

Module: Experimental Strategies Report (ADAA5003)

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Which 2 artists have been most influential to your site-specific research?

Anna Reivilä Was a artist of major interest to me while researching site specific, utilising the artists relationship with nature, forms ties to her work, quite literally in this artists case. Reivila, as stated in my visual enquiry uses the fairly modern Japanese binding technique known as shibari which has its own rich history in photography. This relationship that Reivila has with relationship is communicated strongly, The work has tension from the knots but is communicated elegantly from their careful construction. While existing in a place of personal solitude and freedom. Their was to form inspiration on how historical context and contemporary understanding create tension. Gormley's work in close encounters was the inspiration behind carefully planning the materials that would enrich my narrative. It was through Gormley's use of iron, that cemented the works conflict with humanity and our growing disconnection to the earth as we advance as a civilisation.

What information related to your site has been most influential to your site-specific research?

Looking into JR the artist behind the Face to face stunt in 2007, kept me in the early parts of my project mindful of the risk of being desensitised to the significance of Swansea museum and relevance it has to Welsh heritage. JRs work hasn't exactly aged well and in 2023 looking into the experiment that the work was always going to be at risk of being looked at in ill taste. Making work that fits into the museum subtly as a quiet intervention came from this information. From a talk with a Swansea council and museum worker Phil, we learned that the significance of the artefact was in flux in the modern era, the museum has shifted from item of material/wealth significance to that of story due to the 200 year old accumulation of collecting. This information was helpful in picking the objects I would use form my work.

Using key terms, how has site specificity impacted your ideas about making and exhibiting work?

Utilising charity items as historic artifices was a idea formed by Swansea itself finding a direct link between Welsh heritage and the museum, many may find a link between the older generation and the charity shop as people link the museum and older items. Using site specific, bringing items from public Swansea shops into the museum with pot luck of items with relevant and deep stories from the city that the museum has been operating since 1841. When making photography it has been important to respond to the museum's small collection of art, the photography in Swansea serves as a form of documentation of Swansea itself as it looked and its people sometimes over a century ago. The photography I created was of the same documentation aesthetic. The Myth of artifact was also a concept

that dictated my work enhanced by work in the museum I.E the Swansea devil. The Deconstruction of the artifact was paramount to site specific in this context.

What theories/concepts/ideas were key to your project idea?

Responding to archive footage from early 20th century Swansea imagery was a concept I explored, documentation of Swansea from that period is seen as important as Swansea developed from a industrial city to a on the surface, more culturally developed one.

Responding to the city in the time of recession in reference to the images from this time of identity change was a small excursion to see how the continuation of documentation provides important to the cities constant expansion in the early 21st century.

Deconstructing Swansea in the context of the charity shop item was another context, collecting these public artifacts, play on myth and manipulates and plays upon the museum's policy regarding items of significance, all these items come from a place with a story within Swansea yet find themselves being sold for pennies. By brining these items to museum alongside the exhibiting artifacts on show already. Should create a conflict as well as legitimising these charity shop artifacts as much as the museums.

Reflecting on your practical work, how would you have exhibited your proposed images?

Upon reflection the idea behind my work was a subtle intervention, displaying 6 scan images around the museum, displaying them in glass see through frames to mimic a display case. These charity shop items, now scanned, as whole would never be accepted into the museum yet hold authentic Welsh household stories of their own. By playing on the museums policy on items of value these images would get into as many rooms as possible juxtaposing each exhibition room. Six was to be enough, to do that they would be put in quiet areas of the rooms raising questions to their origin and significance in the museum by default, Which is where my visual work on deconstruction would be that metaphor. The work was supposed to be all about encountering the work mimicking an encounter in a museum and questioning its origin, legitimacy providing the spectator with thoughts about phenomenology of the charity shops.

What would you have changed about the practical work in developing your final process?

I think the work of site specific lends itself to using a projection very well, its like double exposure for conventional imagery. By layering a intervention onto a physical structure/artefact you can forge many narratives and juxtapositions. One Idea was projecting virtual photography onto visual documentation. The reason was to reference how the every day person now views the world on our phones and all things tech. Many people don't encounter Swansea without distraction, by bringing tech into the museum I am disrupting the viewing experience akin to people living on their phone. Another final idea was taking a old fashioned projector into the museum and having the public project charity shop items onto a wall. Projecting their own artifacts of choice into the exhibition space.

What skills have you practiced in this module?

This module saw me utilise mild sculpture in my work, constructing and reconstructing charity shop items and then photographing them. Letting theory dictate my work was also practiced. My early parts of the module saw me using communication skills to organize museum talks with Phil early on and ask him key questions regarding what the museum valued in an artifact that proved influential to my theory to begin with.

This module's core aspect was teamwork and this task helped me gain communication skills and team building communication throughout the process. Starting with meetings outside of university and creating appointments with Swansea museum. Making sure that everyone in the group was in the know and aware of the project's trajectory was key. This early part of the project was very good when utilising these skills and the clock presentation would not have been possible without communication and group project organisation skills.

What new practical skills have you trialled (projection, print, digital skills etc).

Using a film scanner to mimic a top down forensic documentation of the charity shop item proved to be an effective way of practicing abstract imagery. This scanner proved to enrich the work, looking at maps and images of the real thing opposed to the real thing disrupts the viewing experience but also keeps the thing alive. The scanner does all these things for the images I created. As stated as forensic, it's a detailed scan of fragments of the stories of the disregarded item. With the project being fragments in focus due to the work as a collective of fragments of memories in time of place as a collective the work marries the concept in its construction.

Using a projector was a skill I have not practiced before and trying one to manipulate imagery on top of different surfaces. This practical skill offered a new way of communicating narrative in my work, i.e. projecting shards of charity shop items onto artifacts of relevance. Manipulating light with stencils and colour filters was also a practical skill that I learned so that I can develop the use of projector more effectively.

What professional skill did you demonstrate best?

Communication with the museum was the best skill demonstrated when meeting the manager and Phil, I laid out the key details of our project and what the aims of it was. I also engaged with staff to really understand what would be possible and impossible inside the building. This is where we found out the key limitations to health and safety regarding the public and the limitations of hanging stuff up with sensors in every part of the building. I also think my work ended up being directed by theory and research rather than art direction was a key aspect of professionalism. This skill is key if I was to do a research based project in the future and although this way of working took time to adjust to in the end it did begin to be communicated effectively linking the work to the museum which is the challenge of the project.

What role would you have liked to have taken in the group context (Marketing, communication, tech etc)?

I would have liked to take on the role of communication for this project, the weakest aspect of this group was the communication which after about a month really collapsed after my personal life became busy nearer the deadline. From a personal point of view the way I work is often structured and ultimately leads to a finished outcome because of this, being in charge of communication would allow me and other to check in and engage with personal projects within the group project. This would allow the group to discuss theories they have adopted from the museum as well as personal discussion with the museums amongst all peers. Meaning that know one is second guessing each other about the state of the project leading to the deadlines therefore levitating a collective stress and all have fair input and can be part of experiments leading up to the exhibition as a group, in turn helping each other up for success for the exhibition and visual enquiry module. Ultimately this did not happen and it seemed that two members broke off from the rest of the group and had already pre planed and organised, marketing, sacrificed communication and collective practice leading up to the exhibition for the last 6 weeks of the project the only communication was from one person dictating what was going to happen.