

Found Shape Design

Materials: Sketchbooks, tracing paper, pencil, black markers, Bristol, black gouache paint, brushes.

Part 1: Found Shape Design

Investigation of line, shape and the relationships between them.

Spend 30 minutes wandering virtually in a museum from this list of 100 museum websites. Choose an artwork or a part of an artwork to draw:

<https://whatpixel.com/museum-art-gallery-websites/>

Spend 30 minutes making your drawing. Just make a careful drawing in which you carefully observe how the subject looks. Shading is not important. Just make a detailed contour drawing. You may only want to draw one shape from a painting. Or a sculpture. It could be a banana. Or a face. Or an abstract shape.

Back in class make 20 thumbnail sketches in small sketchbook using this shape. In each sketch do something different to the shape. Ink thumbnails with black marker to experiment with black and white shapes and lines. The negative (white) space will create white shapes and should be as active (dynamic) as the black shapes of the design. Use line and shape in exciting new ways. Do not repeat your found drawing (this would be plagiarism!). Remember this is an exercise in looking and composing abstractly. Ink in your thumbnails with black marker to designate black and white shapes and lines.

- Extract lines & shapes from found shape and use them in a different way
- Rotate, repeat and crop the shape (use tracing paper)
- Deconstruct the shape: divide in two, imagine its interior, quarter it, etc.
- Shrink or stretch it
- Create a texture with it by shrinking and repeating it many times
- Create a pattern with it
- Create new shapes and lines by the above experiments

Look for ways to create relationships between the shapes in your composition.

Experiment with overlapping, abutting (touching), interlocking, and mirroring shapes. Create mutual tension between shapes by locating them near each other. Do NOT make a symmetrical design or a pattern as your composition. Make 2 final thumbnails with black markers. Create a composition with line and shape that is dynamic, dramatic and full of tension. Choose your strongest thumbnail and refine it. Decide which parts of the design are black and which are white. Several edges of the design should touch the page edges. Enlarge and reproduce design on Bristol 9" X 12" with ink. No border. Technical notes: Presentation of final design on Bristol should be neat, without fingerprints or paint

smudges. Protect artwork with a clean piece of paper in areas where you are not working. If you are having difficulty using the paint, consider painting a piece of white paper with black gouache paint. When it dries you can cut shapes from it with a scissors and move them around your Bristol paper before gluing them in place.

Some notes to help you choose your final design:

- Be bold, dramatic, assertive
- Be original, do not copy/plagiarize the found shape; make your own design
- Be sure design touches edges of the picture plane in at least 1 or 2 places
- Create design unity by repeating, touching, or proximity of forms
- Create rhythm by playing with scale changes, repetition of line and shape
- Make the white space function as shape and line as well as the black

If you're feeling stuck or unsure how to choose or develop your final thumbnail sketch, I hope you'll be inspired to revisit your original found shape drawing. Try to invest your own design with some of the magic of what first attracted you to the found artwork. Not literally, just conceptually or in terms of working with unusual and specific shapes, lines and referents.

Grading Rubric for both designs (Part 1 & 2 below):

Design (ambition, strength, unity, relationship between forms, originality): 40%

Thumbnail process & clarity of Open Lab post photography: 20%

Timeliness (submitted by due date): 20%

Presentation (neatness of execution): 20%

Part 2: Figure Ground Reversal Design

Investigation of shape and the space it creates.

(to be done after we discuss your projects for Part 1)

Discovery of the power of negative space (air space) in a composition and how it can function as a shape and influence the perception of space.

Create a thumbnail with equal parts black and white (50/50) in the composition. Design should be bold and fill the paper. Foreground and background should be interchangeable: we should not be able to perceive what is background and what is foreground. Enlarge to Bristol with black gouache paint. No border.