

## **Unit 1: Methods of Investigating Written response**

When speaking about everyday objects and places, the purpose behind them is often straightforward, and one would not think about deeper investigations or observations. However, when investigating the ordinary through the lenses of a graphic designer, new perspectives can create ideas, reveal hidden patterns and spark inspiration. This written response identifies similarities between my project and the work of Agnès Varda and Georges Perec. I will describe the connections between their works and the process of investigating my chosen place - one of the fountains on Trafalgar Square.

To find a starting point and begin with the whole process of the project, I got inspired by the book "Species of Spaces and Other Places" written by French novelist and writer Georges Perec in 1974. In his book, he describes the objects of his investigation with notable realism and incredible detail. On page 50 of the book, he notes down his observations of the street "Slowly, almost stupidly" (Perec, 1974), writing down what is "most obvious, most common, most colourless." (Perec, 1974). I adopted his approach when visiting the Trafalgar Square fountain for the first time. I noted down everything about the place in the closest possible detail, focusing on the first-sight boring and unimportant details such as trash. The same way Perec did in his book. That sparked the inspiration for further steps in my work.

In my project, I tried to visually capture the diversity of people engaging with a site that was originally meant to have a decorative role in the space. To be able to do that, part of the process was collecting "proofs" of people engaging with the place. I managed to gather a number of items, mainly pieces of trash and used those things to create a set of prints and patterns that have been turned into a diagram-like collection. I have seen similarities between that particular idea in my project and the film from 2000 created by a French director and artist Agnès Varda called *The Gleaners and I*. Varda (2020) in her film follows creatives who use recycled and collected materials to produce pieces of art. She explores the idea of creating new forms of art by using items that seem to be already useless and belong to the trash. In my project, I have worked around the same idea using worthless items to come up with something creative, giving a new life and meaning to pieces of trash found in and around the fountain.

To conclude my writing, I can see the relationship between both mentioned creatives. Perec's book inspired me in the method of noting and describing the place in the littlest

detail. Moreover, I can see a similarity between Varda's idea and the topic of the film and my approach to collecting and re-using unwanted items.

## **Resources**

Perec, G. (1974). *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*. London: Penguin.

Verda, A. (2000). *The Gleaners and I*. Directed by Agnès Varda. France: Ciné -Tamaris.