

Portfolio of Writing.

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Task 1. Manifesto-558

Followed by 273-word bibliography, reference and figures list.

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Followed by 81-word bibliography and figures list.

Task one:

Manifesto

- Nature is an experience that everyone should have access to.
- Connection to the self, to others and to the natural world is essential.
- Joy in artistic expression is healing, creating peace for the individual - art is therapy.
- Identity is both inward and outward, discovering who you are is a lifetime work.
- Authenticity is to be real - allowing genuine ideas to define personal style.
- Time you have plenty of it - until you don't.
- Healing is not linear; it begins when old ways no longer serve you.
- Where is your tranquillity, where is your freedom, where is peace?

Connection intertwined with Identity

“The essence of trauma is disconnection from the self” (Maté, 2022).

In a globalized, digital world, connection between people is lost with our sense of identity often becoming disconnected. Society is driven by the pursuit of quick dopamine hits, with phubbing now common within families and workplaces. Design becomes an act of reconnection to the self, others, and material; through design and creativity, identity is expressed and constructed, personally, culturally, and communally.

Human centred design is rooted in participation, generating collaboration and connection. This is demonstrated in the work of Victor Papanek who believed that design ‘must serve people’ (Papanek, 1971). His work challenges consumerism and waste, and it represents sustainable and socially responsible design practices (figure 1).

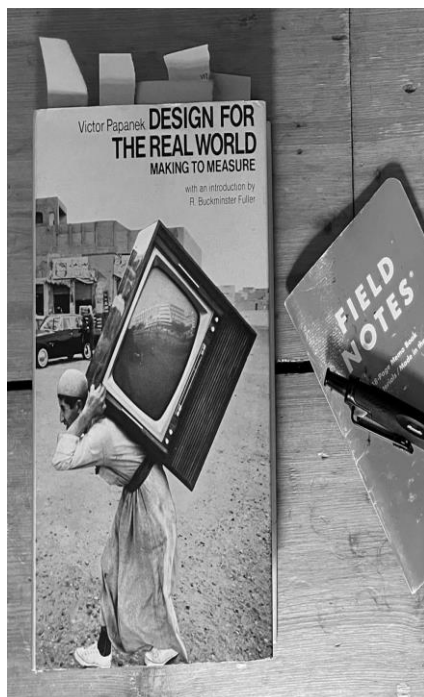


Fig1. 1: Papanek, V (1971). Design for the real world.
Book cover.

Merlau-Ponty's (1990) phenomenology emphasizes the interconnectedness between makers, material and user, proposing that objects and spaces emerge through relationships and first-hand experience. 'Handmade design strengthens these connections, offering an antidote to hyper consumerism and the increasingly digital age that fosters disconnection' (Craven, 2018). The desire for human touch is reemerging, with the context behind an artwork and the need to physically experience it becoming increasingly significant (Craven, 2018).

Joy in creating

"Joy arises when we reconnect with our authentic selves" (Maté, 2022)

'Joy is both purpose and process; a healing rhythm in the act of making' (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Entering a state of flow, time softens, and creation becomes a form of presence. The installations of Olafur Eliasson (figure 2) embody this spirit as an inquiry into wonder. Often connected to environmental crisis and arts power, he offers solutions to climate change and renewable energy.

Historically, the Bauhaus movement (1920) celebrated joyful experimentation, merging craft, play, and purpose. Similarly, feminist and activist art reclaims joy as a restorative act, reclaiming joy and harnessing the pleasure to create and resist systems of oppression.

Greer (2003) coined the term craftivism, blending techniques and including social messages, she writes "Craftivism is the gentle approach of raising awareness and inviting reflection rather than confrontation" she felt that creativity was a place you could voice your opinions in a more compassionate way while consciously celebrating connection, freedom and wellbeing, in a culture driven by speed and productivity we can choose to create slowly and with intent- an act of resistance. When we celebrate design as an expression of care a feeling of true authenticity can be harnessed.



Fig 2: Eliasson, O. (2024) *Breathing Earth sphere*.

Healing connected to Nature

‘Healing is reintegration-aligning with our natural rhythms’ (Maté, 2022).

Through the lens of biophilic design, sensory engagement with natural materials and light supports psychological wellbeing (Wilson, 1984). The architecture of Maggie's Cancer Centre's illustrates how gentle, human-centred environments can help recovery and reflection.

Design can cultivate spaces and rituals that support healing and reintegration. It becomes a restorative act, a return to wholeness through connection with the earth. Natural textures and forms reflect ecological patterns, echoing Naess's (1989) principles of deep ecology. This is also seen in the Arts and Crafts movement, where nature and symbolism guided the search for balance.

The Japanese practice of *Shinrin-Yoku*, or forest bathing, advises time in nature. Proven to reduce physical and mental ailments such as depression and other mental health difficulties and physical ailments such as arthritis and stress induced stomach ulcers, soon it could be prescribed by British doctors. ‘It’s a preventative medicine, not a treatment,’ (Dr Qing Li quoted in Sherwood, 2019).



Fig 3: Shinrin-Yoku/forest bathing. Photograph: Murdo MacLeod

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Figures list:

Figure 1: Papanek, V. (1971). *Design for the real world* (book cover).

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Figure 2: Eliasson, O. (2024). *Breathing Earth sphere*.

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Figure 3: Shinrin-Yoku/forest bathing. Photograph: Murdo MacLeod

Article online.

Task Two:

Observational Writing.



Fig 1: Kapoor A (2007) *Svayambh*.

This large-scale installation by Anish Kapoor, (2007) is titled *Svayambh* meaning 'born of itself' or 'self-generated' in Sanskrit. The piece slowly forms itself as it is pushed through the tunnel opening, its physical transformation echoing its title. Excess material splatters across the floor, and the work is situated within a space resembling a train station complete with track and tunnel. This setting evokes passages, journeys, and transitions, recalling the movement of people and cultural histories. To extend this reading, three key aspects of semiotics help illuminate the world's communicative systems; Barthes' signifier/signified (1957), Peirce's indexical trace (1860), and Eco's cultural codes (1976). The intense oxblood red functions as a powerful signifier, while its signified remains deliberately open. Rather than fixing the colour to one meaning, Kapoor allows it to suggest bodily associations, of heritage, and emotional intensity echoing Barthes' idea that signs generate shifting, layered meanings rather than single interpretations.

Described by Kapoor as 'a tumbrel of red Vaseline paint,' the block travels slowly through the gallery. Its movement produces marks and residues along the floor acting as indexical traces in Peirce's terms; signs that point directly to the action that caused them. The piece's slow advance therefore becomes part of its own meaning, its trail documenting its own emergence and its evoking processes of emigration, cultural crossover, trade routes, and the physical traces of history.

The minimalist palette makes the red striking, and the monochrome environment frames the mass of colour with emotional intensity. This effect links strongly to Eco's notion of cultural codes shared systems through which viewers recognize themes of ancestral rituals and collective memory. These coded associations allow installations to evoke migration heritage and bodily presence without literal representation.

Kapoor has said there is no representation in the piece 'nothing in particular'. This openness resists fixed interpretation, encouraging viewers to imagine freely. His inspiration from Mark Rothko's canvases and their deep oxblood red further situates the work with lineage of abstraction that foregrounds colour as both emotional and symbolic.

Drawing from semiotic theory reveals how the installation communicates beyond its physical form. My understanding of the artefact has changed as at first a striking

sculptural object has now revealed a system of signs its colour the signifier, its residues acting indexically and its spatial setting engaging cultural codes. These elements collectively imbue the work with emotional and symbolic significance that differ around the world. How could this artwork translate across cultures?

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Figures list:

Figure 1: Kapoor, A (2007) Svayambh.
Slide 29 lecture 6 online.

Task 3:

Reflective Writing

Fact

The piece is a collage and made from mixed media images and text. It reflects idea development and an attempt to find direction in response to the *Telling Tails* brief. The layering of colours, shapes and varied materials represent the layers within storytelling itself-beginning, middle and end which do not necessarily follow linear order when approached artistically. However, the layering of colours and materials must be considered carefully, as one colour or shape can obscure another. For some artists, this is a desired effect. Inclusion of text can create bold statements or direct message to the viewer.



Fig 1. Lovering S. (2025) *Telling Tales* mixed media Collage.

Materials used

Ink, soft pastels, grey spray paint, tea, black fine liner, white wax crayon, printed images, metal straw and glue.

Feelings

I wanted the work to evoke joy through its use of colour. My final impression was that it felt playful and expressive, I aimed to create a sense of freedom and movement, responding to the brief while awakening artistic flow within myself-prioritising expression over perfection. Although my intention was to add more layers and push the work further, time constraints halted the process. This raised questions around perfectionism; was the hesitation to continue a limitation, or was the piece complete enough to act as a foundation for further experimentation and growth? I discovered that I enjoy layering, particularly where the base materials are still visible. I also enjoy incorporating text into my work. I have been drawn to similar styles previously, and this

process confirmed my interest in expressive mixed media approaches within contemporary collage practice. The development of the three-dimensional hat was informed by costume and fashion practices that merge narrative, identity, and spectacle. Philip Treacy millinery's works for Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* (2010) designed and collaborated with costume designer Colleen Atwood (2009); this shows how headwear can function as sculptural storytelling. Treacy exaggerated forms and material experimentation aligning with Burton's surreal visual language, transforming the hat into an extension of character psychology rather than decorative accessory. This approach resonates with my own practice where two-dimensional imagery is translated into a three-dimensional object allowing storytelling, shadow work, and found materials to intersect. The hat became a symbolic container for identity, play, and transformation.

Future

In the future I would like to further develop my practice through skills development, reflection, critical thinking and creative exploration, I intend to apply the knowledge gained to future projects potentially focusing on the development of creative spaces, creative therapies, and the promotion of sustainable and socially responsible design practices. While being immersed in this work, I am actively working on my own healing while learning new skills and pushing myself past my comfort zones created by old cycles of behaviour and limiting self-belief. Learning how to articulate my understanding toward the emotional representation of the work I create and how I can resonate with the viewer is a priority, breaking down my own resistance to moving forwards and not choosing to be 'stuck' slowly dissolves with each expression frozen in an artefact. (Magsamen, S. and Ross, I. (2003) *Your brain on art: how the arts transform us*, discusses psychological research carried out by the authors to clarify solutions for well-being and the connections to artistic creation.



Fig2 & fig 3: Lovering S. (2025) *Telling Tales*, mixed media three-dimensional top hat.

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Figures list:

Figure 1: Lovering, S. (2025) *Telling Tales* mixed media Collage.
Personal photograph.

Figure 2 & 3: Lovering, S. (2025) *Telling Tales*, mixed media three-dimensional top hat.
Personal photographs.