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Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's Task) = 521

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Task One: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's Task)



Figure 1 (Steam, 2015): Fran Bow with her cat, Mr. Midnight and Remor in the background.

'Fran Bow', a game named simply after the main character, tells the tragic tale of a well-meaning young girl with seemingly debilitating emotional issues. The game, with its childlike and imaginative illustration style focuses much of its psychological horror around Fran herself. Mental illness was looked down upon in the 1940's, and with the game being set in 1944, we know that Fran wasn't in good hands in the Asylum. Lieberman writes; "The purpose of the earliest mental institutions was neither treatment nor cure, but rather the enforced segregation of inmates from society," (Lieberman, Ogas, 2016, p35) which is made obvious multiple times throughout the game. Despite Fran being in a 1900's institution, the treatment she receives more closely mimics the treatment given to patients in the 1700 and 1800's.

"The mentally ill were considered social deviants or moral misfits suffering divine punishment for some inexcusable transgression." (Lieberman, Ogas, 2016 (p35). This is glaringly obvious within the game; despite Fran's mental issues being obviously due to the fact she witnessed her own parents gruesome murder; Fran is treated badly by most of the staff within the Asylum. Throughout the game, the player is trying to figure out what's reality and what's not; the game will lead you to believe that Fran being on Duotine is making her hallucinate, as when on it she sees horrific imagery; blood, dismembered body parts, and surreal looking monsters; yet it is shown that this is just as much Fran's truth as anything she sees when not on her medication.

"The way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe." (Berger, 1972, p8); keeping in mind that Fran is a child and would theoretically have little knowledge to influence such horrifically vivid hallucinations, this is just one of the indicators that what she is seeing is real. She can physically interact with some hallucinations, but she is not with others, indicating that at some parts, Fran is indeed hallucinating; despite that, she is seemingly unable to tell the difference between reality and a hallucination. Of course, Fran interacting with her 'hallucinations' when in the asylum is simply passed off as a mental illness akin to Schizophrenia; something which is regularly hinted at, but not literally said within the game. This is a recurring theme; characters are symbolically embodying the symptoms of certain mental illnesses, another one of the most prevalent ones being the twins, Clara and Mia; two of the children experimented on by Dr. Oswald. The twins could either be symbolic of Manic-Depressive Disorder, or Dissociative Identity Disorder. It is revealed within the game that Dr. Oswald, the founder of the Asylum, had a plan for Fran all along; he wanted her to be another one of his experiments. Just as he'd experimented on twins who were also in the asylum, abusing them, turning them against

each other, and surgically combining the two together, ultimately leading to their untimely death, Oswald wanted to keep Fran in the asylum as she grew up, eventually removing her brain and discarding her body when she became an adult. Oswald was aware that Fran wasn't merely hallucinating, and that she was able to interact with interdimensional beings. To conclude, while we know the game is of course based on the mental health of Fran Bow, it carries a lot of symbolism throughout; displaying different mental illnesses through different characters; but never truly saying if it's true or not, it's all up to the players interpretation.

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Task Two: Manifesto Writing (Julia's Task)

1. Even if my art isn't perfect, it's something I have made, and I should be proud.
2. I should learn from my mistakes and work on improving on them.
3. I shouldn't judge my art based on what others are doing, because we are different.
4. My art should invoke emotion.
5. Accept and appreciate constructive criticism and ignore insults.
6. Take inspiration from anything and everything.
7. Draw or write every idea; there is nothing too small.
8. No idea is too ambitious.



Figure 2 (Lifehacker), 3 hands holding signs with the number '10' written on them.

"Even if my art isn't perfect, it's something I have made, and I should be proud."

I often stress myself out too much over things being 'perfect'. Not just within my art; but within daily life. Many others and I put too much weight onto such a trivial word. "There is a very big difference between striving for excellence and striving for perfection." (Bluestein, 2015, pg3); Throughout our lives; we are seemingly judged on everything we do, but we forget to ask ourselves, whose judgement really matters? While some people's judgements may have direct impacts on our lives, it's important to realise that our own judgement of ourselves is the most important. It's hard to remind ourselves that while we sit there, embarrassed our work isn't up to an unrealistic standard, there are people who look at our work and strive to be like us; but they still put their work out there; they know there is always room for improvement, and appreciate that what they've done is, right now, their very best; which is something to be proud of.

I've chosen Figure 2 as my image, as I feel this is something, we all strive for; filmmakers, gymnasts, horse riders, pageant stars, anyone who is being judged wishes to get the highest possible score. But, when working towards these 'perfect 10's', they forget why they started doing what they were doing in the first place; because they enjoyed it.

“Accept and appreciate constructive criticism and ignore insults.”

Constructive Criticism	Destructive Criticism
• Intends to educate	• Intends to embarrass
• Related to the work	• Feels like a personal attack
• Helps build on an idea	• Tears down an idea
• Makes the outcome better	• Makes the person feel worse
• Is intelligent and calculated	• Includes rapid-fire and random responses
• Comes along to help	• Tries to take over

Figure 3, (Electric Skateboard Builders, 2019), Image outlining the difference between constructive and destructive criticism.

Criticism can often be hard to hear. I know I’m guilty of being upset when someone points out issues within my work. Of course, there’s some situations where it’s completely warranted to be upset; for example, someone just saying “The colours in your work suck”, and not giving any feedback at all. It’s reasonable to be upset then; the person clearly just wanted to make you feel bad. However, it can sometimes be hard to accept even constructive criticism. I try to keep some things in mind when receiving criticism; “What happens if we think of critique as an affective stance that orients us in certain ways?” (Felski, 2015, pg18), I think this is a great way to look at it. Constructive Criticism is there to help us; someone has looked at your work and thought of ways you could improve, and while they may not have necessarily complimented your work in any way, I feel like its encouraging to have their support in bettering yourself. It’s also important to learn how to simply ignore insults. With there being so many social media platforms for people to post their art; it’s so easy for people to anonymously insult and embarrass people and their work. That’s why I’ve chosen Figure 3 as my image for this point; I feel as though this is something everyone who creates or criticises any form of art should see. Not just for tips on how to constructively criticise others work, but to remind themselves what ‘criticism’ should sometimes be ignored.

“I shouldn’t base my art on what others are doing because we are different.”



Figure 4, (Loish, n.d), Girl with long black hair in water.

It’s so easy to spend hours and hours scrolling through social media, looking at artists who are 4 years younger than you, yet have hundreds of thousands of followers, You become envious and wish you had a different art style all together. That’s why for this point, I included a piece of art done by one of my favourite artists; Loish (see Figure 4). She’s someone who’s art I’ve appreciated and loved for years, but I’d hate to think of the amount of times I’ve wished my art was the same as hers. As artists; we take inspiration from everything around us, including the artwork we see; and that’s completely normal. However, it’s always somewhat disheartening to see someone have the exact style you’d like to have.

“With rare exceptions, we become who we become as artists *because* we are influenced by other artists, not despite that fact.” (Congdon, 2019, pg9.) This is an important thing to bear in mind when you are becoming an artist; most people are influenced by artists they love; and that’s a good thing. Experimentation with styles is so important in finding who you are as an artist and being inspired by others is something positive; you just must find the style your happy with. While it may not stop you from being envious of other styles; it’ll certainly make you more confident in your own.

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Task Three: Reflective Writing (Jon's Task)



Figure 5, (Slate, 2018), Miles Morales,

Phil Lord and Chris Miller are known for their pop-culture infused movies; and when asked by Sony/Marvel if they could make their first animated film, they agreed to do it on one condition; the film be about Miles Morales (Ordoña, 2019). Miles Morales is the first Afro-Latino Spider-Man; he first appeared within Marvel Comic Books in 2011. While there are many different Spider-Mans, Miles Morales obviously stood out among a set of predominantly white characters.

The film is influenced primarily by Comic Books; the entire animation style based on real observations but stylised in an incredible way. The film, having over 140 animators working on it, has scenes where you can very obviously see the inspiration from the illustrated comics; as show in Figure 5 the colour scheme, the squiggly lines surrounding his head to show his 'Spidey-Senses', and the various other textures, are bound to make most people think of comic books, which definitely wan people over; although other Marvel films are somewhat based on the comics, when you watch them, it's not all that reminiscent of a comic book; only the characters from the comics really relate.

The film stands out incredibly well amongst Marvel films; and not just because it's animated. Colours play a huge part in this film; I think one of its most memorable qualities is the incredible colour schemes it uses throughout.

"Remember, to achieve the greatest impact and sense of depth in your background art, there must always be significant differences in the colour values in the foreground, midground, and background of any environment." (White, 2009, p378); I think this is something the film does phenomenally well; as shown in Figures 6 and 7. The characters stand out among the background; but the way they've done it makes it look so natural. The visuals overall are something that make this film so notable. With a combination of unique animation styles from different artists, and uniquely designed characters, it's sure to stand out in anyone's eyes.

Another incredibly important facet of this film is of course, the main Spider-Man being black. We see the world through Miles' eyes; a young black teen in a predominantly white private school. It's a different experience for so many people. For white people, it's seeing

through the eyes of a black superhero, in a franchise that consisted predominantly of white men. For black people, it's being able to finally watch someone who looks like them be the hero, which is so incredibly important in a society where racism is still such a prevalent issue. It's an important step in the right direction for Marvel. Comic books have often been looked down upon as violent; "This Superman-Batman-Wonder Woman group is a special form of crime comics. The gun advertisements are elaborate and realistic." (Wertham, 1954, pg33), he wrote that comic books were nothing more than a means to encourage violence and can only do harm to young people; and I think this film completely disproves that. The film impacted me as someone who's been a fan of comic books since a very young age; while I've always been a fan of the Marvel films and have always made a point to see them in Cinema, seeing a film on my favourite superhero, that had a style that was so closely inspired by the comic books was honestly refreshing, and what made it my, and many others, favourite film.



Figure 6, (Syfy, 2018), Miles Morales and Peter. B. Parker in their Spider-Man Suits



Figure 7, (NY Times, 2018), Miles Morales in his Spider-Man Suit hanging in the road.

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