# DART 444|4 A : PORTFOLIO DESIGN

SESSION: Winter 2024
INSTRUCTOR: Christopher Moore
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Design + Computation Arts
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DATE RANGE: 18|01|24—11|04|24
STUDIO: Thursdays 17:45—19:45 [EV-7.735]
LAB: Thursdays 19:45—21:45 [EV-5.709]
OFFICE HOURS: Email for an appointment
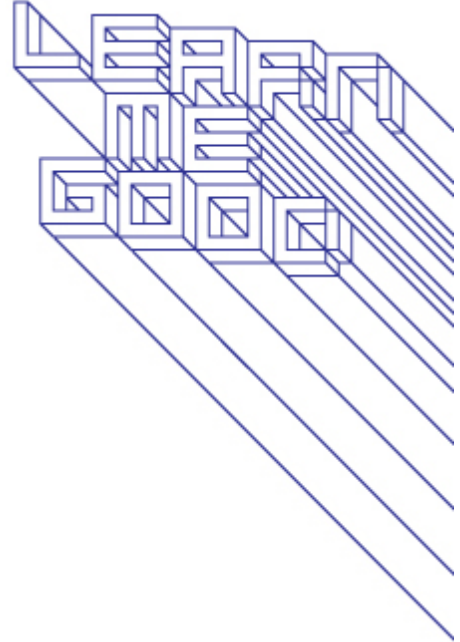
"… self-satisfaction is a sort of poison. Complacency kills. I don't think you can 'think too much'. Clearly if you're wracked with self-doubt and anxiety, you are going to find life difficult. But questioning yourself – and your work – is healthy. This is true of life, as much as it is of graphic design. But of course with self-analysis comes a certain amount of pain, yet this needn't be a bad thing."

- Interview with Adrian Shaughnessy

DESCRIPTION: In this studio course, students represent their design practice in a series of portfolio materials. Visual and written documentation are developed for print, digital media, and exhibition.

OBJECTIVES: This course is organized around the development of a personal and distinct design identity through the creation of a functional set of portfolio materials. Design has become an intensely competitive field, which heightens the importance of acquiring the ability to see objectively and the necessity of intelligently presenting your work. The *way* that designers present themselves can say as much about them as the *work* that they show. It is a demonstrable sign of potential for clients and employers. If a designer does exceptional work, their portfolio will reflect it. Effective, original, and striking work full of emotional or intellectual resonance will not go unnoticed.

This course will also place a strong emphasis on the notion of creative conviction: the need for a clear and informed vision and understanding of design, the ability to trust

your inner instincts, and the importance of being informed and aware of our visual and popular culture.

General objectives:

- Development of critical skills that will enable objective assessment and decisions required in portfolio development.
- Development of conceptual skills and ideas applied to the initial planning, design, and development of self-promotional work.
- Development of relevant technical skills pertaining to individual goals.
- Development of a distinctive visual identity.
- Development of constructive evaluation skills that will aid in the critique and portfolio development of classmates.
- The ability to develop a large scale, multifaceted self-identity project from start to finish.
- Enhancement of presentation skills (oral and visual).

TEXTBOOKS: There are no required texts for this course. However, weekly presentations, texts and additional online resources will be provided by the instructor (*http://www.learnmegood.ca*).

All the course materials are available on the web, or through the course website. You will be shown how to access this material during the first meeting. It is expected that you will have reviewed any relevant materials before each class. It is also recommended that you peruse the weekly presentation ahead of time to become familiar with the materials and subject matter. Failing to do so will affect your participation grade for the course.

You are also required to have a notebook/sketchbook and writing implements during each studio session. It is expected that you will take notes during presentations to assist you in preparing your assignments.

MOODLE: A Moodle forum for DART 444 has been created for information sharing/exchange and submission of assignments and tutorial activities. However, the bulk of the course materials will be available on the *LearnMeGood* site.

OPTIONAL EQUIPMENT: While limited personal storage space exists on the network, it is subject to down-time and routine maintenance. For this reason, you should always backup data on a portable drive.

PARTICIPATION: What and how much you learn in this course is directly related to your participation in the studio and lab sessions. The classroom environment is an important tool for learning about methodologies and processes, and for developing critical and creative skills. Your most important contribution to this learning environment is your interest and active attention. Engage—use all your experience, knowledge, and natural creativity to develop your skills and those of your peers. Your engagement will be directly proportional to your learning and success in this course.

You will be regularly assigned small exercises to assess your participation. At the end of the semester, you will receive a grade based on your active engagement, mature and considerate conduct, questions, and comments made during class, etc.

I realize that not all students are as comfortable as others in speaking during group situations, therefore, I will accept other activities as evidence of participation. For

example, you can post an interesting link on Moodle, provide a critique, design review, or media sample to share with your colleagues. I am always looking for new resources to update and refine the course delivery in subsequent iterations.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact me directly. For further information, please review the official Syllabus for the Department of Design and Computation Arts.

WORKLOAD
"In accordance with the recommendations of the Conseil des Universités du Québec, students' academic activity is measured according to the credit system. For the average student, each credit represents a minimum of 45 hours of academic activity, including lectures, tutorials, laboratories, studio or practice periods, examinations, and personal work." (Extracted from:
https://www.concordia.ca/academics/undergraduate/calendar/current/section-16-academic-information-definitions-and-regulations/section-16-3-evaluation-administrative-notations-examinations-and-performance-requirements.html)

E-MAILS:
For me to efficiently respond to questions, proper e-mail formatting is necessary. Please use appropriate subject titles and indicate the course number when sending messages. For example, "DART 444: Assignment 2, Draft Text."

ASSIGNMENTS:
Assignments are to be completed on the dates when they are due—
which always corresponds to our scheduled class sessions. All students must be prepared to present projects during the face-to-face sessions. Completed assignments are to be submitted to the appropriate Moodle link.

Individual submission folders for each assignment have been created on Moodle. Assignment-specific requirements will be presented in the project descriptions and in-class sessions.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
You must correctly document in your assignments all ideas and media that have been incorporated in your projects but have been borrowed from outside sources. Failure to do so is considered as academic dishonesty and treated accordingly. For written papers, all sources used in the development of your work must be cited as references. Where text is borrowed from another source, quotation marks must indicate the citation and the source must be acknowledged appropriately. A useful overview and relevant links are available online via the Concordia Library site:
http://library.concordia.ca/help/citing.

LATE POLICY:
Projects submitted late will receive an automatic deduction of **5% per day** unless prior arrangements have been negotiated. If you are struggling with the content, or having difficulties managing your time, please advise me. I am a compassionate individual, and am most often able to accommodate requests, if you provide a reasonable alternative.

You may also find it useful to schedule an appointment with the Student Success Centre. An advisor can work directly with you to improve your writing skills, review draft texts, and provide advice on time management or study skills:
http://www.concordia.ca/students/success/learning-support/writing-assistance.html.

PERSONAL SECURITY:
This course will strive for consistency with the University's policy on personal security and conduct, where it is acknowledged that freedom of expression and frank discussion of controversial issues is kept in balance with an individual's rights not to be subject to discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or other forms of intolerance.

Harassment is a serious offence that includes but is not limited to sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favours, and other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Behaviour need not be intentional to constitute harassment. Harassment occurs when an objective person in the position of an individual claiming harassment would find the conduct or comments would have the impact of creating a hostile environment. For further information, please consult section 17.30 of the Concordia University Calendar. Information and resources are also available through Concordia's Counseling Services and the University Chaplain.

DEPARTMENT SYLLABUS: The Department of Design + Computation Arts has established a standardized Syllabus, addressing codes of conduct and academic regulations applicable to all DART and CART courses. You are expected to become familiar with this document, which supersedes all other regulations identified in this course outline.

To view this document, visit:
https://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/finearts/design/docs/dcart-undergraduate-syllabus.pdf

SUSTAINABLE PRINCIPLES   All the projects developed in class must integrate the fundamental notions of sustainability: favouring local materials and production, reducing parts and costs, designing for disassembly, designing for repair and longevity, avoiding the use of toxic materials, glues, paints, and finishes. These principles must be integrated in all the aspects of the design process: limiting the printing, using eco-friendly materials for the construction of preliminary maquettes and prototypes, and leaving the studio clean after class.

Students are expected to consider some of these principles in their final proposals. These principles are not mutually exclusive. They are intended to help you re-orient some of your design decisions.

1. Principle of Efficiency: reduce impacts (a life cycle approach)
2. Principle of Effectiveness: waste = food or principle of industrial ecology—don't use anything that cannot be metabolized back into the earth
3. Principle of Sufficiency: frugality, voluntary simplicity, etc.
4. Principle of Human Vitality: respect for people, and their skills
5. Principle of Cultural Vitality: respect for creativity and beauty
6. Principle of Holistic Thinking: whole systems thinking of the complex/interrelated implications of design
7. Equitable Accessibility: design for impaired, etc.
8. 4R's: rethink, reduce, reuse, recycle
9. Clean or at Least Renewable Energy Sources
10. Renewable Resources Only
11. Preservation: ensure there is a plan to preserve and maintain what you impact— requires a clear understanding of repercussions
12. Conservation: principle of using sparingly
13. Durability (long-life): second life design, emotional, interaction, attachment
14. Biomimicry or Nature Inspired Design: learn from the systems and constructions of nature, as this is inherently sustainable – but how to make the transformations sustainable?
15. Addressing Obsolescence: planned, economic, emotional or otherwise

TERRITORIAL ACKN'MENT   I/We would like to begin by acknowledging that Concordia University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. The Kanien'kehá:ka Nation is recognized as the custodians of the lands and waters on which we gather today. Tiohtiá:ke/Montreal is historically known as a gathering place for many First Nations. Today, it is home to a diverse

population of Indigenous and other peoples. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community.

For further information, visit: *https://www.concordia.ca/about/indigenous/territorial-acknowledgement.html*

EVALUATION: 15% Readings / Participation / Commitment to Course
15% Moodle Responses
15% Visual Identity
10% Curriculum Vitae and Invoice
10% Social Media Presence
10% Video Resume
05% Competition Submission
20% Website Portfolio

CLASS SCHEDULE:

Please note that class activities will be flexible and adaptive—current information and syllabus updates may be viewed on the course website at *http://www.learnmegood.ca.* A more detailed list of weekly resources appears at the end of this document. Please refer to this table for class preparation, due dates, homework, and supplementary resources.

ASSESSMENT:

MOODLE RESPONSES
Value: 15% (ongoing assessment)
Due: Dates variable

Overview:

On an ongoing basis, you will be tasked with small activities to be completed during the class sessions and posted to the Moodle forums. Some of these will be completed in groups, while others will be submitted as individual responses. Further information and directions will be provided in the weekly presentations.

Deliverables:

- Short responses posted to Moodle, as directed by the instructor during the class sessions.

Assessment Criteria:

- Did the student demonstrate an adequate level of commitment to completing the task?
- Level of creativity and innovation.
- Depth of research and/or analysis in the response.

VISUAL IDENTITY

Value: 15%
Due: February 8

Overview:

You are asked to develop a visual identity and branding system for your self-promotion as a designer or independent studio. Reflecting upon the ethos and profile activities conducted in the first week, devise a logo/wordmark and select an emblematic colour scheme and typographic system to reflect these values. Consider how this identity can be flexible and adaptive to a wide range of applications—both print and digital—and how it will translate at differing scales and in monochromatic situations. The first stage will involve presenting variations that, through critique, individual consultations, and iterations, will be narrowed down to the final design. It is important to consider all details of this system from the start, as it must be consistently applied to all the subsequent portfolio materials.

The second and final stage involves producing a graphic standards manual. This document will outline the specific colour schemes and variations (in RGB, CMYK, Pantone, and Hexadecimal colour spaces), along with typeface selections and appropriate uses of the logo in a variety of situations. For example, demonstrate how the system is applied in a monochromatic application, on dark/light backgrounds, and the scale relationship between the logo and typographic elements. Compile this information into a cohesive document that illustrates this information as though it could be passed to another designer to apply.

Deliverables:

- A single PDF document for the visual identity and graphic standards guidelines.
- Upload your finalized document to the Moodle submissions link.

Assessment Criteria:

- How closely does the branding scheme reflect the original ethos statement?
- Depth of exploration and energy invested in developing the system.
- Comprehensiveness of the graphic standards manual.

CURRICULUM VITAE AND INVOICE
Value: 10%
Due: February 15
Note: the class and critique on this date will be conducted via Zoom: https://concordia-ca.zoom.us/j/5774917555

Overview:

Any independent designer, artist, or studio requires two fundamental documents—a Curriculum Vitae and an invoicing system for billing clients. Begin by reviewing your current CV and edit it to reflect your professional experiences, technical skills, and main career aspirations. Reduce the content to highlight your most relevant contributions to the field in which you wish to operate. It is not necessary to include every employment experience if they are not directly related to the situation or opportunity. A brief biography is a good way to introduce the list of achievements to provide a snapshot of what you have to offer. Develop a logical and legible hierarchy to succinctly present the information contained in your CV. Be sure to follow the systems outlined in your graphic standards manual when planning your design.

The second document is the invoice. This is the official document or contract with your client that outlines the nature of the services rendered, pricing, and other billable items (materials, hourly rate, revision fees, travel fees, subcontractor costs, etc.). For both documents, you may wish to create

bilingual versions or separate documents in each language. Combine both the CV and invoice into a single document for the final presentation.

Deliverables:

- A single PDF document for the Curriculum Vitae and invoice.
- Upload your finalized document to the Moodle submissions link.

Assessment Criteria:

- Clarity and relevance of the CV contents.
- How well does the hierarchy of information highlight the most significant achievements?
- Do the documents accurately conform to the graphic standards manual?
- Level of energy and focus invested in the development of the documents.

SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE
Value: 10%
Due: March 14 (and ongoing updates until the end of the semester)

Overview:

In an increasingly networked age, the reliance on paper-based portfolios and ephemera is diminishing. Social media has largely usurped traditional forms of promotion as a means for presentation. As such, you are asked to develop a strong social media presence for your works. Many of you may already have this developed to a certain degree, but reimagine this as a separate, professional presentation apart from your personal media. If you are leading with your own name, create a parallel identity (e.g. Christopher Moore Designs), or set up accounts for your studio name. Select a minimum of 3 different platforms to develop—which all have different audiences and characteristics. Twitter functions differently than Facebook and Instagram generally has a different following than Behance or TikTok. Exploit the strengths and affordances of each environment to display different characteristics of your practice. There are certain limitations in terms of aspect ratios and file types permitted with each interface, so make best use of these features.

Throughout the semester, you are required make at least 1 post to each platform per week, which will be verified at the end of the course.

Deliverables:

- A single PDF document containing screenshots and links to your social media sites.
- Upload your finalized document to the Moodle submissions link.

Assessment Criteria:

- Level of customization for each social media platform.
- Application of graphic standards.
- Level of energy invested into seeding the accounts with content.
- Application of each platform's characteristics in the customization of content.

COMPETITION SUBMISSION
Value: 5%
Due: March 14

<u>Overview</u>:

During the class session, you will research 5 design-related competitions, publications, or calls for proposals (exhibitions, grants, etc.) and post them to Moodle. This will become a shared resource for the entire class. Select one opportunity and follow the application guidelines. If the deadline is approaching, you are encouraged to follow through with the submission. If you do so, provide a proof of your application (screenshot, email confirmation, etc.), but this is entirely voluntary. Compile your entry into a single document for assignment submission.

<u>Deliverables</u>:

- A single PDF document with your application materials and proof of submission (if applicable).
- Upload your finalized document to the Moodle submissions link.

<u>Assessment Criteria</u>:

- Adherence to competition guidelines.
- Level of energy invested in preparing the entry.
- Did the student follow through and submit the application?

<u>VIDEO RESUME</u>
Value: 10%
Due: March 28

<u>Overview</u>:

Even prior to the pandemic lockdown, employment procedures began to shift. The globalized present means that designers can be working from virtually anywhere and for clients in diverse countries. As a result, a new trend of video resumes has become a popular form of screening potential employees/service providers before engaging in a more thorough interview process. This is similar to the video reel that is often used in the animation and visual effects industries. Typically, the designer's video includes sequences of images and/or videos with an audio narration or captions highlighting their key qualifications and skills.

For this exercise, you are asked to produce a 3-minute (max.) video that outlines the main points from your CV and illustrated with examples of your past works. Consider adding a royalty-free or original audio soundscape to create cohesion throughout the presentation. You may use any software to prepare this video—it could even be done in PowerPoint/Keynote and exported to video. Work within your skill sets. Zoom is also a possibility, given its ability to record a shared screen and audio. Upload the final video to a public streaming service.

<u>Deliverables</u>:

- 3-minute (maximum) video file posted to a streaming service (YouTube, Vimeo, etc.).
- Upload a document containing a screenshot and link to your video.

<u>Assessment Criteria</u>:

- Effort and engagement in preparing the video resume.
- Ability to translate CV highlights into the final presentation.
- Quality of production in creating a compelling argument.

WEBSITE PORTFOLIO
Value: 20%
Due: April 11

Overview:

For your final assignment in this course, you will produce a website portfolio. This is the culmination of all the prior activities, unifying each component in a shared repository. Given that this is not a web design course, I know that many of you may not have advanced skills in this area. I encourage you to use one of the many template web development services, such as:

- Wix
- Squarespace
- Site 123
- WordPress

Integrate examples of your featured works, along with brief captions. Include links to your CV as a downloadable PDF document and all your social media sites, along with the video resume. A brief "about" biography is also useful to personalize the website. Naturally, include your contact information—set up a new, professional email address that can be forwarded to your personal address, if desired. Feel free to integrate any additional features, as you see fit.

Deliverables:

- Completed web portfolio (using online template or original design).
- Upload a document to Moodle containing a screenshot and link to your website.

Assessment Criteria:

- Adherence to graphic standards.
- Integration of previous assignments in a logical, hierarchical interface.
- Clarity of information and formatting.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In creative disciplines, the evaluation process is not always transparent or clearly stated. Multiple-choice and automated tests are easy to administer, but they cannot replicate the qualitative assessment necessary to judge a work of art or design. It is the instructor's role to determine the relative merit based upon multiple factors—some technical, some ethical, and others, aesthetic:

- Does the project meet the requirements, as stated in Assignment criteria?
- How much effort or engagement was involved in completing the project?
- Does the final work thoughtfully or provocatively comment on the chosen subject?
- Has the student progressed technically or conceptually in the development process?
- Does the work demonstrate an understanding of the creative and compositional principles discussed in the class sessions?
- Did the student make incremental progress on a week-to-week basis?
- Does the project demonstrate innovation, challenge, or take risks?
- Has the student exceeded the instructor's expectations?

- How closely does the work mirror professional/industry standards?

Having considered these factors, among others, the instructor must determine where the project should be placed within a given range for each criteria. The cumulative assessment of these factors is translated into a letter grade. For further granularity, please review the following general grade range descriptions:

D-RANGE:
[MARGINAL
PASS]

The work is unsatisfactory. The student has unsuccessfully completed the project and/or has met only the most basic requirements. The work may exhibit only a passing resemblance to the criteria laid out for the project. The student may have diverged from the criteria without previous discussion with the instructor. The student may have submitted a project from another course or situation, and claimed it to be new work. The work is rife with mistakes, or is possibly unplayable/unreadable without expert technical intervention and/or a very forgiving eye. The work is incoherent or does not successfully or meaningfully communicate a concept or theme. The student is not progressing in their development. The work is below average in the opinion of the instructor.

C-RANGE:
[SATISFACTORY]

The work is acceptable. The student has made an earnest attempt to fulfill criteria laid out for the project. The student is not progressing well in their development. The student has not taken sufficient time to internalize, understand, own, and interpret the criteria for the project. The student may be unclear on the criteria for the project and has not asked for clarification from colleagues or the instructor. The student may have diverged substantially from the criteria without previous consultation with the instructor. The student has not referenced secondary sources of information or experience outside the classroom. The work contains too many technical errors – i.e. poor transitions, inappropriate pacing or conceptual structure, failure to acknowledge quoted material, scripting errors, audio problems, grammatical or spelling mistakes, too short or substantially too long. The work is average and acceptable in the opinion of the instructor.

B-RANGE:
[VERY GOOD]

The work is good. The student has made an earnest attempt to fulfill the criteria laid out for the project. The student is progressing in their development. The student has taken sufficient time to internalize, understand, own, and interpret the criteria for the project, with notable success. The student may have referenced a few secondary sources of information or experience in an interesting way. The student's interpretation of the criteria may be somewhat lacking. The interpretation may lack sufficient personal voice or originality; it may be unsubtle. The work may experiment earnestly without huge success. The student may have diverged slightly from the criteria without previous consultation with the instructor. The work may contain a few technical errors – i.e. poor transitions, inappropriate pacing or conceptual structure, failure to acknowledge quoted material, scripting errors, audio problems, grammatical or spelling mistakes, too short or substantially too long. The work is generally good in the opinion of the instructor.

A-RANGE:
[OUTSTANDING]

The work is excellent. The student has fulfilled the criteria laid out for the project through active engagement while demonstrating a personal voice. The student has referenced many secondary sources of information or experience in an interesting way. The student has internalized all project criteria and offers supplementary ideas that support the criteria, or skillfully deconstructs the established criteria in a creative way. The student is progressing at an above-average rate. The project is at least almost totally free of technical errors. The project probably demonstrates earnest and successful experimentation.

A+:

The student has fulfilled all criteria worthy of an A mark and has excelled beyond the instructor's expectations. The work approaches or attains the capacity of a professional

in the field. The work approaches suitability for publication or professional broadcast. The work represents substantial, innovative experimentation.

DART 444|4 A : PORTFOLIO DESIGN : READINGS, RESOURCES & ACTIVITIES [WINTER 2024]

		CLASS SESSION	HOMEWORK
WEEK 1	JANUARY 18	• 25-word design ethos • 100-word employment profile • 5 sample designers or studios (summaries)	• Complete the in-class activities and post to the appropriate Moodle forums • Review postings from classmates
WEEK 2	JANUARY 25	• Begin development of personal visual identity o Sketching, colour palettes, typeface selection, etc. • Review process for company registration and incorporation (groups)	
WEEK 3	FEBRUARY 1	• Overview of sample visual identities • Individual consultations	• Complete visual identity guidelines document
WEEK 4	FEBRUARY 8	• Visual identity due (critique) • Review and edit current Curriculum Vitae contents	• Complete Curriculum Vitae and Invoice

WEEK 5	FEBRUARY 15	• *Note: the class and critique on this date will be conducted via Zoom:*
		    o *https://concordia-ca.zoom.us/j/5774917555*
		• Curriculum Vitae and Invoice due (critique)
		• Review examples of social media profiles
		    o Determine typical user profiles for each platform and define their content characteristics	

WEEK 6	FEBRUARY 22	• Format visual content for social media platforms (aspect ratio, colour space, etc.)	
BREAK	FEBRUARY 26 – MARCH 3	Mid-Term Break: No Classes	

WEEK 7	MARCH 7	• Work session and individual consultations	• Continue development of social media • Submit application to at least one competition (optional)
WEEK 8	MARCH 14	• Social media presence due (critique) • Competition submission due	• Begin script and storyboard for video resume • Post to social media accounts
WEEK 9	MARCH 21	• Work session and individual consultations	• Film and edit video resume • Post to social media accounts
WEEK 10	MARCH 28	• Video resume due (screening)	• Compile content for web portfolio • Select platform/technology for website • Post to social media accounts
WEEK 11	APRIL 4	• Work session and individual consultations	• Finalize website portfolio and make it live • Post to social media accounts
WEEK 12	APRIL 11	• Website portfolio due	• Academic Withdrawal deadline (DISC): April 17