

Assignment 2: Interpretive Essay

20%

TOPIC: (Option 1) **Critical discussion** of the impact of digital technologies on an earlier media practice such as photography, video, cinema, music, performance or visual arts **through specific reference to selected artwork(s)**; **OR** (Option 2) **critical discussion** of the use of digital technologies in the work of one of the artists encountered through the lectures or course readings (including the artists you covered in your review paper but you need to cover new grounds) through **referencing specific artwork(s)**; **OR** (Option 3) **critical discussion** of one of the works in the new exhibits listed on the course website in the exhibitions page.

CONTENT REQUIREMENTS: Essay must be informed by and cite a) 3 course readings, one from each of the modules in this term (consult the schedule for module breakdown); b) 2 of your own discussion postings; c) 2 postings by your peers (from any group, excluding the moderators' notes); d) 1 lecture from any module; and e) one external article. All of these should be properly referenced and cited in the works cited (bibliography) list following the MLA guidelines.

MECHANICAL REQUIREMENTS: 1000-1200 words, typed (font: Times 12), **single spaced**, 1" margins, original title, **must include a word count listed at the end of the essay**, submit only as .doc, .rtf or .pdf in the ASSIGNMENT 2_submissions forum. File name should follow this scheme: **lastname_firstinitial_a2.extension (.doc, .pdf, .rtf)**

OTHER REQUIREMENTS: All referenced material must be cited properly according to MLA style guide.

NOTE ON EVALUATION: Good grammar, clean spelling, good writing and thoughtful presentation count.

DUE DATE: January 3/2006, 11:59 PM.

NOTE ON DEADLINE: In consideration of your end-of-term exams and heavy workload, I have pushed the deadline from December 8 (York's official deadline for submitting first term work) to give you sufficient time to work on this without too much stress. But this means that **without an extended medical reason and appropriate documentation, late submissions will be subject to a penalty of 20% per late day or fraction thereof.** You may submit earlier if you wish to go through your holidays without having to study and work.

Guidelines

In this essay you must **apply** your critical understanding of **concepts, terminology and issues** discussed in the course readings, lectures and discussions to a **specific work of art or area of art practice** according to the options listed above. In this essay, you must reference class discussions according to requirements listed above, and demonstrate additional research (at least one external source). Please note the use of the word **critical**: It means that your statements and opinions must be informed by your **understanding and conscious use of concepts and issues discussed**. This is not to mean that you cannot bring any new understandings to this essay, but to suggest that you should start from the points already established and build up on them.

Your essay must combine **description** with **analysis** and **interpretation**. You are already familiar with the task of description from the review paper. We are now building up on the skills you gained in that assignment.

Analysis requires identifying and ‘zeroing in’ on the **concepts that animate a work of art (or an area of investigation)** and finding the **abstract and tangible relations** between those concepts and the specific work you focus on.

While **interpretation** is ultimately a personal response to a work under study (or an area of investigation), it has to go beyond simple and purely subjective statements of “I like it” or “it’s interesting.” Rather, interpretation needs to be informed by description and analysis and, at the same time, must bring other concepts to bear on the understanding of the work and **to connect that work to its broader social, cultural, artistic, historical context**.

In selecting a topic area, feel free to go with what you already have some information about (e.g. music if you are a music major, etc.). But, and this is absolutely crucial, you must demonstrate your understanding of the concepts, terminology and issues we have covered in this course (i.e. this cannot be an essay you write for your film studies course).

This is a formal essay and must be written as such. It must have a clear thesis, introduction, supporting arguments, and conclusion. But do bring your creativity to your style of writing.

Please post any questions you may have, including anything about your topic of choice, in **ASSIGNMENT 2_q&a** on the course forum. Our public exchange will be useful to everybody, so please do not ask me questions by private message or e-mail unless you need to discuss something of a personal nature.

I will not be available from December 6 to January 3 (inclusive) to respond to questions of any kind by any means. Please take the time now to think through this guideline and what you may want to do for your assignment so you can catch me before I disappear.