🏠 » Deliverables » Major project

Outline

- **Due:** 9pm Friday, October 30
- **Mark weighting:** 50 marks
- **Submission:** submit your assignment through Gitlab (full instructions below)
- **Policies:** no late submissions accepted; for other policies (e.g. academic integrity) see the policies page

Spec

In COMP1720/6720 your major project is an **interactive** p5 artwork for a new-media art exhibition. Here's the scenario: gallery attendees are able to walk around and observe the various works (including yours) at their leisure. If they wish, they can pause at your sketch and interact with it, but they will receive no additional guidance/instruction on what to do. Your goal is to provide an **engaging** user experience of *roughly* three minutes, but the exact nature of that experience is up to you. It might be an interactive generative artwork, it might be an interactive movie/storytelling experience—you get to choose.

Theme

Each year, we choose a theme for the COMP1720/6720 major project. You shouldn't feel limited by this—you have *heaps* of freedom to interpret and explore the theme however you like. Your artist statement (which must be more substantial this time than for your assignments) is your chance to explain how your interactive artwork relates to and explores the theme.

This year's theme is:

> **fearful symmetry**

You can interpret this theme however you wish, as long as you fulfill the requirements below.

Getting started

The process is exactly the same as for all the other assignments:

1. fork & clone the major project repo

2. make an interactive p5 artw

3. as you go, commit and push

As in the other assignments, the major project template repo `sketch.js` has some (minimal) starter code, and the template `index.html` file includes a "back to gallery" button (because your major project will be exhi   on").

As usual, there's a submission checklist below to help you make sure you've c   n your submission. Remember to take advantage of the Git help in the FAQ.

Requirements

Your major project is a p5 sketch which **must**:

1. allow interaction using either the keyboard, mouse, microphone, camera, or some combination of those

2. provide an **engaging** interactive user experience of *roughly* three minutes

3. relate to the theme in a meaningful way

4. be suitable for *public* presentation, viewing and interaction—it can't be obscene!

5. have well-organised source code, displaying the appropriate use of functions, arrays, objects, and the techniques discussed in lectures

6. include an `artist-statement.md` (max 500 words) describing your artwork

7. include an `interaction-statement.md` (max 500 words) which describes how a typical user will *interact* with your artwork

8. include a `statement-of-originality.yml` describing any inspiration/code/assets you got from other places. It's ok to use these external sources, but your major project **must contain significant new work by you**—you can't just cobble together stuff from these other places (you'll fail if you do)

9. include a `thumbnail.png` image file with the resolution 1280x720 in the top-level folder of your submission repo to use in the "sketch selection" interface

10. run smoothly in **fullscreen** at the test URL at any canvas size from 1920x1080 (in the CSIT labs) to 2560x1440 (in the PK iMac labs) **make sure you test it out in the labs**

11. include a "back to gallery" button in the bottom right-hand corner (this is provided in the template—so as long as you don't remove it then you're fine)

The artist statement

Your submission must include a short/medium length (max 500 words) artist statement. This is a short document, written in the first person, which answers the question:

How does your artwork address the major project theme?

Your artist statement shouldn't just be a list of "the first screen is this, the second screen is this…"; that's what your interaction statement is for. Instead, the artist statement is your chance to explain the deeper artistic message you're trying to comunicate and the questions you're trying to raise through your work.

There's no strict template for the artist statement—instead, you'll be marked on how clearly you articulate your what you've tried to achieve artistically in your major project.

If you're looking for things to discuss in your artist statement, here's some ideas:

- how have you interpreted/explored the theme?
- was there a particular aspect of the theme that you focussed on, and if so what was it?
- how have you structured the experience (e.g. beginning-middle-end, or something else)?
- what are you trying to make the viewer *think*?
- what are you trying to make the viewer *feel*?
- what do you hope the viewer tells their friends about your artwork after they leave the gallery?

The interaction statement

Your submission must include an **interaction statement** (max. 500 words) which describes how a typical user will interact with your artwork. This means a step-by-step discussion of your planned interaction experience from its beginning, to its middle, and its end. For each step in the interaction experience, you should describe what a user sees, what they should understand about the meaning of what they see, how they know what to do next, and what happens when they complete this step. When we assess your interaction statement, we will compare it with your sketch and decide whether or not it is realistic.

Submission process

Here's the process (again, remember the Git help screencast videos)

1. fork the major project template repository from the CECS GitLab server

2. clone[1] & work on *your* fork of the major project template repo, regularly committing & pushing your changes to the GitLab server

3. at the submission deadline, the latest commit[2] pushed to the GitLab server (not on your local machine!) will count as your submission

warning

One thing to note is that there ar u get a **pipeline failed** email, then have a look at the FAQ.

Submission checklist

warning

The major project is worth 50% of your total mark, so this stuff really matters ble-check) your submission.

1. my project satisfies the requirements

2. my completed project has been pushed to the master branch on GitLab server, and **all** the required files (including any assets) have made it to the server

3. my `statement-of-originality.yml` file is correctly formatted, includes all the necessary references/acknowledgements, and *everything* not mentioned in there is my own work

4. my sketch works when viewed in Firefox on the lab machines at the testing URL (https://comp1720.cecs.anu.edu.au/uXXXXXXX/comp1720-2019-major-project/, with `uXXXXXXX` replaced with your UID)

FAQ

You can ask a question on the COMP1720 forum using the `major-project` tag and if it's popular enough I'll put it up here.

info

Also, remember that there's lots of helpful info on the FAQ page which applies to the major project. You should check it (and the rest of that page) out—I think it'll really help.

Can I write more than the word limit for the two statements?

No. If either your artistic statement and interaction statement are more than 10% over the word limit, you will start to lose marks.

I've realised that there's a bug in my major project after the submission deadline—I know it won't change my mark, but can I at least fix it for the exhibition?

Yes, you can. In fact, the major project gallery exhibition just points to the test URL you've been (hopefully) using all along to check whether your sketch works properly.

If you see that your sketch isn't working at the test URL, you can fix it and push up the changes to the GitLab server as normal, this will not affect how we mark your assignment.

What's the `thumbnail.png` for?

The main gallery website interface will be a bunch of images—one for each person's project. Viewers will be able to browse (and search) through the exhibition on any web browser.

The purpose of the `thumbnail.png` image is to provide a still image for *your* major project artwork on this main page which the viewer would click on to go to your (full-screen) sketch.

Remember to grab the `thumbnail.png` image from the Downloads folder, resize/crop it to 1280x720, move it into the top-level folder of your submission[3] and commit it to your Git repo with that exact filename (make sure it's spelled correctly or it won't work!).

I didn't include a `thumbnail.png` in my final submission—can I still add one after the deadline for use in the gallery interface?

Yep! You can add a `thumbnail.png` file at any time, and it'll show up in the gallery showcase.

When/where can I get feedback on how my major project is going before I submit?

The lab sessions from week 10 onwards are **all about your major project**. You could also ask a question on the COMP1720 forum using the `major-project` tag.

Can I make a game for my major project?

No. Your major project has to be an interactive artwork which explores the theme. It can incorporate game-like elements, but if you just make a game then you won't get a great mark. As an example, if you make an pacman-style game and "skin" the characters with things to do with your theme, then that's not really engaging deeply with the theme (and you'll be marked accordingly).

What does it mean for my project to be engaging?

That's a tough question to answer without knowing more about what your project is and what story you're trying to tell, but here are a few hints:

- show, don't tell
- your goal is to make an artwork, not just show some information, so don't just have lots of text
- there are enough powerpoint (`.ppt`) presentations in the world, don't make another one for your major project!
- can you come up with some interaction techniques other than "click this button to proceed"?

What do you mean by "don't make a `.ppt`"?

Don't make something with a bunc[...]rough from one page to the next. Seriously, you can be much more [...]

Will my major project [...]

Yes—as we've said all along, the major project is an art gallery exhibition, so [...] blic[4].

My sketch works fine on my machine using the [...]e the test URL it can't find the assets?

As it says in the `assets/README.md` file in the template repo:

> This folder is where you should put any assets (e.g. image files, audio files) which you use in your sketch. Make sure you commit the asset file in git (otherwise it won't get pushed to the server, so it won't work at the test URL)

The reason for this is that the CI job which copies your files to the test URL server (by default) uses this command:

```
cp -r assets *.html *.js $DEST_DIR
```

If you're familiar with the `cp` (copy) command you can see that it copies three things:

1. `assets`: the whole `assets` folder
2. `*.html`: *any* file with a `.html` file extension in the top-level of the project
3. `*.js`: *any* file with a `.js` file extension in the top-level of the project

If you've got files somewhere else, then they won't get copied to the test URL server, and so your sketch won't work.

At this point, you've got two options:

1. move your files (e.g. any assets not in the `assets` folder) so that they *do* get copied by the script (you'll have to update the paths in your sketch as well)
2. modify the script so that it copies the files that currently "misses"

Both options are fine—although if you're not familiar with the command line and `cp` command then you might find the first option easier.

Finally, if you're going to modify the `.gitlab-ci.yml` file then have a look at the FAQ.

Do I *have* to do weird extra/extension stuff to get a good mark?

No! The point of this course isn't about what techniques you use, but about using them to create an effective and engaging artwork. You can totally do that in "vanilla" p5 using just the ideas & features we've covered in the course.

What's the difference between the 1720 and 6720 major project?

The spec & deliverables for the major project are the same for both undergraduate (1720) and postgraduate (6720) students. The difference will be in our expectations—we expect a higher level of achievement in a masters-level course, and will grade the 6720 projects accordingly.

Can I re-style the "back to gallery" button?

You can't remove it, you can't re-position it (it has to be in the bottom right), and you can't re-size it, but you *can* re-style it if you like (e.g. change the colours to match your sketch). It must still be clearly visible, though (again, convenor's decision is final).

Unless you really have a good reason to, though, you should probably leave it as-is.

Why isn't the "back to gallery" button working?

The button doesn't do anything when you're just working on your project (either using the live server or at the test URL). It will, however, work as planned when your sketch is exhibited with all the others for the major project exhibition.

I don't know where to start?

I'm sure that your ideas are better than mine, so I don't want to stifle that creativity. The best advice I can give is to start thinking about your major project **now**, and we can discuss your ideas in the labs and on the COMP1720 forum. Still, here are a few ideas/things to think about:

- You need to engage the viewer for *roughly* three minutes, so you need to think about the "interaction trajectory" (beginning, middle, end) of your artwork. Don't use up all your best ideas in the first 30 seconds!

- You want the gallery visitor to notice **your** artwork out of all the others in the gallery—how are you going to draw them in?

- How will the user know what to *do* when they come to interact with your artwork? Make sure you give them cues, but you also want to encourage them to explore and discover things for themselves.

- What do you want the lasting memory of your artwork to be? What do you hope the viewer will remember afterwards?

What size should the sketch be?

The template uses `windowWidth` and `windowHeight` to set the canvas size based on the size of the display (so that it can run in fullscreen mode). Your sketch needs to adapt to whatever size display it's running on—so use `width` and `height` instead of hardcoded numbers (e.g. `200`) wherever you can.

There's an easy way to test this—just re-size your Firefox window and refresh the page. If things break, then your sketch doesn't work properly. Have a look at the responsive-design section of the week 10 "toolbox" lab for some tips on how to fix it.

I don't want other peo   ut?

Yeah, you can opt out of the exhibi   l get a mark & a grade for your major project, it just won't show up in the

I hope that you won't opt out, because exhibiting your work is a crucial part of   y fun. Make something that you're proud of and show it off. But I also realise that stuff doesn't always turn   want to opt out that's ok.

Also, if *anyone* is ever harsh or mean to you about the work you submitted in t   're all at different stages of our journey in learning to art+code, and if someone tries to tell you that you're not   elong in this course (or in CS courses in general) then:

1. don't listen to them
2. remember that *everyone* started somewhere, including them
3. let me know, because belittling the work of others is just not on

Can I use stuff I've already submitted in my assignments for this course?

This is an interesting one—this is called recycling and it's allowed in COMP1720 as long as you refer to your assignment in your statement of originality. If you don't do this, it's plagiarism like any other "unreferenced" code from elsewhere (even though you wrote it yourself).

However, **you should be really careful** about re-using assignment code in your major project—in fact I'd advise against it. The major project is your opportunity to show how you can put all the skills you've learned in this course together to make a significant **new** piece of interactive art. If you just re-use your assignments, then you're not doing that—and you'll be marked accordingly. It's entirely possible that you'd fail (get less than 20/40) the major project assessment item if it's based on an assignment submission you've already received a mark for (even if your project is quite good overall).

How will the major project be marked?

As I've said all along (in the first lecture, on the FAQ page, etc.) this course isn't like the other courses. There are no unit tests to pass, and your mark will be based on the quality of your artwork, using the following general ANU marking guide (you can find it in Table 2 on this page).

Grade	Letter Grade	Numerical Mark (%)	Standards
High Distinction	HD	80-100	Work of exceptional quality, as demonstrated in the attainment of learning outcomes at or above the relevant qualification level
Distinction	D	70-79	Work of superior quality, as demonstrated in the attainment of learning outcomes at or above the relevant qualification level

Credit	C	60-69	Work of good quality, as demonstrated in the attainment of learning outcomes at or above the relevant qualification level
Pass	P	50-59	Work of satisfactory quality, as demonstrated in the attainment of learning outcomes at or above the relevant qualification level
Fail	N	0-49	Work in which the attainment of learning outcomes at or above the relevant qualification level has not been demonstrated

In particular, we consider at least the following aspects of your assignments when deciding on a mark:

- Success in terms of meeting the assignment specification.
- Depth of artistic process and conceptualisation.
- Artistic and interactive quality and sophistication.
- Code and technical quality and sophistication.
- Clarity of communication and expression.

A couple of other things are worth noting about the way we mark the major project.

First, it's worth 4x as much as the assignments. So we expect it to be significantly better/deeper than your assignment submissions. Just because you submit something that's of a similar (or maybe a bit better) level as your assignment work in this course, it doesn't mean you'll get the same sort of marks you received for your assignments. As clearly stated in the table above, to get the higher grades you need to submit work of *superior* (for a distinction) or even *exceptional* (for a high distinction) quality.

Secondly, as discussed in the lectures, the major project is the deliverable where we expect a higher standard of work from our masters (i.e. COMP6720) students. According to the Australian Qualifications Framework, graduates of a masters-level course (AQF Level 9) must display "expert, specialised cognitive and technical skills in a body of knowledge or practice". Since the major project is the capstone deliverable for this course, you're expected to demonstrate the learning outcomes at that level in your submission.

Will I get marks & feedback for my major project like all my other assignment submissions?

Your major project is marked by the course convenor and you will not get feedback in your gitlab repository. We'll make the major project mark (out of 100) visible on Streams on the day that final grades are released for your ANU courses. You will not see marks before that date.

If you have any questions about your marks after final grades are released feel free to send a direct message to the course convenor on the course forum or by email.

If you're unhappy with your mark, [...] ing that you'll accept the new mark (which may be higher or lower tha [...]

1. make sure you clone **your own fork** (i.e. the one with your uni ID in t [...] t the template (because obviously you aren't able to change the template for everyone—GitLab [...]

2. it's the **master** branch which counts as your submission—which is the [...] lowed all the instructions then you've been working on the master branch all along) ↵

3. i.e. it should be at `comp1720-2019-major-project/thumbnail.png` ↵

4. If this is a problem for you, then contact us and we'll try and figure something out. ↵

UPDATED: **28 Oct 2020** / RESPONSIBLE OFFICER: **Head of School** / PAGE CONTACT: **Charles Martin**