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Graphic Design

M4X01560

Jon Pugh and Martin Bush

Task One: (Jon Task) = 463 words

Task Two: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan task) = 499 words

Task Three: Manifesto (Julia Task) = 457 words

Task 1 - Jon Pugh-Reflective Writing: Do you know what you think?

Jen Bartel Metallica 2019 poster



(Bartel, 2019)

A reflection of Jen Bartel's poster of Metallica's Indianapolis 2019 show and how it impacts on equality in society.

The artwork is a concert poster for the heavy metal band Metallica designed by artist Jen Bartel. Heavy metal music is typically presented with dark and gothic colours and symbols, there are a lot of uses of fantastical elements such as magic or mythological creatures and black, red and silver colours. This design has kept the fantastical elements of magic and myth to maintain its connection to the genre, but instead of the typical moody blacks and reds there is a mix of bright orange and pink allowing the poster to stand out completely against others of its kind.

Over the past decade the continuing growth of empowerment movements such as Gay Pride and #MeToo have influenced the way society treats previously discriminated groups. Jen Bartel's work is designed to reflect this growing trend of equality by combining the gothic metal imagery typically associated with a more masculine audience and the range of bright, near fluorescent colours attributed to more feminine stereotypes and used in LGBT iconography. Bartel's use of colours seems to have been influenced by the media surrounding the time of her upbringing. "for me that's everything from the late 90's/early 2000's, so I tend to pull influence from things like Lisa Frank stickers, anime, JRPG game art, 90's punk and grunge fashion, etc." (Puc, 2017)

this has been expressed in the form of a neon near psychedelic rainbow of colour that is reminiscent of the media forms listed by Bartel in her interview with Rogues Portal.

The central figure of the artwork is a woman wielding powerful magic and a huge scythe while riding a flaming horse, she is presented in a way that shows her as powerful and strong while remaining feminine rather than being just

something pretty to look at. Bartel stated in an interview with SyFy Wire about her work “I try to be very mindful [that] my female characters are drawn in ways that are empowering. In my mind, there is plenty of room for sexy characters, as long as it makes sense for the character and they appear to have agency.” (Horne, 2018) At a surface level Bartel designed it this way to expand Metallica’s audience by attracting a female demographic. But looking at a deeper meaning the woman is being used as a tool of empowerment for women, showing that women can be these strong powerful figures and enjoy these dark gothic sounds just as much as men can.

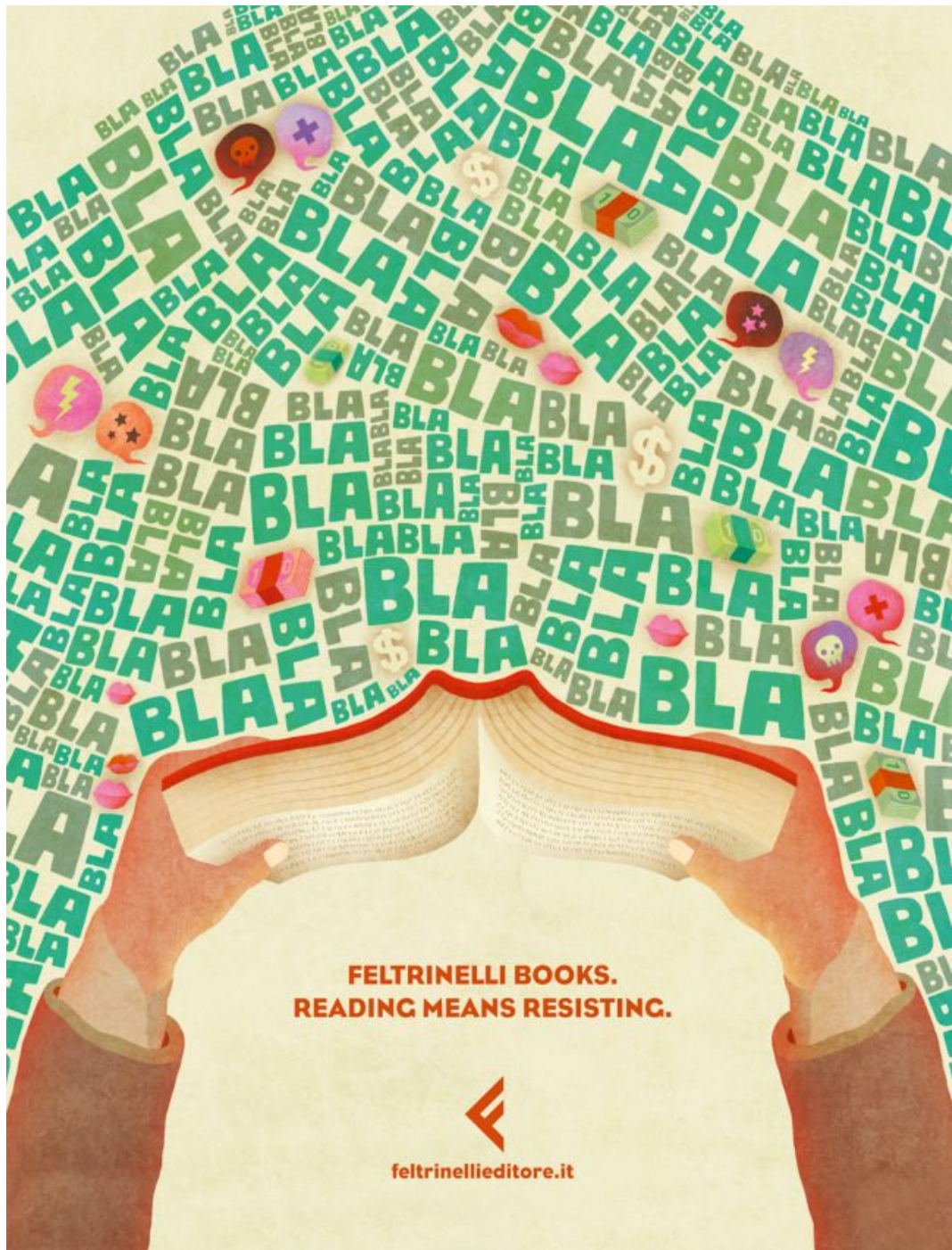
The use of specific colours influences a person’s reaction to a piece of art as much as the imagery displayed in it. The depiction of a powerful woman is reflective of society’s changing attitudes towards equality.

Bibliography

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- Horne, K. (2018). *INDIE COMICS SPOTLIGHT: JEN BARTEL TALKS BLACKBIRD, SAILOR MOON, AND WHY WONDER WOMAN IS EVERYTHING*. [online] syfywire. Available at: <https://www.syfy.com/syfywire/indie-comics-spotlight-jen-bartel-talks-blackbird-sailor-moon-wonder-woman> [Accessed 30 Dec. 2019].
- Puc, S. (2017). *Interview: Jen Bartel Talks Artistic Process (and Lisa Frank)*. [online] roguesportal. Available at <https://www.roguesportal.com/interview-artist-jen-bartel/> [Accessed 30 Dec. 2019].

Task 2 - Ryan Moule-Observational Writing: Identify an image and write a semiotic analysis

Tita poster for Feltrinelli - 2012/13



(Tita, 2012)

A semiotic analysis of the bookstore Feltrinelli's 2012 "Reading Means Resistance" advertisement and how it relates to the world in 2019 as compared to the year of its design. Semiotics are defined by the Merriam-Webster Dictionary as "a general philosophical theory of signs and symbols that deals especially with their function in both artificially constructed and natural languages and comprises syntactics, semantics, and pragmatics". Using semiotics, the denotations and connotations ("Denotation is the literal meaning of the picture, while connotation focuses on the underlying message or feelings it contains." (Duncan, 2015)) of this advertisement can be discovered.

Depicted in the advertisement is a person holding a book straight out in front of them, behind and around the book is a stream of the word "Bla" repeated over and over again. In amongst the words are various symbols, dollar signs, stacks of money, lips and speech bubbles with skulls and stars. The stream doesn't fill between the person and the book almost like the book is acting as a shield from all these words and symbols. In this white space is instead the words "Feltrinelli Books. Reading Means Resisting" and a link to their website. This phrase when taken literally is saying that by reading a book from the person is able to resist the overflow of assorted symbols and words.

Looking past literal meanings for what's being shown we can take the stream of words and symbols to be a representation of the daily things in life that bog us down effectively being the "white noise" of life. The various symbols in the stream could be seen to stand for some specific things that tend to cause people stress, the dollar signs and money piles representing financial worry, the various speech bubbles being seen as exhausting social interactions and the lips meaning love life issues or the beauty standards we hold ourselves to.

The main strapline “Reading Means Resisting” can be taken as resisting the daily struggles of life and escaping into a fantasy to relax and enjoy ourselves for a time, the white space between the person and the book supports this thinking showing that the person is too engrossed in their book to worry about the stream of information.

However, with the rise of misinformation being spread through unreliable news outlets and social media, we can look at this advertisement in a different light today than we would in 2012 when it was first designed. The stream of info could be taken as a representation of this misinformation, and the main strapline now being interpreted as reading and researching yourself will give you the knowledge to resist the spread of misleading and harmful information.

It is interesting to see how an advertisement like this can be interpreted differently with the context of the current events that impact our perception of the world and the interpretation will change as our perception changes in the future. Semiotics being the tool with which to show these changes between the interpretations.

Bibliography

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Tita (2012). Feltrinelli Books. [image] Available at: <http://www.titamilano.com/feltrinelli-201213> [Accessed 30 Dec. 2019].

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Duncan, H. (2015). Image Analysis: Connotation and Denotation. [online] Medium. Available at <https://medium.com/film-stories/image-analysis-connotation-and-denotation-a925d67ec1cc> [Accessed 2 Jan. 2020].

Task 3 - Julia Lockheart-Manifesto Writing: "What do I believe in?"

1. Work in a way that I enjoy
2. Use bright colours and bold letters when possible
3. Avoid designing for and promoting harmful people and groups
4. Take influences from people, places and things everywhere I respect not just my practice
5. Be open to changing my process and not becoming rigid
6. Continue learning and improving to not become stagnant
7. Try to convey personality in my work to avoid things looking dull
8. Create work that promotes positivity and fairness wherever possible

Keyword 1: Positivity and Fairness

“Create work that promotes positivity and fairness wherever possible”



(primipil, n.d.)

Creating artwork will leave behind meaning to be interpreted by the viewer whether intended by the artist or not, how we choose to display aspects of life in art can make people feel different emotions or see the world in a different light if only briefly. As artists we should be striving to leave the viewer with a positive experience (even if it elicits what most people would consider negative emotions) and a view of the world that promotes fairness and equality, because by presenting people of all different backgrounds in powerful and positive contexts, art can help inspire others to create and succeed in their own way. Inspiration is one of the best tools artists have for helping to shape the world and using it to spread fairness and positivity amongst people is very important.

Keyword 2: Influences

“Take influences from people, places and things everywhere I respect not just my practice”



(Unknown, 2013)

Looking to other people working in the same fields as us for ideas and inspiration is a natural part of creating art, seeing another person's way of doing things can often help us understand how to create solutions to problems or just add some needed flavour to a piece of work that was lacking something. However inspiration isn't just limited to our fields in particular, any piece of art from any existing field can help us re-shape our thinking or inspire us to create work that elicits a similar feel, limiting ourselves to only looking at our direct peers helps stifle creativity over time instead of blending techniques and styles of different medium's to create innovative new artworks. Even beyond the realm of art the world offers plenty of things to be inspired by from simple

landscapes or the current weather to even a person's reaction or personality, inspiration can come from anything at any time so we shouldn't be afraid to embrace it and work in brand new directions.

Keyword 3: Personality

"Try to convey personality in my work to avoid things looking dull"



(Sykes, 2019)

When creating art for someone else we as artists have to be able to tailor our work to the client's needs, otherwise they won't be satisfied with what they're paying for. But if we only take the client's view into account why should they hire us individually over any other artist? To allow our work stand out in a market full of capable peers we need to be able to put some of ourselves into our creations, so that when somebody asks us to work for them it's because they want our unique take on their ideas and they want to see how we implement their vision. Without putting at least, a little bit of ourselves into our work the art loses that magic touch that elicits an emotional response from the viewer, which is why we should always strive to put some of our personality into our creations whenever possible.

Bibliography

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