

Ways of Perceiving

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Course Title: Illustration

Word count: 1625

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Delving Deeper

Introduction

My curation exhibition is set to challenge the premise that an audience spends little time viewing works of art. A study by Smith (2001) investigated this hypothesis by performing a study where 150 individuals were invited to look at 6 pieces of art, finding that “the mean time spent in front of a work was 27.2 seconds (SD=33.7).” (Smith p.231) and the median was only 17 seconds.

Designated “Delving Deeper” my exhibition would encourage children to do just that by encouraging them to question that which is presented in the world around them by presenting artworks as an evolving narrative as opposed to just isolated pictures from different historic periods. Prioritizing works with vaguer meanings but linked to historical events/ periods of time, such as Roy Lichtenstein’s ‘Whaam!’ where the viewer is drawn beyond their initial reaction to seeing a picture of a plane.

It is my intention to present my exhibition in recently abandoned/old (but safe) school buildings, I believe this setting to be relevant as these environments would present a distorted image of a normal place of learning. However, I would make changes to the space to be more immersive aiming to appeal to the senses and encourage creativity. The exhibition would move around the country transforming former school buildings before cleaning up and moving on to give children of all locations equal opportunity to visit.

In each room there will be small clues about why the pieces were created as well as having one actor per room dressed appropriately for the period to engage with the children and stimulate them in their learning. There will be music representative of the time playing, as well in some of the rooms offering the opportunity to try delicacies from the time.

“Children are active learners who need to be involved in activities which use as many senses as possible.” (Wortman 1988) In order to engage the children to enjoy art and understand its meaning I

want to take the artwork out of the boring museum environment where all they are able to do is engage with their visual and auditory senses. I propose to encourage kinaesthetic, visual and auditory learners by altering the environment that they normally associate with learning and engage with their desire to feel, smell, taste, examine and move. There will be five different rooms each centred around a single dominant piece of art created during the period being presented. It is my goal to encourage the audience to look at the narrative and consider influences behind the art and understand its position relative to historical events, political views and controversial topics.

Ned Block wrote “[T]here is a difference in what it is like to hear sounds in French before and after you have learned the language” (N. Block 1995 p.234) my proposition is to educate children about the purpose behind the arts creation and to inspire them to create themselves. By considering more deeply the meaning of other art pieces and learning how to dissect subjects from works they can consider this deeper understanding in their own pieces. Illuminating that art can be a very effective way to frame ones emotions about a subject at the time that they can later reflect upon. The pieces I have chosen both represent a historical time period and fit in with the primary school curriculum so they can continue learning about the art has and the relative eras after the exhibition closes.

Egyptian



Fig. One



Fig. Two

J. Mark (2017) wrote “Art is an essential aspect of any civilization.” which I believe is a characteristic that is often overlooked when delivering history in schools, this has influenced my decision to design an exhibition which showcases the importance of art. My rooms will be set out in chronological order, therefore, displayed in my first room would be work from the Egyptian era.

Constructed to look like the desert in ancient Egypt with replicas of the sphinx, pyramid and sand to engage with their kinaesthetic senses. The focus of this room would be pieces from the tomb chapel of Nebamun which depict a romanticised interpretation of what living in ancient Egypt was like at the time. In the same text J. Mark states “All Egyptian art is based on the perfect balance because it reflects the ideal world of the gods.” this connects with my exhibition theme as Egyptians were strong believers that depicting an idealised image of life would assist the rich in the afterlife which often goes unnoticed. There will also be a short sentence on a wall of the room in Egyptian which the pupils will be given tools to help them decipher the meaning of. As well as engaging their touch senses by presenting canopic jars where children can feel which organ is where by the use of similar feeling substances.

Ancient Greece



Fig. Three

Presented in my second room would be 'Venus De Milo' by Greek artist Alexandros of Antioch.

Venus de Milo is a sculpture carved from marble in 150 BC depicting Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love and beauty, however she was occasionally "Worshipped as a goddess of the sea and of seafaring; she was also honoured as a goddess of war, especially at Sparta, Thebes, Cyprus and other places"(The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020.) Connecting to my theme of Delving Deeper as many of the children will not be able to identify this statue as Aphrodite or know what she symbolises, in addition situated in the room will be an actor dressed as Zeus and facts about various gods. Which the children will have to correctly match to photos of other sculptures in order to get them to learn about how art influences religion and worship.

Roman Mosaics

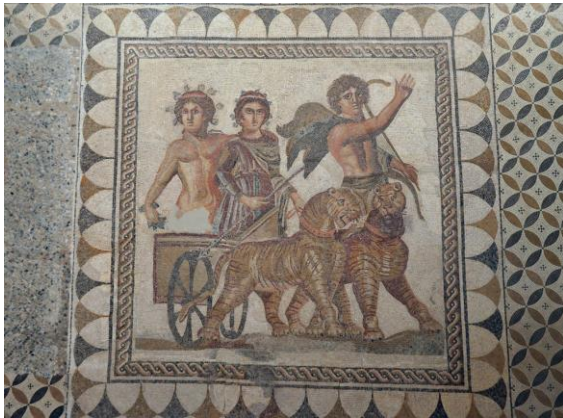


Fig. Four

For my third room the former classroom would be transformed to represent a roman bath with fountains, pillars and arches. Centrally placed, there would be a sand pit with a mosaic obscured beneath that the children will have to expose. These mosaics link to my theme of delving deeper as roman used such pieces of art as a sign of wealth and hoped to demonstrate their faith to the gods in the mosaics and pottery. The Roman period was historically valid within the British Isles with the primary curriculum focusing on roman battles, baths and architecture but not really the art.

Bayeux Tapestry

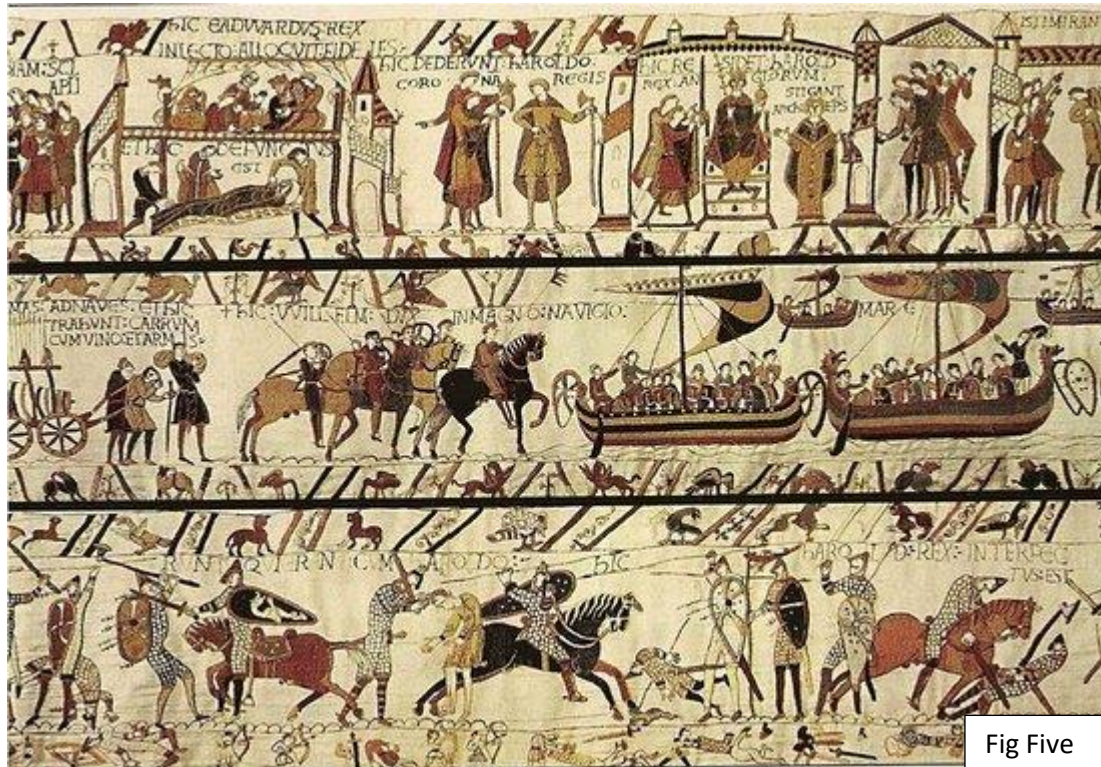


Fig Five

As an illustration student I felt it was important to add a historic piece of art which tells a narrative, which lead me to the Bayeux Tapestry. The tapestry, acting almost like a storyboard, depicts the Norman invasion and conquest of England in 1066 (focusing on the Battle of Hastings). This fits in with my exhibition theme as Children should consider reading the tapestry as if it were a book to gain insight from it. This will also show the difference in our technological evolution when compared with Lichtensteins *Whaam!* which would be displayed in the final room. In this room there will be a loom for children to engage in the process of weaving together with a Norman shield which the actor can use to engage with them.



Fig. Six

To round off the exhibition we move onto the Pop Art Movement where I want the focus to be 'Whaam!' by Roy Lichtenstein – Fig 6. I have decided to display this piece due to the backstory of Lichtenstein and the fact that due to the comic book style and bright colours the meaning of the piece is overlooked. Lichtenstein served in WW2 and that is believed to be the inspiration of the piece showing one plane shooting down the opposition in a bright way, thought to represent how the media had glorified the war and desensitised the public to it. Transforming this room by making it look like a field with replicas of war objects for them to interact with, ration meals/snacks for them to taste also be cans and everyday objects for them to draw to greater understand the meaning of pop art.

Collectively these pieces give us all an insight into how life at the time of these events is depicted and how different mediums/materials were used in their creation. However, it is important that the children consider how the subject of war is the underlying link between all of these varied pieces. Hickman (2020) wrote "Since the dawn of time, wars and battles have had a significant impact on the course of history" and how this concept has influenced the creation of each piece. In the earlier era/pieces these wars are not directly acknowledged, instead the focus is on other aspects of life

such as that associated with a desire to find favour with the gods. In Whaam! and the Bayeux

Tapestry the link is blatant but both represent a distorted view based upon the intent of the creator.

Exhibition Map

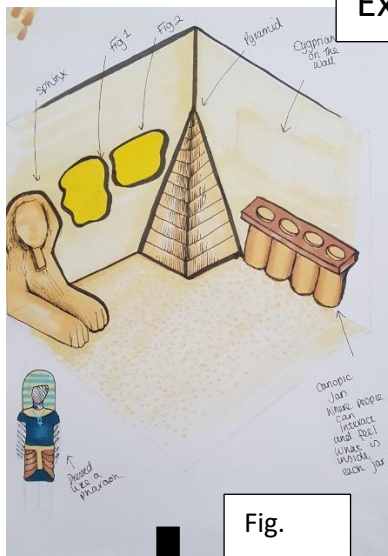


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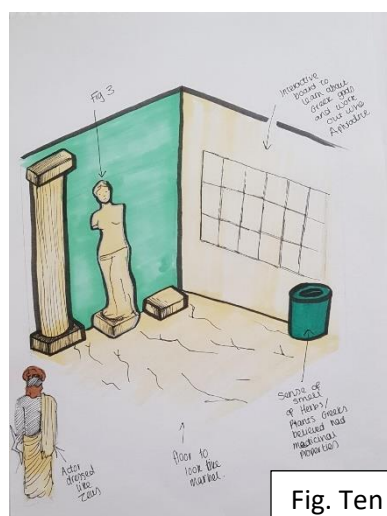
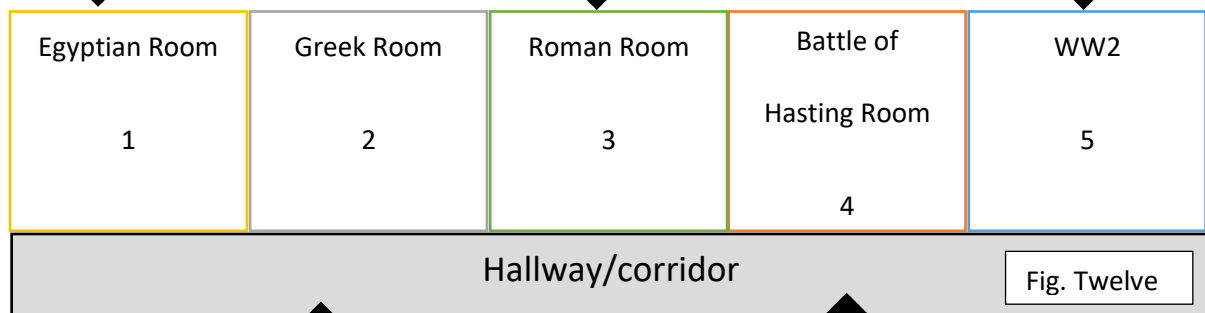


Fig. Ten

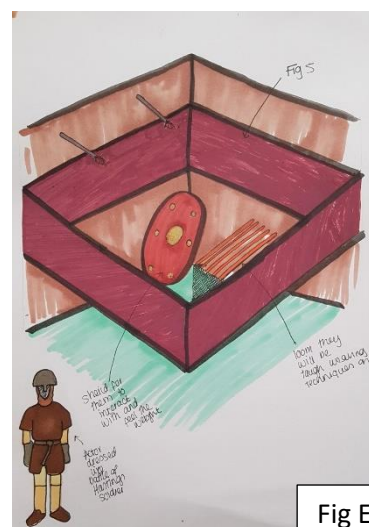


Fig Eleven

As shown above, my exhibition will take place using multiple rooms in the host buildings. As the idea of my exhibition is that it can be accessed by all and is mobile the layout and positioning of rooms would need to adapt and be altered to suit the available spaces. It is important for my rooms to be inclusive for all so I have tried to make them accessible, but the rooms will likely need to change based on the exhibition location. My intention is that the space will encourage many spectators to question the purpose of art and be inspired to create art works of their own, appreciating the art for its importance and diversity.

Referencing

Figures

Fig. One: Unknown (1350. BC) *Nebamun fowling in the marshes*, [18th Dynasty, paint on plaster, 83 x 98 cm], Tomb-chapel of Nebamun, Thebes

Fig. Two: Unknown (1350. BC) *Surveying the fields for Nebamun*, [18th Dynasty, paint on plaster, 106.7 x 45.8 cm], Tomb-chapel of Nebamun, Thebes, Egypt

Fig. Three: Alexandros of Antioch, (150 BC) *Venus de Milo*, [Marble statue of Aphrodite, 203 cm (6ft 8in)]
The Louvre, Paris from Melos

Fig. Four: Unknown (3rd century AD) *Mosaic of the Triumph of Bacchus* [Tesserae and stone on floor], Museum of Archaeology, Seville

Fig. Five: (1070) *Bayeux Tapestry*, [embroidery stitched panels of linen cloth (nine panels in total) 6800cm x 50cm] Museum of Bayeux in Normandy,

Fig. Six: Lichtenstein, R (1963) *Whaam!*, [Magna acrylic and oil on canvas 170 x 400cm] Tate Modern, London

Fig. Seven: Bayliss, K (2020) *Egyptian Room* [Alcohol markers and black liner pen on paper]

Fig. Eight: Bayliss, K (2020) *Greek Room* [Alcohol markers and black liner pen on paper]

Fig. Nine: Bayliss, K (2020) *Roman Room* [Alcohol markers and black liner pen on paper]

Fig. Ten: Bayliss, K (2020) *Battle of Hastings Room* [Alcohol markers and black liner pen on paper]

Fig. Eleven: Bayliss, K (2020) *World War 2 Room* [Alcohol markers and black liner pen on paper]

Fig. Twelve: Bayliss, K (2020) *Exhibition map* [Digital Generated Image]

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