

Portfolio of writing

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Student number :

BA photojournalism

Task 1 - Julia Lockheart-Manifesto Writing: "What do I believe in?"

Word count : 609

Task 2 - Jon Pugh-Reflective Writing: Do you know what you think?

Word count: 470

Task 3 - Ryan Moule-Observational Writing: Identify an image and write
a semiotic analysis

Word count : 587

Manifesto Writing: What do I believe in?

Manifesto

1. we as humans are ignorant to the true nature of reality.
2. I believe that women should be represented more in art as artists , to address the gender imbalance .
3. I believe that art should not need to have meaning, and that it can be just for aesthetics
4. I believe that art can be an escape from reality, a type of therapy.
5. I don't believe art should have a price tag , how can you determine a price?
6. We should address the current ecological crisis through art
7. We should address political issues through our art
- 8.

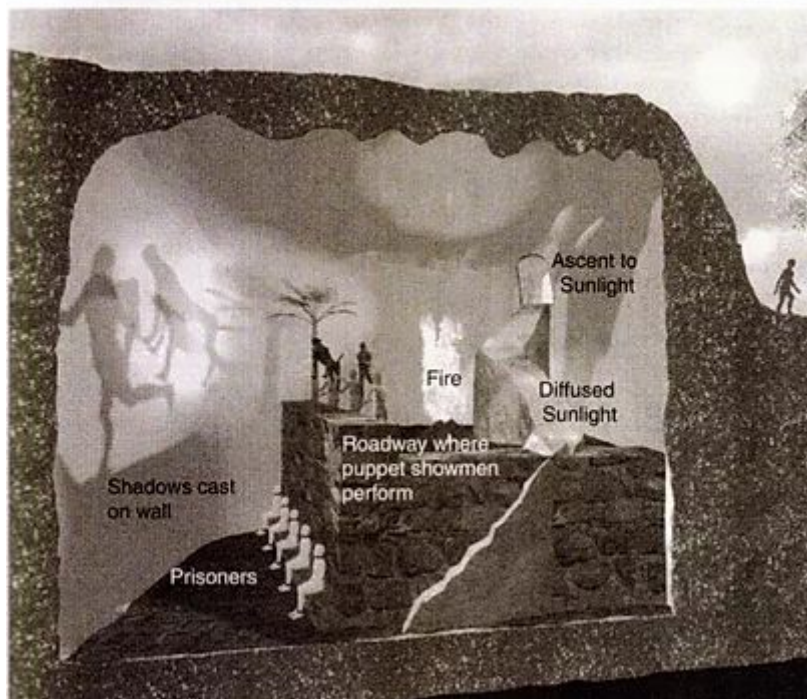
I believe that we should question social norms and ideas that we have always been told. In society, many people live by social norms because they are widely accepted within groups such as family and friends. For example, a social norm could be the idea of women having to want children , or that men can't show more emotion than women.

To explain my belief of questioning ideas and what we believe is real, I have used The allegory of the Cave by a Greek philosopher known as 'Plato'. The point of the allegory is to come away and question everything you would automatically call 'real'.

In Plato's cave , it describes a character not conforming to the social norms and finding their own path and individuality. The character who escaped the cave represents the little percentage of people who act differently to everyone else without giving into influence.

The characters who stayed chained in the cave represent people who DO conform to norms. They pursue the shadows and think what they see is the only real.

PLATO'S ALLEGORY OF THE CAVE

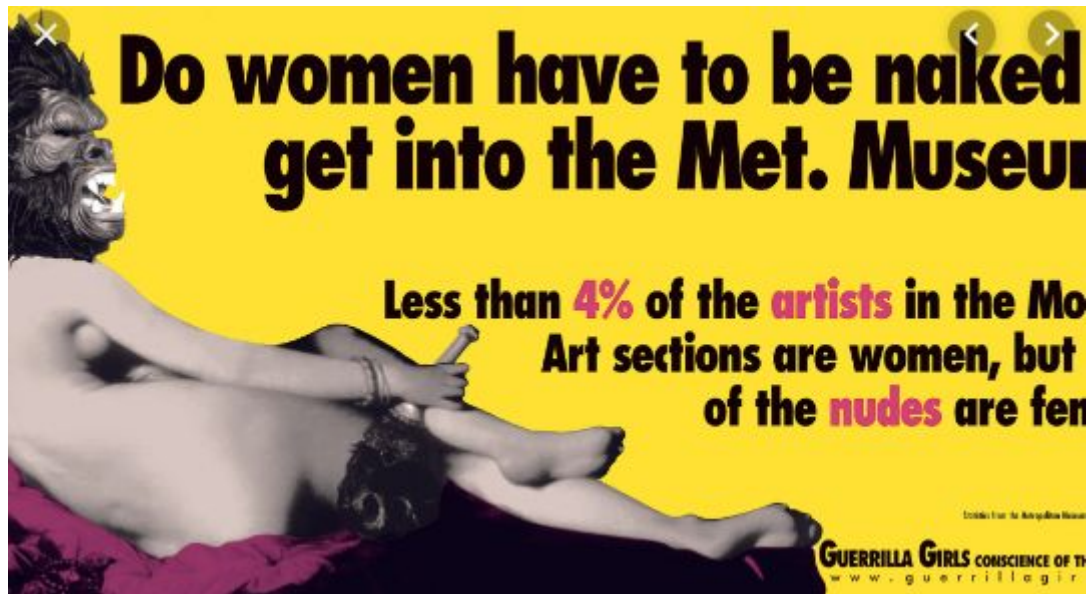


This image below relates to my manifesto belief that women should be able to be more involved in the creation of artwork , instead of being subjected visually in art and in exhibitions etc.

The gender inequality has been going on from even the victorian era, an example being the female pre- Raphaelite artists. The pre- raphaelites art era expressed women as sensual and 'sexual creatures' , which to me I dont find it to be empowering but more of objectification. I see these images as something that was made specifically for male gaze and amusement.

This is a poster created by an anonymous group of female artists called 'The Guerrilla Girls'. The group aimed to put a stop to gender issues in art. In times where in art, the most predominant creators have been male, women were common subjects for them, I feel this has given men an unfair advantage throughout the years in art.

Although more equal in 2019 ,women are still subjected in art for aesthetics. What I have personally noticed in exhibitions is that when men are in the reversed role , it almost reflects accomplishment etc.



I believe that any medium of art does not have to have a meaning to be appreciated, The visual aspect alone, the colours, patterns and shapes allow the viewer to feel an individual way. Sometimes, artists may want to create something bright and bold in colour however, it doesn't have to have a deep meaning. Sometimes when we are taught the meaning behind a piece of art, it starts to mold into something else.

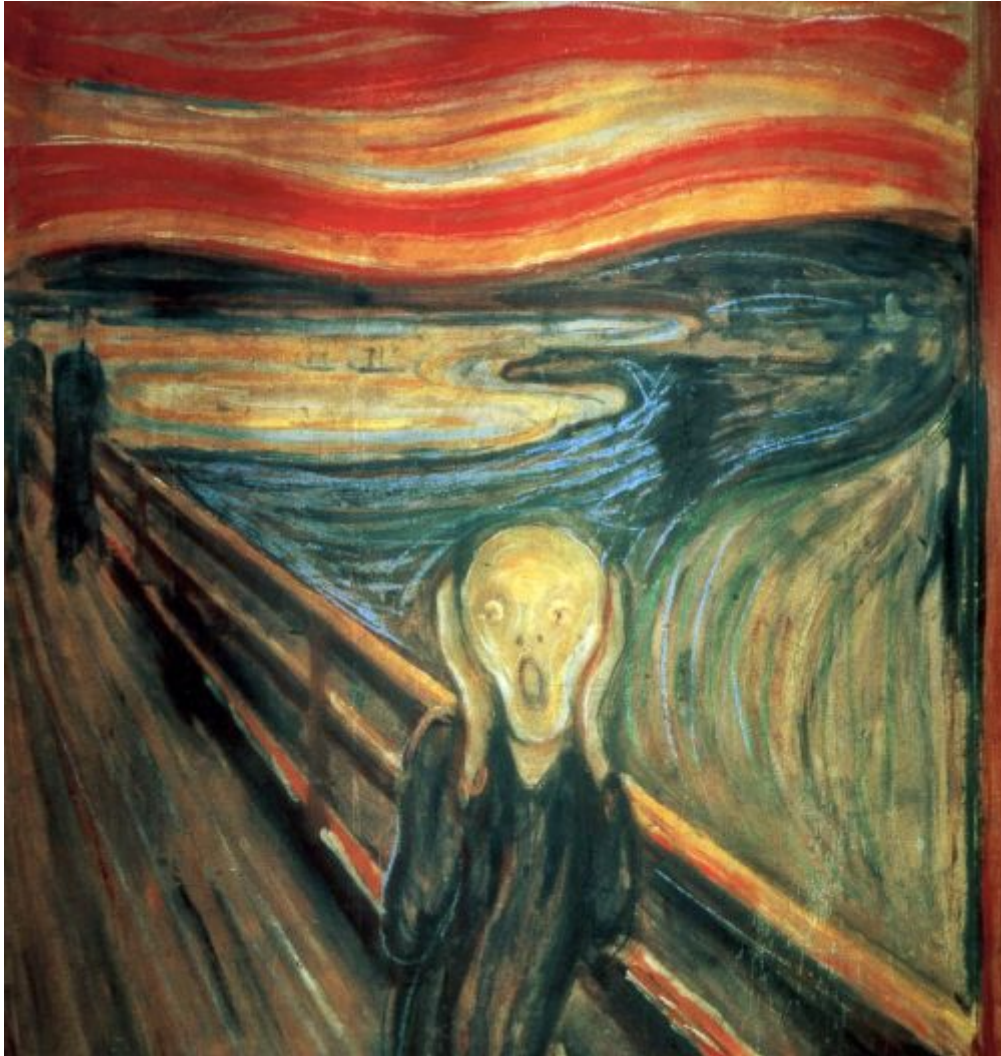
Many great iconic art pieces don't have obvious answers and meanings and I feel this creates excitement and conspiracy between the viewers and the art. Anish Kapoor, a sculptor, is conscious about not putting meaning into his sculptures with his famous quote "I have nothing to say as an artist".

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2009/oct/29/art-meaning-bob-dylan>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/culture/story/20130417-why-is-art-so-expensive>

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2019/oct/12/more-than-tragic-muses-female-pre-raphaelite-artists-finally-take-flight>

Reflective writing



The Scream, by Edward Munch consists of an eerie figure positioned on a bridge like structure, set in a sunset landscape. There are many versions and ideas of what we visually see as viewers and what we believe is happening. I believe that the painting describes feelings of anxiety and paints an overall picture of poor mental health.

What was happening to influence the creation of work when it was made ?

When we look deeper into what could have been the inspiration for this piece of art , we find Munch's notebook, with this particular piece written in 1889. " I was walking along the road with two friends—the sun went down—I felt a gust of melancholy—suddenly the sky turned a bloody red. I stopped, leaned against the railing, tired to death—as the flaming skies hung like blood and a sword over the blue-black fjord and the city—My friends went on—I stood there trembling with anxiety—and I felt a vast infinite scream [tear] through nature".

From this notebook entry , we can see that Munch had an experience that relates very much to his painting, almost a representation of how he felt of himself and how we saw the world around him in that moment.

What was the work and how did it fit in or stand out in it's time?

Since 'The Scream' , Expressionism, an art movement that is described as 'subjective' and 'distorted' became more popular among artists in Germany. Edward Munch amongst other artists such as Vincent Van Gogh were a very influential part of this movement. Many artists at first , rejected Expressionism as a movement , however this died down when the movement started to develop in other countries such as France and Austria. When Munch's painting was created, expressionism at its early stages, was labelled as radical. When I think about this particular movement , I do think it is radical however, i feel it is an important element and adds to the expressive vibe. This also enables the art to provoke emotion and feelings.

What impact did the work have, and does the work have today?

Although 'The Scream' is seen as the first of its kind in the 1900s, today it fits in well to the topic of mental health that is expressed regularly through the medium of art. Many art movements such as Expressionism have impacted what today's artists are creating, with more art centred around artist's feelings and internet troubles. Today, the scream is seen as one of the most iconic pieces of art in the world, along side the Mona Lisa.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/late-europe-and-americas/modernity-ap/a/munch-the-scream>

<https://www.edvardmunch.org/link.jsp>

<https://www.theartstory.org/movement/expressionism/>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/culture/story/20160303-what-is-the-meaning-of-the-scream>

<http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/history-of-art/german-expressionism.htm>

<https://encyclopedia.1914-1918-online.net/article/expressionism>

Anish Kapoor

Anish Kapoor is an artist specialising in sculpture. Kapoor experimented with polished stainless steel in 1995. In this period, Kapoor was creating large works in this style and material. I am analysing his sculpture 'Cloud Gate' in Chicago. Cloud Gate is a 10m x 13m x 20m stainless steel sculpture. It is rounded and reflects into a shape of a gate, hence the name given. When a viewer looks into it, it appears to be a large distorted mirror. The sculpture engulfs the surroundings of Chicago around the viewer. The sculpture provokes metonymy when seen. It is such a popular attraction that anyone would know where you were if you snapped a picture of yourself in the large mirror like sculpture.

To me, the sculpture stands for **how we want to perceive things**.

When briefly looked at, you may notice your distorted self and city behind you and many may just find it amusing. I feel this strange reflection symbolises **how we want to perceive things**. The sculpture allows you to be in the reflection by being close up to it but allows you to be out of the image, if looked at from a far. You are able to walk beneath the sculpture due to its arched structure to hide elements such as yourself, the sky or the skyscrapers of the city. Different angles of this sculpture influences and allows us to interpret what we are seeing differently, showing that everyone looks at what's around us individually. This shows how some want to see and be exposed to everything or be potentially blind to things.

In the book 'Amusing ourselves to death' by Neil Postman, the character 'George Orwell' is warned about information being banned to keep the public powerless. On the other hand, the character 'Aldous Huxley' depicted a population too amused by distractions, they didn't know they had been made powerless. I feel this important reference means you

can either drown in a sea of information from the media or conceal the actual truth by fake news or ignorance. It shows how we can be blind or want to be blind to things.

People usually find it difficult to view an abstract shape, with many of us trying to relate it to ourselves or something else. The abstract shape of this sculpture allows viewers to be opened minded and intrepert it in their own way , relating back to how we want to percieve things.

The reflection off the large sculpture results in a mirrored image of the landscape and viewers. In symbolism, mirrors are usually related to **'truth'**. In this particular case, the viewers can essentially build their own visual of the city. The viewers of the sculpture are not looking into a so called 'normal' mirror but one that is classed as distorted. The viewers can show a truthful view of what's around them or take away certain elements of the landscape. I think this piece of art may have a motif of questioning truth and questioning what we perceive as real.

At first glance , the shape of the sculpture isn't common and made me wonder why the artist may have chosen this contemporary shape. I think Anish Kapoor is maybe trying to send a message to the viewers. After researching into different types of shapes and how they make us feel various ways , I have learnt that curved objects tend to link with movement, which would make sense for this sculpture because of the fast, continious movement of the city.

