

Personal Project - Calligraphy

Criterion A: planning

I had a really hard time deciding what I wanted to do for my project. I have quite a few interests but I didn't know which one I should choose. Before I started brainstorming ideas I thought I would have a lot, but when it came time to actually think of things, my brain was completely empty. For the longest time the closest I got to some ideas was a piece of paper labeled *Personal Project Ideas* and some bullet points with nothing after them. (fig 1) I knew that I enjoyed writing, painting, baking, and a lot of other things but nothing that I could do with those sounded very interesting to me. I admit I procrastinated a lot. Eventually, I decided I would do something that had to do with writing, one thing I had always wanted to do was write a script for a movie or tv show. So I thought "why not" and decided to write a script for the first episode, I got about four lines in and completely lost interest. But I figured after a few days I would come back and keep writing but a few days turned into a few weeks and I never picked it up again. So I knew I had to come up with something else. But what was I going to do? What would make a good project? After a few weeks of unsuccessful brainstorming I decided to pick a country, learn about it, and cook some food from there. I was planning on doing that with some friends actually, but that didn't work out so I was at a complete loss for ideas.



(fig 1)

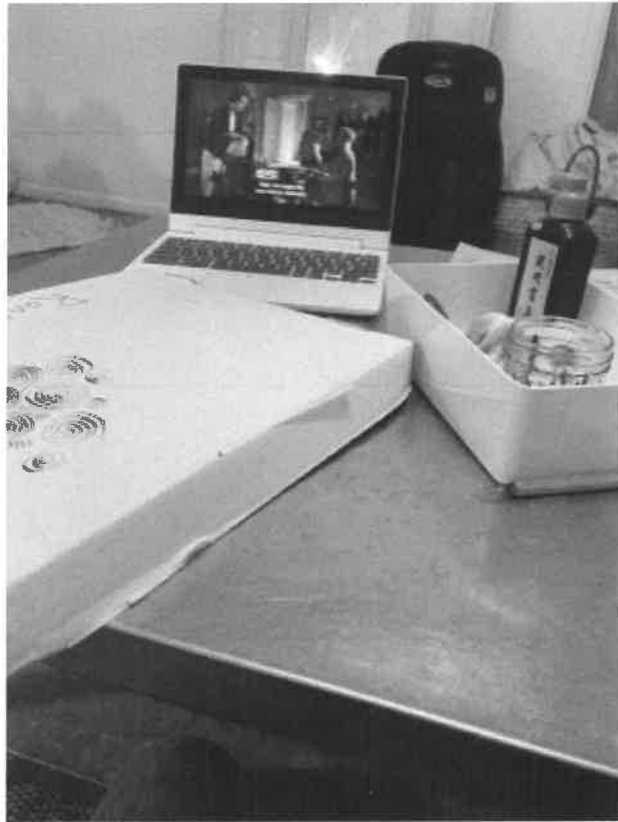
But then one day I randomly remembered that I had done a little bit of calligraphy a few years ago and I had really enjoyed it. So I asked my mom where the supplies I had were and I decided that was what I was going to do.

My goal for the project was to learn how to do calligraphy and then apply those skills to something bigger that I could use or display. I had to start with practice sheets and they were pretty messy at first because I had to get back into the groove of using a pen and dipping it into the ink at the right time and then making sure I didn't press too hard too avoid all of the ink coming off of the pen in one big blob and spreading over the paper covering up the work I had already done, but I also couldn't press too lightly or the lines would be too thin. When I did calligraphy a few years ago, my mom bought this kit. It was a small cardboard box and inside was a calligraphy pen, a jar of ink, a booklet teaching you how to do it, and some pieces of

vellum for practicing. My mom also had a book of projects you could do with calligraphy so I looked through it to find inspiration for my final product.

Criterion B: applying skills:

I had already developed a few calligraphy skills when I did it two years ago, but I wasn't particularly good. But I could use those few skills to help me with my project. I tried, and was mildly successful, using my brainstorming skills. I thought of many ideas but either couldn't think of how, or wasn't able, to bring them to fruition.

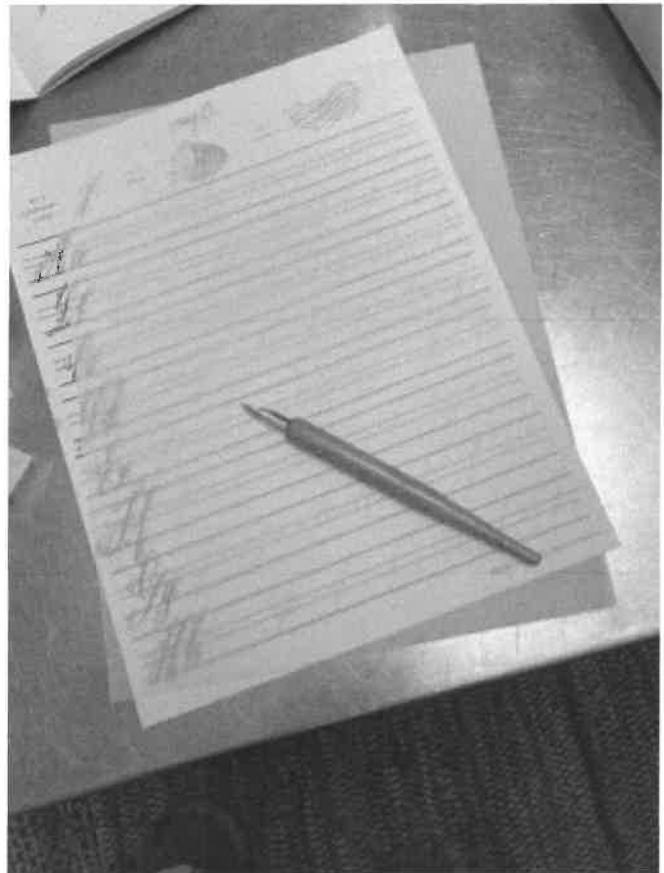


(fig 2)

the pen and get thick and thin lines. I took pictures almost every time I did it partially to document the process and partially because there's something really beautiful about how the supplies look layed out. (fig 3, 4, 5)

I definitely used my creativity and art skills to create the project, from start to finish. I used them in the practicing and in the making of the final product.

I started the project practicing filling pages up with letters so I would get good at them. I filled pages and pages of paper with letters repeating over and over and over and over. I would work on it almost every evening while watching my favorite TV show at the time, *The Durrells in Corfu*. I would set up all of my supplies on the coffee table and spend hours working on it. I ended up with so many pages of vellum with repeating letters or small designs that helped you learn how to control



(fig 3)



(fig 4)



(fig 5)

After I had way too many loose papers with calligraphy on them, I bought an empty sketchbook and started putting all of the paper in. (fig 6,7, I divided it into sections, each with a different step of learning calligraphy and explained each one. Putting it all together in a book took lots of time, gluing, and cutting. But it all looked really beautiful together and was fun to see all of my work come together and see the progress that I made over the few months that I was doing calligraphy.

Criterion C: Reflecting

By the time the deadline for the personal project was coming to an end, I had nowhere near filled up the many pages in my blank sketchbook, but I had made a ton of progress and grown to love calligraphy.

Learning calligraphy helped me to develop a new hobby, it started becoming an almost daily routine to work on it in the evenings, and I can't see myself stopping anytime soon even though my personal project is finished. I

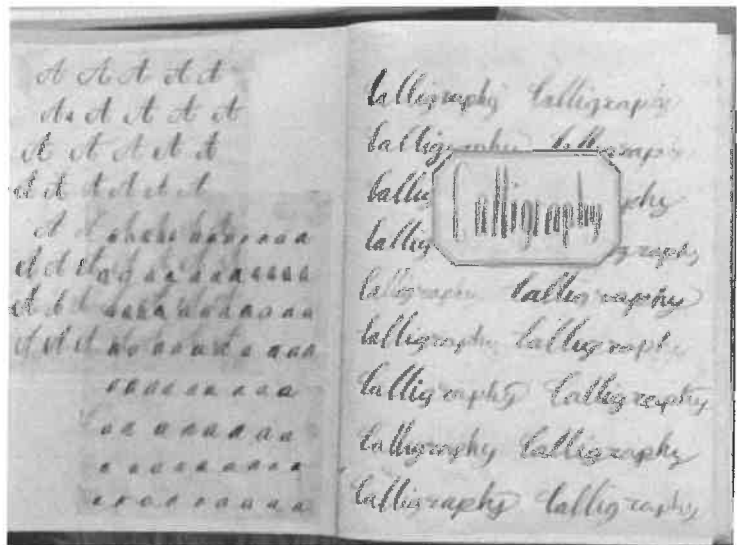


Fig 6



Fig 7

will continue to learn more and get better. And it is a skill I can use often in my life.

Even though I didn't technically "finish" my project, or fill up the sketchbook from start to finish, I still learned a lot and discovered new skills that I can use for the rest of my life. One thing that I really enjoyed was that I got to teach myself how to do it rather than following any sort of instructions, I was able to do whatever I wanted to try out different techniques, and I could see the progress I was making each day.

I think I was successful with my project because of how much I learned and my goal was to teach myself a skill and not an end product. I made lots of changes in my project because it was hard for me to come up with an idea, and once I did, I thought of ways to improve it along the way.

Overall, I really enjoyed doing the project and I learned that I love calligraphy and I really enjoyed the process of putting all of my work together in a book that I can keep forever and look back on to see where it all began. And I know that I will keep doing it because I

love it and I want to complete my book so it is full of pages and pages of my calligraphy and you can see the growth and improvement overtime with practice.

