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Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Semiotic Analysis = 532 words

Task Two: Manifesto = 488 words

Task Three: Practice-based writing = 468 words

Task One: Semiotic analysis

“Human intellectual and social life are based on the production, use, and exchange of signs” (*Danesi, 2019, p.37*), and signs are the basis upon which semiotics is built.

In semiotics, a sign is constructed from a signifier, the physical thing, and the signified, which is the intended meaning of the sign. For example, a mobile phone is only a phone because we have communally agreed that is what it is – without that communal agreement it would purely be just metal, plastic and electrics pieced together; this concept is important as it prevents confusion among communities and gives clarity.

Any visual material that has ever been produced is subject to the application of semiotics, ‘the academic field dedicated to the study of signs.’ (*Hébert and Tabler, 2019*). Along with physical objects, many things can be scrutinised using semiotics. An image could be perceived differently by multiple individuals because of differences in upbringing, cultures or just differing life experiences, but the message could still be understood because of the overarching signs that are communally accepted being present.

I have decided to analyse the Oasis marketing campaign from 2015 as it intrigued me due to having no photographic imaging, instead relying mostly on text. Typically, in advertisement “the signification of the image is undoubtedly intentional” (*Barthes, 1977, p.33*), each aspect of the message has been meticulously crafted to contain meaning and be “frank” (*Barthes, 1977, p.33*) with the audience it wants to connect with.

The Oasis 2015 campaign in 2015 '*O Refreshing Stuff*' was heavily based in insane honesty and marketing towards millennials, a generation with critical views towards the nowadays bombardment of ads both in person and online. The campaign relies heavily on bright vivid colours providing connotations of cheerfulness and enjoyment that you may experience while drinking Oasis. This is then contrasted by the sarky, humorous text that accompanies it, which provide the honest statements that have been crafted to humanise Oasis as a company and the campaign greatly depends on written text and words over the imagery in these posters in particular "The power of words is beyond expression, it defines what the person wants to express." (*Shakti Enterprise, 2018*), and this is what Oasis uses to appeal to the younger generations with a sense of transparency.



Fig.1, Oasis' 'O Refreshing Stuff' Campaign, 2015

Font size is utilised in a way that draws the attention of the audience to an initially positive phrase like 'OASIS WIN' or 'YOUR CELEB WOULD DRINK OASIS', coupled with the bright, graphic oasis bottle which, at a slight glance, would provide a surface level positive message for a person simply walking (or scrolling) past. This initial reception is then distorted when examined closer by the rest of the phrase written in a much

smaller, unnoticed font size, revealing the satirical undertones that prevail across the range of images.

Semiotics, including how we all view the world and the signs around us, can be used to analyse almost any piece of media that you could come across. A basic understanding is enough to look deeper into how companies and their marketing teams apply basic concepts, buried deep in the collective subconscious, to create links between emotions that are commonly shared, and the service being advertised.

Bibliography:

- Barthes, R (1977) *Image, Music, Text*. London: Fontana Press
- Danesi, M. (2019) *Understanding Media Semiotics*. Second Edition. London: Bloomsbury Publishing Plc
- Hébert, L and Tabler, J. (2019) *An Introduction to Applied Semiotics*. 1st Edition. London: Routledge
- Shakti Enterprise (2018) *Why using words effectively is important in our daily life*. Available at: https://medium.com/@Shakti_Enterprise/why-using-words-effectively-is-important-in-our-daily-life-5ed0940847b9 (Accessed 5th December 2021)

List of figures:

- Fig 1 – O'Refreshing Stuff, Oasis Advertisement Campaign, 2015 Available at: <https://hartasandcraig.com.au/2017/08/24/three-questions-nick-allso/oasis/> (Accessed on 26th November 2021)

Task Two: Manifesto

1. not taking the 'easy' route when it is more convenient but leads to lesser creativity
2. to be experimental and push boundaries
3. to have integrity and to create work and designs that I believe in
4. responding openly to feedback and constructive criticism, not to reject it
5. to give myself time, have a chance to explore rather than be pressured to finish
6. to believe in and rely on my ideas, talents and abilities
7. to learn from and listen to those around me and incorporate those ideals into designs
8. to look beyond the obvious and create art with a purpose

Keyword: time

To make art that means something to either an audience or the artist you must be able to create the time and space to delve deeper into the subject matter that you are trying to portray in order to properly bring it to life. "To find a solution in the arts means to be allowed to think, and to take one's time in order to achieve a high ambition" (Jensen, Hersted and Chemi, 2015, p.95); whether making a commentary on a socioeconomic issue or just art for the sake of art, design always has a purpose. This purpose is what needs time to fully form and come to fruition.

Time also leaves room for exploration into an idea and how it would be best executed, looking into techniques and preparation that couldn't be done if everything was last minute and rushed in a pressured attempt to finish.

Keyword: Integrity

It is important to always have integrity when designing anything as that work is an extension of yourself that will be reflected into the world. You must have restrictions or morals emphasising what you will or won't stand for as this will guide your practices in a way that you won't end up regretting. "Unconditional commitments are the most serious convictions we have. They define our limits; what we feel we must not do no matter what, what we regard as outrageous and horrible. They are fundamental conditions of being ourselves." (Kekes, 2018, p.21)

Truth within art can be subjective and it is essential to keep a moral compass in every endeavour, however you must still be aware of any facts you are presenting as 'truth'. Knowing the importance of making the effort to find out information and research for yourself whether your sources are reliable before spreading their information out into the world is vital. There is trust between the artist and the audience and it is the responsibility of the designer to not pass on misinformation or to intentionally mislead, which would undermine their key integrity.

Keyword: Purpose

Art effects every individual to a certain degree – “the word “art” is like the words “love” or “happiness” in that everyone knows what they mean or recognizes what they refer to” (Dissanayake, 2002, p.3-4). Even if someone has no prior artistic education or has not been subjected to interpreting art, they will still possess the ability to their own conclusion about an artwork using their previous knowledge even if the piece gives no indication of the original artists intentions.

I believe that art should always have a goal, or purpose, behind it. It may not be a spectacular, grandiose purpose, yet there should be an intention behind it stemming from the artists’ passion to create work. Whether this intention is then shared is up to the artist, however, within the discipline of graphic design I feel that the message being conveyed should be able to shine through.

Bibliography:

- Dissanayake, E. (2002) *What is art for?*. University of Washington Press
- Chemi, T., Borup Jensen, J., and Hersted, L. (2015) *Behind the scenes of artistic creativity: processes of learning, creating and organising*. Peter Lang Edition.
- Kekes, J (2018) *The Art of Life*. Cornell University Press.

Task Three: Practise-based Writing

A reflection into the use of layout and type in poster design.

In this brief I was tasked to design 2 posters with multiple limitations set in place to force thinking outside the box and exploration into how said limitations can actually elevate the final design. “The typeface itself is a key influencer, and its selection is as important as any other element in the composition” (Laserow and Delgado, 2020), so for one of the limitations, Helvetica was chosen as the only font available for use, along with the addition of only one font weight and type size allowed. The information given to us was ‘The White Stripes’ band tour dates and beyond the limitations, it was up to us how we presented this information.

When designing anything with type, particularly posters, it is easy to get caught in the trap of anything of importance must automatically be a bigger font size, forgetting that many other ways of manipulating type exist, and this is what this brief was trying to prove.

My first few attempts, I was thinking very laterally and just had text in chunks around the page with a few variations in opacity, not really thinking how to do things differently and more eye-catching.

In an attempt to create a more dynamic poster I decided to try using a dilation system. “In a dilatational system circles dilate or expand from a central point... compositions are dynamic as the eye moves along the arc of the circle” (Elam, 2007, p.50).

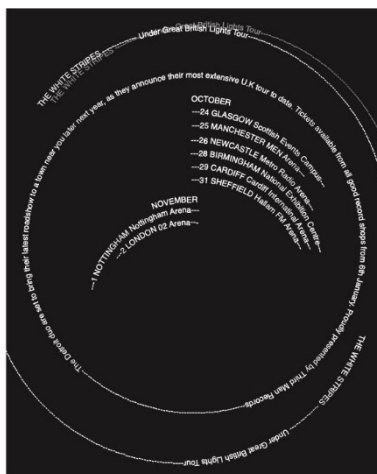


Fig 1. first dilatational design

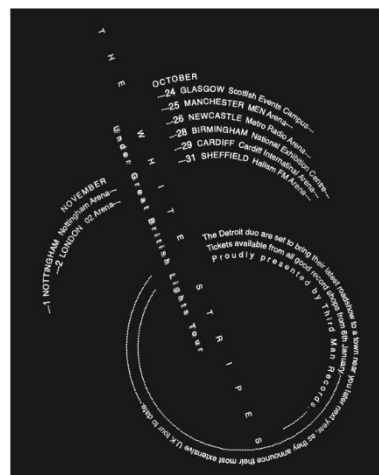


Fig 2. final design

This worked, (fig.1) however I found that having a full circle made it difficult to extinguish the important information from other lines of text so I decided that it would be best to group these differing bits of information into different portions.

I felt that having the concert dates set along an angle worked well so I decided to incorporate this into the next design (fig.2) but making the middle of the diagonal the focus point of the poster and placing the band name and tour title within the centre point. “blank space is just as important as words” (Maguire, 2021, p.28), so to make the title stand out more I utilised kerning, the spacing between letters and this worked to provide a more prominent look.

Experimenting with capitalisation to distinguish importance within a clump of text was also something that I investigated. For example, having the cities capitalised making them stand out next to the venues.

I believe that this was an incredibly effective brief as it challenged me to think more about the layout of my work and how to effectively use many more tools than I originally thought I had at my disposal. I also think that I achieved the goal that the brief set out.

Bibliography:

- Elam, K. (2007) *Typographic Systems of Design*. Princeton Architectural Press.
- Laserow, S. and Delgado, N. (2020) *Making Posters*. London: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.
- Maguire, L. (2021) *The Rhetoric of the Page*. Oxford: Oxford University Press USA – OSO.