Introduction

Cleveland Institute of Art is an art school with a variety of majors and classes. With its many areas of study there is really only one thing missing. Accurate representation and pride. When one looks at the current CIA merchandise they don't see unity, they don't see ‘art school’. They see repetitive and ordinary.
In order to better showcase the creativity and versatility of the Cleveland Institute of Art and its students, I will make a new line of merchandise for the school. This merchandise line will include major specific designs and be more unique to appeal to the student body. These designs will be based on student responses to previous merchandise made by the school and by the results of my survey. Appealing to the students in this way, we can increase their engagement along with pride in and outside the school. In addition to this, I will design an online store to host and display the merchandise in unique and interesting ways.
Current CIA Merchandise

This merchandise is from the CWRU book store Barnes and Noble. On-top of being very expensive, the merchandise provided was simple and not very unique. The designs are dull to the eye and does not seem to mention that they are an art school. Unfortunately, there is only a tiny table in the center of the store surrounded by CWRU merchandise.
Every year there is a student T-shirt design contest, hosted by C.A.B. The students get to design a t-shirt that can be worn by students, faculty and parents alike. Only two designs are chosen and it’s only sold for a limited time period during a specific time of year. While this is a step in the right direction, it’s a very limited scope. Along with a lot of faculty not totally understanding some of the designs that were chosen.
CWRU Merchandise

I went to the local Barnes and Noble that is owned by Case Western Reserve University and I cataloged the merchandise CWRU had because CIA students are exposed to it all the time. Since it’s so close, the students like to compare the amount of product they see and designs that they have verses the amount that CIA has. I will be using this information as a basis for my line.
Columbus College of Art and Design

Columbus College of Art and Design is one of the few art school that I found that had interesting and art related merchandise. Even their website screamed art school. They have fun colors and wacky ideas. I will be using this school as part of my inspiration.
I took a school wide survey and received 58 responses. To the right are some of the written responses to the question:

“What type of merchandise would you like to see?”

- “ANYTHING WE ARE AN ART SCHOOL. WE SHOULD HAVE WAYYY BETTER MERCH”
- “Something more exciting in terms of design. For an art school, our merch is generally pretty boring and plain. Sweatshirts and crew necks would be cool too. Buttons are nice.”
- “More colorful, more organic shapes! More experimentation! We are an art school! the masks are cute, and I have the contest winning cat hoodie from last year and I just love it, but the current merch definitely leaves something to be desired. Right now it’s just ‘CIA’ on shirts and things... and it really isn’t worth it. I just looked at the squadlocker and while the variety on clothes is nice, it has the same problem.”
CIA Survey Results

Do you own any CIA merchandise?

20.7% YES

79.3% NO
CIA Survey Results

Do you like CIA merchandise?

- 67.2% Sometimes
- 24.1% No
- 8.6% Yes
CIA Survey Results

Do you wish there was more merchandise?

93.1% YES

6.9% NO
Approach

When approaching this challenge I wanted to do something completely different from what the school had already put out itself. I wanted to go more into the student design field and have a bit of fun with it. I decided to go for major specific designs because I really wanted to represent the school as a whole and not just the most popular majors. My goal for every design was showing how each major would approach the CIA brand/logo.
Design 1: Life Science Illustration

This design was a collaborative effort between me and one of my student committee members. We combined our ideas of using a skull since its common knowledge this major does work with human anatomy and I added the idea of flowers since I know they study plants as well and it's pleasing to the eye for outsiders. I added the CIA in the eyes and nose to give it a bit of an edge.
Design 2: Graphic Design

This is a design I came up with for Graphic Design. This is the second design I came up with as the first one didn’t really do the major justice. For this I decided I wanted to represent what is going on when you design in illustrator or InDesign. One letter is selected another is representing the type application and another is the use of the curvature tool. I added arrows to show letter distance and kerning.
Design 3: Illustration

This design was made by one of my student committee members Carmen Johnson. Her inspiration for this was Illustrators can design/draw their own “universe”. She decided to do a pencil drawing an outer space scene. It's supposed to convey sketching and idea development.

Designed by Cameron Johnson
Design 4: Photography

This design was made for Photography. I was inspired by the color processes that go into making photography. I wanted to show it is a layered process though the colors are not accurate. I also wanted to show a glitched effect since that’s a popular design going around these days.
Enamel Pins

This was a project I did for my enamel class but wanted to show in my BFA. The story behind these is that I wanted to connect CIA to an art movement to more represent that we are an art school. So I thought every other month or so we could have a themed enamel pin set inspired by different art movements. This would represent the Pop Art movement.
I wanted to make a separate website for the merchandise since I think the current website is overcrowded with information. The plan was to have a link from the current website to this one. I wanted to incorporate things from around the school so I used the mural from outside as some backgrounds.

https://amorton15.wixsite.com/ciamerchstore
Extra Mock-Ups
Future Endeavors

For the future I’d like to make a design for every major so I can represent all of them equally. I’d like to include branded art supplies such as sketchbooks, tool boxes, and portfolio cases. I’d also like to suggest an in-person store that included work from students such as ceramics, sculptures, prints, and jewelry. This is definitely a project I’d like to take further with input from other students and faculty.
Special Thanks to my student committee!

Kaitlyn McKanna & Carmen Johnson
Thank You!