

fall 2010 miami university
print design systems
helen armstrong
armstrh@muohio.edu
office hours: M. W. 4:00-5:00; T. 9:30-10:30
and by appointment any time

Project Three: Mass Customized Journals

INTRODUCTION: For this project, you will design the first issue of a new literary journal. Each issue of this journal curates a collection of poems written in a specific type of location. For this particular issue, a group of poets has written poems in parking lots. In addition to designing the journal, each student must come up with a way to individualize each copy of the journal. (See description of mass customization further down the page.)

Things to keep in mind about literary journals: Literary journals tend to represent the literary aesthetic of a particular moment. They often only last a few issues. These few issues, though, make a big splash. Everyone in a particular literary circle discusses them for a short period of time. Through such journals, poets can begin to make names for themselves and small literary communities take form.

RESEARCH: First, come up with a name for your journal. This journal title should work not only for this issue, but also for future issues in which the poems are written in a different location. For example, one issue might profile poems written in underpasses, one might profile poems written in playgrounds, etc.

Second, begin to research literary journals. Check out the links and research tips on the blog. Go to the library and thumb through some of the journals listed on the blog. Don't feel restricted by what you find. Your literary journal is not just about the language of the poetry, but also about the design of the piece. Feel free to use your design to explore the poems in any way that you see fit. In other words, the poems should not be treated as sacred texts.

Next begin to brainstorm about the theme "parking lots." (For example, parking lots are place that people pass through. People seldom remain in them for any length of time. Parking lots have environmental implications, etc.) Use our listing technique from last year to come up with ideas. You can use these ideas when you begin to actually develop imagery for the book. Read through the poems and take notes about what you find in them.

As you develop a look and feel for book, work to create a layout that reflects the overall theme of the publication. You will determine this theme as you come up with a title for your journal. Look through the examples brought to class and go to Art and Architecture Library to get more ideas. The final piece is entirely up to you. It might be bold like Mieke Gerritzen's work or more subtle like Stephen Farrell's designs. Your layout might respect the words of the poem or it may bend them to your will.

The best ideas will unite the journal name with a customization method. We will critique your ideas in class.

Keep in mind: although these ultimately will be produced on lulu.com, the customization will require handwork on your part. Lulu.com will, in essence, produce the first part of the book and you will produce the second. Anyone who wants to purchase this finished book will have to buy it directly from you so that you can customize it. Each person who receives this book should feel that they are getting a unique version of the journal.

Coming up with good ideas for customization is crucial so spend some time on this.

fall 2010 miami university
print design systems
helen armstrong
armstrh@muohio.edu
office hours: M. W. 4:00-5:00; T. 9:30-10:30
and by appointment any time

Project Three: Mass Customized Journals

POETRY LAYOUT, PHASE ONE: Develop a grid for your project. Using the grid, develop two different layouts for one of the poems. In these layouts you will need to think through the following typographic issues: headers and footers, main headings, bios, author's name, body text. Also determine the style of the imagery for the spread. This style should set a tone for the rest of the book. Bring these two layout variations to class for discussion/critique, full size and trimmed down. Make sure to use paragraph styles as you lay out the text. Each poem should take up at least one spread.

POETRY LAYOUT, PHASE 2 AND 3: Pick one direction for your layout and apply it to poems 1-6. Consider how the layout changes from poem to poem to reflect the poem's content and provide interesting visual pacing. Note that the poem *Big Lots* is the longest poem in the collection. It is a collaboration involving all the poets in the book. Make a conscious decision where this should fall in your book: in the beginning, the middle or the end? For Layout Phase 3, you will apply your layout to the remaining poems in the book. Each time you lay out more poems, you should revise the preceding ones as well to improve them. As you work on your layouts, keep the customization requirement in mind. This could affect your layout of the poems. Create thumbnails for your book as demonstrated in class. This will help you plan content for each spread while keeping the book as a whole in mind.

COVER (FRONT AND BACK) AND TABLE OF CONTENTS: Read the handout on cover design for books. Think back to your discussions last year. Refer to links on the blog. For this phase of the project you will bring in sketches, then an initial proof of the cover and table of contents, and then a revised proof. (See the schedule at the end for all of the dates.) Keep in mind the design process for a cover design discussed in class: 1) Define the problem; 2) Research; 3) Brainstorm; 4) Prioritize; 5) Try It; 6) Test it. Make sure your cover is visually interesting enough to pull in a user, yet clear enough that the intended message is easily communicated.

TITLE PAGE: Toward the end of the cover design period, I will ask you to bring in a title page layout. Title pages typically pick up on the cover design but simplify it in some way.

CUSTOMIZATION PHASE: As you determine and revise a direction for the layout, begin to think about the customization requirement of the project. How can you make each issue of this publication unique? Mock up at least two ideas for how this customization could happen in a publication. Bring these ideas to class.

NOTES ABOUT MASS CUSTOMIZATION: Publications are traditionally mass produced. Each copy is exactly like the next. Added value comes into play only when an author signs a copy, thereby making it unique. Recently, designers have begun to produce publications which are both mass produced and custom one off pieces. For example, Daniel Eatock's monograph includes an area on the spine for his fingerprint. Eatock went to the warehouse storing his book and applied the fingerprint to each copy himself. Each copy is therefore unique. Copies that were not fingerprinted could be brought to book signings so that Eatock could literally add his individual touch. Designer Luna Maurer designed a publication in which the page numbers were written in by hand in charcoal. Although the rest of the publication appeared to be a traditional mass produced book, the handwritten page numbers added an individual quality to each copy. In addition to the fact that they were written by hand, the charcoal smeared as the book was handled leading to more customization. In both cases, the human touch fought the anonymity of computer generated design.

fall 2010 miami university
print design systems
helen armstrong
armstrh@muohio.edu
office hours: M. W. 4:00-5:00; T. 9:30-10:30
and by appointment any time

Project Three: Mass Customized Journals

The challenge of this journal is that, although the bulk of it is mass produced through lulu.com, each copy must be unique. How to achieve that is up to you.

FINAL FILE PRES: At this end of this project, each student will prepare their file to upload to lulu.com. Follow the prepress checklist to do this. The final files will be brought to class for review and then we will upload them to lulu in class. Once the books come back from lulu, each student must customize it, photograph for the blog, and turn it in to be graded.

SPECS

Flat Size 12 x 9

Trim Size 6 x 9

4 color process (4cp): However, I strongly urge you to consider your color palette carefully. Use either a very restrained palette or go crazy with color. Don't fall someone in between.

Maximum of two typefaces

fall 2010 miami university
print design systems
helen armstrong
armstrh@muohio.edu
office hours: M. W. 4:00-5:00; T. 9:30-10:30
and by appointment any time

Project 3: Literary Journal