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Ways of thinking

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Manifesto Writing - 502

Semiotic Analysis- 588

Practice Based Writing- 527

Manifesto Writing

- 1) Enjoy the process of making, knowing that you have the freedom to create something beautiful.
- 2) Take the time to create, don't rush just for the sake of an outcome.
- 3) Be cautious of the environmental impact you have, stay as sustainable as possible.
- 4) Find inspiration in everything, make the mundane magical.
- 5) Be critical enough to improve your work, but not so critical that you lose the motivation to create more.
- 6) Always be playful in your practice.
- 7) Always challenge yourself.
- 8) Have fun.

Always Be Playful.

I promise to stay forever playful in my practice. Sketch and stitch together beautiful pieces just because you can. Paint and colour and rip and stick things just because you can. Experiment and mix elements, you love and hate together and produce something that has no real message behind it, apart from being playful in the process. Get inspired by the environment around you and find the magic in the mundane. Create, and create, and keep creating. You have the freedom to draw anything, to paint anything, to sew anything. Make anything and everything.

Enjoy the process of making, knowing that you have the freedom to create something beautiful. My statement here was inspired by this quotation I once read, 'There is no end to the variety of ideas that come once you start to experiment by combining different techniques, mixing different textures, and using your sense of colour and design' (*Da Conceição, 1980, page 9*). This quote is from the fashion and textiles book 'Finery' and the sole purpose of this book is to inspire other creators to produce beautiful things through experimentation. I believe that this is one of the most important aspects of creating art, exploring and expanding your ideas knowing that there is an abundance of possibilities for where your work could go. If you don't remain playful and curious with techniques and methods of making, how can this fantastic process of art remain fun?



Find inspiration in everything, make the mundane magical. I always strive to find inspiration everywhere, regardless of the place, the time, or the things embedded within. Sometimes, those elements can be what bring the inspiration in the first place. Luke Edward Hall, is an artist whose work I believe deeply reflects the art of noticing and getting inspired, especially

through the statement, 'Drawing is, like taking a photograph, a way of capturing a moment, a thought, a feeling...' (Hall, 2019, page 25). I find that observational drawing is the best way to create whilst looking for something to inspire you. Do not think, just draw. You may just draw the first thing you see with a pop of colour, or maybe something which sparks a certain emotion, either way, I find it's a fascinating approach to finding inspiration in everything.



Always be playful in your practice. There is an infinite amount of ways to be playful in your practice, but one important factor is to remain inquisitive and think outside of the box. A creator who is admired for her capability of investigating areas which others don't dare to, is Vivienne Westwood. Westwood displays this trait of hers through the declarative, 'It wasn't that I purposefully wanted to rebel, I wanted to find out why it had to be done one way and not another.' (Westwood, 2004, page 9) Westwood's unique perspective towards fashion and society granted her with the ability to playfully craft and create edgy and eclectic designs, which she then used as a vehicle to drive her campaigns of change.



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Wilcox, C. (2004). Vivienne Westwood. London: V & A.

List of figures:

Figure 1: Waistcoat

Image accessed from: Maria Da Conceição and Grubb, N. (1980). Finery

Figure 2: Jacket

Image accessed from: Maria Da Conceição and Grubb, N. (1980). Finery

Figure 3: American Bar Spring 2020

Image accessed from: <https://www.lukeedwardhall.com/projects/art>

Figure 4: English National Opera Autumn 2019

Image accessed from: <https://www.lukeedwardhall.com/projects/diana-vreeland-bon-mots>

Figure 5: London Fashion Week September 2012

Image accessed from: <https://www.elle.com/uk/fashion/q42367393/vivienne-westwood-iconic-fashion-moments/>

Figure 6: Flash mob September 2015

Image accessed from: <https://www.elle.com/uk/fashion/q42367393/vivienne-westwood-iconic-fashion-moments/>

Semiotic Analysis



When you think about communicating what do you think of? Speaking or writing to someone? Words must be involved surely. But what about road signs, they are communicating something to you. Or brand logos, the apple symbol, or golden 'M', they're sending you a message to buy their products. To send a message words are not always necessary. Semiotics are, as Gillian Rose stated, 'how images make meanings' (Rose, 2016, p.171). Images can only mean something through the audiences prior cultural understanding; however, they are imperative for marketers wanting to successfully sell their products.

In 2018, the sporting brand Nike released the inspirational advert of Serena Williams playing tennis as a child, including their ubiquitous logo and slogan as anchorage text, the 'swoosh' and 'Just Do It'. Gillian Rose once said, 'What is seen and how it is seen are culturally constructed' (Rose, 2016, p.17). An example of this, is the Nike campaign, which has been constructed for a specific audience through cultural knowledge. Nikes primary target audience will understand, through their knowledge of popular culture, that the denotation of this swoosh logo is the sporting brand. Furthermore, due to the denoted understanding of the logo, the audience can then make connotations of this symbol such as presenting, activeness, hard work, goals, determination, and many more empowering attributes.

The Nike advertisements are always simple and snappy but very effective, especially in this one with the monotone image and limited text involved. The marketers have worked hard to grab your attention, not only through the layout of the advert, but also through semiotics, by drawing a focal point to the young Serena Williams mid swing. The advertisers have used an image of the well-known tennis player at a young age to create a sense of

motivation and an element of foreshadowing the success which, through context, the audience are aware of for her future. John Berger's idea here supports this marketing method, 'The way we see things is affected by what we know or what we believe in' (Berger, 1972, p.8). Similar to Rose's previous quote, due to our prior knowledge in society of Williams career, advertisers can use this to spark certain feelings or emotions without having to mention any words related to her at all.

Another clever technique from the marketers was by using a young Serena Williams and pairing this image with the declarative text 'It's only a crazy dream until you do it'. Charles Forceville reminds us that, 'the essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another' (Lakoff, Johnson, 1980: 5 In Forceville, 1996, page 69). In this advert, the young tennis player has been used as a metaphor for believing in yourself and having these great goals in life. To support the previous quotation, Williams as we understand is a successful tennis player, but this image also creates a pictorial metaphor of aspirations and hope, letting us as an audience experience one thing, believing in ourselves, through another, young Serena Williams.

Expanding on the advert, the significance of Williams being a child symbolises having those 'crazy dreams' which collectively as an audience, everyone has had, making the advert much more personal and people are able to resonate with it. This also supports Williamson's ideology that, 'people are made to identify themselves with what they consume' (Williamson, 1978, P.13). If you pair a successful sports person with your brand, your consumers will identify themselves with that person, hence making them more enticed with buying and using your product.

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List of figures:

Figure 1: Nike Advert

Advertising image accessed from:

<https://sightworthy.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/DmNYMImWsAlbp8v-1.jpg>

Practice Based Writing

Object: Handbag

Word: Practical

The handbag is a staple accessory in the world of fashion and has been constantly readapted for style and practicality through the years. The adjective 'practical' means to be, 'suitable for the situation in which something is used' and 'able to provide effective solutions to problems' (*Cambridge dictionary*). The handbag was invented for the practical use of being able to carry around money, valuables, and personal items in people's day to day lives. Due to the original purpose of the handbag being to carry around money, when they were first invented, any handbag held connotations to wealth, 'Handbags have always functioned as signifiers of power, status, and beauty, as well as practical use.' (*Walker, 2015*). Nowadays, there are so many varieties of styles of handbags that particular ones hold more wealth than others and are only owned for the sole purpose of being related to the significance the bag holds. In the book 'BAGS' By Claire Wilcox, she quotes Dora Shackell from her book 'Accent on Accessories', 'A good handbag is something one can afford to be snobbish about' (*Shackell, P.99*). This supports the ideology of there being cultural significance behind certain fashion items, and by owning these items you can create an alternative image of yourself.

Practicality is still an important and well considered factor for not only the producers of handbags but also the consumers. However, in today's day and age, most consumers typically focus on the brand of the item and how this may make them appear to others. This is another classic of example of when semiotics can appear outside of linguistic matters. Ingrid Loschek displays her theories on how we portray particular items in fashion, 'If the message is not verbalised by the designer himself or herself, it is the task of fashion theory to formulate and convey it [...] It employs semiotics to make it recognisable as a social reference.' (*Loschek, P.2*). This means that if a designer is not going to explicitly make known of the value of their products, they must show it through culturally significant ways, for example having a well-known and wealthy public figure being seen with their items. Another example of the semiotics of fashion products, is the Hermes Birkin bag. 'Born in the 80s, the Hermes Birkin bag has since risen to become the quintessential fashion accessory.' (*Foreman, 2023*). The Birkin bags original purpose was to be a practical accessory for carrying everyday personal items with lots of storage spaces, after the Paris-based British actress Jane Birkin had an accidental exchange with former Hermes chief executive Jean-Louis Dumas. Whilst the bag was originally meant to be a practical storage vessel for the everyday, It quite rapidly became a symbol of wealth. In the book 'BAGS', Claire Wilcox explores the ever-changing styles and functions of bags and describes the fashion accessory as, 'An item that can embody luxury [...] a crafted object or highly fashionable status symbol, it mirrors the spirit of the times.' (*Wilcox, P.11*). In this case, the Birkin Bag is known to be a status symbol costing from between £20,000 to £100,000, defeating its original purpose of being an everyday practical accessory.



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List of figures:

Figure 1: Birkin Bag

Image accessed from:

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/fashion/news/jane-birkin-asks-hermes-fashion-house-to-rename-luxury-birkin-bags-due-to-animal-cruelty-concerns-10422738.html>

Figure 2: Kim Kardashian Birkin Bag

Image accessed from:

<https://whyreps.com/10-celebrities-who-wear-hermes-birkin-bags/>

Figure 3: Birkin Bag

Image accessed from:

<https://www.styleswardrobe.com/hermes-birkin-bag-just-bag/>

