

Week 4: Summerhall Exhibition Series: 'CATALYST: Art as Activism' – A Viewing Record

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Exhibition Viewing— CATALYST: Art as Activism

□ Gallery: Summer Hall

The works mainly present relevant social, political, and ecological issues to the audience through related artworks and spatial designs, rather than merely expressing emotions. Summer Hall places works by different artists on different themes in separate exhibition halls, each with its own unique spatial and lighting designs. The layout of each space is tailored to the theme, aligning with the emotions expressed by the different works. Some exhibition halls require quiet contemplation, while others demand a circular viewing route, incorporating the movement of the audience as part of the

narrative, as if leading them into the stories behind the artists' creations.

Thematic Keywords:

Ecological Crisis and the Status of Non-Human Life

The Emotional Topography of Migration and Exile

Material Destruction within Capitalist Structures

Body Politics, Gender and the Reconstruction of Identity

Future Visions and Collective Responsibility

The concept that the entire exhibition revolves around is that contemporary art not only represents reality but also serves as a force to intervene and change it. It emphasizes art as a sustainable social practice that enables us to question and think critically.

1. All Day, Waiting for Another Sun to Rise

Corner Gallery – Molly Wickett

Centred upon a post-apocalyptic world, the exhibition reconstructs possibilities of loss and continuity through plastic and materials. Fallen trees and fungi upon dead wood conjure a dystopian future. These sculptures are not mere symbols of vanished objects, but rather transform the forest's life cycle into a language of hope. Entering the gallery space is not a linear progression; visitors navigate between the sculptures, becoming immersed in the works themselves.

Link: [All Day, Waiting For Another Sun to Rise](#)



Fig 1 :Detail of the “All Day” artwork



Fig 2 :Detail of the “All Day” artwork



**Fig 3 :Detail of the “All Day”
artwork**

2. A Heart in Exile

Lab Gallery – Taraneh Dana

Through the artist’s personal experiences, the exhibition explores how displacement accumulates across emotional, memory and physical dimensions. This gallery serves as a quiet display space, with works spaced apart and arranged methodically, allowing visitors to linger and reflect.

Link: [A Heart in Exile](#)



Fig 4 :Works from “A Heart in Exile”



Fig 5 :Works from “A Heart in Exile”

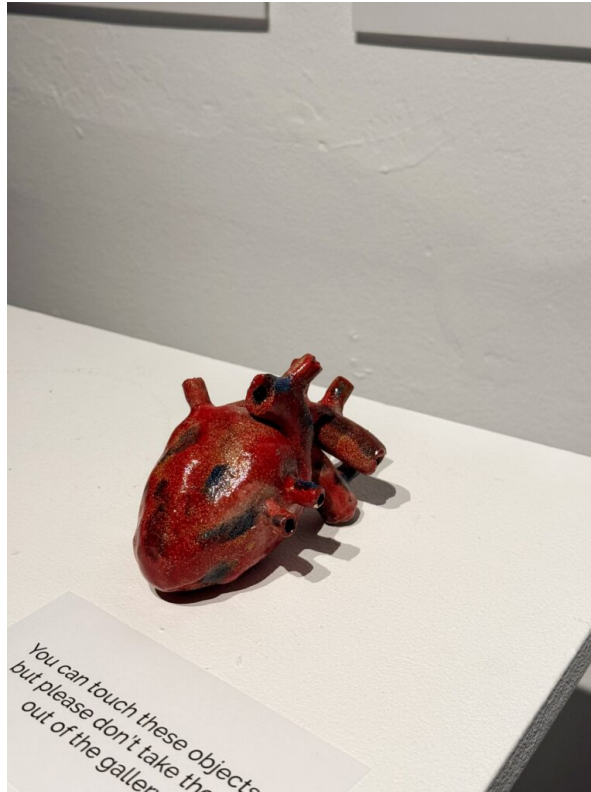


Fig 6 :Touchable model

3. Net Worthy

Sciennes Gallery – Eilidh Appletree

The work constructs a submerged underwater world, where materials such as steel mesh, metal components, sand, hair, and petals illustrate how capitalism endangers life on Earth, leading to species extinction and ecological collapse. It also emphasises the intertwined destinies of humans and non-human animals. Viewers can experience the visual tension evoked by the piece through an immersive, all-round viewing experience.

Link: [Net Worthy](#)



Fig 7 :Detail of the “Net Worthy” artwork



Fig 8 :Detail of the “Net Worthy” artwork



Fig 9 :Detail of the “Net Worthy” artwork

4. Any Body Home

War Memorial Gallery – Kasia Oleskiewicz

The works explore human and non-human communities, transcending boundaries of gender, species, and nationality to imagine an inclusive world of coexistence. Through an open layout and interactive elements, the exhibition space guides visitors to engage with and reflect upon their relationships with others.

Link: [Any Body Home](#)



Fig 10 :Detail of the “Any Body Home” artwork



Fig 11 :Detail of the “Any Body Home” artwork

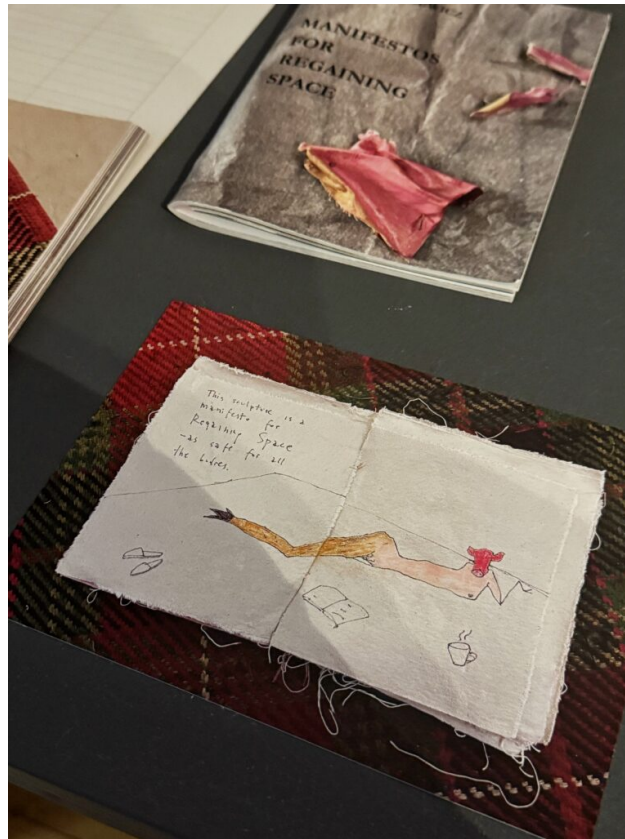


Fig 12 :Detail of the “Any Body Home” artwork

Exhibition Insights:

The exhibited works do not provide clear answers to the audience; instead, they stimulate the audience to reflect and interpret through spatial organization and artistic materials. This open expression style is no longer the artist’s one-sided transmission and output; the audience can perceive the meaning that the works intend to convey through their own standing, observing, and participation. As Claire Bishop pointed out: “In its purest form, participation involves a rethinking of the relationship between the artist, the work of art, and the audience(Bishop,2023).”The audience is no longer passive; instead, they become an important part of the meaning construction together with the artist. The spatial layout of each gallery in Summer Hall conforms to the thematic intention of the works. Some spaces have a large amount of blank background, inviting the audience to stay and meditate, while others adopt non-linear and irregular paths

to encourage visitors to move among the exhibits, viewing their movements as part of the narrative and exploring the art works.

Kester mentioned in the article: "The understanding is that the viewer lacks a sufficiently critical and reflective understanding of the world, while the artist possesses exemplary critical awareness, from which the viewer can gain inspiration and guidance(Kester,2013)." In this exhibition, the audience not only participates in the construction of meaning, making the viewing "embodied", but also is subtly guided by the artist's set context, thereby reflecting on and obtaining inspiration for previously unattended issues, and regarding the exhibition experience as a dynamic thinking process.

Online Group Meeting:

Online group meeting: Exchange and discuss the ten declarations of the group, select key words and key sentences to expand the content of the declarations, group members brainstorm and present their own written declarations, and finally select ten declarations through voting; the group meeting discusses the framework of the group introduction together, write the origin, principles, vision, etc. of the group name, and finally build a complete group profile.

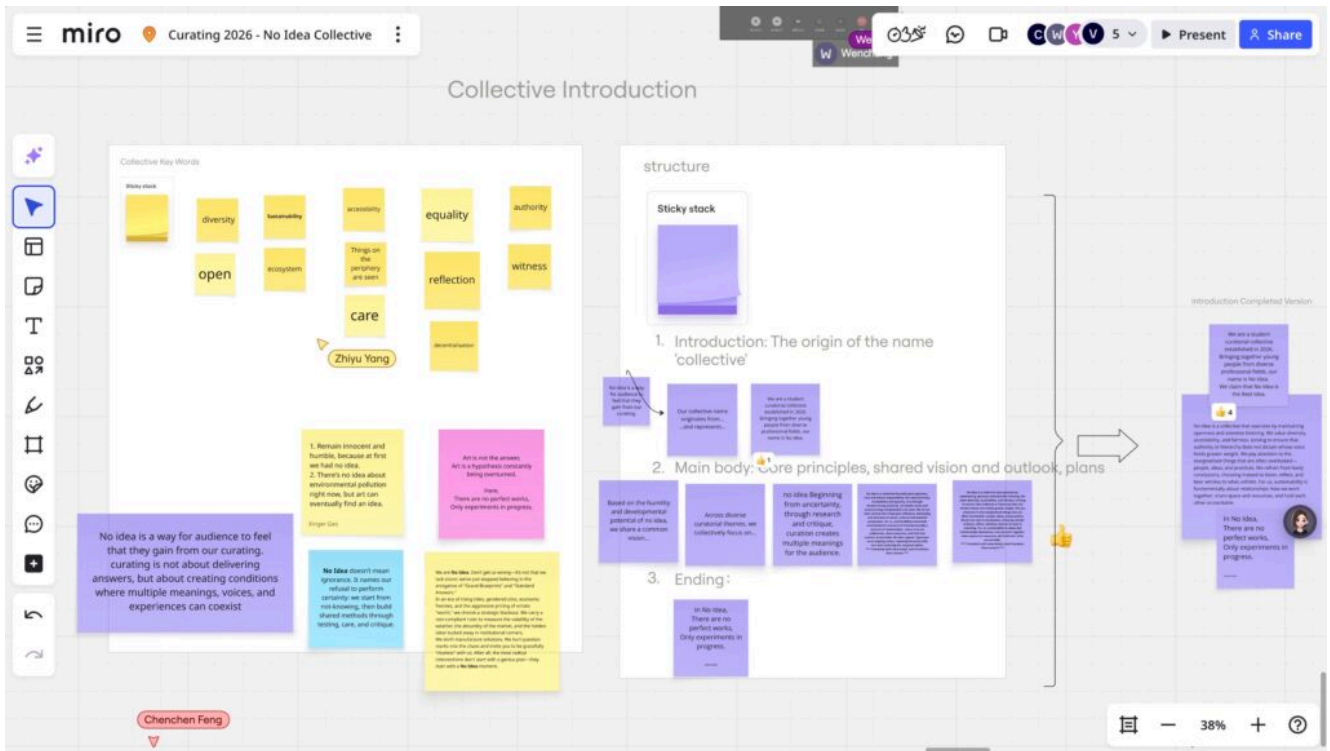


Fig 13 :Group Brainstorming Meeting Minutes

References

Bishop, Claire. *Artificial hells: Participatory art and the politics of spectatorship*. Verso books, 2023.

Kester, Grant H. *Conversation pieces: Community and communication in modern art*. Univ of California Press, 2013.