

INSIDE THE APPARATUS CLEAN ROOM

“Empathy for the people using your product is the key to good interaction design.”

Designapparat.us is the culmination of years of work and constant collaboration with people that care about making something better. The focus of my work is around applications and not so much traditional websites or marketing pages. I live in complication and I go out of my way to find problems that are complex. Everything has an answer that is both elegant and intuitive.

I often get asked about how I got into design and it's been a long hard road. In my senior year in college, I could see the landscape of design changing and my degree in “visual communication” wasn't going to cut it in the real world. I started reading more forward thinking design books at the time like **“Don't Make Me Think”** and **“Defensive Design for the Web”**. I made deals with my professors to starting learning HTML on my own instead of following the normal curriculum for my design degree.

It didn't help. I graduated and spend the first year out of school struggling to find a job that wasn't a dead end. It wasn't long until I found myself broke and homeless, living out of my car. Every week I would make used car ads for the back pages of the Chicago Tribune for a few hundred dollars and spend the rest of my time teaching myself CSS via **“The Zen of CSS”**. I made my first website for a coffee shop that let me camp out in the back of the store and leech off their internet connection while I got better at design work.

A friend of mine got me a job in Denver and eventually I found my design legs, but I can't shake this feeling that I need to keep reading and learning about new technologies and design theory. Designapparat.us is yet another example of this as it's my first personal responsive design site and heavily influenced by **“Responsive Web Design”** and **“Mobile First”**. I am very lucky to have friends that are absolutely brilliant about design work and I would be nothing without their help.