

Dearest Experimenters,

It has been slightly longer than a calendar year, and 52 newsletters since I started this project. It began as a short weekly email I sent to my thirty experimental production students. Like so many of you reading this, we were a group suddenly separated and disconnected from our classrooms and our work. I felt isolated, aimless, and helpless. My students told me that they felt adrift and overwhelmed.

As a way to help ground them in their work for the week and to communicate with them in a form that they could go back to complete with Zoom links, assignments, and other relevant information, I started writing Monday morning emails. I jokingly named those emails This Week in Experimental. The title stuck, but the format shifted. My students, who were largely juniors and seniors, wanted more than logistics. They wanted to see more work, read more essays and books, and complete short exercises.

I wrote six of these emails to my students, and about halfway through that six I realized that I was enjoying this aggregation process. In my 400-level capstone class, I asked my students to make submission calendars for the next calendar year (grants, residencies, festivals, graduate school, etc). They were understandably uncertain of what the next year would look like (as was I), but taking some of the research out of the equation made things less daunting. Students were coming to class or replying to the emails with insights about things they'd watched or read. It was deeply gratifying.

I think it was the fourth email or so that I asked if students would keep reading these through the summer. I also mentioned what I was doing to a few friends, who asked to be put on the list or forwarded the emails. That was when I started looking into platforms and settled on TinyLetter to set something up for whoever might want it. I never would have guessed that this many people would sign up or that it would get this much attention. I shifted my focus to sustainable artistic practice adding COVID Artist Relief as the first section, adding non-student opportunities, and obviously de-centering classroom experiences in favor of more exploratory, self-driven activities. This project has continued to evolve as an [Instagram page](#) to catch all of those screenings and opportunities that inevitably get posted on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for events happening before the next Monday. That's also a space where I feel more comfortable amplifying opportunities that exist in the physical world and/or require currency to change hands—the newsletter seeks to amplify opportunities that are free and available on the web.

This newsletter has helped me grow as an artist, a teacher, and a human being. I have “met” so many new and wonderful people, connected with friends and colleagues that I fell out of touch with, and upped my submission game. It has been a truly bright spot in the quarantined life of this immune-compromised artist. I cannot thank you enough for reading, for submitting, for your encouragement, and for experimenting.

In solidarity,  
Gabby

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\*Interested in taking over for a week (or more) in Year Two? Or maybe you'd like to design a template for the IG highlights? I'm looking for collaborators to contribute to this project. If you want to learn more about putting this newsletter together and possibly become a guest or contributing writer, email me at [gfollettsumney@gmail.com](mailto:gfollettsumney@gmail.com). More voices will only make this a better project.

# Screenings

I've compiled screenings here that are still publicly available and listed them by volume they were released.

Note: these do not include ongoing/pop up screening series like Mark Toscano's Remains to Be Streamed—which you should definitely watch on IG Live!

[Short Works by Sky Hopinka](#)

[Short Works by Shannon Silva](#)

[Short Works by André Silva](#)

[I Am Not Adam Driver](#) by Ben Schifano

[Short Works by Jennifer Reeves](#)

[Works by Adam Khalil](#)

[Work by Alex Mackenzie](#)

[Work by Stephen Broomer](#)

[Work by Georg Koszulinski](#)

[Chant For a Pandemic](#)

[UDVFF: Program 3 - 'The Death Channel'](#)

[Bruce Baillie Volume 1: Five Collected Films](#)

[Color Field Films 1-4 by Madison Brookshire](#)

[UT & THE LIFE by Tyrone Lebon](#)

[SPENCER'S SLIGHTLY IMPERFECT PEEP SHOW A.K.A. MICRO-BURLESQUE](#)

[Asymmetrical Square](#) by Anabela Costa

[ODOKURO](#) by Aurelio Voltaire

[Work by Zach Blas](#)

[Turbulence \(2015\)](#) by Rose Lowder

[Robben Island Chaomic Node](#) by Chris Boyd

[Goldberg Variations](#) by Elisabetta Guglielmin and Jean Detheux

[A Ritual of Sisterhood](#) by Rikkí Wright

[Gùtk'ódàu \(Yellow\)](#) by Adam Piron

[Fate \(sketch 1\)](#) by Jean Detheux

[An Optical Poem \(1938\)](#) by Oskar Fischinger

[SHADOWS. Berlin 1996](#)

[Without Your Interpretation](#) by Ulysses Jenkins

[America Is Exhausted](#) by Álvaro Franco

[AFRONAUTS](#) by Nuotama Bodomo

[Ears, Nose and Throat](#) by Kevin Jerome Everson

[Animation by Jonatan Schwenk](#)

[Here: A Visual Poem](#) by Robert-Jonathan Koeyers

[Art 21 Playlist: Portraying the Black Experience](#)

[Jollies](#) by Sadie Benning

[Garoto transcodificado a partir de fosfeno](#) by Rodrigo Faustini (cw: flashing)

[Gargoyles III](#) by Erick McDonald

[Sending Out A Signal: Kara Walker & Jason Moran](#)  
[A Bomb Podcast: Season 1, Episode 1: Simone Leigh & Madeleine Hunt Ehrlich](#)  
[Straight 8 2020](#)  
[UDVFF 12: Cityscapes](#)  
[To Love and Repel](#)  
[These works by Luther Price](#)  
[Discoveries on the Forest Floor](#) by Charlotte Pryce  
[LUCID](#) by Olivia Peace  
[Field of Infinity](#) by Guli Silberstein  
[psychotronic meditation](#) by Mark Farrelly  
[Swelter: A Dream from The Heart](#) (podcast)  
[Inplainsightmap](#) (Instagram)  
[Soupalunch Heroes](#)  
[SALA 2020: The Unwelcome](#)  
[AGITATE:21C Women Filmmakers](#)  
[Moonship Dispatch Hakima "The Martyr"](#) by Ramzi Hibri an XLMXKHF1  
[eNDi. phase face C.zuRES](#) of 10 by Chris Boyd  
[Vortex & Quarter Century](#) By Tunç Gençer  
[Times Artist Nam June Paik Predicted the Future](#)  
[Dick Pics! \(A Documentary\)](#) by Hannah McSwiggen & Russell Sheaffer  
[Blooming Festival - Projection Mapping](#) Video di Diego Gavioli e Martina Zena Musiche di Remo De Vico  
[Under The Surface](#) (video installation) by Sergei Tumanov  
[I made a generative art animation with grids](#) by Art Coding Now  
[The Mulch Spider's Dream](#) by Karel Doing  
[Relieving the American Dream - Documentation](#) by Charlotte Taylor and Robert Edmondson  
[Life on Solitude 7](#) by ĐURO  
[Resistfilm](#) by Pablo Marin  
[Light Ghazal](#) by Marie Craven in collaboration with Matt Hetherington  
[Fucked Like a Star](#) by Stefani Saintonge  
[The Devil Had Other Plans \(Act I\)](#) by Guli Silberstein  
[UDVFF 15: A Week with Luis Arnias](#)  
[Into the Mothlight Podcast](#)  
[A nightmare](#) by Abhirup Maitra  
[Blue Fire: Slowed by 10000%](#)  
[My Brain is Screaming to Rest](#)  
[This Independence Weekend, 80 Artists Will Protest Immigrant Incarceration In](#)  
[Nationwide Skywriting Campaign](#) by Tessa Solomon  
[By a Waterfall](#) – Greta Garbage  
[I'll Remember You as You Were, not as What You'll Become](#) by Sky Hopinka

[Outer Space](#) by Peter Tscherkassky  
[A Tone Halfway Between Lightness and Darkness](#)  
[LOST HOUSES \( I am not \)](#)  
[Dark Paradise: Humans in Galapagos](#) by Paul Rosero Contreras  
[Cameraless Photography Month](#) Curated by Mark Tamer  
[Death Archives No. 5](#) by Ratigan  
[ANI2danceCOLLAGE30](#) by Luis Carlos Rodriguez  
[Orange](#) by Ingrid Stobbe  
[Anatomy](#) by Marie Craven  
[Upheaved](#) by Eric Stewart  
[La Folia](#) by Jean Detheux  
[Experimental Photo Festival: Pinhole & Solarigraphy Month](#)  
[MIA SCREENS: SARAHJANE SWAN & ROGER SIMIAN](#)  
[H2EEF 7 Listening With Your Eyes with Jean Detheux](#)  
[Kali na Lune / Кали на Луне](#) by Sonia Nelubina  
[Winter Abstractions 2](#) by Eija Temisevä  
[The Most Terrible Plague](#)  
[Sir John Lubbock's Pet Wasp](#) by Osbert Parker  
[Surviving White BS with J Mase III](#)  
[Day 01 Program 02 Sinister Encounters](#)  
[The Magical Dead Sunstroke Valley](#) by Alesandro Cima  
[Esto Es Para Esto Day 11, Program 2](#)  
[Blackness is Everything](#)  
[RED | WHITE | BLACK](#) by Shaun Clarke  
[JooYoung Choi's Journey to the Cosmic Womb Part 1 & 2](#)  
[Kimsooja in "Systems"](#)  
[Layers of Transformation: Ambrosia Public Art Installation in Boston](#)  
[Ten Leaves Dilated](#)  
[that time they got lost at the lake](#) by Larry Wang  
[Legacy](#) by Carlos Motta  
[Distant Mirror](#)

# Readings

Here's every book, article, essay, and poem I've recommended over the last 52 newsletters (links wherever possible).

## Articles/Essays

[Interview with Kodwo Eshun of the Otolith Group](#)

[The Crack-Up](#) by F. Scott Fitzgerald

"The Individual Artist" by Toni Morrison (from *The Source of Self-Regard*)

[Life Watchers: How to Achieve More Life Goals with a Support System](#)

[Time Off is Hard Work](#) by Anna Harsanyi

[In the Studio: Stephanie Syjuco](#)

[Filmmaker's Guide To Applying For US Coronavirus Federal Relief](#)

[How Carolee Schneemann 'detonated art history'](#)

[Letter from a Birmingham Jail](#) by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

[Tribeca Film Institute's Closure Should Worry All American Independent Filmmakers – Opinion](#) by Sara Archambault

[Film School Confessions by a Deservedly Angry Black Woman](#) by Nola Cooks

[John Akomfrah's Best Films, Ranked: Strange Futures, Black Identities in Flux, Earthly Damage, and More](#) by Alex Greenberger

[Kia LaBeija Is Prioritizing Stillness](#) by Dessane Lopez Cassell

[Hauntingly Beautiful Photos for an Anxious Moment](#) by Edward M. Gomez

[An Anti-Racist Animation Syllabus](#) by Mihaela Mihailova

[You Should Write Letters](#) by Jordan Salama

[Hito Steyerl: How To Build a Sustainable Art World](#)

["Solidarity Is Not a Market Exchange": An Interview with Robin D. G. Kelley](#)

[Meet the NYC Art Community: American Artist Wants to Know, Who Are You Making Art For?](#) by Dessane Lopez Cassell

[INTERVIEW: STEPHEN BROOMER](#) by Chris Dymond

[Deborah Stratman Uses Illinois History to Examine Ideology, Exodus, and Divinity Your 'Surge Capacity' Is Depleted – It's Why You Feel Awful](#) by Tara Haelle

[Building a System of Support Among Latinx Artists](#)

[Digital Dualism And The Glitch Feminism Manifesto](#) by Legacy Russell

Hank Willis Thomas's [Colonialism and Abstract Art](#)

[EFF Filmmaker Profiles: Christopher Harris](#)

[Principles for Decolonial Film](#) by MTL Collective

["Woman With a Weapon-Camera"](#) by Yasmina Price

[“Firelight Media Documentary Lab Names Its 2020 Fellows From Underrepresented Communities”](#) by Erik Pederson

[“Why Is This So Hard? On Workload, Pressure, and the Ways through the Woods”](#) by David Stuart Jr.

[“The Colorful Worlds of Pipilotti Rist”](#) by Calvin Tomkins

[‘Trash Is a Record of Existence’](#) by Caroline Goldstein

[SAMI HOPKINS: MORSELS](#)

[Beyond Empathy](#) by Sony Childress

[Beyond Vietnam](#) by Martin Luther King Jr.

[How an Unfinished James Baldwin Manuscript Became a Documentary Film](#) by Charlie Schmidlin

[Ain't I a Womxn?: What Glitch Feminism Can Teach Us Now](#) by Legacy Russell

[“Abigail DeVille, \*Light of Freedom\*”](#) by Lilly Wei

[“Position Paper #1 on Revolutionary Art”](#) by Emory Douglas

[“Glitching the Master’s House”](#) by Legacy Russell and Momtaza Mehri

[How the Creators of HBO's \*The Lady and the Dale\* Told a Sensitive Story About a Complicated Trans Trailblazer](#) by Suyin Haynes

[Tik Tok and the Grammar of Silent Film](#) by Carolinee Golum

[How Shigeko Kubota Pioneered Video as a Personal Medium](#) by Karen Kedmey

[TOUCH AT YOUR OWN PERIL](#) by Amaris Brown

[I’ll Meet You Anywhere](#) by Saeed Jones

[“The Art World Is Full of Lies, Smuggling, and Financial Hijinks”](#) by Michael Kalendarian

[Sonya Childress on just filmmaking](#)

[Four Artists on the Future of Video Art](#) by Andrew Russeth

## Books

*Lexicon of the Mouth* by Brandon LaBelle

*The Creative Habit* by Twyla Tharp

*The Four Tendencies* by Gretchen Rubin

*Another Brooklyn* by Jacqueline Woodson

*Trap Door: Trans Cultural Production and the Politics of Visibility*

*The Autobiography of Martin Luther King Jr.* (audiobook if possible)

FLUID FRAMES: EXPERIMENTAL ANIMATION WITH SAND, CLAY, PAINT, AND PIXELS

*The Fire Next Time* by James Baldwin

[\*Between the World and Me\*](#) by Ta-Nehisi Coates

[\*Policing the Crisis\*](#) by Stuart Hall, et al

*Education for Socially Engaged Art* by Pablo Helguera

*Conversations with Film-Makers* by Jonas Mekas

*Parable of the Sower* by Octavia Butler

*Winners Take All* by Anand Giridharadas

*The Source of Self-Regard* by Toni Morrison

*Anthotypes* by Malin Fabbri

*The Legend of Maya Deren, Vol 1* by Clark, Hodson, and Neiman

*Death 24x a Second: Stillness and the Moving Image* by Laura Mulvey

*Telling Invents Told* by Lis Rhodes ([Check out this SoundCloud](#))

*Handbook of Alternative Photographic Processes* by Jan Arnow

*The Art of the Personal Essay* Edited by Phillip Lopate

*A People's History of the United States* by Howard Zinn

*Mary Ellen Bute: Pioneer Animator* by Kit Smyth Basquin

[On LGBTQ2S+ Animation](#) (FREE)

*The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron

*Perfida* by Sky Hopinka

*The Book of Lost Saints* by Daniel José Older

*Inventing Latinos* by Laura E. Gomez

*Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson

*film and the anarchist imagination* by Richard Porton

*Owed* by Joshua Bennett

*Girl Head Feminism and Film Materiality* by Genevieve Yue

[Moving Image Artists Issue 2 May 2020](#)

*The Skin of the Film* by Laura U. Marks

*Funeral Diva* by Pamela Sneed

*This Bridge Called My Back* by Rosario Morales

*But Some of Us Are Brave* by Akasha Hull, Patricia Bell-Scott, and Barbara Smith



We Want It All: An Anthology of Radical Trans Poetics by Andrea Abi-Karam and Kay Gabriel

[Young Gifted and Black](#) ([also check out the exhibition](#))

*Punching the Air* by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam

*The Mothers* by Brit Bennett

*Nonhuman Photography* by Joanna Zylińska

*The Three Mothers* by Anna Malaika Tubbs

*Queer Marxism of Two Chinas* by Petris Liu

*Teaching to Transgress* by bell hooks

*The Tradition* by Jericho Brown

*Expanded Cinema* by Gene Youngblood

*Beloved* by Toni Morrison

*Teaching My Mother How To Give Birth* by Warsan Shire

## Poems

[Respiration](#) by Jamal May  
[Golden Retrievals](#) by Mark Doty  
[“What Kind of Times Are These”](#) by Adrienne Rich  
[Perhaps the World Ends](#) here by Joy Harjo  
[Night Shift](#) by Jericho Brown  
[three](#) by Tishani Doshi  
[My God, It's Full of Stars](#) by Tracy K. Smith  
[The Revolution Will Not Be Televised](#) by Gil Scott-Heron  
[Let America Be America Again](#) by Langston Hughes  
[Remember Now and Then](#) by Glenis Redmond  
[Truth](#) by Gwendolyn Brooks  
[Disability Can Save Your Life \(for Stacey Park\)](#) by Kenny Fries  
[We Lived Happily During the War](#) by Ilya Kaminsky  
[A Litany for Survival](#) by Audre Lorde  
[Little Pharma Encounters the Spine](#) by Laura Kolbe  
[A Small Needful Fact](#) by Ross Gay  
[A Mother On Black Boys](#) by Harrison David Rivers  
[Burial Practice](#) by Srikanth Reddy  
[How to Do Absolutely Nothing](#) by Barbara Kingsolver  
[America Will Be](#) by Joshua Bennett  
[Being the Mother of Black Child](#) by Mona Lake Jones  
*the MFA in hamsters* by Tao Lin  
[If I Told Him, A Completed Portrait of Picasso by Gertrude Stein](#) (listen to it)  
[Song & Error](#) by Averill Curdy  
[Yom Kippur 1984](#) by Adrienne Rich  
[in puerto rico we inherit your wars](#) by Raquel Salas Rivera  
[All Hallows](#) by Louise Glück  
[Halloween in the Anthropocene, 2015](#) by Craig Santos Perez  
[border/softer](#) by Safia Elhillo  
[Crosscurrent](#) BY M.L. Smoker  
“A cage within a cage” by [Alisha Walker](#)  
[Starting](#) by Marc Zegans  
[Smoke in Our Hair](#) by Ofelia Zepeda  
[Bessie Dreaming Bear](#) by Marnie Walsh  
[Kudzu](#) by Saeed Jones  
[Good Bones](#) by Maggie Smith  
[Conditions for a Southern Gothic](#) by Rickey Laurentiis

[For Each of You](#) by Audre Lorde

[Caged Bird Sings](#) by Glenis Redmond

[To be of use](#) by Marge Piercy

[won't you celebrate with me](#) by Lucille Clifton

[Passive Voice](#) by Laura Da'

["Dear Nainai"](#) by Jennifer Tseng

[ted talk](#) BY JENNY ZHANG

[King Friday and the Land of Make Believe](#) by Kenyatta Rogers

[There Are Birds Here](#) by Jamaal May

[for the kids who live](#) by Aja Monet

[I Sit and Sew](#) by Alice Morre Dunbar-Nelson

# Assignments

I'm compiling my favorite assignments here as a kind of syllabus grab bag. Teachers, steal these! Repurpose them to your tastes and courses. Don't be afraid to reach out and talk through things. Non-teaching artists, most of these are good for repetitions when you feel stuck!

**Volume 3:** This week I want you to connect with your practice. Think for a moment about at what point in the creative process you feel most like yourself. For me, it's when I'm painting on film. Spend some time this week in that space. Don't feel like you need to make anything fully formed or substantive. Just try something.

**Volume 5:** Obscure your lens! Whatever you have that takes images is fine (phone, point & shoot, webcam, etc). Place a transparent/translucent material in front of your lens. It can be a glass jar, plastic wrap, another lens from a better camera. Get creative. Take some photos.

**Volume 6:** A listening exercise. Choose a room/space that you don't spend so much time in. Place your back flat against a wall or the floor/ground. For about five minutes, just breathe deeply. Allow the air in your lungs to fully expand as you inhale, and then deflate as you exhale. Listen to your body during these five minutes. What sounds are you hearing that you normally ignore? What does it take sonically just to breathe? After these five minutes, listen to your surroundings. Spend 5 minutes listening to the room. Really allow yourself to hear the room tone. For the last five minutes, listen to the room and your body. Take in this full soundscape. How are you contributing to this space? How is it contributing to you?

**Volume 7:** What's the last thing that really moved you? Did you cry? How did that feel? What was your reaction in the moment? To hide it? To acknowledge it? Did it catch you off guard?

**Volume 9:** This one is from a course I teach; so, some of you may have already completed it. Still, repeating it from time to time can help calibrate how you see light and capture it when you photograph/film images. Secure a blank piece of paper—sketch paper is ideal, copy paper is fine, and an index card will do. Lay that piece of paper on a flat surface. Set a timer for 60 seconds and observe the paper. Using a pencil, shade in the places where the light is touching the paper.

**Volume 10:** No filmmaking today, just observation. Spend an hour with a plant. It doesn't matter if it's a house plant, a tree, or just a weed that catches your eye. Really look at it. What does it remind you of? What kinds of images come to your mind? How is the light interacting with the plant?

**Volume 12:** When I have my students complete this assignment, it's on a single roll of film. For many of you, this assignment may be completed on your smart device. I recommend limiting yourself in some way (only stills/editing clips together without altering start and end points/keeping to a short duration). An exercise in shot size, scrutiny, and bracketing: think about how you can use your camera to explore and observe a space. Your final film/video should include each of the following: an undercranked/fast motion shot, an overcranked/slow motion shot, a shot metered for highlight, a shot metered for shadow, varied shot sizes (wide, medium, close, extreme close), and shots that challenge the viewers' perspectives (camera upside down, on its side, feature a reflection, etc). Have fun with this one!

**Volume 13:** Remake/Adaptation: choose a pre-existing work. It can be a film, a short story, a book, a poem, a painting, etc. You may find it easier to diverge from the original material if the work is older or far removed from your style/approach. Consider the original artist's subjectivity and message. Think of what draws you to the work in a way that still allows you to express yourself in a way that is authentic and present. Inspired by [Enola Em Evael](#), Kathryn Ramey "unfaithful remake" of Man Ray's [Emak Bakia](#).

**Volume 14:** Let's play with [timelapses](#)! For this assignment, I want you to think very intentionally about light. Think about your home or other familiar environments you can access. Whether you use a motorized film camera, a dSLR, or your phone, strive to demonstrate the gradual changes in light and condition in your frame.

**Volume 15:** Simple and human this week: reach out to someone you miss. It can be a family member, a classmate, a mentor, a neighbor. Whether it's a text, a phone call, a video call, or a DM—it doesn't matter—just reach out. Let someone know you're thinking of them. Ask them how they are doing, then [actively listen](#).

**Volume 16:** Remixing! For this assignment, I highly recommend listening to the episode of The Heart podcast that I suggested in the Watch section. In it, the artists recreate a dream someone had of being interviewed by Oprah. They talk about their methods of collection at the end of the episode in the credits. For your remix, look through footage that you have (clips you used, clips you discarded, clips in a smart device, etc). Once you've collected them, see if there's a common thread that emerges (or one that you can make emerge). Consider what kinds of clips exist on the internet that you can repurpose to realize this thread. Imagine what kinds of media you can sample to really push the absurdity/reflection/contradictions.

**Volume 19:** Let's play with layers this week. Choose your own method (in camera, post production, transparencies, collage, audio). Think very intentionally about how and where you are juxtaposing images/sounds. Consider how seemingly unrelated items can enliven one another when stacked on top of each other. Consider how you can bring two items into conversation with each other to enrich a given topic. Don't forget how your voice is present in the actual assembly. Be intentional in your vision while also leaving yourself open to serendipity.

**Volume 20:** The Rhythmic Edit! I find this method best to create a portrait of a noun, but feel free to branch out and try something else. You may complete this using found footage, direct animation, film footage, or digital footage. Each one-minute project should be edited to screen at 24 frames/second using the following pattern: 4-4-4-8-4-12-4 x 35 times + 40 frame freestyle. Each number should represent a different piece of footage. You may not have the same footage edit beside itself though you may repeat it with an interruption between. If thinking of this as a poem consider it like this: 4A-4B-4A-8B-4A-12B-4A. You may also repeat whole cycles as it serves the work.

**Volume 21:** Check out the [Deep Dream Generator](#). Play around with this tool to see what kinds of images you can generate. Think of how you might use them in your digital life (digital backgrounds, profile pictures, etc). Thanks to André Silva for telling me about this!

**Volume 23:** I'm thinking about my voice a lot lately as I prepare class lessons for students to take in asynchronously. I've been listening extra hard on video calls for vocal tics, hard plosives, slight slurring, strange pronunciations, etc. I've found certain words popping up more often when I'm reaching for a thought or an emotion. Basically, I'm getting on my own last nerve because my voice is oversaturating my day to day audio experience. Here's what I propose: Record yourself having a conversation (two-party consent with the other half of that conversation, please). Leave that audio file alone for a couple of days. Try not to think about the file or the content of what you said. After that two days, come back and make a super cut of all the things that get on your nerves about your voice. I know this sounds masochistic, but think of it as a kind of symphony. Create a rhythm of those sounds. Layer them. Think of ways combining sounds can create a new sonic experience. Share your work! We can all use a laugh right about now.

**Volume 24:** Speculative Curation. For this assignment, your job is to be the curator of a one night only screening event. Choose your theme (What is on your mind? What do you want to say to the world? What do you think the world needs to see?). Now, think of what works you want to highlight. Think of artists you think are speaking to each other in their works even if they aren't contemporary/aware of each other. Think of artists who fill in the gaps of other artists' perspectives. The sequencing is a critical part of this process. Help your imaginary viewers make interesting/new connections. I challenge you to choose works that are not widely known/celebrated. Definitely share your dream lineups. I'd love to report some of these out to the whole subscriber list. Oh, and don't forget to name your screening!

**Volume 26:** Each week my Found Footage students have a prompt with the goal of picking four media items that answer it. This week this is their prompt: We've seen global protest and coverage in nearly all forms of media in 2020 (even dating back to Fall 2019). How is protest portrayed and covered in the media? How do these depictions differ based on the format, genre, form, or camera operator? What makes protest footage particularly compelling? Look for footage that you find to be unique, compelling, or powerful as well as footage you find ineffective/derivative/pedestrian. Think of how you can draw those distinctions using editing strategies and placing this within a larger piece.

**Volume 27:** Each week my Found Footage students have a prompt with the goal of picking four media items that answer it. This week this is their prompt: For this collection assignment, I want you to think very intentionally about how you're recapturing images rather than the images themselves. Push yourself beyond file ripping services and plug-ins. Rather, consider ways that you can alter images in the capture (free lensing, only focusing your camera on a portion of the image, occluding the lens, etc).

**Volume 28:** Each week my Found Footage students have a prompt with the goal of picking four media items that answer it. This week this is their prompt: Let's try some composites! Your collection job this week is to take some footage you already have and play with layers, filters, datamoshing, glitching, keying, etc. Think of how you can build new images out of old ones.

**Volume 29:** Each week my Found Footage students have a prompt with the goal of picking four media items that answer it. This week this is their prompt: Let's try some composites! Your collection job this week is to take some footage you already have and play with layers, filters, datamoshing, glitching, keying, etc. Think of how you can build new images out of old ones.

**Volume 30:** When I was an undergraduate where we were given 48 hours to make a one-minute film that told a secret. I used my minute to explore one of my deepest held fears: the fear of drowning. In that vein (and the approach of Halloween), think about what you fear. How might you communicate that fear in a one-minute visual work?

**Volume 32:** I'm working with two incredible artists right now on a collaborative GIF series about decolonization and working toward a better future. How would you imagine a decolonized future using a GIF/GIFs? How might you use GIFs to express your hopes for the world or to chart a moment of decolonization in our current timeline? I'm working with two incredible artists right now on a collaborative GIF series about decolonization and working toward a better future. How would you imagine a decolonized future using a GIF/GIFs? How might you use GIFs to express your hopes for the world or to chart a moment of decolonization in our current timeline?

**Volume 35:** Make a card. It doesn't have to be elaborate or conventional. You can do something as simple as fold a piece of paper in half and draw a doodle on the front. You can take an index card and doodle on "the front" and write on "the back." The point is this: visual on one side, note inside/on the other side. Maybe you mail this to the person you write to, maybe you write to yourself, or maybe you actually hand deliver the thing. Make a card.

**Volume 37:** Do a video portrait of an object in under 3 minutes. Spend some time with the object really looking at it before you press record. What is interesting about it? Are there imperfections? Signs of aging/use?

**Volume 40:** I'm teaching an intro level production class this semester, and as a way to get them engaging with their cameras and thinking about light I have them going on a scavenger hunt this week. This can be completed with a film camera, video camera, dSLR (what they're using), or even a phone camera. Have fun with this one!

**Volume 41:** We're thinking about sound in my intro-level production course this week. In order to get students thinking about recording methods and devices—and to get them really listening to what recorded sound sounds like. For those of you who are more advanced, I urge you to get weird with this one. Maybe you can put a microphone in a PVC pipe to record—something I've been meaning to try since 2012.

**Volume 42:** A good friend has been experimenting with watercolors lately, and I've seen an artist I admire on IG playing with chalk. Your assignment is to find a medium/tool you're curious about and just play. Doodle, collect images, collect sound, etc. Try not to be goal oriented in this work. Seriously, just play. Make a mess. Have fun!



**Volume 44:** From my class this week (as stolen from Shannon Silva). Using what you have available to you, choose one of the following artworks to recreate. You should match lighting, composition, and color as much as possible. [Check out this article that plays with this idea.](#)

[Red's Younger Brother at Home, Harlem 1948](#) by Gordon Parks

["Self-portrait \(Mochi\)" \(2019\)](#) by Shen Wei

[Fox \(2019\)](#) by June T. Sanders

From [I Dream of Los Angeles](#) by Star Montana (2018)

**Volume 46:** Let's glitch! My good friend, Charlotte Taylor, spent last week glitching footage for a film she's working on and she shared some incredible resources and workflows with me. [Try a few of the methods as laid out in this resource!](#)

**Volume 47:** This one's from [Hogan Seidel](#). What things outside your artistic practice that are of dire importance for your mental health? Write 5 things on a sheet of paper. These things are non negotiable. Everything gets worked around these 5 things. Say no to all things that conflict.

Why? Boundaries not only help your mental health but set an expectation that you are not on anyone's "beck and call." It also sets a standard with employers (freelance or full time) that you do not have unlimited physical and emotional resources for them.

Sample:

1. 6 Hours of Sleep (minimum)
2. Long Walks with my pug around the pond in the morning
3. 1 full day off /week
4. Time with my husband
5. Reading Scifi (or any non theory!)

**Volume 49:** From a post by [@porshaolayiwola](#): Tell us about a history you've survived. Intertwine the tale with a story about a time when you accomplished a mundane task like making coffee or cutting grass.

**Volume 50:** Calendar time! This is the time of year where I usually like to make my submission schedule. Look at the projects you're working on (especially the ones you're finishing up). Plan your next 12 months of submissions for each project. This is actually how I usually set project deadlines for myself. If I know I want to submit something to a festival with a June deadline, it means I need to finish up by the end of May. Don't forget to add a healthy amount of grants, residencies, and fellowships to that calendar.

**Volume 51:** Curate a playlist to get your creative juices flowing. Think of music that you can work to or prepare your workspace to. No genre restrictions or length limit. This should be the start of something you can add to and adjust as your tastes and needs do. If you make them public, send links, and I'll share them in next week's newsletter!

**Volume 52:** Let's collage this week! I'm noticing a number of my friends playing with different methods of this. Hogan Seidel is physically splicing pictures together and adding motion; Shannon Silva is building timelines out of watercolors; I've been cutting words and textures out of an airport magazine. What does collage mean to you? How might you play with the idea. If nothing occurs to you, try this: just sequence your last 30 or so photos on your camera roll into a timeline and loop it.

# Journals

Here's every single journal prompt (controlled for doubles and combined where it makes sense).

**Volume 1:** When this is all over, if you could rebuild your world anyway that you wanted, what would it look like? (Stole this from my wife who suggested it as a meeting topic for a community group we belong to)

**Volume 2:** After World War II, Europe had to both physically and governmentally rebuild in order to progress and change in the wake of massive destruction and loss of life. What would that kind of rebuild ideally look like in your country/city/community? What would it look like in yourself?

**Volume 3:** Make a list of the things you're looking forward to doing after social isolation is over. My wife & I started a joint list yesterday, and we've found it very cathartic.

**Volume 4:** Write 250 words describing something you can see out of your window. You may not use the letter "e" if you write in English or 的 in Chinese or the most common character in the language you choose to write in.

**Volume 5:** What song/songs have you been muttering/singing/humming to yourself in isolation? Revisit that music. Maybe share a playlist with us? Or write about how that music makes you feel upon revisiting. I know there's been a lot of guitar driven 90s/2000s stuff in rotation on my end.

**Volume 6:** Now that the semester is over, what's next? What do you want to do? What do you feel like you're supposed to do? What are little things you can do each week to get those things done? Who are the people in your life who can support you in these aims? What kinds of habits and schedules can you adopt to help you achieve as much or as little as you choose?

**Volume 7:** What's the last thing that really moved you? Did you cry? How did that feel? What was your reaction in the moment? To hide it? To acknowledge it? Did it catch you off guard?

**Volume 8:** What's on your quarantine playlist? Is it classics from your formative years? Your parents'/children's/grandparents'/guardian's formative years? A curated list of new music? Why do you think those songs are speaking to you in particular? If you're not connecting with music right now, what is the soundtrack of your life? Birdsongs? Burning candles? Passing cars? How is your chosen soundtrack shaping your perspective?

**Volume 9:** What is bringing you comfort now? What about joy? What's the last thing that made you really laugh? It's okay if that something is dark or ridiculously goofy? What commonality can you find in those moments of comfort and joy? A person? A space? A time of day?

**Volume 10:** What's the last piece of media that you watched? Why did you choose it? Did you watch it alone? Or with someone else? What kind of screen did you watch it on? Have you watched it before? Did it feel different this time? Did you enjoy the work?

**Volume 11:** In 2016, I went to see Angela Davis speak in downtown Boston. This was before the election, but the anxiety had already set in. The room was full of artists, and so she tailored the talk to the role of artists in the struggle to create a more just world. She told us that our job was to imagine a more perfect world and make our work from that place. Your job this week is to feel what you're feeling, and let that guide you toward a more just existence. Write it down or record yourself expressing those feelings. Step away from that for at least an hour.

Now, imagine how you can inspire others with your work to get closer to a more perfect world. How can you share your perspective and your vision with the people who view your work? Do you seek to inspire empathy? Knowledge? Indignation? Action? Reflection? Choose a guiding principle and write it down.

For me, this means keeping the following quote in the Notes App of my phone (and in my email signature where I work): "When you get these jobs that you have been so brilliantly trained for, just remember that your real job is that if you are free, you need to free somebody else. If you have some power, then your job is to empower somebody else. This is not just a grab-bag candy game." - Toni Morrison

**Volume 12:** The last two books I've recommended are letters to young men that the authors are personally related to. They write about the turmoil of their age to someone, who will come of age in the shadow of that turmoil. [Nikole Hannah Jones](#) (journalist, [1619 Project](#)) keeps a journal of letters she writes to her daughter for when she's older. Who will you write to? A younger sibling? Your child? Cousin? Nephew? What do you want them to know about this moment? What do you hope they'll learn from this struggle?

**Volume 13:** Many of us are seeing an easing of shelter in place restrictions where we live. How do you feel about that easement? What are you seeing around you? How willing are you to socially engage? Do you find yourself anxious about social interactions? How has your life changed as a result of the last few months? What does normal look like now?

**Volume 14:** What is the last thing that made you smile? What's the last thing to make you really laugh? Was it an ironic laugh? I often laugh throatily when I'm particularly angry or disappointed. Or did that laugh come from a place of real joy or amusement?

**Volume 15:** In last week's newsletter, I recommended a [podcast conversation between Simone Leigh and Madeleine Hunt Ehrlich](#). In this discussion, Simone brings up something she's said in the past, which is that she makes her work specifically with black women as her intended audience. She and Madeleine also discuss the technical, content, and aesthetic choices they make with their audience in mind. Who do you make work for? Why? How does that manifest in the stories you tell/subjects you engage with? How does that intended audience affect the technical choices you make? The materials and tools that you use? The aesthetics that you mold? What do you hope your audience gets from your work?

**Volume 16:** What does it feel like to have the sun on your skin? If you're having trouble remembering, find a patch of sun and sit in it for five minutes or so. Just allow it to wash over you. Stay in your body and really feel the warmth touching your skin. How does it make you feel? How would you paint that feeling? How would you edit images together to convey it? How would you describe it in words? What does it taste like? What does it sound like?

**Volume 17:** Write just little stray thoughts as they come to you. Don't try to make sense of them. The more random, the better.

**Volume 18:** What's the first story you can remember? Maybe it was a book? Or a piece of a religious text? Maybe something a caretaker was telling you to soothe you to sleep? Have you ever encountered that story as an adult? How has your understanding of it changed? Was it your memory of the story or a shift in your perspective?

**Volume 19:** What artists do you draw inspiration from when you feel disconnected from your voice/practice? What work do you seek out when you feel bereft of ideas/inspiration? What medium do they work in? What kind of work do they make? What is it about their work that enlivens you? How does that manifest in your own work?

**Volume 20:** Define experimental media. Think about the works/makers/aesthetics you associate with experimental media first. Why those? What is it about that work that resonates with you? Is there a writer/scholar/filmmaker whose definition you find most complete? What is it about that definition that works for you? Where does it fall short? For my former students, go back and look at your History & Theory essay and think of how you can distill those ideas into something less academic and more personal/conversational.

**Volume 21:** Last week, I asked you to define Experimental Media. This week, I want you to look back at that definition and think about what are the key elements of that definition. Think of them like pillars. What are your three or four pillars of Experimental Media? Think about themes that continually pop up in your work. Are there themes or tools that you keep coming back to? I've posed this question as a kind of party game in the past—and also used it to decipher what elements are critical to syllabi I've had to rework.

**Volume 22:** Spend 2-3 days collecting scraps of paper around your home, workspace, or car where you've scribbled little notes to yourself over the last six months (don't limit yourself to just hand written words, you can even do this on your computer/in your email/in your notes app). Whatever method you choose, you're just looking to collect as many things that you've written as you can. This can mean grocery/to-do lists, little half thoughts, reminders, love notes, etc. After you've assembled your source material, randomly select portions of these texts to assemble your COVID poem (corona-etry? COVID-Verse? Stanza-Rona? Poem-19?).

A short example from my Day Book to-do lists: Sent Newsletter/Maybe I'm too southern?/Rest/Answered Emails/Definitely a little nuts & manic/Played Takenoko with Jess/Mouse is back

**Volume 23:** What is your dream post-pandemic gathering? Is it a backyard cookout? A theme party? Black tie cocktail hour? Pajama cuddle puddle? A concert? A houseparty? Who is there? What do you talk about? Allow yourself to get lost in this dream.

**Volume 24:** I recommend that my students edit their Artist Statement & Bio twice a year. This usually means that I require them to submit this paperwork with their final projects. Use this journal entry to think about how you and your practice have changed in the last six months. How has your perspective changed? Your access to materials? Your workflow? Your concerns? How have you changed? Try to think back to your ambitions and your plotted trajectory six months ago. What's different now? How does that affect your potential trajectory in this potential future?

**Volume 25:** Who do you miss right now? What do you miss about them?

**Volume 26:** A podcaster that I really admire used to take pictures of her gratitude journal. Take a moment to really dig deep and make a list of things you're grateful for. I used to carry a piece of paper with those things written down in my wallet to help me get perspective during dark, personal times.

**Volume 27:** In honor of Rosh Hashanah and in building off of the theme from last week, take some time to think about the good you did this year. These can be small things you did for yourself, words of encouragement that you gave others, ways that you contributed to your family and community, etc. This is an easier task if you're someone who keeps sweet notes/emails/texts when people thank you/praise you for things you've done.

**Volume 28:** We are just on the other side of the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur. Yom Kippur is the day of atonement which is a time for fasting, prayer, and reflection. As a recovered Catholic, I have a certain ambivalence around the idea of atonement because it brings up the idea of sin but also the opportunity for accountability and reflection. As you journal, consider this: What are you holding yourself accountable for? What do you think you should be that you aren't? What would it mean to atone for those derelictions/missteps/lapses in judgement? How might you work to forgive yourself for those moments where you were not your best?

**Volume 29:** My students also have to write a response to a given prompt every week. Here's their assignment for this week: Generally, when we talk about materiality of film in Experimental Media, we're talking about physical film stocks and the ways artists seek to manipulate them and bring the material component to the fore. What about digital materiality? How can you as an artist highlight the unique qualities of digital video? What are those qualities? How can you make a video project that highlights its video essence?

**Volume 30:** I was asked to respond to this question as part of the program I started last week. It was inspired by a talk given by the artist Pope.L. that poses the following question: What is the role of the artist when the world has always been on fire?

**Volume 31:** This week, my Found Footage students are posting links to the works that were central to them when they decided to start making art. What works were life altering for you? What was it about them that stuck with you? Do they still show up (however subtly) in your work?

**Volume 32:** In honor of Halloween, what's something you find spooky? I almost had you reflect on fear but in 2020 when aren't we?! What makes something spooky vs scary? Are you someone who delights in the spooky? Why or why not? Do you explore that in your work? Would you? How?

**Journal 33:** November 1st was The Day of the Dead. While I don't have an altar to my lost people in my home, I do try to spend time with their photographs and just talk to them on that day. Sometimes, I even write them a letter. This week, write to someone who is no longer on this plane.

**Journal 34:** Take some time this week to take stock and make note of the many, many emotions you likely experienced last week/month/year/years. You may not be able to put it into words. Maybe you need to draw/paint/collage. However you can make a note of this moment, do it. Not so much for history's sake, but rather for your own healing. We must do the hard work of becoming more whole in order to be better artists and humans.

**Journal 35:** I had the immense privilege of hearing June T. Saunders talk about her practice yesterday. She spent a fair amount of the talk reflecting on the violence of our language and how it bleeds into our art practice. She is working to reframe that thinking in many ways, but the one I found particularly insightful was the actual practice of giving. June has quite literally given pictures to passing strangers of themselves as part of that small interaction. What can you make in your art practice that you can also give? How does giving manifest in your own practice? How could it?

**Volume 36:** I know it's corny, but what are you thankful for? In times like this, gratitude has immense power to shift our perspectives. When I first began struggling with depression as a teenager, the first thing that helped me find my footing was making a list of things I was grateful for and carrying them around in my wallet. It doesn't mean I don't still struggle, but it does make life seem more livable.

**Volume 37:** How have these earlier sunsets impacted you? Are you feeling tired earlier? Getting up earlier? Has it changed your activities? Are you giving in to the restfulness? Or upping your activity game to fight off lethargy?

**Volume 38:** When was the last time you felt really restful? Go back to that moment. What did that feel like? How did it feel in your body? Breathe into that memory. What is particularly striking about it?

**Volume 39:** What are your goals for this year? They don't have to be work oriented—not catching COVID is on my list. When choosing those goals think of what you'd like to spend time on this year. Maybe there is a habit you'd like to add to your routine, a book you'd like to read, or a project you'd like to get off your task list.



**Volume 40 - 43:** It's Black History Month, and so each week I'll give you a quote from a Black historical figure to respond to. I recommend reading it and letting it simmer for a while before just letting loose and free writing. Here they are:

"History isn't something you look back at and say it was inevitable, it happens because people make decisions that are sometimes very impulsive and of the moment, but those moments are cumulative realities." - Marsha P. Johnson

"Paradise is one's own place, One's own people, One's own world, Knowing and known, Perhaps even loving and loved." – Octavia E. Butler

"Love grows from stable relationships, shared experience, loyalty, devotion, trust."— Richard Wright

"It is not our differences that divide us. It is our inability to recognize, accept, and celebrate those differences." - Audre Lorde

**Volume 44 - 48:** I so enjoyed the quote exercise for Black History Month that I thought I'd continue the trend for Women's/Womxn/Womxn+ History Month. I recommend reading it and letting it simmer for a while before just letting loose and free writing. Here they are:

"No matter what the fight, don't be ladylike! God almighty made women and the Rockefeller gang of thieves made the ladies." – Mother Jones

"The kindest words/my father said to me/women like you/drown oceans." – Rupi Kaur

"Mother Nature—militarized, fenced-in, poisoned—demands that we take action." – Berta Cáceres

"In a time of destruction, create something." - Maxine Hong Kingston

"Life cannot stand still. One must progress but one must not tell their plans. I never speak of what I am going to do. Perhaps it is superstition." – Anna May Wong

**Volume 49:** What recharges your creative batteries? How can you do those things more regularly to sustain your artistic practice?

**Volume 50:** What's the project that you're stuck on right now? You know the one. It feels so big that you don't know where to start or you're stuck on part of it for some reason you can't quite figure out. Maybe you took a break a month ago, and now you don't know how to pick it back up. Take a minute to reconnect with your core idea. What drew you to this idea? What is it that you want to say/explore? Why do you feel so daunted by it now? What do you still find exciting about it?

**Volume 51:** I'm thinking about grief this week. This word has so many different iterations and locations—personal, familial, community, national, global. What does grief look like? How does it smell? What does it taste like? How does it feel? How do you experience it? Do you allow yourself to sit with it? How does that feel? Where did you learn to grieve?

**Volume 52:** My dear friend, Shannon Silva, has been prepping for a summer of [Deep Work](#). She came across this on [Merlin Mann's 43 folders](#). Your journal this week is to respond to this:

"If the amount of time you devote to lite correspondence with individual people exceeds the amount of time you spend on making things, then you may be in a different line of work than you'd originally thought you were. Not that there's anything wrong with that. But if you're feeling off your game, it might be a good time to ask yourself whether you're primarily a writer of novels or of email messages. Do you generate more IMs than comic panels? Have you drafted more web comments than scenes in your screenplay? Or, for that matter, do you find you're taking more meetings than photos these days? What is it that you really do? What's the last thing you made that really excited you? Where are you and your work in all that 'communication?'"