WIN! MICHAEL JOHNSON'S NEW BOOK 'BRANDING IN 5½ STEPS' – RRP £29.95

COMPUTER ARTS

DESIGN MATTERS

ISSUE #260
DECEMBER 2016
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PRINTED IN THE UK

HOW TO CRAFT BETTER BRANDING

The Chase reveals how an old Indian saying helped shape its branding process

GREAT SELF PROMO IDEAS YOU WISH YOU'D HAD

Future

ILLUSTRATE FOR FASHION

Master hand-drawn techniques with award-winning illustrator Miss Led

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Make your mark in design with insider advice from D&AD New Blood

“WE ALL LIVE IN A RHYTHMIC UNIVERSE. THIS IS MINE.”

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Making the cover

This issue's eye-catching cover is the work of mural specialist Alex Fowkes, who translated his Photoshop composition of the 'great self promo ideas you wish you'd had' cover line onto a sheet of wood, and then painted it by hand – making use of the Nottingham-based studio space of his friend Norm Hayes, aka Waste.

"I've been doing lots of restricted palette type stuff recently, with 3D shadow styling added," he explains, adding that the wood background adds an authentic twist.

However, the wood grain proved a bit distracting, so Fowkes painted it with a grey wash: "This lets the texture come through, but gives a cleaner feel," he adds.

Computer Arts regularly experiments with special finishes, including 'scratch and sniff' lemons, heat- and light-reactive ink, pearlescent varnish, glitter foil and more. Watch a selection of videos of these treatments being applied at our print finishing partner Celloglas at www.bit.ly/ca-printfinishes

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ALEX FOWKES

Alex is an award-winning designer, best-known for his typographic installations and murals in retail stores, music venues and offices for the likes of Sony Music, O2 Academy and Urban Outfitters. He is represented by We Are Goodness in the UK and Europe.
www.alexfowkes.com

Editor's letter

There's a reason D&AD uses the phrase "I wish I'd done that" in its Awards campaigns – it's a powerful reaction to have when you look at someone else's work. It doesn't necessarily mean envy (although it might), but respect for the creator is a given – and while we'd never condone imitation, admiring your peers' achievements can give you the inspiration to achieve greater things.

With this spirit in mind, our cover feature this month presents four very different, but equally effective examples of self-promotion (as well as one cautionary tale of what not to do). The best self-promo is individual and original by nature, but if you wish you'd thought of these ideas first, they'll hopefully inspire you to go one better.

Sometimes, serendipity comes into play and great self-promotional activity happens when you least expect it. In our interview, Gemma O'Brien shares how an absent-minded doodle on a sick bag on a long flight snowballed into a full-blown exhibition. Elsewhere, our video team visits Manchester-based studio The Chase to discover why creativity lies at the heart of everything it does.

Back to D&AD for a moment, as this issue begins a new 10-part series, culminating in our annual New Talent special next summer. Curated by D&AD New Blood trustee Tom Manning, these articles will explore what it takes to make it as a young designer in the modern design industry.

Next issue, creative consultancy FranklinTill predicts the four key palettes that we'll be seeing everywhere in 2017 in our annual colour trends report. There's also a guide to getting more from your side-projects and, crucially, how to find the time to make them count – see you then!

● NICK CARSON
Editor
nick.carson@futurenet.com

KEEP IN TOUCH WITH...

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FEATURING

MICHAEL JOHNSON
johnson banks founder Michael has put his two decades of hands-on experience into his new book, Branding: In Five And A Half Steps (Thames and Hudson). He explains why his so-called 'step 2.5' is crucial to success on page 22.
www.johnsonbanks.co.uk

MISS LED
Also known as Joanna Henly, Miss Led is an illustrator, artist and art director with over 14 years of experience in commercial illustration and fine art. On page 88 she shares pro tips for stepping up your hand-drawn illustrartion.
www.missled.co.uk

RICHARD TURLEY
In our Icon section, following his recent move to Wieden+Kennedy as global executive creative director, Richard Turley shares his recent obsession with Mushpit magazine on page 98.
www.richardturley.tumblr.com

ALEX DONNE-JOHNSON
Dazzle Ship founder Alex has worked on everything from art direction for the James Bond gaming franchise to specialist strategy for fashion brands. Discover how his studio introduced drone racing to the world on page 92.
www.dazzleship.com

Credit: George Evans

GEMMA O'BRIEN
Sydney-based hand-lettering expert Gemma specialises explains how an inauspicious start led to her meteoric rise through the industry in our interview slot, on page 56.
www.gemmaobrien.com

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Next issue on sale
09 December 2016

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Future plc is a public company quotes on the London Stock Exchange (symbol: FUTR).
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MEET THE TEAM

NICK CARSON
EDITOR
Following last month's Croatia trip with a brief jaunt to Lanzarote with his girlfriend and her family, Nick got himself a reputation for 'always being on holiday' – but couldn't resist checking his email while away.

JO GULLIVER
ART EDITOR
This month, Jo went to all the gigs (four in one week). The most memorable, but not the best, was a black metal gig where the lead singer inexplicably climbed out of a flatpack fabric wardrobe.

ROSIE HILDER
OPERATIONS EDITOR
Rosie soaked up the sun in Malta during a very relaxing holiday. She also attended her first design conference, OFFSET Sheffield – the highlight of which was a talk from design legend Ben Bos.

KEY CONTRIBUTORS

GARETH JONES
VIDEOGRAPHER
Gareth helped film and edit this month's Designer Series at Manchester-based agency The Chase, where he unexpectedly came face-to-face with a cardboard cutout of Eric Cantona.

JULIA SAGAR
CONTRIBUTOR-AT-LARGE
Despite once writing the Freelance Handbook, Julia fell prey to the classic error of taking on too much work this month and had to turn down many fun times. (She remains grateful she can pay the bills.)

Production notes

PRINTERS
TEXT AND COVER CMYK
William Gibbons

PRINT FINISHING PARTNER
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PAPER
COVER
Precision Special Gloss FSC 250gsm
P3–74: Ultra Mag Plus Gloss 90gsm
P75–98: GrapholInvent 70gsm

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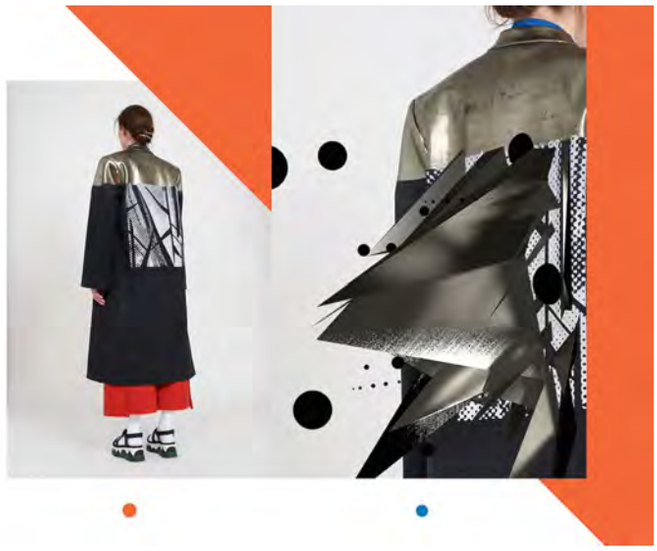

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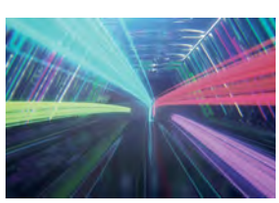

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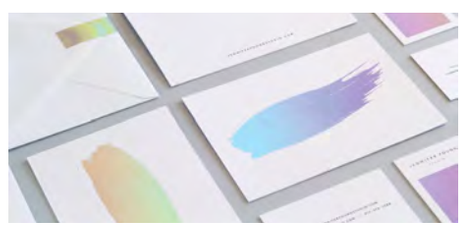

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WIN!

MICHAEL JOHNSON'S NEW BOOK, RRP £29.95

See page 22

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TRENDS: EMERGING

AUGMENTED PATTERN:

Garments come to life as technology hits the catwalk, creating new ways of viewing the latest fashions

We live in a technological age. Constantly connected to our devices, we are increasingly splitting our consciousness across real and virtual dimensions. Augmented reality (AR) is no longer restricted to gimmicky marketing, and novelty apps as designers are increasingly adopting the gaming technology to layer digital elements over physical designs and environments.

Patterns that evolve, adapt and react add a magical serendipity to products, spaces and fashion. Creating a more immersive experience, designers are utilising AR as a tool to tell compelling stories that bring pattern and colour to life.

Kailu Guan – one of the vanguard of designers using technology to engage with textiles – has created a collection of womenswear enhanced with augmented reality. Her KG Projects collection contains eye-catching dresses, trousers and tunics featuring sharp lines, bold colours and graphic prints. But there's more to the tale. Using image recognition technology, Guan worked with developers and animators to convert the screenprinted abstract prints on each garment into digital codes, readable by a smartphone or tablet app. Seen through the lens of a digital device, halftone dots scattered across a futuristic jacket appear to float across the screen; vivid brushstrokes on another coat transform into rippling blue liquid.

This is a truly engaging example of tech-enhanced clothing, and Guan's collection spins a compelling yarn. ◘
www.kailuguan.com/#lookbook

Each month, our Trends section is curated by experienced creative consultancy FranklinTill www.franklintill.com

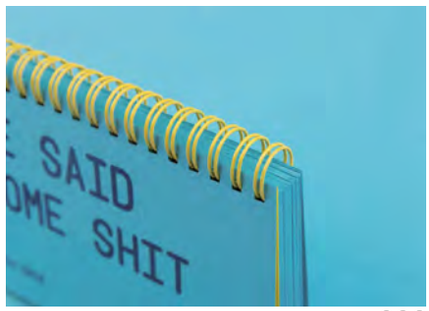
TRENDS: STILL FRESH

WIRO BINDING

The humble wiro binding is back in vogue. Once the staple of dreary office reports, designers are reappropriating the technique through contrasting colour combinations to create playful designs.

How It Is, by Nicolas Burrows
(shop.hatopress.net/products/how-it-is)

Open Books Volumes A–E, designed by Sophie Demay, edited by Charlotte Cheetham and Sophie Demay, published by Hato Press (images courtesy of Hato Press)
(shop.hatopress.net/products/open-books-volumes-a-e)



We Said Some Shit, by Strategy Creative
(www.bit.ly/CA-260-wesaid)

TRENDS: MAINSTREAM

STRONG MESSAGES

David Shrigley leads the way for strong hand-drawn statements. A no fuss approach to communication sees naive illustrations and hand-written text in duo palettes of bright primaries and black.

25 Years Of L'affare, by Dick&Jane
(www.bit.ly/ca-260-dickandjane)

People I've Loved, for Goodhood SS16
(images courtesy of Goodhood)
(www.bit.ly/ca-260-goodhood)

David Shrigley, for Tiger
(http://uk.flyingtiger.com/davidshrigley)

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Studio Constantine is a small multidiscipline design practice, working internationally from Melbourne, Australia. The founders believe everyone has the right to good design; objects, identities, places and spaces that are both functional and beautiful. www.manualelectric.com

OUR DESIGN SPACE IS...

A SAFE PLACE TO CREATE

The husband and wife team behind Melbourne-based **Studio Constantine** describe how they've shaped their studio into a comfy creative space that keeps them inspired

Studio Constantine can be found on the ground floor of a warehouse in Hawthorn, a Melbourne suburb. The green area surrounded by a mix of contemporary and colonial architecture is just minutes from the city centre and metres from the Yarra River. For studio owners David and Hannah Constantine, their work space is also a stone's throw from their home, which is on the floor above.

"We love the polished concrete and the light!" says David. "In summer, the light from the skylights is wonderful." The couple have surrounded themselves with things that interest, inspire, encourage or comfort them. One such thing is plants (**1**). "They improve the air quality, and are so sculptural in their own right," remarks David.

The studio has been working with Reiko Kaneko for several years. "Firstly on helping her refresh her brand, and now on her communications and various shows," explains Hannah. "We love her work and have a number of pieces from her collection (**2**), including jewellery and studio glaze items. Her terracotta pieces particularly appeal to our sense of style and function. Plus, it's lovely to have a friend's work on the table for a meeting or a meal."

More artwork comes in the form of Dillybags (**3**), a set of three felt sculptures by Australian textile artist Pam Hovel. "They are coloured entirely from natural pigments like clay and rust," reveals David, explaining that the sculptures reference indigenous and early European provision bags made from grass or canvas. "We buy a lot of art from our municipal council gallery – they have a great programme of curating up-and-coming Australian artists," he adds.

Pilot House, Tinderbox 1 (**4**), by the Tasmanian artist Jock Young comes from further afield. "We bought it recently on a trip to Tasmania," says Hannah. "The government there has an amazing scheme where they offer interest-free loans for Australians who want to purchase artworks by living Tasmanian artists. We loved the immediacy of the picture, and wanted to support the scheme."

Some of Studio Constantine's own work is also on display. Public (**5**) is the latest of the couple's Studio Paper publications, featuring a number of creative responses to the idea of design for the public realm. "We collaborate with a number of contributors," says David, adding that the publication was the largest to date and definitely the most enjoyable to curate.

Hannah and David's space definitely conveys the sense that the couple enjoy what they do. "We are creating a 'safe' space to work in," says Hannah. "Some of the stuff is a long way removed from the type of work we produce. Yet everything here is present in every project in some way. It's a very autobiographical space." ◻

1

2

3

4

5

Rob Bye recently launched Availo to help connect potential clients with experienced freelancers. getavailo.com

NEW VENTURES

FREELANCE HUB

How **Rob Bye**'s past experience running a product design studio for start-ups led him to create an app to benefit freelancers and studios

Rob Bye used to run a design studio, Morrama, but found it hard to quickly locate top-quality, available freelance designers. Recognising the need for a product that replicated how people get work: an intro within a network, short quick messages, then a face to face meeting, he set up Availo with two others...

How will Availo make things easier?
A lot of designers still use their network to find work and we support that. Who you know still has a lot of clout in the design industry. Our aim is to make managing inbound work from your network simpler, but allowing for new clients, all in one place.

How does it differ from other platforms?
Platforms like Upwork and Freelancer.com focus on cheap remote labour and are built from the client-side first. Availo is for mid-senior freelancers, who charge over £200 per day and primarily work in-house. We also built everything with the freelancers' needs prioritised. You don't need to scroll through listings and apply for jobs. We put the ball in the client's court, allowing them to view your work. It's more like getting an intro email than applying on a job board.

How does collaborating with Nick Clement and Nick Wood work in practice?
Nick Clement is one of the most highly regarded and well-networked designers in London. Not only does he run Glug (potentially the best events series within design), but he helps lead and direct our designers. Nick Wood is our tech founder – without him Availo wouldn't exist. Between us we cover business, design and tech.

How has co-founding Morrama informed your experience of launching Availo?
Morrama was profitable from day one and this meant we took no investment, could grow naturally and progressively hire people to support new projects. Availo is a different animal. We're a tech company accountable to our shareholders, growing at an alarming rate with customers in the thousands. But Morrama taught me how to build a team, develop good time management practices and understand how to use money to support growth. Every time you start a company you make mistakes – the more you do it, the less mistakes you make.

What's been the response so far?
We've had thousands of designers apply to be part of the community and everyone from the tech giant Instagram to the startup Reposit have been using the platform. We've been totally blown away by the response.

What's next for Availo?
We're building a desktop app to help us reach new types of client and working on some awesome features. We've also just started community reviews, where we bring Availo freelancers in-house to critique what we are doing and help prioritise new features and releases. It's amazing seeing a product being designed by the people who will actually use it! ◘

KEY INFO:

Location
Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester
www.designmcr.com

When
13 October 2016

Attendees
650

Key speakers
Jason Bruges, Field, Alexandra Wood, Trapped in Suburbia, Peter Girardi and OH OK LTD

EVENT REPORT: DESIGN MANCHESTER

DESIGNING CITIES

Julia Sagar heads to Design Manchester's one-day Design City Conference to find out what it means to design with the city in mind

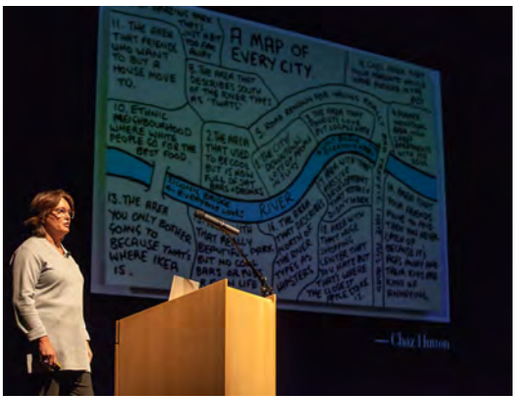
Themed 'design city', Design Manchester's one-day conference in October explored the way in which we move through cities, and the different opportunities that city spaces offer to engage, assist, inform and delight. It was one of 37 events hosted over 12 days as part of the Design Manchester festival – now in its fourth year – which saw a wide range of exhibitions, workshops and design fairs taking place across the city.

Interaction and narrative quickly became recurring ideas as a multidisciplinary line-up of speakers – including creative studio Field, graphic designer and wayfinding specialist Alexandra Wood, and Dutch design collective Trapped in Suburbia – took to the stage to share their thoughts on what it is to design with the city in mind.

Architect and designer Jason Bruges blends environmental awareness and technical skill to create immersive architectural installations that become part of the existing environment. "You can make cities playable and enjoyable," he said, explaining that his team work at the cutting-edge of technology to bring the studio's ideas to life. "We look at problems, and narrative and design. But of course we're always prototyping and building a palette of tools that we enjoy using. It's about: what problem are we setting for ourselves? How do we best answer the brief?"

Trapped in Suburbia's Karin Langeveld and Richard Fussey framed the theme as experience design, using the studio's mantra to explain the ideas behind their work: "Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I'll understand." The studio uses physical materials and the surrounding "sensory world" to

Clockwise from left: Design Manchester branding by instructstudio; Peter Girardi explaining his first introduction to grahic design; Alexandra Wood on being "comfortably lost"; Creative Review editor Patrick Burgoyne chaired the event



PHOTOGRAPHY: Sebastian Matthes

make its designs tangible and, in doing so, more memorable and meaningful for recipients. "It's all about bringing the idea to life through interaction," explained Fussey. "It doesn't make sense until someone has to do something, and then it comes alive."

Warner Bros Animation's Peter Girardi used the theme to take the audience back to 1980s New York, where he started out as a subway graffiti artist. He grew up surrounded by a steady stream of American consumer products, which, he later realised, provided his first introduction to graphic design: "Cereal boxes were an explosion of typography and logos and characters," he laughed. "They were the gateway drug to comic books."

> *It's about bringing the idea to life through interaction. It doesn't make sense until someone has to do something, and then it comes alive*
> ***Richard Fussey, Trapped in Suburbia***

"Failed cities isolate people," Alexandra Wood pointed out at the start of her talk on wayfinding. "Comfortably lost" is often the aim for her studio, Holmes Wood: "We don't want anyone to feel like that in an airport," she said, "but we do in a museum or gallery. We want people to be immersed."

Holmes Wood specialises in a unique mix of graphic design and wayfinding. With its signage, the studio seeks to reassure viewers, while at the same time disrupting them – and this point really encapsulated the mood of the event. "We subconsciously set the rhythm," said Wood, capturing the ethos of all the creative shown at Design Manchester. "We also try and make sure that we do a really good design and that it works," she added. "It's about not being superficial."

WHAT'S ON

COMING UP

Art Basel in America
1–4 December
Miami, USA
www.artbasel.com/miami-beach
In Art Basel's American show, 269 leading galleries from North America, Latin America, Europe, Asia and Africa will show significant work from the masters of modern and contemporary art, as well as the new generation of emerging stars.

HiFest
3–4 Decemberr
Hastings, UK
www.hifest.co.uk
Now in its third year, Hastings Illustration Festival (HiFest) will be taking place over in a brand new venue: The Printworks. There will be an array of stalls, workshops, talks, live drawing and exhibitions happening around the town.

Type Talk: Jonathan Barnbrook
12 December
Birmingham, UK
www.bit.ly/JBarn
Billed as a "Barnbrook super-deluxe ultra-karaoke megamix", Type Talk's December talk from David Bowie's favourite graphic designer promises to be both insightful and entertaining.

DESIGNED FOR LIFE

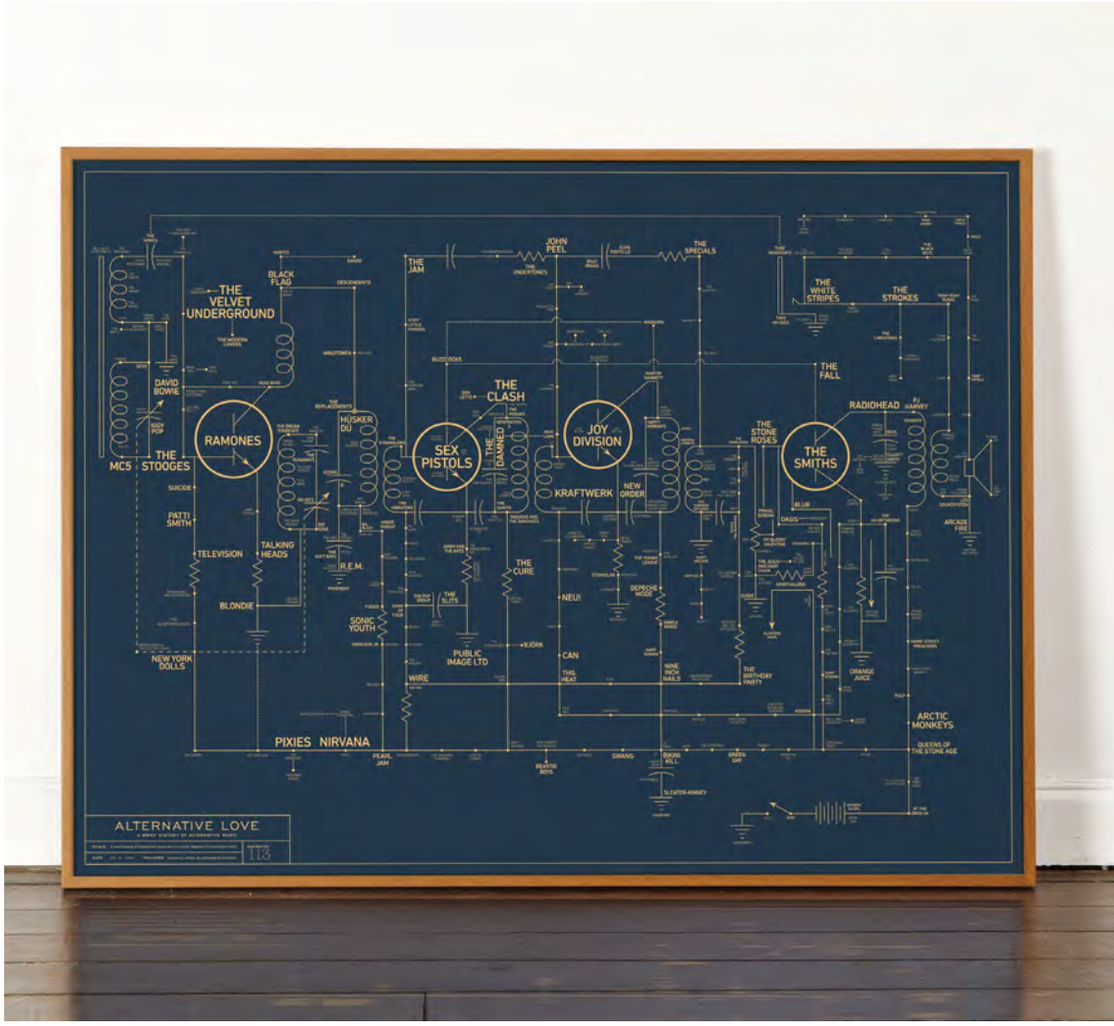
MUSIC HISTORY

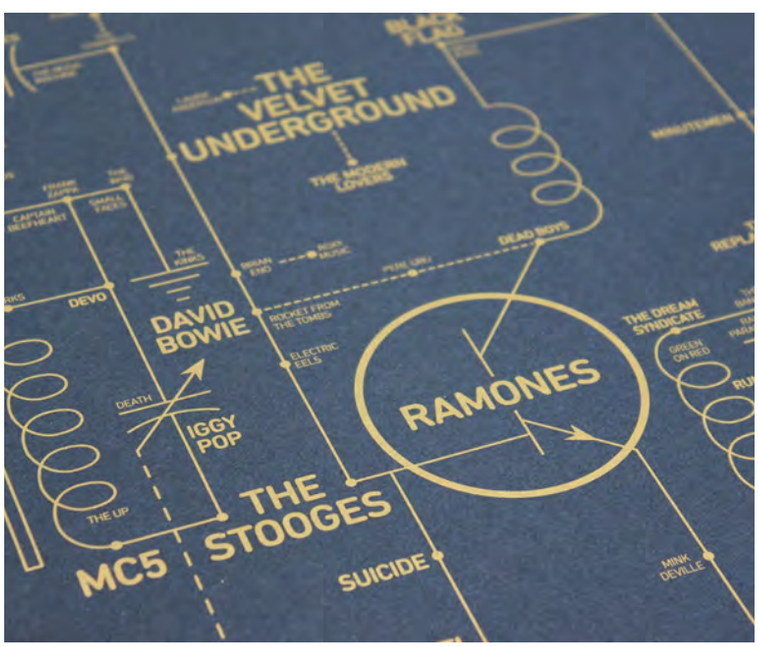
The Alternative Love Blueprint charts the history of counter-culture rock music – and makes for a great after-dinner debate

Liverpool-based studio Dorothy's stunning metallic gold screenprint, Alternative Love Blueprint, maps a history of alternative and indie music onto the circuit board of an early transistor radio.

Printed on 120gsm Keaykolour Navy Blue uncoated paper, the poster celebrates over 300 musicians, artists, managers and producers who have been pivotal to the evolution of the alternative and independent music scene. "We tried to map it out, from the early proto-punk and garage rockers, through CBGB-era punk, punk, post-punk, 2 Tone and ska, hardcore, Riot grrrl, grunge and many more scenes through to alternative rock," explains designer James Quail.

"We wanted to show the flow of history, as well as how all these things are connected. The circuit board enables us to show how, if many individual components are connected in the right way, it'll make something incredible happen." ◘





Price: *£35 (plus P&P)*
Dimensions: *60cm height, 80cm width*
www.wearedorothy.com

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Jeremy Tankard Typography

INSPIRATION FEED

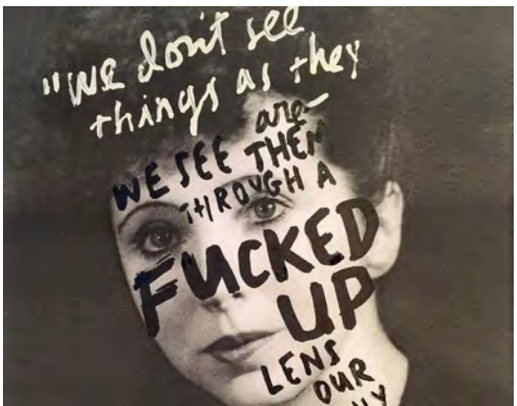
James Victore

James Victore runs an independent design studio "hell-bent on world domination". He's an author, designer and teacher, who strives to make work that is "sexy, strong and memorable". Victore's art has been exhibited at New York's Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) and other museums around the globe.

"I am a pretty good designer," he says. "At least the MoMA thinks so. But I am a much better teacher. I use art and design as the teaspoon of sugar to get larger ideas across."

Victore feels Instagram (IG) and camera phones have helped improve his vocabulary. "IG helps me express my thoughts on creativity and ask difficult questions of my audience," he says. His feed is generally sketches and work processes... "although I may occasionally post a really adorable video of my son," he smiles.

www.instagram.com/jamesvictore



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INSIGHT

Strong opinion and analysis from across global design industry

MICHAEL JOHNSON
FOUNDER,
JOHNSON BANKS
www.johnsonbanks.co.uk

Michael has put his two decades of hands-on experience into his new book, Branding: In Five And A Half Steps (Thames and Hudson), which is out now in both the UK and US.

ZENA BRUGES
FOUNDER,
THE BUSINESS SIDE
www.thebusinessside.co

After many years managing creative businesses, Zena founded The Business Side, "a company to help with the things that keep you awake at night".

DESIGN MATTERS: How far is too far when it comes to self promotion? – page 24

PLUS: We critique Venture Three's colourful rebrand of takeaway service Just Eat – page 26

Illustrations:
Louise Pomeroy
www.louisezpomeroy.com

ESSAY

Branding: blurred lines

Following the release of his new book demystifying the branding process, **Michael Johnson** reveals why his so-called 'step 2.5' is crucial to success

When we first started to take on major branding projects at johnson banks, clients would ask to see our 'process'. So we dutifully wrote down what we thought this process should be. And, bar a few tweaks, those initial steps of research, strategy, design and implementation still hold today.

But more recently, I've made two additions to those four core stages. After the implementation stage, the manner in which you embed a project (or reboot it) has become increasingly important.

Also, the interface between strategy and design, the blur between steps two and three, has come into sharper focus. It's this intersection that often causes the most difficulty, discussion and disagreement in branding projects, and this has caused me to add a half step to the process, outlined in my book.

Once, this step was clear: the strategy and narrative provided an irrefutable verbal basis for what was to come next. The thump of the strategist's PowerPoint slides – printed out and dropped onto a designer's desk – was both audible and intentional. These vast documents had been signed-off. They oozed gravitas. And the takeout was clear: don't mess with me, or else…

For a while, we tried to follow the rules. If a visual idea came up that improved on the agreed narrative, we left well alone. If we felt the supplied narrative was a bit ho-hum, we concentrated on visual solutions that would bring it to life.

But increasingly, as we started to do the verbal work ourselves, some key issues began to unfold. We wanted to allow the ideas from the design stage to loop back and allow a redraft of what had come before. As we tackled some very tricky brand architecture problems, we realised that creative solutions at this point could provide invaluable strategic glue as well. As we embarked on naming projects, it became clear that agreeing just one strategy, one name and one design was pretty risky, especially if global name-checking could rule out an entire route at any time.

So to cope with this, we began to amend our way of working. Yes, we would get the verbal work broadly agreed, but we would leave the door ajar, just in case the visual ideas provided another direction. As an example, the idea of 'bringing the cosmos down to earth' as a central idea for a Japanese space observatory came up in the design stage. But we were able to move it backwards into the narrative stage.

Several times, we tackled brand architecture within the design stage, which in turn suggested completely new ways to solve structural problems (such as our scheme for the Pew Centre).

As we worked more and more on naming, we began to treat each shortlisted name as its own entity. So whilst legal checks were ongoing, a client could see how contrasting types of name could take them in different strategic directions.

Most recently, often due to condensed time frames, we've had to collapse design, naming, brand architecture and design into one uber-stage, whilst pursuing multiple routes in parallel. This creates a more nimble and agile process that better suits certain clients. Done well, it means we can all see worked-up narrative and design scenarios in parallel. Rather than one-after-another, as before, which is more stressful, difficult and often more expensive, but a lot of fun and extremely useful.

> *Now, we leave the door ajar, in case the visual ideas provide another direction*

Don't get the impression that this inter-step can only be carried out by a company like johnson banks, which merges strategy and design in-house. Other companies are just as agile at the translation of one side into another. Take the consultancy Circus, which has seamlessly facilitated the merger of Cathedral group and Development Securities, co-creating the U+I (United and Industrious) name and working with North on its new identity. Another example is Jane Wentworth Associates, a company that has mastered agreeing brand strategies, bringing in design companies and then collaborating to create some of the most groundbreaking work in the cultural sector.

One day, strategy and design may merge into one big stage and the need for any half steps in between will be negated. But, just for a little longer, and especially while very different personalities are working on either side of the divide, 'step 2.5' can help us all to bridge the gap. ◘

WIN A COPY OF MICHAEL JOHNSON'S NEW BOOK, WORTH £29.95

Branding: In Five And A Half Steps goes deep behind the scenes of the branding process, exploring both the strategic and the creative side and, crucially, how the boundaries between them can blur. We have five copies to be won: for more info, go to www.bit.ly/ca-johnsonbook

DISCUSSION

How far is too far when it comes to self-promotion?

ROB CLARKE
Type and lettering designer
www.robclarke.com

"I saw a spiritual video on someone's portfolio website. I think we're all a bit guilty of over-egging our self importance in business, especially when it comes to social media, but to consider yourself as someone with extra-special powers on some kind of spiritual journey is, in my opinion, going too far. To make your own self-absorbed video is cringe-worthy to say the least. Weaving your private life into business is a peculiar mix that I would avoid. Let your work do the talking, not the fact that you can strum a guitar and have managed to spawn a couple of cute kids. Keep your message (if you have one) simple and concise, cut down on the hyperbole. You're a graphic designer… you are not, and never will be, that important."

BEN STEERS
Creative director
www.fiascodesign.co.uk

"There is good and bad promo, but as a studio we like to see people making that extra bit of effort. Having something tangible that someone has made and invested time into lives longer in the memory. However, even if it's just doing that extra bit of research before contacting us, it's likely to have an impact. Over the years we've received some great examples of self-promotion, including a box of perfectly packaged tea (with a resume instead of an ingredients table on the outside of the box), and a wooden box entitled 'Operation Intern' with accompanying parachute, delivered straight to our office. It's hard to get noticed, but do your research first and remember that as a designer, the message is also in the medium."

LOUISA ST. PIERRE
Executive agent, Bernstein& Andriulli
www.ba-reps.com

"I'll give some advice instead. Think: what's memorable? Anything that satirises office culture is a winner. My fave promo of all time is Mr Bingo's Hate Mail. And hey, if you can rap like Bingo to get yourself work, go for it. Promo could take the form of the medium of dance. Liturgical dance. Streamers. Morris dance. My husband Stephen Rutterford is ECD at The Brooklyn Brothers. He wanted to work on a Coca-Cola campaign back in the day. He arranged a delivery of himself and a copywriter, nestling inside a huge Coca-Cola can, to the agency who had that account, complete with a sign saying: 'Prepared to work in the smallest of spaces.' It was delightfully silly and definitely memorable, and he got the job."

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FARN JOSEPH
"When your ego outweighs the quality, problem-solving capabilities and scope of design shown in your portfolio."

ALFREDO MAR
"When someone says, 'I'm new here. Please like my page.' I will not even check the content, as there are better ways to ask."

@STUDIOMISTER
"Humble full-screen portraits of you on your folio site."

@STEVENBONNER
"Retweeting every damn mention of you and your work. "

@DESIGNFRIES
"A face tattoo with website, phone number and email address."

David Price

Open College of the Arts

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REBRAND FOCUS

Focus on: Just Eat rebrand

Hot on the heels of DesignStudio's rebrand of rival Deliveroo, the Just Eat rebrand by Venture Three adds a splash of colour to the online delivery service. We discuss whether the new design tickles the tastebuds...

GRAHAM JONES
Partner and creative director for Just Eat rebrand, Venture Three
www.venturethree.com

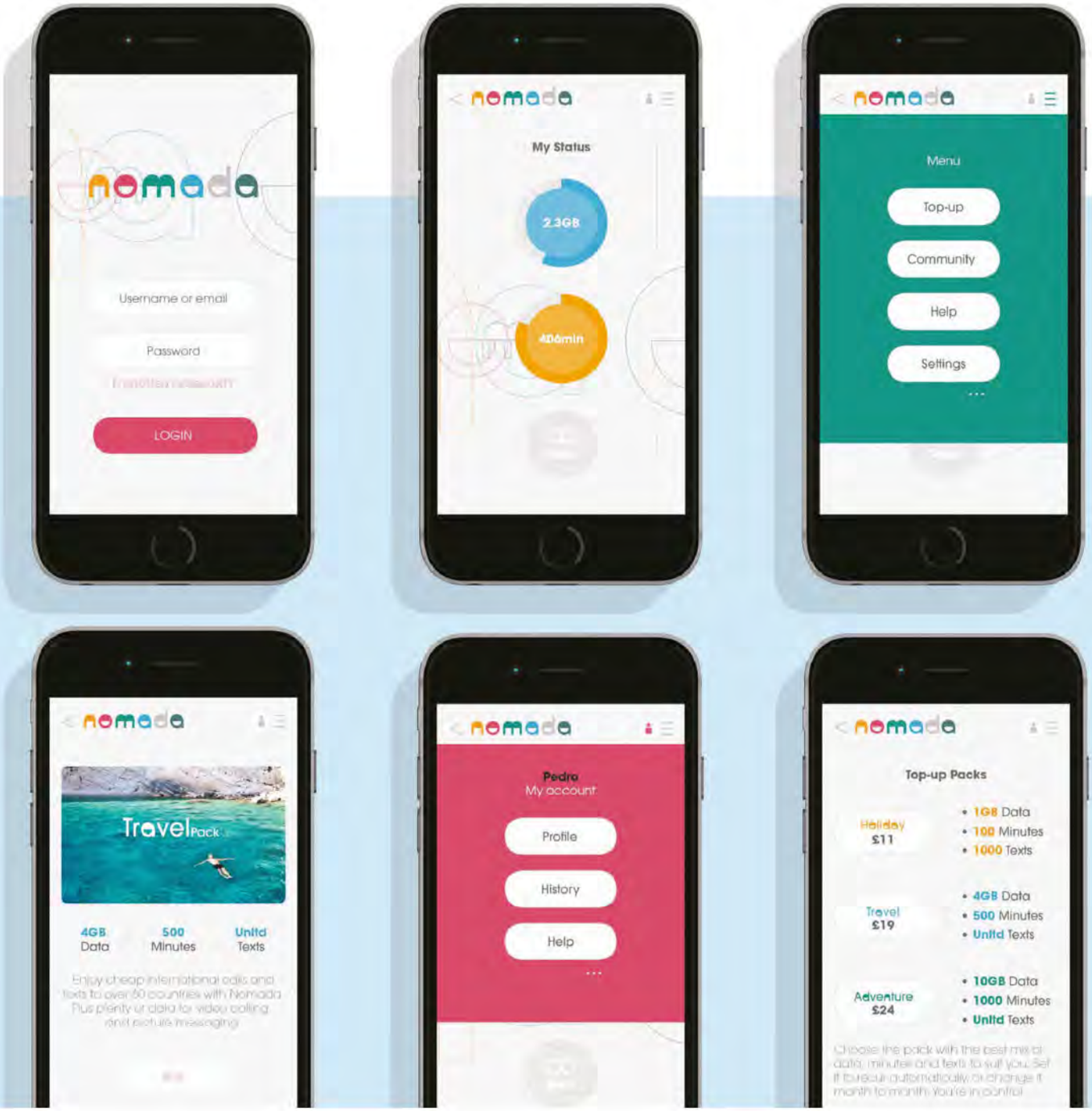
"The new brand signals Just Eat's focus on shifting perceptions of the global food delivery industry; changing behaviours around how and when we get the food we love each day. Based on our creative idea of 'find your flavour', we developed an expressive new identity, complete with a burst of colour and animation style that adds flexibility and opportunities to delight in the brand experience. All of our work is based on humanising what is essentially a technology platform, now with a vision of 'creating the world's greatest food community'."

CHRISTOPHER COLOURYUM
Freelance graphic designer and illustrator
www.colouryum.com

"This is a fantastic rebrand that has much more flexibility and vibrance than the previous design. The cursor in the logo has been dropped, which – although a nice concept – was previously poorly executed. It's eye opening to realise that the cursor is a rather dated object now, and as Just Eat's users predominantly use mobile devices, its relevance has passed. The typeface now looks much cleaner, and the use of italics makes it feel like this is a brand that moves. The palette has shifted to a full spectrum of colour, which looks great in application and represents the brand's diversity of cuisine."

ROHAN NANAVATI
Founder and art director, Roar Studios
www.roarstudios.net

"The Just Eat rebrand is designed to appeal to the masses. Bright colours, tacky design and below-average typography combine to refrain the consumer from thinking anything else about the brand apart from to just eat! This is one of the most mediocre rebrands we've seen this year, one that clearly believes distribution and network trumps a well-designed identity. While this holds true for many brands, it makes success dependent solely on the service. What would have been better is a brand that feels responsible about the quality of food it delivers – rather than a brand that will deliver just anything."



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How to start a studio

According to creative business consultant **Zena Bruges**, these three steps are crucial for your new venture

So you're making the big leap and going out on your own. You'll be your own boss and in control of your own destiny, and your own time. Brilliant, I love it. I'm excited for you. Get out there and conquer the world! But before you jump straight in, I'd like to share three things I've gleaned over the years, things I wish someone had told me before I started my business.

1. Check your credit

There are a few vital financial things to consider before you take the plunge into the world of your new business. If you want to buy a property, you need to have two years of business accounts before you can apply for a mortgage. So if this is something you're planning on doing, get all that set up before you hand in your resignation letter.

Do you have credit cards? Do you have a healthy limit that you haven't already blown? Money will probably come to you intermittently when you first set up, and you may need a financial safety net, so factoring against personal debt might be a good option. Again, you'd be wise to get a credit card before you quit your job.

2. Once you're sure it's right for you, get on with it

Consider your own temperament before going it alone. Are you good at the hustle? Are you happy self-promoting? As the owner of a creative business, you will be the one responsible for bringing in all the new business. Are you ready for this? As well as the enthusiasm to talk about your new venture, you need to be tenacious and consistent in your approach and ready to hear 'No, thanks' without wanting to throw in the towel completely.

Have you considered the many hats you will need to wear as the owner of a business? Your responsibility has just increased from merely creating awesome work to covering IT support, finance, marketing, HR and studio management – it's all you. Be realistic about your abilities and build a team around you that will balance out your strengths and weaknesses.

And finally, stop planning and do something. Many people spend ages planning things they are going to do one day: there are URLs to buy, branding to develop, studio space to look at, people to contact. I'm a massive fan of planning. But to create a successful business, you need to actually do something. Start with small things to get going. And then take action every day to move you closer to your goal.

3. Get some clients in place beforehand

Chances are that, being in the creative industry, you're starting a service business. It may sound blindingly obvious, but you therefore need some clients to service. Is there a way you can build up work on the side while still employed? Get some clients before you quit your day job and you'll have confidence that your business is going to work – and get a bit of a cash to help you through the lean first months.

With the right amount of self-belief, common sense and downright grit, your business will be a success. Good luck! ◘

What challenges have you faced when setting up your first studio? Tweet your thoughts to @ComputerArts using #DesignMatters

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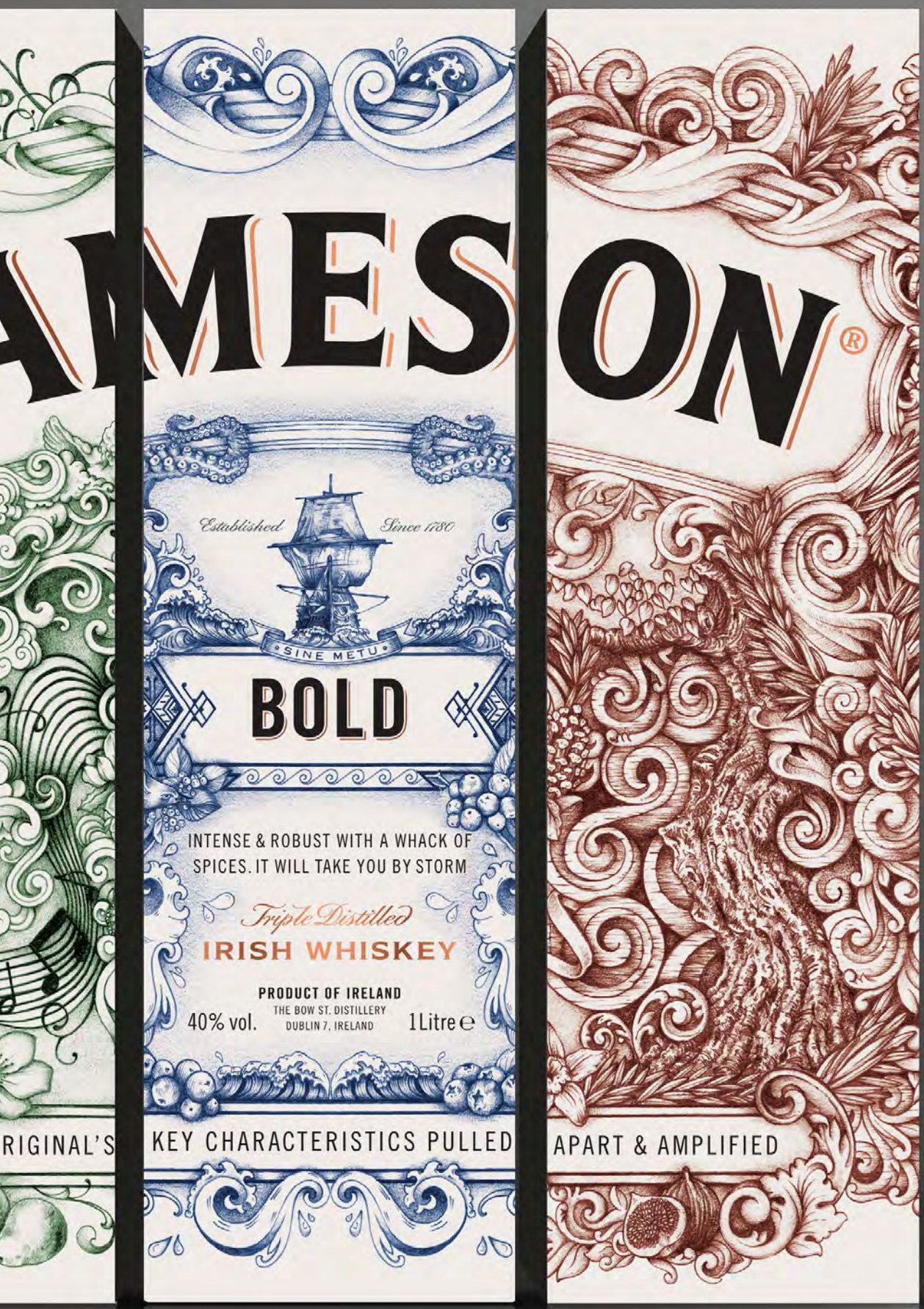
Computer Arts selects the hottest new design, illustration and motion work from the global design scene

WHISKEY WORLDS

JAMESON – THE DECONSTRUCTED SERIES
by Greg Coulton and Pond Design Stockholm
www.gregcoulton.com

The new super-premium Deconstructed Series of Jameson Irish whiskey focuses on taste rather than age. For the packaging and labelling, Pond Design Stockholm tasked illustrator and designer Greg Coulton with visually bringing to life the sensation of tasting each one. "After being supplied with the tasting notes, I built a profile around each element – its natural environment, heritage and visual properties," says Coulton, who captured the character and personality of the whiskies through a series of visual narratives.

"The most challenging part was the sheer volume of work," he continues. "With a front and back label, plus the large-scale pack itself across each of the three bottles, it came to over 50 full-detail drawings in total."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Since 1780
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INTENSE & ROBUST WITH A WHACK OF SPICES. IT WILL TAKE YOU BY STORM
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DUBLIN 7, IRELAND
40% vol.
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ON®
RIGINAL'S
KEY CHARACTERISTICS PULLED
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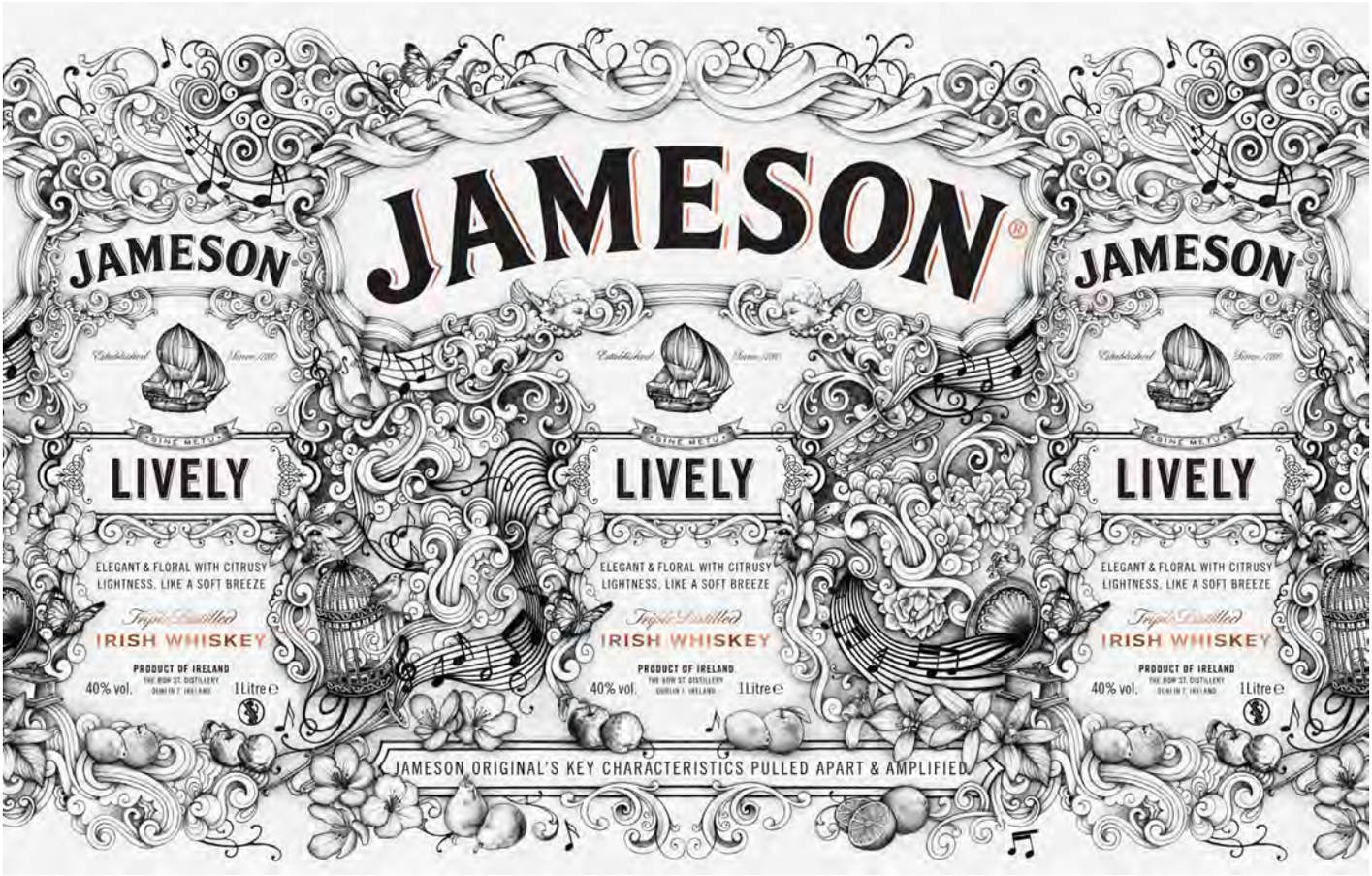
JAMESON
JAMESON
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LIVELY
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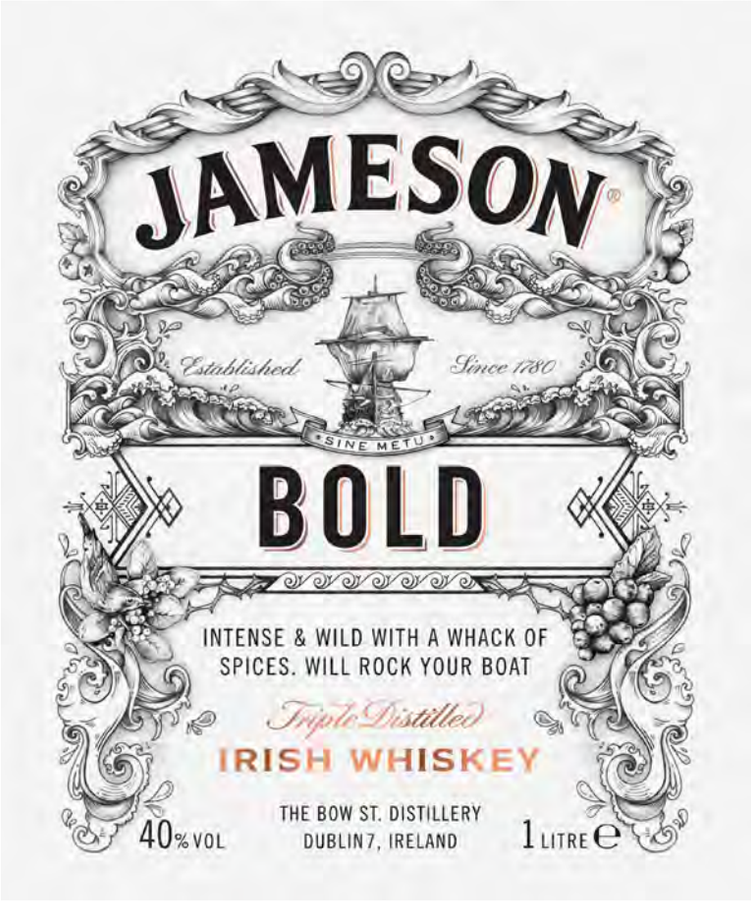
LIVELY
ELEGANT & FLORAL WITH CITRUSY LIGHTNESS, LIKE A SOFT BREEZE
IRISH WHISKEY
PRODUCT OF IRELAND
40% vol.
1Litre
JAMESON ORIGINAL'S KEY CHARACTERISTICS PULLED APART & AMPLIFIED

JAMESON
ROUND
JAMESON
ROUND


JAMESON
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40% VOL
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1 LITRE

Greg Coulton's intensely detailed illustrations bring the character and personality of each whiskey to life.

The designs incorporate different elements from the spirits, including spice, citrus and wood tones.

The intense detailing ensures that the three designs work together in tandem, when shown as a series.

Smooth curves and bold lines tell the narrative behind the Jameson whiskey.

Close-ups of some of the stunning, hand-crafted illustrative elements seen across the branding. A different variant of the ship appears on all three.

HOLOGRAPHIC ART

JENNIFER YOUNG IDENTITY
by Kati Forner
www.katiforner.com

Lifestyle, portrait and travel photographer Jennifer Young wanted minimal, modern and unique branding that would represent the essence of her work. "From the get-go Jennifer was drawn to holographic foil, and wanted it to be incorporated into her suite in a minimal and tasteful way," explains LA-based designer Kati Forner, who completed the project in October.

"After exploring several executions for the foil, we always came back to the more minimal option. We wanted the business cards to be the more minimal elements; and the notecard and thank-you card to complement the business card, but also be different."

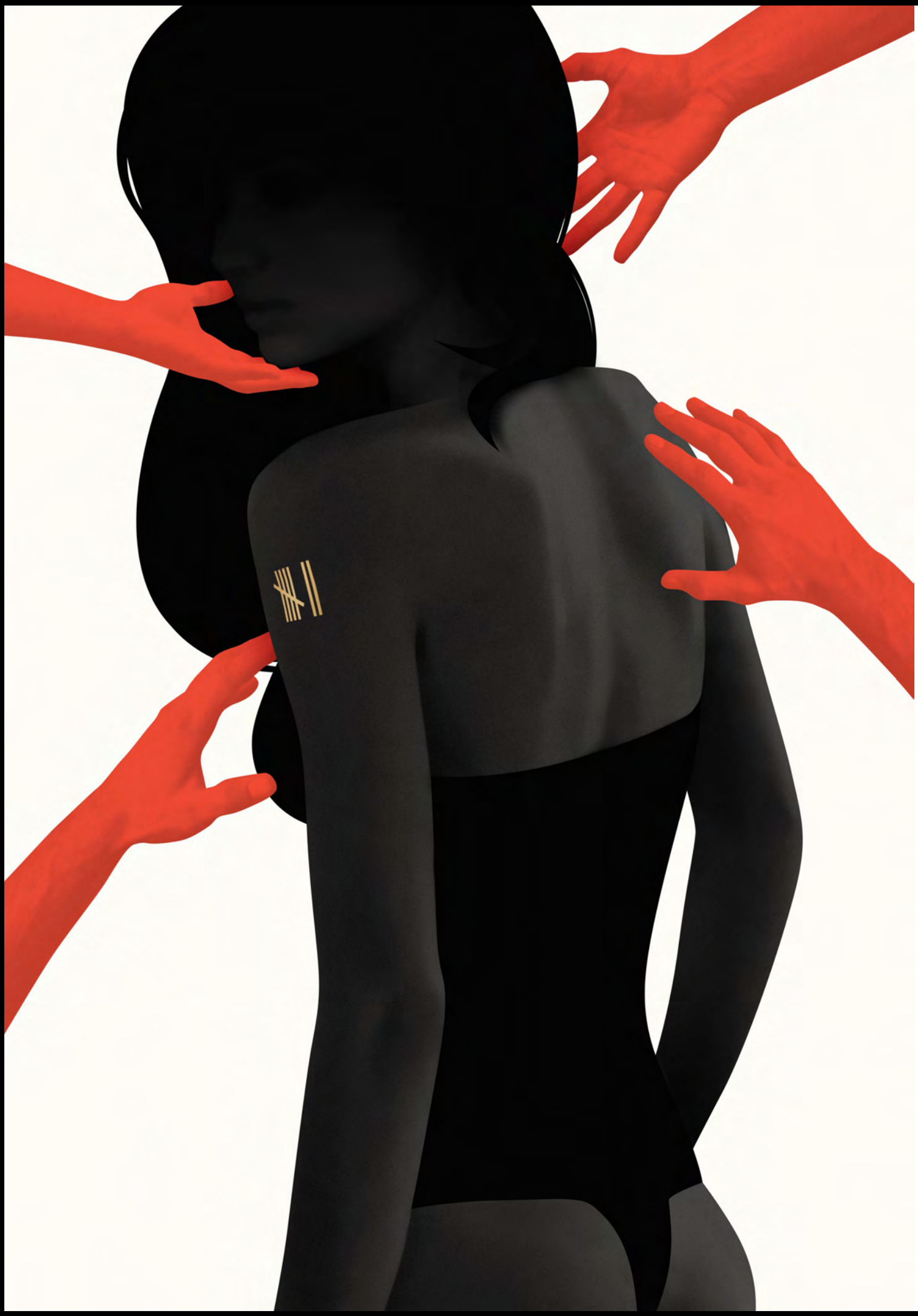
The most challenging part of the project, she adds, was retaining the clean, minimal feel while keeping the design interesting. "I think using the holographic foil within an unexpected form, like the paint stroke, helped make the project feel more unique," says Forner. "The suite feels refined, yet fun, just like Jennifer's work."

MODERN HISTORY

SENTRALEN IDENTITY
by Metric
www.metricdesign.no

Sentralen is a new performance venue in Oslo, housed in the former building of Norway's oldest savings bank. Metric Design drew upon the building's roots for the venue's visual identity: "The logo and typeface are derived from – and inspired by – Oslo Sparebank's original logo, but all the letters and details are drawn from scratch, so they're all new," explains Christian Schnitler, partner at Metric.

"We undertook a thorough study of the shapes in the original logotype to highlight its peculiarities. The challenge was to find the perfect juxtaposition of the historic and contemporary."



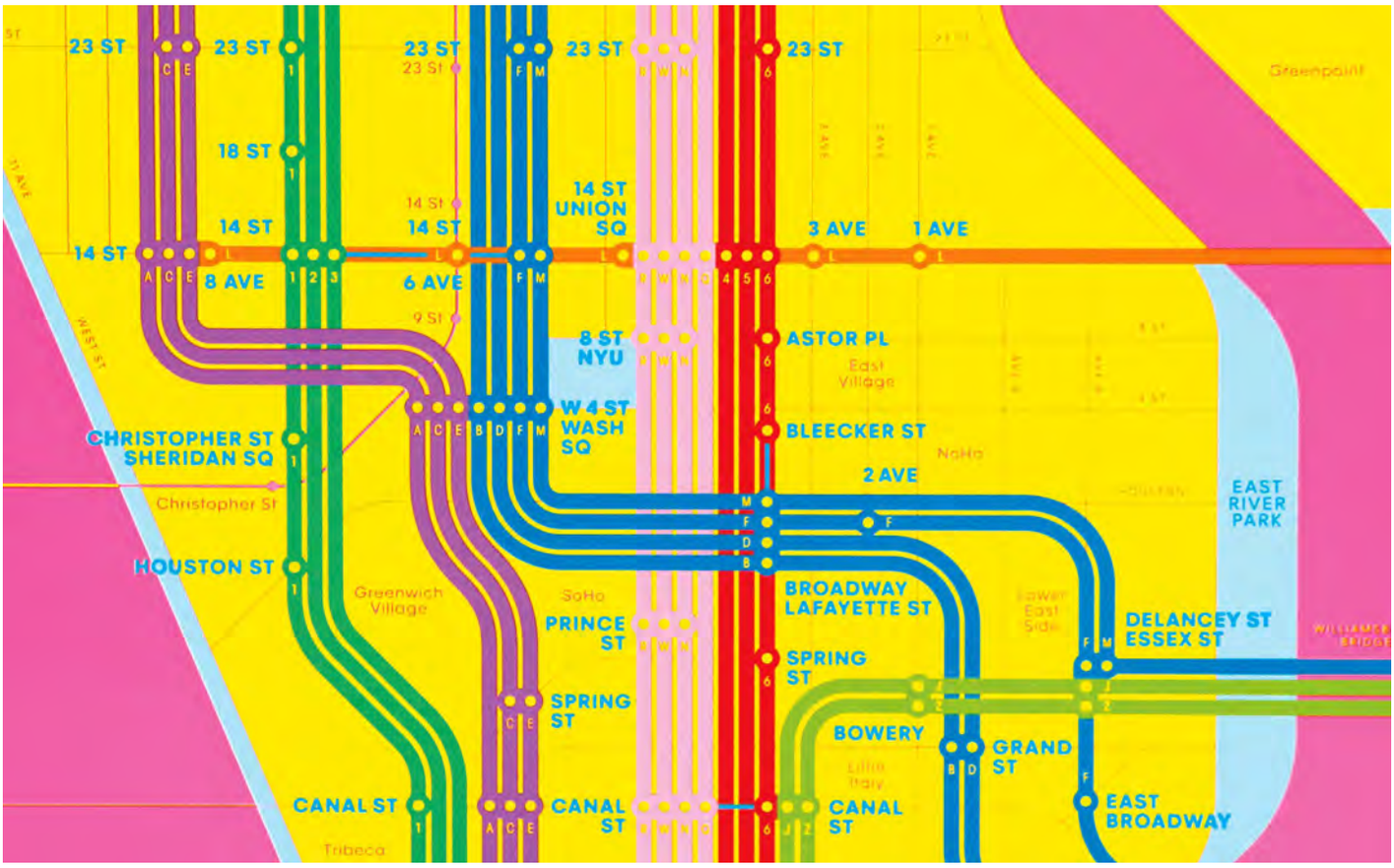
POLITICAL ART

A_USE
by Tomasz Wagner
www.behance.net/krv

Warsaw-based art director Tomas Wagner created this personal project – which consists of a series of artworks in a similar style – after being inspired by recent events in Poland and a number of protests happening across the country. "For this self-initiated work, I wanted to illustrate the way in which the government treats women," Wagner explains.

The feminine figures that appear throughout the series are juxtaposed by intrusions of red appearing each image. "I wanted to find something that emphasises the negativity. Thus, the red colour. It's aggressive in contrast to the feminine lightness and delicacy," he says.

"I was inspired by the people around me – my family and friends," he adds.



VISUAL PARADOX

WRONG COLOR SUBWAY MAP
by Triboro Design
www.triborodesign.com

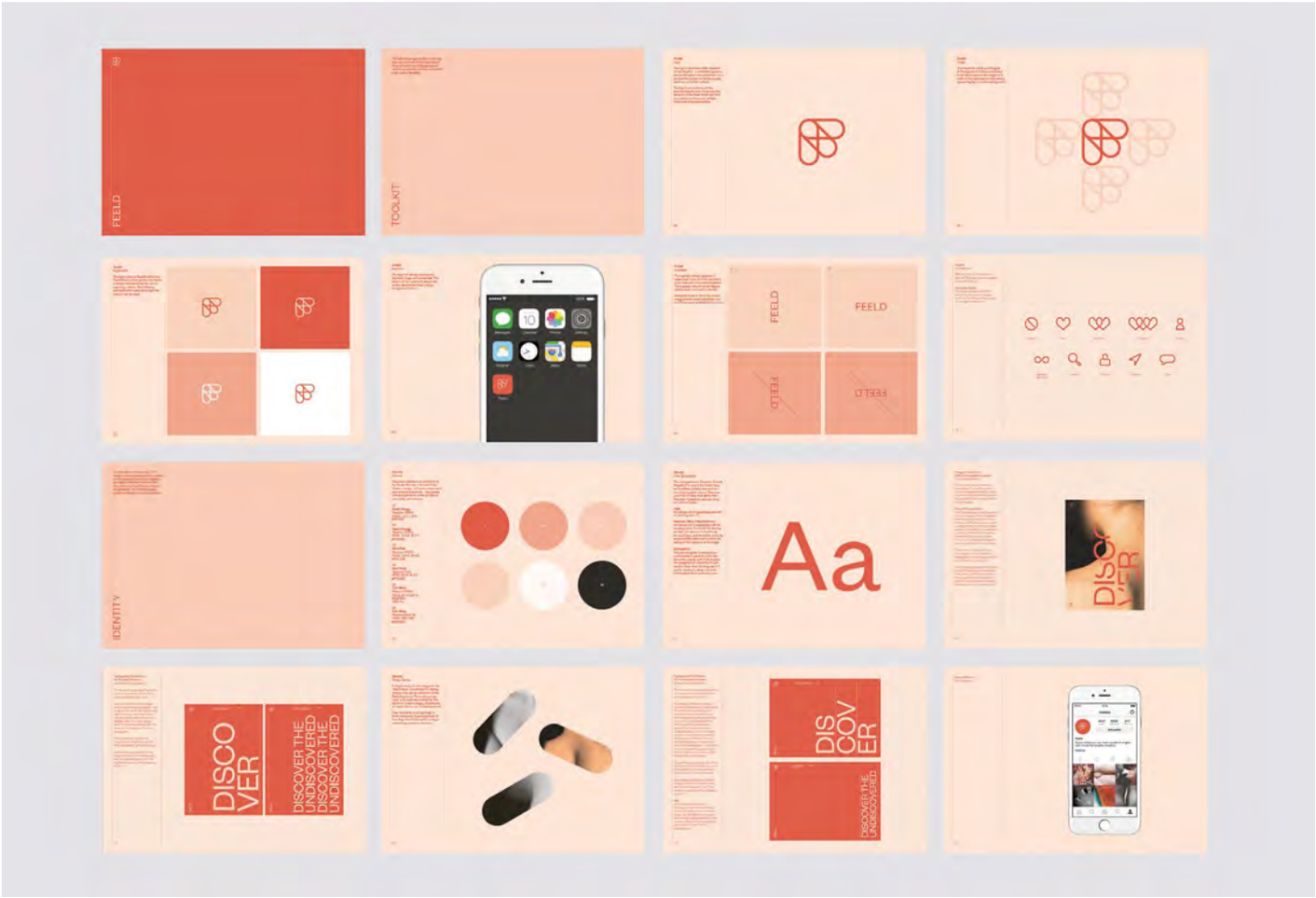
"Our fascination with the New York Subway began when we moved to Brooklyn 16 years ago," says David Heasty, partner and creative director of design studio Triboro. "Our first attempt to design a map for the system, the One-Color Subway Map, earned many fans and quickly sold out. Since then we have been tinkering with the design. The Wrong Color Subway Map is the next evolutionary leap."

The project was born from a dislike of the official New York Subway map. The goal was to improve the subway map's geographic accuracy, visual hierarchy and make it more beautiful – but to subvert these improvements by printing the map in 'wrong' colours. "It creates a kind of absurd infographic paradox," says co-founder and creative director Stefanie Weigler.

THE FUTURE OF TYPOGRAPHY

BRAIN MAGAZINE JAPAN COVER
by TwoPoints.Net
www.twopoints.net

"The idea for the cover came instantly," says Martin Lorenz, co-director of TwoPoints.Net, "but it took a while to find the balance between static and dynamic, and order and chaos." TwoPoints.Net used a typographic system it had previously developed – a typeface built with a limited set of elements that can be substituted by graphic or photographic elements – to write the word 'Future' with a variety of graphic elements. "It was important that some of the elements had clean shapes, some were rough, some were taken from the Brain masthead and some had nothing to do with it," says TwoPoints.Net co-founder Lupi Asensio. "We wanted to created an eclectic world, because this is how we imagine the future."

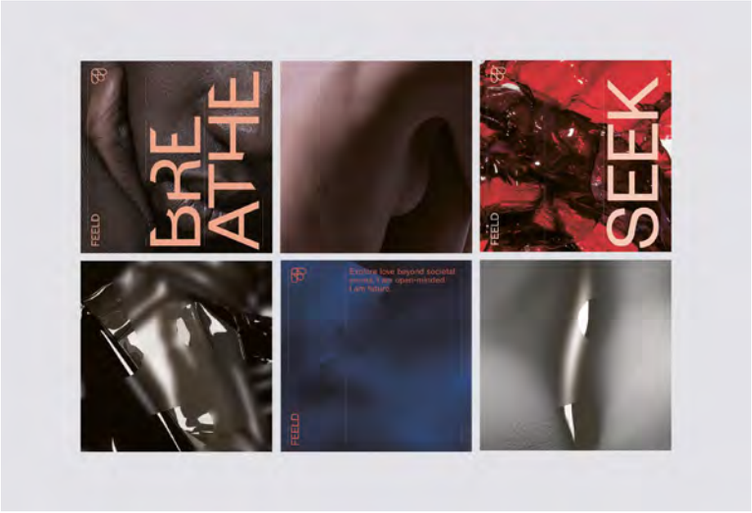


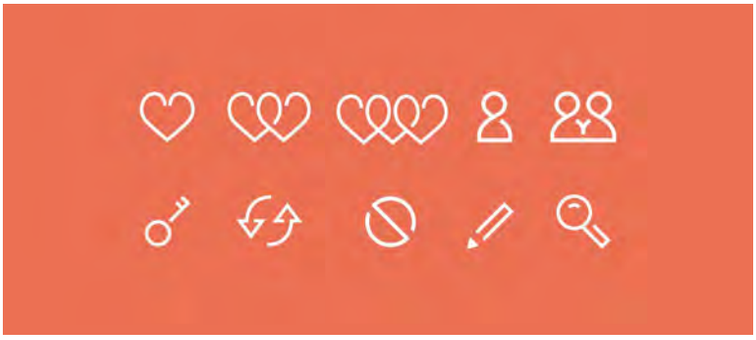
THREE'S NO CROWD

FEELD
by Two Times Elliott
www.2xElliott.co.uk

When threesome app 3nder rebranded as Feeld, founder Dimo Triminov asked London-based design consultancy Two Times Elliott to reposition the company with a more socially engaging and inviting aesthetic. Wanting to avoid the design cues used by other dating apps, the studio worked closely with Feeld to create a flexible identity and typographic system that could evolve with the service.

"Other dating apps lacked imagination, and felt more like a quick and easy hookup," explains Two Times Elliott creative director James Horwitz. "We identified a more interesting dynamic – the app becomes a space that connects people together to create wider communities with similar interests. There is a sense of belonging to something that is constantly evolving and creating new experiences for members to become a part of."





SURREAL ENVIRONMENTS

LANDSCAPES
by James Gilleard
www.jamesgilleard.com

James Gilleard had wanted to create "ideas for some backgrounds for an animation" for years. He began with an image released as part of a project for a children's art exhibition at Gallery 1988 in Los Angeles, which he saw as "kind of a test to see if I could stylise an environment in that successfully," before going on to create more versions in the same style. Inspired by Eyvind Earle, who makes landscapes look man made, ordered and quite surreal, Gilleard was aiming for an angular nature with the scenes. He used sketches based on photos, to create line artwork in Illustrator and then did colour mock ups, using colour boards similar to those in The Incredibles.

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CREATE POWERFUL SELF-PROMO

JULIA SAGAR TAKES A LOOK AT FOUR SELF-PROMOTIONAL PROJECTS YOU WISH YOU'D THOUGHT OF FIRST *(AND ONE YOU'RE GLAD YOU DIDN'T)*

Picture the scene: half of Sheffield has been evacuated. The railway station is closed. Traffic has backed up onto the motorway, causing a 70-mile tailback, from Leeds North to Derby. A bomb disposal expert is being helicoptered in from Nottingham. And two well-known members of one of the UK's most iconic design studios of the nineties are sat in the back of a police car, answering questions about possible links to Ireland.

That's what happened when legendary studio the Designers Republic was sent a showreel in a pizza box-like package, along with a bomb. It wasn't a real bomb. But this wasn't established until several, tense hours later, when the device was blasted apart with a high-pressure water-projectile pellet, leaving a huge hole in the desk and destroying a number of archived 12-inch records in the process.

Why are we recounting a bomb scare from the nineties? Because it's become the archetypal tale of self-promo gone wrong. Ian Anderson explains: "It transpired that the package came from a guy – I can't remember his name, but we used to call him 'the Belgian stalker' because whenever we did an exhibition he was always there, trying to get free stuff. One time he'd asked Matt [Pyke] how he could get a job with us and Matt just said: 'You need to do something that stands out – something that makes people stop and check your work out.' It's what we always said to students back then, because we were sent so much stuff, we just couldn't look at it all," he adds.

"The police said it looked exactly like a bomb, that whoever made it knew how to make bombs," he says. "Once you knew it wasn't, it was clear it had been done to catch attention. The tone of the covering letter was: 'Hope you enjoy this; hope it makes you laugh'. It made a great dinner party story."

Needless to say, the designer didn't get an interview. Anderson admits he has no idea of his name, and the studio never saw his reel because the police took it. As far as self-promo goes, it doesn't get much worse. So what went wrong?

DESIGNING THE OUTCOME

For Anderson, it comes down to the same oversight that prevents any project achieving success: a lack of consideration for the end result. "It's typical. You think: 'That'll be a fantastic idea' – but don't think about what will happen or why you're doing it," he explains. "The outcome you want to provoke needs to be appropriate, especially with shock tactics, so people understand what you're trying to communicate. Think about your audience: what do they want and how can you do it for them?"

Of course, for every spectacular self-promotion fail there's a dazzlingly brilliant idea that's perfectly pitched and stunningly executed, and adheres to Anderson's advice – the sort of self-promo you wish you'd thought of.

Over the following pages, we've highlighted four of our favourite recent examples, each of which proves that in an age of complex communication and cut-throat competition, it's still possible to create a self-promotional project that stands out (without involving the bomb squad). Read on to be inspired...

Left: The Jacky Winter Group's military-inspired challenge coins project.

Below left: Student Liam Blunden's effectively eye-catching, acrylic portfolio.

Below right: B&A's matchbook project.

Bottom: James Curran's attention-grabbing Instagram series.

CHALLENGE COINS

ADDING VALUE

AGENT JACKY WINTER REFRESHED AN OLD MILITARY TRADITION TO REWARD CLIENTS, CELEBRATE CAMARADERIE AND SHOWCASE THE CREATIVITY OF ITS ARTISTS

When you're in the business of representing creatives, self-promotion is the name of the game. With over 100 talented artists on his books, The Jacky Winter Group founder Jeremy Wortsman is a veritable master of the art: the agency's annual publication, Field Guide – a high-end showcase of its artists' work – has become a highly anticipated resource over the years. (The most recent, pictured, presents a collection of six booklets, with handy perforated edges so you can tear out your favourites.) Lifting the bar is crucial and the agency also releases a number of additional self-promo projects each year – which is how Jacky Winter's beer-opening challenge coins were born.

If you listen to the 99% Invisible podcast, or have an interest in military traditions, you might know that challenge coins were used to convey emotion across rank, and often stood as a symbol of respect. Inspired by the idea, Wortsman decided to create the agency's own version, to present to clients that have fought alongside its artists in the battle to meet deadlines and produce great work. Decision-making phrases – 'Hell yes' and 'Fuck no' – are inscribed on either side, and the designs give a nod to challenge-coin drinking rituals through an integrated bottle opener.

Jacky Winter illustrator Luke Lucas designed them, working with Wortsman and manufacturer Coinforce to bring the concept to life. It was a lot of fun, say both, but also a huge learning curve. "As a print designer, you're always thinking about technical aspects, such as line weights, tolerances, ink coverage and so on," says Wortsman. "But with coins or other types of metal – like pins – you have to almost design it like a 'colour by numbers' game. Each shape needs to be clearly delineated as a 'reservoir' to hold colour."

The agency typically likes to reward clients that have completed either a creatively or financially rewarding job, as well as longer-term clients, when a project has wrapped. "It's about maintaining and growing our current relationships, and expressing how much we value these bonds," says Wortsman. "The coin feels amazing in your hand, but it also has utility as a bottle cap opener and decision maker. The feedback has been fabulous."

"THE COIN FEELS AMAZING IN YOUR HAND, BUT IT ALSO HAS UTILITY AS A BOTTLE CAP OPENER AND DECISION MAKER. THE FEEDBACK HAS BEEN FABULOUS"

HIGH-IMPACT PORTFOLIO

HOW STUDENT LIAM BLUNDEN'S POCKET-SIZED ACRYLIC PORTFOLIO LED TO PAID DESIGN WORK FOR HOUSEHOLD-NAME CLIENTS

Earlier this year, Birmingham-based LIFE Agency put out a call for interns. When visual communication student Liam Blunder was invited for an interview, he took the opportunity to make a lasting impression. "He already had my attention with a really positive outlook, bags of enthusiasm and a very solid student portfolio," recalls senior creative Luke Tonge. "So when he handed me his leave-behind at the end I really was surprised."

Inspired by the Pantone colour guides, Blunden had created a miniature, customised portfolio with a laser-cut translucent-yellow acrylic cover. "I thought to myself: 'Pocket-sized and a little sturdier, it'd be a good housing for a portfolio' – so I did it," explains Blunden, who already has work for Selfridges & Co, Carmex and MTV under his belt. In fact, his portfolio was so strong that Birmingham City University accelerated him directly into the second year of his course.

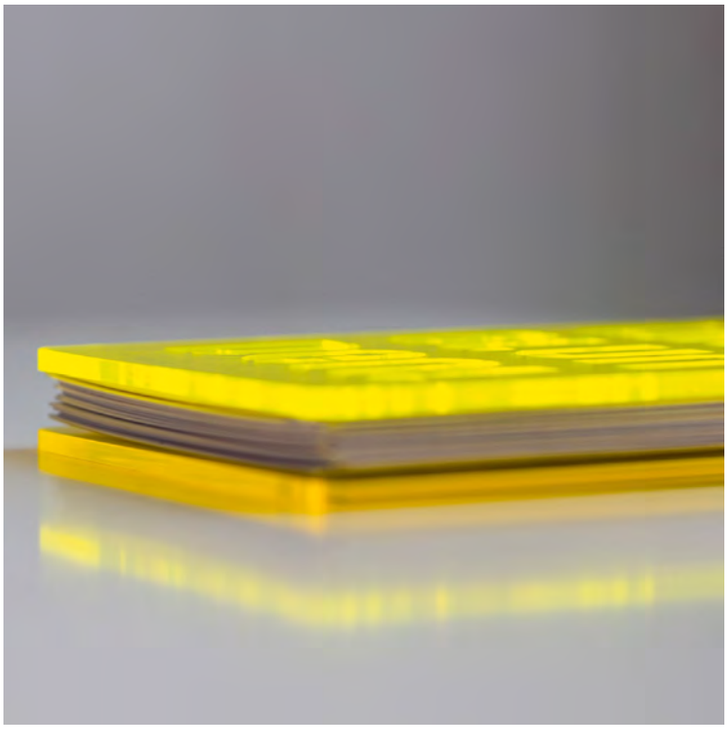
"I reshaped it, replaced the cover with acrylic and swapped the plastic tube screw with a metal one," he continues. "I made it physical because it gave me an excuse to visit the studio to drop it off. I also wanted something I could hand over so it made me a little more memorable."

The portfolio quickly turned heads across the studio. "Anyone can email a PDF, but to book time in a workshop, buy materials and try out a new skill by physically creating a portfolio displays a level of effort and thought we don't often see," says Tonge.

A change in company policy shortly after Blunden's interview meant recruitment plans were put on hold, so he handed a few more portfolios out – and received a fantastic response. "I got three months' paid work at Fluid Design in Birmingham, which was amazing," he says. "I worked on projects for some AAA games such as BioShock: The Collection, as well as contributing towards some incredible projects for some big names."

For Blunden, having the confidence to see a self-promo project through to the end is key. From idea to completion, it took just over a week to have 10 physical portfolios ready to go, and by persevering to put them in front of the right eyes, the third-year student has become increasingly employable. "In the words of the mighty Shia LaBeouf, 'Just, do it'," he laughs. "I know a lot of talented people who are too reserved. Think of some ideas, bounce them off some friends and make it happen."

"I MADE IT PHYSICAL BECAUSE IT GAVE ME AN EXCUSE TO VISIT THE STUDIO TO DROP IT OFF. I ALSO WANTED SOMETHING I COULD HAND OVER SO IT MADE ME A LITTLE MORE MEMORABLE"



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Liam Blunden
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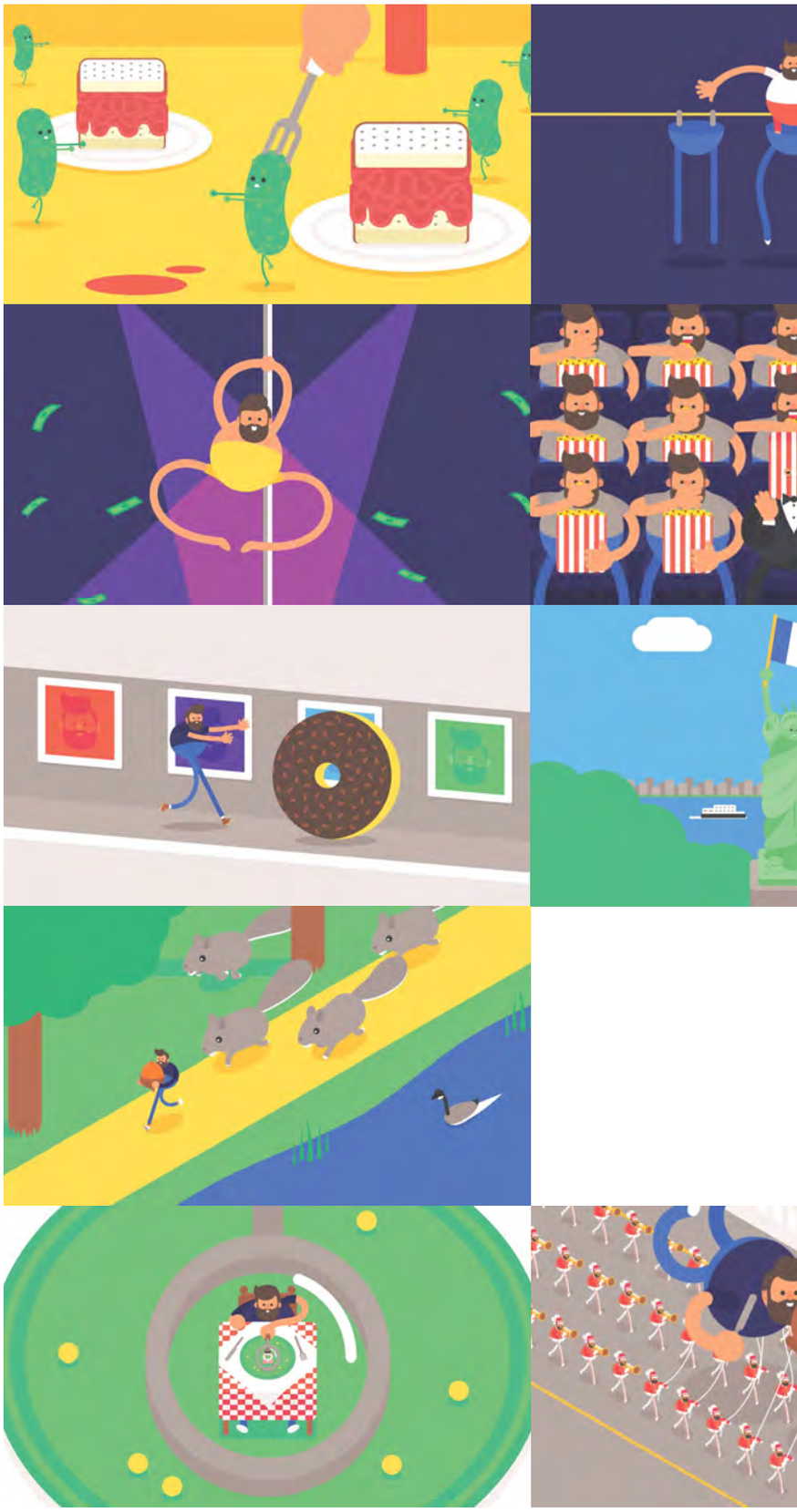
STUVWXYZ
CLIENT: PERSONAL WORK

Electric Thunder
CLIENT: THE 21 PIRATES EXHIBITION
CLIENT: PERSONAL WORK

NYC GIFATHON

SELF-PROMO WITH STAMINA

FRESH FROM A TV PROJECT WITH DISNEY, JAMES CURRAN EXPLAINS HOW HE GAINED 10,000 INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS IN 30 DAYS WITH A FUN, LONG-DISTANCE PERSONAL PROJECT

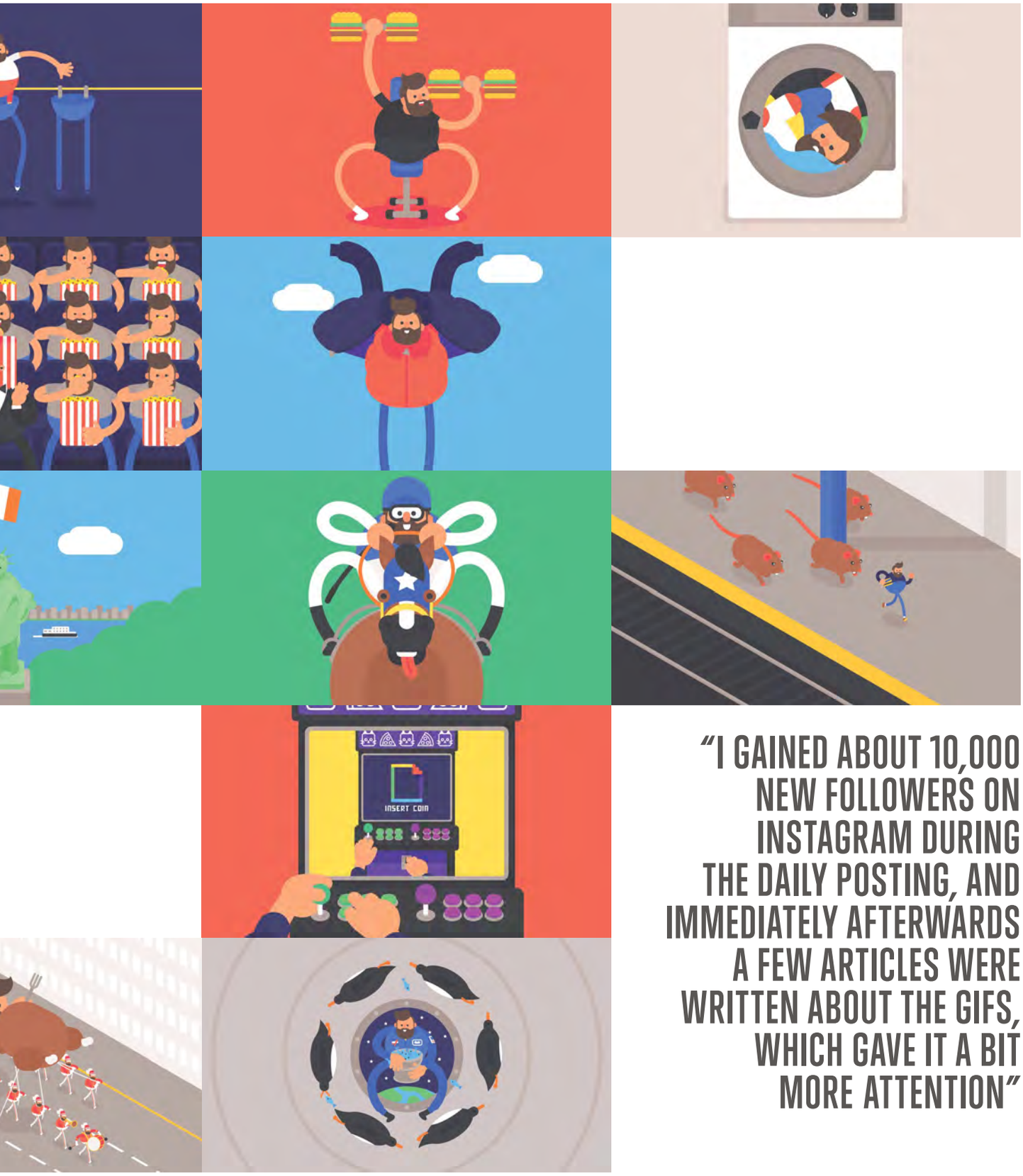


London-based animation director and designer James Curran knows the self-promotional power of a personal project. In 2011, his unofficial title sequence for The Adventures of Tintin brought him widespread exposure and, famously, a job offer from Steven Spielberg on his next film. Since then, Curran has viewed personal projects as his priority – which is why he embarked on a 30-day 'Gifathon' during a month's holiday in New York last year.

Each day, Curran took a few hours out of his itinerary to make a new GIF. "I had a rough list of ideas for things to do, but I just made it up as I went along," he explains. "I'd made enough GIFs already to know that making one a day was possible. The hardest part was just maintaining it for 30 days, as I didn't really have any free time between animating and doing the activities that inspired the GIFs, so it becomes quite tiring after a few weeks."

He didn't expect the project to be a big success – as with Tintin, the aim was simply to have fun – but interest grew with each daily post on Twitter, Tumblr and Instagram. "I gained about 10,000 new followers on Instagram during the daily posting, and immediately afterwards a few articles were written about the GIFs, which gave it a bit more attention," he recalls. "It wasn't until I made a longer compilation video of all the GIFs – with added sound by David Kamp – that it really started to get noticed though."

An article on Adweek and a Vimeo Staff Pick helped push the project to a different level, spreading it across the internet and gaining a few hundred thousand more views. Has the exposure lead directly to new work? Curran isn't sure. But since then he's worked on social media campaigns for a number of brands and recently added a TV project with Disney to his portfolio, so he's doing something right. "The NYC Gifathon has replaced the Tintin project as the thing people remember me for," he says. "If you're having fun when making something, there's more chance people will have fun when they see it. Which makes them more likely to share it with others."



"I GAINED ABOUT 10,000 NEW FOLLOWERS ON INSTAGRAM DURING THE DAILY POSTING, AND IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS A FEW ARTICLES WERE WRITTEN ABOUT THE GIFS, WHICH GAVE IT A BIT MORE ATTENTION"

MATCHBOOK MASTERPIECES

BERNSTEIN & ANDRIULLI PUT A FRESH SPIN ON A VINTAGE PROMOTION TECHNIQUE WITH ITS NEW PROJECT, THE MATCHBOOK

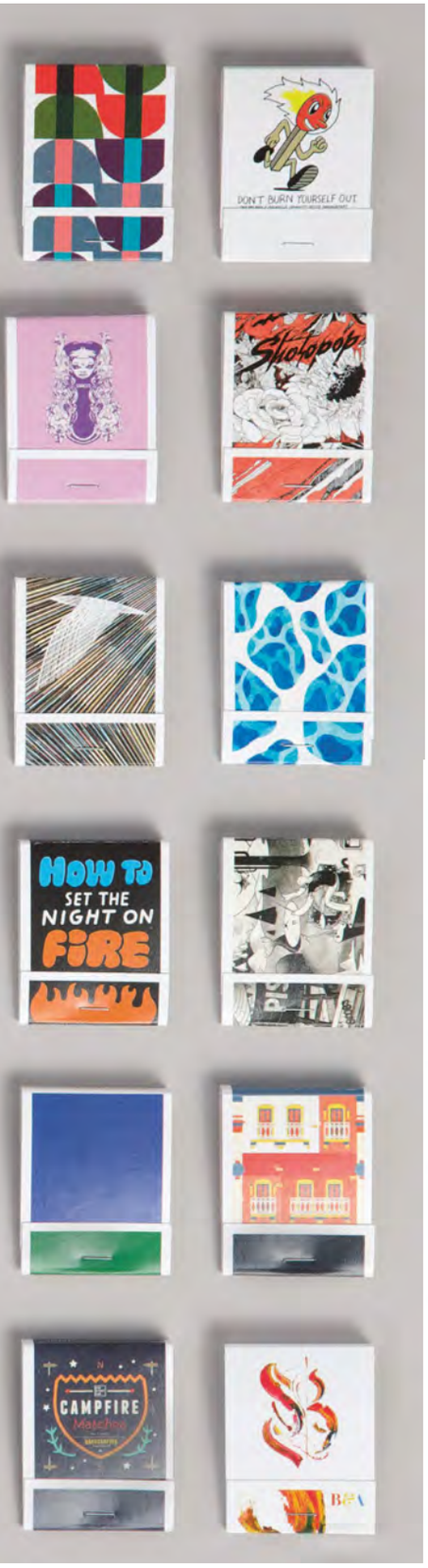
Since September, New York-based agency Bernstein & Andriulli (B&A) has been teasing its social media followers with glimpses of striking matchbook artwork created by its talented roster of designers and illustrators. Vault49, Kyle Bean, McBess and Tristan Eaton are just some of the big-name creatives who have adapted their styles to the distinctive miniature canvas, making for a highly desirable collection of contemporary matchbooks that serve both a practical function – fire – and a promotional role.

"From the Dadaists to the Surrealists, masterpieces have been created by candlelight; ideas have been shared over a cigarette; phone numbers and information exchanged by scrawling on these portable, multi-purpose notebooks – not to mention the advertising gimmick of the 1920s–1950s, where promotional images ended up in the purses, pockets and homes of millions of consumers," explains Louisa St. Pierre, executive agent at B&A.

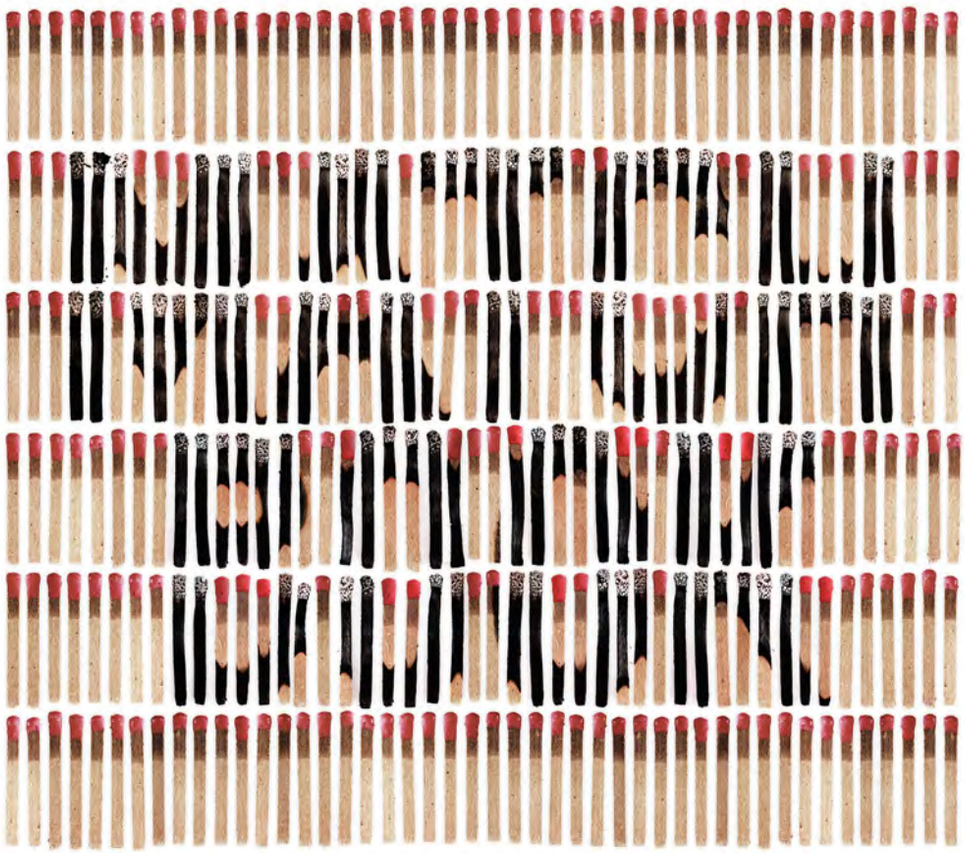
"We printed matchbooks bearing the art of all the artists we represent to be used literally as matches, but also included in a book designed by Craig Ward, called The Matchbook, which is shaped like an oversized matchbook. We love utility, art and portability, and all three were incorporated into the project."

Also running throughout the project, of course, is a cracking metaphor – think matches, sparks and inspiration. At the beginning of 2017, some 2,000 copies of The Matchbook will be sent to B&A's VIP clients, and the agency intends to host a speakeasy-style book launch on both sides of the pond. In the meantime, you'll have to keep an eye on social media for more teasers.

As St. Pierre explains, good self-promo is all about giving clients things they don't yet realise they want. For B&A, it's also about encouraging and facilitating collaboration, and exploring different media. "Ask yourself: what might enhance someone's life experience? It might be as simple as a desk calendar, or as fancy as some wearable technology, or a little animation that's hilarious or just utterly relatable for clients," she advises. "Make it delightfully memorable."



"ASK YOURSELF, WHAT MIGHT ENHANCE SOMEONE'S LIFE EXPERIENCE? IT MIGHT BE AS SIMPLE AS A DESK CALENDAR, OR AS FANCY AS WEARABLE TECHNOLOGY. WHATEVER IT IS, MAKE IT DELIGHTFULLY MEMORABLE"



HOW TO MAKE YOUR SELF-PROMO STAND OUT

As communications become increasingly complex, the art of self-promo, too, has evolved. Where once a well-crafted piece of promo sent to prospective employers, clients or the press served as a primary technique for capturing attention, now anything and everything can be spun into a profile-building exercise – from an obscure self-initiated project to a tweet weighing in on the latest topic du jour.

But while methods of self-promo might have changed, the fundamentals for creating cut-through haven't: "You have to know your audience and what outcome you want to achieve," reinforces Ian Anderson. "With the bomb, the outcome was me spending time with two coppers, learning about detonation and disarmament. I don't remember the guy's name and I didn't see his work."

His advice is to always think about your audience, and fine-tune your self-promo appropriately. "It's so easy to tailor digital files or your output," he says. But know your strengths: "If you specialise in typography and do a bit of illustration, don't apply to an illustration agency and show your typography work. You might be the best typographer in the world, but it's irrelevant."

For Tonge, successful self-promo needs to either stand out in content, format or concept. "Think about the presence you want your portfolio to have when it's on a messy desk in a busy studio," he says. He advises against gimmicks, but recommends putting a bit of personality into the production of the project. "I'd much rather have an emotional reaction – even if it's confusion – than feel bored by it."

It's a tough market. But as each of the projects featured here demonstrates, brilliant ideas executed with craft and passion will always rise to the surface. Whether it's unique, useful, shareable or something so beautiful the recipient can't throw it away, a carefully considered piece of self-promo is an investment that can pay off time and time again.

"The secret to good self-promo is not to make it about promoting yourself as such," says Wortsman. "In the current market, literally everything you do is a piece of promotion. If you actually just explore your own interests, or craft to the most rigorous level of finish or investigation, your work will naturally make its way to the people who need to see it," he continues.

"The not-so-radical truth is that there are simply more talented people out there than ever before – and the bar gets raised a bit higher every day. As long as you care about what you do, and you put that care into your work, it will show through. And that's what people respond to." ◻

5 GOLDEN SELF-PROMO RULES

CUT THROUGH THE NOISE WITH THESE TOP TIPS FOR CREATING PROFILE-BUILDING PROMOTIONAL PROJECTS

1 Know your audience

"Always think about your audience," says the Designers Republic founder Ian Anderson. "If it's self-promo in terms of an exhibition, then who do you want to come, and what do you want to say to those people? If it's a single piece of self-promo that you're sending to a potential employer or client, then what is it that those people want to see? Think about what you want to achieve."

2 Be there

"Industry events, social gatherings, online hangouts – just be there," advises designer Liam Burden. "I've gained clients by just talking to people – they didn't even see my work! Make sure you have a nice online portfolio. Whack the URL on some business cards with your details and hand them out. Step it up a notch by making something unique. We're in a creative industry, so get creative!"

3 Create something of value

"If you're going to invest your time and energy into something that you want to represent your work and keep you top of mind for more than a passing second, it makes sense to create something of value," advises illustrator Luke Lucas. "We're all bombarded with so much promotional junk. If you can put out something that's too good to throw away, you're already winning."

4 Explore different channels

"Also, don't put all your eggs in one basket," adds Lucas. "Outside of the things that Jacky Winter and my other reps do through their networks, I try promote my work through a variety of channels – be it social media, SEO, advertising in various industry directories, entering awards, contributing to exhibitions and regularly updating my folio. It all counts."

5 Have fun

"Don't try to make something that will get you exposure, because you'll most likely over-think it and it won't work," says animator James Curran. "Just create something while enjoying the process and then put it online, without trying to force people to see it. Even if it doesn't get a lot of views, you've still made something that you care about."

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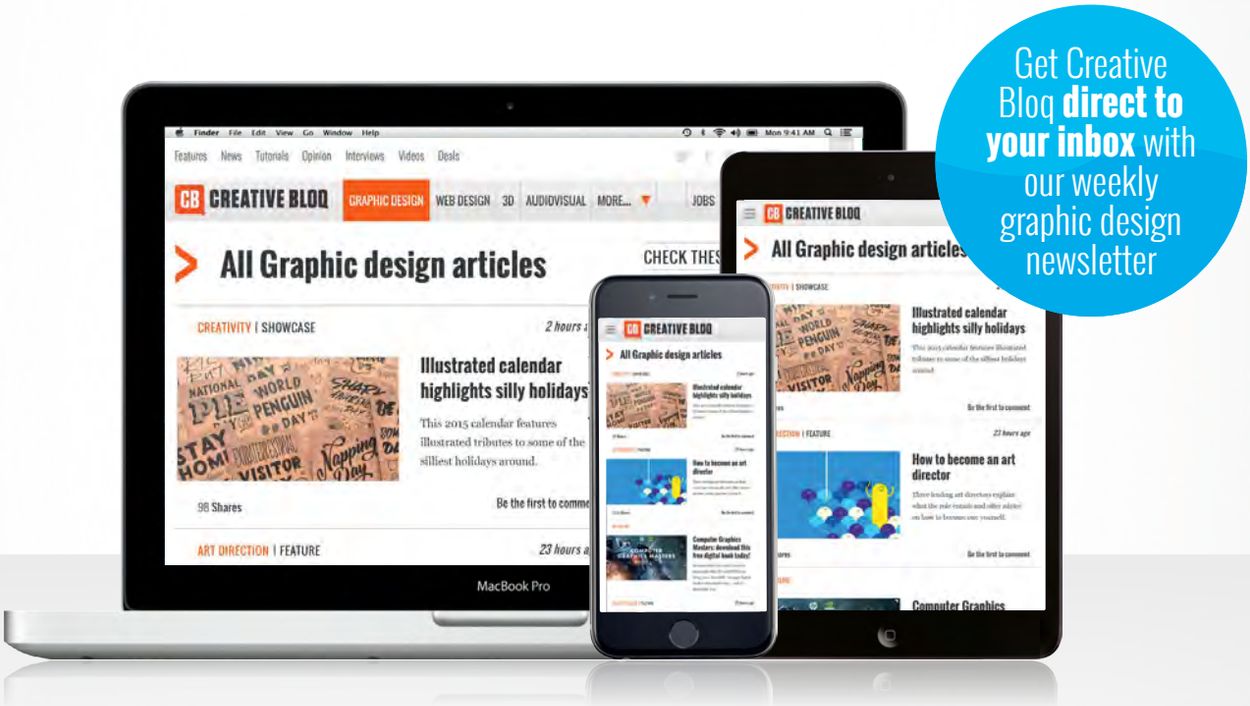

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LOVE LETTERS

Following a meteoric rise over the last few years, Sydney-based lettering specialist Gemma O'Brien reveals how a passion for experimentation and a love of travel have helped stoke her success...

GEMMA O'BRIEN_ Gemma is an Australian artist specialising in lettering, illustration and typography. After working as an art director at Animal Logic, Fuel VFX and Toby & Pete, she became a freelance illustrator in 2012. Her clients include Playboy, Nike, Heineken, Qantas and Diet Coke. She was recognised as an ADC Young Gun in 2015. www.gemmaobrien.com

■ WORDS: Nick Carson SELF PORTRAIT: Gemma O'Brien

Credit: Elle Green

Left: Gemma O'Brien, pictured in front of a series of her calligraphic experiments.

Having your student project spotted and discussed by a design critic halfway across the world might be a dream come true for many young designers. Gemma O'Brien got off to a rocky start on this front, however, when TYPO Berlin's Jürgen Siebert reacted to her 2009 Sagmeister-inspired stunt of scrawling typography all over her bare skin with marker pens – the video for which had already attracted over 150,000 YouTube views – with a pithy blog post entitled, 'Amateur designer has sex with letters'.

This first taste of the limelight was somewhat awkward, but the old saying 'all publicity is good publicity' soon proved to be true. After a surge of online support for her and her craft, Siebert re-appraised O'Brien and decided to fly her 10,000 miles to Germany to speak at the next TYPO. She became one of the youngest speakers on the circuit, beginning a jet-setting career that now involves hundreds of hours each year in the air.

These aren't wasted hours, though – a typographic doodle on a sick bag during a flight became her Spewbag Challenge (see facing page), a series of illness-based puns guaranteed to raise a smile, soon to become an exhibition.

As if to prove the point that travel is in her blood, we caught up with the in-demand lettering artist in Antwerp, after watching her late-night talk at the inaugural OFFF By Night festival…

You were introduced as the first solo woman speaker, at the end of a three-day conference. Your alias is Mrs Eaves, named after the first woman in typography. Are you particularly conscious of the role of women in design?

I haven't been conscious of it in the sense that I've been disadvantaged in any way throughout my career. This conference is one of the more male-dominated ones that I've witnessed, but there does seem to be more balance in general.

When I was studying there were so many big female designers coming up, like Jessica Hische and Jessica Walsh, who were my age and doing amazing work. They were at the top of commercial success. It's important to be aware of the issue in general, but I haven't personally had any negative impact.

You spoke about the 'Amateur designer has sex with letters' episode, which started negatively but turned into an overwhelmingly positive experience. Do you think it's important for young designers to court press, or does that kind of thing just happen?

When I look back on that I'm almost shocked that it was a project that I did. I feel like now, if I saw someone do that I'd be like: 'That's not the way you want to get noticed, you want to get noticed for doing good work.' In a way it's gimmicky, but if it resonates and connects then you can't control that.

I think it was also something to do with the timing: when that happened for me, it was at the peak of the viral video craze – Instagram didn't exist, and it was probably a smaller window. Now there are probably loads of cool uni projects that are happening, but they don't always get noticed because the sea of stuff is just massive.

Jessica Walsh and Stefan Sagmeister are part of a breed of designers who put themselves in their art – Sagmeister wasn't just writing on himself with markers, he was carving into his skin. Where do you stand on the cult of personality in design? Are you part of that?

When I was studying, there were these big names in design that you noticed, and part of the appeal of being successful was tied up with being well known, speaking at conferences and being in that realm. That's an entirely different thing to creating good work.

Lots of people create amazingly good work but maybe don't like speaking, or putting themselves into it. I'm always up and down with where I sit. At first, I liked the idea of creating something really personal, whereas now I'm more inclined to think that,

Below left: Fully Sick, the spontaneous 'sick bag' doodle that kick-started O'Brien's Spewbag Challenge.

Below right and bottom row: O'Brien continued her pun-laden series of Spewbag Challenge pieces with a wide variety of pop-culture references.

Above: O'Brien concentrates on a mural in progress.

while it's my name and image attached to it, I'm more concerned with pleasing myself through experimentation and good work than I am pursuing a public image.

In your talk you discussed trends and authenticity, particularly the recent proliferation of 'chalkboard-style' typography. Do you have any advice for carving your own path?
I think that trends are inevitable, and generally they come off the back of something that's good and resonates with people. It's the saturation that takes away the value.

The way to find your own path is to look at the trend you're seeing, and ask what's driving it. I think with the chalkboard trend it was a reaction to the 90s and desktop publishing and all these digital styles – a human reaction to what a font couldn't do by itself. The only other thing to do is experiment. Experimenting with different tools and techniques is the only way to create something truly new.

With this in mind, how do you make sure your style stands out and feels fresh, not derivative?
Trends seem to spread faster than ever with social media. I think for me, the only way to continue to work on my personal style is to allow time for experimentation in order to explore new techniques, and look to new sources of inspiration outside the design world.

Most trends seem to speak to something that is deeper than just the style or execution, so I'm always interested in finding out what that is, and ultimately finding a new way to meet that need.

What's the most valuable thing you've done in your career so far to raise your profile and get the work rolling in, and how did it help?
I think the most valuable thing is to keep creating the kind of work you want to do. That's the best way to stay creatively satisfied, and also shape the kinds of client work that might come to you. This was something I started to do early on, and I used social media as a platform to share it. It was a great way to connect with art directors and creatives and increase exposure to my work around the world.

Several other OFFF By Night talks also touched on the idea that if you keep doing what you love, sooner or later clients will pick it up and commission you for it. Given that you said 60 to 70 per cent of your commercial work you don't want to show, does that make experimentation even more crucial?
I think it's something I've started to notice as I've moved through my career. It's only a fairly short period of time in which I've started to get recognition – maybe a three-year period – so when I say it's work I don't want to show, it's because it's the same concept I've done before; I'm repeating myself.

I think in order to make a career you have to do those sorts of things to make money, but you know when you're bored, or it's stale. Sometimes you just do it because you know it'll help fund something completely free and creative, but usually it's those free spaces that encourage personal fulfilment.

Whether or not people respond to that is interesting, though. It's a bit like a band: they have their hits, and people want to hear those hits, but they also want to experiment and whether or not that resonates as a long-term career success remains to be seen.

It's often serendipitous though, isn't it: when you first doodled

Left: Gemma O'Brien's cover for Print magazine celebrates 15 new visual artists under 30, and is a rare venture into colour.

Below: Created in partnership with Adobe, O'Brien's alphabet poster was inspired by 2016's Outside Lands festival.

Bottom: A mural for clothing brand Volcom in Sydney. More followed in California and Barcelona.

Above: Some of O'Brien's larger-scale murals require a stepladder.

on a sick bag, you probably didn't think that further down the line it would become an exhibition...
Exactly. And if you set out to do something that's a personal side project with the idea that it's going to be really popular or lead to paid work, it's already inherently flawed. Usually the projects that naturally progress are the ones you do because you just really want to do them.

You worked at Animal Logic, Fuel VFX and Toby & Pete before going it alone. How did you find that transition from in-house art director to freelance commercial illustrator? Were there any unexpected challenges?
I think the hardest thing about this transition was finding a rhythm and routine that worked for me as a freelancer. I think I thrive outside of the nine-til-five structure, which was a positive, but it took some time to really find a work-life balance. There was initially a fear that I wouldn't have a constant flow of work, but now there are many jobs I have to turn down due to scheduling.

You do a lot of hand-painted work, which requires a certain amount of trust and commitment from the client: it's a lot more permanent and harder to change than purely digital work. Have you encountered any issues with this?
Usually with any large-scale work I will design and draw the artwork beforehand, and share this with the client and address any feedback before moving to the wall or canvas. By the time I'm painting large scale there will only be finer details added.

Your clients are all over the world, but presumably being based in Australia the time difference can be an issue. How do you deal with this? Can you twist it to your advantage?
I'm a night owl, and love staying up late to work – so this can be advantageous for calls with clients around the world. Also, Australia is in the future compared to most places I work with, which can be helpful for deadlines.

Being in Australia also means a lot of travelling if you want to speak at events, paint murals overseas or meet clients face-to-face, for instance. How important is travel and experiencing new things, for you to stay inspired? Where are your favourite places in the world to travel to?
I really like the variety of visiting new places, and the inspiration it can offer. The signage in each city can be so diverse– it's a wealth of typographic inspiration. I love Barcelona. The first time I went there last year I discovered some beautiful styles of letterforms I'd never seen before. In terms of direct influence on my work it's hard to pinpoint, but I definitely value travel as part of my work because when I'm home in the studio, I usually end up glued to my desk, working alone.

GET MORE FROM YOUR DOWNTIME

Gemma O'Brien shares her advice for making the most of 'dead time' while you're travelling...

"My travel has increased a lot in the last two years, with conferences, murals and workshops abroad," reveals O'Brien. "Being based in Australia means most places are far away, but it's a great opportunity to be inspired by new cities and meet the design community around the world in person. I try to manage my commissions around the travel, and sometimes keep working while away."

When each journey means flying thousands of miles, there's a lot of potentially 'dead time' in the air. For O'Brien, this is rarely wasted, as her Spewbag Challenge project attests. "I find downtime – whether on planes, walking or simply having a shower – can be a great space to just come up with new ideas," she insists.

"Often these are the only times away from my devices, and my mind is more open to connections between things I've seen or worked on that day. That said, when I started my Spew Bag Challenge I wasn't quite as busy with commercial work: these days I do enjoy watching movies on the plane too."

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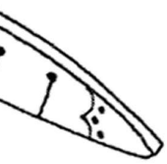


MANAGE YOUR PROJECTS BETTER

Tom Dennis speaks to pro agencies to find out how they keep on top of multiple projects and ensure every client brief is completed on time and on budget

Never forget that the design business is, well, a business. Which means that you need to account for your time, track the hours you spend on a project and ensure you're billing for every second of input you put into a client brief. Why is this important? Because too often creatives find themselves shovelling extra hours into projects which aren't accounted for. In a busy environment, this causes backlogs and bottlenecks which, if unchecked, damage a business' reputation and bottom line. The same applies to small studios and freelancers – if you can't deliver on time and on budget, you're unlikely to be hired again. Knowing when to work, how to work, and who's working on what is important. But equally important is ensuring you're paid for your time.

Similarly, keeping projects on track and ensuring they hit a given deadline does more than ensure you get paid: it grows your reputation. No one employs a bad plumber, even if they undercut the competition with their quote. The same stands for creatives. Do the work well, deliver it on time, and you'll only get positive recommendations.

This is really the essence of excellent project management: a synergy between accounts teams handling client briefs and budgets, and creative teams firing on all cylinders. Behind all of this is often an agency's secret industry weapon: the project manager or traffic manager, who keeps on top of everything.

So how do the top agencies and studios manage this synergy? "For me, I want to make sure I understand the requirements and expectations of others, so that I then do the same in return," says Kim Cox, studio traffic manager at Six, a Bristol-based agency with a client list that includes Bank of Scotland, Lloyds and Halifax.

"Between the studio and client services team, I have around 30-plus people's needs to meet at any given time. So it's important I keep everyone updated and resist the temptation to over promise. It's much better to set expectations and then over deliver. Flexibility is also key – as much as I relish having everything perfectly scheduled in advance, I have to be ready and willing to change everything around at a moment's notice."

COMMUNICATION IS KING

Communication is a key facet of successful project management. And there are a number of ways top studios and agencies ensure everyone

ILLUSTRATION: Anna Wray, www.annawray.co.uk

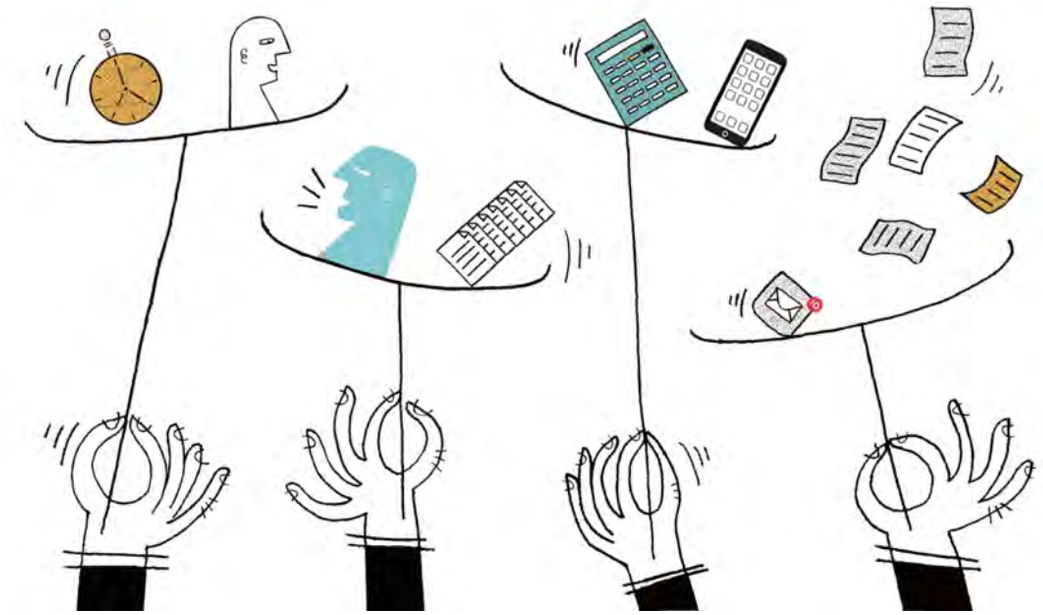
FEATURED CREATIVES

KAT HEATON
ACCOUNT DIRECTOR, JOHNSON BANKS
Kat is the main point of contact for new clients and new business enquiries. She costs and puts together proposals, pitches, plans and manages projects, making sure all know what they're meant to be doing, and when.
www.johnsonbanks.co.uk

ROB LOWE
DIGITAL DIRECTOR MR B & FRIENDS
Rob leads the digital team, helping build commercialisation and profitability of digital output, for clients such as Fourpure Brewing, Unite Students and Principality Building Society.
www.mrbandfriends.co.uk

KIM COX
STUDIO TRAFFIC MANAGER, SIX
Kim works with account managers and designers to schedule projects for clients including Lloyds, GWR and Hitachi. She ensures projects are completed on time– and rearranges everything when things inevitably change.
www.six.agency

LOCKET AEBISCHER & ROSIE BRENNAN
ACCOUNT MANAGERS SOMEONE
Locket and Rosie are responsible for client accounts. They ensure work is completed on time, to a professional standard, manage budgets, suppliers, production and client relationships.
www.someoneinlondon.com



involved in a project is fully aware of all its requirements. Numerous project management software packages, as well as methods like Agile – a framework which sets segmented parameters and deadlines – are common. But face-to-face briefings shouldn't be neglected, either. "In the digital team specifically, we have daily stand-ups at 9:30 every morning," explains Rob Lowe, digital director at Mr B & Friends – an agency which has Principality Building Society, Unite Students and the BBC amongst its clients. "This gives the team a chance to talk though their workload with the rest of the team. Making sure everyone understands their tasks and accountability for those tasks is key."

Sometimes, it becomes clear from these meetings that an extra set of hands might be needed in order to either add a specialist skill, or deliver the resources required to hit a deadline. "The pace of the projects that we work on, along with balancing a range of different clients' needs, means that flexibility and adaptability are crucial to a project's success," explains Lowe. "Again, communication is essential to making sure that resources can be reallocated as needed. We're lucky to have an extremely good base of freelance support that we can call on when necessary, too."

SUPER SKILL SETS

Finding the right people for the job is also not just about recruitment, it's a secret skill of the project manager. Knowing not just your co-workers skill sets, but also their interests and passions outside of work, can make a brief really reach its potential, as Locket Aebischer, an account manager at SomeOne explains: "Where possible, we try to assess the studio for interest and abilities to see which team is best for each brief. For example, if we got a sports brand brief, we would try to allocate this brief to a sports enthusiast, which means they want to do the work and are more passionate and hard-working on that project."

Flexibility means knowing at what stages a project is likely to require additional or specialist help – and then scheduling it. Rosie Brennan, another account manager at SomeOne, explains that being aware of a team's specialisms means that the company can power through particular project stages, before moving people to other projects: "We put more people on the concepts stage of a project, but once the route is chosen, we streamline," she says.

"We're lucky to have a fairly large team with a variety of strengths and abilities, so we try to tap into these when we can. Our senior designer, who loves animating, will often be put on the jobs that need animation, for example."

SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS

Tracking multiple projects' requirements, expenditure and key communications is where specialist project management software and tools come in. Slack is fast becoming the communication tool of choice for creative and development-driven businesses, with its ability to create message threads and share assistance and information.

"We use the project management software Synergist," says Cox. "It covers everything Six needs – from studio bookings to quotes and financial reporting. I find it really easy to use for what I need. Being able to switch and change bookings easily really helps when projects are constantly moving. I also like exploring the reports it generates and using this data to improve the way I work. For example, I can quickly run time reports against projects from previous weeks, months and even years, and use this information to anticipate what studio time is likely to be required for future projects."

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

THESE ARE SOME OF THE SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS THE PRO AGENCIES USE TO KEEP THEIR PROJECTS ON TRACK...

TRELLO
www.trello.com
The team at johnson banks use this. It has a really simple UI, which makes it easy for everyone to understand quickly, and see everyone's tasks on all projects on just one page. This overview of workloads makes it easy to prioritise work, especially for a small studio. It's best seen as a shared group task list and doesn't work so well in seeing how long each activity is going to take.

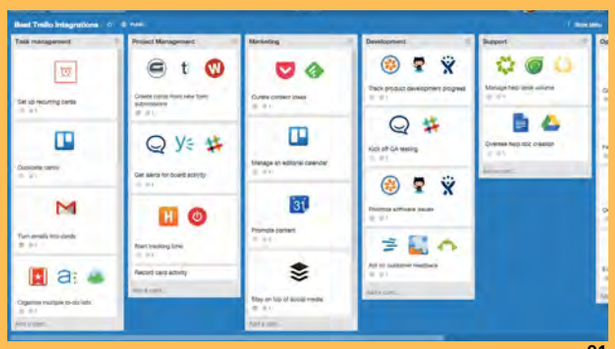
SYNERGIST
www.synergist.co.uk
"I would be lost without it," says Kim Cox, traffic manager at Six. "On a good day, I can recall most bookings a day or two ahead. But once you add into the mix 15-plus designers and jobs that move around – sometimes on an hourly basis – it's impossible to keep a mental track of everything. All the information I need to do my job is right there in one system. Spreadsheets can only go so far when it comes to scheduling."

RESOURCE GURU
www.resourceguruapp.com
"For managing studio resource and workflow, we use Resource Guru," says Rob Lowe at Mr B & Friends. "It's extremely flexible and easy to use. It also gives everyone in the studio full visibility of their schedule and workload. It offers at-a-glance solutions and has a mobile interface for when I'm out and about with clients. The simplicity of the system helps keep complex projects on track."

SLACK AND HARVEST
www.slack.com / www.getharvest.com
"We use Slack to stay in touch with designers minute by minute, and an online time sheet manager called Harvest, which allows us an overview of hours spent and budget for each live project," says Rosie Brennan at SomeOne. "We also use Google sheets and share these across teams and the studio. Slack is super fast, easy to use and designers have it open on their screens all the time, so it's the quickest way to contact them."

PROJECT MANAGER
www.projectmanager.com
New to the market, Project Manager enables you to create and share customisable online plans, with real-time dashboards showing statuses at a glance. Automated emails let you know when your team updates tasks, and easy one-click reports can be printed or shared online, so the process doesn't pause when someone's out of the office.

01 Trello
02 Synergist
03 Resource Guru
04Slack
05 Harvest
06 Project Manager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RUNNING THE SHOW

KAT HEATON AT JOHNSON BANKS SHARES HER TOP TIPS FOR KEEPING PROJECTS ON COURSE AND IN CHECK

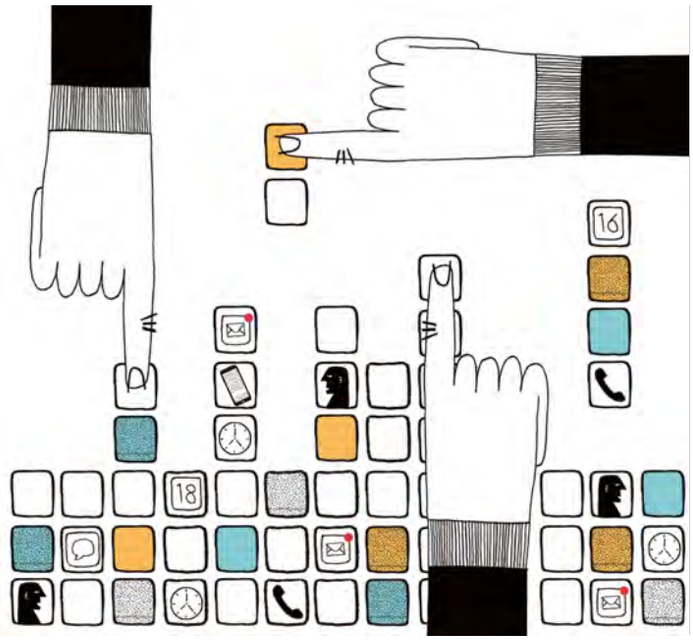
As account manager Kat Heaton knows, time management will make or break you. Getting it right means being paid properly, ensuring you hit deadlines and keep business flowing.

What does your role include?
As account director, I'm the main point of contact for new clients and new business enquiries. I cost and put together proposals, pitch for new work, plan and manage all our larger projects, and make sure everyone knows what they're meant to be doing and when.

What are the secrets to project management success?
The secret to good project management and traffic flow has got to be good communication. Although it takes time, it's important to explain to colleagues why certain tasks have to be completed and when – that tasks are inter-dependent. Equally, I'd never just tell a designer they had to complete work by a certain date – it's always a discussion as to whether they feel comfortable meeting that deadline.

How do you keep a team organised and on track without compromising creative output?
When planning a project, I always try to give the creative team as much time as possible. If a client is pushing for creative work in a shorter period, it's up to me to persuade them of the benefit of giving ideas time to develop. To then keep the team on track, I set clear internal deadlines, check the team understands the brief and has what they need to complete it. It helps that we're a small studio, so I can see what everyone's working on and see the progress they're making.

What best-practice advice can you give on the effective allocation of resources?
As well as understanding everyone's workload, it's important to understand what each team member's strengths and skills are, and, importantly, what will motivate them, and then allocate work accordingly.



Even the most carefully managed projects can overrun, though – either through additional client demands or production delays. In these instances, project and traffic managers come into their own, delegating and redeploying resources in order to 'fight deadline fires'. As ever, though, communication remains key. Knowing who's available to be reallocated, what other projects delays may have a knock-on effect on, and – importantly – how delays might disrupt a planned budget and deadline, is half the battle.

PANIC PREVENTION

"We do weekly status reports for a lot of our clients, to help us spot these situations before it gets to the 'panic zone'," explains Brennan. "If a project runs over time – and we rarely do – we either try to negotiate an extension with the client or we get all hands on deck, to get the work done! Our 'free' channel on Slack comes in handy at times like this too – if a designer has some time they will make it known to the channel and be snapped up. Using Harvest and time sheets means we can keep an eye on the budget and hours for each project."

"Every project is different, but fundamentally it's about communication," agrees Cox. "We're very good at keeping each other updated, so if projects look like they're going to overrun, we usually have some notice to find a solution and most importantly, notify our clients of any changes to the plan. Then it's my job to find the additional time needed. I think of it like playing Tetris – lots of individual elements to move around to find the best fit."

NEXT MONTH

GET MORE FROM SIDE PROJECTS
Many designers regret not making time for personal work. We reveal why it's so important, and how to make the most of all opportunities.

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PART 1

Following our successful four-part typography skills workshop with the ISTD, this month we kick off a 10-part series in partnership with D&AD, curated by this year's New Blood trustee, Tom Manning. Each advice-packed article will reveal the skills it takes to survive and thrive as a young designer in the modern industry. *Subscribe today to guarantee the whole set: see page 42.*

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PART 2 Issue 261, on sale 9 December 2016
PART 3 Issue 262, on sale 6 January 2017
PART 4 Issue 263, on sale 3 February 2017
PART 5 Issue 264, on sale 3 March 2017
PART 6 Issue 265, on sale 31 March 2017
PART 7 Issue 266, on sale 28 April 2017
PART 8 Issue 267, on sale 26 May 2017
PART 9 Issue 268, on sale 23 June 2017
PART 10 Issue 269, on sale 21 July 2017

LESSONS LEARNED FROM MY FIRST YEAR IN DESIGN

Kicking off a new 10-part series in partnership with D&AD New Blood, **Tom Manning** describes why fear and confidence often go hand in hand

On her 1978 hit single, Gloria Gaynor sang: 'At first I was afraid, I was petrified'. The lyrics describe her discovery of personal strength after a devastating breakup. But I have a fact about this song that will disappoint jilted lovers everywhere: the song wasn't written by Gaynor, but by a guy called Dino Fekaris who had been fired from his job at Motown Records. I Will Survive was Fekaris' way of telling the label, 'I'm gonna do me.' And when you relisten to the song with that in mind, it's a masterclass in storytelling, perfectly describing two essential creative ingredients: confidence and fear.

I've only ever been fired once, from my Saturday job at a garden centre when I was 16. It didn't come as much of a shock. I knew precisely nothing about plants, so I'd make up answers to customers' questions, and their gardens presumably went to shit. When I started on placement as an advertising creative, it wasn't much different. I kept my head down and tried to muddle though. I followed the example of others, and looked busy when the creative director walked past my desk. I was new, full of fear and lacking in confidence – all totally normal. At the beginning your skills aren't developed and so you have to paddle faster to keep up, or else you'll drown. All. Totally. Normal.

But now, having made it through my first year as an advertising creative, the fear is different. I fear being mediocre, and creating mediocre work that goes unnoticed without impact. I worry about not standing out from a sea of other creatives. I worry about 'settling', not making the most of my years without the commitments of kids or a mortgage. Creative director and writer Dave Trott said, "You start getting fired from your first job the day you get it. Because you start to relax. So you stop doing everything that got you the job. Which was whatever it takes."

But, good news! If you're afraid of mediocrity, it means you have 'great' in your crosshairs; that's what you're aiming for. And if mediocrity starts creeping up on you, shoot it dead and move on. You'll be in good company, too – many of my heroes in design and advertising have been fired. Some multiple times. Subsequently these women and men have cabinets full of awards, started their own agencies, and created iconic work that has changed culture. Many even wear their sackings like badges of honour. Because it's much scarier to be mediocre than it is to be

TOM MANNING, D&AD NEW BLOOD TRUSTEE 2016

Tom is carpeing all the diems. Attempting not to make advertising as a junior creative at Havas London, he was also elected D&AD New Blood trustee in October 2016. In his spare time he makes, designs and codes fun things on the wild wild web. He wrote this bio himself, in the third person, to try and make it more legit.
www.dandad.org

Below and previous page
Campaign artwork for D&AD New Blood's 2017 awards, created by The Beautiful Meme. The briefs are now live at dandad.org/newblood.

fired following your ambition. I think fear is an essential ingredient in a great creative. The fear of doing something bold that hasn't been attempted before. The fear of working on a thing that is totally fuck-up-able. But that's not all you need. To be able to go out and do that big bold thing, to attempt the unattempted, and to do so at the risk of it all going wrong, you need confidence.

Even though they seem like polar opposites, you can be afraid and confident at the same time.

FEAR IS AN ESSENTIAL INGREDIENT IN A GREAT CREATIVE: THE FEAR OF WORKING ON A THING THAT IS TOTALLY FUCK-UP-ABLE. BUT THAT'S NOT ALL YOU NEED. TO BE ABLE TO GO OUT AND DO THAT BIG BOLD THING, YOU NEED CONFIDENCE

In fact, you should be. Without confidence you make decisions based on fear. But with confidence, you make decisions in spite of fear. Mike Tyson once said: "When I come out I have supreme confidence. But I'm scared to death. I'm afraid of everything. I'm afraid of losing. I'm afraid of being humiliated. But I'm confident. The closer I get to the ring the more confident I get. All during training I've been afraid of this man. I think this man might be capable of beating me. I've dreamed of him beating me. For that I've always stayed afraid of him. But the closer I get to the ring, the more confident I get. Once I'm in the ring, I'm a god."

With Tyson's words in mind Sam Ball, founder of Lean Mean Fighting Machine, said: "If the toughest motherfucker on the planet can be confident and afraid at the same time, then so can you."

Guard that confidence carefully, because the conformists, the realists and the pragmatists will try to knock it out of you. We must not let them. Do the opposite. Set yourself a big scary goal that seems impossible, and then learn, grow, and develop by constantly learning and acquiring new skills, and you will gain confidence. Hold onto those two essential ingredients: confidence and fear.

D&AD, the organisation for which I now serve as a trustee, stands for creative excellence – that's what it awards and what it teaches. It's also what you and I are both striving for. In the following issues, we'll look at the skills needed to achieve excellence in the creative industries. I'll talk to professionals who have these skills and have used them to pursue goals that are big and scary.

We'll cover topics like selling your work, building your personal brand, and the power of side projects, to name just a few. Whether you've been working for one year or 10, we'll take you through what will be a journey of discovery. Here's to fear, confidence, and hopefully, excellence. ■

Subscribe today to guarantee the whole set: see page 42.

HOW TO STAY CONFIDENT

MAKE YOUR MARK IN DESIGN WITH TOM MANNING'S ADVICE

1 FORGET THE BRIEF

Print the brief, read it, highlight it, cut it up, rearrange it and then put it out of your mind. Fill up on culture, cartoons and quotes, let your mind drift and your subconscious will do the hard work.

2 KNOW WHEN TO STOP

Be brave enough to know when you should kill an idea. But don't be embarrassed about your experiments. Love them as you would an ugly child.

3 GET TO THE POINT

Don't beat around the bush when you're talking about an idea. Often it can feel as though you're easing people into it, or building it up, but really you're just losing them.

4 DON'T LOOK BACK

Regret nothing. Sorry for sounding like a self-help book here, but you can have excuses for not having what you want, or you can have what you want. You'll find satisfaction knowing that you couldn't have done any more.

5 TRUST YOURSELF

One final piece of advice. Be wary of who you listen to. Opinions can be helpful, but too many of them can weigh you down, and dilute your ideas. Be informed, but brave – learn to trust your own voice.

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Learn to deal with clients from hell, discover how The Partners strives for branding perfection and spruce up your workspace with our studio buyer's guides

ISSUE 256 AUGUST 2016

This year's new stars of design are revealed, plus learn how to earn what you deserve and refresh your typography skills in the first part of our ISTD series

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Master the art of branding with help from SomeOne, and discover everything you need to know about climbing the ranks of a design studio

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Computer Arts goes behind the scenes with world-leading designers as they reveal their working processes...

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HOW TO MAKE CREATIVITY PART OF EVERYTHING
One of the top studios outside of London in CA's 2016 UK Studio Rankings, Manchester-based agency The Chase explains how and why creativity informs every part of its business

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2016 MILLY FALL RANGE
How Sagmeister & Walsh created over 400 visual assets for an ambitious fashion campaign, spanning both print and social media

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HAND-DRAWN TECHNIQUES
Award-winning illustrator Miss Led shares her best insights and advice for refining your hand-drawn illustration techniques in this pro workshop

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DRONE RACING LEAGUE
London studio Dazzle Ship goes behind the scenes on how it helped introduce the emerging sport of drone racing to broadcast audiences worldwide

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UK STUDIO RANKINGS 2016

VIDEO INSIGHT

THE CRAFT OF CREATIVITY

One of the top studios outside of London in CA's 2016 UK Studio Rankings, Manchester studio **The Chase** explains why creativity informs every part of its business

There was an old Indian craftsman who carved beautiful little elephants from unpromising blocks of timber. Asked how he did it, he simply replied: "I just cut away the wood that doesn't look like an elephant."

So goes the doctrine of British creative consultancy The Chase – one of the UK's most awarded design agencies. Co-founder Ben Casey launched the firm in Manchester three decades ago as a regional alternative to London's brightest design consultancies, and 30 years on it's stronger than ever, boasting an outstanding reputation for creativity and a strong portfolio of clients – some of whom have collaborated with The Chase for decades.

It's also more diverse than ever, with an Oscar-nominated film arm – The Chase Films – and architectural work now part of its offering. We spent an afternoon filming at The Chase's friendly, city-centre studio space to find out the secrets behind its long-term collaborations and how, exactly, an old Indian craftsman came to define the ethos of a north-west British agency.

How did the tale of an elephant carving become the Chase's doctrine?

Ben Casey: When we started out, we were like most companies: we had no work that we could claim to be our own, so we needed a story to tell that explained how we were different and how we went about our work. I was toying with this idea while driving home one evening, and heard someone talking about a trip to India on the radio. They were describing how they saw people carving wooden elephants on the streets. When one of them was asked how he did it, he said: 'I just cut away the wood that doesn't look like an elephant'. It was an amazingly disarming answer, which seemed to sum up how we approached the design process at that time.

How does this ethos inform your day-to-day process and craft with the agency?

BC: How it works within the process of design has changed. We started out with a linear process: we would analyse the client and competition, do a lot of research, then move onto the strategy, form the brand architecture, form the brief and get sign-off, and then start on the creative process. But about 10 years ago I met Sir George Cox, who was writing a review for the government about the importance of creativity. His summary was that as competition grew from India and China, the UK would have to use its creativity to stay ahead. It wasn't just about product design or communication: it was how creativity could be used within a company – how they structure themselves and how they operate.

This gave me more confidence about our reason for being. Rather than creativity being the bit at the end, I thought it should be much more upfront and integrated into the strategy. I'm a big believer in design intuition. I think that it can serve a big part in how we go about strategy.

So rather than dealing with just words, we started throwing in some creative ideas alongside the words – often, clients respond to them more. This then led to us writing the words to fit the strategy. Creativity and brands are to do with emotions, so in some ways it seems more logical to go about it this way. So now we do the design process like this to find out what we've got at the start, before we start cutting away and putting the brand architecture together.

The Chase hit an unexpected bump soon after starting – what happened?

BC: Before The Chase, I was working in London at the School of Communication Arts and had a call from a friend in Manchester, Lionel Hatch, who ran a type setting company. He was always trying to persuade me to set up a design company in

THE CHASE
Set up in Manchester in 1986, The Chase was voted one of the top non-London agencies in CA's UK Studio Rankings 2016, and is also the only agency outside of the capital to have topped Design Week's Creative Survey. Clients include Royal Mail, Tesco and TfL.
www.thechase.co.uk

Watch the videos on our YouTube channel: **www.bit.ly/ca260-thechase**

Manchester because there weren't any serious ones there at the time, he felt – no one had done it to the creative level that was becoming established in London, and he saw a gap in the market, if you like.

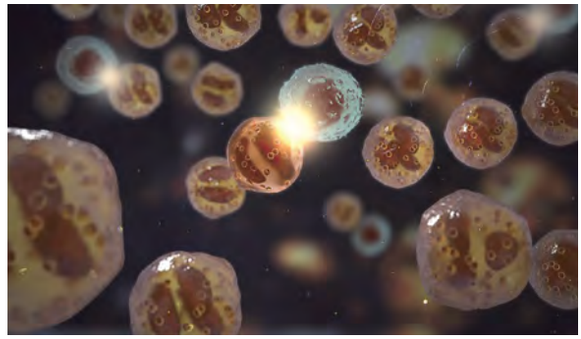
I took him up on it, and we got off to a good start. But to our surprise, our parent company went into receivership not long after we started, which left us stranded. We had to buy ourselves out from the receivers. It wasn't a pleasant experience. We both put our houses on the line – this was in the early 80s, so there was a deep recession going on at the time. Not only that, we had a month to find new offices and our biggest client pulled out because they didn't want to travel into Manchester. We couldn't get credit from suppliers. So it was a difficult start, but we got through it. It did us no harm. It taught us to run a very tight ship financially, as you can imagine. We managed to cope and build confidence, and then start to grow.

How has The Chase evolved over the years?
BC: We started with about half a dozen people or so. Now we've probably got between 30 and 35. It varies, and we do a lot of placements too – they're very important, with my education background. But we've been at this size for quite a while. We've never had an ambition to grow, it's just been as and when it fits.

The way we've grown is to diversify into film and, more recently, architecture. That's how we've seen our way of going in the future. It might be a lot to do with the way the industry is going and technology is changing. We want to be equipped so that we can tackle things in all sorts of different ways.

What drives you as an agency?
BC: Creativity. It doesn't seem like work. We enjoy it so much and there's nothing we get a better feeling from than getting that creative spark – particularly coming from a young designer who brings an idea and you wish you'd done it. That's what we're all about. We all love creativity.

What advice would you give to younger studios that are just starting out?
BC: I talked to the lads who set up Magpie, actually, when they were starting out – I told them: do what you enjoy doing, be yourselves and keep an eye on the money. It doesn't come naturally to a lot of designers, that side of the business. But if you do the work you enjoy, you'll win work and your enthusiasm will get you on the road to success.



Left and below: The Chase used silhouettes combined with spectacular medical imagery to express global pharmaceutical giant AstraZeneca's original thinking and devotion to leadership in scientific breakthroughs.

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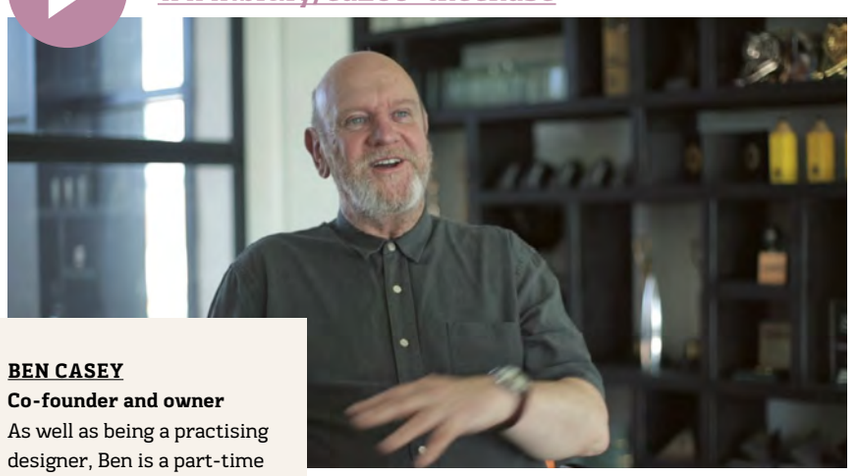
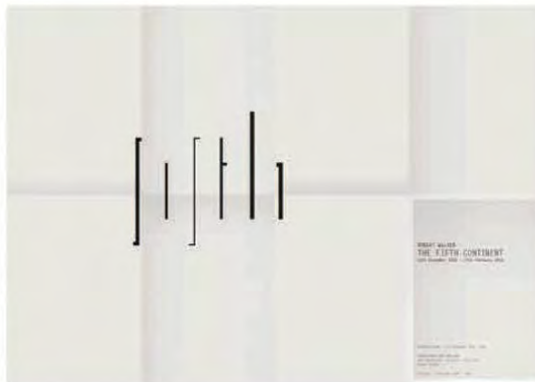


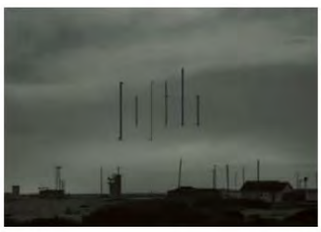
BEN CASEY
Co-founder and owner
As well as being a practising designer, Ben is a part-time visual communication professor at the University of Central Lancashire. He specialises in graphic design but has TV commercials, type design, public art and more in his portfolio.

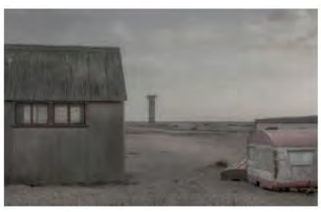
CARVING THE CORE IDEA

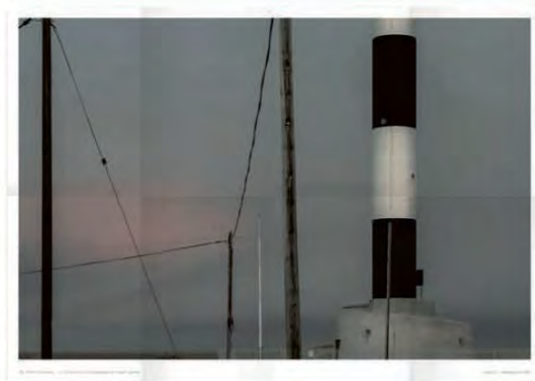
In our first video, The Chase co-founder and owner Ben Casey explores the ethos of the award-winning creative agency, explaining why every mark needs to be justified, and how an early bump in the road only made the studio stronger.

Below and right: Identity for Manchester-based photographer Robert Walker's exhibition The Fifth Continent, echoing the feel of his barren and often starkly linear images of Dungenessy, Kent. It was highly commended at CA's 2016 Brand Impact Awards.









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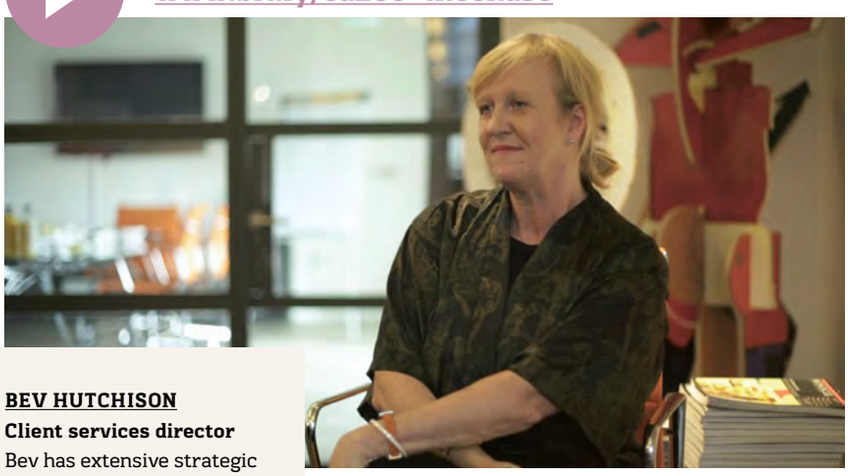


BEV HUTCHISON

Client services director

Bev has extensive strategic brand and consultancy experience, much of it at board level. She has also spent a number of years client-side and brings a considerable weight of knowledge to the team.

BE MORE TENACIOUS WITH CLIENTS

In our second video, client services director Bev Hutchinson explains how tenacity is key to The Chase's impressive long-lasting client relationships. "To survive in what we do, you have to have that dogged determination," she explains.

IMPROVE CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

The Chase has worked with some of its clients for decades. Richard Scholey shares five tips for happy, long-lasting client relationships

1 Don't get too cosy

You're only as good as your last job. Ok, if you've been working together for five years you might be able to get over a slight blip, but never get complacent. Don't wait to be pushed: push yourself – and always push the brief.

2 Smile through it

All clients have the odd, unreasonable deadline. Yes, it can be frustrating, but often it's due to factors outside of their control so don't get shirty or defensive – just pull out all the stops when you need to. We have often helped clients out when they have been let down by other agencies at the last minute, or had an urgent request from the powers above. There is nothing guaranteed to cement your relationship more than saving the day when clients are in trouble.

3 Face-to-face meetings

Make the effort to go and see your clients or invite them to see you. It's so easy nowadays to work remotely through email, WeTransfer and the occasional phone call, but you can't beat a face-to-face get-together. Think how hard it would be to have a strong relationship with your friends or family if you never actually saw each other.

4 Be proactive

Think about how you could improve what you do for your client. It could be creatively, or client service-related: there will always be ways to improve. Also, don't sit there waiting for a brief to come in. Come up with your own, and ask your client: 'Have you ever thought of doing this? Have you seen what the competition are doing?'

5 Make it enjoyable

You have to deliver a highly professional service, but don't take yourself too seriously. Nobody likes to work with a prima donna: life's too short. There are many designers out there ready to take your place.

Left and below: To mark the 350th anniversary of the Great Fire of London, The Chase created graphic novel-style stamps for the Royal Mail, forming panels from the street layouts.

3 QUALITIES THE CHASE LOOKS FOR IN NEW DESIGNERS

Three senior staff at The Chase reveal how they choose a new hire

1 Enthusiasm
"We look for enthusiasm in new designers. That's number one, usually," says Richard Scholey. "Intellect is another quality. And creativity goes without saying, as do design skills. I'm always attracted to those first two though – someone who can think really well, and is enthusiastic – because you need enthusiasm with a deadline looming."

2 Tenacity
"For anyone in our industry, tenacity should be a high on the list," says Bev Hutchinson. "Our industry is hard work, and to survive you have to have tenacity – that dogged determination – because you're going to have knock-backs. It's difficult to teach. It's a bit like enthusiasm: you either have it or you don't, but we always look for it."

3 Good team spirit
"We go to events. We attend talks, conferences and awards ceremonies," says Peter Richardson. "You start to see the same people. In the north-west of England there's a good camaraderie. The design community is slightly smaller and people move around between agencies, so there's a good team spirit, as well as a very healthy competitive element."

WATCH THE VIDEO NOW AT www.bit.ly/ca260-thechase

RICHARD SCHOLEY,
Creative director
Richard recently returned to The Chase after nine years as group creative director at Elmwood. His clients have included Nike, The Royal Mail, the BBC, Asda, Marks and Spencer, The Design Council and a hairdressers in Rochdale.

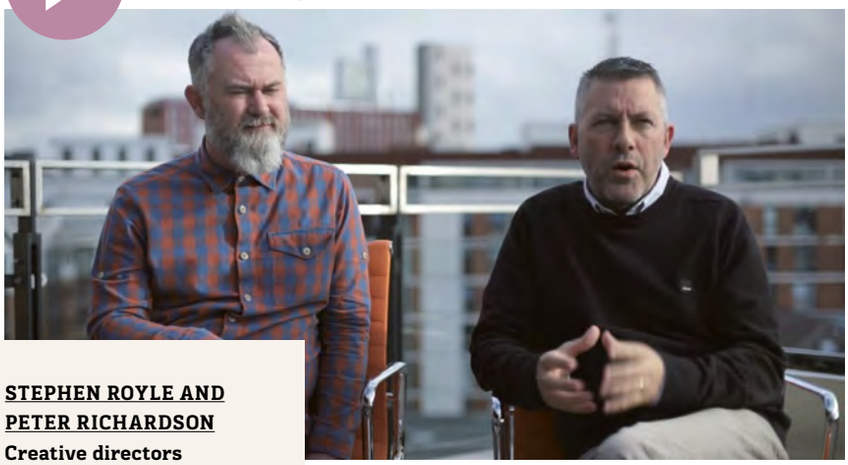
THE CRAFT OF CREATIVITY

In our third video, creative director Richard Scholey explains why it's so important to bring visual stimulus into the branding process early, at the strategy stage, and what key qualities the agency looks for in new designers.

Bottom: The Chase worked with Lawless to create a name and brand for Circle Square, the UK's first ever innovation district

Bottom right: The Voorman Problem is an Oscar and BAFTA-nominated short film from The Chase Film's sister firm, Honlodge Productions

WATCH THE VIDEO NOW AT www.bit.ly/ca260-thechase



STEPHEN ROYLE AND PETER RICHARDSON
Creative directors
Stephen joined The Chase in 1997 and is joint creative director of the Manchester studio with Peter, who joined The Chase in 1989 as a junior designer. Both have received numerous industry awards.

THE MANCHESTER DESIGN SCENE

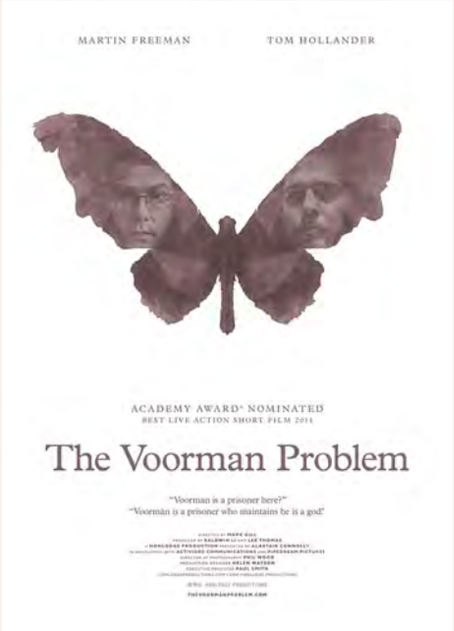
In our final video, creative directors Stephen Royale and Peter Richardson explain what it's like to work in such a culturally charged, creative city, and how the studio nurtures long-standing collaborative relationships with its freelancers.

HOW TO DIVERSIFY YOUR EXPERTISE AS A STUDIO

Having successfully ventured into architecture and film, The Chase offers advice to other studios for branching into new areas

1 Think: how will it affect your brand?
Adding something new to your offering is exciting for both you and your clients. However, you need to make sure that this new area still reflects who you are and how you behave. If you've spent years building up your brand, you want your new addition to strengthen it – not dilute it.

2 Make sure you get on
The benefit of joining forces with experts in different fields – shared learnings, a broader offering, fresh thinking and the impetus gained by adding something new to the studio – are abundantly clear. However, if you don't get on, it will soon become a nightmare. Do a few joint projects to test the water before you officially walk down the aisle together.



Watch the videos on our YouTube channel: **www.bit.ly/ca260-thechase**

PROJECT DIARY

2016 MILLY FALL RANGE: STYLISH AND IRREVERENT

Iconic New York studio **Sagmeister & Walsh** created over 400 visual assets for this ambitious fashion campaign, spanning both print and social media

JESSICA WALSH
Co-founder and creative director, Sagmeister & Walsh
Designer and art director Jessica has worked for clients including Jay-Z, Barneys, The New York Times and the MoMA. She's won many major design awards, and the film version of her 40 Days of Dating book is currently in progress.

PROJECT FACTFILE

BRIEF: Generate a bold, colourful and irreverent campaign with a feminine edge, for Milly's fall 2016 women's fashion collection. The campaign covers print, out of home, online and social media, with more emphasis on digital than with previous campaigns. Over 400 images are being rolled out over six months.
CLIENT: Milly, www.milly.com
STUDIO: Sagmeister & Walsh, www.sagmeisterwalsh.com
PROJECT DURATION: Six months
LIVE DATE: September 2016 (ongoing)

THE DESIGN BRIEF

Jessica Walsh

The brief came about through my friend Ari Horaitis, head of ecommerce production and merchandising at Milly. She showed the owner and creative director at Milly, Michelle Smith, my Instagram feed a while back. We met at her runway show last year. Michelle liked the bright, bold, colourful aesthetic in our work and thought we'd be a good fit for the campaign.

The original brief called for a campaign that was bold, colourful and irreverent, but also with a feminine edge. Their previous campaigns have predominantly focused on out-of-home advertising and print, but for this one they wanted to include social media as well.

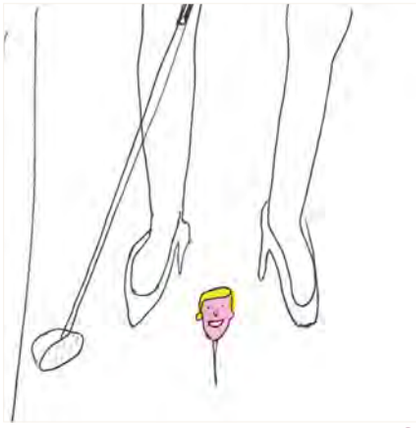
Stefan and I always start out branding or campaign projects by doing a workshop with the client to help them define a few key brand attributes. We help the client narrow down the list to no more than three, as we are able to successfully visualise and communicate a few things well. However, if we try to say too many things we end up saying nothing, as the viewer can get confused in all the messaging.

In the case of Milly, the campaign personality traits Michelle wanted us to visualise were: attention to craft, colour and irreverence. Once we had those words, it was pretty easy to think of concepts to fit the brief.

The concepts and overall creative direction were relatively easy, as their brand attributes lined up pretty well with my own style and aesthetic. I don't believe in pushing your own personal style into a brand's identity unless it makes sense for the brand's personality, its goals or its audience. But in this case, it turned out to be a nice match.

PHOTOGRAPHY: John Madere

STEFAN SAGMEISTER
Co-founder and creative director, Sagmeister & Walsh
The much-lauded Austrian designer and art director's clients have included The Rolling Stones, Talking Heads, Lou Reed and the Guggenheim Museum. His work has been exhibited around the world and he co-directed the documentary The Happy Film, shown at the Tribeca Film Festival.



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THE CREATIVE APPROACH

Jessica Walsh

We started by developing and designing the main campaign images, which set the tone visually and stylistically for the Instagram campaign. Stefan and I conceptualised most of the main campaign images, while the Instagram campaign was mostly Angela Iannarelli and myself.

There were further social media ideas here and there from other members of the team, such as Daniel Forero, Matteo Giuseppe Pani and Valentin Breyne. Once we had the concepts, Ange sketched out most of them as line drawings in Illustrator, then we tested colourising them. Next, our in-house photographer, Aron Filkey, would shoot them, with production and styling help by Molly Brunk and Emily Frank.

We were inspired by the clothing collection itself, which used a lot of florals, bold graphic prints and strong colours – even though it was a winter collection. Michelle mentioned her inspiration for the series was the idea of a colourful flower blooming and being revealed out of ice and winter snow, and this idea of blooming/revealing flowers and ice inspired many of the visuals. This really does come through in the concepts we came up with.

03

04

01-02 A Ken doll's head gets teed off, going from concept sketch to final image, in this piece intended for the Milly Instagram campaign.

03 Jessica Walsh selecting hand made elements for a set entitled Paper Cutouts, also part of the Instagram campaign.

04 Testing photographic concepts for the Paper Cutouts series.

UNUSED IDEAS

DIDN'T MAKE THE CUT

Angela Iannarelli looks at three pieces that didn't quite pan out

Patterns are great. But we decided for Instagram we needed images that weren't too busy. We wanted the main image to stand out and let surrounding images complement it.

This edgy, irreverent and feminine image would have fitted the brief perfectly, but the mouse trap did not move forward because the client stopped selling shoes on their website during production.

Since the collection itself was inspired by blooming flowers, we worked on a number of these floral inspired concepts. This particular idea just didn't make the cut in the end.

EXPLOSIVE STYLINGS

Jessica Walsh reveals the thinking behind and development of Smoking Dynamite

Smoking Dynamite is one of the images for the main campaign. I originally had an image in my head of a girl smoking a flower – since the season's clothing line was centred around flowers – and her breathing out coloured smoke. However when I talked about it to a few other people in the studio, smoking a flower didn't quite feel powerful or irreverent enough.

I thought about it a bit longer and came up with the dynamite concept. The first step was to do a pencil/computer line drawing and colouring test to get the composition done. Once it was sketched out, one of our designers, Daniel Forero, mocked up the concept by compositing many different photos together in Photoshop.

From there, we collected a lot of different makeup and lighting images which were used as reference material during conversations with the photographer (Henry Hargreaves) and makeup artist (Anastasia Durasova) before the shoot. On the set, we shot the girl holding the dynamite pretending to smoke. Afterwards, we sent the images to Brad Pickard, a CGI artist, who added in the coloured smoke in 3D.

Once the concept was arrived at, Angela Iannarelli crated rough sketches.

A work in progress photo from the Smoking Dynamite shoot.

These unusual red smoke and spark effect were added in post by Brad Pickard.

ANGELA IANNARELLI
Designer, Sagmeister & Walsh
Ange is a designer from Philadelphia who is currently working in New York City. Prior to her position at Sagmeister & Walsh, she worked at both Lippincott and Sequence, where she developed strategies, crafted brands and built app designs.

05 Irreverent in pink: the Gum piece which will be part of the social media campaign, using Instagram.

06 Leg Bouquet is colourful, feminine and has a more playful character to it.

07 One of the final images from the Paper Cutouts series (for more, see page 84).

In terms of the main campaign for print and outdoor, she really loved everything we proposed and there were almost no changes. The Instagram campaign involved a lot of back and forth and fine-tuning and we're still figuring out the balance between having the feed look visually striking while allowing for flexibility and spontaneous personal posts. The Milly Instagram account was previously her own personal account, so it's natural she'd be very involved in those ideas.

CONCLUSIONS

Jessica Walsh and Angela Iannarelli

Michelle said she wanted the campaign to be irreverent, and she wanted the campaign to attract an edgier crowd, so we could have gone even crazier. That said, there was a desire not to alienate their current consumer: so many of the really irreverent ideas we had were killed off.

We're a relatively small studio, and the bulk of those social media images we not only conceptualised but produced and photographed in-house. It was one of the most time intensive and involved projects we've had in a while. There are times we felt maybe we took on too much by agreeing to do the Instagram campaign. If we had only taken on the main campaign imagery we would have been able to devote more time and care to pushing those ideas and visual executions to be even stronger.

It's simply not enough any more to create a few strong campaign images. Consumers are used to digesting things quickly and want a constant stream of new content to stimulate them via social. However, at the same time, you want content that's strong and engaging. It's a lot of work to do that amount of content well.

In the end, we produced over 400 items across the main campaign and for Instagram and the constant concepting and production was stressful. But we had a solid and dedicated team, and had some fun with it. Each member of our team had their own strengths and roles that rounded us out. This allowed us to create work and new ideas consistently.

05

06

08 The season is partly floral-inspired, so flowers burst forth in many of the works.

09 This is a work in progress photo for the project entitled Flower Face.

10 Nails, from the print campaign, pushes some surreal edginess.

11 Flower Back is a striking element, again from the print campaign.

07

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"It's simply not enough any more to create a few strong campaign images – consumers are used to digesting things quickly"

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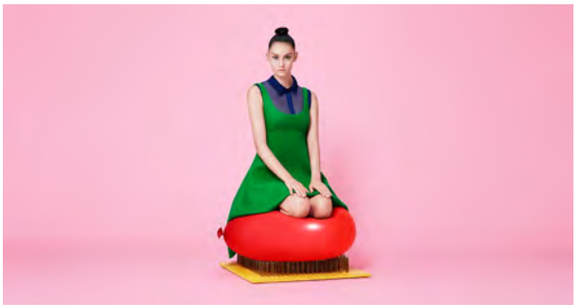

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11

NEXT MONTH

DIGITAL TECHNIQUES

Miss Led's second workshop explores digital collage and texturing

WORKSHOP

REFINE YOUR HAND-DRAWN ILLUSTRATION TECHNIQUES

Following the launch of her new video tutorial series, award-winning illustrator **Miss Led** shares her insights and advice

Miss Led's drawing of Nina uses a range of traditional and modern techniques.

MISS LED

Also known as Joanna Henly, Miss Led is an illustrator, artist and art director with over 14 years of experience in commercial illustration and fine art. Her clients including Google, Ted Baker, L'Oreal, Clinique and Braun. Online, her artwork and artist tips have created a social media audience of over 1.3 million.
www.missled.co.uk

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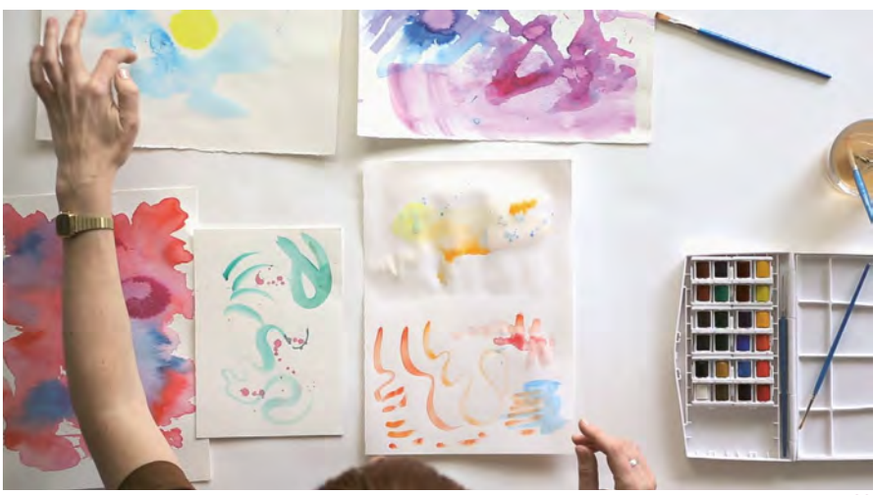


02

01 A selection of the materials used in Miss Led's video tutorial. Choosing the tools to suit your style is crucial.

02 Miss Led regularly experiments with watercolours to develop new creative techniques.

ILLUSTRATION CREATIONS

Miss Led

I've been working with pencil and paper since childhood, when I would carry these materials around with me. Colouring and painting, however, are skills I've developed more slowly. When I started creating work under the name of Miss Led in 2006, I was too petrified to colour it. With a basic scanner, I used to create digital versions using my limited Photoshop knowledge and colour them using the Paint Bucket and Lasso tools.

Even though I got a digital tablet in 2011, it wasn't until working on advertising campaigns with Braun and then Wacom in 2014 that I started to create illustrations that were exclusively digital. With live painting and delivering workshops with Liquitex paints, as one of their global ambassadors, I wasn't able to slack off on the traditional and often difficult side of illustration work. Instead, I learned to develop the two, sometimes opposing, forms to complement each other. And my traditional digital style was born.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MATERIALS

If you want to achieve a crisp feel and tight finish, it's vital to have the proper tools for the job, including the right paper, pencils and tools for adding colour. Beautiful line work can be ruined by streaky or blotchy colour, and drawing work that's absolutely spot on can look grey and flat without the right attention to detail.

When creating Nina as part of my Illustration for Fashion tutorial (see page 91), I exclusively used Daler-Rowney paper. I like to work to A3 size, so I can spread out and also have a load of negative space, which tends to frame the work.

I use Bristol board or even Xerox paper when I want the cleanest lines. When using a super soft 0.03 lead, it's nice to be texture free. However, for the tutorial, I wanted a little bit of texture to offset the digital finish to the final piece, so I went with A3 cartridge, which I buy as part of a spiral bound sketchbook. Tracing paper is hugely important for me. It's easy to buy and store, and wonderful to use. I use it when I'm planning the next steps and can create shapes around a drawing. For this piece, I wanted to make sure my angles were right. Placing the tracing paper over the reference, I was able to create the basic guidelines. With the trace paper and its limited guidelines on top of clean paper, I can clearly see the shape of the face or body.

I love to use retractable pencils and have a large range of brands, sizes and a box full of graphite leads. If you're going to buy a range, I recommend getting the Pentel, Faber-Castell and Zebra brands, especially the ones with the graphite grading on them – it's easy to mix up your Fs and your 3Bs when you use them a lot.

For adding colour, you can't go wrong with any of the Liquitex acrylic products. I like a clean, fresh finish and the acrylic inks are great for this. As they have such strong pigments, you just need a small amount for creating bold and seamless fills or marks. These inks are also really great for line work, with either a fine brush (I tend to use Winsor & Newton Cotman

watercolour brushes) or even ink dipping pens, which you can get in a pack with a variety of nibs at most art stores.

What's great about ink finish is that you can work on top really nicely with either fine line work or with the Liquitex paint pens. I've used the paint pen in my tutorial to illustrate the geometric shape on the fabric, as it has a sharp nib that creates a clean line, which is contrasted against my splashy yellow colour base.

Whenever you add a new colour or strong mark, you set a new balance and order of things. So it's good to understand beforehand which areas and features you want to highlight.

LINE QUALITY AND WEIGHT

It's important to explore different ways to use your pencil to create marks. I start with using a very soft line, then I build up in layers – not so different to when painting. I create the main lines first, starting quite softly to make guides, then building up in density to create complete lines, which can be erased. There are many of what I call 'breaks' in my line work. These missing lines create the illusion of light. For me, the lines I add are as important as the lines I choose to take away. I wanted this piece to feel bright and have a strong sense of light, and this technique has helped me achieve that.

The way you hold your pencil in your hand creates different marks. I hold the pencil further up and at a low angle when creating the super-soft lines that make up the shading around the face. These are carefully layered and contrast heavily with the strong dark lines that describe the jawbone. This contrast is characteristic of my work, I like pairing crisp line work against more splashy chaos, or dense or dark line work against negative space.

The lines that meet and extend out show the depth and shadow of the hair around the neck and under the ear, which elevates the lightness in the face even more. Rather than drawing all the lines, I create a suggestion – especially on the pattern of the hat. I want the lines that I'd created using a small ruler (very softly), to acknowledge the shaped hair curves and complex line weights. Deciding to draw all the lines would have changed the balance in this area. So the hat lines support but don't detract from the hair lines.

EXPERIMENTING WITH MEDIUMS

I'm going to concentrate on watercolour here. It's a medium that's used a lot in illustration work at the moment, especially in advertising, storyboarding and editorial work. The majority of my students are keen to work with watercolours, not because it's new to them, but because they want to learn how to be more expressive with it. In my video tutorial, I start the watercolour section by suggesting the viewer turns off their phone, disconnects from email and all other distractions, to tune out and have space to play with the material.

"When you add a new colour or strong mark, you set a new balance, so consider which areas and features you want to highlight before you start"

Using another sheet of your paper (it's important that it's the same paper you're using for your piece, as you're also testing how your paper responds to the medium), get a large paintbrush and use water to wet cover half of your 'experiment' paper. Leave the rest to dry. Look at what marks you can make with a smaller brush putting on watercolour paint both on the wet half and then the dry. Create lines and curves, put pressure on the brush and then ease the pressure and use a light touch. Look at the paper with splashes, drop colour and drop water. What kinds of textures and marks can be achieved if you pick up the paper and move it around in different angles? Do colours drip and mix? Play around with your paint and paper until you find a style you like.

Remember, these experiment sheets aren't all scraps. I don't throw any of them away. Keep these sheets for next month, when I will show you how to use them in your illustration work. It's always a good idea to have a range of different colours, marks and expressions for this job. So don't stop now, keep playing!

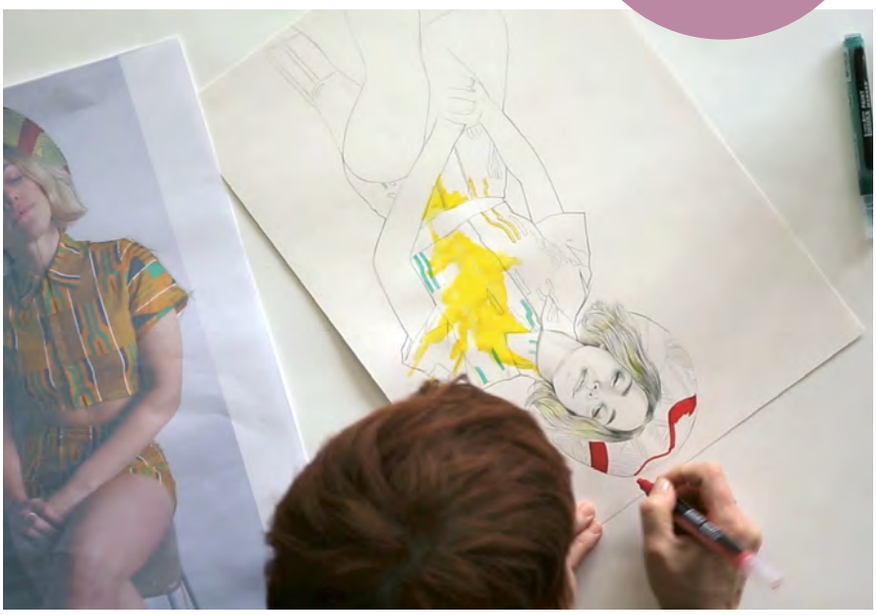
03

03 Different weights and qualities of line can add texture.

04 Miss Led uses acrylic ink and paint pens to add colours from the original image.

03 A print of the final image.

Sign up to Miss Led's mailer at www.missled.co.uk to receive a free, instructive tutorial each week



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SAVE £10 ON MISS LED'S 2-HOUR VIDEO TUTORIAL

CONTENT: Miss Led's video tutorial, produced by the Train To Create team, takes you through this illustration project from the first pencil lines through to a range of traditional mixed media colour stages, including digital clean ups and dynamic photographic collage. The £59.99 tutorial includes full Photoshop layered artwork files and digital brushes, plus exclusive access to webinars and workshops as part of the I4F Creative Community.
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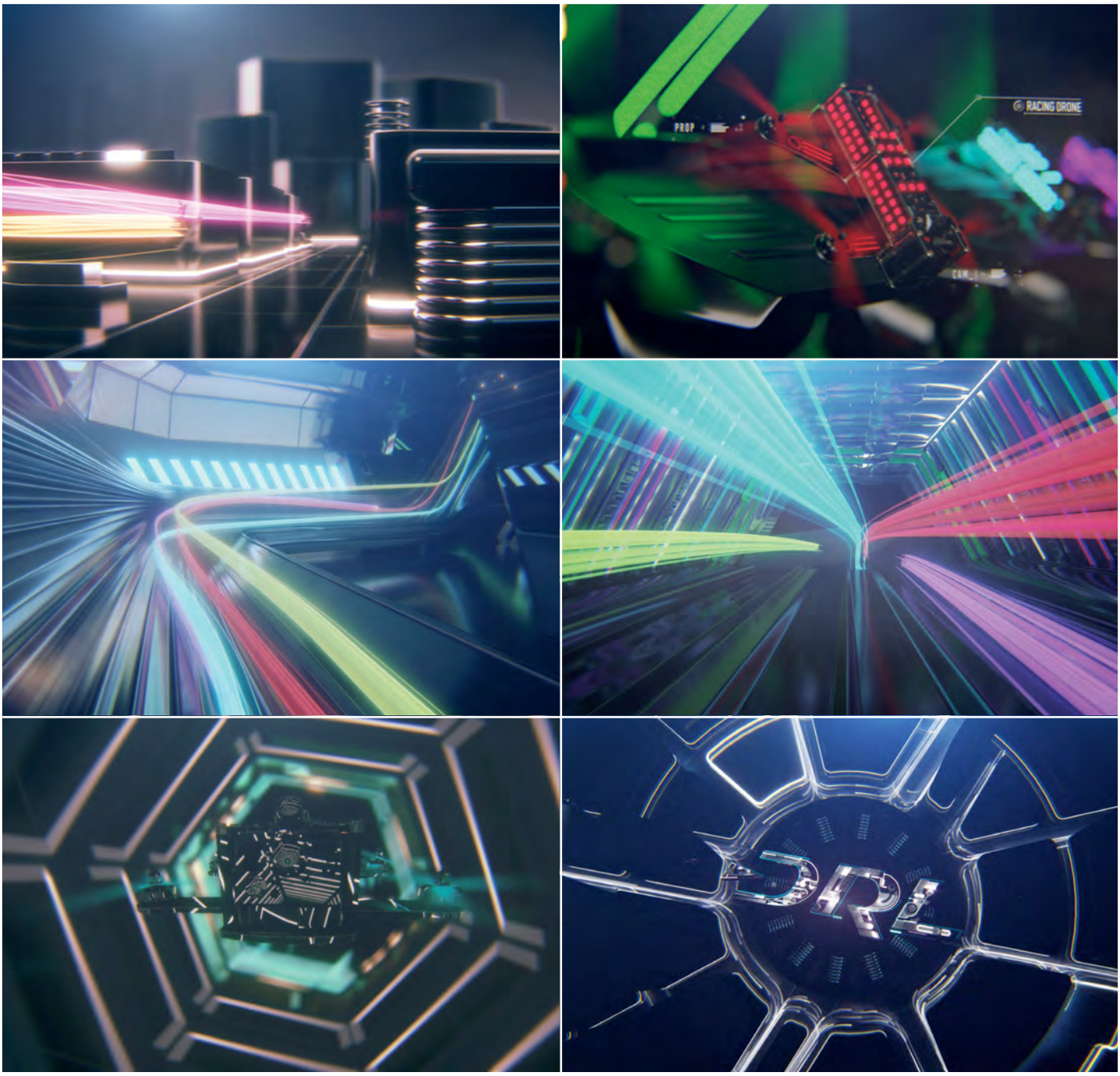


PROJECT DIARY

DRONE RACING LEAGUE IDENTS: SPORT MEETS SCI-FI

How London studio **Dazzle Ship** helped introduce the emerging sport of drone racing to broadcast audiences worldwide

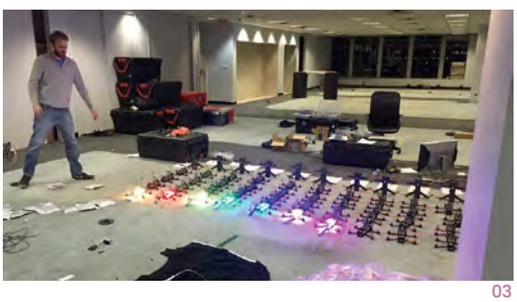
PROJECT FACTFILE

BRIEF: Produce a broadcast ident that introduces the sport of drone racing to TV audiences, accurately depicting the drones and capturing the passion and pace of the racing itself. Plus, create replay wipes, bumpers, lower thirds, racing bugs, leaderboards and trailer graphics. In all, over 20 deliverables were required.
CLIENT: Drone Racing League, thedroneracingleague.com
STUDIO: Dazzle Ship, www.dazzleship.com
PROJECT DURATION: Eight weeks
LIVE DATE: October 2016

ALEX DONNE-JOHNSON
Founder and creative director, Dazzle Ship
Alex's career has spanned art direction for the James Bond gaming franchise, specialist strategy for various fashion brands linking them to underground music and youth culture, global campaigns for WaterAid, and teaching at Swedish design institute Hyper Island.

01

02



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01-03 The client really wanted the drones used in the racing league to be replicated as realistically as possible. DRL sent images of the drones themselves through to Dazzle Ship for inspiration.

04-05 The DRL logo would form a key element of the idents, and became the basis for the track the drones race around during the 35 second segment. Dazzle Ship went for a futuristic neon look.

A SCI-FI SPORT

Alex Donne-Johnson

The Drone Racing League is introducing something new for both sporting competitors and spectators. The league's first season took place in 2016, with 13 pilots speeding FPV Quadcopter drones through five courses in various American cities, building up to the world championship. It's being shown on sports channels in the US, UK and Germany.

The first work we did for DRL was last year, producing a YouTube ident to help their brand go viral and generate fans. They like our work, the relationship with them has grown organically, and in June DRL asked us to create a full package including a broadcast ident, replay wipes, bumpers, lower thirds, racing bugs, leaderboards and trailer graphics. There were over 20 deliverables in total.

Drone racing is so new, the question we asked ourselves was, 'How do you brand the sport of the future?' The public isn't generally aware that drone racing exists, they have few visual points of reference and aren't aware of its rules. It's a totally new concept that treads a line between real world sport and science fiction. To many it's like a computer game, but what people don't understand is that the drones are real, it takes a lot of skill to fly them. And they crash. It's like a computer game with real consequences.

CRASH COURSE

Andy Overton

When we'd seen the drones in action we thought of the light-cycle sequence in *Tron*, PlayStation game *Wipeout*, and the pod racing in *Star Wars: Episode I – The Phantom Menace*. It's funny how science fiction eventually becomes science fact.

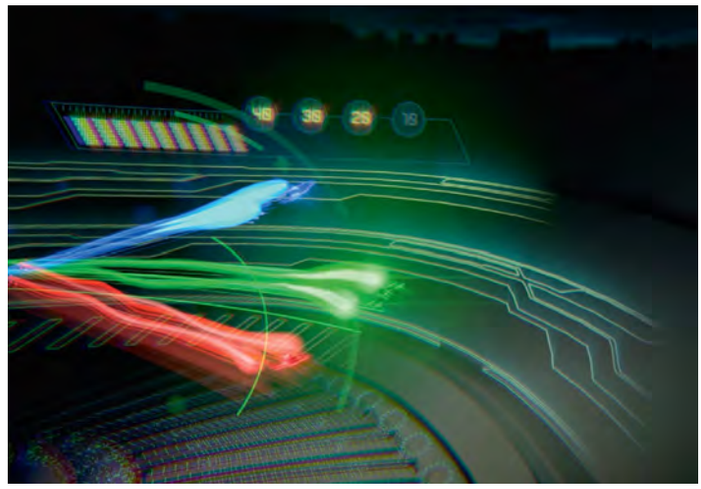
We based the ident around the DRL logo itself, turning it into a race course through a futuristic landscape, with the aesthetic of a neon maze. Drones can fly along all axes – X, Y and Z – and we designed the course to reflect this, with challenges such as tunnels, vertical drops and tight spots to invoke crashes. Drone racing is all about the crashes!

06 Close-up of the FPV Quadcopter drone used by the Drone Racing League, which Dazzle Ship modelled for the ident.

07 The glow and light tracers were created using the hair renderer in Cinema 4D, with the final render done using OTOY.

JODY MCALAVEY
Senior producer, Dazzle Ship
With over 10 years' experience in TV and video production, Jody has worked in a wide range of creative, technical and management roles while producing documentaries, commercials, music videos and branded content. He's also an animation director with motion graphics skills.

06



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PROBLEM SOLVED

DOWN ON THE FARM

The project's ambitious demands led to a rendering innovation, explains Dazzle Ship's 3D lead Andy Overton

We wanted to show all the best aspects of drone racing in 3D, and it meant ramping up our rendering capability. To do this we picked Octane by OTOY. It uses your graphics chips rather than your CPU, but perhaps its best feature is the very quick live-preview function. This meant we could check how frames were rendering and tweak our 3D scenes without waiting for a full render. We brought in two extra computers to make a sort of DIY render farm as well.

The drone model was supplied as a 3ds Max object, which we rebuilt to allow for proper texturing and animation in Cinema 4D. The courses were built in Cinema 4D too, and we rendered everything in Octane. It's fast, with a high degree of realism and produces very high quality previews in realtime.

The light trails were created using hair objects in Cinema 4D for render speed. The shots were rendered in multiple passes, composited in After Effects.

TALKING THE WALK-THROUGH

Jody McAlvey

You rarely know how much production experience your client has, so we always try and maintain a close collaboration. We used clear references to show what was achievable, and offered several options with increasing degrees of complexity, so DRL could see what was possible, and what sort of quality and effects their budget could achieve. Along the way, we showed them tests, proofs of concept, and invited their ideas. We set their expectation level before going into full production.

When in production, we made the steps in the process really clear for members of the DRL management team and explained all the key methods so they were totally on board with the process. If you take the time to carefully walk your client through processes early on, they are much more supportive if there are any unexpected challenges during production.

08 Generating the inside of the tunnel for the racing sequence in Cinema 4D.

09 The artists at Dazzle Ship developed a circular grid that, theoretically, the drones would race through during the sequence.

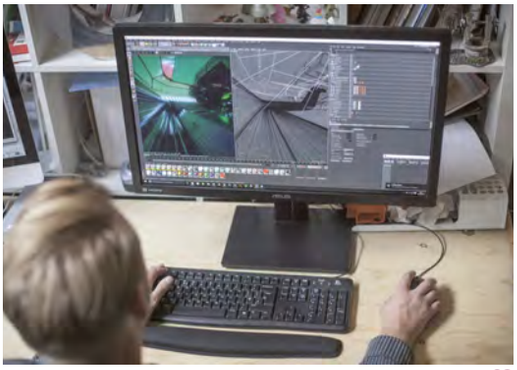
10 The race and the ident conclude with the DRL logo reveal (see 11).

11 This collection of stills from the ident shows both what the course looks like from the race perspective, and an overview of the track which culminates in the logo (see 10).

ANDY OVERTON

3D lead, Dazzle Ship

A graduate from the University of the Arts London and a highly skilled 3D specialist, Andy has worked across music videos, commercials and branded content. At Dazzle Ship he is nicknamed 'The Machine' because he knows no limits!



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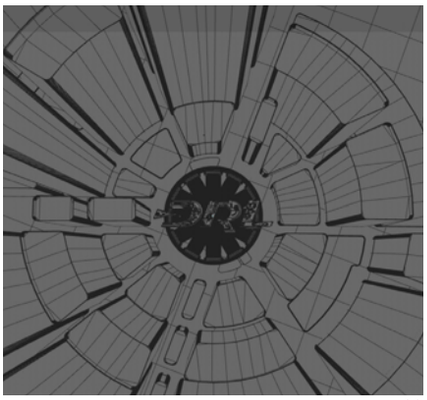

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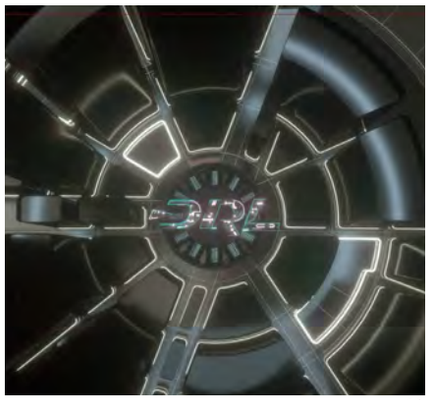

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11

GOING NATIVE

Alex Donne-Johnson

Overall, the feedback throughout the process was very positive. DRL contributed lots of ideas and gave us a fresh perspective. This helped to make the sequence even better. Most importantly, we struck the right balance between being informative and engaging, and communicated a lot of the real world details of drone racing to viewers – how the drones fly, what they look like, and how fast-paced and intricate the sport can be.

According to DRL, we've managed to introduce the sport to a new generation of sports fans around the world, delivering its passion, science-fiction-inspired look and feel, and competitive aspects.

The project has also inspired us to get into drone racing. We'd love to see the sport make it over to the UK, and we'll be getting a racing drone for the office. ◻

LESSONS LEARNED

DON'T GET TOO CLOSE

Dazzle Ship's advice is to go the extra mile

1. KILL YOUR BABIES

It's easy to get precious over your first few ideas, but this isn't ideal in a group dynamic. With the DRL project many things didn't make the cut. However we had a good team dynamic with everyone respecting each other's perspective.

2. OPTIMISE YOUR RENDERS

Rendering is never the most fun part of the process and because of the tight deadline we had to tweak each scene individually. So it was labour-intensive for us. But we worked quickly and feel it was well worth it in the long run.

3. ASK AROUND

After long hours and many consecutive days you can find yourself too close to a project. We made a point of seeking external feedback to get fresh perspectives and make sure we were meeting our goals and hitting the brief.

SNASKIFIED

Project managing is extremely boring. It involves having good contact with the client as well as remembering what's been said, and getting all the creatives together and delivering on time. It doesn't spark inspiration or create butterflies in your stomach – it's just work. But without it, nothing else would function and everyone in the studio would go off the rails. So how to go about it?

Well, if you're a freelancer, you don't have much choice. You have to project manage yourself. If you're part of a studio or agency, you most probably have someone doing this already. But every project needs this, and the easiest way to do it is to use lists. Yes, the sexiness meter just blew up. Writing lists doesn't only force you to keep track of what you need to do, it also clears your mind. It means you don't have 100 per cent of every project's timeline, budget and strategy within your head. Once you've planned your project, and written down the plan, all you need to do is follow it. If you don't follow it, and also don't deliver on time, you won't last long in this industry.

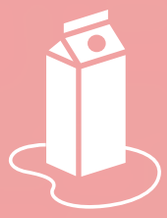
Another key consideration when project managing is to remember to press 'Reply to all', since this helps you keep track and ensure you're involved in what happens in projects. If you're the kind of person who simply doesn't reply to email sometimes, you're nothing more than an idiot and will struggle in your career. And believe me, there are plenty of these people.

Finally, every project should end in some sort of celebration. Celebrate the success or celebrate the mistakes. Failing to do this will make everyone feel that the project didn't end, and didn't actually result in anything special. Last but not least, a great project should always end by being made into a great case study, which is another project in itself.

SNASK OFF!

Snaskified is a recurring column by Snask, an internationally renowned creative agency that strives to challenge the industry by doing things differently.

Fredrik Öst
www.snask.com



ENEMY OF THE MONTH

Low budgets
Low budgets usually come with high expectations and short deadlines. How that equation came together only Einstein could figure out, but this seems to be a pretty normal client request these days.

GOSSIP Q&A

Q: Do you always make wise and well thought through decisions?
A: Nope, the opposite. Most decisions we make are pretty swift.

CANDY THUMBS UP!

Change is afoot
We've been going through some changes here at Snask. After nine years, it feels like change is a good thing.

FILTH THUMBS DOWN!

Measuring lies
People say: "Today you can measure everything". But you can't, and even if you could this doesn't necessarily give you the answer to every question or problem.

NEXT MONTH

THE HOTTEST COLOUR PALETTES FOR 2017

INDUSTRY ISSUES

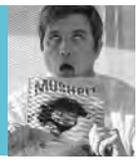
How to get more from your side projects, and ensure you have the time to do them justice

VIDEO INSIGHT

Discover how a design team functions at Pentagram as CA's film crew pays a visit to the veteran agency

Plus: inspiring projects, current trends and expert analysis from the global design scene

ON SALE 9 DEC



Global executive creative director of Wieden+Kennedy ***Richard Turley*** *talks through his recent obsession with Mushpit magazine*

RADICAL MEDIA

I finally made it to the magCulture store in London earlier this year on a sullen summer day. The owner, Jeremy Leslie, has been writing about Mushpit for a while, so I was aware of the magazine, but it wasn't at the forefront of my mind as I wandered in. But there it was, staring at me, and in the intervening three months I haven't stopped looking at it.

The magazine is a collision of two very smart women called Bertie Brands and Charlotte Roberts. And when I say collision, I mean hot mess. No two pages are thematically similar: the magazine freewheels from consumerism to fashion, politics, sex, getting wasted, life. It never hangs around long enough on an idea to develop it into a theme or rationale. It gets bored as quickly as I do, sometimes sooner, and has a relentless desire to surprise and entertain. As such, it's wholly unafraid and feels like a breath of fresh air. It's not that female voices like this don't exist anywhere else – in fact, just about all the women I've worked with or chosen to be around are like this. It's just that conventional media hasn't found many places for those voice to be heard.

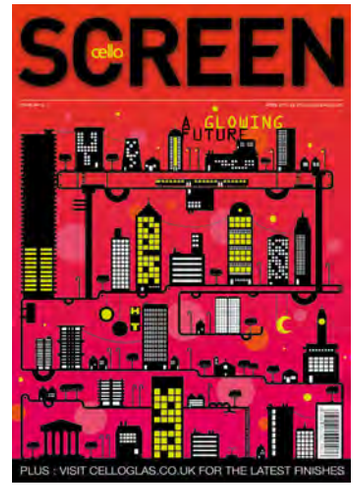
Being largely satirical, the magazine frequently uses pastiche as a design tool, whether mimicking ads, other magazines, dictionaries, local authority letters, whatever. I realise that this is being printed in a 'design' magazine, so featuring a magazine whose design is deliberately artless and blunt might seem contrary. Which I suppose it is, but I find myself drawn to magazines and practitioners who take oppositional positions. When did 'design' become so central to the orthodoxy? It was Orwell who said: "Orthodoxy means not thinking – not needing to think". I'm bored of white space, clean lines, clear messages, taste and aspiration. Actually, more than that: I fear white space, clean lines, clear messages, taste and aspiration. 'Design' has been coopted by governments, corporations and institutions as visual shorthand for "we know what we're doing", "trust us", "buy us", "believe in us".

Ex-senior vice president of MTV Richard Turley calls Mushpit a breath of fresh air

And to that end, Mushpit talks too of a cultural landscape that holds little of interest. There is a feeling of being priced out of media in the same way they've been priced out of the city they live in. Currently 'radical media' means Vice, which means radicalism is part-owned and monetised by the same corporation that owns The Sun, namely Rupert Murdoch (amongst others). OK, there is Snapchat now. But ok, Snapchat – are you kidding me?

Social media made creators out of us all. Now, not everyone seeks the tools of self-expression – many are happy to consume other people's narratives; to plug themselves into media made by others – whether it be New Yorker, Buzzfeed, Game of Thrones, DJ Khaled or Big Brother – and that's fine. But I just wish that others had the ambition and foresight to print their ideas on paper so, come the digital apocalypse, there will be fragments around for future generations. So they can see that we weren't all bots in the matrix.

Bertie and Charlotte are part of a generation that was adolescent during the 2008 recession. They have grown into adults after been drip-fed the idea that they're screwed, we're screwed, the world's screwed. Maybe we are; maybe we aren't. But Mushpit – to this one angsty 40-year-old – seems to be doing a more interesting job in reflecting the feeling of being screwed (both metaphorically and often physically) better than just about anyone else. That they chose to express this primarily in the printed pages of a magazine demonstrates the effectiveness of a radical, oppositional mindset.



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See page 74 for full details