

Torrence

by

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Submitted to the Graphic Design Board of Study

School of Art+Design

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Purchase College

State University of New York

May, 2022

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For my Senior Project, I have curated a jewelry making business. Growing up, my mother was always open minded to healing methods, cleansing, and prayer. This was naturally instilled in me. I started with sage which aids in cleansing the air of any negative energy. In other words, purifying the air and the space that you're in. I was gifted with my first crystal when I was fourteen. My cousin studied and collected crystals for a while and shared one with me. After that I carried it with me everywhere; it was a Rose Quartz. I was inspired, and I began studying them and using them in practice; while doing yoga, meditating, even the simplest things like doing homework. They became such an integral part of my everyday life. Crystals are said to promote the flow of positive energy. They help rid the body and mind of negative energy for physical and emotional benefits.

Growing up being a proactive child I did everything; from designing and cutting up my clothes, braiding hair, drawing, and jewelry making. I always challenged myself and never settled. Beginning college, I felt the most challenged to stay grounded; mentally, physically, emotionally. Fighting a battle that was against myself and what felt like the world. I stopped creating— music, art and craft. My roommate at the time began making jewelry and one day challenged me to join her; since that day I have not stopped. Out of the sheer love for making jewelry I found myself using this process as a therapeutic outlet in my own way. Through incorporating crystals into my daily life, and jewelry making, I began to thrive. I was challenging myself, I stopped settling, and began anew.

While perfecting my craft, I finally had the courage to begin selling. My brand is called Torrence, and with this brand my mission is to celebrate crystals and give my consumers another form of individualism and confidence when wearing their piece(s). Torrence will empower and uplift those who long for it, as I did. My first step in beginning this process was exploring and expanding the acts of visual communication. Specifically how my designs, and craft represent my consumer. Considering what each piece of jewelry made for my consumers will effectively represent them. I began to research the ideal consumers for Torrence and found that many today no longer favor jewelry that is costly. Instead, they favor the quality of craftsmanship. Creativity, authenticity, and craftsmanship are then considered luxury in itself. All considered, each piece is specifically made to the consumers fit and make; choice of metal, the crystal of choice, and the various wire designs I have created.

For a period of time I was torn between many variations of design elements— type investigations, color, textures and space. While thinking about the craft and design I needed to keep in mind both as its own form of communication and them as one. Specifically the way my jewelry will be or can be worn— the functionality of it on the body. Welcoming new questions such as; how does this necklace alter the shape of the chest when worn? Does the earring worn effectively communicate the consumers choice of style? Both form and function hold their own weight on communication. Being that each piece is personalized for the individual wearing it, ensuring that both the form and functionality of the product is crucial. In other words each piece is one of a kind and its own, just as each person that wears it. Through trial and error,

communication directly with my consumers to find what design and marketing strategies was the most optimal approach.

Although much of this process is self exploration and the explorations of new mediums, new marketing ideas, and strategies, much of what I put into practice was taught to me here at SUNY Purchase. Many courses, professors, and assignments have opened my eyes to new ways of thinking and viewing from a designer and a business owners standpoint. Courses such as, Visual Language, Word and Image I, Lens and Time, Word and Image II, Arts Management, Advanced Type, Word and Image III, Word and Image IV, Communicating the Arts, Junior Seminar, Installation, Finance of the Arts, and Marketing of the Arts; have all taught me vital lessons and strategies to get me where I am today as Graphic Designer, and business owner.

Visual Language (2018) has taught me the significance of the use of space; and how a field can be used, empty, or filled. I've learned to consider how each component of a piece works in harmony with one another, which has aided me in visual cohesiveness for my design layouts, mockups, and installation work. With this, I took the knowledge of space and related it to my Senior Project Exhibition. The use of wooden props to take up space on the wall while also allowing movement throughout the rest of the exhibition—posters, triptych, and lastly the table storing the crystals.

In the course, Word and Image I (2018); assignments such as In A Name, Name It, and Homolog-Analog has shown me the fundamentals of how visual information affects a viewer's eye, and to consider forms of visual communication through such processes. Lens and Time (2019) has educated me in using a camera— specifically Canon— and various photo techniques; such as detail, frame, and time. Learning about different “points” in photography has given me a new perspective on the frame. Points such as Becoming the Subject, Birds-eye View, Eye Level, Worm's Eye View; has allowed me to explore the photography of my product and how these vital properties are essential in capturing the experience in a photo. As seen in Photo 1 of 3, and Photo 2 of 3.



Photo 1 of 3



Photo 2 of 3

Word and Image II (2020) showed me the importance of how type is considered in a space, and how it can and will influence visual perception. It trained me to understand that type is also an image. I incorporated this in some of the poster designs, as shown in Photo 3 of 3. This image succeeds in communicating the importance of refining visual perception by showing the engagement of the ear and the earring; and how the use of other organic elements can help communicate this.



Photo 3 of 3

Arts Management (2020) informed me about fundamentals of funding the arts, what a target audience is and what they contribute to a small business. Much of what I've learned in this class aided me in narrowing down my audience; how I want to manage my time, efforts, to consider and practice hierarchy and sequence in marketing, and resources to further expand my business.

Advanced Type (2021) allowed me to consider type in and on a space. How to effectively lay out lengthy type onto a spread, and how the construction of a typeface can alter someone's interpretation of the piece. Transitional space, and how we ready a page— leading, paragraphs spacing, indentation. I consider much of what I've learned from this course to aid in the overall branding of Torrence; from a cover letter, promotional design, to a business card layout. Word and Image III gave me the fundamentals on creating a system for brand language—Branding, logo design and ad design.

This course and knowledge became essential for the branding of Torrence down to the logo design. The largest takeaway from this course is visual communication through branding. It gave me a better understanding on how exactly I want my brand to make one feel. Word and Image IV (2021) took all that I have learned from the previous Word and Image courses. Considering all the components of type, image and creating hypothetical package designs; I've learned to consider everything on a design that is packaged as well as the content and how it is communicated to the buyer. Hierarchy was also prevalent in this course; considering what should

be read first, last, and watching type and image work hand in hand on a physical object or space. Communicating the Arts (2021) showed me how to approach and consider fast responding, accommodating, compromising, and good communication with employees when it comes to explaining and justifying the “arts”. This aided me in communicating my product Torrence swiftly and efficiently. In the midst of all of this learning and discovering, one course that allowed me to think of self discovery and interest was Junior Seminar (2021). In this course I created a resume, began a website for myself and my work, as well as created business card designs.

The course Installation (2021) made me look beyond the piece itself, but the space it is in. It has broadened my knowledge of considering the single piece but to incorporate everything around it. It also opened my eyes to how this can change the scene, mood, feel, and interpretation of the piece. This knowledge took into effect while considering the Senior Project Exhibition. Thinking of lighting, placement of props, and making the eight foot space give an experience. Finance of the Arts (2021) aided me in the use of other programs— Excel— to keep in order and consider all expenses when owning a business.

Studying other local and small businesses; while creating hypothetical budget sheets to better understand the fundamentals of financing specifically in the arts. Lastly, Marketing of the Arts (2021) let me understand that owning a business has so many factors. For example, any brand or business needs positioning, branding, current strategy, financial resources, customer



relations, internal factors, being aware of the strengths and weaknesses of your organization, artists/organizations that pose a direct or threat to your organization, time management, etc. Before this course, I hadn't considered half of these to be vital factors. While learning during this course, I was also learning and expanding on the benefits for my brand.

For my Senior Exhibition, I am using various design elements such as; logo design, packaging design, web design, photography, and promotional design to aid in its execution. Using programs such Illustrator, Photoshop, Indesign, SquareSpace and intertwining them with physical matter has been an enlightening experience. The exhibition will consist of a variety of designs such as; handmade jewelry— eight wire wrapped necklaces, fourteen pairs of earrings, fourteen different variety rings and their styles—a poster, three triptychs, business cards, and a logo design printed on vinyl. To ensure that this exhibition is an experience; I built props— wood slabs, a table, and painted bowls— to hold and beautifully display the handmade jewelry. Also incorporating the raw materials used to make the jewelry— bundled wire, pliers, crystals— to give my viewers and consumers an opportunity to see each element used before the end product. The only prop that is not hand made is a podium used to hold business cards, and a notebook open to those who have feedback. I intend to share my experience, empower, and educate through my craft in jewelry making, designing, and love for crystals through my upcoming brand Torrence.