

Portfolio of Writing

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Course title: BA Design Crafts

Module: Ways of Thinking (ADDA4022)

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Following Tasks

Task 1 - Manifesto – 515 words

Task 2 - Observational Writing - 522 words

Task 3 - Practice-based Writing - 510 words

Task 1: Manifesto

1. Modern art lacks the essence of true art
 2. Mistakes aren't problems, they're stepping stones
 3. Art should be easy to understand without being too complex
 4. Art isn't always physical
 5. Money should never be the primary motive to art
 6. People should freely be able to express through art
 7. Art should evolve with time
 8. Have fun and enjoy the process
2. Mistakes aren't problems, they're stepping stones



Fig 1, Sean Carey, 2020

In art, mistakes can happen. People naturally consider these mistakes to be bad or something that shouldn't happen. In reality, mistakes should be used to improve our art and interpreted as a way of learning. Many artists consider making mistakes a benefit, making the piece more individual or even using it as the final product. Emmett Helen states,

'It's not totally wrong, but it's also not totally right... we're looking at this from the wrong angle—they're not necessarily getting lines exactly the way they envision them, they're rolling with whatever they get.'

From this, I gather that sometimes it's better to roll with it and see how things go, as it can make the piece more expressive and original.

1. Modern art lacks the essence of true art



Fig 2, Ian Kuzola, 2023

When it comes to art, there is no wrong way to do it. Some draw their artwork based on real-life sources or views they have from their opinions and experiences. Others draw from nothing, display work that makes little to no sense to the average person which tends to cause discussion within the community. This art form is called modern art. Art like 'Ceci n'est pas une pipe' by R. Magritte, who created this piece intended to play with the audience's views on whether the work is actually a pipe or not. The intent of R. Magritte was to create a concept that shows the conflict between words and images, allowing the audience to question the mystery behind the piece and what the true meaning could be.

'Conceptual Art challenges artistic norms... Stupid Art, on the other hand, is conceptual art stripped of depth. It does not expand artistic discourse; it simply plays on the expectations and gullibility of the audience.' Dilek Yalcin explains.

This states that conceptual art takes many forms that can leave viewers confused and lost in what the meaning of the art actually is. The definition is *'art in which the idea or concept presented by the artist is considered more important than its appearance or execution,'* from Oxford Dictionary. This tells us that artists typically have a meaning only they understand, which varies from the viewers causing debate on whether the art is special or made up from nothing.

5. Money should never be the primary motive in art.



Fig 3, Tony Rubino, 2022

Sometimes, people think art can make a lot of money for very little effort, especially with the concept that art can be anything and provides various interpretations. This can cause the industry to become more competitive, making it harder for smaller artists to gain the recognition they deserve. In this economy, money equals survivability, meaning that without money, life becomes tougher, leading some to prioritize financial gain over creative expression. An article by Trevor Anzai states, *'Pure intentions help guide the*

artist's hand, eye, and heart to make beautiful works of art... But oftentimes, artists can fall into greed's trap.'

This comment explains how this world is driven by money as many artists end up getting caught up in financial gain instead of the artist's true purpose for their work. As a result, artists can lose their passion and motivation to greed, leaving them burnt out with no motivation to continue.

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Fig 1 - Tony Rubino, Rubino money calling gangster entrepreneur Christmas, 2022: available at - <https://www.artmajeur.com/en/magazine/5-art-history/it-s-all-about-money-wealth-flaunted-by-art/332698>

Fig 2 - A person mistakes a clock for an art piece in a contemporary art gallery. They try to find a meaning about it when there is clearly none. By Ian Kuzola. Available at: https://threepennypress.org/staff_name/graphic-by-ian-kuzola

Fig 3 – learn from your mistakes like an artist. By Sean Carey. Available at: <https://seancarey.co/learn-from-your-mistakes-like-an-artist>

Task 2: Observational writing



Fig 1, Sunflower Seeds, Ai Weiwei, 2010

In 2010, contemporary artist Ai Weiwei created an artwork consisting of thousands upon thousands of small sunflower seeds that were scattered across the floor. This image comes from the interior of the Turbine Hall in Tate Modern, where Ai Weiwei discusses his art and background to this work.

Upon looking at this, we first see the large number of sunflower seeds that cover the floor, leaving no trace. This raises the question: Are they real? Why sunflower seeds? Sunflower seeds are known to be something people enjoy as snacks and are loved by most Chinese people. Because of this, we start to understand the relevance of what Ai Weiwei is trying to show through this art.

Following the interview at Tate Modern, we began to understand more about the process leading up to this work. Made in Jingdezhen, formed by 1600 people using porcelain, a material found to be historically one of China's most prized exports. From this, we can decode the carefully crafted work that has been produced from scratch. The number of seeds that show the countless workers that gather to sculpt each seed indicates the labor in traditional methods that truly shows the 'made in China' production. During the Unilever Series Commission, Ai Weiwei had a proposal and during this, he mentioned the significance of these seeds.

'In the times I grew up... Handfuls were carried in pockets, to be consumed on all occasions both casual and formal. So much more than a snack, it was the minimal ingredient that constituted the most essential needs and desires. Their empty shells were the ephemeral traces of social activity.' by Ai Weiwei, unpublished proposal for Tate Modern Unilever Series, March 2010.

This statement shows us the bond that would be formed from carrying them, sharing with others, and allowing people no matter the ranking signifies how meaningful these seeds are and justifies the drive into why the seeds are the representation of the views on issues involving the contemporary practice in China. The practice of creating those seeds in a handmade way rather than it being industrially produced, signifies the

manual labour to produce these seeds, bringing attention towards the ‘made in China’ phenomenon that comes from the mass-produced cheap goods we know today.

When we think about sunflower seeds, we think about the sun and growth. Similar to humans, we start as babies, and with time and nurturing, we grow as people. However, these sunflower seeds are not real and will never grow. They will remain as they are, and if anything, they may slowly wither with time. This connotation reflects the people in China who are not fortunate enough to grow and instead can be stripped of their purpose, like the sunflower seeds that do not get the opportunity.

Following this semiotic analysis, I gained a deeper understanding of the process and meaning behind this piece. This has allowed me to see a different side of the world as we know it and how it has impacted those who spend their lives producing great things that are not compensated well enough due to a lack of care and understanding.

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Fig 1, Ai Weiwei sunflower seeds, Tate Modern, interior of the Turbine Hall, 2010.
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<https://www.flickr.com/photos/waldopepper/5391444478/in/photostream/>

Task 3: Reflective Writing

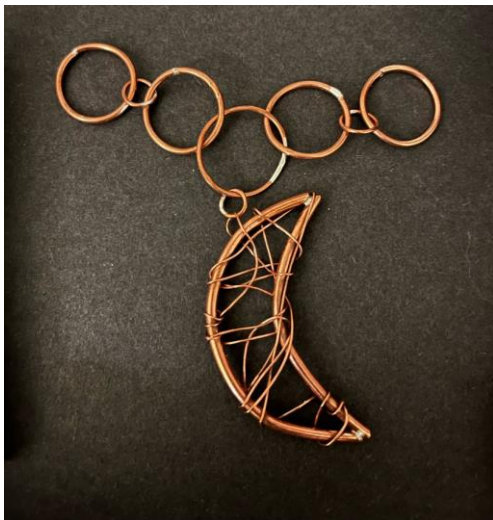


Fig 1, crescent moon, own image, 2025

During the first semester, one of my first pieces of practical work was making jewellery, specifically making rings and chains. It was hard at first. The new feeling of handling

metals and manipulating their shape really took a toll on my body. Learning the steps in forming a ring shape looked so easy during the teaching, but once I started doing it myself, it was very painstaking to say the least. Once I started getting the hang of things, I turned to the web for inspiration and ideas for what I could make. After some research, I came across a moon-shaped pendant someone made that I wanted to try for myself.

Alina Scheithauer states, *'Self-reflection through art is not merely an exercise in self-indulgence; it is a pathway to personal empowerment and growth.'* This statement is something I believe in without a doubt. Despite it being something I did a few weeks ago, reflecting on it allows me to think about the mistakes I've made and what needs to be done next time to achieve a better result. Back during the process, I remember feeling that it was the best and that I did a good job, but looking at it now, I see the imperfections and the areas that if I had spent longer on them, would have been cleaner and smoother. From afar, the piece itself was great and had dimension and was good at a beginner's level, but if you look close enough, you see the badly filed corners, the lack of soldering used to adhere the sections.

'Every piece, at the time of its creation, is the most challenging. Because each piece is different from the last, the creation process always involves quite a bit of trial and error.'

(Wallace Chan, April 2024) During my process in making jewellery, the realisation of how much precision to detail and time is needed to work on a piece became very apparent. Another thing is patience. I remember getting so frustrated at trying to get the ring ends to be flush and soldering them in the hopes the solder wouldn't fly away. The fiddly parts in making each piece would take up all my time and patience. Working with

the smaller wire is so much easier as it allows for more control in bending and shaping to how you want it, which adds more dimension to the final result.

Overall, working with metals isn't easy, it takes time and precision to bring the highest quality to your final piece. Reflecting on my work has shown me the precision I need to make better quality jewellery that will make me feel better about my work, as once the imperfections became clear to me, I realised how much better I could've done. Simone Wolowiec says '*Looking back naturally leads to looking forward. Reflection isn't just about the past—it's a compass for the future.*' understanding where I've gone wrong and the steps to improve my work will help me in being a better creator and enjoy the creative process much more.

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