

Student Name: Emily Elias

P Number: 1605987

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Lecturer's Name: Julia Lockheart

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Question Addressed: *Question 5; From the series of Thinking Making research strand lectures, choose a theme, movement, or selection of artists or designers that relate to your practice or interests, and construct a 2,500-word essay. Critically assess primary themes, key writers, and relevant practitioners.*

To comprehend the possibility that artifacts can represent meaning far beyond the physical limitations of their own material elements can be considered as abductive assumption. For the designer it remains imperative to assess through the means of inductive reasoning, the language of the object as, "the closer our relationships with objects, the closer our relationships with people" (Miller, 2008) these empathic considerations translate a more explicit understanding of the self and that of the human desire, need and want. Through the process of theory driven structures this text intends establish connections by assessing the trajectories of the artefact as, a whole through parts. With intent to evaluate how such connections are established; Through the paradigm of hauntology to decode the set of signs of the past in order to aid the designer to further sense make what signifies these artifacts and objects of our present.

To understand Hauntology is to *know* "of any explicit reference to the past" (Fisher, 2012 p.17), the philosophy of Hauntology earth's roots within Derrida's writings, derived from the term "Haunt"; Visit in the form of a ghost; remain in the memory or thoughts of; (noun) Places visited frequently (Oxford, 2022). Fisher explains that, "The future is always experienced as a haunting: as a virtuality that already impinges on the present, conditioning expectations and motivating cultural production" (2012). The designer must note, that experiences are interconnected to that of our past and our relationships with the past that mould the trajectories of our present; "The power of Derrida's concept lay in its idea of being haunted by events" (Fisher, 2012, p.107) in the same way Berger highlights the vague nostalgia artifacts use to communicate their past existence with us, which bridges our relationship to them, (1972, p.139).

Hauntology utilises a dialect of "visual language with historical dimensions" (Berger, 1973, p.140) by transmitting a familiar visual reference that speaks a transferable language, relational to the spectator both consciously and subconsciously. This familiarity bridges a closeness to the spectator and the object. Berger goes on to discuss how the consumer is continually presented with subliminal references to these moral, historical, and poetic references (1972, p.140). These hereditary characteristics of the past formulate our present conceptions "of cultural lessons half-learnt" (Berger, 1972, p.140) to which supports the ontological theme of hauntology.

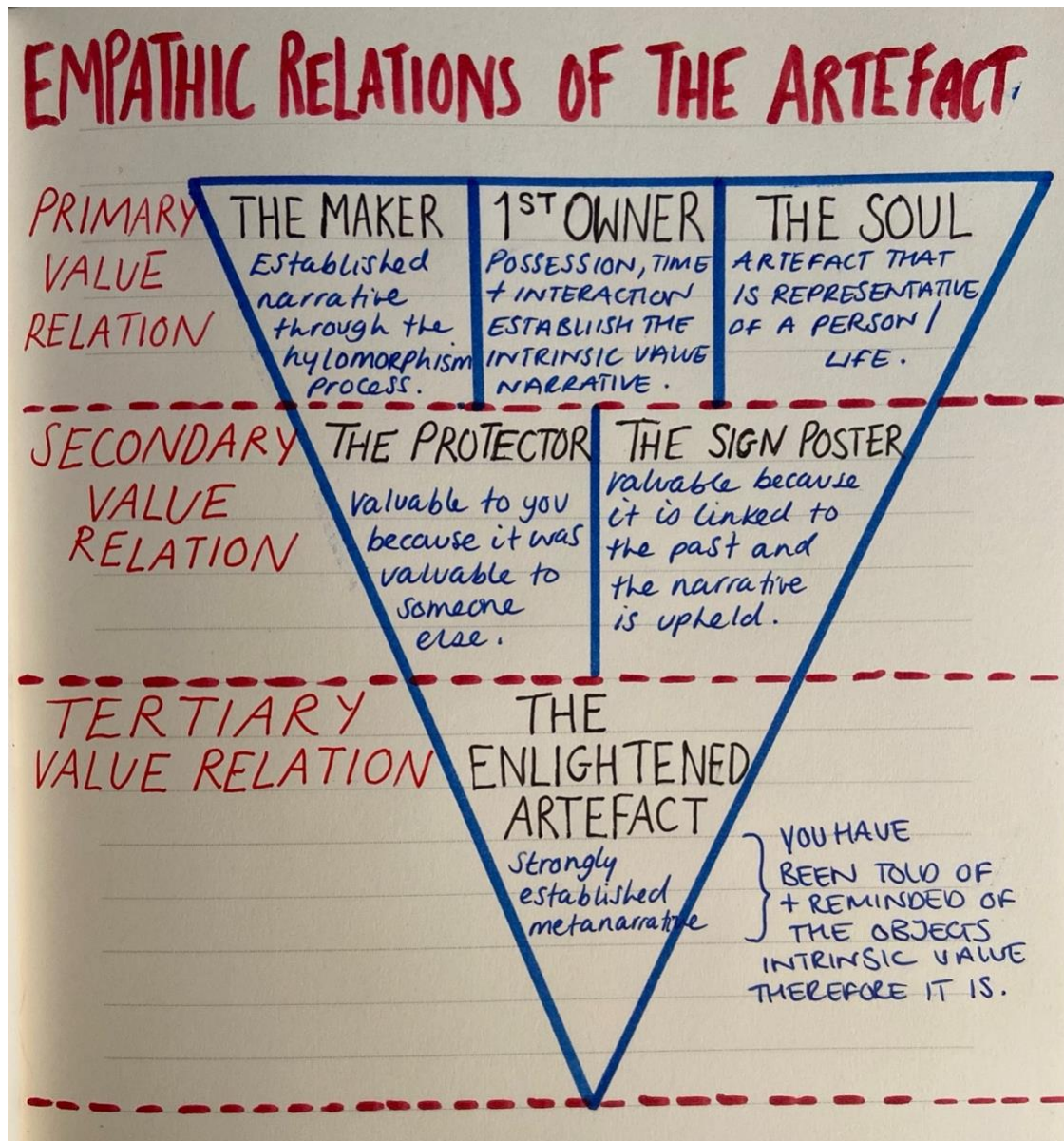


Fig 1. Emily Elias, *Empathic Relations of the Artefact*, 2022.

Observing the notion that humans project a fetishism onto artifacts has provocative connotations; however, “fetishism as demonstrating a human relation with unreal objects” (Dant, 1996, p.2), as the designer must fundamentally acknowledge awareness that “material objects are valued in cultural contexts” (Dant, 1996, p.4), it is the materialistic and physical limitations that are reliant on measuring a monetary value, value that is objective. The subjective form of value exceeds beyond monetary conception or ostentation. Figure 1 identifies how empathic relations of the artifact are acquired. The three main routes of acquisition are defined within this text as; (*the hauntology of maker, the owner, and the soul*) that interweave the human to the artifact as, “Men are the producers of their conceptions” (Marx and Engles, 1970, p.52). The text will evaluate the process of how hauntology attaches itself to objects through the primary relation of the maker, owner and soul; and identify relationships between intrinsic value and hauntology’s role within the fetishization of objects.

Through the intrinsic window, observation of the artifact imparts an enriched understanding of “*Designerly ways of knowing*” (Cross, 2006); such ways of knowing are infringed within design empathy; to curate, create and think with such motivations aids greater accomplished outcomes as, “Those proportions will be the most beautiful which it will be the most difficult for the eye to detect.” (Jones, 1868, p.23). The text intends to synthesize inductive understanding of the paradigms of our past alongside physical ornamental language to further empower the designer as the “*Form giver*”, “Form is the end, death, Form-giving is life” (Klee, 1973, p.269), to conceive the product trajectories of our present.

Make; form (something) by putting parts together or combining substances; create: to exist or come about; bring about (Oxford, 2022). There is a sense of enlightenment and enrichment set within the paradigms of hylomorphism and craftsmanship as, ‘Form-giving’ for the making ritual induces the designer to consider, “The production of ideas, of conceptions of consciousness” (Marx and Engles, 1970, p.52); which becomes an enmeshed philosophical extension brought into form by the given resolution. It is the heuristic technique that acknowledges “the value-relation between the products of labour” (Marx and Engles, 1970, p.51) produced by the designer and their new-found physical and social relation which bridges a metaphoric narrative at the hands of the maker, embedded within the newly baptised outcome.



Fig 2. Emily Elias, *Genes*, 2018.

Figure 2, represents a personal example of the heuristic technique; it is the metaphoric language of the uniting of the independent elements, that through interaction, process, and the skill of the hand contribute to the generation of a new hauntological narrative. Indigo denim jeans donated by my mother, embellished with portraits of my most recent female ancestry founded from the family archive as raw materials no longer exist. I, Myself, embody *the maker*; employed a new trajectory through the baptism of making and hylomorphism, “adding his own impetus to the forces and energies in play” (Ingold, 2013, p. 21). A newly formed outcome emerges. Dependent on the reference of the materials and past interactions of the maker, defines where the Hauntology of the object begins.

The physical conversation between raw materials and the maker is, “a process of growth” (Ingold, 2013, p. 21) to evoke a deeper ontological narrative “interwoven with the material activity” (Marx and Engles, 1970, p.52). This is the conception of the hauntological narrative that “join with those very forces that bring form into being” (Ingold, 2009, p.91). The objective value of the raw material becomes dismantled in the “physical relation between physical things” (Marx and Engles, 1970, p.51). As the craftsman begins to employ new trajectories through synthesis, to discover the hidden context within the characteristics of the materials. It is the, “splitting them apart, synthesizing and distilling” (Ingold, 2013, p. 21) that connects the designer through tactile interaction between the, “active materials” (Ingold, 2013, p. 21) that the made solution embodies a lived extension of the designer; through synthesis of the raw materials does the outcome establish an independent narrative defined by the maker, that forever exists within the made form. Through reflection can the designer contemplate the dialogue that the made item is inclusive of, “because objects create subjects more than the other way round” (Miller, 2008). These physical investigations of handicraft, “are constitutive of identity” (Miller, 2008); the designerly identity, that formulates the hauntological narrative between the maker and the made, that now *lives* within the outcome.

Own; used with a possessive to emphasize that someone or something belongs or relates to the person or thing mentioned; have (something) as one's own; possess (OED, 2022). Evaluating the relationship of *hauntology and the owner* and the materialistic culture surrounding the fetishism of the *object*. Conceived as a western notion, founded within the roots of historical religious practice as, “pre-humanistic scheme in which spirits, sometimes residing within material objects, were treated as a significant part of the ontological order of the world” (Dant, 1996, p.3), as the church identifies itself as ‘*The house of God*’ the bricks, mortar and stain glass motifs transcend beyond their physical value, connecting themselves collectively to the presence of a higher being through the methodology of worship. The metanarrative of idealisation and worship is woven into the fabric of the human subconscious and is inclusive of the secular. In the same way, “that an object acquires special social value, indicated by the reverence, worship or fascination with which it is treated” (Dant, 1996, p.6) should optimum conditions exist, evaluated further within this text; material value and ostentation is omitted as the language of the object weighs in higher favour to the worshiper of the artifact.

A postmodernist caveat exists upon, what Berger notes as, “the modern means of reproduction” (1972, p.32) that being the commodities of consumerism; a paradigm that such products of mass production defy the notion of sensemaking, that the theory of transcendent value is obsolete and becoming ever more diluted. Imposing discredit on the reproduced, solely due to the method of manufacture, “which is therefore inseparable from the production of commodities” (Marx and Engels, 1970, p.51). That the outcomes reliant on the methodology of such making process, “have entered the mainstream of life over which they no longer, in themselves, have power” (Berger, 1972, p.32) therefore meaning is absent prior to the destination of the assembly line. Contrary to the philosophies of William Morris and his establishment which focused on, “a rejection of the industrial process” (Feill, 2020, p. 18) it is down to the discretion of the “Form Giver” that a product of industrialisation leads to the possibility of acquiring spiritual significance. This notion is detached from the language of the material physicality of the object and the *now* artifact, establishes a hauntological narrative which is exclusively relational to the “Form giver”.



Fig 3. Society of Antiquaries of London. *The Sitting Room of William Morris; Kelmscott Manor, 2022.*

Considering the proclamation made by William Morris, “have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful” (Fiell, 2020, p.20) contrary to this dictum, perhaps the artifact presents neither attribute in Morris’ measures of value or desire. Intrinsic value does not limit itself to the statement, intrinsic value presents the relational value between the imposed narrative by the owner in which the beauty or fascination of the artifact is beholden to, as Ingold teaches, “genesis and growth that give rise to forms in the world we inhabit are more important than the forms themselves” (2009, p.91) The owner curates an epistemological narrative that exceeds the physiological material; this narrative only can be observed within the retrospect, the artifact exists, “as a permeant record” (Berger, 1972, p.144) indicating a fixed sign of the past, which is a reference to the paradigm of hauntology. The owner as *the spectator*, Berger discusses within *Ways of Seeing*, projects their fantasies (1972, p.146) onto the object; sign-posting the intrinsic value

of the artifact in which such conditions are necessary for the object to represent itself as a sign of a signified hauntological narrative relational to the owner.

The acquisition of the artifacts intrinsic value in possessing an ethereal aura to the owner, is achieved by the conditions of possession, time and interaction; "The body-sense is the situation, inherently an interaction, not a mix of two things" (Gendlin, 1992 p.347) the objects existence is relational to the moments lived in by the owner through presence. Both through direct and indirect interaction, "interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men" (Marx and Engels, 1970, p.52) does the object then obtain an interdependent chronology dictated by the spectator in which it exists along side. The tactile ritual that produces the future narratives for the object remain that of a subconscious one, observing the items chronological existence, and the relation it now represents of the past; however in this tense is more likely to exist as a symbolic relic, "not as reality, but as an ideal representation" (Jones, 1868, p.51) of a time period, situation or person. The course of significant acquisition of these symbolic affiliations are contributory to the designerly ways of knowing when considering prognostic design.

In order to assess hauntology's relation to the soul; Designerly was of comprehension must observe the, "pre-humanistic scheme in which spirits, sometimes residing within material objects, were treated as a significant part of the ontological order of the world" (Dant, 1996, p.3) in which such objects articulate themselves as the signifier while the soul which is projected to inhabit them becomes the signified; "We define the aura of the latter as the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be" (Benjamin, 1969, p.5) in which the object acquiesces to the status of a Symbolic object, the artifact.

In a pursuit to rationalise loss, we seek to find closeness in objects, defying to "focus on the 'objectiveness' of things" (Ingold, 2009, p.97) the artifact transcends itself to possess an ethereal value. The hauntology of the object within this observation, inhabits a sense of life through the absence of the living, and acquires a personification of the soul; the object or "the thing" becomes representational for, "Memory may not always preserve specific moments, but rather maintain the vague essence of an experience" (Parrish, 2014) as a manipulation of our knowledge that, "makes all history mythical" (Berger, 1972, p.140), existing in the present as an evidential artifact of a life once lived.

When the soul parts residual connotations leave imprints of a presence that once was, what is left is the negative space of which the living once resided, it is the remains of the 'things' or belongings that are left are the signs of the signified soul, of which the hauntological narrative is embedded within.



Fig 4. *My Bed*, Tracy Emin, 1998.

In reference to Fig 4, the work captures momentarily a vision of life lived, it is Emin's engagement with these artifacts which allows them empathic representation of a deeply intimate narrative. Each item observed within their isolated physical form ceases any understanding of value. The composition of the installation as a whole through their parts has acquired a, "multi-dimensional space" (Barthes, 1977, p.146) illustrates the form of the occupant in tandem with the absence of the occupant. The artifacts as a collective embody a somatic existence becoming the signifier; "It is the body's way of living it's situation. Your situation and you are not two things" (Gendlin, 1992 p.347), this is the hauntological reference of the artists existence embedded within the work. Emin is connected to artifacts which becomes an undivided situation. Through living within the space, remains heavily tied up in the notion her existence is not detached from the work but rather, a co-dependent relationship. It is because of Emin's existence does the work exist; while through acknowledgement of the work can Emin's presence be recognised.



Fig 5. Amy Parrish, *Check the Mail for Her Letter*, 2014.

The artifact establishes itself to be indicative of soul bearing qualities exclusive to the “form-giver” as, “The living body is an ongoing interaction with its environment” (Gendlin, 1992, p.349) it is through the previous interactions of the artifact beside the form-giver that even through physical absence, the form-givers presence insists to be acknowledged through the artifact. Within *The First Law of Thermodynamics* “Energy can neither be created nor destroyed in a system of constant mass, although it may be converted from one form to another” (Atkins, 2010, p.5), ‘the form-giver’ observes that this loss becomes the conversion of the soul. Now attached to the objects that remain, “We define the aura of the latter as the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it may be” (Benjamin, 1969, p.5) the closeness established by the hauntological narrative that remains. As a sensitive personification of the lost soul, the artifact *now* represents a tactile closeness. Such observations can only be appreciated from a retrospect perspective, as the object in the current tense, becomes a reflection of the past that relates back to *our* present.

On reflection of the texts intent to evaluate intrinsic value as a consideration of the design process, through the paradigm of Hauntology; postmodernity resides on the pretence that all meaning is lost, there lies a conflicting ongoing conversation of that and modernity; and furthermore, on a personal note conflicting inquiries into where sensemaking of the designers of today reside. This text has explored the narrative that intrinsic value is inclusive of all objects and artifacts as it remains subjective to that of the owner, maker, and spectator.

However, postmodernity strikes through these concepts in which the text above remains inferior to. Within personal reflection sits a niggling thought that postmodernity will speak for the future when it has truly passed. Future retrospect will decode the necessities of

postmodernism in the super-postmodern world. A possible trajectory is that the senseless existence becomes senseful once again. The plane of existence within lost narratives drives forward to further pave the way for the sustainable revolution, in which artefacts of the past regenerate the value of meaning and context once again, as newness becomes a fashion of the past. That we will utilise the constructs of sense making and hauntology to shift the narrative away from consuming for extrinsic and obsolete mass demand and observe how intrinsic value can redesign how both the designer and consumer interact more sustainably with the objects that surround us.

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