Non-traditional artifact
PHIL 449, Spring 2014

DUE: March 6, 2014, by 5pm
(submit to the Connect website or to my office, BUCH E375: I'll be there 3-5pm that day)

As noted on the syllabus, you can choose to do either a paper on Nietzsche or a non-traditional artifact, for 20% of your final course mark. After talking with a student, I agreed to give you another option: you can choose to do both the paper on Nietzsche as well as the non-traditional artifact, and each would then count for 10% of your final course mark. <u>This is only an option</u>; you can choose to do the essay on Nietzsche instead and you don't have to worry about this assignment at all!

The idea behind this option is to allow you, if you would like to do so, to make an argument of some kind about one or more of the texts we've read, in a "non-traditional" way—by that I mean not a traditional philosophy essay. Writing essays in philosophy is a very important skill—indeed, it is how a good deal of work in philosophy is done these days. But I would like to give you the opportunity to try making your points in a different medium, to see if we can expand a bit how philosophical arguments might be effectively made.

<u>Some options</u>

There are probably many ways to do this assignment that I can't think of at the moment, but here are some possible options.

-- A podcast in which you, or you and one or more other people, discuss one of the texts we've read. You could even team up with one or more people from the class to do this if you want. Let me know if you want to ask the class for anyone interested in teaming up; I'll send an email to everyone. **No more than 15 minutes long.** There are some examples of philosophy podcasts on the course website, here: http://blogs.ubc.ca/phil449/links-podcasts-etc/

-- A video in which you do the same as the above, or a video in which you make a point about one or more of the texts not by speaking about it directly but by mixing images and voice/sound in some other way. **No more than 15 minutes long.**

-- A web page devoted to making a case for a particular reading about one or more of the texts, or that shows how we might apply one or more of the arguments in the texts to something in our everyday lives, or current social/political issues. It's actually really easy to create a webpage on the UBC Blogs system. Just talk to me if you want to do so and I can show you.

-- A Wikipedia page on something related to the text(s): creating one that doesn't exist, or doing significant edits to an existing page (talk with me about what this might mean.

-- A poster in which you make an argument about one or more of the texts. This can be done in something like Power Point rather than printed up into an actual poster (which can be expensive, given the large size of most posters). Or, you can physically cut paper and images and paste them onto a poster board.

-- A work of fictional writing, such as a dialogue or a short story. **No more than 15 pages double-spaced** (dialogues can take up a lot of "page space," so it's not like a 15 page essay!)

Talk with me first

Whatever you choose to do, your project must be discussed with me before you go ahead. We need to agree that this is feasible given your skills and the time you have to complete it, and that it will provide something like an argument about the text(s).

Some basic help with video and audio

I wrote up a document last summer with some basic tips for recording and editing video and audio, which you might find useful: http://is.gd/lslR1M
But I think that if you don't know how to do such things already, it is probably a bit much to take on for this project!

Respecting copyright

If you use images, video, audio, music or words that come from another source, make sure that that material is either out of copyright (in the public domain) or licensed for re-use. Quoting words from another source is fine to do in the usual way, but for images, video, audio or music, you need to make sure that it is either in the public domain or uses a license such as "Creative Commons." There are several links on our course website about Creative Commons licenses and how to find content with them, here: http://blogs.ubc.ca/phil449/content-licensed-for-re-use/

Explicit content

Unless it is somehow crucial to your project (and it should be clear how/why), please refrain from using sexually explicit content, explicit language, or graphic depictions of violence. Please talk with me if you are unsure about what you plan to do, in this regard.

Essay portion

You must submit, along with the artifact itself, an essay that explains to the audience what it was you were trying to do or say with the project. The essay should be no more than 6 pages double-spaced, and it should have the following elements, though not necessarily in this exact order:

1. Explain what you were trying to do or say with the project, and how you designed the project to do so. How does this project, working in the way it does, say something about one or more of the texts we've read in the class?

2. Why did you choose this particular medium (e.g., video, audio, etc.)? What does this medium allow you to do that you might not be able to do as well in a traditional philosophy essay? Explain.

3. If your project involves something like live recording (video or audio), discuss your planning process: did you plan it out carefully in advance, or were you trying to capture something more spontaneously? For either answer, why did you do it this way, given your particular project?

4. If you ran into any difficulties doing your project (such as technical difficulties, though there may have been others), explain what they were and how you tried to address them.

Marking criteria

I won't be marking on the aesthetic quality of your project, largely because I don't have the requisite training and skill to do so, and also because that's not what I'm most interested in with this assignment. Rather, I am hoping to see some examples of how we can make philosophical arguments in new ways, so I'll be looking mainly at what sort of argument or point you're trying to make and whether that comes across well in your project.

Specific things I'll be looking at:

a. Link to the text(s): The project should have a direct link to one or more texts we're studying in the class. You should be making some argument about these texts, whether it be to give a particular reading or criticism, or to apply them to some other aspect of your life or current social/political issues.
   -- What are you saying about the texts in your project, and does this actually fit with the texts (e.g., is there anything you're suggesting about the texts that seems to go against what is said in them? Is the reading you're giving supportable by reference to the texts?).

b. The argument you're trying to make/what you're trying to say or do with the project
   -- What are you *saying* with this artifact? Is it clear what your purpose is, what argument you are trying to make? Do you maintain a consistent focus on that throughout the project?
   -- Could what you're saying with the artifact further someone's understanding of the texts or issues we've been discussing in class in some way, or are you saying something relatively trivial or on the surface level?

3. Image/video/voice quality: these will be taken into account in the sense that if the quality of them is quite low, this detracts from what you are trying to say and do. Consider also that if you are doing any audio, speaking too quickly can make it difficult for the audience to understand your points well.

4. copyright: Are all media taken from other sources used legally? I.e., are they in the public domain or licensed for re-use? Have you attributed them correctly? See here for information on how to attribute Creative Commons licensed work correctly: http://blogs.ubc.ca/phil449/content-licensed-for-re-use/

Submitting your project

Many video and audio files are too big to send via email, and I don't know how well the Connect site will handle them. You could post videos to YouTube or Vimeo, or use a cloud service like Dropbox to share them with me. Audio files can be uploaded to Soundcloud (http://soundcloud.com) (you get two hours with a free account), or uploaded to a cloud service and shared with me.

Will you allow me to post your work on our public course website?

Let me know; it's copyrighted, so unless you give me permission I can't post it! I could post it anonymously, if you want, with your name, or not at all. I'd like to share it with the class if you allow, in which case I could post it with a password I give to the class only.