Final Research Paper

An 8-10 page art historical analysis will be due to MyClasses on July 15, 2019. “A” papers will have a well articulated thesis statement—an assertion your paper will prove—and will incorporate formal analyses of relevant works of art as well as primary and secondary source material. This assignment will require research: at least six sources outside of your textbook are required, including at least ONE primary source.

Late papers will be marked down FIVE POINTS for every day late and will not be accepted more than a week late.

Deadlines: Students will work on the paper in stages, according to the following schedule:

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<th>Term Paper Topic</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Term Paper Topic</td>
<td>March 13th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outline AND Annotated Bibliography</td>
<td>April 17th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper Draft</td>
<td>May 15th</td>
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<td>The grade you receive for completing these assignments on time and in a satisfactory manner will count towards your assignments grade (10% of your final grade). The final draft of the paper itself will count as 20% of your final course grade.</td>
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Contemporary Paper Topics:

Choose an installation or exhibition from a previous Biennale. Some contemporary artists who have shown at the Biennale in recent years:

- Mark Bradford
- Charles Atlas
- Karla Black
- Anna Halprin
- Sheila Hicks
- Dawn Kasper
- Ernesto Neto
- Gabriel Orozco
- Agnieszka Polska
- Rachel Rose
- Judith Scott
- Nancy Shaver
- Shimabuku
- Kiki Smith
- Marie Voignier
- John Waters
- Jeremy Deller
- Sara Sze
- Felix Gonzalez-Torres
- Bruce Nauman
- Ai Wei Wei
- Ed Ruscha
- Robert Gober
- Ann Hamilton
- Robert Colescott
- Bill Viola
- Louise Bourgeois
- Jenny Holzer
- Jasper Johns
- Isamu Noguchi
- Alfredo Jaar
- Cindy Sherman
- Lara Almarcegui

Your paper should address both how the artist’s work in the Biennale relates to their overall body of work, as well as to the city of Venice and the Biennale itself. You will need to research the artist and their work, as well as their installation at the Biennale. You must use a mix of primary as well as secondary scholarly sources, outside of the textbook and course readings to support your paper’s main argument. You may use the readings from our class as additional sources, but they cannot count as one of the required six sources. If possible, you should look at interviews
with the artist about his or her installation, artist statements, and contemporary reviews of the installation (you will be able to find these in English language newspapers and art magazines and journals), as well as the catalogue from the exhibition which you can interlibrary-loan if it is not in our library. You will also want to consult books, interviews, and articles about the rest of the artist’s œuvre as well. One of your six sources must be an interview with the artist.

Questions you might consider include: Why does your artist make the work he or she does for the Biennale in that particular historical moment? What is the meaning of the work? Is it responding to current events, historical events, or trends in the art world, and why? Is the work you are writing about characteristic of the artist’s works or not, why? How does it fit in with or differ from other works by the same artist?

**Step-by-step suggestions for structuring your paper**

- In the **first paragraph**, introduce your artist and their work. By using a quick visual analysis, allow the work to pose its own question. Make this question the main argument of your paper and suggest an answer, your hypothesis, in your thesis statement.

- In the **second paragraph**, introduce the background information, but only as much as the reader needs to understand the context in which your work and analysis fit. Too much background and context will distract from the answer to your main question. For example, only provide as much biography about your artist as is relevant to your work and main argument.

- With the **third paragraph**, you may want to spend more time taking apart your artwork visually. Allow this to sharpen and direct the question for which you have now provided some context. Let the image guide your analysis.

- In the **fourth paragraph**, begin answering your question based on the problems you pulled out in the third paragraph.

- As you work through your paper, be sure that you are working toward answering your primary question or confirming your main point? Does each part of the paper serve this function? If not, remove it.

- Are your published sources helping guide your argument or do they remain peripheral? Have you made it clear how your sources have helped you develop your argument?

**Tips for preparation as you think and write:**

1.) Look at your artwork very carefully. What makes it unique and interesting? What sort of problem does it seem to suggest?

2.) You must use at least **6 published resources** for your paper. Again, these must be published articles in academic journals or art magazines (such as *Artforum* or *Art in America*), book chapters, or books. The only newspaper articles that will be accepted are reviews of the Biennale and the artist’s work, as well as interviews with the artist. Encyclopedia entries, webpages, blogs, etc., can be supplemental, but not one of your 6 sources. Ideally, try to look for a mix of journals and books. The class readings can also be supplemental but will not count as one of the 6 required sources. If you do find an article that appears in an online academic journal, it must be a piece of scholarship that also appeared in print or was reviewed by peers. A useful example of one of these online peer-reviewed cites is: [http://www.caareviews.org/](http://www.caareviews.org/)

3.) Walk into the library and pull a book related to your topic off the shelf!!! Read it.

4.) Once you’ve looked carefully at your image and made a first reading of your published sources, try to reconsider the central question you’ve already begun devising. Think
about how and why your artwork was made, its subject matter, artist, content, etc. Remember, you’re sharpening the question as you build your paper’s argument paragraph by paragraph. A quick way to think about this is that any image poses a problem of some sort (see above). This could be an aesthetic, practical, technological, critical, or political issue. What is the problem posed by your image?

5.) Now go back to the 6 or more published resources on your artwork (or artist) and read them again with your question in mind. See if you can determine if other writers have a similar question about your image/artist, or if they think differently about either. Allow this to influence how you think about your artwork, artist and question. Adjust your query as you do this. Here is a shorthand for this process: Any significant artist, artwork, or photographic institution has sparked a debate. What is that debate and how will you intervene in it?

6.) It might be best to edit your Introduction at the same time you write or edit your paper’s Conclusion. This will allow you to tailor your introduction and conclusion to fit the trajectory of your argument throughout your paper once it’s written. This allows you to be sure your introduction accurately introduces your paper’s argument in a clear and direct thesis statement, and that your conclusion clearly reframes and drives home your main thesis as well as reminding the reader of how you reached that conclusion through the course of the argument.