

Interview 117 - Anon. - 29 minutes (# 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.)

Alex: When did you view the exhibition?

Anon: It was probably a few weeks ago that I saw it on the intranet, the BU intranet, so it must have been one of the first days it was out, so it must have been a couple days later. Three weeks ago probably something like that.

Alex: Have you viewed it anytime since then?

Anon: Yes. So that was the first time and then when I came for your two talks. And then I passed by another time because I wanted to re-read one bit.

Alex: What part did you want to re-read?

Anon: I wanted to look at the one. The sign language. I wanted to look at it again.

Alex: During each of these times, how long do you think you were in the exhibition?

Anon: 10 minutes maybe – well for the lunches of course it was like the full period when in the exhibition. Probably about that.

Alex: During any of these times did you go with someone else?

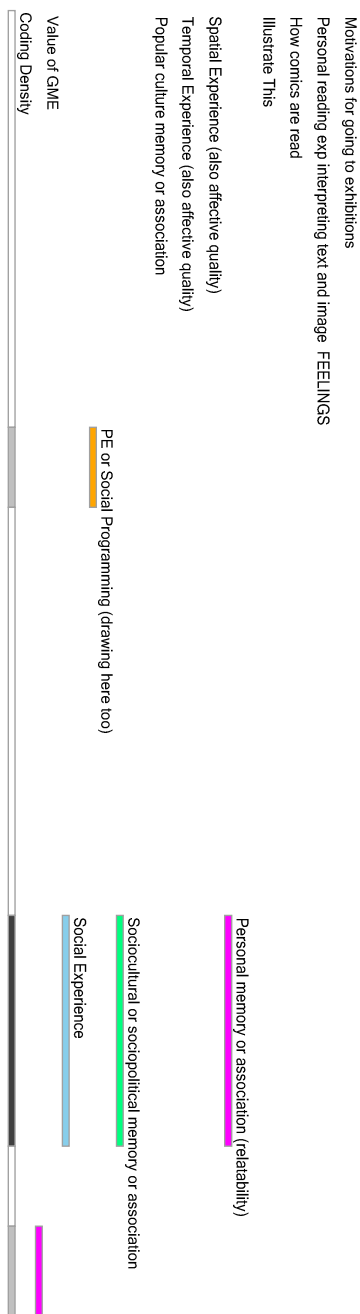
Anon: No.

Alex: Where there any conversations that you had during the events that have really stuck with you?

Anon: well it made me think, for the lunches, I mean when I was by myself no, but for the lunches – all the concepts of comics how limited my concept of comics, what I thought about, and then about the, support available through comics and graphic novels, something like that, for mental health, of for different conditions that I had no clue about. Despite that fact that I am a mental health first aider. And it is not mentioned in the course. So I was like “Oh, that could have been a good support or thing to have added to the course I guess”.

Alex: And why do you think that was your impression that this would be a good thing to add to the course?

Anon: Because its less kind of standard and, it's a different approach to the, a condition or mental health and it is not coming, its not coming down from the government or an authority, but it is from your peers. I know that when I was reading



through the, in the mental aider, mental health first aider course there were lots of blogs that you can tell you can read or information like this, but it seems that it is so very standardised. You get this book and you listen to these things and you can go to this group. Ahh. It seems like a more approachable way, for younger as well, audience, for a younger audience of people who maybe don't want to read through a whole booklet or manual of, you know, what happens when you have this and this.

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

Anon: I think I started, so entering I started from the colour paintings, so like the three, the tied up series, I think it was, that way, then the video and then going up to the sign language and then I found out that there was the other side (laughter). You know with the comics... Yeah that's right (aside)...

Alex: And did you find out about the other side during the first viewing...

Anon: *Yeahyeahyeah*, I was just looking around but yeah it was because I looked around otherwise it might seem that it was more just the central bit.

Alex: And I am guessing when you said you went to re-read you just went back...

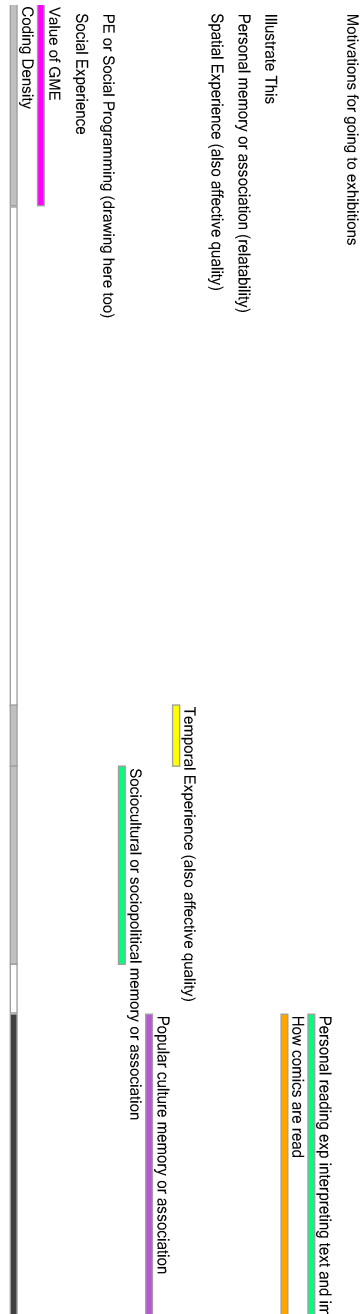
Anon: yeah to the one I wanted to reread.

Alex: Can you describe your experience viewing the exhibition?...As far as what came to your mind and what feelings you had?

Anon: Hm, Cause I read the introduction first so I had a bit of expectation, well kinda expectation, but then I, I wasn't sure if I would be, you know when I started on the tied up side I was like I thought it was more storyline but for me those were more independent, well not independent but independent paintings or works of art there. And then it changed more to comics, so I was trying to find the link between all of those so, cause it was, well I know that the link was all mental health and the conditions, something like that, but I was like why is there more comics and why there are some, like I said for me, more paintings or art, like individual art, ya know.

Alex: Was there any works that have really stood out to you and stayed with you?

Anon: I think mostly the one that maybe I stayed longer to read or to look at was the agoraphobia one. With all the small kinda cards (when your body becomes a place). And I think because I saw it as a, not really as a narrative, but it was really more of like, you know when you have famous quotes and you want to read them and really understand them or like it is something that you might want to get a card and have them in your room. In the wall in your room and have them there. So I was reading kinda through, read them individually and really try and understand or repeat them and remember them. So I think that is where I spent most the time trying to figure out those.



Alex: Were there any ones that perhaps stood out to you but maybe were in like a more negative or didn't quite understand way?

Anon: Not negative but the one that I was really trying to make sense of was the, what, two windows, cause I really really trying to see what, which kind of condition are they trying to talk about and wanted [to see] the same view. But yeah it is not a negative, it is just a more a (confused thinking face).

Alex: Why were you interested in coming to the exhibition?

Anon: Because I am interested in art. (laugh) so it I always if there is something happening or something down in the [gallery] I always go and see it. So, yeah. That was the main...and just to see what was there. And to see if I knew anyone one the...cause sometimes it is the people from university in the exhibit as well.

Alex: Other than the famous quote cards was there anything else that came to your mind? No matter how random it might have seemed when you viewed the exhibition.

Anon: the comics part, made me think back, I mean Ive not been reading comics in a long time, but I use to read more when we younger or home. So it made me think back to the kind of comics that I use to read and the difference there probably is now between comics and what we use to read as comics. And, I thought that the only comics that I kind of read now is an Italian one that is online as well. And I was trying to see, because hes just a mainly a comic comics so hes telling stories you can, he's talking about politics or he's talking about his own experience sometime of, that's what made me think "oh he is probably trying to express or to say something about probably, yeah, about this" through funny stories, he is always trying to entertain you, you always laugh a lot, but he has like this input into politics or to social welfare or to...and then his own experience into what it is like sitting on the sofa at home or something like that. So that made me think of those side (gm wall).

Nothing I can think of but maybe if it comes back to me later on.

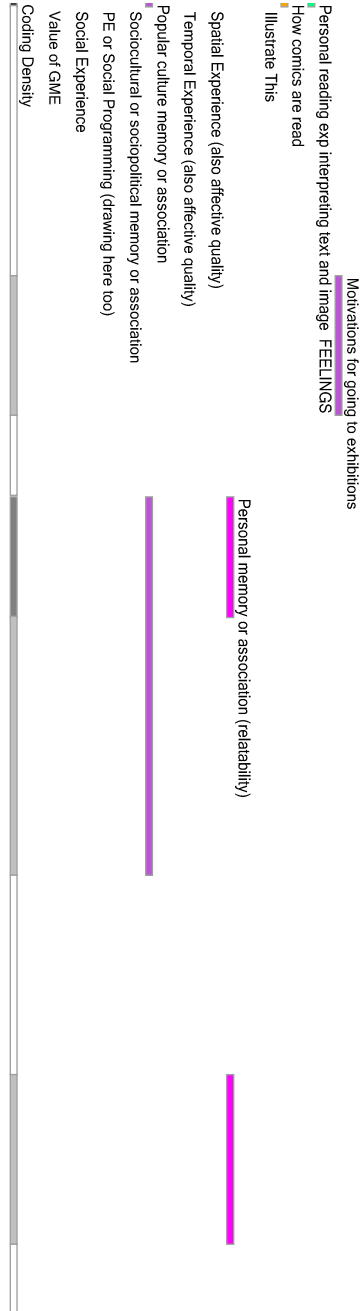
Alex: What type of comics did you read...

Anon: when I was a child?

Alex: Yeah.

Anon: Well just weekly, well I don't know, adventures or something. There was an Italian one, I don't know if they are now, but its like you buy the booklet weekly. So it would be Dillan Dog or Martin Mister/Mystery, and they are all told their adventures, stories, eh...and when I was younger, oh I don't know, Disney and mickey mouse or...yeah mainly those series. I bring those home every week with their stories, so.

Alex: Did you do any drawing as a part of any of the events?



Anon: No.

Alex: And then, two of the main themes in the exhibition were spatial anxiety and anxiety in general and I was wondering for you – how did you experience that within the exhibition?

Anon: Like how I experienced the theme they are talking about? Um...well the...oh I don't know...like, sorry can you repeat the question? How did I view the theme or like...

Alex: So was there like anything in the exhibition that made you think ah yes [anxiety] or kinda your interpretation of those themes in the exhibition.

Anon: Well it was kinda giving me a perspective or view on how some people experience anxiety and it, I find it sometimes more impactful to see it drawn than not to see it, described in words or like trying to express it in words because with the drawing and the colours and the different way of presenting it gives you more an impact or more an idea of what their actual experiences is, because I don't have experience, I haven't experienced any of these anxieties or not like space anxieties so it is difficult to understand how do you feel, how you feel when you are experiencing something like that if you are not experiencing it yourself. And, so I think that was insightful and really, really good.

Alex: And then what was your impression of the use of comics in the exhibition?

Anon: Well, I don't know, I've never seen and exhibition of comics, so that was...not that I can think of...not of new comics. I mean I have seen comics you know when they are like old comics that people keep and you have them on under glass because they are the first edition of something, that kind of thing, and not exhibition of new comics with a theme, that they are there with a theme. And to know that these kind of comics exist and that you can extrapolate a bit and just trying to help people and their can be exhibited as art (? Half question tone). If that makes sense, so taken out of there, I don't know, weekly publishing or something like that, but just put as a piece of art together with the rest of the art. So that was my impression.

Alex: And did you, kinda to elaborate more on that as comics as a piece of art, did you find...like what were the types of feelings you might have with like you said it taken out of its context of its larger body of work into that? And was there anything about that excerpt?

Anon: I think they were quite powerful. Of all the ones expressing their own experience. More than the one about advice (journey to wellness) maybe. you know it is more powerful and insightful, and it made me more curious to go and read the rest of the story, or the story how their experience goes. And, and despite I think the darkness of some of them. I think being in a comic, a comic format, there's always that, not lightness, but there is always that bit of something that makes you smile

Coding Density

Value of GME

Motivations for going to exhibitions
Personal reading exp Interpreting text and image FEELINGS
How comics are read
Illustrate This
Personal memory or association (reliability)
Spatial Experience (also affective quality)
Temporal Experience (also affective quality)
Popular culture memory or association
Sociocultural or sociopolitical memory or association
PE or Social Programming (drawing here too)
Social Experience

Anon: Check my notes...How do you pronounce VASTO in Portuguese? Do you know how it is pronounced? Is it VASCH-toe? Because I was thinking here about the different pronunciation between vast and vasto.



Alex: I think maybe how you said it the second time...I don't know. I don't speak Portuguese.

(laughter)

Anon: I thought maybe you had heard it. Because I think that is interesting. I didn't know that they had completely opposite meanings. Open and closed that's quite interesting language wise.

I think I said it but when we did the first talk I came to when you were talking about the whole comics are like a narrative and I really still find it difficult to see a narrative in some of the, for me, individual pieces. I see it of course in the comics and in the Zu one, but all the other ones...I can see their seriality. Like the three on this side, the tied up, are clearly part of a series there but I still don't see the narrative as in a comic, like that kind of narrative, and yeah even the one about agoraphobia. They are clearly linked. There is a series they are all together, but yeah I still find the narrative, maybe in a more traditional sense of narrative, if that makes sense.

(looking through notes)

There was something that came to me when we were taking and now it is gone. I know the light is gone.

Oh yeah this one. Like all those, they definitely for me are a piece of art (like glass) like I would see them in the museum, just...yeah.

Oh and the other thing. Maybe the other thing that made me think of is the usefulness of such an exhibition. Its, it makes the, these conditions...not accessible but it makes you feel, you know if you are experiencing that there are other people's experiences that are probably the same. And you can try and express it in different way. If you can't talk about it maybe you can draw about it. or you know or put it in other, in a different medium. And hopefully, yeah, it opens up more, the conversation about what people feel like and what they are experiencing and but out of a more medical structure. A structure away where these are the symptoms and these are the possible causes and these are the solutions. Yeah and it is a more informal discussion.

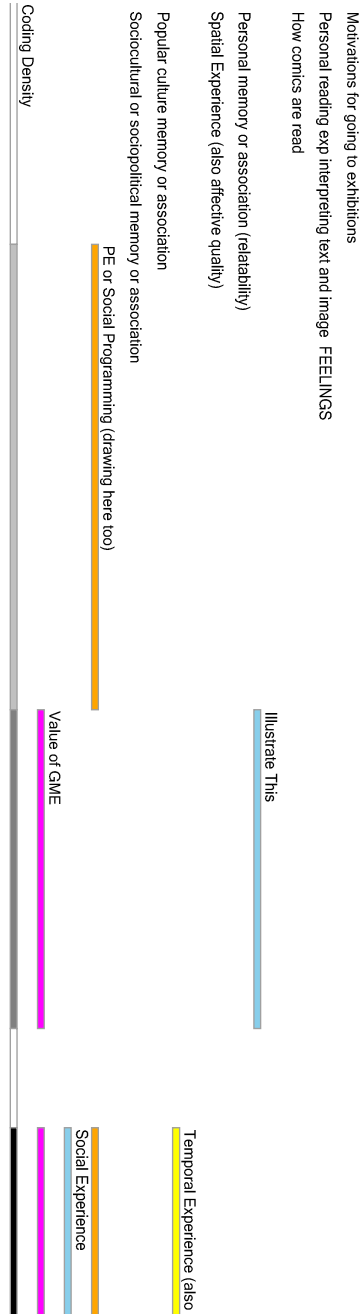
Alex: And that actually brought up one more follow-up question.

Anon: *yeahyeahyeah*

Alex: Because you have come to a couple of the Look at Lunches, how was that as an event, like event structure?

Anon: I think they are really useful.

Alex: Oh – okay (laughter together).



Anon: Ah no, its because as I say you go by yourself and you look and read explanation and you look and you read, but yeah there are questions that you might have and there is no one around you to answer or you don't know and you go away maybe thinking about it but you forget about it, but with the Lunch and with the theme you have the chance to ask questions and to as well to learn more about the exhibition and what the art is. So I think it is like a great idea to, yeah to encourage people to come along and look at it and to make it more as well. Its not just art for people to understand it. and into the arts and they understand it and they know what it is about, it just is chat about and you can ask questions, just like listen. I think it was good. I mean I learned a lot and was like you know. I guess without the lunches maybe I wouldn't have gone on and you know looked through, look up the artists and look to see if there was you know anything I can read about them. I mean it makes you think more about the exhibition when you are looking at it because sometimes as well being in the position it is maybe loads of people just pass-by, have a quick look through, and then go get their coffee but the fact that you are there for a reason it makes you "okay now I am here. I actually need to think about it more than just "oh yeah interesting"" and move on.

Alex: and you said that looking up the artists too. Was it just then that continued space of thinking about it?

Anon: Yeah continued space of thinking about it and wanting to know more. And to see what this graphic medicine is about. Because I had no idea it existed so in that sense. Cause yeah I think that if I had been in probably just look at it I don't think I would've even...is it graphic medicine even mentioned anywhere in the words in the explanation...I don't remember. I am trying to think. That's why I was like I probably wouldn't even know the name to go and look up, I mean I probably would have looked up the name of one of the artists or comics, but not the whole field and the whole thing so.

[End]

