



IN THIS ISSUE

The 25 List 2012.....1

Drawn In: Engaging Handwritten &
Customized Letterforms.....14

Connecticut continues to thrive with an inspiring community of agencies, creatives, vendors and professional organizations.

The 25 List is a cross-section of the state's top creative professionals as chosen by our editors.

We are excited to recognize this year's honorees — leading creatives and living legends, thought leaders and do-gooders, trendsetters and newsmakers, ambassadors and educators.

Illustration, opposite: Ben Jura.

The 25 List portraits: Paul Emery by Aaron Kotowski; John Gibson by Jeff Solak; Bob Vitale by Ted Kawalerski, NY; Karl Heine by kHyal; Derek Dudek by Marie Chao; Greg Chinn by Hadley Spagna; Mark Snyder by Eric Panke; Dan Taylor by John Rudolph; Don Carter by Bill Knight; Nathan Garland by Dennis Letbetter; Nick Healy by Aaron Kotowski; Amy Graver by Derek Dudek.





**PAUL EMERY
KEILER**

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Collaborated on a video which became the centerpiece of the 150th anniversary celebration and fundraising gala for the Boys and Girls Clubs of Hartford. Beautiful imagery, a compelling message, and a catchy tune moved the audience of sponsors and volunteers to clap, whistle along, cheer and ultimately get involved. Most importantly, the work was in support of a non-profit organization that provides vital resources for the children of our community. The opportunity to contribute and to know our efforts were helping others, outside of commerce, was especially meaningful to me on a personal level.

Developed a music-themed global promotional campaign for Pepsi in the late '90s with Janet Jackson.

After program briefings, I had the privilege of walking the F-35 assembly line in Ft. Worth, was then escorted to the flight line, and stood in awe, next to an F-35 while witnessing one of the world's best F-16 pilots take off, roar straight up into the clouds, dive straight back toward the ground, and roll into a practice run for the Farnborough airshow.

Directed and produced over 100 photo, film & video shoots extensively throughout the United States, as well as in Mexico, Belgium, and Indonesia.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? Development of a library of photographs for use in advertising and marketing campaigns, portraying U.S. armed forces on various global missions. Proposed, conceptualized, scouted, storyboarded, produced, and directed project on behalf of Lockheed Martin. Shoots took place at several diverse locations including a rainforest, beaches, urban ruins, a shipping port with container ship, and desert mountains. 26 models, four military technical advisors, 32 sets of uniforms/weapons/gear, two Draeger rebreathers, night vision equipment, and a

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? BEING TOLD I SUCK BY SOMEONE I THOUGHT I SHOULD RESPECT (ONLY TO REALIZE LATER THEY SUCKED.) THE SLIGHT PRECIPITATED A LONG PERIOD OF GROWTH, AND FUELED MY DRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE.

Zodiac boat were all brought together to help illustrate scenes in the most accurate way possible. Puerto Rico and the Sierra Nevada Mountains were selected as backdrops to represent a variety of environments with the added benefit of allowing production to take place within the United States.

Projects in 2011 were recognized by Graphis, AIGA BoNE, Hatch, BtoB Best Creative, Photo District News, CADC and Ad Club of Connecticut.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Strengths: Having a vision and pursuing it with intent using aesthetic sensibilities, voice and decisiveness, to craft a personality, attitude, and story for a brand or marketing strategy. Problem solving through creativity, intuition, and calculated risk-taking. Creating work that bridges the gap between the disciplines of graphic design and advertising.

Weaknesses: Coffee.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? My defining moment was more of a recognition and understanding of how rare pivotal moments are and giving them the respect they deserve by working as diligently as possible to honor and make the most of the opportunity.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? There are always new challenges and ways to use one's creativity, presenting opportunities to learn and develop as a visual communicator.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I like road trips. Traveled cross-country twice, the Eastern Seaboard a few times, as well as parts of Canada. One of my most memorable trips was driving the Baja Peninsula from Los Angeles to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico and back, over 2,000 rugged beautiful miles.



**JOHN GIBSON
BERTZ DESIGN GROUP**

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Being able to make a living at something I love. Winning enough awards to realize it's not about awards. Making friends at Weekly Reader Corporation, Bertz Design Group, Middlesex Community College, CADC, Independent Creative Club and AIGA CT. Witnessing people I've taught, mentored or influenced achieve things they didn't think possible. Speaking to groups that had a genuine interest in what I had to share. Co-founding the CADC Student Conference, an event that grew over time to have an impact on many young designers. Contributing to Lotion, an AIGA CT prototype event that united designers in bringing some good to an organization in need.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? AIGA Leadership Retreat, Minneapolis, MN — an amazing couple of days, when some of the most passionate design folks from all over the U.S. assembled in one place for the benefit of the whole industry. Nathan Shedroff: Design is the Problem, AIGA CT event — an insightful event on meaning that still sticks with me. Pulling together a photo essay with my wife Lisa about Palm Springs, CA for feltandwire.com.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Weakness: I'm lousy at personal SWOT analysis.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? I'm finishing up my fourth year as treasurer and executive board member of AIGA CT. I also had the opportunity this past fall to facilitate a discussion via Skype with Eames Demetrios, the grandson of Charles and Ray Eames, after the Real Art Ways screening of "Eames: The Architect and the Painter."

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? Being told I suck by someone I thought I should respect (only to realize later they sucked). The slight precipitated a long period of growth, and fueled my drive for excellence.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? The potential of creating communications that resonate with people in some powerful way.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I started out a decent, normal kid.



**PETER SENA
DIGITAL SURGEONS**

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Working with amazing people on amazing projects. Getting up every morning and facing a new creative problem — with awesome people beside me — is one of the most exhilarating aspects of my job.

I've had a ton of fun getting to influence and drive creative marketing for brands that I personally interact with and have an affinity for, such as Epic Games, Guess Watches and Ovation Guitars. Most recently we created and developed Shoot Local, a social utility for photographers and videographers for scouting, sharing and discovering new and exciting shoot locations.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? 2011 was a pivotal year for Digital Surgeons. We moved into our new studio space that our team designed and built from the ground up; the space provides a creative location for brewing up some of the best ideas of tomorrow for our clients. We partnered with Epic Games to help launch the digital destination for Infinity Blade. And our team launched its first mobile application, Shoot Local — just the beginning of exciting projects we have in development.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Being a hybrid creative/technologist gives me a leg up on the competition. Being able to go from idea to completion gives me a ton of insight that I can apply to all the projects we work on. Looking through the creative and technology lenses rapidly and simultaneously increases delivery time by knowing what is possible prior to devising an idea, and avoiding finding out later it's ahead of its time or needs to be scaled back based on feasibility and budgetary constraints. Weaknesses: Time. I just can't seem to accept that there are only 24 hours

I'M NOT A MICRO MANAGER OR CONTROL FREAK. I GET A THRILL WHEN SOMEONE DOES A GREAT JOB WITH VERY LITTLE HELP FROM ME. BY CONTRAST, MY WEAKNESS IS GIVING GOOD FEEDBACK. I LIKE TO LET THINGS SIMMER, NOT SHOOT FROM THE HIP, BEFORE I GIVE FEEDBACK. YOU DON'T ALWAYS HAVE THAT LUXURY.

in a day. And giving up — I'm relentless with seeing things through, even if I compromise myself in the process.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? During my undergraduate years I took a design class that involved a great deal of fine art and hand-done work. At the time, my passion was in digital media; I had already been doing digital design professionally, so this felt like starting over. I felt the academia was focused on separating technologists and creative and I refused to be pigeonholed. So I changed my degree program to business and management information systems — to supplement what I didn't know about business with what I already knew about communication design. I marketed myself as a hybrid creative tech geek and — after a few art director and developer gigs — decided to start Digital Surgeons.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? It changes by the second. Every day there's a new buzzword or technique to learn, another marketing or business challenge to crack, and that level of constant change never lets things get stale.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I'm the only creative geek I know that can bench 350 pounds. So yeah, I'm a total meat head.



**WAYNE RAICIK
CRONIN & COMPANY**

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? My career highlights have come in television. Which is odd because I consider myself a designer and relate more to still images. The broadcast work I've done for The Jimmy Fund, The Connecticut Lottery, CT Light & Power and Konica Minolta have been great experiences. It's allowed me to travel, work with really talented directors, editors and composers and allowed me to do some memorable work.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? I worked on a couple of spots for Konica Minolta. They were written by Paul Catanese, who really has a talent for situational comedy. We shot them in Los Angeles right before Christmas. They were great fun to work on and an awesome way to end the year.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? I'm not a micro manager or control freak. I get a thrill when someone does a great job with very little help from me. By contrast, my weakness is giving good feedback. I like to let things simmer, not shoot from the hip, before I give feedback. You don't always have that luxury.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? We try to do our share of pro bono when we can. The Jimmy Fund project wasn't totally pro bono but Cronin donated a lot of services. Recently I created a logo and website for the Petit Family Foundation. Both those experiences were very rewarding.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? Growing up I had a family friend who was a designer. They called them "Commercial Artists" back then. I also had a few uncles who drew and painted. My path seemed inevitable.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? I think about what my parents and grandparents — immigrants from Sicily — did for a living.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I watch TMZ... faithfully.



KARL HEINE
CREATIVEPLACEMENT

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Running a successful recruitment firm for close to 25 years; speaking at major design schools throughout the United States; creating a line of unique lighting from reclaimed metal and translucent stone under the name Fresh Beam; concepting and producing creative events like Match Party, Taste of SoNo, PUSH workshops, PUSH Design Camp and SoNo Block Party; founding my own line of custom designer journals, DesignerJournals, producing custom notebook projects for Lynda.com, Yves Behar's fuseproject, A Better World by Design, MegaGlam and Carbon War Room.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? Work and play with kHyal, my wife and partner in business, art and life: traveling to Paris to see kHyal's Pink Yeti character featured in Pictoplasma's Post Digital Monsters show at La Gaité Lyrique, sponsoring A Better World by Design for the second year, judging and designing the awards for Hasbro's Project Upcycle, developing and producing PUSH Design Camp on Block Island, and our many impromptu art and design projects.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? As a creative recruiter, I have always had an innate sense of understanding what type of talent personality works best in each unique client environment. That has developed into a skill which both candidates and clients benefit from and appreciate. I also have the advantage of my formal design education and my experience as a creative professional still actively designing. I not only understand the work I'm looking at, I also know how it's done and have the know-how to produce similar work myself, which allows me to make informed assessments.

I FELT LIKE MY DESIGN APPRENTICESHIP WAS COMPLETE. I HAD BEEN FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO WORK WITH TWO OF THE ALL-TIME BEST CONNECTICUT CREATIVES — BILL WONDRISKA AND TED BERTZ.

I have a weakness for caring deeply about my clients and candidates; I often go far above and beyond, helping candidates rewrite their resumes and develop their portfolios, working early mornings, late nights and weekends and being available to my clients 24/7.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? For almost 25 years, I've been developing and placing creative talent in agencies, design firms, companies and corporate communications departments. As a speaker and educator of emerging creative professionals, my intention is to continually raise awareness concerning the real world skills necessary to work within the design industry.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? My one moment occurred before my career path was defined. I had the good fortune during my freshman year at University of Bridgeport to have August Madrigal as my advisor. Based on a gut feeling, I requested Professor Madrigal as my only advisor instead of moving to an advisor within the graphic design department. His guidance during my five years at UB provided me with a well-rounded direction and the confidence to overcome many obstacles throughout my life.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? The satisfaction of developing young designers at the start of their careers, and improving the career outcomes of seasoned designers by taking part in their professional growth, drives my passion for creative recruitment.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? That I'm a found object, scrap yard junkie.



DENNIS RUSSO
WONDRISKA RUSSO

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Rather than one particular event or project, I think my "highlight" was the period of time between the years of 1986 and 1996 — a ten-year timeframe that was almost ten years after I finished college. During those years, I felt like my design apprenticeship was complete. I had been fortunate enough to work with two of the all-time best Connecticut creatives — Bill Wondriska and Ted Bertz — and design and advertising in Connecticut were flourishing. The experience I gained during this period of time was invaluable and the volumes of good work taking place in the industry excited me. These factors lead me to open my own business. This was a life-changing time in my career.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? A year after graduating college, I applied for a job as a staff designer with one of the large insurance companies in the state. I was interviewed but didn't get the position, because I said no to being able to hand-render large poster size type for internal postings. That expectation, and a few other requirements, made me realize that I wasn't the right fit for a job in the corporate environment.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? Being challenged to develop and execute good creative solutions. I also love getting projects that seem so complex and making the final outcome simple.



GRANT COPELAND
WORX BRANDING & ADVERTISING

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? In 15 years, there's been a ton. The Bobby Choice campaign for AT&T. Rebranding Hoffman Auto Group. Designing a NASCAR for Holiday Inn. Seeing my work at the Super Bowl, The Masters, US Open, World Series. But mostly, it's the human moments; specifically, seeing clients visibly moved by the thinking and the work.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? My top ten: Becoming more comfortable with leading Worx as President. Living by the ocean. Doing some of my best work while feeling a bit burned out. Any meal involving sushi. Taking up clamming. Approaching ten years of marriage. The Yankees not winning the World Series. Solving a number of difficult business and branding challenges for several clients. Getting more introspective and starting to work on things I want to improve as a person. Seeing my kids passionate about creative thinking. (Our 6-year-old is doing some freaky things with art, books and fashion — much more advanced than I was at that age. And my 4-year-old son said recently, "Dad, I think I want to be your boss some day." He's since rescinded that comment, and now just wants to be a hockey player.)

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? I think in life, one's greatest strengths are also one's greatest weaknesses. A client of ours said, "Grant, you're like a duck to me. You're very calm and collected on the surface, but it's also clear there's a great intensity and lots of things happening underneath the surface." Drive, focus and intensity are what define me — both positively and negatively.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? I'd really like to be more involved. Connecticut has a very unique creative circle, and a bumper crop of talented young creatives within agencies, companies and colleges. I'd like to reach them all in some way, and keep them in the state. Likewise, Connecticut is a very special place, and for its people I feel very passionate about helping. Some of my marketing work for groups like the United Way has been the most rewarding of my career. But more, I feel like there will be chances to help people in our communities more directly, expose and involve my

FORGET NEW YORK. FORGET BOSTON. WE HAVE GREAT COMPANIES, GREAT PEOPLE AND GREAT MARKETING AGENCIES.

colleagues, and show my children the power of selfless giving.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? In the summer of 1997, having just graduated from Skidmore, I came home to pursue a professional baseball career, and needed a temporary job. It just so happened that I got one at a graphic design firm — doing cold call sales of all things. The CEO of that firm, Ron Poehailos, also let me show him my portfolio in the interview. A month or so later, he offered me a chance to do some basic design work — the same week, ironically, I went to an Orioles tryout camp. Even though it was only a chance to do production work, I felt like I had gotten my first "break" in graphic design. I stopped playing baseball there, and happily so. Ron and I later became business partners — I started a firm with him at age 23 — and we ran that successfully for six years before merging into Worx. I'll always thank Ron for that first opportunity.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? Let's be honest. Most great creatives, most influential people, desire control. Control of the process, of the product, of the presentation, of the persuasion. I love what I do for a myriad of reasons, but at the end of the day, I love controlling the thinking. I love putting the puzzle pieces together. There's a great quote from Mike Krzyzewski, the coach of Duke basketball. Even though I'm a diehard UConn fan, Coach K is spot on when he says, "Many factors go into why we win, but when we lose, it's my fault." That's how I feel about our work, our clients, our colleagues and our agency goals.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? That I've never had any interest in a marketing career outside of Connecticut. With all due respect, forget New York. Forget Boston. We have great companies, great people and great marketing agencies. I'm just proud to have gotten the breaks, learned the ropes, and maintained the drive to keep pushing forward so that now I get to lead an amazing agency in Prospect — the branding hub of the world! It's just where a regular kid from Portland should be.



BOB VITALE
SVP PARTNERS

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Breakfast with Bruno Monguzzi. Actually, it was several meals over the course of a couple days. In any event, it wasn't about the culinary experience, it was about the conversation.

On communication: *Do the obvious in a way that it's never been done before.* Ha, such simple advice. I've come close to achieving this a couple of times in my career... I think.

On design: *When you think you've reached "the solution," do the opposite.* It's amazing how quickly you know whether you nailed it, or you've got more exploring to do.

On life: *I'm a man, husband, father, and then a designer.* It puts things in perspective. There's a telling story here involving a group of Bruno's design students and the book "The Little Prince."

Securing my position as partner at SVP by leading my (then) boss, Jean Page, and colleague, Randy Smith, into believing I was wise beyond my years and my best work was ahead of me. It was my most convincing "pitch," built almost entirely on wit & charm. Fourteen years later and my (now) partner, Jean Page, still expects me to get her lunch. Ah, sweet success.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Strength: I bring logic to the creative process. Weakness: I bring logic to the creative process.



BRENT ROBERTSON
FATHOM

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? The highlights of my career are happening right now. At Fathom, the company I helped found, I am committed to providing an environment where others can hear, see and act on behalf of their full potential. Our team and clients allow me to fulfill this commitment daily, one-on-one and at the scale of an organization. The amazing interactions, and the brilliant achievements of others that I see come to life based on our work together over the years have become my most treasured career highlights. To be a part of so many journeys is a blessing.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? Last year was a breakthrough year, for me and Fathom. I saw our team and clients willing to take on the big, scary conversations of designing a new future. I became clear on my role in the “design,” by holding the door open for others to go to work on things bigger than they are. And, when successful, what emerges is something remarkable that has never been done before and has no basis for comparison, but provides precedence for a body of future work. My good friend and mentor Mel Toomey calls this “fire walking.” I call it sculpture. The medium is an organization, and the work is the objectified manifestation of what an organization, that owns its full potential, looks like for all to see, share and contribute to. As you can imagine, this work isn’t something you typically offer as a conversation starter. Yet, I discovered in 2011 that a lot more organizations are interested in, and committed to, taking this work head-on than I imagined.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? My greatest strength is the fact that I am clear about when I am a constructive force within a body of work, or when I’m in the way. By design this awareness exposes my weakness, that I can’t operate solo. In the conversations where I stir up opportunity and possibility,

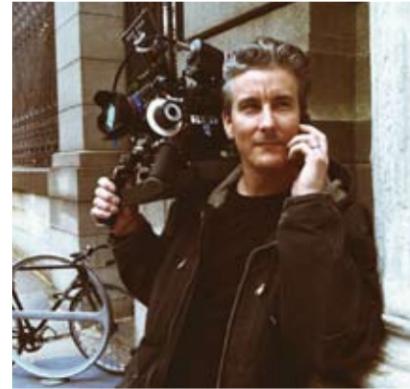
MY GREATEST STRENGTH IS THAT I AM CLEAR ABOUT WHEN I AM A CONSTRUCTIVE FORCE WITHIN A BODY OF WORK, OR WHEN I’M IN THE WAY. BY DESIGN THIS AWARENESS EXPOSES MY WEAKNESS — THAT I CAN’T OPERATE SOLO.

I’m indispensable. In the conversations that follow, where we need to make ice cream out of what I’ve stirred up, I’m no longer needed. Luckily, my weaknesses are others’ strengths and we have a lot of strengths at Fathom that I rely on for bringing ideas to life.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? I am an advocate of the beauty that forms from a simple idea, that our realities are ours to create, and we do have a choice in how things play out. Bringing this idea to my community is an insatiable passion.

From my family, to my neighbors, my town, state and beyond, I help others find clear distinctions around difficult subjects that are found useful to others in the work that they do. I’m most passionate when I’m able to work with whomever will give me room to help clear things up so they can go off and do amazing things. This takes form of human services, arts, leadership, academic and youth organizations. As of late, I’ve been working on developing breakthrough opportunities by providing community among those who aren’t habitually in conversation together and so far, the results are stunning. Seeing others connect and take charge of the impact they’re creating in their world has been very rewarding.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? When I realized I couldn’t stop asking the questions that got me into trouble (and a lot of trouble those questions created), mostly because they began to call out decisions and the thinking of an organization that there was no tolerance for. And the lack of tolerance was because of a lack of permission to have those conversations. Think of it this way, would you expect or invite your plumber to call into question decisions about your



DEREK DUDEK
DEREK DUDEK STUDIO

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Designing a new studio, which is now in the final construction phase!

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? One day long ago while working on the set of a one hour drama, I was able to hangout with a photographer and his assistant. I quickly realized that being a photographer/director was definitely the career path for me. About two months after that, I started my own business.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? I’d have to say it’s the constant collaboration with talented people and the opportunities to meet new people.

DIETARY CHOICES? Of course not, but if that same plumber showed up as a nutritional counselor that happened to diagnose issues through the waste we produce, maybe so. The point here is, discover who you need to be with a client, or anyone, to have the conversation you want to have. Over time I’ve developed a way of being at work that allows me to ask those dangerous questions in a way that invites organizations to find the answers together. The question I asked myself that was the defining moment for me was, “Is this it?”

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? Seeing others emerge as the fully formed brilliant examples of humanity that they are and watching them go to work on things bigger than they are.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I am a trained sculptor and I design furniture for generations of daily use, which are built from repurposing existing heirloom furniture that has outlived its usefulness. I am a practicing Buddhist, and use my woodworking as the basis for putting some real rigor around being present and at peace with the moment. (Sharp tools come in handy when being in the moment.)



JACK TOM
JACK TOM DESIGN

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Being a young freelance illustrator in San Francisco right out of college. Turning 27 and moving to New York in 1977. Being hired at McCall’s magazine and later working for Lou Dorfsman at CBS. I’m still looking forward to more career highlights.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? Getting my graduate degree (MFA in Illustration from Hartford Art School.)

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? My greatest strength is my enthusiasm.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? I enjoy giving back to the creative community by volunteering for various organizations and events (CADC, Illustration Conference, AIGA CT). I also love teaching and encouraging students to be involved with the creative community.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? Simply put — they pay me to draw pictures, what’s not to like! Other than the work, I enjoy meeting the people along the way.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I enjoy watching cooking shows on PBS and Kitchen Nightmare.



GREG CHINN
JARGON BOY

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? Good question. Probably my son being able to point out Target and say, “Look, Dada — logo!” or my daughter finally mastering a back-hand spring in gymnastics.

Seriously, The Bridgeport Arts and Cultural Council “Heroes” poster series is a biggie. It was featured in the Communication Arts “Exhibit” section — which highlights new and innovative design and advertising from around the world — and was also acquired by the Housatonic Museum of Art for their Permanent Collection, which includes master artists such as Isamu Noguchi, Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg. I was overwhelmed by being selected; that my work is in the same company as these art icons is priceless to me.

I was jazzed that my “M is for Modern” Flash Cards retailed on Fab.com — the cards were included in their staff picks of the best of the “Best Design Gifts Under \$100” holiday list.

My commarts.com article, “Thinking in Three Dimensions,” discussed my crazy work environment, my wife’s relationship to Lester Beall and why I’m sure that being a chef would be draining.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? One of my greatest strengths could be cooking Spam, a local Hawaiian fav. But a close second would be creating unique identity solutions that connect with people on multiple levels. My biggest weakness and mortal enemy — time! Don’t know where it goes, but I always seem to lose it. “Hey time, where are you?”

COMMUNITY SERVICE? Working with fantastic non-profits like the Bridgeport Arts and Cultural Council, The Connecticut Audubon Society’s Birdcraft Museum and The Bridgeport Library’s History Center, which have important social messages and genuinely assist their surrounding communities. Also, being an Adjunct Professor of Design at the University of Bridgeport’s Shintaro Akatsu School of



EDVIN YEGER
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Perhaps discovering design itself as a vocation and an avocation. My schooling and the designers that have mentored me within the educational and professional setting.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? I work with students at the undergraduate and graduate level. To be able to engage in theory, practice and discourse with this community, in a collaborative manner, has been quite inspiring and rewarding.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? I think my graduate work at Yale was and remains the pivotal point.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? Design has become a way of thinking, looking, seeing and living. Cannot imagine life otherwise.

Design. I really enjoy helping develop the next generation of designers.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? When the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York and The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art both contacted me and wanted to retail my “M is for Modern” Flash Cards in their museum stores. Recognition in numerous design magazines and websites followed, and orders began to pour in from all over the United States and abroad.

This one product launched Jargon Boy and put me on the design map. Thank goodness for my daughter Lily, who I initially created the flash cards for. Her favorite card happened to be “D is for Dada,” which still makes me smile.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? That nervous excitement when a new project starts and knowing that the creative possibilities are limitless.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I live with two fully-grown Bernese Mountain Dogs that truly believe that they are lap dogs.



MARK SNYDER
HARTFORD ART SCHOOL

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? My first job at Shaw Industries, Inc. as textile designer; my acceptance to RISD's Graphic Design Masters Program, which lead to my appointment at Hartford Art School; getting tenure at HAS; my service on the board of CADC (including a year as president); having my experimental type work published in the international typographic journal baseline.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? I am most happy with two publications designed at object | resonance, my studio with Kevin Sepe that focuses on non- and not-for-profit entities in the fine/performing arts and education sectors. The first is a HAS catalog, a collaboration with Sepe and intern Christian Ort. It was truly a labor of love, working with client Robert Calafiore and an image bank of over 15,000 entries created by The Defining Photo. The second is a hand-bound catalog for the Rare Beauty book arts exhibition in the Joseloff Gallery. The run of 500 was hand-stitched —with the help of student volunteers — reflecting the theme of hand-made, limited-edition books.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Strengths would be generosity and the ability to pull other great creatives into projects I am working on. As for weaknesses, too many to list, but I could be much better in the business/management of my studio.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? Where I work (Greater Hartford area): my studio provides pro bono work for our longstanding paying clients such as Hartford Art School, The Hartt School, The Hartt Community Division, and Trinity College. I have also taken on pro bono work for initiatives like Upper Albany Avenue Main Street, Hartford Community Center, West End Civic Association, and HartBeat Ensemble.

I LOVE BEING IN THE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WHERE I'M CHALLENGED EVERY SINGLE DAY. IT KEEPS ME ON MY TOES.

Where I live (Canton/Collinsville): I am on the board of the Canton Artists' Guild/ Gallery on the Green, also providing pro bono design work. I also do a great deal of pro bono work for The Maxwell Shepherd Memorial Arts Fund, Inc., which provides fine and performing arts events free of charge to our local community.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? In my first semester of undergraduate studies at Miami University, I received great advice from professor Tom Gilmore. How, I asked, could I end up doing what he is doing? He told me to perform well in school and get a great job. Gain valuable work experience and, when ready, get into the best graduate school possible. Then find a job at a university where you feel comfortable and supported.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? I love the fact that the challenges in our field are so broad and diverse. I love problem solving and every day I am greeted with different challenges for projects. Since all of my clients are non-profits, I also relish the challenge of getting the most for our clients, on a shoestring budget. I love being in the educational environment where my students challenge me every single day. Sometimes the questions are about projects I have assigned and other days they are questioning me about the work I have produced for one of my campus-based clients that they have seen out in the landscape. It keeps me on my toes. I also love seeing our many alumni successes as recognized by regional, national and international competitions and publications.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? My next "dream venture" might involve culinary school/hotel management and a takeover of the amazing Hotel Budir on the Snaefellsnes Peninsula in Iceland. I am a foodie and I truly love Iceland and its people for their heartiness and self-reliance. I have a fascination with the isolated beauty of Budir and its surroundings.



PAUL PITA
THE PITA GROUP

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? I don't look at it as one singular moment. It's been many moments and experiences that have helped me to get where I am today. I've had the opportunity to observe how design and communications have evolved. In our industry we have to be open to continuous learning. That's what I set out to do each day.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? I get to work with so many different types of people — those looking for ideas, creativity and solutions to help grow their businesses... and those who contribute to developing those ideas and solving their challenges creatively. My career has allowed me to work with dynamic teams who have helped me to evolve creatively and professionally.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? In the early part of my career, I volunteered much of my time to the creative community through the CADC. I have evolved my commitment to now include non-profit organizations that impact those who are underserved, with a particular focus on education, literacy, social services and urban development. I enjoy contributing my knowledge, experience and talent to help organizations who serve the greater good.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? That I first picked up drumsticks in the fifth grade, and I'm still playing to this day. I've recorded several albums with my former band Glory Box — "Into the Violets" is still available on iTunes. I recently joined a new band and we hope to be playing out this spring.



DAN TAYLOR
TAYLOR DESIGN

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Landing an internship at Pushpin Studios after graduating — working in such a creative environment, with a bunch of designers and illustrators at the top of their game, opened my eyes to what a small, creative studio could be. Then my first full time job at William Snyder Design in New York — I was able to cut my teeth on great projects for Merrill Lynch, AT&T, MTV, and ABC Television, working directly with clients, going on photo shoots and press checks, and learning the machinations of running a small business. Then the day in 1992 when I started Taylor Design with a rented desk, a Mac IICI, and a telephone — my scariest career milestone.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? Our team of designers and developers continues to push themselves and each other. Their work earned awards in several competitions and annuals last year, including HOW, Graphis' 100 Best Annual Reports, American Graphic Design Awards, CADC Awards, CASE and Creativity.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Strengths: When I read a creative brief for a new project, I sketch out thoughts and general ideas pretty quickly, in turn providing a focused direction to the chosen designer. I am also pretty good at knowing if a project is on the right track or not, helping suggest adjustments and corrections to make sure the new design solution fulfills the goals of the assignment and exceeds the expectations of the client.

Weaknesses: I find I often undervalue our services, thinking we can develop a logo or website in less time than it actually takes. I also find myself feeling sorry for prospects that weave a tale of financial woe, of the "we don't have any money, but we really need a new website" variety. Fortunately, we have an excellent business manager, Laura, who prepares realistic estimates that properly reflect the value we provide to businesses and institutions.

GETTING MY FIRST KID'S BOOK PUBLISHED WAS BIG FOR ME. AND SEEING MY SHORTS ON DISNEY.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? Although very busy with work and family, I feel it's important to give back to the community. My sons are scouts in Stamford's Troop 9, so I serve on the executive committee, organize monthly campouts, guide the quartermaster corps, prepare slide shows for the courts of honor, counsel scouts on merit badges... the list goes on. I also do volunteer work for the Stamford Public Schools and the WestFair chapter of IABC.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? One winter day in 1984. While freelancing in NYC, I often contacted design firms to see if I could drop off my portfolio in the hopes of finding a full time job. Month after month, I ran around town dropping off my samples at studios, then picking it up again a few days later, with nothing but rejection in return. I had just picked my portfolio up from another firm, along with another rejection, and while I was walking dejectedly back to my apartment I slipped on some ice and fell flat on my back to the sidewalk. Being New York, no one stopped to help me up. As the pedestrians walked on by, I lay there for a while — cold, wet, and depressed. It was a seminal moment: "Do you have what it takes to make it in this business? Or should you just give up?"

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? I have always loved making something from nothing. One summer during college I bought a rusty 1920s ice cream cooler at a tag sale for \$.50. I sanded it, primed it, repainted it and it looked good as new. I really liked the feeling of completing something, knowing the hard work was well worth the end result. It's the same with the design business. A company will come to our studio with a worn out brand — an ugly logo, amateurish brochures, and an old-school website. So we're given a challenge: "Okay, guys, restore it." When the new digital and print assets are complete and they are ten times better than the old ones, and you know it's going to help that business compete better — I take a great deal of pride in that.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? During my sophomore year at Bethel High School (Class of 1979), I was voted homecoming king, and my queen was Meg Ryan (known then as Peggy Hyra).



DON CARTER
ADAMS & KNIGHT

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? The first ad I ever wrote (and art directed) was a One Show finalist — a campaign for the Bushnell Park Carousel Society. To be recognized by such a tough show for both writing and art direction was a huge boost to my confidence — which eventually led to creative directing at Mintz & Hoke and now at Adams & Knight. Also, getting my first kid's book published was big for me. And seeing my shorts on Disney. (My shorts, that's funny.)

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? 2011 was a good year for the agency in a not-so-good year for the industry. We added a lot of new business and were able to hire new people. On the personal side, my painting style feels like it finally found its place this year. I would love to have painted more, but the pieces I did do were very satisfying.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Can your strengths also be your weaknesses? I work too fast. I'm too critical of my own work. And I really want clients to be happy with the work I do for them.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? At A&K, we love to help those that otherwise couldn't get or afford our level of creative. We've done work for everything from sports barbershops to raptor rehabilitation. For me personally, I've had a long history of pro bono work for clients like Kidrific, Theaterworks, Hartford Stage, Camp Courant, Hartford Ballet and, of course, the Bushnell Park Carousel Society. And lately I've been very involved with West Hartford's Noah Webster Library, curating a rotating exhibit of local illustrators in the children's department.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? In high school, I remember my father taking me around to the local ad agencies. It was an interesting mix of hard core industrial to consumer shops. Talking to the people really cemented my desire to pursue the "commercial art" path.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? The ability to mix my two passions — art and business — has always been the motivator for me. And the whole tangible thing; making something with your hands that you can hold up at the end of the day... or hang on the refrigerator.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? My father was the milkman.



JOHN VISGILIO
OUTTHINK

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Working for the CBS affiliate in Hartford. Building a small graphic design firm that was soon acquired by an innovative, dynamic defense contractor interested in diversifying without fear or trepidation. And starting Outthink from scratch, with some of the most intelligent and talented individuals I've had the pleasure of knowing. Although, working in a printing plant alone in the middle of the night doing offset photography and stripping while going through college certainly left an impression on me. A twisted one, at least.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? It had noting to do with my career but 2011 was topped off with an amazing trip to Italy with my family and parents. Seeing my children's jaws continuously drop was a hoot. Reconnecting with Italian friends and family gave my kids a perspective and grounding no video game or iPhone could ever match. I really miss the cheese... and the wine.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Simple answer: the passion I have for developing compelling creative fueled by solid strategy. I love the pursuit of the answer and the creative discovery along the way. But that passion can also put a lot of pressure on the people around me. It can also make it difficult to change course when a client does not see the same path.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? Outthink has always found it important to support our local community by donating our strategic and creative energy in order to make a difference in businesses and experiences that can't afford the typical agency engagement. Recently we've worked with The Ivoryton Playhouse, High Hopes Therapeutic Riding and Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts

**LIKE CHEFS,
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to help reposition and brand them for success. I've also had the privilege to speak to students and other peers about our industry through various CADC events. I've volunteered the last number of years judging a region-wide high school marketing competition called The Apprentice Challenge. And I'm involved in my church and am a past board member for the Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? When I ultimately transitioned from a developer of creative (who sat behind a computer designing stuff) into a manager of creatives. I loved crafting beautiful graphic design. I loved getting into the details and playing with layout, typography and composition. But once I committed to my current path, I found an amazing amount of satisfaction working with individuals to collaboratively construct the visuals and messages that motivate consumers to action.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? It's not one thing or another — it's just who I am, I guess. I think it's amazing to have the opportunity to do what I do every day. I feel very blessed.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I feel like I'm just getting started (despite the fact that I'm in my mid-forties and creeping up on fifty). I feel that every day — every engagement is an opportunity to learn and grow and discover.



NATHAN GARLAND
NATHAN GARLAND LLC

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? I've had the good fortune to work with remarkable people on fascinating projects. Examples include writers like William Zinsser and Bruce McGhie, curators like Edgar Munhall, artists like Anselm Kiefer, sculptors like Chris Wilmarth and photographers like Erich Hartmann.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? One was having the Yale Arts Library request my archive.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? I think my strengths include my degree of engagement or immersion in client needs and my dual fix on both the big picture and key details. Another may be my belief that design can't do it all — alone. Like chefs, designers need good help and the right ingredients. Talented collaborators and quality content matter.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? I've been on two advisory boards: AIGA CT and the Center for Typographic Language (founded by Jack Stauffacher in San Francisco). I've worked to help many worthy local and national causes. In addition, I've worked to support two international initiatives: "A Different Future" (to facilitate an Israeli/Palestinian peace) and "Rwanda: path to peace" (to export woven goods and raise their standard of living).

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? I'm fascinated by the combination of art with meaning and the challenge to communicate. How should words and/or images be used to solve problems, tell stories, inform, teach and explain? These demanding mysteries still intrigue me.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I am a curious generalist. So, I read and listen to a wide range of books and music. Great writing and music inspire me and lead me to the discovery of new ideas. It's good to be informed. Paul Rand said that was why he valued Louis Pasteur's dictum that, "chance favors the prepared mind."



NOEMI KEARNS
HOW 2 DESIGN

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Truly, I feel so lucky. There are almost too many highlights to mention. Here are just a few: After seven years of working on a quarterly publication, having the client announce that every time we presented ideas was as exciting as the very first time. // Pitching a large pharmaceutical company and getting called (during the ride back to the studio) to be told that after two years of being on a twenty-six person committee the only unanimous decision they ever made was to hire How 2 Design. // The first time a client cried during a presentation: because they never thought that design could move them so much. The second and third time clients cried with joy. // Being told, "Noemi, you put down on paper what I had in my heart." // Not one but two clients getting our work tattooed on their bodies. // Starting my own business and running it for the past 17 years with people that I love. How amazing a career is that?

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? New clients, new work, new experiences. Redesigning the studio space, eliminating the darkroom and investing in silkscreening equipment to continue to grow each day as creative people and never lose the art in design.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? What is a weakness is also one of my strengths. I've been told I take things too personally. I do. This is more than a job to me. It is who I am as a person. I think about ideas all day, I don't sleep at night because I can't turn my brain off. And that is universal to whatever role I play.

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COMMUNITY SERVICE? Giving back is a big part of our philosophy here at How 2 Design. Each year our holiday gift to clients is created around charitable giving. We also donate our time — just this past year we've branded a soup kitchen, a campaign to end homelessness, "For the Love of Guilford — VOTE" campaign, and we're currently branding Growing Guilford Kids. I've taught Graphic Design at Middlesex Community College and continue to sit on their board; I have been a board member of Young Audiences of Connecticut; I've been a member, a secretary and VP of CADC; and I'm a member of AIGA. And somehow, we end up taking in our clients' interns during the summer. We're like fun camp for corporate youth.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? I was born this way. Both of my parents and my sister are artists and I don't remember anything different in my life. But there was a moment that expedited change — when WYD Design in Westport closed their doors unexpectedly. We all lost our jobs on Friday; I started How 2 Design on Monday.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? Everything. Thinking. Strategy. Research. Concept. Design. The spark of an idea. The process of growth. The "ah-ha" moment when someone else gets it. Joy.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I am a business partner at a gym in Branford called Sweat. We specialize in Bootcamp Training and Spin. How 2 Design branded the studios and we are now living it. Extreme.



PETER GOOD
CUMMINGS & GOOD

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Starting my own design practice around 1970. Forming Cummings & Good with my partner/wife, Jan Cummings, in 1994. And encompassing those two events, a multitude of varied assignments, many of which gained acceptance by my peers and other professionals as well as providing me with an extraordinary degree of creative gratification.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? Forming a gallery for exhibiting the posters, prints and personal art works that Jan and I have been creating for over 45 years. The Gallery also displays the sculpture and art works by our sons Jesse Maxwell Good and Justin Good.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? The design community in Connecticut has been rewarded in recent years with fresh, intelligent and spirited leadership manifested in the CADC and AIGA CT. Although I try to participate in both institutions, my personal involvement is limited. The community of Chester continues to be a source of provincial enjoyment. Jan and I continue to contribute to the many events that have made our very special hamlet an extraordinarily rich environment in which to live and work.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? It's been more of an ongoing series of events and ever-changing creative endeavors. And, I prefer the mystery of an unmarked path. I have always resisted forming a design doctrine or methodology because of the changes that I've seen over time, in the ways that people react to signs, symbols, letterforms and images. I don't believe in absolutes or immutable design laws. I rather relate to the Pyrrhic Sceptics; "I know nothing about anything and I'm not even sure about that." It tends to keep the receptors on alert.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? The pleasure of creating visual concepts that might affect another sentient being.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I'm not a bad Petanque player but I can't make a carreau for squat.



NICK HEALY
MASCOLA GROUP

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? My wife Katharine and I had our first child, a daughter Charlotte June Healy. It has been an amazing experience; she has given us a whole new outlook on things and has really given meaning to the phrase, “work/life balance.”

At Mascola, we had a super busy year. We finished a complete rebrand for our client The World, which included a new printed collateral package, 2 long format video pieces, and a website/email campaign overhaul. For The Big E, we created some really memorable tv spots — using POV video footage that we captured on all the midway rides with Derek Dudek — which resulted in record attendance numbers for this year. Yale University kept us busy with over five website redesigns. And we began rebranding Heritage Museums & Gardens in Sandwich, Massachusetts — a really cool location with three museums and hundreds of acres of gardens on their grounds right at the start to Cape Cod.

In April, One of Twenty was featured on The Today Show, and we quickly went from being a small collective of artists in mostly Connecticut and New Hampshire to also representing established and emerging artists from all over the country. We participated in multiple gallery openings, put on a few of our own and have been pushing getting our clothing into more stores in Connecticut and beyond.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? I think my greatest strength lies in knowing my own limitations. I am well aware that I don't know everything and working in a vacuum never produces the best results. I love the collaborative aspect of the industry. At

Mascola, we have an amazing team where each person specializes in a different field, whether that's PR, content/strategy, media or design. When we come together and work as a group, any single seed of an idea gets pushed to a much better place than each of us could do on our own. Beyond the walls of Mascola we get to pair with amazing creatives for photography, video, web and radio projects, all of whom I am constantly learning from.

My greatest weakness right now is my lack of knowledge on the business side of our industry (or any industry, for that matter). Starting One of Twenty in 2008 with my brother quickly introduced me to the necessary evils of managing incoming and outgoing expenses, contracts with artists, working with vendors, etc. The challenge is not focusing my time on the fun creative projects and making sure that I've taken care of business.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? Right after college I joined the CADC, and in a few years became a board member and was the Vice-President in charge of the Award Show in 2008. Recently I haven't been as involved as I've become more involved in the fine art community. With One of Twenty, I've been in charge of organizing, marketing and hosting group art events with the collective. It has also allowed me to exhibit my artwork in shows put on by other galleries and, in general, I have just been going to view more visual and performance art.

While I love advertising and graphic design, I only truly got into them as a way to make a decent living that I could depend on. I grew up drawing and painting for myself and these are my true passions.

I am also a firm believer that you need a passion outside of what you do every day at work to help keep you motivated and creative on the job.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? I think the thing that appeals to me the most in the world of advertising and design is change. I am a big fan of working on projects for new clients because I get to learn the ins and outs of an industry I might have not known anything about. Even for the clients that we've had relationships with for years, we are faced with change. The economy, new technologies, competition in the marketplace or new product launches constantly affect the marketing plan of any company and we must be quick to adjust our campaigns to account for this. This constant learning and adaptation keeps me interested and excited to work in this industry.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I was a nationally-ranked BMX bike racer at age 14. If I only had a shred of dedication I might be at the X Games today and not at a computer in New Haven.



BRIAN MILLER
BRIAN MILLER DESIGN GROUP

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? When I left agency and corporate life to start the Brian Miller Design Group in May of 2005. The past six years have been a process of discovery, which is always the best part of life. In many ways it's harder, but in all ways it's more rewarding and satisfying. When I stop discovering it will be time to move on to the next thing.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? I had two: In February, my book Above the Fold was released. The thrill of seeing something I had worked so hard on come to life and be received so positively was immeasurable. In August, I began working with Paula Scher on material for TDC58, the Annual Competition for the Type Directors Club. Both were the result of hard work and good friends.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? My strength and weakness are one in the same: I've never been afraid to ask for something I want. Some see it as proactive and passionate, others see it as arrogant and needy.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? I serve on two boards: TDC, where I chaired the Web committee and TDC58, and more recently was elected to the Executive Board as the Secretary Treasurer; and my local community's board of directors managing public works and helping with community events. It's a vital part of my creative life as it offers me the ability to get out of my home studio and into a terrific network of professionals.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? When I was an art director at Gartner, I worked with a copywriter named Tony Leighton. At the time I desperately wanted to go out on my own and freelance, but I was concerned about the stability. Tony told me something I'll never forget; he said, “When you are a full time employee, you have exactly one client. When you freelance, you have three, four, even five clients; if one goes down, you have a few to fill in while you look for more. If your full time employer decides they don't need you, you have no clients.” Very shortly after that, I started the Brian Miller Design Group.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I've been to the New York Mets opening day ten years in a row (this year included).



LEE MOODY
MOHAWK

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS? Always a fun question for me, as I had a career before Mohawk. As a textile and furniture designer in New York, my career highlight was when Moody Designs was awarded the Barneys, Barneys NY, and Barneys Japan accounts, and I worked with a team to develop window displays with my products. Since then, my 13+ year relationship with Mohawk has let me be involved in the community not just as a vendor, but as a source of support and inspiration to designers and trade organizations.

Some highlights:

Spending three weeks in Australia — talking to agencies and corporations about Mohawk.

Seeing Mohawk become a global leader in manufacturing paper with 100% recycled fiber and renewable windpower energy, as well as the first paper mill to shift toward carbon neutral production. My whole job changed to educating the community about sustainability and what Mohawk was doing to make a difference.

Working with “A Better World For Design” at RISD and Brown. Being a founding Board member of AIGA Metro North. And partnering with a wonderful team of designers to engage and educate the community about sustainability, through an AIGA CT event called “The Living Principles/Shed.”

2011 HIGHLIGHTS? Mohawk has spent a lot of time and effort leveraging connections in the digital, design and photo arena — with a consumer photo brand, Pinhole Press, and an online marketplace called FeltandWire. It has been very exciting to see so many creatives in Connecticut get involved in projects both client-based and personal, and work with Pam Williams to get many featured on FeltandWire — Noemi Kearns, Karl Heine and kHyal, John Gibson and Peter Good to mention just a few.

MY 13+ YEAR RELATIONSHIP WITH MOHAWK HAS LET ME BE INVOLVED IN THE COMMUNITY NOT JUST AS A VENDOR, BUT AS A SOURCE OF SUPPORT AND INSPIRATION TO DESIGNERS AND TRADE ORGANIZATIONS.

I also have had the pleasure of working with Tina Sommers — a photographer and a creative director at People's United Bank — to design some products for Pinhole Press.

A special 2011 honor was to be added to the CADC Hall of Fame, as well as being chosen to be on the Board of Directors for the Hartford Art School — an opportunity to engage in students' futures is wonderful.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? Mohawk is a national partner of AIGA, so my time is spent working with the boards of AIGA Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine, New York and Boston. And Mohawk has supported CADC for over 15 years, with myself on the Board. In my own community, I am involved in the Durham Garden Club and we give our time to the local environment.

DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? When Mohawk bought IP Fine Papers and became a global leader, selling to 64 countries. The realization that Mohawk was not just a “little mill in upstate New York” was very inspiring. To see the tremendous change to reach such a diverse audience has been amazing. To be able to partner with so many really great agencies and corporations around the world who are using Mohawk paper.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? My passion for art and design! I love to see what the next project is that everyone is working on — artists, designers, photographers, architects, typographers, printers, book designers and authors.

LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I lived in NYC for 25 years, and moved out to be able to design my own house. It's a cool house. With a piano in it, cause I play the piano!



AMY GRAVER
ELEMENTS

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Starting Elements. Eight years on the CADC Board, two as President. Helping Lisa Burns start the AIGA Connecticut chapter and serving as its VP for two years. Being asked by Rockport to write a book on design. And right now. It is exciting to watch something you started evolve and grow.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS First, co-authoring “Best Practices for Graphic Designers: Grids and Page Layouts” with Ben Jura. Second, after losing a parent, getting married and having two kids, re-fitting all the pieces back together and channeling my energy fully back into Elements.

YOUR STRENGTHS & WEAKNESSES? Weaknesses: Organization, chocolate, unwavering optimism, not listening to my instincts, trust in others. Strengths: Curiosity, unwavering optimism, listening to my instincts, drive, belief, trust in others.

COMMUNITY SERVICE? We are actively involved in numerous charitable organizations donating our time, funds and services wherever we can. So far this year those include the Alzheimer's Association, Branford Firefighters, The Boy Scouts of America, Students without Borders and the Children of Scott Getzinger.

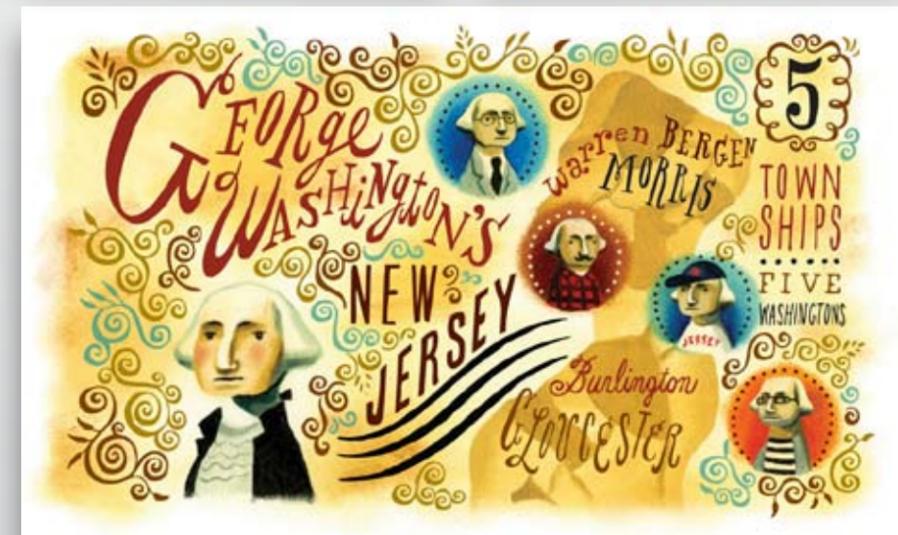
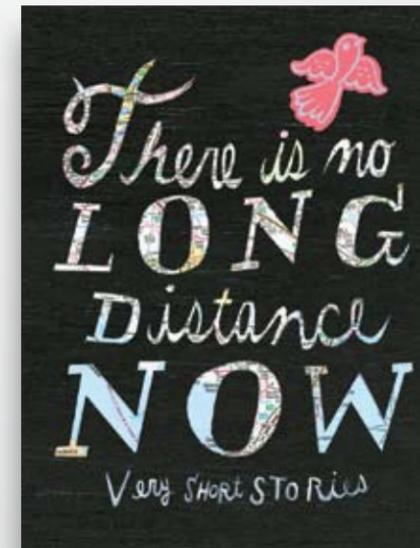
DEFINING CAREER MOMENT? Leaving my staff job as a photojournalist working for The Boston Globe to pursue a career as a graphic designer. No regrets.

WHAT KEEPS YOU GOING? Someone once advised me not to become friends with my employees. I was never able to make that policy stick. The best reward for coming to work is the work we are doing with people who I enjoy being with. Also my family and running.

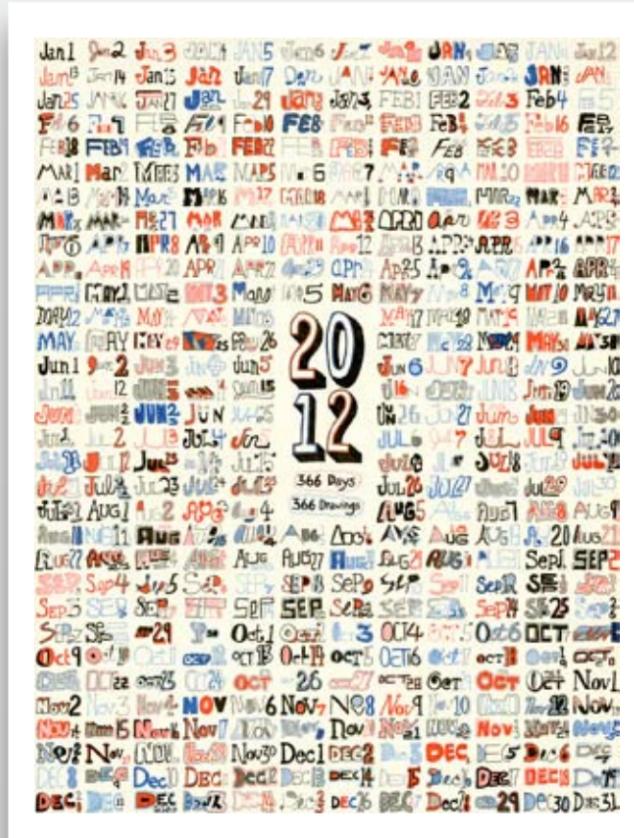
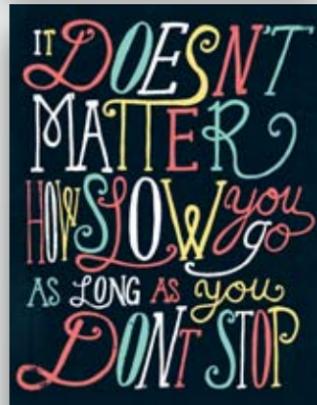
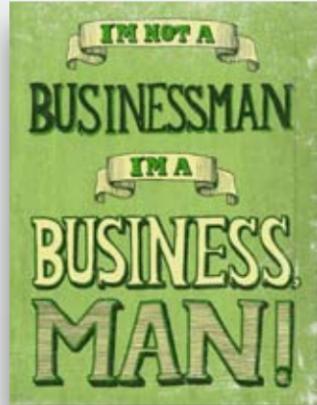
LITTLE KNOWN FACT ABOUT YOURSELF? I started running when my Dad became ill two years ago to clear my head, get healthy and on a promise to my Dad to be strong. My first race was the Branford Father's Day 5k in 2010 in his honor. I was hoping he'd see me cross the finish line, but he passed away two weeks before the race. I haven't stopped since, and I'm healthier and happier than I've ever been.

DRAWN IN: ENGAGING HANDWRITTEN & CUSTOMIZED LETTERFORMS

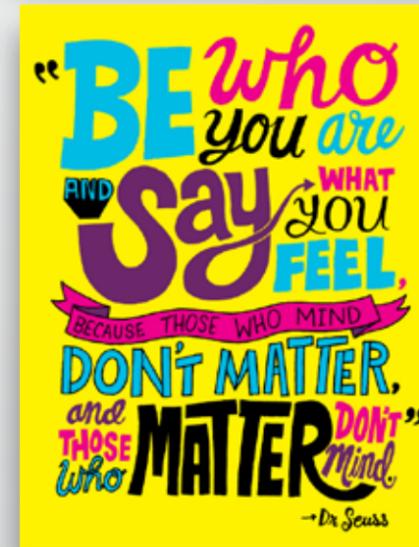
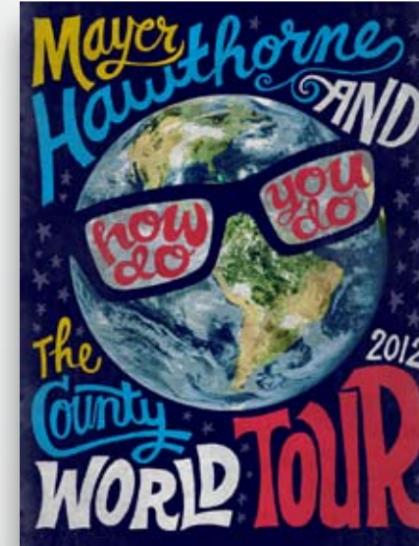
For many designers, creating type by hand is a reaction to computer-based design and overused typefaces. The popularity of hand-drawn typography continues to grow, and a number of Connecticut creatives — folks like Vaughn Fender, Ben Jura, Chris Piascik, Ryan O'Rourke and Matt Hunsberger — continue to blur the lines between design, typography and illustration, both in client work and in self-initiated projects. Here we explore and celebrate the portfolios of these creatives, whose every letter is a work of art.



MATT HUNSBERGER MATTHUNSBERGER.COM



“Lately, I’ve been enjoying the act of drawing much more than working on the computer. It’s a much freer expression of my thoughts and ideas. There’s something powerful about putting pen to paper that a computer can’t replicate.”



CHRIS PIASCIK CHRISPIASCIK.COM

BEN JURA BANDCOSTUDIO.COM



“When I am doing ‘lettering’ or ‘type design,’ I will incorporate existing letterforms if it makes sense to do so. Drawing orthogonally with a mouse is not something I dream of doing, so if I can start with an existing letter that has some of the characteristics I need and then just modify it, that is what I will choose to do every time. The result is that a lot of what I do uses a mix of bespoke and modified existing letterforms.”



VAUGHN FENDER VAUGHNFENDER.COM

