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Automotive Design

Module: ADAD4018

Task One: Manifesto (Julia's task) 501 Words.

Task three: (Jon's task) 484 Words

Task Two: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's task) 490 Words

Julia's Task: Manifesto Writing: "What do I believe in?"

1. Design will not please everybody.
2. Good design is a perception of the beholder.
3. Commitment makes progress.
4. Form can follow function yet still look 'beautiful'.
5. Perfection is never achievable.
6. Innovation is a constant goal.
7. There are always multiple solutions to a problem.
8. The Best outcomes come from hard work.

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Design is a form of art which is ultimately going to be subjective to every individual. In the automotive industry, a car has one fundamental function: to carry the passengers from A to B. However, with so many variations of the car on the road, it is apparent that when buying a car, the appearance will play part in the decision making. As a designer, it is inevitable that not everyone will find one design aesthetically pleasing. As a result, it has to be decided before hand 'who should and who should not be targeted' (Morris, 2009:39). There are certain people who will want a certain kind of aesthetic, hence will only shop for that specific style.

Consequently, it is only feasibly possible to please the people of whom the product was intended for. With this in consideration, one must conduct enough research before considering the design in order to target the product, and then be able to suit the design to that specific audience.



McLaren Senna. Photo by Alistair Barkley.

The McLaren Senna may not be classed as a beautiful car by many. It was designed by engineers for speed and as such the aesthetics of the car came second best. However, in this guise, the car is attributed to a livery from Senna's period. While not strictly being part of the design, it is sculpted around the lines of car, and having that evokes emotion. This helps the car turn heads when out on the road. Those in the know appreciate the features required for speed, especially in corners, whilst others may just see it as something a bit different. Either way, it is not without design as 'Humans connect to the world through emotion. And design without beauty is void of emotion. We cannot resonate with it. We cannot exist happily in it.' (Sagmeister, 2016).

In my mind, form is important but there is a need to ensure we do not forget the aesthetics. Looking utilitarian would be 'void of emotion', and not something that's in my soul.

As a human being, perfection is a 'belief' (Schwartz, 2008) that is constantly strived for; yet most people will never think they've achieved it. As a designer, it is essential to remember that when creating a product, it will either be a successor of a past iteration, or a new innovation. There are always compromises however, and this is what limits that endeavour for perfection.

In a practical sense though, the process of designing something can always be improved. For example, the quality of the development, the thoughts behind it, and also the way the ideas are conveyed on paper. As a young designer, I aspire to be able to draw to a standard of those who have been in the industry for decades. However, I have to realise that I lack that experience and practise. Many people feel 'bombarded with demands to improve [their] performance' (Antony; Swinson, 2009:10), but in many cases, I think they are self-inflicted too. It is definitely the case for me.

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Jon's task: Reflective Writing: Do you know what you think?

Reflection on the importance of considering heritage in modern design.

When designing a vehicle for future production, things like the design language and characteristics must be carried through or developed from previous designs. However, and potentially of more importance, it is essential to remember the heritage and history of a brand as 'branding is a process that involves telling stories about those concepts and persuading people to believe them' (McKevitt, 2018:149). An established connection to a product will 'capture the attention of customers who tend to reminisce about past decades' (Vong, 2012), making the market for the product more extensive.

The 24-hour endurance race held at Le Mans started almost a century ago. Traditionally, the drivers would start from outside the car, running to it when the lights went green. Porsche as a brand were very successful through the time period in endurance racing, and it was helped by one clever design feature. They worked out that moving the ignition to the left of the steering wheel (where it is typically on the right). By doing this, the driver was able to start the car whilst getting into it, hence was able to pull off more quickly gaining a small but significant advantage.

As a tribute to that small design feature, modern Porsches are still manufactured with the ignition to the left of the wheel. Celebrating the history of the brand in the present time makes the 'luxury' car feel more special by having a connection to its past.

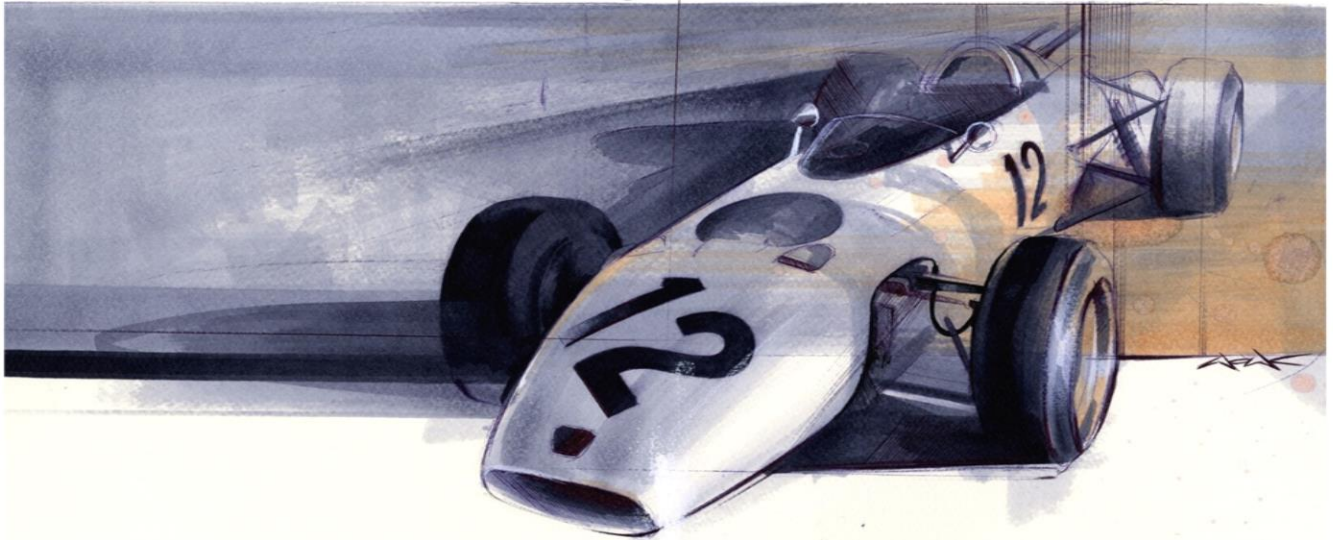
Considering the legacy and small design quirks when designing a new vehicle can make the final product feel more unique and therefore special. Chances are that most people wouldn't know the story behind such details like this one, but equally that enhances the experience for those who do when they switch on their car. This can be likened to marketing campaigns, where nostalgia is used to attract 'consumers through their past emotions' (Sardinha Cordeiro Morais; Carvalho Gomes; Ribeiro de Azevedo; de Almeida Pessanha, 2016).

The majority of modern designs and cultural forms of art have their basis stemming from previous times. It can be difficult to design a truly original concept, which will be readily accepted by society. People like to have an easily identifiable connection to the past as it feels safe having been done before. An example of this is modern music being inspired by previous artists. Mark Fisher explores this concept, saying that 'the reliance of current artists on styles that were established long ago suggests that the current moment is in the grip of a formal nostalgia' (Fisher, 2013:15).

Is this a case of the creative industries not being able to move forward with true innovation or is it that society is happy to not let go and live in the past? With modern design having its connections to the past, it is no wonder that designers continue to utilise nostalgia.

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- Volkswagen AG. (2018) *The New Porsche 911: Timeless Beauty*. Available at: <https://www.volkswagenag.com/en/news/stories/2018/12/the-new-porsche-911.html#>



Honda F1, Mateusz Wowk (2016)

This particular piece is quite earthy and raw. I think this choice of colour is representative of the vehicle – a classic F1 car – which as a driving experience would be raw and engaging. Not dissimilar to the artwork, the way colour is used is engaging as it integrates with the background, moulding into interesting reflections and therefore shadows, as light cannot be had without darkness. The use of light and dark helps to ‘intensify the optical illusion of form on a two-dimensional shape’ (Krieger, 2001:74) There is also an organic undertone in the way the colour is laid across the image. It flows and feels natural, possibly due to the lack of blocked areas. It’s all broken up by either light or shade, creating a lot of depth, and adding to the overall effect that the subject is 3D, regardless of it being in 2D format. This clearly demonstrates the artist’s understanding of 3-Dimensional form.

Space is quite a dominant feature of this particular artwork. This helps the viewer to place the vehicle, as ‘we don’t see the world in a rectangular frame’ (Taylor, 2014:10). There is a lot of space above and below the main feature, inducing a sense of scale. The car in reality isn’t all that large, and

by not allowing it to completely dominate the space, that fact is maintained. Moreover, the main block that it's in doesn't sit in the centre horizontally, resulting in more space below. It's not quite sat on the third division line, but it helps to create a sense of direction in front of the car, giving it somewhere to go if it were moving.

By contrast, the vertical composition is meticulously laid out according to the rule of thirds. The outer tyre on the left is roughly sat on the left third, as well as where the wishbones meet the chassis on the right one. As a result, it draws the attention of viewer to these specific points as the eye naturally divides the overall space into three. In particular, the wishbone is where Wowk uses the more defined, thicker outline which would suggest that this area specifically is one of if not the main focal point of the image.

Wowk seems to like subtle details, right down to the grain of the paper. Integrating a texture into an artwork 'situates [it] in particular styles and historical periods' (Anapur, 2016), possibly a nod to the period that the vehicle is from. There is a slight roughness, especially where the strokes are less opaque, which would be reminiscent of running a finger down an old hand beaten piece of metal. However, the number appears very smooth (like paint on the real thing), furthering the sense of realism in a primarily conceptual drawing. However, the slight scraping on the '2' would suggest that the car has been raced, and that texture is evocative of that and the paint 'peeling' as a result.

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