

Ordinary/ Extraordinary meets Soundscape

Digital Imaging in the Visual Arts

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*"Poems proceed by mapping new relationships between feelings, images, behaviors, ideas, perceptions, and expressions. The associative space creates a range of characteristics with its various qualities of **integration, resonance, irony, incongruence, simultaneity, and parallelism**. Imagine the possibilities when associating between the written word, or another unit of meaning, and any other unit of meaning in words, images or sounds." Michael Nash in Resolutions: Contemporary Video Practice*

"and from the 17th c. Japanese Poet Mtsuo Basho " the haihu that reveals seventy to etight percent of its subject is good. Those that reveal fifty to sixty percent, we never tire of" (shared with me by Yi Dai)

Description:

For this project, we will build on the experience of collecting field sounds that we either discovered or created. Starting with the structure of your sound piece (1 minute long), you will gather images to **compliment or challenge** the sound. (You will not use the literal images that made the sound, but rather find out what happens when you juxtapose varied images to that sound.) The images can establish irony, incongruence, or parallel but surprising associations, etc. (for instance the sound of sandpaper with an image of butter)

The goal will be to create a collage or video poem, showing your understanding of aesthetic form from the first half of the class, translated into time-art with new formal elements of **duration, rhythm and movement**. You will use video equipment and software to gather/structure images/sounds in a way that *emphasizes* their unusual aesthetic/evocative qualities and that challenges our common ways of seeing/hearing.

Process:

Go out into the world and find/ create new images.

Subjects: You can find subjects/actions that already exist, or you can make them happen. They can be in the natural or human-made environment, they can be bodies or bottles, micro or macro, as long as they are compelling! Consider using the human body as a subject, but in an uncommon way, with uncommon gestures, materials, point of view, parts, etc.

Methods: *Learn all the options of the camera.* (see addendum)

In all your images, think about **intentional** movement and the composition of the 4x3 or 16x9 video screen. Does the image move left to right, zoom in or out, tilt up or down or remain centered and pulsing? Remember that this is not a still camera and explore what movement can do. Make the movement slower than real life to still get the feel of real action without making the viewer sick to their stomach. Use the camera on a tripod. Use the camera *without* a tripod ONLY if you really need the viewer to be aware of the camera operator as part of the movement, and even so, make sure steady-shot is on and you move slower.

Try clips of varying length. Select unusual points of view, challenge our concept of size with extreme foreground/background shifts, blur the image or shoot it upside down, or select under-represented images to begin with. Experiment and don't expect to use all your footage. Make sure you have more light than you think you will need. You can use unusual materials as filters through which the camera sees the world (plastic wrap, mineral oil on glass, magnifying glasses, juice pitchers, etc).

Import your footage and learn to edit with it in response to your Soundscape.

Selecting: Eventually you will use images that have something in common formally, but choose at least one or two elements as counterpoints because although you are trying to have a unified piece, difference or tension can make it more interesting.

Editing: Use the sound to determine the duration and rhythm of images. Consider the structure or shape of time that you have already developed with your soundscape. Either amplify or oppose this structure with images. By

the nature of this project a slight narrative may be implied, but it should be very minimal and suggestive rather than didactic or obvious. If it remains totally abstract, that is fine!

Addendum: Here is a more detailed description of your shooting options:

Point of view establishes the video maker as either:

Objective: observing the action from outside the subject (documentary)

Subjective: taking on the point of view of a character, etc... called subjective camera, when the camera movements mimic a character or look at other characters.

Using Camera Angle: Use camera angle along with other video elements to emphasize your point. (Looking down on a figure makes it look helpless, looking up looks powerful)

Cinema Verite: Camera acting impulsively or unpredictably, searching for subject, swish pans, handheld, etc... implying a consciousness of camera presence.

Frame within a Frame: Using interior compositional elements to set apart part of the image to impact the meaning, creating a focal point, a sense of theater, a sense of isolation, etc...

Compositional Considerations:

The arrangement of the elements is called "mise-en-scene."

Consider the elements and principles of design/composition from your still image training to create interesting shots.

- what is the focal point?
- What type of balance are you using?
- What degree/type of color will emphasize the mood you intend?
- How does the type of movement of either the camera or object support this?
- How is the image unified?

Remember screen aspect ratio (4x3 or 9x16)

Consider dividing the screen in thirds and having focal points at the intersection of those lines.

Consider the eye room, (space in front of the character's gaze) creating a sense of direction.

Avoid convergent lines between main subject and background.

Consider the creative methods while shooting:

Use a Tripod to pan or tilt

Use a dolly (wheel chair option)

Use dog-walker or get up on a ladder.

hand-held motion

changing the axis of the camera,

masking off part of the image,

using color filters,

multiple screens,

shooting through a semitransparent object, a mask or matte,

bounce off a mirror,

use non-traditional or spot lighting (a flashlight, car headlights, etc)

use a projected background or project onto an object while taping,

use a color you will later key out either in background or elsewhere.

Consider these Type of Shots:

Establishing shot: wide shot that lets viewer know context at onset.

Medium shots: show action, dialog

Close up: shows emotion, details

Still shot: keep camera still allows action to take place within subject (internal action)

Moving: pans, quick cuts, tracking create mood (action or disturbed, violent)

Swish pan: pan quickly (blurred) landing on subject. Creates movement, rhythm, tension.

Shoot to edit:

Let movement go off and on and off screen

Don't change framing on shots you want to edit together

Shoot from multiple angles for variety

sense of continuation (consider action leaving one frame and going into another)

