

The background of the image is a textured, brownish-grey surface with a complex, tattoo-style illustration. The central focus is a human skull, rendered in a light tan color with dark outlines for the eye sockets, nasal cavity, and teeth. The skull is surrounded by various decorative elements: to the left, there are stylized floral and leaf patterns in shades of yellow, green, and red; to the right, there are more intricate designs, including what appears to be a butterfly or a similar winged creature in green and pink, and some abstract, flame-like or leaf-like shapes in orange and red. The overall aesthetic is reminiscent of traditional tattoo art or a vintage poster design.

PURCHASE
INK
ARCHIVE

Introduction & Thesis

ABOUT

This project aims to connect a subculture on campus, fostering a sense of community among tattoo enthusiasts and preserving their stories for years to come. By creating a website where students and faculty can submit their tattoos alongside their personal narratives, I hope to establish an interactive and self-sustaining archive. Additionally, I will design an exhibition around the work compiled.

Tattoos are more than just marks on skin—they are personal narratives, symbols of identity, and reflections of individual journeys. Each one carries meaning, whether it's a tribute, a milestone, or an artistic expression.

The Purchase Ink Archive aims to celebrate this by creating a lasting platform where SUNY Purchase students and faculty can document and share the significance of their tattoos. Through a digital archive and physical exhibition, this project will connect a community of tattoo enthusiasts on campus, preserving their stories for years to come.

THESIS

PICKING A SENIOR PROJECT

SKATE-BOARDING	Brand and market a skateboard shop with a line of products	Line of products could include screen printed tee shirts and skateboard decks.	NO
	Create a college level curriculum based on skateboarding	Interest in the topic outweighs the deliverable as a graphic designer.	NO

Picking a capstone project to showcase my graphic design skills was incredibly challenging. After graduation, I plan to pursue higher education while working as a tattoo artist. Initially, I had ideas to brand a skateboard shop with a line of products, such as tee shirts and skateboarding decks, that could be printed on campus. I also considered creating a curriculum based on skateboarding to enhance my grad school applications. However, after much deliberation, I decided to focus on the tattoo world, as I'll be working in that field before starting grad school. Initially, I wanted to explore a thesis on tattooing from a graphic designer's perspective. However, upon further research, I discovered that tattoo artists have been utilizing graphic design skills for decades, and the trade secrets are closely guarded and shared through apprenticeship and mentorship. I didn't seem to be breaking new ground, or showcasing my graphic design skills. I began to reflect on the significance of tattoos, considering the stories behind them and the individuals who wear them. The tattoo community is vast and diverse, comprising people from various backgrounds. Inspired by this, I conceived the idea of creating a portal website where Purchase students can upload pictures of their tattoos along with the narratives associated with them. This website will exist digitally after my graduation, and I hope it will serve as a platform to connect the tattoo community.

TATTOO	Benefits me after graduation-seeking tattoo apprenticeship	Tattooing through the lens of a graphic designer	Learn tattoo techniques dealing with skin tone, color, and placement.	Not breaking new ground, trade secrets of tattoo artists shared through apprenticeships	NO
	Benefits tattooed student and faculty community	Creating a digital tattoo archive along with a branding and marketing strategy	Design and build portal website that students can interact with, connect community	Showcases all the skills learned in graphic design with website and social media branding	YES

OBJECTIVES

Create a digital tattoo archive where Purchase students and faculty can upload images of their tattoos and share their stories.

Design an intuitive, self-sustaining website that remains active and accessible beyond my graduation.

Foster community engagement by encouraging students to connect over shared experiences and tattoo culture.

Develop a physical exhibition

Brand and market the project with social media posts, animations, flyers etc.

Ensure long-term sustainability of the project by integrating it into campus culture, potentially passing social media management to future students.

EXPECTED IMPACT

This project aims to serve as a bridge between art, identity, and personal storytelling within the SUNY Purchase community. By creating a living archive of tattoo stories, I hope to encourage deeper conversations about self-expression and shared experiences. Furthermore, by ensuring the sustainability of the website, this project has the potential to continue connecting students long after my graduation, preserving a unique slice of campus culture for future generations.

PERSONAL STORY

I've been getting tattooed for over 20 years, and in that time, I've immersed myself in the history, culture, and language of tattooing. It's more than just ink under my skin—it's a lifelong connection to an art form that has shaped my identity in ways I never expected.

I got my first tattoo when I was 16, thanks to a little creative forgery. My older cousin "chalked" my learner's permit, using colored pencils to adjust the birth year from 1986 to 1983. I was already drawn to the art, fascinated by its permanence, its rebellion, and its deeply personal nature. I even toyed with the idea of seeking an apprenticeship, though life had other plans.

Over the years, my collection has grown into a patchwork of meaning and impulse. Some of my tattoos carry deep personal significance, marking pivotal moments in my life. Others? They were just for fun—something cool at the moment, chosen without much thought. And then there are the cover-ups—at

least a dozen of them—because, despite what people say, not every tattoo has to last forever. One of my recent tattoo artists put it perfectly: she was sick of hearing that tattoos are permanent. **"Till the grave,"** she said with a smirk.

Spending so much time in the chair, I've picked up the language of tattooing. Terms like "gap filler," "blowout," and "neo-trad" have become second nature to me. I've sat through marathon sessions—my longest lasting 8 1/2 hours—and I've had quick, 10-minute pieces done on a whim. I've watched my tattoos heal, fade, and shift with time, learning through experience how to care for them properly.

But beyond the technical aspects, tattooing has always been something more for me. It's a ritual, a process that makes me feel more complete—more myself. Strangers often approach me just to talk about my tattoos, and I welcome those conversations. I don't have a single favorite piece, but I do have artists I trust, artists whose work I connect with on a deeper level.

Tattooing is a story written on skin, and every piece I wear is a chapter of my life. Some pages get rewritten, some stay exactly as they are. Either way, I'm still adding to the collection, still

embracing the ink, and still finding new ways to express myself through this art form I love.

That passion for tattoo culture is what led me to create Purchase Ink Archive, my senior project at SUNY Purchase. I wanted to build a space where students and faculty could share the stories behind their tattoos, creating a visual and narrative archive of body art on campus. Tattoos are conversation starters, memory holders, and personal expressions—and I hope this project connects the tattooed community at Purchase in a way that feels both meaningful and lasting.

METHODOLOGY

Research & Planning:

Analyze how other tattoo storytelling projects function and determine the best methods for accessibility and interaction. Study the subculture of tattooing on campus with students and professors.

Website Development:

Build a website with a submission form that allows image uploads and text input. Users can share their tattoos and the stories behind them

Community Engagement:

Promote the project on campus through posters, word-of-mouth, and social media.

Physical Deliverables:

Curate the most compelling submissions and design high-quality posters to be displayed on campus. Branding and marketing with logo design, color palette, and style guide.

Sustainability Plan:

Establish a strategy for keeping the project alive after my graduation.

The **Purchase Tattoo Archive** is a community-driven project that captures the stories behind the tattoos of students and faculty. Through **research and planning**, I will examine existing tattoo storytelling platforms and explore the unique tattoo culture on campus. The **website development** phase will focus on creating an accessible platform where users can easily submit photos and narratives. To encourage participation, I will implement a **community engagement** strategy using posters, social media, and word-of-mouth promotion. Select submissions will be highlighted in **physical deliverables**, such as curated posters designed to showcase the most compelling stories. Finally, a **sustainability plan** will ensure the project continues beyond my time at Purchase, maintaining its role as a living archive of campus tattoo culture.

CHALLENGES:

Website coding and building: I have very little experience in web design

Not enough participants: Possibly not enough data will be collected

Expedited timeline

Week away (Spring Break)

TIMELINE & WEEKLY SCHEDULE

PHASE 1

Research & Initial Setup

Feb 20: Present proposal. Create google form looking for submissions. Research tattoo culture, create flyer

Feb 27: Research tattoo culture, and define website structure through mockups/sketches. Continue iterating on style guide

Mar 6: Establish website hosting, select theme, find solution for submission photos

PHASE 2

Website Development

Mar 13: Set up basic website layout, test submission form for images & stories. Finalize logo, color palette and style guide

Mar 20: Finalize website structure, begin uploading initial submissions, find ways to collect more data

Mar 27: Troubleshoot any website issues, refine website

Apr 3: Open social media for promotion, create assets for posts

PHASE 3

Content Curation & Design

Apr 10: Refine website, continue updating social medias, add all submissions to gallery, write disclaimer

Apr 17: Consider final exhibition ideas, continue to collect data and add to the gallery, complete About page

Apr 24: Find best options for the final exhibition, finalize how to display images and stories in the archive gallery, begin research paper

PHASE 4

Finalization & Exhibition

May 1: Get final feedback from David, create final exhibition assets

May 6: Install exhibition, upload first draft of research paper

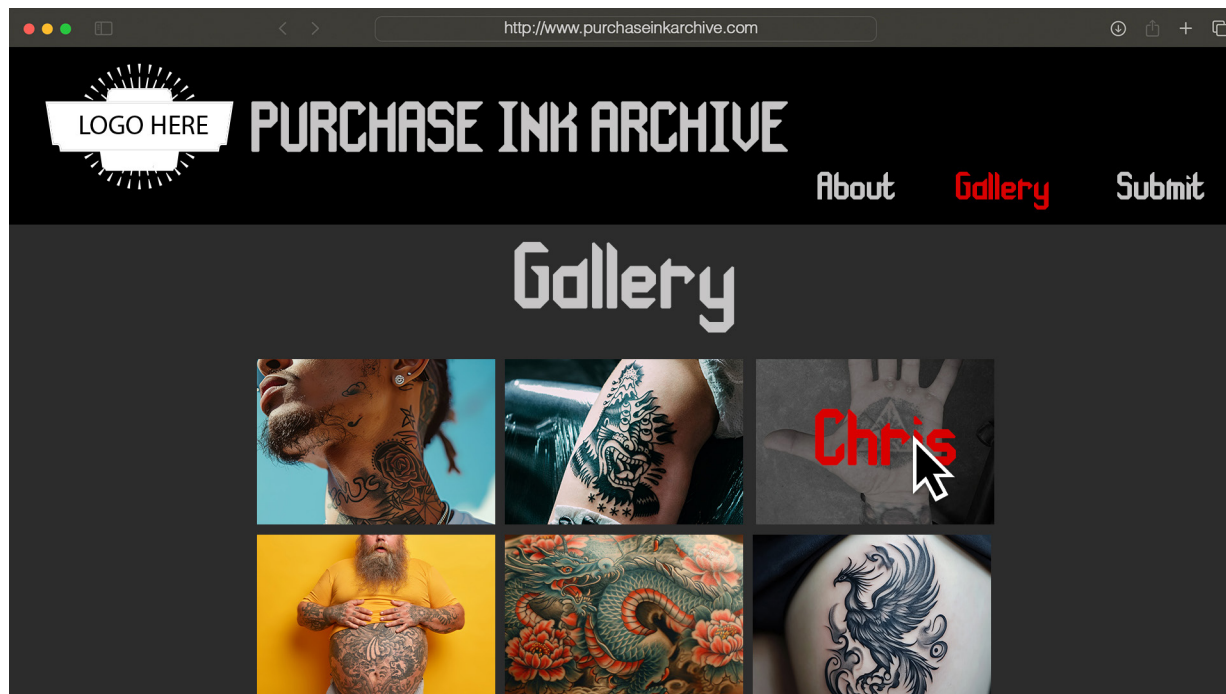
May 8: Final meeting with advisor, submit project documentation.

MOCKUP



LANDING HOME PAGE/ ABOUT

The landing page will be the about page, with a description of the project, research into tattoo culture and instructions on how to submit photos and stories through the portal. Images can be used. Assets needed are a logo, color scheme, and font pairings



Gallery

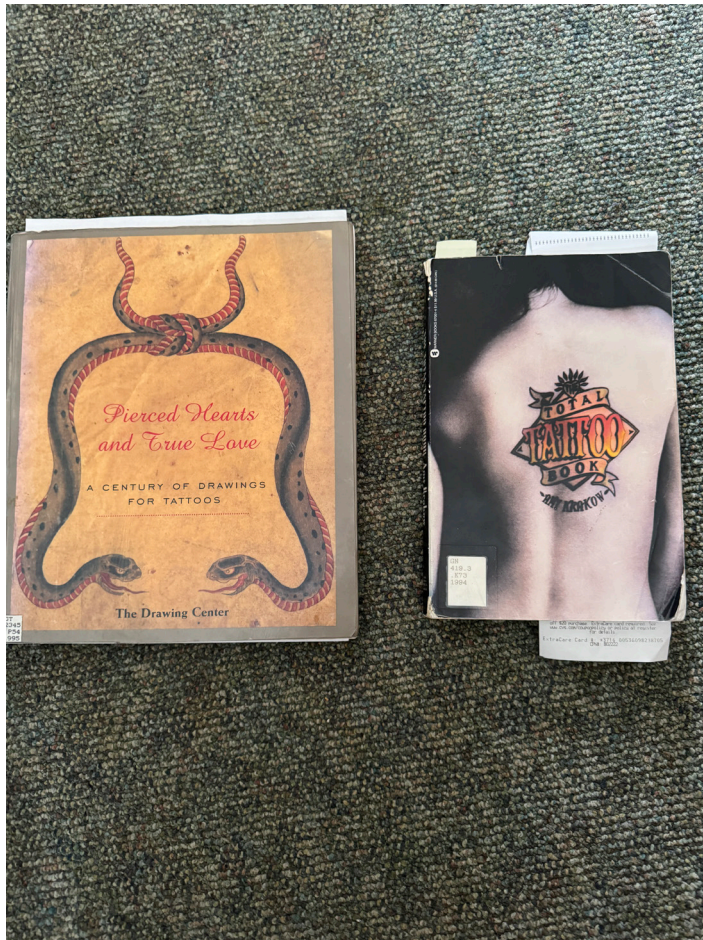
The gallery page will showcase all the submitted pictures. clicking the pictures will bring up a page with the story about the tattoo. The gallery will be constantly updated

PHASE 1

RESEARCH MATERIAL

BOOKS

Pierced Hearts and True Love
Total Tattoo Book



INTERVIEWS

Tattoo artists
tattooed students and faculty

PODCASTS

Honest Tattooer
Books Closed
Tattoo Traditions

SUBMISSION FORM

Purchase Ink Archive Submission Form

B *I* U  

The **Purchase Ink Archive** is a digital collection showcasing the tattoos of students and faculty, along with the stories behind them. This project aims to celebrate self-expression, personal narratives, and the vibrant tattoo culture at SUNY Purchase.

If you'd like to contribute, please fill out the form below and upload a clear image of your tattoo. Your submission may be featured on the archive website and in future displays on campus.

Guidelines:

- You can submit multiple tattoos, but please fill out a separate form for each one.
- Feel free to be as detailed or concise as you'd like in your responses.
- If you'd like your submission to remain anonymous, you can leave your name blank.

What is your name? *(Optional)*

Foy

Are you a student or faculty?

Your answer

Where on your body is this tattoo located?

Your answer

What is this tattoo and why did you get it?

Your answer

What is important about this tattoo?

Your answer

Is there anything else you would like to share about this tattoo?

Purchase Ink Archive Submission Form

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Guidelines:

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Feel free to be as detailed or concise as you'd like in your responses.

If you'd like your submission to remain anonymous, you can leave your name blank.

Questions:

What is your name? (Optional)

Are you a student or faculty?

Where on your body is this tattoo located?

What is this tattoo and why did you get it?

What is important about this tattoo?

Is there anything else you want to share about this tattoo?

Upload a clear photo of your tattoo. (Google Forms file upload option)

SUBMISSION FORM TEST

Purchase Ink Archive Submission Form

Your response has been recorded.

[Submit another response](#)

What is your name? (optional)

Christopher Raetz

Are you a student or faculty?

Student

Where on your body is this tattoo located?

Palm

What is this tattoo and why did you get it?

All seeing eye, I got it for the interesting history of the symbol and the unique placement

What is important about this tattoo?

the most important thing about this tattoo is how it was done. It took a master tattoo artist that understands the

Purchase Ink Archive Submission Form - Google Forms

IMG_7230 - Christopher Raetz.JPG - Google Drive



SUCCESSFUL

Google form has been tested with success, it is ready to start collecting data from students and faculty

FLYER

tell me
about your
TATTOO



Have your tattoo and story
featured in my senior project!

Pending approval, this flyer is ready to be printed and hung around campus to collect data from students and faculty. The QR code links to the google form where participants can upload pictures of their tattoo and describe the meaning behind it, placement, why and how it was done, etc

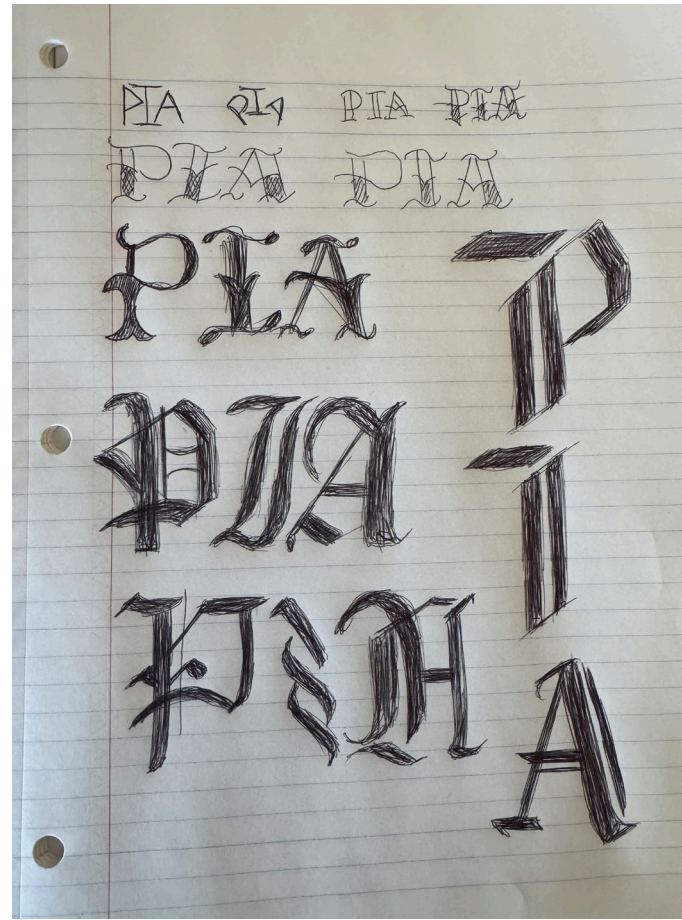
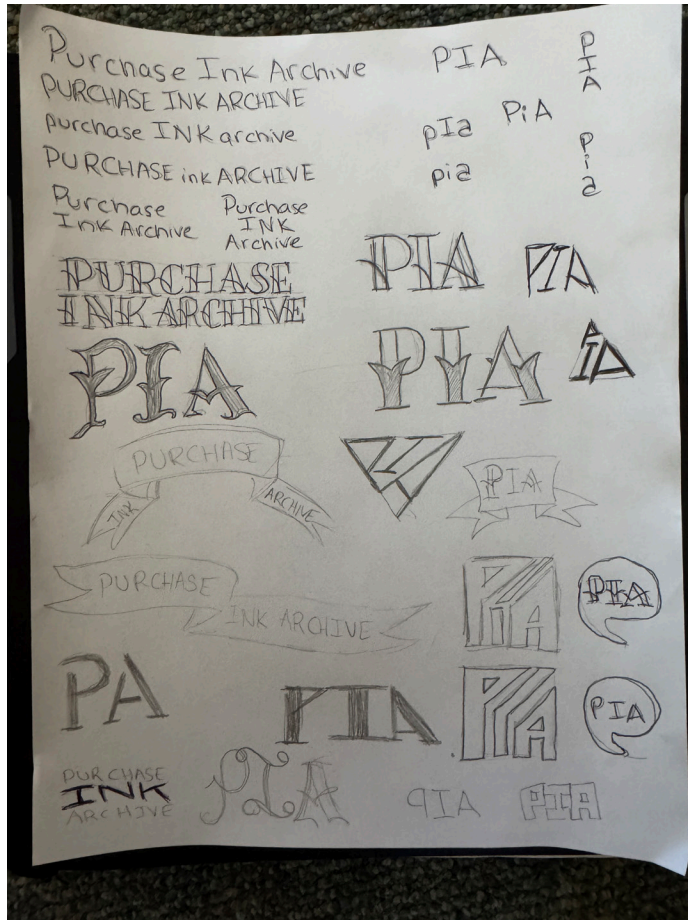
FLYERS HUNG UP ON CAMPUS

DATA COLLECTION BEGINS

40 flyers have been printed and hung around campus starting on Friday February 21.



LOGO AND STYLE THEME



LOGO AND STYLE THEME

Purchase Ink Archive

PIA

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Archive

PIA PIA

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Purchase Ink Archive PIA

PURCHASE
INK ARCHIVE

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purchase ink archive

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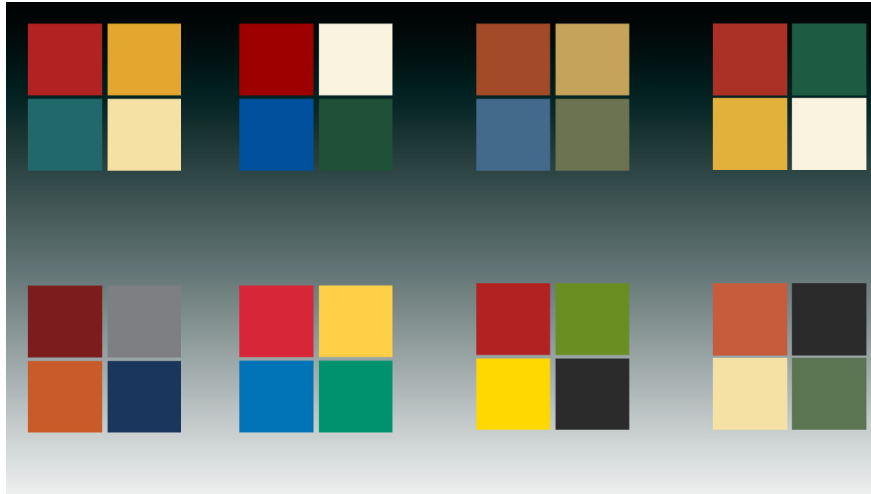
PIA PIA

PIA PIA

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COLOR PALLETES

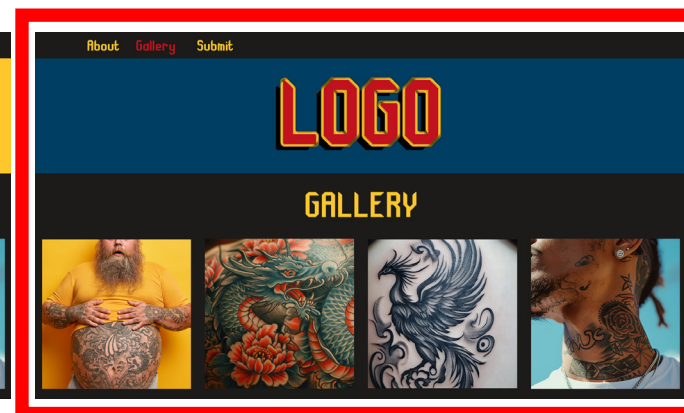
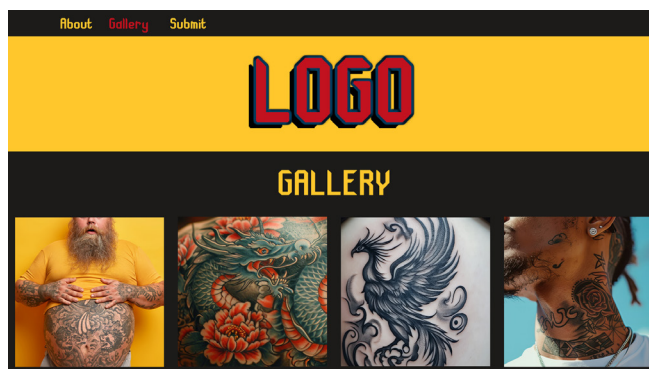
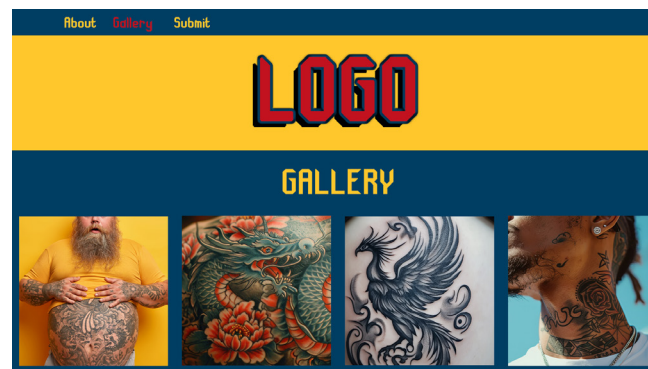
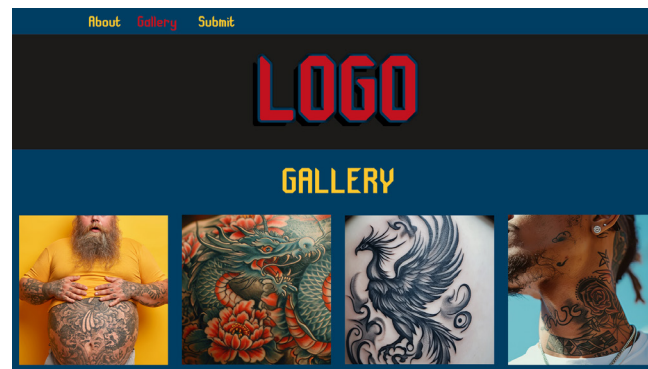
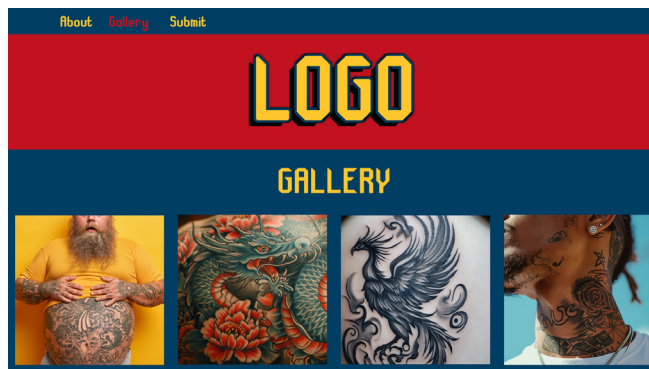


The Purchase Ink Archive color palette is inspired by the bold, high-contrast aesthetic of traditional tattoo flash art, ensuring a striking and recognizable visual identity. The primary color, Bold Red (**#C1121F**), commands attention and symbolizes passion, energy, and creativity—perfect for a project centered around self-expression. True Black (**#1C1B1A**) provides a strong foundation, enhancing contrast and readability across all branding materials, from the website to social media and printed posters.



To add depth and balance, Golden Yellow (**#FFC72C**) introduces warmth and vintage appeal, echoing the classic hues found in aged tattoo flash sheets. Finally, Deep Navy Blue (**#003F63**) backgrounds. Together, these four colors create a timeless, impactful, and highly adaptable scheme that ties the entire project together, making Purchase Ink Archive visually compelling and cohesive across all platforms.

WEBSITE



DATA COLLECTION FIRST WEEK

In the first week, **17 submission forms** have been filled out along with pictures. Students and alumni have contributed, but I’m hoping to get more faculty this week.

What is important about this tattoo?

19 responses

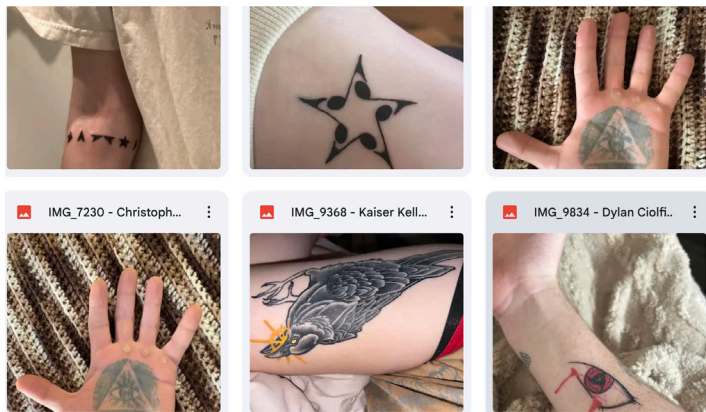
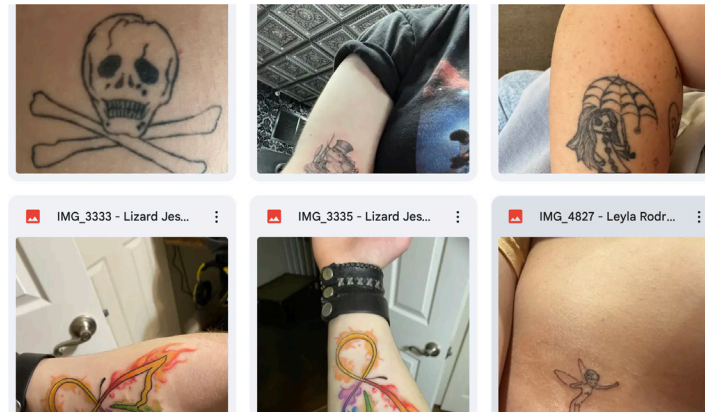
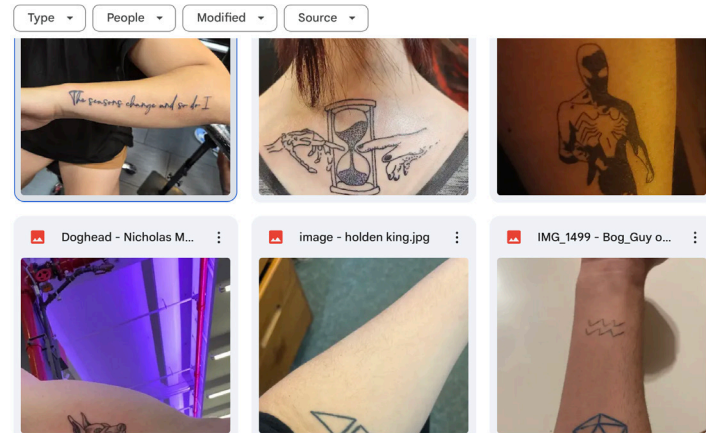
What’s important about this tattoo is how it ties into 2 significant parts of my identity, ADHD and Autism. They influence the way I think, process, perform and perceive. There are days where I feel like I’ll never truly keep up with this world despite knowing it wasn’t designed with someone like me in mind. This tattoo is meant to remind me that there are words to describe my experience and what I go through and it’s not broken.

Purchase Ink Archive Submission Form

Timestamp	What is your name? (Optional)	Are you a student or faculty?	Where on your body is this tattoo located?	What is this tattoo and why did you get it?
2025/02/20 2:33:27 PM EST	Christopher Raetz	Graphic Design	Palm	It was inspired by classic imagery but the style was determined by the artist who knew the unique placement required a specific technique to pull it off
2025/02/21 1:28:33 PM EST	Christopher Raetz	Student	Palm	All seeing eye, I got it for the interesting history of the symbol and the unique placement
2025/02/21 1:46:40 PM EST	IG: @kingartworld	Both	Forearm	Triangles
2025/02/21 2:21:55 PM EST	Pearson Kent	Best Graphic Design Student	Left forearm	Skull and cross bones, a symbol of rebellion, my family looks down upon people who have tattoos but I view them as a form of expression and freedom, I wanted to show them that just because someone has a tattoo doesn't
2025/02/21 2:23:12 PM EST	Nicholas	Student	Right bicep	The tattoo is of a dog head. It was my first ever tattoo. I went to a pop up event in nyc to hopefully meet one of my favorite artists/group, City Morgue. While there if you spent 100 dollars on merchandise you could then get a
2025/02/21 3:36:23 PM EST	Kaiser Kelly	student	thigh	crow- he was cool
2025/02/21 3:43:13 PM EST	TJ	Alumni	forearm	My tattoo is a 20-sided die. I'm a big fan of Dungeons and Dragons, so getting this felt like a no-brainer.
2025/02/21 4:26:49 PM EST	Joseph Cereola	Student	Right Forearm	It is an infinity sign with one half being gold and the other being a rainbow butterfly wing. Why I got it is that it's a combination of the symbols for ADHD and Autism.
2025/02/22 5:01:42 PM EST	Sarah Ledesky	Student	Forearm	My tattoo is a song lyric from the song "Hollow People" by a band called Nova Charisma. I've been wanting this tattoo since I heard the song because I immediately connected so deeply with the song and its messaging. It's
2025/02/24 8:09:16 AM EST	Soda	Student	Neck	Its the hands from creation of Adam, one is a skeleton hand, one is fleshed out. Both reaching towards an hourglass. Represents memento vivere memento mori. Remember to live and Remember to die
2025/02/24 1:21:37 PM EST	Shannon	Student	Arm	This is a tattoo of a frog wearing a hat. It was my first tattoo. I've always wanted to be tatted up so I made the appointment when I turned 18. I wanted the frog but it was the artist's choice to add the hat so I just rolled with it.
2025/02/24 2:42:19 PM EST	Dylan	Alumni	Forearm	Itachi Uchiha's Mangekyo Sharingan (Naruto)
2025/02/24 3:16:45 PM EST	blaine	student	forearm	it is a sequence of stars from the cover art of david bowie's blackstar, i got it because i loved the art and bowie has always been my favorite artist
2025/02/24 8:30:31 PM EST	Leyla	Student	hip	I got a fairy tattoo because Ive always loved them and my favorite movie growing up was tinkerbelle. I loved everything about it and I wanted to live there I also had a big crush on queen clarion.
2025/02/25 11:22:35 AM EST		student	forearm	This is a tattoo of a girl that I got tons of inspo and ideas from random places. I believe it to represent me but sort of what I am more on the inside because I am very different on the outside. The girl is wearing a raincoat and
2025/02/25 9:07:56 PM EST	JJ	Student	Forearm	Symbiote Spider-Man and it was my first tattoo ever
2025/02/25 9:16:01 PM EST	Charlotte	Student	Inner right ankle	It's a star made out of music notes

DATA COLLECTION FIRST WEEK

My ... > Purchase Ink Arc... > Upload a picture of ...



HOW I CAN COLLECT MORE DATA

I am preparing to paint traditional tattoo style flash sheets to sell at the **STOOD FLEA** on Sunday March 9. I will have the QR code ready and I will engage with the community, hopefully getting more people interested in filling out the questionnaire about their tattoos.

I am also planning on walking around on campus with the QR code and asking tattooed people directly if they'd be interested in submitting.

RESEARCH

BOOK NOTES

Total Tattoo Book
Amy Krakow

"It's right there in the Bible: You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh...or tattoo any marks upon you (Leviticus 19:28) p.6

"Tattooing, as ritual and as art, has gotten a bad rap for centuries. But attitudes are changing. Tattoos combine an interest in ancient and primitive cultures and their rites, along with an easier, less rigid way of dealing with (and looking at) our bodies." p.8

"Tattoos bring out the prejudice in many people- people who have bought into the long-held myths that tattoos were the marks of lower-class people, mentally and morally deficient people, or criminals. Times have changed." p. 8

"Some people have lots of tattoos. Some people have just one. The interesting thing about us is that we're just like any- and everybody else." P.12

"As an art, they have been traced back 4,000 years to the Egyptians.

"Tattoos existed 12,000 years before Christ. Proof has been found in archaeological and anthropological digs."

"Cultural anthropologists believe that tattoos actually serve society by bringing ritual to cultures that lack communal rites. That's just one of the reasons why tattooing is so popular in America today. Our culture suffers from a decided lack of traditions, combined with a latent desire for both spiritual and secular rites that bind people to each other or to a larger group." P.16

"In 1891 Samuel O'Reilly patented the first electric machine, and tattooing caught on among a wider Western audience."

"O'Reilly's tattoo machine was likely based on a Thomas Alva Edison invention- the electric pen, which was capable of puncturing paper with its needle-like point. The machine underwent several patented modifications, most of which were invented by the working tattooists. The basics were always based on the original: moving coils, a tube, and a needle bar." P.22

"The freak-show aspect of tattooing-tattooed men or women exhibiting their heavily decorated bodies for a fee- is a part of tattoo history that's difficult to deny." P.23

"Before tattooing was outlawed in new York city, government officials gave the tattooists the opportunity to form an association and self-regulate. The indecent, feisty tattooists couldn't organize themselves. Instead, the health code violation went into effect."

"In 1961 tattoo shops were closed down by the governments in New York City and the state of Massachusetts." P.28

"Tattooing was a business with few written rules, and little legislation. You weren't taken seriously as a tattooist until you had been in it for several years- until you had paid your dues, showed you could cut it, showed you were part of the "family." Once it was apparent to the local trade that you were willing to keep the secrets, and willing to stand up for your brothers, only then would you be accepted into the fraternity." P.37

ARTICLE NOTES

An Art Educator's Response

For many North Americans, tattoos reflect hopes, values, or beliefs and act as vehicles to communicate those beliefs to others (Sanders, 1989). For some, tattoos offer a means to reclaim a sense of ownership and control over their body (Hicks, 2005). Tattoos are particularly popular with teenagers who explore their identity through experimentation with their outward appearances. Since the 1990s, tattoos have become an established part of youth culture (Riley & Cahill, 2005). Jablonski (2006) posited:

"In an increasingly globalized world of look-alike clothing, cosmetics, and hairstyles, tattoos are permanent reflections of personality, carefully calculated representations of core beliefs and sentiments that can make a uniquely powerful statement of individuality" (p. 151).

Art educators can utilize their students' desire to investigate tattoos to create meaningful lessons. Art educators Taylor, Carpenter, Ballenge-Morris, and Sessions (2006) affirmed that:

"Since the teen stage is primarily about the construction of identity, schools and subject areas should offer multiple ways to include identity development, diversity issues such as class, oppression, and privilege, and the management of identity development" (p. 81).

Teenage Tattooing Practices

Brown, Perlmutter, and McDermott (2000) identified three major changes in the tattoo industry that contributed to its growth: a wider variety of ink, the entry of skilled artists into the field, and the proliferation of celebrity tattoos. Teenagers hold actors, musicians, and professional athletes in high esteem and tend to emulate their behavior.

Although most state laws prohibit tattooing individuals under the age of 18, many states permit it with the written or verbal consent of parents or guardians (Green, 2005). However, as Armstrong and Murphy (1997) discovered:

"Adolescents who want a tattoo will obtain one, regardless of money, regulations, or risks" (p. 187).

They surveyed 213 tattooed adolescents and found that the average age for the first tattoo was 14, with the majority obtaining them during grades 7 and 9. Girls represented 55% of this tattoo population.

Teens view their tattoos as objects of self-expression, while adults frequently consider them signs of deviant behavior (Armstrong & Murphy, 1997). Pitts (2003) concurred that youthful body modification is likely to be framed as socially problematic and that:

"Sensationalized media accounts raise moral panic, associating children's tattoos and body piercing with drugs, homelessness, and other social problems" (p. 24).

Studies about teenagers link tattoos with eating disorders, unsafe sexual activity, violence, and suicide (Carroll, Riffenburgh, Roberts, & Myhre, 2002), as well as with low self-esteem and

RESEARCH

"I reexamined the power of symbols appropriate to the West, and now I've become more involved with that. The giant panther head I did is a perfect fusion of Japanese and American styles." D.E. Hardy P.94

"Many of the tattoos I've done have made people feel so much better about themselves. When you can give a person the psychic armor to help them get better, that's a successful tattoo." D.E. Hardy P.94

"I got drunk on champagne when I did my first tattoo. It took me hours to do anything. And you can't practice. Just on potatoes. That's not the same as skin. In the old days, the tattooists would pay derelicts to be a canvas. My friend Roger my first tattoo, was neither a derelict or a potato. He got drunk, too." Ruth Marten P.99

"Too many youngsters in the business now are not paying their dues or giving respect to the old-timers. Tattooing is so mainstream, so acceptable now. Zeke Owens can walk around in Anaheim and nobody would know who he is!" Gill Monte P.100

"I paid my dues. I stayed with tattooing when it wasn't an easy thing, when it was an outlaw profession. No money. No kudos from the art community, when it was a racket. Today it's artsy-fartsy, yuppified, gentrified. Cushy. But a lot of us were there when it wasn't." Jonathan Shaw P.101

"We need to clean tattooing of the scourge of scratchers that are plaguing the profession." Jonathan Shaw P. 102

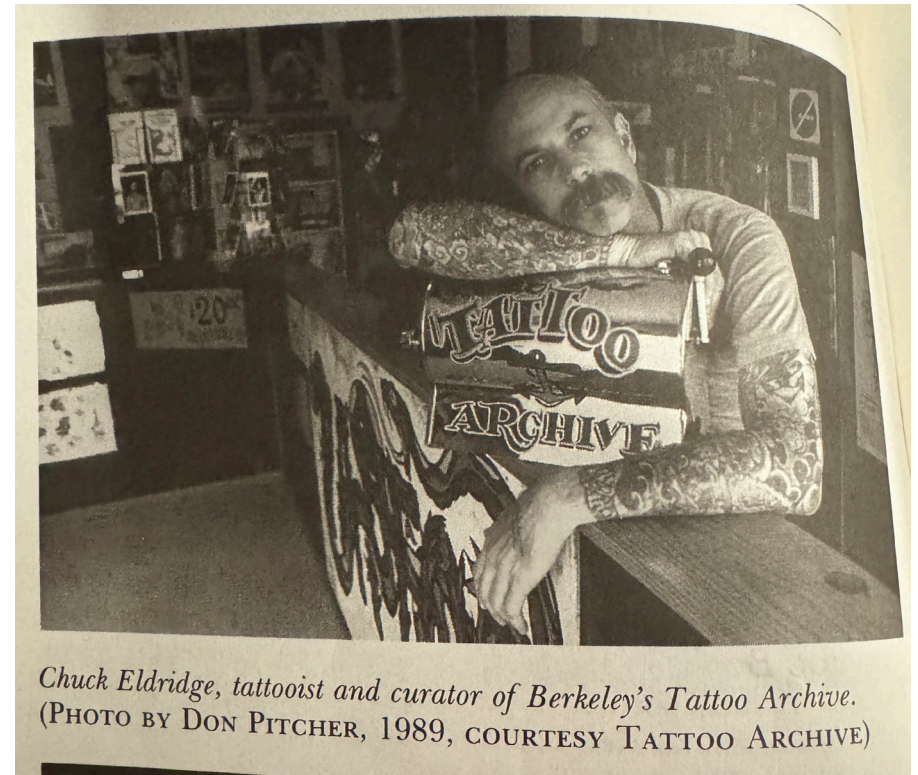
"As a forensic pathologist, one of Sperry's areas of expertise is identification through tattoos. Because tattoos are 'permanent, easily recognizable, memorable markers of individuality, they can be utilized as a reliable means of identification.' And because tattoos go into the third layer of the skin, they can be used as forensic tools even after a body begins to decompose." P.139

"Tattoo suppliers are evil incarnate." I've heard it exactly that way and in several other forms, some a little nicer, some nastier. The comment is made by tattooers and only tattooers. The names of the tattooers who have said it are incidental, because it's the attitude behind the comment that counts. And the attitude is a throwback to the old days when tattooists didn't want to supply their rivals with the tools of the trade. They'd make it difficult for young people to break in. Those who toughed it out learned the business. Those who didn't, well, they didn't belong, did they?" P.156

"Artists who vehemently oppose supplier advertising give these reasons. They want to discourage casual, nonserious people from picking up a machine without knowledge of technique, sterilization and hygiene. They don't want scratchers coming along and charging quality prices for inferior work, which disparages the work of the professional artists." P.157

"Tattoo museums don't have big endowments. They're not wealthy institutions with large collections. They're labors of love started and kept going by men and women who adore the subject." P.161

"Tattoo designs, machinery and more are in the permanent collection of the Smithsonian." P. 161



"Tattoo museums don't have big endowments. they're not wealthy institutions with large collections. They're labors of love started and kept going by men and women who adore the subject. They should. They're all practicing tattooists."

P. 161

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Symbolism & Meaning

1. What are some of the most meaningful tattoos you've done?
2. Have you noticed any symbols or themes that clients request the most?
3. Are there any symbols people commonly misunderstand or misuse?

Funny & Crazy Stories

4. What's the weirdest or funniest tattoo request you've ever gotten?
5. Have you ever had to talk someone out of a tattoo?
6. What's the most impulsive or last-minute tattoo you've done?
7. Have you ever had a client regret their tattoo right after getting it?
8. What's the strangest explanation someone has given for their tattoo choice?
9. Have you ever had a client pass out or react in a way you didn't expect?

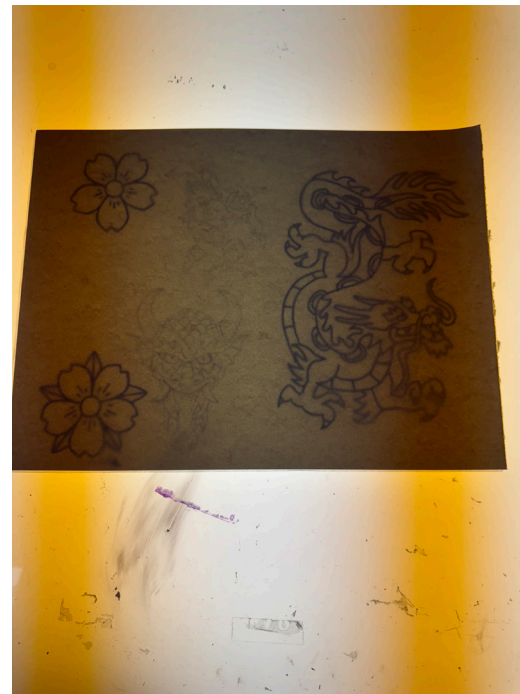
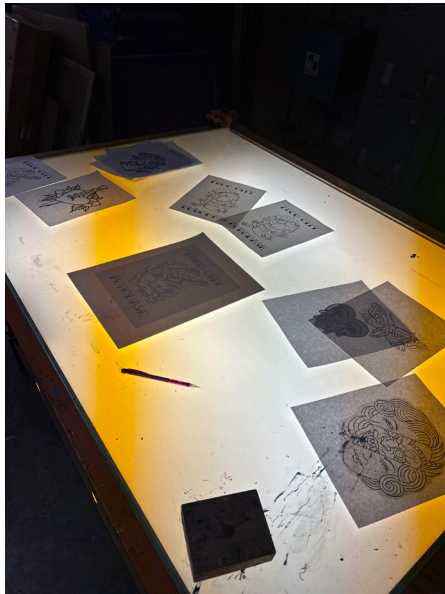
Challenging Custom Pieces

10. What's the most technically difficult tattoo you've ever done?
11. How do you handle unique or highly specific custom design requests?
12. Have you ever done a challenging cover-up? What made it difficult? **(Thank you for fixing my arm!!!!)**

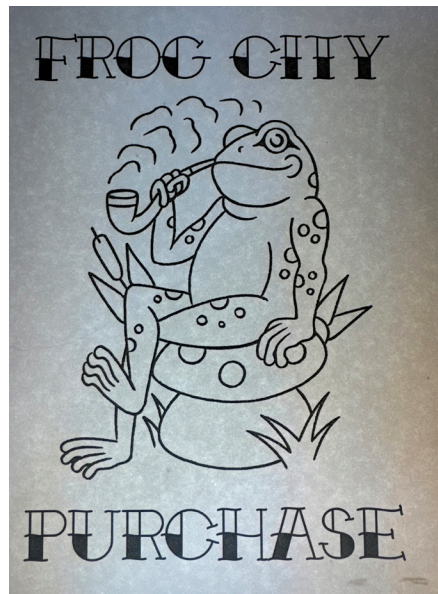
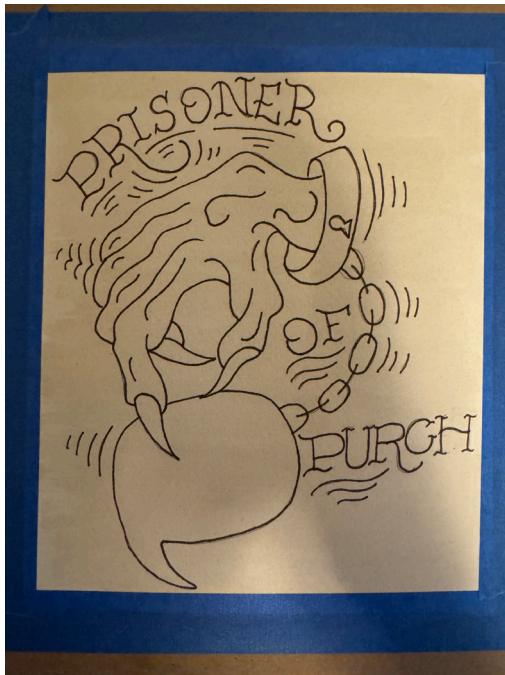
Personal Experience & Insights

13. What made you want to become a tattoo artist?
14. How do you balance your own artistic style with what clients want?
15. What's your favorite kind of tattoo to design and why?

FLASH FOR STOOD FLEA PROCESS



FLASH FOR STOOD FLEA PROCESS



I created a series of tattoo flash designs using traditional techniques. I began by sketching out concepts in my sketchbook, refining them with tracing paper, and finalizing the outlines using the lightbox in the print shop. I then transferred the designs onto cold press watercolor paper with a stencil, re-outlining them in permanent Sharpie for bold, crisp lines. To add depth and a unique texture, I brewed black coffee and layered it onto the paper to create varying skin tones. Next, I'll enhance the designs with shading and color using watercolor paint. Some pieces incorporate classic tattoo imagery with a Purchase-inspired twist, while others stay true to traditional flash aesthetics.

I'll be selling these pieces at the Stood Flea this **Sunday, March 9**, to raise funds for high-quality paper and other supplies needed for the next stages of my project.

CUSTOM FONT FOR BRANDING

PHIRST
By Jack Coffey

AaBbCcDdEe
FFGgHhIiJjKk
LlMmNnOoPp
QqRrSsTtUu
VvWwXxYyZz

A custom font created by Purchase graphic design student **Jack Coffey** will be used in the branding for Purchase Ink Archives. It was already used in the flyer!

tell me
about your

TATTOO



Have your tattoo and story
Featured in my senior project!

DATA COLLECTION WEEK 2

What is important about this tattoo?

The tattoo was originally modeled after a perfume bottle my grandma gave me when I was 6. Unfortunately, I broke the bottle when moving out of my freshman dorm a few months later. My grandma also has a pond in her backyard with frogs and she named the fattest one Arnold after the terminator and she would go "I'll be back" when he jumped in the water. Because of this, I named the frog in my tattoo Arnold

What is important about this tattoo?

bowie and his music has been a part of my life and my family since i was born, and it represents various relationships i have with my family members and also with myself. his music has been with me as i've grown and so have his ideas.

What is important about this tattoo?

This tattoo represents to never (help,give etc.) pour from an empty cup. If I want to pour into another cup first I must tend to mine to the point where my cup overflows into another's. Therefore my cup won't be depleted or barren from helping/sharing nor will the other cup.

Questions

Responses 27

Settings

27 responses

Link to Sheets

Summary

Question

Individual

What is important about this tattoo?

I think this tattoo is one that means the most to me because most of my tattoos have meanings but not all for me so I like that it kinda shows what I think I am that others might not see. I feel that I used it as a creative outlet to allow myself to show that even though on the outside I may not look this way that I am in love with this side of myself.

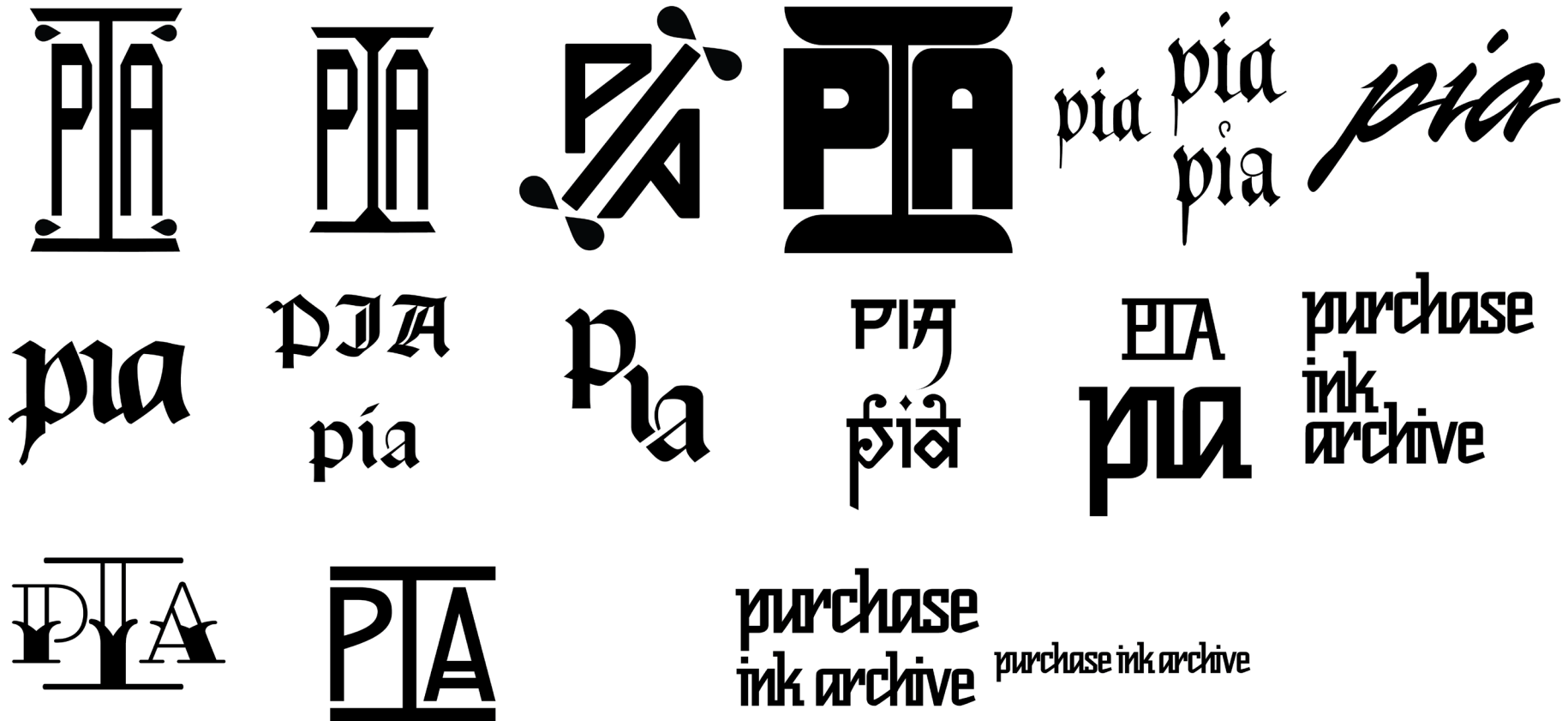
What is important about this tattoo?

One of my friends, Mark, committed suicide on that day and I also have struggled with suicidal ideations

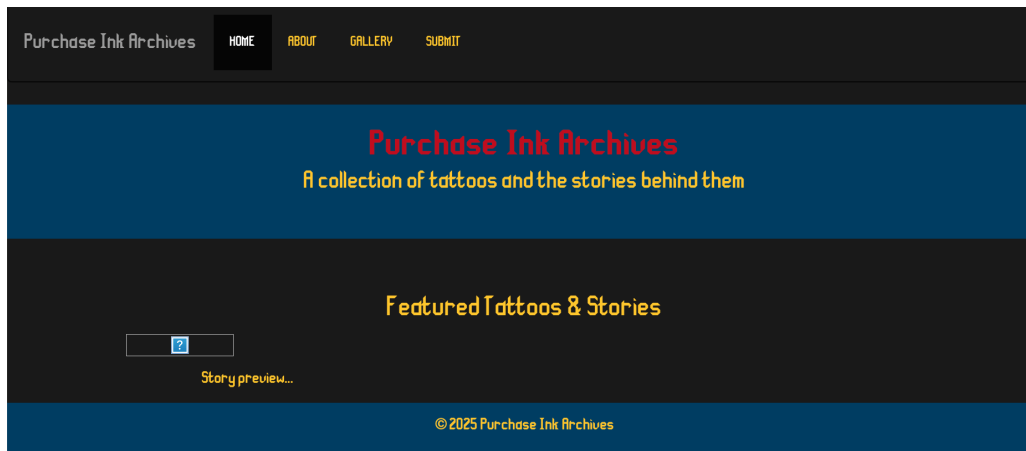
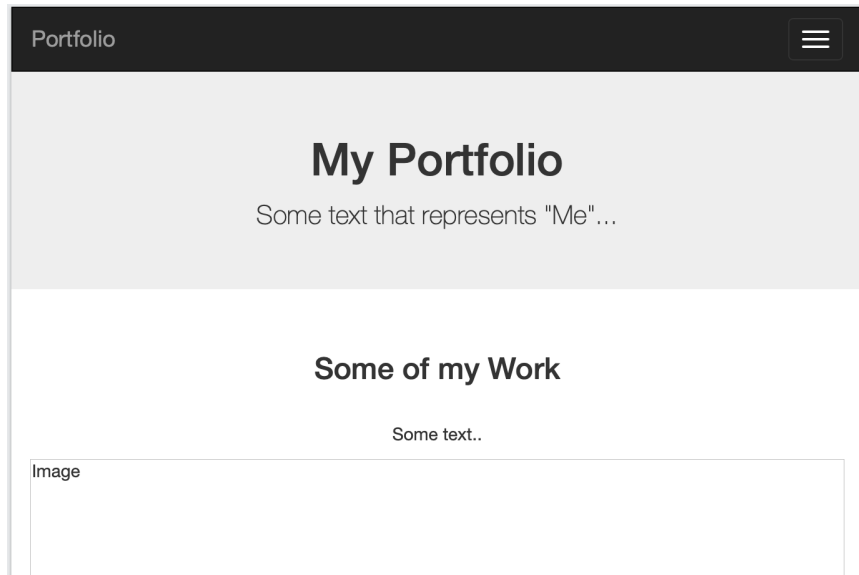
What is important about this tattoo?

it represents me and my sisters relationship; this song is about the love between these two people and how they will find each other in every life. Me and my sister have an extremely close relationship and we know that our relationship/sisterhood is going to find us no matter what life we are in.

MORE LOGO ITERATIONS



WEBSITE WORK



Evolution from W3Schools Bootstrap Portfolio to Purchase Ink Archives

1. Branding & Identity:

- Changed Portfolio to Purchase Ink Archive.
- Introduced a custom color palette (Bold Red, True Black, Golden Yellow, Deep Navy Blue).
- Integrated a tattoo-style custom font ("Phirst") for uniqueness.

2. Navbar Adjustments:

- Updated links to match project pages (about.html, gallery.html, submit.html).
- Removed unnecessary elements like the login button from the original template.

3. Hero Section (Jumbotron) Changes:

- Changed the generic "My Portfolio" title to Purchase Ink Archives.
- Adjusted background color to Deep Navy Blue.
- Styled text in red and yellow to align with the theme.

4. Content Updates:

- Modified the image grid to display tattoos and stories instead of random portfolio images.
- Placeholder tattoo images and story previews replace generic portfolio content.

5. CSS Enhancements:

- Removed W3Schools' inline CSS and organized it into a separate styles.css file.
- Improved typography and spacing for a cleaner, more readable layout.

WEBSITE WORK



About page has been created and linked to the stylesheet.

PHASE 2

RESEARCH

Pierced Hearts and True Love

Tattooing originated in prehistory and has proliferated rapidly worldwide over the last half of the twentieth century. It encompasses aspects of psychology, ritual, medicine, and art. P. 15

Drawings made for tattoos are the photographic evidence of this most extreme visual art and cause us to question a variety of assumptions forming the foundation of our society. The capacity of a tattoo to shock or alienate the uninitiated, and the deliberate self-marginalization of tattoo artists, has largely prevented recognition of their skills by the art historical establishment. P. 15

As tools of expression or utility, tattooing implements have reached various stages of refinement in different cultures, depending on available resources and the ingenuity of the practitioners. These range from serrated boar's tusks or sea turtle shells in Samoa and other Pacific Island cultures to the appropriation of fine milliner's needles lashed to a stick (Japan) or soldered to a metal bar running through a tube attached to an electric motor (US and Europe). P. 15

Each nuance affects the outcome of the finished tattoo: minute variations in the point of the needles (viable only with a powerful magnifying glass), the type of wire on the electromagnetic coils, or angle of tension on the steel spring responsible for the "return" action of the mechanism are but a few considerations. Whatever level or intent of expressive ability the tattooer may aim for is largely dependent on these tools, highly personalized extensions of each Artist's temperament. P. 15

Machine tuning, setup, and sources of good components were jealously guarded secrets, shrouded in superstition, and penuriously passed from one practitioner to another. Until very recently, information about every aspect of tattooing was submerged in a community of artisans who primarily viewed one another with a mixture of distrust and jealousy. Grudging admiration or outright respect were hard won. P.15

Powdered pigments suspended in a solution usually consisting of isopropyl alcohol and distilled water were hand mixed by each tattooer. After healing, the wetting agent dispersed and color remained as minute particles embedded in cellular layers. Black was the only true liquid used, usually a variant of concentrated carbon ink. Invariably, larger corporations were unwilling to sell to tattooers (to avoid culpability for any possible side effects of their product), so tattooers in the know posed as sign painters or fine artists. Today manufacturers of tattoo supplies provide pigment lists developed in their own laboratories. Since the late 1980s, predisposed pigments with a greater ease of workability have come into wide usage. The average tattoo palette until the early 1970s was limited to black, red, green, brown, yellow and occasionally white. Sailor Jerry Collins was the first to introduce a good blue and purple in the 1960s, but these were only in the hands of a few artists. Since that time, the color range has expanded to include nearly every hue generally available in the painter's repertoire. P. 16

Some tattooers kept each sheet to one theme: skulls, roses, anchors, and so on. Others felt that mixing up the designs led customers to examine all the flash more carefully and perhaps be attracted to an image other than what they originally sought. Some followed compositional rules, placing a large design on each sheet to anchor it to the wall and help the eye locate it again in the profuse overload of designs blanketing the shop. Other considerations included the degree of color or intricacy painted into the flash (as opposed to that actually put into the tattoo), arrangement of designs on a intuitively, but certain aspects were formulaic, passed on from one artist to another in the informal apprenticeship tradition. All added to the distinct look of each shop. Individuality was highly desirable in a trade that shared a common image bank. P. 19

Each design required an accompanying stencil to transfer the line image to the skin. Early in the century these were made by dry pointing celluloid (a highly combustible material), later replaced by acetate. "Cutting" stencils was an art in itself, and good practice for the artist's hand in creating decisively tattooed outlines. Powdered charcoal was rubbed into the icest lines, then pressed onto the shaved area coated with vaseline. A firm, even depth of line in the plastic was necessary to transfer a sharp clean outline onto the skin, and become the standard method of transferring on-of-a-kind designs to avoid the more laborious method of cutting an acetate stencil. Perhaps borrowed from the Japanese, many sample flash books of that era are signed in dye pencil by customers. Dye transfer patterns have the considerable advantage of remaining visible on the skin well into the tattooing process, whereas acetate and powdered charcoal imprint methods are fragile and smear easily. This necessitates the awkward method of tattooing from one corner of the image up. Currently both of these methods have been rendered largely obsolete by the use of stencil machines that produce a durable dye transfer image off of a photocopy instantly. This is perhaps the most important innovation for the contemporary tattooer, enabling the reproduction of extremely complex effects. P. 19

The five thousand or so designs featured on any given shop wall could be reduced to twenty proven pieces on one sheet, or so the joke went, but customers needed the illusion of vast choice before deciding on their panther, heart, or dagger. This holds true in Japan as well, where a basic repertoire of heroic and mythological images from *kyōka*-g standards still makes up most of the tattoos. Each culture seems to distill an image bank of desirable tattooed shapes and images. The beauty of these design traditions in the subtle variations of the artist's hand, both in painting techniques and tattooing. P. 20

People like to believe the tattoos they have acquired are the most exquisite ever done, since they are so complexly linked with one's sense of self, value system, and taste. Taking the customers' opinions at face value can breed complacency and hinder development as an artist. The old carry term for this is "being a sucker for your own game." Those capable of surviving in the business over a long period of time generally develop an appreciation for its profoundly surreal and humorous elements. Prolonged exposure to the psyches, blood, and sweat of the client while trying to create neat work under stress is the great litmus test of the medium and it is imperative to keep a sense of humor. P. 21

The skin is a tremendously complex surface to render art upon, varying from inch to inch as well as from one individual to another. An accomplished tattooer must develop a sixth sense of touch with the tools, as virtually all work is done in a puddle of pigment that obscures the exact location of the points, and skin accepts color differently depending on where it is being applied. Equal pressure while executing a long line, for instance, may not yield equal visual results. Changes in muscle mass or proximity of bone beneath the surface must be reckoned with the pigment itself must be placed below the epidermis, into the top of the dermal layer. Too deep or shallow tattooing results in light or blurred designs, qualities often apparent only months or years after the image has healed into the skin. The finesse of touch required is equal to that of the most subtle asian works on silk or rice paper, with greater necessity for assuredness. Each mark is indelible and must be done right the first time. Error require covering with larger and darker images, as black is the only true opaque color. Every tattooer does a great deal of "cover work" over poorly executed or unwanted designs. The successful transformation of an area already marked is one of the most challenging aspects of the medium. What's more, the tattooer is frequently called upon to fit his or her creations among over, or around existing tattoos. The "blank canvas" is the exception rather than the rule. Different skins take tattooing differently, and sometimes the most dedicated collector will not have the ideal skin to accept the ink. Heredity, sun, diet, age, and lifestyle all contribute to how well skin will hold tattoos. P. 23

People like to believe the tattoos they have acquired are the most exquisite ever done, since they are so complexly linked with one's sense of self, value system, and taste.

The earliest tattoo to have been discovered was on the mummified body of an Egyptian woman named Amulet who was a priestess for Hathor at Thebes during the Eleventh Dynasty (c. 2200 BCE)

Tattoos generally function as psychic armor. Often a marker of a state of mind or events, meaning is accrued with time, the bearer explains the mark's significance and the story of how and where it was acquired. **Much of the symbolism or meaning cannot be articulated and is private to the wearer, as is any artwork to its creator or collector by willing it to be placed on the body the tattoo collector literally becomes one with the art.**

Similarly, the tattooer as creative artist faces a number of realities absent in those working on inert objects. First, of course, every production has a certified life span, there is no hoping for eternal fame for one's best efforts. Full appreciation of the work at the time of execution, then, is essential, photo documentation is a poor second to seeing the actual piece. Every tattoo is inherently a piece of process art—the qualities of the tattoo change with time, as more layers of skin form over it. (Interestingly, carbon traces migrate to the bones.) Lastly, the tattooer must accept the presence of the person commissioning the work. Unlike the illustrator, graphic designer, or visual artist in other "work to order" fields, the creation is executed at the closest possible range, with and unavoidable confrontation of both physical and psychological intimacy. Efficient work methods are of paramount importance—to get in, get the job done, and get out. The physical state and attitude of the person being tattooed always affects the process. It helps when they don't move—as the old joke goes, the last thing you want to hear is your tattoo artist saying "oops." P. 23

Tattoos generally function as psychic armor. Often a marker of a state of mind or events, meaning is accrued with time, the bearer explains the mark's significance and the story of how and where it was acquired. Much of the symbolism or meaning cannot be articulated and is private to the wearer, as is any artwork to its creator or collector by willing it to be placed on the body the tattoo collector literally becomes one with the art. While the art may arguably have a more profound or long-term effect than a painting or sculpture, which can be put away or sold, daily exposure over a lifetime erodes awareness. In the end, the tattoo functions as a social barometer, revealing far more about the viewer than the person wearing it. Ultimately no one else's business, the projections, intrusions, judgements, or appreciations it triggers are indications of the viewer's perceptions and received social notions. Tattooing will continue to provide rich fodder for the dissecting tables of academia, but at core its power defies absolute classification. At best, it fulfills the enduring role of all art: to emphatically affirm the irrational and to celebrate life itself. P.25

The earliest tattoo to have been discovered was on the mummified body of an Egyptian woman named Amulet who was a priestess for Hathor at Thebes during the Eleventh Dynasty (c. 2200 BCE). Tattooing did not, however, originate in Egypt but was imported from Nubia where there is fragmentary evidence indicating that it occurred as early as the fourth century BCE. Though tattooing was practiced in pre-Christian Europe, Biblical and conciliar prohibitions virtually eliminated the practice until the modern period. With the emergence of colonialism, tattooing was rediscovered in the South Pacific by European seamen and adventurers. The word "tattoo" derives from the Tahitian word *tatu*, which means "to strike" and suggests the sound of the mallet hitting the instrument with which the body is cut. Though briefly popular among European royalty and aristocrats at the turn of the century, tattooing has generally been associated with marginal individuals and social groups. P. 30

There can be no doubt that the remarkable changes in styles and practices during the past several decades have contributed significantly to the growth of tattooing's popularity. As designs have evolved from standardized flash to customized work that allows for creative contributions by clients, tattoos have become attractive to people who previously never would have considered marking their skin. Tattooing is not only widely practiced but in many circles has become highly fashionable. Yet, in spite of this growing acceptance, tattooing retains traces of transgression for many people, tattoos are still badges of protest or rebellion that are worn with defiant pride. For others, the marked body is unavoidably deviant. P. 39

Tattooing is not only erotic, it is also violent. Love and death meet in the ecstatic pleasure of pain. P. 42

Retired boxer Max Peltz started tattooing out of a booth next to Nathan's Restaurant in the 1940s. He had been blinded in one eye in the ring during a bout with Maxie Rosenbloom and

tattooed at times wearing an eye patch. Peltz had taken commercial art classes and had a fundamental knowledge of drafting and graphic design. Several young men interested in tattooing gravitated to Max's booth where they were met with a curious mixture of paternal interest and contempt. P. 52

After a few appeals, tattooing was banned in New York City in December 1964. P. 54

The only country with detailed historic accounts of the practice of tattooing dating back many centuries, Japan is also where the art was developed to its highest degree of intricacy over the past 2000 years. At their earliest point, tattoos appear as complex markings on clay figures excavated from ancient burial remains dating from Japan's Jōmon period (10,000-300 BCE). The earliest accurate record of tattooing among the Japanese appears in a Chinese account of the Yuyao period (300 BCE-300 CE) compiled in 297. Considered to be the most detailed and reliable source of its time, this text states that all the men, of whatever social station, tattooed their faces and bodies. Among divers and fishermen the practice was amulet, eventually the tattooing became merely ornamental." A later Chinese history dating from 445 CE records that both men and women "tattoo their faces and decorate their bodies with designs, the size and position of these designs varying according to difference of rank." Early eighth-century Japanese literature also refers to tattooing being practiced in the fourth or fifth centuries. After the middle of the fifth century, however, voluntary tattooing came to an end in Japan and for many centuries the practice was considered a severe form of criminal punishment. P. 59

The format of painting flash with ink line and watercolor shading was established after the example of Meiji-era Japanese artists. They perfected the use of graduated water shading in both black and colors, this became the standard effect emulated on skin, both with electric machine and hand tool-techniques. P. 62

Up until very recently all tattooed imagery, east and west, was based on a lined image, more or less shaded and filled with color which echoed the style of woodblock prints. P. 62

Tattooing carries and incredibly complex and deep-rooted social stigma in Japanese society, touching on ancient Shinto ideals of purity and one's body being an undefinable gift from the gods (and one's parents). To be different, or to be an individual, is not a desirable quality in the Japanese psyche. Given the historic social milieu of the neighborhood public bath, to have a secret tattoo was nearly impossible. Choosing this form of embellishment was to render oneself an outcast, anathema to the average citizen. The emergence of more private baths in the home has facilitated a greater degree of privacy. P. 66

On the most basic level, the tattooed ladies of a former period chose to get themselves tattooed as a means of earning a living. These were independent women who made the decision to take care of themselves. P. 73

The key word is "empowerment," and women today highlight that concept in their "tattoo narratives," or stories that they construct describing their tattoos and the motives for acquiring them. Empowerment here refers to identity formation, spirituality, and overcoming adversity. P. 74

But regardless of class position, heavily tattooed women can be said to control and subvert the ever-present "male gaze" by forcing men (and women) to look at their bodies in a manner that keeps them in control. P. 74

Of course, this is not always the case. Historically, as in the present, the tattoos women wore were often signs of ownership, not of independence. Female circus and carnival attractions

LOGO

purchase ink archive

PIA

Wordmark and
Lettermark have
been constructed
using the
Scriptek font.

PAINTING FLASH



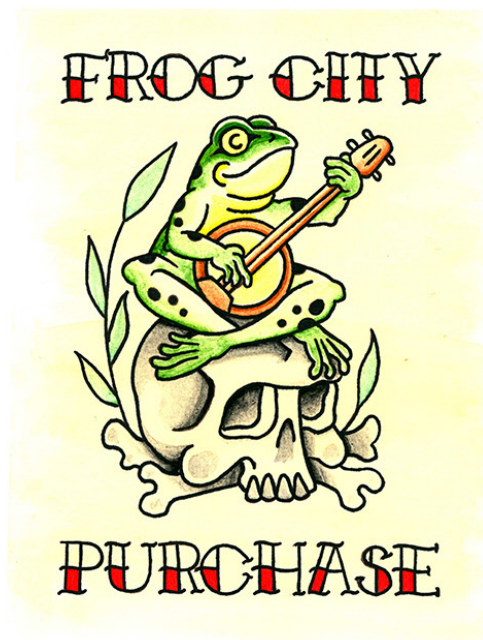
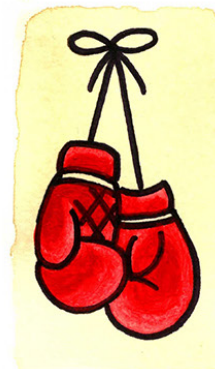
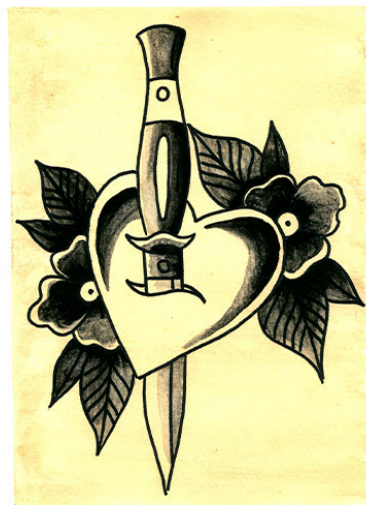
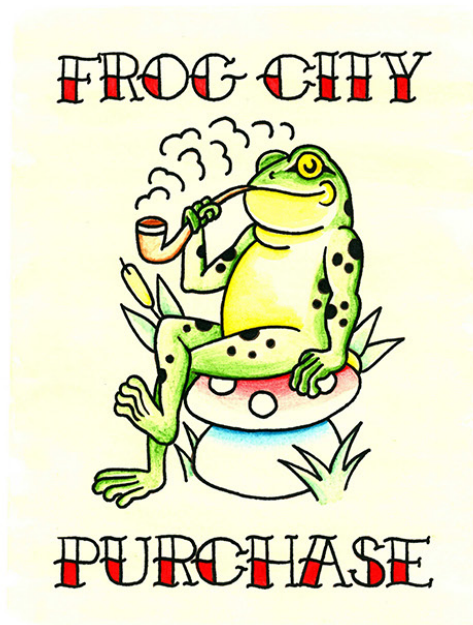
“Spit Shading”

a traditional watercolor technique used in tattoo flash art, applying watercolor paint to stained paper and blends it by breathing on the brush to keep it moist. This controlled moisture allows for smooth gradients and rich shading, creating the bold yet soft look characteristic of classic tattoo designs.

I scanned in all the flash and created PNGS out of them for assets on the website and for marketing/social media



SCANNED FLASH



Scanned at high resolution at the library

The format of painting flash with ink line and watercolor shading was established after the example of Meiji-era Japanese artists. They perfected the use of graduated water shading in both black and colors, this became the standard effect emulated on skin, both with electric machine and hand tool-techniques

FLASH AND TELL



The Stood Flea was rescheduled to **Sunday March 16**, so in the meantime I booked a booth at the campus center north entrance by the Hub where I will display my flash and have QR codes ready to be scanned. I plan to interact with any interested students or faculty and hopefully generate more data on their tattoos. I aim to do this once every two weeks until the end of the project.



FLASH AND TELL



FLASH AND TELL

has been advertised
around campus

I also applied for a
gallery exhibit at the
Rectangle Gallery
for FLASH AND TELL

FLASH AND TELL



Joyce, Celeste



To: RAETZ, CHRISTOPHER

Thu 3/13/2025 10:05 AM



Policies of the Rectangle Ga...
PDF - 89 KB

Hi Chris,

Hope you're well! Congrats, you've been approved for a show in Rectangle Gallery. Your timeslot is March 18-March 24. Please take some time to review the requirements and fill out the attached form and give it back to me.

I know this is a last-minute approval, so if you cannot install on Tuesday let me know. I tried to give you close to the time you requested.

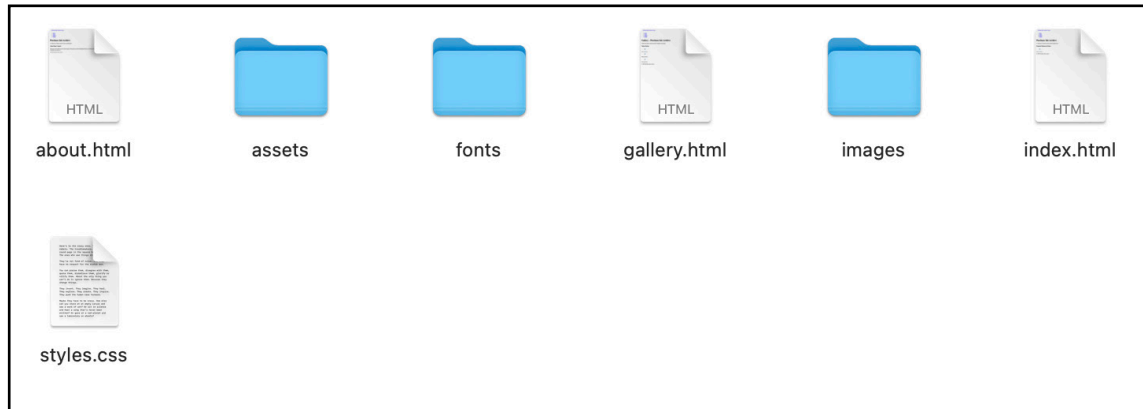
Best,

Celeste

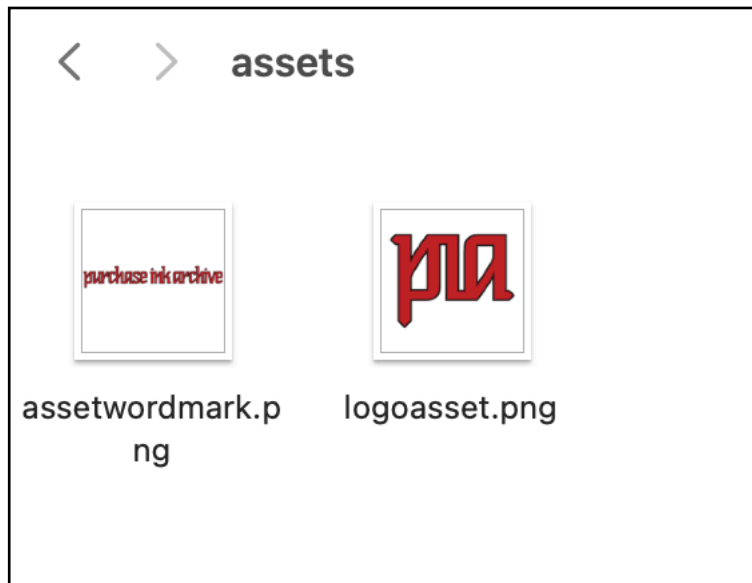
FLASH AND TELL



WEBSITE WORK



HTML files prepared for the gallery page, with an assets folder created.



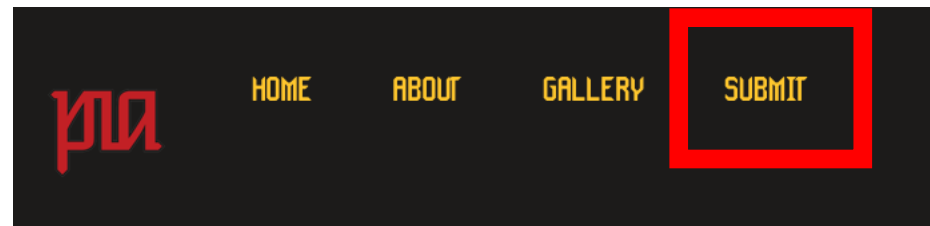
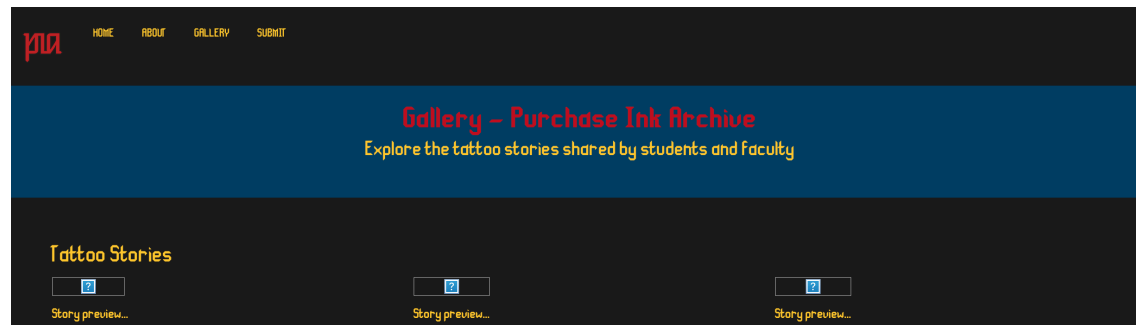
Lettermark and wordmark PNG's have been added to the asset folder

WEBSITE WORK

Lettermark
logo added



Gallery page
started and
linked to style
sheet



Submit now
links to the
Google form

ABOUT PAGE AND DISCLAIMER

While Purchase Ink Archive welcomes all tattoo stories, we strongly advocate for safe tattooing practices. Many submissions include tattoos that were not professionally done, but we do not condone unsafe tattooing. Tattoos should always be done in licensed, professional shops to ensure safety and quality.

Tattoos are more than just ink on skin—they tell stories, mark milestones, and bring people together. Purchase Ink Archive is dedicated to documenting the tattoo culture at SUNY Purchase by connecting students and faculty who share a love for tattoos.

With over 20 years of experience getting tattooed, I've seen how tattoos can spark conversations, forge connections, and serve as powerful forms of self-expression. SUNY Purchase is filled with people whose ink carries meaning, artistry, and personal history. This archive is a space to share those stories, celebrate tattoo culture, and strengthen our creative community.

I created Purchase Ink Archive as both a passion project and a way to showcase my skills as a graphic designer. Beyond preserving the tattoos of our community, this project allows me to explore the art form on a deeper level..

RESEARCH

Most meaningful tattoos?

Polite answer: Tasteful memorials. I personally prefer an image that symbolizes the subject of the tattoo. For example, one girl got a teddy bear with a US flag wrapped around it for her grandfather. The flag because he was a veteran; and the teddy bear referenced his nickname for her. Much better than the 'name, date of death, and angel wings' combo.

Honest answer, is that none of the tattoos I've done are meaningful to me. I am simply there to put the ink inn the skin as accurately and efficiently as possible. And I am neither accurate or efficient; so I guess my most meaningful tattoo would be the one that I think I screwed up the least.

Most requested symbol or theme?

Symbol: Whatever the internet's self-pity of the month is at the moment. Self diagnosed autistics get their puzzle pieces. Semi-colons were initially for suicide survivors. Then they downgraded to people who've had suicidal thoughts. And downgraded again (as claimed by one client) as symbolizing the they are a safe place for those having suicidal thoughts. I've tattooed piles of semi-colons. For whatever reason, people like to advertise their troubles more than their accomplishments.

Theme: same as the above, minus the drama. Subject matter is almost always dictated by internet trends. 90's tribal (in the 2000's); Polynesian tribal; attaching octopus tentacles to anything and everything; American Traditional; "YOLO" for about a year; Infinity symbols with an impossible amount of text worked into them; pocket watches by the dozens.

Misused symbols?

Of the aforementioned examples, I'd say that not one person that got Polynesian tribal was qualified to wear it. There's not a white man in the contiguous US that has a clue as to what those shapes mean; but "The Rock" got a tribal sleeve, so, the "I don't know what to get, but I know I want a sleeve" crowd followed suit.

Otherwise, I'd cite incorrect mixing of styles as most common. Japanese dragon with American traditional roses. American Traditional designs with new school colors. Etc.

Funny?

Two stick figures fucking doggy (doggie?) style. Above the guy was "me". Above the woman was "your mom". Complete stranger; walk-in. Thought it was the funniest thing anybody's ever considered getting inked on themselves voluntarily. Disappointed to see the

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Most requested symbol or theme?

Symbol: Whatever the internet's self-pity of the month is at the moment. Self diagnosed autistics get their puzzle pieces. Semi-colons were initially for suicide survivors. Then they downgraded to people who've had suicidal thoughts. And downgraded again (as claimed by one client) as symbolizing the they are a safe place for those having suicidal thoughts. I've tattooed piles of semi-colons. For whatever reason, people like to advertise their troubles more than their accomplishments.

Theme: same as the above, minus the drama. Subject matter is almost always dictated by internet trends. 90's tribal (in the 2000's); Polynesian tribal; attaching octopus tentacles to anything and everything; American Traditional; "YOLO" for about a year; Infinity symbols with an impossible amount of text worked into them; pocket watches by the dozens.

Misused symbols?

Of the aforementioned examples, I'd say that not one person that got Polynesian tribal was qualified to wear it. There's not a white man in the contiguous US that has a clue as to what those shapes mean; but "The Rock" got a tribal sleeve, so, the "I don't know what to get, but I know I want a sleeve" crowd followed suit.

Otherwise, I'd cite incorrect mixing of styles as most common. Japanese dragon with American traditional roses. American Traditional designs with new school colors. Etc.

Funny?

Two stick figures fucking doggy (doggie?) style. Above the guy was "me". Above the woman was "your mom". Complete stranger; walk-in. Thought it was the funniest thing anybody's ever considered getting inked on themselves voluntarily. Disappointed to see the

Most meaningful tattoos?

Polite answer: Tasteful memorials. I personally prefer an image that symbolizes the subject of the tattoo. For example, one girl got a teddy bear with a US flag wrapped around it for her grandfather. The flag because he was a veteran; and the teddy bear referenced his nickname for her. Much better than the 'name, date of death, and angel wings' combo.

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Professional tattoo artist

David Sutherland

emailed me back the interview answers. Excellent research data here!

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I do what they want. I'm all about tattoos being for the client. It's their skin. If they want to copy something they saw online, so be it. I protested that for years; and always tried to get people to consider completely unique designs. But it's the era of the internet trend.

GALLERY EXHIBIT

**Chalky was
my best
friend for 13
years...**



Chalky was my best friend for 13 years. Losing him was unbearable—I couldn't even look at his pictures or say his name without breaking. After months of grief, I finally got this tattoo, and for the first time, I could see him again. Now, he's with me every day, just like he should be.

PIA

**The healing
process
was just as
bad—if not
worse...**



The healing process was just as bad—if not worse—than getting the tattoo itself. Maybe it was because I was bartending the whole time, with my hands in sinks, slicing lemons, opening bottles, and carrying trays. Even a simple high five was agony.

PIA

I used a friend photographer to take high resolution photographs of my tattoos and created large scale (24 x 36in) posters, to include in the gallery exhibit. This will be a way to tell my stories without being all over the website, as the website will be more about the community. The **lettermark** was used to start branding the project.

**After my
grandmother
passed, I
was given
her diary...**



After my grandmother passed, I was given her diary. In it, I found this line in her handwriting: 'I danced for the first time and it felt so good.'

PIA

I danced for the first time and it felt so good.

**It was more
than just
ink—it was a
bond...**

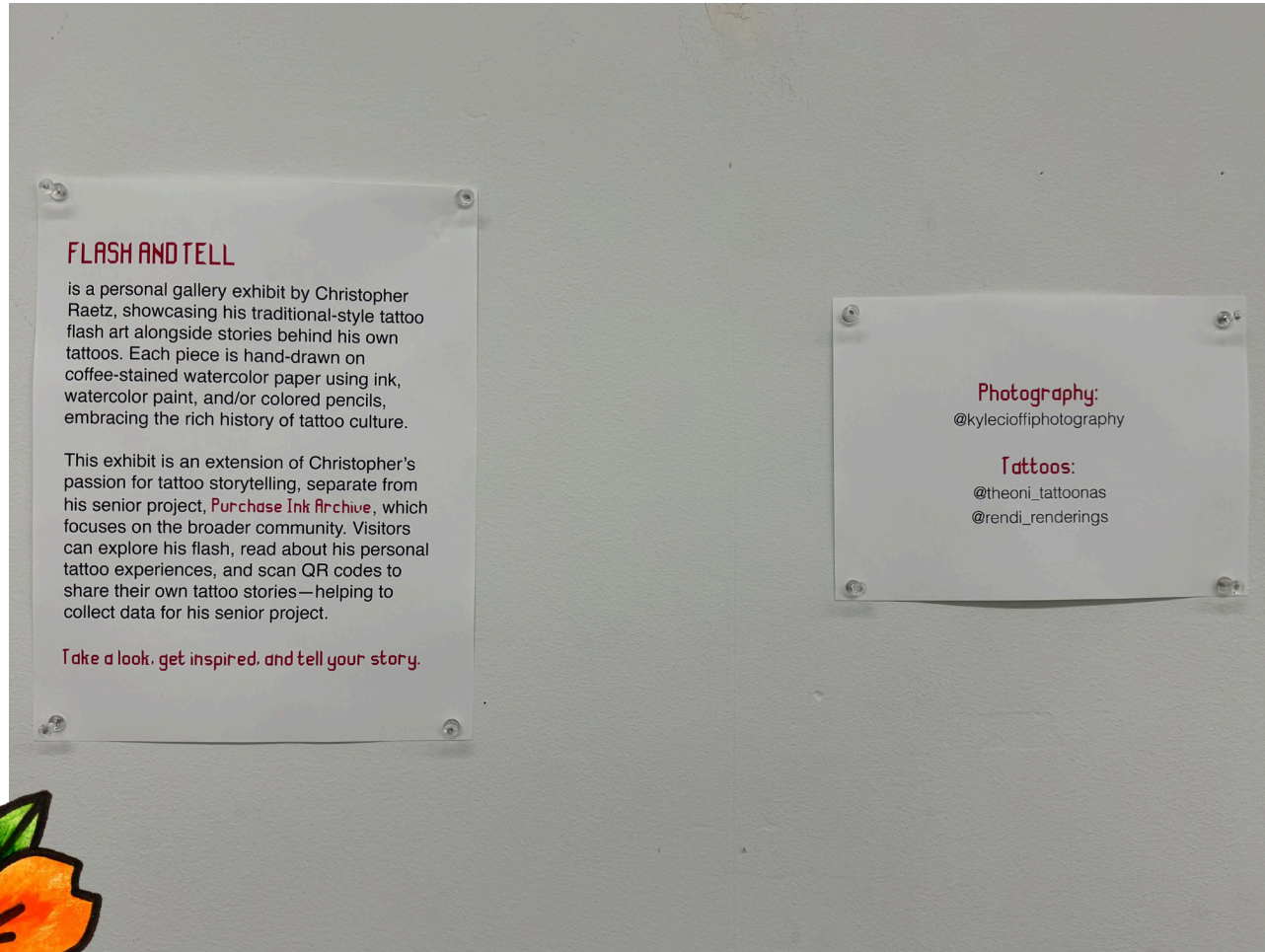


I tattooed this anchor on myself, and I gave the same one to 12 of my friends. It was more than just ink—it was a bond. Now, only ten of us remain, but this mark keeps us all connected, no matter where we are.

PIA

GALLERY EXHIBIT

Description of
how the flash
was created and
the purpose of
the exhibit- to
collect data about
viewers tattoos



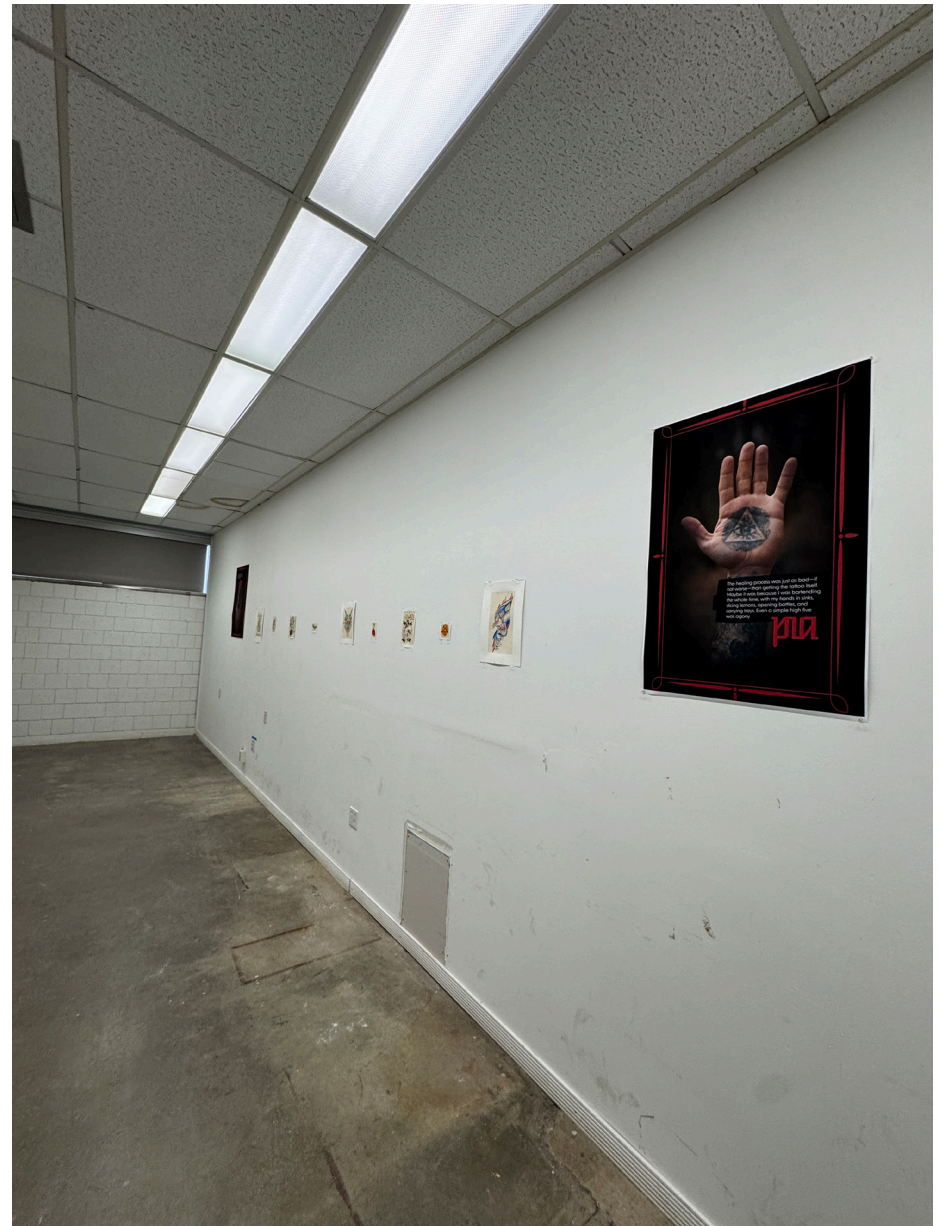
Credit to the
photographer of
my tattoos (large
scale posters)
and the tattoo
artists that did my
featured tattoos

GALLERY EXHIBIT



Credit given to
Jack Coffey for
the font that will be
used on the website
and for marketing

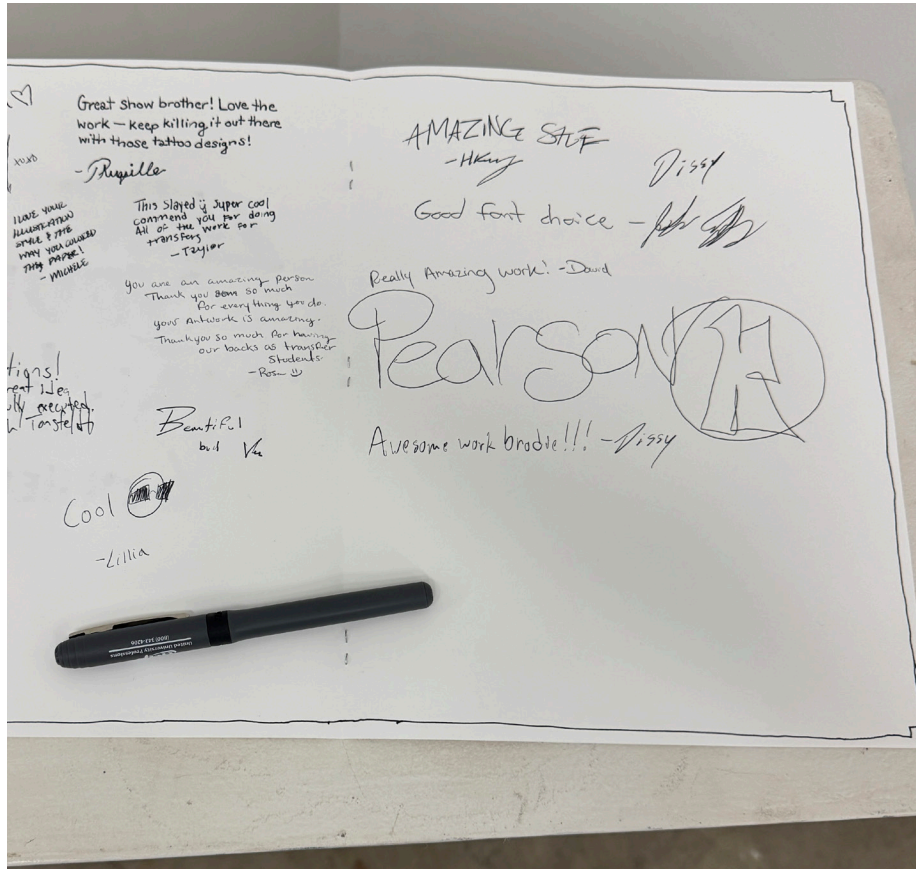
GALLERY EXHIBIT



OPEN
9AM-9PM
03/18/2025-03/25/2025



GALLERY EXHIBIT



DATA COLLECTION

Responses

48

He had a complicated relationship with Catholicism. Being queer, he had an intense disdain for religion, the condemnation and especially the Catholic Church, yet he was fascinated by its traditions and imagery. We never knew if his appreciation was sincere, a family thing or entirely sarcastic, but he would howl with laughter at images of Archangel Michael slaying Satan. And then there was St. Sebastian—his absolute favorite. The beautiful man tied to a tree, riddled with arrows, surviving only to be beaten to death later. Maybe it was the absurdity of the violence, or maybe he saw something deeper in it—something about persecution and identity.

My tattoo artist tried to talk me out of the placement, since it appears upside down to others when my arms are naturally down lmao. But I wanted it to read right side up when I made a “power fist” lol to show resistance.

My dad was cool. Much cooler than I. He was a Connecticut farm boy—Scots-Irish Catholic, one of six siblings—a high school basketball phenom who went on to become a U.S. Marine, serving in Korea. Then, a total turnaround and he fully embraced the counterculture, “tuning in and dropping out,” and even attending Woodstock. He was an avid reader, an astute intellect, and a man of deep, sometimes conflicting, passions.

“Poppy” went to college in Arizona and came back East with a lifelong love for the desert. I grew up surrounded by cacti—tons of them—along with Navajo-style ponchos and turquoise jewelry, a strange aesthetic for a house on the East Coast. My childhood friends were always like, “WTF is with all the desert stuff?” and I’d explain

DATA COLLECTION

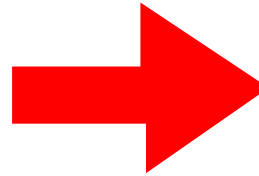
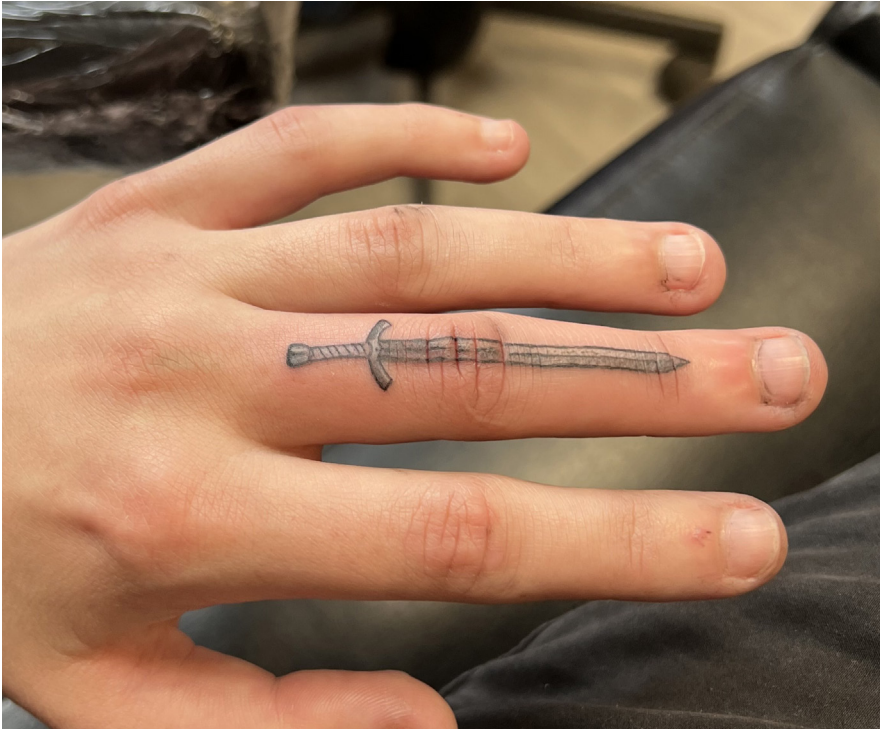


9 entries from Alumni!

Lots of amazing tattoo pictures and stories!



DATA COLLECTION



When a tattoo isn't properly applied, or if the client doesn't properly care for the tattoo it can deteriorate easily over time. This is an excellent example of having the right artist, tools, and knowledge for the job at hand. The photo on the bottom is one of mine from over 10 years ago that has never been touched up.

"its only been a few years but its already pretty faded. the night i got this ink my peers from the study program wanted to go out and we didn't return to our hostel until it was time to leave for our flight around 3 in the morning. **decisions made that night absolutely effected the healing process.** everyone in my life gives me grief about getting it touched up, but i don't know if i ever will.

WEBSITE WORK

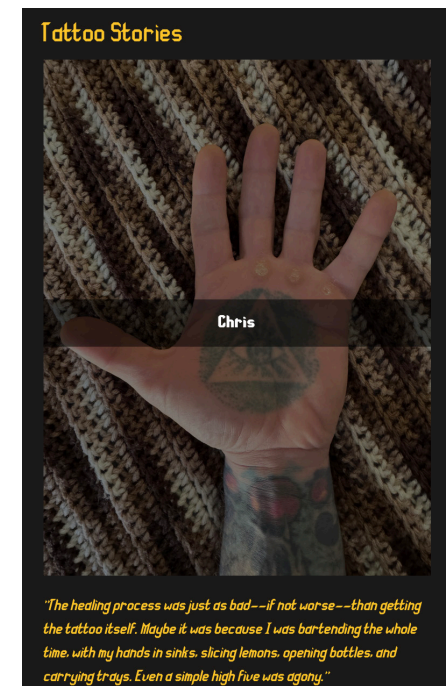
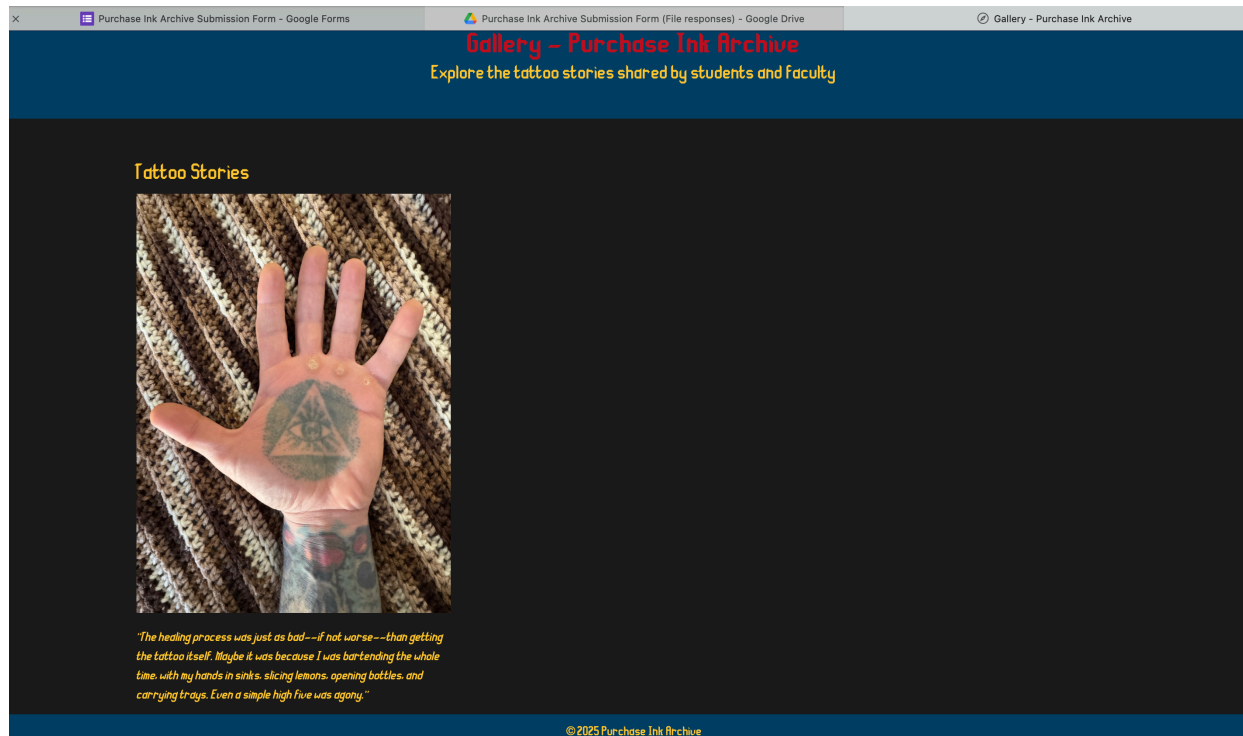
1. Added a New Image – Initially, the gallery only had placeholder images. Now, I have added my actual tattoo image (Chris.JPG) and its accompanying quote.

2. Overlay Effect on Hover – Previously, hovering over an image did not display any additional information directly on top of it.

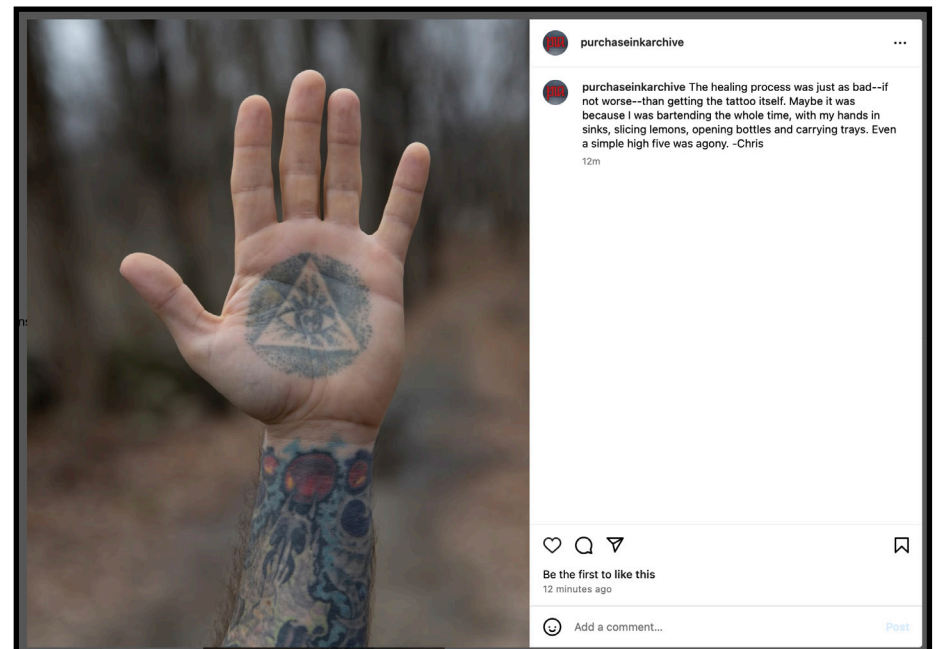
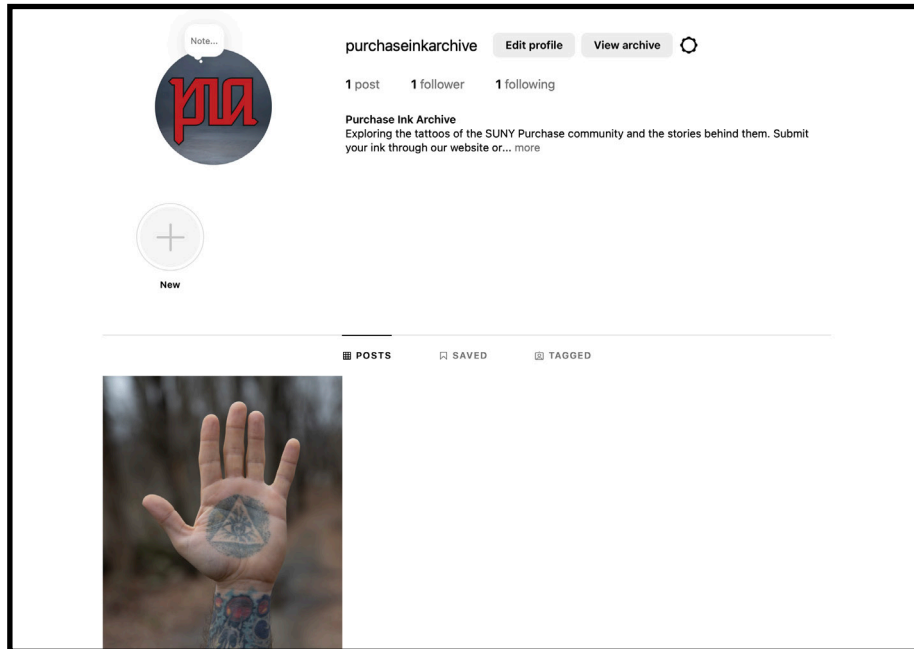
Now:

- When you hover over the image, it dims.
- The name “Chris” appears centered on the image

3. Improved Styling for Text Overlay – The name “Chris” is now positioned in the center of the image using position: absolute, and the dimming effect is applied via opacity.

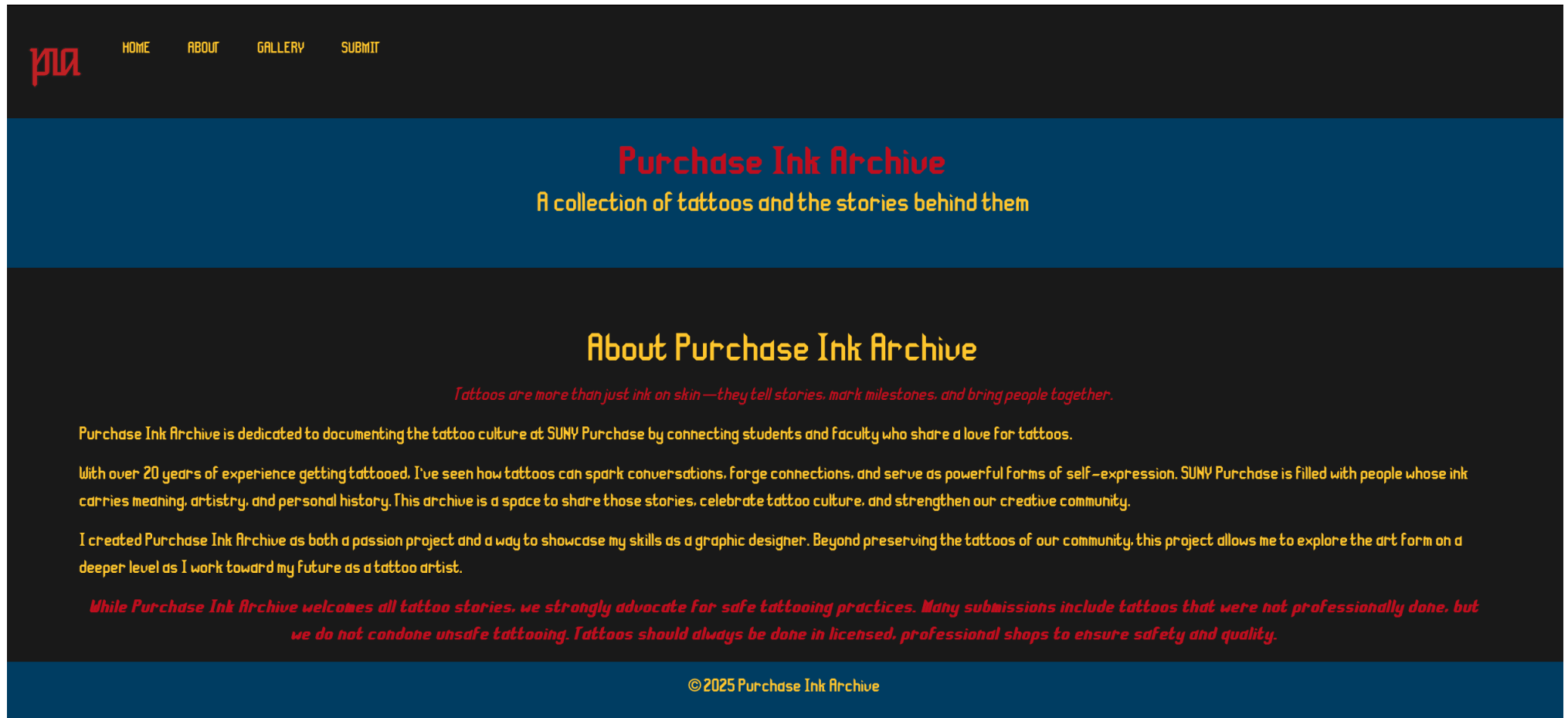


SOCIAL MEDIA



Social media INSTAGRAM has been created

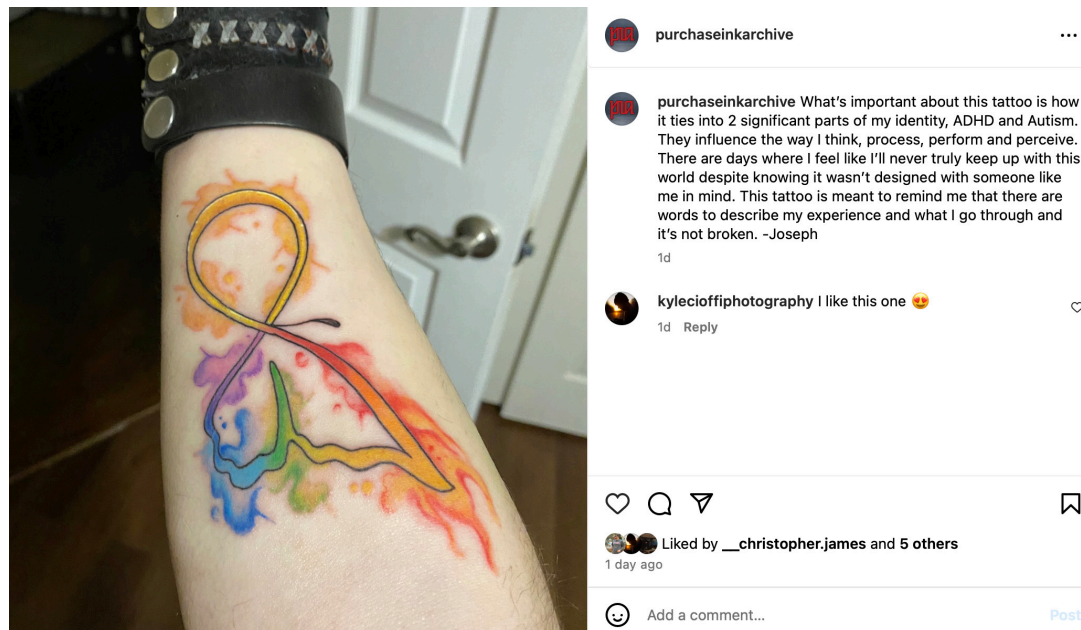
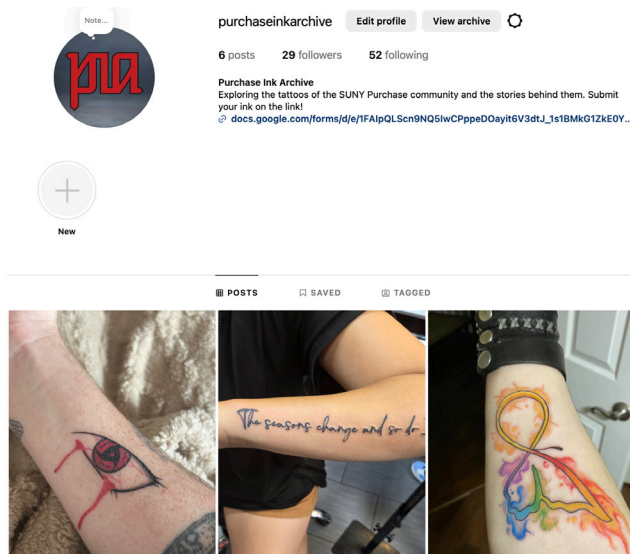
ABOUT PAGE AND DISCLAIMER



About page and disclaimer have been put on the site

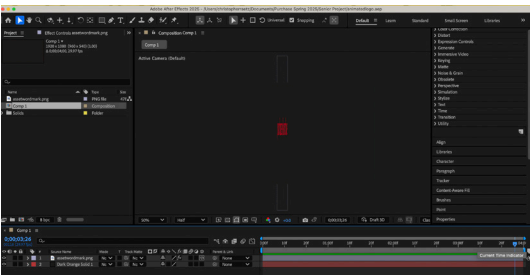
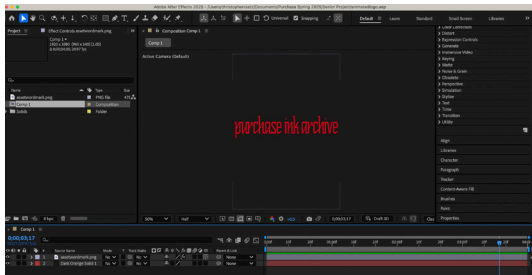
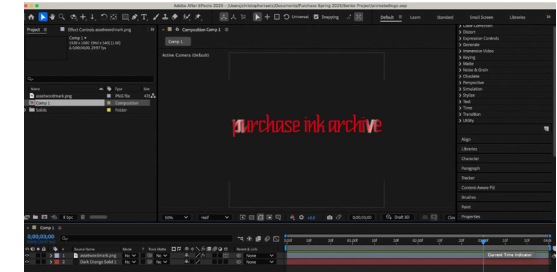
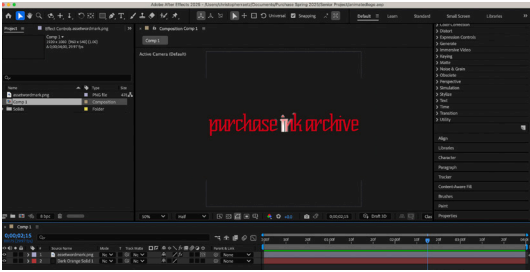
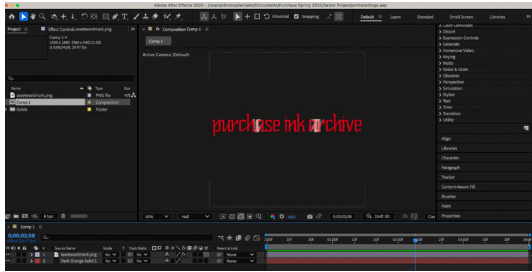
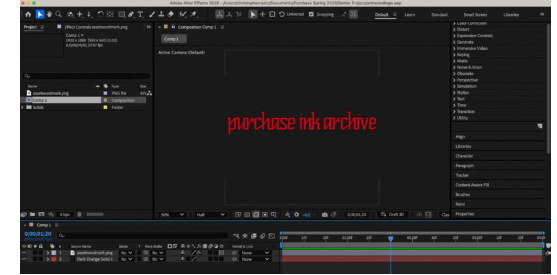
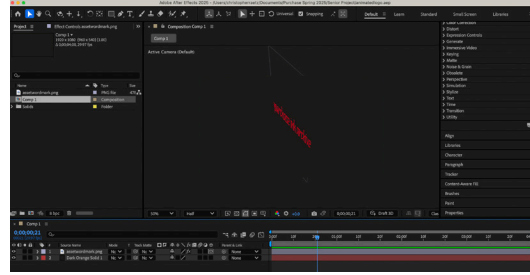
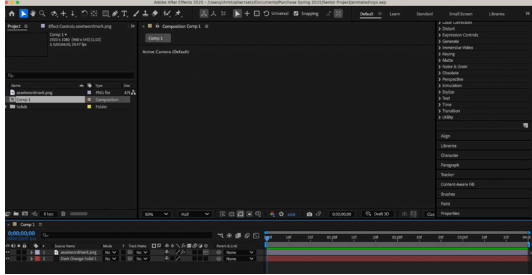
PHASE 3

SOCIAL MEDIA UPLOADS



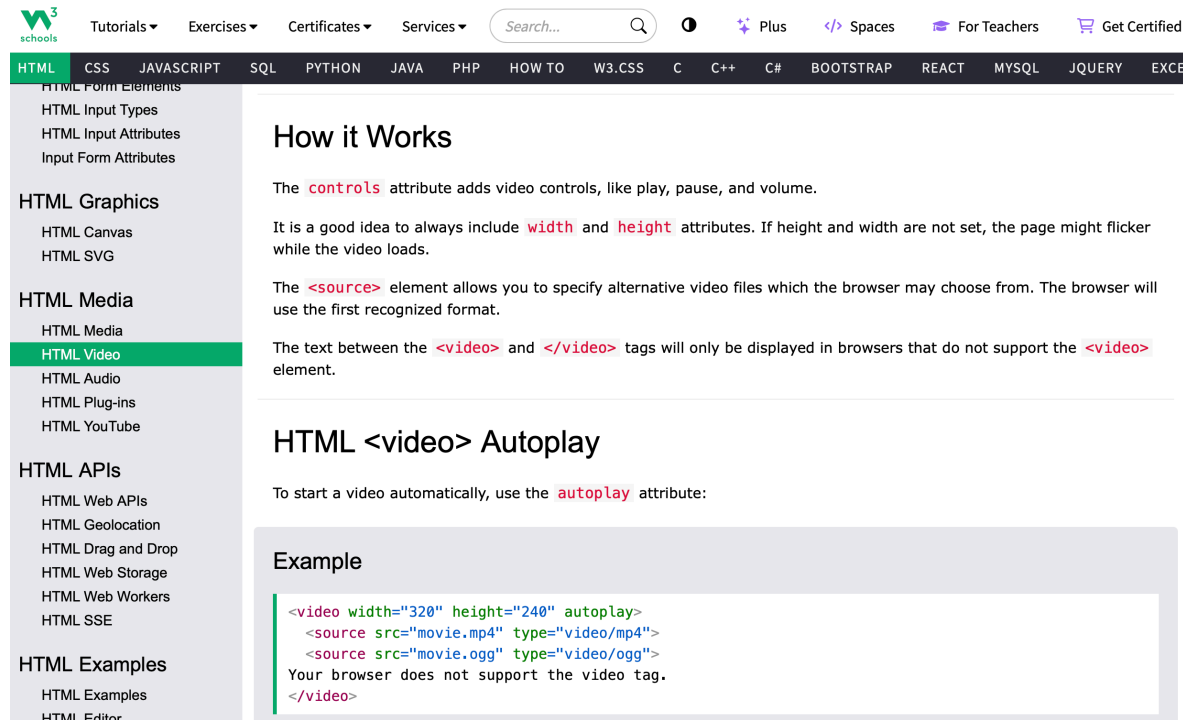
I have been consistently posting submitted tattoos and stories on the Instagram for Purchase Ink Archive

ANIMATION



I animated the logo to hopefully use on the home screen of the website. It is a 3d layer that animates with a double light sweep.

ANIMATION



The screenshot shows the W3Schools website with the 'HTML' tab selected in the top navigation bar. The left sidebar lists various HTML topics, with 'HTML Video' highlighted. The main content area is titled 'How it Works' and explains the `<video>` tag. It mentions the `controls` attribute for video controls and the `autoplay` attribute for automatic playback. Below this, there is a section titled 'HTML <video> Autoplay' which states that to start a video automatically, the `autoplay` attribute should be used. An 'Example' box contains the following code:

```
<video width="320" height="240" autoplay>
  <source src="movie.mp4" type="video/mp4">
  <source src="movie.ogg" type="video/ogg">
  Your browser does not support the video tag.
</video>
```

I didn't know how to get the animation onto the homepage, luckily bootstrap was able to help me get started.

Add `muted` after `autoplay` to let your video start playing automatically (but muted):

Example

```
<video width="320" height="240" autoplay muted>
  <source src="movie.mp4" type="video/mp4">
  <source src="movie.ogg" type="video/ogg">
  Your browser does not support the video tag.
</video>
```

Try it Yourself »

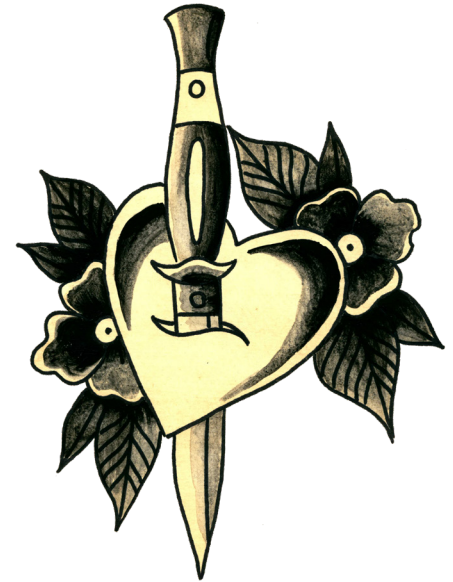
Attributes I started with

ANIMATION

```
<video autoplay loop muted playsinline class="hero-video">  
  <source src="assets/animatedlogo.mp4" type="video/mp4">  
  Your browser does not support the video tag.  
</video>
```

The attributes:

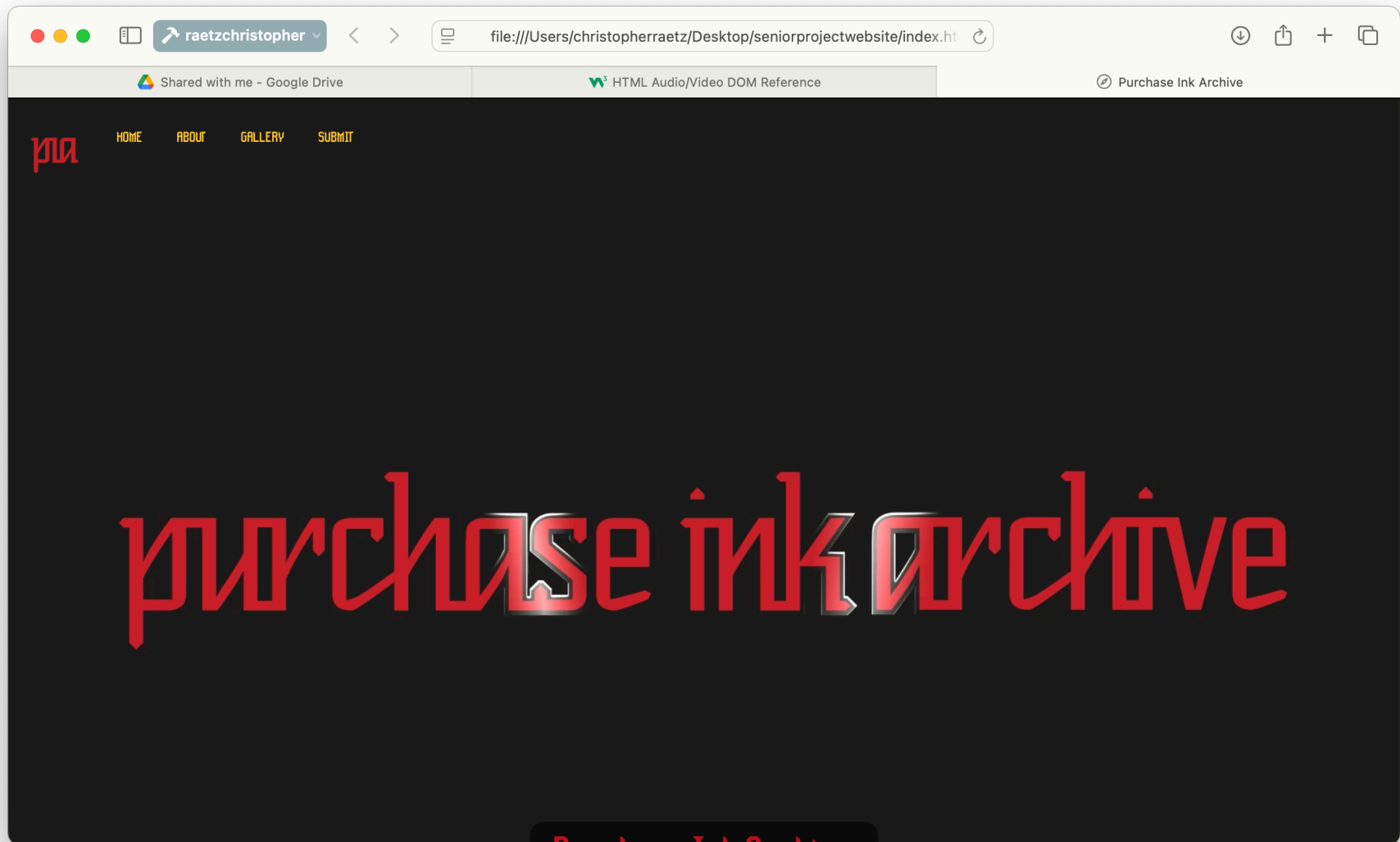
- **autoplay** – makes the video start automatically.
- **loop** – so it repeats endlessly.
- **muted** – most browsers require videos to be muted to autoplay.
- **playsinline** – prevents the video from going fullscreen automatically on mobile devices.
- **<source>** – defines the video file and format.
- The fallback text (“Your browser does not support...”) is just a safety net for older browsers.



Additional Design Elements:

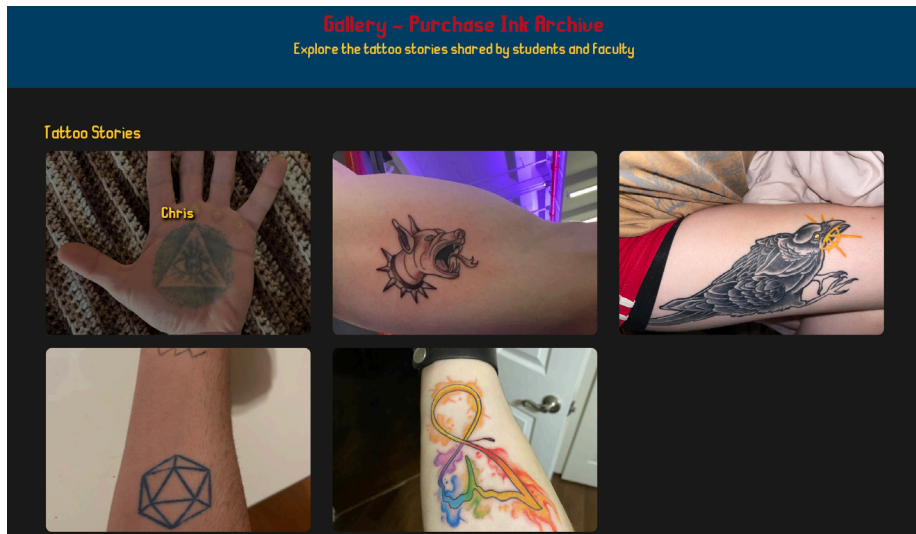
- **width: 100%** stretches the video to the full width of the parent container.
- **height: auto** keeps the aspect ratio intact.
- **display: block** removes extra white space some browsers add.
- **margin: 0 auto** centers it horizontally in case it's smaller than 100%.

ANIMATION



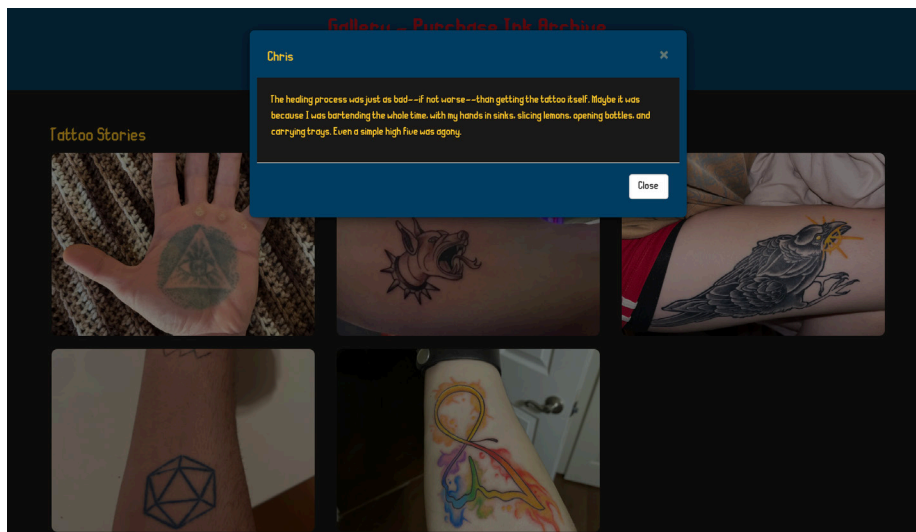
SUCCESS!

WEBSITE WORK



The Gallery page of Purchase Ink Archive has gone through several updates to make it cleaner and more interactive. Initially, the text was placed below each tattoo image, but this made the page feel cluttered. To fix this, the text was moved into modal windows. Now, when you click on an image, a **modal pop-up** shows the full story behind the tattoo, keeping the gallery visually cleaner.

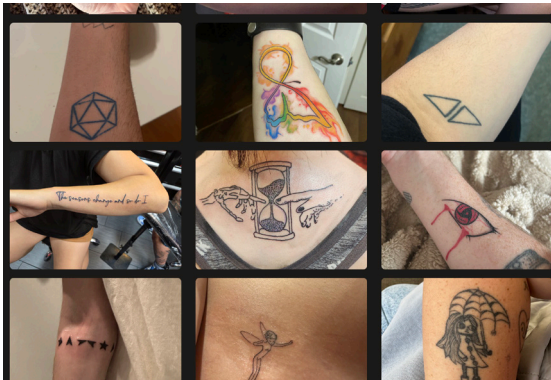
To make the names of the tattoo owners more visible, **tooltip text** was added. When you hover over an image, the name appears, making it easier to identify each person without crowding the page with text.



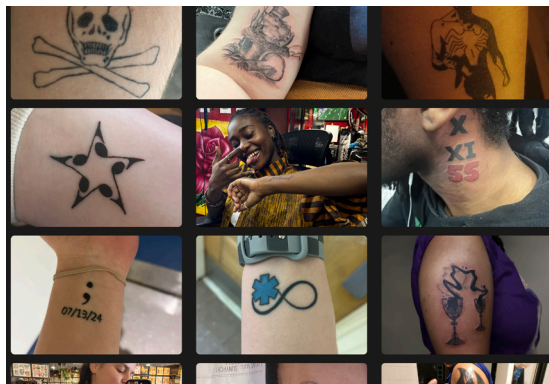
The modal itself uses the Deep Navy Blue from the color palette for the background, with Golden Yellow text to match the overall design. The image hover effect was also adjusted to make the text pop, and the tooltip text was centered and made larger for better readability.

```
<div class="tooltip-container" data-toggle="modal" data-target="#story-Modal"
  onclick="setModalContent('Name', 'Story...')">
  
  <div class="tooltip-text">Name</div>
</div>
```

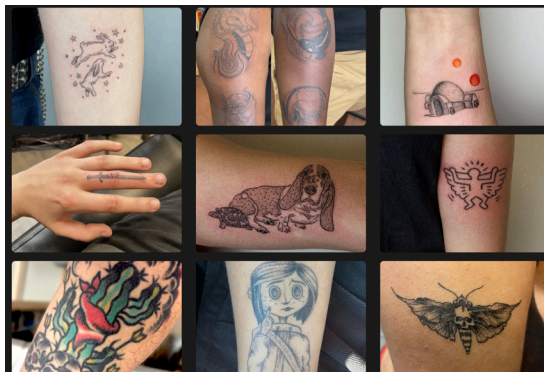
WEBSITE WORK



```
<div class="tooltip-container" data-toggle="modal" data-target="#storyModal"
  onclick="setModalContent('Name', 'Story...')">
  
  <div class="tooltip-text">Name</div>
</div>
```



My goal last week was to get at least 10 entries on the gallery. Using the code above, and a few nights-
I have uploaded all 50 submissions!



```
93 <!-- Chris Entry -->
94 <div class="col-sm-4">
95   <div class="tooltip-container" data-toggle="modal" data-target="#storyModal" onclick=
96     "setModalContent('Chris', 'The healing process was just as bad—if not worse—than
97       getting the tattoo itself. Maybe it was because I was bartending the whole time,
98       with my hands in sinks, slicing lemons, opening bottles, and carrying trays. Even
99       a simple high five was agony.')">
100     
102     <div class="tooltip-text">Chris</div>
103   </div>
104 </div>
105 <!-- Nicholas Entry -->
106 <div class="col-sm-4">
107   <div class="tooltip-container" data-toggle="modal" data-target="#storyModal" onclick=
108     "setModalContent('Nicholas', 'Out of a few selections to choose from I chose the dog
109       head. I thought it was sick and now it reminds me of a great day with my friends
110       and getting to meet one of my favorite artists.')">
111     
113     <div class="tooltip-text">Nicholas</div>
114   </div>
115 </div>
```

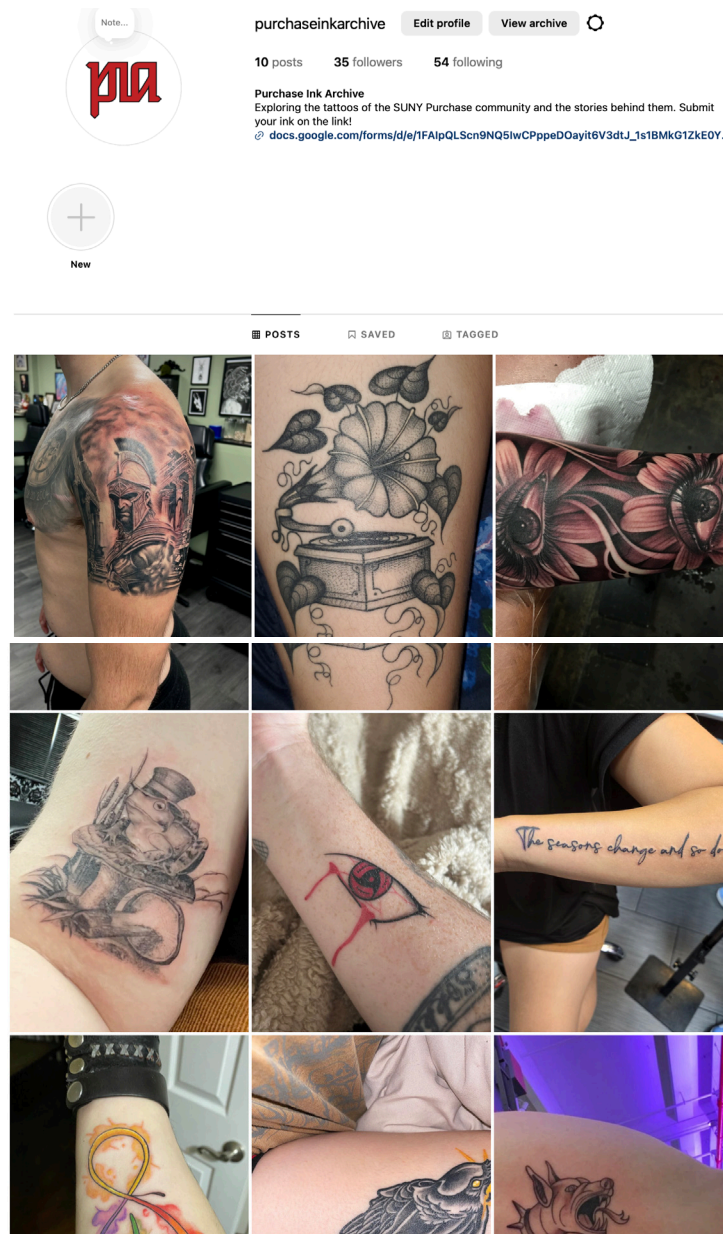

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTING

I'm still posting pictures and stories to the Instagram account for Purchase Ink Archive

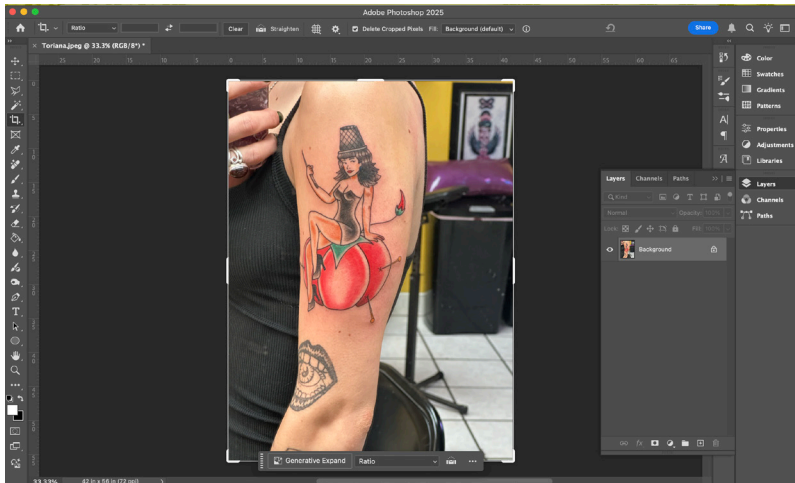
Instagram

- Home
- Search
- Explore
- Reels
- Messages
- Notifications
- Create
- Profile

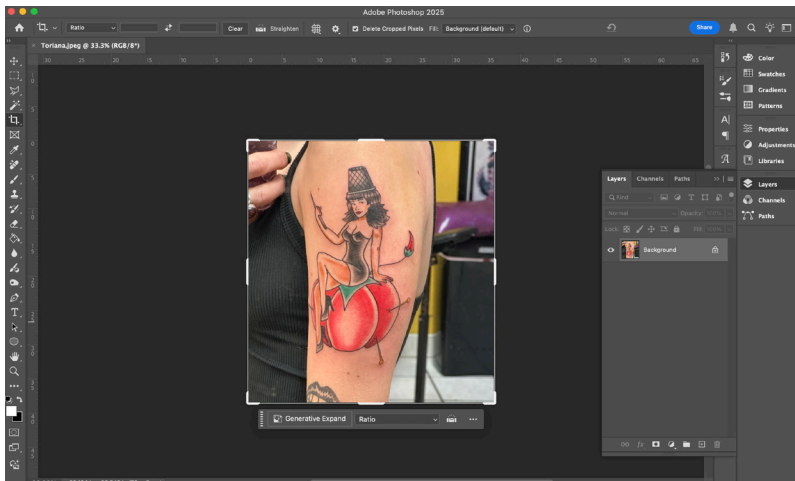
- Meta AI
- Threads
- More



WEBSITE WORK

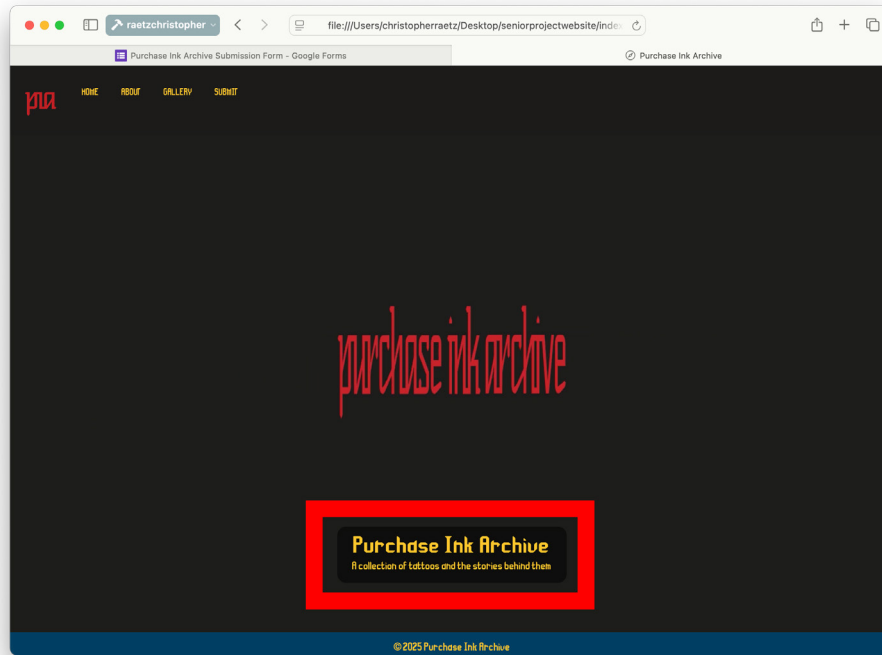


Many of the submitted images were at a size that wouldn't work with the bootstrap grid, so before coding them into the site, I used Photoshop to crop the images.



Balancing the negative space around the tattoo helps ensure the image is clearly visible on the website.

WEBSITE WORK



The text on the main index page is now a link that leads to the gallery.

```
<div style="position: absolute; bottom: 10%;  
left: 50%; transform: translateX(-50%); color:  
#FFC72C; text-align: center; background-col-  
or: rgba(0, 0, 0, 0.5); padding: 1rem 2rem; bor-  
der-radius: 12px;">
```

```
<h1 style="margin: 0;">
```

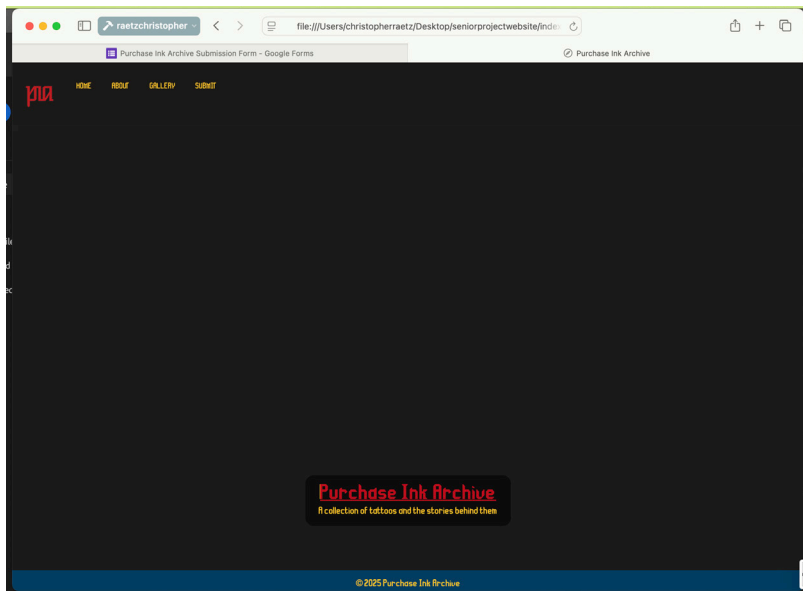
```
<a href="gallery.html"  
class="hero-title-link">Purchase  
Ink Archive</a>
```

```
</h1>
```

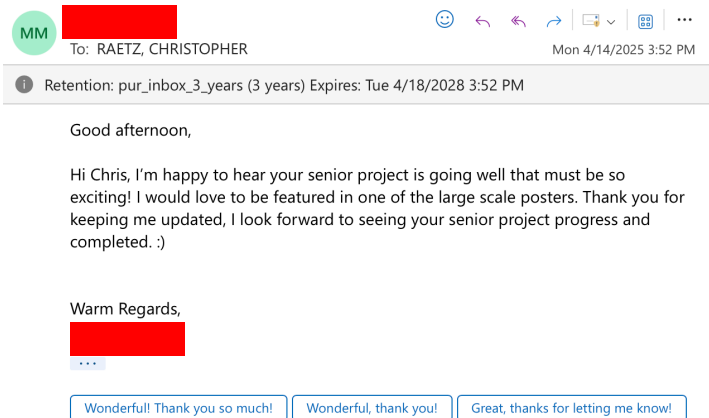
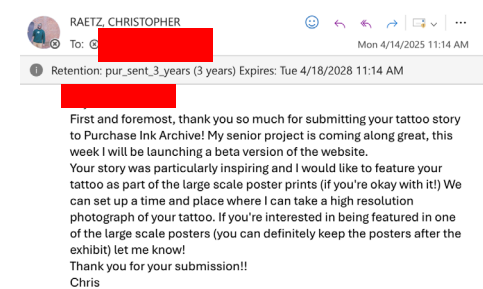
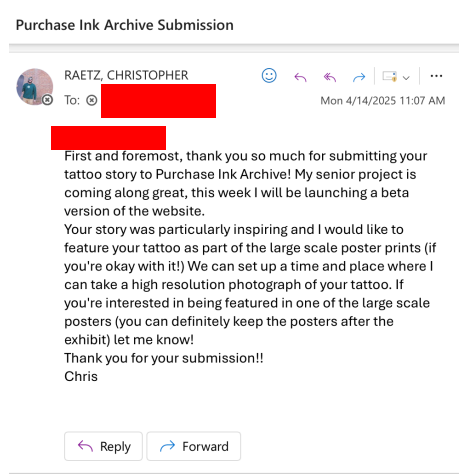
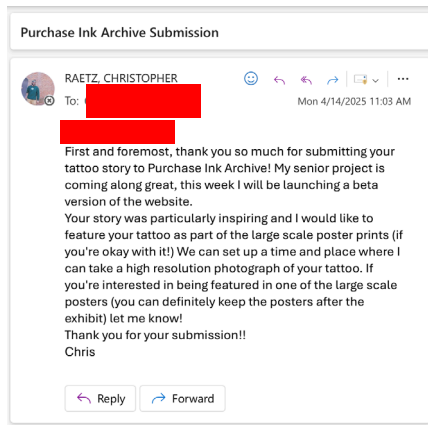
```
<p style="margin: 0;">A collection of tattoos  
and the stories behind them</p>
```

```
</div>
```

```
</div>
```

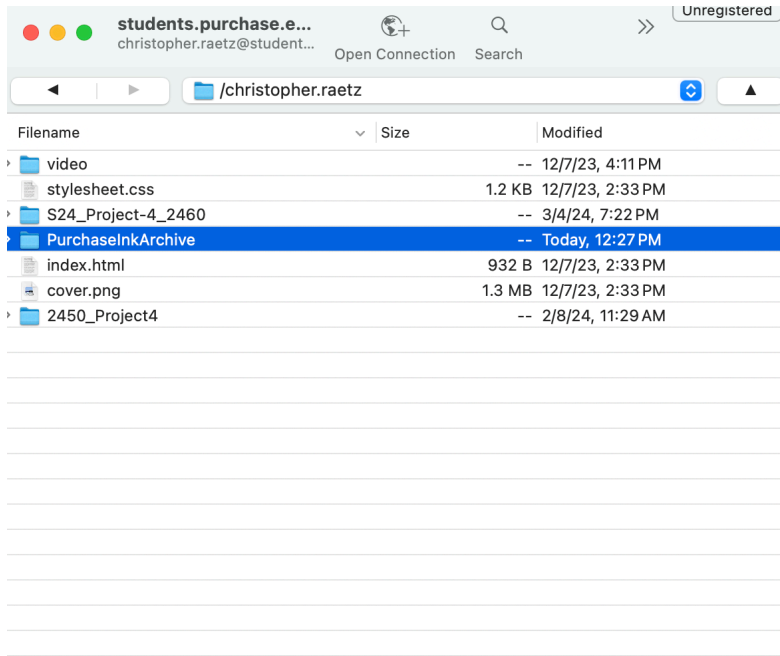


EMAILS



So far only one student has replied with interest in being featured in the final exhibition. I might explore other options for exhibition ideas if I can't get at least 5 participants.

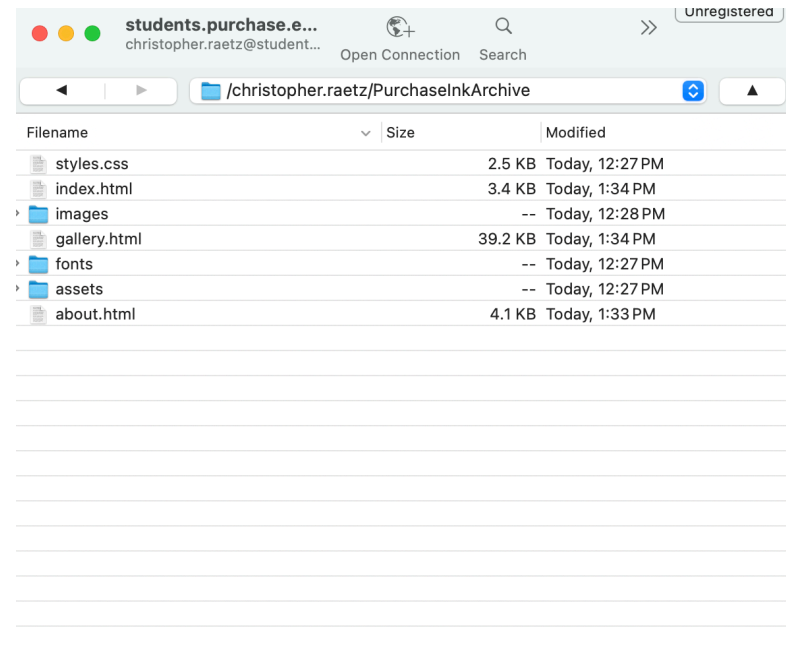
GOING ONLINE



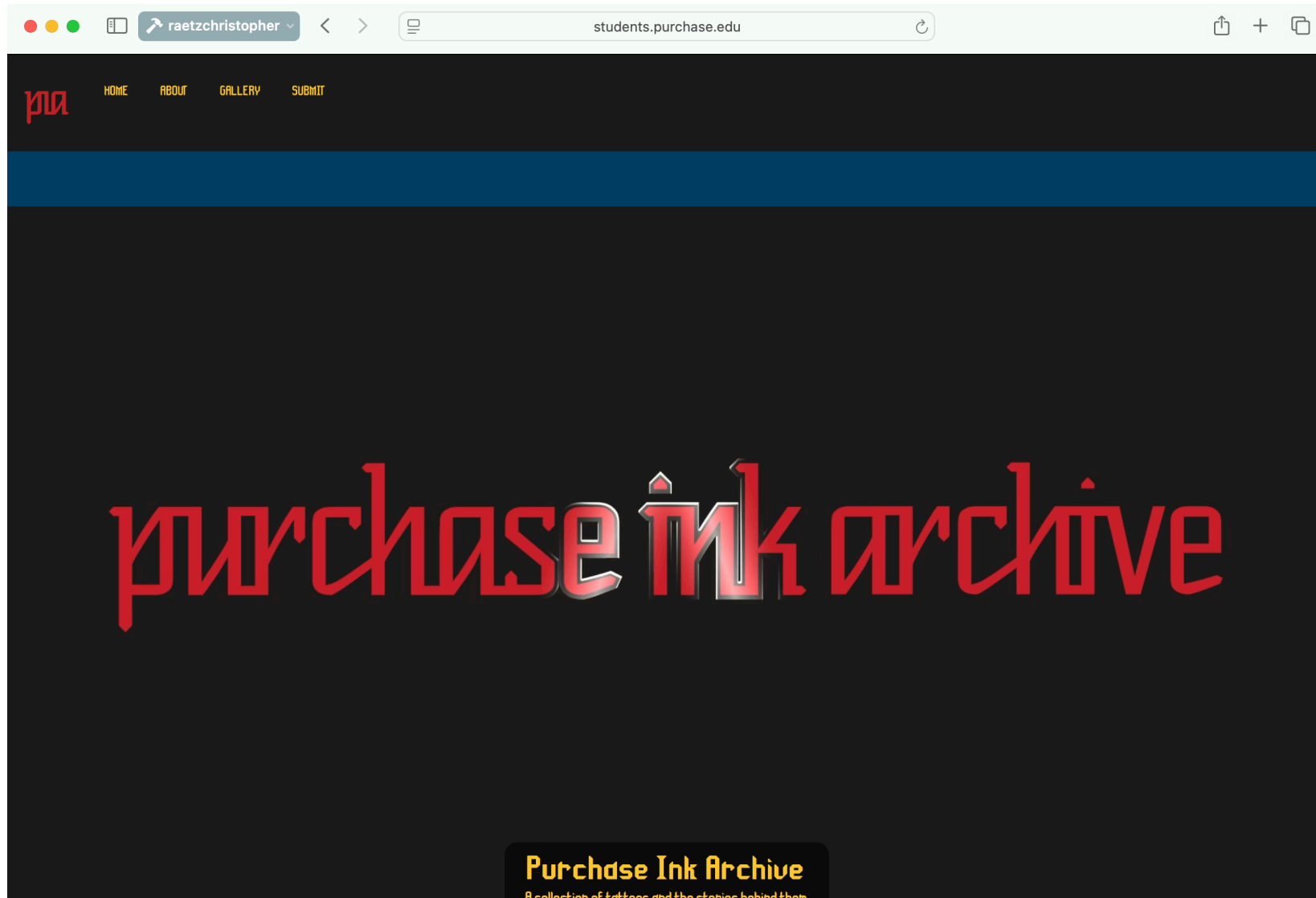
Connected to students.purchase.edu
I created a new folder called
PurchaseInkArchive and uploaded my
html, css, and asset folders in there



Cyberduck

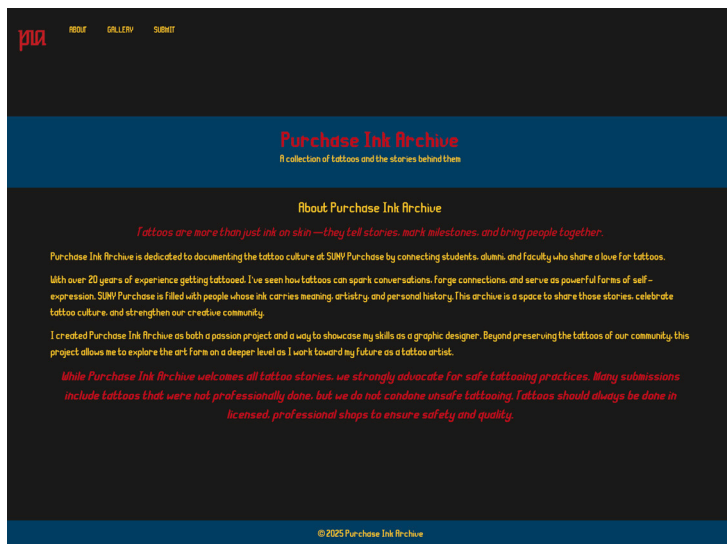
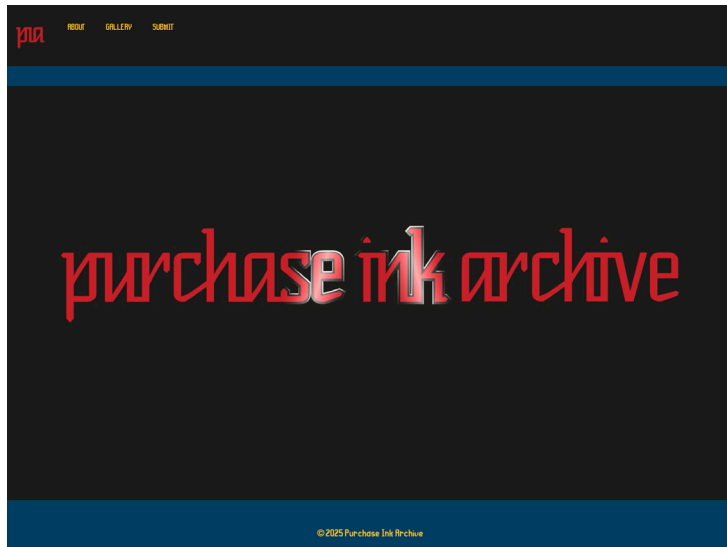


GOING ONLINE



<https://students.purchase.edu/christopher.raetz/PurchaseInkArchive/>

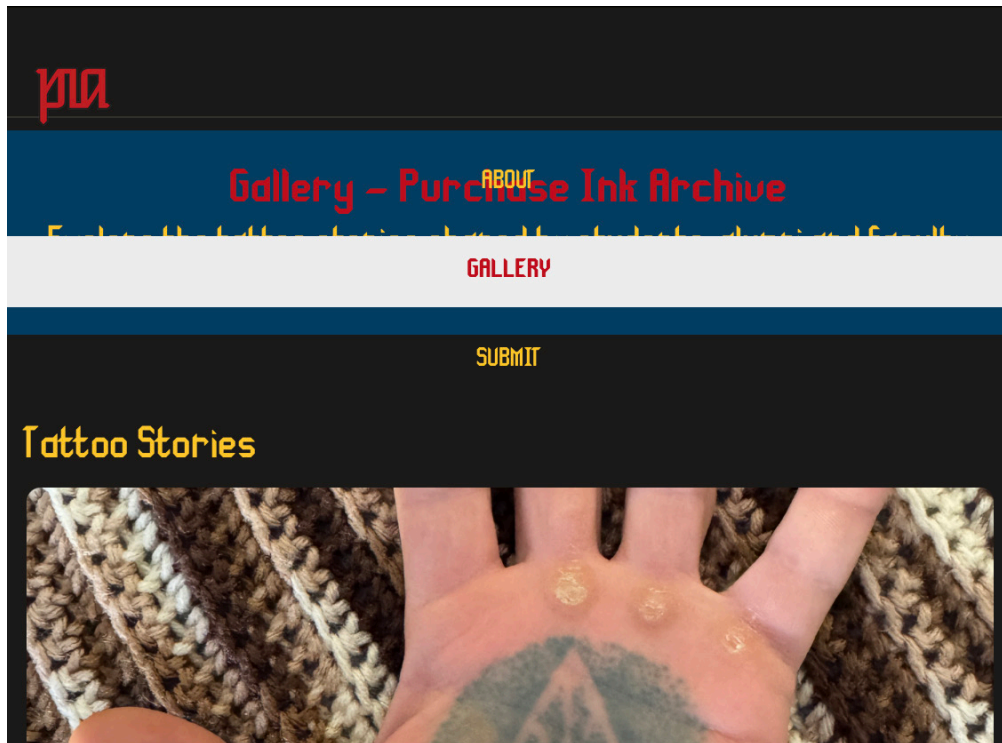
WEBSITE WORK



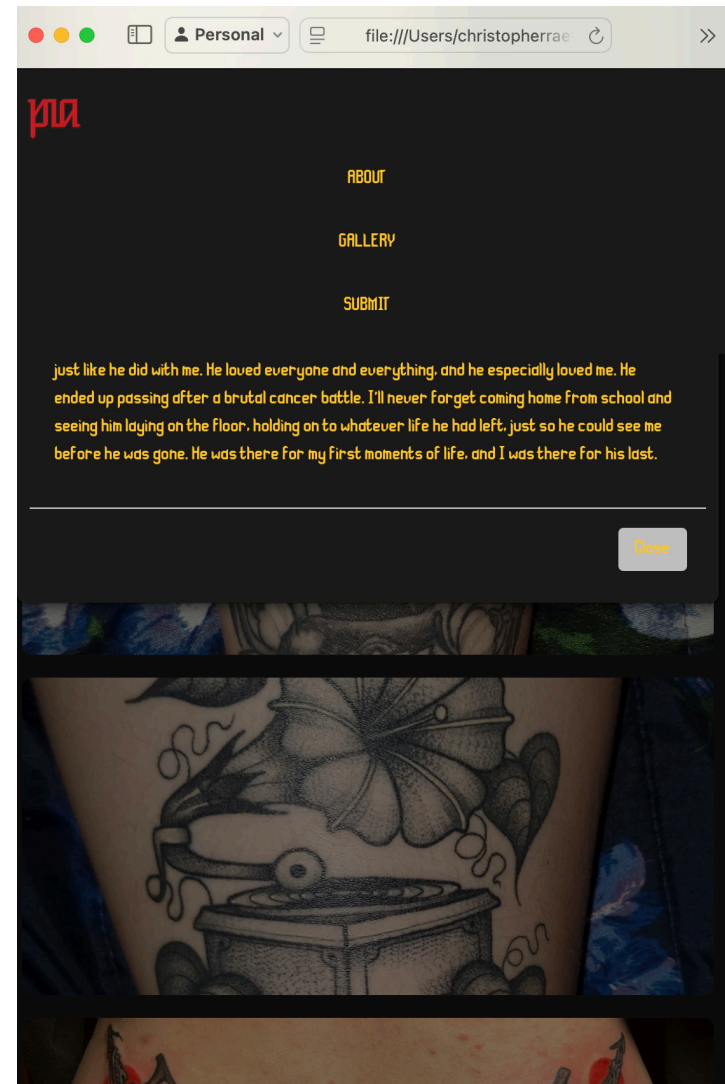
Following David's notes, I made changes to the website.

- Home button removed from Navbar
- Title/subtitle with link to gallery removed
- Footer anchored to the bottom of the page
- Submit button opens Google Doc in new window
- Removed 'X' from the popup modal (only close remains)
- Home index screen video now links to gallery.html

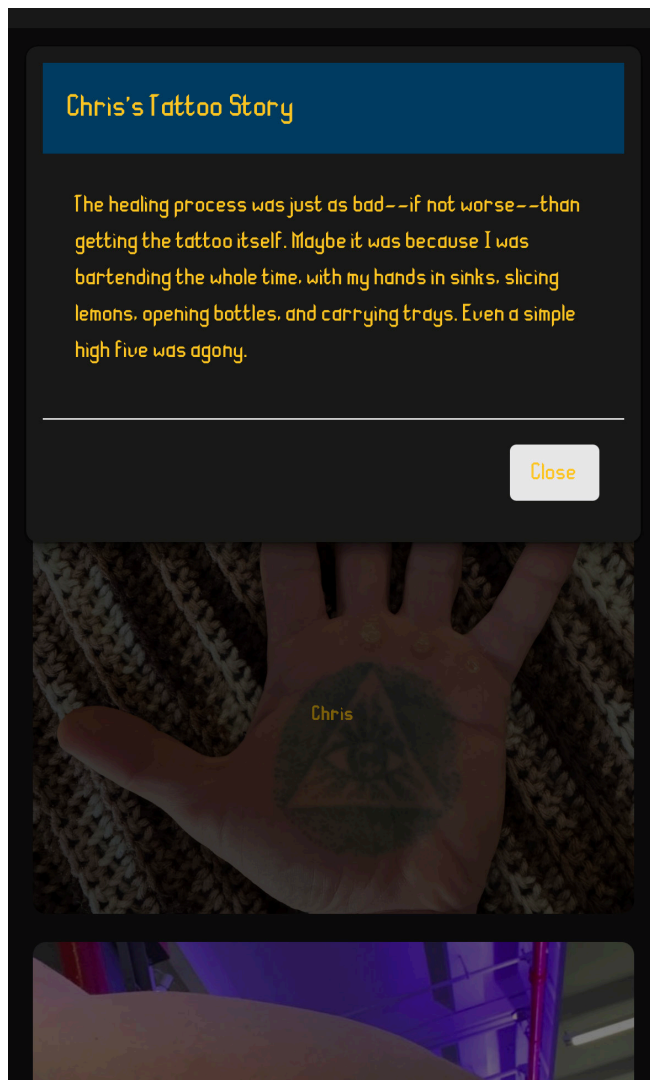
TROUBLE SHOOTING



The **navbar** was not working properly, it was cutting off content from the pages. especially on the responsive smaller screen, the stories on the modals weren't visible behind the navbar



TROUBLE SHOOTING

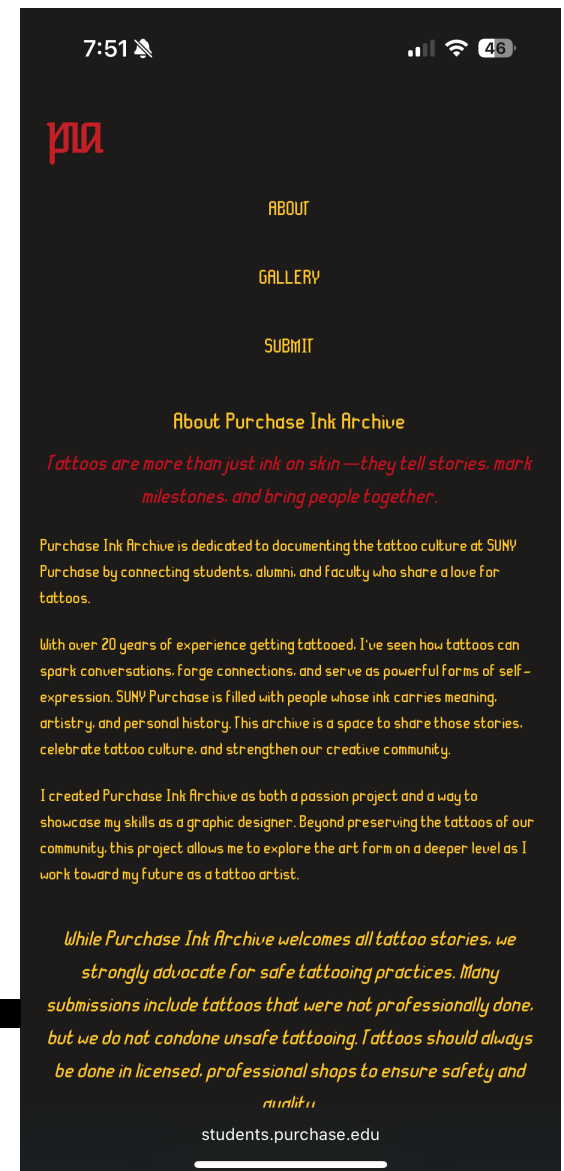


The magic combo is:

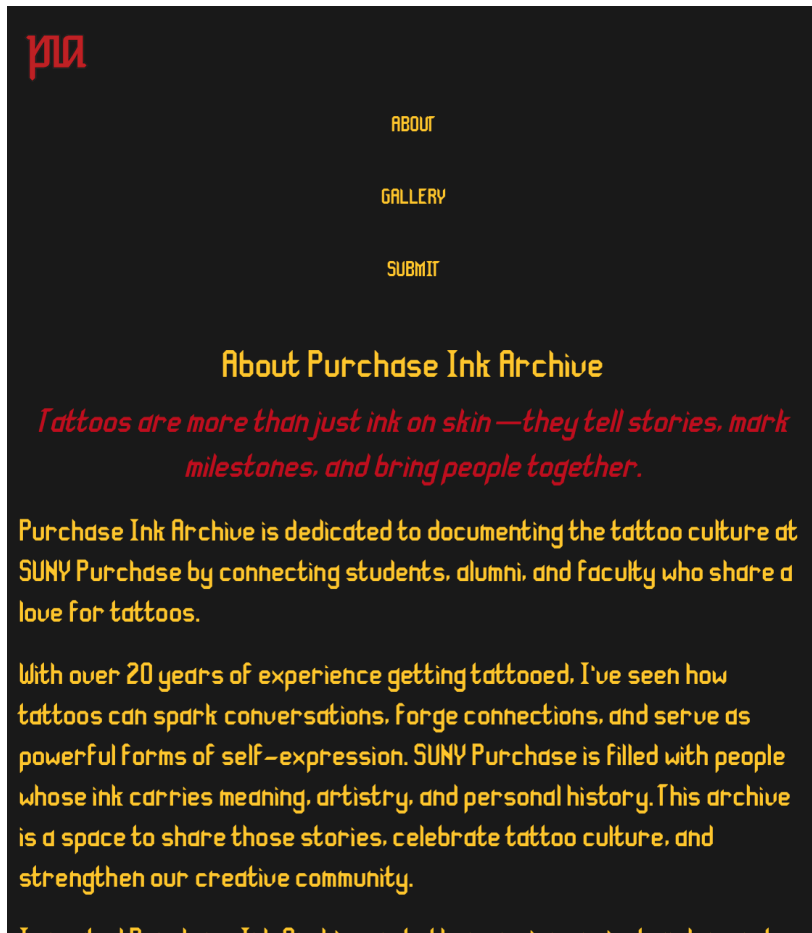
- High z-index
- position: fixed
- JavaScript dynamically showing it
- HTML structure with proper Bootstrap classes like modal, modal-dialog, modal-content, etc.

To fix the about page text I added padding to the top of the page:

```
.page-content {  
  padding-top: 220px;  
}
```



WEBSITE WORK



I made the text bigger on the about page by adding code to the style sheet.



```
.about-page .container h2 {
  font-size: clamp(2rem, 2.5vw + 1rem, 3rem);
}

.about-page .container p {
  font-size: clamp(1.5rem, 1.2vw + 1rem, 2.2rem);
}

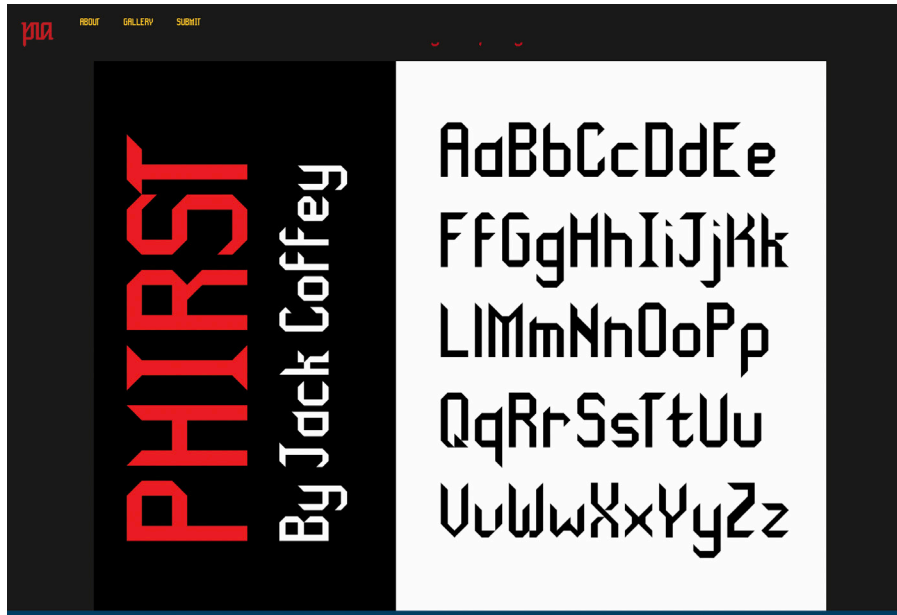
.about-page .container p em {
  font-size: clamp(1.8rem, 1.3vw + 1rem, 2.5rem);
}

.about-page .container p {
  font-size: 2rem;
}

.about-page .container h2 {
  font-size: 2.5rem;
}

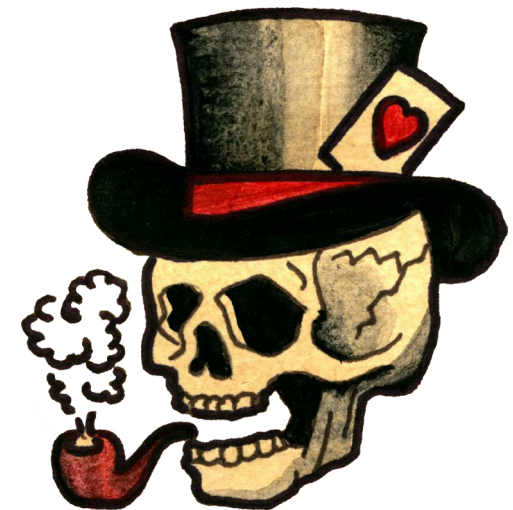
.about-page .container p em {
  font-size: 2.2rem;
}
```

WEBSITE WORK



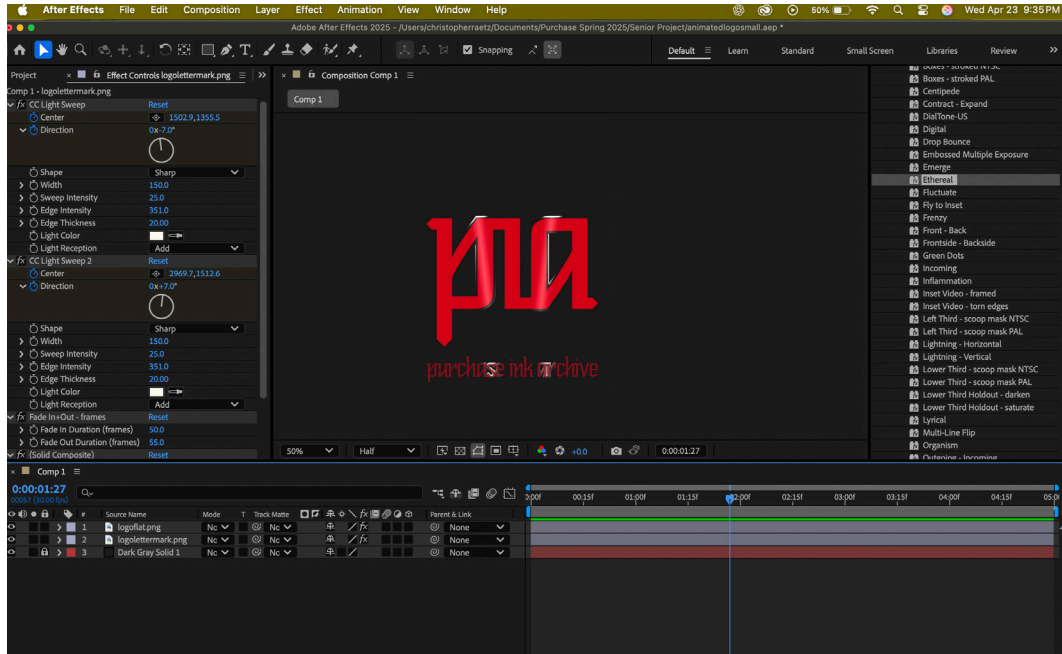
Responsive to
smaller screens

Jack Coffee has been given credit for the font used on the about page. When he updates his website I'll link it



PHASE 4

WEBSITE WORK



I made a new animation for smaller screens, and put it on the index page when the screen is smaller

<script>

```
function updateVideoSource() {  
  const video = document.getElementById('responsive-video');  
  const source = video.querySelector('source');  
  const screenWidth = window.innerWidth;  
  
  // Check current src to avoid unnecessary reload  
  if (screenWidth <= 768 && source.getAttribute('src') !== 'assets/smallvideo.mp4') {  
    source.setAttribute('src', 'assets/smallvideo.mp4');  
    video.load();  
  } else if (screenWidth > 768 && source.getAttribute('src') !== 'assets/animatedlogo.mp4') {  
    source.setAttribute('src', 'assets/animatedlogo.mp4');  
    video.load();  
  }  
}
```

```
window.addEventListener('load', updateVideoSource);
```

```
window.addEventListener('resize', updateVideoSource);
```

</script>



DELIVERABLE PRESENTATION



LARGE SCALE
POSTERS OF MY
TATTOOS FROM
FLASH & TELL.

TV SCREEN PLAYING A VIDEO OF THE
TATTOOS AND THE STORIES

Book
of
flash
from
FLASH
&
TELL

THESIS &
DESCRIPTION OF THE
PROJECT

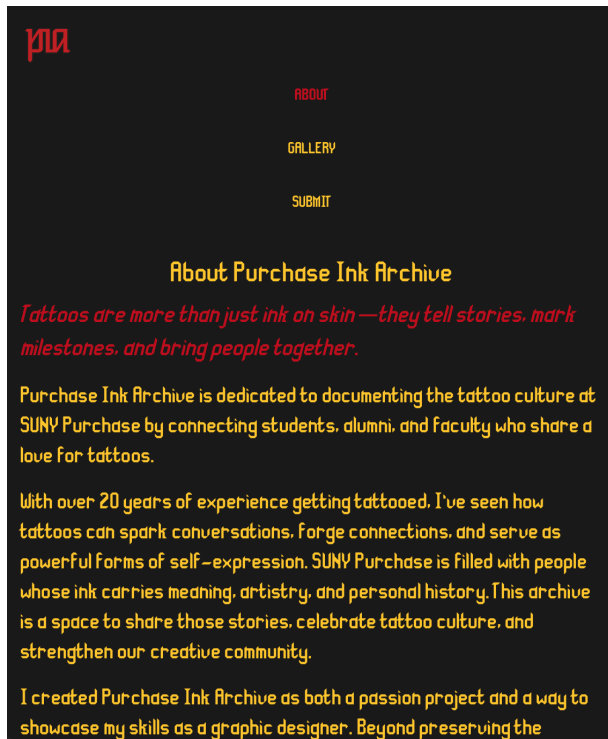
QR code to
PURCHASE INK ARCHIVE

SUPPLIES NEEDED:

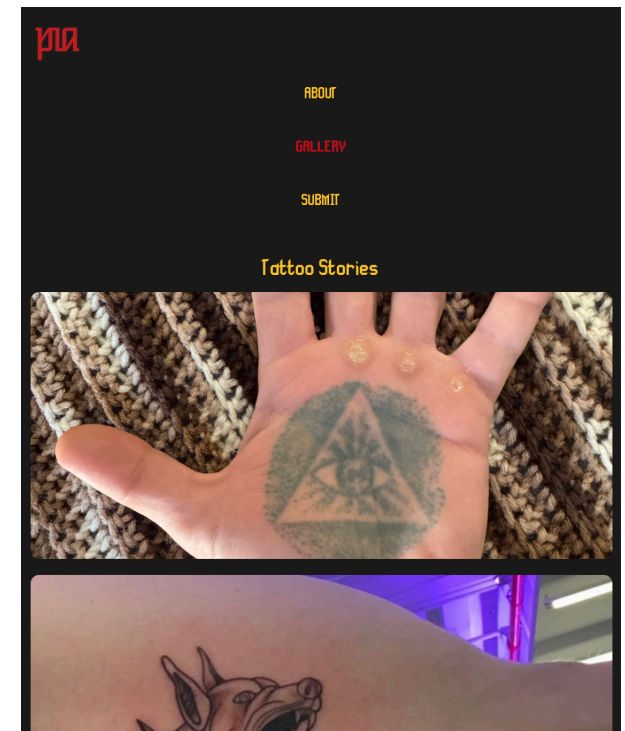
- TV screen
- Mounting for posters
- Podium/wood block

I'm open to other ideas

FINAL REFINEMENTS

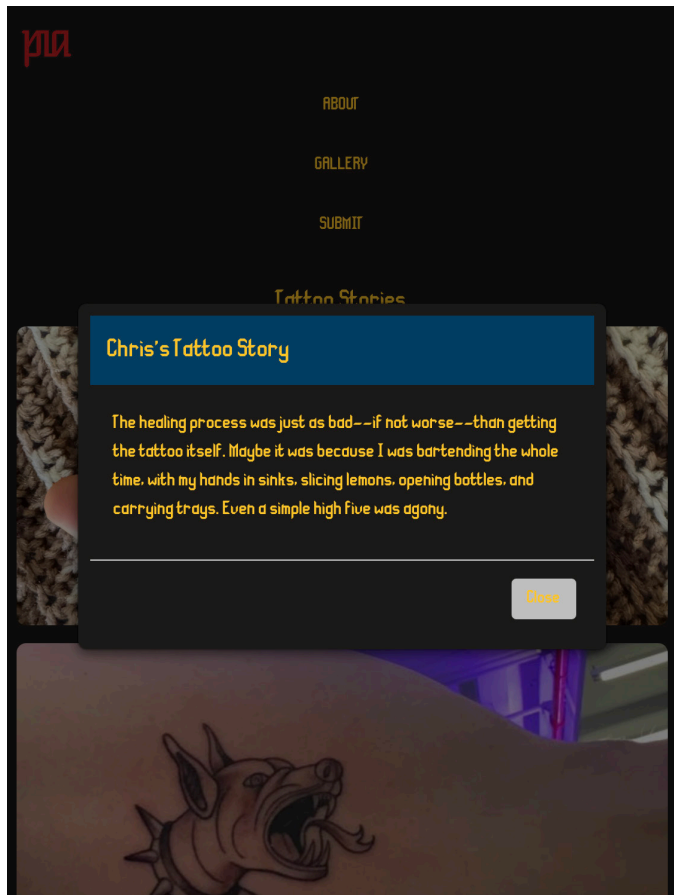


Centered text on About page has been fixed to Left aligned, except the Title which remains centered



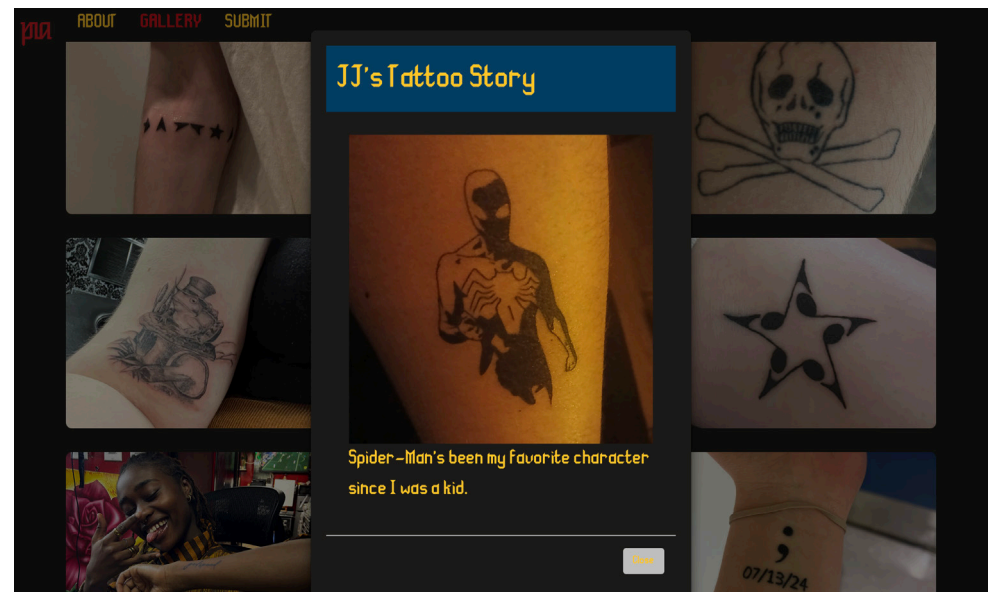
Active page color has been added to the Navbar.

FINAL REFINEMENTS



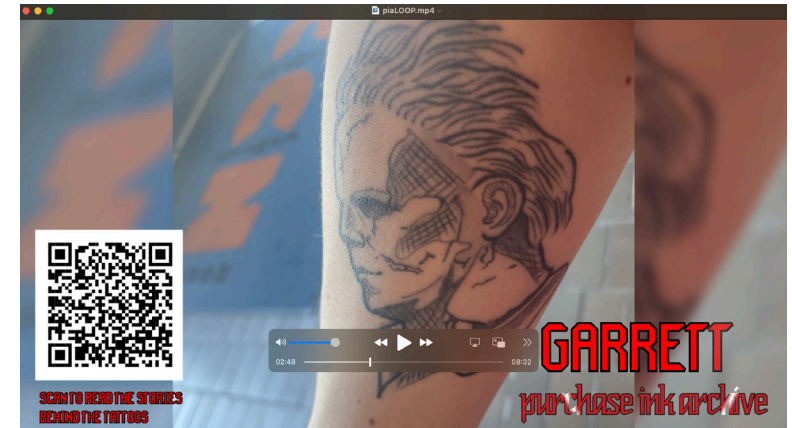
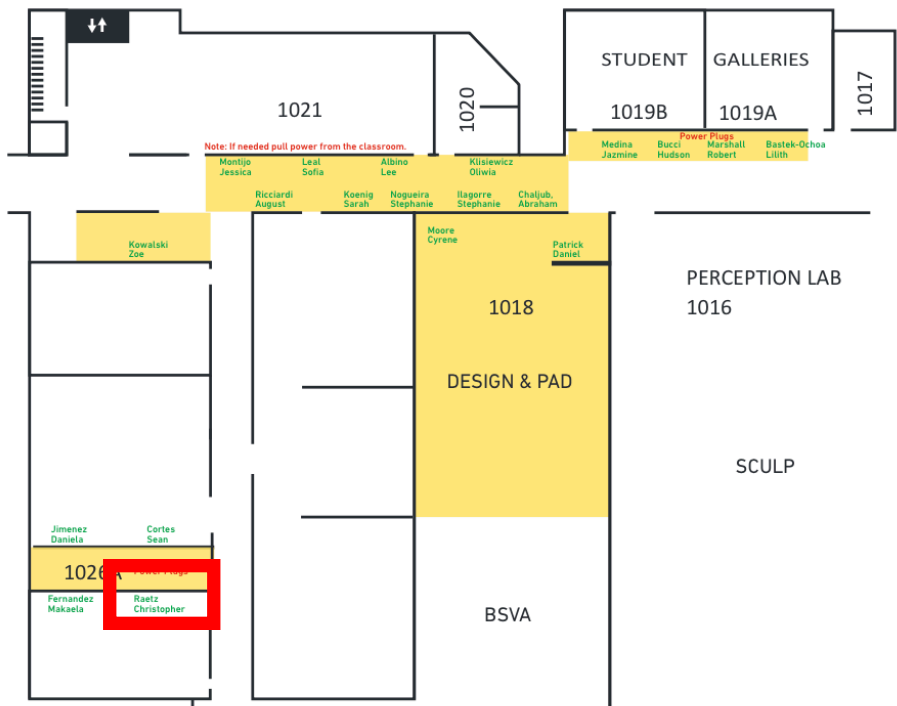
Modals have been moved to the center of the viewing screen

Images have been added to Modals



FINAL EXHIBIT

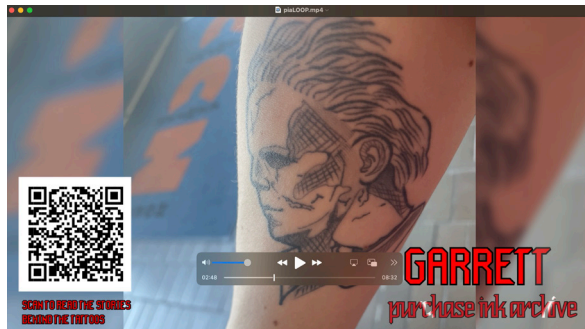
GRAPHIC DESIGN - 2025 SENIOR SHOW



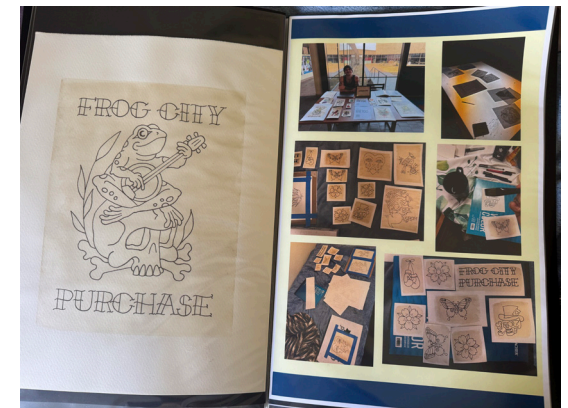
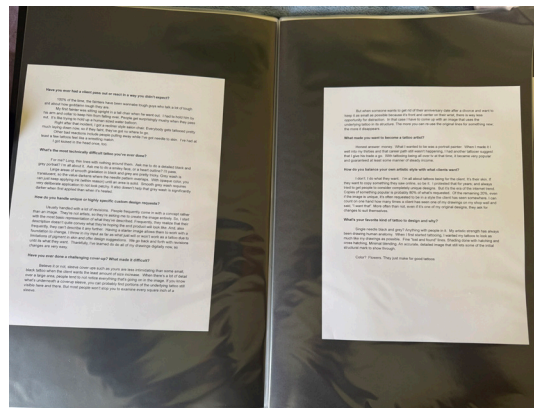
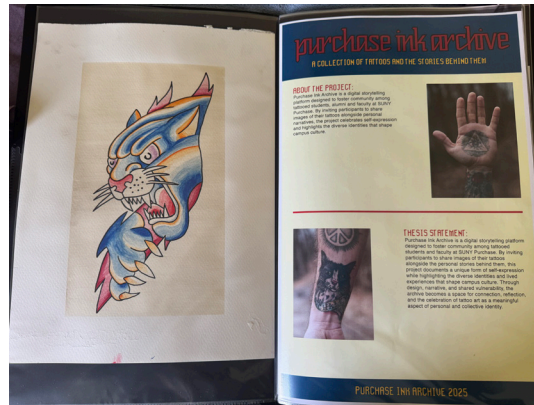
I put in a request for a monitor with a computer for a video loop (no audio), and a podium.

I created the video loop to be played, it has the tattoo images, and the names, with a qr code to the website to read the stories.

FINAL EXHIBIT



The exhibit will feature a video loop and a portfolio book of documentation along with the flash I hand painted for the Flash & Tell events



RESEARCH PAPER FIRST DRAFT BY MONDAY 05/05/2025



students.purchase.edu/christopher.raetz/purchaseinkarchive