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ADAA5001 Changemakers: Building your Personal Brand for Sustainable Employment

Exhibition Review

Tutor: Paul Duerinckx

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- 1098 words

Our exhibition was a collaboration held by first and second year photography and art students. The exhibition took place on Thursday 30th March at our campus '*Dynevor*' and my work was displayed within the Fine Art Department corridor.

I found it a stressful experience that challenged both my curatorial and creative skills. For the week leading up to the exhibition it felt that everything that could go wrong did go wrong, and I was left still finishing up my contribution on the morning of the opening day.

My contributions towards the exhibition were informed by my past experience of working within an art gallery, visits to museums and galleries and feedback from the end of my first year exhibition. Through these I have learnt that position of works are powerful in that they direct focus and show importance. When the pieces complement each other, thematically or visually, or work within the space well together, the exhibition benefits greatly. Practically, installations need to be well hung, the space measured and awareness of lighting and atmosphere considered.

Reflecting on my first year exhibition, I wanted to create something that felt more authentic to myself and my practice. I didn't want to just display what I had made but what my practice currently is, a reflection of my studies.

My first hand experience of the exhibitions at the Biennale, also acted as a pinnacle of what an exhibition has the potential to be. The curation and variety of work and perspectives, felt lively and eccentric. Being a big event and using the space really well all contributed to its success. I wanted my contribution to our show to have the same level of success.

Through group discussion, we settled on the title for the second year art segment of the exhibition, naming it 'Passing Rhythms'. Passing to show progression of time and rhythms having ups and downs that are never really complete. This represented where we were as a group at that moment in our artists journey.

In relating this title to my own practice I looked at the two words separately. I related the idea of time 'passing' to how art is passing to a more digital era. My work aimed to collaborate with A.I. and merge how both the artist and the technology could process similar ideas and visuals. In regards to rhythm, I thought of a play on words and how computer 'algor-rhythms' would generate the images and texts I intended to use.

Originally throughout the year, I had aimed to paint portraits on canvas of A.I generated variations of my face. A majority of my second year practice had been working on these canvases in preparation for this show.

Through tutorials however, I was encouraged to shift away from painting and instead focus on drawing graphite eyes. The reason for this change came from how the focus on eyes would relate better to my theme. Eyes have symbolic relation to the soul and A.I is often quoted as soulless, leading to a juxtaposition between the reference and the work.

Due to a series of challenges, the piece shifted from the eyes having their own separate focus to being a key element within a mixed media piece repurposing an old painted portrait and a large scale printout of the A.I portrait.

The work I chose to submit was a 30x30" canvas mixed media piece accompanied with a 30x30" (approx.) print of A.I. generated text explaining the premise of the work. I am very pleased with the work itself, despite not being what I originally envisioned and instead being a creation born from problem solving and stress.

My piece, *'it's all in the I's'*, combined different elements from my own practice and was unified through experimentation. I used a canvas that I had pre-painted, collaged a print-out of A.I. generated references and graphite drawn eyes. I originally planned to hang one of the canvases with a print of the reference next to each other; displayed with A.I. generated text.

In the lead up to the exhibition, we discussed the allocation of space and amongst ourselves, as an art class, we discussed what else we would incorporate. At some point we settled on a catalogue of artists and art works, as well as a series of postcards of chosen works in order to fundraise for our third year show. I submitted a piece for the postcards and also contributed a bio and a series of works that was created into an accompanying exhibition brochure by a fellow student.

I worked alongside another artist when installing their portion of the exhibition, lending assistance and a critical eye. In terms of my own work, I hung my canvas using a set of mirror plates and painted over top of them to have a cleaner finish. Hanging the paper was slightly more complicated due to it's size, which ended up being slightly bigger than planned, it warped and needed a certain method to hang it. We settled on 2 nails, one in each corner, with the text not being fully nailed in. In order to stop the warping two clips were used in each bottom corner to act as counter weights.

On the day of the exhibition, I acted as a guide for the guests that I had invited walking them around and offering insight into fellow artists works.

I felt the work that I shared a space with shared some similarities as we both had a focus on features, with hers looking at studies of hands in different media, and mine using facial features in a collage emphasising eyes.

Overall I feel conflicted about the exhibition; the final outcome of my work was something I was proud of, especially considering how it was the result of a lot of adversity but still represented my work and my second year so far. Due to the show being earlier than expected we did not feel 'ready' for this exhibition.

In summary the exhibition was a learning process for me. My main take away was that I lacked quantity. I could have expanded more and produced a larger body of these A.I. mixed media collages. This growth in confidence to display 'myself' is something I am grateful for as I struggle with self-image. Going forward I would like to experiment with this style of work that emerged through the stress of exhibition and I hope for my next one I will have a stronger body of work which I am more confident about.



