

Ways of Perceiving, Curation Essay

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I aim to curate an exhibition called "Propaganda", which will hold 5 pieces of artwork from five different artists, these posters will show how propaganda posters have been used through the ages up until the present day. I will be holding my exhibition in an Anderson Bomb shelter in the Imperial War museum in Duxford England. I would like to display my propaganda posters in the Anderson shelter to have a real feel of what it was like in WW2 with the propaganda posters placed around the Anderson shelter for effect. I will be looking into Chomsky and Herman theory about propaganda how it is relevant to the five pieces of work I have chosen for my exhibition.

I aspire to use the Anderson shelter in the museum which is 6ft 6in **long** by 4ft 6in **wide** by 6ft high, it will have little seats in there, where people can sit and admire the artwork around them as I feel people will want to sit down and take their time to take in the environment around them and imagine how the families lived in those times and the cramped conditions, they lived in. Butler stated in her book that people used to live in the shelters for an extended period and how they were:

exposed the inconvenience of the private and public shelters; that people would have to sleep, eat and excrete in them night after night had not been allowed for. These discomforts led some women to refuse to even use their shelters. (Butler, 2018, p. 94).

I aim to portray the connotation of the feeling of how cramped the surroundings would have been as people took their personal belongings with them even their pets, this gives the atmosphere of how it would have felt being stuck in the Anderson shelter during the hard times. I would like to have the sounds of the planes flying overhead, and the noise of bombs being dropped to give the feeling of what it was like in the Anderson shelter and how terrifying it must have been. People show their emotions in many different ways some will react by getting upset or fearful imagining what people

went through. Schachter Singer theory is the cognitive theory of emotion. The singer theory suggests that you create emotion from seeing the object and feeling the certain emotion and then labelling it as an emotion. (Cherry, 2019)

The posters will have no frames (Frame used to mean 'the physical body') around them because I want the Anderson shelter to feel like the frame is the home for these posters. Hans Ulrich Obrist considers the paintings that William.C.Seitz produced and how he had the frames removed as "the gallery itself became the framing mechanism" (Obrist, 2014, p.29).

The word propaganda in the book 'Manufacturing Consent – The Political Economy of the Mass Media' by Edward. S. Herman and Noam Chomsky, their theory states that propaganda is mass media and the "model tries to understand how the population is manipulated, and how the social, economic, political attitudes are fashioned in the minds of people through propaganda".

(Propaganda Model, 2013). Their theory also includes how the government only want to get out what they want the public to hear and understand. The five posters I have chosen for my exhibition will fit in with this theory as I think that in WW2 and even now the government only want us to see or hear certain promotions or advertising for us to take action.



FIG 1

The 'Uncle Sam' poster by James Montgomery Flagg, which has become the most iconic poster in American history. I have chosen to place this poster directly in front of you as you walk into the Anderson shelter. It will be placed directly as you walk in as it's a very powerful and well-known poster, it was used to recruit soldiers from WW2 and it makes you feel like you need to act now by Uncle Sam pointing at you, he makes you feel like he is making a statement by his look and the typography as the 'You' is bold and draws in the public's attention.



FIG 2

The "Women of Britain Come into the Factories", a 1941 poster by Philip Zec will be directly next to the Rosie poster on the left-hand side because they both have a link as they are made for women in WW2 to come and help. This is important because with what's going on now with women rights, I thought it would be good to show powerful propaganda posters like these to show that women are strong and can-do male jobs as well. The dimensions of this poster are 297 x 420mm. This makes the poster easy to see and understand what the poster was asking of the people back in WW2.



FIG 3

Rosie the riveter poster will be placed on the left-hand side of the Anderson Shelter. The colour palette is very bright so it will stand out of the background of the Anderson shelter. The Rosie poster is one of the most popular posters in WW2 and people are still very familiar with it. This poster was designed in 1943 by J Howard Miller and it became a very inspiring piece because women who worked producing tanks, ships, planes and other materials in WW2 called themselves "Rosies". (Vergun, 2019). This poster is to make the spectators think about how hard women worked back in WW2 and how their jobs were very brutal, this is why I want this poster as the first one too sees as it's so inspirational to women.



FIG 4

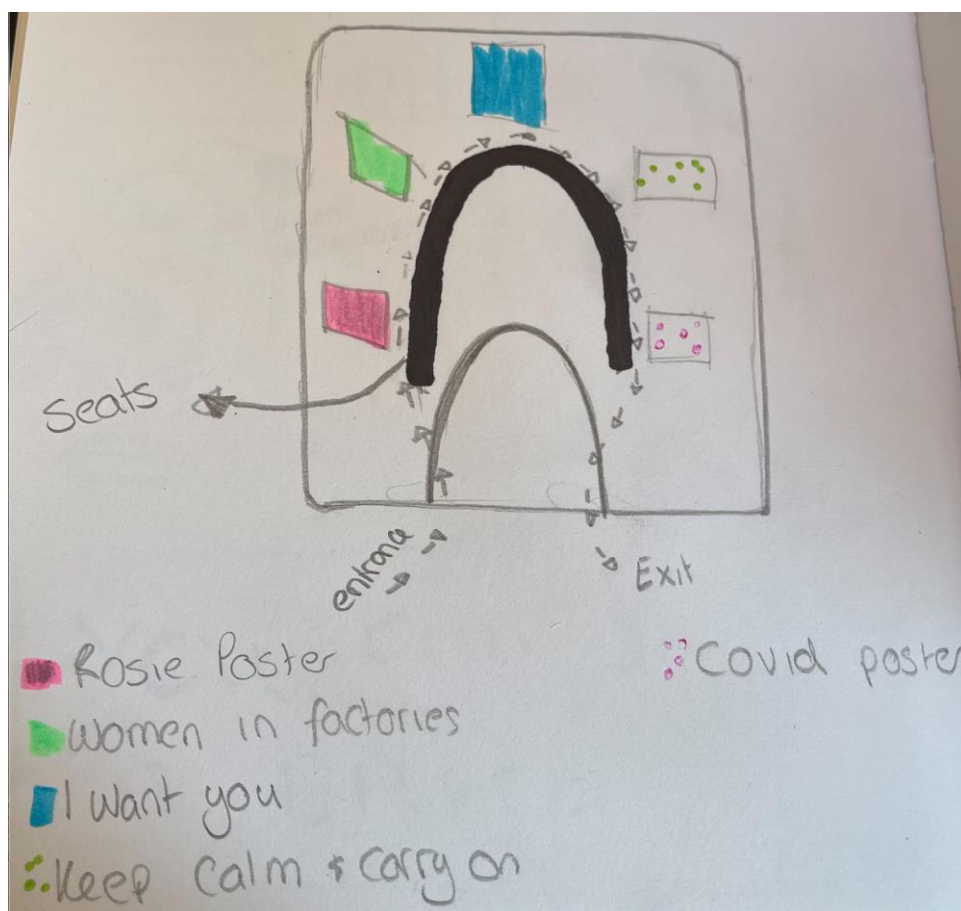
As you walk in on the right-hand side of the Shelter, the Keep calm and carry-on poster will be placed. This poster is to curate an understanding of the propaganda poster that was made by the British government in WW2 and it's still used today. The aim of this poster was to give the public a moral boost and it was displayed across Britain. These posters are still used today with the same objective. Having this poster near the end of the exhibition shows the development of propaganda and how it's still being used today and how it influences people, as they give powerful information out and they are so bright and easily catch the public's eye.



FIG 5

In America, artists like Sylvia Bueltel have been taking inspiration off the propaganda World War 2 posters and changing it to the suit current times which at the moment is for the current Covid pandemic, to get people's attention as they would in WW2. I wanted to display this in my exhibition because people can see the development of propaganda and they can now relate to the poster and have a feel of what people in WW2 would have seen. This poster is so important to the current times as it is showing the countries superhero's who are the frontline worker's, this is why I will be placing this propaganda poster as they leave the Anderson shelter so they can relate to the current times and have a real feel of what a propaganda poster feels like to understand. (Hill, 2020)

I wanted different ages of propaganda posters because I wanted to show the development and how the main message of a propaganda poster hasn't changed. The space of the posters in the exhibition is to curate the type of environment they would have been in. For example, from my experience's when listening to my great grandparent's stories of their experiences in WW2 and from reading books about the war, I wanted to use that atmosphere to create a real life feeling of what it would have been like with all the sounds and the experience and witnessing the posters and the atmosphere of the shelter.



My map above shows that my exhibition space is easy to access and has a one-way system around the Anderson shelter as it's so small and I want people to have a good understanding of what it was like. The shape on my space is an oval shape, I feel like this shape is easy to follow as it's simple for people to understand and can see the posters easily.

Overall, I really like my “Propaganda” exhibition because it gives people an insight to what it would have been like to live in those difficult conditions and how propaganda is still around and used for the same purpose as seen with the Covid poster, at the end of the exhibition. Next time, I could have more posters or perhaps different objects in the Anderson shelter that were a main part of the war.

Figures

Fig1: Flagg.M.J. (2021), *Uncle Sam*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Uncle-Sam#/media/1/614065/68167>

Fig 2: Zec. P. (1941). "*Women of Britain Come into the Factories*". United Kingdom. Available at: <https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O75918/women-of-britain-come-into-poster-zec-philip/>

Fig 3: Vergun.D. (2019), *Rosie the Riveter Inspired Women to Serve in World War II*. Available at: <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/Features/story/Article/1791664/rosie-the-riveter-inspired-women-to-serve-in-world-war-ii/#pop3280881>

Fig 4: Fowler.B. (2015). *Brits may roll their eyes at 'Keep Calm and Carry On' — but here's why they secretly love it*. New York city. Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/the-surprising-history-of-keep-calm-and-carry-on-2015-6?r=US&IR=T>

Fig 5: Bueltel. S (2020). *Stay Home*. Chicago, IL. Available at: <https://www.sylviabueltel.com/?pgid=jjd2x1nt-4f4cfabe-d1da-4f51-a222-e351034e251c>

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