Computer art

Ms. Ginnitti, room 139, p. 4

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Visual Culture:** an image saturated world.

***Some background:***
Everyone in today's society is affected by "Visual Culture," the dominance of visual forms of media, communication, and information in the postmodern world. The term "visual culture" acknowledges the reality of living in a world of *cross-mediation*--our experience of culturally meaningful visual content appears in multiple forms, and visual content and codes migrate from one form to another: everything we see, have seen, or may visualize including paintings, sculptures, movies, television, photographs, furniture, utensils, gardens, dance, buildings, artifacts, landscape, toys, advertising, jewelry, apparel, light, graphs, maps, websites, dreams-in short, all aspects of culture that communicate through visual means.

In other words, ours is a visual culture. Our workplaces and schools are visually saturated environments and our dominant pastimes (films, television, video games, and the internet) are visual media. Moreover, we communicate visually when we are trying to cross over cultural boundaries; think, for example, of the graphics devised for international signs. Knowledge is often communicated visually: scientists chart brain activity, economists graph fiscal trends, geographers map territory and detectives photograph evidence. The growth of the web as an information distribution system has made an understanding of visual design factors indispensable in every field of study. The visuals we see are also our access to the past. The earliest recorded communications are pictures and artifacts are central to the reconstruction of history.

***Questions:*** After reading the background information above and considering the things you see in your everyday life, please answer the questions below and on the back.

1. *What do you think* ***visual culture*** *means*?

2. What are some examples of visual culture?  Create a word web. (See the example started)

3. What are the affects of visual culture on people?

4. How do you think cultures have been changed due to the accessibility of visuals?

**Your first project:**

Using layers and masks in Photoshop, create a montage of images that represent the visual culture that has the most significant affect on you.  The digital montage should exist inside the shape of your own initials (see the example to the right).  The images must be your own photographs or they can be copied or scanned from visuals you would see on a normal basis.  In other words, since visual culture affects who you are and the way you interpret your world; the images should ultimately represent you.  You can create the shape of the letters yourself or use fonts that already exist inside the character palette.  The visual can be collaged in either the positive or negative space -- it’s up to you.

***To start,*** close your eyes and trace your steps throughout a typical day in your life.  What are the first visuals you see each day?  What visuals affect you as you move throughout your morning, afternoon, evening, to and from classes, in class, during your travels to and from school or another place, while shopping, while driving, in restaurants, on television, etc...

Once you have done that, use the space below to sketch out your ideas. We will do some tutorials for this project and work on the concepts in the days ahead.

***Requirements:***

1. 8x10” at 300 ppi.
2. It must reflect your personal visual culture.
3. You must use *at least* 5 images -- some of which must be your own photographs.
4. You will be graded on your **technical knowledge and originality**!