

Portfolio of Writing

Student Number: 2501593

BA Honours: Graphic Design

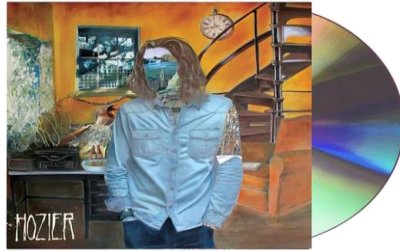
Word Count:

- **Task 1: Semiotic Analysis: 549**
- **Task 2: Manifesto Statements: 543**
- **Task 3: Practiced based writing: 540**
- **Total word count: 1,632**

For this assessment, I confirm that I have not used Generative AI to support me in structuring my submission, including creating a draft argument structure, identifying parts and headings. I confirm that I have not used Generative AI to create text for my submission. I confirm that I have not used Generative AI for creative materials, such as images.

Task one: Semiotic analysis

“In semiotics, a sign is traditionally defined as something which ‘stands for’ something else. It can take any form- a word, an image, a sound, an odour, a flavour, an action, an event, an object” (Chandler, 2022, P.16). This could be a personal meaning, or something that is highly analysed and recognised by people. Studying the use of typography and colours, I will analyse the meanings of them, and how they were used in the album cover.



This piece was originally a painting done by Raine Hozier Byrne, before being turned into an album cover for the self-titled album “Hozier,” released in 2014. Hozier (2025), states that this piece was very personal, having meaningful links to his life, including the New York skyline in the face, which is a reference to his first trip to America.

Linking to the Hozier cover, it has a lot of hidden meanings, like the lyric on the torn sleeve ‘gentle sin’ referenced by Hozier (2025) as his favourite lyric, from the song “take me to church”. This shows that studying the meanings of what this typography means is essential to understanding the album cover, having his favourite lyric on the torn sleeve is used to represent the feeling of the entire album, whilst also including something that is important to Hozier. Typography within album covers must be eye catching, as essentially it is a marketing tool to make people interested in the album. “Brands consist of meanings, not just the ‘stuff’ consumers use” (Oswald,2012).

Therefore, this typography must be recognisable to the average Hozier listener, using consistency across all albums. “it’s an assertion of self, reclaiming humanity back for something that is the most natural and worthwhile.” (Hozier, 2014), in reference to his song “take me to church” this symbolizes that having a lyric from this song on the

cover is meant to represent something natural that should not be discouraged, and allowing humans to just simply be, humans.

“Musicians, and artists have tried to establish correspondences between sound and colour” (O’Neill, 2023, P. 47). Colour within this album is important to what it stands for, also having a link to the typography. As the typography within this cover includes song lyrics from the album, the colours also must represent the feeling of the songs in a way, as Hozier is someone who uses political and social injustice as a theme in his work, the red/ orange colours could be associated with the anger felt by him or the aggression represented by the social issues he represents, such as the unnecessary aggression on protesters. Whereas as Hoziers figure is blue, this could represent his aim to create peace or show awareness for the issues represented in his music. Blue and orange are complementary colours and both high contrast, therefore making this album cover appear more vivid and linking to Hozier’s stance on injustice, by referencing emotions that many people feel about injustice, especially as it is one of the main topics in his music.

Although there are plenty other semiotics that could be analysed within this album cover, it is clearly shown by the meanings behind it that semiotics is everywhere, in the products you see every day, signs on the street, everything has a meaning, there is more behind things than recognised.

Bibliography:

Azcarate, A. L-V., O'Neill, S. (2023) *The Intermediality of Contemporary Visual Arts: Towards a Semiotics of Visual Music*. Intech Open. P.47-68. Available at:

<https://www.intechopen.com/chapters/86642> (Accessed on: 1st December 2025)

Chandler, D. (2022) *Semiotics: the basics*. Fourth edition. Routledge. Available at:

<https://www.vlebooks->

[com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/Product/Index/2747169?page=0&startBookmarkId=-1](https://www.vlebooks-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/Product/Index/2747169?page=0&startBookmarkId=-1)

(Accessed on: 28th November 2025)

Hozier-Byrne, A. (2025). *Hozier Album Artwork Description*. Available at:

https://youtube.com/shorts/v3gqEB_YrS4?si=oLtgNKrVq0s2CVKh (Accessed on:

12th November 2025)

Oswald, L.R., (2012). *Marketing Semiotics: Signs, Strategies, and Brand Value*.

Oxford University Press. Available at:

<https://academic.oup.com/book/9313?login=true> (Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Sheperd, J.E., Hozier-Byrne, A., (2014) Q+A: *Irish Musician Hozier on Gay Rights,*

Sexuality and Good Hair. Available at: [https://www.thecut.com/2014/03/qa-hozier-on-](https://www.thecut.com/2014/03/qa-hozier-on-gay-rights-sex-good-hair.html)

[gay-rights-sex-good-hair.html](https://www.thecut.com/2014/03/qa-hozier-on-gay-rights-sex-good-hair.html) (Accessed on: 1st December 2025)

List of Figures:

Figure 1: Hozier (2014) *Hozier album cover*. Available at:

<https://usstore.hozier.com/products/hozier-self-titled-cd?srsId=AfmBOorCeyaeF7dHNsFo6wXy2QNTdSaC5m6MAZL5OBffXbPwktibrm2>

[o](#) (12th November 2025)

Task 2: Manifesto Statements

1. Experiences are more important than things
2. Treat everyone with kindness and respect
3. Everything happens for a reason
4. Anxiety can drive us in a lot of ways
5. Be inspired by anything and everything
6. Do what makes you happy
7. Making mistakes is part of learning
8. Be yourself

4. Anxiety can drive us in a lot of ways

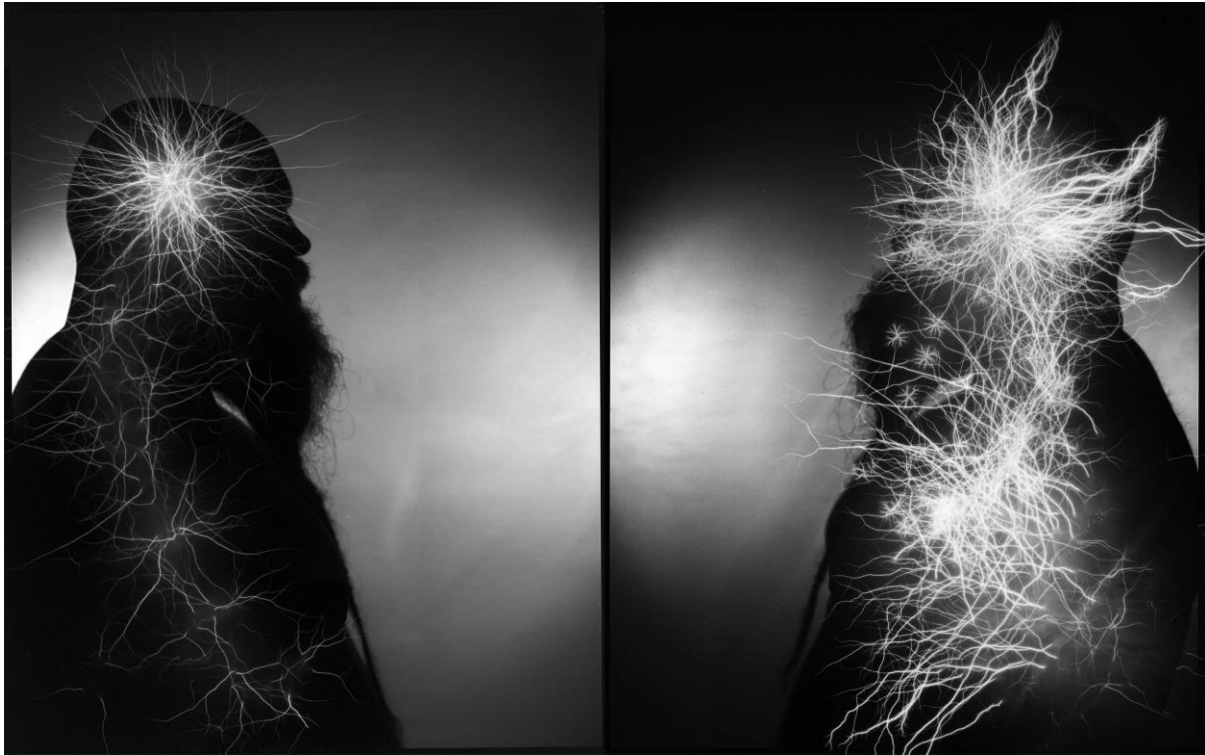


Figure 1, (Pfister, P., 2023, Facing the Devil)

Anxiety has a significant impact on many people. According to Mind (2021), Anxiety is what we feel when we are worried, tense, or afraid, particularly about things that are about to happen. Anxiety is a natural thing, and everyone feels anxious- presentations, deadlines, or even job interviews. Anxiety impacts how we work; it can be negative but also a motivator. “Although these emotions tend to be subjectively experienced as unpleasant, they can also provide energy, focus, and determination, helping an individual work hard toward a future goal” (Strack, J. et al, 2017) It helps people to get everything done. Figure 1 represents what anxiety may look like in people in a time of stress; however, this energy is what inspires and influences people to work harder. “Survival circuits ‘instantiate functions that allow organisms to survive and thrive by detecting and responding to challenges and opportunities”

(McNaughton, N., Jeffery A.G., 2024) This represents how the brain detects anxiety caused by future events, and creating a response, to getting the person motivated to complete the preparation, with the aim of getting rid of the anxious feeling. Therefore, anxiety can be seen as a major factor in motivation, as it creates a fear of not getting things done on time, and can often be a major factor in concentration too, as the fear makes people work harder.

5. Be inspired by anything and everything

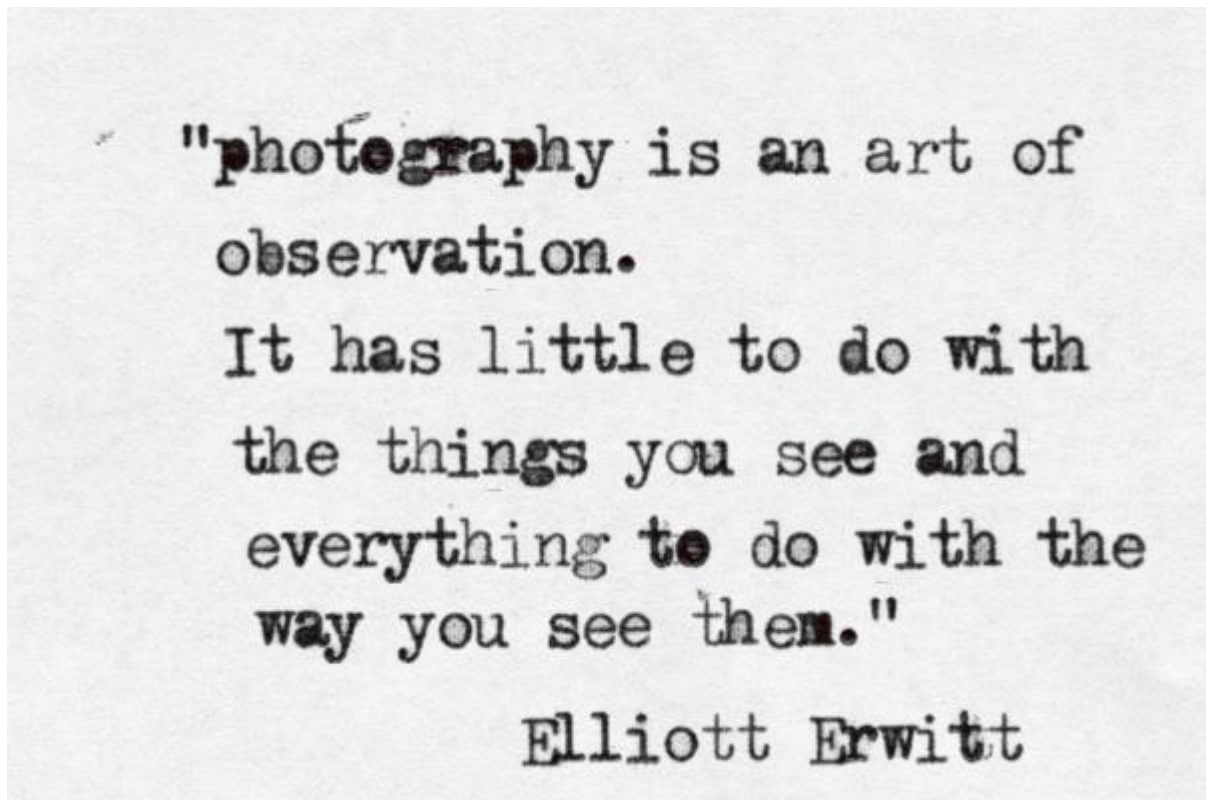


Figure 2: (Kay, N., 2018, *photography is an art of observation.*)

Inspiration comes from anywhere- "The mind is always searching for ways of telling its dreams. This has been the pattern in every creative mind, to tell its stories from the perspective of the inspired mind" (Thomas, M., 2024) How you go about life, your

views, your beliefs, everything can create inspiration. “Be continually positive, always inquisitive, and eager to seek out new experiences. These are the qualities I believe are the key to creativity.” (Burrill, 2017, P.14-15) This was a quote from Burrill's Grandfather, showing the extent of where your inspiration can come from, showing that Burrill has used this for inspiration all throughout his life, and well into his career. This concludes that taking inspiration from others is how we get through life, it is all inspiration from things that have had a personal impact. “In life’s saddest winter moments, when you’ve been under a cloud for weeks, suddenly a glimpse of something wonderful can change the whole complexion of things, your entire feeling” (Howard, 2018) inspiration can make us feel, a range of things, helping with our state of mind and productivity.

7. Making mistakes is part of learning



Figure 3: (Tackle What's Next, 2022, How embracing our mistakes can help us grow)

Mistakes are an essential part of life, making mistakes helps with making improvements, and often better things will come from them. Not everyone and everything will be perfect the first time around. Mistakes are a catalyst for change in a lot of situations. "Because we cannot avoid mistakes, we must learn to make the best of them. And to do this means to learn from them. Our brain has its mistake radar turned on high and is eager to alter its behaviour" (Beck, 2019) They help us to become better people, but also seeing others allows us to become more comfortable in ourselves. Therefore, they give us the chance to not only help ourselves, but also to help others appreciate the fact that mistakes are part of life and not something to be embarrassed about.

Bibliography:

Beck, H. (2019) *Scatterbrain: How the mind's mistakes make human creative, innovative and successful*. Greystone Books. Available at:

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/trinity/detail.action?docID=5856957&pq-origsite=primo> (Accessed on: 1st December 2025)

Burrill, A., (2017) *Make it now!: Creative inspiration and the art of getting things done*.

Available at: <https://www-vlebooks-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/Product/Index/1359160?page=0&startBookmarkId=-1>

(Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Howard, E., (2018), *Life according to Elliot Erwitt*. Available at:

<https://www.magnumphotos.com/arts-culture/society-arts-culture/elliott-erwitt-life/>

(Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

McNaughton, N., Jeffery A.G., (2024) *The Neuropsychology of Anxiety: An enquiry into the functions of the septo-hippocampal system*. (3rd edition). Oxford University

Press. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/book/56484?login=true> (Accessed on:

30th November 2025)

Mind (2021) *Anxiety and panic attacks*. Available at:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health->

[problems/anxiety-and-panic-attacks/about-](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/anxiety-and-panic-attacks/about-anxiety/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=20972684107&gbraid=0AAAAAqxG7mpunDorU9KQyvQgntopWu0tY&gclid=CjwKCAiA86_JBhAlEiwA4i9Ju_wpi_Hf05e38PgACts4JvgmwPyVsMd8wo0B6whXWbJCSOkmriaFfRoCp_AQAvD_BwE)

[anxiety/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=20972684107&gbraid=0AAAAAqxG7mpunDorU9KQyvQgntopWu0tY&gclid=CjwKCAiA86_JBhAlEiwA4i9Ju_wpi_Hf05e38PgACts4JvgmwPyVsMd8wo0B6whXWbJCSOkmriaFfRoCp_AQAvD_BwE](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/anxiety-and-panic-attacks/about-anxiety/?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=20972684107&gbraid=0AAAAAqxG7mpunDorU9KQyvQgntopWu0tY&gclid=CjwKCAiA86_JBhAlEiwA4i9Ju_wpi_Hf05e38PgACts4JvgmwPyVsMd8wo0B6whXWbJCSOkmriaFfRoCp_AQAvD_BwE) (Accessed on:

30th November 2025)

Strack, J. et al. (2017) *Must we suffer to succeed? When anxiety boosts motivation and performance*. Journal of Individual Differences, 38(2), P.113-124. Available at:

<https://research-ebsco->

[com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/c/onvpsy/search/details/73otgcuy7b?db=pdh&limiters=Non](https://research-ebsco-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/c/onvpsy/search/details/73otgcuy7b?db=pdh&limiters=Non&q=Must%20We%20Suffer%20to%20Succeed%3F&searchMode=boolean)

[e&q=Must%20We%20Suffer%20to%20Succeed%3F&searchMode=boolean](https://research-ebsco-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/c/onvpsy/search/details/73otgcuy7b?db=pdh&limiters=Non&q=Must%20We%20Suffer%20to%20Succeed%3F&searchMode=boolean)
(Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Thomas, M. (2024) *Deciphering the creative mind- Decoding the language of creativity, poetic endeavour, fantasy, inspiration, and imagination*. Available at:

<https://www.proquest.com/docview/3206946123?accountid=130472&parentSessionI>

[d=W6CofWaNY%2FZ54mVjAMojfFRCff8E898ilqerLpjEatY%3D&pq-origsite=primo&sourcetype=Scholarly%20Journals](#) (Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

List of Figures:

Figure 1: Pfister, P.J. (2023) Facing the Devil. Available at:

<https://www.parkerpfister.com/blog-/asheville-fine-art-photographer-pictures-of-anxiety> (Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Figure 2: Nate, K. (2018) *Photography is an art of Observation*. Available at:

<https://www.thephotoargus.com/99-inspirational-photography-quotes/>

(Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Figure 3: Tackle What's Next (2022) *How embracing our mistakes can help us grow*.

Available at: <https://www.tacklewhatsnext.com/blog/embracing-our-mistakes>

(Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Task 3: Practice Based Writing

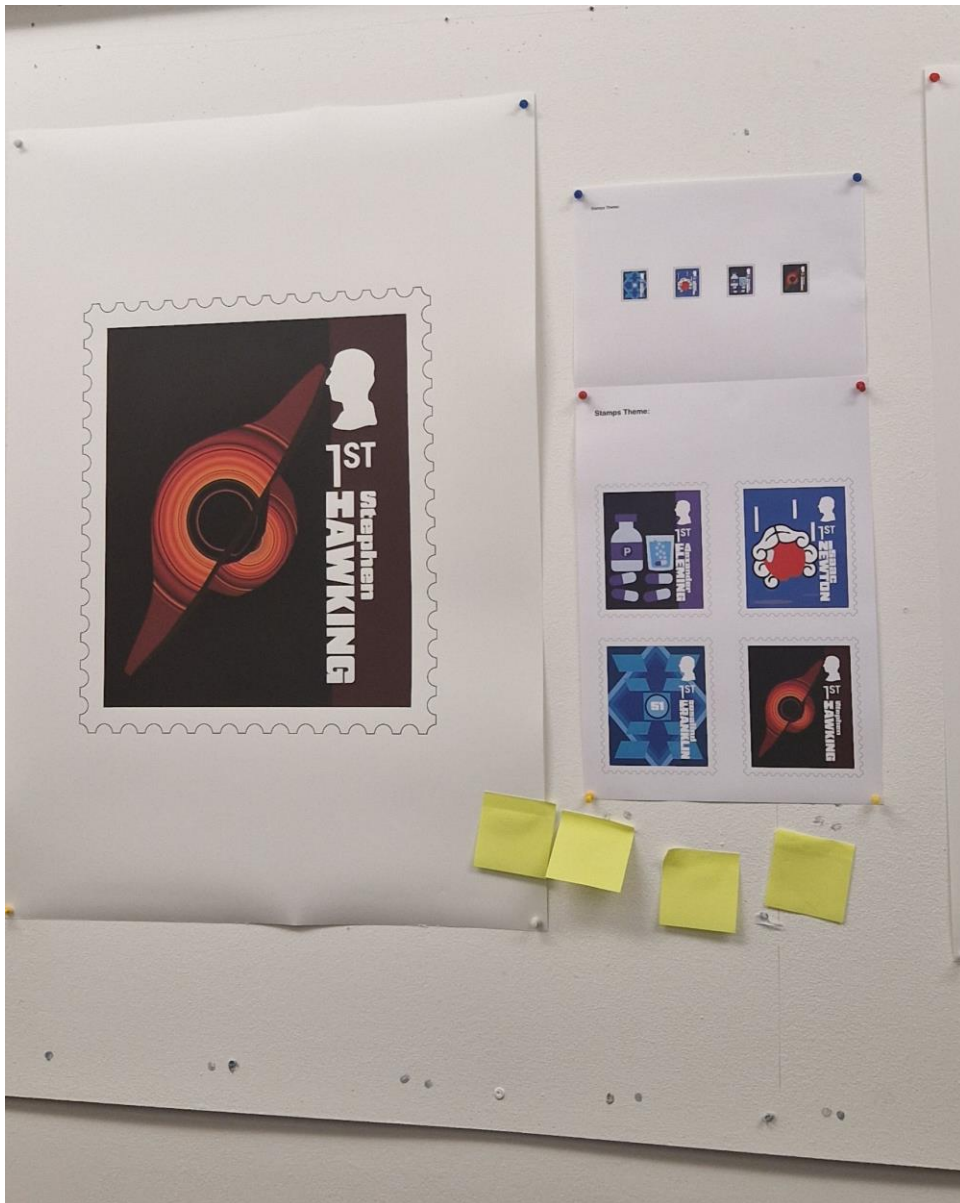


Figure 1: (British Scientists stamp set, own image,2025)

This piece was a collaborative workshop done with 3rd year graphic design students. This was a challenge, as it involved working with new people, and producing an idea everyone is happy with. we started researching what we could design, eventually settling on British scientists and what they discovered. The main things I noted about Stephen Hawking was his discovery that “the total area of the event horizons of black

holes- the boundary beyond which nothing can ever escape- should never shrink.”

(Glaser, L.B.,2021) Along with this he also discovered that “Black holes aren't completely black but emit thermal radiation” (University of Cambridge). The main thing I took away from this was that I wanted the aim to be on black holes and focus on the colours emitted from it that can be seen in images, (Figure 2). We focused on keeping the typeface and the coloured the same on all, keeping the font colour the same, but sticking to the 2 coloured limit, which changed depending on the main design colour, to make it obvious that they are a set of stamps not singular stamps. The main aspect of this design was to make it a homage to the life and works of Stephen Hawking.

“People engage in creative arts by simply doing what is natural to them. Activities like drawing, singing, dancing, and thinking, are the essentials of creativity that express who we are as human beings” (Candy, 2019). This quote is interesting to me, as when I was creating my stamp design, I was not confident in my work, as I was focusing on the parts I did not like, instead of looking as a whole piece. So this is interesting in comparison to my work, as when creating this piece I used what things felt natural to me and what ideas came in my head, along with using inspiration from the simplicity but boldness of the designs of my teams designs, so they all matched, but after looking at it for a while and appreciating the stamps as a set of 4 I am much happier with mine.

“People are naturally consumers of design. Without much deliberation, they embrace digital tools, social media, websites, apps, smart devices, digital art, video games” (Scherling, L. S., 2024) This is a good quote to think about when looking at my collaborative stamp designs, as most people wouldn't realise when going about their

day to day lives, it's just not something people regularly think about, the design that goes into what they use.

“The capacity to handle the typography of a project as well as the illustration allows for more creative control” (Blake, M. 2021) Typography within a project is a very interesting aspect, as within design if something is designed badly you notice it, but when its designed well you just read it, as that is the intention, for it to be read to tell you what the product is.

Overall, I found this collaborative workshop extremely useful and productive, to see how well I could work with others and to see how other people work that is different to my own style. Reflecting on my work I am happier with it now than when I was during the design process.

Bibliography:

Blake, M. (2021). *Typography and Illustration*. In *Drawn to type: Lettering for illustrators*. P.15-28. Bloomsbury visual arts. Available at: <https://www-bloomsburycollections-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/monograph-detail?docid=b-9781350066946&pdfid=9781350066946.ch-002.pdf&tocid=b-9781350066946-chapter2> (Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Candy, L. (2019). *The creative reflection practitioner: Research through making and practice* (1st edition) Routledge. Available at: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9781315208060/creative-reflective-practitioner-linda-candy> (Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Glaser, L.B., (2021). *Hawkings black hole theorem observationally confirmed*.

Available at: <https://news.cornell.edu/stories/2021/07/hawkings-black-hole-theorem-observationally-confirmed> (Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Scherling, L.S., (2024). *Digital transformation in design: Process and practices*.

Bielefield. Available at: <https://research-ebsco-com.ezproxy.uwtsd.ac.uk/c/onvpsy/search/details/htu7p4peon?db=e001mww>

(Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

University of Cambridge (2018) *Stephen Hawking: Milestone of a life in physics*.

Available at: <https://www.maths.cam.ac.uk/features/stephen-hawking-milestones-life-physics> (Accessed on: 30th November 2025)

Figure List:

Figure 1: (British scientists stamp set, own image, 2025)

Figure 2:(Nasa: First image of a Black Hole, 2019) Available at:

<https://science.nasa.gov/resource/first-image-of-a-black-hole/> (Accessed: 30th

November 2025)