

Winter Quarter 2009
M/W 2:00 pm – 4:20 pm

Instructor: Karen Gutowsky
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Office Hours: M-W 10:20-11:00/1:20-2:00/4:20-5:00
Course Website: myhome.spu.edu/kgz/3205

Project Six Transitional System

Throughout the course we will work on a series of poems written by American poets and create a typographic anthology.

Our sixth project will focus on a Transitional System of typographic organization. The transitional organization is an informal system of layered and shifted banding. There are not interrelationships along an axis or edge alignments, and elements move freely left and right. This is a far more casual system than the grid system in that strict interrelationship through edge alignment is not desirable. The lines of type are free-flowing and the textures they create assist in ordering the message. Examples of natural transitional arrangements include strata of layered rock or casually stacked wood.

Compositions can be airy and widely leaded or tightly compact, which emphasizes the negative space. *(Text from Typographic Systems, by Kimberly Elam)*

Process

Each system will have three phases.
—First, will include 5 (8" x 8") hand studies mounted on 9" x 9" black construction paper. Poems will use one sans serif font, same size and weight throughout the 5 sketches. Variables will include placement, line breaks, leading, word and letter spacing.
—Second, will include 2 (8" x 8") computer studies printed out and mounted on 9" x 9" black construction paper. Variables will include non-objective elements such as rules, shapes, value shifts (ie bold weight, transparency and tone), illustration and or photography
—Third, Final Due, student will take evaluation from 7 sketches and create a final composition printed out 8" x 8" color output (all studies will be mounted at the end of the quarter).

*Below is the text used for
Project Six-Transitional System*

The Weary Blues

by Langston Hughes

Droning a drowsy syncopated tune,
Rocking back and forth to a mellow croon,
I heard a Negro play.
Down on Lenox Avenue the other night
By the pale dull pallor of an old gas light
He did a lazy sway . . .
He did a lazy sway . . .
To the tune o' those Weary Blues.
With his ebony hands on each ivory key
He made that poor piano moan with melody.
O Blues!
Swaying to and fro on his rickety stool
He played that sad raggy tune like a musical fool.
Sweet Blues!
Coming from a black man's soul.
O Blues!
In a deep song voice with a melancholy tone
I heard that Negro sing, that old piano moan--
"Ain't got nobody in all this world,
Ain't got nobody but ma self.
I's gwine to quit ma frownin'
And put ma troubles on the shelf."

Thump, thump, thump, went his foot on the floor.
He played a few chords then he sang some more--
"I got the Weary Blues
And I can't be satisfied.
Got the Weary Blues
And can't be satisfied--
I ain't happy no mo'
And I wish that I had died."
And far into the night he crooned that tune.
The stars went out and so did the moon.
The singer stopped playing and went to bed
While the Weary Blues echoed through his head.
He slept like a rock or a man that's dead.

Schedule

Wednesday, February 18—
Steps 1 (5) hand sketches

Monday, February 23—
Steps 2 (2) computer sketches

Tuesday, March 17—Final Study Due