

Creative Lancashire



Conversations in Creativity ©

In 2011, Creative Lancashire with local design agencies Wash and JP74 launched 'Conversations in Creativity' - a network and series of events where creatives from across the crafts, trades and creative disciplines explore how inspiration from around the world informs process. Previous events have featured Hemingway Design, Gary Aspden (Adidas), Pete Fowler (Animator & Artist), Donna Wilson (Designer), Cherry Ghost, I am Kloot, Nick Park (Aardman), Lemn Sissay (Poet) and Jeanette Winterson (Author) - hosted by Dave Haslam & John Robb.



Who's Involved



www.wash-design.co.uk



www.jp74.co.uk





MADE YOU LOOK

“If everything that we create only ever exists in a digital cloud then I think that’s an incredible shame”- Sam Arthur (Nobrow)

The last 15 years has seen a boom in the UK graphic arts and illustration industry, with a DIY scene emerging and prospering alongside new and affordable leaps in technology.

So much of our lives is now spent in the virtual digital realm, so what will become of the tactile objects we all hold so dear? Will we see books disappear in our lifetime? And why are more and more creatives moving away from the computer and getting back to using their hands to create art, both commercially and for art’s sake.

Made You Look is a documentary by Look&Yes which sets out to explore the landscape of the commercial arts in the 21st Century. It’s a film that gives an insight into how modern creative people feel about the challenges and triumphs of living in a hyper digital age.

This film is a rare and candid insight into the work of some of the UK’s top creative talent, including beautifully shot footage of artists at work and play in their own creative environments.

“Back in 2013 I was interviewed by Print Club London for a little film they were doing about their Film 4 Summer Screen exhibition at Somerset House. I answered questions about my artwork, my process and opinions on the modern creative landscape. When I left their Dalston studios it dawned on me that there was very little representation of the UK graphic arts scene committed to film, especially in long form documentary format.

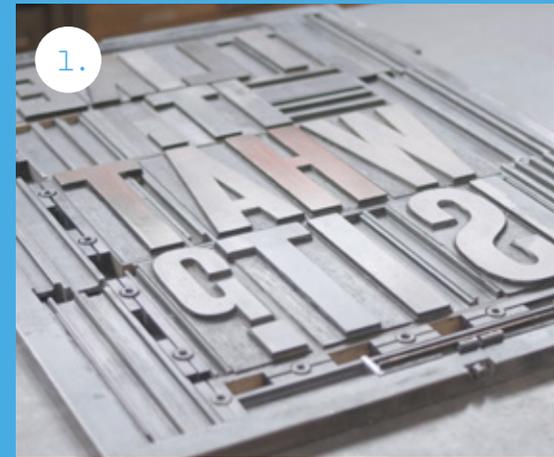
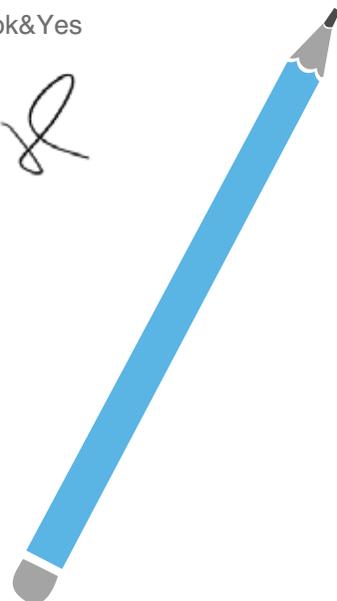
There was a definite story to be told, and one that would allow for pure visual indulgence in recording the working processes of artists from many disciplines.

But this film isn’t just about the creative brilliance of people who have informed the way our world looks. It’s also a story that sympathises with the way many people feel in the modern age: overwhelmed and bombarded with information twenty four hours a day, and longing for some time away from the multitude of screens through which we work, consume, create and record the world around us.

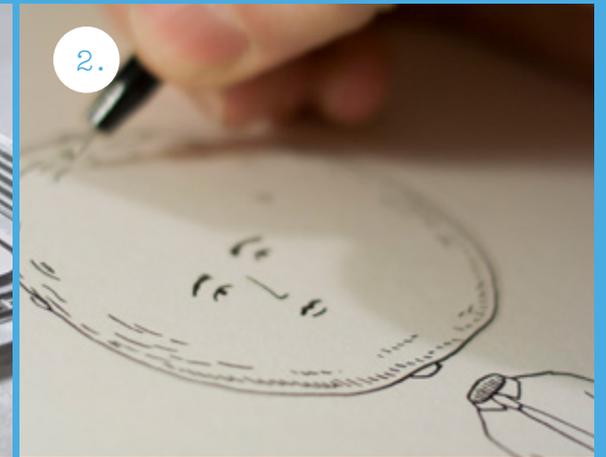
So many creative people are turning to mediums that take them away from their computers, methods of making work that involve making real, tactile items to be cherished and kept, instead of being consumed and forgotten.

However very few creatives could have an audience or career without the trappings of the internet and social media, and this tension between the analogue and digital world is the story we are pursuing in Made You Look.”

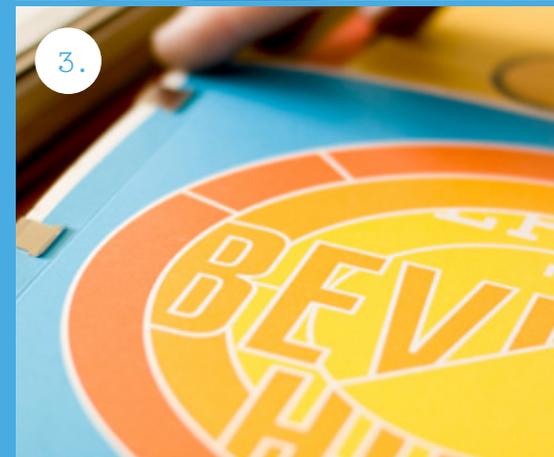
Anthony Peters, Look&Yes



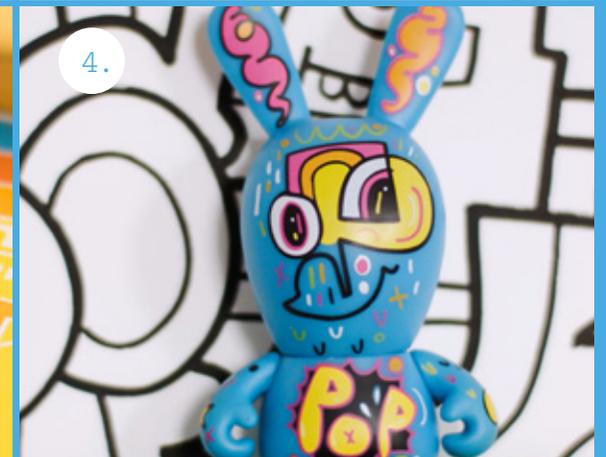
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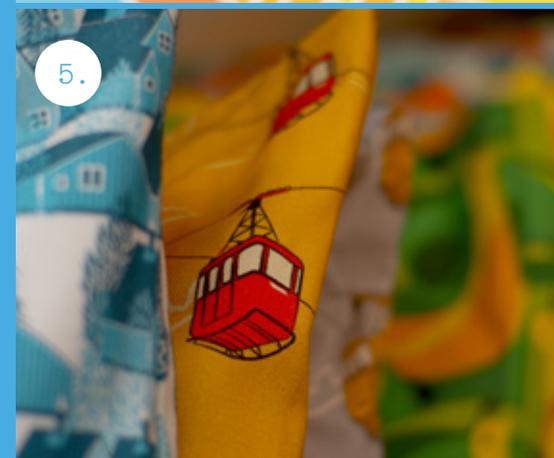
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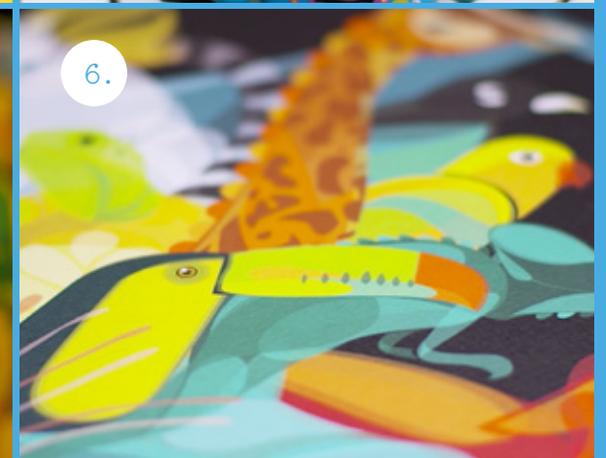
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1. Adams of Rye / Anthony Burrill

2. Andrew Rae / Moonhead

3. Anthony Burrill

4. Burgerman

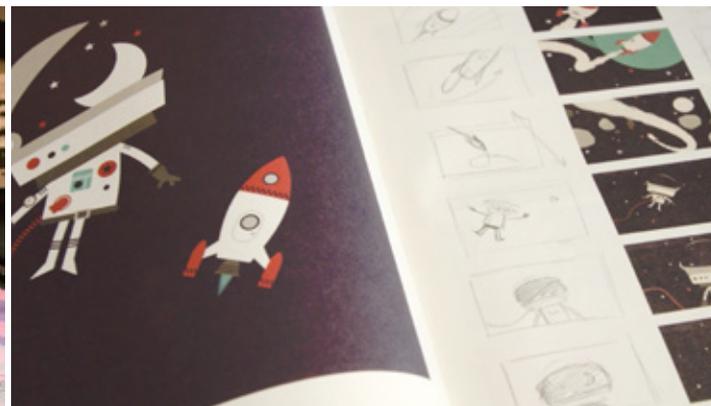
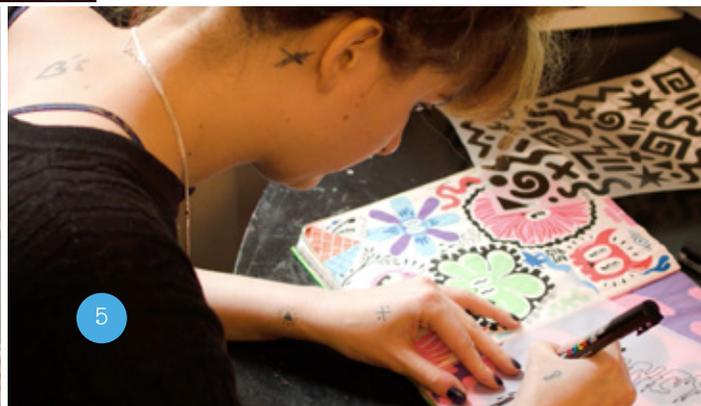
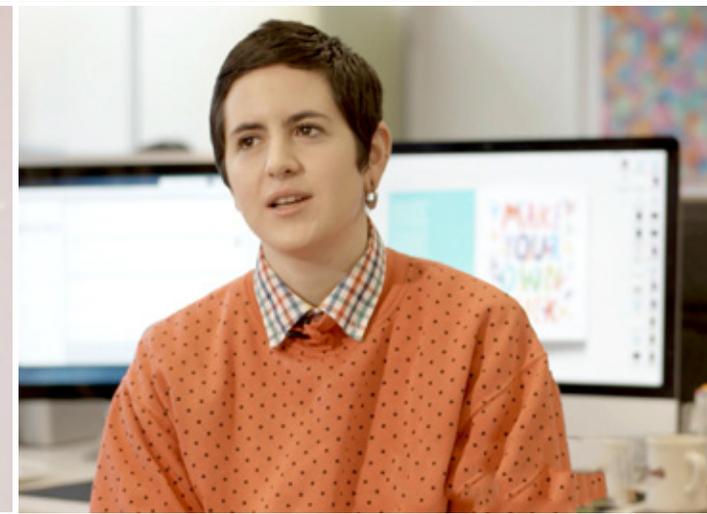
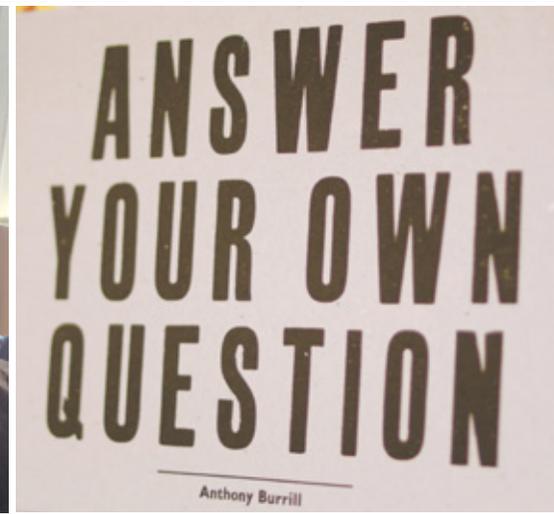
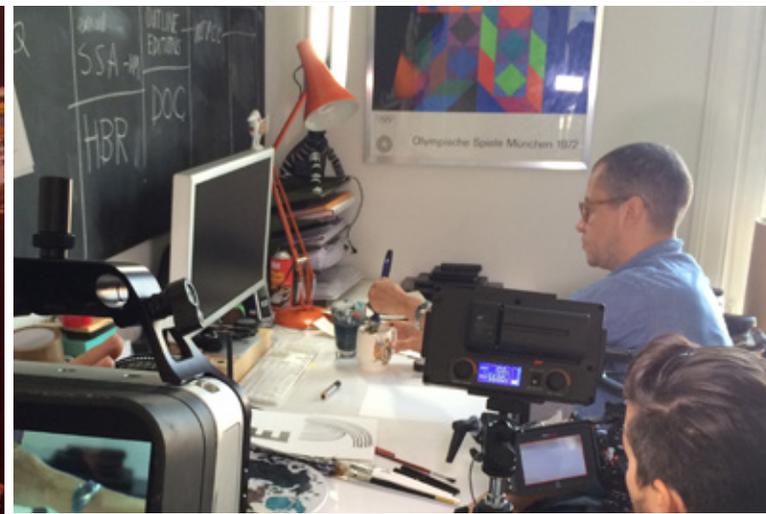
5. Ben The Illustrator

6. Ben O'Brien



‘Made You Look’ profiles the work from some of the UK’s leading practitioners and most influential artists, illustrators and designers from the industry.

Including: Sam Arthur, Jon Burgerman, Ben The Illustrator, Anthony Burrill, Sophie, Dauvois, Fred Deakin, Ed Cheverton, Pete Fowler, Kate and Fred Higginson, Will Hudson, Adrian Johnson, Kate Moross, Helen Musselwhite, Andrew Rae, Ian Stevenson, Hattie Stewart and Spencer Wilson.



Writer & Director

Anthony Peters



Ahead of the official launch of the Made You Look documentary, Stephen Caton, creative director at Source Creative talks to Anthony about why the film is so relevant now, and how creative tensions are played out through their work with clients.

SC: What inspired you to make the film and why now?

AP: Two things inspired the making of the film, the first was that I was working with Print Club London - Somerset House for their Summer Screen exhibition of film posters and I was doing a poster for Raising Arizona. In the run up to the show they made films about the artists involved in the show, big heroes of mine like Anthony Burrill, Kate Gibb and James Joyce. I was interviewed along with Joe Wilson and I realised that there was a story to be told, a kind of Beautiful Losers for the UK Graphic Art scene (though this film is very different).

Around the same time I was bored of trying to talk to people while they stared at their mobile phones, bored of staring at screens all day and night and always being glued to social media. I realised that there were many creatives in the UK and beyond who had turned away from digital methods of creativity.

This became our core narrative.

SC: Is the film born out of love for a certain generation or of like-minded designers?

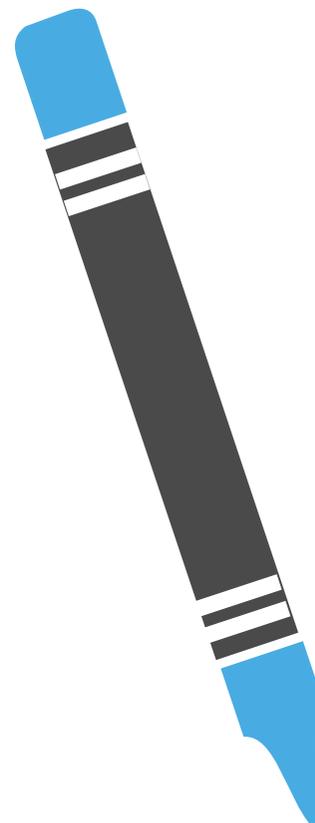
AP: I'm a ninties kid and I adored the YBAs (Young British Artists), I loved Conceptual Art, Pop Art and Fluxus, but you could never own anything by any contemporary artists, it was always out of reach. At the same time I have always loved and collected vinyl, it's where I learned my visual language. At the end of the nineties the DIY scene in the graphic arts began to appear, people who started agencies & record labels, companies began making interesting design objects and tees and toys. Finally I could afford to own prints and objects by creatives I loved, who at the time were cutting edge. These same creatives came from the scenes that spawned all the record sleeves I loved, Matador, Domino, Ninja Tune, Creation, Mute, Warp... Art and creativity suddenly became more accessible. So really the film is born out of my recognition for people who spearheaded a new scene in aesthetics and the generation that came after.

SC: What was the journey from idea to the final edit?

AP: The journey was a complete joy, besides the Kickstarter failing. We were interviewing people, who were lovely, fascinating, well informed and incredibly creative, and we got an insight into their creativity, this was wonderful. Plus I was working with two of my best friends, you can't go wrong really! The edit was one of the most intense and rewarding collaborative things I have ever done, myself and co-director Paul O'Connor (who also edited the film) spent six weeks editing and talking about the film in terms of concepts, visual language, symbolism and narrative. A thoroughly rewarding process!

We did an edit review and it was evident from the feedback that something was missing, so we reworked the credits, and added one last interview with Jon Burgerman.

After the edit was complete we then had the near impossible task of programming it into cinemas and making contacts and relationships with festivals, cinemas and design press, it's been nearly eight months since the final edit and there is still so much to do!



SC: When the Kickstarter failed, although it did garner good attention, did this make you question taking the project further and what alternative route did you have to take?

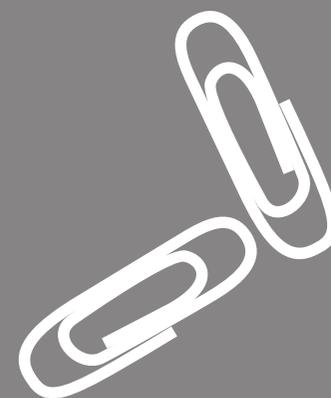
AP: When the Kickstarter failed it was a massive blow in terms of our confidence and the energy that we needed to push the project forward. With anything self-initiated it's only the makers belief and confidence that projects it forward and gets it done. It had been a gruelling 12 weeks, six weeks of editing and then six weeks of Kickstarter right off the back of the edit. We were exhausted and demoralised but we knew that we had to pick ourselves up and get on with it.

We made the mistake of trying to build our social media following at the same time as the kickstarter, so it was kinda like "Hey, good to meet you, can you give us some money?" A real no-no for anyone trying to crowd source funding.

When the dust settled we started doing tutorials online for grading and audio post production, we worked with a composer for the soundtrack and taught ourselves to do all the things that we were going to pay for with the Kickstarter funds. That's the power of the internet; there are tutorials out there for everything! In the end we found so many new skills, and we had more control over the end project, I'm not saying we would do our next production this way but it worked for Made You Look.

SC: Look&Yes are a collective of multi-disciplinary talents – how comfortable are you with the blurred lines and what are the synergies with contributors in the film?

AP: We all have different ideas about the blurred lines, some people in the collective think things should be more clear-cut but I love the ideas of people like Valve, companies where if a person has a strong idea they head up a team to make that idea happen, no one has set roles and they can grow in any direction they want. Very idealistic and won't suit every company, and for this first film we have learned about every part of the process, editing, pre production, organisation, mood boards, storyboards, cinema booking, working with the press, making DCPs (Digital Cinema Package), film grading, audio post production. Its been an incredible and very educational journey, but next time we will be getting some help!



SC: One of the themes explored in the film are the tensions played out through the complex relationship designers have with technology and the web. What does the film bring to this conversation?



AP: The conversation was pretty straight forward – what do you find to be the main plusses and minuses of technology and creativity? The answers were vast and varied. The main issue was procrastination and how disposable visual creativity has become, Clients expect endless amends with no real turnaround time, some people can work faster, some people want more time to work on concepts and creative ideas. Many people are fearful of getting lost amongst the multitude of voices on the many digital platforms. The main takeaway for me was that getting away from computers and having a tactile relationship with real materials was really good for happiness and mental health, but that no one could really have a career without the trappings of the internet!

Hattie Stewart / Lily Allen

SC: How has the digital era influenced a reassessment of hand-made skills and a desire for analogue tools and equipment, and in turn how well does the digital realm co-exist with this? Do you think the two complement each other?

AP: I think they complement each other. People can make work by hand but have to be online to find an audience and to sell the work. I have been telling people they will not really find great inspiration on design blogs because it's a small gene pool, and you can always discover someone who has done something similar to you, which can be de-motivating. But if you stay offline during the creative process and find all your inspiration offline you will do something much more original!

The real truth is that the film is only exploring a small niche idea, digital culture is going nowhere, 3D graphics and type is becoming a big thing with some amazing work out there, and we are seeing 3D printing, interesting AI development, Oculus Rift, some great animation work and the mind blowing images created by the Neural Network - digital is getting more and more fascinating. But we all still need to step away from the screens and remember how beautiful and invigorating the real world is!

SC: Look & Yes only takes on projects that challenge them creatively and professionally. How does this fit with a sustainable business model and where do you set the degrees of tolerance to remain consistent to your values?

AP: I did a talk at Bristol University with Ben O'Brien (Ben The Illustrator), and he had a slide that said 'Be Boring' it confused me but then he elaborated, "I love the boring work because it allows me to do all the fun stuff." Very few companies or creatives are lucky enough to only have the fun and exciting work, and the reality is that you have to pay the bills. Look&Yes is set aside as a pure thing, and something we go to when the time is right and the ideas are there. Almost an escape from the mundane everyday stuff we do outside of the company.

So the truth is that we have to bring in money from outside of Look&Yes and so we are at the moment continuing with our own work beyond the company. In the long term we hope that the purity of ideas will mean that we can grow and follow the mould of people like Jeannie Finley, Gary Hustvit and Adam Curtis. We want to keep the purity.

SC: It sounds like you have an incredibly busy time managing both your company, Look&Yes and family life. Is that a difficult balancing act?

AP: I always take on too much; I think the same is true for Paul O'Connor my co-director and David Waterson our producer. We all hate being bored. But the side effects of trying to do everything means that you face frequent burnout, highs and lows, anxiety and then fear when you have nothing to do!

It's a bit of a cliché but I don't really separate much in life, family time, working time, the film stuff, the design stuff, it all makes up a fairly organic ebb and flow. I fit it all in around each other, that's one of the great things that happened since I went freelance 4 or 5 years ago. I just have a lot of lists, notes and to-do lists and I seem to stay on top of it all mostly!

SC: You mentioned the next time? Have you a new project in mind or have you already started it?

AP: We have a whole bunch of ideas, but are reluctant to just jump straight in again, its 2 years of our lives! We are going to put together several treatments for our ideas, discuss them, share them with potential funding organisations and grow it from there. There's an old music cliché that you have your whole life to make your first album and a year to make your second. That's how I now feel about film making!



Anthony Peters: <Writer & Director

Anthony is a multi-disciplined creative who has over ten years' experience in the graphic arts and has worked with clients such as Shortlist, New Scientist, Nobrow, HSBC, Macmillan Cancer Charity, Leo Burnett and John Lewis amongst others. His work has been exhibited in London, Los Angeles, New York, Milan and Paris.

Paul O'Connor: Editor>

Paul O'Connor is the owner of Mechanical Mouse and an award winning multi-disciplined director and producer. Paul has managed and directed projects for clients such as Blackberry, HP, VW, Nokia and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.



David Waterson: <Producer

David was previously creative director of the Wood Green International Short Film Festival and has managed short film production funds in partnership with the BFI, Film London and Creative Skillset, commissioning over 20 short films which have gone on to be programmed at London Film Festival and Venice Film Festival.



About Look&Yes

Look&Yes is a collective of Directors, Art Directors, Graphic Designers and Animators whose only mantra is to work on things that they really enjoy doing!

Tell us about the history of Look&Yes and your early projects?

We were in bands together in the 90s, and also shared many low rent houses. We loved shoegazing, 60s psych, avant guard jazz and Krautrock, and were also film fanatics since we were young. Our band never really had much real success, our high point was supporting Kula Shaker, Menswear (remember them?) and Heavy Stereo. Can't believe we just admitted that in writing!

In 1999, we were living in Greenwich and Connor (Paul O'Connor) was introduced to us. We spent hours discussing the slow editing of 70s cinema, Peckinpah, Cassavetes, early Spielberg, Scorsese etc. It all grew from that kitchen conversation.

Some years later we started a record label together called Manna records with another good friend, Charlie Lines, and started releasing electronic music, with touches of folk and hip hop. Our releases can still be found on Spotify. We had a pretty successful club night in London and booked people like Psapp, Hot Chip, Minotaur Shock, and Max Tundra. Bands would play; we would DJ and do intricate visual mixes. Sometimes we would collaborate to create mash up mixes and build visuals to suit.

This all culminated in us headlining a music festival in East Germany in 2006 with a full band and visuals, fantastic fun, and really the last of our musical adventures.

However, it was the worst time to be running a record label, especially when most of your artists don't play live! We started to have families and had to begin the process of finding 'real' jobs to sustain our changes in lifestyle. We still saw each other frequently. Finally in 2013 we found a new project to work on together. I think Look&Yes has much more permanence than previous projects... let's hope so at least as we'd love to tell more stories on film!

How do you establish your own style over a period of time and still stay relevant?

One of the fundamental things to do in order to develop your own style is to go offline during the creative process. Look in junk shops, museums, galleries, thrift stores, libraries, go to the beach, hang-out in the mountains. Forage for your inspiration then bring it all together and share it online when you are finished. If you use the internet for inspiration or reference you will find that someone has also done something similar, this could be de-motivating.

If you want to keep your ideas and style pure then hone your skills away from all the noise. With regards to relevance, you can't stay relevant forever. A few people become national treasures but often we still refer to their seminal works from their most creative period. Enjoy being relevant while it lasts, and be prepared to hand over to the younger generation when the time comes, this is a natural cultural exchange! It's healthy that one generation rejects the last, embrace it and see how you can help with your knowledge when the time comes!

Does your work develop thematically or is it more distinctive and random?

It's a bit of both. Our core reason for starting the company was to make documentaries about art, design and creative cultural movements. So we have a rough thematic idea of what we want to do.

We believe in letting the footage and interviews breathe making visual connections in the edit, sometimes very subtly. If something is over-stylised it dates quickly and you find yourself too distracted by the style to follow the narrative. We also made the decision early on to not use too much exposition and to not patronise the viewer. This is something that will develop as we make more films.

What has been the biggest influence on your work?

In Graphic Design & Illustration, the influences are varied; Joseph Beuys, Matisse, Paul Rand, Sagmeister, Sigmar Polke, Neville Brody. We always loved the work of Mike Mills and Geoff McFetridge, this love was pushed further after the release of Beautiful Losers. Seeing Mike Mills go from Graphic Artist to film maker was incredibly exciting, to know that as long as you have something to communicate you can use a variety of mediums to do so!

We have huge respect for people like Jeannie Finlay, Adam Curtis, Aaron Rose and Gary Hustvit. Helvetica and Objectified were incredibly good films, making a great narrative from something that could be a very dry subject matter.

Documentary films seem to be in their ascendance, with online and on-demand platforms allowing for niche stories to be told and to find an audience. It's a good time to be a documentary maker!

What inspires you or provokes the motivation towards creativity within?

There's a great book called 'A Technique for Producing Ideas' by James W. Young. It's a 1965 book used by advertising creatives initially. In the book it suggests that you go out in the world, fill yourself up with unconnected ideas and knowledge, then relax, do anything except work on the idea and an idea will come from your subconscious a mixture of all the knowledge you have collected. There is no such thing as an original idea, just a new hybrid of existing ideas drawn together to create an evolution of an idea.

Most creative people follow this process naturally, creative people voraciously consume and collect culture and cultural ephemera, and then ideas are formed from fusing these elements together. This is why it's not a good idea to only use the web for inspiration, that's exactly where everyone else is looking, and so the chance of finding a new fusion of thoughts and ideas is much slimmer!



D&AD Professional Awards - Open For Entry

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Crafts for Design	Media	Spatial & Experiential Design
Digital Design	Mobile Marketing	Creativity for Good (White Pencil)
Digital Marketing	Music Videos	Writing for Advertising
Direct	Outdoor Advertising	

Entry Deadline - February 17th 2016

Enter your work by 25 November to save 10%

Contact / Get in Touch

Our awards team are on hand to help, wherever you are in the world. If you've begun entering and have a question, get in touch with Marie Dryden: marie.dryden@dandad.org / +44 (0)207 840 1119

About D&AD

Since 1962, D&AD has been inspiring a community of creative thinkers by celebrating and stimulating the finest in design and advertising. A D&AD Award is recognised globally as the ultimate creative accolade, entered and attended by the best from around the world. But it's much more than just awards. Members join a vibrant global community, whilst creatives and clients are inspired by a world-class training programme. As a non-profit, all of D&AD's surpluses go straight into programmes such as New Blood, that inspire the next generation of creative talent and stimulate the creative industry to work towards a fairer more sustainable future.

Winning a D&AD New Blood Award puts people under 24 on the path to the brightest of creative futures. Budding film directors and photographers also get the opportunity to be recognised with a D&AD Pencil and have their talent promoted back to the industry - in the Next Awards.

www.dandad.org



Upcoming Events

A selection of current and forthcoming events, exhibitions and activity to provoke further conversations about creativity:

Art from Elsewhere – International Contemporary Art from UK Galleries

10.10.15 – 28.11.15

Harris Museum & Art Gallery, Preston

Art from Elsewhere explores global change through the work of artists from around the world.

www.harrismuseum.org.uk

Textil/Juvel – Contemporary Craft from West Sweden

10.11.15 – 27.1.16

Chrysalis Arts with Konstantverkscentrum: Sweden
Accrington Library

Exhibition of contemporary jewellery and textiles from seven leading makers, reflecting current trends in Swedish making.

www.artunpacked.co.uk

The National Festival of Making 2016 –

10.10.16 – 16.10.16

Blackburn

Festival of Making is a year-long programme of work culminating in a week-long event that celebrates the crafts and industries from yesterday, today and tomorrow, investigating the provenance of making and where making is taking and can take society.

www.blackburnisopen.co.uk

Masterclass Series 2016 – Andrew Graham - Graham and Brown

19.05.2016

Lancaster University

A series of Masterclass seminars by inspirational speakers who all have a passion for business and want to share their knowledge and expertise

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