Project 2: Lines

Project Description

In this project, you will develop a personal visual identity by crafting a monogram that expresses specific qualities of your choosing. Using Illustrator, you will merge your initials into a single visual element. Using Illustrator with Photoshop, you will create an identity document illustrating how the monogram could be used in different contexts.

This project is an exercise in the visual representation and communication of identity.

We will have three group critiques for this project, plus numerous opportunities for individual feedback. The critiques will address both conceptual issues (of the monogram’s form) and technical issues (of the process of execution).

Schedule

Due dates will be posted and updated on the course website:

xarts.usfca.edu/~shmurray/viscommi/

Components

This project is made up of four parts.

1. Concept

You already know what your initials are, but what is your identity? (Or, what will “your identity” be, for the purposes of this project?) Write down some words that describe your personal or professional identity. Use lots of adjectives and emotion words. Who are you? What do you want to communicate to others?
You will write an identity concept proposal — just one paragraph explaining your concept. This should not describe your visual concept, but rather the emotions and qualities that your design will evoke.

2. Monogram

Using skills we learn in class, use Illustrator to create a unified visual form that incorporates at least two letters (your initials). You will start by choosing an appropriate typeface in which to type your initials; then you will join the forms together by modifying the letterforms’ outlines and supplementing them with additional lines. Your monogram may be somewhat abstract, but the letters must be legible.

Your monogram must be in black and white only — no color or shades of gray.

During critiques, you may be asked to justify the visual form of your design. It should clearly communicate the emotions and qualities identified in your concept.

3. Mockups

To envision your design being used in real-world conditions, you will create at least three mockups of the monogram:

- on a business card
- on an envelope or stationery
- on a billboard

We will discuss how to do this in class, using both Illustrator and Photoshop to merge your vector artwork (the monogram) with digital photographs (e.g., of a billboard and other real-world objects). We will learn how to use Smart Objects, so you can continue to refine your monogram, and the mockups will be updated automatically with the latest version.

Your mockups must be in color, meaning they are created with color photographs. Within each mockup, the monogram must be represented using a single color, either black, white, or an appropriately selected color. The monogram cannot contain multiple colors or gradients.

4. Identity Document

Finally, you will assemble an identity document, explaining your concept, showing the monogram on a full page, and presenting your mockups of the monogram in use.
Final Deliverables

1. The Illustrator (.ai) file of your final monogram design.

2. Two to three paragraphs of text articulating the values behind your identity. (What is your design trying to communicate?)

3. At least three photographic mockups, illustrating the use of your identity in the following scenarios:
   - on a business card
   - on an envelope or stationery
   - on a billboard

4. A single PDF file, professionally packaged, that includes:
   - Your final design, by itself on one page
   - The explanatory text
   - The three additional mockups

Grading Standards

A  Completed the required deliverables, and packaged them into a professional-caliber identity document. Created a monogram that successfully communicates the intended qualities, and does so in an aesthetically superlative fashion. Created three or more mockups that represent real-world uses of the design. Wrote a clear, insightful explanation of the concept behind the design.

B  Completed the required deliverables, and packaged them appropriately into an identity document. Created a monogram that successfully communicates the intended qualities. Created three mockups that represent real-world uses of the design. Wrote a clear explanation of the concept behind the design.

C  Completed the required deliverables, including identity document. Created an appropriate monogram design, three mockups, and included a written explanation of the concept.
Technical Skills

You will become familiar with the following Illustrator tools, techniques, and concepts:

• Vectors (what they are, and when you should use them)
• Vectors as mathematical equations of coordinates
• The art board
• Document set up
• Lines and shapes
• Understanding paths and path structure
• Understanding anchor points
• Fonts and font management
• The type tool
• “Create outlines”
• Placing type on a path, and in an object
• The pen tool
• Using rulers
• Aligning objects
• Drawing tools: brush, pencil, spray can
• Using layers
• Use of Smart Objects across applications
• Saving images (for print and web)