



Final Project: A *Slightly* Deeper Dive

For *Music, Sound, and the Environment*—
25% of semester grade (Fall 2023)

Hi all,

This is a “medium-sized” project: big enough to do some productive thinking, but not something massive or something that you can’t complete over the span of three weeks.

What do you need to do?

STEP #1: worth 2% of overall assignment

Choose **ONE** topic we’ve covered in class that you’d like to do some more thinking about.

(submit your idea to me this Fri, Dec 1, 11:59pm)

- Some potential topics on are located on separate handout—feel free to pitch things to me, too!

STEP #2: worth 4% of overall assignment

Turn in a **BIBLIOGRAPHY**: this can include materials you’ve used, or further readings on your topic

(submit this to me on Friday, December 8)

- Your bibliography should include at least **THREE** items (you may have more).
- Of these, I want **ONE** of them to be a scholarly source (published by a university press). This **cannot** just be the same reading assigned in class.
- Having problems? Remember that your scholarly source doesn’t need to be about EVERY element of your topic
- Research tips: see back of the page
- Citation method: I don’t massively care whether you use Chicago, MLA, Turabian.....use whatever you know and can get correct

STEP #3: worth 4% of overall assignment

A very brief, informal presentation to your colleagues in class on Thursday, December 7

- This should be about 2-3 minutes (no more): just a report on what you’re working on, what you’ve done so far and finding exciting, and what you’re finding difficult to find....
- No slides, media, etc—just informal!

Step #4: worth 15% of overall assignment

(submit this to me on Friday, December 15, 11:59pm)

Complete ONE of the following on your piece:

Option A: Podcast, somewhere between 7-10 minutes. This would include some polished spoken presentation from you and some audio examples.

Option B: Video presentation, somewhere between 7-10 minutes. This would include some polished spoken presentation from you, some audio examples, and some visual elements (slides, video examples, etc).

Please choose the option that most appeals to you—or seems the least stressful!—and have fun with it :)

Tips, Notes, and Rules:

1. **If you use music examples**, they should be brief—no more than 1-2 minutes of music at absolute maximum (short snippets are better, not long excerpts).
2. This should not be a “book report,” but should include some analytical thought on your part, some analysis, some bigger picture demonstration of your continuing work and thought as a musician, educator, performer, etc.
3. You are most welcome to involve other people in your project (have a guest on your podcast, for example), but you need to do your own work (these aren’t jointly graded projects)
4. I don’t care how you record this; you may use any recording medium—I’m not judging on quality of sound. Many cell phones have apps for recording. You could also try web-based services such as Vocaroo (vocaroo.com) or Audacity (audacityteam.org). Let me know if you have questions about this and I may be able to guide you to some resources.

In your podcast or presentation, you should discuss your chosen topic by putting together some mixture of the following:

- What's the issue? How does your topic connect music, sound, and the environment?
- Perhaps a bit of summary about what we covered in class, then move on to your topic & how you're expanding or taking this idea in a new direction—use your sources and research!
- **Things YOU like** or find intriguing about this topic, and avenues you'd like to explore more in the future. A personal touch is fabulous here!

Some other possible topics of discussion:

- If discussing a composer or performer, biography
- If discussing a piece, **how/when** the piece was composed or commissioned; **performance history** (when was it first done, or who has famously performed it?); **subject matter of the piece**, if relevant; **some things to listen for in the piece of music**
- **Any large-scale issues** that are connected to the piece—much like we've been discussing as our “big picture questions” in class.
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Please balance your presentation carefully (you don't want to spend 8 minutes in minute detail on biography).

Where do I look up stuff to include?

So we all need to learn how to pull together various sources to do this kind of stuff, and it's okay (even important) to understand the roles that various sources play. TLDR: of course we can use things like Wikipedia to launch ourselves, but WHAT ELSE?

- Composer webpages
- Interviews
- Program notes
- Newspaper coverage
- DO NOT JUST COPY THE WORDS OF OTHERS—plagiarism isn't just a college grade downer, it can actually lose anyone their job!

Scholarly articles:

- **This step is required—make sure you check a couple of the databases below.**
- go to <https://library.potsdam.edu/music> You'll notice there are search engines for “Music Periodicals Database,” “Music Index,” “RILM Abstracts,” and “JSTOR.” Look up your piece or other related search terms in one or more of these databases and see what pops up.

Books:

- Try Bearcat (our local library): <https://library.potsdam.edu/home>
- Try Worldcat (libraries worldwide): <https://library.potsdam.edu/home>
- Google Books
- Drawing a blank? Make an appointment with me and I will help you! I love research (it's nerdy fabulous fun) and love learning about stuff you're interested in :)