

Portfolio of Writing:

- 1) Manifesto Writing
- 2) Observational Writing
- 3) Practice-based Writing

Name: Caitlin Evelyn Rowlands

Student No: 2100373

BA Illustration

Course Tutor: Gwenllian Beynon

Word count:

- Task 1: 711 words
- Task 2: 498 words
- Task 3: 492 words

Task 1 – Manifesto Writing

Statements:

- I believe that art is an outlet to show one's personality, feelings, interests and more
- I believe that art is for everyone, no matter the skill set
- One of my favourite mediums that I frequently use for my practice is digital
- I work on my art constantly to try and improve my skills
- I believe that practice and determination will improve the quality of my art
- I believe that to excel as an artist, you must experiment with different mediums in order to find your strongest areas
- My art is mainly in a semi-realistic style but I also like to delve into different styles such as cartoon
- I believe that art should have a deeper meaning

Art is a major part of my life and always has been, ever since I was a baby. I would like to work for a company in future as an illustrator, designing book covers or game art. When it comes to the types of illustration I like it varies greatly. I find all illustration fascinating however, pop art and 'scratchy', rough line-art are some of my favourites. For example, a personal favourite is the work of artist Roy Lichtenstein.

Roy Lichtenstein produced the now famous paintings of science-fiction villains, gorgeous heroines, and armaments of tabloid mass culture that epitomize Pop Art

(Coplans (1974) Roy Lichtenstein)



Liechtenstein (1963) *Whaam!* [Lithographic print] Gallery 52: Jeffersonville

I believe that art should be simple enough for everyone to enjoy, but should contain a deeper meaning to those who search for it within the piece. Personally, I like to believe that each piece of art should contain a part of the artist who created it, almost like a window into their life and how they view the world. On the contrary, I think that the viewer should also attach their own personal meaning to any piece of art, as described in 'The Picture of Dorian Grey':

To reveal art and conceal the artist is art's aim. The critic is he who can translate into another manner or a new material his impression of beautiful things.

(Wilde, 1890, preface)

With this mindset is how I approach my pieces; making sure to give my pieces personality and flair. I draw inspiration from artists who have entertained me since childhood such as Quentin Blake, Chris Riddell and Nick Sharratt, even though my style of work may not resemble theirs. In recent years I have also become more focused on portraiture to a more realistic degree.



Rowlands (2021) *Untitled* [Digital]

One of my favourite mediums is digital, however I find joy in all kinds of different mediums. I believe that digital art is important because this form of art that was once criticised for not being as complex as *"the chemistry of oil paints or the mechanics of a piano"* (Higgins 2019) has now become a sensation, a new movement in the world of art.

In order to develop my art and I constantly try to find new mediums which I have strengths in through experimentation. Overall, this makes me a more versatile artist and therefore more suited for a job in illustration, as I will have to meet various demands.

I have a positive attitude towards creativity because it is what drives me and gives me the determination to improve upon my skills as an artist constantly. In my opinion artists always have the potential to grow and there is no limit to furthering one's skills.



Monet (1899) *Waterlilies and Japanese Bridge* [Oil on canvas] Princeton University Art Museum: New Jersey

Inspiration comes from all around, beauty surrounds us, be it in people or nature. I draw a lot of inspiration from nature as I find it calming and enchanting, much like Monet. Even in the mundane, beauty and art can be found. Art surrounds us in all forms, for example in architecture but I believe that, even in the non-manmade parts of life, the delicate foliage of the earth is a form of art. I'd like to be an illustrator who highlights the marvel and wonder of the world around us. I'd like to create a lens to show that even the parts of life that we have grown accustomed to, that seem plain and ordinary, have their own unique charm.

Bibliography:

- Coplans (1974) *Roy Lichtenstein*, 1st Edition, UK: Allen Lane/ Penguin Books
- Higgins (2019) *Mainframe Experimentalism: Early Computing and the Foundations of the Digital Arts*, California: University of California Press
- Wilde (1890) *The Picture of Dorian Grey*, Legend Press
- 'Whaam!', 1963', Artsy website <https://www.artsy.net/artwork/roy-lichtenstein-whaam-22> (Accessed: 20/11/2021)
- *Waterlilies and Japanese Bridge*
(1899), Princeton University Art Museum Website
<https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/31852> (Accessed: 21/11/2021)

Task 2 – Observational Writing



Picasso (1903) *The Old Guitarist* [Oil on Panel] Art Institute of Chicago

Semiotics is how we interpret different signs and symbols and the way in which they are used, a modern example of semiotics could be emojis, these are symbols used to represent different moods, and are widely recognisable, acting almost as a universal language since each emoji has a certain mood or item that it represents. Even though signs can often have explicit representations, there are often different meanings behind them. Chandler outlines one of the “broadest definitions” of semiotics using Umberto Eco’s (1932-2016) definition that “semiotics is concerned with everything that can be taken as a sign” in his book *‘Semiotics: The basics’* (Chandler, 2002, p. 11-12).

When looking at the work of Pablo Picasso *‘The Old Guitarist’* we can see how imagery is used to perpetuate a meaning, the literal denotation of what we see is a hunched man playing a guitar while sitting on the ground, and this is what is initially seen by the viewer. However, there is a deeper, more personal meaning behind the piece in that this painting was created after the suicide of one of Picasso’s close friends and also represents some of Picasso’s personal experience with poverty. We see symbolism with the negative expression on the face of the subject in the painting, implying that he may be tired and melancholy

especially from the tough living conditions. The colour blue is also used to symbolise a feeling of despair and is a big factor of what was known as Picasso's 'Blue period' where his paintings were mainly blue and sometimes depicted the homeless to show his own experiences in life with poverty. We know he is homeless from his rough appearance and ripped clothing as well as his guitar implying that he is a beggar trying to make money on the street from his music. This supports Berger's theory that a "painter's way of seeing is reconstituted by the marks he makes on canvas or paper" (Berger, 2008, p. 6) which suggests that Picasso portrays himself in the painting indirectly through his experiences and feelings, even though the painting may not be a self-portrait; this relates to Picasso's 'Blue period' because it is the colours and forms of his mark-making using oil paint that show his feelings at the time. Initially, I did not think the painting held a huge amount of meaning other than showing a possibly homeless man with a guitar, however when inspecting closer, the colour choices as well as the symbolic choices show a deeper hidden meaning and insight to the artist. Eco quotes Peirce's theory in his book '*A theory of semiotics*' that relates to this by saying "the word or sign which man uses is the man itself" (Eco, 1976, p. 316) which has the implication that the sign (in this case the painting) is Picasso in a sense that Picasso's feelings, thoughts and experiences manifest themselves in the form of the painting.

Bibliography:

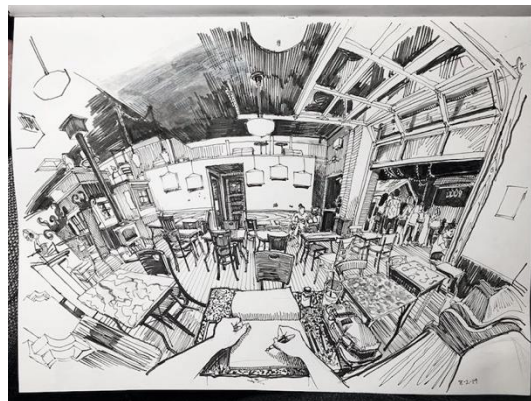
- Berger (2008), *Ways of Seeing*, UK: Penguin Books
- Chandler (2002), *Semiotics: The basics*, UK: Routledge
- Eco (1976), *A theory of semiotics*, USA: Indiana University Press
- Pablo Picasso website (Unknown) *The Old Guitarist, 1903 by Pablo Picasso*, Available at: <https://www.pablocicasso.org/old-guitarist.jsp> (Accessed: 6/12/2021)

Task 3 - Practice Based Writing



Rowlands (2021) *Sweet Shop* [Watercolour and pen on paper]

This illustration demonstrates the technique of perspective, specifically two-point perspective. Perspective is an important part of art, whether it is used in a piece or not. Perspective can be a difficult word to define but is best defined as “*the representation of objects in three-dimensional space on the two-dimensional surface of a picture*” (Tate Art Website 2021, *Perspective*). One of my main sources of inspiration for this drawing was the work of artist Paul Heaston, who uses a similar medium to create the intricately detailed effect through use of a fountain pen, his work is also different in that it utilises a different form of perspective; through a first-person view where we can see the hands of the subject and a fish eye lens which could be to replicate human peripheral vision.



Heaston (2019) *Untitled* [Fountain pen and carbon ink in a sketchbook]

When looking at art history and how it relates to perspective, Tim Fisher best explains that

It wasn't until the Renaissance that Italian masters started to explore the science of depth and volume in art and it is they who can be first attributed with formalising early rules of perspective

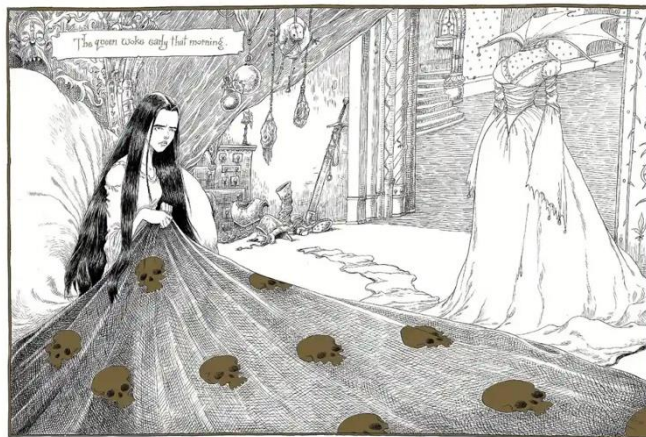
(Fisher, 2021, p.8)

The art of perspective drawing is largely based around mathematics and exact measurements to achieve realistic angles, which is how perspective was learnt rather than visual estimations of the artist. In the modern day, technology can be used to replace the mathematics behind perspective;

geometric knowledge of artists paved the way for technological innovations by means of experimentation in architecture (Field 1997)

(Rossi, Michela 2016, *Architectural Perspective Between Image and Building*)

We often see perspective used in mathematical illustrations such as architectural building plans and concepts; however, concept art is another fascinating area of art that features this, be it for creating the scenery for games, animations or movies. This is another form of inspiration to me, especially art that features in videogames.



Riddell (2014), *The Sleeper and the Spindle*

Another artist whose style inspires me is that of Chris Riddell, despite his art not focusing around perspective, the style of his art inspires me as well as the way in which he uses a unique method of mark-making with his medium. I like the sketch-like style of his art and its overall aesthetic and this was something which I attempted to replicate in my work, while also keeping it my own.

Overall, I think that I did a successful job at taking inspiration from the artists that interest me as well as educating myself on the subject of perspective itself in order to gain a better

understanding of the end product that I should be reaching. I chose to use the traditional and mathematical method in order to create my piece using a horizon line and vanishing points, rather than using digital software as I feel like this contributes to the style I wanted to achieve.

Bibliography:

- Fisher (2021) *Drawing Perspective*, UK: Search Press
- Gaiman (2014) *The Sleeper and the Spindle*, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing
- Rossi, Michela (2016) *Nexus Network Journal - Architectural Perspective Between Image and Building*, Vol. 18 (3), Germany: Springer International Publishing
- Taggart (2019) *This Artist Creates Incredible Drawings of the Room He's in From His Perspective*, Available at <https://mymodernmet.com/perspective-drawings-paul-heaston/> (Accessed: 12/12/2021)