

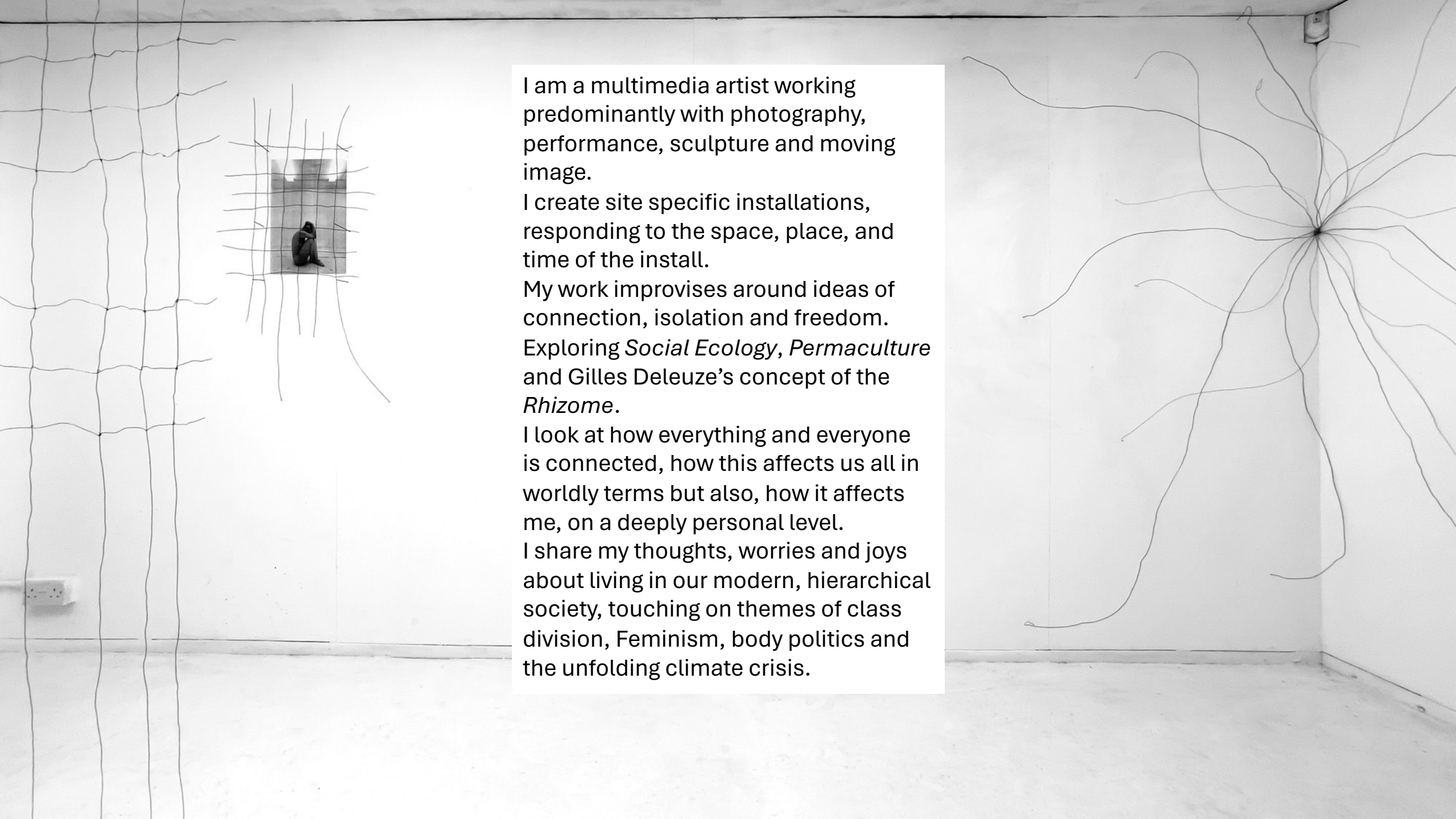


Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Swansea
College of Art
Founded 1853

Sarah Grounds

CASW STUDENT AWARD SUBMISSION



I am a multimedia artist working predominantly with photography, performance, sculpture and moving image.

I create site specific installations, responding to the space, place, and time of the install.

My work improvises around ideas of connection, isolation and freedom. Exploring *Social Ecology*, *Permaculture* and Gilles Deleuze's concept of the *Rhizome*.

I look at how everything and everyone is connected, how this affects us all in worldly terms but also, how it affects me, on a deeply personal level.

I share my thoughts, worries and joys about living in our modern, hierarchical society, touching on themes of class division, Feminism, body politics and the unfolding climate crisis.

My practice has evolved so much since finishing my BA in Documentary Photography and Visual Activism and starting an MA in Contemporary Dialogues at Swansea College of Art UWTSD.

I take the photographic image out of it's conventional frame. Filling whole spaces with one image, removing the 2D image totally from the wall to become 3D sculpture. Turning the still image into moving image, through stop motion and then putting it all back on the wall again.

Experimentation is key to my practice. I try to push myself to always go somewhere I have never been, from wet plate collodion to AI generated images. All mediums are legitimate and all empower my voice as an artist.

My influences are diverse, ranging from Rebecca Horn, Duane Michals, Francis Bacon, Tomas Saraceno and Laurie Anderson.

My background in music means my work is also very influenced by composers and performers, such as Bjork, PJ Harvey and Samuel Barber.

I view my work as visual music and approach my art practice as I approached my musical practice. Practicing every day knowing that it is not until you are no longer thinking about how to make an image, that you can really start putting your soul into a work.

I have two main threads of research I am exploring at the moment.

Time, and the space between the still and moving image.

And emotion expressed through art, particularly Gilles Deleuze's thoughts on artistic expression.



I have various threads to my practice that are now starting to work together to create an aesthetic.

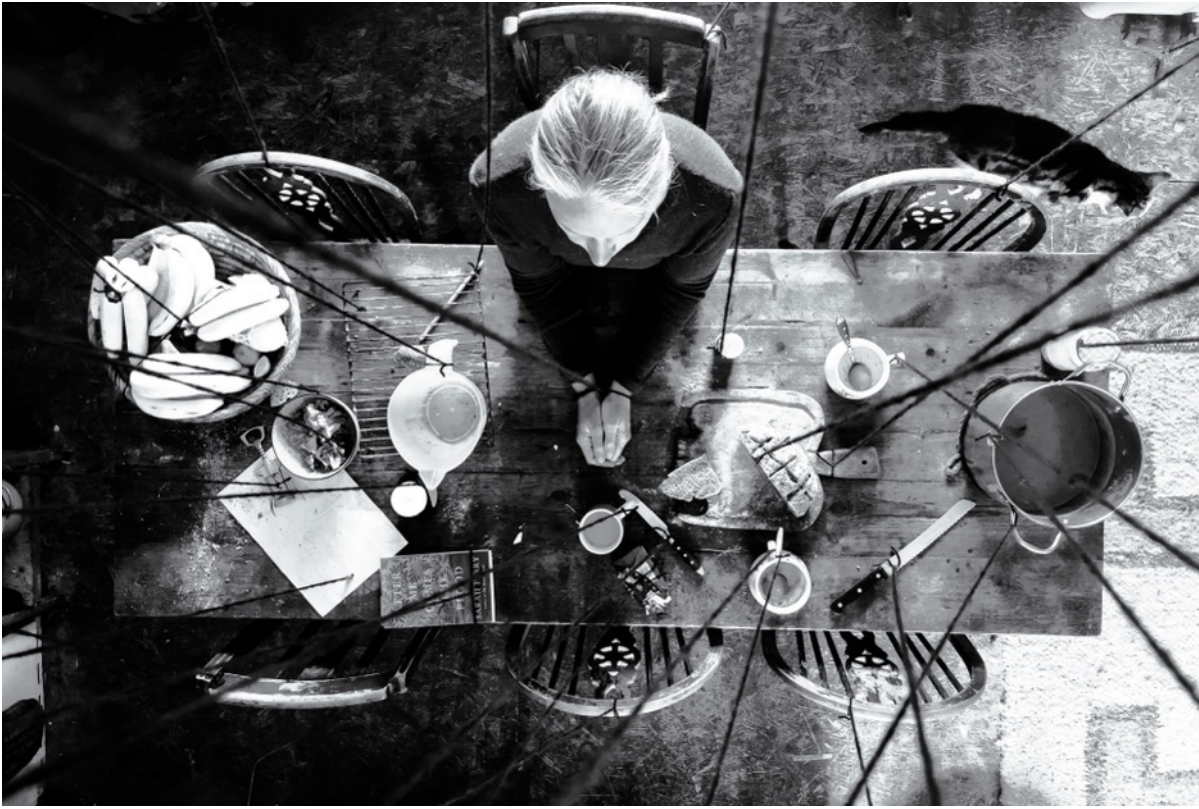
One of the main aspects of my work is how I present images on the wall.

During my BA I was very aware, as a working class artist, how expensive it is to have photography printed for exhibitions. I knew I wanted my images to be large and I also knew that I could not afford to go through the normal photography printing companies. So I started experimenting with different ways of creating large images, cheaply.

I came up with the idea of printing large scale images on multiple A4 sticky address labels. Breaking up the images in Photoshop and piecing them back together again, like a jigsaw, in the space. The images are printed just on a normal laser printer and each print of an image, has different tiny faults and smears. The process of me then cutting out each rectangle and sticking it to the wall, again creates little faults. The level of faults quite often depending on my emotions of that day. This then means that every time I create one of these large images, it will be slightly different. Reflecting the site of installation, the print and my emotions during the install. Each image is ephemeral and when an exhibition is finished, tears quickly off the wall.

This whole process, reflects my thoughts about connections in our society and also enhances my connection to the images I have created. I experience my images intimately, each detail, carefully reconstructed by me, on the wall.



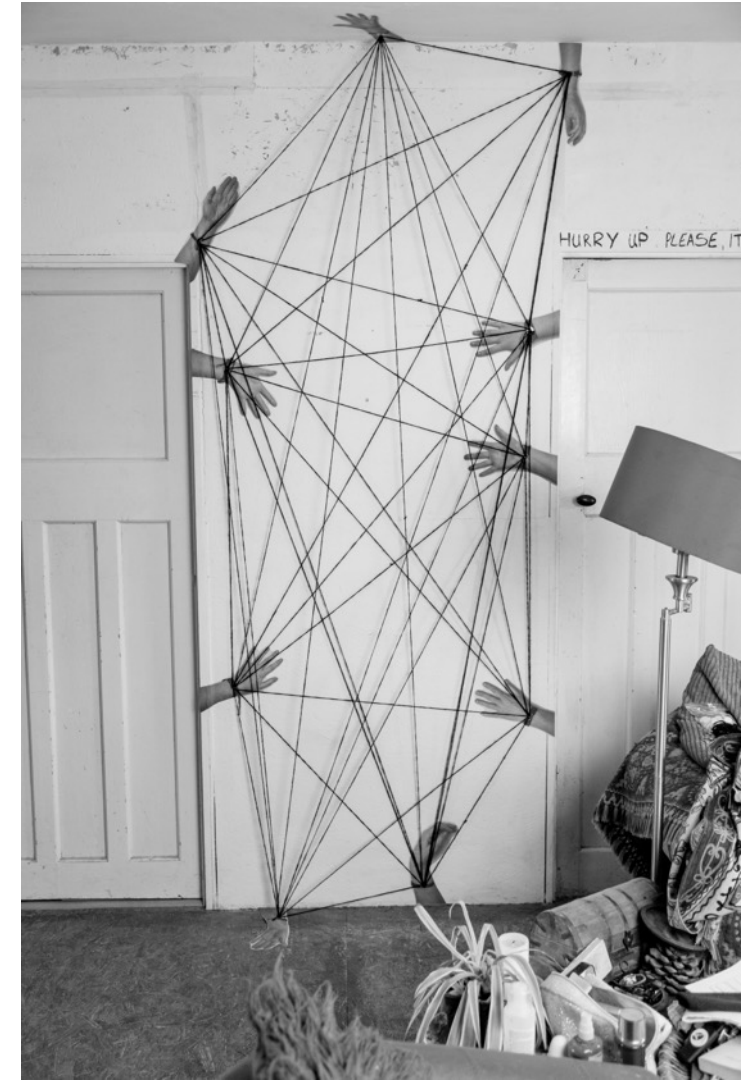


Another thread is how I create performances in my home. I live in a small eco cabin that I built with my partner. I live very simply and because of this, feel very connected to the elements and the land around me. This is reflected in my performances. Having lived like this my entire adult life, it has also made me very aware that there is no escape from the ties of our modern hierarchical society. Again, I try to reflect this within my performances. Sometimes using installation, sometimes sculpture and often using my own body to translate, the constrain, isolation and despair I feel, living as a working class woman in a patriarchal society.





Links Installation created in my home with my daughter.
I then did a performance with the work, creating long exposures,
merging myself with the work and making my individual identity blurred.





Various performances in and around my home.



STASIS FILM

I create a lot of moving image work. It is not until starting my MA though, that I have really understood what I am doing. I play with time a lot. Documenting performances using long exposures and then piecing them back together as stasis films. I have a fascination with how one can express emotion using the photographic image, and for me, these stasis films have become the ultimate way for me to express pure emotion.



Now I understand what I am doing with my stasis film work I have started experimenting more with time, through slow and accelerated motion. I have also been looking at longer works. Particularly *La Jetee* by Chris Marker and Andy Warhol's *Eat*. I am hoping to create my first short film this Summer.

[Link to SUMMERTIME](#)



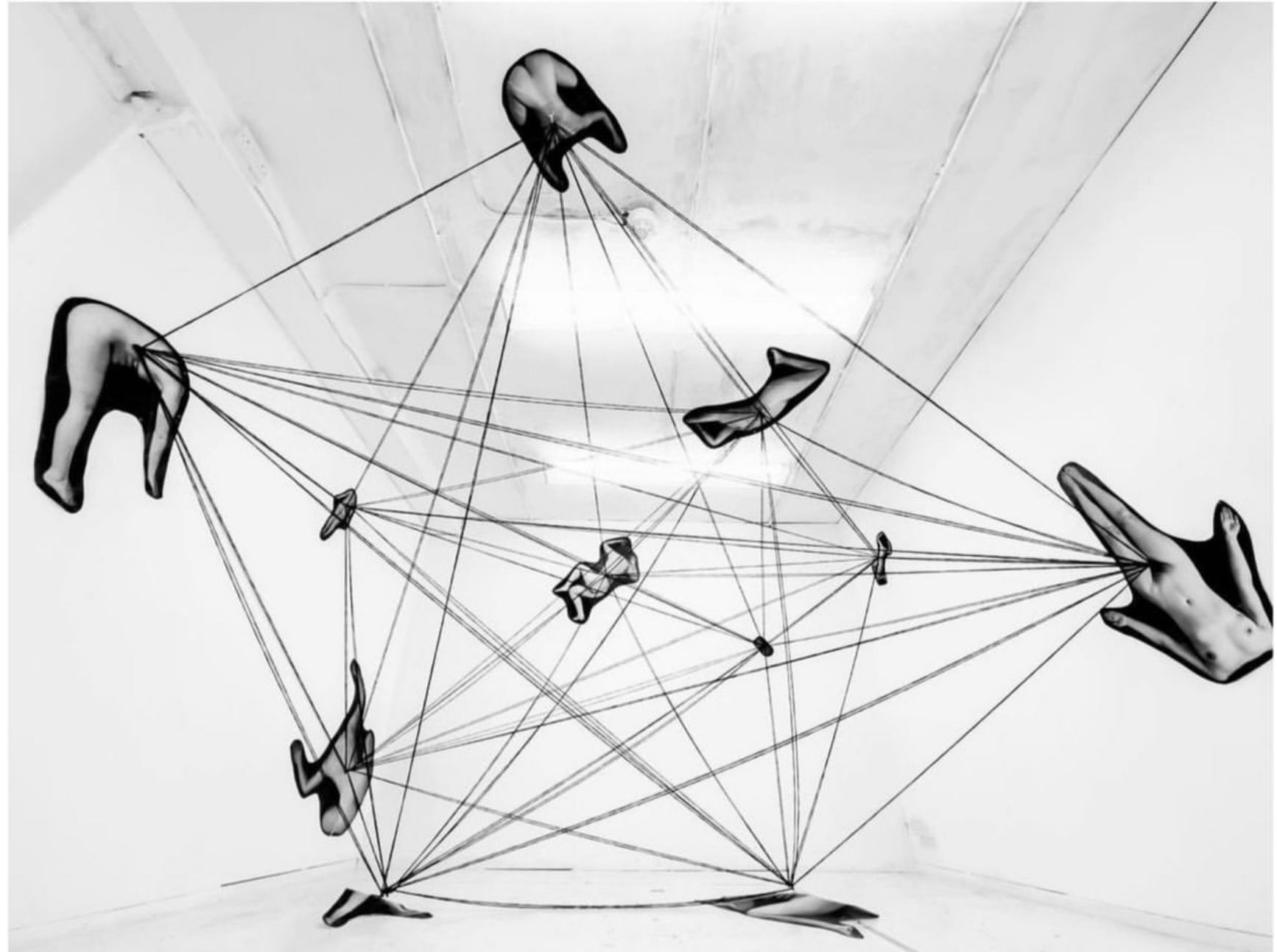
[Link to SCREAM](#)

INSTALLATION EXPERIMENTS

By the end of my second year doing my BA, I had realized that I had no interest in presenting my work in a traditional photographic way. So, in the third year, I started really experimenting with different ways of presenting my work. I want my work to be all consuming for the viewer. I want them to feel the work, as they step into the room, before they even look at one of my images.

LINKS 2022

This is my first installation experiment. Exploring the links in my life that have made me who I am. The images are improvised shapes I made to represent important moments in my life, good and bad. I then linked everything, to make a representation of me.





I am very lucky that the photography department have a white cube space down in the basement for photography students to book and use.

I was already using this space for experiments using different mediums. So I started using the space to do larger experiments.

LINKS 2023

For this experiment I created an installation outside my cabin, showing the links coming out from me into the World. I then took an image which I turned into a large scale sticky label image. I then added more links actually coming out of the image into the room. Playing with ideas of what is real and what is image, is something I explore a lot with my installations.

My experiments in this room were only fleeting, as I could only book the room for a week at a time. I also had to calculate in, removing all the work and painting, into that time.

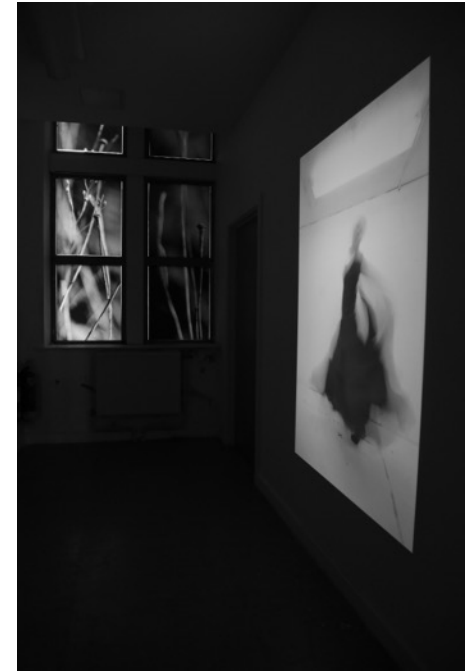
This was my first experiment creating a large long exposure image. Whilst creating this image, I could not see any prominent features of the image on the individual A4 sheets. I could only trust in the process and when I stepped back, the image appeared.



THE LINKS PROJECT – OVERLY BLUEISH
Swansea College of Art UWTSD
May, 2023

For my final degree work, I was very lucky to be allowed to use a whole side corridor for myself. My lecturers gave me complete freedom to do what I wanted in this space. Looking back now, I was still rather timid with what I created. But this was the first time I actually took the experiments I had been doing in the basement and translated them into an exhibition. I started the work with an installation around the door of all the hands of the students in my year, with wool links. In the main area of the corridor I had images representing the constrain and isolation I feel living in a hierarchical society. Then, to conclude, in a tiny back corridor, I had a stasis film projection of me dancing, which represents freedom. But it is in a back corridor, that everyone has forgotten about.

[LINK TO VIDEO OF THE LINKS PROJECT](#)



THE LINKS PROJECT – POP UP GALLERY

Quadrant Centre, Swansea

June, 2023

I then got to recreate my final degree work in various ways, in different group exhibitions. This was in a Pop Up exhibition in Swansea I was asked to take part in.



THE LINKS PROJECT – OVERLY BLUEISH
Copeland Gallery, London
July, 2023

The photography department took our final degree show to the Copeland gallery in London. This is the first time I had to create large images without actually physically seeing the space. I had to go by measurements supplied by the gallery for creating my large images. This is the largest image I have created so far.



THE LINKS PROJECT - PORTAL 2023

Llantarnam Grange

August, 2023

I was accepted for Portal 2023. This time the work was presented in a much more traditional way.



Sarah Gwynne
The Links Project
August 2023
Digital photography
A1

connect@studiomade.org.uk studio.made studiomadeuk

My image was also used for the poster of the exhibition.

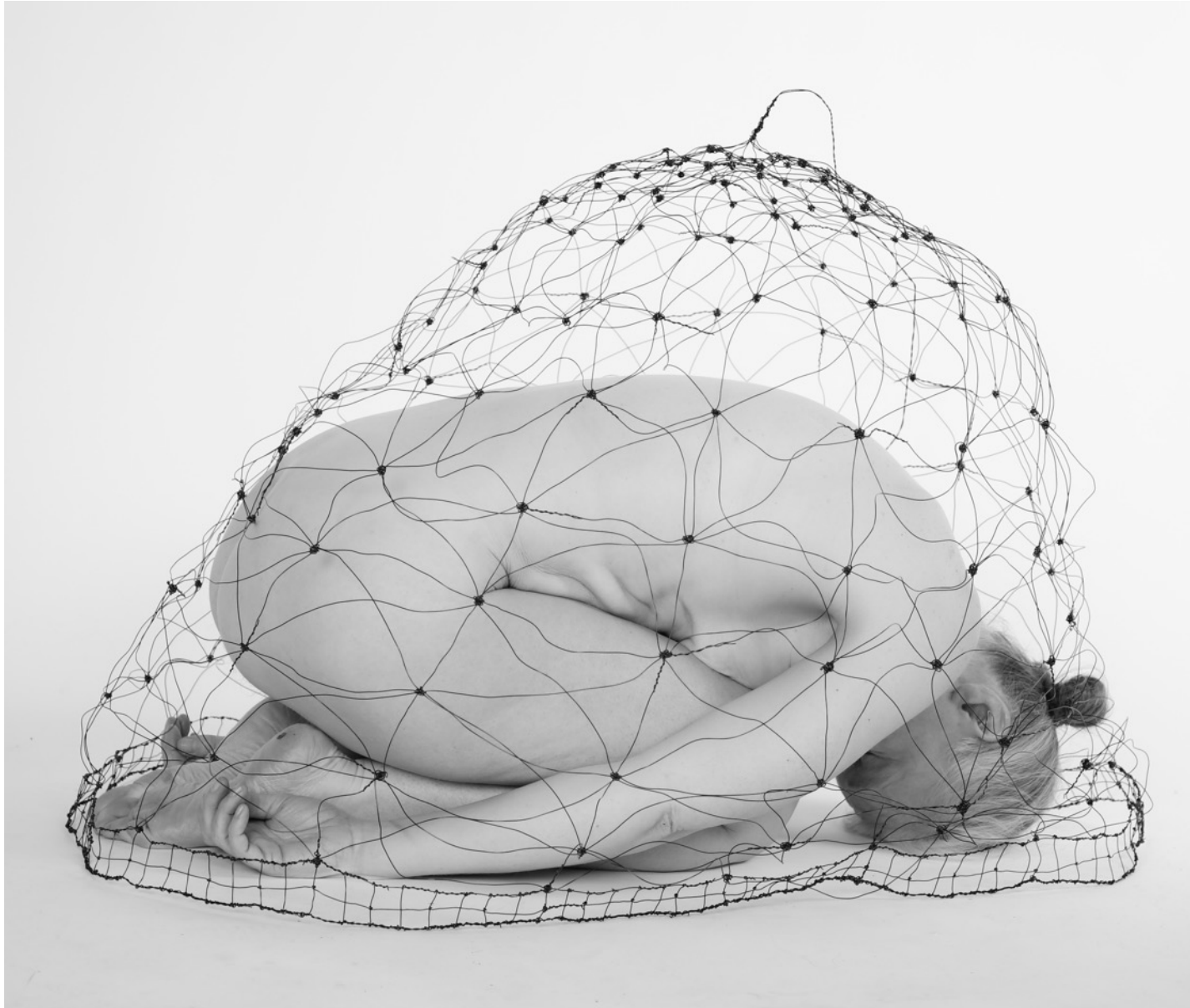
Seren Ambrose-Ellis, the 2023 CASW student award winner, was also involved in this exhibition. And spoke of how the award had helped her.





I have never had a studio space before and have found that it has changed everything for my practice. I can now do experiments and not have to take them down at the end of the week. I have work in my studio, that only looking back at months later, do I finally understand. Having the large space also allows me to think large. I am very aware though, that I will no longer have this space for the last 6 months of my MA. The studio spaces supplied with the MA are much smaller, a wall space the width of a desk. I do not have the money to rent a studio space. If I were to win the CASW award, I would mainly use the money to rent a studio through Elysium, in Swansea.





MA CONTEMPORARY DIALOGUES

I decided to continue my studies and do an MA. As I felt I was just finding myself as an artist and I was excited about taking my practice into different mediums. In particular I have been very keen to experiment with metal. I finally got the chance to do a spot soldering workshop at the end of March and my whole World has opened up as an artist, as a consequence.

After my first workshop, I immediately went down into the basement to experiment with what I had learned.

RESISTANCE

Installation Experiment at UWTSD
March, 2024

I decided to start off with no plan and just see what happened in the blank space.

I firstly created a panel of wire hanging down in the middle of the space. This panel represents the divide between our society now and what our society could be. I then improvised a performance with the wire, which I documented with photography. I explored my desire for freedom, like an animal caged and restricted, I rebelled against the limits imposed upon me.

I then took these images and printed them in my A4 sticky label way. Then I created more wire sculptures to interact with these images. Layers and layers of limitations, that I experience every day, as a working-class woman in a hierarchical society.

[LINK TO VIDEO OF *RESISTANCE*](#)



SELF PORTRAIT - SWANSEA SHOWCASE

Volcano Theatre, Swansea

May, 2024

I was asked to be involved in an exhibition to show the artistic talent in Swansea.

I decided to exhibit an experiment I had been making over the Easter holidays,

I had weaved a metal sphere around an image of my head, just as an experiment, which I had liked very much. It made me think about what else is restricted and forbidden about me. This led me to make further spheres, for my breasts and my crotch. For the exhibition I presented these with giant sticker images of my legs and arms. A broken up self portrait.

I call this side of my practice Bits Work. I take bodies apart and present them put back together in varying ways. All talking of body as meat, body as organic, body as neutral. All the shame and judgement, being a placed thing, on a set pattern of the body. Presenting the nude body in these ways, makes people, including myself, a lot less uncomfortable. Which hopefully gets people thinking about why that is.

I was very pleased with this work. I thought, with the direction my practice was going, that being involved in group shows would be difficult for me. But this is a small work, that worked well within the group. Yet, it is still an installation that speaks of all the things I do.

My BITS work could also be translated into whole room installations.





SELF PORTRAIT - MASH UP – MA W.I.P. Exhibition
Swansea College of Art UWTSD
May, 2024

Another side of my Bits Work are Bendy People. I am exhibiting my first Bendy person for our MA Work In Progress Exhibition this May. The work is site specific and is made up of five sticker prints of a self portrait.

My bendy people work shows how I feel I am bent, stretched, contorted into different shapes by our society. By bending, stretching and contorting my image into spaces. I have to conform, fit in, be accepted, and so lose the essence of who I am.

Starting this installation, I had a very strict rule for myself, that I had to place the stickers down in strips of five. By the end though, I realized that I did not have to stick to this rule and I could actually add to, or take away from the body I was creating, as I felt. I am very excited by this. And I plan to do experiments creating bendy people, squished flat, pulled in all directions, just one part of the body distorted. All depending on the space of installation and my feelings at the time of install.

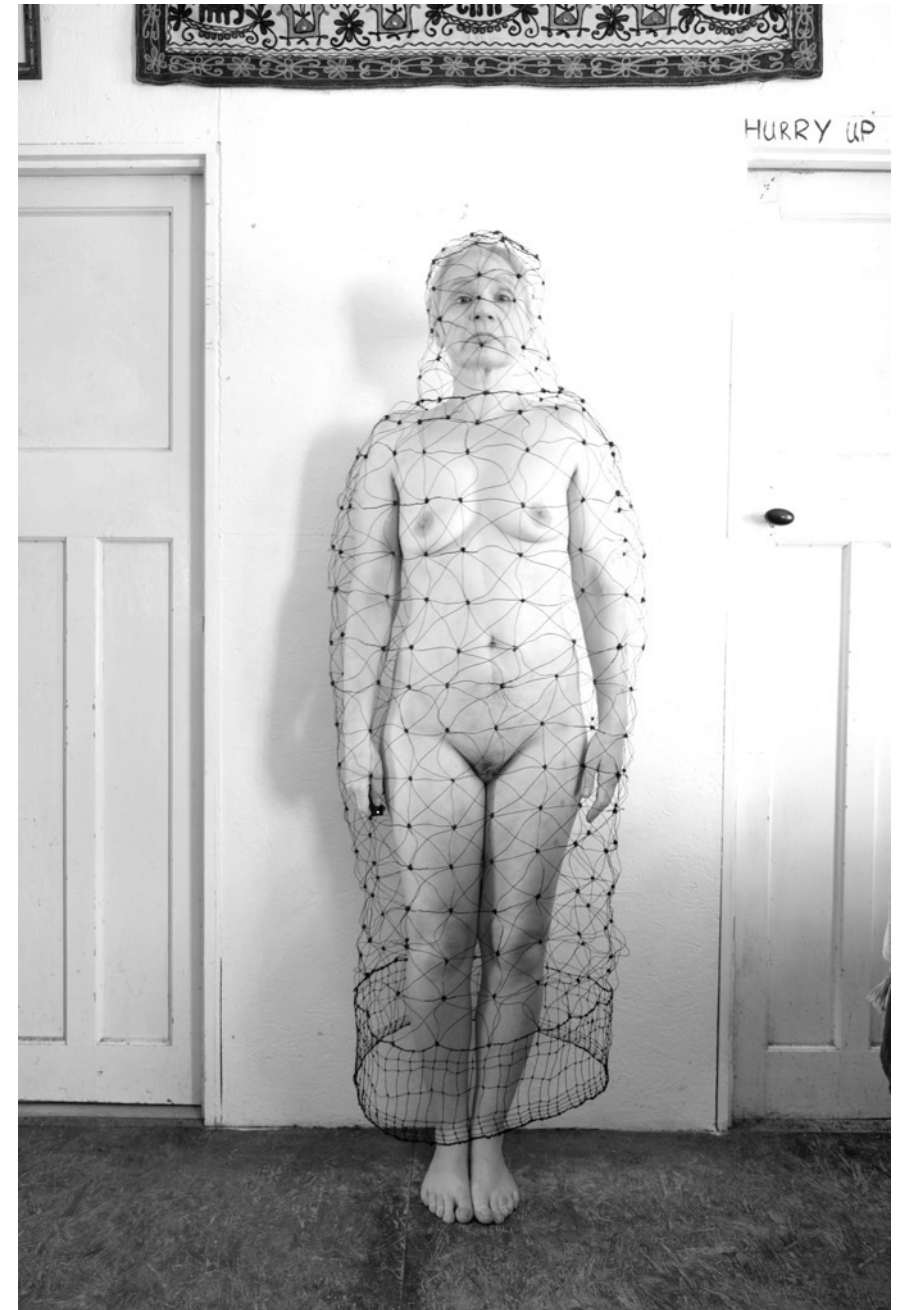
[LINK TO VIDEO OF *SELF PORTRAIT*](#)



VESSEL

This work is multi layered and I think nicely expresses where my practice is at the moment.

I firstly weaved myself a vessel, measuring and trying on the sculpture, as I weaved. The sculpture represents all the things we carry with us, living in a hierarchical society. I then improvised a performance wearing the vessel, in my home. I am nude to show my vulnerability as a human. The wire is cold and hard, the sharp points scratch me. As modern life is cold, restrictive and hurts. My vessel is also beautiful, as my life as a white western European, is also privileged.







VESSEL

Installation Experiment at UWTSD
May, 2024

I then took this work and created a white cube style installation at university. Incorporating my wearable sculpture, sticky label images of my performance and then adding further layers, by weaving wire walls insitu. I think this is the best work I have created so far. The wire work and the sticky label images, which also have wire in, work so well together. I am very excited by the possibilities of wire in future installations. But I am already pleased with my outcomes after only two months since my first wire workshop.

I am planning on expanding on this idea for the Sybil Crouch Exhibition I have in October 2024.

[LINK TO VIDEO OF VESSEL](#)

CONCLUSION

I am now working on ideas for a more organic Installation. Looking at the relationship between humans and all other life on Earth. This work is called Synergy and I am hoping to incorporate double exposure analogue images with organic wire sculptures. This work I am intending on using for the Alan Whatley Exhibition I have in November 2024.

I feel I am finally finding my voice and style as an artist.

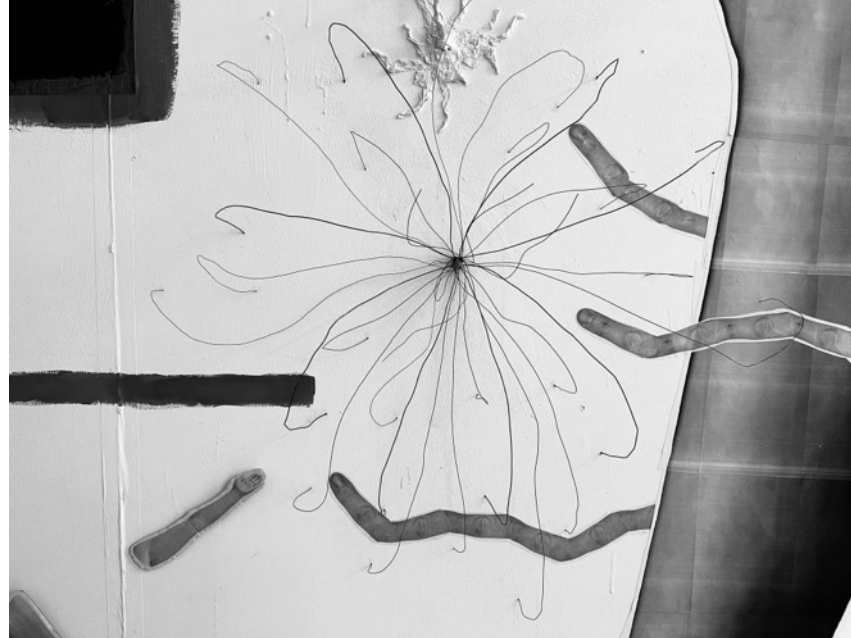
I have so many more experiments to do, though.

How could wire be used in an installation to influence the viewer?

What would moving image look like with wire? What other structures could I create with wire and what would these shapes and structures represent? In what other ways can I make 2D images 3D.

I am very excited to see where my practice is by the end of my MA, in five years time, in ten. My practice has changed so much, in just the last three months. Who knows where I will end up. I do know that I absolutely love creating installations and seeing all the different mediums I use, linking together and working in synergy so beautifully.

I very much feel, that this is just the beginning.





WEBSITE

INSTAGRAM



Sarah Grounds

VISUAL ARTIST

PROFILE

Innovative artist with experience participating in 32 exhibitions. Extensive portfolio spanning from fine art self-portrait work to documentary work with a strong community art ethos. A great deal of experience working with people from all backgrounds. Commissioned by various ecological businesses to create Photo Essays for their websites.

EXHIBITIONS

2024

Mash Up - Alex, Swansea (Group Show)
Swansea Showcase – Volcano Theatre, Swansea (Group Show)
Persephone Rising – 54 The Gallery, London (Group Show)

2023

A Different View, Studio Made, Denbigh (Group Show)
Links - Orchard Street Gallery, Swansea (Solo Show)
Portal – Llantarnam Grange, Wales (Group Show)
Overly Blueish - Copeland Gallery, London (Group Show)
Urban Foundry Exhibition - Pop Up Wales, Swansea (Group Show)
Exquisite Codes – Bla-Bla Projektraum, Berlin (Group Show)
Hagitude – 54 The Gallery, London (Group Show)
Change The Picture – FemLens, Online (Group Show)
Overly Blueish - Dynevor, Swansea (Group Show)
Swansea Open – Glynn Vivian, Swansea (Group Show)

2022

It's My Life - The House of Smalls, Online (Group Show)
City and the Sea – Taliesin Arts Centre, Swansea (Group Show)
Reaction – Creative Bubble, Swansea (Group Show)
Unbound – Swansea College of Art, Swansea (Group Show)

CONTACT

Phone
(01994)448810

Email
sarahgrounds@icloud.com

Instagram
@midlifepsychosis

Facebook
www.sarahgrounds.com

EDUCATION

**University of Wales, Trinity
Saint David, Swansea College
of Art**

*BA in Documentary Photography
and Visual Activism (2020- 2023)*
First Class

MA Contemporary Dialogues
(2023-Present)

RELEVANT SKILLS

Adobe Photoshop
Adobe Premier Pro
Adobe InDesign
Adobe Lightroom
Studio Lighting

OTHER SKILLS

Languages; English and French

Carpentry Skills

Selfies-Women in Photography – Royal Photographic Society,
Online (Group Show)

Shadows – The House of Smalls, Fronteer, Chester (Group
Show)

The Time of Her Life II – The House of Smalls, Fronteer, Chester
(Group Show)

The Anxiety of Interdisciplinarity – Island Venue, Bristol (Group
Show)

Studio Practice – Stiwdio Griffiths, Swansea (Group Show)

Nostalgia – D31 Art Gallery, Doncaster (Group Show)

Real Utopias, Photo Fringe, Worthing (Group Show)

BBA Photography Prize, Kuhlhaus, Berlin (Group Show)

The Shadow and The Light – Water Street Gallery, Todmorden
(Group Show)

2021

The Time of Her Life – The House of Smalls, Online (Group
Show)

This Volatile State – The House of Smalls, Online (Group Show)

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall – The House of Smalls, Online (Group
Show)

Swansea Open - Glynn Vivian, Swansea (Group Show)

Y Farchnad Gelf – Swansea Market, Swansea (Group Show)

Soft Anatomy – Volcano Theatre, Swansea (Group Show)

PRIZES

Alan Whatley Award 2023

Sybil Crouch Award 2023

BBA Photography Prize 2022 – One Shot Award Winner

COMMISSIONS & PUBLICATIONS

2024

Artist Feature - Glynn Vivian Newsletter
Swansea Positive – Main photographer for new local paper.
1 Year Residency at Swansea College of Art

2023

1 week Residency at Orchard Street Gallery, Swansea
A.N. Degree Show Guide

Music, Dance and Performance
background.

Ecological Expert

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Product Photographer
2004-2020

Self-Employed,
England and France

Vast experience photographing
diverse products for sale on the
internet. Website design,
advertising, social media and
customer relations

Workshop Leader 2023-
Present

Primary School, Neath
Abbey

Running day long, photography
based workshops for children.

Artist Feature – Art Etcetera Magazine

Dirty – Sique Magazine

Swansea Bid – Photograph and interview residents of
Swansea for their website and social media.

2022

Cerebra Charity – Lifestyle and product images of Children
with Special Needs and equipment. For use in their brochure
and website

Metamorphosis – Haus a Rest, Zine

Womanhood - Artists Responding To...Magazine

Body – Pretence Magazine

2021

Mulch Organic, Photo Essay for their website

EKoply, Photo Essay for their website 'How to make a Solar
Water Heater'

Welsh Heritage Jazz Archive, Documenting artifacts

[LINK TO DOWNLOADABLE CV](#)