

intro to graphic design



the design process

problem statement

research

brainstorming

thumbnail sketches

prototypes

final art

the **design process**

- 1. problem statement**
- 2. research**
- 3. brainstorming**
- 4. thumbnails**
- 5. prototype(s)**
- 6. final art**

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problem statement

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the problem statement defines what the problem is...

the 5 “W’s” + parameters:

- who?
- what?
- when?
- where?
- why?
- + parameters

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who is your (client's) intended audience?

- age level?
- economic level
- education level?
- gender?
- special interest?

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who is your (client's) intended audience?

what does the client want to say?

- is your audience familiar with your company?
- what is the client trying to communicate?
- tone? concept? mood?

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who is your (client's) intended audience?

what does the client want to say?

when is the due date? ... deadline?

- who are the decision makers?
- is there a particular event they need it by?
- if printed, how long will that take?
- if mailed/delivered, how long will that take?

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who is your (client's) intended audience?

what does the client want to say?

when is the due date? ... deadline?

where will the design be seen?

- computer monitor/digitally
- printed/mailed to the audience
- point of purchase/store shelf
- billboard/outdoors

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who is your (client's) intended audience?

what does the client want to say?

when is the due date? ... deadline?

where will the design be seen?

why does the client need this “communication”?

what is it's intended purpose?

- inform?
- persuade?
- particular function?

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who is your (client's) intended audience?

what does the client want to say?

when is the due date? ... deadline?

where will the design be seen?

why does the client need this “communication”?

parameters ... specific guidelines for the project

- is there a specific budget for the project?
- is there a company/corporate “style guide”?
- usage?

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research is primarily **visual & verbal** and relates to gathering information related to the problem statement... all the parts and pieces

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research is primarily visual & verbal

photography- can capture a particular moment in time...
it also can convey an incredible amount of detail



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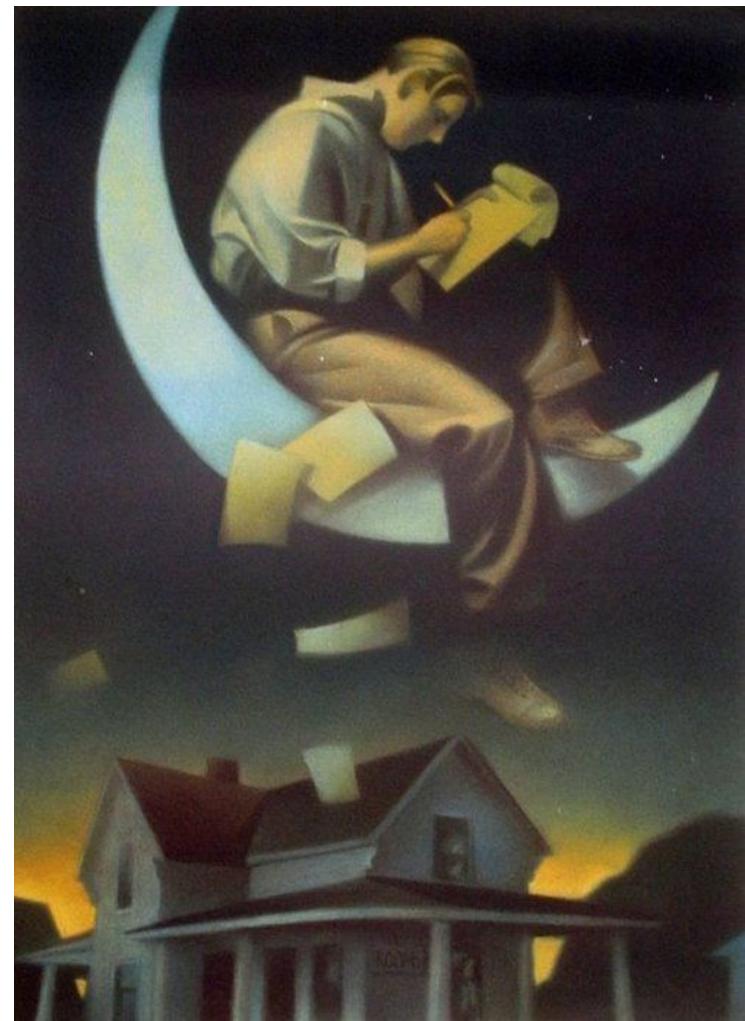
prototypes

final art

research is primarily visual and verbal

illustration-

can compress a long period of time into what can be seen in just a moment... it also has the ability to portray a unique interpretation of the intended idea



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research is primarily visual and verbal

dictionary definition(s)

- having a deeper understanding of what the word actually means or conveys

The image shows a page from a dictionary. At the top left, there is a small note: "—see also *guarantee*". Below this, the word **definitely** is defined with its phonetic spelling /dɪ'fɪnɪtli/. The definition states: "being wrong; certainly: Max knew that he had ^{guaranteed} with no chance of being wrong about Diana. | ‘It’s not worth that much. ‘No, definitely not!’ —see *OF COURSE* (USAGE)". To the right of this, another definition of **definitely** is given: "that says exactly what a word, phrase, or idea ^{guarantees} with a satisfactory definition | [+ of] No one has ^{guaranteed} a definition if something has a particular quality, it must have that quality because all ^{guarantees} type have it: A message that cannot be seen ^{guarantees} definition, not effective. 3 [U] the degree of something such as a picture, sound etc is guaranteed | adj 1 [usually] something that is guaranteed".

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research is primarily visual and verbal

thesaurus

- word list that utilize synonyms to give more variety in interpretation of a given word



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brainstorming is a word/idea list.

generating as many words and ideas as you can think of relative to the problem statement...
no images, as they tend to distract from the “open thought” process.

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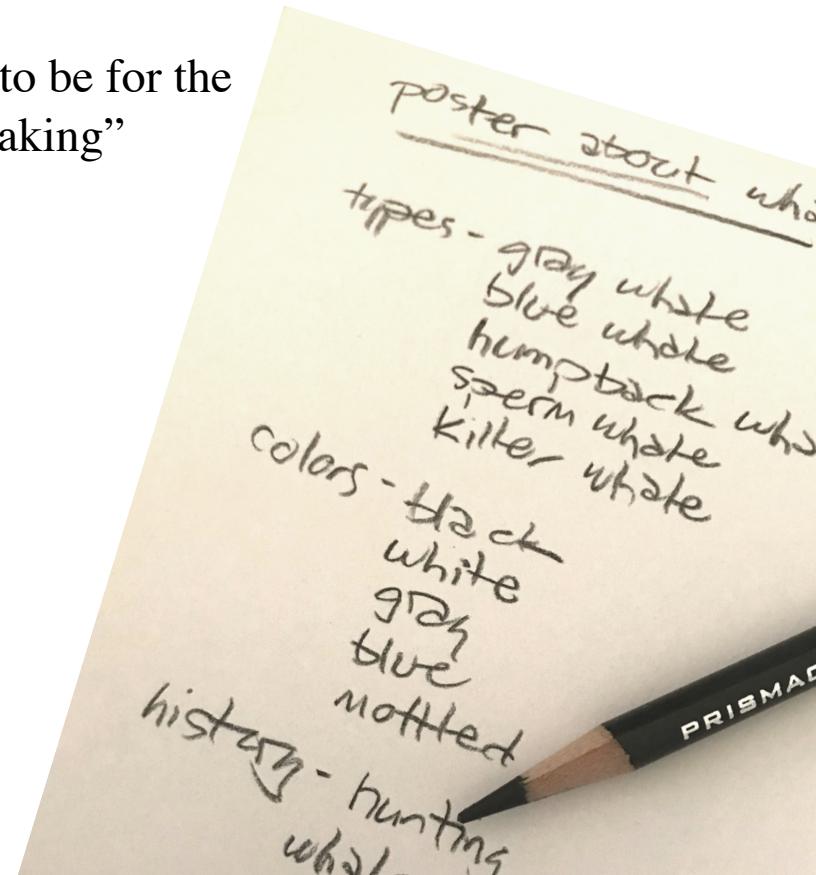
prototypes

final art

categorized word list

- general categories like: color, shape, mood
- specific categories like: season, use, audience

these kind of lists tend to be for the more “organized/list making” graphic designer



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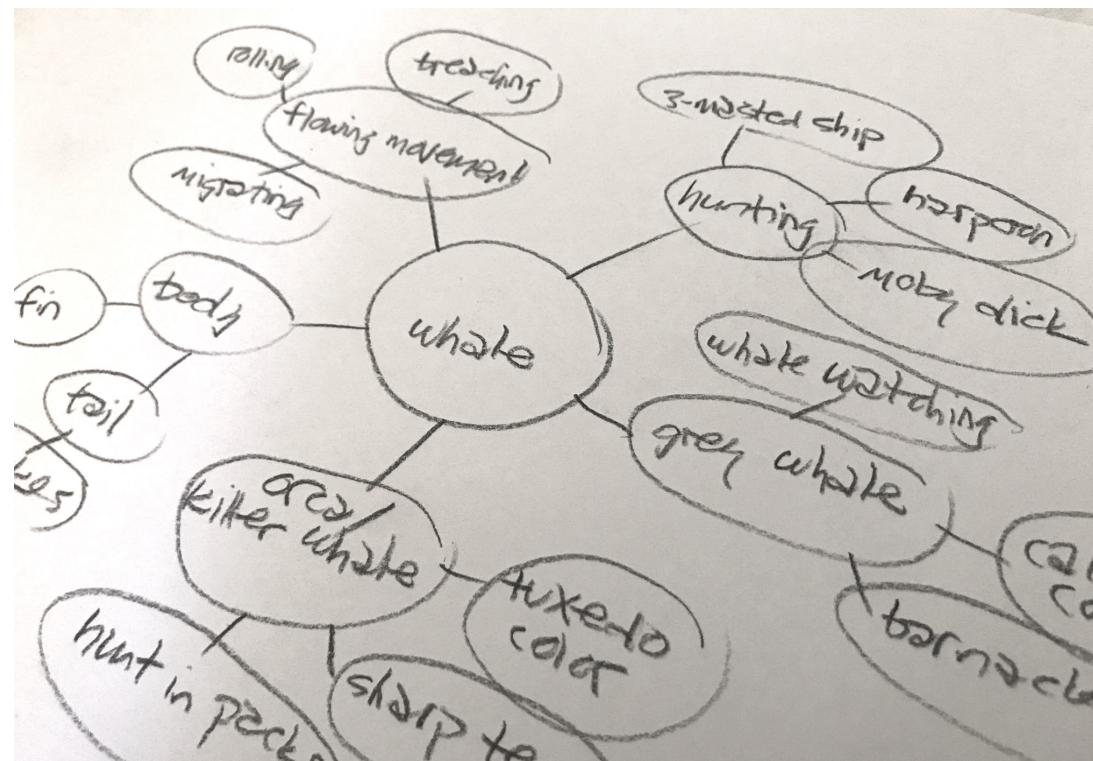
prototypes

final art

bubble diagram

- more stream of consciousness
- can visually see relationships between words/ideas...

this kind of list tends to be for the more “free-form” designer



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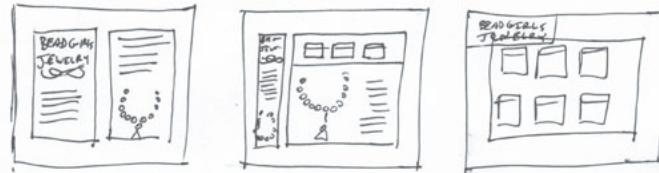
brainstorming

thumbnail sketches

prototypes

final art

thumbnail sketches are small proportional sketches used to work out composition and contrast



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prototyping is creating a “working model” to help resolve design issues. the edit/refine phase of the project... (allows you to see what works or doesn’t)



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final art is generating a finished product (either physically or digitally) that can be “reproduced”



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Sea Creature Symbol

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PROBLEM STATEMENT Sea Creature Symbol

THE GOAL: Research and select a sea creature which will be used as reference to create a symbol. This creature must live completely in the ocean and cannot also spend time on land. It must be a specific species, like "Blue Whale" or "Killer Whale."

Once the symbol is created, it will need to be molded to conform to two different concepts: *volatile* and *tranquil*. The end result will be two black and white symbols (no gradients) that retain the look of the sea creature but also encompass the concepts behind the words assigned.

THE PROCESS: Collect at least 20 images of the selected sea creature (from books, the internet, etc.) and research the creature to find out what physical characteristics make it unique.

Next, create simple sketches or traces of the sea creature from various angles to begin to understand the creature's shape.

After, create silhouettes of the creature from various angles and select those with the strongest form.

Following that step, define the simple shapes that make up the parts of the sea creature, by creating an inventory.

Research the concept words and collect at least 30 images for each concept.

Using the inventory and reference images as a basis, create sketches of the symbol incorporating the concepts.

After, select the strongest symbol from four or five different versions and then experiment with line weights.

Following that, refine the symbol using markers in preparation for vectorizing the symbol.

Vectorize the symbol and make any last minor adjustments.

The final vector art images (2 in total, one for each concept) will then be printed out at 6" x 6" and mounted onto a single 15" x 20" black mounting board.

RESEARCH Vampire Squid (*Vampyroteuthis infernalis*)

The Vampire Squid is not actually a squid at all. It is a small cephalopod, the class that spawned octopus and squids. It lives deep in the ocean, in the Deep Pelagic zone, approximately 2000 - 3000ft below sea level.

Adult Vampire Squids can reach up to 1 ft. in length. There are four major features that make this cephalopod unique,

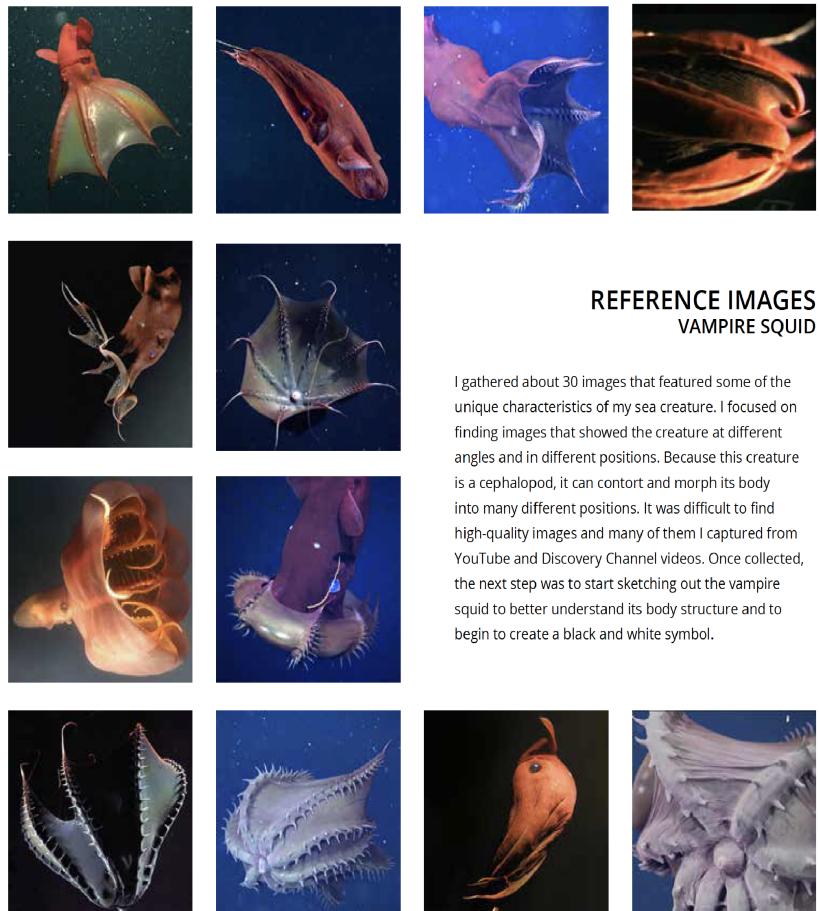
1) **A large eye:** The vampire squid has the largest eye in comparison to its body size of all other cephalopods, squids and octopuses.

2) **Large, ear-like fins on the upper body:** Similar to the dumbo octopus, the vampire squid has large fins that look like ears. These are used to quickly and gracefully steer and propel the creature through the water.

3) **The ability to turn itself inside out:** When threatened, the vampire squid will fold its lower body over its head, revealing a darker underside with threatening looking spiked-protrusions. This is where the cephalopod received its name: when turned inside out, the body looks like an ominous, black cape, something that Dracula may have worn.

4) **Bioluminescent tips:** Also when threatened, the very tips of the vampire squid's arms will glow with a bioluminescence. A predator will be attracted to that and attack that instead of the rest of the cephalopod. If a tip is bitten or ripped off, it will simply regrow.

The vampire squid is extremely well adapted to the deep ocean. It uses a long filament to collect "sea snow," the detritus that falls from other sea creatures above, which it then contracts into its body and digests this food. Its physiology hasn't changed significantly in over 300 million years which is why it is also referred to as a living fossil.



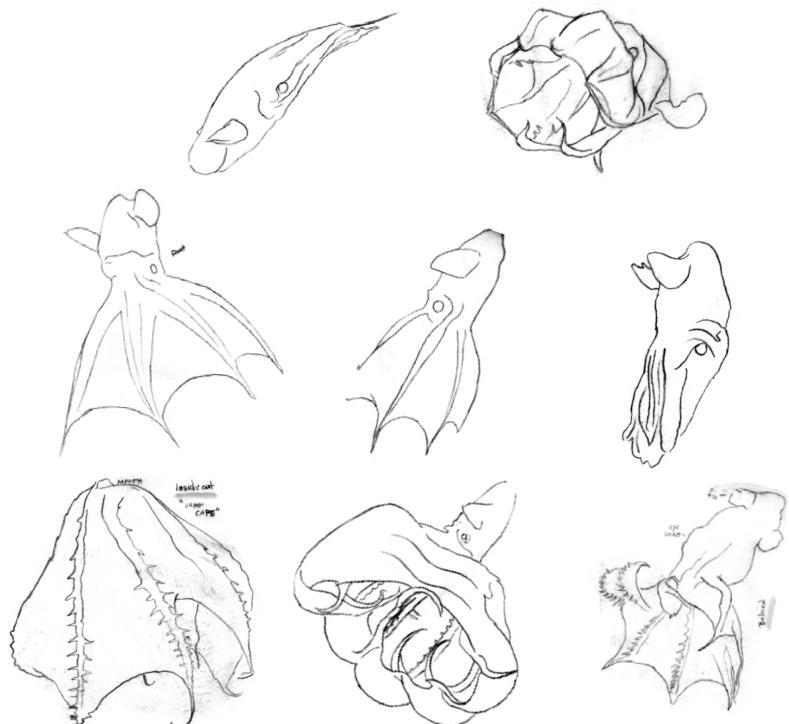
REFERENCE IMAGES VAMPIRE SQUID

I gathered about 30 images that featured some of the unique characteristics of my sea creature. I focused on finding images that showed the creature at different angles and in different positions. Because this creature is a cephalopod, it can contort and morph its body into many different positions. It was difficult to find high-quality images and many of them I captured from YouTube and Discovery Channel videos. Once collected, the next step was to start sketching out the vampire squid to better understand its body structure and to begin to create a black and white symbol.

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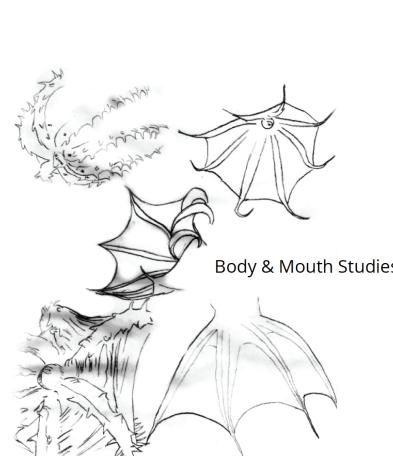
TRACINGS & STUDIES Sea Creature Symbol

To begin the project, I traced from a number of photo references of my creature. I selected a few images from the reference photos that I felt displayed some of the interesting features of my sea creature.



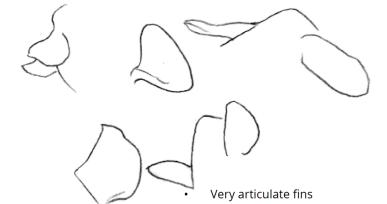
TRACINGS & STUDIES Sea Creature Symbol

I then sketched some studies of the various parts of the creature that make it unique so that I could better understand the creature.



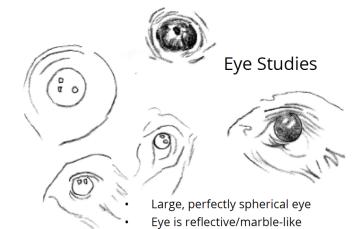
- Has 8 sections like an octopus.
- Flower-like underside.
- Webbing between arms looks like an umbrella when opened.
- Spiny nubs on arms look scary but are harmless.

Fin Studies



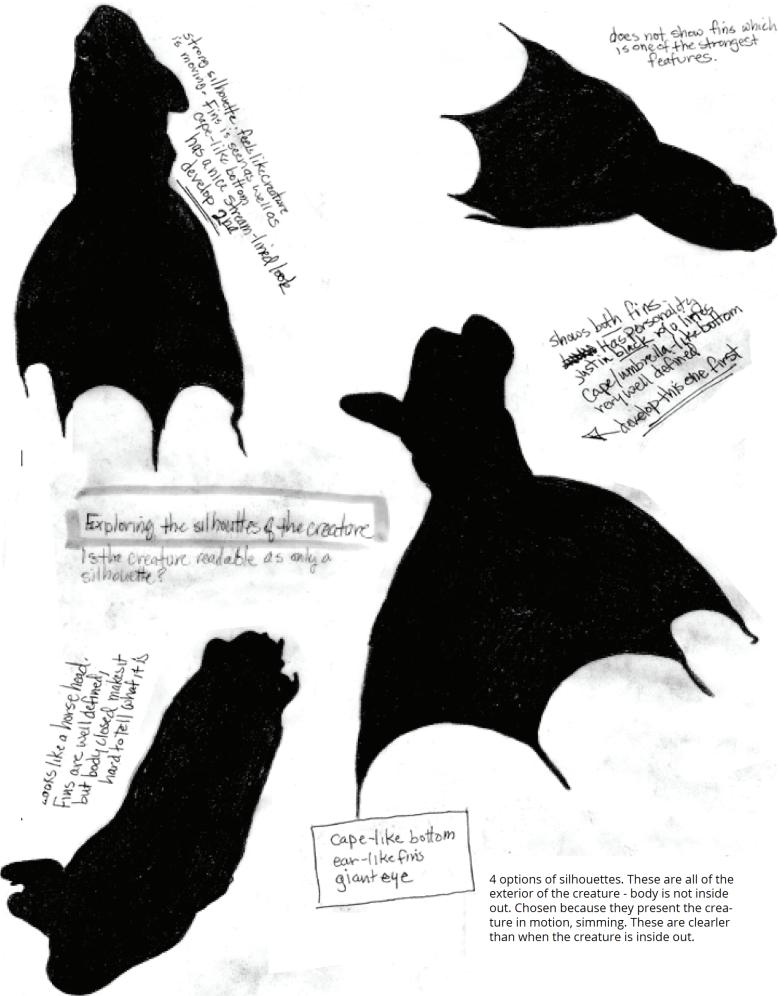
- Very articulate fins
- Can look like ears on mouse, fox, cat or elephant.

Eye Studies

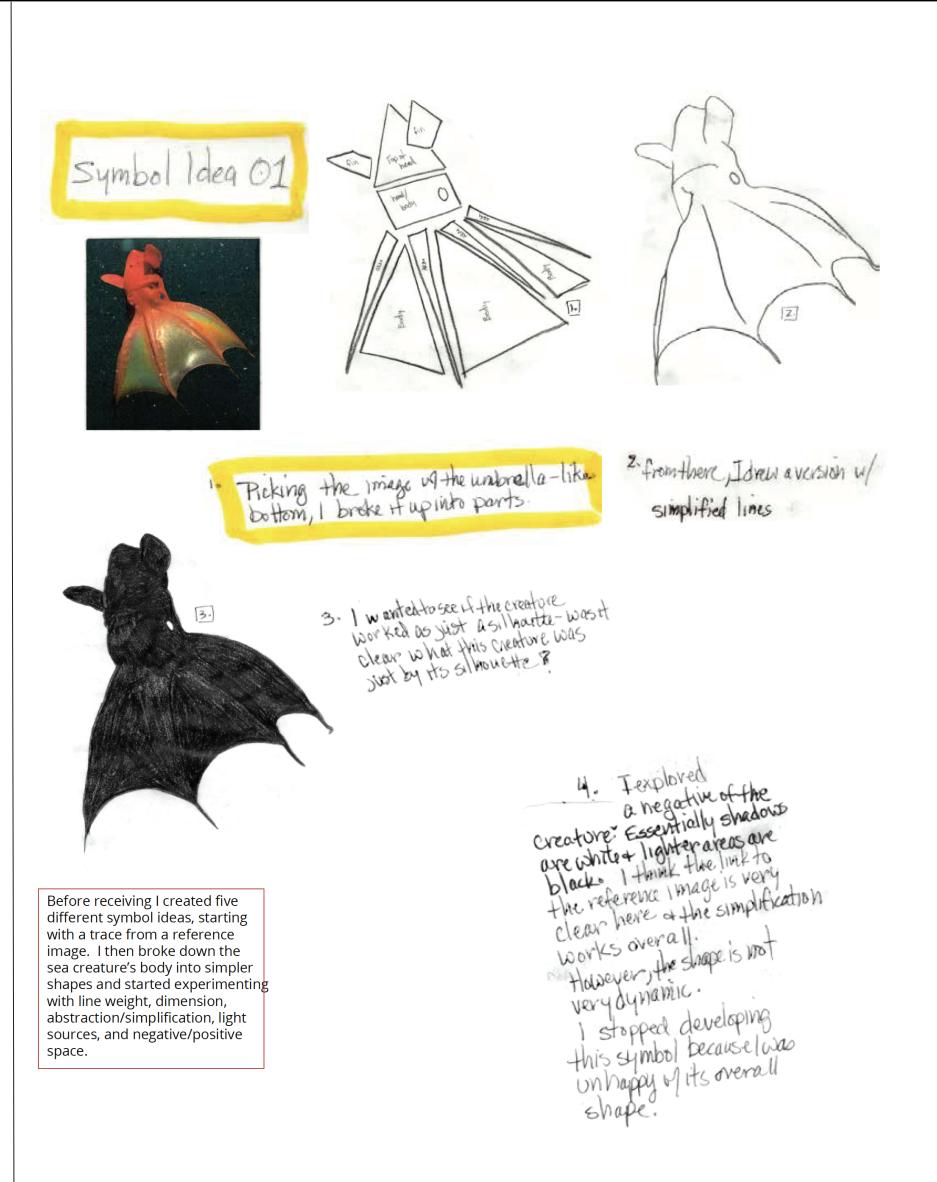


- Large, perfectly spherical eye
- Eye is reflective/marble-like
- Eye opens and closes like lens shutter.
- Fleshy brow above eye protrudes a bit.

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4 options of silhouettes. These are all of the exterior of the creature - body is not inside out. Chosen because they present the creature in motion, swimming. These are clearer than when the creature is inside out.



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1. Combined 2 different images to make a more dynamic version - one that shows more of the interior as well as the iconic fins & eyes. I then traced that new version here.

the head was from the "umbrella" study
+ the body was another reference image



SYMBOL IDEA 02



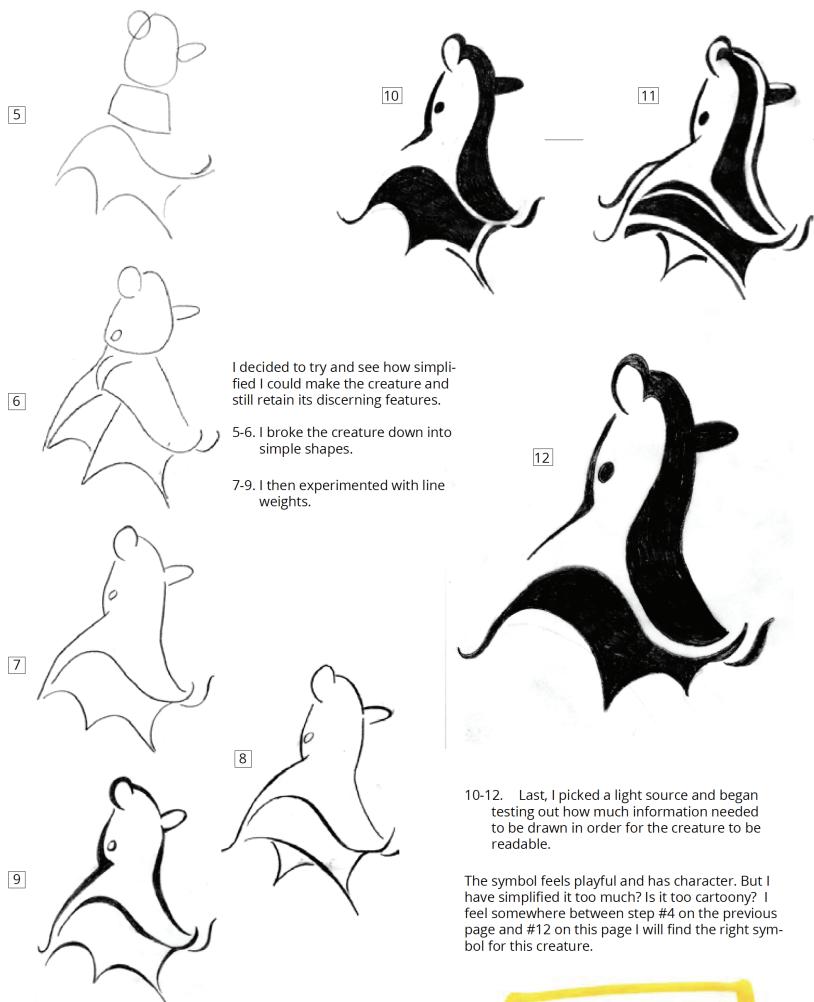
2. I then tested the shape as a silhouette. This makes a far more interesting silhouette. Now it's time to experiment w/ lines + light sources. Perhaps I can even elongate + bend the creature to make it an 'C' which could look more serene + calm - which this creature is. But first, light studies.



3. First attempts at playing w/ a light source + slowly simplifying the creature.
Note: flipped the creature so it's moving up + to the right instead of left.



4. Cleaned up the lines + further adjusted the line weights.
I really like how striking the light + dark contrast is here, but I feel this may be too representational @ this stage.



I decided to try and see how simplified I could make the creature and still retain its discerning features.

5-6. I broke the creature down into simple shapes.
7-9. I then experimented with line weights.

10-12. Last, I picked a light source and began testing out how much information needed to be drawn in order for the creature to be readable.

The symbol feels playful and has character. But I have simplified it too much? Is it too cartoony? I feel somewhere between step #4 on the previous page and #12 on this page I will find the right symbol for this creature.

SYMBOL IDEA 02

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[1]

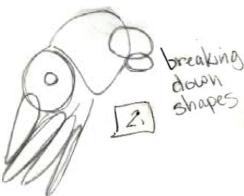
1. tracing from
reference



5. The negative study. The
only one that still feels like
the squid and not a horse.



Reference Image

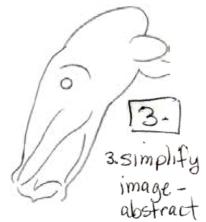


[2]
breaking
down
shapes



[6]

6 - 8. Experimenting with line
widths and simplification to see
how abstract I can get and still
retain the look of the squid.



[3]
3.simplify
image -
abstract



[7]

I feel like I have lost
the vampire squid + found
Mr. Ed.
w/the exception of the negative
study, which I actually
like. I think I'm
fond of the heavier,
black designs.



4. Experiment w/
line widths +
light sources



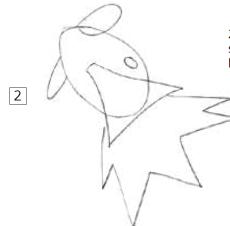
[8]

As I simplify, this creature gets
rather cute. But I wonder if it
looks too much like a horse's head?



[1]

1. As I traced, I simpli-
fied the lines.



[2]

2. Exploring the squid's
shapes: egg-shaped
head; star-shaped body



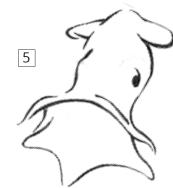
[3]

3. I picked a light source
and filled in the shadows
according to how I thought
the light would fall off my
creature.



[4]

4. Same light study with
more simplified, abstract
lines.



[5]

5. Using the simplified ver-
sion, I played with stroke
width and white space.



[6]

6. Negative study of
the symbol. I really like
reversing the symbol - the
almost all-black versions
have been the strongest -
the form is presented well
due to the use of negative
space to separate fore-
ground and background
elements.

**SYMBOL
IDEA 04**



Here is another reference that was
inspired by combining two images - I liked
that one could see part of the under side
of the creature.

intro to graphic design

VOLATILE DEFINITIONS

volatile

adjective

1. (of a substance) easily evaporated at normal temperatures.

synonyms: evaporative, vaporous; More

antonyms: stable

2. liable to change rapidly and unpredictably, especially for the worse.

"the political situation was becoming more volatile"
synonyms: tense, strained, fraught, uneasy, uncomfortable, charged, explosive, inflammatory, turbulent; More

antonyms: stable, calm

Origin

Middle English (in the sense 'creature that flies,' also, as a collective, 'birds'): from Old French volatil or Latin volatilis, from volare 'to fly.'

VOLATILE SYNOMYMS

buoyant
capricious
elusive
erratic
fickle
resilient
ticklish
unsettled
unstable
elastic
ephemeral
fugitive
gay
imponderable
light

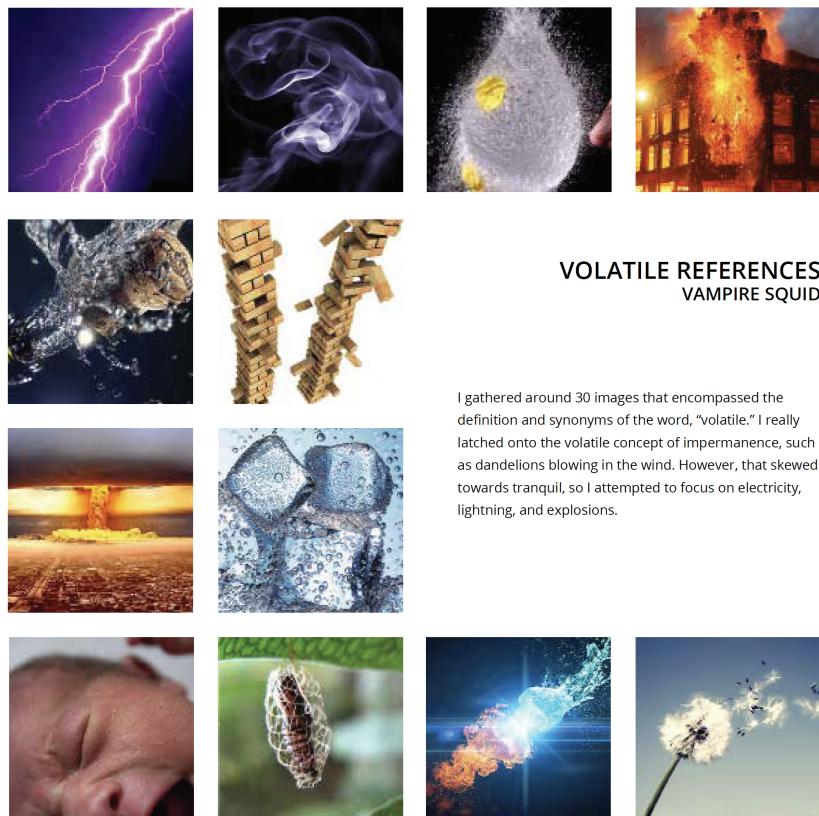
transient
variable
airy
effervescent
expansive
fleeting
flighty
flippant
frivolous
fugacious
gaseous
giddy
impermanent
inconsistent
inconstant

CONCEPT VOLATILE

After the class had been given sufficient time to explore the sea creatures we created, we were given the concept words so that we could move on to the next phase of the symbol's development. It was up to each of us individually to research the definitions and collect reference images depicting the meaning of the concept words.

From there, we picked a few of the researched images and used those in an effort to meld the sea creature with the concept.

The following section details my process as I developed the concept *volatile*.



VOLATILE REFERENCES VAMPIRE SQUID

I gathered around 30 images that encompassed the definition and synonyms of the word, "volatile." I really latched onto the volatile concept of impermanence, such as dandelions blowing in the wind. However, that skewed towards tranquil, so I attempted to focus on electricity, lightning, and explosions.

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Reference Image

1. Using Photoshop, I combined two different images of the Vampire Squid to create the reference image.
2. Then, I did a quick render from that to use for the template sketch which was then used to combine with the volatile concept.



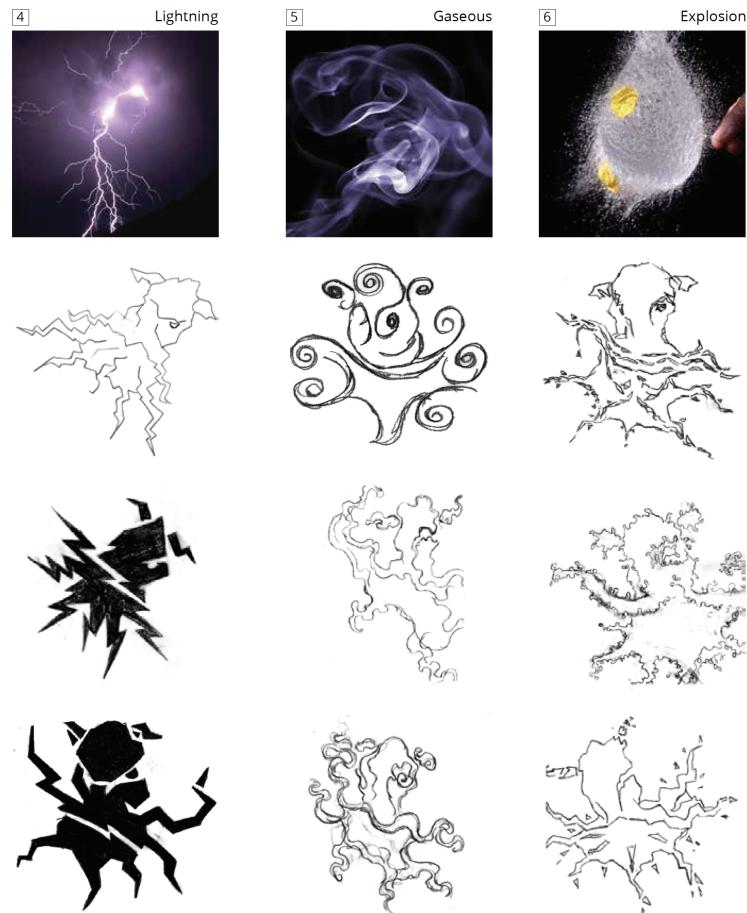
Template Sketch

4. **Lightning.** Starting with a lightning bolt reference, I began to sketch out ideas to marry lightning with the sea creature.
5. **Gaseous.** Next, I used an image of blown smoke to try and develop into a symbol.
6. **Exploding.** I utilized an image of a popping water balloon and quickly sketched some ideas.

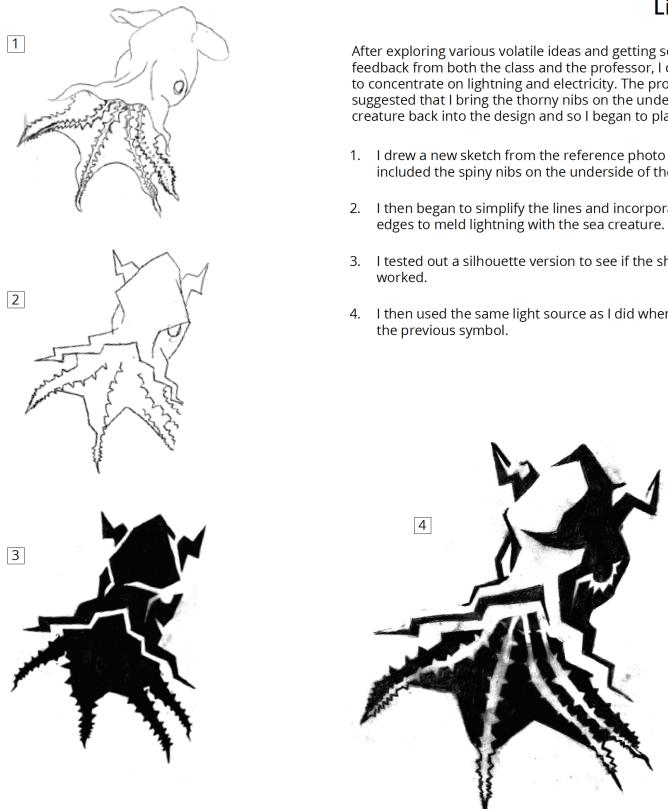
VOLATILE STUDIES Sea Creature Symbol

I was torn between a few different interpretations of volatile: electricity, gas and exploding water. Electricity, especially lightning is very impermanent - a bright, bold flash and then gone. And anything in a gaseous form is constantly in a state of flux - it is always moving, therefore it is volatile.

I decided to start with a different position and shape for the body from the previous symbol idea. I wanted something that felt more threatening and dynamic, which would make a better fit for the volatile concept.



intro to graphic design



VOLATILE SYMBOL Lightning

After exploring various volatile ideas and getting some feedback from both the class and the professor, I decided to concentrate on lightning and electricity. The professor suggested that I bring the thorny nibs on the underside of the creature back into the design and so I began to play with that.

1. I drew a new sketch from the reference photo and included the spiny nibs on the underside of the creature.
2. I then began to simplify the lines and incorporate hard edges to meld lightning with the sea creature.
3. I tested out a silhouette version to see if the shape worked.
4. I then used the same light source as I did when working on the previous symbol.

Adjusted Pencil Sketch



Vector Version 01



After I created the designs on the left, I felt that the creature's pose was not dynamic enough and it felt too angular and rough.

The lightning bolt motif didn't seem strong enough.

Also, there were too many thorny nibs which would not reduce well, so this needed to be simplified. And because the underside naturally looked like thorns, I used a thorn image that I had collected while searching for volatile references to incorporate into the image.

I then retooled the body to make the symbol more threatening but also simpler. I was much happier with this design and was ready to take it to vector.



Lightning motif



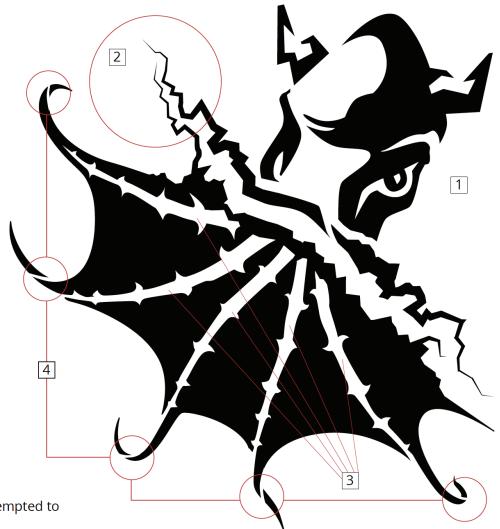
Thorn motif

VOLATILE SYMBOL Lightning

Above is the cleaned-up vector version of the symbol which I submitted to the class for feedback. There is very little change from the drawn version other than some refinement of the curves.

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VOLATILE SYMBOL Lightning Vector Refinements

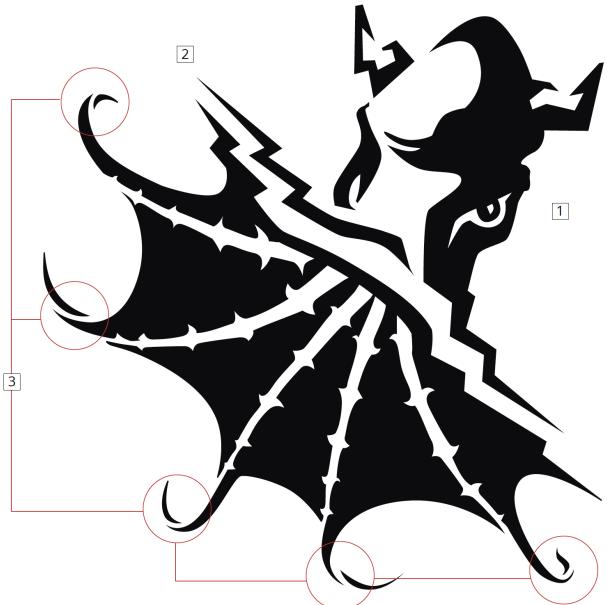


After getting feedback from the class, I attempted to incorporate the comments that I received:

1. I elongated the head so that it better matched the shape of the sea creature.
2. I attempted to make the lightning bolt look more jagged like a real bolt.
3. I added curves to the thorny underside.
4. I added white-space at the ends of the tentacles, along the curves, to help create dimension.

Vector Version 02

The new design retains the look of the creature and certainly looks volatile. My concern was that the lightning bolt arms felt too busy compared to the rest of the symbol.



The volatile sea creature symbol received another round of feedback from my classmates and professor. Here are the final changes:

1. I elongated the head further to more closely match the source material.
2. I simplified the lightning bolt tentacles, returning them to their original design. This helped bring the whole design together: making it more cohesive.
3. Last, I cleaned up the ends of the tentacles so the white space better followed the curves of the tentacles.

VOLATILE
Final Version

intro to graphic design

MATRIX

VOLATILE SYMBOL



VAMPIRE SQUID

A living fossil, the cephalopod hasn't changed in over 300,000,000 years.

Distinguishing features:

- Largest eye of its genus: there is no light in the ocean at the depth this creature lives.
- Ear-like fins: The fins allow it to move quite swiftly in the water.
- Turn inside-out: When in danger, the creature can pull the inner portion of its body over its head. The dark underside makes it virtually disappear in the water.



VOLATILE



SYNONYMS

adjective

1. (of a substance) easily evaporated at normal temperatures.

2. liable to change rapidly and unpredictably, especially for the worse.
"the political situation was becoming more volatile"

(of a person) liable to display rapid changes of emotion.

(of a computer's memory) retaining data only as long as there is a power supply connected.

buoyant, capricious, elusive, erratic, fickle, resilient, ticklish, unsettled, unstable, elastic, ephemeral, fugitive, gay, impudent, light, transient, variable, airy, effervescent, expansive, fleeting, flighty, flippant, frivolous, fugacious, gaseous, giddy, impermanent, inconsistent, inconstant, lively, lubricious, mercurial, momentary, playful, short-lived, sprightly, subtle, temperamental, transitory, unsteady, up-and-down, vaporous, whimsical

FINAL THOUGHTS Sea Creature Symbol

This project required a thorough study of an object, in this case a sea creature. I may have sketched more angles and observations of this creature than I have for any other project I have thus far worked on. But in doing so, it really helped me to understand the shape and structure of the creature so that I could then stretch and abstract the creature without losing its unique features.

I had to keep very organized on this project as I had a plethora of sketches and references and revisions. I numbered the tops of each page of the tracing paper I used so that I could keep a sequential record of the progress I made on the creature. As I worked digitally, I named each subsequent version of the vector symbol so that I would not lose any work previously done on the symbol.

This project truly built on the principles learned in GPHD 25. It was important to consider intervals, point, line, and plane, as well as the gestalt principles. Without these concepts, the symbols would not have been as successful.

The only unfortunate by-product of working so diligently on this for a few months is that by the end I was getting tired of the project. At times, it took great effort to continue putting in the same effort as when I first started the project. Two things helped me with this: 1) I really liked the sea creature I picked and the more I studied it, the more in awe I was of the creature, 2) this is required for entrance into the program. The thought of not completing this project and thus not being able to submit for the program was excellent impetus to keep me going.

Lastly, sketching various angles and studies of the creature really allowed me to understand how the creature was built and how it moved which made adjusting the creature to better fit the concepts much easier. Without this study step, the final symbols would not have been as effective.



**your homework is to study
for a quiz on the Design Process...
the quiz is this coming Wednesday, February 5th**

I will supply paper that you will use to
list and describe the 6 steps of the process
(and yes, they need to be in the correct order)