

The Medium is the Message



Marshall McLuhan (media theorist and author of “The Medium is the Message” and “Understanding Media”) tells us that a “message” is “the change of scale or pace or pattern” that a new invention or innovation “introduces into human affairs.” He warns us that we are often distracted by the content of a medium (which, in almost all cases, is another distinct medium in itself.) He writes, “it is only too typical that the “content” of any medium blinds us to the character of the medium.”

In the 21st century, we have new technologies that effect our communication on local, regional and global scales, thus effecting social, cultural and political contexts. How do these technologies change the way we interact with other people? Understand modes and methods of communication? How do digital technology and modern communication systems effect our greater cultural norms? For this project, you will create a work of video / glitch art that highlights the medium rather than the message. Rather than concentrating on a “theme” or “concept” to convey with your work, the content of your video will focus on the inherent qualities of technological processes that we use to communicate today.

STEPS:

1. Read about McLuhan’s theory *The Medium is the Message*, and consider how it relates to modes of communication we use in our culture today.
2. Choose a “medium” to focus on for your project and write down the inherent qualities of that medium and what consequences they may have in our world today.
3. Using found and/or original imagery, and employing glitch processes, create a video that conveys your medium, its inherent qualities and consequences.

TOOLS WE WILL EXPLORE:

- Online searching for public domain imagery
- Fair use and Appropriation in Art
- DSLR video capture and capturing/saving online video
- Video Editing in Adobe Premiere
- Glitching Images and Video in Audacity, and Photoshop

ARTISTS THAT WE WILL LOOK AT:

- Nick Briz, <https://vimeo.com/278387531>
- Jon Satrom, <http://jonsatrom.com/>
- Hasan Elahi, <https://www.ted.com/talks/>