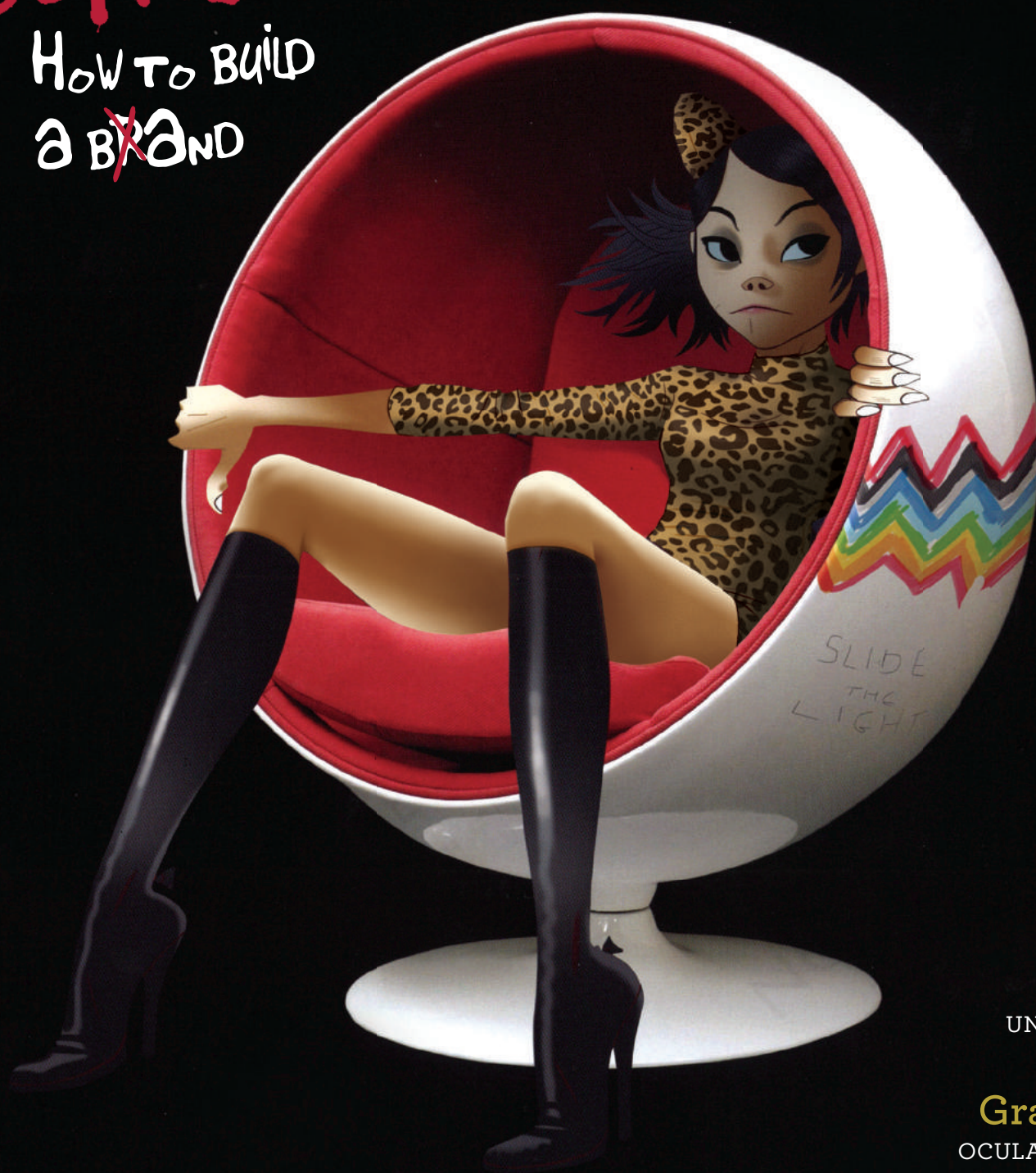


TECH SPECIAL

GORILLAZ

HOW TO BUILD
A ~~BR~~AND

shots

Intel

UNCOVERING THE
BEAUTY INSIDE

Graham Fink

OCULAR ADVENTURES

Steve Vranakis

GOOGLE'S CREATIVE CONJUROR

OTO Film

award

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“...if you use the basic analogy that machine learning was in reception class at that point, it’s now moving into Year Three, has learned to read, write, got to grips with basic arithmetic and has mastered the art of deception by playing one parent off against the other.”

Professor Stephen Hawking, one of the world’s pre-eminent scientists, has been quoted as saying that artificial intelligence could spell the end of the human race. “[An AI-enabled machine] would take off on its own, and re-design itself at an ever-increasing rate,” he said. “Humans, who are limited by slow biological evolution, couldn’t compete, and would be superseded.” He said that at the tail end of 2014, and if you use the basic analogy that machine learning was in reception class at that point, it’s now moving into Year Three, has learned to read, write, got to grips with basic arithmetic and has mastered the art of deception by playing one parent off against the other.

So, should we be scared? Will our inherent human desire to make things, to learn things and to better our current situation lead to our subsequent annihilation? Tough one. And I’m not really in any position to argue with the man who basically wrote a biography of the universe. Especially as I have terrible trouble simply setting my Casio G-Shock watch to GMT+1.

But, as this issue is our annual Tech special, we have been able to ask more qualified people about

the ways in which technology is impacting on our lives and how that impact has, and will continue to, influence this particular industry. Chatbots, for example, are covered by Y&R London’s creative technologist, Gracie Page (page 72), who says “The term artificial intelligence crops up often when discussing chatbots, but the fact is they are still relatively dumb.” Dumb they may be, but with over 100,000 bots reportedly developed for Facebook Messenger alone, they are inveigling their way into our lives at an increasing rate.

On page 12, Lisa De Bonis, Havas London’s executive digital director, says that she can’t wait to meet our new, ever-evolving robot companions and that “technology fuels human creativity, it doesn’t replace it”. That’s evident in our interview with Ogilvy China CCO, Graham Fink (page 46), who uses technology in his extra-curricular artistic endeavours. Fink has co-created a piece of eye-tracking software that allows him to draw using only the movement of his eyes. And from eyes to the mouth – could voice technology and assistants such as Siri and Alexa herald the end of radio ads? Rothco Ireland’s UX designer Piers Scott gives his opinion on page 78.



Then there’s our cover star for this issue, Noodle, the lead guitarist for pop behemoth Gorillaz, a band which owes its fame, indeed its very existence, to technology. From primitive pen and ink to more sophisticated software, we chart the group’s evolution through technology (page 16). And though you are reading this on oh-so-old-fashioned paper, our very clever friends at Passion Animation Studios have brought us into the present by AR-enabling the cover of this issue. Maybe I should ask them to help with my watch...

Danny Edwards
Editor
@shotsmag_dan

Top Illustrator Andy Bridge turned his dab hand to render shots editor Danny in fine illustrated fettle. He also created the opening illustration for our Chicago Special on page 59.

Above The APA flies the flag for internationalist London, page 35

Below Get the shots app and make our exclusive Gorillaz cover come to life

Watch **GORILLAZ** come to life with our exclusive AR cover

Our Tech issue includes a special augmented reality cover, featuring Gorillaz’ lead guitarist Noodle, created for shots by Passion Animation Studios and band co-founder Jamie Hewlett.

To bring the cover to life, simply search your chosen app store for “shots AR”, download the free app, open it and point your phone camera at the cover image.



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November 2017

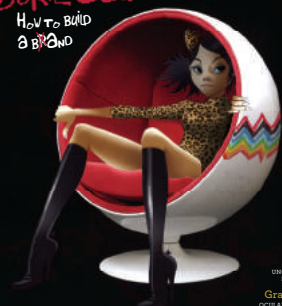
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Our interactive cover stars
Gorillaz lead guitarist, **Noodle**,
created for *shots* by Passion
Animation Studios. Follow the
band's tech evolution from page 16.

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NOVEMBER 2017

TECH SPECIAL

Gorillaz
 HOW TO BUILD
 A BRAND


shots

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 UNCOVERING THE
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**shots 173 /
January 2018**

The next issue of *shots* is our
annual **Review/Preview** special,
in which we take stock of 2017
and various industry insiders
consult their crystal balls. We're
also exploring **South Africa's**
colourful creative scene and
the flourishing future of **fashion**,
plus **R/GA's** tech titan, **Nick
Law**, tells us how he sees it.

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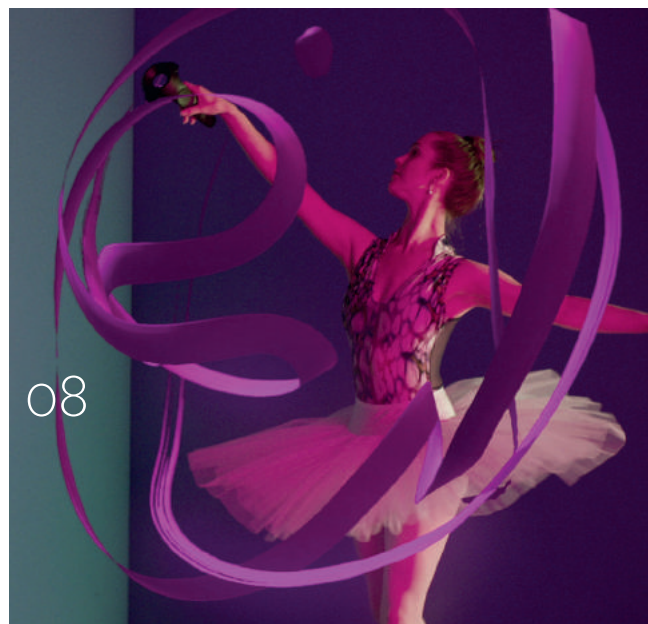
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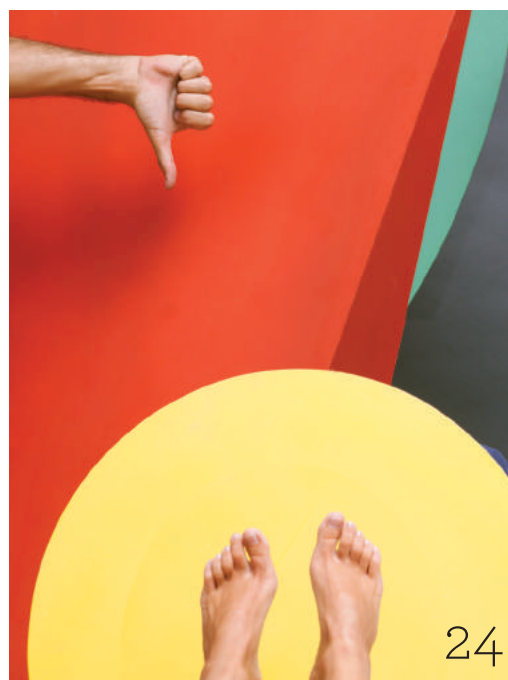
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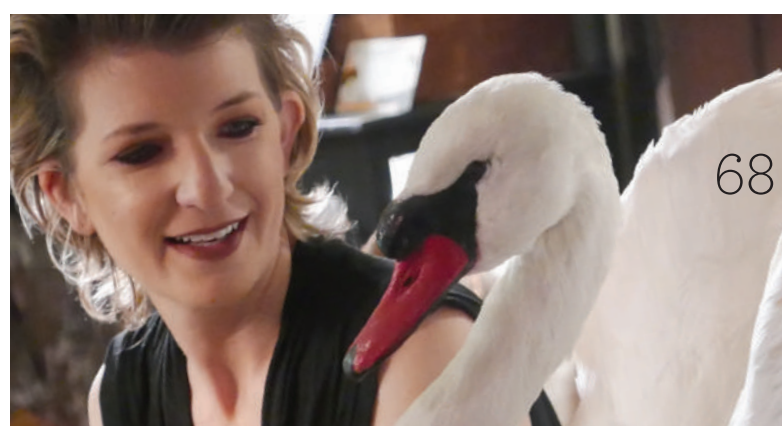
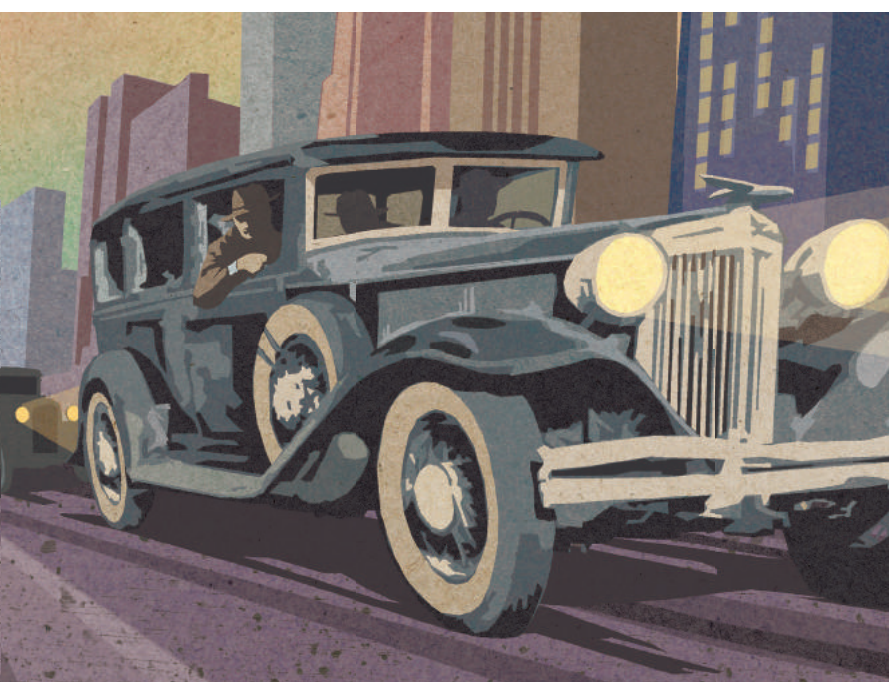
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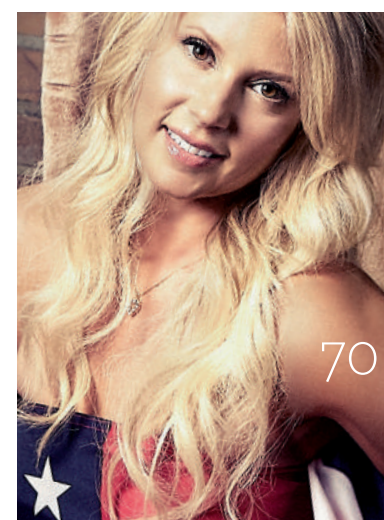
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November 2017

This issue's top work on
the accompanying DVD

Creative Showcase

1. Galaxy Thought Train
2. AXA Dancer
3. Diesel Go With the Flow
4. Guinness The Compton Cowboys
5. Kwiff Caught Glass;
Bedlam; Father & Son
6. Heinz Geoff
7. Hungry Jacks Keeping It Real
8. Edeka Men of Fire
9. McDonald's Love Affair
10. McCain We Are Family
11. Nike Mo Farah - Smile
12. FIFA More Than a Game
13. Agent Provocateur Oops
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15. Cerebos Snow
16. Channel 4 The Great
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Music Videos

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22. Mellah Round
23. Play Off
24. Guinness Roll the Old
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25. Samsung Ostrich
26. Kohler Never Too Wanted
27. State Farm Following
28. Hallmark Henry & Hannah
29. Illinois Council Against
Handgun Violence Teddy Gun
30. Bayer HeroSmiths
31. LIFEWTR Inspiration Drops
32. Morton Salt/OK Go
The One Moment

The 2017 APA
Collection

Bonus DVD included

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please do not be
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that your company has
produced anything that
would complement the
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please let us know.

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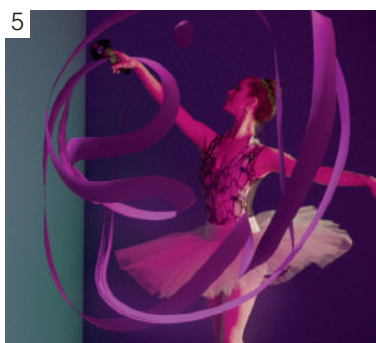
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Boy racers slowed by dad rock

INNOVATION

 **Toyota**
Safe & Sound

One in five drivers will have a crash in their first year behind the wheel; the main causes are speeding and mobile phone use. Auto brand Toyota has combined forces with Saatchi & Saatchi to tackle both issues with their new app, Safe & Sound. It blocks social media notifications and calls when driving speeds exceed nine mph.

Google Maps and Spotify still work, which allows for the app's second, more ingenious feature. Aimed at embarrassing young drivers into putting their phones down, the app can replace the driver's Spotify playlist with that of, say, their parents if the driver goes over the speed limit or touches the phone. In short, drive too fast and Stormzy becomes Céline Dion.

This is all humorously captured in the launch film, directed by Kirkland & Rafalat via Rumble, which shows a would-be boy racer trying to impress a girl by flooring the accelerator – only for his music to be abruptly replaced by a far less cool track.

Jason Mendes, Saatchi & Saatchi's ECD of global brands, explains the thinking behind the app: "Tell teenagers to turn their phone off in a cinema and they will. [He obviously hasn't been to *shots* local multiplex.] Tell them to turn it off in a dangerous situation, like driving a car, and they won't. Go figure. But the threat of embarrassment for teenagers is far more severe than the threat of injury – that insight was a powerful platform to create something that would cut through, make a difference and ultimately continue the conversation around safety." **STS**

Tilting perceptions of virtual reality

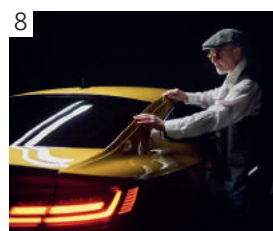
EXPERIENTIAL / FILM

 **Google Tilt Brush**
Semi Permanent films

Sydney-based design conference Semi Permanent and experiential production company Will O'Rourke have collaborated to create a pair of mesmerising films showcasing Google Tilt Brush – the VR app that allows you to paint in 3D.

Director Leilani Croucher approached visual artist James Jean, ballerina Sharni Spencer, architect Kelvin Ho and typographer Luke Lucas and asked them to create collaborative works in a virtual space. The resulting stereoscopic VR/360 film, which was live-produced as part of the Semi Permanent Sydney 2017 event, showcases the power and potential of Cannes Innovation Lion-winning Tilt Brush. An accompanying docu-short unpicks the

Virtual worlds of all kinds are being explored in new work this issue: from the reconstructions of visuals inside a blind photographer's mind to a resurrected illusion technique used to bring back a long-dead booze magnate. We also learn some of the secrets of love and hate



Beauty in the eye of the beholder

PRINT / ONLINE FILM

 **Volkswagen**
Beauty in Every Sense

"I'm a visual person. I just can't see." So says blind photographer Pete Eckert in Grabarz & Partner Hamburg's latest campaign for Volkswagen.

Directed by TJ O'Grady Peyton, the stunning spot documents Eckert's remarkable way of working and even more remarkable results. Using time-lapse techniques and beams of light, the photographer tries to replicate how he experiences an object through sound and feel. He shines various lights over the car's curves and captures their paths via long shutter speeds, giving the car an otherworldly halo, to create his "light paintings". Of the shoot, Peyton says, "The lack of control was definitely a constant challenge." The results, however, really live up to the campaign's title: *Beauty in Every Sense*. **STS**

collaborators' various creative processes. "We're fascinated by the idea of virtual reality as a new medium the creative industries can use to present their work," says Semi Permanent's founder/director, Murray Bell. "So when the opportunity arose to work with Google VR and explore their new 3D painting and sculpting technology, we wanted to give our audience a glimpse of how this technology might one day revolutionise how they work across art, design and collaboration." **OA**

1/2/3 Toyota, *Safe & Sound*

4/5/6 Google Tilt Brush, *Semi Permanent films*

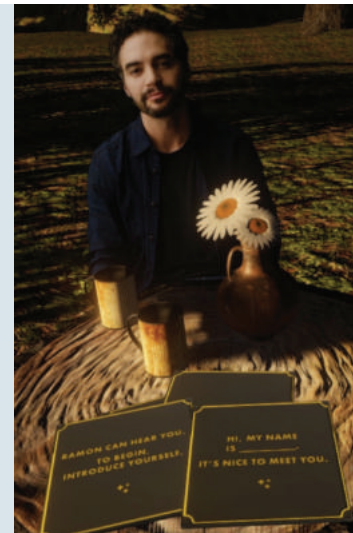
7/8 Volkswagen, *Beauty in Every Sense*

I'm virtually in love with you

INTERACTIVE



Fall In Love VR



There are hundreds of theories about why and how people fall in love with each other. Is it a question of timing? Compatibility? Dumb luck? An essay published in 2015, titled *To Fall in Love With Anyone, Do This*, claimed to find the answer, with a series of 36 questions to determine whether you've truly met your soulmate.

This has inspired Tool of North America's new virtual reality project, *Fall in Love*. Directed by Kevin Cornish and available on Oculus Rift and Gear VR, it allows the headset-wearer to have a real-time conversation with an actor in the virtual time and space of the experience, using AI and facial recognition software to make it all as realistic as possible. The project launched earlier this year at the Tribeca Film Festival. Below, Kevin Cornish and Tool of North America's head of VR Julia Sourikoff discuss whether they believe true love can be found in tech.

How did this project come about?

Julia Sourikoff: Tool was looking to sign VR and AR directors that were generating their own original concepts for these new media. The first project that Kevin pitched to us was *Fall in Love*, and we knew immediately that he was a creator we wanted to sign, and that this was a project we wanted to produce. We spent the next couple of months in development and fundraising mode until we secured Oculus as a partner and officially green-lit the project.

What was the casting process like for the VR actors?

Kevin Cornish: We cast five participants for the project: four actors – Ramon Rodriguez, Logan Huffman, Wolé Parks, and Grace Van Dien – and model Maya Donovan. It was really



"I was looking for actors who had a natural connection to their emotions so the end user would be able to easily connect to their feelings each step of the way through the experience."



important that the performances felt as natural as possible and that nothing felt rehearsed. During the casting process I was looking for actors who had a natural connection to their emotions so the end user would be able to easily connect to their feelings each step of the way. To ensure their performance was as neutral and authentic as possible, I shot it with the actors sitting across from their significant others, which we filmed in real time using The Intertron [a two-way teleprompter, developed by documentarian Errol Morris for continuous eye contact in on-camera interviews].

It was also really important that this experience used filmed actors and not CG characters so the human connection and little details, such as micro-expressions and eye contact, could be as impactful as possible.

What were the biggest challenges?

Cornish: Figuring out everything that needed to be done to pair the natural language processing with the characters'

performances. We overcame this by testing a number of different language processors until we found one that matched perfectly.

We also worked with James Cameron's camera team to shoot *Fall in Love VR* in stereo, and the challenge was getting the stereo perfect in a way that matched the stereo coming out of the game engine. The final challenge was balancing the image quality and the real-time light rendering with the performance requirements for the natural language processing. We overcame this by writing custom shaders.

Why do you think the experience resonated with viewers?

Cornish: There is something special about conversation, which from the beginning of time has been how we connect as humans. To be able to experience something so simple yet so satisfying in virtual reality was an eye-opening experience showing where human connection can go in VR. **OA**



Hardwired for headbanging

INTERACTIVE / ONLINE



Fans of Japanese electrocore metal act, Crossfaith, take note: to listen to the band's latest single you'll need a computer, a strong neck and long, luscious tresses. The last is optional, but recommended.

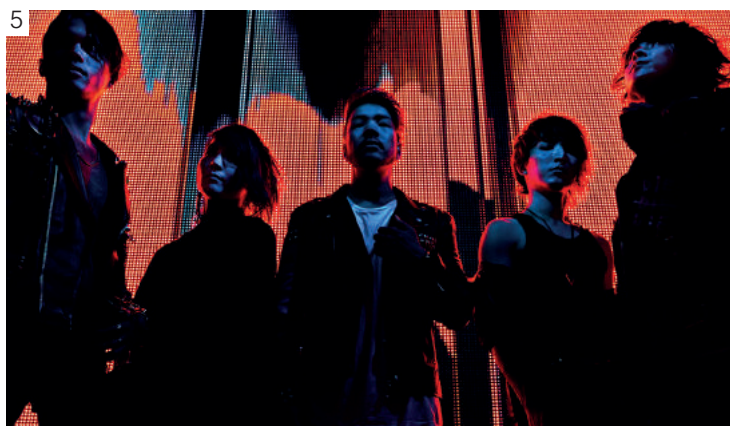
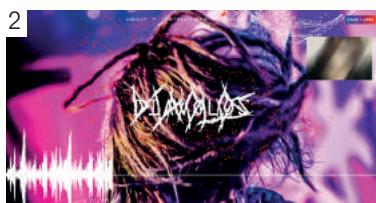
That's because the only way to get access to the track, *Diavolos*, and its accompanying visuals is by visiting Makeitmetal.jp, turning on your webcam and engaging in the act of what the *Oxford Dictionary* describes as "a violent rhythmic shaking of the head" — headbanging.

The interactive website was developed by Tokyo-based ad agency, Ogilvy & Mather Japan, which was tasked with creating a "one-of-a-kind promo" for the first single from Crossfaith's new album. Tapping into the fierce loyalty of the band's fans, the agency landed on the idea of promoting the track by way of a customised visual experience that requires fans to earn the music in a fun (although potentially whiplash-inducing) way.

Visitors to the site are greeted with a series of tongue-in-cheek instructions and invited to headbang in front of their webcam in order to unlock live-streaming of the new track and accompanying visuals. There's a catch, however: the moment the fan stops moving, the music stops too.

Offering fans even more of an incentive, when the song finishes, an image-tracking algorithm on the site generates a personalised artwork based on how much skill, enthusiasm and dedication the fan has demonstrated in their headbanging.

"Traditional ways of promoting albums just aren't as effective today," says Ajab Samrai, chief creative officer of Ogilvy & Mather Japan. "Now musicians are blending art, advertising and technology in smart and exciting ways. That is why we created this unprecedented piece to help launch the band's new music." **SS**



Bags of health and happiness

PRODUCT DESIGN



Following a Greenpeace China study, which found that 90 per cent of fruits and vegetables in the country were contaminated with pesticides, Tesco and Cheil WW Hong Kong have introduced Safety Bags. These food sacks use a process called photocatalysis to remove pesticides from food, and have rather cute smiley faces — cleaning your greens with a grin, your cherries with a chuckle, and your haricot beans with happiness.

Photocatalysis is "a process that breaks down compounds using the power of light, and is proven to destroy toxic chemicals, including even pesticides," according to a Cheil WW Hong Kong spokesperson.

Here's how it works: all of the Tesco Safety Bags have an inner coating of nano-photocatalyst TiO_2 (titanium dioxide). After exposing the bags to light for three hours, the coating is activated, allowing toxic residues to be broken down into harmless substances like carbon dioxide and water, which are then dispersed naturally into the air. After a quick rinse, a contaminated fruit or vegetable is ready and safe to eat.

Not only have these bags proved understandably popular during their trial, but they have also received FDA approval,



and Tesco hopes to roll out the bags globally, after completing all the necessary tests, for those who like their carrots without chlordane or their dragon fruit without DDT.

This is the latest of a number of Cheil campaigns aiming to turn carrier bags, a long-standing symbol of man's destruction of the natural world, into a force for good. Earlier this year the agency's Germany branch designed and created biodegradable carriers for Scheck-In-Center (owned by supermarket chain Edeka). The bags were then sold together with seeds, encouraging people to use the carriers to grow their own food. **STS**

The ghost of an idea

EXPERIENTIAL / INNOVATION



In August, Copenhagen's Glyptotek art museum hosted a TEDx talk called "Why you should answer every question with 'Probably'", by J. C. Jacobsen, philanthropist and founder of Carlsberg. This might seem like standard fodder for the inspirational talk brand, but the speaker was more than a little unusual... he's been dead for over a century.

So why bring back a dead man to give life lessons? It was all part of a campaign created by FCB affiliate agency, Happiness Brussels, to celebrate the beer brand's 170th anniversary. Rather than try to explain Carlsberg's whole history in a 30-second TV commercial, the agency

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1/2/3/4/5 *Crossfaith,
Make it Metal*

6/7 *Tesco,
Safety Bags*

8/9/10/11 *Carlsberg,
#ProbablyTEDx*



decided to share Jacobsen's successful life philosophy with the masses.

"A lot of brands are running heritage campaigns, but the problem with those is that they always seem so nostalgic. We wanted to do something about legacy that would be relevant for people today," explains Geoffrey Hantson, chief creative officer at Happiness. "J. C. Jacobsen was like a combination of Steve Jobs, Elon Musk and Mark Zuckerberg. If he was alive today he'd definitely give a TED talk. So we thought, wouldn't it be great if he could somehow do it?"

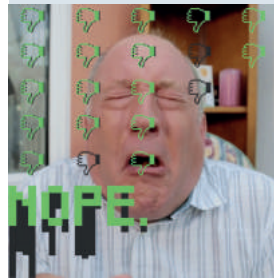
Resurrecting Carlsberg's founder was no small feat. Inspired by the discovery that Pepper's Ghost [a holographic-style illusion technique] was invented during Jacobsen's time, Happiness enlisted MDH Hologram – the tech whizzes who resurrected rapper Tupac to perform at Coachella in 2012 – to create an ultra-convincing hologram.

Eight months were spent trawling the Carlsberg archives and poring over Jacobsen's notes and documents in an effort to capture his voice. "Writing the speech was a bit like method acting," adds Hantson. "The speech was the essence of the campaign, really, not the technology. Technology always serves the idea." **SS**

Facing up to the Marmite truth

INTERACTIVE

Marmite
Tasteface



Ever since its launch, Marmite's unique taste has divided the population into lovers and haters, even entering the British lexicon as a byword for something that polarises opinion. But why is it so divisive? Turns out your feelings for the yeasty condiment are almost entirely down to DNA, if Marmite's latest campaign, *The Marmite Gene Project*, is anything to go by. The brand enlisted genetics and fitness specialists DNAfit to monitor over 260 adults eating the divisive condiment to determine whether they were born lovers or haters, and the resulting data formed the basis of a £3 million campaign, including a TV spot created by adam&eveDDB and the creation of gene testing kits for customers.

Now digital agency AnalogFolk has launched the latest activation in the campaign, its pioneering Tasteface platform: a piece of tech that analyses a consumer's facial expression after tasting the sticky brown stuff, using a bespoke algorithm to conclude whether the taster is a Marmite lover or hater. Below, AnalogFolk's ECD Simon Richings and director of technology Miguel Alvarez tell *shots* more.

What was the brief Marmite approached you with?

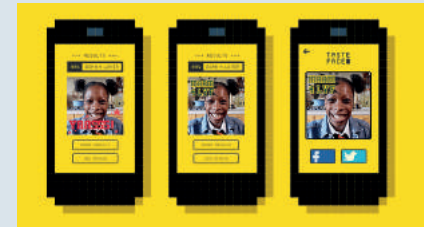
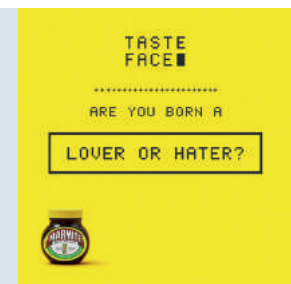
Simon Richings: Marmite has always divided the nation between love and hate. It's a cultural phenomenon. Over the years Marmite has produced some award-winning, much loved and memorable creative work bringing this idea to life. But Marmite has continuously questioned why are reactions so divisive? Is it fate? They asked us to create a digital experience that would drive product trials in a fun and engaging way. We approached the brief by asking whether we could

"...[could we] use the emotion-reading capabilities of facial recognition technology to discover in real time whether you're an intrinsic [Marmite] lover or hater."

use the emotion-reading capabilities of facial recognition technology to discover in real time whether you're an intrinsic lover or hater.

What were the technical challenges involved?

Miguel Alvarez: Tasteface is an online mobile experience, not a downloadable app. We wanted it to be an inclusive experience and saw the download factor of apps as a barrier. However, this ended up being more challenging for the team because we wanted to create an



in-app experience. We used bleeding-edge frameworks for the feeling of a full screen and implemented a complex distributed architecture to make sure the experience was as rapid and seamless for the user across devices.

Equally, the experience needed to recognise different face types and not discriminate between them. Our bespoke technology builds on the Microsoft Emotion API that recognises the facial expressions of people across a set of eight emotions. We built a bespoke algorithm to convert these emotions into a sliding scale of love and hate – but also tested and adapted them to make sure the technology recognised all skin types and face shapes.

Finally, we were very conscious that this is a user-generated content campaign and, although the majority of users don't, in the past some have abused this kind of activation by inserting celebrities or controversial characters. We've incorporated a facial recognition database into the system that recognises and prevents the uploading of static famous faces... unless it's really them, of course. **OA**

BOTHERED BY BOTS? THINK AUGMENTED INTELLIGENCE



With an army of Alexa-like digital assistants predicted to outnumber humans by 2021, some creatives are suffering bot anxiety. But, as *Lisa De Bonis*, Havas London's executive digital director, points out, AI tech designed with human goals – smart cots that learn how to put a baby to sleep, bots that assess your investment personality – benefits both marketers and consumers. For advertising folk, artificial intelligence can lead to an augmented intelligence that takes creativity to new heights

“Technology fuels human creativity. It doesn't replace it.”

The robots are here and I, for one, can't wait to meet them. I'm fascinated by tech that has taken over what was the “stuff of humans”, whether that's a painting by an AI “old master” (JWT Amsterdam's *The Next Rembrandt*) or a restaurant review (AI trained with Yelp data), both of which were almost indistinguishable from the real deal.

To consider these real-life sci-fi moments as threats to our creativity, or even our jobs, is madness. And more importantly, it's missing the bigger point – technology fuels human creativity. It doesn't replace it. It forces us to think “people first”, to truly, deeply understand human context. It inspires us with the unimaginable. It elevates what is possible beyond anything we've seen before and augments intelligence by teaching us to solve problems differently. The Canadian Down Syndrome Society campaign *Down Syndrome Answers* is a case in point. Inspired by people's search behaviour, it answers Google's top 40 questions on the subject with videos featuring people actually living with Down Syndrome. The excellence of the campaign comes from its deep understanding of context; when prospective parents learn their unborn child has Down Syndrome, they have 10 days to decide whether to proceed with the pregnancy or not – and usually they're making up their minds by reading WebMD threads. Naturally, receiving a video message answering their query from a child with Down Syndrome is an unforgettable, emotional, highly effective heartbreaker.

Tech-inspired thinking becomes even more effective when we start measuring it properly. In his TED talk on “How better tech could protect us from distraction”, designer Tristan Harris talks about the importance of tech with human goals. One of his favourite examples, Couchsurfing, a website that matches people seeking a place to stay with a free couch – measures success not on time spent on site, but on something they call “net orchestrated conviviality”. This looks at how many net hours of good times the service has enabled for both users.

New tech such as VR and AI is allowing for even more creativity in interactive applications. For financial services brand TD Ameritrade, our US teams used IBM Watson to power Alvi, a bot that chooses investing education materials for a user based on their investing personality. Instead

of having to complete a dry, technical survey, Alvi will ask if you'd rather be a vampire, zombie, or werewolf, among other, non-financially related questions. Your answers would then guide your investment profile and the content that's best for you.

A gold Lion winner at Cannes' Cyber awards this year, Ford's MAX Motor Dreams lets you record your baby's favourite sleepytime car ride and simulate it – complete with sound design replicating engine and traffic noises and LED lights mimicking street lighting – in a specially designed cot – so you can get your baby to sleep without having to take a drive. And then there's mind-blowing tech like Google's Tilt Brush, which lets you paint and create artworks in 3D space with VR.

Evolving roles for hominids

Back on planet Earth, there's lots of chat these days about chatbots. Rest assured – this isn't a fad. Ovum, a market research consultancy specialising in the digital economy, has predicted that by 2021 there will be more digital assistants, such as Amazon's Alexa, on the planet than humans. Management consultancy Accenture predicts that in five years, customers will select a business's services based on their AI capability.

As a result, it's thought that the value of the writer will increase as voice becomes more dominant than image. There will be renewed importance placed on character development skills – a digital assistant for Domino's delivery will need to sound very different to one for a medical diagnostic service. So, as a creative industry, the tech-enabled world is our oyster. But we need to lean into it. If we keep worrying about how to make our creative ideas more effective at interrupting people, we're going to miss the boat.

There is no doubt that technology and data use is giving control back to the people; allowing individuals to choose what kind of experiences and relationships they want to have with a brand. If we, as a creative industry, want to influence their choices, we need to learn how technology can actively influence the creative process. Be curious about the advances developing around us. Embrace new ways of working and people with different skills to yours. Be open to different definitions of what makes an idea, and perhaps even a new definition of creativity itself. **S**



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HELLO KITTY, GOODBYE PHISH



Confusing this feature with a job interview, *Jim Jenkins*, O Positive director and founder, spins us porkies about his website choices to impress us. We're impressed. But also worried by his inflatable-Hello-Kitty-shaped head, his fantasy about being in rock band Phish and his fondness for the song *Shake My Sillies Out*

What is the most creative advertising idea you've seen in the last few months?

There's some work out there that's beautiful and there's some work out there that's clever, but work that sticks with you is so rare. I'm biased, but I haven't seen anything this year that's better and more perfectly done than my partner David [Shane]'s work for *The Atlantic*.

What's your favourite website?

My favourite website is BuzzFeed. I love to see the latest technology news, particularly the latest advancements made in computer science and robotics. It's fascinating to see where computers are going and how technology is evolving.

What website do you use most regularly?

I lied about BuzzFeed. I copied my answer to your prior question off of a website that helps people to look smart in job interviews when the interviewer asks "What's your favourite website?" In truth, you'll usually find me on niche sites most people have never heard of: *nytimes.com*, *espn.com*, *amazon.com*, and a couple of others that are a bit more mainstream.

What track/artist would you listen to for inspiration?

It's important to stay in touch with what's going on out there musically, so I try to listen to what my kids listen to. My oldest has gotten me into Jake Bugg, Gary Clark Jr and The Sweet Remains. My youngest has got me into *The Wheels on the Bus*, *Six Little Ducks* and *Shake My Sillies Out*.

Mac or PC?

Has anyone ever said PC? I can't imagine anyone has ever said PC.

What product could you not live without?

My PC.

What product hasn't been invented yet that would make your life/job better?

I have five kids, and we're in the process of adopting two from Eastern Europe (I like children). I wish there was something even better than FaceTime to help me stay in touch while on the road. While FaceTime is awesome, it's also somehow depressing – it ramps up the frustration of not being at home with them. I'd say a product that would make my life better is a teleporter, but a teleporter with films and a meal service. And a lie-flat bed. And I'd like for it to be a bit unreliable so I could say it's not working when I'm away and the kids need help with their maths homework.

What's the best film you've seen over the last year?

The best film I've seen all year has either been *Moana* or *The Boss Baby*, since it feels as if those are pretty much the only two movies I've seen... over and over and over again. I sleepily remember seeing *The Lost City of Z* with my wife, which Darius Khondji shot beautifully, of course, because he's Darius Khondji. I will say my favourite first half of any film was *Lion*, which I loved, right up until the moment everyone started speaking English.

What show/exhibition has most inspired you recently?

I recently went to *Inventing America: Rockwell and Warhol*, in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, which was a pretty great exhibition if you're into populism, which hopefully we all are who make our living in this business. Obviously, both Norman Rockwell and Andy Warhol looked at the 20th century in very different ways, but there are similarities. And seeing Rockwell's work up close makes you respect what an incredible storyteller he was.

If you could live in one city, where would it be?

I've lived in New York for so long, but I still can't imagine living anywhere else. The city is more tame than it was 30 years ago, but it still has the best and worst of everything, and mashes it all together to make a unique stew. In LA's car culture, you can go from your house to your office and never leave your little protective bubble, but here you are forced to interact with people who are completely different to you. It's annoying and intrusive and awesome. The subway is the most fascinating show in the world.

Speaking of car culture, there's a great book by James Kunstler called *Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape*. It's all about the rise and decline of America's man-made landscape. Hope I didn't give anything away.

What fictitious character do you most relate to?

I've no idea. Maybe the Hello Kitty inflatable from the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, because you'll always find us in New York and we both have enormous heads.

"Has anyone ever said PC? I can't imagine anyone has ever said PC."

What's your favourite magazine?

I love *Works That Work*, out of the Netherlands. It calls itself "a magazine of unexpected creativity" and it focuses on design in objects that surround us, but that we never think of, and ingenious ways people all over the world incorporate design into their lives. A recent feature was about photographer Jessica Hiltout, who took a seven-month road trip across Africa documenting handmade footballs she encountered on the way. *WTW* makes the design of random things really interesting – the design of shipping containers and mobile phone towers, for example. *National Geographic* remains a great mag as well.


Who's your favourite photographer?

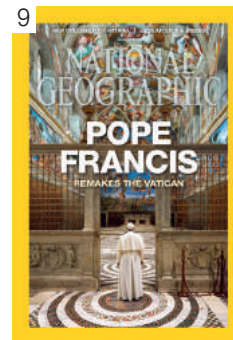
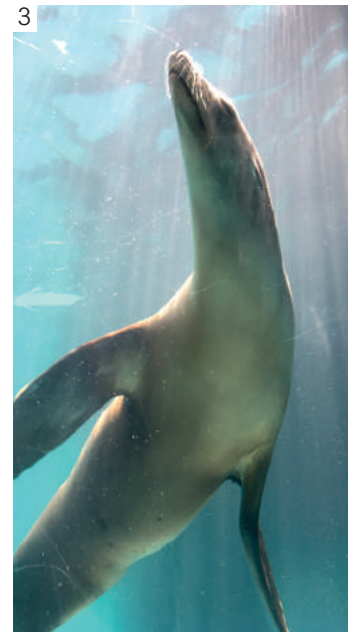
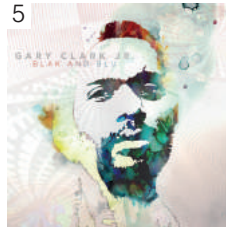
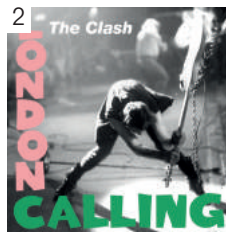
Speaking of *National Geographic*, I love most of their contract photographers, particularly Dave Yoder. That said, Yoder is still runner-up to my five year old, who took this photo (see right) at the aquarium.

Who's your favourite designer?

I should probably pick a designer that makes me sound hip, but I'm not hip, so I'm going with one (two actually) that are almost 100 years old. Armand Desaegeher (an iron caster) and Octave Aubecq (an enamelling specialist) founded Le Creuset, and their original design for their first product has flowered into all sorts of cool creations. Have you ever walked through a Le Creuset store? It's like walking through a little art exhibit, and every design harks back to their original 100-year-old creation. I doubt anything I shoot will be remembered in 100 years. Or even 10 years. Or even next year. (Awkward moment of silence.) Now, please excuse me while I jump in front of a train.

If you could have been in any band, what band would you choose?

The Clash. Or maybe Phish, just so I could stop mid-concert at Madison Square Garden, look at everyone and say "Guys, let's not do this anymore. We're terrible." 



What inspires Jenkins:

1 Work That Works magazine

2 The Clash

3 Photograph taken by Jenkins' son

4 One of the handmade footballs

photographed by Jessica Hilltout

5 Gary Clark Jr.

6 Teleportation

7 Jake Bugg

8 Cookware by Le Creuset, founded by

Armand Desaegeher and Octave Aubecq

9 The work of National Geographic

photographer Dave Yoder

10 Inflatable Hello Kitty, from the

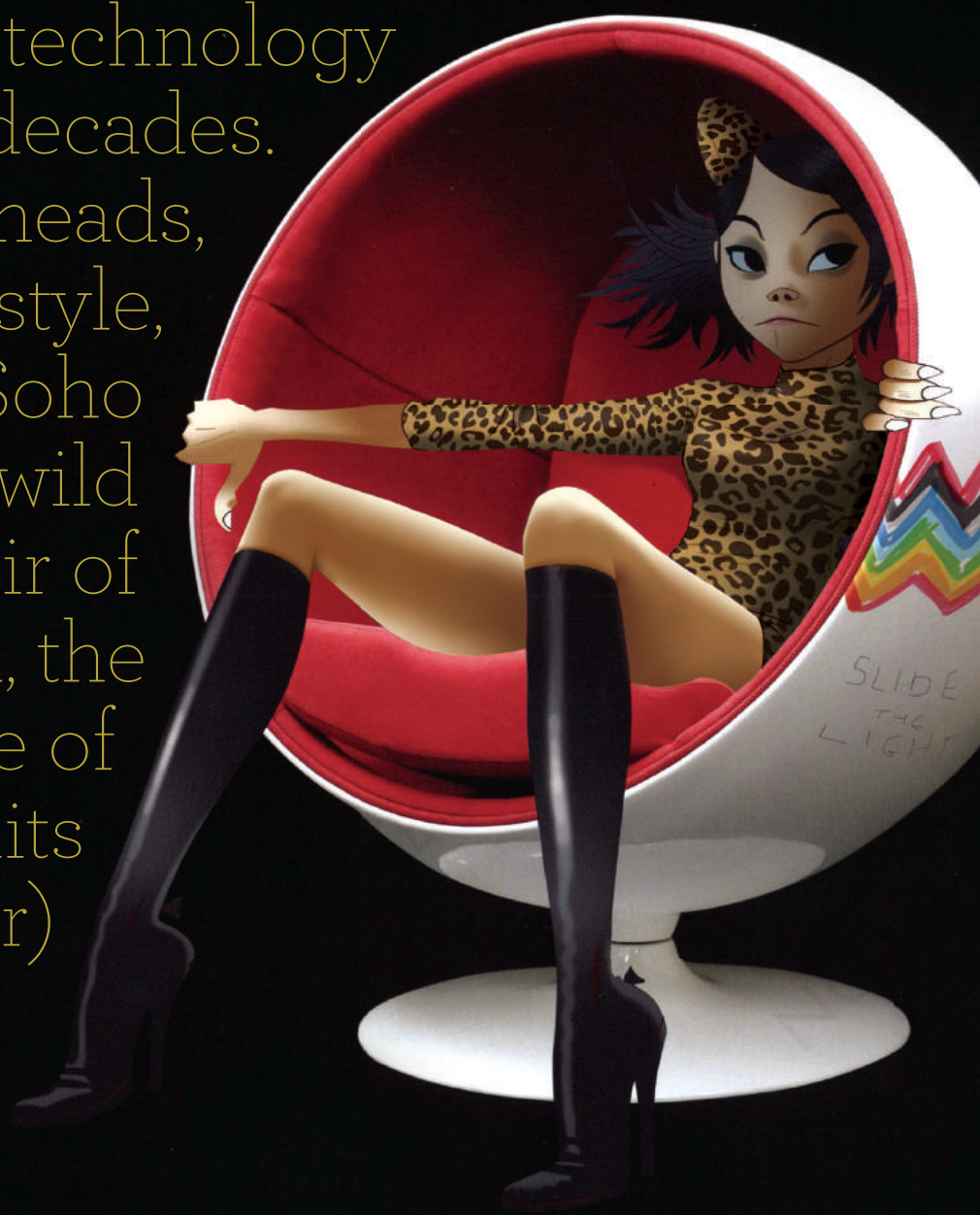
Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

11 The Atlantic, Typecast



The gorilla (Latin name *gorilla gorilla*) is a large simian, with males of the species reaching heights of around 1.7m. Gorillaz (Latin name *gorillaz gorillaz*, probably), is a huge animated band, reaching number one in the singles and album charts and selling over 17 million records. While the former only has a grasp of the most rudimentary tools, the latter has been at the forefront of animation technology for nearly two decades.

Samuel Spencer heads, Jane Goodall-style, into the mists of Soho to track these wild animators in the lair of Passion Animation, the studio behind some of Gorillaz' greatest hits (and *shots*' cover)





THE ~~X~~ REVOLUTION OF GORILLAZ





1/2 *Tomorrow Comes Today*

3/4/5 *Clint Eastwood*

6 Gorillaz' holographic live performance at the MTV Europe Music Awards 2005, Lisbon

7 Gorillaz at the Brit Awards 2002

While today's apes evolved from insect-eating proto-primates, the Gorillaz evolved from a project for a brand that's also been consigned to history. As Cara Speller, Passion's EP for animated film and TV, who has worked on the band's projects since its inception, reminisces, "We had been working on a Virgin Cola spot with Jamie [Hewlett], and he mentioned that he and his flatmate were starting an animated band, and asked whether we were interested in doing a music video with them. Then he mentioned his flatmate was Damon Albarn and we said: 'Where do we sign?!'"

Despite their name now being synonymous with the latest tech, Gorillaz' first video, *Tomorrow Comes Today*, released in 2000, could not have been any more traditional if Walt Disney had awoken from his cryogenic catacomb and directed it himself. "We were using pencils and paper," remembers Speller. "I think it was lightboxes with people flipping paper, drawing in pencil, photographing the paper, scanning it in. I think the only digital elements were the ink and paint, the colouring of the drawings, which we did in Toonz software at the time."

The reasons for such a traditional approach? "With that first video, it was an unknown quantity. Even though Damon and Jamie's work was very well known in their respective fields, no one knew if this was going to work or not. We had a relatively small budget from the record label, so by necessity we made something very simple, which had Jamie's beautiful artwork barely moving against some video footage that we shot around Soho one night."

That said, even in the tetralogy of videos released from the band's eponymous debut album (*Tomorrow Comes Today*, *Clint Eastwood*, 19/2000, *Rock the House*), there is huge development. Of the progress between

"[*Clint...*] is an incredible track, and there was definitely a progression there, with much more movement in the animation."

Cara Speller

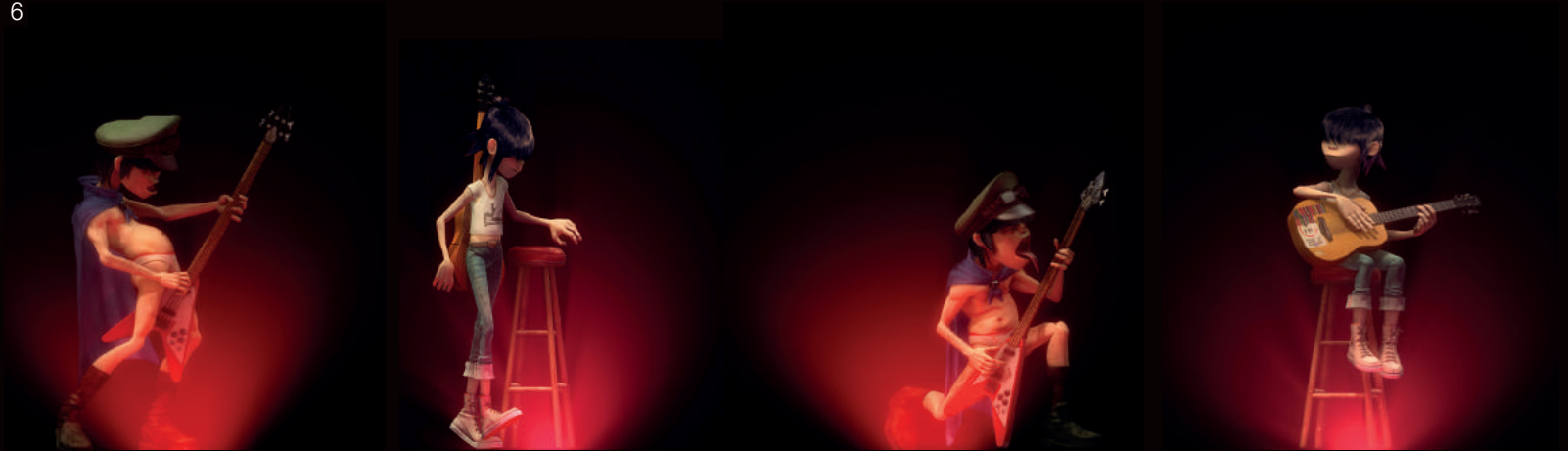
Tomorrow... and *Clint Eastwood*, Speller says: "On [*Clint...*] we were able to be a bit bolder with it. It's an incredible track, and there was definitely a progression there, with much more movement in the animation. Saying that, it was still fairly limited – we used a lot of cycles of animation. But that didn't feel like a compromise stylistically. It really suited the track and that really suited the mood at the time."

The song was a top five hit in the UK, and much of that is due to the video, a classic of its kind, offering a primate pastiche of Michael Jackson's *Thriller*. "It was so well received worldwide that it really helped kick things off for the band," says Speller.

This success presented Passion with both benefits and challenges. What made the Gorillaz so popular (apart from the fact that those early singles are certifiable bangers) was Jamie Hewlett's unique animation work, but there was only one Hewlett. "What has always been a struggle throughout our years of working with the band," Speller says, "is finding enough people who can draw like Jamie. His style is incredibly unique. We are lucky enough to work with the finest 2D animators on the planet, but even so we've had a really hard time getting enough people who can really do the artwork justice and produce a video in a reasonable amount of time."

How do they find these feted animators? Do they have to pass a draw-like-Jamie test? Well, in a way. "On every production there's a period where people have to spend a little time getting into that style and maybe not quite getting it right first time. Honing that creative eye that Jamie has takes a little bit of ramp-up time."

6



“I suppose we all love Noodle unerringly, and she does guide my hand the most, but I don’t have a favourite among the characters. They’re too complex for that.”

Jamie Hewlett

7



2D's AROUND THE WORLD

2002–2010

But finding Hewlett-alikes would be the least of Passion’s problems when it came to the next stage of the Gorillaz project. If a virtual band is to truly be a band, then it has to tour. But how can four characters who only exist in storyboards and on a group of animators’ computers take to the physical stage? One solution presented itself when Passion helped the band to perform at the 2002 Brit Awards. Set among a night of performances including Mis-Teeq, a Shaggy duet with Ali G, and a Jamiroquai and Anastacia collaboration were the four members of Gorillaz, seeming to appear on stage with rap group Phi Life Cypher. How was it done? “We had these enormous LED screens, that were matched into the look of the stage so that it looked like the characters were there. They had one screen each and they were about 20 feet high,” explains Speller.

For their next major awards show appearance, the 2006 Grammys, Passion went back to the history books to get the band on stage, choosing a hi-tech solution plucked straight out of the 19th century. Pepper’s Ghost is a Victorian parlour trick that reflects the image of an object from one room to another. While the original effect used plates of glass, Passion used a kind of transparent film, described by head of CG Jason Nicholas as “a very large diameter film, almost like the film used to make audio cassette tapes, but entirely transparent”. Alongside this film they rigged

up “a system of projectors and reflecting surfaces – white surfaces rather than mirrors – so that the image gets bounced on to this transparent screen, which is at a 45-degree angle to the stage. That makes the image appear to be upright and behind it.”

As if dealing with multiple top-of-the-range projectors and setting this all up wasn’t complicated enough, Passion also had to project the real Madonna alongside the animated Gorillaz, with the Queen of Pop seeming to interact with the band. As Speller explains, “It was a big illusion, trying to convince people the characters were really standing on the stage. The show’s producers wanted to create one of their musical mashups between guests. So we asked Madonna, who was about to do her track on the next stage, made sure she was in the same costume that she’s going to appear in three minutes later, and filmed her in advance in the same way, so it looks like it’s in the same space. In that way you could get Murdoc walking in front and behind her, which wouldn’t have been possible if she had been live on stage.”

Whereas the first stage of the band had relied on traditional animation, this project saw Gorillaz working at the forefront of technology. “Arri, the camera company, was literally making modifications to the chip in the camera while we were shooting, and it kept overheating because it wasn’t quite production ready.” Those of you looking for gossip on Madonna’s notoriously diva-ish behaviour, however, will be disappointed, as apparently, “She was awesome. Entirely professional.” ■

“It was a big illusion, trying to convince people the characters were really standing on the stage. The show’s producers wanted to create one of their famous musical mashups between guests.”

Cara Speller

1



1/2/3 On
Melancholy Hill

4/5/6 *Stylo*

2



GORILLAZ GO 3D

2010–2017

Following these high-profile performances and technological triumphs, Passion and Gorillaz had to up the ante when it was time for the band to release their third studio album, *Plastic Beach*. They did it by literally adding another dimension to the band, turning the quartet into 3D CGI characters.

Full-on is definitely the word for the first video from this new-look Gorillaz – *Stylo*, a five-minute mini movie featuring car chases, stunts and Bruce Willis. “It was a lot of fun, a big ‘We’re BACK!’ for the band!” jokes Speller, “and at that point it was probably the biggest budget that we’ve had for a music video.” Despite having acted alongside such luminaries as Helen Mirren, Alan Rickman and the babies of *Look Who’s Talking/Look Who’s Talking Too* (as well as having the simian-titled *12 Monkeys* on his reel) working with four Gorillaz was still a challenge for Willis. “We needed him to interact with the space the characters would occupy,” Speller explains. “The flow of the events is that Jamie did the storyboards and we cut that to the track, so we had a fantastic template of what needed to happen and when. We shot the live action with Bruce Willis acting to markers where the characters were going to be. Then we came back to the studio and

“Inspiration is never restricted to one project. It comes in from everywhere and goes out where needed.”

Jamie Hewlett

3



4



5



6



went through the process of animating those characters individually and placing them in the scene at the right point in the right place.”

Why was 2010 the right time to take the characters into three dimensions? For Passion, it was a technical decision, with Nicholas noting that “Over the years, processes become so much easier to deal with. You don’t have to have ILM and 200 people working on it.” Plus, the look of the band had already altered between *Gorillaz* and sophomore album *Demon Days*. “The characters have evolved each time there’s been a new album,” says Speller, “not just the design of them. They grow up, they look slightly different. Murdoc and Russel are fairly constant, but 2D and Noodle in particular have changed drastically. Each time it’s been a new process of Jamie preparing sketches from every angle and with every expression. If it’s CG we model a character, we overlay one of Jamie’s drawings on it, we check the proportions are looking mostly right, then we show him and he comes in and says ‘Yeah, but actually that hair isn’t quite working at the back with that volume,’ or whatever.” Nicholas adds that this process takes “about a month from 2D to a model Jamie’s happy with. Some are quicker than others, but things like mouth shapes and hair take time because they’re quite distinctive.”



1/2/3 Do Ya Thing

4/5 Saturnz Barz

6 Gorillaz' first live interview



VERY MODE RN MONKEYS

2017-

Even considering their previous technological successes, the band really outdid themselves in the run-up to their latest release, *Humanz*. So far we've seen a 360-degree VR video, a live interview with the animated band, and a selection of augmented reality work – including the cover of this very magazine, which stars sassy lead guitarist Noodle. Why was she chosen? “I suppose we all love Noodle unerringly, and she does guide my hand the most, but I don't have a favourite among the characters,” insists Hewlett. “They're way too complex for that.”

Our fantastic cover aside, one major highlight this year has been a live YouTube interview, which saw two members of the band, 2D and Murdoc, transformed into digital puppets to answer questions posed by fans in real time. But how do you get what are essentially cartoon characters to react to people in the real world? For inspiration, Passion looked to their 2014 Nike campaign, *The Last Game*, which featured footballer Zlatan Ibrahimovic in animated form. Using motion capture, they created an animated version of the Swedish forward who answered fans' questions, which had been submitted via social media. A voice actor provided an impersonation of Ibrahimovic's voice, and the whole thing was brought together using a game engine. For the Nike project they had what Speller estimated was a “10-minute turnaround”, whereas the Gorillaz YouTube interview was live, partly due to an improvement in game engines over the years since the Nike campaign.

Then there was *Saturnz Barz*, a 360 promo so technologically cutting edge that “the team at Google Spotlight Stories were writing code while we were in production on the video,” says Speller. The retina-burning

experience was a project beyond the comprehension of many VR experts. “What we did there was put traditional 2D hand drawn characters into a CG 360 stereoscopic environment. If you say that to anyone who works in VR they will look at you like you're insane. But it worked, and people seem to really like it. That's a really interesting collision of worlds – the absolute forefront of technology. It's where viewing experiences are potentially headed, combined with the oldest form of animation.”

What will the next evolution of Noodle, Russel, Murdoc and 2D look like? Not even Hewlett knows. “Inspiration is never restricted to one project,” he concludes cryptically. “It comes in from everywhere and goes out where needed. Sometimes the characters are 3D, sometimes 2D, whatever suits them at the time. They have moods like the rest of us and have grown up with the same needs and challenges as we have.” One thing's for sure: these simian superstars will continue to astound, delight and awe audiences with their blend of the traditional and the technological. **S**

Watch **GORILLAZ** come to life with our exclusive AR cover

Our Tech issue includes a special augmented reality cover, featuring Gorillaz' lead guitarist Noodle, created for *shots* by Passion Animation Studios and band co-founder Jamie Hewlett.

To bring the cover to life, simply search your chosen app store for “shots AR”, download the free app, open it and point your phone camera at the cover image.



SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST, FLUFFIEST FAKE FEATHERS

Digital Darwinism is a concept that underpins how I approach creating CG creatures. Every day throughout a production I see variations of models, textures, animation and shaders and make selections and rejections. Only the fittest survive, and slowly the creature evolves towards photorealism. This natural selection extends further between the different species of our digital world. We pan for the gold in each of our creations and pass that technology or creativity on to the next. We have to be proactive with this, to move with the times and evolve.

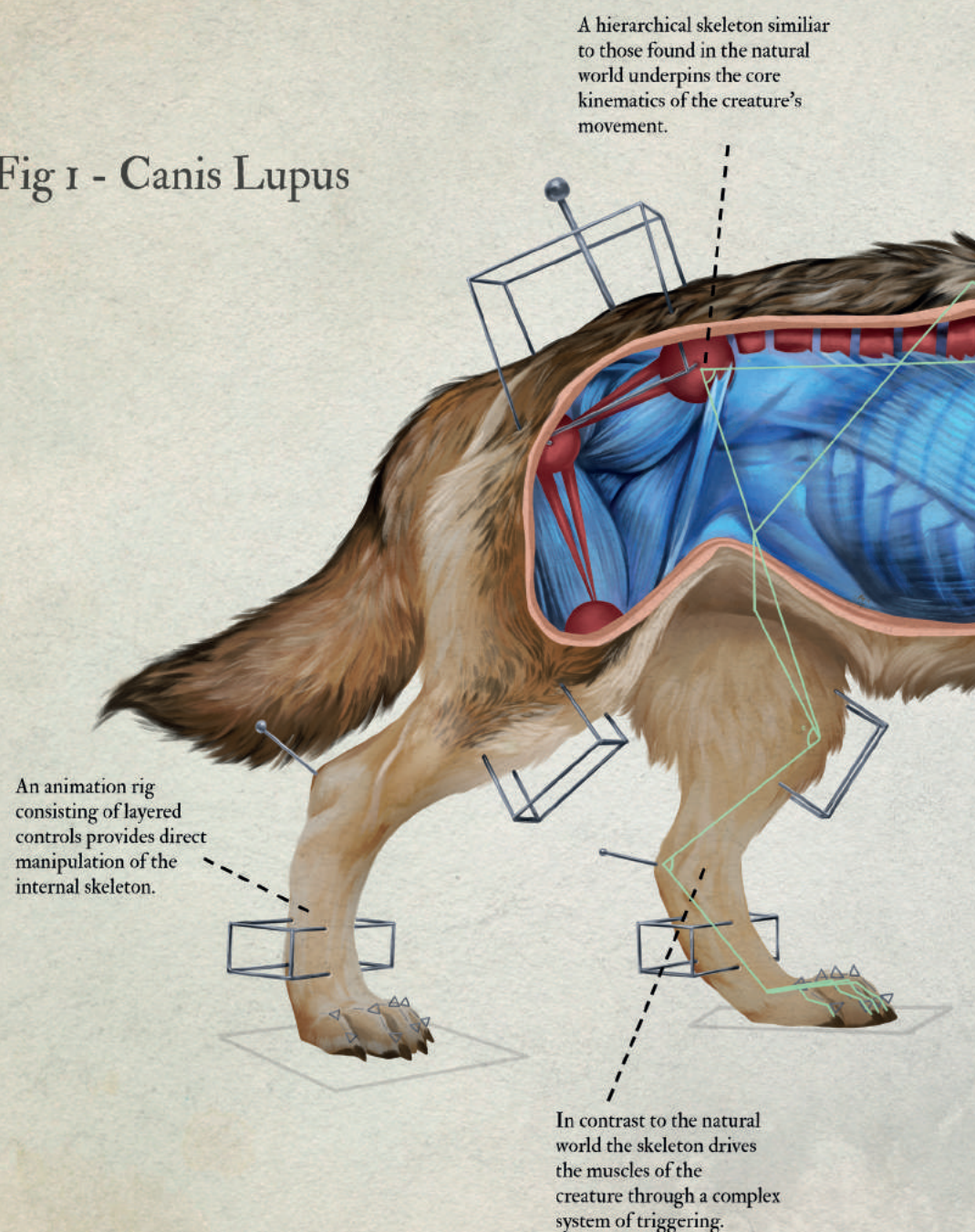
You can literally trace the bloodline of MPC's recent CG ostrich for Samsung back through a flamingo, a seagull and a black swan to Monty, the fluffy Adélie penguin who became quite well known a few Christmases ago. You might even find a few strands of digital DNA from a T-Rex in a squirrel. And whilst the technical and creative aspects of our work evolve, so do we, the not-so-blind watchmakers. The artists working behind the tools are what really matter. It is more about nurture than nature, as we pass our wisdom and insights down to the newer talent. Here are some of the more esoteric notions that have served me well over the years.

Don't rush. Building a photorealistic CG creature is a time-consuming process that requires great patience and attention to detail – and an enormous amount of skill and creativity. Resist the urge to turn your computer on too soon. Compile a monstrously in-depth dossier on your creature of interest, full of references and cross-references of every kind. Mistakes made early in the process always come back to bite you.

Don't get too hung up on the process and the technical aspects. In the early days of CG, everything was based on clever tricks to try and fake reality using computers that were less powerful than our present-day smartphones. These days our toolset is more physically based and comes closer to simulating or modelling the real world more directly and accurately. However, everything is still a massive over-simplification compared to the complexity of the real world. The end image and the illusion of realism are what really matter; it doesn't matter how you get there.

Realism and believability are crucial, but not the end game. There is always the need to engage emotionally with the creature or animal. An important lesson I've learnt over the years is that nature knows best. Don't try to anthropomorphise your creature, look instead to Mother Nature for reference, and we humans will project the rest. It's tempting to put too much human in because we're

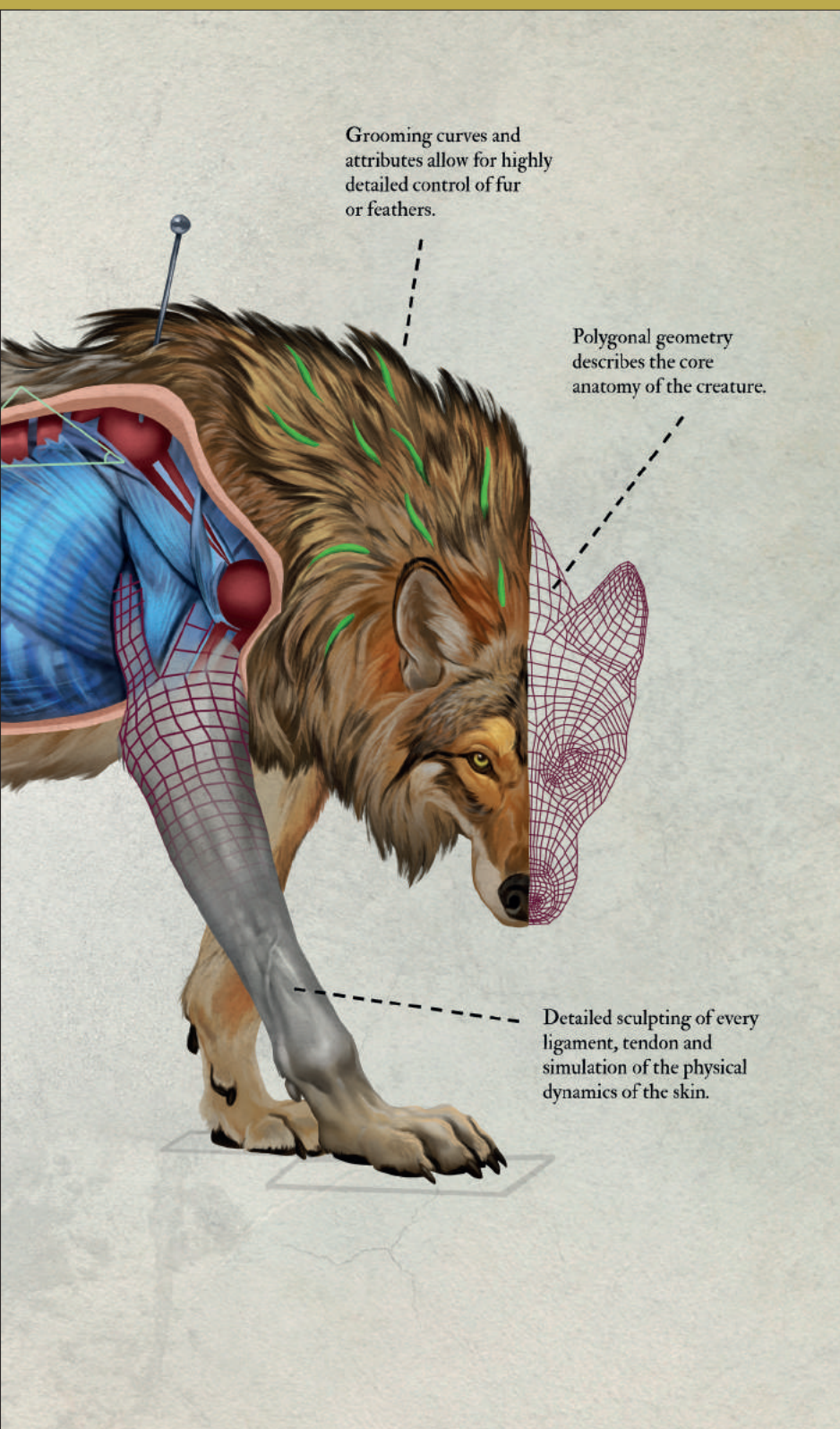
Fig 1 - Canis Lupus



trying to convey emotion in a short space of time, but, without fail, the animal doesn't like it. The best emotional responses come when the animal is left to be itself – the emotion comes from the viewer.

You need to lose control of the technology a little. Your tools have to have enough complexity that they start to take on a life of their own. That's when you get emergent behaviour or results that surprise you. A contained tool won't give you

that. Take Samsung's CG ostrich. They are complicated looking birds, with wild fluffy feathers that bounce all over the place. Our MPC Life team worked hard upgrading our feather system to achieve this. It was a truly wild beast of a tool when we had finished it, and there came this point where we were freaking ourselves out with the realism of our own renders. That is the magic moment when you lose control of your technology and it takes on a life of its own. **S**



OPINION Diarmid Harrison Murray

Diarmid Harrison Murray, creative director, 3D, at MPC, ponders the evolutionary forces that shape his team's award-winning CG creatures, from the cast of Disney's *Jungle Book*, to Samsung's ostrich and Buster the Boxer.

His advice to designers aiming to breathe life into their CG creatures? Embrace the complexity of creation, hold back on the human and lose control of your tools

“Your tools have to have enough complexity that they start to take on a life of their own.”

THE INNER circle

Danny Edwards talks to the three friends behind Madrid-based creative technology specialists Espadaysantacruz Studio. Miguel Espada, Juan Santa-Cruz and Nerea Goikoetxea met at university and seemed destined for careers in academia – in philosophy, mathematics and cultural management. But inspired and united by their love for art, culture and technology, they turned themselves into *the* go-to talents for agencies seeking tech-inspired stories – producing everything from spectacular interactive events to swimming caps that guide visually impaired swimmers



In 2012 three friends decided that life in academia as, variously, a mathematician, philosopher and cultural manager, could take a back seat to more creative and artistic endeavours. So, united by a love for art, culture, technology and a challenge, Miguel Espada, Juan Santa-Cruz and Nerea Goikoetxea created Espadaysantacruz Studio. Based in Madrid, the company specialises in creating interactive and visual experiences that use technology to take creative ideas to a new aesthetic dimension.

Their groundbreaking work for Samsung – which earned them two gold Lions at Cannes 2016 for their development of a vibrating swimming cap for blind swimmers – alongside lauded work for Ford and Pepe Jeans, has seen them propelled to the top of many must-work-with lists. Here, the studio's three founders talk to *shots* about the company's origins and the positive and negatives of working with tech.

Can you explain a little about your individual backgrounds and how you all came together to create Espadaysantacruz?

NG We met while we were at university. Juan and I studied philosophy and humanities but we were passionate about photography, developing and printing in our own lab in our kitchen. Later on, Juan, who was doing a PhD in computer science, met Miguel at the Universidad Complutense de

1 Samsung,
Blind Cap

2 Espadaysantacruz
Studio founders:
Nerea Goikoetxea,
Miguel Espada and
Juan Santa-Cruz

2

“...we started to pay attention to brand communication. We thought that brands and agencies could be interested in our skills, that they could communicate using new media projects lead by creators like us.”

“Our mission is to find the expressive qualities of every technology and build stories through them. Technology is a tool, not an end in itself.”

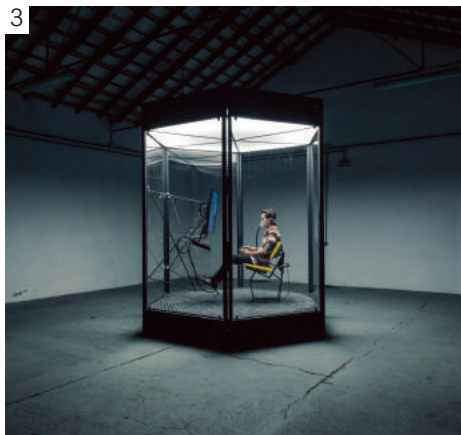
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Madrid, where Miguel was a young professor.

We all had an interest in art, cinema, literature and culture in general, and were all experimenting with being artists through our own personal projects. At that time, I was dedicated to cultural management, coordinating and directing projects, while Juan and Miguel were teaching in the computer science faculty. They were working on personal artistic projects, some of which involved the use of new media technologies. In 2008 I mentioned that they should create a company, a studio – Espadadaysantacruz.

And they did. Juan and Miguel focussed their attention on this new venture, with no real professional objective at that point. Then, in 2012, I left my job and joined them. That's when we started to pay attention to brand communication. We thought that brands and agencies could be interested in our skills, that they could communicate using new media projects lead by creators like us.

What was the driving force behind your decision to create the company?

NG Continuous curiosity. The will to do things in different ways, the spirit of adventure. We are all very restless and passionate and worked hard to create the studio. None of us has any business training, but our instinct and the process of trial and error propelled us forward. We chose to focus our creativity and work on advertising and brand communication because it was a fertile ground in which creative technology was still developing.

Was advertising an industry you always wanted to get into?

ME Not at all. We all come from backgrounds very far from advertising: mathematics, philosophy and cultural management. We began to collaborate as an artistic collective because we shared a common interest in different artistic expressions. We began to incorporate new technologies into our work and this elevated them to a new artistic dimension. At one point, we thought we could apply our way of doing things to the advertising industry to have greater visibility.

Your area of expertise is technology and technological solutions. Has the abundance of new tech at your disposal made standing out from the crowd easier or harder?

ME We don't differentiate between one technology and another. What we do is apply scientific methods to our projects. Of course, there are many technologies. Every day new devices appear, but basically they all try to modify our relationship

with the world and with others.

Our mission is to find the expressive qualities of every technology and build stories through them. Technology is a tool, not an end in itself.

Do you think that brands and agencies sometimes rely on using new and potentially exciting technology in a campaign regardless of whether that technology actually helps them solve the client's problem?

NG This is an interesting but difficult question to answer. No doubt there are some agencies and brands that jump on innovation without having a clear idea of whether it's useful (or even inspiring) to their clients or to the public. Our work is, to a large degree, about creating content that is attractive, innovative and inspiring to the public. We try to help agencies and brands connect to the public through these projects. Technology is fashionable, as it has always been. What has happened is that technology is now more accessible – and better – than in the past, not only for users but also for makers. But the life of technologies are shorter and this causes what we call “use and throw innovation”.

Is simplicity sometimes the best approach?

Do some companies and brands have a tendency to overcomplicate the use of technology?

ME The advertising industry is helping companies find new spaces of communication between them and their potential consumers. A simple application of technology, such as Blind Cap [a wearable band and swimming cap that alerts visually impaired swimmers as they approach the end of a lane] can help show that a company is looking to the future and it has a particular sensitivity about its customers' needs.

Sometimes the advertising industry does overcomplicate the use of technology. Innovation communicates very well, it gets recognition and awards, so many agencies are trying to introduce new technologies into every single aspect of everyday life, even where they are not needed. Sometimes analogue solutions are much better than digital ones.

Espadadaysantacruz is a multitasking entity. You develop projects, code them and make the surrounding film explaining the piece of work. Do you think this approach is one of the things that makes you stand out?

NG Definitely. If there is something that defines us it's that we take care of all details and aspects of each project: the technology, design and visual aspects. In advertising there is great respect for the TV commercial, so they tend to focus on this

1 Ford, Max Motor Dreams

2 Pepe Jeans, Yeah!

3 PlayStation, Until Dawn



Nerea Goikoetxea is inspired by...

What's your favourite ever ad?

There are so many that inspire me. But Toni Segarra [executive creative director at SCPF] is the mind and the soul behind the iconic Spanish ad for BMW, *Mano* [Hand]. Its tagline '¿Te gusta conducir?' [Do you like to drive?] resonates in the mind of everyone in Spain. A hand trailing in the wind through a car window is a sign of freedom. We do not see the product. The absence of the car was disruptive at the time. I love the simplicity and the intelligence of the idea behind that ad.

What product could you not live without?
The sea.

How do you relieve stress during a project? I convince myself that when a collective of people focuses together on the same objective, giving their best, in the end the project comes out ahead.

What fictitious character do you most relate to? [Cartoon character] Willy Fog. I am very dangerous with a world map in my hands.

What are your thoughts on social media? I have mixed feelings. Social media easily connects people who, in another time, it would have been impossible to connect. In a brand context, it's an open window that connects brands with people naturally. And without doubt it's an enormous creative field, in constant movement, which makes it even more stimulating. But, at the same time, I think it has a perverse face. I can't discard my background before the internet and social media. I don't feel like a 100 per cent digital native, so that influences me to think that the digital world makes relationships between people less genuine.

What's the last film you watched and was it any good?
A Most Violent Year by J. C. Chandor.

What film do you think everyone should have seen?
Any of David Attenborough's documentaries.

If you weren't doing the job you do now, what would you like to be? A marine biologist, no doubt!



Miguel Espada is inspired by...

What's your favourite ever ad?

I love the poetic way that technology is used in the spot *Sound of Honda / Ayrton Senna 1989*.

What product could you not live without?
My bike.

What are your thoughts on social media? I'm a lazy user. I'm more a voyeur than an active participant.

What's the last film you watched and was it any good?
Goodnight Mommy. A nice horror movie.

What's your favourite piece of tech? I like Arduino. As an open hardware platform it changed the way we relate to technology.

What film do you think everyone should have seen?
Any of Tarkovsky's films.

What fictitious character do you most relate to?
David Lurie, the protagonist of J. M. Coetzee's *Disgrace*.

If you weren't doing the job you do now, what would you like to be? A white-collar thief or a bad-ass hacker.



Juan Santa-Cruz

and assimilate their production methods to the ones used in film. We do not do that, we are not directors (but we direct our films), we are not creative coders (but we code) we are not product designers (but we design). We are a team and we work as a collective with one goal: to make each project unique, coherent and consistent.

In terms of future technological innovations, what are you most excited about or intrigued by?

ME In the last few years we have started to become interested, like so many others, in artificial intelligence and machine learning. In fact, machine learning is based on a set of algorithms that have been known for many years, but now they're starting to be really useful on a practical level.

There are technological revolutions that are paradigm shifts because they affect our world view, how we relate to the world, and we believe that the advances in machine learning are going to be game-changers, because they are going to propel the rest of the technological world to a different level. **ES**

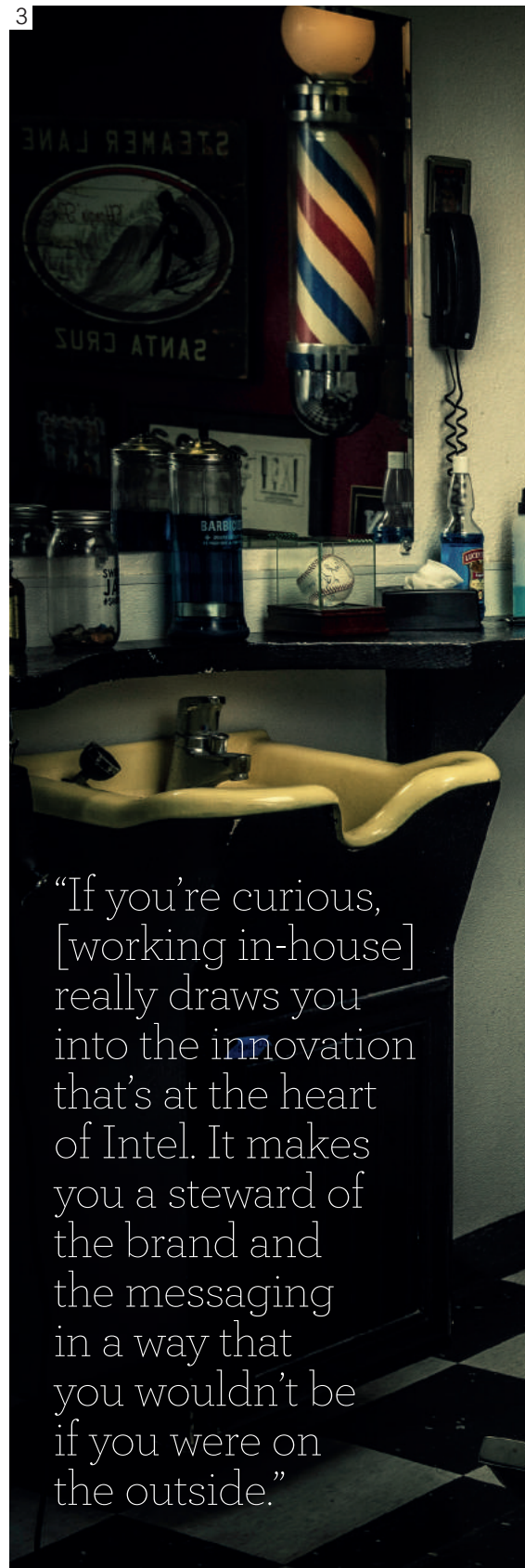
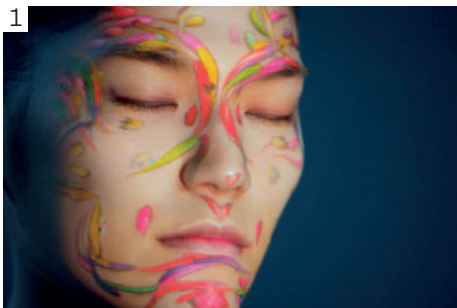


INSIDE OUT





While the world dismissed Intel as a moderately dull computer chip maker, the company has been amassing a portfolio of distinctly not-dull projects, such as powering space craft, fixing backpacks to bees and collaborating on cultural gems, from animations to drone light shows. *Kate Hollowood* speaks to VP-global creative director, Teresa Herd, and director of Intel Global Production Labs, Yogiraj Graham, about sharing Intel's inside jobs with the outside world



It must be every creative director's dream. With projects ranging from powering space craft to sewing machines, saving the environment to empowering communities with coding, Intel has been behind a gold mine of untold stories. "I don't think I knew what a treasure I was walking into," says Teresa Herd, who joined the brand to head up its new internal creative unit, Agency Inside, in 2014. "If it turns on, you can assume that somewhere Intel powered that piece of technology." As VP-global creative director, Herd knew she had to tell the world about Intel's extraordinary work, from its data centre supporting leading scientists to its social impact efforts, because prior to her arrival the brand had been famously inward looking.

Launched in 1991, the company's *Intel Inside* campaign positioned its semiconductor chip as a vital component of the personal computer market, transforming the brand into a household name. It made itself relevant to even the most tech illiterate, who have looked out for the Intel Inside label ever since when buying a new computer. However, Intel was trying to move away from being a PC-centric company and towards becoming a data-centric one. "We thought it was time to rebrand," says Herd. "There was a very big turning point three years ago when we decided to stop looking inward and start telling the story of how we power these experiences on the outside."

Working alongside the brand's internal production team, Intel Global Production Labs, Agency Inside created a series of online films, *Meet the Makers*, that demonstrate the varied impact Intel products have on the world. In all the films the human – rather than the technological – story takes centre stage. For example, one film turns the spotlight on the inventor of a connected glove that can predict an epileptic attack. Rajlakshmi Borthakur's epileptic son suffered such severe attacks that he was left permanently brain damaged. Feeling powerless to help him, she spent three and a half years researching the disease and came up with the idea of a simple glove that could

pick up vital bio-data signs – processed swiftly by the powerful Intel Edison – and signal that an attack was imminent. As she says, "What wouldn't a mother do to save her son?" Another film features backpack-wearing bees, or rather, bees fitted with tiny RFID tags connected to Intel Edison. The technology gathers data about what the bees are doing each day, allowing scientist Dr Paulo De Souza to measure any stress factors. "This is not about bees or microchips or technology," says De Souza. "This is about the future of our planet."

Going Gaga over dancing drones

In order to truly become an experience brand, Intel has to behave like one. "Consumers are too savvy," says Herd. "It's not just a matter of changing our tagline, we actually have to do these things."

Enter Lady Gaga, 300 drones and the biggest broadcast event of the year. For the 2017 Super Bowl halftime show, Intel collaborated with the singer and Pepsi to light up the skies with twinkling LED-fitted drones, built from scratch for the event and dubbed the Intel Shooting Star. Flying around in perfect synchronicity, the drones moved in various formations, culminating in the American flag. The display introduced 150 million viewers to a new application for the technology, as well as a fresh definition of Intel.

The Super Bowl halftime show epitomises the kind of work Agency Inside is creating to redefine the brand. "Intel makes amazing products, often for very specific-use cases, so we'll work with the business to see how we can stretch the bounds of potential creative applications," explains Herd. Her team creates new products, based on the brand's existing technology, that will show off the company's capabilities in the most engaging way. For example, she is working on applying the drone tech used to assess oil rigs to environmental projects such as monitoring whales. The super steady drones are designed to survive strong winds, making them the perfect tool to capture data about cetaceans. "It's about understanding

"If you're curious, [working in-house] really draws you into the innovation that's at the heart of Intel. It makes you a steward of the brand and the messaging in a way that you wouldn't be if you were on the outside."

1/2 Experience Amazing

3 Yogiraj Graham, director of Global Production Labs, Intel, and Teresa Herd, VP-global creative director, Intel

4/5 Intel's Shooting Star drones



TBWA\Chiat\Day LA rev up B2B

"B2B is a category that can be boring, impersonal and dry because it's people talking to businesses rather than people talking to people," says Linda Knight, ECD at TBWA\Chiat\Day LA. "We're trying to change that." Impressed by this commitment to talk to business people in more human terms, Intel appointed the company as its global B2B creative agency in 2016.

An initial series of spots feature the future personified as a man. After discovering that 45 per cent of business leaders worry they'll be obsolete in three to five years, the agency saw an opportunity for Intel to help ease their anxieties. The films show the future reassuring the troubled people he encounters that we have a brilliant world to look forward to, ending with the line 'We know the future, we're building it'.

More recently, TBWA\Chiat\Day LA has produced a series of highly relatable and amusing films about life at work, showing critical situations where technology needs to work as it should. The agency is also exploring how Intel's AI capabilities could help demonstrate and explain the opportunities the technology offers to businesses. "We're using technology to sell technology," says Linda. "We all want to make things that go beyond film. From the onset of our partnership, Intel's CMO Steve Fund has pushed us not to do traditional B2B advertising." She explains that the companies work together as true partners. "Teresa Herd and her team have been amazing. They help us navigate a very large company to find the right people at the right time. We always walk away from meetings with the sense that everyone is trying to make good things happen."

McGarrybowen big up the bong

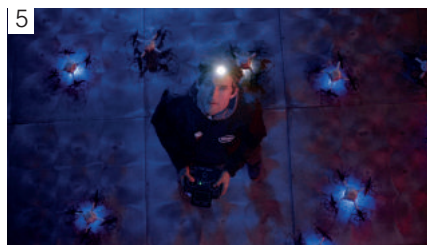
McGarrybowen was named Intel's global lead agency in 2015, winning the business with the idea 'Experience what's inside'. "We changed the paradigm from it being an ingredient brand to an experience brand," says Marianne Besch, MD and ECD of mcgarrybowen.

In 2016, this new idea was launched with the *Experience Amazing* film, a montage of Intel-powered experiences – ranging from a DreamWorks animation to using a prosthetic limb – set to music that mashed up Intel's iconic five-note bong with Beethoven's *5th Symphony*, arranged by Walter Werzowa, who composed the original jingle.

Further work includes a series of comic spots starring *The Big Bang Theory*'s Jim Parsons, in which he urges real-life sporting heroes to upgrade their equipment. The campaigns have all raised the brand's stock in actual terms: according to the BrandZ Top 100 Most Valuable Global Brands rankings, compiled by Kantar Millward Brown, Intel's rating has skyrocketed from 86 in 2014 to 44 in 2017.

Besch and Herd's collaboration doesn't stop at Intel – the pair created a PSA, *Why I March*, for the US-wide women's marches following Trump's inauguration, in which marchers from all ages, genders and walks of life explained why they were protesting. The film was nominated for an Emmy.

"Intel is a partner not a client," says Besch. "Teresa and I joke that we share a brain cell, it's a great collaboration." She believes this culture breeds creative success. "When there is trust in a collaborative environment, creatives push themselves further," she says. "When you love what you do, it shows in the work."



WHAT INSPIRES...



Teresa Herd

What's your favourite ever ad? E*Trade *Backup Plan*

What product could you not live without? I could probably live without most things. I'm scrappy, but I'd sure be sad if wine went away.

What are your thoughts on social media? I think very few brands know how to make great content, neither do they have a strategy to maximize it. Part of the reason for this is that trends change so fast that brands have a hard time keeping up with them. Whole mediums are born and die so quickly. I also think it scares some brands because it seems like the users are driving the conversation versus the other way around. Finding the right place to insert oneself authentically is difficult.

What's the last film you watched and was it any good? I honestly don't remember so I'm guessing it was not any good.

What's your favourite piece of tech? My car.

What film do you think everyone should have seen? *Sophie's Choice*.

What fictitious character do you most relate to? I don't.

If you weren't doing the job you do now, what would you like to be? A bartender or a cheesemonger.

Tell us one thing about yourself that most people won't know... I used to get anxious around heads of iceberg lettuce. I'm better now.

Yogiraj Graham

What's your favourite ever ad? It's an Australian ad from 1988 for cleaning product Ajax Spray n' Wipe. It tells the story of a woman who has to battle a hangover and cleans her house in time to show a prospective buyer. Naturally the buyer is impressed. It's driven by an insanely catchy jingle and I remember every word 20 years later. What happened to jingles? I miss them. Oh, and the DirectTV *Kiss My Giraffe* spot featuring a tiny giraffe. I laugh (a lot) every time I watch it.

What product could you not live without? Diapers and Vegemite. (The diapers are for my two small daughters).

What are your thoughts on social media? I think it has forced marketers to chase human behaviour, which has made our industry a lot more interesting. Anything that shakes us up in advertising is good.

What's the last film you watched and was it any good? I just watched *Their Finest*, which is about the making of propaganda films during WW2. The two screenwriters struggle to craft the perfect narrative and, in doing so, pull the curtain back on what goes into telling a good story. I couldn't decide whether to take notes or just enjoy it. In the end I decided to enjoy it. I've since watched it again and taken notes. It's very clever.

What's your favourite piece of tech? Massage chairs at airports.

What film do you think everyone should have seen? *Idiocracy* by Mike Judge. Watch it, laugh, and then become afraid.

What fictitious character do you most relate to? The Dowager Countess of Grantham [played by Maggie Smith] in *Downton Abbey*, because she's old fashioned.

If you weren't doing the job you do now, what would you like to be? Professional tequila taster.

Tell us one thing about yourself that most people won't know... I was once the VO guy in an ad for the Outback Steakhouse restaurant chain.

how the tech works and how it might be able to be repurposed or reimaged," says Yogiraj Graham, director of Intel Global Production Labs. "Being at Intel has really changed the way that I think about creativity, because we have to understand what we actually do as a company."

Sharing the same offices as the rest of the company, the agency is able to get much closer to the technology and the people creating it, making it easier to spot opportunities. "If you're curious, [working in-house] really draws you into the innovation that's at the heart of Intel. It makes you a steward of the brand and the messaging in a way that you wouldn't be necessarily if you were on the outside," Graham says.

The power of collaboration

Despite bringing the majority of its creative work in-house, Intel still works with select agencies. In fact, mcgarrybowen worked with the brand on the Super Bowl light show campaign, creating the TV commercial. "We were all on set together, and if you were to show up, you would not have known where mcgarry stopped and where my team started," says Herd. "We work with a handful of partners who we really trust and who understand what our goals are, and are comfortable with working that way. Not every agency is."

This means that occasionally her team ends up pitching against mcgarrybowen or Intel's global B2B agency of record, TBWA\Chiat\Day. "But once we decide on the ideas, the teams really work together. You're not going to waste time on a shoot day arguing over whose turn it is."

Herd fully realised the power of Intel's collaborative approach at Cannes, after winning a gold Lion for the Super Bowl halftime drone show. As everyone involved gathered to celebrate the success, Herd found herself surrounded by a strikingly diverse array of talent. Together they'd created a whole new product, launched it with spectacular creativity and packaged it up in a captivating story. "I remember looking around and thinking, 'Wow, there are very few companies who can do this,'" she says. "That was a bit of an 'Aha!' moment. We're not doing this alone." **S**

"There was a very big turning point three years ago, when we decided to stop looking inward and start telling the story of how we power these experiences on the outside."

But that's how it is...
there is just no other way around it!

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A full-page photograph of three women standing in a studio. The woman on the left has short white hair and is wearing a black leather crop top, a dark blazer, and black leather pants with a wide studded belt. The woman in the center has long red hair and is wearing a long, shiny maroon leather trench coat over black clothing and black boots. The woman on the right has short white hair and is wearing a black leather jacket over a silver sequined top and black leather pants with black boots. They are all looking upwards. The background is a dark studio with various equipment visible, including monitors in the top left showing different images, and a large camera on a crane in the top right. A shower of orange and gold confetti is falling all around them.

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THE EFFICIENCY NARRATIVE AND CONSTANT CONTENT

OPINION Chris Clarke



atching the Mercury Prize this year was a holiday from two years of despair handed from the old to the young via Brexit and Trump. Here was a shortlist brimming with fresh, motivated young talent who all appeared to be a ringing endorsement for the role of technology in providing access and opportunity.

The shortlisted artist known as Loyle Carner didn't even own a computer until recently, but his debut was recorded in a series of bedrooms where he at least had access to one. And, as the techno utopians would have it, that has given him access to a global audience. His mum (Jean, according to the T-shirt he wore at the awards) will be very proud. Across the board at the Mercuries we saw young people dealing with the world they've got, not bemoaning the one 40 year olds are missing. They are content to spread their message through social media and waste little time freaking out, like I do, that Donald Trump and Brexit were delivered with a bow on top because our news is now so connected to rewards offered by Facebook, selected for what is seductive and addictive, not informative or helpful.

So, the kids are alright. The kids might save us from our parents, whose selfish baby-boomer ways have given us climate change and a fucked-up housing market. But will Jean be able to move to a bigger house now? Unlikely, because despite the commercial lift the Mercury will give her son, these days the winner takes all and the winner isn't Carner, or even Sampha, whose album *Process* took the prize this year; it's Spotify or Google or Apple or maybe Adele, Ed Sheeran and Taylor Swift.

Dreaming in neutral

As with all industries, creative or otherwise, technology makes it easier than ever to enter but harder to make money once you get there. Technology shrinks the industries it enters and siphons off the remaining cash to killer apps and the VCs who fund them.

Take my own corner of the creative industry – 20 years ago, advertising supported thousands of agencies and media owners as well as the holding companies. Now ad revenue has fallen significantly. Holding companies face massive headwinds as much of the revenue goes to Google and Facebook, there are fewer scaled businesses left to buy and the consultancies are muscling in. Technology

acts like a warming ocean, bleaching a once-thriving advertising reef. But that's not the full picture. The scrutiny of social media appears to be making the creative industries more diverse. Minority and female voices are given greater volume. Organisations such as Creative Equals are raising standards across the board, bringing in perspectives that are more reflective of the world outside adland.

The technology of an era has always defined and shaped its creative output. The printing press unleashed revolutionary ideas and shaped the world we know today. The seven-inch single defined the pop song, with LPs came longer tracks and different artists. With technological disruption some formats die, but podcasts saved radio where some thought they'd kill it. Perhaps no technology ever completely dies. Except maybe 8-track and Betamax, because they were shit.

As creatives we must both work within and push the boundaries we're given. Many creatives decry the short format of Facebook video ads. For me, they're the posters of our era, a fertile place for a disciplined use of creativity.

The technological big picture is complex. Technology culture is shaping a future where human agency is removed in the name of efficiency and efficiency is rarely the goal of creativity. Serendipity fuels invention. Dreaming, with your brain in neutral, leads to epiphanies. Boredom is the fuel of the creative and mischievous child. The efficiency narrative of modern technology asks us to make use of every moment of the day. We are afraid of leaving our brains unoccupied for a second. There are, according to Facebook, about 100 metres of content for us to scroll through every day.

This is maybe the greatest danger of all. Once we're addicted to the instant gratification of our feed, all that time that could be spent on our novel/film/revolutionary business idea, is spent writing witty comments on other people's stuff.

So we are now at a point in history where it's crucial that creative people question the world that's coming. Efficiency ought not be the only god. If we challenge it now, we can have a future where technology makes us more powerful and more creative and more interesting.

If we don't, a sterile future as consumption zombies awaits. **S**



Chris Clarke, CCO international, DigitasLBi, considers the opportunities technology can offer bright young things, but also questions our tech-focussed culture. Are our ever-busy minds dumbed by over consumption of content, and is an obsession with efficiency killing creativity by stealing away our chance to daydream?

“Efficiency is rarely the goal of creativity. Serendipity fuels invention. Dreaming leads to epiphanies.”

No place like YourPlace



In the world of advertising there are always bottom-drawer scripts and ideas that have, so far and for various reasons, remained unmade. There are also those scripts that started with great potential, but ended up as damp squibs. Then there are those that could not – indeed, should not – ever be made. In his ongoing series, *David Kolbusz*, CCO of Droga5 London, plays devil's advocate with the imaginary scripts that taste forgot

We open on an ageing white man with boyish good looks, sitting in a distressed cognac leather recliner.

MAN: Hello. You probably don't know me but I'm the founder of YourPlace. I created the original template for what you now know as a "social network". But when you make that much money and attain that much success in such a short space of time, every achievement afterwards feels like an endless, spiralling psilocybin comedown. Suddenly you find yourself looking for new ways to get a charge. Life experience becomes your new high and each new thrill needs to beat the last.

As the camera pulls wider we see that he's in his den receiving a blood transfusion from a baby panda strapped to a gurney next to him.

MAN: So I sold my controlling share in YourPlace in 2009 for a cool US\$500 million and never looked back.

He gets up and unhooks the IV from his arm. He walks over to a touchscreen computer and logs on to the internet, pulling up the YourPlace homepage.

MAN: Which begs the question: why am I wasting my time filming this commercial when I could be hang-gliding in the Pyrenees or performing consequence-free sex acts on mail order Japanese Real Dolls? Because I've got some news that might surprise you as much as it did me. YourPlace is still a thing!

Without paying any attention, he drags his fingers across the keyboard and lazily hits a random selection of buttons, which pulls up the page of a young, unsigned rock group.

MAN: Did you know that you can now follow bands on YourPlace? Neither did I! Apparently it's turned into a social networking site for musicians. So instead of focusing on actual song craft, unknown artists can squander their lives by connecting with other equally irrelevant members of their social strata, dreaming of a day when someone actually gives a damn about a single note they play.

Now standing, he pulls down a world map and holds a pointer up to a small archipelago in the western Pacific Ocean.

MAN: Here's something else that's interesting. I'm worth more than all of Micronesia. Their GDP last year was US\$310 million.

He keeps walking and the soft furnishings in the den-like space give way to metal doors and a wall-mounted numerical keypad, suggestive of a heavily secured area. He punches in a code and a panel slides open, revealing a safe room. Inside, he picks up a Kevlar vest and slides it on his chest.

MAN: I know what you're probably thinking. "That's all well and good. But with YourPlace's 2016 security breach – where all usernames and passwords for the site were exposed to the general public – why would I ever trust this social networking site again?" The answer is simple. No one cares what you do on YourPlace. It's a lawless frontier. And that spells freedom. It's like the dark web – but for online pariahs.

CLIENT

YourPlace

TITLE

Reboot
2017



The man now moves from the security-heavy surrounds of his basement fortress and up a flight of stairs to a modern-style kitchen. He picks up an orange from the marble island in the centre, peels back the rind and casually tosses a piece of fruit into his mouth as he keeps speaking.

MAN: Look – I get it. This whole operation is a bit of a brokedown palace. A car in need of a new engine and a lick of paint. But here's the thing. It's still around. Which is more than can be said for Bebo. Or Friendster.

The juice leaks down his chin but he doesn't bother to wipe it off. He just keeps going.

MAN: Basically, I'm here asking for you to give YourPlace a second chance because once upon a time I poured my heart and soul into its creation. It's not like I need the money.

He reaches into his breast pocket and pulls out a square made from the finest Indian silk. He wipes his face and tosses the offending article in the trash bin.

MAN: Hey – you want to know what I did last week? I went up to an elderly migrant worker selling oranges by the side of the road and offered him US\$500 to beat the shit out of him. I didn't even particularly want to. I just have unresolved daddy issues and needed to know what it felt like to have that much power over a man who was old enough to be my father.

He exits through the kitchen door, which opens into a large field situated on one of the islands of Micronesia. He picks up a spring-loaded crossbow and signals to a man in a tower to lift the door on a cage full of people. They start running and screaming, their faces stricken with fear. Lighting the tip of an arrow, he turns to camera.

MAN: YourPlace. Sign up. Or don't. Like I could give a flying fuck.

He straps on a helmet and chases after the humans he has paid to hunt for sport.

Logo/Tag: YourPlace.
We Don't Care Anymore.

“...unknown artists can squander their lives by connecting with other equally irrelevant members of their social strata, dreaming of a day when someone actually gives a damn about a single note they play.”



“Now, instead of being pushed around on a skateboard, I use a Segway miniPRO to get a “dolly” shot. Not very cool, but at least it’s better than rollerblades.”

Mark Zibert

“I have a little collection of polaroid cameras too, which retain such an attraction for me; such unique and iconic devices that have a romance all of their own.”

Ian Derry

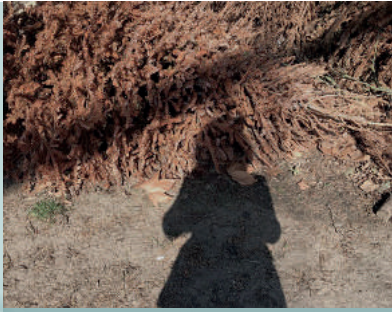
the camera DIARIES

“...the 5D was such a game-changer for me. I was still self-shooting with zero budget, but digital SLRs gave everything a more professional gloss.”

MJ Delaney

“I made a film that I edited on two U-matic machines, cutting to Jimi Hendrix’s *Ezy Rider*. It was all shot on this Super 8 with a fixed lens. There was no focus to worry about, no zoom – only aperture...”

Ed Sayers



“Sometimes I’d get invited to dinner parties and, being terrible at small talk, would take photographs. I guess I might never have been a director if I’d been chatty!”

Siri Bunford

Siri Bunford

Knucklehead

First camera

My first film camera was a Pentax ME Super which I bought when I first moved to London. Sometimes I’d get invited to dinner parties and, being terrible at small talk, would take photographs. I guess I might never have been a director if I’d been chatty!



Most unusual set-up

I shot an ad in the Serengeti during the wildebeest migration. It involved coordinating a helicopter and two SUVs to get 100,000 wildebeest to stampede towards the DP hiding in a tree holding a RED.

Seven select directors reflect on the gear that has accompanied them on their journey behind the lens, from their first camera crushes to their most curious set-ups



Mark Zibert

Rogue Films

First camera

I grew up reading [skateboarding magazines] *Thrasher* and *TransWorld*. Grabbing the family camera or camcorder and shooting your buddies skating was a natural progression. In high school I studied photography and purchased my first camera: a Nikon F-601. I still have it somewhere – probably collecting dust at my mom’s house.

Eventually I went to photo school at Sheridan College, Ontario, where we were schooled in medium- and large-format photography. Nothing like hauling a 4x5 camera to school every day.

Most unusual set-up

If anything, cameras are becoming simpler by the year. Digital went mainstream just as I finished college. It definitely worked in my favour as the new medium levelled the playing field



between the young blood and the established guard. Before then, taking portraits on 4x5 camera systems was complicated in terms of the overall process. Setting it up on a tripod, loading film, metering for exposure, whereas today you just look on a monitor.

Now everything beyond the camera system has become more complicated. My shooting process may mean holding a RED or Alexa Mini mounted on the latest Movi system and hauling ass down the street on

a Segway... trying not to bail in front of the crew!

What’s exciting about this is that flexibility and mobility have reached a whole new level and gear is more accessible and easier to use, levelling the playing field even further. There are more opportunities to steal “produced” looking shots without permits.

Now, instead of being pushed around on a skateboard, I use a Segway miniPRO to get a “dolly” shot. Not very cool, but at least it’s better than rollerblades.

“It’s a cliché, but digital lets you develop some pretty lazy habits that film won’t allow. There are fewer variables with 35mm, which I love.”

Miles Jay

“My first camera was an old rangefinder that my father brought back from Hong Kong when I was 14 years old. I had an instant empathy for it.”

Ian Derry

“I was seven when I first picked up a camera. It was my mum’s... I can still remember the smell: a mixture of leather and rubber.”

Melanie Bridge

Melanie Bridge

The Sweet Shop

First camera

I was seven when I first picked up a camera. It was my mum’s camera and had a Zeiss lens, which she informed me was really special. I can still remember the smell: a mixture of leather and rubber. I was interested in magic tricks and wondered if there was some way of creating a magical illusion in a photo. My granddad, who was an amateur photographer, told me how to take a picture of a person sitting inside a bottle. To me that sounded amazing! He explained I had to take a photo of a bottle and then rewind the film and take a photo of a person in the same position and it would look like they were inside the bottle (a simple double exposure). I didn’t really get it but I tried it anyway, positioning the bottle carefully and getting my little sister to make herself really small like she was trying to squeeze herself inside it. I had to wait weeks for that photo to be printed. I was so excited to see it



– and then so disappointed in the result. I had completely missed! Here it is, the first picture I ever took.

Most unusual set-up

The most unconventional set-up I’ve used is also the most lo-fi. The idea for the ad (for Dulux paint) called for an animated mural to be painted onto a house before your eyes. To make it look as real as possible we shot a time-lapse from dawn to dusk with the camera moving all the way around the house using a 5D

camera. We worked out how many frames we needed and plotted out our track, laying it all the way around the house, with a dolly and a small crane so we could move the camera up and down the walls. Every five minutes we moved the camera slightly and took another frame. The result is a one-shot camera move all the way around a house with the light changing from dawn to dusk. We created the animation in post. It looked entirely convincing.

Miles Jay

Smuggler

First camera

Well, it’s not really the first camera I shot with. It’s not even a camera per se, but about three-and-a-half years ago I shot with 35mm for the first time and I was, like, “Oh, this is how it’s supposed to feel.” I still remember when the camera started rolling and I felt the money burning – the pressure of that made me work with heightened senses. It’s a cliché, but digital lets you develop some pretty lazy habits that film won’t allow. There are fewer variables with 35mm, which I love. There’s a simplicity to what you’re doing; the emotion of what you’re shooting can come to the foreground. It’s honest. With film, I’m never worried about the aesthetics; it allows me to focus on performance and storytelling. Although, on the music video where I first shot 35mm, I also shot every scene from 20 surveillance cameras for an interactive component,



but I learned my lesson. “Keep it simple” is the mantra now.

Most unusual set-up

Carly’s Café was, by far, the most technically challenging shoot I’ve done to date, and it was my first professional job. It was an interactive PSA where you could experience, to a degree, what it was like to be a person with autism having an over-stimulation episode. There were six different viewpoints for the character and we only used an Alexa because I wanted to keep the quality up and didn’t want to use

a multi-rig set-up, because it wouldn’t have painted the subjective experience properly. We started off on normal lenses and then we switched to Lensbaby tilt-shift lenses to play with the visual field. At some points we were holding lenses in front of the camera to give a certain effect, which had to match all the other action. All six of these cameras then had to be shot out of sequence with action that overlapped between the images in real time, with lenses that became more distorted as our story went on. It became a technical mind-bender.



MJ Delaney

Merman

First camera

The first camera I worked with was the Sony PD150, which my brother, Theo, very kindly lent me from time to time when I was first making little films in my bedroom. For *Deaf, Dumb and Blind*, one of the first music videos I made, we couldn't afford a grade with our £0 budget. [Editor] Rebecca Luff was working on reception at Final Cut and we used to edit in the dead of night there after everyone had gone home. We chucked every filter available in FC7 all over it just to try and give it a look. That's why the Canon EOS 5D was such a game-changer for me when it came out. I was still self-shooting with zero budget, but digital SLRs gave everything a more professional gloss. For example, for the second backstage film I made, for Vivienne Westwood, I still couldn't afford a grade, but the 5D lent it a certain sheen, which I liked, and which hadn't been available to me before.



Most unusual set-up

The most fun I've had with a camera was the Nando's spot, where we strapped an Alexa to a drone and flew it out of an abandoned, roofless, Art Deco cinema and over Maputo. [DP] Chris Sabogal and I were grinning like kids on Christmas morning that day.



Ed Sayers

Seven Productions

First camera

My dad won it in a golf competition and finally let me use it on a snowboarding trip when the camera was about 20 years old – as was I! I made a film that I edited on two U-matic machines, cutting to Jimi Hendrix's *Ezy Rider*. It was all shot

Ian Derry

Archer's Mark

First camera

My first was an old rangefinder that my father brought back from Hong Kong when I was 14. I had an instant empathy for it. After that he bought me my first SLR, a Chinon CM4 from Dixons. We're talking 1981, so this was in the days of film.

By the time I was 15 I was offered a week at my local paper to do some work experience. That's where I was given an iconic Nikon F to use, the camera of my boyhood dreams. I was smitten. That week turned into three years and I became a full-time staff photographer for the paper.

Since then I have shot on all formats – 6×6 Hasselblad, 6×7 Mamiya, 5×4 plate camera... and I've tinkered with moving image on Super 8 and 16mm. I have a little collection of Polaroid cameras too, which retain such an attraction for me; such unique and iconic devices that have a romance all of their own.

These days, of course, I shoot mainly on digital, which is a revolution, but you're always looking for ways to inject some charisma. I use Zeiss Otus lenses that give a bit of that magical old-school look back.

on this Super 8 with a fixed lens. There was no focus to worry about, no zoom – only aperture, for which Syd Macartney (a commercials director from Rawi Macartney, where I was a runner) lent me his old manual Sekonic light meter.

With so little to adjust on the camera, it made you think about positioning to get a more interesting shot. And the camera was so small you could snowboard while turning it over in your hands.

Most unusual set-up

Despite my championing of Super 8 and film (via short film competition *Straight 8*) I'm totally agnostic about formats. The right medium and camera for each job is the key, whether it's 35mm (Speech Debelle *Terms & Conditions*) or Go-Pro and a drone (VW *Play the Road*) or whatever.

As a producer and a director, I've worked on a lot of multi-cam projects, usually due to hiding some or all cameras from members of the public. Those projects don't lend themselves to film for obvious reasons, so it's always digital. You may have Alexas, Canon C300s, DSLRs or mirrorless equivalents, Go-Pros, phones, drones... the key is to get the cameras where you need them. On an eBay multi-cam film called *Suddenly Xmas* we had two cameramen in seven-foot-tall polar bear suits, holding Christmas presents with their huge paws. The presents contained the camera (a C300) with the lens looking out through a Christmas bauble-shaped cut-out at the front, a screen secreted on the back, and their real hands were on the inside of the colourfully wrapped box, operating the camera controls.



But the ways in which you can adjust your look are numerous, and I don't want to give too much away!

Most unusual set-up

Shooting [debut short film] *Johanna* in Finland was always going to be technically difficult. The air temp was -15°C and water temperature -4°C. I wanted to shoot RAW and I wanted a proper camera to get the best quality we could. The environment was so extreme there was no margin for error. We put a Sony F5 camera inside a huge Gates underwater housing with a separate monitor. The water temperature wasn't a

problem, but the camera froze in the -15°C air. On one attempt to shoot some sequences underwater the monitor flooded so the DP was shooting blind. The O ring seal had frozen and let water in. Overnight we dried it out and it was a very tense start to the next and final day. Luckily it worked.

The other difficulty was the drone. As it flew higher it got colder, so each battery lasted only about two minutes. This meant we had to be very precise with our shot planning and choreographing of individual scenes. We shot these using a RED Dragon and the results speak for themselves. **S**

NEUROSCIENCE COULD MAKE YOU A BETTER MARKETER



For marketers hoping to probe the shadowy depths of consumer consciousness, neuroscientific research sheds a brighter light on the workings of brand communications than any traditional survey can. *Heather Andrew*, CEO of neuro-science research agency, Neuro-Insight, talks mind-reading, memories and how neuro-research unlocked the efficacy of two famously impactful campaigns

“...to the brain, there are no silos, or distinctions between content and context.”

Understanding what consumers think about your brand, and how that impacts on their behaviour, is the holy grail of marketing effectiveness. In pursuit of finding out what makes audiences tick, research methods are becoming increasingly sophisticated.

Neuro-research is one such method. By measuring brain activity, neuroscience offers a picture of subconscious responses that traditional question-based research can't reach. Neuro-researchers aren't able to read your mind, but good neuroscience-based methodologies can shed light on subconscious cognitive processes.

Using methods such as Steady State Topography (SST) – a modified EEG that records the brain's electrical activity – researchers can build a picture of a subject's responses to stimulus material. Marketers have long recognised that many decisions (including purchases) are not motivated by rational thinking but by rapid, subconscious emotional reactions. By identifying the parts of a creative idea that resonate most strongly, it's possible to identify the most effective parts.

The most impactful messages also use a combination of elements that help to drive memory encoding. If a message is not remembered it can't possibly affect our future behaviour – but the brain is very selective about what goes into the memory. If an image, brand or communication is stored, or encoded, it's probably because the brain has already, at a subconscious level, identified a potential use for it. This element of intent is what links memory and future decision-making/purchase behaviour. Thus, the most effective campaigns successfully utilise key drivers of memory, in particular, narrative, emotional intensity and personal relevance. For example, Always' *#LikeAGirl* ads have a narrative structure that engages viewers from the start by asking “What does it mean to do something like a girl?” Our brains are strongly driven by puzzles and stories, and will follow a problem/solution narrative closely to find clues that may help solve it.

Channel 4's *We're the Superhumans* also leverages a key driver of memory encoding: emotion. The ad takes us on a journey that elicits fluctuating emotional reactions. Neuro-Insight's study of the ad found that viewers' emotional responses shifted from negative to positive as the narrative unfolded. Initially, the extreme stunts on display elicited concern from

audiences, but by the second half of the ad we saw more positive responses, suggesting that viewers had overcome their concern and simply enjoyed the spectacle.

This kind of journey drives memory encoding due to our evolutionary tendency to encode memories associated with emotionally intense moments. For advertisers, it's an opportunity to make key messages land with impact, as Channel 4 did to empower Paralympians in this ad.

Into the uncanny valley

Neuroscientific research can also be applied across new tech and digital media. Despite the pace of technological advancement, many neuroscience fundamentals remain unchanged in the digital realm; to the brain, there are no silos, or distinctions between content and context, i.e., how the message is received.

In a recent study conducted in partnership with Mindshare Futures and JWT Innovation Group we looked at brain responses to voice-activated devices in order to understand the relationship between users, technologies and brands. We discovered that new users gave quite strongly negative emotional responses to using a voice assistant for the first time. But, as users became more at ease with the technology, we recorded more positive responses from them. The research raises an interesting question: how far along the human-machine spectrum should an AI device go? While total realism is an obvious objective, our previous experiences tell us there is also a point on the human-tech spectrum which falls into uncanny valley territory. This phenomenon occurs when we encounter an image or representation of a person that falls between the human and robotic categories – almost human, but with something not quite right. The uncanny valley tends to trigger strong feelings of unease, and is something for brands to be aware of when entering the world of AI and voice-tech.

While there is still, of course, a valuable role for interviews, surveys and suchlike, measurement of audiences' brain activity provides clarity on issues that people might not be consciously aware of, or which they would find hard to articulate. These insights could be invaluable, not just to help the creative process behind campaigns, but to inform and shape technologies of the future which could one day change our lives. **S**

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DIGITAL SPIRIT

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THE MIND'S EYE

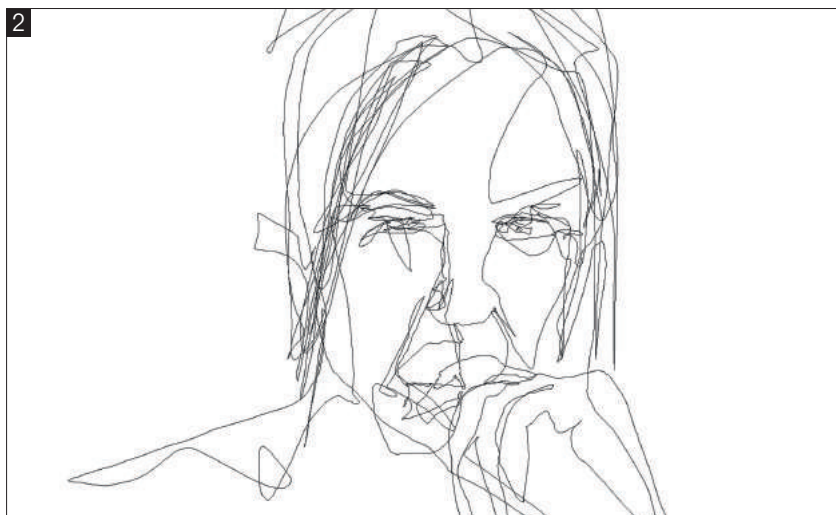


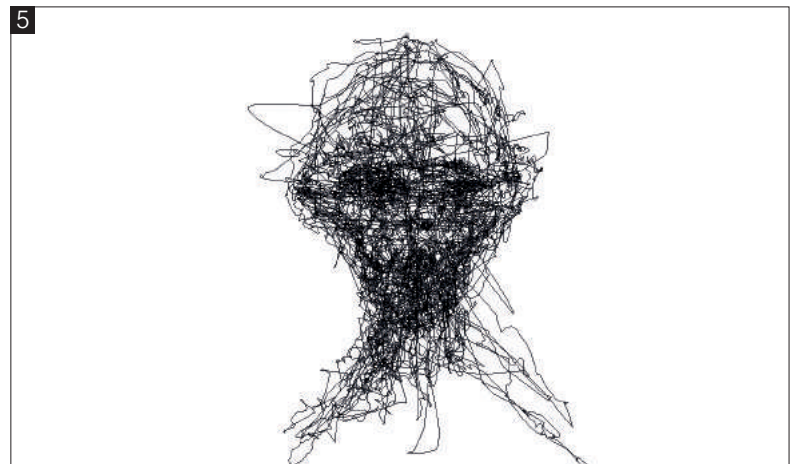
“Monet is only an eye,” Paul Cézanne once said of his chum, “but what an eye!” This reminds us that it’s not the dexterity of the artist’s hand as they wield brush, pencil or mouse, but the way they see that distinguishes a true artist. “When I was in drawing classes at art school,” recalls Fink, “the teachers would keep telling us to look, really look. I kept thinking: I am looking, but my arm and hand is the problem, it gets in the way. I thought a lot about this and how to draw in a purer way. Without the middle man, so to speak. Could I just draw with my eyes?” Turns out he could and, collaborating with Swedish company Tobii Technology, he helped develop customised eye-tracking software that enables him to draw using solely the movement of his eyes. In March 2015, at London’s Riflemaker Gallery (which represents him) he gave the first of his *Drawing With My Eyes* displays – where visitors can watch him stare intently at a screen while drawings appear on it as if by magic.

The windows of the soul

Since 1908, when Edmund Huey built the first rudimentary eye-tracker – a contact lens with a hole for the pupil – the science of recording eye motion and point of gaze has not only advanced apace but has found applications in marketing, psychology, human-computer interaction and product development. Fink explains how his software works: “It records reflections of infra-red light shone into my eye and algorithms convert

During his 25+ years in adland, Ogilvy China’s CCO Graham Fink has produced numerous lauded campaigns, like BA’s *Face* and the Cannes Grand Prix-winning *Coke Hands*. He’s also recorded a club hit, made a BAFTA-selected short, been D&AD’s youngest president and founded production company, The Finktank. You wouldn’t think he’d be looking to achieve much more, but looking is what he does and in his second job, as multimedia artist/tech innovator, he has caught the art world’s eye by creating no-hands drawings powered just by his peepers. He tells *Carol Cooper* about his ocular oscillations





- 1 Eye
- 2 Self Portrait
- 3 Daniel Bergmann
- 4 Eye Drawing 2
- 5 Eye Drawing 11

that information into a line on the computer screen, so wherever I look, the cursor moves too, thus drawing one long, continuous stroke. Once I start to draw, I have to keep going until I finish. So I can't correct any mistakes." Hmm, I see – well, I don't really see at all – but no matter, it's what he sees that counts, and the inner visions of this highly innovative artist have found form in a variety of disciplines: photography, video and installations, as well as painting.

The medium sounds like hard work; I wonder if he ever gets eye-strain, thinks “sod it” and reaches for a pencil. “When I first started to do this, the hardest part was learning how to control my eyes, because your eyes are making hundreds of tiny oscillations every second. It took me about three months of practice to get any good at it.” One of the hardest drawings was, ironically, *Eye*, which took 30 attempts. “Drawing my own eye with my eyes was a real challenge. I had to use a magnifying glass and a mirror and setting it all up was a nightmare.”

He has two methods of drawing, either recording what he visualises in his mind's eye, or drawing subjects from life. In the case of the

latter, he rigged up a system that negated him having to look at the screen as he draws: “I built a wooden frame and mounted the eye tracker on that,” he explains. “It allows me to look directly at the subject and draw them. This builds up a very intense emotional connection between the sitter and myself, as we stare right into each other's eyes. I am actually drawing blind. I can't see the line as it's developing on the screen. This is both exciting and disconcerting. I can't make conscious decisions as to whether I need to enhance certain parts of the face or even if the drawing is working or not. It's obviously very different to conventional drawing.”

The process of drawing his inner visions is equally unconventional and requires a curious blend of intense concentration along with letting go of the conscious mind. He has spoken about drawing “without the mind's influence”. It is an extension of his fascination with exploring the subconscious and creativity. This February his photographic exhibition *Stone Souls* explored his interest in pareidolia, the perception of a visual or auditory pattern where there is none. He describes it as “basically, seeing things like faces in clouds or

the fire. So one method of drawing is (as Paul Klee would say) taking the line for a walk. With early portraits I'd just draw a line in a random way and wait for a face to eventually appear.”

Drawing with his eyes wide shut

Fink's *Stone Souls* images depict faces emerging in random forms in nature, in decay, the paint peeling from a wall, and such like. He says he sees these faces or “ghosts” everywhere – in 1989 he found a sizeable, and pretty costly, face for Saatchi's celebrated BA campaign. As it's usually the first thing a baby sees, the human face is lodged deep within the psyche. “Portraits are the most drawn or painted subject in art,” says Fink. “Now we have selfies too. In advertising we spend most of our time trying to do things in a new way. I'm trying to draw portraits in a new way.”

So what artistic boundaries will he be pushing next? “I am working on a way to draw with my mind. I know how to do it but I just need more time to work on the logistics. I also have a day job that keeps me very busy.”

Watch this space for news of Fink drawing with his eyes closed. [S](#)

shots

awards
2017

shortlist

Best Use of Animation in a Commercial

Berocca *Be More Berocca*
Branston Pickle *Please The Cheese*
Strongbow *A Nature Dream*
IKEA *The Best Day Is The Everyday - Ludde*
James Wellbeloved *Mega City*
Leica *Everything in Black and White*
Sainsbury's *The Greatest Gift*
Samsung *Ostrich*
TEDxSydney *Ménage à Tetriz*
Volkswagen UK *Alien*
Waitrose *Coming Home*
Center Parcs *The Forest is Your Playground*

Best Use of Music in a Commercial

Sponsored by Greenlight

Apple *Dive*
Berocca *Be More Berocca*
Finish *I Love Doing Dishes*
MailChimp *MailShrimp*
McDonald's McCafe *Madness*
Nike *Mo Farah - Smile*
Paddy Power *Coach Driver*
Sainsbury's *Food Dancing (Yum, Yum, Yum)*
Sony PlayStation *The King*
Uniqlo LifeWear *Move Like You're Not Supposed To*
Volkswagen UK *The Button*
Waitrose *Coming Home*

Best Use of Outdoor

Dunkin' Donuts *Marathon Motivator*
Halo *Digital Landfill*
Harry's *Bearded Billboard*
Off The Street Club *The Bullet Hole Transplant*
Paramount Pictures *The Baywatch Slow Mo Marathon*
Samsung *World Choir*
Tennent's *Here to Serve*

Best Use of Sound Design in a Commercial

Absolut *Big Bang*
Fox Sports *Every Game is Everything - Anthem*
Heineken *The Trailblazers*
Honda *Dream Makers*
Honda *Up*
James Wellbeloved *Mega City*
McLaren *Raise Your Limits*
Temptations *Keep Them Busy*
Virgin Media *This Is Fibre*
Volkswagen UK *Alien*

Branded Entertainment of the Year - One-Off Project

Harper's Bazaar *For The Love Of Gabrielle*
Ibis *Do Not Disturb*
Morton Salt *The One Moment*
Motion Poems *How Do You Raise A Black Child?*
Off The Street Club *The Toughest Letter*
Samsung *Missed Spaceflight*
TV2 *All That We Share*

Twentieth Century Fox *Meet Walter*
Vogue *Elle Fanning's Fan Fantasy*
Chanel *Jellywolf*
H&M *Come Together*

Branded Entertainment of the Year - Series

Converse *Forever Chuck*
HP *The Wolf*
MailChimp *Did You Mean MailChimp?*
Volvo *Human Made Stories*

Charity/PSA Campaign of the Year

Ad Council *Love Has No Labels - Fans of Love*
Addict Aide *Like My Addiction*
Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity *Things You Can Unthink*
Burns & Smiles *Halloween*
Canadian Red Cross *The Pool Party*
Collectif Féministe Contre Le Viol (CFCV) *Laurajsd_90*
Comic Relief *Swear Jar*
DU *Hotel*
Glasgow School of Art *Ash to Art*
Great Ormond Street *Ordinary World*
Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence *Teddy Gun*
Macmillan *Life with Cancer*
Off The Street Club *Hope Is Tougher*
The Sierra Club *We Hold These Truths*

Experiential Campaign of the Year

Air France *Cinema To Go*
Lexus *LIT IS*
Sparkassen Finanzportal *Debt Collector For Hire*
Paramount Pictures *The Baywatch Slow Mo Marathon*
SNCF *Baryl*
TV2 *All That We Share*

Integrated Campaign of the Year

Bayer Aspirin *HeroSmiths*
Dunkin' Donuts *Marathon Motivator*
IKEA *Balenciaga*
John Lewis *Buster the Boxer*
Jordan Brand *Welcome to the Playground*
Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence *Teddy Gun*
MailChimp *Did You Mean MailChimp?*
Planned Parenthood *#IDEFY*

Interactive Campaign of the Year Including VR/AR

Addict Aide *Like My Addiction*
Canal+ *Aimen*
Castorama *The Magic Wallpaper*
Sparkassen Finanzportal *Debt Collector For Hire*
Expedia/Visit Britain *The Only Place*
Google Play Music *Through the Dark*
Honda *Candy Cane Lane*
John Lewis *Buster's Garden VR*
Oculus *Fall In Love VR*
Portugal. The Man *Feel It Still*
Toyota *RAVtivity*
Warner Bros. Pictures *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them VR*

Music Video of the Year

Bonobo *No Reason*
Daughter *Medicine*
Elton John *Bennie and the Jets*
Elton John *Rocket Man*
Francobollo *Wonderful*
Jain *Makeba*
Jay-Z *The Story of O.J.*
Leningrad *Kolshik*
Lil Dicky *Pillow Talking*
OK Go *The One Moment*
Royal Blood *Lights Out*
The Blaze *Territory*

Online Commercial of the Year Over Two Minutes

Audi *Test Drive*
British Airways *Comic Relief Safety Video*
E.ON Energy x GORILLAZ *Tomorrow Is On*
H&M *Come Together*
Hallmark *Hannah & Henry*
Heineken *Worlds Apart*
Hyundai Tucson *The Switch*
Morton Salt *The One Moment*
Movistar *Love Story*
Nike *Run by Rebels*
Polaroid *The Fishbowl*
Selfridges & Co. *Material World*
The Atlantic *Typecast*

Online Commercial of the Year Up To and Including Two Minutes

Apple *Barbers*
Apple *Bulbs*
Avocados From Mexico *Secret Society*
AXE *Is It Okay For Guys...*
Barclays Corporate *Self-Skipping Ad*
GEICO *Crushed*
Google *Year In Search 2016*
Heathrow Airport
Coming Home for Christmas
Honda *Dream Makers*
John Lewis *Buster the Boxer*
MailChimp *JailBlimp*
Procter & Gamble *Febreze*
Half Time Bathroom Break/Odor Odes
Samsung *Ostrich*
Volkswagen UK *The Button*

Television Commercial of the Year Over 60 Seconds

Apple *Barbers*
Audi *Duel*
Canal+ *Kitchen*
Finish *I Love Doing Dishes*
giffgaff *The Big Swim*
John Lewis *Buster the Boxer*
Jose Cuervo *Last Days*
Lacoste *Timeless*
Lucozade *Anthony Joshua*
Nationwide *Fatherhood*
Nike *What Are Girls Made Of?*
Waitrose *Coming Home*

Television Commercial of the Year Up To and Including 60 Seconds

Apple *Dive*
Bose *Get Closer*
Canon *Boundaries*
Kia *Hero's Journey*
Kwiff *Caught Glass*
Marks & Spencer *Spend It Well*
Skittles *Romance*
McDonald's McCafe *Madness*
Paddy Power *Coach Driver*
Rustlers *80 Years Of Torment*
Thinkbox *The Broadcast*
Volkswagen UK *Alien*
Volkswagen UK *The Button*

Agency of the Year

Sponsored by Freefolk
adam&eveDDB London
BETC Paris
Droga5 London
Droga5 New York
Lucky Generals London
Wieden+Kennedy Amsterdam

Director of the Year

Andreas Nilsson *Biscuit Filmworks*
Gary Freedman *Independent Films*
Henry Hobson *Furlined*
Ivan Zacharias *SMUGGLER/ Stink*
Ringan Ledwidge *Rattling Stick*
The Sacred Egg *Riff Raff Films*
Tom Kuntz *MJZ*

Editing House of the Year

Cut + Run Los Angeles
Final Cut London
PS260 New York
Stitch London
The Quarry London
Trim Editing London
Work New York

Editor of the Year

Dan Sherwen *Final Cut*
Dominic Leung *Trim Editing*
Jono Griffith *Work Editorial*
Max Windows *Stitch*
Paul Hardcastle *Trim Editing*
Rich Orrick *Work Editorial*

New Director of the Year

Sponsored by Goodgate

Anderson Wright *Independent Films*
Brent Foster *Foster Visuals Inc.*
Casey&Danielle *MINDCASTLE – MindsEye*
Cloe Bailly *Caviar*
Douglas Bernardt *Stink Films*
Sarah Clift *Madrefoca*
Michel + Nico *Believe Media*
Nico Kreis *MILCHSTRASSE Filmproduktion*
Ricky Staub *Great Guns*
Savannah Setten *Blackdog*

Production Company of the Year

Sponsored by Global Production Network
Blink London
FINCH Sydney
MJZ Los Angeles
Nexus Studios London
Riff Raff Films London
SMUGGLER London
SMUGGLER Los Angeles
Stink London

Production Service Company of the Year

Goodgate
Nevada Service
Tantor Films Service Production Company

VFX Company of the Year

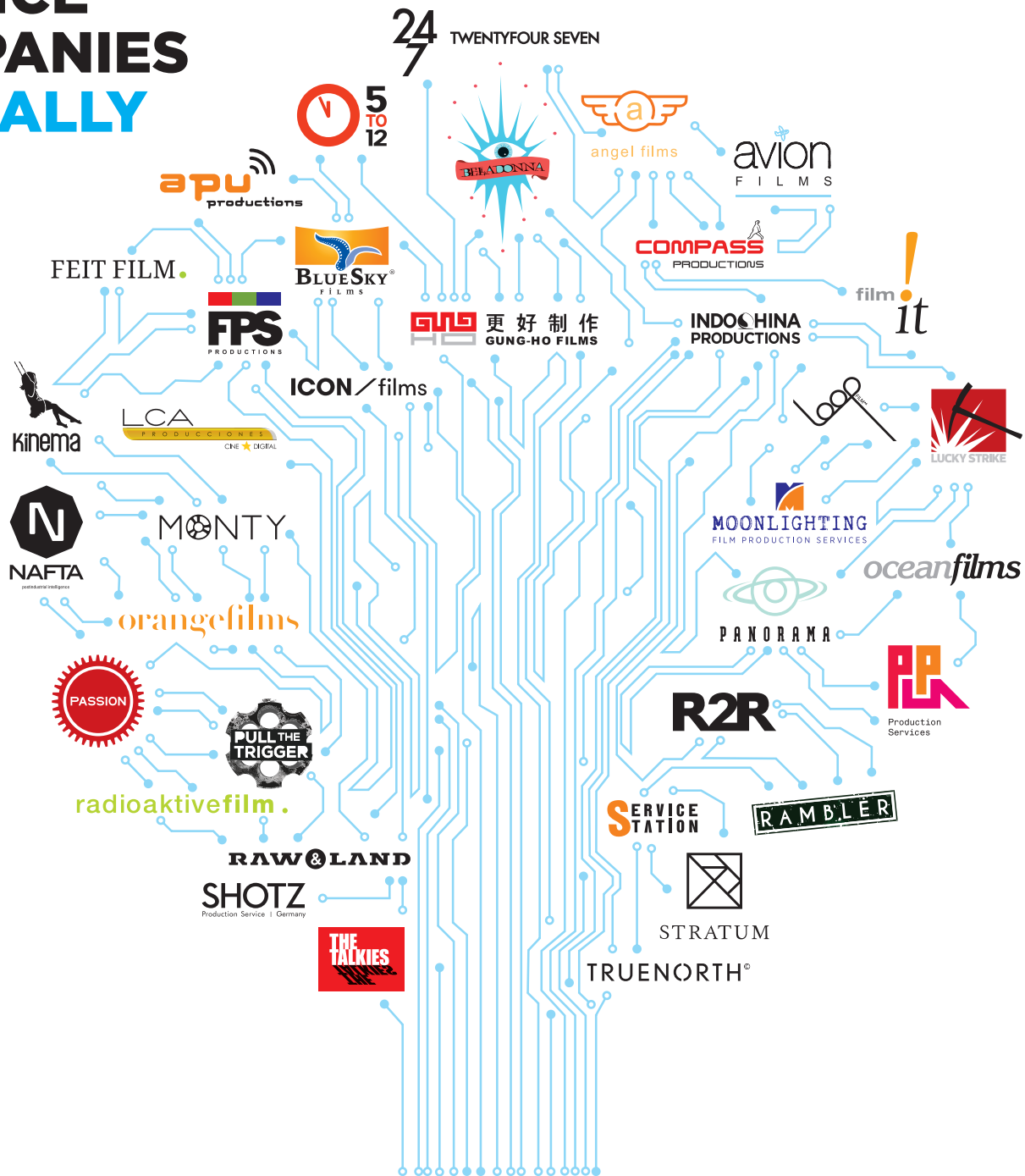
Electric Theatre Collective London
Freefolk London
MPC London
The Mill Los Angeles
The Mill London
The Mill New York



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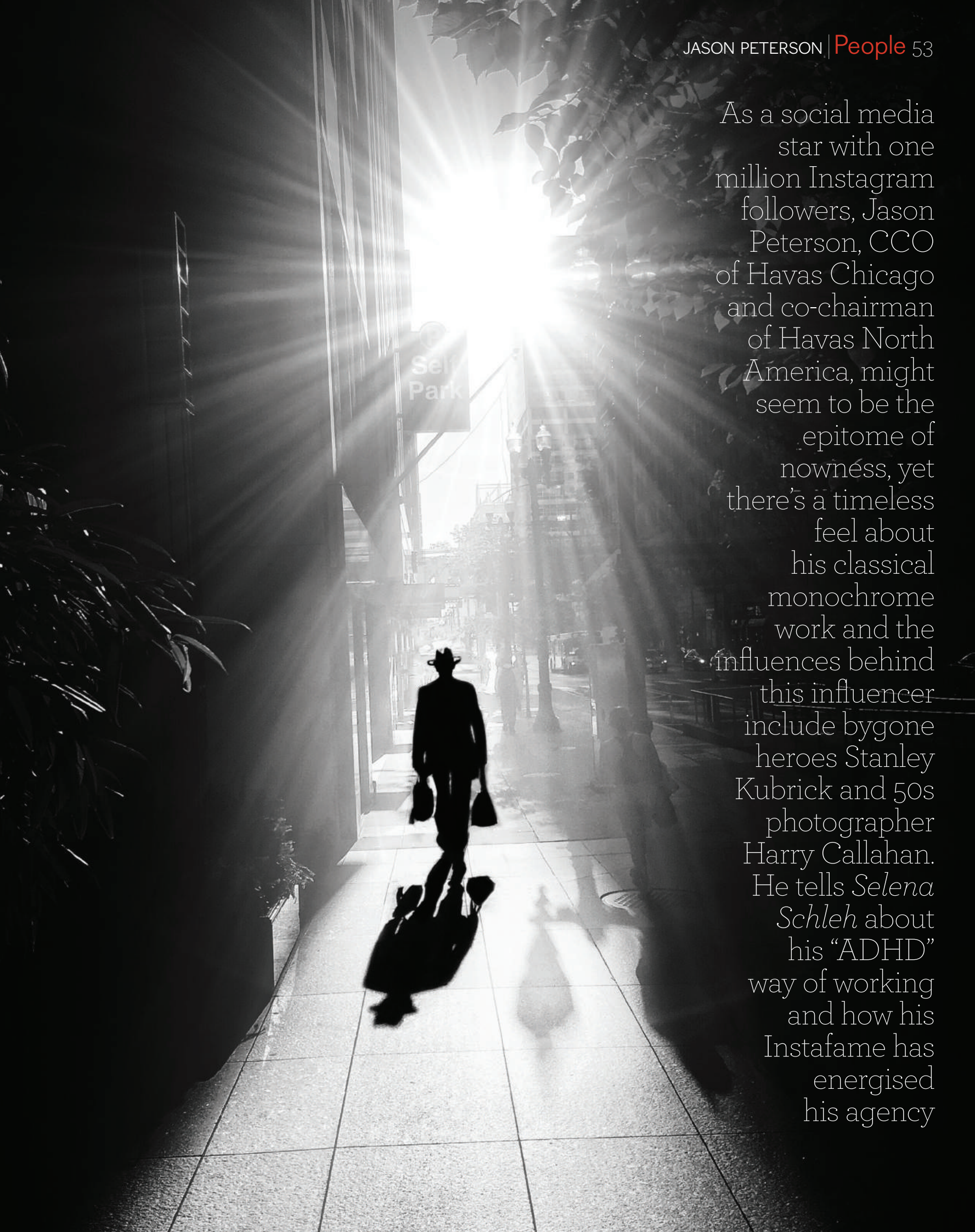
North America: Harry Tracosas
harry@globalproductionnetwork.com
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Julia@globalproductionnetwork.com
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As a social media star with one million Instagram followers, Jason Peterson, CCO of Havas Chicago and co-chairman of Havas North America, might seem to be the epitome of nowness, yet there's a timeless feel about his classical monochrome work and the influences behind this influencer include bygone heroes Stanley Kubrick and 50s photographer Harry Callahan. He tells *Selena Schleh* about his "ADHD" way of working and how his Instafame has energised his agency

1



With agencies wondering how to feed the ever-gaping maws of social platforms with fast, credible content and brands hitching their wagons to any old (or rather new) social media personality, influencer marketing can feel a bit like the blind leading the blind. But when Jason Peterson talks about social strategy his clients actually sit up and listen. With a million Instagram followers, and as a regular behind the lens at

A\$AP Rocky's gigs and Chicago Bulls games, Peterson is a bona-fide influencer. No wonder brands and even rival ad agencies are falling over themselves to work with him.

A fan of the Kubrick rubric

His account, @jasonmpeterson, is one of the most beautiful you'll ever scroll through: black-and-white cityscapes and abstract architectural details, peppered here and there with

shots of young, hip musicians, sports stars and even a former US president (he photographed Obama's final speech). New York is a frequent theme, but it's Chicago that makes the most breathtaking subject for Peterson's stylised, high-contrast aesthetic, with its vertiginous skyscrapers, steep-walled alleys and Möbius-strip freeways, while the fog rolling off Lake Michigan lends drama to an already dramatic skyline.

Inspired by black-and-white street and fashion photography pioneered by 50s photographer Harry Callahan, as well as Stanley Kubrick's early photo-journalism, Peterson's work has a very classical feel, so it's no surprise to learn that the Ohio native started out shooting on film and was an avid student of the craft: aged 14, he even had his own darkroom. Photography remained a hobby throughout his advertising



p51 *Lil Chano
From 79th*

p52 *Tylenol*

p53 *Chicago,
Rites of Spring*

1 *Chicago, taking
everyone down
with us*

2 *Canary Wharf*

But his following quickly swelled to the thousands, then the tens of thousands, before breaking the one million mark last year, thanks to a namecheck from pro skater Tony Hawk. Peterson now shoots and publishes two photos on Instagram every day, a quick-fire way of working that suits his “crazy ADHD” much better than classic

film photography – “I’d be left with these rolls and rolls of undeveloped film because I’d just forget about it and do something else.

Why shoot solely in monochrome? “I really like the timeless nature of [black and white photography]. There’s something about colour that really marks time. Close your eyes and think about ▣

“The best camera is the one you have on you when something’s happening right in front of you.”



career, but it was only in 2010, when Peterson moved to Havas Chicago, that he realised it could be something more. “It coincided with my day job as a creative director and the looming importance of social media,” he explains. “I wanted to figure out a way into social media that would match my passion for photography.”

He started posting to Instagram “almost as a joke – I thought it was just some corny filter app thing”.

1



the 1950s, 60s or 80s: there's a colour palette. But I could shoot a black-and-white photo in downtown Chicago right now and you wouldn't know if it was today, or a month from now, or from the 1950s."

Long waits for lens magic

Many of Peterson's images – such as a solitary figure caught in a beam of sunlight emerging from one of the city's famous alleyways – look staged,

almost like film sets, but are actually the result of patience, perseverance and a hefty dollop of luck. Getting a shot of Anish Kapoor's *Cloud Gate* sculpture (affectionately known locally as The Bean) without the usual selfie-snapping tourist hordes, for example, involved a game of hide-and-seek with the park's security guards at 2am. Other times, Peterson might wait for hours "for a shaft of light to come down the side

of a building". One of his favourite images, of a couple embracing under an arch in a snowy New York park, was taken totally by chance: a good example of why, despite being sponsored by Leica and the proud owner of a drone, he still periodically shoots on an iPhone: "The best camera is the one you have on you when something's happening right in front of you."

In a world where anyone with a

phone can be a creator, what has been the secret to Peterson's success? "To me, a great photograph is really simple: it makes you feel something," he reckons. More importantly, perhaps, he understands the importance of an authentic voice and is choosy about commercial partnerships. "I turn down probably 70 per cent of opportunities, because not only would those brands be wasting their money, I would also be

1 *Police and Thieves*

2 *Georgia Aquarium*

remembers. “And I would say, I’m like an athlete who trains before he plays a game. This is my workout before game day!”

A major benefit of being part of the Instagram community is the access to a “whole different pool of super-creative and inspiring talent”, allowing Peterson to bypass the usual recruitment channels. “I’ll post on

Instagram when I’m in another city, and say ‘Come hang out with me and shoot some photos, and 500 creative kids show up... We’ve hired 50 creators who knew nothing about advertising, and now they’re innovating and changing the way we work. So through this whole other [channel] we’ve been able to energise our agency.”

“To me, a great photograph is really simple: it makes you feel something.”



destroying my brand by promoting something that has nothing to do with me or my photography.”

The aesthetic of an athlete

When it comes to his day job, Peterson’s influencer status not only lends him credibility with clients but has propelled his rise through Havas’ ranks. “I remember people giving me shit [at the beginning], like, ‘All you care about is Instagram,’” he





*Let's face it... You're up to your eyeballs in Rosé
and sunshine.*

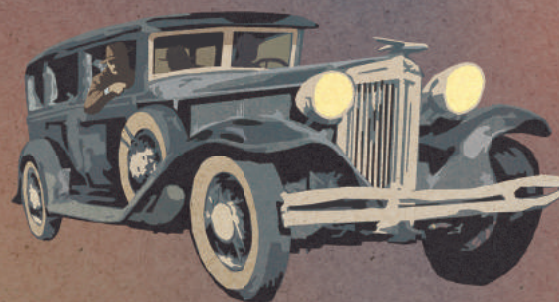
It's time to get back to work!

Selena Schleh travels to Chicago and finds the Second City winning first place in the collaboration and creativity stakes



This could only happen in a town like this

Like the well-loved Sinatra standards that celebrate its spirit, Chicago has long been catalogued under old-school and traditional. But there's a breath of fresh creative air blowing through the Windy City, whipped up by a diverse workforce, an ecosystem of cutting-edge tech and ad start-ups and big clients finding a brave new attitude to marketing



“**M**ake no little plans... They have no magic to stir men's blood and probably will not themselves be realised.” So said Daniel Burnham, the urban planner behind much of Chicago's early architecture. Looking at the city's iconic skyline, with its totem poles of stone, metal and glass piercing the heavens, it's impossible not to be awed by the ambition and scale, the mix of new and old which somehow works in harmony.

Burnham made his famous comment sometime in the 19th century, but fast-forward

to 2017 and it's a motto that Chicago's creative community seems to be taking to heart, if this year's barnstorming performance at Cannes Lions is anything to go by.

With Oscar-winning creative studio Framestore opening up a Chicago base, McDonald's moving its headquarters from the suburb of Oak Brook into the city centre, and a series of brand new start-ups invigorating the tech scene, these are clearly exciting times to be in the Windy City.

Second city... but first-rate creativity

Yet historically, Chicago has suffered under the label of “second city” and, despite the creative leaps made in recent years, it's a perception that still persists, to the annoyance of many industry insiders. “The market has been pursuing great work for a very long time, but we've been a bit in the shadows,” reckons Tonise Paul, president and CEO of Energy BBDO Chicago. “I think our story is better than the one that's been told so far.”

“I don't think that we'll ever get away completely from that feeling of Chicago being a second city to New York,” sighs DDB's head of production, Diane Jackson. “DDB's heritage is very much Madison Avenue and Bill Bernbach, but I would argue that the jewel in the network's crown is the Chicago office. We're certainly the most highly awarded.”

Craig Duncan, MD at Cutters Studios, agrees: “Chicago is widely referred to as the ‘second city’, but over the years we have seen first-hand that it is top-tier in every way. I feel the creative

standard is incredibly high, and the work that came out this year was extraordinary.”

“There's no way you can look at the creativity, originality and groundbreaking work that comes out of the agencies in Chicago and say that it is not on par with the coasts,” adds Framestore's executive producer, Krystina Wilson.

Certainly Chicago put in a strong performance on the Croisette this year, winning Lions in categories as wide-ranging as Film Craft (Samsung *Ostrich* from Leo Burnett, and Morton Salt *The One Moment* from Ogilvy & Mather) and PR (FCB's *Teddy Gun* campaign for Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence), while DigitasLBi and Leo Burnett picked up a Grand Prix apiece in Creative Data (Whirlpool *Care Counts*) and Creative Effectiveness (Art Institute of Chicago's *Van Gogh BnB*) respectively.

Much of that “second city” reputation stems from Chicago's traditional advertising heritage, based as it is in heavy-lifting consumer packaged goods (CPG) and insurance work for big brands, many of whom have been somewhat slow when it comes to venturing beyond the safe harbour of traditional, formulaic advertising.

“We [still] do our most engaging work with clients outside the Midwest,” says R/GA ECD Matt Marcus, pointing to LIFEWTR, Pepsi's new art-inspired water brand, which aims to democratise art through creative initiatives such as bottle labels designed by emerging women artists; and Rose, a “highly personality-driven” chatbot-cum-concierge R/GA created for Las Vegas' Cosmopolitan hotel.



“There's no way you can look at the creativity, originality and groundbreaking work that comes out of the agencies in Chicago and say that it is not on par with the coasts.”



the case with healthcare,” says Andrés Ordóñez, CCO, Energy BBDO.

It’s not just new ways of advertising that are being explored – clients are increasingly looking to mould-breaking agency models, too. DDB’s Jackson cites the “epic” 2016 McDonald’s pitch as a key example, in which Leo Burnett and DDB Chicago battled for the fast-food brand’s close-to-US\$1 billion business. “[McDonald’s] was looking for something radically different. So we really blew things up in terms of our pitch.” The bold solution was to offer the client a dedicated “agency of the future” – We Are Unlimited launched in January this year. “It’s definitely a different approach to servicing a client and doing really comprehensive work for them, not just re-appropriating TV ads as pre-roll,” says Jackson, “and the fact this kind of epic move for a major global client is happening here in Chicago is tremendous.”

With this uptick in creativity, coupled with a more affordable cost of living and a healthier

But change is afoot, says DDB’s Jackson.

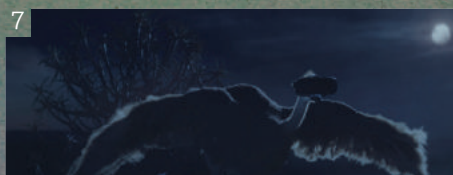
“We definitely had a period of time where clients weren’t willing to take risks, but there has been a massive shift in the last three years. Even large, traditional companies with a dyed-in-the-wool approach to marketing are beginning to rethink their approach.”

Someone who knows the value of convincing clients to take a creative leap of faith is Marcus’s co-ECD AJ Hassan, the brains behind P&G’s multi-award-winning *#LikeAGirl* campaign, who joined the company from Leo Burnett last year. “Every brand goes at their own pace, but over time I think we’ll see more of these big clients being braver, the more they see success stories from corporations like themselves,” she says.

Those success stories include Morton Salt’s *The One Moment*, for which Ogilvy & Mather convinced one of Chicago’s oldest brands to partner with local rockers OK Go on a brilliant music video embodying the spirit of the brand’s iconic umbrella girl logo.

Blowing things up in the Windy City

Meanwhile, Energy BBDO Chicago has been shaking up the usually predictable health category with their life-saving initiative, *The HeroSmiths Theory*, for pharmaceutical giant Bayer, encouraging people with the common surname of Smith to carry Bayer aspirin, thereby helping to reduce the danger of heart attacks. “We applaud Bayer for taking the risk to make a campaign that taps into human emotion, rather than focussing on product attributes, as is often



“Every brand goes at their own pace, but over time I think we’ll see more of these big clients being braver, the more they see success stories from corporations like themselves.”

work-life balance than New York, it’s surprising creatives aren’t flocking from the Big Apple to the Windy City. As Britt Nolan, CCO of Leo Burnett, puts it: “Chicago has all the best parts of New York, but it’s less intense. New York’s at a nine, Chicago’s at a six.”

Yet despite this, attracting talent remains an issue, says Liz Taylor, CCO of FCB Chicago. “Winning international awards and having the big clients helps but [Chicago] can still be a hard sell for creatives.”

Happily, it’s a prejudice that seems confined to the within the United States; elsewhere, Chicago’s success story is trumping old mindsets. “We have people reaching out to us from Brazil, from South Africa... and we love it,” says Taylor. FCB isn’t the only agency attracting international talent; DDB recently lured creatives from Australia and Energy BBDO’s Ordóñez oversees a creative department made up of over 20 different nationalities. “People think of Chicago as this beige, Midwestern place, but you only have to walk the halls of this agency to see that’s ▶

1/2 State Farm, *The Following*

3 Morton Salt, *The One Moment*

4/5 Art Institute of Chicago, *Van Gogh BnB*

6/7/8 Samsung, *Ostrich*



LIFEWTR,
Inspiration Drops
Bayer, *The Hero*
Smiths Theory
Hallmark,
Hannah and Henry



not true,” says BBDO’s Paul proudly. “One of the reasons we’re doing work that is resonating with people all over the world is that we’ve been driving diversity like mad.” Leading international creative production studios such as The Mill and Framestore, which opened in May this year, have also served to draw a wave of world-class talent into the city.

From traditional to tech-forward

When it comes to production, Chicago may not be blessed with the West Coast’s palm trees and balmy climes, but the 30 per cent state tax credit (for shooting and handling post production in Illinois), is bringing “a ton” of TV, film and commercial production into Chicago, meaning there’s enough work not only to keep long-established editing companies like Whitehouse Post and Cutters busy but also to support new



“We call it the city of big shoulders... this notion of being in it together and holding each other up, being great teammates and collaborators.”

ventures such as Third Coast (see profile, page 70). “Traditionally, agencies had to go to the coasts to finish off high-end films, because they felt there wasn’t the talent here to do that,” notes Matthew Wood, partner and editor at Whitehouse Post. “There’s no longer that feeling that a film will suffer for staying here.”

And although the Chicago market continues to be “very traditional, very film-dominated”, according to Wood, R/GA’s Marcus sees the beginnings of a “tech swell” thanks to a wave of new start-ups popping up all around the city “[which are] starting to drive a new perspective”.

A challenger to Chicago’s River North tech hub has appeared in the form of Fulton Market, the city’s former meatpacking district, which houses Google’s Midwest headquarters and The Mill’s gleaming new offices. Having grown from 12 to 65 staff, and with three 2017 Super Bowl spots to their name, “This past year has been pretty spectacular,” says The Mill’s head of colour, Luke Morrison. “We’ve built a team of brilliant makers and creators for all media from across the world, which has made it possible for our clients to keep all of their business in the city.”

Despite its short time on the ground, rival Framestore is already busy with exciting new opportunities, including the new Capital One campaign featuring Samuel L. Jackson. “The most exciting part is that the work... is not just traditional broadcast advertising, but has required us to pitch on projects for all platforms including VR,” says Wilson.

All for a win and a win for all

One thing’s for certain: every award, every piece of new business is celebrated as a win, not just for the individual companies but for Chicago as a whole. Compared to markets like London and New York, Chicago boasts a truly collaborative spirit and a collective goal to raise its creative profile on the world stage.

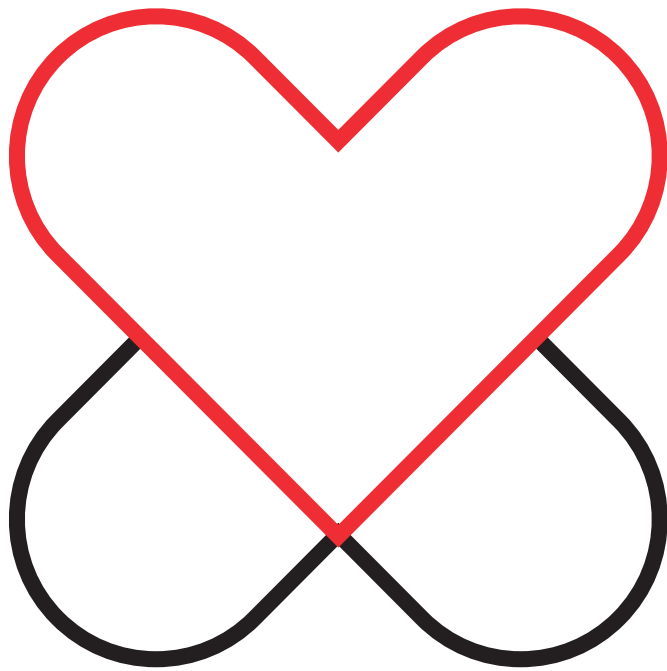
“We call it the city of big shoulders,” says Energy BBDO’s Paul, “this notion of being in it together and holding each other up, being great teammates and collaborators.” Leo Burnett’s Nolan concludes: “Do great work - but be understated and humble about it. That’s the philosophy we live by in Chicago.” **S**

“We’ve built a team of brilliant makers and creators for all media from across the world, which has made it possible for our clients to keep all of their business in the city.”

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A Windy City woman's winning ways

Like most women who've succeeded in male-centric sectors, Liz Taylor has engaged in a few battles: 'fighting her way' onto Gatorade sports spots, facing up to rancour on landing an ACD role over others and countering gripes of positive discrimination on becoming CCO, FCB Chicago, a year ago. Her weapons of choice? A breezy resilience and a cache of Cannes-winning creativity

A famous namesake comes in very handy for certain things. Just ask FCB Chicago's chief creative officer, whose moniker, shared until 2011 with a certain violet-eyed actress, has secured her many a room upgrade/table at the hottest restaurant in town. (In a star-studded double whammy, her creative director husband shares his name with the All Stars legend Chuck Taylor.) But when it comes to carving a stellar career path, Liz Taylor has done it under her own steam.

Which makes the assumption that she landed the CCO gig at FCB purely thanks to a female quota rather annoying. "A lot of people were saying 'Oh, there's another one who got the job just because she's a woman.' I was like, 'I've won some awards! I'm not a hack!'" she says indignantly. "But part of me didn't really care about people's preconceptions, because [I thought] I'll just rise to the challenge with great work that speaks for itself."

And rise she has: leading FCB Chicago to a 12-Lion win at Cannes this year with a slew of creative campaigns, ranging from the charming to the chilling. For kids' bike and trailer brand Radio

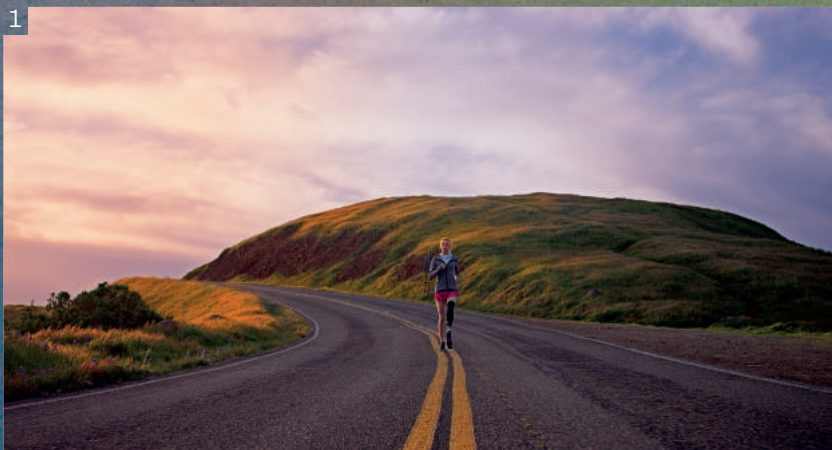
Flyer, the agency launched a kids-only travel agency featuring destinations such as Stinky Broccoli Forest and Mount Puppy, reachable only by imagination, while in their campaign for Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence, a teddy-bear-shaped gun was a grim reminder that it's easier to bring a lethal weapon than a soft toy to market under current US manufacturing regulations.

Other recent highlights include a quartet of films for probiotic brand Renew Life, voiced by William H. Macy and Felicity Huffman, built around the concept 'Being Human Takes Guts'. For Taylor, the campaign exemplifies FCB's global creative vision, "Never finish work", which she was tasked with bringing to Chicago. "[The Chicago office] was traditionally about beautiful, perfected executions. But now, we're working a new muscle in the department, getting people to think about equity-building, legacy-making, culture-changing platforms that can have a provocative, behaviour-changing idea within them, and evolve with new chapters every year. A Nike 'Just Do It'. Or a Dove 'Real Beauty'," she explains excitedly. "That's our mission, and we're just getting started with it."

A Chicago native, Liz Taylor was raised in the suburb where movie classics *The Breakfast Club* and *Sixteen Candles* were shot, and she displayed a strong creative streak from a young age, starring in amateur theatricals and scribbling stories. After majoring in English, she was bound for law school; luckily, her brother convinced her it would "suck her creative juices dry".


The opportunism of an oil painter

Advertising had always interested Taylor – instead of band posters, her college dorm-room walls were plastered with Nike and Absolute ads ripped from magazines – but lacking any industry contacts, she wasn't sure where to start. Unfazed, Taylor simply rang up the most famous agency in town. "I called Leo Burnett Chicago and asked the operator: 'How do you get a job making the ads?'" laughs Taylor. "I didn't even know what it was called!" After attending a portfolio clinic at the agency, she was inspired to apply to Atlanta Portfolio Center, sending oil paintings and a novel (penned at the age of 13) in lieu of a portfolio. It was an early example of the lateral thinking, enthusiasm and resilience that's served Taylor so well in her career. Graduating alongside Ted Royer and Jay Benjamin (it was clearly a vintage year), Taylor got her first copywriting job at J. Walter Thompson New York, where she was soon handling big budgets, global accounts and shooting million-dollar Kodak commercials in India. After eight years in the Big Apple, she returned home, transferring to JWT's Chicago office, where she worked alongside CCO Dennis Ryan "and fell in love with consumer packaged goods". Not the sexiest of products, to work on, admittedly, but, explains Taylor, "If you don't do good work on Nike, you're in trouble. But if you do amazing work on clients that are more traditional and conservative, then that's way more rewarding." ►



1 *Renew Life, Being Human Takes Guts*

2 *Illinois Council Against Handgun Violence, Teddy Gun*



“A lot of people were saying
‘Oh, there’s another one who
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she’s a woman.’ I was like,
‘I’ve won some awards!
I’m not a hack!’”



“It was one of the hardest jobs I’ve ever had. Socially, because there were a lot of creatives who did not like the fact I was coming in above them; mentally, because I didn’t even know how to build a banner ad.”

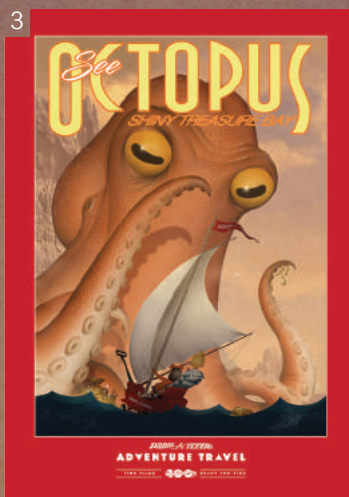


In 2001, she followed Ryan to local indie agency Element 79 (now absorbed by DDB Chicago), where she worked on Gatorade’s *Can Jimmy Play?* campaign, among others. As a big sports fan, it was a personal and professional highlight. “I had to fight my way onto that account – it was a very male-centric group,” remembers Taylor. “*Jimmy...* was an assignment that no one wanted – everyone else was doing the big Super Bowl spot – but it actually became one of their biggest campaigns.”

Then came a four-year stint juggling motherhood with freelancing as a creative gun-for-hire, during which Taylor worked on

“every new business pitch in the city”. Although working with lots of different agencies was fascinating, the craft-obsessed Taylor found handing over projects halfway through “quite frustrating... when what comes out is not at all what you thought you were creating”.

As digital creative evolved from websites and banners into bigger cyber-centric, crafted ideas, new opportunities opened up. Having helped TribalDDB to victory in a Wrigley’s pitch as a self-confessed digital novice – “I’d write down all these technical terms in my Moleskine and go back and Google them” – she was shocked to be



1/2 OK Go, *The One Moment*

3/4 Radio Flyer, *See Octopus Shiny Treasure Bay*; *Planet Of Evil Unicorns*

offered a permanent ACD position. “It was one of the hardest jobs I’ve ever had,” she says. “Socially, because there were a lot of creatives who did not like the fact I was coming in above them; mentally, because I didn’t even know how to build a banner ad.” But displaying the same fly-by-the-seat-of-your-pants attitude that got her into ad school, she stayed “two steps ahead of the clients”. When the agency closed in 2010, she continued building her digital expertise by freelancing at R/GA and Ogilvy, eventually going full-time at the latter as ECD, digital and social, in Chicago, then North America, and finally global.

There, she oversaw such creative highlights as *The One Moment*, Morton Salt’s mesmerising slow-mo music video for OK Go, a bold move for an ultra-traditional brand that had never done any advertising; Glade’s data-fuelled immersive scent experience, Museum of Feelings; and the Brady Campaign’s *Zero Minutes of Fame*, a Google Chrome plug-in that replaced mass shooters’ names with those of their victims, denying killers their craved notoriety.

Collaborative competitiveness

Add to this an almost brotherly bond with Ogilvy’s CCO, Joe Sciarrotta (“I’ve never met a bigger champion of women, of talent. I am where I am because of him.”) and it’s no surprise Taylor thought she’d found her forever agency. Fate – and FCB’s global CCO Susan Credle – had other ideas. The two had known each other for years, but one night, at an industry dinner, “We just started talking, and the opportunity was too good to be true.” Now, just over a year into the job, Taylor is focussed on the creative mission set by Credle of “doing famous work on famous brands” and bolstering the creative department through diversity recruitment initiatives. “We’re being cautious – I don’t want anyone to feel there is a quota, or cause any insecurities,” she adds, mindful of her own experience.

Understandably keen to see FCB Chicago rise to the top of the network, Taylor is equally set on challenging hoary old perceptions of the Windy City itself and boosting her home town’s creative credentials as a whole.

“We Chicagoans are competitive, we’re always fighting our way to the top, but we’re still supportive of others. We’re all in it together,” she concludes. “Unless it’s the Cubs versus the Sox!” **S**

Going native: Chicago



Glorily Velez, editor at Whitehouse Post Chicago, says her city's favourite pastime is eating and drinking. Luckily, it has some of the best restaurants – and the strongest pisco drinks – in the US

What is the best thing about working in advertising in Chicago?

The tight-knit community. Everyone seems to know each other in one capacity or another.

What is the worst thing about working in advertising in Chicago?

I know this is a clichéd answer, but I'd say winter. It's just so damn long.

If you are booking a hotel in Chicago, where would you choose to stay?

Room #55 at the Longman & Eagle Inn. Unpretentious and attached to a delicious restaurant with an amazing whiskey selection. It's located in Logan Square, which is a bit out from the downtown area, but the neighbourhood is full of great bars, restaurants and coffee shops.

What advice would you give to a visitor?

Most tourists spend all their time downtown, which is unfortunate. I'd tell a visitor to schedule some time to visit some of the different neighbourhoods in the city. Each one is so distinct and vibrant. Experiencing a few can give quite an impressive view of what this city is all about.

What's the best ad from Chicago you have seen in the last year?

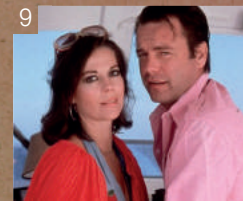
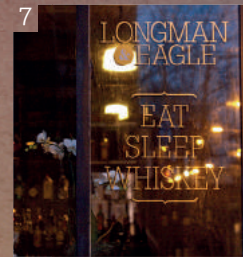
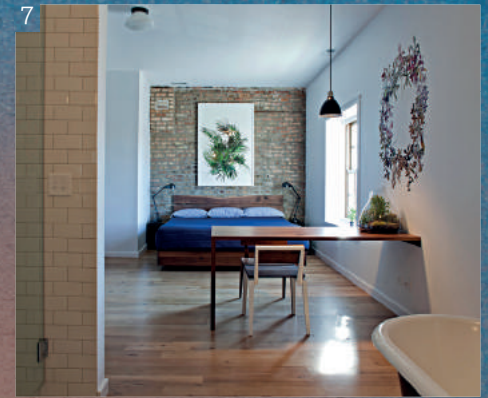
I really got a kick out of Liquid-Plumr *Cracks*. So simple. It really surprised me when I first saw it and it makes me giggle every time I see it now. There are so many concepts, making so much noise, competing for a viewer's attention. Sometimes a chuckle is all you need to make a spot memorable.

Who do you/would you love to work with in the industry?

Where do I start?! Generally, anyone who manages to stay fresh, motivated and positive. A kind heart and soulful eyes are a plus.

Where's the best place to eat in Chicago?

That's almost impossible to answer. Chicago has some of the best restaurants in the US. I eat at Lula Cafe more than any other and it continues to be a favourite. It's laid-back and cosy. You can have a casual lunch or a fine dinner. The experience is totally up to you because the menu offers a bit of everything. It's been open since 1999 and was farm-to-table before that was even a concept. It continues to stay relevant today, which is extremely inspiring.



And the best place to have a drink?

Estereo in Logan Square for strong pisco drinks and a kick-ass Latin/funk/soul playlist. Just walking by that place puts a smile on my face. Also, Rainbo in Wicker Park for the dive-y atmosphere and all the friends you'll run into.

If Chicago were a product, what would it be?

A state-of-the-art minivan in need of a tune-up.

One table, four places. You and who else?

Maya Deren, Nelson Mandela and Julia Louis-Dreyfus.

What is Chicago's favourite pastime?

Eating and drinking. It's no joke.

What do you miss when you are out of the city?

The Bavette's burger, which some say is better than Au Cheval's.

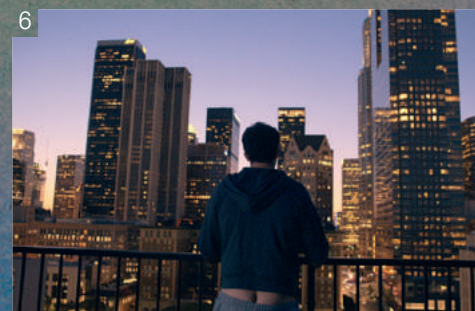
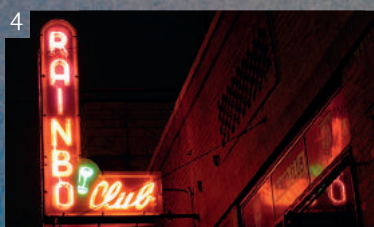
What's your one-line life philosophy?

Do I feel like sharing with the world today?

If you could have one question answered, what would it be?

What really happened to Natalie Wood? **S**

"If Chicago were a product it would be a state-of-the-art minivan in need of a tune-up."



- 1 Filmmaker Maya Deren
- 2 Actress Julia Louis-Dreyfus
- 3 Nelson Mandela
- 4 Rainbo Club for a drink
- 5 Eat at Lula Cafe
- 6 Liquid-Plumr, Cracks
- 7 Longman & Eagle Inn
- 8 Bavette's burger
- 9 Natalie Wood

Chicago's taxidermist of truth

Director Ky Dickens' documentaries delicately preserve real-life stories for future generations. She uses her emotional intelligence to sensitively tackle charged subjects in her award-winning and influential films, covering subjects as wide-ranging as survivor's guilt and the history of advertising in Chicago



“You can’t be a passive participant. You have to be actively trying to make the situation better.” Ky Dickens is talking passionately about the paucity of women on film sets, be they directors, camera operators or grips. She pauses. “But on the plus side, there’s a really short line for the bathroom.” A flash of humour that perfectly illustrates the down-to-earth attitude that makes her such an accomplished documentarian.

Over the course of her 10-year career, Dickens has trained her lens on some deeply emotive subjects – religious opposition to gay marriage (*Fish Out of Water*); survivor’s guilt (*Sole Survivor*); the lack of paid family leave that drives mothers back to work within two weeks of giving birth in the US (*Zero Weeks*) – with empathy and emotional intelligence. The result? Hard-hitting films that have not only garnered numerous awards on the indie festival circuit, but shifted policy and public opinion.

Telling tales out of school

The daughter of Swedish immigrants, Dickens grew up just outside Chicago. A natural storyteller (“It started as tall tales when I was little,”) she has been documenting the world around her since picking up a video camera in fifth grade. When a college friend died tragically in a car crash, she was able to construct a memorial from the hours of footage she’d accumulated. “Suddenly it was clear that film can immortalise someone in a way. Something just clicked in my brain and I thought, I will always have a camera with me now, no matter what.”

After graduating from Vanderbilt University, Tennessee, with a “cobbled-together” film degree, Dickens started making commercials to fund her first documentary, 2009 Netflix hit *Fish Out of Water*, which challenged the seven biblical verses commonly used to condemn homosexuality. Since

then, the commercial and filmmaking strands of Dickens’ career have flourished in tandem: her deft interviewing skills translating particularly well into documentary-style branded content pieces for clients such as Huggies, Wrangler, McDonald’s and Hallmark.

Chicago’s hidden ad history

Since signing to STORY in Chicago last year, she’s directed a Mother’s Day campaign for Tylenol, *How We Family*, redefining traditional notions of parenthood via interviews with mothers including actress Lucy Liu, whose son was born via a surrogate. “I never want it to feel contrived,” she says of her approach. “Even if it’s a script, I’ll ask the subjects questions, so they’re not just delivering a line. In order to get those really raw performances, I spend a lot of time getting to know these people, researching them, what are their insecurities? The more you can make them feel safe and protected, [the better], so it feels like they’re just having a conversation with a friend.”

Dickens reckons that women have a natural advantage when it comes to unscripted work. “I’m not saying that men aren’t capable of it, but [in] society, women are trained to be emotional listeners. So it’s good that advertising agencies are starting to harness that.”

This autumn, the two facets of her career cross over in *The City That Sold America*, the untold story of Chicago’s pivotal role in the US advertising industry. While Madison Avenue is commonly seen as adland’s ancient seat, Dickens points out many of the early creative greats hailed from Chicago, along with marketing ploys like product placement and market research.

In the feature-length documentary, Dickens spotlights key milestones such as the shift away from long copy in print ads (“You should buy X because Y...” to large images, pioneered

by Leo Burnett; and the introduction of brand mascot “critters” – Tony the Tiger, the Pillsbury Doughboy et al – which were mocked at the time.

She also, excitingly, uncovers local talents that have been whitewashed from the history books, such as the black designer and artist Charles Dawson, who was “making comic books and pop art long before Andy Warhol”.

A sequel to the Emmy Award-winning film *Art & Copy, The City...* has been three long years in the making. In contrast to the “visceral” experience of making *Zero Weeks*, the film took “a ton of research”, complicated by many of its subjects – such as the father of modern advertising, Albert Lasker, legendary copywriter Claude Hopkins, and Leo Burnett himself – being long dead. Currently at the final hurdle of rights clearance, it’s set to premiere in early 2018 and has taught Dickens a few lessons about making commercials: “When a storyboard lands on my desk, I can’t look at it in the same way now. I see the roots of where it came from.”

It’s set to be a busy few months with both *The City...* and *Zero Weeks* hitting the indie film festival circuit, and two more films in production: LGBTQ documentary *Queer in Trump’s America*, and, for fun, a “teeny little project” on the Chicago Mothman, a legendary seven-foot humanoid bat said to terrorise the Windy City.

City of affordable dreams

Winged monsters aside, Dickens has a deep affection for Chicago, citing “the awesome community” of documentary makers, editors and filmmakers, the liberal, progressive vibe and the affordable cost of living. While many have upped sticks to NY and LA, in Chicago “it’s easier to have a creative life”, she concludes. “And that’s where my values are: I’d prefer to be making my work than waiting tables on the side.” **S**



PHOTOGRAPH: JIM LUNING / LOCATION: WOOLLY MAMMOTH

“I never want it to feel contrived. Even if it’s a script, I’ll ask the subjects questions, so they’re not just delivering a line.”

Cut from a different cloth

Nimble, smart and collaborative, cutting company collective Third Coast Editorial represents a thoroughly modern way of working. Founder Lisa Long explains how she is bringing together the new editorial gangs of Chicago



There's a revolution going on in Chicago – editorially speaking. True, the mighty Whitehouse Post and Cutters still dominate the local market, but down in the city's arty River North neighbourhood, one woman is quietly challenging the established order. Having launched Third Coast Editorial (a “collective of elite international editorial companies”) last year, founder Lisa Long has already facilitated an impressive body of work. The first spot to be cut out of Third Coast's small but efficient studio was Samsung's award-winning *Ostrich*, followed by commercials for State Farm, Capital One and Kellogg's.

“It's been a complete whirlwind,” says Long, who doesn't look remotely ruffled. She clearly possesses the typical producer traits of unflappability, problem anticipation and the ability to keep creatives, directors and editors on an even keel during what is often the trickiest – and most emotional – part of the post process, in spades.

“The Soho House of editorial” is how Third Coast bills itself; something closer to a private members' club than a four-wall studio. The collective's members, who currently comprise Work Editorial, Final Cut, Cosmostreet and colour-grading studio Apache Digital, pay a monthly retainer. This gives them exclusive access to editing suites, studio space, multi-level assistant editors and Long's EP services – including her enviable little black book of local agency contacts, built up over two decades in the business. They also have a veto over new member applications.

A lean, mean editing machine

In an era of shrinking budgets and in-house agency studios, Third Coast's lean, nimble, collaborative model looks like a very modern answer to the question marks hanging over the future of creative editorial. So why hasn't anyone managed it until now? “I guess I was just the first

person to quit my job and try it,” says Long. “I figured I could sell my house and go live with my parents in the suburbs if it didn't work out.”

The idea first started germinating in spring 2016, during the annual AICE awards show. Chatting to EPs from Final Cut, Cosmostreet and Work Editorial, Long recalls: “We were having the same conversation. What do we do about Chicago? We all knew there was work and opportunity here, but how to make it happen? No one wants to put up bricks and mortar if they don't already have a client base here. And the editors in town are already contracted in. They're not looking to be the next editor at, say, Final Cut when they're already a partner at [an existing Chicago editing house].”

Long was working at a small design agency and itching to get back into the editing business, where she'd started more than 20 years ago at Red Car Chicago. “I asked myself, what is it editors need on a local level? You need an executive producer who has relationships with the agencies here already, you need a space, you need assistant editors. And [to know] that if you build it, they will come.”

After running the idea past the heads of production at the big Chicago shops, Long was completely convinced. “Because [bringing in editing talent] can be a big headache for an agency producer, too. When does the editor get here, where do we put 'em, what happens if the cut isn't approved, where does the assistant come from, am I paying for them? I thought, I can solve the editing company's problems. I can solve the agency's problems. I'll bring all the talent here and make it really simple.”

Once Long saw the River North studio, all the pieces fell into place. The only question was whether rival editorial companies would actually agree to share space and resources. But, driven by “a level of mutual respect” and understanding that “playing together nicely” was the only way to

succeed in the market, Work, Cosmostreet and Apache Digital all signed on the dotted line, followed by Final Cut earlier this year.

“The way I saw it, if I surrounded myself with the best talent, it would bring people to the table, because people are going to want to work with that talent,” says Long. And the jobs have flooded in.

The future of creative editorial

When it comes to moving editors around the globe, Long has a wealth of experience. She was producing at the Looking Glass Company when it merged with Whitehouse Post in 2002, and was charged with the workflow of 16 editors between London, New York and LA – in the pre-smartphone era. (“We were texting on Nokia flip-phones!”)

Even so, working with three huge editorial companies has its challenges. “It's what you'd do as an EP for one company, times three. Looking at calendars, I'm having a stroke, because everyone's bidding on these five or six really hot brand campaigns, and what if they're all awarded at the same time? But I tell myself there's always a way.”

What has been the reaction from the big guns, including her former employer? Healthy competition and challenging a monopoly can only benefit the local market, reckons Long. She already plans to extend her empire to Boston and Boulder, Colorado – both markets producing work of a creative standard that demands (and, just as importantly, has the budgets to bring in) the crème de la crème of international editing talent.

Fundamentally, says Long, Third Coast represents the future of creative editorial. “These big companies with 10,000 square feet, and 10, 15 edit suites ... runners, receptionists... 10 different varieties of sparkling water in the fridge – is that model really sustainable? Can you staff up when you need to? And staff down when you don't? You've got to break the mould to stay current.” **S**

“The way I saw it, if I surrounded myself with the best talent, it would bring people to the table, because people are going to want to work with that talent.”



BOOMING BOTS AND THE APPSOLUTELY OBSOLETE



Business bots butting their way into conversations on social media might seem like anti-social behavior that could hurt a brand, but by following certain rules a chatbot can sweet talk its way into a user's life. *Gracie Page*, creative technologist at Y&R London and digital marketing mentor at Cambridge University, predicts the fall of the app as bots engage in a little more conversation



With an excess of 100,000 bots reportedly developed for prime bot-serving platform Facebook Messenger, bots are one of most hotly debated topics to hit the industry in years. Smartphones are used by 81 per cent of the adult UK population, and by 91 per cent of those aged 19-44. The average British child has their first smartphone aged 10 and 68 per cent of visits to fashion retailers are on mobile^[1]. The chatbot medium represents a Trojan horse into the consumer's life through messaging platforms.

What is a chatbot?

Essentially, a chatbot is a computer program with which a human can interact to have a conversation. They're often designed to mimic a human, although no modern consumer-facing bots have yet passed the Turing test. The term "artificial intelligence" crops up often when discussing chatbots, but the fact is they are still relatively dumb. They deliver one side of a conversation in either plain text or a richer range of media such as images, multiple-choice menus and booking systems, using real-time contextual data and geo-location information.

Unlike a human on the end of a phone or a live web chat, they're always on – our first clue as to why they have so much brand potential. To truly understand the value of chatbots for brands, we need to contextualise this technology in a typical consumer's daily life.

The key to launching a successful bot is to build brand affinity by helping accomplish a task or deliver some personal value such as education or entertainment. Facebook recently announced that bots would soon be coming to group chats and WhatsApp is introducing them by the end of 2018. Chatbots will not only evolve, but become increasingly relevant to consumers' complex, connected lives as they prove useful, and as more brands get involved. The era of the app is over.

The new disruptor

With so many bots developed for Facebook Messenger, we now have a solid handle on how to build them. But this is only half of the equation. Bots are among the most hotly debated pieces of tech to start permeating the industry in years, but to fully appreciate how they will disrupt the current landscape, we must consider their role from the user's perspective.

User behaviour

Brits are set to spend £27 billion this year on mobile^[2], not least because of the aforementioned 68 per cent of all visits to fashion retailers that now occur there. In saturated digital days that start moments after wake-up (33 per cent of users reach for their phone within the first five minutes of waking^[3]), people have started streamlining and nowhere is this clearer than the change in behaviour towards

“Ease of communication with a branded bot in such an intimate space constitutes a new user behaviour and a disruptive event.”

SOURCES

- 1 IMRG and Capgemini, 2016. Quarterly Benchmarking Report.
- 2 According to the Centre for Retail Research (CRR) and online retailer VoucherCodes.co.uk
- 3 Deloitte's mobile consumer survey from 2016: 'There's no place like phone'.
- 4 Localytics, 2017. '24% of Users Abandon an App After One Use'.
- 5 Gartner News Room, 2016. 'The Post-App Era'.
- 6 CNN, 2017. 'Facebook Is Still Trying To Make Bots Happen'.
- 7 Mashable, 2016. 'Apple Releases Most Downloaded Apps of 2016'.
- 8 eMarketer, 2016. 'UK Makes Up One Fifth of Mobile Messaging App Users in Western Europe'.

“The chatbot medium represents a Trojan horse into the consumer’s life through messaging platforms.”

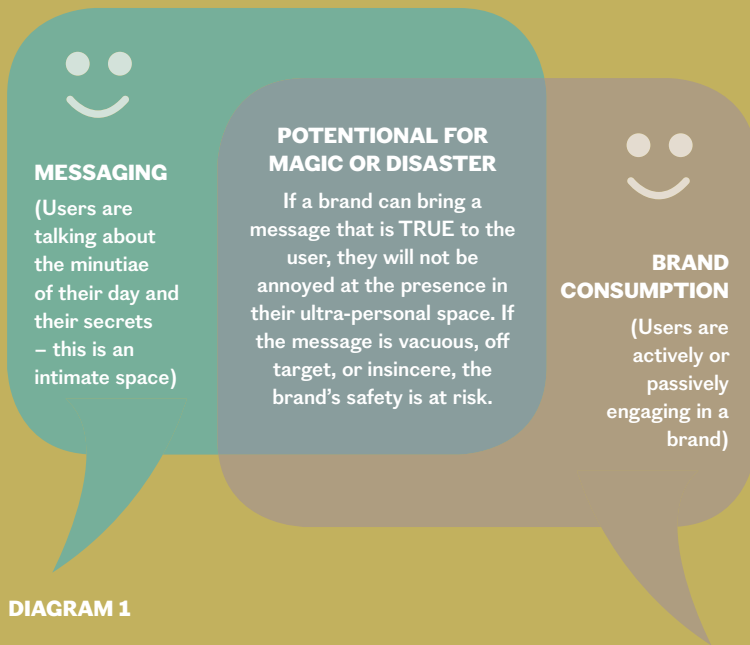


DIAGRAM 1

apps. With one in every four deleted after just one use^[4], the post-app era has begun^[5]. So, with mobile consumption on the rise, but decreased app usage, where is our audience? Deloitte’s 2016 study on mobile usage^[3] offers clues: email, social media, messaging platforms. The two most downloaded iOS apps of 2016 were Snapchat and Facebook Messenger^[7]. WhatsApp has overtaken text messaging in the number of messages sent. The phenomenon is a pan-generational one: almost half of 55-64 year olds use instant messaging weekly, and more so than regular social platforms^[3].

The message is clear: the next place to engage the bombarded consumer is directly within the messaging environment. This is where they are at ease. Talking with their loved ones, marketing guards down. However, there is a huge brand safety issue here. As Cathy Boyle of eMarketer

puts it: “[brands] injecting themselves into users’ conversations is not easy, and it’s often unwelcome”^[8]. Invading this ultra-personal space requires tact, and a strategy for delivery of positively life-changing content.

The branded chatbot

To meaningfully connect, brands must recognise consumers want to be engaged in very few ways. In essence, brands must help consumers to save time or money, afford them conveniences, or entertain them. Although saving time and money is more typically a product job as opposed to a content one, this can be translated – in the context of content – into them being “informed” and “inspired”. Thus, the three pillars of the bot’s role become to inform, inspire and entertain.

Barriers to engagement are low, thanks to the chatbot effectively

Trojan-horsing into the user’s life through the familiar messaging platform. Ease of communication with a branded bot in such an intimate space constitutes a new user behaviour and a disruptive event. In this space, the brand takes on a pure quality. A relevant message amidst a cacophony of other advertising represents a chance to build a real connection with the user (see diagram 1).

The chatbot trinity

Chatbots can be used by brands in three main ways. Firstly, they can be transactional: such a bot might help the user get a task done. A great example of this is the KLM chatbot that assists travellers to navigate their way through the booking and travelling process. Secondly, they can be entertaining or amusing. German sweet brand Trolli has a slightly disturbing but engaging

Tamagotchi-esque bot that rewards participation with candy. Finally, chatbots can be used purely for disseminating information or otherwise helping the user educate themselves. The adidas Woman chatbot is a great example of these last two functionalities.

Rules of engagement

My golden rule for all tech usage in content marketing is simple: if it doesn’t have a purpose, don’t make it. The two variables chatbots deliver on are value and service. And these can each take two forms: functional, or emotional.

This gives us the following possibilities (see diagram 2). The key to launching a successful bot is to build brand affinity by helping accomplish a task, or delivering some personal value such as education or entertainment. Everything ultimately reflects on the brand, so carefully choosing the role for this technology will make the difference between campaign success and brand failure.

Conclusions

It remains to be seen how the public will embrace bots, especially given the current lack of analytical data. However, the field is forging ahead. Facebook announced at its annual developer conference, F8 2017, that bots are coming to group chats soon, while over at WWDC 2017, Apple’s yearly developer conference, it was announced that iOS 11, which launches this autumn, will feature bots for business.

The more they are used, the more bots will become increasingly useful in consumers’ lives, and the more brands will get involved. The era of the app as we know it could be coming to an end. **S**



DIAGRAM 2

THE WAY
I SEE IT

Steve Vranakis

Back when digital was but a gleam in analogue's eye, Steve Vranakis got in on the act early, and subsequently was known wherever he worked as "the web guy". On joining Google in 2011, however, he was surrounded by such top-flight tech talent he became the "least digital guy", a lesson in humility he now values. Despite his relegation, though, as ECD of Google's Creative Lab, he's proudly leading a "ragtag group of idealists and vagabonds" to create visionary digital work that not only creates positive change but wins awards. He talks to *Tim Cumming* about "goodvertising" and his motorcycle maintenance maxims for life





“I was one of those people who didn’t even know what ‘creative’ was. When you grow up with immigrant parents, it’s all about doing something that will give you a decent living.”

I was born and grew up in Vancouver. My parents emigrated from Greece after the war, seeking a better life. I grew up in an incredibly mixed neighbourhood, very multicultural. There was a lot of energy, a lot of positive vibes.

I’m self-taught. I was one of those people who didn’t even know what “creative” was. When you grow up with immigrant parents, it’s all about doing something that will give you a decent living.

My dad was an artist, but he was also a labourer. That’s how he supported us, he had two jobs. In September I’m going to be president of D&AD so a big thing about my narrative is trying to get all types of different kids involved – people from families who don’t know anything about these industries, who don’t have the means to teach their kids these sorts of things.

I had set up a little graphic design studio in Vancouver, in a cool area called Gastown, and these guys came in, and said, “Could you help us put an identity together? We’re launching Canada’s first ISP.” I pretended to know what ISP [internet service provider] was. Then I pretended to know what the internet was. And I helped them launch it. That was my first foray into tech.

I hired a couple of people, and we switched exclusively to web. Nobody cared about the internet at the time, but people saw that we were starting to become a viable, credible business for digital marketing. We merged with Palmer Jarvis DDB [now DDB Canada], and I stayed there for a couple of years, then came to the UK and joined a start-up called Modem Media Poppe Tyson, and became part of a group of really interesting people from all over the world who helped to launch this digital thing. We did great stuff for brands like PlayStation, and the original positioning for Amazon, which was ‘Books for Everyone’.

What I had learnt at DBB, around formulating a really strong creative thought to help drive the narrative, came into play. You still had a lot of people who were pure techies or IT people going into the digital space, so even going out there with a creative idea was a stronger proposition in itself. It wasn’t just this advertising layer that sold people stuff. DDB had that same methodology of entertaining people. They would turn it into something quite magical.

There’s a big difference between “creatives are king” and “creativity is king”. I think agencies these days are a lot more flat, a lot more democratic, there are a lot more ideas coming out from across different groups. And even groups don’t exist anymore – it’s a bunch of people with a different centre of gravity. Some people think more strategically; some people are more inclined to design; some people write better. That whole departmental thing doesn’t seem so prevalent anymore.

I remember one agency I worked at, the third floor was only for creatives, and if you were caught on the third floor and you were what they called a suit, then you’d be in a lot of trouble. Can you imagine that? You want to do the opposite. This whole place at Google Labs is designed to allow people to collide and to run in to each other. It’s always about these exchanges and that’s a really powerful thing.

When people were still trying to figure out the web, I was very much the back-of-the-deck guy. Whether it was for pitch or a presentation, once they had gone through the lead TV, the print, outdoor and radio, then you could present digital. And often we didn’t get to pitch because we ran out of time. If you did manage to do it

there was never a budget to generate anything, so we would have to make sure they shot additional assets and were always cobbling together stuff in a very scrappy way.

At the time I hated it, it was just really insulting, but now it’s taught me that when you have these constraints you get to some of the best outcomes. And we’re still incredibly scrappy in my team at Google Labs – we use a week or two and a very small pot of money to make stuff. If it doesn’t stick we’ll go on to the next. And we haven’t spent a lot of time and money doing it. That is how we work.

I try to understand how people feel about things. What are the implications of the stuff I put out for a kid who is sat in front of the TV for hours every day while his parents are at work? I think about all of these people who are seeing these things, and are we making their lives better? Or are we just adding to all the other stuff out there?

I have been at Google since 2011. Having started on the web so early in my career, I was the web guy at almost every single agency. And when I got here, I am probably the least digital guy because it is an organisation run by engineers who are doing incredible things with all sorts of applications, and you need a sort of humility to go from the most to the least digital guy. It was an incredible experience, very humbling. I think a lot of people could use that.

This company has a belief system about technology, that it’s for everyone, no matter who you are or where you’re from. We make things that remove the barriers and give you access to the things you need in your life.

Last year we continued work on a programme Google India launched in 2013 called HWGO (helping women get online). It uses technology and low-cost Android One phones to help get millions of women from rural Indian villages online. We have these women who ride bicycles with a food delivery box on the back but there’s no food inside, instead there are phones. They go from village to village, handing out phones, teaching women how to use the internet. One woman had just one pattern for the blouses she made. She was then able to download different patterns and suddenly was using designs nobody else had and selling three times as many blouses.

You sit there and you think about these things. It may not be a huge amount of money but it’s triple the amount of money the blouse maker had before, because she could access information. It’s enabling. People have it in them to do amazing things that circumstances may have prevented them from doing. If our technology can help remove barriers and we can enable people to do incredible things, then we should.



“I try to understand how people feel about things. What are the implications of the stuff I put out for a kid who is sat in front of the TV for hours every day while his parents are at work?”

How do you make things that have an impact on everyone’s lives? That is what our chief executive talks about. Interactivity is about access. Look at a small business that uses Ad Words; they have a limited amount of money and to be able to help a bunch of people build businesses and livelihoods, that is a powerful thing. That’s what the internet and our company helps them to do. And it’s right across the board.

To this day, the single most important thing I feel that I have done is a little tiny mobile website built in 36 hours, two years ago, to help refugees. We went to the Greek island of Lesbos for a week and helped 150,000 people who landed there find their way to a refugee house. It didn’t cost any more than a flight to Lesbos. That’s what I’m trying to get more people to think about.

Somebody once said: “We should not be embarrassed about what we do,” and I wholeheartedly agree. I built a career on the back of it. Some people say that advertising is turning into goodvertising and that’s not right because not every brand can be a goodvertising brand, but I think all brands can do better and have a more positive impact on society. I believe as creative people we are more powerful than we think – or acknowledge – that we are.

At Google Labs we do a lot of different types of work across the whole organisation. I’d say we are a ragtag group of idealists and vagabonds. We’re from all over the place and from all different backgrounds and cultures, but there is a level of idealism in what we believe we can do.

Our whole thing is to try and rethink some of our products, come up with more future-facing aspects alongside our engineers, with technology at the core of it. There’s no real thread that connects it all, other than the desire to do good and to show people how technology might enable them to do things better.

One of the practices that we follow at Google Labs is that we put everything we do in one line. There’s one line to explain the idea, and if you can’t really understand what the single line is articulating, then it’s probably too complicated.

Inside Google Labs we have The Google Five. They’re a group of people we pull from all over the world, who are at the beginning of their careers, and who haven’t had too much of their thinking affected. We want them to come to us

with really interesting raw perspectives, and we want them to find out first-hand what creativity and technology can allow them to do.

The Google Five are drawn from different disciplines. We don’t use the word “creative”, because I’d like to think that every single person in my group is creative, from my strategists to my team leaders to my producers and project managers. I want them to approach everything creatively.

The Google Five are a cohort, but sometimes we encourage them to split up. At other times they’ll do projects together, and at the end of that year, the point isn’t that they stay on – though some of them do – but that they go out and share their practices and experience with other organisations. That’s alright with us; there’s nothing secretive going on. It’s the way we put the group together that makes it special.

I’ve won more awards with the team here in six years than I had done in my entire 20 year career prior to this – I’m really proud of the team. I learnt very late in my career that it is not about competition, it’s more that if you can create the conditions and the environment for people to succeed, they will thrive.

I remember taking my motorcycle training and they have this acronym called SIPDE, which means Scan, Identify, Predict, Determine, Execute, and I apply that to my day-to-day life. I am constantly looking at anything that will prevent my team delivering. We have been very successful because of that approach. 📷

SIRI SEEMS TO BE THE HARDEST WORD



“Video killed the radio star,” so sang The Buggles, on their 1979 pop prophecy about a new medium killing its forebear. But Piers Scott, lead UX designer at Irish agency Rothco, believes “in with the new” doesn’t have to mean “out with the old”. He thinks fears that new voice tech will kill off audio ads is unfounded. With a bit of imagination, the robot voices of tomorrow needn’t be ad-free

“We need to accept that voice assistants have their own set of rules.”

In 1927, a young Hitchcock had his first major cinematic success with a silent film, *The Lodger*. Watching it now, it’s easy to recognise that distinctive Hitchcock style and the themes that would reappear throughout his later works. However, its overly exaggerated acting has more to do with Victorian-era vaudeville than 20th-century realism. Film and cinema might have been new media, but those involved in their production brought with them the style and language of their predecessors. At the time *The Lodger* was released, many were wringing their hands at the impending death of the theatre. Similarly, those working in the print media were fretting over the demise of newspapers at the hands of radio. Move on to the 1950s and television was meant to kill off both cinema and radio. In the 1980s home recording would see the end of its predecessor, TV, and, in the 1990s, the web was finally meant to finish them all off. This decade the smartphone was media’s prospective murderer. New media, as it turns out, do not have a great record of killing off their precursors. As new platforms emerge, we’re more likely to add them to our existing media consumption habits than forget about the old.

Currently, it is voice technology, such as Apple’s Siri, Amazon’s Alexa, or Google Assistant that’s resulting in conversations about disruption. Just as film in the 1920s resembled theatre, the received wisdom is that voice assistant ads, being an audio medium, will take after radio commercials. And the fear is that, as consumers move from radio to streaming audio, voice assistants will do away with ads altogether. The argument is that, as consumers increasingly use voice technologies – which don’t have visual interfaces – marketers will have fewer and fewer opportunities to reach them. This belief was seemingly proved in March this year when Google Home and Google Assistant appeared to include promotional content about the new *Beauty and The Beast* film. Users were annoyed, protests acknowledged, and the content disappeared within a few hours.

For its part, Google understands this, saying that it currently doesn’t want to inject ads into the voice interface. But that doesn’t mean that a voice-controlled future is going to be ad-less (Amazon is currently trialling sponsored content), but that the nature of the ads needs to be different.

Voice tech will require a new set of rules, and customers will interact with promotional content on these devices differently. It will simply become another medium that we must learn to design for.

Context is king

Rothco tested voice assistants with a small number of users to see exactly how they were using them. While these users said they used these devices as information-finding tools (eg “What is 56°F in Celsius?”), we observed they more frequently used the devices as planning tools. Consumers want to know what their day’s schedule looked like; if it’s going to rain, what shopping they needed to get. They also often asked the devices to remind them of important information at set points during the day. When these consumers used these devices for product-related searches they wanted to find information about products that they were already considering buying. It appears that consumers don’t need radio-like ads designed to increase awareness – other media do that better – they need content that helps them make more informed decisions about the products that they are interested in buying. An important point here for consumers is that context is key for successful voice content. This is most apparent and acute when consumers are using voice assistants while driving.

When driving, consumers will turn to their voice assistant to find practical information such as, “Where is the nearest petrol station?” The opportunity here for advertisers is to use the context of this request to provide the best possible quality of information to consumers. A voice assistant that tells you there’s a garage near where you’re driving is good, but a superior voice assistant would tell you that in the same radius there’s a garage with better services. This research may be just a small glimpse into consumers’ usage of voice tech but it helps us get perspective and gives a starting point for providing useful and usable content via this medium.

We need to accept that voice assistants have their own set of rules. And if we set out to understand these rules with actual consumers, rather than relying on assumptions based on older ideas and media, we can deliver better quality information to consumers and ultimately better services for our clients. **S**

1 HTC Vive, Gear VR, Oculus Rift (pictured), PlayStation VR

I seemed to reach a kind of career zenith thanks to VR headsets. It's a genuine love for me. I spend an unhealthy amount of time squirrelled away in the virtual world. As a creative space to play in, it's maddening, depressing, surprising and exhilarating. Its potential is insane, yet the key to its magic lies tantalisingly out of reach for now. A creative's dream challenge.



2 Record collection

As an expat Londoner living in New York, I've shipped most of my possessions over to America. The one thing I couldn't manage, for a bunch of reasons, is my ridiculously large record collection. It has been a cruel separation. There are thousands of records, but I can describe in intimate detail where I was and what I was feeling when I bought every single one of them. Therein lies the power of the addiction, perhaps.



3 Surface Pro

An observation from this Anglo in New York: the bizarre hold that Apple has over people in the production business. I'm onto my third Microsoft Surface Pro now and it's a kick-ass little beast of a machine for everything from Steam games to development to day-to-day laptop/tablet functionality. I love it. And no, I don't want a MacBook Pro.

4 Amazon Fire TV Stick

Watching TV has never been easier. This puts my YouTube and Flickr accounts on my TV, next to my premium cable apps and enormous film libraries, plus Kodi, streaming, iPhone remote, Alexa voice integration... the list is endless. All on a fully portable USB stick. Bravo.

5 Visvim

As a 43 year old, I should have grown out of this, but my normal teenage sneaker obsession has matured into a more bizarre infatuation. There's a truly incredible Japanese company called Visvim that goes to extreme lengths to create the perfect sneaker. They're part pioneering science, part handmade-influenced design and part incredible comfort. I've had one pair since

2003 and they look like new. Sadly, Kanye started wearing them a little while back, so they're more expensive than is reasonable these days.

6 Skateboard

There seems to be a pattern developing here. Another youth obsession I'm struggling to let go of. Like many ex-skaters I'm not arsed about extreme sports, more the culture that goes with street skating. This opened me up to music, films and creativity more than anything else could have done when I was an impressionable teen. **S**

MIKE WOODS
director of immersive content/
executive creative director,
messing pieces New York
**FAVOURITE
KIT**



Production Services in the Canary Islands!



Product: Rolls Royce
Client: W Film London
Executive Producer: Beth Wightman
Producer: Norbert A Schilling
Director/Photographer: Joe Windsor-Williams
Director of Photography: Andy McLeod
Location: Lanzarote, Canary Islands

Film!CanaryIslands



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MEN BEHAVING SADLY

Olivia Atkins meets the makers of three films featuring troubled males: a comic cartoon sees a competitive player put the crazy in crazy golf; a haunting promo profiles a soldier's angst and a spec spot shows the poignant side of rugby rivalry



MegaComputeur

SHORT FILM



Play Off

The six members of this French animation collective – Camille Jalabert, Léo Brunel, Quentin Camus, Corentin Yvergnaux, Maryka Laudet and Oscar Malet – share an affinity with absurdity

How long have you been directing for and why did you decide animation was for you?

We've been directing together for almost a year. Obviously working in animation is the best way to achieve wealth and fame, but it also allows us to tell stories without any real-life limitations. We can play with proportions, colours and styles. And cartoonising characters allows us to delve further into our preferred genre – absurd comedy.

Did you know instantly that you wanted to direct together?

Some of us met four years ago during our first year at Supinfocom Arles [computer graphics school now called MoPA] and others joined two years later. We got on well and were interested in each other's work, so it felt natural to exchange ideas. We share a vision about the sorts of projects we want to do, even if we do sometimes fight over it.

What inspired your film *Play Off*?

It came from our desire to do a short about sport. We wanted to play around with the tension in a

character that takes sport too seriously. He soon evolved into a purist on a mini-golf course. We wanted to contrast the calm setting with the guy's crazily ambitious and obsessive desire to win.

What appeals to you about the comedy genre?

Comedy allows you to connect with people. And of course, people laughing at your film is very rewarding. It never happens when we tell jokes in real life.

Tell us about how you put the film together.

First we developed the story and the animatics, drawing out the characters and defining their personalities. It then took four weeks to turn these plans into a 3D short, fuelled by strong coffee and our superhero metabolisms. The six of us worked on the pre-production and modelling stages, before splitting into two different groups to tackle the animation and image parts.

In *Play Off* and other films you tell the stories without dialogue. Why?

This was one of the first exercises we had at film school and is a really interesting format to work in. It's challenging telling a story with no words, but we focus on developing the character's animation instead – it's much more universal.

"It's challenging telling a story with no words but we focus on developing the character's animation instead. It's more universal."

What were the biggest challenges in bringing *Play Off* to life?

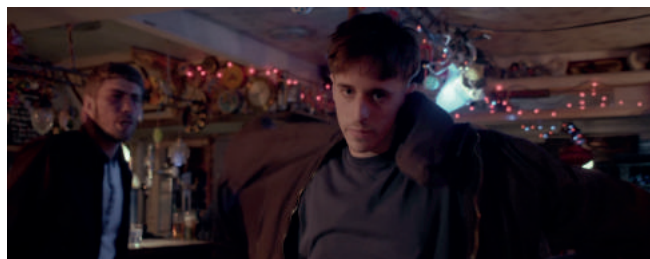
Time. We only had four weeks to complete the spot and we didn't want to cut back on quality. The tight deadline forced us to focus more on the characters, which actually helped to strengthen the storyline.

What have you learnt as a directing collective?

We've got better at managing our time and efficiency. We completed *Play Off* while we were interning at Passion Pictures and we really benefitted from the studio's feedback.

You've just signed to Passion. What can we expect to see next from you?

We're returning to school at the moment as we still have one more year to go. But we'll keep in touch with Passion and we've got some exciting projects up our sleeves... we will be on your screens sooner than you think!



Mellah

MUSIC VIDEO



South London indie musician Mellah, aka Liam Ramsden, has had a busy year releasing music and helming three of his own promos. He tells us about the autobiographical inspiration behind his work and how Guinness and goodwill helped him realise his vision for his anti-war track *Round*

What inspired you to start directing videos for your own tracks?

I've made videos for my music for quite a while, but only recently had the opportunity to release them on a platform where they have had enough reach to get any acknowledgement. Visuals around music can be very powerful; the partnership helps to convey the mood or message of a song more vividly than a song alone.

What inspired *Round*?

The basis for the song was a run-in I had with a former soldier I encountered in a pub while I was on tour with my old band. He was a pretty unhinged guy who had obviously experienced some horrific things while serving in Afghanistan. He fervently believed we needed a stint in the British army to set us straight.

The song came directly from that encounter so I thought it apt to base the video around it. The white lady represents the dark side of his psyche; the side of himself he struggles to face. I wanted the video to be sympathetic towards the soldier but also follow the song's narrative of attacking the damaging reality and futility of war.

Tell us about the shoot.

We shot the whole video in one evening, mostly in a London pub. The landlord was very accommodating and let us use his place for nothing. He also catered to the crew's relentless thirst for Guinness.

We also shot some bits in the park opposite the pub and an undisclosed wooded location in southeast London, although that was definitely the most harrowing part of the shoot. We got there about 2am in mid-winter and had to lug all the gear, including lamps and a generator, about 200m through mud to where we were shooting. It doesn't sound too horrendous but when no one's getting paid and you've been going since 5pm, you start to wish you had a budget. Once we set everything up and powered the generator, the projection lighting

didn't turn on. We spent two hours trying to fire them up while our dancer, Mai Nguyen Tri, curled up in the van beneath a blanket. We'd pretty much conceded defeat and thought the scene would have to be lit by a lamp – which would've been nothing like the polkadot projections – but then the projectors suddenly started working. It's my favourite scene in the promo and Mai's performance was spellbinding to watch.

I've never done anything on this scale before so I was lucky to have some very talented friends on board to realise my vision. My DP, Ruben Woodin Dechamps, was integral to the process. He has an amazing eye and he carried us to the bitter end.

"I find a lot of similarities in the creative process. It's a case of knitting together material, whether that's sonic or visual, to make a collage of textures that hopefully ends up as a whole."



"It's the contrast that makes the film. The music, the rough game and the distinct faces are juxtaposed with the introverted protagonist's thoughts."

What have you learnt as a director and how does it differ from being a musical artist?

I find a lot of similarities in the creative process. It's a case of knitting together material, whether that's sonic or visual, to make a collage of textures that hopefully ends up as a whole. I rarely have an idea of how the finished product will end up before I start.

I think the best creation comes when you're not thinking; you're just making. If I sit and think too much about what I'm going to do or how I'm going to do it, I get anxious and start analysing everything before I've even made it! You have to just begin. Once you're rolling, you're rolling and even if you sew in a patch that you don't like in retrospect, you can always sew in another around it or over it. It's important not to hold onto things, to let the process take over.

Are you keen to continue directing?

What's next on your agenda?

Yes! I've got some money from a record deal to buy a 16mm camera. I have a few ideas for some short films and I want to be part of the video-making process for all future Mellah videos.

Ben Miethke

TV & CINEMA



Guinness
Roll the Old Chariot

A German film student's remarkable spec spot draws on wild Irish scenery, a lad's sporting strife and Jonathan Glazer's iconic frames

How did you get into directing?

The first film I made was a crappy skate film with my brother. I was always filming stuff so when I finished school with low grades, I just wanted to get into film. Initially I was writing then I switched to directing.

You're still studying at Film Academy Baden-Württemberg. How has the school shaped your outlook on directing?

Studying here is a huge privilege. We are urged to develop and craft our own style. I'm really inspired by my tutors and fellow students.

What inspired your Guinness spot?

The idea came from several different sources. I grew up in a pretty dismal district in Krefeld, Germany, and played football for several years. I always wondered why the matches we played with teams from neighbouring districts were so heated. Sometimes the games even had to be cancelled due to fights on the pitch. It was strange; we all grew up in the same barren area yet there was so much hate between us. When I found David Coffin's version of the song, *Roll the Old Chariot*, and discovered the rugby pitch on Inishturk, an island off Ireland's west coast, via a Reddit thread, I wanted to transfer my sporting experiences to Irish rugby teams that originated from a similarly bleak world to mine.

Where did the shoot take place and how long were you on location shooting?

When we were searching for a location, I remembered the stunning scenery of the pitch that I'd seen in the photo earlier, so my producer, DP and I went to visit it. We were all fascinated by the island's history and its inhabitants. We ended up shooting three rolls of film on the tech recce. Three weeks later, we came back for two days to shoot the lads.

What did you have to consider when making the spot fit Guinness' signature style?

I think Guinness' approach is bold yet timeless – characteristics I wanted to evoke in my story. It does feel a bit 1990s and nostalgic, but I played on this by shooting on 16mm and using the 4:3 format. Although some Guinness ads are funny, I wanted to tap into its slightly more serious style depicted in the 'Made of More' series. And the freeze frames are an homage to Jonathan Glazer's great Guinness films.

What was the casting process like and what were you looking for in your characters?

I knew the film could only work if a rugby-playing, Guinness-drinking Irishman liked it. So I decided to use a local team. We contacted a few rugby teams in County Mayo and pitched our idea to them after a training session. It was 9pm; they were all exhausted, covered in mud and blood. They were all listening, but not saying a word, just staring at me, and I thought, "Oh shit, you freaking German. Why did you think these men would want to be part of your film?" But when I asked who'd like to join in, all of their hands shot up. And I knew it was going to be fun.

Tell us about the process.

I wanted to tell the story of the loser, who's the anti-hero character in this spot. It's the contrast that makes the film. The music, the rough game and the distinct faces are juxtaposed with the introverted protagonist's thoughts. Though he doesn't win the match, his sense of personal victory means the viewer feels empathy for him.

What keeps you inspired and what do you love most about the creative industry?

Paintings by Elizabeth Chaplin, Russian orthodox choral music and the work of photographer Tobias Zielony.

What other projects are you working on?

Right now, I'm in pre-production for another spec spot. I can't say much except that it's a story inspired by my friends and me.

ON REFLECTION

Tango Barrel; Postman; Velcro

Ulf Johansson, formerly part of directing collective Traktor, reminisces about elaborately planned, brilliantly executed stunts from the 2003/2004 Tango spots. Look back in wonder at a man jet-propelled into a barrel of oranges or a basement flooded with apple juice – all to get the hit of the whole fruit

The job was unique in its simplicity, but hard-hitting in its message.

It was playful and fun. But most importantly, there was a creative team behind it – Charles Inge, Micky Tudor and Brian Turner [of CHI & Partners] – that we knew and trusted. We had worked together many times so the journey was a joy, with the delightful producer Anthony Falco (aka the Falcon) whipping us all into shape. With creative talent such as that, one has the key to a great campaign. Plus the client was an absolute joy – the PPM happened in a pub! The client just told us to do what we do best and to sell Tango. It made us work that much harder, as he trusted us to deliver.

Orange Man [the previous happy-slapping Tango spot] was great but the agency and client wished to take the campaign in a slightly different direction. So we only looked forward to get that Tango “hit”. Casting was everything: we looked far and wide for protagonists that were able to take direction well and play their roles with an earnest sensitivity without being slapstick.

Each set of commercials for each campaign was shot back-to-back.

The production process was a journey of in-camera tests to create a world where we could get everything in-camera. The learning curve was steep, and the shoot days were short so we had to be fully prepped for our special effects and keep a tight schedule.

There were no practice runs – we shot everything as we went along. Even in a rehearsal, one can capture great in-camera magic. It is always the reset time that is the killer. Actors give a better performance when they are surprised by the action that is required – the nuances of their body language and the ability to take direction relies on keeping the action fresh and light on its toes.

Stunt folk are talented people but by definition, their body language and body shape is very different from that of a regular guy. Accordingly we used stunt coordinators rather than real stuntmen. The poor cast

1 Tango, Barrel

2 Tango, Velcro

3 Tango, Postman



3

thought we were bonkers! But there was a method to it and no animals or people were hurt during the filming process. Promise.

I don't know how much fruit we went through. It was shot in plates so that we could create as much mess as possible! Maximum chaos, maximum hit of the Tango. MPC then cunningly sewed together the plates in post. They didn't blink when we popped in for meetings with our boards and told them we'd be shooting everything in-camera for real. If they thought we were nuts they have never told us. As yet.

Finding the right chair for a three-point touch-down was probably the biggest challenge. The best part? The comedic timing of the voice-over (which of course was the talented Rob Brydon) was incredible. He just got it spot-on every time.

Each job has its own heartbeat and momentum. You work as hard as you can to create the best work one can and then have to move on. You are only as good as your last job so you hope that everyone is happy with the result. I can't say we would have done anything differently if we had the chance again.

The creative team really deserved their gold Lion [for Postman] at Cannes. Who the hell comes up with storylines like that? Long live the vivid imagination.

I think these ads could definitely be made today. The humour is timeless. It's just a case of getting the grown-ups and grands fromages to buy the creative and the world's your oyster. **S**

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