

Student name: Lewys Davies

P number: 2317133

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Module: ADAD4018 Ways of Thinking

Tasks in the order I received them:

Task one: Semiotic Analysis = 536 words

Task two: Manifesto = 480 words

Task three: Practice-based writing = 539 words



# Kepler-186f

WHERE THE GRASS IS ALWAYS **REDDER** ON THE OTHER SIDE

***Fig.1 -Kepler 186-f-JPL travel poster, NASA, 2020***

### **Task one: Semiotic Analysis**

This travel poster, published in December 2020 depicts the discovery of Kepler-186f; the first Earth-size exoplanet discovered in the potentially 'habitable zone' around another star, where liquid water could exist on the planet's surface. Its star is much cooler and redder than our sun. If plant life does exist on a planet like Kepler 186-f, its photosynthesis could have been influenced by red-wavelength photons, making for a very different colour palette that contrasts the greens on Earth. The discovery was made by Kepler, NASA's planet hunting telescope and signals a significant step closer to finding a world similar to Earth (Brennan, 2022).

The poster depicts an interesting paradigm, a distinct theory that liquid water could exist on this new planet's surface and suggests potential plant life could exist. Because Kepler-186f's star is much cooler and redder than our sun, this would result in the planet's photosynthesis being influenced by red-wavelength photons and hence why the poster depicts a red forest. Humanity understands that 'Everyone knows how many words a picture is worth' (Hickey, 2002, p. 146); the poster portrays a polysemic message where it explains the unique characteristics of this new planet's photosynthesis with the red plant life, but also the colour red denotes connotations of hardiness and valor, in reference to the American flag (American legion, 1919); symbolic of NASA's previous achievements such as Apollo 11 (Loff, 2015).

Anchorage can be seen; 'where the grass is always REDDER on the other side'. This statement is referring to the proverb 'the grass is always greener on the other side', describing envy and

perception (Craiker, 2022). The perception element refers to NASA's optimism of their discovery, implying that life would be better on Kepler186-f compared to Earth. The polysemic statement holds an element of irony, with the adjective 'REDDER' in reference to the red-wavelength photons, but also the connotations of change from green to red symbolises a change from old to new, referencing their hopes of new beginnings. We as society are taught that 'images are the central medium of information, and the role of language has become that of a medium of commentary. Images (and this includes the layout of the page) carry the argument' (Kress and Leeuwen, 1996, p. 38). The anchorage contradicts this statement by Gunther Kress and Theo Van Leeuwen by giving a better understanding combined with the image of the purpose of the poster.

The white picket fence is an arbitrary sign where it holds iconic status as Americana, symbolising the ideal middle-class suburban life and peaceful living; connotations of ideology of NASA's vision 'for the good life' (Dolan, 2019) on Kepler-186f. The connotations of ideology are reinforced by the two astronauts symbolising a couple looking out at their new garden, hopeful of a new life and beginnings together. The combination of the white picket fence and the astronauts are significant in American culture where 'its prime intention is the direct transfer of ideas and information from one person to another, from subject to object, the voice to the ear' (Brody, 1994, p. 53); representing another breakthrough for NASA and the USA, with the astronauts symbolising Neil Armstrong being the first American to land on the moon; reinforcing their theme of accomplishment.

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## **Task two: Manifesto**

1. 'Water will always find its own level'
2. 'Education is a human right, not a privilege'
3. 'You get what you give'
4. 'Less is more'
5. 'Hurt people, hurt people'
6. 'The biggest risk is being afraid to take one'
7. 'If it's behind you keep it there'
8. 'Everyone should have a form of therapy'



*Fig. 2, Dealing with the threat of a learning gap, Ezy schooling, 2021*

# 1. 'Education is a human right, not a privilege'

Key word: human right

Education is a fundamental pillar to society and is vital for the development and progression of our future. Due to the 'inadequate education' (Hillman, Jenkner, 2004) in third world countries, this has influenced our society to believe that we may be perceived as privileged for adopting an education system. Designers such as Catherine Casalino view working on books 'as a chance to push myself in a new creative direction' (Casalino, 2013, p.105). Education defeats mental barriers in terms of creativity; 'throughout the history of human beings, the idea or symbol of a bridge was used to represent crossing from one world to another. Perhaps today the media, especially graphic design, plays this role of a bridge' (Abedini, 2007, p.30). Abedini's metaphor of a bridge describes graphic design as the path to developing our future, reinforcing the importance of education as if it behaves like a bridge to a new world of possibilities.

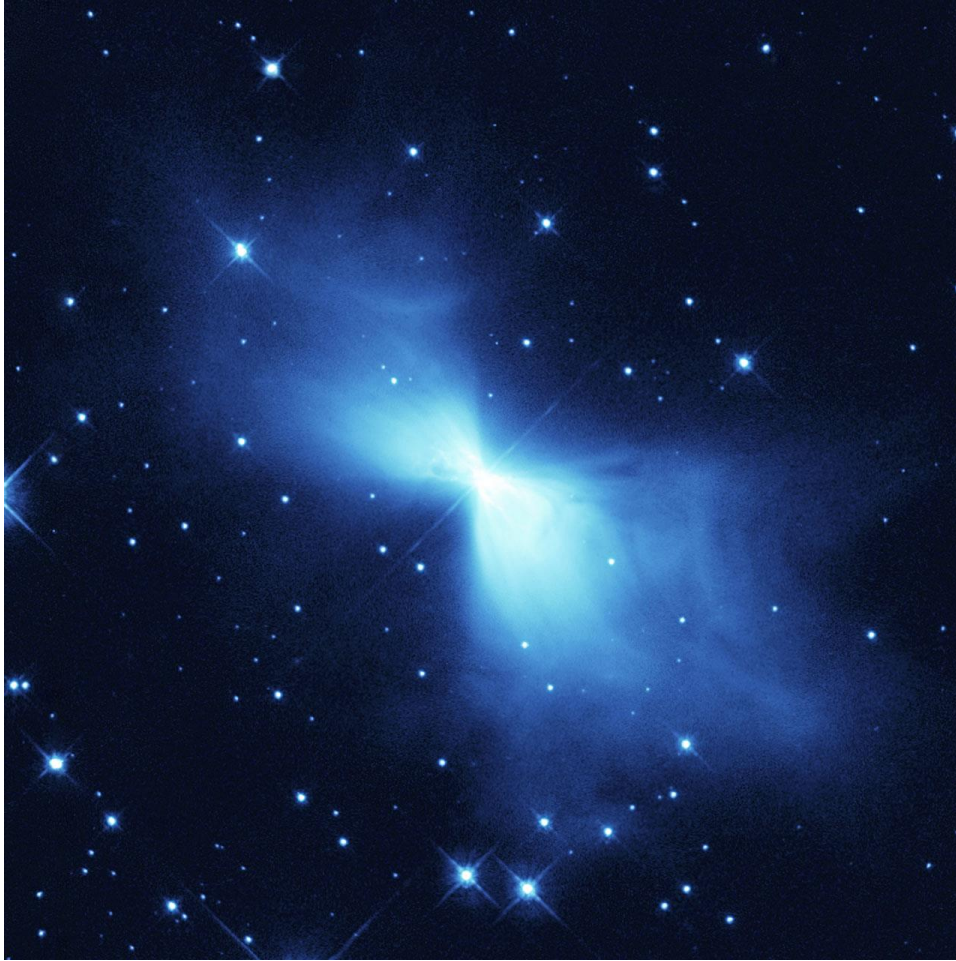


*Fig. 3, Boomerang Nebula, European space agency, NASA, 2003*

2. 'you get what you give'

Key word: you

This manifesto is subconsciously a 'way of thinking and knowing, a way of feeling, and a way of life' (Meggs and Purvis, 2011, p.270). We can visualise this manifesto like a boomerang and as if we are the universe. We as humans have free will; fundamental to the sort of life we create, and what we choose to give out whether it be good or bad we receive back, like solving an equation things naturally manifest balance. Many artists perceive and implement this as a design philosophy, fulfilling great ideas through hard work and perseverance to achieve brilliant

outcomes. Through this belief, many of today's artists continue to create great work through great effort and positive manifestation; 'intuition and feeling could be freed' (Meggs and Purvis, 2011, p.270) when implementing this philosophy in design.



*Fig. 4, The persistence of memory, Salvador Dali, 1931*

### 3. 'Everyone should have a form of therapy'

Key word: therapy

Therapy is fundamental for a person to develop and become the best version of themselves.

People who are emotionally healthy are in control of their thoughts, feelings and behaviors and tackle life's problems better (Brennan, 2021). Interacting in any therapeutic activity is beneficial for humans to release negative feelings inside, helping them regain purpose and achieve a

clearer view in life. Surrealism; art that allows the unconscious mind to express itself, provides us with an overview into someone's emotional realities and teaches us how to holistically heal. Through letting our subconscious mind and emotions influence our art, it is a 'liberation of the human spirit' (Meggs and Purvis, 2011, p.271). Society undermines this manifesto due to factors such as stigma of being ashamed of receiving therapy (Schreiber, 2015), and thus 'the necessity for the operation to remove imagination from the brain' (Bury, 2007, p.25) is implemented to ensure our emotions influence our design work to reach its greatest potential. Therapy will not only develop us as designers, but as human beings.

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### **Task three: Practice-based writing**

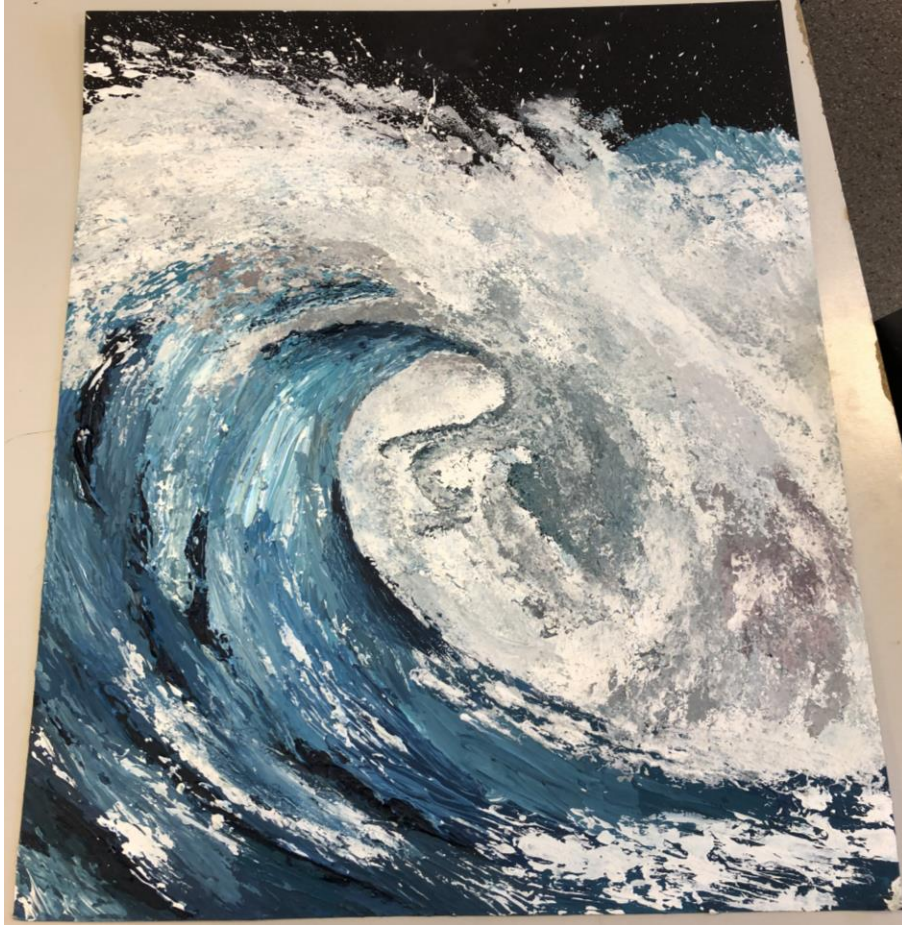


***Fig.5, Burry Port, Lewys Davies, 2022***

Above is my final piece I created as part of my art and design a-level, I had studied waves as my topic of research. I would always want to capture and remember the feeling of riding a wave; without a camera in the water, I would try and recapture this feeling through painting.

Painting waves in my sketch books I felt was the best way to reflect my surfing journey, thus 'the history of painting is the history of fabricating 'other worlds'; be they of social orders, historical myths, religious dreams, or personal inner voyages' (Kosuth, 1991, p.89).

‘Colour is *subjective* in more senses than one’ (Tolansky, 1964, p.27) and is what influences our eyes to follow the behaviour of the breaking wave. This wave was from a picture I had taken from the first day I had surfed my favourite surf spot; I felt using a palette knife would describe this memory the best, ‘as with any language, the physicality of the language of art *had* to be transparent’ (Kosuth, 1991, p.89). The palette knife created an impasto texture, giving a 3D element to the painting; ‘three dimensional space, finally, offers, complete freedom: shape extending in any perceivable direction, unlimited arrangements of objects and the total mobility of a swallow’ (Arnheim, 1954, p.218), recreating the experience of feeling the ripple effect of water.

Physics was heavily influenced in this painting and personally the most interesting factor I felt about the painting was the behaviour of the wave and its structure; ‘the structural skeleton is nor more due to the movements of the viewer’s eyes than it is to those of the artist’s hands’ (Arnheim, 1954, p.93). Gravity and reflection were factors behind the painting, but refraction influenced the colours most. Refraction is a natural phenomena depicted in mediums such as water, and whilst creating the painting I studied the behaviour of light waves and their influence on art. ‘Wavefronts bend as they cross the boundary because of the speed change’ (Hecht, 1998, p.100) which influences the darker colours at the bottom and the lighter colours at the top. I used impasto to reinforce this behaviour as ‘full velocity is only achieved in deep water’ (Tolansky, 1964, p.71), best reflecting the behaviour of light waves influencing mediums of different refractive indexes, resulting in the colours we see.

Reflecting upon the completion of the painting, I aim to develop more confidence and minimalise the fear of failure in my artwork as I feel this will be the driving force to explore and achieve full potential whilst developing myself to be a better artist. We mainly see a limiting range of shades of blue, but through experimenting with the spectrum of colours this can depict waves more naturally and reflect the influences of physics better as 'colour, its origin, meaning and measurement have played a most important part in the history of optics' (Tolansky, 1964, p.27). Furthermore, this will aid to combine and develop my passions of art and science, the study of light and ocean waves through art led to my better understanding of the physics behind the painting, as 'Philosophy says what art cannot say, although it is art alone which is able to say it' (Bernstein, 1992, p.244).

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