

Rhys Black

2008552

Product and furniture design

Dr Julia Lockheart

Task 1: Manifesto writing

1. Explore the concept of successful art being affected by class inequality.
2. Gain inspiration from the world we live in when designing.
3. Imperative to recognise that art is timeless and is not required to be contemporary with social and political conditions to be appreciated.
4. Use social media as a tool to improve our work rather than a platform to criticise and compare our work.
5. We create the world together.
6. Get inspired, draw, develop, create.
7. There is an old and new consciousness of time.
8. Surround yourself in art to become the artist you want to be.

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3 areas of exploration

The concept of successful art being affected by class inequality



Fig.1- I have decided to starve, May 5, 2018

Art is worldwide and we are exposed to it constantly. However, there have always been debates as to whether art is more accessible to wealthier individuals in society. Similarly, the question of artists from upper- or middle-class backgrounds becoming more successful than their less privileged competitors, is also asked. Certain theorists such as Marxists would suggest that the lack of art in certain deprived communities stems from capitalist ideologies installed in the education system. Bowles and Gintis suggest in their book, *Schooling in capitalist America*, (1976), pg.103, “The educational system fosters and reinforces the belief that economic success depends essentially on the possession of technical and cognitive skills”. This suggests that the education system promote children studying more academic subjects from a young age to strengthen capitalist system by creating a compliant and obedient workforce. Furthermore, this results in deprived children being more likely to take up unskilled careers such as laborious work. Not having the resources to be experimental with creativity could unfortunately lead to less art potentially being produced and recognised in the world.

Use social media as a tool to improve our work rather than a platform to criticise and compare our work



Fig.2-Banksy, nobody likes me, 2014

Social media has changed modern times by allowing us to connect with others and share ideas to the rest of the world. Social media has had many positive and negative effects on society in the past ten years. “Social media are online platforms that allow users to create a profile about oneself, as well as connect and exchange information with other members” (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). Individuals displaying their personal life through social media could possibly lead to certain expectations of validation from peers. Criticising and contrasting personal work with others can lead to the feeling of inadequacy, leading to less development of ideas and creativity. All human beings instinctively express themselves in what they produce; they objectify themselves, so that their product is an extension of their being (Karl Marx, Capital, 1876).

Gain inspiration from the world we live in when designing



Fig 3.- Nautilus house, Arquitectura Orgánica

Many young designers have issues with gaining Inspiration when developing ideas. The early stages of designing and evolving unique ideas that have never been thought of before can be a challenge. This is a challenge we all face as designers but must all learn how to overcome. There are many factors of our surroundings that should be considered, such as wildlife, geometry, and colour. “With almost no conscious control, your brain brings together separate representations of brightness, edges, lines, line orientation, colour, motion, objects, and space” ‘John Whalen, Design for how people think’, (2019). Constructing an idea for a product with a selection of unusual patterns and colours can be more eye catching for costumers, leading to higher success rate of your product. A variety of successful designers, such as Ross Lovegrove, incorporate nature into their work. For example, Lovegrove’s DNA staircase is a spiral staircase which replicates a DNA helix. This technique of designing can be very popular and used widely within the design community. The image above ‘The Nautilus house’, located in Mexico, replicates a nautilus shell, promoting the idea of human beings being one with nature which is communicated from the architect’s design.

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Fig1.- 'I have decided to starve' May 5, 2018

<https://zipit.pk/i-have-decided-to-starve-is-art-only-for-the-rich/>

Fig2.- nobody likes me, Banksy, 2014

<https://www.her.ie/life/pic-of-the-day-nobody-likes-me-this-street-art-is-pretty-genius-110156>

Fig3.- Nautilus house, Arquitectura Orgánica

<https://www.designrulz.com/architecture/2012/10/nautilus-house-unique-shell-shaped-design-by-arquitectura-organica/>

Observational writing



Fig1.-Sauvage by Dior, 2015

Semiotics is the interpretation of certain images and objects and how they are perceived by individuals. One of the broadest definitions is that of the late Italian semiotician Umberto Eco (1932–2016), who states that ‘semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign’, Semiotics: the basics, Daniel Chandler, 2017. Semiotics can be analysed from any image, especially advertisements as they can have hidden connotations and polysemy to persuade buyers to invest in their product. Sauvage by Dior is a great example of this.

The advert contains the model, Johnny Depp, settled by a fire. He is relaxed and gazing into the distance with the dark sky and desert in the background. The use of the sombre tones shows the end of the day, symbolising mystery. “In Western Europe, we are familiar with the colour black as a symbol of death and mourning. Funeral directors wear black jackets, and it is usual for those who attend to wear black” ‘David Crow, Visible signs an introduction to semiotics in the visual arts’. Depp’s black attire symbolises death. His blasé attitude towards the idea of his foreboding future can be attractive which makes this such a unique technique of marketing for consumers. This is also shown with the presentation of fire, showing a sense of danger and fear. The declarative statement shown, ‘We are the land’ also juxtaposes the imagery as it can be interpreted as humans being part of the elements, earth, wind, and fire, explaining the fearlessness within the model.

Similarly, the hand tattoos may suggest a daring nature with the idea of tattoos being frowned upon in society, showing a lack of conformity with society. Furthermore, this is supported by the name of the product (Sauvage) which is a translation for wild in English. These subtle techniques in advertisement persuade customers in investing in their products as they push the idea that you can become the desired person advertised if you use the product.

However, fragrance advertisements are usually hyperbolic for people to invest. Additionally, the fragrance needs to be unique, standing out from competitors. "since perfumes can have no particular significance. This is a type of ad which can give no real information about the product (what information can be given about a smell?) so that the function of differentiation rests totally on making a connection with an image drawn from outside ad world." Judith Williamson, *Decoding Advertisements: Ideology and Meaning in Advertising*, 2010. Judith Williamson also introduces the concept underlying myths; arguing that advertisements have become a form of contemporary mythology and should now be analysed with appropriate acknowledgement of its changing status by using the same criteria as those which are applied to any other design, art, or cultural forms. She also mentions when referring the Chanel number five advert 'If she were not a film star and famous for her French beauty, if she did not mean something to us, the link made between her face and the perfume would be meaningless. It is not her face as such, but its position in a system of signs where it signifies flawless French beauty, which makes it useful as a piece of linguistic currency to sell Chanel.' These similarities can be drawn from the Chanel advert with Dior's with the model being Johnny Depp.

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Fig1.-Sauvage by Dior, 2015

https://www.dior.com/en_gb/fragrance/mens-fragrance/sauvage?gclid=Cj0KCQiA0MD_BRCTARIsADXoopbTZZrtYFVxpNezDKydyj8khXqw0wWoRW8QXV91j5d7EhAeuLR

Practice based writing



Fig1.- LC4 Chaise Lounge, (1928)

This is the Chaise lounge chair constructed by Le Corbusier, dating back to 1928. The product is constructed with a H- shaped base and a separate seating element, with hide upholstery and head cushion. The style and materials of the product are inherently linked with high-design interiors. This bespoke product is the epitome of interior design during the period of industrialisation and modernism.

Le Corbusier's design originated from his concept of 'machine for living', functional furniture appliances for the household. The product was extremely successful and known affectionately in the design community as the 'Corb chaise'. The ergonomics of the lounge chair were strongly considered during the design process of the product, having an adjustable neck roll with free positioning of the seat on its frame. The product was aesthetically pleasing and offered comfort and flexibility. Corbusier's lounge chair was unique, being part of an avant-garde collection in Paris. However, Corbusier's invention only

became famous in 1965 but is now perhaps one of the most familiar icons of the twentieth-century furniture design.

I believe that Corbusier's construction was a revolutionary product for its time, changing the way we perceive modern interior design. However, there are certain aspects of the product that I believe can be improved or would be built differently if built today. For example, using sustainable materials. "The decisions made by the designer affect the health and well - being of both current and future generations and the planet on which they live, work, and play." Louise Jones, *Environmentally responsible design: green and sustainable design for interior designers*, 2008. The design is very ergonomic, designed for relaxing and great for people with problems with posture. Nearly one hundred years later, increasing number of interior products are multifunctional where the Chaise Lounge is not. The Chaise Lounge was designed for one purpose which explains why there are no back adjustments to sit upright. This asks the question to whether this product would be as successful as it was if it were made today. In contrast, the chair was very ahead of its time and having a futuristic look, making it hard to believe that the product was made in 1928. The use of the hide backrest gave the product a sleek appearance. I can appreciate the use of the hide in his design as it incorporates nature in his art. However, the use of genuine cow hide in today's world is usually seen as unethical and unsustainable, especially when mass produced.

To conclude, Corbusier's Chaise Lounge changed the way the design community perceived interior design by introducing sleek materials and ergonomics. There are some aspects of the product that I believe could be altered and perhaps would have been, if constructed today. There could have been a different selection of materials used which are more ethical and sustainable. Additionally, the advanced resources designers have now may have changed the way the product was built, for example being multifunctional. Lastly, If the product was constructed with a different motive then the product may not have been iconic and praised like it is today.

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<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Corbusier-Leather-Chaise-Lounge-LC4/dp/B00O4KSPDQ>