

Week 7 Blog 1: Curatorial Field Trip to Glasgow – Engaging with Space, Narrative, and Identity

This week, our field trip to Glasgow provided an invaluable opportunity to observe, analyze, and reflect on curatorial methodologies in action. Visiting multiple institutions—including the Hunterian Art Gallery, Tramway, and GOMA (Gallery of Modern Art)—allowed me to compare how different spaces approach exhibition design, audience engagement, and critical discourse.

1. The Hunterian Art Gallery: Historical Context and Curatorial Framing

Our first stop was The Hunterian, where we explored a range of curatorial approaches. The Jarman exhibition was particularly striking, not only in its thematic focus on AIDS activism, sexuality, and personal storytelling but also in how the curatorial framing shaped the audience's experience.



The picture was taken at The Hunterian Art Gallery.

□ **Key observations:**

□ The **archival approach** blended text-heavy wall labels with visual storytelling, reinforcing Jarman's political and personal narratives.

□ The **juxtaposition of paintings, photographs, and press cuttings** created a layered historical perspective, showing how public perception and personal identity intersect.

□ The **use of bold color choices in exhibition spaces** enhanced the emotional impact—particularly in how AIDS activism was presented.

One of the most powerful pieces was the wall of newspaper clippings, illustrating the media's sensationalism and public discourse surrounding AIDS in the late 20th century. This made me think about how text-based curation can serve as both an informative and emotionally charged tool.



This image shows a wall installation of newspaper clippings, The clippings highlight media coverage from the late 20th century, focusing on AIDS activism, LGBTQ+ representation, and public discourse on sexuality and censorship. The picture was taken at The Hunterian Art Gallery.

□ Takeaway for my own project:

This visit made me reflect on how visual storytelling and archival material can be integrated into my own exhibition. While my project is interactive and immersive, could elements of historical documentation enhance audience engagement?

2. Tramway: Spatial Narratives and the Power of Immersion

Our second stop at Tramway introduced me to more experimental and spatially dynamic curatorial strategies. The exhibitions of Maud Sulter (You Are My Kindred Spirit) and Leanne Ross offered contrasting but equally thought-provoking approaches to curation.

□ **Key observations:**

□ Sulter's exhibition explored Black female identity, historical representation, and cultural memory, using large-scale portrait photography and poetic texts.



The picture was taken during the exhibition.

□ Leanne Ross' work was highly site-responsive, incorporating

sound, projection, and suspended fabric panels to create an immersive experience.

□ The use of suspended screens and layered projections blurred the line between audience and artwork, making movement a key part of engagement.



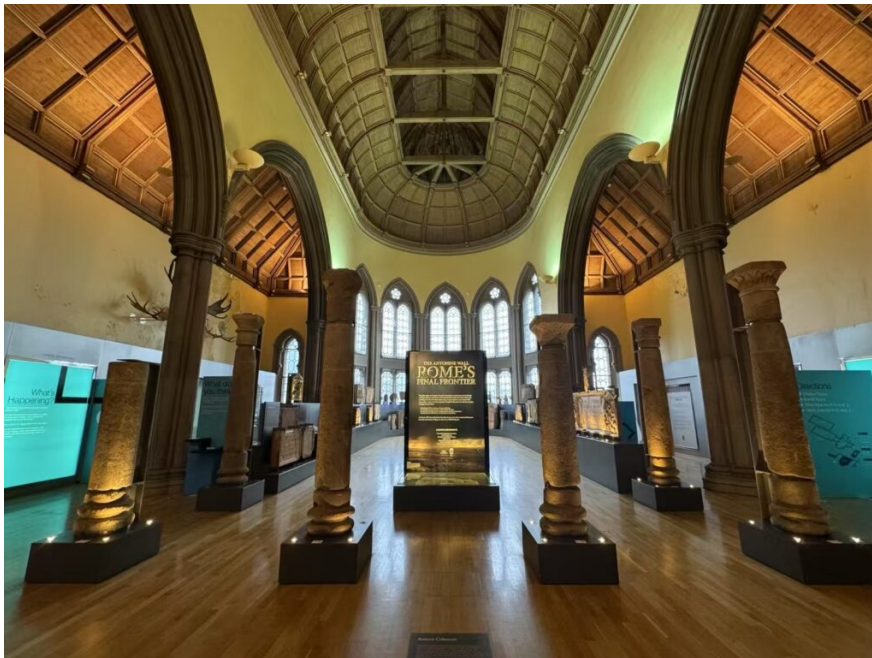
This picture presents an immersive exhibition installation, aiming to explore spatial narrative and interactive participation. The picture was taken at Tramway.

□ **Takeaway for my own project:**

This experience directly relates to my exploration of interactive and immersive exhibition formats. I was particularly inspired by the physical layering of projection surfaces—a technique that could be adapted into my own project to enhance audience agency and multi-narrative engagement.

3. GOMA: Institutional Curating and Public Engagement

Our final visit to GOMA (Gallery of Modern Art) provided a contrast to the more experimental approaches seen at Tramway. As a publicly funded institution, GOMA's exhibitions reflected a more structured and text-heavy curatorial approach, focusing on clarity and accessibility.



The picture was taken during the exhibition.

□ Takeaway for my own project:

GOMA's approach reminded me of the importance of providing contextual entry points for audiences. While my project emphasizes interactive and nonlinear engagement, how can I ensure that audiences have enough context to navigate the experience without feeling lost?

Week 6 Blog[1]: Choosing the Right Interactive Devices – Exploring My Curatorial Approach

1. From Concept to Curatorial Design: Refining the Immersive Film Experience

This week, I delved deeper into the curatorial concept of my Immersive Interactive Cinema Exhibition and further refined the spatial design, audience interaction methods, and technical support for the exhibition. Over the past few weeks, I have studied several related exhibition cases, including:

- *Netflix's Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*, which introduced an interactive film mechanism that inspired me to explore how audiences could make choices and influence the cinematic content within the exhibition.

Initially, I envisioned an interactive system where audiences would use simple touchscreens or gesture controls to select story branches, similar to *Bandersnatch*. However, after further research into interactive exhibition technologies and immersive film experiences, I realized that this method was too static and failed to fully integrate audiences into the exhibition. This led me to explore the potential of AI-driven real-time audience interaction, aiming to create a more fluid and nonlinear experience.

I also drew inspiration from:

- *TeamLab's immersive projection exhibitions, which utilize 360° projections and interactive sensing technologies to shape the exhibition space.*
- *Punchdrunk's immersive theater, which allows audiences to freely explore the space, creating a nonlinear narrative experience.*

Interactive engagement is not merely about giving audiences control—it is about creating a responsive space that adapts to the audience's presence and movement. Audience actions are not limited to a binary choice of "A or B" but rather unconsciously shape the visual narrative. This concept was inspired by TeamLab's *Borderless* exhibition, where projections shift in response to audience movement rather than requiring direct interaction through buttons or screens. This "invisible interaction" led me to rethink: True immersion is not about pressing buttons, but about becoming part of the cinematic environment.

To break away from the traditional passive film exhibition model, I designed an exhibition that includes:

- **Projection Zone** – A 360° immersive projection space where visuals change based on audience positioning and choices.
- **Gesture-Controlled Interaction** – Audiences can influence the storyline using gestures or touchscreen selections.
- **Decision-Making Zone** – A dedicated space where audiences make choices that impact the exhibition's content.
- **Feedback Wall** – A space where audiences record their viewing experiences, generating real-time visual data feedback.



This image is from Van Gogh: The Immersive Experience, a digital exhibition that transforms Vincent van Gogh's paintings into a 360° immersive environment. The projection showcases *Starry Night Over the Rhône* (1888), enveloping the walls and floor with vibrant colors and movement. Visitors can relax on lounge chairs or the floor, fully immersed in the dynamic reinterpretation of Van Gogh's iconic work. Picture source <https://travellutionmedia.com/news/van-gogh-the-immersive-experience/>

2. Learning from Artist-Led Curation: Key Takeaways from Adam Lewis-Jacobs' Lecture

This week, we attended Adam Lewis-Jacobs' lecture *Underground Overground, Inside and Out: Exploring the Dynamics of Artist-*

Run Spaces, where he shared his experience curating and managing artist-led spaces like Transmission Gallery and Céline. The lecture explored the differences between artist-run initiatives and traditional institutional curation, and how independent, non-commercial spaces operate.

Key Reflections:

□ **Artist-Run Spaces vs. Traditional Institutions**

- Artist-run spaces emphasize experimentation, community engagement, and decentralized curation, often relying on grants, artist committees, and DIY strategies rather than commercial sales.
- Traditional galleries prioritize market value, art sales, and collector demands, limiting curatorial freedom.
- Museums and public institutions, despite offering academic support, are constrained by bureaucracy, funding, and institutional policies.

□ **Nonlinear Exhibition Possibilities**

Adam shared how Céline challenged traditional exhibition formats by experimenting with site-specific projects, improvisational performances, and interdisciplinary collaborations. This inspired me to consider:

Could my curatorial project extend into a virtual space through VR?

By incorporating immersive and interactive elements, I aim to create an exhibition that transcends physical space and allows international audiences to engage remotely.



3. Ensuring Accessibility: Who Gets to Experience This?

While developing this exhibition, I started to reflect on how to ensure that the experience is genuinely accessible to a diverse audience, rather than catering solely to a specific artistic or technological demographic. Although AI-driven interactive film experiences offer exciting possibilities, they could unintentionally exclude certain groups, particularly individuals with disabilities.

The Core Question: How Can Interactive Devices Be More Accessible?

Traditional interactive film experiences often require physical gestures, touchscreen interactions, or visual recognition, which can be challenging for audiences with limited mobility or visual impairments. To make the exhibition more inclusive, I explored the following solutions:

□ Multi-Sensory Interaction: In addition to visual engagement, I aim to incorporate audio feedback and vibration cues to enhance accessibility. For example, interactive film zones could include audio descriptions or spatial sound cues to guide visually impaired audiences rather than relying solely on visual indicators.

□ Barrier-Free Interaction Design: Providing voice-controlled options as an alternative to gesture-based interaction, enabling users with mobility impairments to navigate the experience using voice commands. Inspired by the Guggenheim Museum's accessibility strategies, I want to ensure that the exhibition is not limited to a single mode of engagement.

□ Socially Interactive Elements: Rather than requiring individual engagement, the exhibition could include collaborative decision-making mechanisms, where audiences can work together to influence the film's outcome. This not only enhances inclusivity but also fosters social interaction and discussion.

These adjustments go beyond meeting basic accessibility requirements; they aim to broaden the exhibition's audience and encourage meaningful participation. I don't want the exhibition to be exclusively for technology enthusiasts—it should offer diverse engagement opportunities for people from different backgrounds and abilities. Through this reflection, I realized that curation is not just about presenting art—it's about constructing an interactive and inclusive space for dialogue and reflection. Moving forward, I will carefully consider how to further develop exhibition accessibility so that audiences with diverse needs can seamlessly enter this immersive world.



Image source:
<https://vocal.media/01/how-to-make-your-own-interactive-digital-display>

4. Balancing Control and Freedom: Who Shapes the Narrative?

During this week's discussions, I received insightful feedback from my peers, particularly regarding the roles of the curator and the audience within the exhibition. Many were intrigued by the concept but raised critical questions:

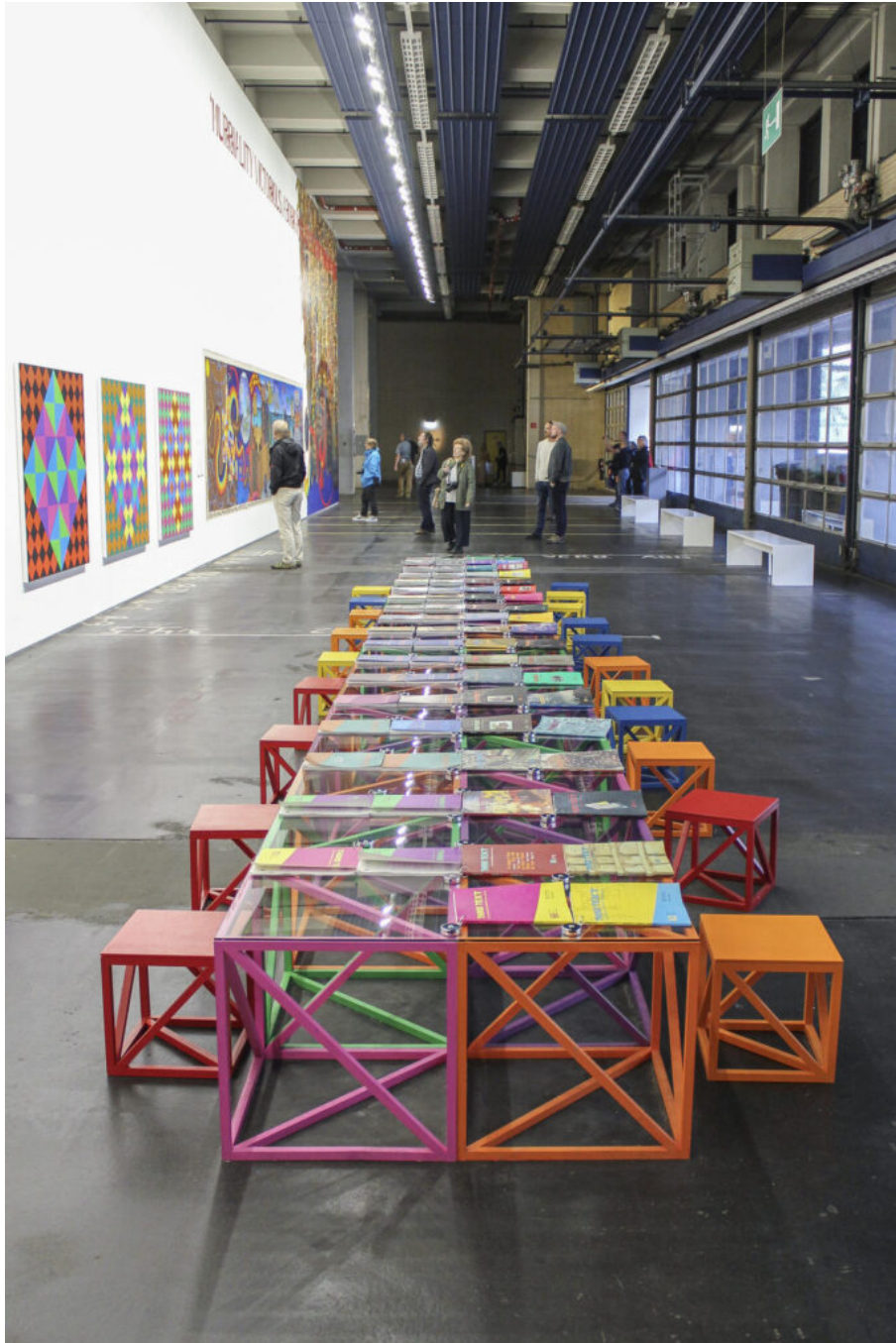
- Is the audience the ultimate decision-maker in this exhibition?
- How does the curator maintain curatorial logic within an open-ended interactive exhibition?

□ How can we ensure that allowing audience freedom doesn't compromise the overall narrative experience?

Documenta 14's Decentralized Curation: This exhibition challenged traditional curation by allowing content to shift based on geography and audience engagement. This inspired me to ask: Could my exhibition function as a dynamic editing system rather than a fixed storyline?

Ultimately, I concluded that the curator is not completely relinquishing control but instead transforming into an "experience designer."

This curatorial strategy aligns with Claire Bishop's concept of "curating as collaboration" in *Radical Museology*. She argues that curation should be a multi-layered process of knowledge production rather than a one-way transmission of information. In this exhibition, the curator is not simply providing answers, but creating a space for the audience to explore and construct meaning.



Image

source:

<https://artviewer.org/documenta-14-neue-neue-galerie-neue-hauptpost/>

Case Study & References

1. Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. Verso.

Explores the concept of participatory art and audience agency,

relevant to my exhibition's interactive approach□

2. Frameless Exhibition London. (n.d.). Available at: <https://frameless.com>

A London-based immersive art exhibition using large-scale projections, influencing my Projection Zone design.

3. Netflix (2018). *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*. Available at: <https://www.netflix.com>

A key example of nonlinear storytelling and interactive media, inspiring the Decision-Making Zone in my exhibition.

4. teamLab Borderless. (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.teamlab.art>

An immersive digital art space where visuals change in response to audience movement, influencing my AI-driven interaction model.

5. Punchdrunk. (n.d.). *Immersive Theatre & Site-Specific Performances*. Available at: <https://www.punchdrunk.com>

A leading immersive theater company known for audience-driven experiences, shaping my approach to nonlinear exhibition curation.

6. teamLab (2018). *Universe of Water Particles on Au-delà des limites*. Available at: https://www.sohu.com/a/247178891_721246

A digital waterfall artwork that responds to audience presence, inspiring my gesture-controlled interaction concepts.

By drawing from these case studies and references, my curatorial approach is being shaped by both immersive art and interactive storytelling, ensuring that the audience's role as a co-creator remains at the heart of the exhibition.

Week 5 Blog 2 Case Studies, Theoretical Insights, and Future Directions for Expanded Cinema

Expanding Cinematic Boundaries: Case Studies & References on Interactive & Immersive Cinema

1. Learning from the Frameless Exhibition (London)

The Frameless Exhibition in London is an interactive screen-based exhibition space that uses large-scale projections to create immersive environments. Unlike traditional exhibitions, where visitors are passive observers, Frameless invites movement-based interaction, allowing audiences to engage dynamically with projected artworks.

Adaptation for My Project:

- Consider using 360-degree projection mapping to envelop audiences in a cinematic world beyond the conventional screen.
- Explore motion-tracking technology, where audience movement influences the film's visuals, similar to Frameless' interactive projection spaces.

□ [Frameless Exhibition London](#)



Frameless Exhibition, London. Visitors immerse themselves in large-scale interactive projections of Gustav Klimt's Tree of Life, enhanced by mirrored ceilings and dynamic visuals, creating a multi-sensory experience. Image credit: Richard Blake / Frameless London.
 [source][<https://thenudge.com/london-things-to-do/frameless-london/>]

2. Interactive Narrative Inspiration: Black Mirror: Bandersnatch (Netflix)

One of the key inspirations for interactive storytelling is Black Mirror: Bandersnatch (2018), a Netflix film that allows viewers to make choices affecting the plot's direction. This format aligns with my project's vision of Expanded Cinema, where audiences become active participants rather than passive spectators.

Adaptation for My Project:

□ Introduce decision-making points in the film screenings, where audiences collectively determine how the narrative

unfolds.

□ Use multiple endings to emphasize the agency of the audience, creating a non-linear, multi-perspective film experience.

3. Immersive Environments: teamLab's Digital Art Spaces

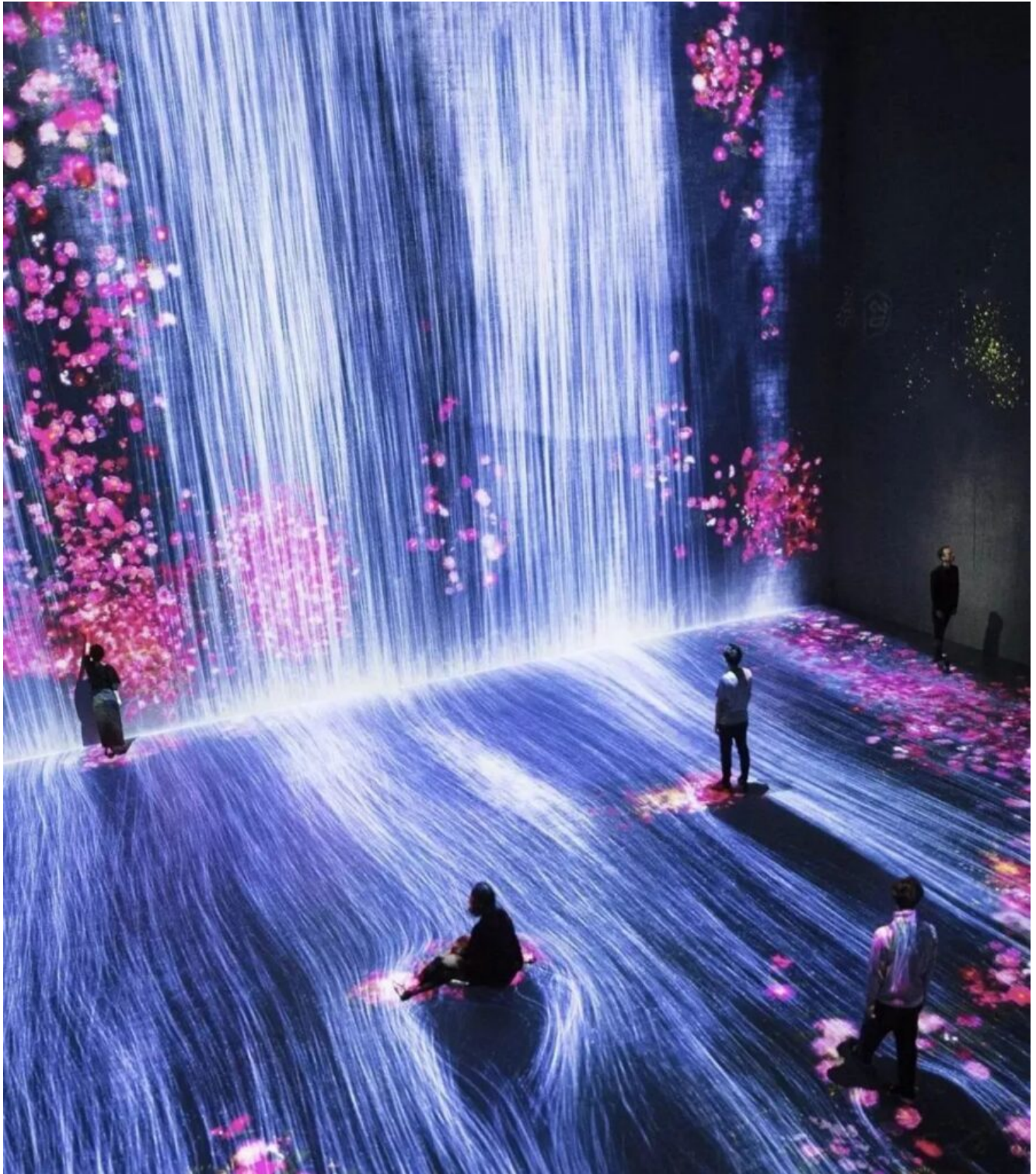
The work of teamLab, a digital art collective, is another strong reference for my project. teamLab's interactive digital installations create environments where audiences physically interact with projected visuals, breaking down the boundary between the digital and physical worlds.

Adaptation for My Project:

□ Experiment with projection-responsive environments, where film narratives respond to audience movement, mirroring teamLab's interactive digital spaces.

□ Use sensor-based technology to allow participants to trigger visual or auditory changes within the cinematic experience.

□ [teamLab](#)



This image showcases Universe of Water Particles, an interactive installation from teamLab's Au-delà des limites exhibition. The digital waterfall, composed of water particles, creates an immersive environment where visitors influence the flow of water in real-time, altering the artwork's shape and interaction. (Source: https://www.sohu.com/a/247178891_721246)

4. Theatrical Immersion: Punchdrunk's Site-Specific Theatre

Punchdrunk, the company behind immersive productions like *Sleep No More* and *The Burnt City*, reimagines theatre by allowing audiences to move freely through multi-room environments, uncovering narratives at their own pace. This aligns with my project's idea of cinema as a spatial journey rather than a fixed screen experience.

Adaptation for My Project:

- Design the exhibition as a multi-room cinematic experience, where audiences physically navigate different film sequences.
- Consider an actor-augmented experience, where live performers interact with visitors, blending film and theatre.

□ [Punchdrunk](#)

The peer review feedback has been crucial in refining the interactive aspects of my Expanded Cinema project. Drawing from Frameless, Black Mirror: Bandersnatch, teamLab, and Punchdrunk, I now have a clearer direction for integrating choice-based narratives, projection-mapped spaces, and immersive storytelling. Moving forward, I will incorporate these elements into both the conceptual development and practical execution of the exhibition.

Expanding the Theoretical Framework: Audience Agency & Digital Curation

The shift from traditional film curation to Expanded Cinema raises questions about how much agency should be granted to the audience. According to Bishop (2012), participatory art challenges conventional curator-artist-audience hierarchies

but also risks creating the illusion of democratization rather than true engagement (Bishop, 2012).

One of the best examples of audience-driven narratives is Netflix's *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* (2018). This interactive film allows viewers to make real-time decisions, altering the storyline dynamically. However, despite offering multiple pathways, the film's choices are still pre-programmed, demonstrating a paradox: is audience participation truly unrestricted, or is it an illusion carefully curated by creators?

This dilemma mirrors the challenges of Expanded Cinema exhibitions:

- **How do we ensure audience agency while maintaining curatorial vision?**
- **Can AI-driven storytelling balance control and unpredictability?**

Case Study: TeamLab Borderless – Digital Immersion & Curatorial Control

Case Study Introduction

TeamLab Borderless, a pioneering digital art museum in Tokyo, utilizes projection mapping, motion sensors, and AI-driven interactivity to create a fully immersive experience. Unlike traditional exhibitions where audiences passively observe artworks, TeamLab dissolves the boundary between the observer and the artwork—for example, digital flowers bloom or wither based on human touch, and virtual pathways shift dynamically in response to visitor movement.

This interactive model challenges traditional curation by giving audiences agency to shape the experience rather than just interpret it.

This mirrors my project's goal: to explore whether projection

and AI can transform Expanded Cinema into a participatory experience, where audiences 'edit' the film in real time.

Conclusion: Refining the Balance Between Interaction and Curation

Through peer review, tutorial discussions, and case studies, I have explored the complexities of participatory Expanded Cinema, identifying both its potential and its challenges. While technology enhances audience engagement, it simultaneously raises curatorial and ethical dilemmas regarding control, agency, and authorship. The paradox of audience participation—whether it is truly open-ended or subtly pre-curated—remains a key issue in my research.

Moving forward, I will focus on:

- **Integrating AI and real-time storytelling** into Expanded Cinema while maintaining a structured curatorial vision.
- **Defining the balance** between curatorial authorship and audience-driven narratives to avoid the illusion of agency.
- **Developing practical exhibition models** that optimize interactivity without compromising meaning.

By addressing these questions, I aim to refine the next phase of my project, ensuring that Expanded Cinema is not only immersive and participatory but also cohesively curated and conceptually impactful.

Case Study & References

1. Bishop, C. (2012). *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*. Verso.

2. Frameless Exhibition London. (n.d.). Available at: <https://frameless.com>
 3. Netflix (2018). *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*. Available at: <https://www.netflix.com>
 4. teamLab Borderless. (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.teamlab.art>
 5. Punchdrunk. (n.d.). *Immersive Theatre & Site-Specific Performances*. Available at: <https://www.punchdrunk.com>
 6. teamLab (2018). *Universe of Water Particles on Au-delà des limites*. Available at: https://www.sohu.com/a/247178891_721246
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Week 5 Blog 1:

Deconstructing Expanded

Cinema – Refining Audience

Interaction & Spatial

Narratives

1 Introduction: Defining the Direction Through Feedback

Over the past few weeks, I have refined my curatorial project based on readings, lectures, peer reviews, and tutorial discussions. My exhibition explores the concept of Expanded Cinema, moving beyond traditional film screenings into interactive, spatial, and installation-based experiences.

Through peer discussions and tutorial feedback, several key issues emerged that require further refinement:

1□□ Structural Clarity: Should my project focus on three distinct exhibition models (Interactive Film Curation, Community Screenings, and Unfinished Film Curation) or streamline it to emphasize just two?

2□□ Audience Interaction: How much agency should audiences have in shaping the cinematic experience? Should participation be passive (e.g., pre-recorded interactive sequences) or active (e.g., real-time live performance integration)?

3□□ Technical Feasibility: How can I practically implement interactive narratives in a physical exhibition space rather than just on a screen?

After receiving feedback, I have begun **restructuring my exhibition model**, integrating new theoretical perspectives and case studies to enhance the project's feasibility and impact.

This week's lecture on **place-responsive curatorial programming** provided valuable insights, especially regarding how different sites and technologies shape curatorial decisions. These reflections push me to refine my exhibition model and reconsider how audience interaction can be integrated without compromising curatorial intent.



This picture is from the ppt of the lecture
□ https://www.learn.ed.ac.uk/ultra/courses/_117082_1/outline/file/_11051180_1 □

2□□ ***Critical Reflections on Lecture: Place-Responsive Curating***

This week's lecture by Frances Davis explored place-responsive curatorial programming, offering useful considerations for curatorial approaches. ATLAS Arts operates in non-traditional, site-specific contexts, organizing exhibitions across rural, island, and coastal landscapes rather than conventional gallery spaces.

Key Insights for My Project:

- Multi-Sited Storytelling: *Samhla* (2024) was displayed across five locations in North Skye, altering audience perception depending on the site. Similarly, my project can explore site-responsive Expanded Cinema, where films are exhibited in different environments to shape unique audience experiences.
- Community Engagement: ATLAS Arts' *School of Plural Futures*

fosters participatory discussion about the social and political realities of place. My project can integrate community involvement by inviting audiences to shape the film narrative through live interactions.

Applying to My Exhibition:

□ Consider **alternative screening locations**—e.g., abandoned buildings, parks, or urban spaces—to create immersive site-specific film experiences.

□ Use **oral history elements**, inspired by *Tobar an Dualchais*, allowing audiences to contribute their own narratives to the exhibition.



Photo from 24_25_ATLAS Arts presentation

3□□ *Peer & Tutor Feedback: Refining the Curatorial Strategy*

□ Key Feedback from Peer Review & Tutorial

1□□ Too Many Exhibition Models? Some peers suggested that my three-part structure (*Interactive Film Curation*, *Community Screenings*, *Unfinished Film Curation*) might be too fragmented. Would it be more effective to focus on just two core models?

Adjustment:

□ Instead of three separate sections, I am considering merging interactive film curation with unfinished film curation to create a hybrid format where audiences engage with incomplete narratives and shape their development.

2□□ Audience Interaction: The level of interactivity remains unclear—should the audience have pre-recorded choices (like *Bandersnatch*) or live role-playing experiences (like *Punchdrunk*)?

Adjustment:

□ The best approach is to allow audience choices to shape the story in real-time while maintaining a structured narrative. Using motion sensors and projections, their movements and interactions can influence the visuals, creating an engaging and immersive experience without losing curatorial direction.

3□□ Technical & Spatial Feasibility: How will the physical movement of audiences be managed? Should there be a structured pathway or an open, nonlinear experience?

Adjustment:

□ A semi-structured approach works best—key scenes guide the audience, but they can explore freely. Subtle lighting or motion sensors naturally direct movement without restricting choices.

4 Identifying Issues: Why Do These Challenges Exist?

Structural Fragmentation – Should the Project Be Streamlined?

One critique from the peer review was that the three exhibition models (Interactive Film Curation, Community Screenings, Unfinished Film Curation) might be too disjointed. This issue arises because each model has a distinct conceptual basis.

Bishop (2012) critiques participatory art as “sometimes being a curatorial illusion of inclusivity, where audience agency appears expanded but remains curatorially controlled” (Bishop, 2012). This tension is evident in my structure—if audiences engage in interactive film choices, can the same curatorial logic apply to unfinished films?

Case Study: Punchdrunk’s Immersive Theatre

Punchdrunk’s *Sleep No More* (2011–present) presents a non-linear narrative, where audiences are free to roam the space and construct their own experiences. However, the overall structure is still carefully designed to maintain coherence. My project can draw from this model by allowing audience freedom within structured parameters rather than completely open-ended interaction.

Audience Engagement – How Much Freedom Should They Have?

Some peers questioned whether the interactive component should allow open-ended audience control or structured engagement.

Bandersnatch (Black Mirror, 2018) demonstrates pre-scripted audience interaction, while immersive theatre like *Punchdrunk’s Sleep No More* allows free movement and role-playing. Which model aligns best with my project?



A scene from *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch* (2018), Netflix's interactive film, where protagonist Stefan Butler (Fionn Whitehead) navigates choices using a joystick. The film explores free will, digital control, and branching narratives, allowing viewers to shape the story's outcome. Source:Netflix (2018). *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*. Available at: www.netflix.com [Accessed 7 Mar. 2025].

□ Case Study: teamLab's Digital Exhibitions

teamLab's installations invite audience participation without breaking curatorial intent. Their work *Borderless* (2018) in Tokyo allows visitors to alter digital projections, yet the overall exhibition remains a cohesive experience. This suggests a possible model: interactive Expanded Cinema with controlled variability, where audiences can influence aspects of the film but within a structured framework.

5.5 Optimizing the Curatorial Model: Proposed Revisions

Merging Models for Cohesion

□ Interactive & Unfinished Film Hybrid – Creating a single fluid exhibition where audiences contribute to, alter, and experience unfinished films in real-time.

□ Technical Feasibility: Using motion tracking (teamLab) or gesture-based interactions (Frameless London) to allow participation without disrupting the film's artistic intent.

conclusion□

Refining my Expanded Cinema exhibition, I merged Interactive Film Curation and Unfinished Film Curation for a more cohesive experience. Drawing from Punchdrunk's immersive storytelling and teamLab's digital interactivity, audience choices will shape the narrative within structured parameters, similar to *Bandersnatch* (2018). Motion tracking and projection mapping, inspired by teamLab *Borderless* and Frameless London, will guide engagement while preserving curatorial intent. Moving forward, I will refine technical logistics to balance interactivity and artistic control, ensuring Expanded Cinema remains both immersive and thoughtfully curated.

Case Study & References□

1. Bishop, C. (2012) *Artificial hells : participatory art and the politics of spectatorship*. London: Verso.
2. Punchdrunk. (2011–Present). *Sleep No More*. Available at: <https://www.punchdrunk.com>
3. Netflix (2018). *Black Mirror: Bandersnatch*. Available at: <https://www.netflix.com>

4. teamLab Borderless. (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.teamlab.art>
 5. Frameless Exhibition London. (n.d.). Available at: <https://frameless.com>
 6. ATLAS Arts. (2024). *Place-Responsive Curating & Multi-Sited Storytelling*. Available at: <https://www.atlasarts.org.uk>
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week 4 Who Holds the Power? Ethical Challenges in Curating Interactive Expanded Cinema

Introduction: Expanded Cinema as a Curatorial Inquiry

This week, my curatorial exploration of Expanded Cinema was further developed through discussions on exhibition-making, curatorial ethics, and peer review. Engaging with James Clegg's workshop, I began considering the practical and logistical challenges of presenting an interactive, participatory film exhibition. Meanwhile, Dr. Gabrielle Barkess-Kerr's lecture on curatorial ethics prompted me to reflect on audience agency, power structures, and the ethical considerations of participatory curation.

Rather than focusing solely on the technical aspects of Expanded Cinema, I am increasingly drawn to the ethical implications of audience participation. How much control

should curators relinquish in an interactive cinematic experience? What are the limitations of participatory curation, and how do we balance artistic intent with audience agency?

A relevant example is **Tate Exchange's "Who Are We?"** project, which blurred the boundaries between curator and audience. This participatory exhibition invited viewers to engage in storytelling and co-creation, effectively shifting curatorial authority towards the public. This resonates with the challenges of Expanded Cinema—when curators introduce participatory elements, to what extent should they relinquish control? How do we ensure that audience contributions enhance rather than disrupt the coherence of the exhibition?



This image captures the Who Are We? project at Tate Modern, showcasing an interactive exhibition where visitors actively engage in an open curatorial space. (Source: <https://whoareweproject.com/2018-programme>)

Project Overview: Who Are We?

“Who Are We?” is a participatory curatorial project at Tate Exchange, Tate Modern, exploring themes of identity, belonging, migration, and citizenship. Bringing together artists, scholars, activists, and the public, the project uses visual arts, film, photography, design, architecture, and performance to examine the intersection of curation and social issues.

Challenging traditional curatorial models, the project encourages audience co-creation, transforming curation into an open dialogue through interactive installations, workshops, and live performances.

□ Video Overview: <https://youtu.be/a4907zwF0Xk>

This week’s discussions and readings have led me to reflect on the delicate balance between immersive curation and structured authorship, as well as how participatory Expanded Cinema can maintain curatorial integrity while providing audiences with a truly meaningful interactive experience. This may be the key issue that my project should explore in greater depth.

Balancing Curatorial Structure and Audience Agency

The exhibition-making workshop with James Clegg provided practical insights into the logistics of curating.

A relevant example is *Punchdrunk’s immersive theatre*, which challenges traditional audience passivity. In *Sleep No More*, audience members freely navigate the performance space, choosing which scenes to engage with and even interacting with performers. This model raises crucial questions for Expanded Cinema:

- Does increased audience agency redefine cinematic authorship?
- Should curators set boundaries for participation to maintain artistic coherence?

Like *Punchdrunk's* approach, Expanded Cinema demands an ethical reflection on audience agency—where does participation enhance the cinematic experience, and where does it risk fragmenting it? These considerations will be central as I refine my speculative project.



This image captures a scene from *Sleep No More*, an immersive theatre production by Punchdrunk, performed in Shanghai. Audience members, wearing signature white masks, freely navigate through the McKinnon Hotel, experiencing fragmented narratives and engaging with the performance in a non-linear fashion. (Source: <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/71154449>)

Refining the Expanded Cinema Exhibition

Model

From peer discussions and faculty feedback, I realized the need to refine my curatorial model. Initially, I proposed three components. However, after further reflection, I am considering streamlining the structure to focus on:

□ **Immersive Expanded Cinema** – Films that evolve through interactive audience choices.

• ***Theoretical Framework: Audience Agency & Participatory Curating***

The concept of audience agency is central to participatory curating, which is particularly relevant in the Expanded Cinema model. Claire Bishop (2012) states that “*participatory art challenges the traditional curator-artist-audience hierarchy by redistributing creative control*” (Bishop, 2012). In *Artificial Hells*, she critiques participatory art’s utopian promise, questioning “*whether audience involvement genuinely democratizes art or merely serves as a curatorial illusion of inclusivity*” (Bishop, 2012). This tension is critical in Expanded Cinema, where interactivity can empower audiences but also pose ethical dilemmas regarding curatorial control.

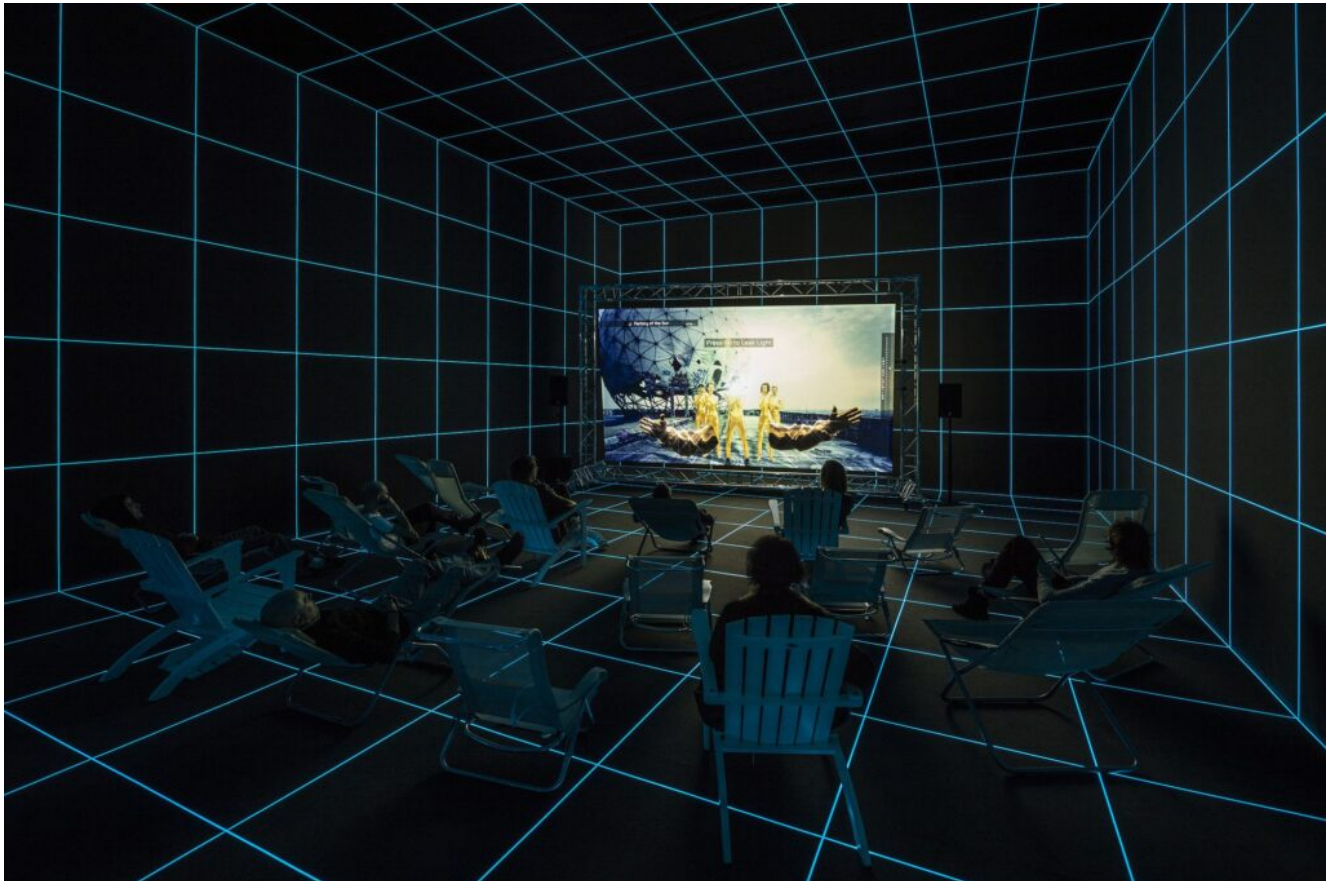
• ***Case Study: The Factory of the Sun (Hito Steyerl) – Interactive Media & Curatorial Control***



□Reference website□

A compelling example of Expanded Cinema’s intersection with interactive media is **Hito Steyerl’s *Factory of the Sun* (2015)**, an immersive video installation that blends gaming aesthetics,

political critique, and digital culture. Originally presented at the German Pavilion of the Venice Biennale, the installation places the audience in a futuristic motion-capture studio, where they navigate a hypermediated space of surveillance, resistance, and digital capitalism. Unlike traditional film screenings, *Factory of the Sun* **blurs the boundaries between passive spectatorship and interactive participation.**



Hito Steyerl's *Factory of the Sun* (2015) is an immersive video installation exhibited at Kunsthall Charlottenborg (2016/2017). Featuring a neon blue grid-like environment, it blurs the boundaries between reality and virtuality while exploring themes of surveillance, digital labor, and media power dynamics. [Source: Elina Knuutinen, Kunsthall Charlottenborg, 2016/2017. <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/71424344071252408/>]

Expanded Cinema dismantles the rigid structures of traditional curation by integrating audience interaction and digital technology. Similar to Hito Steyerl's Factory of the Sun, where participants navigate a hyperreal environment,

curators of interactive film exhibitions must confront the paradox of control and openness. If audiences dictate the cinematic experience, how do curators maintain the integrity of their vision without restricting creative participation?

In reevaluating the curatorial model for Expanded Cinema, I have recognized the necessity of balancing audience participation with curatorial control. As Smith (2017) states, "Curating is not merely about displaying artworks; it is a mode of knowledge production" (Smith, 2017). However, excessive audience participation may blur curatorial intent and weaken the coherence of the exhibition. Therefore, curators must carefully design interactive elements to ensure that audience engagement enhances the exhibition experience without diverting from its core curatorial vision.

Integrating the Curatorial Collective Manifesto into Expanded Cinema

The 11-Point Curatorial Collective Manifesto provides a framework for ethical, inclusive, and experimental curatorial practices. It emphasizes non-hierarchical collaboration, accessibility, and speculation, which directly inform my Expanded Cinema project. By aligning my curatorial approach with these principles, I aim to develop a participatory exhibition model that rethinks audience agency and curatorial control.

11:11

11 Point Curatorial Collective manifesto

Respect - Respect everyone's rights and voice

Speculative - Imaginative proposals, allows for experimental and investigative research

Communication - give feedback to each other positively and critically

Collaboration - Collaboration Over Hierarchy, every voice is equal.

Joyful - Entertainment and humour are also elements that curating needs to consider.

Experimental - We should have the courage to break the current restrictions, to broaden the concept of curators, and to put our ideas into completely new exhibitions.

Grassroots - Independent separate from major corporations and exists beyond external pressures

Accessible - eliminate barriers so that everyone can participate

Diverse/Inclusive - Strive for transparency in curatorial decision-making processes and embrace diversity.

Circular Economy - any profit made is put back into the collective.

Altruistic - for the good of the arts

Balancing Curatorial Control & Audience Agency

A key challenge in Expanded Cinema is determining how much control curators should relinquish to audiences. The manifesto's emphasis on collaboration over hierarchy suggests that audiences should play an active role in shaping the cinematic experience. However, as Bishop (2012) argues, participatory practices often present a curatorial paradox—while they claim to empower audiences, they may still reinforce existing power structures (Bishop, 2012). This tension requires careful navigation in my project, ensuring that interaction remains meaningful without compromising the curatorial vision.

Experimentation & Ethical Curation

The manifesto's commitment to experimental curation aligns with my project's goal of rethinking traditional exhibition formats. Expanded Cinema challenges passive spectatorship, allowing viewers to actively shape the narrative. However,

Steyerl (2015) warns that digital interactivity can also serve as a tool of control, as media environments often dictate user behavior under the guise of participation (Steyerl, 2015). This raises ethical questions—how much agency is truly given to the audience, and how much is predetermined by the curatorial structure?

Sustainability & Community Engagement

The circular economy principle of the manifesto inspires me to consider sustainable exhibition models. Instead of one-time installations, my Expanded Cinema project could explore modular, adaptable formats that allow for ongoing community engagement. As Finkelpearl (2013) suggests, participatory art should not only engage audiences but also foster long-term cultural production beyond the confines of a single exhibition (Finkelpearl, 2013). This perspective encourages me to design an exhibition that extends its impact beyond the initial experience, perhaps through open-source digital archives or interactive community screenings.

*The **11-Point Manifesto** serves as a guiding philosophy for my Expanded Cinema project, ensuring that it remains both **innovative in form and ethically sound in execution**. By critically reflecting on **audience participation, ethical interactivity, and sustainable exhibition design**, I am developing a curatorial model that **challenges traditional cinematic experiences while remaining socially responsible and inclusive**.*

Conclusion: Moving Towards an Ethical and Feasible Model

Expanded Cinema challenges conventional curatorial hierarchies, raising questions about **audience agency, artistic**

intent, and curatorial ethics. As I refine this project, I aim to find a balance between **immersive participation and structured curation**, ensuring an experience that is both **engaging and ethically responsible**.

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Week 3 Blog Post: The Artist-Curator & Speculative Curatorial Thinking

Introduction:

*This week's exploration of the **artist-curator** challenged the*

*traditional boundaries between art-making and exhibition-making. **Fran Cottell's House Projects** was particularly inspiring, as it redefined exhibition spaces by integrating them into lived environments, showing that curation can be fluid, personal, and embedded in everyday life. Similarly, the speculative curatorial projects we discussed in the workshop—especially those that engaged with **audience participation, social perception, and unconventional spaces**—made me think about how I want to structure my own curatorial project.*

*Moving forward, I am particularly interested in **curating as an immersive, participatory process rather than a passive viewing experience**. My project will focus on creating a **situational exhibition** where audience interaction is central, using space, performance, and dialogue as key curatorial tools.*

The Artist-Curator: Rethinking Curatorial Methods

The artist-curator does not separate artistic practice from curatorial practice but instead integrates the two. This approach resonated with me because it treats curation itself as a creative medium rather than a neutral framework for displaying artworks. Fran Cottell's House Projects inspired me to think beyond the typical exhibition model—she transformed her home into an exhibition site, making the audience reconsider their relationship with space, objects, and art.

This challenges the assumption that exhibitions need to exist in formal institutional spaces. Instead, it opens

up possibilities for curating in unconventional locations—public spaces, domestic settings, or even transient, mobile spaces. This is a key influence on my own curatorial project, as I want to design an exhibition where the space itself plays a role in shaping audience experience, rather than merely functioning as a backdrop for artworks.

Speculative Curatorial Projects: Experimental Approaches & Practical Applications

Our workshop discussions introduced **speculative curatorial projects** that emphasized **risk, trust, and audience participation**. Two projects in particular—Sarah Percival's **Open Studio** and Beichen Huang's **Situational Exhibition**—inspired me to think about how **curation can be structured as an interaction rather than just a display**.

Key reflections from these projects that apply to my own curatorial approach:

1. ***The exhibition as an evolving process*** – Percival's idea of an **open studio format** made me think about how an exhibition can allow audiences to witness creation rather than just its final result. This aligns with my interest in making the **curatorial process itself visible**, incorporating elements of live production, conversation, and change over time.
2. ***Situational curation and social dynamics*** – Huang's project, where visitors enter a space knowing they might share it with someone they perceive as "risky," highlights how curation can **construct social experiments**. This made me consider how **creating**

controlled yet open-ended situations could be a powerful tool in my own project.

Applying These Ideas to My Own Exhibition Plan

Taking inspiration from these speculative curatorial experiments, my exhibition will be:

- ***Situational & Interactive*** – The audience's participation will influence the outcome, making them co-creators rather than passive spectators.
- ***Multi-Sensory & Immersive*** – I want to incorporate elements of sound, movement, and dialogue to create a layered experience rather than a static one.
- ***Non-traditional in Space*** – The exhibition will take place in an unconventional setting that **challenges traditional notions of where art should be experienced.**

One of my main challenges moving forward is **finding the balance between structured curation and open-ended audience engagement.** The next step in my project development will be **identifying artists and performers who work with interaction and immersive storytelling,** as well as researching locations that support **fluid, participatory exhibitions.**

Conclusion: My Curatorial Plan Moving

Forward

Based on this week's reflections, my curatorial project will focus on:

- ***Situational Curating*** – Designing an exhibition that encourages spontaneous audience interaction.
- ***Immersive & Experimental Formats*** – Moving beyond static presentations by integrating performance, sound, and spatial design.
- ***Alternative Exhibition Spaces*** – Exploring unconventional venues that allow for an evolving, interactive experience.
- ***Audience Agency & Unpredictability*** – Allowing participants to shape their own experience within the exhibition, making it a dynamic and unpredictable space.

This week reinforced my belief that curation is not just about arranging artworks—it is about creating environments that provoke thought, invite participation, and challenge norms. My next steps will be refining my concept, identifying collaborators, and mapping out potential spaces to bring this vision to life.



Week 2 Blog Post: Curatorial Models & Working as a Collective

Introduction

This week's discussions expanded my understanding of curatorial models and collective working. Beyond institutional exhibitions, curating today encompasses participatory, site-specific, and socially engaged

formats. The focus on collaborative curatorial practices led me to consider how collectives function and how knowledge-sharing, skill exchange, and non-hierarchical structures shape curatorial work.

More importantly, this reflection helped clarify what kind of curatorial approach aligns with my future project. Rather than following a singular model, I am interested in hybrid formats that integrate dialogue, community engagement, and immersive experiences. This blog explores key insights from this week's learning and how they influence my curatorial direction.

Curatorial Models: What Resonates with My Practice?

Rather than strictly institutional or independent curation, I am drawn to models that emphasize interaction, audience participation, and contextual adaptability. Some approaches that resonate with my future project include:

- *Dialogue-Based & Participatory Curation* – Moving beyond passive viewing, incorporating **conversations, workshops, and audience contributions** into the exhibition process.
- *Community-Engaged & Site-Specific Projects* – Inspired by *The Roof is on Fire*, curating in **unconventional spaces** (e.g., car parks, temporary setups) to enhance **social interaction**.
- *Environmental & Sustainable Curation* – Projects like *Decarbonising Together* raise questions about **curatorial responsibility and the boundary between art and**

activism.

- *Performance & Action-Based Curation – The act itself becomes the core, prioritizing interaction over traditional exhibition spaces.*
- *Immersive & Digital Curation – Using VR, AI, and interactive technology to expand engagement beyond physical exhibitions.*

Each of these approaches offers ways to break conventional exhibition structures, making art more accessible and socially relevant. My next step is to explore how these elements can intersect in a cohesive, hybrid curatorial format.

Collective Curation: Collaboration & Knowledge Exchange

This week also highlighted the significance of working as a collective in curatorial practice. From historical artist movements like Fluxus and Bauhaus to contemporary artist-run spaces and biennials, collectives foster collaboration, shared authorship, and interdisciplinary exchange.

Some key aspects of collective working that influence my curatorial perspective include:

- *Non-Hierarchical Structures – Decision-making through discussion and shared responsibility.*
- *Skill & Knowledge Sharing – Utilizing each member's expertise to expand creative possibilities.*

- *Interdisciplinary Collaboration – Engaging with practitioners from technology, activism, and community work to enrich curatorial projects.*

Studying collective models reinforced my interest in curating as a process of co-creation rather than just exhibition-making. Moving forward, I want to integrate collaborative and participatory strategies into my curatorial approach.

Conclusion: How Does This Shape My Curatorial Direction?

This week's learning deepened my understanding of alternative curatorial approaches and reinforced my interest in curation as an interactive and collective process. As I refine my speculative curatorial project, I will focus on:

- Merging participatory, site-responsive, and immersive elements into a hybrid curatorial format.
- Integrating interdisciplinary and collective-driven methods to foster inclusive curation.
- Exploring how curatorial projects can function beyond exhibition spaces, emphasizing community engagement and real-world impact.

Curating is not just about displaying art—it is about creating spaces for dialogue, exchange, and new ways of experiencing the world. My future project will be

shaped by these principles, aiming to bridge art, audience participation, and collaborative experimentation.

Week 1 Blog Post: Exploring Curating in Uncertain Times & Building a Collective

Introduction:

- *Julie Louise Bacon's lecture, "Curating in a Time of Broken Globalisation", examined the impact of globalization's instability on curatorial practices and discussed how curators navigate this uncertainty.*

This week's course provided us with an initial understanding of contemporary curatorial practices while emphasizing the core values of **criticality, creativity, and care**. Julie Louise Bacon's lecture, Additionally, this week marked the formation of our curatorial collective, an essential step toward collaboration in the course.



Curating in a Time of Broken Globalisation

- *Curators function more as translators or creators whose medium is the work of others” (Thea, 2010)*□

As globalization faces increasing instability, curatorial practices must continuously adapt. The lecture explored how contemporary curating repositions itself amid economic, political, and cultural uncertainties and how curators serve as mediators of knowledge production. As Carolee Thea notes in *On Curating: Interviews with Ten International Curators*, “Curators function more as translators or creators whose medium is the work of others”(Thea, 2010)□. This highlights that curators are not just organizers of

exhibitions but key facilitators of connections between art, society, and audiences.

- *This made me reflect on whether we could consider decentralized curatorial approaches, such as temporary exhibitions, digital curating, or community art projects.*

The reading materials further developed this discussion. Ronald Kolb et al., in *Centres / Peripheries – Complex Constellations*, examined the centre-periphery dynamic in curatorial practices, emphasizing how major urban art institutions dominate discourse while peripheral regions and non-mainstream practices remain underrepresented (Kolb et al., 2019).

- *Small Visual Arts Organisations (SVAOs) play a crucial but often overlooked role in exhibition-making. Unlike large-scale institutions, SVAOs focus on **micro-curating**, emphasizing local, community-driven initiatives (Bilbao, 2018)*

This perspective encouraged me to think about how curatorial projects can integrate with local culture and social issues rather than solely focusing on large-scale, mainstream exhibitions.

Understanding the Curatorial Collective Model and Key Curatorial Concepts

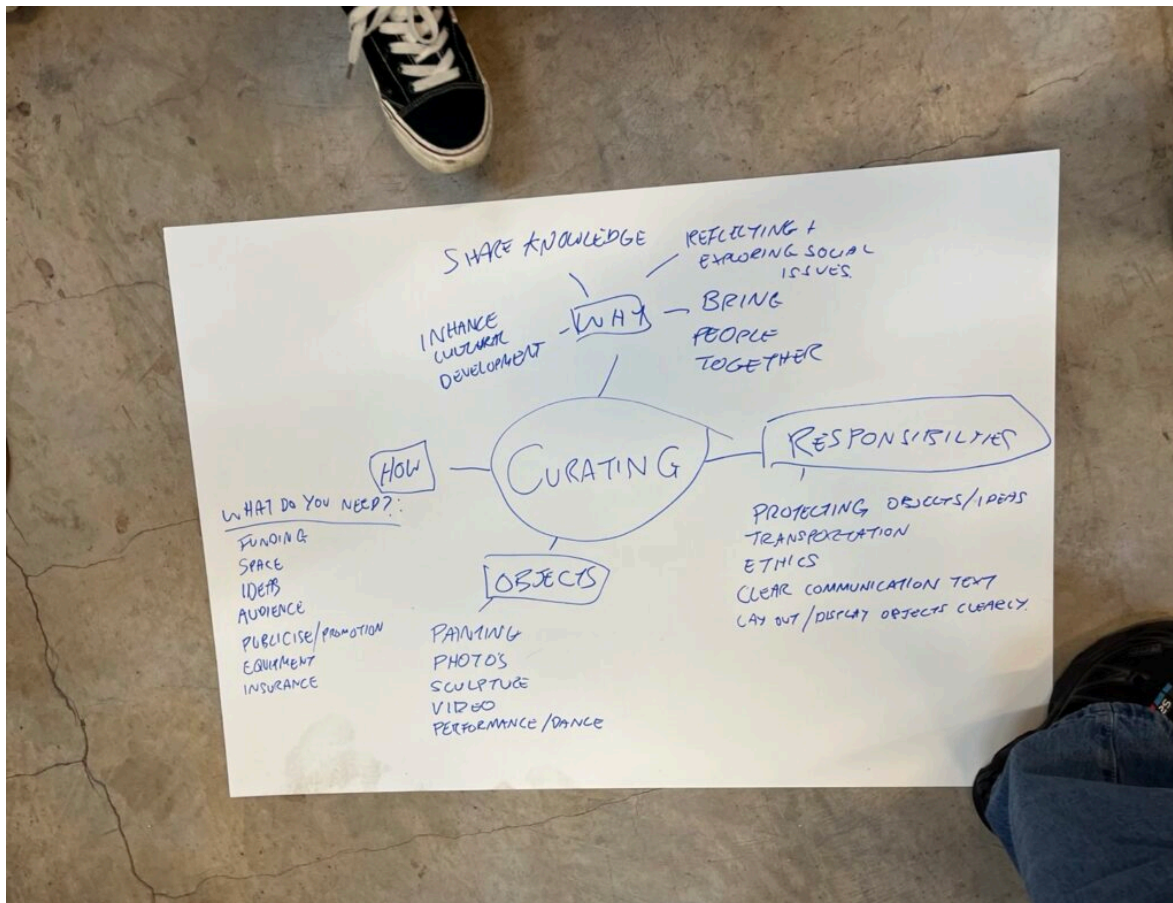
During this week's planning meeting, we officially formed our curatorial collective and discussed curatorial models and key concepts. Curatorial collectives emphasize collaboration rather than individual curatorial authority, aligning with Carolee Thea's idea that "Curating is an evolving, interdisciplinary field."



We began by introducing ourselves and sharing our sources of interest in curating. This process helped us better understand each other and our varying perspectives on curatorial practices. We then discussed past curatorial experiences and curatorial directions we find compelling, allowing us to develop a deeper sense of exploration and envision our future work in curating.

To better understand the core elements of curating, our

group created a mind map during our discussion, summarizing key curatorial concepts, including the purpose of curating (Why), curated objects (Objects), curatorial responsibilities (Responsibilities), and the resources needed for the curatorial process (What do you need?).



1. The Purpose of Curating (Why)

Curating is not just a process of showcasing artworks; it is also a crucial means of sharing knowledge, enhancing cultural development, reflecting on and exploring social issues, and bringing people together. This demonstrates that curating is not merely about the display of art but serves as a key platform for

fostering dialogue, stimulating critical thinking, and promoting social engagement.

2. Resources Needed for Curating (What do you need?)

Curating requires a wide range of resources, including funding, exhibition space, curatorial concepts (ideas), audiences, publicity and promotion, equipment, and insurance. This reflects that curating is not only an artistic practice but also a process that involves planning, management, and execution, ensuring that exhibitions run smoothly and maximize their impact.

3. Curatorial Responsibilities (Responsibilities)

Curators are not only responsible for planning exhibitions but also for protecting objects and ideas, managing transportation, considering ethical implications, ensuring clear communication through exhibition texts, and organizing a well-structured layout and display of objects. This highlights that, beyond artistic and creative aspects, curators must also focus on the practical feasibility and ethical considerations of the exhibition.

4. Curated Objects (Objects)

We discussed the various media involved in curating, including painting, photography, sculpture, video, and performance/dance. This demonstrates that curatorial formats can be diverse and should not be limited to traditional exhibition spaces. Instead, curating should explore more experimental presentation methods, such as immersive exhibitions and cross-media curation.

Summary:

This week's discussions reinforced that curating is more than exhibition-making—it is a practice that can engage with social issues and foster cultural dialogue. Through lectures and readings, I gained insight into how curators adapt to global instability and use decentralized curatorial approaches to reach diverse audiences. Additionally, through our curatorial collective discussions, we established a foundation for collaboration and refined our understanding of key curatorial elements.

In future blog posts, I will explore real-world examples of decentralized curating and consider how these concepts can be applied to my individual curatorial project (SICP).

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