

Project 4 Icon System

overview

Choose a personal interest and design a system of 6 icons based on that selection. Your topic can be real, fantasy-based, or abstract. The challenge of creating an icon system is to create a unified language that communicates effectively, impresses aesthetically, and is readable at a very small scale.

objectives

- to develop a unified design system using the language of icons
- to conceptually create a contextual, iconographic language
- to demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of creating a visual language

terminology

- | | | | |
|---------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| • Gestalt | • sign | • visual code | • semantics |
| • index | • ideogram | • abstraction | • syntactics |
| • iconography | • pictogram | • pragmatics | |
| • icon | • symbol | • parody | |

phase I: Initial Research

Mind Map: Select your “obsession” and mind map as many ideas as you can think of. Use colors, imagery/symbols and single keywords. Remember to use curved lines that become thinner as they radiate out from the center. Fill the entire space on an 11”x17” paper. 75 bubbles minimum, choose 15 that relate to your obsession theme for consideration as an icon.

“Warm up” Icon Exercise: Find 10 objects around your apartment and draw a pictorial representation of that object as an icon, index, and symbol. Finalize using a fine-point micron or sharpie marker. Black-and-white only.

phase II: Icon System Concepts 45 thumbnails _____ 6 rough systems _____

Thumbnails: Choose 15 ideas and draw 3 potential icons for each, 45 thumbnail sketches total in your process book. Icons should not include text and be solely pictorial. Sketches MUST be done by hand.

Icons can have a direct resemblance to the things it represents, or symbolically represent by association a broader general idea. Consider the use of visual codes. Icons should work at a very small scale.

Roughs: Select your top 6 strongest concepts from your thumbnail sketches. Draw 5 thumbnail variations for each concept. Select your strongest thumbnail from each concept, 6 total, and hand-draw 3” x 3” using a fine-point micron or sharpie marker. You should have 30 thumbnails and 6 roughs for next class.

phase III: Icon System Design initial critique _____

Initial Critiques: For critique, you must refine your 6 concepts from your rough concepts. Icon system should be created using Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator.

phase IV: Final Icon System final critique _____ final presentation _____

Final crit: After the first finish critique, make revisions to your set of icons. Continue to simplify and refine, and then print for final critique. Icon system should be printed on 8.5”x11” horizontal. Each icon should be 3”x3”.

Final work: Final icon system should be finalized using Adobe Photoshop or Illustrator. Present your final icon system on 8.5”x11” horizontal heavyweight stock. Each icon should be 2.5” by 2.5”. Include a title for your icon set (small sans serif, i.e.: 9 pt. Helvetica).

icon resources

<https://www.behance.net/search?field=131>

<http://iconutopia.com>

<https://thenounproject.com>

written self-assessment

On the form provided, describe your conceptual meaning(s) behind this project. Explain your process for arriving at the concept(s), describe (research, materials, sketches, brainstorming).

readings

chapter 10: Visual Coding: Loading Form with Meaning

supplementary pearson videos

Experience the Media Assignments:

Watch Designer Profile Video: Interview with Michael Greenblatt and Jessica Wexler

http://media.pearsoncmg.com/ph/hss/SSA_SHARED_MEDIA_1/art/santoroVideos/G2GD_Greenblatt_Wexler_Tablet.html

View the Closer Look: Evacuation Instructions

<http://closerlook.pearsoncmg.com/view.php?type=closerlook&id=482>

