

Name: Emilija Vaitkute

Student id: 2502419

Course: surface pattern and textiles

My Manifesto:

1. A persons creativity can never be copied.
2. Allow passion to drive your talent.
3. Your art can be anything.
4. You have to be honest with yourself.
5. Art is universal it can be put into any form.
6. You are creating for you, and no one else.
7. Art doesn't always need a meaning or message.
8. Just because someone doesn't like your art style, doesn't mean you need to change it.

2*none of us are talentless, plain and dull. All artists have a different voice, minds and beliefs, many people have been told that their works look simple and easy to replicate. What people tend to miss out on is that in order to have talent you must have the passion to create, if you don't have the drive then how are you meant to make something extraordinary, something unexpected. The book failure by Lisa Le Feuvre highlights how artists are afraid to fail, the art industry can be so harsh the academicians alone have rejected around 3000 pieces that they thought don't fit in with the criteria. Of course modern artists will have a fear of failure if the stakes are so high. 'For an artist to place a work into the world is to lose control.' - Le Feuvre, failure published in 2010. This line in the book really stood out to me, it really reflects the life of many artists, we all want to lose control and have freedom of speech when it comes to our art however failure always be and the back of every artists minds, I've met so many talented people doubt their work because its not 'perfect' but what if that fear is whats holding you back from perfection.

5* When people usually think of art, what comes to mind is usually paintings, or metre long murals locked away behind glass in a gallery. What people fail to notice is that art could be as simple as thread stitching through yards of colourful hand crafted fabrics by the hidden designers, or words being beautifully painted over a blank page creating lively images in your mind. During the 1900s, Russia was going through rapid industrialization, Russia was losing its soul after the old Russian empire broke up, people were hopeless. Between the years of the 1900- 1937, Russia went through a panorama period of modernism. The association of poetic language, was a massive impact to this movement, three talented writers; Yuri Tynianov, Boris Eichenbaum and Roman Jakobson had developed the critical theory of Futurism, concentrating on the subject of literary style.

7* A story could always be found in art, no matter if it was intentional or not. A trend I've noticed is that most artists start with the story or message before starting their piece, but why can't they create for creations sake. Ways of seeing, a book written by John Berger is a book that was created to lead the charge for the BCC show as he thought that the show didn't allow to properly express his view due to bad airing timings. In the book he highlights how artwork can be perceived in different ways based on settings. For example, if you see a religious painting in a church you would often perceive it differently compared to if it was displayed in a gallery. He talks about how easy it is to often miss the bigger picture in art as art critiques are often more focused on the colours and brush strokes. As a society we collectively gravitate towards the most known painting such as the 'Mona Lisa' and 'The starry night', however the artists behind those paintings grew to create much more important things, Van Gogh said himself that 'The starry night' was his least favourite painting, because it was too abstract and far from reality. But the reason it became so popular was because of the symbolic meaning behind it. It's a shame that art becomes popularised due to the meaning, despite the amazing visuals.

References:

- Le, Feuvre, L. (2010). **Failure**. Whitechapel Gallery.
- Elliot, D. (1986). **New Worlds: Russian Art and Society, 1900- 1937**. Thames and Hudson.
- Berger, J. (1972). **Ways of Seeing**. Penguin Books.

Constellations, by Zhao Zhao 2021-2022



Fig. 1.

At first sight it looks like a sheet of glass with bullet holes through it, but when you look at it closely it's a sheet of silk with hand embroidery. Zhao Zhao also known as Ai weiwei's assistant, expanded on the themes of nature and destruction, memory, and the painstaking process of reconstruction. The reasoning behind him sing shattered is because it resembles his intent to transform remnants of violence into a narrative of historical reflection and resilience.

'Constellations' contrasts the fragility of glass once the glass breaks it is cintrasted with the strength of the adhesive, that mends it. The reconstruction of the shattered glass is not to hide it but to simply highlight the damage it's been through. Each crack and scratch shows all the trauma the glass as been through. This is how Zhao Zhao has represented such a simple visual into the representation of time and memory, this invites viewers to figure out what story matches with the fragment of glass (silk).

The decision to make the embroidery thread visible, is important, because it serves a map of trauma, marking each crack a mend with a tangible solution. Rather than hiding the damage, he highlights it turning it into a key part of his work and the works overall aesthetic. This approach challenges the traditional way of mending, which is typically to hide the damage instead of highlighting it like Zhao Zhao did, he embraces imperfections as the fundamental human experience, celebrating the beauty of complexity that can arise from traumatic and destructive experiences.

In addition, Zhao Zhao's choice in the title of his work 'Constellations' adds another layer of meaning, usually when we think of constellations we see a group of scattered stars across the sky being connected dot to dot to compose a constellations, well Zhao Zhao linked this to the fragments of glass being brought together to make an unfiltered piece. The title suggests a sense of order and structure emerging through the chaos and destruction. Hinting that you can always find beauty in destruction.

Moreover, his work also hints towards the themes of censorship and control from a larger system. The broken glass represents the broken promises and silences voices or even suppressed histories, and the repair of the glass could symbolise struggling to reclaim and remember. Zhao Zhao has rebelled against the law before. Part of the series of constellations Zhao Zhao purchased a gun which is illegal in China and shot into sheets of glass. All this glass work was in fact inspired for one of his own traumatic experiences, be for the 'constellations' series dropped Zhao Zhao unfortunately got into a severe car accident resulting in him smashing his head into the windshield which is what inspired him to use glass as a material. And for this specific piece he hand embroidered with the help of his mother the patterns of shattered glass.

In conclusion, Zhao Zhao's 'constellations' is a powerful thought-provoking artwork. The shattered glass invites viewers to share their complex memories of trauma and complexities.