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My theme for my curated space is Bipolar disorder I feel that not enough is known about this condition and there is stigma attached, by following in the principles of the “situationists” idea of “creating new and surprising situations through art”. (Buchanan, I. 2018, p.452) I aim to show a perspective into the bipolar journey, through sculptures, narration, installation, sounds, simulating the senses and trying to “prove the real through the imaginary”. (Baudrillard, J.1995, p.19)

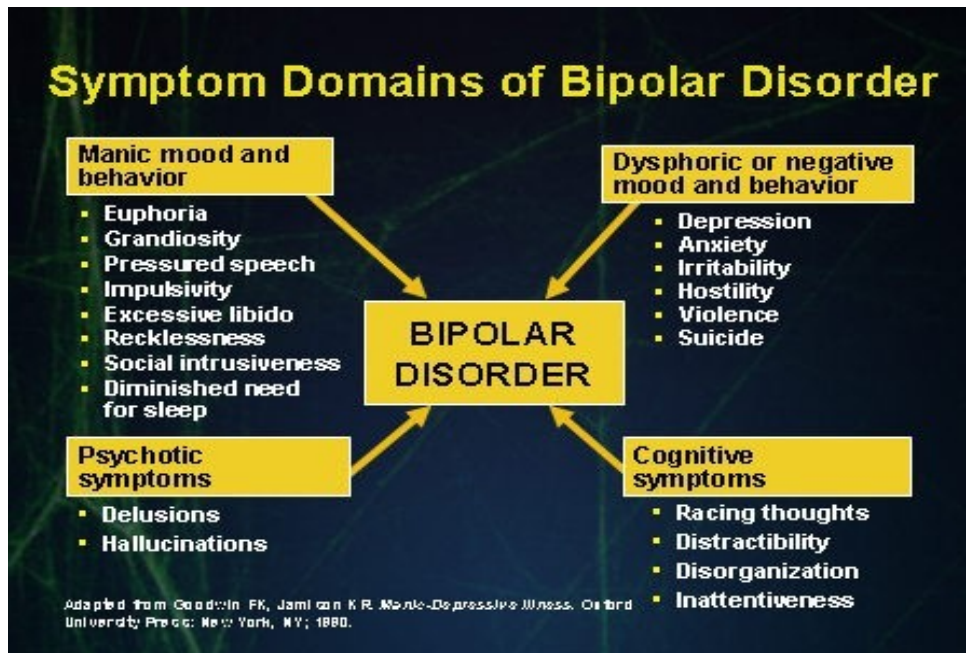


Figure 1: Bipolar Diagram Entitled

“Perspective”.

Perspective, a particular attitude towards something; a way of thinking about something SYNONYM viewpoint (The Oxford Mini Dictionary)

When I thought about the curation space, I thought of a tunnel which has many phenomena, such as:

Near Death Experience- Michael N. Marsh describes this as an “ascent through a dark, black ‘tunnel’ into the glorious light of the hereafter”. Blackmore and Trosianko report of a 70-year-old women’s near-death experience, when she saw” a light and felt warm, and her pain left her then she went into the light it was beautiful”.

Tunnel Vision – “Not looking at all possibilities, ignoring or downplaying the less important factors or alternatives”, (Fetzer, J. 2005, p.381)

A tunnel is symbolic of black, darkness and night and can represent a journey from one place to another or even being focussed and heading to the end. The tunnel is one way and represents a part of the bipolar journey. “Leading through a series of interconnected rooms, was a journey through time, through stages of development that was the story of history”. (Obrist,2014, p.43)

The tunnel is the Rhondda and Swansea Valley Railway tunnel, which is nearly two miles long and “is the longest tunnel in Wales” it was used to transport coal from 1890 and closed in 1968. (The Rhondda Tunnel Society,2021).

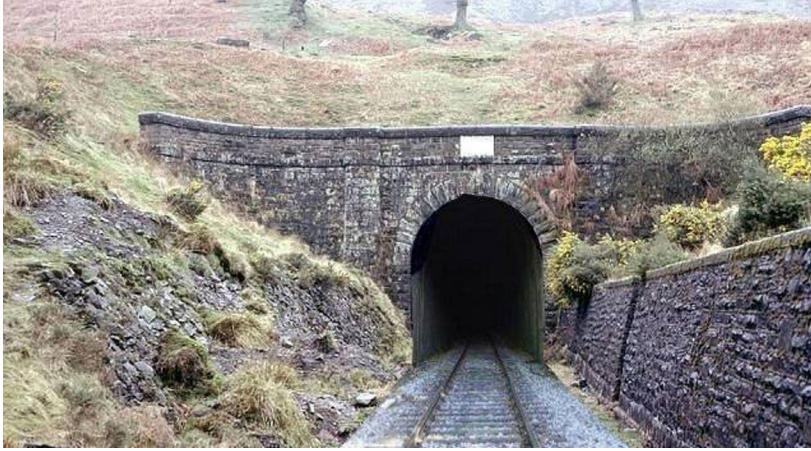


Figure 2: The Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway Tunnel



Figure 3: The Rhondda and Swansea Bay Railway Tunnel



Figure 4: Welsh Miners pause for a cigarette.

Due to the incredible history and engineering of this tunnel, I would like to re-use it to generate income for the Valley, as when the coal mines went silent there was a general economic depression, which is still felt to this day. Unemployment still remains high and “the terraced houses are still home, though it is hard to find a block where several of them are not adorned with “For Sale” signs (Huntley,2021). There are “fewer than 60,000 adults in Blaenau Gwent. Each month almost 10,000 prescriptions are used for anti-depressants”. (Eaton,2013)

The Rhondda Tunnel Society is trying to re-open this tunnel to re-connect communities a pedestrian and cycle route.



Figure 5: Entrance tunnel diagram



Figure 6: Sculpture by Antony Gormley

At the start of the tunnel, I would place sculptures by Sir Antony Gormley. "Gormley has a gift for the unsettling, when he started placing his naked life size figures out of doors the Natural environments enhanced the fragility of the human form." (Encyclopaedia, Britannica, 2019). The life size sculptures will make the user feel like they are part of the journey.

This signifies the beginning of the journey, the above white sculpture representing the person with bipolar, the other sculptures friends, family, and the people in their lives. As the journey progresses the sculptures get fewer until just the white sculpture is left.

"As bipolar disorder is characterised by extreme changes in moods, caring for someone with these symptoms can be very stressful for family and friends. This causes strains and difficulties in maintaining relationships." (Canadian Mental Health Association, BC Division, 2013).



Figure 7: Diagram of tunnel with shadow art, creature, and sculptures (Antony Gormley)

Please watch: The Cave Allegory <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1RWOpQXTItA>

Similarly in Plato's "The Cave Allegory", In a bipolar episode of psychosis shadows are a reality. The visitors know that the shadows are not real and made from mundane plastic bottles through light. Deconstructing our tunnel, it could represent a closed and narrow minded one way of thinking about bipolar. Our visitors like the un freed prisoners could be unwilling to seek new views and wisdom and remain ignorant to what they are perceiving through this simulation.



Figure 8: Shadow art

As you enter the tunnel there are shadows hovering over you, these are made by shadow artists, Tim Noble and Sue Webster, whose "work combines assembly, light and shadows. They get objects and debris into works that bridge two realities." (Artworks for Change, 2020). I want the audience to feel a little unsettled as a person who is having a psychotic episode, "Psychosis, is when you perceive or interpret a reality in a very different way from people around you". (Mind,2020).



Figure 9: Diagram of tunnel with Michael Sheen and Tracey Emin bed and sculptures (Antony Gormley)

Walking along the tunnel there is a bedroom to the right by artist Tracey Emin and Michael Sheen narrating poetry from 'The Perspective Project', Michael is opposite the side of the bed. It seems like a theatrical set, but "even in the age of cloning technology, no identical space exists in our social world, every social space has a system of actors in a set of locations." (Abbot, 2005, p.246)



Figure 10: Tracey Emin bed space

In an interview with the Tate, she talks about the dark emotional place that her work emerged from. "I had a complete breakdown. I spent four days in bed. Asleep and semi-conscious." (Tate shots, 2015). The bedroom metaphor can take several forms, "inside the bedroom, private conversations and intimate exchanges occur, it is a bridge that is particularly private and public" (Pearson, 2009). The chaos of the room echoing the chaotic mind., untidy layers of mess and decay showing their current identity. "Hypomania, disordered thinking" (Benazzi, 2007, p.935). This could

be a state of “otherness” where the bipolar has another self In Emmanuel Levinas concept it “is that which the self can neither know nor assimilate”. (Buchanan,2018).



Figure 11: Actor Michael Sheen

I chose Actor Michael Sheen to narrate the poems because he has won numerous awards for his acting and is Welsh, he is involved in lots of Welsh charity work, and he plays a crucial role in breaking the social taboos of mental health issues. He has introduced “Postcards for Mind” a mental health charity fundraising for them on you tube. (Mind,2020). He brought ‘The Homeless World Cup’ to Cardiff in 2019 and when the charity lost funding.

He said: “Five hundred of the most vulnerable people from all over the world [were] on their way to Cardiff, for a tournament that was potentially transformative and life-changing. And so... I gave all my money to it” (Yahoo News,2020). This shows his passion, vulnerability and empathy towards issues facing mental health and similarly Tracey has been through a breakdown so can empathise also.

A collection of narrative poems from the Perspective Project.” The Perspective project is a social enterprise tackling mental health stigma through art and creativity.” (The Perspective Project,2020). Michael is the narrator telling the poem, similarly, to childhood when you were told a bedtime story. Like the world renown storyteller Hans Christian Anderson, who “combined his natural storytelling abilities and great imaginative power with universal elements of folk legend to produce a body of fairy tales that relates to many cultures.” (Britannica,2021). In his later book “The Shadow” (Anderson,2008) which he wrote in later years becomes dark and suggests that each human being has a shadowy, part that could destroy you, if you let it, the same can be said of the bipolar mind. This could turn the story to more like a nightmare.

BPD/EUPD - Clare Knighton

I am broken. Recovery is not mine. Each gentle, hesitant step I take forward is marred by the chains I am bound to.

I can never be free to soar the clouds again; I must struggle on the ground, carrying the weight of the cold metal chains, that rub my wrists, drawing sad droplets of blood, running into scars of days gone by.

I am broken, every step forward, the chains become heavier and I become ever weary. My pace becomes slower and eventually I stand.

Breaths come and go. I search for ways out of the chains, ways to sooth my wounds and soften my despair.

The chains are cold and unforgiving. I sink to my knees, and cast my eyes to the sky, I watch it darken, and pray for the light.

Figure 12: A Poem

Trying to Explain - Ryan Tierney

There is no shame in this complex brain

One day sunshine, the next day rain

Lost in the darkness, then found in the light

Knocked down for a while, then drag myself back up to fight

You could be my enemy

But then again maybe my friend?

I know we are doing this together.

All the way till the end

So learning to live with you is what I must do.

Not always trying to find the answer about why I sometimes feel blue.

Let's face it we have now been together for so long,

should really be thanking you for making me so strong.

Figure 13: A Poem

Glass - Julie Tsiricos

My glass box protects me
But you can see right through
It shows the marks of fingerprints
Of those who tried to reach out to me
It is supposed to be safety glass
But I do not feel safe

When this glass is damaged
It does not splinter
But instead breaks into hundreds
Of blunt fragments
And although the sharp splinters
Would cause me more harm

The fragments frighten me more
For they feel like me
Broken into so many pieces
That I can never be
Put back together again

Figure 14: Poem



Figure 15: Light Installation “The Deep Dark”.

Walking further into the tunnel you see lights in the distance drawing closer you can see that they are doorways. This is an installation ‘called “The Deep Dark” (Brown and Garret, 2015.) Held while in residence at the Banff Centre Dawson City. The doors are made up from wood and led lights, twelve doorframes stand as gates over a 600-foot path.

The sculpture is now on his own with nothingness, entering the doorway.

As the visitors walk through, they are temporarily blinded and in between the door frames are the “non places” focussing on Marc Auge’s theory. (Auge, 1995, p.75).



Figure 16: The diagram of a singular sculpture outside the doorway.

The place in between the doorways blinds the visitor momentarily from the light straight to darkness, light and dark “Everything is metamorphosed into the opposite to perpetuate itself in its expurgated form”. (Baudrillard, J. 1995, p.19) I want the audience to imagine how loneliness, fright, not knowing feels like in the nothing. The darkness, “masking the absence of a profound reality; it plays at being an appearance- it is the order of sorcery”. (Baudrillard, J. 1995, p.6) As Freud quoted in

Figure: 18 Words taken from poems

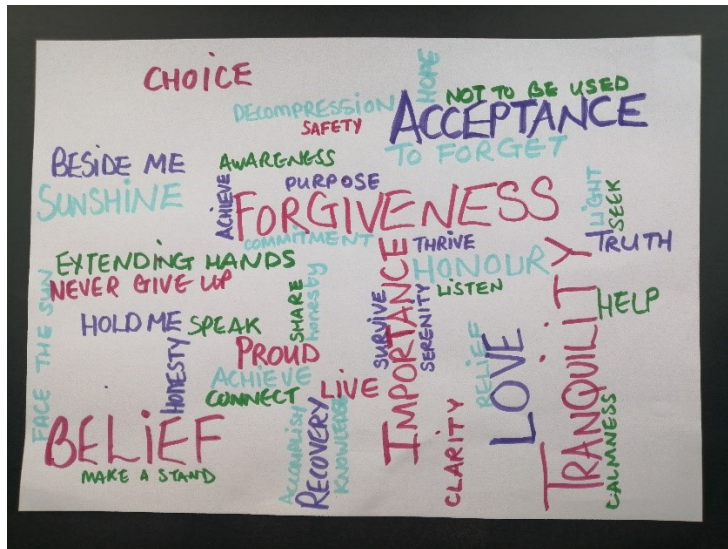


Figure 19: Words taken from poems.

The visitors then see a doorway light up with a sign above its 'Hope'. What happens next is the visitor's choice.



Figure 20: Diagram of doorway light up with a sign spelling 'Hope'.

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Figures

Figure 1: Available at: <https://www.assignmentpoint.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/BipolarDisorder-2.jpg> (Accessed:29 April 2021).

Figure 2 and 3: Available at: <https://www.rhonddatunnelsociety.co.uk/about/> (Accessed: 28 April 2021).

Figure 4: Available at: <https://britishheritage.com/history/coal-mining-wales-rhondda-valley> (Accessed: 29 April 2021)

Figure 5: Entrance tunnel diagram (Julie Doel)

Figure 6: Available at: <https://pin.it/5GX2Jbw> (Accessed 29 April 2021).

Figure7: Diagram of Tunnel with shadow art (Julie Doel)

Figure 8: Available at: <https://www.artworksforchange.org/portfolio/tim-noble-and-sue-webster> (Accessed:29 April 2021).

Figure 9: Diagram of Tunnel with Michael Sheen and Tracey Emin,'My Bed. (Julie Doel)

Figure 10: Available at: <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/emin-my-bed-l03662/tracey-eminmy-bed> (Accessed: 29 April 2021).

Figure 11: Available at: <https://uk.style.yahoo.com/michael-sheen-expecting-baby-with-25-yearoldswedish-model-girlfriend-anna-lundberg-082941893.html> (Accessed:29 April 2021).

Figure 12,13 and 14: Available at: <https://www.theperspectiveproject.co.uk/us> (Accessed:29 April 2021).

Figure 15: Available at: <https://incandescentcloud.files.wordpress.com/2015/09/15-deep-darkfinished-installation.jpg> (Accessed: 29 April 2021).

Figure 16: Diagram of tunnel and single sculpture at doorway (Julie Doel).

Figure 17: Diagram of dark tunnel (Julie Doel).

Figure 18: Words taken from poem (Julie Doel).

Figure 19: Words taken from poem (Julie Doel).

Figure 20: Diagram of tunnel signposted 'Hope' (Julie Doel).