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Experimental strategies / Visual activism: location and curation

Swansea Musuem

Our site-Specific task set in Swansea Museum was a success. Swansea museum has a very long and interesting history as it is the oldest museum in Wales, being of that age brings many interesting facts and stories to tell. The museum's story started with Swansea Philosophical literary society and their president Lewis Weston Dillwyn whose son later went on to own Penllagaer estate, Mr Dillwyn and his accomplices would collect many samples and document in notes about early entomology, natural history, archaeology etc and by 1835 they had a small sized collection of artifacts as well as nature samples and so on. 1841 was the year that the building that stands as the museum today opened, as well it motivating my group and I to name our exhibition after this event and date it allowed the public of Swansea to come and view history close. But the museum didn't stop there it became a study space alongside a lecture theatre with countless of books and documented texts available for the sole purpose of learning and understanding. This gave both my group and I much to think about while searching for inspiration. I took a lot of interest in the Among the most fascinating artefacts in the museum's archaeology area are the bones from the Red Lady of Paviland, the cave itself also known as Goats Hole or Paviland. Even though the bones are on exhibit, they are copies, with the originals kept in the archive of the Oxford Museum. But there were plenty more details and artefacts from the cave which I found quite interesting, its history for one is very broad. For instance, the cave used to overlook stone age savannah during the palaeolithic era. Over time climate change shaped the area to what it is today a cave that now overlooks the sea, admiring the contents of the museum with that idea of p assage of time in mind allows you to really understand how long the cave has stood and become a shelter, protection even an observer to all that's lived around it.

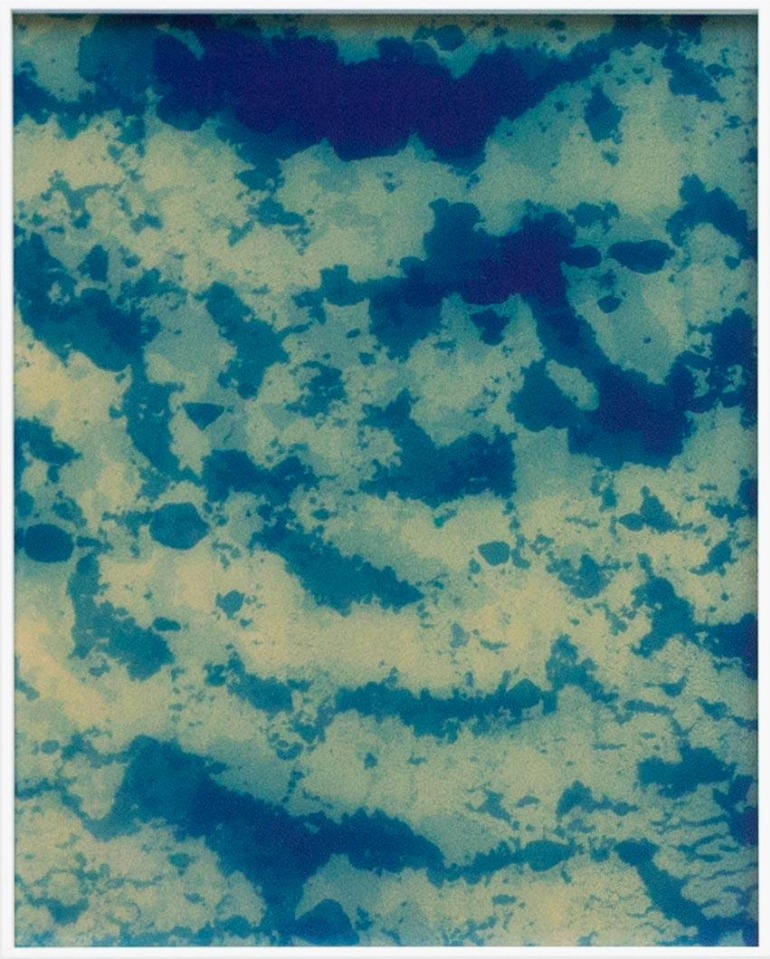
The museum had original images of the cave, which was amazing to access through the database and I'm very privileged I had that chance. But it also allowed me to broaden my idea as I intended on using a copy of that image to support my work in the exhibition but sadly due to a lack of printing, I could not print this image on acetate. I intended on using it for a liquid light process which soon failed as there was not enough time to do so, I had to adapt while still helping my group with specific tasks.

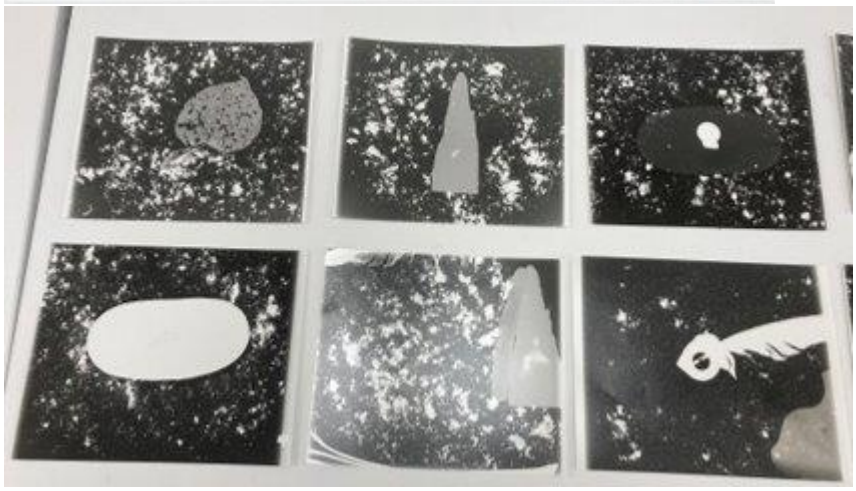
The projection was a great way to show my skills and capability through this technological assessment. In Joes' projection task I really showed my worth helping my groupmate Harvey while testing and explain a number of ways we could work together on displaying old footage on top of the old Tir John PowerWorks. We experimented with many methods such as circular projection through premier pro as well as using blinds as a way of exposing the image to the glare of natural lighting. This also was a good way to take a step back from my set back with the liquid light process, next as a group we had to design many posters for the event.

As everyone discussed, a poster creates a deeper effect on readers than other forms of advertising such as cards or brochures because it visualises and projects a concept more deeply. For this reason, creating a poster was crucial to publicising and spreading the news about our exhibition. Accordingly, we chose a number of designs that correspond to the original posters and brochures advertising Victorian science and history events held at this site. Again, referencing the number of lectures and study events that this building had was imperative, as we wanted to make it known this exhibition was a trip in time and acknowledgement of both the museums history and Swansea had to feel included in some manner. Hence why we had to also spend a bit of time deciding on a name, after many suggestions by me and the other we eventually agreed on 1841-Fragment yn ffocws, we chose this name because of its direct link to first ever the opening date of the site, and to make a bilingual reference to all of the Welsh and English contents of the museum.

After a chat with one of my lectures I had noticed that I did not need to rely on my original idea and that I could convey my work in various of ways, for instance I struggled to find time to go to cave itself as I had to rely on the tide. However, I had been lucky where there was a break in the weather one morning. So, to help myself get producing work I went to the cave, as I began to descend, I noticed that luck was not in my favour as the tide although on its way out was very violent and it would have been too risky and dangerous to make the climb into the cave. But on the way back up I had spotted a smaller cave that I used to get some images as well as collect material. After

reevaluating my trip, I had come to the conclusion I was going to produce photograms. The next few days were spent in the darkroom for hours using natural and manmade materials like sand earth, plastic, glass etc to form a visual illusion on paper. Whilst producing these prints I did my best to transfer the feelings I had being in cave as well as the texture you can touch, sense and see in a low light natural cavern. To elaborate many of the fragments I had found and used under exposure in the dark room represent the artefacts found in the museum while the sand and earth are the rocks and water natural minerals and materials found in the area and are as much a part of the cave itself. Bringing the cave itself to the museum wasn't enough, so I displayed the prints in the display cases where the artifacts are presented to the public as well as this I had used a plinth to place one print with a bone I had found from the cave on top of said print to resemble the passage of time close up. Going one step further I had created a video using premier pro to highlight not just my images but my knowledge of the space after being in it, to do this alongside the images I wrote a poem.





Once I had my prints displayed, I notice how they resemble the work of alexander Mourant's (2019)[1] work titled “to feel its touch” as they have a similar starting point and end with his collecting of earth and process of creating work. Before our exhibition could open to the public I had to help the group in dispersing the posters around the university as well as the city centre, then we had to set up the projector which I had to readjust for the lectures visit. Furthermore, I had to help with sharing our daily Instagram posts and reels updating the public on when to view our exhibition and where. Finally, we had to do our risk assessment with making sure wires or any forms of our work as well as

[1] Mourant,Alexander, (2019) ‘To feel its touch’ available at: To Feel Its Touch (alexandermourant.com)

the group projection had to be set safely with no cause for harm, as well as list the contents used.

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Y Drindod Dewi Sant
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Trinity Saint David

Coleg Celf
Abertawe
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Risk Assessment: a site responsive Exhibit

Details: A Group of 5 level5 students holding a site responsive exhibit at the Swansea museum with multimedia installations

Description	Site Specific Exhibition
Department:	Photography
Location:	Swansea museum
Author:	Saba Humayun
Line Manager:	Ryan moule, joe colemen
Date:	27/11/2023 28/11/2023 29/11/2023 30/11/2023
Applicable Equipment:	Projector, voice recorder, camera, Plinth, posters,
Associated Risk Assessment(s):	
Version:	1 of 1
Review Date:	27.11.23
Approved by:	
Reason for latest update	

[Text Wrapping Break]

Print name: saba humayun

Signed:

Authorised by:
Print name: Ryan

Following a great deal of stress associated with this exhibition, I've discovered that, despite numerous setbacks, I am still able to produce art and, in addition, that I am capable of giving my ideas life and atmosphere by transforming them from paper to the physical world. The group activities were challenging just like any other, but communication is essential, and we've come a long way from where we first started, in my opinion. Even better, a respectable number of people came to see our exhibition, which raised spirits among us. I do wish on the other hand that we had more time as well as support not that the support we had wasn’t appreciated, only that it became challenging at times when it could have been different. All in all, I am glad Iv accomplished this task in the time I had with the way that I did.