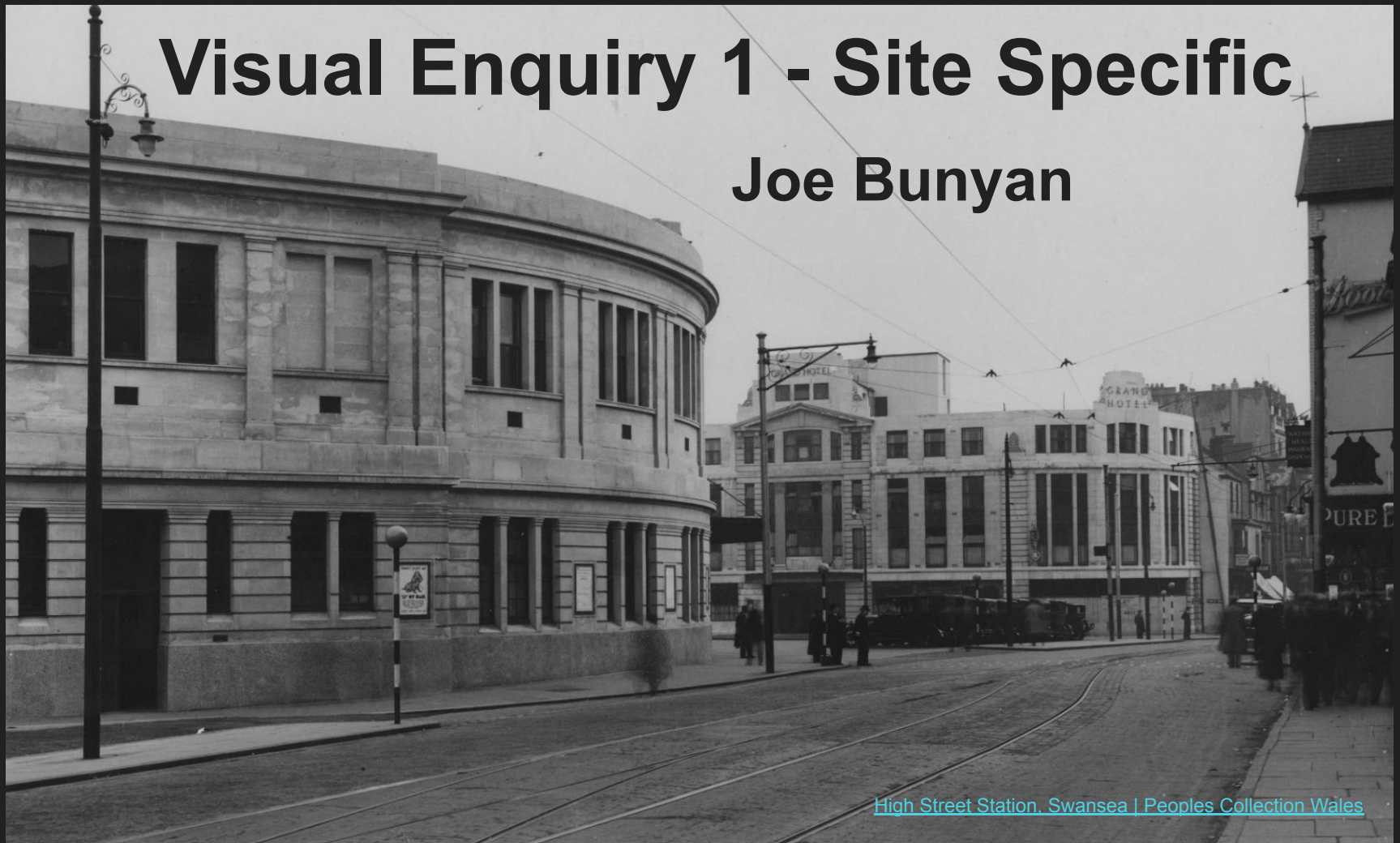


Visual Enquiry 1 - Site Specific

Joe Bunyan



“...ostensibly unsuitable for re-representation anywhere else without altering its meaning” (Kwon, 2002, p46)

A site-specific artwork is one which can only exist in its intended setting. If removed, the work is either rendered meaningless or takes on an entirely new meaning, turning it into a different artwork. The location should be intrinsic to the work's context - whether that concerns politics, conflict, geography, physics etc, it exists as a dialogue between itself and the environment it is displayed in.



Enemy Contact, 2002. Uli Aigner.

Enemy Contact, 2002. Uli Aigner

Uli Aigner created an installation in Freud's London home, where the floor was covered in mirrors. Not being able to sustain the weight of a person, these mirrors would break underfoot - so, the viewer is forced to watch their reflection shatter from an arguably unflattering angle. This installation responds to psychoanalysis, a method of therapy of which Freud was a pioneer. Psychoanalysis uses various methods such as dream analysis and free association to try and unearth repressed feelings. For the patient this can be an uncomfortable delve into their unconscious mind, and this is what I believe the mirrors represent. I'm sure there are lots of interpretation around this work, although I feel that there is a universal correlation between the idea of psychology and staring at the self.



Valerie, in almost every picture # 11, 2014. Erik Kessels

I chose to look at this series as it stands out to me as a slightly unusual site-specific work. Whereas in most site-specific artworks the site demands the kind of work, here the images demand a certain kind of site - any body of water. In the series the sites are varied; a river, Lake Geneva, fountains - this seems to defeat the purpose if the sites can be interchanged, however it makes sense when we consider the series of images. These are not actually Erik Kessels' photographs - a man had posted the collection of images online, all of his wife in various bodies of water. Erik Kessels' installations take the collection a step further by putting large prints of Valerie in water into different bodies of water.

The installations are dependant on their site, however the site is interchangeable as long as it meets the requirement of having water.



Sun Tunnels, 1973-76. Nancy Holt.

Nancy Holt created four large concrete cylinders and placed them in the middle of the desert. They are positioned so that, when stood inside them, the sun can be seen on the horizon during the summer and winter solstices.

“These four tunnels serve as a focal point for the land, suggesting Holt’s ultimate proposition: You are the aperture.” (Kron, 2018)

These cylinders, whilst being the constructed element of this artwork, seems to divert attention away from themselves and instead towards the incredible landscape they exist in. In this way, they function as a strange sort of aid to which the viewer can enjoy the landscape. This shift of attention would be impossible in a white wall gallery as the space is designed to make the *work* stand out. “Sun Tunnels” is designed to make the *space* stand out.



Kron, C. (2018). *The story behind “Sun Tunnels,” Nancy Holt’s Land Art Masterpiece.* [online] Artsy. Available at: <https://www.artsy.net/article/artsy-editorial-story-sun-tunnels-nancy-holts-land-art-masterpiece>

Site Proposal - The King's Arms Tavern

The Kings Arms Tavern is situated on Swansea High Street, with King's Street (which is more of an alley) on its right. I can remember being told by my god-father who is massively interested in listed buildings and local history that it was the oldest running pub in Swansea until it shut down. Of course there are pubs in older buildings, such as the Cross Keys, however they hadn't been used as pubs for as long.

To get a sense of what the pub was like prior to its closure I had a look on Tripadvisor to see what people had written about the place. Most of the reviews were very negative - I have included one review on the next slide. (I liked how it is almost structured like a poem).



“This bar is disgusting!!
Rude staff and managers.
Bouncer looks like she chewed a
wasp.
Not a clue how to run a nice gay bar
The whole place stinks ,dirty floors
furniture.
Expensive for drinks
Really not worth the money
Better off going to wine street
Better atmosphere there .
What a shame there is not another
nicer gay venue in Swansea!!
Avoid this dirty disgusting place !!!!
Close it down !!!”



In terms of accessibility, I am trying to get in contact with the commercial developer Coastal Housing, who have recently purchased the property. On their website they mention plans to “upgrade” the building and then re-open it for commercial use. I’m assuming that means they will open it again as some sort of bar or pub. After peeking through the windows- you can see that the inside of the building is in quite a state. This means that, provided we have permission from Coastal Housing, there would be a big clean-up job involved before displaying any work there.

- I have spoken to Coastal Housing over the phone and explained the project, the fact we would need access to the site etc. - the message has been passed on to the management team, so they should be getting back to me in the next few days.



When considering themes for a project here, there are quite a few directions you could take it in (death of the high street, inflation, changing attitudes in young people towards alcohol, you could explore the site from an LGBTQ perspective). This would depend on the group - maybe we would pick one theme and work on it together or we could each make slightly different work and have a small group exhibition inside the pub.

An idea that came to my mind was representing “ghosts of the past.” I find there is a really stark contrast looking at a space which you know has had many busy nights, then to see it still and silent. I used to have this feeling working in pubs after all the customers left on friday and saturday nights. My ears would still be ringing slightly from all the noise and chatter from 10 minutes ago and I’m wiping down the bar in near silence.

I thought a good way to represent this idea would be to cover all the tables and bar surface in paper covered in cyanotypes of glass bottoms. In my head, this looks similar to beer stains where people haven’t used coasters.

Another idea I had was to find as many archival photographs of this pub as possible, then to reshoot the found images on film, then experiment with developing the film in different kinds of alcohol. Here in this link somebody has created a “beer developer”

- <https://shootitwithfilm.com/how-to-develop-film-in-beer/>



The Streets - Site Specific Group

In our initial discussion, we shared ideas about scraps and detritus in the streets, and how printing photographs onto materials we find in the street could be interesting. Especially with bits of paper - these can be pasted up onto walls, and will eventually deteriorate, fulfilling a kind of circle. The kind of imagery we might use would be street photographs, although we need to create a more defined concept which links back to the materials we are using, giving the project more depth.



Visualising



In the next session, we drew out our plans of what our exhibit might look like. Another idea we had was to paste leaves onto the pavement and have them leading up the street towards our chosen wall. The images would be printed onto the leaves using liquid light - essentially silver emulsion which becomes liquid when heated up. We would then paint the leaves with this and leave the emulsion to cool. We might also paint the leaves white beforehand, so that the image is lost in the background of the leaf.





Prints from a walk around Swansea city centre

Legality

Key Regulations for Posting Posters in the UK:

- **Permission:** Before putting up posters, make sure you have permission from the property owner or relevant authority. Without proper consent, you could be liable for trespassing or vandalism.
- **Placement:** Posters should be placed in designated areas or locations where they are allowed. Avoid putting up posters on historical buildings, monuments, or private properties without consent.
- **Content:** Ensure that the content of your poster complies with regulations regarding decency, accuracy, and legality. Avoid using offensive language, misleading information, or copyrighted material without permission.
- **Removal:** Once your promotion or event is over, remember to remove the posters promptly. Leaving them up for an extended period could result in fines for littering or damage to property.
- **Penalties:** Failure to adhere to poster regulations can lead to fines, legal action, or community service. It's essential to be aware of the consequences of violating these rules.

By following these rules and regulations for posting posters in the UK, you can showcase your message effectively while staying on the right side of the law. Remember, responsible poster posting not only promotes your cause but also contributes to a cleaner and more regulated environment for all.

- Anywhere we intend on posting up our work we will need full permission from the council/property owner. The only thing we can experiment with without permission is leaves as it is an organic material. There are other darkroom processes such as beetroot printing, which means that no harmful chemicals are used in the process of printing onto the leaf.

Project inspiration - “Circulation,” Takuma Nakahira





In 1971, Japanese photographer and writer Takuma Nakahira was invited to join the Paris Biennale. The work he created there was as much a performance as it was a photographic display. For the week of the exhibit, Nakahira's routine was to spend the day taking photographs in the streets of Paris. In the evening he would develop all the film he shot and make prints. Finally he would put this up in his exhibition space and repeat this process the next day. The images included fragments of text and images from posters, and also included more traditional street photographs. The performance links heavily with Guy Debord's ideas of the *dérive* and the psychogeographical drift. But instead of looking at a documentation of a past journey through the city, visitors of the Biennale could witness the drift live over the course of the week. What I take from the performance is how it highlights ideas of temporality and fleeting moments, which I will discuss more on the next slide.

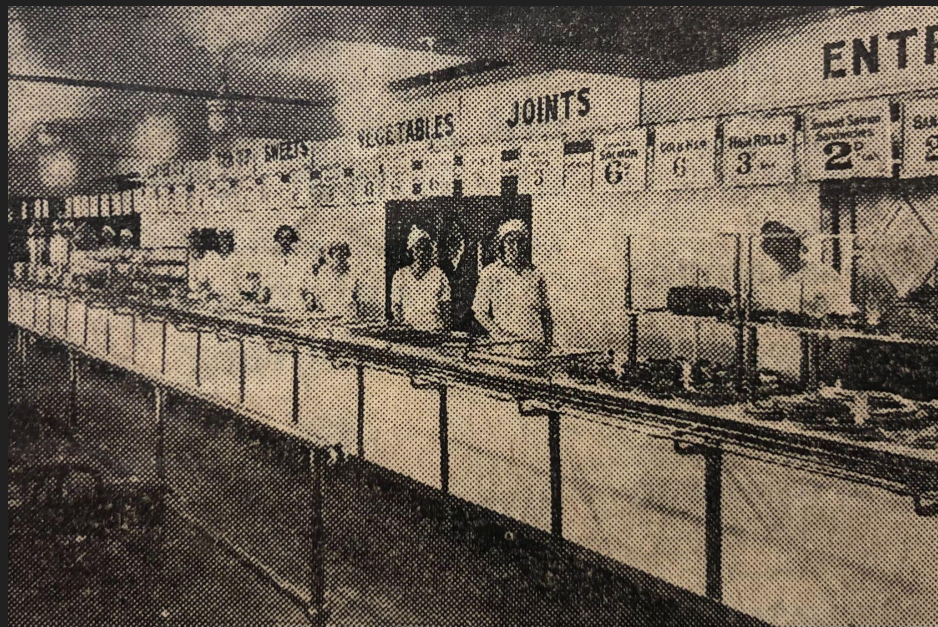




Archives Visit

To go along with Emma's personal collection of archival imagery, we went to the Swansea Archives and had a look at some of their collection. So that the images have the same time frame as Emma's we asked for pictures from the first half of the twentieth century. All the photos are from the Kingsway, Oxford street and some surrounding streets. We were told at the archives that we could take pictures for personal use, however if we want to use them in our site-specific project we would have to discuss with them further. I might go back and ask about use some close-up fragments of images which contain people like the image on the left.

















Projection Workshop

In our session today, we learnt how to use the projectors. When installing the projectors into an exhibition space, you will need a hdmi connection and likely an extension cable, depending on the space. These cable should be taped to the group to prevent a trip hazard. All the electrical equipment must be PAT tested for the exhibition. As well as the projector you will need a media player (top right image), which can decode files from a USB stick so that the projector is able to play them. You need to be mindful of file size here, because the media player will struggle with anything over five gigabytes. Once you have your files in the media player you will need to use the keystone buttons of the top of the projector to make sure the image/video lies level on the surface you are projecting onto.

For the workshop, our site specific group used the imagery from the archives











Nam June Paik - TV Buddha

“Yi 逸 (unconventional naturalness) is originally a mental state that seeks freedom from tangible and intangible bondage. In East Asia, literati, philosophers, and politicians made art, so the spirit of yi they pursued became an aesthetic ideal. In the Tang 唐 dynasty, yi became a grade for evaluating art; and since the Song 宋 dynasty, yi has been regarded as the highest grade (Cheng 1995: 348). This, of course, is closely related to the prosperity and popularization of Zen Buddhism.”

Lim, T. (2019) 'Moving Meditation: Paik Nam June's TV Buddha and Its Zen Buddhist Aesthetic Meaning', *Dao : a journal of comparative philosophy*, 18(1), pp. 91–107. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11712-018-9643-5>.



Nam June Paik's TV Buddha is an installation where a statue of a buddha is facing a live projection of it's reflection. The work explores the meeting of traditional East Asian beliefs (it could be interpreted as just buddhism or the buddha as a symbol for a wider belief system), and rapidly improving western technology. The quote on the previous slide mentions the concept of Yi, which is essentially a transcendence from worldly things. There is a long lineage of Asian artwork with which Yi is integral. In TV Buddha, Paik has broken this tradition, as the Buddha, in a state of meditation, is bonded (to re-use the word from the quote) to the image of himself on the screen. I'm sure this work can be interpreted in many ways, however I find that this meeting of western technology and traditional East Asian beliefs seems quite violent and conflicting when considering some of the elements of Buddhism this work draws from. That being said, I can imagine standing by this work in real life and it being very calm and contemplative.

Perhaps these split interpretations are intended, as it would link back East Asian beliefs, specifically to the concept of Yin and Yang which is the connection between opposing forces.



Shimon Attie - The Writing on the Wall

In this project Shimon Attie took archival imagery of Jewish street life in Berlin, and projected these images around the city, each image being projected at the location they were originally taken. With this sort of work where the past is brought back to the present, projection is an ideal medium as it has an almost ghost-like look to it. The illumination signifies the once-was.



Tony Oursler - The Influence Machine

I like this project a lot because of Oursler's experimentation with surfaces. In "The Influence Machine," Oursler projects the faces of ghosts onto trees and smoke from smoke machines, giving the installation a transient quality. If we were to use projection in our site specific group there would be a lot of potential for experimentation with surfaces as we are not bound to any specific space. We could find buildings and walls with different kinds of textures and shapes and see how our archival imagery looks projected onto them.



Vinyl Printing Workshop

After discussing Malachi's theme of being watched, me and Emma considered how we could link this with the archival imagery.

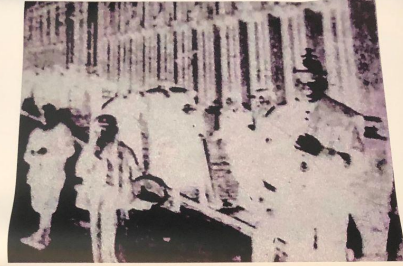
Our idea was to crop into the photographs and find people who are staring at the camera. I think this idea links to Malachi's idea well, but also has some humour to it, and quite eye catching if you were to see it in the street.





The first step in this workshop was go out to the Kingsway and find some 'Natural Frames' where we could display our images. We took a tape measure with us and made note of the dimensions.

Next we scaled our images to the size of the frames in the street and sent them to Daf to print. When printing on vinyl it is important to let the print dry before doing anything with it. After five or so minutes we took the sheets into the workshop room and cut the the white off with a ruler and scalpel. These were then ready to take to the Kingsway.



Before sticking the vinyl on the wall we had to pull off the back layer- this was a bit finicky as it was quite a windy day, but we did them one by one and helped each other out with handling. As the surface we were sticking them onto was wonky breeze blocks, the posters didn't stick massively well, although they should remain stuck for a time, until somebody decides to take them down. I imagine this will happen before the rain gets to them.

An interesting thing which happened during the workshop was that, despite measuring the spaces accurately - I was slightly surprised when the prints came out. I thought they looked far too big for the space and we would have to remeasure and trim them. However we did get our measurements right and this was just some trick of the eye!



