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Monday, December 6, 2010

Web Design, Project 3 Self-Critique Memo

I choose to "work with jQuery or another JavaScript library to build additional effects and visual/accessibility enhancements to your site."

Goals
I had three goals to extend my site using jQuery:
1) Add slider functionality to the home page that would allow users to preview portfolio samples along with explanatory copy.
2) Make the portfolio section more accessible by dividing into three project areas—print, web, and academic. Within these areas, I wanted to be able to create sliders which showcased work within that particular set of projects.
3) I then wanted to present these functions into a visually appealing presentation by integrating CSS.

Research
I began my research by simply looking for functionality on sites that I liked. I mostly viewed CSS gallery sites. When I found a site that contained the required functionality, I viewed the source code through web inspector. I was then able to identify credited scripts and track back to the original source.

The site that I liked the most was a personal portfolio site, Little Budda Design. The presentation of the portfolio was appealing to me so I found the scripts on a site called highslide.com. After spending a good deal of time trying to make this implementation work I decided I was in a little over my head so I sought out a simple slider script and found one at cssglobe.com.

The author of this script offered downloadable example pages that I reversed engineered in order to make my site work. I mostly adjusted for the different sizes of my images, moved the inline-styles of the example to my attached css, and connected scripts:

```
<script type="text/javascript" src="js/jquery.js"></script>
<script type="text/javascript" src="js/easySlider1.5.js"></script>
<script type="text/javascript">
    $(document).ready(function(){
        $("#slider").easySlider();
    });
    </script>
```

Progressive Enrichment
As I mentioned in my last memo, I found Handcrafted CSS by Dan Cederholm and Ethan Marcotte very helpful in teaching a craft approach to CSS. The authors discuss

ways of extending sites so that they take advantage of newer CSS 3 specs that will be more visually appealling on forward-thinking browsers. The author's attitude is that there can be an acceptable variance browser to browser. Users with more progressive browsers will gain visual benefits. With this in mind, I worked through the book and added a couple of enhancements—rounded corners, shadows, and depressed areas that created depth on the portfolio overview pages.

RGBA, which we discussed in class, is the next area of exploration, as I tweak the design further. I feel that I have achieved much of the functionality that I was looking but the site still needs improved visual appeal. RGBA will help me apply a more appealing controllable color scheme. Manipulating color in this way is more familiar to me. It is easier to see the interplay between the rgb colors as I did in print with CMYK.

Accomplishments
1. I successfully integrated a slider script although I still want to make the more intricate script work. I still want a system of dots at the bottom which allow for clicking from one project to another.
2. I divided my portfolio into three areas to show a progression from print to web project work. I still have to integrate slider presentations within these sub areas
3. I added visual benefits for Opera, Safari, and Firefox browsers.

I still see my site as a work in progress—blocked out with functionality and first-draft content but I believe I have make progress and now know how to code, design, and add functionality. My own feeling is that each of these tasks inform the others and that a good designer has a sense of each. I will continue to improve and clean up this site as I gain more knowledge.

Sources
http://www.csselite.com/
http://www.littlebuddhadesign.com/work/index.html
http://highslide.com/
http://cssglobe.com/post/4004/easy-slider-15-the-easiest-jquery-plugin-for-sliding