

Ways of Thinking

MX.....

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Manifesto

8 short statements about work, beliefs and practice

- 1) Dogs are the best mammals alive.
- 2) I believe in the freedom and expression of art; anything can be created as long as it is a true representation of your inner self.
- 3) I believe in not believing but just letting things happen- I would rather not be constricted by rules but be free to express myself.
- 4) I believe in true neutralism, being non-biased towards anything with no prejudice or judgement towards others. I enjoy parts of everything but I like to be grey, in the middle.
- 5) Illustration in its core is the most basic form of communication and allows a visual representation conveying information.
- 6) I believe life is about more than just work. I need to create a work/life balance to be happy.
- 7) Do we play God in more than one aspect; we create and clone animals and preserve animals which we have no right to preserve. We should have no control over nature and things should be allowed to die in the natural order of life
- 8) Global warming is a natural part of life and is part of the world becoming a more tempered planet. Earth has had multiple ice ages and tropical phases and this is just a natural process the world must go through.



Fig. 1: *Egyptian Hieroglyphs: The Language of the Gods.*

5) Illustration at its core is the most basic form of communication and allows a visual representation for conveying information.

Image making and illustration can be considered the most basic form of language.

Linguist Nobrega argues that “human language emerged as an abstract symbolic system” (Gibbens, 2018). An individual can create an image to describe anything without using words. Before words there were pictures and that was how humans communicated; an understanding can be reached between different languages through the medium of pictures. For example when visiting a foreign country dialogue can be communicated through using photos/drawings with local people.

The Ancient Egyptians used hieroglyphs as their main form of communication and these are still apparent today. “Hieroglyphs were called, by the Egyptians, “the words of God” and were used mainly by the priests” (discoveringegypt.com, 2021). Priests were highly

respected and powerful and would have been influential in communication. It was considered that the gods used the priests as a vessel to convey their message to the people so the use of illustration and symbols became highly important. The use of symbols and illustrations arguably became the basis for the language we use today.

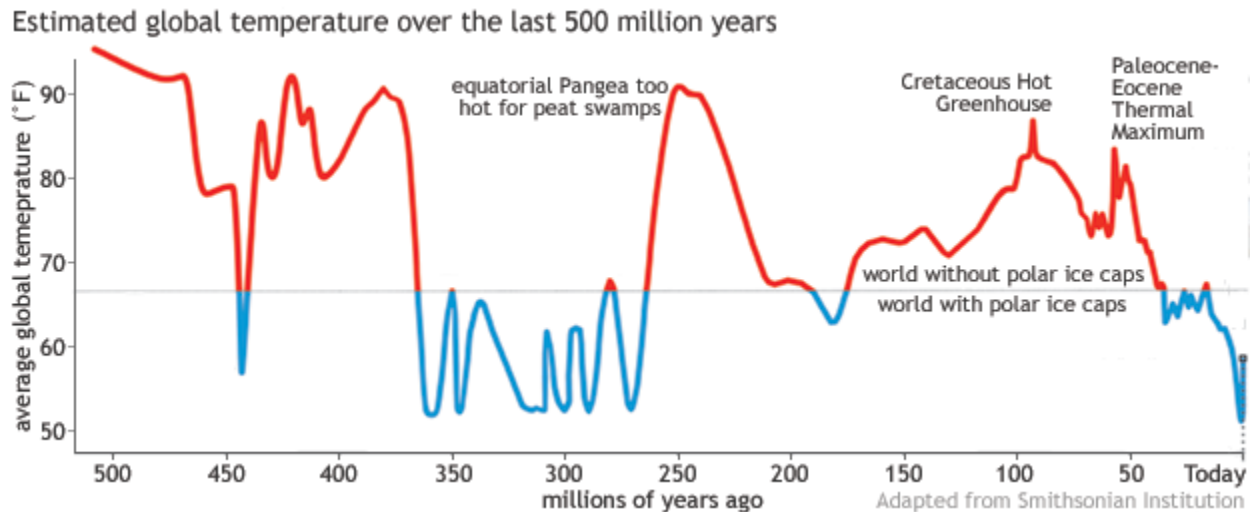


Fig. 2: *Estimated Global Temperature over the last 500 million years.*

8) Global warming is a natural part of life and is part of the world becoming a more tempered planet. Earth has had multiple ice ages and tropical phases and this is just a natural process the world must go through.

The earth has been through five ice ages starting two billion years ago and most recently being roughly three million years ago and we are still in that ice age (Eldredge and Biek, 2019). For there to be an ice age the earth must have some form of ice on the earth and this would be the North and South pole (Beitler, 2011). Currently we are experiencing a greenhouse period which is caused by temperature fluctuating and this has been a continuous natural phenomenon. This means that global warming is just a natural cycle, however humans have sped up the process by damaging the environment by burning fossil fuels such as coal and oil, taking $\frac{3}{4}$ of what we can replenish in fossil fuels.

It is my belief that humans are advanced enough to survive global warming; it will ultimately change our way of life drastically but it will not be something we cannot adapt

to. Global warming is a natural part of life and is an important process for the world to regenerate and become more tempered.



Fig. 3: *Birth, Death, Sex, Horror and McDonald's.*

2) I believe in the freedom and expression of art; anything can be created as long as it is a true representation of your inner self.

Any concept in a person's mind can be translated into a physical body and anything that can be thought, can be art. "Instead of reflecting states of the external world, art is held to reflect the inner state of the artist" (Brittanica, 2021). It is more important for an idea to originate from an artist's head than an object or a concept; it becomes thereby a reflection on another's perspective of their external world. Art is a comment on things, subjective in translation yet open to interpretation; the painter can paint something and interpret it in one way with the viewer interpreting this completely differently. This can be seen as a spectrum of understanding and can depend on external processes such as colour theory; an item painted one colour as opposed to another can change the meaning. This can influence what people can visualise and their understanding.

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Figure 1: Hill, B (2020) 'Egyptian Hieroglyphs: The Language of the Gods', *Ancient Origins*, 23 August 2020. Available at: <https://www.ancient-origins.net/artifacts-ancient-writings/egyptian-hieroglyphs-002990> (Accessed: 10 February 2021).

Figure 2: Scott, M and Lindsey, R. (2020) 'What's the hottest Earth's ever been?', *Climate Watch Magazine*, 18 June. Available at: <https://www.climate.gov/news-features/climate-qa/whats-hottest-earths-ever-been> (Accessed: 19 January 2021).

Figure 3: Artlyst (2014) 'Jake and Dinos Chapman: Birth, Death, Sex, Horror and McDonald's' [Photo]. Serpentine Gallery. Available at: <https://www.artlyst.com/reviews/jake-and-dinos-chapman-birth-death-sex-horror-and-mcdonalds/> (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

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<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2018/02/acoustic-caves-rock-art-language-origin-spd/> (Accessed: 26 January 2021).

Observational Writing



Fig. 1: *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun.*

The Great Red Dragon is a painting by William H. Blake that depicts a large winged creature standing over a woman, which is the sign. The name Great Red Dragon denotes the winged

creature as a dragon however in terms of societal understanding of the word this is a misnomer; the figure is neither what is typically understood as the colour red or have the attributes of a dragon other than the wings and tail.

The large winged creature (sign) is in the foreground and presents the most detail within the picture. Blake has anthropomorphised the 'dragon' providing it with arguably human characteristics such as legs and multiple heads, of which three can be seen within this image however other versions depict seven. The painting is a depiction of the cosmic battle between good and evil, and the human characteristics of the dragon could be significant of the inner beast within mankind. In contrast the woman lying on the ground is blurry signifying a lesser person next to the muscular figure of the dragon, indicative of strength and power.

The dragon although in the foreground has been painted with a muted red colour in comparison to the blinding, golden yellow that emanates from the woman. This creates an ethereal glow around her. Yellow is a sign of sunshine and is significant within this image of positivity and goodness in contrast to the red dragon. Red is a colour significant of anger and danger however this has been muted by the light from the woman signifying a fight for power and control, and the deteriorating impact she is having on him to make him muted. The dragon's colour moves from red to a grey/ white significant of ashes signifying destruction. The use of the colours yellow and red/ grey-white can be interpreted as signifying a battle between good and evil.

The Great Red Dragon has a crown atop his head, a sign of nobility and royalty but arguably forged and man-made, bent into shape through power. The woman's crown is made of stars, a sign of light, signifying life. The ethereal glow that surrounds her signifies religious connotations denoting the pictures of Jesus Christ. The image is a reimagining of the New Testament 'Book of Revelation', with the woman signifying the Virgin Mary, mother of Jesus Christ; this was a book considered to contain warnings of terrible events intended to help Christians maintain their faith (williamblake.org, 2021). "The dragon embodies Satan. His mission is to exact revenge on the woman who has given birth to a follower of God who will spread the Christian faith" (nga.gov, 2021). The woman has her hands held together significant of praying to a higher power or intervention; a positive image connoting asking for help and forgiveness. The position of her hands however mirror the dragon's arms significant of a union; "suggest that good and evil are a duality, like the dark and light sides of the moon, rather than completely independent forces" (nga.gov, 2021). This depicts a balance that where there is good there also must be evil.

513 words

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Figure 1: Blake, W. (1803-1805) *The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun* [Black ink and watercolour painting]. Available at: <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/4368> (Accessed: 17 February 2021)

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Practice based writing



Fig. 1: 'Seasons Greetings' Banksy Port Talbot mural

Seasons Greetings is a Banksy piece situated on a steel worker's garage in Port Talbot and was created in 2018. It is located in the low income area of Taibach, close to Tata Steel, a large steelworks that dominates Port Talbot. The piece has been painted on two sides of a garage; on the one side a child with a sled is trying to catch falling snowflakes on her tongue: on the other side it becomes clear the 'snowflakes' are ash falling from a burning skip.

My initial reaction is this is a lazy piece by Banksy, lacking the deep political message normally associated with his work and is quite a simple piece; I was not as overwhelmed as public opinion seemed to be. Banksy is creating his own lottery by attaching his work to wherever he wants and this has been the case with this piece. The random location on a personally owned garage for me questions its significance and as a result of its location, caused major difficulty for the local residents. "Interest in the piece led to congestion in the area, prompting Neath Port Talbot Council to post two members of staff at the site to advise the public on where to park" (John, 2021). This seems unfair as a local area has now become a tourist attraction due to what is essentially criminal damage and if it wasn't made by Banksy this would not have achieved the same press, instead resulting in prosecution.

Further research has shown however that this piece was not as random as I had presumed and was planned and thought out years in advance, appearing in sketch form for the 'Alternativity', a Danny Boyle production in 2017 (see figure 2).



Fig.2: *The Sketch from 2017*

This contrasts with my earlier belief that this piece was lazy. In addition the placing and location of the piece I had initially believed to be random, with Banksy creating his own lottery, has also been disproved through research with Banksy seeming instead to choose his locations carefully. The garage it is situated on has a bonfire opposite it lit every year and the chimneys of Tata steel can be seen.

Immediately opposite the garage, the burned remains of the massive bonfire that happens every November 5 can still be seen, and the chimney stacks of the steelworks can just be seen above the rooftops of the terraced streets (Deacon, 2018).

Seasons Greetings was apparently created as a result of a letter from a local resident highlighting the issues with pollution following black dust settling on cars and houses which explains its location with Tata Steel visible from the site (Deacon, 2018). The piece additionally was bought by an art dealer and was later removed to a central former police station in Ty'r Orsaf, to be finally moved to a private art collection. I disagree with moving it as this is a community art piece made by Banksy for the people and should be used to promote Port Talbot and uplift the local community, an opinion shared by resident Dawn Spencer-Kelly. "They said it was going to help revitalise Port Talbot," she said. "But there's nobody here" (Morris, 2019). A

lack of publicity has meant this piece has not been truly recognised or taken advantage of and I feel it is a missed opportunity for Port Talbot.

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Figure 1: <https://news.sky.com/story/banksy-port-talbot-garage-mural-sold-to-art-dealer-for-six-figure-sum-11610639>

Figure 2: Banksy (2017) *The Sketch from 2017* [Drawing] Available at: <https://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/truth-behind-port-talbot-banksy-15608628> (Accessed: 28 April 2021).