Artist Statement

Hannah Spieker

Exploring the Market: Picture Book and Greeting Cards

This project explores different markets of illustration to open up opportunities to develop a process of creating characters with unique shape language and handmade textures with elements of hand lettering while still being inclusive to a large range of audiences. The exploration of picture books and interest in letters developed into a children’s educational book called *Animals of the Alphabet*. Here each letter of the alphabet is illustrated with an animal that represents the letter that it starts with and uses shape language in that character to morph it into the shape of the letter. Stylistically the illustrations look as if they have been cut out of paper with each layer casting a shadow onto the layers below it and having handmade textures applied to the shape to make them look more hand cut. The book is towards an audience of young children who are of the age to start learning the alphabet but is not specific to any gender.

Four greeting card and social expression collections of different categories are explored in this project as well. The collections include themes such as birthday dogs, graduation pigeons, wedding swans, and friendship symbiotic relationships in the forms of cards, gift bags, and patterns. All of these collections hold the same importance of using shape language in the animal characters and handmade textures to create a personality that is appropriate for the collection that they represent and the story that they are telling. The hand lettering in these cards is also important in showing off personality, mood, and adds to the storytelling. The cards are also intended to be inclusive to all ages, genders, sexualities, and races through using the subject matter of animals as characters so that anyone can insert themselves into the card. They also do not fall into the stereotypes that a lot of cards on the market do now so that it can reach as large of an audience as possible. This includes creating alternates to the wedding cards to show homosexual and heterosexual marriages along with one of no gender identification. Exploring greeting cards and social expressions allowed for the gaps in the market to be exposed and filled with these collections.
ANIMALS of the ALPHABET & CARD collections + social expressions

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a BFA by Hannah Spieker
Illustration can be practiced in an abundance of markets and is often applied to different products to be bought by a customer. Some of the biggest of these markets include picture books, greeting cards, and licencing opportunities that can expand on these different projects. Through my thesis, I wanted to dive into these different opportunities since that is likely how I will approach working in the industry.

Through this, in the fall I created a picture book called *Animals of the Alphabet*, a teaching book that helps children learn the alphabet with different animals in the shape of the letterform that they represent. I opened up this picture book to become different products as well such as flash cards and decorative posters.

I also created card collections this spring of varying categories and animal themes to go with them: birthday dogs, graduation pigeons, wedding swans, and friendship symbiotic relationships. Other social expression products that match the cards such as patterns for wrapping paper and assets for a gift bag are included in the collections as well.

Exploring different markets of illustration opened up the possibilities for me to develop my process of creating characters with unique shape language and handmade textures with elements of hand lettering while still being inclusive to a large range of audiences.
ANIMALS of the ALPHABET

By Hannah Spieker
When deciding on what I wanted to take on for my thesis, I asked myself what I liked most about illustration. I decided that I wanted to do something with integrating letterforms into my illustrations and my style best suits a young audience. And what better way to market to kids and use letters than with the alphabet? So the next question I asked myself was how can I make the alphabet fun and exciting for children to learn while also integrating illustration and storytelling in a unique way out of the letterforms?

The solution to this problem is to make the alphabet fun by making it into a colorful teaching book. I would place animals that start with each letter on top of the letter that it represents and allow it to take the shape of the letterform. To tell a story, each animal and their respective letter will be placed in an environment that gives more insight into that animals habitat. These will all be done in a unique style by making everything have a collaged, paper cut feel to them to make the illustrations more exciting and colorful for children to look at.
MARKET

Based on some research that I did, children usually begin to learn about letters at about age 2 and most children know the whole alphabet by the time they turn 4. So my alphabet book would be marketed towards the age range of toddlers to kindergarteners based on this knowledge. Depending on how early parents want to start teaching their children about the alphabet, the market could begin at a younger age and could also reach children that are interested in the animals in the illustrations at an older age than 4.
STYLE EXPLORATION
ALL FINAL LETTERS
A CLOSER LOOK
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<td>Tiger</td>
<td>Umbrella Bird</td>
<td>Viper</td>
<td>Walrus</td>
<td>X-Ray Tetra</td>
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Hannah Spiker

is the creator of this fun alphabet book. She is an illustrator from Ohio that studies at the Cleveland Institute of Art.
WHAT’S NEXT?

For the children’s book aspect of my thesis, the next step would be to send to publishers and agents to hopefully get the book into production and sold to families with children. I would look for publishers and agents that typically market a young audience and styles similar to what I have in my book.

I would also like to look into more licencing directions that I can put my illustrations into. I have some ideas presented here such as the flashcards and posters, but I know that there are many many more routes that I can take with making products out of the illustrations. Some things that I have in mind would be classroom decorations, mugs, individual letter posters and many more.
THANK YOU!
CARD collections + social expressions

By Hannah Spieker
When coming up with what to make for my card collections, I turned to researching what was out there and what is currently selling. Through this, I decided what categories I wanted to explore with those being birthday, graduation, wedding, and friendship. I also definitely wanted to use animal characters as themes in each collection so that the consumer could place themselves into the card and so that they would be more relatable. It is important to me that the cards reach as large an audience as possible so I made them as inclusive as I could by not leaning into the stereotypes that some cards do now and I also wanted to have representation for all kinds of relationships. It is also important that they are not limited to a certain age range so that people of all ages could enjoy them. Style and process are also important factors in creating the cards. The shape language of the animals are still important in telling the story and giving the mood of the collection. I also integrated hand made textures to give them a unique look.

Overall, creating collections that fill the holes in the market and are unique in style to me is what my aim was in creating them.
As mentioned before, I want these cards to be inclusive to a large range of audiences so my market is very broad. The birthday and friendship cards could definitely appeal to anyone and any age. However the wedding and graduation cards will most likely be purchased by an adult audience due to the nature of when those events happen in a person’s life. But of people in that stage of their life, it is still open to any gender, race, or sexual orientation.
SKETCHES

MAKE A WISH

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

CONGRATULATIONS GRAD!

CONGRATULATIONS!

TRUE LOVE

I DO.

WISHING YOU A HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

WE'VE GOT YOUR BACK.

WE'VE GOT THIS.

I'VE GOT YOU.

YOU'VE GOT ME.
HAPPY BIRTHDAY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY
CONGRADULATIONS

GRAD!

congradulations

GRAD
WEDDING collection

HAPPILY EVER AFTER

True Love
PATTERN & BAG
Wishing you a happily ever after.
FRIENDSHIP COLLECTION

I've got you
&
You've got me

we've got your back.

FOR YOU
CARDS

I've got you

&

You've got me

we've got your back.
PATTERN & BAG

FOR YOU

Zebra pattern

Shark pattern

Fish pattern
I've got you

You've got me

we've got your back.
For my collections, there are a few different routes that I can take with these after graduation. While talking with the art director at American Greetings, she said that I could send them to her to possibly get hired as a freelancer for them. I could also find an agent to represent me and get these into production through them. Lastly, I could set up a small business type of shop online and put these collections up for sale there.

Regardless of any of these options, getting these collections out on the market would give consumers the opportunity to buy cards that they can give to loved ones with an inclusive and unique design behind them.
thank you!
I appreciate you attending my presentation