

This presentation was made in response to Mark Dion's Thames Dig.

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Background - Mark Dion is an American artist born in 1961 and most known for his conceptual and installation works presented in a scientific manner. His work is heavily focused on the history of the world as well beliefs, and cultures prevalent in society.

"The job of the artist, is to go against the grain of dominant culture, to challenge perception and convention." - This appears to be one of Dion's most well known quotes and perfectly summarises his beliefs as an artist; to dispute and question the normalities of the world.

"Working in the studio, one would see an object in the middle of its life. I found that incredibly interesting."

Thames and Techniques - Mark Dion seems to not work with particular techniques, and overall his projects appear to be compilations of items. He collects, orders and exhibits objects from various locations or time periods in order to explore and convey history. He approaches the collection process like an archaeologist, documenting, analysing and cleaning each item he finds.

The objects tend to be displayed in the form of installations (in cupboards or boxes, on walls or trees).



The meaning of "Thames Dig" - Mark Dion began the project with the aim of exploring the history of London with a more unconventional method. He did that through found materials that are buried at the shore of river Thames at Bankside and Millbank. The objects collected range from clay pipes, oyster shells, lost photo IDs, plastic toys, etc. All the items are then arranged into a installation, he organised everything they found into categories and presented them according to location in a double-sided old-fashioned mahogany cabinet.

In this installation, people are invited to "create their own associations, to trace histories across time, not necessarily in a linear direction"

Our response - Upon seeing a woman's ID as part of the installation, we contemplated that "If we were to drop our IDs into the river right now they might end up displayed in this cupboard twenty years from now". This allowed us to actively respond to the artist's work when present in the museum. As we are all currently in London, and able to walk along the Thames river, makes us part of this place's history just as much as the rest of the items on display.

Link to video on google drive: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VbHt0duJb0S-bmChPY5IYjJ4KHf06X1V/view?usp=sharing> (cause it's too big for myblog)