

## **Susan Helene Bown**

How can an art practice visually communicate  
the everyday in response to constraints of  
location, access and freedom?

BA (Hons) Painting, Drawing & Printmaking  
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Submission declaration

How can an art practice visually communicate the everyday in response to constraints of location, access and freedom?

*Submitted by **Susan Bown** to Plymouth College of Art as a research project towards the degree of BA (Hons) **Painting, Drawing & Printmaking** 2020-2021. I certify that all material in this research project which is not my own work has been identified and that the final word count from introduction through to conclusion is **4400** words.*

..... **Susan Bown** .....

## Abstract

This practice-led dissertation details the steps taken during the Coronavirus Pandemic in 2020/21 to sustain and develop an art practice whilst being confined at home during a series of three lockdowns put in place by the UK government. As a practising artist, this unprecedented situation brought about practical constraints in how I conducted my work. Prior to lockdown my intention was to acquire new printmaking skills in the studio and to further an inquiry into collaboration. Being in the home and being a woman led to conflicts of roles and I discuss how I overcame this with baking. As I sought to develop my practice, I became more aware of everyday items and this led to my decision to focus on the quotidian as my subject. The everyday theories of Georges Perec and Michel de Certeau are used to examine behaviour and also to see how adjustments in behaviour take place to effect change. My research is broken down to coincide with three periods of isolation, firstly lockdown one, in which I discovered that I could use the limited resources at home and make scanography prints with everyday items and use these to make a series of artist's books. Lockdown two, in the autumn, when virus levels had dropped, I experimented further to produce work focused on restrictions of location, access and freedom. I applied further constraints as I discuss the manner in which the oeuvre of Andy Warhol extensively featured the everyday. Finally in lockdown three, I overcame a creative block by understanding how other artists had coped during the pandemic. This leads to one final experiment to test a question on the constraint of location where I recognised the presence of myself in my work and its autobiographical nature. This concluded the investigation, revealed new paths to follow and questions to be answered.

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## Introduction

The World Health Organisation declared Coronavirus as a global pandemic in March 2020; this was an unprecedented threat to worldwide health and is a generation defining crisis. (Ghebreyesus, 2020) Later that month the UK population was subjected to the first of a series of lockdowns, in which social contact was severely restricted to avoid the spread of the disease. As a practising artist this had a huge impact on how I conducted my artistic research. Prior to this my practice had been focused on developing my printmaking skills and collaboration. Life became a predictable routine with the majority of time spent in the home. The studio I use closed, as did my access to a physical library. With the desire to push ahead with my research, I had to find ways to diversify and expand my practice. This investigation will document how this experience led me to make changes and specifically the consequences due to constraints of location, access and freedom.

In Chapter One, I question the importance of creativity and also the role of a woman in the home. Giard argues that certain roles in the home are naturally fulfilled by women and this explains the conflicted priorities I experienced. (De Certeau, et al., 1980 p. 156) This leads to a comparison being drawn between an art practice and baking.

The following two chapters feature experimentation which explores my response to constraints of location, access and freedom. I detail my response to three national lockdowns and how they affected my state of mind and the impact this has had on my art practice. I discuss Michel de Certeau's theory of how coping mechanisms are inculcated by the use of strategies and tactics which demonstrates how change is effected. Throughout, inspiration and comparisons are drawn from the practice of Andy Warhol, who by an aesthetic act decided to 'ennoble' everyday items 'into the ranks of a work of art' (Honnef, 2000 p. 52)

In the fourth chapter I review 'How do we create art in a time of crisis?' a symposium by Amplify and compare my observations to four international artists that were interviewed. Revealing another way in which the pandemic has impacted my work, this being the lack of contact with others. A discussion with a visiting artist helps me to set one final experiment in which I conclude this exploration and aids in cementing a path forward by highlighting new opportunities.

## Chapter 1: A Creative Distraction

In this first chapter I examine the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic and the introduction of restrictions in relation to my creativity. Being an art student, used to having access to a studio with full facilities and printmaking equipment I was forced to make drastic adaptations and choices. To do this I examined the theories of Luce Giard, in relation to a woman being at home and the theory of Michel de Certeau concerned with behaviours in the home.

'The coronavirus is the biggest threat this country has faced for decades – and this country is not alone. All over the world we are seeing the devastating impact of this invisible killer...From this evening I must give the British people a very simple instruction - you must stay at home.' (Prime Minister's Office and Street, 2020)

This statement made by Boris Johnson, UK Prime Minister on 23rd March 2020 announced the first lockdown. News of the Coronavirus pandemic gripped the world, infection rates were rising and the daily death toll was growing. Non-essential businesses were forced to close, individuals were only allowed to leave home for essential shopping, medical needs and one period of daily exercise. Workers had to work from home and educational institutions closed. Life changed dramatically.

Prior to this I had planned to explore fine art printmaking processes and to look at ways to combine painting and printmaking. Also, having held a couple of collaborative exhibitions, I intended to deepen my enquiry into collaboration. With the studio closed and contact with others outside of my household banned, this was not possible. At home, I have no studio, just a small shared office, my kitchen and my garden. In the studio I am free to splash paint and use mediums that have a strong odour and high toxicity. Usually, my work is expressive, gestural and loose. When I paint I lose myself in the liquidity of the medium and enjoy the unexpected events that occur. When I draw I enjoy the feel of using charcoal and pastels utilising them to

construct large scale sculptural drawings. I naturally have a capacity for making a large quantity of art and I am open to new ideas. I am energised by people and my values are positivity, fairness and kindness. I am not a political person and I find conflict uncomfortable which means that I am not interested in communicating a controversial narrative with my work. With my familiar world transformed, life became an existential horror in which everyone had to learn how to live differently; creatively I felt lost and unsettled.

‘Creativity can be considered as a universal attribute, one of the factors through which we provisionally recognise what it means to be human...we can consider creativity as the manifestation of sentience’ (deSouza, 2018 p. 102)

Seven years ago, recognition of my creativity occurred by a move to Dartmouth, Devon, where the view and light inspired me to paint. In lockdown despite the view still being there I could not muster the interest to draw it, I felt unable and at a loss. Neurologist, Dr Oliver Sacks talks of loss as a deficit, a neurological disorder that affects the self. (Sacks, 2015 p. 6) For me, creativity needs both physical and mental space and I had no choice but to work from home. As a woman, working from home, the close proximity to household chores led to conflicting priorities. This view is supported by Luce Giard who wrote, regarding women, that household responsibility is considered a ‘birthright’ and an expectation that ‘these things’ must be done, ‘someone has to take care of them; this someone will preferably be a woman.’ (De Certeau, et al., 1980 p. 156) In frustration I wrote out a list of duties that were distracting me from being an artist. (Fig. 1)

‘Being an artist has to be something that one is or has (talent), combined with something that one becomes or develops and acquires (skills). There has to be the seed that sets one apart, but a seed that requires proper nurturing.’ (deSouza, 2018 p. 102)

Now nurturing my skills as an art student, not being able to attend college or use the studio was a problem that required a changed approach.

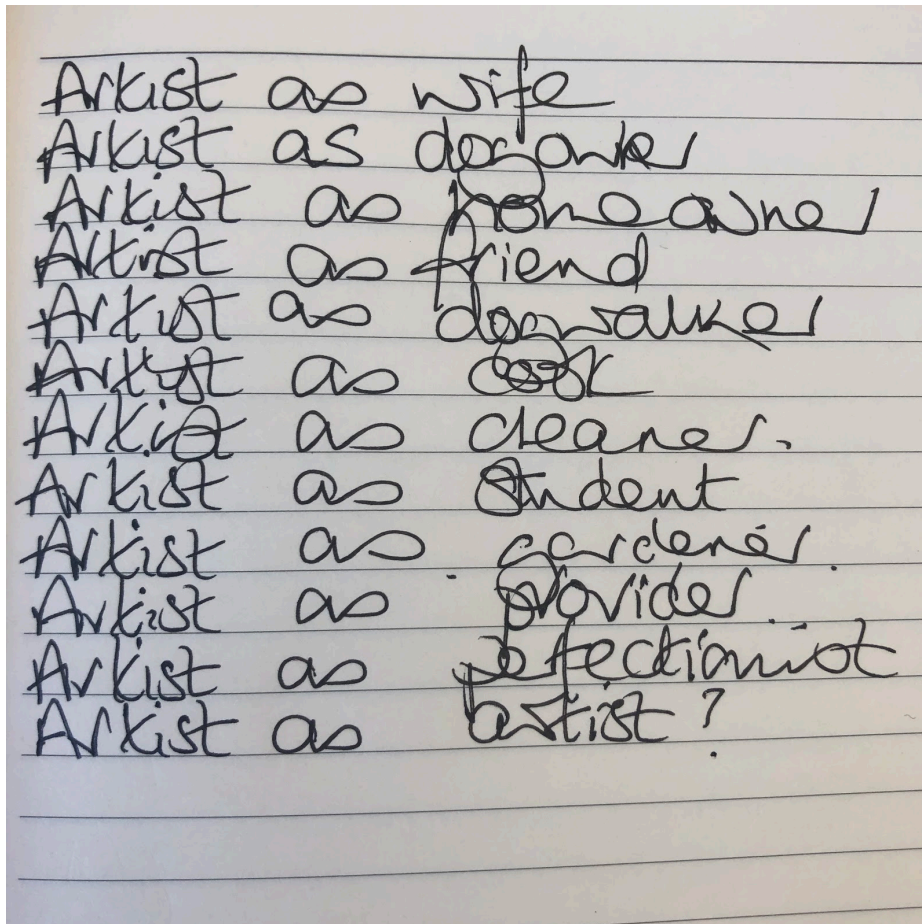


Fig. 1  
Notes in sketchbook by Sue Bown.

I have always had a propensity towards problem solving and my maxim for life is 'find a way'. I began baking sourdough bread, possibly a practical distraction. Giard pinpoints the cathartic nature of cooking saying 'the manipulating of raw material, of organising, combining, modifying and inventing...the tenacious pleasure of doing cooking'. (De Certeau, et al., 1980 p. 153) Sourdough bread is complex, it requires attention to detail and note-taking. By handling the ingredients I was gaining praxical knowledge. Barbara Bolt holds the view that praxical knowledge involves a reflexive knowing that imbricates and follows on from handling'. (Barrett and Bolt, 2019 p. 34) Similarly, note-taking has become a valuable part of my creative practice, it informs decisions and aids the refinement of the process. Whilst

baking felt like a frustrating form of procrastination, subconsciously I was embracing the role of an artist and using my kitchen as my studio. De Certeau describes the kitchen as the centre of our homes thus ‘..., this “warm room” where the family gathers, a theatre of operations for the “practical arts”, and for the most necessary of them, the “nourishing art”. (De Certeau, et al., 1980 p. 148) It could be argued that here I combined my creativity and my artistic skills to counter the problem of isolation.

## Chapter 2 - Finding a Way in the Everyday

In this second chapter I examine the impact of lockdown one. Primarily, the shift in behaviour as life became centred around the home, postulated by de Certeau's observations of domiciliary routines. I document steps taken to diversify my practice using everyday items to overcome the constraints being experienced. I detail a number of constrained experiments in which I visually communicate my feelings in a conceptual manner using forms of artist's books, inspired by the everyday theory and constrained writing experiments by Georges Perec.

Working at home meant options for creating art were limited. Michel de Certeau, in regards to the home, argued that 'As a general rule, in this private space one rarely works...'. (De Certeau, et al., 1980 p. 146) When this statement was written it was true, but it had become outdated as everyone had to work from home during lockdown. De Certeau also stated that the only work that does happen at home is cooking, cleaning and entertaining and this 'gives a human form to the succession of days...'. With face to face social entertainment not allowed, many resorted to online forms of connection; technology that was not possible in 1980 when de Certeau wrote his theory. Adapting to this new way of living, everyday life became a mundane routine. Shopping for essentials became a challenge with shoppers panic-buying and this led to shortages of everyday items such as toilet rolls and baking products. Considering the humorous side of this, I wondered how I could utilise these everyday items in my art practice.

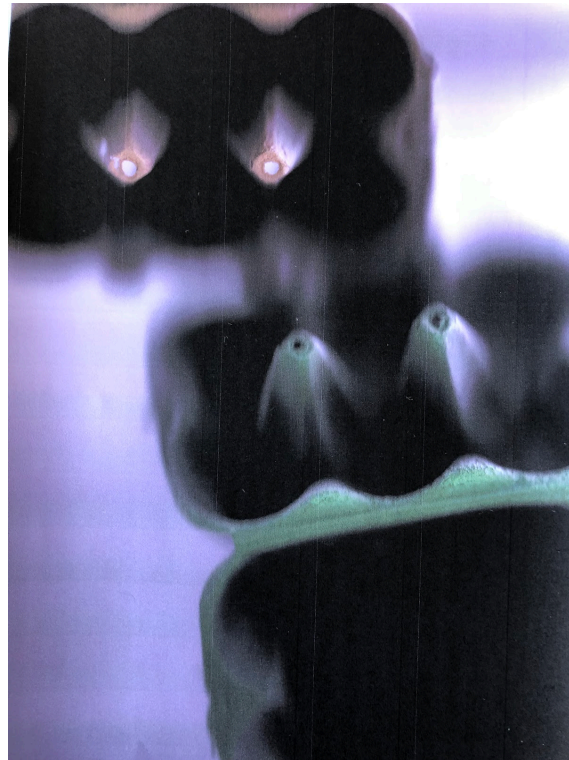
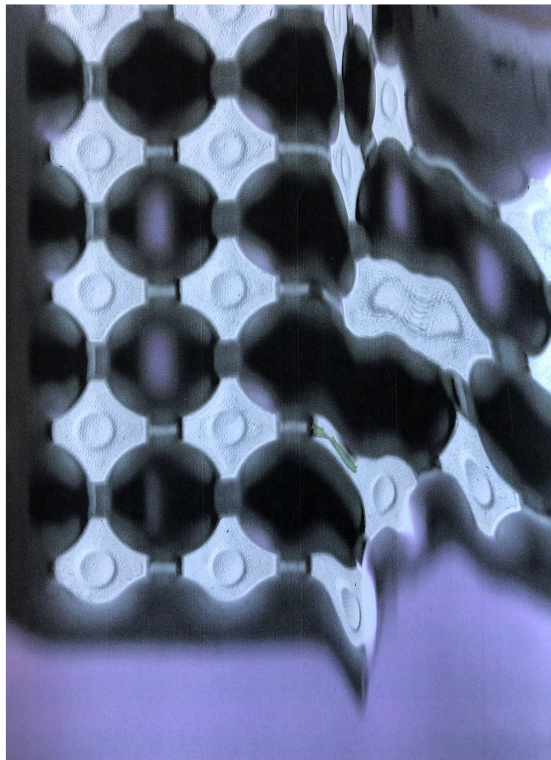
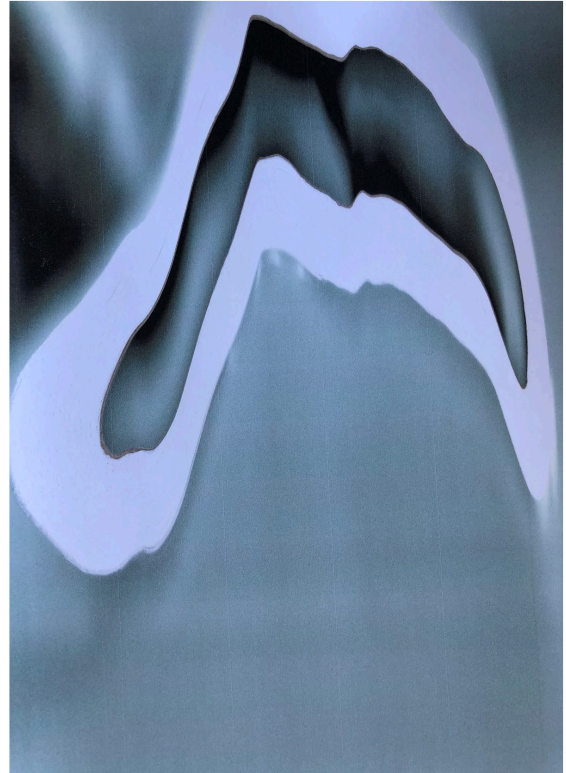
Everyday items have provided a rich source of inspiration since the early 20th century when Marcel Duchamp unveiled his sculpture entitled 'Fountain'. Made from a white urinal, this was an outrage at the time, but is now accepted as an iconic piece of modern art. (Holt and Skov, 2008 p. 15) This still inspires contemporary art practices as I observed when I visited the 2019



Venice Biennale, as many installations featured everyday items, including consumer goods and food. (see Appendix A) This visit sewed valuable seeds of inspiration, pertinent at a time when cultural events were cancelled due to the pandemic.

I then discovered Georges Perec, a member of the French Oulipo movement, a group of writers who purposely used self-imposed restrictions. They called this 'constrained writing' and used it to 'exploit the possibilities inherent in words' (Perec, 2008. Introduction xv/xiv) Taking this idea into consideration I added more constraints. Also, to comply with COVID-19 regulations and only shopping for essential items, I committed to only using art materials that I had to hand.

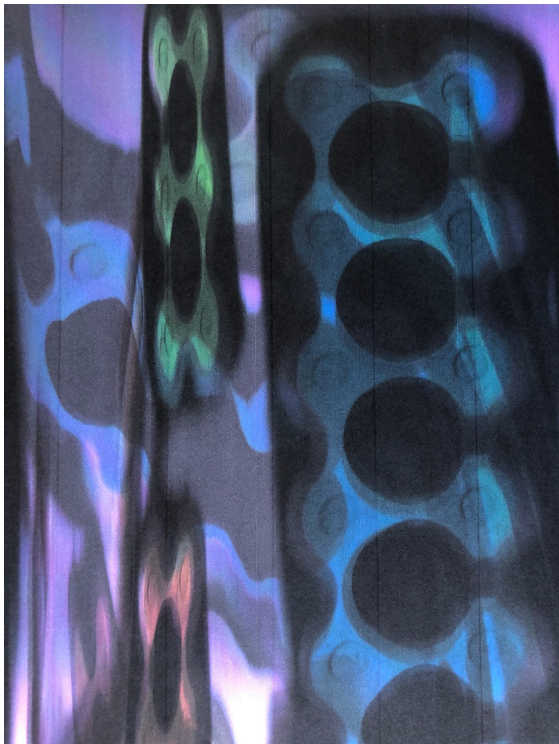
Already working under the constraint of no access to the printroom, I endeavored to find a way to continue printmaking at home. I researched many options and experimented with forms of watercolour monotypes, a process I had used before. However, I found this process was unsuccessful without a press. I had recently purchased a new printer/photocopier and having previously been introduced to scanography I realised it was a viable option. Scanography is a method of manipulating an item whilst photocopying which creates a monotype that has 'fine detail with a rather shallow depth of field'; a process derived from medical imaging. (VanDelinder, 2012) I used this to make a series of scanography prints using toilet rolls and egg boxes. (figs. 2a, 2b, 2c & 2d).



Figs. 2a, 2b, 2c & 2d  
Experimental Scanography prints using toilet rolls and egg boxes. A4 size  
By Sue Bown



Pushing the process, I experimented with different weights of paper and explored the photocopier's tonal settings. Layering the created images many times added ambiguity and depth. Pleasing unexpected colour combinations appeared giving these images a veiled abstracted appearance. (Figs. 2e & 2f). Georges Perec argues that the frantic pursuit of life distracts us from the 'infra-ordinary', the everyday familiar items around us. He states that by not questioning the habitual and not allowing it to question us, 'we sleep through our lives in a dreamless sleep.' (Perec, 2008 p. 210) By using this process I had discovered new options and had questioned everyday items that were previously invisible to me. Creating new images in this manner was a new development for my practice, and in being a response to a situation makes them more conceptual.



Figs. 2e & 2f  
Blue Print I & II  
Layered Scanography prints using egg boxes.  
A3 size  
by Sue Bown

Ideally, these abstracted images would have been taken into the print room to inform new work. With this not possible, I had to contemplate other options that were achievable at home. Previously, I had experimented with artist's books and enjoyed the haptic nature of the process. Linked to printmaking, book art is used to convey concepts in an abstract form 'that seem to aspire to something higher than their original function'. (Antaya, 2011 p. 18)

Contemplating how I could incorporate this, I created scanography prints with homemade bread and made prints with bread dipped into drawing inks. I combined the resulting prints with earlier prints into double-sided works on heavy paper and formed them into a series of deconstructed artist's books, representing my locked-in status and lack of access to a library. (Figs 3a, 3b & 4) Also, as part of a creative writing exploration I wrote a poem to act as a form of narrative.

#### **Who took all the books?**

How is the pandemic making us suffer, or are we forming this into  
the new?

When is a metaphor possible? Who chooses?

An emotional reaction to isolation, everyday items transgress our  
beings.

Form created for the future and generations to come.

Impact everywhere.

Conceptual catharsis abounds

Sculpture revealing landscapes, new realities.

Inspiration and expansion. Book.

Attention everyone, no...no...not me, this is you.

Our response to a psychological need.

Double-sided freedom, panic.

a...series of manipulations.

Books, artist, form of the unknown.

Land ourselves everywhere...

The vehicles of desire, the drive.

An unwitting theory of the deep.

Incoherence, a flow of shortages and excess.

Reconciliation...naturally...forever.

By Sue Bown



Fig. 3a  
Lockdown Box #1  
10x10cm box, bread crust printed outer containing a shredded essay.  
By Sue Bown



Fig. 3b  
Lockdown  
Box #2  
10x10cm  
box, bread  
crust printed  
outer  
containing 12  
ink and  
watercolour  
paintings.  
By Sue Bown



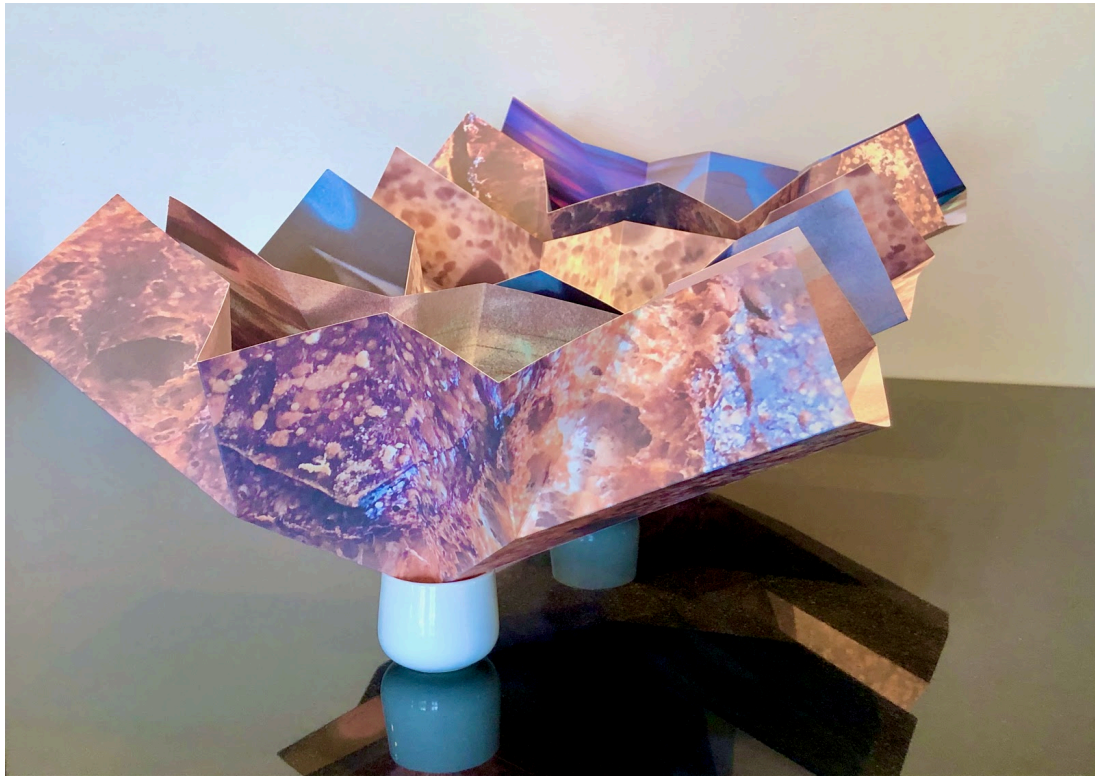


Fig. 4  
Sliced 1,2 & 3  
Three deconstructed artist's books.  
By Sue Bown

This series of folded work, with accompanying poem, forms an autobiographical memoir of lockdown one which depicts the compartmentalised time and holds the emotion experienced. Changing my location, with no access to the studio, and restricting options revealed outcomes with a more conceptual narrative and heralded a distinct visual change in my work. Similarly, Andy Warhol took everyday items and 'put them on canvas, artistically 'exalting' them and transferring them from supermarket to art gallery.' (Honnef, 2000 p. 53)

## Chapter 3 - Challenging Constraints

After the first lockdown, having adjusted to new ways of living, life settled. However, a seasonal surge in Coronavirus cases in the autumn resulted in another lockdown. In this chapter I examine lockdown two, using theory observed by Michel de Certeau. Then I detail experiments to explore the constraints of location, access and freedom to visually portray the everyday; inspired by elements of Andy Warhol's process. Finally, I detail an experiment inspired by Henry Ward, whose practice purposely varies by location.

Lockdown two began on 5th November 2020. This felt different as people were adapting to new ways of living and a vaccine was imminent. Michel de Certeau proposes that everyday life consists of a grid of practices and behaviours which he identifies as strategies and tactics: strategies being the big ideas we live behind and tactics being our 'ways of operating', small things that we do to deal with everyday situations and this is how we effect change. For example in the pandemic, the government declared a strategy of how we must live in order to counter the spread of the virus and to protect the population. De Certeau argues that gradually individuals develop their own tactics and modus operandi to live in the situation. Eventually these tactics subvert the main strategy, bring forth change and a new normal is established. (de Certeau, 1984 p. Intro xix) It could be argued that the gradual steps I took during lockdown one were tactics and in doing this I discovered ways to work and adjust. Limiting my choices had opened up new options and my work became more conceptual, a marked change in my art practice.

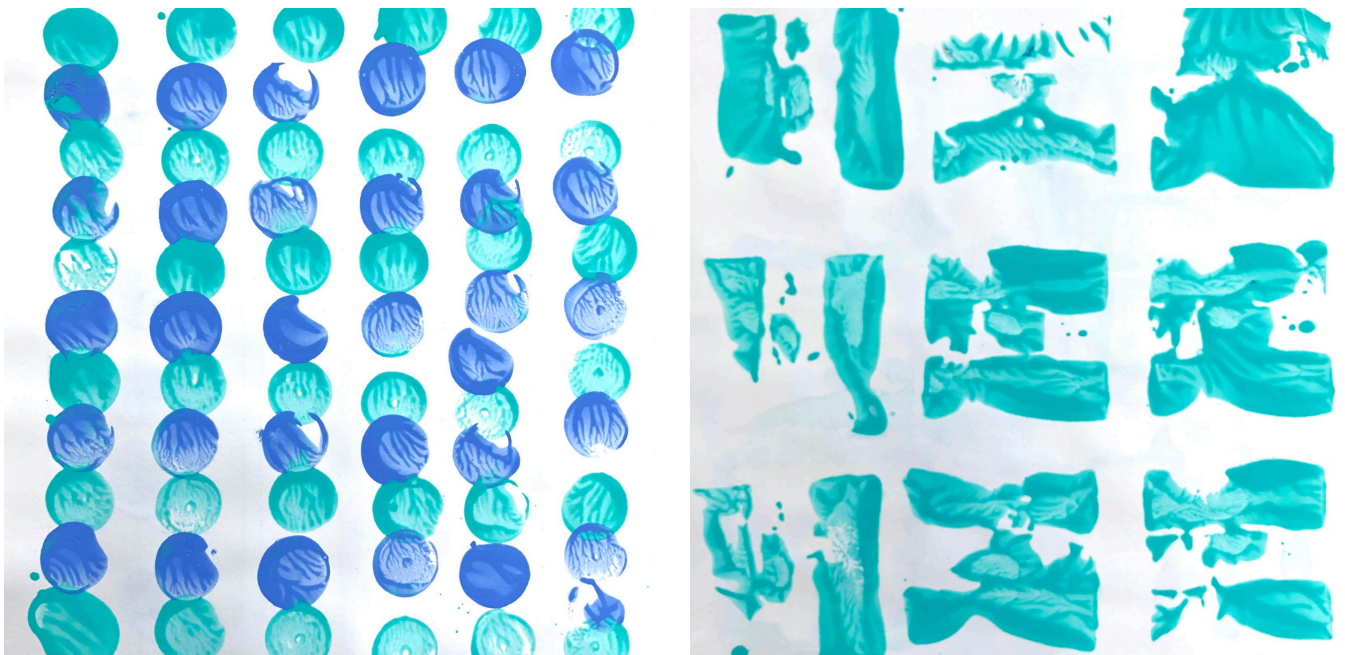
To develop my art practice further I made a mind map to understand what is important to me. (see Appendix B) This revealed the relevance of 'fun', an element that was absent due to raised anxiety levels. To overcome this I looked to Perec's (Perec, 2008 p. 210) suggestion to 'question your teaspoons', taking a light-hearted view of the trivial and thereby making them essential. To do this I opted to interrogate one item that was in daily use in my home, an oat milk carton.

My methodologies for a series of experiments are set out below:

### Experiment One: Constraints - One item

1. Oat milk cartons
2. Paint/paper I had to hand

Still seeking home-based printmaking processes I discovered that, in his early days, Andy Warhol made prints using a blotted-line technique, a crude copy and transfer process (Warhol, et al., 1989 p. 64) This seemed a playful process which I modified by utilising an oat milk carton to imprint shapes onto the paper with poster paint, which I chose as it is washable. (Figs. 6a & 6b) These bear resemblance to work I have made before. The right hand image (Fig. 6b) resembles abstracted landscapes, which could be used as compositions for paintings.



Figs. 6a & 6b  
Imprinting with poster paint.  
By Sue Bown

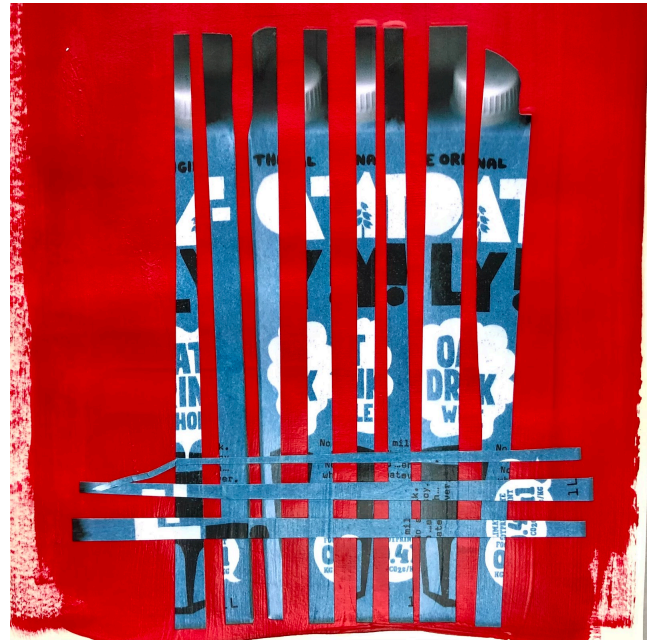
Continuing with the oat milk carton I made scanography prints and collaged these onto bright backgrounds. These reflect the repetitive nature of routine with my art practice mindfully interwoven into each day, the bright colour



added as an attempt to lift spirits. These reveal the nature of food available and consumed in 2020 and in future arguably could serve as a historical document. Similarly, Warhol's iconic Campbell's soup cans work (Fig. 7) 'tells us more about our habits than any other cultural testimony.' (Honnef, 2000 p. 50)



Fig. 7, Andy Warhol, Campbell's Soup Cans, 1962



Figs. 8a, 8b, & 8c  
Three paintings comprising scanography  
prints collaged onto coloured backgrounds.  
By Sue Bown



## Experiment Two: Constraint - The contents of the fruit bowl

Examining food regularly eaten, I made scanography prints with fruit. Having observed that prints varied depending on the ambient light in the room, I purposely controlled the light. (Figs. 9a & 9b) Here my photocopier developed a glitch and vertical white lines appeared, adding a dimension of movement and of the fruit falling. These prints have an appearance of bizarre 'still life', with the fruit looking out of context. (Figs. 9c & 9d)

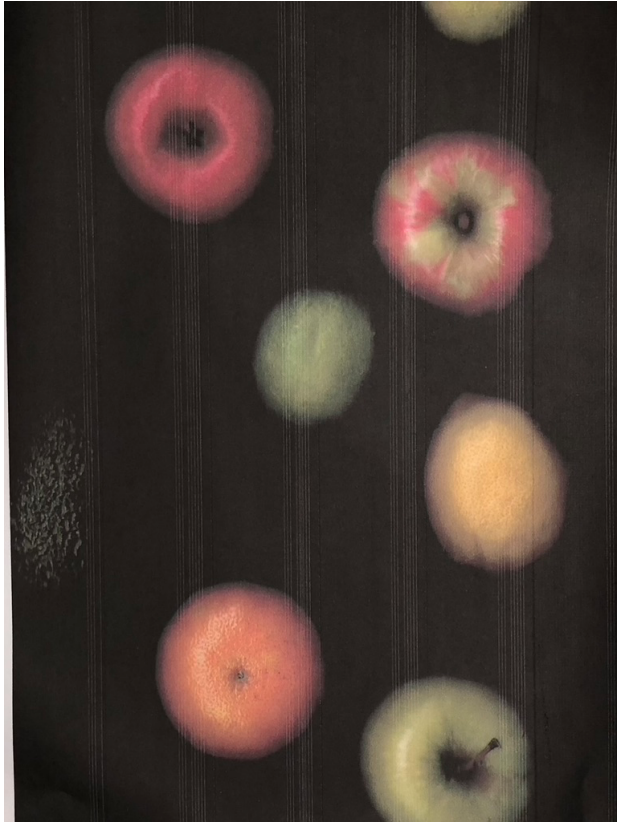


Figs. 9a & 9b

Contents of the Fruit Bowl,  
Scanography prints

A4 size

By Sue Bown



Figs. 9c & 9d

Contents of the Fruit Bowl,  
Scanography prints

A4 size

By Sue Bown

### **Experiment Three: Constraint by Location - The Garden**

At this point I wanted to further question the impact that location has on my work. Artist Henry Ward creates work in three different locations; the kitchen, shed and studio; and his work visually varies by location. (Francis, no date)

#### **My methodology and other constraints**

Oil paint in four colours, blue, magenta, cadmium yellow and white.

Four tools and four A1 pieces of paper.

Contents of a recycling bag tipped randomly on the deck.

These paintings bear similarity to work I have made before. (Figs. 10a, 10b, 10c & 10d) It could be said they show my artistic DNA and idiosyncratic style. Working outdoors rather than in my home enabled me to be gestural and expressive; freely using paint without the risk of spillage.

To conclude, these experiments demonstrated that I can produce a variety of work that visually communicates the everyday despite constraints. I have discovered that the more constraints that I apply the more options arise.





Figs 10a, 10b, 10c & 10d  
Experimental paintings using the contents of the recycling bag as inspiration.  
A2 size  
by Sue Bown

## Chapter 4: The Constraint of Space and Place

This final chapter focuses on lockdown three, when the virus became more transmittable. This raised anxiety levels and caused me to experience a creative block, which I investigate. During this time I encounter incidences of artists who have also had to diversify their practices. This corroborates my own experience and reveals solutions, highlighting another constraint of location, which asks new questions of my practice.

Lockdown three was introduced early in 2021, more virulent mutations of the virus were identified, severe restrictions were reintroduced for an indeterminate time, again we were only allowed to leave home for essentials and one form of daily exercise. Despite a countrywide vaccine programme being underway, the reality of life never returning to 'normal' was a concern. I did not have the same energy for creativity as I had in lockdown one where the adjustment felt a novel challenge. In a panel discussion entitled 'How do we create art in a time of crisis?' four artists were interviewed to examine the impact of the pandemic on their practices. (Schmidt, 2020) They all had experienced changes in creative activity, varying from energetic to concerned grief. Equally they had all diversified their practices through digital solutions. I reflected on the questions put to the panel to gain a deeper personal understanding. (see Appendix C) Two pertinent points were revealed. Firstly the relevance of being in the physical presence of other creatives. Whilst I had been in the presence of other creatives, this was via a screen and digital interactions do not replace a physical presence. De Certeau predicted such a situation,

'Social exchange demands a correlation of gestures and bodies, a presence of voices and accents, marks of breathing and passions, an entire hierarchy of complementary information necessary for interpreting a message that goes beyond a simple statement.' (De Certeau, et al., 1980 p. 148)

Secondly, in normal circumstances I would have shown my work in an exhibition where to prepare I would have spent time curating and evaluating my work. Also, I would have taken part in a face-to-face critique during which I would have received feedback and validation from others. This feedback would have helped me to interpret what I had created. Barbara Bolt identifies this relevance:

‘My failure to “realise” a painting according to pre-existing principles, and simultaneously the unraveling of my preconceived notions...were enabled by a movement from logical rational thought to material thinking.’ (Barrett and Bolt, 2019 p. 32)

These are further effects of constraint by location that I had not previously considered. Contemplating how to address these issues I had a conversation with Amalia Flarakou-Flari, Masters Printmaking student at the Royal College of Art. During the pandemic, she also had resorted to digital options of creation and display. She validated the relevance of scanography in an expanded printmaking practice. Her advice to address the constraint of location in which to display my work was that as my work had been inspired by and sourced within my home, to consider using my home to display it, something I had failed to contemplate. Perec (2008) argued that. ‘We live in space, in these spaces, these towns, this countryside, these corridors, these parks. That seems obvious to us...but it isn’t obvious, not just a matter of course. It’s real...’

To test the theory, I undertook a final experiment bringing together elements of earlier work and making art that visually communicated the everyday in response to this other constraint of location.





Fig. 11a  
Oat Milk Carton made from  
Bread Print.  
by Sue Bown



Fig. 11b  
Oat Milk Carton made from Bread Print, Displayed in my fridge.  
by Sue Bown

This paper sculpture is a full scale oat milk carton constructed from a bread print, and is displayed in my fridge as a specific location within my home. (Fig.11b) This communicates the everyday and is made in response to constraints of location, access and freedom. By locating this artefact in my fridge, I am conveying a stronger conceptual message representing the acute emotional response to an existential situation of being shut away and having to adapt to new conditions. Online visiting lecturer, Iain Andrews commented that 'Art reflects how the artist lives in the world, a part of the artist is present in the work.' (*Iain Andrews Talk\_29 Jan.mp4*, 2021) This led to one final realisation that this piece of work could arguably be a self portrait representing me at home, isolated, with my roles intermingled, battling to preserve my art practice.

This was my final practice-led research experiment but I can see other questions appearing that require further investigation. For example, can I make further site specific work? My original question, working under strict constraints has led me to see that rather than being constrained by a location I could now make work specifically for a location.

## Conclusion

2020 and the pandemic brought forth a deep shift in life and the appreciation of people and space. This phenomenological experience forced me to expand my home printmaking skills and investigate new ways to create prints outside of the studio. This in turn, led to recognising that within a home there is ample inspiration for an art practice. I have created work that is different, autobiographical, authentic and that communicates my inner feelings. During this investigation my home became my studio, I used materials and equipment I had to hand. Everyday items became tools for communication and I created work that was more conceptual. I found the more constraints I put on myself the more options appeared. I recognise that I can have freedom wherever I am, I can use creativity to alleviate anxiety caused by isolation and my creativity will always give me freedom. Location plays an important role in shaping the work I produce and is therefore relevant in the considerations made in planning future work. I discovered that I could not replace the physical presence of others and I realise that feedback and validation from others is important to me and helps to deepen my understanding of my work. I recognise that I have creative dexterity and my natural propensity to problem solve is a strength. I am now more critically engaged with my work and can use it to convey autobiographical meaning and a stronger narrative. With this knowledge I am confident that no matter how many constraints I put on myself I will always find a way. I am now seeing different questions evolve, such as how to make work that is site specific and also to seek other ways to access an audience.

'What's needed perhaps is finally to found our own anthropology, one that will speak about us, will look into ourselves for what for so long we've been pillaging from others. Not the exotic any more but the endotic.' (Perec, 2008 p. 210)

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## **Appendices**

- A. 2019 Venice Biennale. Examples of everyday foods used in art installations.**
- B. Mind Map representing ideas and themes relevant to my art practice.**
- C. My responses to questions asked during panel discussion ‘How do we create art in a time of crisis? What is it to be an artist now?’**

# Appendix A

## Visit to 58th Venice Biennale, November 2019

During my visit to this event I observed many examples of artists using everyday items in their work. Here follows two examples of installations using the theme of consumer goods and food.

### Market by Zhanna Kadyrova

This installation consisted of everyday food items, made from reclaimed materials, displayed in a market stall setting. (Figs. 1a & 1b) The artist, Zhanna Kadyrova, used these to depict consumerism in the art world and sought to create a new economy selling art by weight. I sensed the colourful items held a distorted representation of food. Particularly with the meat items and I felt a feeling of disgust and yet curiosity for the life-like creations in natural stone. (Fig. 1b).



Figs. 1a & 1b  
**Market (2017)**  
Ceramic tiles, cement,  
mirror, natural stone.  
By Zhanna Kadyrova



### **Pickle Juice Bar by Slavs and Tatars**

This exhibit used images of everyday foods in ambiguous settings to infuse a sensory experience by offering visitors to sample a sour smelling 'pickle juice'. The area was segregated with large walk-through curtains, which further played with the senses. (Fig. 2) I did not taste or see any visitors sampling the juice but the implication of the experience aroused a synaesthesia of visual taste. (Fig. 3)



Fig. 2  
**To Turn**  
By Slavs  
and Tatars

Photograph  
by S. Bown



Fig. 3  
**Brine & Punishment**  
By Slavs and Tatars

Photograph by S. Bown

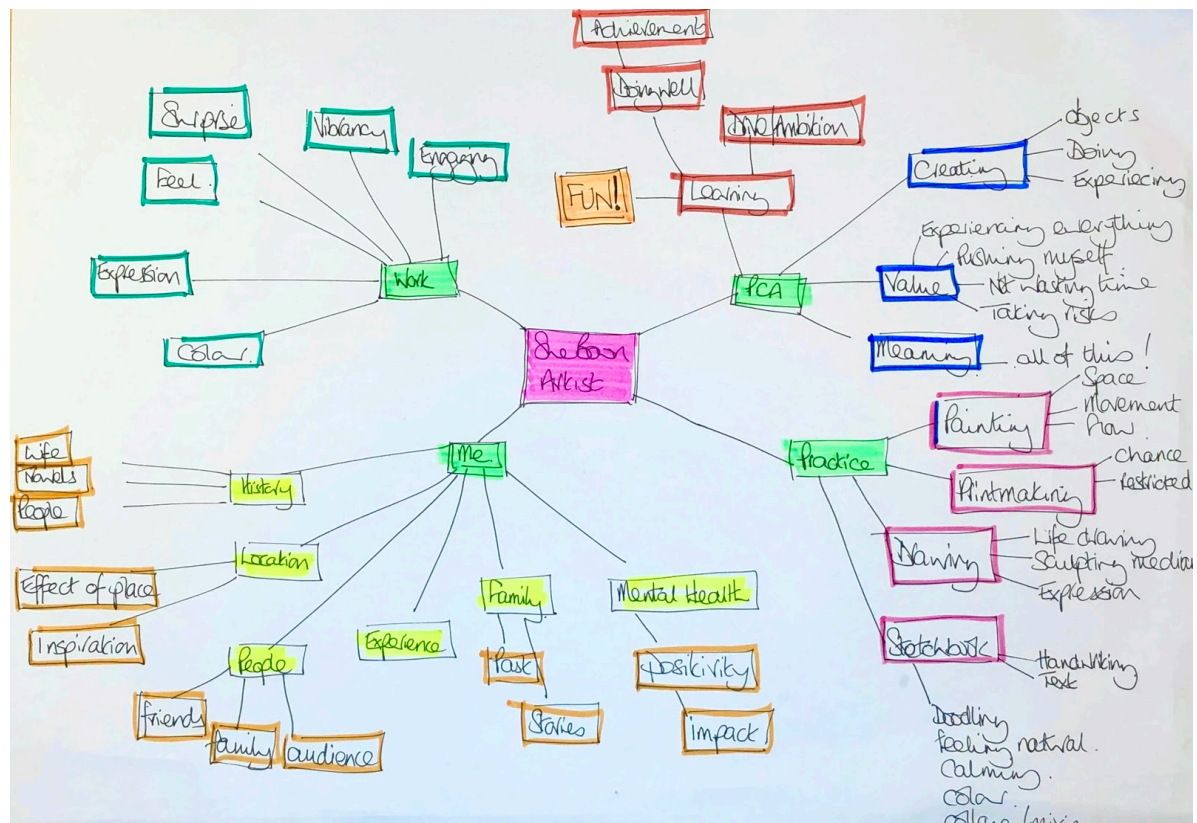


# Appendix B

## Mind Map representing ideas and themes relevant to my art practice.

I made this mind map to help me recognise ideas and themes that are relevant to me and my art practice. It also helped to serve as a document to detail areas that I have worked on and skills I have acquired.

On reflection I recognised that my art practice is inextricably linked to me. And a significant realisation was the notion of 'fun', something that when I get stuck I need to utilise to unblock myself and to advance.



## Appendix C

### **My responses to symposium 'How do we create art in a time of crisis? What is it to be an artist now?' (Schmidt, 2020)**

During this panel discussion four international artists answered questions about creating art during the pandemic. They are all performance artists and their responses showed a common theme of adaptation. I noticed a natural correlation between their practices and mine. I thought it would be useful to answer the same questions to help me with this investigation. It brought forth some realisations and enabled me to take steps to progress.

#### ***Q. Have you come to understand something about your creative health at this time?***

SB - My most productive period of creativity was lockdown one. Whilst it was tricky to adjust to a new location it was a challenge and a novelty. Now in lockdown three I feel my creativity is at a low ebb, the prolonged nature of the pandemic is unsettling considering the reality of life going forward. With news that lack of access to the studio will go on until at least Easter, I am feeling a sense of grief and raised anxiety. Also, I am missing being around other creatives and the shared creative energy.

#### ***Q. Do you have rituals that you performed before in the pursuit of creation, that have been upended or improved?***

SB-

#### **Rituals that have been upended**

##### **Location**

At home, I have no studio, just a small shared carpeted office, my kitchen and my garden. My natural style of work is expressive, energetic and loose. I have had to change my style of working to suit the location and work in a more controlled and considered manner. During the pandemic I have had to make work on a much smaller scale and in a more contained and constrained manner. I am not able to work with my familiar materials. When I paint I lose myself in the liquidity of the medium and enjoy the unexpected events that occur by taking risks in pushing the material to its limits. When I draw I enjoy the sculptural feel of using charcoal and pastels and use them to draw in a large scale expressive way. I miss this performative style of working and

getting my hands dirty. A ritual would be that I would show it to other people and receive their feedback and validation.

### **Access**

My printmaking practice has been severely curtailed. The studio I use has a wealth of presses and equipment, but I do not have a press at home. At the outset I researched the cost of a small press but I did not have a suitable space to locate it. My goal had been to refine and deepen my fine art printmaking skills and to investigate ways to combine printmaking and painting.

Printmaking without a studio/press tends to have an appearance of lesser quality without the embossed plate effect.

### **Freedom**

At home I cannot work with a painting on an easel, or have the space to take time to look at work and get feedback from other creatives. Freedom of movement to see people is a frustration for me.

### **Rituals that have been improved**

I have expanded my printmaking skills by investigating new ways to create prints outside of the studio. The scanography technique produced abstracted prints that altered the reality of everyday items. This site and time specific work represented a situation in my life, a phenomenological response and therefore more conceptual.

*Q. How have you by proxy built another audience?*

SB- I had an exhibition cancelled in July 2020, which I would have used to gain more local exposure to my work. This exhibition is usually held with two other more experienced artists and I value their help with learning the process of curation. Part of the process of exhibiting is a period of reflection and curating the work for exhibition, considering the best method to display the work and seeing the work in the space helps to view it with a new perspective. Also, seeing my work displayed amongst the work of others helps me to see and understand it in more depth. All of this has been changed by the lack of connection and social interaction.

One of the galleries that was exhibiting and selling my work has closed. Also, a gallery that had agreed to take some of my monoprints to an art fair cancelled the arrangement as they opted to not attend the fair.

During lockdown one, I photographed my work at home and it was a challenge to get the light and background acceptable so that it looked professional.

However, I have built a bigger online audience on Instagram as I sold a number of pieces of work using the Artist Support Pledge. This is an initiative started during the pandemic to help artists affected by closures of galleries and exhibitions.

*Q. Are there things that you will take away from this period?*

SB- I recognise that I have creative dexterity and that my natural propensity to problem solve is a strength. Also, that inspiration for art and to pursue an art practice is all around me. And I'm confident that no matter how many constraints I put on myself I will always find a way.