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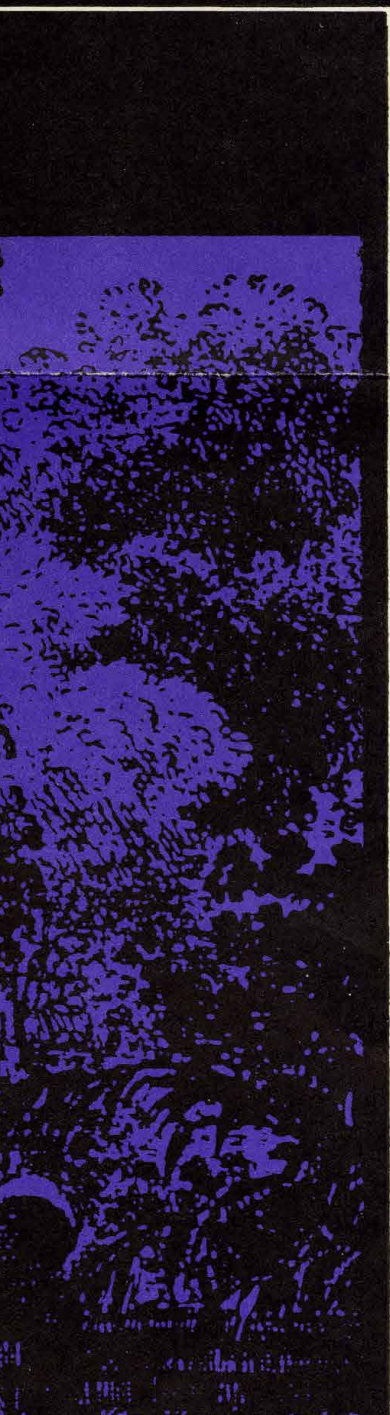Colin Davis.

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THE RECORD CLUB

V.A.MOZART

SPECIAL ISSUE
COMMUNICATION DESIGN

CONTACT

Inside cover
Promotional poster for
the World Record Club's
monthly release, showing
W.A. Mozart: Eine Kleine
Nachtmusik, K.525 and
Serenata Notturna, K.286.
Courtesy of Geoff Hocking

Cover
Untitled Bold Sans
Lettering (detail)
Godfrey (Geoffrey)
Fawcett c. 1990s

Graphic design in Australia presently finds itself in a new period of change, one that is perhaps most clearly manifest in the shift in nomenclature away from 'graphic design' and toward 'communication design'. The latter term is now firmly established in the academy, if not yet so squarely in industry. Change such as this is not without precedent.

Looking to history, and abroad, the Ulm School of Design was central to the rise of the term 'visual communication' in the third quarter of the twentieth century. At Ulm, that term stood for such curricular innovations as the incorporation of semiotics and rhetoric into communication design education. But while post World War Two Germany was exploring the possibilities of systematic approaches to the semantics, syntactics and pragmatics of visual communication, the graphic design profession in Australia was finding its feet qua profession.

Dominic Hofstede's article in this issue tells a story of the evolution of the graphic design industry in Australia through the lens of one key figure, Geoff Digby. As Hofstede's account tells us, Digby is emblematic of the rise of the figure of the art director in Australia, as graphic design moved from the nebulous designation of 'commercial art', via the influence of advertising, into an era of freelance studio practice. Digby's various job titles alone reveal the tumult of the early growth of the profession in this country.

Changing focus, to examine what actually goes on inside the studio, Jenny Grigg gives us a detailed view of the work and working methods of David Lancashire, and particularly of Lancashire's career-long interest in the materiality of paper. As Grigg reveals, inspiration in Lancashire's practice came from far and wide, and his concern for detail in turn bore discipline-wide benefits: While many practicing designers in Australia would have merely lamented the paucity of paper stocks available on our shores, Lancashire threw himself into a product development role in the paper industry, seeing new stocks developed in and for Australia.

In his study of the work of lettering artist Geoffrey Fawcett, Stephen Banham takes a bird's-eye view of studio processes and an ant's-eye view of serif and kern. An important long-term collaborator in Lancashire's practice, Fawcett bucked the trend toward typographic clinicism as the international style swept through Australian graphic design. As Banham shows us, Fawcett is an under-recognised point of reference for contemporary lettering artists, but one whose situation is worlds apart from the lettering renaissance of today.

Alongside old practices rediscovered, new tools, such as service design thinking and ethnographic research methods, have become important to the discipline. An emphasis upon 'strategy', broadly understood, has replaced the communication design industry's pre-millennial obsession with 'branding', while 'design thinking' has replaced 'synergy' as the concept du jour in the worlds of business and management. No longer content to stare at numbers alone, organisations of all types are seeking to perfect the art of looking sideways — this is an historical moment in which everyone, apparently, is a designer. How, in this context, might our discipline articulate its value, and communicate it outwards?

It might be clichéd to speak of the dangers of an ignorance of history and its repetition, but the stakes dictate that I should risk such a faux pas. Despite a rich and storied history in the U.K., Europe and North America, the discipline of graphic design remains understudied in Australia. A number of excellent books and articles exist, but much work is still to be done. This issue of the RMIT Design Archives Journal is a modest move in the right direction. The articles in this issue remind us of the importance of polymathy in an era of specialism, of material perceptiveness in an era of technological desensitisation, and of rigorous craftsmanship in an era of digital homogeneity. Each remains an essential lesson, lest we retrace well-trodden ground.

Brad Haylock
Guest Editor

Brad Haylock is a designer, publisher, and Associate Professor of Design at RMIT University

GEOFF DIGBY: THE DEFINITION OF AN ART DIRECTOR

Dominic Hofstede

Front cover:
Our alphabet today takes many forms which are as varied as the make-up of society itself. As the human equation changes to meet the challenges of the latest man-made environment, so too do the fundamental letter shapes change to meet the requirements of advancing technology and the design innovations it fosters. The cover graphically demonstrates the evolution of man's alphabetical needs during his lifetime. The child's letter "a" is contrasted with Wim Crouwels design for the same letter created to satisfy scanning process of cathode ray tube typesetting.

One of the earliest forms of recorded human expression are "petroglyphs" or painted stones. River pebbles marked with peroxide of iron were used as magic symbols by people of the Azilian culture in the middle stone ages. Other precursors of writing were mnemonic devices such as knotted cords and notched sticks which were used to prompt the memory much the same as the modern practice of tying string around a finger.

The Development of the Alphabet

"Great A, little a, bouncing B!
The cat's in the cupboard and can't see me."

For many of us this and other similar rhymes evoke the earliest memories of our days in the bubs when daily we grappled with the mysteries of readin', writin', and 'rithmetic.

Across the top of the blackboard ran the monumental frieze of letters which we laboriously, but not without pride, copied on to our sheets of butcher's paper or built into simple words with blocks.

Although we thought it was all very important, it was doubtful if we had any idea of the foundation we were laying for our future development simply by learning the ABC.

Even today few of us stop to think what an ingenious system of communication is provided for us by the alphabet, and how dependent we are on it.

There are over 800,000 words in the English language and all of them can be made up out of just 26 letters. This phenomenon of the alphabet allows us to record and discuss everything from day to day necessities to highly complex abstractions of thought.

Writing is the umbilical cord through which the future survives and thrives. We use it to pass on the accumulated experience and knowledge of many centuries. Without it civilization would be crippled and progress would grind to a standstill.

In the past, humanity has survived the major part of its existence without an alphabet but progress was painfully slow. It was the development of a concise easy to learn letter system that, in a few short centuries, sped man from his primitive existence into the remarkable world of computers and moon flights.

The alphabet was not created overnight. Its evolution can be traced back over sixty centuries. Systems of writing existed before any kind of alphabet was devised but they were clumsy and complex. However, it is in them that we find the origins of our modern letter system.

Today many of the world's languages bear little resemblance to one another although it's generally agreed that most of them emerged from a common source.

Memory Aids

As far as we know the first attempt to develop a logical visual system for recording thoughts and ideas was in 4,200 B.C.

Prior to this date the nearest things to writing were various mnemonic or memory aiding devices not unlike today's practice of tying string around a finger or knotting a handkerchief to act as a reminder about something.

People in North and South America, Japan, Tibet, China and parts of Europe all at one stage knotted cords in this way.

The Incas of Peru probably had the most elaborate form in their quipus,[1] a series of knotted cords attached to a crossbar with other cords hanging from them. Even in the 20th Century some shepherds in Peru use a similar device for counting sheep.

In North America some Indian tribes used coloured beads woven into belts to record information. These wampums[2] were often used to commemorate treaty pacts with the white settlers or to illustrate things of religious significance.

WORLD RECORD CLUB PROGRAMME
OCTOBER 1967–SEPTEMBER 1968

PREVIEW

PREVIEW OF 1968's HIGHLIGHTS

BY HARVEY BLANKS

With the new Dividend plan permitting selection to be made from the complete major repertoire starting in December, the list of projected releases for the forthcoming year assumes even greater importance than usual. The brochure describing each album in detail will be sent to every Member shortly, but meantime here's a taster of some of the outstanding albums scheduled.

In the field of orchestral music, where Beethoven reigns supreme as the cornerstone of any serious record library, the complete nine symphonies, together with representative overtures, are being offered in the brilliant series featuring the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by André Cluytens. Spaced in pairs throughout the year, they will appeal especially to new Members just beginning their collections, and will also give the opportunity to older Members to fill in gaps in their library.

The new repertoire, however, opens with a "bang," if one may be pardoned for speaking so irreverently of what most major critics believe to be the 20th century's most impressive symphony. For here, as a major choice for next December, is the new, 1967 H.M.V. album of Sir William Walton's *Symphony No. 1 in B flat minor*, magnificently played (under the composer's personal supervision) by the New Philharmonia Orchestra directed by Sir Malcolm Sargent. This is a haunting work, conceived on an epic scale, and aimed directly at the heart with all the power of a large modern orchestra. Walton is known to a wide public through his fine film scores for Sir Laurence Olivier's Shakespearean films, and through his dramatic oratorio *Belshazzar's Feast* (now 36 years old), which continues to thrill countless thousands all over the world every year.

But it is in this first symphony, I feel, that he reached the pinnacle of his achievement. I first made its acquaintance through a set of aged Decca gold label 78's, conducted by Sir Hamilton Harty, more than 20 years ago — a set I have clung to with affection over the years while awaiting the superlative stereo performance that the work obviously demands. Now, my long wait will be rewarded with the brilliant Sargent recording in December. In this Walton work, the power and drama of the romantic conception of the symphonic form is crossed with true 20th century feeling, distinguished by nervous rhythms, piercing dissonances and hard sonorities. It owes little to the past, nor even to contemporaries (except rhythmically to Stravinsky and harmonically to the Sibelius of the powerful 7th symphony), and has no programme, but in its four movements there is a clear progression of moods: strife — anger — grief — triumph. Here, Walton works inexorably toward an exultant climax of great grandeur, with the last movement building from a battering introductory fanfare to a series of violent and unpredictable explosions

that leave the listener breathless with excitement. I predict this performance will be one of the prizes of the year.

While on the subject of great 20th century orchestral music, I must mention a release scheduled for May next year featuring Bartók's wonderfully luminescent *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* ("MUSPAC," as the irrepressible Americans have christened it), coupled with Hindemith's tremendous symphony, *Mathis der Maler* (Mathias the Painter). Both are played by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Herbert von Karajan.

The Bartók work is probably the most frequently played of all this composer's creations, and is fully deserving of its popularity with modern audiences. Only a modern stereo recording can really do justice to this colourful work, for Bartók stipulates that the strings be divided into two orchestras, to the right and the left of the conductor, with the percussion assembled between them. The percussion section consists of timpani (pedal-tuned and so capable of thrilling glissandos), bass drum, cymbals, side-drums (with or without snares); xylophone, piano and harp, and the silvery-toned celesta itself.

The Hindemith symphony, stimulating and intensely dramatic, has an historical figure as its protagonist — Mathias Grünewald, the 16th century painter whose great Isenheim altarpiece, now in the Colmar Museum, contains three panels which give the three movements their titles: Angelic Concert, Entombment, and the Temptation of St. Anthony. The symphony itself is the composer's arrangement of themes from his large-scale opera of the same name, with full-throated brass choirs playing an impressive role in the tremendous finale.

HOLST AND IRELAND

In recent years there has been a considerable upsurge of interest in the music of English composers, and three fine albums from the new British company of Lyrita have been obtained by the Club for release next year. The first of them features music by Gustav Holst, composer of the powerful *Planets Suite*, played by the English Chamber Orchestra and soloists, conducted by the composer's daughter, Imogen Holst. This album includes the delightful *St. Paul's Suite* for strings, featuring traditional tunes, the *Brook Green Suite*, a similar but later work, the *Lyric Movement* for viola and orchestra, which is one of

the best yet least-known of Holst's works, and the fascinating *Fugal Concerto* for flute, oboe and strings, with its overtones of Stravinskyan neo-classicism.

Sir Adrian Boult conducts the London Philharmonic Orchestra in a two-record set scheduled for October next year, of the music of John Ireland, recorded with the assistance of the John Ireland Society. These two albums cover the entire scope of this inexplicably neglected composer's orchestral output. These are 1966 and 1967 recordings.

John Ireland was born near Manchester in 1879 and died in 1962 in West Sussex, but London was his physical and spiritual home for some 55 years. Some of his orchestral works are frequently played at London promenade concerts, but with only one or two exceptions are comparatively unfamiliar to Australian audiences. There is an element of celtic mysticism about much of Ireland's writing (his *Legend for Piano and Orchestra*, included on these records, was reputedly inspired by an uncanny experience on the Downs near Harrow when he was confronted by some dancing children in archaic clothes who suddenly disappeared when he glanced away for an instant). Other titles on this record set indicate the composer's preoccupation with racial memories and occult dreamings — *The Forgotten Rite*, the granitic *Symphonic Rhapsody: Mai-Dun*, *Satyricon Overture* and *A Downland Suite*. Best-known of his works included here, however, is the *London Overture*, a nostalgic re-creation of a beloved city, reminiscent at times of the best of Vaughan Williams, with hints of the old song about the church bells of London, and a

Sir William Walton (left) discusses the new recording of his Symphony No. 1 with the conductor, Sir Malcolm Sargent.

jaunty little theme suggested by a bus conductor calling out "Dilly-Piccadilly!" I haven't heard the *London Overture* for at least 10 years, but writing about it instantly brings this theme hauntingly back to mind.

On Christmas Day, 1913, Ireland composed a brief but lovely carol of the Nativity, called *The Holy Boy*, and so popular did it prove that over the year several orchestral arrangements were prepared. The one featured here is for string orchestra. Of similar appeal is the *Concertino Pastorale*, dedicated "for Boyd Neel, Canterbury, 1939," and first performed by Boyd Neel at the Canterbury Festival in that year, when war-clouds were lowering over Europe. Finally, to bring back many memories of the war years, is the impressive *Epic March*, commissioned by the B.B.C. and composed at a critical stage in 1942. The stirring music strongly suggests the tramp of vast armies, with something of the faith and fire that inspired the men who marched against Hitler's hordes.

If I appear to have spent a disproportionate amount of space on the preceding albums, as compared with works by Beethoven or Mozart, it is because the classical masters need no unsought publicist, and because I hate to think that fine and appealing compositions of our own time may be passed over because they are "unfamiliar." This points up a strange paradox in too many record collectors — the demand is all for new material in the popular and light fields, but when it comes to serious music they lose all sense of venture and exploration (qualities to my mind which are half the fun of collecting records).

Anyway, for the diehards, I'll now revert to some of the more orthodox fare in our new repertoire, with

PAGE 4, WORLD RECORD NEWS, SEPTEMBER, 1967.

The Australian Graphic Design Association (AGDA) Hall of Fame was established in 2001 to formally acknowledge the profession's most significant contributors. Alongside this raison d'être, the Hall of Fame fulfils a critical educative function for those of us seeking insight into the industry's evolution, filling some of the gaps left by a lack of documented history. In the 15 years since the Hall of Fame welcomed Richard Beck and Les Mason as its inaugural members, another 24 individuals have joined them, their inductions often accompanied by a colourful and informative biography written by Max Robinson. These intimate vignettes possess the kind of eyewitness authenticity that only someone like Robinson can provide.

In 2008, art director Geoff Digby attained Hall of Fame status, and Robinson's citation began with the following salient observation: 'The role of the art director is sometimes denigrated. It is suggested that other people do the great work, and the art director often takes the credit. Were they teachers? Maybe - but their motivation was not only to teach, it was to draw out the talent that they saw in the individuals they chose to deal with, and bring it to a higher level, always for commercial purposes. Mentor is a pompous word, but it fits'.[1]

Robinson is uniquely placed to comment on both the role of the art director, and, more specifically, Geoff Digby's lengthy career under this most imprecise title. The two were central figures in one of Australian graphic design's most important chapters; The World Record Club (WRC). Brian Sadgrove encapsulates the WRC's position within the industry's annals: 'The WRC is the most representative collection of Australian designers' work in one field, over one decade, that has ever been established. It highlights the years of transition from commercial art to graphic design'.[2] To appreciate Digby's contribution to this evolutionary period as WRC's art director, it is worth tracing the origins of his vocation.

The Editorial Art Director
When Digby began his career in post-war Melbourne, 'art director' was not part of his, or the profession's vocabulary. In America, however, art direction actually preceded the discipline of graphic design. In 1920, the Art Directors Club (ADC) of New York was formed to acknowledge designers whose work did not fit under the ubiquitous term 'advertising', those who worked in editorial design, for example. The 1920s were a golden age for the magazine, and it is on the pages of America's emblematic periodicals of this time that the first 'art directors' emerged.

Iconic publisher Condé Nast dominated the magazine landscape of that time with a blue-chip portfolio that included *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair* and *House and Garden*. In 1928, after 17 years as Condé Nast's acclaimed art editor (a precursor to 'art director'), Heyworth Campbell resigned. Condé Nast's frenzied pursuit of a suitable replacement took him to Europe, eventually ending in *Vogue's* Berlin offices with Russian-born prodigy Mehemed Fehmy Agha. Condé Nast was immediately taken with the young man's intelligence and persuasive personality. When Nast relayed the news of his decision to his American editors, he emphasised Agha's aptitude for mentoring. In Agha, the controlling Nast had found a man even he could not teach, 'since he had at our extended interview, assumed that role for himself – after relegating me politely to the dunce's corner where apparently, he thought, I really belonged'.[3]

Agha's inventive approach integrated design with content, combining activities that had been perceived as inherently separate functions. An accomplished photographer, Agha identified and commissioned some of the early pioneers of modern photography including such influential figures as Edward Steichen, Cecil Beaton, Hoyningen-Huene, Horst, Carl Van Vechten, and Charles Sheeler. The

considerable mentoring skills which had impressed Nast helped define the careers of countless protegés including Alex Liberman, and husband and wife Art Director's Club of New York (ADC) Hall of Famers William Golden and Cipe Pineles.[4]

Alexey Brodovitch followed Agha's lead, joining *Vogue's* great rival *Harper's Bazaar* in 1934 at the behest of Carmel Snow, the magazine's recently appointed editor-in-chief. Agha and Brodovitch had much in common; they were Russian-born, precociously talented and fortunate to be working at a time, and in an environment, ripe for their particular mix of genius. Brodovitch had also trained as a photographer and he commissioned established virtuosos such as Bill Brandt, Brassai and Cartier-Bresson. Like Agha, Brodovitch's eye for talent was unerring. Irving Penn was his first assistant at *Harper's* New York offices, and throughout his extensive career he would discover and nurture seminal figures including Leslie Gill, Richard Avedon and Hiro.

Brodovitch's legacy stretched well beyond the printed page. An uncompromising, but magnetic teacher, in 1933 he established a series of open workshops for designers and photographers known as the 'Design Laboratory'. Brodovitch's teaching was heavily influenced by Bauhaus theories of pedagogy that reflected a desire to 'educate the whole individual by directing his or her attention to a variety of modern solutions in their graphic projects'.[5] An entire generation of designers and photographers were shaped by Brodovitch's unique 'irritate and intrigue'[6] philosophy that prioritised invention over repetition and cliché.

This first generation of editorial art directors forged a unique position encompassing both the individual action of 'directing art' (influencing the design), and the administrative task of 'art direction' (influencing the designers). As managers of the design process, they were able to preside over every aspect of their work. The field of advertising spawned the next incarnation of the art director where this all-encompassing approach and pursuit of innovation was embraced by a young New Yorker of German descent named Helmut Krone.

Helmut Krone and the Creative Revolution
Helmut Krone attended Manhattan's High School for Industrial Art and hoped to be a product designer. His plans changed when he saw the work of Paul Rand and Lester Beall, and he found work designing advertisements before World War Two.

He spent his war years with the Naval Construction Battalions, working as a civil engineer until leaving the service in 1946 to pursue his career in design and advertising. In 1947 Krone attended one of Brodovitch's classes. 'Brodovitch preferred fresh thinking to meticulous craftsmanship. The most important thing I learned from him was the true meaning of the word inventive. You couldn't con him. You couldn't slip him anything that resembled even the avant-gardists of the time – Picasso, Steinberg, Paul Rand, et al. If you tried, it slid off the side of his desk'.[7]

Krone spent time at *Esquire* magazine before joining Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB) in 1954. He was just 29 years old. DDB was at the forefront of a creative revolution in advertising, integrating art and copy in an intuitive and engaging method that contrasted starkly with the hard-sell convention of the time. Bernbach pioneered a collaborative model of pairing art directors and copywriters that remains omnipresent in advertising creative departments today. Krone's fertile partnership with writer Julian Koenig produced some of the most iconic advertising in history, including acclaimed campaigns for Volkswagen and Avis.

Krone spent more than thirty years at the agency, redefining the function, and reputation of the advertising art director. His desire to control all aspects of a client's identity pushed the scope of his role beyond mere layouts and headlines, merging graphic design with advertising. As DDB's reputation grew, men like Krone became valuable agency assets. The art director was now seen as the catalyst for creative excellence.

The International Influence
In the early 1960s, as Manhattan rose to the top of the creative pile, London agencies began poaching American art directors in pursuit of the 'commanding graphic idea'.[8] Foremost amongst these were Robert Brownjohn and Bob Gill. J. Walter Thompson seduced the brilliant but troubled Brownjohn, and Bob Gill joined advertising agency Charles Hobson before leaving to establish Fletcher / Forbes / Gill (a forerunner of Pentagram). In Australia, and Melbourne particularly, assimilating overseas influence was a deliberate, and necessary, strategy. In 1957 USP Benson (a merger of United Services

Publicity and leading London agency Benson) appointed the gifted Hungarian emigré Frank Eidlitz as an art director. Recognising Eidlitz's value, the agency wisely supported his desire to work with his own clients, a tactic which perhaps explains the length of his tenure (almost eight years). Eidlitz's glittering career at USP Benson included a striking series of 24 sheet posters for Shell that reflected his lifelong fascination with kinetic art. In 1961, USP Benson appointed another émigré art director to its roster, a sagacious decision with significant consequences for the course of Australian graphic design history.

Les Mason was already an established figure in his native United States when he arrived at the agency, bringing with him 'a design-led approach informed by a love of contemporary art and international graphic design movements'.[9] His stay at USP Benson was brief, but he created award-winning work for Shell (as had Eidlitz) and General Motors Holden, before opening his own design studio in 1962. His legendary terrace in South Melbourne quickly became a honey pot for Melbourne's emerging designers, drawn by Mason's magnetic presence and outspoken views. Lyndon Whaite spent eighteen months under his tutelage, a period he acknowledges as a most significant influence on his development: 'The association laid the foundation for an open-ended, continually developing design appreciation. It was an exciting time of discovery and discussion of common design precepts recurring in the universe – the Barcelona chair, a Mozart concerto, a five year old's drawing, Japanese calligraphy, Sartrean existentialism, a Korean tea bowl and Corbusier's concept of living space'.[10]

Mason's impact on the new generation of Australian graphic designers was far-reaching. Though Geoff Digby's diplomatic persona differed wildly from the charismatic Mason, his influence would also be profound.

Digby's Formative Years
Graphic design education was still in its infancy when Digby began studies in a Commercial Art course at the Melbourne Technical College (now RMIT) in 1944. Upon turning eighteen, he enlisted in the army for a brief time before being discharged in 1945 at the conclusion of World War Two. He returned to complete his studies and was promptly offered employment designing radio cabinets by one

of his lecturers, Hedley Saunders. Saunders worked for Radio Corporation, manufacturers of the popular Astor Radios. Astor was known as an innovative brand, producing radios in a variety of colours, in comparison to the standard wood cabinets on offer from their competitors.

Working with plasticine to model the designs was tedious and, on hot days, the smell was nauseating. Relief came in the form of an offer to join the art studio at the Herald and Weekly Times Limited (HWT) that produced advertising and books. At that time newspapers, periodicals and books were produced by individual divisions within HWT, most with designated layout and art staff who worked under an editor. In 1948 the department morphed into Colourgravure, an individual unit responsible for a broader range of publications alongside the Herald Sun Readers' Book Club and Privilege Offer books.[11] 'Design in those days was part of the project rather than a separate phase. You just did it all as a continuous task: design, layout, typography and finished art'.[12]

Digby's experiences at Colourgravure would set the tone for his entire career, working alongside an accomplished team of designers and artists including Bruce Petty, Judith Perry-Setford, Tony Trufitt and Joe Greenberg. Within four years he was effectively studio manager, overseeing Colourgravure's prodigious output and gathering the critical formative experience that would ultimately shape his future as an art director. When the Herald Group was rationalised following the death of Sir Keith Murdoch in 1952, the CEO of Colourgravure, Terence Creswell-George, resigned to take up an offer from the National Magazine Company (Goodhousekeeping Group) to establish a book publishing arm in London. Conscious of the unique chemistry he had built at Colourgravure, Creswell-George offered positions to four of his old staff, including Geoff Digby and John Day. Though daunted by the thought of packing up his young family, Digby was excited by the prospect of a London sojourn. Creswell-George sweetened the deal with first class sea fares and in 1955 the group set sail.

Digby's London responsibilities included supervising a team of four: 'There were a couple of designers in the studio, a typographer, a photographer (of sorts), relatively competent but not a high flyer. Little finished artwork really was done, it was mainly designing the book, formatting and putting it

Top
Geoff Digby in the
Hartwell studio of the
World Record Club (n.d)

Photographer:
Guus van der Heyde

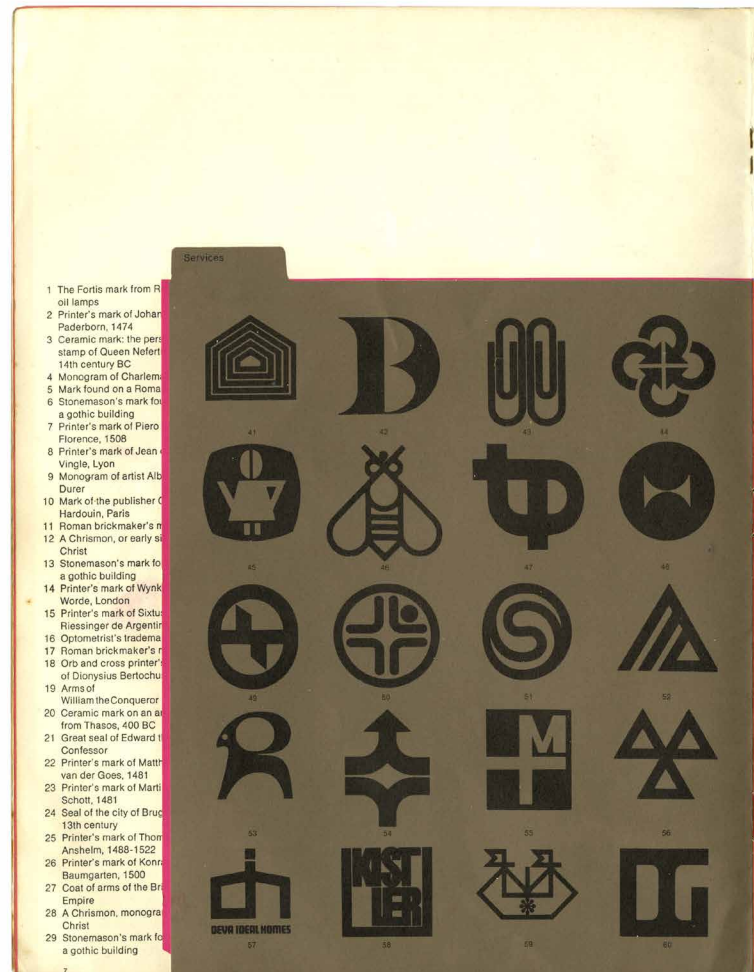Photograph courtesy of
Geoff Hocking

Middle
Listening booths were
installed in the Flinders
Lane display centre, an
example of the
innovative marketing
techniques employed by
the World Record Club,
c.1960.

Bottom
Record buyers flocked to
the World Record Club's
Flinders Lane display
centre, c.1960.

Photographer: Guus van
der Heyde

Photograph courtesy of
Geoff Hocking

Middle Top
APPM *Trendset promotional mailer* (n.d.), internal pages.

Design: Geoff Digby

Courtesy of Geoff Digby

Middle Below
APPM *Impressions Number Three: Man and His Mark,* 1970, internal pages.

Art director: Geoff Digby

Design: Les Mason

Right Top
Internal spread of World Record Programme, 1968.

Courtesy of Geoff Hocking

Right Bottom
Designer and illustrator John Copeland (seated) and art director Geoff Digby at the WRC studio (n.d.).

Photographer: Guus van der Heyde

Photograph courtesy of Geoff Hocking

through to the printers and typesetters'. The clear demarcation of responsibilities reflected a stiff English attitude that contrasted dramatically with Digby's experiences in Australia. 'The English had a real appreciation and respect for their craft. They also knew their station. I had a good typographer, Wally Wall, a cockney fellow. He could hand-letter five point type without a problem. He was getting paid a pittance. One day I said to him, 'Wally, why don't you do some finished art or layout instead of just the typography. He said, "Geoff, I'm a typographer, I'm a good typographer and I don't want to do anything else"'.

The World Record Club
After two exhilarating, but exhausting, years in London, Digby returned to Melbourne as a freelancer. 'My work at the Herald gave me a form of calling card, and a couple of friends in advertising supplied a steady stream of work – it just grew from there. At no stage did I need to take a portfolio around. It wasn't a very big field, most people knew each other in those days'. Pragmatically, Digby returned to the drawing board, producing illustrations, layout and finished artwork for a variety of advertising clients including K.M. Campbell, Nicholls Cumming Advertising, Noel Paton Advertising and Robert Hughes Advertising.

Back in London in 1956, John Day, Digby's fellow former employee at both Colourgravure and The National Magazine Company, was part of a group of investors who started a new record marketing system of mainly classical music and jazz known as the World Record Club (WRC[13]). Day had insisted that the road to success lay in a unique formula: members received no inducement to join, and were required to take only a minimum of one record per year (the established industry standard was to offer a handsome gift upon enrolment in return for a commitment to a specific number of issues per year). Moreover, virtually all clubs at that time had operated under a system where members were required, on a monthly basis, to indicate that they did not want that month's product, or it was sent automatically. WRC sent its members six-monthly programs and required them to choose in advance the records they wanted. With the London arm of WRC proving a success, Terence Creswell-George was employed to establish an Australian branch, returning to Melbourne in 1957.

Creswell-George initially asked Geoff Digby to assist with WRC's advertising, but soon offered him a role as the new company's first art director. With his bourgeoning roster of clients, and a young family to feed, Digby was wary: 'I'd seen sections of companies close their doors, blokes get put out of work, and I had a pretty decent flow of income; I didn't want to jeopardise that'. The two men negotiated a part-time arrangement that suited both parties; Digby was free to pursue his freelance opportunities, whilst committing twenty hours per week to Creswell-George's new venture.

Managing costs as well as individuals was particularly important in WRC's early days. The first Australian covers were a standard format in which only the composers and portrait changed. A limited number of full-colour covers were budgeted for monthly, with the remainder printed in two colours. These constraints were only part of the challenge presented to Digby and his designers. 'The records were only about half of it. There was all the advertising, catalogues, monthly newsletters and a whole range of printed material'. The frantic pace of the first few months was vindicated with an overwhelming response. Membership applicants queued each lunch hour at the Club's premises on Flinders Lane and, with its commercial potential validated, Digby formed an in-house art studio to create bespoke designs for each record sleeve.

John Day returned to Australia in 1959, eventually becoming CEO of the Australian company in 1963. One of the key ingredients in Digby's success at WRC was the unmitigated trust and support he received from Creswell-George and Day, a collaborative spirit he passed on to his designers. John Copeland worked in the WRC studio between 1959 and 1963: 'We were all very lucky to have had such a good art director as Geoff Digby. He certainly attracted some good designers. Compared to some clients I have worked for, he allowed me a huge amount of freedom and encouragement'.[14] There are a couple of points to be made here about Digby's skills as an art director: (1) he had an unerring eye for talent (Copeland, for example, is also a member of the AGDA Hall of Fame); and (2), he excelled at facilitating rather than dictating.

Digby was shrewd enough to identify potential problems before they manifested. 'Through my book publishing experience, I did insist on one thing.

There are no signatures or acknowledgments of designers on the records. Someone did a little bit here, or a little bit there, but they're all WRC covers. Everybody accepted it. Some of the covers were started by one designer and finished by another. That was accepted and we had a great feeling of companionship as a result'.

The World Record Club Studio

The World Record Club straddles a period when Australian graphic design found its feet, and many of our profession's central figures are WRC alumni, either as staff or commissioned artists. Lance Stirling, Max Robinson and Alex Stitt were all substantial (freelance) contributors to the WRC venture, and all are members of the AGDA Hall of Fame. Illustration was central to the visual identity of the WRC, and acclaimed talents such as Archibald Prize-Winner Wes Walters, Tony Ward and David Leonard, to name a few, created iconic work. The paucity of fees meant that designers often took their own photos, and, occasionally, they even stood in as models. In the early years, the studio was blessed with its proximity to the premises of the legendary photographer Athol Shmith. Though budgets were tight, Shmith worked for Digby largely because of his love for music: 'His passionate, lifelong interest in music was as integral to his life as his photography, and each enriched the other. It was, therefore, a beautiful fit when Athol began creating cover photographs for the World Record Club'.[15]

It is perhaps worth considering the unique canvas on which the designers worked. WRC releases were pre-sold by catalogue, so there was no requirement for the covers to follow the convention of listing tracks or other content. They were also not required to stand out on a record store shelf in a competitive environment. Freed from these constraints, the WRC designers developed a distinctive approach using simple typography and bold imagery, a combination that became the organisation's signature. 'The young staff designers, under Digby's mentorship, worked at a furious pace,' observed Max Robinson, 'each designer often completing 30 covers a month'.[16] All told, more than 3000 were produced by the local arm of the World Record Club between 1958 and 1976, a fact that explains their ubiquitous presence in second-hand shops across Australia even today.

The work produced by the WRC studio and its freelancers soon gained national, and international

acknowledgment. In 1960, a special feature on 'Advertising Art in Australia' was published in *Graphis*, #90, edited by Richard Haughton (Jimmy) James.[17] Two World Record covers were among the small sample of work displayed (p322), with credits given to Geoff Digby and 'Lance 'Steirling' [sic]. Locally, the Australian Commercial and Industrial Artists, Association (ACIAA) published a series of three awards annuals between 1963 and 1965. These books are rare, and important, documentary evidence of a profession taking the first evolutionary steps from commercial art to graphic design. The World Record Club's prominence reinforces the significant part played by the studio in that transition.

By the early 1970s the musical and cultural landscape had changed dramatically. The demand for direct mail records had diminished with the advent of record stores, and musical tastes shifted towards popular music. EMI gained complete control of the WRC in 1975 and a new, corporate mentality shifted priorities away from an emphasis on design. John Day left in 1976, and Digby, tired of the increasing rigidity imposed by management, resigned eighteen months later.

APPM Impressions

It is a testament to Digby's time management skills that he was able to maintain a steady client base throughout his time at WRC. Acting as a freelance art director for KM Campbell Advertising gave him access to some sizeable commissions. 'In my earlier days I made a strong association with KM Campbell. They were a medium-sized agency and Associated Paper and Pulp Mills (APPM) was one of their clients. Digby art directed a range of advertising and promotional material for APPM, most notably a series of booklets between 1969 and 1971 under the masthead *Impressions*.

The conceptual nucleus for *Impressions* was simple: Each issue used a single prompt as a starting point for written and visual exploration. With print as an over-arching thread, topics with broad scope for interpretation included Communication (#1), the Alphabet (#2), Trademarks (#3), The Transfer of Meaning (#4) and, more discretely, the Silent Explosion (#5) which dealt with the growth of magazines.

Designers were hand-picked by Digby for each issue, supported by collaborative teams of illustrators and photographers. Consistent throughout was the

Top
APPM *Impressions
Number Five:
The Silent Explosion,*
1971, cover.

Art director:
Geoff Digby

Design:
Tucker & James

Courtesy of
Warren Taylor

Bottom
APPM *Impressions
Number Two:
The Alphabet,* 1969,
internal pages.

Art director:
Geoff Digby

Design:
Brian Sadgrove

Courtesy of
Warren Taylor

erudite copywriting of Rennie Ellis, who at that time was Creative Director of Monahan Dayman Advertising. Although Ellis would soon quit advertising to pursue a career in social documentary photography, *Impressions* remains a telling reminder of his dexterity with the written word.

Digby's ability to straddle both the client and creative ends of the design process was unique. His own hands-on experience over the years meant he understood the peculiar nuances of dealing with creative people. 'Clients were, in some ways, scared of the artists and designers. They have a right to be sometimes. If you're not talking their language, it can get off track. I guess that's where I was called in'. His humility and enthusiasm were also significant contributors to this relationship, particularly when dealing with forceful personalities like Les Mason, who designed the third issue of *Impressions*. 'I looked at the work of designers like Les Mason and illustrators like Wes Walters and accepted I could never equal their brilliance but always wished I could. When you are with talent like theirs it would be arrogant to do much "directing" and it was always exciting to see what they produced. Projects such as *Impressions* were wide open for their input'. [18]

Brian Sadgrove had just opened the doors of his own studio in 1968 when he was commissioned to design the second issue of *Impressions*. His perfunctory description of the art director's minimal input illustrates Digby's point: 'I don't remember Geoff giving me much direction, apart from the trim size'. Sadgrove himself had spent some time art directing in advertising: 'I was an art director, so called, at USP Benson 1964–1966 and at J. Walter Thompson 1966–1968. Mostly I made sure photographers (Dieter Muller, Brian Brandt, John Pollard, Kurt Veld, Mark Strizic) left me enough room on images to crop and strip in type. I never "directed" anyone apart from those mentioned above; that's probably why I only spent five years in advertising'. [19]

Though the needs of the designer for creative expression were important, a project such as *Impressions* had a commercial imperative; to promote, and sell, paper. Each issue featured a variety of APPM paperstocks, printed and embellished selectively to showcase their potential. Digby never lost sight of the needs of his client, APPM, and his sustained relationship with the company, spanning over two decades, is a testament to his skills as an account manager.

All told, *Impressions* would last for five issues. Digby's unerring eye for talent identified a veritable Who's Who of Australia's finest designers, illustrators, photographers and writers, contributors to a significant benchmark for paper promotion specifically, and Australian graphic design more broadly.[20]

Conclusion

Digby continued to run his own successful freelance studio under the name of Geoff Digby and Associates Ltd until semi-retirement in 1996. Along the way he completed scores of projects including extensive work in exhibition and display design through his association with K.M Campbell. These projects for Brick and Pipe Industries, Nubrik, APPM and Bertolli Products in some ways recalled his early industrial design experience. Adapting with the times, he embraced the shift from the drawing board to the keyboard, and even now, in his 90th year, he continues to undertake pro-bono commissions from friends and relations.

Reflecting upon an art director's myriad roles, he describes a polymathic all-rounder: a communicator, salesman, project manager, aesthete and diplomat.
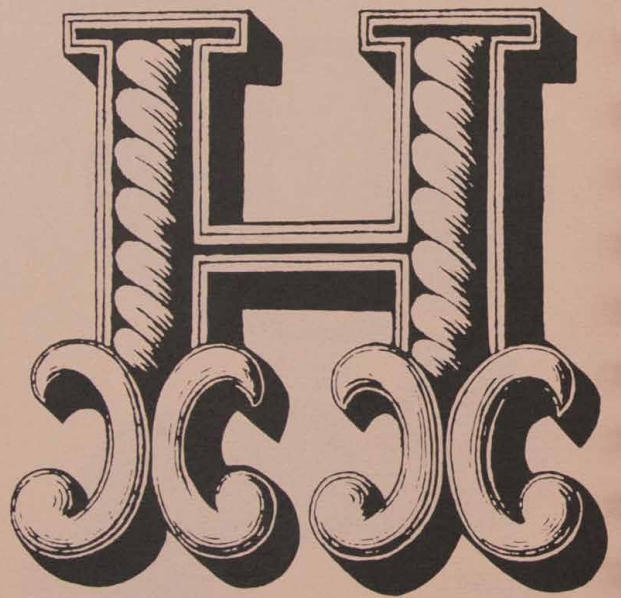
> In my opinion the task involves communicating between management and designer/artist and then selling the proposed approach to management, client or producer of the final product.

> Supervising each stage of production is an important part of the job. This requires an appreciation of design, art, photography, typography, printing and knowledge of appropriate providers. All this, mixed with a large dose of diplomacy.

This definition positions the art director as a facilitator, a conductor with an overarching influence on all stages, and all individuals, engaged in the design process. When considering the impact of such generalists, we must look beyond tangible outcomes like magazines, advertisements or record covers. By establishing one of Australia's first independent graphic design studios, and employing and mentoring many of our most acclaimed luminaries, Digby had a profound and lasting impact on the transformation of the profession.

Dominic Hofstede's extensive and varied career in graphic design has included practice, writing, teaching and research.
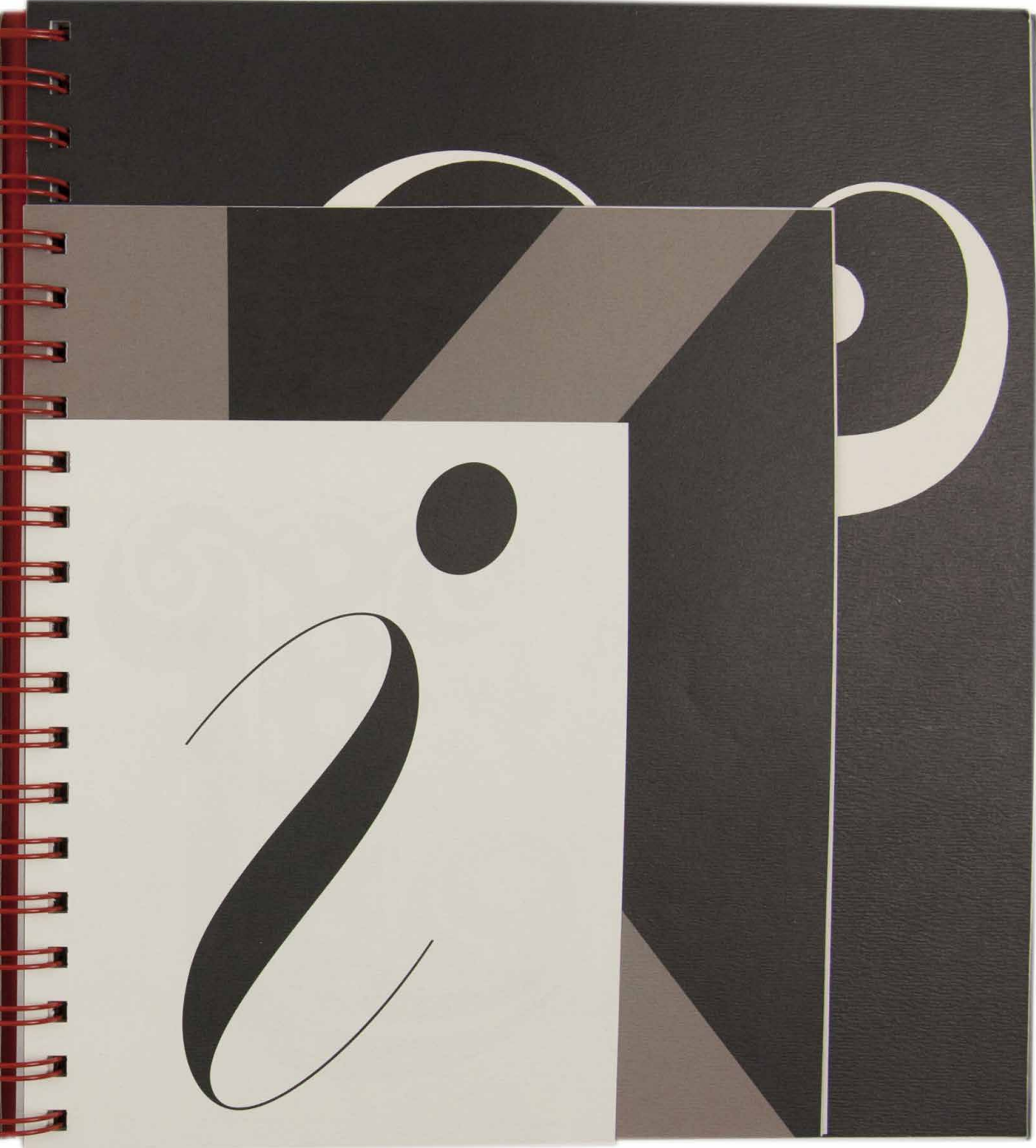
1   "AGDA Hall of Fame – Geoff Digby," Last modified May 7, 2016, http://www.agda.com.au/inspiration/hall-of-fame/geoff-digby-1926-/

2   Geoff Hocking, *It's Another World Record: Album Cover Art 1958–1976,* (Castlemaine: New Chum Press, 2009), 21.

3   Richard Hollis, *Graphic Design: A Concise History.* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1994), 97.

4   "ADC Hall of Fame – M.F. Agha," last modified June 24, 2016, http://adcglobal.org/hall-of-fame/m-f-agha/

5   Purcell, *Alexey Brodovitch*, 108.

6   Kerry William Purcell, *Alexey Brodovitch* , 108. (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2002)

7   Clive Challis, *Helmut Krone. The Book: Graphic Design and Art Direction (Concept, Form and Meaning) After Advertising's Creative Revolution,* (Cambridge: The Cambridge Enchorial Press, 2005), 11.

8   Rick Poyner, David Crowley, *Communicate: Independent British Graphic Design since the Sixties,* (London: Laurence King, 2004), 17.

9   "NGV – Les Mason Solo," last modified May 18, 2016, http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/essay/les-mason-solo/

10 Geoffrey Caban, *A Fine Line: A History of Australian Commercial Art,* (Sydney: Hale & Ironmonger, 1983), 114.

11 The Readers' Book Club produced and sold a novel every month on a pre-order membership basis. These books were existing titles but completely re-designed with new jackets and illustrations. The 'Privilege Offers' were made to readers of *The Herald and Sun News Pictorial*, produced and sold at reduced costs to Herald and Sun readers to encourage sales of their newspapers. From an interview with Geoff Digby at his home by the author, May 10, 2016.

12 Biographical information about Geoff Digby is drawn from a biography written by his son, Stephen Digby, in 2014. These biographical notes were requested by, and prepared for, the RMIT Design Archives. Additional background was attained in an interview conducted with Geoff Digby by the author at his home on May 10, 2016.

13 John Day's fellow entrepreneurs included the prominent British merchant banker Norman Lonsdale, record producer Fiona Bentley and the actor Richard Attenborough, who was an acquaintance of Lonsdale's. Geoff Hocking, *It's Another World Record: Album Cover Art 1958-1976,* (Castlemaine: New Chum Press, 2008), 9.

14 Hocking, *It's Another World*, 266.

15 Hocking, *It's Another World*, 304.

16 "AGDA Hall of Fame – Geoff Digby," last modified May 7, 2016, http://www.agda.com.au/inspiration/hall-of-fame/geoff-digby-1926-/

17 Richard Haughton James was a commercial artist, industrial designer, educator, advertising executive and painter. Beyond this, he was a tireless promoter of 'design as a modern creative industry with its own practice and codes of behaviours, ethics and standards and a defining critical discourse'. He was inducted into the AGDA Hall of Fame in 2004. "DHARN – Richard Haughton James, Australia National Journal And Designers For Industry," last modified March 28, 2016. http://dharn.org.au/details.php?article_id=143

18 From an interview with Geoff Digby at his home by the author, May 10, 2016.

19 Brian Sadgrove, email correspondence with the author, May 17, 2016.

20 *Impressions #2* appeared on pages 112 and 113 of Graphis #190 in a special feature on Australian graphic design titled 'Recent Advertising and Editorial Art in Australia'.

XXX DOUBLE STOUT

TRADE MARK

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CASTLEMAINE BREWERY

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DAVID LANCASHIRE: TRANSFORMING THE ORDINARY

Jenny Grigg

'The skin is the material layer where the soul and world co-mingle.' Through touch, the skin 'gives access to information; it is a soft correlate of what was once called the intellect. Material and design thinking manifest in the skin.'   ERWIN VIRAY 2011[1]

Researching another designer's archive is as close as we can get to being inside their head. This is the rich promise of the 90-plus boxes that represent David Lancashire's design practice to date, recently accessioned at the RMIT Design Archives. One of Australia's best known and awarded graphic designers, David Lancashire is a member of Alliance Graphique Internationale, a past board member of Icograda, and a member of AGDA. Since arriving from the United Kingdom in 1966 and setting up practice in 1976, David Lancashire Design (DLD) worked alongside Melbourne contemporaries Ken Cato, Brian Sadgrove, Mimmo Cozzolino and Gary Emery, and it is no surprise that there are many gems in the collection. However the outstanding feature is evidence of the extent to which Lancashire explored paper. The archive holds many examples of this innovative and technically adept practitioner's solutions which realised original and inventive designs for mass production using paper.

At the simplest level, a study of Lancashire's work with paper reveals a relationship between a craftsman and a tool. A flat paper sheet is infinitely transformable. When Lancashire handles it, he allows it to assist his imagination. He observes it closely and, by remaining open to how it behaves in response to manipulations, he is able to coax and guide innovative, fit-for–purpose results. This is a careful, dextrous conversation where the mutable paper contributes as much as Lancashire. At the beginning of each design process, working in unexplored territory, Lancashire's imagination is enlivened by the potential of discovering something through paper. Reliant on his ability to capture chance creative opportunities, Lancashire's design process is aleatoric, and his questioning of materials is fundamental to the results.[2]

Much of the work in the collection results from multiple commissions by Australian paper companies which place Lancashire in a long, global history of paper advertising design. As far back as 1895 the Strathmore Paper Company utilised the 'paper in use' technique in an effort to grow their business, employing graphic designers to make creative interpretations of paper.[3] These were put into production and disseminated within the industry to inspire other users, and consequently, the design history of paper promotion is a chronicle of symbiotic couplings between paper companies and often highly influential graphic designers.

For example, the Strathmore Paper Company commissioned the typographer Oswald Cooper, designer of the typeface *Cooper,* and Saul Bass, best known for his animated titles for films such as *Anatomy of a Murder* and *The Man with the Golden Arm*. The West Virginia Paper and Pulp Company employed designer Bradbury Thompson from 1939 through 1962 to design their in-house publication *Westvaco Inspiration for Printers* which tempted paper buyers for more than sixty issues. New York and Penn commissioned Paul Rand, Spicers Paper commissioned Bob Gill from Fletcher, Forbes, Gill; Steve Woods Printing Company commissioned Seymour Chwast; and the French Paper Company commissioned Charles Spencer Anderson. And Mohawk remains in consultation with Pentagram's Michael Beirut, a relationship that now spans more than twenty years.

Having been taught art and design in the late 1950s by John Henshall at the Circle Studio in Stockport near Manchester, Lancashire developed a sensitivity for the material values of paper and the print technologies designed to enhance it, such as intaglio, embossing, die-stamping and die-cutting, early in life. Prior to days of specialisation, his teacher Henshall was a poet, calligrapher and water colourist who

David Lancashire's archive is held at RMIT Design Archives.

Previous Spread
The History of Writing paper promotion designed by DLD for Dalton Fine Paper in 1983 written by Roger Dunn.

Lancashire proposed to the marketing director Paul George 'Let's do a promotion that uses every bit of paper you produce'
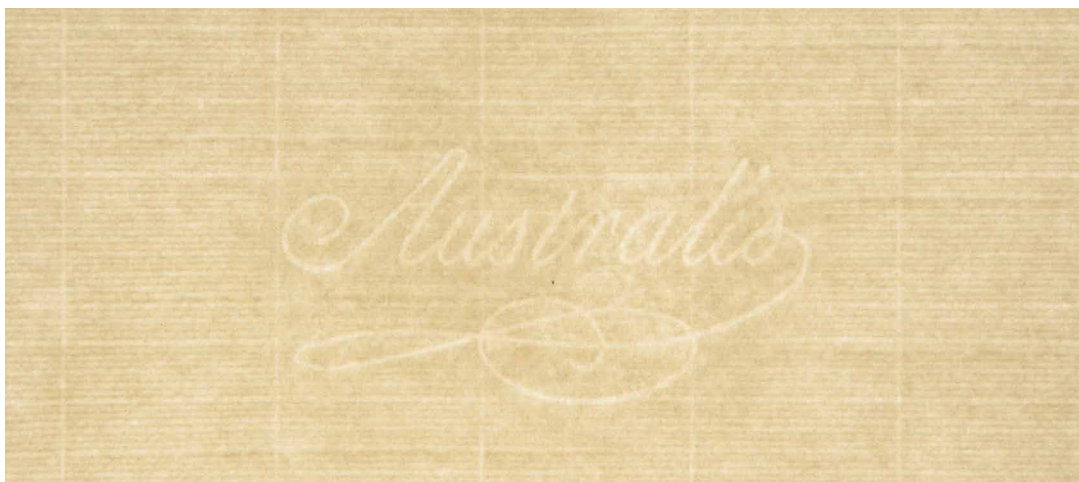
Top
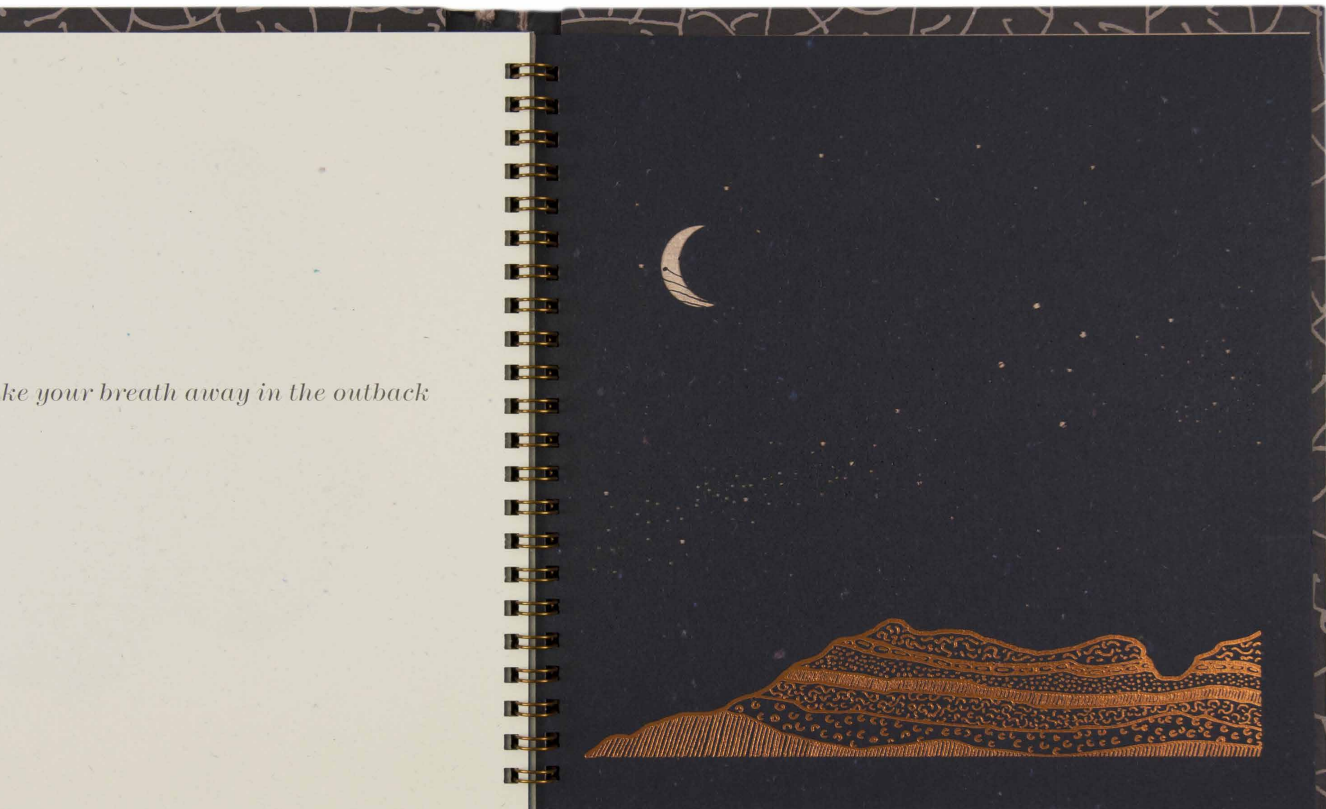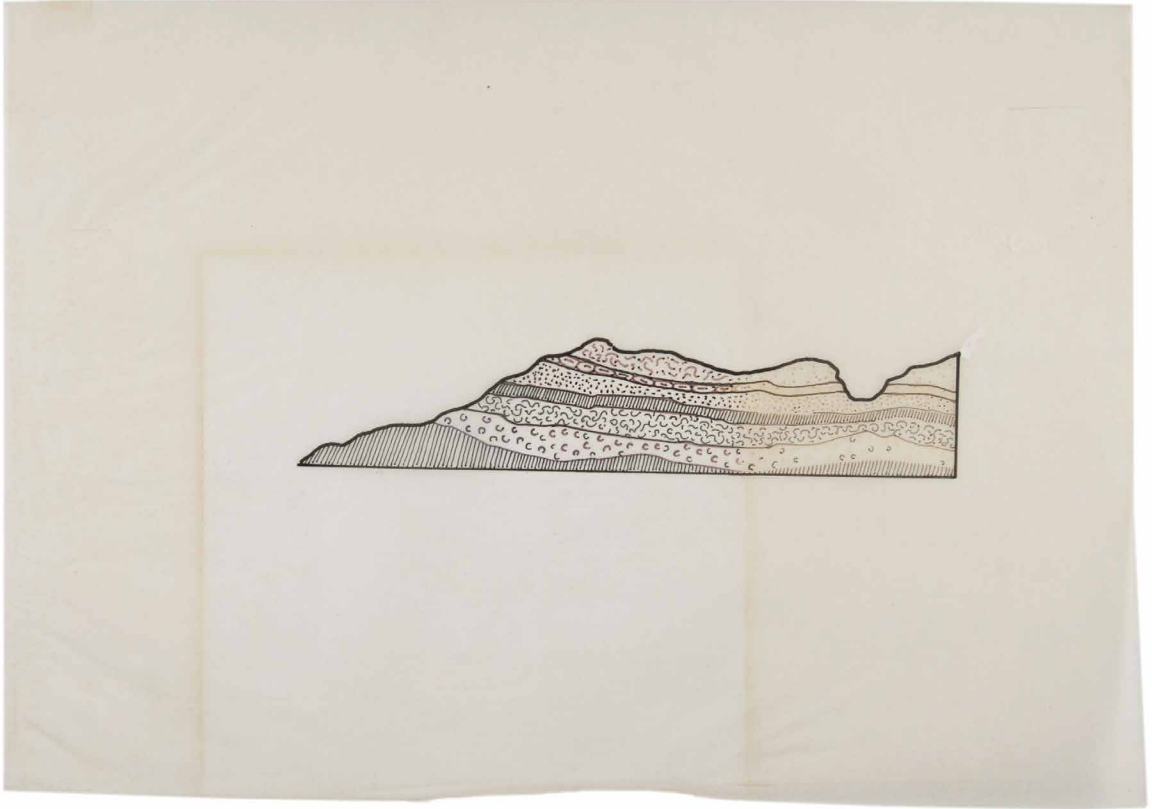Lancashire working at Industrial Art Services in Manchester in the 1960s.

Courtesy of David Lancashire

Bottom
Designed for Australian Paper and manufactured in Shoalhaven, New South Wales, *Australis* is a laid paper sheet featuring a watermark designed by Geoff Fawcett

ke your breath away in the outback

encouraged his students to practice techniques such as painting letterforms with a brush and Indian ink, and to learn about tonal variation by working only in black and white. It was here that Lancashire first began to experience the value of using his hands and art materials to elicit expression from paper-based media.

Lancashire was accepted into art school in 1962, at the age of 16, but discouraged by the view that a life in fine art was only for the wealthy, Lancashire began work. His first job in Manchester, which lasted only one month due to the recession, required him to he produce technical illustrations of tractors. Lancashire next worked for the painter Arnold Radcliffe at his company Industrial Art Services, a contemporary of fellow Mancunian, the now well-known painter L. S. Lowry. Lancashire helped around the studio, cleaning water jars, and remembers Radcliffe loaning him a camera and sometimes slipping him five pounds to buy film. Lancashire also remembers Radcliffe sending him to The Britain's Protection Pub where, being under-aged, he would ring the night bell to buy Radcliffe bottles of scotch. Radcliffes studio was on a canal and each summer when the water dried, a collection of empty scotch bottles was exposed below the window, sitting in the mud.

Moving to Liverpool, Lancashire got a job at C. Vernon & Sons, who in more staid days of the business identified themselves by a brass plaque as Professional Practitioners in Advertising. C. Vernon's largest account was for the Cunard Shipping Company. They also handled the advertising for Brian Epstein's North East Music Stores (NEMS), for which Lancashire designed newspaper advertisements.

Lancashire credits his art teacher Henshall with encouraging his sense of adventure. Uninspired by the prospect of a life in northern England, at age 18 in 1963, he and two other 'ten-pound poms' boarded a British Airways flight to Sydney. Living at 46 Penkivil Street Bondi, Lancashire worked at Clarence Street Studios where he remembers designing pharmaceutical packaging, before relocating to Melbourne, which ultimately provided him with more interesting design opportunities.

For the next ten years, Lancashire freelanced in Melbourne. Sometimes from home in the outer suburban, leafy Dandenong Ranges or in a garden

studio at another home in suburban Ashburton, Lancashire worked for clients such as Jackson Wayne and Berri Estates Winery. He art directed in-house for agencies Masius Wynne-Williams, McCann Erickson and Berry Curry, and at one point he was interviewed by Frank Eidlitz. Known around Melbourne as the 'mad Hungarian', Eidlitz had a reputation as a cantankerous taskmaster. Lancashire passed up the offer — regrettably, he says in hindsight. After a stint as art director at the high-profile advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather, despite being thought crazy, with his first baby on the way, Lancashire returned to freelance and began working on the Practical Puffins series for local publishers McPhee Gribble. It was at this time, in 1982, that a lucrative commission to design the Safeway Home Brand packaging marked the point when David Lancashire Design hit its stride and from 1987 to 1990 DLD developed into an internationally recognised, highly awarded design studio with eighteen staff members.[4]

An increase in demand saw the Australian paper industry expand during the 1970s and 1980s, driving the requirement to advertise their products. Following international examples, Australian sgraphic designers were employed to attract the large audience of paper users, including printers, designers, advertising agencies, production staff, embellishment specialists and artists. Commissions to advertise paper offered designers rich, creative scope, as well as the opportunity to explore the material that was often central to their practice. This work was rewarding and highly covetable. The last decades of the twentieth century were Australia's heyday for print design and, after decades of admiring technologically innovative print production and design produced abroad, in Lancashire's words, 'the Australian printing industry exploded.'

In 1991 DLD accepted its first paper-related commission. Daltons Fine Paper required a redesign of their Reflex typing paper, then milled in Burnie, Tasmania, and DLD was hired by Tony Geeves and Associates to propose packaging designs. In retrospect, this first commission from Dalton forecast an opportunity for Lancashire to re-engage with his early days in Manchester where he aspired to being a fine artist and first developed an affinity for paper.

This Page

Three spreads from DLD's 'Outback' paper promotion for Australian Paper.

Encouraging AP to innovate beyond a white paper sheet, Lancashire designed a colour range inspired by his time in the Australian desert.

Big black birds screech and soar in the outback

Precious rocks are discovered in the outback

Strange and surprising trees grow in the outback

Research into Lancashire's design practice highlights how his expertise with paper, a material that is common to both art and design, provided him with a passport to produce work that blurred the boundaries between design and art, and this extensive, technical knowledge characterised his business in a unique way. Commissions from paper companies meant he could utilize this knowledge and work in the materially-led half-light that exists between design and art practice, re-inventing himself as he invented designs for clients.

Tireless and social, Lancashire worked closely with his clients, and his expertise in advertising influenced some of their key business decisions. When Scott Peregrin from Mohawk visited Australia from the United States, Ross Black from the agent Raleigh Paper took him to visit Lancashire at DLD's Newry Street studio in Richmond. Lancashire was actually nicknamed 'Mr. Superfine' in local design circles after his favourite Mohawk paper stock *Superfine*. Lancashire took the opportunity to recommend that Mohawk add a card weight to their *Superfine* range and the idea was implemented.

Similarly, at a boozy dinner at Melbourne's Flower Drum restaurant, Lancashire, asked the head of Australian Paper Kevin Buckwell, 'When are you going to do a *Saxton* sheet that's not white, make a cream paper like Mohawk's *Superfine*?' Convinced that a cream Saxton sheet would be popular with Australian designers, AP put *Saxton Chardonnay* into production. Passionate about paper, and as both a colleague and a representative of the 'paper user' market, Lancashire was in a position to influence the production agendas of paper companies.

Another example of Lancashire's close involvement with a paper client is the development of K.W Doggett's branding. Strategic involvement in early decision–making is essential to well-considered, corporate identity design, and DLD's work for K.W Doggett Fine Paper is a strong case in point. Ken and John Doggett, the owners of the company were initially against the idea of playing off their surname to use dogs in the branding. However, DLD, seeing an enduring, memorable and fun opportunity, persuaded their clients to reconsider. With an art director's foresight, Lancashire's objective was to locate a concept that could endure multiple campaign iterations as a tail-wagging, bone-fetching, newspaper-delivering, flea-scratching dog offered endless metaphoric extrapolations.

There was huge potential in this simple idea. On an efficiency level, being easily recognisable and loaded with personality, dogs can be executed roughly, reduced to inexpensive, single-colour illustrations and simple animations. DLD designer Tony Gilevski mentioned the idea of dogs digging up old boots, which explains why the current Doggett paper kit features a series of beautifully photographed, well-worn shoes, including a grotty Dunlop Volley with a hole in the toe, a worn leather sandal, and one of David's own trashed, elastic-sided R.M. Williams boots. In addition, there are 'Dog Tales' and a 'Fetch blog'. DLD's farsightedness was the cornerstone of an economical, successful and popular advertising campaign. Less materially driven, this paper campaign reverberates with Lancashire's marketing nous and sense of humour.

Throughout the archive, it is clear that Lancashire pushed clients as close to 'art' as they would take. Referring to Henshall's teaching and the material aspects of designing, Lancashire explains one of his core motivations: 'If you understand how something is made, you want to re-make it in your own way'. Not content with making superficial contributions, Lancashire often became fully immersed at the processual level of the studio commissions, actively researching his own design knowledge by testing it in practice.

For paper clients, this meant DLD sometimes went further than just promoting the paper. When possible they were also involved in designing and making new papers, as well as naming, packaging and promoting those papers. *Australis* and *Outback* are two stocks custom designed by DLD in this way.

Australis is a classic, almost regal, laid paper sheet, featuring a flourished lettered water designed by Geoff Fawcett, that was manufactured from scratch at a paper mill in Shoalhaven, New South Wales. A faithful rendition of an ancient technique, there is nothing easily detectable about it that confirms it was made in twentieth-century Australia. *Outback* is a range of coloured papers that resulted from DLD's encouragement that AP innovate and move beyond the white paper sheet, then ubiquitous in Australian graphic design. Uncoated, with a texture reminiscent of dry earth, the *Outback* range is coloured by rich, organic, vibrant colours— Lancashire's trademark palette, inspired by his time in the Australian desert. *Outback* was originally named *Terra Firma* and

Australis was originally named *Terra Australis*, however for a broader market reach the Latin names were anglicised by DLD's copywriter David Webster.

The material origin of the *Australis* sheet can be attributed to two aspects of Lancashire's roots: His British heritage and Henshall's teaching. It represents a fusion of Lancashire's appreciation of the warm, tactile qualities of fine paper and his knowledge of how papers are made. Because Lancashire knew how watermarks and a laid sheet are made during the milling process, he was able to propose its use to his client for a branded piece of graphic design.

By selecting to design a 'laid' sheet, where the linear pattern of the wire sieve separates the paper pulp during the manufacturing process, Lancashire referenced a technique prevalent in Europe between the twelfth and nineteenth centuries, when paper was made in single sheets. The watermark in the *Australis* sheet is reminiscent of specialist fine art papers such as the French-made, watermarked cotton rag sheet *Arches*, designed for fine artists and print makers.

Implementation of these techniques enabled Lancashire to work with the technology he understood to make the materials that inspired him whilst also fulfilling his commercial obligations. In this way, Lancashire's design inquiry, design evaluation and design knowledge are implicit in his design results.[5]

American architect and furniture designer Charles Eames, of the husband-and-wife team Ray and Charles Eames, was straightforward in his acknowledgement that 'the role of self' is a key factor in design ideation. The motivation behind most of the things we've done was either that we wanted them ourselves or we wanted to give them to family and friends.'[6] Similarly, DLD's design of *Australis* and *Outback* papers is an example of how Lancashire relied on self-generated exploration to enrich and sustain his design practice.

By creating commercial papers that referenced papermaking history and the quality of artists' papers, Lancashire's commercial designs were able to advance materially toward art. And, manufactured for distribution, Lancashire's innovations also enabled his design contemporaries to take a material focus in their work. For example, the provision of

coloured papers in the *Outback* range allowed designers to conceive inversions of negative and positive during their design process. Rather than routinely applying dark elements to a light substrate, designers had the option to reverse designs out from a sheet by printing or foil-stamping lighter colours.
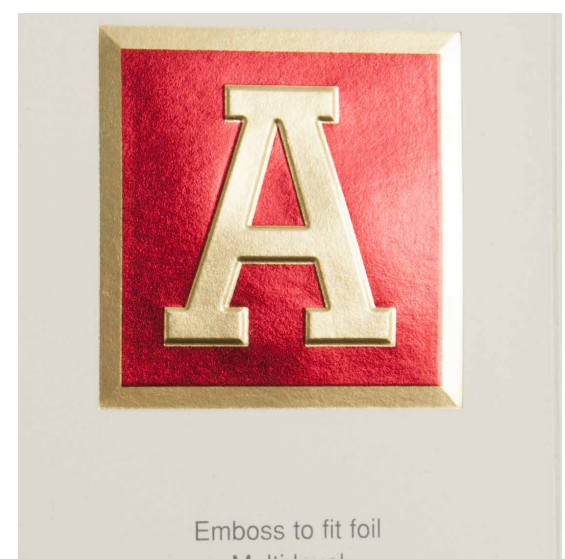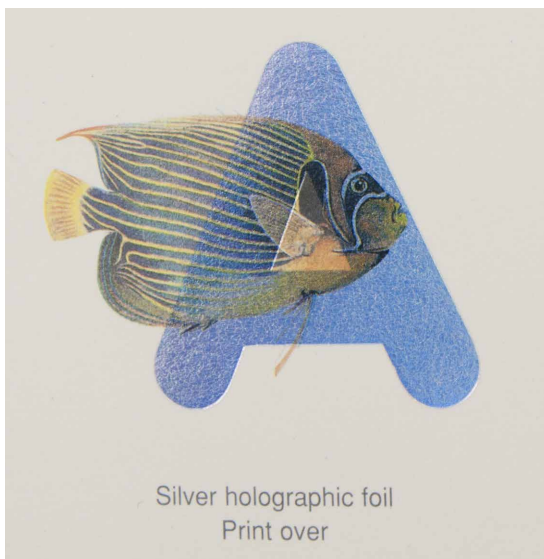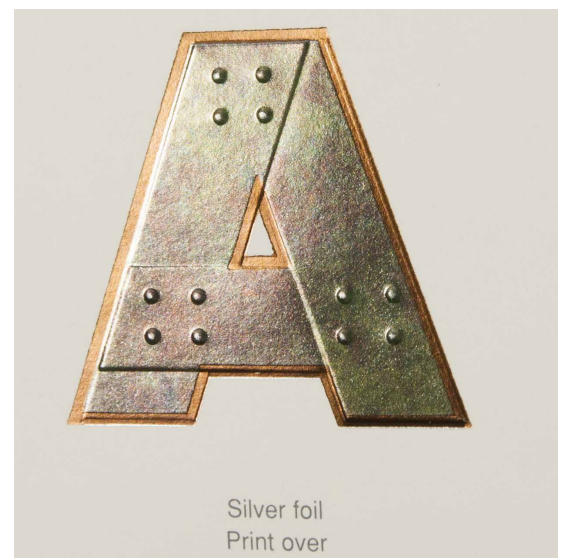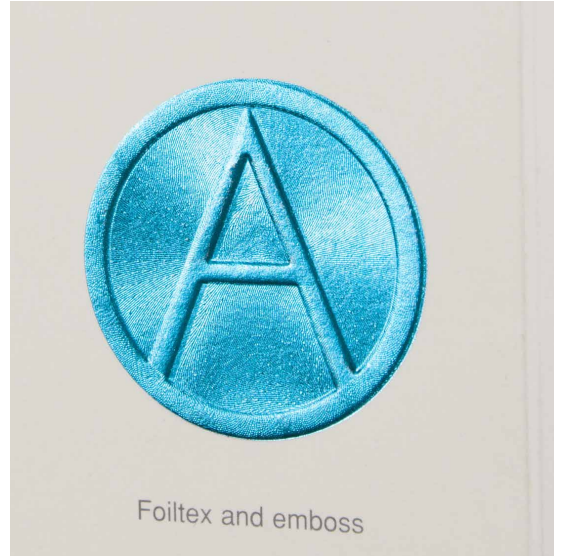
The *Outback* promotion is also an example of how Lancashire allowed sensory experiences, such as travelling in the Australian desert, to inform his design practice. The experience of sleeping under the stars led to the promotional concept for *Celestial Black*, a black uncoated paper in the *Outback* range. Entirely rendered in print embellishment techniques, Lancashire depicted a desert landscape at night. A felt-tip drawing of hills is stamped in copper foil to evoke the warmth of the earth, and subtle, laser-etched shapes depict the Southern Cross, the Milky Way and a moon, visually encoding the black paper to read as a night sky. As Lancashire told Desktop magazine in 2013, 'I would encourage every young designer to go bush, roll your swag out, and soak it up. Reconnect regularly with the environment, then see what happens to your work'. [7]

A poetic example of Lancashire's innovation with paper is a Christmas booklet designed for K.W Doggett in 2010. Delicate and small, a stapled paper section opens at the centre to reveal elaborately sculpted, die-cut angel wings that float above bronze-inked paper, typeset with the lyrics of Leonard Cohen's *Hallelujah*. The angel feathers are laser-etched with tiny patterned holes that enhance an already weightless appearance. Alluding to Christmas themes, this piece has other seemingly incongruous beginnings until they are understood materially.

Lancashire's bowerbird's nest of a studio is filled with objects collected on his many travels. [8] By steeping himself in this material world, he gives himself direct access to the knowledge that is held in these objects and they help to inspire his thoughts. During the design process, Lancashire translated the abstract requirement of capturing an intangible aspect of Christmas into a tangible, paper object.[9] By considering the notion of ethereality and its metaphoric association with golden shafts of light, Lancashire remembered a *wayang kulit* shadow puppet collected in Bali. This aleatoric recall was possible because he had recognised and understood

Pigment foil

Foiltex and emboss

Transparent foil over print
Full relief emboss

Silver foil
Print over

Silver holographic foil
Print over

Emboss to fit foil
Multi level

Moths are surprising, as is paper. To appreciate the delicate colours and exquisite forms of many moths often requires close examination. On the other hand, some moths are so spectacular they attract immediate attention.

In all, fluttering around the world there are moths of perhaps 100,000 varieties. We have chosen but a few and adapted them to special species in order to introduce you to the splendours and subtleties of Dalton Byronic text and cover papers.

The Byronic range of twelve distinctive colours, including two whites, offers you the opportunity to achieve elegant appeal or dramatic contrast in your printed pieces. Byronic is splendid in performance, accepting inks superbly and having character and strength that allow you to utilise finishing techniques such as die-cutting, embossing and foil stamping to great effect. Furthermore, exceptional durability due to Byronic's innate quality ensures each printed piece handles well and has a long life.

Talk to your Dalton representative about the characteristics and capabilities of Byronic. Just as moths are many and varied, the versatility of Dalton Byronic text, cover papers and envelopes makes them eminently suitable for a broad range of applications.

OWL MOTH

BYRONIC   CLAY

MELBOURNE   SYDNEY   BRISBANE   ADELAIDE   PERTH

Opposite
Sample embellishments featuring the letter 'A', designed to promote Avon Graphics technological expertise

This Page
Top
DLD's paper promotion for Daltons Fine Paper, titled *Twelve Moths of the Year*

Bottom
Peace Doves. A Christmas card designed for Australian Paper featuring a blind embossed, sculptured relief of one dove made from several doves, and gold, foiled branch.

why the puppet was made the way it was; he had read the design knowledge that was embedded in its form. The puppet was etched with fine patterns in order to create intricate shadow displays when backlit and projected onto an Indonesian wayang kulit theatre screen.

Having made this connection, Lancashire combined it with his experience of and access to laser etching manufacture, and generated an idea for how to proceed with the Christmas booklet. Wayang puppet shapes are discernible in the angel's paper wings once you compare the two items, however the key material insight Lancashire located was in the intricately patterned, cut holes. Treating paper with similar etches would enhance his expression of an ethereal, weightless quality in the angel. This material principle was transferred from the black, hand-punched hide of an Indonesian puppet to white, laser-etched, paper angel wings. A traditional, handmade technique was translated for mass-production.

As Lancashire says, 'we always wanted to make things that people would want to keep, to make them like a gem'. While Die Brücke artist Ernst Kirchner claimed in 1905 that the 'expression of the senses' was the sole domain of art, Lancashire's devotion to sensitive interpretations of commercial design briefs, such as this one, questions this notion.[10]

Further examples of Lancashire's contribution to Australian print design are DLD's promotions of Avon Graphics' embellishment expertise. Lancashire invented elaborately jeweled visual narratives to demonstrate the availability of and the manifold ways in which print embellishment could be explored to enhance design. Working with Avon's owner Trevor Hone, techniques such as embossing and debossing, and holographic, metallic, clear and matt foils, were worked in various combinations to promote Avon's high standard of workmanship and technological knowledge. DLD's promotions for Avon remain covetable items and inspiring toolboxes for designers. In addition to working for Avon Graphics, DLD also worked with them to develop designs for his clients in the paper industry.

Considering Lancashire's reluctance to make a separation between art and design, it is interesting to assess where Lancashire the designer was active

in his work and where Lancashire the artist was. *The History of Writing* is a complex, paper promotion in book format, designed for Dalton Fine Paper in 1983, written by Roger Dunn. Lancashire proposed to the marketing director, Paul George, 'Let's do a promotion that uses every bit of paper you produce'. Lancashire knew that this idea would do at least three things: it would promote Dalton's range, it could be explored creatively in a book format, and catalytically it could offer its audience an experimental, covetable, artifact.

Revealing inspiration from Herbert Spencer's journal *Typographica* and Kurt Schwitters' inter-war collages the highly designed, exactingly engineered, half-Canadian bound, perfectly square book comprises a layered collage of varying sheet sizes, paper textures, fold-outs and tip-ins over 145 surfaces – potentially a mess if not conceived with clear, committed focus and design expertise. Typical of DLD's often image-laden work, the physical properties of the type are equally well considered and controlled. Each character, whether sitting in body copy or featured specifically, is regarded as an individual shape and deliberately placed.

The History of Writing explores Lancashire's career-long interest in experimenting with the synergistic reactions that occur when candidate shapes are randomly juxtaposed. Aleatoric combinations of colour, pattern and texture inform his design decisions.[14] It is also an example of the influence that the German artist and designer Kurt Schwitter's had on Lancashire. And consideration of this, reveals a resourceful parallel in their practices: paper ephemera were a byproduct of each of their commercial graphic design practices, later recycled in collage.

Similar to *The History of Writing* and also designed for Dalton, are the two promotions *Twelve Moths of the Year* and *Twelve Beetles of the Year*, which reveal further, thoughtful references to Kurt Schwitters' *Merz* publication. Because Lancashire fuses elements from art and design, a notable characteristic of his practice and very apparent in these three promotions for Dalton, the commercial inception of the work is barely detectable in the final promotional design.

Working from his rural studio, Lancashire now has time to focus on his art. However, testifying to the

benefit of integrating self-exploration and commercial work, not too much has changed about his practice. He is still handling pieces of paper to explore his thoughts.

Currently working on a series of landscapes, Lancashire is revisiting painted studies that he made of rock formations on a recent trip to Alice Springs, and is again exploring collage. Developing a technique that combines paint and cut paper on a gessoed canvas or paper surface, this series is an investigation of gaps, chasms and gorges.

In material conversation with the paper pieces on the table in front of him, Lancashire lets his hands and his memory of the landscape author the work. Circuitously, many of the patterned papers he is using today are the offcuts from his past investigations with paper in order to promote it. As he says, 'It's continual. Making things is about finding out. It's the nicest place to be.'

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Above
A paper collage from 2016, Lancashire is currently working on a series of landscapes investigating rock formations, gaps, chasms and gorges.

Image courtesy of David Lancashire.

1   Erwin Viray, foreword 'Why Material Design?' to *Material Design, Informing Architecture by Materiality*, by Thomas Schröpfer (Switzerland: Birkhäuser, 2011), 8–9. This article was informed by a series of interviews with David Lancashire and explorations of archival material at the RMIT Design Archives.

2   These ideas are explored in Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2008); Benay Gürsoy, 'Visualising making: shapes, materials and actions,' *Design Studies* 41 (2015): 29-50, and, Jennifer

Walwin and Henry Krokatsis, *You'll Never Know: Drawing and Random Interference* (London: Hayward Gallery, 2006).

3   'The Advertising Programmes of 17 Paper Companies,' Print XII:1 (1958), 33-44.

4   'Hall of Fame / David Lancashire' last modified 2014, http://www.agda.com.au/inspiration/hall-of-fame/david-lancashire/.

5   For discussion of these ideas see, for example, Peter Downton, *Design Research* (Melbourne: RMIT University Publishing, 2003);

Christopher Frayling 'Research into Art and Design', Royal College of Art Research Paper, (1993) and, Trevor Streader, 'Idea Ignition: Design Origins' (Master's Thesis, Swinburne University of Technology, 2002).

6   Charles Eames 'An Eames Celebration' New York: WNET, 3 February 1975.

7   'Interview: David Lancashire,' last modified April 10, 2013, http://desktopmag.com.au/features/interview-david-lancashire/#.WJ-G77Z94ck.

8   Andrew Upton, *David Lancashire: Roos* (Sydney: Formist Publishers, 2014).

9   See Nigel Cross, *Designerly Ways of Knowing* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006).

10 Sherwin Simmons, 'Kirchner's Brücke Poster,' *Print Quarterly* 23 (2006); 155-173.

INGREDIENT AND METHOD:
A SURVEY OF LETTERING ARTIST GODFREY (GEOFFREY) FAWCETT 1928–2003

Stephen Banham

INGREDIENT
AND METHOD:
A SURVEY OF
LETTERING ARTIST
GODFREY (GEOFFREY)
FAWCETT 1928–2003
CONTINUED

It is no secret that 'mark-making' crafts such as letterpress printing, risograph printing, ticket writing and signwriting have all experienced a 'twilight renaissance' in recent years. Perhaps the most popular of these is handlettering. Both the online and offline graphic design worlds are awash with hand-drawn scripts, ranging from the masterfully flourished to the plain unconvincing.

The interest in, and revival of, hand-lettering skills is part of a wider want for a reconnection of the graphic designer to many of the manual skill sets thought lost to an earlier era. This want for reconnection has facilitated an important generational handover and a redefinition of skills from previous generations to current ones. Locally this has seen many hand lettering short courses such as those offered by *Old School, New School* and *Maria Montes* emerge to meet a demand for skills no longer broadly taught in conventional university design school curriculums.

This revival is perhaps most explicitly borne out by observing current industry demand. In a global survey of the most popular typefaces of 2015 by *MyFonts*, one of the two largest international font vendors, more than half (60%) of the most popular typefaces were based on hand-lettered forms, indicating that the commercial demand by designers and advertising agencies for typefaces emulating hand-drawn scripts (albeit in digital form) is strong.[1]

This rise in interest in the hand-lettered form is not isolated to the world of typography but rather is indicative of a wider cultural fascination with the notion of 'authenticity'. The contemporary reading of 'authenticity' is less concerned with the end product than with the process of production itself, working as a counterpoint, supplementing the universal with the unique. As David Boyle forecast in 2003, 'It is beginning to be clear that the dominant cultural force of the century ahead won't just be global and virtual, but a powerful interweaving of opposites – globalization and localization, virtual and real'.[2]

In typographic terms, this demands a more engaged, physical experience, re-igniting the inherent connection between mind and hand, and by inference offers an alternative to the exclusive use of the computer as the method of production. It is argued that digital technology 'edits out all the imperfections, the unfiltered emotions, the unpredictabilities and the vagaries of the human touch'.[3] The 'truth' offered through homogenous consumer aesthetics is rapidly becoming less believable. The stranglehold of the computer program in flattening out the texture of imagery and its physical, material presence creates something quite different in experience from the image created by materials manipulated by hand. From childhood onwards, everyone has the ability to connect to the inventiveness, danger and downright fun of directly applied experimentation: what happens when you mix this with that? How will this paint react with that material? With computers, much of the magic has all been worked out by programmers a long time ago.[4]

The typographic form most identified with the culture of hand lettering, script, has been particularly noted as experiencing a dramatic revival. Type scholar Paul Shaw recently noted that 'Scripts, once the orphans of the type world, relegated to the back pages of type specimen books and ignored in typography manuals, now rival sans serifs as the fastest growing group of fonts, selling strongly to both amateurs and professional designers'.[5]

Furthermore, a concurrent interest in ornament within graphic design culture has aided the acceptance and proliferation of the most popular of scripts – the embellished or ornamented script. The current fascination with ornament and decoration can be seen not only as a reaction against, but also as an addition to, the work and thinking of the turn-of-the-century, systems-obsessed designers. The modernist philosophy that has dominated twentieth-century design empties ornament of meaning and separates it from function, thus rendering it superfluous in the eyes of the canon. Knowing this, the feting of ornament and the production of exuberantly excessive, dense and sometimes exaggeratedly useless work, can be seen as a provocative thumbing of the nose to the approach to design advocated by many schools and

Geoffrey Fawcett's work is held in the David Lancashire Archive at RMIT Design Archives.

Previous Pages
Experimental Lettering
Godfrey (Geoffrey) Fawcett c. 1980s

Opposite
Lettering Sampler Board.
Godfrey (Geoffrey) Fawcett c. 1980s

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professional organisations in which 'problems' are 'solved' by following a sequence of codified steps.[6] Within the typographic world, the most noted and influential of these 'embellished typographers' is the Canadian designer, Marian Bantjes. Her work embraces the notion of 'long hours of intense labour, where all sense of time and reality disappear'.[7] She refers to this in her 2010 monograph *I Wonder*: 'It seems that over the last two centuries, the time invested in the creation of documents has slowly decreased, from the decline of highly elaborate penmanship, to the rise of templated engraving dies, to haphazardly laser printouts'.[8] This sense of a physical commitment to something that feels very 'authentic' offers a great deal of appeal to a younger generation of designers for whom design has been a primarily digital experience.

So it was timely that the RMIT Design Archives should acquire some of the work of hand lettering artist Godfrey (Geoffrey) Fawcett, as part of its larger collection of the work of prominent graphic designer David Lancashire. David's artful approach to design, often incorporating illustration, called for a comparably human touch to the typographic voice of the corporate identity and packaging projects that David Lancashire Design (DLD) undertook. It was Fawcett who fulfilled this role, working alongside Lancashire for many decades as a freelance lettering artist.

DLD had been established in 1976, after Lancashire left his position as art director at advertising agency Ogilvy and Mather. The practice soon acquired a reputation for well-crafted and artful design work, a counterpoint to the emergence of a more stark modernist influence that was then gaining momentum in the Australian graphic design industry. As the renowned designer Les Mason commented in 1983, 'Things began to change around with the influences of the Swiss school of typography in the early sixties'.[9] Whilst many studios were pursuing the European notion of 'total design',[10] whereby identity systems were conceptualised and applied using rationalist frameworks of uniformity and reductive simplicity, Lancashire took a softer approach, using custom lettering and a great deal of illustration.

Lancashire recalls the humble conditions of DLD during the early years: ' We would work in the back shed at my home in Ashburton. It had an artiscope (a bromide camera) and we would simply hose down the equipment in the garden'.[11]

Fawcett worked as a freelancer, being paid per job, gradually working more regularly on jobs for Lancashire until he was working on DLD projects on a full-time basis. For Lancashire, having an in-house letterer opened up rich possibilities of customised typography in design projects, particularly packaging. 'Lettering artists are available to produce their interpretations of type forms, tailored to suit individual advertisements, as well as produce other lettering styles not available...'[12]

The son of a lithographer, Fawcett was born in England in 1928. Although it is uncertain whether his father's profession influenced his orientation towards the graphic arts, it was common for sons to follow their fathers in their professions. After working in several agencies in the United Kingdom, Fawcett made the move to Melbourne. He settled in the south-eastern suburb of Langwarrin, making the long journey to the DLD studio in Newry Street, Richmond, every day.
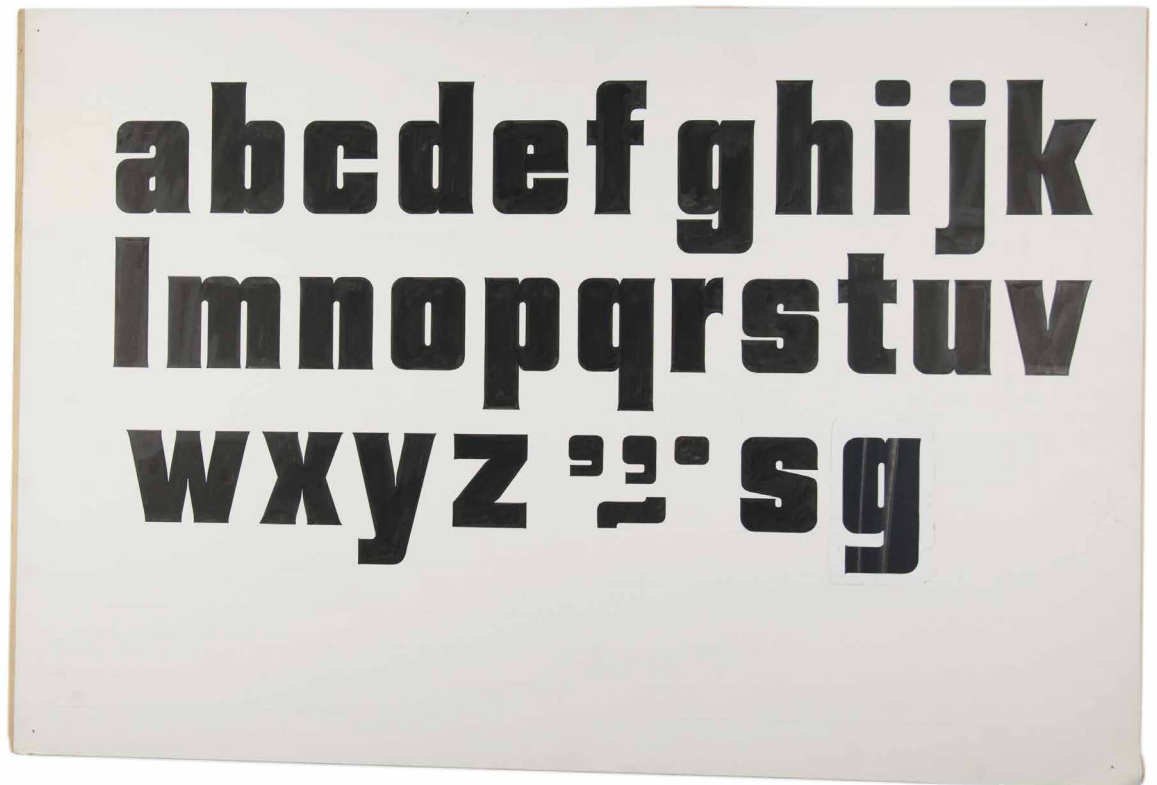
Working alongside Lancashire at DLD, the working process was simple: Lancashire would sketch the idea and Fawcett would meticulously draw it up. Prior to the introduction of Letraset and the widespread use of photo-typesetting, this close relationship between art director and an in-house lettering artist was a common one – most famously personified by the studio relationship between New York art director Herb Lubalin and his lettering artist Tom Carnese. Lubalin was renowned for his 'napkin sketches' of designs, which were then handed onto Carnese for masterly typographic execution. The unequal power dynamic led to an unbalanced legacy – history records the work of Lubalin far more prominently than that of his letterer.[13]

Despite commercial art being a poorly paid profession, Fawcett's pride in the trade was expressed in no uncertain terms. Lancashire recalls introducing Fawcett to a colleague as a 'finished artist', to which Fawcett forcefully replied: 'I am not a finished artist, I am a lettering artist!'.[14]

Top
Godfrey (Geoffrey) Fawcett at the offices of David Lancashire Design c. 1980s

Bottom
Experimental Lettering
Godfrey (Geoffrey) Fawcett c. 1980s

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CONTINUED

Top
Brand Lettering

Godfrey (Geoffrey)
Fawcett c. 1980s

Bottom
Untitled Bold Sans
Lettering

Godfrey (Geoffrey)
Fawcett c. 1990s

Fawcett's contribution to the practice was substantial. In a DLD promotional book, produced in 1988, the presence of Fawcett's lettering is evident across the three booklets housed within its firm cardboard casing, each profiling the three parts of the design work: Print Promotion, Corporate Identity and Packaging.

The 'pragmatics of production' permeate Fawcett's work. To the modern eye, expecting a complete and persuasive design rendered speedily and slickly, the 'incomplete' nature of many artefacts within the Fawcett collection are oddly compelling because they reveal 'fragments' of artwork, ingredients that make up an unseen, eventually completed artwork. Fawcett would photocopy or bromide parts of the letters and make an assemblage replicating typographic curves and features to save time. Lancashire notes: 'You don't see anything behind a lot of current artwork. It's all there. Now everything looks finished straight away – and it's not. There's no gap between the thought process and the 'touchy-feely'. Process is the journey. Otherwise it's just a superficial picture'.[15]

There is a practical economy of labour in seeing a word that has not been drawn in order but in its 'typographic parts'. Its primary role as 'production artwork' is not to immediately seduce the viewer through a completed beauty but to be the foundation of its print reproduction.

And with it came a strong sense of actual size, scale and planning, since resizing and endless revisions are less easily accommodated when done by repro camera or by hand.
As Lancashire plainly states, 'It was called commercial art, and that's exactly what it was'.[16]
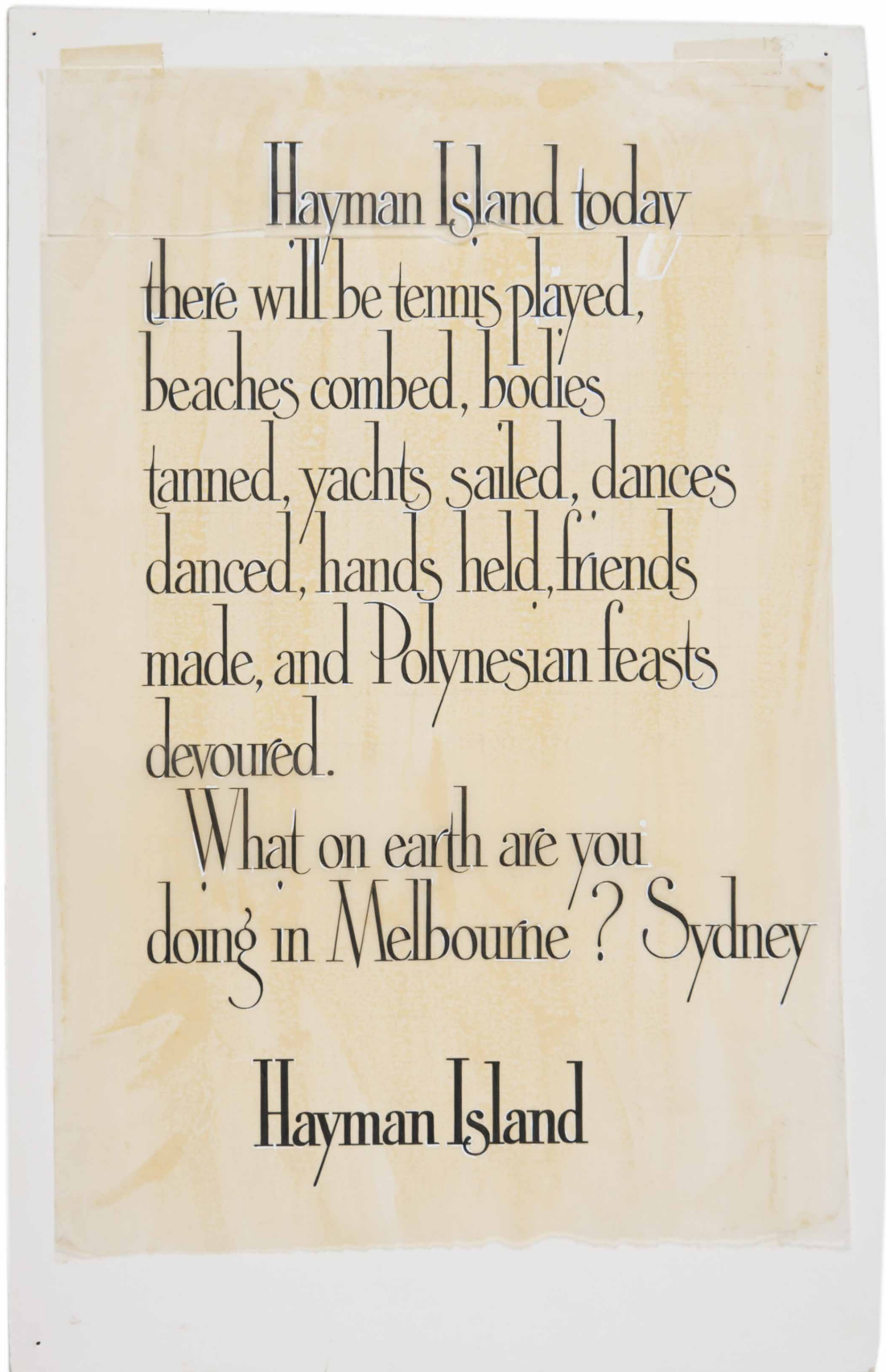
A knowledge of the production processes following the design stage was central to any letterer and Fawcett was no different. Lancashire would discuss the design and typography with Fawcett, who would then 'make it fit', even if it meant bending it around all matter of shapes, as was the case with a great number of logos and packaging designs during this period. This print knowledge meant that he could cleverly minimise the work involved – such as drawing lines across Letratone (adhesive halftone screens) to achieve the desired tonal qualities.

Lancashire describes the process that Fawcett used: 'All his work was carried out by hand and with bromides, then stuck down onto smooth finished artboard with cow gum. Brush ruling was used for his hand lettering. He also mesmerised students and new designers in the studio with his method of sharpening a stick, dipping it in ink and ruling with it on tracing paper – he said it gave him a better line than with ruling pens'.[17]

As the impact of the Apple Mac began to spread across the field of graphic design, Fawcett could see that the age of the in-house lettering artist was passing. He was an 'Indian Ink and China White man', so, as Lancashire recalls 'He was glad to get out of the game'.[18] Fawcett died in 2003, only a few years after he 'retired' from working at DLD.

So, what does the Fawcett archive offer the contemporary viewer, seeing it many decades after its execution? For one, the collection highlights the difference in definition of what it is to be a hand-letterer – and, more specifically, the considerable difference between the role of the 'jobbing' or 'trade' letterer and that of the contemporary 'hand letterer'. The former presented itself as a being more 'matter-of-fact' about the business of generating artwork for print production, indeed aligning itself to the print industry. The latter, being a revival of the former, is afforded a more professional complexion – with the visual language of hand lettering now being considered in the marketplace as more 'boutique' in personality. Hand lettering is now seen as an artfully expressive alternative to the norm (computer-generated typography) – a counterpoint to an earlier era when hand-lettered solutions were the norm, before there was a widespread alternative. As a result of this more priviledged position, the contemporary letterer is more prone to self-conscious embellishments of a message, envoking a sense of spectacle and novelty.

Fawcett's work also highlights a more pertinent divide between twentieth and twenty-first century notions of hand-lettering – that of content. Whereas the 'commercial artist' made no claim to be the author or have any influence over the content to be drawn, the contemporary letterer is more likely to view their work in an artistic, authored and 'bespoke' sense – reinforcing the cultural and economic transformation of hand lettering from trade to boutique.

**INGREDIENT
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CONTINUED

This page
Lettering for
Hayman Island Press
Advertisement

Godfrey (Geoffrey)
Fawcett c. 1980s

Opposite
Lettering Sampler
Board

Godfrey (Geoffrey)
Fawcett c. 1960s

Symphony

This miracle fabric

The Haunted

MORE FOR YOUR MONEY

Say it with

Flowers

For all nice things!

CHOCOLATES

now and again

Christmas

**INGREDIENT
AND METHOD:
A SURVEY OF
LETTERING ARTIST
GODFREY (GEOF-
FREY) FAWCETT
1928–2003**
CONTINUED

it's finger lickin' funtime... and the fun starts with Kentucky Fried.

Many hand letterers now expect an element of authorship (and stylistic ownership) over their work. The parallel revival of tattoo culture, with its similar bespoke culture, has helped hand lettering enter a wider, popular (pop) cultural sphere, rather than being the sole concern of commerce and marketing.

There are specific works within the collection that not only display the breadth of Fawcett's deftness but also the very wide 'jobbing' scope letterers had to respond to during the era of commercial art. On a single board (see page 34), itself a bromided composite of lettering artwork, is displayed a crowded array of advertising and promotional statements in just about every superlative lettering treatment available: formal scripting, informal scripting, outlining, inlining, line-filling, swash-capping, drop-shadowing, reversing and contouring, amongst others. Words are given an almost onomatopoeic treatment –'Wow!' is rendered as blaring globes while 'Gas the good flame for spring' is emblazened with a half-line fill, an inline and drop-shadowing around a semicircle. The equivalent of an entire digital letterer's portfolio presented en masse, the piece serves as an impressive testimony to Fawcett's scope as a hand letterer. In this display, the words themselves seem to recede into the background, present only to express the commercial or 'real life' application of his technical prowess.

Fawcett's typeface designs — or 'interpretations', in many cases, such as the Helvetica titling character set — typify the role of the letterer from this era, namely as a provider of ingredients to enable others to complete their design projects. Fawcett's typefaces exhibit simple character sets, almost always without glyphs such as punctuation and diacritics now considered standard in digital fonts.
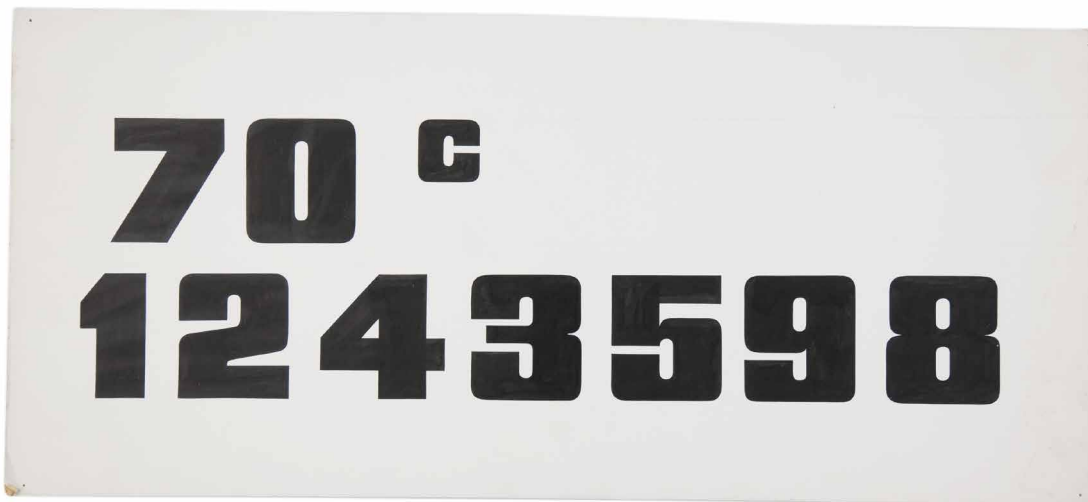
Some feature what appear to be additional alternate letterforms, 's' or 'g' for example. It is however difficult to tell whether these were intended as alternates (in the contemporary digital sense) or if they were in fact redrawn corrections of the original glyphs.

A piece that highlights this notion of 'ingredient' is a numeral set, presumably drawn for retail display. This features the price '70 cents' on the top line and on the second line the rest of the numerals in that style to be used when the price changes. Charmingly, these are not presented in numerical order but rather in the order of their structural similarity (the '3' being similar in structure to the '5', the '9' with the '8' etc.), making the process of its creation and development evident as a 'typographic toolkit' for the designer, in this case, David Lancashire.

Like many of the earlier lettering artists of the commercial art era, much of the graphic power of Fawcett's work lies in the jarring juxtaposition between the complete banality of the words themselves – 'Sale!', 'Discount', etc. –and the exquisite typographic beauty and technical craftsmanship of its execution. This is the language of an earlier period of advertising – more blunt, more direct, no hint of irony or post-modern self-awareness. But it is this very blandness of message that amplifies its transformation from inane message to masterful typographic elegance.

The creation of each piece, a pastiche of parts to be compiled at a later stage of production, is unique in its 'matter-of-factness' and humility. The spirit of the work speaks loudly – 'There's a job to do and it just does it'.

From an archival perspective, work such as that of Fawcett's, made up of its various parts and

ingredients, offers the viewer a 'direct line' to the maker – it is all about process, the sketched development, the various iterations and production components.

In 2011, Lancashire assembled a modest exhibition of Fawcett's original hand lettering artwork, entitled *Black and White*, at Lamington Drive in Collingwood, Melbourne. Although humble in scale and presentation (a small gallery space featuring original works pinned directly to the wall), the exhibition offered the viewer a very unique design experience – an insight into the ingredients of the design process of the hand letterer, not their final, finished outcomes.

Most telling of Lancashire's 'love of process' was the central image cleverly used to promote the show – the inking boards that Fawcett used on his work desk to test his brushes. These featured a landscape of thousands of test brush swipes and pen scribbles. The result transforms what is essentially a utilitarian object (an element of production, the board) into something that is considered far more precious by contemporary eyes – an artefact that could only come from a pre-digital era.

The *Black and White* exhibition not only made people aware of Fawcett's work but also introduced many graphic designers to their profession's proud yet often forgotten predecessor – commercial art. At a time when the profession of graphic design is often described as being in transition, the collection of Fawcett's hand lettering offers a resource for future generations of designers to research and explore the possibilities of the hand-drawn typographic form even more deeply.

Stephen Banham is a typographer, author, lecturer and PhD Candidate at RMIT University.

1   https://www.myfonts.com/newsletters/sp/201601.html

2   Grant Curruthers, Handmade graphics refuse to go quietly, *Eye. Journal of Graphic Design* 58 (2005): 77.

3   David Boyle, *Authenticity: Brands, Fakes, Spin and the Lust for Real Life* (London: Flamingo, 2003), 4.

4   Boyle, *Authenticity*, 4

5   Paul Shaw and Abby Goldstein, 'The Line of Beauty ', *Eye. Journal of Graphic Design* 83 (2012):54.

6   Alice Tremlow, 'The Decrimimalisation of Ornament', *Eye. Journal of Graphic Design* 58 (2005): 19.

7   Tremlow, 'The Decrimimalisation of Ornament', 19.

8   Marian Bantjes, *I Wonder* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2010), 80.

9   Geoffrey Caban, *A Fine Line. A history of Australian commercial art* (Sydney: Hale & Ironmonger 1983).

10 The introduction of 'total design' is widely credited to the Dutch emigré designer Pieter Huvaneers.

11 Interview with David Lancashire, 13 August 2015 at the RMIT Design Archives.

12 Mortimer Leach, *Letter Design in the Graphic Arts* (New York: Reinhold Publishing 1960).

13 Adrian Shaughnessy, *Lubalin* (London: Unit Editions 2013), 31.

14 Interview with David Lancashire, 13 August 2015 at the RMIT Design Archives.

15 Interview with David Lancashire, 13 August 2015 at the RMIT Design Archives.

16 nterview with David Lancashire, 13 August 2015 at the RMIT Design Archives.

17 http://lamingtondrive.com/shows/black-and-white/

18 Interview with David Lancashire, 13 August 2015 at the RMIT Design Archives.

Above A letterpressed Christmas card designed by David Lancashire in 2011 for the family owned Melbourne paper company K.W. Doggett. Led by the company's name Lancashire's design features numerous dog breeds and, typical of his humour, one sneaky cat. The card was presented to clients with its own stand and was printed in both silver and red.

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