

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

In Unit 2, my journey in exploring the position within my personal practice has led to several shifts in my thinking. My current position is focused on exploring how design techniques can recontextualise and alter the narratives of existing materials. My enquiry centres on the question: How could design serve as the medium for re-contextualisation or decontextualisation (in exploring a concept) through manipulation (with text and imagery)?

During the initial 100 iterations, I continued my Unit 1 interest in early films of Asian American actress Anna May Wong. By deconstructing and reassembling elements of the films, including moving images and intertitle text, I sought to deepen the political messages within them, specifically regarding the gaze and stereotyping of Wong as an Asian female actress. This journey began with handcrafted collages and gradually transitioned to recontextualising the original film to present Wong's struggles in the time period.

A reference project, "An Ecstatic Experience" by Ja'Tovia Gary, involves an artificial intervention into the existing video narrative, encapsulating a personalised expression of political topics. Initially, I aimed to explore a less forceful expression of political messages in my own practice. However, as my research progressed, I felt uncomfortable centring my practice around political intentions. Instead, I looked back and found I am more passionate in the visual effects created by manipulating film footage using visual design strategies. Therefore, I decided to focus on how design can serve as a medium for recontextualising images and video materials.

Another influential project was Douglas Gordon's "24 Hour Psycho," in which Gordon slows down the original film, leading the audience to overlook the film itself and instead focus on the sensory experience. This inspired me to incorporate decontextualisation into my position.

Based on this, I selected some everyday materials to explore how recontextualising and decontextualising visual techniques can create narratives, amplify specific visual elements, or challenge existing visual imagery in materials without strong conceptual backgrounds. In this process, I became a re-creator of visual information, contemplating whether my recreations need a theme and what kind of theme would leave a lasting visual impression on the audience.

I was deeply captivated by Xu Bing's "Dragonfly Eyes," which features poetic storytelling and finds narratives in ordinary surveillance camera footage. This challenged my understanding of existing visual materials, which carry strong historical and social contexts behind them. Exploring the narratives in these materials is like treasure hunting.

In response to the previous finding, I analysed Jacques Tati's film "Playtime," recontextualising and decontextualising parts of the film to reinterpret existing narratives, change protagonists, or extract purely object-focused scenes. This approach aimed to provide the audience with space for imagination.

I am also inspired by the article "Pictures for Rent," which explores stock images as a fundamental graphic design element. Much like Xu's surveillance footage, the old stock images carry historical and social messages from when they were created. Thus, stock images might become a subject of my next exploration.

Overall, as a communication designer and creator, my current position is to reinterpret existing materials, such as stock images, through recontextualisation and decontextualisation, aiming to create new narratives and meanings and transform images into powerful communication tools.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gordon, D. (1993). *24 Hour Psycho*. [Digital Art] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a31q2ZQcETw&ab_channel=KunstmuseumWolfsburg [Accessed 23 May 2024].

Gary, J. (2015) *An Ecstatic Experience* [Digital art]. Available at: <https://www.jatovia.com/gallery-3#3> (Accessed: 23 May 2024).

Miller, J.A. (1994). 'Pictures for rent'. *Eye: the International Review of Graphic Design (Archive : 1990-2005)*, [online] 4(14), 1 Sep., pp.68-77. Available at: <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1459648957?accountid=10342&sourcetype=Trade%20Journals> [Accessed 23 May 2024].

Playtime. (1967). Directed by J. Tati. [Feature film] France: SN Prodis .

Xu, B. (2017). *Dragonfly Eyes*. [Film] Available at: <https://vimeo.com/681414334> [Accessed 23 May 2024].