

# 02 Initial Assignments, Art Defn

Wednesday, January 15, 2025 4:59 PM

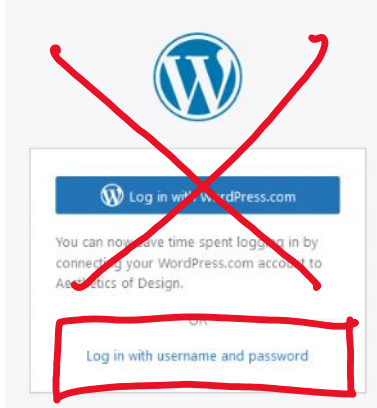
Today:

- Admin stuff
- Finish syllabus
- Initial Assignments
- Definition of Art

## Admin stuff

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HGFJ



- Table tents for in-person attendance. Write your name LARGE and DARK. First name and last initial. You can store them here. Grab them at the start of class.

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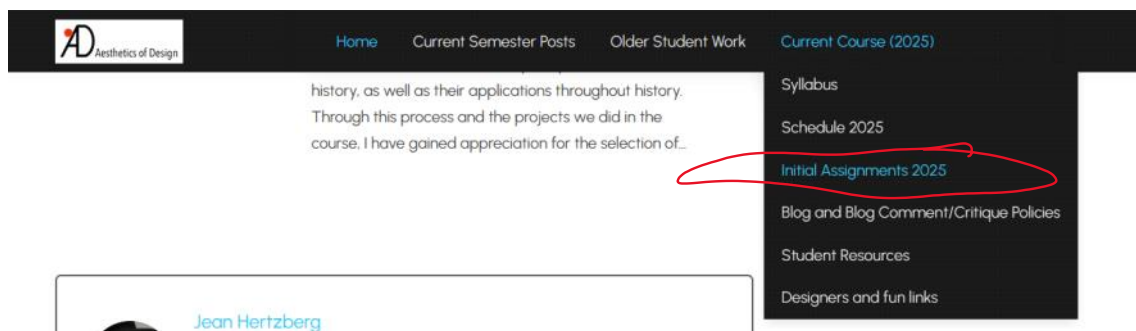
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- 57%  
21  
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- A) This is cool! I'm glad my work will be useful in the world.
  - B) I don't really care about the world but I'm glad to have a portfolio published.
  - C) Whatever. It's fine.
  - D) I'm not happy with this. I'm not sure I want my work published.
  - E) I want to keep my work private to sell in the future.

## Initial Assignments

<https://www.aesdes.org/initial-assignments-2025/>



- **Start a design notebook.** Carry it with you always. Continually doodle in it, sketch details of design that catch your eye, practice shading and rendering etc. We will often have short sketching assignments during class, so

please bring it.

- We'll be using **Iclicker** Cloud in class. Everybody (remote and in-person) should sign up ASAP: HGFJ It won't be used for attendance or class participation, but we use it frequently for opinion polls like 'should we move the due date for the next report' and 'what do you think of the Eames chairs at the airport?'
- **Read the syllabus:** <https://www.aesdes.org/syllabus-2025/>. Then state that you have read it and agree to the policies by midnight Friday January 17 in the Canvas assignment.
- We'll be using **Slack** for communications and to share in-class discussions. Join the class workspace, AesDes2025, by midnight Friday Jan 17: [https://join.slack.com/t/aesdes2025/shared\\_invite/zt-2xpclmhm8-Q6232xJSF0fWEDhG3luUA](https://join.slack.com/t/aesdes2025/shared_invite/zt-2xpclmhm8-Q6232xJSF0fWEDhG3luUA)
- Complete your **login to AesDes.org** which will allow you to post blogs. Due Friday Jan 17. [Here's how](#) You'll get an email invitation for this. Contact Dev Mahajan on Slack if you have trouble with your login. Posts and critiques are due every week. Your first required blog post is described below. Required: **read my post on Blog and Comments policies.**
- **Blog Post #1: Explore an aesthetic.** Due at midnight Wednesday Jan 22. We will go over the definition and examples of aesthetics in class, but keep this assignment in mind. For your first blog post, identify an aesthetic, include **at least 6 images** and/or videos illustrating it, and discuss the context a bit. When was this aesthetic created? Who were the big players? What influenced it? What has it influenced since then? Be sure to find the original authors of your images and videos, and provide citations for all your information sources. Be sure to **categorize** your post as 'Post 1 – 2025 Aesthetics Explorations', but the **title** of your post should be your chosen aesthetic, NOT 'Blog Post 1.'. Aim for around **500 words** in length.
- Complete the **CATME survey** by midnight Friday January 24. You'll get an email invitation. This survey will be used to put teams and pods (groups of teams) together. The teams will be used for support and critiques.
- **Critiques/comments on two other student's Blog Post #1** will be due Sunday Jan 26 at midnight. Details: [Blog and Comments policies](#)
- **Revise your post** based on the comments on your post by Tuesday Jan 28 at midnight. Details: [Blog and Comments policies](#)
- Students enrolled in the **graduate sections are expected to give a 5 minute presentation** to the class on a design movement, topic or designer. No repeats please, of other grad student presentations this semester. You can cover one of my lecture topics as long as you do it before me. Content from student posts (including yours) is OK too. **Use this Sign-up Sheet** to save a spot and a topic. Use lots of visuals to define the work, and give plenty of context. What was happening in design before, after and during? If you need inspiration, look at Fiell, Charlotte & Peter. *Design of the 20th Century*. Taschen America, 2012. <http://www.amazon.com/Design-Century-Charlotte-Peter-Fiell/dp/3836541068> [Links to an external site.](#). This is an A-Z list of famous designers and schools of design. I have a copy in my office.

You might also want to look at winners of recent design competitions to find contemporary examples.



Ice Cycle



#### Floating Bookshelf

© February 20, 2018 @ Chris Watson  
I have a bookshelf in my room that is no longer functional. I wanted to change the typical form of bookshelves and needed some inspiration...



#### Rustic Shou Sugi Ban Chess Board – Made with Mountain Barn Wood

© February 20, 2018 @ Chris Watson  
I have a chess board that is no longer functional. I wanted to change the typical form of chess boards and needed some inspiration...



#### The GEEN 1400 Special

© February 20, 2018 @ Chris Watson  
I have a special project that is no longer functional. I wanted to change the typical form of special projects and needed some inspiration...

- **Upcycle Project.** This will be your individual warm-up project, due Feb 17. Create an artifact that **conforms to an aesthetic**, either the aesthetic you researched, or one that someone else in class posted about, or another one that you choose. Upcycle means that your artifact should be constructed of inexpensive or recycled material, something easy to manipulate using additive or subtractive techniques: cardboard (can be laser cut), foam core, drywall, sticks, plastic forks or plates, soda cans/bottles, Legos, bubble-wrap or packing peanuts, stir sticks, paper cups, pine cones, cloth, papier Mache, tires, DVDs, PVC, food, plastic bags etc. Try to avoid buying new materials. (A hint: repetition is a common component of many artworks, so for example, if you use rubber bands, use *lot* of rubber bands). [Here is a post](#) with places you might find materials. You'll be asked to document your design and construction process, *so keep track of where you find inspiration*. In particular, if you use an existing design you **must** document the source, but hopefully you will use this opportunity to create something new. Your artifact should be of moderate size, something between 0.5 and 8 cubic feet; can be small but must be viewable without a microscope, or up to as large as a chair. Plan to video the finished artifact for a short in-class presentation during the week of Feb 17, and a formal report will be due as a blog post 5 on Weds Feb 19. You might want to make one of those **time-lapse assembly videos** for extra awesomeness.
- **Main Project.** Deciding on your main project has been called the hardest part of this course, so don't wait. You can get started on it

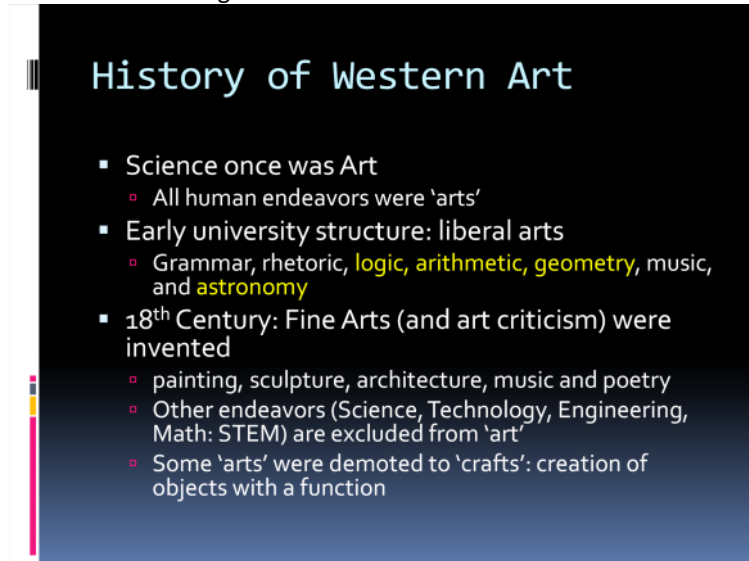
right away. You can make anything you want, as long as it has some sort of dynamic component; a moving part or something that changes with time. You are expected to pay for the materials (cost at least equivalent to a hardcopy textbook, say \$150) and the project is yours to keep at the end of the semester. Keep in mind your other constraints; limited access to manufacturing facilities, appropriate workspace, delays in getting orders filled, etc.

ZOTERO

From <<https://www.aesdes.org/initial-assignments-2025/>>

## Aesthetics

Prof. Jean Hertzberg



**History of Western Art**

- Science once was Art
  - All human endeavors were 'arts'
- Early university structure: liberal arts
  - Grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy
- 18<sup>th</sup> Century: Fine Arts (and art criticism) were invented
  - painting, sculpture, architecture, music and poetry
  - Other endeavors (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math: STEM) are excluded from 'art'
  - Some 'arts' were demoted to 'crafts': creation of objects with a function

# ar·ti·fi·cial

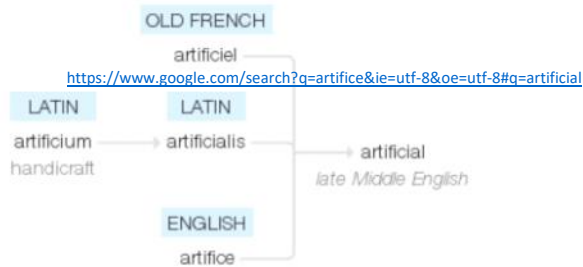
/ˈɑːrdəˈfiʃhəl/

adjective

adjective: **artificial**

- made or produced by human beings rather than occurring naturally, typically as a copy of something natural.  
"her skin glowed in the artificial light"
  - (of a situation or concept) not existing naturally; contrived or false.  
"the artificial division of people into age groups"  
*synonyms*: **synthetic, fake, imitation, mock, ersatz, faux, substitute, replica, reproduction, More man-made, manufactured, fabricated, inorganic;**
  - BRIDGE  
(of a bid) conventional as opposed to natural.
- (of a person or a person's behavior) insincere or affected.  
"an artificial smile"  
*synonyms*: **insincere, feigned, false, unnatural, contrived, put-on, exaggerated, forced, labored, strained, hollow; More**  
*informal* **pretend, phony, bogus**  
"an artificial smile"  
*antonyms*: **genuine**

## Origin



late Middle English: from Old French *artificiel* or Latin *artificialis*, from *artificium* 'handicraft' (see *artifice*).

# ar·ti·fice

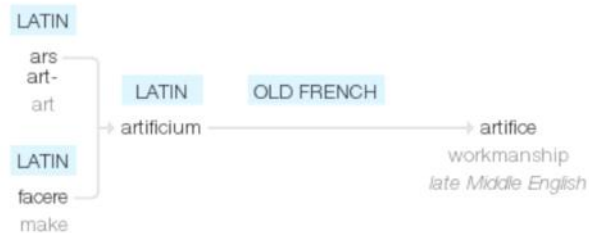
/ˈɑːrdəfəs/

noun

noun: **artifice**; plural noun: **artifices**

- clever or cunning devices or expedients, especially as used to trick or deceive others.  
"artifice and outright fakery"  
*synonyms*: **trickery, deceit, deception, duplicity, guile, cunning, artfulness, wiliness, craftiness, slyness, chicanery; More**

## Origin



late Middle English (in the sense 'workmanship'): from Old French, from Latin *artificium*, based on *ars*, *art*- 'art' + *facere* 'make.'

# Art and Aesthetics

What is art? What *good* is art? What is the purpose of art?

- Art theory

What is good art?

- Aesthetics

## Major Art Theories

What is art? What good is art?

- Realism
  - Plato (500 BC): Representations should be truthful. Beauty = truth. Human perceptions are fallible, invisible true world has ideal 'Forms'.
  - Aristotle: Beauty = both appearance (order, harmony, symmetry) and functionality. Form is inseparable from the purpose of art: to represent.
- Expressionism (1850's)
  - Art is to embody and stimulate emotion, often through metaphor.
  - Cognitivism: Art can teach. Dewey's 'aesthetic experience' gives meaning and value.
- Formalism (1900's):
  - Only the form is important. Emotion, narrative, functionality are irrelevant.
  - Abstract art context
- Postmodernism (1968)
  - Art and aesthetics cannot be separated from the social, ethical and political world.
  - Pluralism. No theory is absolute; context is essential.

Barrett, Terry. *Why Is That Art?: Aesthetics and Criticism of Contemporary Art*. 2nd ed. Oxford University Press, USA, 2011.