Maximal / Minimal Analysis of a Letterform

The point of view of this project is to analyze and develop a sensitivity to the various parts of an individual letterform. The development stages of the design process will be introduced as the approach to reaching a final solution.

Each character in the alphabet is a unique form and has specific characteristics. These characteristics change from one typeface to another although each letter continues to be recognizable. This is what gives each typeface its own special "personality." In this way, you should begin to recognize the differences in typefaces.

In this project, you will explore the concept of showing the smallest possible area of a letterform, while the viewer is still able to read the letterform.

Explore design based on type as image.

Create an interesting arrangement with maximum impact through minimum use of form.

Understand the significance of structure of the letterform.

Create a bold statement in the use of positive/negative space.

Development of process and critical skills.

Use of computer and final execution skills.

Tape a sheet of tracing paper down over a sheet of graph paper.

Sketch 18 squares 1" X 1" each, on the tracing paper, with your fine nib felt tip. Leave space between the squares.

Limit your exploration to the following typefaces:

- Baskerville
- Bodoni
- Garamond
- Goudy
- Palatino

Use the specimen section of your book as reference.

Choose a letterform to begin with and work in one typeface.

Make three drawings using your first letterform and one typeface.
Using the same letterform repeat the process, using a different typeface.

Repeat this process using three different letterforms and at least four different typefaces.

You may do more than 18.

Draw nine 2: X 2: squares on a sheet of tracing paper, taped over the graph paper:

Choose the nine most successful of the solutions above, and draw at this scale, being as accurate as you can and based on enlargements of the original typeface. You may draw by freehand or use the lucigraphs. At this stage, reverse the positive/negative relationship (white letterforms and black negative space).

Mount onto 14 X 17 Bristol board for preliminary critique.

**EXECUTION / PRESENTATION**

Working in Adobe Illustrator, execute nine of the solutions based on 2" X 2" square size. Output and mount these according to instructions.

Choose the most successful of the nine and enlarge to 7" X 7" and mount as instructed.

**SUPPLIES**

type book
graph paper
tracing paper
Bristol board
pencils
fine nib and medium nib markers
laser printout