BLACK PANTHER

PIECES BROKEN APART AND HELD IN PLACE BY NOTHING BUT GLUE, MAKES SOMETHING POWERFUL.

IDEATION

From the beginning, I knew I wanted to do the anamorphic sculpture. I did an illusion project in 3D Design last year, and I had a lot of fun with that. I wanted to push myself more with this project and dive deeper into the art of anamorphosis.

I started thinking of the structure and how I was going to build it. I looked up images for inspiration and ideas. This one was the first one I began to think about.

The images above is what inspired me. I loved how clean, sturdy, and portable it looked, as well as how the pieces hung.

After knowing what structure I was going to build my image in, I began thinking about materials. What would the structure be made out of? What would the image be made out of? How would I hang it? How would I attach the hanging pieces to the structure?

I first thought of having the top and bottom of the structure be made out of glass with metal rods, like in the first image. After doing some research and looking for materials, I decided I would make it out of wood. Wood boards would be the top and bottom, supported by wood dowels in the corners.

Next was figuring out what the image would be made out of. I first thought it would be wood dowels that would be cut and painted in the shape of whatever image I decided on. With this idea, I figured I didn't need to hang them because the dowels would just be glued to the top and bottom of the structure. I could see how it would work in my head, but when I tried describing it to people, they didn't understand it too well. I should've taken this as a sign it wouldn't work, but I didn't want to change my course of action that I had laid out. There were issues that would come up with this idea, but I figured I would think of a solution once I got there.

The image above shows how I though I would use the wooden dowels to portray an image.

When choosing what image I wanted to portray, I wanted to do an animal that represented me. I asked around to my close friends and my classmates to find out what animal they would associate me with. I could've picked what animal I think I am, but I wanted it to resemble how other people see me and I knew I would be bias if I picked one for myself. Everyone I asked said a big cat or black panther. I was very honored by this because ever since I was a little girl, I wanted to be like a black panther. I wanted to be sleek, beautiful, unpredictable, and powerful. Knowing what animal I was doing, I began to work.
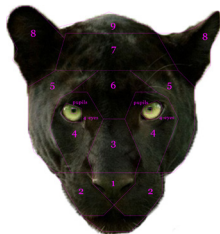
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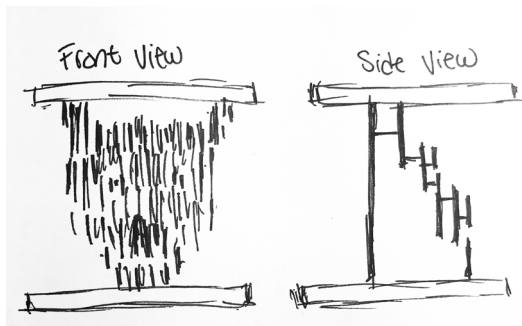
This shows the top and bottom of the structure with dowels cut to make the panther.

Here is the image of the panther that I found to go off of. The stillness and expression of calm power captured everything I wanted for this sculpture.

MORE IDEATION

I put the image of the panther in Photoshop, and sectioned off each part of the face. I numbered them in the order that they would go in from front to back of the head.

This is after I sectioned off the face and created rectangles, filled with the common color in that space. This would be the color and size that I would paint the dowels.

I tried laying it out in Photoshop using the 3D workspace, I tried sticking the dowels into foam to see the shape, and I tried cutting the dowels which was difficult and seemed hard to keep the craftsmanship intact. After may attempts and much consideration, I realized that the wood dowel idea would not work. This idea was too difficult to envision and lay out. I just could not see it in my head how it was going to work, which did not make me confident or inspired.

After much deliberation and research, I saw this image. This way of hanging pieces was exactly what I wanted to do. This artist used painted pieces of cardboard, but I wanted to use wire to form the pieces exactly how I wanted them. I wanted it to look clean and be lightweight. I decided I would put different colored tissue paper around the wire pieces to show depth.

I uploaded the original image to Photoshop and made everything black and white except for the eyes to make them pop. Then I played with different effects to create the same type of look as the inspiration image above. I decided on the cutout filter to make this sketch on the left.

MORE SKETCHES

I uploaded the new image with the cutout filter to Illustrator. Then I used the pen tool to trace the different colored shapes on the face.

I did this because I needed the shapes to be their own individual layer. I also needed to have the edges of the shapes be clean and distinct so I could easily bend the wire to create their outline.

I numbered the order that the pieces had to hang in. This was important because I wanted the panther's face to really pop out and look 3D to the viewer, so the order needed to go from the front of the face, to the back of the head.
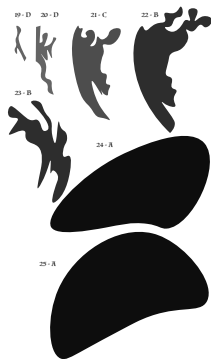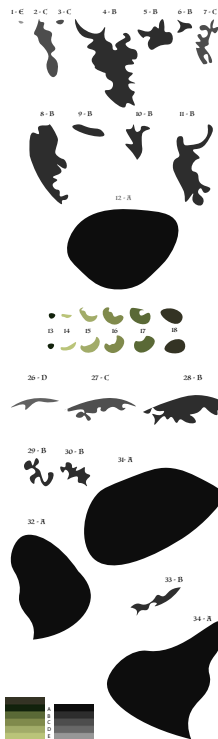
These are each individual piece of the image separated, in order, and with their appropriate color label. I printed these out in the correct size that I wanted the panther, so I could bend the wire to the exact shape of each piece.

PROTOTYPES

The first piece I tried wrapping in tissue paper, I covered a square of paper with mod podge and wrapped it around the wire.

Then I tried that with another piece. To create different shades, I put black tissue paper over the gray. That looked way too messy.

I took another wire piece and put glue over both squares of white tissue paper and painted it. That way of coloring worked much better, but the craft of the tissue paper was not looking good.

Finally, I figured out that I had to cut the tissue paper to the shape of the wire piece. I took one stenciled piece of paper and only put glue on the edges of the paper and wrapped the edges around the wire frame. Then I put the clear beading string, that I would use to hang the pieces, over opposite side of the shape that I put the first paper on. Lastly, I put the second stenciled out piece of tissue paper over that and glue it to the edges. This made it look much cleaner.

PROCESS AND FINAL THOUGHTS

Creating this anamorphic image took many different steps and skills.

1. Using Photoshop and Illustrator to create the image.
2. Printing it to the correct size and layout.
3. Cutting, bending, and forming wire into shapes.
4. Working with thin tissue paper, mod podge, and clear beading string.
5. Mixing acrylic paint to the right color and painting the very delicate shapes.
6. Gluing the beading string to the inside of the display box and figuring out what height and area to place them.

Although it may sound long, tedious, and endless, each new phase made it feel like a new project. I felt a sense of completion, pride, and excitement for the next phase once each one was done. I enjoyed being focused on thing at a time. I got really into it and time flew by.

I learned to work with a lot of different materials that I have not worked with before. I learned how far the metal wire could bend before it would break and that beading string can melt when near a hot glue gun. I also learned that after a delicate thing like tissue paper is painted, it can be quite sturdy.

This project was definitely a challenge and a process. At every stage I had to change my original plan or idea in order for it to look clean and have the illusion work. Although changing my ideas throughout the project was annoying and frustrating, I did enjoy it because it kept it interesting and forced me to stay on my toes. Being forced to change my ideas taught me how to be more flexible and not as attached to my original plans.

Running into so many roadblocks also taught me about myself, and what works best when I run into an issue. I learned that I liked to brainstorm different solutions in my head. If I thought something may work, I would try to lay out the materials and test it. If that didn't work, or if I couldn't think of a solution, I would take a break and go do something else. I learned that by leaving the room, running errands, or watching a couple episodes of TV really helped with not feeling so blocked. When I was distracted by something else for a little bit, I either thought of a solution during that break, or I could figure it out when I came back to the project. Doing these actions helped me solve all of my issues with this project. Knowing how I work when faced with a problem, will help with school, work, and life. I can now apply what I learned to the next time I have a creative road block, and hopefully come to a solution faster.

The image of a black panther was chosen because the characteristics align with who I am and who I want to be. I identify with the black panther because it is a solitary creature. I enjoy being alone more than with others because I feel a lot more motivated, healthier, and happier. I am a lot more entertained and successful when I am by myself than with others. Because the black panther is solitary, it does not mate for life. I also identify with this because I am better when I'm alone, so I do not wish for a partner. The black panther is viewed as sleek, powerful, and intuitive, which is how I wish to be seen as well. The negative characteristic of the black panther is their aggressive approach towards life. If they see a threat to their space or their privacy, they will attack. This is my biggest flaw as well. My aggressiveness and temper can easily get out of control when someone is in my way or is simply in my space. If I am working or trying to get from point A to point B and someone interrupts that, I can get very angry and lash out.

This piece is covered with metaphors that show who I am. It may look clean and put together from the outside, but if you look inside there are cracks and glue all over the place. I try to display myself as a polished and undamaged person, but inside I have as many flaws and crooked pieces as this art piece.