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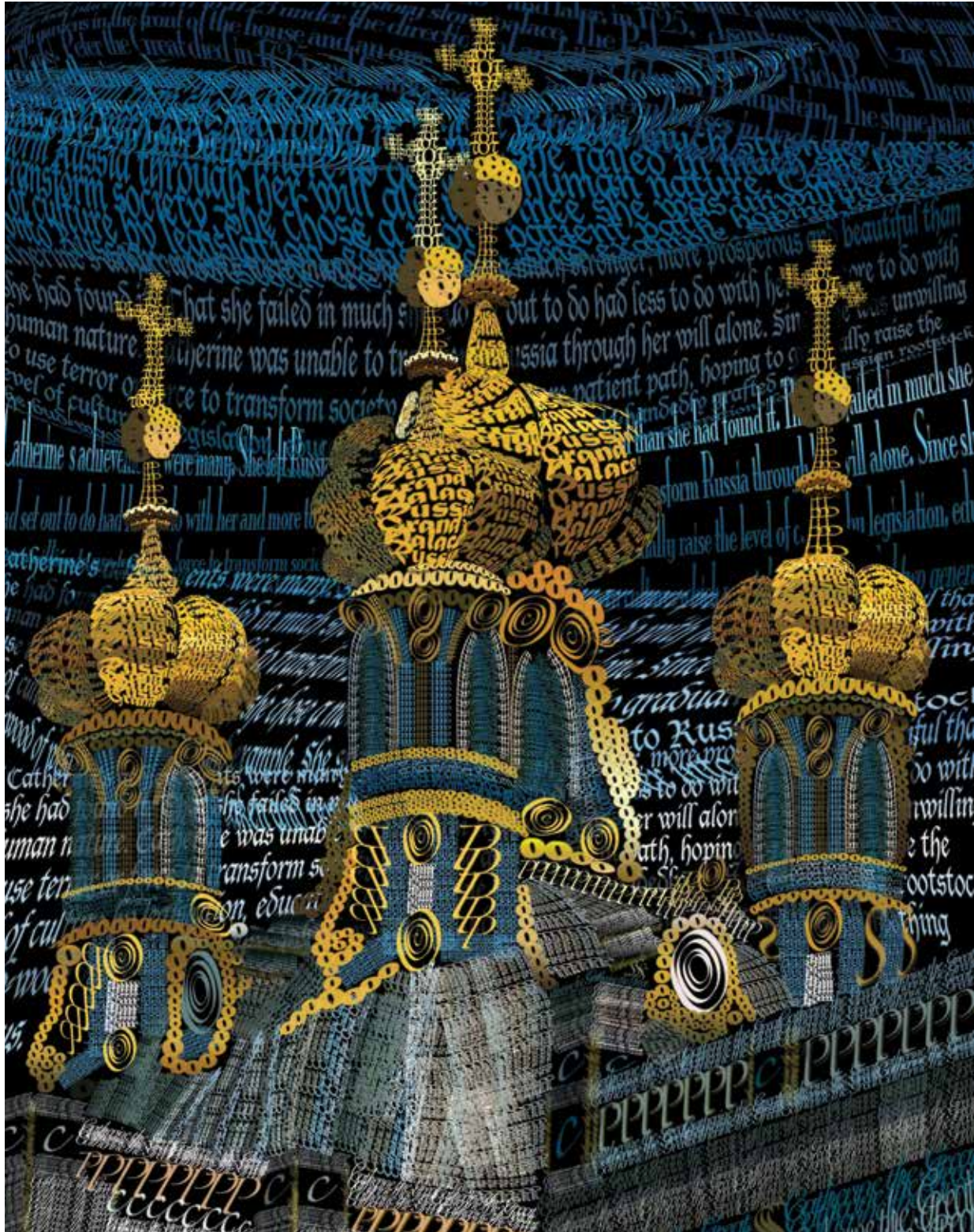


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ARCHITEXTURE

COMBINING DIGITAL TEXT AND IMAGES



Kristine Cobb

Adobe Photoshop is a powerful tool that can include photography, drawing, typography, and an endless combination of effects—it figures prominently in the digital imaging course I teach. I am always trying to develop new and inventive lessons that yield high-quality creative results, and this one, which I call *Architexture*, has been very successful.

Finding an Image

Architexture utilizes text as a drawing tool to add meaning and decorative detail to architectural images. Each student begins by finding a high-resolution image of a famous piece of architecture, statue, or monument. Students check the resolution of the reference image in Photoshop by going to the Image menu, then selecting Image Size. Here they can determine the dimensions of

the image as well as its resolution. An ideal size is 8½ x 11" and at least 250 pixels per inch (ppi).

Manipulating Type

Once they have selected and properly sized their image, students need a few days of instruction and practice on manipulating type in Photoshop. This will allow them to layer text over their images that relates to the chosen structure—the objective being to have the text completely cover the document.

Next, I demonstrate how to click and drag with the Text tool to create a text box that can be typed into. If the box is reshaped with the Text tool, the type reflows into the new shape, but the size of the type does not change or become distorted. However, when the text box is scaled with the Move tool, the type changes size and can become distorted. Students can use whichever method cre-

OBJECTIVES

- Create an original design combining text and architecture.
- Use text as a primary drawing tool and design element.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How can text and images be used together to create works of art?

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- High-resolution images of architecture or monuments
- Adobe Photoshop

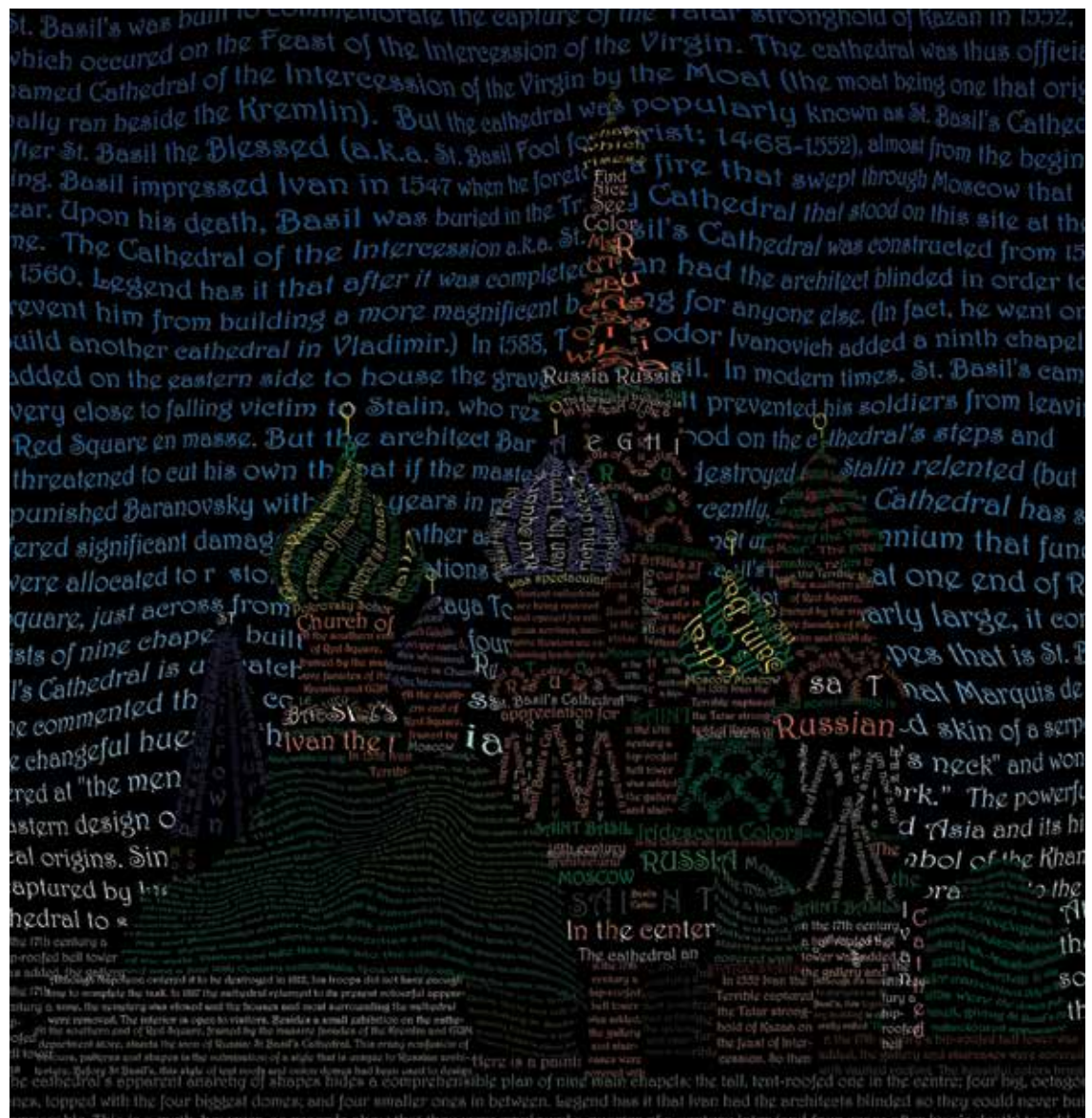
NATIONAL MEDIA

ARTS STANDARD

Creating: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Artwork left by Hilary Wong, grade nine; right by Julia Pitney, grade ten





Artwork by Emma Townsend.

ates their desired results.

Text boxes can also be transformed to fit an area. In order to transform the type, it must first be rasterized. To do this, go to the Layer menu, select Rasterize, then select Type. Once it is rasterized, the text box can be reshaped by going to the Edit menu, selecting Transform, then selecting Distort or Warp. Type can also be transformed by liquifying it (select Filter, then Liquify). Liquify should be used sparingly in order to maintain the readability of the text.

Another way type can be used to illustrate is to put text on a line.

Students can use the Pen tool or the Shape tool to make a path, then type can be added. When the Text tool is put next to a path, the icon changes, allowing text to be typed on the path.

Font Choices

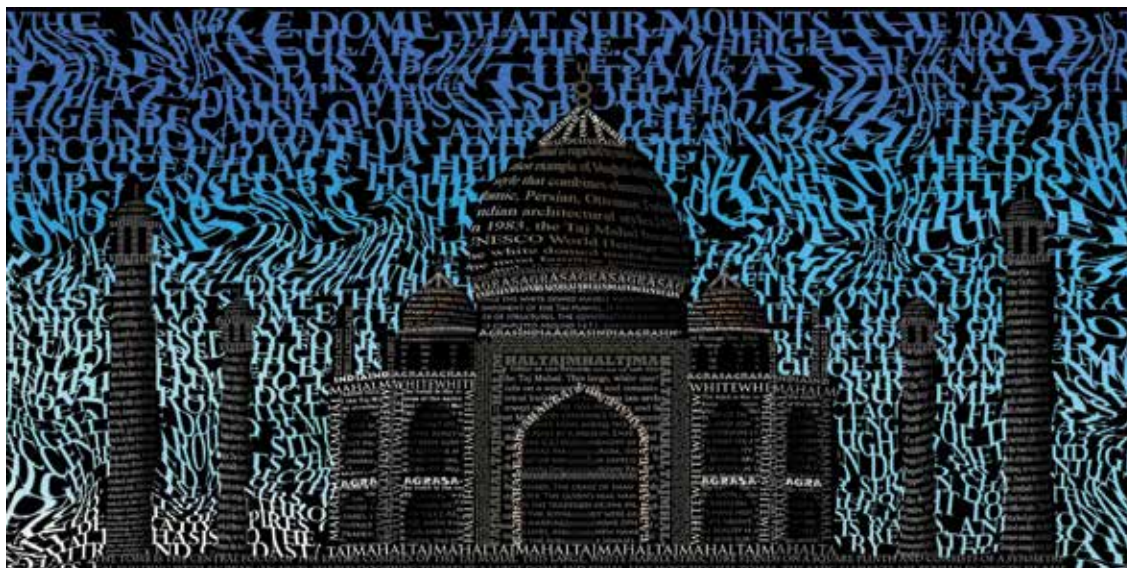
In order to create contrast in their compositions, I encourage students to use a variety of type sizes and weights. Font choice should also be made carefully. If the architecture is modern, a sans-serif font, such as Helvetica or Avant Garde would work well. Serif fonts, such as Garamond or Times, are more appropriate for

architecture of the past.

Once the entire document is covered with text, the original reference photo is turned off and students apply a background color of black, white, or gray. The choice that creates the most contrast with the text is usually the best selection.

Stamping

The last text illustration technique some students use is stamping with the Brush tool. Students can create a custom brush out of a word or group of words, then, using the Brush tool, they can stamp the words by clicking



Artwork top by Yutong Liu, grade nine;
bottom by Chloe Maucuer

(not clicking and dragging) where they want to place the words. If desired, the brush can be rotated by using the Brush palette (select Window, then Brush).

Adding Color

Students can keep their projects black, white, and gray, or they can add color. If the type is not rasterized, they may highlight words and change the hue by clicking on the foreground color. If the type is rasterized, students should select the text with the Move tool. At the bottom of the Layer palette, click on the Layer Style (fx) button. In the drop-down selection, choose either Color Overlay or Gradient Overlay. This will change the color of the selected type, but not the background.

Words of Advice

- If nothing seems to be working, hit the Return key.
- If nothing seems to be working, hit Command + D (shortcut for Deselect).
- Have students continually back up their work on a flash drive. Be sure to let it finish saving before ejecting the drive.

Kristine Cobb is an art teacher at Shrewsbury High School in Shrewsbury, Massachusetts.

