



Welcome back.

I can't tell you how excited I am to be involved in re-launching Streetgraphic! Almost two years after our last issue we are back in full swing with a brand new site, a new editorial team and plans in place, which I am sure, will prove to make for an interesting year.

I think it's fair to say that Streetgraphic has matured quite considerably since it's last issue, we have a new professional tool for managing and editing content, a larger, more globalised team of contributors and most importantly a stronger sense of identity and purpose. Helping to drive the growth and expansion of Streetgraphic is a large part of what makes it so exciting, and I anticipate a lot of exciting times ahead.

In this issue we interview Rob Chiu, motion director and founder of 'The Ronin', to find out what he has been doing recently with Adobe and New York based design house; digital kitchen.

Our Australian correspondent Dave Taylor takes Streetgraphic down under in an exploration of ozzie perception of home grown design versus imported British work, in an series of interviews with creative directors from some of Sydney's top agencies.

We also took a trip to Barcelona to interview a British student who is living and working out in Spain placement, to find out whether his job is giving him the necessary experience to cut it in the design world.

I'd like to say a big thank you to our new team who have been working very hard to launch the new site, to John Kelly, Dave Taylor and Joy Sykes for all their support, and to Rob Chiu and to the rest of the contributors.

If you are interested in being involved in the next issue please contact us to find out more, otherwise you can look forward to an interview with artist and animator John Ross, to find out what he has been doing with aardman studio and his views of art and design in academic institutions.

On a final note I would just like to put a call out for creative students and professionals alike, to contact us, with suggestions, feedback, information, or interest in contribution.

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# street graphics

Once upon a time in Oz

In the early Eighties, Australia was regarded as design graveyard for the Brits. With many designers returning home and finding it difficult to find work. Since the Aussies hosted the Olympics, many graduates and professional designers are taking the leap to Oz. We wondered if there was any difference in quality between the Brit import and home grown stuff. The feedback is frank, honest and with some colourful language.

David Taylor is Managing Director and Lead Strategist of Ink Project in Sydney

Great designers don't belong to a town, region or nation they are from everywhere and anywhere and they use their sense of cultural identity to inspire their design. When great designers travel my experience is that they become greater! As they assimilate all around them and re-express it. Their talent and attitude to life and work is key, search for self, truth and beauty and a desire to share this with others is key... where they came from has fuck all to do with anything really.

A very short answer to the question about a shortage of truly talented designers both here and in the UK would be that there always has been a shortage.

Like everything in life, there is a huge volume of crap out there, a mass of mediocre and a thin line of the real pure stuff. Apply this to products, brands and talent. Design is no different, their always will be a shortage of the truly gifted, as quality agencies around the globe scramble to take ownership of rare talent. It would also be fair to say that as educated audiences demand more or better supply struggles to keep up as the resource (gifted designers) seem to be born and not mass produced to satisfy demand.

Which, if that's the way it's going then fair enough, but to Aussies, that's too bloody easy mate... NO!

Mark Stott is founding partner and Creative Director of Common Design

It's very difficult to assess, on a whole, the generic design talent of a nation. Design is the front line of visual culture and subcultural movements and with that, there are innate differences between the UK and Australia. Surroundings and influences are different, vernacular and idiosyncrasies are born out of different ideals within lifestyle. So of course with the variables that should go into design and communication in terms of influences within the different cultures, outcomes are slightly different. Having said that, visual solutions are definitely blurring the boundaries between the UK and Australia, and many other western countries for that matter, which unfortunately suggests that solutions are not born out of influences and personal experiences as they should be, they are born out of re-developing solutions at hand and force fitting them, a frightening trend. As for talent, I think we need to look at individuals and not countries for the answer.

Do I think it is easier or harder to find talented designers here...

I think it's difficult to find great designers here for that matter. The merging boundaries of mediums and the responsibility of the modern design agency's role to its clients suggests that there are very few designers who can fill the multifaceted require, or any wireframes. There are great thinkers, which is what common looks for in a designer, but very few solid all round creatives. As for whether it's easier or harder to find them, I haven't been in the industry in the UK for 8 years now so I couldn't tell you the trends over there, but would hazard a guess that it will be a similar situation.

Are you formally educated in design or are you self taught? How important would you say design education is for people working in motion graphics?

The only reason I went onto to do a degree was to find my own voice (I was already currently senior designer at a local agency) therefore after I found my graphic voice I used Journey as a tool to market myself towards the motion graphic/film side of things. My first commission was for Service Point UK for which I did a short commercial entitled Imagine.

Collateral project ...

The Black Day To Freedom project is one of my favourite projects as it was a combination of motion and print design. There was a book which can be purchased from the site ([www.blackdaytofreedom.org](http://www.blackdaytofreedom.org)) which contains over 30 invited international designers and illustrators to express their views via the visual medium on the subject of refugees. I was able to work with many friends and peers I had been inspired by for a long time. I also created a short film for the book which is included on a DVD that comes with the book. We launched the project at the ICA in London in May 2005 and since then the film has gone on to be shown at a number of film festivals worldwide.

Thanks for your time Rob, any final words?

Ronin spins live forever

"music is generally what inspires me and creates the emotions in my work that fuel the visuals"

graphics for my final degree piece. "Journey" was the first short film I ever created and was also the first time that I had ever used Adobe After Effects. The film went on to get me into an international student year book and a first class degree!

How has the visual language of feature length motion picture influenced your work?

Films. Actually I'm writing this as I was after just coming away fully inspired by watching a film. I've been mentally blocked on a project for some time getting no where and churning out sub standard stuff that when I saw the film it all became clear to me what I should be doing. My vision is totally different to that of what I was inspired by but there's something in the film that saw that kick start off a whole new wave of ideas and points of view. Right now I'm feeling good.

Could you tell us your typical process of creation, and your technique at work?

My usual work process although it can vary greatly depending on what it is that I am working on - would be to engulf myself in music that I am considering for the project until I start to see the visuals in my mind. I would then start to work heavily in Photoshop creating mood boards etc until I am happy and then I would either commission my audio designer - DoSC ([www.diagram-of-suburban-chaos.com](http://www.diagram-of-suburban-chaos.com)) to create some soundscapes for me. Sometimes I jump into After Effects and get things moving a little before I talk to DoSC depending on how busy he is but I prefer to know the direction of the audio before I make the motion as the music is generally what inspires me and creates the emotions in my work that fuel the visuals.