

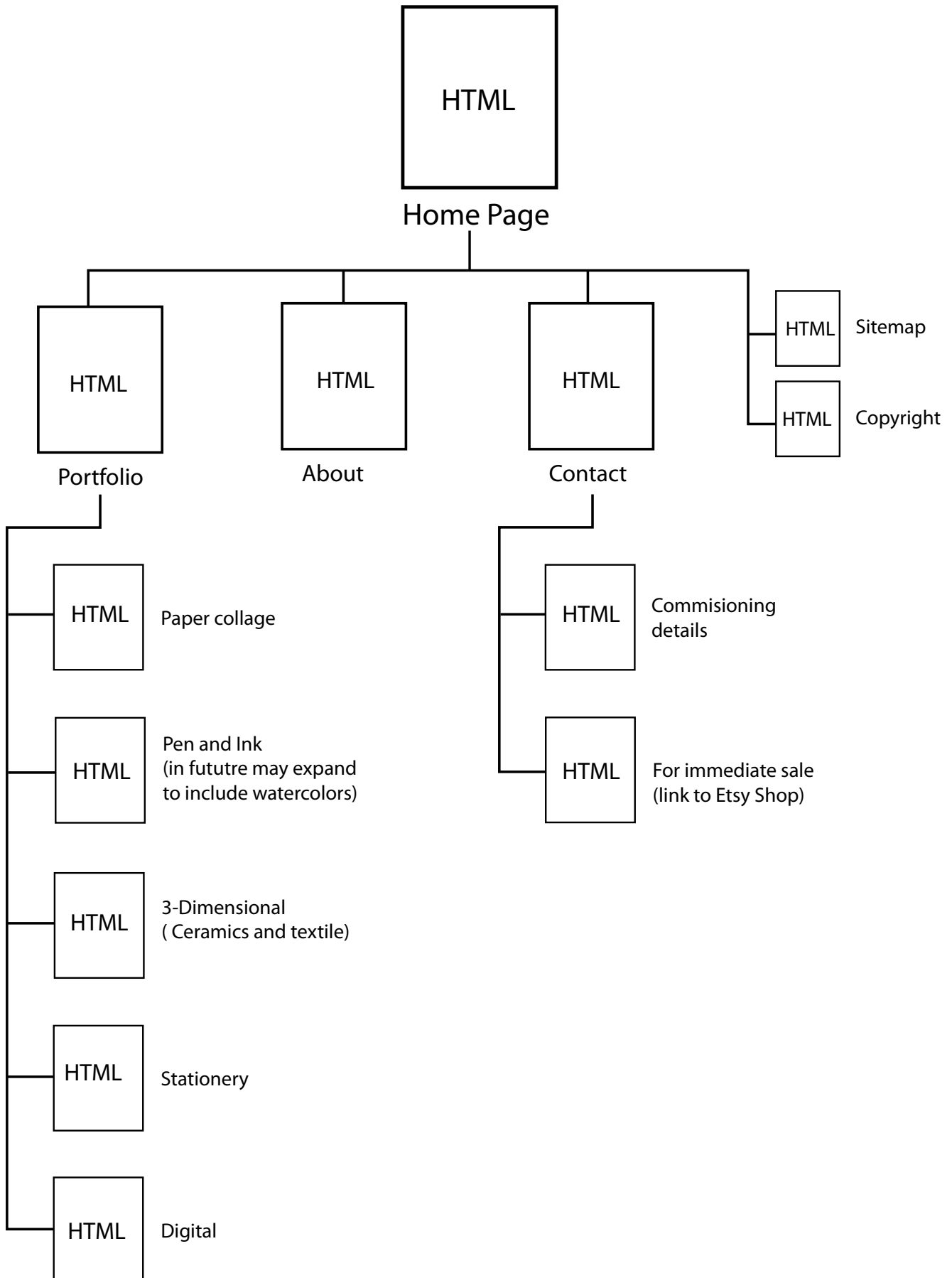
Rebecca Ridout

Final Project: Rebecca Ridout Portfolio Website

ART 170, Web Design 1

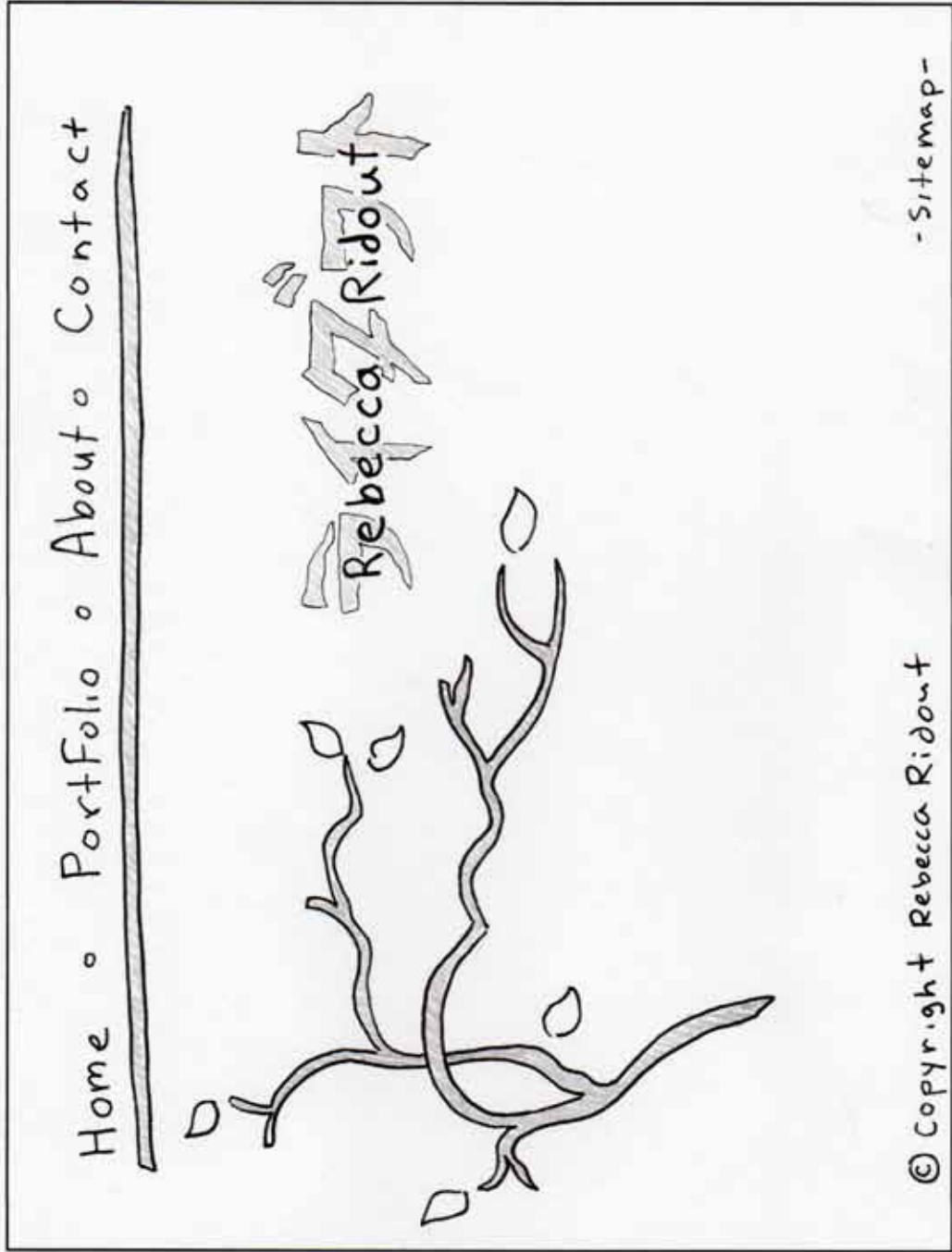


Flowchart of site



Project Name: Rebecca Ridout Portfolio Website

Home Page



Storyboard Number ①

Graphic Notes Background white
Large Logo in center,
cut paper design

Animation Notes none

Text links hand lettered
instead of font
Name in logo X1111
Arial in footer
text. 3A3F40 (Dark grey)

Navigation Structure

Top navigation bar
Copyright + Sitemap
in footer.

Additional Design Notes Logo cut paper design

Name black text overlaying last name in katakana (red paper with 40% opacity)

Project Name: Rebecca R. dout Portfolio Website

Gallery Page

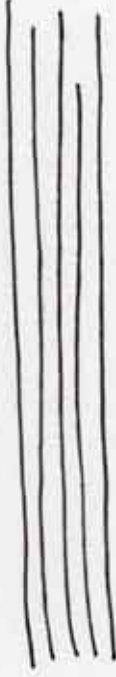
Storyboard Number ②

Home • Portfolio • About • Contact

Logo

Paper Collage

Paper Collage



Pen + Ink

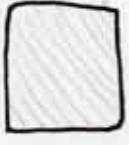
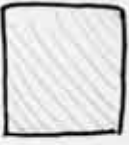
3-Dimensional



Stationery



Digital



© Copyright Rebecca R. dout

- Sitemap -

Graphic Notes Text: 3A3F40 (dark grey)
Links: 4A6938 (Dark Green)

Links visited: 697735 (med. green)

Background: white

Animation Notes

none

Text links hand lettered instead of font

Body text: Arial

Footer: Arial

Navigation Structure

Top navigation Bar

Copyright in footer

Side navigation bar for

Subcategories

Additional Design Notes Gallery Grid of thumbnails Clicking on thumbnail will lead to new page with large view of artwork.

I. Background and Goals

Company

Please provide corporate and industry descriptions, including competitors, along with a brief critique of sites. Include contact information and a description of the group who will be working on the project. are the decision makers? Who else would be contracting? Who's responsible for what? What human resources do you have for various stages of the process?

I will be undertaking this project for myself. I will not have to contact any outside parties to complete this project. I will be utilizing the photography equipment/studio at my job (Premier Kites and Designs) to take photographs of items not already in my portfolio, but it will not require involvement from anyone else to coordinate this.

Currently the only already existing "site" I have of this nature is an account at Deiantart.com, which is a convenient option, but not professional enough to include with a resume. I would like to have my artwork available to be viewed without advertisements or affiliations with unrelated artists.

Project

What is the mission statement or summary of your project?

The intent of this project is to make a professional portfolio of my artwork which will be suitable to show potential employers and as a means to procure freelance work.

What are the basic goals of this project? (e.g., branding/identity reinforcement, improved access to information, direct sales, corporate communication, etc.)

The basic goal of this project is to make my artwork accessible in a more professional format. I would like to develop a personal brand for myself and have a website that can be printed on business cards and used for networking.

What outcome will make this project successful? How will you measure success?

This project will be successful if the finished website is professional looking, easy to navigate, and does not detract from the focus of my artwork. I will measure its success based on feedback by peers in both the graphic design and traditional art communities.

What are your schedule requirements?

For the initial site setup I will dedicate several hours per week to this project. Once the site is up and running I will not maintain it on a rigid schedule, but I will update it whenever new content is produced, or when any relevant information changes.

What is the budget for this project? Is there an acceptable budget range, depending on the level and comprehensiveness of services provided? Please explain.

I have unrestricted access to all equipment I will need for maintaining the site's content (camera, photography studio, scanner, etc) at no cost. My expenses will consist of site hosting and art supplies. The art supplies I would be acquiring independently of the existence of this project so I will not include them in this budget. I am willing to spend up to \$100 annually for maintaining a personal website.

Describe any work that has been done toward designing/redesigning a new web site.

A large quantity of my 2-dimensional art has already been processed for digital viewing as I have previously scanned much of it to upload to Deviantart. No work has yet been done for the actual structure of a website. I only have content prepared so far.

Will the web site reinforce an existing branding or marketing strategy? How?

The website will reinforce the small business I created by opening a shop on Etsy. I will link to my website in my Esty profile. By being able to view a gallery of my past creations I hope to encourage people to choose me for commissioning projects. I attend events such as craft fairs occasionally as well, and being able to pass out information to a presence on the internet will be helpful in securing business. I personally find that I often collect artists' business cards when I first see their work in person but do not necessarily buy from them immediately. When I can bookmark a website for their work and return to view it at a later date I am more likely to remember them and give them repeat business. I also feel that I will be taken more seriously as a graphic designer if I have a self-designed personal website, so this project will also reinforce my job identity.

Discuss any identity/branding assets (logos, other artwork, and fonts) or issues.

I have a business card which I designed several years ago, which I may consider incorporating into my site branding. It included a simplified two color graphic developed from one of my paper collages (a blue and white cat), and my signature in red. The signature I use on my artwork is distinctive because I sign most of my work in Japanese katakana (I began doing this when I was an exchange student in Japan, and continued to do so after returning because that experience caused a significant shift in my art style). My Japanese signature has been my primary "brand" up until this point. I think I will probably use this as part of my logo on the portfolio, but I will probably abandon using the cat graphic. This will not cause any issues, because the business cards are several years out of date, and were never widely distributed enough for my identity to be strongly pre-established.

The only other existing brand I have created for myself is the banner I made for my Esty shop. I have not decided yet if I will use the same font from the banner when designing the website. If I do not I don't think it will be a large issue because I do intend to use a lot of paper scans in the site design, which will tie the look of the site to the Esty banner (which primarily features scans of torn paper). The only issue I foresee is that my Esty identity is associated with a user handle (gnarlycat) and I wish to brand my portfolio site under my real name, so visitors may not automatically associate the two sites as connected to one artist. I am not overly concerned with this however as I have seen other artists successfully maintain multiple internet identities. I intend for the portfolio site to be my primary networking resource, and the site I will more widely advertise.

Rank the following, in order of importance:

1. Quality execution (graphics, writing, navigation, etc.)
2. Staying within the budget
3. Creating a community of dedicated visitors
4. People bookmark the site because they get so much out of it regularly
5. Ease of maintenance
6. A web strategy that fits with our corporate strategy
7. A web strategy that fits with our marketing strategy
8. Sending the message that we know the Web and use it appropriately
9. Doing better than our competition on the Web
10. Time to market
11. Repurposing existing content

II. Audience, Content, and Functionality

Audience

What types of visitors do you want to attract?

Employers, potential freelance clients, artist peers

What are your goals for each type of visitor?

1. For employers I would like my site to showcase my skill for web design in addition to providing an archive of art done in traditional mediums, to demonstrate the full range of my artistic abilities and ways I would be an asset to their company.
2. For freelance clients and peers I would like my artwork to be displayed in easy to navigate high quality scans and photographs so that they may browse out of interest, or to generate ideas for commission work.

What are the products/services involved?

I will have existing artwork available for purchase in my Etsy shop, usually consisting of paper collage, textile sculptures, and hand printed stationery (at this moment my shop is on the empty side as I have been focusing my energy on class work. After the semester is over I will return to producing personal art projects and the selection will be more diverse). I will offer to complete commissioned projects in the following mediums: paper collage, pen and ink illustration, watercolor, textiles, stationery, vector graphics and logo design. At times when I am job hunting the primary service I would be advertising would be myself for full time graphic design employment.

What are your goals for these products/services?

My goals are to make my artwork look as attractive as possible in digital format and to reach as wide an audience as possible of potential clients. I would like the site to be easy to understand and navigate so as not to put off viewers when they browse my art and for my contact information to be easily accessible to encourage dialogs which may lead to business.

Content

Where will content come from? Will it be new, repurposed, or both?

All content will originate from myself. I will be repurposing scans and photographs of artwork I have posted online in the past. In cases where I do not feel the scans or photographs are of high enough quality I will re-scan or re-photograph when possible (several items I wish to show have been sold or given away already so it will not be possible for me to obtain new images of everything). I am constantly working on projects so new artwork will be added to the site as completed. I will be creating new graphics specifically for the site branding as I work on this project.

How often will you add new content?

I will not add new content on any rigid schedule, but will upload new art whenever completed. There should be several new entries per year.

Who will update the content?

I will update all new content myself.

Functionality

What functional requirements do you believe to be necessary? (e.g., download areas, database-driven webpages, commerce, catalog, applications, etc.)

An easy to view gallery is the primary function I will require. I intend the gallery to show a grid of many thumbnails of artwork which you can click on to lead to larger singular views of each item. The gallery must be easy to upload new pieces to. The site will probably contain multiple galleries, dividing my artwork by medium. Beyond the galleries, the site's main content will be text based, with some links to outside resources.

Who will update these functionalities?

I will personally update all aspects of the website.

Are there extraordinary security issues?

The only security issue I see is that I intend to publicly display my real name on the site. The only contact information I shall provide is my email address, I will not make my phone number or physical address publicly accessible so I am not overly worried. I will probably post a secondary email address rather than my primary personal one, in case I have issues from sharing that contact information. In the case that sharing my email does generate problems I will remove that from the site and only encourage people to contact me through my profile on Etsy or through commenting on my blog.

Are there other technical issues or limitations?

I am not advanced enough in web design yet to have the ability to set up features such as an online shop, so all business transactions will be limited to through email conversations or through the outside link of my Etsy shop. If there was a way to set up immediate purchase applications I feel that would improve the functionality of my site, so my inability to do so is a limitation.

Have you budgeted for hosting and maintenance of the site? What is your budget?

I am willing to spend up to \$100 per year to maintain my site. I have looked at GoDaddy.com, WestNIC.net, Dreamhost.com, webs.com, hostrocket.com, hostgator.com, and 1&1 internet as hosting options.

-GoDaddy.com charges \$11.99 per year to register a domain name plus webhosting ranging from \$4.66 to \$11.99 per month, depending on the service package and time commitment you choose. Not every plan they offer would fit in my budget, but they have viable options which would work for me.

-WestNIC.net charges no setup fee and offers web hosting ranging from \$3.57 to \$14.95 per month, depending on the service package and time commitment you choose. Like GoDaddy, not all service packages would fit in my budget, but they definitely offer options I could afford.

-Dreamhost.com has no set-up fee and charges \$8.95 per month. This would total \$107.40 per year so it is technically out of my budget. However it is so close to the budget limit I set that if after analyzing the quality of their service I found it to be superior to my other options I might reconsider the parameters of my budget.

-Webs.com offers free webhosting and would be the most appealing option to my budget. However I do not think I will choose this option because it appears you are limited to templates for creating your site, and would not serve as a good platform to showcase my personal web design skill.

-HostRocket offers plans ranging from \$5.99 to \$11.99 per month, plus a \$20 per year domain registration fee and a \$5 back-up fee. I could afford this host in my budget so long as I chose the cheapest plan they offered. I do not like that the backup service has an additional charge however.

-Hostgator offers hosting plans ranging from \$3.96 to \$10.36 per month. The cheaper plan they offer would fit into my budget.

-1&1 Internet offers plan packages ranging from \$4.99 per month to \$11.99 per month plus 99 cents per year for the domain. I would have options with this company to host my site within my budget.

Who will maintain the site contents?

I will maintain all content.

How will the site be served/hosted?

I will choose a web hosting service such as GoDaddy, WestNic, or Dreamhost. I have not made a final decision yet, I will have to do more research on which host will best suit my needs. All offer similar services however.

What types of legacy systems/databases are in place?

WestNIC runs weekly offsite backups of all site content so that you have recent restore points if the site crashes. GoDaddy offers daily backup. Dreamhost offers backup, although I could not find the information for how frequently backups are preformed. I do not like that

Aside from backup provided by the webhost, all content of my site I will personally backup on two separate external hard drives.

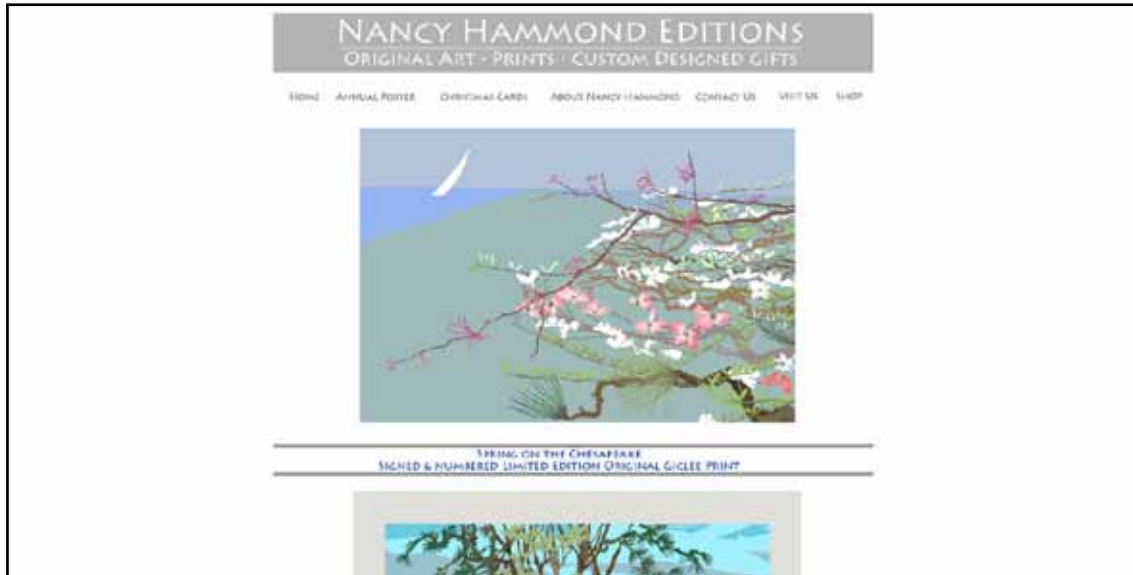
What is your long-term plan for the site?

I intend to keep my portfolio as a live website indefinitely, although the site might be subject to future redesigns if the style of my artwork evolves drastically. I will try to keep the site current with new content and with an appearance relevant to the dominant art form I am working in at any given time.

Project Profiler - Field Trip

Site 1: Nancy Hammond Editions: <http://www.nancyhammondeditions.com/index.html>

I chose Nancy Hammond Editions as an example website because she is a very well known and successful artist to my personal locality. She specializes in paper collage so her artwork is the most similar to mine in style out of the successful artists I know of. She sells both original works of art as well as prints and stationery so she is catering to the same type of clientele as my target audience.



This site is a good example because it uses a similar color scheme to what I had already envisioned for my own site. I had initially felt inclined to make the color scheme of my own site black because I thought it would make the multi-colored papers which make up my collage work pop...but after analyzing a variety of sites I liked I realized that I generally prefer sites with light color schemes and I most strongly gravitated towards sites which were predominately white. A grey on white color scheme strongly appeals to me--the site feels light and airy. I like this site as an example for layout and interface as well. The navigation bar at the top is very clear and easy to use. I like that the content of the galleries of artwork are stacked with only a single image per row. This allows the art to be shown fairly large, although the images are still a manageable size and there is not an excessive amount of content per page. I like the consistency of the site where the header remains constant on each page.



On Nancy Hammond's site I find the images of her artwork very good quality, but the quality of her photo in her bio looked a little pixilated to me.



The shop button in the top menu has a drop down with several different categories the shop contains. If you do not select a specific sub-category it brings you to the page shown below, which has no content except for the address of the gallery's physical location. I do not like this quality to her site. I feel that the default page when you click the shop button should have some art content to look at. I would at the very least have links available to the shop sections from a masters shop page.



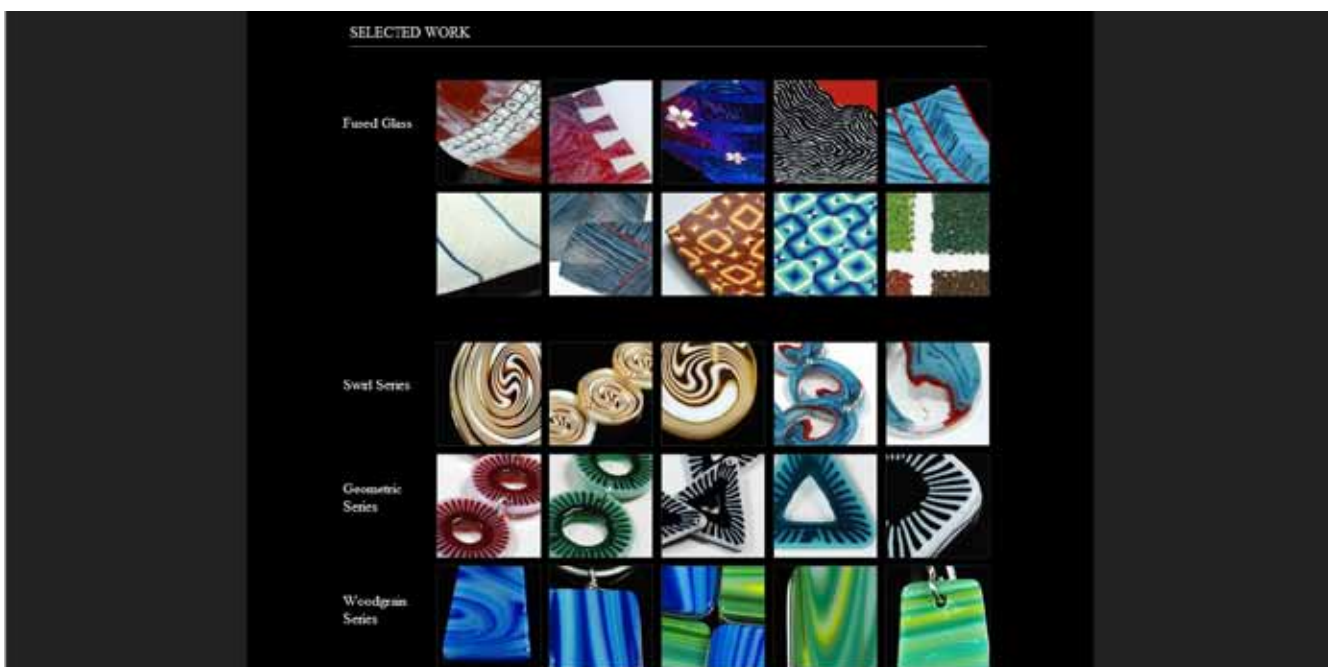
One thing I disliked about her site is that there is not a lot of creativity to its design. It has a very basic layout that looks a lot like many other sites I have visited. Only the content of her actual artwork is artistic; going only by the site layout it would not be obvious that the site belongs to an artist. I think it would have been neat if she had somehow included a graphic in her header, or somewhere else on the site.

Site 2: Gayla Lee - Pattern and Geometry in Glass: <http://www.gaylalee.com/>

The site of glass artist Gayla Lee, is a very different example of how a portfolio-esque site can be set up. The page is done magazine style, with no links to subpages in the site. The header to her page is very bold and showcases eye-catching examples of her artwork. The header is so large that it is necessary to scroll down 'below the fold' before you arrive at any actual site content. I imagine that having a header this large might be annoying to some people, but I like it as a feature on an art site. When I am browsing webpages for artwork, I want an immediate idea of what an artist's style will be like without having to take the time to scroll through galleries or navigate to separate pages. With a header like this I can take a quick glance at the home page of a site and immediately tell whether I'm interested in looking farther or if I don't want to spend my time browsing.



The bold quote displayed on the home page is a feature I've seen incorporated into a lot of artist's sites. It is not something I am personally a fan of, although I can see the aesthetic appeal of having a short segment of text displayed in a contrasting font/size from the rest of the site's content. This is probably not a detail I will choose to emulate however.



Directly below the large header is a gallery of examples of her work. It is an edited gallery, not displaying every piece she has created, only key examples of her signature styles. When you click on a thumbnail of an image a larger view pops up in a separate window. I like how her art is broken into “series” categories. I also like the quality of her photos. The larger image gives you a very nice sized view of the piece, and I think the quality of the photographs is very nice. I would consider using a similar format to make a gallery on my own site, although I would probably have the thumbnails navigate to a different page instead of generating a pop-up, as I have a personal preference of not liking pop-ups very much.



Below the gallery is a bio, information about her art form, followed by contact information and lists of venues where she teaches or her art is available for sale. I would generally be inclined to have these different segments on individual pages. However, I think this format works well for this particular site as when none of the content is very lengthy it would probably look empty on individual pages. I like that her gallery of art is the first thing shown in the content. It is a good example for a site with concise content, and I think it was executed very attractively and successfully keeps the focus on Gayla’s artwork.



Site 3: Ruben Monakhov Paintings: <http://rubenm.spb.ru/>

The site of painter Ruben Monakhov is different than most other artist sites I visit in that the home page tells little at all about him or his work. It merely gives you the option of entering his site in English or Russian. Choosing either option will give you an identical site, the only difference being the language of the text. There is also a link to his blog on livejournal prominently displayed on this main entrance page. It might seem strange to give a link to an outside hosted blog precedence over any examples of his artwork, but livejournal is the primary platform on which he markets himself (it is how I first encountered his artwork and what lead me to begin regularly checking his site) so it makes sense to me that he would want to make sure his blog was easily accessible.



Clicking one of the two language options will take you directly to the catalogue portion of the site. This first page has a large image of whatever his most recently uploaded painting is, prominently displayed. Above it is a navigation bar which gives you options to look at a biography and artist statement for the artist, as well as links to articles about his work and contact information. Below the large image is a row of news entries listing other recent art uploads, and below that is a row of years spanning from 1998-2011. Clicking on a year will bring you to a gallery of all the paintings he did in that particular year. I find this feature unique to this site. Most galleries I look at divide the art content by medium or themes of the content. I have not seen any other online galleries which are primarily divided by years completed. The first time I looked at this site I found this format a little confusing...there is no explanation that the list of years are links to more art galleries. I had to simply start clicking around to figure out how to navigate. I think this site would operate a little more smoothly if there were clearer directions. However, once I understood the site's layout I realized I like the way it works. This particular artist produces such a great quantity of paintings that I cannot think of a way to categorize his work more efficiently. 99% of his art is done in oil painting, so there is not enough variety in mediums used in order to categorize with that division. On the other hand, the subject matters of his paintings are so varied that I do not think his work could be easily divided by topic. In this particular case, breaking up the art into sub-galleries by date is the most logical and efficient way of displaying it.



I really like Ruben Monakhov's site for an example of the gallery portions. I like how large the thumbnails of his artwork are, yet he manages to fit a large quantity of them on a single page. I like his ratio of page content to thumbnail size. When you click on a thumbnail it brings you to a new page featuring a larger image of the painting. I prefer this to having the thumbnail generate a pop-up. I like how no matter which portion of the gallery you are in, there are still links present to the other years which make up his other galleries.



ABOUT ARTIST



Ruben Monakhov

Born December 12, 1970 in Leningrad (USSR)

Graduate from Serov Art School (at present time Roerikh Art School) in 1991, graphics design.

St. Petersburg section of Russian Federation Artists Union since 1999.

Artist Statement:

When I was a teenager, I thought that the XXI century — is an unachievable distant future. And now this future already came. Many things that seemed as science fiction before, now — the prosaic reality.
But did it make people more happy?

Modern man is so fed up of visual information, that he lost the ability to wonder. Craft of visual simulation has reached such a degree of perfection that absolutely everything become possible.
But did it make people began to feel more acutely?

A XXI century resident is racing through his life with escape velocity. The visual aspect of the world rushes in front of him like a continuous tape, and his eyes have time to grab only the most glaring and outstanding, most new and unusual. But even this he does not manage to feel in a full range. Because new information is no longer waiting — it's climbing into his eyes and pushed by the next, like the passengers in the Tokyo subway.

LATEST NEWS

10.10.2011

New painting added:

Early autumn
in Petrodvorets.
oil on canvas,
50x50 cm., 2011.
[have a look]

04.09.2011

New painting added:

Yellow building.
oil on canvas,
50x90 cm., 2011.
[have a look]

Ruben Monakhov's site felt the most "portfolio-like" to me, and less "shop-like" out of many art sites I have visited. His site actually has an artist statement, rather than a more generic "about the artist" bio. His site also had the most resume-quality information on it.

One thing I did not like is that the site does act more like a portfolio/resume even though nearly all of the content is for sale. There is very little information about sales on the site. Paintings which have already been sold are marked "in private collection" but anything which is still available for sale is not explicitly marked as such. There is no mention of prices anywhere. I have found many of his paintings listed with prices on a completely separate website (one which sells the art of multiple Russian artists), but that site is not linked to from his personal website. If I am interested in buying something but cannot easily find the information I need about its availability or cost, I will often get frustrated and automatically assume it is beyond my budget or attainability. Having to inquire to find out an objects price definitely puts me off so I would imagine that not clearly displaying that type of information is potentially losing him sales.