

The Placement Diaries: Week 20 - Getting Back on Instagram, Vision Boards, and The Labyrinth of the Mind

28th January 2022

I decided to get back onto Instagram after such a long time and it felt surreal to be back. Of course, I doubted my actions, but I had to do it anyway, just to see it how it'd go, and I still have mixed feelings about it, but then again, it's pretty much the de facto place for most creatives to be these days, so it'd be silly not to use it, even if the platform itself seems to be unethical since it favours those who post all the time in order to please the algorithm. However, that algorithm changes all the time, and you can't win with it, so I'm just going to try avoiding the metrics as much as possible, just posting things so that they're at least out there, albeit in a walled garden which I'm fairly wary about. I think that's the thing with seeing and knowing things because once you've seen and heard about them, you can't unsee or unhear about them, and whether it's a blessing or a curse, I'm not entirely sure.

Getting back on Instagram, and posting my illustrations, as well as connecting with other illustrators feels foreign but familiar at the same time. It's like going back to an old friend after so long, but also realising that you're no longer compatible with each other because you've both moved on. I feel alienated from other illustrators, like I've somehow outgrown that community for some reason. I don't know what to do, especially since their work doesn't really speak to me anymore as much as it used to, and this is pretty much with any of them. I find creative coding and generative art as creative discipline a lot more interesting, as well as feeling as though I can connect with those people more than I can connect with the illustrators. It's a funny feeling, and I think it's part nostalgia as well as growing up a bit. I feel shy on Instagram, especially now that I know that they're watching me, but how else am I supposed to get known? It's pretty much the paradox of wanting to be known, but not wanting to be perceived at the same time.

I also did a bit of vision boarding this week, where in short, I visualise my future. Creating it was the easy part since I basically crafted my ideal lifestyle out in front of me so that I could see it right there and then, but the hard part was to actually sit and meditate by visualising that future in my mind. I found it quite hard to visualise my future in that way, and I remember (in my mind) walking down a corridor which you'd see in a modern mansion. I couldn't quite close the door on the past. I wasn't ready to do it yet. However, the future further down the hallway had a door eerily similar to the one on 10 Downing Street, maybe it's because it's the door that I remember the most because I see it on the news all the time. So, I go in there and it's dark. I can't visualise a single thing at all in there. What does this mean for my future? I'm not entirely sure, and I think

it's because I'm currently dealing with a lot of uncertainty at the moment with where I want to go with this whole placement year. However, I did somehow manage to see a labyrinth, but no way to turn the lights on, so maybe this might be a metaphor for something that I'm currently dealing with at the moment. I call this labyrinth the labyrinth of the mind because it's pretty much where my mind is at in this moment of time.

The concept of the labyrinth of the mind is quite an interesting one to me, especially since it's something that I'm trying to do in the dark, where I've got so much options so that I pick one, fumble around with it in dark, crashing into walls and ending up in dead ends all the time, struggling to be able to get to the middle of that labyrinth to pick up the thing in that area, with that thing being something that I don't know about. I want to be able to get to the middle of that labyrinth, get that thing, and find my way out, but it's easier said than done, as I try to find my way through it, navigating through a lot of uncertainty to the the point where I don't even know where I'm going with this. Maybe it's a sign that I should stop living in my mind all the time, and maybe get out into the real world. I'm halfway through a placement year (or thereabouts), and I've still got my academic head on, especially since I know that I've got to do my final year straight after this, which is probably why it proves to be so hard to switch gears and to switch them back again.

However, the thought of my future being all dark and uncertain made me anxious because I don't know where I'm heading towards or how I'm going to get there, so my best bet is to just to do things and see what sticks instead of having to overthink every little thing, because trust me, that gets tiring really quick, and I'd like to move on with things at some point.

So, that's been my somewhat chaotic week, by trying to go back to old habits only to realise that the door is very hard to open, trying to force myself into something that really no longer fits, and realising that I'm trapped in a labyrinth with no light at all, so I'm just stuck, fumbling around in the dark, trying to do what I can, desperately trying to get to the middle in order to see what my thing is, although it seems a long way away yet, where there's no end in sight. Hopefully I get there soon, but when "soon" actually is, I'm not entirely sure. I think for now, I just need to give myself permission to do things without expecting them to take off, and to just do things for the sake of doing them by throwing everything to the walls and seeing what sticks. Going forward, I would try to consider some options and platforms that could potentially become an extra source of income for me, but for now, I just need to try to navigate this labyrinth of the mind.