



MANIFESTO WRITING

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Design Crafts (MDES,BA)

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- ✚ It is my aim to allow people, regardless of age, gender, cultural background, or physical ability, to experience art through any of their five senses.
- ✚ It is my aim to provide individuals access to the nature around them and to allow them to express themselves in as many ways possible.
- ✚ It is my aim to encompass all aspects of nature and deliver this experience to all people with varying abilities, through art.
- ✚ It is my aim to develop creative talents of the future, by giving individuals a way to experience and interpret mother nature and all that is around us.
- ✚ It is my aim to create enterprise and pools of talent that can be used to motivate the masses.
- ✚ It is my aim to open up less fortunate communities through the medium of art and give individuals a way to showcase their talents.
- ✚ It is my aim to empower and give a voice through art and nature, to those not confident enough to communicate their thoughts.

Introduction

This manifesto has been created by Charlotte Marston, with the aim of bringing people together through arts and its mediums. My manifesto incorporates the Japanese art of Wabi Sabi, a Japanese *'philosophy that embraces three basic realities of the material world: 'nothing lasts', 'nothing is finished', and 'nothing is perfect'.* (Tsaknaki and Fernaeus, 2015)

Wabi Sabi

"A Japanese aesthetic ideal and philosophy that stresses imperfection as the basis for harmony"
(Orgad Yariv, 2016).

Wabi sabi is a centuries old Japanese philosophy, derived from Buddhist Zen, where an individual is encouraged to be in solitude within nature and to appreciate all that nature has to offer. A place where one can seek, explore, and embrace the flaws and irregularities within nature. It is a philosophy that identifies that nature is not all symmetry and perfection but also identifies that the empty and dark spaces in nature can be just as beautiful as the outside spaces that we can see. Wabi Sabi teaches us that art is not all about the pretty, or the attractive but the rustic and organic nature around us.

Natural items such as wood, grasses, leaves, water, mud and even some metals can be seen to change over a period of time. This change can be the opening of a flower, the changing colours of leaves during seasonal changes and the textures of rust through the stages of decay and weathering.

Wabi sabi encourages individuals to break from the constraints and demands of society and encourages us to embrace nature as we understand its transience and to identify our role within nature itself. It encourages us to discard the materialistic consumption around us, to become free of judgements and to embrace the impermanence of nature.

It is this approach that fits best with my mission statement and manifesto of my work, as it allows people time, space and opportunities to embrace and empower their own uniqueness, as well as to provide an environment that is free from judgment, whilst also giving people the opportunities to see, touch, feel, smell and taste, in order to express themselves.

It is my aim to provide individuals access to the nature around them and to allow them to express themselves in as many ways possible.

Too many people live in relative poverty, with different abilities, with dependencies, mental health concerns, or with misinformation about art itself. It is these people in society that my manifesto is aimed

towards and how nature can be brought together and translated in to art on many levels. To empower people as individuals and to encourage a community of non-judgement and empathy.

By stepping out of our door, we can hear the birds sing, see the formations of clouds in the sky and see the prisms of light formed within a rainbow. We can feel the wind on our face, feel the texture of bark on a tree and we can take in the smell of freshly cut grass. It is this feeling that we can translate into many art forms and reach an audience with many ways of reading and interpreting the feeling of the artist at that time. Wabi Sabi allows artists the opportunities to 'feel' the world around them and create work that is as unique as they are.

It is my aim to develop creative talents of the future, by giving individuals a way to experience and interpret mother nature and all that is around us.

I want to create a community of harmony and understanding through art and creation. To allow empathy and understanding to run freely and where there is no judgement or divisions. To encourage social change towards those unable to communicate verbally and to empower those who wish to showcase their talents. The underlying art of Wabi Sabi allows us to embrace the flaws and irregularities of nature and allows us to identify and address that we, as humans are also unique.

It is my aim to empower and give a voice through art and nature, to those not confident enough to communicate their thoughts.

I want to encourage reflection, to see and feel mother nature and to interpret this into creations. I want to create a community where there could be an alternative way to intrigue and perplex viewers of their art and creation.

I want my work to encourage, motivate, and inspire those less fortunate to seek an avenue in which to express themselves. To bring art, crafting and design to the public eye and give every person the chance to express themselves and showcase their talent to others, regardless of age, gender, physical ability,

and social position. I want to provide a place where people can come and explore their uniqueness and produce work that encapsulates their own uniqueness and personality.

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- All photographs, artists own.

Introduction

Semiotics is the analysis and interpretation of signs. Roland Barthes (1972) broke this down further and identified two orders of signification: Denotation and connotation. Denotations is the obvious, most common sense meaning of the sign, whilst connotation is finding the deeper, more hidden (subjective) meaning. This can be based on:

- The sign
- The feelings or emotions of the viewer
- The value of the viewer's culture

This involves the signifier (the sign itself) and the signified (what the sign refers to).

This is especially important in the arts sector, as it influences the way on which we see art and the message that the artist may have been expressing at the time of their work.

Figure 1 shows a simple breakdown of denotations and connotations that can be found within a picture and how we, as viewers can find hidden messages that the artist is subliminally sending.

Denotation	Connotation
Dirty floor	Unclean, broke, bad lifestyle.
Expression	On drugs? Drunk?
Pose	Fallen down (possibly due to drugs and drinking)
Underwear	Prostitute? Stripper?
Feet	No shoes. Not enough money to buy shoes? money spent on drugs instead? Been walking around for awhile with no shoes on to get that dirty.
Contents of the room	Empty. Not alot of money to decorate or buy furniture? Doesnt care for material things. Squatter house?

Figure 1.



Figure 2. <https://evergrowfertil.com/fertilizer/fast-grow/>

I have taken an advert for an agricultural fertilizer and aimed to break down the denotation and connotations within the advert itself.

The advert (figure 2) portrays (denotation) a large muscular arm. It bears similarities to The Incredible Hulk, with well-placed vegetable leaves, portraying veins and muscle structure, signifying strength, power and masculinity. With its own uniqueness, it can also be seen as a coat of arms.

The fact that this arm is green, its connotation can signify many things, such as nature, plants and trees. Green also represents the season of spring, where there is rebirth and growth. Other common affiliations with the colour green symbolise good luck, health, and good fortune. The UK's Health and Safety Regulations 1996, state that signs to identify fire escapes and site safety, must be in green and therefore many people associate green with safety and security.

Green signifies envy and jealousy, so this may signify that those not using this fertilizer would be green with envy. Therefore, the purchase and use of this fertilizer would bring the user a strong and healthy product, to sell on at a premium price. Green can also have an association with taking action, such as a green traffic light.

The words 'Natures Vitamins', also in green, implies that the fertilizer is naturally sourced, with no harmful chemicals. When looking at the breakdown of the fertilizer, it contains total nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium (Evergrow.com), all of which are beneficial to the land but are not organic when manufactured on this scale.

The colours are clean, block colours with no trace of dirt, or wear. The leaves are all perfect, with no damage, which can be seen as purity. There is also a mix of species in the leaves, showing that the fertilizer is adaptable, even to the smaller and more delicate vine of leaves through the arm itself.

There are dew drops on the arm, which looks like sweat, signifying that the fertilizer works hard, maybe harder than its competitors.

The background shows a serene and tranquil sky in gold tones, an ideal weather condition for agricultural industries. It conveys a feeling of relaxation, where the farmer could put their feet up and let the fertilizer do all of the work.

It is an advert that is solely directed towards a male dominated agricultural industry, (which is rapidly increasing in female farmers. The advert has positive connotations, giving the overall message that that use of this fertilizer will increase and improve the yield and produce stronger, healthier products.

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OBSERVATIONAL WRITING

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Figure 1. Wooden Toadstools (antonandk.co.uk)

Figure 1 shows some wooden toadstools that I have used for inspiration. They are made from aged wood, possibly oak, or yew. The tree itself tells a story, one that is potentially hundreds of years old. It has seen many seasons, many generations of families and had many animals nesting within it, or using it as shelter.

When managed well, wood is a sustainable source of material. One that can be crafted into many functional pieces, as well as decorative.

It is natural, organic, and unique in its formation, patterns, and notches. Within art, because of its age, it is treated with respect, those natural blemishes are kept as part of a story, purposely identified, often enhanced and used as features. It is a way for the story of the tree to be passed from generation to generation, allowing the tree to continue living.

It is also a way for the viewer to escape into their own imagination. A way for them to imagine the trees story, it's history and how they, themselves can continue with a new, or enhanced story of their own.

It is for this reason that I enjoy working with wood, as there are so many ways in which it can be perceived, read and embellished for future generations.

I love working with wood, as this enables viewers to imagine a story, to imagine where the tree came from, how old it is, what it has seen in its lifetime and what it has become. The cracks and notches can show how the wood may have been stored, what may have nested within it and how the wood may have changed over the years.

I have a passion for using reclaimed wood, such as old railway sleepers and timber within my home and can often feel a character within the wood. One that may have been repurposed several times and one that can tell many stories. Wherever possible, I try to gather as much history as I can about the wood, or original photographs, as this allows the story to continue.

There may be myths and legends already associated with the wood and where it came from, so it is always good to continue to respect those and to maybe enhance those stories within further creations.

We are living in an era where these stories passed through organic material, where they are expected and respected, so it is my duty as an artist to continue with this method.

Bibliography

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