

Exhibition 2.0

(ADAA5010)

Written Evaluation

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Word Count: 1,333 + Figure List and Referencing

This evaluation reflects on my contributions to our 2nd year group exhibition of fine art and photography, titled Damage Control. It shows the evolution of my ideas, from initial proposals to the final installation, and examines how my work functioned within the exhibition space. I will also discuss my research and influences, my personal contribution to the collaborative processes, and the development of both my practical and online skills.

Research

The two main artist influences for this body of work and exhibition outcome have been Alix Marie and Annegret Soltau. Marie's focus on the human body and all the visceral grotesqueness that comes with it, has really resonated with the anatomical subject matter I have explored within this project. Her photographic sculptures and multi-textural installation pieces have inspired me to consider how relating the physical material of the work to the subject matter, can truly elevate it's context and provide the audience with a more interesting sensory experience. Her manipulation and consideration of print and surface have also been integral to my installed work, as well as my photobook.



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Soltau's stitched photography and abstraction of her own body, gave me the ideas to experiment with sewing together prints and pages, particularly using my own hair as a material. Her work has allowed me to feel more comfortable with ugliness and untidiness in the name of art and self expression. Both artists have inspired me to lean into the raw nature of human anatomy and my personal morbid curiosity of specimens and preserving natural elements - Without undermining the importance of simplicity and letting the work just 'be'.



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As well as these artists, I've been exploring the theory of animism by focusing on the symbolic and physical connections between humans, animals and other organisms. This exploration has led me to think about how common traits such as hair, skin, organs, and limbs can be abstracted through photographic processes and print to the point where their species-specific identity becomes ambiguous or they belong to another being entirely.

I have also been inspired by scientific specimens, especially from the Victorian era, in which animal and human remains were preserved, dissected, and catalogued in jars, cases, and books. Though I was unable to attend during the semester, the Surgeons' Hall Museum in Edinburgh was of great interest to me. Their collection of human and animal remains, wet specimens, surgical tools, and various medical curiosities date back to the Victorian era. More locally, I visited Swansea Museum which also has a collection of historical taxidermy, bones and animal specimens - both catalogued in cases and wet, dissected specimens. These places influenced the way I thought about displaying my work as though it is an organic material or an archival object.

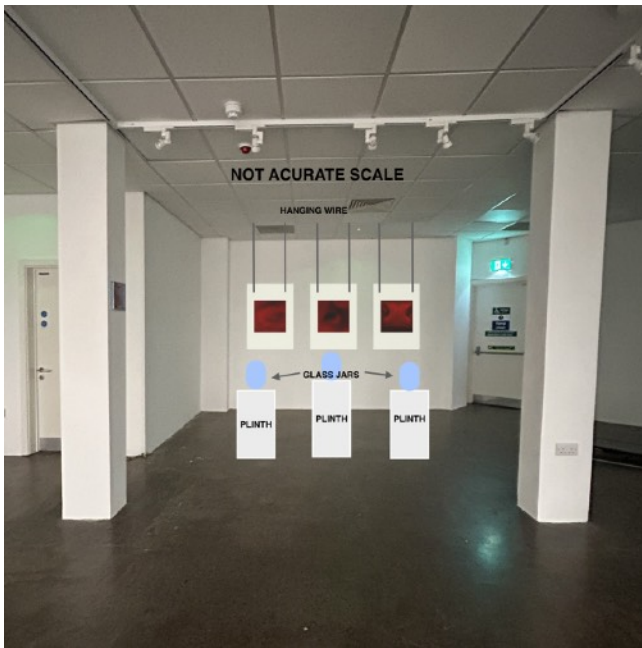
Idea Development and Personal Practice

Exploring different materials was essential for this project. I tested various paper stocks, stitching methods, made 'dummy' versions of a photobook, experimented with the use of hair and recycled materials. I also considered creating specimen jars for installation and suspended elements. My experimentation with risoprinting became the main part of the

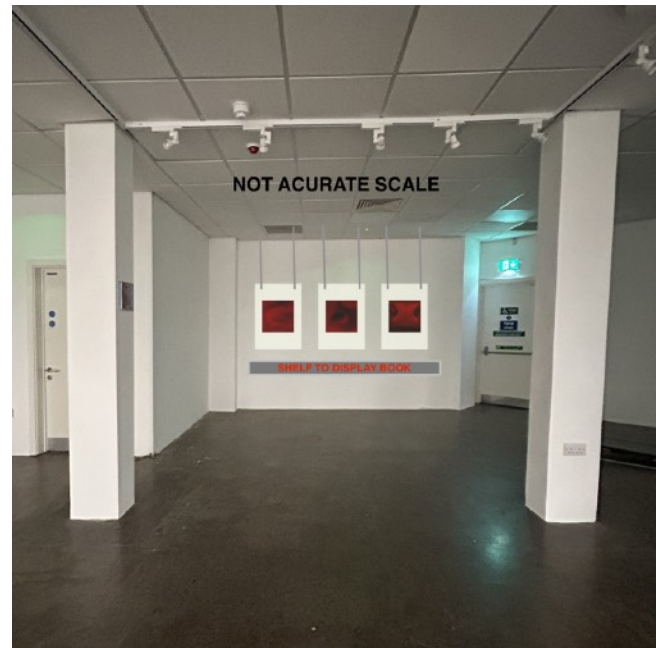
development phase, which involved consistent preparation and communication with a different department and art technicians to achieve the best possible outcome.

Therefore, this project involved multiple proposal iterations, each showing the evolution and refinement of my ideas.

(Diagrams used in proposal iterations):



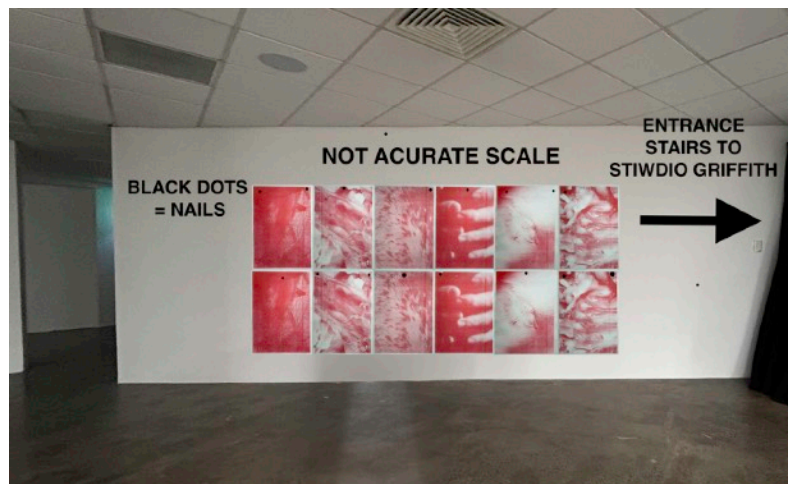
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These were my ideas of how I wanted to display the final work, however after further testing, finally printing my book and consulting with Ryan, I chose to leave the idea of suspended pieces in favour of a more simplistic display (similar to Figure 8). This allowed me to use all the images included in the book in a way that felt more grounded and polished.

I was also interested in the sustainability and afterlife of the work and considered how my exhibition prints might be repurposed as pieces for purchase after the show, therefore care was taken to preserve the prints and their quality. This focus on sustainability and eco-consciousness is also reflected in my installation through the use of recycled paper and rusted nails, as well as sewing my photobook with my own hair (an organic, compostable material).

Contribution to the Exhibition Process

As with previous exhibitions I have been responsible for the designing, promotion and social media management, I decided to focus on developing my skills in practical installation.

I helped prepare the space ahead of installation by painting, sanding, filling, and cleaning. During install, I assisted other students and made sure my own materials were ready and presented professionally.

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I was also actively involved in the deinstallation process, helping take down work, ensuring nothing was damaged, and restoring the space through cleaning and repairs.

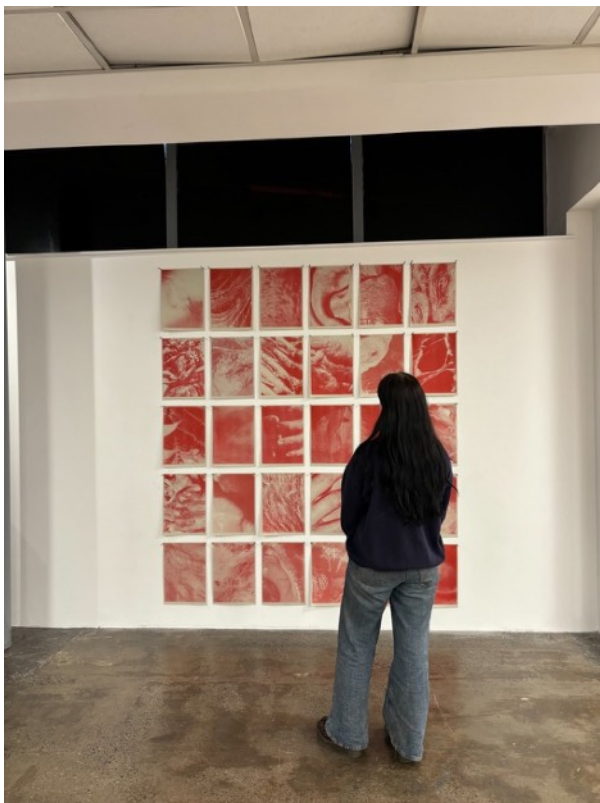
I contributed to communication through the exhibition group chat, participated in polls, and supported others by photographing installed work for their documentation. I also helped promote the exhibition through word of mouth and sharing content from the exhibition's Instagram account.

How My Work Functioned in the Space

(Images of installed work)



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My installation featured a grid of A3 red-toned risograph prints, each suspended slightly off the wall using rusted nails. Each print floated slightly off the surface, creating soft shadows that added more dimension and movement. The red ink was chosen to directly reference flesh, and internal muscle textures, while the purposely abstracted imagery encouraged viewers to take a closer look. The grid format created order and symmetry, and provided closer reference to specimen categorisation. I also made the decision to vary the contrast and saturation of the prints to highlight the different textures between images, adding to the ambiguity.

I believe the work held its own within the group exhibition without overpowering neighbouring pieces. I feel the subtlety of the imagery mixed with the bright red ink and use of space, allowed it to draw in viewers rather than demand attention. This allowed time for viewers to reflect on the body, different species and archival themes without being overwhelmed.

External Interactions

The work was received as striking and grotesque, with some people even saying it made them feel a bit sick. I appreciated this response, as it confirmed the work's ability to provoke a strong reaction. The imagery also created conversation, with viewers engaging in a kind of guessing game, by trying to identify what each print depicted.

I was also present for the visit from Sight Life, an art support group for visually impaired people. During their visit, I guided one of the members around the show, describing my own work in detail as well as helping them navigate other pieces in the space. This experience made me reflect on how my work communicates beyond the visual, and consider the deeper contextual, sensory and emotional aspects. It highlighted the importance of accessibility and how abstract imagery can be described or interpreted without sight.



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In addition, I was involved with the art technicians throughout the semester to develop my risoprints. This allowed for consistent collaboration, feedback and support.

Online and Practical Skill Enhancement

This project helped me to improve both digital and practical skills. I have updated my website and plan to update my socials to present my new body of work and practice development. Learning how to risoprint was technical skill I also developed, especially when experimenting with different inks and papers. I took into consideration how those choices affected tone and message, which I believe improved my graphic design awareness and pushed me to think more intentionally about print as an art form.

Overall, this exhibition has been helpful in refining the conceptual depth behind my work and general practical capabilities. From personal material experiments, becoming more sustainability conscious and communicating with people outside the department, I feel more confident in how I develop and present my ideas. I look forward to continuing experimentation and aim to use this personal development in future exhibitions and creative opportunities.

List of Figures and Referencing

1 . Alix Marie, Les Gatiantes, 2016.

- Ghosh, R. (2023, September 1). *Bodies of work: Alix Marie talks myth and muscle - 1854 Photography. 1854 Photography.* <https://www.1854.photography/2023/09/alix-marie-misc-athens-installation/>

2. Alix Marie. Bleu 2017.

- Alix Marie. (n.d.). *MÖREL.* <https://morelbooks.com/products/alix-marie>

3. Annegret Soltau, Permanente Demonstration 1976.

- Annegret SOLTAU, *Permanente Demonstration am 19.01.1976, 1976/2008.* (n.d.). Richard Saltoun. <https://www.richardsaltoun.com/artists/233-annegret-soltau/works/16367-annegret-soltau-permanente-demonstration-am-19.01.1976-1976-2008/>

4. Annegret Soltau, Vagina 1977.

-Annegret SOLTAU, *Vagina, 1977.* (n.d.). Richard Saltoun. <https://www.richardsaltoun.com/artists/233-annegret-soltau/works/18118-annegret-soltau-vagina-1977/>

5. Proposal diagram, created by me, using my artwork.

6. Proposal diagram, created by me, using my artwork.

7. Proposal diagram, created by me, using my artwork.

8. Proposal diagram, created by me, using my artwork.

9. Image of installation, taken by me.

10. Image of installation, taken by me.

11. Image of installation, taken by another student.

12. Image of my exhibited work, taken by Dr Estefani Bouza.

13. Image of my exhibited work, taken by me.

14. Image of my exhibited work, taken by me.

15. Image of my exhibited work, taken by me.

16. Image of myself helping Sight Life member during visit, taken by another student.