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Programme of Study: Ways of Thinking

Programme Lecturer: Julia Lockheart

Portfolio of Writing

Tasks in the order I received them

Task1: Manifest writing = 526 words

Task2: Observational writing = 468 words

Task 3: Practice based writing = 536 words

Task One: Manifesto writing

1. Sustainability is more urgent than ever.
2. Combat overproduction and repurpose textiles.
- 3 Promote crafts; they are as important as any other discipline.
4. Welcome diversity into design.
5. Appreciate the importance of traditional techniques.
6. Viva Vintage!
7. Connect with the natural world through art and design.
8. Embrace change.

1. Sustainability is more urgent than ever.

“The Earth is one but the world is not. We all depend on one biosphere for sustaining our lives. Yet each community, each country, strives for survival and prosperity with little regard for its impact on others”. (Brundtland, G.1987).

The Textile industry is worth over \$2.5 trillion and makes a major contribution to the economy in developing countries; however, it is responsible for water and air pollution.

Though, recognized as one of the most important industries from the economic point of view, at the same time this industry is subject to severe ecological and social problems throughout the supply chain. (Sharma A. and Narula S.A. 2020)

I believe that there is a need for a more responsible approach.

According to the Brundtland Report these issues are largely ignored in developing countries, focusing on technological and economic aspiration, the emphasis being on low cost, rapid production. It should be the responsibility of corporations to provide training in, and adoption of sustainable practices.

Collectively we must shape market demand, by increasing awareness and promoting sustainable manufacturers, calling on Government to set Global standards and offer incentives.

2. Combat overproduction and repurpose textiles.

“The underlying premise of mass consumption economics—that unlimited consumption is acceptable, even desirable—is fundamentally at odds with life patterns of the natural world” (Gardner et al.2004).

Textiles have been traditionally rooted in sustainability as a matter of necessity. In the past, textile workers generally used locally available materials because these were affordable and accessible. Most fabrics were repurposed until they were no longer fit for use, the result of which was less landfill.

“The post-war fashion industry portrayed the practice of refashioning or wearing used garments as something shameful and a sign of poverty”. (Savageau, A.E.2011)

As a design student I endorse the creative use of whatever materials are at hand, as one way of reducing the volume of waste.

New products are created every season, the result of which is the previous goods becoming old fashioned or irrelevant. This exacerbates the waste problem.

Choice is driven by availability; this is an opportunity for designers and manufacturers to change consumers' purchasing habits to something more sustainable.

3. Promote crafts; they are as important as any other discipline.

Human achievement depends on the proper coordination of all the creative faculties. It is not enough to school one or another of them separately: they must all be thoroughly trained at the same time. (Gropius W. 1919)

Craft education has both economic and social value. Research shows that it develops creative thinking and problem solving. It engages the learner with the experience of working with natural materials and promotes a feeling of wellbeing.

The recent rise in popularity has seen craft sales rise to over £3bn in 2019, the number of purchases reaching 37.7m. However, the customer is now buying lower value goods and prefers to buy direct from craft markets, the consequence of which is unprofitability.

I believe now is the time to find a different approach by making crafts as competitive as art or fashion by promoting their skill, thus commanding a higher price. Larger business should be encouraged to collaborate with traditional, small scale

manufacturers as it is an important source of inspiration for contemporary design and is culturally importance, being part of our history.

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Task two: Semiotic Analysis



Fig.1. *An island sanctuary like no other. Vogue (2020)*

My first impression of this image is its simplicity, a wide space with only three elements apparent within it, barely looking like an advertisement at first sight.

We decode images by interpreting clues pointing to intended or suggested meanings. To understand the message behind the advertisement we must deconstruct it, using the linguistic theory of Semiotics to reveal the signifier (the image) and signified (the meaning) which together form the sign, although this is arbitrary due to learned cultural influences.

“The way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe” (Berger, J. 1972 p.8)

The clues may be in the form of elements such as colour, composition, perspective and the manner in which they address the viewer.

The use of colour in itself is not significant but can be used as an emotional trigger.

As we know from research that black is the colour of authority and power.

Psychologically, white can be associated with purity and cleanliness. Grey can induce feelings of timelessness. Large areas of grey can promote feelings of nothingness; whereas white space has nothing to say - used to express silence.

The colours in the centre are pale; there is nothing vibrant in the frame, mostly white and silver grey, a neutral colour scheme in an image is a trick to relax relaxes the viewer.

The eye is drawn to a pale Caucasian woman, partially submerged, her body barely visible under water

The figure appears devoid of make-up, her hair simple and swept back giving the appearance of a natural beauty, she is signifying the link we make between the calm water and the natural surroundings derived from our culturally acquired understanding.

The pose is unusual; sitting with her knees bent and legs out to the side, hands clasped together by the side of her face. Sometimes a direct reference to art is employed in advertising, using familiar images or sculptures from the past. This appears to be the case here, the figure showing similarities to the once popular

images of nymphs or mermaids sitting on a rock, mythological creatures associated with nature and sensuality.

“Advertisements are selling us something else besides consumer goods in providing us with a structure in which we and those goods are interchangeable! (Williamson J. 1978 p.13)

There appears to be only one small word in a plain text on the image itself. The text is a mystery to us until we read below – an island sanctuary like no other. The name is not as important as the feeling of serenity it wishes to convey.

The implication is that to visit such a unique destination sets you apart from everyone else, as John Berger states “Being envied is a solitary form of reassurance. It depends upon not sharing your experience with those who envy you”.



fig. 2 J. W. Waterhouse *A mermaid* (1900.)



fig. 3 Gucci *Hallucination* (2018)

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fig 1. Advertisement, *Lanai, An island sanctuary like no other*. Vogue Magazine (2020)

fig.2. Waterhouse J. W. *A mermaid (1900)* available at <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/a-mermaid> (accessed 2nd Jan.2021)

fig.3. Gucci *Hallucination (2018)* available at <https://www.gucci.com/us/en/st/stories/advertising-campaign/article/spring-summer-2018> (accessed 2nd Jan.2021)

Task3: Practice-based writing

Keyword – Origin

Chosen Object – Coffee

Definition of origin: Collins Dictionary

Ancestry or parentage; birth

Conditions or events viewed as giving rise to something

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/origins> (2020) Accessed online

18/11/2020

The object I have chosen is coffee, an object integral to my daily life and the word I have chosen is origin, I would like to know how coffee became a big part of our culture.

Coffee was unknown in Europe before the 1500's. The first coffee house opened in England in 1650, a small smoky affair reminiscent of the East, slowly it became popular with Actors, writers and artists, "it became an institution that replaced the alehouse as a place for men to meet and discuss business or politics" (Jamieson, Ross.W.2001 p.285). No women were present, the taking of tea was considered a more feminine pass time.

Eventually the fashion for coffee entered the domestic scene and a wave of consumerism followed which required the redesigning of eastern utensils for "polite" British society. Traditional silver service was replaced with china bowls and saucers, reflecting the gentility of the Chinese tea ceremony, fashion had changed. The trend meant the creation of china factories such as Wedgewood to satisfy the demand, the infiltration of coffee had influenced culture, commerce and design.

In the post war era, interaction with customers was deemed not respectable for young women, so, the coffee shop remained the domain of the male Barista, as waiter in his traditional uniform.

The 1960's saw a cultural revolution among young, working class people, centred on the meteoric rise of pop groups such as the Beatles. Music was performed in small venues which lead to the birth of the coffee dance club.

Coffee shops existed before but with nowhere to dance. Here people were able to express themselves freely. New styles of dance dispensed with the formalities of having a partner. Young women were adopting unconventional styles, with less femininity, wearing jeans and flat shoes, as was practical for dancing.

Coffee clubs continued to rise in popularity with the arrival of the juke box.

"This was the baby-boom generation - people born in 1946, '47. There were a lot of young people, and they wanted something different" (Milestone, K. 2018p.).

The coffee club was important; especially for girls as gender inequality limited their choices. The clubs were accessible to the girls, they no longer needed permission to enter, they could dance, they were able to throw off the constraint of their parent's culture and find their own individuality, enabling the next generation to be creative through music and set the trends in fashion.

By the 1990's companies such as Starbucks re-invented the café experience, the Italian barista uniform became more contemporary and included the company's branding. The relaxed atmosphere generated a new coffee culture.

"Today, there is much more attention to branding that is cool, more fashion than uniform" (Pojmann.W.2020)

Many other coffee shops followed suit, offering an even more informal atmosphere, generally not following fashion trends. Instead, vintage and urban styles entered the café aesthetic. Independent traders appeared, offering a more authentic experience in organic coffee. Known as hipsters, with their beards and leather aprons, they became the antithesis of corporate culture and the barista had transformed once again,

In my opinion, coffee has transformed from humble beginnings into an art form in itself, the brewing process, the coffee shop aesthetic, the merchandise and the fashion.

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