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Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Semiotic Analysis = 510 words

Task Two: Manifesto = 519 words

Task Three: Practice-based writing = 555 words

Task One: A Semiotic Analysis of Rose N Roses: Miss Dior Advertising Campaign



(sourced: Belerofonte 2019)

In the realm of advertising, the use of semiotics plays a crucial role in conveying messages beyond mere visual aesthetics. Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols and their interpretation (Cobley 2010), is a powerful tool that advertisers use to communicate with their audience. One such compelling example is the Miss Dior perfume advertisement featuring Natalie Portman. This essay will delve into the semiotics employed in this advertisement, exploring how symbols, signs, and cultural references contribute to the overall message.

The influence of colour can induce many feelings on the human mind may serve either as an emotion elicitor that creates an emotional impact on the viewer or as an emotion messenger, sending a communicative signal describing the affective quality of the color itself or of the environment/product (Ou 2015). This is quite clearly illustrated in the “Miss Dior” advertisement,

using hues of pink to create a feminine, innocent, and lustful atmosphere. Whereas the use of white is often associated with perfection, cleanliness, and honesty. Pink and white therefore send an affective quality to the viewer which is then associated with the perfume scent.

In addition, imagery is the signifier in semiotics with the information derived from the image being the signified (Silverman 1998). Natalie Portman (the signifier) is the brand ambassador. However, her sophistication, grace and embodiment of 'Miss Dior' qualities are the signified. Portman's presence adds a human touch to the advertisement, creating a connection between the viewer and the fragrance. Her graceful demeanour reinforces the brand's aspirational qualities. Portman becomes a living symbol, embodying the essence of the fragrance and appealing to the viewer's aspirations. Also, there is a prominent display of roses. The symbol of love, romance, and natural beauty; they serve as a powerful cultural symbol, conveying the primary note of the fragrance and arising emotions associated with love and elegance.

A clear brand identity is the cornerstone of effective branding and marketing strategies. It facilitates positive interactions with consumers, builds trust, and contributes to the overall success and longevity of a brand in a dynamic and competitive marketplace. Branding can gain control over how people view your business (Oswald 2012). Typography, colour scheme and imagery can influence viewers and create a cohesive memorable brand. The Dior logo is used to illustrate the brand identity and legacy. The elegant and minimalist typography of the Dior logo contributes to the overall sense of sophistication, reinforcing the brand's heritage. By using a serif font in branding it can add a sense of tradition and evoke feelings of history.

In conclusion, Dior's Miss Dior Rose N' Roses advertisement employs a rich tapestry of semiotic elements to convey a nuanced message. The use of roses, colour symbolism, the presence of Natalie Portman, and the visual composition collectively create a narrative that goes beyond the mere promotion of a fragrance, aiming to evoke emotions and establish a connection with the audience. The semiotic imagery in this advertisement is a carefully crafted language that speaks to cultural symbols and societal codes, contributing to the overall branding and perception of the product.

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Mini Manifestos

1. Draw inspirations from your surrounding environment (natural, unnatural, political etc.) an invitation to be present, observant, and receptive to the wealth of possibilities and insights that can be found in the world around me. It is a reminder that inspiration is not elusive or reserved for special occasions but is constantly present, waiting to be discovered if I actively seek it.

2. Create work with meaning and purpose, I strive to engage in activities that hold significance and contribute positively to my life and the broader world. This principle encourages me to seek fulfilment and satisfaction by aligning my efforts with values and objectives that resonate with my personal aspiration.

3. Never stop experimenting encapsulates a philosophy that encourages continuous exploration, learning, and innovation. Allowing me to embrace curiosity.

4. Use sustainable practices. This belief centres around the idea that I should prioritise and integrate sustainable practices into my daily life. By being environmentally conscious and having responsible consumption of materials.

5. Believe in yourself, embark on a journey of self-discovery. to explore passions, interests, and values, gaining a deeper understanding of who I am and what I stand for.

6. Make a mess it is a part of the process. It is a liberating act that allows artists to break free from conventional constraints. It opens the door to unconventional ideas and encourages the exploration of uncharted territories.

7. enhance critical thinking, it underscores the importance of developing and refining cognitive skills that enable individuals to analyse, evaluate, and synthesize information effectively.

8. Your crafts should make you feel crafts should ignite a sense of passion within you. Creating something meaningful should go beyond the technical aspects; it should resonate with your innermost passions and evoke a genuine sense of fulfilment. When your crafts are born out of passion, the process becomes inherently rewarding.

Task Two: Manifesto

A belief is a subjective attitude, the individual may believe it is true without any evidence. The subjective quality of beliefs means that they are often shaped by emotions, personal experiences, and social influences (Nilson N. J. 2014). This essay will delve into my beliefs and why they are important.

One belief that I contain is to draw inspirations from my surrounding environment (natural, unnatural, political etc.) An invitation to be present, observant, and receptive to the wealth of possibilities and insights that can be found in the world around me. It is a reminder that inspiration is not elusive or reserved for special occasions but is constantly present, waiting to be discovered if actively seek it. (Bergdoll B. Et Al 2007) The act of being present involves cultivating mindfulness and attentiveness to the details, nuances, and patterns that unfold in the immediate surroundings. Whether it is the intricate beauty of nature, the manifold expressions of human creativity, or the complexities of political landscapes, being present enables individuals to develop a heightened awareness that can spark fresh ideas and perspectives.

Use sustainable practices. This belief centres around the idea that I should prioritise and integrate sustainable practices into my daily life. By being environmentally conscious and having responsible consumption of materials. (Proctor R. 2015) humans frequently neglect their responsibility to prioritise actions that are in the best interest of both their well-being and the preservation of the planet for future generations. A key emphasis should be placed on crafting high-quality items that demonstrate durability and longevity, thus mitigating the issue of items breaking or becoming obsolete after only a few uses. An illustrative case is the commendable work of Stefanie Chong and her development of interchangeable rings.

Create work with meaning and purpose, I strive to engage in activities that hold significance and contribute positively to my life and the broader world. This principle encourages me to seek fulfilment and satisfaction by aligning my efforts with values and objectives that resonate with my personal aspiration. Art made with intent allowing viewers to be comforted or challenged by the ideas encapsulated within (Rollins J. 2021) The act of creating art with intent goes beyond mere aesthetics; it becomes a deliberate effort to communicate ideas, emotions, and perspectives. To purposefully provoke thought, question societal norms, or confront uncomfortable truths. This type of work serves as a catalyst for reflection, fostering critical thinking and encouraging viewers to engage with ideas that may be unconventional or thought-provoking.

In conclusion, beliefs, whether about drawing inspiration from the environment, prioritizing sustainable practices, or creating meaningful art, are subjective convictions that shape our perspectives and actions. Rooted in personal experiences and influenced by societal cues, these beliefs serve as guiding principles for a purposeful and mindful existence. Drawing inspiration from surroundings fosters creativity, sustainability emphasizes responsible living, and creating meaningful art contributes to societal reflection. The subjective nature of beliefs underscores the importance of emotional and experiential dimensions in shaping our worldview. By consciously embracing these beliefs, I navigate a path of awareness, responsibility, and meaningful contribution to both personal growth and the broader world.

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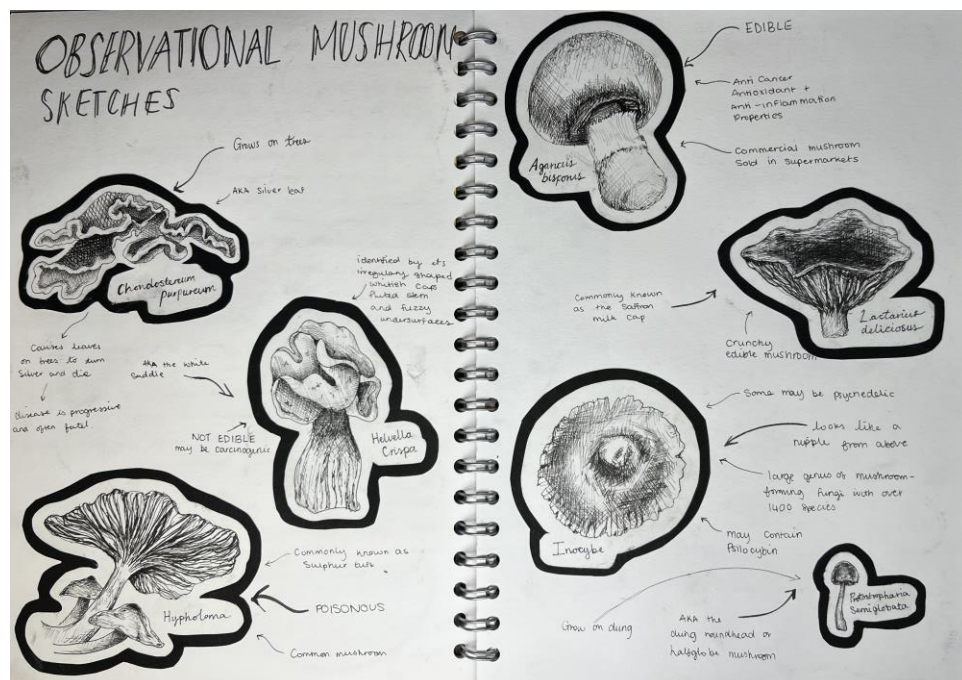
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Task Three: Practice Based Writing

During recent years I have had a growing fascination with the world of fungi, there is fungi everywhere, from inside the human body to underground. It supports the ecosystem and has a mind of its own (Sheldrake 2020). With an estimated 2 to 4 million species, of which only under 150,000 species have been described (Pilcher 2023) there is a significant amount left to learn about fungi.

My fixation with fungi began on autumn walks surrounding the place I reside, wondering how it spread and grew - I began to research. I first began by studying mushrooms spore prints, capturing an accurate representation of the mushroom gills. I then began to sketch and observe the different types of mushrooms, capturing their form, ranging from smooth and slimy to hard and rough. Each type of mushroom is unique and in no way simplistic. Using plain black ink, my images had an almost scientific approach; factual and realistic but a critical component missing.



Early observational mushroom sketches

Mushrooms have inspired art, literature, and cultural symbolism throughout human history (Nai and Meyer 2016). Mushrooms have found a place in surrealist art due to their otherworldly appearance. Surrealist artists often incorporate mushrooms to create dreamlike and fantastical scenes, exploring the boundaries between reality and the subconscious. "Fungi have often symbolised...an alternative

view of the surrounding world.” (Nobel Prize Museum 2023) Mushrooms frequently appear in fantasy art and fairy tales. Their whimsical shapes, vibrant colours, and association with enchanted forests make them popular elements in illustrations depicting magical realms, fairy creatures, and imaginative landscapes. Psilocybin-containing species have been historically linked to psychedelic experiences. In the 1960s, during the counterculture movement, mushrooms became prominent symbols in psychedelic art (McKenna 1999). Vibrant colour, intricate patterns, and surreal imagery often characterize this genre of art inspired by the hallucinogenic properties of certain mushrooms.

Reading *Entangled Life* by Merlin Sheldrake (2020) I learnt the truly magical component of mushrooms is the mycelium systems. Beneath the surface, mushrooms form intricate mycelial networks. These networks connect with plant roots, creating a symbiotic relationship known as mycorrhizae. This underground web facilitates the exchange of nutrients and information between plants, contributing to the health of ecosystems

Cambridge dictionary describes ‘magic’ as ‘the use of special powers to make things happen that would usually be impossible.’ To me magic is the bewilderment you feel when learning, seeing etc. taking you back to childhood innocence. The chemist who first identified psilocybin, Albert Hoffman reflects to similar experiences as a child (Nai and Meyer 2016)

To capture this in any artistic medium is extremely difficult. How do you capture a magical childhood innocence? To me I found colour to be the best experimental form, as well as playing with light, shadows, and sparkles. This has brought me to my latest experimentation of fungal artwork, a UV printed design onto glass, using bright psychedelic colours, it will cast a rainbow shadow as it captures the suns glow. A window to the fungal kingdom, leading your inner child to a whimsical fairy garden in an enchanted forest of dreams.



Uv printed mystical mushroom art

Through my research into fungi, I have found that the possibilities that they can achieve are endless and therefore may inspire an endless amount. As I learn more about fungi, I shall forever look to improve my artistic depiction.

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