



MANDATORY ASSIGNMENT 03 - ILLUSTRATION

«Africa Unite»

by Bob Marley

Link to the song:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpfxD0yY6f8>

Ziya-po ya-ya, pa-pa-ya-pa!
Ti-da-lee, na po-po pu-du-loo!
Ste-na-peh na-na po po-ro po!

Africa unite:

'Cause we're moving right out of Babylon,
And we're going to our Father's land, yea-ea.

How good and how pleasant it would be before God and man, yea-eah! -

To see the unification of all Africans, yeah! -
As it's been said a'ready, let it be done, yeah!
We are the children of the Rastaman;
We are the children of the Iyaman.

So-o, Africa unite:

'Cause the children (Africa unite) wanna come home.

Africa unite:

'Cause we're moving right out of Babylon, yea,
And we're grooving to our Father's land, yea-ea.

How good and how pleasant it would be before God and man

To see the unification of all Rastaman, yeah.

As it's been said a'ready, let it be done!

I tell you who we are under the sun:

We are the children of the Rastaman;

We are the children of the Iyaman.

So-o: Africa unite,

Afri - Africa unite, yeah!

Unite for the benefit (Africa unite) for the benefit of your people!

Unite for it's later (Africa unite) than you think!

Unite for the benefit (Africa unite) of my children!

Unite for it's later (Africa uniting) than you think!

Africa awaits (Africa unite) its creators!

Africa awaiting (Africa uniting) its Creator!

Africa, you're my (Africa unite) forefather cornerstone!

Unite for the Africans (Africa uniting) abroad

Unite for the Africans (Africa unite) a yard! [fadeout]

INTRODUCTION

I was super looking forward for MA03 Illustration; I saw some examples from former students on moodle and read a bit about it before it was allocated.

I was totally excited to illustrate one of my favorite songs.

INTERPRETATION OF THE TASK

I was originally fooled by the name of the assignment, thinking I will do most of my work in illustrator, while I was going through the linda.com videos it got more clear for me that the use of pictures and to treat them will be expected on this assignment.

My first idea was to do "Killing in the name of" by Rage against the Machines, thinking of making illustrations of different religious and political items to create a pistol. Then I thought of doing "Fuck da police" by N.W.A, but for that idea to work the use of text was imperative,

This assignment found me in a really cold and dark Saint Petersburg, so I did not really feel to go out and take a picture, instead I went through some old hard drives and found a bunch of pictures of decent quality from a trip I took back in the days through Africa.

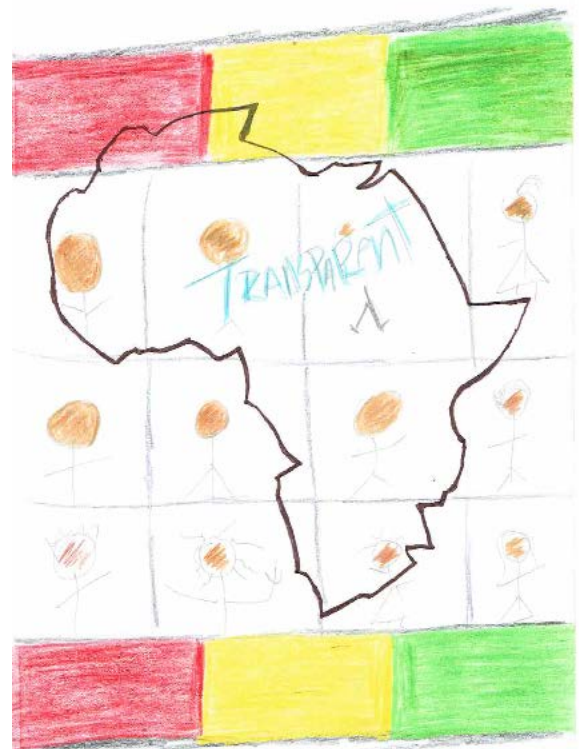
CONCEPT AND TARGET GROUP

My target group will mainly be for the reggae lover, but I think the message and the relevance of it is not only for those who fancy reggae for its calypso sounds and relaxed stoned vibe, but everybody who understand and celebrate the message of Bob Marley:

Only in unity will the third world find freedom.

STRATEGIC DESIGN

The idea was to make some kind of gallery or filmstrip to play as a container for the selected pictures, I thought of 9 pictures to make three columns vertical and have them superimpose on top of an African map.



RESEARCH

Africa unite is a very political track. The song was originally released on the Survival album and stresses the message most popularly postulated by the late and Marcus Mosiah Garvey in regards to the return of people of African descent to Africa.

Survival, released in 1979, was an album with an outwardly militant theme a different approach by Marley after the laid-back, ganja-soaked atmosphere from his previous album, "Kaya".

In the song "Africa Unite", Marley proclaims Pan-African solidarity. The song has then become a hymn for the unification of a continent with a turbulent history.

Marley, following his rasta, pan-African ideals, advocates for the unity of all Africans.

Censored by the then apartheid South Africa government, the feel good rhythm of the song tends to conceal the seriousness and urgency of the message in the song.

The song and its message has become an inspiration for human rights organizations, concerts and happenings throughout Africa.

The song has been covered by Bob's son, Ziggy Marley Live At The Roxy in 2013 and remixed by will.i.am for an album with the same name on 2005. It has also been the inspiration for a documentary directed by Stephanie Black in 2008, about the family of the late Bob and their first trip to Ethiopia to attend the annual Africa Unite concert.

CREATIVE METHODS

I was having a problem with resizing my pictures to put them in the filmstrip, somehow when I made them smaller I was losing quality, so I decided to drop the idea of the frames/filmstrip and place the pictures free.



I thought of the idea of using a map since it will be a perfect way to illustrate Africa and that way I will also have my vector elements required as part of the task.



It felt that was a bit weak, so I went for plan B, which was creating some kind of artwork combining the faces and the map, pretty much a collage. What a better way of visually express the message of the song that unite the shape of Africa with the faces of their people.



I went through a process of selection of faces until I got the result that I wanted, I was pretty hooked and I had a lot of pictures, so I could have gone for days masking my picture and playing puzzle.



I had decided to use the eraser tool to get rid of parts of the pictures that I was not using and that way create the borders for the map. I set the hardness of eraser tool to 50% and reduce considerably the flow, trying to give more control to my rookie untrained hand, unfortunately that took me to a place where I found my self with a lot of defuse and soft edges.



I started cleaning the edges with the eraser tool. It was super cool to zoom in all the way and work on a pixel-by-pixel operation.

I got to take advantage of the Liquify filter where I had gone to far and erasing into my subjects, or where I have been a bit lazy when masking.



I had a lot of fun liquefying to make hair grown and ears come to live, I felt a bit like doctor Frankenstein, but I see now that next time I'll rather invest a bit more time to select and mask my picture.

INSPIRATION METHODS

For inspiration I went to my vinyl collection and did an Internet research for reggae albums.



COLOURS

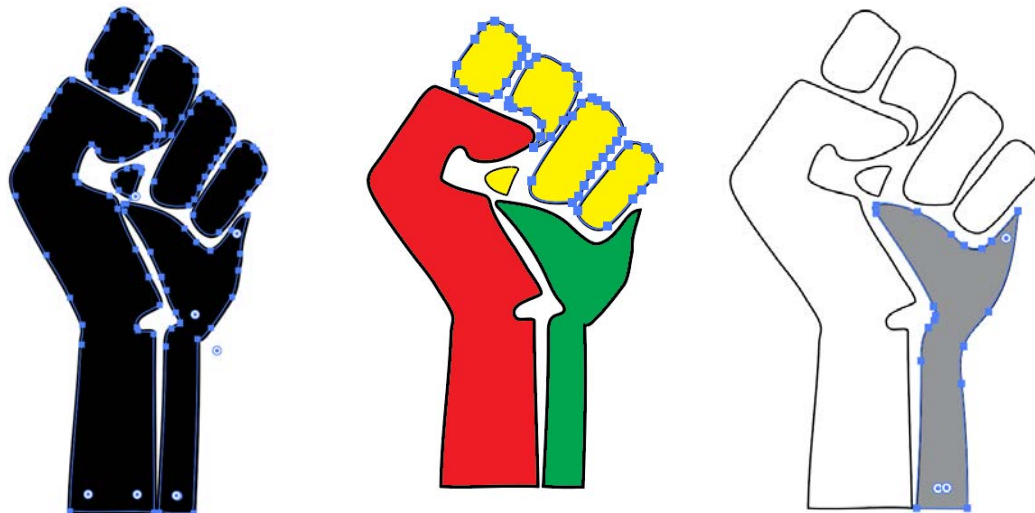
It was a given that I had to use the rasta colors: *red, yellow, green*, I knew that the skin of my subhead a different range of light to dark browns, so I knew I have to use vivid colors to compensate, which will be totally appropriate knowing the genre

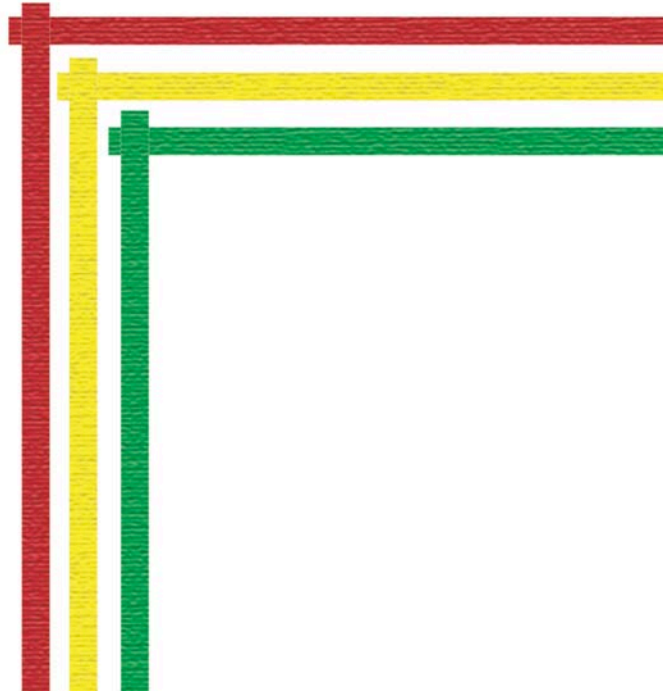
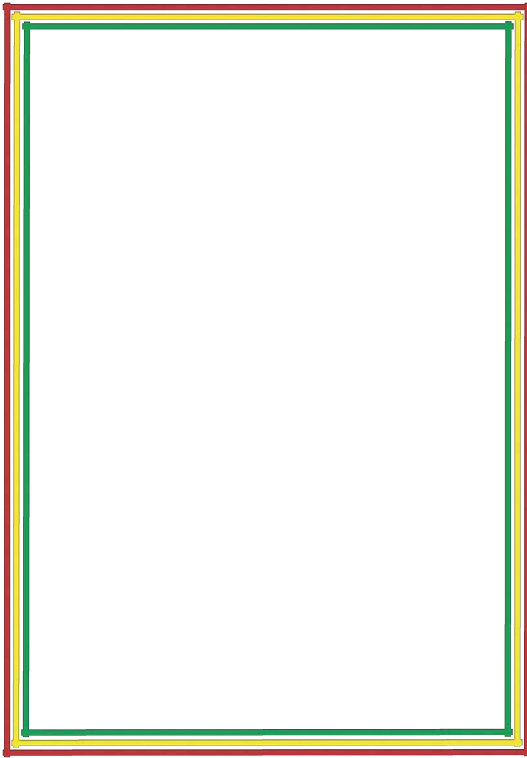


The illustrator challenge

In the original Idea the map would have been my vector Illustration, but this map was all ready cover by the faces, therefor i felt obligated to come with something new.

The map was big and took a lot of space on my artwork, so I decide to make a frame based on the rasta colors and a fighting hand.



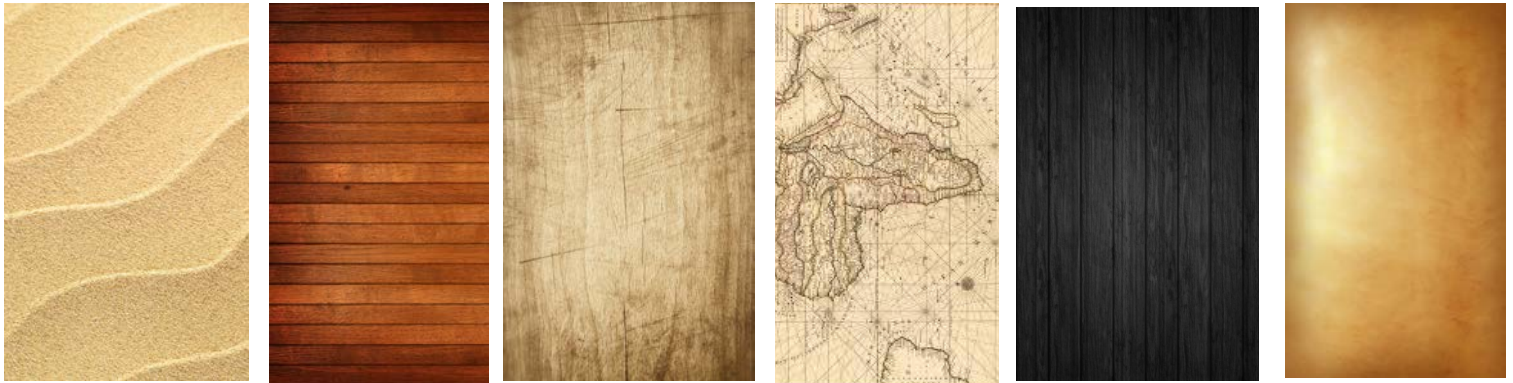


Then I tried to combine the elements together, but still felt that the whole poster had a really plastic feeling so I knew something had to be done. I applied a craquelure texture effect and add some Bevel and Emboss; I just put down a notch the opacity of the overall map and add a small drop shadow.

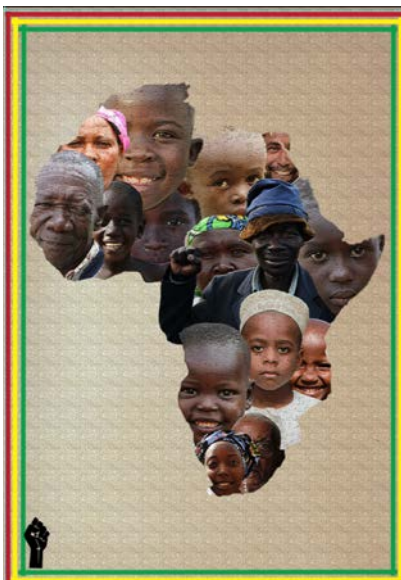
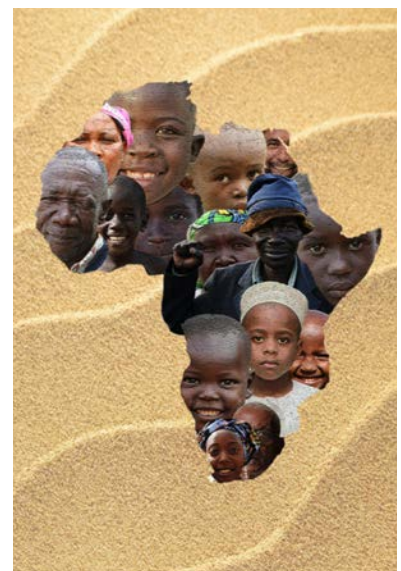
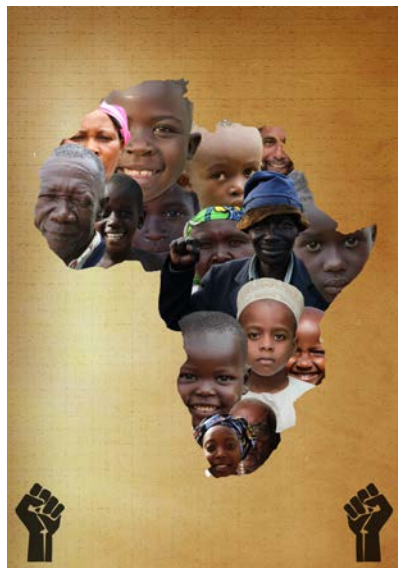
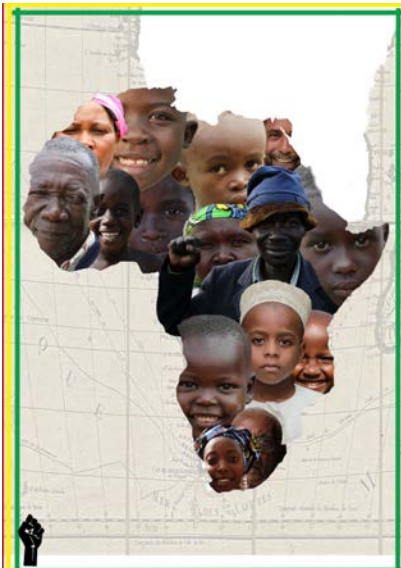
I decided not to clean or remove the dirt off the faces, but instead keep the dust and imperfections to communicate a more organic feeling. Still too clean and not matching the style of a reggae album, which normally is charged with colors and natural backgrounds.



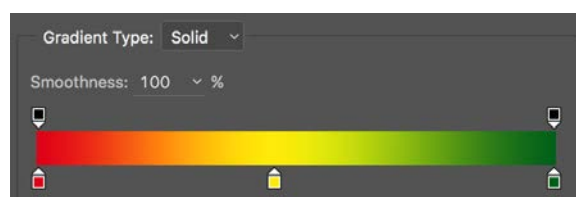
I started by downloading some textures:



Which I started playing with, manipulating the opacity, blending modes and adding gradients and texture.



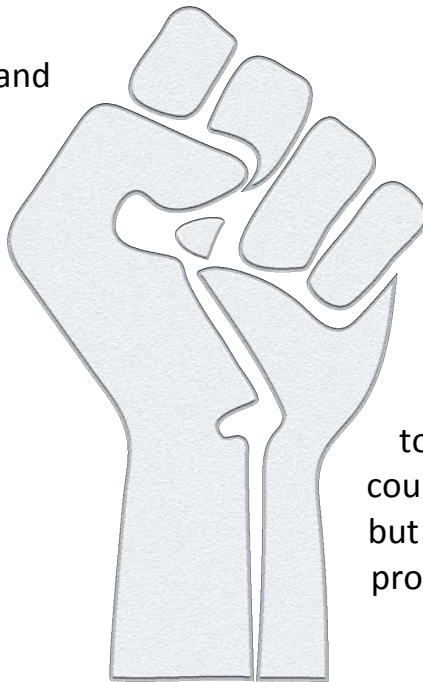
At the end I choose the black wooden background and apply a three colour gradient at 65% opacity.



I played around with different blending modes until I was satisfied with the screen mode and added the same texture filter to highlight the patterns of the wood and unify the map, vectors and background.

COMPOSITION, LAYOUT, GRID

I had 3 main elements to align: the frame, the map and the hand, the map was created to play a main role at the center, and the frame was created to frame, so it was just the hand who became like some kind of decor. I was not satisfied with the four hands and I changed from black to white and add craquelure texture.



I have to be honest and admit that I don't feel like I totally nail the symmetry of the whole poster. I had a conflict with the hand and the map; somehow putting the hand in the center of the frame did not look align with the map which extends more to its left than to its right. I could have make the map smaller but I felt it lost a bit of protagonist if I did that.

CONCLUSION

This was an awesome assignment, super fun to do and I felt like I learned a bit of photoshop. The ten hour videos was a killer, - I was zombie for two days trying to gather all the knowledge I could, but it was not until I put my hands on the project that I felt that I was learning. I'm satisfied with the final result, but it was hard to make a poster with no text.

SOURCES:

LYNDA.COM: Photoshop CS6 - Essential Training with Julianne Kost

Latin America Graphic Design, Felipe Taborda/Julius Wiedemann, 2008

Bob Marley: The Illustrated Biography Paperback, 2011

Creativity now, Jorgen Wolf, Create your space,

Creativity now, Jorgen Wolf, Apply your why, who, what, where and when questions

Creativity now, Jorgen Wolf, Start with the end

One Love: The Bob Marley All-Star Tribute (1999)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Survival_\(Bob_Marley_%26_The_Wailers_album\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Survival_(Bob_Marley_%26_The_Wailers_album))

<http://www.allmusic.com/album/africa-unite-the-singles-collection-mw0000704420>

<http://africa-unite.org/>

<http://www.africaunite.org.za/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Africa_Unite:_The_Singles_Collection

<http://www.lahistoriaconmapas.com/atlas/africa+map/old-africa-map.htm>

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/historical/history_africa.html