E: It has been quite some time since we last conversed. Since then, I had an intense month in which my senior show *w-t-f*[1] was born, evolved, and finally exhibited at Princeton. The process of developing the show as both about the work and about the exhibiting of graphic design was an interesting one, particularly given the point on context you bring up.

I wonder if it is possible to say that decontextualizing work by removing the client brief is good enough. After all, there are still societal, cultural, "of our time" contexts that operate on a piece of work (art or commercial) which are inescapable. Perhaps also there is a difference of doing graphic design in a vacuum (the institution) and practicing it in a studio. I do, however, like the point that you bring up about individual style as context.

One of the pieces that I've been reading recently is Paul Elliman's "My Typographies." It is a reminder that the layer of visual language applied onto the world is both highly subjective and extremely thin. At some point, someone decided that the form for an 'A' would look the way it does and there it goes. But this decision is ultimately, consciously or not, divisive throughout society. I am now thinking of the difference between western and asian languages.

There is also the whole idea of graphic design as kitsch, which then can be used as propaganda in order to influence the masses. At least, that would be the perspective of Greenberg's "Avant-garde and Kitsch" essay which I found both pretentious and agreeable.

One thing I have been fascinated with of late is the idea of found typography – nothing novel at all, but nevertheless I am interested

in both the place specificity of language (I was recently in New Orleans where the culture and language is significantly different than the East Coast) and the artificial defining of a new character set in order to convey meaning.

28 March 2018

[1] https://eric.young.li/w-t-f/