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DEATH ROW MEAL SPREAD

BY DANIEL PAEZ

## Softwar es Used



## Descr i p t i o n

For this yearbook spread, I created a fictional “friendly death row meal” menu that mixes dark humor, food design, and crime-inspired visuals. The concept presents last-meal choices in a playful menu format while using visual elements from investigation boards to connect the theme back to crime. The goal was to make the spread feel unique, bold, and memorable without making it too serious or disturbing.

## Chal l e n g e

The main challenge was finding a way to combine three very different ideas: crime, menus, and meals. I needed the design to clearly communicate the concept of “death row meals,” but still feel appropriate for a yearbook spread. It also had to look visually interesting and not just like a regular restaurant menu.

## Sol ut i o n

I designed the spread as a mix between a restaurant menu and a crime investigation board. The menu organized the meals, while the connected lines, notes, and evidence-style visuals helped connect the food and crime themes in a playful, clear way.

## Mai n Inspo

**BIOGRAPHY-JOHN WAYNE GACY**

*Last words*  
"KISS MY ASS"

*John Wayne Gacy*

AKA: THE KILLER CLOWN  
BORN: 03/17/1942  
DIED: 05/10/1994 (AGED 52)  
CONVICTIONS: MURDER (33 COUNTS)  
PENALTY: DEATH

ONE OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS SERIAL KILLERS IN AMERICAN HISTORY, JOHN WAYNE GACY BECAME INFAMOUS FOR MURDERING AT LEAST 33 YOUNG MEN AND BOYS IN THE 1970S. HE IS OFTEN KNOWN AS THE "KILLER CLOWN", AS HE PERFORMED AT CHARITY EVENTS AS "POGO THE CLOWN" THROUGHOUT THE TIME HE WAS KILLING, AND ONCE TOLD A POLICE OFFICER, "YOU KNOW... CLOWNS CAN GET AWAY WITH MURDER."

**EARLY LIFE:**  
- HAD A TROUBLED CHILDHOOD WITH AN ABUSIVE FATHER AND HEALTH PROBLEMS.  
- TRIED TO LIVE A CONVENTIONAL LIFE: MARRIED, HAD CHILDREN, AND WAS INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY WORK. WHEN HE AND HIS FIRST WIFE DIVORCED, HE NEVER SAW HER OR HIS CHILDREN AGAIN.  
- RAN A SUCCESSFUL CONTRACTING BUSINESS (WHERE HE MET AND HIRED MANY OF HIS VICTIMS), AND BECAME ACTIVE IN LOCAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY POLITICS.

**CRIMES (1972-1978):**  
- GACY LURED HIS VICTIMS-MOSTLY TEENAGE BOYS AND YOUNG MEN-BY OFFERING THEM WORK, POSING AS A POLICE OFFICER, OR INVITING THEM TO HIS HOME. HE WOULD SEXUALLY ASSAULT, TORTURE, AND STRANGLE HIS VICTIMS.  
- MOST OF THE BODIES WERE BURIED IN THE CRAWL SPACE UNDER HIS HOUSE; WHEN HE RAN OUT OF SPACE, HE BEGAN DISCARDING THEM IN A NEARBY RIVER.

**CAPTURE AND TRIAL:**  
- GACY WAS ARRESTED IN DECEMBER 1978 AFTER A TEENAGE BOY, ROBERT PIEST, WENT MISSING.  
- DURING THE INVESTIGATION, POLICE DISCOVERED HUMAN REMAINS ON HIS PROPERTY.  
- HE CONFESSED TO KILLING OVER 30 PEOPLE.

CONVICTED OF 33 MURDERS IN 1980  
SPENT 14 YEARS ON DEATH ROW  
EXECUTED BY LETHAL INJECTION ON MAY 10, 1994, IN ILLINOIS.

## MOODBOARD



Allen Lee 'tiny' Davis

- 54 yrs
- Florida
- Robbery, 3 counts of murder
- Electric chair

- Lobster tail
- Fried Potatoes
- 1/2 lb fried shrimp
- 6oz fried clams
- 1/2 loaf garlic bread
- 32oz A&W root beer



Ronnie Threadgill

- 40
- Texas\*
- Murder
- Lethal injection

- Baked chicken
- Mashed potatoes with country gravy
- vegetables
- sweet peas
- bread
- tea
- water
- punch

\*Texas abolished the last meal in 2011, so he was given the same meal as everyone in his unit

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# Sketches

From the beginning, I was sure there would be the name of the students, the description of their dish, photos, and something engaging for the class. The last part was the most difficult part to explore, but thanks to Atie it worked out pretty well.



# Fonts

Special Elite

Mom's Typewriters

# Role

While I was mainly focusing on the design, my classmate Ritika helped me a lot with the exploration of the design. She was the one who came up with the colors that inspired me to design the frame for the menu.

# Target Audience

The audience for this project is literally our classmates! The idea is to make them feel part of the yearbook and that they remember something meaningful for the moment they see the yearbook.

# Goals & Objectives

The goal was to create a spread that students could connect with and feel identified by when they saw it. I wanted the design to feel fun, familiar, and memorable while still matching the crime and menu concept.

# First Design

## LAST MULTIMEDIA MEALS

### THE RAFSUN

Steak burrito with sweet potato fries, two soft drinks, large with 2L of milk, and 480 ml of

Pepto-Bismol. (?)

### THE LINH

Chocolate sundae ice cream

### THE SANJI

Garlic naan with butter chicken

### THE EMMA L

General Tao

### THE JASON

Chocolate Mr. Puffs

### THE KELLY

Tiramisu

### THE BAGINDA

Pasta Carbonara

### THE DANIEL

Lasagna di la mama

### THE NICOLAS

Fried fish in corn sauce

### THE FIONA

Mom's Pho

### THE EMMA A

Sushi or nonna's pasta

### THE KATERINA

Butter chicken, matcha and mango ice cream

### THE POLINA

Mayo (?)

### THE JACKY

Lionel Messi

### THE SATINE

Banh mi

### THE ANELIE

Grandma's Tiramisu

### THE MORGAN

Garfield's Lasagna

### THE CLYDE

Fried Plantains

### THE SAMANTA

Pasta gratin with bechamel

### THE GAELLE

Poutine from La Banquise

### THE FLAVIA

Burger king combo #3

### THE WENDY

Pure acetone nail polish remover

### THE TYLER

Smoked Salmon creamed cheese bagel

### THE STEPHANIE

General Tao from La Citronelle and strawberries

### THE RITIKA

Sundubu-jjigae with chicken tikka and matcha

## THE LAWBREAKERS



# Final Design

# Conclusion

## LAST MULTIMEDIA MEALS

### THE RAFSUN ▲

Steak burrito with sweet potato fries, two soft drinks, large with 2L of milk, and 480 ml of Pepto-Bismol.

### THE LINH ●

Chocolate sundae ice cream

### THE SANJI ▲

Garlic naan with butter chicken

### THE EMMA ▲

General Tao

### THE JASON ●

Chocolate Mr. Puffs

### THE KELLY ●

Tiramisu

### THE DANIEL ☺

Lasagna di la mama

### THE NICOLAS ▲

Fried fish in corn sauce

### THE FIONA ▲

Mom's Pho

### THE RITIKA ▲

Sundubu-jjigae, chicken tikka and matcha



### THE KATERINA ▲

Butter chicken, matcha and mango ice cream

### THE POLINA ●

Mayo

### THE JACKY ▲

Seafood Boil

### THE SATINE ■■

Banh mi

### THE ANELIE ■■

Grandma's Tiramisu

### THE MORGAN ▲

Garfield's Lasagna

### THE CLYDE ●

Fried Plantains

### THE SAMANTHA ■■

Pasta gratin with bechamel

### THE FLAVIA ▲

Burger king combo #3

### THE WENDY ●

Pure acetone nail polish remover

### THE TYLER ▲

Smoked Salmon creamed cheese bagel

### THE BAIONDA (Escaped) ▲

Pasta carbonara

### THE GAELE (Escaped) ▲

Poutine from La Blanche

### THE STEPHANIE (Escaped) ▲

General Tao from La Citronnelle

### THE EMMAOLATA (Escaped) ▲

Sushi

## THE LAWBREAKERS



In conclusion, I think this project was way more fun than I thought it would be and I really enjoyed designing this menu. I have made professional menus in the past, but doing it for something that is supposed to be fun and engaging really made me happy!

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