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Art 225A

Assignment 1 Critique

Thinking of five words that can describe my can be a little tricky. Sure I can pick out five words, but I worry that doing so might impose limitations. Since it is the essence of this assignment, I will go ahead and do so: flow, color, shapes, expressiveness, and simplicity.

I first started out with figuring out how the text should flow. Since I am an English major, this part came very naturally to me, not to mention that I saw it as a necessity. To ensure I created a good flow on the text, I began imagining looking at a business card as a potential customer and figuring out a logical pattern to the text layout. In this assignment, I took on the assumption that I was an independent graphic designer advertising my own work. As such, I put my name with the 14-point font size and center-aligned that textbox within the center of the document and left some space between the text and the top of the document. The textbox that contained “graphic designer” was in a 12-point font and about a quarter inch below the textbox for my name. The text for both my name and “graphic designer” used a slightly different font. I choose each of them by scrolling through the font selection and picked out what I thought looked good. Thinking of the logic of keeping similar pieces of contact information together, I grouped the phone number, e mail address, and website together and aligned them to the right of the business card. The physical address was aligned to the left. Both of those sections used an 8-point font size with Helvetica as the style. I felt my contact information is supposed to be simple, and I kept it as such.

I played around with the arrangement of the text for a while, seeking a design that would look both visually appealing and read well. By page nine of the document, I came up with a text design that would for the most part remain permanent through the rest of my sketches. It has a logical flow of my name, profession and website all center aligned in the document. Each has a slightly different font and decreased in font size by two points from one to the next. I ended up putting my e mail address and phone number on the bottom left of the document and address on the right. I figured this layout for the most part would be extremely readable by anybody used to the Western style of word and text formatting.

I then began playing with colors. I went the monochromatic route at first, playing around with black and white. Doing this led me to figure that as a graphic designer, I would need to demonstrate my proficiency in color. I namely worked with two colors through the rest of my sketches: blue and red. I choose blue because it is my favorite color, and it also happens to have the association with a male identity. Red, being a color of passion, was also useful to demonstrate a love for what I do.

After playing around with colors and the different effects (most of which I discovered by accident), I started thinking of shapes to use. This was a tougher part for me, since I am not the word’s best drawer, and I am very picky about having any kind of shape or sketch be a good overall fit in the design. I ended up importing the star shape from the first class exercise. That symbol worked well because not only did it show the potential that I have, but stars have historically been symbols of direction. I did some variations of it, and I finally settled into the end result of my design in page 30.

I ended up with a good overall design, but I worried that it might lack some expressiveness. I wanted to incorporate red and maybe some other colors, but the way I did that in my previous sketches wasn’t visually appealing to me. I also wanted to convey that I can go beyond my simple design pattern. I think this was rectified when I did the analogous variation of my design. I made the color more of a violet, which serves a good purpose. Purple is not only a color that has been traditionally associated with royalty (and opulence), but it is also a very popular feminine color. That color variation could express the idea of that although my original design was associated with masculinity and simplicity, I can see outside the box and incorporate things that into my designs that are more expressive than what I started out with. Having done my design, I feel that it is a good start, but there are always ways how I can expand myself as a graphic designer. Hopefully, my future work will reflect that.