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Programme of Study: Illustration

Module: M4X01560

Tasks in the order I received them:

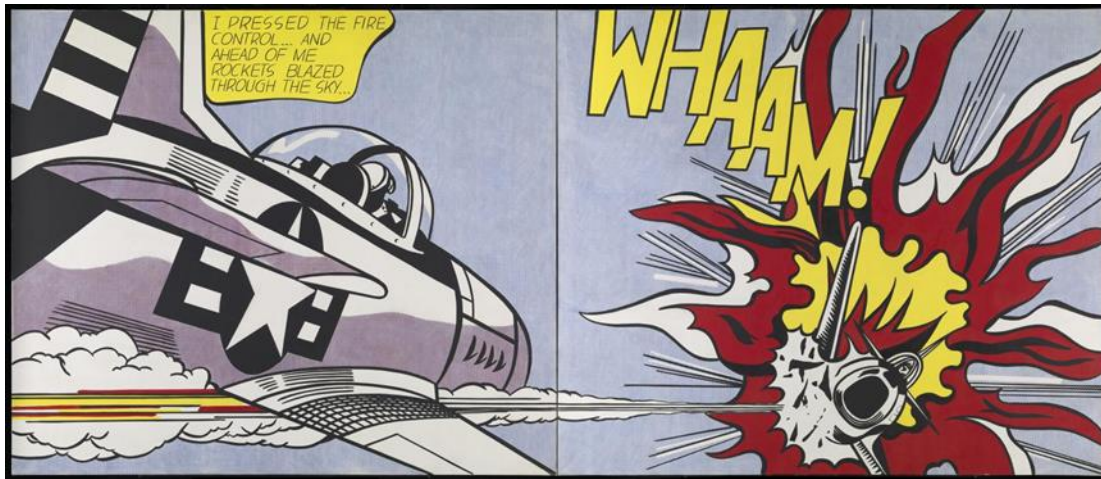
Task One: Reflective Writing (Jon's Task) = 468

Task Two: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's task) = 495

Task Three: Manifesto Writing (Julia's task) = 497

Total = 1,460

Task One: Reflective Writing (Jon's Task)



Roy Lichtenstein's 'Whaam!' 1963

Pop Art was a controversial art movement that emerged in America during the late 1950's. It grew in popularity during the early 1960's and saw consumerism influencing artists subject matter. 'Due to the undeniable impact of advertisements and the compelling nature of consumer practises, consumer culture has contributed to the reinforcement of the socioeconomic and political hierarchy' (Mamiya, 1992:4).

Roy Lichtenstein (1923-1997) was born in the inter war period where consumerism was thriving. However, more troubles were ahead when the Second World War broke out in 1939, involving 100 million people and Lichtenstein himself was conscripted in 1943.

Many of his works were influenced by war and the comic book style, coinciding with the Silver Age of comic books. During his life he was often subject to criticism for a lack of originality, particularly criticised for his piece 'Whaam!', and for copying comic artist Russ Heath. In Heaths obituary, the New York Times stated

that Heath was '...either inspiring or being outright copied by the Pop Artist Roy Lichtenstein' (Genzlinger, 2018:21).

'Whaam!' was created by Lichtenstein in 1963 based upon DC's 'All American Men at War'. The subject matter depicts a plane being shot down but has cleverly used the comic book style to conceal the meaning and present the image in a flat blocked colour. It is speculated that Lichtenstein did this to show the desensitisation that was used to reflect on the war, even though in the 60's many people were still affected by the events. 1963 was a time for people to stand up and voice their opinions to make a social change "...March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom" (Le Blanc 2013:29) at which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr delivered his historic "I have a Dream" speech. The demonstration resulted in a promise from President Kennedy to actively support civil rights legalisation." In 'Whaam!' Lichtenstein was giving his opinion on war and how the media represented it without emotions.

'Whaam!' continues to be a very popular piece today with many still fascinated with his mechanical style and utilisation of benday dots but controversy still surrounds his work with many saying it is made for comic books and not museums. Many individuals often overlook the meaning and subject matter of Lichtenstein's work thus proving his point that the style images are presented in can often affect the emotions they convey.

My work has been influenced by Lichtenstein's in many ways, I love his use of typography in order to tell a story which connects to my illustration course. His use

of strong line, instead of tone to add in some detailing, makes his work unique and has inspired me to do something similar. His work remains current and relevant today as his use of emotive themes is still relevant as the media continue to desensitise it.

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Task Two: Observational Writing (Ryan's task)



When I first saw 'Puddles' by Merve Ozaslan I was immediately drawn to three key elements; scale, colour contrast and subject matter.

In this piece the size of the forest scene is disproportioned to the street scene, looking smaller and not dominating the piece, however the use of the bright luscious greens are a world away from the grey monotone areas that are the main feature of

the composition "Ozaslan's work is simple yet mesmerising, how the perspectives of the overlaid photos collide in perfect harmony" (2015). She has altered the scale and layered the tree scene behind the street scene to show how our world is becoming overruled by man made structures with less areas of natural beauty.

Once I began looking more closely, the piece made me question how aware people are of the environment we live in and sad that we abuse such a beautiful place. In a report by The Guardian using data gathered from a study using 160 governments from the UN Environmental Programme they stated "Degradation of the world's natural resources by humans is rapidly outpacing the planets ability to absorb the damage" (Harvey 2016). The scariest fact is that many people ignore this enormous problem with even America's President Donald Trump previously saying he didn't believe in global warming.

The piece is very emotive and Ozaslan has been very successful in using colours to do this. 'Puddles' and many of her other work places the natural environments in hectic scenes to show how the majority of individuals go about their everyday lives and routines in man-made environments, ignoring what is surrounding them. The composition of this piece shows a woman stepping over the forest showing an avoidance of distance between herself and the natural world, the woman's head is also angled downwards showing that she is not observant of all her surroundings instead focusing on what she is doing.

The work is very successful at shedding light onto issues such as why we are not more concerned about the ever-changing environment and how destructive we are as a race on these beautiful settings. Overall the piece provokes feelings of anger that people can stumble through their lives completely unaware that the streets they once walked on were beautiful natural environments which have been destroyed to make our life more convenient.

Ozaslan has chosen her colours carefully and reflectively in this piece; for example, in the forest there is likely to be a sense of peace where all you can hear is the sound of the breeze hitting on the trees, the leaves crunching beneath your feet or the sounds of wildlife moving around whereas in the street you are overwhelmed with noise from traffic, conversations and people racing around. "In that sense natural act appears with its all colors when our emotions are paralysed in the vital points of cliché and dull city life" (Ozaslan 2014) This overexaggerates the idealist world where you are surrounded by peace in a natural environment.

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Task Three: Manifesto Writing (Julia's Task)

1. In a time where social media consumes many peoples lives' we should question the standards that it instils in us and expose the fact that most of it is fake.
2. Detailed – capture everything in order to capture the viewer's attention.
3. Explore different media and subject matter in order to broaden boundaries and decide what works well in order to create cohesive pieces of work.
4. Create emotive pieces of work that have a meaning or make the viewers feel something
5. Create recognisable pieces of art with a deeper a deeper meaning instead of abstract, modern or impressionist work whose meaning is often obscured
6. We should question the political views that are affecting our lives and others.
7. Seek perfection in what we do but accept that sometimes the things that turn out unexpectedly are just as good and everything is different.
8. Art should always be celebrated and there should be a form that suits every person but artists should also be recognised for their hard work.

Social Media



Fake images that circulate the internet

1. In a time where social media consumes many people's lives' we should question the standards that it instils in us and expose the fact that most of it is fake.

In the past 9 years, social media usage has risen from 0.97 billion to 2.82 billion people and, by 2021, it is expected to rise to almost half of the population using at least one social media platform at least once a month. This will make it one of the fastest growing markets of our time.

It is speculated that social media can have a great impact on mental health leading to some people developing negative body and self-image, anxiety and even depression. Especially among young girls who see photoshopped images of

models and cannot help comparing themselves and desiring to be like them, instilling negative thoughts. One study states 'Social media use has pronounced effects on mental health.' It also found that higher levels of life satisfaction and happiness were linked to whether an individual has social media and the number of friends they have on it. (Lau et al.,2016: 657)

Emotive

4. Create emotive pieces of work that have a meaning or make the viewers feel something

Art should be created with a purpose for a desired response often referred to as a vital part in the human experience "Art has the power to upset, to disturb, to make us change our assumptions, to change us" (Gaut, 2007:01) It eliminates the distance due to history, geography, religion and many more allowing a variety of people to understand one artists feelings throughout the ages and across the globe. It is the only language in our world that can be understood by us all so it should be created with a purpose in order to reinforce claims or create new ones. I believe that a single image, if presented correctly and showed to a significant amount of the population, has the capability to change views about everyone and everything.

The media often utilises emotive photographic images in order to sway the public and widen their eyes as “images are worth 1000 words” making situations feel much more relevant and real it is easier to ignore a headline than an image.

Recognisable

5. Create recognisable pieces of art with a deeper a deeper meaning instead of abstract, modern or impressionist work who's meaning is often obscured

Although some work is created to allow the artist freedom and to be expressive, I believe that in my practice of illustration art should be created with specific clear form, with obvious intent in order to create meaning, stories and emotions. “A work of art is the selective recreation of reality for the purpose of communicating some aspect of what it means to be human or how we perceive the world.” (Ross; 2019) In my opinion, artwork without meaning is like a book without words, they both have the potential to change your lives, way of thinking/perceiving and values but in these cases, they are missing a key element in order to do this.

Abstract, impressionist and modern art are all forms that seem to struggle to communicate the intended meaning across often leaving many feeling although it shouldn't be allowed to be art. Tracey Emin's Unmade bed left the public feeling although their own beds should

also earn £2.2 million and be considered art, struggling to see anything special about the piece.



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