

Manuscript Necklace

The assignment was to create a piece based off of books that the art classes had seen on a trip to Iowa City in March. This necklace was based off of the ideas of words as pieces to be used to create something larger. It also incorporates pieces of text from a book from 1699 that is currently located in Iowa City.

To create this piece, the shapes that had been created in the original plan onto a sheet of copper metal. The 12 shapes were then cut out of the sheet of metal. After that, holes were drilled into all the corners where two pieces would be connected. The pieces with the capital block letters were created through the process of etching. The letters were traced from the book onto the pieces in sharpie, and then the pieces were placed into chemicals that would eat away at all parts of the piece except for the places where the sharpie was. The colored pieces were created by melting powdered glass onto the pieces. A base layer of powder was poured onto the pieces and then torched until it melted and became smooth. Then more powder was poured on top of the first layer through a stencil made to look like lettering from the book. The remaining pieces were sanded and polished, and then all the pieces were connected with jump rings.

The main idea behind the necklace was the idea of words as pieces to be arranged and rearranged to form a bigger picture. The whole necklace is made up of smaller pieces that are placed together to form the entire necklace. Texts from the original manuscript were incorporated into the pieces, to get the idea of words and text across. The necklace also incorporates the idea of pieces needing each other to hold any real meaning. Any of the pieces would seem incomplete without the others, but when they all come together, they create something that they could not be on their own.

This necklace was almost completely planned out before the construction of the individual pieces began. A simple sketch had to be translated into a larger, real-size version in order to trace the shapes onto the metal sheet. This took several tries, because it was difficult to find the exact proportions and shapes that would work out with the curve of the top of the necklace. The idea to put letters onto some of the pieces wasn't part of the very original plan, but it was incorporated in some of the later sketches. The exact pieces of text used on the pieces were chosen after the metal pieces were cut out.

The entire piece ended up looking very close to the original plan. Also, the color scheme and overall shape of the project turned out nicely. However, this project could have been improved by finding a way to make the pieces farther away from each other. In the original plan, the pieces had much more space, instead of sitting right next to each other. The spacing looked much better in the drawn plan.