MARQ MERVIN

ARTIST • EDUCATOR • ACTIVIST

Curriculum Vitae

LAST MODIFIED - NOVEMBER 2022

Contents

THE ARTIST

THE EDUCATOR

THE ACTIVIST

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The Artist

Artist Statement

My artistic practice is not complicated. Neither is the comprehensive statement. Simply put, my work is about identity. The intersections of my lived experiences as a Black gay man of size are complex enough.

As such, I constantly question my personhood and my purpose. I create in order to better understand my identity and to answer a question that continues to elude me—where do I belong in this world?

Storytelling has been a friend and confidant for as long as I can remember. I share my narratives by crafting experiences involving music, poetry, digital painting, illustration, design, and interactive digital elements.

Through each project, I unravel the strings of who I am and braid these strands into a version of myself that guides me through the next phases of my life. I've been asked, "What is the intent of your work?" My answer is simple. My intent is to experience healing and freedom through self-acceptance.

Exhibition History

NUDUS 2022 |
ONLINE

Work – *C1*
2022, Virtual Exhibition

12TH ANNUAL FIGURATIVE ART EXHIBITION 2022 |
ONLINE

Work – *C1*
2022, Virtual Exhibition

"EGO" (SOLO EXHIBITION) |
ONLINE

2020, Virtual Exhibition

JAXBYJAX LITERARY ARTS FESTIVAL VI |
JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY DOWNTOWN

Work – *Excerpts from "One Day, I Hope That...: A Collection of Prose & Poetry*, 2019, Jacksonville, FL

"MAKING IT NOW" ALUMNI ART EXHIBITION |
JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY

Work – *Revelation/Revolution*
2019, Jacksonville, FL

"PIERCING THE VEIL" POETRY READING |
YELLOW HOUSE

Work – *Nobody Knows My Name*
2019, Jacksonville, FL

Exhibition History

**"MIND BODY SOUL" (CURATOR) |
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE**

2017, Jacksonville, FL

**GAAM FANTASY SHOW JURIED ART EXHIBITION |
GAAM**

Work – *The Concept of Love*
2016, Jacksonville, FL

**GAAM FANTASY SHOW JURIED ART EXHIBITION |
GAAM**

Work – *The Future is Now*
2014, Jacksonville, FL

**"OUR MUSES DO NINETY" ALUMNI ART EXHIBITION |
NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Works – *I.C.U., Silenced, and Yours, Mine, Hope*
2013, New York, NY

**M.F.A. GRADUATE THESIS EXHIBITION |
NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

Work – *Once Upon a Time*
2013, New York, NY

**B.F.A. THESIS EXHIBITION |
JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY**

Work – *t.E.N.*
2010, Jacksonville, FL

Work Experience

SOCIAL MEDIA DIRECTOR | TEDXFSCJ

December 2016–February 2018
Jacksonville, FL

As Social Media Director, I upheld TED brand standards while developing social media content for TEDxFSCJ events (Salons). This resulted in a broader reach to the Jacksonville community and a stronger online presence to engage with a larger demographic. My accomplishments include, but are not limited to:

- Developed social media content to help establish online presence and connect the general public with prominent figures in the Jacksonville community, as well as TED Senior Fellow Meklit

- Developed the visual identity for TEDxFSCJ's 2018 speaker conference, Barriers

MOTION GRAPHICS DESIGNER | WJXT CHANNEL 4

November 2013–March 2016
Jacksonville, FL

I was responsible for assisting the Art Director and Creative Services department in developing graphics and animations for on-air broadcast, social media awareness, and printed distribution. My accomplishments include, but are not limited to:

- Designed motion graphics for the Emmy-award winning documentary "Challenger: A Rush to Launch" and its promotional content

- Developed animated intro segments featured on River City Live

- Created promotional web graphics for News4Jax Investigates/I-Team and monitor backdrops for breaking news stories and The Morning Show

Work Experience

MARKETING & DESIGN DIRECTOR | THE DOGHOUSE GOURMET GRILLE

January 2011–August 2015
Jacksonville, FL

My responsibilities included branding, marketing, and designing promotional tools to evolve our social media presence and establish avenues to further business growth. My accomplishments include:

- Developed our visual brand identity materials including logo design, collateral, and promotional advertisements.

- Expanded consumer traffic for both business and social media, thus increasing profit and customer base

- Garnered city-wide interest through web promotion via EatDrinkJax. com, Jacksonville University's online publication Wave Weekly, and radio promotion via V101.5 for the Taste of Black Jacksonville

MULTIMEDIA DESIGNER | FREELANCE

September 2008–December 2018
Jacksonville, FL

As a Multimedia Designer, I've collaborated with local start-ups, small businesses, and non-profit organizations. My work ranged from developing visual brand identities and drafting promotional collateral, to motion graphic elements and intro sequences for film and broadcast. My clients include:

– The Hester Group (Jacksonville, FL)
– Carla Mechele Media (Jacksonville, FL)
– Beans Insurance Agency, LLC (Jacksonville, FL)
– WJXT Channel 4 (Jacksonville, FL)
– I'm A Star Foundation (Jacksonville, FL)

The Educator

Teaching Philosophy

I'm a believer of magic. The magic of curiosity, imagination, and play. These three elements have been the foundations of what fuel me as a lifelong learner. There's an excitement in being curious, endless possibilities when being imaginative, and the journey of exploration reveals itself through play. When these three forces meet, the impossible becomes possible, the limitations become stepping stones, and the barriers become building blocks. This is the joy I find in learning. But how does one get there?

Trial and error are the proof of process. But before the student can learn through failure, I believe they must, first, find the courage to try. This is where the biggest challenges exist in Art & Design education. Students, much like non-practitioners of the Arts, see the product but not the process. What they also may not see are the gaps that keep them from reaching their aspirations. I believe the teacher's role includes illuminating those gaps, building bridges to create pathways, then guiding students along the newly formed bridge.

Students have the capability to tap into the curiosity, imagination, and passion for play that we all innately possess. However, in order to help them discover the courage to try and the confidence to create alongside failure, bridges must be built to give them a starting point. I define my educational philosophy on the following principles: To create, you must be curious; to be curious, you must imagine; to imagine, you must try; to try, you must have courage; and to have courage, you must have ground to stand and walk upon. Most importantly, you must always remember the joy of play.

That is where we find the magic.

Teaching Pedagogy

My values as an educator are rooted in curiosity, imagination, and building bridges to assist students on their paths toward self-fulfillment. To put these values into pedagogical practice, my methodology is comprised of three primary components that support my goal: Establishing Trust, Asking Questions, and Adapting Tutelage.

I believe the student's trust in their educator's ability opens the door for collaboration. In order for trust to grow in this relationship, I choose to be transparent about my creative process, past failures, and current struggles as a working artist. I facilitate and encourage conversations to share my experiences, but also to learn more about the students and how best to support their learning.

I ask the following five questions to every group that I work with: "What are your creative interests?"; "What do you currently know about your area(s) of interest?"; "How do you feel about your ability to create?"; "Why did you choose to pursue Art & Design?"; and "What do you hope to gain from your time in this class/program?" These questions allow me to gauge what they want, what they know, how they see themselves, their incentive, and their aspirations. This information also defines the class composition and helps me understand who the students are as learners and, most importantly, as people.

After gathering this information, my classes are normally composed of students who fall into one of the following three categories: The Self Initiators who are steadfast and most focused on their goals; the Sponges who have a general idea of their interests, but are open to pivoting; and the Slow Burners who don't know their end goal and need time to work through feelings of indecisiveness.

Each group requires their own specific needs. Understanding the class composition allows me to determine how to nurture their development, adapt the project(s) if needed, and what resources to tap into (i.e., professional guidance, mentorship programs, organizations, memberships, festivals, local and/or national creative communities, etc.).

Teaching Pedagogy

I assign one large-scale semester project to allow time for trial, error, exploration, discovery, and confidence building. Based on the class structure, I will either introduce additional projects to reinforce foundational development or expand the parameters of the initial project to a more robust version.

To measure the effectiveness of my methodology, I follow the educational careers of my students from start to finish. This helps me to assess whether: A. They were able to implement what they learned from our time together in future course work or personal projects, or B. They decided to pivot towards their initial or newly developed interest(s). The students' progress, decision-making, and feedback operate as an evaluation of what works, what doesn't, and what needs improvement.

My goal is to assist my students along their paths of individual fulfillment. I prioritize this because every student has different motivations for pursing a degree, especially within Art & Design. I'm aware that I'm unable to meet every individual need. Instead, I believe in using my experiences as an artist to guide my values as an educator – to support the growth and development of budding creatives as they forge their own paths towards what makes them happy.

Teaching Experience

**PROFESSOR OF DIGITAL MEDIA
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017–CURRENT**

GRA1156C – Vector Illustration

– Per Florida State College at Jacksonville's Digital Media B.A.S. Course Catalog 2022–23:

"This course is intended to introduce the student to the understanding, development, and application of vector-based graphics. Students will explore the image making process through a series of projects that relate to color, abstract image development, and graphic rendering techniques to form visual solutions within the problem-solving process in sign/symbol development."

– Vector Illustration is an introductory course to vector graphics and vector imaging. The primary software used throughout Vector Illustration is Adobe Illustrator. In this course, I focus on establishing a foundational understanding of Adobe Illustrator and encouraging creative exploration through the three projects listed below. Sample Project Briefs are provided for viewing on the following pages.

– Project 1: Training Day

– Project 2: Cartoon Characters

– Project 3: Scene Illustration

Vector Illustration
Prof. Marq Mervin

Project 1 - Training Day

For this assignment, you will be starting with the basics by tracing letters and numbers. Using new programs can be very daunting at first, so it's always best to ease into the process. The letters and numbers should have various colors as well. Your goals are to gain a better understanding of Illustrator's UI (user interface), develop a comfort level with the program, and explore the various tools available to you. The template you need will be provided to you. You will be utilizing Adobe Illustrator. Below are examples of the letters and numbers:

Assignment Requirements

Naming Convention: Assignment_FirstInitialLastName
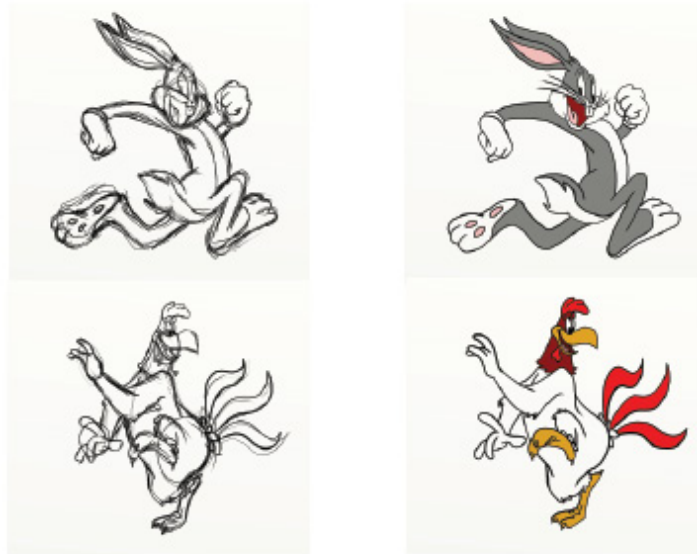(example: TrainingDay_MMervin)

Submit assignment in AI format.
(See "Assignments" tab.)

Due by Friday, October 1, 11:59pm

Vector Illustration
Prof. Marq Mervin

Project 2 - Cartoon Characters

For this assignment, you will be illustrating an iconic cartoon character. You will be selecting **two** of the character sketches I provide to you and illustrating the characters digitally. You will be utilizing Adobe Illustrator. Below are examples of sketches and illustrations:

credits: Daily Cartoon Drawings

Assignment Requirements

Dimensions: 1920px x 1080px, RGB, 72dpi (landscape or portrait)

Naming Convention: Assignment_FirstInitialLastName
(example: NameOfCharacterIllustration_MMervin)

Submit assignment in PNG format.
(See "Assignments" Tab)

Due by Friday, October 29, 11:59pm

Vector Illustration
Prof. Marq Mervin

Project 3 - Scene Illustration

For this assignment, you will be developing an illustrated scene. Every character, whether a cartoon or actor/actress lives in a scene, or the environment around them. You'll be illustrating **two** of the following four scenes: 1. Cityscape, 2. Landscape, 3. Bedroom, or 4. Café or Restaurant. Sketching, conceptualizing, and research will be vital for this assignment. It's time to put your skills to the test! Tell us an amazing story! You will be utilizing Adobe Illustrator. Below are examples of illustratated environments:

credits: Andrei Stephan, Jeremy Booth

Assignment Requirements

Dimensions: 1920px x 1080px, RGB, 72 dpi

Naming Convention: Assignment_FirstInitialLastName
(example: SceneIllustraton_MMervin)

Submit assignment in PNG format.
(See "Assignments" tab.)

Due by Friday, December 3, 11:59pm

Teaching Experience

**PROFESSOR OF DIGITAL MEDIA
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017–CURRENT**

GRA1952C – Professional Development

– Per Florida State College at Jacksonville's Digital Media B.A.S. Course Catalog 2022–23:

"This course is designed to provide students with the opportunity to create and design an interactive portfolio for use in gaining employment as well as experience a discipline-related project which provides students with meaningful work experience in a chosen field. Students will discuss industry requirements, write a resume, practice interviewing skills, and build a portfolio of their best accumulated work out of the past two years."

– Professional Development operates similar to a capstone course for students in the Associates of Science program. Through teaching this course, I noticed a wide variety of students with different skillsets, interests, and placements in the Digital Media program. This posed a problem—students weren't properly prepared for their next steps due to a lack of training, understanding, or uncertainty.

I gathered data based on the students' educational history and interests. I learned that most students fell into one of three categories: A. Students who were ready to enter the workforce, B. Students who were hoping to work at their own pace while continuing towards a Bachelor's program, and C. Students who needed time and help to figure out what they were interested in. As such, I developed a three-track approach to support the three groups of students. Sample Project Briefs are provided for viewing on the following pages.

– Project Brief: Starter Pack

– Project Brief: Freelancer Pack

– Project Brief: Passion Project

Professional Development
Prof. Marq Mervin

The Starter Pack

The Starter Pack was developed to assist you in gaining some additional insight into and preparation for the working experience in creative areas. Additionally, these items are intended to assist you on the business end of your professional creative journey. This project will span the length of the semester. The Starter Pack aims to be all-inclusive (as best as possible) and includes four components, which are listed below:

1. Résumé

2. LinkedIn Profile

3. Website or Social Media Presence

4. Process & Research

There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to your creative journey. It's vital to research your area of interest, its industry practices and expectations, as well as the direction it's headed. Your final submission will result in the following, along with process images/designs (**show your process!!!**):

1. Résumé - 8.5in x 11in, CMYK, PDF
2. LinkedIn Profile - TBD
3. Web or Social Media - TBD
4. Process Images + Research Materials

Assignment Requirements

Naming Convention: Assignment_FirstInitialLastName
(example: StarterPack_MMervin)

Submit assignment in a zipped folder
(See "Assignments" tab.)

Due by Friday, April 23, 11:59pm

Professional Development
Prof. Marq Mervin

The Freelancer Pack

The Freelancer Pack was developed to assist you in gaining some additional insight into the freelancing experience. Additionally, these items are intended to assist you on the business end of your professional creative journey. This project will span the length of the semester. The Freelancer Pack includes four components, which are listed below:

1. Business Card
2. Contract/Project Agreement
3. Website or Social Media Presence
4. Process & Research

There is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to your creative journey. It's vital to research your area of interest, its industry practices and expectations, as well as the direction it's headed. Your final submission will result in the following, along with process images/designs (**show your process!!!**):

1. Business Card - 3.75in x 2.25in, CMYK, PDF
2. Contract/Project Agreement - 8.5in x 11in, CMYK, PDF
3. Web or Social Media - TBD
4. Process Images + Research Materials

Assignment Requirements

Naming Convention: Assignment_FirstInitialLastName
(example: FreelancerPack_MMervin)

Submit assignment in a zipped folder
(See "Assignments" tab.)

Due by Friday, April 23, 11:59pm

Professional Development
Prof. Marq Mervin

The Passion Project

Passion Projects are one of the most important projects you can have. They express who you are, your interests, & the work you enjoy doing. For this project, you will be developing a body of work based on your area of interest. As creatives, you'll be responsible for working on projects that fuel your creativity, while also being mindful of things like time management, organization, & research.
Below are a few ideas:

Short Film/Documentary	**Podcast**
Comics/Sequential Art	**Drawing Fundamentals**
Illustrations	**Paintings & Sculptures**
Book/Editorial Design	**Photography Display**
Story Writing	**Vlog**

This project will span the length of the semester. The project's parameters will be based on what you decide. You'll also write 4 journal entries to practice reflection, documenting your thoughts, & accountability. Your final submission will result in the following, along with process images/designs (**show your process!!!**):

1. Passion Project - TBD
2. 4 Typed Journal Entries, 1 pg each (3 monthly, 1 recap) - Word Doc, Blog, or PDF
3. Process Images + Research Materials

Assignment Requirements

Naming Convention: Assignment_FirstInitialLastName
(example: PassionProject_MMervin)

Submit assignment in a zipped folder
(See "Assignments" tab.)

Due by Friday, April 23, 11:59pm

Teaching Experience

PROFESSOR OF DIGITAL MEDIA
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017–CURRENT

GRA3139C – Graphic Design Visualization & Creativity

– Per Florida State College at Jacksonville's Digital Media B.A.S. Course Catalog 2022–23:

"The development of effective communication strategies will be presented through a series of graphic design campaign projects that bring together all previous skills and knowledge learned. Through selected assignments, the student will focus on the relationship of identity, information, and persuasion in the development of graphic design projects."

– Graphic Design Visualization & Creativity (shortened to GDVC) is a Bachelor's-level elective course. I developed this course to introduce students to visual identity design and branding. Through this experience, I provide the students with a mock client and guide them through the processes of moodboarding, logo development, typesetting, color palette branding, and developing mockups to view their work in application. Additionally, I facilitate discussion around the client-designer experience, including industry and competitor research, effective business practices, and the importance of empathy and etiquette. Sample Project Briefs are provided for viewing on the following pages.

– Project Brief: Visual Identity Design

– Creative Brief: Mock Client

– Supportive Document: Milestones

Graphic Design Viz & Creativity
Prof. Marq Mervin

Visual Identity Design

Visual Identities, mistakenly referred to as the "Brand", are what we remember most when engaging with a product, business, or organization. From the logos and signage to the typography and color palettes, visual identities help strengthen the recognition and visibility of a business. Much like branding, visual identity design involves research, strategy, and intention.

For this project, you'll be developing one slide deck to present **two** visual identity proposals for a mock client. The mock client & their Creative Brief will be provided for you. You are to have the following for your final project:

1. Slide Deck PDF Presentation - 500pts

both proposals must include:

Logo Concept | Color Palette | Type Set | 2 Application Mockups | Moodboard

2. Process Folder - 500pts

must include:

Process Sketches + Process Images of Design Work | Reference Images

A slide deck template and one of the Application Mockups will be provided for you. However, you are responsible for building on the template to enhance the presentation of your work. **Be sure to show & document your process!!!**

Assignment Requirements

Naming Convention: Assignment_FirstInitialLastName
(example: VizIdentityDesign_MMervin)

Submit assignment in a zipped folder
(See "Assignments" tab.)

Due by Friday, April 23, 11:59pm

Graphic Design Viz & Creativity
Prof. Marq Mervin

Creative Brief

Thank you for working with us!
Here's the Creative Brief for our project.

Business Name: Vida Meals

Industry: Food Service, Culinary

Background Summary: Vida Meals is a small business that focuses on healthy and affordable meal prep. We like to provide our clients with weekly menus, meal options (vegan, vegetarian, paleo, keto, etc), and quantity options (breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks). We've always enjoyed cooking. However, what we've noticed is that it gets harder and harder to meal prep because of hectic schedules. Our goal is to help those who have trouble balancing good eating with busy lives. That's the inspiration behind "Vida", or "Life" in Spanish. Our values are all about supporting and promoting healthier eating options that fits within our busy lives. Our motto is "food is life". Our customers have been primarily young single adults. We'd like to keep this market as our primary focus.

Overview: Visual Identity

Tone, Message, & Values: Our message includes healthier eating, affordability, and understanding the need for this type of service. We're very friendly and accommodating. We'd like to promote those values, as well as incorporating the feelings of energy, support, and consistency.

Visuals: Visually, we're open to a variety of colors. We'd like the logo to incorporate some sort of graphic along with our business name. However, we can compromise if presented with strong options. Color-wise, earthy, energetic, warm colors would be good elements. We aren't set on colors, so having options would be great!

Contact Person: Marq Mervin

Graphic Design Viz & Creativity
Prof. Marq Mervin

Milestones

Milestones are used to keep a project on track and to avoid procrastination as much as possible. Below are the dates and summaries of what is expected at each milestone. Turn in your work to the provided Dropbox link on the date below by 11:59pm. We'll review submissions in class (Tuesdays).

Feb 15

Milestone Monday 1 - 3 Moodboards and 30 logo sketches.
Moodboards should be in one file, AI format, and named (Moodboards_FirstInitialLastName). *Remember to include the source images.* Logo sketches should be JPG or PNG format and named (Sketches_FirstInitialLastName).

Mar 15

Milestone Monday 2 - Revised logo sketches, 4 typesets, and 4 color palettes.
Revised logo sketches should be JPG or PNG format and named (RevisedSketches_FirstInitialLast-Name). Typesets and Color Palettes should be in one file, AI format, and named (TypeColor_FirstInitialLastName). *Remember to include the fonts.*

Mar 29

Milestone Monday 3 - Final typesets and color palettes, 2 Logo designs B&W.
Typesets and Color Palettes should be in one file, AI format, and named (TypeColorFinal_FirstInitialLastName). *Remember to include the fonts.* 2 Logo designs should be in one file, AI format, and named (LogosDraft_FirstInitialLastName).

Apr 12

Milestone Monday 4 - Final 2 Logo designs w/ color, 2 Application Mockups.
Final Logo designs should be in one file, AI format, and named (LogosFinal_FirstInitialLastName). Application Mockups should be separate files, PNG or JPG format, and named (Application_FirstInitialLastName).

Apr 19

Milestone Monday 5 - Slide Deck Presentation
Slide Deck Presentation with all of the required elements (2 Logo Concepts should be in one file, AI format, and named (SlideDeck_FirstInitialLastName). Once approved, prepare your final submission folder (see Project Brief for naming convention and requirements).

Teaching Experience

PROFESSOR OF DIGITAL MEDIA
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017–CURRENT

Additional Courses Taught (per Florida State College at Jacksonville's Digital Media B.A.S. Course Catalog 2022–23)

GRA 1110C – Graphic Design Methods

– This graphic design course is intended to introduce the student to the essential skills necessary to bring together the conceptual and formal elements of design. The use of image, shape, color, and type in terms of their aesthetic possibilities in relationship to the organization of written information, messaging, and visual communication will be explored and implemented through project-based learning.

DIG2105C – Web 2.0 & Social Media

– This course is designed to explore the current technologies associated with Web 2.0 and social media. Topics to be covered include social networking, really simple syndication (RSS), tagging, consumer generated content (CGS), blogs, wikis, and podcasting. Student knowledge in the historical perspectives, prevailing definitions, and industry-wide applications of Web 2.0 and social media tools will be extended.

DIG3305C – Fundamentals of 3D Animation

– This class is designed to teach students basic 3D modeling and animation skills, with an emphasis on polygon creation and modeling for both print and animation. Students will be introduced to 3D modeling program(s), foundational animation principles, and wil explore the role of this art form in digital media.

DIG3433C – Visual Storytelling & Visual Development

– In this course, students study storytelling and the applications to visual narrative design and interactive forms of media. Students will design narratives in a variety of digital media formats.

Teaching Experience

**PROFESSOR OF DIGITAL MEDIA
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017–CURRENT**

GRA3209C – Applied Typography

– This course teaches advanced principles of typography through exercises and projects. Projects will emphasize the typographic form and type-and-image in visual communication. Emphasis will be placed on terminology, historical origins, form, and compositional elements used while designing with type. Problem solving skills, process, and research will be stressed. Graphic design principles will be reinforced with projects concentrating on typographic detail.

DIG3354C – Advanced 3D Animation

– This course highlights methods in animation, including advanced 3D animation techniques, 2D animation techniques, and compositing. Student will apply methods in the creation of a complete animation, working with pre-production, production, and postproduction techniques.

Keynotes, Panels, Workshops, & Presentations

"GETTING ON THE SAME PAGE: FSCJ AUTHORS ON SELF-PUBLISHING" | FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE, ONLINE, 2020 |INVITED PANELIST

In honor of National Novel Writing Month, I was invited to discuss the non-traditional journey I took towards self-publishing. Alongside fellow professors and colleagues, we shared our experiences as writers, what we learned through the process of self-publishing, the additional responsibilities involved such as sales management, & shared advice for viewers who were interested in self-publishing.

"ELEVATING BLACK DESIGN VOICES (PART 1)" PANEL DISCUSSION | UCDA, ONLINE, 2020 | INVITED PANELIST

I was invited to participate in *Elevating Black Design Voices*, a panel discussion hosted by the University & College Designers Association (shortened to UCDA). The discussion sparked conversation about the experiences of Black designers, design educators, and design students. We shared our journeys thusfar while also advocating for more safe and inclusive spaces that celebrate Black perspectives on design education and the design profession. The success of the event prompted the panel to evolve into an ongoing series of conversations.

"THE SHOW" | AIGA NEBRASKA, OMAHA, NE, 2018 | INVITED KEYNOTE SPEAKER

I was invited by AIGA Nebraska as both an adjudicator and keynote speaker for their annual design competition, *The Show*. Alongside co-judges Rich Hollant and Sadie Redwing, we reviewed submissions from the local Omaha design community ranging from brand identities and environmental design to student work and motion graphic cinematics. In my talk, I shared my struggle with being at the crossroads of Art & Design, how I learned my work is centered in identity, what led me to education, and what next steps I aspired to.

Keynotes, Panels, Workshops, & Presentations

FSCJ CONVOCATION DIVISION PANEL DISCUSSION | FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2018 | PANELIST

I was invited by the Dean of Arts & Sciences as a representative of the Digital Media program to discuss emerging trends and innovative activities happening in the age of globalization. Alongside professors across various programs, we shared our thoughts on the projected evolution of our disciplines, how to prepare and respond to these developments, and what practices we can implement to support student success through interdisciplinary collaboration.

"DIVERSITY & INCLUSION OUTREACH & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT" | AIGA NORTHWEST ARKANSAS, BENTONVILLE, AK, 2018 | WORKSHOP

I and my co-facilitator, educator Gaby Hernandez, developed a workshop with AIGA Northwest Arkansas during our Diversity & Inclusion Retreat. During this retreat, various AIGA D&I leaders convened to discuss methods of improving outreach. Our workshop, titled *Diversity & Inclusion Outreach & Community Engagement*, highlighted the value of design to schools, institutions, and local communities through discussion, presentations, Q&A, and written exercises.

"CREATIVITY & DIGITAL INNOVATION TODAY" LECTURE SERIES | FRANK H. PETERSON ACADEMY, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017 | INVITED LECTURER

For Frank H. Peterson's first Creativity & Digital Innovation Today lecture series. I was invited by Communication Design educator Mike Fuller to speak with his students about talent retention, innovative thinking, and the importance of design education to support students interested in pursuing design careers. In addition to the presentation, I facilitated a group-based workshop that prompted students to develop a business and visual imagery to support their ideas.

Keynotes, Panels, Workshops, & Presentations

"MORE THAN A HALF-LIFE" |
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE,
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017 | PRESENTER

In my presentation, *More Than A Half-Life: Black Video Game Characters from Assassin's Creed to Watch Dogs 2*, I discussed the importance of equitable representation of Black and Brown characters in video games. Video games can, oftentimes, be a person's introduction to a different race, ethnicity, or cultural background. As such, the importance of well-rounded Black and Brown characters becomes critical. Topics discussed included ingrained stereotypes, the evolution of Black characters, and forms of digital blackface in video games.

"MILES TO GO" |
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE,
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017 | PRESENTER

For Black History Month, I, alongside my co-presenters Dustin Harewood, Angela Gaines, and Jennifer Grey, facilitated a presentation titled *Miles to Go: Why A Black Spiderman Should Be Just the Beginning*. We discussed topics such as the history of Marvel, lesser known Black and Brown superheroes in Marvel and DC canon, and the experiences of being a Black cosplayer. Through this experience, I was able to introduce students to Black superheroes who have less notoriety but are equally as important.

"BLACK IDENTITY & THE ARTS" PANEL DISCUSSION |
FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE,
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017 | PANELIST

Black Identity & The Arts was a panel discussion to support upcoming exhibitions that explored the nuances and complexities of Black identity. I and Shawana Brooks, curators of our exhibitions (*Mind Body Soul* and *KESHA: A Black Female Experience of Identity and Race*, respectively) were joined by artists participating in our exhibitions. We discussed our experiences as Black storytellers, artists, and the mirroring themes of our shows that explored Black masculinity, Black womanhood, and Black identity.

Keynotes, Panels, Workshops, & Presentations

"REPRESENT! DIVERSITY & EQUITY IN ARTS EDUCATION" | TEDXFSCJ, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2016 | KEYNOTE SPEAKER

For TEDxFSCJ: Engage, I spoke about the importance of diverse and equitable representation in Arts education. I presented research on programs at three prominent higher ed art schools along the East Coast. In this research, I shared the small percentages of Black and Brown faculty compared to the much larger percentages of white faculty. I advocated for the benefits that Arts education can experience by actively and intentionally forming a diverse, inclusive, and equitable faculty community.

"COMMUNITY THREAD: THE POLITICS OF ART EDUCATION" | WJCT, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2016 | INVITED PANELIST

I was invited to discuss the lack of representation and inclusion in Arts education for WJCT's Community Thread series. Through our conversation, I and my co-panelists expounded on the steps the Northeast Florida community should take to approach arts policy, sparking action for change, supporting the Jacksonville art community, and advocating for more inclusive and equitable arts education.

Advising & Adjudication

UCDA ANNUAL DESIGN SHOW DESIGN COMPETITION, 2022 | INVITED ADJUDICATOR

I was invited by Liz Chrisman of UCDA (The University & College Designers Association) per Gina Gray's recommendation to adjudicate work submitted from educational institutions across North America. Alongside other invited judges, we reviewed submissions ranging from brand identities and illustration to social media marketing campaigns and motion graphic cinematics. Award winners' work was displayed at UCDA's Design Conference 2022.

LIGATURE 31 - UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA STUDENT PORTFOLIO REVIEW, 2022 | PORTFOLIO REVIEWER

I participated in University of Florida's annual design symposium as a portfolio reviewer. I had the opportunity to review graduating seniors' work from UF's Graphic Design/Design & Visual Communications program. Held virtually, I was paired with 2–3 students and shared insights, recommendations, and words of encouragement for their next steps into the work force.

CMU DESIGN - CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY STUDENT PORTFOLIO REVIEW, 2022 | PORTFOLIO REVIEWER

I was invited by Andrew Twigg to participate in Carnegie Mellon University's School of Design portfolio reviews. I had the opportunity to review a range of students' work from CMU's design program. Students ranged from sophomores to seniors. Held virtually, I was paired with 6–8 students and shared insights, recommendations, and words of encouragement for their next steps into the work force and/ or their pursuits in higher education.

Advising & Adjudication

CREATIVE CIRCUS AWARD SHOW
STUDENT EXHIBITION, 2021 |
INVITED ADJUDICATOR

I was invited by design educator Nakita Pope to adjudicate student work for the annual student competition at The Creative Circus based in Atlanta, GA. Alongside various judges, we reviewed submissions ranging from brand identities and editorial design to content creation and advertising campaigns across a 4-day period.

FL ANIMATION FILM FEST
ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, 2021 |
INVITED ADJUDICATOR

I was invited by the Florida Animation Film Festival team to adjudicate animated short films in the first annual FL Animation Film Fest competition. Alongside co-judges that work in various sectors of animation (producers, writers, storyboard artists, background painters, etc.) to film (actors, actresses, directors, etc.) and education, we reviewed submissions ranging from student work and independent filmmakers to animated shorts and international cartoons.

FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE
FOUNDATION IMPACT REPORT, 2021 |
FACULTY ADVISOR - ART & DESIGN TEAM

As Faculty Advisor, I served as both a bridge between Florida State College at Jacksonville's (shortened to FSCJ) Digital Media program and the FSCJ Foundation. Additionally, I contributed to the development of visual and design collateral for the FSCJ Foundation's Impact Report. My role on the Art/Design Team was to assist students and designers in developing, refining, and presenting concept proposals to support the initiatives of the FSCJ Foundation.

Advising & Adjudication

JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS ADVISORY BOARD, 2019–2022 | ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER

I was invited to join and contribute to Jacksonville University's College of Fine Arts Strategic Advisory Board. As a member of the Advisory Board, I support Jacksonville University's mission by assisting in developing bridges between the College of Fine Arts and the Jacksonville art community. My community work (see Service to Community) grants me insight to support the Advisory Board towards their goals.

FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE DIGITAL MEDIA ADVISORY BOARD, 2019–2021| FACULTY ADVISOR

As a Faculty Advisor for the Digital Media Advisory Board, I contributed to our mission by recruiting Art & Design professionals and educators to discuss emerging trends, talent recruitment, talent retention, to better inform my teaching pedagogy, and to build relationships between Jacksonville-based agencies and Florida State College at Jacksonville's Digital Media program.

JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE, 2020 | COMMITTEE MEMBER

I was invited to join and contribute to Jacksonville University's College of Fine Arts Strategic Planning Committee. During my time with the Strategic Committee, our mission included the following: to strengthen the presence of the College of Fine Arts (shortened to CFA) across Jacksonville University's network through interdisciplinary practice; to promote opportunities to expand student success; to develop initiatives that support faculty fellowships; and to enhance structure and infrastructure throughout the CFA facilities.

Advising & Adjudication

NORTHEAST FLORIDA ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION SCHOLASTICS STUDENT ART COMPETITION, 2019–CURRENT | INVITED ADJUDICATOR

Northeast Florida Art Education Association (shortened to NEFAEA) is an organization that supports, elevates, and recognizes art students and educators. I was invited to participate as an adjudicator in the Scholastics Student Art Competition from 2019 onward. Alongside a wide range of art educators, I reviewed work submitted by 6th–12th grade students across Northeast Florida.

AIGA NEBRASKA "THE SHOW" DESIGN COMPETITION, 2018 | INVITED ADJUDICATOR

I was invited by AIGA Nebraska to adjudicate work submitted from their local Omaha design community. Alongside co-judges Rich Hollant and Sadie Redwing, we reviewed submissions ranging from brand identities and environmental design to student work and motion graphic cinematics across a 2-day period.

Service to Education

"BEHIND THE SCENES: VISITING ARTIST LECTURE SERIES" | FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE | JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2020–CURRENT

Behind The Scenes: Visiting Artist Lecture Series is a series of conversations with creatives to get a deeper look into their artistic and professional journeys. These conversations aim to give insight into the lives and career highs and lows of art, design, and digital media practitioners. We often see the final product, but here is where we'll learn some of the process. I created this on-going series to introduce students to professional creatives and to provide observational and interactive learning opportunities for students throughout their educational careers.

"THE PROFESSOR IS IN" BOOK CLUB | FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2019

I was invited by Florida State College at Jacksonville's Library & Learning Commons (shortened to LLC) to facilitate a book club meeting and discussion in their series, *The Professor Is In*. I shared the book *In the Life: A Black Gay Anthology* edited by Joseph Beam. This opportunity prompted thoughtful conversation about the experiences of Black gay men in the era of the AIDS epidemic, as well as my own coming-of-age journey towards acceptance as a Black gay man.

GEARUP SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM | FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2019

GEARUP Summer Bridge Program is a college and career readiness program to support middle and high school students in Duval County Public Schools. Through this program, students are introduced to STEAM careers and educational options. I participated as a representative of Florida State College at Jacksonville's Digital Media department and as a representative for Arts Education. I facilitated a "Draw Your Own Character" workshop for campers and introduced approximately 30 students to Art & Design.

Service to Education

DIGITAL MEDIA GUILD – FACULTY ADVISOR | FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2018–2019

The Digital Media Guild was a student-ran organization formed by juniors and seniors in the Digital Media program. I supported and advised former President Roger Sarria during his tenure. Both he and I developed programming for the Guild, invited guest speakers in the Arts and Art Law, and created a sustainable structure for future Guild participants and leadership.

DIGITAL MEDIA SHOWCASE – CO-ORGANIZER | FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2018

Alongside my colleague, I co-organized the first Digital Media Showcase for Florida State College at Jacksonville's Digital Media program. The Showcase highlighted the work of students from the Digital Media program. The success of the showcase led to new relationships with Jacksonville-based agencies for student internship opportunities, alongside support and participation for the Digital Media Advisory Board.

"BRIDGING THE DIVIDE" – FACULTY ADVISOR | FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE | JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2018

Bridging the Divide is a joint initiative between Florida State College at Jacksonville, the Rashean Mathis Foundation, and Campus Compact's Fund for Positive Engagement. The initiative was designed to explore, address, and propose solutions to the various disparities (education, health, socioeconomic impact, and criminal justice) affecting the city of Jacksonville. As Faculty Advisor, I supported the initiative by offering design guidance for the logo development and insight from my experiences as a native Jaxon and a FSCJ alumnus.

Education History

M.F.A., COMPUTER GRAPHICS - ANIMATION |
NEW YORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
NEW YORK, NY

B.F.A., COMPUTER ART & DESIGN - ANIMATION |
JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY
JACKSONVILLE, FL

A.A., GENERAL STUDIES |
FLORIDA COMMUNITY COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE
JACKSONVILLE, FL

Awards, Honors, & Scholarships

ADOBE PARTNERS BY DESIGN |
HONORED 2020

JACKSONVILLE UNIVERSITY'S DISTINGUISHED FINE
ARTS ALUM | AWARDED & HONORED 2019

FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE AT JACKSONVILLE FACULTY
AUTHOR RECEPTION | HONORED 2019

AIGA DIVERSITY SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT |
AWARDED 2017

EMMY - "CHALLENGER: A RUSH TO LAUNCH" |
AWARDED 2017

The Activist

Personal Statement of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

From childhood into adulthood, I've always found myself as the F.O.D.—the First, the Only, or the one who's Different. The First in my family to pursue graduate studies. The Only Black and openly gay full-time faculty member. The person who, until recent years, felt odd being "Different" because my creative voice resonated most in the spaces of multidisciplinarity. Through these experiences, I learned something that forever changed my life - Discomfort prompts us to take action.

I was a student who didn't go to a specialized art school. Nor did I see art teachers who looked like me and created in the way that I wanted to create. The lack of representation often made me question my ability and worth as a student, artist, and person. Though, these experiences were the catalyst that formed the foundation of my advocacy. I wholeheartedly believe that equitable Art & Design education should be also accessible to marginalized and under-resourced communities. These creative voices deserve to be lauded but are often silenced due to many barriers, two of which are inaccess to information and inaccess to representation. As such, I apply my experiences and values into my practice by:

– Advocating for diverse, equitable, and inclusive classroom spaces, learning environments, faculty, and administration.

– Introducing Art & Design careers to K–12 students by supporting and expanding upon STEAM educational initiatives.

– Championing for more career-oriented support, guidance, and mentorship to be available and accessible for marginalized and under-resourced students.

– Bridging comprehension gaps by explaining creative industries and professions more effectively to parents and institutions in the hopes of cultivating support systems for kids interested in Art & Design.

Personal Statement of Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Examples of my advocacy can be found throughout my professional and personal work. In 2016, my TEDx talk, *Represent! Diversity & Equity in Arts Education*, raised awareness about the glaring lack of diverse faculty in Art, Animation, & Design higher education institutions. Shortly after, I volunteered with AIGA's Diversity & Inclusion Task Force (now DEI Task Force) as a member-turned-lead of the Education and Community Committee.

Teaching in an open-access institution has expanded my empathy and lens in immeasurable ways. I've learned about educational pathways from elementary to high school, their strengths and areas of improvement, existing and emerging barriers towards the pursuit of post-secondary education, and the humbling journey of post-graduate life for students looking to enter creative industries. These experiences directly inspired my volunteer work with K–12 students and my tutelage of students across a wide spectrum of lived experiences.

I'm thankful to say I've become what I didn't have. I've also learned that my role is not solely being an artist, designer, nor educator. Rather, the many intersected threads of my identity remind me that I am a reflection of many communities and an eternal advocate for equitable representation, inclusion, protection, and amplification of diverse voices. In short, a bridge builder.

It is my life practice to lead with empathy, lean into grace often, and to be a lifelong learner of human experiences. My hope is that every person who identifies as a F.O.D. has a seat at the table of their choice. Through my commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, my intent is that they are no longer the first, the only, nor othered for being different. Rather, that they are welcomed, heard, encouraged, and supported.

Service to Community

INVITED PRESENTER & WORKSHOP FACILITATOR | RIVER CITY SCIENCE ACADEMY INNOVATION, JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017–CURRENT

I've developed an ongoing relationship with River City Science Academy Innovation (shortened to RCSAI) as a guest artist, presenter, & workshop facilitator. My work with RCSAI involves facilitating workshops that introduce Art & Design projects to 3rd–6th grade students, engaging with 7th grade students in service learning projects, supporting STEAM initiatives through presentations, & participating in school-wide programs for Black History Month.

EDUCATOR | ADOBE PARTNERS BY DESIGN, SAN JOSE, CA, 2018–CURRENT

The Adobe Partners By Design program connects the world's leading art, design, game development, & film schools with one another to foster inspired collaboration & conversation. As a Partner by Design, I work internationally with higher ed instructors on developing innovative ways to create a more robust learning experience for students. This includes, but isn't limited to, collaborative projects, ideation, & developing in-depth learning/teaching strategies such as curricula & online video resources.

EDUCATION & COMMUNITY LEAD | AIGA DIVERSITY & INCLUSION TASK FORCE, NEW YORK, NY, 2017–2019

Along with my fellow committee members, the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force explored partnerships with educational institutions, communities, & minority-based organizations interested in design education, diversity & inclusion. Much of my work involved organizing & building databases to house information about AIGA Student Groups founded at HBCUs, HSIs, TCUs, & AANAPISIs across the country.

Service to Community

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION LEAD |
AIGA JACKSONVILLE,
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017–2019

During my tenure as Diversity & Inclusion Lead for AIGA Jacksonville, I was responsible for bringing awareness of marginalized & underrepresented groups to the AIGA Jacksonville community. My role allowed me to form bridges between AIGA Jacksonville & communities that, oftentimes, felt excluded or unseen. My highlight is assisting in normalizing the use of pronouns in board members' lexicon & chapter policy.

DISCUSSION MODERATOR |
VYSTAR INTERNATIONAL ARTIST LECTURE SERIES,
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2018

I had the opportunity of moderating a discussion with Disney legend Floyd Norman for *VyStar's International Artist Lecture Series*, presented by the Cultural Council of Greater Jacksonville. To support the Cultural Council's efforts, I organized a student group to develop a promotional campaign inviting the Jacksonville community, Florida State College at Jacksonville administration & students, & Animation educators across Florida.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AMBASSADOR |
JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC EDUCATION FUND,
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017–2018

As a Public Education Ambassador, I was engaged in supporting initiatives & programming for the Jacksonville Public Education Fund (shortened to JPEF). This included community-wide conversations to build relationships between parents & public education administrators, as well as participating in JPEF's *Teachers Are More Campaign*. The campaign highlighted the importance of educators & the teaching profession. More than 70,000 members in the Jacksonville community shared their support for educators during this campaign.

Service to Community

**WORKSHOP FACILITATOR|
FIRST COAST YMCA THINGAMAJIG CONFERENCE,
JACKSONVILLE, FL, 2017**

The First Coast YMCA's Thingamajig Conference was a day-long conference for kids to learn the importance of STEAM & are introduced to STEAM careers. As the sole representative for the Arts, I facilitated a workshop to expose nearly 700 campers to Design careers. My workshop, *"Design Time with Mr. Marq"*, introduced the campers to logos they were familiar with, the importance of Design, & concluded with an exercise that guided kids to make their own business cards.

MARQ
MERVIN

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