

Final Project Explanation

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I wanted to use this final project to be centered around one of my favorite projects this semester “cutting line”, where we used laser cutting, and furthermore wanted to use it as a way to reflect on this past semester. Having this semester feel like its gone by so fast, I knew I wanted to do it like this coming into the project and was immediately drawn to a tradition that my roommate and I have adopted this year, being that whenever a friend of ours comes into our room for the first time, we take a polaroid picture of them. Over the course of this semester, we’ve collected a good amount of polaroids of people who come into our room (about 40). I wanted to incorporate some of these photos and this tradition into my final project, by taking a dozen of these polaroids, copying them into illustrator, stenciling them by hand, and laser cutting them into a material. I wanted to do it this way as I could turn these stencils into something physical and eventually gift it to the people in the polaroids that I stenciled. I thought this would be a good idea as one of the downsides with polaroids is that you can't share them as it only creates one copy. However, in this way, I can create copies of these polaroids by laser cutting them into the material and giving them back to the people in them, creating a middle ground for this issue. I also photocopied the polaroids and pasted them on the back of the cutouts so that one could have a copy of the real photo and be able to compare the actual photo to the stencil itself.

To get started, I chose a dozen polaroids randomly for the stack of 40 and put them into illustrator for me to stencil. After I started thinking about the material I wanted to use and landed on mirrored acrylic as thought it would be interesting for the person looking at the stencil to see themselves reflected in it. It would be especially interesting for the people who are in the polaroids as I think seeing yourself double, in the stencil and in a reflection, adds a layer to the idea itself. Furthermore, these photos often serve as memory holders as we often look back at them and walk down memory lane. Because of this, being able to look into the mirror and at the stencil seemed to do the same thing with mirrored acrylic and was another reason I chose it. After choosing the material I went to laser cut these stencils into a square a bit larger than a real polaroid to make it a better hold and eventually plan on handing them back to the people in them when I get the chance.