

WAYS OF PERCEIVING

A Film Festival on Spiritualism

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SPIRITUALITY

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I'm going to host a film festival consisting of five film pieces linked to the theme of Spiritualism in The Brangwyn Hall at Swansea. I chose this location because it is a symbolic building that has survived the blitz and is a strong beacon of hope. There is a lot of talk and prophecies about the end of the world, so I think now people are searching for a clearer understanding of life, which is why I think spiritualism is a good topic to discuss.

I will talk you through each showcasing that I have chosen to play in their order, and why I chose them. Each film will be played one after the other on the stage on a video projector at nighttime, with my target audience being 18+ due to my choice of screenings. I want to keep my surroundings quite simple so that the audience's attention remains on the true meaning at hand – spiritualism.

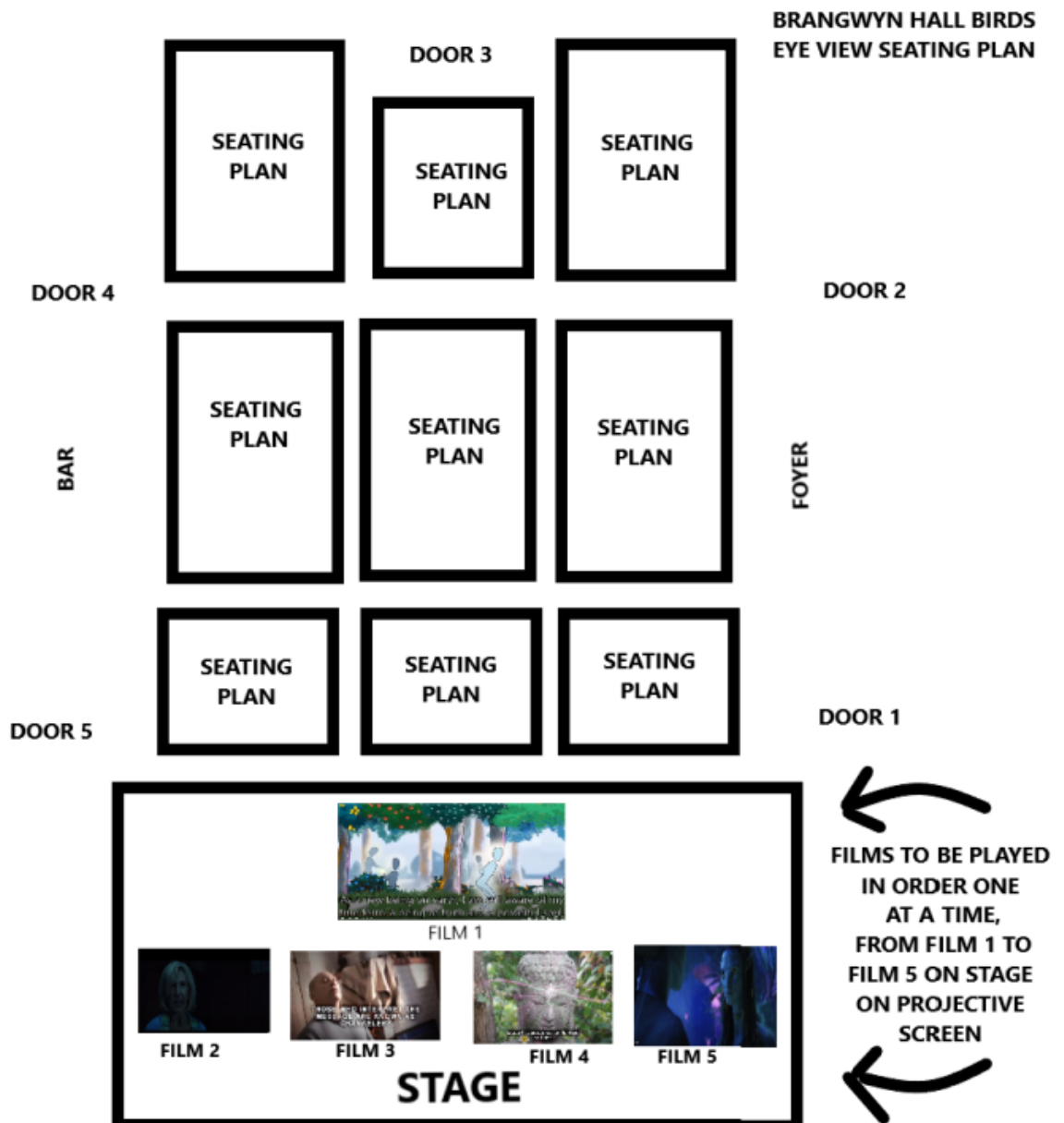


Figure 1

"There is no fear for an Awakened One, whose mind is not sodden (by lust) nor afflicted (by hate), and who has gone beyond both merit and demerit." (Buddharakkhita)

Spiritualism covers a wide concept of themes from spiritual awakenings, human spirit, soul, prayer, predictions, meditation, psychics, and senses that mostly consist of universal psyche experiences. I looked at philosophers and writers work, such as Nostradamus and Buddha. All my film choices relate to spiritualism because it's linking the natural world to the spirit world, which ultimately all lead to one path of enlightenment, fulfilment, and universal connections.

I found that a spiritual awakening can be triggered by traumatic life experiences that can push a person to undergo a self-discovery journey. This is supported by Dr Maya Spencer's *"Development may not necessarily be an instantaneous event but can happen more gradually as when going through an experience of severe illness, or a terminal diagnosis, when the fragility of life is revealed and a person re-evaluates the meaning of their life."* Spiritualism has been with us since the dawn of time, and I think that especially now during this pandemic, a lot of people are turning to it as a form of guidance.



Figure 2

Nostradamus states *"The body without soul is no longer at the sacrifice. At the day of death it is brought to rebirth."* Certain circumstances can push events forward, like in the way which the world has with spiritual evolution over the years. We, as human beings change along with it, and I think this quote is a great example of showing that.

When we die, where do we go? When we experience certain events in life, what causes us to change? When you feel happy, you radiate positive energy, and when you feel sad, you release negative energy. This short-animated film *Lost and Found* stood out to me because of those specific reasons. It focuses on a person's spiritual growth and divine interventions that enables us to see a transformation through self-awareness, so I have chosen this as my first film to show to introduce my audience to the world of spirituality.

I also believe that spiritualism can also be linked to religion, which ultimately leads to one road. It is around us in every part of our lives in the form of miracles and vibrational energy frequencies, but how we choose to perceive and open to its belief solely depends on that person and their personal experiences.



Figure 3

The second film I will use in for my film festival would be Insidious 3. The film focuses on a medium who has psychic powers, and she uses them for good to try and get rid of a dangerous entity after revisiting her past. I chose this film because it gives a good understanding to the paranormal, and how people deal with it and their fear of it.

Kumar states, *"What is actually fear? It is a "thought" of a presumed accident that might take place."* I want to give my audience something to think about when watching this film – for them to be aware of the understanding that fear is a delusional psychological concept that be can be controlled with our thought and behavioral patterns; and not everything is as they seem no matter what time period we're in. Fear is one of the greatest controls of the world because it touches on every aspect of our lives, through colour, universal signs, and speech. Some people choose to ignore what they see or feel because if they cannot feel it or see it, then they cannot fear it.



Figure 4

This brings me onto my third choice of showing for my film festival in relation to spiritualism: *Tuning In*. “*The mind is the best friend of man but potentially his worst enemy too.*” (Swami) I want to draw the audience in by showing them a documentary exploring the depths of the human mind, and how human beings can connect with their “higher self” through practices of conscious awareness via the likes of yoga and meditation. I believe this documentary is a good example of that because it follows the lives of six psychics’ experiences.

The mind is a powerful tool – whatever you think of, the universe will transpire those thoughts and actions, which will manifest into your reality, much like what Rick Warren says himself: “*Be careful how you think; your life is shaped by your thoughts.*” These mediums in the show can give predictions, whether it is through seeing, sensing, tasting, or hearing. They are able to connect with the other side, and I want the audience to be able to see how they do this, and potentially do it themselves, so by showing this in my film festival gives people a greater concept of what it’s like.

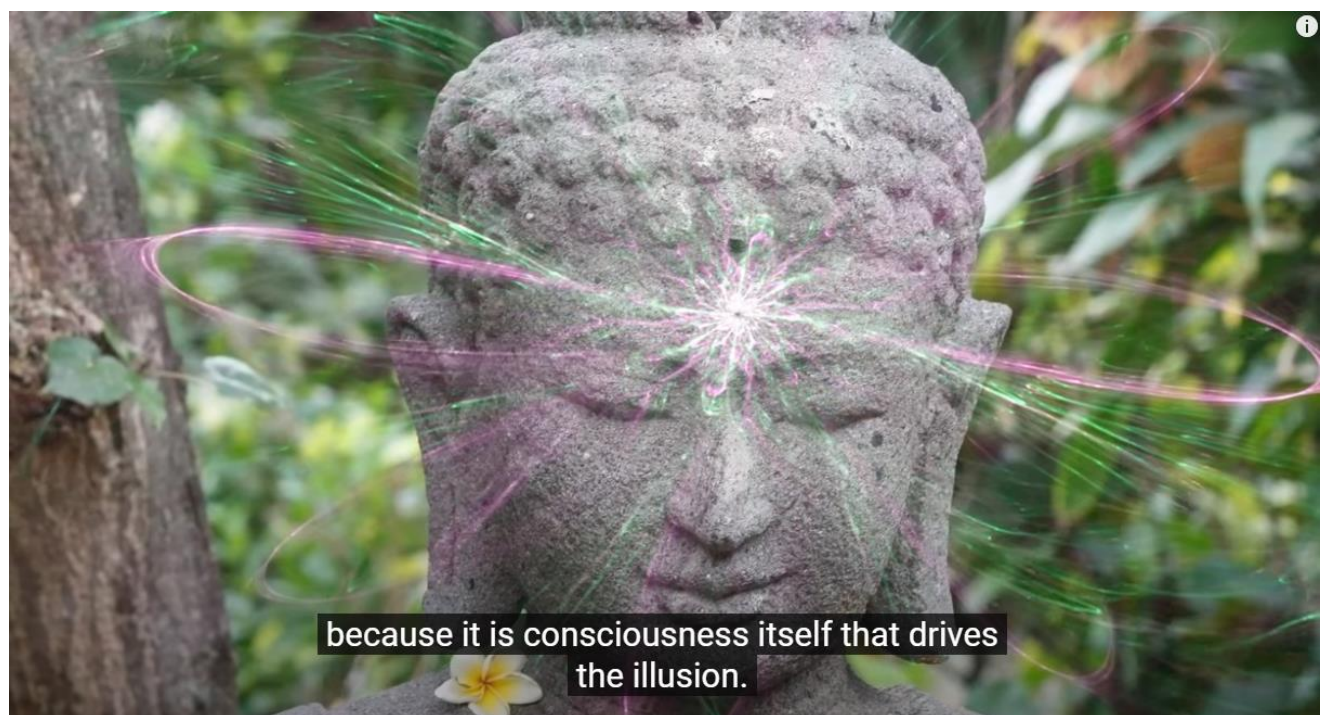


Figure 5

For my fourth showcasing at my film festival, I will play *Inner Worlds, Outer Worlds* documentary. “*There have been moments in your life when you were pure awareness. No concepts, no thoughts like “I am aware” or “That is a tree” or “Now I am meditating”*” (Dass) I want to bring the entire focus on yoga, manifestation, prayer and meditative practices that could teach my audience on how to go within in search of answers for this show choice. In one part of the documentary, it’s stated “*the word “tetragrammaton” was often used to represent a certain manifestation of God,*” giving the audience a clear idea that certain words or chanting sounds can trigger manifestations or beliefs in religions, which is agreeing strongly with the above quote.

The idea of religion linking to spiritualism gives a wide debate due to each system having their own beliefs. It is also mentioned in the documentary that “*The Greek philosopher Heraclitus*” theories focused on “*origin of all repetition, pattern, and form,*” which can mean that events and circumstances never stop changing – history always has a way of repeating itself. The entire documentary has a broad idea, showing that spirituality can be interpreted in different ways in terms of religion

“*The relationship between religion, spirituality and forgiveness is complex*” (Ellens) I want my audience to understand that you can connect with spirituality through their own methods of teaching and has been a huge part of the world from the beginning of mankind, to even now.



Figure 6

Spirituality is like an alternative universe because we have a real world that we are a part of, but we are led to believe through mystical worlds that ultimately the spiritual one does exist. In a fashion, we are told through scripts and prayer that it is a better than the world we live in, which brings me on to my fifth film choice for my film festival being *Avatar*.

Spiritualism is also linked to survival, hope, and harmony. Hope is especially a huge significance in this film because it's giving the audience an idea of what the world will be like in the future, and the human spirit can conquer all through the mind. *"The essential nature of spirit (the soul or mind, if you prefer) is the potential to be one with all things."* (Colacurcio) It's giving an illusion that no matter what obstacles or challenges you may encounter, life always finds a way there's always a belonging; and I want my audience to be able to see and feel this world around us in its truest form because everything is interlinked through universal magic and natural forces.

Spiritualism is a continuous journey, but what is the journey, and where does it end? *"The film is a journey during which banal objects tip the scales and move the action forward; it is also a journey without beginning or end, without a clearly defined goal."* (Obrist) We need to forget that we need to learn again, and why we are here. The world that we live in is real, but so is the spirit world. We are connected to it in many forms, and I think that especially now more people are turning back to spirituality as a form of guidance and hope for a better understanding of the world and inner peace.

Figures

1. Digital drawn up template of the Brangwyn Hall using Paint 3D
2. Written by Manila, I, 2015, Lost and Found, short film (YouTube)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ctgf8HAC3HI>
3. Written by Whannell, L. Whannell, L., Directed by Whannell, L, 2015, Insidious: Chapter 3
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt3195644/>
4. Written by Thomas, D., Directed by Thomas, D., 2008, Tuning In
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1103276/>
5. Written by Schmidt, D., Directed by Schmidt, D., 2012, Inner Worlds, Outer World – Part 1 - , Akasha
<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2415372/>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXuTt7c3Jkg>
6. Written by Cameron, J. Directed by Cameron, J. 2009, Avatar
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