

My portfolio is minimal and functional. This reflects how I currently feel about electronic portfolios. In the first semester of MATX, we spent a long time discussing containers and categories, nomenclature and signifiers. At the time, I was unsure of what my work would do, look like, or feel like. I therefore first built an unwieldy portfolio with catchy words and confusing signifiers. I was not happy with what I built, especially when I started to think about what would actually go into the vaguely-named categories that I created. I began to question how the portfolio fit into my progress through the degree and my learning process overall, and ultimately came to the series of decisions outlined below.

Since the first semester of MATX, slowly, I have come to realize through this process that I wanted a clean and easy to navigate site. I want the work hosted within the site to be complex, and provocative, but I want the container itself to be unassuming, easy to use, and minimal. The inspiration for the look of this site came from looking at other sites that I thought were minimal and easy to use, but also from the work of visual artist Cosima Von Bonin, because I wanted to create a portfolio that was self-aware of its role as a container. Von Bonin does a lot of work with boundaries and borders, and because of my background in decolonial theory and queer theory, of course this notion appealed to me. I also wanted to juxtapose clean, minimal design with complex ideas that I explore in my academic and creative work. I feel that Von Bonin's work does this, and wanted to emulate this idea while adding my own twist to it.

I am an avid user of social networking sites like YouTube and Sound Cloud. Last semester, we worked with the video server and my portfolio last semester demonstrated my (burgeoning) ability to use our video server. With that said, this semester, I wanted to embrace social media as such, and that is why when you click on "sound" you get my Sound Cloud player, and why when you click on "video" you get a link to my YouTube channel. I am inspired by the way that social media allows one to learn, make art, and share in a networked environment that is transparent AS a network. I also embrace the community building aspect of social media, and the myriad ways one can use social networks for art and activism. All of my social networks flow into my Facebook page, which has over 900 "friends." These "friends" are students, colleagues, fellow community organizers, family, and people I have yet to meet face-to-face. Though I would argue against the idea that the web flattens out social hierarchies, I do enjoy the ease with which social media allows people to share their creative work and ideas for activism.

A note on technical aspects of this portfolio. I did not come into the program with any web design skills what-so-ever. I have a bit of experience working with Final Cut (video editing software) and Logic (sound editing software), and therefore my video and sound work is a little more sophisticated than my site itself. I have also scanned a few zines into my site, as that is my medium of choice. You will find them both in the academic and the creative sections of my site, as the topics of the zines span both arenas. I experimented with Photoshop in creating the header and the photo images within my site, but I have much as much to learn with Photoshop as I do with Dreamweaver. I come to this program more as a scholar, poet, and sound artist than a web designer, but the opportunity to learn new skills has been one of the most rewarding aspects of this program for me.

What is left? I would like to learn how to better use Flash and CSS. I hope that my site will continue to grow and change, but I think that I will retain the minimal design for the purposes of my portfolio. I hope to make the site even more minimal and more “clean” to look at. I realize that the site looks different in Explorer and Firefox. Firefox is my browser of choice, so I prefer you view my site in Firefox. I am currently trying to figure out how to make my site uniform, so it does not appear differently in different browsers. I would also like to continue to experiment with font design and layout, as time permits.

Thank you for reading, and any feedback you have to give is greatly appreciated!

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