

In this essay i will be discussing the importance of lighting within art, i will be explaining this through giving 2 examples of varied exhibitions i feel used lighting very effectively and displayed artworks under a different perspective purely through the use of lighting. To support my opinions on these exhibitions i will be referencing some of my own work and experiments i have done with lighting during my first term in university.

1. DSA Light Boxes in the *Gardner Museum Revisited* exhibition by Kota Ezawa, Christopher Grimes Gallery in Santa Monica.



The first exhibition i would like to look at is the Gardner Museum Revisited exhibition by Kota Ezawa, Christopher Grimes Gallery in Santa Monica. This exhibition is interesting when referencing the use of light in gallery spaces as the works themselves were made on top of the lighting device themselves meaning that there is no need for exterior lighting, in fact these works have a greater effect when in a dimmed light or a naturally lit area, outside of any sort of direct lighting sources. This choice to create the work onto the light box itself was decided upon by the artist and provided with help from the gallery, these boxes are 'Standard Slim Line Light Box in an anodized silver finish was the chosen model for this installation. With a narrow

2.75" depth and hinged side opening, this model was customised with LED backlit strips to provide bright, evenly diffused and energy efficient illumination.' now this gives a lovely effect for the work as it stands out from the rest of the gallery but isn't overpowering or harsh on the eye, meaning these works will get a lot of attention and people will be subconsciously drawn to these works.

This exhibition has taken my interest as it uses the same premis as my latest experiment with light was to do with lighting coming through the work its self and as we see this artworks are on lightboxes, i used the same idea with a slightly different approach as i displayed my work onto a window allowing the primary lighting to come from behind the piece, with my personal experiment i found that you require different times of day for different effects and that you need a slightly dark room for the best outcome.



2

Although with artificial lighting coming from lightboxes this may change and we can see how important the light is to the piece as it gives it that luminosity and vibrance that you wouldnt get without those LED's within the lightbox. These works are lit under a softened natural light within a open space. I personally believe these works should have been displayed in a darker room so that they have the chance to stand out from other works and use the light they emit to really show their importance as these works aren't just artworks but are a memory of artworks that display

illuminated images that recreate thirteen works of art stolen from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in 1990. These paintings were all made to size (of their original artwork) and explore the use of minimalism. These paintings benefit with having this lightbox lighting because of the simplistic abstractions that the paintings display which are representations of paintings and sketches by Rembrandt, Vermeer, Manet and Degas.

2. Laurence Edwards, Maquettes Messums, Tisbury, Wiltshire



3

With this second exhibition we have sculptural work made by Laurence Edwards displayed in Maquettes Messums, Tisbury, Wiltshire. These works are displayed in a barn like building with hardly any natural light and rather harsh down-facing artificial lighting. This lighting works beautifully with these sculptures in my opinion as it gives the work a harsh dark feel which makes these figures look worn and it really shows the texture to the material due to the harsh shadows and concentrated highlights. This works differently to natural lighting due to the concentrated face of the light compared to a dispersed light which would give the work a flatter feel. This is less effective for a sculpture like this one as it would lose one of its main points of interest being its texture and the contemplation of its haptic feel. Therefore it's lighting displayed as it is will make the piece pop out from its surroundings bringing all

attention to them. This is important as the sculpture is the purpose of this particular exhibition and it's presence should be felt.



4

This sort of harsh lighting can be seen in my recent work below, i did this as my piece was a 3D piece meaning i wanted to show the depth of the work. I did this through having a direct light on one side of the piece with a white wall on the other to reflect some of the light back onto the darker points of the sculpture so that it didn't lose its detail but kept that depth perception that i required. I feel this sort of lighting is important to 3D art works as it can really change how the piece is seen, especially if it is being seen digitally as it can become flat without that lighting to bring out it's real intensity and form. Although very similarly to the exhibition this work is made of rather dull colours, i believe that this lighting specifically has really changed the art work and has brought out some intensity that maybe at first glance might be overlooked.



5

Therefore to conclude, i believe the answer to the question 'is lighting important?' is yes, yes it is. I believe it is an integral part of how we as artists think of and perceive artworks. This belief comes from my knowledge and understanding of light that i have gained and done research on throughout this first term wether that be in university or through personal exploration and that has led me to believe that it is one of the most important concepts to consider.

Bibliography.

Silverio, S.S, 2018 January 21, 'The Crime of Art (Hollywood Edition) at Christopher Grimes Gallery'

<https://artandcakela.com/2018/01/21/the-crime-of-art-hollywood-edition-at-christopher-grimes-gallery/>

Villarreal, J.V, 2019 January 15, 'Light boxes of the 13 stolen works from the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum on view in exhibition'

<https://artdaily.cc/news/84348/Light-boxes-of-the-13-stolen-works-from-the-Isabella-Stewart-Gardner-Museum-on-view-in-exhibition#.Y7SbwS-l3q1>

Avila, F.A, 2022 Nov 18, 'DSA Light Boxes in Contemporary Art Gallery Exhibition'

<https://dsasignage.com/dsa-light-boxes-in-contemporary-art-gallery-exhibition/>

Russell, S.R, 2017 October 17, 'Laurence Edwards SCULPTURE'

<https://messumswiltshire.com/exhibitions/private-viewing-room-laurence-edwards/>

Wyatt, R.W, 2022 August 21, 'Wiltshire wanderings'

<https://bathnewseum.com/2022/08/21/wiltshire-wanderings/>