

Portfolio of Writing

Manifesto:

1. The state of the world is dire. We are headed towards societal collapse and irreversible runaway climate change that will kill and displace billions before the end of the century. There is a genocide going on that our government is complicit in. Same as the genocides that came before. The systems of power that dominate are destroying lives, our futures and our freedom.
2. Rest and healing are a form of resistance. I am exhausted from traumatic experiences that are common place in our societies and are part of a greater context of oppression. Capitalistic values demand my near constant productivity and I say no.
3. Creating is something inherent to human beings. It has been suppressed by the pillars of oppression that are foundational to modern societies and the dominant culture. Capitalism devalues what cannot be quickly and efficiently produced for profit, patriarchy devalues what cannot be 'rationally' and accurately measured and recorded- people's subjective experiences when looking at a piece of art for example, and white supremacy that values uniformity of culture and values and enforces this through suppression of cultures through forced assimilation, colonisation and genocide. Most peoples no longer have access to the means of their production nor the value they produce.
4. Modernity has severed many people's connection to community, land and nature. We are living and producing in a manner of extreme disbalance in which the global North exploits the global South.
5. We can learn, and have a remembering of different ways of being by observing indigenous cultures both historical and present. The majority of human evolution has been spent living in tribes of 50-100 living with deep knowledge and connection to place.
6. The idea of humanity progressing is propaganda. People living as hunter-gatherers were not primitive or 'less than'. They lead complex lives, rich with ceremony, and a deep understanding of the ecosystems they were a part of. I believe that we have a lot to learn from them. This superiority complex is a tenant to the culture and ideas that encourage domination over each other and other-than-human beings.
7. We are all traumatised. The environments we live in are not conducive to sustaining healthy lives, we are chronically disconnected from the

world around us and forced to rely on systems that exploit without having the full capacity to comprehend our actions.

8. Explore creation as a form of spiritual practice and as a way to reconnect to nature by using ritual, ceremony, contemplation and use of natural tools and materials. Flow states associated with creating art soothe our dysregulated nervous systems and provide a healing modality for traumatic stress.

Living in modern industrial-consumer societies is inherently traumatising. Wonderfully and terrifyingly our brains have adapted to protect us through dissociation. This is re-enforced by the systems of oppression that disconnect us from the things that sustain us, deliberately weaken our resourcefulness and force us to rely on systems that exploit us. (find solidarity apothecary source). Many modern humans are lost in pursuing grandiose individualism- something that wounds us and leaves us empty. The majority of us are stuck in a stage of arrested development due to our cultures not being healthy enough to sustain individuation and maturing into healthy adulthood. We must remember what we are- part of a magnificent superorganism that makes up all life on Earth. We cannot heal ourselves without reconnecting to the whole of what we are. This includes resting, expression, connecting to nature, finding community and showing up in solidarity for the others, both human and non-human, being harmed by systems of oppression through loving, courageous action. (Plotkin, 2013) Our lives are dominated by an anthropocentric culture that worships speed, technological progress, profits and convenience post-industrial revolution (Marinetti, 1909). This period of human history is but a blink of an eye in the grand scheme of things however, the vast majority of human evolutionary history has been spent as hunter-gatherer peoples leading complex lives, rich with ceremony, and a deep understanding of the ecosystems they were a part of. I want to tap into something inherent to our natures by learning from indigenous artists as often art was inherently tied to many aspects of their lifestyles. Part of this includes creation as a form of spiritual practice and as a way to reconnect to nature by using ritual, ceremony, contemplation and use of natural tools and materials. Often everything in life becomes art and it all blends together. I want to help myself and other's connect to something greater and harness the healing that comes. Eventually this might mean running clay workshops for people, helping them create art imbued with power and meaning of the person. Flow states associated with creating art soothe our dysregulated nervous systems and provide an important healing modality for traumatic stress. I want to help myself and others reconnect.

Observational Writing



Analysing the image above semiotically, I will be focusing on the signified- the meaning intended from a signifier, the code- a system used to create meaning, where semiotics, values and social structure connect, and the myth- the way in which certain signs contribute to certain ideologies in our societies. The image is an advertisement for a virtual reality headset. The 3D billboard, arm reaching towards you, space travel all give futuristic vibes. The spaceman is tied to a box gives imagery of umbilical cord, reborn, leaving behind our mortal nature and mortal reality to become something new. The colour scheme and design give very futuristic modern with the simple black and white with pops of accent colour. There is no living things in this image- even the spaceman is faceless, the helmet could be empty, a new frontier just for you, it speaks to the audience directly, arm outstretched reaching for you. It is like the spaceman is leaving their reality, even though they are tied to it, to pull you in. Space is a code – space exploration is the very representation of human progress and anthropocentrism. This idea that leaving our planet space colonisation- we

leave our lands and conquer space- this very idea of conquering is deep set into the ideologies of modern society as industrial consumer society is a colonising set of beliefs. It seems kind of forceful and aggressive- like the audience has no choice, gloved hand gripping the barrier between walls tightly as other arm outstretched, ready to grasp, ready to pull you in, YES YOU! Let's also look at what is being directly signified through the brand name- meta quest. The idea of a quest plays into the myth of heroes, grand men who single-handedly save humanity, promoting an individualistic lens. Meta means to be self-aware. It can also mean to be situated beyond, more specialised or transforming. While I see this advertisement as an epitome of the disconnect that technology creates from nature, the cord tying the spaceman to the box could be likened to plugging into a new reality. New beginnings, reborn to start afresh leaving your old life behind to live a new life in a different world. Something that may deeply appeal to a lot of people who seek to escape a stressful life.

Practice-Based Writing:

I have chosen to look at how the word 'modernity' relates to this image of this ancient clay figure from Jomon period Japan. Modernity to me encapsulates the cultures, ways of thinking and ideologies that have built our modern societies. In the context of making this means mass-production, prioritising convenience, automation, worship of technological advancement, and in the larger context it means a society built upon and reliant on fossil fuels, domination over nature and environment and an extractive way of looking at things, built-in hierarchies and systems of oppression, supremacies of many kinds (anthroposupremacy, white supremacy, male supremacy, etc) and materials using concrete, metals, plastics, and electronics.

The dogu figure below was made by one artist from start to finish and would likely have taken many hours of hard work. Labor of love. Process is undoubtedly a personal form of worship or the final piece has a spiritual significance. Uses natural materials from the earth- rope cords made of plant fibres and clay to be pit fired. An item that last millennia instead of being designed to break so a consumer will have to repurchase. I feel strongly that in modernity nothing is sacred except perhaps profits. Not human life, not future generations, certainly not the objects we brazenly throw into landfill. To the Jomon people an artefact like this must have been sacred. My first impression of the figure was that it looked almost alien. Perhaps this is because my colonised mind is used to the straight lines and orderly forms of modernity.

