

Molly Ashton- 20008556

Curation Essay

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This exhibition is in collaboration with Anthony Gormley, a British artist who explores the human form and their relation to the world, (Tate, 2011). Field (as seen in figure 1) consists of thirty- five thousand sculptures created mostly by the extended family of brick makers in San Matias, Cholula, Mexico. Gormley made a small criterion for the volunteers to follow, each figure had to be: hand sized, easy to hold, eyes to be set deep and closed and the head to be in proportion to the body. The sculptures ranged from eight to twenty-six centimetres in height and they were all fired in a brick kiln, (Tate, 2011). 'That repeated action of taking a hand-sized ball of clay, squeezing it between your hands, standing it up and giving it consciousness becomes meditative, the repeated action becoming almost like breathing, or a heartbeat,' (Daily Mail, 2012, 'Interview with Antony Gormley').



(Figure 1: 'Field')

This exhibition is an adaptation of the 'Field', the sculptures represent the British female population and displays the statistics of sexual harassment and assault. The sculptures for this exhibition will be made using the same criteria as before with the size and shape the same, and later fired in a kiln. The pieces will be made by victims of sexual assault and represent themselves and their traumatic experiences. This has been inspired by the rebirth of the 'MeToo' movement where women found their voice. The movement picked up in its popularity after the rise initially of accusations, in October 2017, against the film producer

Harvey Weinstein, who was eventually prosecuted. Victims were encouraged throughout all platforms of social media to share their experiences with #MeToo.

It has been decided that the room will be an enclosed space with one viewpoint for the audience. The sculptures will be positioned in a white room in the South London Gallery. In Gormley's previous exhibitions of 'Field' (Arts Council Collection, 2021), the area in which the installation has taken place had only one viewpoint and the viewing area was always one sixth of the total floor area of the piece. The sculptures completely occupy the space in which they are installed, filling the space so the viewer can look at the sculptures, but cannot enter the space they occupy. The curator at the Chester Arts Fair (2021) highlights the importance in the choice of space for any exhibition. They encourage all curators to consider all the dimensions of the space to ensure maximum utilisation of the walls and floors, as well as space the viewer is positioned. In this exhibition, based at the South London Gallery, the viewer was an 'afterthought'. The lack of space for them to stand signifies the importance of the victims in the exhibition and in that, the viewers are not allowed to enter the space of the sculptures. The room is crowded to its fullest capacity with the essence of the sculptures signifying the strength in numbers. The mass of sculptures hopes to convey an aura of intimidation that theses voices are no longer afraid.

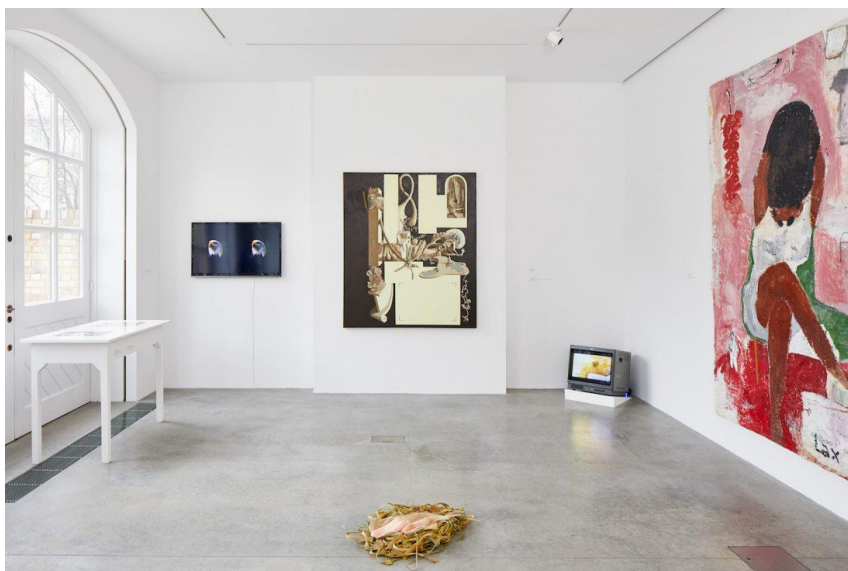


Figure 2: South London Gallery.



Figure 3: Gallery in South London Gallery.

The gallery choice is fitting as research captured in 2015 by CPS prosecution shows London in 2014/2015 had the highest number of reported cases, (Statista Research Department, 2021). A distressing part was that only 16% of reported cases of rape resulted in conviction and this only represents those individuals brave enough to step forward and report their case. There are many reasons why individuals do not come forward. Of the assaults reported in the Crime Survey in 2020 (Stripe, 2021), 16% reported it to the police, from those who did not report to the police, 40% said they were embarrassed, 38% did not think the police could help and 34% thought it would be humiliating.

One reason why women do not report their assaults to police is from fear of being accused of making a false allegation. The home office found that 4% of sexual violence cases reported to the police are found or suspected to be untrue, (Lazard, 2017). Research also shows that when a false claim is made, majority of the time the perpetrator is not named as they are more vague claims about a stranger. Lazard (2017) also made a very clear point that the number of false allegations for sexual violence are no higher than false claims of any other crimes and yet victims of crimes such as burglary are not questioned like victims of sexual assault.

The above-mentioned Crime Survey for England and Wales (Stripe, 2021) found that 1.6 million people aged 16 to 74 years had experienced sexual assault by rape and attempt of rape. The breakdown showed that '49% of the adults had been a victim more than once; 44% of those had been assaulted by someone they were close to such as their partner or ex-partner; 9% said the location of the assaults was either on the street, a public park, in a car park, or another open public space; this was in comparison to 37% who were made a victim in their own home'. The Survey concluded that '54% percent said that physical force had been used to hold them down and 6% had been threatened to be killed'. This data has been found from the year ending in March 2020 and combined with results from the year ending in March 2017 (when it was previously collected) to illustrate a fuller picture. This information is significant as it supports the cause of the exhibition.

This exhibition's aim is to bring awareness to the statistics of sexual violence. Research by Bakhshi and Gilbert. (2015) 'Red, purple and pink: The colours of diffusion Pinterest.' has found that images where the main colour is red, pink or purple are more likely to be shared on social media. They state, that in addition to inducing calm, colours can evoke powerful reactions ranging from warmth to energy to danger. This is supported by Elliot and Maier (2014, p.1) who concur that 'Colour is a ubiquitous perceptual stimulus that is often considered in terms of aesthetics,' in that colour is present everywhere and has a deeper impact on our self-awareness. Therefore, a deliberate choice will be made to use this colour range. It is hoped that utilising this colour palette will mean that any future photos will have a higher chance of being shared on social media, hence spreading interest of the exhibition and raise awareness of the cause.

The connection of the colour pink is linked to colour psychology, in his research Byrne (2013) reported of a case study where directors of a naval prison were convinced to paint the inmates' cells pink, believing pink would be calming. After a period of time, rates of violent behaviour fell after exposure to the plain pink walls. Byrne (2013) stated that in a follow-up report from the prison, '... there have been no incidents of erratic or hostile behaviour.' Pink is recognised worldwide as a colour that's exceptionally feminine but still

stands strong, powerful and impactful. Pink is not often used in professional design, but in Britain, breast cancer charities use the colour for their branding and logos.

The sculptures that are coloured pink will represent victims of harassment or assault and the depth of the colour indicates the severity of those experiences. There is a varying scale of severity of these sexual crimes that start with harassment and lead to assault, rape or murder. The government defines sexual harassment as, ‘..any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that makes you feel intimidated, degraded, humiliated or offended,’ (Government Equalities Office, 2019). In January 2021, the United Nations Women worked with YouGov, a company for global public opinion and data, whose aim is to explore what the world thinks, discover solutions and encourage people to join their online communities. Jointly, they created a survey about sexual harassment and presented eleven different scenarios of sexual harassment, with a likert scale of ‘none of these’, ‘prefer not to say’, ‘choose not to say’ and ‘do not recall’. A sample of 1089 women completed the survey from five different age categories. These women ranged from 18 to 55 plus years old and the findings showed that 20% of these women had not experienced any of these ‘harassment’ situations resulting in the remaining group of 80% had been sexually harassed (YouGov, 2021).

The information from the YouGov, 2021 survey has been arranged to create a continuum of six categories as shown in the table below. These are graded in terms of the severity of those experiences. This scale used is a theoretical guide only and does in no way intended to undermine the significant impact of the lived experiences of the women involved. The victims will personally place themselves in the best fit dominate category based on their subjective evaluation of their experience.

Category	Swatch of ceramic glaze	Scenarios (YouGov Survey, 2021)	Percentage subjected to one or more scenarios	Number of statues out of 35,000 (number of statues in previous 'Field' exhibition)
1		'...none of these..'	20%	1167 (of 5833)
2		'...don't know/ can't recall..'	2%	117(of 5833)
3		'...being stared at..' '...being physically followed ..' '...being cat-called or wolf-whistled..'	51%	2975 (of 5833)
4		'...online comments or jokes..' '...in-person comment or jokes..' '...sharing of suggestive, indecent or unsolicited content online or in-person..'	35%	2042 (of 5833)
5		'...unwelcome sexual suggestions or advances or requests for sexual favours..' '...had images of yourself either taken without your consent or taken consensually but shared without your consent..'	34%	1983 (of 5833)
6		'...indecent exposure..' '...unwelcome touching, body rubbing or groping..' '...being threatened, coerced or forced into participating in sexual behaviour, or being touched sexually without your consent..'	37%	2158 (of 5833)

When this exhibition takes place, another survey will be carried out. This will help categories the sculptures to find a colour that best suits each individual. It is very difficult to sort the statistics from the YouGov, 2021 survey as it is impossible to see how many women chose more than one answer. This means that the numbers cannot be arranged to fit the needs of this exhibition. A number of victims will also be encouraged to take part and so they will also need to be represented in the statistics.

All those involved will be praised and thanked for their level of engagement in the project, another part of empowering women in all stages of the exhibition.

Figure List

Figure 1: Field by Gormley. Tate (2011). Antony Gormley: Field – Exhibition at Tate Liverpool | Tate. [online] Tate. Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-liverpool/exhibition/antony-gormley-field> [Accessed 18 Mar. 2021].

Figure 2 and 3: <https://www.southlondongallery.org/>

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