

Music Merchandise

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The design brief constructed was to; design and create merchandise for local Adelaide band 'Maisie'. The design parameters of the brief were to present all various prototype sketches and designs using a range of different media, with all final design being presented as physical items, such as a t-shirt. To refine and create this brief, I began generating a brainstorm, which consisted of my areas of interest and media and techniques that I would like to work with. As graphic design is a career path I want to pursue in the future, I chose to further improve my skills, by undergoing this project. To define my client, I began contacting a range of local Australian bands, that I believed would be interested in my investigation. As I received back many responses, I needed to choose a band/artist that would not only align with my personal aesthetics, but resonate with a broad audience, ensuring that my creative work would have an impact on a more diverse audience.

After writing and refining my brief, and client, I started my design process. This included doing some preliminary research on types of music merchandise on the market, and the endless graphics, colours, fonts, and merchandise types that exist. Completing this research sparked many initial thoughts and ideas, including merchandise types that I would be interested in designing for the band, including t-shirts, posters, stickers etc. After completing this research, I conducted insightful analysis on the Maisie's band aesthetics. This step was vital in my design process, as I gained a deeper understanding of the band identity, music genre, and their target audience. Understanding their unique style and musical genre, was crucial in ensuring that their essence and aesthetic was conveyed through my merchandise designs. Through completing a range of annotated collages, mind-maps and images of my influences, I was able to establish the purpose and direction of my project, ensuring that my designs authentically represented the band, which would then resonate with the target audience.

Speaking to supporters of Maisie was an effective strategy to comprehend what merchandise fans would be interested in buying. This heavily contributed to the design decisions that were made, for example when speaking with Maisie supporter's, they stated that affordability was something they look for. Therefore, I chose to create a poster and t-shirt, as these are items that are affordable and popular for young people aged 15-25. Additionally, researching other band merchandise, proved instrumental in influencing my designs. Two designers that heavily influenced my designs was Dylan Frost, and Billy Mason, who design merchandise for Lime Cordiale and Sticky Fingers. These designers influenced my work as they have a similar rustic and vintage vibe to Maisie. One aspect that I was influenced by from Billy Mason, the designer of Lime Cordiale's merchandise, was his use of lino printing. The organic, and old school aesthetic that this medium created in their designs, greatly influenced my design decision to lino print my graphics. Moreover, colour and line were two design elements that were critical in the designing of the poster. Through using colour and graphics I aimed to create imagery that would instantly convey the band's music style, and essence of their concerts. The colour palette that was chosen, reflects the mood and energy of Maisie's music genre, allowing the vibrant hues to capture the band's dynamism. In addition, the use of line and shape in the poster, directed the viewer's

gaze to key information and create a memorable image for viewers. Thus, contributing to a powerful sense of visual identity for the band and their aesthetic.

The design resolution that was crafted for Maisie, aligned perfectly with the requirements of the outlined design brief. The practical solutions developed, including the poster, t-shirt, kick drum, stickers, tote bag, and film camera all harmonised with Maisie's music genre, and aesthetic. Through incorporating their unique aesthetics, name branding, and my own personal aesthetics, a cohesive visual identity for the brand was created. Additionally, utilising eco-friendly fabrics for the tote-bag aligned perfectly with Maisie's target audience, as many young alternative supporters are passionate about sustainability.

A significant success in my design process was utilising word association brainstorming, to spark and generate new innovative ideas. Through utilising this strategy, I was able to make my merchandise ideas more unique, for example the designing of a film camera. Making use of this thinking strategy allowed me to generate and review new ideas. Therefore, only identifying the most innovative and successful concepts and ideas, which could then be integrated into the design project. Although I believe that I was successful throughout this process, one area of this project that I encountered an issue was the composition of my poster. As I had a large amount of information to add into my poster, with so little space, I was struggling to make the text legible and aesthetically pleasing. Therefore, I needed to think outside of the box, and change the formatting of the poster. After getting some feedback on my poster, I began thinking about altering the orientation of my canvas from portrait to landscape to make the information more legible. By actively seeking feedback, and incorporating it into my design project, I was able to open new avenues for innovation, therefore allowing me to refine my critical and creative thinking skills. Additionally, throughout the process I learnt about infusing personal aesthetic into a design, and how this can make a product more captivating and unique. The three prominent personal design styles that I implemented into the merchandise designs was a modern, graphic, and vintage aesthetic.

In conclusion, the incorporation of Billy Mason and Dylan Frost's work, as well as my own personal aesthetic, created an artistic evolution for the final merchandise designs for Maisie. Which all embraced the modern, yet vintage graphics, allowing me to meld and explore the endless creative possibilities, whilst producing merchandise that met the requirements for the band and their target audience. Additionally, discovering such a vast range of design aesthetics throughout this process altered my personal aesthetics, and design decisions.