

Interview 814 - Brian. - 15 minutes (2 hr. transcription)

(In all transcripts I have edited out ums, likes, ahhs and stutters from both the interviewer and interviewee unless it was deemed they added to the context of the response.)

(Brian: You have labelled me. Its big brother.)

Alex: When did you view the exhibition?

Brian: Last week. And then again this morning.

Alex: About how long were you at the exhibition each time?

Brian: About 5 minutes.

Alex: Did you view the exhibition with anyone?

Brian: No.

Alex: Since the exhibition have you had any conversations about it that you would be willing to share?

Brian: Only comments to yourself when you happened to be standing there that first time. Um so no.

Alex: Do you remember what order you viewed the exhibition in?

Brian: Left to right. Let me clarify that. The first time I sort of started in the middle. Because I had been aware of it, but hadn't made time to go into it, and when I realized it was connected to you I thought I would check it out. Happened to start in the middle and go from there. Today I started deliberately from left to right.

Alex: So, when you say the middle is that the TV screen or the wall here (tied up)?

Brian: Ah, I am trying to remember the layout, um its in...its kinda like there (pointing to catalogue layout). So the inner right wall (tied up). And when I went back today I took some notes to solidify my initial impressions when I went last week.

Alex: Sounds great, and did you view the graphic medicine wall on this side?

Brian: Yes.

Alex: Can you describe your experience than and your reactions?

Brian: Ah, very dark and frightening. You said don't hold back (smiley defiant tone).

Coding Density

Personal reading exp interpreting text and image FEELINGS
Popular culture memory or association
Illustrate This
Temporal Experience (also affective quality)
Motivations for going to exhibitions
Value of GME
Personal memory or association (reliability)

Spatial Experience (also affective quality)

Alex: That's fine (warm tone). And what...

Brian: I have a number of impressions. Moving from left to right I found it, ah, very lonely. There seemed to be a lot of fear. Both of old and young people. There was a feeling of being watched or spied upon. There was the old person with the really dark big glasses (wild child) with a look that I took to be almost like angry or disapproving and so that one in particular I felt like being watched in a disapproving way. Also felt like being stuck in a prison. Locked away and looking out to the world so like in a dark box. And sad. Ah the whole left side of the exhibition was an overwhelming feeling of sadness. It was just black and dark and alone. Which, oh and there was a question that occurs to me which I asked you last week, what does the sign language say?" I want to know. There is this message there. "what does it say" (*change in voice to indicate inner voice/dialogue and a bit frustration but in a kinda comedic voice to show no offense...*).

There was also a feeling of like transition to Japanese horror with much more sort of angular drawing. Manic, frantic scribbles over her mouth or something so kinda like The Ring or something like that (believe this was Inner Voices).

Moving onto the xrays it gave me the first initial thoughts of sickness or cancer. Which really sort of continued the overall negative feeling of it.

And then continuing around the wall it made me think of space and science. Cause there were these dots. I don't know what they were but they could have been photos of planets that were slightly out of focus or something. So it just made me think of space. But it also felt really disconnected, so there was a definite disconnection from the dark lonely sad side to suddenly like as someone walking down the street and something that could have been a planet. It was strange.

But then coming around to the illustrated, what did you call it the medical side or support side?

Alex: Yeah, ah, the graphic medicine...

Brian: Yeah, the graphic medicine. Was a complete contrast to the dark and lonely side and it felt really bright and supportive. Even take a breath and its okay and there is help for you. And so my overall feeling of the exhibition was like a dark lonely place, problem leading to their being help for you.

[...].

Alex: Oh...I see. So...

Brian: To explain the thought process.

Alex: Right. So that's the link between it. Oh I see.

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Alex: So was there anything, so you talked about Japanese horror and then your mother and science, was there any other things that came to your head?... Free associations.

Brian: (head shake nope)

Alex: So why were you interested in viewing the exhibition?

Brian: Ah, because of the connection to you. I have seen other works there in the past but never really have time to go in. But of course, like you've helped me out a bunch of times. You know you have worked with a ton of colleagues here so when I knew there was a connection to you here I made time.

Alex: Thank you. And did you do any drawing as part?

Brian: No.

Alex: So answered this question...you were really efficient...so a theme that goes across the exhibition is anxiety and also spatial anxiety. I was wondering what was your impression of those specific themes in this exhibition?

Brian: Anxiety for sure. Definitely on the left hand side. I wouldn't have gotten anything about spatial anxiety until either the last or second to last image all the way on the right with the graphic medicine side, but then I did think that that was quite a good illustration to help show to those who do not suffer from graphic, from spatial stress what it can be like for a person who does and the sort of mental mapping that they got through to sort of avoid situations. I found that to be quite good.

Alex: And, was there anything specifically about that piece or the medium that did that for you?

Brian: Ah, the sort of comic book aspect to it allowed for a good representation of it sorta like the stress lines that were around the person and to help show the thought process that was going through in the thought bubbles and stuff like that. So, I don't think you could have pulled it off very well if you had photos or something. I just wouldn't have worked.

I can be very very shy and suffer from social stress and so while I don't have anything like what the photo was illustrating or leading to I could appreciate it. And I know a lot of people who cannot get those sorts of problems and so I think photos like them that work like that are really good. Help create a bridge.

Alex: Where there any other works that really stood out to you?

Brian: Um, the woman kneeling in what looks like a weeping pose (tied up) in a completely dark room was really desolate and sad.

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And from the area that I associated with Japanese horror the vaguely fox shaped face with the mouth all scribbled and scratched out made me think of a serial killer. Cause I mean whenever you, a lot of times when you look back on the records of people who became serial killers who look at their yearbooks or something and that have scratched eyes out, scratched mouths and faces, just very angry. So yeah that was the association there.

Alex: And with this being quite dark in your experience for that inner side of the gallery what are your thoughts on its place, so the actual exhibition place itself and location?

Brian: Being in the corner of the exhibition hall so it was? I really had no impression of that. The only thing that I did think was that it was nice that an exhibition space had been set aside to be used in that way. It was a better use of space then previously. I liked that they had brought in benches, but in relation to the artwork itself I didn't have any thoughts to that.

Alex: What were your thoughts of comics being exhibited?

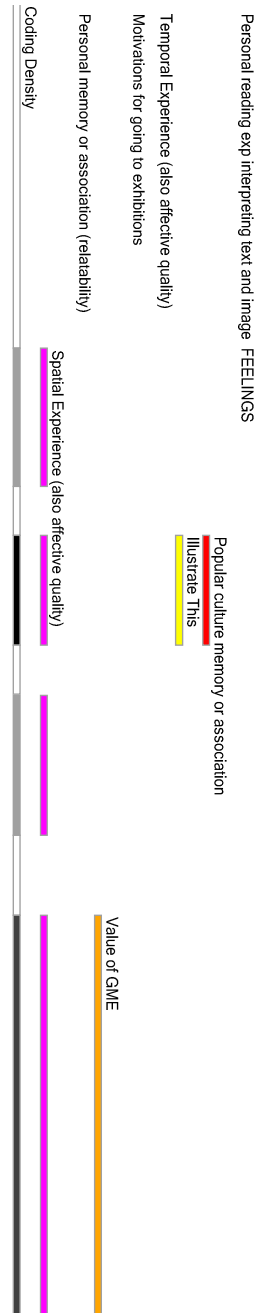
Brian: Um, as a medium in and of themselves there was no thought as to well "oh look there's comics here" and I am a huge comic fan. Like Marvel comics and things like that. But, I didn't really register them that way. I just as more pieces of art.

Alex: And, could you elaborate on why you think that is?

Brian: The various pieces in many ways were so different from each other in the technique that was used, in the imagery that was being demonstrated, in the messages for each and so I would've, I was getting to the point of expecting that each would be different and to take it as it came.

Alex: What are your thoughts on exhibitions being used as a way to kinda communicate these types of stories or narratives?

Brian: I think it is brilliant. On a few different levels. I think that it is an excellent form of public engagement, a way to connect research and findings of research, and the execution of that research into some sort of policy or impact. To be a really good way – I think a lot of people find art inaccessible or don't make time or don't even know where to find it. And so putting it in a very accessible place like that gives an opportunity for people who may never have gone to an exhibition before an opportunity to do so. I think it allows for a really good opportunity for new work to be exhibited and not just older high faluten art that so its just really accessible. It was good. I like that. That's why I was saying before that I was glad that that space has been repurposed into a small gallery space cause over the years previously I have thought what a shame it was that the upper floor gallery seems not to be used very much as a gallery and more for a storage closet. So...but then you would also have



to very specifically go up there and I've almost never made time to go even in that corner there to see art, so I have never gone upstairs.

Alex: And is that just because your own schedule?

Brian: I am often wrapped up in my own head, literally rushing from one thing to another, if I find myself in fusion (meant Poole House I believe) I am either going to a meeting or running to catch a bus. So its just always rushing. Slow down...smell the artwork.

Alex: I just have one more question from you, and you kind of already answered this, but if there is anything you wanted to add I was going to ask you what was your overall impression of the exhibition?

Brian: I mean the overall impression definitely is dark and lonely and fearful but then the theme of there being dark and alone and there being a problem and then ending on a very positive note with a lot of help and support and communication and information was very illustrative of a lot of things in life. And so I like that it ended on a positive note.

Alex: Was there anything else that you would like to add that my questions didn't get at?

Brian: Not really. Your questions really covered it and some of my initial extra comments to help throw in my frame of mind.

[End]

Alex: Could you repeat that?

Brian: I suppose I should have read any of the signage or notes that were in the exhibition but whenever I go to a museum or some type of exhibition I tend not to do any of the reading and really limit it just to the visual.

[End of second recording]

