

Student Name: Cara Edwards

P Number: 2004414

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My exhibition is called Immersive. It will feature five pieces and the collection includes the work of four different artists or creators.

This exhibition will explore the theories of immersive and interactive art in providing multi-sensory experiences. Through curation, I have selected relevant pieces of work, which will support my concept.

A comment by Frank Rose in The Art of Immersion book, talking about television, none the less, fits in to the narrative of my own proposed exhibition. He says

“A new type of narrative is emerging- one that’s told through many media at once in a way that is nonlinear, that’s participatory and often game-like, and that’s designed to be immersive.” (Rose, 2011, p.3)

I have chosen Swansea’s Singleton Park as the proposed venue for my exhibition because I feel that the city already attracts Art and Design students and visitors to galleries, and a pop-up attraction will offer them an exciting new interactive experience, not usually available locally. My exhibition will be located centrally within the spacious open parkland.

Also, with this exhibition I hope to change the preconceptions of people who do not usually visit conventional venues, that all museums and galleries are boring and show them that it

can be a fun activity for family and friends to enjoy together, giving the visitor an unique experience to remember.

I propose to build an 80 metre by 105 metre exhibition space divided into five exhibition rooms with a connecting corridor, public conveniences, a small café space, seating area, a pay desk and a small entrance space. (figure 1 below).



Fig. 1: *Conceptual Template of the Exhibition*

I was conscious that I needed to consider the implications of curative decisions and therefore selected both my space and pieces with care. All internal walls will be painted a stark white. I feel the use of white in the space will further enhance the psychological feeling of entering an unknown void.

Whilst discussing the advantages of having white walls as a curative decision, Obrist says “other visual cues in the space were reduced to a minimum, resulting in a clean, spare gallery

space". (Obrist, 2014, p. 29). There's going to be a lot of sensory input inside room, and I want the walls to be blank canvas.

The relationship between all the selected works is the fact that the audience are an essential component in completing the artwork. The audience's interactive actions give life to the pieces completing them fully. Each experience is different, as it is dependent on the individual's own actions and reactions.



Fig. 2: *Your Blind Passenger*

At the entrance the audience will experience to place 'Your Blind Passenger' by Olafur Eliasson (Figure 2). I have chosen this piece because it works with perception and makes the exhibition goers have a visual experience. I want my audience to use all their senses and feel, rather than theorize about the art.

I want the first piece to make a dramatic impact by taking people into a new world of experience, leaving their conventional world behind.

The artwork will be a 45-metre-long tunnel made out of plywood. It will be filled with thick fog, meaning the viewer's visibility is limited to around 1.5 metres. The purpose of this is to compel visitors to rely on more than one sense to navigate themselves around the installation. There will also be an area which will be lighter in colour near to the exit, to allow the eye to transition to the brighter light before leaving the space to view the next exhibit.

Eliasson refers to this in the Guardian, stating "Very quickly you realise, and I mean this quite literally, that you are not completely blind after all, you have a lot of other senses which start to kick in," He elaborates on this by explaining "It shows that the relativity of our senses is much higher than we think, we have it in our capacity to recalibrate or at least stop being numb." (Eliasson, 2019).

Like Eliasson, my aim is to challenge and change people's traditional experience of visiting museums and galleries by making visitors a part of the exhibition experience, not mere observers.



Fig. 3: *Clearing VII*

This piece was created by Antony Gormley in 2019. I want this piece 'Clearing VII' to be in Room 2, which is entered via a small corridor.

The Clearing will fill the exhibition space with 8km of metal. Black aluminium loops and coils will expand around the space, restricted only by the borders of the room itself such as walls, floor and ceiling. Viewers will clamber and duck through the jungle of metal in much the same way as they would through overgrown vegetation. This means that the viewer sees the installation from different viewpoints and perspectives, constantly seeing something new and immersing themselves in the visual experience and also surrounded by the clanging sound of metal. They are literally walking through a giant scribble transposed into 3-dimensional form.

Antony Gormley's philosophy is that "Art is not about understanding, it's about experience." (Gormley, 2014). In my opinion this would be a great addition to a multi-sensory gallery

experience and links well with my concept of immersing the visitor in the artwork itself and allowing them to be part of the environment.



Fig. 4: *Your Uncertain Shadow*

The third room will be a long and tall space. It will have five different coloured spotlights placed on the floor and positioned side by side. The wall will be white and as shown in figure 4 above, all the colours blend together to form a white light. Visitors to the room change the exhibit by creating shadows, which appear as colourful silhouettes. The visitor's movement causes the white light to show its original rainbow composition.

In 'Abstract: The Art of Design' on Netflix, Eliasson said art is about collaboration:

"You are a co-author with me, the main protagonist. What you see is quite up to you."

('Abstract: The Art of Design', 2019). He trusts the audience to engage with their own senses to add to the sensory experience.

Although Eliasson is the architect of the experience in this installation, the visitor is also an essential part of the creative exhibition, as he or she creates and changes what is viewed.



Fig. 5: *The Artist is Present*

The fourth room will be white with a large enough space for the onlookers to view the performance art. The performance will be the famous artist Abramović sitting at a table in a pose (which is similar to the painting called 'Whistler's Mother' by James McNeill Whistler) with another chair on other side. The audience would be invited to be a part of the exhibit by being able to enter the performance space and sit directly opposite her, look at her for a few minutes before being moved on. This would continue all day during the exhibition opening hours, every day for the duration of the exhibition.

I want the visitors to engage and experience sitting quietly, locking eyes in silence. In the multi-media age in which we live, for many it would be an opportunity to experience a different form of interaction with an artist. Taking time to really look into and study

someone's face is something we do not often take time out to do and can provoke unexpected emotions.



Fig. 6: *Richie's Plank Experience*

The fifth room is a Virtual Reality (VR) Experience using Richie's Plank Experience, developed by company called Toast VR in 2016.

Visual Artist Jess Johnson described VR as "the most effective conduit from one brain to another that's ever existed. With VR you can seduce someone into accepting an entirely new reality." (Johnson, 2020).

Whilst a number of major galleries use VR to immerse visitors in a virtual famous painting for example, I chose this because it provides opportunities to investigate both interactivity and immersion to provide a multi-sensory experience.

I will use a medium sized room with 5 wooden planks measuring 1.92 metres. There will also be 5 virtual reality headsets and 5 sets of 50-inch digital screens for audience to share experience. Staff will be on hand to attend to any safety or technical issues.

Visitors will be invited to participate in a virtual scenario of walking on a plank which is 80 stories high. According to their own response to the psychological experience, they may walk

the plank or freeze and shake. At the same time other visitors can view their reaction and may also experience emotions such as fear or amusement. Richie's Plank Experience shows the user what an intense level of immersion VR can cause.

I wanted to make the exhibition accessible to as wide a range of visitors as possible. However, even though I have tried to provide an accessible space, there will be limitations regarding the suitability of some installations for certain users. Each exhibit will be clearly labelled, and full risk assessment will be carried out. For example, the first exhibit may cause an adverse reaction in some asthmatics, especially if exposed for long periods. The second room is not suitable for people who are wheelchair users or are not very mobile. These rooms for example can be by passed through corridors if not suitable for an individual.

The aim of my exhibition is to make the viewers more than mere spectators, including them as an integral part of each exhibit. I want them to come away having experienced a fun and visceral, exhilarating experience, which they will remember for a long time. I want to challenge the visitor to use all of their senses to navigate their journey through the experiences I propose to provide them with.

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Video

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Figure 3: Gormley, A. (2019) *Clearing VII*. Available at: <https://www.artlyst.com/reviews/antony-gormley-plays-perception-space-ra/> (Accessed: 28th March 2021).

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Figure 6: Bleacher Report Football. (2019) *Walk the Plank*. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArlavrOFpkl> (Accessed: 28th March 2021).