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Composing Digital Media

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Reflection on Visual

For this project, I decided to create a postcard for Notorious Entertainment, an entertainment company I am apart of from the Pittsburgh area. Our company features 2 DJs, one of whom is also an instrumentalist and a photographer (me). I was excited when we were assigned this project because our company is beginning to pick up now so it is more vital than ever that we expand our media presence.

In terms of my prior experience with GIMP, I had none so this was definitely a challenging project for me. My greatest challenge was to transform what I had envisioned in my mind and on paper into a reality. I watched many GIMP tutorials and also met with a friend who taught me how to create layers for each element of my postcard (I had previously been placing many different elements of my postcard into the background and was wondering why I couldn’t move them around once they had been pasted). A specific challenge I faced was creating lines and circles on the front of my post card. I ended up using the Rectangular Tool for the lines and then the bucket tool to fill in the color I wanted, additionally adding a little gradient to it for a more 3D effect. For the circle, I used the Ellipses Tool, extending it from the center to get a better fit to the individual pictures I had cropped into circles for the design element of framing. These pictures were ones I had taken of them, which they had approved, and so I knew their use was fair. The most challenging tool that I learned how to use was the Select By Color tool: I wanted to use the same blue color as the heading on the back of my postcard for the outline of the Pittsburgh city skyline. By selecting the blue color I wanted from the heading, and then selecting the background of the skyline image, I inverted black background with the blue color I had selected to make the skyline the desired blue color. I used the same technique to create the blue lines bordering the bottom of the postcard on the back.

In terms of design elements, I wanted to incorporate emphasis, contrast, alignment, framing (already mentioned), and organization. I realized that the 3 brightly colored images of me, Harvey and Sunny were going to be what people’s attention was drawn to when viewing the front so I used alignment in a way that positioned each of our expressions to focus towards the center image (me), and then used the grey lines from each of our images to guide viewers’ eyes to our logo, the larger cropped image on the left. My hope was to engage viewers through the use of the lines connecting us to the logo. By framing each of the pictures on the front was also to help viewers follow the path of emphasis I had created. I decided on using circular croppings of our individual pictures, because they not only paralleled the shape of our logo, but also the spinners on a disc jockey’s board. I wanted the front to have high contrast with the light grey on black, with more empty space, as not to occlude the readers’ eyes too much. On the back was where I listed the special features and types of events in white as well as contact information in blue in 3 separate boxes. I used organization to draw attention to the center of the back where the contact information was listed in larger blue print. I used 2 images that I found thru a modified google search with a “license for reuse with modification”. Mr. Miller reminded me the importance of specifying this when search because this postcard will be used for commercial use. The image of the spotlight was found on Pixabay (the license allows me to modify and use it for commercial use); I used the image twice, cropping and tilting it for placement in the top 2 corners on the back. I created a spotlight effect with the alignment of words in my box of text with the types of events (left) and my box of text with the special features (right). The second image I used was that of the Pittsburgh skyline found on Flickr (the license allows me to adapt and share the image, even for commercial use). The Pittsburgh skyline outline was yellow originally but like I mentioned early, I was able to change its color to match the blue I used for the “Notorious Entertainment” header on the back. I unknowingly organized the front and back of my postcard, somewhat following the Rule of Threes with the 3 cropped pictures on the front and the 3 columns of text and imagery on the back.

In terms of my desired genre, I wanted the feel to be that of a modern, forward-thinking entertainment company that is willing to continuously advance and improve to create a one-of-a-kind experience for its customers. By incorporating high contrast, circular framing, the Century Gothic font, and the cool blue and light grey/white color palette, I must say I am happy with my first attempt at this postcard for our company. Because entertainment companies attract a wide variety of customers, I wanted to appeal to both the younger, more modern generation as well as the traditional older crowd. To target the younger generation, I used the bolder black background color with the clean and not-overcrowded organization on the front as well as mentioning the more modern features our company offers like the LED dance floor and CO2 guns. On the back, more traditional families can read the types of customary events we have done in the past as well as learn that we have emcees, a photographer and an instrumentalist for those more traditional events.

In terms of using Github, I am aware that there were definitely things I could improve upon and take advantage of that I did not quite grasp during this first attempt at using it. Specifically, this includes utilizing the concept of branches to try out different versions of an edit and then merging the desired branch with the master branch. If given the opportunity, I would want to make more use of that. I also learned that my commit summaries should go in the title line as for an easier read when going through my commit history. I liked the idea behind Github, of tracking progress throughout a project and easily being able to refer to an edit from any given day throughout the process.

Overall, I am very satisfied with my first round of learning and creating this postcard and am looking forward to hopefully getting to modify it even further for my final portfolio.