

Titled "Noire", through aspects of curation, I will be creating, planning, and constructing an exhibition that involve six pieces of work by three different artists. Through this exhibition, I want to focus on the judgement of black contrasting with white. The reasoning for this is due to gigantic difference between the two shades that happen to stand out the most, while also working together in contrast. Michael Eugene Chevreul mentions this by writing, "Black never produces a bad effect when it is associated with two luminous colours. It is therefore often preferable with White." (Micheal Eugne Chevreul, 1857, p. 61).

Through the ways of curating, I've come up with the location of my exhibition to be nothing more than a white rectangle. I intend for this box room to be 9 metres x 18 metres, therefore longer length wise, than width. The intention for this design is based off of Hans Ulrich Obrist's idea of the 'white cube' design that transformed into the 'white rectangle. Hans stated, "He also developed what came to be known as the 'white cube' style of display, which flavoured rectangular, neutral spaces with works placed far from each other. Works were meant to be encountered alone." (Hans Ulrich Obrist, 2014.) Given that each individual art exhibition I've chosen is painted black being struck isolated on a section of white painted wall would strike the viewers eyes. In the modern era, the symbol of an art exhibition comes as a white box which was also written by Brian O'Doherty, in which he wrote, "An image comes to mind of a white, ideal space that, more than any single picture may be the archetypal image of twentieth century art; it clarifies itself through a process of historical inevitability usually attached to the art it contains." (Brian O'Doherty, 1999, p. 14.) Meaning that with the contrast of my black-on-white imagery and furniture, it also represents ideal modernised art history as a whole.

White colour as a whole has an entire psychological trait that is proven to be a positive trait for the general public's mental state. Black as a whole usually comes across as being a very negative colour; eerie, scary, unsafe etc. While the colour white would prove to come across as ethereal, warm and simple; leaving the person in state of standard bliss. Karen Haller proves this within her book, stating: "The positive psychological traits of white is perfection. It is pure and unblemished, and gives a feeling of peace and quiet, simplicity and clarity. White can clear a cluttered mind and provide emotional safety." So, not only does it attract the viewer, it would also clear their mind and come across as blissful. Yet with the mix of the 'noire' aspect, mixing black with white can give a completely different outcome to every single individual; warmth yet uncomfortable.

Not only does the white box have significance with contrast and an art of symbolism but there's cultural history behind the design, but only within the 'recent present'. Brian O'Doherty goes further to state:

"The communal mind of our culture went through a significant shift that expresses itself in the prominence of the white cube as a central material and expressive mode for art, as well as a fashionable style of displaying it. He identifies the transition in question as modernism bringing 'to an endpoint its relentless habit of self-definition'." (Brian O' Doherty, 1999, p. 11.)

Throughout this exhibition, it will test the cultural history of the white rectangular rooms as well as the black-on-white contrast so see if it attracts the public-eye more.



Fig One

As you enter in through the entrance of the white box; to the left of the door, the viewer will be greeted with "Untitled" by Zdzisław Beksiński – Fig One. The gothic and yet baroque art piece embraces an eerie and eye-catching atmosphere, yet something so comforting about it; a perfect settlement to place within a white box, it's hard to miss and leaves the viewer intrigued to know more about the painting. The polish artist constructed the piece at 87cm x 87 cm, making it a relatively small piece. A literacy critic named Tadeusz Nyczek wrote about the ideologies that helps construct his pieces: "He is most strongly attracted by modernism, decadence, 19th-century precision of works, which he has, at any rate, achieved in his painting." (Tadeusz Nyczek, 1989.) The portrait indicated a section within Zdzisław's life, a dark and gloomy second-section to his art career. This was towards the end/late part of his career in which he explained "I'm going in a direction of a greater simplification of the background, and at the same time a considerable degree of deformation in the figures." (Zdzisław Beksiński, 1994.) Which he represents perfectly in Fig One.



Fig Two

Following Fig One, along the left side of the wall shows another illustration that is portrayed by Zdzisław Beksiński, also titled "Untitled" – Fig Two. Through the life and artistic career Zdzisław, he went through two-split, distinct paths; Gothic/Doomsday (**Fig One**) and impressionistic colour platforms with heavy realism and architecture, which is shown here in Fig Two. The two link each other with somewhat of a preternatural yet solace atmosphere, while still featuring the same kind of art-style while depicting more colour. The reasoning for which I chose this exact piece was that it captures both sections of Zdzisław's life, the colour, and the gothic downfall of his artistic style. Fig Two would essentially be the second thing that the viewer sees considering it somewhat of a polyptych. Again, duplicate to Fig One, Fig Two's dimensions are 87cm x 87cm and framed to fit on the wall, centred at level-height, right of Fig-One, trouble-free for the viewer to access.



Fig Three



Fig Four

In the centre of the room, there's two different sections of furniture that's made by fashion designer and architecture Rick Owens – Sections Fig Three and Fig Four. Fig Three, entitled “Daybed in petrified wood” displays a futuristic yet wooden aspect of future that is unlike other bedding. From the list of look-books from Rick Owen, these futuristic designs displayed in both Fig Three and Fig Four are from the same group called “Prehistoric”, due to the materials used to make them; ‘500-000-year-old fossilised wood.’ The plywood bed is an edition of eight, which stands at 320cm x 90cm x 80cm, placed directly opposite the chair so it stretches along the rectangular room so people can walk around the pieces at a figure of eight. The day bed would Meanwhile the chair in Fig Four is entitled “Stag Chair Right” as a pair of two wooden chairs, made completely of black plywood and a real moose-antler. The chair would stand at 127cm x 69cm x 87cm, it's a relatively average sized piece that places great contrast with the white cube. Rick mentioned within an interview: “My furniture takes that base, but supersedes everything. I kind of like that monumentalist, rationalist Italian fascist look, but a skate park reduction of that aesthetic.” (Rick Owens, 2006, Stephen Todd – PIN-UP 1.)



Fig Five

Towards the final wall, leading the exit contains iconic Yohji Yamamoto fashion photographed by Max Vadukul – Fig Five. The very experienced photographer worked along side fashion designer Yohji Yamamoto for up to 27 years, while also spending up to five years working along *New Yorker* and *Vogue Paris*. The reasoning for which I picked Max Vadukul's actually accounts for many different reasons; *Black imagery*. The majority of images that Max takes come across as dark images, usually extracting the colours to bolden the surrounding landscapes while still focusing on the clothing style. The images that Vadukul portrays within his photography hides secrets that only himself and his subjects will share, quoting that the "devil really is in the details." The way in which this image manages to link to the rest of the exhibition is the contrast of the black imagery painted onto the white while linking the fashion designer Yohji with Rick Owens.

Takay



Fig Six

Next to Fig Five, is a photographic piece entitled “The Continuation of Yohji Yamamoto” by Japanese photographer Takay which was taken in 2012 – Fig Six. Although being very similar to Fig Five, Fig Six establishes an entirely different outcome to the fashion designer Yohji’s fashion, covenanting the black and white colour-wave. The aspiring and similar piece to this is within Fig One, the characters/person fading in and out of each other which manages to drag the idea of the furniture, Polish art and photography all together.

Figures:

Fig One: Beksiński, Z. (1989) *Untitled* [Oil, Fibreboard] Sanok, Poland.

Fig Two: Beksiński, Z. (1987) *Untitled* [Oil, Fibreboard] Sanok, Poland.

Fig Three: Owens, R. (2013) *Daybed in petrified wood* [Fossilised Wood, Plywood] Bologna, Italy.

Fig Four: Owens, R. (2013) *Stag Chair Right* [Black Plywood, Antlers.] Bologna, Italy.

Fig Five: Vadukul, M. (1985) *Yohji Yamamoto* [Photograph] New York City.

Fig Six: Takay. (2020) *The Continuance of Yohji Yamamoto* [Photograph] Japan.

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