

Ways of Thinking

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BA Course Study: Fine Art: Studio Site and Context

Module: ADAD4018

Submission Date: August 16th 2020

Tasks in the order I received them:

Task One: Semiotic Analysis (Ryan's Task) 538 words

Task Two: Manifesto (Julia's Task) 503 words

Task Three: Reflective Processes (Jon's Task) 501 words

Task One: Ryan Moule:

Observational writing: Semiotic Analysis of an image.

In December 2018 a painting appeared on a garage wall in Port Talbot. It was identified as being the work of the street artist Banksy. The painting at first glance appeared to be of a young boy with arms open catching snow as it falls, it appeared festive, innocent and fun. However the painting was cleverly put onto the corner of the garage and the other side of it told a different story, it showed a rubbish bin on fire, with ash blowing out, which on the other side of the garage was seen as the snow that the young boy was trying to catch. The artist has created this picture as a sign, to draw attention to locals of the pollution in the town, quite possibly with reference to the steelworks. The artist is using the surroundings to express their cultural criticisms and statements, and is advertising the fact that Port Talbot is a polluted town. Ransdell (1977,p.169) describes the immediate object as “what we, at any time, suppose the object to be” and Hookway (1985,p.139) describes it as “the object at the time it is first used and interpreted”.



Image 1: Season's Greetings



Image 2: Season's Greetings

Semiotic analysis can translate a picture into words, so basically the picture that the artist creates is seen as an image or icon, this then becomes a sign with a meaning. Lots of pictures have another meaning, so what you first see is not always what the image really means. In saussurean analysis the distinction between signifier and signified is crucial. The signifier is the image used to stand for something else, while the signified is what it really stands for. This analysis is portrayed in the Banksy picture, the signifier is the image of the young boy holding his hands out enjoying himself while playing in the snow, the signified is that the snowflakes he is catching are actually ash from the fire, drawing emphasis on the pollution in the town. The picture in fact tells two very different stories.

In advertising the significance of the image is undoubtedly intentional; the signifieds of the advertising message are formed a priori by certain attributes of the product and these signifieds have to transmit as clearly as possible. If the image contains signs, we can be sure that in advertising these signs are full, formed with a view to the optimum reading; the advertising image is frank, or at least emphatic.

(Barthes, 1999 :33)

Barthes explanation can be used to examine and interpret the banksy picture with the priori being the knowledge that is considered to be true, this being that we know that the ash is coming from the steelworks. The attributes refers to what is causing something, in this case the ash is being caused by the work that is completed within the steelworks, which is causing ash and pollution to fall on the town.

My understanding of the image has changed, at first glance I initially thought the image was of a young innocent boy playing happily in the snow during the winter period, with hands and mouth open wide catching snowflakes.

Following a semiotic analysis I have realised that the picture is not happy and innocent but actually interprets and raises awareness to the pollution in the town.

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Image 1 and Image 2: *Seasons Greetings*. Google images. Accessed on 22.07.20

Task 2: Julia Lockhart:

Manifesto Writing: My beliefs

Manifesto of statements of my beliefs , work and practice

1. I believe in “raw” art, old style, long before computers and graphics, way before the days of technology.
2. Get lost in your thoughts when exploring and creating art, lose yourself as if you were in another world, only then will you create magnificent things.
3. It doesn't matter if your art work looks like nothing to someone else, to you it tells a story. “Every picture tells a story”.
4. Life would be nothing without art, it would appear dull and pointless, imagine a world without Art.
5. I love to create. Art is all about creation, without it there would be no artists in the world. God created the world just as artists create Art.
6. Don't be afraid to explore, try new things and show your work even if it's not perfect.
7. Support local art and embrace it as part of your culture.
8. Believe in yourself.

Keywords and images:

Art versus digital technology



Image 1: Traditional art versus digital – Victor Lunn-Rockcliffe

Traditional art is about creating an image from scratch, what you see in your head and putting it on to the sketch book with a simple pencil or paint brush. Going back to our ancestors in the cave days they were creating art onto the walls of caves with a simple stone, clay or animal bones. Digital art is about using technology to create art images. This is done through computers or Ipads, these days we have programmes that allow us to draw directly onto the computer or to draw freehand and scan it into the computer which allows us to alter the image to suit. Blake De Hart asked the question “Should I do traditional art or digital art?” In my opinion I don’t think there is a specific answer, every artist is unique, they must look at the positives and negatives of each type of art and do whichever suits them best. I personally prefer traditional art, I find it more challenging and rewarding, a raw talent that does not need to be altered by digital imaging.

Explore



Image 2: Idlehearts.com

Don't be afraid to get out of your comfort zone to explore and try new things. Just because you are good at one thing does not mean you won't be good at other things. Explore and experiment with your art work, even if it fails, you don't need to succeed in everything. Reflect on what doesn't work and look at ways to do them differently next time. You don't need to compete with others, your work is about you, your ideas, how you have visualised your piece, how you have planned and carried out your work and the finished product.

Don't wait for a good idea to come to you, start by realising an average idea, no one has to see it. If I hadn't made the works I'm ashamed of, the ones I'm proud of wouldn't exist." (Morgan,2012)

Life without Art

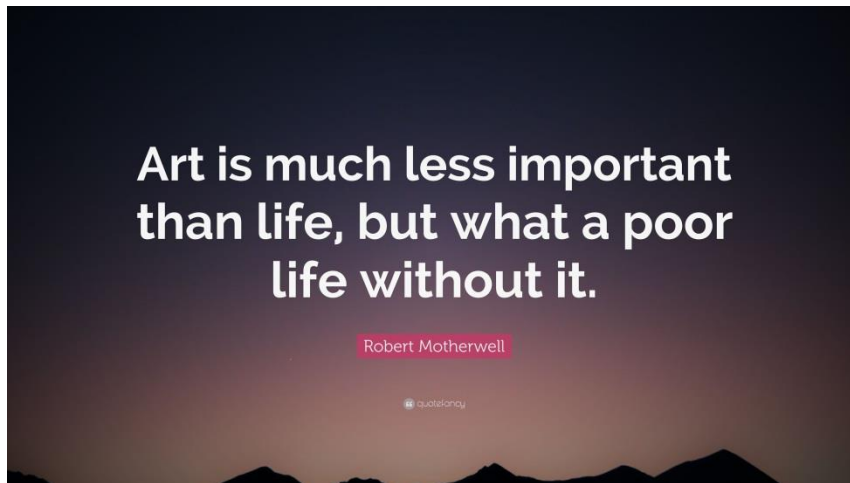


Image 3: Robert Motherwell Quote

"Imagine a world without art, imagine a world that had never known Mona Lisa's smile. Consider a world without the vision of Monet or Rembrandt." (Bond, 2011) Imagine how the world would be if there was no Art in it. Everything would appear as a blank canvas, there would be no colour, no pictures, no signs, no photographs, books would just have words and no illustrations. The world would be grey and unappealing. Children would find it hard to imagine a story in their heads without the pictures that help to tell the story. Life would appear boring, people would go about their daily routines and never experience the beauty of art, which would surely have an effect on their mental wellbeing. Those with artistic talents would have no inspiration or ideas to guide them. "A colourless, soundless, shapeless, tasteless abyss of what we would call living. But that, in fact is not living, it is suffering. A life without art is in reality not a life at all." (Rosenbaum, 2016.)

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Image 1: Lunn-Rockliffe, V. *Traditional Art versus Digital*. Wikipedia. accessed 29.07.20

Image 2: *Idlehearts*. www.idlehearts.com accessed: 22.07.20

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Task 3: Jon Pugh

Reflective writing – Reflection and narrative Structure

A reflection on the painting “The Starry Night” by Vincent Van Gogh and how it draws similarities to a narrative structure.

To see a narrative structure in a picture I first need to understand the artist and their reason for creating the piece. The Starry Night was an oil on canvas painting which was painted by Vincent Van Gogh in June 1889. It was painted from the window of his room at Saint Remy-de province, an asylum which Van Gogh had voluntarily admitted himself into in May 1889 following a mental health episode where he had cut off his own left ear.

“The skill of the experimental learning in which people tend to be the most deficient is reflection.” Duley (1981, p611)



Image 1: The Starry Night

It is one of Van Gogh's most recognised paintings and has been on display in the museum of modern art in New York since 1941. The picture can be seen as the artists way of expressing his feelings and emotions, maybe somehow showing his determination and hope in recovering from his mental illness. The use of dark colours shows a dullness and creates a feeling of gloom, this could be seen as the artists feeling overcome and low in mood. The use of the bright yellow colours in the windows and for the stars, I see this as a sense of warmth and comfort to the artist, allowing him a little sense of calm and comfort.

"In reflection in-action", " doing and thinking are complementary. Doing extends thinking in the tests, moves, and probes of experimental action, and reflection feeds on doing and its results. Each feeds the other and sets boundaries for the other". (Schon, 1983, p.280)

The painting was created in Van Gogh's studio as he was not allowed to paint in his bedroom. It was created from his memory of his view from his bedroom window which was east facing. Van Gogh did not paint the bars of his window into the picture, which would have been part of his view. I feel that this would have portrayed his feeling of isolation and instead the absence of the bars portrays his longing for freedom. The village and the church spire in the picture are imagined, these could be inspired from his memories of his home in the Netherlands and his life before mental illness took over, it could be is way of saying he wants to go back home and to how things were before. Dark colours have been used in the painting which is not Van Gogh's usual style, this could be his way of expressing his feelings of low mood, depression and manic state.

Bright starts, moon "Hope is in the stars" Van Gogh wrote to his brother. This could be seen as his feelings of hope and eventual freedom from his thoughts and his feeling of imprisonment.

Wenger (2006) explains: " A growing number of associations, professional and otherwise are seeking ways to focus on learning through reflection on practice. Their members are restless and their allegiance is fragile."

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