

UNDESIGNED

Undefined by Design

April 12 to May 18, 2014

Iorimoto

16-23 Hancock Street

Ridgewood, New York

Special thanks to Allie Rex

and The Children's Publishing Design Forum

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Heading type set in Montserrat

Text type set in Lato

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In Memory of Marie M. Mulligan (1922–2014)

STATEMENT

“Fine artists have been taking inspiration—when not outright stealing—from the world of graphic design for a century. The list is long: Kurt Schwitters and Georges Braque, Stuart Davis and Charles Demuth, Jasper Johns and Andy Warhol, Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holzer.”

—Michael Bierut

Graphic design, in turn, has a tradition of references to fine art, whether we call them inspiration or theft. The relationship between the two fields is a fruitful and uneasy symbiosis. Institutionally, though, a distinction is assumed: design is not art. Each discipline has its own history, culture, heroes, valuations, and functions. Despite these demarcations, those who vigorously explore the complexity of both fields within their practice perform a sort of alchemy. Their multifaceted bodies of work expand and connect both worlds. *Undefined by Design* presents works of art by visionary designers who share a drive to explore the line between art and design.

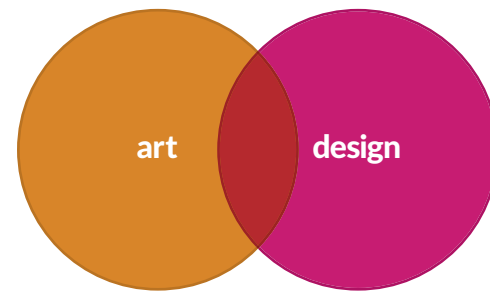
Brian LaRossa

ESSAY

Brian LaRossa’s provocative exhibition celebrates designers who defy the norms of their profession and who also make objects that we call “art.” Keetra Dean Dixon’s piece, *A-Way*, is a nylon flag that zips apart from itself. It opens its fly and comes undone. Dixon’s materials beckon from the world of useful things, but her piece refuses to be utilitarian. It illuminates language rather than using it to promote or persuade. It hangs on a wall in a gallery, not on the sale rack at Kohl’s. Dixon’s misbehaving artifact has no client. It solves no problem and sells no product—except for perhaps itself.

Whenever I see the word “undefined,” I start hunting for definitions. Those for the terms “design” and “art” are notoriously difficult to pin down. Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, the esteemed cultural authority for whom I have toiled for over twenty years, accepts numerous working definitions of design. Rather than pick one, Cooper-Hewitt’s curators and museum educators buzz around a swarm of colliding notions. Sometimes we focus on process: design as thinking, design as making, or design as decoration. Sometimes we focus on people: design for users, design for clients, design for social change, or design for designers.

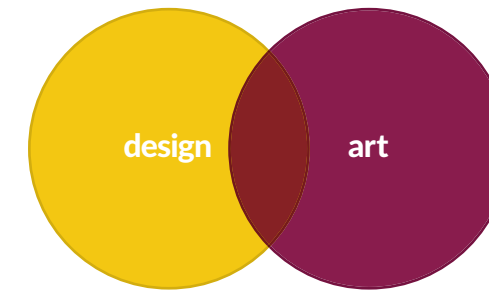
Since defining design is so difficult, and LaRossa's exhibition is about how design and art overlap, I decided to think about the overlap. How does design exist in relation to art? Surely the handiest tool for thinking about overlaps is the Venn diagram. This bubble-shaped wonder of the philosophical imagination helps us understand categories of objects or ideas in relation to one another. What do categories include and exclude? How do we come to understand things by seeing what they are not?



Peanut Butter and Jelly

Imagine the work in LaRossa's show stuck in the middle of a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, right at the plane where the sweet-and-sour personality of fruit preserves confronts the dense, chalky heaviness of pulverized peanuts. Elliott Earls's work occupies a sticky frontier where two antagonistic substances meet. Think of jelly as graphic design; it's popular,

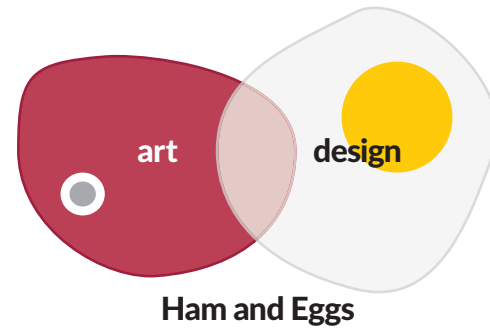
accessible, and communicates a message. Peanut butter, on the other hand, is art; it's serious, obscure, and hides its meaning at the back of your throat. Debbie Millman's white-on-white visual poem is a wonderful piece of PBJ. Her bright narrative voice and inviting typography provide the jelly while the opaque monochrome surface brings on the peanut butter, supplying gravitas and a welcome layer of discomfort. Like peanut butter, art makes you work a little harder.



Beer and Wine

My next diagram gets at the culture clash between design and art. Wine, like art, has a reputation for classiness while beer is the working man's drink. (Needless to say, there is plenty of cheap wine and bad art in modern society, and beer is now a collector's item in certain parts of Brooklyn.) When you mix highbrow and lowbrow together, you get a toxic brew

indeed: middle brow. Luckily, nothing in LaRossa's show tastes quite like Weer or Bine, but the danger is always there. (Don't you cringe when design tries too hard to be art?)



Maybe my first two diagrams are too simple. They don't reveal the secrets that design and art are trying to keep from each other. Consider ham and eggs. Ham is art; it's an expensive product that has been cured by salt, sugar, or fire to endure the test of time. Eggs are design; they are a cheaper form of sustenance that shouldn't linger in your fridge for more than a week or two. Although ham and eggs each have their own discourse and history, creative people have been cutting them up and mashing them together for centuries. But ham harbors something that is hard to penetrate—even by its own insiders. It's the art market, that marrow-rich bone of late capitalism with the power to create value that exceeds utility.

Like artists, designers have their own way of doing business, but theirs is rather obvious and accessible. Designers make contracts with clients and users in order to create stuff that people need or want. The rewards of these contracts are smaller but more reliable than the rewards locked away in art's magical ham bone.

Many of the pieces shown in *Undefined by Design* are for sale; some of them aren't. The gallery creates a context where people can experience various artifacts as autonomous objects of contemplation as well as players in a special kind of commerce, one that is usually closed to graphic design. Brian LaRossa has bravely collected a disparate roster of things into a space where we can value them in new ways.

[Ellen Lupton](#)

EXHIBITION

Opening: April 12, 6–9pm

Schedule: April 12 to May 18, 2014

Gallery: lorimoto
16-23 Hancock Street
Ridgewood, NY 11385

Artists:

Deanne Cheuk
Kareem Collie
Russ D'Anna
Keetra Dean Dixon
Elliott Earls
Milton Glaser

Debbie Millman
Juan Carlos Pagan
Able Parris
Mike Perry
Chris Rubino
Paul Soulellis

Essayist: Ellen Lupton

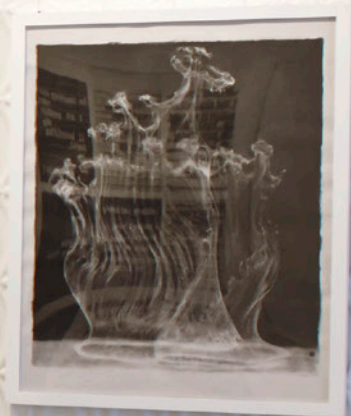
Curator: Brian LaRossa

Editor: Carolyn Wood













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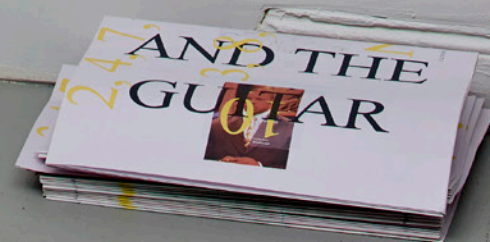


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2 maps, 3 Earth)
- B Image (4 Getty Images,
5 Google Images)
- C Text (6 Wikipedia,
7 Twitter, 8 Project Gutenberg)



DEANNE CHEUK

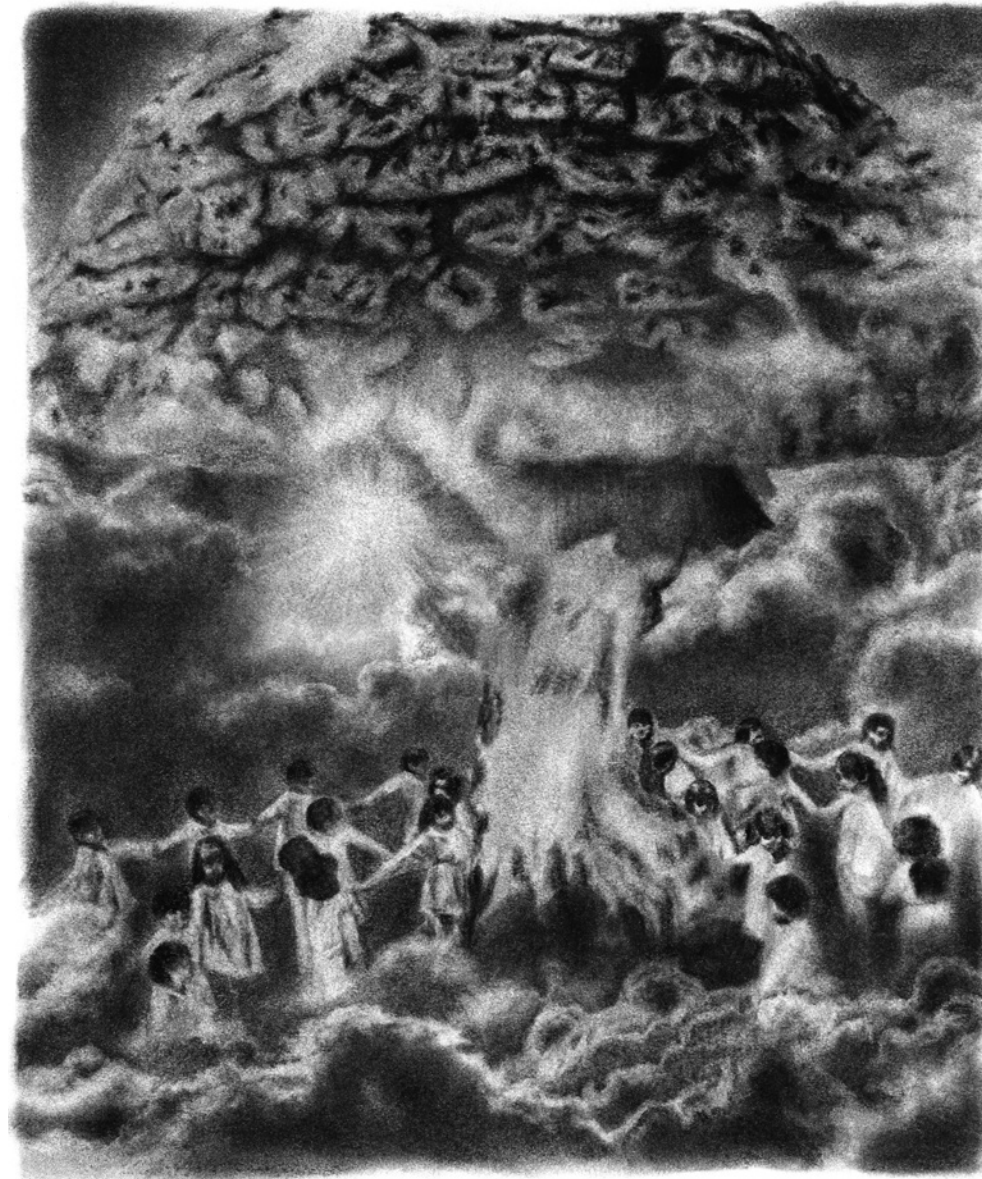
New York-based artist and designer Deanne Cheuk works predominantly on paper with charcoal or watercolor. Her artwork touches on nature, utopia, space, and being, and it often distorts realistic representation into fantasy.

Cheuk was born in Perth, Western Australia. She graduated with a BA in Graphic Design from Curtin University at the age of nineteen, and during the same year, she landed her first design job as the art director for one of only two magazines that were produced in Perth.

In 2000, Cheuk relocated to New York and taught herself illustration. Commercial commissions soon followed. Her first solo show was in 2004, the same year that she released her monograph, *Mushroom Girls Virus*. Cheuk's art has been exhibited around the world, most recently in London, New York, and California.



Big Drip
Charcoal on Paper
18" x 24"
2013



Mushroom Children
Charcoal on Paper
11" x 14"
2014

KAREEM COLLIE

Kareem Collie was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York. He graduated from Pratt Institute with a BFA in Communication Design in 2001, and he spent the next decade as an art director for such clients as Nickelodeon, USA Network, Coca-Cola, Starwood, and Mercedes. From 2006 through 2011, he and his business partner launched and then ran the design studio Dimitrious II Inc. while he also taught graphic design at Pratt Institute through 2012.

Currently, Collie is working on his graduate degree at New York University, concentrating on the creation of mythologies in popular culture through the use of narrative theory and visual culture.



*President Obama
Launched a War
on Fox News
Digital Archival Print
12" x 12" Edition of 9
2014*

Democrats Seem to Be
on the Verge of Getting
Their MOJO Back.
Digital Archival Print
18" x 24"
2014

I Fear for My Country
Digital Archival Print
18" x 24"
2014

Sorry Conservatives,
The Kenyan, Socialist,
Marxist, Communist
Doesn't Want to
Pry Your Fishing Pole
from Your Cold,
Dead Fingers
Digital Archival Print
9" x 12"
2014

The President
Remains Supremely
Confident That His
Vision Will Work
Digital Archival Print
9" x 12"
2014



Portraits of Barak
Obama: Contrasting
Narratives & Popular
Perception
Limited Edition Book
11" x 8.5"
2014

RUSS D'ANNA

Russ D'Anna was born in Kansas City, Missouri, and raised in neighboring Independence. After high school, he enlisted in the US Army Special Forces. Upon finishing his three-year tour in Germany, he enrolled in the University of Kansas, where he earned his BA and MS in Fine Arts. He married in his last year of school and he and his wife, Dorothy, moved to New York City, where they have lived ever since. Hired by Scholastic, one of the country's largest publishing houses, he serves as corporate creative director and is a faculty member at the School of Visual Arts.

He has won numerous awards, including those from the New York Art Directors Club, the Los Angeles Art Directors Club, the American Institute of Graphic Artists, the Society of Illustrators, the Golden Phoenix, and the Mead Library of Ideas, among many others. D'Anna's latest exhibition, NYNY, was held in Kansas City at the Vivilore Gallery. This successful show will be followed by another there in the spring of 2014. It will exhibit more than thirty paintings.



Times Square
Giclée on Canvas
26" x 33"
2014



23rd Street Station
Giclée
on Canvas
33" x 19.5"
2014

KEETRA DEAN DIXON

Keetra Dean Dixon is a designer, director, and artist. Her hybrid design background and expertise in graphic design often lead her work toward speculative terrain, such as the leveraging of emergent technologies and the shortcomings of ubiquitous creative tools. She has been recognized on several fronts, receiving the US presidential award, the ADC Young Gun award, and a place in the permanent design collection at the SFMOMA. She has been featured in numerous publications and exhibits, including feature articles in *Time*, *étapes*, and *Surface*, as well as commissioned works for the 2009 US presidential inauguration and the 2012 Olympic Games.

Dixon has held solo exhibits at the Kessels Kramer Gallery KKOulet and she has shown at the Walker Art Center and the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum. She has acted as the design director for installations featured at the 2008 Venice Architecture Biennale and 2010 O1SJ Biennial. In 2013, Dixon was a featured speaker at TYPO SF and participated in INCONGRUOUS, a residency for “brazen experimentation in design practices,” with the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City.



AWAY
Cotton Canvas Fabric
32" x 47"
2010

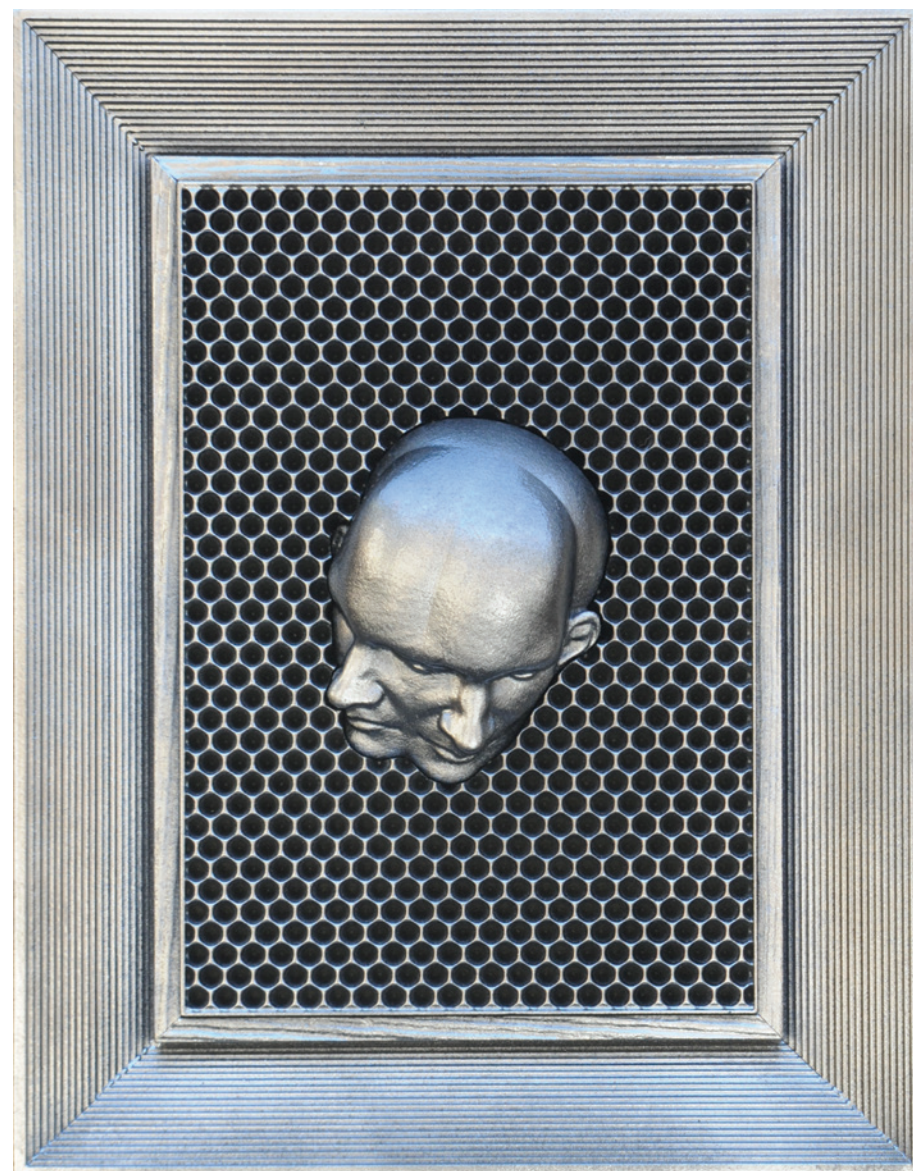
ELLIOTT EARLS

Elliott Earls is artist-in-residence and head of the graduate Graphic Design department at Cranbrook Academy of Art. Earls has led the graduate program at Cranbrook since 2001. His work as a designer, performer, and artist is represented in major collections, including the Smithsonian Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, the Wolfsonian Museum, and the Miami Art Museum. His work has been featured in both solo and group exhibitions at Art Basel Miami Beach.

As a performance artist, Earls was awarded an Emerging Artist grant from Manhattan's prestigious Wooster Group. Earls has performed globally, including featured shows during the Exit Festival at Maison des arts de Créteil, and at Music Hall, Detroit. His achievements include a recent major installation at the Triennale Design Museum in Milan.



Super Anti-Zero
Ebonized Aspen Panel
18" x 24" x 2"
2013

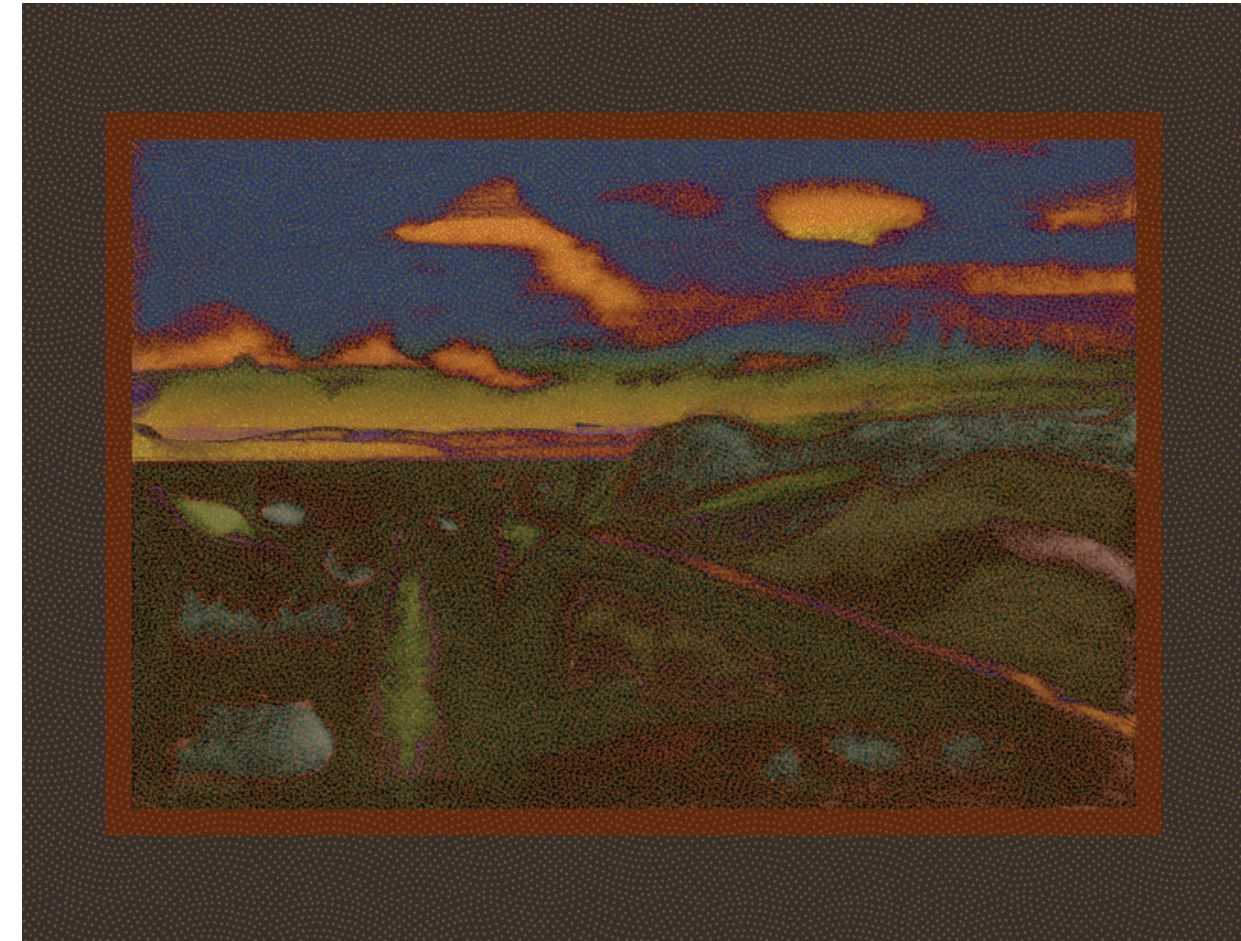


Number 7
Ebonized Aspen Panel
16" x 22" x 2"
2013

MILTON GLASER

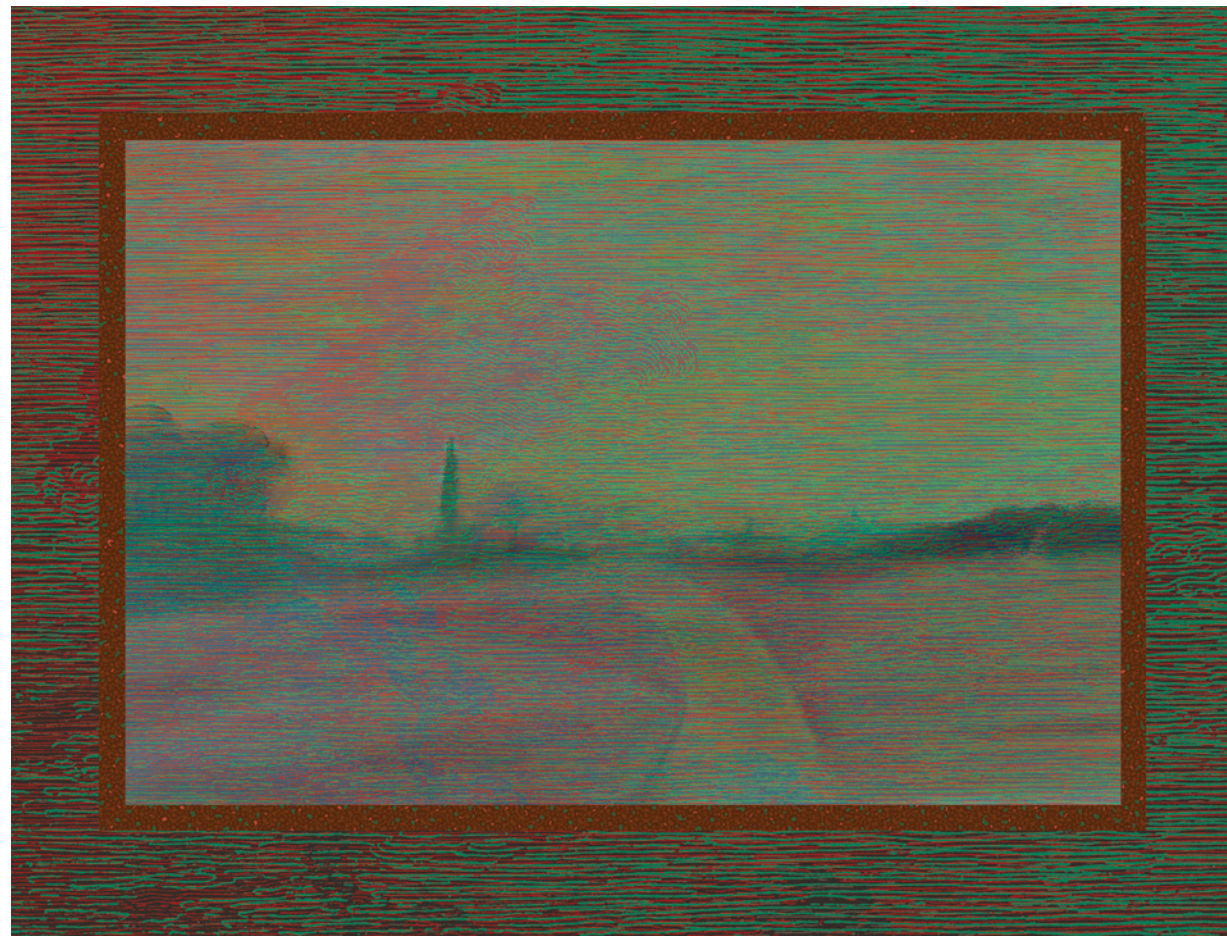
Milton Glaser is among the most celebrated graphic designers in the United States. He has had the distinction of one-man shows at the Museum of Modern Art and the Georges Pompidou Center. In 2009, he was the first graphic designer to be awarded the National Medal of Arts. He was selected for lifetime achievement awards from the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum in 2004 and the Fulbright Association in 2011.

As a Fulbright scholar, Glaser studied with the painter Giorgio Morandi in Bologna and is an articulate spokesman for the ethical practice of design. He cofounded the revolutionary Push Pin Studios in 1954 and *New York Magazine* with Clay Felker in 1968. In 1974, he opened Milton Glaser Inc. where he continues to produce a prolific amount of work in many fields of design.

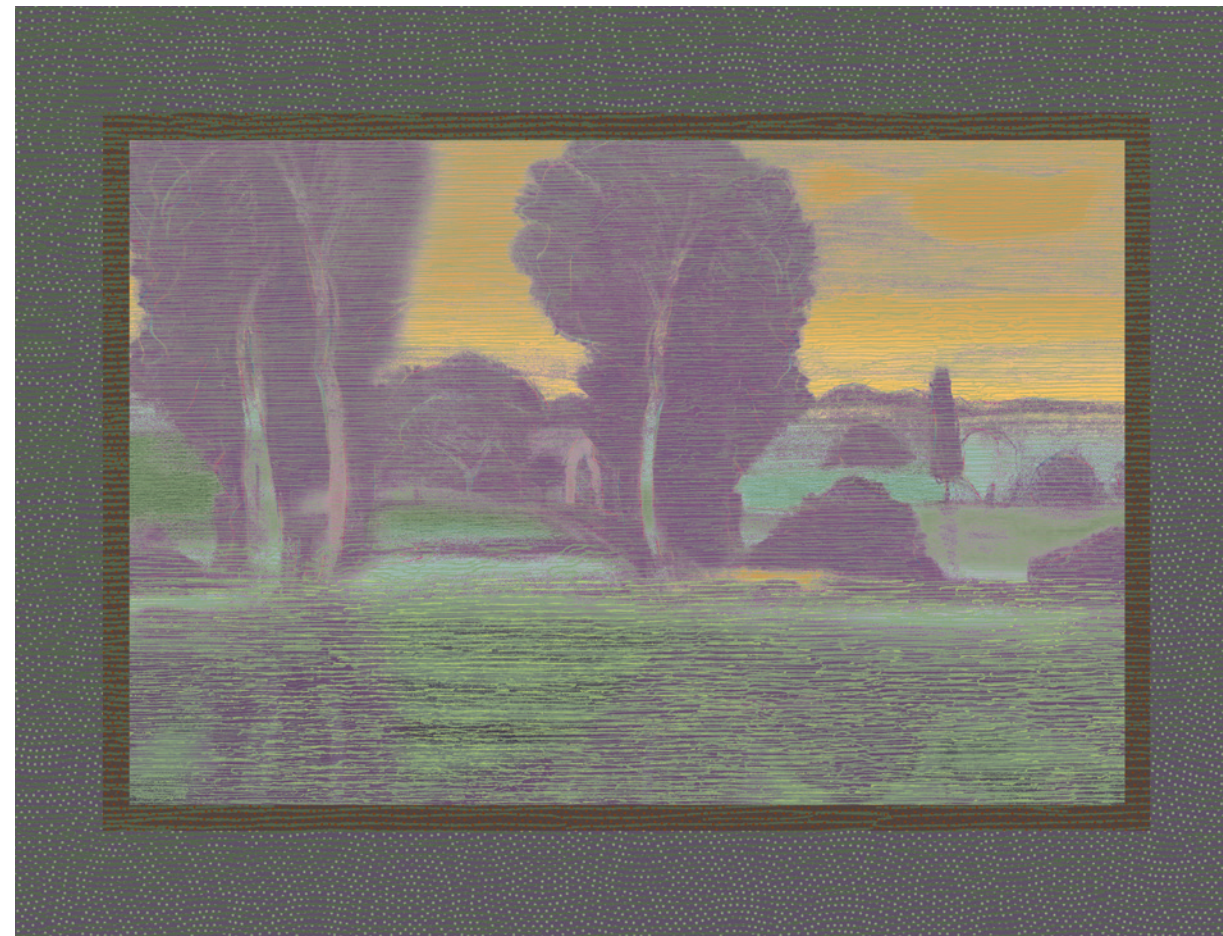


Orange Cloud
Giclée
17" x 22"
2013

Dutch View
Giclée
17" x 22"
2013



Purple Trees
Giclée
17" x 22"
2013



DEBBIE MILLMAN

Debbie Millman is a designer, author, educator, and strategist. She is president of the design division at Sterling Brands, where she has worked on the redesign of over two hundred global brands, including projects with P&G, Colgate, Nestlé, Kraft, and Pepsi.

Millman is also cofounder and chair of the world’s first Masters in Branding Program at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. She is president emeritus of AIGA, the largest professional association for design in the world, and she serves as a contributing editor at *Print* magazine. In 2005, she began hosting *Design Matters*, the first podcast about design on the Internet. In 2011, the show received the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Award.

She is the author of six books on design and branding. Last year, an exhibition of her visual essays debuted at the Chicago Design Museum; they are currently on view at Anderson University in South Carolina.



Fare Thee Well
Digital Print
on Cotton Twill
60" x 72"
2012

JUAN CARLOS PAGAN

Juan Carlos Pagan is a New York-based designer and typographer. In 2006, he received his BFA in Communication Design from Parson's The New School for Design, and in 2011, he completed his studies as part of the inaugural class of Type@Cooper, the postgraduate typeface design certification program at Cooper Union. Pagan is currently the design director at Deutsch New York and a partner at the Brooklyn-based design studio Pagan & Sharp. Prior to Deutsch, he served as head of design at DDB New York.

His work has been recognized by the Art Directors Club, the Type Directors Club, Cannes Lions, the One Club, D&AD, the Clios, *Print* magazine, and *Communication Arts*. In 2012, he was named a "Creative You Should Know" by Creativity Online and *AdAge*. In 2013, Pagan was the recipient of the ADC Young Guns 11 award, and he was listed in the top ten of *Adweek's* Talent 100. He has shown at the Mexican Museum of Design in Mexico City, the Art Directors Club in New York City, the FoCi Art Fair in Miami Beach for Art Basel, and the Type Directors Club in New York City, among others.



Look Twice
Acrylic on
Window Blinds
48" x 61"
2010

ABLE PARRIS

Able Parris is an accomplished artist, designer, and creative director. He lives and works in Brooklyn, New York, with his beautiful wife and long-time collaborator, the artist and photographer Julia Parris. He is design director at Big Spaceship. Previously at McKinney, he helped design some of the agency's most successful, award-winning work. Parris left Rhode Island School of Design in January 2005 to found his own boutique design studio servicing record labels and startups. He is also co-creator of niche sound art and music blog, Field Mic, which was named Best Amateur Music Blog by *Chicago Reader* in 2010.

His surrealist collages and typographic illustrations have been sought after and commissioned by publications around the world. In early 2013, he and Julia founded Analog=Heavy, a boutique creative studio and online shop where they currently sell fine art prints, and are developing designs for wearable products. In 2010, he was invited by Yosi Sergeant to exhibit in *RE:FORM SCHOOL* alongside Marc Ecko, Shepard Fairey, Michel Gondry, and other esteemed artists from around the world. In 2013, he had his first solo exhibition at Indiana Wesleyan University.



Moroni Fern
Collage
6" x 6¼"
2013

Forest Home
Collage
8¾" x 12"
2013

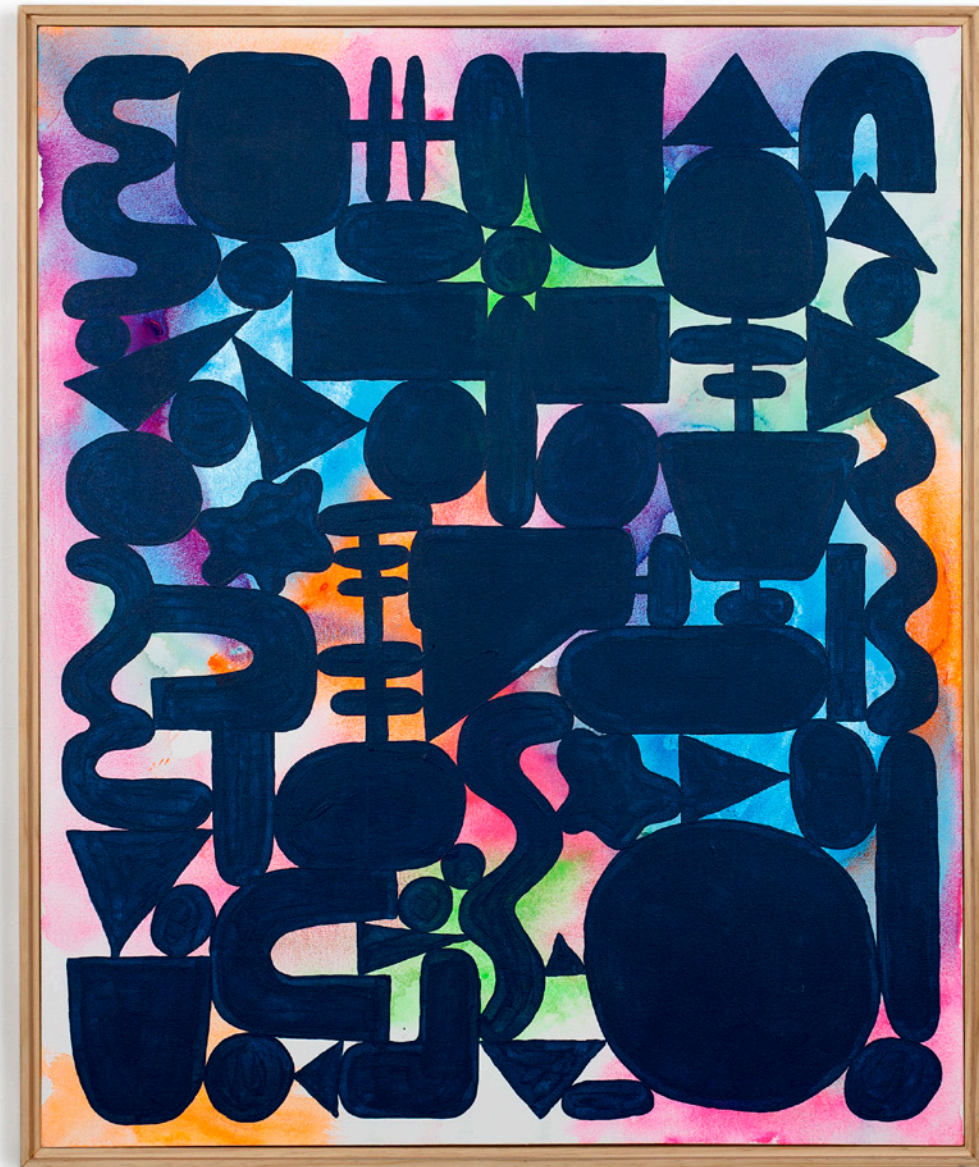


Howlin' Gold
Collage
8.5" x 8.5"
2013

MIKE PERRY

Mike Perry is a designer and artist working in numerous media. Perry works regularly for a number of editorial and commercial clients, including Apple, the *New York Times*, *Dwell*, Target, Urban Outfitters, Aldo, and Nike. Perry has garnered numerous accolades and awards, including *Print* magazine's esteemed New Visual Artist award, and the Art Directors Club's Young Guns. His work has been exhibited around the world, including at two recent solo shows in Tokyo: *We Are The Infinity of Each Other and Color, Shapes and Infinity*.

Perry has also published extensively. His first book, *Hand Job*, pays homage to the relevance and beauty of hand-drawn type in the digital age. *Over and Over: A Catalog of Hand-Drawn Patterns* explores the nuanced texture, humor, and elegance of illustrative patterns. A third book, *Pulled: A Catalog of Screen Printing*, was released in March 2011, and showcased the silk-screened extravaganza of contemporary artists and designers. His fourth book, 2012's monograph, *Wondering Around Wandering: Work So Far*, is an anthology that focuses on the past eight years of art output.



Lamp 2
Acrylic on Canvas
39½" x 47½"
2013



Lamp 1
Acrylic on Canvas
39½" x 47½"
2013

CHRIS RUBINO

Based in New York City, Chris Rubino has participated in many aspects of the design profession, including title design for films—such as *Blue Valentine* and *The Place Beyond the Pines*—and illustration for Banana Republic and the *New York Times*. He has also art directed television commercials, such as DirecTV and Ketel One, and he has designed hotel interiors, including Distrikt Hotel and Ace Hotel.

His printmaking background, initially focusing on posters, flyers, and t-shirts, has heavily influenced his work. His work has been featured in two solo exhibitions in New York, one in Hong Kong, and a great number of group shows around the US, Europe, and Japan. It has also been added to the permanent collection at the Museum of Design in Zurich.

Rubino holds a BFA from Syracuse University. He was selected as an ADC Young Gun and has served as a board member of the New York City chapter of AIGA. Most recently, Rubino was the subject of a documentary film, *Love Kills Demons*.

He is a cofounder of the Transitionist art movement, which simply states that the line between art and design is blurred beyond perception.



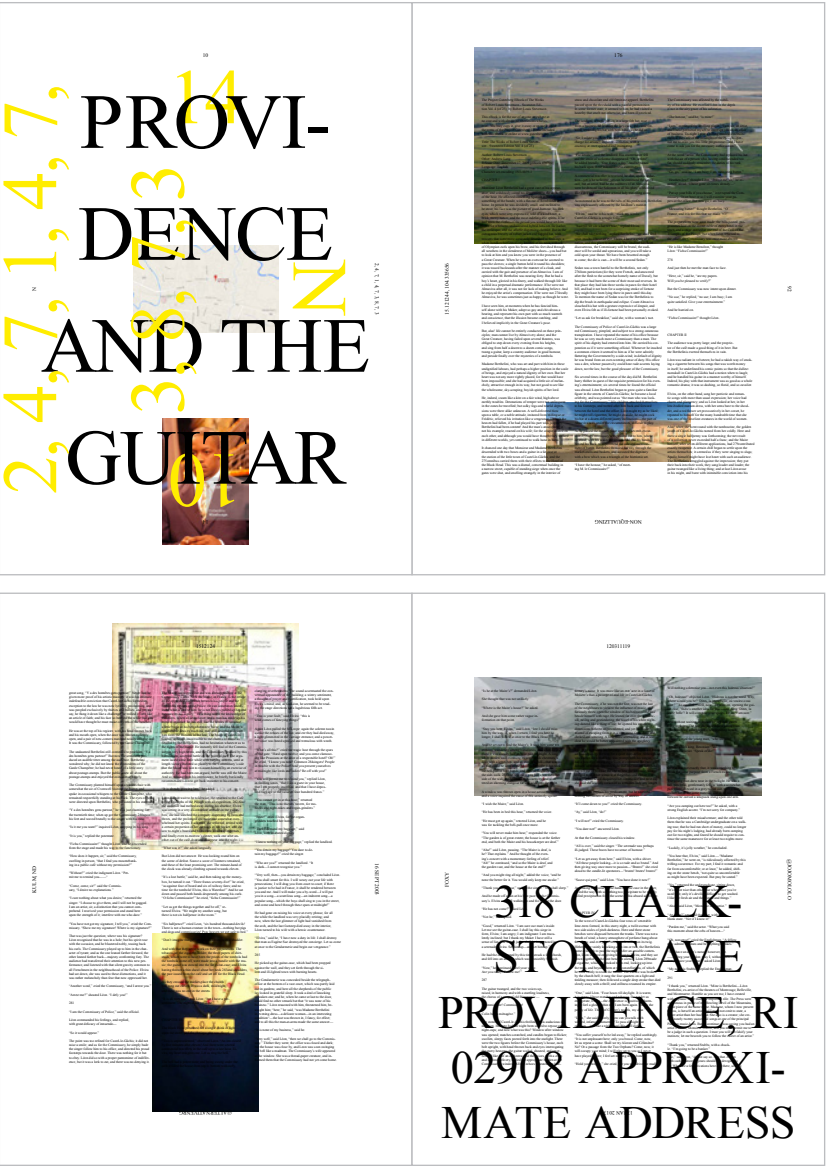
Vanishing Future
Acrylic on Wood
40" x 30"
2014

PAUL SOULELLIS

Paul Soulellis is a New York-based artist and creative director. He founded the strategic design firm, Soulellis Studio, in 2001. He is a graduate of Cornell University’s College of Architecture, Art, and Planning. Soulellis has been a visiting critic, lecturer, and/or adjunct faculty at RISD, Cornell University, Purchase College, UCLA, Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, and Parsons The New School for Design.

In 2012, as an artist-in-residence in Skagaströnd, Iceland, he created 530, an edition of fifty books and social encounters. *Weymouths*, a twelve-volume set of books and social encounters in Weymouth, England, was commissioned by the b-side Arts Festival for the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad. Soulellis also hosted a *Glass House Conversation* on John Cage that year.

Library of the Printed Web, his growing curatorial project, was founded in early 2013 and has since gathered international attention. His *Printed Web #1*, presenting new web-to-print work and texts, launched at the 2014 LA Art Book Fair and in New York City at Printed Matter in March 2014. He has spoken internationally, and he regularly writes about design culture for publications such as *Communication Arts*.



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LaRossa Mix: Score


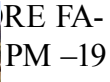
This is a score for making a publication containing three categories of content (A, B, C) drawn from eight openly accessible web archives. The publication may be any size and contain any number of pages. To begin, chance-determine the number and order of web object types, plus a single search term to generate the first one. Use residual terms, coordinates, numbers, and other elements generated by each search to feed subsequent searches, from one object to the next, until all web objects have been collected. It is the business of the artist to arrange the objects in order, two or three objects per page, as desired. Incorporate all residue into the publication. Produce a small edition and give away all copies.

A Geographic (1 Google Street View, 2 Maps, 3 Earth)

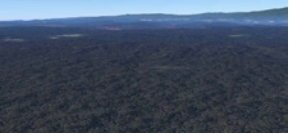
B Image (4 Getty Images, 5 Google Images)

C Text (6 Wikipedia, 7 Twitter, 8 Project Gutenberg)

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ALAN OSORIO PEREZ
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LaRossa Mix:
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14¼" x 20¼"
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GALLERY

LORIMOTO: A COLLABORATION OF NAO MATSUMOTO AND LORI KIRKBRIDE

We are husband and wife, as well as artists, and we've lived and worked in Brooklyn for many years. When we decided to acquire a space for our home and our studios, it was a natural step to look for a building that could also accommodate a gallery.

Our search was largely concentrated in Bushwick, Brooklyn, due to the area's industrial nature and its dense population of artists and galleries. Having maintained a studio there for seven years, Lori knew the neighborhood well. After about a year of searching, we discovered exactly what we both had hoped to find, just across the Brooklyn border in Ridgewood, Queens.

The gallery is located in a former knitting mill that had been in use from the early 1900s until we occupied the space. We retained some of the building's quirky character and charm by keeping the original tin walls and ceilings.

We focus primarily on coordinated group shows that engage both the art community and the local neighborhood. The gallery allows us, as artists, to stay in constant dialog with other artists and art professionals, and it also provides guest curators and artists an opportunity to exhibit.

The arts community in the surrounding Bushwick-Ridgewood area is thriving and we are excited to have put down roots here.



CURATOR

Brian LaRossa has spearheaded award-winning branding, books, packaging, and interactive for a variety of clients, and he has worked as an art director and designer at Scholastic, the global children's media company. He is an alumni of Milton Glaser's Summer Program and a founding member of The Children's Publishing Design Forum (CPDF). He also organizes lectures for The CPDF, and has personally hosted Michael Bierut, Seymour Chwast, Tina Roth Eisenberg, Louise Fili, Milton Glaser, Chip Kidd, George Lois, Ellen Lupton, and Debbie Millman. His illustrations have been recognized by The Society of Illustrators, *American Illustration*, and *Print* magazine.

From 2007 to 2012, he exhibited his work in New York City, which culminated in a two-person show entitled $1 + 1 = 11$. Following that show he began experimenting with conceptual poetry. In 2013, he ghost-authored a manifesto, founded an anonymous poetry collective, and published an anthology of conceptual poetics. He has gone on to generate a large body of poetic work via that collective.

Raised in Atlanta, Brian earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from The Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore. He currently lives in Brooklyn with his wife, Allie Rex, and their twin sons, Maxwell and Theodore.



