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Tasks in the order I received them:

Task 1 (question 4): Taking the idea discussed by Nicolas Bourriaud, that an artist's role should be a 'translator between worlds', explore this concept in relation to the role of the artist/collaborator in the 21st Century with reference to two practitioners or thinkers. = **2500 Words**

TASK 1: The Role of 21st Century Artists/Collaborators

In the 21st Century, artists and collaborators can now express their views more, as it has been considered more normalised. In other words, in this time and age, everything is more open-minded and acceptable to those who understand the concept of this idea.

The idea discussed by Nicholas Bourriaud (about how the artist's role should be a 'translator between worlds') is another way to narrate how artists/collaborators communicate their ideas, opinions and emotions. This is portrayed across to the audience that is seeing, reading, hearing, feeling and reacting to the art piece; thus, allowing them to share the feeling of the artist experience and ideas.

"From the beginning of the 2000s, the cultural climate seems to have deserted conviviality, both in production and in the sense of togetherness that characterized the 1990s. In this era of social violence and the return of the irrational, has the interhuman sphere become, paradoxically, obsolete? The Anthropocene, a geological phenomenon that symbolizes a collective conscience taking hold, drives us towards the recognition of life forms other than our own: the most important artists of our era are moving towards a choral art, a polyvocal one, which sparks or orchestrates traces that stem from multiple sources. Objects, minerals, animals, robots, artificial intelligence, human beings, plants ... Nature? Culture? Outmoded notions. We are moving towards an amplified humanism, one in which the human being is no longer central – and in which the artist acts as a translator between worlds" (*Nicolas Bourriaud on the Artist as a Translator Between Worlds*, Frieze, n.d).

This links to what Erin Morgenstern, a multi-media artist and an author, once said: "Sometimes I write what I can't paint, and I paint what I can't write. I use a different part of the brain" (Quotefancy.com, 2021).

Erin Morgenstern's quote is the perfect example of being a 'translator between worlds'. "Sometimes I write what I can't paint" which means that what she can write in a short story, poem, song or essay or a letter to a loved one (her words are like

the paint on the canvas; as she paints her words. And vice versa for what she then is unable to put into words, she paints a picture to share her vision. Then “I use a different part of the brain” I interpret this part as Erin Morgenstern getting out of her comfort zone to carefully plan how to communicate her ideas in detail the way she wants show to the audience.

Erin Morgenstern graduated with a degree in theatre and studio art from Smith College. In addition to her writing and speaking, Erin Morgenstern paints, writes books and blogs (*Erin Morgenstern*, prhspeakers.com, n.d).

Erin Morgenstern painted phantomwise tarot decks and spent roughly the same time as writing and rewriting one of her books *The Night Circus* (*This Is About The Phantomwise Tarot* – Erin Morgenstern, 2011).



Figure 1

Even though everything in the 21st Century is more open-minded, that can frequently include more controversial art. Of course, some opinions are controversial and open to criticism in the art world, but it can question people’s views and it can make people react in different ways to the art piece. There are a very few amount of artists that are activists ... but their artworks are very well-known and coveted.

Banksy, is an England-based street artist who is also a well known political activist, is very well known for his infamous controversial artwork (he creates stencil art in public for everyone to see in their everyday lives). Sadly, most of Banksy’s work are either vandalised for the notoriety of “having destroyed a Banksy” or due to the offending nature of the art or subject matter. These are then removed from the

public's eye and the object of the exercise is defeated (*Banksy Biography & Artwork | Artists, Street Art Bio*, n.d). Some of Banksy's works are:

Show Me The Monet (2005) is based on *The Japanese Bridge* painting by Claude Monet, but with the modern version to bring more awareness to environmental issues. This is shown in figure 2.

The breathtakingly beautiful scenery is disturbed by shopping trollies that are dumped in the water accompanied with a traffic cone. This is a visual representation of how much damage we cause to the environment. I believe that Banksy shows this to us to share his concerns in hope that things can change for the better. We, as the audience, see this and understand the point Banksy is trying to make.

I personally think that the stronger the technique in portraying this, the more affect it can have on a person. Banksy uses Monet's famous painting *The Japanese Bridge* (which Monet painted by observing his surroundings at the time) and used elements of modern items to show the massive difference of environmental issues.

Compared to Claude Monet's *The Japanese Bridge* painting and Banksy's *Show Me The Monet*; you can see that times have changed but sadly for the worse.

It was sold at a Sotheby's event in London on Wednesday following a near nine-minute battle between five collectors. Alex Branczik, Sotheby's European head of contemporary art, said: "In one of his most important paintings, Banksy has taken Monet's iconic depiction of the Japanese bridge in the Impressionist master's famous garden at Giverny and transformed it into a modern-day fly-tipping spot. More canal than idyllic lily pond, Banksy litters Monet's composition with discarded shopping trollies and a fluorescent orange traffic cone. Ever prescient as a voice of protest and social dissent, here Banksy shines a light on society's disregard for the environment in favour of the wasteful excesses of consumerism" (*Show me the Monet: Banksy comment on consumerism fetches £7.5m*, The Irish Times, 2020).

In my opinion, I have to be careful where ever I walk because the pavement is mostly covered in the occasional chewing gum, vomit, dog waste, human spit and other unhygienic objects.

"Show me the Monet is one of the most iconic paintings of Banksy's provocative oeuvre. It is an extremely rare entirely hand-painted canvas that helped cement Banksy's position as a controversial and decisive social commentator for our time. It was one of the masterpieces exhibited at Banksy's landmark 2005 exhibition *Crude Oils: A Gallery of Re-mixed Masterpieces, Vandalism and Vermin*. Banksy repurposes an iconic image in the western canon: Claude Monet's career-defining view of the Japanese footbridge in his water garden at Giverny. With its tongue-in-

cheek pun of a title, Banksy's painstakingly observed re-painting delivers a complex dialogue that tackles prescient issues of our time, such as the environment and the capitalist landscape of our contemporary moment, not to mention the art establishment and its current identity crisis. With a sumptuously rendered orange traffic cone and a thickly textured shopping trolley disrupting the romance of Monet's iconic Impressionist masterpiece, Banksy's version is more twenty-first century fly-tipping spot than timeless idyll" (Laboureau, n.d.).



Figure 2.

Kissing Coppers (2004) shows same-sex intimacy as seen in figure 3. *Kissing Coppers* was created in Brighton, England. Brighton was known as the LGBTQ+ Capital of the UK (*Why is Brighton the LGBTQ Capital of the UK?*, The Culture Trip, n.d.).

The location of this art piece was on the wall of the Prince Albert bar and was responded to in various ways. The LGBTQ+ community was very fond of the artwork displayed; some people had negative reactions; consequently, it led to the removal of the artwork due to vandalism. The mural was removed by specialists in 2008 and replaced it with a replica. The landlord of the Prince Albert, Chris Steward, sent the original to New York in 2011, with a view to finding a buyer; then the *Kissing Coppers* was auctioned. On October in 2006, two men in a plumber's van pulled up outside the pub and sprayed black paint over the mural. Paul Zenon, who lives in Brighton and is a regular at the Prince Albert, said: 'The damage was awful'. The pub tried to clean off the paint on top of Banksy's artwork but the scrubbing sadly erased most of the copper on the left (Powell, 2014).

The mural created by the street artist Banksy sold at an auction in Miami for \$575,000, which was at the low end of estimates. Two other Banksy works -- which the artist created during his monthlong "residency" in New York last year -- failed to

meet sale expectations. The Banksy works were being sold as part of a street-art auction by Fine Art Auctions Miami. Banksy's *Kissing Coppers* was expected to bring in between \$500,000 to \$700,000. An anonymous buyer purchased the work for \$480,000 plus \$95,000 in fees, bringing the total to \$575,000 (*Banksy mural 'Kissing Coppers' and others don't impress at auction*, Los Angeles Times, 2014).

In my opinion, I believe that Banksy's not-so-hidden message was to show that even those in power and a position of authority (in this subject matter; two male policemen) are capable of feeling love against the preconceived prejudiced notion (homophobia etc) as we are all human and have the freedom to explore and display our sexuality as we wish to choose; irrelevant of our position, job etc. It also addresses society's masculinity issues in a constructive and positive manner.

"The work, which depicts two policemen in a passionate clinch, has become a shrine for fans of the elusive graffiti artist and a regular stop on Brighton's tourist trail. But, after repeated attacks on the artwork left it severely damaged, the pub owner has decided to sell the original through a New York gallery for a sizeable fee, estimated to be anywhere from £500,000 to £1m" (*Brighton kisses goodbye to Banksy's kissing coppers*, The Guardian, n.d).



Figure 3.

Mobile Lovers (2014) shows how advanced technology and social media has become a huge part of our lives and can intervene when it should not. The couple, while holding each other in an embrace, are more interested in their phones than in

their relationship. The *Mobile Lovers* artwork truly does answer the phrase “and they say romance is dead.”

This artwork is a visual confirmation to how the evolution of technology and social media has dulled our senses and emotions. Before technology, there was more basic human interactions such as talking, showing affection and listening. All the basic human interactions which helped convey empathy, anger, sadness, happiness, disgust, confusion and many more emotions.

The simple way on communicating this, are now limited and abbreviated into the use of text-speak, street slang and emojis. This now also displays how the use of the verbal language is no longer as eloquent as it once was due to the evolution of technology taking its toll over people’s lives (i.e.: technology may have advanced but communication and interaction has not). Therefore, the use of basic human interaction is no longer common sense to the rest of humanity.

The location of the artwork, as shown in figure 4, expresses how many people ignore the reality of how much damage the evolution of technology and social media has caused on everyone's lives. The artwork, hidden in plain sight, someone could easily walk past it and not realise the artwork is there until they take a second glance and notice their surroundings.

In my opinion, I have seen so many people with a phone in their hand that it is starting to become rare to see someone without their eyes glued to their phone screen.

"Just a few months later, in August 2014, the 120-year-old Broad Plaines Youth Club risked closing and was financially struggling. The youth club’s owner sold Mobile, to a private collector, Mobile Lovers for £403,000. After the sale, the works of art were confiscated by police to identify the owner of the work. In turn, Banksy wrote to the youth club to confirm they were the owners of the artwork” (*Everything you need to know about Banksy’s Mobile Lovers artwork*, Canvas Art Rocks, n.d.).



Figure 4.

Season's Greetings (2018) represents a child's perspective verses reality. The artwork is created on a corner, when standing in front of the child with their arms spread and tongue out eating the snow ... it is heart-warming to see. But when you look around the corner you can see that the 'snow' was actually ash floating from the fire of a burning bin (as shown in figure 5).

Season's Greetings suddenly appeared just before Christmas 2018 on the wall of a garage in Port Talbot. This location is home to the largest steel plant in the United Kingdom. Consequently, black dust, a by-product from the giant local plant, has been known to cover swathes of the town. During the summer of that year, a very large number of inhabitants even complained of respiratory issues. Because of this situation, with 9,68 micrograms of particulates per cubic meter according to a report. Port Talbot was presumably crowned as the most polluted town in the United Kingdom. That's probably why Banksy chose exactly that spot. The title itself is ironic. The bitterness left by the painting is a very unpleasant greeting (De Laurentis, 2020).

In my opinion, a child's perspective of the world is completely different from how a 'grown up' or adult would see the world: Children are more unaware of the dangers

around them as they are more trusting and assuming. So, this artwork visually shows what a child could, would, should remember – verses - the unfortunate reality of the 'snow' and the world we live in.

The child standing with their arms out wearing all winter clothes facing upwards with their tongue out without knowing the truth about the 'snow'. The fire in the bin could be interpreted in different ways; the fire in the bin to keep homeless people warm as it is suggested that the season is winter by the child's clothes, or that the cruel reality that the child is raised in a polluted poverty striven world with no knowledge of it.

“The *Season's Greetings* mural appeared on the walls of steelworker Ian Lewis's garage in Port Talbot last December. John Brandler, the gallery owner, paid a six-figure sum for the work; with an agreement that, for only three years, it would stay in the town. In May, after months of planning, the engineers used a crane to lift the 4.5 tonne mural on to a lorry, before it was escorted by police to its new home. The Welsh Government funded its transfer amid rising security costs” (*Banksy Port Talbot: Season's Greetings piece goes on display*, BBC, 2019).



Figure 5.

As society in the 21st Century changes (becoming more accepting of debatable artwork), the artists/collaborator's art changes with the times. Therefore, the idea of the artist/collaborators role being 'a translator between worlds' falls into the same category. The artists raise awareness to the audience but the audience can react to the artworks in various ways: This can sometimes lead the audience to act, on the subject matter raised in the artwork, based on their reactions such as vandalism or changing their lifestyle for the better.

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Figure 2. *Banksy's Show me the Monet painting sells for £7.5m at auction, The Guardian*

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