

Visual diary experimental strategies / research report

Seren Willicombe

Swansea Market Group Members

- Seren Willicombe
- Sarah Grounds
- James Peaple
- Megan May Cox

We have a Facebook group chat to discuss ideas and coordinate work. We also have a weekly in person meeting every Tuesday, I believe that we worked well as a team and have created a successful exhibition.

Site

- Sarah Grounds is the member of the group who had the idea of creating an exhibition in/about Swansea Market and created the video to show to the year group at the start of the module. James also created a power point midway through the module to show our progress to the rest of the year group. Sarah Grounds is also in contact with the manger of the market and filled the forms for us to use the stall space for free. The site is big and there is a lot of wall space to fill which I think is a good thing. We did have a few problems with the communication between us and the manager of the market as he is new to the job and is very busy, but all that was sorted and communication between use became better.

Important dates

- The exhibition will take place on 19th and 20th of November a Friday and a Saturday as there will be more people in the market on a weekend.
- The 15th of November is the beginning of the exhibition week and will start the countdown for the exhibition and the day when most for the work should be finished.
- The 18th of November is the day we will set up for the exhibition, for example place work onto the walls and set up stuff for the opening the next day.

Swansea Market Research

- Swansea is home to Wales's biggest indoor market (Swansea Indoor Market, 2021a) and is home to many stalls and cafes. The market was also bombed during World War 2 (Swansea Indoor Market, 2021b), and the market is very different today because it was bombed in the war.
- Learning about Swansea Market and its history was a big part of my primary school education as it was one of the local schools in Swansea, therefore I already knew a lot about the market and its history before this project. I have a lot of general knowledge about the market that was helpful when we first started to discuss ideas as a group.

Further Research/ idea

- I knew from the beginning of this project that I wanted to focus on the community aspect of the market especially since other members of the group are focusing more on the history of the market , therefore the majority of my research is me exploring the Market space and observing the stall owners as they work and the customers as they explore the stalls. I have also been observing the interactions between the customers and the stall workers. I have spent many hours in the market and enjoyed the fact that everyone was very friendly and it was a very comforting environment. I gathered that the market is a really busy place but it is also a really relaxed place because everyone is happy and friendly. All the stall owners know each other really well, the market has a really strong community.

Map of the market



Fig. 1

Map of the exhibition and information about the work we created



The Community Wall – The Community Wall is a project by all four artists of this exhibition, the intention for this project is to capture the essence of the market's community spirit. Instagram - yfarchnadgelf



Photographs by Seren Willicombe – Seren is a Photography in the Arts student at Swansea College of Art, and her work displays the proud stall workers/owners in their environment. Her other work follows the small unnoticeable things in the market space. Instagram - seren_will_photography



V.I.P. by Sarah Grounds – Sarah is studying Documentary Photography and Visual Activism. Her work V.I.P. is about appreciating the things we take for granted, the seemingly unimportant things, that are actually so important. From the pigeon in the market to the market in Swansea. Instagram - midlife psychosis



Kaleidoscope by James Peale – James is studying Photography in the Arts. His work Kaleidoscope takes past and present combining them together through the use of archived images and his own present day photos of the market, photos of his own family and quotes about their experiences in the market. This represents the community spirit and longevity of the market while also showing how it has changed over time. Instagram - Jamespeale



Fusing by Megan – Meg is studying Photography in the Arts. Her work Fusing is about using supplies from the market to her advantage and creating a few pieces of art with these. This helps promote the stalls in the market. Instagram - megphoto29

Y Farchnad Gelf



Map and Description

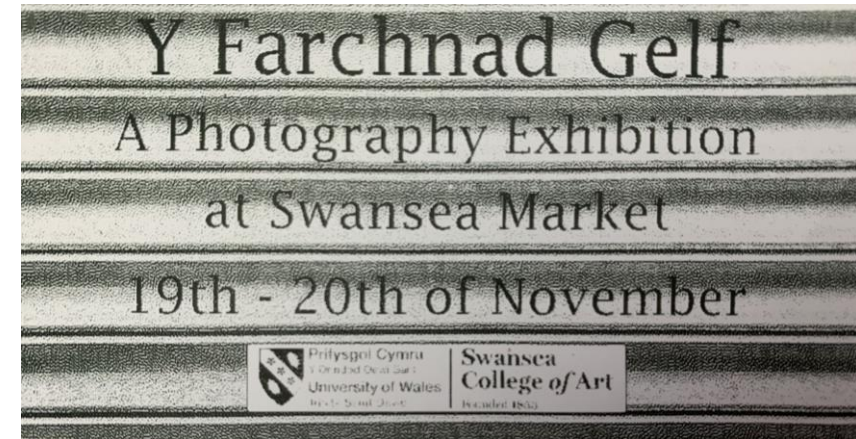
- I created the above photos using the map of the market from the market website (2021) and clip art from Microsoft power point. These two images are printed double-sided onto A5 paper, we also printed them onto A3 paper to put on the stall. These will be handed out on both days of the exhibition for the audience to find the art and to get to know more about us. The market is a big space so by having a simple map that anybody could understand will help them find the art. Sarah has also created signs to cover the old stall signs.

Advertisement and promotion

- I created an email and Instagram page and given access to every member of the group and we post on the page as often as we can.
- We handed out flyers to the stall holders and talked to them about the exhibition and that we plan on creating a community wall and many of them were interested in participating and many put the flyers in their windows.
- Further into the project we all decided to create different posters so we can have a variety of them, I have placed posters on all entrances in the market. My sister also gave posters to her art teacher at BrynTawe school, they have also shared the poster on their story on Instagram @celfbryntawe
- I have also contacted South Wales Evening Post and Wales Online about the exhibition but they have not responded.

posters

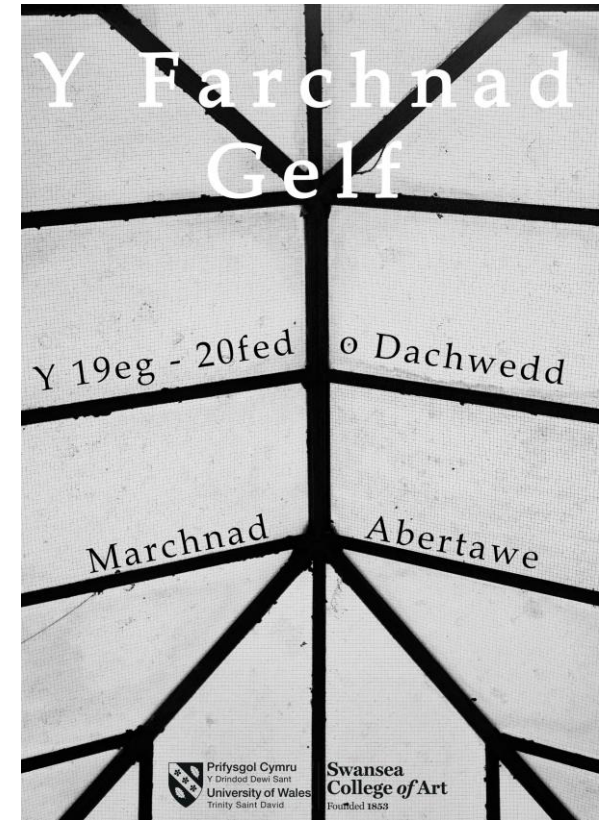
This is the first poster that I created for the exhibition

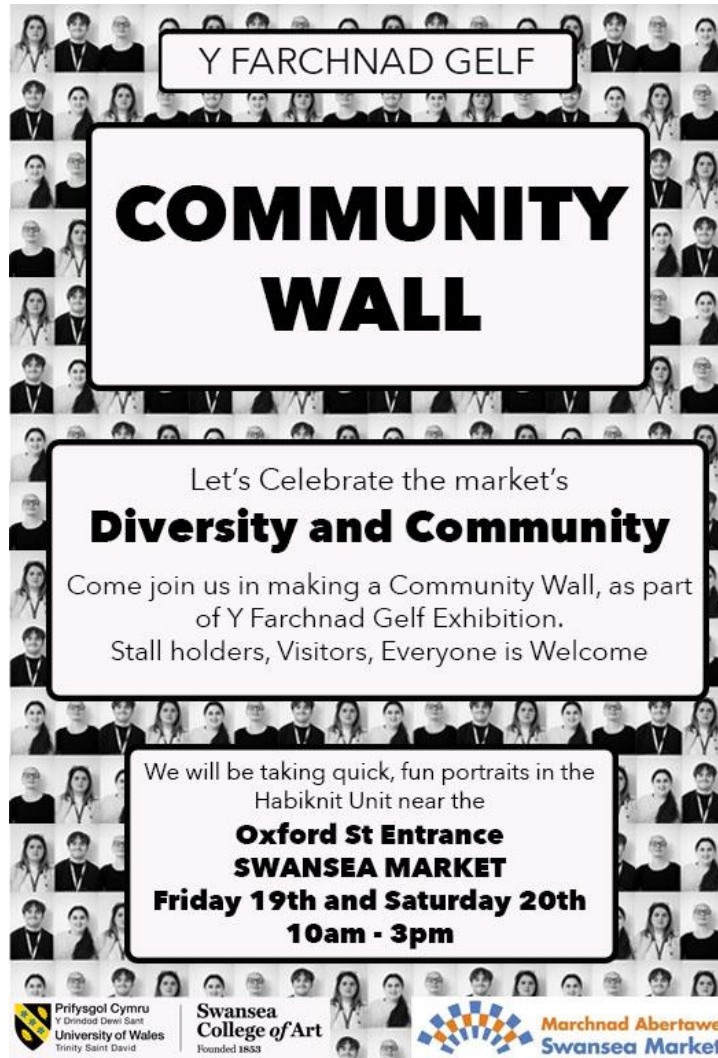


Sarah edited the original poster for it to look better.
Poster that we handed out to stall owners/workers



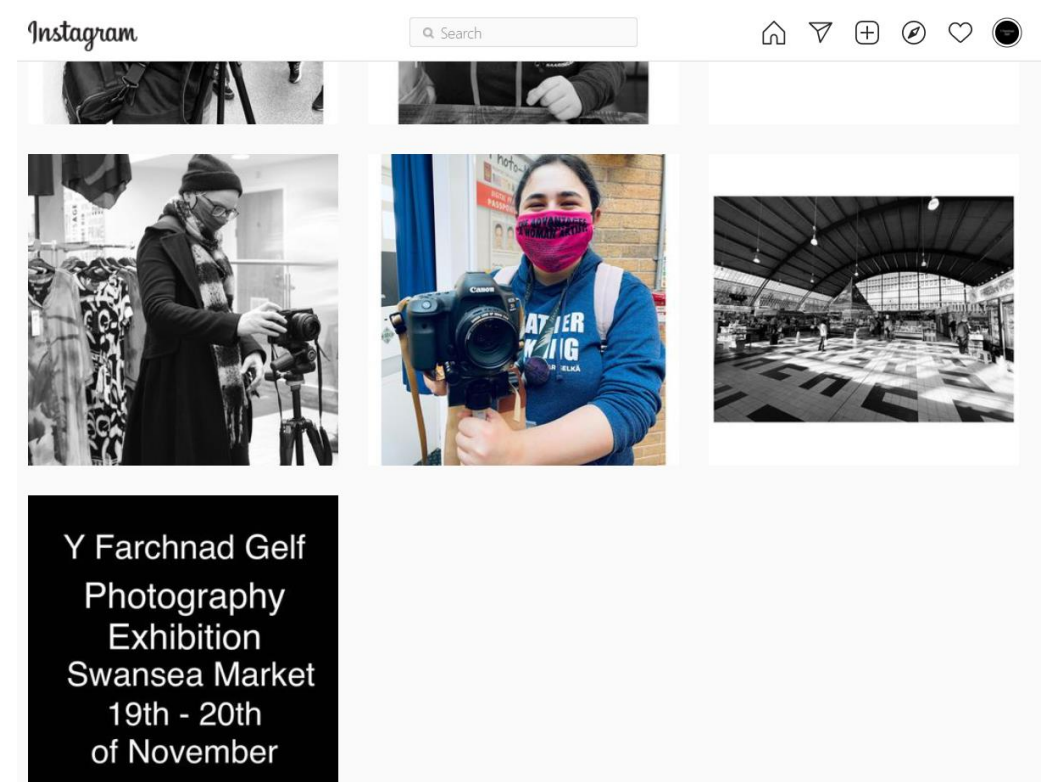
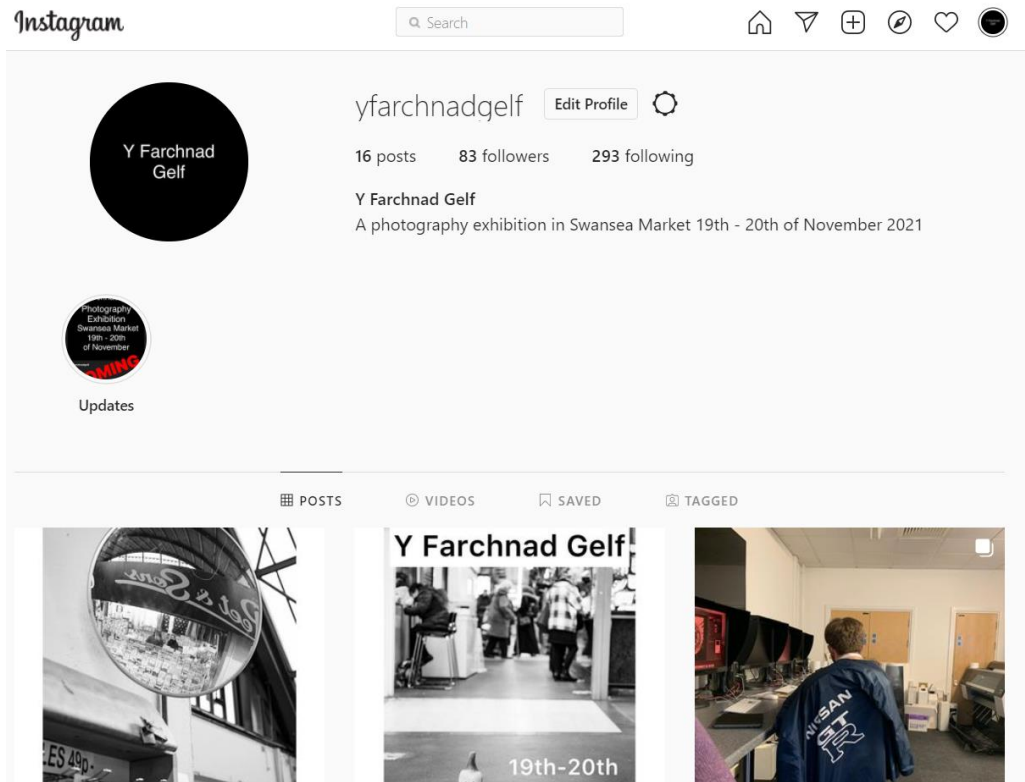
I created the Welsh posters as I am the only member of the group who speaks Welsh and I really like how they look.





Sarah Created a poster to promote the community Wall project. She used photographs from our practice run of the Community Wall to create it. I went around the market and put up a bunch of different posters. I printed two A3 posters one of the Community Wall posters and one of the Welsh posters and put them on the main entrance of the market.

Instagram



We all have access to the Instagram account that we use to advertise the exhibition. We all post on it and share on the story with updates. We also follow relevant pages and hashtags for example Swansea market page, other artists pages and #SwanseaMarket.

Photos from first visit

On the visit to the market as a group I took photos of things that interested me, things like bright colours and interesting textures.



Site visits

- One visit to the market as a group
- Second visit with lecturers
- Third visit with manager of the market
- Fourth visit my myself to explore the space
- Fifth visit with lecturer and artist Tom Pope
- Next few visits over the weeks to take photographs and explore the space as a group
- We made many site visits to plan the layout and to develop ideas

Initial ideas

- Name: we decided to name the exhibition Y Farchnad Gelf, which translates to The Art Market because we are displaying and creating art that is specific to Swansea Market. It is a nice and simple name that is easy to understand, also we decided to have the name in Welsh because the Welsh community/history is an important part of Swansea Market.
- We wanted a community based exhibition and wanted the community to be involved.
- We want to create a Community wall project inspired by JR's (*Inside Out*) art project.
- We want to put work on the inner outer walls of the market.
- I would like to take photographs in style of Bernard Mitchell (2021), his website is full of his photographs of Welsh artists in their studio space surrounded by their work and I would like to photograph the stall owners/ workers within their stalls as that is their craft. The difference between my photographs and Mitchells is that the stall owners/ workers will not be posing for the photographs as I want to capture the community in it's natural state.

Initial ideas

- I came across a video on the app TikTok of a woman using a kids camera that prints onto thermal paper before we started the exhibition, unfortunately I cannot find that video again due to the nature of the app. I then went and bought one and walked around the market taken photographs and using the camera to print onto thermal paper.
- I realised that receipts are printed using thermal paper and decided I would like to print my photographs onto thermal paper. The camera is not the best quality so I bought a small thermal printer that connects to my phone via Bluetooth the kids camera came with an micro SD card so I was able to print the photographs from the camera with better quality. I would like to use the printer and camera for my work.

Ceal Floyer – *Monochrome Till Receipt (White)*



Fig. 2

Whilst doing research into artists who use thermal paper, I could not find many artists that specialise with thermal paper. But I did find this one piece *Monochrome Till (White)* (Floyer, 1999). This piece is currently at the Tate Modern and on the website. This piece (Floyer, 1999) is really interesting to me because it is something so simple and something we normally would throw away without even looking at it and to have it as a piece of art is completely different from its original purpose. I would like to use the idea of bringing attention to something so simple that we normally only look at it once.

Bernard Mitchell



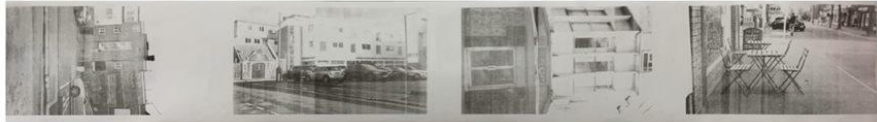
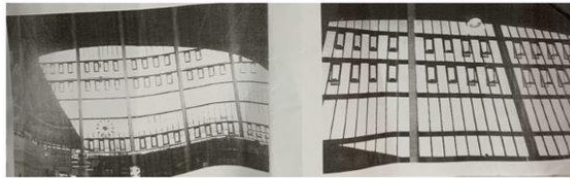
Fig. 3

- This photo by Bernard Mitchell is of artist Aneurin Jones and he is being photograph with his art (Mitchell). I would like to create images similar to this with the stall owners/ workers in their stalls, the different will be that not all the stall owners will be posing and looking at the camera, but some of them will. Bernard Mitchell is also local to Swansea and having work inspired by him in is local area is a good idea.

(Inside Out)

- As a group we have decided that on the two day exhibition we will create a community wall inspired by JR's *(Inside Out)* art project. One of the exhibitions for this project was *(Inside Out, Times Square, 2013)*. JR works with the public and other artists to create walls and spaces full with portraits of the community and local people. We would like to recreate this idea of having a wall full of portraits of the market community. We plan on making it a fun and enjoyable experience for the community and hopefully will bring more people into the market. JR's work is perfect inspiration for this exhibition because his work brings different communities together to create magnificent work.

Experimenting with Thermal Paper



I enjoyed experimenting with thermal paper and think it fits in well with the market as thermal paper is most likely used by most stalls for receipts and are discarded without even looking at them. I also experimented with printing photographs onto already printed receipts from stores but unfortunately it was difficult to see the image on the paper. Different brands of paper create different quality prints and I will use different paper in the exhibition.

Work in style of Bernard Mitchell



This is one of my photographs using the style of Bernard Mitchell and I like how it displays the stall owners/workers and the stall as one but I will like to include photographs with some of the stall owners/ worker posing and looking at the camera. I feel like these photographs capture the hard work of the stall workers, they also capture the community spirit as the workers and owners are a permanent part of the community/market.

Community wall

To create the community wall we will need a pop up studio in the market on the 19th – 20th of November there for we need to know how to do it and how it will work. We used the studio space at the university to run a simulation of the pop up studio. We are using my home printer that we have gotten PAT tested, external lights from stores and sticky back paper to print onto. As a group we had a test run to see if the community wall project would work well and I am happy to say that it worked well and should be successful on the day. We have a huge roll of paper that we will tape to the wall and stick A4 labels with black and white portraits of the community, and at the end of the two days we will roll it back up and give it to the manager of the market to keep and use whenever they want. The stall that we are using had some electricity problems so we looked at other places but we could not find a place that was safe/ luckily the stall next door has let us use an extension cord. We now have electricity in the stall.

Further thoughts

- After photographing the stalls and stall owners with Bernard Mitchell's style as inspiration I noticed that my attention to the small things that are just existing in the market. I have decided to include both style of photos in my work. I naturally pay a lot of attention to small things that most people look over similar to how most people don't pay attention to receipts. I have decided to print the small things in the market that most people don't pay attention to because most people don't pay attention to receipts as well. I will print the images in style of Bernard Mitchell onto A3 crystal jet paper and the small unnoticeable things onto thermal paper.

Display

- We have been told that we can use any wall space we want as long as we don't damaged the wall. I have found some clear gel tape that is strong but won't damage the walls. I will not be framing the work on the walls because frames will not blend in well with the rest of the market, I will be using mounting boards to strengthen the photographs and still blend in well with the market. I will be hanging the thermal paper from a wire that is already hanging in the market, I will also stick some of the thermal paper prints to the wall in long strips. All the work will be close together in clusters to simulate the busyness of the market.

Day before the exhibition

- Everything is set and ready for the opening. The work is ready on the walls around the market, we used a step ladder to place some of the work on the walls and the wire. We managed to set up the pop up studio ready for the morning of the exhibition but will bring the equipment on the morning of the exhibition because it is expensive.
- We had to clean the stall because it has only been used for storage for many years, and we had to make sure everything is safe so there should be no problems on the day.
- We have completed the risk assessment and everything is up to date.

Site Specific

- This exhibition is site specific because we are using what is already there to create pieces of art work. Also all the work we have created has a specific place that it needs to be. All my photographs will be placed near to where I took them, in will also be creating a piece of art using the wire that has been there for years. Every member of the group has worked hard to make this exhibition site specific.

This exhibition is about the community
of the market and is for the community
of the market

List of figures

Figure 1. *Map of Swansea Market* [map]. Available at: <http://www.swanseaindoormarket.co.uk/a-smile-from-the-heart/> (Accessed: 14th of November 2021)

Figure 2. Floyer, C. (1999) *Monochrome Till Receipt Paper (White)* [Ink on Paper on Wall] Tate Modern, London. Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/floyer-monochrome-till-receipt-white-t12894> (Accessed: 10th of November 2021)

Figure 3. Mitchell, B. *Aneurin Jones* [photograph]. Available at: [Gallery | Welsh Arts Archive \(bernardmitchell.co.uk\)](http://GalleryWelshArtsArchive.bernardmitchell.co.uk) (Accessed: 13th of November of 2021)

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