Music Entrepreneurship Networking Assignment 1

 To prepare to network at the Alexander Brest Art Gallery opening, I thought of good conversation starters in advance. Some of these included “What about this piece interest you?”, “Why did you decide to come to the gallery opening?”, and “What do you think this piece is about?”. Additionally, when I arrived at the gallery, I spent some time analyzing the pieces on my own, so that I would be able to speak eloquently about them to others. Furthermore, I also had some conversations with people I knew first who weren’t in Music Entrepreneurship to help me loosen up.

I hoped that I would be able to hold a few short conversations with complete strangers and successfully practice triangulation, and I feel that I was able to do this. I found that the most effective method was approaching someone who was admiring a work of art by themselves and then asking them what they thought of the piece. This allowed me to build the conversation by agreeing or disagreeing with what they said and then adding on my own thoughts. However, because I didn’t have a deep understanding of the art at the gallery, I struggled to keep coming up with things to say about the pieces.

The most interesting thing I learned was from one of the artists. I approached him not knowing that he was one of the creators, and through the conversation learned that he had made the piece I was asking him about! I was able to ask him what certain things meant, and what his inspiration was, which was fascinating. This was also great because after my conversation with him, I was able to talk to others about the ways my original views of the pieces differed from what the artist intended.

Next time I do this, I will definitely do more research beforehand on the art and artists so that I have more specific things to question others about. However, I would be much better suited to do this exercise at a place that focuses on performance rather than visual art. In a place where I am able to discuss a performance with those around me, I will be able to not only understand the piece better, but I will have a wealth of knowledge of other pieces to draw comparisons with. Additionally, I will feel more comfortable because I will be confident in my ability to answer any question thrown at me. At the art gallery, I was a little scared that someone would ask me something about the pieces and I wouldn’t know how to answer.

Overall, I felt that I did well, but my networking technique could be improved upon. However, it was interesting to get out of my comfort zone and talk about things I don’t fully understand with strangers.