CCT250H5, Fall 2015

Type as a Metaphor:

Creating the Postcard

October 5th, 2015

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*“We’re all living together, even if most folks don’t act like it.*

*We all have the same roots, and we are all branches of the same tree.”*

- Huu, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*

Upon being assigned our task, we were instructed to choose a quote that stuck out to us in a way that made our choice feel “special” and reflected how we are all unique individuals. Immediately – being the cynic I am – I thought to myself “Well, that’ll be hard considering nothing is ‘special’ and we’re all just slight variations of the same composition of atoms”, but coincidentally, that reminded me of my favourite quote from my favourite animated series, *Avatar: The Last Airbender*. The quote in question is said by the character “Huu” (pronounced “Hugh”) after being confronted by the protagonist. Huu passes on his enlightened wisdom to the protagonist, stating that “we are all branches of the same tree”, in an effort to help him understand that all people are not so different from one another, despite their cultural upbringing or their conflicting beliefs. Since hearing this, I have always kept this mantra in mind whenever dealing with people that don’t see eye-to-eye with me and vice versa. For the sake of this assignment, I felt it ironically appropriate to use this quote to describe how special I am by showing how none of us are really special at all.

My choice of imagery was made obvious by the analogy made in the quote. I recognized that tree imagery in media is often used as a symbol for life, so the parallels that I could make to this quote were endless, but for the sake of time-saving I stuck with the idea of a bright, lit-up image. With a bit of scouring I found the perfect image that lent even more life symbolism to the imagination. The banyan tree is a massive type of tree with dozens of branches to spread out over a wide area and the hanging lights represent the connection we hold to other people in our lives and how they are all connected by one commonality. I opted to use an image taken by Reimar Gaertner, found at <http://www.pbase.com/reimar/image/59642107>, because at the time of this assignment the weather is turning into a dreary, grey atmosphere in preparation for a true Canadian winter, so I didn’t feel that a picture of a dingy, blustery tree would convey my idea adequately.

Once I had my desired image, I began comparing different combinations of fonts with the tree image and found that Bell MT was an elegant font whose sharp curvature contrasted quite well against the flowing vines and nature setting of the image. On top of that, I discovered that my overarching theme could be succinctly highlighted by some of the words within the quote. By calling upon the teachings of professor Littlejohn, I found that using bolded and italicized Lucida Bright against Bell MT emphasized the weight of the font as well as making it clear what my main message was. Using the colour palette of the picture, I decided that the highlighted text of the quote should reflect the colour scheme of the image; I initially wanted it to be a dark green to juxtapose the red-orange lights, but this caused it to fade into the green leaves, as well as the white text into the protruding light in the background. In the end, I repositioned the text over the dark green shrubbery to make the white and red-orange text stand out better than it would have in the upper part of the picture.