



Open
College
of the Arts

Formative feedback

Student name	Daniel Sutton	Student number	516636
Course/Unit	Book Design 1 - Creative Book Design	Assignment number	Two
Type of tutorial	Written		

Overall Comments

Part two looked at the structure of a book, and at how this may be adapted to reflect a book's function. It examined the format, scale and size of books, considered the choices of paper and binding available to designers, and examined how this relates to the nature of the book as an object to be held, read and interacted with. Your practical work is of a very high standard, and you are conducting some good research. Further independent exploration of drawing/design is recommended.

Project One: The function of books

Exercise 1: The function of books

This exercise asked you to identify a range of at least 6 books that have fundamentally different functions in terms of how these books are engaged with - how they're held, where they're read, by whom, and for what purpose.

It's great to see you examining such a diverse range of different book types, including more functional instruction/information books as well as more mainstream books to see how they are designed and constructed.

This exercise is essentially an investigation of the publisher's decision making when planning the material properties of books, for example, smaller format books with a hard, wipeable cover as they are likely to be used outdoors, and you go some way to discussing this.

Overall you have made a good start to the second part of the course.

Project Two: The form of books

Research task: Book terminology

This research task asked you to familiarise yourself with the terminology used in describing the anatomy of a book and write some brief notes in your learning log on how the various structural elements could be modified to reflect the book's function.

Good work here, you have laid an adequate groundwork in your investigation of the anatomy of the book, and your notes may prove invaluable moving forward in the articulation of your decision making in regards to book making. I would recommend adding to this as the course progresses as there is a wealth of terms still to be discovered.

Exercise 2: Paper and binding choices

Collect and critically examine the physical properties of as many different kinds of books as you can, looking at paper type/weight, binding method, and how the cover relates to the body of the book.

You have analysed each respective binding technique thoroughly, although it would have been good to see you questioning *why* a particular binding style may have been chosen for each book. Overall a good effort.

Research Task: Paper and Bookbinding

Further inform your understanding of paper and bookbinding by reading pages 165–180 of Alan Pipes' chapter 'On Press', collect lots of different paper samples, and assemble these into a standalone book, or integrate them into your sketchbook, with a view to starting an ongoing resource that you can add to, and refer back to.

Some good samples investigated here, the material qualities of paper and print finishes can be an addictive area of interest, working with printmakers and paper merchants I often see the excitement when a new paper comes on the market, and the amount of thought involved in choosing a particular paper type and finish isn't always apparent in a finished product unless you know what you are looking at. It is great to see that this research task has been of interest for you and that the knowledge acquired has informed your response to paper products in general.

Exercise 3: Book designers

This exercise aimed to broaden your understanding of other book designers' work by looking at their cover designs, by starting to identify the kinds of book covers you are drawn to, and critically assess why you think these designs are successful.

You have selected a very wide range of examples to work from, and you have gone some way to breaking down and analysing the composition and balance of elements within selected examples of work by Baines and Rand, it would have been better if the balance between your own investigations into the composition of different covers and your research had been a bit more even, as at the moment it's very research heavy, and analysing the decisions made by designers regarding the composition of text and image in their designs in a visual way can be an important exercise as it can help inform your own use of composition.

Exercise 4: Designing a cover

This exercise asked you to identify some key elements within a particular classic novel (such as *1984* or *the Handmaid's Tale*) and create lots of different cover designs by rearranging these elements.

Excellent work for this exercise, your extensive initial research has provided you with a wealth of material to work from in the development of your designs, and overall your resulting cover artwork examples for *A Clockwork Orange* are of a professional standard.

Assessment potential

I understand that you plan to submit your work for assessment at the end of this course. From the work you have shown in this assignment, and providing you commit yourself to the course, I suggest that you are likely to be successful in the assessment.

Feedback on Assignment Two: Form and function

Assignment two provides a creative opportunity to put into practice what you have learnt so far, by exploring the physicality of the book in relation to its function and working through the design process in relation to a set brief. Your brief - Design the book format and cover artwork for two different versions of Daniel Defoe's classic 1719 novel Robinson Crusoe.

An excellent effort for your second assignment. Your research and preparatory work is extensive, the sheer volume of thumbnails and mockups produced to test the composition of the cover artwork in relation with the spine and back cover is impressive, and indicates a methodical and exploratory approach to generating engaging cover artwork. Your use of digital software to produce clean and uncluttered designs, as well as to demonstrate details within your designs, such as the gold embossed motifs on the hard cover versions, really highlights your skill in this area, and all of your mockups are of a very high standard. An extra step could have included looking at integrating the end papers into the cover design, they could feature a repeat pattern of your cover motifs, for example, or they could even be used as a way to continue the design inside of the book in order to give the viewer more of an interactive experience. Just a thought.

To summarize;

- Clean and engaging layouts.
- Good integration of text and image elements across each publication.
- Extensive preparatory work evident.

Overall your response to the second part of the course has been methodical and thorough, there is evidence of you using a range of approaches to image making and integration in order to widen your repertoire, and further pushing of your process to see how your methods and materials behave and the results they can produce is advised. Your use of typography is coming along very nicely indeed, and I would encourage you to continue to make the most of the content of the course by continuing to critically evaluate your response to the tasks as you go along, and push your making where there is opportunity to do so.

Learning Log / Blogs

Your log is clear and easy to navigate. You have pulled research from a wide range of sources for the exercises, and there is some evidence of you beginning to work independently in your sketchbook, which is fantastic. Moving forward I would recommend that you regularly put aside some time to conduct independent work, whether that is in the form of drawing, font design or bookbinding/folding techniques.

Suggested viewing/reading

Take a look at the following organisations, all of which are dedicated to book arts;

<https://londonbookarts.org/>

<https://arnolfini.org.uk/whatson-category/minibabe/>

<https://centerforbookarts.org/>

Also here are some people/groups that you might find interesting, including the designer of the wonderful *The Secret Lives of Colour*, the illustrator of a version of *The Handmaid's Tale*, and a lovely film of graphic designer Karel Martens;

<http://www.jamesedgardesign.com/>

<http://florenceboyd.com/portfolio/book-covers/>

<https://posterzine.com/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkZT7-Xn4C4>

Pointers for the next assignment

- Reflect on this feedback in your learning log
- Conduct independent drawing/material experimentation in your sketchbook/digital sketchbook

Tutor name:	India Wilkins
Date:	10/07/20
Next assignment due:	01/10/20