

# **Achievements & Innovation In Advertising, Publishing, & The Web**

**Karin Gottschalk**

## Author's Note

Over the years friends and colleagues have asked me to explain to them what it was, exactly, that I have done in the fields of advertising, publishing and the World Wide Web.

Their reason is simple – resumés are scant outlines of what an individual has done in her working life, and they never tell the real stories of what has gone on.

The full stories are what are truly fascinating, and I have always enjoyed reading about how someone came up with a brilliant breakthrough idea, whatever field of endeavour they work in.

I hope you find the tales herein interesting in their own way, and if you have any questions about any of them, please feel free to **email** me, or call.

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## HOW ADVERTISING FOUND ME

The Douglas Brothers are to blame for my getting into advertising.

Andrew and Stuart made their reputation as photographers via a series of *Esquire* magazine portrait assignments, then took up directing after being inspired by MTV's ten-second station idents. When on assignment on location to photograph athletes in training, the boys would take along an old 16mm movie camera, so you would get double the value.

### A Double Proposition

I was at their studio "organising" their archives for them one day when Andrew told me there were two jobs going and was I interested? One was as picture editor with designer Vince Frost on *Big* magazine, and was unpaid, while the other was an undefinable position with an advertising agency named Leagas Delaney.

I opted for the moolah – the glamour of being involved with trendy magazines hardly compensates for the relative impoverishment that goes with it.

At the time I was living off my Australian dollar earnings as cofounder and European contributing editor for *Black+White* magazine. Even with a more attractive exchange rate than we have today, and a rather good rate of pay, it made good fiscal sense to look for other opportunities.

### Into The Fiery Furnace

Years ago I had no idea that I would actually end up working in advertising. And little did I know it would be at an agency with a terrific creative reputation, and that was also known as a place where you go to radically increase your dollar (or pound) value.

To earn that gain in worth your contribution is long hours, dedication and extreme innovation, but you do get a crack at working with some top drawer clients on projects large and small, for clients all over the world.

## Do Whatever You Need To

The first day at the agency was a strange one. I was introduced to art director Martin Galton<sup>1</sup> who gave me some cryptic instructions. "Be creative, do whatever you need to, inspire."

And then he made an equally cryptic gesture with both hands, as if he was fondling a supermodel from behind.

Martin is an odd man – a true iconoclast, proponent of the finely-honed big idea and, I was pleased to note, with no formal training in advertising, like me – and I was sorry to see him disappear after a while, ostensibly to write a Hollywood screenplay but in fact to go off to BBH.

I took Martin's advice to heart and, as there was no evidence left behind of exactly how my predecessor went about things, I simply did what seemed reasonable.

If I came across a gap, I endeavoured to fill it.

If I saw a lack, I sought to make up for it.

If I found a need, then I dealt with it.

## Things Left Behind

One of my achievements was building a database of reference material, for use in generating new ideas and commissioning photographers, directors, illustrators and sound tracks.

It took a polyglot form, since digital media and electronic databases had not quite reached their maturity just then, and comprised filing cabinets full of photocopies from photographers' and illustrators' books, assorted printed matter from working girls' phone box advert cards to magazine cuttings, and a nascent computer database as well as obscure and wonderful books from nearby Charing Cross Road.

My assistant had connections in the music industry, and arranged for copies of new releases to be delivered. I asked the video guy in the new editing suite behind my desk to archive the movies he was pulling from the Web.

I requested that the production guy who was investigating FileMaker and 4D database programming spend some time on a relational multimedia database for cataloging creative talent

as well as tracking and archiving jobs.

That reference collection is still in use for commissioning, I am told. A number of new talents whom I did not personally work with but promoted to the creative teams got their first advertising assignments through those records.

### **Phobia For Annuals**

I don't like the ubiquitous awards books and advertising and design annuals you see on every agency's bookshelves. I didn't buy any in my time at Leagas Delaney.

In fact these books sadden me. Ads are taken out of their intended context and held up like a headhunter's trophies to be seen and picked over. The true stories of their making are never told.

There is more than enough in daily life and the things that surround us, as well as endless stories to be found in the brands, the products and the personalities, to inspire plenty of effective branding and communication. Ideas are all around us, should we bother to look.

The media we have at our disposal offer so many possibilities for the imagination now too – I would have killed for a MacBook Pro, Mac OS X, Final Cut Pro and a decent little video camera if they were around when I was trying to make films in the days of Super 8 and slicing and splicing.

So why excavate show reels and old award annuals for inspiration?

### **ADIDAS: A DREAM CLIENT**

I thoroughly enjoyed our work for Adidas. In many respects they were a dream client.

And organisationally, an odd one. Adidas was for many years a family-owned firm and had evolved some eccentric practices. Each country had its own marketing office and there was a central marketing office run out of Germany. Aims and budgets would often overlap.

Sometimes we would work on large

campaigns in conjunction with Adidas head office. The budgets would be large, permitting me to commission famous photographers like Ellen von Unwerth.

Sometimes a national marketing office would phone up, and ask us what we could do for them with, say, £3,000. That was the cue to look through my database for an interesting

young photographer I could give a break to.

More often, though, the budgets would be quite reasonable, and I would be working with The Douglas Brothers, by now veteran director/photographers who were quite happy to go off into the field for an unspecified duration to see what they could make of an athlete and a location, for TV and stills.

If Andrew and Stuart were busy then I would call up a photographer of similar stature and see if they would like to do the shoot. Nobody ever said no. I got to work with a number of people whose work I had admired for some time that way.

### **ART DIRECTING: THE SCHOOL OF WARREN**

Legendary art director Warren Eakins<sup>2</sup> is a native of Portland, Oregon, who is Los Angeleno by adoption, an art director by training and a movie maker by choice. He made his mark



**Our award-winning work for Adidas transformed the fortunes of this once-failing family sports shoe firm.**

working on Nike with Wieden Kennedy, then moved over to the enemy camp – Adidas.

Warren replaced Martin Galton at Leagas Delaney as the art director Tim Delaney most frequently worked with. I met him when he arrived from America to do some work on a series of tennis ads for Adidas, featuring athletes like Steffi Graf and Marcel Rios.

I liked to call Warren our Malibu Beach Office, as he constantly circulated between London and his heavily digitised home on the West Coast of the United States.

I started finding out who Warren actually was when I spoke with photographers and agents about whether they'd be interested in working with him. Turns out that everyone would come running if Warren nodded in their direction.

Apparently he really is a legend.

### Legend Minus Ego

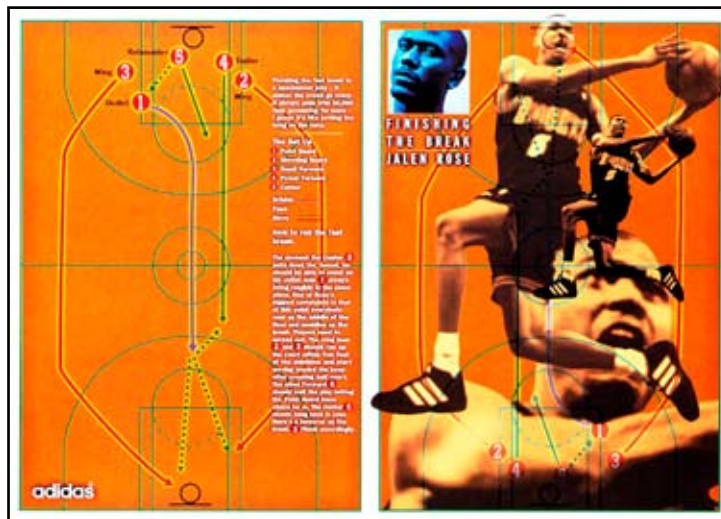
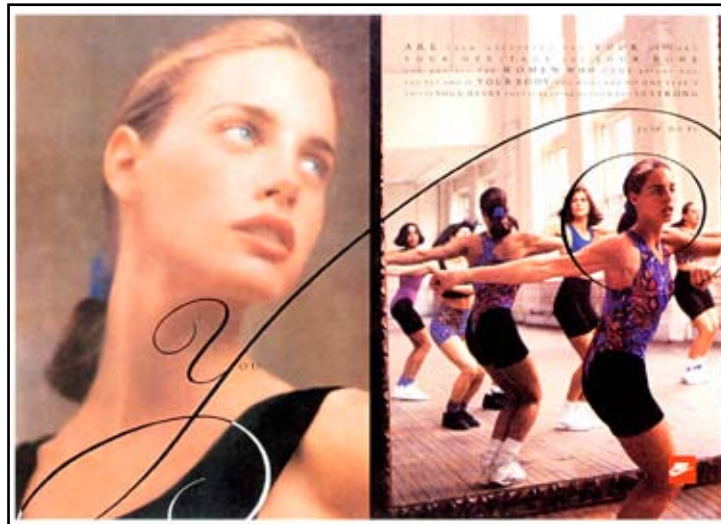
A legend without a trace of an ego.

Warren's method is to enthuse and collaborate, to find the best people to work with and then allow them to bring out the best they have to give. He believes in the primacy of the visual, given we learn visual language before the written. His print ads are exercises in collaged multilayered meaning, with something of the nature of multimedia.

They're in the same direction as the design I had envisaged for *Black+White*, that the

magazine did not manage to pull off until the all-too-brief tenure of Australian art direction wunderkind Andrew Godfrey.

Like too many young Australian designers of world stature, Andrew has been underemployed for too long and there is little doubt that we will lose him to the Brits or Yanks in due course.



### Work for two competing shoemakers – Adidas and Nike – by Warren Eakins.

### A Doppelgänger

There is someone else who reminds me of Warren – a man who shares many of his traits. Hollis Dwyer is an American who ran the film and television department at Central TAFE when I was trying to learn filmmaking.

The art school where I was an undergraduate had strict limitations on who was permitted to study what. They were good at telling you what you weren't allowed to learn. On graduation I had a long list of subjects I'd expected to have been able to study there, and I was looking for a way to fill in the gaps. Film was one of them.

Hollis Dwyer offered the unbelievable – free access to all his facilities and no obligations.

Occasionally he asked me to come by and teach a class in some aspect of film, based on what I had learned by trial and error. He made it possible for me and a partner to make a 28-minute feature film that won all the awards, and that then suddenly, and mysteriously, hadn't.

That experience was where I learned a great deal about power, money and access. And

interinstitutional power politics in education.

Like Warren, Hollis is someone who allows you to be yourself, and to be the best you can be. He sees something in you, then opens the doors to what you need.

### **PMA – Power, Money & Access**

Those issues of power, money and access were what made Hollis return to the United States in the end, and I hope he continues to do well in whatever field he chose to work in there. He is one of the most open, honest, and generous people I have ever met.

Hollis Dwyer is a role model. So is Warren Eakins.

### **THEY'RE FEET, THAT YOU WEAR**

The biggest project I worked on with Warren Eakins was Adidas' *Feet You Wear*.

The concept of the shoes was that since nature has designed your feet to work so well, why not wear a shoe that simulates the best features of the thing that goes inside it?

"Your feet work, so we copied them." The idea seems reasonable enough, although I never did try one on myself. By this time Adidas America was making headway signing up a number of younger star athletes such as Keyshawn Johnson and Kobe Bryant.

Warren flew in to London from Leagas Delaney's Malibu Beach branch office to work on

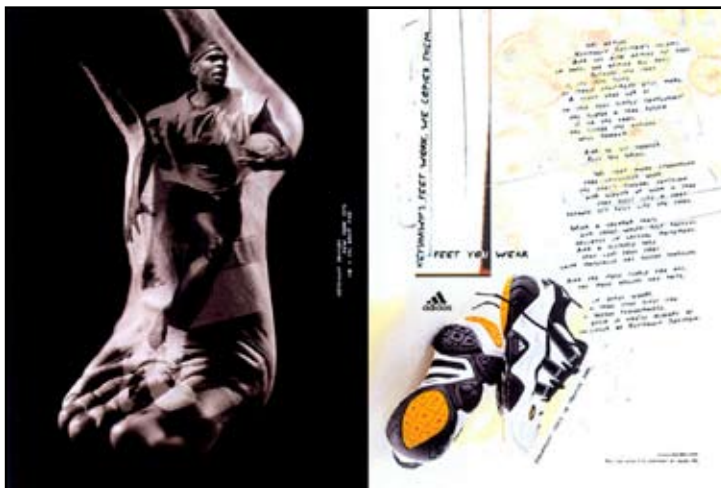
the project, and I got a bit of much-needed rest for a change.

### **Those Long, Long Days**

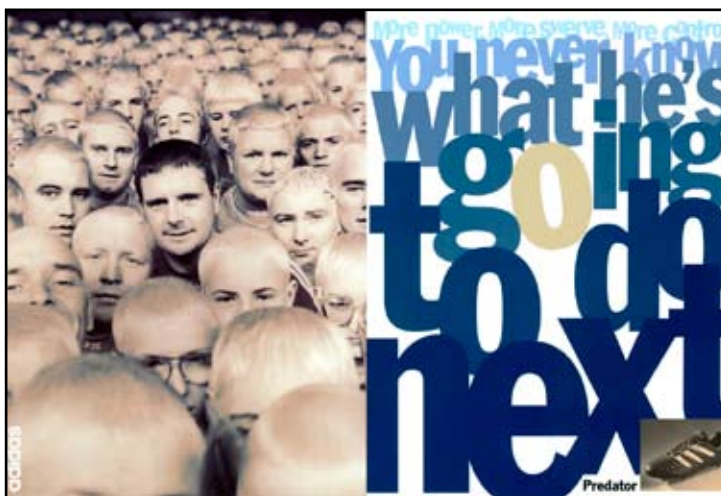
Warren already had some photographers in mind for the shoe and athlete shoots in the United States, and had set them up before leaving. All I had to do was the administration

and coordination. Quite a change from the usual 12, 14 or 16 hour days working across time zones from Herzogenaurach, Germany to Portland, Oregon and beyond.

Later in the project Adidas' Australian office asked for a *Feet You Wear* ad for them too, so I commissioned a rather under-estimated Sydney photographer to shoot basketball player Andrew Gaze. The photographer, by the way, was Sage, formerly of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. I recommend him highly.



**Famous feet wearing those feet you wear, for Adidas.**



**Gazza immersed in fandom at Scottish football's mecca, Ibrox Stadium, Glasgow.**

### **WITH GAZZA OOP T'NORTH**

Glasgow Rangers star Paul Gascoigne was the most famous British soccer player next to David Beckham, as notorious for his antics off the field as on it.

Gazza, as he is popularly known, decided to colour his Caesar cut peroxide blond and his barmy army of diehard fans immediately followed suit. Almost as quickly Gazza switched from blond to black. This time his fans were not so keen to do the same.



To create this tactical double page spread I flew up to Glasgow with creatives Tony Davidson and Kim Papworth (taking advantage of the boss's temporary absence), our photographer and a small production team.

We recruited a number of Gazza fans keen to sit next to their idol in holy Ibrox Stadium, touched-up bleached-out locks and waited for the great man's arrival.

### **An Affair With Type**

Back in London after the shoot we digitally boosted the crowd around Gazza and spent a week getting the text just so, to mirror the layout of the people. I've always loved type and beautifully printed books, and this project was a great introduction to the importance of good typography in advertising. It was also good incentive to learn Photoshop.

As a result of this project I suggested we make an alliance with one of several excellent British typographers to better handle future print jobs. That initiative bore fruit in a subsequent project for the Patek Philippe watch people in Geneva.

### **PREDATORS FACE TO FACE**

Of all the creative pairings I have worked with, the one of Kim Papworth and Tony Davidson was the most remarkable.

Neither of them could be said to be *the* art director and neither was *the* copywriter. Instead

each of them played both roles simultaneously – art director *and* copywriter, both.

This team was responsible for the longest run of the most innovative Adidas print work, and they generated many more effective concepts than the client could ever find the budget for us to produce.

I once asked Tony and Kim how they managed

to get their jobs at various agencies, given how conservative most employers are in requiring potential employees fulfil a ready-defined role.

They told me that one pretends to be *the* art director and the other *the* copywriter. Having secured their new positions they drop the pretence and assume their real roles.



**Two Italian soccer stars who play the same position on opposing teams, Paul Ince and Marcel Desailly, meeting up in computer space.**



**Somebody reads award annuals! This bookmark came with a novel I purchased back in Sydney.**

### **Needing The Least Inspiring**

In contrast to the other young and midweight teams at Leagas Delaney, Kim and Tony did their own research and I would often bump into them out at weekends in the West

End, amongst the bookstores, palaces of retail and quirky designer boutiques.

This project, working name *Ince/Desailly*, was the other large shoot I did with Tony and Kim, commissioning Kurt Markus to do the photography.

Markus is a cowboy from Dakota, a photographer of boxers and fashion models, and a specialist in classical monochrome photography.

Kurt chased Paul Ince and Marcel Desailly around northern Italy in deepest winter while they flitted from appointment to appointment.

“Same city. Same position. Same boots. That’s where it ends.” Apt headline but one that contradicts the strained circumstances of the advertisement’s making!

Finally he got one of them in Turin and the other in Milan, and the two met virtually in the computer in London. Star athletes *can* be rather flakey.

**Is Imitation The Sincerest Form?**

I don’t want to labour this point, but I can’t see the purpose in stealing someone else’s images if the image does not serve the idea.

The photograph in the Books Alive! bookmark may bear some relation to the phrase “Lose your head...,” but why are the man and woman screaming at each other?

Is this what reading books can do to you?

**Awards:**

- D&AD, published in the annual.

**RUNNING FOR ADIDAS**

Runners were Adi Dassler’s first customers, and the ones from whom he learnt the most about how to build good shoes.

Running is still a key component of the Adidas business and, given how glamour attaches itself to the sport, ads for running are ongoing.

Running constantly provides Adidas and its advertising agencies with new chances to try

out new creative talent, and allows established photographers, and directors, to push the edges of the envelope of image-making.

**Leave The Capitol**

Running assignments tend to be on location where the athlete is training, often near their home, quite often in exotic locales. But even

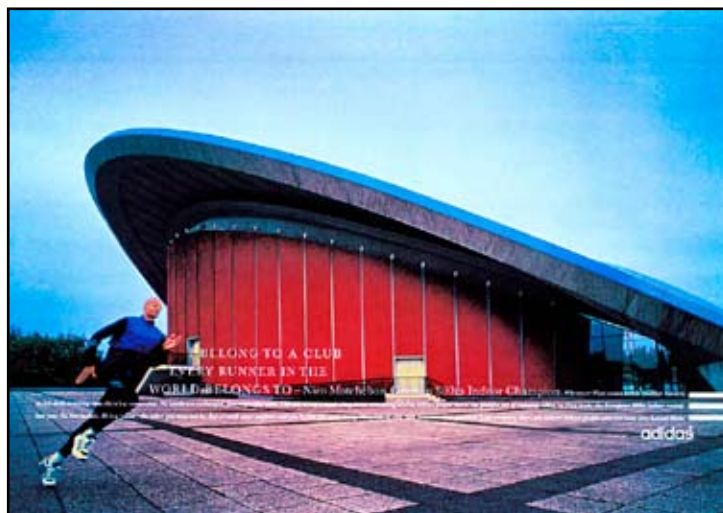
mundane localities are good tests of a photographer’s ingenuity.

Running also provided the best chances to rejuvenate historic and famous images, like the late Leni Reifenstahl’s photograph of Jesse Owens at the Berlin Olympics.

Reifenstahl’s notorious Nazi-era documentary film *Olympia* was a popular inspiration at the agency, and I would negotiate new usage fees with her or her live-in agent/ boyfriend from time to time.

**Awards:**

- D&AD, Silver Award



**Ladies and gentlemen, I give you Running Man! Photos by The Douglas Brothers and Toni Meneguzzo.**

**COPYWRITING: LEARNING FROM THE TIM**

When the Douglas Brothers told me about the job at Leagas Delaney I already knew about the agency’s work for Adidas. It could be seen in every magazine and high street.

But on doing a little research I was impressed to note Tim Delaney<sup>34</sup> was also responsible for the Timberland long copy adverts. “We stole their land, their buffalo and their women. Then we went back for their shoes”.

I don't know where I first saw this ad and the others in the series, but it was a long time ago and they have stayed with me. The deep research evident in the copy, the twist, the wit, the tone – the Timberland ads have influenced my own writing for years.

I could never do it like Tim does though, with fountain pen and lined note paper. I have to see the text as it will appear in the finished article, and that often means writing the copy directly into a page layout program. I'm a visual writer – words, images and design have an intimate relationship for me.

Another habit I am pleased to admit I did not pick up from Tim is his propensity for starting the writing process well past the deadline. It would drive me crazy.

### The Industry Perception

Tim Delaney could often be found prowling the corridors at 9PM and after asking people why they were leaving work so early.

He also does not believe in allowing creatives to leave the building to attend shoots or to find creative inspiration. Those were my jobs, on their behalf.

My predecessor, agency co-founder Sarah Smith, and Tim's former art director partner in crime, Steve Dunn, did manage to leave the building though and came skidding to a halt at Frank Lowe's agency in Bowater House.

Tim's workplace policies are of course well known in the industry, as is the rarity of a smile appearing on his dial. I did see hints of one

though, when he sat in on a couple of shoots by blonde photographer/director and ex-model Ellen von Unwerth that I produced for Adidas.

Tim has his soft spots.

### SALLY IN THE MIST WITH TRAINERS

I had come across Sally Gall's evocative photographs while on a drive to widen the range of work *Black+White* magazine was publishing. Her work reminded me of my old after-art school slogan: “To elevate the everyday into the realm of the extraordinary.”

Sally photographs normal places and

ordinary people in such a way that they seem to exist beyond the planes of this world. I had only seen her work in a little book I bought some time before, but that was proof enough of a remarkable vision.

I presented Sally's little book to art director Dave Dye<sup>1</sup>, and eventually he asked me to see if she was available for an Adidas Trail Running shoot.

**I was lucky enough to work with one of the greatest advertising copywriters ever – Tim Delaney of Leagas Delaney.**

## An Oregonian Wood, Isn't It Good?

After discussing ways, means and locations with Sally I sent her off to spend a few days in southern Oregon with some shoes, some clothes and a runner, to find some visionary landscapes.

Those ten days in the misty wilderness weren't easy on Sally or her runner, by any means, but she certainly delivered the goods, and then some.

Dave Dye<sup>5</sup> and copywriter Sean Doyle pinned a number of Sally's large format prints up on the walls around their office, and waited for the muse. A few late nights and some furious games of hallway soccer later, they came up with some nicely bent copy.

*Free*, *Hurry* and *A*. *Make Your own B*. have been featured in a number of advertising annuals and how-to manuals, and won Sally her first set of advertising awards.

## Art Mixes With Commerce

The other photographer I put forward for the job, should colour be more appropriate, was Joel Meyerowitz. He and Sally had built sterling reputations in the art world, and were a refreshing change from the fashionistas and editorial portraitists I had worked with

on previous Adidas assignments (The Douglas Brothers aside).

After hours I associated with photographers, collectors, critics, and art world figures at Hamiltons Gallery, where I was sometimes to be found trying to teach owners Tim Jefferies and Andy Cowan how to use their computers. Occasionally I poached their staff.

It was through Hamiltons that I finally met in person many of the artists whom I had been writing about at long distance.

In Sydney I had become accustomed to working on *Black+White* at nights, staying up well past midnight to interview people over the phone, transcribing the tapes afterwards when sleep seemed just too far out of reach.

Being on the spot in Europe was a very different experience.

## Be Yourself, Only More So

Hamiltons, as well as Sotheby's, the Saatchi Gallery, the National Portrait Gallery, and their various openings and social events, provided the opportunity to meet these artists in the flesh, face to face, in daylight or the closest thing to it. They were living reminders that the only way to succeed creatively is



**A. Make Your Own B, as well as Free, and Hurry were set amidst the wilds of southern Oregon.**

simply to be yourself, only *more* so.

I found the world of advertising photography, on the other hand, to be populated with people who thought it wasn't enough to be themselves. Instead far too many of them believed they had to emulate their heroes by copying their images and their styles.

I would see so many young photographers who felt obliged to tell me that if their hero was not available then they would be glad to step in and take their place. Luckily such a situation never occurred!

#### Awards:

- The One Show, Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards
- D&AD, Silver Award

### ADIDAS: THE WEB'S PRECURSORS

I had seen bits and pieces of what was to become the World Wide Web some years before it became a reality, while at university.

The School of Physics had a mainframe computer facility, and out of curiosity I obtained a log-in name and password. The computers were internetworked, and students often played games with colleagues on other campuses.

Basic seemed reasonably easy compared with the Fortran 4 I had learned in a high school flirtation with programming at long distance via punch card. The colour graphics terminal lying unused in a corner hinted at the possibility of more interesting visuals than phosphors glowing green against black.

Then the School of Art and Design acquired a Fairlight CMI (Computer Musical Instrument) and the parts fell into place in my imagination – sound, graphics, text and a wired network

between computers. That is why I was so enthusiastic when a team in the Leagas Delaney attic started producing the first issues of the *Adidas Webzine*.

### Watching The Pioneers

The World Wide Web had become designable and multimedia-friendly, and these four pioneers

were working their hearts out to see where they could push it.

All the graphic designers I knew regarded the Web with varying degrees of dismay – low quality graphics, horrible typography, slow connection speeds. But our guys had no such prejudices, having come from backgrounds as

various as music, film, journalism and secretarial work.

Having learned the pitfalls of traditional print publishing I could see the benefits of being able to publish as a one-man band. Our in-house Web team were almost that – they were competing against the Nike website, rumoured to be built by a well-funded 27-member organisation.

So, every chance I got I sat in with James and Kathy to learn how to write HTML by hand, crunch GIFs and JPEGs, and upload the results to a Web server. Photographer Douglas Cape popped in every so often with the latest results of his experiments in making shoes rotate, virtually.

The *Adidas Webzine* soon had its own QuickTime virtual reality shoe museum complete with shoes you could view from every angle.



**Our favourite Adidas star athlete featured often in our pioneering Adidas *Webzine*.**

## HARRODS GETS AN IMAGE UPDATE

The Harrods brand had been ably supported by French photographer Daniel Jouanneau's richly-lit traditional still-lifes for years, with the same images still in use during the sales – "There is only one sale."

The store needed to appeal to a younger demographic however, and I went looking for more contemporary photographers whose work still contained some classical elements.

I found Cindy Palmano through *The Sunday Times Magazine*, although it was my also practice to have an open door Mondays and Fridays to see photographers who'd never dream of shooting for an advertising agency. The key is to ask them to show you what they love doing, what they photograph for themselves, as opposed to what they think they should be showing you.

I had negotiated a good rate for Cindy, especially when you take into account the usage fees Daniel is paid every year for the same set of sales images. No wonder he lives in a château.

But it was Cindy's obsession with boxes that threatened to blow out the budget. They had to be just so, made of exactly the right timbers and brought to a perfect quality of finish.

This attention to detail paid off handsomely, however. The series bounced Harrods out of its former fuddy duddy image, and the store continued to upgrade its WayIn department, and

radically increased the designer label space in the floors below the tourist trap ground and lower floors.

### AWARDS:

- The One Show, Print Finalist



**Altarpieces for the great temple of retail  
– *Bitter Chocolate* and *WayIn*, for Harrods.**

### PATEK PHILIPPE: BEGIN YOUR OWN TRADITION

Generally, wristwatch advertising focuses on lifestyle aspirations, craftsmanship, or simple desirability. Research showed Patek Philippe's customers tend to be the established rich rather than nouveau riche – not surprising given starting prices of £5,000.

Patek's high-tech timepieces are made to the same standards as the finest of jewellery and are as much heirlooms as status symbols. So it was decided to emphasise their value

as hand-me-downs.

Taking a leaf from British royalty, most of whose time-honoured traditions were actually invented in the late nineteenth century, the copy suggested Patek Philippe's customers do likewise and start their own. Invest in a Patek Philippe and pass it on to your heirs.

To get this suggestion across we backed Tim Delaney's incisive copy and an elegant product shot with some happy pictures of families at play.

## A Shortlist Of Luminaries

Through *Black+White* magazine I had come to know a number of photographers around the world. In fact my address book was a major factor in being appointed to the job at Leagas Delaney. I drew up a shortlist for the Patek Philippe series that included such luminaries as Peggy Sirota, Peter Lindbergh and Mario Testino.

Peggy did the first two shoots in Los Angeles, and I got former Sydney editorial still life specialist Jenny van Sommers to photograph the watches, with an armed guard in attendance at her Soho studio. Graham Wood of Tomato set the digital type with the same fine craftsmanship he usually applies to hot metal.

A particularly rewarding aspect of my role at the agency was the search for fresh young photographers, and potential new directors. I gave Jenny her first London advertising assignment – a couple of football shoes – and she transformed them into extraordinary objects through her mastery of lens and light.

It was the beginning of a distinguished European career in advertising photography for the former struggling magazine photographer.

## PEPE JEANS: OUTRAGE & IMPROVISATION

Pepe Jeans is one of those smaller clients it is well worth having as they allow you to get away with murder, creatively speaking, and win a few awards into the bargain.

The price to pay for such creative freedom is often much smaller production budgets. The penalty for the controversy our work for Pepe sometimes generated was banning by stodgy British television, but that simply made the ads more popular when we showed them as cinema spots instead.

## Low Budgets & Great Ideas

Necessary compromises generated intense innovation.

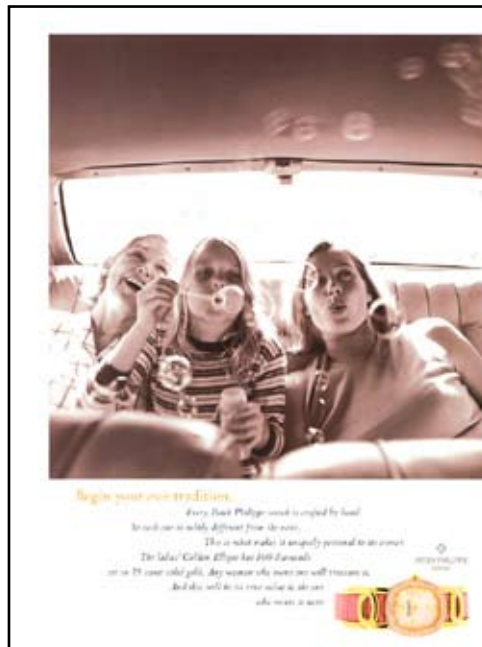
A Post-It note could only be vaguely reminiscent of a Post-It note. Magazine cuttings had to be faked. Feckless youth was really carefully cast models. Happy families were specially put together for the occasion.

Deepest London winter stood in for spring on the Continent for press ads and posters to go in Adshels during the coming season. We quickly moved location into an East London garage when the winds blew and the snowfall really set in. The models suddenly acquired more outerwear.

The Pepe Jeans Adshels shoot was an amazing one, where we trucked scantily-clad models off to the East End along with giant space heaters and warm-as-toast location vans. I was thankful I had nailed the photographer and the others down to doing the job for a fixed fee, when the snow started flurrying.

Pepe's production budgets were the lowest I had to work with. The paperwork was arduous as was the production work, but the exhilaration of

pulling it all off was limitless.



**Equality of the sexes. We began with one for the girls and one for the boys, for Patek Philippe.**

## Awards:

- The One Show, Print Finalist
- D&AD, Published in annual

## OIL OF ULAY: ART IN THE CAUSE OF COMMERCE

Oil of Ulay (or Olay, Ulan, Olan or Olas depending on where you bought it) had an image as an older woman's moisturiser. Procter & Gamble wanted to modernise and broaden the brand, and had created a range of cosmetics containing Oil of Ulay's key ingredients.

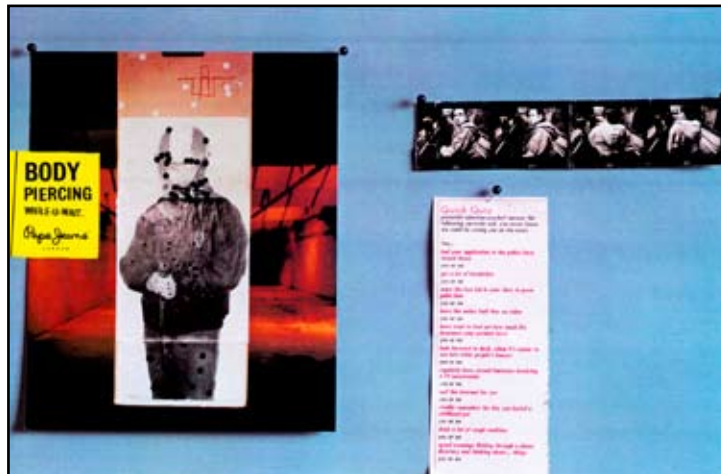
Saatchi & Saatchi called me in to meet the American VP in charge of marketing, and to discuss a leftfield approach to the project. Although the agency had a direct connection to the fine art world when collector Charles Saatchi and brother Maurice were co-owners, that was no longer the case and they needed someone with a keen insight into contemporary British art – me, apparently.

### Roll In The YBAs

This was the period when the YBAs (Young British Artists) were at their most notorious, and the Saatchi Collection's exhibit *Sensation* was showing to big crowds at the Royal Academy of Art. We created our own little art prize to give to five female artists so they could make an art

piece and a video. They could do whatever they wanted.

The works went on display in Boots store windows, while we showed the videos once only – primetime, same time, middle of the week, one per week – so that their appearance would be eagerly anticipated events.



**Attack advertising. These double-page spreads appeared out front in style mags like *Dazed & Confused* and *The Face*.**

### Shockworks On The Box

I had chosen non-traditional artists for their contemporaneity, and to work around the obvious associations between makeup and paint. Tracey Emin was an obvious candidate as she is still a controversial YBA, and she delivered more than good value after our opening night at the ICA.

Tracey was a guest on *The Late Show*, arrived at the TV studio bevvied up, and proceeded to insult the interviewer.

Our client was ecstatic. Brilliant free publicity!

## NEW MEDIA BEGINNINGS

It wasn't just the Adidas Webzine that alerted me to the possibilities of the World Wide Web. When I started at Leagas Delaney, I asked for a Macintosh, much to my co-workers' surprise, and began exploring the Internet. The advantages of email became immediately obvious.



Most of the shoots I was commissioning and producing for Adidas were in Europe, the Americas or Africa. The photographers were working on location, then returning to their home base to process their film. We would sit and wait for the contact sheets to appear, place our print orders, and wait again.

If deadlines were tight we used World Courier overnight instead of FedEx. Once I had to resort to sending a package to a client in New York by Concorde. Ouch!

### Email Evangelism

I did my best to convince photographers to get connected. Scan and email us their edits so we would know the shoot had come off OK with time to spare. Then we could email our own selections to the client waiting in Germany or elsewhere in the world.

Some photographers did become fully wired for broadband, after some convincing, and a couple of directors became interested in the idea of shooting in video, then editing it on location.

### Digital Artbuying

Pictures had been appearing on the Internet well before photo libraries made their first tentative forays online. In fact, the early dial-up bulletin boards had been rich grounds for photograph trading for years.

Part of my job was to keep art directors well supplied with images for composites, and most of what they needed was hardly the kind of thing you could get at the average picture library.

The 72 ppi images I found on the Web proved good enough for inspiration and mock-ups. My first port of call soon became an early online picture library named Seymour, while the

traditional stock agencies were slowly finding their way on to the Web.

### Adidas: The Aftermath

After seeing the *Adidas Webzine*, I was keen to discover who else was making good use of the Web and digital technology.

I visited a number of designers, publishers and photo libraries to find out. It seemed to me there was a better way of conducting much of the daily business of an advertising agency, especially one with a global reach, and that way might well be electronic.

My findings were mixed. Traditional graphic design firms were still sceptical about the web altogether. The

multimedia specialists who had formed earlier to take advantage of the CD-ROM revolution saw it peter out just as fast, and were in crisis.

Eventually I came across a firm named AMX Digital, who seemed to have their finger on the pulse, were well connected, and had the respect



**Stills from the Oil of Ulay Colour Collection TVCs. Video at top by Swedish artist CK Dolven. Video below by British YBA Tracey Emin**

of a number of government, media and art world people whom I knew.

## MX IS IN THE BUILDING

Malcolm Garrett's new media design firm AMX Digital has become a larger, and a very different kind of organisation, since I worked with him. AMX was renamed AMX Studios, and then they were folded into Havas Advertising, who are also owners of advertising agency Euro RSCG Worldwide.

AMX Digital was Malcolm Garrett's response to the digital era, founded at the end of the CD-ROM period and before the World Wide Web.

Prior to that Garrett was better known as *the cutting edge* British print and album cover designer.

### Three Key Names

Three names constantly come up as constituting the new establishment of British graphic design – Malcolm Garrett, Peter Saville and Neville Brody. Saville and Garrett both got their start in 24 hour party people city Manchester during the punk era.

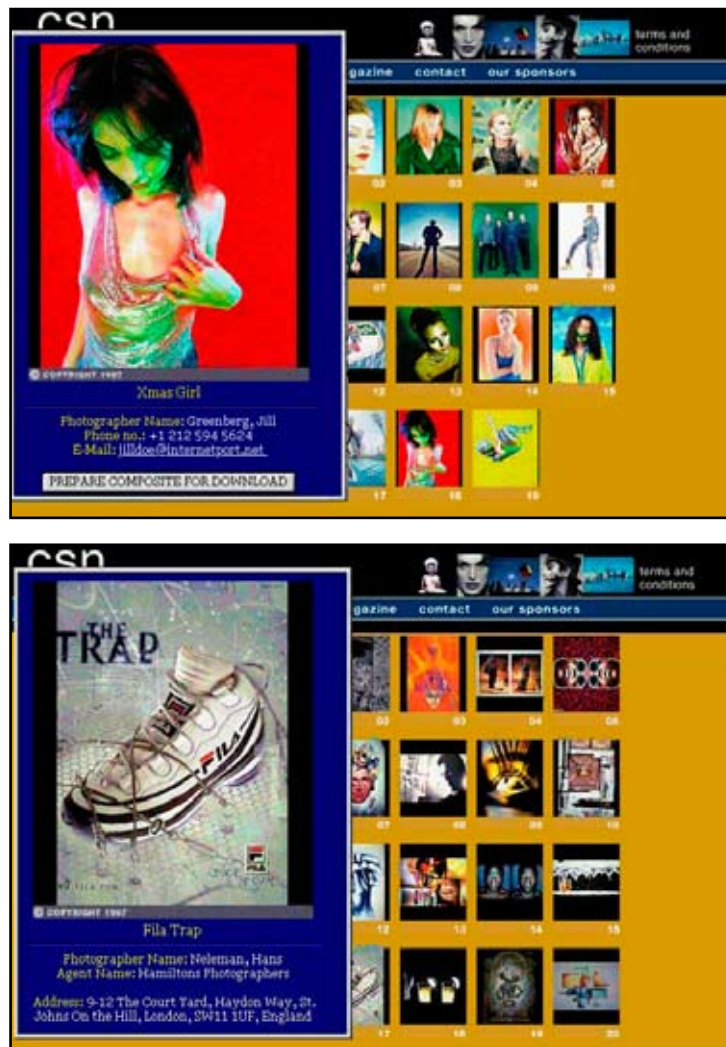
Do a search at the All Music Guide with Malcolm Garrett's name under Artist and you will find he has designed album covers for many people, including Duran Duran, Brian Eno, Peter Gabriel and The Buzzcocks.

### Establishment, But Not

Although Brody, Saville and Garrett feel they *do not* actually constitute the British design establishment – the graphic artists who came to prominence and who created design as we know during the 60s still being alive and in charge – Garrett in particular has been well recognised by the British political and academic establishments.

Garrett is the holder of a number of visiting professorships, lectures at the Royal College of Art, is often to be found on the podium at design, new media and typography conferences worldwide, and has received various distinctions from the British government and royalty.

Major clients of the AMX Digital consultancy during the period I was associated with them included Saatchi & Saatchi, Barclay's Bank, Oasis, the Spice Girls, *Dazed & Confused*, the Institute for Contemporary Art, and the list goes on.



**Pioneering online image banks – search results pages in *ThePortfolio*.**

### TALENT-FINDING FOR ADVERTISING

It is harder than you think to locate new talent in a city like London.

The people who are always knocking at your door with portfolios in hand are well-established agents for well-established talent, and you know their work already. So does everyone else in the advertising business.

The people you *really* want to find, and work with, are the photographers, illustrators and potential new directors who don't have representation, or if they do then their agents are not located in London at all.

### A Bugbear Or Two

The other bugbear is how creative people present their work.

Artists like Nick Knight or Nadav Kander carry their work around in huge hard cases, as big transparencies and prints mounted in fragile wooden or heavy cardboard frames. So does everyone else who wants to be Nadav Kander or Nick Knight.

Take a look at the average advertising agency cubicle and wonder how anyone manages to cope with opening up one of these monstrosities, much less carrying it up and down several flights of stairs. Then, having found someone you do want to keep a record of, you can't photocopy their images.

Some folios come with posters and cards for you to keep, but that raises issues like how to successfully store and retrieve them. And the images they want to give you may not be the ones you want to remember anyway.

### Solving The Problem

These observations were not just my own – I had discussed the absurdities of the process of talent-

finding with a number of colleagues at other agencies. They were as frustrated with it as I was.

During my survey of new media agencies, I had encountered AMX Digital. Coincidentally, a friend who was a director of BT – British Telecom – told me how impressed he was with a new media firm who was doing some consultancy for him – AMX Digital.

I learned AMX was considering building a broadband digital communications network as a proof of concept for BT and Hewlett-Packard, during my early discussions with the firm. It was called the Creative Services Network (CSN), and was to be a method of delivering searchable archives of television commercials and historical print ads under the name of *The Advertising Channel*.

Adding a second channel to deliver a searchable database of portfolios and show reels would not be too much of a stretch.

Then I proposed a digital magazine as a marketing tool and

centre of an online community.

We built *ThePortfolio*, and *TheMagazine*, as the first channel to go live in the CSN proof of concept. The test results with selected people in advertising were very positive indeed.

### Pioneering The Technical

Nowadays every major web site is expected to have a database backend. When I worked with AMX Digital to build *ThePortfolio* the software



**Log-in page of *ThePortfolio*, and a typical page of *TheMagazine*.**

to build such things was young, and you often had to build many of your own heavy-duty software tools from scratch.

AMX had pioneered e-commerce in the UK with their web store for the rock band Oasis. We used this technology to provide *ThePortfolio* with a database facility, while awaiting the imminent arrival of far more robust software tools then still under redevelopment in America.

**Extreme Searchability**

When building my personal creative talent database I made it searchable by a large number of criteria – name, agent, location, specialty, genre, style and many other descriptive keywords.

I used a similar system in *ThePortfolio*, but instead of subjecting the work to my own interpretation I asked each artist and their agent to select keywords and a short description to attach to each image. Those keywords came from a list I had compiled based on commonly understood descriptions.

Thus an art director could, for example, do a search using words like *soft, romantic, car, bridge, woman, sun, colour*, and so on, and a matching selection of images would appear.

Or, they could keep hitting the Random button to see if something inspirational pops up. The choice of how to search, how broad or narrow to cast the net, was entirely up to the user.

**The Other Two**

BT had built a fibre optic network throughout the City of London and the West End, and

having completed it had nothing to use it for. They saw *ThePortfolio* and the CSN as helping them prove the network’s usefulness, at a time when the word broadband had little currency and business was just beginning to understand the web.

Hewlett-Packard’s role was to provide the servers and desktop computers. Each desktop machine would be delivered preloaded with software and a core collection of content, to be updated each evening from the central server bank. Every subscriber to the CSN would receive one high-end workstation as part of their subscription with the option of acquiring more as needed.

This was a great opportunity for Hewlett-Packard to get more exposure in an environment usually dominated by Apple Macintosh computers.



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**Issue 1 of SemperMac magazine. Its innovation lay in successfully applying print magazine methods to the Web. I was Creative Director, writer, & 3D illustrator.**

With the CSN's push and pull broadband system every user would see fresh content each day, and receive notification of new items based on their user profile. They could do their searches of *ThePortfolio* based on any criteria, download items of interest, read *TheMagazine*, and interact directly with creative talent or their agents via email and chat facilities

### **SEMPERMAC: NOTHING SHORT OF AMAZING**

A print magazine that achieves a readership of 210,000 less than a year from launch is counted a success in the world of publishing. A Web magazine that attracts 210,000 readers in less than 6 months is nothing short of amazing.

But what really surpassed all my expectations for *SemperMac* was how enthusiastic our readers were for its innovative approach to advertising. We received many, many emails actually asking for more ads, not less.

### **What Was Old Is New Again**

Most web users, and most web designers, resent ads being in web pages. Users dislike their intrusion into editorial space, and designers dislike the disruption to the page. For people from both walks of life to ask us to create and publish more advertisements was remarkable.

Part of the reason is that I designed *SemperMac* from the onset to present both advertising and editorial content so that each

works in the best possible manner, but hand in hand. The pages of regular web publications are designed in such a way that any form of advertisement – banner, button or otherwise – is in conflict with the material the ad is adjacent to. That's a battle neither side can win.

In *SemperMac*, editorial and advertising were on separate pages. Each ad occupied the whole

of the page. The articles were spread over a series of pages, and there were ads in the pages between articles.

Furthering its similarity to print magazines, *SemperMac* had a cover and a table of contents. You could navigate from page to page in the same way a reader flicks through a printed magazine from front to back, or back to front.

People are immediately comfortable with what they already know.



**An advertisement by Apple Australia in *SemperMac* magazine. A number of Australian, British and US companies created interactive Flash ads specially for publication in the magazine.**

### **What Is New Remains So**

As *SemperMac* was a web magazine, you could also navigate by means of hypertext links, something no print publication allows. Each item in the table of contents was a link. Each page had a navigation bar in the same place you find the page number on a printed page – at the base.

The navigation bar contained a link back to the contents page, and links that jumped back or forward page by page, and others that jumped from article to article.

The result was a set of navigation schemas where every reader could find one that suited them best, with the most popular being page

by page. The advantage of the latter was that readers would inevitably encounter every ad page in the course of their travel.

If the ad managed to grab their attention fast enough, they would refrain from hitting the next page link button to explore the ad further. If not, they could simply keep going. It transpired that *SemperMac's* readers enjoyed the ads as much as the stories.

### **Time Is Money, Webwise**

The web logs reported readers spent an average of 35 minutes per session within the pages of *SemperMac*, and up to an hour and thirty-seven minutes at maximum each time. Readers returned repeatedly. Many asked for a version that they could download and keep, so we experimented with a PDF version for them.

Readers spend 30 seconds to a minute and a half scanning the pages of normal web publications. Normal web ads are deemed lucky they receive a 3 or 4 of seconds of a reader's attention. If created according to my full definition of what a *SemperMac* ad could be, advertisements could be complete web sites contained within a 650 by 530 pixel *SemperMac* page.

Readers spending plenty of quality time with a *SemperMac* ad as big as most web sites would still be located within the actual magazine. If readers chose at any time to leave

the environment of the advertisement then they would be right back in the editorial page flow.

That represents real value to advertisers and great value for the publication.

### **Write About What You Know**

*SemperMac's* subject matter, by the way, was Apple Macintosh computers and the culture

and creativity that derives from them. Its readership was everyone who uses a Mac at the office or home, at work or at play. In reality our reader base extended beyond that to anyone interested in computers as such, and people wanting to experience real web design innovation.

In title I was Creative Director, but in reality I did just about everything – wrote the articles, created the illustrations and multimedia widgets, art directed the publication, and designed the pages. I was more familiar than my coworkers with what it takes to produce any kind of magazine, and sweat

and long hours are major components.

I chose the Mac and its culture as subject because that is something with which I am familiar enough. I got my first exposure to the Mac as a publishing tool at *Black+White* magazine, used a Mac at Leagas Delaney, bought a Mac for myself thereafter, used more Macs at AMX Digital, and continue to use them today.



**The first issue of *Black+White*. It was preceded by a series of articles on aspects of photography that I wrote, and that the publisher tested out by publishing in some of his other magazines.**

I have owned and used several Windows machines, have used assorted mainframes and minicomputers, and have had a Linux machine or two. However, I have always been at my most productive, and creative, with Macintoshes.

### Best They Either Love You Or Hate You

A sign of success in publishing is how your peers rate you. You discover that from their emails, and commentary in the pages of other publications.

Our peer responses fell either of two ways – praise and admiration for what we were doing, or outright condemnation.

Some sentences from one email have stuck in my mind all this time. The reader was furiously condemning *SemperMac's* design for breaking with all the tried and true practices of web publishing. Tradition, in a medium only established in 1993! My critic predicted abject failure for so blatantly disregarding such a long-lived heritage.

I was delighted. Better they hate you or love you than simply ignoring you.

### BLACK+WHITE MAGAZINE

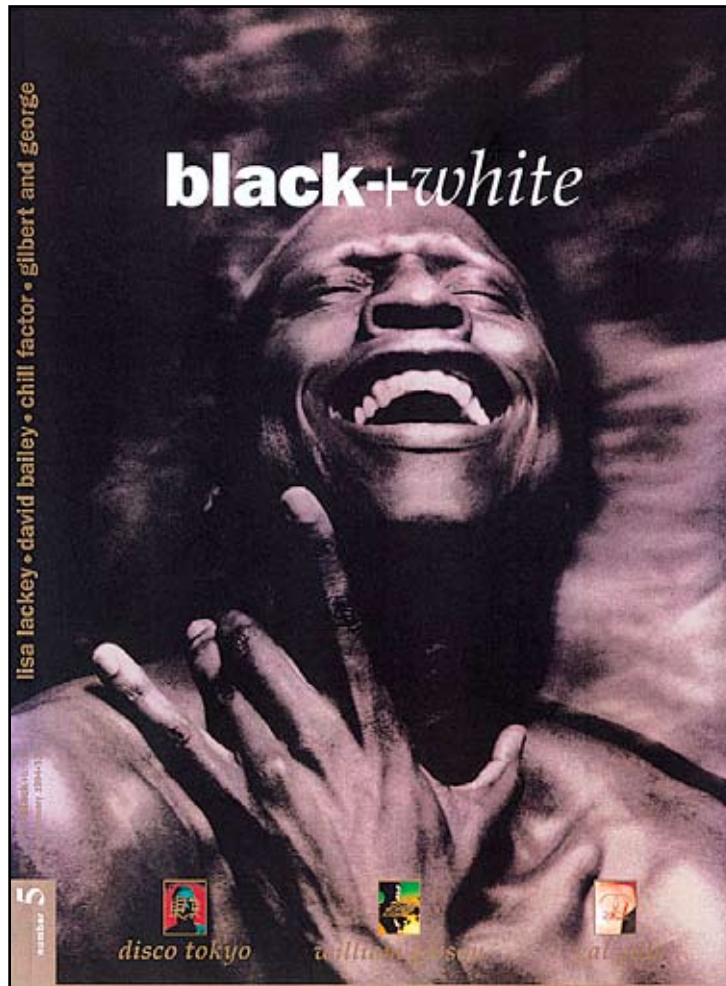
“Thank you for giving me such a brilliant career.”

That’s from an email I once received from a former *Black+White* editorial staffer, who has

now gone on to other things elsewhere.

I’ve heard similar comments from a number of photographers, and one or two magazine publishers have told me how they were inspired by *Black+White* to create their own variations on a theme.

### The Real Intent



***Black+White* began finding its feet by issue 5, when it became a cult item that all inner urban creative people absolutely had to buy.**

The intention of the magazine that became *Black+White* was no less than to change Australian society.

I had been through almost a decade of artistic and cultural activism in Perth, while mostly working as a university lecturer in art and design. Institutions in the east – universities, art galleries and museums – were held up as our exemplars. The assumption was that they were doing a good job of it in fostering Australian visual art and film, and given they were receiving most of the funding had the means to do so.

Yet when I got there, and looked at what was going on,

conditions were not as I thought they should be. Photography continued to have a low status within the visual arts. Films truly reflecting Australian lives and experiences still weren’t being made in any quantity. Digital art was looked on as a bastard offspring. Artists in all media who had to move overseas in order to earn a living went unrecognised in their homeland.

I looked for a lively debate about these things and couldn't find it. Worst of all was that the cultural cringe seemed to have a small though persistent foothold. I reasoned that if Australians and their work were placed on the same level, in the same arena, as their non-Australian confreres, then that might go some way towards changing attitudes. As would open and honest discussion of the issues.

I didn't have the history here or the support network for activism, but my experience with underground and trade publications in Perth showed how they could become cult objects and influencers of opinion. A magazine might be the path of least resistance. I imagined the kind of magazine that might accomplish my purposes and consolidated my ideas.

### The Usual Suspects

I spoke with a number of colleagues working in the big magazine publishers. The response was the same everywhere. "If it is such a good idea someone overseas would already have done it. Then we'd buy the licence."

Eventually a small independent fashion magazine publisher showed some interest. I did other work for them from time to time, and their office was close to where I lived. I'd often drop in and just chat, feeding them ideas. After a while the editor asked me to try writing some articles of the kind I had been discussing, so they could

publish them in their other magazines and see if there was a potential readership.

Studio Magazines found there was enough of one to justify publishing a trial issue, number 00. When it came out Steve Vizard made a big thing of it on his late night TV show, and *Black+White* immediately became a cult item, something to display on the coffee table as badge of

membership of an elite inner urban taste club.

I had to wonder about the magazine's real name though – (*not only*) *black+white* – especially when people began enthusing to me about how much they loved black and white photography! I prefer colour myself, and liken monochrome photography to drawing and colour photography to painting.

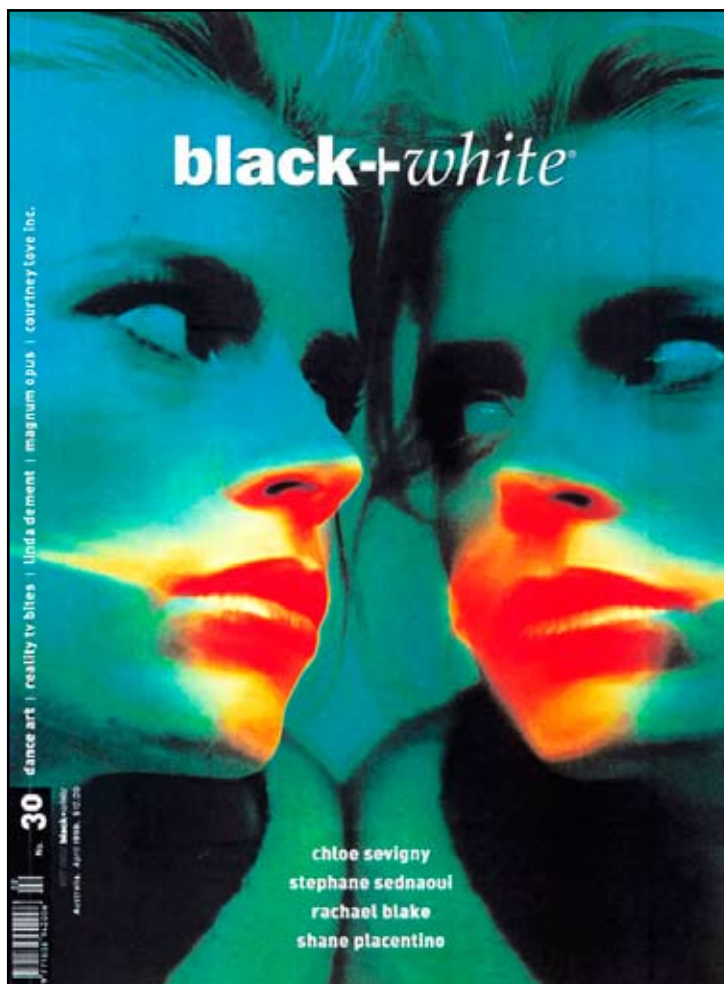
The magazine's name, by the way, was not my choice.

### The Years Roll On

Over the years I continued to write, edit and try to influence the magazine's content and direction. For the most part I did the

major interviews with photographers, often most of the smaller ones, and book reviews and critical articles, as well as set up other writers with their stories.

I was doing most of the interviews over the phone, late at night, with people based anywhere other than Australia, so one day I packed up, got on a plane and landed in London,



**In order to help break the misconception that *Black+White* only ever published monochrome photographs, we began publishing issues with full colour cover photographs.**



becoming *Black+White*'s contributing editor in Europe.

My relationship with *Black+White* ceased on my return here, after a meeting with the editor and publisher where I just could not see it evolving any further in a direction I felt was useful. The inevitable editorial disagreements. All things have their endings.

### **A New Resolve**

One thing I did not influence *Black+White* enough in its early days was its graphics.

In later years for a time I was involved with a publication in the planning stages to be named *Transit*. Afterwards it became *Tank* – a magazine of fashion and photography. My shortcomings in getting across my design theories verbally made me resolve to gain command of desktop and graphics software. And that is exactly what I did, buying my own Mac and all the relevant design and publishing software, which I proceeded to learn to use by trial and error.

Better to show it than to describe it. Better to do it than talk about doing it.

### **Designers Appear**

When we began there was nobody available who had experience in designing this kind of publication. A couple on holiday who had been corporate publication designers in the UK

were discovered working in a café. Their skills transferred to magazines quite well.

Later, as *Black+White* became a household name in all of Australia at least, young local graduate graphic designers saw it as the chance to hone their design skills and potentially win an award or two.

In this way the kind of vision I had for the

magazine's look and feel at its founding finally became reality, during the all-too-brief art directorship of Andrew Godfrey.

During his time in the chair the pages he designed for *Black+White* were featured in over 15 different graphic design books and annuals.

Andrew is a brilliant type designer and typographer as well as graphic designer, and with the right encouragement, and opportunities, he may well achieve the same stature in Australia that British designer Vince Frost – whom I had met through the Douglas Brothers in London – gained in Europe and the United

States before he moved to Sydney.

I was as pleased to meet up with Andrew in later years in Perth as I had been to first encounter Vince in London. After all, one of the founding principles of *Black+White* was the encouragement of world class Australian creative talent.



**Issue 42 represented Andrew Godfrey's unique art direction talents well. A beautiful cover concealing wilder page layouts within.**

### From The Classics...

Exhibitions by established and emerging photographers from outside Australia are surprisingly rare here.

When travelling survey shows appear at the Art Gallery of New South Wales they often break attendance records. The evidence is that the Australian public is interested in fine photography, yet lacks consistent opportunities to see it.

My aim was to have a good percentage of stories about established artists and their work, especially those who helped shape contemporary visual imagery but were almost unknown here. Someone like David Bailey is a household name in Britain, and William Klein's earth shattering images from the 50s and 60s are incredibly influential today, but I knew most local gallery-goers would not recognise these names.

Conversely Australia boasts several photographers of global stature who, although they had to leave in order to build their careers, are proud to remain Australian. The late Helmut Newton, his wife June Newton aka Alice Springs, and the pioneering South Australian editorial and advertising photographer Anton Bruehl are examples.

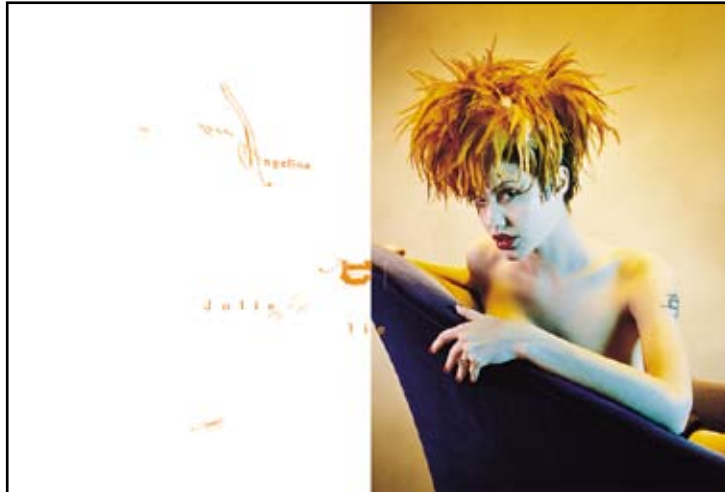
*Black+White* provided me with the means to educate and inspire its readership, by allowing these artists to speak in their own voices

(with some guidance and editing of course) in interviews, and by showing their work in quality reproduction.

### ... To The Young Turks

I had other aims with *Black+White*, oriented towards younger talents.

Reproduction of a body of work in a quality magazine is a proven career stepping stone for young photographers. It gives potential clients confidence in handing out assignments, provides a good marketing tool, and can aid in finding an agent.



**Two double page spread designs by Andrew Godfrey for *Black+White* – from timelessly classical to cutting edge contemporary.**

### With Critical Commentary

London is almost as important a centre for art and photography exhibitions as Paris or New York, so whenever possible I attended major shows and wrote critical articles about them.

The publication of important books also provided me with the opportunity to write more thoughtful articles. Art and

design criticism is something I will write more of one day.

### ADVERTISING: PROVIDING A GREAT VENUE

I was aware of the importance of advertising revenue from previous involvement with magazines, and asked that *Black+White's* pages

be large, the paper thick, and the production values high to attract quality advertisers.

After a while it became obvious some advertising agencies were creating ads specially for *Black+White*, aimed at a visually literate readership who could easily decode more sophisticated messages.

The magazine's high quality printing meant art directors were assured of good reproduction of highly saturated or subtle colour, and that monochrome images would also reproduce beautifully.

### Another Reason, Or Two

There was another purpose in making *Black+White* attractive to advertising agencies.

My reasoning was that if we featured terrific photographers and filmmakers in its pages then agencies may become aware of their existence. Then one day a photographer who appeared in the editorial sections might be commissioned to shoot for the advertising pages.

Many advertising agencies found *Black+White* to be a useful creative resource. I would often notice copies in advertising agency libraries when visiting colleagues in London, and on enquiry was told they had begun subscribing to it shortly after it first appeared.

That was at a time when it was difficult or impossible to find copies of *Black+White* in newsagents there.

## MAGAZINES: EARLY BEGINNINGS

I started writing and photographing for

publication at the age of fifteen, when I was living in rural Western Australia. I had no idea you could have a career doing it, and I didn't learn otherwise for quite some time.

The editor of a regional newspaper group saw my photographs in an exhibition at high school, and invited me to be the district correspondent. Outside of school hours I shot my photographs and made my reports, and the income helped put me through university later on.

### Underground Press

I didn't contribute to the student press – I was too busy trying to subvert the art world at the time.

But I did help cofound an underground magazine named *The 5 O'Clock News*. Despite what its name implied it was neither a newspaper nor appeared as regularly as one. During its short life it published critical commentary on social and cultural issues, and my role was as an illustrator, photographer and occasional art director.



**Vodka drinkers and vodka vamps. A photograph in Russia for Stolichnaya by Perth-based advertising photographer Alan Myles at top.**

## **Into The Light**

Later I met Michael Lynch and his partners, and they were working on a newsletter for the Perth advertising industry that grew into a magazine – *Campaign Brief*. Eventually it became a national publication, for the creative side of the industry.

In *Campaign Brief's* early days, I saw an opportunity to help raise its visual quality, to influence local attitudes to photography, and to gain some exposure for my work.

I was aware of the British advertising magazine *Campaign*, its creative spin-off *Direction*, and its sister publication *Management Today*, and was inspired by their innovative photography. In later years I was lucky enough to interview their key photographic genius, Brian Griffin.

My work for *Campaign Brief* consisted of making graphically rich and iconographically loaded portraits of advertising people, many of whom did their best to look as mundane as possible. They wanted not to stand out, and my aim was to make each of them seem exceptional.

For those who did cooperate I made images that often proudly hang in advertising agencies boardrooms today.

## **FOOTNOTES:**

1. Martin Galton, pp 76–81, *The Art Direction Book*, D&AD, ISBN 2880462843.
2. Warren Eakins, pp 54–57, *The Art Direction Book*, D&AD, ISBN 2880462843.
3. Tim Delaney, pp 34–39, *The Copy Book*, D&AD, ISBN 2880462584.
4. Tim Delaney, pp 3, 5, *Cutting Edge Advertising*, Jim Aitchison, Prentice Hall, ISBN 013012897X.
5. Dave Dye, pp 50–53, *The Art Direction Book*, D&AD, ISBN 2880462843.