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Tasks in the order I received them:

Task one: Manifesto= 508 words

Task two: Semiotics= 556

Task three: Practice based writing= 596

Manifesto Writing

1. Museums kill art by making it superior, idealised and inaccessible. WE need to make art into something we all create, not just consume, as society is alive and changing, thus so is art.
 2. Female-based activities and non-western, indigenous societies should be given the same recognition and equality as their white, male counterparts. Patriarchal western art needs to be challenged and overthrown.
 3. Art is only truthful when revealing the ugly, corrupt elements of our world. We must not romanticise or ignore the reasons for ruin, but expose the process as an inevitable transition, one we cannot hide from.
 4. Art is to be experienced not taught. From art arises unique and personal responses, there is an infinite number of ways that art can be experienced. Instead of retreating to the second-hand information of others, who will influence via subjective view points and subconsciously censor meanings, we must explore it ourselves.
 5. Understand that aiding the destruction of the planet is aiding the destruction of ourselves. We must fight to gain back control from large capitalist corporations and the corrupt agendas of politicians.
 6. We must re-evaluate and question our basic beliefs and views, as they are often given to us for the political/ economic benefit of authority and to progress our capitalist society. Especially question the news and media providers. View them as critically as you view art. (this doesn't necessarily mean changing our views.)
 7. The arts, crafts and traditions of indigenous ethnic groups should not be exploited for profit, nor should it be viewed as a "trend". We must respect and acknowledge, not appropriate.
 8. Art acts as a social function, ultimately connecting society and evolving it. The design sector should have equal recognition and respect as other areas of society, such as business and science.
1. **Museums kill art by making it superior, idealised and inaccessible. WE need to make art into something we all create, not just consume, as society is alive and changing, thus so is art.**



Figure 1

Art should be egalitarian: ‘In a natural society there will be no precious or privileged beings called artists.... There will only be workers.’ (Burman, 2021). However, the analysis of art in museums is elitist: “The revolution will not be televised” (Scott Heron, 1970) and nor can the art revolution occur in a museum, where the artist loses control over the meaning of their work, as we live in an era of “monopolization vs. democratization” (Rifkin, 2014). For example, Did Banksy “shred” his work as a radical art installation, commenting on the out-dated superiority of the auction room, or to raise the value? (The Guardian, 2018) Whichever, by placing his art in a capitalist environment, Banksy lost control of the meaning. Banksy should have kept to street graffiti, so his art is “ephemeral, which fits in with the notion of the digital world” and not controlled. (Asdpen, 2016). Art should be losing its “immortality” (Asdpen, 2016). Scott-Heron comments at the end of his poem, “The revolution is live” (1970) but museums and auction rooms are dead.

2. **Female-based activities and non-western, indigenous societies should be given the same recognition and equality as their white, male counterparts. Patriarchal western art needs to be challenged and overthrown.**

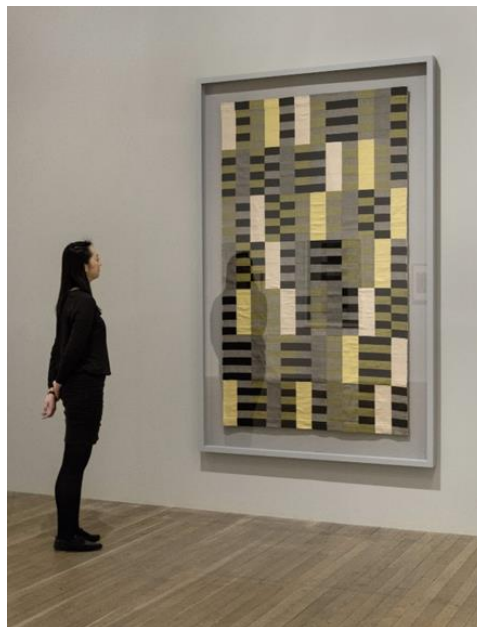


Figure 2

“Craft” is defined as “An activity involving skill in making things by hand” (OED, 2021), a definition applicable to art. So why treat it as ‘Inferior’? Anni Albers states “[There is] no distinction between the craftsman designer, the industrial designer, and the artist.” (Albers, 1979, pg 79). Albers challenged the “inferiority” of woven textiles by replicating male-dominated Bauhaus paintings through her weaves, creating pieces such as “black-white-yellow”, thus “shaking it free of its 19th century association with feminised crafts” (Troeller, 2020). Not only does craft contribute to society politically, through movements such as the “Craftivists” who “handmake [their] way to social change”, campaigning for M&S to pay employees a living wage, and hailed as “the most powerful campaign [M&S has] witnessed”; it also contributes economically: “Craft is growing at a faster rate than any other creative discipline” (The Guardian, 2019). In short, is craft mere “women’s work” or a challenge to the social relevance of contemporary art?

3. Art is only truthful when revealing the ugly, corrupt elements of our world. We must not romanticise or ignore the reasons for ruin, but expose the process as an inevitable transition, one we cannot hide from.



Figure 3

Ernst Fischer states: "In a decaying society, art, if it is truthful, must also reflect decay" (Fischer, 1963, pg48). Contemporary "decay" equals economic, political and environmental ruin. Reflecting decay in art means reflecting on the existential issues facing humankind. Also, societal decay is not a new concept: "The raft of medusa" by Théodore Géricault, (see Fig. 3) presented the contemporary struggles within French society (Ventura, 2019, pg. 107). It was a painting that "Stirred the public" (Ventura, 2019, pg. 107) - it was not just "ruin porn" seen in Romantics, such as John Martin's "The Destruction of Pompeii and Herculaneum" (Journal 2014). Géricault's painting is "only accidentally beautiful" (The art of ugliness, 2019), unlike Martin's piece, as it carries a strong message, reflecting societal decay both physically and metaphorically. Ruin porn aestheticizes and dehistoricizes (Apel, 215, pg.12-26), dissolving the true meaning of decay. However, creating art that exposes societal decay, like Géricault, creates unity between the message of ruin and the artwork.

This statement was influenced by Ernst Fischer and his Book "The necessity of art"

Semiotics

Semiology is the system "of significations other than language in accordance with the process typical of any structuralist activity, which is to build a simulacrum of the objects under observation" (Barthes & Sontag, 1986, Pg. 95), usually signs are produced so they can be universally understood to "seem natural to human experience" (Trifonas, 2001, Pg. 68), they can affect how we see the world and can change how we see ourselves. Essentially, As Ferdinand de Saussure states, Language, or signs are "the relationship between a signifier...and the signified" (Trifonas, 2001, Pg. 70). We are taught the arbitrary connections from a young age. For example, the colour red signifies passion and

love, but the colour blue represents sadness and melancholy. However, the sign system is not natural, but it is procured to appear so.

Daniel Chandler stated that the signified can be divided into the Denotation (“literal, obvious... meaning”) and connotation (“ideological, emotional” meaning). The “Connotation produces the illusion of denotation” (Chandler, 2017, pg 137-138), creating a “Myth”. A “Myth is the result of ideology” (Trifonas, 2001, Pg.68) which is collectively created by culture. Ideology is also said to be “the foundation of the political unconscious” (Trifonas, 2001, Pg.66), therefore semiotics can easily be used by those in power to reinforce their values, or, looking through the lenses of advertising, to sell a product. “Advertising is the most influential institution of socialisation in modern society” (CharnleySophie, 2014) and this, I believe, is because of semiotics.

The Marc Jacobs daisy advert (see fig 4) relies almost entirely on semiotics to disclose its message. There is anchorage text but it is unadorned. The text helps reinstate the idea that it is “The Fragrance for women”. This encodes that if you are a woman, you need this perfume to actually become one. Also “The” communicates that it is the only perfume on the market a woman will ever need. The connotations compliment this, the image is a scenic paradise in an idyllic meadow- there is even a rainbow, further acknowledging the denotation that no other fragrance is better than this one.

The advert combines the beauty of nature with the natural beauty of the model. This code suggests that she is as delicate and fragile as the flowers or plants that surround them, supporting the myth that you will become dainty and delicate when you buy the perfume. The model is not highly sexualised, wearing a white garment that has a pure, child-like quality to it, making the model appear innocent and naive. The Iconic sign, the large perfume bottle, reinforces the childlike naivety of the model, as everything is bigger when you are young, as well as the simple design of the daisy on the bottle, as if a child could’ve designed it. The wild flowers and flowing hair reinforce the whimsical, fairy-tale like atmosphere, suggesting this is something you too can experience when you buy the product. Marc Jacobs have used this culturally acquired outlook on childhood to sell the product, as we often romanticise our childhood years. This advert balances the attainable with the unattainable, this makes it powerful as the advert is believable. Judith Williamson states we “take the sign for what it signifies, the thing for the feeling”. Since adverts are always more than just selling a product, “they are selling ourselves” (Williamson, 1978, Pg. 21)

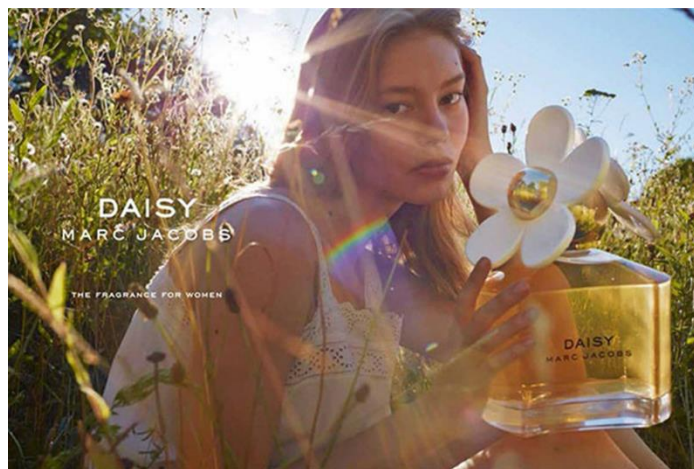


Figure 4

Practice based writing



Figure 5

My keyword is exploitation and my chosen object is a garment. The combination of these two words raises the question of whether garment production and exploitative practices can ever be separated.

The noun “exploit” originates from old French “exploiter”, meaning to “carry out, perform, accomplish”. In the 1400s, it originally had positive connotations (etymonline.com, n.d.); the word being used as a way to express “brave” deeds and “achieve[ments]” (Collins Dictionary, n.d.). However, in 1838, the use of the word had morphed into the idea of selfishness (etymonline.com, n.d.), which, coincidentally was during the time of the industrial revolution (Brain, J, n.d.), an era famed for the human rights offences of the labour force, including the exploitation of garment workers (Engels and Hunt, 1859, pg.8-9). The contemporary definition of exploitation is “to take advantage of (a person, situation, etc), esp unethically or unjustly for one's own ends”. (Collins Dictionary, n.d.)

The conjunction of ‘garments’ and ‘exploitation’ is better suited to the contemporary definition, which identifies how garment production can exact “a human cost” (Bajaj, 2014). The industrial revolution is an example of this, where textile factories were “noisy, dirty, crowded and decidedly un-refined” (Beckert, 2015, Pg.1-10). The rise of capitalist textile corporations in the industrial era led to increased profit through an increase in oppression and exploitation; as the Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy explains “Exploitation can be transactional or structural” (Zwolinski and Wertheimer, 2016), suggesting that the global ‘structure’ of the economy, especially in the garment industries, is partly to blame for the lack of basic rights.

My personal opinion is that this structural inequality is still in evidence in the garment industry, as the capitalist structure still stands, with “only an estimated 2% of fashion workers around the world... paid a livable salary” (San Segundo, 2019) and incidents such as the Rana Plaza factory collapsing exposing a “basic inequity” (Jacoby, 2014). Consequently, designers, like myself, as well as clients and consumers, are demanding and actioning change on behalf of the factory workers who don’t have an economic voice. Brands such as Lucy & Yak only produce their garments in factories that “always pay the living wage” (Lucy & Yak, 2019) and have safe, comfortable environments for their employees.

However, exploitation of the environment also appears to go hand in hand with Factory worker exploitation in garment production, where abusing the earth's natural resources seems to have become common place. "It takes 2,700 litres of water to make one...cotton shirt" which is "enough to meet the average person's daily drinking water needs for two-and-a-half years." (Water Docs, 2020). The water intensive production of cotton has already been linked with disasters such as the disappearance of the Aral Sea, which "completely dried" up in 2014 (Tansy Hoskins, 2014). However, designers are now collaborating more closely with consumers and workplaces to navigate the issues raised by environmental 'exploitation' and 'garments'. Tabby Bunyan, founder of re_considered, is a designer and artist who takes old fabrics such as bed-sheets gifted to her by her clients to be upcycled into garments for them (Bunyan, 2021). This innovative business model allows consumer demand to be part of the solution to environmental exploitation, not the problem, something that I can utilise in my own practice.

We now need to reclaim the original meaning of the word 'exploit', which is to perform "heroic act[s] or notable deed[s]" (Vocabulary.com, n.d.), which reject exploitative practices. To stand up to the power of global garment industries, reform the economic transactions between Western consumers and factory employees in developing nations, is truly a noble 'exploit', and finally separates 'garment' from 'exploitation'.

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