

Portfolio of Writing

Student Name: Rose Mallett

Student Number: 2404162

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Tutor's Name: Julia Lockheart

Tasks:

- Manifesto – 542 words
- Observational Writing – 540 words
- Practice-based Writing – 476 words

Manifesto

Word Count: 542 words

1. Creativity is essential for making art.
2. Documenting the art-making process, like taking photos and making sketchbook pages, is key to complete the final piece so that you can reflect upon the process and the mistakes made.
3. Being able to interact with the piece creates a more interesting experience for the audience.
4. There is a huge importance of sustainability in the art world, and it should be central to all art making processes or at least a certain care must be taken to be the least wasteful as possible.
5. It is important to push the boundaries of the art world.
6. Culture plays an important role for inspiration and creating artworks.

7. Research is not essential but is a very good source of inspiration.
 8. Coming back to the work on multiple occasions should be done to help highlight the imperfections of the piece as well as helping to see the work in a new light.
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3. Being able to interact with the piece creates a more interesting experience for the audience.



Figure 1: *Panorama* (Marcelis, 2024)

A piece can be made interactive by either making the audience interact with it, like evoking specific senses, or by having something else interact with the work, like using light shining through glass to create different effects. By doing this, it adds a new dimension to the artwork and creates a new atmosphere for the audience. This is commonly done for children, like in the books *ADC 3D* (Bataille, 2008), a pop-up book where the letters transform as the pages are turned and *The Black Book of Colors* (Cottin and Faria, 2006) which explores colour purely through texture. However, interactive artwork can also be made for older audiences like Sabine Marcelis' '*Panorama*', which consists of four rotating glass rectangles.

This gets the audience to interact with the reflective pillars as well as being able to move between the four objects (Page, 2024, p.12,13). This piece also interacts with its atmosphere because the natural light hits the piece at different angles which changes as the blocks rotate and as the sun shifts throughout the day. By creating art that can be interacted with, it draws in people that may not usually appreciate art especially with 'Panorama' which was placed outside the High Museum of Art in Atlanta to intrigue passers-by.

4. There is a huge importance of sustainability in the art world, and it should be central to all art making processes or at least a certain care must be taken to be the least wasteful as possible.

The importance of taking sustainability into consideration is ever increasing as the world's resources decrease and CO2 emissions increase (Houghton, 2004, p.39). Not only does making art sustainably help the planet but it often saves money due to producing as little waste as possible. However, wasteful practices are commonly seen in art-making techniques like the making of glass. Even though this material can be recycled an infinite number of times, many glassmaking processes waste a huge amount of heat due to the kilns and furnaces used. This however can be counteracted by using this excess heat to generate electricity for example in certain European countries like in some German and Italian factories, they power generators with the extra heat produced from their industrial furnaces (The European Container Glass Federation (FEVE), n.d.). This shows that in any circumstance, even when art processes are wasteful, there are ways to make the practice more sustainable and still be able to continue to make this art while being mindful of the environment.

5. It is important to push the boundaries of the art world.



Figure 2: *All Rendered Truth* (Holley, 2024)

It is essential to constantly push the boundaries and rules of art like questioning what constitutes jewellery. This may be very subjective and is used to break the traditional ideologies that many people hold. Pushing the boundaries can also come in the form of using unconventional materials like using what is considered junk to create art like Lonnie Holley who creates 'welded sculptures of scavenged steel, wood, and glass – materials otherwise bound for some landfill' (Drury, 2024, p37). He started creating artwork with these materials long before it became popular to do so and showcases that you don't need expensive or traditional materials to make art. It can also mean using materials like paper, typically seen as a single use item that lacks strength and can be destroyed very easily, can be made into beautiful and intricate jewellery and other forms of art. This is done by using what is typically seen as the materials' weaknesses and turning them into strengths like the flimsiness of paper which means it can be folded and scrunched easily creating many new textures and layering the sheets to create depth and detail.

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Figures

Figure 1: Marcelis, S., 2024. *Panorama*. [glass] (High Museum of Art, Atlanta).

Figure 2: Holley, L., 2024. *All Rendered Truth*. [photograph] (Camden Art Centre).

Observational Writing

Word Count: 540 words



Figure 1: *Dodgeball, Kinder Egg, Red Riding Hood* (Grey, 2013)

Semiotics is the study of signs and what they mean. This originates from the Swiss linguistics professor, Ferdinand De Saussure who created the terms 'signifier' and 'signified' and was further developed by Roland Barthes. The signifier can be defined as a representation of an object or concept and the signified is the knowledge that tells you what the object is (Barthes, 1957).

The main visual elements of this image, the denotative level (Barthes, 1957), are the two young girls staring into the camera and therefore staring into the audience's eyes. Their neutral expressions, as well as the brown tinted background, gives a miserable and slightly

morbid feeling, reflecting the mood of the topic. When the image is first seen, the audience's eyes are drawn to the objects the girls are holding: the children's book, 'Little Red Riding Hood', and the assault weapon, held in a menacing way as if she is ready to fire. For example, the weapon is described as a signifier because it is what can be seen in this political advertisement without any further analysis needed (Barthes, 1957). However, it is very shocking for the audience to see a young girl holding a huge gun and as the connotations of guns are danger, anger and violence, seeing a child hold it while staring into the camera creates the effect of fear for the audience.

From the signifiers (Saussure, 1916), the signified can be identified as it is what can be inferred from the gun, which tends to be linked war and brutality due to the power guns hold, both mentally and physically. The other signifier is the classic fairytale 'Little Red Riding Hood' which portrays childhood and innocence embodied by the young protagonist's mistakes. There are 2 main versions of this story: Grimm's version, where both the girl and her grandmother are saved, and Perrault's one, ending with them being eaten by the wolf. From the way the book is compared to the weapon, it is expected that the banned version is Perrault's fairytale with the traumatising ending however the version pictured is Trina Schart Hyman's (1983) one, inspired by Grimm's story. This implies that all versions are banned, whether it's due to a positive or distressing ending, with the only reason being the bottle of wine in her basket. This shows the extremeness of the American ideologies which can further be seen as America is represented as the land of freedom however firearm-related injuries has been the leading cause of death for children and adolescents in America since 2020 (Carter, Cunningham and Goldstick, 2022). This shows that the myth, meaning the signs that create the ideologies of societies (Barthes, 1957), in this case is that in most of the world guns are seen as linked to violence however in America, they believe it is the symbol for freedom.

By understanding semiotics, this changes how to look at the image as it causes the audience to focus their attention on specific elements and in this case, it was the two objects held by the girls. This flips the meaning of freedom as it implies that this sense of power, by using weapons, is needed in the United States to live happily which is why the advert compares the gun to the children's book to show the ridiculousness that it is the banned object.

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Figures

Figure 1: Grey, 2013. *Dodgeball, Kinder Egg, Red Riding Hood*. [online] Moms Demand Action. Available at: <<https://www.adsoftheworld.com/campaigns/dodgeball-8e4e8820-40c0-4e08-9ce8-815b1825ff41>> [Accessed 10 November 2024].

Practice based writing

Word Count: 476 words



Figure 1: *Engraved Impala Situla* (Morris, 2000)

This sculpture was made by William Morris in 2000 in the United States. It is made from blown glass with engraved details and is currently being displayed in the Victoria & Albert Museum. The object was made to be a decorative situla which is an ancient ritual drinking

vessel. This sculpture uses the contrast of an impala, found in southern Africa, and a bucket-shaped vessel from the Iron Age found between the Apennines and the eastern Alps which makes a surprising link between the 2 continents (Saccoccio, 2023). For this reason, the chosen keyword that will be crossed with this artwork is culture. It is defined as 'the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society' (Oxford University Press, 2008). In a design context, culture tends to be used for inspiration, as many artists are inspired by their roots, upbringing and identity, creating a strong, often emotional, connection within their artwork. This relationship can be for both the artist and audience who may relate to the artist's experiences.

When these two concepts combine, an interlinked approach is created which highlights how interlocked the world really is. The world is often very divided, split by continent, by culture, by race, however this work breaks down these boundaries and shows that there doesn't need to be walls around culture. It demonstrates that the world is a fluid place where ideas and cultures can mix and cross over. The piece creates a fluid connection between continents which breaks down the walls that society has built up by combining different elements from several cultures, with Morris himself being from another. A mid-20th century British cultural theorist who explored this intertwining of cultures with art is Raymond Williams who found great interest in the critical analysis of culture, its history and its relation to art. He spent many years of his career dedicated to the topic as well as to teaching and writing many books including *The Long Revolution* (1961) and *Culture and Society* (1958). In *The Long Revolution* (1961), Williams described that art is at the centre of society and how art is key to creating new cultural meanings. This is further implied in *Culture and Society* (1958) where Williams states that 'Aesthetic, moral and social judgments are closely interrelated' linking to this idea of fluidity and the interwoven concept of culture and aesthetics.

The fluidity seen through this artwork and Williams' work can be seen in Design Crafts as a large variety of materials and techniques are intertwined together from all over the world and throughout history. This is much like Morris, who used a glass impala in place of the traditional metal bucket-shape used for traditional situlas. There is also the matter of inspiration which often comes from everyone's own cultural and societal experiences as well as research into other cultures and artists' experiences which can be seen through the work produced on the course.

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Figures

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