

TRISKAIDEKAPHILIA: 2016 GRAPHIC DESIGN SENIOR SHOW

by

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A Senior Honors Project Presented to the

Honors College

East Carolina University

In Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for

Graduation with Honors

by

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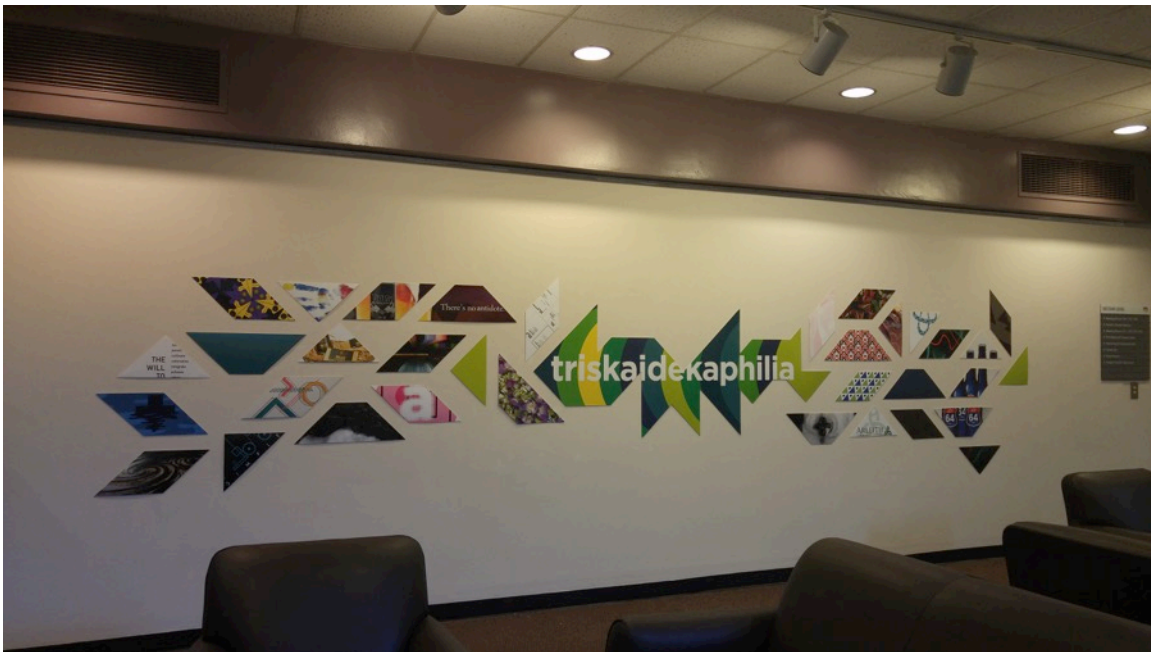
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I. Intro

My senior honors project is a creative endeavor consisting of an art exhibition and portfolio. The show was named Triskaidekaphilia: 2016 Graphic Design Senior Show and displayed April 17th-29th, 2016 in Mendenhall Student Center at East Carolina University. The portfolio review was on April 27th, 2016 and was also in Mendenhall Student Center at East Carolina University.

For the show my class wanted to put emphasis on our group work ethic. Having a small class has allowed us to collaborate and learn from each other much more than usual. This installation is based on relationships between our pieces, composition, and design elements.



II. Requirements and Past Shows

The graphic design concentration requires their students to do a group show their junior and senior year. The junior show is a record of what you've done that year and attempts to solidify trends, strengths, and weaknesses in your work. Each person has a specified space on the wall and it is a very personal process. The senior show however, can be whatever the class wants. As a group the seniors decide the theme, title, content, layout, hanging methods, etc. In the past the senior shows were still

pretty traditional in the way that everyone displayed their own work in their own specified space and there wasn't any interaction between the pieces.

III. 2016 Show

The 2016 senior class is remarkably smaller than past years. There are 13 students versus a normal 25 or so students. Because of the small group and observing the similarity of past shows, we saw an opportunity to do something very different. Our show consists of geometric shapes (rhombuses, trapezoids, and triangles) with 45° angles. This ensures the shapes fit next to each other perfectly. Each person created approximately 12 shapes with their own designs. The shapes consist of past work, common patterns, colors, or themes in each student's work, items or tools that are essential to each student's work, etc.

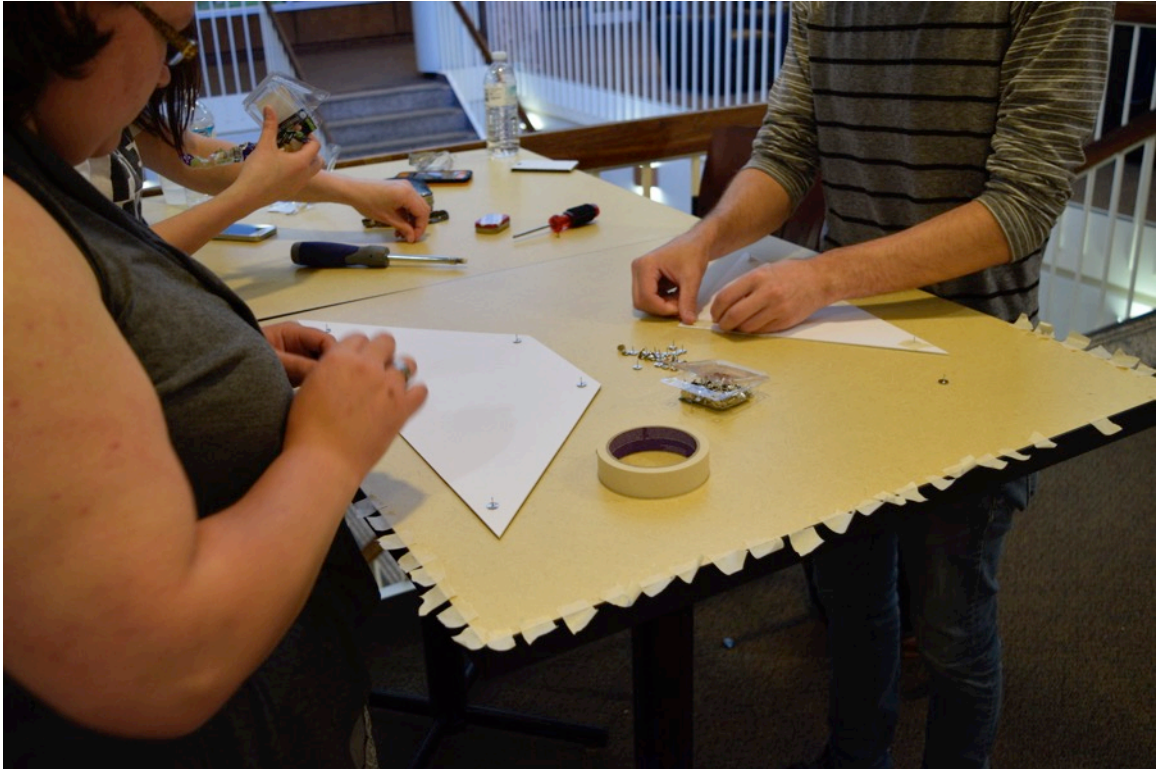


Once the shapes were designed, we printed them at 15% scale and made a mock-up of the gallery space at 15%. By doing this we were able to view all the work at once and how it would look in context of the space. We ended up making several compositions before choosing the final one. All compositions had the shapes interacting with each other with a 3 inch margin between them. Some were very regulated with the shapes creating an overall composition with very straight edges. Others implied more movement with shapes sticking out, up, and down. We settled on one that had a common baseline (a starting point used for comparisons) running through the center

that was occasionally broken by a shape or two and also had shapes protruding from the top and bottom. The baseline was set 5ft from the floor. We calculated that this would be an average eye line for viewers. There are three exhibition walls in Mendenhall Student Center—one long wall about 59ft and two short walls about half that length. We designed a large sign with the name of the show consisting of multiple shapes merged together. This went on the short wall that you see first while walking up the stairs.



Once all the planning was done, we digitally printed all the shapes on Epson Premium Luster Photo Paper (260) and mounted them on white mat board. We devised a hanging method of taping tacks onto the backs of the pieces and then gently pushing them into the wall. This worked well because they were extremely easy to rehang if something was crooked. It also did not damage the gallery walls.



The day of the installation we hammered in nails to each side of the 3 walls and ran a string across to create our baseline. Then we referred to our composition and starting hanging piece by piece. Since the placement of each piece depended on the ones around them we started in the middle of each wall and worked outwards. Using a combination of 3 in margin markers and levels a group of 2 to 3 people hung each wall while the rest prepared the pieces in the correct order. The total installation time took about 4 hours, which is pretty average for a show of this size.



While we designed our own shapes, we hung them mixed together based on design relationships. The intent is not necessarily to know who's piece is who's but to view it as one collaborative installation. We are in an interesting situation where we've been together for three years and grown together with our work. Because there are only 13 of us, we have become closer and influenced each other more than the previous classes. We wanted to celebrate our group and the intensity of working together on such a large project. This is where the name of the show comes from. Triskaidekaphilia is the obsession with the number 13.



IV. Portfolio

One of the most important things to a designer is their portfolio. It shows their work, experience, and who they are as a designer. My class went through a long process of finalizing ours to get us ready for the job hunt.

First you must decide what pieces you want to include. A good portfolio will keep an interview going for a minimum of 20 minutes. Depending on the depth of the pieces that might be around 7 or 8 pieces. Each job is different so it is not unlikely to change out your pieces for each interview. It is wise to start with a strong piece, follow with a few less powerful but still solid pieces, and then finish with something interesting to remember you by. The structure of the portfolio is important as well. Many designers make their own book, box, etc. This shows that you're putting extra effort into your work and can be another way to show off your design style.

For my portfolio I chose a 6"x7" flipbook. I mounted images of my work to black matboard and punched holes in the top of each. I then connected them with metal rings. I felt the size was personal and easy for me to maneuver. It also made it very easy to switch out which pieces I wanted to show. I also brought along physical copies of some of my pieces. There were things that I wanted reviewers to see up close and personal, not just in a picture. I put my book, these items, resumes, and business cards in a black photo box. This was the perfect way to safely transport all my items together.

V. Portfolio Review

On the night of the portfolio review the students sat around the room with their portfolios ready. Reviewers came from all over the state to meet us. There were many successful designers that were also alumni. They sat with us and gave us feedback on our work. Once they were done with one student they would move along to the next. This is very helpful because you get to meet new people and make connections and get lots of advice in the same night. The goal of this night is to prepare us for the job hunt.

VI. Conclusion

I believe executing this group show and writing about my personal experience has helped me grow as a designer, student, and person. The long hours and collaboration taught me what it's like in a professional design studio. Being able to create this show as a group while also displaying my own personal take on design has been a wonderful opportunity that I am very thankful for.