

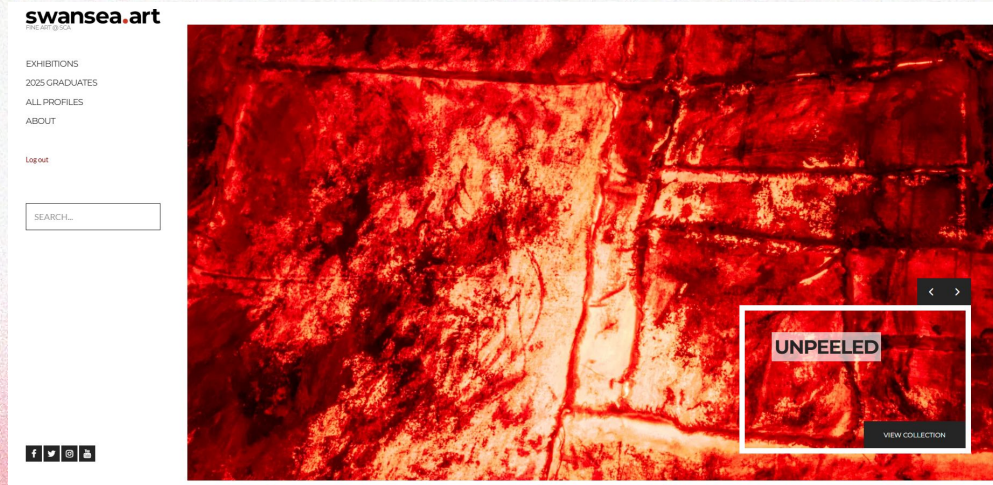
YEAR 2
SEMESTER 1

ADAA5011

HOLLY
SLINGSBY

WORLDBUILDING

EM AELWYN DORION



<https://swansea.art/>

WHAT IS WORLDBUILDING?

Worldbuilding in this instance is when an artist creates a presence online via social media, websites and other internet profiles. This is used to increase an artist's audience and engagement.

LOOKING AT ARTIST WEBSITES

Unsuccessful examples: What makes an unsuccessful artist website/page?

- Hard to read fonts - Small font size, colour clashing, or generally hard to understand typefaces.
- Poor navigation - unorganised menus and information in wrong areas.
- Missing information - lack of statement, contact details etc.
- Unappealing design choices - colours which clash with artwork, poor photos of artwork, flashing designs or sounds.

This would be an example of a bad colour choice, there is not enough contrast and the colours would likely not work with most artist's styles.

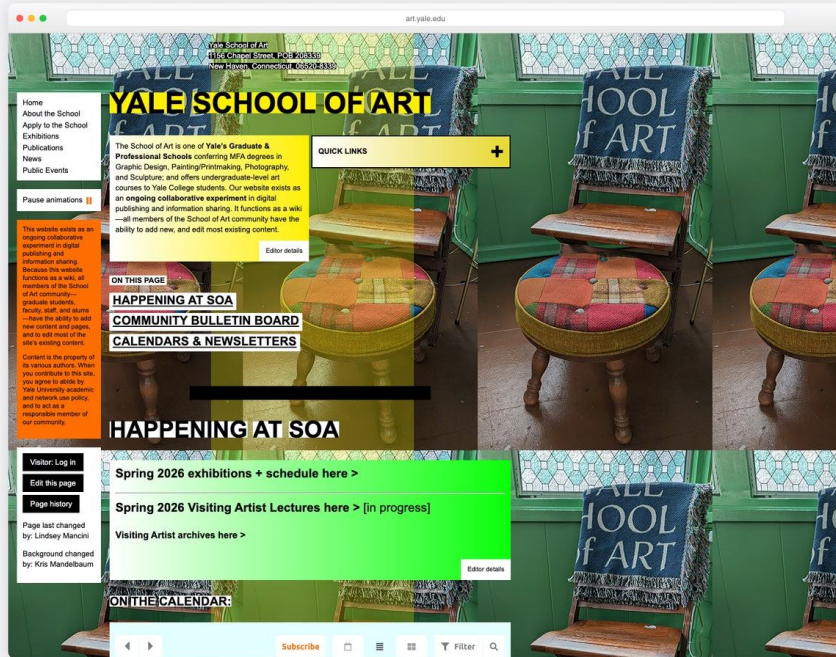
This would be an example of a poor font choice, it is quite stylized and difficult to read, especially if small.

AND THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF FONTS THAT CLASH TOGETHER.

Using varying typefaces causes a messy looking design and may lead to confusion.

IT IS BEST TO USE STYLIZED FONTS FOR TITLES ONLY, NOT IN THE MAIN BLOCKS OF TEXT.

Poor website execution example:



<https://www.art.yale.edu/>

Notoriously known as a poorly designed website, Yale school of art blends a dated style and vibrant colours which clash with newer photos of seemingly random things. From my research I have found that it is a collaborative website, which allows any member of YSCA to contribute. In theory this is a fun idea, however executed it is confusing to navigate and looks quite unprofessional for a university website.

Things I would change would be:

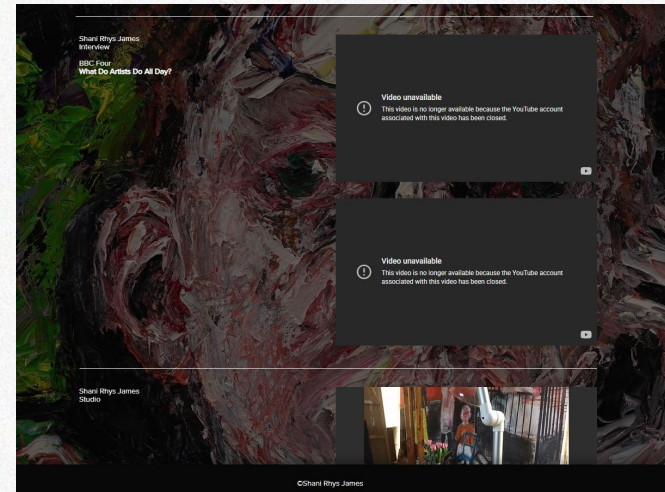
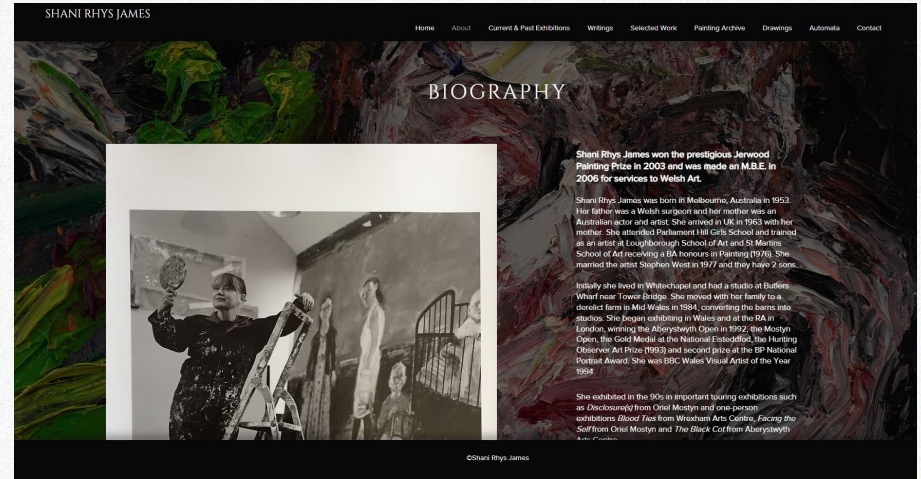
- The formatting - On the desktop version of the site it is off centre and the menu is not enjoyable to navigate. I would centre all text and create a smaller selection on the main menu which you could click on for more information.
- Colours and text - The highlighting on the text looks rushed and unprofessional. I would change the background to a more neutral option so that text stands out on its own. I would also remove all of the clashing colours and keep it to a smaller colour palette. I would also make some of the text bigger so that it is more legible

SUCCESSFUL ARTIST WEBSITES...

Shani Rhys James is a Welsh artist I enjoy, I believe her website is quite successful and concise. All of the information is laid out well and I appreciate that it is in a selected order like her “About” section coming first which includes her artist statement. Her website also includes all exhibitions, the drop tab is useful, however, considering how many exhibitions Rhys James has had, it does become quite overwhelming and perhaps hard to navigate when it is all in that tab.

I must also comment on the fact that a few videos on the website are also unavailable or taken down by the posters, which could suggest that the website has not been recently updated. This however is a very minor issue and did not massively affect my user experience.

<https://www.shanirhysjames.com/>



IMPROVEMENTS



Another website which I believe could be better is that of Soheila Sokhanvari. The website appears to be somewhat successful if not a little bit lacking in information, however, upon further inspection, each photo seems to be low in quality and quite blurry. This is the main issue I would fix.

<https://www.soheila-sokhanvari.com>

ARTIST STATEMENTS

The first step would be to create an artist statement; an artist statement is an extremely important part of the artist's worldbuilding. It should capture the artist's style concisely so that it can give further context behind the artist's work, or even paint a picture on what their work is like before the viewer even sees it. It is important to avoid being vague and overly pretentious.

When looking for references when researching my statement, I gravitated towards snappy and honest statements which avoided "art-speak" and filler words. These types of statements describe their work better for me and also drawn me further in to their work by describing things in a more punchy way.

QUEERNESS

- LESBIAN
- GENDER NONCONFORMITY
- FEMME BUTCH DYNAMICS
- FEMME IDENTITY

BUTCH
FEMME
ROLES

FEMME/BUTCHNESS
AS GENDER
IDENTITIES

LESBIAN
DYNAMICS

LESBIAN/QUEER
FEMINISM

GENDER AND FEMINISM

- GENDER CRITICISM
- GENDER ROLES
- FEMININITY/ MASCULINITY

MATERIALS THAT
FEELS TIED TO
IDENTITY

MESSINESS
EXPERIMENTATION

TEXTILES AND
WOMANHOOD

MATERIALS AND WORK STYLE

- FABRICS/
TEXTILES
- LARGESCALE
PAINT TEXTURE
AND
MATERIALITY
- CHARCOAL
AND
CONTRAST

HUMAN
MISTAKES

MARK MAKING
AND
REPRESENTATION

BRAINSTORMING AND KEYWORDS

ACTS OF
SERVICE

SEEKING
COMMUNITY

QUEER LOVE
SEX AND
FRIENDSHIP

RELATIONSHIPS
BETWEEN GNC
INDIVIDUALS

HUMAN RELATIONSHIP

- LOVE/LUST AND SEX
- COMMUNITY
- HUMAN STRUGGLE
- DOMESTICITY
- HUMAN ACTS

STATEMENT ONE:

Em Aelwyn Dorion's work relates to the queer femme experience, focusing on interpersonal relationships, feminist ideas and the gender nonconforming body. Inspired to create by her research in butch and femme subculture along with lesbian literature and history; Her paintings and drawings typically are set as scenes with storytelling elements, showcasing domestic living between women and genderqueer people, centering the attention on love, sexuality, and struggle.

- Mention of themes behind work
- No art jargon
- Honest and accurate
- Not very descriptive of materiality and physical work body
- Repetitive ideas
- Could be longer

STATEMENT TWO:

Em Aelwyn Dorion's work relates to the queer femme experience, focusing on interpersonal relationships, feminist ideas and the gender nonconforming body. Inspired to create by her research in butch and femme subculture along with lesbian literature and history; Her paintings and drawings are set as scenes with storytelling elements, showcasing domestic living between women and genderqueer people. Centering attention on love, sexuality, struggle and the dynamics in these relationships; from romantic, sexual and platonic. Choice in materials and drawing techniques are also a form of research in Dorion's work, choosing to use secondhand materials such as old bedsheets, curtains and other household materials. This is a way of further communicating these themes on feminism and queer 'domesticity'.

- More in depth but not lengthy
- Communicates clearly
- Feels true to my work
- Still feels a little unsure (?)
- Could use more captivating language
- Not the absolute clearest picture of what my work looks like

I refined my first statement and decided to go with my second one. While I still think my statement could use improvement, I believe it will develop as my experience, career and identity evolves.

I aimed to be critical enough so that my statement feels true to me however I know I have room for improvement. Next time I revisit my statement I will aim to get honest peer reviews of what I have written so that I can trust it is accurate to my work.

Em Aelwyn Dorion's work relates to the queer femme¹ experience, focusing on interpersonal relationships, feminist ideas and the gender nonconforming body. Inspired to create by her research in butch and femme subculture² along with lesbian literature and history; Her paintings and drawings are set as scenes with storytelling elements, showcasing domestic living between women and genderqueer people. Centering attention on love, sexuality, struggle and the dynamics in these relationships; from romantic, sexual and platonic. Choice in materials and drawing techniques are also a form of research in Dorion's work, choosing to use secondhand materials such as old bedsheets, curtains and other household materials. This is a way of further communicating these themes on feminism and queer 'domesticity'³.

1. "Femme" (French for "woman"), Traditionally is a word to describe a feminine presenting lesbian woman. This identity however has several nuances and dynamic implications to it which I enjoy exploring.
2. Butch/Femme dynamics. "Butch" a lesbian identity, exists to challenge gender roles and is a counterpart to the Femme identity. Butches typically express their gender through masculinity. Butch and Femme lesbians can identify as women but not always... Both Butchness and Femmeness can act as subversive identities towards traditional gender roles, pushing the ideas of what masculinity and femininity can be. They also exist intersectionally, as a lot of Butch and Femme culture exists because of working class lesbians and people of colour.
3. Queer domesticity differs from the traditional domestic lifestyle which is centred around making family (children) with stereotypical gender norms. To me, queer domesticity focuses more on found family, expressing love, pride and care rather than the feeling of obligation with traditional domesticity. Prioritising acts of service, intimacy, building relationships and community and exploring subversive dynamics.



EM AELWYN DORION

2ND YEARS /

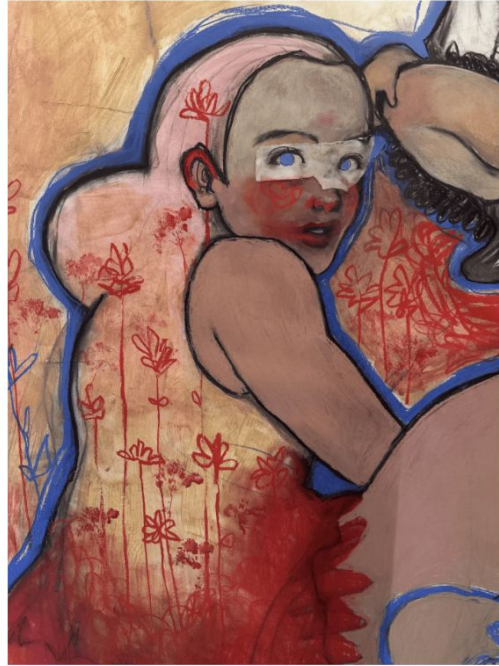
STUDENTS

Em Aelwyn Dorion's work relates to the queer femme experience, focusing on interpersonal relationships, feminist ideas and the gender nonconforming body. Inspired to create by her research in butch and femme subculture along with lesbian literature and history; Her paintings and drawings are set as scenes with storytelling elements, showcasing domestic living between women and genderqueer people. Centring attention on love, sexuality, struggle and the dynamics in these relationships; from romantic, sexual and platonic. Choice in materials and drawing techniques are also a form of research in Dorion's work, choosing to use second-hand materials such as old bedsheets, curtains and other household materials. This is a way of further communicating these themes on feminism and queer 'domesticity'.



Once I had uploaded my statement, I began selecting my images. This was difficult as I only had a few pieces I felt happy with sharing. Over the course of my time at University I will however develop my body of work and submit more of my pieces.

Photos from my first year end of year
exhibition



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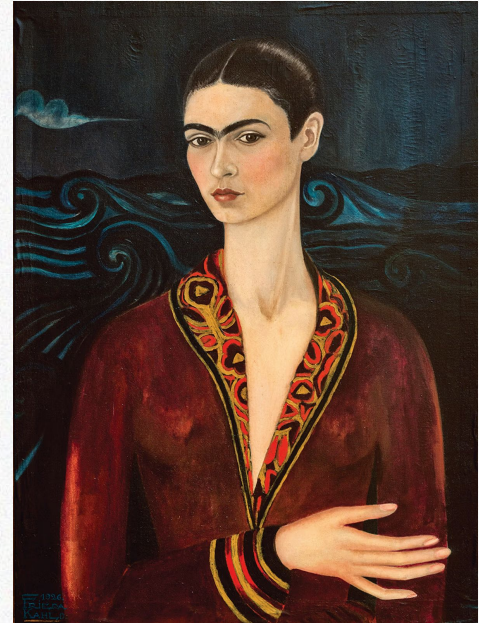
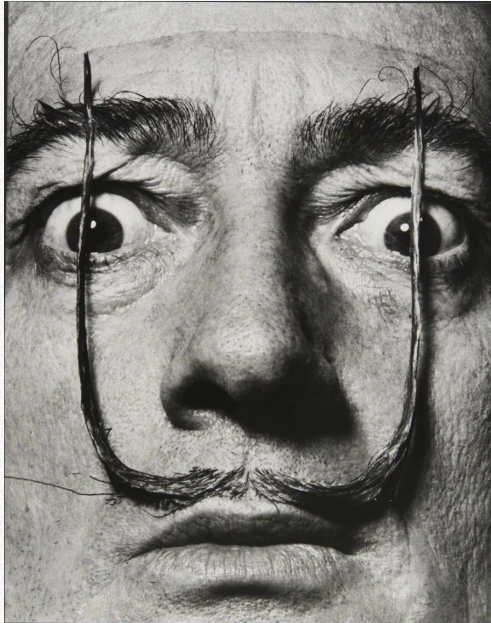
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ARTIST PERSONA

‘The particular type of character that a person seems to have and that is often different from their real or private character’

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>



Marcel Duchamp as both Rose Selavy and R. Mutt

Duchamp called into question the role of the artist persona by releasing artworks under two alter egos: R. Mutt and Rose Sélavy. Rose Sélavy being his most interesting identity. She was Duchamp's female persona, described as Duchamp cross dressing or being a 'transvestite'. From my perspective, and many others, Rose was Duchamp's drag identity, he used Rose as artistic expression and to communicate his sense of humour and work.



ARTIST MANIFESTOS

'An artist manifesto is a public declaration of the intentions, policies, goals or opinions of an artist or movement. It's a means of expressing and publicising the ideas of an artist and often wider issues like the need for a revolution, freedom of expression and a change in society.'

Artist manifestos aspire to be works of art in their own right; for instance, many manifesto writers intend for their texts to be performed. Other manifestos cannot be fully appreciated simply as written statements because they rely heavily on how the emotions are expressed and communicated.

A manifesto asks the question, 'What do you believe?' Outline what you as an individual artist or collective believe then narrow it down to specific objectives related to larger principles.' <https://32east.org/artist-manifesto/>

We were put in groups and tasked with creating artist manifesto pieces based on famous artists, these then would turn into performance pieces. In my group we began by researching together and decided to pick an artist who has a controversial history as we believed it would make for a more interesting manifesto. We decided to use Edgar Degas for this, a french impressionist painter known for his ballerina paintings.

EDGAR DEGAS MANIFESTO

As well as being a famous painter, praised for his skill in capturing the movement of dance through his paintings, Degas was also a very controversial figure. He was known to be a rampant misogynist and anti-semite; forcing his female subjects to hold poses for lengthy periods of time as well as referring to them as animals and monsters, many of them being under the age of eighteen. His anti-semitism caused him to lose a lot of connections since Degas had a habit of accusing people of being Jewish, whether they were Jewish or not.

Degas' negative behaviour is well documented and he is now known as one of the most controversial painters. This gave us plenty of information to work from, so we began our script. We had planned that Naomi, Emma and I would talk while Harry acted as our Degas - Dressed like him and painting while we spoke.



A lot of our script was in reference to Degas quotes. He often spoke about his lack of spontaneity and his independence.

Edgar Degas - Manifesto

Petit Rats - An Edgar Degas Manifesto

- The artist should reject spontaneity - "no art was ever less spontaneous than mine... of inspiration, spontaneity, temperament, I know nothing ."
- The artist does not group himself with such people as the impressionists
- The artist should see himself as a realist and an 'independent'
- The artists does not need to think before he speaks
- "The artist must live alone, and his private life must remain unknown"
- The artist cannot help but paint 'ugly' because 'all these women are ugly animals anyway'
- The artist should capture the rats off guard as if they are being watched without knowing.
- The artist should not concern himself with the wellbeing of these Rats.
- The artist can use these Rats how he wants, not as dancers but as subjects for his own practice.
- The artist must break them, scold them, humiliate them. Keep the little rats in their place.

(Edgar Degas was horrible to the dancers)

- The Rats should perform how the artist wants
- The artist requires perfect posture, no slouching
- The artist needs to capture his "little monkey girls" as they suffer through "creaking

Here we reference what he would describe his subjects as, as well as what his feelings towards Jewish people were.

(Edgar Degas was horrible to the dancers)

- The Rats should perform how the artist wants
- The artist requires perfect posture, no slouching
- The artist needs to capture his "little monkey girls" as they suffer through, "cracking their joints".
- The artist should not concern himself with his attitude, driving models away.
- The artist should not concern himself with looking for an *animal*, "otherwise known as a wife".
- The artist must live alone. To never love nor marry. The artist does not need to concern himself with the likes of women

(Edgar Degas was an antisemite)

Edgar Degas demanded the enclosure of Jews in ghettos or the complete destruction of the race)

- The artist must not work with anybody in his studio he doesn't wish to concern himself with
- The artist needs not be held accountable for his actions against people who work for him.
- The artist must have strong opinions regardless of whether these opinions harm marginalised groups of people.

We wanted the manifesto to start somewhat satirical but end more seriously since during our research we discussed how once an artist dies, especially a male artist, they are typically praised for their talent despite the atrocious acts they commit.

(Edgar Degas was an antisemite

Edgar Degas demanded the enclosure of Jews in ghettos or the complete destruction of the race)

- The artist must not work with anybody in his studio he doesn't wish to concern himself with
 - The artist needs not be held accountable for his actions against people who work for him.
 - The artist must have strong opinions regardless of whether these opinions harm marginalised groups of people.
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- The artist should be remembered not only for his paintings, but for the context and hateful beliefs behind his works.

WHAT I WOULD CHANGE

I would definitely update my statement as my work evolves, including my education and achievements. I would update my photos to a higher quality and include far more finished work so that my portfolio is expanded some more. To support this I would also investigate my own work and what makes my art distinct, this will also help build my artistic identity. I would also perhaps explore more into my core themes and values as I think my art that is currently on the Swansea.art website does not entirely represent what motivates me to create art.

MOVING FORWARD

When moving forward I would change a lot of things about my artist presence. I have a lack of discipline when getting my work out there, I would begin by uploading to my social media accounts a lot more. I would also take more professional photos of my work since I do not think my phone camera translates well on my pages. Once I take professional photos I would change them over on my Swansea.art page, I would also be interested in making a website for myself before I graduate, this would help me in my early artist career. In this website I would include my portfolio, cv and statement as well as any other information I may need to communicate. This is my next step in furthering my worldbuilding as I go into my third year.