

Student Self-Evaluation

Module	Exhibition 2.0
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This document helps facilitate the assessment of the module listed above.

Please evaluate your project or projects under each heading using the guidelines provided. Add visuals as necessary to support your evaluation. Consider each section in relation to your exhibition outcome, and your process and engagement with the timetabled sessions.

You will be assessed on your exhibition outcome with additional consideration made of observed module engagement and your evaluation.

Name	Claire Forshaw
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Part One: **Knowledge and Understanding Skills (30%)**

Applied Skills, research and experimentation

In this section, students should discuss and evaluate the application of existing and newly acquired skills, and knowledge to their outcomes.

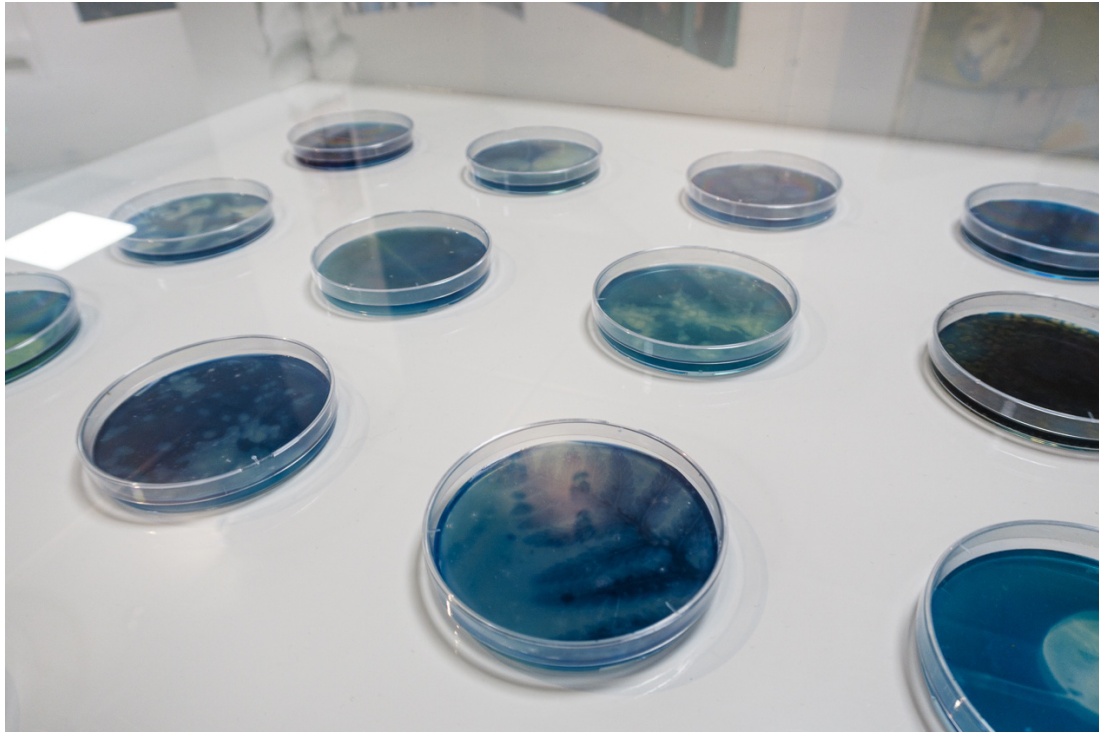
Demonstrate research into exhibition strategies with analysis of exhibitions visited. Discuss your process regarding exhibition options – framing, mounting, installation, performative etc. – as appropriate, commenting on any experiments undertaken.

Use visuals as necessary.

Approx. 350-450 words.

Response:

The work I produced for the exhibition was a recreation of the work I had previously made during my book project. The work consisted of experiments using both artistic and scientific processes and materials to creatively merge the subjects of art and science. (Fig 1)

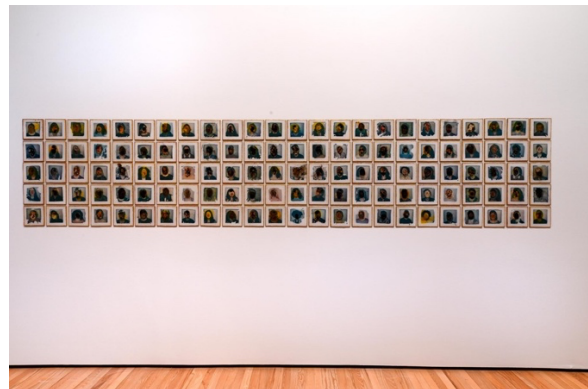


(Fig 1)

When researching other artists who use similar materials or narratives, I came across Selin Balic. Within her work titled *Contaminated Series Balic*, a microbiologist and artist, experiments with mold spores on agar (Fig 2) to later create images which are then fixed and preserved using epoxy resin. In her series *Faces* (Fig 3), she collects mold spores from participants and applies them to their individual polaroid portraits, allowing the spores to grow, changing and evolving the image over time. It is this use of image and mold spores, experimentation, time, and lack of control and unpredictability that creates a similarity between our work.



(Fig 2)



(Fig 3)

Though similar in processes and materials, the way we both exhibited our works were very different. One giving more of a gallery impression, whilst the other, a laboratory tone.

After experimenting, (a shared trial and error process that is found within both art and science), and watching the changes happening within my petri dishes, I decided I wanted to recreate this scientific action of observation within the exhibition. I wanted viewers to experience the unfolding of each piece, rather than just showing them the final result. To achieve this, I knew I had to let go of my control over the final outcome, by allowing the biological process to actively shape, distort and degrade my work over the course of the exhibition. Throughout the exhibition the viewers would see the mold spores grow and take over each image, creating a continuously evolving piece of work.

Unlike Balic's work, which was arranged artistically upon a wall, I wanted my work to be displayed in a way that gave a sense of scientific authority, a 'you can look but do not touch' impression. To accomplish this, I sought out a vitrine table (Fig 4).

Similar to the work of Susanne Anker, who used a glass cabinet to display her fine art petri dishes (Fig 5), the vitrine not only allowed for observation with distance, similar to that in a lab or museum, but prevented observers from opening and touching the petri dishes. Because I was using live mould spores, I didn't want viewers to touch, for health risks.



(Fig 4)



(Fig 5)

Part Two: **Cognitive and Intellectual Skills** (20 %)

Evaluating the specific needs of exhibition display

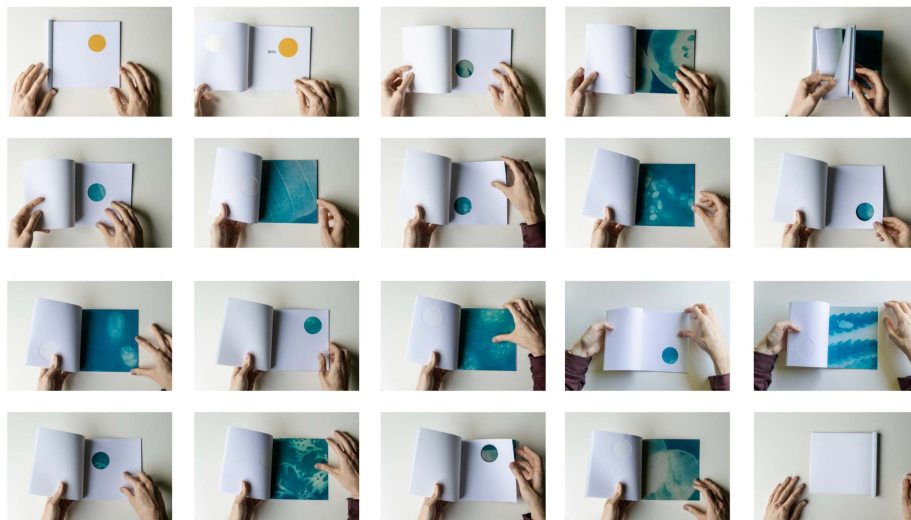
Consider the module in relation to other practical outcomes. How have you considered your work specifically in this context, rather than in publication form, or

as a portfolio of work. Considerations could include discussion of practicality in relation to the exhibition space, edit, scale, sequence, distillation from a larger body of work etc.

Use visuals as necessary.

Approx. 250-350 words

Response:



(Fig 6)

This series began as work intended for a book. *BA23C* then consisted of close up, clear, cyanotype images onto agar that were within petri dishes. Though the petri dishes could not be seen, I had inserted clean, white pages in between with petri dish size holes in so viewers could get that lab, petri dish or microscope style view to each piece before revealing the whole image. In making the book I focused a lot on how the book would not only 'read' but how it would physically feel, considering paper thicknesses, shine and smoothness. (Fig 6)

The exhibition gave me the opportunity to allow the scientific element of *BA23C* to be observed. Instead of displaying images in their beginning or final state, I was able to create a piece of work that would change throughout the course of the exhibition, allowing the science to unfold naturally. Where the book was a piece of art, planned and organised with full control, the exhibition work was a live piece, unpredictable in its final outcome.

Because of the nature of the exhibited version of *BA23C*, the fact I was working with live mold spores, the work went from being something to be felt and held, to something that would have a sense of clinical detachment, something that would be observed and not touched. I needed to create a distance between work and observer,

a barrier that allowed for scientific observation like that in a museum, and the vitrine was the perfect vessel. (Fig 7)



(Fig 7)

Considering the limited space we had for our group exhibition, the vitrine allowed me plenty of options when it came to placement, and freed up any wall space, I may have used, for others. My only big considerations with placement included light and having enough space to walk around the vitrine, both of which were simple to achieve.

Part Three: Practical Skills (30%)

Practical Work Submission - Exhibition

Apply both existing and newly acquired skills to the process of conceiving and mounting a group exhibition. Engage with any workshops or technical assistance to develop these skills.

Discuss processes involved in conceiving the work for submission and evaluate choices, for example, the use of inhouse or external fabrication and problem solving during both the run-up to, and final installation.

Consider and comment on the relationship between initial and developing concept *and* exhibited work.

Use visuals as necessary, including process and final installation images.

Approx. 350-500 words.

Response:

One of the biggest challenges for me during this exhibition was the fact that my exhibited work was made of agar and would mold. I had considered treating my work to prevent this from happening.



(Fig 8)

Whilst researching, I came across Klari Reis who created a series called *Petri Dish* (Fig 8). Her work consisted of bright colourful petri dishes filled with paint, dyes, pigments and epoxy resin to explore colour on a microscopic level. Though not mold, they are designed to look like mold and fungus. Selin Balic also used epoxy resin to preserve her pieces which did involve natural mold, so I had considered using epoxy in a similar way. But when reflecting on why I was creating these pieces, how I was wanting to show this bond between science and art, I started contemplating on leaving my work to naturally do what it wants to do. I realised that by letting go of control and allowing my work to organically mold and decay, I would be literally presenting science in its natural, instinctive form, something I could do within an exhibition. It would be one of the elements that makes this piece different from my publication version of *BA23C*. Deciding this was the way I would go, I then had the pressure of time. Now I wanted my work to mold, but I wanted it to happen during the exhibition, for people to witness, not before, so timing was crucial. Although I had plenty of time, leading up to the opening, to practice my pieces, (I had become a bit of a pro at combining cyanotypes with agar), the final work to be exhibited had to be made as close to the opening as possible, so I was creating the work on the same days as we were all setting up.

Similar to my last exhibition, with the images on Glasses, my work came about through experimentation rather than through something learnt within a workshop. Though I have attended workshops on mounting and other exhibition related tasks in the past, I didn't attend any this time around as I knew I didn't require it.

My final piece (Fig 7) didn't evolve much from initial ideas. I knew that I wanted to present my art within a scientific arrangement to help create balance between the

two intertwining subjects. I believe having this museum, archival style display, the vitrine provided, and the petri dishes, it worked well in contrast with the abstract, cyanotype images. The dishes were placed in an ordered grid like formation, not uncommon to both gallery style and museum presentation. This is what I had in mind quite early on in the module.



(Fig 7)

Part Four: Transferrable Skills for Life and Professional Practice. (20%)

**Engagement with Taught and Studio (non-timetabled) Sessions;
Professional Engagement**

Have you participated in all tutorials and group seminars, and completed all the related tasks? How good has your time management been throughout the module?

Present exhibited work to a professional standard with a view toward professional audiences and potential clients and collaborators.

Consider group engagement and dynamics – your contributions in terms of team engagement (specified roles, help offered during the installation process etc.). What have you learned from the process to feed forward into future exhibition planning?

Approx. 250-350 words.

Response:

I took a step back this project, allowing others to take on the bigger roles. Unfortunately, during this time, I had a lot going on back home, with my grandfather being poorly and then losing him only 4 weeks later. I knew that at this time I didn't want to take on a lot of extra responsibilities as I usually would as my health and mental health was starting to suffer.

I did take on one of the roles of treasurer, helping to collect cash payments. I worked alongside a fine art student, and all went smoothly. Had I been in a much better head space, I would have loved to have taken on one of the design roles, to help create logos and posters. This is something I will aim for in the next years.

I did attend most sessions and hand in personal statements and exhibition proposals when required. I was around during the setting up of the exhibition, offering my help to anyone who needed it. Unfortunately, during this time my grandmother became really sick and the morning of the exhibition I had to travel home to Manchester where I stayed by her side until she passed a week later. It was a very difficult time for me during this semester and although it seems I probably didn't put in much effort, it was the most I was mentally able to do.

I know a lot of people struggle when it comes to group projects, but I honestly could not have completed this module without the help of the other students and staff. I wasn't around to invigilate or to help remove and clean up after the exhibition had closed, but I had a lot of support and help from all of the others. One of the biggest things I've learnt this module is how important it is to work as a team. You can never predict when life is going to come and smack you in the face (repeatedly), so you

really have to learn to put your trust in others, something that is usually hard for me as I always want to be in control, especially when my own work is involved.