

Portfolio of Writing

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Programme of Study: BA Illustration

Module: ADAD4018 Ways of Thinking

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Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Manifesto = 532 words

Task Two: Semiotic Analysis = 487 words

Task Three: Practice-based writing = 539 words

Task One: Semiotic Analysis

My 8 statements:

- I want to become confident in my art style and in my work.
- Never shy away from experimenting.
- I aim to create at least a sketch each day in order to continue my practice.
- I would like to investigate and develop drawing techniques in other genres.
- I want to refine my academic research skills.
- I want my work to be individual, easily recognisable, unique, but also something I can be proud of.
- As I'm autistic, I hope that I can communicate my ideas through my art.
- I hope that my sources of inspiration such as video games, anime, films/animation movies and artists like Yoshitaka Amano and Hirohiko Araki can inspire others.

Map

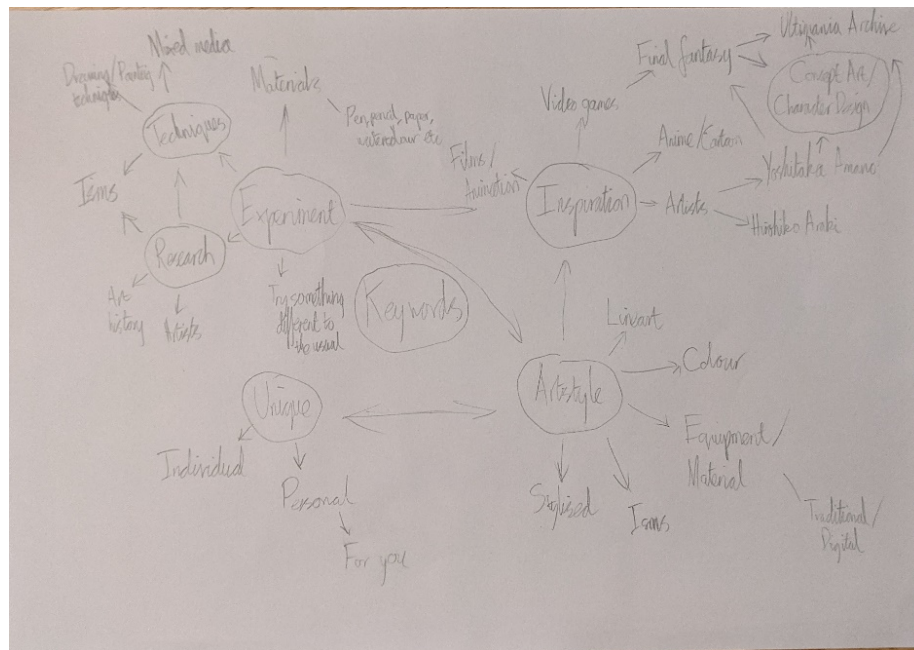


Fig. 1: Henderson (2021) *Map*

Manifesto

1. Never shy away from experimenting with your art.

Keyword: Experimenting



Fig. 2: Dean, R. (1973) *Tales from Topographic Oceans Black and White*



Fig. 3: Dean, R. (1973) *Tales from Topographic Oceans*

In the history of art, there have been many art movements expressing a variety of different art forms. I have learnt from the inspiration that I have gained from several art practitioners that it is important to keep experimenting with my art in order to develop my own style and to grow as a practitioner. For example, when Dean (1973) was designing the album cover '*Tales from Topographic Oceans*' (see Fig. 2) for the band 'Yes', he made 'several pen and ink drawings' (Dean, Unknown) of the painting in order to experiment with the design for the cover. Then as part of the process, he finalised his design and coloured it using materials such as 'watercolour/ink/acrylic' (Zeegan, 2014, p.114). With my own art, I also want to experiment with different materials, subjects, and techniques so that I can find out what works for me and what does not.

2. I hope that my sources of inspiration such as video games, anime, films/animation movies and artists like Yoshitaka Amano and Hirohiko Araki can inspire others.

Keyword: Inspiration

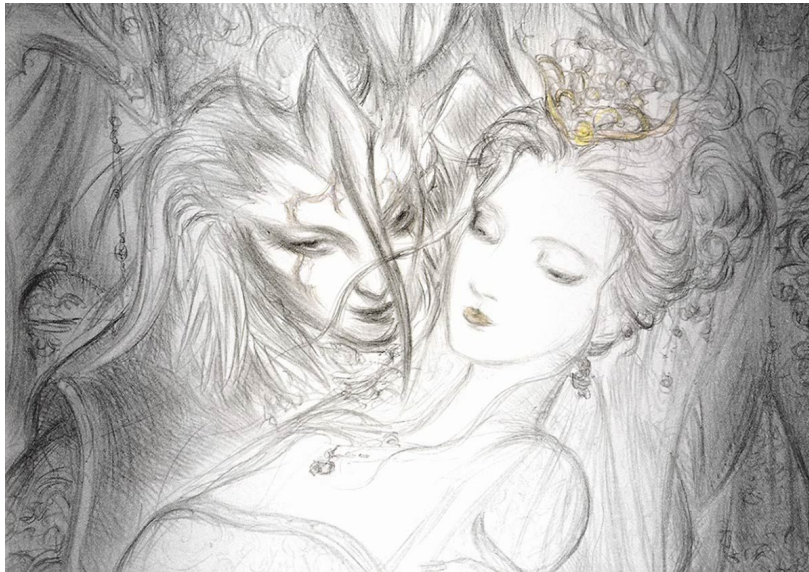


Fig. 4: Amano, Y. (2001) *Noir*



Fig. 5: Araki, H. (2013) *Drawing of all Jojo's protagonists*

Having a wide range of inspiration is important so that your ideas are not limited. Some of my sources of inspiration include my hobbies and artists like Yoshitaka Amano and Hirohiko Araki. Yoshitaka Amano is an illustrator who has created character designs for a video game company *Square Enix*. Amano's art interests me because of his loose process of drawing, the range of materials that he uses, and the end result of the illustration. What I also find fascinating about Amano is that he 'doesn't know yet what the illustration will look like when it's done.' (Amano, 2016, p.110) which is reflected in his loose art style (see Fig.3). Hirohiko Araki is a manga creator who has created one of my favourite manga series. The way that Araki creates the character designs enhances the narration within his stories. Furthermore, the use of the characters for his illustrations makes for an interesting and unusual composition (see Fig.4).

3. I want my work to be individual, easily recognisable, unique, but also something I can be proud of.

Keyword: Unique and Art style

Drawing the key points of statements 1 and 2, I want to work towards refining my work so that it becomes individual and easily recognisable. As a student, this is going to involve a lot of hard work and experimental practice. Experimenting will help you discover new possibilities within your art that you wouldn't have thought about trying. In addition, inspiration is useful to have when coming up with ideas for an art piece and also it can help you to feel motivated. Overall, in order to become better as a practitioner, I aim to create at least one drawing a day so that my mindset and skills when drawing don't become rusty. For some artists such as Amano, when it comes to creating an illustration, he creates 'an average of twenty to thirty rough drafts per completed illustration.' (Amano, 2016) so that

he can get his ideas onto paper and then develop some of the drafts that he likes. I believe that getting my ideas on paper through rough sketches is a good method for daily drawing which can develop my practice.

List of Illustrations

Figure 1: Henderson, B. (2021) *Map* [Paper and Pencil]

Figure 2: Dean, R. (1973) *Tales from Topographic Oceans Black and White* [Watercolour, Ink, and Acrylic] Available at: <https://www.rogerdean.com/> (Accessed:23 October 2021).

Figure 3: Dean, R. (1973) *Tales from Topographic Oceans* [Watercolour, Ink, and Acrylic] Available at: <https://www.rogerdean.com/> (Accessed:23 October 2021).

Figure 4: Amano, Y. (2001) *Noir* [Mixed media on paper] Available at: Final fantasy Ultimania Archive, 3. Oregon: Dark Horse Books.

Figure 5: Araki, H. (2013) *Drawing of all Jojo's protagonists*

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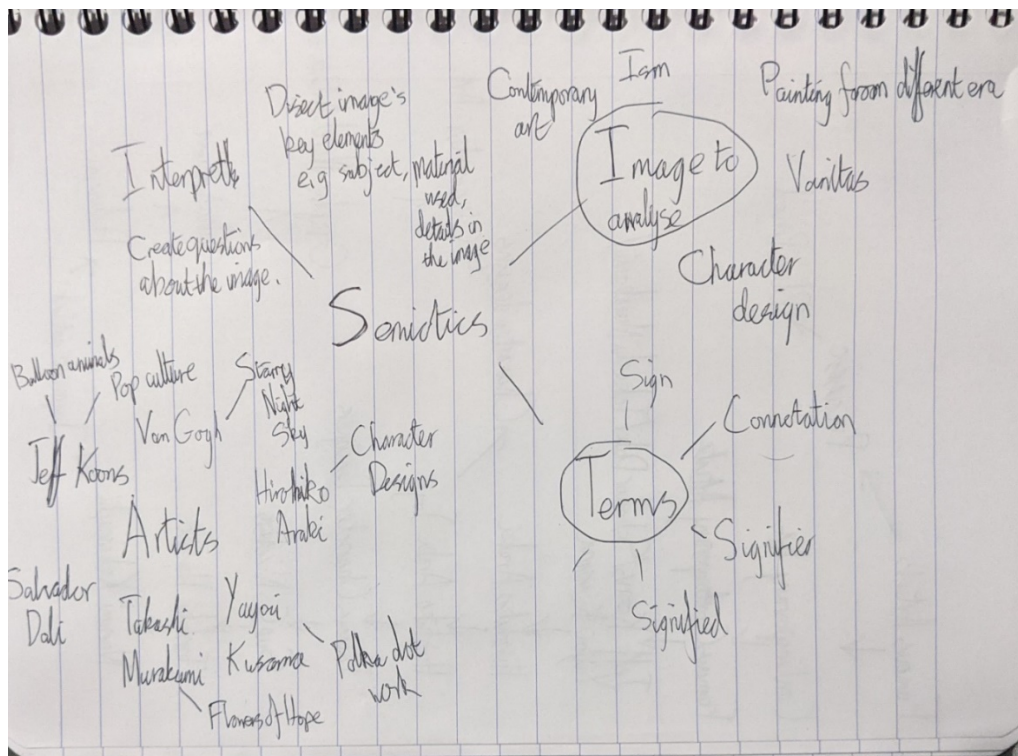
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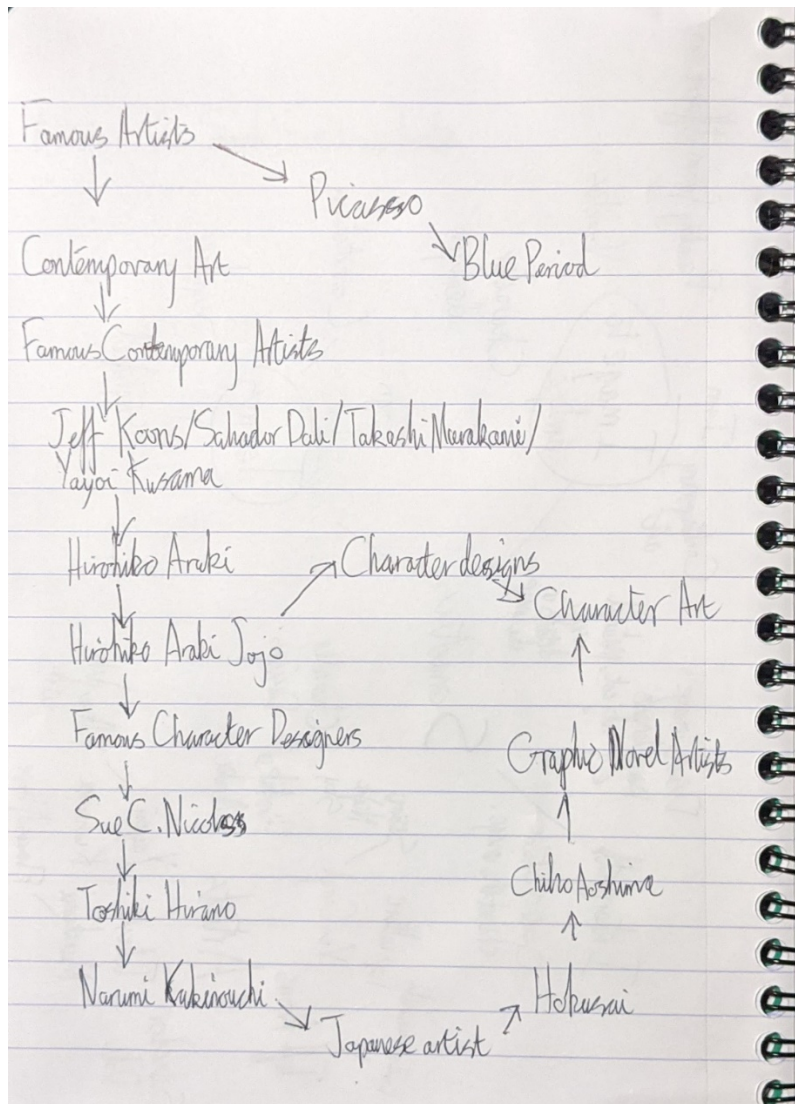
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Task Two: Semiotic Analysis

Map



Henderson, B. (2021) *Semiotic spider diagram*.



Henderson, B. (2021) *Semiotic Mind Map*.



Picasso, P. (1903) *The Old Guitarist*.

According to Sebok, (2001) 'Saussure's definition of the sign laid down the course that semiotic inquiry was to take during the first half of the twentieth century' A sign is a combination of the *signifier* which is 'something physical – sounds, letters, gestures, etc' and the 'image or concept to which the signifier refers' that is termed as the *signified* by Saussure.

The Old Guitarist is a painting made by Pablo Picasso (1903) during his Blue Period which happened around 1901 to 1904. The Blue Period was born from the 'suicide of his close friend and confidant Carlos Casagemas' (Admin, 2019) which had a 'deep and profound

affect on Picasso' (Admin, 2019) and his sorrow from losing his friend became his source of inspiration for his Blue Period.

Firstly, I will analyse the colour blue used by Pablo Picasso (1903) in his painting, *The Old Guitarist*. The majority of the painting contains the colour blue and different shades of blue to make the painting monochromatic. According to colour theory, the colour blue can symbolise numerous things such as 'calm, trust and intelligence' (Lundberg, 2019). However, Picasso used the colour blue for this piece to signify 'his experience of relative poverty and instability' (Pablo Picasso's Blue Period – 1901 to 1904) of the outcast in society during that time period. In addition, the subdued blues can also express Picasso's sadness for the recent loss of his friend Casagemas. Furthermore, the subdued blues can be seen as a connotation that creates a sad and melancholic atmosphere as well as expressing the loss of the old man's youth. The only exception to the 'monochromatic blue palette' (*Analysis: Pablo Picasso The Old Guitarist*, 1903) is the guitar which is painted in a 'warmer, brown color' (*Analysis: Pablo Picasso The Old Guitarist*, 1903). This clearly shows that the guitar is the focal point of the pieces which is centred in the painting, and it represents as the only tool that the old man has to get out of his sorry state of living.

The focal point of the painting is a 'bent and sightless man' (*The Old Guitarist*, 1903) who holds a large guitar close to him. This can signify that the old man is a musician that plays music as a living or when he was younger. Another aspect about the old man is that he's sitting in an uncomfortable posture with his upper body crooked and angled downwards as well as his legs crossed with his feet angled flat on the floor. This can reflect how poverty effected some people who had to be homeless which made their lives difficult and uncomfortable.

Initially, when I saw this piece, I thought it simply displayed a man sleeping while playing his guitar. After analysing it, I now know that the analysed elements of the painting are all connected by the artist's perspective, history, and the emotions he was feeling at that time.

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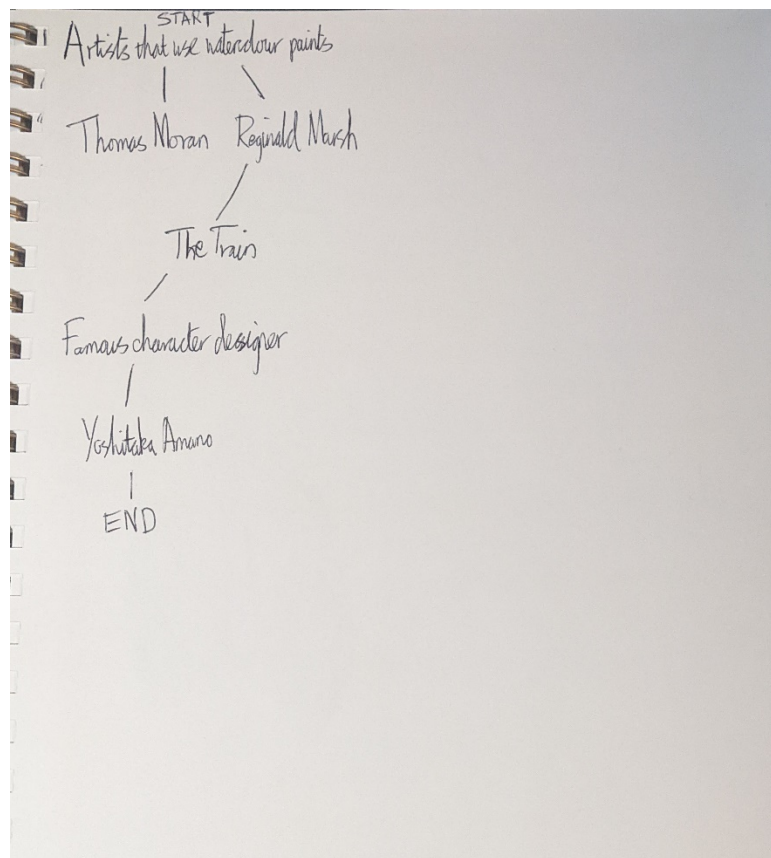
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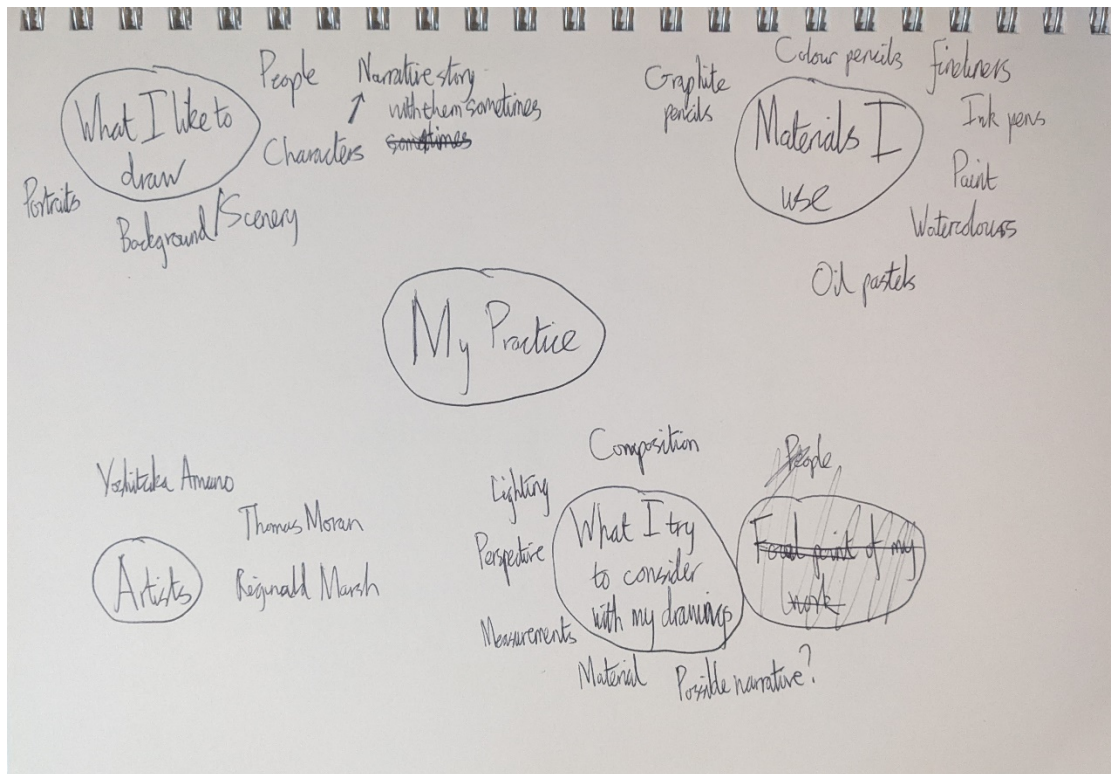
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Task Three: Practice-based writing

Map



Henderson, B. (2021) *Practice based connection map*.



Henderson, B. (2021) *Practice based mind map*.



Henderson, B. (2021) *Paranoid*.

As part of learning colour theory and watercolours, I made a watercolour painting on the theme of paranoia. The reason for choosing this painting is because it combines the things, I like to draw such as characters and backgrounds, as well as techniques that I have learned during the Illustration course like symbolism, perspective, colour theory, etc. My practice

has always focused on people and characters, sometimes I like to include a background or scenery that I can place the character in to give a sense of narrative.



Amano, Y. (2020) *Vogue Italia*.

Throughout his career, Yoshitaka Amano has done numerous jobs as a 'Japanese artist, character designer, illustrator and a theatre and film scenic designer and costume designer.' (Amano, 2021) Started as an animator at 14, then became an independent freelance artist in 1982. One of his note-worthy jobs was creating concept illustrations of characters for the franchise *Final fantasy* made by *Square Enix*.

The reason for examining Amano's practice in art is because he has been a big impact on my art, and still is to this day. Personally, I find his artwork to be very fascinating and mesmerising with his loose style of creating unique characters and pieces of art. Sometimes when I look at his work, like with the *Vogue Italia*, it makes me believe that I should feel free when working on my art. Although he mainly paints on 'aluminium box panels with acrylic and automotive paint' (Amano, 2021), he uses a variety of materials to create some of his work. This is something that I like to do as well within my practice. In addition, his reason for creating art is because he 'wanted people to look directly at my drawings' (Archipel, 2020) which is a feeling that I can understand when I create art.

The piece above is a portrait of Lindsey Wixson made by Amano for one of *Vogue Italia*'s magazine front covers in 2020. What I find interesting is how his portrayal of Wixson gives her a fantasy-like appearance which personally made me think it was a character when I first saw it. Inspired by this piece, I tried to express the feeling of paranoia by designing an ordinary looking character that wears an eye design hoodie which constantly stares at him. Using both Tillman's theory (2012, p. 12) 'When dealing with character design...character exists as a result of the story' and Hart's theory (2015, p. 99) of using 'Omens' as a 'sign that indicates all is not well', I focused on creating my character to represent paranoia by using the eye pattern as the sign. For the colour scheme, I used different shades of purple and a bit of blue to express fear and paranoia. Whereas, with Amano's piece, he used different shades of blue, a bold red and a few other colours to complement the blue. In one of his other works, he used blue for the background, 'Since I was going to draw flowers, I wanted the colours to balance out.' (Amano, 2016) He did this by using red for the lips to subtly balance the colours without creating any contrast to the character.

In conclusion, I chose to compare my work with Amano's because I find him and his artwork inspiring.

List of Illustrations

Amano, Y. (2020) *Vogue Italia*. [Mixed Media]

Henderson, B. (2021) *Paranoid*. [Watercolour illustration]

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