
Book Cover & [Quite Possibly] Endpapers

// Watercolor //



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ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION - BOOK COVER IN WATERCOLOR

Back to structured assignments. For this project, you will reimagine the cover of a book of your choice, including front, back, spine and jackets.

OBJECTIVE

The function of a book cover is multifaceted. First, it extracts some element of the text (image, object, concept) and displays it visually as a means of offering a preview for the audience. Book covers are like editorial illustrations in the way that they are based on text. The cover is also a place in which to display content, so you must consider where certain elements of text need to exist (back copy, titles, author name, etc; or, if it's minimal, that can work too). Lastly, covers should be pretty in some way, either aesthetically or conceptually. What are the most interesting covers you've seen? Why were they interesting.

ADDITIONALLY, OPTIONALLY

End papers are decorative leaves on the inside of a book, attached to the insides of the front and back cover. They are functional structurally, but also serve as a means of emphasizing some element of the text and prettifying the book object. This is not required in this assignment, but I encourage you to try it.

GUIDELINES

The Timeline herein outlines a detailed timetable for when you will be presenting. Here is what is required:

1. Book Choice

You must have read the book whose cover you're remaking. With that in mind, select a book, preferably one you like.

2. Thumbs

Create 20 thumbs for your ideas. They should be sketched proportionally, taking into consideration where copy will need to go on the book (ie. title, author name, back copy, spine, quotes, etc.). Look at well-designed books for ideas.

3. Sketches

When you find a successful composition, begin actual-size sketches in order to tweak the design as necessary. There is no formula for the best book covers; only strong conceptual foundations, legible content, organized composition and a sense of balance. Also, we are using color here, so be sure to consider the palette in the early stages. The drawing also needs to be considered for translation into the third dimension. How wide is the spine? What size is the book? Where will the jackets turn in? How will the illustration function in the third dimension?

4. Illustration

When your composition is entirely crafted, begin work on the final illustration. You can work on either cold-pressed (rough) or hot-pressed (smooth) watercolor paper. It needs to be artist's grade (not student). You may use pen and ink as well. Make sure to practice on the paper type you're using before entering into the final piece; all papers produce various marks.

5. Presentation

The final presentation is a digitally printed dust jacket, wrapped around a book. For critique, we will pass around the books and experience them as a consumer would. You may use type, but some of the best book covers I've seen have been pure illustration.

RESOURCES

- + The best resources are always analog. Check out real books.
- + <http://bookcoverarchive.com/>
- + <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2008/04/14/excellent-book-covers-and-paperbacks/>
- + Endpapers // Talas sells decorative papers possibly worth looking into: (talasonline.com)
- + Endpapers // http://www.drawger.com/show.php?show_id=27

TIMELINE

Date	Due
10.14	Book Choice + Thumbs Due
10.19	Well-developed Sketched Due
10.21	Work on Sketches and/or Final Illustration
10.26	Final Illustration
10.28	Critique!

