Wrap-up Notes on Santa Ana City College Workshop, 4/9/11

Locations: Digital Media Center, 3300 Bristol, Santa Ana, CA
Attending school representative: Dr. Sharon Brown, _____

09:40 - 10:10 Introduction: goals, comments and images: Order vs. Chaos.
10:10 - 11:10 Order vs. Chaos exercise
11:10 - 11:25 Critique
11:25 - 11:55 Introduce Letterforms exercise
11:55 - 01:15 Letterforms exercise
01:15 - 02:00 Lunch
02:05 - 02:35 Critique
02:35 - 03:25 Introduce Contrast of Two Systems exercises
03:25 - 04:30 Contrast of Two Systems exercises
04:30 - 05:00 Critique #1
05:45 - 06:00 Revise Contrast of Two Systems exercises
05:30 - 05:45 Critique #2
05:45 - 06:00 Revise Contrast of Two Systems exercises
05:50 - 06:00 Wrapping it up

Students in attendance:
Andrew _____
Robert _____
Claudia _____
Christina _____
Robbie _____
Benjamin _____
Jose _____
David _____
Nick _____

Range of students were mid-20's to middle aged. All seemed to be pursuing careers directly or partially involved with graphic design. Some seemed to be pursuing mid-career adjustments. Dr. Brown stated that nearly all had ay jobs and were taking night classes through the week.

Also in attendance as an observer was an instructor of 3D design at SACC: Patricia Waterman _____-.

Nine students attended. Nobody left early. In fact, all stayed over the scheduled time.

Observations:
Primary differences between this workshop and previous workshop at Long Beach City College. (1) More students. (2) All students stayed beyond scheduled time. (3) School's server functioned flawlessly. (4) Was able to utilize "Remote Access" for more effective class critiques. (5) The department chair (Dr. Sharon Brown) was in attendance. Her

willingness to contribute her own "free time" was extremely helpful and her organizational sense and virtual role as "workshop assistant" contributed to a highly dynamic learning environment. The presence of a familiar and proactive figure greatly diminished the possibility of barriers between the students and myself, a virtual stranger in their midst. (6) "Visual Continuity" was more strongly emphasized. I created a slide show that illuminate the principle of visual and physical continuity. Also, I gave them three ways to integrate two (or more) systems: visual continuity (alignment), proximity, or overlap. (7) Students (through the insistence of Dr. Brown) replied to the survey questions before they went home.

All the students seemed highly involved. The all-digital, content-accessible format was easy for them to immediately engage. One student appears to have been adverse to the use of "clip art" and appeared to get lost in those feelings according to Dr. Brown.

It took a few tries to familiarize myself with the Remote Access environment. Once I did, I was able to comment directly with the both the individual and the entire class on individual compositions observed while in the creative process. I was also able to directly access each student's work and if necessary, modify their design (viewable by the entire class) in order to reveal or illuminate an important point.

While revising a particular student's design with Remote Access, I managed to use the transform>scale tool to dramatically enlarge a portion of the composition, thus changing the positive/negative proportions of the work considerably. An audible "wow" was heard and chatter ensued among several students. "Cropping" is a topic obviously worth featuring.

In response to my previous self-recommendations (from LBCC) regarding emphasizing *visual continuity*, I developed a slide show. The slide show had a few students repeating the show's analogy ("just like a clothesline" was heard twice among the students throughout the day). Students were audibly coherent about the new ideas they were being exposed to. The next day one student, Robert _____, emailed to Dr. Brown, "Thanks Dr. Brown I think I'm going to re think my current work project because of what I've learned this past weekend."

In response to my own recommendations regarding the final exercise, I asked that two or more studies be completed. I also suggested that contrasts should be combined, like: red and large vs black and small.

Also, on the final exercise, two critiques were implemented. According to Dr. Brown, "They really improved between them".

I also incorporated into the SACC syllabus the following previous self-recommendations: (1) *Visual continuity **or** overlapping* (or both) and *deliberate use of negative space* must occur in each composition in addition to repetition, variation, one dominant direction and one focal point. (2) *Visual continuity, proximity* or *overlapping* must occur as a connecting strategy between contrasting systems in both compositions.

I neglected to ask students (by their names): "Steven, where does *repetition and variation* occur in this image? *Contrasts* of what types? Focal point? Dominant direction? Subordinate direction? Dr. Brown suggested that "how to critique" your work and others be added to the workshop.

Recommendation for next workshop:
• "Cropping" (enlarging details) is a topic obviously worth featuring.
• Half-way through exercise #3, ask the class, "Read the exercise, especially the list of contrasted pairings again".
• Ask the teacher in advance to require that the students reply to the survey questions *before* the go home.
• Progressive screen captures (via Remote Access) throughout the final exercise.
• Utilize Remote Access when available as per school
• Expand hours to 9:30 – 6:00
• Integrate critiquing techniques and critical analysis: use non-judgmental, objective "strength" vs "weaknesses" critiquing technique as the compositions relate to design principles.
• Continue to ask them at the wrap-up to buy a *Communication Arts* magazine and compare all the work they see being featured to the Eleven Coordinating Principles of Design listed (and defined) in the syllabus. "It will reinforce and add to all you learned today".

Workshop Exercises:
Order vs. Chaos, Exercise 1: You will create three studies which will allow you to explore the relationship between order and chaos. In Illustrator, create a 7"x7" document. Using your Ellipse tool (L) while holding down the shift key, draw one perfect circle in any size larger than 3/4". Copy the circle to create 11 circles in total. Fill each circle with a solid color of your choice; do not apply a stroke. Copy the layer twice, giving you three layers in total. On the third layer, add four more circles by copying to give you 15. Turn off the second and third layers. In the first layer, arrange the circles to express ORDER. Next, turn off the first layer and make the second layer visible. Select all 11 circles and given them all a different solid fill color. In this second layer you will express CHAOS. Next, turn off the second layer and make the third layer visible. The third layer will express an balanced integration of ORDER and of CHAOS using 15 perfect circles and two solid fill colors. Use one color to represent all the orderly circles and a different color to represent all the chaotic circles. Your goal in layer 3 is to achieve both a sense of balance and integration between the two systems. How many orderly circles (color 1) and how many chaotic circles (color 2) is up to you. Overlapping and bleeding are permitted in all three. Place a white rectangle over any bleed areas.

Letterforms, Exercise 2: Five large letterforms were created by the instructor. Each letterform appeared on a separate Photoshop document, each with transparent background. In Photoshop, create a 10"x15" document: white background, 150 resolution, grayscale. Go onto the server and locate the folder Letterforms-resources within the Workshop Resources folder. You'll find five letterforms, each on a transparent

background. Select no more than three letterforms to work with. Using only your pen tool and/or your marquee tools, select and arrange portions of letterforms to place within your 10"x15" space. Your goal is to create a composition that displays repetition and variation, visual continuity (aka, "alignment"), a dominant direction, subordinate direction, and the deliberate use of negative space. Your composition must fill the 10"x15" space interestingly with active areas (positive) as well as silent ones (negative). Treat the negative areas as shapes. Negative shapes can divide up two-dimensional space in interesting ways. They can be used to create silent pattern. Negative shapes can repeat positive shapes. Negative shapes are just as valid as positive shapes. Place white rectangles over any bleed areas.

Contrast of Two Systems, Exercise 3 – two studies
In Photoshop, create a 10"x15" document: white background, 150 resolution, CMYK. Go onto the server and locate the folder *Contrast of Two Systems-resources* within the *Workshop Resources* folder. You'll find 68 images each on a transparent background in either grayscale or CMYK mode.
Using these images only – and the previous letterform images if desired – create a 10"x15" study that presents an integration of two contrasting visual systems. For example:

> geometric vs. organic
> order vs. randomness
> red vs. black (or any other contrasting two colors)
> image vs. typography
> large vs. small
> one vs. many
> narrow vs. broad
> circles vs. rectangles
> tonal image vs. flat shapes
> white vs. hue

Combine contrasting systems like: red and large vs. black and small for even stronger results. *Visual continuity* (aka, "alignment") and the deliberate use of *negative space must occur in each composition*. *Repetition, variation,* a *dominant direction* and a *focal point **must occur*** in each composition. *Visual continuity, proximity **or** overlapping **must occur*** as a means of integrating your contrasting systems. Feel free to change color modes, color fill, opacity, transparency, overlap, scale, bleed, copy and paste, merge, trim, or rotate. ***Note: Do not distort. Avoid free transform except to scale, rotate or flip. Do not use any filters.*** Place white rectangles over any bleed areas. (Note: keep it primarily visual. Any resulting "narrative" or story should be purely coincidental and not by intent.)