

graphic design

FOR STARTERS

Brief intro to graphic design (and its relationship to the music industry). This will include a 15-20 minute presentation and some time for questions.

WARM-UP—MUSICAL CHAIRS (APPROXIMATELY 15 MINUTES)

We want to explore how music can influence the visual. This exercise will use three different stations for the exploration. Don't worry, you will have a chance to visit all three stations.

Station One : *Typography* : stencils, sharpies, pencils, letraset, type specimens {At this station, we want you to focus on the structure of the music—think about repetition, emphasis, tempo, pattern, volume—what do these musical elements look like?}

Station Two : *Image* : magazine clippings, printouts, sharpies, pencils {At this station, we want you to focus on associations—what does the music remind you of in the larger culture, or your own life experiences?}

Station Three : *Color* : colored paper, markers, watercolors {At this station, we want you to focus on the mechanical qualities of the music—what processes created the music? Blowing, drumming, strumming, clapping? What do those gestures look like?}

Each of you will start at one of the stations. We will play a song, and you will use the tools at your station to visually respond to the music. Do whatever you'd like. Go crazy. Peek at someone else's work. Get messy.

As soon as the song is over, you will leave your creation behind and move to the next station. We will play a different song, and you will repeat the exercise with your new tools. We will photograph each composition, and share them all with you on a disk.

WARM-UP—MASH-UP (APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES)

We want to see how an existing visual design can prompt a whole new design through the art of mashing up different elements. The paper size we have been working with is the same as a CD cover. Each of you will pick two random words out of a container to use as the name of a fictional band, and will create artwork for your band's next album. You will begin with one of the compositions you designed in the last exercise. Now, instead of responding to the music you hear, we want you to respond to the visual design that you see. You will create a brand new design—using elements from other student's work, elements from your original composition, and any new elements you wish to create using the tools from the previous exercise. You may cut apart, tear, paste together, paste on top of—have fun! (Remember, all the compositions have been photographed and "saved".) And don't forget, you can work together, bounce ideas off one another and share elements.

CRITIQUE SESSION—TIME TO TALK ABOUT THE WORK

We will have a brief group critique of the compositions from the warm-up project after lunch. The discussion will center around how the CD covers deal with scale, color, juxtaposition, and layout. You will each receive a disk tomorrow morning containing all the compositions created during the warm-up. You can continue mashing them together at home.

SUPER-BAND-CREATION-FUNTIME

The afternoon will focus on creating a poster, button and (if we have time) other items for a fictional band. We will use a grab bag technique to help you devise your band and to start thinking about their identity. This project will show you how different elements can come together to create a system of design.

Step 1 : *Grab-bag session* to randomly select elements that will help you create your client

Step 2 : *Brainstorm*—sketching and individual/small group discussions. You will fill out a creative brief to help determine the personality/identity of your client. Then through sketching, word association and bouncing ideas off each other in small groups, you will start thinking about ways to show your client's personality visually. Your goal is to communicate who your band is and show why someone might want to listen to their music or attend a concert or live show.

Step 3 : *Element construction*—you will create a poster, button and, if we have time, other elements (stickers, tickets, flyers, t-shirt design) for your client. We will use the tools from the warm-up project, along with digital cameras, the xerox machine, scanners, and digital type on the computers to develop dynamic designs.

Remember to think about our discussion during the critique session. How will your designs address scale, color, juxtaposition and/or layout? You should also think about the message of your poster—the words you choose are just as important as the font. What are you trying to say? Who is your audience? How does your message relate to that audience? Where will people wear your button? On a jacket? A bag? What might the button say about their style? Where will your poster be hung? In a bedroom? On a brick building? In a school? How might the message change when the context changes?