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Since ancient times, art and science have gone hand in hand as coexisting subjects and continued to do so until the late 20th century. In this essay, I will be using this idea as the basis of my imagined exhibition and discussing my reasons for choosing this topic as well as my process of curating artists and artworks to bring this topic together in my chosen exhibition space. I want to explore how modern-day art and science can still interact and be a strong combined subject area despite art in the science world becoming decreasingly prevalent compared to previous centuries when those such as Leonardo da Vinci were using both simultaneously to advance their ideas and knowledge within each area.

As the topic of science and art feels too vague in my opinion and contains a lot of grey areas (such as Pseudo-science), I want to further consider what area my exhibition will cover before establishing a venue. I've broken it down into three sub-sections; antibiotic resistance, bio-art, and biology in art.

Antibiotic resistance is relevant to current news surrounding the medical world and brings awareness to the ever-growing threat of superbugs and future pandemics. However, I feel that it is too narrow and too specific to find a sufficient number of artists or artworks to showcase this idea efficiently.

Bio-Art is a rising art form and relatively new in the art world, making it a more unique proposal for an exhibition and effectively combines the two subject areas, although it would still be a challenge to find a variety of artists who focus on or look at bio-art, although not impossible. There is also the fact that I would have to consider the ethics of bio-art as several artists in this area have unethical practices and means of working, and while this would grab attention, I wouldn't personally agree with including these artists.

Finally, Biology in art is the broadest and still could include the previous two topics while still being interesting and unique as well as relevant. I can also cover a larger time period if I wanted to. As this is a broader area, I would need to be very decisive and think about what artists and artworks I choose and how they could work or interact in the exhibition space.

I will be choosing my third idea "Biology in art" as it is the one with the most potential and most artists for me to choose from, as I feel both "bio-art" and "antibiotic resistance" are both too narrow to curate an effective exhibition from. However, I will only choose to look at biology rather than science in general because otherwise it'd be too broad and won't work as well visually compared to focusing on one area of science. This topic also can include the other two themes I considered.

Now that I have chosen a topic for my exhibition, I need to choose an appropriate exhibition space that I think will suit the topic and have the possibility to contribute to it in some way. While I could choose any gallery or museum I wish to, it wouldn't have the same effect as considering what gallery or museum I choose and why. For example, I could choose the Victoria and Albert Museum simply because it is my favourite, but the museum itself, in my opinion, focuses too much on culture and fashion for it to be an effective space to hold a science-based exhibition. For this, I have three museums in mind: The Science Museum, The Natural History Museum, and The Wellcome collection. Any of these museums would be appropriate as they all have a biology aspect to them. However, to me, both the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum feel too straightforward for my exhibition and don't incorporate art in the way that the Wellcome collection does. As is stated on their website, they "create opportunities for people to think deeply about the connections

between science, medicine, life, and art.” (Wellcome Collection.org, n.d.) Therefore, making this the optimal venue for my biology and art exhibition.

Galleries labelled 1 and 2 in the map below are the exhibition galleries and I would choose either of these for my own exhibition.

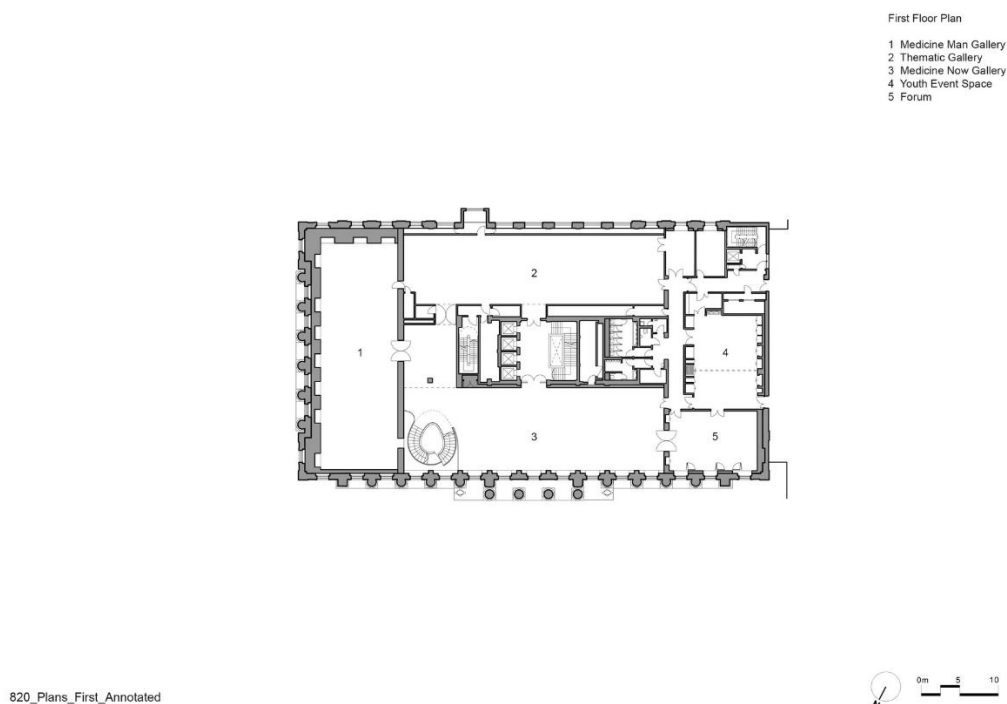


Figure 1 Wellcome collection map.

Moving onto curating the works included, I will discuss the main works and how they fit my theme as well as develop my understanding of what it means to curate an exhibition. To curate something means “to be in charge of selecting and caring for objects to be shown in a museum or to form part of a collection of art, an exhibition” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d).

As an artist myself, I believe artists can be some of the best people for this task as we understand composition and planning in ways that other people don’t. As stated by Swiss Curator Hans Ulrich Obrist “the role of exhibition-maker is one sometimes played by

creative artists themselves” (Obrist, 2014, p. 35). Further confirming my statement.

Additionally, I would understand that my exhibition would be temporary as I’d be an independent and external curator using the Wellcome Collection as my venue. Proven in the following quote:

“Temporary exhibitions: If you are working as an independent curator or external curator at a museum, then the likelihood is that your project will be a temporary exhibition.” (George, 2015, p. 38).

The first artist I would want to include is Anna Dumitriu. According to the biography on her website, annadumitriu.co.uk, Anna Dumitriu is a “British artist who works with BioArt, sculpture, installation, and digital media to explore our relationship to infectious diseases, synthetic biology, and robotics.”.

I’d like to include her work as it is unlike anything else I have ever seen or encountered in my time as an art student, particularly her infectious diseases quilts, created using threads impregnated with antibiotic-resistant bacteria such as MRSA and Tuberculosis and fabric dyed with naturally occurring dyes in Petri dishes showing where the antibiotic resistance is. It goes beyond just being an indicator or representation of the ideas behind her work and directly incorporates dormant versions of diseases with the potential to cause future pandemics.



Figure 2 MRSA Quilt details - Anna Dumitriu

My second would be Chilean artist, Juana Gomez, who focuses on the details of the systems within the human body and how these patterns can be seen throughout nature through a perfect combination of photography and embroidery. The large scale of her work encourages the viewer to see finer details in our internal systems and appreciate how intricate, delicate yet powerful they are. Her work represents the complexities and beauty of our bodies, giving the viewer the ability to reflect on how much more there is to us than what we see externally and appreciate the fact that these systems both keep us alive and connect us.



Figure 3 "Constructional 4" - Juana Gomez

British contemporary artist, Marc Quinn, uses his art to explore “what it is to be a person living in the world” mainly through sculpture or installation. More specifically a series of his work titled “self” (1991) where Quinn decided to take a cast of his own head and recreate it using 10 pints of his own frozen blood and suspended it in silicone, indicating a need for dependence on an external source for it to continue holding its form and directly representing his own dependence on alcohol. While the idea behind it isn’t inherently biological, the medium used is and in my opinion, fits in with the biological theme of my exhibition.



Figure 4: "self" (1991) - Marc Quinn

After undergoing an MRI brain scan, British artist Susan Aldworth began creating a different type of self-portrait, using these scans of her own brain, and describing them as a “portrait of the self – located in a moment of time.” (Aldworth, A. 2021). They are literally medical and biological imagery, capturing the one thing that truly makes us who we are and why we do things the way we do while not being able to distinguish them from other peoples unless, of course, you understand how to read these. They are altered to represent how she thinks

they would look if they truly showed who we are, creating a multi-layered composition that is an index of how Aldworth perceives herself.

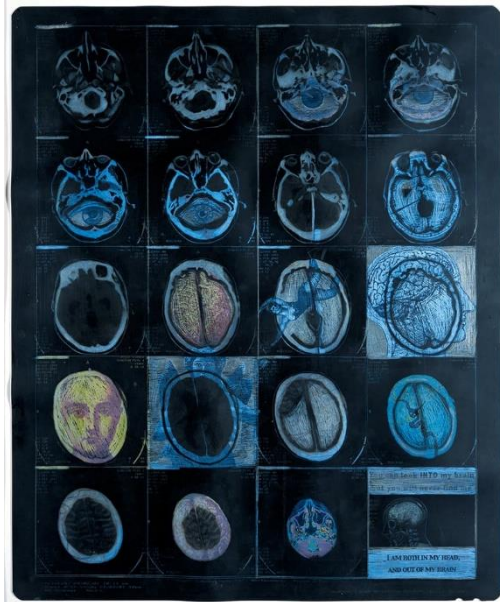


Figure 5: "Cogito Ergo Sum 1" - Susan Aldworth



Figure 6: "Cogito Ergo Sum 2" - Susan Aldworth



Figure 7: "Cogito Ergo Sum 3" - Susan Aldworth

Finally, I would want to include no other than the work of Leonardo Da Vinci, particularly his anatomical drawings representing the research and ideas surrounding the human body being developed in his time. Not only was he an artist but also a scientist and contributed perhaps the

most important ideas about the body we still know and follow today. His sketches being as detailed and accurate as they are, also inform us of the greatly influential and advanced discoveries he made.



Figure 8: Skull Drawings by Leonardo Da Vinci



Figure 9: front-facing skull Drawing by Leonardo Da Vinci

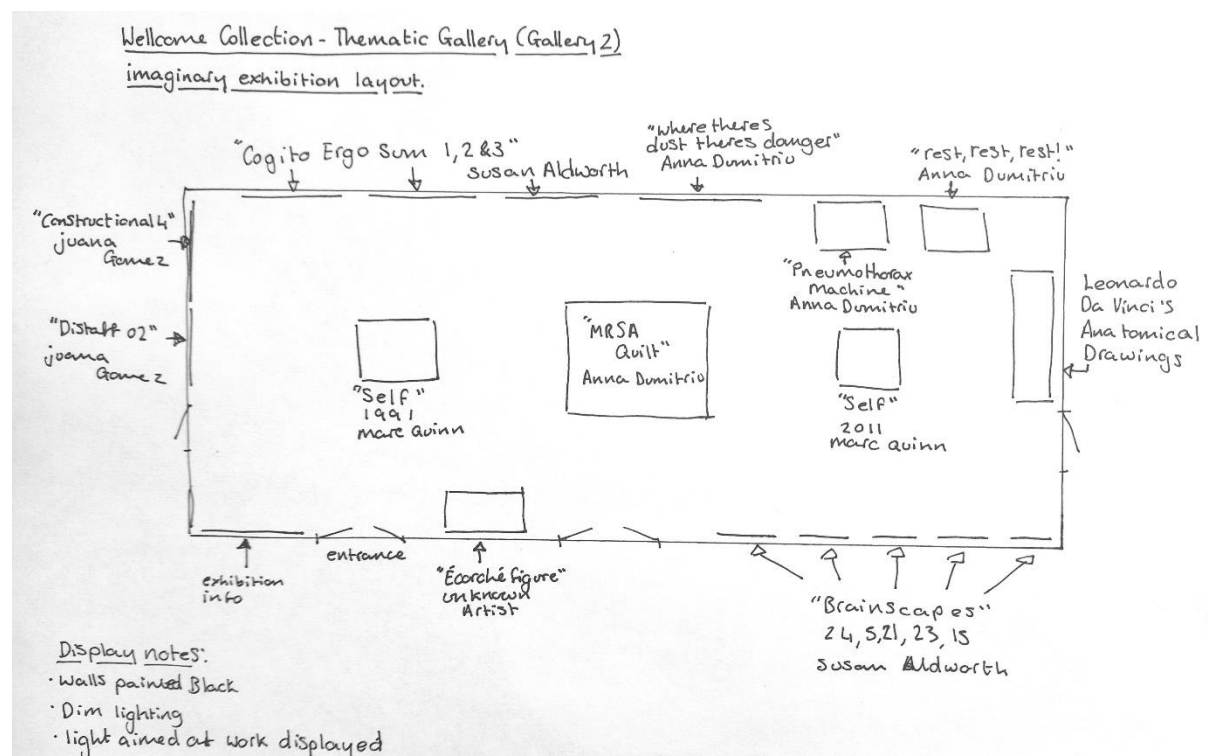


Figure 10: Exhibition Layout

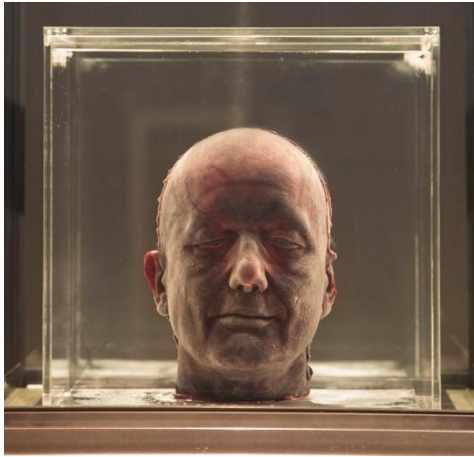


Figure 11: "self" 2011 – Marc Quinn

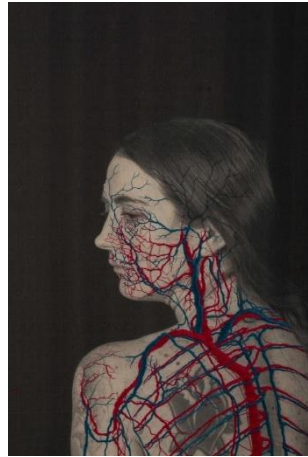


Figure 12: "Distaff 02" – Juana Gomez



Figure 13: "Brainscape 24" – Susan Aldworth

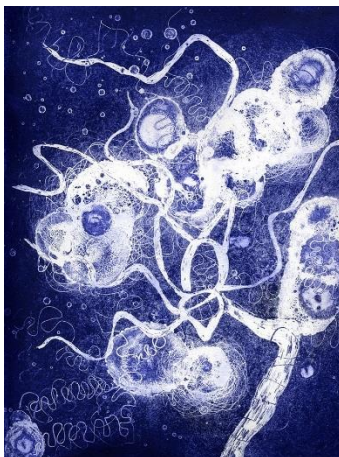


Figure 14: "Brainscape 21" – Susan Aldworth

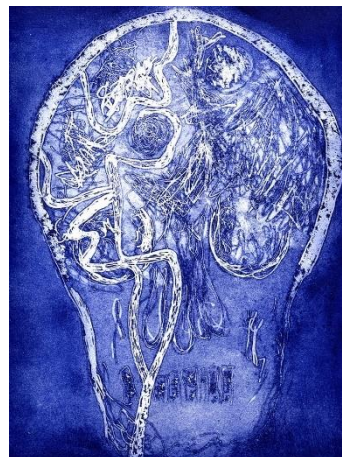


Figure 15: "Brainscape 5" – Susan Aldworth



Figure 16: "Brainscape 23" – Susan Aldworth

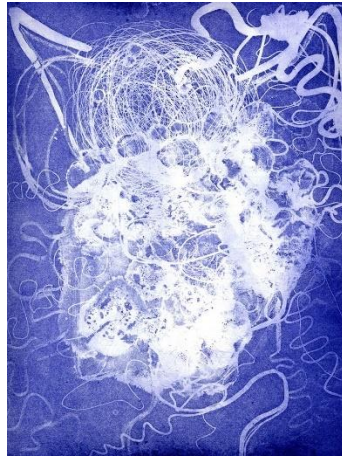


Figure 17: "Brainscape 15" – Susan Aldworth



Figure 18: "Écorché figure" – Unknown Artist

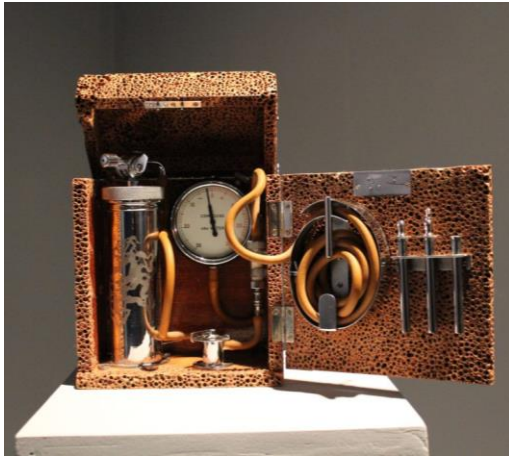


Figure 19: "Pneumothorax Machine" - Anna Dumitriu Figure 20: "Rest, Rest, Rest!" - Anna Dumitriu



Figure 21: "Where there's dust there's danger" - Anna Dumitriu

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Figure 2: Accessed from: <https://annadumitriu.co.uk/portfolio/the-mrsa-quilt/> (Accessed: 7 Feb 2022).

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Figure 9: Accessed from: <https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20130828-leonardo-da-vinci-the-anatomist> (Accessed: 14 Mar 2022).

Figure 10: Hand Drawn by me (Amber Marsh) on 15 Mar 2022

Figure 11: Accessed from: <http://marcquinn.com/artworks/single/self-2011> (Accessed: 7 Feb 2022).

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