**Artists Statement**

Marrying the colourful plastic of Punk rock and the affinity with nature of the environmentalist, I repurpose waste. My sculpture is playful and adventurous, as I enjoy the challenge of manipulating, transforming, and constructing with unconventional materials. Most everything I use is waste; from domestic food packaging and old clothes to discarded building materials and broken tents.

At the heart of my practice is a primal need to make and I work intuitively with the materials I find. Through collecting, experimenting, and assembling them I create forms which I find appealing. I want my work to be joyous and intriguing. My work takes up space and invites the viewer to participate in a journey of discovery as they explore the work and develop an understanding of the forms and materials and the dialogue that they find there.

I am inspired by nature, history and the cyclical nature and interconnectedness of everything. I am interested in Art as a vehicle for change. Art reflects the world that it is made in, it can bring people together and can help find creative solutions to problems. My work is confronting the issues of our time, but it asks more questions than provides solutions.

**Slide 3 Plantonic Solids and David Nash**

Platonic solids are said to be the building blocks of life and by using them as a starting point I can focus on the materials and what I can do with them.

My inspiration for this is David Nash who talks about making work with whatever he can find. For him that is natural materials but as housewife and mother I have been surrounded by the domestic waste that accumulates in the home and have chosen to face the challenge of using that. The photograph of my work in this slide is from a small community arts festival. The new age travellers of the festival scene, like the city squat culture, have always made use of what they can find around them, what other people throw away.

**Slide 4 Ancient history**

I relate to Mendieta’s search for identity and belonging through a connection to earth. The way she explores different elements while using a single form, the female figure, and how it relates to ancient Goddesses and the reverence for nature our ancestors had. I am interested in our ancient ancestors knowledge in relation to sustainable living.

**Slide 5 Sculpture and installation**

Barlow’s approach to sculpture is focused on materials, form and the occupation of space. How the work is presented, how it sits in the space is as important as the work itself. Her large scale work becomes installation as it dominates the space it occupies and creates a theatrical, immersive atmosphere that the audience is invited to explore. She often recycles work from one space to the next as you can see from the images in this slide. The top right photofrom the Royal academy show has shards coming from the wall draped with fabric and in the image to the left from the British pavilion in Venice four years earlier, similar shards are naked. These could be the same work presented in different ways dictated by the space. When displaying my work “Breakfast, Tea and Supper..” in Centre Celf in Llandrindod Wells, I had to consider that the room would be used for events and so hung it from the ceiling, but when it moved to the Climate change exhibition at Mid Wales Art Centre I was given an outdoor space which demanded a totally different approach. Unlike when the work was in the Gallery, when it was outside it created a lot of discussion around the problems of waste and issues around climate change as it was seen by many more people.

**Slide 6 Materials and the Femanine**

**Arte Povera**Italian art movement that challenged the norms of Fine Art in the 1960’s. It rejected the commercialism of Art and moved away from conventional materials and ways of displaying work making way for installation and conceptual Art practices.

**Marisa Merz** wife of Mario Merz was the only woman associated with the movement, she used unconventional domestic materials and craft processes, she worked in the home. She talked about there being no division between her life and her work as her kitchen became her gallery.

 After 30+years of keeping the home and raising children, the domestic is very much part of who I am and therefore at the core of my work and part of why I use domestic waste as materials. I also use my knowledge of traditional women’s crafts such as sewing and weaving, in my work. . My piece here is made from discarded tents left at festivals that were donated to refugees in Calaise. I made the work to highlight global wealth disparity and homelessness.

**Yin Xiuzhen** (top right)

When I saw Trojan at Venice Biennale in 2017 I exploded with joy as I explained to my father that the fashion industry created more pollution that the aviation industry. I was being too specific. Trojan and the accompanying “Nowhere to land” are about the climate crisis but more generally. I love the use of old clothes in her work. and it encouraged me to try and use my knowledge of working with textiles, upcycling clothes, into my sculptural work

Yin said she became concerned about environmental issues after her daughter was born and the plane symbolizes how it is everyones problem, we are all on the same plane.

**Slide 7** **Accumulation.**

By using a large collection of materials I am able to create forms which are unrecognizable as the original materials. As a strategy this is not only transformative but visualizes excessive consumerism.

Tara Donovan creates other worldly installations using mass manufactured everyday objects but Tatiana Wolska, like me uses only recycled materials.

 On the Irene Laub gallery website it describes “Tatiana Wolska is a “junk” collector. She watches her collection without any concept or plan. Being deprived of imagination she starts to join these elements, bind them together – out of sheer curiosity.”

This could easily describe my process of exploration and experimentation.

(https://irenelaubgallery.com/artistes/tatiana-wolska/)

**Slide 8 Punk and this project**

 My work, like me, is not quiet and unassuming, it is loud and in your face like Punk. The Punk aesthetic comes from the ‘Do It Yourself’ mentality, an instant, impatient, transformation which has a bright, brash, raw, unfinished quality.

When presented with hundreds of CDs I was attracted to the colours that reflect from their surface. I wanted to work with fabrics so I started by experimenting with ways to attach the CDs to fabric. Then I tried to manipulate the CDs so they became less recognizable. I was pleased with the luminescence of the blistering when I heated them and the flower like shapes that I achieved. There was a transformation of the plastic manmade into a beautiful natural form. By building with platonic solids I began to create an alien but natural looking form.

**Slide 9**

While making this work I was thinking about plastics the miracle material that has become a global problem. Not only harming animals in the wilds but as it breaks down into smaller and smaller pieces it has made its way into food and our blood stream.

When considering how to display the work I wanted to confront the viewer with the excessive accumulation of our consumption and visualize the breaking down and dispersal of the materials.

I then went on to think about where plastics come from and about how fossil fuels were formed. The world was a very different place then, an alien environment in which we would never survive But a fugus evolved to break down the lignin in trees and it all changed. We are now discovering fungus that breaks down plastic .

**Slide 10**

So I am thinking about this alien world where our survival would have been impossible and I’m thinking about mushrooms and cycles and the interconnectedness of everything. But my work looks like an ice cream. I was thinking floral but it didn’t quite work out like that. The presentation was a compromise in that the curtain of tendrils would have been more affective if it had been a curtain the viewer had to pass through to entre a potentially alien world. But considering the scale of the installation and the health and safety issues, I was happy with how it came out as a work in progress and I have learnt from the opportunity to exhibit it.

As the viewer tends to look for recognizable forms, I will endeavor to make the central sculptural form more recognizable as a mushroom in order to convey where my thought process was going. As I am so focused on the processes of manipulating the materials I can miss quite obvious things that present themselves. I need to take a good step back and view the work with new eyes in order to see what the viewer sees and progress accordingly.

**Slide 11 conclusion**

To have any real impact with my work I need to engage the public in a conversation around the subjects my work alludes to. This could be achieved through where and when the work is presented for example in a more public sphere as apposed to a gallery. I also aim, through my experimentation, to develop projects that I can take out into the community as workshops which will encourage a more creative attitude towards waste and a reassessment of the need for plastics in our everyday lives.

**Bibliography**

Harrison S. 2021 “Phyllida Barlow collected lectures writings and interviews. Hauser & Wirth.

Christov-Bakargiev C. 1999- 2014 “Arte Povera” Phaidon Press Limited

https://irenelaubgallery.com/artistes/tatiana-wolska/