GRAPHIC DESIGN PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

ALGONQUIN COLLEGE

graphic design

This dynamic and challenging three-year Ontario College Advanced Diploma program is designed for individuals who are interested in applying their creativity to communicating ideas and concepts in both print and digital media. Students develop the expertise required to become graphic designers through strong practical and theoretical training in typography, the basic fundamentals of creativity, design, image, form, colour, and production skills. The program includes extensive hands-on training in current software tools which allows students to present their design solutions in a variety of formats.

Graphic designers are problem-solvers who research and manage visual design projects. They establish a project's goals and objectives, analyze needs/problems, develop visual solutions, and prepare concept presentations for client approval, which ranges from simple sketches to full colour layouts. Designers develop concepts in consultation with clients and work with photographers, illustrators, web developers, programmers and other creative professionals to produce print, digital, and audio-visual communications.

Traditionally, graphic designers focused primarily on print media including brochures, logos, corporate identity materials, annual reports, promotional posters, signage systems, packaging, film and video graphics, publication design for books and magazines, and flyers. However, with the emergence of digital visual communication, graphic designers have become more involved in web design, motion and broadcast graphics, and design for interactive media.

Students study the design fundamentals for print and screen in the first two years of the program. In the third year, students choose a print or electronic media specialization and take part in field placement for on-the-job training and experience.

Graduates produce a comprehensive design portfolio profiling their skills and abilities, and have the opportunity to display their best work at an annual Grad Show exhibition for graphic design professionals and the public.

SUCCESS FACTORS

This program is well-suited for students who:
- Enjoy working with type and images to communicate their ideas.
- Like to draw and use software tools to create images and documents.
- Are detail-oriented, organized, and committed to achieving excellence in their final products.
- Think visually and creatively and are conceptual thinkers.

Graduates of this program pursue careers through a variety of entry-level positions in graphic design studios, advertising agencies, web publications, multimedia production houses, magazines, newspapers, printing houses, retail stores, television/entertainment industries, and government agencies or educational institutions. Graduates may also work as freelancers providing print and/or digital design solutions to clients' communication problems.

For more information, please contact:
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or visit :
http://www.algonquincollege.com/GraphicDesign or http://www.algonquincollege.com/MediaAndDesign/programs/graphic_design.htm

the graphic designer

The Graphic Design Industry is constantly changing with the times. Here are a few areas/job descriptions to where our program can lead you.

Creative Director
Creative directors develop the concept and overall experience of a project with the client and department directors. They provide the design team a creative framework to consider, and specific goals to achieve.

Art Director
Art directors are very detail oriented, and often work with a team of designers or multiple marketing and design departments to establish and unify the visual communication of a project.

Graphic Designer
Graphic designers use form, colour and typography to visually communicate to a specific target audience. They create the look-and-feel of the graphics and content used in print and digital media.

Brand Developer
Brand developers leverage graphics, typography, messaging and the strategic use of various medias to establish the public persona, or character, of a company or organization.

Illustrator
Illustrators use visual communication to tell a story. They create artwork for 2D and 3D projects using a range of medias and tools, from pencils and paper to tablets and modeling software.

Production Artist
Production artists have a strong understanding of the technical requirements of a project. Efficient and fast-working, they're good at taking designs and realizing them into polished, market-ready products.

Prepress Technician
Prepress technicians have a variety of responsibilities including managing type and photography assets of press-ready artwork, checking proofs for technical tolerances, and preparing files for offset printing

Interaction Designer
Interaction designers conceptualize how humans will use a product or service. They design and develop user interfaces and interactive content for digital projects such as websites and mobile apps.

Motion Graphics Designer
Motion graphics designers layer moving graphics and audio to communicate a message. They often work in the entertainment or advertising industry working on projects for film, television and games.

To be successful, Graphic Designers must combine their strategic, artistic and technical skills to produce effective visual communication solutions for their client. Graphic Designers execute projects based on client input, research, experience and team collaboration. They create and develop designs for posters, brochures, advertisements, websites, mobile apps, and other printed and digital products and services.

Good design will enhance the clients image and bottom line, *meeting the clients objective.*

Graphic designers are hired by their clients to visually communicate ideas. The ultimate goal of a graphic designer is to meet the expressed needs of the client.

portfolio submission

As part of the application process, you are required to submit a layout test, a drawing test, as well as a portfolio. There is a portfolio assessment fee payable to Algonquin College with your submission. Please check online for information on cost of the assessment.

Please find below specific instructions on how to complete each of these items. **TIP:** if you are unfamiliar with some of the terminology, a few hours of research on line to graphic design related sites will help. If you are a serious aspiring designer, you might want to buy a few trade magazines: *Applied Arts, How Magazine* or *Communication Arts* — just to mention a few.

The portfolio submission is a sampling of 10 to 15 of your best pieces of art and design and should demonstrate creativity, neatness and how you have developed your ideas. The portfolio should also demonstrate your hand skills and how well you can sketch your ideas. Included with your 10 to 15 pieces you will also supply a drawing and layout test (originals).

Plagiarism is not tolerated! Applicants who have submitted work which is not their own, will not be accepted to the program.

Your portfolio submission should include:

• Drawings in ink or pencil (colour and/or B&W mix) created from observation, imagination and/or memory. Try to show a variety of work — not just drawings. You could incorporate some of your drawings into a layout that incorporates type or photography (such as a magazine cover layout, CD cover design, product label, etc).

• Thumbnail sketches that show how you developed an idea into a finished piece. Show your research, preliminary sketches, works in progress especially if you supply computer generated layouts and designs.

• Any exploration in typographic design would be great to include. (Research *typography* if you are not familiar with this term).

• Projects that combine text and graphics in a finished commercial application such as posters, folders, ads, logos, etc.

• Show work that reflects your understanding and use of colour. Consider focal point, cropping and placement of multiple images in your layout.

The following will NOT be accepted :

• Loose samples in a garbage bag or rolled in a mailing tube
• Scrapbooks or binders
• 35 mm slides of artwork or CD's
• Any form of sculpture or fabric arts, oil paintings, framed or unframed. Please supply photographs or photocopies of any large pieces like paintings or sculptures. Do not send originals of any work).

Please supply photographs or photocopies or your originals. If you submit work that was part of a collaboration, indicate what part you played in the process. Portfolios will NOT be returned unless requested and picked up by applicant.

DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSIONS — APRIL 30
Completed portfolios should be delivered to :
Algonquin College Graphic Design Department
Room N215, 1385 Woodroffe avenue,
Ottawa, ON K2G 1V8

portfolio kit

You may purchase a Graphic Design portfolio kit from the *Algonquin College Bookstore*: (613) 727-4723 ext. 7609.

The kit includes the following:
- A cardboard mailing package;
- A return self-adhesive address label;
- 2 - 10" x 15" #27 Illustration Boards (for the portrait and layout tests);
- 18 sheets of 12" x 18" black poster board for mounting your portfolio pieces.

Label the package clearly with your name and contact information including your student number. The key point is to make sure your presentation is neat. Centre your pieces on the boards. Mount the work using double-sided tape, adhesive spray or rubber cement. Include your name on every item submitted. If you are not able to obtain the kit, all contents in the kit can be purchased at any art supply store. Simply supply pieces in a large envelope.

design studies

Acceptance is based on the quality and creativity of your work and the results of your tests. If you are not accepted into the Graphic Design Program, Algonquin offers options that could improve your chances of acceptance in the future.

Algonquin College has a one year Design Studies certificate program through General Arts and Science. Students who complete this program develop quality portfolios that have a good chance of acceptance into Graphic Design.

The college also offers various Visual Arts courses through the School of Part-time Studies that can improve skills in graphic techniques. The courses in the Part-time Studies program can not be used for exemptions from courses in the Graphic Design Program.
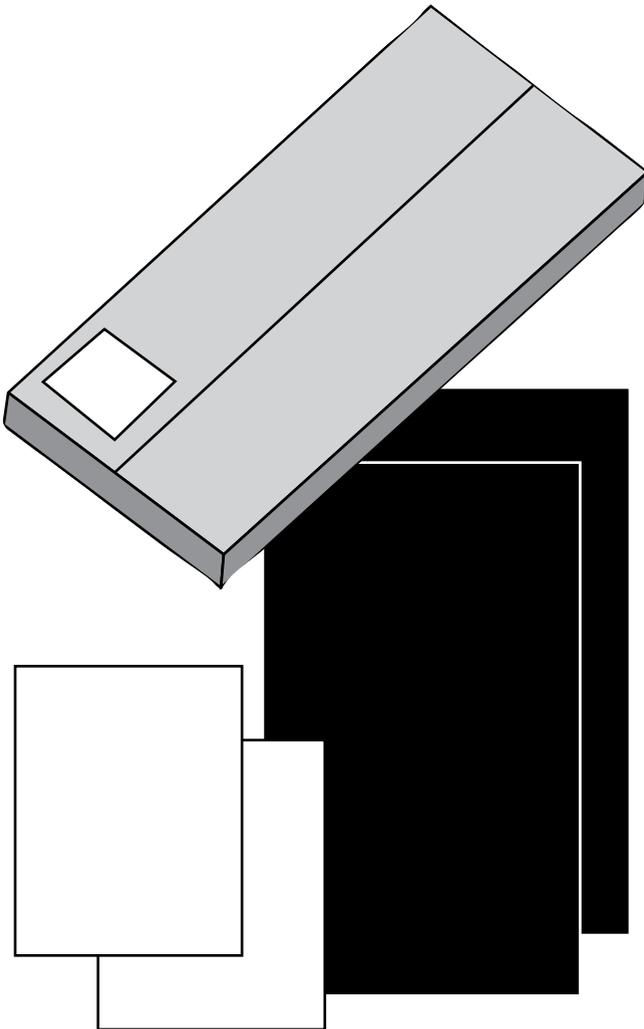
required drawing test

The drawing test will tell the portfolio reviewer a lot about the applicant. Attention to detail, pencil control, style and cleanliness are all taken into consideration here. The ability to follow instructions is also noted.

- Draw a 6" x 9" self-portrait centered on an 8.5"x11" piece of #27 white illustration board (if you purchase the Portfolio Kit it will be 10" x 15". (See information for the *Portfolio Kit* on the facing page).

- Render your portrait in pencil. Attention to detail, style and cleanliness is very important.

- Tape a recent photo of yourself to the back of the board.

Samples of different styles will show what is acceptable for a successful portfolio submission on the following pages. Two samples of unacceptable styles of portraiture have also been included.
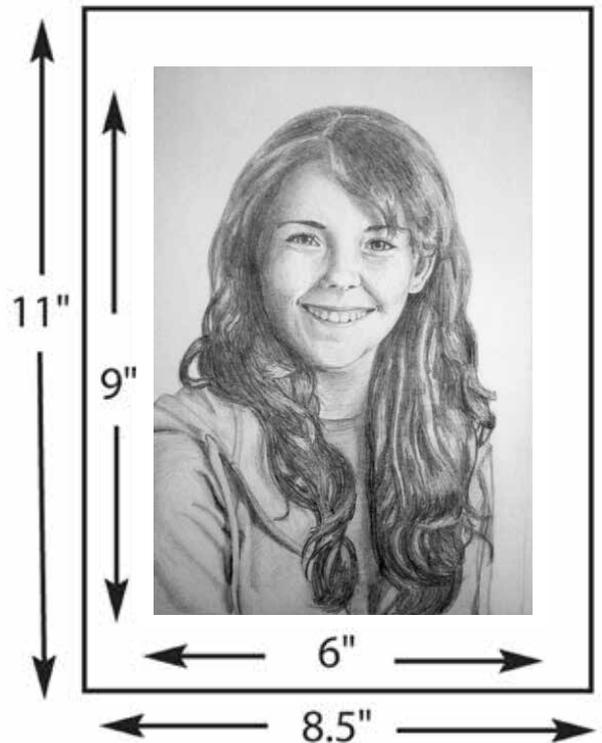
Megan Raddatz, 2010

self portrait samples
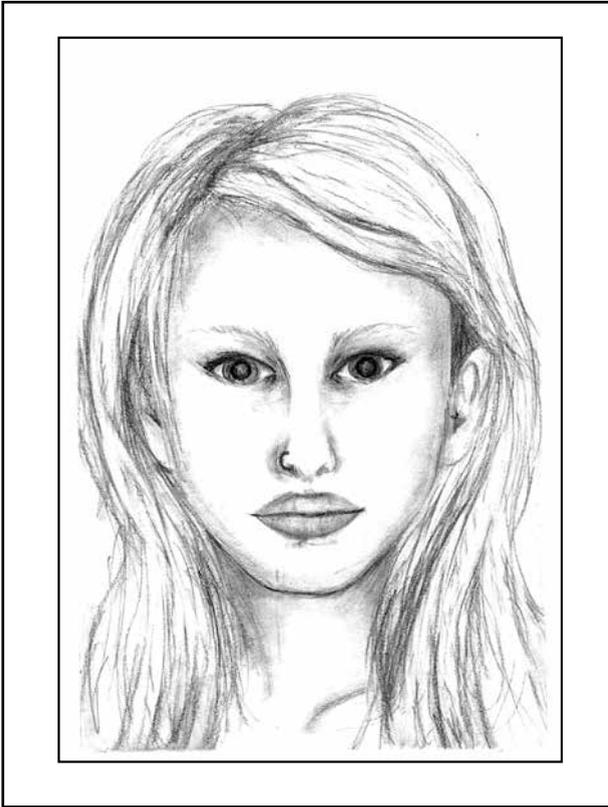
Becky Gilroy, 2009

Adam Jamieson, 2009

The portrait shown here shows a realistic image with loose pencil work. The well rendered and detailed eyes provide a prominent focal point.
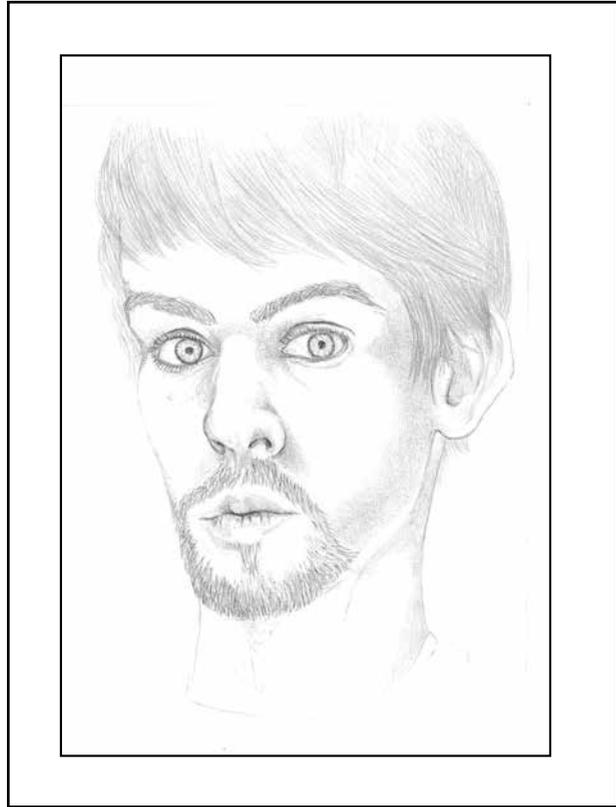
The unfinished top of the portrait head provides visual interest; this is rendered very well with detailed pencil work and an interesting 3/4 angle.

self portrait samples
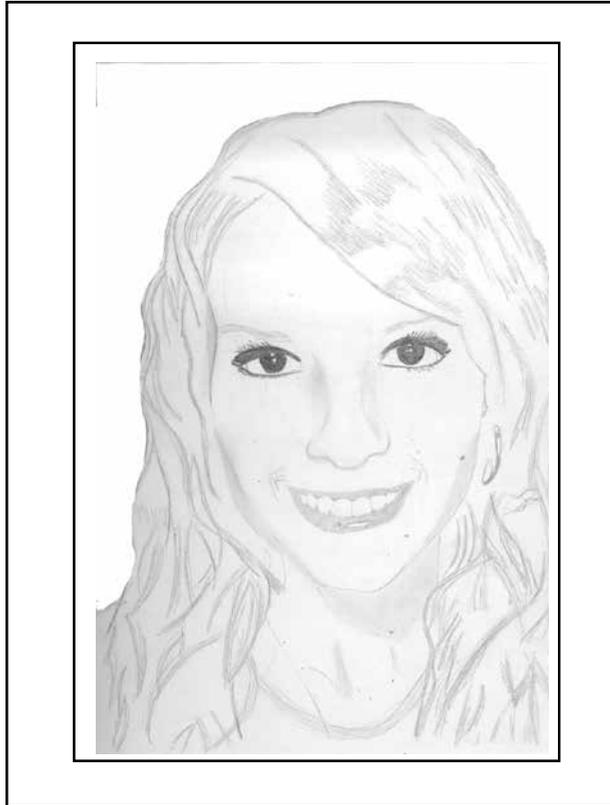
Rhiannon Charette, 2010

Ania Kolecki, 2009

The interesting placement of the portrait on the page and the light pencil work shows skill.
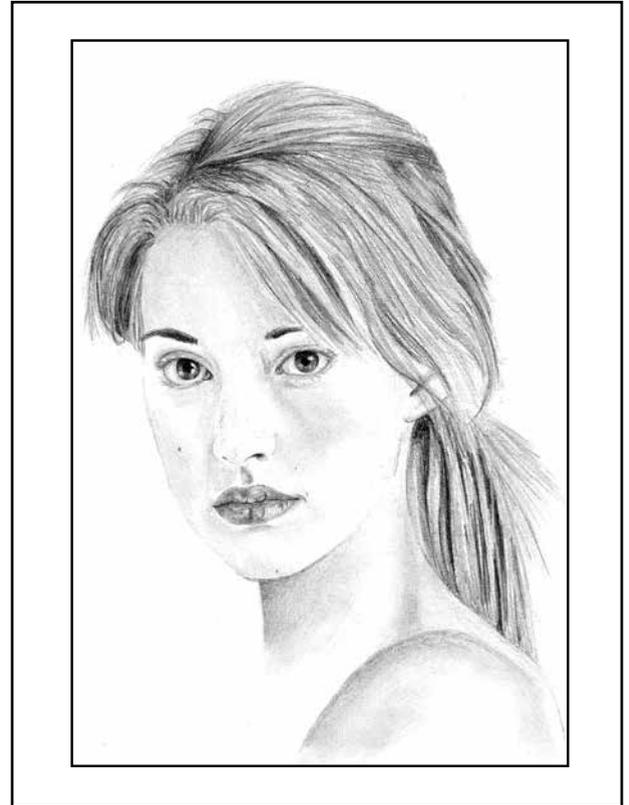
This very highly skilled portrait shows extremely talented artistic skill in drawing. There is an interesting 3/4 angle, fine attention to detailed shading and wonderful detail in the hair.

self portrait samples
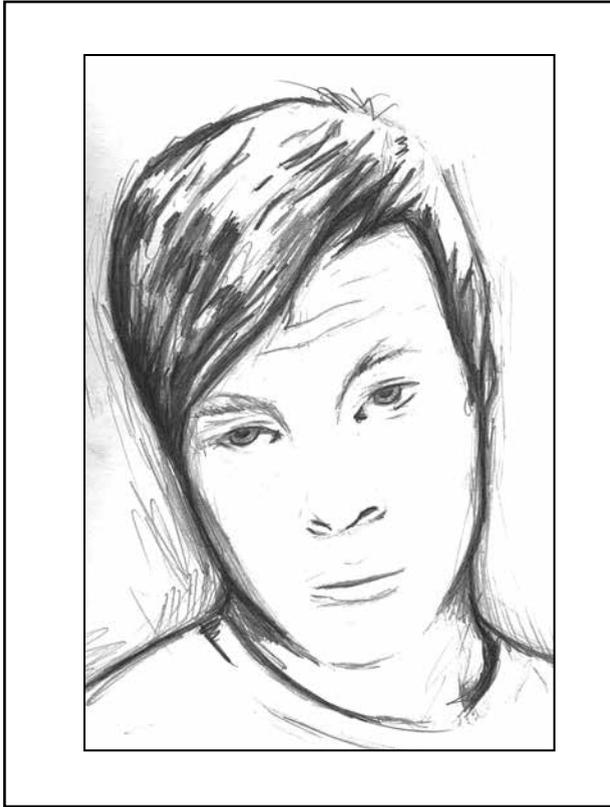
Bryan Dunlay, 2008

Maureen Gibbs, 2009

A self portrait doesn't have to be a high-end, realistic drawing. The portrait above shows a stylized flair and an interesting view point.
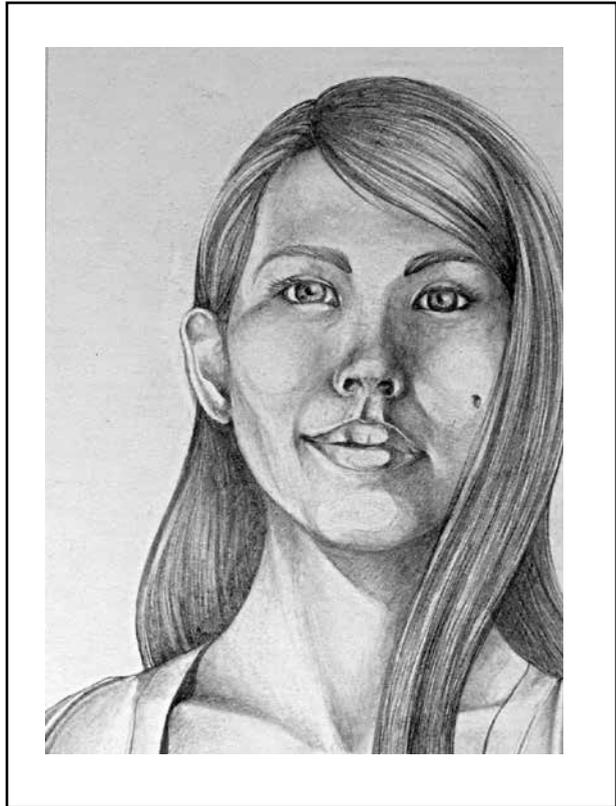
This self portrait shows great drawing talent. Excellent rendering technique, attention to detail and shadow detail. The position, cropping and view point adds a wonderful touch.

self portrait samples

Amethyst Wreggitt, 2009

Naomi Kuhn, 2009

Try to pay attention to the view selection and cropping.

This portrait shows wonderful expression apart from the detailed rendering.

These two self portrait examples would not be acceptable. Simple line work, over smudging and pieces that are not very clean will not be considered.

required layout test

Your layout test will determine your ability to work within a required area with type and images. You must r**edesign** the advertisement so that it is pleasing, readable and contains all the information from the original ad.

- Select a jewelry business advertisement from the yellow pages or newspaper.

- In pencil, **redesign** and re-draw the ad to a new size of 6" wide x 9" high on an 8.5" x 11" piece of #27 white illustration board. If you purchase the Portfolio Kit the illustration board will be 10" x 15". Just centre your 6"x9" layout nicely on the larger board supplied in the kit. (*Information for the Portfolio Kit is found on page 4.*)

- In your new layout, include all of the text as well as the company logo from the original ad.

- If your ad has no image, draw any piece of jewelry (watch, ring, etc.) and include it within your newly designed ad.

- Tape a copy of the original paper advertisement to the back of your board.

Attention to detail, style and cleanliness is important. Original artwork must be submitted. Illustration board can be purchased at any art store.

Ania Kolecki, 2009

Bryan Dunlay, 2008

Sample of original Yellow Page ad layout.

The left layout (above) shows extremely good treatment of text and image. The original ad is at left, below.

The layout directly above shows an interesting treatment of the heading with type reversed out of a black background. The image of a ring has been interestingly placed and well cropped.

layout samples

Laura Forbes, 2010

Layouts can also be redesigned in a landscape layout. They can be simple and clean with well rendered images and type. Watch spelling!
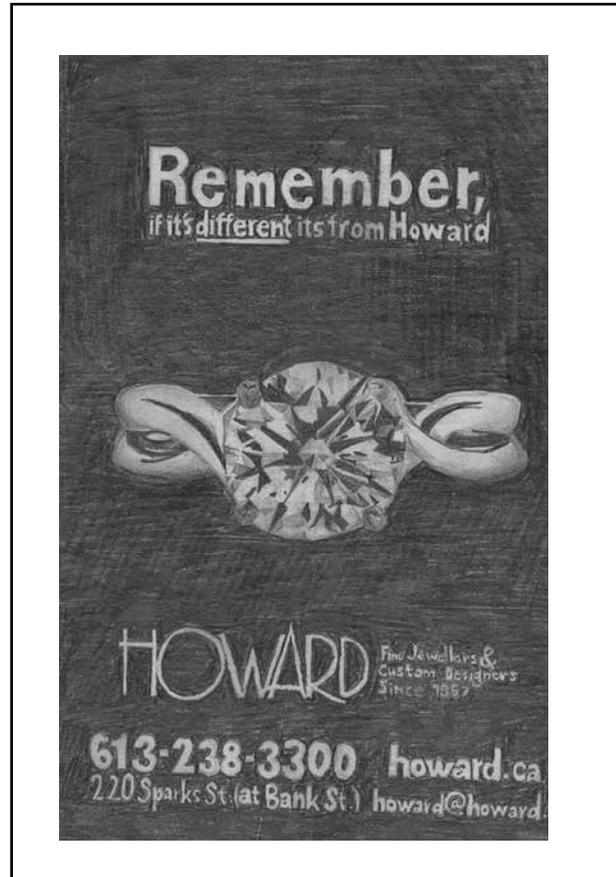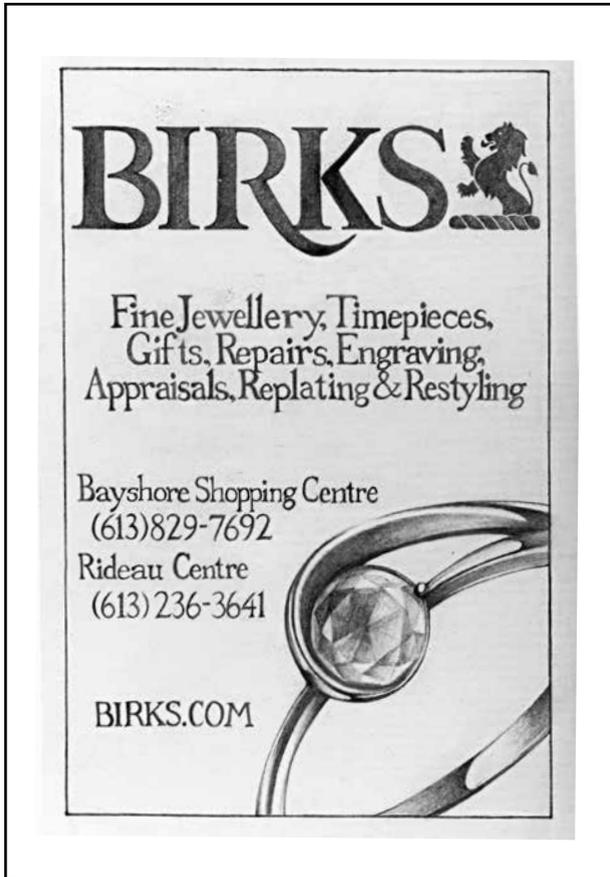
Maureen Gibbs, 2009

The layout above shows good treatment of the heading. The image has been cropped with type wrapped around. it

At right is the original Yellow Page ad layout.
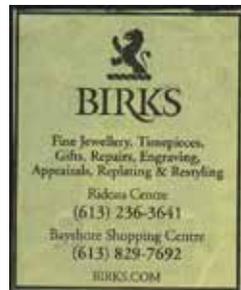
The layout above shows a black background with reversed out whilte type. This could be difficult to complete successfully and cleanly.

layout samples
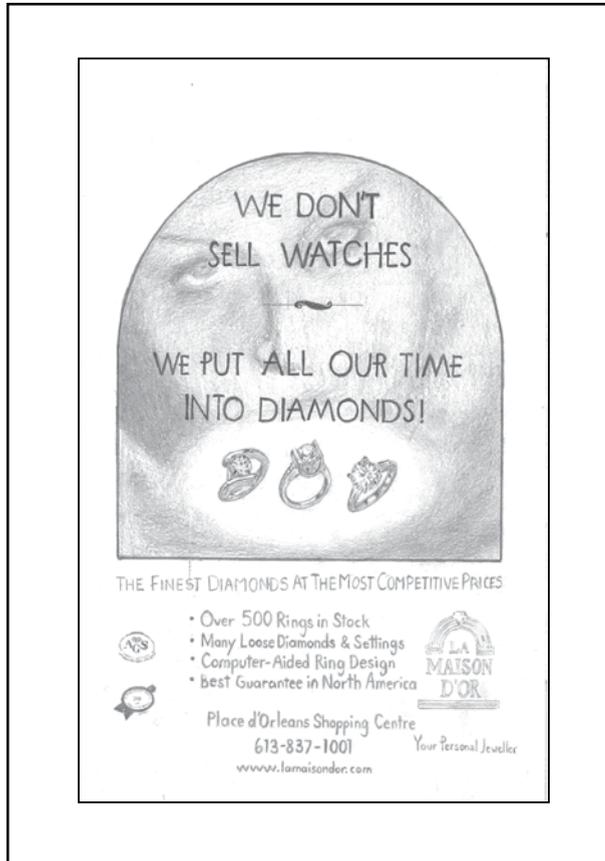
Naomi Kuhn, 2009

This layout shows an interesting combination of illustration and typography. It is a well designed, well balanced page.
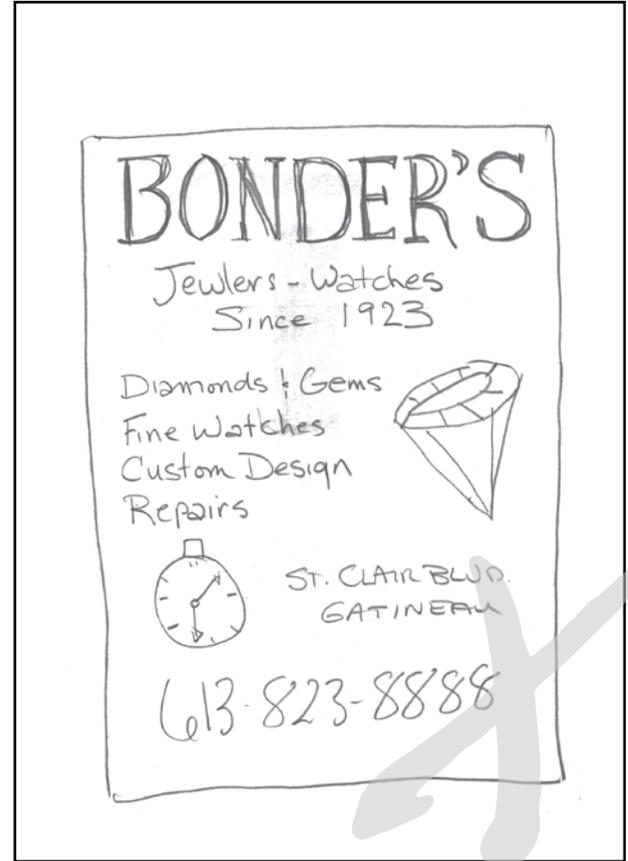
Unacceptable layouts would be done on paper and not the required board; Layouts that appear to be quickly done with no real sense of layout and look more like a rough sketch; Type and image do not work together or type is unreadable.

Images should look finished and not roughly sketched as shown above. Attention to layout and quality of rendering is very important.

the portfolio

Your portfolio is representative of you and what you can do.

Be very critical and proud of what you put into it. The number of pieces in your portfolio is up to you but we suggest between 10 to 15. The number is not that important — what is important, is quality and variety. Presentation is key as well. If you do not take care and pride in your portfolio, it will say a lot about you and your commitment to the program.

You should explore and research all aspects of graphic design to determine the wide scope and areas of design that graphic design entails. Graphic Designers do not sit and draw all the time.

Lots of drawings in your portfolio will not tell us very much about your ability. Drawing certainly show some of your ability — your self portrait will tell a lot about your drawing skills — but try to incorporate your drawings into something that we do as visual communicators. Incorporate drawing into a layout, cover design, package design, etc. If you include lots of cartoons or Anime then maybe Animation is the program you should be looking at.

Hand rendered work is acceptable, as well as computer generated pieces. You should show thumbnail sketches of work to show progression of your design when needed. (*Thumbnail sketches* are rough sketches of designs, see page 22 and 23 for samples of thumbnails). Thumbnail sketches are especially important when showing computer generated pieces. Consider including the redesign of an existing logo or package in your portfolio, and if you do, include the original design.

Typography is a crucial and important part of graphic design. Any piece that incorporates type would stand out. Explore type shapes and possibilities in design and create abstract images with type or layouts that would incorporate your images and type.

Photography is also good to include in your portfolio. Photographs should show interesting subjects and creative cropping.

Typographical Design
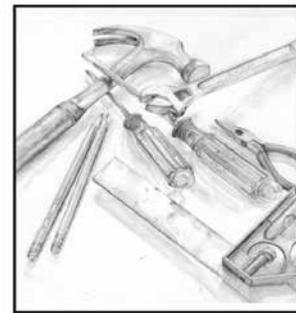
Illustrations

Illustration/Typography
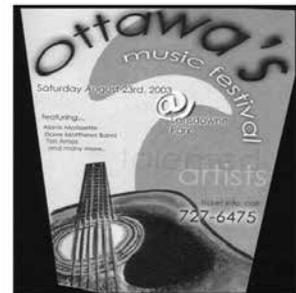
Layout
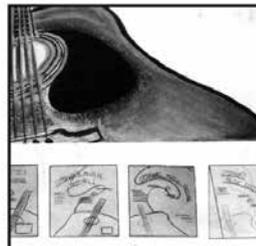
Thumbnails

Logo/Label Design

typographic design

1

2

1 **Stephanie Chartrand, 2009**

2 **Megan Raddatz, 2010**

3 **Chris Plosaj, 2010**

3

typographic design

1

2

3

1. Font creation
   Adam Jamieson, 2009

2. Playful creations of type
   Emily Whalen, 2009

3. Typographic Collage
   **Christine Plourde, 2008**

typographic design

1. Exploration of type

2. Typographical Portrait
   Laura Forbes, 2010

typographic design

Chris Plosaj, 2010

typographic design

Megan Raddatz, 2010
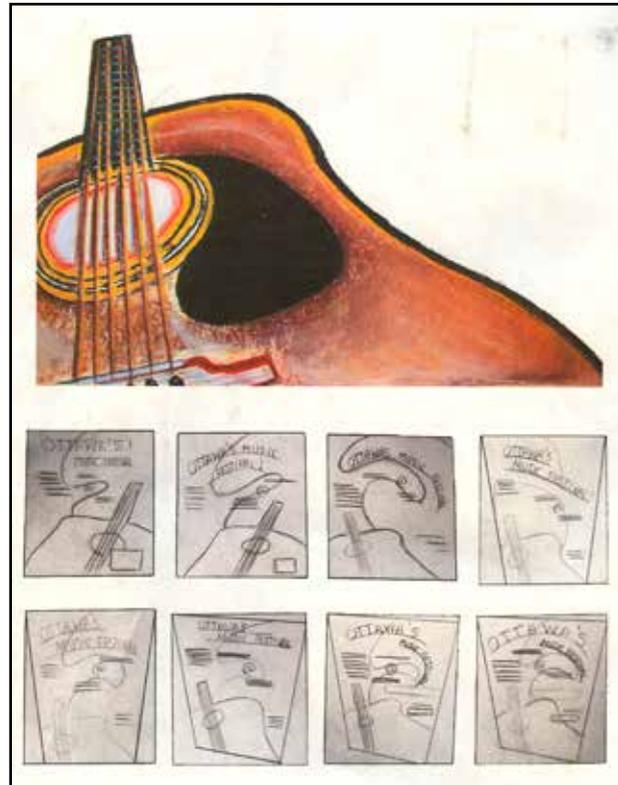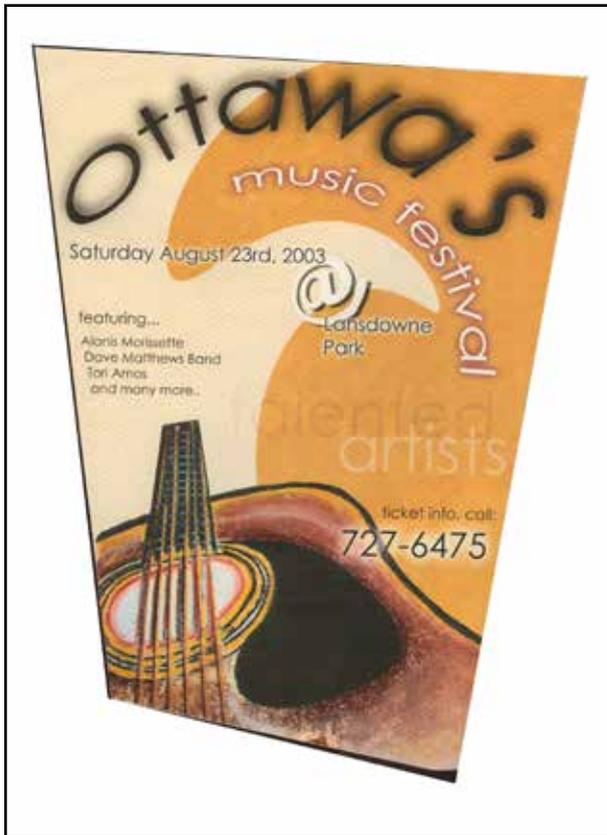
The layout example above shows a finished printed layout. The image to the right shows thumbnail sketches of different layouts to determine the final design as well as the illustration that was incorporated into the design.

Thumbnails are the best way to get your ideas down on paper before you decided on the finished design. ***Thumbnails are a must for the graphic designer.***

type, image and layout
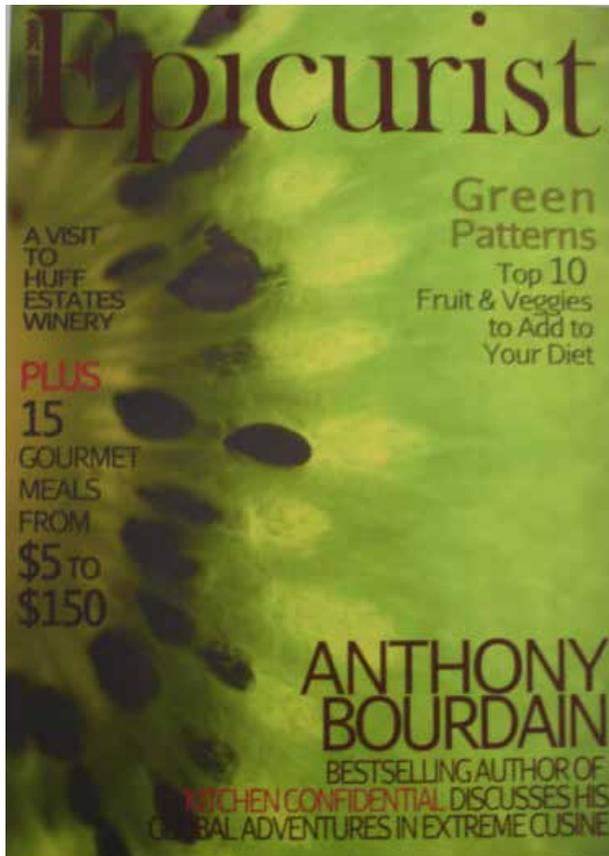
Magazine Cover Layout
Chris Plosaj, 2010

Thumbnail sketches for final layout
Chris Plosaj, 2010

type, image and layout
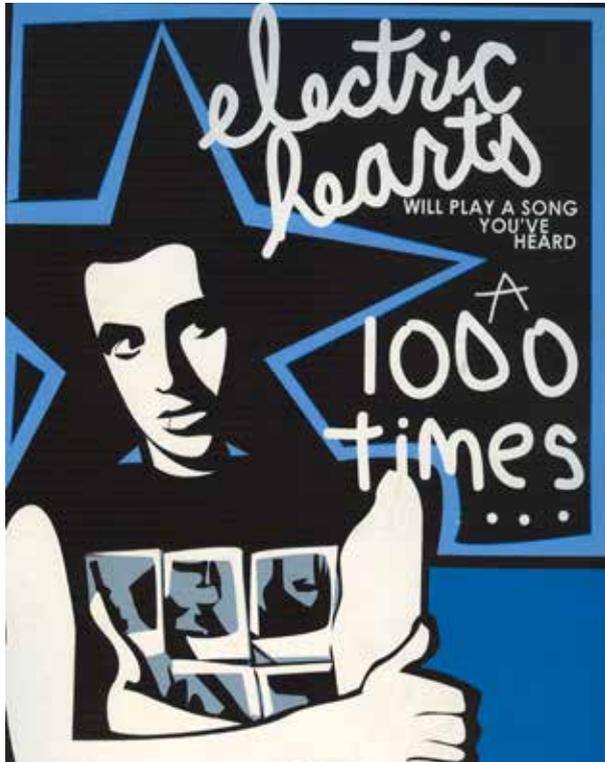
Chelsea Mosher Rae, 2009
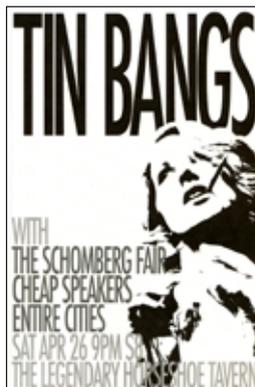
Bryan Dunlay, 2008

Hand drawn or computer generated layouts or a combination of both are acceptable. Combinations of image and type is a great addition to the portfolio and demonstrates familiarity with type and lettering, as well as more complex layouts.

type, image and layout
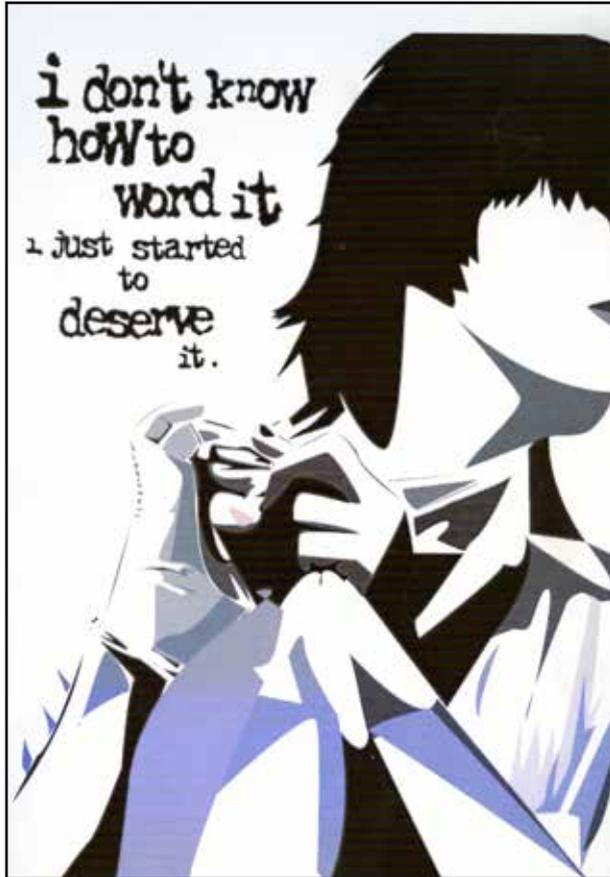
Chelsea Mosher Rae, 2009
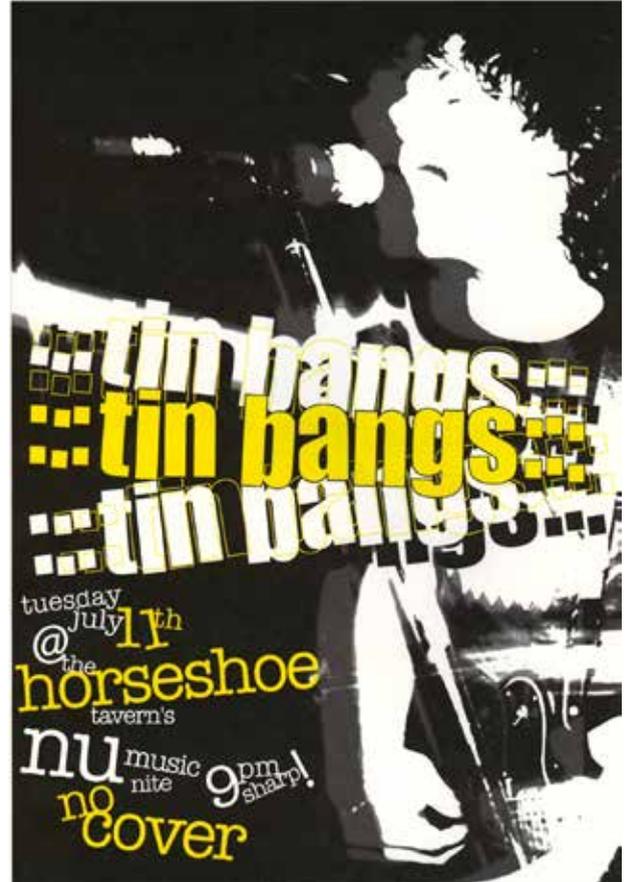
Bryan Dunlay, 2008

type, image and layout


Chris Plosaj, 2010

Megan Raddatz, 2010
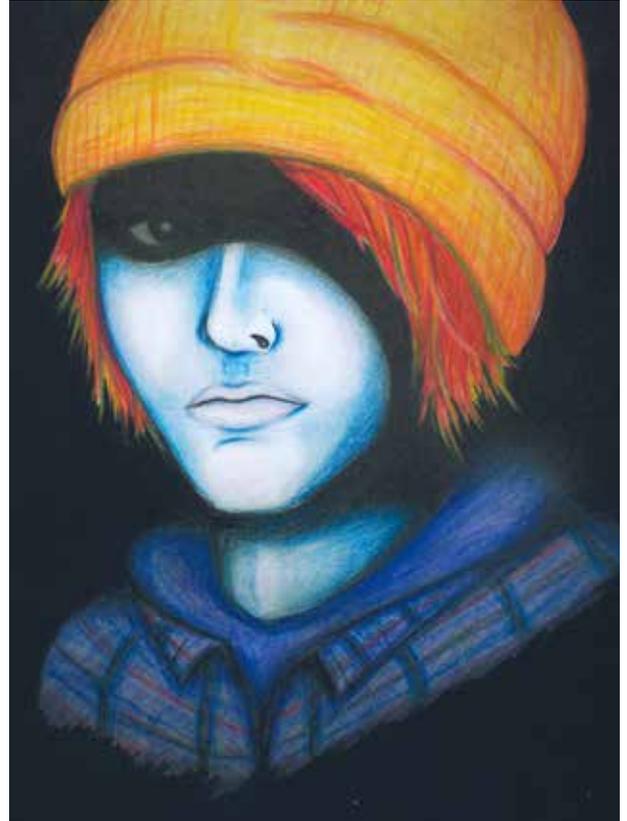
illustration

Becky Gilroy, 2009

A good variety of illustrative work is good to see. The use of different mediums showcase illustrative skills. Oversized pieces should be photographed for presentation in a portfolio. Hand rendered or computer generated is acceptable.

illustration

Charcoal sketch
Emily Whalen, 2009
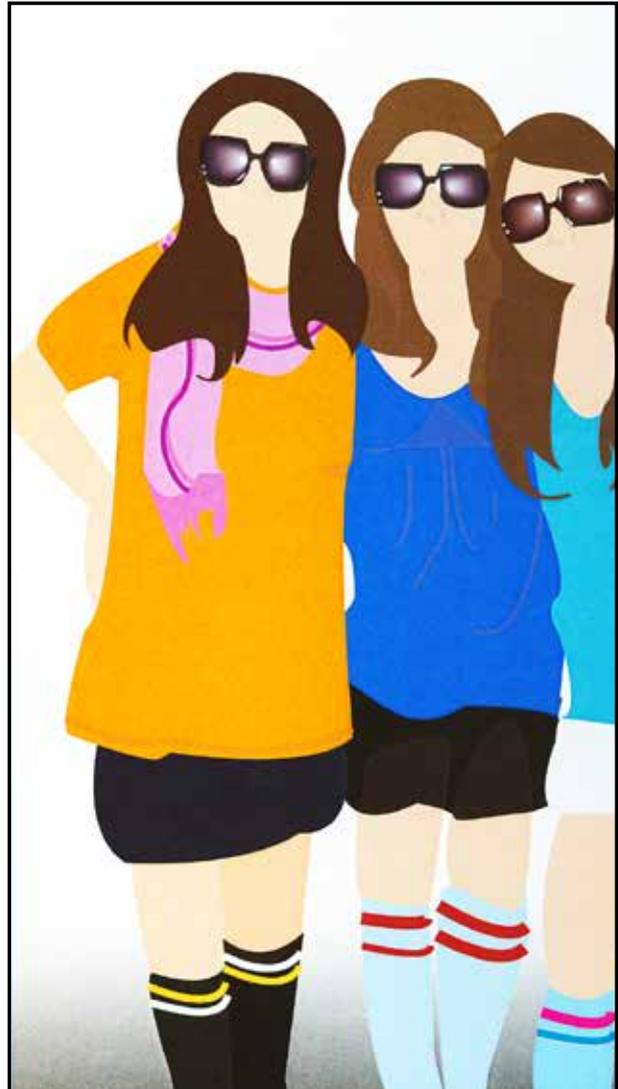
Illustration created in Adobe Illustrator
Emily Whalen, 2009

illustration

Maureen Gibbs, 2009
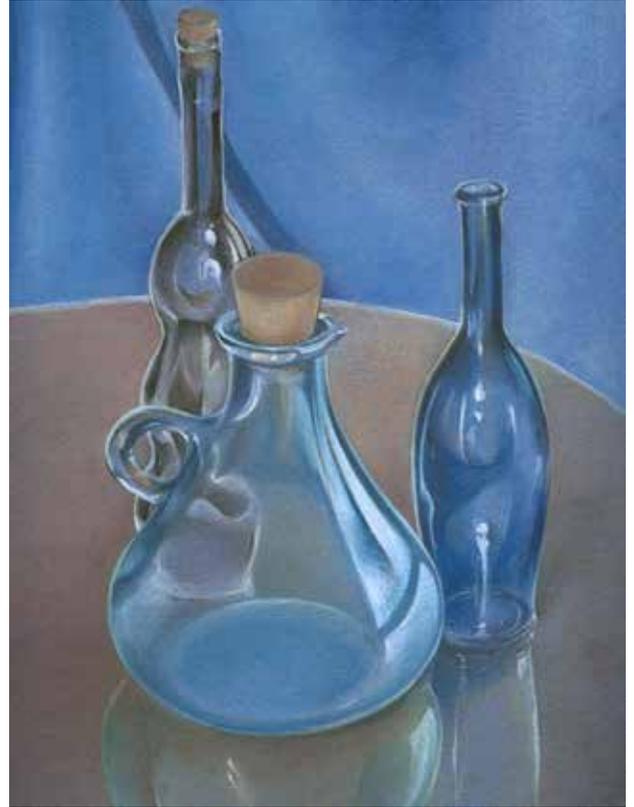
illustration

Megan Raddatz, 2010

illustration

Chris Plosaj, 2010

illustration

Watercolour
Becky Gilroy, 2009

Maureen Gibbs, 2009

illustration

Laura Forbes, 2010

illustration

Mixed media
Laura Forbes, 2010
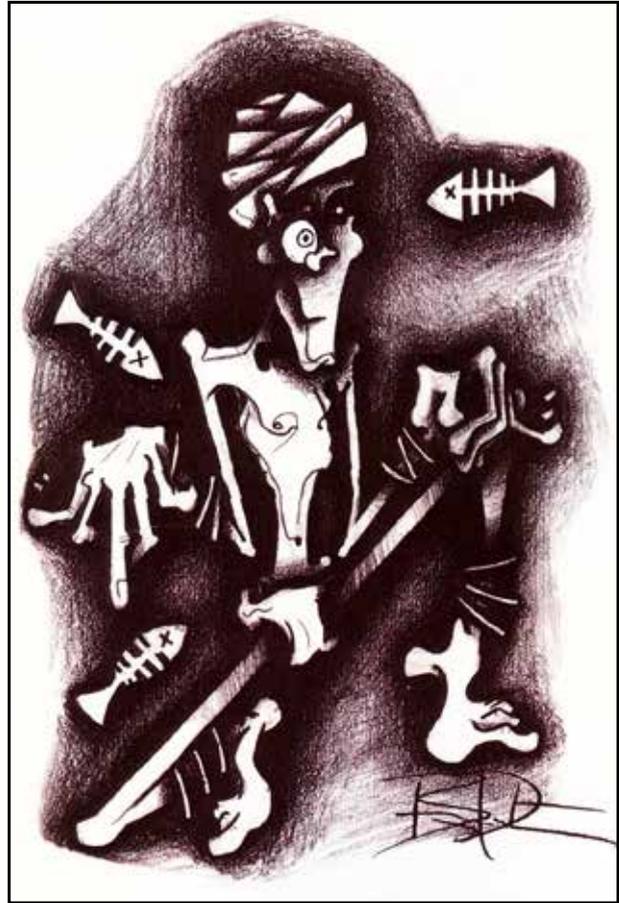
Bryan Dunlay, 2008

photography

Creative photography will show off an applicants'
view point and cropping skills as well as subject selection.

Bryan Dunlay, 2008

# graphic design

Laura Forbes, 2010

Adam Jamieson, 2010

Logo Design with thumbnail sketches
Bryan Dunlay, 2008

Black and white studies show an understanding of positive and negative space. Logo design is also good to show in a portfolio. Thumbnail sketches are great to see for any design or layout, to show progression. If you are showing a logo redesign it is good to see the original.

graphic design

Coloured Pencil & Logo Design

To the left is the original drawing used for this logo design. Below is a half-way point in the drawing stage.

If you have a lot of drawing in your portfolio, you may consider turning one into a logo like the logo on the right.

Ania Kolecki, 2009

Megan Raddatz, 2010

*Ania Kolecki, 2009*

*Package Design*
Megan Raddatz, 2010

graphic design


Product/Label Design
Emily Whalen, 2009
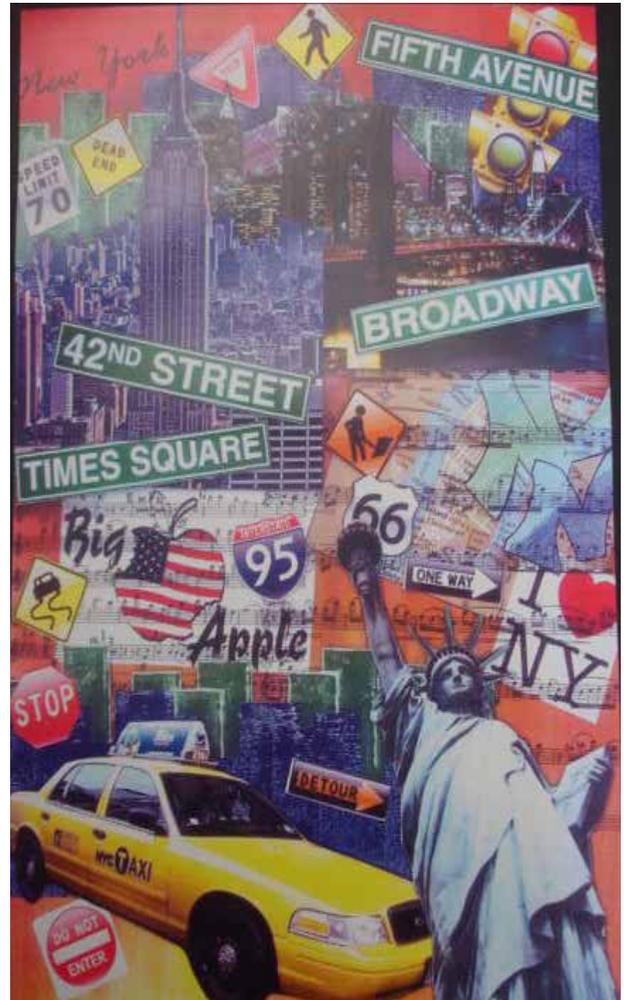

Graphic Collage
**Rhiannon Charrette. 2009**
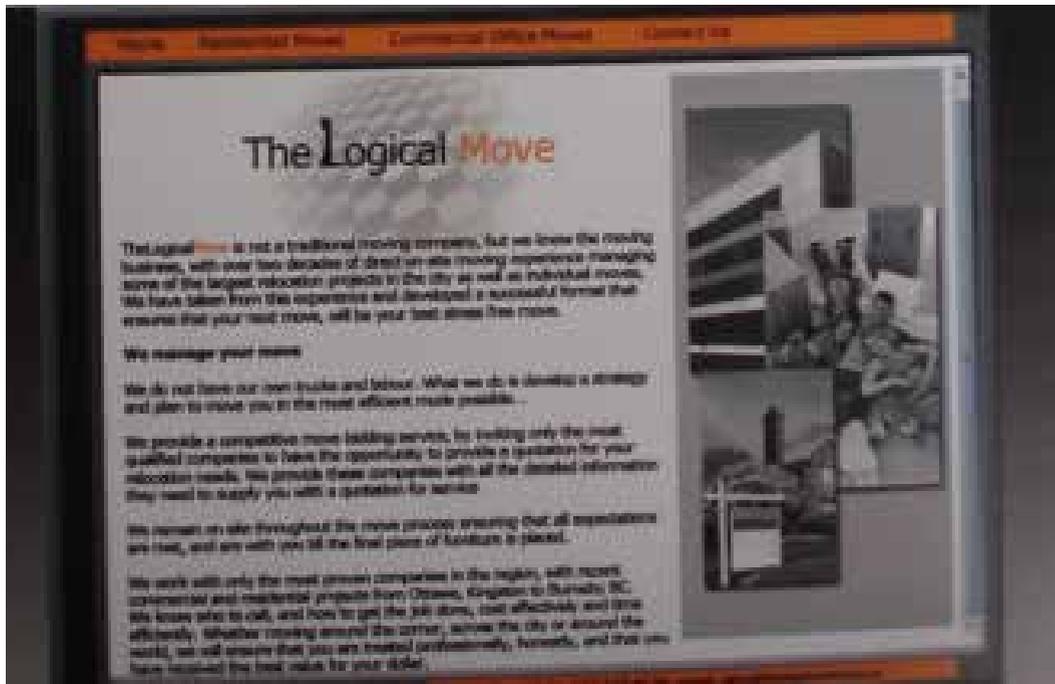
Web page design with sketches
Chris Plosaj, 2010
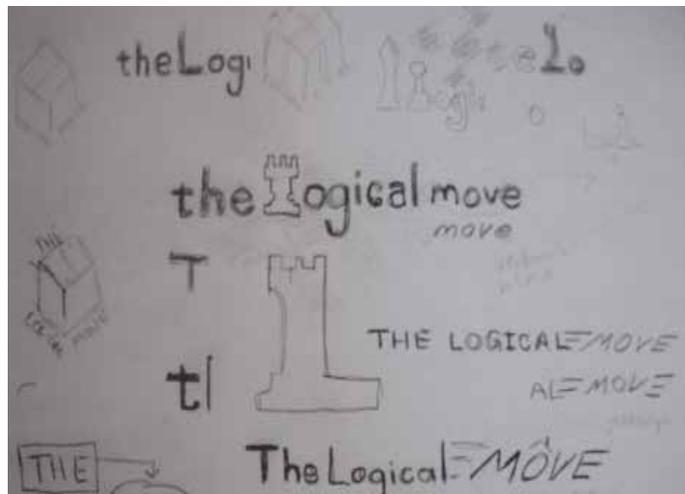
graphic design
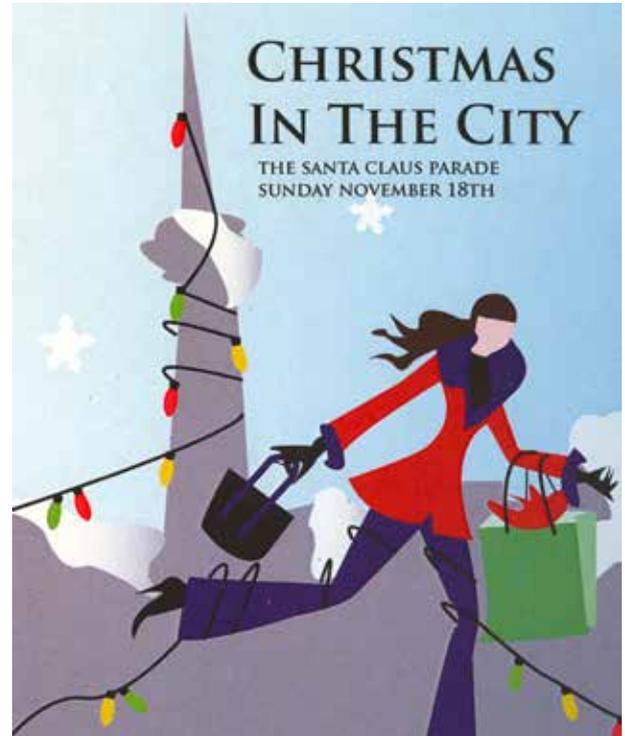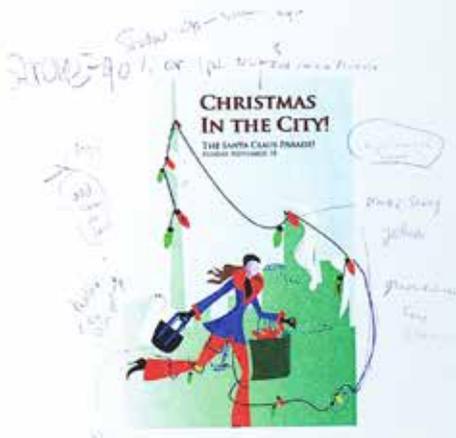
Advertising layout with sketches
Emily Whalen, 2009

www.algonquincollege.com

January 2013