

Hear! Hear! Thesis Performance (15% / 150 points)

Due dates:

- **September 8: Draft thesis**
- **September 12: Revised thesis + selected gestures/poses**
- **September 15: Performance plot**
- **September 22, 24, 26: Performances**
- **September 26 by midnight: Visual documentation and reflection**
- **September 29 by noon: Visual documentation and reflection for Friday performers**

Task

You will perform for the class a 60- to 90-second pantomime in which you demonstrate a thesis argument, position, or concept as translated from another genre (lab or homework assignment, newspaper article, physical exercise or task, video game, etc., football game). Your performance also involves the following constraints:

- The only verbal language you can incorporate into the performance is the thesis itself.
- You **MUST** incorporate it somewhere in the performance.
- You must incorporate at least one sound effect.
- You may use props.
- You must submit visual documentation of the plotted performance (slide show, video, poster) with a 400- to 500-word reflection that responds to the questions given below.

Visual Documentation and Reflection

Your visual documentation (video, slide show, poster) should include brief (1–2 complete sentences) captions that identify each video/image.

This document of your performance and process must be accompanied by a 400- to 500-word reflection essay that addresses the following points:

- Describe the assignment you took your thesis from and how you arrived at the statement that represents the argument of that assignment.
- Identify the movements/gestures/poses (at least two) that anchor your performance of your thesis, why you chose those movements instead of others you were considering, and how you “intensified” them for the sake of the performance.
- Justify your choice of sound effect and reflect on how well it worked in the final performance.
- What would you do differently—either to enhance or improve the performance—if you had another chance to perform the thesis?

Purpose

This is an exercise that asks you to:

- think about the variety of arguments implicit in any genre
- identify an argument in a genre you take for granted as nonrhetorical
- make the argument explicit in your own words
- translate the argument into a multimodal (nonverbal, oral, visual) performance

Goals

At the end of the assignment, you should have a better grasp of:

- a number of possible arguments contained in a given text or genre
- the range of positions a thesis can take
- the significance of genre in shaping a particular thesis
- the ability to make rhetorical moves literally with your body

Submission

The assignment will unfold in stages at the deadlines noted above. Your thesis statements, gestures, and script/plot will be workshopped but not submitted for review unless you choose to do so in your final portfolio. Therefore you should preserve the elements of each stage for possible inclusion in your portfolio.

The visual documentation will be uploaded to T-square as a file or link by the last day of performances, September 26 (by September 29 at noon if you perform on Friday).

Grading

The pantomime assignment, including the staging steps and the visual documentation, is worth 15% of your final grade. You will be graded on:

- the clarity and force of the thesis, as well as the adequacy of its interpretation and translation of the statement in the originating genre
- the creativity of your performance (how you rise to the challenge of translating semantic expressions into nonverbal expressions)
- the success of the selected gestures in communicating the corresponding elements of the stated thesis.
- the incorporation and appropriateness of the chosen sound element(s).
- how well you use the visual documentation and reflection to evaluate and learn from the choices you made for the performance.