

WAYS OF PERCIEVING

CURATION ESSAY

SARAH GROSSEY

TITLE: REINCARNATION

Student Name: Sarah Grossey

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Lecturer's Name: Ryan Moule

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Entitled, 'Reincarnation', I delve into the definitions of rebirth and how they are interpreted and become part of the 'within of the realms' of art. 'Reincarnation', traditionally defined as the rebirth of a soul into another body (Cambridge Dictionary, 2021). It is a new version of something from the past. I intend to curate an experience collation of six works of art, from a variety of artists. Exploration of art through religion and spirituality, recreation and reuse, consumerism and rediscovery. To delve into the curation of humanity and how people have evolved. A process of self discovery to highlight the possibilities for change, evolvement of humanity, spiritual enlightenment and REBIRTH. As by the philosophy of Hans Ulrich Obrist (2014, p.39) my curation is a collection of knowledge;

"It is also, inevitably, a way of thinking about the world - the connections and principles that produce a collection contain assumptions, juxtapositions, findings, experimental possibilities and associations."

I intend for there to be multi-media in use. Incorporating sound and imagery to trigger the senses. A wave of over stimuli – the calm within the chaos.

Reincarnation, the religious aspects. For example, the traditional sense of 'reincarnation' portrayed in faiths such as Hinduism and Rastafari. The idea of the continuation of the soul's journey towards fulfilment. They repent, "Babylon System" being the modern reality or what modern life represents. It is described and perceived as a system of corruption – it signifies all that is wrong, anything that is corrupt or oppressive. Therefore, they reach for enlightenment and eternal life. (Uvm.edu, 2021) Although, as a belief system, a title most repent in itself, they believe in the eternal life, it is through being Rastafari that you rebirth your soul. Rastafari give up all that is 'Babylon', changing their mind-set, what they consume and how they treat themselves and their surroundings. Babylon is seen as the current institution/society or even life of which they, or we all, are fighting for freedom from.

(Wikipedia Contributors, 2021) The term itself is used in opposition to another as “Babylon”, for most enslaved Africans, it was the one part of the scriptures that was available as reference from the Bible (Rastafari | History, Beliefs, & Facts | Britannica, 2021).

This is where, I will take the opportunity to highlight areas of the world, which, I believe are in need of a rebirth. This Rasta philosophy, somewhat, has a continuation as a prominent theme.

“come to realize capitalism and the environmental destruction it has caused as Babylon, a place of destruction and greed. In order to escape this "Babylon system" a lifestyle has been employed that is focused on a correlation between man and nature.” (Uvm.edu, 2021)

It is by the nature of consumerist culture, that one is able to find difficulty on reflection of what is wrong or “Babylon” in today's society. It is easy to reflect on a time where life was far simpler and people had to work harder for what they received- things were not so readily available. It is an honest man's work, there was a genuine appreciation for possessions. However, although it may be at ease that we romanticise these past lives, there still existed greed along with other ‘unnaturals’ or rather ‘babylon’ perpetration. It is all about looking at now and forward. As in the words of Wyndham Lewis, ‘Our Vortex’;

“Our Vortex is not afraid of the past: it has forgotten its existence.

Our Vortex regards the Future as sentimental as the past.

The Future is distant, like the Past, and therefore sentimental.

The mere element ‘Past’ must be retained to sponge up and absorb our melancholy.

Everything absent, remote, requiring projection in the veiled weakness of the mind, is
sentimental.

The present can be intensely sentimental – especially if you exclude the mere element ‘Past’.

Our Vortex does not deal in reactive Action only, nor identify the Present with numbing
displays of vitality.

The new Vortex plunges to the heart of the Present.

The chemistry of the Present is different to that of the Past. With this different chemistry we
produce a New Living Abstraction.

The Rembrandt Vortex swamped the Netherlands with a flood of dreaming.

The Turner Vortex rushed a Europe with a wave of light.

We wish the Past and the Future with us, the Past to mop up our melancholy, the Future to
absorb our troublesome optimism.

With our Vortex the Present is the only thing.

Life is the Past and the Future.

The Present is Art.” (Danchev, 2011.pp81-82)

In reference to this, I have chosen pieces from past and recent periods. I plan to reflect films,
music and artistry as, almost, a display through time. The stages of rebirth and progression –

the curation of 'Reincarnation', the "exhibition itself as the relevant carrier of meaning" (Obrist, 2014.p.29).



Figure 1(Viola, 2021) "The Reflecting Pool"

I propose that in light of what it is for something to find meaning and becoming present; to look at what I intend to place within the gallery in correlation to my theme. Upon the entrance of the 'Mission Gallery', I chose to have projections of moving image piece, that appeared in the 'Real Life' exhibition (Tate, 2011), Bill Viola's, 'The Reflecting Pool', of which will be projected on the first wall of the gallery upon entry (on left) and onto the floor (if possible). This way the spectators can in some ways be reflecting upon themselves. I have chosen this piece to showcase the initial theme of this exhibit. It is a transition, for the spectator to visually encounter the the fragility and frailty of "human nature and life experience" (Tate, 2011). I believe that this film, visual installation is symbolic of spiritual

purification, death and rebirth. In this I hope for an individual to gain an initial submergence into what 'reincarnation' can mean.

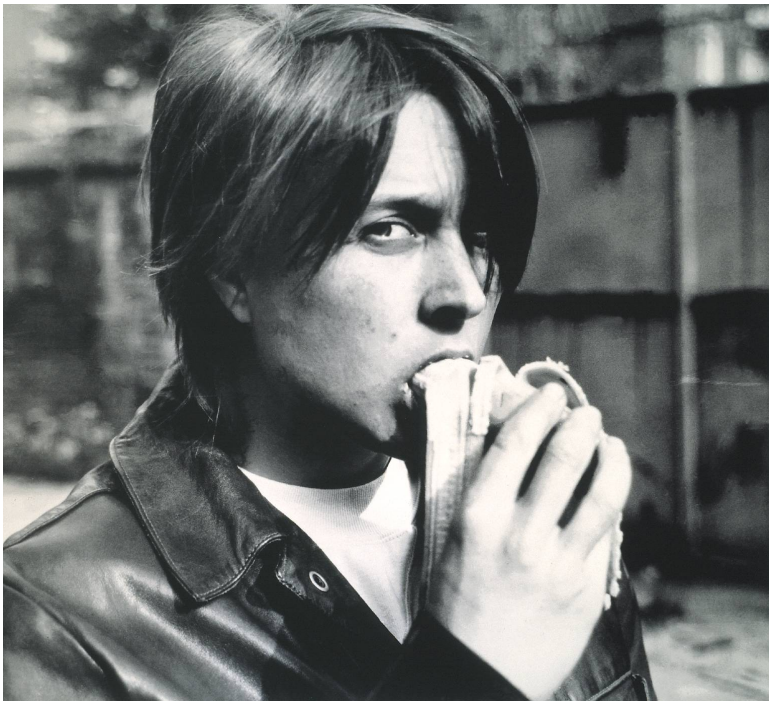
Spirituality majorly transforms a person's outlook on life and belonging. It is a form of redefining life and an exploration of the possibilities that life can become. This is especially evident, once a person has discovered the unbounded abilities and infinite ways of perceiving a world beyond our own.

Therefore, I would hang my second piece, 'Pity', upon the back wall of the first room upon entrance, in-between the projections, almost. This way I believe that this will create an exposure and further strange shadowing and surroundings for the two, quite opposite, works of art to merge. William Blake, an English poet and painter, is a prime example of an exploration for the freedom of expression. His piece, 'Pity' completed in 1795, displays Blake's, "Romantic idea of artistic truth through existential pain and possibility of spiritual rebirth through art" (Tate, 2016). Along side this, I would possibly like to plaster one of his poems to further explain this interpretation and feeling, for the spectators to get close to that for themselves.



Figure 2 (Tate, 2011) "Pity"

As the audience moves through into the dome of the gallery they will be met with the sounds of music, specifically 'Babylon System' by Bob Marley and the Wailers. This originally sings about the enslavement of ancestors, however, in its entirety is pointing out the corruption of the world that people once lived in, 'Me say de Babylon system is the vampire, falling empire,' (Marley, 1979). I have chosen this song to be subtly playing to get the audience mind thinking, questioning its relevance, forcing them listen more intently to the lyrics.



3Figure 3(Tate, 2021) "Eating a Banana"



4Figure 4 (Tate, 2021) "Self Portrait and Two Fried Eggs"

Within the dome of the Mission Gallery I plan to place the works of Sarah Lucas. Her photography will be suspended around the curvature of the gallery, hung from the ceiling rather than on the walls. In a way constructing this space design for, 'the free circulation of people through a public space' (Obrist, 2014 p. 28). Going against the manufactured exhibitions – this will allow the audience to view the pieces however they wish, and to walk around the entirety of the image.

Sarah Lucas, uses a multitude of medias and reuse of old, unexpected materials (sustainability) in her work. She also makes constant reference to the questioning of gender and how people define themselves; works such as the sculpture ‘Two Fried Eggs and a Kebab, 1992’, and the photographs ‘Self- Portrait with Fried Eggs’ and ‘Eating a Banana, 1990’, reflect this. I have chosen these photographs as they create discussion aligning with gender discovery, transitioning to somebody new. The ideology of becoming the person you feel is most yourself. Questioning gender norms and encouraging change. This can be interpreted as not just the community of transitioning individuals – where one may feel they were assigned the wrong gender at birth – but also the exploration of becoming a profoundly more honest version of oneself. This, I propose is a form of reincarnation and rebirth before death in itself. The series of self-portraits I have selected are about perception. Lucas defines herself with as ‘Masculine appearance’ (Tate, 2021), in which she challenges her own identity, as well as, the common stereotypes portrayed of gender and sexuality, “She creates an image of defiant femininity” (Tate, 2021).

“A certain resonance between the idea of curating and the contemporary idea of the creative self” (Obrist, 2014, p. 23).



Figure 5 (Arthur.io, 2021)

Duane Hanson's piece, 'Supermarket Shopper, 1970', will be displayed centrally, in between the two suspending images. This is a 'photo realistic' sculpture highlighting the changes in consumerist culture. Despite this artwork being near 50 years old, I would argue that the changes in this time to the consumerist culture have increasingly become worse and far more economically driven. This is to a point where people do not question where their consumerist goods are coming from, how they've been made, whether it is sustainable or if it has an environmental impact. Nonetheless, since the 80s where charities like Greenpeace grew in popularity, people have become increasingly more aware, or rather, the ongoing realisation of its negative impacts. More recently, we see a retraction and a repulsion towards corporations and large companies, with the attempts of people trying to reduce impact and encourage sustainability in the way they consume. My goal through this sculpture is for the audience to have that recognition of the inhumanity in consumerism. It is a system in need of a rebirth, it is 'Babylon'.

Painting displayed on wall
next to film projections.

The music will be playing from
hidden/discrete speakers. A faint
surround sound of the song playing on
a continuous loop.

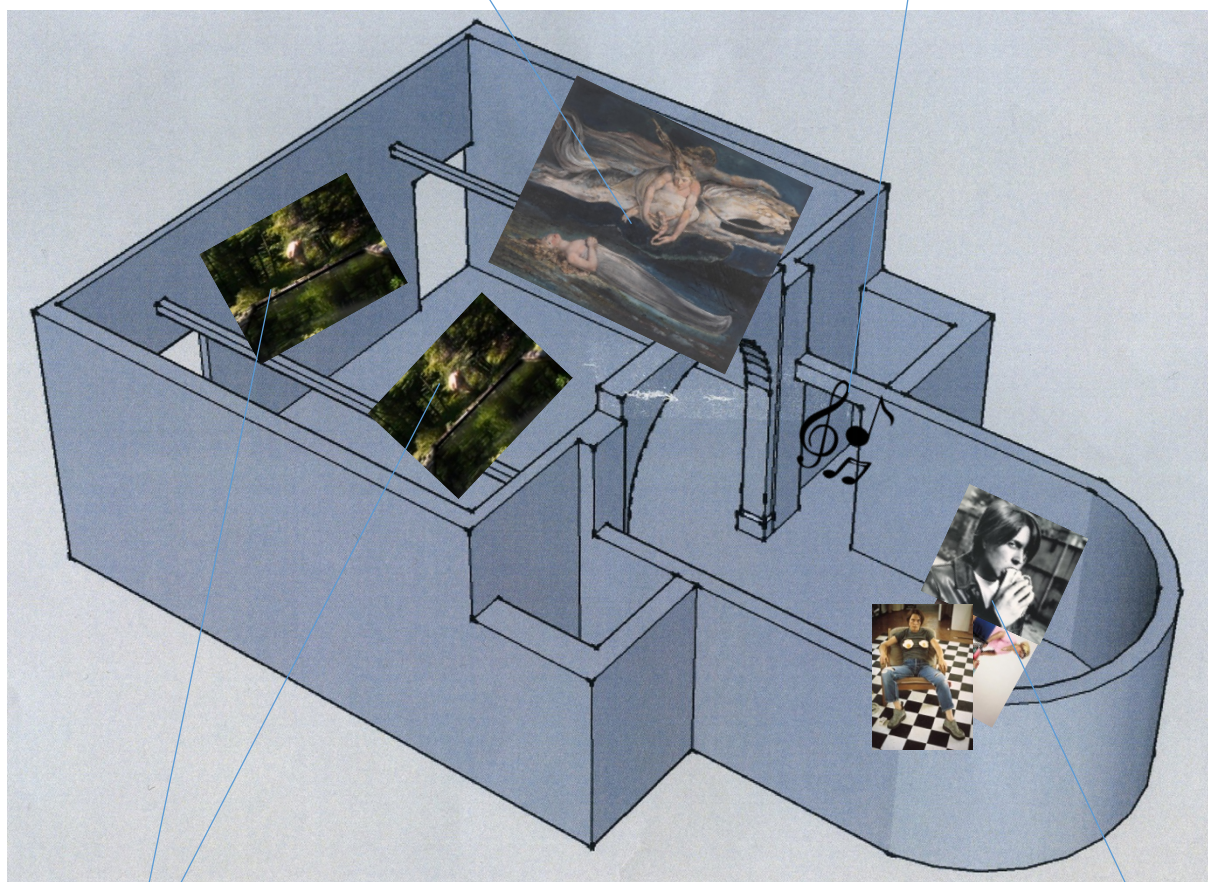


Figure 6 Mission Gallery Floorplan

Film is projected on one wall and onto
the floor of the same room. This is the
first piece the audience will witness
upon entrance of the gallery.

This is difficult to display in diagram
form – the photographs are suspended
either side of the sculpture. This is
placed, somewhat centrally in the
dome.

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