LIVE, LAUGH, LOVE

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ROSIE

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GBDA

WHEN MILK GOES BAD IT MAKES YOGURT

LUKEYMC

DESIGN

BUSINESS

My design journey began with humble beginnings. Before taking this course, my design experience was limited to creating silly landscaping ad campaigns for summer jobs. I would literally make memes and post them on their Facebook. I had no experience whatsoever with marketing at all. But somehow they worked and they made a lot of money from those posts that summer. I was just as shocked as everyone else. There wasn't a lot of thought to that approach. I focused entirely on what looked good without understanding any of the underlying principles. I never spent any time learning about design principles or methodology at all.

My creative process changed a lot throughout this semester. At first, I approached design with a what looks good mentality. Looking back I realize how awful those designs were.

My creative process changed a lot throughout the semester. I quickly changed my approach to design from a what looks good mentality. I followed along with the lessons and tried to learn as much of the fundamentals and fundamentals and methodology that I needed to succeed. Now I have a much more intentional approach.

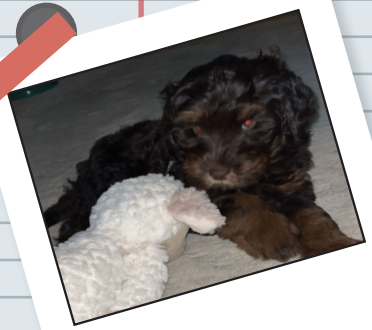
One big change in my process was using moodboards and planning my designs better. Moodboards have become essential to me. I found out of anything we did for preparation the moodboard helped the most for me. This allowed me to seek and use inspirations for the assignments. Before this course, I often struggled with finding direction for open-ended assignments. I felt that my ideas were too crazy or too far fetched. This allowed for more structure to my creative process. I could collect and organize inspirational elements before committing to a design path.

The storyboard I used for the brand identity in assignment 2 shows this evolution. "I really wanted to create a brand that reflected all of it" (Assignment 2 Reflection). This approach made me think narratively about design. I had to consider how visual elements could tell a comprehensive story. I never would have attempted this before.

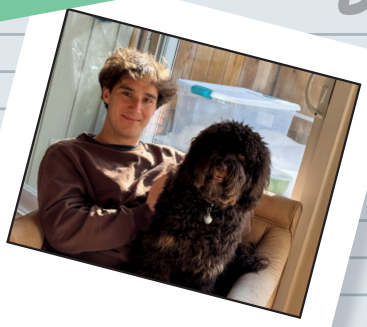
Visual hierarchy and storytelling were the most impactful course themes for me. These concepts were entirely new. I never had thought about this stuff before. Learning about visual hierarchy changed how I approached composition. This shows in my poster design: “I spent a lot of my time focusing on the overall composition of my poster… I spent time working on how the eye would travel. I did this to create a narrative about what kind of person she is. I wanted the eyes to travel across the poster revealing more about her” (Assignment 2 Reflection).

User experience principles also changed my design thinking. For the bear trap phone case project, I focused on communicating the emotion of hesitation. “I chose the bear trap because I wanted to emphasize why you should be hesitant. The bear trap is meant to show as a reminder that if you grab your phone there will be consequences” (Assignment 3 Reflection). This attention to emotional design and user interaction shows my growth. I went from someone who just made memes to someone who can create meaningful experiences through design.

CALGARY STAMPEDE



THE RODEO



WHERE HOME IS

WATERLOO

Another principle that stuck with me was simplicity. In my icon design project, I learned that “It is very difficult for the meaning of a piggy bank to not equal saving money” (Assignment 1 Reflection). This insight about widely recognized symbols helped me understand effective design. Often, clarity matters more than complexity.
My technical skills grew a lot during this course. I became better with indesign, photoshop, procreate (was a godsend) and found that illustrator was my favourite. i had the most fun using it for the assignment 1 logos. The vector capabilities of Illustrator impressed me: “My logo was created in Illustrator so I could take advantage of vectors and so the logo could be expanded to any size” (Assignment 2 Reflection).
For digital sketching, Procreate became essential. “For my sketches I did them digitally, I used procreate on my Ipad” (Assignment 2 Reflection). This tool made my ideation process easier and let me experiment more freely. I also improved my video editing skills using Adobe Premiere for the emotional object assignment.

My typography skills got better too. “I spent a lot of time working on the typography. I’ve always struggled with typography so I experimented by using Adobe Fonts to find a font for the first time and trying to pair it with another font” (Assignment 2 Reflection). This exploration of font pairing shows my growing attention to details I used to overlook.
Creating mockups was another valuable technique I learned. “Another thing that I learned from class was how to create the mockups. This was something new to me and I found it really cool to see how my design came to look in real life” (Assignment 2 Reflection). This added dimension of visualizing finished products improved my presentation skills a lot.
Throughout the course, I faced many design and technical challenges. For my icons project, perspective was a constant issue. “For all of my objects I struggled to get perspective right. The biggest challenge I had was being able to look at it and see that the lines aligned properly. My objects felt lopsided quite a bit. I was able to solve this by trial and error” (Assignment 1 Reflection).

THE GUYS

WINE NIGHT

MAX'S HOUSE

ST PADDY"S

LIFELONG BUDDIES

PANCAKED

LET'S DO A SILLY ONE

GRADUATION 2024

FIREWORKS

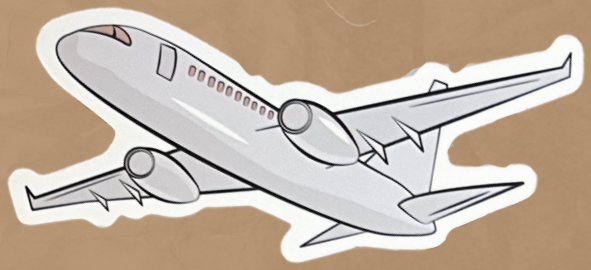
Material challenges came up during the bear trap project. “A huge challenge with my object was using the styrofoam. The styrofoam that I chose to build with was initially appealing because of its texture and weight, but it became very quickly evident that it was super difficult to work with. I wasn’t able to cut the styrofoam very well at all with box cutters or scissors” (Assignment 3 Reflection). This taught me valuable lessons about material selection and physical prototyping. Finding inspiration for open-ended assignments was another big hurdle. I found it very hard to get inspiration for a lot of the assignments. they felt very open ended and that is something that I have always struggled with.“I found the best way to overcome this was looking for inspiration in the books we passed around in class or to look online on sites like pinterest.

The design foundation I’ve built during this course will serve me well into the future. I think that I will use these skills for the rest of my life. I’ll use these skills when designing in harder classes. The methodical approach to design thinking I’ve developed especially the use of moodboards will continue to be valuable. I don’t think in future years I’ll be as lucky as to have such a detailed design process that we learnt. Like upper year classes won’t require use of moodboards but I’ll still write my own moodboard.

POWERLIFTING

LIFT HEAVY CIRCLES

LOCKED IN

GAINS

From this I now have solid techniques to move forward with.
The blend of technical software skills and conceptual understanding I've gained has transformed me. I went from someone who made "silly" marketing materials to a designer with a process and purpose. I now understand how to analyze user needs, convey emotions through design, and create work with intentional visual hierarchy and storytelling elements. This comprehensive skill set will be applicable across many contexts, from academic projects to professional work. This makes this course one of the most practically valuable experiences of my education.