Student Artwork Examples

CIARA PARKHURST

Instructor - Graphic Designer - Visual Artist



Teaching Practice

Instructor of Record

ART 121: Integrated Design Process

ART 112: Drawing as Integrated Design Thinking

ART 1100: Introduction to Art

ART 100: Why Art Matters

Teaching Assistant

ART 110: Integrated Art & Design Communication

ART 100: Why Art Matters

Teaching Approach

Concepts are introduced through presentations and in-class exercises to build familiarity with key ideas, objectives, and vocabulary. Course modules follow a “read, watch, apply” approach, incorporating resources, quizzes, journal entries, and projects. Ongoing feedback and peer collaboration further support student learning.

About These Examples

These projects highlight the range of student interpretations, creative approaches, and individual responses to course concepts.

Each example demonstrates how students apply their understanding through experimentation, critical thinking, and personal expression.



Rhythmic Space: Making as Mood

ART 121: Integrated Design Process - Toothpicks, Cardboard, Paint, Adhesive - Fall 2022

Assignment & Objectives

Students created three-dimensional forms through a series of guided design challenges, exploring how spatial organization, negative space, and additive and subtractive methods can communicate mood. The project emphasized experimentation, principles of design, and revision.





Instructional Reflection

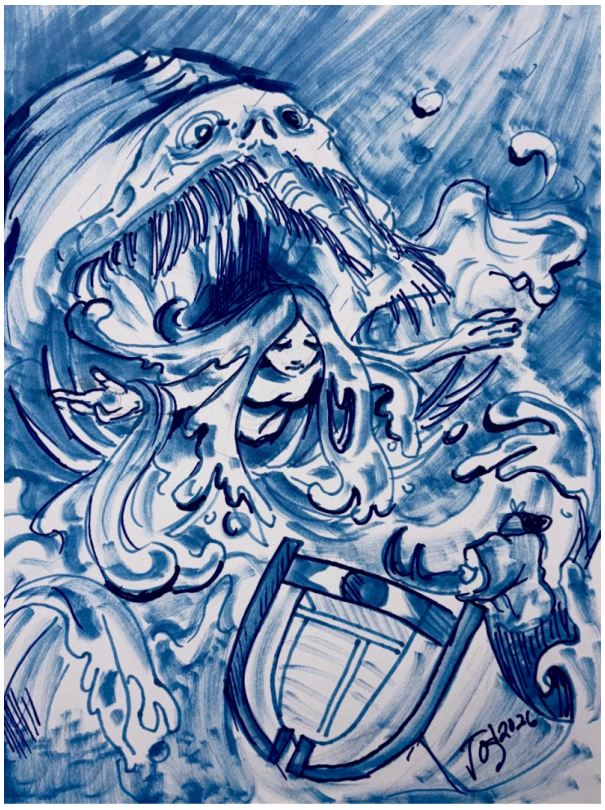
Student work demonstrates intentional use of form, negative space, and spatial relationships to communicate mood. Through guided challenges, class discussions, and ongoing revisions, students refined their compositions and explored different approaches to three-dimensional construction.

Threads Through Time

ART 100: Why Art Matters - Digital/Analog - Spring 2025

Assignment & Objectives

Students combined at least three researched artworks from different historical periods into a new composition reflecting a shared theme. Using traditional or digital collage, drawing, or painting, students explored visual manipulation, composition, and creative interpretation.





Instructional Reflection

Student work demonstrates connections across art history through thoughtful image manipulation, creative decision-making, and principles of design. Each composition reinterprets existing artworks to communicate a shared theme.

Abstract Totem: Making Identity

ART 121: Integrated Design Process - Wood, Glue, Paint - Fall 2022

Assignment & Objectives

Students explored personal identity through the design and construction of an abstract wooden totem. Through sketching, modeling, woodworking, and color application, students developed three-dimensional forms that communicate individual characteristics and contribute to a collaborative class installation.





Instructional Reflection

Student work demonstrates the use of abstraction, planar forms, spatial relationships, and color to express personal identity. Each totem reflects intentional design choices, craftsmanship, and the application of woodworking techniques to create a cohesive three-dimensional composition.

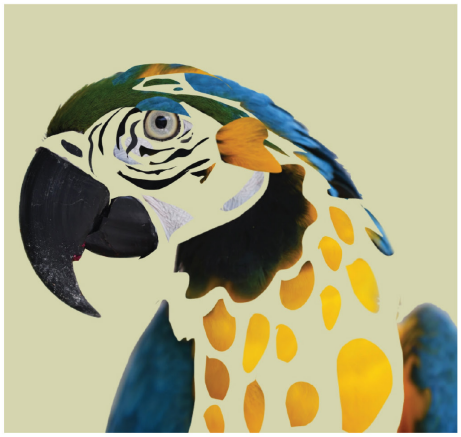
Going Abstract

ART 100: Why Art Matters - Digital/Analog - Spring 2023

Assignment & Objectives

Inspired by Picasso's *The Bull*, students explored the transition from representation to abstraction through three progressive drawings. Beginning with a realistic depiction of a selected subject, students gradually simplified the form into basic shapes and lines while maintaining recognizable characteristics.







Instructional Reflection

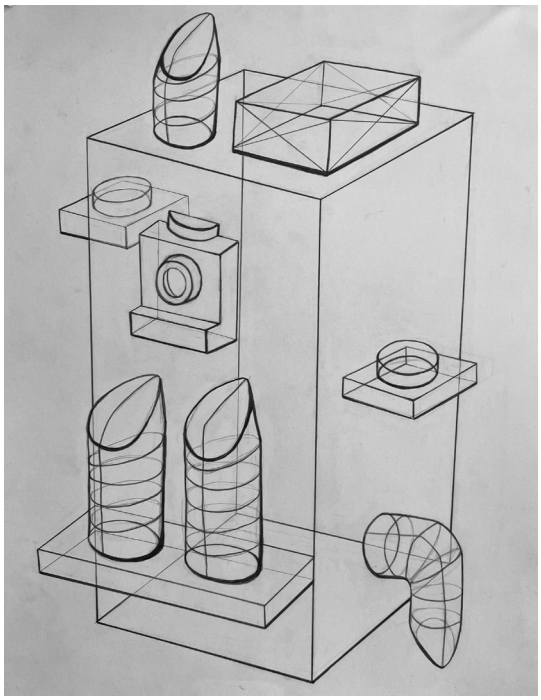
Student work demonstrates an understanding of abstraction through the intentional reduction of detail, value, and form. Each drawing highlights visual decision-making and the ability to communicate a recognizable subject using simplified shapes and lines.

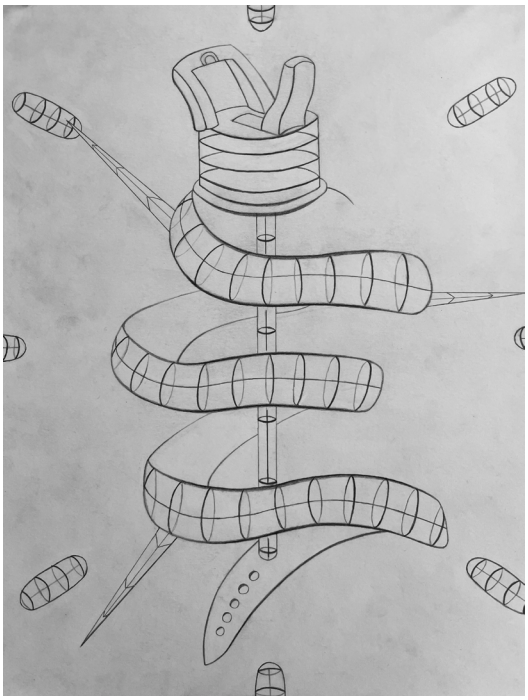
(Un)realities of Two-Dimensional Space

ART 112: Drawing as Integrated Design Thinking - Pencils, Artist-Grade Drawing Paper, or Bristol Board - Spring 2023

Assignment & Objectives

Students explored line, shape, and value to create illusions of depth, space, and texture. Through thumbnail sketches and design studies, students experimented with composition, overlapping forms, scale, and spatial relationships to develop an 11" × 14" black-and-white composition.





Instructional Reflection

Student work demonstrates intentional use of line, shape, value, and mark-making to create depth and dynamic compositions. Each piece reflects thoughtful application of design principles, spatial relationships, and an evolving creative process through experimentation and refinement.

Environmental Progressions

ART 112: Drawing as Integrated Design Thinking - Bristol Board Paper, Graphite, Colored Drawing Media (Pencils, Pastels, Inks), Magazines, Collage materials - Spring 2023

Assignment & Objectives

This project explores the transformation of imagined environments through collage, abstraction, and expressive color. Students combine found imagery to construct an invented environment, then reinterpret the composition through changes in scale, shape, color, and mark-making. Through two visual progressions, students investigate how artistic choices influence spatial depth, mood, and visual interpretation.









Instructional Reflection

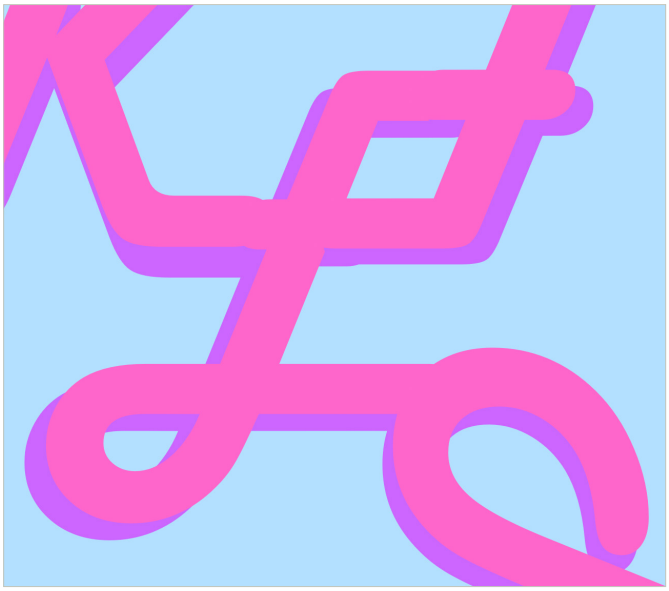
This assignment encourages students to revisit their initial compositions through experimentation with scale, color, and shape. The visual progressions demonstrate how revision can reveal new creative possibilities.

Letters as Shapes

ART 100: Why Art Matters - Digital - Spring 2024

Assignment & Objectives

Students explored typography as abstract shapes through digital composition. Using letters as visual forms, students experimented with scale, placement, contrast, and positive and negative space to create dynamic compositions that move beyond recognizable letterforms.





Instructional Reflection

Student work demonstrates the intentional manipulation of letterforms to explore shape, spatial relationships, and visual balance. Each composition reflects an understanding of design principles and the creative possibilities of typography beyond traditional communication.

Journal Entry: Connecting to Place

ART 1100: Introduction to Art - Digital - Fall 2026

Assignment & Objectives

Students explored connections between art, culture, and place by researching historical and contemporary artworks from a location they call home. Through visual research and comparison, students examined how artistic traditions, cultural influences, and creative expression evolve over time.

Connecting to Place

Journal Entry #2

My Selected Place: Auburn, Washington, ancestral homeland of the Lushootseed Nation

Compare and Contrast: In both these pieces the artists have included small details in these pieces that are seen differently from the distance and both have intentional use of line. The weaved basket is used to hold other items as well as show the intentional design and skill of the artist. The Sighting is meant to encompass the views of nature and to celebrate the surrounding environment of Auburn to connect the community.



Mrs. John Goody (Siagut), a Cowlitz/Nisqually weaver, *Coiled Cedar Root Basket*, c. **1890s**. Found at Burke museum of Nation History and Culture.
Source:https://www.burkemuseum.org/collections-and-research/heritage/artscultures/coast-salish-art/historical-coast-salish-art





Brandon Zebold, *Sighting*, **2004.** Outdoor sculpture, made from Cor-Ten steel (TM). Found at Lakeland Hills Elementary School.
Source: https://www.publicartarchive.org/art/Sighting/418df687

Instructional Reflection

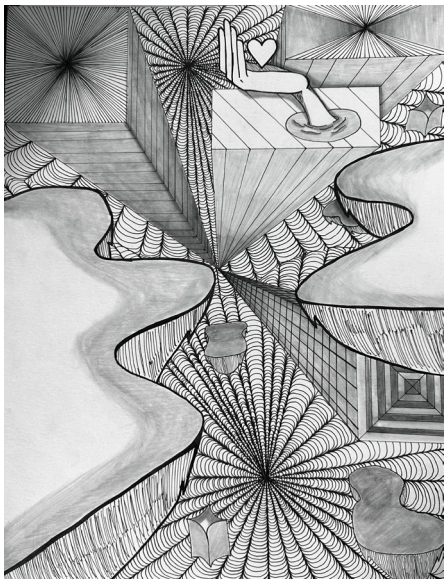
This assignment encourages students to connect art with places they consider home. Researching and comparing artworks helps students recognize how cultural influences shape artistic expression and develop a deeper understanding of their communities.

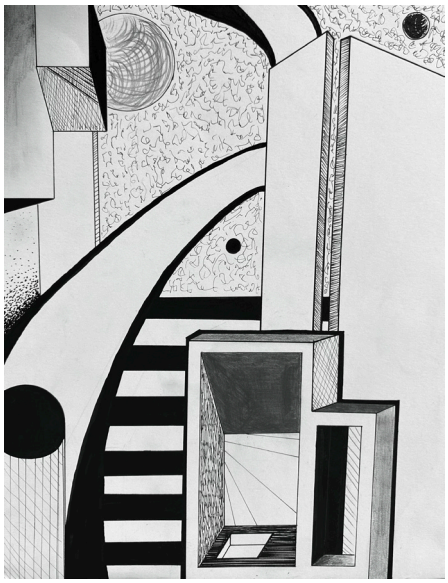
Complexities of Form: Hybridization & Biomorphic Adaptations

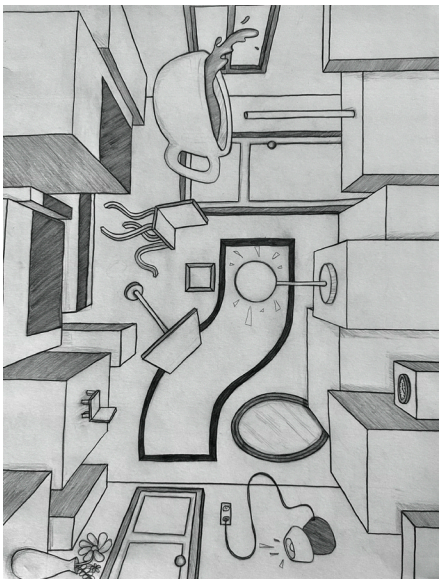
ART 112: Drawing as Integrated Design Thinking - Pencils (B, HB, 2H), Artist-grade Drawing Paper, or Bristol board (at least 11" x 14") - Spring 2023

Assignment & Objectives

Students explored analytical perspective by combining geometric and organic objects into imaginative hybrid forms. Through observational sketches and compositional studies, students developed detailed contour drawings emphasizing perspective, line weight, spatial relationships, and dynamic composition.







Instructional Reflection

Student work demonstrates an understanding of perspective, form construction, and intentional line variation to communicate depth and structure. Each composition reflects creative problem-solving, careful observation, and the transformation of familiar objects into new, cohesive forms.

Pages of Expression: Zine-Making Workshop

ART 112: Drawing as Integrated Design Thinking - Paper, Graphite, Glue, Scissors, Colored Drawing Media (Pencils, Pastels, Inks), Magazines, Collage materials - Spring 2023

Assignment & Objectives

Students explored zine-making through an in-class workshop focused on self-expression, visual storytelling, and experimental design. Using drawing, collage, typography, and paper folding, students created handmade publications that combined imagery and text to communicate personal ideas.







Instructional Reflection

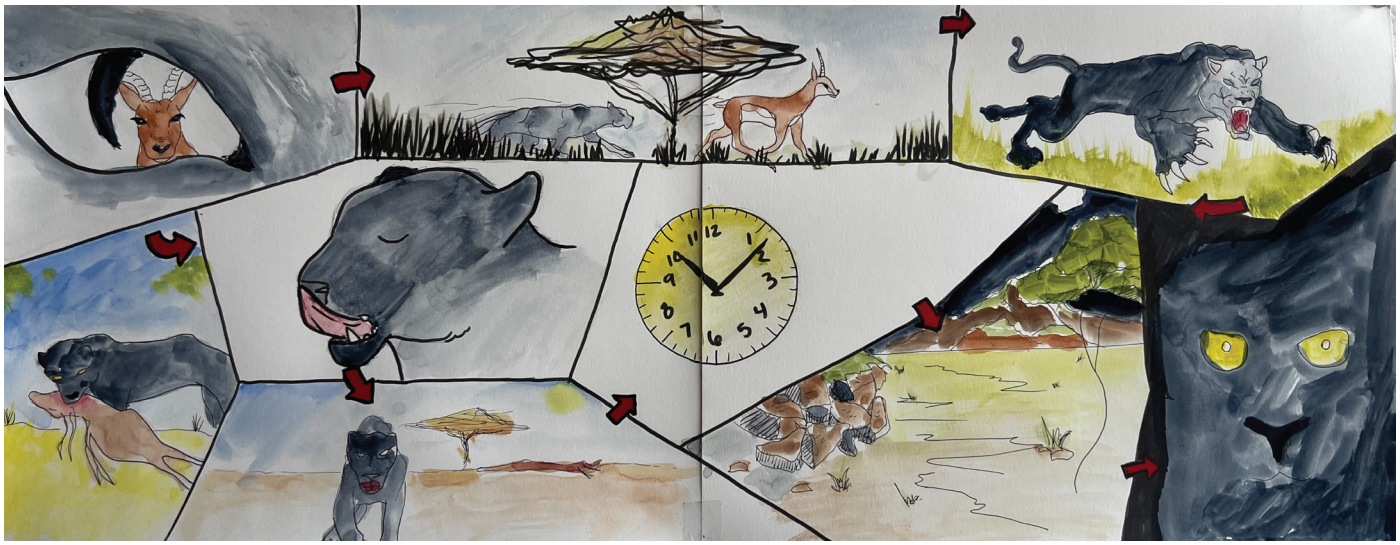
Student work demonstrates creative experimentation with layout, composition, and visual communication. Each zine reflects individual expression, thoughtful design choices, and an understanding of how imagery, text, and sequencing work together to communicate ideas.

The Narrative Assignment

ART 112: Drawing as Integrated Design Thinking - Paper, Graphite, Glue, Scissors, Colored Drawing Media (Pencils, Pastels, Inks) - Spring 2023

Assignment & Objectives

Students explored visual storytelling by creating a narrative sequence of at least seven frames inspired by a film genre. Through preliminary sketches, varied perspectives, and a limited color palette, students developed dynamic compositions that communicate a story with an unexpected twist, without the use of text.



Instructional Reflection

This student effectively uses varied perspectives, dynamic framing, and shifts in scale to communicate a visual narrative. The intentional arrangement of panels, directional movement, and limited color palette guide the viewer through the story while emphasizing key moments of action and suspense.