

Actions and Ideas

Final hand-in

Zach Muir

INITIAL IDEAS BRAINSTORM

Agency, your
subject position

intersections of life & death
memento mori
graveyards
personal loss



being remembered
being forgotten
Reputation of the
average person

The human body

out of body experience

forgetting you have a meat-suit

Perceptions of others v. Perception of self.

Restrictions on decisions

laws

morality.

You could choose to do anything
personal perceived boundaries.

similar

agency & expression/conformity.

Joy of experiencing things yourself

discovery, genuine emotions instead of having
to express clearly to others

Family in relation to your 'different-ness'

any larger rebellion to society ~~can~~ also be a
rebellion to those you love.

Dear Friend,

I am not here to pick anyone up, or to be picked up. I am here alone because I want to be here, ALONE.

This card is not intended as part of an extended flirtation.

Thank you for respecting my privacy.

This work particularly appealed to me due to its relatability. I feel like I need my own ones of this for everyday use.

I picked it as it particularly embodied the discussion of agency.

- directly tells the person what you want
- Reminds viewer of how the other person is infringing on your own life.

I reckon it is an act of rebellion because of how it goes against the usual grain / rules of social interaction.

- not talking to the other
- being direct in what you want. Not implying what the card asks (to be alone) is also not what would be expected especially at in a social environment.

to have something like this that's only purpose is to enforce your agency definitely explores the idea of agency you're taking your 'conditions of life' as such into your own hands.

The idea of the cards gives off a certain sense of confidence and direction, even if you're not directly confronting who you gave it to.

6/4/23

u
en

ARTIST MODEL - ZOE LEONARD - I WANT A PRESIDENT

I want a dyke for president. I want a person with aids for president and I want a fag for vice president and I want someone with no health insurance and I want someone who grew up in a place where the earth is so saturated with toxic waste that they didn't have a choice about getting leukemia. I want a president that had an abortion at sixteen and I want a candidate who isn't the lesser of two evils and I want a president who lost their last lover to aids, who still sees that in their eyes every time they lay down to rest, who held their lover in their arms and knew they were dying. I want a president with no air conditioning, a president who has stood on line at the clinic, at the dmV, at the welfare office and has been unemployed and laid off and sexually harassed and gaybashed and deported. I want someone who has spent the night in the tombs and had a cross burned on their lawn and survived rape. I want someone who has been in love and been hurt, who respects sex, who has made mistakes and learned from them. I want a Black woman for president. I want someone with bad teeth and an attitude, someone who has eaten that nasty hospital food, someone who crossdresses and has done drugs and been in therapy. I want someone who has committed civil disobedience. And I want to know why this isn't possible. I want to know why we started learning somewhere down the line that a president is always a clown: always a john and never a hooker. Always a boss and never a worker, always a liar, always a thief and never caught.

This work rebels against the idea of the ideal American president - Someone who is so removed from the people they are supposed to be taking care of. It speaks to the types of people who do need help, those who would understand and be empathetic to the people.

It emphasised the discrepancy between the regular person and how removed Presidents are from society.

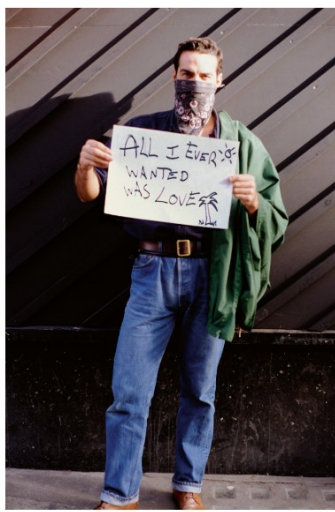
It flips on its head the idea of who the 'bad' people are - who is deserving of celebration, whether or not the 'American dream' has worked for them.

It calls into question as to why we elect overlords into positions of power again & again. It appeals thus to the people who are not quite the people it describes, drawing them out of ~~their~~ their set worlds in order to contemplate why.

The work also uplifts those it describes, saying they too are worthy of the most coveted position in America. This is especially good, as these people are often the most set-aside, forgotten or kicked down.

I enjoy its aggression & inclusivity, as well as the message that a leader should be for the people, not themselves.

ARTIST MODEL: GILLIAN WEARING - Signs that say what you want them to say and not what someone else wants you to say.
1992-3



This work explores the difference/lack thereof ~~of the~~ between what we are thinking, and how society expects us to act. The signs, combined with how the person presents call the audience to think about how they are judging and treating people in day-to-day life.

The ones I've picked are ones that I feel are happier and relatable to me. They speak of a human need for love and connection. It celebrates this as well as rebelling.

I also enjoy the idea that the thoughts recorded on the white pages are reflective of the time period they were written in, as along with art one of my main interests is history - especially how history was experienced by everyday people. These were made in the early 1990s in London, where a recession was hitting the country.

→ against a system that has made life + society so much more individual-orientated.

ARTIST MODEL: GLEN LIGON - untitled (i am an invisible man)

1991

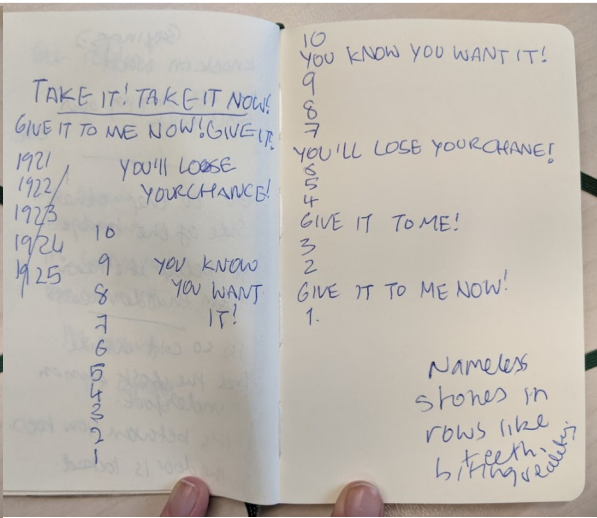
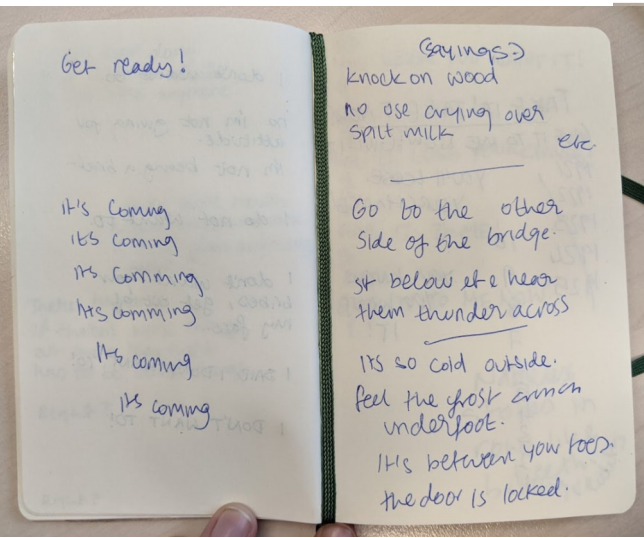
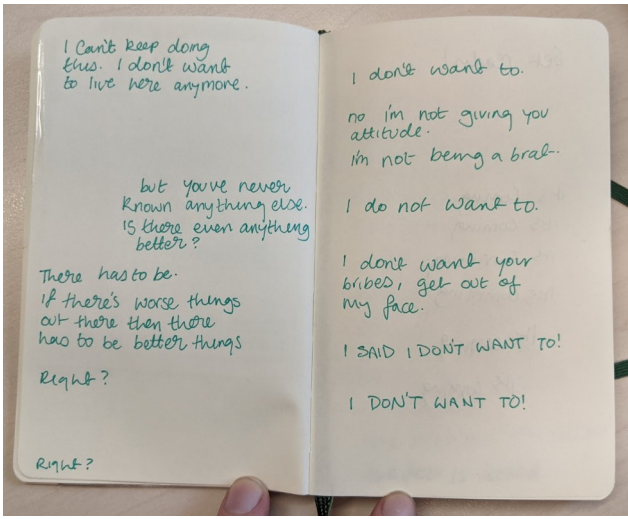
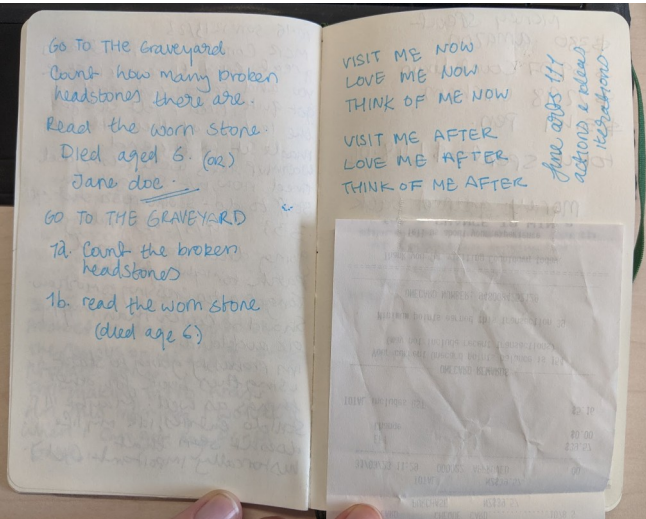
I am an invisible man. No, I am not a speck like those who haunted Edgar Allan Poe; nor am I one of your Hollywood I'm vice cops - plasmas. I am a man of substance, of flesh and bone, fiber and liquids, and I might even be said to possess a mind. I am invisible, understand, simply because people refuse to see me. Like the bodiless heads you see sometimes in circus sideshows, it is as though I have been assaulted by millions of目光 that approach me, stare at my back, but never see me. I am not invisible, not at all. I am just a black man in a white world.

This work excited me because I had seen it before but had forgotten the name. I enjoy it because it is a quote from the 1952 novel 'invisible man', which is obviously very heartfelt by the artist. I have worked similarly in the past, using text within my paintings from books that left deep impressions on me.

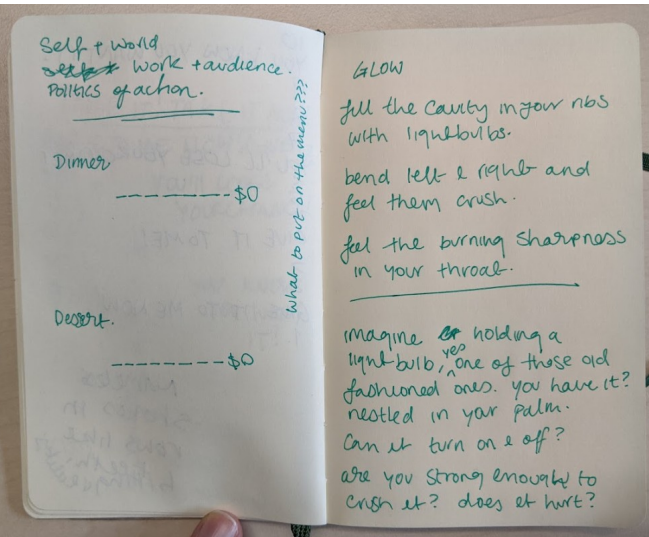
despite relating to the execution of the work, I

can never fully relate to the concept of the work, as I am not black & do not have the same lived experiences. However I can relate to the idea that everyone should be acknowledged and respected in society, which is the idea that this work is trying to get across. The work resists the racist lens society did & still does see people through, simply by acknowledging that the artist is "not" an invisible man. This "not" is one of the few clear words within the quote, along with the first line, reading "I am an invisible man."

It explores the agency people have over how they carry themselves, with pride, to brush aside negative comments and live as your full unchanging self - which is a difficult thing to do.



Idea Generation & Class Notes



These are my brainstorming pages. Not all of these ideas relate completely to the brief. I just got out anything that came to me while I was sitting and thinking.

I went and sat in the closest graveyard to get some peace and quiet to do these, as I often get too caught up in everything if I'm in a fast-moving environment like a cafe to people-watch. The graveyard has a more peaceful air to it, and it is very unlikely that you'll be interrupted.

The works on the *Glow* page and underneath (*Sayings*), I think have potential for further development towards my final work.

ASSEMBLY FOR SOULS

Go to the graveyard:

- 1a. count the broken headstones
- 1b. read the worn stone

(died age six)

Presented Monday 3rd April

When writing this work I was inspired by the format of *music for two players II*, which was shown to us in-class. The format was different to the artist model I did first (Adrien Piper).

I enjoyed how the instructional nature of the piece encourages the viewer to really participate with the artwork, to ponder what would happen. I tried to incorporate this into my own work while still adding something that was *me*, rather than simply copying the format.

This piece was heavily inspired by where I was sitting when writing it- the graveyard. I wonder for future works weather things would come out different depending on where I sit, and if this could be a more central focus on my works; how we interact with our surroundings, how we might need someone else to point things out since we're so focused on our own little worlds and not the bigger picture or even others/the people that came before us. It seems today that everything that doesn't directly relate to us is immediately forgotten or pushed away. Perhaps my future work could combat that.

< music for two players II >

In a closed room
pass over 2 hours
in silence.

(They may do anything but to speak.)

C. Shiomi 1963

it's so cold outside
feel the frost crunch underfoot
it's between your toes

The door is locked.

Presented Thursday 6th April

With this work I was trying to figure out how to convey a certain feeling of not-quite-loss and a kind of flat regret. I think this was a step down from what I did for the previous lesson, but now I know which direction feels best to me- something more akin to the instructional style from previously. The next step then is to look at some more instructional artist models.

I was inspired by some of the works I saw from fellow classmates, but imbued the style they used with my own bits, getting away from the feeling of a body, but how the body feels the world, both physically and emotionally.

I think the lack of personal pronouns makes this work slightly more open, encouraging the viewer to imagine themselves in this scenario. The aim is to get them to feel the same feeling. However, there isn't much of a larger meaning or political rebellion. This is something I can improve on in further works.

BACK FROM MID SEMESTER BREAK FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

things to think about:

- Return to graveyard and think of 10 words related to the "read the stone" line.
- definitely focus on the "Assembly for souls" piece.
- think about where my own agency comes into the piece.
- lean into my personal / unique life experience for this.
- for artist models, go a bit deeper for each of them in critical thinking.
 - how it relates to individuals & the world
 - how it relates to different kinds of individuals.

DUE FRIDAY NEXT WEEK

Do 6 artist models.

have 2 versions by thursday.

Final is due next monday.

MAKE THIS A FOCUS ☺

The University of Auckland
General Library
Regularly check your email for Library notices

Items that you have checked out

Title: Yoko Ono : to the light /
ID: 35556519154306
Due: !!23/06/2023 20:00:00 NZST!!

Total items: 1
24/04/2023 10:12:01 AM
Checked out: 1

Check your University or My Library Account
for recalled items. These must be returned by
the new due date to avoid fines.

REMEMBER TO RETURN
LIBRARY BOOK !!

YOKO ONO

A ROOM WITHOUT A WINDOW I.

THE ROOM WITHOUT A WINDOW I

Draw a window on the wall
to remind you of the sun.
to remind you of the rain that taps.
to remind you of the sunset that makes you smile.
to remind you of the moonlight that sneaks in your room.
to remind you of the snow that covers the world.

I Couldn't find much written about this work by other people, both in the book I found it in, and online. The book is about Ono's 'To The Light' exhibition in the Serpentine gallery.

The Concept this work is trying to get across is to get the viewer to remember all the goodness and beautiful things that the world has always had in it. It is an instructional piece, but it doesn't demand, but rather encourages the viewer in a positive direction. It reminds the viewer that they have agency over their own feelings and perceptions, something which is difficult to remember during tough times.

The piece resists the materiality of the society we have built - the physical structures of which act against our nature to connect with our environment, nature itself. In the individualistic world capitalism has created, we still need to reach out through those windows, even if we need to create the windows ourselves, to connect with others and the rest of the world.

My favorite line by far is "to remind you of the sunset that makes you smile". It reminds me of my mother's philosophy to live in the moment - watch every sunrise/sunset because no one is the same at the next. I enjoy the simple celebration of these special moments, which the piece brings to mind.

YOKO ONO

TAPE PIECE I

Tape Piece I

Stone Piece

Take the sound of the stone aging.

1963

I picked this piece from the Fluxus work book on Canvas because it is so similar to what I will be working on to improve before Thursday.

We do not traditionally think of a stone as something that ages. aging is something that mortal things do. The idea that a stone can age invokes a vast sense of time, putting our own existences into perspective with that of the world. Aging is also not something that has a sound, again invoking the idea of a cosmic bigness that the world has.

I enjoy the simplicity the work has, and its lack of connotations that conversations about aging usually have (usually negative ones). It quietly celebrates the idea of aging and growing because of how natural it is to everything in the world, even rocks.

To 'take' the sound of the stone aging can be taken to mean many things. To listen, to simply acknowledge, to make the stone silent, etc. This gives the work a sense of openness that other word choices would not have allowed. My personal interpretation of this is to listen, and to take something away from the experience. I think the critique of this piece gives the audience this, without anything else other than that single line.

JOHN CAGE + SISTER CORITA KENT TEN RULES FOR STUDENTS, TEACHERS AND LIFE.

MERCE CUNNINGHAM STUDIO 55 BETHUNE STREET NYC NY 10014

10 RULES FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

FROM JOHN CAGE

- Rule 1: Find a place you trust, and then, try trusting it for awhile.
- Rule 2: (General Duties as a Student)
Pull everything out of your teacher.
Pull everything out of your fellow students.
- Rule 3: (General Duties as a Teacher)
Pull everything out of your students.
Consider everything an experiment.
- Rule 4: Be Self Disciplined. This means finding someone wise or smart and choosing to follow them. To be disciplined is to follow in a good way. To be self disciplined is to follow in a better way.
- Rule 5: Follow the leader. Nothing is a mistake. There is no win and no fail. There is only make.
- Rule 6: The only rule is work. If you work it will lead to something. It is the people who do all the work all the time who eventually catch onto things. You can fool the fans—but not the players.
- Rule 7: Do not try to create and analyze at the same time. They are different processes.
- Rule 8: Be happy whenever you can manage it. Enjoy yourself. It is lighter than you think.
- Rule 9: We are breaking all the rules, even our own rules and how do we do that? By leaving plenty of room for "x" qualities.
- Rule 10:

Helpful Hints:

Always Be Around.
Come or go to everything.
Always go to classes.
Read everything you can get your hands on.
Look at movies carefully and often.
Look at movies carefully and often.
SAVE EVERYTHING. It may come in handy later.

I initially found out about this piece from a Youtube video I watched during lockdown: 'Art + Life Rules from a Nun' posted to the 'Art Assignment' channel. Since then this work has always been interesting to me, though I would not be much good at following the rules.

The work is quite straightforward to start with, emphasising work, and the effort that is required to make anything good. The rules are handy for the modern world, as everything

here is a distraction, no one can seem to do one thing for any amount of time. Rule 2 jumps out at me, as it reflects my experiences going to lectures. People are mostly just there to take notes, ~~to~~ not to simply engage with the class. It is a very saddening experience when no-one wants to answer the lecturer's question or speak up in any way. The way teaching is largely done (in lecture theatres) is quite impersonal, not collaboratively in any form, as the first few rules here suggest. The way Sister Corita Kent worked was mostly collaboratively at the school she taught at, and this is reflected in her rules - of which she had many.

The work explores the enhanced agency you may experience when you set a way forward through rules. Sister Kent's aim with this work was not restriction but a ~~path~~ well worn path forward that can allow you to more easily learn, create, ~~and~~ work, and go through your life. We can see this most especially in rules 9 and 10.

BARBRA KRUGER YOUR BODY IS A BATTLEGROUND 1989



Like in many of her works, Barbra Kruger uses pronouns in her work here. The use of "your" and "we", "us" etc asks the viewer to think of who is included in each of those groups. In this particular work the 'you' can be anyone, any viewer, however the image of a woman in the background implies this work is about consent/sexual assault against women - something

that women always seem to be fighting against. Fighting to regain control of their own lands, their own bodies in a war against society + men. This very clearly speaks to the idea of agency, the agency you should have over your own body. The work resists the traditional ideas that a woman is the property of her husband/father. The medium of advertising, which Kruger was interested in and incorporated into her work, tries to convince/command the viewer to take note of this injustice. As Kruger said about her work: "I try to make work that joins the seductions of wishful thinking with the criticality of knowing better."

One of the other things that I enjoy about this work is that it can be interpreted by each individual to relate to their own struggles with bodily autonomy, whether that be because of their gender, or even because of a disability. Whichever way you interpret it, it still gives the viewer the message that they are powerful and should keep up the good fight.

LOUISE BOURGEOIS

SHE LOST IT (2) 1992

A MAN AND A WOMAN
LIVED TOGETHER. ON ONE EVENING
HE DID NOT COME BACK FROM WORK,
AND SHE WAITED. SHE KEPT ON WAITING

AND SHE GREW LITTler AND LITTler.
LATER, A NEIGHBOR STOPPED BY OUT OF
FRIENDSHIP AND THERE HE FOUND HER, IN
THE ARMCHAIR. THE SIZE
OF A PEA

This piece was a test on paper for the Composition of Silk scarves. Louise Bourgeois and other artists were commissioned to create. The words are from her 1947 Journal. The work describes a "story of abandonment" in Bourgeois' words. "she is a passive person... she is dying."

The work comments on dependancy on others, the passive life we can let ourselves get lost in, and how we can lose everything, our whole selves to that if ~~we~~ we don't have a wide group of friends. It's about how we can lose our own agency to another. The work is not exactly a rebellion or a celebration, but rather a parable, as the Museum of Modern art puts it. The story teaches us a lesson - to cast our nets wide with friendship, as those are the people who will save us, like the neighbour who 'stopped by out of friendship' in the second paragraph. It also provides commentary on the society/culture of the time it was written, late 40s (either France or NYC). Western culture. It speaks about how women were expected to always be there for their husbands, who in turn were allowed to come and go more freely. As well as the financial dependancy women had on men, although during the time women were getting more involved in the workforce. Women had to learn to rely on each other, which is perhaps the role of the neighbour.

MIEKO SHIOMI

EVENT FOR MIDDAY IN THE SUNLIGHT

1963

< event for the midday >
(in the sunlight)

12:00 — Shut your eyes
12:03 — Open your eyes
12:03'05" — Shut your eyes
12:04 — Open your eyes
12:04'04" — Shut your eyes
12:04'30" — Open your eyes
12:04'33" — Shut your eyes
12:04'50" — Open your eyes
12:04'52" — Shut your eyes
12:05 — Open your eyes
12:05'01" — Shut your eyes
12:05'05" — Open your eyes
12:05'06" — Shut your eyes
12:07 — Open your eyes
and look your hands

before I even begin talking about the work, I think it was interesting that I picked this work, unknowing of the artist when I so enjoyed her other work - "Music for two players II".

Mieko Shiomie was part of the Fluxus group, with many of her works being published and performed with them. despite

being a composer her 'music' pieces have little to do with instruments or other things directly related to music like other fluxus artists. To me, her works have deeper meanings than the things that have just been made in order to be different and stand out, to be strange.

This work draws attention to how we exist in the world not in society but with nature. The action within the work is simply the extended blinking that we do when the sun is in our eyes and we don't have any sunglasses, a simple gesture that speaks to our link to human nature, and our ancestors who likely did the same thing, and also everyone else in today's age. everyone has experienced the sun, everyone's experienced a ~~simple~~ midday.

While there is no rebellion explicitly here, it does celebrate a connection with nature and our own bodies. a connection which is more and more difficult to make in our modern cities and commodification of bodies and how we look. the piece offers a place similar to meditation where the viewer can just take a moment to feel that connection.

TASTE THE RING OF DIRT ON THE SHOVEL

Go to the graveyard:

- 1a. Be desperate enough to be close
- 1b. Read the worn stone
2. Fill the hollows with dirt
(or dust.)

<BE WITH ME>

Go to the graveyard:

- a. revel in the loneliness
- b. fill your hollows with their dust
- c. be desperate enough to be close.

TASTE THE RING OF DIRT ON THE SHOVEL

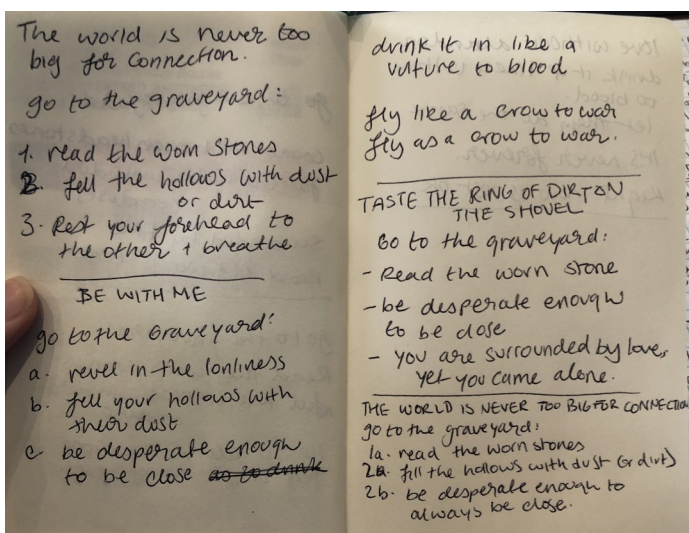
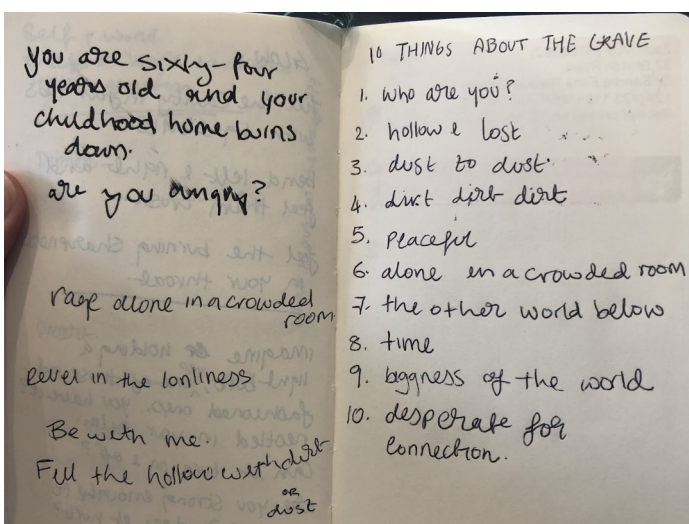
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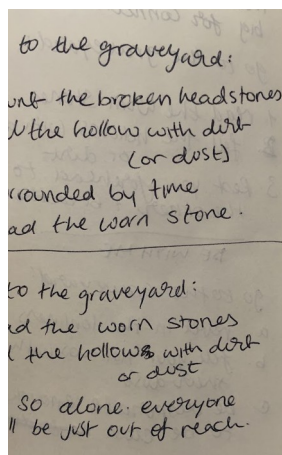
Presented Thursday 27th April

There was not much time for individual feedback, as three works were picked as examples for the whole class. However, the night before presenting this work, I showed the two options above to a couple of my fellow classmates, who gave some feedback and critique. Given that it was a bit late to re print the works again, I simply edited them physically as the feedback was largely about rearranging lines. I rearranged both pieces but ended up going with the 'TASTE THE RING OF THE DIRT ON THE SHOVEL' one.

The look of the pieces wasn't as bad as I thought it would be, but it might take away from the effect of the piece if it was simply printed out how it was edited. The look of the tape reminded me of what I was initially thinking of before we were told that the visuals of the works were not important- a sort of punk poster kind of look that I thought would go with the 'minor rebellion' and 'agency' criteria of this project.



Rage alone in a crowded room
Revel in the loneliness
Fill the hollow with dirt or dust
Who are you
Hollow and lost
Alone in a crowded room
The other side
Time
Bigness of the world
Desperate for connection
Count the broken headstones
Surrounded by time
Read the worn stone
Be so alone
Love without abandon
Drink it up like a vulture
Let them do the same
Its never forever
Look out across the veneer the veil



Idea Generation & Class Notes

This time around I focused on the best parts of the work I'd done previously. I tried out some new titles for the 'ASSEMBLY OF SOULS' piece, as well as working in some new lines and keeping the best one, namely 'read the worn stone'. I tried out different tones/genres, as well as aspects from my artist models, especially Yoko Ono and her work about listening to a stone ageing.

For the second go at creating something, I started with making a list of all the lines that I'd come up with so far, just to get them all in one place so I could rearrange them easily in order to make my final work. I came up with three arrangements, two of which I was happy with (the latter two). Feedback about these preferred ones was then sought, and the decision was made as to which I would present as my final.

For the pallbearers, weepers and mourners

- Love without abandon
- Let them do the same
- You will always be alone in a room full of people
- It's never forever.

Honour for the veil

Go to the graveyard:

Read the worn stones.

You're surrounded by time. Feel it against your cheek.

Leave:

Tell a stranger your name, and remember theirs.

<Outreach for the beloved>

Go to the graveyard:

Enter

(Be desperate enough to be close)

Walk

(Read the worn stone)

Weep

(Fill your hollows with dirt, or dust.)