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Imagined Display Exhibition – Plastic Ocean

As part of my project, I will be curating an exhibition displaying 5 different artists and their individual artworks, to feature within my exhibition with regards to plastic pollution. I have chosen to curate upon plastic pollution, as I feel very strong about this subject. As time progresses, this problem is enlarging, we must bring it to light before it is too late. Every year, around ***“100,00 marine creatures”*** die because of ocean waste, which is a massive number for something that can be prevented.

My exhibition will be held within the Mission Gallery, located at Swansea Marina. I believe this location is well suited to my exhibition, as plastic pollution is a reoccurring problem around many beaches and marinas worldwide. I have carefully selected relevant artworks and artists, which help support the concept of plastic pollution – giving visitors a better understanding of this ongoing, worldwide issue.

My exhibition will be taking place in the Mission Gallery. I will be making use of the entire gallery. The gallery is completely open plan, with white walls to enhance the space and the colourful artworks within it. Swansea Marina, where the gallery is located, is a very popular area for members of the public to visit.



Figure One

Displayed on the left hand side wall will be **'Sea of Artifacts'** by artist Mandy Barker. The three images illustrate plastic pollution 'under the sea', when in reality, the images have been edited to create that realistic effect for the audience. As a photographer, I wanted to incorporate photography into the gallery. Mandy describes the artwork to be, "*lit with spotlights that enhance the feeling of viewing the recovered collections of plastic from under the sea*" (**Barker. M, 2019**). I have chosen this image to be included within my exhibition, as it is one of many that highlights a positive perspective of this issue. These pieces are relatively recent, coinciding with the growth of the pollution. The artist has photographed plastic that has been recovered from the ocean, and turned it into art. The purpose of these images was to bring something as negative as pollution into light, and show the impact of what retrieving plastic of the oceans can do. These eye-catching images will grasp the attention of visitors right at the entrance of the exhibition.



Figure Two

Placed in the back room of the exhibition will hang the sculpture **“Sea Things”** by artist Sam Jacob. This mirrored cube displays a ***“cartoon style animated video”*** that ***“takes spectators on a poignant journey from the year the first commercial plastic projects were launched to 2050”*** (Jewell. N, 2019). This will more than likely be the largest artwork in the gallery, and will automatically catch the attention of guests. Personally, I believe that the artist wants his spectators to look up at the artwork, as if they are viewing it from an ‘underwater’ perspective, as if the plastic is floating on top of the ocean. It makes you think, and reconsider your decisions about pollution. It automatically captures your attention, as it stands out from the rest. Published by the online source V&A, the piece is ***“internally reflected to an infinity that seems both as wide as the ocean and as large as the challenges we face”***. This will be the only piece exhibited that is not at eye-level, but will be raised. Linking into the theme of plastic pollution, the cube showcases a variety of outlines connecting to marine life, along with ocean waste. V&A also state that ***“the project has an aim to evoke a powerful sense of emotion”***. The main aim is for spectators to leave the exhibition with a clearer understanding of this issue, reflecting on how they help resolve the problem.



Figure Three

Placed within the front centre of the gallery will be **'Bounty, Pilfered'** by artist Pam Longobardi. This structure will take up most of the space within the first room, standing at a large scale of 136 x 84 x 54 inches. 'Bounty, Pilfered' contains a variety of different materials including *"plastics, steel armature, drift nets and floats"* , to make up the construction of a whale consuming waste. Quoting the Anchorage Museum, *"Pam's artwork addresses the phycological relationship of humans to the natural world"*. Each material has been sourced from different areas of the world. I personally believe the artist considered how we are all responsible for this form of pollution when creating the structure - hence collecting pollution from different countries . I have chosen this piece in order to represent recycling, and finding a way in which waste can be repurposed. The purpose of this artwork is to represent marine life consuming all types of plastic waste. Having the plastic in bright colours, highlights to the audience that it's the problem and needs to be controlled before it's too late.



Figure Four

The next piece I have chosen to exhibit is by artist Pascale Marthine Tayou – known as **‘Plastic Pollution Awareness Trees’**, created in 2015. The trees will be displayed on the right hand side of the gallery, and will run along the wall. The art piece is designed to educate guests on the effect of pollution. This is shown, *“through the act of littering, people are placing toxins into the earth where trees grow” (Floyd. A, 2015)*. Each plastic bag placed on the branches *“appear to represent the suffocation that is taking place in society” (Floyd. A, 2015)*.

Personally, I believe the artist intended to curate something beautiful, but have a deeper meaning hidden within. The piece is very distinctive, I haven’t seen anything like this before – bringing a sense of uniqueness to my curation. Once again, this unique piece is eye-catching. As there is no physical description about what is being displayed, it allows the audience to figure out for themselves what is being portrayed, letting them think and reflect.



Figure Five

This artwork by Bonnie Monteleone, known as '**Hokusai's Great Wave**', will be placed within the second room. The piece illustrates a wave formed of ocean waste. The image was originally created by Hokusai back in the 19th century, however, Bonnie decided to create her own interpretation. Realistically, this is what's inside oceans during modern day. I believe the artist sees this as a way of raising awareness. When an audience views this piece, they will have a sense of nostalgia, knowing they have seen the image somewhere before, capturing their attention. The artist has been interested in plastic pollution since a young age, asking her mother "*Where does all this stuff go?*" (Maloney. S, 2013), referring to plastic at age 12. This curiosity led the Bonnie to discover more, further educating others in the future. Her mindset changed after she saw a "*graphic photo of a deformed turtle*" (Maloney. S, 2013), due to the effects of ocean waste. This really changed her perspective, inspiring many of her successful works, as well as volunteering to collect waste from oceans in around her country. The piece fits my exhibition well, following the theme of plastic pollution. The wave can be viewed as if it's consuming more plastic waste. The artwork is so colourful and eye-catching, it can't help but capture your attention. The more you study the piece, you start to discover more and more of what is hidden within.

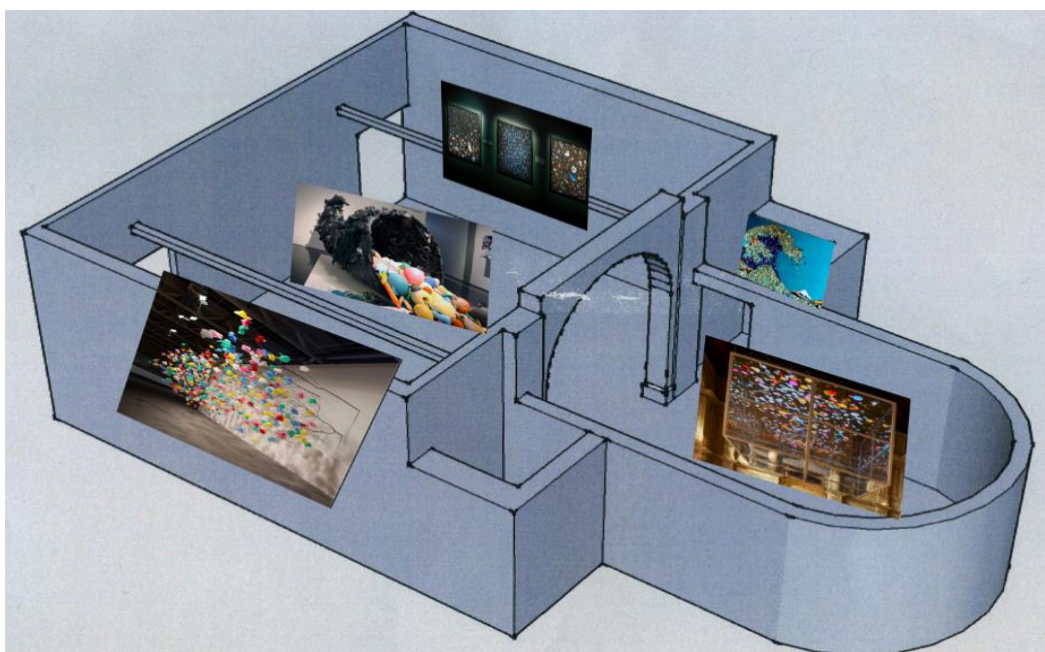


Figure Six

Above, illustrates the map of Mission Gallery, located in Swansea Marina, where my exhibition 'Plastic Ocean' will take place. The gallery allows each figure presented to have enough individual space for spectators to view clearly, getting a closer look. Advertisement for my exhibition will be in and around the local area, as well as on different social media platforms, for visitors to find out more information on what to expect when attending. My exhibition will run 6 days a week from 9-4, excluding Sunday's. These flexible times will hopefully suit visitor's day to day lives, ensuring no one will be missing out on my curation. I envision the space to be quite dim in lighting, to give spectators the feel of being under the sea. Each and every art work will be spotlighted, to achieve the feel of an immersive experience. There will be no background music included within the exhibition, as I would like my audience to be able to think and reflect on what is going on around them.

All pieces of art included within my exhibition will hopefully allow spectators to leave reflecting upon decisions they have made in the past, and ones they will make in the near future. Plastic pollution is a very serious problem, that is growing rapidly year by year. It is said that the ocean encounters trillions of new plastic each and every year. Personally, I hope that my curation gives guests a better understanding and knowledge on how to save the planet before it is too late. Future generations are relying on us to think wisely about our actions, making better decisions for our planet.

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