

# Writing Sample:

## Nikola Tesla Lecture Series

The assignment brief for this project was to choose an innovator that had an impact on the development of America and create posters advertising a lecture series about this person. Details were to be provided by the student and be relevant to the person selected. I chose Nikola Tesla because his eccentric behavior and the scientific nature of his work presented unique design possibilities.

I wanted posters that would evoke his personality and excited the audience to learn more about him. In researching him, my vision for the posters began to form. Initially, I imagined something similar to a mad scientist lab from a 1960's science fiction movie, but in actuality this would have been a poor representation. He was very soft-spoken, shy to the point of being reclusive and his actions were always based in theory and calculation. He was also extremely eccentric and despised having his picture taken making it difficult to find usable images of him. Ideally I would have liked to photograph working replicas of his inventions, but found it impractical. I did manage to come across many of his documents and patents and found them to be beautiful and perfect to visually define him.

Originally, the series was designed as a sepia tone to help mask the fact that some of the images were low resolution. In addition I find myself, as a designer, using color as a crutch to resolve much of my hierarchy. Limiting my color pallet forced me to focus on figure ground and negative space to create the composition. After the first submission of this series, I decided that limiting my color pallet, while helping me as a designer, was preventing the poster series from being as good as possible.

The typeface for the headline, Cholla Slab, was selected because of its humanist qualities contrasting with its machined appearance. The secondary typeface, Folio, was selected because it not only contrasted with Cholla Slab nicely, but it has enough quirky irregularities to keep it from feeling cold and sterile. The arrangement

of the type became crucial to the posters' design, by creating interesting shapes in the negative space to direct the viewer's attention. I felt that the type being set at 30° and 60° angles not only added a dynamic quality to the series, but also interacted well with the imagery.

Selecting the imagery also proved challenging due to the average person having never even heard of Nikola Tesla. I wanted images that conveyed science as well as the era he lived in. It was important to me to that, though the average person wouldn't be aware of it, the images were relevant to Tesla's work, and not just random gizmos that merely looked the part.