Essay 2: High Fashion Meets High Art – Analyzing Contemporary Art

- class meets in the Wignall Museum
- proposal & Wignall worksheet (2+ pages, 1 pt.) due
- Washington Holiday – college closed
- research notes (2+ pages, 1 pt.) due
- outline (2+ pages, 1 pt.) due
- rough works cited page (1 page, 1 pt.)
- rough draft (5 pages, 2 pts.) due
- meet with a tutor or me by
- final draft (5+ pages, 15 pts.) due

All of these must be typed using MLA format (except for the Wignall Worksheet).

Topic

Are we the clothes we wear? How do others view us? Should we keep up with the latest trends (or not)? What are the ethical, economic, or environmental concerns related to clothing, shopping, and fashion? All of these questions and more are raised by the artists in the current Wignall Museum exhibition: Fashion-Conscious.

Roman Stollenwerk, the curator, writes that fashion is both a positive force, “a performance and expression of personal style,” as well as a negative force: “Fashion is a human activity and the behavior of people involved in fashion can be amoral, if not unethical” (Stollenwerk 1). All of the artists in the exhibition illustrate and examine this complex idea of fashion, and their artworks challenge the viewers to be “more conscious about their relationship to fashion and prompt them to consider how fashion can change to be more conscious” (Stollenwerk 2).

As you view the exhibition and write this essay, answer these fundamental questions:

- How do the artworks portray trends, fashion, clothing, identity, manufacturing, etc. in similar or different ways?
- How do the artworks make you question (or confirm) your previous ideas about fashion or the fashion industry?

For this essay, choose two artworks in the exhibition, Fashion-Conscious, and write a comparative analysis of those artworks (6+ paragraphs, 5+ pages).

Be sure to describe the physical properties of each work in detail (colors, shapes, materials, style, media, format, etc.) and analyze the purpose, message, social commentary, or effect on the viewer.

Answering these questions will help you to analyze the art:

- What do you see? What do you feel? What do you think? What questions do you ask?
- What is the possible message of each artwork?
- What questions do the artists raise or attempt to answer?
- Is the argument of each artwork implicit or explicit?
- How does the artwork relate to the exhibition title, Fashion-Conscious?

Audience & Purpose

Imagine that your reader has visited the exhibition, Fashion-Conscious, in the Wignall Museum but may not understand the artwork to the same extent that you do or might not agree with your perspective. The purpose of your essay is to persuade your reader that your perspective is valid.
Reading Requirement

- Wignall Museum exhibition guide for *Fashion-Conscious*
- various articles online (English 1B – Essay 2)

Research Requirement

You must use these five sources in your essay and list them on the works cited page:

- two artworks in the museum
- Wignall Museum exhibition guide
- two articles from research

Use the library’s electronic databases to find articles (i.e., Academic Search Complete, JSTOR, etc.). You may also use credible, academic internet websites (including the articles posted to my website).

Structure & Content Checklist

- Write a creative, informative title for your essay; write an interesting, inventive hook as well.
- Your introduction should identify the two artworks that your essay focuses on.
- The thesis must preview your essay in detail (two or three sentences) and should make some kind of judgment.
- Use clear topic sentences and transitions to provide a structure for your essay.
- Organize your essay in either point by point or alternating subject by subject format.
- Incorporate details and analysis of the artworks in every supporting paragraph.
- Incorporate one or two research quotations in every supporting paragraph.
- Remember to ICE: introduce, cite, and explain each quotation, example, or paraphrase.
- It is acceptable to use first-person (“I,” “my”). You may also include your own thoughts about fashion, etc.
- Write a strong conclusion that summarizes and wraps up the entire essay.
- Use present-tense verbs to write about art and other texts.
- Edit and proofread your sentences so that they are as clear and correct as possible.
- Include a properly formatted works cited page.
- Format your paper properly: double-spaced, one-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font.

Do not plagiarize (copy, borrow, steal, or buy someone else’s writing); if you do, you will receive zero points for this assignment and possibly fail the course.

Process – You must complete and submit all of the following with the final draft:

- final draft & works cited page
- printouts of research article(s) used in the essay [very important]
- tutoring receipt or my comments**
- rough draft(s)
- outline
- research notes
- peer review form
- rough works cited page
- proposal & Wignall worksheet

** If you are unable to see a tutor for this essay, you may visit my advice hours.

- Bring your assignment sheet, notes, draft, etc. with you when you see a tutor at the Language Success Center.
- Please feel free to visit my advice hours (MW 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. & TTh 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.) or email me (neil.watkins@chaffey.edu) at any point in your writing process.
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Proposal Questions  
• 1+ page, typed (1 pt. = 1%)  
• due Wednesday, February 12

1. What were your initial reactions and impressions when first viewing the art in *Fashion-Conscious*? How did your reactions change over time?
2. Which two artworks do you think you will write about? Why did you choose them?
3. How might your own thoughts and opinions about identity, trends, fashion, clothing, shopping, manufacturing, work, etc. affect your interpretation of the artworks?
4. What do you want your reader to learn or understand from your essay?
5. What obstacles or challenges might you face as you work on this essay? How will you overcome those?
6. When & where will you work on this essay?

### Students’ Advice for Essay 2
“Don’t let this essay overwhelm you. Take everything one step at a time, and you will do great!”

“Visit the Wignall multiple times. Talk to the Wignall staff. Take photos there to help you see more details.”

“Go to the museum at least once by yourself. Sometimes going with the class may be distracting or feel rushed. So this way you can take your time and really choose a good artwork.”

“My advice is to take notes and fill out the worksheet that Watkins gives you. Be open minded and discuss your thoughts with the other students. You might find common ground or an interesting point of view that differs from your own.”

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**Sketch – O – Rama**
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☐ proposal & Wignall worksheet (2+ pages, 1 pt.) due Wednesday, February 12

Answer these questions below during our class visit. This worksheet is due in class on Wednesday, February 12, along with the proposal for Essay 2. You will need to revisit the museum to write this essay as well.

Scavenger Hunt
Find these items / images in the exhibition & write the title of the artwork:

☐ chair

☐ workroom

☐ mannequin

☐ luggage

☐ wife of a president

☐ gold

Q & A

☐ How do the artworks portray fashion, identity, etc.? What similarities and differences can you find?

☐ What does the word “conscious” mean in the title of the exhibition?

☐ Which artworks in the exhibition are most memorable or interesting to you? Why?

☐ If you were the curator of this exhibition, what would you title this exhibition? Why?

Reporter for a Day
Interview 2 or 3 classmates about the exhibition.
Write their responses here:

Sketch – O – Rama
Draw a picture, diagram, or sketch inspired by the exhibition on this reverse side of this paper.