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I intend to curate an exhibition of botanical wallpapers by renowned British company “Cole and son.” I will display the wallpaper in projection form onto three of Port Talbot’s industrial hubs. Entitled “whelm” and reflecting theories found in Charles Jencks’ *The New Paradigm in architecture* (1977), I wanted to portray the resilience of nature and its ability to conquer as it overpowers these industrial places and floods them with beauty.

The choice to showcase these wallpapers on industrial buildings within an industrial town highlights the need for sustainable energy and the lack of empathy that large scale companies for the environment. The port talbot steel works in particular uses a considerable amount of water to make their products as well as generating a lot of waste in their blast furnaces.

Another reason for this choice is that the combination of large industrial buildings with beautiful, delicate botanical prints clearly reflects Charles Jencks theory of double coding as I would be creating something in a post-modernist way as “post modernists design buildings with mixed languages that recognise the basic duality.” (Jencks, 2002) These contrasts are blatant and also help to convey the overall message of the exhibition as it heightens the sense of power in nature.

Not only do I aim to reflect nature through this exhibition but also project positivity in this time of national uncertainty as the corona virus pandemic effects lives everywhere. It is well-known that “Spending time in green space or bringing nature into your everyday life can benefit both your mental and physical wellbeing.” (www.mind.org.uk, n.d.) therefore I am hoping that projecting botanicals that are visible from many homes in the area will lift moods and spread positivity. Particularly in south wales, where many people’s livelihoods depend on jobs within industries like steel making there is a heightened sense of ambiguity, therefore this also makes my choice of location even more poignant.

There is no real need for any extensions or modifications to be made to any of the buildings I have chosen to use as they each have element of blank space and colour. For example, Baglan power station situated on the Baglan moors in Port Talbot, has a large cylindrical furnace that is rendered completely from grey concrete. (see fig 1) This is perfect for the projection as it provides a blank canvas.

Fig 1. Baglan power station.

Fig 2. Cole and Son ‘lilac’



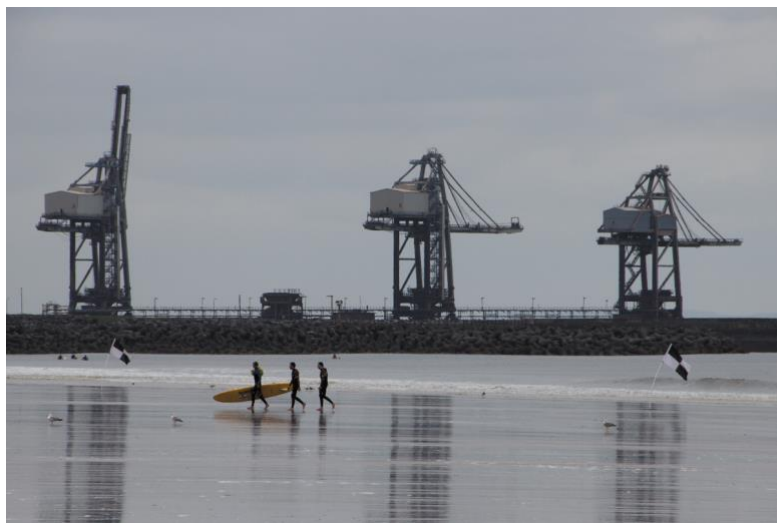
The projections themselves will only be visible during evenings and at night and I will be projected using several projector machines powered by solar panels to ensure sustainability.

I chose to use the method of projection as not only would physically papering these buildings be dangerous but also damaging to the environment due to the scale of the buildings and the amount of materials that would be required. Using projections eliminates both issues as well as making the installation of the exhibition social distancing friendly. Moreover, projections are a form of interactive art. They are changeable as they project onto all forms, for example, a bird flying past the furnace would change the texture of the wallpaper making it constantly changing to the viewer. This interactivity is likely to “invite participants to experience and practice meaning making” (Stern, 2013) meaning it will provide entertainment during this time of national quarantine.

My choice of wallpaper for this location would be Cole and Son’s ‘lilac’ from their ‘Botanical Botanica’ collection as the lush and organic feeling imagery contrasts perfectly with the harsh materials and architecture seen throughout the power plant. Also, it creates a contrast between old and new as the modernity of the power plant is overshadowed by the classic style of the print. Again, this concept is interestingly similar to double coding as it highlights the combination of old and new in architecture as Charles Jencks “coins the word ‘double-coding’ to refer to the fact that post modern architecture adds another code and set of messages” (Rose, 1991, p.102)

Fig 3. Cranes at Tata steel works, seen from Aberavon beach Port Talbot.

Fig 4. Cole and Son ‘



The other location I have chosen for my exhibition is somewhat of a landmark in Port Talbot as the steelworks shadow over the town. The cranes from the Tata steelworks tower ominously over Aberavon beach, therefore they are already a relevant nod to double coding as the angular, industrial steel structures juxtapose the lapping water and picturesque beach. I am heightening this by projecting three variations of Cole and Son’s ‘sweet pea’ wallpaper again from the ‘Botanical Botanica’ collection.

This wallpaper has a dainty floral print that is delicate and pretty with fresh colour palettes, therefore, to have this printed on large, rusted steel structures creates an interesting contrast. The reason for this is that the cranes and the floral wallpaper connote two completely different things.

The cranes provoke more masculine feelings, whereas the floral wallpaper is typically associated with more feminine feelings. Additionally, “ultimately the floral wallpaper presents continuity between interior and exterior space.” (Chatterjee, 2014) So, it is interesting that the continuity between the outside and in is still present when projected on to the exterior of a building or structure due to the context of the building itself.

My final exhibition location is blast furnace five at Port Talbot’s Tata steel works. (See fig 6.) This is one of the most dangerous places to work within the steel works as it is a high pressure environment with lots of machinery and a furnace full of molten materials.

Fig 5. ‘Wisteria’ by Cole and Son.



Fig 6. Blast furnace five at Tata Steel works Port Talbot.



There is a direct juxtaposition to the floral prints I will display and the blast furnace itself as the soft and feminine connotations of the floral prints contrast with the dangerous and typically masculine connotations associated with the blast furnace. This not only reflects Charles Jenks theory of ‘double coding’ as “postmodern architecture is a language that depends on double understanding, comparable to irony.”(www.artandpopularculture.com, n.d.) but also it encourages the audience to look and think about the dual meanings of objects and artworks.

Additionally, because of previous tragedies that have taken place at the blast furnace I would also draw attention to the tribute I was making to the brave people who work here and those who have lost their lives doing their jobs. This would be reflected in my choice of print as I will use Cole and Son’s ‘Wisteria’ wallpaper from their ‘Botanical Botanica’ collection (see fig 5.). The wisteria flowers have been said to symbolise ever-lasting life therefore they are a nod to this.

I believe it is imperative that we bring art to the working classes and make it accessible to all as this will inspire the next generation of artists and creators. There is a “depressing lack of representation

for the working-class across the creative industries, we need to celebrate working-class artists.” (Mahfouz, 2019) Therefore, my choice of location is important to me as growing up in this town I believe that there was a stigma around careers in the creative arts and a devastating lack of accessible exhibitions to view creative pieces. Therefore by broadcasting this on a larger scale it opens up a conversation and rouses creativity.

My locations are both spread out and simultaneously condensed as they are all situated in one town. I chose to condense them throughout one town as not only would it highlight the area and bring attention to other creatives working here, but it also allows a large quantity of people to view the exhibition who otherwise wouldn't see any art or design. This is due to the exhibition locations being visible from many densely populated areas.



Overall my hopes for this exhibition are to bring joy and inspire creativity through this time of national uncertainty as well as to make an accessible exhibition so that the masses can see creative installations.

Moreover, I hope to instil a realisation that the public's consumptions of energy and production of waste should be minimised especially during this time as despite the decrease in green house emissions "not all the environmental consequences of the crisis have been positive. Volumes of unrecyclable waste have risen" (unctad.org, n.d.)

I believe that this exhibition could be successful as it creates an experience that can be shared by families and loved ones as they isolate together and also it would generate lots of interest as the change in environment would be significant to the local and surrounding areas.

The large concrete and metals structures would be completely transformed by the floral projections and the texture would also add new meaning to the florals. I believe the meaning of the exhibition as a whole could be interpreted differently by each viewer but ultimately it's obvious that the use of prints highlights the resilience of the environment and wildlife within industrial communities as it thrives despite the abuse that it has faced throughout the years.

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