POSITIONS THROUGH ITERATING

REFERENCE LIST

Death of the Author | Roland Barthes

Roland Barthes' concept of the "death of the author" has inspired me in two key aspects: the notion of the audience as a re-author of the creative product, imbuing it with their own self-understanding; and second, the effects that the medium of text itself can engender.

In my handling of video materials, I deviated from the original author's intent, assuming the roles of both audiences as a new author and a minority group within the original context, thereby generating a creative product based on my own interpretation. Moreover, from the perspective of text, as a medium capable of evoking images, it played a reinforcing role in my iterations within the context. (I extensively employed intertitles from the original silent film.) Barthes' concept deepened my understanding of the impact of text on the audience. Consequently, I plan to integrate these impressions and influences into later iterations and processes.

Fuck Content | Michael Rock

This text emphasises the designer's role as both creator and author. I find Rock's understanding of the relationship between content and form in design particularly interesting and highly insightful for my practice. Rock discusses that "What is How" in graphic design, highlighting that the visual language—or, in other words, the form and style of our design—is the content itself. This resonates with my position, where my interpretation and reassembly of found material constitute a design intervention. Rock's article seems to address my concerns about the apparent lack of a theme in my practice (since I decided not to prioritise political intentions). It made me realise that my approach to handling found material is both a design method and a visual language, which can also serve as my content.

Extreme Exoticism: Japan in the American Musical Imagination | W. Anthony Sheppard

This paper takes the opera "Madam Butterfly" as a starting point to explore the inherent impressions of Asian female figures from a Western perspective, particularly the fixed impressions of Japanese culture expressed in American musical theatre. Remarkably similar to the plot of "Madam Butterfly" is my practical engagement with Anna May Wong's film "The Toll of the Sea," which essentially serves as a Chinese reproduction of the Madame Butterfly narrative. This reflects the prevalent portrayal in Western mainstream culture at the time, that women in East-West romantic narratives as steadfastly devoted dependents. The intertitles of the film also revea al strong Colonial Gaze and Power Dynamics, particularly in the stereotypical depiction of Oriental female figures as fragile, dependent, compromising, and in awe of American servicemen. These Orientalist perspectives initially became the central theme I wished to explore in my project. However, as my exploration progressed, my inclination towards incorporating political messages in practice was gradually challenged and shaken. I will elaborate on this directional shift in subsequent stages of the process.

Design Follows Politics? The Visualization Of Political Orientation In Newspaper Page Layout | Johanna Schindler

This paper delves into the subtle relationship between newspaper layout design and political inclinations, where the typography, color, and layout of newspapers serve as visualizations and responses to politics. Within the confined space of newspaper layout, graphic design still has the potential to convey messages through details, thereby shedding light on the communicative possibilities of design within political contexts. Through my practice, I realised that I did not

wish for my work to communicate strong biases. Instead, I aimed for the information I focused on to be disseminated and presented in a less straightforward manner, devoid of provoking intense visual or cognitive conflicts. Thus, I believe that the language of detailed design can aid in conveying a more tranquil message. While this paper primarily discusses static design area such as newspaper layout, my current iterations lean more towards moving images. Nevertheless, I am still endeavouring to extend the techniques I employ into various forms and media, including still images and textual intentions.

An Ecstatic Experience | Ja'Tovia Gary

Figure.01 An Ecstatic Experience (Gary, 2015)

Within the realm of visual art, the artist's approach almost mimics an analogue editing style, involving entirely different artificial interventions into the existing video narrative. This reference has broadened my understanding and exploration of visual image processing methods. More importantly, Gary's works encapsulate a personalised expression of political topics. I perceive her discussion surrounding the oppositional gaze and black feminist discourse in her works to be presented in a manner that is influential yet not discomforting. I consider this to be quite a successful visual communication strategy, one that aligns with the effects I aim to achieve in my own practice. Considering the historical context in which Anna May Wong operated, I believe that through the study and reconfiguration of visual works, employing a narrative approach that is not overly forceful, I should explore how to unmask the influences of dominant groups on our perspective as a minority group towards reality. Furthermore, Gary's thematic content prompts me to reflect on why, as individuals belonging to a minority group, we find it challenging to express our viewpoints and stances directly and positively.

24 Hour Psycho | Douglas Gordon

I believe this reference has the most potential to influence my practice. In the initial iterations, I continuously attempted to achieve recontextualization by altering (magnifying or subverting) the context of the original moving image through various image processing techniques. Douglas Gordon's treatment of Hitchcock's original film in "24 Hour Psycho" changed the audience's understanding of the film. It can be said that hardly anyone watches the entire 24-hour film, yet viewers quickly grasp Gordon's intentions through his manipulation of the imagery. During viewing, the audience tends to overlook the film itself and instead focus more on the sensory experience.

Figure.02 24 Hour Psycho (Gordon, 1993)

LINE OF ENQUIRY

Based on 100 iterations of film material featuring Asian American actress Anna May Wong, the initial enquiry of this project was established through visual techniques such as cropping and magnifying flat graphics. The aim was to research whether these visual effects could deepen or alter the inequitable context of male dominance over females and the mainstream white society's portrayal of Asian images. Through research on other projects and references in this field, I realised that I wanted to focus more on manipulating found material to explore its narrative and context rather than conveying a solid political message through the work. Therefore, in the subsequent development, I experimented with visual processing of everyday found material without a clear concept.

At the current stage, my line of enquiry is:

How could design serve as the medium for re-contextualisation or decontextualisation (in exploring a concept) **through manipulation** (with text and imagery)**?**

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