

## FINAL PROJECT\_

### <<MASKS FOR NAVIGATING THE ANTHROPOCENE>>

*"We need art that does not make people think (we have quite enough environmental art that does that), but rather that walks them through an inner space that is hard to traverse." – Tim Morton*

Designers are agents of social change. How can **DESIGNING, MAKING AND PERFORMING** a mask bring awareness to issues related to environmental change and/or possibly alter the behavior of those who use/wear it?

A mask, when intentionally created, has the power to communicate and embody the complexity and wide-range of realities that compose the Anthropocene.

Reflect on the issues we have discussed in class (such as: climate change, wicked problems, storm surge, sixth extinction, social resiliency, guilt/denial, impact on air, water, plants, animals, waste, long-term/geologic thinking and the materials of the Anthropocene, such as plastic and nuclear waste).

From these themes you will design and produce **A MASK FOR THE ANTHROPOCENE**. Your project can be an aesthetic interpretation of a mask, but it should be motivated by the themes we have discussed and be carefully produced.

Your mask should do one of following:

1) **Be an illustration/representation of a specific issue or "character" who embodies or enacts your chosen theme so that audiences can aesthetically experience that theme or problem in a more meaningful way.**

Who are the characters of the Anthropocene?

How can a mask materialize/translate a theme into an object/character that can be experienced?

OR

2) **The mask can invite someone wearing it to behave differently.** Perhaps the mask enables a person to be more sustainable or resilient, or maybe the mask provides protection or encouragement in relation to a contemporary environmental problem. Your mask could be designed to be worn as protection or encouragement for a nearly extinct animal, someone living near Fukushima, someone living in Zone 1 of New York City or for someone dealing with poor air quality in Beijing etc.)

How does the mask invite a different way of behaving?

Who might people become when they wear your mask?

#### **PERFORMATIVE DOCUMENTATION:**

In order to be an effective design, the masks need to be activated (interact with other people or things). Enacting/performing your mask is essential to this project. How might you demonstrate the ideas behind your mask through documentary photos or video? How might you stage a story or narrative about what your mask makes possible or the questions that it presents through photos or video?

**IN-CLASS JUNE 17<sup>TH</sup>:**

**GUEST SPEAKER LISA HIRMER + FIELD TRIP TO RUBIN MUSUEM**

**STEP 1:** Chose three problems that you could use as your central mask theme

**STEP 2:** Pitch your idea to your partner. Narrow your choices and **choose one issue/problem as your central theme for your mask.** Powerful designs are based on thorough research and an exploration of how complex systems interact.

**BEGIN conducting research** around your chosen themes using the methods we have explored in class: observation, sketching and photography.

**BEFORE LEAVING THE RUBIN MUSUEM ON JUNE 17TH**

**STEP 3: BEGIN to imagine at least three different ways to address your central theme through a mask design.** How can your mask integrate scientific data in aesthetic ways? Consider the difference between explaining something and creating an experience of it. Before leaving the Museum check-in with me about your ideas/plans.

**BY THURSDAY JUNE 18<sup>th</sup> (midnight) EMAIL ME YOUR FINALIZED PROJECT PLAN**

**STEP 4:** Email me a description of your:

- 1) final theme
  - 2) sketches of your intended mask concept (narrowed from three possibilities)
  - 3) plans for final documentation/performance
- + questions or feedback you would like

**JUNE 19-23<sup>rd</sup> MAKE YOUR MASK AND FINALIZE YOUR DESIGN BRIEF**

**STEP 5:**

Your final mask should be accompanied by a design brief that explains:

- 1) the core concept of your mask and why it matters to you
- 2) how the mask expresses the core concept
- 3) how the performance/activation of the mask invites those who see it or wear it to become more resilient — and in what ways.

**IN-CLASS JUNE 24TH**

**STEP 6: PEFORM YOUR MASK, FINALIZE DOCUMENTATION + PRESENTATION**

The morning of June 24<sup>th</sup> (approx. 9am-12pm) will be open for you complete work for class, including finalizing details on mask and conducting a live performance/activation of your masks outside, which should be documented on photo or video.

**\*\*Masks will be presented immediately following our lunch break.**

+ After presentations, you will be given time to upload final documentation of final projects to your Learning Portfolio.