

SPECIAL COLLECTOR'S EDITION

20

17

COMPUTER ARTS

DESIGN
MATTERS

ISSUE #275

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20

18

I PLEDGE TO MAKE 2018 MY

BEST

RESOLUTION # 1

QUIT MY BORING JOB

RESOLUTION # 2

START A NEW SIDE PROJECT

RESOLUTION # 3

WIN A DREAM CLIENT

RESOLUTION # 4

FIND MY IDEAL WORK-LIFE BALANCE

YEAR

EVER

RESOLUTION # 5

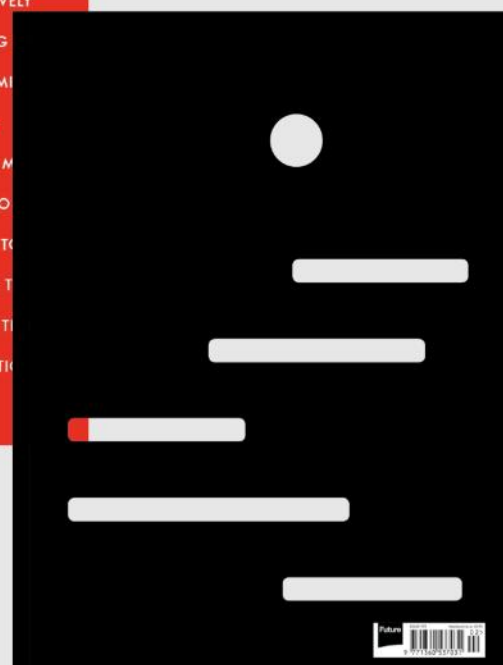
BUILD MY REPUTATION

Future

Making the cover



Left and below: Areas to be die cut needed to be simple and subtle enough not to threaten the structural integrity of the cover; so we slightly rounded the corners of each lozenge to reduce the chance of torn edges.



Editor Nick's original brief – 'one of those secret agent-style encoded messages' – was wonderfully evocative and seemed simple enough in principle, but in practice, this proved one of our most difficult cover treatments to execute.

Maintaining the clarity of the exposed cover lines in the body of the text (printed on the thick, Pantone red insert card) was an editorial challenge in itself, but nudging and tweaking that copy to accommodate our fluted foil headline resulted in several rounds of refinements.

Equally, creating the die cut to punch out the cover lines should have been simple enough, but as with any additional manufacturing process, the need for absolute accuracy – 5mm error either way would make the cover lines illegible – led to palpable levels of anxiety in the art department.

Watch the cover being die cut by our print finishing partner Celloglas, as well as many of our other special covers, at www.bit.ly/ca-printfinishes

Below: While this schematic shows two separate layers, the two different foils are actually laid on one plate – the fluted effect on the headline (right) is achieved by embossing once the foil plate has been printed.



Celloglas™



MARK WYNNE

Nick and Mark worked so closely on this cover, they brought to (Mark's) mind the epic Spice Girls smash, Two Become One (which Mark has only just discovered is about sex).

Editor's letter

Quit your job. It's a pretty empowering statement: if you're not creatively rewarded, feel like you can't reach your full potential, or are generally under-appreciated, don't just sit there and take it: make 2018 the year to make your dreams a reality.

When we put a tweet out asking for stories of people who had done just that, the response was overwhelming. We explore the topic in detail this month, part of an issue dedicated to making those new year's resolutions count for something. Whether it's finally launching that side project that's been on the back-burner, tackling your stress levels to find a better work-life balance, or landing a massive client as a portfolio centrepiece – it's up to you to make it happen.

Our rather special collectable cover is all about making a promise to yourself: a pledge to make 2018 your best year ever. The specifics, of course, are up to you – we've provided some suggestions, and some advice to get you started – but only you know what your list of goals looks like.

As our video profile demonstrates, sometimes there's no substitute for unswerving passion and hard graft: the co-founders of Bristol-based studio Fiasco threw themselves into business seven years ago with no prior experience whatsoever, and ended up with a BAFTA and a D&AD Pencil within their first few years of business.

It may not work out all the time, but you can learn from that too. In a one-off special feature, we've replaced our regular behind-the-scenes project diaries at the back of the mag with private diaries instead, in which Marian Bantjes and Michael Johnson share creative concepts for clients that never made it off the drawing board, but are still inspiring pieces of work in their own right.

Next month, we bring you our hotlist of illustrators to watch this year – an invaluable reference guide for your next big commission or collaboration. See you then!

● NICK CARSON
Editor
nick.carson@futurenet.com

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FEATURING



MATT BAXTER

Matt is creative director of award-winning branding studio Baxter and Bailey, based in Brighton. On page 20, he argues that the best designers always find time to think.

www.baxterandbailey.co.uk



KATH TUDBALL

Design director at The Partners since 2016, Kath was previously at Johnson Banks. As part of our feature on quitting your job in 2018 (page 42), she gives advice for those looking to move studios.

www.the-partners.com



JASON SMITH

Co-founder of Bristol studio Fiasco with Ben Steers, Jason shares how he grew an award-winning creative business from two inexperienced guys with laptops – see page 76.

www.fiascodesign.co.uk



MARIAN BANTJES

Marian is a Canadian designer, artist, illustrator, typographer and writer. One of three designers who share their unseen sketchbooks on page 82, she reveals a project that never saw the light of day.

www.bantjes.com



EMILY OBERMAN

Emily is a multidisciplinary designer and partner at Pentagram. On page 98, she discusses what her childhood love for MAD magazine has taught her about humour and going against the grain.

www.pentagram.com

(mt)

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MEET THE TEAM



NICK CARSON
EDITOR

Nick and Mark had a great few days in Antwerp for the inspiring Us By Night, and Nick was also enamoured by the hotel's self-service waffle maker. They also managed to miss their flight home due to train delays.



MARK WYNNE
ART EDITOR

Censorship and free speech were hot topics in the CA office this month (Hi, Polly in Legal!) and our bourgeois liberal art ed had plenty to say, obviously. ~~by Nick Carson~~



ROSIE HILDER
OPERATIONS EDITOR

Rosie is feeling smug at her limited Christmas present buying (thanks, family secret santa!) and not so smug about her flat being so cold she's had to essentially cling film the windows. #generationrent

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

GARETH JONES
VIDEO PRODUCER

Gareth has been hurriedly buying presents at Bath Christmas market and is debating whether Nick will wear a wooden tie to work. He was also envious of Fiasco's cosy office space while filming in Bristol.

JULIA SAGAR
FREELANCE WRITER

Julia has realised the gentle wind-down to Christmas she envisioned is unlikely. Never mind. This time last year she was trekking through a snowy desert in Jordan, wishing she had a better map. Every cloud.

Production notes

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PANTONE RED 032 C ON INSERT
William Gibbons

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survey – p49

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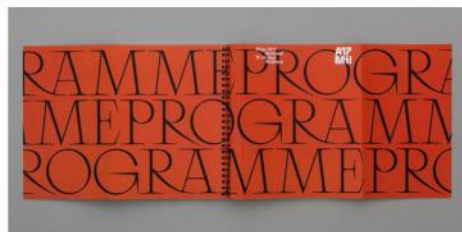


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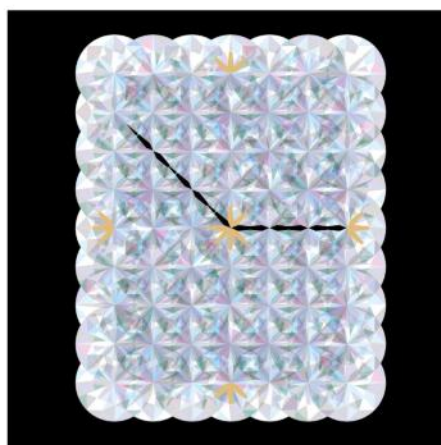


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The eyebrow-raising sculptor discusses life as a satirical sculptor, and why he loves creating nudes

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AREPA BY ANGUS BROWN

TRENDS

BRAIN POWER

Mental health considerations are increasingly moving focus away from body performance, and towards the brain-body connection instead

Neuroscientist Dr Tara Swart, founder of The Unlimited Mind, teaches techniques to achieve mental reliance and peak brain performance. She focuses on five fundamentals of neuroscience: rest, which examines the sleep best for your brain; fuel, looking at foods that are brain boosting; hydrate, which ensures enough water is consumed to allow proper neuron function; oxygenate, which encompasses the types of exercise that boost brains for successful ageing; and simplify, which takes in mindfulness in the form of meditation, yoga, mindful eating and mindful walking.

Brain-optimising products, services and experiences are coming to the fore in the form of nootropic consumables, tech add-ons and tailored exercise regimes. Brands are working with neuroscientists to infuse their products with brain-optimising features. Using technology, and natural and synthetic chemicals, innovative designers are creating products and services that enable us to program efficiency and optimisation into our cognitive activities.

Dr Swart has recently been offering an overnight experience called the Brain Power Package. It includes a menu of nutrient-rich meals, mindfulness sessions, heated marble floors claimed to help neutralise the effects of electromagnetic interference on the brain-body system, blackout blinds to aid sleep, treatment sessions, a series of talks on topics from the science of the brain to politics, sleep pods for power napping, and a Brain Lab where guests can learn to develop mental resilience.

Created by food technologist Angus Brown, and developed in collaboration with neuroscientist Dr Andrew Scholey, Arepa is a juice-based drink containing L-theanine, as well as other supposedly mind-enhancing ingredients, such as pine extract. The fruit of four years' development at New Zealand's The FoodBowl food innovation centre, the apple and blackcurrant flavoured drink is said to stimulate alpha brain waves, claimed to boost creativity and reduce depression.

Developed in collaboration with neuroscientists, Brain.FM is an artificial intelligence music composer that delivers tailored musical treatments claimed to affect cognitive activity. The musical vibrations promote one of five cognitive states: focus, relax, meditation, nap and sleep, and are said to complement the brain's natural frequencies.

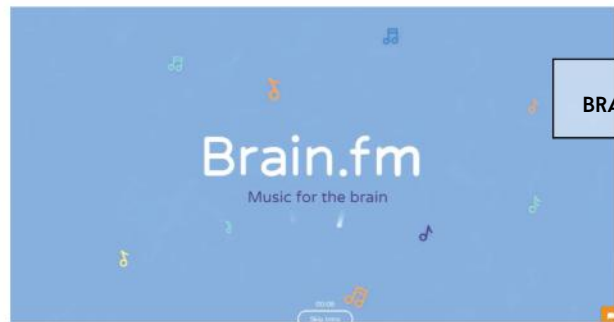
HeadStrong is a new Equinox group fitness class that combines brain and body training to push physical and mental boundaries in a four-part 'active regeneration' workout. Described as the intersection between high intensity and mindful movement, the 60-minute class has four key sections, each with a customised soundscape.

California-based start-up HVMN believes humans can be quantified, optimised and upgraded. It designs and develops products that enhance key biometrics relating to our cognitive, physical and metabolic output. Its Nootrobox comprises four products – Rise, Kado-3, Sprint and Yawn – that focus on key aspects of brain health and performance with the aim of providing a sophisticated way to nourish our sophisticated brains.





NOOTROBOX BY HVMN



BRAIN.FM



**BRAIN POWER
PACKAGES AT THE
CORINTHIA HOTEL,
LONDON**

FRANKLINTILL STUDIO

Design Futures / Material Futures / Colour Futures

FranklinTill Studio is a forecasting agency and creative consultancy that works with lifestyle brands across the disciplinary spectrum to provide research-based insights that drive creative innovations in materials, colour and design. It creates reports, publications, exhibitions and events with the aim of making its research both accessible and inspiring. It also edits and produces two magazines, published by View Publications, which you can buy from www.viewpoint-magazine.com.

VIEWPOINT DESIGN

Viewpoint delivers visual, editorial and statistical information to brands, designers, agencies and consumer insight teams determined to create lifestyle products, campaigns and environments that anticipate consumer demand. Written by professionals in the branding and design business, each issue explores how a significant trend will impact consumer behaviour and the global design landscape.

VIEWPOINT COLOUR

Launched December 2016, Viewpoint Colour offers visual inspiration, design direction and a global perspective on colour. The inaugural issue provides an in-depth analysis of the personality traits of emerging colour stories, explaining why they are relevant now and how they are currently being applied.

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Robin Eisenberg is an artist and illustrator based in Los Angeles. Past clients include Broadly, ASOS, Nickelodeon and Apple Music. www.robineisenberg.com

MY DESIGN SPACE IS...

VIBRANT YET CALMING

LA artist and illustrator **Robin Eisenberg** discusses the joys of having a leopard on her desk

Aiming to combine bright clean walls with lots of colour and texture, Robin Eisenberg created her LA home studio in her two-bedroom apartment in early 2017. It's the first time the artist and illustrator has had her own studio space, and she absolutely loves it.

"I genuinely get to so excited about working every day," she says. "I love being in spaces that feel vibrant and lived in, but also calming and organised. Being at

my desk makes me feel like my brain is happy and focused."

That focus can also have its downsides, however, as Eisenberg admits she is sometimes "not as present" as she'd like to be in other parts of her life. A collection of objects given to her by her parents and husband remind her of "life outside of art" (1). "The geode Lady Cave is by Chaparral Studio and I am so in love with it," she says.

A sample of pins (2) she's collected over the past couple

of years also keeps her inspired. "When I first moved back to LA in 2015 after being away for a few years, I discovered the pin-making world and was inspired to start making my own pins and selling them. Starting a shop and meeting other pin makers was so exciting, and it really changed a lot of things for me as an artist," she says.

One wall of Eisenberg's studio is adorned with her own art (3). "I like having my work up behind me, it kind of makes me feel like

my drawings have my back while I'm working on new stuff," she grins.

She also enjoys having her books and piano (4) close by. "If I'm ever having a moment of frustration with a project, I'll take a break and play the piano, and I always feel calmer afterwards," she says.

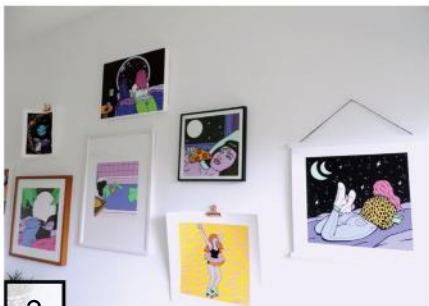
Eisenberg's coloured pencils (5) were a gift from one of her closest friends, and although the leopard is actually a case, she doesn't keep anything in it. "I just like having a leopard on my desk," she shrugs. ▣



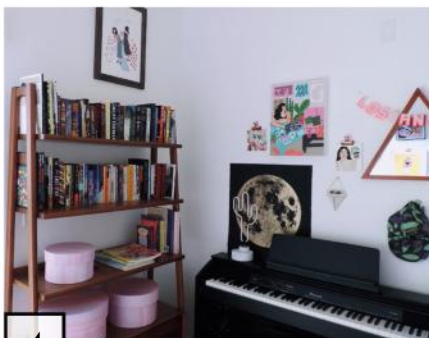
1



2



3



4



5



The O Street team. Josh Peter (second from right) is returning to his native America to set up the new studio.

NEW VENTURES

AMERICAN DREAM

Josh Peter, who is heading up **O Street's** new Denver division, reveals why the Scottish studio has decided to cross the pond

During a trip to the US supported by Scottish Development International, O Street found that Denver, Colorado was a booming place for new businesses, start-ups and tech. The team liked it so much they decided to set up a studio there. We asked Josh Peter how this new venture will work in practice...

Why were you drawn to Denver?

Denver has a vibrant arts culture, a great climate and is one of the craft beer capitals in the world, making it an amazing fit for our expertise. With the population rapidly growing, the culture out here is fresh. It feels like it's just getting started.

How will the studios work together?

When our UK studio is winding down its day, our US studio is just getting started, meaning the former can easily hand work off to the latter. We've retooled our meeting schedule to accommodate a designated time of 4pm GMT and 9am MST. It's going smoothly so far, but we're just getting started.

At the moment, it's the UK studio that's doing the lion's share of the work but we envision it becoming 50/50 as the US family grows. The early creative stages of projects will be cross-studio and collaborative, and for quality control, it's likely that one studio will then see the project through to production. As for managing, it's communication, communication, communication.

What are the risks and the benefits of setting up a new studio in the US?

The obvious risks are upfront business costs, though we've managed to keep

these relatively lean so far. The benefits are limitless: new opportunities, new clients, higher fees and the opportunity to have a real cultural impact on a new place.

What are the main differences between US and European (or UK) design?

The States is such a massive place, it's not really fair to paint the whole industry here with one brush. However, there does seem to be an approach being championed more obviously in European design studios at the moment: a depth of strategic thought paired with a strong aesthetic sensibility. The O Street approach is to begin every project with a focus on research, the end users' needs and finding design solutions that yield results. We finish those projects by making sure we have created something that looks and feels beautiful.

How do you think US clients will find your approach compares to US agencies?

The tradition of Swiss modernism runs deep on the European side of the Atlantic. Even an offbeat studio like ours will impress American clients with the care and thoughtfulness we bring to their design needs.

What are your plans for future growth?

We plan to grow how we always have: doing good work while being ourselves. Our goal is to pick up steam until we have a few designers working for us in Denver, then repeat the process in another city. With the US studio currently in a co-working space, we're yet to see how that will work out physically – but we're excited about this modern era of re-evaluating workspaces. ■



EVENT REPORT: US BY NIGHT

KEEP EXPERIMENTING

At Antwerp's second Us By Night festival, **Nick Carson** was struck by the inspiring results that freeform creative experimentation can yield

KEY INFO:

Location

Parkloods Noord,
Antwerp, Belgium
www.usbynight.be

When

23–25 November 2017

Attendees

1,700 per day (5,000
total over three days)

Key speakers

CATK, Ryan Belmont,
Jonathan Zawada, Studio
Feixen, Hugo & Marie,
Aaron Duffy, Saiman
Chow, Neville Brody

For the second year running, Us By Night – formerly known as OFF By Night – took over a vast warehouse space in Antwerp with giant LED screens, artisan food stalls, an array of ping pong tables and retro games, and of course a three-day programme of inspiring talks from some of the world's most exciting creatives...

Diverse topics ranged from multi-sensory VR experiences, to Aaron Duffy's '10 signs you're an advertophile' – but a sentiment shared by many speakers was the value of creative experimentation, and how to create an environment

in which it's possible, and more importantly, fruitful.

"Testing out new technologies can inspire you," was CATK's take. Notable for its surreal combinations of organic shapes and colours, the Berlin-based agency demonstrated one such experiment in action: Shrooms, a psychedelic feast for the eyes that got a round of applause from the assembled crowd.

CATK's first major commercial project came in 2012, working with Wolff Olins on the new Windows 8 packaging. Despite the huge corporate nature of the client, the final illustrations were all freeform creative experiments.

Meanwhile, for Nike Lab's Ryan Belmont, innovation and experimentation is the order of the day every day. "It's like being back in college," he grinned. "We're just playing, seeing what works." One fascinating example was an installation at Milan Design Week dedicated to the theme of movement, which featured everything from high-tech motion-capture technology to a lo-fi stack of shoeboxes, arranged into a sweeping, dynamic curve.

Belmont also showcased Nike Lab's collaboration with a small group of fashion students from top design colleges, which expresses



some of Nike's material innovations through costume design and dance.

Diversity of style is another likely byproduct of experimental spirit. As Jonathan Zawada revealed in his talk, his illustrations have evolved enormously over the course of his career. He's even pledged to never let the client dictate the look and feel of a piece, valuing creativity over cash – if they don't like it, he won't charge so long as he can use it for his own purposes.

In fact, for almost three years Zawada decided to stop working commercially almost entirely in order to focus on oil painting experiments in Los Angeles. He's since moved back to a remote part of his native Australia so he can do the kind of work he loves without the constraints of LA's cost of living.

"I have a system underpinning the way I make work – a system for curiosity, to explore ideas," he said. "Often, it's about designing without intent. Creating an environment to

mess around in, not consciously visualising the outcome."

Animator Saiman Chow, when discussing the lack of consistency in his practice, shrugged that he's "not wired that way" – in no small part because of his ADHD.

"I look for new challenges," he explained. As a teenager, Chow's family emigrated from Hong Kong to LA following the Tiananmen Square massacre. Adaptation was tough, and themes of social isolation permeate much of his work.

"In school, the most fun I had was huddled in the corner painting," he recalled. Like Zawada, Chow had an epiphany: he decided to focus on himself and consciously dial back the commercial work. "Money is not my motivation," he insisted.

Mario Hugo, co-founder of New York-based creative agency Hugo & Marie, mischievously described his own creative direction process as like drink-driving. "My thinking is cyclical, disorganised and spiralling,"

Clockwise

from left: Us By Night's Living Room stage replaced traditional conference chairs for rugs and sofas; one of the giant LED screens, and ping pong table; festival branding; Jonathan Zawada showing some of his creative experiments; two cars painted white acted as freeform canvases for creativity.

he confessed. Like Zawada, he is prickly about client intervention: "I want to explore things that I want to explore, not the things my clients want me to do," he shrugged.

Boutique Swiss agency Studio Feixen has its own system to aid freedom of expression: "We think in games," explained co-founder Felix Pfäffli. "Our process doesn't lead to one outcome, but a set of rules that govern many outcomes."

One example was an education project that explored how a group of people can design something truly collaboratively. One group established a system whereby half of them would try to write the word 'play' using a grid of paper titles, while the other half tried to destroy it by ripping them up. A second group turned the creative process into a dance, passing shapes and colours around between them.

As all these examples attest, formulaic thinking and box-ticking will get you nowhere creatively. ▣

INSPIRATION FEED

Daniel Aristizábal

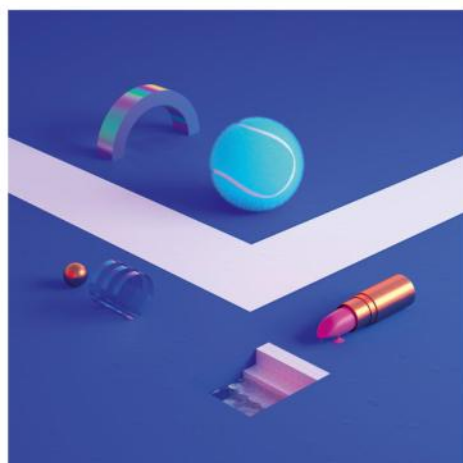
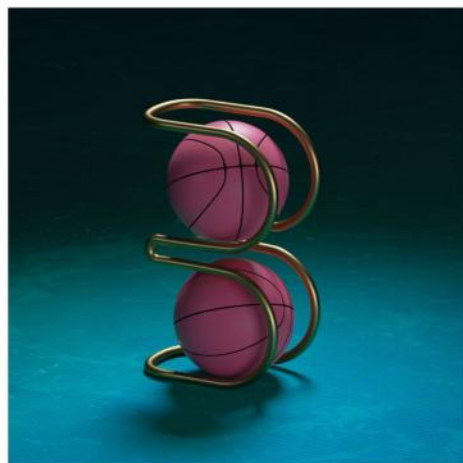
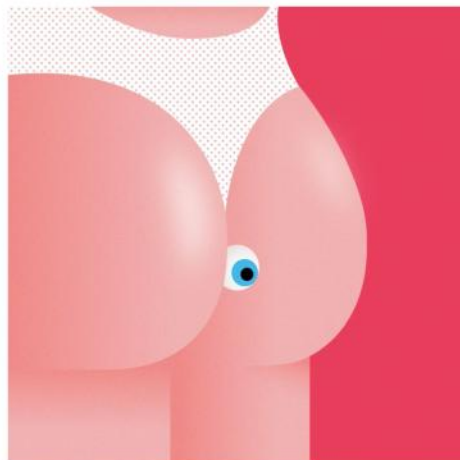
Daniel Aristizábal is a graphic designer and visual artist from Medellín, Colombia. His work focuses on surreal and odd imagery that speaks about his inner world and how he envisions life. He describes it as "a journal on my quest to find and create beauty, which is perhaps my biggest obsession."

Aristizábal sees Instagram as a great way to gain an audience who engage directly with his art and experiments. It also allows him to discover talented artists and inspirational feeds.

"I believe I'm a very moody person, and these swings are reflected in my work and subsequently in my feed," he admits. "I can trace moments of joy, sadness, confusion, and curiosity just by looking at the colours and themes of my Instagram account."

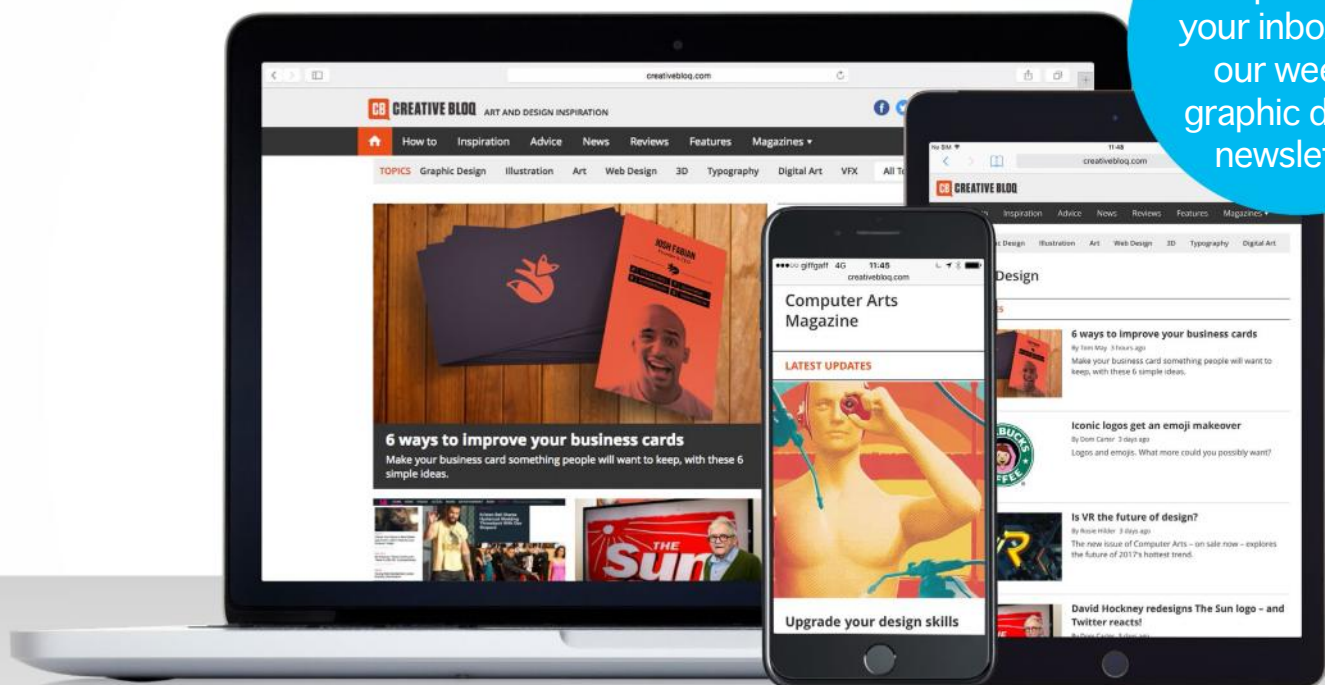


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MATT BAXTER

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
BAXTER AND BAILEY

www.baxterandbailey.co.uk

Matt is creative director of award-winning brand design studio Baxter and Bailey, based in Brighton. Over his 22-year career, he has worked with brands all over the world – his favourites include Land Securities, The Body Shop and The Australian Ballet.



ROSIE HILDER

OPERATIONS EDITOR
COMPUTER ARTS

www.rosiehilder.com

Rosie is a journalist and editor. She joined the CA team in 2016, after working as deputy editor of Time Out Buenos Aires in Argentina. On page 23, she reveals her editing nightmares, and why her new year's resolution is to take more care of herself.

DESIGN MATTERS: What are your new year's resolutions for 2018 – page 22

PLUS: We dissect Moonpig's rebrand, created by its in-house team and Ian Styles – page 24

Illustrations:
Anna Higgie
www.annahiggie.co.uk

ESSAY



Pause for thought

Baxter and Bailey's creative director, **Matt Baxter**, argues that the best designers always make time to think

Lately, I've been thinking about thinking. Almost every weekday morning, I walk downhill all the way (and consequently less lovely on the homeward leg), and is a half-hour window to get my thoughts in order before diving into the emails, phone calls, catch-ups, discussions and the demands of the studio day. Every morning for the past week, I've walked past the same flyposter. It appears to be promoting a gallery show and it says this, in glitchy and distressed uppercase typography: **KEEP MOVING, STOP THINKING.**

The poster achieved exactly half of its stated aim, in that I did indeed keep moving. But what it failed to convince me to do was to stop thinking. In fact, it did the opposite. And what it made me start thinking was: 'Get off my case, glitchy typographic poster, we need more thinking not less.' In fact, other than perhaps JUMP IN THIS POOL OF LAVA or POP YOUR HEAD INSIDE THIS JUICER, I can't think of many all-caps commands that are more guaranteed to keep me moving very fast in the opposite direction while thinking very hard.

KEEP MOVING, STOP THINKING is all very well if you're running away from bees or the Terminator. And while it's true that in this industry, the ability to move – to develop, to evolve, to move forwards towards a solution, to relentlessly pursue an idea – are all vitally important attributes, what we really need are thinkers. The best designers are thinking designers. All of my design heroes (and I'm guessing some of yours too) are thinkers. Some are conceptual thinkers with one foot in the fine art or craft camps – people like Alan Fletcher, Tibor Kalman, Jim Sutherland, Vaughan Oliver or Paula Scher. And some are more commercial thinkers, always with an eye on the brand or the system – people like Michael Johnson, Michael Bierut or Margaret Calvert. What unites this disparate bunch of geni is a thoughtfulness in their work: they make brainy, deep work that means something to them, their clients and their clients' audiences.

And while I'm as easily seduced by a beautiful aesthetic as the next fickle designer (and just as likely to exclaim: 'Ooh, just look at that fluoro spot colour and foil detailing!'), the design work that really delights me is the stuff that's clearly been thought about. When I see thoughtful, clever or intelligent work, the reaction isn't quite, 'I wish I'd done that', but more: 'I wish I'd thought of that.'

When we founded Baxter and Bailey five years ago, we decided straight away to build a thoughtful

business. The first thing we did, before buying a Mac or a chair or a bookshelf or a bag of coffee beans, was to sit down for a day in a borrowed Covent Garden meeting room and design a thoughtful business plan. We thought hard about client sectors that we already enjoyed working in or had good track record in, and we actively avoided sectors we didn't like. We thought hard about mistakes we'd made in our design pasts and made firm commitments not to repeat them.

When thinking about and writing this business plan, we also tried to ensure that the design business we were creating allowed us to be thoughtful outside of the studio too. Dom and I were both already dads by this point and consequently were becoming experts in dad jokes and dad dancing, and were in danger of developing an irrational fondness for fleeces. So we committed to think hard about ways in which our business could be ambitious, brave and brilliant while allowing us to be good parents too. We were keen not to fall into all of those classic design studio shabby habits: habitual late hours, weekend working, neglectful parenting. And while this thoughtful approach doesn't always work perfectly in practice – I'm typing this on a Sunday afternoon – we're giving out-of-hours thoughtfulness our best shot.

In recent years, as the studio has grown, this thoughtful approach is still embedded in our DNA and informs how we look out for great new designers. We're firm believers that good designers are thinking designers. I'd go a bit further, and say that designers who think deeply and widely about their work are already strategists in the broadest sense. They think about how the work meets the brief, how clearly it will communicate, how well it marries up with the brand strategy or aims or ambitions. And, if they're really good, they'll think about all of this carefully and make it look brilliant too. And if they're nice people with excellent taste in biscuits too, we're sold.

Maybe it's time for a flyposting campaign of our own. I can see it now: clean, clear, bold and brilliant all-caps typography. Not a glitch or a distressed texture in sight. And the copy? **KEEP MOVING BY ALL MEANS, BUT FOR GAWD'S SAKE, THINK! ■**

Is thoughtfulness important to your design practice? Tweet your thoughts to @ComputerArts using #DesignMatters

Designers who think deeply and widely about their work are already strategists in the broadest sense. They think about how the work meets the brief, and marries with the brand strategy

DISCUSSION

What are your New Year's resolutions for 2018?



JANNE EGELAND
Design and marketing manager,
Data Design System
www.janneegeland.com



"Less Netflix and chill, more design and thrill. I have to admit that I've been spending far too much time binge watching one series after the next over the past few years, and I really want to cut down and start putting my personal design projects first. One of the things that I rarely get to do in my day job is animation, and it's something I really miss doing. It's work I've always found enjoyable and creatively revitalising. That's why I've decided to set myself a doodle challenge for the next year: one animated doodle every month. Partly because I don't want to lose the skills I already have, but more importantly to gain some new ones too."



LEANNE MALLINDER
Freelance graphic designer
www.leannemallinder.co.uk



"For me, this January marks surviving two years of self-employment. Working as a freelancer can be somewhat feast or famine – either I'm too busy for side projects, or I'm spending my quieter periods trying to drum up more work, feeling guilty at the prospect of spending a couple of days learning something new. Entering year two with regular clients and a more consistent workflow feels like a good time for some creative resolutions – to learn some of the other Adobe CC apps that I already pay for, practise hand lettering more and improve my photography skills. I also need to just pick up a pencil or pen and draw more, even if no one sees it but me."



MATTHEW TWEDDLE
Co-founder and CD, Only
www.onlystudio.co.uk



"It's very easy when you're running a small studio to become completely consumed by the job you're working on. Often weeks go by in a relentless pursuit for perfection as everything else is put on hold. One thing I've learnt over the last few years, is that your best work rarely comes from working in this way. In 2018, I would like to remember to take a step back, even when the pressure is on. If something isn't working, not to force it – and to give myself the time to make sure it's right. To try and ensure this happens, I'm moving our daily studio catch ups to the end of the day – the idea being that this should act as a consistent reminder to go home and rest."

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CATHERINE THEO
To study JavaScript for my multimedia course, and to finish up my illustration series, where I push myself to experiment with different techniques.



LOUISE SPANGET-LARSEN
I want to take some more responsibility, and use my design skills to solve social and environmental issues. We need better, not more.



NATHAN DUSO
To work in my sketch book every day. Not just once a month.



@T_MMY PARKER
To be more selective with the work I take on, so I don't burn out.



@GHOSTCOGS
To stop being so scared that I'm not good enough. I can do this.

COLUMN



Why this year's about me

CA's operations editor **Rosie Hilder**
on why she's prioritising her wellbeing

Every year, I make the same new year's resolution: to stop biting my nails. I then badly paint my poor stubs for about a week until my boyfriend complains of the smell of nail polish remover and I have an excuse to give in.

This year, I'm not bothering with the facade. I've finally accepted that biting my nails is linked to anxiety, and if I've got any hope of growing them, I'd better address the underlying issue instead.

Like many creatives, I'm a perfectionist, and this urge for perfection is both a blessing and a curse. While it means I strive to do the best job I possibly can, sometimes I completely lose perspective. My nightmares are made of misplaced apostrophes, misspelt names and unchecked facts. Just the thought of a past mistake is enough to send me on a spiral of despair, and while I know I'm good at my job, all it takes is one error and I'll disregard a whole project as a failure.

That creative drive also means I get obsessed easily. I get so gripped by an idea that I find it hard to think or talk about anything else. The problem for me comes when my sleep is disturbed – that's my red flag, and I have to remind myself to do something about it before the obsession quickly becomes sleep itself. How many hours did I get last night? Why did I wake up at 3am? Can I get away with cancelling

everything until I get a solid eight hours? (Sorry people with young children, but some of us are still chasing that dream.)

The more I talk about this, the more I find that it's not just me. I've also come to realise that while some of my best ideas have been in the middle of the night, I'm perfectly capable of thinking and creating during working hours, as long as I'm well-rested. A surplus of ideas is useless if you're too tired to execute them properly.

I think we all need to remember that however important we think our work is, a job is just a job. It's not worth losing sleep over. It's not worth working yourself to the bone and neglecting everything and everyone else, not worth feeling the need to check your emails outside of work hours. Most of all, it's not worth neglecting yourself.

That's why this year, my new year's resolution is to make a conscious effort to tackle my anxiety head on, and give myself both the time and space to do so, regardless of the state of my nails. I'm determined to take more care of myself, to take a step back when I feel things getting on top of me, to prioritise a good night's sleep and to find more time to do the things I love, outside of work. I urge you to do the same. ■

How are you going to take better care of yourself this year? Tweet your thoughts @ComputerArts using #DesignMatters

REBRAND FOCUS



Focus on: Moonpig rebrand

We bring you three perspectives on the gift site's fresh identity



IAN STYLES
Founder and creative
director, Ian Styles
www.ianstyles.com



**CHRISTOPHER
COLOURYUM**
Graphic designer
www.colouryum.com

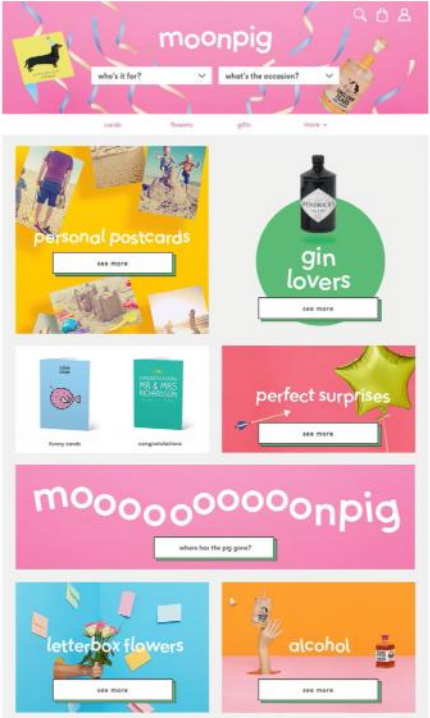


MATTHEW HAUKE
Senior designer, BrandPie
www.brandpie.com

"Working with Moonpig's creative director James Turner and his in-house design team, my own team and I adopted an 'inside-out' approach to this rebrand. Basing ourselves in Moonpig's office, surrounded by its weird and wonderful products, we quickly got to understand the company, its customers and culture. We interpreted Moonpig's new positioning into a simple idea: 'Life is more light-hearted on the moon.' With this thinking at the core, we were able to entice people into our weightless world. A key part of this was the commission of a bespoke font by Face37 in three styles: lift, wobble and shake. To create more stretch to the visual identity we designed a fun app icon – our pig's snout – based on the two 'O's, and an extended version of the logotype, to interact with its signature jingle."

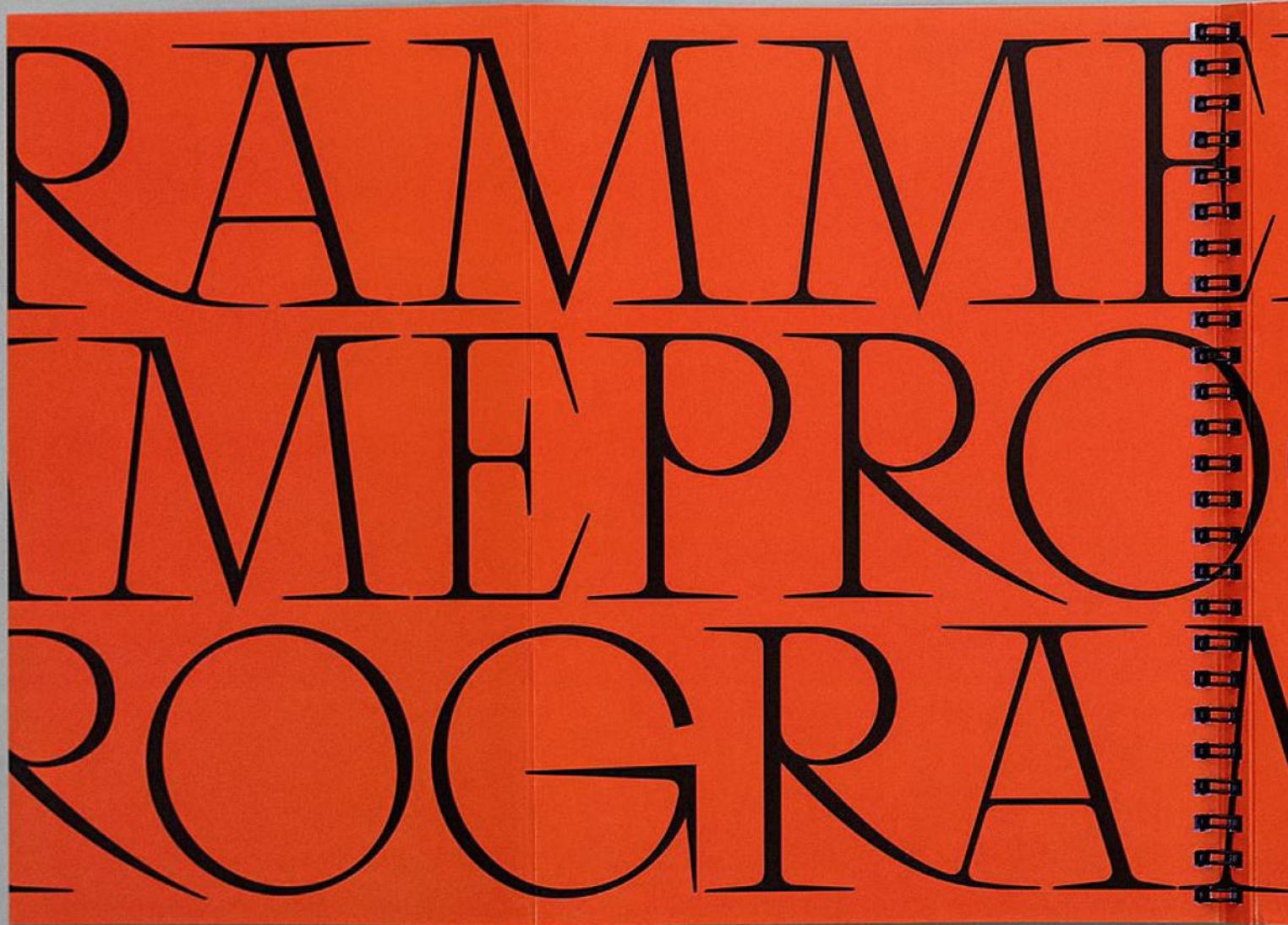
"This is a fantastic example of concept-driven branding. Whoever came up with the snout lockup, I tip my hat to you for keeping a strong playful element without that godawful illustration. Bravo. I also love the animation application of the logo to give the sense of space. This is a really solid rebrand and the application of it is gorgeous. One thing I was interested to see is whether the design team would change the jingle to match the dropping of the .com 'moooonpig dot com'. (Sorry if that's now looping in your head.) Interestingly, they have dropped the '.com' and replaced it with a whistle. I'm unsure how this will pan out, and whether they will drop all the spoken words for the tonal melody of it all, so it currently seems a bit unfinished."

"I never minded the charmingly kitsch original brand of Moonpig. Yes, it wasn't particularly sophisticated, but it still tried to convey a sense of joy and wonder for gift giving. But like many dot-com era brands, its identity aged, and to keep up with modern gift-focused outlets such as Not On The High Street and Etsy, it desperately needed to be updated. The rebrand shoots for the moon and nails it – striking a fantastic balance between sophistication and playfulness. It's charming, clever and modern, allowing it to sit with other gift sites easily. The playful typography, the soft pastel colours, the snout icon – all exemplify the joyful sense of gift giving in an incredibly simple manner. More importantly, it transitions Moonpig from a last-minute, quick-fix solution for cards into the go-to place for gift giving."



The logotype has been playfully redesigned as a subtle reference to a pig's snout. Moonpig's brand voice has also been overhauled, using cheeky humour to "bring a glimpse of life on the moon".





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TYPOGRAPHIC TAPESTRY

ATYPI IDENTITY

by Julien Hébert

www.julienhebert.net

Entrusted with the design of the 2017 identity for Montreal-based typography conference ATypI, graphic designer Julien Hébert took the opportunity to challenge the traditional conventions of type design. Channelling Montreal's "multiple personalities", Hébert pulled together a wide variety of loud typefaces and beautiful custom lettering to create a joyful typographic tapestry.

"The design had to convey Montreal's dualities, quirkiness and boldness," recalls Hébert. "I wanted each element of the identity to feel special, while maintaining a common graphic language. As the communications leading to the event were numerous and published over very long period, it was crucial to create a flexible system that wasn't redundant."





A variety of different typefaces were used throughout the identity to channel the “multiple personalities” of the event’s city, Montreal.

The programme booklet for the 61st edition of the ATypi conference sports elegant custom lettering.

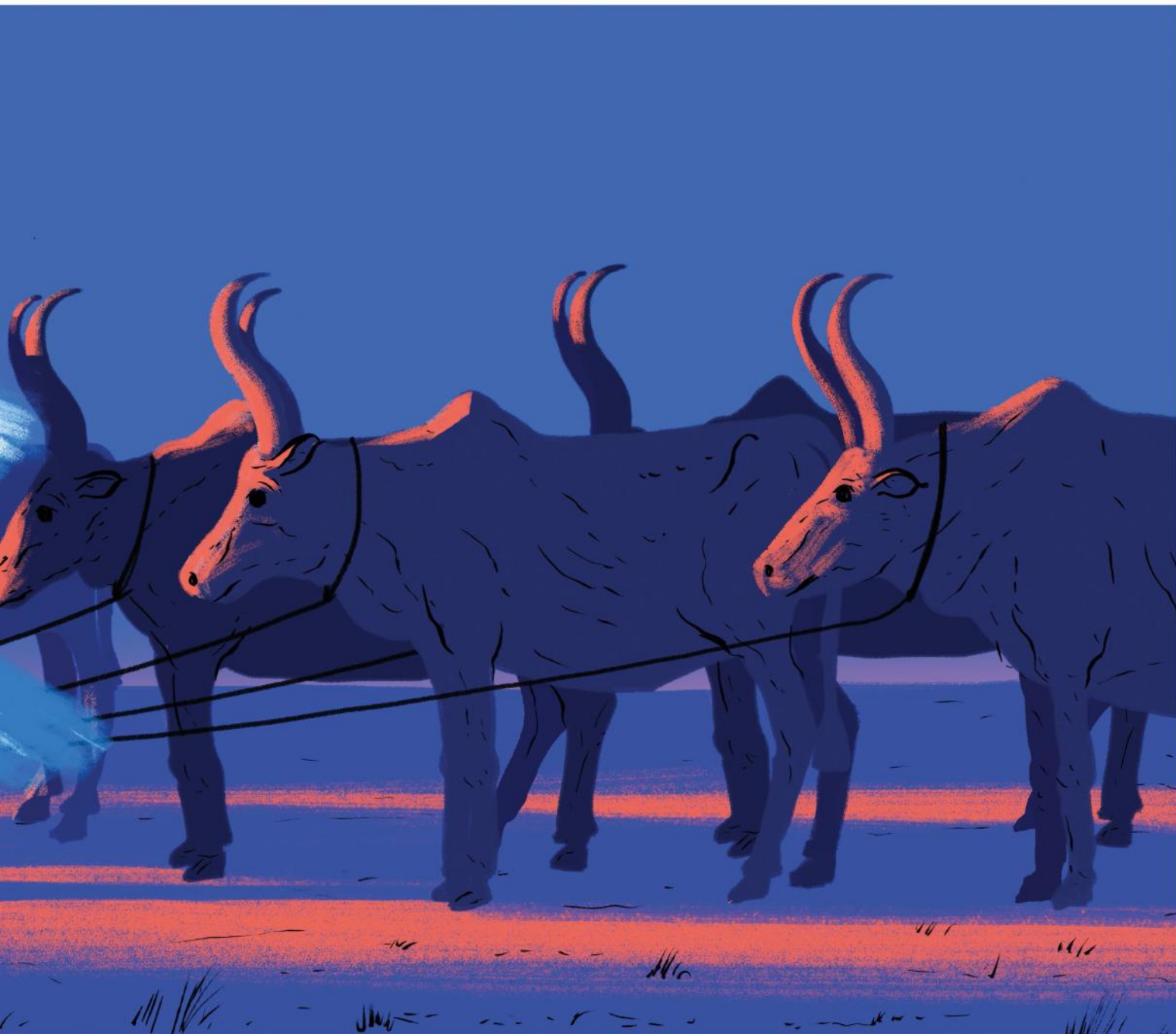
“My favourite part is the posters featuring custom lettering, and Guillon, the secondary typeface by Feedtype,” says Julien Hébert.

Inside the programme, information about the event sits alongside pages of stunning typographic treatments.

The typographic choices behind the schedule design reflect the theme of the event: atypical.

The logo balances exaggerated letterforms with perfect spacing to create an experimental, contemporary final design.





POIGNANT TONES

I AM TOO YOUNG TO MARRY YOU

by Paul Blow

www.paulblow.com

Illustrator Paul Blow tested his narrative capabilities during a recent project with the International Rescue Committee (IRC), which helps those affected by the world's worst humanitarian crises. Briefed via his agent Handsome Frank to produce three web-based illustrations for an article on forced marriage – entitled 'I am too young to marry you' – he worked closely with the IRC team to bring to life an interview in Rumbek with 'Rachel' and her 13-year-old daughter 'Helena'.

"I broke the story down into three events: the treatment of the young girl as a commodity, the threat of violence she had to endure and the final homecoming," explains Blow. "I wanted to convey a strong sense of place, which involved researching and absorbing the South Sudanese landscape. I also wanted the young girl to be identified quickly and graphically, so the use of a wedding dress was simple and effective."

THE SCARY ROOM

SPIN/ADVENTURES IN TYPOGRAPHY 2

by Unit Editions

www.spin.co.uk

London design studio Spin embarked on a journey into typography's darkest recesses in the second issue of Spin/Adventures in Typography, aiming to promote an interest in experimental design and typography.

"Our aesthetic approach was driven by play, trial and error, and a desire to go into what we call 'the scary room,'" says Spin's Tony Brook. "That said, we hoped to make it enjoyable to engage with."

Making the physical experiments work was challenging at times, he admits. "We didn't really have a clear idea of where we were heading." However, these are his favourite parts of the final publication. "It was so exciting and kind of hilarious to see them coming together," he adds. "They are reassuringly unexpected and weird."



SPIN / Adventures in typography

DR FRANKENSTEIN'S HELVETICA

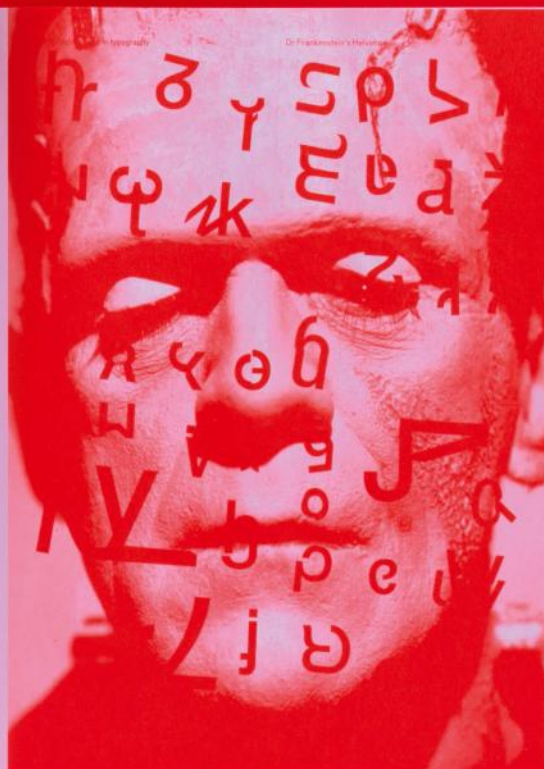
The Helvetica reverie continues. Was there, we wondered, a drop of creative juice left to be squeezed out of the limp and battered body? A dead cat bounce, one final hurrah?

As the pulse grows weaker, could some urgent, drastic intervention, performed by skilled graphic surgeons help a dire situation? By the taking of a glimmering razor-sharp 10a scalpel blade and some injudicious, delicious, malicious manhandling, could the old girl be rescued? Was there a slim hope that the slicing and dicing of the grande old dame may bring her crapulous corpse, hideously distorted, back to life? I'm sure that similar thoughts were entertained by Dr Frankenstein for his, by happy coincidence, Swiss monster.

Well, we gave it a go.

Boris Karloff who played Frankenstein's monster in the 1931 film 'Frankenstein' (pictured opposite) was born in Castleford, a suburb of South London, and originally appeared as the monster of William Henry Pryn. He was very proud of his English heritage and by all accounts won a Cricket ball, often winning the game of the Great Cricket ground, also in South London.

The following text comes from the trailer for the film.



SPIN / Adventures in typography

Dr Frankenstein's Helvetica

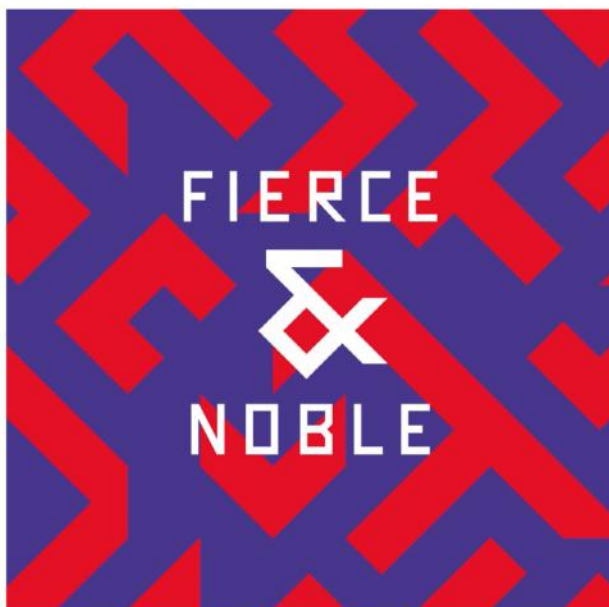
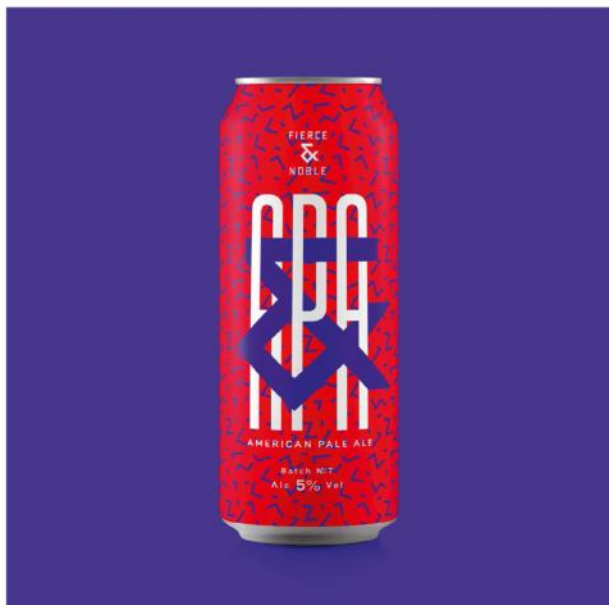


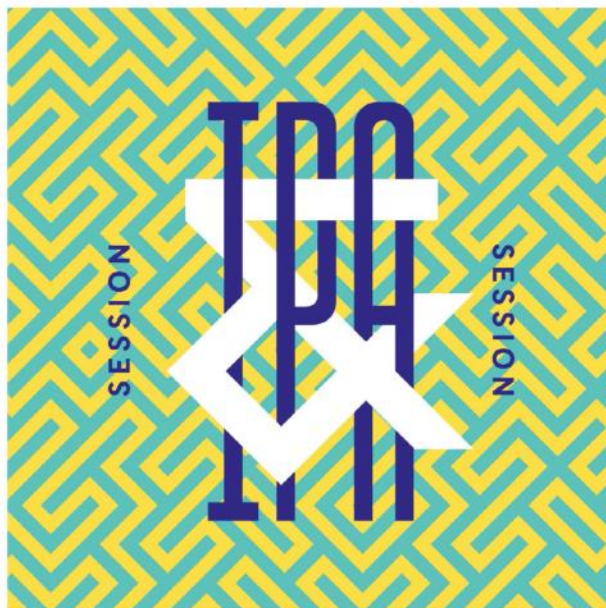
See Karloff in his most terrifying performance... as the Banzai monster... and you'll know why there's also a reason he's another... Frankenstein

SPIN / Adventures in typography

Dr Frankenstein's Helvetica







CRAFTY BRANDING

FIERCE & NOBLE IDENTITY

by Halo

www.wearehalo.co.uk

Bristol studio Halo was approached to create a strategy, name, brand identity and packaging for a new craft brewery in St Werburghs, Bristol. The name – Fierce & Noble – represents the brewery team's fierce independence and respect for the heritage of the craft, while the bold creative, custom type and bespoke patterns reflect the local vibrancy of its location.

"The product needed to jump out on bar and shelf," explains Halo design director Andy German. "And what with the brewery being in a creative vibrant area of Bristol with other craft breweries in it, it made sense for the building to stand out and be seen. The main pattern for the brand was based around the ampersand we made – my eyes went a bit fuzzy creating this one."



ENCRYPTED TYPE

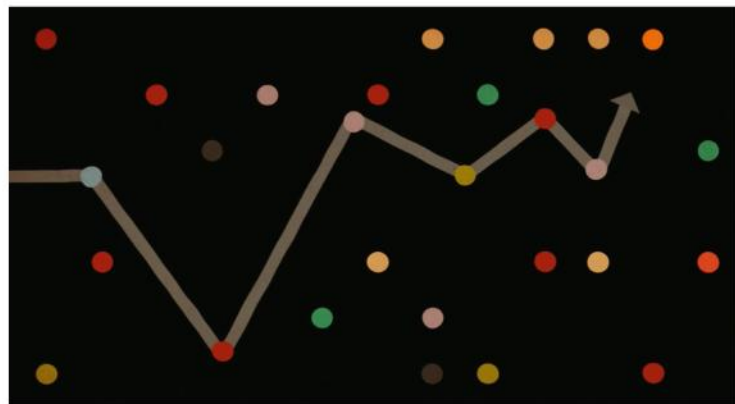
IBM ILLUSTRATION

by Sawdust

www.madebysawdust.co.uk

When IBM Systems Magazine asked Sawdust to illustrate an article about a paradigm shift in the industry – from selective encryption, to simply encrypting everything – the duo looked to the cyber world for inspiration. “We were asked to visualise the text ‘Paradigm Shift to Pervasive Encryption’ in a way that spoke to the written piece,” recalls designer Rob Gonzalez. “We liked the idea of super computers and giant servers being the typography – who wouldn’t?”

Finding a balance between image and type, proved challenging. “It’s a fine line and often what can happen is one becomes compromised by the other,” adds designer Jonathan Quainton. “That balance is always a challenge to get right.”



UPS AND DOWNS

WHAT IS BIPOLAR DISORDER?

by Uncle Ginger

www.uncleginger.com

Commissioned by TED-Ed – TED’s youth and education initiative – UK animation studio Uncle Ginger created an animation responding to the script by Helen M. Farrell, ‘What is Bipolar Disorder?’

“We wanted to find a way to aid the script by simply and sensitively communicating the disorder to people with little knowledge of it, without oversimplifying or belittling the huge effect it has on so many people on a daily basis,” explains Uncle Ginger co-founder Hugh Cowling.

“We looked initially at ‘60s and ‘70s medical journal and book cover design for the way they intimately communicate subject matter that’s both poignant and complex,” adds co-founder Owen Gent.

The pair quickly discovered that by limiting themselves to just shape, colour, motion and sound, there was very little to hide behind. “Each tiny detail had to be just right,” says Cowling.





LOOKALIKE LABELLING

STEFANO SAUCES BRANDING

by lg2

www.lg2.com

Montreal-based agency lg2 took an original approach to its branding of the first ready-to-eat products from well-known chef Stefano Faita and his partner Michele Forgione. Featuring a jovial, energetic caricature of Faita, the identity gives each sauce a unique typographic treatment – with nutritional and legal information presented in an unusual vertical fashion outside the shape.

“It was a major challenge to differentiate the brand in this type of category, where all brands merge into one,” says David Kessous, creative director at lg2. “The concept’s originality produced a real, appealing identity and packaging that leaps out.”



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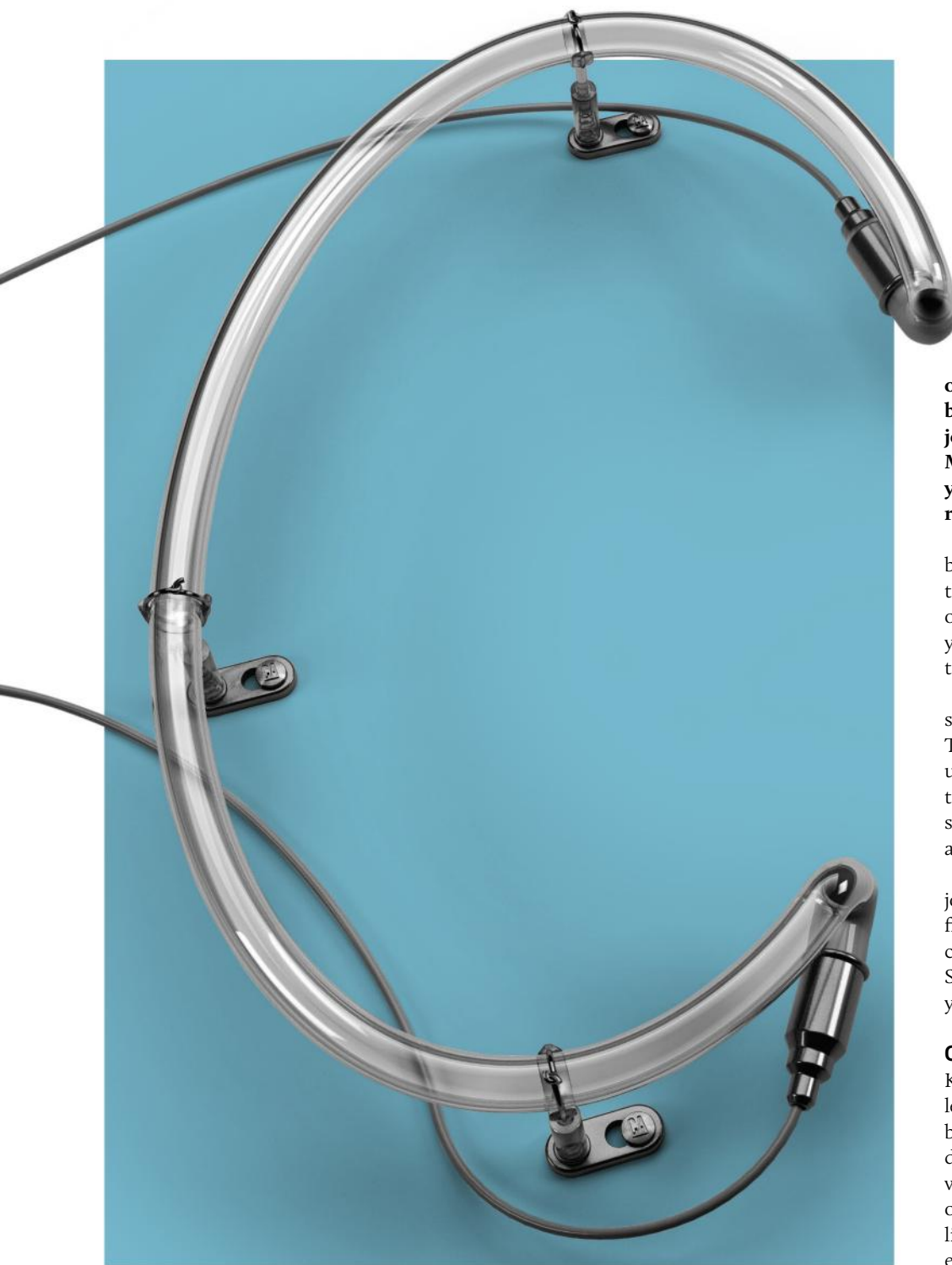
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ould your current role be holding you back? What do you want from your job this year? Progression? New skills? More experience under your belt? Maybe you're motivated by the prospect of a pay rise, or recognition from your peers.

No job is perfect. But if you're no longer being creatively challenged at work, or feel that your skills aren't being fully utilised or appreciated – or you're just not giving it your all anymore – we have good news: there's never been a better time to quit.

First, a caveat: we don't mean wildly sticking one to your boss after Christmas. These are politically and economically unpredictable times, after all. We're talking about using your initiative to find something more rewarding – and there are plenty of opportunities out there.

According to Gov.uk, the number of jobs in the UK's creative industries rose by five per cent in 2016, compared to a 1.2 per cent increase in the wider UK workforce. So what are your options? And how can you make them happen?

CHANGE STUDIOS

Kath Tudball spent almost 15 years at leading London agency Johnson Banks before joining The Partners as design director in early 2016. "I chose to move on when I did because the small physical size of the agency meant there was a natural limit to how far I could progress," she explains. "Joining a larger company gave

FEATURED CREATIVES



KATH TUDBALL
Design director at The Partners since 2016,

Kath was previously a senior designer and team leader at Johnson Banks.
www.the-partners.com



SIMON WATERFALL
Simon is creative director and head of

operations at Samara, Airbnb's in-house design and innovation studio.
www.samara.com



TOM MOLONEY
Tom is a senior brand strategist at London's Koto.

Prior to this, he worked in client services and strategy for NB Studio.
www.studiokoto.co



STUART YOUNGS
Founder and creative director of Studio Texture

and Texture AI, Stuart was previously a partner at brand consultancy Purpose.
www.bit.ly/ca275_youngs



REISS HINDS
Currently brand strategist at Studio BLUP, Reiss joined the

London agency as a junior designer on a three-month placement in 2017.
www.studioblup.com



HOW TO SCOPE OUT THE COMPETITION

FIVE WAYS TO EXPAND YOUR CONTACTS BOOK AND FIND YOUR NEXT STUDIO

01 LOOK ONLINE

"Whilst the market is far more complex than it used to be," begins Stuart Youngs, "it's still comparatively small and there are so many more ways to discover who's interesting through blogs, social media, magazines and awards, for example."

02 GO TO EVENTS

The best way to scope out the competition, though, is real life networking. "We're an industry awash with events," says Youngs. "My advice is to get to them and get chatting. You'll learn and you'll connect."

03 ENGAGE WITH THE COMMUNITY

"Engage in the wider creative community in any way you can," agrees Kath Tudball. "Find your voice on social media, immerse yourself in creative culture, attend the talks, ask questions, have an opinion and share it. Get out there and talk to people."

04 CHECK CA'S UK STUDIO RANKINGS

Every autumn, we poll Britain's leading creative directors and studio founders to find out which studios they've been most impressed by over the last 12 months. The results feed into our annual UK Studio Rankings Top 50, which makes for valuable reading if you're looking for a new job. See CA issue 272 or read the latest list online: www.creativebloq.com/features/uk-top-50-studios

05 PUT OUT CONTENT

Don't just scope out the competition, let them see you, too. "Put out content on a daily basis on every visual platform – Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube – that's relevant to your discipline," says Reiss Hinds. "Also, use LinkedIn and a personal blog to get your work in front of every potential new employer that your work is congruent with."

me the opportunity to lead my own team, work across more projects, experience a wider client mix and take on greater overall responsibility."

She says that one of the biggest dangers of staying at a studio too long is becoming too comfortable, and not being creatively challenged. "Too much of the same routine can lead to complacency and, at worst, stagnation," she says. "It's better to always feel just a little bit scared. Doing unfamiliar things may be daunting, but it's also incredibly motivating. If you don't have enough new challenges or opportunities coming your way, try to create them. But if that doesn't work, it might be time to move on."

Her best advice for finding the perfect new job is to do your research. Find out as much as you can about the agencies

"IF YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH OPPORTUNITIES COMING YOUR WAY, TRY TO CREATE THEM"

KATH TUDBALL
DESIGN DIRECTOR, THE PARTNERS

FIVE WAYS TO GET A PROMOTION

HOW TO CHANNEL CAREER RESTLESSNESS INTO SOMETHING PRODUCTIVE

01 KNOW YOUR GOAL

Promotions don't just occur with time anymore. You must clearly demonstrate how you meet the requirements of a new role – so make sure you know where you want to be and exactly what that position entails, and then look to take on more responsibility in your current job.

02 CHANGE HOW THE STUDIO WORKS

One of the best ways to prove your value is to make your studio more efficient or save the team money. Pay attention to processes, and look to other departments or studios for inspiration. As well as saving resources, streamlining workflow also shows an understanding of the bigger picture.

03 SEEK FEEDBACK

You'll need to get your boss on side for a promotion, so book a meeting to find out what you need to do to get to a higher level within your studio. Ask about your manager's objectives, too, so you can focus on helping them be successful. Communication is key, so seek feedback from your boss as well as other team members.

04 DEMONSTRATE COMMITMENT

Striking a home-life balance is important, but if a crucial project deadline is looming, volunteering to work late – or simply to take on more work or help in an area outside your normal job role – shows commitment. (Just make sure working late doesn't become expected.)

05 USE YOUR INITIATIVE

Don't sit around waiting to be told what to do – if you can see a way to help a project or add value, suggest it. A well-timed 'I noticed that [certain task] needs doing – I'll do that now' will go further than you might think.

that interest you and aim for the ones whose work, philosophy and overall approach you genuinely admire. "Real enthusiasm and shared passions will come across and increase the chances of a great fit," she points out. "So who do you really want to work for, and why?"

She continues. "Also, don't be shy – try getting in touch directly with the people you admire for an informal chat. A personal connection or recommendation of some sort always helps. Just remember: don't act like a stalker."

Koto senior brand strategist Tom Moloney agrees that asking people you admire for career advice is a good move. "Ask your mates and colleagues who they rate; where they've worked; who they know. Just don't say, 'I'm thinking about moving on...' first," he laughs. "Also, get your shit together – your CV, website, portfolio; whatever it is. There's no shortcut. Just start doing it."

Moloney took the opportunity to refocus his career by moving to Koto in September, after six years at NB Studio. "It was a combination of things: a very personal desire for a new challenge, and a professional ambition to focus on brand strategy," he explains. "By moving to Koto, I was able to achieve both of these."

He agrees that when it comes to knowing it's time to move on from your current role, there are warning signs to watch out for. "If you're not looking forward to going to work the majority of the time, or your motivation is dropping and you know that you're not giving the role or your work your best effort, then it's time to move on," he says. "But that doesn't mean that it's easy to leave somewhere, or to find a new job."

This is especially true if you've been out of the job-seeking game for a while, or you've been too comfortable in one role for too long. Many long-serving employees report a creeping uneasiness about the transferable value of their

specific skills. If you feel like this, it's a clear sign that you're in danger of becoming institutionalised – and the only way to tackle it is to initiate change.

START YOUR OWN STUDIO

If you're not feeling fully satisfied in your current position, another option is to start your own studio – which is exactly what Studio Texture founder Stuart Youngs did in March 2017. Previously a partner at brand consultancy Purpose, he launched Texture for one reason: autonomy.

"I believe it's crucial for studios to explore, experiment and take risks in pursuit of progress," he explains. "It's our creativity and ability to innovate that makes us attractive to clients. But to pioneer takes time, investment and an awful lot of practice. In my experience, that's more difficult to do in a studio with bigger overheads and demands, where failure is often not an option."

In his new role, Youngs is no longer accountable to a board. He has sole accountability to his family, team and clients. And although he admits this is far more pressure, he can now move faster and is free to make mistakes. "It's sharpened the mind and, interestingly, made me more purposeful," he reflects.

So what about Brexit? Given our current political and economical backdrop, is there an argument for staying secure in a role – even if it isn't creatively satisfying anymore? Not according to Youngs. "The age of security has long since gone," he says. "The world is moving too fast for that. Today, it's essential to be looking to tomorrow."

For Youngs, the single biggest industry threat faced by designers who want to get a new job is fear, and the paralysis it perpetuates. "We can't afford to sit still and hope," he says. "I believe we're on the cusp of the biggest transformation our industry has ever seen. We're about to enter the age, not just of artificial

“I WAS LOOKING FOR A VERY SIMPLE THING: I WANTED TO CHANGE THE WORLD”

S I M O N W A T E R F A L L CREATIVE DIRECTOR, SAMARA



PHOTOGRAPH: @mr_pixelhead

intelligence, but the more profound augmented intelligence. The consequence is even more pressure on creativity and ideas; on originality and distinction – where the machines can’t compete.”

That said, don’t feel you have to move jobs for the sake of it. “Nobody should feel uncomfortable just from being in a studio for a long period of time,” he points out. “If you’re challenged, progressing and fulfilled, you should stay put. The grass isn’t greener. Promise.”

And don’t move purely for money. “If you’re moving for money, you’re missing the point. Move for opportunity. Money will follow if you pick the right opportunities and you’ll be much happier.”

GET A PROMOTION

Of course, you don’t have to change studios to find new opportunities. Your studio might not be advertising new job roles, but if you can make yourself invaluable to the team, you’re in a strong position to negotiate a promotion.

Reiss Hinds started at multi-disciplinary design agency BLUP on a three-month placement as a junior designer. During that time, he paid attention to the daily process and workflows used by his directors. “Email was the biggest one,” he recalls. “We were going back and forth so many times for alterations, so instead I suggested that we use Basecamp as our project management tool. It’s cut down our email time and kept all client services projects in one place.”

He continues: “I tried to provide my directors with as much value as possible – no job was too large for me to tackle. When my three months came to an end, I suggested that there was a need in the business for someone to help streamline and execute on brand strategy, for both our clients and for Studio BLUP’s brand.”

His advice? “Find a gap in either the market or in someone else’s business that you know you can enhance, and



FOUR WAYS TO GO IT ALONE INSTEAD

CAN'T FIND A FULL-TIME JOB? HERE ARE SOME OTHER OPTIONS FOR 2018

01 GO FREELANCE

If it's really time to move on from your current job but you can find the right opportunity, then one option is to go freelance. Get yourself a website, business cards and separate business bank account, and once you've got some clients you're good to go. (For more info, read Four Routes into Freelance Life, see CA 272.)

02 TAKE ON SHIFTS

Your favourite local agency might not be hiring – but they might occasionally need holiday cover or extra resource for a big project. If you can become a trusted freelancer through shift work, you'll be first in line when a suitable position does come up. And if nothing else, you'll have broadened your portfolio.

03 SET UP YOUR OWN CREATIVE BUSINESS

Not sure about going it alone? Then pool your resources and set up a collective or studio. With the latter option it's a good idea to seek out a business partner with complementary skills to yours – and make sure you draw up a contract, too.

04 DO SOME PRO BONO WORK

Charity work can be a good way to balance an unsatisfactory day job. If you pick the right project, it'll give you valuable experience and develop your portfolio, making you more employable when that perfect job does come up. So think about where you want to be, and look for a local pro bono project that might help you get there.



“MONEY WILL FOLLOW IF YOU PICK THE RIGHT OPPORTUNITIES AND YOU’LL BE MUCH HAPPIER”

STUART YOUNGS FOUNDER, STUDIO TEXTURE

in return you could end up becoming the next big creative in your space.”

MOVE CLIENT-SIDE

Sometimes finding a better job involves playing the long game, as creative entrepreneur Simon Waterfall explains. The former D&AD president first started talking to Airbnb co-founder Joe Gebbia in 2014. Three years later, it took Waterfall – who's co-founded a number of leading digital studios and consultancies, including Poke, Fray, Social Suicide and Deepend – a total of 29 interviews over six months to land his new job as creative director of Samara, Airbnb's recently launched design and innovation studio.

That many interviews might have put off other candidates, but not Waterfall. So why was he so committed to moving client-side at Airbnb? “I was looking for a very simple thing: I wanted to change the world,” he explains.

“How many places, people or brands can do that? Where are they? What do they do? Have they done it before? When

you address these points, there are only a handful of companies – and most are in Silicon Valley,” he continues. “Working inside means you're already in charge of the biggest asset: the community and audience you want to change.”

When you're aiming for the stars, like Waterfall, reaching your goals isn't going to happen overnight. He says you have to be prepared to really grind – and advises being patient. “Big dreams need time to solidify,” he reasons.

And he agrees that the biggest industry threat to designers isn't the likes of Brexit and a flailing economy, but simply sitting still. “It's the tiny, almost unnoticeable threats that are the real killer,” he says. “Murder by Powerpoint; death by meetings about meetings. Don't go quiet, my friends: scream into the page and tear it up. Good luck 2018.”

**NEXT
MONTH**

10 GOLDEN RULES OF LOGO DESIGN

Logo Design Love founder David Airey reveals his ultimate checklist for a successful modern brand identity.

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● NICK CARSON
Editor, Computer Arts
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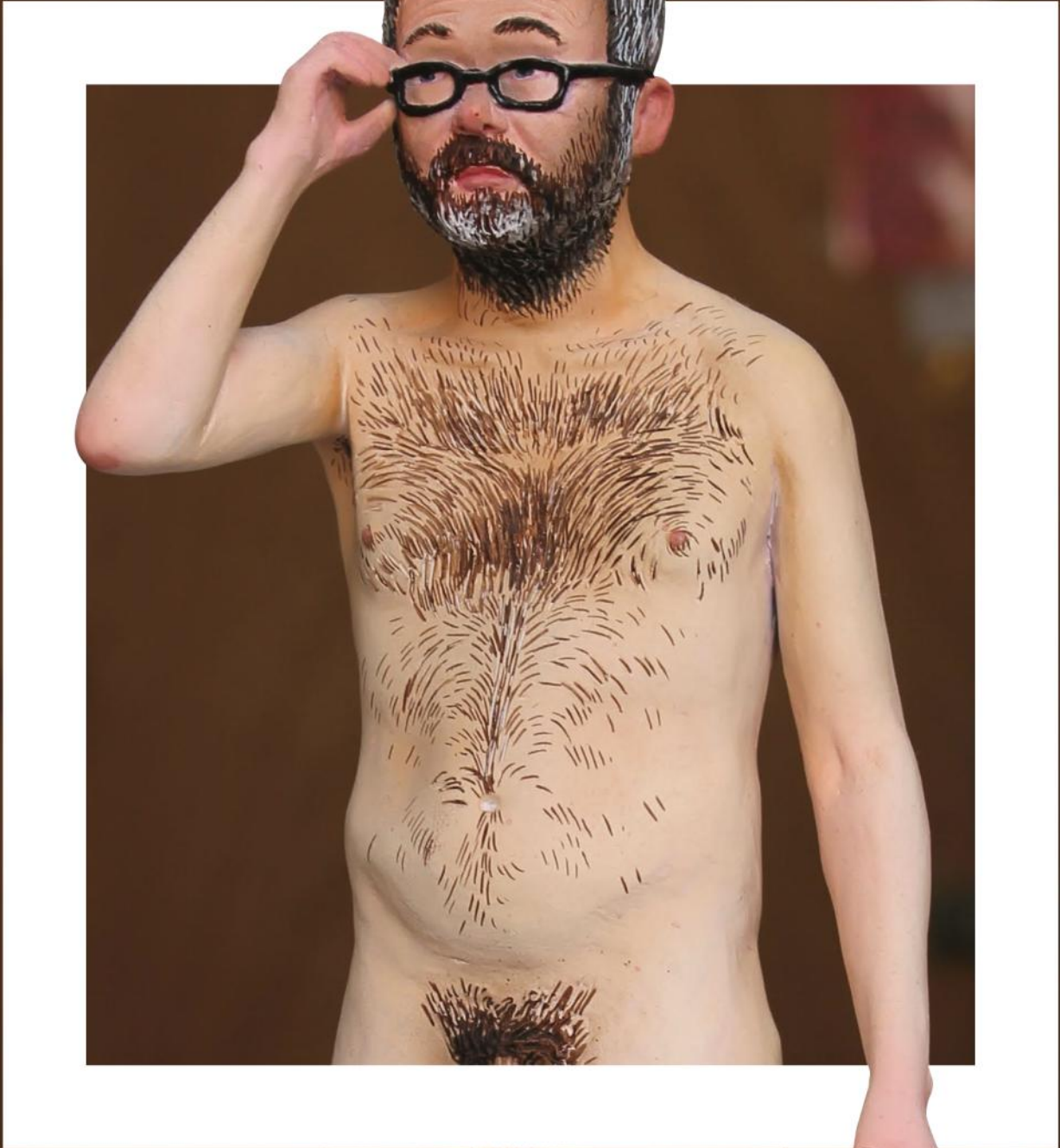
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SKIN DEEP

Some raise a smile, others eyebrows, but one thing's for sure: **Wilfrid Wood's** sculptures are never boring...

WILFRID WOOD _ London-born Wilfrid grew up in rural Sussex, before studying graphics at Central St Martins. After a stint in publishing, he trained as a 'headbuilder' for satirical TV show Spitting Image, then set up shop as a freelance sculptor, now based in Hackney Wick. His work is provocative and playful in equal measure, and some pieces may cause offence to some readers. See more at www.wilfridwood.com

■ WORDS: Nick Carson SELF-PORTRAIT: Wilfrid Wood



Facing page:
Theo. Ever
resourceful, Wood
has previously
sourced live
models for his
projects using
dating app Grindr.

Below: Entitled
Transvestite
Selfie, this piece
sits at the more
risqué end of
Wood's portfolio.

Wilfrid Wood doesn't shy away from a bit of artistic nudity, as the piece on the previous page attests. "In all my glory," was the coy one-line response to our request for a self-portrait image.

His portfolio includes some more sexualised curiosities too, that may not be to everyone's taste: Trainer Fetish features a teenager playing with himself while sniffing one of his shoes, and other subjects include rent boys, sex dolls and BDSM.

But much of his less risqué work is pure caricature – some subjects

are celebrities, making use of his experience crafting political puppets for satirical TV show Spitting Image, but increasingly they are the result of private commissions. In other words, people who want to be sculpted, and are happy to pay for the privilege.

One thing's certain: of all the talks at Bristol's Something Good festival in October, Wood was certainly the most memorable – so we were curious to find out more...

What did Spitting Image teach you about the craft of caricature – any lessons you still apply today?

It was a panicky and hilarious job, with tight deadlines, burning hot glue, noxious gases and puppets with squints. I had no technical background and barely knew how to drill a hole. I mainly fitted up eyeballs and blinks – it wasn't very creative – although I did go on to make a few heads and animals.

I got my best practical tip a couple of months ago. I was watching an interview from the '80s with my old boss Roger Law. He simply said that it's not the eyes, or the nose, or any other features that are the key to getting the likeness of someone. It's the overall shape of the head.

Many of your sculptures feature nudity, usually in a comic way, and your experience of sourcing life-drawing models on Grindr was a particularly memorable anecdote. What's the fascination?

Nudity is something you can get away with in art that you can't in everyday life. The only legitimate way most people get to stare at live naked bodies is a life drawing class.

We're all nude, but cover it up with clothes! Of course I love nudity,

who doesn't? Any situation can be enhanced with an element of nudity. Nude nude nude. See, I can't stop saying it now.

You have an artistic family, and you said in your Something Good talk that it was hard to find your own voice. How did you go about it?

I read an interview with the actor Michael Douglas, son of Kirk Douglas, who said 'the children of famous parents tend to be slow developers'. I found it reassuring.

The artists in my family weren't exactly famous, but they were well known within their fields. They were strong personalities and had traditional views about how art should be done. At college, I was very bunged up with these received ideas. I envied people whose parents were accountants, who weren't hamstrung by artistic convention.

I tried to be a designer, then an illustrator, and for a while I wrote a lot of stories – none of which amounted to anything. Aged 30 I started sculpting, which released me. Even so, it's only over the last few years that I feel I'm doing what I really want to.

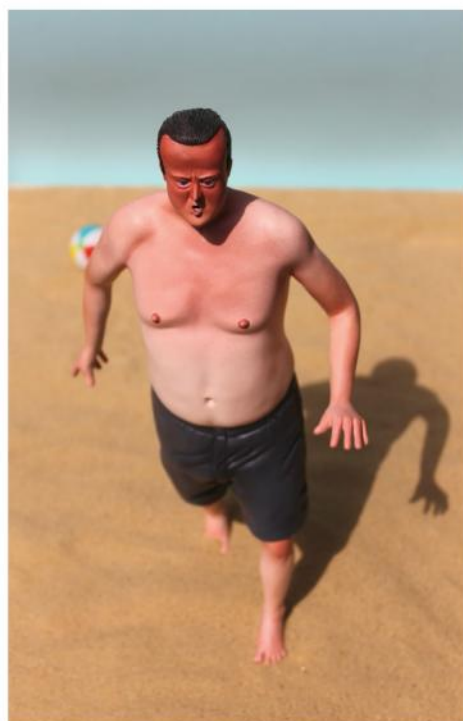
How did you carve a niche for yourself as a satirical sculptor?

There were painters and designers and illustrators in my family, but no sculptors. I think that's one of the reasons I've always liked doing 3D stuff, because it was different.

The satirical bit is influenced by my time at Spitting Image, plus my tendency to try and make jokes. Now I think of myself as more of a portrait artist: I'm mainly drawing and sculpting real people I know rather than celebrities.









Facing page, clockwise from top-left: Freddie Mercury; Roy Hodgson and Harry Redknapp; Mick Jagger; Keith Vaz MP (and rent boy); Caitlyn Jenner as goat deity Baphomet; David Cameron on holiday.

Above: Wood's two Michael Phelps sculptures explore the champion swimmer's distinctive face and physique.

▣ **What's your usual process when creating a new sculpture?**

Getting reference these days is a piece of piss: type it into Google. If it's a private individual I'm sculpting, I photograph them, then do some drawing, sometimes make a rough maquette, and go on to make the finished thing from polymer clay.

I don't do loads of drawings, a lot of the development goes into the actual sculpture. One annoying thing is when the maquette turns out to be more immediate and dynamic than the finished thing. I want the finished thing to look fresh, but not slap-dash.

You said in your talk: "When you think the world's run out of ideas, there's always something nutty on Instagram." How do you get the most from the platform?

I love Instagram. You follow people you like, and it suggests you look at

other people they follow. You follow classy people, you're shown classy stuff. That's basically it, isn't it?

Most of Instagram is crap, but there's so much there that if even one per cent of it is brilliant, that's enough. I've bought art, met people and been commissioned from it.

You also quoted Victor Hugo: "The flesh is the surface of the unknown." Besides your subjects' appearance, how much attention do you pay to personality and behaviour in your work?

That quote kind of sums up what I'm trying to do. Or it could say, 'Does the flesh tell you something about the person inside, or can it be equally misleading?'

How much can you deduce by looking at someone? If a mass murderer walked past you in the street, would you notice? When you look at your lover, what are you

seeing? Presumably it's not their essence; their soul – that's supposed to be intangible.

Do people end up with the face they deserve? Why do we associate beauty with truth? I love these types of questions. We all love looking at people; we are insatiably curious.

Do you have a favourite type of caricature, either visually or the 'world' the person occupies, such as politics, music or film?

As an artist who does portraits, I should be able to tackle anyone. Slightly strange faces are the most attractive to me, but any face can look strange from certain aspects. Sports people are great to sculpt: they're usually fit, slightly weird and manically focused, which is an amusing character trait to portray. I think my Michael Phelps is one of my best, but only because he's such a brilliant subject.





❑ **Have you ever been tempted to caricature President Trump?**

Trump is both too easy and too difficult to caricature. What can I add? There have been hundreds of brilliant cartoons about him. To most reasonable people Trump is weird. No one needs another caricature pointing this out. The more some people are lampooned, the stronger they get.

Do you feel any responsibility to provide a critical, satirical voice on particular issues?

I don't have a clear feeling for politics, and certainly don't feel any responsibility to comment. I usually sit on the fence and am equally convinced by both sides of the argument. To be honest, I hate political ranting in any direction.

My sculptures aren't direct political satire. A while ago I sculpted Angela Merkel, just for fun. I gave her a broad grin. A friend of mine who is very political said, 'But what do you actually think of Merkel?

I can't tell from your portrait.' I was pleased to have frustrated him.

What was the hardest satirical sculpture you've worked on?

In general, I find women more difficult than men. Pretty women are particularly tricky because they are by definition somewhat bland and symmetrical. Men generally have bolder features.

I also assume that women are more sensitive about their looks; sexist of me I know. A good female friend asked me the other day how I know that. It's a good question. I don't know it: I assume it.

Have you ever had a strong negative reaction from a subject?

I actually get disappointingly little feedback from my subjects. I imagine famous people would see me as a potential pain in the ass, so don't like to comment.

Sometimes when I draw people the model is clearly disappointed. Recently I drew a guy with very

prominent nostrils. I happen to like prominent nostrils, but that's beside the point. I possibly exaggerated them a bit. And when he saw the drawing he said, 'The nose is awful.'

There is often a conflict of interest between what the artist and the sitter are looking for in a portrait. The artist wants a dramatic, atmospheric or characterful drawing. The sitter often wants simply to look attractive.

If I sense a conflict looming, then I make it clear to the sitter that I am not a portraitist who flatters. If they want a beautified representation, they should go elsewhere.

Finally, what advice would you give to an artist or illustrator looking to make a name for themselves in satirical drawing or sculpture?

Who would try and make a name for themselves in satirical drawing or sculpture? About eight people a year?

It's not really a thing to get into, is it? I'd probably trot out some cliché like, 'Draw from nature.' ❑

Facing page: The result of a private commission for a French family, and shown in situ in Wood's studio.

Above: Wood's sculpture of Angela Merkel, complete with enigmatic smile.

I PLEDGE TO MAKE 2018 MY

BEST

QUIT MY BORING JOB



START A NEW SIDE PROJECT



WIN A DREAM CLIENT

YEAR



FIND MY IDEAL WORK-LIFE BALANCE

EVER



BUILD MY REPUTATION

Got a big ambition for
this year? We reveal
how you can overcome
common obstacles, put
your plans into practice,
and start to make your
creative dreams a reality

WORDS: Tom May



"I found the initial few months gruelling to say the least... but I'm now working more flexibly and creatively than I was before"

LISA MALTBY FREELANCE ART DIRECTOR

What would you like to achieve in 2018? To kick-start that passion project you've been dreaming of? Leave your full-time job and go freelance? Learn a new skill? Publish your first book? Start your own studio? Sell your designs on Etsy?

We all have a dream, and everyone's is different. But perhaps the more important question is: what are you doing about it? A new year is the perfect time to come up with a plan, and start actively working to achieving it.

So what's stopping you? Well, for many people, quite a lot actually: The mortgage. Self-doubt. Low energy. The seeming unavailability of hours in a day. The demands of children, or parents. Lack of skills or experience. Feeling that you're too old, or too young.

But while these are all genuine, real-world issues, they shouldn't be the death knell for your ambitions.

Over the next few pages, we'll walk you through some of the most common challenges in pursuing your dreams, suggest ways to overcome them, and hear from creatives who've done just that.

CHALLENGE ONE: FIND THE TIME

Let's deal with the most common issue first: finding the time.

Whenever you want to achieve something outside your main working hours, the clock always seems to be against you. Between the office, your commute and daily household life, there never seems to be a spare minute.

Are things that bad, though? Shane Mielke, creative director and author of *Launch It* – a book of career advice for creatives – suggests your time might not be as limited as you think.

"Take an honest look at your day," he advises. "Find things you might be wasting time on that are less important than your goal, or that you could be doing more efficiently. Things like social media, video games, commuting and inefficient work habits can all suck bits of time from our lives. If you can free up 30 minutes every day, that adds up to 180 plus hours in a year. Excuses are just excuses."

Gavin Strange, who works at Aardman in Bristol by day and pursues multiple fascinating side projects by night, offers an example of how that might look in practice. "For me, I find a routine that I try and stick to during the weekdays," he explains. "I finish work at 6pm and then come home, eat dinner with my wife, watch a 30-minute TV episode (anything longer eats into the night too much) and then get cracking on 'round two', as I call

it. Sometimes, when things get really busy, I get up an hour early before work to squeeze in extra passion projects, or get cracking on my lunch hour."

That might sound like a tough regime, But Strange – whose self-published book *Do Fly* serves as a motivational tract for creatives – sees it more as a matter of creating good habits. "It's about finding the right pattern for you, or adapting how you already work," he explains. "There's no right or wrong way to do it. The hardest part is starting, but once you've got a tiny bit of momentum, it gets better and better."

CHALLENGE TWO: FIND THE ENERGY

But what if you do manage to eke out some extra hours, only to find you don't have sufficient energy to use them productively?

"I think the amount of energy you have – or you think you have – relates to the amount of passion you have invested in your goals," says Ariana DeLuca, a New York-based art director. "This is why I called my side project *The Passionate Project* (see page 67), because making it was like falling in love. I was so excited, I had great energy, I had butterflies. I was getting home from work and I was staying up till 3am. To get on the



RESOLUTION #1

QUIT MY BORING JOB

LISA MALTBY FREELANCE ART DIRECTOR, ILLUSTRATOR AND LETTERING ARTIST WWW.LISAMALTBY.COM

For some, having a baby might be a good reason not to leave the financial security of a full-time job. But for Sheffield-based illustrator and designer Lisa Maltby, it was actually the catalyst to do so.

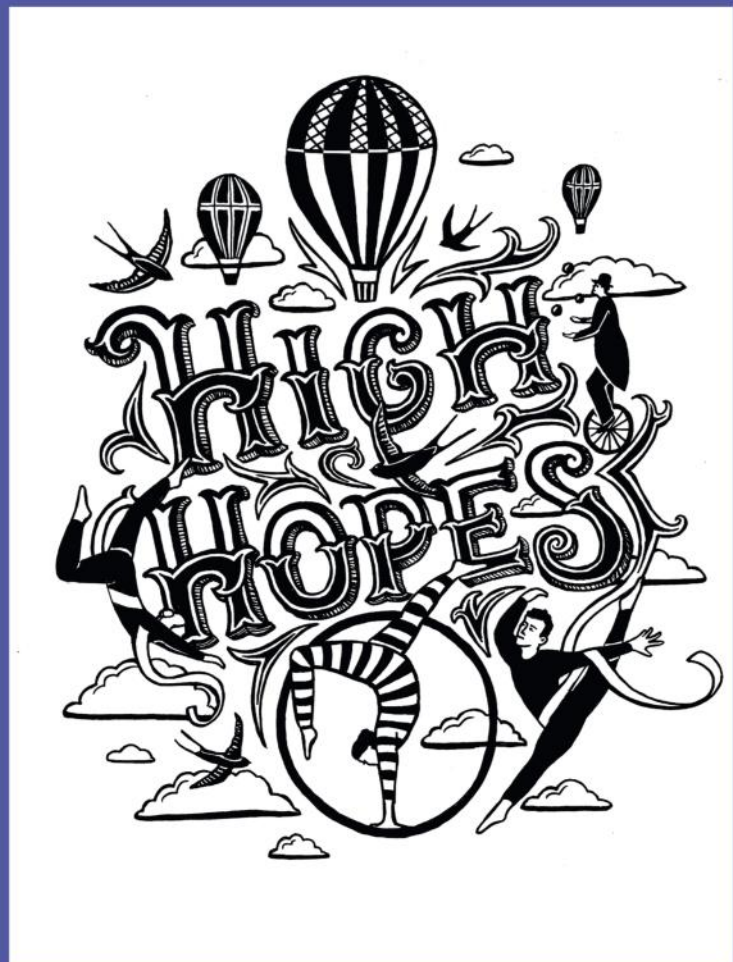
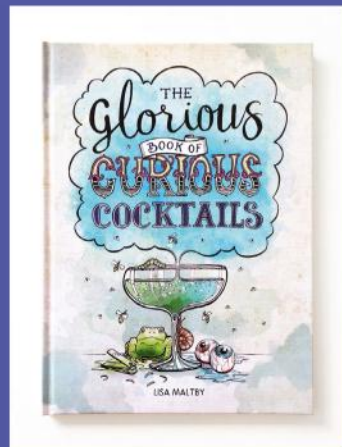
She'd been working at a design agency and things had been going well, she recalls. "But I'm a real ideas and creative person, and there wasn't a lot of opportunity to push ideas as much as I wanted to. I didn't feel as challenged as I did when I first began."

So just a few months after having her second child, she thought to herself: 'Life's too short.' "I think kids make you feel like that," she says. "They bring this fresh sense of life, where they're limitless in their imaginations, and you kind of want some of that too."

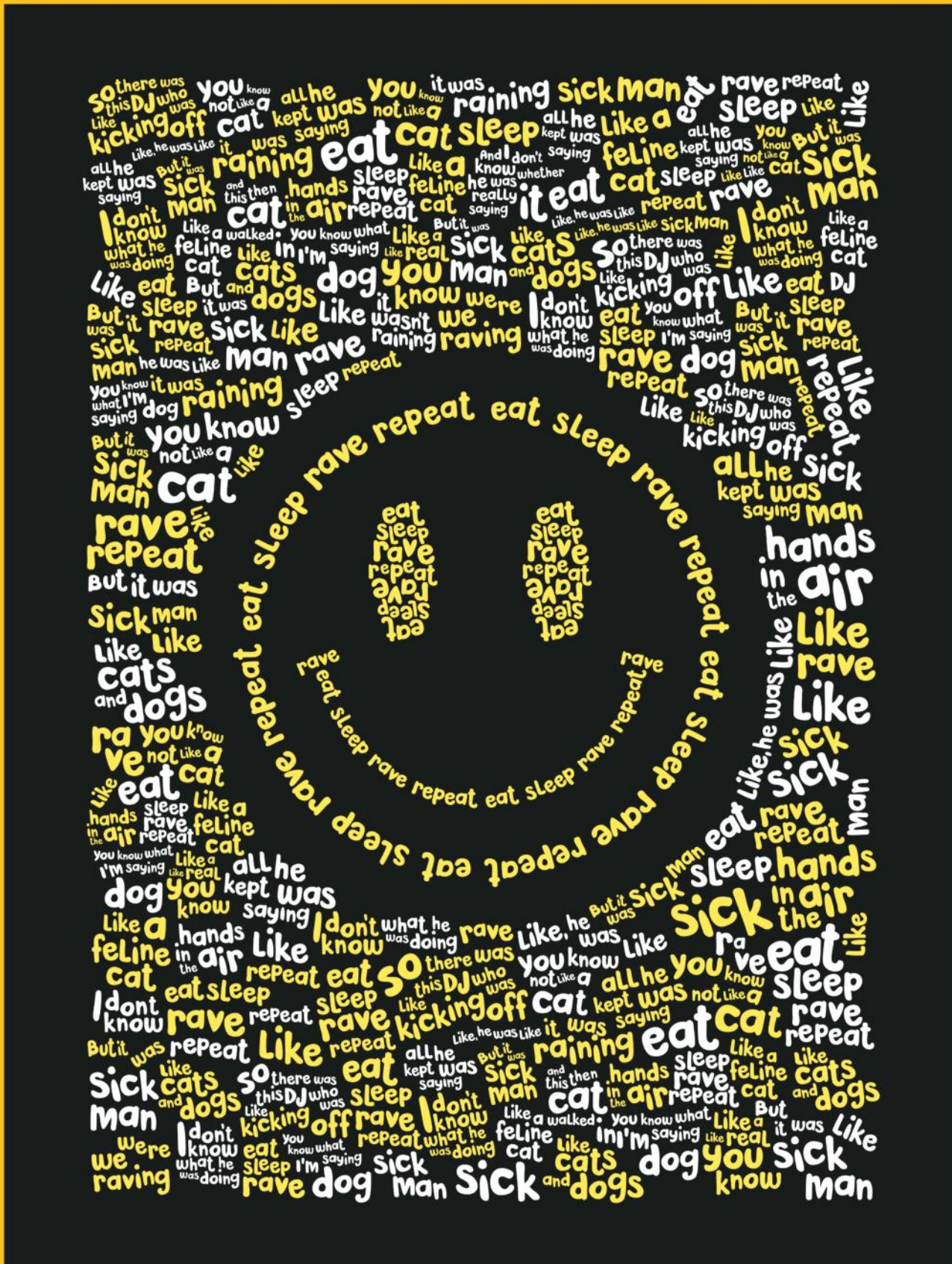
After striking out on her own, she hasn't looked back since. "I found the initial few months gruelling to say the least, working on four hours' sleep and going to meetings with baby puke down my back,"

she says. "But I've since gone on to have some amazing commissions and opportunities, and I'm now working more flexibly and creatively."

And that's important to her psychologically as well as financially. "My creativity has always been part of my self-expression, as well as wanting it to be a career," she stresses. "So it was almost my way of survival: that I wasn't just knee-deep in nappies, that I had something else."



AMY KILNER FREELANCE GRAPHIC DESIGNER WWW.AMYKILNER.CO.UK



Left: Eat Sleep Rave Repeat poster; Absolut Vodka promotion for a Tiki bar in Cardiff, in collaboration with White Sky Creative.



After five years working at design agencies across Yorkshire, people thought Amy Kilner was crazy to chuck in her job and go back to college. But the 24-year-old from Rotherham was adamant. “I’d never completed my design degree because I got a design job in my second year and left uni,” she explains. “But as I got older, I realised I needed to go back and finish it.”

She eventually did so, funding herself through a mix of student loans and freelancing. And as an unexpected byproduct, she ended up selling a piece of her student work to superstar DJ Fatboy Slim.

“It was a typography project for my course,” Kilner explains. “The brief was to create a poster based on song lyrics, anything we wanted. I chose the words to Eat, Sleep, Rave, Repeat. When I’d completed it, I posted it on Instagram, tagged it, and didn’t think any more about it.”

A few days later, the star’s manager emailed to ask if he could buy the illustration. Kilner agreed, and then the DJ himself emailed, requesting a signed copy to display in his home alongside artwork by Banksy, Chemical X and Jimmy Cauty. “I was like, ‘Oh my God, this is not real!’”

It’s one of many successes she’s had since returning to education, convincing her she’s made the right decision. “I haven’t taken the normal career route,” she admits, “but it’s got me to where I am, and I’m happy.”

“I’d never completed my design degree because I got a design job in my second year, but I realised I needed to finish it”

AMY KILNER FREELANCE GRAPHIC DESIGNER



computer and create this, and know I was doing something I absolutely loved, gave me that extra shot of energy.”

Carolyn Porter, a graphic designer from Minnesota, tells a similar tale. Her love of old-time handwriting propelled her to create her own font, which mimicked the script of a real-life wartime letter. That project subsequently spun into a book, *Marcel’s Letters: A Font And The Search for One Man’s Fate*, which she based on the research she’d done into the letter’s original author. “I think if you find a project that you’re passionate about, you just have to be relentless and tenacious about bringing that project to life,” says Porter. “It may not be fast, it’s not going to be easy. But it’s ultimately worth it, and you just need to be tenacious.”

CHALLENGE THREE: LIFE GETTING IN THE WAY

All this can be easier said than done, of course, as life has a habit of getting in the way. A child or family member gets sick. The roof starts leaking. You’re handed a huge project at work and have to work later hours than usual.

The solution? Accept that life is not perfect, sure... but don’t give up, and try to find new ways to hang on to your goals.

“Sometimes life or other projects are more important,” says Mielke. “In life, you have to go where the

fires are at. But that doesn’t mean you can’t still play mental tetris with, say, the logistics of a side project, in those moments of the day that don’t have your complete attention: when you’re working out, in the bathroom, on your commute. The organisation and planning of a project or goal is the foundation and support of the physical action of the idea.”

And when things get sticky, Strange stresses one key word: positivity. “Just approaching everything you do with a positive mind state can work wonders,” he enthuses. “It presents obstacles as opportunities, which helps immensely when it’s 1.30am and you’re not sure if you can succeed. You need all these little boosts to help you through all of your creative endeavours.”

CHALLENGE FOUR: FIND THE MONEY

Sometimes, your dreams don’t just demand your time and energy; they need a bit of seed money too. You might need some cash, for example, to pay for that course, print your own book or magazine, or to get you through the first few months of going freelance.

The most obvious approach is to start watching the pennies and save up a nest egg. That’s not a particularly fun prospect, but make a few lifestyle sacrifices and keep a careful eye on your budget, and it

RESOLUTION #3

WIN A DREAM CLIENT

ROSE WATERSON FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR WWW.ROSEWATERSON.COM



Clockwise from left: Rose Tinted Glasses; Stag Beetle; Manchester Bee; illustration for Nike Pant Studio.

"I've always used Instagram, but I've realised the power it has now, and the difference it can make if you invest in it"

ROSE WATERSON FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR



Rose Waterson may have been a talented illustrator, but she wasn't really aware of it. The fine art graduate and freelancer lacked confidence in her work, and didn't expect to attract clients outside of her hometown of Brighton. So it was something of a surprise when she got a call from Nike.

It all stemmed from a logo and poster she had designed for a group in Brighton called Girls Can't DJ. "They'd posted it on their Instagram account. And then later on, they'd done an interview with Nike about women in the music business," she says.

When Nike saw Waterson's work on the group's Instagram, it was a case of good timing; the brand had just decided to collaborate with seven female artists to promote their new workout pants line, Nike Pant Studio. So the company got in touch and commissioned her for the campaign.

"It was about three days before the deadline," she recalls. "They contacted me on a Monday and wanted my illustration on a Thursday. It was very last minute but I managed to do it somehow. The campaign came out about a month and a half later; the whole thing was quite swift."

Working for Nike has raised Waterson's profile and been a big boost to her self-confidence, she says; plus it's taught her two main lessons. "Firstly, the importance of Instagram. I've always used it, but I've realised the power it has now, and the difference it can make if you invest in it. And secondly, you never know who your contacts are going to be. I had no idea that this DJ group had any connection to Nike, which is a bit mental if you think about it."

■ should be achievable. Plus of course, if you're foregoing that nice bottle of wine or subscription to Sky, it's only going to help you find that extra time you need to pursue your creative goals.

But what if you're impatient to get started right now? That shouldn't be a problem, says Mielke, it's just a case of which part of your plan you get started on. "Google is free, and so research and planning costs you nothing other than time," he points out. "So switch gears to a part of your plan that might be more organisational and can be done during free time at night or on weekends. For example, if you're wanting to self-publish a book about your favourite design topic, there's nothing stopping you from researching how to get your book on Amazon, or making a list of possible printers who might print your physical book."

Of course, saving is not the only solution to money issues. Alternatively, you could visit the bank and see whether they can offer you a loan, or equity release on your home. If they say no, try another bank or building society. We're still in an era of quantitative easing, and you might be surprised how willing financial institutions are to lend to anybody with a track record of having a regular income and good credit score.

Another source of potential cash might be crowdfunding. Lisa Maltby, a Sheffield-based illustrator profiled on page 61, used Kickstarter to finance her 'disgustingly distinguished recipe

book' for children, The Glorious Book of Curious Cocktails. She managed to raise £5,600, although creatives commonly ask for, and often get, larger sums. Be warned, though: even free money doesn't come for free, and you'll probably have to do a lot of hustling in order to meet your target.

"Running a Kickstarter was like having another child; it was quite a challenge," recalls Maltby. "I have a wide network of people I'm connected with, so I was able to push for a few things, pull a few strings. But even then it was really tricky to get articles about the campaign published, to get people to share it on social media. You are your own campaign, so you've got to fully drive it all the time. I got the funding, which is amazing, but this sort of campaign is not to be taken lightly. It's really hard work."

CHALLENGE FIVE: BUILD A STRONG NETWORK

Even if you consider yourself a self-starter, the success of your creative dream often lies in the hands of other people. So having a strong network of contacts will help enormously, whether you're seeking work as a new freelancer, looking for the right partner for a collaboration, or searching for a mentor as you develop your skills in a new creative field.

Building up a decent list of contacts you can rely on doesn't just happen by accident, though. Getting out there and introducing yourself to people, both on social media and in the real world, ■

“It’s all about working hard, finding the thing you love and going forward. I tell people to push through those doubts and those fears, grind it out, and you’ll get there”

ARIANA DELUCA ART DIRECTOR

■ at things like creative events and meetups, is essential.

Kate Moorhouse, a graphic designer from Manchester, very quickly learned the importance of networking when she went freelance. “I heard about a meetup group based in Sheffield and Manchester called Freelance Folk and popped down to see what it was all about,” she explains. “I immediately got a friendly response from everyone. It felt like we were all in the same boat: finding our way, making the same mistakes. And it was nice to chat to like-minded people from different disciplines, but the freelance side was common to us all.”

It wasn’t just a psychological boost: the group helped her find work, too, she adds. “I met the founder, Katy Carlisle, at one of her Squarespace workshops and she asked me to redesign the logo for the group. In return, she helped me with some Squarespace support.

Since then, whenever I go to the group, I meet someone new who I can either work for or work with. I’ve also collaborated with other freelancers from there, and I feel it’s a really natural way for us to work together.”

CHALLENGE SIX: FIND COLLABORATORS

If your creative dream for 2018 involves collaboration, then its success will live and die on whether you choose the right partner. Tennessee illustrator Tammy Coron, who recently teamed up with Apple game developer Chris Language to create game design resource www.dayoftheindie.com, offers some pointers.

“Finding someone you trust and being honest with each other are vital,” she says. “One of the reasons Chris and I work so well together is because we speak our minds: we’re honest and open with each other.

“We also share responsibilities and understand situations where one of us needs more time to focus on something else, without guilt from the other. And the best thing about our partnership is that we encourage and push each other to reach just past our abilities, in order to level-up our skills.”

CHALLENGE SEVEN: PROMOTE YOURSELF

Whether it’s launching a passion project or your services as a ■



FIVE WAYS TO PUSH YOUR CAREER FORWARD

FRANK SUYKER, ART DIRECTOR, WWW.MR-SUGAR.NL

Dutch designer Frank Suyker originally set out to be a business leader, but got interested in design and video production, and ended up “accidentally” becoming an art director. Currently working for Orange Pearl in the Netherlands, he offers some advice for developing your creative career.

EXPECT CURVEBALLS

For those who know their end game, great! For those who don’t know (and that’s a lot of us), just go with the flow and let life surprise you with a curveball. You never know where you might end up.

DIVE DEEP

If you’re really interested in a topic, don’t hold yourself back from diving deeper. Learn everything you can find about it. And then... forget it (I learned that one from the master, James Victore). Only then will you have the opportunity to create something that comes from the heart.

LEARN FROM OTHERS

There is so much information online. On every subject you want to learn more about, there is a website, a video, a forum. When you hit a wall, there’s always

someone who’s hit that wall before you did, and then shared their experience.

SKILLS AREN’T EVERYTHING

You can apply for jobs even if you don’t have all the knowledge. You can learn on the job too. A good fit with the culture of the company and the strive to go all out is much more valuable to employers.

KEEP LEARNING

When you stop learning, you get overtaken by those who are more eager. Never give up. Keep going. Be the best you can be.

RESOLUTION # 4

START A NEW SIDE PROJECT

ARIANA DELUCA ART DIRECTOR WWW.ARIANADELUCA.COM

Left: Some of the women who have joined The Passionate Project. Below: Visuals for Ted X New York.



In September 2016, Ariana DeLuca, an art director based in New York, was looking for a photographer. “I wanted to reach out to someone new, so I put the word out,” she recalls. “But I was getting a lot of responses from men that didn’t sit right. I didn’t feel comfortable with anyone who responded. And I thought to myself: I’d really love to work with another female creative, who has similar goals and ambitions to me. But nothing like that existed.”

DeLuca couldn’t think of an easy way to find new female creatives she didn’t already know, who were also eager to create and connect. “Then I

thought: this should exist, why don’t I just make it?”

So that’s exactly what she did. She got in contact with photographer and conceptual artist Heather Leigh Cullum – who she knew through a mutual friend – and in February 2017, they launched a new group for women called The Passionate Project. Its mission is to help ‘female creatives who want to collaborate on projects, strengthen their portfolios, and network.’

DeLuca has done all of this outside her full-time agency job, but despite the hard work and long hours, she’s loved every minute. “I think it’s great to take

a risk and to open up new doors and meet people, and just help each other out,” she smiles.

People marvel at her energy and constantly ask her ‘How do you find the time?’, she says. But rather than basking in the glory, she urges others to follow her lead and pursue their own passion project.

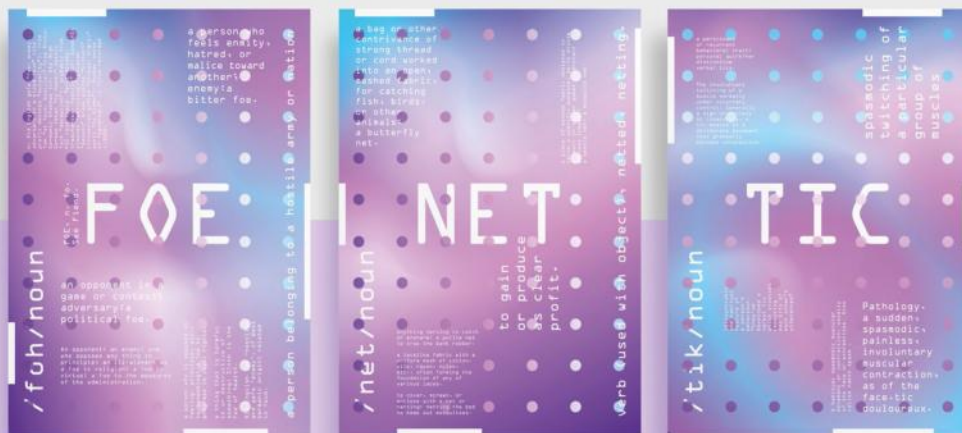
“I just tell people: ‘You can do the same thing,’” she says. “It’s all about working hard, finding the thing you love and going forward. I try to be really encouraging and tell people to go for it. Push through those doubts and those fears, grind it out, and you’ll get there.”



RESOLUTION # 5

FIND MY IDEAL WORK-LIFE BALANCE

SHANTI SPARROW GRAPHIC DESIGNER, ILLUSTRATOR AND LECTURER WWW.SHANTISPARROW.COM



Shanti Sparrow was working as a designer in a little boutique studio in Sydney. She enjoyed her job and found much of the work fulfilling. But something was missing, she just didn't know what. So she decided to take a year off travelling, in order to work out what it was.

She used her savings to rent a flat in New York and stayed for six months. "When I arrived, I didn't want to get straight into work," she recalls. "I was so exhausted I just wanted to absorb New York, have some fun and just sleep." Eventually she started doing bits of freelancing for her old employer. "It worked out really well for their timeline," she notes, "because I could do it overnight, they could go to sleep and then when they woke up, it would be done."

After half a year in the US, she then spent another six months going around Europe and Japan, visiting 17 countries in total. "It was amazing," she smiles.



"I'd always been the mother hen of every studio I'd been at, and I loved the idea of being in graphic design, but without all the deadlines and clients"

SHANTI SPARROW GRAPHIC DESIGNER,
ILLUSTRATOR AND LECTURER



■ freelancer, promoting yourself is key. That means not just networking with other creatives, but sharing your work more widely, on platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, Behance and Dribbble. This may sound obvious, but New York-based designer and lecturer Shanti Sparrow has seen the positive effects first-hand.

"I've been a designer for nine years, but my freelancing outside of my main job has actually only kicked off in the last two," explains Sparrow (see left). "It was only when I started releasing my work onto social media channels that it happened. I was started to get contacted internationally, whereas before it tended to be people I knew through people I knew. But now it's anybody who Googled a magazine and my thing came up, and they're in China and want me to make them something."

There's a lot of noise online, of course, and just posting stuff doesn't necessarily mean you'll get attention, so it pays to get creative. For example, Rotherham-based designer Amy Kilner (see page 62), launched an Instagram feed called @thedesigntfix this year, and it's become a roaring success.

"The way you get followers on Instagram is by getting your work featured on other pages," she explains. So she essentially took the same idea and reversed it. "I launched my own page to help other creatives, and it just blew up," she explains. "There are now around 40,000 posts on Instagram using the hashtag and I've got more than 18,000 followers on it. I've got

these brand ambassadors promoting it, and it's just growing. It's still a work in progress but I'm doing something right."

CHALLENGE EIGHT: ACCEPT IT'S NOT LINEAR

As the saying goes, 'Man plans, God laughs'. In other words: whatever scheme you have to boost your career and achieve your dreams in 2018 may very well go astray. But that's not a reason to not bother trying at all, more a realisation that you're going to have to stay nimble, accept challenges head on and hope to enjoy as much of the ride as possible.

"There's this assumption that when you're an adult you get everything locked down and sorted," says Strange. "No way! I think these times are the most exciting; you're more wise to the world and can make changes even more easily. It's about being open and receptive to change, and eager to identify when something isn't working for you and then making a change. It's a never-ending process of analysis, assessment and action!" ■

**NEXT
MONTH**

ILLUSTRATOR HOTLIST 2018
Discover our list of the world's
most exciting illustrators
to watch this year...

"After going to Barcelona and Tokyo, I'll never see colour in the same way again."

On return to Australia, though, she still struggled for a time to work out why her career wasn't sitting right. Then, finally, it all fell into place, when she saw an ad for graphic design mentors at Shillington back in New York.

"I'd always been the mother hen of every studio I'd been at, I was always training juniors," she explains. "And I loved the idea of still being in graphic design, but without the deadlines and clients."

She's now found the perfect work balance, combining a job as a lecturer for Shillington with design freelancing. And she thinks she'd never have got there without the perspective gained from travelling. "I took that time in New York to focus on me," she explains. "And after that, eventually, everything started to make sense."

Clockwise from top left: Collaboration exhibition branding; concept cover for Alice's Adventures in Wonderland; Foe, Net, Tic poster.

This six-part series is an essential guide for junior designers. We give advice on topics entry-level creatives need to know about, from basic theory to practical tips. In the final part, we look at following brand guidelines. Missed an issue? Catch up by purchasing back issues of CA – see page 74.

DESIGN MATTERS

JUNIOR DESIGNER MANUAL

HOW TO FOLLOW BRAND GUIDELINES

In the last of our series aimed at junior designers, we examine how to interpret and follow clients' brand guidelines

WORDS: Tom May

The idea of following brand guidelines is something that doesn't get a lot of attention on most design courses. "I've never come across an intern or graduate who understands the fundamentals of brand guidelines," says Ellie Pearson, senior designer and studio manager at Cambridge-based agency Mobas. "But it's not their fault: they weren't told about it, and neither was I."

The concept itself, though, is quite simple. Clients provide designers with a detailed outline of their preferred colours, fonts, logos and so on, and how each are to be used. But what students are often taken aback by is the sheer range of things they cover.

"I was surprised at first by the complexity and depth of brand guidelines," recalls Jess Dutton, junior designer at Mobas. "For some larger clients, they're incredibly extensive. You think of brands having one or two primary colours, but I didn't know they could have secondary colours too." Dutton was also surprised by the distinctions between internal and external colours for collateral that will be used for staff and for customers. "It's a lot more complex than meets the eye," she says.

And this complexity means you need to spend a lot of time digesting them. "I always make sure I've gone through the brand guidelines from start to finish, and that I have a clear understanding of the look and feel of the existing brand, before I start a project," says Joe Bembridge, junior designer at Macclesfield design consultancy Brandon.

Tom Tennant, a motion graphics designer at Gramercy Park Studios in London, tells a similar tale. "I spend as much time as possible studying the guidelines, as it's really helpful to be on the same page as your client," he says. "Even reading the parts that aren't relevant to what you're doing can give you more insight into the brand. After all, it's there to help."

STICKING TO THE RULES

Laura Wynn-Owen, junior designer at Nelson Bostock Group in London, notes that guidelines are usually handed over without being talked through, so they can be open to your own interpretation. "But in our case, there are usually brand teams on hand to answer any questions," she says. "There may also be brand sites that give access to assets, guidelines and best practice examples."

As the word 'guidelines' suggests, these are not immutable rules. But pushing back on them should be a last resort, not a default, believes Andrius Petravicius, digital designer at Hampshire design agency Superrb. "I usually wouldn't push back on brand guidelines, as in most cases, you can still be creative and work around them," he reasons. "I've done so on occasions, though, when I felt like the guidelines weren't working well visually and I knew they could be improved upon."

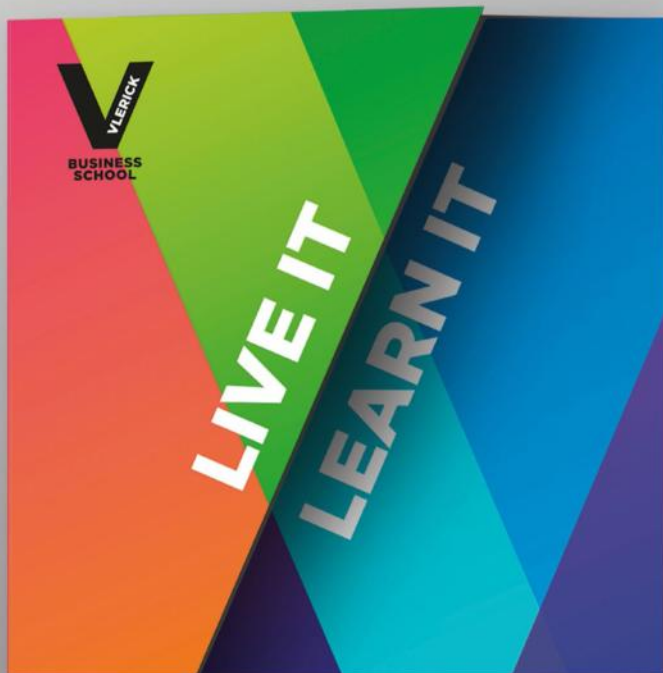
Karl Doran of Manchester design agency Flow Creative concurs. "We did some work recently for Arts Council England," he says. "They had a fairly detailed brand guidelines



PRO INSIGHT

HOW TO BEND THE RULES

JUNIOR DESIGNER AT BRANDON, **JOE BEMBRIDGE**, EXPLAINS HOW THE TEAM EXPERIMENTED WITH BRANDING GUIDELINES FOR VLERICK BUSINESS SCHOOL



EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

"Within this series of brochures promoting Vlerick Business School's Executive Education programme, we had to both retain the V-pattern but also anchor the logotype within it. This pushed the boundaries of the original identity system as the logotype usually sits in one of the four corners of the page."

"This is a pocket-sized prospectus for potential students at career fairs. One of the school's brand drivers is vitality and the use of the vibrant coloured V-patterns helped us stand out again the competition as being something different. The logotype is anchored alongside one of the V-patterns within one of the four corner points. In terms of the inside spread, we also locked the logotype up in one of the four corner points, and used the transparency of the V-pattern to bleed over the photographic image.

All told, it's a very complex V-pattern and one that we review each year with the school's internal

marketing team and all external brand partners to ensure there's as much quality control as possible.

We use a traffic light review system to highlight what we ask people to avoid doing (red), what might be ambiguous and slightly breaks a rule (amber; the Executive Education piece is one such example) and what are great examples of brand use for the school (green). This really helps everyone to understand how to best use the identity across flat graphics, moving image and event experiences. We even used the guidelines when we branded a Xerox photocopier for the school!"

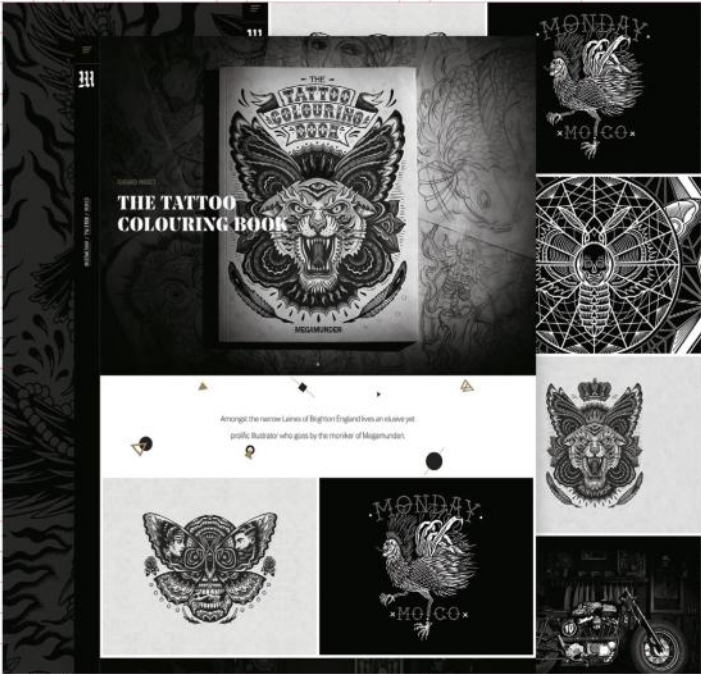
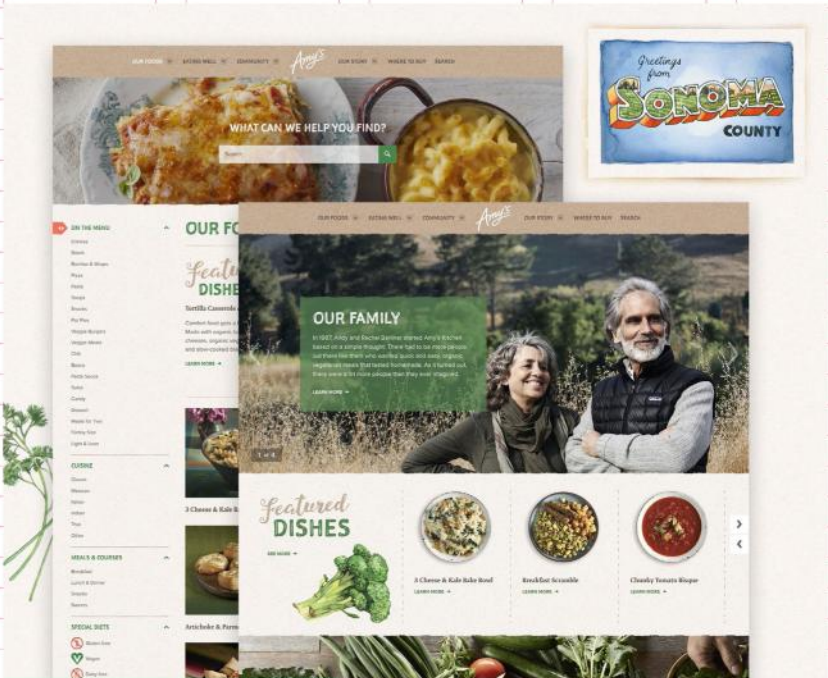
**In most cases
you can still
be creative and
work around
brand guidelines**



PRO INSIGHT

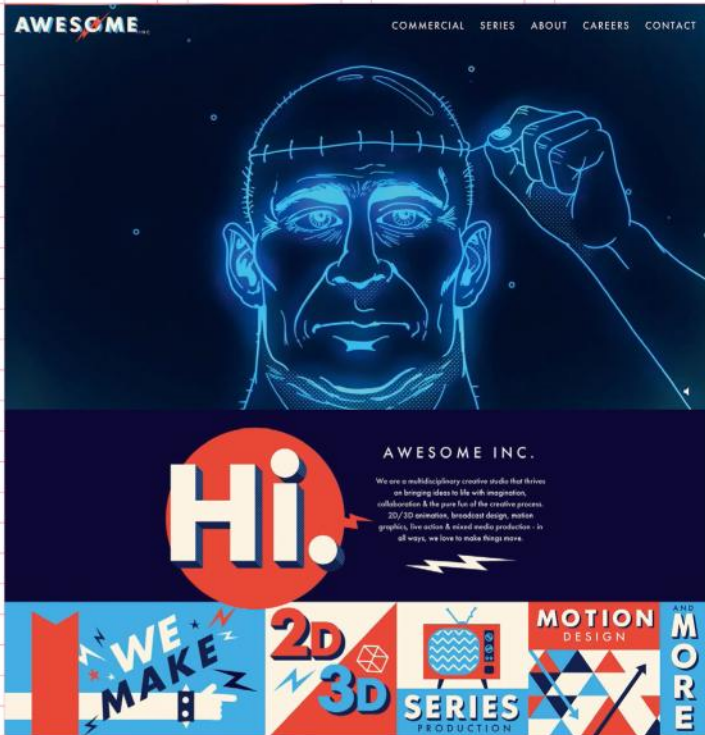
HOW TO ADAPT TO GUIDANCE

RORY BERRY, JUNIOR DESIGNER AT SUPERRB, OUTLINES HOW VERY DIFFERENT GUIDELINES INFLUENCED THREE CLIENT PROJECTS



AMY'S KITCHEN

“The marketing team at Amy’s Kitchen were very clear about the story they wanted tell through the website, but the business had evolved tremendously since the original branding was done, so their old guidelines weren’t up to date. Other than the logo, we had pretty much free reign on the look and feel, but had to keep it true to the ethos of the brand. As we were nearing the launch, the team rolled this new style out across their other channels, so things were tight.”



AWESOME INC

“In terms of guidance, Awesome Inc provided us with a logo and a colourway, which we had to stick to. As part of the brief they also expressed a desire for the site to have a fun, animated feel to reflect their unique style and ethos. From there, it was down to interpretation. The nature of their work is very eclectic so we decided to go for a fairly clean wrapper to make the most of their portfolio. Given that they’re an animation studio, it was also important to make sure the animations on the website were really slick, but at times, we had to rein it in and remember that showcasing the work was the priority.”

MEGAMUNDEN

"In terms of developing brand guidelines, this project was very collaborative. MegaMunden is an illustrator, so when he was working up logo comps, he shared some options early on so we could decide which would work best for web. It was important that the site incorporated his signature style, therefore we got him to illustrate a lot of the incidental elements, such as background icons, arrows and footer lock up. By kicking the brand back and forth, we arrived at something which felt natural to him and that we knew would work seamlessly across a wide range of media."

Brand guidelines can be incredibly technical, always seek help if you're unsure

document, but we did try to push it a bit, and bring in some extra tints and colours, plus we created a kind of illustrative classic style that they'd not really used before. It fitted in with their branding but it moved it on a little bit, and they were happy with it. If you can do that, that's ideal, although it does obviously depend on the client and the brief."

USING SYSTEMS

Normally, though, your job is simply to understand and internalise the brand guidelines, as well as work within a reliable system to ensure they're adhered to. Such systems will vary from studio to studio, but will normally be largely based on common sense. "At Moras, we have a huge printed folder with details of all brand guidelines that we work on in the studio, which is also accessible on our server," explains Dutton. "I go through and manually double-check colours, as well as doing an InDesign check that shows all the typefaces used, so you can easily weed out any that shouldn't be there. Plus, we have an internal artworker in the team who checks everything against guidelines and specs before it's sent back to the client."

Adherence to brand guidelines may also be integrated into the software itself. "At Superrb we use Sketch, which allows us to set up reusable colour palettes and typography styles," says Petravicius. "I've also been using InVision's Craft plugin for Sketch quite a lot lately; this lets you create branding libraries with all brand assets, styles and symbols. I'm also really excited about a new tool from InVision called Design System Manager, which seems like a powerful system for creating, managing and scaling design libraries."

The most important thing, adds Pearson, is that if there's something you don't understand – and there probably will be – ask. "Brand guidelines can be incredibly technical," she says. "One of our animal health clients has a lock up at the bottom of all designs that requires a mathematical formula to work out the right height and width for the exact document you're working on. A junior or intern has little hope of understanding that, so they should always seek help if they're unsure." ▣

FIVE TIPS FOR BRAND CONSISTENCY

DESIGNERS SHARE FIVE TIPS ON FOLLOWING BRAND GUIDELINES

1 DO YOUR RESEARCH

"Some big brands make their guidelines available on issuu.com," says Jess Dutton, junior designer at Mobas. "Look for a brand you know and like, and read their style sheet. You'll change your perspective, gain an understanding of the design process, and realise what goes into creating something."

2 STAY CREATIVE

"Don't let brand guidelines hold you back on your creativity," says Joe Bembridge, junior designer at Brandon. "These guides are put in place not to limit creativity, but to help a brand stay recognisable and consistent," he points out. "But if you do go against the guidelines, make sure you have a valid reason for doing so."

3 MAKE SUGGESTIONS

"If you feel something could be improved, suggest that to the client, or even make a concept variation to show how a brand could look with your improvements," says Andrius Petravicius, digital designer at Superrb. "Yet if the client insists you follow their guidelines, don't ignore them."

4 HARNESS SOFTWARE

"To make sure I follow the guidelines carefully, I'll take a screengrab of the most important parts: the colour references, font, and point sizes," says Tom Tennant, motion graphics designer at Gramercy Park Studios. "I also find it helps to copy the brand colours into whichever software you're using so you have a palette that's easily accessible."

5 ASK QUESTIONS

"Raise any questions you have as soon as possible, rather than when you're midway through the work," advises Laura Wynn-Owen, junior designer at Nelson Bostock Group. "If there's anything you're unsure about, ask. Even senior designers need guidance. There are no stupid questions when it comes to brand guidelines."

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- How to succeed as a designer-maker
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VIDEO INSIGHT

HOW TO BUILD A STUDIO FROM SCRATCH

Discover how the co-founders of Fiasco have created an award-winning studio at the heart of Bristol's creative scene, despite initially having no cash, clients or business experience



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UNSEEN SKETCHBOOKS

Three top designers share unseen development work from the archives. Marian Bantjes reveals rejected artworks for a high-end jewellery



company; David Fernández Huerta shares sketches for game Monument Valley 2; and Michael Johnson explains a forgotten concept for Tate Britain



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REIMAGINE A CLASSIC SONG

How Information is Beautiful award-winner Valentina D'Elfilippo created a series visualising David Bowie's Space Oddity from 10 different angles

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■ VIDEO INSIGHT

BUILD A SUCCESSFUL STUDIO FROM SCRATCH

Despite initially having no clients, cash or business experience, the co-founders of **Fiasco** have built an award-winning studio at the heart of Bristol's creative scene

Seven years ago, Ben Steers and Jason Smith set up Fiasco in Bristol with no design agency experience, or much design experience at all to speak of, during one of the biggest global recessions in living memory – a move that peers at the time described as “mental”.

After three short years, they won a BAFTA. Two years later, a D&AD Pencil. Now, through sister company thread, they're also running a successful series of design events to bring the South West's creative community together. Here, Steers and Smith reveal how they did it...

How did get you Fiasco off the ground?

Jason Smith: I was cheffing at one point, taking calls in the kitchen to arrange meetings. I was working, like, five jobs. But we had so much energy, and loved it. We kept persisting, doing collaborative work – for free – that helped us grow a circle of friends in Bristol and the South West and produce a portfolio, and without it, things would have been a hell of a lot harder.

Ben Steers: We really did start from scratch. Other co-founders think we're mental. They've come from another agency, or have a design background, so have a portfolio of clients or a certain level of experience.

Neither of us had had a full-time job at a design agency. No business experience. We didn't know how to run an agency, or what the dynamics, or structure, of a typical agency was. But because we were so young and naïve, there were no restrictions. I guess that was a strength; we went into everything with open arms.

We said 'yes' to everything, and worried about the rest later. Then slowly started to refine who we were as a company, and the type of work we wanted to be doing, as well as how we work with our clients. That's taken a long time to do.

JS: When we started, it was just us running accounts, marketing, business development and then actually doing the work. Because we

were forced to wear so many hats, we had to learn very quickly on the job.

BS: We were in an incubator space to begin with, surrounded by other start-ups. Naturally, start-ups need branding, as well as all the standard business collateral stuff.

For us, it was perfect – we were getting nurtured as a business through this incubator [run by the University of the West of England – UWE – with a 50 per cent subsidy on rent], but also had the opportunity to work with other small businesses that needed design services, but didn't have huge budgets. It was an important platform for us. Those people put a lot of trust and faith in us, not having any experience or much of a portfolio to fall back on.

What was your breakthrough project?

BS: There's been a few at different stages. The first was with a production company called Somethin' Else: an online game for Channel 4, which came off the back of some freelance illustration work I'd been doing.

We were commissioned to create a whole set of characters, furniture and environments. At the time, Channel 4 knocking on our door was a massive deal. It was a landmark moment, and the game won a Children's BAFTA a year later. For a company of our size, going into our third year of business, it was pretty big.

JS: It also made us aware of the importance of social media. Our first conversations with Somethin' Else happened through Twitter.

BS: In the early days it's really important to get yourself out there. You don't know whose phone is going to get that notification or pick up on that tweet. We also started working with Penguin Random House off the back of a tweet: someone within Penguin was looking for a design/dev team to help with some sites for some of their authors. We saw that, got in touch, and heard nothing for months. Then one day we got an email asking us to create a website ➤



FIASCO

'Creativity takes courage', 'Together is better' and 'Simple is good' are the guiding principles of award-winning Bristol-based studio Fiasco. Clients include Channel 4, Red Bull, Penguin Random House and Tobacco Factory Theatres. www.fiascodesign.co.uk



Watch the videos on our YouTube channel: www.bit.ly/ca275-fiasco

for a series called Gods and Warriors. Not a huge job, but again, an 'in' with a really reputable brand. Off the back of that, we did the design and build for The Snowman and the Snowdog site, which led to the Pelican website.

It was a long, at points arduous, stressful job, but we ended up with a beautiful product that won a series of awards, including a D&AD pencil.

JS: We'd just had our fifth birthday. It was great going to the awards ceremony; it drummed home that every winner is just a fantastic original idea.

What is it about Bristol that excites you both?

BS: There's something quite tangible about the atmosphere here; something in the air that's quite special. It comes from the industrial history that the city has. There's this DIY ethic, people just go out there and make it for themselves.

JS: Summer is like being on holiday every day: countless festivals, arts and culture. Plus we've seen a lot of young companies like ourselves grow up in Bristol with us. There's definitely a sense of community and friendship.

BS: A few years ago, we set up a series of events called thread to champion the local creative community, bringing people together for talks and workshops in an informal, comfortable way. We started in a small bar with about 100 people, and now do 220-230 people quarterly. We've set up a separate sister company to run it. And last October we put on a design festival called Something Good, with an amazing response.

Where do you recruit talent from?

JS: Our last two recruits are from Manchester and London. There seems to be a real movement at the moment – due to rising house prices, or desire for better quality of life – for people to move out of London. Many are coming to Bristol.

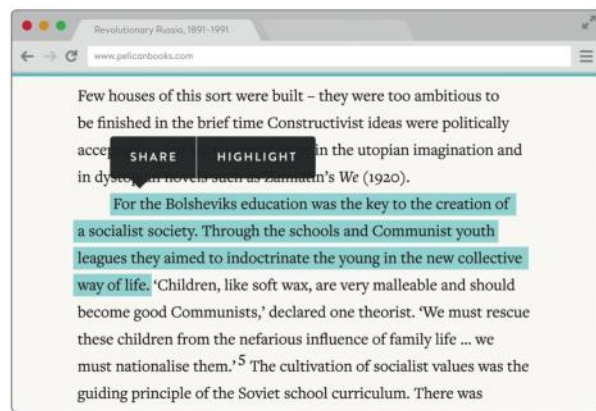
We also have open lines of communication with the local unis. Our studio manager Marj is a UWE graduate, and came on board last March.

According to your website, you only work with brands you respect. How do you gauge that?

BS: For us, it's more about respecting the people within the brand. By no means do we always get it right. It's like interviewing for a job. You don't really know that person until you're three, six, 12 months into the job. You have to try and do due diligence early on, then give it a go.

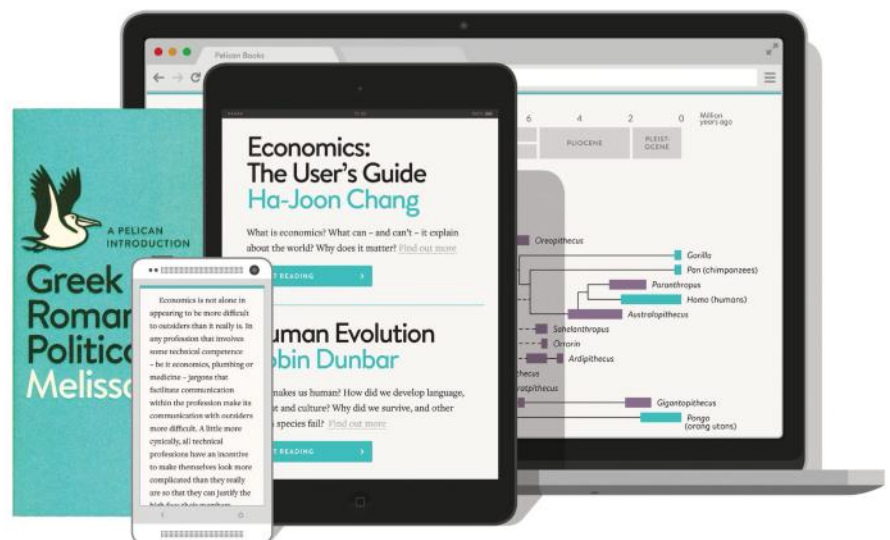
JS: Respect and trust are closely intertwined. We don't work *for* people, we work *with* them. And to collaborate, we need to trust each other.

BS: It's like a marriage. If trust isn't there, things start to rock. We bring clients on board from the beginning – we don't just go away, and come back with a big 'ta-da!' moment. We constantly update them, which helps build that trust. ■

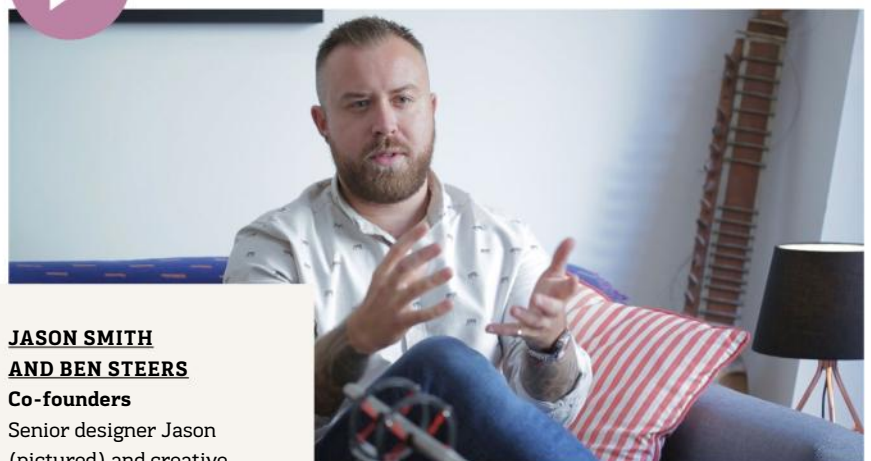


Left: Fiasco's website for Pelican Books delivers "an innovative online reading experience", and won several awards – including a D&AD Pencil.

Below: The site was carefully optimised across all devices, to minimise distractions for readers.



WATCH THE VIDEO NOW AT
www.bit.ly/ca275-fiasco



JASON SMITH AND BEN STEERS

Co-founders

Senior designer Jason (pictured) and creative director Ben met at Deviate magazine in Bristol. Jason fell in love with the city after moving there in 2004, while Ben arrived later, having studied in Plymouth and worked in London.

HOW TO LEARN ON THE FLY

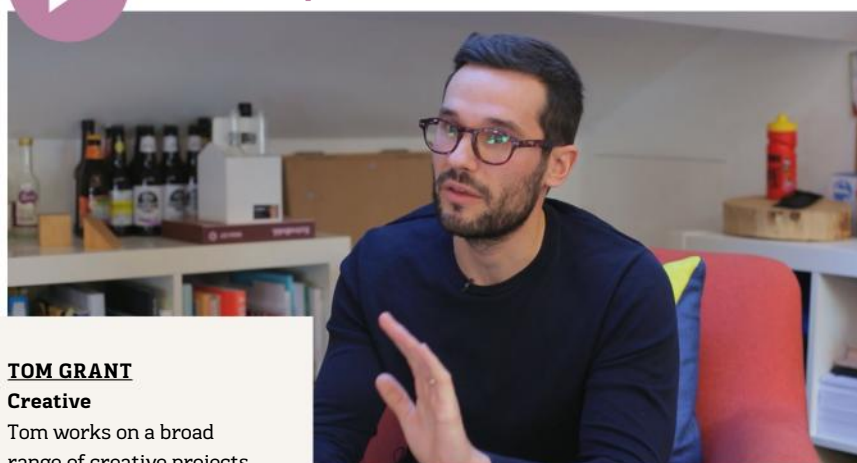
In our first video, co-founders Ben Steers and Jason Smith (pictured) share how they grew Fiasco from two inexperienced guys with a couple of laptops into an award-winning studio.



Above and right: For its brand overhaul of Bristol cultural hub The Tobacco Factory, Fiasco was inspired by the building's original industrial roots.



WATCH THE VIDEO NOW AT
www.bit.ly/ca275-fiasco



TOM GRANT **Creative**

Tom works on a broad range of creative projects, from branding to web design to animation. After graduating from Liverpool John Moores, he worked at various Manchester agencies before moving to Bristol two years ago.

KEEP YOUR SKILLS FRESH

In our second video, creative Tom Grant reveals how the eight-person studio handles such a range of multi-disciplinary projects – and how Fiasco encourages the whole team to stay sharp.

DEVELOP A MULTI-TALENTED TEAM

Nurturing a talented creative 'family' takes time, says Tom Grant, creative at Fiasco

1. Create an outlet

A weekly email with an area named 'Just for fun' gives the Fiasco team an excuse to experiment and learn new skills, says creative Tom Grant. "It just gives us a small window to go away and learn to do something different," he says. "It makes you feel like you're developing and progressing."

2. Aim high

Although Fiasco collaborates with others when client work requires skills outside the in-house remit, Grant stresses that it's good to push existing team members. "It's always nice to try and get there yourself," he says. "Creating work that's a little outside your comfort zone is the way you improve and avoid stagnation."

3. Get stuck in

Grant has been experimenting with animation for the newsletter, and has been getting tips from his colleague, who's "a bit of a whizz in After Effects." However, he says, often the best way to get your head around a programme is just to get stuck in. "Have a play and make a few mistakes and figure out how everything works."

4. Foster a family culture

"We do weekends away and go out for dinner and lunch, everyone gets along," says Grant. "I think it definitely helps just having people that have got your back and are willing to push you." This sense of unity encourages the team to create. "When you see someone else doing a piece of work that you think, 'Wow, that's amazing,' you want to do be doing that. It keeps you striving to do better."

5. Set aside time

Recognising that experimentation and learning takes time, Fiasco sets aside time each week to experiment with new programmes. That knowledge can then be applied to future projects. "It breaks up what we are doing and gives us another element to our skill set," explains Grant.

HOW CLIENTS CAN BECOME FRIENDS

Account manager Natasha Field reveals how to nurture your client relationships

1. Build trust

"I treat every client relationship like I would a friendship in terms of good communication and trust," says Natasha Field, account manager at Fiasco. "When clients trust us and we trust them, it helps move the project along." Plus if something does go wrong, it'll be easier to resolve.

2. Act human

In the past, Field sometimes felt she wasn't being herself when talking to clients. "The way I spoke to them wasn't very human and seemed robotic, and I wasn't building relationships because that's not how you build relationships." She advises remembering that everyone has good days and bad days: "If they're having a bad day, you can just be there to talk."

3. Don't burn bridges

Fiasco was recently re-hired for a client they'd worked for five years previously, suggesting that sometimes you might have to wait to bear the fruits of your good relationships. "You don't know when a project comes in whether or not that's going to lead to more work," she says. The lesson? Every client is worth investing in.

4. Be flexible

"Each client is different in the way they work, so some need a bit more explanation, whereas some just let us run with it and won't need so many face-to-face meetings," says Field. "You have to be flexible in how that client wants or needs to work."

5. Immerse yourself

A good account manager should be an extension of the client, and be able to pre-empt their feedback, adds Field. "The only way to do this is immerse yourself so that you understand them – who they, what they do and their core values."



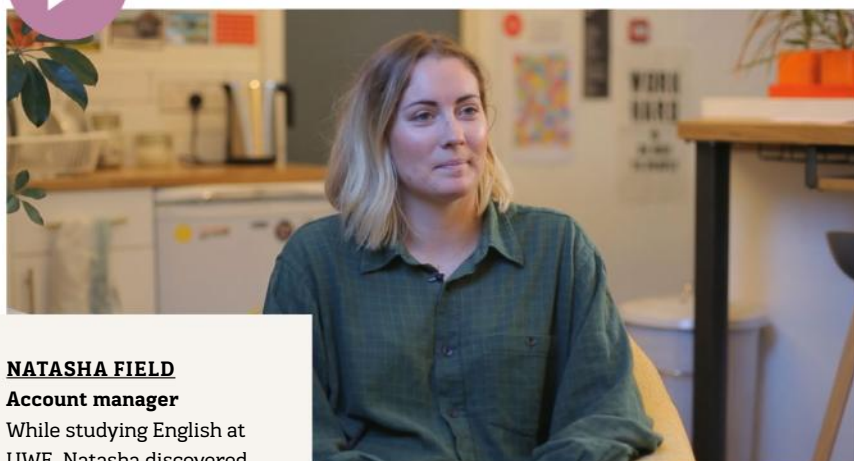
Above: One of the best-attended thread events of 2017 was the joint talk by DesignStudio co-founder Ben Wright (pictured) and DixonBaxi's Dan Capstick about rebranding the Premier League.



Left: Fiasco's sister company thread went all-out on the branding for the event, including a stall selling football scarves.



WATCH THE VIDEO NOW AT
www.bit.ly/ca275-fiasco



NATASHA FIELD

Account manager

While studying English at UWE, Natasha discovered a passion for design and switched her degree. She found a route in via account management at a London-based digital agency, then a larger ad agency, before moving back to Bristol.

MIX BUSINESS AND PLEASURE

In our third video, account manager Natasha Field reveals why a small, friendly studio suits her more than a large agency – and how Fiasco's 'family' vibe translates to client relationships.



Above and right: October 2017 saw thread put on Bristol's first major design festival, Something Good, which was reviewed in CA issue 273.



GET YOUR FOOT IN THE DOOR OF A SMALL STUDIO

Studio manager Marj Newnham impressed as an intern, then hit the ground running

1. Don't underestimate self-promotion

The year before Marj Newnham applied for an internship at Fiasco, she sent the studio a pop-up rocket Christmas card. She didn't hear anything back, but when she went for an interview she was pleased to be able to point out her card, still stuck on the wall. "It's always good to send out some feelers, because you never know when it'll come back around to help you," she says.

2. Make yourself indispensable

Marj left her previous job in the hope that her internship would lead onto full-time employment. It was a bit of a leap of faith she says, but she tried hard to impress throughout the internship "so they couldn't let me go," and her efforts paid off.

3. Find transferable skills

As well as managing the studio, Marj is also heavily involved in organising Fiasco's regular series of speaker-led events – thread – as well as its annual design festival, Something Good, which launched in October 2017.

"At uni, I organised the degree shows and final exhibition, so I could draw on that for experience," she explains.

As long as you've got a strong idea of what you're trying to achieve, she adds, it's surprising how many of your skills will be transferable.



WATCH THE VIDEO NOW AT
www.bit.ly/ca275-fiasco



MARJ NEWNHAM

Studio manager

Recent illustration graduate Marj works front-of-house for Fiasco, looking after clients during meetings and handling the day-to-day running of the studio, as well as helping to organise events and festivals.

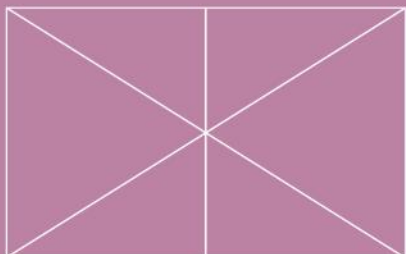
FIND A ROUTE INTO DESIGN

In our fourth video, recent UWE Bristol illustration graduate Marj Newnham reveals how she first got a foot in the door at Fiasco, putting her organisation skills to good use to help the studio and its sister company thread run smoothly.

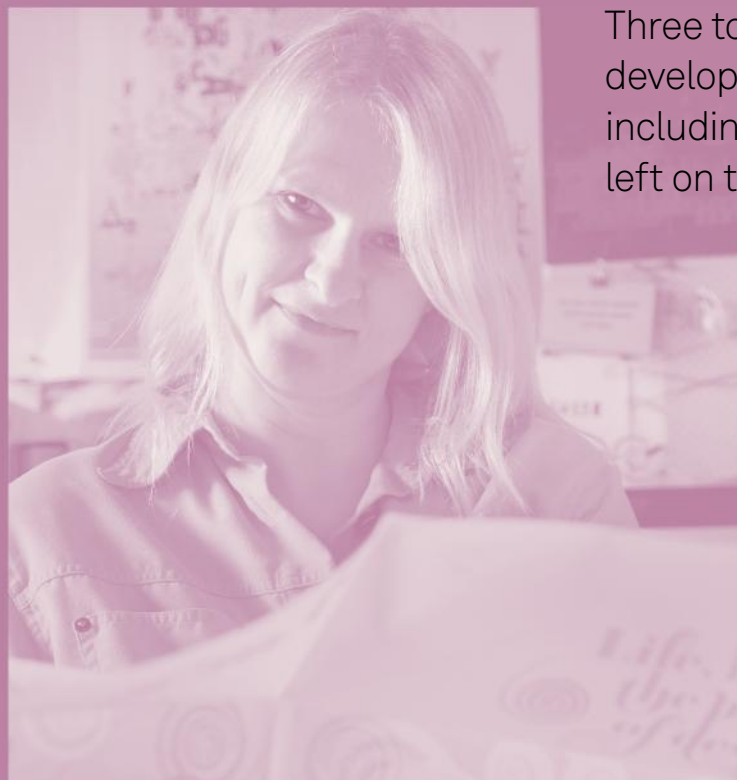
Watch the videos on our YouTube channel: www.bit.ly/ca275-fiasco



SPECIAL FEATURE



PRIVATE SKETCHBOOKS



Three top designers share unseen development work from the archives, including rejected concepts that were left on the cutting room floor



CLIENT CHANGES DIRECTION

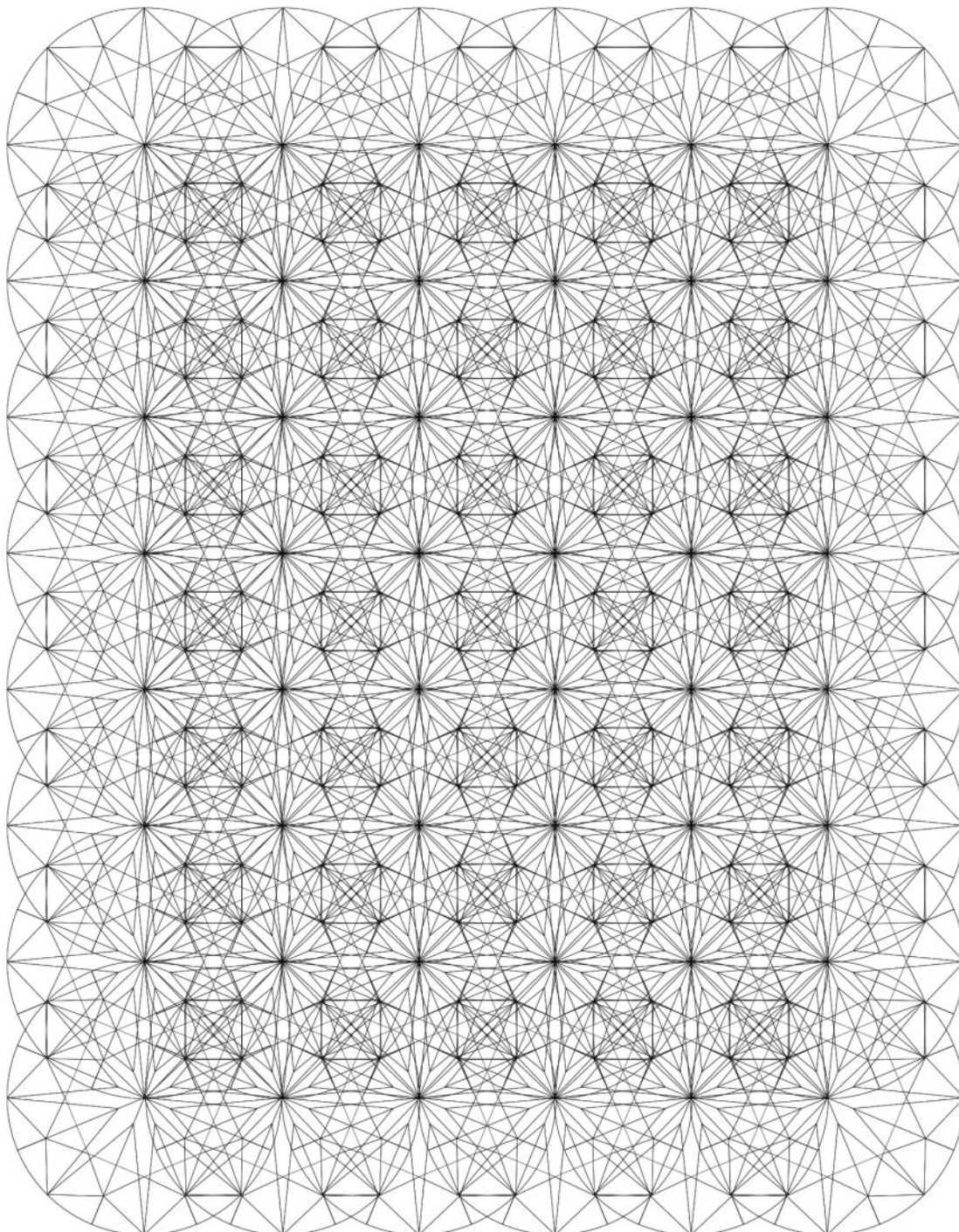
Marian Bantjes shares a series of artworks she developed for a high-end jewellery event, which never saw the light of day



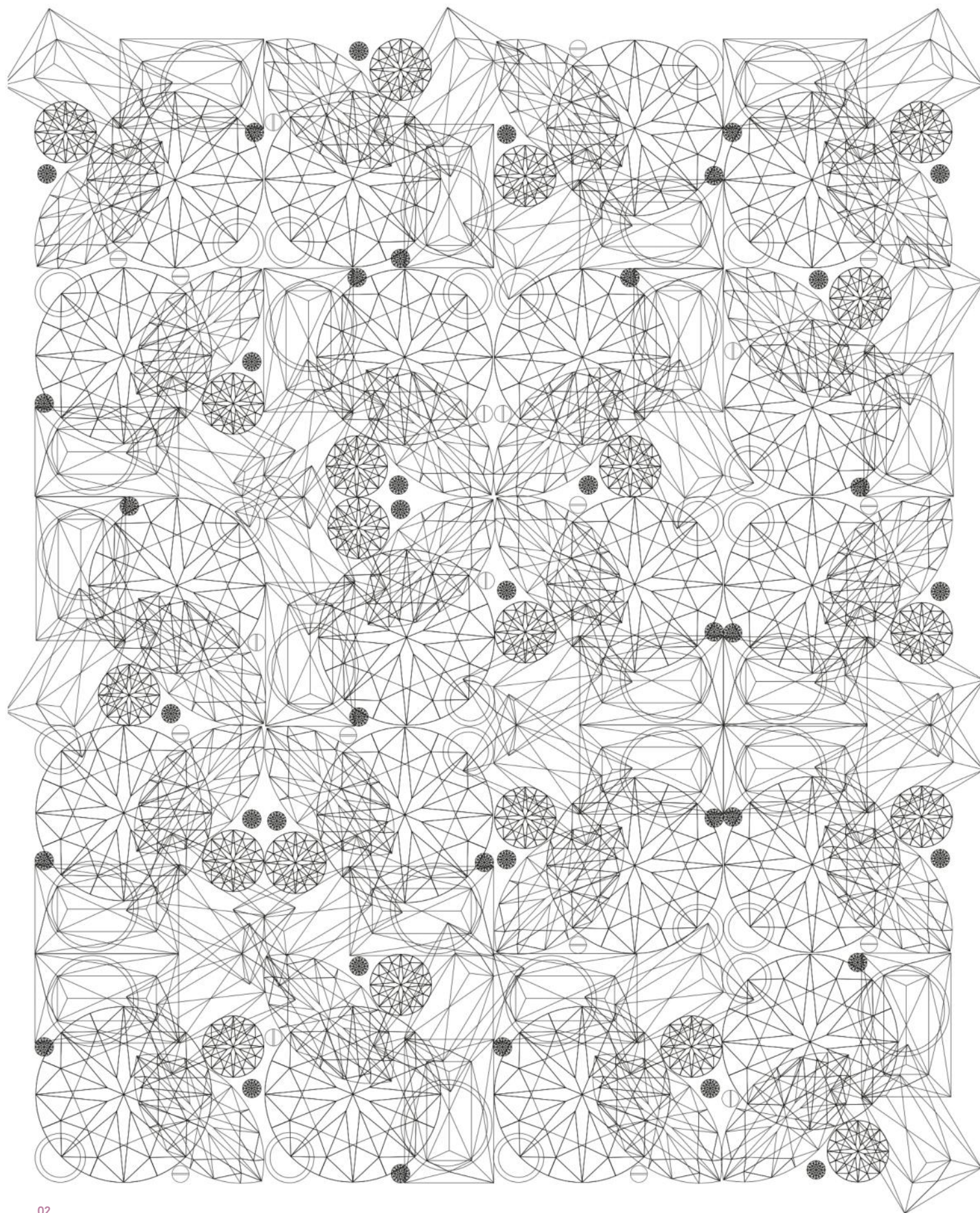
MARIAN BANTJES

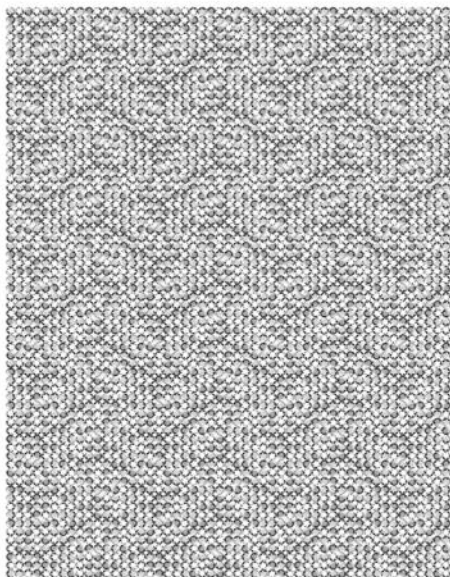
Designer and illustrator

Called “one of the most innovative typographers working today” by Stefan Sagmeister, Marian is a Canadian designer, artist, illustrator, typographer and writer, whose clients include Pentagram, AIGA, Sagmeister & Walsh, Wallpaper* and Wired. www.bantjes.com

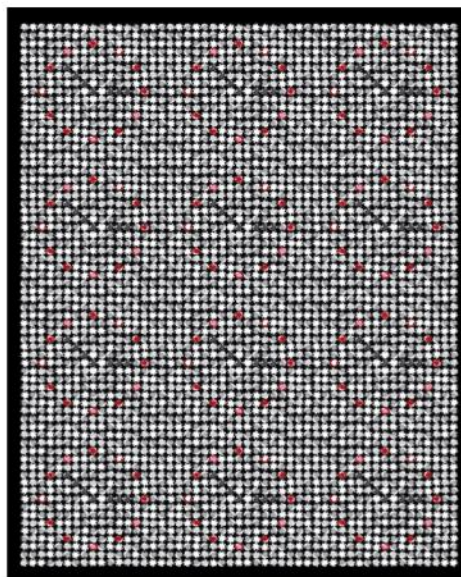


01 One of Bantjes' early concepts for her artwork for high-end jewellery event BaselWorld: a geometric pattern inspired by jewels and gemstones.





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“One of my favourite ideas used refracting gems as a watch face. I later repurposed this for a carpet design”

GENUINE GEM

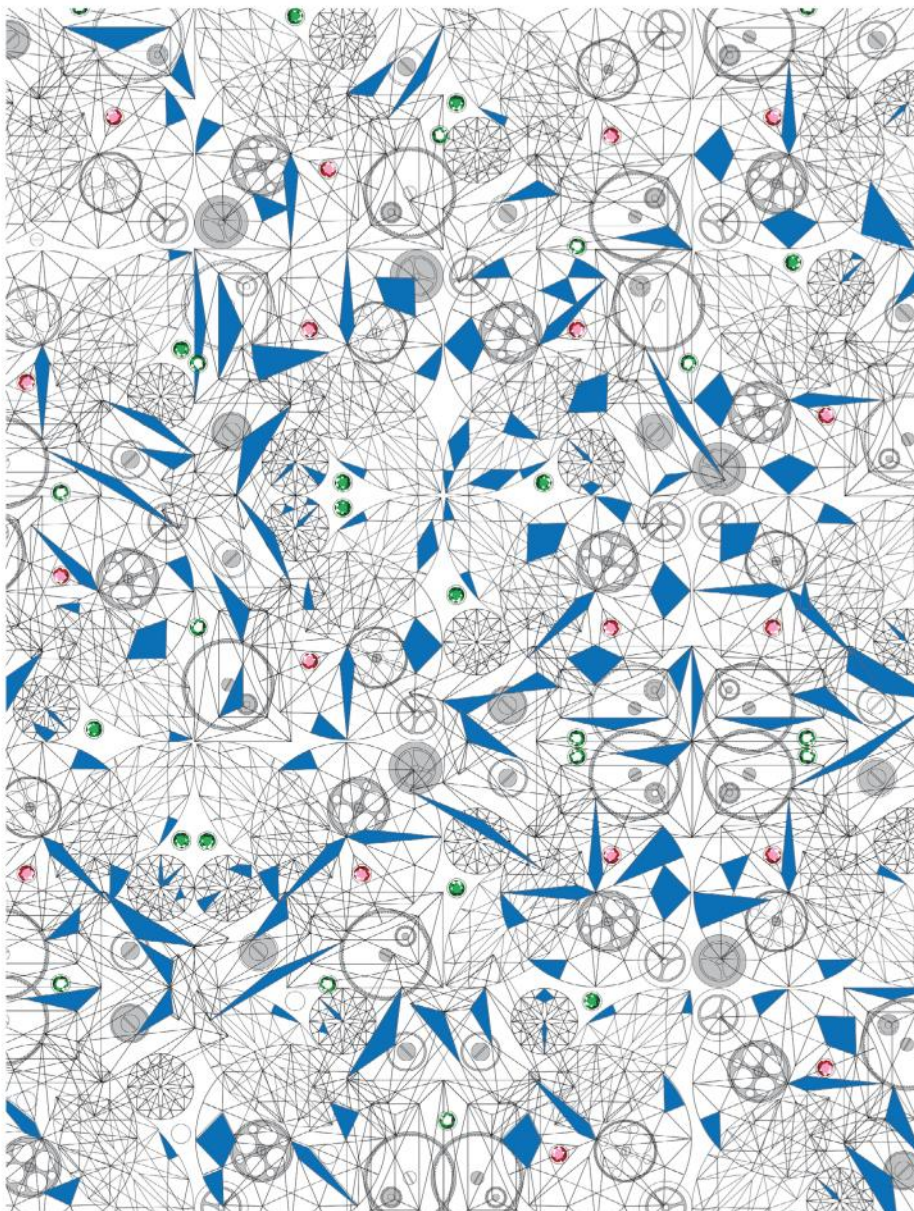
Marian Bantjes

In 2014, I was contacted to design the cover for an annual event in Switzerland called BaselWorld, which attracts jewellers and high-end watchmakers.

I started with some drawings of patterns based on jewels, and then worked them up into colour options. They liked these, but asked that more watch parts, or reference to watches, be used.

One of my favourites used refracting gems as a watch face. I later repurposed this for a carpet design, without the watch. For some reason these were not working for them, so I tried again. The intention for this was to use foil on a matte background.

Ultimately, none of these were used, and they printed a plain black cover with a gold band across it. Go figure.



06

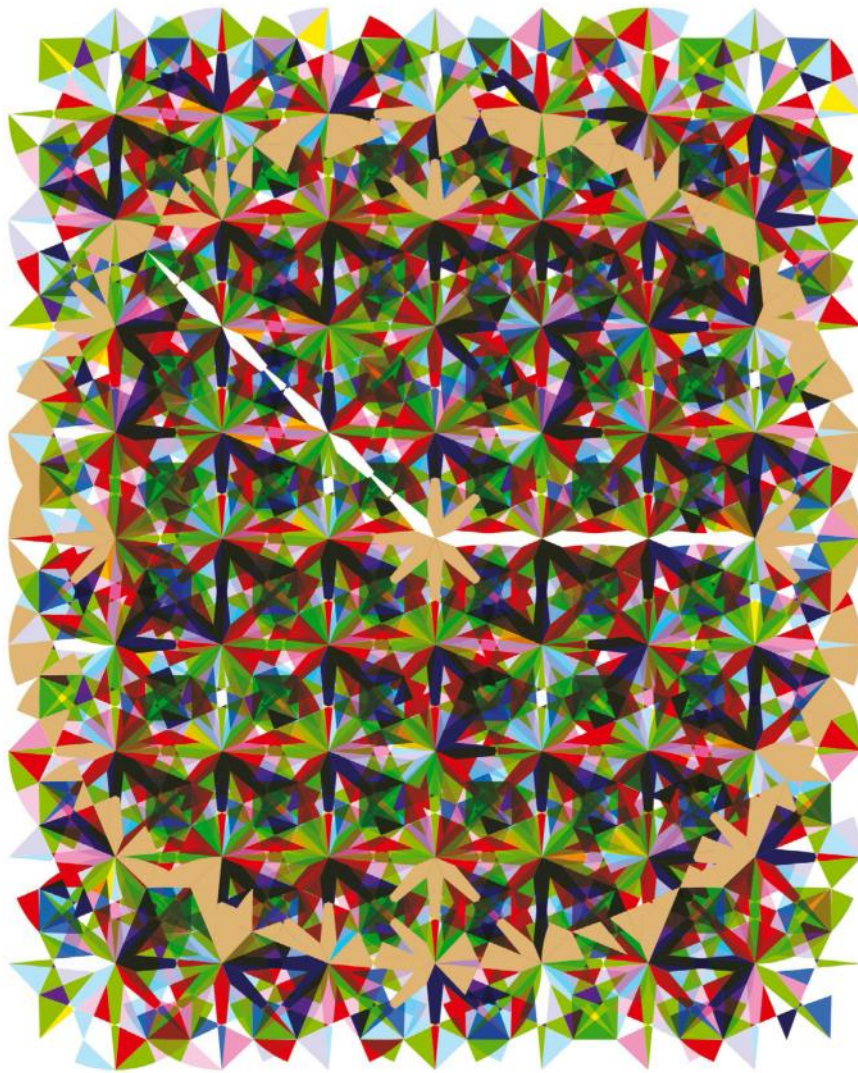


05

02 Another of Bantjes' jewellery-inspired geometric patterns.

03-04 Bantjes started experimenting with colour in the patterns.

05-06 As the idea developed, more explicit references to watch components were added alongside the gemstones, and she tried different colour combinations.



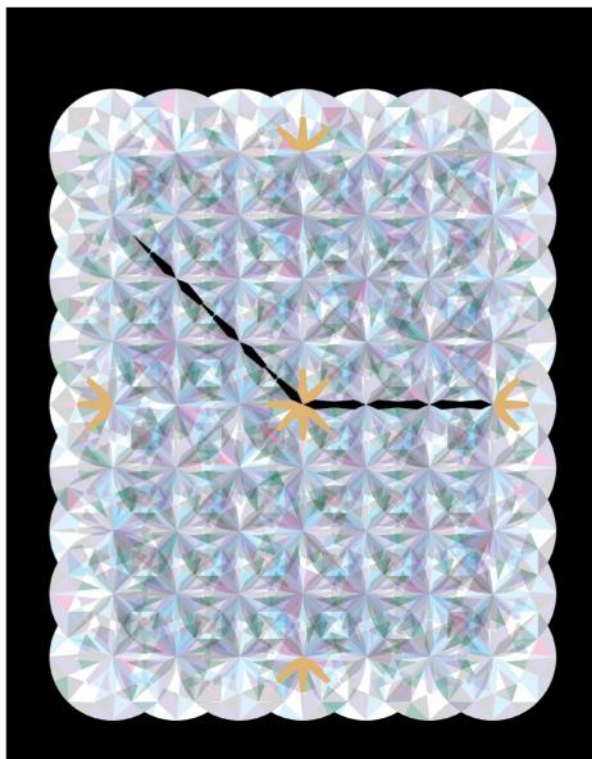
“For some reason the ideas weren’t working for the client, so I tried again. Ultimately, none of them were used: they printed a plain black cover. Go figure”

07 One of Bantjes’ favourite concepts, depicting refracting gems as a watch face, which she later repurposed without the watch for a carpet design project.

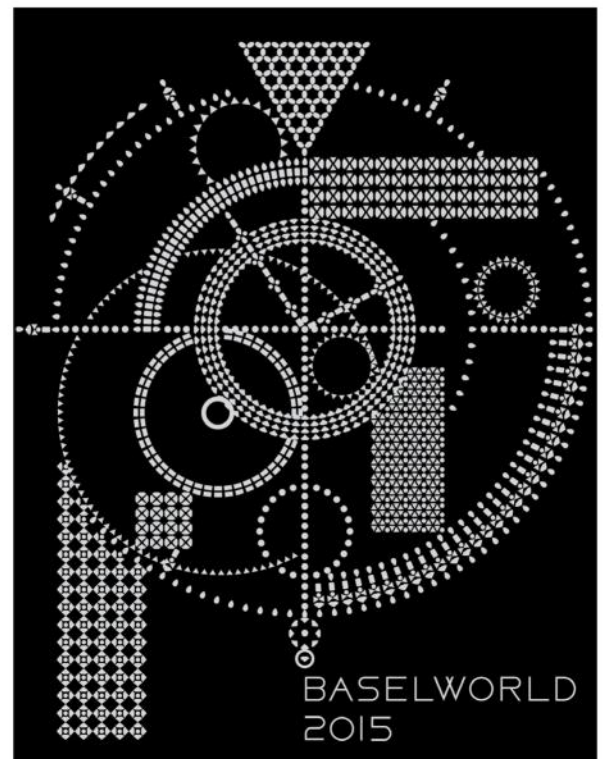
07

08 The client still wasn’t happy with the direction, so Bantjes pared it right back to emphasize the watch face even further.

09 A totally new concept, designed to be foil-blocked on matte black. Ultimately, none of them were chosen.



08



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SKETCHES HELP SHAPE A NEW WORLD

Art director **David Fernández Huerta** opens his personal sketchbook to reveal how the 2017 sequel to ustwo's hugely successful puzzle game took shape



DAVID FERNÁNDEZ HUERTA

Lead artist and art director, ustwo Games

With 10 years' experience as a games artist and illustrator, David joined ustwo Games as a senior artist in 2013, and is now lead artist, working on smash hit Monument Valley and its spin-off titles Forgotten Shores and Ida's Dream.

www.ustwogames.co.uk



01 (previous page)

This rough sketch shows a 'landscape' version of the game, as well as developing the landscape and architecture. It also features a character sailing away on a boat, which (spoiler warning) made it into the final game – albeit in a different context.

02 An example of the 'zoomed in' approach that Fernández Huerta played with to break the single-screen format of the original, as well as an array of different non-player characters in situ.



“My sketches experiment with the ‘adult-child’ relationship that became the game’s core theme”

UNCANNY VALLEY

David Fernández Huerta

These early sketches for Monument Valley 2 (www.monumentvalleygame.com) show my experiments with giving the game a landscape instead of a portrait orientation, as well as adding more detail to the architecture than was seen in the original game.

I also played around with the idea of zooming in on levels, as opposed to the 'world on a single screen' framing that we used in the first Monument Valley. Other sketches include further exploration of non-player characters, as I tried to create the feeling of being in a bustling village or town.

My sketchbook for this project is filled with lots of experiments with different character designs and styles, including the 'adult and child' relationship that would later develop into the core theme for the entire game.



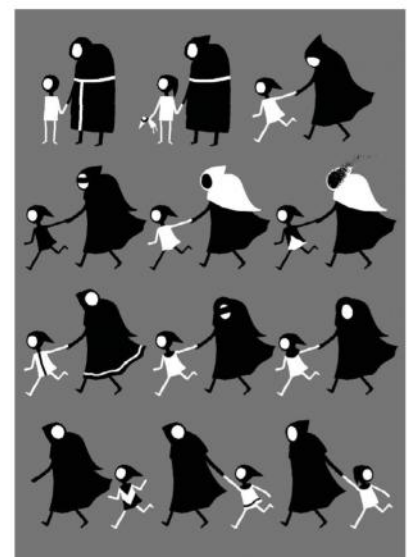


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03-05 Various character design experiments, including key poses and the all-important interactions between adult and child characters that would prove integral to the game.



05

IDEA REJECTED WITHOUT TRIAL

Michael Johnson shares a concept from inside the Johnson Banks archives that sadly never made it off the ground



01 One of the most striking images in Johnson Banks' proposed Tate Britain campaign depicts a Barbie doll, drowned in a plastic bath, in homage to John Everett Millais' Ophelia.



MODERN ART

Michael Johnson

If my file dates are correct, we originally proposed this idea back in 2003, to an ad agency who had asked us for help with an approach to Tate Britain.

The idea was: 'Where British art comes to life'. We imagined a family returning from a visit, and recreating Singer Sargents, drowning Ophelias and Richard Longs in their back garden using everyday objects, such as toys.

Personally, I always really loved this idea – but I suspect it was never even shown to the client.



MICHAEL JOHNSON

Founder, Johnson Banks

Michael set up multi-award-winning design consultancy Johnson Banks in 1992. 26 years on, he oversees the strategic and creative output, but is just as likely to roll up his sleeves and get involved in the work himself.

www.johnsonbanks.co.uk

STILL A SORE POINT



REBRAND SWIFTLY CANNED

As Michael Johnson recalls, his studio's logo for the world's biggest type foundry was rolled out, but then promptly rolled back in again

In the very early nineties (1993 I think?), we were asked to design the logo for Monotype – cue great excitement – and it was adopted, only to be replaced literally within months because of a complete change of ownership. At the time, it seemed like the roof had fallen in.

■ WORKSHOP

HOW TO VISUALISE A CLASSIC SONG

Information designer **Valentina D'Efilippo** shares the process behind her award-winning visualisation of David Bowie's Space Oddity

NEXT MONTH

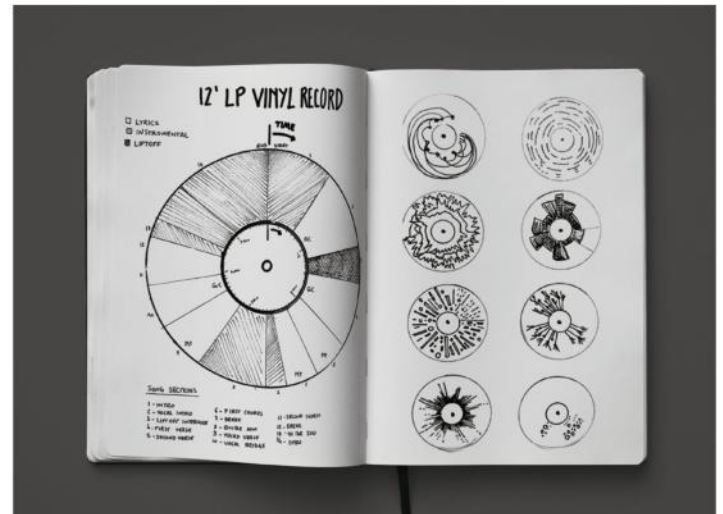
THE MOON AND BACK

How Paul Button
visualised all the
Apollo missions

**VALENTINA D'FILIPPO****Information designer**

Whether she's designing data-driven products, business intelligence tools, live theatre projections or books, the mapping of information allows Valentina to explore, learn and communicate. Her book, *The Infographic History of the World*, takes the reader on a journey through human history via 100 infographics.

www.valentinadefilippo.co.uk



01

01 Sketchbooks outlines for the different systems used, representing 10 different angles from which to look at Space Oddity, including Rhythm, Texture, Trip and Emotions.

DATA IS EVERYWHERE**Valentina D'Filippo**

Interest in how we conceptualise, understand and visualise information has fuelled my practice. I use data as a raw material from which I find my perspective and express what resonates with me, while hoping that others will find it compelling, too.

My personal interest in data visualisation took off more than 10 years ago, when working on my thesis for a postgraduate degree in visual communication. By exploring bias in gender cues that children receive through visual stereotypes, I started to collect and visualise data. Since then, I have continued to explore the world through data by collecting, deconstructing and mapping information.

Data can be found all around us, in where we go, what we consume, touch, read, watch or hear. My latest self-initiated project explores the application of dataviz techniques to music – giving form to what we hear, imagine and feel while listening to a song. *OddityViz* is also a tribute to an extraordinary artist, David Bowie.

DECONSTRUCT THE SONG

David Bowie left us with a constellation of intersecting worlds, loaded with material for celebration, consideration and interpretation. From the start of the project, it quickly



02-03 Work in progress images outlining what became the Trip version of Space Oddity.

04-05 Close-up details of the project.



02

It became apparent that it was necessary to limit the scope and focus to one song.

What would Space Oddity look like turned into images or through data visualisation? This is what I and data researcher Miriam Quick set out to explore in OddityViz. We extracted musical data from the track and visualised it in a set of 10 engraved records, paired with large-scale prints and projections that draw from the song's fragmented interstellar world.

Each 12-inch disc deconstructs the song differently – by instrumentation, rhythm, melody, harmony, lyrics, structure or the underlying story. Rather than abstract soundscapes, the records become a visual system to understand how Bowie masterfully crafted Major Tom's journey.

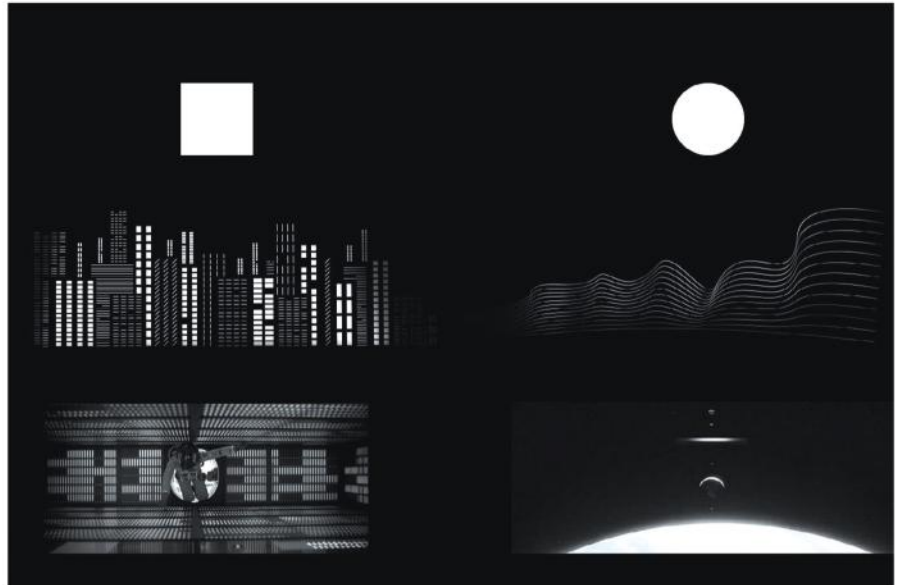
TURN AUDIO INTO VISUAL

Our intention was not to create an alternative visual score but to make the experience of listening to a song more 'visible'. By breaking down its core components and piecing them back together, we can end up with a deeper understanding of our initial experience.

We can think of traditional music notation as a kind of visualisation: pitch height corresponds to vertical height on the staff and the type of note describes the tempo. This system was created for musicians to perform. As you learn how to read it, the language becomes meaningful and legible. In a similar way, our visual encoding needed clear annotation, a key and writing to surface the insights.

FIND THE RIGHT FORMAT

The range of outcomes – computational animations, large-scale posters, engraved



03

discs and a window installation – allowed us to experiment with how to best encode the narrative. It took months of exploration and many hours of listening to the song on repeat and sketching out ideas. A turning point that defined most of the visual language was deciding to experiment with a new medium, creating sculptural data-objects.

The vinyl record was an obvious reference. From Edison's phonograph to today's vinyl records, music has been encoded through a series of grooves that spiral to the centre of the circular disc. Applying a similar logic, I wanted the musical data to be engraved. This decision forced me to work with no colour, using white on black, which also recalls the light of the stars in the darkness of space. The format also defined the system to encode the data – time around the circumference becomes a universal axis that allows comparison across visualisations.

Given the constraints of laser cutting and etching on records, a minimal, bold design was imperative. Simple geometry and shapes were used to encode sounds – evoking the nature of each individual instrument – and narrative patterns. Ground Control was represented by a square – a familiar, safe, angular shape that represents a point of stability on Earth – while Major Tom was a circle, a more human character, who becomes one with the cosmos.

This visual investigation was then brought to life with animation, in a freer attempt to

“Simple shapes were used to encode sounds and narrative patterns”



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06 Different methods have been used to present the project on the vinyl records, including emojis and shapes.

07 The visualisations have also been transformed into an animation that can be viewed at www.oddityviz.com

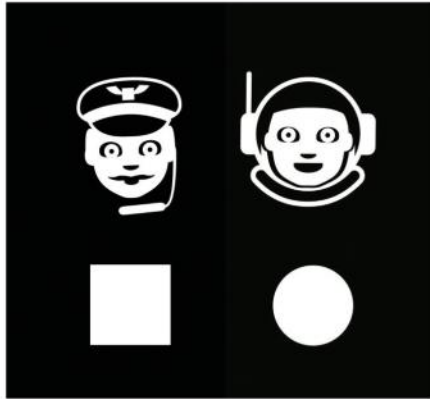
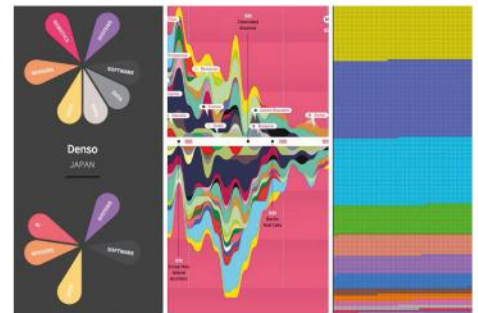
08-09 Each visualisation is engraved on a 12-inch acrylic disc and prints are also available to buy online.

10 The version of Space Oddity used was the 2009 remaster; most of the data was gathered through listening to the track.

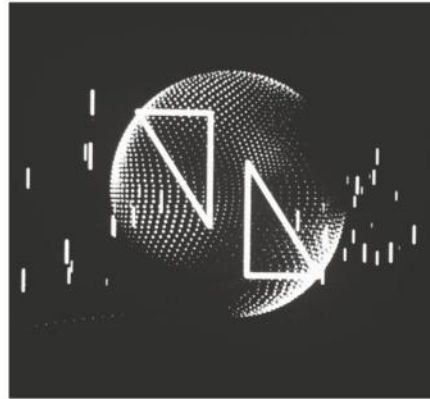
INFORMATION IS BEAUTIFUL AWARDS

2017'S WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Celebrating excellence in data visualization, infographics and information design, the awards have eight subject-based categories. See the winners online at: www.informationisbeautifulawards.com



06



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link various aspects of the deconstruction to the actual music. Collaborating with Mike Brondbjerg, a talented generative artist, we created a moving image including a generative portrait of Bowie and a series of sequences, which Mike coded in processing, and others that I animated in After Effects.

MAKE THE VISION HAPPEN

When approaching a new project, I find it helpful to set out a strong creative direction to guide me through the design process and limit the decisions I will have to make later on. On the other hand, not knowing where I am going excites me and I like to allow the subject to inform the creative process.

Moods and inspiration for this project included a variety of visual references from popular culture to experimental music notation resources and the Voyager Golden Records. Space Oddity comes with a wealth of visual inspiration to draw on from this very interesting period in popular culture.

One of the discs, Trip, references Kubrick's 2001 Space Odyssey which was one of the main inspirations for this song. This record stands out from the rest due to its use of a distinct visual language – emoji. Rather than being driven by data, it utilises illustration and images that loosely code for text and incorporates visual metaphors from the movie.

Thanks to the support of Wieden+Kennedy, we were able to exhibit the project in London to mark the first anniversary of Bowie's death. Since then, it has been on the road, with mini installations and talks across the world from London to Milan, to Minneapolis. The project also won an Information is Beautiful Award. ■



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The Association of Illustrators (AOI) is a not-for-profit trade organisation promoting contemporary illustration and maintaining industry standards. Established in 1973, the AOI works to increase the standing of illustration as a profession and improve commercial and ethical conditions, and support illustrators at every stage of their career.

A FREE AGENT? WITH SHOTOPOP AND LUISA RIVERA

In part five of our AOI series, we explore life with and without an agent

Many of our members are represented by agencies, but we also have many that aren't, as well as agent members, who abide by our ethical code of conduct, and work hard to secure a richer industry through a great plethora of talent.

Many illustrators ask us: is it essential to have an agent in order to be successful? To answer this question, we sought the insight of two AOI members who are currently thriving in their careers, with and without agents.

Shotopop (represented by Bernstein & Andriulli, Valérie Oualid and Jacky Winter) tells us how working with an agent is all about communication...

Shotopop: Although we are represented by three agencies, they each cover very different regions of the world, so luckily there's no overlap or difficulty. We're always very transparent in what we do and who we work with; for us it's all about being open and honest.

Our agents are like part of our studio. If we didn't have them, we'd need to employ people in their place. They complement and strengthen us, and we can't fault them. Pros include getting awesome projects to work on and not having to worry about contracts and red tape.

An agent isn't someone who tells us what to do, they represent our interests. If you end up with an agent that starts giving you feedback, or comes between

you and the client, you should reconsider the relationship.

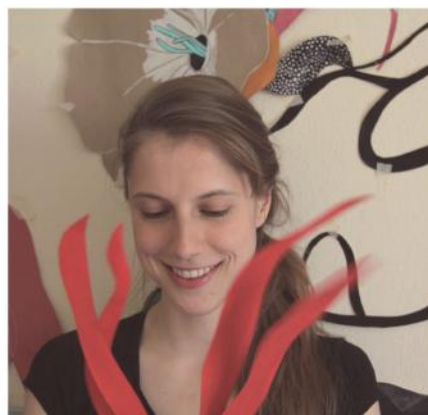
Meanwhile, Luisa Rivera shares how being unrepresented can allow you to be more self-sufficient...

LR: Not having an agent has allowed me freedom because I am more in control of my own practice. I have learned a lot in the process: how to negotiate, manage a project, and create a more personal relationship with my clients. The cons are practical because you end up doing more work (that is, more admin).

I try to network and showcase myself as much as I can, either via email, finding blogs to feature my work or on social media. I show finished illustrations but also my process, because that helps others to understand my method. When I manage my commissions, I prioritise projects or clients that are meaningful to me.

Communications have shifted in the last five years, allowing illustrators to engage more directly with art directors, so having an agent nowadays isn't mandatory. It will help if you want to focus on the creative side, and especially if you decide to work within certain industries like advertising. However, like in any relationship, you should find a good fit: someone you trust and who understands your work. ■

If you're seeking representation and don't know where to start, find resources at www.theaoi.com



Left and below: Luisa Rivera is a London-based illustrator originally from Chile. Her clients include Penguin Random House, Reservoir Books and Air Canada. Find more of her work at www.luisarivera.cl. Bottom: Shotopop is a London-based creative studio that creates visuals and animation for clients including Netflix, Google and Smirnoff. See more at www.shotopop.com.



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Emily Oberman – a multi-disciplinary designer and partner at Pentagram – discusses what her childhood love for MAD magazine has taught her about humour, silliness and going against the grain.

MAD FOR IT

I grew up in a big old house in Yonkers, New York. My parents, both artists/designers, had their studios on the top floor along with their archives, and to my endless delight, shelves of magazines. They had every issue of Graphis; stacks of the beautifully designed Avant Garde and Eros; Pogo comics; old Esquire mags (with covers photographed by their friend Carl Fischer), and of course, the New Yorker and New York Magazines. I used to spend hours up there, burning all of it into my brain, but the real reason I returned to the shelves time and time again as a kid was for MAD Magazine.

Ah, MAD! My parents had every issue, from its debut as a comic book to when it switched to the now-classic magazine format (issue 24), up to the then-present day (1976). I read every issue front to back – memorising every word, every drawing, every pun, every twisted illustration.

What made MAD so great? Well, in my mind then, as now: everything.

First of all, the logo was incredible: three intricate, circus-style letterforms filled with tiny characters drawn by Sergio Aragonés running around in a bacchanalian frenzy. It was like a Hieronymus Bosch inside that logo.

Then there were the covers, featuring the inimitable Alfred E. Newman. I soaked up every absurd situation he got himself into, whether he was impossibly eating sweetcorn, or swimming with Bruce, the shark from Jaws. And each cover always said 'our price xx¢ cheap,' even as the price went up over the years (I've always wanted to put that on a proposal).



Above: A selection of MAD magazines, including the fictitious mascot and cover boy, Alfred E. Newman (top left). **Below:** An early version of the MAD logo, including illustrations by Sergio Aragonés.

MAD was full of unforgettable details. The masthead listed the contributors as 'the usual gang of idiots,' a phrase I still use to this day to describe my friends, family and team – much to their chagrin. Its movie and television parodies were flawlessly punny (favourites included Star Bleck, The Putrid Family, and M*I*S*H M*O*S*H), and each issue ended with the MAD Fold-in: a brilliant illustration drawn by Al Jaffee that asked a loaded question and, when folded just so, revealed an anti-establishment jab as an answer.

MAD was a class-clown masterclass: I learned about drawing from Mort Drucker (my dad loved Mort's line work) and about absurdist humour from Don Martin. MAD showed me the joy of language, as wry parody, political nose-thumbing and sheer nonsensical gibberish ran rampant on every page in equal measure. From sound effects like FWAK, SHTOINK, and GLINK to the oft-used furshlugginer – a fake Yiddish word for something old, battered, and junky (as in 'I better finish this furshlugginer essay on time') – absolutely nothing was off limits.

But the biggest thing that MAD magazine gave me, the thing that I carry every day, which permeates my life both as a designer and as a person, is that it's okay (that it's great, really) to be funny, subversive, outspoken, silly and smart. And that you can be all of those things at once, if you want. I'm glad I live in a MAD world. I'm a better weirdo for it. ■





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