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Three keywords: Memories, Inspiration and Protest.

In this proposal I have picked three keywords and they are Memories, Inspiration and Protest. I have chosen memories because this is a very meaningful word to me as I realised last year how important my memories are after losing a loved one and how it is important to cherish those moments. I picked inspiration as my second key word because I feel like I have been inspired by many people in many ways and I would not be the person I am today if it were not for those inspirational moments. Lastly, I picked protest I am interested in protest and how graphic design has a huge part of helping people speak their thoughts and I wanted to research into more ways of how people show their opinion. The three artist I picked to go alongside these keywords are Sheppard Fair, Roberts Blakeley and Greg Banbury.

Memory is the process of taking information in which is around us, storing it and retelling the information and sometimes recalling them many years later. Memories are important to me as I feel they have had a massive impact on my life as I have recently lost a loved one and I constantly think about memories to help me think about all the good times we have had. Sometimes memories can fade over time so it is important to preserve memories, as once you have lost a loved one, they can be with you by looking through all the videos and photos you have kept, so the memory will not fade over time. It allows you to re live your favourite times, hear their laugh one more time and feel like you are in their presence. Memories bring the older and younger generation together because it gives their children and grandchildren more insight into their past. It allows children to create a stronger bond with parents and grandparents as they can see them as real people with history who have real hopes and fears and not just their parents and grandparents. (DiJifi, 2020)

As Angela Riechers (2015) states that "Memory is a powerful communicative device, and many designers struggle to decide when to employ it." The job of the designer is to solve the problem that is given to them by the client and to deliver the message effectively to the client and then the client can re-create the memory by keeping the artwork through a photobook, journal or tectonically through a blog. However, I do feel graphic designers do produce work through memories effectively if it is their own memory as they can really retell the story and can relate to it. It is hard for graphic designers to show it through client work as it is not their memory to tell. Graphic designers must think of ways to evoke memory in an authentic way that will allow a wider audience to engage in, so as designers they to avoid making the work about them and more of what the client wants but still have aspect of what they like too. Visual group memory is based on popular culture. Designers use visual group memory to evoke certain moods or feeling for the viewer to see that creates a gut feeling before reading anything. "The eyes and heart react before the mind process." Symbols can

Figure 1: Riechers. A. (2015)



have memories that can fade and then create new ones. For example, the first image of the Fallout shelter was the threat of a nuclear annihilation, in the cold war which is now a distant memory and is now being used for warning for factual zombie invasions and rebellious rock show posters. Many designers reuse symbols that the memories have faded on and reuse them for other purposes, such as boxing posters they are forceful and eye catching, and the typography is used as diner menus to advertisement posters.

(Riechers, 2015) This shows that memories are useful not just remembering a loved one but also help many graphic designers creating their work for clients or themselves. And that we do not

understand how much we rely on memories every day, whether it is a happy or sad memory.

According to Collins dictionary (2020) the definition of inspiration is “inspiration is a feeling of enthusiasm you get from someone or something, which gives you new and creative ideas.” This definition I feel sums up inspiration for me because I have had many experiences when someone or something has given me an idea or inspiring thought to do something. For example, I would not be doing graphic design in university if it were not for a teacher in my school as he gave me the encouragement and believed in me, he encouraged me to push my ideas and became an inspiration to me as a student. Inspiration is important especially as a graphic designer because ideas do not come straight away to us, we must research, look at other people's work and gather inspiration off others. Like Pablo Picasso famously said: *“Good artists copy, great artists steal”* this phrase became known again in 1996, when Steve Jobs stated in his PBS documentary that *“We have always been shameless about stealing great ideas.”* (Connolly,2020) he did not mean it was okay to steals someone's work and claim it as your own but exploring someone else’s work and looking at different things and how you would incorporate it into your own with your unique stamp on it.

One of the most inspiring people to me is Barack Obama, he is one of the greatest humans as not only is he the first Black president of America, but he is also a husband a dad and an inspirational man to many people around the world especially to Americans, as he wanted to make their lives better. Obama was not just there for Black people to make their lives better he was there for everyone and one of his many achievements whilst president was the Obama care. The aim of the Obama care was to make health insurance available for everyone and to be more affordable. Millions of Americans have benefitted from this act, people on low income or someone who had to care for sick family members or even had their own health issues, really benefitted from his kind gesture as they would not be able to afford private health care otherwise. If it were not for the Obama care people would

Figure 2: National Portrait Gallery. N/a.



have had to suffer in silence as they could not afford medical treatment privately. (Roland, 2019). Even the most inspirational people have someone who has made an impact on their lives and have been an inspiration to them, for example Obamas most inspirational person is his own mother as she has had the greatest influence on his life and he said, “She’s really the person who instilled in me a sense of confidence and a sense that I could do anything.” The most inspirational painting of Barack Obama was the red and blue image of his face with the word HOPE placed underneath, created by Shepard Fairey. This is the most iconic image of the first African American president of the United States. The word “HOPE” is used because the man in the image Obama provides us with hope.

However, people may have a different approach to the meaning of the poster if they did not like the way the president ran the country, they may take the poster as sarcasm. (Yuan, 2014)

Throughout history, “artists and citizens have turned to protest art as a means of demonstrating social and political discontent.” (McQuiston, 2019) Since the 1500s they have used strategies such as engraving, photolithographic, prints, posters, murals, graffiti, and political cartoons, these graphic forms symbolise the rebellious struggle that the artists try to portray in a protest. For example, Black Lives Matter protest when the long line of African American deaths involving police officers. This led to a massive protest the next day and carried on and still goes on now fighting for a peaceful end to violence. This became an international protest and there are now many familiar slogans being used like ‘I can't breathe,’ ‘Black Lives Matter’ and Justice for George.’ Many graphic designers took hold of these slogans and turned them in to artwork that was used as protest to lives that have been affected.

Figure 3: Wong.H. (2020)



The 'I can't breathe' poster designed by Bunbury, he stated that "I'm hoping for fertile ground" from a design point of view he is looking for a shorthand to get across his point. That is why he has used the typography approach instead of an illustration as its easier to take in and notice. He says he wants it "basic" and "if I can put up three words and make people visibly uncomfortable then I'm doing my

job." (Wong, 2020). This is also one of the reasons he chose the colour red to make it resemble blood. Aswell as the protest on the streets for Black Lives Matter, there was a huge protest on social media with #BlackLivesMatter and #AllLivesMatter. These hashtags were used 11.8 million times across social media this just shows the power of social media and how it can get people from anywhere around the world to join in on one campaign. Social media has become one of the most common ways of voicing political and social groups. The Black Lives Matter hashtag was the third most used social issue hashtag in the 10-year history platform. (Anderson. 2016). However, whilst there was no noticeable change being made by the public policy concerning the issue about the Black Lives matter. The football player Colin Kaepernick took it in his own hands and started another protest by kneeling during the national anthem, this then was carried on by other football players to raise more of awareness to the protest. This just shows that there are many ways of protesting your political views, to get your message across and change minds. (Santoro, 2020)

Graphic designers have the empowerment on people to really look at things differently, whether it is through propaganda or typography, it has the potential to make the reader understand the message and take it on board. Showing artwork whilst protesting does not change anything because of what you have written or drawn, it is how the message can get through and change a point of view. Also, the rise in social media has made it a lot easier for a creative campaign to have more of an impact. For example, the 'I'm in' graphic about the UK'S pro-remain campaign, went viral on social media, this shows that graphic design now shapes movements as well as being the medium for their message. Graphic design has the power of the visual language of protest is so powerful that it creates the ability to change minds and it works into our everyday lives and shakes up political views. Sunmola (2019)

Whilst creating this proposal the research areas I decided to pick were based on my interest within the key word so for example with protest, I decided I would investigate Black Lives Matter as it is a highly topical subject and i liked the way they protested using graphic design, social media and hashtags and did not just protest on the streets. I decided to pick a certain topic within my key word because I felt I could narrow it down and I could really show my passion for the key word. Then the artwork became easier to decide as I had narrowed the topic to one thing and picked the artwork which was the most suited and inspired me the most. I felt by splitting my research up was an effective way of allowing me to explore each of my keywords and really have a thorough research. The keywords I choose are quite different from each other because memory has a personal meaning to me and is related through family the most, inspiration is to do with how people have directed me, helped me, and pushed me in the right direction to be where I am today. Lastly protest, this word is quite different from the other two as its not personal to me, but I am interested in this topic and how it is related to graphic design. However, the three key words do link, for example Surragette Emmeline Pankhurst who protested and fought for women's right to vote, we remember her, and her story and she has been an inspiration to women over the years.

Over the summer I will be researching Why are memories so important? So, this helps me get more of understanding when going into year 3.

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Images

Figure 1: Riechers, A. 2015. *Evoking memories: Communicating via memory in design*. Available at: <https://www.printmag.com/design-inspiration/evoking-memories-communicating-via-memory-in-design/>

Figure 2: National Portrait Gallery. N/a. *Now on View: Portrait of Barack Obama by Shepard Fairey*. Available at: <https://npg.si.edu/blog/now-on-view-portrait-barack-obama-shepard-fairey>

Figure 3: Wong, H. 2020. *Black Lives Matter: graphic design's role in the protest movement*. Available at: <https://www.designweek.co.uk/issues/1-7-june-2020/black-lives-matter-graphic-designs-role-in-the-protest-movement/>