

Ways of perceiving Curation Essay

Kate Joseph

Student number: 1911259

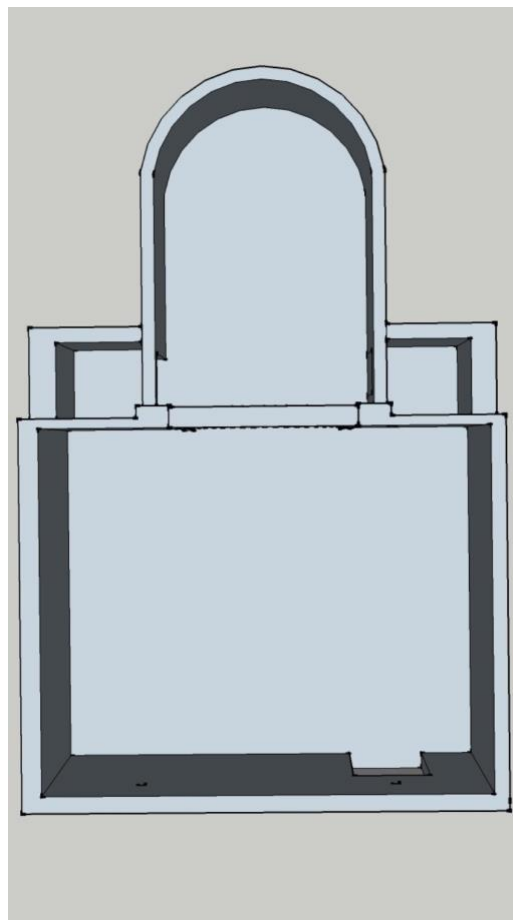
Course title: BA Illustration

Word count: 1,469

Tutor: Jonathan Pugh

For my curated exhibition I intend to create a space that explores the differences between eastern and western art throughout history. I intend to look at traditional and modern day art from both Japan and the UK in order to compare and contrast them and see how art differs around the world in terms of both time and style. I will display my exhibition in the mission gallery because I think the effect of old paintings transitioning to new will be much more effective while walking around the circular room of the Mission Gallery. I also believe it will add another layer to the exhibition - walking in a circle from the traditional paintings to the modern and then back again will also signify the idea of trends in art being created, improved upon and then reused as time goes on (an example of this idea would be vintage style typography coming back into fashion in recent years). I will also select iconic artists from each of these places and eras so that lots of patrons will be interested in visiting my exhibition.

Here is a floor plan of the Mission Gallery for reference:



I do not intend to add anything to the gallery walls and floor space other than the artworks that will be on display. I believe that adding too many extras will clutter up the space and will take away from the works that are on display. While considering if I would add anything extra to the gallery I found this quote from Gail Gelburd, a professor of contemporary art, which stated "Art is visual communication and has something to tell, to share, to teach. Just as you cannot listen to a quiet concerto while a rock band is playing, or vice versa, the white cube provided that place for viewing, meditating and listening to the inner voices of the art. The white cube allowed you to enter into a sacred space and feel free to contemplate the art." (Nison, n.d.). I think this quote is really effective and sums up my thoughts in a much more concise way. The idea of stripping back all other distractions in the gallery space and simply

allowing the visitors to enjoy the art uninterrupted is exactly the kind of experience I am intending to create for my own exhibition. I also believe that presenting the pieces in this way will add a level of sophistication, which is what I would like people to feel when they visit the exhibition.

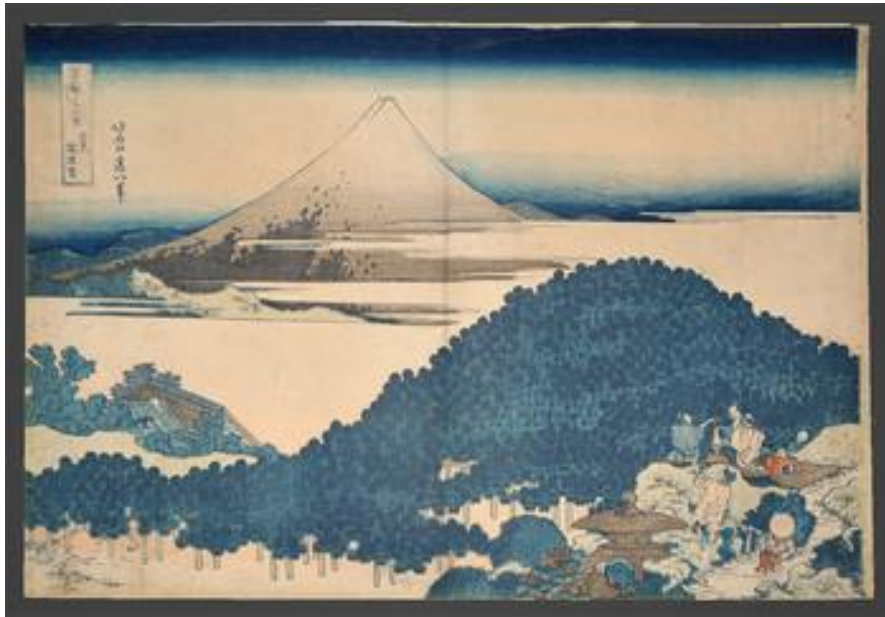


Fig. 1

The first piece I intend to place in my gallery would be a woodblock print by the artist Hokusai titled *The Cushion Pine at Aoyama* (1832). Personally, when I think of traditional Japanese art my mind always goes to Hokusai's work. Although many might expect to see *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*, I think it is important to showcase his other works too that may be lesser known to people. Each of his woodblock prints are extremely high quality, and I think it will allow people to see that he was an artist that had many beautiful pieces of work that all deserve to be seen. It will also be good to showcase a woodblock print as it has become way less popular in the modern era, and it will be good to show visitors not just how much art styles have changed throughout the centuries, but also how much the ways of creating art have changed alongside it. This will be the piece in my exhibition which showcases traditional Japanese art.



Fig.2

To showcase traditional British art in my exhibition, I intend to use this painting by George Romney titled *Lady Elizabeth Stanley (1753-1797), Countess of Derby*. I think that George Romney is a great artist, and I think his work has a really beautiful delicate quality to it. My favourite of his works are the quick sketches he did in his sketchbooks, but I think for this exhibition it would be best to show one of his finished portraits. While woodblock prints were popular in Japan, portraiture was a huge part of British art, especially in the Renaissance era. Portraits were a sign of status, so there are many examples of portraiture in Britain dating back as far as the 1400s. I think having Romney's work alongside Hokusai's will really make the differences between the two styles stand out. It will make visitors consider how portraiture was the main focus in the west while colourful, flat woodblock prints were popular in the east. Displaying these pieces together will also allow people to see the vast differences in what type of art was preferred between the two artists, with Romney's work being as realistic and three-dimensional as he could manage, while Hokusai's work had a much heavier focus on thick, flat line work, exaggeration and bold colours. Overall, I think these two pieces will be perfect for my exhibition.



Fig.3

For the next piece of work in my exhibition I will display this piece by Hirohiko Araki in order to show the shift from traditional to modern Japanese art. Araki is the creator of the manga series *Jojo's Bizarre adventure*, which has been hugely popular in Japan since its creation in the 1980's. Araki's style has changed over time from a very typical manga-esque style to something more realistic and fashion-oriented, and because of this his manga is very highly praised for its consistent quality of artwork. His way of creating art has also led to collaborations with fashion brands like Gucci, and he has even had a previous exhibition in the Louvre. I think because manga is such a huge part of Japanese art and culture nowadays it is vital for me to show a manga artist in my exhibit, and I can personally think of none more deserving to be displayed than Araki. His art will show visitors the extent that Japanese art has evolved over the centuries, from traditional woodblock pieces showcasing scenes of nature, to bright, imaginative manga art that has a much bigger focus on character design and portraiture. This is why I think Araki's work is perfect for my exhibition.



Fig.4

In order to showcase the evolution from traditional to modern art in the UK I intend to use this piece of work by Banksy. I chose this piece in particular because I really like it, and I think it would be better to shine some light on one of Banksy's other pieces of works rather than the iconic ones that everyone knows. I think Banksy is a good selection for a modern UK artist because he is known globally and is really popular, so I think a lot of people would really like the idea of being able to come to my exhibition for the chance to see an original piece by Banksy. I believe Banksy is also a good choice for my exhibition because his style is so different from that of George Romney. Even though both artists deal with portraiture, Banksy does so in a way that is realistic but flat at the same time, and focuses on blocks of colour as opposed to Romney's hyper realistic colour matching of his subjects. Using Banksy's work is also a good way to show how attitudes have changed over time. His work is very political and satirical and he uses it to make statements and critique things that are happening in the world. He creates art on whatever subject crosses his mind and does not hold back on portraying his thoughts and feelings through his work. Romney's art, on the other hand, dealt with portraiture of nobles, and he had no intention of adding politics or satire into his work. Comparing Banksy's art and Araki's art will also be a very good way for visitors to see how both place's styles have evolved in similar ways, but ended up with very different and unique outcomes.

In terms of which way I am planning to set out my exhibition, I would like to display Hokusai's work on the left of the room, followed by Romney's immediately after, with Araki and Banksy's works being displayed next. I think this is the best possible layout in terms of the effect that I am trying to create, as it will allow visitors to go from traditional Japanese art which they will then be able to compare to the traditional British art that is next to it, which they will then be able to compare to modern Japanese and British art. Leaving the middle of the exhibition space blank will allow visitors to stand back and view all four pieces together as one, so they can appreciate each piece of art in whatever order they wish if they are not happy with the original layout that I have planned. This is my intention for my exhibition.

Bibliography

Nison, R., n.d. Why are art galleries white cubes?. [online] Hopes&Fears. Available at: <<http://www.hopesandfears.com/hopes/now/question/216781-why-are-art-galleries-white-cubes>>

Fig.1

Katsushika, H., n.d. The Cushion Pine at Aoyama. [online] Ronin Gallery. Available at: <<https://www.ronin.gallery.com/The-Cushion-Pine-at-Aoyama>> [Accessed 4 May 2021].

Fig.2

Romney, G., n.d. [online] Metmuseum.org. Available at: <<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437500>>

Fig.3

Araki, H., n.d. 荒木飛呂彦原画展 JOJO 冒険の波紋. [online] JOJO 荒木飛呂彦 原画展 -冒険の波紋-. Available at: <<http://jojoex-nagasaki.com/>>

Fig.4

The Art of Banksy | London. n.d. Art of Banksy | About us. [online] Available at: <<https://artofbanksy.co.uk/about/#Gallery>>