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EXHIBITION TITLE: DECISIONS

Exploring the theme of nature, the exhibition titled “Decisions” will centre around the dependent relationship between humanity and the natural world. Through art-pieces by Demetra Theofanous, Mollie Bosworth, Elizabeth Shriver and Denise Romecki, the natural world’s ability to inspire humanity will be on display. Simultaneously, the exhibition will call into question the exploitation of the natural world for wealth and greed, an increasingly pressing issue as climate change and global warming continue to accelerate (Carey, 2012, p51). This will be demonstrated largely through the layout of the exhibition itself, held within a decommissioned cooling tower. The two conflicting aspects of nature, one of spirituality and the other of materialism, will be paired together, allowing the spectators to question their priorities and contemplate the decisions that have led to the decline of the natural world.



Figure 1

Being an obvious symbol of industrial pollution, the irony of a nature exhibition held within the bones of a powerplant calls into question the sacrifices humanity has made regarding the planet but also the longevity of our decisions; such that the cooling tower now remains dormant and devoid of life, the attendees may question the state of the planet as a whole. Upon entering the exhibition, the attendees will be provided with a choice between entering a large, sterile atrium or following the hallway around its periphery. This would have forest green walls, creating the sense of comfort and life as outlined both in the Theory of Colours (Von Goethe, 1840) and the principles of Feng Shui (Rossbach, Lin, 1932, p29), given that green reconnects the body to nature. Gold accents along the corridor will create the perception of wealth which, together with the natural theming of the room, will emphasise that real value comes from the natural world.

The atrium will consist exclusively of a single artificial plant at its centre, far too small to fill the room. The room will be lit extensively through white artificial lights that, combined with the lack of corners in the room, will leave it featureless. As a contrast to the warmth of the hallway, the atrium will feel cold and lifeless, such that being within it causes great discomfort. This is largely inspired by Gregor Schneider’s ‘Weisse Folter’, an art exhibition that imitated the conditions of

sensory deprivation (Eichler, 2007). The feelings of relief that guests had upon leaving the Weisse Folter would be felt upon returning to the hallway, an exaggerated emotional experience of returning to the natural world. The artificial plant within the centre of the atrium will be symbolic of the false comforts that humanity has created itself in addition to being a warning of a potential future should authentic nature be replaced completely.

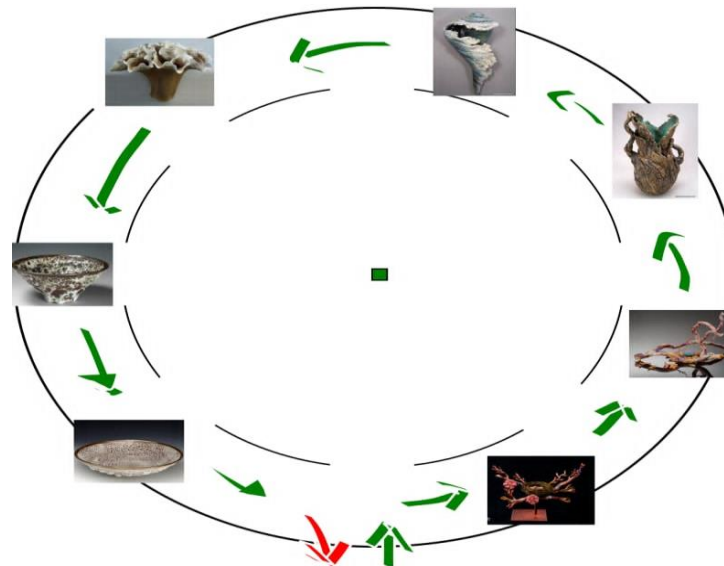


Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the floorplan for the exhibition. The empty and lifeless centre can be seen to be oversized and disproportional, whilst the surrounding hallway has more activity and interest. Although the atrium is almost fully open to the hallway and movement is not prohibited, it is expected that attendees will follow the desired path around the atrium, finding walking through the centre too uncomfortable of an experience.

Whereas the atrium will be unwelcoming, artwork will be displayed around the hallway, each emphasising nature in its form. The pieces will be partially within themed coves featuring both enhanced visuals and related sounds, allowing the spectators to lean into the artwork and be immersed in a scene. This will create an intimate connection to the art given how sound can enhance an experience, with Michael Stockere noting how sound “touches our bodies, our skin and our bones.” (2013, p2). The circular layout of the exhibition further emphasises the human relationship with the natural world; whilst a story will be told regarding humanity exploiting the natural world, it is by no means an end. This is best demonstrated by the first artwork within the exhibition from Demetra Theofanous’ series titled “Rebirth”, Figure 3.



Figure 3 and Figure 4

The frame worked glass piece explores the themes of nature, transformation and rebirth, incorporating natural elements of nests, leaves and branches that convey the interconnectedness of the natural world but also its fragility. The artwork will invoke a sense of peace, equivalent to the emotions of spring, yet the vulnerability of an unprotected nest serves as a warning. The eggs serve as a microcosm of the entire natural world. Demetra notes, "I seek to depict the cycle of life." (2025). The next piece, also by Demetra Theofanous titled 'Repose', Figure 4, is similar to the first being a nest amongst glass branches. However, it is noted that the eggs, no longer within a sturdy nest, are balanced amongst leaves, showing an increased risk. The artwork shows an incredible reflection on both environmental challenges and the human experience. This sense of connection between humanity and the natural world is a primary focus within the exhibit and reflects on the philosophy of biophilia, of which Edward O Wilson describes the connection as "our existence depends on [life], our spirit is woven from it, hope rises on its currents" (1984, p1).



Figure 5 and Figure 6

The next artwork within the exhibition is the 'Nature Vessel with Two Branches' by Denise Romecki, seen in Figure 5. Imitating the jagged edges of tree bark, the vessel showcases the raw elements of nature, enabling the audience to truly appreciate the beauty of the natural world.

Put on display, the ceramic calls to attention the often-unnoticed intricacies of a tree bark, a feature often overlooked. This could potentially be due to gestalt theory, the idea that the human mind simplifies objects into the simplest recognisable shape (Smith. 1988. p12) – rather than layers of bark, the mind sees a tree trunk. Romecki deconstructs the tree into its fundamental texture and applies it to a vase, inverting gestalt theory completely. The next artwork in the exhibition, also by Romecki, is the ‘Giant Conch’ seen Figure 6. Using a similar technique, the ‘Giant Conch’ has the shape of a shell yet the texture of a wave, truly invoking the interconnected relationship that nature has.



Figure 7

Elizabeth Shriver’s sculpture, the ‘Coral Bouquet’ would follow onward from Romecki, seen in Figure 7. Like Romecki, Shriver captures the intricate texture from nature, furthering the idea that the natural world is a great source of inspiration. Imitating coral, the ocean theme is continued yet the artwork lacks colour in comparison to the previous art. Being dull and exclusively in brown shades, the piece signifies that something has gone wrong given that coral is expected to be bright coloured and vibrant. Following the previous intimate connections with the artwork earlier in the exhibition, the sudden sign of illness in the art can resonate with the attendee; where once the observer was finding great beauty in the intricate design of the natural world, the observer will find the beauty amidst sorrow. This should invoke a great sense of reflection.



Figure 8 and Figure 9

The final pieces within the collection, now having done a full lap around the exhibition would be Mollie Bosworth’s experimentations with a lava/crater glaze, seen in Figure 8 and 9. Being the final set of the exhibit, the pieces depict a design lacking any obvious link to the natural world. Seemingly random and burnt in its design, the lava glazes appear to be the antithesis of life and a

stark contrast to the life and natural patterns found in the world. However, upon a deeper inspection of the designs, signs of life are still present amongst what appears to be charry remains. If the observer allows themselves to be optimistic, the patterns from Bosworth's pieces can be interpreted as waves in the ocean, the stems of a mushroom and many more. This hopeful attitude brightens the seemingly depressing end to the exhibition, setting it up for a return to the start and experiencing Theofanous' rebirth once more, reiterating her desire to depict the circle of life and acts as a subtle message that life is not over yet.

Figures

Figure 1: de Velde, R.V. (2017). Landscapes Within

Figure 2: Lelinska, N. (2025) Floor plan of Exhibition

Figure 3: Theofanous, D. (2014). Rebirth Series

Figure 4: Theofanous, D. (2010). Repose.

Figure 5: Romecki, D. Nature Vessel with Two Branches

Figure 6: Romecki, D. Giant Conch

Figure 7: Shriver, E. Coral Boquet

Figure 8: Bosworth, M. (2013) White crator glaze

Figure 9: Bosworth, M. (2013). Unnamed

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