





# JIM RISWOLD

Portland-based artist, writer and former creative director for Wieden-Kennedy, discusses creating some of the most iconic advertisements of the 20th century and how the appropriation of culture leads to innovation.

Jim Riswold is the former creative director for Portland-based advertising agency, Wieden+Kennedy, and an instructor for the agency's experimental advertising school, WK12. He studied communications, philosophy, and history at University of Washington and was Wieden+Kennedy's first copywriter hire in 1984. During his time there, Riswold created advertising campaigns such as the famous Bugs Bunny/Jordan pairing, the "Bo Knows" Nike campaigns featuring Bo Jackson, and the Tiger Woods commercial, "I Am Tiger Woods." In 2000, he was diagnosed with leukemia and, five years later, quit advertising to become a full-time contemporary artist. His photographs have been shown in galleries throughout the Northwest and hang in the permanent collections of several museums. He was inducted into The One Club's Creative Hall of Fame in 2013.

***"Creative people are by nature curious. Curiosity is never satisfied. Once curiosity becomes satisfied, then it becomes complacency."***

*Have you had any mentors along the way?*

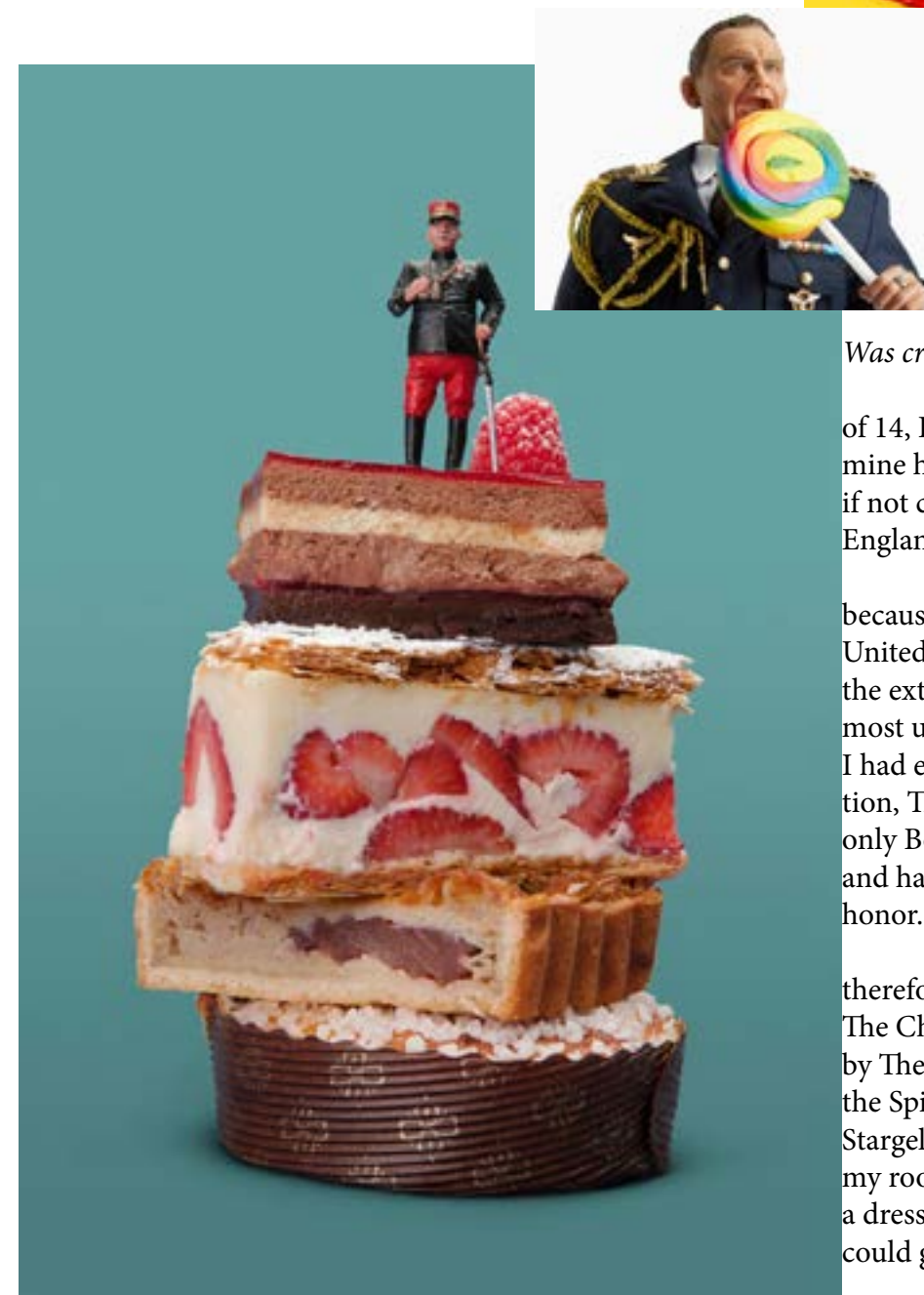
My mom is my mentor. She put up with my father and me for a whole bunch of decades. She taught me fortitude. Where do you get your ideas from?

*Have you had any particular influences over the years?*

I have never had an original thought in my career. Everything I have ever done has been borrowed, enlisted, reformulated, regurgitated, turned upside down or inside out, played back at a different speed, and sometimes just plain stolen from either popular culture, music, history, art, literature, the back of cereal boxes, Hegelianism, an athlete's life, news, a bedtime story my grandmother once read me—whatever.

Anything and everything is fair game when it comes to stimulus. A friend once warned others never to wear a new pair of shoes around me. My lawyers have asked me to point out that this is not plagiarism; it is appropriation.

***"Start every day stupid. If you start every day stupid you start every day without inhibition and inhibition is creativity's kryptonite."***



*Was creativity part of your childhood?*

In 1972, at the very impressionable age of 14, I saw my first rock concert. A friend of mine had invited me to see a then relatively, if not completely, unknown musician from England named David Bowie.

He was definitely unknown to me, not because it was Mr. Bowie's first tour of the United States and he was unknown to all but the extremely hip, but because I was the single most unhip teenager in the Pacific Northwest. I had exactly one record in my music collection, The Charge of the Light Brigade, and the only Bowie I'd ever heard of died at the Alamo and had a knife posthumously named in his honor.

Like I said, I was impressionable and, therefore, things changed after that concert. The Charge of the Light Brigade was replaced by The Rise and Fall of Ziggy Stardust and the Spiders from Mars. Posters of Willie Stargell and Gump Worsley that adorned my room were discarded for every image of a dress-wearing man with orange hair that I could get my hands on.