

## Final Project: Art History on the Airwaves Podcast

As artists, designers, illustrators, art historians, and art lovers in general, it's as important to be able to *talk* about art as it is to be able to write about it. This assignment is designed to help you practice talking about art in an interesting, informed, and creative way. After having practiced these skills informally in class all semester, you'll use them in this assignment in which you record a short podcast episode (10-12 minutes) explaining the connections between an example of contemporary art *or* contemporary visual culture and the art of the ancient and medieval worlds (before 1400 CE). Most podcast teams will be groups of three or four students. Plan your podcast for an audience of Eastern community members interested in contemporary art and culture, but who may not know the historical connections. We'll share QR codes to the podcast on posters on campus to highlight your work for others on campus.

*Rationale:* This assignment asks you to use all of the skills you've developed in written assignments and class discussions to share your art historical knowledge with a broader public. By taking on the role of expert in this assignment, you'll gain a deeper understanding of the course material and skills. Your skills of description and formal/visual analysis are all the more important in the audio-only format of podcasts (and other recorded works) because you can't assume that your reader has a picture of your work of art in front of them. The format is a reminder of the importance of specific and evocative descriptions, comparisons, and analyses in any communication about art.

*Grading:* This assignment will be graded based on the specificity and insight of your descriptions, comparisons, and analyses, the connections you make between research and your own observations, and the creativity and engagingness of your presentation. Some assignments will be graded individually, while others will be graded for the group. Group grades may be adjusted in clear cases of unequal contributions. See Blackboard for a detailed rubric.

*Why does this have to be a group project?* When we work together, we can accomplish more than we can alone. It's corny, but it's also true. To present a full picture of modern visual culture's historical roots in the space of five short weeks, you have to work as a team. Working collaboratively is also a crucial workplace and all-around life skill, so go into this project with the aim to brag about how well you work with others in a job interview. Throughout this project, we'll talk about how to cultivate healthy and productive collaborations. And, if something *really* isn't working in your group, I will be here to mediate and adjust things if needed.

*[M 10/4, in class: brief introduction to the assignment when we start to focus on the main skill, comparative analysis]*

*[F 10/29: Requests about group assignments due; students learn their groups in class on F 11/5]*

*Proposal—1 page, individual grade, due F 11/5*

Ahead of your first group meeting in class, propose a topic and a genre for your podcast. Start with a meaningful or important example of contemporary visual culture or art (from about 1980 or later) that you think deserves further consideration. Next, consider how you might contextualize this contemporary work within the eras of art history we have studied in this class. Choose at least three historical objects (made before 1400 CE) that you think would make good comparisons to

illuminate and explain different aspects of your contemporary work. Finally, consider the genre and tone you want to strike with your podcast. Get creative, have fun, and make it engaging – past examples have included morning radio shows (complete with airhorn), red carpet interviews, fictional dialogs, impassioned debates, and more. What’s the best way to tell the story of your chosen work? You’ll decide!

Groups will meet in class to share ideas and finalize a group proposal (due F 11/5, end of day).

*[M 11/8 or later that week: library instruction session focusing on finding scholarly sources for project objects]*

*Comparison Notes (at least 2 pages) & Annotated Bibliography (at least one scholarly source) – individual grade, due by conferences in Week 13 (schedule will be posted on Blackboard)*

Study your comparison and write detailed notes (at least 2 pages) about the similarities and differences you observe and your analysis of their significance – what can this help us understand about your contemporary work? Draw on your own observations of the work as well as the information you’ve discovered in your research. These notes can be in whatever form is most meaningful to you: a comparative analysis table, bulleted list, outline, concept map, paragraphs, etc.

After your notes, include a bibliography (list of textual sources) that you used in generating your ideas. Your bibliography should include the class reading and at least one scholarly source about the historical work and any sources you need to contextualize the contemporary work. List the sources following the Chicago Manual of Style (Notes and Bibliography) format (see Blackboard). Under each source, write a short summary of the useful information you got from it (include page numbers if your source has them) – this is called an annotation. Do not include the works of art on your bibliography (they are not textual sources).

Group conferences will be scheduled during class time in Week 13; we’ll use this time to share notes with the group and talk about the final format of the podcast.

*Rehearsal/ Workshop – 8-10 minutes, group grade, Week 15 (schedule will be posted on Blackboard)*

Run through a full rehearsal of your podcast for the class. This opportunity lets your team practice, experiment, get feedback on what worked, and consider what to add or change. As with any other review situation, the more you prepare for this first draft, the more your final work can improve.

Also submit a draft of your podcast poster, which should have images of each work of art you discuss. Although this poster will be displayed on the screen while you present, keep in mind that your future audience may not be looking at your poster while they listen.

*Final Recording, Poster, & Annotated Bibliography – 10 minutes, group grade, due W 12/13 (end of day)*

Record your podcast and submit the audio file. Upload the final version of your poster, leaving space for the QR code (I'll add this later).

Also submit a final annotated bibliography with all sources you used in your recording (everyone's sources in one document). Annotate it, as before, to make clear what information you took from each source.

One more thing before you're done: fill out the group peer- and self-evaluation on Blackboard.

**Grade breakdown for the course:**

<b>Course Requirements and Assignments</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>
Student engagement	45%
<i>Class participation</i>	<i>15%</i>
<i>Readings and quizzes</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Homework assignments</i>	<i>10%</i>
<i>Reflection portfolios</i>	<i>10%</i>
Papers	20%
<i>Description Paper</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Formal Analysis Paper</i>	<i>15%</i>
Podcast Project	35%
<i>Theme Proposal (Individual)</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Outline and Bibliography (Individual)</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Presentation &amp; Workshop (Group)</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>Final Recording (Group)</i>	<i>20%</i>