

Portfolio of Writing

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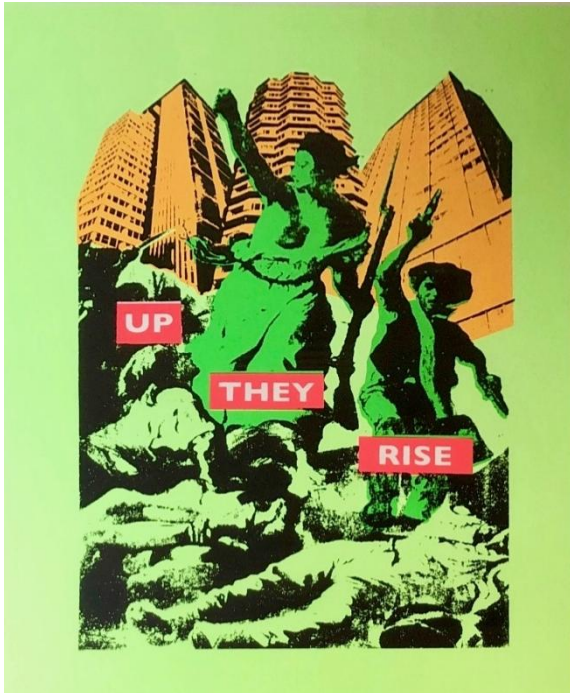
Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Reflection (Jon's Task) = 520 words

Task Two: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's Task) = 545 words

Task Three: Manifesto (Julia's Task) = 525 words

Task One: Reflection (Jon's Task)



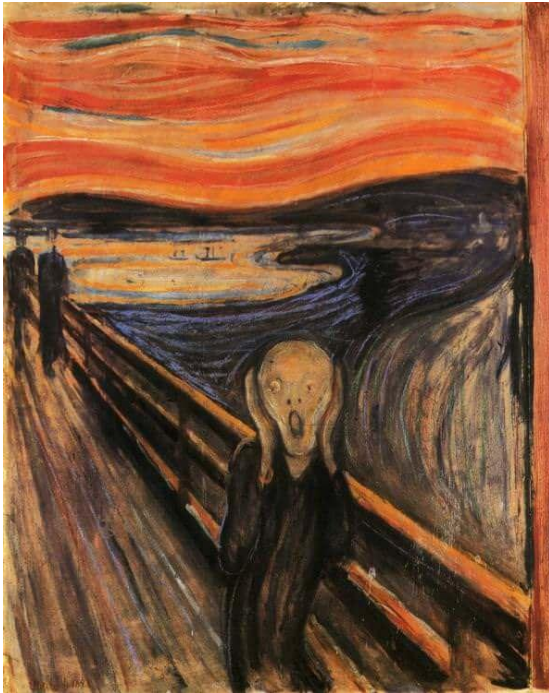
Jamie Reid

Up They Rise, 2007

I first came across this image while researching punk culture online. I listen to a lot of post-punk bands such as The Cure and Siouxsie and the Banshees so naturally, as an artist, I began to become more interested in the art from that culture. The image I chose instantly grabbed my attention because of the bold colours and the vague statement that reads "Up They Rise". It got me thinking more about who the people in the image are and how the statement could relate to them. This artwork is so simple yet says so much. I interpret this piece as a message to the authority that runs society. It shows us that the normal people of society aren't scared of people with more power than them. Ever since I became intrigued by the punk subculture, I have found myself agreeing with a lot of the things they have to say about society, mainly politics and hierarchy. The piece above was created by artist Jamie Reid. He is known as being one of the people who created the punk aesthetic that we all know today. The punk art aesthetic is known for looking quite rushed with little thought put into how good the image looks as a final outcome. Although this may sound lazy, it reinforced what the punk movement was about. It showed that

the images were handmade by the people themselves (or 'DIY' as it's called). "The extreme hands-on nature of D.I.Y. ethics gives a person a feeling of establishment" (Moran, 2010, p.64). This is something punks were known for, using what they already had to create an even bigger message. This made me think more about using what I already had around me to my advantage. With this in mind, I wanted to see if I was capable of creating something based on my beliefs, I wanted to try and stand out by making a bold statement about society. "Punk culture is based on an ideology that emphasizes questioning conformity and creating a space for individuality within community. It has inspired fans to create their own music and art as part of their quest for authenticity"(Masino Drass, 2016, p.138). To put this into practice, I now try to pay more attention to the society we live in and build my own opinion from what I've learnt. As part of my active experimentation I have also created a couple of political pieces that convey bold statements using techniques that traditional punk artists would use. Kolb's 'active experimentation' described by McGuigan and Weil - "They are required individually plan for their case study experience, by reading required material and formulating an action plan for completing their assigned work. The students will then experiment with the case study individually by each completing an initial attempt of the work"(McGuigan and Weil, 2007, pp.154-155). I feel like I have achieved this as I retained useful information and applied it to my art. I was also happy with my outcomes, indicating that I correctly followed the process of experiential learning in order to improve my work.

Task 2: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's Task)



Edvard Munch

The Scream, 1893

'The Scream' by Edvard Munch shows a distressed figure in the centre of the foreground of the image. The figure appears to be standing on a bridge that's also being used by two other people. These people are a fair distance away from the figure but it's hard to tell whether they are walking towards or away from it. A body of water can be seen flowing from underneath the bridge, towards the sunset. A patch of land can also be seen towards the left hand side of the image. These are the only things that we can see but we can also wonder about what they mean. "A connotative meaning is the outcome of the relationship between the object (product) and sign (colour), including human aspects, such as emotions and feelings, and the culture" (Kauppinen-Räsänen and Jauffret, 2018, p.108). Munch said "In my art I attempt to explain life and its meaning to myself"(Winsor&Newton, 2012). If we were to apply this statement to the image, it could suggest that the screaming figure is Munch. As they are facing towards us, they could be overwhelmed by something going on behind them. However, you could also argue that they're reacting to the observer of this image. The facial expression of the figure could imply that they are

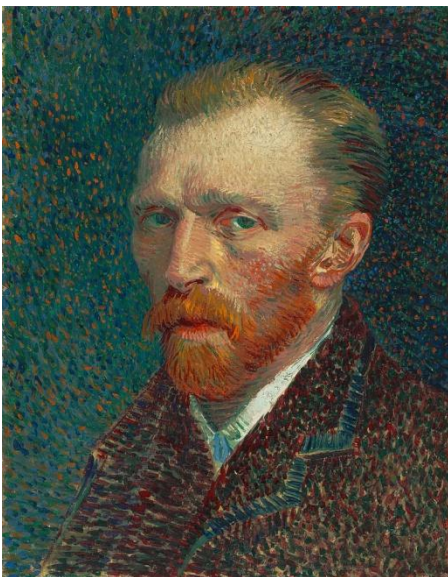
either scared or pleasantly surprised. Whatever the emotion is, it could represent how Munch was feeling at the time this was created. The dull tones of the figure could've been used to emphasise the negative emotions he may have be experiencing." Goethe's colour polarity is evident from the light and dark or warm and cool colour oppositions along with their associated positive and negative connotations"(König, C. & Collins, M., 2009, p.234). This also tells us that people use colour as another way of conveying emotion. As explained before the two people in the background can be seen walking but in an unknown direction. It's possible that they could have something to do with the main figure's scared reaction. The two people also appear to be dressed in black; this could be linked with funerals and death. They could symbolise the future as we are all going to die one day. A fiery orange has been used to create what appears to be a sunset. Sunsets are associated with relaxation however; it can also be associated with fire and burning which could then remind us of hell. The water may also be seen as a flood due to its scale and the way it can be seen twisting and turning around the landscape. Quick flowing water can only suggest panic and worry within the image. The bridge and the two people are the only aspects of the image that haven't been drawn in a distorted way. They could possibly represent reality while everything else symbolises Munch's mental state. "Sometimes however the story survives, the imagery assisting in the process of passing the narrative down the generations, perhaps changing in some aspects but retaining its essence."(Bullen, 2013, p.91). This tells us that after many years an art work can still hold the same meaning due to the vivid messages behind the piece, the narrative aspect allows us to tell the story over and over again.

Task 3: Manifesto (Julia's task)

1. It's okay to fail.
2. I will never take art seriously.
3. If I'm not having fun, I will not create.
4. The meaning behind artwork is a social construct, art has no meaning.
5. Just because art has no meaning doesn't mean I will give up on it.
6. I will never limit myself, experimentation is key.
7. I am constantly changing therefore, my art is constantly changing.
8. Just because the art is finished doesn't mean the topic discussion is over.

Key words and images:

Key word: Fail



Vincent van Gogh

Self portrait, 1887

We will never be perfect at anything; 'perfect' is a social construct. Failure is not the end of the process just the beginning of a new one. Without failure we won't recognise our mistakes. Development will not occur and our art will not represent what we are trying to convey. Of course, we can choose to accept these flaws as they may show the beauty of our original creation.

An example of this is a Japanese concept called Wabi sabi. "Wabi sabi embodies the nihilist cosmic view and seeks beauty in the imperfections found as all things, in a constant state of flux, evolve from nothing and devolve back into nothing" (Juniper, 2003, p.5). However, we can also use these imperfections to our advantage. They can inspire us to persevere and improve. In the midst of recreation we may wonder what else we are capable of. Failure gives us the opportunity to explore what could've and can still be. Van Gogh was classed as a failed artist throughout his life. It was only after his death that his work became famous all over the world. Even though he was classed as a failure, he still continued to create. In fact, before his suicide at the age of 37 he created hundreds of artworks, he persevered.

Key word: Changing

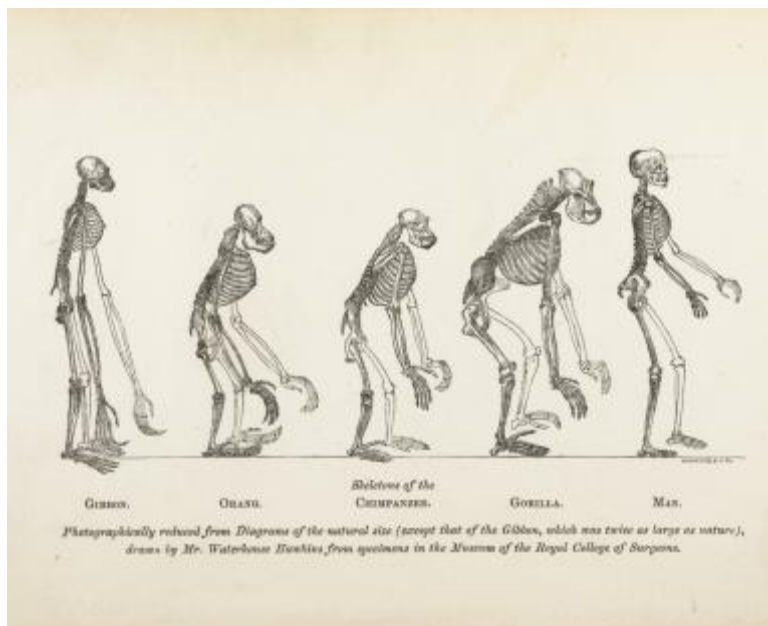


Illustration from Thomas

Huxley's Evidence as to Man's Place in Nature, 1863

The image above shows how humans and apes had similar skeletal structures and how the ape could've evolved into the human. If the Darwin's theory of evolution is correct, it implies that the ape will have adapted to fit its surroundings at the time in order to survive. This could be applied to the artist and their work. The artist's life will always be changing therefore; they won't necessarily create the same things all the time. Factors in their life will cause them to change.

Change can be seen as something scary however, times of stress are times of growth. Darwin also came up with survival of the fittest. "This term is often used to describe the natural selection of genes that optimises the fitness of a species in a particular environment" (2009, p.973). You can also apply this to the artist. Of course, art isn't a competition however, if you do not create art that makes you feel fulfilled, you may give up.

Key word: Finished



Leonardo da Vinci

Mona Lisa, 1503

Once an art work has been completed you're able to take a step back and observe what you've just created. The piece can be interpreted in many different ways depending on who the observer is. As the art work ages over time it will still hold the same message and will still be up for discussion. The image of Mona Lisa is an example of this. After hundreds of years we are still talking about this image. For example, "What gives Mona Lisa's smile such a mysterious quality? Livingstone (2000) has suggested that the portrait changes its expression depending on where on the portrait the observer looks" (Bohrn, Carbon and Hutzler, 2010, p.378).

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