**Introduction from Unit leader:**

**Preparation**

* The session will be **10-1pm** only – half day
* Please read the **Introduction to Semiotics slides and journal article in Moodle** and **bring an example** of the Semiotics you observe in daily life

**Other elements**

* Leslie will be leading the workshop, and part of the work in our session will inform a research project in which Leslie is involved.  In connection with this, she will email you separately with more details and participation/consent forms.  We can also discuss this on Thursday morning.
* Leslie will also be giving you some early indications on homework and content for the Design Leadership unit which she is leading next term.
* I will be outlining the work to be done for DRMCP by the 11th January and the individual tutorials
* Michael will be sending out an email later today regarding the social event on Thursday afternoon - keep an eye out for it 🙂

Sam

**Email to students to set up the work session:**

Hello everyone!

I’m looking forward to meeting you all tomorrow on the last day of lectures for the DRMCP.  We’ve tried to create an important, but also fun, session for you. After all, learning through play is a powerful practice that increases engagement, inclusivity and creativity.

While the session is primarily focussed on understanding and practising visual strategy, there is an element of exploration and research as well.  Sam and I are both interrogating the role of AI in post graduate design management teaching.  My research involves the use of visual AI as a design strategy teaching tool.  We hope you will enjoy and learn from our work together to co-create a point of view of the advantages and limitations of AI in great strategy storytelling.

It will also be a learning experience for you as participants and observers of qualitative research in progress.  Please make sure to observe the tools and practices you’ll be using in your own research when it comes time to do your FMP. 😊

Enclosed are two documents: a participant consent form and an information sheet that gives you more detail about the project and your involvement.  **Could you please fill in, sign and send back the participation consent form?  It will be much more efficient via email than taking time in our 3 hour session tomorrow.**

It will be lovely to meet you all before we’re together again for the Leadership unit in January.

See you tomorrow!

Leslie

**Work session follow up email to gather feedback:**

Hello everyone!  It was lovely to see you all again at the market.  I hope you enjoyed your mulled wine or hot chocolate!

As mentioned last week, I am writing to gather your reflections on the session last week…specifically about the utility of Midjourney/visual AI tools in communicating your design strategy through visuals.

I would really appreciate your return email with your thoughts on the following three questions:

1. How did you feel about using the tool?
2. What was good about using the tool to communicate your strategy?
3. What was bad or missing from outputs of the tool compared to the alternative?

Thank you very much for the signed consent forms.  For anyone who hasn’t, please let me know if you are happy for me to use your comments (anonymously).

And many thanks for your contribution to the research!

Have a wonderful break and holiday season wherever you are in the world. 😊

Leslie

**Student** **Feedback 1:**

1. The experience was exciting and I did expect a certain degree of unrealistic airbrushed finished image but was eager to see the possibilities.
2. It gives relatively very clear picture, in quality.

3. Using Mid journey wasn't easy to show specific topics, facts or area name such as "elephant and castle".

**Student Feedback 2:**

Thank you for the session, it was thought-provoking and engaging. Here are my answers to the questions:

1. **How did you feel about using the tool?**

It was efficient for a quick rendering of fully conceptualised ideas where the intention is not to ideate with the tool but rather describe in detail what you would like visualised as one would do with an artist or software expert. I did not think the tool at its present stage of development could comprehend for the nuances of abstract ideas (which required an understanding of human emotions).

1. **What was good about using the tool to communicate your strategy?**

* a. Despite the limited time for designing the prompts, **the tool did a good job of rendering somewhat high-quality depictions of possible futures**. It is an interesting tool to speculate with and could render high-quality complex environments.

b. It could be assistive for quickly visualising ideas and narrowing them down from multiple concepts to a final one though I doubt how much of the visualised elements may be used outside of ideation.

c. It could also add flexibility to the working process by revealing potential gaps in the idea early on - as an assistive tool to storyboarding or in stylistic experiments.

1. **What was bad or missing from outputs of the tool compared to the alternative?**

* a. In aspects such as lighting and human expressions **it often chose to obscure faces**by depicting the back of people's bodies or backlighting people unless otherwise specified.

b. **The body language and the activities performed by the people were out of sync with the prompt**. For example, for "green apathy / environmental apathy" the tool depicted people in what looks like dense gardens browsing on screens. It felt surreal (very uncanny valley) because, within this image, the background was a nature-symbiotic city but with drones in the sky and people immersed in technology in what looked like handspun garments. It interpreted the prompt as a future without catastrophic climate change (or a green-tocracy) but with people subsumed in technology whereas the intended scenario was people's apathy towards the environmental crisis in the present day.

c. Also, from the perspective of a visual designer, I would say the tool generated "an" image but not "the ideal" image - for example, it didn't always follow the best visual narrative practices and sometimes, the emphasis was more on the background than on the elements that should have drawn the eye for building stronger visual narrative. Maybe this could have been bettered with the opportunity to tailor certain parts of the image to better suit the scenario.

Sorry if the answers are a bit too long. I hope