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Ryan's Task:

Semiotics

Semiotics is where you behave and think in a way automatically without questioning it as it has been coded into your brain since a young age. We behave this way as we are taught to do and act in a certain way by observing others and learning. For example, we are taught that red is a negative colour and can mean danger or stop and green is a positive colour associated with go, safety and nature. However, in other cultures, people are taught that red is a positive colour and associated with happiness, joy and celebration.

Once we are brought up to behave in a way, we find it difficult to think in any other way. This causes us to not realise hidden subjects in life and become blind to things that are not what they appear to be. For instance, a simple lecture theatre writing desk may appear to be made of wood and looks like wood though in reality it is not, it is a plastic picture of wood vinyl glued onto a block shredded wood pieces (Ryan Moule, 2019)

Some people believe that the government use semiotics as a way of controlling the public's behaviour for example placing fake cameras in public areas so that people feel like they are being watched and therefore behave in a way beneficial to the government. Advertisements do this to make you buy their products. Advertisement companies will subconsciously entice you

without you knowing. They can do this by adding an attractive person who casually mentions the product. This makes you feel like you will be like this person if you use the product they use and then the product becomes more desirable. In some ways this takes away from peoples free will.

In conclusion, semiotics can hold a heavy influence of our everyday lives.



Figure 1

This image is a still from Arcane Roots song "Curtains".
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4U-WoT9IAuU>
accessed 3rd january 2020

This image gives me an impression of an otherworldly, atmospheric, abstract aesthetic.

I believe the dark blue undertones give a spacey vibe as the earth's atmosphere appear this colour which is in space. As well as this the alien beams of light heading out gives me the feeling of a new entity unearthing from below the surface, hence the cave setting.

The green gives off a sense of nature, a subject often associated with peace and harmony, as to be at peace is to be "one with nature".

The song also gives an impression to support the futuristic atmospheric style as the song mainly consists of a range of synths that start the song, as the song progresses the instruments crescendo and more organic instruments appear such as acoustic piano, orchestral elements such as strings and guitars. This gives me the feeling like the alien like synths are rising up and becoming organic and one with nature. Much like the image.

In conclusion I believe this image portrays exactly what the artists wanted and gives the otherworldly yet organic vibe to the image with the use of clearly edited unnatural beams of futuristic alien light set in a scene or pure natural grass and organic rock setting. When observing the image with the music as opposed to without the music my understanding of the image has changed and I feel differently towards it.

Julia's Task:

My beliefs, work and practice

1. No idea is wrong.
2. Anything can be made to sound good.
3. If you run out of ideas, create new ways to be creative.
4. take time out of your practice to seek inspiration from life and events going on around you.
5. Don't care what other people think, make music that makes you happy, not others.
6. Express yourself and add your own character and emotion into your creations.
7. Use different cultures music and genres, don't get stuck in one genre.
8. Imagination is everything, it is a preview of my dreams and goals.

“If you run out of ideas, create new ways to be creative.”

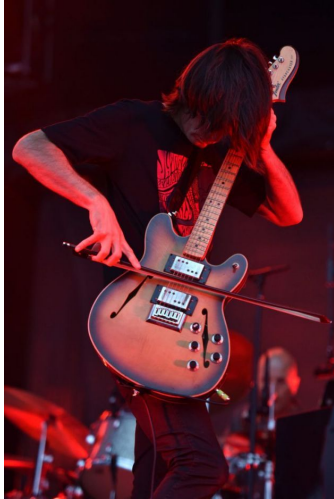


Figure 2

You are never without ideas or ways of making music, you have to break out the usual ways of doing things and ‘think outside the box’. With this mentality you can make anything you dream about become a reality if you really try. Creativity is “the ability to produce original and unusual ideas, or to make something new or imaginative” (*Definition of creativity from the Cambridge Academic Content Dictionary- Cambridge University Press*). Through this way of thinking you should never run out of ideas and always produce more individual content that defines you as a person. For example, the band, Radiohead, never fail to be creative, when they run out of ideas they take a cello bow to a guitar and create a whole new beautiful sound. As seen in the image above.

“Take time out of your practice to seek inspiration from life and events going on around you.”



Figure 3

Taking time out of your of your practice helps to relax your mind and takes stress away from something that brings you joy in life. From this you can avoid ‘writer's block’ which can become very frustrating and may distance you from music. Inspiration is “someone or something that gives you ideas for doing something” (*Definition of inspiration from the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus - Cambridge University Press*). Going into the world and experiencing life will give you the creative mind to be inspired, whether it's by other musicians, the feelings and emotions provoked from being around people you care about or even dislike or by events that are happening. For instance, political situations occurring may make you angry, many metal bands such as the band, Northlane, use this to fuel their music as they are unhappy about the industry and want to speak out. However, on the other hand, you may spend your spare time adventuring in new relaxing places such as the icelandic wilderness. This may inspire you to create a beautiful, gentle, musical piece of piano ambience much like the artist Olafur Arnalds. Inspiration is everywhere and sometimes you have to take a break from your work to enjoy life and gain some perspective to fuel your passion.

“Use different cultures music and genres, don't get stuck in one genre.”



Figure 4

From using different cultures music you can take away any limitations in your writing process. Through doing this you not only have access to an array of new instruments and techniques but it connects you to people around the world and brings us all together with music. You are not just limited to one area of music and people. Culture can also cover more than just nationality, it can also spread to religion, language or art. As well culture you also have genre to take into consideration. One song does not have to have one genre, it could have multiple. This gives you more options when writing music. The band, ALT-J, do this in many of their songs by incorporating other languages and cultural instruments into their songs such as the song 'every other freckle' (see reference in the bibliography). In this song the band include a section of the song where the genre completely changes and new instruments are introduced such as flutes, shakers and many percussive elements. This receptively connects them to many types of people and makes them stand out from everyone else.

Jon's Task:

My first experience with music technology started when I was of a young age. I started playing the piano at the age of five. From this I then went on to learn how to play the viola, electric guitar, bass and drums. At the age of 9 I joined 'Swansea Rock School' which was run by Dai Smith of "The Storys". This fired an interest in writing original songs and performing them in a band. Later on I attended a music project where I met other like minded young musicians and formed the band "Purge The Ocean". Later on we recorded an EP with James Weaver, a well known Swansea recording engineer. Being in this studio environment gave me such joy and started me thinking that there is more to music than just playing instruments. From that moment I become obsessed with learning how to record in a studio.

I began to learn with Dai Smith in his studio with his professional equipment, recording, mixing and mastering audio, soundtracks and music for companies and other bands. This inspired me to build a collection of professional recording gear. I have been in contact with many popular performers and technicians to ask for advice and general discussion, and they encouraged me to pursue a career in the music industry. This is why I decided to study a full time course in BTEC Music Technology Level 3 at Coleg Sir Gar. The subjects I learnt from this course fuelled my passion of wanting to learn more, hence why I applied to go to university to study the subject at a deeper level.

Currently, I am studying music technology in the University of Trinity Saint David and have found that it has opened my mind to explore lots of new ways of making music and recording it. Outside of education I am in a band called "Apathy Avenue" playing bass. In this band I tour across the United Kingdom playing our original music. This music has been recorded and released across all musical platforms and is growing in popularity. Through these shows I connect with many musicians who give me inspiration. As well as this, I also make my own original music which genre ranges from ambience to electronic or sometimes dance. This is heavily influenced by my love of the music created by "Olafur Arnalds" and the band "Arcane Roots" to who I continue to be inspired by every day.

In the foreseeable future, I will continue on with my university course for four years in total with the goal of achieving a masters in music. With this degree I hope to get a job in a professional sound studio recording musicians and if possible inspiring them to take the same career path as myself. If I can not gain a job in a studio I aim to create my own music studio business from home, like "Dai Smith" and "James Weaver". In this business I will record, produce, mix and master people's music for them to release.

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