

ART S167 (30257)
Tuesday / Thursday 1–4:15
Online and at Home

Class Site
yss20.matt-wolff.com

Instructor
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EMAIL NEWSLETTERS

Start an email newsletter that addresses a topic or theme of your choosing.¹ Your newsletter's format, length, typography, and overall design should be determined by its contents. In addition to these serial messages, build a website to serve as their archive. This website should allow others (anyone with an Internet connection) access to a backlog of messages along with a subscription form.

REQUIREMENTS

1 Email Newsletter, must include:

- Title
- Some indication of seriality: numbered, dated, both
- Arrive to our final critique (see schedule) having sent out 6+ newsletters (minimum of 6).
- Minimum of 30 recipients. (Our class already covers half of that.)
- Each email in your series must include text. You can quote others, translate, annotate, conduct interviews, write your own copy, etc., but each message in the series must include some text.
- Images are more than welcome. If you did not create the image, you must cite its source.
- No single email should exceed 10 MB.

2 Website, must include:

- Custom Domain Name
- Functional (important) text input / submit form allowing others the option to sign up and subscribe to your newsletter
- Access to an archive (or an index, backlog, record – you decide) of past newsletters. What you translate from email into HTML is entirely up to you. While your emails will be transient and personal, the website affords a place for those messages to persist and become public.
- Context. Your website should offer some sort of explanation or added caption about what it is you're doing. Think of it as "About" page, and Abstract, or a summary. This section of your site can be as informative, descriptive, informal, poetic, cryptic, etc., as you like. Context should be considered a part of your content and includes titles, metadata, descriptions, and so on.

IMAGE Moyra Davey, *Untitled (Three Butts)*, 2014
Digital C-Print, tape, postage, ink; 28 × 43 cm, unique (mailer H)

1 Some possibilities: you might choose to address current socio-cultural, environmental, or political topics: the climate, ongoing protests, the

pandemic, the upcoming US presidential election; to provide resources (links, texts, hacks, recipes, tutorials); to self-reflect, introspect or journal (daily routines, dreams); to converse with others (reach out to artists, friends, family, strangers, conduct interviews); or to take this somewhere else entirely. It is up to you.

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SCHEDULE

STEP 1

Due July 3

- Conduct Research: Subscribe to 3+ newsletters (ones you aren't already subscribed to).
- Send an email to your classmates, Nick, and I with descriptions of two (2) entirely different ideas for your newsletter and possible content. Include 10 keywords, phrases, images, and/or references, for each direction. (20 total). See **Getting Started** for help.

STEP 2

Due July 7

- Based on your own intuition and the feedback you received after **Step 1**, choose a direction.
- Begin refining content and designing two (2) visually distinct drafts of the first email in your series. Start thinking seriously about things like Title, Subject Line, a unique email address, layout, typography, and how all this might lead to an iterative system.
- Present these drafts in class July 7th.

STEP 3

Due July 10

- First email in your series sent out.
- Based on in-class feedback from **Step 2**, revise, edit, and send out the first newsletter. Include everyone in the class, Nick, and myself. Don't overthink it. You can further refine as we proceed.
- Start considering the website for your newsletters.

STEP 4

Due July 16

- Continue working on and planning your newsletters. Numbers 2 and 3 should be well underway.
- As our collective knowledge of HTML and CSS grows, consider re-designing your emails as HTML files. More on this in class.
- Presentation of two (2) entirely different designs for your newsletter's website. Sketches and Wireframes are okay.

STEP 5

Due July 21

- Based on feedback from **Step 4**, begin to design and refine your website.
- A version of the site should already be uploaded and hosted on Netlify at your custom domain.
- Come to class with some ideas for your website's Subscription Form.

STEP 6

Due July 23

- Continue working on and planning your newsletters. I expect you should be preparing to send at least newsletter no. 4 by the end of this week.
- Present progress on your class site.

FINAL CRITIQUE

July 30

- All Requirements met
- Minimum of 6 newsletters sent out.
- 30+ Subscribers
- Website with custom domain online and available.

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GETTING STARTED

Coming up with your idea

- What do you want to share with others?
- What email do you wish you could receive but have not?
- What examples / references are resonating with you?
- What do you currently enjoy doing, reading, seeing?
- How does my newsletter function serially?
 - Can each operate independently of the others?
 - Is there a single narrative sent out in installments?
- Who is this written for, who do I hope would read it?
- What is necessary to communicate and engage that readership?

Deciding on your content

- What experience do I want someone to have?
 - What feeling or thoughts do they have when receive a notification; when they see the subject line; when they first open it; while they read?
- Does my newsletter invite a response or prompt an action?
 - “Don’t forget to hit like a subscribe” / “Leave a comment below” / “Write back with...”
 - Are there live events, readings, sweepstakes, surveys, merch, printed materials, etc.?
 - Are you selling ad space / classifieds ads in each installment?
 - Is it possible to “unsubscribe” or “read more?”
- How does your design affect the content’s reading? Is your design technical, serious, ironic, morose, playful, tongue-in-cheek, etc.?
- Is there something that can be added?
- Are some things better left unsaid?
- How do the constraints and possibilities of the web browser change your content as compared to an email client?
- When do you send your newsletter?
 - What time of day/night?
 - With what frequency: set, timed intervals or more sporadic / irregular?
- What can you get away with?

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INTRODUCTION TO INTERACTIVE DESIGN WORLD WIDE WEB

REFERENCES, STARTING POINTS

The following list offers several references and possible starting places to start from. In no particular order, the list contains newsletters, serial print publications, and other examples of what a newsletter or serial publishing might entail. Mention ≠ Endorsement. More will be added to our class site.

ONLINE:

[TCI Newsletter](#)

“Exploring the emotional and practical facets of creating with a different working artist.”

[ICA Daily Newsletter](#)

“Collected daily recommendations of reading, viewing, listening and more from the ICA’s curatorial team and a series of guest editors.”

[\[SLUG\]](#)

“[SLUG] publishes pamphlets and distributes them via email.”

[Cargo](#)

[Newsletter](#) and [Useful Music](#)

Newsletter and playlists from an online publishing platform

[Avery Shorts](#)

“Short-form architectural writing through email.”

[Internetting with Amanda Hess](#)

NYTimes “Amanda Hess decodes the culture of the internet”

[Donald Trump’s Twitter](#)

[Useful Music from Cargo](#)

“Mixes to support your production(s)”

[The Julie/Julia Project](#)

“365 days. 536 recipes. One girl and a crappy outer borough kitchen.”

[Other News](#)

News from Other Means, a graphic design studio in New York City.

[Hacker Newsletter](#)

“Weekly newsletter of the best articles on startups, technology, programming, and more.”

TEXTS DON’T HAVE TO TACKLE ANY ONE, SINGLE SUBJECT:

[Ryan Gander, Loose Associations PDF and Video](#)

[Seth Price, Notes on this Show](#)

IN PRINT:

[The Fungfile](#)

[Newsletter of the Triangle Area Mushroom Club](#)

[80s Metal Band Newsletters:](#)

[Slayer](#) and [Hellhammer](#)

[Riot Grrrl and Grrrl Zine Network](#)

“Start a fuckin riot”

ARTISTS AND WRITERS APPROACHING THE ‘EVERYDAY’ AS SUBJECT MATTER:

[John Smith, The Girl Chewing Gum](#)

[Sophie Calle, Cash Machine](#)

[Moyra Davey](#)

[Georges Perec’s writings](#)

[Mark E. Smith’s songs](#)

[Pati Hill’s photocopier work](#)

MISC.:

[ARM Tutorial](#)

Alan Resnick’s YouTube tutorials.

[Art Thoughts, Hennessy Youngman](#)

Contemporary art and race relations in a YouTube-based performance work by the artist Jayson Musson

[Eva and Franco Mattes, Life Sharing](#)

“A radical gesture of self-surveillance.”

[Brian Mackern, netart latino database](#)

“Text-only site with hundreds of links to works by Latin American artists as well as related online discussions and criticism.”

[Jane Goodall’s field observations](#)

[Molly Hartung](#)

[Amalia Ulman, Excellences & Perfections](#)