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The idea around my current project is diving into the depths of abandoned Mental Hospitals and what happened inside the derelict walls. My work is vastly researched based, photographs and sometimes keepsakes from the places I've visited alongside. Researching into the asylums before I visit helps me to picture what happened inside while roaming the hallways, it helps me empathise with the souls of the patients that were mistreated immensely by their doctors. I believe that the research I put into my work is extremely valuable, without it nobody would truly understand the work I've created. It adds emotional aspects to my work allowing the viewers to connect in a deeper way. I'm hopeful that my work leaves an imprint, opening eyes to the cruelty of Mental Hospitals in the 18th and 19th century. My aim with all of this is to raise awareness of how far our community has come with understanding and treating mental health.

Mental Health such as schizophrenia, Bipolar, Depression and Anxiety is not new to our community; its records date back to the 1670s showing that private Mental Health Hospitals or as they used to call them 'madhouses' were in existence. Although it wasn't until more than a century later that there was even an attempt to inspect and regulate any of the hospitals. In this era no mental health treatments were developed, this meant that conditions that we recognise and help today were considered to be signs of madness and even in some cases possession. People with melancholy, wildfulness, 'possession by evil spirits' are some of the many symptoms that would end up being locked away from society and usually left to die in filthy and inhumane conditions. These signs today are seen as Schizophrenia and Bipolar and are easily treated/managed. It wasn't really until the 18th century that the science of psychiatry really began to develop and improve, this is where changes in the way society treated the mentally ill began. This was the most important time, where changes in science that saw the belief in 'evil spirits' were all but a superstition. Mental Health of course was still a very unknown topic but it was shown that around this time doctors became more

aware of the brain and it's nervous system, meaning that they slowly but surely began to progress in the treatment and understanding the different symptoms for specific illnesses. . (NHS Foundation Trust 2014). The mid 1700s was the period of some of the most inhumane actions on patients.(Fabian.R 2017). So many 'treatments' were discovered to help ease the patients but in reality were these actually to help the patients who were suffering or to help the nurses gain even more control over them. Jeffrey A.Lieberman once stated "The purpose of the earliest mental institutions was neither treatment nor cure but rather the reinforced segregation of inmates from society".(Jeffrey A.Lieberman in Shrinks: The Untold Story of Psychiatry, Talkspace). The thought of people who was suffering with such an illness then tortured due to that fact is horrendous, in this day and age it is such a common thing but back then you were locked away never to see daylight again. Journalist Nellie Bly actually went undercover in Blackwell Island Insane Asylum in New York in 1887 to truly see what happened to patients behind closed doors. Her findings were very unsettling but not at all surprising. One of the first eye openers was how easy it was to actually be committed, so little examinations are done to determine the sanity of one's mental state. She stated that 'the conditions were harsh, cruel and inhumane.'(Nellie Bly Talkspace). Throughout her time there she had chance to interview some of the current patients one of which said:

> "For crying the nurses beat me with a broom-handle and jumped on me, then they tied my hands and feet, and throwing a sheet over my head, twisted it tightly around my throat, so I could not scream, and thus put me in a bathtub filled with cold water. They held me under until I gave up every hope and became senseless". (Fabian.R 2017).

This was one of the many inhumane treatments they would give to the mentally insane patients throughout their lives in the hospitals. Hydrotherapy was a very popular technique that nurses used in the hospitals, using warm or usually cold water. Either submerged into a bathtub for hours at a time, tightly wrapped in a pack, or even sprayed with freezing cold water in showers.(Fabian.R 2017). Throughout my project with the amount of research I have withstood I found that the two most common techniques that were used to help taime mentally ill patients were both lobotomies and electroconvulsive shock therapy. The 1940s

were when lobotomies came about and the patients were almost always awake during the procedure using nothing but an ice pack to numb the pain. An increase in suicidal attempts and amnesia were two of the many symptoms of patients who recieved shock therapy, yet doctors still continued to use this on patients knowingly.(Fabian.R 2017). For me my freedom to venture out of my home is so important to my health and wellbeing and even my artistic flow. To have that freedom taken away from me throughout my dark days would lead me to insanity. Imagining in my head those patients being tied down by mechanical restraints for days at a time simply to control the overcrowding in the institutions has me tossing and turning at night. Their freedom… Gone… Because of an illness they had no control over.

I've come to realise that none of these unfortunate patients can speak up about what happened to them. Their voices were never heard, not back then, not now because they had no voice. Artists today are trying to represent them through their work in many different creative ways, bringing their voices to light. Francisco Goya being one of the many artists who represented the mentally ill through his work, The Madhouse is one of his most known oil-panel paintings that was produced between 1812 and 1819.(Luz.E 2018). In the painting its only source of light is the barred window that is high up on the wall out of the reach of the people down below. The painting is to represent the characters down below, the distinctive character figures are painted engaged in 'grotesque and pitiable' (Luz.E 2018) behaviours. While researching Goya and his work with this topic it was discovered that he was always attracted to representing madness, deformity or even perversion.(Luz.E 2018). The painting is not a true insight to what happened in the mental hospitals but it gives you an idea of what it was like it's representing the unknown, the imagination of the artist of what he believes it was like.

Goya, (1812-1819). *The Madhouse.* [Painting].

Portraiture drawings were a common way to represent the mentally ill patients. Dr.Hugh Welch Diamond took this to his advantage throughout his artistic career and created a project where he took a series of portraits of his patients when he was the superintendent of the female department at the survey county asylum.(MacRae.M 2014). The portraits were created solely for his work on physiognomy, a science that's based on 'the assessment of a person's character or personality from his or her outer appearance, especially the face'.(MacRae.M 2014). There are hundreds of portraits of patients at asylums and all of them share a certain look, every single set of eyes that is looking at you through the image looks lost and hollow inside even through the smiles on their faces. Diamond's representation of the menallty ill patients is one of the few that speaks loudly without any words given which is something difficult to portray in your work. He shows the pain and loneliness through just a portrait, and for that he gives an excellent representation for the patients, giving them their voice back. Here's one of the many portraits I've found of his work, it shows an older woman, short hair, in ragged clothing staring up at something. In this photograph I feel sadness and loneliness and that really does impact me as a viewer, it's unimaginable what the photographer must have been feeling, perhaps guilt.

Dr.Diamond, (1855). *Portrait of a patient, Surrey County Asylum.* [Photograph].

The reasoning behind this project is that photographing asylum patients could be used to record what the appearance of mentally ill patients might look like in order to use them as a comparison and diagnosis in the later patients.(MacRae.M 2014). You could argue that even though his work was to help diagnose future people he helped raise awareness on what happens after someone is committed to a mental hospital, the way they change appearance wise and even personality traits.

The Mechanism of Human Facial Expressions is a book created by Duchenne de Boulogne filled with photographs and documentation. Boulogne combined his devoted interest in facial anatomy with his photography skills and expertise in using electricity to stimulate individual facial muscles where he produced multiple interesting representations of the ways the human facial expressions portray emotion. The book was incredibly important for the development of psychology and physiology, it marked the first time that photography was used as a way to represent and illustrate the mentally ill. Inside the book are pages of photographs from his experimentations with facial expressions and four different components that held research on describing the relevance of his findings to experimental psychology, plastic surgery, neurology, and physiology.(Cambridge University Press 2010). Some may see his photographs as a mockery of the mentally ill patients but others would

see that the intentions were true, he was able to find a way to present to us the facial expressions and emotions that they would've endured. In 1862 Duchenne de Boulogne published two albums that were full of photographs and citations called Le Photographics Pathologiques and Mécanisme de La Physionomie Humaine.(R.A.Cuthbertson)

Boulogne, (Roughly 1852). *Unknown.* [Photograph].

The image above is one of the many throughout the period of his experimentation; it shows him experimenting with different tools across a man's face. His expression is caused due to hitting a specific nerve in the face. It's remarkable how he managed to recreate specific facial expressions.

Institualization is a very taboo topic and it always has been. It's thought that once you were institutionalised there was never any going back, it would be with you for life. Once being committed to a mental hospital you very rarely left alive. Michel Foucault was one of the many victims of being institutionalised as he dealt with his own psychological issues but was lucky enough to have been released, this was part of the reason why he became so intrigued by the history and practice of psychology as he wanted to understand what was happening to him.  After battling his own demons he wrote a novel called The Madness and Civilisation; it was based on institualization in the mid to end of the 1700s.(Goodbook

Summary). My subject matter is based on the 18th-19th century but I felt as though bringing this book into my research was a real asset as it explains how mental hospitals began. I've studied many different videos on the explanation of his work. In his book Focault argued that madness was treated better in the Renaissance; they were considered to be different, not crazy or mad. His research showed him that in the mid 1700s a new attitude had developed for the madness. Medicalised and institutionalised the mentally ill or as such the mad and the poor, they were unable to live alongside society anymore. In those days the general hospital (not the type of hospital we all know today) housed the poor, even the beggars. In the 17th century it was mostly people who were poor were to be locked away, confining those without work and putting them to work in the hospital. As a result of working in the hospital they were granted a warm place to stay and warm food in their stomach but lost their freedom to be confined inside a prison-like hospital. This meant that they were out of the streets which was ultimately making the place look bad and placed inside a prison-like hospital where they worked to be fed.(Pocketbook Philosophy). In the book Madness and Civilisation there are many quotes spoken from Michel Foucault himself out of all of them one stood out to me the most.

> "The new meanings assigned to poverty, the importance given to the obligation to work, and all the ethical values that are linked to labour, ultimately determined the experience of madness and inflected its course… madness was thus torn from that imagination of freedom which still allowed it to flourish on the Renaissance horizon. Not so long ago, it had floundered about in broad daylight: In King Lear, in Don Quidote. But in less than a half-century, it had been sequestered and, in the fortress of confinement, bound to reason, to the rules of morality, and to their monotonous rights." (P.64 Madness and Civilisation, Pocketbook Philosophy).

To me this quote speaks of the poor being made mad due to institualization. The poor were taken off the streets and worked to be fed but as a result of this led them to becoming mad themself. When first entering the hospital they were as such normal people just without a place to stay or any income, being institutionalised created madness for them which led them to losing their sanity. This speaks volumes as to actually how appalling patients were

treated in the hospitals if someone who was not mad before then became mad by being in there. How could this be any help at all to people who were actually mentally ill to begin with.

The moral of this is really to determine whether or not mental hospitals were good for the patients inside. Even though there were benefits to them they only came at a later date. In the earlier days patients were treated without compassion, almost as though they were demons and not human beings with real feelings. Of course as time went on the understanding of mental health improved and so did the patient's care. Although my argument was whether or not the hospitals were any good to the patients in the 18th-19th century, I believe I've put forward a reasonable argument to portray that this statement couldn't be further from the truth. So, were mental hospitals actually benefiting the patients inside? My resolution is that they were nothing but harmful to the patients, my findings throughout my project prove my argument. The patients were shown no compassion and treated like animals for having an illness they had no control over. Take a moment to consider this, on one of your dark days where you need the support of your closest, would you want to be looked away from your loved ones and treated with nothing but cruelty? Would that help? In reality it would send you into a spiral ensuring that you became worse as time went on rather than improving. The hospitals were created solely to keep the mentally insane away from the public not at all to help them manage their illness.

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