



Wales International
Visual Arts Prize

Artes Mundi Prize 2

Education Pack

11 February-7 May 2006
National Museum Cardiff

www.museumwales.ac.uk
www.artesmundi.org



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An Introduction to Artes Mundi

The Artes Mundi Prize is a major biennial event within the visual arts, celebrating today's artists from across the world. The Latin name Artes Mundi, when translated, literally means 'arts of the world' and starts to set out the theme of the Prize.

The Exhibition

A selection of work by each of the 8 shortlisted artists will be shown at the National Museum Cardiff from 11 February until 7 May 2006. The exhibition includes sculpture, drawing, printmaking, photography, film, video, installation and performance art. The work can be seen in many places within the Museum and will provide an opportunity for students to explore the role of art in today's world. It is an exciting and thought provoking exhibition which can relate to a wide range of project work.

Using this Pack

This education pack aims to offer an insight into the topics raised by the artists in the exhibition. It also looks at the different ways that the artists explore the theme of the Prize: the human form, human presence and the human condition/humanity. The pack is written for use by teachers, students and other group leaders.

You do not need to know a lot about each artist to carry out a successful visit to the exhibition. Activity suggestions and focus questions can be used to draw out your group's creative responses to the work on display. You can adapt these to suit your students' needs or to integrate areas of this resource into an existing classroom area of study.

Encourage students to think not of one correct reading of the artwork, but of many. Each response will depend on who the viewer is, and when, where and how they look at the work.

This education pack is primarily intended to be used in conjunction with an exhibition visit, to assist students to engage with works of art at first hand in the gallery. There are ideas for pre-visit preparation and suggestions for follow on activities. It can also be used by students or staff who cannot visit the exhibition as a general resource alongside the information on the Artes Mundi website www.artesmundi.org



Frequently Asked Questions

What does 'Artes Mundi' mean?

'Artes Mundi' directly translates from Latin as 'arts of the world'.

The Prize celebrates how visual artists from all corners of the globe interpret the theme of the human form, human condition and humanity.

When did 'Artes Mundi' start?

The first Artes Mundi Prize was awarded in March 2004.

How are the artists shortlisted?

Artes Mundi appoints two Selectors who consider nominations from across the world. In making their selection, the Selectors focus on two main criteria; artists who have achieved recognition for the quality of their work in their own country and internationally and artists whose work reflects the broad theme of the Prize.

The Selectors are:

Deepak Ananth - Paris-based Indian Curator and Art Historian

Ivo Mesquita - Curator of Pinacoteca do Estado and Projeto Octógono, São Paulo and teaches at Bard College, New York

Who are the short-listed artists?

Eija-Liisa Ahtila based in Helsinki, Finland

Thomas Demand lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Mauricio Dias and **Walter Riedweg**, from Brazil and Switzerland

Leandro Erlich based in Paris and Buenos Aires, Argentina

Subodh Gupta lives and works in New Delhi, India

Sue Williams based in Cardiff, Wales

Wu Chi-Tsung lives and works in Taipei, Taiwan

Who judges?

The overall winner of the £40,000 Artes Mundi Prize will be selected by a panel of five international Curators and Artists. They consider the artists' work over the last 5 - 8 years, looking at previous works and exhibitions as well as the Artes Mundi Exhibition at the National Museum Cardiff.

The Judges are:

Paolo Colombo - Curator of MAXXI, Museo Nazionale delle Arti Del XXI Secolo, Rome, Italy

Thelma Golden - Director and Chief Curator of the Studio Museum, Harlem, USA

Cai Guo-Qiang - Artist, lives and works in New York, USA

Gerardo Mosquera - Independent curator and art critic, based in Havana, Cuba

Jenni Spencer-Davies - Curator of the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea, Wales

Who received the first Artes Mundi prize?

Xu Bing from China



Planning Your Visit

Gallery Workshops for Schools and Colleges

Artists / Live Guides are available everyday during the exhibition to lead workshops for schools and colleges. There are two workshops daily at 10.15 am and 11.15 am. Each workshop is 1 hour 30 minutes long and includes a range of activities such as drawing, writing and talking to encourage children to develop a response to the work. Workshops can be adapted for all Key Stages.

All Gallery workshops must be booked in advance by phoning the Education Department, (029) 2057 3240 / 3278

Teachers Preview

15 February 4.00 pm - 5.30 pm

For teachers, community educators & other education professionals. Please join us for an exclusive and free teacher preview of the exhibition. This is a chance for you to see and hear about the exhibition, meet the gallery educators, catch up with colleagues, discuss the education programmes and enjoy a glass of wine.



Before Visiting the Exhibition

Talk about the theme of the exhibition.

Human form

Is it simply the physical shape of a person?

What about the marks we can make with our bodies?

... a footprint in the sand, our breath on a piece of glass, a finger print?

What are the objects that can represent our presence?

Human condition

Is it to do with feelings or personality?

How do you think you are different from others?

How much does where you are from make up who you are?

How much does where you are at a given time influence your thoughts?

Is your personal history or your family history important?

What are your political, cultural and social points of view?

Humanity

The dictionary definition of humanity is *the human race, the quality of being human, kindness or mercy.*

How do we relate to our immediate surroundings?

How do we relate to others?

Do we have a collective responsibility to the human race?

How do we communicate with each other?

Is it our understanding that we are part of something bigger?

How is humanity linked to the human condition and the human form?



In the Exhibition

Artists throughout the centuries have observed life. They interpret the world in different ways that make us question and think. Artists working today are no different. They are looking at ways of expressing the shared values and concerns we have as human beings.

Artwork has always been made using the diverse methods and materials available to the artist at that time. Artists will use what ever they need or have to hand to say what they want. Today this list of materials and ways of working is exhaustive.

The starting point of your visit to the Artes Mundi exhibition should be to experience the work in the gallery. Many of the artists want us to think or react to what we can see. Others invite us to be active participants in the work. Therefore it is important to give students plenty of time to look and think.

The questions below could be asked about all of the works in the exhibition. It is important to emphasise that there is no one set answer and that opinions will differ. Students should feel able to question, challenge ideas and make their own interpretations. These questions might be used as an ice breaker or to start a discussion.

Looking

- What can you see here?
- What is your first reaction to this work?
- What is the first word that came into your mind when you saw this work?
- Does it remind you of anything? Does it make you think about anything?
- Describe the colours, shapes, forms, textures you can see.
- How big is the artwork? What effect does scale have on the artwork and our response to it?

How is it made?

- What is it? (a film, photograph, installation etc.?)
- What materials and techniques do these artists work with?
- Can art be made out of anything?
- Why do you think some artists use sound in their work?
- Why do you think these artists choose to make some of their work with audio, film and digital media?



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In the Exhibition

What is it all about? Individual interpretations.

- What do you think the artist wants to communicate?
- Is the artwork about a subject, issue or theme?
- Is this art about real life?
- What are these artists interested in?
- Which of the issues and concerns do you find most interesting?
- Do the artists share any common interests and concerns?
- Could the work have a symbolic, moral or political meaning?
- Does the work have a title? Does this affect the way you see it?
- Who is the artist? Do you think the background of the artist can tell us about why or how it was created, or what it might be about?
- What does the artwork tell us about the ideas and values of today's world?



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Eija-Liisa Ahtila



Eija-Liisa Ahtila lives and works in Helsinki, Finland. She works mostly with film, video and creates multiple screen installations.

She tells stories about human relationships and often deals with strong emotions in her work. Emotions like love, anger and jealousy are explored. The stories are often troubling and tell of failed relationships and unhappy times.

Life's painful, humorous and confusing moments inform her narratives. However in such unhappy moments there are sometimes glimmers of hope, symbolised for instance by nature, light falling on surfaces and the sky.

We experience the ordinary tales of ordinary humans suffering ordinary lives. The content of her work is often fictional but heavily based on research, on real interviews and her own experiences and memory. All the characters in her work are professional actors and actresses.

How the work is displayed is very important to Ahtila. The whole gallery space is often used and the viewer is invited into the work. We physically have to move to experience different parts of the story. Sounds come from more than one direction. On arriving into the work it is difficult to know if it's the beginning or the end of the story.

Her 'films' are viewed in a gallery setting which is quite different from being in a cinema which would probably be a more comfortable experience. When looking at the work we apply our own experiences which in turn lead to different interpretations.

- Walk into this artist's work. It is a multiple screen installation. Listen to the noise. Look at the images. What do you think she is trying to tell us? How does she want us to feel? How does being in this work make you feel?



Thomas Demand



Thomas Demand lives and works in Berlin.

Demand starts with an existing image taken from the media or from memory. He then translates this into a life sized model made of coloured paper and card. The paper and card sculptures are then photographed. The sculptures are destroyed and the large photographs are all that is left. When looking at his work we question what it is we are looking at.

Demand does not want to control what the viewer understands of his work. This is left up to each individual. He does however invite us to think about where we have seen the image before. He asks us to apply our own memories and imagination when looking at his work. Any feelings we might therefore experience are our own making.

The spaces he creates are empty of people. He is interested in making us think about the space rather than the stories we might create about people.

He does not pretend that he is photographing perfect recreations. On looking carefully at his work it is possible to see some minor imperfections – cuts and folds in the paper. These are clues into the process of the work which he does not try and hide. His art is convincingly real and strongly artificial.

- Stand in front of this artist's work. You are looking at a photograph. Is it a photograph of a real place? Look carefully. What is missing from this photograph? What were your first thoughts when you looked at this artist's work?
- In your opinion is the photograph of the event more important than the event itself? Why?



Mauricio Dias & Walter Riedweg



Brazilian artist Mauricio Dias and Swiss artist Walter Riedweg have been working collaboratively since 1993. Together they travel the world and talk to groups of people. They have no prejudice and no prior agenda when they start these conversations.

The people they talk and work with are usually those who live on the periphery of mainstream culture. In the past they have worked with a wide range of groups such as street children in Rio de Janeiro, recently-arrived immigrants and refugees in Switzerland and prisoners and juvenile offenders in the USA. The children of asylum seekers in Liverpool worked with them to make a collaborative piece of work called Sugar Seekers.

Using a video camera as a tool they produce video and installation work. The work produced addresses a wide range of overlooked and marginalised existences. They become familiar with the everyday lives of their selected group. They live with them and it is this direct involvement that is crucial to their work process.

Dias & Riedweg do not claim to teach or to make any great changes through their projects. They aim to blur the boundaries between 'us' and 'them' and make representations that are free from fixed identities and prejudice.

The end result is often hard hitting and perceptive. It reveals hidden social and economic structures and raises issues associated with identity and group structure. These people who are not normally heard are given a voice.

- Stand in this work. You are now part of the work. What is your first response to the work? What are your first thoughts about the people in the work? Does our reaction to the work tell us more about ourselves than the people in the film?
- Dias & Riedweg work all over the world and make their home with the people they work with. Why do you think they often chose to work with groups of people who are marginalised, particularly refugees and immigrants?



Leandro Erlich



Leandro Erlich was born in Buenos Aires in 1973. He now lives and works in Buenos Aires and Paris.

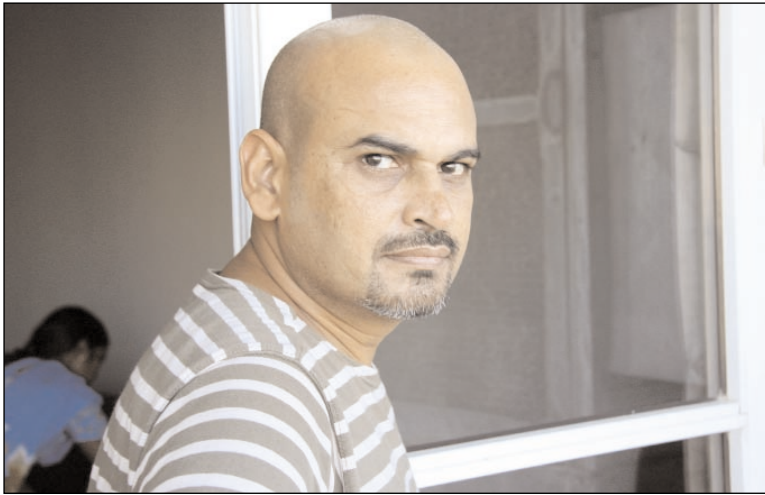
He is an installation artist but has also recently worked with film. He invites the viewer to enter his installations and to also take part. His work often deals with experiences and is dependant on the viewer being actively involved. The installations are like set designs which encourage interaction. Without this involvement the piece is not finished. The participation completes the work and makes it and the experience different each time.

Nothing is what it first appears to be. What was once familiar becomes strange, 'doors cannot be opened, peepholes reveal the unexpected.' The viewer is constantly 'tricked'. He constantly changes the 'natural' meaning of daily objects and the unexpected happens in a familiar environment.

- Walk into this work. Look up, look down, look around you. Do you feel that you are now part of this work? Have you ever been in a place like this before? How does standing here make you feel? What do you think Leandro Erlich wants you to think about while standing in this work?



Subodh Gupta



Subodh Gupta was born in Khagaul, India. He now lives and works in New Delhi, India.

Subodh Gupta works in a wide range of media from sculpture and painting to installation, photography, video and performance. He is probably best known for his sculptural works that raise the status of found objects from everyday items to artworks.

He uses the products of rural India such as cow dung, milk buckets, kitchen utensils, scooters, guns and gulal powder (a coloured powder, often used in Indian festivals and Hindu ceremonies) as his materials. His works often involve the casting of objects such as bamboo sticks, airport luggage carriers and scooters in aluminium.

The objects Subodh Gupta chooses to use in his work have long represented India, both to itself and the rest of the world. It is through the use of such clichéd items that Gupta refers somewhat ironically to the current state of India's shifting society and the effects and frictions caused by a rapidly globalising civilisation, where new world engulfs old.

Gupta's work communicates not only on a local level, questioning his own identity, his home, family and community. It also works on a global level addressing tensions between the old and new and the effects these changes have on our day to day lives.

- What are the different kinds of objects you can see in Gupta's installation? Where do you think he found them? Where do these objects usually belong?

Sue Williams



Sue Williams has lived and worked in Cardiff since 1976. She is a painter.

As a child she was obsessed with her diaries, full of notes and doodles. 'My paintings have now become my diary pages.' Words and sentences mix freely with drawn images in her paintings. 'Drawing is a medium which enables me to extract ideas and images from my mind at a rapid pace.' Her work is a layering of colour and drawings. Some of the drawings are observations from life while others are more symbolic like graffiti.

'Each canvas is a page in my diary where I allow myself the opportunity to reinvent memory, play with images, deal with issues and more importantly, deal with my own vulnerability and femininity.' Sue Williams feels comfortable expressing herself through her work.

More than one figure often appears in her work which results in a sense of drama. The figures do not always conform to fashionable ideas of beauty and they sometimes gaze out of the canvas thus commanding the viewer to look. The poses selected can also be unsettling.

There are often contrasts in her work, between the real and the imagined and between secure places and insecure places. The colours used can be bright which in turn make us question whether the bright cheery colours are conflicting with more troubling issues.

- Images and words often appear in Sue Williams' work. Why do you think she adds words to her drawings and paintings? Do you think this work is about real life? What do you think the artist is trying to communicate through her painting?



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Wu Chi-Tsung



Wu Chi-Tsung was born in Taiwan. He still lives and works there.

He is an artist who works with video, photography, and mechanical installation.

His work explores the idea of "image". He is particularly interested in how different media and technology can transform the banal and the ordinary into the intriguing and fascinating.

To date many of Wu's works have involved the manipulation and distortion of time using long-exposure photography, projection and videos. One example of this is his multiple long exposure photographs. This process involves photographing the same scene several times using a slow shutter speed. Although in one sense the images are duplicates of the same scene, each remains unique as they portray different passages of time.

Wu burns the original negatives. Could this be to resist reproduction, to highlight the irreversibility of passing time or purely an act of rebellion?

It is perhaps because of his manipulation of time that his works have transitory and dream like quality.

- Walk into Wu Chi-Tsung's space. Look carefully at all of the works in the space. Do they have anything in common?
- In his photographs, installation and film, Wu re-conceives the events and objects of everyday life with new significance and often beauty. How does he do this?
- Why do you think he burns the original negatives of his photographs?



Gallery Activities

Let's look closely...

What can you see?

Does this work remind you of anything?

Use questions to help the pupils explore and discover things about the work. Tell the group to work in pairs, to look at the work and to discuss their initial reactions. Ask each pair to describe their response to the work to the whole group.

I can remember...

Look at one work

Look closely for one minute

Turn away from the work.

Ask each pupil to remember one thing they remember seeing.

Look again - look closer

New title

If you had just finished making this work what title would you give it?

Talk about the titles they have chosen - why have they chosen their titles? Talk about the title that the artist has given the work.

Art all around

Walk into an installation in the exhibition. Talk about artists who make installations. You are stepping into the artwork. Ask the pupils to describe what they can see and how they feel. What might happen next inside the artwork?

First thoughts

Sit in front of the work. What is the first word or thought that comes into your mind? Make a class list of these words. These can help when producing a piece of descriptive writing work about the work.

A conversation with the artwork

Look at the work.

Is the artist having a conversation with us through the work?

What sort of questions does the artist want us to think about?

Is the artist challenging us to think about the world we live in?

Is the artist informing us about something that has happened?

Fact / Opinion

This activity is good for engaging a group of young people in a discussion about the work, and can be applied to many works in this exhibition. Give each pupil a statement to read to the rest of the group.



Gallery Activities

A statement is a fact if everyone in the group agrees.

The statement is an opinion if only a few in the group agree.

The following statements can be used when looking at *Everything is Inside*, Subodh Gupta:

- The roof of this car is yellow.
- There is a roof rack on top of the car
- There is a square and a rounded shape on top of this car.
- It looks clean and shiny
- There are boxes and parcels on top of this car.
- This car is drowning in water.
- It is a very old car.
- This car is from a long time ago.



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Themes: Narratives and Stories

Telling stories through visual imagery has been one of arts most important undertaking for centuries. From images on prehistoric cave walls to the mythological stories on Greek vases, artists have told stories that speak to us across ages and cultures.

Many artists in the Artes Mundi exhibition do not tell stories with clear beginnings and endings but instead brush between fact and fiction and past and present.

The stories told in the art on display are often closely linked with the artists own lives and experiences. These in turn are intertwined with the issues that face us all: concerns of race, gender, family relationships and identity.

Eija-Liisa Ahtila

Eija-Liisa Ahtila describes her work as 'human dramas'. They are fictional narratives that emerge from lengthy periods of research as well as from her own observations and experiences. Ahtila's three screen installation *House* tells the disturbing story of a woman who is slowly losing her grip on reality. Images and words skip from one large screen to the next. We are drawn into the woman's altered state of reality.

- What do you think Eija-Liisa Ahtila means by 'human dramas'?
- Would the Eija-Liisa Ahtila stories come across differently if it was only shown on one screen? How does using multiple screen installations change your experience of engaging with the characters?

Thomas Demand

Thomas Demand's immaculate photographs could be actual places, very real yet strangely artificial. The stillness of the image creates a sense of anticipation. The absence of people, obvious story line or action invites the viewer to guess what is happening.

- Where do you think you are in the story? Before or possibly after an event? What do you think has happened or is about to happen?
- Do the works have a title? Does this effect the way you see it?

His rooms are built of coloured paper and cardboard which he then photographs. The paper models of spaces or scenes are life-size and are often based on places of historical significance. Several of Thomas Demand's artworks are recreations of some of the most notorious historical events of the last eighty years.

- How does this information affect the way you look at the artwork?



Themes: Narratives and Stories

Dias & Riedweg

Dias & Riedweg's video installations represent a different approach to storytelling in art. They are very documentary in their nature. In *David and Gustav* they interview two distinguished artists with a migrant background. In *Sugar Seekers* they are talking to nine refugees from Liverpool. The artworks tell real stories about real people.

- What kind of people do the artists work with? How do you think they are feeling? How do they relate to one another?
- What makes Dias & Riedweg's videos artworks and not documentaries?

These questions could be asked of most of the artworks on display.

- Is the painting / installation / video telling a story?
- Where do you think the story originates? (e.g. does it illustrate a text or is it from the artist's imagination, memory or life?)
- What are the similarities and differences between telling stories in art / in writing?
- Do you like visual story telling or do you think that narrative should be left to books?



Themes: Installation Art

Installation art is a term that is used to describe not one object such as a painting or sculpture, but the relationship between objects, materials and the place they are in. Installations are usually mixed media, multi-dimensional, and are usually site-specific. This means that the space that the artwork occupies is often taken into consideration when the work is planned.

Installation art became a commonly used term in the 1970's. It is often regarded as a new art form, although it really is rooted in antiquity. Most ancient installations were created as sites with specific ritualistic and cultural practices. Stonehenge is a good example of a cultural site which holds similarities with installation art created today.

Viewing an installation is about being in something rather than looking at something. We are usually involved in the work as we move around the installation.

Dias & Riedweg's *Sugar Seekers*, actively invites the viewer to interact with the piece through a control panel on which the viewer can touch keywords to activate short animated films.

- Does the work appeal to any other senses apart from seeing?
- How does the control panel effect the way you look and interact with the work?

Leandro Erlich

We enter the exhibition through Leandro Erlich's *Bower*. It does not feel like a gallery space, but a pathway through the woods or a park.

- Describe your own experience of this installation. How did it make you feel as you walked through? Did you feel as if you were in a gallery space?
- How do you think Erlich created the effect of light casting the shadow of tree leaves on the floor?
- How is Leandro Erlich's installation different to looking at a painting of a park or woods?

Eija-Liisa Ahtila

Eija-Liisa Ahtila's films are shown around the gallery space, often on multiple screens. This allows her stories to unfold simultaneously both in time and space.

- Stand back from *House*. Do you find it easy to follow the story? Does the way it is installed effect the way you 'read' the story?
- Why do you think Eija-Liisa Ahtila chose to show her films in a gallery rather than at a cinema?
- There are several coloured boards between the screens in *House*. Do the different colours give you different feelings? Do you think Eija-Liisa Ahtila colours mean anything? Why do you think she chose them?



Themes: Installation Art

Subodh Gupta

Subodh Gupta's artwork *Everything Inside* consists of two bronze cast bundles placed on the roof of an Ambassador taxi. Because the artwork is placed directly on the floor it appears to be sinking into the floor under the weight of the goods that it is carrying.

- Why do you think Subodh Gupta decided to show his work on the gallery floor rather than on a platform?
- Where else could he have shown the work? How could placing it in a different place change the meaning of the work?

The bronze cast bundles on top of the car are known as 'ghathris' in India. They are often seen being carried by migrant workers returning from the Gulf States. These workers are viewed as a form of cheap labour but the wages they earn are often beyond those possible in India. This allows them to send money to their families at home and to purchase consumer goods.

- Subodh Gupta is Indian and lives in India. Do you think that the work would be read differently in India than in Britain?

Questions that can be asked of all the works:

- Look for other installations in the gallery. Do you think the objects have been placed randomly or carefully positioned?
- Describe your own experience of this installation. What did you first notice?
- How did you move around the space? Where did you spend the longest?
- Do you feel part of the work?



Themes: Art and the Everyday Experience

Artists have always been inspired by subjects and ideas that relate to the everyday world and to their own experiences. Dutch painters in the 17th century painted ordinary people in everyday settings. Many artists during the 18th and 19th century painted pictures of serious events from their time, often depicting the horrors of war. The 20th century saw more and more artists making art about their own experiences in life.

Many of the artists in this Arts Mundi exhibition explore such themes and ideas in their work. Although at first some of this work might look confusing we may know more about the work than we think.

We also have to consider how our own individuality will affect the way we look at and respond to a particular art work. We will all bring our own experiences to looking at artwork and this allows us to see things in a particular way. Our own lives, who we are, where we live, our likes and dislikes all influence the way we read pieces of work.

Subodh Gupta

Subodh Gupta uses everyday objects from rural India such as kitchen utensils to make his work. The objects he chooses have long represented India, both to itself and the rest of the world. The sculpture *Curry* has been made out of kitchen utensils. They are simple symbols of everyday life in India but seen here out of their usual utilitarian context. These are utensils which would be used for carrying a packed lunch and for cooking and serving food. The artwork looks very clean as the objects shine under the gallery light.

What do you think about first of all when you look at this work? Are the utensils different from the ones you have in your own kitchen? Do these objects look new or are they old and used? What message is the artist trying to communicate through his work?

Wu Chi-Tsung

Wu Chi-Tsung transforms ordinary everyday images into the mesmerising. He is fascinated by images, how they are made and how we see them. He uses photography and video to create his images and experiments with and manipulates these processes.

There is a sense of irony behind his work. A Taiwanese artist who is so preoccupied with such traditional methods of creating images. Living in a highly sophisticated technological world Wu Chi-Tsung takes delight in almost accidentally finding ways to capture or re-imagine the world around him.

On occasion he consciously decides to destroy the original negative film to confirm the irreversibility of time and the inability to reproduce a moment or a scene.



Themes: Art and the Everyday Experience

In *Wire 1* Wu combines a simple piece of wire mesh, a magnifying glass and a light to create a memorising image reminiscent of a landscape or a wave.

- Look at the image on the wall. What does it remind you of? How do you think it has been made? What objects do you think he has used?

Sue Williams

Sue Williams often describes her work as pages from her diary. This suggests that her drawings and paintings are about herself. She does however admit to making self reflective art. She re-presents life experiences in large scale paintings and small drawings.

The acts of painting and drawing are fundamental to how Sue Williams approaches her art. She sees that drawing is an activity that enables her 'to extract ideas / images from my mind at a rapid pace'. Her paintings are larger than life at 8 square feet and their style reveals the physical nature of making them. Words, materials and objects are applied to the canvas to enhance the sense of physicality both as artworks and as a reflection of the stuff of life.

- Why do you think an artist would choose to make art work about themselves?
Which aspects of your personality would you want to communicate in an artwork?

Questions to ask of all of the artwork:

- Think of an experience in your life that one of the works in this exhibition has reminded you of.
- What was the connection?
- What are the differences between your memory and the work in the exhibition?
- What do you think the artist is trying to tell you about his or her experience.



Themes: Using Moving Images

Many artists in this exhibition make work using moving images. Film and video are now part of our daily lives. We should not be surprised to see them displayed as art. Artworks using film and video as a medium are now considered a serious art, featuring in nearly every major international art show and major public museum. You may ask however when does video become art. Video becomes art when the artist chooses it to be, when it is placed in a gallery setting.

Artists have always been observers of the world, looking at things in strange and specific ways. When artists use film they use it to represent something they have witnessed, to record their actions or to make moving collages. Artists generally use video cameras in much the same way that painters use paint. However their image is moving. The world today is a world of moving images.

Video and film in contemporary art may use some of the techniques and method we see in cinema. However what we see has been developed from a different starting point. Contemporary artists however use video to observe the world, to express ideas almost like moving paintings. They don't have to have a narrative like films in a cinema but allow us to experience what we see.

The important thing about a video installation is that to understand it you have to spend time watching it. Emphasise to your students the importance of giving time to these works.

Questions to ask of the work in the exhibition:

Why do you think the artists choose to make films within a gallery context as opposed to showing them at a cinema?

How does this particular film and gallery space make you feel?

Do you feel part of the film or simply an observer?

Does the film simply document something or does the way it is filmed add to our understanding of a situation? How have the artist used techniques such as close up views, awkward angles, slowing down the frames, dramatic lighting?

Does the work have a narrative, tell a story? Look at the work of Eija-Liisa Ahtila.

Do you think painters like Leonardo da Vinci or Van Gogh would have used video cameras if they had been available?

Think about how these artists use our familiarity with the medium of film to draw us into their work.

Consider how Eija-Liisa Ahtila and other artist experiment and offer alternative ways of presenting and experiencing film.



Glossary

Performance Art

A performance which usually involves the artist performing an idea through a physical action. Unlike actors, performance artists are not playing the part of someone else. Performance Artists often use their own body as a medium for expression and experience, like a painter uses canvas or a sculpture uses stone.

Lens-based Media

A term which describes the use of cameras to make art, these could be still or moving images. It includes early photography through to new forms of digital video.

Installation

An installation involves the artists using a space within the gallery to make a single work. It usually engages the different senses and is temporary. Some artists make work as a response to a particular space. This is called site specific and the environment becomes part of the work.

Digital Art

A new growing form of art is Digital Art where artists use computers to make work and use digital images.

Minimal Art

The art work produced has been reduced down to basic shapes, sometimes a colour or the bare material. It was an attempt to make art in its simplest, purest form.

Conceptual Art

The idea is as if not more important than the finished work. How the work is made, the process and thinking behind the making is more important than how the work looks. It often raises questions about what a work of art can be.

Abstract Art

Elements of visual language are not used to represent anything from the real world. They are simply used to represent themselves.

Culture

Beliefs and values that form our lives. Cultures are often identified by nationality, ethnicity and religion. We are influenced by many cultures to make up our personal identity.

Contemporary Art

Contemporary Art is art that is being made today. It is the continuing development of art which in time will become art history. Now it is ours, it relates to our time.



Resources

Suggested websites for individual artists:

Artists Web links:

EIJA-LIISA AHTILA

Paolo Curti/Annamaria Gamnuzzi & Co

<http://www.paolocurti.com/ahtila/ahtila.htm>

Tate

<http://www.tate.org.uk/modern/exhibitions/ahtila/about.htm>

The Guardian, Adrian Searle, April 30, 2002

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/critic/feature/0,1169,707678,00.html>

Museion – Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art

<http://www.museion.it/eng/177.html>

Marian Goodman Gallery

mariangoodman.com

THOMAS DEMAND

www.thomasdemand.net

Victoria Miro Gallery

<http://www.victoria-miro.com/artists/17,biog/>

Museum of Modern Art, New York

<http://www.moma.org/exhibitions/2005/demand.html>

Cybermuse

http://cybermuse.gallery.ca/cybermuse/showcases/meet/artist_e.jsp?artistid=27095

The Guardian, Adrian Searle, June 21, 2005

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/arts/critic/review/0,1169,1511239,00.html>

SUE WILLIAMS

<http://www.nomorepink.com/>

Art in Wales

<http://artinwales.250x.com/ArtistsWmS.htm>

DIAS & RIEDWEG

Kiasma

<http://www.kiasma.fi/www/viewresource.php?id=3WsxmRrdJ-kNmww3&lang=en&preview=>

Liverpool Biennial

<http://www.biennial.com/archive/2004/artists/Dias&Riedweg/bg.htm>

Populism

<http://www.populism2005.com/index.asp?sivu=11&menu1=8&menu2=18>



Resources

LEANDRO ERLICH

<http://www.leandroerlich.com.ar/>

Kent Gallery

<http://www.kentgallery.com/erl.htm>

Ruth Benzacar

<http://www.ruthbenzacar.com/web/ArtMostrar.php3?id=6>

Albion Gallery

<http://www.albion-gallery.com/flash/erlich.html>

WU CHI-TSUNG

Experimenta

<http://www.experimenta.org/vanishingpoint/chitsung.htm>

Mori Art Museum

<http://www.mori.art.museum/html/eng/exhibition/index.html>

SUBODH GUPTA

Jack Shainman Gallery

<http://www.jackshainman.com/dynamic/artist.asp?ArtistID=27>

The Telegraph India, Anirban das Mahapatra, April 29, 2005

http://www.telegraphindia.com/1050429/asp/nation/story_4675637.asp

The Showroom

<http://www.theshowroom.org/go/art/media,gupta;txt;information/Info.txt>

General reading

- *Ways of Seeing* by John Berger
Publisher: Penguin Books; ISBN: 0140135154
- *Mr Palomar* by Italo Calvino
Publisher: Vintage; ISBN: 0099430878
- *On Photography* by Susan Sontag
Publisher: Penguin Books; ISBN: 0140053972
- *About Looking* by John Berger
Publisher: Vintage Books; ISBN: 0679736557



Resources

Where else can I see Contemporary Art in Wales?

Chapter Arts Centre, Canton, Cardiff www.chapter.org

G39, Mill Lane, Cardiff www.gallery39.fsnet.co.uk

Mostyn Art Gallery, Llandudno www.mostyn.org

Wrexham Arts Centre www.wrexham.gov.uk

Aberystwyth Arts Centre www.aber.ac.uk/artcentre

Museum of Modern art – Machynlleth www.momawales.org.uk

Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea <http://www.swansea.gov.uk/glynnvivian/>

Mission Gallery, Swansea

Ffotogallery, Penarth www.fffotogallery.org

Oriel Davies Gallery, Newtown, Powys www.orieldavies.org

Wales Millennium Centre, Cardiff <http://www.wmc.org.uk/>

Bay Art, Cardiff Bay <http://www.bayart.org.uk/>



After Visiting the Artes Mundi Exhibition

- What do you like most/least about the exhibition
- Share and discuss your responses to the exhibition
- What surprised you about the exhibition and why were you surprised?
- What other reactions did you have? What created these reactions?
- Do any of the ideas and themes in the exhibition echo aspects of your own life?
- Which works would you most like to have in your home? Why?

Artes Mundi is supported by:

Arts & Business, Arts Council of Wales, Artsworld, BBC Cymru / BBC Wales, BT, Cardiff Council, Cardiff Initiative, Cardiff School of Art & Design - UWIC, Cardiff University, City and County of Swansea Council, Colwinston Charitable Trust, Contemporary Art Society of Wales, Drake AV Video Limited, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Eversheds LLP, FRAME Finnish Fund for Art Exchange, Francis Balsom Associates, Geldard LLP, King Sturge, KPMG LLP, Park House Club, S & G Print Group, Swansea Institute, Sydney & London Properties, The Derek Williams Trust, The Ernest Cook Trust, The Millennium Stadium Charitable Trust, The Prince of Wales Arts & Kids Foundation, University of Glamorgan, University of Wales Swansea, Wales Arts International, Wales Tourist Board, Welsh Assembly Government, Welsh Development Agency, Western Mail & Echo

