Individual Project Proposal

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Momentary Metamorphosis: Artistry Awakens in Abandoned Spaces

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Momentary Metamorphosis: Artistry Awakens in Abandoned Spaces

Themes:

The focus on abandoned spaces is because engagement with abandoned spaces can provoke profound reflection and discovery and can evoke thoughts about history, memory, and personal identity (Solnit, 2006). At the same time, abandoned spaces evoke thoughts of romantic beauty, historical depth, and presence (Dillon, 2014). These spaces provide an alternative way of experiencing history and decay and help to reassess what is considered valuable and meaningful in society (Edensor, 2005). Exploring abandoned spaces has many examples in the context of contemporary art; an electronic waste factory in China has been transformed into a contemporary art space. The director, Zhu Pei, spoke of how "we think it should emphasize activities rather than a static gallery and should be flexible enough to accommodate different types of art from painting to performance (Pearson, 2016)."

Additionally, I focused on Edinburgh's Hidden Doors, a project that reveals hidden parts of the city and showcases emerging artists, musicians, theatre, and filmmakers. From 2014 to date, they have developed Edinburgh's derelict spaces, such as the Market Street Vaults, the Old Leith Theatre, the former National Film Theatre building, and the disused warehouse of the Granton Gasworks, giving these derelict spaces a new lease of life and color as art spaces (Hidden Door, 2023). At the same time, I also looked at the work of ECA graduating students exploring abandoned spaces. Therefore, exploring and reusing urban abandoned spaces rekindles cultural vitality and promotes social and environmental sustainability. By transforming these forgotten places into centers for art and community activities, they beautify the cityscape and enhance community cohesion and residents' sense of belonging. In addition, the artistic treatment of these spaces provides unique places to reflect on history, memory, and personal identity, bringing emotional resonance and psychological solace to individuals. Obrist's attitude towards curation, "We must try to go beyond the object (Smith, 2012, p.291)." This is why I will set the curatorial site in an abandoned space, expecting to deepen the viewer's immersion and create a natural dialogue between the artwork and its environment.

The exhibition features two artists, mainly graduated students of ECA, with artworks that include **installations, paintings, and photographs**, all of which reflect, to a large extent, the exploration of abandoned spaces. Prince Shen's project, Developing Cracks, with his work Whisper of Cracks, creates a space for viewers to experience and explore urban cracks by exploring them. It can inspire the audience to shift from negative to positive emotions. The second artist, Cheng Xu's work 'Leny Quarry | Revival of an Abandoned Landscape,' uses the abandoned landscape as a lens to demonstrate the revival of ecological and social values of abandoned spaces through design and artistic intervention. In addition, the Glasgow Photography Gallery organized an exhibition of photographs called 'Abandoned' in November last year, and their photographs were available for hire. In addition, I will be liaising with the board of Hidden Door to invite emerging Scottish artists to join in this artistic endeavor.
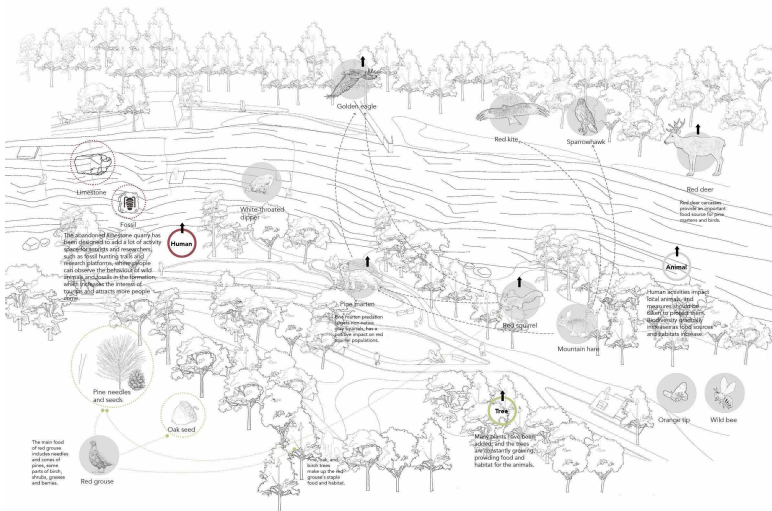
Artists and Media

Artworks

Zishen Wang
Cracks in Development

Cheng Xu
Leny Quarry | Revival of an
abandoned landscape

Artworks.

These are examples of Hidden Door's past work in transforming abandoned spaces into art centres.

Hidden Door

The exhibition will be a group show with public programs

Format

Artist Exchange Sessions:
ECA artists such as Zishen Wang and Cheng Xu will be invited to share with the audience face–to–face their artistic explorations of abandoned spaces, their creative processes, and the concepts behind them. These sessions aim to deepen the audience's understanding of artworks and the reuse of abandoned spaces.

Seminars and Workshops:
Seminars and workshops are organized to invite Hidden Door to discuss the cultural, social, and environmental significance of abandoned spaces with artists who have participated in the exhibition or have previously worked in similar fields.

Interactive Installations:
Design interactive art installations that allow viewers to participate directly in creating the art and experience the education and inspiration from that participation. For example, a modular art wall can be set up to let viewers leave their views and feelings about abandoned spaces.

Virtual Reality Experience:
Virtual reality technology provides the audience with an immersive experience, such as a virtual visit to different abandoned historical sites to experience the space's past and present life.

Site

The location of the exhibition will be on the outskirts of the ECA, which has released its redevelopment plan this year, and using the soon-to-be-redeveloped part of the ECA as an exhibition space can spark a dialogue about the past, present, and future. For feasibility, I plan to make creative use of the construction site, for example, by working with the arts organization (Hidden Door) and the construction team to understand the site's specifics and possible security restrictions. This can help determine where and how the artwork will be displayed, or consider using the building envelope, temporary structures, or spaces within the site as exhibition spaces. Waterproofing is also installed for the works on display to ensure the safety of the artworks during the exhibition. This 'under construction' state can be part of the creation and presentation of the artwork.

Target Audience
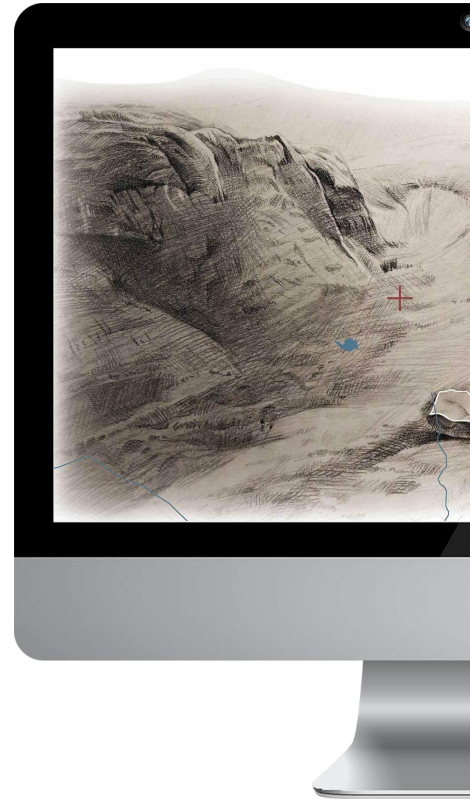
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Art enthusiasts and critics:

individuals interested in emerging forms of artistic expression and contemporary art exhibitions who seek to learn about the latest art trends and artists.

2

Community members and residents:

people who live near the ECA and have a direct interest in and influence on how the space around them can be reused and revitalized.

3

Students and educators:

All ECA students and teachers, as well as educators in related disciplines, can understand and explore the exhibition's content from an educational and academic perspective.

4

Historical and cultural researchers:

researchers interested in urban development, historical preservation, and cultural heritage who have an in–depth research interest in abandoned spaces' historical and cultural value.

Feasibility

Physical Feasibility: Ensure that the exhibition venue is accessible, including entrances, lifts and toilets accessible to wheelchair users.

Information Feasibility: Provide guided tour materials in multiple languages, including exhibition labels, brochures and audio tours, as well as special interpretation services that take into account people with visual or hearing impairments.

Economic Feasibility: free exhibitions to ensure that the exhibition is accessible to visitors of all economic conditions.

Educational Feasibility: Increase participation at the educational level by organising seminars, lectures and interactive workshops to make the content more accessible to audiences of different ages and backgrounds.

Timeline

This exhibition lasts four months from pre-planning to the final exhibition, with preparation from January to March and the exhibition in April. It is divided into six phases

Time	Phase	Main Activity
01.01 —15.01	1	Project Launch & Initial Preparation Artist and artwork selection
16.01 —31.01	2	Finalise the exhibition venue. Preliminary design of exhibition layout and use of space.
02.01 —28.02	3	Identify material, equipment and technical support needs. Confirm production and shipping schedules for all artwork. Begin production or adjustments to artwork needed for the exhibition.
01.03 —15.03	4	Conduct internal previews and gather feedback from the team. Adjust the exhibition layout or presentation of work based on feedback.
16.03 —31.03	5	Gather feedback from the media and key viewers for final adjustments.
01.04 —30.04	6	Ongoing exhibitions with regular guided tours and interpretation services. Arranging exhibition-related workshops and artist exchange programmes. Solve any emergencies that may be encountered

Expense Item	Budget (£)
Artwork Production and Installation	300
Promotional Materials (Posters, booklets, etc.)	50
Exhibition Opening Event (Beverages, Snacks, etc.)	80
Travelling expenses (field trips, contacting artists, etc.)	100
Curator/Artist Fees	300
Potential Special Events (Workshops, Lectures, etc.)	100
Miscellaneous (Contingency)	200
Total	1130

Budget
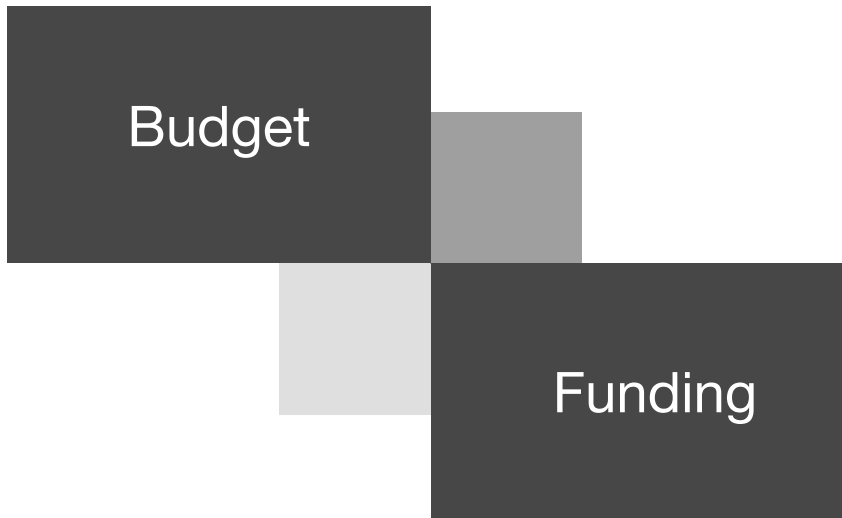
Funding

Income Item	Amount (£)
Creative Scotland Open Funding for Individuals	800
Crowdfunding	300
Own Resources	30
Total	1130

References:

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