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COMMUNICATION ARTS INTERACTIVE ANNUAL 30

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March/April 2024
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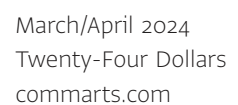
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DIRECTORY

Featured in this issue

Giant Spoon
giantspoon.com

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Frost
frostype.xyz

Sam Kang
samyck.com

Studio Gruhl
studiogruhl.com

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BETC
betc.com

Broken Heart Love Affair
brokenheartloveaffair.com

Design Bridge and Partners
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Goodby, Silverstein & Partners
goodbysilverstein.com

Mother LA
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Mucho
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Pentagram
pentagram.com

Specsavers
specsavers.com

Studio AKA
studioaka.co.uk

Studio Oker
oker.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Features

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Columns

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Book Reviews

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DEPARTMENTS

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ERRATA

On page 60 of our 2024 January/February issue, we were given incorrect information on the grams per square meter for William Whitley's poster series *A Tennyson Tetraptych*. Instead of 320gsm, the paper is 250gsm.

MASTHEAD

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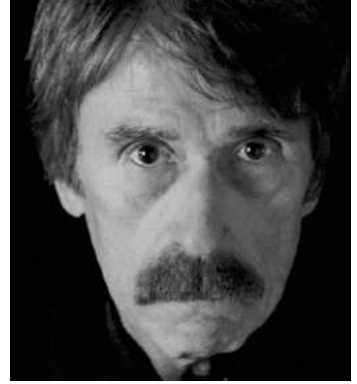
Creativity's Big Bang Moment

I've never been sure what to make of the Big Bang.

It makes sense, of course. Everything had to start somewhere, including the universe. So, it's understandable that, at some point, we'd go so far back that there was nothing. Until suddenly, an infinitesimal particle of energy decided to blow its top, giving birth to every star and planet and asteroid that ever was or ever will be.

Perfectly reasonable explanation.

For me, though, there's always been one thing that's kept me from getting all the way on the train: What was there before the bang? Where did the particle come from? But that's another mind bender for another day.

What really intrigues me is the point when human creativity had its own Big Bang moment. Where did it begin? Before *Mona Lisa*. Before Bob Dylan. Before Stephen King. Before Mozart. Before Kubrick and Disney and Wilbur and Orville.

While no one can say for sure, I think *2001: A Space Odyssey* got it exactly right. There he was: Early hominid. Out there in the burning sun. Doing what early hominids do. Picking bugs from his fur. Wiping snot from his nose. Grunting. Mumbling. And looking down at the bleached white bones from some long-dead creature.

He has done this a million times before: The bugs. The snot. The bones. But today will be different. Today, he will look down at those same bones and will see something else. Something no other creature has ever seen.

For some inexplicable reason, a lone neuron will fire a moment too soon. And in that solitary moment, where before there was a bone, there is now a tool. A killing machine.

What are we to make of this?

Think of it.

For every breathtaking painting to flow from the genius of Francisco de Goya, no less a brilliant moment to imagination rose up from the broken mind of Torquemada during the Spanish Inquisition. The rack. The iron maiden. The pendulum. On one side, all that is majestic and beautiful. On the other, the bleakest depths of our humanity. Two sides of the same creativity coin.

It's unsettling to think of creativity this way, of course. But the truth of it is inescapable. There is no good creativity without bad creativity.

Handel's *Messiah* and the atomic bomb. "Sound of Silence" and land mines. *Mona Lisa* and mustard gas. Gershwin and thalidomide.

By now, we all know Robert Oppenheimer's reaction when he realized the horror he had helped usher into the world: "Now I am become death, the destroyer of worlds."

Now we find ourselves at the beginning of the AI age and whatever new nightmares might be in store for us. *Might*. Despite what both sides believe, both the evangelists and the doomsayers, it's far too early to know the full extent of AI's ultimate impact on our lives, for better or for worse.

It all could have gone differently, I suppose.

Maybe if that seminal moment had never happened. Maybe if that neuron hadn't fired when it did. Maybe if that early hominid hadn't been bored stiff picking bugs out of his fur. Maybe history would have unfolded in entirely different ways.

Would we have been forced to rely more on cooperation and collective strategies for hunting and defense?

Would complex social structures and communication skills have been accelerated?

Would we have intensified our focus on other types of tools?

Instead of killing other species for food, would we have figured out how to domesticate them?

Would we have been encouraged to rely more on recognizing and utilizing our natural environment for safety, instead of spears, catapults and drones?

Would we have learned to cooperate as a society, focusing on sharing and collaboration as essential survival strategies?

We can wonder. We can speculate. But in the end, more likely than not, our creative fate will insinuate itself, just as it did in that fateful moment when we saw the possibility in the bone.

This journey of creativity, which began millions of years ago with our early ancestors, continues to shape our world today. It underscores the profound impact of human creativity on our species' ability to adapt, thrive, and create a vibrant tapestry of culture and innovation.

As we reflect on this "Big Bang" moment of creativity, we are reminded of the enduring legacy of human imagination and the boundless potential it holds for our future. ca

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Patrick Coyne

This issue marks the 30th anniversary of our Interactive competition. Looking back, it's pretty astounding to think of the changes that have happened over the last 30 years and just how humble the early days of interactive media were.

When we first looked at the web in 1994, it was with Mosaic as a browser and a 14.4-kbps modem, and we couldn't help but be disappointed by the lack of creative options and slow access speed. State-of-the-art disk-based projects were either on 1 MB floppy disks or slow loading CD-ROMS.

The impetus for the Interactive competition actually came about during the 1994 Design competition judging. All nine judges spent 30 minutes huddled around one computer to view the three interactive entries submitted. We still had 14,000 print entries to judge in less than three days and realized the whole system would collapse if we got more interactive entries in the future.

When we launched the Interactive competition in 1995, we had to send physical entries to the judges in three bundles over a period of six weeks because of the time-intensive nature of judging disk-based projects. First, waiting for a project to launch took up to several minutes depending on the hardware speed and how the project's programmers decided to optimize the data loading; the more data loaded at the beginning, the faster the access time to various parts of the piece. The next hurdle was the introduction. Almost every project had a non-interactive introduction—some of the baggage left over from older mediums such as television or film. This could take from a few seconds to several minutes to view.

> "The most beautifully designed site will fall flat if the story it's trying to tell is jumbled, confusing or carelessly presented."
>
> **—Maria D'Amato**

More than one judge complained about sittting through a long introduction without the ability to bypass it to the interactive content.

Fast forward to today and, with the exception of branded experiences and museum exhibitions, almost every project is on the internet. In direct contrast to last year's Interactive Annual, all of this year's Best-in-Show winners are web-based projects. Another surprise was that no app-based projects were selected for inclusion.

When asked about their overall impressions of this year's entries, several judges commented

> "This year's superstar is AI. This is not surprising as this technology is changing the creative industry."
>
> **—Viacheslav Olianishyn**

more on the content of the work and less about any technological innovations.

"I was pleasantly surprised to see so much playfulness, joy and humor in the work this year," says juror Maria D'Amato, "less sadvertising; less trying to save the world with an idea that we all know is an awards play; and more honest, human expressions of fun. Let's keep this trend going."

"I was pleasantly surprised by the variety of projects and the topics they raised," juror Viacheslav Olianishyn says. "From incredibly successful commercial projects to exhibitions to social projects—at such moments, you see that design has great power and can change the world."

"The strength of the student pieces was a standout this year," says juror Boo Wong. "I hope that many of their design product ideas are made real. I also saw a lot of humor in the work this year."

I asked the judges what new technologies or trends became a dominant theme in this year's entries.

"I was surprised to not see more entries pushing technological boundaries," D'Amato says. "It seemed that folks were focused on crafting excellent experiences within known technologies rather than experimenting with new ones. I expect this will change dramatically in 2024."

"This year's superstar is AI," says Olianishyn. "AI is everywhere. This is not surprising as this technology is changing the creative industry. But we also saw a lot of AR projects too."

"I did not note any particular technology [as dominating], although I expect that will change for this year with the energy around AI in 2023," Wong says. "A trend I did spot, however, was the use of big, bold design—strong, solid colors; original fonts; and clever ideas made better through design."

I asked the judges what the weakest areas were in this year's entries.

"Of course all the winners were great, but we also evaluated hundreds of other entries," says Olianishyn. "Very often, we saw really impressive presentations of projects that were not done

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well enough. My recommendation is to spend more time on the quality of the work itself—the idea, typography and design. All this should be at a high level."

"Social was one of the weakest areas this year," Wong says. "It was hard to find well-designed and executed projects that were actually effective and not just marketing stories."

I also asked the judges to describe the difference between a good project and a great project.

"Exceptional integration of intent and design," says Wong.

"The difference between a good and a great experience is often the content," D'Amato says. "The most beautifully designed site will fall flat if the story it's trying to tell is jumbled, confusing or carelessly presented."

"The magic is in the details," says Olianishyn. "A great project is always something important, memorable and timeless. You should always remove [excess] layer by layer, and only after seven to eight layers will you reach a solution that you can call great."

Looking towards the future, I asked what breakthroughs would be required for VR to finally become widely accepted.

"Miniaturization of components to enable a more comfortable form factor that can be worn for longer time frames," Wong says. "And true AR, versus pass-through in standard VR headsets—the advent of consumer AR will change how we design for communication, utility and entertainment."

Lastly, I asked the judges what impact they think AI will have on the process of interactive design.

"Huge! It's going to be a game-changer," says Olianishyn. "As designers, we must master AI as another of our tools, like Figma or Illustrator. Yes, it's just a tool that will help us to make our work faster, help with content and copy, with idea generation, and with routine tasks. We must be open to change, not be afraid of being replaced and learn these tools as quickly as possible."

"AI will speed iteration and scale and enable creators to make previously impossible things possible," Wong says. "AI will fuel cross-disciplinary innovation—for example, by giving non-technical designers the ability of no-code development and wielding technologists with generative art."

"AI will certainly simplify the design process," says D'Amato. "Designers will be able to generate looks, UI elements and layouts more quickly. These will become the starting places, but no good designer will leave them as the end result. From there, my hope is that the time saved will be applied to crafting the narrative of an experience—something that is still a human endeavor."

Selection for this year's annual required a minimum of four out of six votes. Judges were not permitted to vote on projects with which they were directly involved; I voted in their stead. The winning projects, including links and case-study videos, can be viewed on our website at commarts.com. I would like to extend our grateful appreciation to our jurors for their conscientious efforts in selecting our 30th Interactive Annual.

In Memoriam

It is with deep sadness that I acknowledge the recent passing of several influential members of the creative community.

MARIA D'AMATO is executive creative director at Austin, Texas-based agency GSD&M. With a simple philosophy—to be ahead of what's happening at the forefront of technology and design—D'Amato has played an integral role in establishing experience design within GSD&M shortly after joining the team and has since been a formative partner to clients like Lennox, Southwest Airlines and the United States Air Force, among others. She has won numerous awards from Addys, the Art Directors Club, Awwwards, Cannes Lions, *Communication Arts*, CSS Design Awards, FWA, New York Festivals, One Show, Webby Awards, and was named on *Adweek*'s Creative 100 list in 2022.

LAUREN KIMBALL is vice president, design director of Momentum Worldwide in New York. Having started her career in sports and entertainment architecture, she focuses on the development of connected experiences and design strategies for notable clients including American Express, Coca-Cola, the NBA and the NFL. Kimball has created bespoke experiences for artists like Jack Harlow, Alicia Keys, Lizzo and Pharrell. She has led interdisciplinary teams through the design of Olympic master plans, music festivals and immersive game design. Her award wins include Clios, Effies, The Ex Awards, and having Momentum Worldwide named *Adweek*'s Experiential Agency of the Year in 2022.

FANG LIU is the founder of Koikreative, a Beijing, China-based creative agency involved in digital marketing and interactive solutions for fashion brands. Having received a BA from Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology and an MA from the London College of Fashion, Liu worked in the digital marketing departments of Vivienne Westwood and Karl Lagerfeld before establishing Koikreative in 2014. He is the recipient of awards from Awwwards, *Communication Arts*, D&AD, FWA and Red Dot. Liu is also a guest lecturer and postgraduate tutor for the Beijing Institute of Fashion Technology and director of the opening ceremony for Beijing's 751 International Design Week.

Burkey Belser, 76, was best known for his information design of the nutrition facts label that appears on all packaged foods in the United States, the EnergyGuide that appears on all major US appliances and the Drug Facts label that now appears on all over-the-counter drugs. Cofounder of Washington, DC–based design firm Greenfield Belser, he was also widely known for his pioneering work in legal advertising that earned him a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Legal Marketing Association as well as induction into that organization's Hall of Fame. He was a judge for us in 2007.

Bob Dennard, 79, was a Dallas, Texas–based designer, illustrator, art director, copywriter and adman who utilized his multiple talents at Dennard Creative, Inc., and later as a partner in Dennard, Lacey & Wood. He was part of the all-star creative team at ad agency Stan Richards & Associates and helped define "the Dallas look" in the 1960s and '70s. As a principal in his own firm, Dennard mentored several of the next generation of successful Dallas designers and served as an adjunct instructor for Texas Christian University and Texas A&M. He was a judge for us in 1992.

David Lance Goines, 77, was a graphic artist, calligrapher and printmaker whose posters, inspired by German Art Nouveau and Japanese woodblock prints, helped define the aesthetic of Berkeley, California's counterculture—beginning with his 1971 poster announcing the opening of Chez Panisse, the artisanal French restaurant created by Alice Waters. Goines's 1982 book, *A Constructed Roman Alphabet: A Geometric Analysis of the Greek and Roman Capitals and of the Arabic numerals*, won the American Book Award for typography in 1983, and his posters are in the permanent collections of numerous museums. We published a feature article on his work in 1977.

Helen Marcus, 97, was a prolific photographer of literary figures and film and television personalities in the book and magazine publishing field. A television producer from 1955 to 1974, Marcus switched to photography full-time, and her work was soon appearing in *Forbes*, *Gourmet*, the *New York Times* and *TIME* magazine. A champion of her fellow professionals, Marcus founded the New York chapter of the American Society of Magazine Photographers (later the American Society of Media Photographers) in 1982 and served as its national president from 1985 to 1990. She was a judge for us in 1987.

Miranda Moss, 81, cofounded the Minneapolis-based brand design firm Seitz Yamamoto Moss in 1979 with partners Peter Seitz and Hideki Yamamoto. Renamed Yamamoto Moss in 1986, the firm grew under her leadership to 110 employees with satellite offices in Miami, Florida, and Shenzhen, China. Moss served on the boards of the Design Management Institute and the Minnetonka Center for the Arts and was honored twice by the National Association of Women Business Owners for her entrepreneurship. As she was an accomplished artist, Moss's paintings can be found in corporate and private collections in the United States. She was a judge for us in 1992.

George Tscherny, 99, was one of the leading corporate designers in the 1960s, but his use of humor and humanity differed from the austere Swiss style utilized by many of his contemporaries. After working for design studio George Nelson & Associates, Tscherny opened his own practice in 1955, creating advertising, logos and annual reports for numerous major corporations. He was inducted into the Art Directors Club Hall of Fame in 1997, was a member of Alliance Graphique Internationale and taught the first graphic design course at the School of Visual Arts. We published articles on Tscherny in 1962, 1966 and 1969, and he was a judge for us in 1983. ca

VIACHESLAV OLIANISHYN is a founder and art director of Obys based in Kharkiv, Ukraine. Focusing on creative web development, interaction and graphic design, Olianishyn received a master's degree in print and design from the Kharkiv National University of Radio-electronics and has created work for Air Singapore, CNN, Ernst & Young, Perrier, Porsche, Samsung and Under Armour. Obys has received recognition from Awwwards, *Communication Arts*, CSS Design Awards, FWA and Webby Awards, and was named Studio of the Year by both Awwwards and CSS Design Awards. Olianishyn has also served as an education mentor for the Awwwards Masterclasses.

MARTIJN VAN DER DOES is executive creative director and founder of Wonderland (code d'azur) based in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. van der Does studied media and communication at Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and design at Shillington College in London. Prior to founding Wonderland in 2015, he worked at JWT and DDBTribal. van der Does has won numerous awards from ADCN, Awwwards, FWA, Lovies and Webby Awards and has judged or spoken at Awwwards, Lovies and Webby Awards. He is also the founder of Sustainable Digital Design, a platform for digital sustainability insights from industry experts and design communities.

BOO WONG is the former director of live entertainment for Unity Technologies and was previously computer graphics and creative director at Curious Pictures, executive producer and head of production at Psyop, and global director of emerging technology and cofounder of experience at The Mill. Wong has a 20-year history of leading global teams forging design and emergent technologies into new business lines and products for the most prominent brands in the world. Her work has earned accolades from Art Directors Club, Association of Independent Commercial Producers, Andys, APA, Cannes Lions, Clios, D&AD, *Graphis*, One Show, Oscars, Siggraph, Sundance and Webby Awards.

In Fulfillment
The Designer's Journey

By Justin Dauer
174 pages, hardcover, $30
Published by Lead Hand Books
leadhandbooks.com

In Fulfillment is designer, author and design advocate Justin Dauer's follow-up to *Creative Culture: Human-Centered Interaction, Design, & Inspiration*, which posited the trifecta of empathy, humility and creativity as the keys to modern design practice. Simply put, creativity on its own isn't enough. His second book takes the exploration of our design practice a step further to look at it from another aspect, asking what is surely a question we all want the answer to: How can our work [as designers] help guide us to fulfillment as people?

It's very much a holistic approach. As Dauer writes: "How we show up for people and things we care about are connected—by design, to our values, our inner lives." And while my initial reaction as an uptight Brit to the author's public self-analysis and occasional self-help wordiness was absolute horror, his openness is ultimately quite winning. Here he is writing about the effect success early in his career had on him: "I evolved—devolved, really—into a colossal asshole (and in just about a year out of art school, no less.)"

Many of the scenarios Dauer discusses will be recognizable to everyone in the design industry—first day in a new job, leading a team, going through the motions, new client meeting—and the book is peppered with real-life examples that he uses to expound on what he sees as general principles to leading a better, happier design life. It works for anyone taking stock of where they are and where they'd like to be, whether they're new to design or have decades of experience. In the conclusion, Dauer asks: "Why are you a designer?" And that's something worth considering—and constantly asking yourself—whether it's your first year in design or your 50th. —Yolanda Zappaterra

Virtual Society
The Metaverse and the New Frontiers of Human Experience

By Herman Narula

Author Herman Narula's book explores the rich potential of the metaverse as a virtual space for authentic connection but also for the exchange of ideas and the assignation of meaning and value, another place in human history where shared mythologies and cultures can emerge. *288 pages, hardcover, $28.99, Crown Currency.*

Sustainable Web Design in 20 Lessons

By Michael Andersen

As the internet has become one of the largest sources of carbon dioxide pollution in the world, author Michael Andersen instructs designers on what they can do to help curb the web's carbon footprint in a 20-chapter format, covering topics like green web hosting, design selection and eco-friendly coding. *303 pages, hardcover, $30, independently published.*

The Creative Algorithm
How to Harness the Power of AI and Create Outstanding Digital Products

By Matt Binkowski

For UI designers, product designers and researchers interested in adding AI into their practices or teams, author Matt Binkowski outlines current AI tools and examines how humans can leverage their data-driven insights in the fields of user research, prototyping and design system optimization, among others. *74 pages, paperback, $18.99, independently published.*

Be it a concert venue poster, a website, or an app icon, design is solving the problem of engaging people, agnostic of their circumstances, to connect and convey an experience.

Universal Principles of ux

100 Timeless Strategies to Create Positive Interactions between People and Technology

By Irene Pereyra
224 pages, hardcover, $40
Published by Rockport Publishers
quartoknows.com/rockport-publishers

Principles to live by. Rules to design by. *Universal Principles of ux* gathers general guidelines that together form a set of "best practices" for user experience design. The book is not a grammar of ux or a set of how-to instructions; instead, in an almost anthropological approach, author Irene Pereyra presents 100 high-level topics, based on years of in-the-trenches experience. Timeless in its approach, endlessly debatable, this is an eminently useful book.

Arranged in loose categories—including Consider, Empathize, Define, Research and Validate—each principle gets a page of explanatory text, along with accompanying graphics. Some of these illustrations are quite useful, while others barely rise above the level of eye candy. Each principle is backed by evidence, and many are cross-referenced to others in the book. In the process, ux principles are explained, problems solved, practical advice given and directions supplied.

Some principles explain hard and fast rules. Examples include: "If users can't understand the value of meaning of a website, they click off in ten seconds." Others include practical guidelines: "Use card sort to uncover consensus." Still, others are more open-ended—and open to debate. "Match the real world." Really? Tell that to any online banking website design team.

Along the way, fascinating secrets are unlocked, debates are put to rest (or ignited), and hunches and intuition are explained by facts. Is less really more? Are better-looking products easier to use? Let the debates begin. —Sam McMillan

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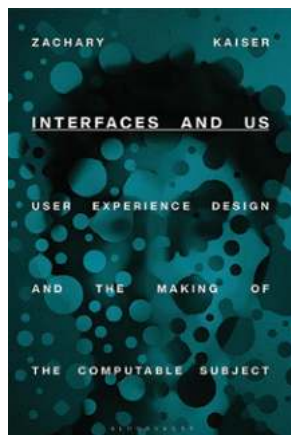
Interfaces and Us

## *User Experience Design and the Making of the Computable Subject*

By Zachary Kaiser
224 pages, softcover, $29.95
Published by Bloomsbury
bloomsbury.com

While the era of the internet of things and the fully teched-out smart home hasn't quite manifested yet, we're notably becoming reliant on algorithmically generated data to predict behavior. What author Zachary Kaiser, assistant professor of graphic design and experience architecture at University of Michigan, puts forward in his book *Interfaces and Us* is the question of *how* we concluded that data represents reality. With an intriguing claim that interface design often reflects the world we wish to live in—or the world we wish others would live in, by means of encouraging or discouraging certain interactions—Kaiser suggests that reading computer data for behavioral predictions emerges from a psychological need to unify the human experience and that we, as a species, are trending toward a universal set of cultural values emerging from using products designed to improve ourselves.

A generally multidisciplinary endeavor, Kaiser examines the concepts he outlines in his book through the lens of design but also through philosophy and politics, such as philosopher Zygmunt Bauman's present-day interpretation of Marxist alienation as purely digital labor based solely on technical skill. He dives into the reward systems of the devices we use and discusses how their semiotics encourage us to become more productive members of society, as well as how capitalism ties productivity to health. As intriguing as these notions are, I can't help but feel that this book better serves students and design educators rather than product designers at large corporations, but Kaiser presents an intriguing historical and philosophical exploration into ui design nonetheless. —Michael Coyne

INSIGHTS
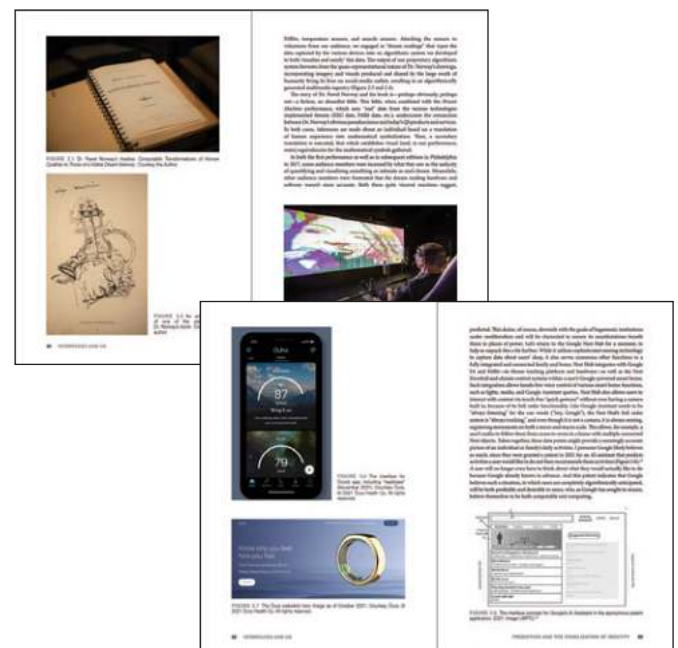
Pau Garcia
Creating Synthetic Reality

Founder and leader of the Barcelona-headquartered but globally based creative studio Domestic Data Streamers, media designer Pau Garcia intuitively chose to study design at ELISAVA in Barcelona without knowing anything about the discipline. But the university's rigorous approach to design as an analytic school of thought informed his perspective on how it can be used. Since then, Domestic Data Streamers has married statistical and data analysis with the beauty of design, crafting info-experiences for clients such as interdisciplinary laboratory CitizenLab, art gallery Tate Modern and the United Nations on a broad range of subjects from environmentalism to sociology to technology. With his diverse skillset, Garcia has given lectures on his findings at the Barcelona School of Economics, the Hong Kong Design Institute and the Politecnico di Milano, and he is chair of the masters program of data in design at ELISAVA. —Michael Coyne

At the global creative studio Domestic Data Streamers, you were an early adopter of ChatGPT and AI for research and design. What are some of your favorite projects where you've used AI? AI has always been a natural step for us. We have been working with data as raw material for a decade now, and the kind of generative AI (GenAI) we use today can only exist because of the huge number of datasets on which it has been trained. We started experimenting with the early ancestors of ChatGPT in 2020 with the goal of exploring what we call "probabilistic stories," specifically focusing on stories of gender violence. These stories, when processed through AI, revealed patterns that might be obscured in traditional statistical analyses but were much more vivid in a narrative format.

Since February 2022, we have been developing a program [to re-create] synthetic memories through image generation. The main difference with other image-editing software is that AI can create images directly from the description of a scene. With some training, very high-quality results can be achieved in five-to-ten seconds. This makes it accessible and enables fast iteration. We are already working with social workers, psychologists and medical experts in dementia and

psychoneurology to understand the positive impact that synthetic memories can have on the progression of degenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's or dementia. The first findings are proving to be particularly exciting and will soon be published in documented form.

We're also taking this technology and these processes to other spaces, such as the reconstruction from historical memory of refugee communities in Athens or the survivors of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These communities, for various reasons, have lost visual documentation of personal moments, often of significant historical interest. Memories erased from the realm of visual culture can now be evoked with more accessible technology. These communities, such as the elderly, migrants or patients suffering from mental health conditions, are generally excluded from access to the latest technologies. GenAI can enable us to understand ourselves as well as communities belonging to other eras and social realities. We must be able to approach everyone in a transparent, responsible and collaborative manner. Synthetic reality can be a space between fiction and reality, an intermediate space where we can meet.

As a designer working with AI, how do you work with human biases present within algorithms? You must acknowledge that bias is not inherently good or bad. It is a natural tendency for humans to have biases. They can be positive and helpful, such as choosing to eat

healthy goods or staying away from someone who has caused harm. However, biases can be very harmful when they're based on stereotypes rather than actual knowledge. The problem with AI biases is that they are implicit, meaning they are unknown to most people using GenAI tools. Such hidden biases can be especially detrimental because they remain unchallenged and unaltered. Given that GenAI's workings—like its training and data sources—are often shrouded in opacity, pinpointing these latent biases becomes challenging. More than 60 percent of the data fueling ChatGPT originates from US datasets, inherently skewing it toward a Western viewpoint. Moreover, most of the data that it contains relates to the last 20 years, so these tools are inherently biased toward a world perspective from the last 20 years rather than the present or another time.

Our work in this area has centered on uncovering biases and then using them to amplify perspectives we previously ignored. For instance, we have created a biased GenAI tool with the perspective of a minority group to give more weight to arguments and perspectives that are normally marginalized and left without a platform to express their problems and realities. Positive bias in AI could be used to create more empathetic, representative spaces that help us understand the diverse realities of our time and space.

Are there any issues with creative AI that you feel don't get focused on enough? The rise of GenAI presents both an opportunity and a challenge. I see it in the universities where we teach; most students focus on the *what* or the *how* but not so much the question of *why* we design. There's a risk of losing the soul of design processes to algorithms if we don't remain thoughtful about the tools we use and the intentions behind our creations. While AI has brought efficiency, speed and certain accessibility to creatives, I feel we run the risk of unanchoring ourselves from design's philosophical roots.

Filmmaker and essayist Georges Perec said: "What we need to question are bricks, concrete, glass, our table manners, our utensils, our tools, the way we spend our time, our rhythms. We live, indeed, we breathe, indeed; we walk, open doors, go downstairs, sit at a table to eat, lie down in a bed to sleep. How? Where? Why?"

Why indeed? As designers, we should be able to better answer this question. Designers give shape to our tools, buildings, products and environments, but later on, through our usage of these, they give us shape. We need to understand how our designs shape us and then consider why we shape them that way in the first place.

Do you have any advice for designers just entering the profession? There's no need to define yourself straight away. When I first stepped out of university, I felt the weight of expectation to quickly pigeonhole myself into a specific design role. However, the idea of prematurely cementing your own identity can be limiting. Think of life not as a series of labels to adhere to, but as a spectrum of possibilities. It's like saying: "Don't just be a title; be an action." Instead of just seeing yourself as a designer, perceive yourself as someone who designs, creates, innovates and evolves. Our journeys are dynamic, and the beauty is in the continuous evolution of our roles. Embrace the unpredictability, enjoy the occasional scare and, remember, labels are best left for jars, not people. ca

GIANT SPOON

CREATING A STIR

BY DAVE KUHL

I n Manhattan on the night of May 26, 2022, a larger-than-life experience took place. If you had been walking up East 34th Street approaching 5th Avenue, you'd be expecting a typical scene around one of New York's most famous landmarks. Instead, you would have been greeted with a first-of-its-kind immersive spectacle, designed to create an extraordinary empire state of mind. On that night, a mind-blowing light, sound and projection extravaganza took place across the side of the Empire State Building, transfixing thousands in attendance and millions more viewing online.

Created to promote the fourth season of *Stranger Things* on Netflix, the experience struck awe in viewers as they watched a crack seemingly appear on the side of the building, revealing a mesmerizing narrative through the Upside Down world from the show. It took place over the facade of the entire building and lasted for two hours. The scene was stunning: with helicopters hovering overhead, a world-renowned building was transformed into a fascinating projection surface, a spectacle so massive it elevated the Big Apple to another level.

As immense as it all was, the agency that helped create it, Giant Spoon, was no stranger to never-been-done-before moments. Those familiar with its arsenal of work have actually come to expect it from them. In the early 2000s, Giant Spoon's cofounders Trevor Guthrie, Jon Haber and Marc Simons were working in big agencies, trying to uncover solutions to a new media landscape. Haber remembers the moment early in his career when people were freaking out over the industry's future due to TiVo, an incredibly popular new invention. "Everyone was panicking, thinking no one [would] watch a commercial ever again," he says. He helped build a skunkworks operation at his agency to figure out ways of expanding how people experience brands. It was an early breeding ground for thinking about marketing and culture as a priority, not just an add on.

Over the years, Guthrie, Haber and Simons developed an itch to start their own shop. Eventually, the three jumped ship with the goal to help clients think more about evolving their brands into universes that people could exist in and engage with. "We told clients we were going to understand their brand, culture and media platforms, then come up with ideas to tell their story, with no preconceived notions of the format and type of ideas those would be," says Haber.

The trio had a school of thought; now they needed a name. "What we identified is that we like to stir shit up," Haber says. "And what do you need to stir shit up in a big, memorable way? A giant spoon, of course." It also helped that it made the agency sound a little weird and different to match its fresh approach to branding. A few big brands that Guthrie, Haber and Simons had relationships with bet on Giant Spoon—most notably, General Electric (GE), HP and NBC. "There were just a few of us, and we didn't have offices yet, but we helped NBC build a custom integration when Jimmy Fallon took over the *Tonight Show*," Haber recalls. "Working with the show's producers and writers, we built out a social ecosystem, which then became a recurring segment on the show." Pulling off such a huge effort was a wow moment for the three.

In those days, they also recognized Giant Spoon's place in a client's agency ecosystem as the small, wildcard shop. It served a role of delivering unique, sometimes crazy ideas that clients weren't getting from their other partners. The three even coined a clever term for their version of blue-sky concepts: Spoonshots. "Now that we've grown to our current size, we're still that wildcard," Haber explains, "but we also serve as the central steward of a brand, thinking holistically

Captions provided by Giant Spoon.

Right: "For the highly anticipated fourth season of Netflix show **Stranger Things**, we devised a traffic-stopping stunt for Netflix to ignite fan love globally. In the show's world, portals to the otherworldly realm of the Upside Down open throughout the fictional town of Hawkins. So, we created immersive projections on fifteen monuments around the world from the United Kingdom to the Czech Republic to Malaysia, blurring the lines between spectacle and interaction, immersive tech and nostalgia. Finally, we transformed the Empire State Building into a portal to the Upside Down with a projection that lasted for hours, while thousands in New York City witnessed a mysterious rift slowly crack open on the iconic skyscraper, revealing an immersive journey through the Upside Down and into the lair of *Stranger Things*'s terrifying new villain Vecna." Tactical Manoeuvre, lighting design; PRG, production company; Superbien, visual effects company; Empire State Realty Trust/Netflix, clients.

about everything it needs to put into the world." The agency's goal now is to weave it all together. "Spoonshots are still part of our DNA because they differentiate us," Haber continues, "but now we focus on the entire media plan built around them."

An example of a Spoonshot that drove the agency's early fame was the *Westworld* experience it built for HBO outside of South by Southwest. A meticulously detailed and managed re-creation of the show's theme park designed to immerse attendees into its world, the activation received global attention and tons of PR. Haber likens that experience to building a plane while flying it. "It took a lot of people putting their necks out, wondering if we could really make it," he says.

Giant Spoon has never been afraid to take smart risks, and it has grown in the process. The team currently numbers about 120 people across Los Angeles and New York City. "We're really like three or four small agencies that together make up one midsize agency," Haber says. "We're experiential, we're a creative agency, we're a media agency—and we often get tapped for strategy-only projects."

The agency just celebrated its ten-year anniversary and boasts many of the same clients that were there at the beginning. Those relationships have changed over time, but the longevity and trust it has built up has given it larger seats at the table for bigger projects. It's enabled Giant Spoon to build infrastructure and expand into doing more things for smaller marketers too. "We have two sweet spots," Haber explains. "One is helping drive innovation for a large Fortune 100 brand while bringing it new, exciting ideas. The second is being a lead agency that's running the full suite of a brand for a midsize marketer."

Let's get back to that Empire State Building takeover-palooza. Did I mention that the event also included an equally jaw-dropping projection lightshow at fourteen other landmark sites across the world? Well, here's the important question: How did a colossal operation like that come to fruition? It started with a brief asking to make the launch of the fourth season of *Stranger Things* into the biggest deal in entertainment across the globe. (Talk about a pretty sweet brief.) "Our creatives had been keeping an eye on the Empire State Building and its facade's new lighting capabilities," details Haber. "When it came to thinking larger than life, that location jumped to top

of mind." Giant Spoon wanted to completely stop New York in its tracks, so it also planned to throw rooftop influencer parties, to film it all with helicopters and drones, and to release a clever teaser promotion that secretly dropped mysterious latitude and longitude coordinates on social media.

They agency didn't execute the other projections around the world, but its narrative playbook and design scheme was used by Netflix's regional marketers, giving everything an interconnected feel. "We love to do experiential where it's so much more of an ecosystem than just the projection itself," Haber says. "We build things with a narrative structure and think through how it extends to social content, so that it feels like one story."

When Giant Spoon isn't doing groundbreaking executions on the sides of landmark buildings, it's doing one-of-a-kind work for other clients too. When GE announced in 2021 that it was splitting into three smaller companies, Giant Spoon helped tell this story by creating the first-ever complete ad takeover of the *New York Times*. Haber details the genesis of the idea as: "What if we made every ad of an entire issue focused on GE and its new business setup? Each ad would be a custom unit that told different stories around the theme of focus." The *New York Times* had never done that for an advertiser in its almost-175 years of publishing. It was a unique example of bringing together a medium, culture, legacy and audience to tell a brand's story in a new way.

HP is another long-running client that has benefitted from many of Giant Spoon's memorable campaigns. One highlight was "The Wolf," a campaign centered around a hacker played by Christian Slater. Several episodes featured him hacking into companies through their poorly secured printers, which then promoted the cybersecurity efforts of HP. The film series won at Cannes and received an enormous amount of press.

Beyond traditional ad awards, the agency has garnered a lot of hardware from festivals that reach beyond advertising. It won a best branded content award at the Tribeca Film Festival and appeared on *Fast Company*'s Most Innovative Companies list in 2023. These awards showcase how its work goes beyond ads, into entertainment and culture. Essentially, Giant Spoon's early vision has come to life.

Its body of work showcases a wide creative range, wider than I can fit within the word count limit of this article. Here are a few more highlights you should research: There's a bold, TV-driven, 360 campaign for Rihanna's lingerie brand Savage

Above: Jonathan Haber, cofounder of Giant Spoon.

Right: "Entering a new category and offering a different perspective than its competitors, beloved lingerie brand **Savage X Fenty** wanted to launch its Sport line of athletic wear with a bang. So, we produced the brand's first TV-driven 360 campaign, bringing all the energy, boldness and undeniable sexiness that it's known for. Using the brand's iconic X logo as a part of the campaign language, the Power X Play campaign featured an incredible cast of dynamic women, from supermodel Precious Lee to TikTok sensation Avani Gregg. We showed that Savage X Fenty Sport is for you—all of you—and is something you can rock no matter what you're doing or how you're feeling." Amber Grace Johnson, director; Object & Animal, production company; Savage X Fenty, client.
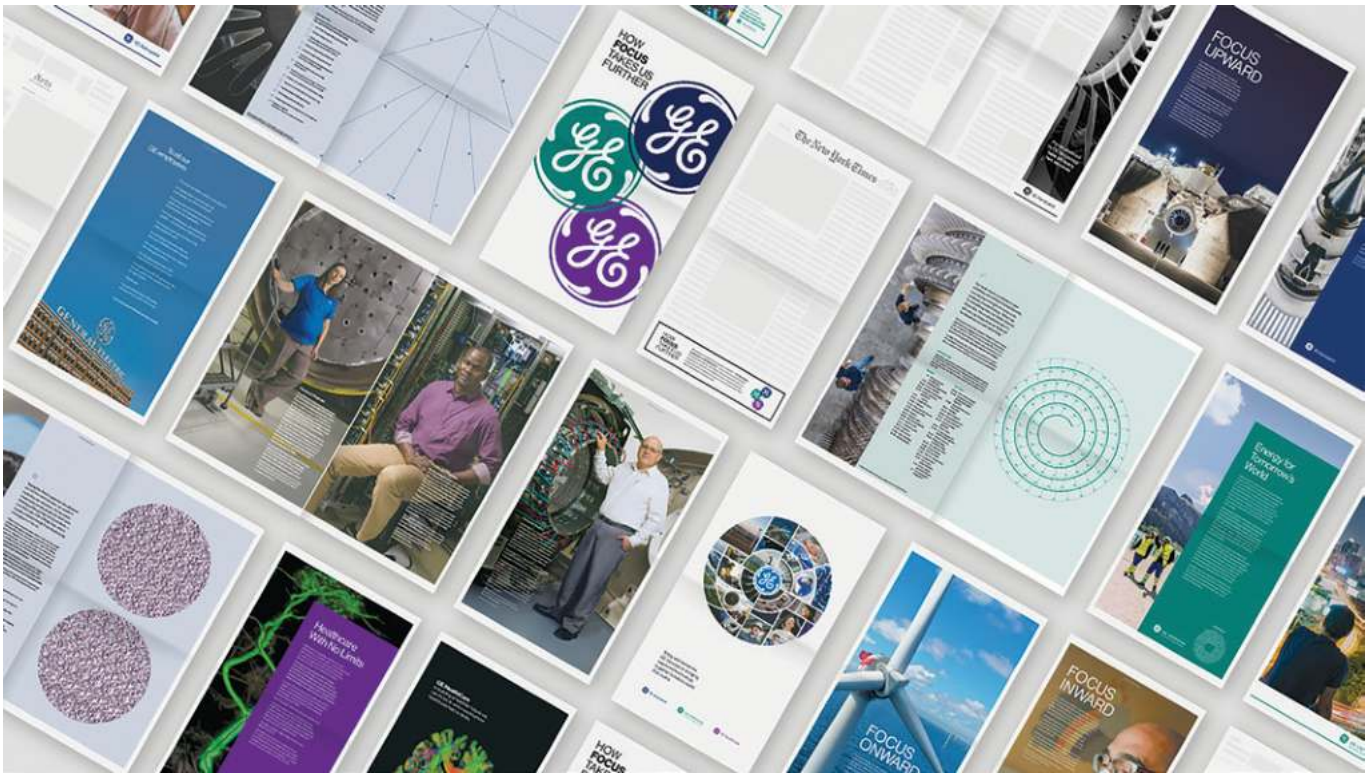
X Fenty. Also, it created "Unlocked," the first branded short film on Peacock for HP that follows data scientists trying to track down a rare plant to cure an epidemic caused by a neurological disease. The agency has made podcasts for clients that became number one overall on iTunes. It even created "What's Cooking Tonight?," a puppet talk show teaser starring Jennifer Garner and Jack Black to promote *Waffles + Mochi*, Michelle Obama's educational Netflix series on food—yes, that's real. Seriously, look it up.

Haber sums up Giant Spoon's overarching vision like this: "We have this tenet that being boring is bad for business. If you want to be memorable, have brand favorability and [foster] a relationship with your customers, you can't be boring. Our mantra to brands is to come here if you want to do something different and make your creative feel more like entertainment that can become a part of culture." Its clients know one thing for sure: if you want to stir shit up in an unforgettable way, grab a Giant Spoon. ca

Left: "Announcing its separation into three independent companies to bring greater focus to its areas of growth and innovation, **General Electric** (GE) collaborated with us and T Brand, the marketing division at the *New York Times*, for an innovative first: a cover-to-cover ad takeover of an entire edition of the *New York Times*." General Electric/T Brand, New York Times, clients.

"To promote TV show *Westworld*'s second season, HBO partnered with us to take fans deep into the show—transforming a 90,000 sq. ft. ghost town outside of Austin into a real-life trip to Westworld, the show's luxury destination where guests can live out their wildest fantasies with a dystopian twist." Glass Eye/Kilter Films/Mycotoo, production companies; HBO, client.

This page: "To prove its legitimacy as a digital advertising platform alongside big players in the field, **Reddit** needed to show up at marketers' destinations in a major way. So, we transformed its digital product into a living, breathing representation of its community-driven platform." Cairns Oneil/Jaw Advertising/Salt xc, agencies; Giant Spoon/R/GA, ad agencies; Reddit, client.

"Building on its previous global campaign FYP Experiences, we brought Reddit back to Cannes Lions in 2023 with **Reddit Recommends**. With a steel facade comprising hundreds of real-life Reddit queries, the activation was literally the house that users built." Exprim, design; Sev Gedra, prop stylist; CanneSmile/Pixeolab, agencies; Reddit, client.

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This page: "In 2019, outdoor brand YETI was faced with the need to translate its brand character into tangible strategy as its business scaled. We created **YETI Presents**, the brand's first national product campaign featuring two brand ambassadors in video and stills, showing the more relatable side of their lives while organically integrating YETI products into the ads. The groundwork we laid in strategy and content proved so successful that YETI continues to use that foundation for its brand today." Stacy Peralta, director; Chelsea Pictures, production company; Method/Union Editorial, post-production companies; YETI, client.

Right: "To launch its first-ever brand campaign, we partnered with **Yelp** to produce Onward, a creative campaign that focused on the people going out there and writing reviews, as well as those reading the reviews and going out to have those experiences themselves. The campaign then translated to OOH, audio, print and influencer partnerships." Frank Todaro, director; Sonic Union, sound design; New Math Music, music; Moxie Pictures, production company; Gloss/Uppercut, post-production companies; Yelp, client.

"To establish HP's gaming brand **OMEN**, we helped it insert the brand into gaming culture. We pushed the boundaries of how the brand shows up in culture by creating talk shows, documentaries, tournaments and league sponsorships, unique brand experiences, original influencer tournaments, ambassador programs, and live programming on Twitch, as well as e-sport athlete partnerships, photography and collaborations." Little Village, production company; Beta Petrol, music company; Ranger & Fox, design firm; HP, client.
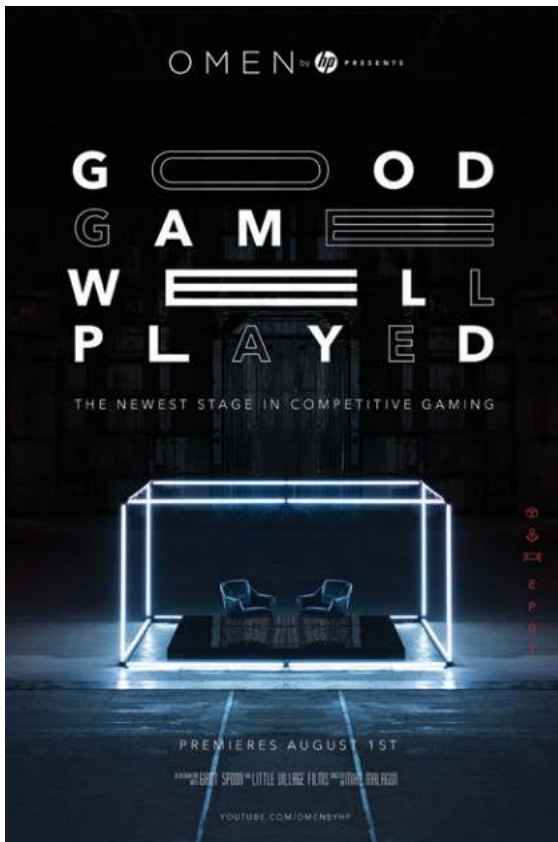
PRODUCTION TYPE

BY FLORENCE FU

To date, the Paris-based type designer Jean-Baptiste Levée has more than 100 typefaces to his name. Levée has worked in the type design industry for 20 years, from freelancing to establishing the foundry Production Type, and each lesson he has learned along the way shaped his design and leadership philosophy. After meeting Levée, who confessed how he's adamantly against patrimonialism in type design, it's clear that the story of Production Type's success goes beyond his own name. Levée describes his team, based in Paris and Shanghai, as a group of people who are "better than him at what he does." And they must have been doing something right, as the foundry celebrated its ten-year anniversary this year.

While new type design programs and alternative schools have emerged in the last decade, there were few and far between in the early 2000s when Levée was a student. After graduating from art school École Estienne in Paris, he worked as a freelance designer. In 2009, he cofounded the foundry Le Bureau des Affaires Typographiques (BAT) with three other partners. "We all wanted to make something together that would foster French type and thrive in a local market that was stiff and underwhelming at the time," Levée says.

A few years later, Levée left BAT after having an epiphany looking at the state of the type design market at large and in France. "I wanted to put my money where my mouth was," he says. "And my mouth was advocating for a consistent stream of design in France and abroad that would materialize in gathering people whose work I like and skills I admire, who did not have a channel for their own designs."

Levée acknowledges that his freelance experience helped make a name for himself, but being on his own had its limits. As the years went by, he realized he was sitting on his own pile of gold—unused and unpublished font designs and drawings that had been shelved away in drawers. There was only so much one could do solo, and his individual name would only take him so far. "There was a glass ceiling of self-branding, and I could never properly build this output channel using only my own name," he explains. So, in 2013, Levée traded in his name for a new one: Production Type.

The foundry took two years to build and launched as a two-person operation, with Levée and one part-time assistant. One year later in 2014, Levée met Tao Chen, a designer from Shanghai. Bonding over on-and-off-hours interests from letterforms to Burgundy wine, the two planted the seeds for collaboration and the foundry's later global expansion.

Tao had lived and worked in Paris for eight years, citing an appreciation for Sino-French culture. "The elegance, freedom and bravery of French culture have always influenced my design theories and practices," he says. "Meanwhile, I am also deeply rooted in my motherland in China, which has vast territory and a long history. I wanted to bring together these inspirations in my practice to innovate in the Sino-French cultural space."

Before joining Production Type, Tao had founded his own agency in Shanghai that specialized in branding and custom type. His professional and cultural experiences in both French and Chinese design environments presented a unique opportunity. In 2019, Production Type opened its Shanghai office, with Tao leading as associate creative director.

To be anchored in Paris and Shanghai "is a story of opportunities," Levée says. "Most of our clients are in the field of luxury, fashion and industry. I noticed there was an opportunity to build a stronger offering that is Western-facing but Eastern-focused."

This orientation means the foundry can not only work with clients across time zones, but also cover a variety of scripts—Arabic, Cyrillic, Greek and Latin on one end, and Chinese, Japanese and Korean on the other. "If you connect the dots, we have the firepower to cover challenging client requests at many levels," Levée says. Even down to licensing, this setup lets the foundry offer support for Western clients who have to navigate a completely different font-licensing landscape in Asia.

"With growing aesthetic and cultural demands, many brands need a reliable, strong voice to help them communicate their brand concepts and ideas," Tao says. "I believe the most important voice of all can be a custom brand font or a retail font that is visible, beautiful, audible and durable."

Captions provided by Production Type.

Right: "**Minotaur**, a flagship typeface for Production Type, was initially designed as a way to reference cubism in a typeface. The most obvious tack would be to disassemble each letter and render it broken and abstracted. That might have produced something interesting to look at but not something that can be used. Minotaur is more practical but no less interesting. Minotaur Sans, Serif and Lombardic are a collection of straight-line fonts that draw from H. W. Hershey's 1960s early vector computer graphics." Jean-Baptiste Levée, creative director.
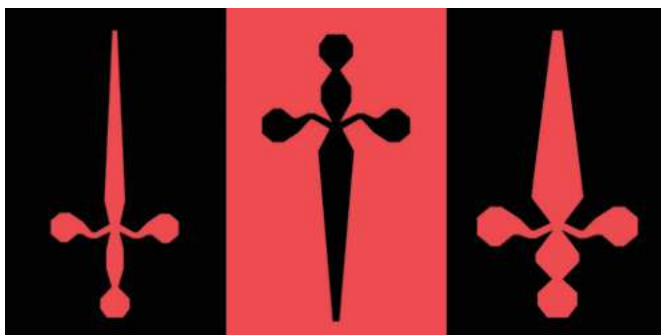
Minotaur
Minotaur
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Minotaur

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 0
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Kinnara
Pontianak
Lightning Bird

1 Minotaur Light
2 *Minotaur Light Italic*
3 Minotaur Lombardic
4 Minotaur Regular
5 *Minotaur Italic*
6 Minotaur Lombardic
7 **Minotaur Bold**
8 ***Minotaur Bold Italic***
9 Minotaur Lombardic

10 **Minotaur Sans Light**
11 ***Minotaur Sans Light Italic***
12 Minotaur Sans Lombardic
13 **Minotaur Sans Regular**
14 ***Minotaur Sans Italic***
15 Minotaur Sans Lombardic
16 **Minotaur Sans Bold**
17 ***Minotaur Sans Bold Italic***
18 Minotaur Sans Lombardic
19 Minotaur Beef

One of the foundry's first global-scripts projects was designing custom Latin and Chinese typefaces for Suzhou Bay Cultural Centre. The project also complements the foundry's own ties across China and France, as the Centre is located in Suzhou, China, and was designed by French architect Christian de Portzamparc.

© Julien Lelièvre/Shijun Xia

Type foundries all over the world often find themselves navigating the delicate balance between usefulness and uniqueness. "How can you make work that feels fashionable, contemporary, relevant and, at the same time, not shallow—but also not completely antiquated?" Levée poses. He describes Production Type typefaces as a mix of depth, substance and freshness. When looking at the design spaces in its library, many typefaces hit the mark on all three of these qualities.

While we usually expect all members of a type family to look similar, sharing visual genes to prove their kinship, Production Type font families are strongly related by concept and attitude. The Minotaur Collection, for example, references cubism from multiple perspectives. They forgo the obvious answer, which would be to disassemble and abstract each letter— a solution that would be visually interesting, but not usable. Instead, each character is razored off, leaving no curves, but ragged edges consisting entirely of straight lines. The serif and sans serif families were created for a Paris art museum, and the collection also includes curious beasts like Minotaur Beef and Minotaur Lombardic.

Minotaur, one of the foundry's first releases in 2014, still feels incredibly thoughtful and contemporary a decade later. In this one collection, visual threads are pulled from stretches of time: 15th-century Lombardic initials, 19th-century Scotch Rouniqman serifs, an early 20th century grotesque—all the way to A. V. Hershey's jagged computer vector fonts from the 1960s. Frankly, Minotaur Beef, which lacks any explanation or visual reference, looks as though it came from the future, beamed from another universe.

As a student, Levée was instilled with the idea that type design was a specialty skill emerging from graphic design. The two disciplines are often spoken about together, but based on the workflow, to the size and scale of impact, Levée believes the field is actually much closer to industrial design. "We manufacture, design and package shapes that are going to be reproduced hundreds and thousands of times, and that one shape will not change while being reproduced," he explains.

This process is even more apparent when designing typefaces for writing systems that are much more complex, with even larger character sets than Latin. For example, the baseline for a workable Chinese font can be from tens to thousands of characters. Southeast Asian scripts require shapes that change and shift based on context. In other words, there are many more parts needed for the final, working product.

The foundry has teased the Chinese expansion of three typefaces, and Levée hints that there's even more on the horizon. As the first set of expansions, one might have assumed Production Type would tackle the typefaces that have been the most commercially successful. Instead, the foundry decided to undertake some of the fonts that pose a great challenge when applied to the Chinese script: Arc, a stencil typeface; Enfantine, an upright script; and Kessler, a contemporary take on inscriptional serifs.

"We don't just release designs because we believe they will sell well," Levée says. Instead, it seems that designs are released because the foundry believes in them. From LAB fonts that are working experiments to typefaces published with independent designers, each and every one makes a statement.

Levée has expressed before that typefaces are not tools, but design for designers—and this belief still holds true in our conversation. "Type design is a craft where it's easy to forget that you are not designing for yourself," he says. "Of course, the design you do has to be rewarding, you have to be proud of what you do."

While this outlook may not directly affect the end user, it makes a difference for how the foundry relates to and releases its fonts to the world. Instead of creating mock-up in-use cases, which some believe prescribes and limits the typeface's potential, Production Type debuts them with what Levée describes as "type allegories." An allegory can be defined as a symbolic expression of truths about human existence, morality, religion or politics. A typeface as design should then impart these truths through visual means. Typefaces become characters with stories and morals of their own, arriving in the world to teach us something. "What you see is simply what the type is, what it should do and what it's good for," says Levée.

To show instead of tell, each typeface has its own art directed story situated in a certain place, however abstract or concrete,

Above: creative directors Jean-Baptiste Levée and Tao Chen.

Right: "The **Suzhou Bay Grand Theater** in Suzhou, China, is a 215,000 sq. m. performing arts and exhibition center inaugurated in 2020 and designed by French architect Christian de Portzamparc. On the shore of Lake Tai, the building's identity and signage uses a Chinese and Latin typeface designed by Production Type that works in multiple reading environments while keeping the design specificities of both scripts." Tao Chen/Jean-Baptiste Levée, designers.

SUZHOU-Grand Center of Culture and Museum

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQR
STUVWXYZ

七三下业中乐二
五交人休众会位作
修停储光入公六具

展映Show

展示厅 Showroom
IMAIX 放映厅 IMAIX Screening Room
多功能厅 Function Room
大剧院一层入口 Grand Therater entrance
大剧院 Grand Therater
排练厅 Rehearsal hall
电影院 Cinema
歌剧院接待大厅 Opera reception hall

展示厅大剧院一层
电影放映厅大剧院
多功能厅排练厅入
歌剧院接待大厅口

示

2

that tells us who it is and what it came here to do. Designed letters enter the visual and material world, generating meaning and cultural value by wrapping themselves around text, words, brands and more.

Our digital era expects that once something is online, it will last forever. But for Levée, nothing *should* last forever—not even fonts. From time to time, fonts go through a quiet retirement from the library. He makes the analogy to that of a controlled burn, when fires are planned to maintain the health of the entire forest. In nature, burning dead leaves and debris returns nutrients to the soil faster than natural decomposition. The open space allows for new young trees to grow. In a type catalog, this means that designs more relevant to the current time can be given the space to shine. But a responsible leader knows the extent to which this power can be exercised, and the fonts that get shelved away are usually Levée's own.

"I don't think that all my designs will be relevant for eternity," he confesses. "So as much as Production Type's mission is to build a consistent, solid stream of high quality design, we are also in the business of the renewing of images."

In 2023, the foundry received exclusive rights to the type design legacy of A. M. Cassandre, a 20th-century French poster artist and graphic designer. It will take on renewing his images for the 21st century, including groundbreaking typefaces like Acier, Bifur and Peignot, as well as his lesser-known works like Graphika 81, a typewriter typeface, and Cassandre, the late designer's take on epigraphic research.

Looking ahead, the foundry's goals are quite simple. In the short term, Levée and Tao want to strengthen the bridge between France and China, between Western and Eastern cultures. This exchange is not only external-facing, but also within the foundry itself. Production Type designers participate in design exchanges and can have extended stays in both Paris and Shanghai offices.

Left: "Type designer Hélène Marian and Production Type collaborated to develop a new wordmark and bespoke typeface family for the rebrand of the WNBA commissioned by Sylvain Labs. Developed into three families, the list of thirteen diverse faces aligns with the league's inclusive and forward-looking aspirations." Cole Nielsen/Katie Sadow, Sylvain Labs, art directors; Hélène Marian, Production Type, designer; Roman King, WNBA, client.

This page: "PVC is type designer Hélène Marian's statement on her continuous, ongoing exploration of the relationships that sign-painting and digital type design entertain. In PVC Banner, Marian reveals her obsessions with filling the horizontal space: store signs, rolls of adhesive tapes, truck tarps and drumsticks—anything goes." Hélène Marian/Shijun Xia, designers.

"We continue empowering our teams with a bicultural approach to sharing knowledge," Levee says. "There's no such thing as individual type design. Type design is a collective act."

With Levée leading Paris and Tao leading Shanghai, the full team is a little less than 30 people. "The core of our partnership is built on trust; after nearly a decade of getting to know each other, we trust each other," Tao says. Their partnership's strength was also evident when the pandemic closed global borders soon after opening the Shanghai office. The two built and ran teams that collaborated closely without seeing each other over the course of three years. These teams only reunited in-person for the first time in the fall of 2023, which Tao describes as an "instant connection."

"The trust provides flexibility, and the Paris-Shanghai twin city model allows both of us to retain a high degree of mobility in dealing with clients and the market, but with a relatively unified philosophy and mindset," Tao adds.

In the long term, Levée will be satisfied if the foundry can continue what they currently do, which is to produce the best of today's and tomorrow's designs. Its work is in the name, and its name is in the work. "The fonts we do are here to help designers produce," Levée says. "Production Type is type that enables the production of shapes, of pages, of screens, of interfaces. It's not decoration type, not light-hearted type, not anecdotal type—it's production type." ca

This page: "**Gamuth**, designed by Max Esnée, is a multifaceted work with two optical sizes—Display and Text—of the same serif typeface. It borrows from Dutch Baroque faces and their typical breadth: narrower than usual proportions, generous x-heights and crisp detailing contribute to giving a dense, deep texture to running text." Max Esnée, type designer.

Right: "With **Enfantine**, creative director Jean-Baptiste Levée wanted to create a childlike script face that was usable in design work. Due to their handwritten origins, script typefaces are normally sloped. This makes an upright script something of an oddity. Yet, there is something about Enfantine that makes it welcoming and familiar. These simple, monolinear shapes are more appealing, with gentle loops and letter connections that work at several levels—top, middle and bottom. Choosing not to rely on quaint references or fancy tricks, Levée achieved his goal of a useful, modern typeface that can operate in a range of contexts." Yohanna My Nguyen/Yoann Minet, designers; Ben Kiel, developer; Jean-Baptiste Levée/Shijun Xia, type designers.

"**Kessler** presents type designer Alaric Garnier's explorations into vernacular lettering, stone carving and sign painting. The font's thin strokes and sharp details particularly shine in large sizes. As a type genre, Kessler occupies a spot so unique so that its Chinese version develops one-of-a-kind reading environments." Tao Chen, designer; Alaric Garnier, type designer.
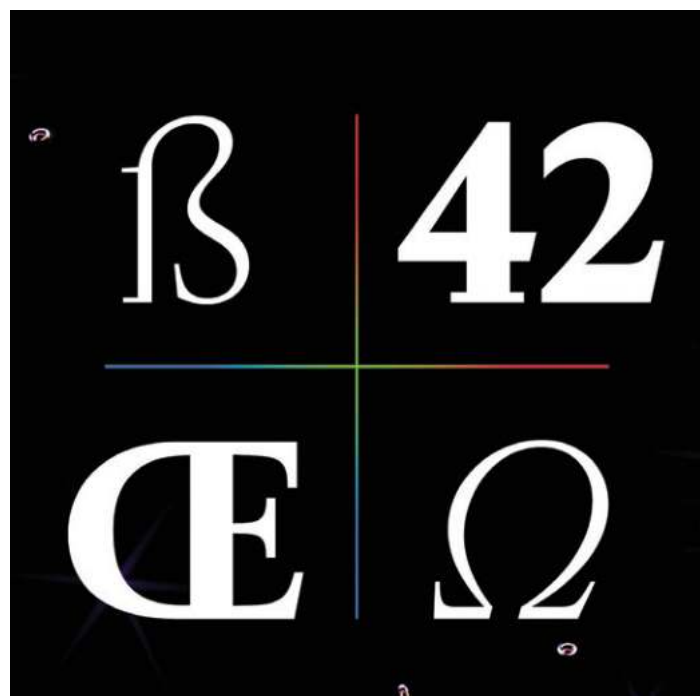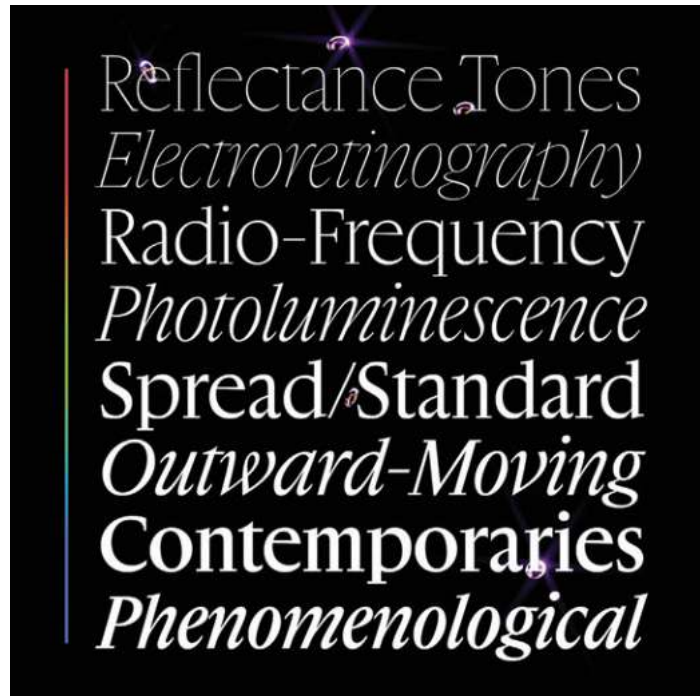
雄鹰
Enfantine

Sugar snap peas 少年去捡拾一枚分
Fantastic Mr Fox 葡萄藤因幻想而延
Radicchio leaves 海浪因退缩而耸起
Desert Marigold 少年去捡拾一枚分
Amaretti biscuits 葡萄藤因幻想而延
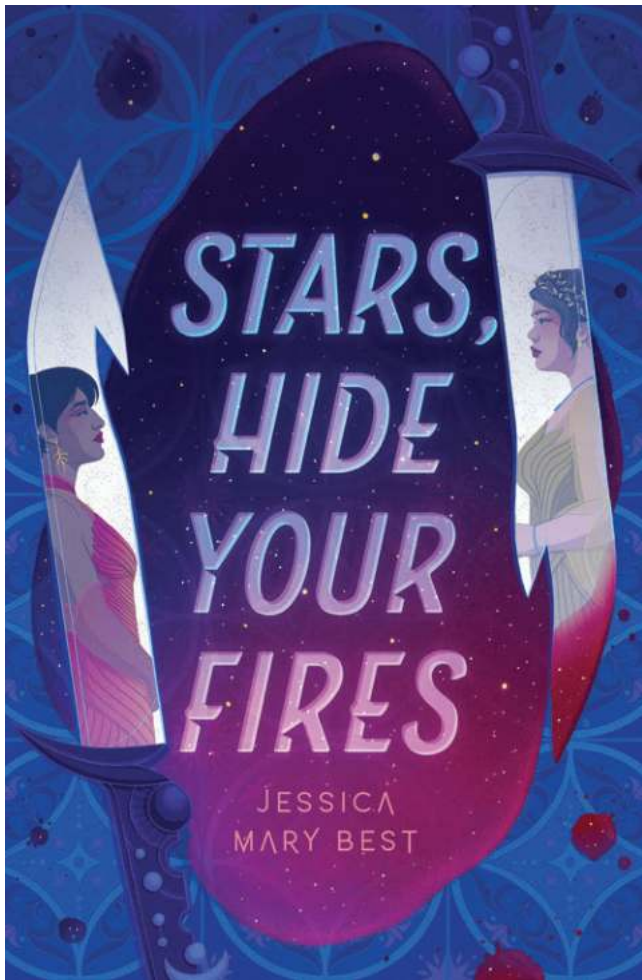Butternut squash 海浪因退缩而耸起

K 爱

渴望·爱
SUN

BRITISH LIBRARY 我渴望成为一片大
CHELSEA BOOTS 在她的注视下在她
SIR HENRY COLE 拒绝海洋我渴望成
CONSERVATIVES 我渴望成为成片大
LORD RAYLEIGH 在她的注视下在她
LELANTINE WAR 拒绝海洋我渴望成

FRESH
CHRISTINA CHUNG

© Han Alexander

For Christina Chung—a Brooklyn-based illustrator who grew up in Hong Kong, Seattle, Singapore and Taiwan—her vivid, ornate illustrations give her the chance to transport viewers into the types of fantastical worlds she loves. "I find a lot of inspiration in films and video games, from color palettes and compositions to mood," she says. "I'm drawn to art that pulls me into a different world than my own, and I hope my work can do that for others." Having graduated from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, an educational experience she credits with helping her discover her illustration style, she has worked for clients such as Dark Horse Comics, the *New York Times*, Penguin Random House and *The New Yorker*. One of her favorite projects, however, was illustrating the cover and interior for Chronicle Books's *Star Wars The Jedi Mind*, a book by Amy Ratcliffe that combines the philosophy of *Star Wars* with meditation techniques. "For me, it's been really important to create honest work that's true to who I am," Chung says. "It's allowed me to find my voice and keep me grounded and ready for the next challenge."

christina-chung.com
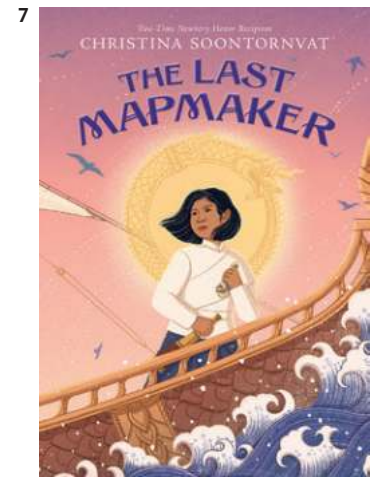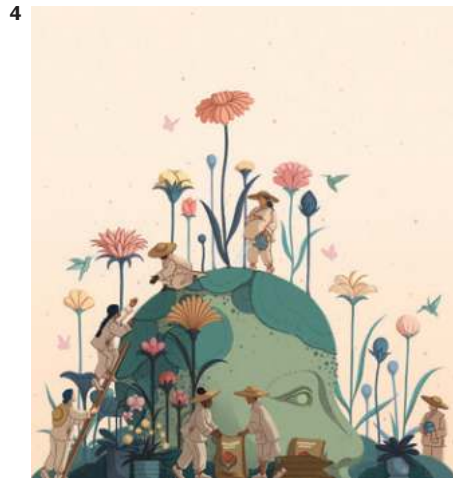
1. "For Jessica Mary Best's novel *Stars, Hide Your Fires*." Elissa Flanigan, art director; Quirk Books, client. **2.** "For Christina Li's novel T*rue Love and Other Impossible Odds*." Laura Mock, designer; HarperCollins, client. **3.** "A personal illustration about celebrating the winter solstice by making the Chinese dessert tangyuan and gathering with loved ones." **4.** "For *byFaith* magazine on bringing people together through the power of imagining a better future." Maria Tamayo, art director; byFaith, client. **5.** "For *The Washington Post*'s article imagining a dystopian future if Hong Kong's cultural identity becomes a relic of the past." Michelle Kondrich, art director; The Washington Post, client. **6.** "For a *Fireside* magazine story about a student becoming an 'arbitect'—growing a seedling into a house-tree." Pablo Defendini, art director; Fireside, client. **7.** "Cover for Christina Soontornvat's novel *The Last Mapmaker*." Hayley Parker, designer; Candlewick Press, client. **8.** "For podcast *Ursa Story*'s episode accompanying the story 'Happy Family' by William Pei Shih." Mark Armstrong/Dawnie Walton, art directors; Ursa Story, client. **9.** "For *Science* magazine's article on the environmental benefits of green choices on food delivery apps in China." Marcy Atarod, art director; Science, client. **10.** "Personal illustration celebrating the Year of the Tiger."

FRESH
FROST

Frost, a type foundry based in Leicester, United Kingdom, explores the confluence of modular graphic design and typography—a characteristic noted by its founder Harrison Marshall. "I create a number of different modules that work together in different combinations," he explains, "hence why my typefaces are quite 'graphic' in nature. I probably developed these characteristics through practicing graphic design." Having always been familiar with creative industries through his relatives, Marshall discovered his fascination for typography when he was shown his grandfather's printing kit, which included letter blocks from his career as a newspaper typesetter. He went on to study graphic design at University for the Creative Arts, Farnham in Farnham, United Kingdom, where he explored typography and modular design systems with instructor Tom Northey. Upon graduating, he worked as a freelance designer and then with Leicester-based design agency Six, all the while developing his typography skills and eventually establishing Frost—named after his grandfather Colin Frost—where he has been commissioned by agencies including Freytag Anderson, Norgram, Pentagram and Spin. Marshall hopes to underscore the importance of typography through Frost's output. "I hope through my work I'll continue to show people how important typography is to a brand," he says, "not only with a quality-drawn typeface but the right typeface to capture each individual brand's or person's voice— and how to apply it."

frostype.xyz
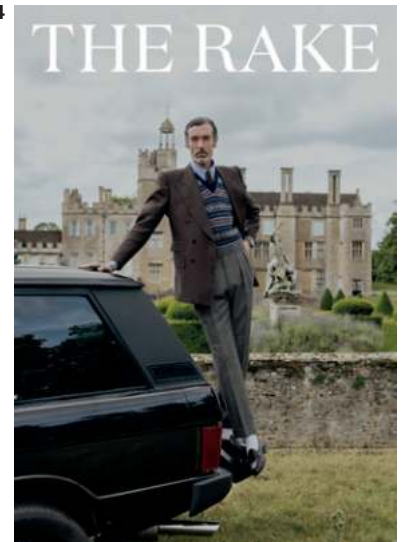
1. "Custom typeface for Los Angeles–based digital marketplace Basic Space. Influenced by modernist typography and native browser styling, the typeface reflects the avant-garde principles behind the brand." Frost/Six, design firms; Basic Space, client. **2.** "For modern Italian restaurant Passo in Shoreditch, London. The custom typeface draws inspiration from irregular letterforms found throughout old Italian signage." Passo, client. **3.** "Calhern is a grotesk sans made of three subfamilies. Bringing a vast variety of character, the typeface was first influenced by type found in film credits and title sequences." **4.** "We were commissioned to re-create the wordmark for lifestyle and fashion magazine *The Rake*. A custom serif embodies the philosophy and personality behind the magazine." The Rake, client. **5.** "Lambert is a slab serif family influenced by my studies into typefaces found on various typewriters. Lambert has typewriter characteristics but does not have monospacing or metrics."

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FRESH
SAM KANG

© Matthew Leung

Viewing the work of New York–based photographer Sam Kang reveals a procession of spontaneous moments that show people just as they are. "No matter where I am, I need to have my little point-and-shoot with me; you never know what you will see," he says. "I feel like my work can be described as genuine, intimate and poppy." Having practiced photography his whole life, Kang explored disciplines from photojournalism to film to nature photography and even medical applications like ophthalmic and microscopic photography during his undergraduate degree at the Rochester Institute of Technology. While studying there, he began working on expanding his portfolio and focusing on his creative work when a friend introduced him to New York Fashion Week. "Ever since then, it changed me," Kang recalls. "As the years went on, I got deeper and deeper into the scene and would even skip classes to photograph it." Inspired by portrait and fashion photographers Berenice Abbott and Bill Cunningham, Kang finds his inspiration in the people who appear in front of his lens. "Over the years of doing Fashion Week, I learned that my interactions with photographing someone were my favorite," he says. "I just want to make cool work with cool people. I just want people to enjoy my work as it is."

samyck.com
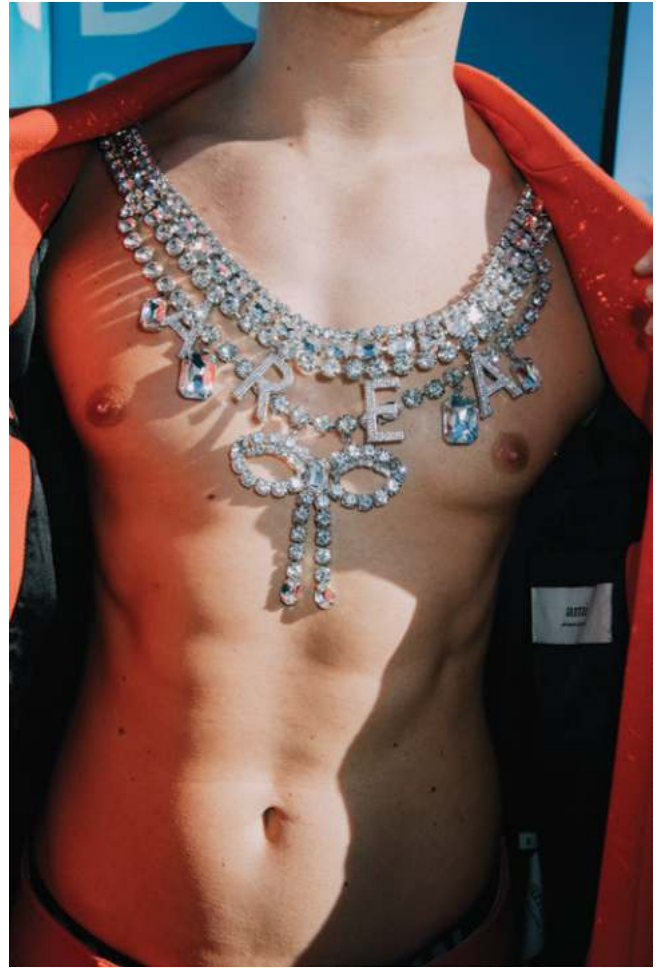
1. "For a *WIRED* article on Sam Zeloof, who created a homemade computer chip with 1,200 transistors seen here under a magnifying glass." Charis Morgan, photo editor; Tom Simonite, writer; *WIRED*, client. **2.** "Model Momo Ramstedt with fashion brand Carry Kismet's Kkot Tote bag in the Blush Patch Daisy style." Paris Benson, stylist; Momo Ramstedt, model; Trish Picklehaupt, director of photography; Joohyun Ha/Elizabeth Shim, Carry Kismet, clients. **3.** "Aaron Idelson before fashion house Area's show at New York Fashion Week." Aaron Idelson, model. **4.** "Part of a larger series in collaboration with stylist Valeria Brenes. The jewelry was graciously lent to us by Martine Ali Studio." Valeria Brenes, stylist. **5.** "Visual artist duo Young Emperors after fashion house Puppets and Puppets's show at New York Fashion Week." Young Emperors, models. **6.** "Part of a larger series in collaboration with stylist Valeria Brenes." Valeria Brenes, stylist.

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FRESH
STUDIO GRUHL

© JJ B

Established in 2020, Studio Gruhl, a Berlin-based trio of designers led by founder Malte Gruhl, has a simple yet versatile ethos: "We, as a studio, always try to do bold work," Gruhl explains. "It doesn't need to be loud, but it should hold up and stand for itself. We achieve this by having a very thorough research process, which greatly assists us in narrowing down ideas and finding solutions to problems." Previously head of design at creative studio Sid Lee, Gruhl worked in Berlin, Los Angeles and New York; he credits these global experiences, combined with his studies in north Germany and New Zealand, with influencing his approach to design. "I was fortunate to travel a lot and live in different places," he explains. "Design helped me do this, as it literally opened borders. Being exposed to different cultures shaped my perspective and formed me as an individual." This borderless principle extends to the studio's multidisciplinary output: for each project, Studio Gruhl engages in research and often employs historical and cultural perspectives on visual communications to understand the design problem and its solution. "When we approach a project, we keep an open mind," Gruhl says. "[Our choices] largely depend on the concept and the idea. From there, we determine which technology or craft can best convey that idea."

studiogruhl.com
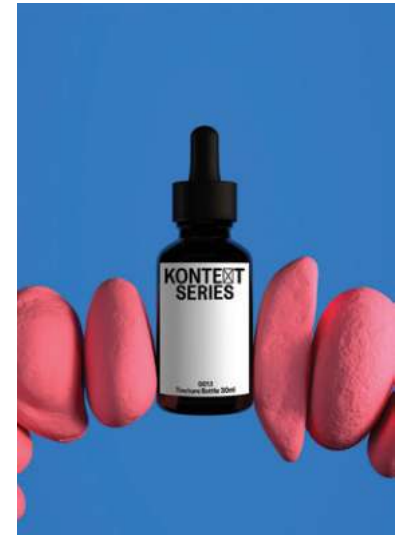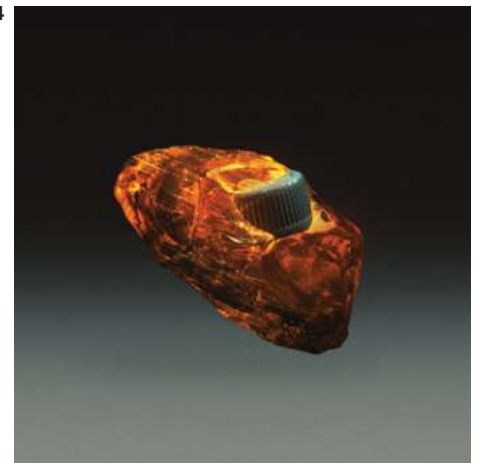
1. "Imagemaking for Daniel Becker Design Studio, an award-winning design studio for lighting, products and interiors." Malte Gruhl, creative director; Daniel Becker, Daniel Becker Design Studio, client. **2.** "Kontext Series is a self-initiated platform offering new, highly art directed design mockups." Klara Michalska, designer; Malte Gruhl, creative director. **3.** "Identity for *Precog*, a yearly magazine that explores science, technology, techno-plastics, cyber culture and feminism." Malte Gruhl, creative director; Kellie Konapelsky, Precog, client. **4.** "This series portrays how plastic waste will become part of nature." Malte Gruhl, art director; Julien Pietri, Third Hand, designer. **5.** "Artwork for the compilation EP *Sublime Creatures Vol. 1* by record label House of Reptiles." Malte Gruhl, art director; Raphael Campos, House of Reptiles, client. **6.** "Poster for record label House of Reptiles's second anniversary party." Malte Gruhl, art director; Raphael Campos, House of Reptiles, client. **7.** "One of four images for *Precog* Vol. 5: Bubble Orchestra." Malte Gruhl, creative director; Kellie Konapelsky, Precog, client.

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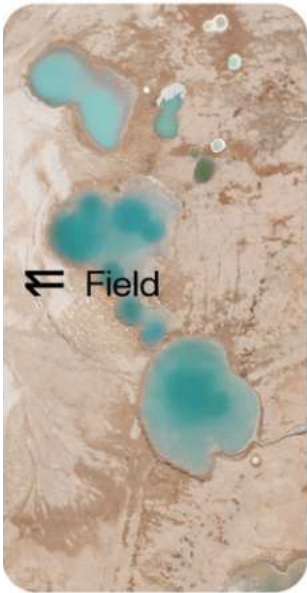
1 Field identity

Comprising multiple European tech entities that merged in 2022, analytics company Field now leads the region in geodata, data collection and analysis. This identity system by Borgenkvartalet, Norway–based design firm Studio Oker visually references the concepts of geospatial layers, geographic mapping and topography through a progressive logo and series of motion graphics. "Given Field's extensive research, we aspired to develop a brand identity that not only captured its core business concept, but also its global vision of offering insights beyond data," says Petter Skogheim, founding partner at Studio Oker. "We created a refined, universally resonant expression by seamlessly integrating nature and technology, resulting in a versatile identity system that informs and inspires. We chose [the geospatial] aspects to craft a relevant, meaningful experience."

Joshwa Wright/Rachel Zhang, designers; Ashley Phillips, creative director; Børge Myrnes, 3-D designer; No Input Signal, interactive developer; Studio Oker (Borgenkvartalet, Norway), design firm; Mirjam Engelsvold/Cato Vevatne, Field, clients.

2 Postmates TV spot

"Boba Tea" :15

Delivery company Postmates celebrates the foods we crave in a multisensory campaign titled This Is Your Brain On Food by Los Angeles–based ad agency Mother LA, with each spot visually transcribing the flavors, textures and feelings we experience as we eat. In "Boba Tea," for example, a 3-D-animated boba character skates through city streets on a wave of milk tea. "We were inspired by synesthetic thinking, translating taste into visuals and sound—i.e., a fancy way to say we ate food and talked about it," says Maddie Rosenberg, creative at Mother LA. "We were lucky to partner with production company Nexus, music company Soundtree, and a talented roster of artists and composers whose unique styles evoked the feelings we were after."

Fabien Glasse, 3-D designer; Ieuan Lewis/Meg Robson, designers; Harry Butt/Jack Cunningham, creative directors; Christopher O'Reilly, executive creative director; Delfina Maria, developer; Dave Hunt/Paul Mitcheson/Dylan White, technical leads; Andrea Zantiras, assistant editor; Laurence Halstead/Dave Slade, editors; Meg Dupont/Andy Spence, contributing artists; Signe Cold/Sacha Danjou/Gareth Tredrea/Hugo Vieites Caamaño, visual effects artists; Double Up Studio/Angela Kirkwood/Laurie Rowan/Shynola/Veronica Solomon, directors; Marylou Mao, 3-D animator; Nayla Nassar/Niko Rossi, 3-D modeling; Lizzie Small, producer; Jo Bierton/Dom Thompson Talbot, senior producers; Josephine Gallagher, executive producer; Tyler Antin/Theo Cassels/Ruyi Meer/Cat Wong/Rowena Woolford, production managers; Germán Diez, visual effects supervisor; Nexus Studios, production company; Mother LA (Los Angeles, CA), ad agency; Postmates, client.

We're looking for new, outstanding collateral, packaging, print ads, television commercials, direct mail, books and exhibits. For submission details, visit commarts.com/submissions.

EXHIBIT

1 *BODIES* title sequence

For Netflix's adaptation of *BODIES*, a mind-bending graphic novel by Si Spencer that spans multiple time periods and four different police investigations, London-based production company Studio AKA had to craft an attention-grabbing opening title sequence that would convey the show's content and themes. "Our team delved into a graphic language that immerses the viewer in the world of *BODIES* by deconstructing and reassembling key elements from the novel's original logo," says Marcus Armitage, director at Studio AKA. "We interwove subtle clues from the show and elevated them by incorporating episodic hints. As the title concludes, a letter flips to reveal a clue for the episode, adding an enduring layer of mystery."

Marcus Armitage/Adam O'Sullivan Avery/Arthur Ranson, animators; Will Eagar, lighting designer; Will Eagar/Adam O'Sullivan Avery, computer generated imagery; Nic Gill, editor; Marcus Armitage, director; Rob Chapman, visual effects artist; Ren Pesci, production coordinator; Lara Salam, producer; Nikki Kefford-White, executive producer; Studio AKA (London, United Kingdom), production company; Moonage Pictures, client.

2 Archer School for Girls identity

An education at Los Angeles–based private institution Archer School for Girls helps young women realize their ambitions through a combination of traditional and emerging philosophies. To communicate this to parents, the Los Angeles branch of design agency Design Bridge and Partners blended the school's innovative approach with its established emblem: the goddess Artemis. "This resulted in the idea of Archer as an 'aegis' for girls pursuing their striking brilliance, with Artemis taking the helm of the identity aiming at a star—just as every girl at Archer has her own star," the design firm says. "Iterative icons and star symbols give the identity potential to adapt in the hands of every Archer student."

Emma Fontaine/Audrie Kapinus/Kari Porter, senior designers; Mackenzie Dragan, design director; Marlee Bruning, creative director; Ross Clugston, chief creative officer; Rob Clarke, typographer; Nina Marie Girod, artist; Andrew Hudson, illustrator; Abbi Chard, motion graphic designer; Veta Bates/Evan Gettinger/Alexa McPeak/Lily Thaler, strategy; Design Bridge and Partners (Los Angeles, CA), design firm; Bridget Ashley/Amy Shih, Archer School for Girls, clients.

3 LADAPT TV spot

"A World Without Limits" :56
Ahead of 2023's European Disability Employment Week, with the year's theme of how technology has boosted the rights of people with disabilities, this campaign by Paris-based ad agency BETC for disability rights organization LADAPT explores the impact of tech on people with disabilities through an AI-generated spot that challenges hiring practices of people without disabilities. "The project helped us realize how technological advances have transformed some forms of disability," say David Campese and Julien Lefevre, writer and art director respectively at BETC, "such as people who are hard of hearing, people with dyslexia or people with autism who need autonomy. We hope this film will change perception of people with disabilities within companies."

Julien Lefevre, art director; Eloise Leveque, associate art director; David Campese, writer; Julien Deschamps, creative director; Jerome Galinha, executive creative director; Stephane Xiberras, chief creative officer; BETC (Pantin, France), ad agency; LADAPT, client
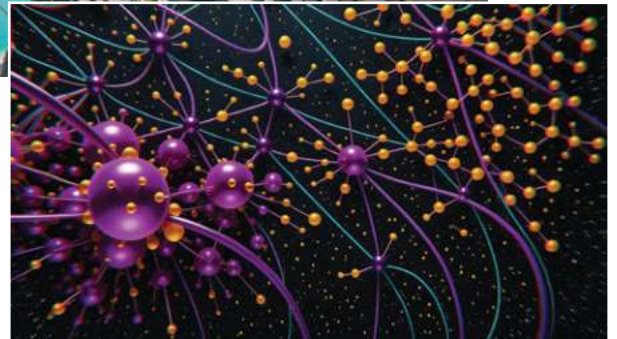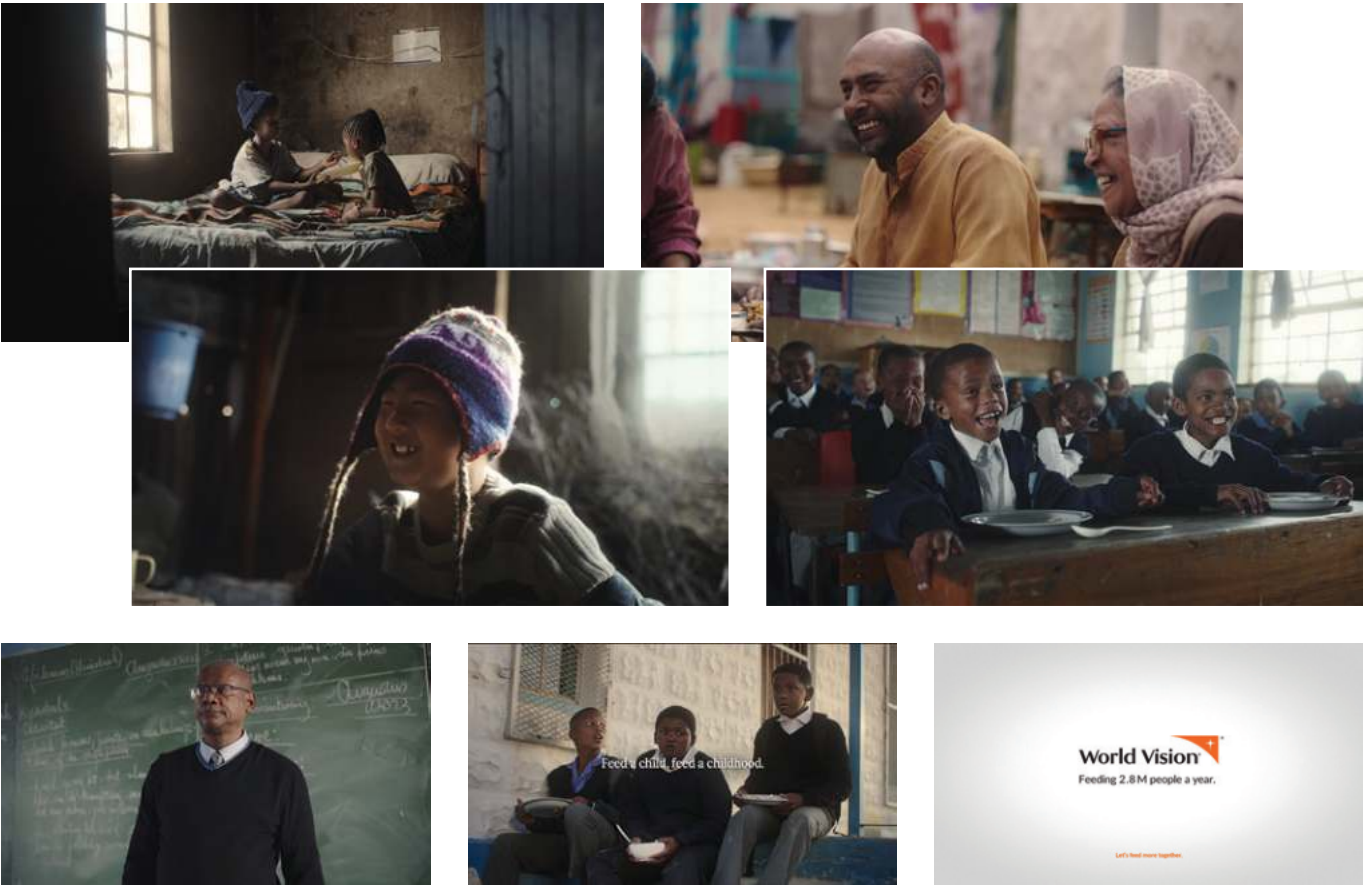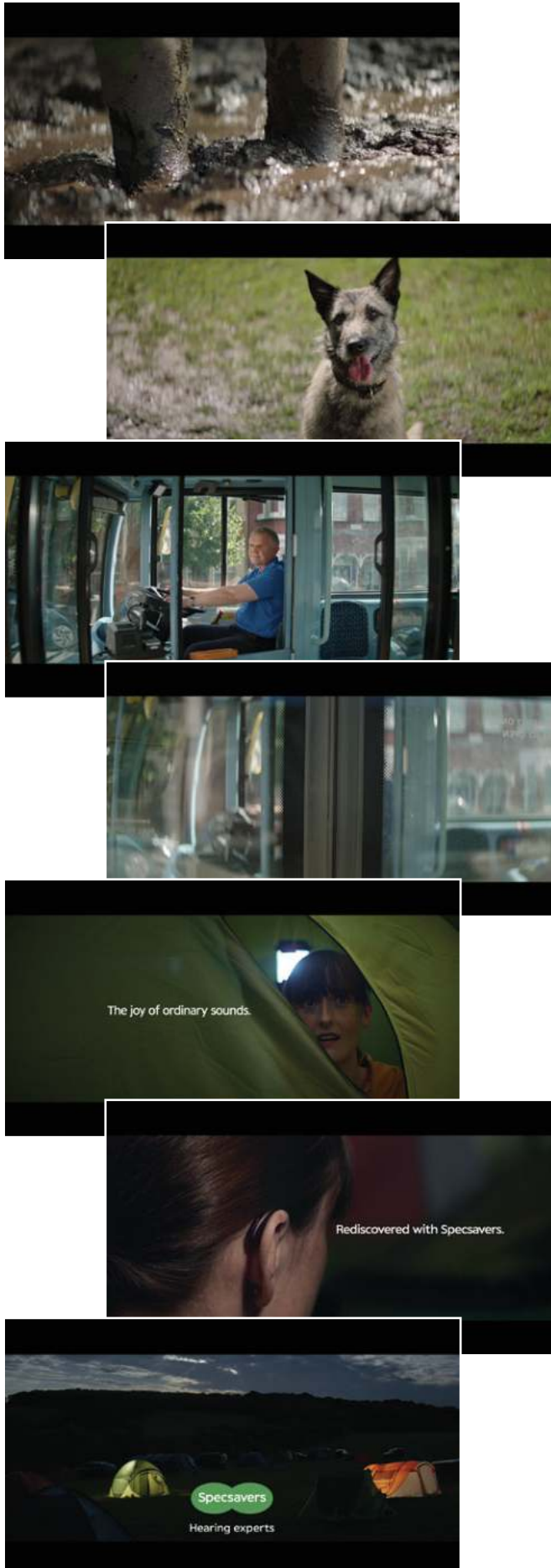
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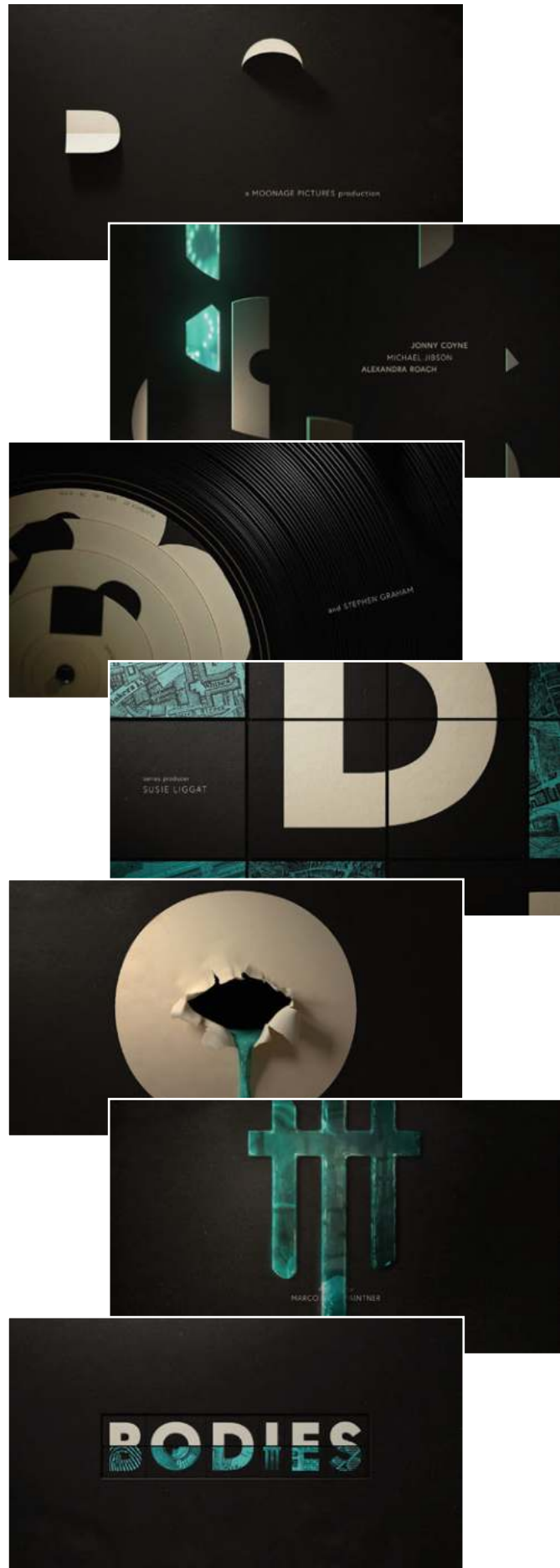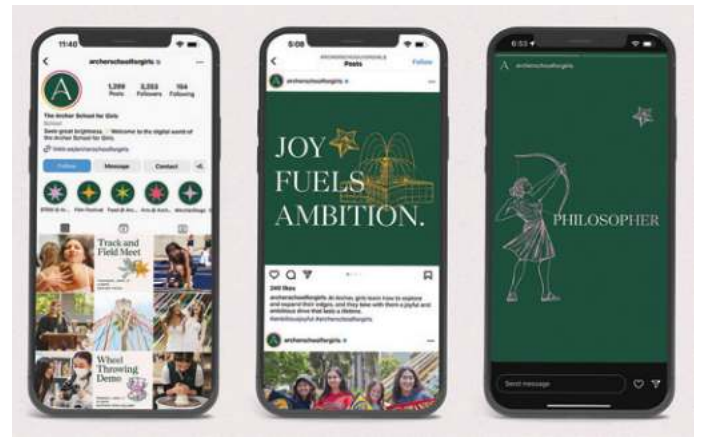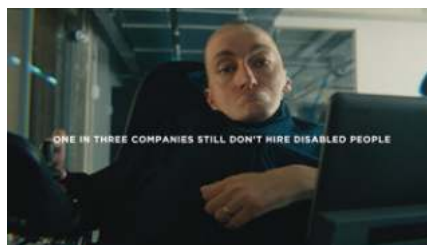
1 World Vision Canada TV spot

"Burp" :30

This spot by Toronto-based ad agency Broken Heart Love Affair uses the burp as a universal symbol of fullness to show how Christian relief, development and advocacy organization World Vision Canada tackles global food insecurity. "Our goal was to show the positive effects donations have and how they let kids be kids," says Mike Morelli, creative director at Broken Heart Love Affair. "We wanted viewers to remember that when they donate to World Vision, people in need get full bellies."

Mike Morelli, art director; Marty Hoefkes, writer; Mark Domitric, Grayson Music/Marty Hoefkes/Mike Morelli, Broken Heart Love Affair, creative directors; Jay Chaney, co-chief creative officer; Brandon Blight, director of photography; Phoebe Lorimer, assistant editor; Ross Birchall, editor; Saints Editorial, editorial company; Grayson Music, music company; tao/s, director; Paul Binney, visual effects artist; Kassi Bellamy, colorist; Kirsten Bowman, line producer; Morgan Campbell, Darling Colour & VFX/Kelly McCluskey, Grayson Music/Emily McKay, Saints Editorial/Josefina Nadurata, Holiday Films/Michelle Rich, Saints Editorial, executive producers; Holiday Films, production company; Darling Colour & VFX, visual effects company; The Big Picture Company, production service company; Starcom, media agency; Broken Heart Love Affair (Toronto, Canada), ad agency; Martin Campbell/Michael Messenger/Jennifer Watton, World Vision Canada, clients.

2 Stern Grove Festival identity

To reposition San Francisco–based live music festival Stern Grove Festival as a contemporary place for entertainment, local design firm Mucho created a new identity with a suite of evergreen design elements that can be animated to show the moving joy of live music and events. "The new identity moves away from the traditional hippie representation of San Francisco and works with any genre of music," says Rob Duncan, creative director and partner at Mucho.

Francesca Duncan/Paul Jeon/Luke Robertson, designers; Lyam Bewry, design director; Rob Duncan, creative director; Karan Singh, illustrator; Thru, motion graphic designer; Mucho (San Francisco, CA), design firm; Stern Grove Festival, client.

3 Specsavers TV spot

As few people know that United Kingdom–based health brand Specsavers can help with their hearing, the brand's in-house creative team designed a campaign that celebrates everyday sounds. "We spent a lot of time chatting about all the little sounds you take for granted and came up with a way to describe them onomatopoeically," say Jon Morgan and Bertie Rapkin, associate creative directors at Specsavers. "Once we'd written a couple, we knew we were onto something."

Jon Morgan/Bertie Rapkin, associate creative directors; Richard James, creative director; Robin Davidson/George Russell/Tom Slinger, designers; Sid Tomkins, design director; Judy Roberts, Flame artist; Adam Spivey, editor; The Assembly Rooms, editorial company; Phil Bolland, sound designer; Sine Audio, sound design; Simon Ratigan, director; Marty McMullen, colorist; Polly Evelegh, strategist; Phoebe Hazzan/Tim Nunn, producers; Mary Musasa, broadcast producer; Charles Gillet, post-production producer; Rogue Films, production company; FreeFolk, post-production company; Specsavers (London, United Kingdom), ad agency/client.

EXHIBIT

1 ᴌʙᴛʏ packaging

Wanting to expand into the luxury beauty market, department store Liberty commissioned the London branch of multinational design firm Pentagram, who had redesigned its identity in 2020, to develop the packaging for a line of fragrances. Inspired by Liberty's rich history in art and design—which extends back to 1875—partner Harry Pearce's team dove into archival research and uncovered that Liberty's name had been shortened to 'ᴌʙᴛʏ' for hallmarks, which became the name of the fragrance line debossed in gold on the packaging. "Reflecting Liberty's ethos of blending heritage and modernity, the fragrances are contained in an elegant clear glass bottle with an understated black-and-white label on the front," says Pearce. "The pared-back label designs set in Akzidenz-Grotesk Extended are a nod to indexes of trademarked fabric names found in the Liberty archive."

Pentagram (London, United Kingdom), design firm; Liberty, client.

2 Advance ꜱꜰ campaign

Launched ahead of the 2023 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Meeting chaired by President Biden, this campaign by San Francisco–based ad agency Goodby, Silverstein & Partners for the economic initiative Advance ꜱꜰ reminds people of the city's role as a hub for technological and artistic innovation. With visuals inspired by San Francisco's street signs, the campaign's visuals reflect the city's character as a junction of creativity across diverse arenas. "The thinking was to let the facts speak for themselves and to have some fun with those facts," says Jim Elliott, executive creative director at Goodby, Silverstein & Partners. "The truth is that San Francisco has always been a center of promise and potential, a beacon for forward-thinkers, changemakers and iconoclasts. Some of the greatest, most influential companies, brands and ɪᴘꜱ the world has ever known got their start here—and it's still true to this day."

Emily Devery, designer; Benny Gold, design director; Dave Becker/Mike Landry, E-Level/Jon Wolanske, Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, creative directors; Jim Elliott, executive creative director; Jim King, director of creative services; Nichole Richards/Mahima Silwal, strategy; Steven Castro, assistant editor; Emilio Diaz, director of photography; Ankur Patar/Aaron Von Freter, artists; Zachary Seidner, motion graphics; David Michel-Ruddy, sound engineer; Michael Damiani, post-production producer; Alisa Latvala, senior producer; Margot Baldwin, production artist; Jim Haight, production manager; Sam Nordemann, retoucher; ᴅᴍᴀx Imaging, editorial company; E-Level, post-production company; Goodby, Silverstein & Partners (San Francisco, ᴄᴀ), ad agency; Ryan McNeill/Wade Rose/Aaron Von Freter, ꜱᴋꜱ Partners/Christopher Wright, Advance ꜱꜰ, clients.

STUDENT SHOWCASE 2024

OUR 2024 STUDENT SHOWCASE FEATURES FOURTEEN PROMISING ADVERTISING, DESIGN, ILLUSTRATION AND PHOTOGRAPHY STUDENTS, REPRESENTING VISUAL COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS ACROSS THE UNITED STATES.

Selected from student portfolios recently posted on Creative Hotlist, the *Communication Arts* career site, these students were chosen by our editors for their distinctive approach to creative problem solving and for producing work at a professional level.

Additional work from these and other students can be found on creativehotlist.com, where students can upload their portfolios for free and be considered for future showcases.
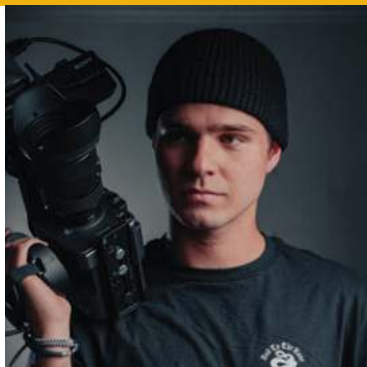
© Tayden Wheeler

Alex Knight
alexknight.io

School: Brigham Young University.

Hometown: Park City, UT.

Graduating: April 2024.

Major: Advertising.

Areas of interest: Cars, motorcycles, campfires, skiing and anything that goes fast.

Work experience: gear technician, drone assistant, production assistant, Override Films (June 2022–June 2023); freelance photographer/cinematographer (June 2020–present).

Cultural influences: Japanese Domestic Market car culture, early motorcycle racing, cowboy art and culture, Renaissance art.

Artistic influences: Ansel Adams, Aaron Brimhall, Chris Burkard, Larry Chen, Jimmy Chin.

Dream job: Freelance photographer and creative director working for major car manufacturers and action sport brands.

1 "Commissioned by Ford to show its collaboration with tire brand Method Race Wheels, sold with the Ford Bronco." Boyd Jaynes, creative director; Ford/Method Race Wheels, clients.

2 "From a recent campaign for ATV vehicle brand Can-Am." Anton Garneau, art director; Dean Hamann, creative director; Cossette Toronto, ad agency; Can-Am, client.

3 "I was given creative freedom to shoot images using this mountain bike from Jamis Bicycles. I spent some time with the talent riding around downtown Salt Lake City because I loved the idea of mountain biking in an urban area." Ben Locks, creative director; Jamis Bicycles, client.

Shruti Jeyakumar

shrutijeyakumar.com/
shrutijeyakumar

School: Maryland Institute College of Art.

Hometown: Chennai, India.

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Graphic design.

Areas of interest: My interests vary across every discipline of communication design, from editorial to identity, advertising, art direction, type design and, most recently, generative AI.

Awards: *Graphic Design USA* 60th American Design Awards (2023); *Communication Arts* Typography Competition, shortlist (2023); Packaging of the World (2023); *Communication Arts* Design Competition, shortlist (2023); Graduate Research Development Grant, recipient (2023); Bunting Award for Graduate Excellence (2023).

Work experience: design intern, Studio Glendenning (June 2023–August 2023); UX intern, Samsung Research and Development Institute (February 2021–August 2021).

Cultural influences: The vibrant hues, intricate patterns and traditional handicrafts endemic to Indian artistry have woven themselves into my design DNA. My relocation to the United States from Chennai was also a transformative lens through which I perceive design and visual storytelling.

Artistic influences: Marian Bantjes, Kenya Hara, Ellen Lupton, Karel Martens, Paula Scher.

Dream job: In a creative hub where inspiration is in the air, tackling serious design challenges with a splash of fun!

1 "An experimental ad project where I came up with concepts for the iconic Hay brand pillows, which are 100 percent cotton and have sun-bleached stripes. I prompted AI to generate images based on my story concept." Greg Kaplan, instructor.

2 "Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave festival includes contemporary artist lectures, literature, cinema and visual art. Inspired by flag book binding, the guide's structure surprises as information emerges, mimicking the multifaceted nature of narratives." Shiva Nallaperumal/ Juhi Vishnani, instructors.

3 "Through micro-level type decisions and vibrant illustrations, this collection of posters represents different types of puzzles." Ellen Lupton, instructor.

Achi Zho

achiiart.com

School: California College of the Arts.

Hometown: Shandong, China.

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Fine art.

Areas of interest: Illustration, art books, hand-drawn animation, experimental animation.

Awards: Illustrators 66 (2023); *3x3* International Illustration Show No. 20, merit (2023); *Communication Arts* Illustration Competition, shortlist (2023); *Creative Quarterly* 100 Best Annual (2023); Society of Illustrators Student Competition (2022); The 8th China Illustration Biennial, Bronze Award (2022).

Work experience: gallery assistant, The Wattis Institution of Contemporary Art (January 2023–present); freelance illustrator, *T China* magazine (August 2021); assistant curator, L'etincelle Art Space (June 2021–August 2021); freelance illustrator, Beijing Modian Huixiang Technology (June 2021); freelance illustrator, Shaanxi Grant Theatre (June 2021).

Cultural influences: Surrealism, post-modernism, Chinese dough sculpture culture, French new wave, the golden age of American illustration.

Artistic influences: William Blake, Kota Ezawa, J. C. Leyendecker, Lorenzo Mattoti, Matt Rata, Yuko Shimizu, Holly Warburton, Qing Yi.

Dream job: Establishing a freelance illustration business or finding an agent to represent me while being an experimental animator.

1 "From a series of illustrations titled *He Crossed the Mountains Before Sunrise*. It portrays the protagonist reminiscing about his childhood, accentuating warmth, freedom, joy and the passing of time, all rendered in a prominent yellow hue." Nuomi/sᴜɴ, clients.

2 Personal work. "From my *Pilgrimage* series, a record of visions I've had during my urban observations and hangouts—almost the memories and emotions preserved within the space itself, occasionally leaking out."

3 "*Women's Exhibition?* depicts a gallery space of multiple portraits of women, each posed uniquely but lacking distinct facial features. When womanhood is linked as a label or gimmick to art, do the women artists depicted become more homogenized?" Yang Wu, art director; T China, client.

1

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3

Jordan Leveille
jordanleveille.com

School: Syracuse University, S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.

Hometown: Bedford, NH.

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Advertising, art direction.

Minor: Anthropology.

Areas of interest: Art direction, album design, poster design, photography, graphic design, brand identity, brand/artist relaunch, visual communications.

Awards: *Graphis* New Talent Awards (2023), Ads of the World Highlight (2022).

Work experience: freelance graphic designer (August 2023–present).

Cultural influences: Conceptual art, pop art, environmental stewardship, rise of independent artists.

Artistic influences: Blair Barnette, Barney Bubbles, Greg Hahn, Peter Saville.

Dream job: Establishing my own design agency with a focus on the music industry and emerging artists.

1 "This campaign for beauty brand Aveeno's Oat Milk Hair Treatment plays with the feeling of damaged hair as monstrous to deal with and, if left unmanaged, dangerous for your overall hair health." Mel White, instructor.

2 "Highlighting drinkware brand Hydro Flask as the ultimate temperature-controlled water bottle that keeps water colder longer, this concept creates a visual connection between the product and a recognizable symbol of cold water: a glacier." Mel White, instructor.

3 "The Charity: Water campaign tangibly re-creates water inaccessibility through a completely sealed and visually identifiable water package, forcing consumers to experience an issue that many typically don't in their daily lives." Mel White, instructor.

Conner Gayda
connergayda.com

School: Jacksonville State University.

Hometown: Tyrone, GA

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: MFA in visual communication design.

Areas of interest: Art direction, identity design, type design, packaging, motion and interactive design.

Awards: National ADDY Award, Typeface Design (2023); United States International Poster Biennial (2023); *Creative Quarterly* 73 (2023).

Work experience: design intern, Tatum Design (May 2023–present); graduate teaching assistant, Jacksonville State University (August 2021–present); design intern, Telegraph Creative (May 2020–August 2021).

Cultural influences: American/European modernism, design responsibility, Southern culture.

Artistic influences: Ivan Chermayeff, Reid Miles, Order Design, Rural Studio, Kris Sowersby, Standard Deluxe, Unit Editions Publishing.

Dream job: To be a professor of design and typography or to start my own multi-disciplinary design studio.
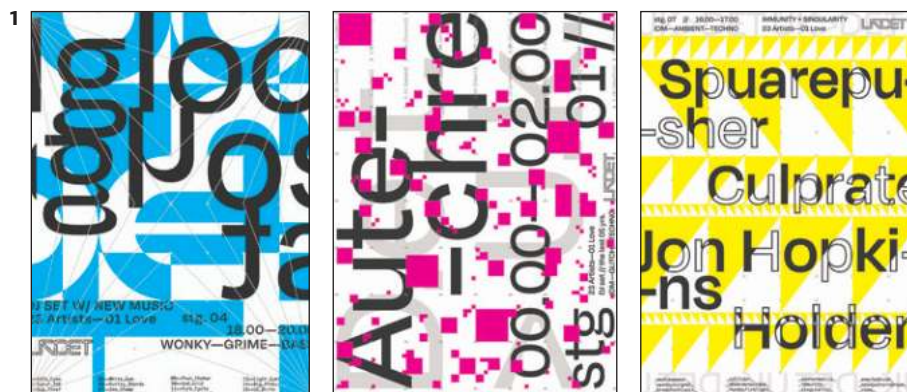
1 "This series of animated posters promotes the electronic music festival UKDET while simultaneously offering way-finding details." Seth Johnson, instructor

2 "Winery Ménagerie is a set of wine bottles created as gifts for donors to the Birmingham Zoo's animal conservation project. Each bottle features an illustration of an at-risk animal the Zoo works to protect." Chad Anderson, instructor.

3 "Waverly is a typographic tribute to Scott Peek's 'design and silkscreen print shop with a live music problem' Standard Deluxe, based in Waverly, Alabama." Jamie Runnells, instructor.

4 "The Birmingham Black Barons were Alabama's premier Negro League baseball team known for producing players like Satchel Paige and Willie Mays. This original typeface pays homage to the team's legacy by developing the type treatment on their 1948 uniform." Chad Anderson, instructor.

© James Porto

Kyra Allen
bykyrallen.com

School: Rochester Institute of Technology.

Hometown: Holliston, MA.

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Advertising photography.

Areas of interest: Emotionalism, surreal portrait photography, interdisciplinary collaborations with similarly passionate artists.

Awards: Rochester Institute of Technology, College of Art and Design Honors Show (2023).

Work experience: equipment specialist, Rochester Institute of Technology (December 2022–present); artist in residence, The Barr Hill Players (July 2022–present); art handler and catalog photographer, Gallery 55 (June 2020–August 2022).

Cultural influences: Abstract expressionism, surrealism, emotionalism, performance art, narcolepsy and chronic dysfunction, introspective sociology.

Artistic influences: Sam Cannon, Jain Cipriano, Pari Dukovic, Cai Guo-Qiang, William C. Harrington, Elizaveta Porodina, Fred Tomaselli.

Dream job: My dream job would allow me to collaborate with photographers and other artists by working freelance until eventually opening my own studio or center for the arts. No matter my job title, I hope to always be in a position that lets me continue supporting and learning from other passionate artists.

1 "Based on the article 'What Is a Body, Anyway?' by Finn Enke in the book *Transcending: Trans Buddhist Voices*, this image is one in a series that seeks to simplify and obscure the human form and invite the viewer to think of the body in a new, more abstract way." Clay McBride, instructor.

2 "As an abstract oil painter, I always look for ways to bring abstraction into my stylized self-portraits. This image embraces color, texture and body to express the sensation of self-assured identity." Kristy Boyce, instructor.

3 Personal work. "In this self-portrait, I become the embodiment of sensory indulgence slathered in silver and gold paint, bathing in golden light."

4 "The *Anatomy Mapping* project is a collaboration with classically trained artist and medical illustrator Olivia Garlock. Using body paint to reveal the tissue beneath the skin, we marvel at the range of human gesture and form as demonstrated by a 'beyond-nude' model." Olivia Garlock, contributing artist; Kristy Boyce, instructor.

Ke Yu
yukeart.com

School: School of Visual Arts.

Hometown: Shanghai, China.

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Illustration.

Areas of interest: Painting, editorial illustration, poster design, advertising illustration.

Awards: *3x3* Illustration Awards, honorable mention (2023); *Communication Arts* Illustration Competition, shortlist (2023); iJungle Illustration Awards, merit awards (2022).

Work experience: freelance illustrator, Yinzhuo Interior Design Co. (November 2021–present); contributor, *Visual Opinion* magazine (September 2023); contributor, *Visual Opinion* magazine (August 2023); advertising illustrator, OCM Globe Inc (October 2022–November 2022); freelance illustrator, Menory Cultural and Creative Store (July 2021–September 2021).

Cultural influences: I have a strong interest in traditional Chinese ink painting and ancient Chinese designs. I frequently draw on traditional materials and scan them to digitally color them. I appreciate the spontaneity of ink painting and the vibrant colors of digital art.

Artistic influences: Illustrator Yoshitaka Amano's colors and intricate details fascinated me and instilled a great passion in me for traditional media.

Dream job: Collaborating with various brands and launching cobranded projects as a freelance illustrator.

1 Personal work based on the short story "Slumming" by Chuck Palahniuk.

2 "An illustration of a meeting between me and myself in ten years. The future me reaches back to the present and records the present world with a pencil." Tomer Hanuka, instructor.

3 "Cover for a series of illustrations I created based on Chuck Palahniuk's novel and short story collection *Haunted*, specifically centered on the short story titled 'Slumming.'" Tomer Hanuka, instructor.

4 Based on the short story "Slumming" by Chuck Palahniuk. Tomer Hanuka, instructor.

1

DIVINE RELIEF
IS NIGH AT HAND

BEHOLD
Blistex

PARTAKE OF THE BALM OF
RESTORATION

BEHOLD
Blistex

2

Side Quest
Want to listen?
Volunteer as tribute at a soup kitchen
Done

Side Quest
Want to listen?
Text your ex
Done

Side Quest
Want to listen?
Tell someone you love them
Done

3

Hallie Smith
createdbyhallie.com

School: Brigham Young University.

Hometown: Greensboro, NC.

Graduating: April 2024.

Major: Communications with an emphasis on advertising.

Areas of interest: I grew up spending my summers at film camp learning about the art of lighting, camera work, storytelling, editing and directing. My background in film led me to animation and graphic design. I also love fashion and worked in the sneaker industry for several months.

Awards: Future Lions, shortlist (2023); Young Ones One Show, shortlist (2023).

Work experience: art director, BYU Adlab (April 2022–April 2024); creative marketing intern, KYX (May 2022–November 2022); freelance videographer (January 2017–July 2020).

Cultural influences: Street art, streetwear, sneaker culture, new media art, hip-hop.

Artistic influences: Petra Collins, Kim Gehrig, Yayoi Kusama, Ditte Reffstrup, Vivienne Westwood.

Dream job: While my formal discipline is art direction, my deep affection for music has been a lifelong passion. I have an extensive collection of playlists and am even a self-taught DJ. Driven by my love for music, film and art direction, I would love to be a creative director for music videos.

1 "The word *medicated* is plastered all over Blistex products. While that may be true, we wanted to find a more creative, enticing way to share this insight. This print ad campaign is part of a more cohesive brand overhaul for Blistex." Macey Carson/Hallie Smith, art directors; Emily Hakala, writer; Jeff Sheets, instructor.

2 "When Spotify added audiobooks, the streaming service decided to compete with companies like Audible and Kindle. So, what's a creative way to attract new users while distinguishing yourself from competitors? Our answer: Spotify Side Quest. This mockup demonstrates customized 'sidequests' that users can complete to unlock a free trial." Nate Nielsen, writer; Jeff Sheets, instructor.

3 "Women make up only 1.6 percent of the resell sneaker market today, but the potential to grow is huge. In the outrageous guerrilla campaign SNKRS × U by Kotex: Break the Cycle, buying a box of U by Kotex tampons unlocks a special code that increases your odds for the next SNKRS app drop." Mary Clark, writer; Jeff Sheets, instructor.

Johanna Moreta
johannadesigns.cargo.site

School: College for Creative Studies.

Hometown: Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Communication design.

Areas of interest: Brand identity, illustration, publication design, print, motion, UI/UX design.

Awards: Leo Burnett Detroit Minority Scholarship (2023); 2022 *Graphic Design USA* Students To Watch (2021); Richard & Jean Coyne Family Foundation Scholarship (2020–2021).

Work experience: remote graphic designer, Paul Snyder Studios (February 2022–present); remote graphic design intern, 3M (June 2022–August 2022).

Cultural influences: My early painting studies, together with my upbringing in the Dominican Republic and its vibrant artistic community, have influenced my use of color, pattern and imagery in my designs. My eyes opened to the ever-changing trends in popular and digital culture when I moved to the United States at the age of fourteen. This let me connect with different audiences and create designs that resonate with them.

Artistic influences: Annie Atkins, Irma Boom, Paul Rand, Leta Sobierajski, Massimo Vignelli, Jessica Walsh.

Dream job: I envision myself as a creative director—or a freelancer—at my own design studio that will let me choose projects that would challenge me as a designer.
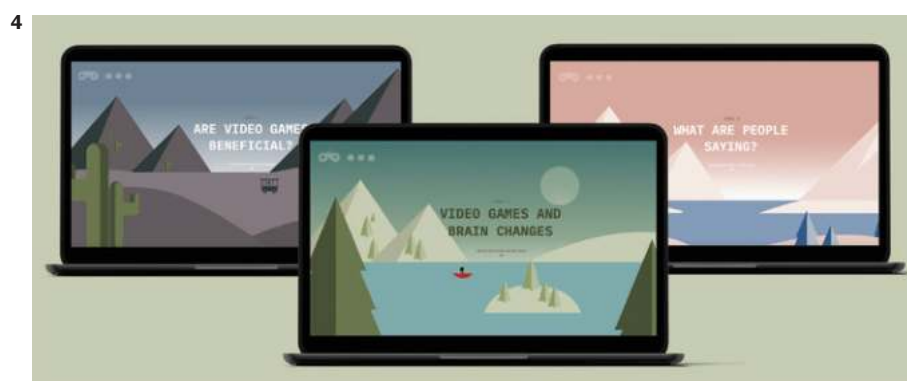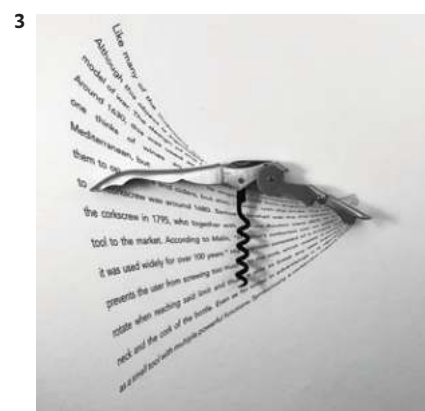
1 "Located in Bozeman, Montana, Saphirs Mining draws inspiration from the mythology of the sapphire with an astrological contemporary theme. This fictional store provides students with safe mining practices and teaches the abilities of the sapphire." Chad Reichert, instructor.

2 "Inspired from my own personal collection of plants, Roots helps users establish effective care habits for their plants. By allowing users to scan their plant's leaves and assigning unique names, the app can diagnose any diseases and treat them accordingly." Ryan Cady, instructor.

3 "Originally designed as a model of war and a tool to clean musket barrels, the Sommelier's Knife holds a rich history. Through a physical examination of the object, I explored the connotative and denotative meanings by considering its angle, shape, details and a relevant prop." Matthew Raupp, instructor.

4 "Based on Hannah Nichols's article 'How Video Games Affect the Brain,' this website explores both the positive and negative effects of video games on the brain and user behavior. The design takes inspiration from the qualities of video games and incorporates a colorful palette, coded pages representing different levels and worlds, and playful illustrations." Michael Cragg, instructor.

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© Andy Phan

Jenna Morelli
jennamorelliphotography.com

School: The University of the Arts.

Hometown: Langhorne, PA.

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Photography.

Minor: Business.

Areas of interest: Fashion and editorial photography, product photography, photo retouching, empowering people through portraiture, honoring human forms through abstraction.

Awards: The University of the Arts Distinguished Scholar/Artist Scholarship (2022–2024); Emerging Perspectives: University Student Show, second place (2023); Echo Lake Awards (2020–2022); David Witham Memorial Award (2021); Stella Elkins Tyler Art Scholarship (2021); Marian Ebert-Wolle Scholarship (2020).

Work experience: assistant photographer, Lauren Driscoll Photography (December 2019–May 2023); photo intern and photographer, AG Photography Inc. (April 2016–October 2020).

Cultural influences: The fashion world, women's and LGBTQ+ issues, the divine feminine.

Artistic influences: Petra Collins, Chantal Convertini, Marcelo Gaia, Lady Gaga, Coco Rocha, Alex Stoddard, film, art history and the many talented people that surround me.

Dream job: Fashion photographer and art director, owning my own studio in New York City and being able to travel around the world.

1 "There is an essence of femininity present in all people regardless of the gender they were assigned at birth. Here, we see a heavily masculine-presenting feature being abstracted to almost resemble a mountain. The soft caress of the stem along the leg's outline and a subtle allusion to Mother Nature challenges any ruggedness and typical expectations of gender." Jennifer Greenburg, instructor.

2 "Heavily inspired by divine femininity and the human spirit, I often seek to emulate a dreamy, free-spiritedness in my work. Here, I styled my model in a beautiful flowing white dress complimented by the breeze and sweeping shapes of the tall grass in the field." Barbara Proud, instructor.

3 "One of five total images where I created environments that complimented various beauty products and then shaped the light in various ways to enhance the overall composition." Barbara Proud, instructor.

Connor O'Neill
connor-oneill.com

School: University of Kansas, School of Architecture and Design.

Hometown: Overland Park, KS.

Graduated: May 2023.

Major: Visual communications.

Minor: Art history, Book Arts Certificate.

Areas of interest: Branding design, print publication, typography.

Awards: Design Senior Award, visual communication (2023); DSVC National Student Show, best senior portfolio (2023); DSVC National Student Show, publication, typography, packaging and wayfinding awards (2023); Spencer Museum of Art, Diverse Media Award (2022); AIGA KC, branding and print awards (2022); AIGA KC, branding and print awards (2021); DSVC National Student Show, best sophomore portfolio (2021).

Work experience: designer, Pentagram (November 2023–present); junior designer, Asterisk Design (June 2023–October 2023); design intern, Design Ranch (January 2022–May 2022).

Cultural influences: Production company A24, fashion, the *New York Times*, music, dance, pop icons, drag artists, Taylor Swift, *Vogue*.

Artistic influences: Bauhaus, drum corps, Phillip Glass, marching arts, Mark Rothko, Sydney Dance Company, Vincent van Gogh, winter guard.

Dream job: I'd love to be a creative director for a studio, continue my design schooling and pursue my passion of teaching as a design professor.

1 "A hotel and hiking experience in West Virginia within the New River Gorge. Designed around the integration of self-exploration and scientific data, the elements of the brand explore trail iconography in combination with elements of stratigraphy, the measurement of rock layers." Alex Anderson, instructor.

2 "Branding and event planning for a week of 32 sessions, events and speakers for the University of Kansas Design Program. The creative process is represented through a system of points that overlap to form new ideas." Abigail Miles/Connor O'Neill, designers; Jeremy Shellhorn, instructor.

3 "A reimagining of packaging for a children's game of dominoes with a reusable design. The riffs on old Western language and visual motifs were inspired by games played with dominoes, including draw and rogue train." Alex Anderson, instructor.

1 "Nothing hurts more than when someone claims they don't want fries and then steals one of yours. This campaign portrays the painful emotions and the feeling of intense betrayal that comes from losing one of your precious McDonald's fries." Mel White, instructor.

2 "Battery life is important when buying new tech, and we can't afford to have our headphones fall asleep on the job. Raycon's Everyday Earbuds beat out the battery life of competitors by 200 percent." Mel White, instructor.

3 "For Gen Z, time is moving too quickly. Clinging onto the past through childhood toys has become a huge problem, yet these items have been unused for years. eBay gives Gen Z the snarky shove they need to finally let their items go and clean out their rooms." Kayla Beck, writer; Mel White, instructor.

Victoria Aragi
toriaragi.com

School: Syracuse University, S. I. Newhouse School of Public Communications.

Hometown: Holden, MA

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Advertising with a focus on art direction.

Minors: Environment and Society, and Marketing.

Areas of interest: Graphic design, branding, packaging design, photography.

Awards: *Communication Arts* Advertising Competition shortlist (2023); *Graphis* New Talent Awards, silver (2023); The Clio Awards, Ads of the World, three (2023); The Clio Awards, Ads of the World, three (2022).

Work experience: art direction intern, Merkley + Partners (September 2023–December 2023); creative intern, Wasserman Next Gen (June 2023–August 2023); social media intern, Bright Horizons (November 2021–present); creative director, Otto's Army (May 2021–April 2023).

Cultural influences: I am primarily influenced by social activism, music and the urban environment surrounding me. I love incorporating the stories of the places I've been and the people I've met into the work I create.

Artistic influences: Boston's local artists, Keith Haring, Noah Kahan, the natural environment, Vincent van Gogh and *The New Yorker* cartoons.

Dream job: Establishing my own creative advertising agency that will focus on social justice and environmental campaigns.

Macey Carson
maceycarson.com

School: Brigham Young University.

Hometown: American Fork, UT

Graduating: April 2024.

Major: Communications, advertising.

Minors: International development.

Areas of interest: Art direction, packaging design, UX/UI design.

Awards: Cannes Festival of Creativity, Future Lions, shortlist (2023).

Work experience: UX/UI designer, Brigham Young University Office of Information and Technology (January 2022–March 2023).

Cultural influences: My parents are both artists, and I've always been in love with the idea of being an artist. I was lucky to grow up with people that support me no matter what and really encourage me to follow my dreams.

Artistic influences: I got to attend the Cannes Festival of Creativity over the summer and found my artistic voice as I studied the work from many different agencies. I was inspired by creatives from all around the world and met many people that I've really looked up to and praised over the years.

Dream job: I would love to someday be an art director at Mother, TBWA\Chiat\Day or Wieden+Kennedy, or anywhere else that looks fun and cool—though I know I have a long way to go. The dreamiest dream would be to live in a random, tiny beach town, painting all day and eating açaí bowls.
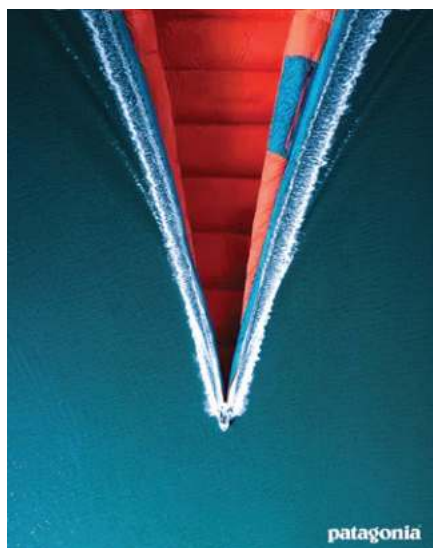
1 "In order to show the all-terrain capabilities of Patagonia's Fitz Roy sleeping bag, these print ads show four different terrains being unzipped to reveal a Patagonia sleeping bag." Quint Randle/Jeff Sheets, instructors.

2 "I originally created this for a typography study on the Adobe font Soleil. When my instructor displayed my project on a screen, everyone laughed because mine unintentionally said SEX in massive letters. Instead of fixing it, I added the line 'Soleil Sells' to the bottom of the page as a joke." Quint Randle/Jeff Sheets, instructors.

3 "For this campaign for Delta Airlines, I made four paper airplanes; wherever the folds met, I added airports. Because anywhere you fly with Delta, you'll find your fold." Jeff Sheets, instructor.

© Isaac Swartz

Chris Gimmillaro
cgimillaro.com

School: The University of the Arts.

Hometown: Paoli, PA.

Graduating: May 2024.

Major: Photography.

Minor: Sculpture.

Areas of interest: Aviation, nature, architecture, dance, portrait photography.

Exhibitions: PhotoLounge Emerging Perspectives (2023); iLab Studios (2023); Senior Work in Review (2023); School of Art (2022).

Work experience: freelance photographer (October 2022–present); database editor, Airliners Photography (November 2014–present).

Cultural influences: History, paintings, historic photographs and traveling off the beaten path.

Artistic influences: Being around nature and immersing myself in history.

Dream job: Traveling the world, photographing wildlife and aviation.

1 "During a beautiful sunset, I came across this church. When I found this small puddle, I had to place my lens as close to the water as possible to get the best, most symmetrical reflections." David Graham, instructor.

2 "I have a habit of looking up while walking around the city. Around sunset, I noticed the light reflecting on a building from across the street in a way I had never seen before." Jennifer Greenberg, instructor.

3 "While walking around the city, this angular architecture caught my eye with its repeating pattern. A bit of perspective editing in post gives a satisfying effect." Jennifer Greenburg, instructor.
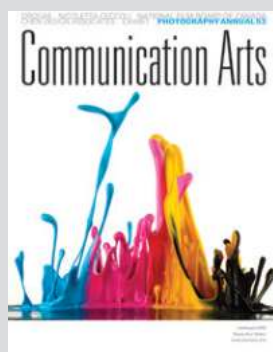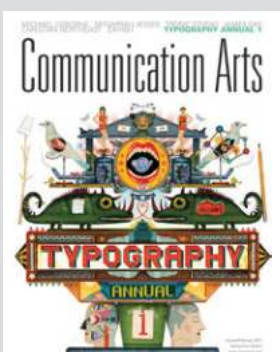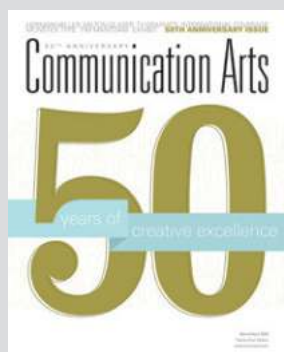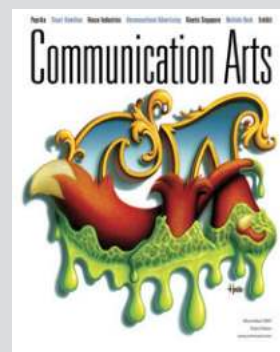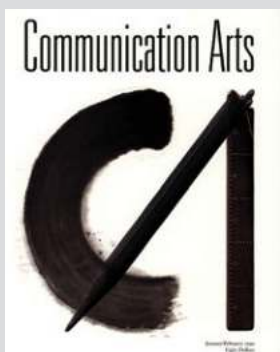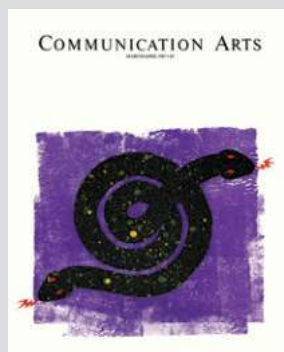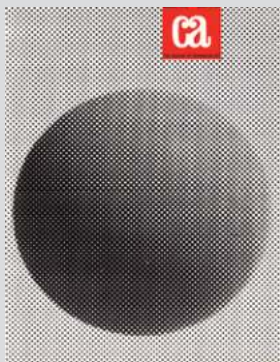
"I was pleasantly surprised to see so much playfulness, joy and humor in the work this year." **—Maria D'Amato**

INTERACTIVE
ANNUAL 2024

"The strength of the student projects was a standout this year. I hope that many of their design product ideas are made real."

—Boo Wong
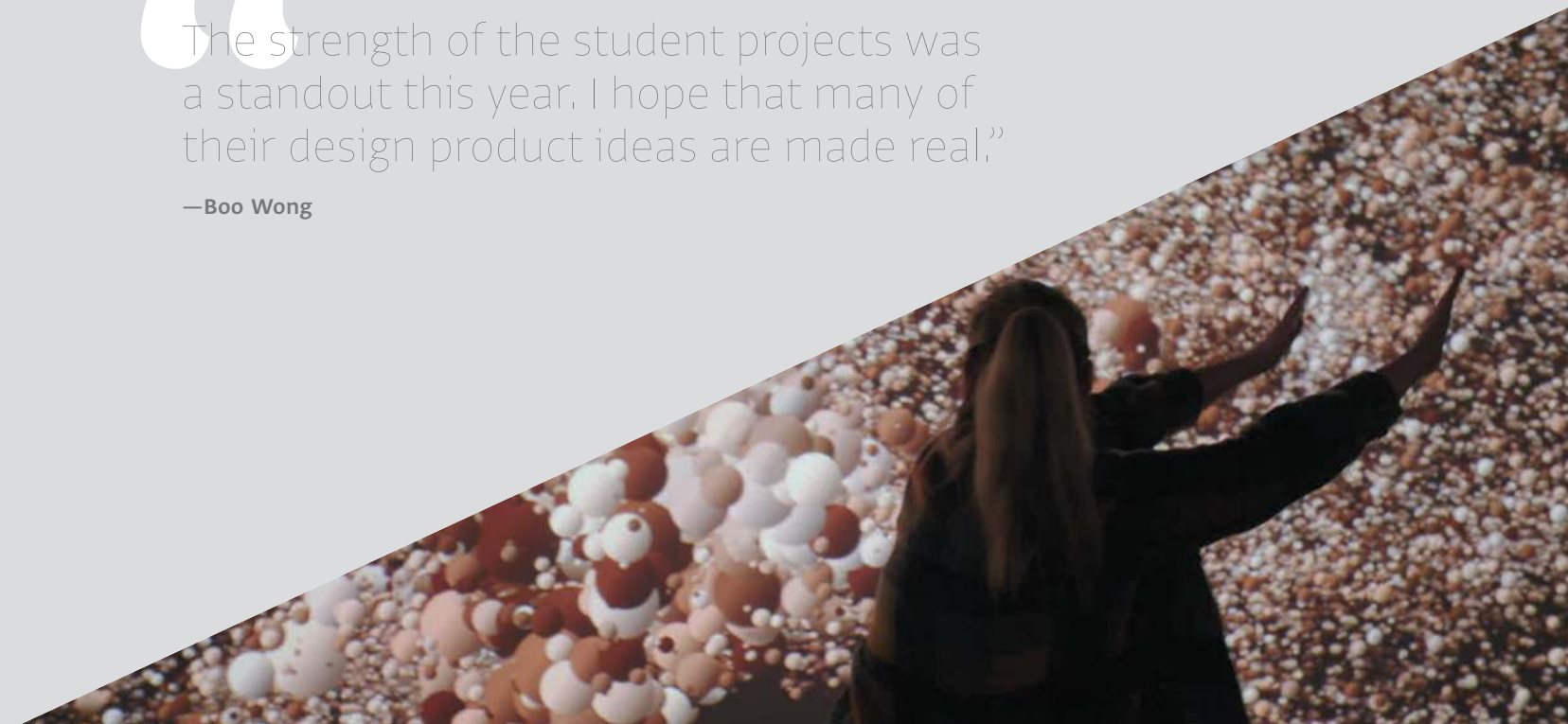
ChainZoku

"What happens when Japanese vinyl and manga meets video game customization." —**Boo Wong**

chainzoku.io

Overview: An expanding NFT collection aimed at enthusiasts of anime and manga, cryptocurrency, fashion, and gaming, ChainZoku takes NFTs to an enhanced level with online gamified features like weekly loot drops, customizable outfits and quests. Through this site designed by Amsterdam-based Antinomy Studio, users can mint their Zoku—the main characters of the NFT line—to discover what clan they belong to: the Onizoku, who develop traditional psychic and shamanic powers; and the BosoZoku, who embrace technology and undergo cybernetic enhancements. Weekly issues of an online manga reveal users' destinies and impact each NFT, resulting in a dynamic Web3 experience.

- A team of seven members at Antinomy Studio collaborated with Paris-based Web3 development studio Miinded and the creative team at ChainZoku to create the website.

- The website is built using mostly vanilla JavaScript with Vue.js. A large codebase of custom smart contracts and back-end architecture supports minting the NFT collection.

- With the ChainZoku website being rolled out in phases, the project took about a year and a half from early discussions to the final launch of the last page.

Antinomy Studio (Amsterdam, The Netherlands)/Miinded, project design and development
ChainZoku, client
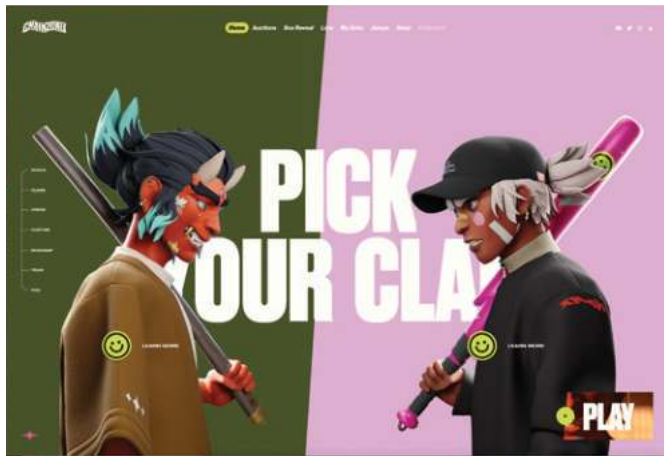
Comments by Baptiste Briel:

How did you launch the ChainZoku website in phases? "We started by launching the homepage that conveys the overall vision of the project, followed by the Lore page, including an interactive map of Tōdai City—the environment where ChainZoku takes place. Then came the minting experience, a fully custom-made interactive mint experience. The Weekly Jumps page, which serves as an online *konbini* ('convenience store') where holders can learn more about the lore, came last."

How many videos, images and other media elements does the site have? "There is a lot going on! For instance, during the preloader, the logo animation has approximately 70 frames to play smoothly. These frames are loaded using a web worker to ensure that the main thread is not blocked while the preloader animation is running. There are a handful of images and videos that are lazy-loaded on scroll while the user navigates through the site."

What was the most challenging aspect of the project? "When we introduced ChainZoku to the world, our main focus was on interactive scrolly-telling. There is just so much to discuss about the project, and we wanted to ensure that users could learn more about it without feeling overwhelmed. But building a large site with many assets comes at a cost—performance. We spent a lot of time debugging and optimizing code to ensure that the ChainZoku site runs smoothly on devices."
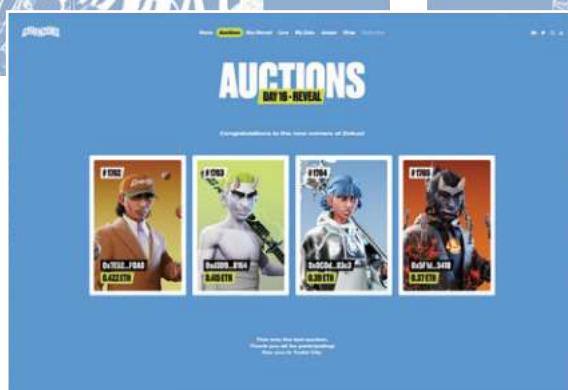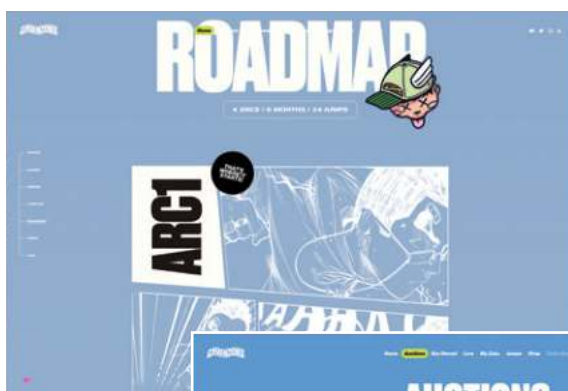
Lusion

"This site does an impeccable job of telling me what this agency does and why I would want to work with or for it. It's completely on trend without feeling trendy, meticulously crafted, shows off its technical chops and incorporates just the right amount of perfectly timed weirdness."

—**Maria D'Amato**

Overview: Based in Bristol, United Kingdom, digital design firm Lusion prides itself on its ability to create unique and memorable experiences. For the third version of its portfolio site, the studio combines immersive, interactive storytelling with advanced technologies like WebGL, real-time 3-D rendering and responsive animations. The site underscores Lusion's penchant for expanding traditional web design concepts through these technologies alongside an intuitive navigation and a user-centric design approach. The project engages visitors while showcasing the studio's commitment to blending innovative technology and art with creative narratives and to redefining the possibilities of digital experiences.

- Playful interactions throughout the site, such as an astronaut protagonist that follows the user or a fluid simulation at the bottom of the About Us page, foster a delightful experience while showcasing Lusion's talents.

- For the site's mobile version, Lusion utilized the mobile accelerometer control to let users interact with the site through natural movements and tilting their devices.

- Asynchronous loading and data compression methods guarantee a high performance even with the site's complex visuals.

lusion.co
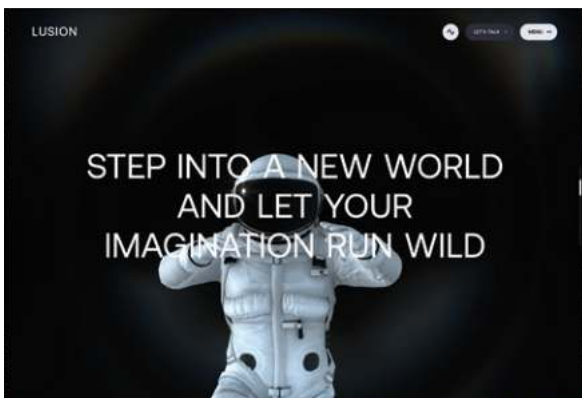
Marco Grimaldi, design director
Edan Kwan, creative director/lead visual effects artist
Marco Ludovico Perego/Anatole Touvron, visual effects artists
Ffion Morgan, producer
Lusion (Bristol, United Kingdom), project design and development

Comments by Lusion:

How would you define the core features of this iteration of Lusion's site? "Our redesigned website's core features center around interactive real-time storytelling experiences. These are not just static displays; they're dynamic, engaging and evolve based on user interaction. We thought out each and every visual with a focus on how we pay attention to detail to exceed expectations. One standout example is the astronaut visual, an immersive experience that evolves with the user's interaction. Scrolling further leads the astronaut through portals until the end when it breaks through the glass. Users can also interact with the visual, clicking the mouse button to slow down the astronaut or scrolling backwards to reverse the journey to the beginning."

What was the most challenging part of this project? "Achieving a balance between high performance and maintaining the superior visual quality we envisioned. This challenge was particularly demanding due to advanced features like real-time 3-D rendering, complex animations and interactive elements integrated into our website. To overcome this, we employed a combination
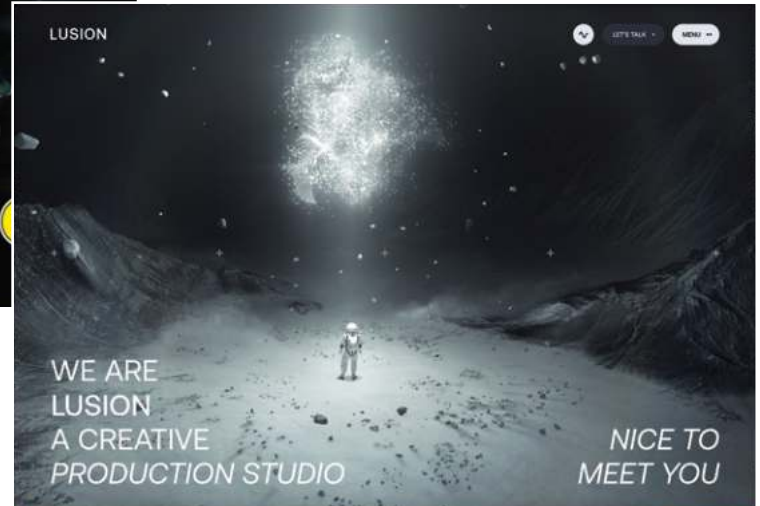
of optimized coding practices, efficient use of graphics-rendering techniques and careful selection of web technologies. We leveraged asynchronous loading and data compression methods to ensure that the website loads quickly without compromising on visual richness. By conducting rigorous performance testing, we identified and resolved bottlenecks in real time."

Are there any other technical features you'd like to call attention to? "Our website contains many advanced technical features like flip solver, ray marching and ray tracing. The flip solver brings to life realistic fluid dynamics, adding depth and realism. Ray marching is key for rendering complex 3-D scenes in real time, enriching our storytelling with detailed visuals. Ray tracing, used for photorealistic lighting and reflections, elevates the site's aesthetic by engendering a lifelike, immersive user experience."
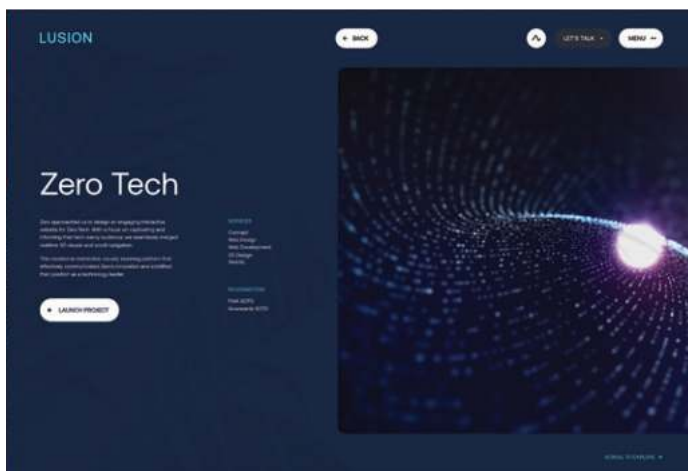
Sculpting Harmony

"Bold type design and a great layout of information and imagery keep the presentation of archival images alive. The ability to deep dive makes you appreciate the history of the project."

—**Boo Wong**
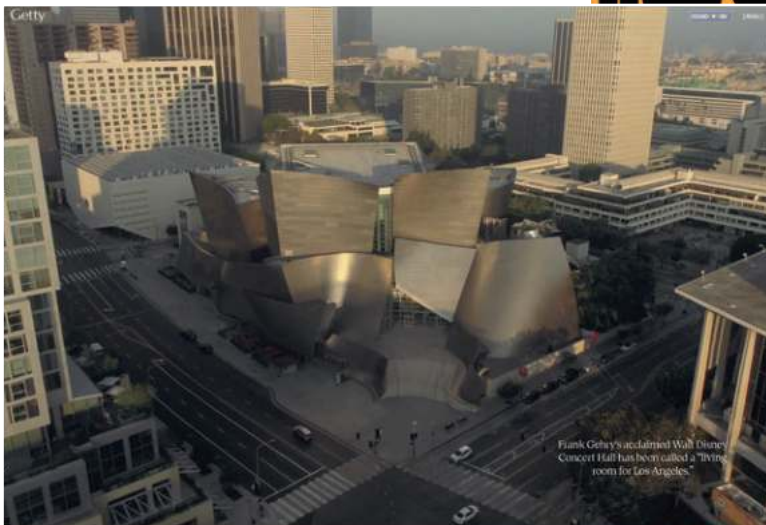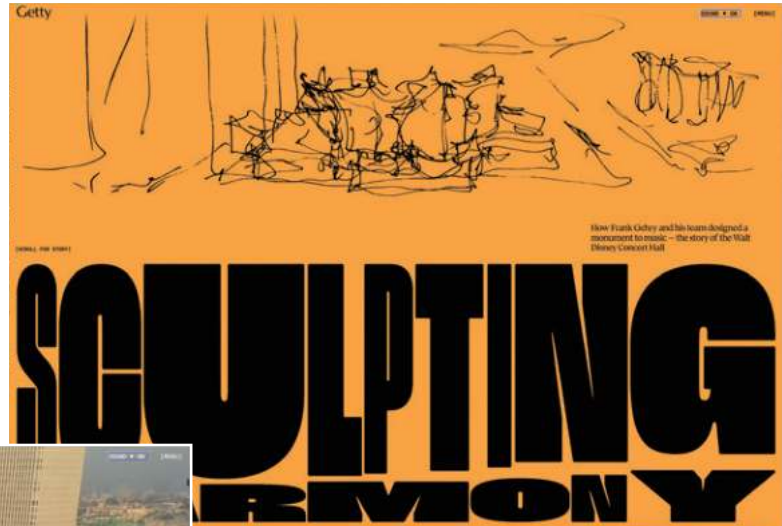
gehry.getty.edu

Overview: A digital exhibition developed in collaboration between global arts organization Getty with architect Frank Gehry and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, *Sculpting Harmony* presents sweeping views of more than 150 models, sketches and photographs from the Frank O. Gehry papers, a vast treasure trove of drawings, models, photographs and video content from Gehry's work between 1954 and 1988. On a website designed by Wellington, New Zealand–based digital design studio Resn, visitors can explore a digital exhibition that provides a captivating glimpse into Gehry's process behind the creation of the Walt Disney Concert Hall in Los Angeles, the home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic.

- Visitors to *Sculpting Harmony* can explore 3-D re-creations of Gehry's architectural models from various angles.

- *Sculpting Harmony* was released in tandem with *Modeling Sound*, a physical exhibition at the Walt Disney Concert Hall featuring six of Gehry's architectural models of the building.

- The site itself took six months to design and develop, but the exhibition took more than seven years of archiving, digitizing and 3-D imaging, as well as two years of research and story development.

Serena Parr Cline, technology group director
Linda Han, digital producer
Ian Webb, project manager
Todd Swanson, digital imaging
Emily Pugh, researcher
Maristella Casciato/Gary Riichirō Fox, curators
Los Angeles Philharmonic, music
Getty/Resn (Wellington, New Zealand), project design
   and development

Screenshots from Sculpting Harmony, © J. Paul Getty Trust
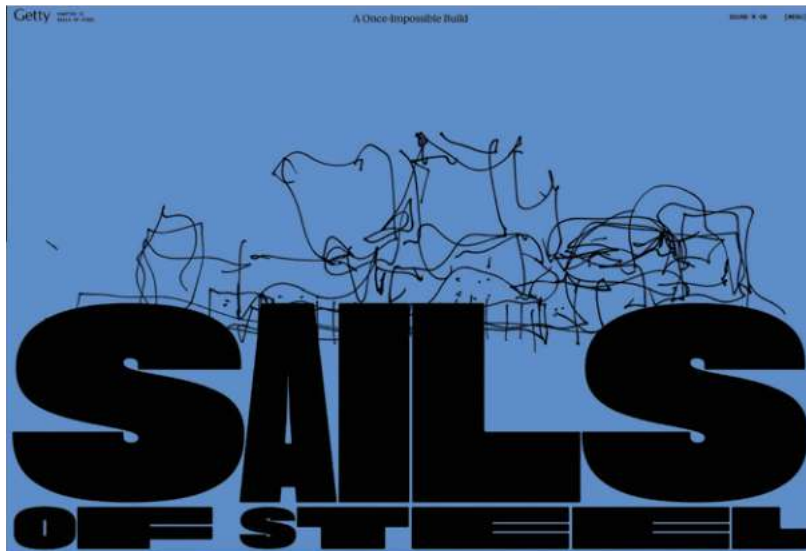
"My favorite site of the year. Every element adds to a clear narrative. The animations and typography feel both modern and pay homage to Gehry. The audio and video add to the experience rather than feeling like something to turn off as quickly as you can. Excellence all around." —**Maria D'Amato**

Comments by Bruno Arizio, design director at Resn:

How would you define *Sculpting Harmony*'s core features? "The team at Getty aimed to reconstruct the evolution of the Walt Disney Concert Hall using digital storytelling techniques and multimedia elements. They'd studied these materials for years, imaging and 3-D modeling the physical archive in different ways and interviewing Gehry about how these pieces fit together. Those archival materials, new interviews with Gehry and interactive 3-D models all became the base of this narrative.

"Together, we combined these elements to craft a meaningful exploration of Gehry's vision and creative process. In the art direction, we captured the architect's trademark style by incorporating his freeform sketches into the design. Using dynamic typography, we evoked the unique shapes of the concert hall, the sounds of the orchestra and Gehry's playful personality. The soundtrack, recorded

by the Los Angeles Philharmonic in situ at the concert hall, imbues the experience with life."

What was the thinking behind the navigation structure? "Essentially, the site functions as an interactive documentary. To get the most out of this medium, we wanted to give the audience a framework for exploration without putting them on rails. We landed on a semilinear structure that provides a solid foundation to tell the concert hall's story from concept to completion while enabling some freedom of exploration by providing opportunities to dive deeper into content at appropriate moments."
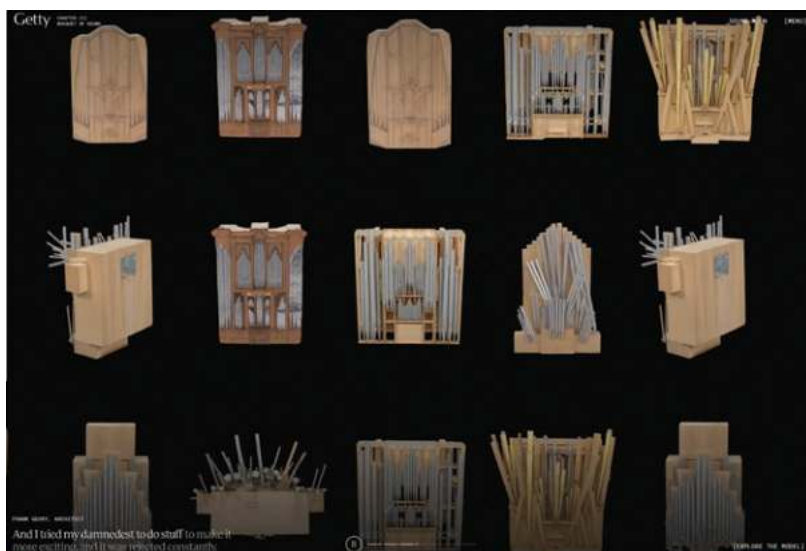
Project Relate

"A fast, fluid storytelling experience that effectively tells the story of nonstandard speech. Well done!" —**Martijn van der Does**
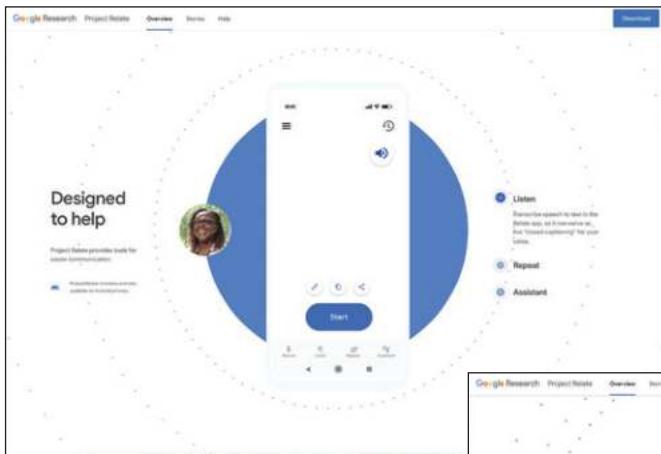
sites.research.google/relate

Overview: More than 250 million people worldwide have speech-related disabilities or nonstandard speech patterns that can make communicating with others difficult. To help them overcome this barrier, Google created the app Project Relate, which utilizes machine learning to help people make their voices heard. Ann Arbor, Michigan–based creative agency Hook and development firm Blinkk designed this website to convey Project Relate's mission to a global audience; show the scale and scope of nonstandard speech by using WebGL and Lottie animations, among other interactive features; and tell the stories of people who use the app through their own words.

- Each dot on the Stories page represents one of the 250 million people with nonstandard speech and offers a glimpse into their experience.

- Project Relate's site uses a combination of traditional HTML and CSS, JavaScript, and WebGL. Animations were created in After Effects and exported to the site using Lottie Web.

- To keep the site accessible, Hook and Blinkk accounted for factors like performance, screen reading and color contrast, choosing to use plain HTML for the core content over WebGL.
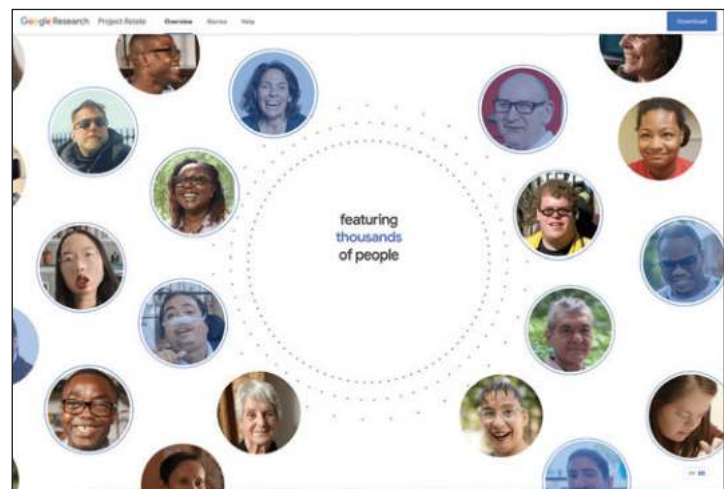
Blinkk, development partner
Hook (Ann Arbor, MI), project design and development/ad agency
Google, client
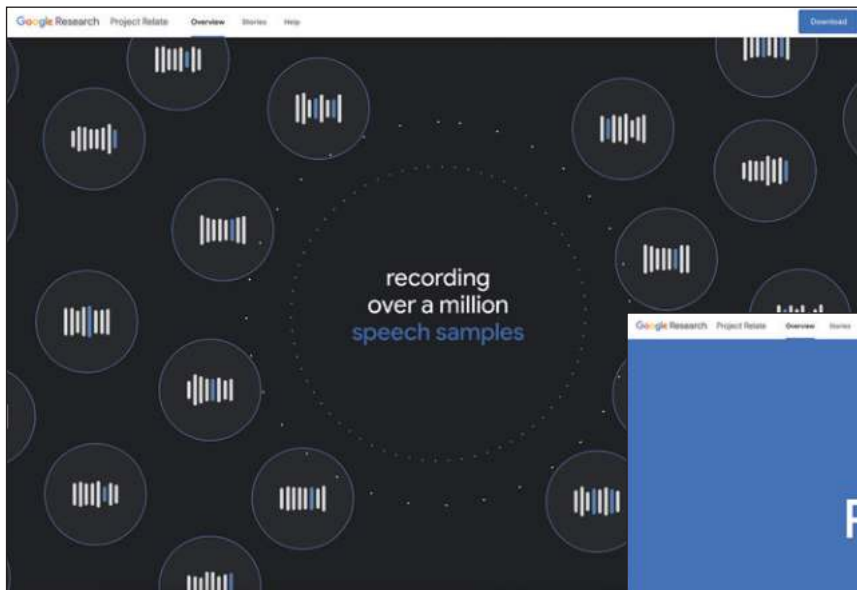
Comments by Ryan Michlitsch, creative director at Hook, and Scott Yano, senior ux engineer at Blinkk:

Did you meet with any extraordinary obstacles during development? "Early on, we knew we wanted to interview app users and help tell their story," says Ryan Michlitsch. "This meant getting questions approved by a legal team and setting up interviews with people all over the world, something not often done when making a website."

"Since a portion of the experience uses heavily transformed HTML, it was more susceptible to frame rate dips during complex animations," says Scott Yano. "To address this challenge, we added numerous micro-optimizations throughout the project to enhance browser memory management and overall performance.

"For example, traditional websites typically load assets on demand to minimize initial loading time," Yano continues. "However, on this site, loading assets during the experience caused minor frame rate drops due to the heavy animations while the browser loaded and decoded them. To avoid this, we strategically preloaded a portion of the essential assets, leading to a slightly longer initial wait for users but ensuring a smoother overall experience."

What insights did you learn from creating a website focusing on inclusivity, accessibility and interactivity? "From briefing to execution, we knew that we wanted to make the site as inclusive as possible while pushing boundaries," says Michlitsch. "This meant maintaining a careful balance of features while still allowing for accessibility. We focused on making the site accessible to everyone by optimizing for color contrast, screen readers and load times. The interactivity brought the app to life for everyone visiting the site. Leaning heavily into Lottie animations and WebGL, we brought user stories to life while explaining the many benefits of Project Relate. Creating an experience with this community has been one of the highlights of my career."
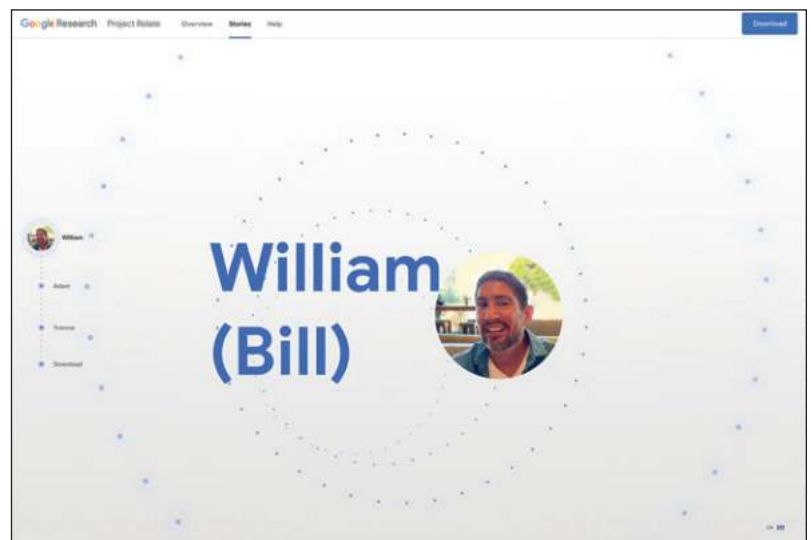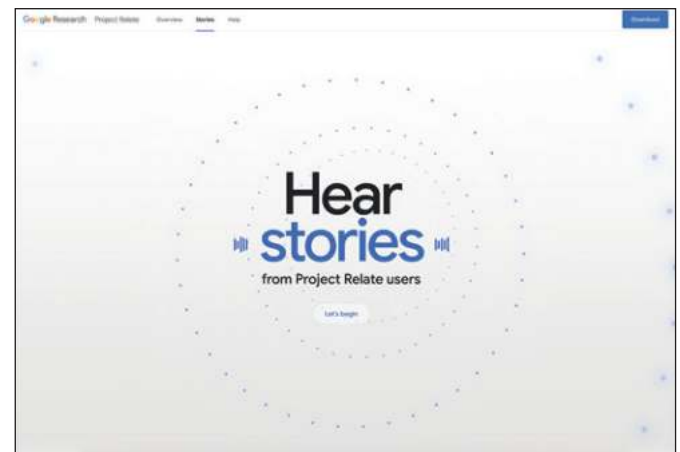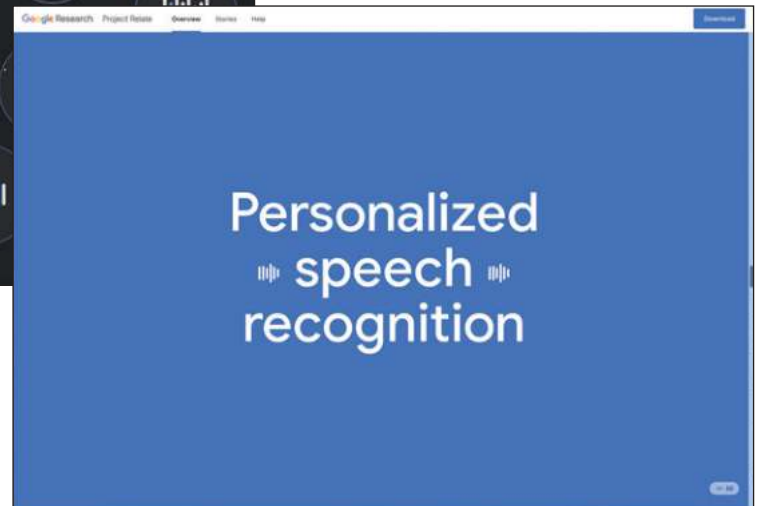
KUYA

"Inventive design and a tight palette never looked so fun. The promise of the agency really comes through."

—**Boo Wong**

hellokuya.co
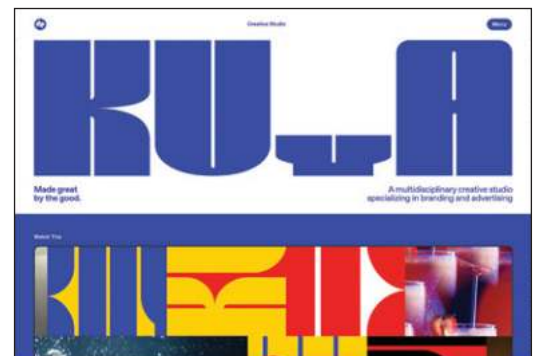
Overview: While the creative team at Redondo Beach, California–based design studio KUYA began to reinvent themselves after their previous venture ended, they knew they needed a portfolio site to introduce their studio to new and prior creative partners alike. The studio's site encapsulates its quirky spirit and approach to creativity through bold typography, vibrant colors and playful animations, showing not only what its capabilities are but also reflecting its creative voice. As part of the KUYA studio and brand launch, the website makes a bold first impression on visitors and conveys the studio's mission to spread joy through great work.

- The site uses the JavaScript library React with Next.js as the front-end framework that integrates with Storyblok for the CMS.

- The animated transitions use as much native CSS as possible to avoid performance issues that arise with DOM manipulations. The more complex animations use the animation library Framer Motion.

- The site honors KUYA's connection between its founder Michael Villa Sison and the Filipino American community through creativity and design.
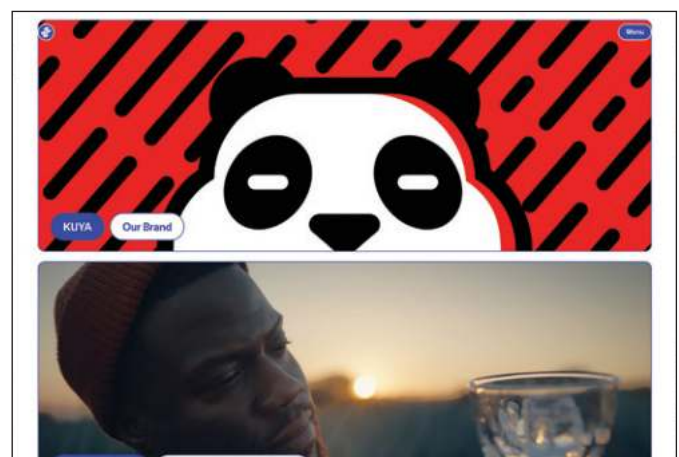
Janine Villa Sison, creative director
Romano Casellini, interactive creative director
Michael Villa Sison, executive creative director
Eduard Fossas Pastor/Xavier Molina, creative technologists
Alec van Staveren, motion graphics
KUYA (Redondo Beach, CA), project design and development/
  client
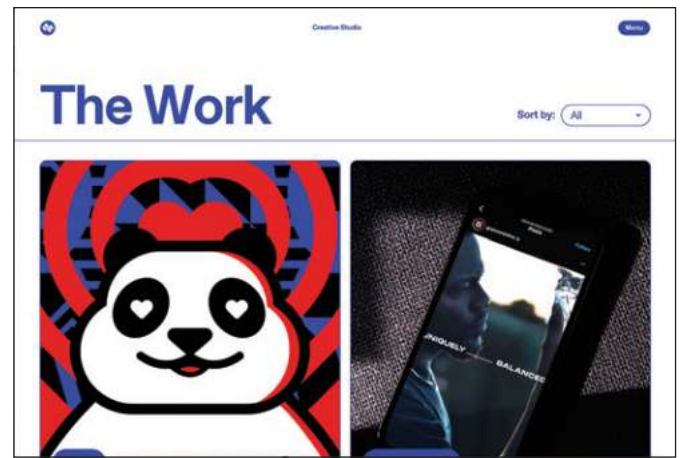
Comments by KUYA:

What are your favorite details on KUYA's site?
"Though the site is chock-full of fun, animated interactions, some of our favorites happen right when you arrive on the site. The first thing visitors see is our YA! sticker animation, which serves as a playful, colorful intro that takes people to the homepage. From there, people can play with our logo, squashing and stretching the type by simply using their cursor to hover on each of KUYA's letters."

What was the most challenging aspect of the project? "Unlike most projects, this one was challenging because it was so personal. It was important for us to create something that can truly stand on its own, and in many ways, it pushed against contemporary design trends. KUYA needed to be a brand—and a website—that was true to us both as a company and as individuals. Discovering what that means through a very public medium was overwhelming at times but, in the long run, so valuable in helping us understand why we're doing this in the first place."
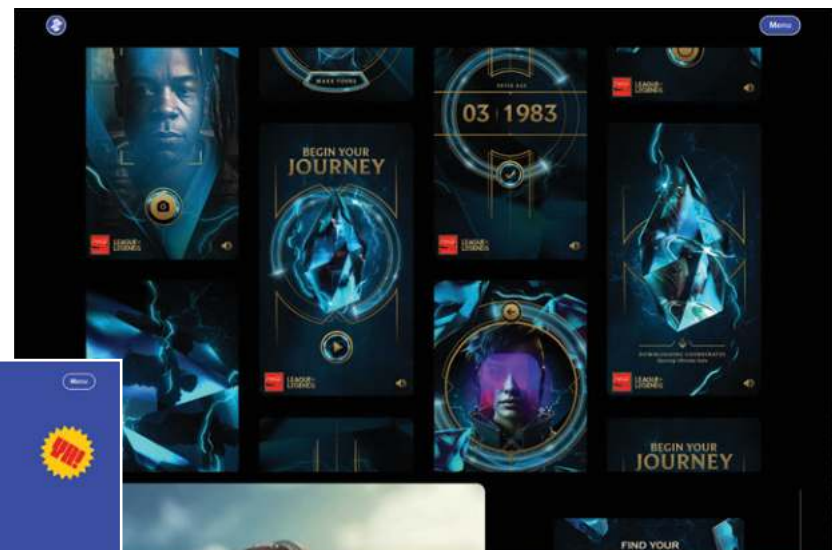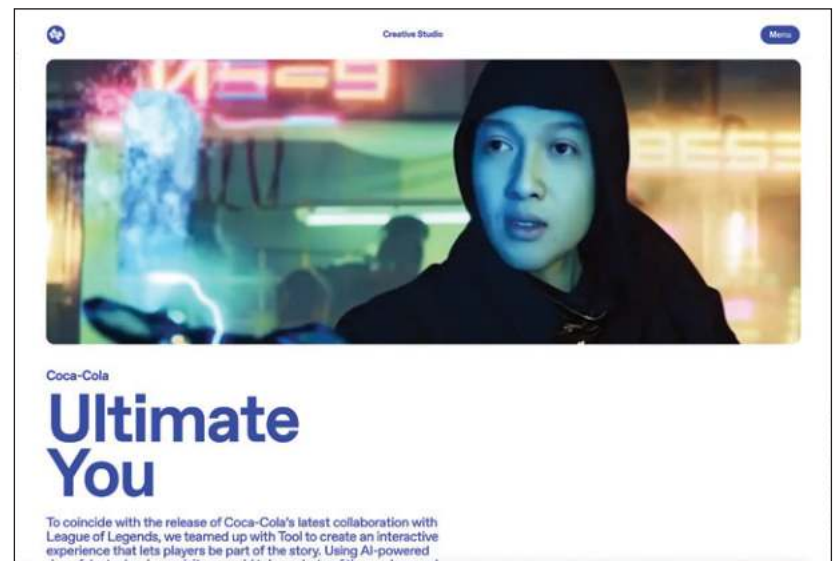
What would you do differently if you could start the project over? "Since this project was already a 'relaunch' of sorts, we were fortunate to have the time and experience to reflect on the things we'd like to change before even getting started. So, the short answer is we wouldn't change a thing."

MetaMask Portfolio
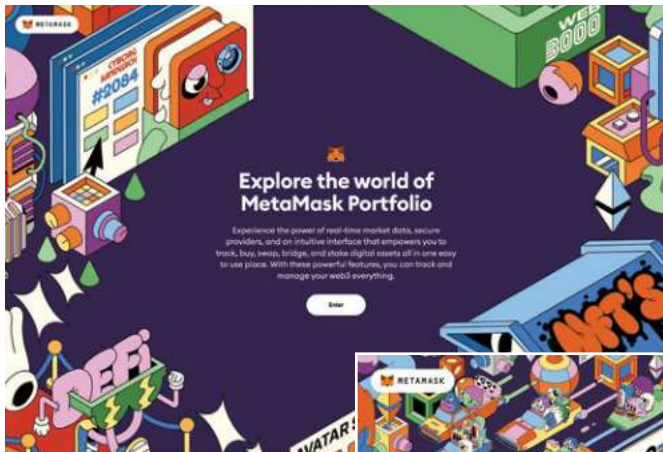
metamask.io/portfolio

Overview: Amsterdam-based digital design firm Antinomy Studio and software company Consensys joined forces to craft an engaging online experience showcasing Consensys's MetaMask Portfolio, a user-friendly platform that lets clients effortlessly monitor, purchase, exchange, bridge and stake digital assets within a single, intuitive interface. The site conveys the service's key features through an illustration by artist Dave Arcade that became the visual focal point for MetaMask Portfolio's promotional campaign as well. The team at Antinomy also refined the site's UI and UX design, seamlessly integrating the illustration into an interactive piece that breathes life into static visuals.

- As Consensys wrote the MetaMask site in React, Antinomy utilized CSS, HTML and JavaScript to adapt to the existing codebase. WebGL and three.js were used to animate Arcade's illustration.

- To improve loading times, Antinomy created a tiled version of the main illustration and created the icons in Rive to animate them without loading images or video content.

- From design and development to launch, MetaMask Portfolio's site took about 24 days, equivalent to a full month of work.
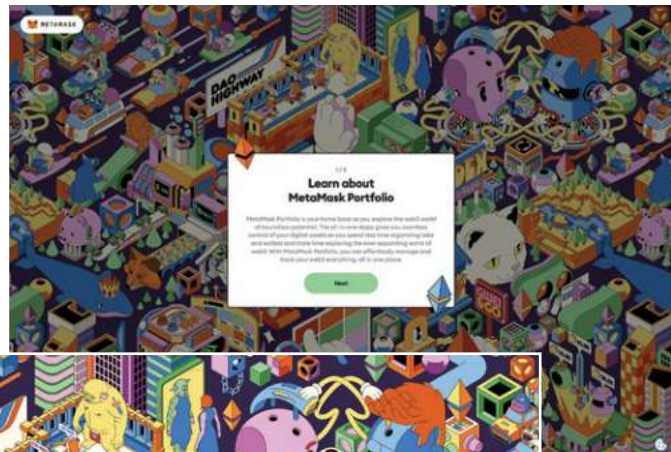
Oliver Renwick/Joel Willmore, writers
Thomas Grelet, designer
Alex Lumain, associate creative director
Nick Nelson, creative director
Craig Wong, chief creative officer
James Beck/Jenni Nguyen, directors of creative services
Jordan Spence, chief strategy officer
Howard Braham/Joshua Lazoff, software engineers
Juan Pablo Borromei/Luciano Borromei/Xavier Jack/Anton Zotelo, developers
Baptiste Briel, lead developer
Kristina Benson, content coordinator
Megan Dias, senior content coordinator
Dave Arcade, illustrator
Sunny Sian, director
Élias Sakakri, digital producer
Quentin Briel-Duchâtel, project manager
Eskender Abebe/George Yeh, senior product managers
Neal Gorevic, chief production officer
Antinomy Studio (Amsterdam, The Netherlands), project design and development
Dounia Agharbi/Samuel Akpan/Renee (Ray) Allums/Camille Armand/Grant Baxter/Andres Boveda Alasia/Ahmed Abdeljalil Chentouf/Elo Gimenez/Hassan Jehan/Magdalena Mladin/Chantal Penning/Rosalie Samuels/Sharmeen Shehabuddin/James Wicker, Consensys, clients

> "Way to make a complicated technology product easy to understand, fun to use and instantly recognizable through exceptional UX/UI." —**Boo Wong**
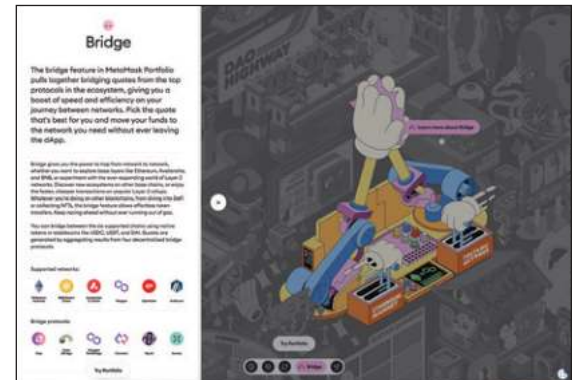
Comments by Baptiste Briel:

Did you meet with any extraordinary obstacles during the MetaMask Portfolio site's development? "To bring the static illustration by David Arcade to life, we opted to create an infinite version. By involving our technical team and developers in the initial client discussions, we provided guidance to the illustrator on creating an infinite-tiled version. This gives visitors the sensation of an endless isometric illustration and an ongoing connection to the MetaMask platform."

What do you think are the project's core features? "The main focus of the site, which revolves around the infinite

illustration, is to provide users with guidance on how to navigate the platform. We implemented a drag feature that lets users navigate the illustration and designed the UI to be minimalistic. This approach gives visitors the freedom to move around while offering a more traditional interface with animated icons that highlight clickable areas of the illustration."

Was the topic or subject of the MetaMask Portfolio site a new one for you? "At Antinomy Studio, we have produced numerous projects within the Web3 space for leading brands and companies that are pushing the boundaries of what Web3 can do. As cryptocurrency enthusiasts, we were already very familiar with MetaMask and its products."

Abetka

"Designed to reference the typography textbooks many of us used in design school, this site does an excellent job of mixing the referential with the modern without letting any of it get in the way of the important content." —**Maria D'Amato**

Overview: Commissioned by the Projector Foundation, a nonprofit organization providing independent digital education for information technology and careers in the creative economy, Kyiv-based digital design firm Obys created Abetka, a website featuring a collection of modern Cyrillic fonts by Ukrainian designers. Abetka highlights Ukrainian alternatives to Russian typefaces, champions the country's vibrant typeface industry to an international stage and highlights symbols of Ukrainian statehood. Thirty-three fonts by 33 designers each highlight one of the 33 glyphs in the Ukrainian Cyrillic alphabet.

- A bespoke preloader showcases each of the 33 fonts through letter cards, displaying a Cyrillic letterform on one side and an image of a Ukrainian cultural symbol on the other.

- The Abetka site grew into a large ad campaign that included print and video content.

- Obys built the site using the static site generator 11ty and the compiler Pug.js. The site runs on a Strapi CMS with a little Obys magic trick, as the agency says.
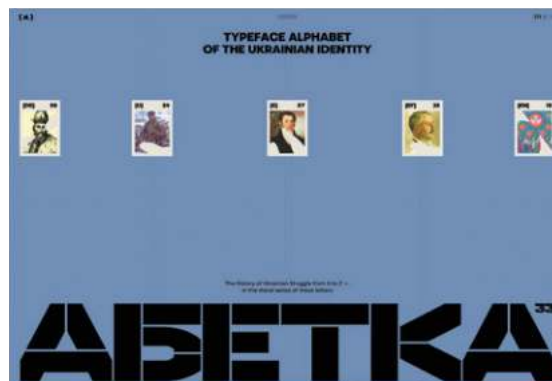
abetkaua.com/en
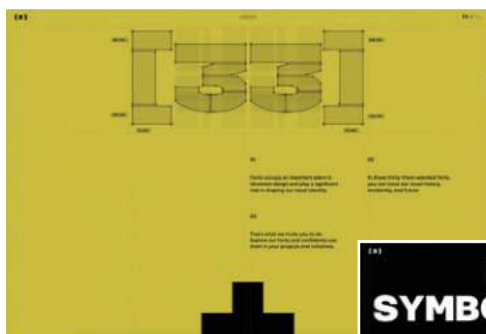
Viacheslav Olianishyn, art director
Obys (Kyiv, Ukraine), project
   design and development
Projector Foundation, client
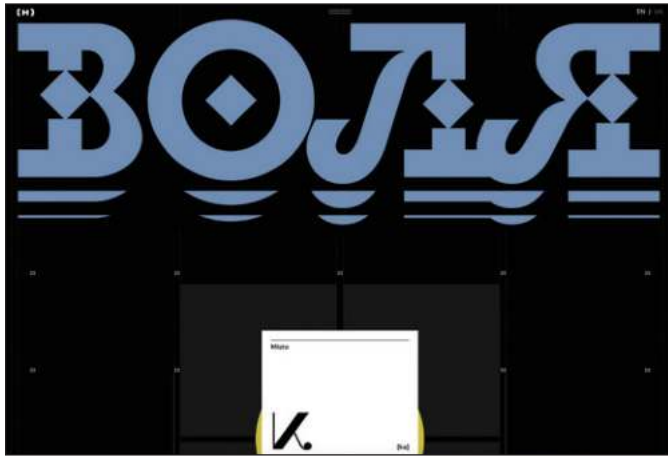
Comments by Obys:

Did you learn anything new while creating Abetka? "It's important to keep in mind that there is always something new to discover in every project, even if you have worked on projects like them in the same field. Some time ago, we created our website The Message to Ukraine, and we managed to showcase the essence of the Ukrainian people in a unique and innovative way. Throughout the process of working on this project, we discovered even more original ways to portray our country and culture."

Were there any challenges unique to the project? "We had 33 letter cards and needed to make the page exciting, which is why we came up with the backstory to display at the beginning of the site. This unusual preloader was precisely what was difficult to implement: we needed to keep the scrolling movement of the card from overlapping with the content and, simultaneously, make its movement smooth and natural.

"It is also worth mentioning the management of such a complex project. Thirty-three articles require 33 authors. We needed to select 33 fonts; then, we needed to obtain permission to use the fonts. During the project, we worked with various partners, sponsors and consultants to make it happen, which was probably its most difficult part."

How did time constraints affect Abetka's final design? "Collaboration is key! The success of this project would not have been possible without the hard work put in by the team of foundation managers, type designers, editors, article authors, designers, developers, historical consultants and partners. And this is just a small part of the entire team involved. Therefore, it is important to be open to collaborating with new professionals from different fields—and not just stick to one's usual circle."
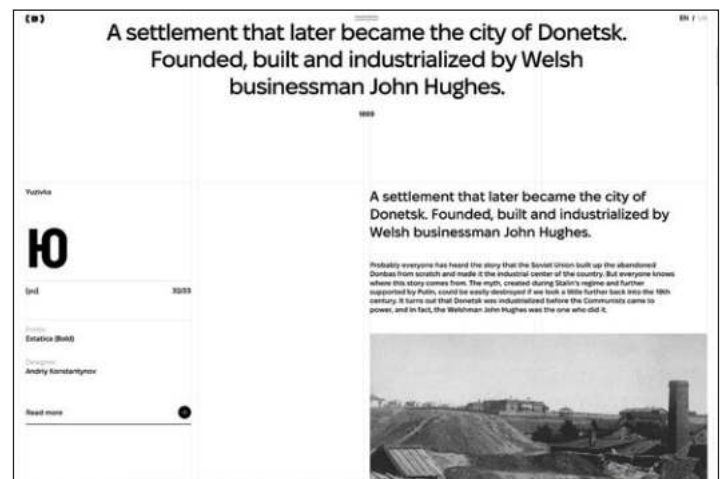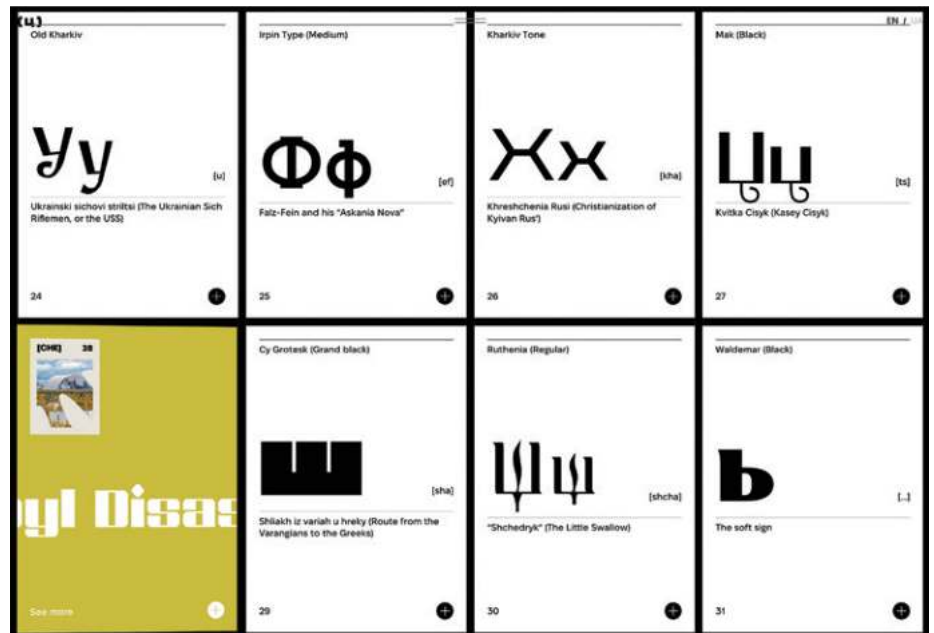
DIKO

"So much fun. So much weird. I loved it."

—Maria D'Amato

diko.co
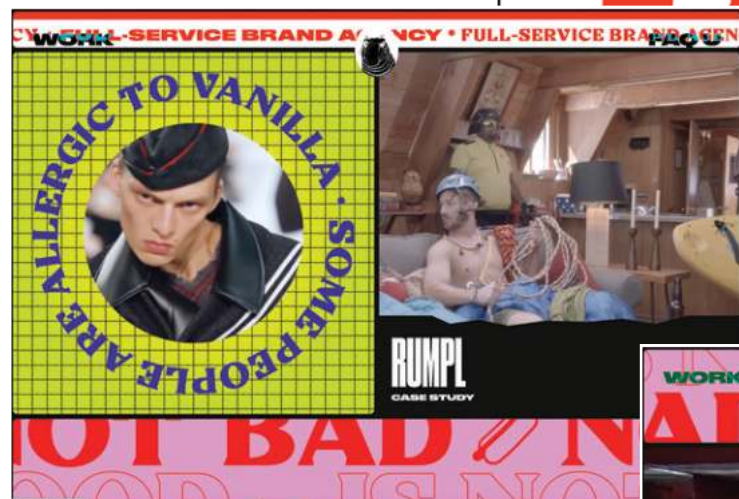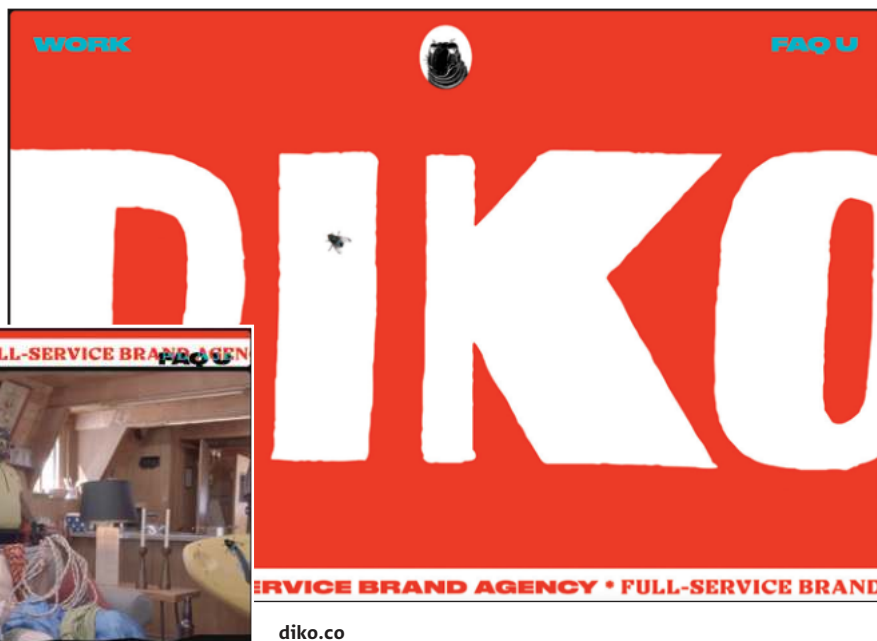
Overview: Austin-based creative agency DIKO prides itself on creating work that stands out. So, when designing its own site, it wanted to eschew the typical cookie-cutter portfolio site that displays no imagination when it comes to UX design. Drawing inspiration from brutalist web design and its disregard for accepted practices, **diko.co** presents a joyful assault on the senses, packed with frenzied color, mismatched type, meme videos and plenty of microinteractions that satisfy those of us with short attention spans while visually portraying DIKO's character in a way that sticks in our minds.

- The website features more than sixteen homepage micro-interactions with two menu items: WORK and FAQ U.

- The landing page uses a vertical scroll, and the WORK page uses a horizontal scroll. The more visitors scroll, the more dynamic elements become, such as animated type and autoplaying videos.

- Within the first three months after its launch, DIKO's website received more than 20,000 visits, exceeding the design firm's metrics by more than tenfold.
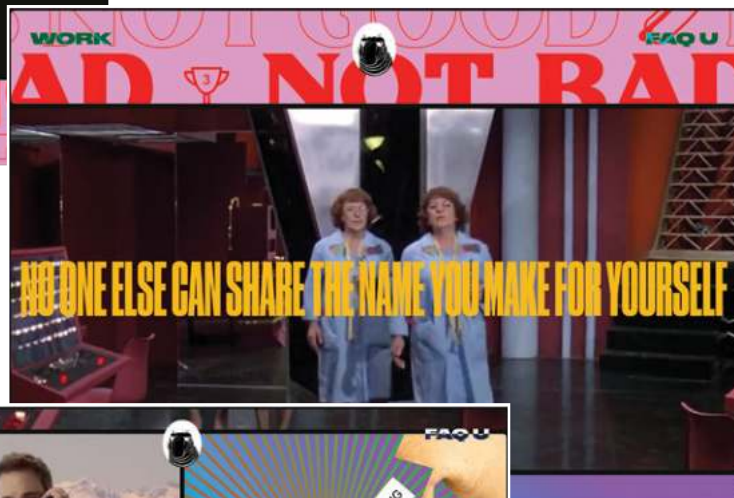
Diko Daghlian, art director/executive creative director
Chad Rea, writer
Tore Bentsen, interactive designer/developer
Pelle Martin, Spring/Summer/Chad Rea, creative directors
Mathias Rask/Mia Thomsen, project managers
Spring/Summer, project design and development
DIKO (Austin, TX), ad agency/client

"Hip vibes and irreverent, unexpected design give tantalizing clues to what lurks within this agency's style." —**Boo Wong**

Comments by Diko Daghlian and Chad Rea:

How did your collaboration with Copenhagen-based digital design agency Spring/Summer change the site's course? "We initially considered custom coding, but our longtime interactive partners at Spring/Summer, masters of taming the seemingly complicated, recommended using Webflow. Despite it being an unconventional choice for immersive interactivity, from our past work, we knew the team under founder Pelle Martin could melt diamonds and bend steel. They pushed the platform to do what we needed, injecting code and finding creative solutions. The outcome led to diko.co being featured in Webflow's customer stories, social platforms and yearly developers conference."

Did you meet with any extraordinary obstacles during development? "If we're talking about creative production, yes. Most sites or campaigns can be visually one-dimensional by design to keep a cohesive visual tone. Our concept was to bring every possible surprise in to keep the audience engaged. It was quite a bear to wrangle the assembly of artists, editors, designers, animators and technicians— among others—that were each contributing to their small section of the site. Because of the workflow, we would sometimes have to pause development when a new idea came up, and we would have to scramble to produce the art."

Is the audience you were targeting a particularly difficult one to reach? "Good creative typically finds good creative. However, marketing executives are increasingly harder to reach directly. Fortunately, in our experience, new business typically comes from the agency getting media attention or through word of mouth. We strive to make unexpected content for our clients that gets noticed, talked about and shared. And we're our most important client, so we have that going for us."
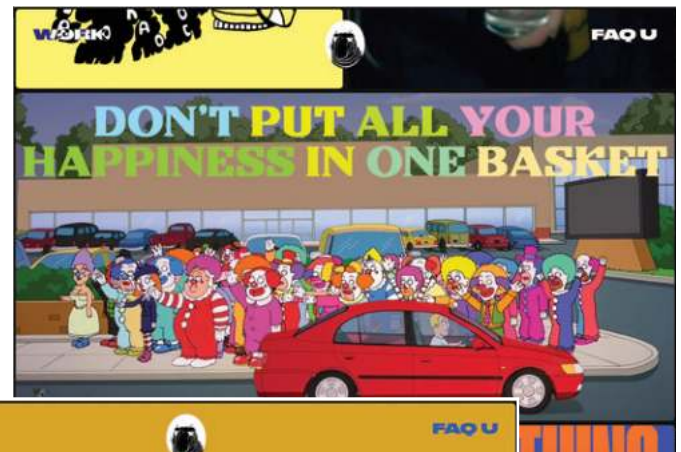
The Seven Virtues Project

"The Seven Virtues Project website provides resources and guidance on how to live a virtuous life in a visually stunning way. It offers articles, videos and other materials on each of the seven virtues: wisdom, fortitude, temperance, justice, faith, hope and charity."

—Martijn van der Does
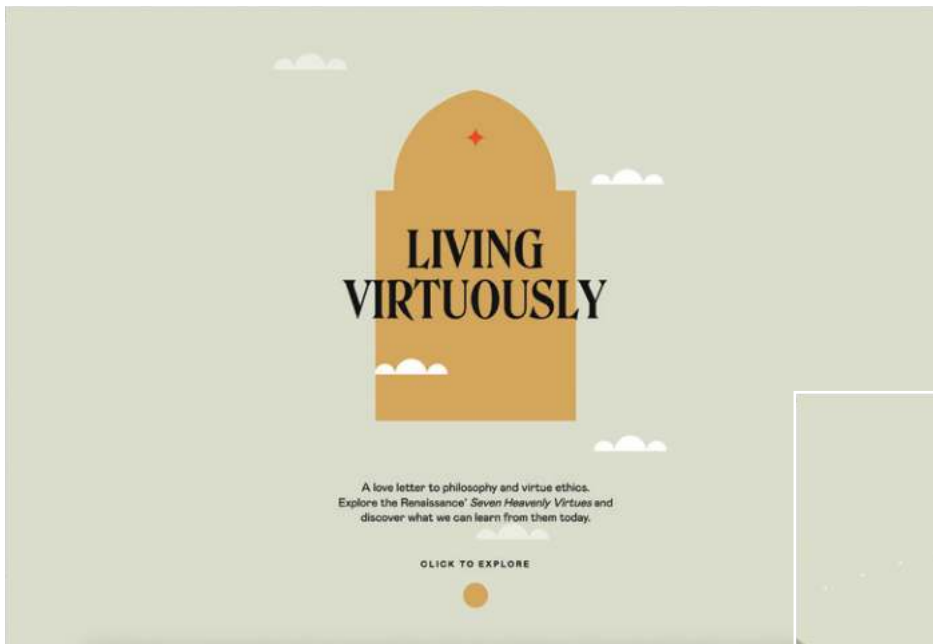
thesevenvirtuesproject.com

Overview: Wanting to engage in a self-initiated philosophical exploration, creative director Amalie Englesson approached London-based design firm Unlearn Studio with a project based on the seven heavenly virtues of Christian tradition, exploring how these ideals relate to contemporary society in the second millennium. As Englesson was inspired by the *Seven Heavenly Virtues* series of paintings made by Pollaiolo and Botticelli in 1470, the Unlearn Studio team took a trip to the Uffizi Museum in Florence, Italy, to convey the messages of the series in a modern version of the artwork. This site presents the project's culmination as an explorable digital museum.

- The site was developed using the open-source framework Nuxt.

- Unlearn Studio created the navigation to feel as though users were exploring a museum, with multiple access points, an infinite gallery on the homepage, a full-screen menu and shortcuts to get from one virtue to the next.

- Frames around the paintings act as portals to different sections of the site with animated transitions that use sound and color to reflect the idea of being transported into the painting.
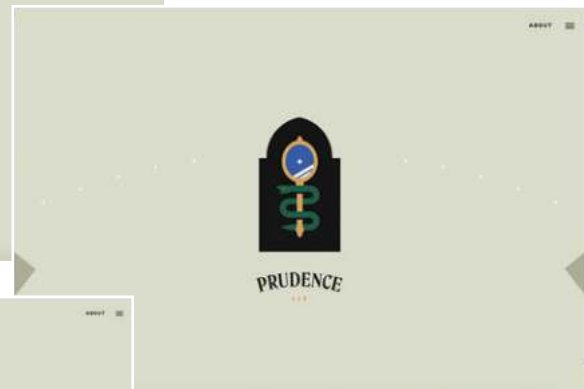
Aleks Wnuk, writer
Davide Baratta, design director
Amalie Englesson, Orden, creative director
Francesco Michelini, creative technologist
Giorgia Xia, motion graphics
Unlearn Studio (London, United Kingdom), project design and development
Orden, client
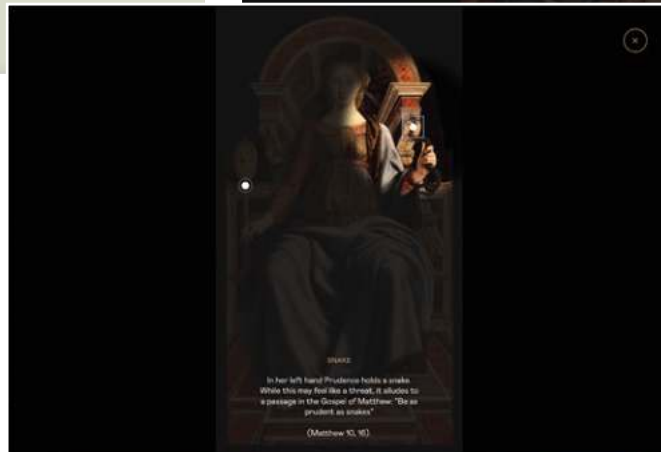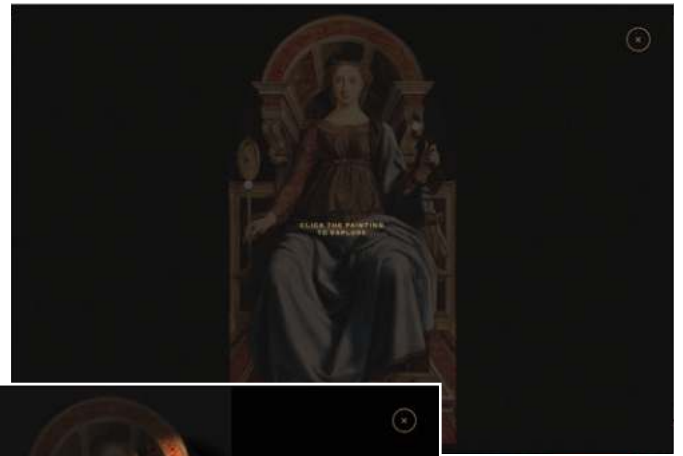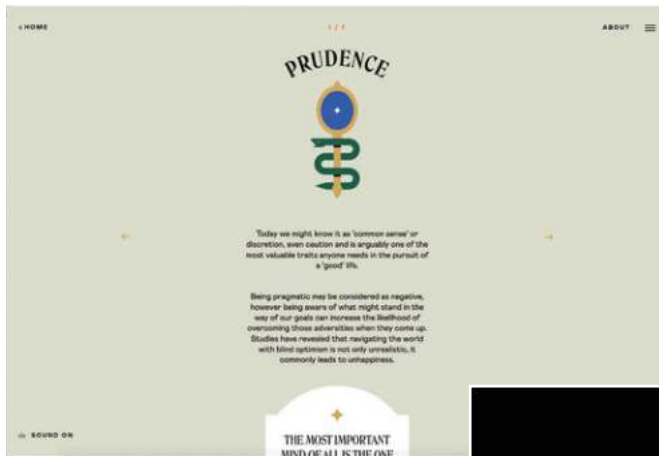
Comments by Davide Baratta and Francesco Michelini:

What are the core features of The Seven Virtues Project? "We used shapes and symbolism to create a parallel between how the seven virtues can apply to our way of living and how they were relayed in the art from the Renaissance," says Davide Baratta. "The illustrations depict the seven virtues by referencing symbols and allegories from each painting, while the frames are used as navigational devices throughout the experiences."

What software, back-end technology and programming languages did you use? "The website was developed using Nuxt v2, which allowed us to create the UI, structure and page navigation almost effortlessly," says Francesco Michelini. "The site didn't need any CMS, so we simply used the Nuxt Content module to place all the content in various JSON files to populate the pages. Easy peasy. Also, most of the animations, interactions and timelines are handled by the GSAP library and some of its plugins, like the Draggable plugin for the carousel on the homepage."
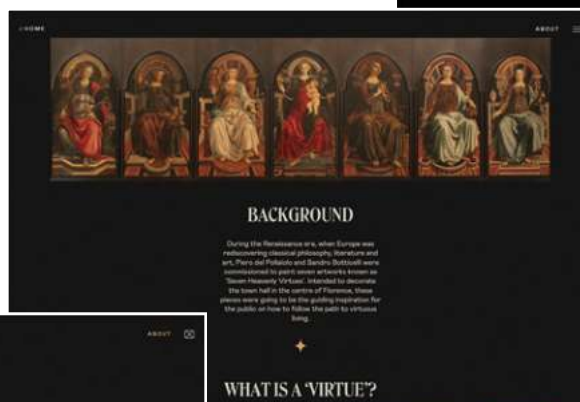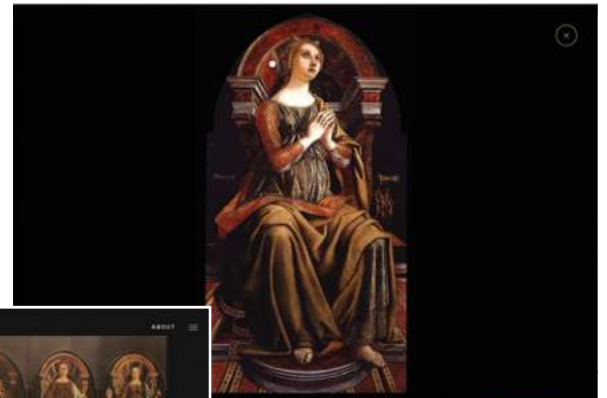
Did you use any applications that you hadn't used before? "We used Rive to create the animations that introduce each one of the seven virtues," says Baratta. "It was very easy to pick up and helped us in creating super-lightweight, progressive SVG animations."

"Since by design the illustrations required complex animations, doing those by hand with code wasn't a viable option because it would have required way too much time and countless back-and-forth iterations between me and Davide," says Michelini. "So, I did some research and found Rive, whose developers claim it's ten-times smaller and faster than Lottie. We gave it a try and found that it was true. In a matter of hours, Davide created all the animations we needed. I really cannot quantify how much time Rive saved us."

Times Two

"Fresh typography, an unexpected but still functional navigation structure and a clear understanding of how to use modern design trends thoughtfully come together into a notable site." —**Maria D'Amato**
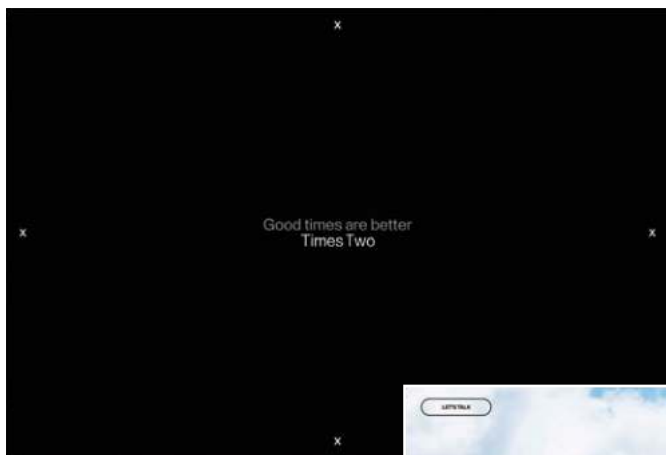
timestwo.design

Overview: Founded remotely by Brooklyn-based creative director Marco Coppeto and San Francisco–based creative director Keene Niemack, design firm Times Two creates work focusing on the power of a strong idea. Coppeto and Niemack wanted to center their studio's strengths— motion and design craft—from the first few seconds that visitors landed on the site. So, upon passing through a brief loading screen, visitors are treated to an animated x2 logo that inflates to fill up the background. An unobtrusive yet stylish infinity scroll elegantly showcases Times Two's work, holistically conveying its design philosophy to prospective clients and designers.

- The site was built on the Next.js framework, the CMS Prismic and the programming language Typescript. For more robust animations and interactions, the site uses the animation libraries Framer Motion and Lottie.

- Since its launch, the Times Two site has received more than a million visitors.

- From concept to completion, Coppeto and Niemack took roughly three months to create the Times Two site, collaborating with external development partner Kodo.
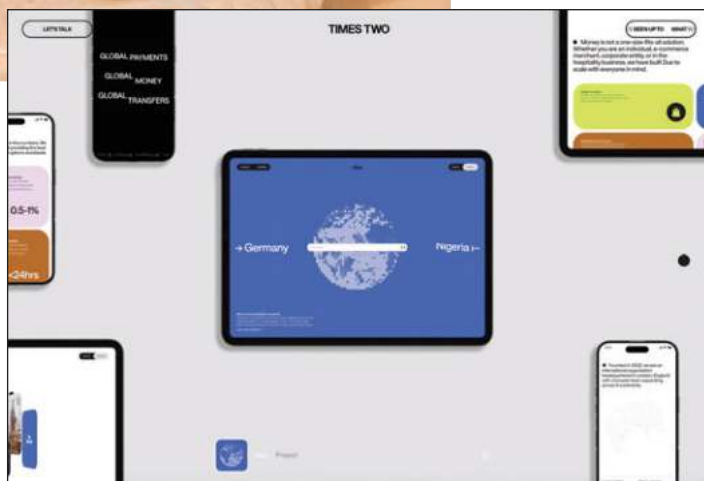
Marco Coppeto/Keene Niemack, creative directors
Magnús Davíð Magnússon/Finnur Sigurðsson, developers
Kodo, development partner
Times Two (Brooklyn, NY/San Francisco, CA), project design and development/client

Comments by Marco Coppeto and Keene Niemack:

What would you say are the core features of the Times Two site? "As the site is the proverbial front door of our studio, we aimed to create an experience that instantly felt like home. Yet, when you walk through that door into the experience, you are greeted with unexpected, vibrant and responsive 3-D visuals that exemplifies our name and ethos. A pillar of our immersive experience is highlighted through the infinity scroll, showcasing rich overviews that can be cycled through endlessly like a gallery you never want to leave. The case studies and subpages were intentionally crafted to feel highly focused as an overlay, bringing the right amount of attention to the work while giving the visitor the feeling of never leaving the big show."

What was the most challenging aspect of making your website? "The most challenging—or dare we say fun—portion of the project would have been creating the intro animation that seamlessly transitioned into our responsive 3-D x2. This was our moment to bring a sense of energy and set the stage for our studio as our visitors walked through our proverbial front door. The interaction and 3-D inflation ended up being rather complex to art direct and create once we considered the various aspect ratios the animation needed to adapt across devices."

Did you learn anything new during the process? "When designing and building our website, our first inclination was to dial up all the bells and whistles we've learned over the past decade—and then some. Ultimately, we rolled it back to the core foundation and experience we felt was most true to ourselves, allowing our work to grow into the canvas we created. In the end, it was a juggling act of compromises but never sacrifices."
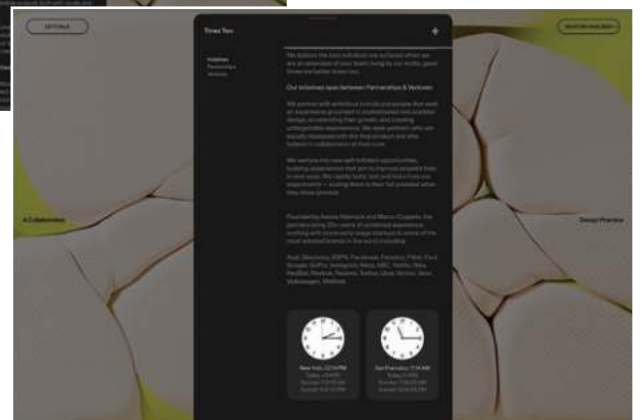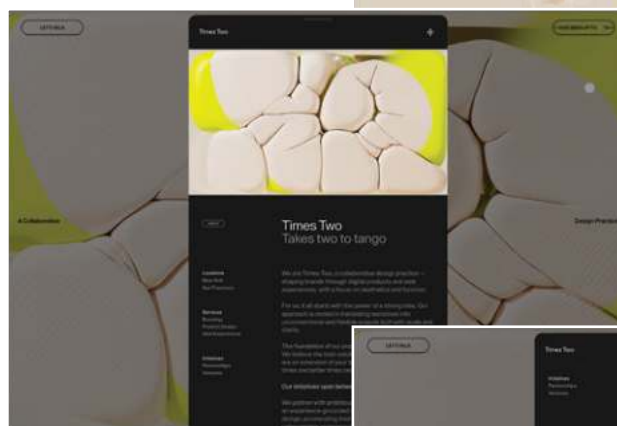
The Search for Work Happiness

"A visually stunning website that interactively provides information and resources to help people find work that makes them happy."

—**Martijn van der Does**

findworkhappiness.com

Overview: Extending the book *The Search for Work Happiness* by author David Lubofsky and making it accessible on the web, this website transforms its content into a whimsical animated experience. Exploring the book's world of Wimmelbilderbuch-style illustrations chapter by chapter, visitors find interactions, animations and audio content that bring a smile to their faces. From chapter title hovers to page transitions, each interaction enlivens the book and inspires readers to not only find happiness in their workplace but also to become catalysts for joy in the lives of those around them.

- Users can navigate The Search for Work Happiness by dragging and exploring the illustrations and by a full-screen chapter navigation that features page-turning animations made with the library Rive.

- The website was constructed using Datocмs for the back end, the framework Nuxt for the front end and three.js to create the draggable canvas.

- Lubofsky collaborated with a team of four other creatives over the course of four months to bring the web experience to life.

Dave Ellis/Aaron Yeo, art directors
Bryan James, creative director
Jesper Landberg, programmer
David Lubofsky (Sandy Hook, CT), project design and development/client

Comments by David Lubofsky:

What was the design thinking behind The Search for Work Happiness, and did you encounter any extraordinary obstacles during development? "The purpose of this project was to make my physical book easily accessible in web browsers. This goal extended beyond merely conveying my thoughts on improving human interactions in the workplace; we built this site with the intent to ensure that users not only read or listened to the content but also experienced enjoyment throughout. Some of the chapters are about challenging situations, so we wanted to balance that with a visually pleasing environment that would bring a smile to people's faces. The content and static illustrations from the preexisting written version of the book provided the foundation, and our focus was transforming those book pieces into an interaction-heavy online experience enriched with animations, motion, storytelling and innovative development techniques."

How did this project compare to others you've worked on in the past? "Unlike any project we had done in the past, the nature of this world we created is quite expansive. There are so many scenes within scenes of detailed illustrative art, and we wanted to bring every one of them to life. On top of that, every single chapter of the book was featured, showcasing both written word
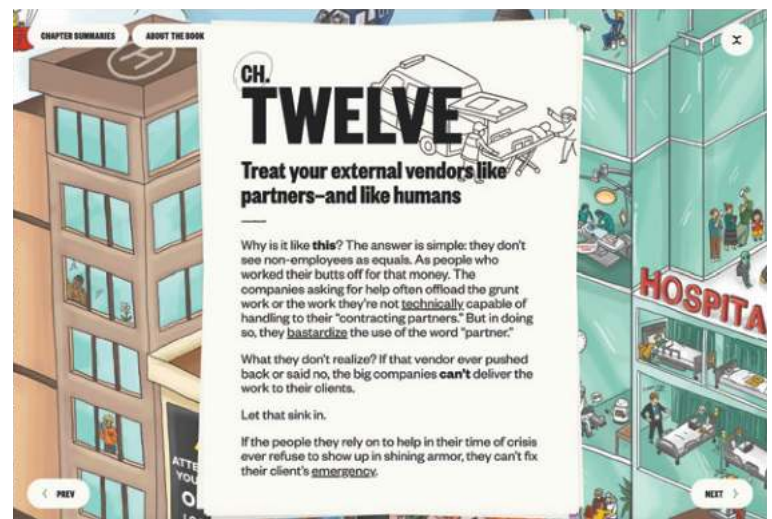
and audio snippets of each chapter. And this had to flow together smoothly on all devices.

"What became most challenging was translating the experience to mobile—this required very careful consideration, particularly due to the absence of hover states that the site was *full* of. So, hover-based animations and interactions from the desktop experience were strategically triggered during scroll or transition on mobile devices, guaranteeing a unique experience for every user regardless of their device or screen size."

Agency (Ad)venture

"I love this style of '90s pixel-art games, and it's a great idea to use it to show [Snapchat's] latest app features!" **—Viacheslav Olianishyn**
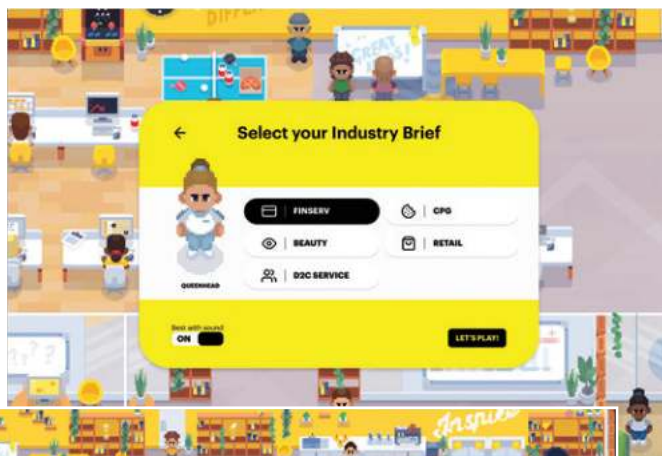
snapagencyadventure.com

Overview: As part of social media company Snap's annual media roadshow event for partnering media agencies to learn how they can use its messaging app Snapchat, the company collaborated with Portland, Oregon–based creative agency Studio Mega and Brooklyn-based design and technology agency OddCommon to create *Agency (Ad)venture*, a browser-based video game set in an ad agency. Inspired by '90s-era 16-bit video games, *Agency (Ad)venture* lets players select an industry— beauty, CPGs, DTC service, finserv and retail—then collect and deliver on briefs while learning about Snapchat's new developments as they climb the game's leaderboard.

- *Agency (Ad)venture* was built in Phaser, a HTML5 game framework for browser-based games, with SvelteKit employed as a UI layer. Firebase powers the back end, with its Firestore database providing real-time data management.

- Senior partners at media agencies like Dentsu, IPG, Omnicom and WPP competed for a spot on the leaderboard for the ultimate reward: a donation from Snap to a nonprofit or charity of their choice.

- Studio Mega developed the initial concept, and OddCommon designed and developed the experience.

Joe Rogers, writer
Rein Boyd, Studio Mega/Patrick Glavee, OddCommon, designers
Ken Watanabe, senior designer
Jordan Fisher, OddCommon/David Jacobson, Studio Mega, creative directors
Alex Krawitz, principal
Joseph Chow, developer
Joe Cooper, senior developer
Daniel Diggle, illustrator
Josh Beyer, director
Zach Martin, music composer
Dejia Morrell, producer
Zarrin Maani, executive producer
Gwen Clarke, project manager
OddCommon (Brooklyn, NY), project design and development
Studio Mega, ad agency
Rose Marie Adamo/Arianna Bernstein/Morgan Kelly, Snap, clients
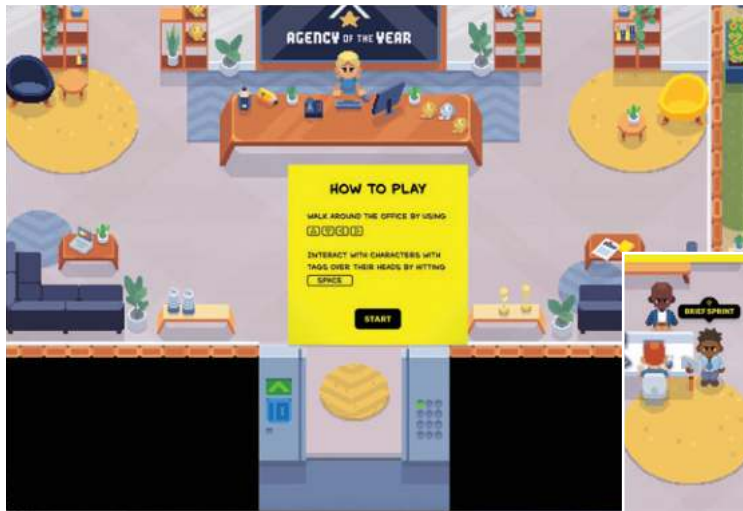
Comments by Taylor Anne Lane; lead of growth, strategy and communications; OddCommon:

How many media assets does *Agency (Ad)venture* **have?** "The experience is one of continuous gameplay, so it's not quite clear how to individually 'count' assets. We were very ambitious with the overworld office area and all the objects and NPCs within it. We had about 100 objects and characters, each with their own individual animations. Pixel art has to be drawn by hand, frame by frame, so it was challenging to accomplish all this in the timeline.

"The primary community-based feature would be the leaderboard. Employees of the included media companies can compete for the highest score, which lands them a donation to their charity or non-profit of choice by Snap."

What was the thinking behind the navigation design? "A central goal was for each user to feel free and excited to explore the open world but, at the same time, encounter the games in a certain order. The office overworld was designed in a way that would both allow that freedom but also guide you through the game in a sequence that would make sense as a story.

"The UI and tools for navigation were also part of the story. As smartphones are so integral to agency life, each user's in-game phone became a tool for both receiving important game information and also a way to perform other actions, like fast travel or to check the leaderboard."
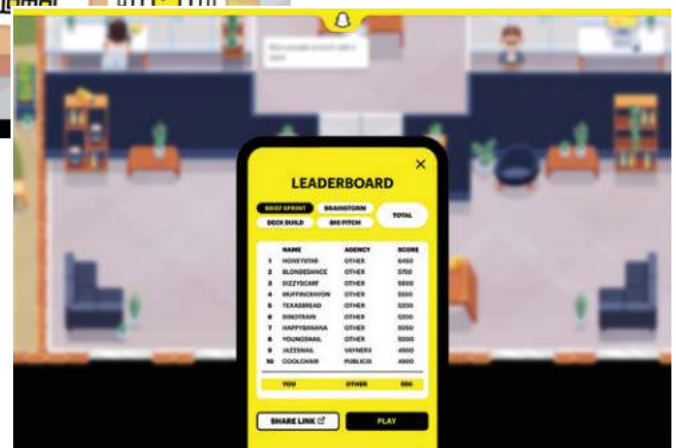
Unscrambling Design Collaboration

"Very meta! Brilliant use of color and design to communicate how important design is in the use of the product." **—Boo Wong**

Overview: Readymag, a design tool to create outstanding websites, celebrates its tenth anniversary by launching a report on design collaboration in the form of "Unscrambling Design Collaboration," an interactive digital editorial on what it takes for designers to work together. With data from surveys conducted with more than 370 designers worldwide, the website provides an in-depth analysis of design collaboration practices, challenges and solutions as well as insights from influential designers like Korie Cull, art director at Apple, and Giorgia Lupi, partner at Pentagram—among others. The project showcases Readymag's capabilities as a tool for creating impressive reports and presentations.

- Unscrambling Design Collaboration was created entirely using the Readymag digital tool.

- Alongside Readymag's tenth anniversary, the report also marked the web tool company's first foray into data visualization.

- It took a team of five Readymag members three-and-a-half months to complete the interactive digital editorial.
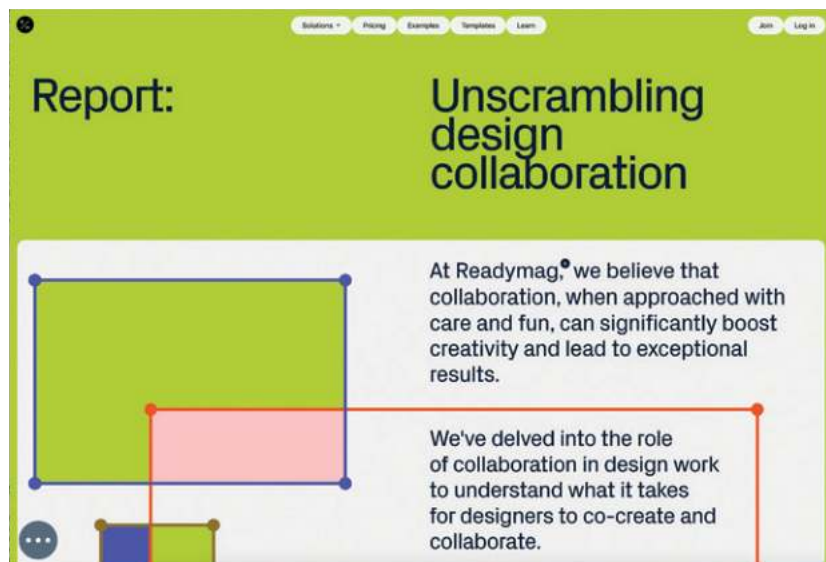
readymag.com/readymag/design-collaboration-report

Tatiana Egoshina, design
Bazhena Gurlenia, editor
Tatiana Kovalchuk, editor in chief
Alya Datii, producer
Readymag (New York, NY), project design and development/
    client

2.

stress level

The majority of the surveyed, 61.5%, regard collaboration as both stress-reducing and stress-inducing.

And 14.7% think that collaboration definitely increases stress.

" Being around large groups of people can be stressful and

4.

The majority of designers self-assess their soft skills as great, giving themselves 7.7 points out of 10, with a median score of 8

1 2 3 4 5

6 7 8 9 10
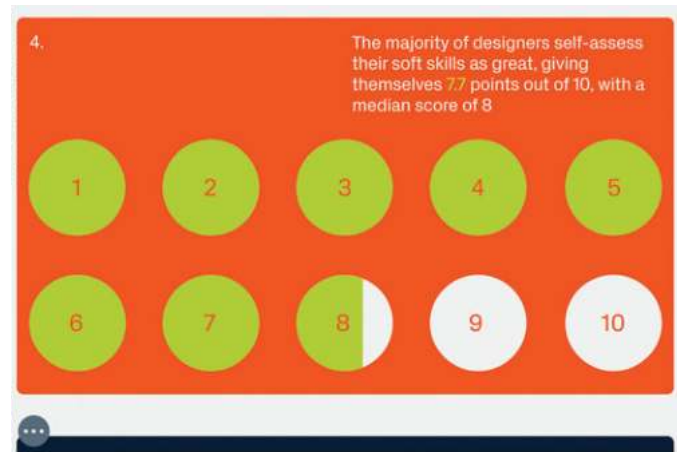
Comments by Readymag:

What would you say are the core design features of Unscrambling Design Collaboration? "Designed by Readymag's designer Tatiana Egoshina, the website features vibrant infographics, dynamic animations and interactive draggable objects. Readymag offers the most powerful, versatile and visually pleasing tool for designing on the web; it's ideal for dozens of formats, from landing pages to multimedia long reads, presentations and portfolios, all made with a single tool. Besides the design system, it seeks to advance the culture and community of design itself. Creative freedom and mindful design are principles Readymag champions through every-thing we do."

What were the statistical findings of the report? "Collaborative projects tend to outperform individual efforts when it comes to achieving business objectives, with an impressive 74.4 percent of respondents favoring collaboration over solitary endeavors. Interestingly, collaboration is seen as both relieving and stressful by 61.5 percent of respondents, while 14.7 percent find it purely stressful. Peer feedback holds great importance for 38.2 percent of participants. Interestingly, 25.9 percent of respondents participate in design communities, but only 9.7 percent use them for job searches, preferring social media. Regarding the work environment, 43 percent of collaborators prefer working from the comfort of their homes. However, only 23 percent believe that long-distance collaboration yields effective results."

8.

The most frequently named communities the surveyed participate in

York Creatives
Art Directors Club of Europe
Australian Graphic Design Association
AIGA
Type Directors Club
Más Mujeres en UX Design en Recherche
La Maison Des Artistes Creative Artists Agency
The Design Kids Uxcel
Working Class Creatives Berufsverband Kommunikationsdesign ADPList
Design+Friends
Interaction Design Foundation The Designers Institute of New Zealand
Design Buddies Growth Designers
Institute of Designers in Ireland

" There are certainly guides to collaboration and practical

14.

Soft skills that designers consider important for effective collaboration
Click on the + to view selected responses from surveyed designers

Empa Active Listening

Openness to feedback Open comunication Conflict management
Flexibility Time management Emotional intelligence Resilience Humility
Critical thinking Teamwork Respect Problem-solving Creative thinking
Proactivity Negotiation Perse
Responsibility Benevolence Asse

17.

The biggest obstacles to collaboration in the design industry

Distance
Designers' Ego
Poor communicative skills
Lack of space
Language barrier
Fear of being vulnerable
Poor management
...go/teamwork balance
Fear of getting criticized
Lack of time
Lack of information Unclear goals
Unrealistic business metrics
Competition with others Mistrust in the team
Intrusive opinions of non-designers
Different approaches
Non-stimulating company culture
Lack of designer-friendly tools
Inadequate budgets

The United States Space Force

spaceforce.com

Overview: As the United States Space Force's biggest, most-comprehensive brand asset, this website by Austin-based creative agency GSD&M brings further clarity, credibility and context to dispel misperceptions of what the Space Force does. With interactive WebGL and informative hotspot features—such as an interactive rocket launch featuring real recordings of Guardians speaking—the site serves as an inspiring information hub and a hardworking recruiting website, inspiring the next generation of space geeks, stargazers, coders and gamers to realize their purpose in the newest branch of the US military.

- The web experience uses Next.js, Theatre.js and three.js for 3-D animations; Framer for DOM animations; the Contentful CMS; and Figma for design, with custom tools to encourage in-browser development and extend Theatre.js with extra features.
- The launch of the site corresponded with the Space Force's third anniversary.
- Within its first month, total sessions increased by 15 percent month over month, with the site now receiving more than 400,000 monthly visitors on average.

Leslie Hung, senior art director
Ben Creekmore, writer
Eli Drljaca, senior writer
Juliana Longoria/Preetal Shah, senior designers
Wildlife, design partner
Lucas Dean Fiser/Maddie Page/Ryan Worthington, design
Christopher Colton/Tori Reneker, creative directors
Jeff Maki, group creative director
Maria D'Amato, executive creative director
Jay Russell, chief creative officer
Kate Gunning, strategy
Kim Faulkner, engineering
Jay Takle, database programmer
Daniel Rodriguez, studio artist
Plan8, sound designer
Skylar Bowen, digital producer
Peter Atherton, senior producer
Amanda Talmadge, digital production director
Kelly Franklin/Courtney Kleeman, project managers
Cardinal Path, Merkle, consultant
Denny House/Joseph Kantar/Marcela Masso/Danylle Salinas-McCord, quality assurance
Havoc, production service company
GSD&M (Austin, TX), project design and development
United States Space Force, client

"Bringing the military into the future through design. Keeping close to the language of sci-fi and gaming is super effective here." —Boo Wong

Comments by GSD&M:

What was the most challenging aspect of the project? "Along with the goal to demystify the Space Force and inspire the next generation about potential space careers, we also chose some really ambitious moments to render 3-D into a browser, highlighting a rocket launch and showing a payload deployment that involved a lot of moving parts. We really had to balance all of the lighting, detailed pieces on the rocket and scale of it all to ensure it looked realistic."

Is the audience you were targeting a particularly difficult one to reach? "Reaching our entire audience is complex. Our core audience is made up of 18-to-24-year-olds who are either heavily STEM-oriented, have a passion for space or are curious about working in start-up entrepreneurial organizations like the Space Force. However, this generation is very suspect of US institutions in general, and few know anyone in the military. Layered on top of that challenge is our mission to bring awareness to a much wider audience. Getting parents, educators and other influencers on board is vital, as are the legislators on Capitol Hill who fund the Space Force. It's even important to target other military branches because most of Space Force is composed of military members who held roles related to space operations before the Space Force's inception. And a sizable percentage of potential recruits are those interested in transferring into the Space Force from other branches."
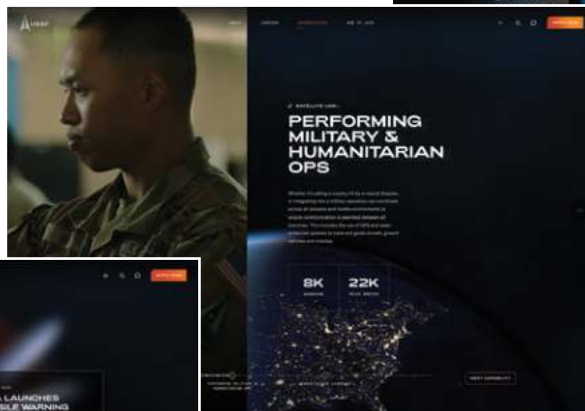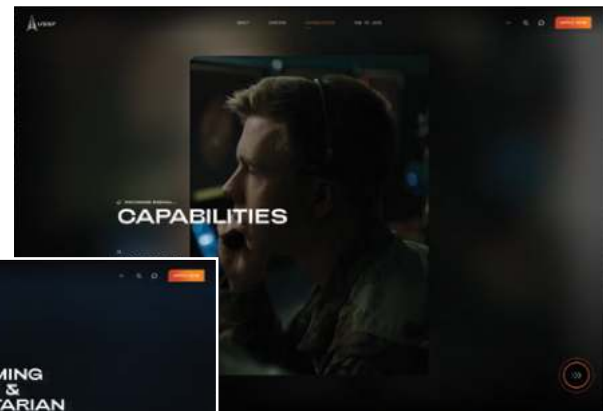
YETI Year in Preview

"I am ready to live 2024 according to what YETI says." —**Boo Wong**

Overview: One of the pillars of outdoor lifestyle brand YETI is to make the wild more accessible to everyone. To encourage its audience of seasoned wilderness explorers and new outdoor enthusiasts alike, YETI collaborated with its digital product partner YML and New York City–based digital agency Code and Theory to create Year in Preview, a digital experience that helped site visitors hit the ground running in 2024. After users answer a few short questions, the Year in Preview tool generates a 2024 calendar with more than 130 seasonal outdoor events and activities curated by user preference.

- Alongside the calendar, the Year in Preview generates a personalized video that compiles the array of dynamic events for users to visualize their chosen activities for the year. The experience was engineered to dynamically render more than 635 videos from code to account for every possible combination of events.

- The site received more than 200 million impressions from press outlets, including *Ad Age*, *Digiday* and *Fast Company*.

- From concept to completion, the Year in Preview site took eight weeks.

calendar.yeti.com
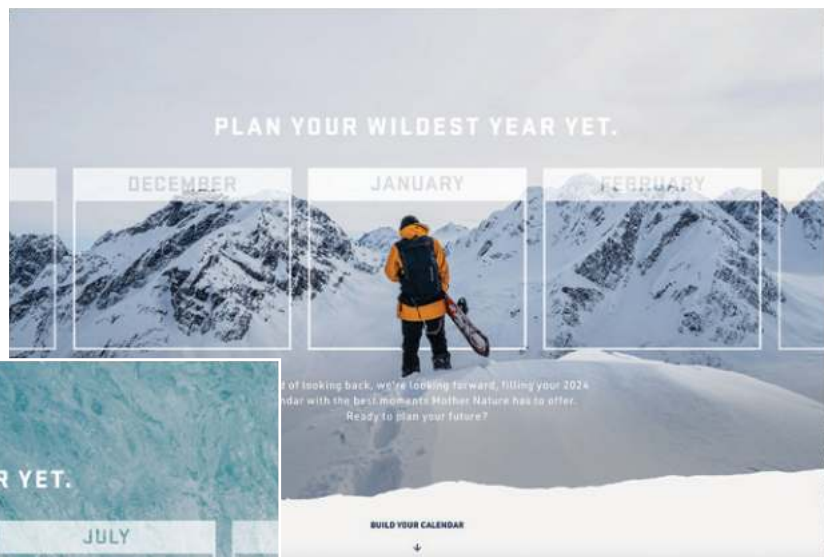
Matt Klugman/Jonathan Main, senior writers
Ginny Golden/Carlos Rangel, executive creative directors
Paulie Dery, chief creative officer
Erika Derylo, senior brand strategist
Sarah Munoz, video director
Caitlin Allen, producer
YML, development partner
Code and Theory (New York, NY), project design and development
YETI, client
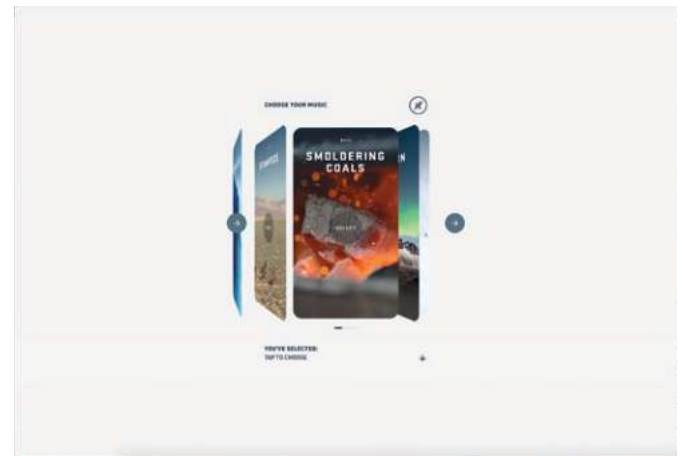
Comments by YETI:

What would you say was the biggest challenge in creating Year in Preview? "When we first started building the site, the biggest challenge we faced was figuring out how to create an experience that felt engaging and personalized to each user without the data that the Spotifys and Googles of the world have access to. With Spotify Wrapped, you simply wake up one day, open the app and find the annual wrap of your musical listening is waiting for you. What we quickly realized is that at YETI, we're the ones with the data in the form of outdoor community knowledge and our vast library of branded content. Instead of showing users a summarized version of their behaviors, our goal was to feed users our data to affect their future behavior.

"We started our experience with a quick, visually engaging quiz built to capture the data necessary to curate each user's calendar to their specific interests. Along with the calendar, we provided the stoke, serving each user with a personalized highlight reel of their year to come. In less than four clicks, we provided users with something functional and inspirational to fuel their 2024."

How does this experience heighten the YETI brand? "Our growth story is undeniably tied to our hyper-focused efforts on individual outdoor communities, like hunting, hiking and surfing, among others. And whenever we're able to showcase all these communities in one arena, that's when we display the true strength of the YETI brand. Year in Preview was the first time we could illuminate and bring together the deep, varied knowledge of our many community leads, and the site delivered on its brand promise of making the wild more accessible to all, giving people a tool to create the 2024 they desired or didn't even know they wanted."

OneDay

oneday.eschlimanstudio.com

Overview: A project by San Francisco–based photographer Dwight Eschliman, *OneDay* catalogs time through a one-per-second shot of one static point of sky over a period of 24 hours. After the 86,400 photographs have been collected, they then each become a pixel in a larger composition. To market the project to galleries and potential clients, San Francisco-based design firm Manual designed and developed a microsite to showcase *OneDay* that includes the ability to let visitors zoom into the large mosaic compositions and explore through a randomizer that features individual seconds of the day.

- Manual built the front end of the site in css, html, JavaScript and php. The back end combines the php-based cms Kirby with a robust upload workflow to an ftp server that streamlines batch uploads of images with more than 86,400 files per project.

- The php- and folder-based back-end structure lets the site fetch individual images based on the documented date and second at runtime.

- From concept to completion, the *OneDay* site took Manual six months.
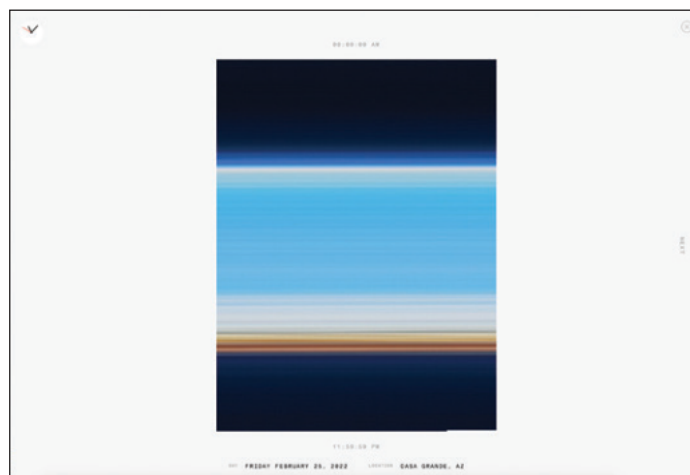
Micah Barrett, art director
Lorraine Li, interface designer
Tom Crabtree, creative director
Manual, project design and development
Eschliman Studio (San Francisco, ca), client

"The idea sounds very simple written in sentences, but the works themselves are quite compelling. Add to that a thoughtful and conceptual web experience, and you have a winner in my book." —**Maria D'Amato**
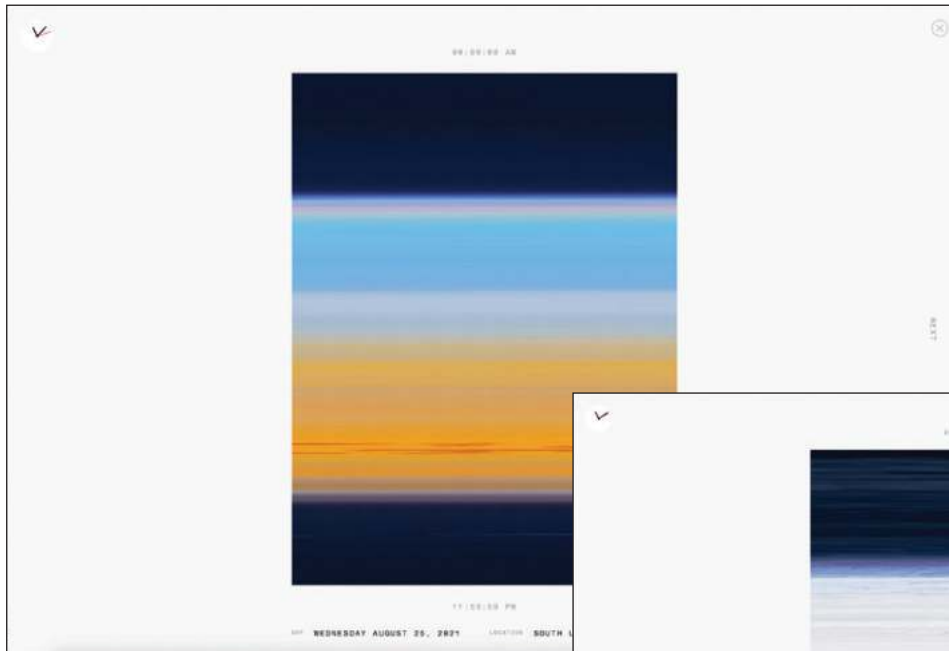
Comments by Dwight Eschliman:

What are the core features of the *OneDay* microsite? "There are a few core features like an infinitely scrolling landing page, zoom feature and individual-second randomizer. These features synchronize very well with the *OneDay* project overall and create a dynamic space for the viewer to experience the project in a deeper manner than is possible in an art gallery. At this point, there are more than 1.6 million individual photographs on the site—and counting."

Was the topic of the project a new one for you? "The *OneDay* project was a departure for my studio in terms of subject matter. Many of our projects over the years have involved cataloging objects. The *OneDay* project is not about cataloging a group of objects, however, but about cataloging a specific unit of time. This shift in subject matter created new challenges and forced a shift in approach to microsite design and development."

What was the most challenging aspect of the project? "The challenges that this project presents in terms of execution took a while to sink in. Once we solved the technical challenges to simply capture the imagery, we realized the project was not just an exercise in sleep deprivation. Each execution involves almost 100,000 images, which creates other challenges—in particular, the challenge of data management. This shaped the design and development of the microsite that Manual created for the project, which cleverly allows the viewer to experience not just the full 86,400-image mosaic effectively, but also its component parts."
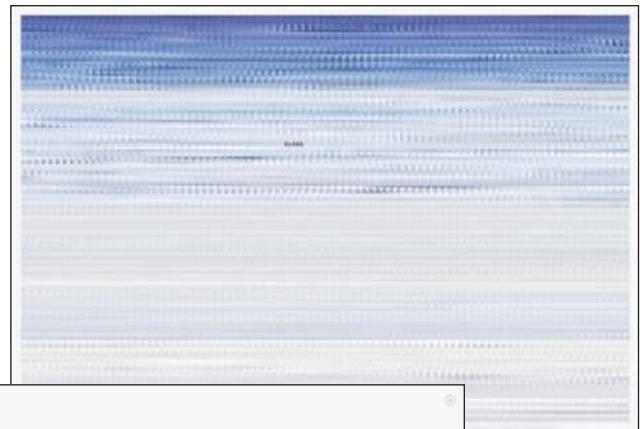
adidas Runner 321 campaign

"The science of a number becomes the designed and brilliant anchor of inclusivity in sports."

—**Boo Wong**

But what if the people wearing those numbers don't look like you?

Lara Goldsmith, user experience designer
Sally Fung/Sara Radovanovich, associate creative directors
Daenen Bramberger, Oso/Tomas Jacobi, Citizen Music, creative directors
Leo Barbosa/Cuanan Cronwright/Andrew MacPhee, executive creative directors
Danilo Boer, global creative director
Nancy Crimi-Lamanna, chief creative officer
Audrey Zink, strategist
Shelley Brown, chief strategy officer
Dylan Groff, engineer
Luiz Costa, technical lead
Fiona Alvarez, assistant editor
Lynn Sheehy, editor
Sebastian Boros/Nupur Desai, online editors
Ian Buck/Yotam Dor, content coordinators
Jason van Bruggen, director
Nico Barry, composer
Sarah Michener, broadcast producer
Spencer Butt, Alter Ego/Lauren Dobbie, Oso/ Kai Rizzuto/Molly Young, Citizen Music, production company producers
Sarah Brooks, School Editing/Geoff Cornish, Suneeva/Hannah Graham, Oso, executive producers
Emily Mihalek, project manager
Stef Fabich, integrated production director
Ebi Agbeyegbe/Andrew Ross, colorists
Citizen Music/Oso, music companies
Suneeva, production company
Alter Ego/School Editing, post-production companies
Chris Miller, development partner
FCB Canada (Toronto, Canada), project design and development
Emily Crueger/Dustin Geddis/Rene Hirschbolz/ Josie Johnson/Andrew Lemoncello/Hygie Ordono/Sally Rubey, adidas, clients
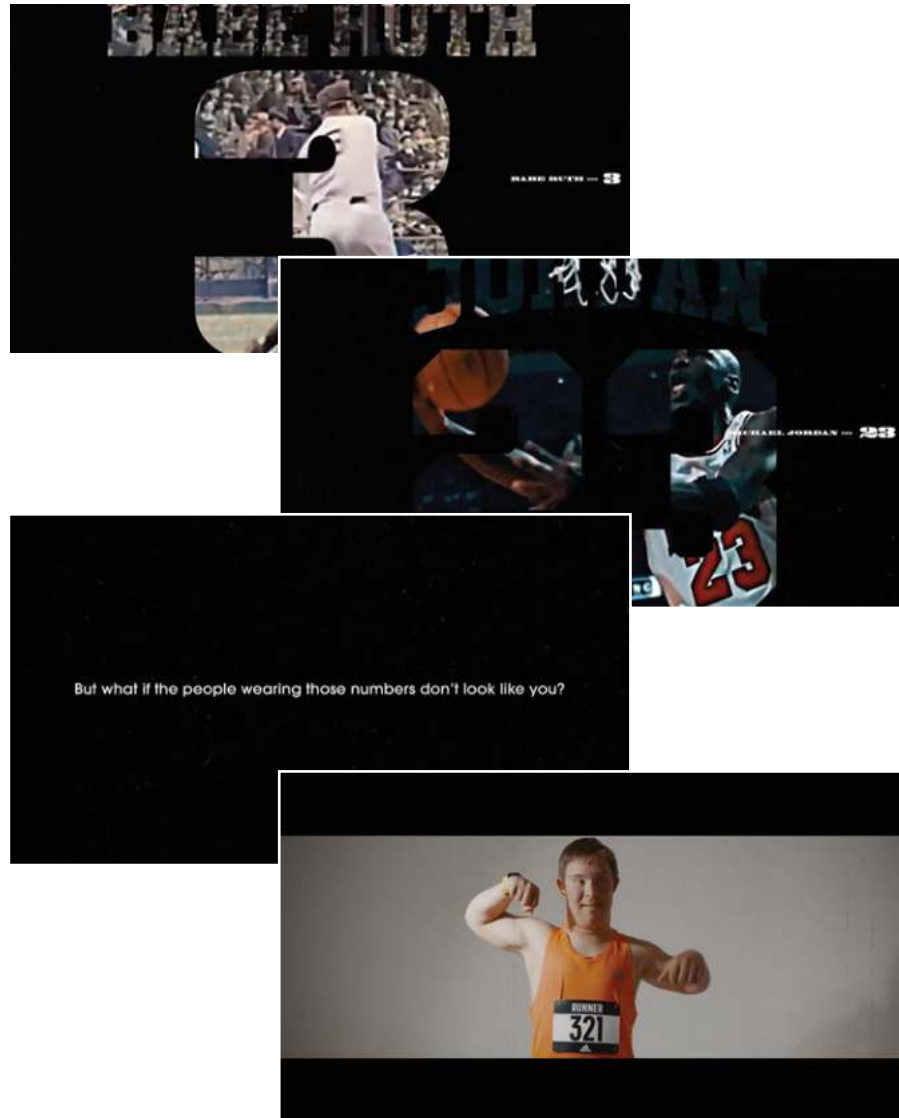
Overview: When people with Down syndrome aren't represented in sport, they aren't able to see what's possible for them. As a brand, adidas has built a mission to break down barriers for marginalized communities and demonstrate to the world that "impossible is nothing." Launching with a video introducing Chris Nikic, the first ever person with Down syndrome to complete an Iron Man with the number 321, adidas's Runner 321 campaign asked six of the world's major marathons—in Berlin, Boston, Chicago, London, New York and Tokyo—to reserve the number 321 for a neurodivergent athlete.

- Four of the six marathons were sponsored by adidas's competitors, including Asics, New Balance and Nike, but still agreed to support the campaign.

- Runner 321 garnered 59 earned placements for 268 million impressions, reaching outlets like Barstool Sports, the *Boston Herald*, *Forbes*, MSN Sports and Yahoo!.

- The campaign also generated awareness and acceptance of neurodivergent athletes participating in the world's largest organized marathons and races.

> "I love this idea. It's simple and powerful. It goes beyond inclusion by promoting belonging." —Maria D'Amato

Comments by FCB Canada:

Where did the idea for Runner 321 come from? "Iconic numbers—like Michael Jordan's 23, Lionel Messi's 10 or Wayne Gretzky's 99—represent perseverance, dedication and the pinnacle of athletic success. They also represent a legacy, wherein sports fans can wear the number with pride and the hope of reaching the same level of achievement.

"Individuals with Down syndrome stand to reap significant physical and cognitive benefits from exercise, but despite this evidence, they've remained excluded from the fitness community. Neuro-divergent athletes are often placed in separate competitions due to outdated stigma and bias about their abilities, and these events signal that they are incapable of participating in 'regular' sporting events.

"Chris is a shining example of what's possible for individuals with Down syndrome. After he began to exercise routinely, he observed strengthened memory, enhanced learning, boosted social skills and increased confidence, all of which have life-changing impacts for individuals with Down syndrome. We made history by partnering with Chris and making him the world's first sponsored athlete with Down syndrome."

Across what media was Runner 321 deployed? "We first launched the campaign on adidas's and Chris's social media pages with a long-form video formally introducing Chris as the first adidas athlete with Down syndrome and the first-ever Runner 321. The video encouraged our target audience to get involved via our destination site.

"Next, we handed out orange T-shirts to fans attending the Boston Marathon that supported Chris and the Runner 321 movement. We then encouraged people to join us 3.21 miles from the finish line to cheer Chris on during his home stretch. All of this led to the Runner 321 campaign becoming a global movement, with 278 athletes and counting signing up all over the world to reserve Bib 321."
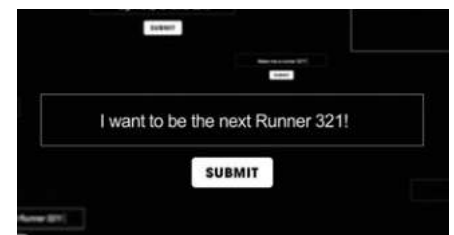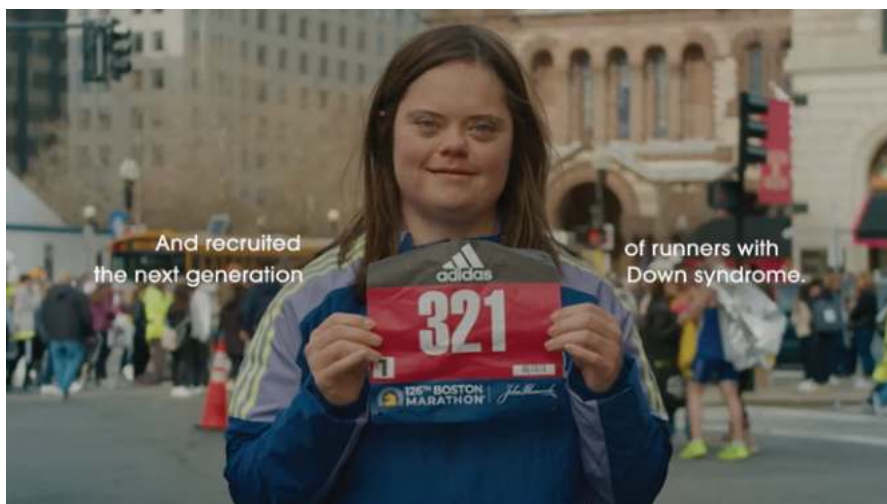
Philadelphia Schmear Socks campaign

"This is an amazing example of a quick response to current events. And by the way, these socks look cool." **—Viacheslav Olianishyn**
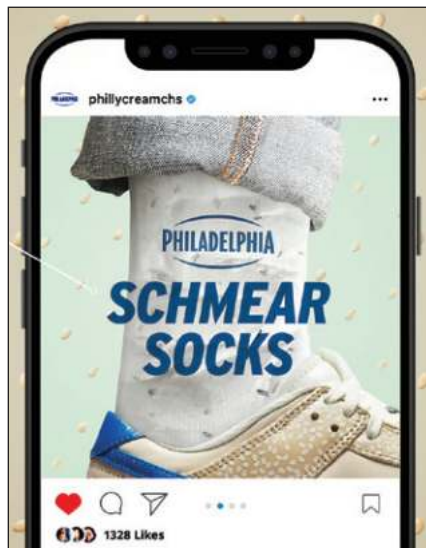
Overview: In 2023, Nike announced the release of its Montreal Bagel Dunk Lows sneakers, inspired by the Montréal bagel and featuring a pattern of sesame seeds. Ad agency Rethink seized the moment for its client, Kraft Heinz's Philadelphia Cream Cheese, and quickly created the Schmear Socks, a set of Philadelphia-inspired, cream cheese–themed socks. Featuring a wavy pattern after the spread in three flavors—original, chive and onion, and strawberry—Schmear Socks became the ultimate accessory for sneaker fans purchasing the Montreal Bagel Dunk Lows, proving that no bagel is complete without cream cheese. Even if that bagel is a shoe.

- From Nike's announcement of the Montreal Bagel Dunk Lows, Rethink conceptualized and produced the Schmear Socks in 72 hours.

- The socks earned 67 pieces of earned coverage across North America, 300 million earned impressions in 24 hours, and an increase in sales of original Philadelphia by 15.3 percent and market share by 2.1 percent.

- Eighty-three percent of Dunk Lows media stories mentioned the Schmear Socks, including in Gen z–focused outlets like *Complex*, *MTL Blog*, *Narcity* and *Streets of Toronto*.

Michelle Budge, art director
Jackson Byrne/Jeremie Lachance/Marie-Hélène Lessard, writers
Xavier Blais, executive creative director
Mike Dubrick/Aaron Starkman, chief creative officers
Sarah Phillips/Tevis Spence/Tanvi Swar, strategists
Sean McDonald, chief strategy officer
April Haffenden/Kate Spencer, producers
Custom Lab, production service company
Rethink (Toronto, Canada), project design and development/ad agency
Anne Field/Kaitlin Kocsis/Keenan White, Kraft Heinz, clients

"Perfect cultural moment to capitalize on for the brand. 'When people talked about the shoes, they talked about the socks.' Exactly." —Maria D'Amato

Comments by Jackson Byrne:

Is the audience you were targeting a particularly difficult one to reach? "Trying to make cream cheese cool isn't easy. Fortunately, if there's one thing sneakerheads love, it's a brand that knows how to act right. By launching Schmear Socks on social media [so quickly after] the shoes' release and hijacking the conversation around Nike's most anticipated shoe launch of the year, Philadelphia Cream Cheese was able to stand shoulder to shoulder with Nike—which is one of the world's coolest brands—not by forcing an unnatural collaboration but by capitalizing on a truth everyone agrees on: bagels aren't complete without cream cheese. Together, the shoes-and-socks combo sold for two-and-a-half-times the shoes alone."

How did time constraints affect your final solution? "The only thing that separated this idea from the tired world of branded merch drops was timeliness. We had to act fast to capitalize on a conversation that would be old news in a matter of days. Moving at this speed forced us to be ruthless in filtering out what mattered and what didn't in our executions, which resulted in a clarity that served the idea well."

Bank of Montréal Gamer's Branch

Overview: A staggering 37 percent of millennials and Gen Z are more uncomfortable discussing personal finances than politics and religion, and this fear stems from vulnerability and embarrassment surrounding money— but it's also killing their financial futures. In 2022, Bank of Montréal (BMO) launched NXT LVL on the content streaming platform Twitch for the under-35 demographic to engage in open, anonymous conversation about finances. Gamer's Branch, by ad agency FCB Canada, similarly uses social media platforms like instant messaging app Discord, TikTok and Twitch to engage young people anonymously and give them the confidence to navigate their financial journeys.

- Viewers of Gamer's Branch spent more than 15,000 hours watching BMO's content on Twitch, with more than 123,000 unique viewers of 8.5 million video views.

- BMO saw a 30 percent improvement in its association with the gaming community, with a 13 percent increase in new bank accounts opening and a 24 percent increase in student accounts opening.

- FCB Canada created more than 100 hours of searchable clips from the Twitch stream for Discord users to access.

Logan Novak, art director
Dawson Courson/Patrick Gravel/Jacqueline Lee, writers
Lara Goldsmith, user experience designer
Caleb McMullen/Hussein Rumaithi, associate creative directors
Daenen Bramberger, Oso/Mike Kotevich, FCB Canada, creative directors
Andrew MacPhee/Jeremiah McNama, executive creative directors
Danilo Boer, global creative director
Nancy Crimi-Lamanna, chief creative officer
John Fung/Stephanie Gyles/Daisy Qin/Amanda Soares, strategy
Shelley Brown, chief strategy officer
Lily Han, developer
Leo Hicks, engineer
Eli Ferrara, creative technologist
Luke Ionico, assistant editor
Peter Miller, editor
Rebecca Burtnik, online editor
TJ Derry/Adam Madrzyk, directors of photography
Sean Frame, contributing artist

Jay Ryan, visual effects artist
Tom Feiler, director
Brent Bergerson, animator
Rebecca Burtnik/Jane Heath, producers
Caitlin Cucco, line producer
Tania Overholt, broadcast producer
Hannah Graham, Oso/Laurie Jones/Michi Lepik-Stahl, United Content, executive producers
Maia Spetter, integrated production director
Kristina Mileska, colorist
Natasha Phillip, quality assurance
Think Tank Creative, animation company
Oso, music company
FlyAR/Jesse Griffiths Casting Inc./Unified Content, production companies
FCB Canada (Toronto, Canada), project design and development
Alexis Chen/Kenya Marcelline/Maja Neable/Kate Simandl/Mike Stean, Bank of Montréal, clients

"FCB Canada could have made an advertising campaign encouraging this audience to change their behaviors, but instead the agency met the audience where it was and delivered something custom and unique. I have no doubt that this strategy will become the foundation for a long-term relationship with these customers." —**Maria D'Amato**

Comments by FCB Canada:

Where did the idea to utilize these anonymous social platforms come from? "Targeting the under-35 gaming community, we knew this group was not only comfortable with digital platforms, but also more inclined to engage in anonymous financial discussions online—with 59 percent of Gen Z and 55 percent of millennials preferring this format. We sought to transform the comfort zones of gaming platforms into forums for open, judgment-free financial discussions. The goal was to instill a proactive financial mindset and inspire these young consumers to confidently manage their finances.

"Riding on the success of BMO's NXT LVL, the first banking experience on Twitch, we broke new ground by offering the gaming community a golden ticket to an anonymous way to bank, live on Twitch. As we streamed, we connected our audience to expert advice and financial resources, and other BMO lines of business got in on the action by sponsoring streams and introducing our audience to specific services like online investing or student financial products. This daring, first-of-its-kind campaign utilized numerous channels—Discord, TikTok, Twitch and Twitter—to interweave the spheres of gaming and finance."

What was the response to the campaign like? "Gamer's Branch led to a remarkable 13 percent surge in digital account openings among the target demographic. The campaign engendered thousands of hours spent discussing finances, executing banking transactions and connecting young people to often-avoided financial resources. Anonymity within the platform remained crucial to foster confidence. BMO's revolutionary campaign breathed new life into engaging young people in a financial landscape."
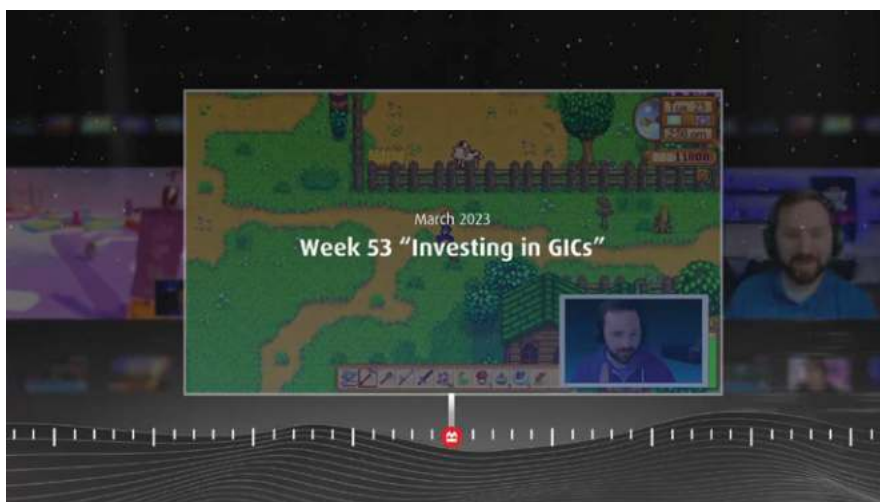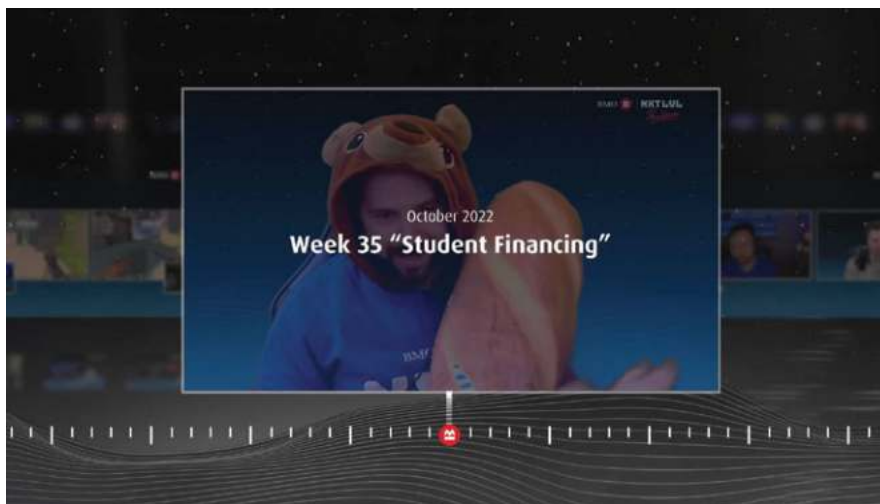
The Gist Tampon vs Tiger campaign

"Powerful idea and implementation." —**Viacheslav Olianishyn**

Overview: After outdriving a male peer at the 2023 Masters, Tiger Woods chose to make a misogynistic gesture by handing his competitor a tampon. So, in this initiative by women-led sports brand The Gist, ad agency Rethink turned Woods's game at the Masters into a campaign against period poverty, donating a box of tampons in his name for every stroke he took. The worse he played, the more boxes were donated. Feminists, pro athletes and tampon brands rallied behind The Gist's campaign to transform Woods's bad joke into a positive force.

- Tampon vs Tiger generated more than 30 million impressions, a 350 percent increase in The Gist's social engagement, an earned media value of $286,522 with $0 spent and a 670 percent increase in tampon donations.

- People could also donate their own tampon boxes via partner charities.

- The campaign featured a real-time-updating counter of the number of strokes taken by Tiger Woods at the 2023 Masters Tournament, which correlated to the number of boxes of tampons donated.

we donated a box of tampons in Tiger's name

for every stroke he took.

Grace Cho/Shona Massey, art directors
Cameron Spires, writer
Steven Miller, designer
Grace Cho/Cameron Spires, creative directors
Sean O'Connor, group creative director
Leia Rogers/Hans Thiessen/Morgan Tierney, executive creative directors
Mike Dubrick/Aaron Starkman, chief creative officers
Anna Shkuratoff, strategist
Jacky Le, strategic planner
Sean McDonald, chief strategy officer
Ken Malley, developer
Stephen Shevchuk, editor
Scott Russell, producer
Kyle Hicks, digital producer
Rethink (Toronto, Canada), project design and development/ad agency
The Gist, client

Comments by Grace Cho:

How did you come up with the idea for Tampon Vs Tiger? "In February 2023, Tiger Woods made headlines for handing his opponent Justin Thomas a tampon after outdriving him, inferring he was playing like a woman. The Gist was determined to respond to Tiger in a way that felt impactful and empowering. As much as giving a tampon to a male opponent was an act of misogyny, many people experiencing period poverty are in dire need of tampons. This led to the insight: Tiger gave out a tampon as an offensive joke, so we could help him give out many more to the people who really need them."

What was the response to the campaign like? "The story broke on the front page of USA TODAY, who applauded the initiative for showing that 'sexism is never par for the course.' It made headlines worldwide, garnering attention from equality advocates; athletes like Olympic snowboarder Calynn Irwin, pro golfer Erikah Neger and National Women's Soccer League player Dani Weatherholt; and major sporting media outlets like Sportsnet. It was retweeted by The Sports Bra, a famous bar dedicated to women's sports.

"Sports fans shared the post on social media to show their support. We got hundreds of comments, including 'I need to drop everything and donate IMMEDIATELY' and 'Tongue-in-cheek charity initiatives might be my new favorite kind of activism.' We called on other brands to join in on the cause and received tampon donations from Aunt Flow, Sunny Period and PHD Feminine Health."

81st Street Studio

"A magical interactive space that keeps children's hands on art and technology, where well-designed learning is gamified and fun." **—Boo Wong**

Overview: The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York has long dedicated itself to fostering a lifelong love of learning and art in children. At its first-of-a-kind, free-to-enter new space called 81st Street Studio, the museum invites young children and their families to play and discover what things are made of. With design by Philadelphia-based studio Bluecadet and installation by New York–based кoкo Architecture + Design, the 81st Street Studio's interdisciplinary, multisensory experiences teach children about sound, light and material, with digital and physical play spaces that feature objects inspired by The Met's collection and musical instruments donated by Yamaha.

- Since opening on September 9, 2023, the 81st Street Studio has welcomed more than 42,000 visitors, with 3,000 people visiting over the opening weekend and an average of 700 visitors every day.

- For exhibition setup and synchronization of the digital assets, Bluecadet used its JavaScript-based, open-source tool Launchpad, which pulls content from cms sources and monitors application health.

- Bluecadet, кoкo Architecture, The Met and Yamaha took four years to bring 81st Street Studio to life.

Michael Prisco, designer
Kim Gim, associate creative director
Josh Goldblum, principal
Katie Han, developer
Clay Tercek, senior developer
Adiel Fernandez, technical lead
Brett Renfer, interaction director
Katie Lannigan, senior producer
Nina Callaway, senior media producer
Ellen Freifeld, executive producer
кoкo Architecture + Design, architect
Bluecadet (Philadelphia, PA), project design and development
Alicia Cheng/Inka Drögemüller/Heidi Holder/Max Hollein/Marina Kellen French/Mandy Kritzeck/
    Darcy-Tell Morales/Mabel Taylor/Anna Zepp, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, clients

"The Metropolitan Museum of Art's 81st Street Studio is a beautifully designed, interactive play space for children aged three to eleven. It is a fantastic place for kids to learn about art, science and culture and to have fun while doing it."

—Martijn van der Does

Comments by Bluecadet:

What interactive experiences form the core of 81st Street Studio's design? "At the center of the 81st Street Studio is a form that resembles a tree—the *Art Tech Tree*—with a digital station beneath. Built with c# using Unity and the Microsoft Kinect Azure depth camera and SDK, the station offers two activities. First, visitors can carve their own 'woodblock' and create virtual 'impressions' of their design in projected light with different colors, patterns and other attributes. The second activity guides visitors to design physical drums and then use digital tools to play them.

"Adjacent to the *Tree* is the *Art Tech Log*, where visitors interact with a two-sided station filled with touchscreens. Through the screens, a JavaScript application built with React and the Vite.js library lets users explore materials—wood, metal and clay—through a range of conceptual lenses. This includes where they're found and how artists use them throughout the Met's collection.

"Across the back wall of the space is *The Ramble*, an immersive, multiuser interactive visual playground that celebrates how artists use light and color. Built in c++ using the creative coding platform Cinder and leveraging the Spinnaker SDK for high-res video streaming through FLIR BlackFly RGB cameras, the installation features a dynamic projection wall and light table. Through color, shadow and distortion, children can explore the behavior and properties of light while creating mesmerizing visual displays.

"Hidden throughout the space are what we call 'subtle magic,' video assets made interactive through BrightSign digital screens and the BrightAuthor software platform. For example, small eyes can peer out from unexpected places; as visitors approach, the eyes blink before offering a delightful surprise from The Met collection. These displays hint at the experience of visiting the full museum, where there is always something more to discover."

Coke Studio - Summer of Music

"An innovative integration of AI and game engines elevates music festival experience." —**Martijn van der Does**

Overview: To place Coca-Cola at the heart of music culture internationally, ad agency Momentum Worldwide and Santa Monica–based creative production company Tool created Coke Studio - Summer of Music, a traveling activation at music festivals that transports festivalgoers to a virtual studio. Up to four participants provide a few pieces of info to an AI engine to generate a unique band name, album art and music track in their chosen genre, as well as animated music visuals for a virtual stage that can then be filmed upon through a green screen and then shared on social media.

- For the experience, Tool used a custom AI pipeline; Unity; OBS for real-time green-keying and recording; the VJ software Resolume; front- and back-end tech including MongoDB, NestJS, React, SocketIO and Vite; Linux and Docker for hosting; and AWS for cloud-computing services.

- After successful launches at several music festivals, two additional physical activations were fabricated to support Canadian and smaller US festivals.

- From the pitch prototype to the first activation, the Coke Studio project took Momentum and Tool approximately twelve weeks.

Allison Hartman, art director
Julius Im/Nick Taubes, writers
Sophie Langohr, 3-D designer
Jason Kirtley, designer
Nicole Meyerson, associate design director
Dan Lau, design director
Sam Resta, Momentum Worldwide/Hans Weiss, Tool, creative directors
Megan Cross, executive creative director
James Robinson, chief creative officer
Dustin Callif, principal
Shalimar Alvarado/Austin Bennet/Justin Wallace, creative technologists
Wim Vanhenden, technology director
Mitch Mitchell, editor
Alex Moy, director
Gary Gunn, music composer

Athena Margarites, associate producer
Sarah Davis/Glenn Minerely/Kyle Morich/Rachael O'Connor/Jeremy Polo/
    Taryn Rolf/Stephani Vial, producers
Jessica Keil/Medina Nikšić, integrated producers
Nicholas Merrill, post-production producer
Alexa Bermn, Arcade Edit/Jill Grady, Tool/Eddie Martin, Momentum
    Worldwide, senior producers
Adam Baskin, executive producer
Kristi Long, project manager
Cameron McMurtrey, production coordinator
Mike Frey/Bill Vaughn, production supervisors
Pooja Daphtary/Melissa Hamilton, integrated production directors
Momentum Worldwide/Tool (Santa Monica, CA), project design and
    development
Coca-Cola, client
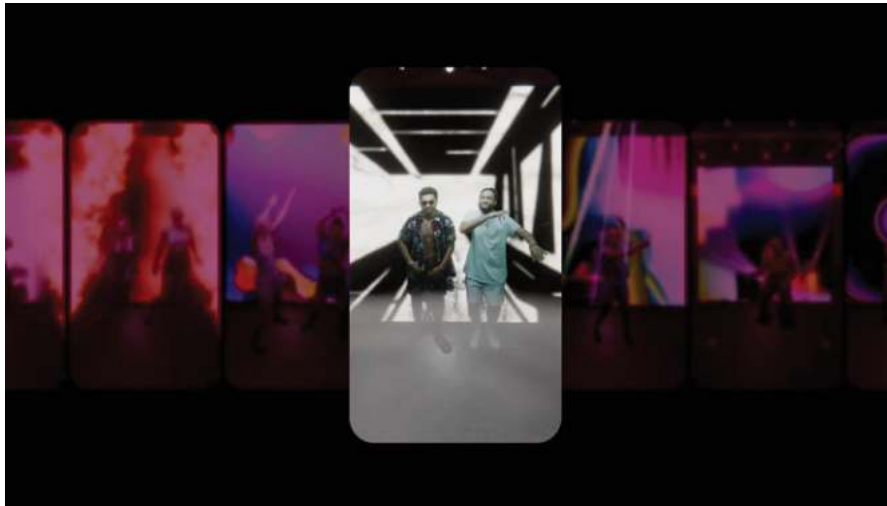
"I love that AI is core to this idea without it being all about the AI."
—**Maria D'Amato**

Comments by Tool:

What does the Coke Studio - Summer of Music experience entail? "The user experience consists of a fun interface to extract some relevant user info, a VIP experience upstairs during behind-the-scenes AI generation, a performance in a green-screen virtual studio, a live preview of their performance on a floor-to-ceiling LED wall and a 35-second video takeaway that showed all of that in its most sharable form. More than 12,000 user videos have been generated to date—every one of them unique—with assets including album art, a band name, a generated music track, animated AI visuals and a composited game-engine render that looks as if the user performed on a Coke Studio–branded soundstage."

What challenges did you encounter in this project's creation, and how did you overcome them? "Employing AI for brands [requires] creating a legal methodology that covers any perceived risk. We worked with our partners to navigate a creative technology that removed any AI copyright or other concerns. We also leveraged fine-tuned models trained on licensed, owned imagery; implemented smart negative prompting to avoid visual outputs that could be perceived to have brand risk; and created an experience that blends a feeling of user agency with highly structured prompting."

If you could redo this project, what would you change? "We debated at the beginning of the project whether to rely on expensive local hardware that could malfunction, as opposed to cloud-computing that would require consistent, reliable internet bandwidth at festival venues. We initially launched with local hardware dominating our architecture, but after several successful activations—along with surprisingly reliable internet—we opted to migrate a large portion of our architecture to the cloud. This enabled us to have more flexibility with remote technical support and code deployments and less physical setup time at each festival."
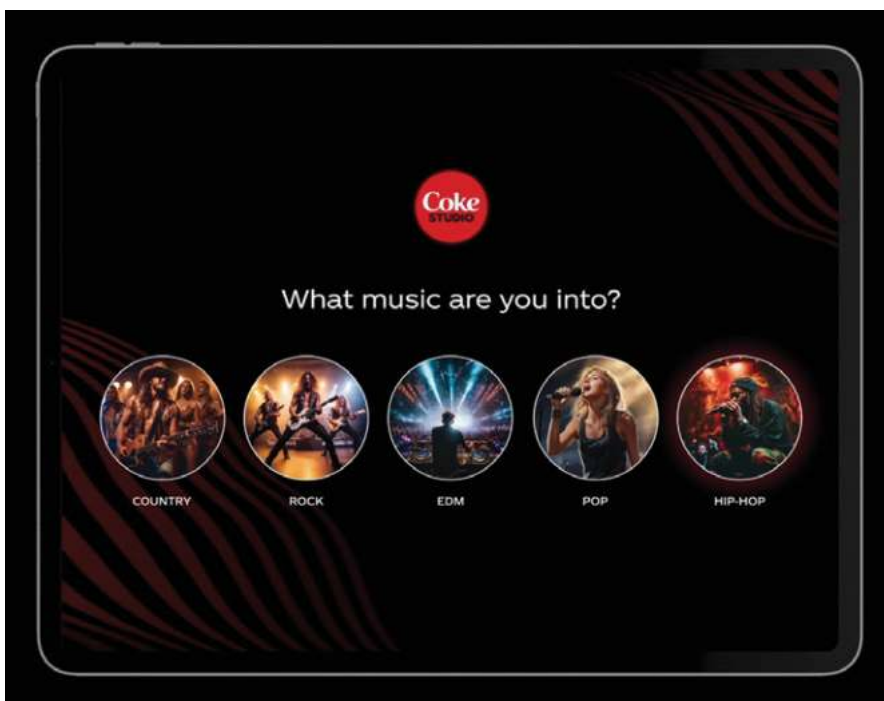
Intel XR Fab Tour

"One of those exhibitions to which I would like to go." —**Viacheslav Olianishyn**

Overview: Intel produces computer chips around the clock in its chip fabrication facilities—or "fabs"—using state-of-the-art manufacturing processes. As these sprawling, externally unremarkable, multiacre facilities aren't open to the public, Intel wanted to give visitors to its corporate museum in Santa Clara, California, an inside look at how the fabs produce silicon chips with nanometer precision. Created by San Francisco–based design firm Stimulant with animations by Portland, Oregon–based studio Invisible Thread, the Intel XR Fab Tour takes an educational, accurate and playful look inside one of the world's most complex manufacturing processes using AR and mixed reality.

- The exhibit features two modes of interaction: a standalone, self-guided tour for the general public; and a special, mixed-reality experience for VIP guests.

- Projected onto a physical fab model, eight animated vignettes explain the buildings and systems that comprise the fabrication process.

- The project took Stimulant's multidisciplinary team roughly a year to complete. The AR and mixed reality experiences run on the Unity engine, while the website is authored in HTML5 and JavaScript.

DeEtta Cobra, user experience designer/design director
Alex Hessler, creative director
Darren David, executive creative director/content coordinator
Daniel Chamberlin, Invisible Thread/Josh Wagoner, Stimulant, developers
Mike O'Reilly/Greg Pronko, engineers
Level 2 Industries, engineering
Sean Holt/Stephan Winokur, technical leads
Ben Purdy, Glowbox/Simon Uleners, Invisible Thread, creative technologists
Thomas Wester, technology director
Alpay Kasal, Stimulant/Chris Seguritan, Invisible Thread, 3-D modeling
Jean Ann Douglass, voice talent
Zach Roberts, senior producer
Darren David, Stimulant/Annie Pomeranz, Invisible Thread, executive producers
Invisible Thread, 3-D animation company
John Murray Productions/Alpay Kasal, Stimulant, fabricators
Stimulant (San Francisco, CA), project design and development
Intel, client

"Innovative melding of AR software and hardware design in a purposeful installation helps visitors see the impossible." —**Boo Wong**

Comments by Stimulant:

What were some of the project's biggest challenges, and how did you overcome them? "The largest challenge we faced was in figuring out how to distill a multitude of complicated systems into a series of easily understood 'explainers.' An Intel fab covers dozens of acres and utilizes a staggering array of highly advanced equipment and mechanisms. All these exist to deliver raw materials to the cleanroom, where manufacturing takes place, and remove and process waste.

"Turning the chip-making process into a living storybook was no small feat. We worked closely with subject matter experts to understand the salient points of the process, including a tour of a working fab and thoroughly reviewing dozens of technical documents. We then developed a high-level narrative framework that became a series of conceptual, accurate diagrams, each of which iteratively transformed into a 3-D animation. Inspired by the books of David Macaulay and Richard Scarry, our goal was to make visitors feel like they were looking directly into a simplified version of a fab."

How do the self-guided and mixed-reality tours differ physically? "[For the] self-guided experience, we designed a system that
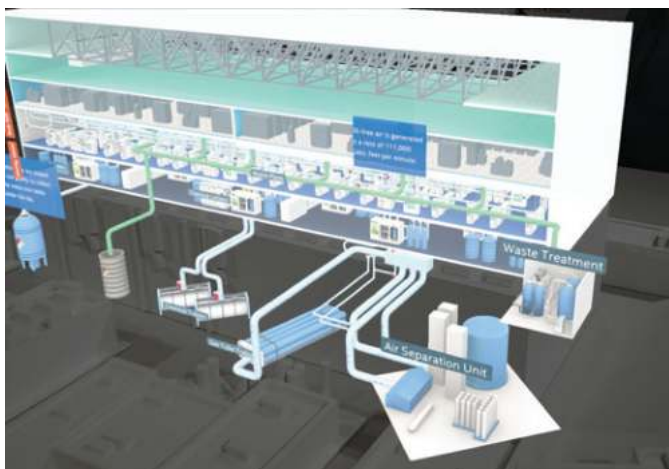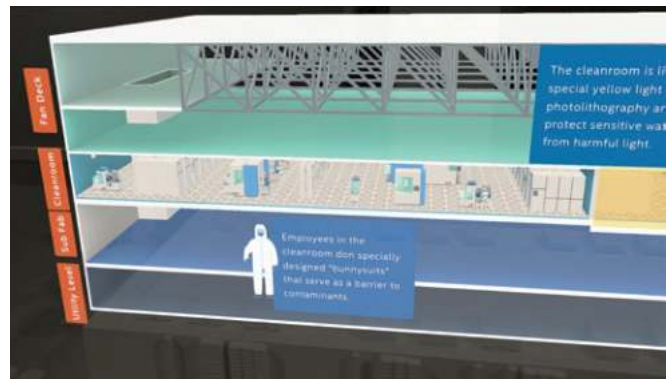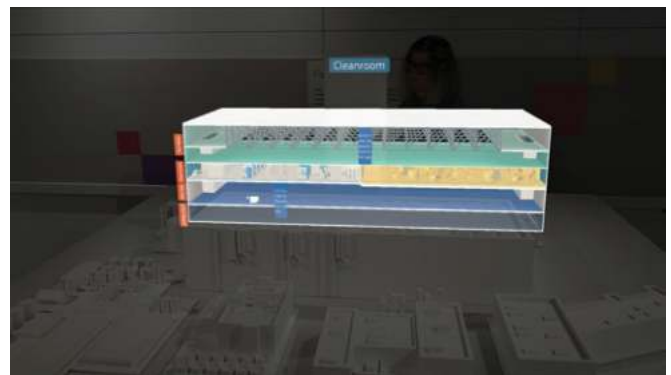
mounted 9:32 aspect ratio displays on sliding rails, letting the displays slide freely to the left and right. Each display was housed in a custom enclosure containing front-facing cameras and positional sensors, which feed image and position information into a real-time 3-D engine that superimposes animated content over the live feed. This avoids the primary issues associated with tablets: learning curves, staffing oversights and monitoring, charging requirements, breakage, and theft.

"The mixed-reality version of the tour runs on the Microsoft Hololens 2. With this, up to eight people can simultaneously explore the fab around the exhibit. Vignette navigation and narration are unique to each user, so they can explore at their own pace."

Bunny Running

"Visually stunning how this installation works. Great way to tell a story."
—**Martijn van der Does**

Overview: Held on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month following the Lunar New Year, the Lantern Festival is one of the most important traditional festivals for Taiwanese people. For 2023's Lantern Festival during the Year of the Rabbit, Taipei-based motion design studio Bito created *Bunny Running*, an outdoor performance installation at Taipei-based Songshan Cultural and Creative Park that transforms the simple joy of receiving a package into an immersive experience. A three-story-tall interactive installation resembling a box takes the audience on a four-minute animated adventure through a shipping warehouse doing express deliveries and lets them uncover hidden surprises.

- To create an immersive, story-rich audiovisual experience, *Bunny Running* utilizes detection sensors, ambient light design, naked-eye 3-D on an LED screen and AR filter cameras.

- During its runtime, the installation did a five-minute performance every half-hour that also used a large rabbit balloon, with time in between performances letting audiences interact with the cube.

- A team of 20 creators and animators—expanding to a team of 40 at installation—concepted and executed *Bunny Running* over more than six months.

Henry Chen/Chung-Lun Hsieh/Tifu Huang/Ruo-Jia Liang/Chang-Xi Lu,
   3-D designers
Lu-Wen Hou/Binbin Lu/Eating Tsia/Hsien-Chen Tsia, designers
Lu-Wen Hou, lead designer
Vicki Huang, co-creative director
Keng-Ming Liu, creative director
Ming-Jyun Hung/Po-Hsiu Yeh, interactive developers
Tifu Huang/Eating Tsia, executive directors
Binbin Lu/Eating Tsia/Johnny Yang, animators
Erh-Lei Chai/Henry Chen/Jane Guan/Chung-Lun Hsieh/Hwa-Chin Hsu/
   Tifu Huang/Ching-Ho Kao/Ruo-Jia Liang/Derrick Liu/Chang-Xi Lu/
   Yu-Cheng Tu, 3-D animators
Tommy Lin/Derrick Liu/Zi Yong, 3-D modeling
Liya Dunlap/David Dunlap, music
Hsiang Hsieh, producer
Naiyun Peng, project manager
Bito (Taipei, Taiwan), project design and development
Taipei City Government, client

Comments by Hsiang Hsieh and Tifu Huang:
How did *Bunny Running* compare with other projects you've worked on in the past? "In terms of technology, this project required switching between different software for video and interactive during the performance," says Hsieh. "It needed more adjustments to ensure consistency in light, texture and color representations."

"The visuals for this performance include scenes rendered by Unity and 3-D animations made by Cinema 4D," says Huang. "Since they are created in different software, the lighting, materials and rendering's appearance differs between the two. Additionally, due to the naked-eye 3-D effect, there are variations in perspective. To seamlessly connect the assets rendered in different software, we made numerous corrections and adjustments and designed special transition animations as well. This phase of work took about a month. From the results, the audience cannot perceive of the software differences, demonstrating the success of our adjustments."

How did time constraints affect your final execution? "This project has a larger screen scale, and the animation details require a significant amount of render time," says Hsieh. "The project featured a 512-cubic-meter cube (about 669 cubic yards) with two sides covered in LED screens at an approximate 4K resolution. The actual rendering time was six times longer than expected. We originally had a six-month production period for the project, but due to the venue's late confirmation, we ended up having only two months. So, we prioritized creativity with the short time we had available, but it made the rendering time extremely tight."

"Looking back, the process was almost a miracle because the production period coincided with the Lunar New Year Holiday," says Huang. "The timelines for music, animation, interaction and render times often overlapped. But because of the time pressure, everyone's potential was brought out. When each separately produced part was combined, the overall effect exceeded expectations."

Illumination

"What a beautiful and truly meaningful project!" —**Viacheslav Olianishyn**

Overview: As one of the world's biggest beauty brands, Sephora has the power to expand the way the world sees beauty. So, as BIPOC Canadians often struggle to find makeup for their skin tone, the brand created the Colour iQ shade-matching tool to address that. To celebrate the tool and champion BIPOC Canadians in the beauty industry, Toronto-based creative agency Zulu Alpha Kilo launched *Illumination*, an immersive installation that displays more than 140,000 unique skin tones and shades of Canadians and transforms them into an elegant, interactive experience with animations and sound design triggered by gestures and movements in real time.

- Shade data was transformed into RGB codes to display across screens, and Lidar technology tracked visitor movements to trigger the animations and sound elements.

- The immersive installation was the hero component of a larger national campaign that included TV and OOH elements.

- The effort spanned many months and a multiagency team between Zulu Alpha Kilo, creative agency SUPERBIEN and production company wonderMakr.
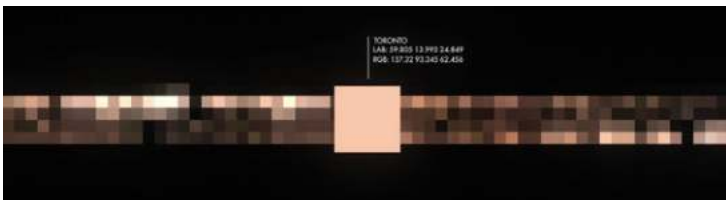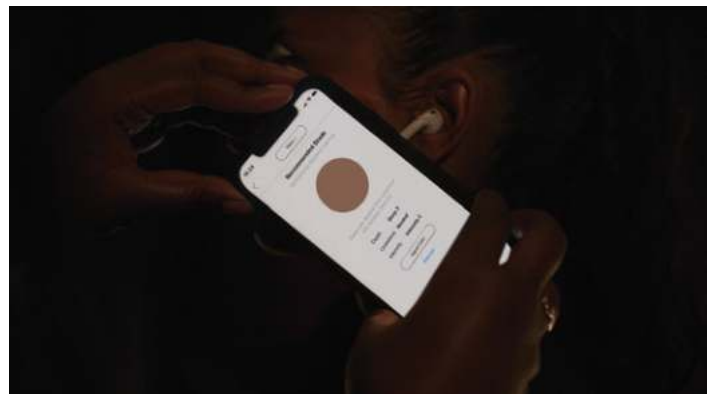
Andrea Por, art director
Christina Roche, writer
Ana-Marija Matić, designer
Andrea Por/Christina Roche, associate creative directors
Jenny Glover/Brian Murray/Stephanie Yung, chief creative officers
Patrick Henderson/Heather Segal/Elyssa Seidman, strategy
Jack Chen, director of photography
Genevieve Charbonneau, photographer
Pavel Petrycki, studio artist
Jimmy Vi, director
Teresa Bayley/Jesse Brook, agency producers
Daniela Favot, producer
Adam Rodness, line producer
Adam Palmer, executive producer
Shauna McKenna/Chris Rosario/Mike Sutton/Lisa Walton-Rixon, project managers
Roman Hul, production manager
Nabil Elsaadi, retoucher
Zulubot, production company
wonderMakr/Zulu Alpha Kilo, project design and development
Zulu Alpha Kilo (Toronto, Canada), ad agency
Candice Dixon/Kaleigh Henderson/Sheila Legault/Caitlin Lindsay/ Allison Litzinger/Vanessa Mosakos/Amy Scott, Sephora Canada, clients

Comments by Zulu Alpha Kilo:

Did you learn anything new during the process of creating *Illumination*? "The beauty category doesn't always showcase a range of skin tones. As Canadians, we do recognize the diversity of our country, but there was something really amazing about seeing just how unique we all are. Makeup shades aren't one-size-fits-all because our individual skin tones are so varied across ethnic groups and within them. To us, it was simply impressive to see how those 140,000 shades are all distinct from each other."

Were there any specific demands that made the project easier or harder? "This work needed to balance a functional message about Sephora's color-matching tool with an emotional message about individual beauty and belonging. In any project, trying to communicate multiple messages can propose challenges, but the work ultimately let the product and the emotional brand message live seamlessly together."

What was the response to *Illumination* like? "There was a great response to the installation and the campaign as a whole. The experience had the great emotional impact we hoped for. Visitors were struck by the multitude of shades represented. It wasn't merely 20 or 30 that you might see in a foundation aisle—these were thousands of uniquely beautiful Canadians. As for the brand's business goals, Sephora stores saw a 60 percent increase in Colour iQ scans nationwide."

Carlos Bremond

Period Law

"An on-point cross-media design and campaign that draws you in with a classic misdirect that then makes you go, 'Wait, what is actually happening? How can I get involved to fix this?'" —**Boo Wong**

Overview: In 22 states, including Texas, menstrual products are categorized as luxuries, not essentials, directly affecting the finances for half of all Texans with a ludicrous tampon tax. To raise awareness of House Bill 300 (HB 300), which would repeal the tax, Austin-based creative agency GSD&M partnered with legal nonprofit Period Law to create a pop-up bar called Bloody Mary Misogyny at South by Southwest (SXSW). Sexist cocktails—like Bloody Mary (taxed) and Bloody Marc (free)—underscored the issue, and attendees could scan the menu to visit an associated website, find their representatives and contact them instantly to support HB 300.

- The microsite was built in CSS, HTML, JavaScript and PHP on a custom WordPress theme, with Google Civic Information API powering its representative lookup.

- With a team of 30 cross-disciplinary team members, the majority of whom were women, GSD&M brought this project to life over the course of six weeks—and on a $10,000 budget.

- Twelve weeks after the pop-up bar launched, Governor Greg Abbott signed HB 300 into law and eliminated the Texas tampon tax.

Claire Baffoe, art director
Jeanne Janutol, writer
Juliana Longoria, user experience designer
Tori Reneker, user experience director
Leigh Browne/Jon Williamson, creative directors
Nicole DuMouchel Davis, group creative director
Maria D'Amato, executive creative director
Jay Russell, chief creative officer
Neeti Newaskar, strategy
Stephanie Collins, strategic planner
Johnny Fuchs, editor
Grace Amiss/Mary Cabana/Paige Crossman/Paige Kelton/Sabrina
  Spodek, content coordinators
Liz Hamel, studio artist
Kim Faulkner/Saira Rabbani/David Rockwood/Mark Schectman/
  Melissa Severin, directors
Keisha Townsend, executive director
Marcela Masso, associate producer
Helena Abbing/Stijn Dobbelaere, producers
Skylar Bowen, digital producer
Kangsan Kim/Mariel Salcedo, project managers
GSD&M (Austin, TX), project design and development/ad agency
Period Law, client

Comments by Neeti Newaskar:

What are the Bloody Mary Misogyny campaign's core features? "The 360 campaign utilized various channels to achieve its objectives, including print and social ads targeting Texans around the subject of period inequity, personal invitations sent to state representatives, and a rally that brought hundreds of local everyday activists together at the state capital. The team also leveraged TikTok to engage younger audiences and a pop-up bar at sxsw to ignite partygoers on the issue of tax inequities. Our site bloodytax.com provided an interactive platform for engaged Texans to take action, while local bar partnerships extended the conversation beyond the festival. Overall, the campaign's success in Texas highlights the importance of designing contextually relevant and targeted campaigns to achieve objectives."

What was the thinking behind the site's navigation structure? "We kept bloodytax.com to one single landing page that did not need a main navigation. However, we knew the most important action a user could take on this page was to contact a rep, and therefore, we included anchor links that directly go to the contact form. Users can scroll through the page and read the interactive content before contacting a rep or use these anchor links to go directly to the form."
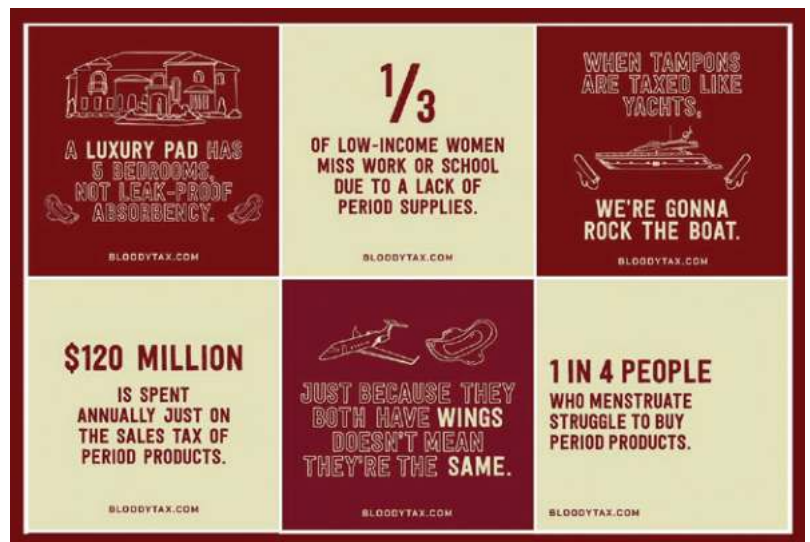
Was the target audience difficult to reach? "We chose to turn to Austin's biggest annual forum—the sxsw festival—to spread our message. But that meant we needed to break through the clutter of the festival's events and happenings. Cocktails were our 'in' into the conversation. The idea of engaging in a simple act—buying a cocktail—to spur social change was one the audience could easily get behind. Through a multifaceted campaign, we successfully rallied not just festivalgoers, but also locals and legislators, achieving the bill's passage and the tax's repeal in just two weeks."

Flowing Forces

"I think technology has a great power to help us explore art in a more active manner. This execution does just that." **—Maria D'Amato**

Overview: Marking the second collaboration between Montréal-based creative studio Moment Factory and nonprofit art institute Art Windsor-Essex, the multimedia installation *Flowing Forces* expands on *Against the Current*, an interactive art walk in Windsor, Ontario's downtown area. Combining the nonprofit's painting collection with cutting-edge technology, *Flowing Forces* lets visitors explore an immersive exhibition with interactive, AI-assisted visuals that blur the line between physical and digital, connecting the showcased paintings together and creating an entirely new work of art. The experience creates opportunities for new and regular audiences to discover the featured artworks and artists.

- The interactive experience transforms Art Windsor-Essex's physical exhibition space through projection mapping, AI-generated video content, mobile-based interactivity and sound design.

- *Flowing Forces* received about 4,000 visitors over the experience's run from February 17 to July 2, 2023.

- Moment Factory conceptualized the experience in October 2022 and delivered the experience five months later in February 2023.

Moment Factory (Montréal, Canada), project design and development
Art Windsor-Essex, client

"What will make you dwell on a painting just a few minutes longer? A wonderfully responsive design system puts the art and interaction into the hands of their audience." —**Boo Wong**

Comments by Moment Factory:

What was the most challenging aspect of creating *Flowing Forces*? "The project's installation presented several challenges that had to be addressed. First, the use of AI in the creative process required careful calibration. Second, projection mapping around real artworks posed a risk to their conservation, and light parameters had to be managed to avoid damage. The integration and orchestration of multiple technologies—such as video projection mapping and real-time content rendered from game engines, sound and web app interfaces for interactivity—were other hurdles we had to tackle to create a seamless experience for users. Additionally, the project's small team and budget posed constraints that had to be navigated. Finally, the installation was part of a research-and-development production pipeline aimed at testing the feasibility of working with AI and advancing our understanding of web apps as interactive tools for a connected journey, making it even more critical to address these challenges effectively."

Did you learn anything new during the process? "*Flowing Forces* offered a prime opportunity to learn and showcase that integrating technology into traditional settings isn't just a possibility but remarkably accessible, contrary to widespread misconceptions. Our aim was to illuminate the potency of interdisciplinary collaboration, ensuring people grasp the formation, objectives and outcomes of such partnerships. Moreover, highlighting the significance of cross-sector collaborations was pivotal to our mission. Through this showcase, viewers witness the intricate interplay of art, technology and audience engagement, catalyzing the expansion of artistic boundaries. Additionally, our goal was to unveil the vast array of opportunities that emerge from harmonizing art and technology, inspiring both artists and galleries to embrace this dynamic synergy."

DistractiFRY

"Hysterical idea that everyone can relate to. All you want to know is where do I get one of these *now*." **—Boo Wong**

Overview: Who are you voting for? When are you getting married? Do you have a job yet? Nobody likes answering these questions at holiday family gatherings, but 99.2 percent of people love French fries. Ad agency Rethink's campaign for McCain Foods features DistractiFRY, a voice-activated device that dispenses hot, crispy McCain fries each time it hears one of 300 preprogrammed trigger words, helping families avoid uncomfortable and emotionally volatile topics of conversation with a delicious dish that everyone can enjoy. After all, it's pretty hard to disagree with each other when McCain fries are on the table.

- The response to the DistractiFRY saw the sale of McCain fries exceed its previous year by 22 percent.

- The campaign exceeded video-completion benchmarks by 220 percent on YouTube and 280 percent on TikTok.

- From concept to completion, DistractiFRY took Rethink, fabrication company wonderMakr and production company Partners Film eight months.

Grace Cho, art director
Jordon Lawson/Jessica Liew/Sean O'Connor/Eric Seymour, writers
Jordon Lawson/Eric Seymour, associate creative directors
Grace Cho/Sean O'Connor/Lara Palmer, creative directors
Leia Rogers/Morgan Tierney, executive creative directors
Mike Dubrick/Aaron Starkman, chief creative officers
Sam Massooleh, strategist
Jacky Le/Sara Lemmermeyer/Claire Tam/Karin Torn/Kaitlyn Vian, strategic planners
Sean McDonald, chief strategy officer
wonderMakr, hardware developer
Austin Blackmore/Stephen Parker, editors
Michael Downing, director
Kyle Hicks, digital producer
David Fraser-Winsby/Leanne McLellan, broadcast producers
Megan O'Connor, post-production producer
Hardave Grewal, colorist
Wave Productions, music company
Partners Film Company, production company
R+D Productions, post-production company
Rethink (Toronto, Canada), project design and development/ad agency
Julia Deep/Michael Embir/Laura Kennedy/Matt Kohler/Kathryn Miskell/Nita Sandhu, McCain Foods, clients

Comments by Jordon Lawson:

How does the DistactiFRY work? "The device is activated by a remote, which warms itself to a comfortable fry-eating temperature indicated by a glowing white LED light in the device's serving tray. When ready, the machine will let you know that it is 'ready to distract,' and voice activation is initiated. The device has a built-in microphone that will listen to the conversation in the room. Once a trigger phrase is detected, the machine initiates its drop sequence by opening a small trap door below one of its six fry-dispensing chambers. The delicious contents of the fry chamber are then released into its serving tray. The chambers then revolve in a clockwise direction, ready to dispense another handful of fries."

Was this part of a larger campaign? "Leading up to the holiday season in Canada, McCain ran long-form and short-form videos showcasing how the DistractiFRY machine worked on TikTok, YouTube preroll and digital display ads—all of which pushed consumers to a landing page where they had the opportunity to win the device for their next family gathering. This microsite also housed a FAQ (Freakin' Awkward Questions) section to further support Canadians trying to redirect contentious dinner conversations.

"McCain also partnered with TikTok superstar Kris Collins, whose sketch comedy highlights the nuances of family gatherings, to further demonstrate how fries can be the perfect solution to bring families together. We also decided to show off the DistractiFRY device on a live television segment on *Breakfast Television*, one of Canada's longest-running morning shows."

Is the audience you were targeting a particularly difficult one to reach? "Canada is home to a vast array of cultures, many of which celebrate major holidays in December. By focusing on an event that transcends any single holiday—the awkward family gathering—the McCain DistractiFRY machine was able to resonate with the vast majority of Canadian families."
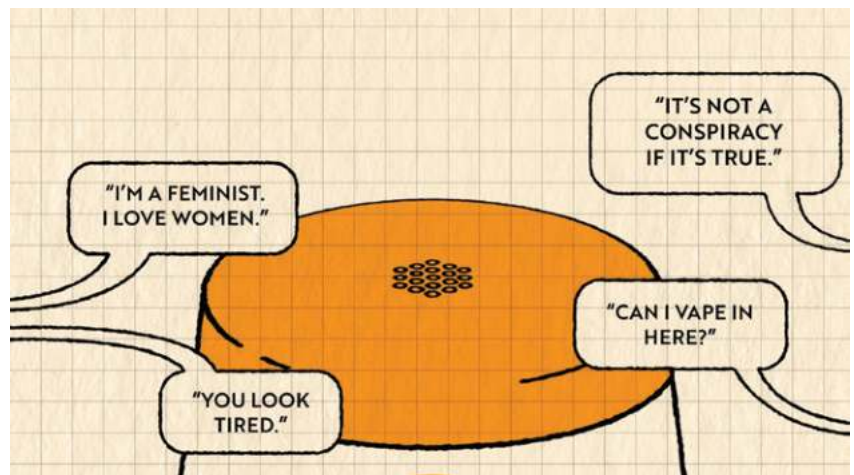
Handy Type

"A nice innovative way to make a typeface interactive with your hands."

—**Martijn van der Does**
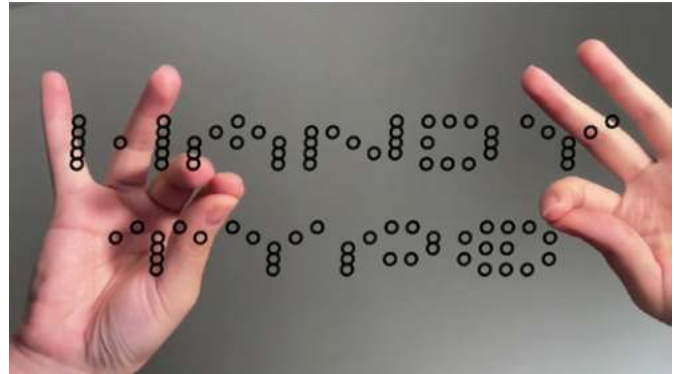
Overview: A revolutionary development in type design by New York–based designer Rozi Zhu and Melbourne, Australia–based designer Haocheng Zhang, Handy Type integrates interactive hand tracking data into a dynamic font-creation process. Departing from traditional, predesigned typography, this interactive typeface enables anyone to craft personalized fonts from anywhere at any time through the use of AI and machine-learning techniques. Zhang and Zhu created a customized system for capturing hand-motion data, creating a new approach to type design and making both the process of design and user experience more playful and innovative.

- Using their hands, users can transform the font through four different variables: stroke, weight, radius and slant.

- Once the app detects hands, it analyzes gestures by calculating the distance between a user's fingers and palms and translates these measurements into input variables to dynamically control the font. The combination of distance and angle values offers an intuitive means of interaction.

- The production of Handy Type took Zhang and Zhu around two months to complete.
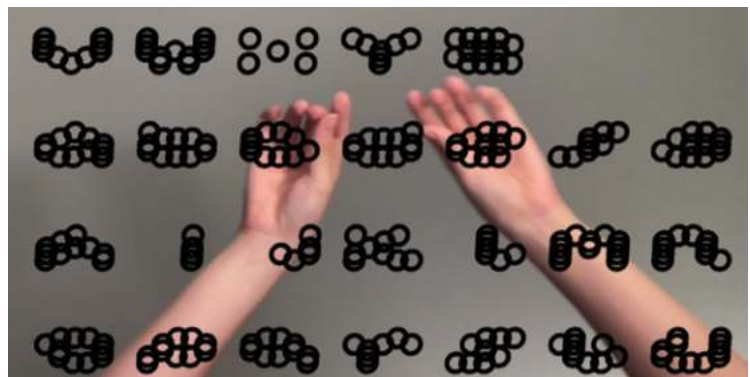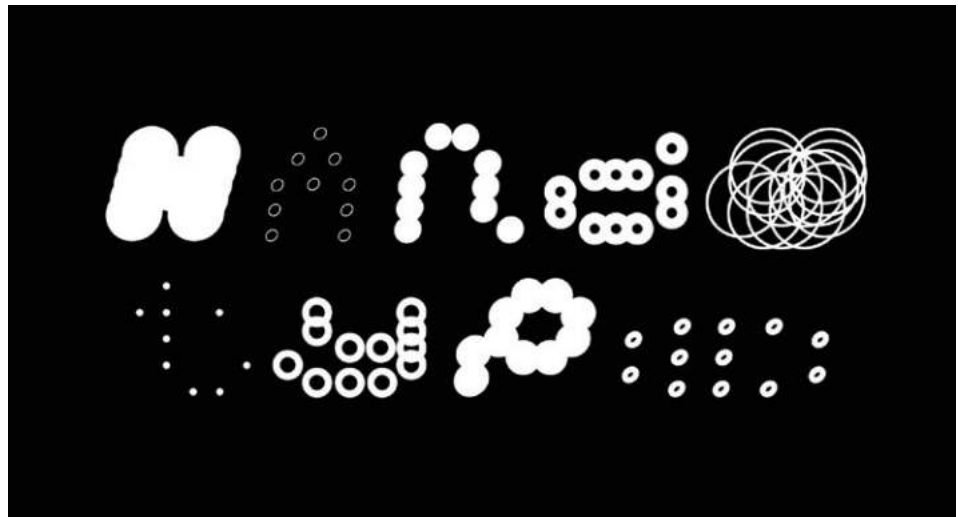
Haocheng Zhang, designer
Rozi Zhu (New York, NY), lead designer/creative technologist
Rozi & Haocheng, project design and development
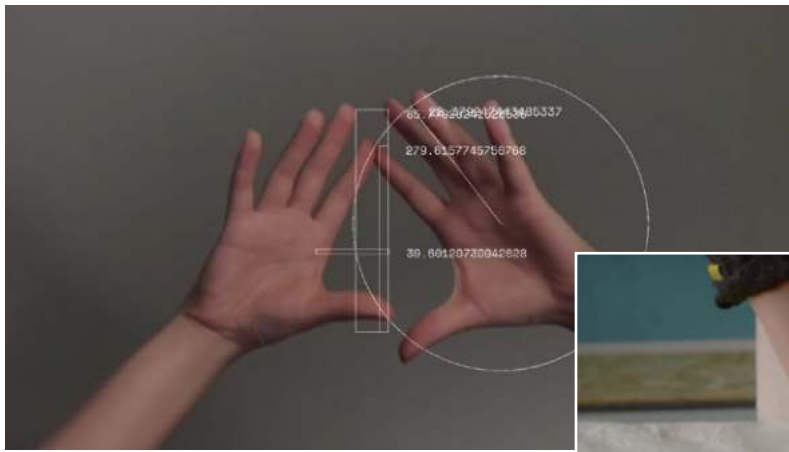
Comments by Rozi Zhu:

In what ways do you see AI shaping the future of interactive design and creative technology? "AI and machine learning, both seen in our application, are reshaping interactive and creative projects. These technologies offer new, engaging experiences for users and designers alike and help streamline the creative process. I anticipate a future where AI personalizes finished projects for users, automates repetitive tasks and collaborates with human creativity, pushing the boundaries of what's possible in design."

Were there any specific design principles or inspirations that influenced the visual style of the font design? "Derived from the initial concept, our goal was to craft a typeface that seamlessly adapts to diverse data variables. Throughout numerous rounds of design reviews and studies, we explored various possibilities, including some playful ideas such as transitioning between serif and sans serif—which, unfortunately, didn't work out. Following extensive prototyping, we settled on a final design that strikes the optimal balance between visual appeal and interactivity."

Did you learn anything new during your work on Handy Type? "Given that the project was a delightful experiment, every-thing was new and exciting. We tried out different tools, explored multiple ways of prototyping and incorporated innovative approaches into our design process. We created a fresh method-ology specifically for this project, diverging from our usual practices. In our client projects, we design according to the brief's requirements to ensure that the outcome meets expectations. For Handy Type, we completely broke free from these constraints, spending a lot of time trying out different tools and methods and diving into all sorts of possibilities with the typography. This process gave us more freedom to be creative and led us to some cool, unique design ideas."
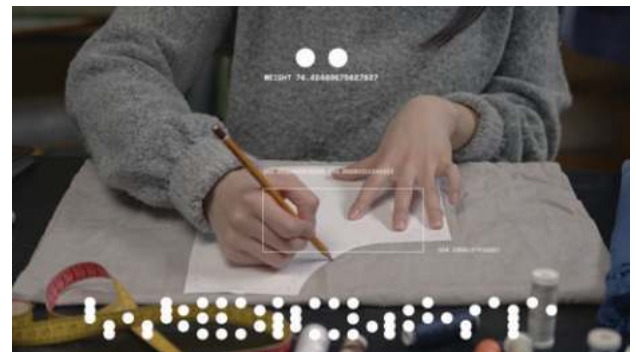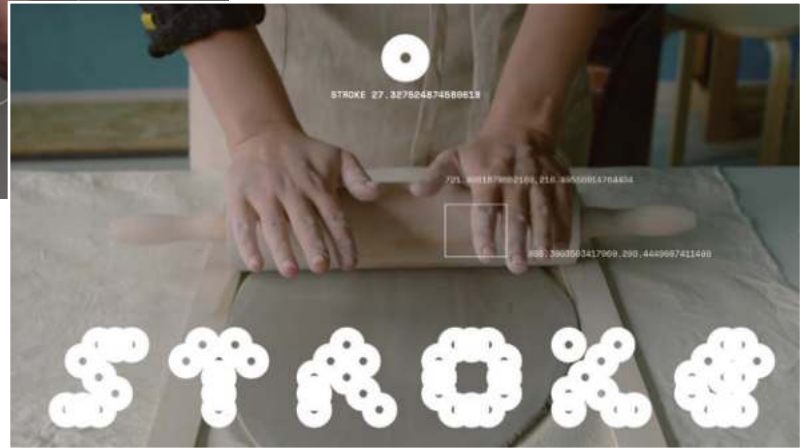
WheelVenture

"I love the idea of feeling yourself in another person's body. It helps us to be more empathic towards other people." —**Viacheslav Olianishyn**
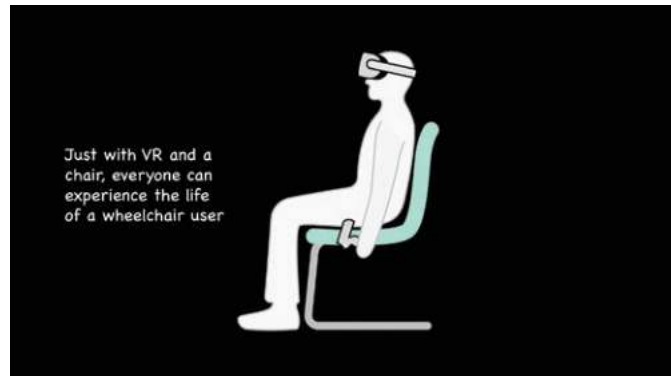
Overview: More than 65 million people use wheelchairs globally, yet they often feel alienated because public spaces still eschew accessible design. *WheelVenture*, a VR experience by Jersey City–based designer Nora Zhang, allows able-bodied users to experience how accessibility challenges are frustrating and isolating, with participants manipulating a virtual wheelchair through surreal environments using their hands. As players experience obstacles like uneven terrain, tight spaces and steep ramps, *WheelVenture* aims to foster empathy for wheelchair users and the daily challenges they face, as well as advocating for more accessibility in public spaces.

- *WheelVenture* was developed using the game engine Unity, with custom C# code and 3-D modeling by Zhang.

- Zhang ensured that the experiential design not rely on verbal or text narratives, so players learn purely through direct interaction with environmental challenges.

- A completely independent project, *WheelVenture* took Zhang the course of a month to complete from concept to completion, including interviewing people with wheelchairs to ensure the experience felt authentic.

Haoran (Nora) Zhang (Jersey City, NJ), project design and development

Comments by Nora Zhang:

Was the topic or subject of *WheelVenture* a new one for you? "Wheelchair accessibility wasn't entirely new to me; I studied some architecture and urban planning, which gave me valuable insight into the challenges faced by people with mobility limitations. I have witnessed how some construction planners try to compromise on making facilities accessible or hide it to prioritize an able-bodied person's experience, so the cause of increased accessibility intrigued me.

"*WheelVenture* is a bold, innovative attempt to combine this learning with cutting-edge VR technology. As VR provides an immersive experience, the media would deeply resonate with participants and raise awareness and empathy. It was an exciting moment for me when I realized that interactive technology can be a powerful tool for social transformation."

What was the most challenging aspect of the project? "Striking a balance between creating an immersive experience for able-bodied participants while ensuring that it remained respectful toward people who use wheelchairs. I conducted research with people who use wheelchairs to gain valuable insights and feedback.

"One common stereotype of wheelchair users is portraying them constantly struggling or being entirely dependent on others for daily tasks. In *WheelVenture*, I wanted to convey a message of resilience and empowerment, emphasizing not just the obstacles, but also how people overcome them. When designing these challenges, I avoided overly dramatizing or exaggerating the challenges faced by wheelchair users in the VR experience to provide a genuine representation of authentic daily challenges."

Arora Publishing House

"Wow—that was my first impression." —**Viacheslav Olianishyn**

Overview: Inspired by retrofuturism, student Tully Ryan at West Chester University in West Chester, Pennsylvania, created Arora Publishing House, a line of four classic sci-fi novels—*1984* by George Orwell, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick, *Dune* by Frank Herbert and *Neuromancer* by William Gibson—with animated covers. Using ultra-thin OLED screens embedded within the binding of each book, the covers display unique animations underneath a semiclear hardcover overlay, appearing opaque in their resting state. Ryan conceptualized a technology that felt appropriate to the stories' setting, enhancing the audience's appreciation of physical literature.

- The features of Arora Publishing House's books include animations displayed on covers, the concept of touch-activated OLED screens, and the construction of their placement within book binding and materials.

- The project comprises one showcase video, four books with photographic mockups, a box-set case, branded bookmarks and a foldable poster that explains the technology behind the covers.

- The Arora Publishing House project took Ryan five months to produce.

Tully Ryan, designer
Jeremy Holmes/Karen Watkins, instructors
West Chester University (West Chester, PA), school

© Tully Ryan

Comments by Tully Ryan:

Did you learn anything new during the creation of Arora Publishing House's animated book-cover concept? "Through this project, I learned some basic CGI special effects and motion tracking. I considered using a 3-D rendering software to showcase the idea, but I decided that if I could film the videography in-house and create convincing enough motion-tracking effects, the project would feel even more believable and appear to have already passed the conception stage."

How did time constraints affect the final product of your work? "Searching for a blank-book box set took a sizable chunk out of my time. I eventually just bought a box set of *The Hunger Games* novels, sanded and spray-painted them, and then experimented with different green screens and backdrops to create videos to later motion track onto."

Would you do anything differently if you could start the Arora Publishing House project over? "I would hire a professional videographer to film my book interactions rather than spending so much time trying to capture good video without fluent knowledge of how to do so. This would have given me another week or two for designing and editing, which I really could have used!"

Meme United Football Club

"I wouldn't have expected mixing a bit style with a punk-rock, DIY aesthetic would work and become something totally fresh and modern, but it does." **—Maria D'Amato**

Overview: As a soccer fan, Yaheng Li, student at ArtCenter College of Design, enjoys the memes that emerge after matches as fans celebrate their team's victories or poke fun at their losses. So, he created Meme United Football Club (MUFC)—a forum that spans a website and app—to collect and share these memes. To provide multilingual support, MUFC features a dictionary that lets visitors translate memes from other languages, enabling fans all over the world to communicate and bond over soccer memes. Li hopes that the forum could invite new fans to get involved in the culture of soccer.

- To introduce and present MUFC's concept, Li created six-to-ten images and a marketing video. The mockup for the project was created in Figma and After Effects.

- Li eventually hopes to involve AI tech in the development of a meme-curation algorithm as well as in the translating process.

- Li developed this speculative project over the course of fourteen weeks, undergoing marketing research, identity design and user interface design.
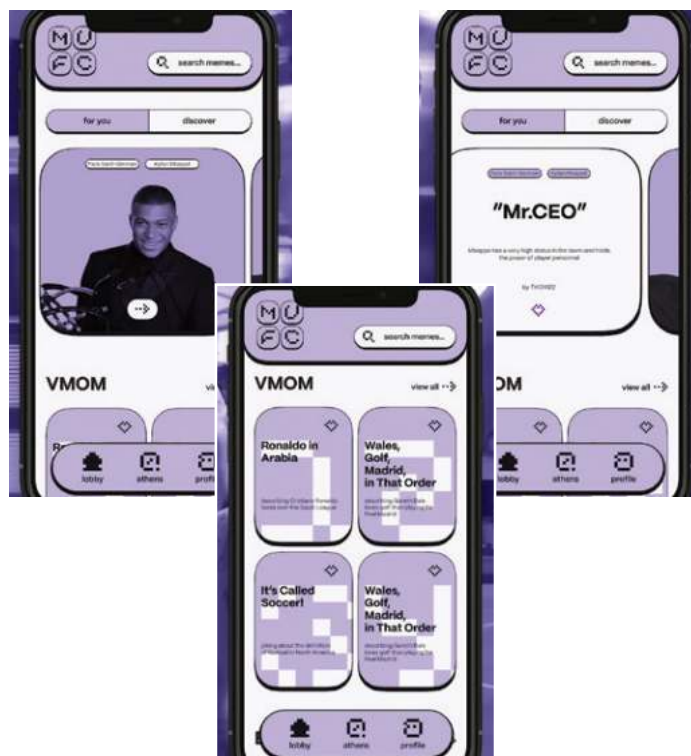
Yaheng Li, designer
Lauren Cantor, instructor
ArtCenter College of Design (Pasadena, CA), school

© Yaheng Li

"As a football fan, I couldn't pass up this project. Brilliant work!"
—**Viacheslav Olianishyn**
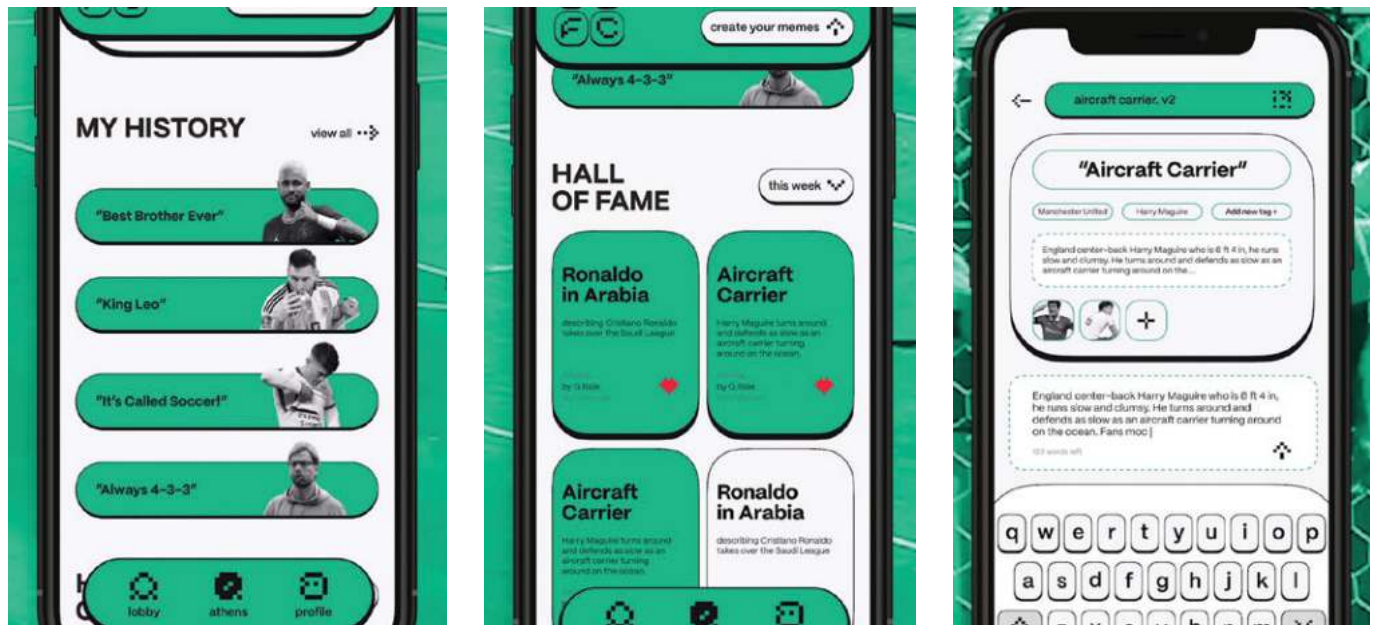
Comments by Yaheng Li:

Was the subject of MUFC a new one for you? "Absolutely. I had a rough idea about making a project involving soccer for a long time before I began working on MUFC. Born from an idea that echoes concepts I came up with a long time ago, this differed a lot from any other projects that I've created. Luckily, I was able to turn the rough concept into a satisfying outcome."

Did you learn anything new during the process? "Besides experience and a new skillset related to design aspects, Lauren Cantor, the instructor of this studio class who comes from a solid business background, brought me so much precious wisdom and methodologies of things like how to do marketing research and how to create a business model and value proposition, among

others. After all this, I realized how rare it is to establish a new project or business that is commercially successful."

What would you do differently if you could remake MUFC? "Since MUFC targets countless football memes in various languages, the first version was created all in English. In the next phase, I am going to expand it to at least a version in an East Asian language—like Chinese or Korean—and in Spanish, which is the major language in the world of soccer. I may also take more interviews with more people who are not soccer fans to find out if there is a smart way to attract them to dive into the colorful, interesting world of soccer through MUFC."

Go Grow Glow

"I appreciated how the interaction design mimicked the subject matter. The use of attention and proximity as variables for the experience was elegant in its simplicity." **—Maria D'Amato**

Overview: As part of Purdue University's Boiler Gold Rush event, an orientation welcoming new undergraduates, students So Young Song and Canwen Wang created the interactive installation *Go Grow Glow* as a way for freshmen to familiarize themselves with the university's campus and engage with friends through an interactive art piece that follows the reproductive cycle of mushrooms. Wanting to convey a theme of sustainability as well, Song and Wang chose the visual theme of mushrooms as both a metaphor for community and to educate players on fungi's integral role in ecosystems and environmentally friendly technology.

- The interactive art piece was shown using two different sites on Purdue's West Lafayette campus on August 17 and 18, 2023 and engaged more than 250 participants over four hours.

- A website (**gogrowglow.art**), a project-specific Instagram account (**instagram.com/gogrowglow.art**), and promotional merchandise like glow-in-the-dark stickers and custom T-shirts extend *Go Grow Glow* beyond the installation.

- From concept to completion, the project took Song, Wang and Professor Fabian Winkler six months.

So Young Song, art director
So Young Song/Canwen Wang, designers
Canwen Wang, interface designer
Fabian Winkler, instructor
Purdue University (West Lafayette, IN), school

© So Young Song/Canwen Wang

Comments by So Young Song, Canwen Wang and Fabian Winkler:

What would you say are the core design features behind *Go Grow Glow*? "The core feature of our project is that the interactive system functions like a game," says So Young Song. "Typically, mushrooms disperse spores by the wind or insects. In this project, the participants play the role of insects, and Purdue's campus acts as a big playground. After receiving spores, students explore the campus to find another tree to disperse their spores, and this process ultimately helps them become acquainted with the grounds.

"To engage the interest of the broader community beyond the school, we created and distributed mushroom stickers that glow in the dark," she continues. "Additionally, the mushroom sticker includes the website and Instagram addresses, aiming to raise awareness of sustainability issues beyond the confines of the campus."

How does *Go Grow Glow* work? "We used a MaxBotix MB7383-100 ultrasonic sensor, optimized to detect people in outdoor settings, and placed it close to the target trees to measure the distance of visitors to the projections," says Fabian Winkler. "The sensor outputs its measurements as serial data and sends this to a host computer located close to the projector. The computer runs a custom software programmed in Processing (**processing.org**) that controls the animation of the virtual mushroom growth in relation to the ultrasonic sensor's measurements."

What was the response like? "Participants' engagement sparked critical and meaningful discussions, with questions like: 'How might mushrooms be utilized sustainably in the next decade?'" says Canwen Wang. "This experience led some visitors to contemplate practical methods for mushroom conservation, enhancing their awareness of the impact fungi has on the ecosystem. Additionally, through their active participation, they gained a broader understanding of endangered mushroom species and sustainability concepts."

Fabric Museum: F Generator
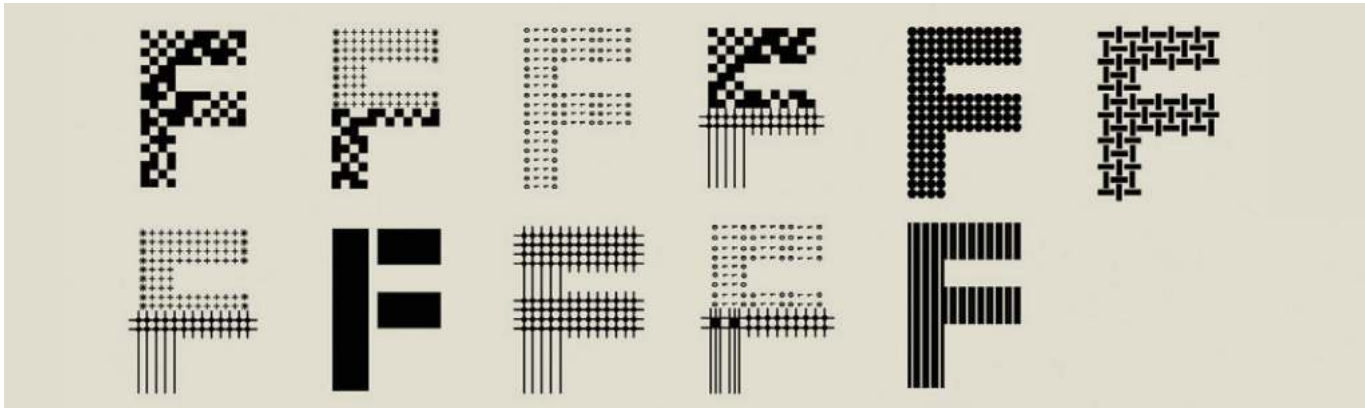
Overview: For the Fabric Workshop and Museum in Philadelphia, which displays historical and contemporary textile art alongside each other, student Jocelyn Ziying Zhao at Pasadena-based ArtCenter College of Design created a generative design tool that visitors can use to output their own versions of the museum's logo. Zhao refreshed the museum's brand with a single *F* inspired by the Jacquard loom; she then created the F Generator to combine the aesthetics of traditional weaving with creative coding. Through this interactive experience, Zhao takes the museum from its foundation in fabric and expands it to a range of diverse media.

- The F Generator features two modes—layering and animation—in which users can prototype their logo design and then animate it frame by frame.

- Zhao developed the F Generator in Processing and used After Effects to flesh out its animation mode.

- As the sole designer responsible for its execution, Zhao created this project in seven weeks with help from her professors Brad Bartlett and Roy Tatum and additional help from Professor Ivan Cruz.
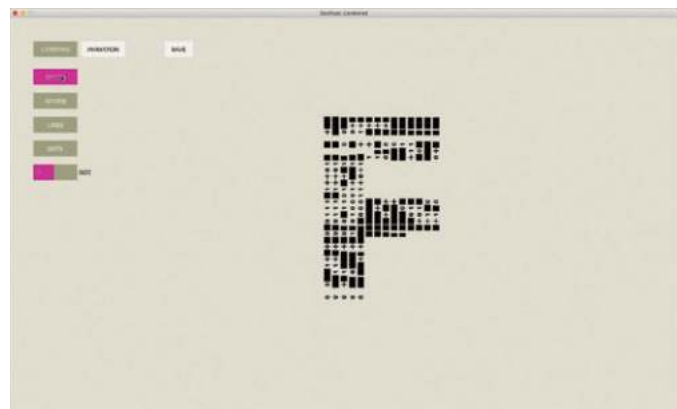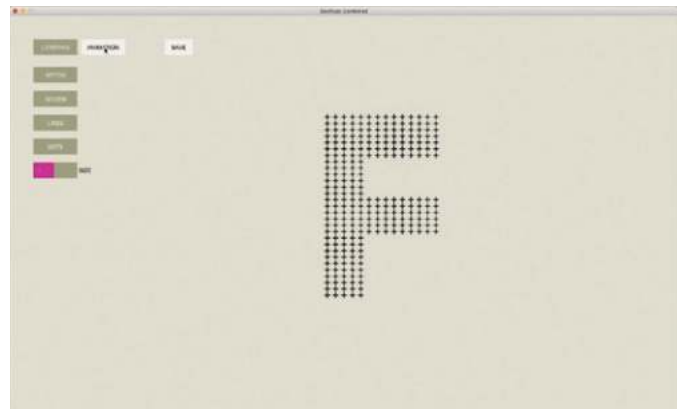
Jocelyn Ziying Zhao, designer
Brad Bartlett/Roy Tatum, instructors
ArtCenter College of Design (Pasadena, CA), school

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"The F Generator sits at the perfect intersection where digital starts to feel tactile, and you want to dig into the code itself to see what else this variable logo design system can do." **—Boo Wong**
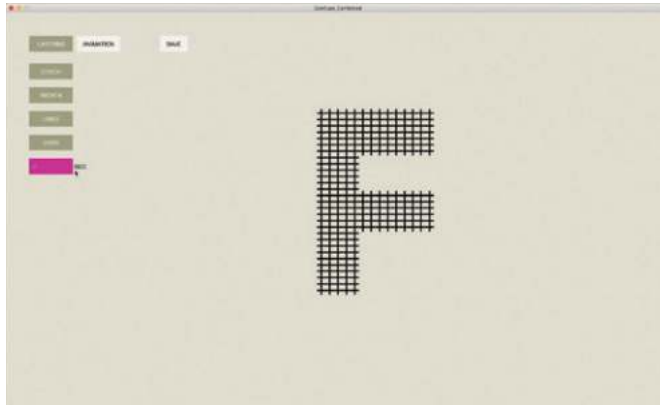
Comments by Jocelyn Ziying Zhao:

How would you speculate that the F Generator would help connect the Fabric Museum to its audience? "By offering visitors the ability to craft custom logos, the museum fosters a personal connection through interactive engagement. Creative coding serves as a beacon of innovation, drawing the eyes of the tech and art sectors and enhancing the museum's recognition. Meanwhile, the use of timestamps creates a living digital archive, charting the museum's progression and visitor engagement across a growing timeline."

What is the core functionality of the F Generator? "The software's core functionality encompasses two distinct modes: layering and animation. The layering mode offers visitors the ability to combine up to three layers of *F*s, each with eleven sets of grid units and seven color palettes, and allows them to experiment with a multitude of combinations. The animation mode provides four sets of shapes mapped onto ASCII characters, enabling users to timestamp and export individual frames."

When creating this project, did you use any applications you hadn't used before? "This project marked my first encounter with Processing, a gateway to the world of creative coding that has become a significant focus of my work. The coding process was the most challenging part, especially since this was my first time using Processing and stepping into the world of ASCII art. I had to code every logo out in Processing, connect with controllers, map characters to animation and create software with multiple states. But the result was rewarding. I extend my gratitude to the professors and peers who helped me along this journey."
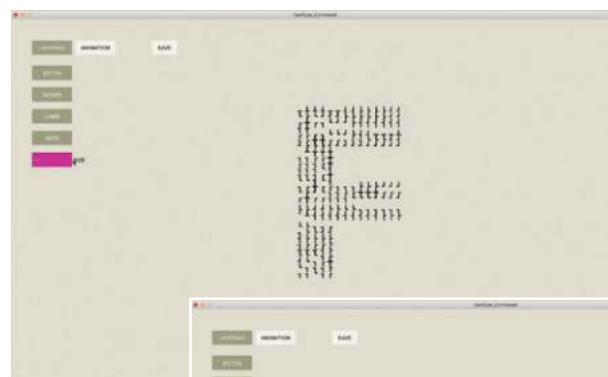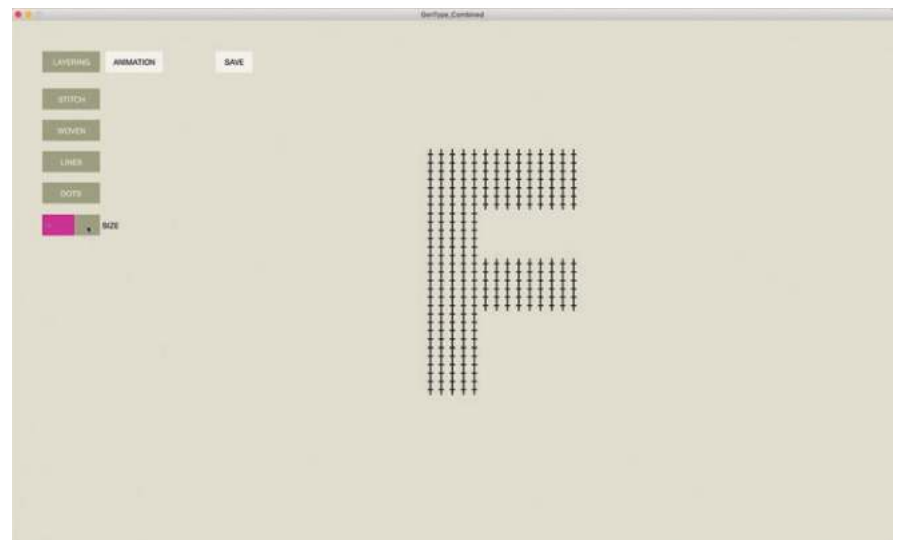
Grow Up

"A poignant piece that uses design to remind us all of the fleeting and changing perspectives we live through." —**Boo Wong**

Overview: By Vivi John, student at Shih Chien University in Taipei, the book *Grow Up* combines illustration and animation to tell a story about growth and how it affects the way we process our experiences. Displayed in a two-sided installation, with one side tailored to children and the other for adult readers, visitors can read two distinct storylines starring an orange gorilla named Grow. A digital display on the adults' side overlays 2-D animations that interact with the illustrations of *Grow Up*'s children's side.

- As part of her research process, John conducted interviews with people from a wide variety of age ranges to understand how they experience events differently.

- John illustrated *Grow Up* digitally in Adobe Photoshop, used Adobe After Effects to create the animations frame by frame and developed the interactions in Unity.

- John created the whole project herself within four months from concept to editing to the completion of the installation.

Vivi John, designer
En-Wei Huang, instructor
Shih Chien University (Taipei, Taiwan), school

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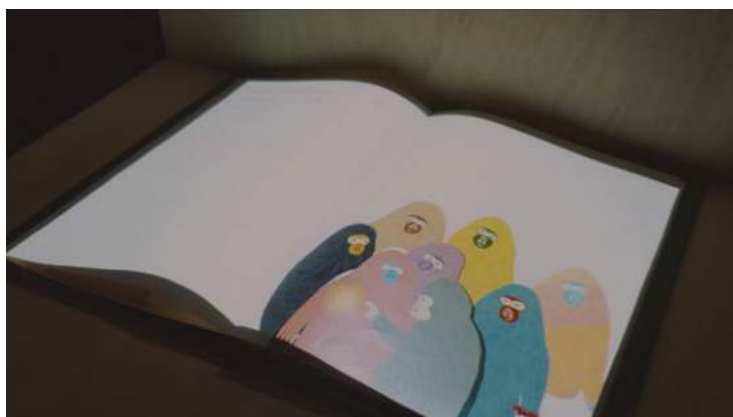
Comments by Vivi John:

What was the inspiration behind creating *Grow Up*, and how did this project compare with others you've worked on in the past? "*Grow Up* depicts the way we perceive things after growing up—we see them from different viewpoints and handle them differently than we used to when we were children. Designed for both children and adults, the book's two versions can be read from the two sides of the installation: Children will read the simplest narrative, just like reading any children's book. On the other side, adults will read the same book but with projected animations that tie in with the illustrations in the children's

version. Growth is the central idea for this project, and the narrative focuses on the changes that take place unconsciously in the minds of people as they get older.

"Compared to my previous works, this one feels more personal to me. At the same time, it also resonated with the public, which is one of the reasons I enjoyed creating *Grow Up* so much."

Was the topic of the project a new one for you? "*Grow Up* was the first time I tackled the topic of growth. I have also never created work aimed at a wide range of ages, so I conducted interviews with a broad variety of participants. It was challenging to interview children, but it was a lot of fun, and I totally enjoyed it."

How did time constraints affect your final product? "As I had just a semester to complete the project, the time limitation was approximately four months from concep-tualizing the original idea to the completion of editing and installing *Grow Up*. Having the assistance of a team or more time would enable me to make this project even better."

Phantom Limbs: Design Interventions and Site-Specific Storytelling

"A great interactive installation that brings to light the neglected history of underrepresented communities." —**Martijn van der Does**

Overview: For her master's thesis project, Veronica Tsai, student at Pasadena-based ArtCenter College of Design, created *Phantom Limbs: Design Interventions and Site-Specific Storytelling* to explore the idea that site-specific design can tell the stories of underrepresented communities. Focusing on the surrounding area of Pasadena, Tsai delved through local history to discover where displaced communities had once existed, namely those of working-class people of color. Through projecting graphics onto the contemporary spaces, *Phantom Limbs* tells the story of these communities that have been destroyed and relocated, reviving them temporarily to educate the people currently living there.

- While Tsai was the sole designer, she worked with professionals in the fields of history, urban studies and interpretive design on the content of *Phantom Limbs*.

- The project's core features include site-specific, projection-mapped environmental graphics.

- As *Phantom Limbs* involved in-depth research, design explorations and finalizing executions, it took Tsai a year to complete.

Veronica Tsai, designer
Brad Bartlett/Miles Mazzie, instructors
ArtCenter College of Design (Pasadena, CA), school

© Veronica Tsai

"The use of light to reveal past stories is both haunting and impactful. It would be amazing to see this idea work at scale." —Boo Wong

Comments by Veronica Tsai:

Was the subject matter or execution of *Phantom Limbs* new for you?
"I have always been drawn to the story of a place. For my master's thesis, I was determined to explore a combination of my undergraduate studies in architecture and graduate studies in graphic design. Focused on Pasadena, where I live, I selected several sites where displacements of communities—mainly those of working-class people of color—occurred. The stories of these communities remain untold. As designers, we have the responsibility to activate neglected places, bring hidden history to light and expand notions of social value.

"The subject matter and medium—urban studies and projection mapping—are not new to me. However, bringing the project outdoors was a new challenge. Even though I was able to plan my installations beforehand to a certain degree, most of the final results were improvised on site. I brought the equipment and assets—type- and image-based videos—to the locations, and then I mapped the content to the architecture on the spot. I chose projection mapping as my primary medium for two reasons: first, it literally brings hidden history to light, and second, it does not leave a permanent mark on existing sites."

How did time constraints affect *Phantom Limbs*'s final execution, and how did your thesis project differ from your other work? "*Phantom Limbs* is a prototype, a proof of concept that focuses on Pasadena's history. If I had more time, I would have liked to extend my exploration to other parts of the San Gabriel Valley to form a network of installations for a historic tour. I also would have liked to interact with community members to incorporate their voices into the project. Compared to my previous work, *Phantom Limbs* is for sure the most ambitious in terms of scope and scale. I learned tremendously through research, writing, design exploration, and the support of my peers and mentors."

Feelz

"The clear and positive design language for this mobile app will encourage easy use and subsequent tracking of results." —**Boo Wong**

Overview: An app created by Phoebe Nguyen, student at Metropolitan State University of Denver in Colorado, Feelz serves as a digital journal and a tool for emotional regulation. Utilizing pattern recognition, the app can detect over time when a user is struggling with stress, anxiety or depression. Nguyen also conceived the app as a secure emotional hub that can be used as a collaborative tool, with the ability to grant access to a user's therapist or a support network of friends to encourage them to reach out and help a user who may be struggling with negative self-perceptions or suicidal thoughts.

- Feelz was Nguyen's first foray into creating an app and ignited a passion in her for UI/UX design.
- During the creation of the UX, Nguyen invited between ten and fifteen people to participate in a trial run, recording feedback to finalize and enhance the app's overall experience.
- Nguyen created Feelz over the course of four months and developed the app using Figma.

Phoebe Nguyen, designer
Shawn Meek, instructor
Metropolitan State University of Denver (Denver, CO), school

© Phoebe Nguyen
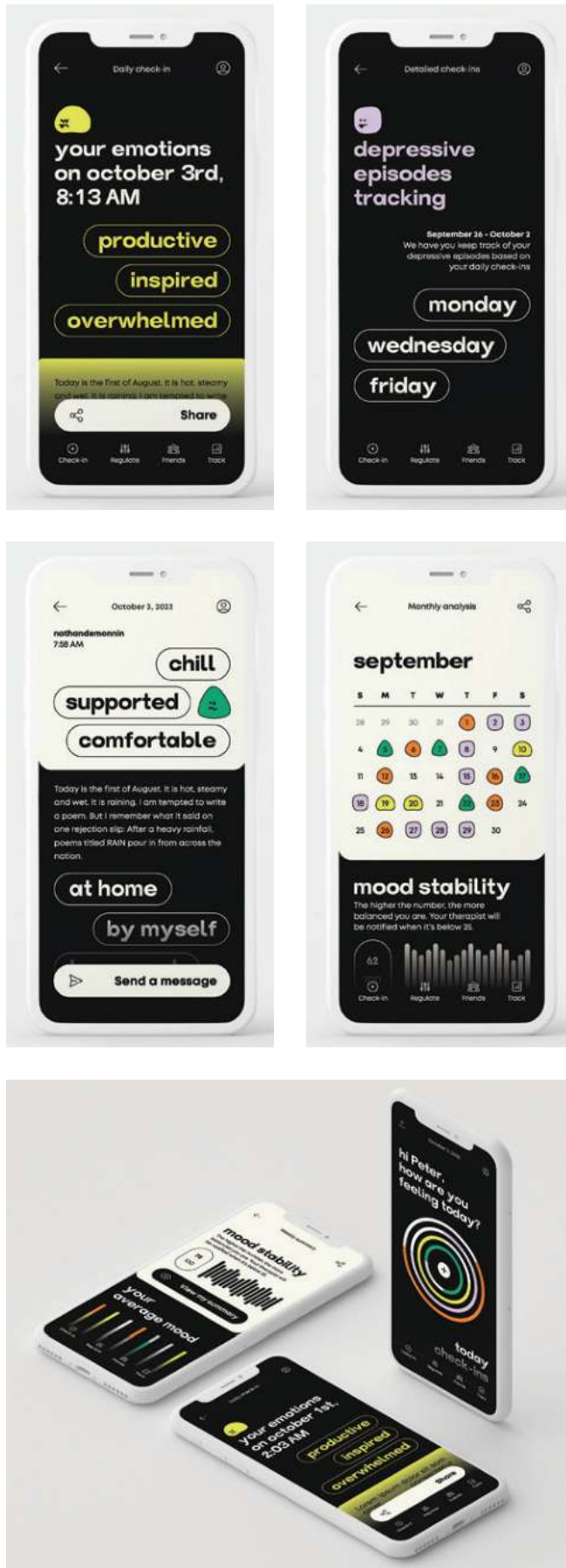
"Transforming mental health support with Feelz: a collaborative ecosystem for your emotions captured in a visually cool way."

—Martijn van der Does

Comments by by Phoebe Nguyen:

What was the thinking behind Feelz's navigation? "Feelz simplifies the process of recording users' emotions through its intuitive, almost-linear structure. During onboarding, users can set up frequency, reminders and sharing preferences. The check-in process is straightforward: users choose emotion keywords, add details and save in their journal or share with select private friends.

"Emotional management requires robust data privacy. While sharing and seeking help are pivotal in our mental health journey, I recognize the importance of individual boundaries. Hence, users can choose whether to share their feelings or keep them private through the app's settings. Also, as accessibility is paramount for any app, I designed Feelz with straightforward navigation to ensure a diverse user base could utilize its features."

What would you define as the app's core features? "What sets Feelz apart from other mood-tracking apps is its unique ability to detect emotional patterns. Beyond functioning as a digital mood journal, the app automatically identifies emotional patterns over time as users document their daily feelings. For instance, if a user consistently records negative emotions for several days, Feelz recognizes this pattern and offers practical solutions, such as meditation, journaling or exercise. Additionally, users can choose to share these patterns with their therapist or close friends. This feature introduces a novel approach to supporting mental health journeys, fostering strong relationships, and identifying both passive and active suicidal ideation."

Where did the inspiration for Feelz come from? "Mental health has been a prevalent theme in my work due to my own struggles over the years. I believe design holds immense power. Visual language can shape experience and shed light on crucial topics. Feelz offers a practical solution to an often-overlooked issue. My conviction in the transformative power of design has only strengthened through this project, affirming its potential to better our world."

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Editor's Note
Every effort has been made to ensure that the credits comply with information supplied to us. If, for any reason, a misspelling, omission or other error has occurred, notify us within 30 days and we will be able to issue corrected award certificates.

"SOFTWARE ATE THE WORLD AND AI IS PUKING IT BACK UP."

Erika Hall, via LinkedIn

"Half of you are getting laid off. Half of you are building AI tools that replace workers. Seriously, y'all should get together and talk."

Mike Monteiro, via LinkedIn

"Every time a startup guy discovers a basic human function people have been doing for millennia and tweets a thread about it as their own discovery, an angel gets its wings."

R/GA, via X

"I'M A STRONG BELIEVER THAT A PICTURE TELLS A THOUSAND WORDS AND A PROTOTYPE SAVES A THOU-SAND MEETINGS."

Katie Dill, via *Lenny's Podcast*

"The key to happy clients? Don't show your best work first!"

Amit Gupta, via X

"AI is both lifting you up and pushing you out."

Caio Braga and Fabricio Teixeira, via the *UX Collective*

"When we create designs, we're basically defining what is possible or at least highly encouraged within the context of our products. We're also defining what is discouraged."

Amber Case, via DOC

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