



Original

*A publication of Portland State
University DES 399*

About Portland Design History

Portland, Oregon's history of innovative advertising and design is rooted in the 1960s, when the city staked its claim in the creative industry. The designers of this era defined Portland as a hub for compelling hand lettering and type design, as well as a leader in design for the outdoor industry. From the beginning, it was a community that embraced the spirit of collaboration.

Portland designers established Pendleton as the "wool standard", wrote books that defined the profession, introduced the world to sports brand endorsements, and inspired the future of digital typography. Much of the work created during this era did not survive. The work has been undervalued by art and educational institutions for decades, and often discarded by children of baby boomers seeking to declutter a basement. As time passes, the design work from this age becomes more endangered.

Supported by Portland State University, The Portland Design History initiative seeks to reveal the stories of our early creatives and the brands, studios and organizations that shaped our city. This project seeks to capture some of the history of the design profession in Portland and honor the contributions of our predecessors. While the focus is on the 1960s and 1970s, in the process of sharing the biographies of designers with long careers, work from many other eras is shared.

The Stories We Tell

As one may assume, many of the stories we tell are those of white men. This is a result of the place and time in which the project is focused. The 1960s and 1970s was a time period when women and people of color were sparse or non-existent in traditional design studios. When women were employed at a design firm, they were often placed in assistant or admin roles (sometimes despite having talent and experience doing design during war years). There are some rare exceptions, and we have gone out of our way to dig in when we find them. In order to tell more diverse stories, we need break out of the mold of the traditional, commercial design studios and look to design work from community groups, independent newspapers, and other non-traditional sources. We have begun this work, but are committed to doing more!

The subjects in this publication were chosen by the students from options introduced by the Instructor. It is by no means a complete guide to Portland's early creative industry. More stories and collections can be found at: www.portlanddesignhistory.com. This is an ongoing project, and you can contribute! Email melissa@meldel.com with story ideas.



Joan Campf speaking at Portland Designers of the Mad Men Era in 2014.

Project Background

The Portland Design History project was founded by Independent Designer, Melissa Delzio (*Our Portland Story*, Meldel), in 2014 with an event at Design Week called, *Portland Designers of the Mad Men Era*. That event featured the work and stories of Byron Ferris, Charles Politz, and Bennet Norrbo. Since 2014, Melissa has conducted over a dozen interviews with designers who were prominent in the era, as well as with spouses, children, friends and colleagues of prominent designers. Previous to 2014, a similar design history initiative was started by Tim Leigh. In 2008 he wrote, "We'd like to create a vehicle that follows the rise of design in Portland, to serve as a chronicle of fact and to notice the personalities that influenced its course along the way. Prime purpose of this entity would be to supply a historical narrative for students and practitioners of design—to show the steps taken to make the profession what it is here, to develop a visual record of design produced here, and to identify and characterize important contributors." It is because of Tim's extensive work framing the project, interviewing key players and his collection of original documents that this project is as robust as it is. Thank you Tim Leigh!

www.portlanddesignhistory.com

Portland State University

In January of 2020, Portland State University hosted a research/writing class for Graphic Design undergrad students titled, *Portland Design History*, led by Instructor, Melissa Delzio. The objective is to boost the project by enlisting the next generation of designers to tell the story of their predecessors. *Original* is a special edition publication, the result of a ten week-long research, writing and page layout intensive.

Our Process

Students chose their subject to study from a variety of preselected options based on the Instructor's research. Students were all given some leads to kick off their research. For some subjects, much starter information was provided, including documents, interviews, photos and design work. For other subjects, little was known beyond a few leads. Conducting direct, original research can be immensely rewarding and equally trying. Students had to adapt when they hit dead ends, and be creative using social media and other technologies to their advantage when searching for, or researching a source. Vitrally important was utilizing the amazing resources of local archives and libraries, even searching a real card catalog! Our class visited PSU's Library Special Collections, the Multnomah County Central Library and the Portland Art Museum Library. Some students' research additionally took them to Reed College's library, PNCA's library, local art galleries, and many homes and coffee shops for interviews with sources. Students shared their exciting discoveries or frustrating dead ends weekly with the class to support and cheer each other on. In addition to conducting interviews, students were tasked with transcribing, scanning, photographing and otherwise documenting all their findings. We set-up impromptu photobooths in houses and galleries, and the students curated the images selected for publication. Ten weeks is a short amount of time to achieve this finished product, and the students rose to the occasion!

Production Note

The magazine article template was designed by the Instructor, but the authors/students set up their own files and layouts. The best effort was made by the Instructor and the student to ensure that all content provided in this publication is accurate, reviewed by sources, and edited. However, if an error is found, please report it to: melissa@meldel.com so it can be corrected for the future.



PSU students researching and documenting findings all over the city!

Portland Pioneer

Charles Politz's Northwest Design Work and Mentorship

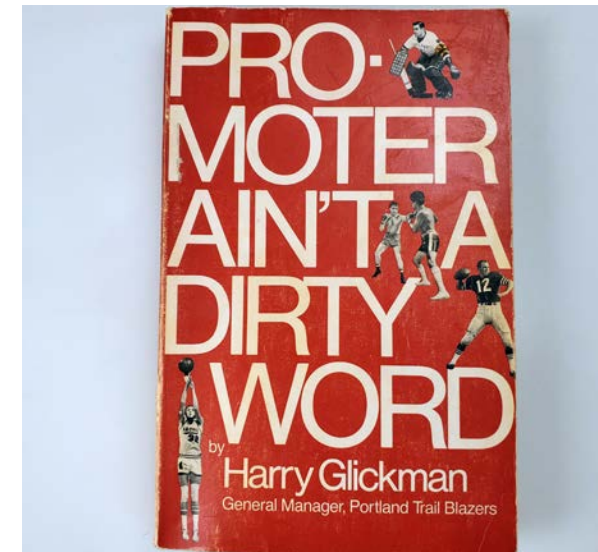
By Nicole Donisi

In Portland, community has always been important to the arts. Few people epitomize this statement like designer Charles Politz. He designed much of the visuals Portlanders saw through the 1960s and 1970s, but his most remarkable legacy may be his mentorship

of younger designers. This approach likely helped pave the way for Portland's collaborative design style. Charles' lifelong interest in art led to his elegant style in graphic design. This style also helped to showcase his subject matter, which was often his native Oregon. Never overly flashy, his designs hint at his affection for the soil he lived on most of his life.

Design Beginnings

When I tracked down one of the first books I could find designed by Charles, I was initially a bit disappointed. At first glance, it seemed it was hardly designed at all. However, the book's subject was the aftermath of the Mount St. Helens eruption. Charles chose to show full spread pictures and accompany it with minimalistic captions in an elegant, non-invasive way. One can really visualize and take in the impact of the blast with this treatment. The design of the book would have likely looked different in the hands of designer who was not from the area.



His love of his city and state showed in all the projects he applied himself to. Amongst the clients and projects were the *Oregon Blue Book*, state tax forms, state centennial celebrations, Multnomah Athletic Club, Portland Opera, City Club and books about the Trail Blazers '77 Championship. Portland area businesses he worked with included Jantzen, Hoffman Construction, Marty Zell & Associates, Salishan Lodge, Museum of Contemporary Crafts, and Legacy Emanuel Hospital. Though many large design firms of the time were thriving on the East Coast, Charles continued to design in Portland and did not venture to a larger metropolis. His friend, native Oregonian Tim Leigh said, "He didn't feel he needed to and besides he lived *here*," gesturing out the window to the waters of John's Landing in Southwest Portland.

Northwest Roots

Charles was born in Portland on Feb. 5, 1923. He graduated from Lincoln High School. As a young man, he showed an early interest in art by heading a cartooning club with notable Portland designer Byron



Far Left: Charles Politz taking a self-portrait, likely shot in the 1960s. Above: Highly popular Portland Trailblazer books published by Timber Press in the late 1970s. Charles was hired to design all three and opted to use striking photography on the covers. Left: Charles surrounded by his work in a photo for his firm, Politz, O' Gogerty and Raskolnikov. The other two chairs remain vacant as their owners were fictional, a joke thought up by Charles.



Ferris. Charles suffered from a stutter and perhaps his aversion to public speaking led him to pursue writing at the School of Journalism at University of Oregon where he graduated in 1945. An article he penned for the *Oregonian* in 1942 explained how his stuttering affected him as a young man, “I developed a morbid fear of reading aloud which hounds me at time to this day. I entered high school with a 7-cent diploma, an all-E report card, and a well-developed stutter. I had all the standard equipment of a grade-A stutterer—enough fears, anxieties and complexes to fill a bureau drawer. I had *telephonics* and *introductionitis*, morbid fears of the telephone and introducing people. These are traits common to all stutterers. My whole life was centered around my speech and what big things I could do if I could only talk.”

While studying at University of Oregon, he contributed written articles to the college publication *Old Oregon*, chronicling educational and political topics. After trying his hand at script writing in Hollywood in the 1950s, Charles returned to his home state.

An Eye for Design

Once back in Portland, one of Charles’s early jobs was as a print shop worker. At this position, he did not have any input into the design of the jobs he was given. When print jobs came in he was to print them as received, no matter how they looked. As a friend put it, “Obviously that didn’t sit too well with him.” With his eye for elegance, one can only imagine how much Charles must have felt the urge to improve the pieces.

In 1947, Charles began his own design firm, which he named Politz, O’Gogerty & Raskilnov (though the only member was himself). Supposedly, he chose the name because it might convey an ethnic and diverse blend to clients. Later in the 1960s, he became a part of Studio 1030, one of Portland’s most successful design firms. He worked alongside other notable Portland designers including Joe Erceg and Bennet Norrbo



Opposite Page: Front of a Studio 1030 sales sheet showcasing Charles’s choice of a colorful child’s drawing for an Oregon elementary school handbook. Top: Back of a Studio 1030 sales sheet describing Charles’s design specialties to potential clients. Above: A committee discusses plans for the 1959 Oregon Centennial. Charles is seen second from the left.

and handled projects for Jantzen, Oregon Elementary Schools, Oregon Historical Society and many others. While at Studio 1030, Charles was asked to curate and design the photography exhibit for the Oregon Centennial. He was specifically asked due to his interest in both photography and architecture. He had become especially interested after a trip to Japan where he took many photographs of the architecture there.

Though never formally trained, Charles had a knack for design that he honed by continual learning, mentorship and exposure to art and culture. Under "Education" on a 1980 resume, Charles wrote only one word: autodidact (self-taught person). A former colleague recalled he would sit at the drafting table with some type and images and just move them around until it looked "right". One client was a tool equipment company and his colleague Tim Leigh recalls that once Charles had a hundred or so small photographs of screws, bolts and tools which he kept moving around until the massive

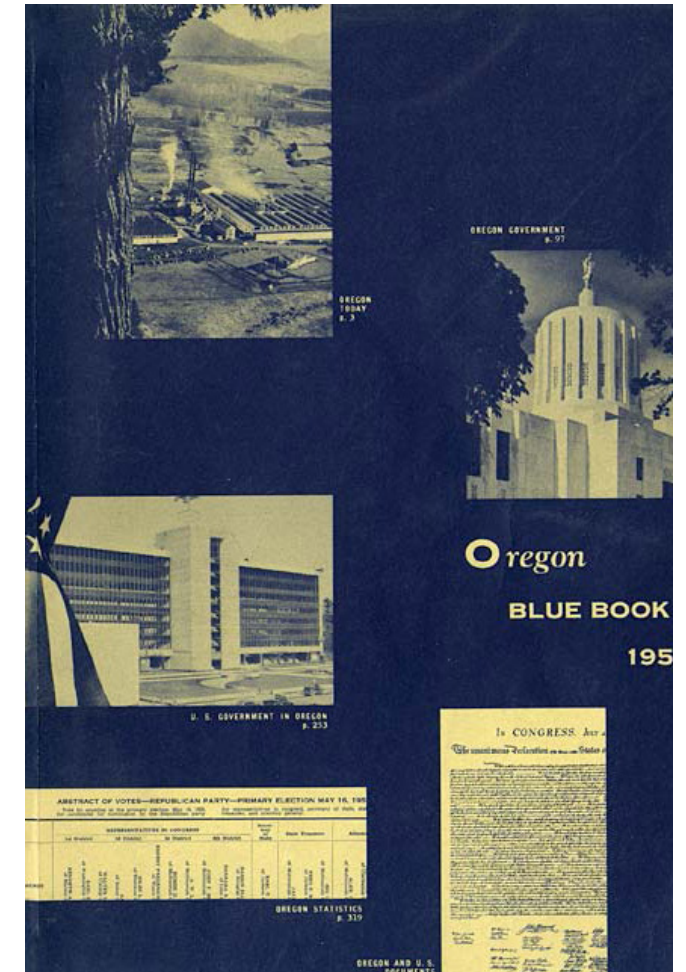
NEW LOOK—Much of the credit for the livelier" makeup of Oregon's 1954 Blue Book is given to Charles Politz of Politz, O'Gogerty & Raskolnikov, Portland advertising consultants, in an article appearing in the October issue of Advertising Requirements, national advertising journal published in Chicago. "The Blue Book has become a colorful promotion piece thanks to the inspiration of admen. The new look was basically the work of Charles Politz," says the magazine.



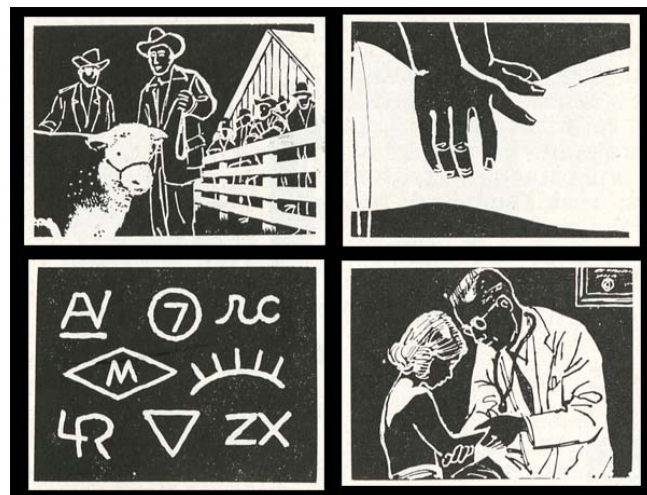
CAPITOL MALL

(1) CAPITOL (5) STATE OFFICE BUILDING
 (2) STATE LIBRARY (6) SUPREME COURT BUILDING
 (3) PUBLIC SERVICE BUILDING (7) AGRICULTURE BUILDING
 (4) HIGHWAY BUILDING (8) HEATING PLANT

The Oregon Blue Book is the state's official almanac and fact book. It contains information on the state, city, county, and federal governments in Oregon, educational institutions, finances, the economy, resources, population figures and demographics. Secretary of State Ben Olcott published the first edition in 1911 in response to an "increased demand for information of a general character concerning Oregon". The primary goal of the book is to help the citizens of Oregon understand and gain access to their government and related institutions. Early editions of the book were available free from the State. By 1937, copies cost 25 cents; in 1981 the book cost \$4. Previous publications to the 1953 edition tended to feature traditional drawings of Oregon scenery on the cover while Charles used a modern design with tinted photography.



Far Top Left: A mention in the Oregonian of the exciting new design for the 1954 edition. Far Bottom Left: Illustrations by Lloyd Allen commissioned by Charles. They feature state commissions: Board of Livestock Auction Markets, Board of Massage Examiners, Livestock Advisory Committee and Board of Medical Examiners. Center: Full photo spread of the capitol in the 1954 Blue Book. Above: Cover of 1954 Oregon Blue Book. Left: Oregonian write-up featuring the new design.



State published Blue Book, issued every two years, has been given real face-lifting for 1954 edition, boasts 455 pages of facts and articles

Oregon's Own Encyclopedia

BY FINITA HOWARD

NEW STATE publications receive as much attention and reader interest in the Oregonian as any other publication. The new Blue Book, Oregon's Own Encyclopedia, is no exception. It is a colorful, up-to-date, and comprehensive reference work for the citizen of Oregon. It contains information on the state, city, county, and federal governments in Oregon, educational institutions, finances, the economy, resources, population figures and demographics. Secretary of State Ben Olcott published the first edition in 1911 in response to an "increased demand for information of a general character concerning Oregon". The primary goal of the book is to help the citizens of Oregon understand and gain access to their government and related institutions. Early editions of the book were available free from the State. By 1937, copies cost 25 cents; in 1981 the book cost \$4. Previous publications to the 1953 edition tended to feature traditional drawings of Oregon scenery on the cover while Charles used a modern design with tinted photography.

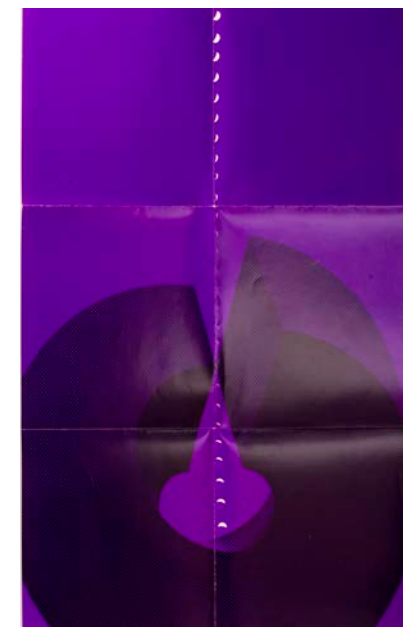
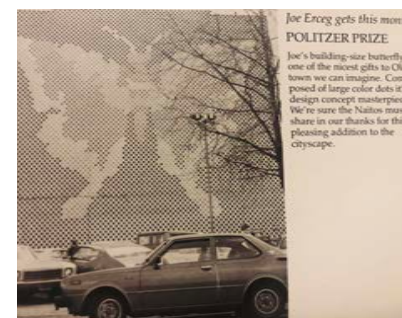
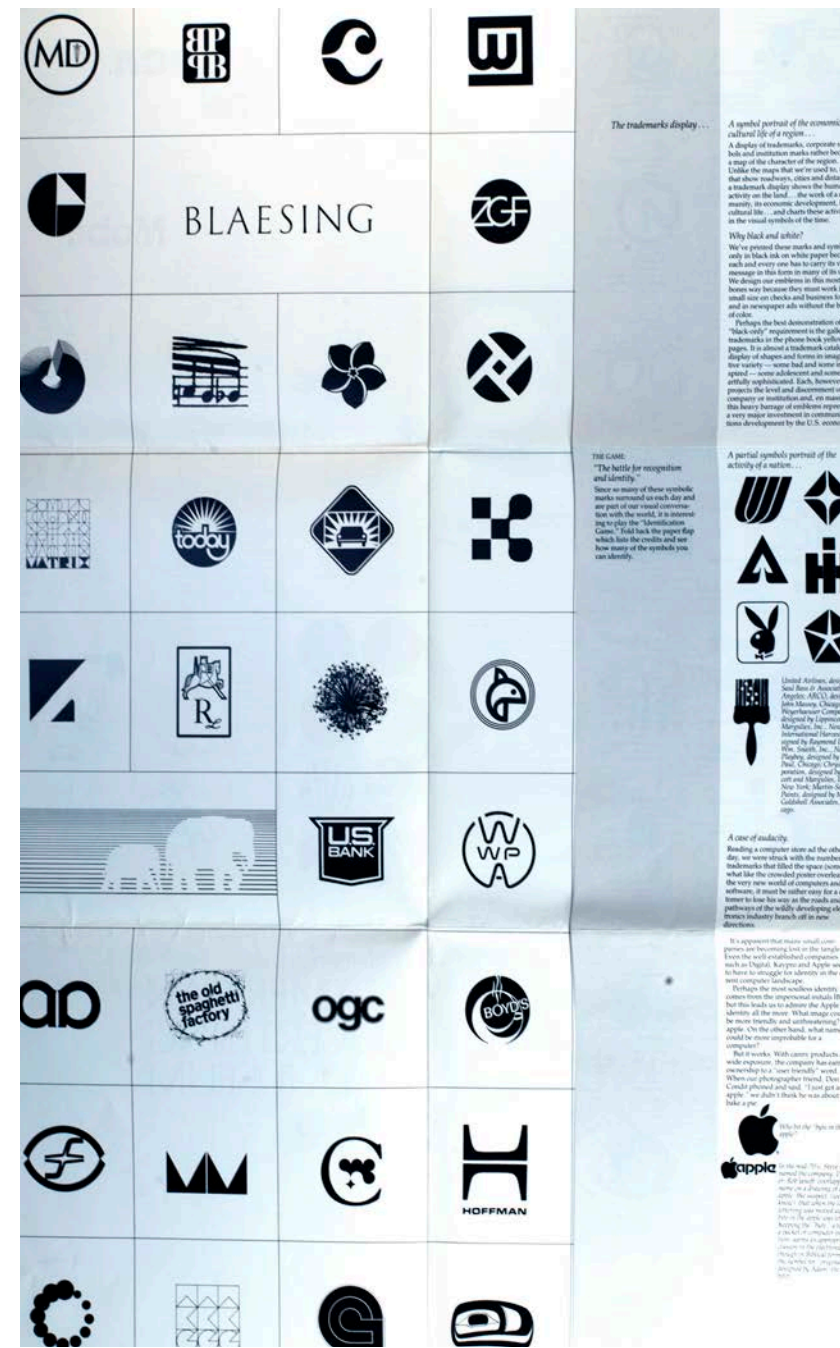
arrangement was to his liking. He didn't always plan designs out with a grid or other tool, he often worked on his intuition. Looking at his cover for the 1954 *Oregon Blue Book* you can really see this approach and imagine him meticulously arranging the photos.

Success and Challenges

In 1977 he became a member of Design Council Inc. (DCI), a cutting edge design group who counted Peter Teel, Byron Ferris and Home Groening among its members. DCI handled many accounts both local and national. Charles designed several wonderful logos while at DCI, including work for Hoffman Construction, Boys & Girls And Society, One Pacific Square, Portland Zoo, Contemporary Crafts Association and Gallery, Blaesing Granite Company and Matrix Associates. He likely contributed to many others as the firm was a group of designers who often collaborated without attribution.

Each quarter, DCI released a newsletter highlighting member achievements, sharing design humor and announcing news. One news item included was the announcement of the winner of the "Politzer Prize", awarding excellent design work in the community. This cheekily named award showed their often absurdist sense of humor.

Despite all of Charles' skills, one challenge Charles faced was pitching designs to clients. He struggled with his stutter when in the spotlight, though friends say it was rarely noticeable in relaxed conversation. However, this never deterred clients. They sought him out for their projects as he was regarded as one of the best designers in Portland, even if it meant waiting patiently while he spoke. His colleague Joan Campf recalls, "If you knew Charles, you knew that he stuttered, and he really suffered from that all his life, but when it got to

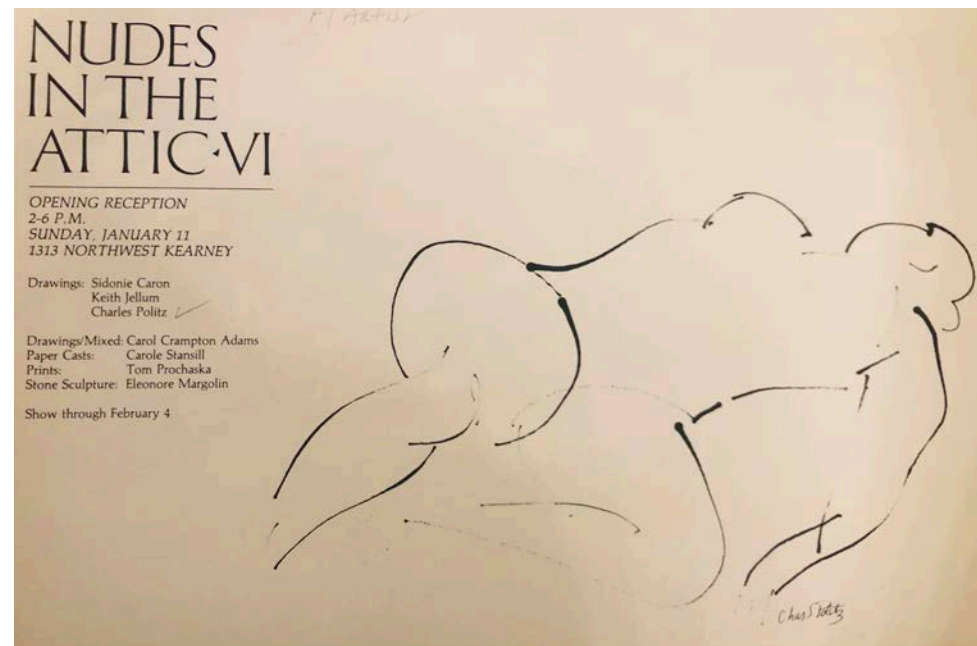


Opposite Page: Two issues of the DCI Quarterly newsletter. Above Left: DCI Quarterly Newsletter featuring logo work by members. Among those by Charles: Hoffman Construction, Matrix Associates and Portland Zoo. Above Right: Back of a DCI Quarterly. Bottom Left: Announcement in a DCI publication of Pulitzer Prize award to Joe Erceg for a downtown mural.

his artwork he never stuttered a bit. It was fluid, and gorgeous, and honest, and real, and it came out of the inside of him. It either came out of the inside of him as a piece of elegance or it came out of the inside of him as a piece of humor. He really could have ended up as a writer, as a really talented writer, but I think that art bug took him down the road.”

Art as a Lifestyle

Charles became involved in design and from there his interest in the arts never wavered. Through his wife, Eiko, he became interested in Asian art which, later in life, inspired his brush paintings of figures. They traveled together to her native Japan and Charles was very inspired by the art and architecture. She was involved in the art community as well and continues to donate gifts to local Portland galleries. Charles continued his interest in photography and drawing, and in the 1970s he began to exhibit his own drawings. In true minimalist elegance, Charles would attempt to reduce the nude figures down to just the essentials, the smallest



number of strokes that still captured the figure's essence. His embrace of culture and fastidiousness with design helped define him as a figure of good taste. He was highly involved in the arts community in Portland, being a member of arts associations and exhibiting his paintings in galleries. He also designed several books for local artists, including a striking one with metallic pages for sculptor Tom Hardy. Over the years, Charles had made a habit of designing a Christmas card for his friends and family. The cards often featured political cartoons or fine art drawings. Charles could have quite a sense of humor and felt free to express himself with the cards each year. These political cartoons showed the complexities of Charles as a person. He practiced

Opposite Page Top: 1976 book featuring Northwest sculptor Tom Hardy. Opposite Page Below: Gallery showcard for Charles's stick-drawn nudes Top: Photograph by Charles showing Mt Hood and the construction of Big Pink reminiscent of the style of Japanese Mt. Fuji paintings.

art as a lifestyle and yet his design career was also commercial. Highly respected in his field, Charles chose to encourage new designers rather than regard them as competition.

Mentor Mentality

Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, Charles often attended Designer's Round Table, a collaborative forum of young designers, and took an interest in their projects. Many older designers of the day would never have shared their secrets with newcomers. This group was comprised mostly of up-and-coming designers of the day and Charles was often invited to give feedback and advice. He was even asked to design their logo.

Tim Leigh recalls how grateful he was to have known Charles in his early designing days, "He was respected and substantial. He defined good taste. We regarded him with wide and admiring eyes indeed. And

do you know what Charles did? From his lofty place, he reached down to us and brought us up. He looked at our portfolios and encouraged us. He took seriously our small efforts and projects. He participated in our groups, offering his skills where they would help. He welcomed us to be with him, and seemed glad when we were. In so many ways, he helped us to recognize ourselves, to find our form and place. It was a precious, invaluable gift."

It was said of Charles that once he went into design, he went all in. That approach included ensuring a future of emboldened Portland designers and for that we can all be grateful. •



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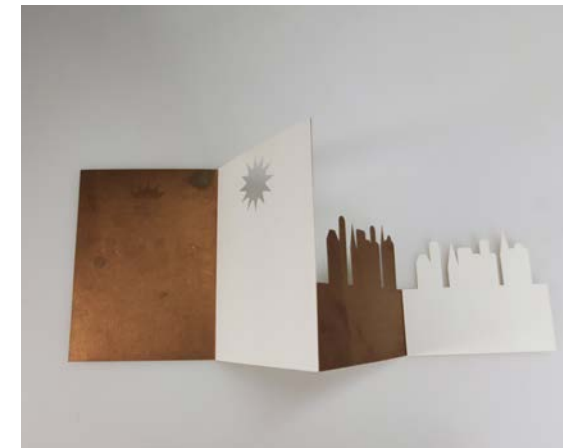
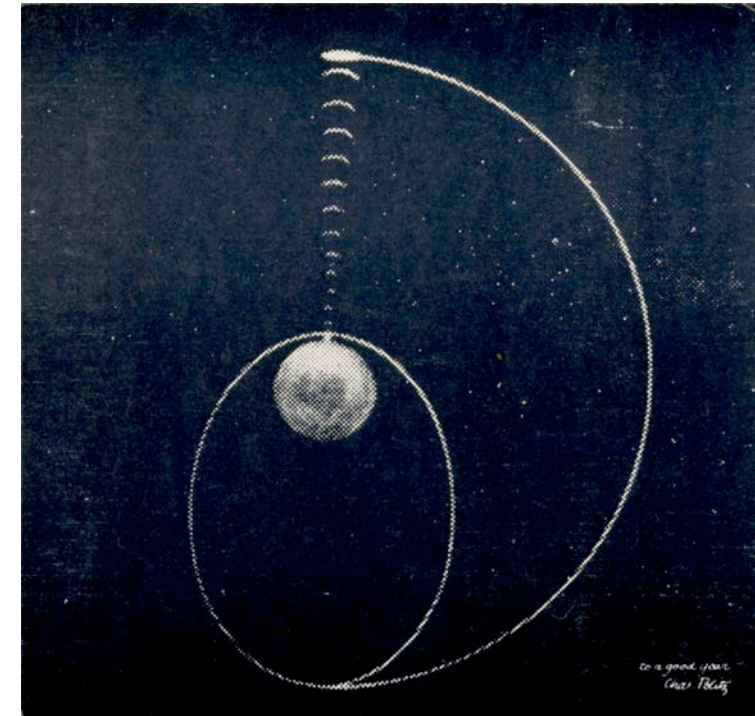
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Above: Various Christmas cards by Charles. Opposite Page: Charles working on a project with Joan Campf.

Wool City

Pendleton's Ads of the Mid 1900s

By Skyler Hayes

Pendleton Woolen Mills—commonly known as Pendleton—is nearly as old as Oregon itself. The seeds of the company were planted in 1863 when Lincoln Kay, a British weaver, moved to the state with his family. After establishing his own mill, the Lincoln Kay Woolen Mill, their roots were set. Years passed, and the tradition carried on through the family to his daughter, Fannie. Eventually, with financing from Fannie, alongside her husband, Charles Bishop, Lincoln's grandsons purchased the wool mill in Pendleton, Oregon in 1909.

The mill was originally built in 1893 and intended for scouring—the cleansing and preparation of wool for safe use. Over the next decade, production expanded to include blanket weaving and bathrobes. The products of the mill found great success with Native Americans and settlers alike. Pendleton saw potential in the designs made by Native Americans and they were happy to trade with the mill.



Though the Pendleton mill faced some financial troubles into the early 1900s, it was saved by the Bishop family and the people of Pendleton. Over the following century, Pendleton Woolen Mills expanded further and further, establishing more mills and products beyond wool alone, including separate men's and women's clothing lines. The local company went national.

In the early years of Pendleton's advertising, the brand relied heavily on the illustration work of Ted Rand. Though he came from Washington, Rand's work impacted Pendleton's advertising campaigns greatly, with his ads running in national publications. The women's sportswear line was relatively new. In 1949, the *49'er Jacket* was released, and exploded in popularity



Left: Spread from Pendleton product book (date unknown).
Right: Cover of Pendleton product book (date unknown).



during the following decade. It can be seen in Rand's advertisements, sporting the latest color palette and pattern to match the seasons. Rand's illustrations cut down to the basics: the model, their clothes, minimal text, and one or two supporting elements. The use of white space focuses the viewer's eye directly to the brightly colored jackets. Later in life, Rand moved away from advertisements to illustrating children's books.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Pendleton worked with advertisement agencies to promote their business across the country. One such agency was Botsford, Constantine & McCarty, a Portland business that hired none other than Thomas Lincoln.

Early in his career, Lincoln was a local Portland designer who constructed ads for Pendleton while working for Botsford. These ads were made for the women's clothing line and featured eight different jackets. They were designed to run in the *New York Times* and *Women's Wear Daily* specifically, among other papers. The themes behind each ad has a unique story. The photoshoots took place in Los Angeles, directed by a

photographer named Peter James Samerjan. The Hollywood location and culture had a heavy influence. Two of the ads featured models on old-timey sets that were rolled out on a moment's notice. Another two were shot in front of a department store, as the women held onto a leashed lamb—symbolizing Pendleton's history with wool. "That's Hollywood for you," quipped Lincoln.

Samerjan brought two of the models all the way from New York. Lincoln added, "One of them was named Margot, and the buzz around the agency was that she was the girlfriend of the famous jazz composer, Quincy Jones." The other model, Cheryl Tiegs, skyrocketed into popularity sometime afterward becoming the most photographed model in the world. In the midst of the *Mad Men* era in New York, flying in models from the hottest city for fashion was a no-brainer.

Hollywood and prestige aside, of the ads designed by Botsford, I found the last two the most striking.

Far Left: 49'er Jacket ad by Ted Rand (1950s).
Top: Clothing ad w/ lamb by Thomas Lincoln (1960s).



These feature models floating in a field of stars, posing as they flaunt Pendleton's jackets under the tagline "Brilliant new fashions born under a great sign". When asked about these ads, Lincoln mentioned he had free creative rein in making them. Specifically, he took inspiration from the recent spike in the public's knowledge of space. Between Sputnik and the moon landing, the stars beyond Earth were all the rage, and the fashion industry was no stranger to keeping up with the times. The space-themed ads were a successful concept.

In designing these ads, Lincoln and the others working for the Botsford agency used a large list of tools and techniques. Most are now outdated with the introduction of digital applications like the Adobe Suite, though there are still some parallels and similarities. Steel rulers, pens, erasers, and X-Acto blades are still in use when designing in the physical world. With the lack of modern technology, however, designers in the 60s relied on things such as drawing boards, brushes, tempera paint, photostats, Veloxes, and rubber cement.

Photostats, or photocopiers as we know them today, produced low cost copies of the photos and art needed for layout. Once layout was complete, they moved onto Velox, which were higher resolution negatives, and ultimately ended up in the print. Likewise, specialized type setters placed text by hand given the specifications made during the layout stage. The rubber cement was a means of 'copying and pasting' proofs. Creating the physical drafts was a multi-person effort, from photostats to layout. According to Lincoln, the process could take up to four weeks.

I spoke to Linda Parker, Pendleton's PR representative, about the company's past. "We constantly resource our archive for product inspiration and for the use of early materials for in-store display," she said. "When we celebrated our Women's 70th Year of Style in 2019, the ads of the past decades helped bring to life the look and feel of that time in our history." It's no question that the ads designed in the last century still have an impact on Pendleton's brand. •



Left: Space-themed ads by Thomas Lincoln (1960s).
Above: 49'er Bronze Jacket ad by Ted Rand (1950s).

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The Vanguard

Cartoonist, Filmmaker and Ad Man, Homer Groening Did it All

By Ash Horn

Homer Groening was a forgotten ad man who was a jack of all trades, and a vanguard of Portland design. Homer worked throughout the 1960s and the 1970s helping to create a foundation of thoughtful advertising. He was born December 30, 1919 in Canada to a German-speaking Mennonite family. Homer's family moved to Oregon sometime when he was in grade school. Homer got a degree in English at Linfield College in McMinnville. This was also where he met his future wife Margaret Wiggum. Her family called her Marge.

Throughout his life, Homer loved film, sports, making people laugh, and anything to do with water. In college Homer was a part of Linfield's basketball and swim teams. However, in Homer's own words, "I wasn't a jockhead. The best way to get girls it seemed to me was to get them to laugh." He also had a passion for drawing cartoons and writing stories. Homer had a knack for experimenting with different ways to make advertisements. He had a talent for connecting humorous concepts with products in order to make their advertisements more memorable.



After graduating from Linfield College in 1941, Homer married Margaret, and became an airplane pilot, flying a B-17 during WWII. After the war, Homer got into advertising by answering a want ad. He started as a production assistant, and developed a reputation for his unusual approaches to advertising. After his presence was known in the business, the Korean War began and Homer went off to fight. During his time in Korea, Homer became infatuated with filmmaking, and upon returning home he went back to advertising with his newfound passion.

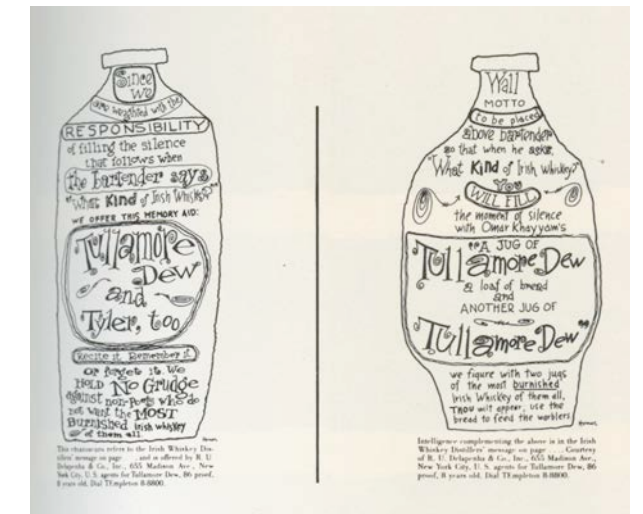
While working for Portland ad agency Botsford, Constantine & Gardner, Botsford for short, he became a family man when Margaret had their first child. With Marge busy at home with the new family, Homer began his rise in the advertising world. Botsford had an Idaho account, and Homer made Idaho potatoes famous, even suggesting a branding tagline on Idaho auto license plates. During his time at Botsford, Homer also worked as an account exec on Jantzen, and became unhappy with how Botsford ran its ads. An unpublished essay about Homer by his friend and colleague Byron Ferris describes this further, "Up to the late 1950s, ad making was 'show and tell,' show the product and tell about how good it was. But the public had changed. New generations had traveled overseas during the war years... and advertisers with full pockets and new customer attitudes were willing to take a chance on new ideas." Homer was ready to usher in that change.

Homer's Ascent in Advertising

In 1958, Homer decided to branch out by entering a national contest to produce an ad for KGW-TV, a new Portland TV station. This is when he made one of his most well-known print ads, which depicts a naked woman complaining about, "You and your damn total television." The ad was never run, but Homer won the contest and a new car. After that venture Ho-

mer left Botsford and opened a one-man shop, Homer Groening Advertising, in a small office in the Executive Building, across from what is now Pioneer Square, on the sixth floor. Homer's first self published ads were hand-drawn cartoons, but soon he needed a qualified art director for more production. Byron Ferris, an avid designer, was in an adjacent office and they teamed up. Each morning they would have a conference about the day's work. With Byron on board Homer Groening Advertising became a full-fledged advertising agency.

The 1950s and 1960s was when Homer did the majority of his illustrative advertisements. In addition to Byron Ferris, Homer worked alongside Charles Politz, and a variety of other designers. Byron Ferris won two graphic design awards while he was associated with the Homer Groening Advertising agency later, Homer Groening Inc. Throughout the 1960s, his work was published in the *Oregonian* regularly. He helped make



Left: Homer was an avid filmmaker as well as a graphic designer. Above: "Tullamore Dew Ad" A print ad made by Homer that ran in multiple magazines like *Communication Art's* September/October edition 1966.

films and illustrations for companies like Jantzen and helped Peg Bracken with her *I Hate to Cook Book*. Byron and Homer also worked together to publish a comic strip called *Phoebe, Get Your Man*. On top of that, he helped Jantzen transition from a swimwear only brand into one of the most popular sportswear brands of the 70s.

The story of the Homer Groening Advertising agency truly begins when Jantzen moved their account to Homer's shop. Bruce Strum, the Jantzen sales manager, invited Homer to the Jantzen team, which linked Jantzen swim suits and sportswear to nationally honored players. One of the first projects was to photograph the Los Angeles Rams all lined up on the bleachers wearing Jantzen sweaters. The ad appeared in *Life*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Playboy*, and *The New Yorker*. The Rams got national exposure and the players got to keep the sweaters, the first sports endorsement perk. According to Byron Ferris, "The Jantzen International Sports Club became an advertising entity and Bruce and Homer invited diverse sportsmen on summer trips to Hawaii and Jamaica to be photographed together wearing Jantzen. The famous sports heroes got free vacations for their in-



volvement. On occasion the Club assembled at Tom Kelly's photo studio in L.A. for ad shots just because they liked each other and the fame that came with the ads." These ads typically included a paragraph of copy. The mood of creative advertising at the time was to find a single intriguing idea and produce a simple message based on a human and striking communication, but Homer enjoyed writing and said, "If you write a long copy ad that people will read they will spend more time on your message." In 1962, Homer published his "Seattle Space Needle" advertisement for the *Oregonian*, and the ad was put into *The New Yorker* later the same year. The copy for the ad was written by Homer, the illustration was created by Rowland Emmett, and the overall design of the ad was a collaboration between Homer and Byron. Still early on in his career, Homer submitted some of his work into the *Communication Arts* maga-

Above: "Will the Space Needle Unscrew?" A collaborative print ad by Homer Groening, Rowland Emmett, and Byron Ferris which was published in the *New Yorker* April 28, 1962. Left: "Jantzen Sweater Ad" Homer wrote the copy and took the photo used in this advertisement published in *Life* 1955.



Bottom row (left to right): Les Richter, Rams; Kyle Rote, Giants; Doak Walker, Lions; Johnny Lattner, Steelers; Chuck Bednarik, Eagles. Second row: Bob Boyd, Rams; Y. A. Tittle, 49ers; Len Ford, Browns; Bill Stiles, Lions; Pete Pihos, Eagles; Jerry Gross, Cardinals. Third row: Dante Lavelli, Browns; Eddie Price, Giants; Skeet Quinan, Rams; Roger Zatkoff, Green Bay Packers; Adrian Burk, Eagles. Top row: Leon McLaughlin, Rams; Ollie Matson, Cardinals; Art Donovan, Colts; Harlin Hill, Bears; Bruno Banducci, 49ers; Ed Sprinkle, Bears.

Cast: the Pro All-Stars...colors by Jantzen

zine, a well-known informational about graphic design and business advertising. The magazine published three pages about Homer in a September/October edition.

The Flicks That Should Have Been Famous

According to *The First*, a well-known film catalog, "Homer Groening shoots, writes, directs, edits, and sometimes narrates his own films." Early in his relationship with Jantzen, Homer went to Hawaii with his wife Marge in June of 1960. At the sendoff party, friends and coworkers of Homer's dressed in tacky fake grass skirts, leis, and straw hats. While in Hawaii he filmed "Surf" which was used in Jantzen ad campaigns, and was later shown in theaters in California and Washington. This marked the first time he would go to Hawaii to film, but certainly not the last.

Another of Homer's achievements was his involvement in the Portland Pops concert in 1962. In an avant-garde performance, Homer hosted and narrated over the musical score "Carnival of Animals," conducted by John Trudeau. The *Oregonian* published several articles advertising the event, and one review which called for an encore. Homer's film *Timberline* was also released in 1962 which depicts stunning shots of Mt. Hood and the surrounding Oregon forests. *Timberline* was one of Homer's first films focusing on the beautiful nature that Oregon has to offer. It is also the first time Homer's films talk about how important environmental conservation is.

In 1966, "Man and His World" was released. It depicts three minutes of a soccer player bouncing the ball while Homer narrates about mankind and world peace. Throughout the following years Homer's film career took off and multiple articles were written about him in the *Oregonian*. This is because in 1964 he made his most popular film, *Study in Wet* which won multiple international awards by 1966. The film depicts different scenes of water with a musical score that is also made by



Top: "Pops Concert Informal" This image is from an article that advertised the Pops concert and had a brief interview with the conductor published in the *Oregonian* June 11, 1962. Above: Titled, "Ad Man Talks to Rabbit in Preparation for Pops Concert". Homer talked to a rabbit as part of the Animal Circus bit that he performed during the Pops concert. An article about him preparing for this piece was published in the *Oregonian* April 23, 1962.

the sounds of water. It was so common to read reports about his achievements in the *Oregonian* that one article stated, "Groening won some more awards (ho-hum)."

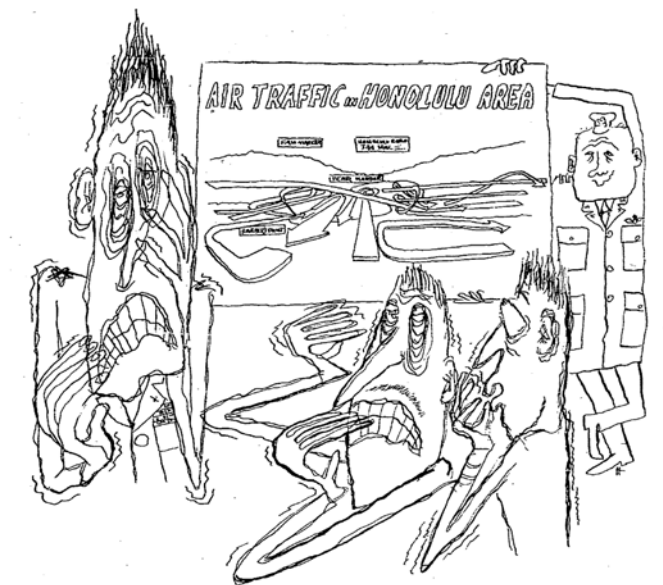
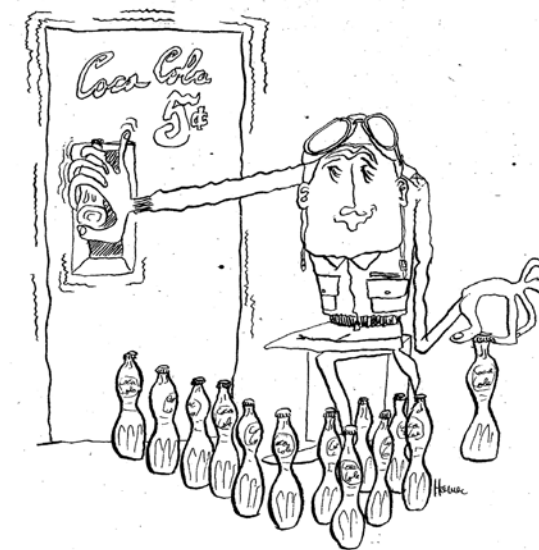
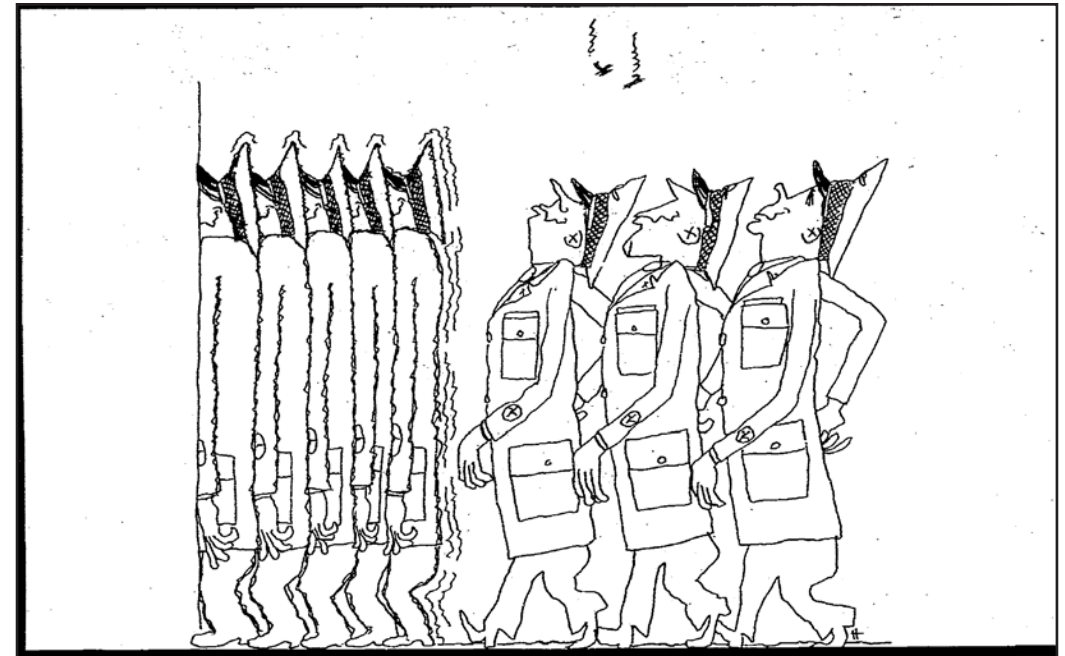


Philosophy and Influence

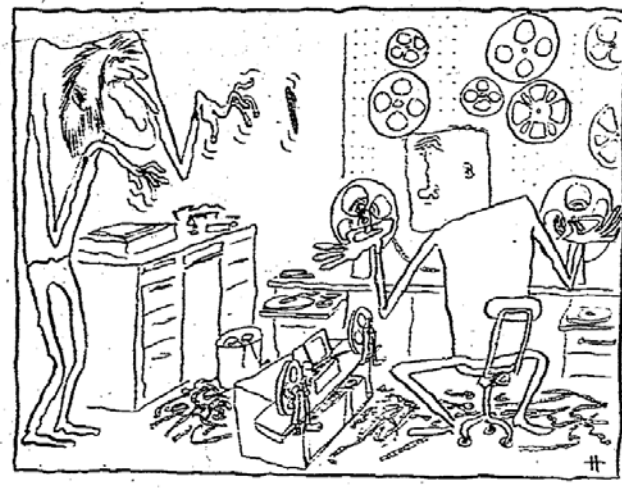
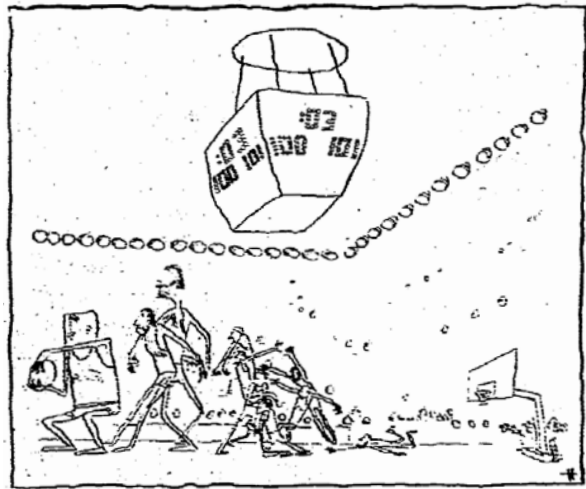
Between 1965 and 1969 Homer started to do interviews for the *Oregonian* about his creative process. In one article titled "Portland's Zany Ad Man," Homer shared his philosophy, "I've come to the conclusion that what I'm really after is fatigue, if I have my spare time, I schedule myself so I'm pooped... The idea in painting is not to cover the wall, but to empty the can." This look into his creative process truly defines him as an artist. Homer's mentality of making work until he can't anymore is a mantra which he seemingly used in business as a whole.

Homer's influence became abundantly clear to me when I sat down with Loren Weeks who started as a graphic designer in the 70s. We went through a little bit of Homer's design work and Loren immediately started to discuss the iconic advertisements that Homer would make. He stated that the majority of Homer's work would be loose linework with thin strokes and clever copy overlaid. During the interview, Loren recalled one of Homer's many Groening-isms "One of Homer's best lines was, "To make a good movie, it either has to be

short or funny' and that really sums it up." This shows Homer's ability to hone in on attention-grabbing advertisements. Clearly one of the fundamental qualities of Homer's ads was to keep it short. A short advertisement means that there isn't much a client could change, and the artist's intent would be shown throughout the ad. For many designers, there is a struggle to find a medium between making something that they like, and making something a client wants. The other fundamental quality of Homer's work, besides keeping it brief, was to make it humorous, and good luck to the client who tries to be funnier than a Groening, especially Homer.



Opposing Page Left: "Film Award Announced" Photo of Homer in Hawaii used for an article about Homer's latest film in the *Sunday Oregonian* May 21, 1967. Opposing Page Right: "Groening" *Communication Arts* September/October edition 1966. This Page: "War Stories At 20,000 Feet" Illustrations by Homer from his short story in the *Sunday Oregonian* February 8, 1976.



Another person who I talked to about Homer was fellow filmmaker Richard Blakeslee. He says, “When I first started working in the film business in Portland, in 1966 at Northwestern, Inc., the editor there, Al Montolvo, was helping Homer with one of his short films. Immediately I was enthralled and knew that was what I wanted to do. His shorts were funny, personal and wildly entertaining... So in some ways Homer was responsible for getting me started.” This illustrates Homer’s significant influence within the local film community.

Richard informed me that Homer had a 35mm Bell and Howell Eyemo camera that he would lend out at no charge. This generosity shows Homer’s support to other’s creative endeavors. Richard also recalled that, “He had his advertising agency [filled] with awards leading down the hall. Kind of intimidating for a young filmmaker.”

From the Top of the World to Forgotten

Well-known in his field, Homer showed some of his works at the Caroline Berg Swann Auditorium, Portland Art Museum. Homer won his eleventh CINE Golden Eagle award, an award given out to American films that are shown at European film festivals, for his film *The New Willamette* which was made originally for Oregon Governor Tom McCall’s campaign to clean up waterways. The film was sponsored by the Army Corps of Engineers, and depicts Tom McCall and renowned



Homer at work. He’s the one with his back turned

Top: “How the Trail Blazers and I Won the Championship” Illustrations that Homer made for the first page of his story in the Sunday Oregonian May 9, 1976. Left: “Oregon’s Ace Movie Maker” A photo of Homer captioned by himself filming in Hawaii for an article that he wrote about his film career for the Sunday Oregonian July 29, 1973.

fisherman Jim Conway enjoying the Willamette. The film discusses the dangers of pollution while elegantly displaying shots of the river.

In 1973, Homer created a 28 minute-long film titled *Linfield Revisited* which he narrates. Throughout the film Homer talks with Linfield staff and students about campus life, athletics, and education. Through the camera lens, he captures the thriving diversity that Linfield College offered.

On November 13, 1975, Ted Mahar, a well-known *Oregonian* writer, Portland film critic, and jazz enthusiast wrote an article about Homer’s new film: *Introduction to the Parry Center Portland Oregon*. The article explains the purpose of the Parry Center, which is to help children get the support that they need when dealing with trauma. At the end of the article it states, “Homer’s films are slickly made, clever and often whimsical. It’s nice to see that he can cover a dramatic situation matter-of-factly, sympathetically and without irrelevant sentimentality.” Ted Mahar describes one truly amazing thing about Homer: the fact that he can tackle any subject, that he puts his heart and his mind to. From abstract, to sporty to informative, it is clear that Groening’s creative range allowed for him to succeed as a filmmaker.

1976 was a big year for Homer. On February 6th his writings and non-commercial art was published in the *Oregonian*. The article he wrote was titled “War Stories At 20,000 Feet,” and it took up three full-page spreads. The wonderfully-crafted tale recounts Homer’s war experiences in a wild way that only he could imagine. Then in April, he wrote an article under the “Modern Times” column called “Avoiding the Swamp.” The short story is about morality and how Homer would find different ways out of trouble. Sometime in May, Homer was on *The Lucky Jim Adventure Show*, a fishing series. This particular episode was about how to catch bass, as well as fishing on Lake Mead near Las Vegas, Nevada. Homer was in another episode in July, about

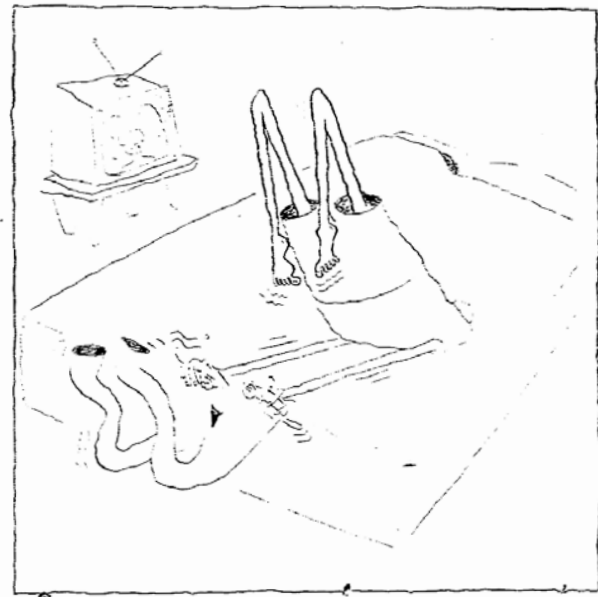
fishing summer-run steelhead on the Kalama River in Washington. Earlier that month, he got another story featured in the *Oregonian* titled, “How the Trail Blazers and I Won the Championship.” Although he loved basketball, this was a work of fiction complete with Homer’s classic witty humor. In the story Homer vividly illustrates how he and his coworker Norton Borrno —most likely a fictionalized version of Bennet Norrbo, who was a colleague and friend to Homer— rig up a contraption that makes it seem like objects are levitating, and how they use this device to help shoot hoops for the Portland Trail Blazers during the championship game. A year later the real Trail Blazers went on to win the actual championship.

In 1977 Homer put together a presentation of short films including his piece *The New Willamette*. The films all had the common theme of being about Oregon, and were shown at the Garden Club. Then in March of 1978 the *Oregonian* published another article about one of his films. This time the film is about global ecosystem conservation, and the importance of—you’ve probably guessed it—water as a natural resource. The title of the work is called *Blue Rock* and was filmed in a variety of Oregon locations.

Throughout his life, Homer won multiple awards for his films and for his art. Despite this, he was largely forgotten about due to the lack of documentation during the era. The closest Homer has come to fame is his namesake, Homer Simpson, which his son, *The Simpsons* creator Matt Groening, lovingly named the doughnut-loving father on his hit cartoon sitcom. Before you get any ideas, the correlations between the two Homers ends there. Despite the lack of remembrance for his work Homer was able to do what he loved for a very long time, and that is something I think most creative people hope for. Homer’s work also became part of the bedrock for designers to follow. His design choices created the groundwork that inspired other Portland designers for years to come.

By the end of his life, Homer had well over forty films with themes ranging from sports, education, advertisements, environmental conservation, and water. His last film, which his son Matt helped him create, was of Homer facing away from a basketball hoop and shooting balls backwards into the basket without looking. This was a trick shot that he mastered long ago during his time in college. Overall Homer was a witty, kind hearted, humorous man, with a passion for film and a love for the water.

Oregonian writer Jack Berry said it best, "A man who does a number of different things is rare in this era and a man who does several things well is almost unheard of. Ad man, cartoonist, writer, consummate talker (sometimes under formal, speech-making circumstances), basketball player, skin diver, pilot and movie maker Homer Groening is one such." •



Top: "First, you have to wake up..." Illustration Homer did for a short story published in the *Sunday Oregonian* March 28, 1976. Above: "Butler On the House" a prize the Groening family won by bidding on an auction item from the *Oregonian Ad Club* December 10, 1957. Right: Ad for the Benson Hotel with copy written by Homer 1966.

THE BENSON income tax assistance plan

offered by the Benson hotel for those who keep income tax diaries*

ALAS, expense account dinners are not what they used to be, even if you sell a war surplus PT boat fleet over broiled Columbia river salmon, or corner the radish market during hot apple pie.

HOWEVER, we of the Benson must help it seem what it used to be. We run what is perhaps the finest hostelry in Western civilization; our philosophy is dedicated to make guests connoisseurs of indolence, and we are skilled at making him bed down, cat, and revel in such luxury that he will forget he has a home.

ACCORDINGLY, we are saving space for you in the "Benson business transaction document-menu." This is how it works. Say that you want to discuss the sale of a Miami tv station or a paperback biography of Tars Tarkas, Jeddak of Thark. What better plan than to meet your prospective buyer miles from interruption?

FOR INSTANCE, why not at the Benson hotel in Portland, Oregon? (You will find it on the map directly west of Ottawa.) Politically unemotional atmosphere, gentle winds, lovely green hills nearby, leaping trout; idyllic hotel. You meet in the London Grill, an eating room that always wins the Holiday magazine award for being the London Grill.

YOU MAY SAY, "Would you really go to all that trouble for the IRS?" Only indirectly for them; our attention is directed to the discerning traveler who recognizes impeccable hotel service. For him we do anything.

Joseph Burnis Callihan
BOOKKEEPER

NO plan your next expense account trip with confidence. Send us the diary information that the Internal Revenue Service requires and let us know when you are coming; we will have your menu waiting.

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO is send a letter telling us what you want on the menu document. To keep them from tracing you we will print only your initials. You can sign your name after you broach the deductible subject. If you can't manage to get to the Benson to pick up your personal menu, we will help bulk up your records.

THE SUBJECT is brought up. You have what they call in selling circles an "opening." Not only that, but you have another document to place in your income tax diary satchel. Our maitre d'hotel will notarize the menu, if you wish.

You ask for the menu and there, for both of you to see in the bulletin board section of the menu, is your message: "MIAMI TELEVISION STATION CAN BE HAD. I.W." Or "I AM NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEBTS OF" and so on.

You can see what happens.

Illustration by Rowland Emmett Wild Ginn Cottage Ditching, Sussex

*For the "Education of MBORRTSMBRER CRABPBLRBN" as one payer wrote on his file.

THE BENSON HOTEL Portland, Oregon
a Western International Hotel
local of the London Grill, Trader Vic's, and the London Bar
For reservations call Western International sales offices in New York PL 2-5600, Boston 267-1145, Chicago ST 2-5835, Minneapolis 644-1413, San Francisco EX 7-7000, Los Angeles DR 2-9064

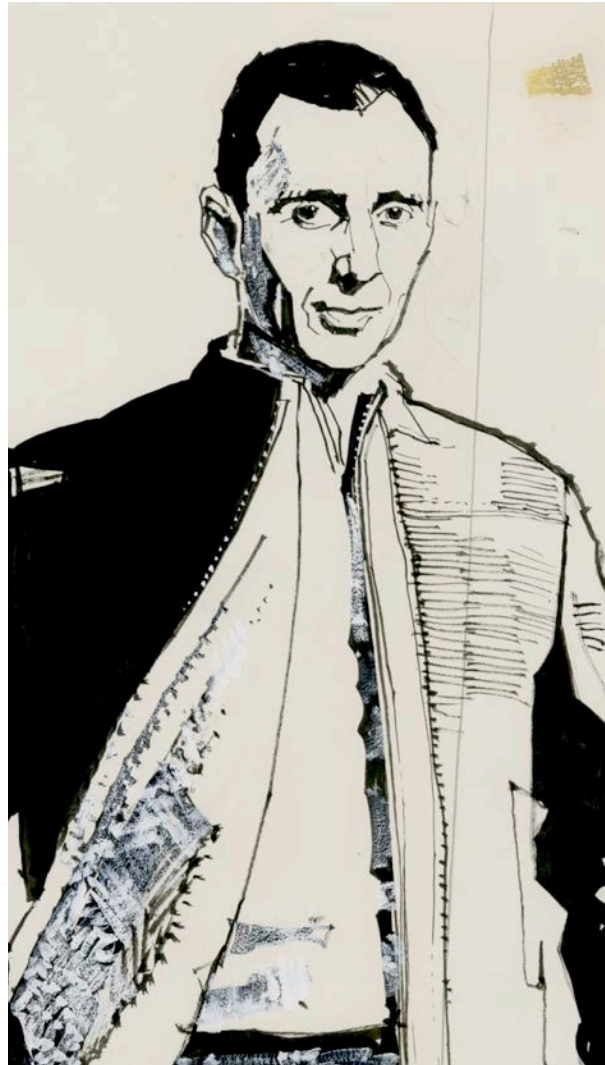
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Naughty & Nice

Bennet Norrbo's Illustrative Past

By Naomi Likayi



While admiring the mirrors and artwork on the walls of a Portland Pearl District art gallery bathroom, I saw one of Bennet Norrbo's paintings hanging over the sink. I knew it had to be his work because of his painting style, his color use and the angular style of his line drawings. The reddish ochre hues against the light blue sky complemented each other with a white cat as the focal point. I walked from the gallery to the entrance of Katayama Framing and was introduced to Marilyn Murdoch. She was a close friend of Norrbo's until his death, and I was here to conduct an interview with her about his life and artwork.

Bennet Norrbo was known as one of the greatest illustrators in Portland during the 1960s. He was a freelance illustrator at Studio 1030, a reputable design agency host to many talents shaping the Portland design scene. He later worked at Douglas Lynch and Associates, and his peers can vouch for his spectacular talent. Norrbo later transitioned out of the commercial art world, into fine art as a gallery artist. His medi-



um varied from oils to acrylics in the two-dimensional sphere and had a chance to experiment with sculpting and film-making. As one of Portland's social darlings, he was one of the highest-grossing gallery artists in town. He made a huge impression on those who were in his circle. The artist was known for having a unique temperament and would shift between being naughty and nice.

Early Years and Influences

He was born as Bennet R. Norrbo in Minneapolis, Minnesota on June 28, 1930. The family name "Norrbo" was uniquely created by his father and isn't found elsewhere in his lineage. Bennet was born to Swedish immigrant parents and was the only child. The family moved to Portland, OR and he stayed there for the rest of his life. In conducting my research, Bennet had a passion for the fine arts as far back as high school. He attended Beaverton Union High School and would often enter competitions such as the Scholastic Arts Contest. As his talent progressed he won the Gold Key

Medal Award and had his art displayed at the Meier & Frank store. He won a full-year scholarship to the Art Center Associate school in Kentucky. Later on, he went to a San Francisco art school before attending the Museum Art School back in Portland (currently known as PNCA). There he met future fellow Studio 1030 artists, Joe Erceg and Tom Lincoln who were also students. As a freelance illustrator at Studio 1030, Bennet had the chance to illustrate for big brands like Pendleton, Jantzen, Reed College and Georgia-Pacific.

Like most illustrators and artists, Bennet had figures who inspired his art style, as he was growing into his own. Nationally renowned artists such as Ben Shawn and David Stone Martin were among his influences.

Left: Sketch of Bennet Norrbo for Jantzen jackets. Above: Studio 1030 pamphlet, Bennet pictured on top row, third from the left.



Studio 1030 alum and exceptional graphic designer in his own right. I inquired about what he remembered and he shed light on Bennet's process. "In those days Bennet, like most illustrators, kept a scrap file of every imaginable subject that struck their fancy as reference material: pages from magazines, mostly. There were no stock photo houses in those days, no Internet where one could google any particular subject, so the scrap images could occupy an entire file cabinet and saved a lot of time and leg work going to the local library for reference." Sometimes coworkers at Studio 1030 would model for each other, or themselves. Bennet was also a model in one of his own illustrations, where he used his face as part of a Jantzen jacket advertisement.



Martin was known for his illustrations on Jazz albums in the early 60s and Shahn founded the Social Realism movement. From colleague Tom Lincoln's observation, their influence on Bennet's work is demonstrated by their similar mark-making. The very sharp and angular and skirted lines are an indicator. Bennet also drew from his Swedish heritage, by studying illustrated Swedish fables and whimsical books.

Illustration Process

We currently live in an age where images are quickly compiled together sourced through stock photos and Pinterest boards at our disposal digitally. During the 60s as an illustrator, the process was more analog. I had a chance to write back and forth with Tom Lincoln, a



From Commercial to Fine Art

Regardless of the fact that Bennet was succeeding as a commercial illustrator, he made a shift away from that type of work and devoted himself more fully to fine art. Despite leaving the commercial art industry, Bennet was still very successful in the fine art world. He was represented by Gallery West and had multiple juried and invitational exhibitions in various galleries, a few of them being Dorothy Cabot Best, Art Quake Invitational, White Bird and several others listed in his resumé. His paintings are a part of many public and private collections as well. His fine art often featured whimsical scenes of cats or women. The compositions were playful and full of movement. The colors were often warm hues, and he aligned oranges, blues and reds. One of Bennet's favorite paintings shows a scene outside a movie theater. The red and orange hues dominate the painting, with a dark outline around the shape



Opposite Page Left: Benet Norrbo self portrait. Opposite Page Right: Pendleton Illustrations done by Benet Norrbo. Top: Illustrations done for Jantzen Jackets. Bottom right: Painting done by Benet Norrbo.



of the subjects as well as in them. This painting is important to Bennet because it shows him and his family going to a movie theater before moving to Portland. This documented a sweet moment in his family life that had the only painted image of his mom.



Bennet's sense of humor and his liveliness were infused in many of his paintings and supplemental work. Despite being out of the commercial industry, Bennet published books and zines, one of them being, *The Pittock Mansion Through the Ages*. The zine is a fictional history of the Pittock Mansion on cream-colored pages and in his simple inked illustration style. Bennet purely injects his whimsy and quirkiness all throughout the book with the mansion shape-shifting and encountering odd guests. One story that struck me was the drawing of the mansion under US Army camouflage netting during World War I in order to hide from the Germans. At one point the camouflaged mansion had to be reexamined after "being considerably gnawed away by muskrats," according to the caption.

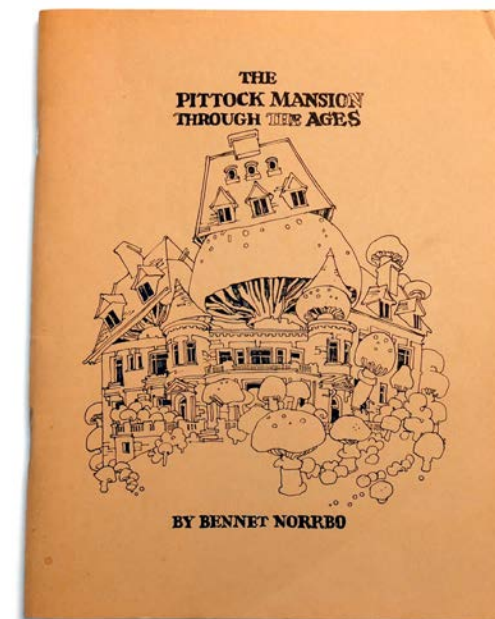
Dual Personality

Marilyn met Bennet post-commercial art career and they became good friends. She had heard of the artist's work, but says, "I had mistakenly thought he passed away. But, found out that he actually was alive. But the story got back to him, so he came to prove to me that he was alive and kicking. Then we just started seeing each other on a monthly basis." From there came a friend-

ship lasting 8-10 years. "I found him to be entertaining because he was so honest. You know honesty is a big thing with me and he was like a stand-up comedian he was very funny and I liked his humor, so it was fun to be with him."

With Bennet's impeccable talent as an artist, it's often said that he had two sides to him or two personali-

ties. Even though Bennet's star sign is a Cancer, Marilyn strongly believed that his Gemini-Cancer cusp had an influence on his personality. There was a self-portrait of Bennet lying next to the cabinet of Marilyn's archived work. The painting with a dark maroon background has Bennet wearing a light blue shirt holding a paint brush. "That picture divides between light and dark right down the middle. His daytime personality was very shy. [He] didn't like to leave the house, didn't want to talk to people," Marilyn explained. His shyness is further emphasized in an archived story from the *Beaverton Times* on Bennet. One of the lines in the article says, "If, on one of the rare occasions when he attends an opening, Norrbo is cornered by an admirer asking what his paintings 'mean' he will mumble something and quickly escape." It seemed as if flimsiness was a reoccurring theme in dealing with people in both his



Top and Bottom Left: Illustrations for an unidentified project by Bennet Norrbo. Left: Cover for *The Pittock Mansion Through the Ages*.

commercial and gallery art careers. But Marilyn rounded out her sentence explaining the painting, “That dark background is what he did at night ... on the town. He was doing naughty things.” By that, she meant that he would frequent shady spots such as brothels and strip clubs as well as engage in heavy drinking. With such extremes of his personality, Bennet was said to be both shy and timid, but on the flip side was performative and humorous. From the outside eye, the juxtaposing sides between light and dark were hard to manage.

That darkness seemed to be responsible for him walking out of the commercial art industry. Colleagues noticed it too. Joe Erceg was a good friend of Bennet’s as well as a coworker at Studio 1030. In an archived interview, Joe explains Bennet’s temperament while working alongside him. “It made him nervous to work on commercial jobs. Eventually he quit doing it because his stress was too great, so he just continued his painting. He didn’t have a long and rich career as a commercial illustrator, because he just didn’t want to go through that. He worked on a few jobs for me, and he probably did illustrations for every designer in town before he just stopped.” Bennet maintained contact with Joe until his death as well as Charles Politz, another 1030 alum whom he was very fond of. Marilyn echoed the same

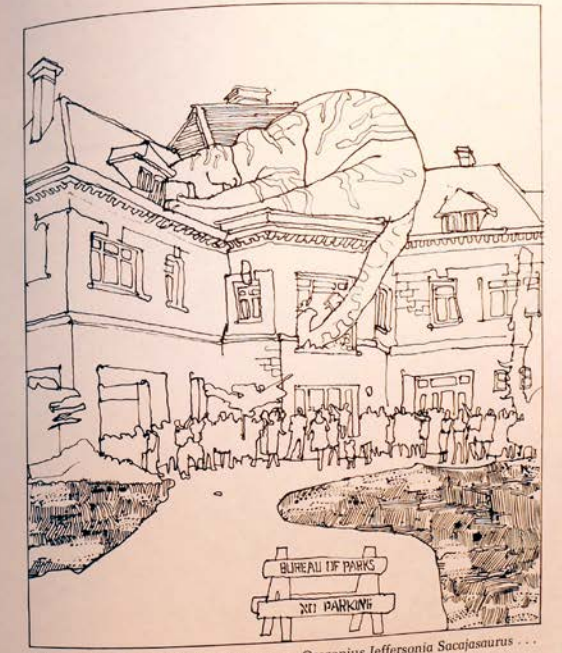


sentiment during our interview on why the commercial industry wasn’t meant for him. “He couldn’t take the pressure of talking with clients, it drove him nuts, he really just had a hard time talking to people. And they worked as independents as far as I know—I think that’s what drove him out, his shyness not being able to face people and be serious.”

Another facet of his darker personality was his relationship with women. Since he was naughty, he liked painting naughty women. In his life, Bennet never mar-



Following Day: Sacajasaurus Saves the World.



After 175 years of Scientific Conjecture: Oregonius Jeffersonia Sacajasaurus ... Asleep in the Sun.

ried, had children or officially settled down. He had a flirtatiousness towards women in work and life, and could be very bold and exhibitionist depending on the setting. Marilyn shares one story as an example. It was the grand opening of p:ear, an artistic mentoring program devoted to homeless youth working and learning art on NW 6th and Flanders, and Bennet and Marilyn attended. The plan was to introduce the director of p:ear to Bennet as he would eventually help mentor the kids in the future. “So they invited me to this event. It was a black-tie event, everybody, really dressed up Bennet was a bit out of place and wore tweed jacket. So we sat down and he was already drunk. Well I should say high, but continued to drink. And it was such a display. There are women going by, and these are West Hills wealthy women, and he grabs one and put her on his lap and said, ‘I want a lap dance.’” I gasped and couldn’t help but laugh as Marilyn related the story. “I’m not kidding!” Marilyn assured. The farce did not fly well with Marilyn and she threatened to leave if he did it again. “You do that one more time and I’m leaving you. He did that one more time.. and I left, ‘You find your own way home!’”

Believing in Endings

Bennet never was able to reconcile his two sides, and he created an alias for his darker work, Joe Hat. Bennet’s mother didn’t want him to disrespect the family name with his seedier artworks. The work was often suggestive and didn’t sell as well compared to pieces attached to his name. Those pieces would be sold at the Omni gallery. In one of his paintings, there’s a man in the center being tugged at by suggestive women who have charming expressions on their faces, while the man in the middle is in complete distress. Written on his suit are the words, “reveling with the prodigal son”.

Towards the later years of Bennet’s life, he felt frustrated with the fine art world. He felt that he had run his art into the ground and had become dispassioned. The complicated politics and trends in the art world felt commercial to him, which is interesting because

Top left: Painting done by Bennet Norrbo.
Bottom: Part of a triptych painting done by Bennet Norrbo.
Above: The Pittock Mansion Through the Ages spread.

he tried to get away from that in the commercial art industry. He felt the need to get away from Gallery West and didn't want to do anymore shows. Bennet wrote in a note to himself, "It is absurd not to label gallery art for what it really is: commercial art. Callous and disciplined people can even make a living at it." Bennet would often write notes on his observations of people and the settings around him, as well as what he dealt with internally. Sometimes he would write about himself as if he was another person. He would write about himself in a self-deprecating manner as well as depict himself as being picked apart by others. There's a large self portrait of Bennet during an older stage of his life that is both dark and humorous and representative of his personality. Surrounding him are hands pointing at him, invading his personal space as well as one hand holding a machete and another squirting a water gun.

It was often said that Bennet was going to attempt suicide, but his friends never believed him. On the day that he passed, Marilyn remembered that it was a busy Saturday morning in 2013 when Bennet called. "I said, 'Bennet I'll call you back, I can't talk right now.' And he said, 'I really need to talk.' I said, 'I'll be with you as soon as I can.'" Marilyn called back after 5pm and there was no answer. By the time police found him, he was already gone. Bennet Norrbo was 83 years old. Five other people had the same story about Bennet's attempted outreach and it left them devastated, but unsurprised. "I think he was very ill, and I think he got a bad report from his doctor ...probably his liver because he was a very heavy drinker." Marilyn followed up. When I asked if an undisclosed illness might have prompted him to end his life, Marilyn thought it summed up his reasoning perfectly. "It seemed as if it didn't make any difference to him because ... he knew where the end was going to be." Close friends knew that Bennet didn't believe in beginning and endings. However, his suicide gave his life an abrupt end.



Despite this tragic ending, it's good to remember that Bennet had an outlandish sense of humor that kept close friends around him entertained and was unabashedly himself. When we are young, we seem to care about what other people's perceptions of us are, but Bennet didn't seem to care at all. He was someone who was solely focused on the present. He would let all of his impulses run wild, and it was apparent in his work. He knew who he was and introspectively worked with such sensitivity. Bennet Norrbo was an exceptionally skilled fine artist and had a wild imagination that's uniquely his own. Bennet's remaining art pieces are currently sold at Murdoch Collections and all proceeds go to p:ear. What I learned from this research was that Bennet's artwork embodied his character and the character of Portland. He loved Portland, and we love him too. •



Top left: Painting by Bennet Norrbo. Top: Collage of Bennet's doodles and notes. Above: Photograph of Bennet in his early 20s.

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From the Jantzen Bullpen

Success of Collaboration Between Design & Advertising

By Trudy Chin

For those who wore Jantzen in the 1960s and 70s, the essence of carefree living was easy to obtain. In catalogs and advertisements, beautiful models and hunky professional athletes were seen living life like everyday people. The ads were funny and cheeky. Models were on the beach, all with a sense of ease, goofing off and blissfully lounging in the sun. And they looked good in what they wore. This imagery sparked a desire in the modern American to live in this carefree lifestyle too. The visual and emotional creativity that stemmed from these ads was a result of the collaboration between design and advertising from Jantzen's local Portland talent.

Portland Knitting Company

The history of Jantzen begins with the history of swimwear. John A. Zehntbauer, Carl C. Jantzen, and C.R. Zehntbauer founded the Portland Knitting Company in 1910, with a few knitting machines above a tiny retail store in Portland, Oregon. They made wool

sweaters, gloves, hosiery, and various other knit woolen goods. They were focused on warm wool sweaters, until 1913, when a member of the Portland Rowing Club came into the store. He asked the company to make a pair of rib-stitch rowing trunks, much like the stitch used for sweater cuffs. He wanted a bathing suit that would stay up without a drawstring and that was fit for cold morning paddling on the Willamette River. The company came up with the first elastic-waist garment which weighed eight pounds when wet.

Soon after, the Portland Knitting Company transitioned to the shorter name of Jantzen. They began making and selling 100% pure virgin wool bathing suits that were lightweight and accompanied by a matching cap and stockings. This bathing attire became popular and was a great turning point for the company.

Jantzen began advertising these "bathing suits" up until 1921, when they introduced the name, "swimming suit." This was a new term that hadn't been used before in advertising. "Swimming suit" was imple-



mented in all advertising copy from there on out. The language of the advertisements highlighted the suit's ideal use. They showed they were fit for swimming, and elevated the athletic reputation of Jantzen. Early advertisements guaranteed the famous rib-stretch would "give that wonderful fit". Jantzen's first slogan for the swimming suit advertising campaign was, "The suit that changed bathing to swimming" and was shown alongside the iconic Red Diving Girl logo.

Who is the Red Diving Girl?

The Red Diving Girl first appeared in Jantzen catalogs, sporting her own red swimming suit, cap, and stockings. The logo was designed by Frank and Florenz Clark, who were freelance artists from Seattle working with Jantzen's advertising agency. In the months after, billboard advertisements appeared with the Red Diving Girl. Bumper stickers with her iconic diving posture started popping up on cars, causing heads to turn and crashes to ensue. (These stickers were deemed too dis-

tracting and were banned in the interest of safety in Boston in 1924.) The Red Diving Girl became one of the longest-lived apparel icons in advertising history.

Jantzen's first national advertisements were published for swimming suits as full color ads in *Vogue* and *Life* magazines, with illustrations of swimmers and beach-goers in Jantzen suits.

The innovation shown throughout Jantzen's advertisements in the 1920s set a bar for the advertisements that would follow. Jantzen produced ads with "pin-up" style art and illustrations, featuring attention-grabbing swimsuits that showed the person's shape and figure of their body.

Copy tended to lean towards the cheekier side, including "Come on, get down to bare essentials... the wonderful bare essentials of the new Jantzens." These

Above: The Red Diving Girl bumper stickers caused many heads to turn in the early 1920s.

themes within advertisements became the central messaging for Jantzen. The main idea was: if you're wearing a Jantzen, you look good and others think so too. It was that kind of message and style that stayed with Jantzen through the 1960s and 1970s. The ads held an elevated quality which was eye-catching and desirable for the modern American searching for comfort and performance, as well as fashion when it came to sportswear. Especially for women. Because of these ads, women were welcomed within the swimwear world.

While many campaigns were produced by big New York agencies, in Portland, the brand hired top local talent in-house and used many local freelance artists, designers, and creatives who worked to improve the Jantzen brand identity. However, many of these early-day "pin-up" style ads had a heavy use of airbrush painting styles, perpetrating unrealistic idealized views of a woman's body, and featured romanticized images of saturated Americana lifestyles. These ads excluded people of color and didn't show lifestyles that differed from the classic American Dream. As we look at these ads today, we can see how problematic they are in terms of inclusion. In the 1920s, this style of advertisements is what was commonly seen throughout media and entertainment, which is probably why these ads hold a sense of nostalgia to them.

Jantzen's 1960s Design: Thomas Lincoln

Throughout the 20th century, there were many prominent creatives at Jantzen. These were the people who were making big changes in the sportswear industry of the Pacific Northwest. Collaboration fueled innovation and talent sparked beautiful outcomes.

Out of hundreds of people who had worked at Jantzen in the 1960s, I had the chance to hear about the experiences of Thomas Lincoln, a designer from Eugene, Oregon. While he only worked at Jantzen for a few

years, his memories of his experience are fond. Jantzen was his first secure job since the army. Previously, he'd had smaller jobs at Studio 1030, an influential design studio in Portland from the early 1960s. The studio was a shared office space for freelance designers who would sell themselves as a team for jobs.

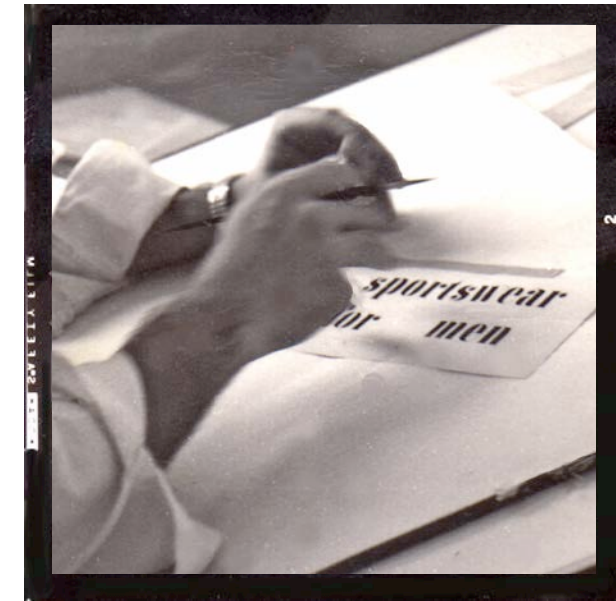
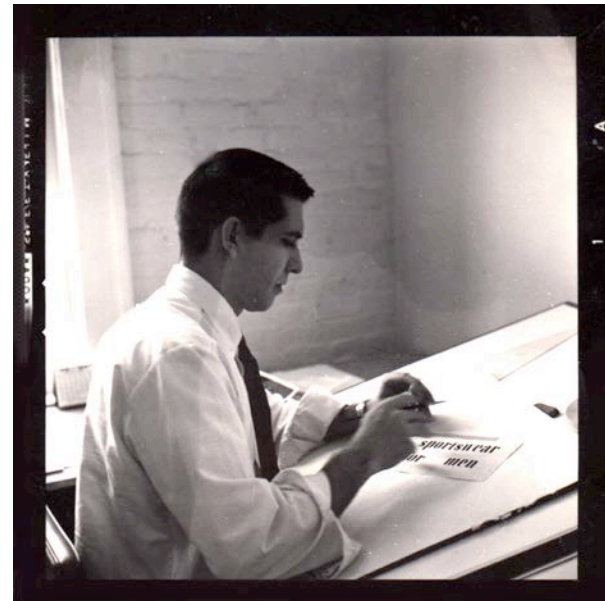
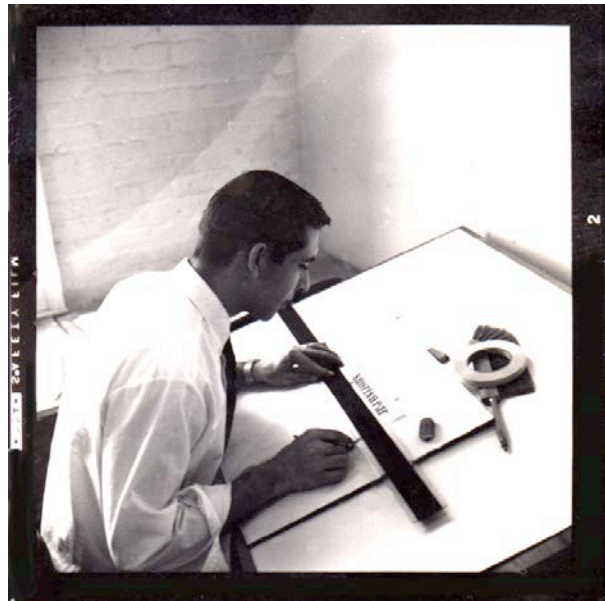
Lincoln was hired on at Jantzen by then Art Director, Douglas Lynch, who was a prominent designer in Portland at the time. Lincoln had studied under Lynch while attending The Museum Art School (now known as PNCA). "I can still envision entering the office at 18th & Glisan," Lincoln recalls of when he first started, "...walking past a sea of desks and secretaries on the first floor and up to the second floor to the advertising and sales promotion department where I occupied a drawing board in the 'bullpen'." The job he had was not a salary job, but instead was more like an in-resident freelance position. It was full-time, and pay was enough for him to replace his 1956 Ford Fairlane convertible with a sporty, robin's egg blue 1962 MG Roadster. Disclaimer: this was back when filling the tank only cost about \$15.

Within the advertising and sales promotion department, there were a number of various administrators, executives and secretaries, but Lincoln worked closely with the more creative types. Some of these colleagues include Lynch; Bruce Sturm, the head of the department; Sam Nichols, an illustrator and art director; Ray Olson, a former Museum Art School classmate to Lincoln; as well as other illustrators and designers. Their projects included work for catalogs, advertisements, special promotions, hang tags, booklets, displays, and the redesign of the Jantzen logo.

Throughout the years, the Red Diving Girl went through a few subtle changes. The wordmark for the Jantzen logotype was set in the already established and readily available font, Bodoni Bold. After 40 years, it was decided that Jantzen needed a fresh new look. The redesign was headed by Lynch and Lincoln, beginning



Above: The finished prototype of the new Jantzen logo. Thomas Lincoln.



This Spread: Thomas Lincoln working on the rendering of the new Jantzen logo.

with Lincoln's rendering of the word "Jantzen" in a style which mimicked something like a Bodoni Condensed, if there had been a condensed form of the font. However, there was no existing font like this. "There was a font around the time called Torino Roman that came close, but it was a little too delicate," Lincoln remembers. And so, Lincoln set out, under Lynch's direction, to create a new prototype. This new rendering was sent to a well-known type designer in New York by the name of John Pistilli, who was tasked with creating an entire Jantzen alphabet in the new design. The font was sent back to Portland to be copied using a photostat machine (similar to an early day photocopier). After they were copied, the letters could be cut up and assembled on new layouts. Designers like Lynch and Lincoln were able to use the new Jantzen font when assembling advertisements headlines and various other Jantzen collateral.

Lincoln worked at Jantzen from 1963-1965. As he was going through memories of his tenure, he recalls going out for burgers at Yaw's Drive-In Restaurant up the street. "Still the best I ever tasted," he says. He once played (brilliantly, according to Lincoln) on the company softball team, which scored him a feature in *Jantzen Yarns*, the company newsletter. After the *Yarns* article was printed, he remembers, "I walked on air for a full week following that." He once was invited to accompany the crew for a photoshoot at Timberline Lodge, promoting the Jantzen Winter Collection. The shoot featured the very glamorous, official Jantzen Smile Girl, Delores Hawkins. Lincoln recalls being quite in awe of her, given that he was a single guy in his early twenties and all.

Jantzen's Late 1960s-1970s Advertising: Roger Yost

I had the opportunity to talk to former Jantzen Art Director and Advertising and Marketing Manager, Roger

Yost. While he now is the proud owner of an art gallery on the Oregon Coast, Yost was once the man behind the advertisement campaigns that led the Jantzen brand to the top of all sportswear companies of the time.

Yost is originally from the Midwest and had previously worked for ad agency, J. Walter Thompson (JWT). He had once visited Portland to present to Jantzen management on how JWT could assist with advertising and PR support for Jantzen. The Jantzen Men's and Women's Divisions had recently gone through a split. Management had been so impressed with his presentation, that they offered him a job out in Portland. "I didn't get the business for JWT. What I did get was an offer to join the Men's Division as its Advertising and Marketing Manager!" Soon after, Yost was on his way west.

During his first two years at Jantzen, Yost had worked alongside the influential Portland designer, Byron Ferris and copywriter, Homer Groening. It was 1967 and Jantzen had just become the NFL's first apparel licensee. Today, that license is held by Nike. The new advertising campaign implemented an innovative technique called sports marketing, which was spearheaded by Jantzen. This was the first time advertisements used iconic and famous athletes to sell products. Through the work of Yost, Ferris, and Groening, athletes were seen throughout ads, influencing those shopping for Jantzen sportswear.

These prominent sports marketing ads featured the Jantzen International Sports Club. This club included famous pro-athletes, such as Frank Gillford, Jerry West, Paul Hornung, and other athletes of the time. The ads presented the athletes wearing Jantzen sweaters, swimwear, and leisurewear, highlighting the durability and comfort of Jantzen apparel. They all look pretty cool wearing everyday clothes like you and I would!

In a letter written by Groening to the editor of *Sports Illustrated*, he states that the athletes who participated in the ad's photoshoot "each received \$50 to be in the



Jantzen sweater ad... [and] each player was allowed to keep the sweater he wore." Today, athletes endorsing a brand would be paid millions. They probably get to keep any clothes they wear for the ad, too.

Further along in the 1970s, the Yost, Ferris, and Groening team also produced a biopic series on model athletes. Yost recalls, "...we worked with Homer Groening to create a 30-minute television show... I then syndicated to more than 120 TV stations. In return we received four free 30-second spots and opening and closing sponsor credits." Because of this short documentary series, Jantzen was able to reach wider audiences. In turn, this allowed them to beat out competitors in the sportswear industry. This also expanded the growing men's apparel department.

For Yost, working at Jantzen was an opportunity that opened up his creativity. He was able to use his creative skills in many forms and mediums. He not only worked with print advertisements and catalogs, but also created pieces for radio and dipped into filmmaking as well. He remembers Portland beginning to open up and develop its own kind of creative style, something that was forever growing into something new.

Where is Jantzen Now?

Jantzen swimsuits changed bathing suits to swimming suits, defining swimming as a sport for women as well. These suits were not only practical, but they were known to be flattering and fashionable for women. Jantzen swimsuits could be seen on every beach and in every pool. At the height of Jantzen's popularity and success, monuments of the iconic Red Diving Girl were made. A series of 20-foot-tall fiberglass and steel statues were put up in locations all around the country. One had a short lifespan at Portland's American Advertis-

Above: Advertisements made with the Jantzen International Sports Club. Byron Ferris, Homer Groening, Roger Yost.

ing Museum (AAM), that Yost, Ferris, and Groening had started after their time at Jantzen. The Red Diving Girl was donated to the AAM by Yost, however she did not survive there long as the museum closed in 2004. One Diving Girl is still known to live outside of a swimwear shop in Daytona Beach, Florida, where she was installed in the 1960s. She is still suspended in her classic mid-air diving position today and is loved by beach-goers and tourists. The Red Diving Girl became an icon of the success of the brand. She, and the nostalgia she holds, are cherished and beloved by many.

In 1980, Jantzen was purchased by Blue Bell, a company that was better known for its denim production. Jantzen was then bought by Miami-based clothing company, Perry Ellis International in 2002. For a few years after that, the headquarters remained in Portland, with an office that employed designers, sewers, quality control personnel, product coordinators, and archivists. The archives were located in the original headquarters building, however, after nearly 90 years of calling Portland home, Jantzen headquarters and archive has moved to California. The building that was once the Jantzen headquarters in Portland is still standing in Northeast Portland, just off of Sandy Boulevard. And just above the main entrance, a tiny Red Diving Girl resides, a small nod to the innovation and creativity that once took place just behind the front doors. •

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Bottom row (left to right). Les Richter, Rams; Kyle Rote, Giants; Donk Walker, Lions; Johnny Lattner, Steelers; Chuck Bednarik, Eagles. Second row. Bob Boyd, Rams; Y. A. Tittle, 49ers; Len Ford, Browns; Bill Stits, Lions; Pete Pihos, Eagles; Jerry Groom, Cardinals. Third row. Dante Lavelle, Browns; Eddie Price, Giants; Skret Quinlan, Rams; Roger Zatkoff, Green Bay Packers; Adrian Bark, Eagles. Top row. Leon McLaughlin, Rams; Ollie Matson, Cardinals; Art Donovan, Colts; Harlon Hill, Bears; Bruno Banducci, 49ers; Ed Sprinkle, Bears.

Cast: the Pro All-Stars...colors by Jantzen

The brilliant gentlemen pictured here are waiting for the kick-off of the greatest color story in the history of sweaters—a powerful 26-color promotion that has dazzled all of us at Jantzen and will probably blind the rest of the sweater industry!

Featured here . . . smart new "frosty" tones that are already showing signs of being the "hot" colors, plus new clear and char tones—in fact, there are so many salable colors there weren't enough All-Stars to go around. That's why there are only 22 colors above.

This is only *one* reason why Jantzen is Preferred Stock . . . reasons that include dramatic new styles, new fabrics, all in these terrific colors — backed by the most powerful advertising and merchandising program men's sweaters have ever seen! See it and you'll agree.

Jantzen
the **PREFERRED STOCK**

Jantzen Inc., Portland 8, Oregon

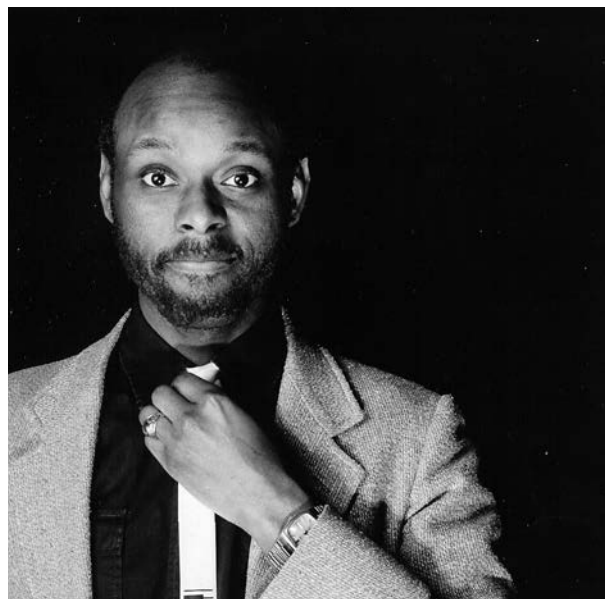
Above: Advertisements made with the Jantzen International Sports Club. Byron Ferris, Homer Groening, Roger Yost. This is "the Sweater Ad" written about in the letter from Groening to Sports Illustrated.

A Superhero in His Own Right

The Saga of Cartoonist & Graphic Designer Rupert Kinnard

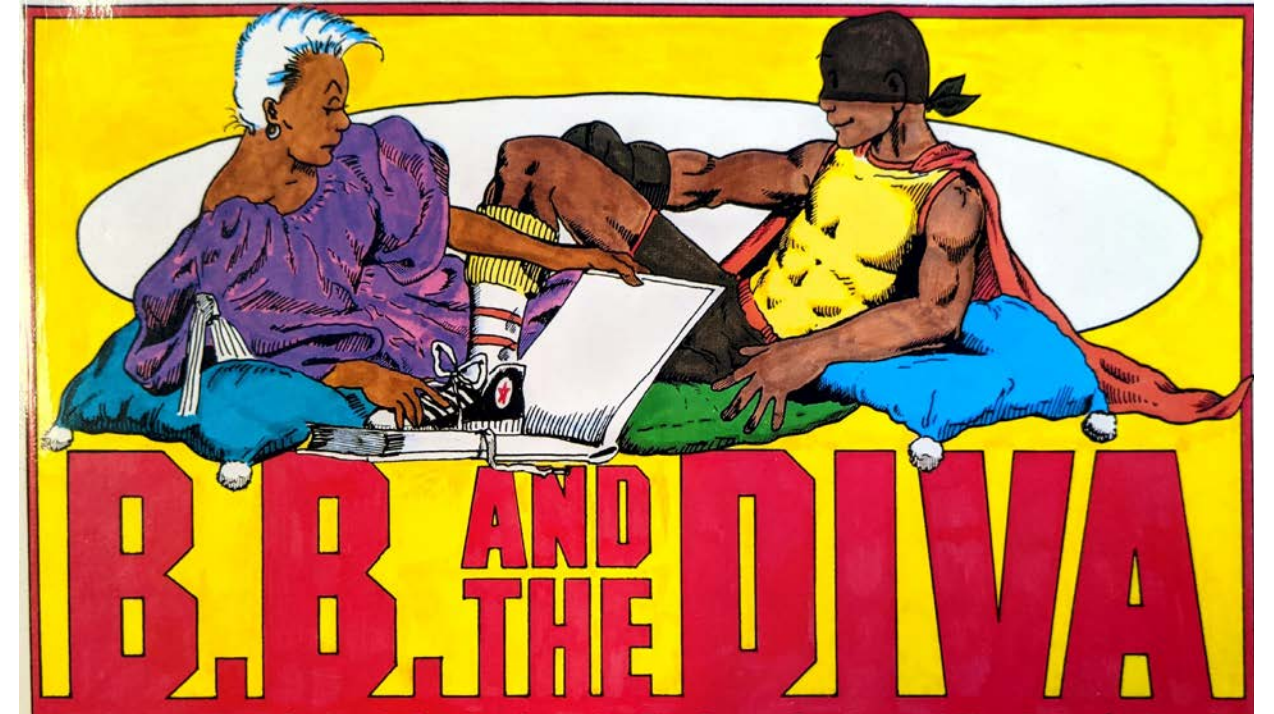
By Fahad Al-Meraikhi

Being a problem solver is a trait every designer should have, and from a young age, Rupert Kinnard had a knack for solving puzzles. Along with drawing and cartooning, these passions were the foundations of what made Kinnard the designer he is today. Born in Chicago, on July the 21st 1954,



Kinnard would grow up to become an influential, gay, African American cartoonist and designer. He created award-winning LGBT comics, and worked on Portland publications such as *Willamette Week*, and *Just Out!*, one of the earliest, groundbreaking LGBT newspaper in the United States. He became a hero who fights injustice and prejudice with his work. But, like every great superhero, he has an origin story.

Alas, this origin story does not live within the pages of a comic book, but it does exist in the creative mind of the designer and cartoonist himself. On February 1st 2020, I sat down and interviewed Rupert Kinnard to find out how he developed an interest in graphic design, and talk about his impact on the graphic design community and Portland in general during the 1980s.



The Origin Story

Kinnard's first real relationship with graphic design started during college, where he would create posters and leaflets that spurred people to action, urging them to attend rallies or read articles in alternative newspapers. He even became the college yearbook editor, a position that taught him many elements of graphic design as a whole that would serve him well throughout the next few years of his life. Kinnard's work on comics would also flourish during that time, as he illustrated comic strips in his college newspaper featuring The Brown Bomber. The Brown Bomber was an iconic character that would be further developed and later featured in Kinnard's award-winning comic book series, *Cathartic Comics*, his most well-known, and celebrated work.

Cathartic Comics is a series of editorial comic books featuring The Brown Bomber, a black, gay, fairy superhero that transforms into this superhero persona through a hiccup. The Brown Bomber is best friends with Diva Touché Flambé, a black, ageless, lesbian

cosmic spirit. These comics tackle serious social problems regarding people of color and the LGBT community in a light-hearted, comedic fashion while still maintaining the gravity of these issues. The butt of the joke is often the people that are not aware of these social problems and in turn perpetuate them, like Ray and Kay Sediah. Kinnard introduced them as recurring characters who were, "Looking forward to wallowing in the media's love affair with smug, white, hetero Republican yuppies," as Mrs. Sediah puts it.

Bottom Left: Photo of Rupert Kinnard in the 1980s.
Top Right: *Cathartic Comics* book cover.



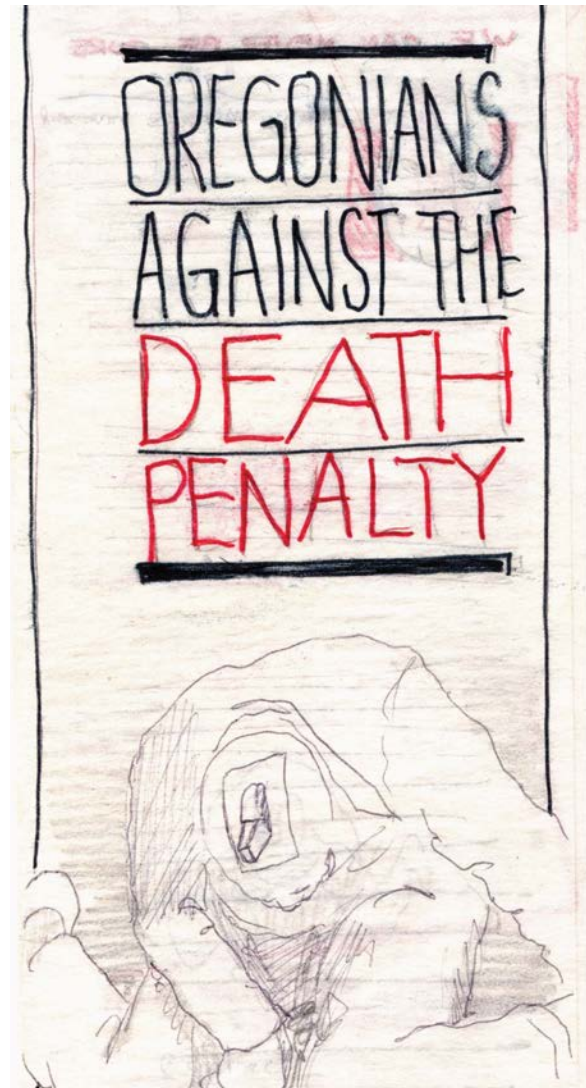
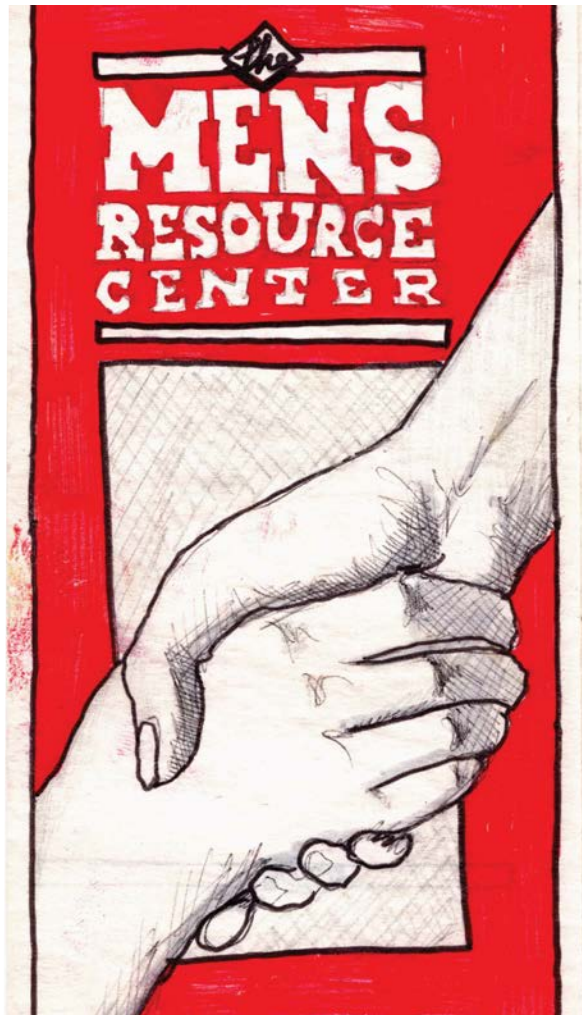
With as few as three panels, Kinnard can deliver insightful messages that pack a punch and dismantle misconceptions or ignorant views of people of color and the LGBT community. This quick and to-the-point messaging is also displayed by Diva Touché Flambé, who is a teacher and master of Slapthology, the very effective and practical technique of clearing someone's mind of bigoted beliefs by simply slapping it out of them. While the art of Slapthology would be handy in the real world, Kinnard had to use real-world solutions to solve these real-world problems, so he tackled these issues by motivating and compelling people to stand up and fight against ignorance and oppression through his design work.

Left: Cathartic Comics panel featuring The Brown Bomber.

Kinnard, Design Vigilante

Kinnard's battle against the villainous trio of racism, sexism and homophobia took off in the 80s, when he truly began to come into his own. In 1979 he moved from Cornell College in Iowa to Portland, ready to start his career. Kinnard was a freelance designer, encouraging action, and designing things like flyers and posters, continuing the crusade against bigotry that he started in college.

One of the key catalysts throughout this time period was his collaboration with others in order to gradually build his craft. He wanted to work with more and more people. While he was working heavily as a freelance graphic designer, his goal, ever since he worked on the college newspaper, was to pursue publication design.

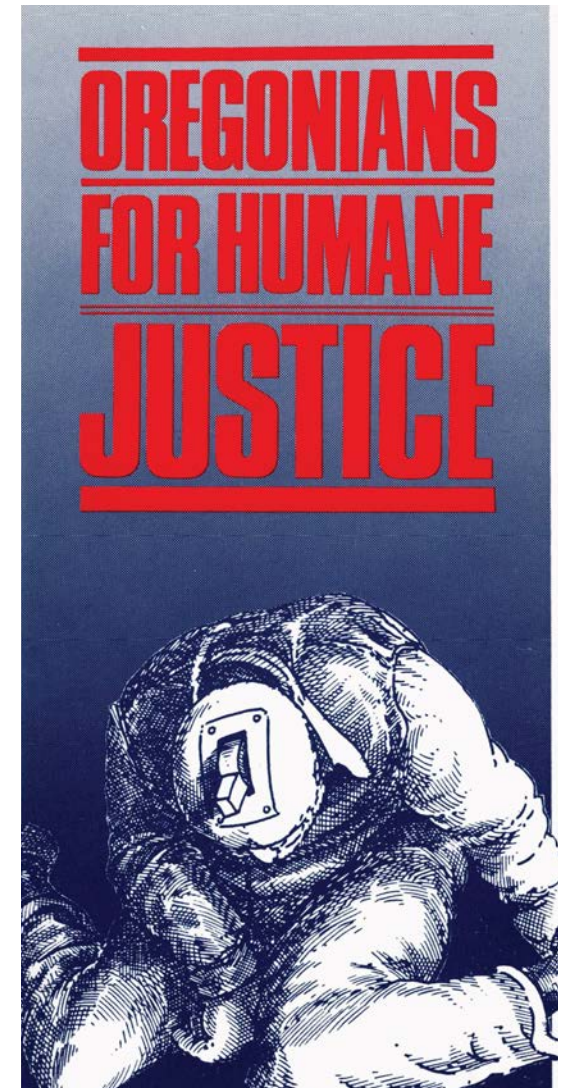


This marked his involvement in the purview of the alternative press, as he called it, even though that work was not much in terms of profit.

In the 1980s, he began to more accurately understand and implement his own personal philosophy in Portland. Kinnard's design philosophy is one that is simple and quite utilitarian. He believed solidly in function over form, and much of this can be easily reflected in the work that he began to produce around this time period. Furthermore, Kinnard believed strongly that design should attract the reader to the text rather than the design itself. This philosophy is one that was grounded in practicality, and was likely

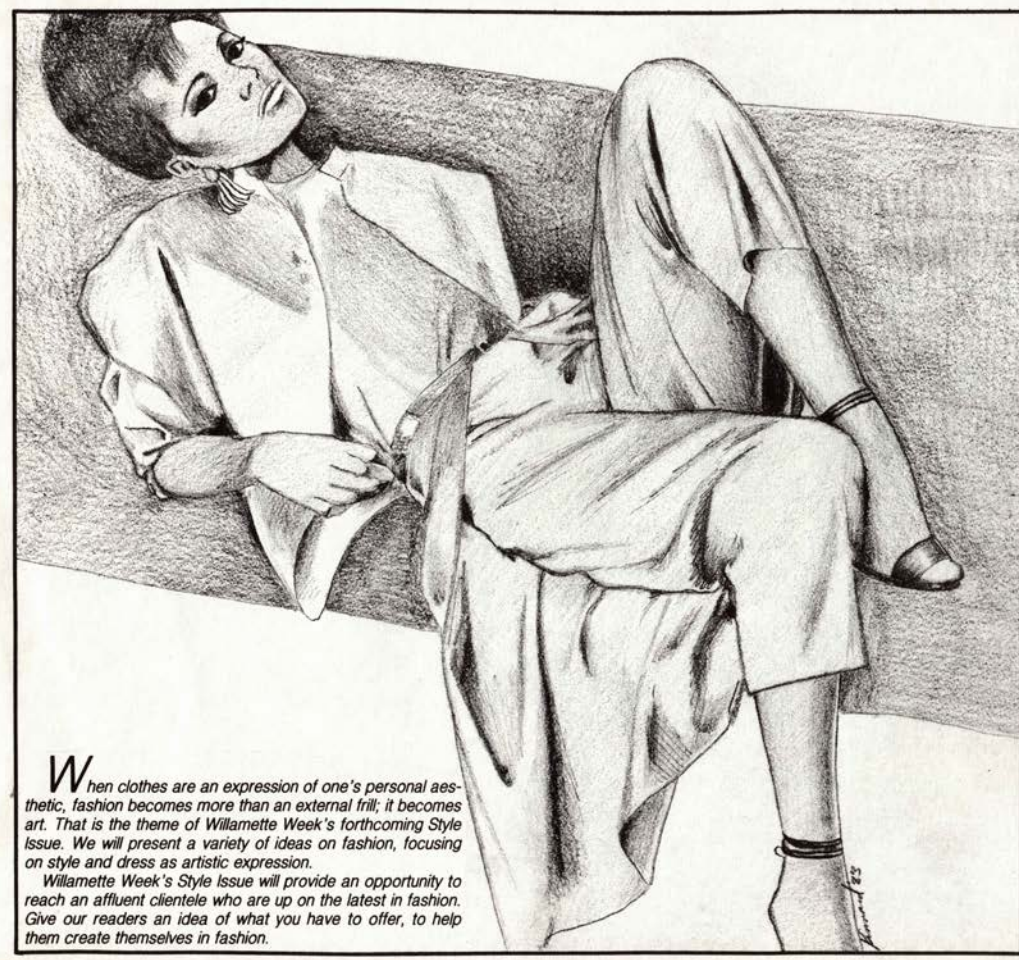
influenced, at least in part, by his upbringing creating cartoons and drawings. Kinnard is an individual who was able to take his original ideas and dreams from when he was younger and expertly extrapolate them into his modern career. Throughout the 1980s, while he was in Portland, many of the components of his design philosophy were tested.

These tests, though, only allowed for him to continue to build this design philosophy, providing several important areas for improvement that would become apparent here. These areas included those such as communication and technique. Because of this, the 1980s saw perhaps one of the greatest improvements in terms of his overall style.



Freelance work was a prominent money-maker for Kinnard because his other avenues of work were not nearly as lucrative. For starters, Kinnard designed anti-discrimination posters for the city and volunteered at a few local queer newspapers. He did layout for them and designed posters and flyers which bolstered his portfolio, but not his wallet.

Opposite Page Bottom: The Men's Resource Center pamphlet cover draft. Opposite Page Top: Anti death penalty pamphlet cover draft. Left: The Men's Resource Center pamphlet cover. Top: Anti death penalty pamphlet cover.



When clothes are an expression of one's personal aesthetic, fashion becomes more than an external trill; it becomes art. That is the theme of Willamette Week's forthcoming Style Issue. We will present a variety of ideas on fashion, focusing on style and dress as artistic expression.

Willamette Week's Style Issue will provide an opportunity to reach an affluent clientele who are up on the latest in fashion. Give our readers an idea of what you have to offer, to help them create themselves in fashion.

ARTISTS

Advertising deadline is noon, September 15th. Call your advertising representative today!
243-2122

The Willamette Week Arc

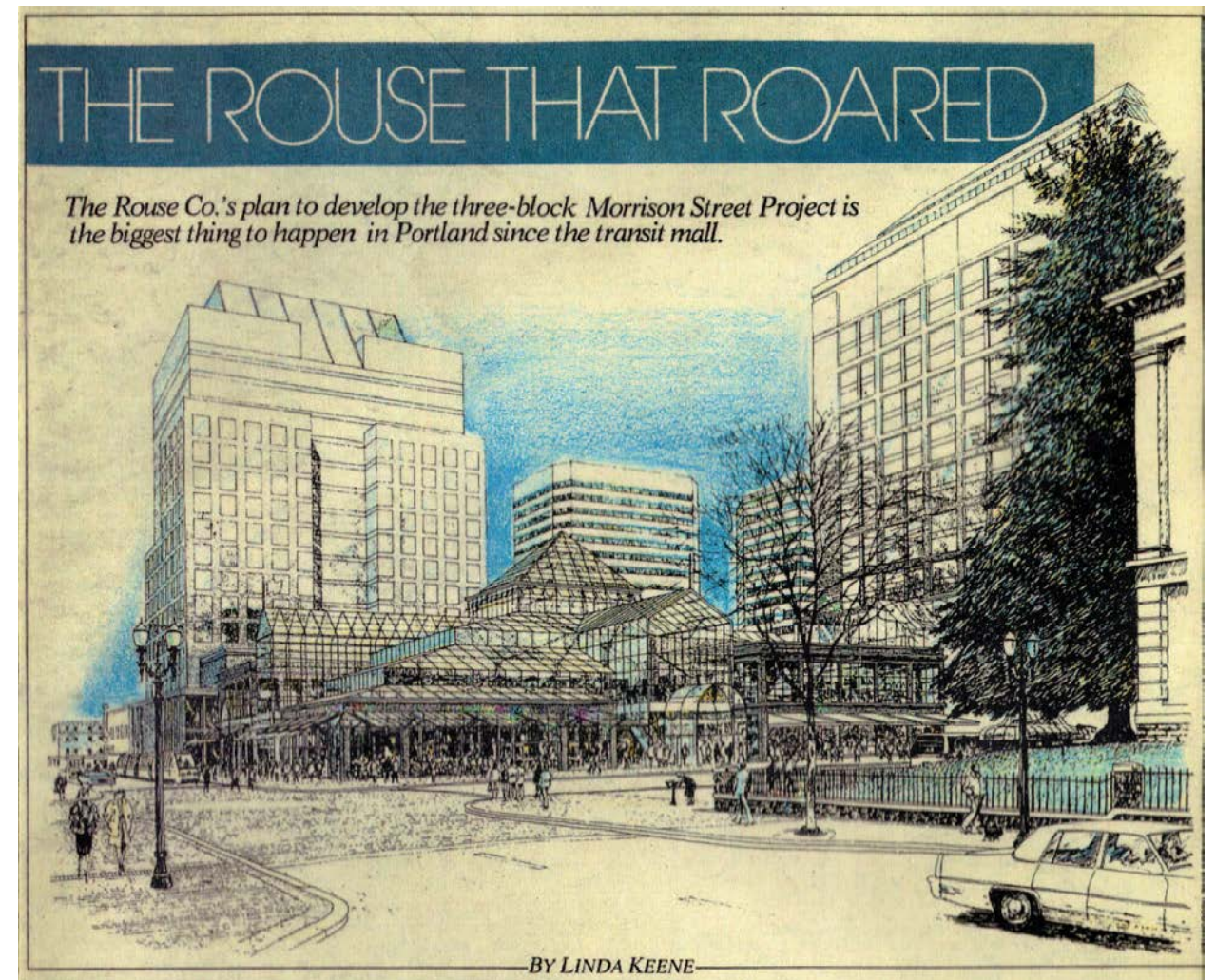
Kinnard worked for the first LGBT rights organization known as the Portland Town Council, creating newsletters and flyers for them as well. *The Northwest Foundation* was the LGBT newspaper at this time, and they provided him with a solid foundation to create illustrations and the like for them. He worked as a Production Assistant for *Willamette Week*, which was one of the jumping off points, as he puts it, for his career. This position is one that would eventually allow for him to become an Associate Art Director at the publication. The position provided him with a solid foundation upon which he would be able to eventually build up his work further, establishing himself as a prominent LGBT advocate for the Portland area. In

the 1980s, Portland was already leaning progressive, and this provided Kinnard with a strong environment for him to hone his skills and develop his reputation. In 1984 Kinnard joined the Portland Town Council as the first African American board member, and attended one of the earliest Portland Pride Fairs (later called The Pride Parade).

Working with *Willamette Week* allowed for Kinnard to work directly with clients, designing advertisements for them, especially in terms of the layout of the ads and where editorial content went. Furthermore, Kinnard created many of the flyers within special sections for advertisers within the paper, and eventually designed the advertising sections. His tenure as Associate Art Director also meant that he designed the main feature

THE ROUSE THAT ROARED

The Rouse Co.'s plan to develop the three-block Morrison Street Project is the biggest thing to happen in Portland since the transit mall.



BY LINDA KEENE

story layout as well as things like the calendar listings. Eventually his persistence paid off, and he was able to design covers and illustrations for the publication and others like it.

Much of the work that Kinnard performed for *Willamette Week* provided experience in terms of layout and design, and he discussed at length the production processes involved in working on publishing before computers. This involved setting selecting fonts, setting line widths, creating scene shading, line work and many other technical components. It was very hands-on, and he stated that he was not thrilled about the advent of desktop publishing that began to occur near the end of the 1980s. There were numerous elements of this new digital process that made his work much more difficult,

but he nonetheless learned a great deal and continues to work on a computer to this day.

Many of the contributions that Kinnard provided at *Willamette Week* would prove to be the traditional style of these issues for many years to come. This came in the form of the highly distinct typefaces and graphical layouts that he brought about for these publications. Kinnard developed a cohesive look across headlines and columns across issues.

Top Left: Willamette Week special section promotional flyer.
Top Right: Willamette Week headline layout.



Fighting Discrimination

There were many queer publications that Kinnard worked with throughout the 1980s as well. His background, as a queer, black, designer, allowed him to easily connect to the designs that he created. He was able to fulfill several different niches that would not have been possible without his contributions. Chief among these was a lack of representation that could be easily observed in Portland. Kinnard mentioned that it was quite challenging to be able to find other designers of color, which comes as no surprise given that African Americans only made up 2.5% of the population in Portland in the 1980s.

This lack of representation was indicative of a more overarching issue within Portland and society during the 1980s. To be sure, the demographic, political, racial and sociological makeup of the country was significantly different than it is today, people of color, as well as those within the LGBT community, were not nearly as accepted as they are today in the creative industry.

Kinnard experienced the negative effects of the lack of diversity in the Portland design community firsthand. After *Willamette Week* downsized, he found himself among the list of the laid off employees, leaving him without a job. As luck would have it though, a friend of his worked at an advertising agency that was looking for a new designer to add on to their team, and as someone



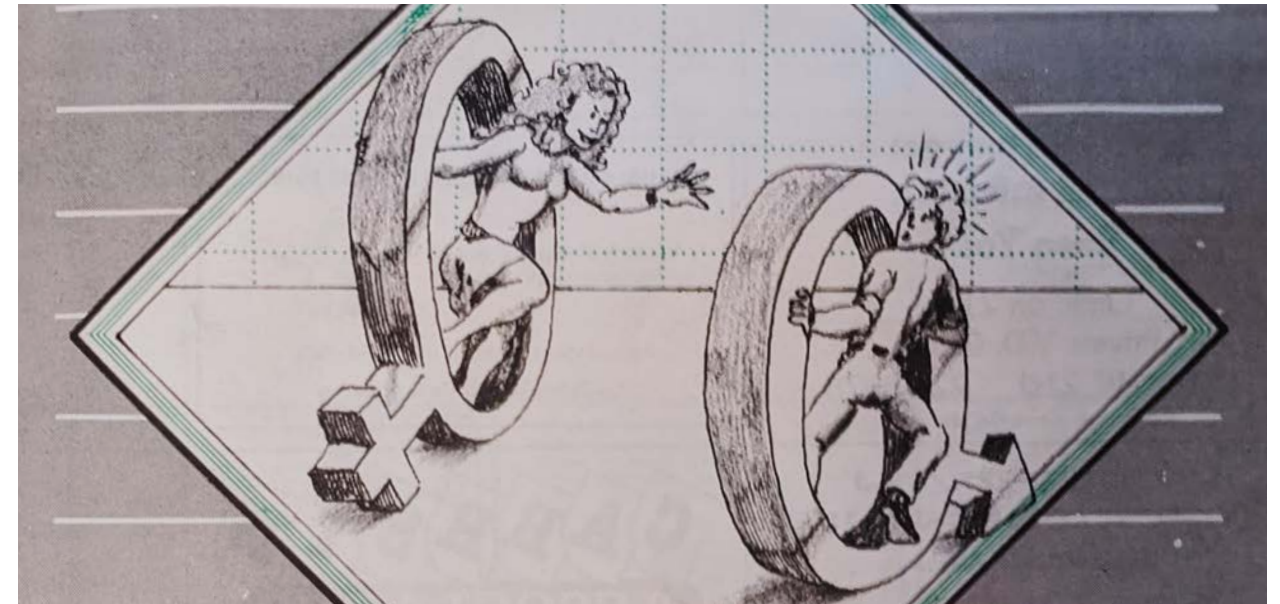
with an art degree and experience in publication design, Kinnard felt confident he would get the job. As the hiring process went on, he only grew more assured as the large pool of possible employees went down to only two people: himself and a white woman, who was fresh out of design school. Ultimately though, he did not get the job. While he acknowledged and considered that perhaps the woman had a portfolio and an approach to design that was more like what they wanted, he couldn't help but feel that the agency was not interested in the different perspectives that diversity would provide. Whenever he came in for an interview he noticed that there were no people of color in the agency. Kinnard said, "I realize there's just this disconnect from people who are hiring, you know, I'm sitting in front of them



Top Left: Photo of Rupert Kinnard and his work.
 Bottom Left: Photo of Rupert Kinnard in the Portland Pride Fair.
 Top Right: NW Fountain cover page.

and they want to be able to relate to me like they do everyone who's like them."

Experiences such as this one caused him to double down on his commitment to ending discrimination as quickly as possible. Kinnard, much like the superheroes in his comic books, preached messages of togetherness and working collaboratively. His excellent design work ensured that this message was delivered to as many people as possible, thereby creating more of a movement around his philosophy. Kinnard did not give up. Rather, he saw this as simply another challenge for him to overcome, and this led to massive levels of success for him.



HARRISON PIERCE
presents
DOS LESBOS
A Play By, For and About Perverts

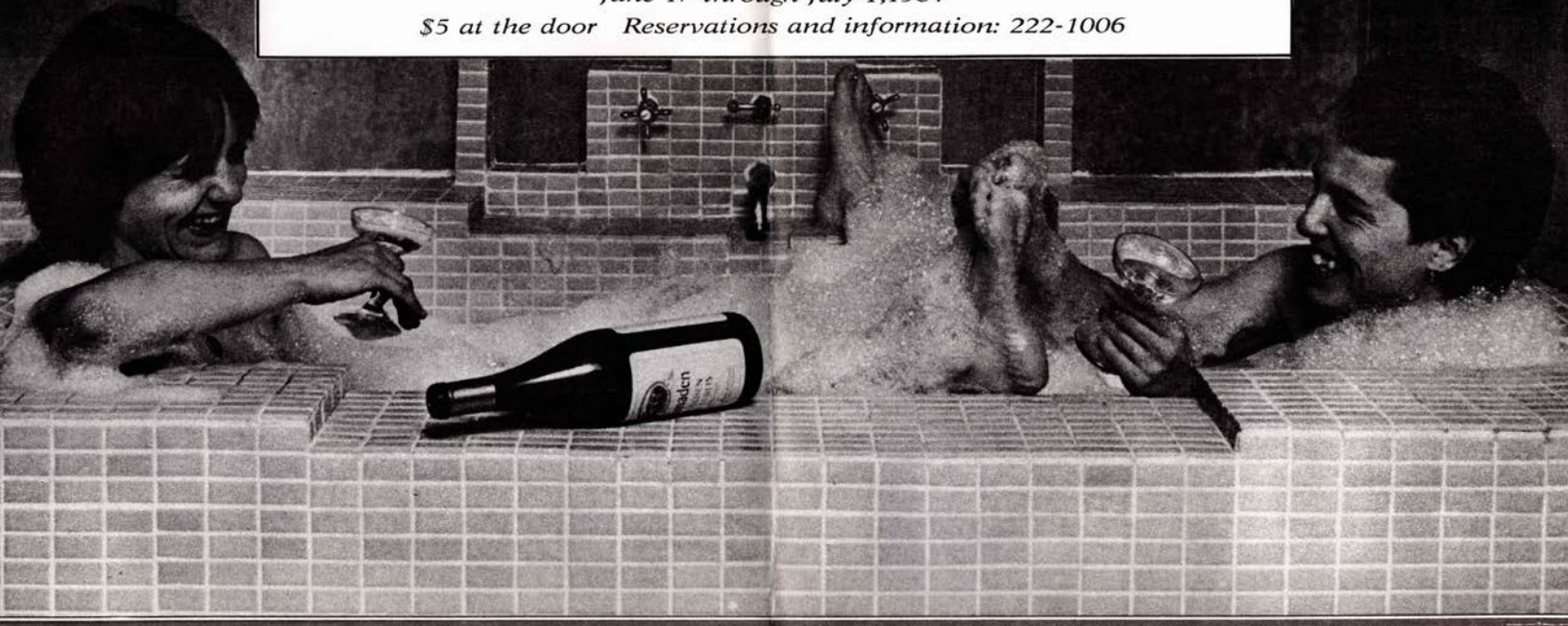
starring
Carol Steinel and Sarazan James
Musical Director John Keating

at
JUDY'S
1431 NE Broadway

Opens 8:30pm, Friday and Saturday, June 8-9
Continues Saturday at 8:30pm, Sunday at 8pm

June 17 through July 1, 1984

\$5 at the door Reservations and information: 222-1006



This Just Out!

Kinnard's work for *Just Out!* was some of his most influential work for a few reasons. Primarily, this publication, founded in 1983 by Jay Brown and Renee LaChance, was one that, as he described it, was quite trend-setting. Because Kinnard worked there right from the start, he was able to start fresh, without having a pre-existing system to build upon as he did when he worked as Art Director for *Willamette Week*. However, this would prove to be both a blessing and a curse, as it allowed him to take creative liberties in his design but it also meant he had no foundations to build upon.

Kinnard believed strongly in the work that he performed, fighting discrimination of all types, especially racism and sexism. His work for *Just Out!* allowed him to perform this on the regular. For the publication, Kinnard designed the logo, as well as created cover art and page layout. He was also behind the decision of

adding a spot color to the cover page and throughout the newspaper. This choice was made only after much deliberation as the added colors increased the cost of production. Ultimately this decision was in their favor as the publication would go on to win awards in design from the Gay Press Association for two consecutive years in a row.

These choices also made the publication stand out amidst a myriad of other newspapers. The design of *Just Out!* was almost allegorical to the content within it. During a time where every newspaper followed a strict grid and was entirely black and white, *Just Out!* breaks that grid and adds color to its pages, making it a literal queer newspaper.

Bottom Left: *Dos Lesbos* play poster.
Top Right: *Just Out!* cover page illustration.

Epilogue

The 1980s was a period where Kinnard was able to truly come into his own as a cartoonist and designer. In the process of doing so, then, he was able to directly contribute to many of these racial and social movements that were already sweeping the nation at the time. Creativity lies at the heart of Kinnard and his contributions to the world of comics and design. Creativity was a vehicle, through which he was able to digest the world with an African American perspective. He was all too aware of how rare these viewpoints and representations were during this time period. He clearly understood the role that he played in this process and treated it with the appropriate amount of weight. Kinnard was a student of the arts and believed that even the smallest of contributions could lead to a snowball effect of monumental change.

Kinnard experienced a large amount of both professional and personal development throughout his time in Portland during the 1980s. These works that Kinnard put forth were able to break the norm, and contribute directly to society as a result. By doing this, Kinnard was able to accomplish what so many before him could not. •



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Middle: Illustration sketches by Rupert Kinnard.

The Portland Scribe

A Forgotten Foundation

by Matt Davidson

The *Portland Scribe* was an underground newspaper from Portland, Oregon that ran in the 1970s and didn't follow a set art direction, and kept a very DIY aesthetic throughout its six years of circulation. The *Scribe* had a circulation of between 5,000 and 10,000, with each 28-page paper costing only 25 cents each.

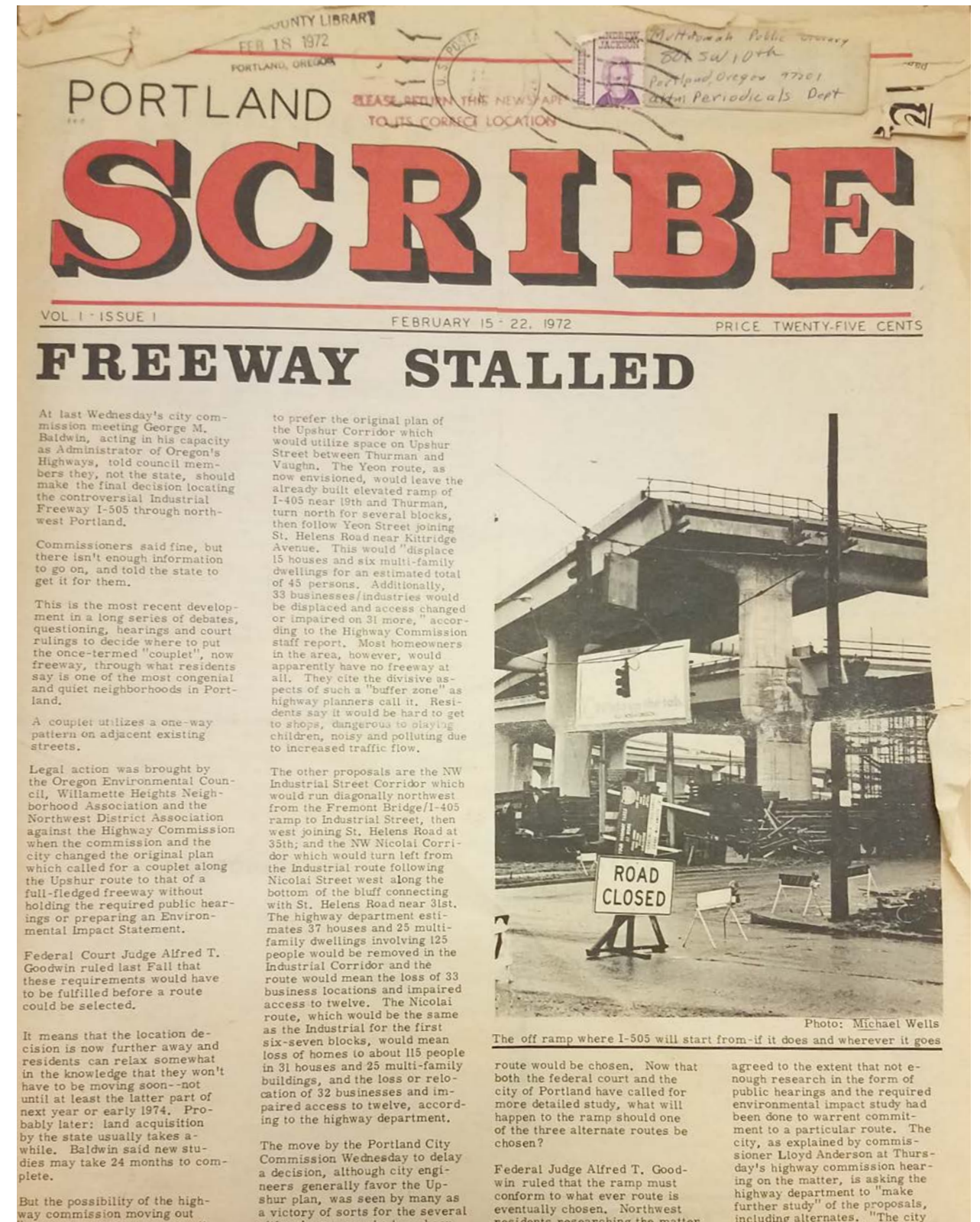
Founding

The *Portland Scribe* was founded by Michael Wells in 1972, after his previous publication, the *Willamette Bridge* went under in 1971 due to financial struggles. Alongside Wells, key members present at the founding of the *Scribe* include Wells's wife Mary Wells and Maurice Isserman, a writer who had worked at the *Bridge* for a year prior to its closing. The *Scribe* was also founded and utilized as a response to the Vietnam War, as the war didn't sit well with the majority of staff, who viewed it as "proof of evil in our country." Additionally, The *Scribe* was a part of a large national movement in the

1970s where many cities had their own underground newspapers, such as the *Diggers* in San Francisco. The *Scribe* was built around a core group of approximately 15 people, who were divided into departments of about two to three individuals.

Recently, I was fortunate to have a conversation with Isserman, where he explained that the atmosphere of the *Portland Scribe* offices was very relaxed and informal, leading to everyone knowing each other and building friendships. Nearly all of the money the publication received was funneled back into production, as Isserman, who was one of three co-editors, was paid only five dollars a week. Because of this, many members of the *Scribe* staff, Isserman included, worked at the *Oregonian* to earn a living and hosted radio shows on KBOO.

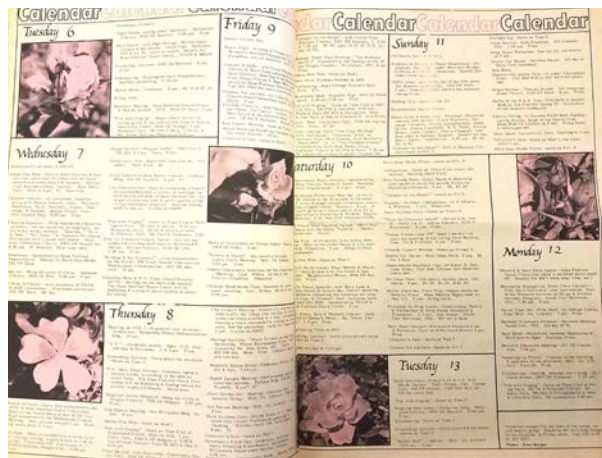
Stories and cartoons developed at the *Scribe* were heavily inspired by political events both at a local and national level. Some topics covered were local protests, the Black Panther Party, the assassination of John F. Kennedy, and Nixon's impeachment and subsequent



Cover of Issue One (February 1972).

removal from office. Sometimes the anticipated stories didn't turn out in the way that the reporters desired. As Tamim Ansary, a former writer for the *Scribe*, says in an interview with the *Oregonian*: "I covered anything that caught my fancy, but as a journalist my specialty was failing to get the story and writing a witty feature about not getting it." According to one source, one such story that was never contained in the *Scribe* was the arrest and subsequent trial of a Portland State University instructor who was taken into custody under suspicion of conspiracy to bomb a large building in Portland. At the trial, a member of *Scribe* staff ran across a writer who was working on a story about the trial. Upon requesting that the story be printed in the *Scribe*, the author asked for only a year's subscription to the publication in return. When the employee ran this proposal by the rest of the staff, it was rejected, leading to the *Scribe* losing the story entirely.

Local events were also greatly highlighted in the



Portland Scribe, as the center spread of every issue held a calendar ranging from music and art events to sports and conventions. Each week highlighted on the calendar would bear a unique illustration, often fitting a theme. For example, one issue's calendar collects a series of abstracted ice cream cones, and another that features astrological signs. Other calendars show images relating to the events held each week or demonstrate

the artist flexing their hand-rendered typography skills. Some issues also include duotone photographs in place of the drawings, such as the flowers featured in the 17th issue. The paper contained copious amounts of advertisements for local businesses on each spread, with every issue featuring a large, intricate drawing advertising KBOO. This comes as no surprise because of the connection the staff had with the radio station.

The love for the community did not stop at the printed page however, as the publication helped out local businesses through fundraisers. One notable part of this effort consisted of benefit concerts. Organizations helped by these fundraisers include the People's Food Store (one of the oldest co-ops in the city), as well as community centers, coffeehouses, women's health clinics, and the Students for Democratic Society.

Design

The design and layout of the *Portland Scribe* was not planned out ahead of time, aside from some basic guidelines. Instead, pages were laid out the night before the weekly issues were sent out to print. Despite this fact, former *Scribe* writer, Isserman, claims that the *Scribe's* design direction was significantly more dialed in and professional than the *Willamette Bridge*. This led to the *Scribe* having a very unique look, with a wide range of typefaces and illustration styles throughout an issue, even often all on one spread.

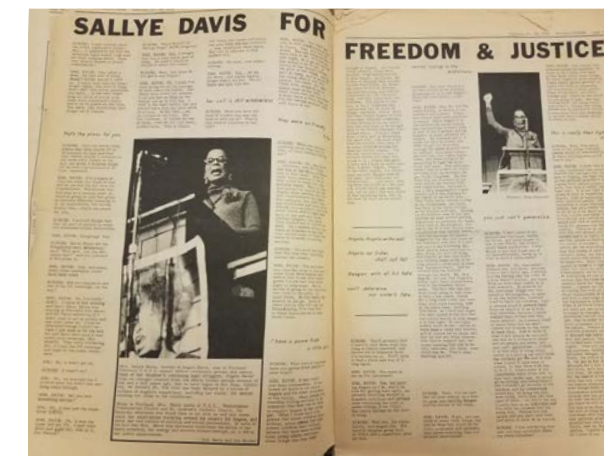
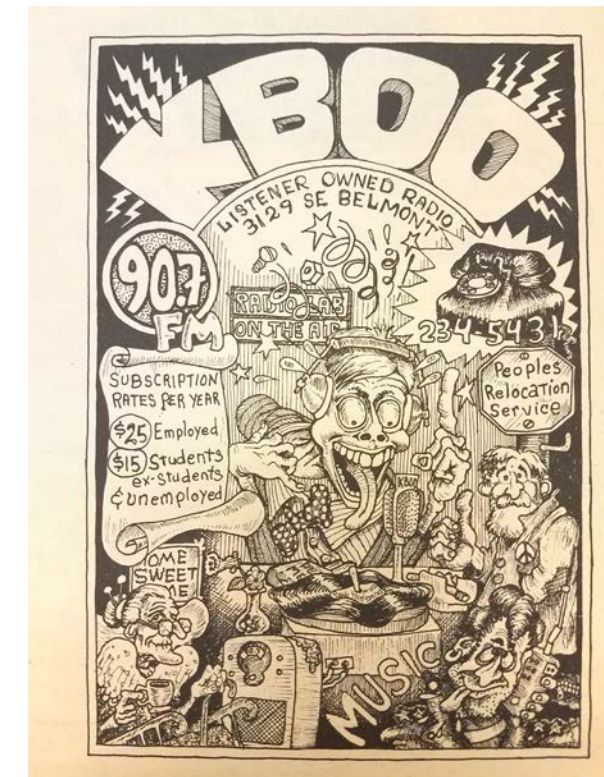
Jim Beller, a cartoonist and former designer for the *Scribe*, states: "I didn't think much about graphic design. For instance, it never occurred to me that we could change the masthead or the look of the paper after we completed our editorial takeover. I did love the wax paste-up process, assembling all of our justified-text paragraphs we made on a special typewriter with headlines made on a funny little filmstrip device.

"I'd say that the spirit behind funky ceramics and sixties-era underground comics, as well as the illustrations by Emory Douglas for the Black Panther paper,

informed the style of the *Willamette Bridge*." While he describes the *Bridge* here, the same applies to the *Portland Scribe*.

Papers were all 28 pages-long, in black and white with the option of a single spot color or a "rainbow." Pages would often consist of six to eight columns of text in the stories, with images and photographs intermingled.

Because of the variety of styles and contributors to



the *Scribe*, many wouldn't praise the overall design and layout, yet there is still something there for everyone. The *Scribe* demonstrates a lot of creativity and inspires the reader to go out and create.

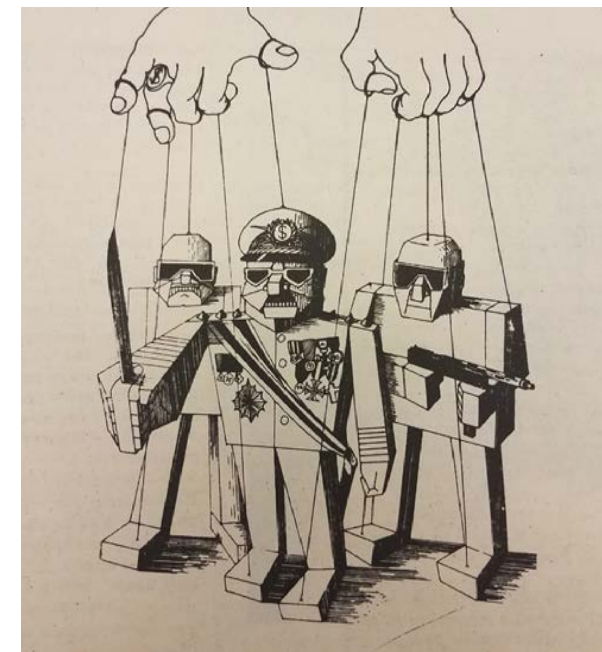
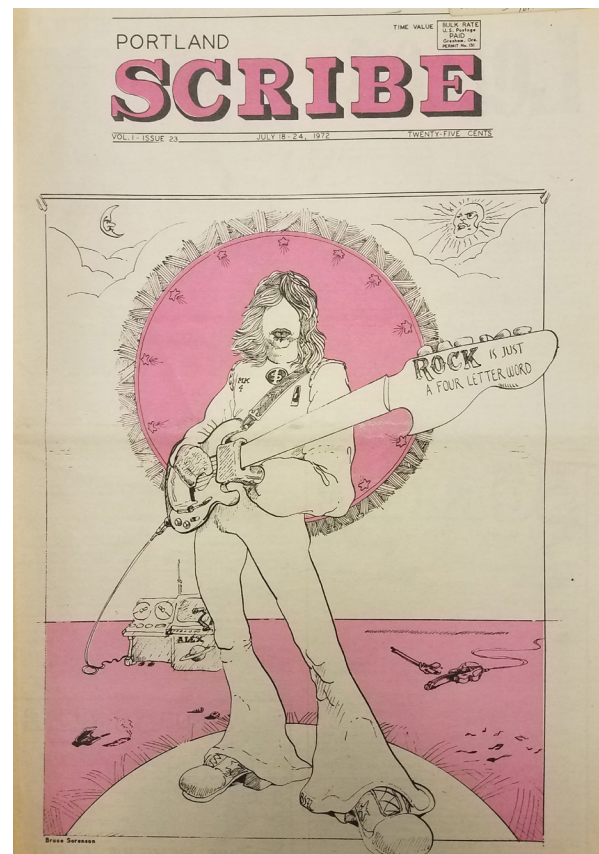
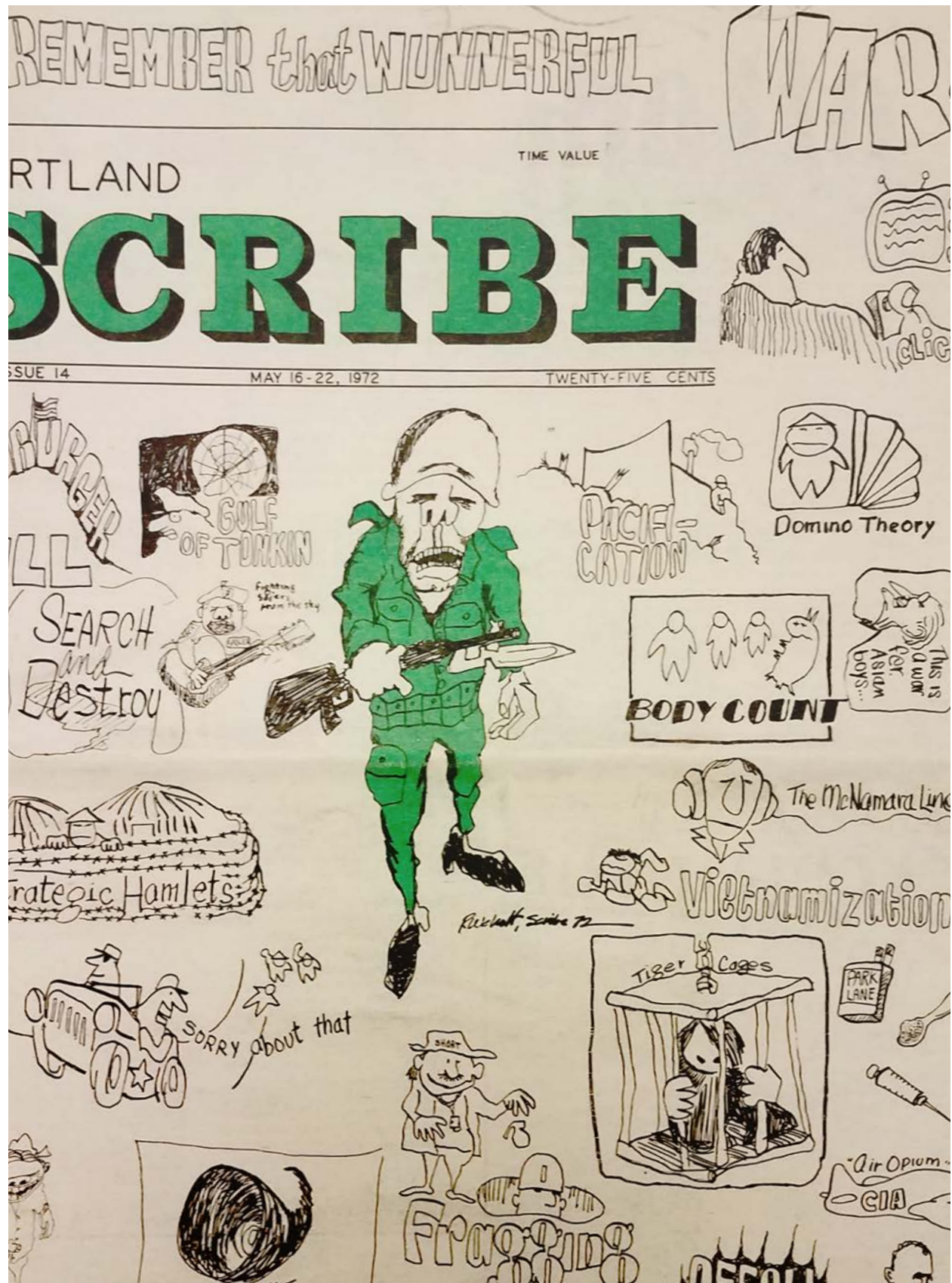
Inspiration was also shared around the office with a program in which the *Portland Scribe* and other similar publications from across the country (such as one based in Texas) would send each other copies to boost the quality of underground papers as a whole.

While the *Scribe* had some in-house artists and designers, many were freelance, which led to an ever-changing masthead from issue to issue. For example, in the annual women's issue the creatives listed in the masthead were nearly all women. Many freelancers were simply "paid in exposure," as the *Scribe* had a very slim budget which relied heavily on advertising fees due to the low purchase cost for each copy.

The process for creating issues of the *Scribe* was fast-paced, as it was a weekly newspaper. On Monday mornings, the core group of about fifteen people in the office would gather to discuss stories and decide what kind of content to pursue. Those in charge of opinion columns decided what was important that week. From there, content generation would continue throughout the week until Thursday evening, where everyone would come together to build the layouts for



Opposite: Calendar of Issue 17 (June 1972). Top Left: In-house KBOO ad from Issue One (February 1972). Bottom Left: Example of grid from Issue One (February 1972). Above: Experimental typography from Issue One (February 1972).



Opposite: Sketch-filled cover of Issue 14 (May 1972).
 Upper Left: Cartoon from Issue 10 (April 1972).
 Middle Left: Music-centric cover for Issue 23 (July 1972).
 Left: Unique takes on ice cream cones featured in the calendar of Issue 28 (August 1972). Top: Illustration critiquing the medical field in Issue 24 (July 1972). Above: Illustration from Issue 28 (August 1972).

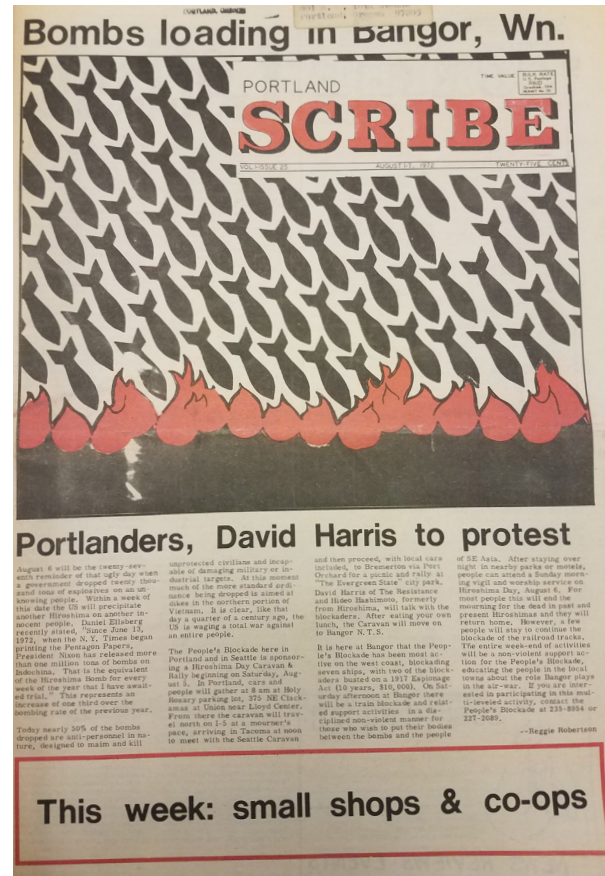
the issue, which was then driven to the printer early Friday mornings. The printshop that was used most frequently was Gresham Outlook, which also printed several other local publications.

The process of production began with the typewritten documents and hand-drawn artwork being taken to the production team. From here, the decision would be made whether to use the original artwork in the paper or have it outsourced and turned into a screenprint. After all of the content was decided on, the task of layout would begin following a basic protocol on what could be placed where. In the *Scribe* offices, there were 28 thick paper artboards that the paper documents would be affixed to using melted wax. Upon the publication's inception, Mary Wells used a process involving heating the wax in an electric skillet and applying the wax using a large brush. A subsequent production manager purchased an electric waxer for \$16 to streamline the process.

After the waxing process, boards were photographed, and photographs were driven to the print shop. The boards would be scraped clean after, in order to be reused for the next week.

Downfall

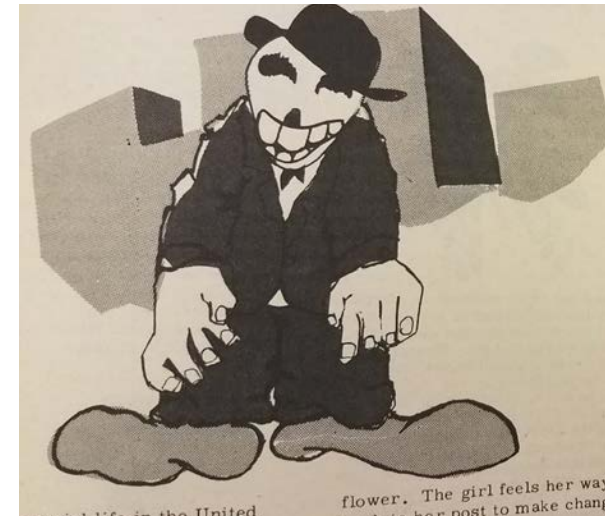
In 1974, Michael Wells was recruited to join a new publication, the *Willamette Week*. This left an opening that led certain employees in the *Scribe* offices to vie for control. What should have been a smooth transition, exploded into what has been described as “power struggles” and “coup d'états.” On top of these battles for the throne, there was also a significant amount of additional infighting, in which some employees would attempt to attack the character of their coworkers and ruin their workplace reputation. Eventually, in 1978, the IRS shut down the *Portland Scribe* due to a tax debt of \$3000, ending it with the same fate that its predecessor, the *Willamette Bridge*, suffered.



Legacy

Although the *Scribe's* life cycle wasn't very long, as Isserman says: “It proved that you can do a weekly alternative newspaper.” This was shown to be true when, in 1978, a group of Portlanders, inspired by the *Scribe* and led by David Milholland, decided that our city should not go on without a similar creative outlet, and founded the *Clinton Street Quarterly (CSQ)*. The *CSQ*, much like the *Scribe*, contained a mix of graphic styles with a unique sense of humor and was heavy on political editorials and stories. The *CSQ* expanded to include a Washington edition in 1982, which eventually melded back with the Oregon edition to form a single Northwest version of the publication.

The *Scribe's* spirit also lived on in some form through Michael Wells' involvement in the *Willamette Week*, which, although it started before the *Scribe* closed, could



Opposite: Bomb-filled cover of Issue 15 (August 1972).

Above: Charlie Chaplin illustration from Issue 18 (June 1972).

be viewed as the larger and more direct successor of the *Scribe*. It is also theorized that the *Willamette Week* was inspired by the *Scribe*, as they use a very similar structure, and follow a similar set of views and demographics.

In conclusion, although it ran into several hitches along the way, one of which claimed its life, the do-it-yourself, rebellious nature of the *Portland Scribe* left a huge impact on the community and continues to inspire artists, writers, and designers to this day. •

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Found Family

The Story of Mark Norrander and the Early Days of Portland Advertising

By Wolfgang Schildmeyer

Mark Norrander was a prominent Portland ad man back in the 1970s. He was a part of one of the most well-known graphic design studios in Portland and helped found an award-winning firm. Recently, I was given the opportunity to meet with Mark in person when I visited him at his home in Bainbridge, Washington to inquire about his life. I learned that Mark is extremely humble and pays great homage to the support he received on his path and the importance of community.

Maybe Mark's outlook towards life and his accomplishments came from his upbringing and early life spent during the Great Depression. Mark grew up on a poultry farm on the outskirts of the Portland in 1938 during the late years of the American Depression. Although he was too young to remember the heart of the Depression itself, he felt some of the effects of it all the same. One story he shared with me was the memories of him drawing as a child and the joy that it brought his mother. His mother would save the butcher paper

that came with the meat his family had purchased and clean it for Mark to draw on. It's this love of drawing at such a young age that Mark drew on later in life when he picked his career in graphic design. Mark had a strong desire to leave his hometown on the outskirts of Portland and find a different path than that of a chicken farmer.

Getting His Start

After spending time as a Marine, Mark returned home and pursued his love of drawing at the Museum Art School (now PNCA) in 1958. He attended for four years as a part-time student and worked at a gas station until his connections began to grow. One of his teachers, Doug Lynch, was in connection with a man named Porterfield who owned a display company that would build traveling exhibits. Porterfield asked Doug

Right: Mark during his agency days.





Should People Over 40 Be Sentenced To 30 Years' Hard Labor?

Handwritten mock-up for an advertisement. The text is written in a dense, cursive script. At the bottom right, there is a logo for "First Security Bank" with the tagline "Currently Giving 100%".



With An Ordinary Mortgage This Is The Last Thing You Pay For

Handwritten mock-up for an advertisement. The text is written in a dense, cursive script. At the bottom right, there is a logo for "First Security Bank" with the tagline "Currently Giving 100%".

Advertisement for Shurgard Self Storage. The headline reads "What To Give The Person Who Has Everything." Below the headline is a photograph of a large, empty storage unit. To the right of the photo is a block of text describing the benefits of self-storage. At the bottom, there is a logo for "SHURGARD SELF STORAGE" and a list of locations.



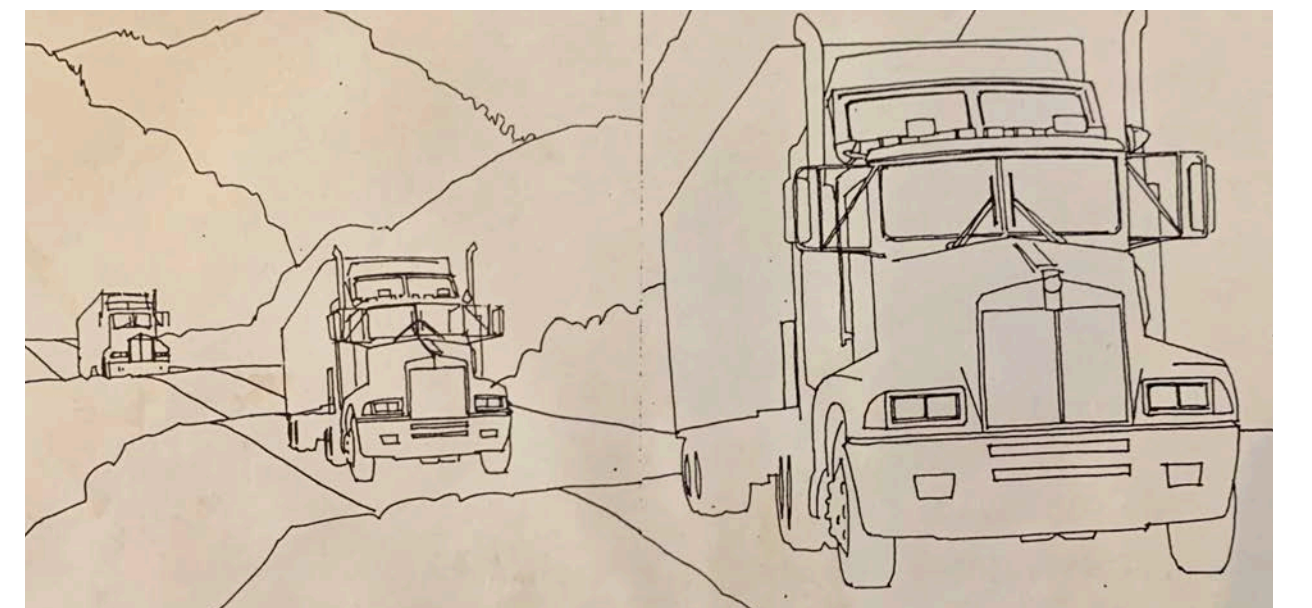
if he knew anyone who could give him a helping hand, and through that connection Mark got a job working on the traveling exhibits. Mark says he would do a little designing, as well as a little manual labor, but he had his foot in the door. Doug Lynch was also in contact with a man name Jack Myers. Jack Myers ran Studio 1030, a prominent freelancers co-working studio, and when Mark was working for Porterfield, one of the offices opened up. Again Doug recommended Mark as being a good fit. This is how Mark became a part of Studio 1030 and that, he says, made his career.

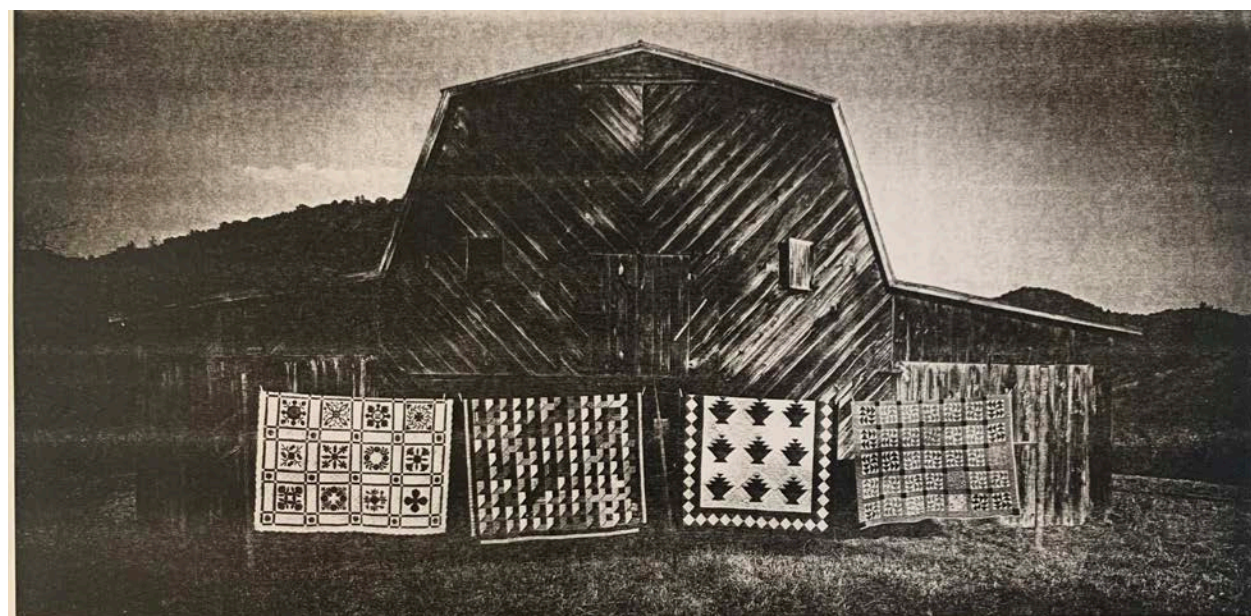
Once he was a part of Studio 1030, Mark's social circle and community of graphic artists began to grow. Mark said to me, "When you get out of art school, graphic design, you can't do anything! Nobody is going to go say, 'You're a genius go design this'". Mark's first major design projects came through his community at Studio 1030, handed down to him by Jack Myers and his assistant from big Portland agencies like Cole & Weber and McCann Erickson. Mark would do mechanical paste ups under the watchful eye of Jack Myers who would be extremely critical and have Mark do them over a few times until he got it right. After working on mechanicals with the help of Jack over time, Mark became pretty good at them. The mechanicals became

accurate and Mark learned how to count type through his work. Before too long the Art Directors at each of the agencies in town knew who Mark was and he started getting comprehensive layout jobs from them. They would hand-off the copy and a thumbnail photo for an advertisement and tell him who it would be for and he would take it from there.

Before too long, Cole & Weber came to the conclusion, "Why hire Mark through the studio when we can just hire him directly?" At first, Mark said it was "a bull pen situation" at Cole & Weber where he was mainly doing mechanicals and some layouts. This went on for a year or so before McCann Erickson made Mark an offer he couldn't refuse as an Art Director. After some time at McCann Erickson working on various jobs for companies like Georgia Pacific and Western Wood Products Association, Cole & Weber hired Mark back for more money. "What was I supposed to do? Of course I'll go work for you for a few more thousand dollars." It was

Top Left: Mock ups that Mark created for an advertising layout done by hand. Bottom Left: a finished print advertisement by Mark. Bottom Right: Album cover designed by Mark. Below: Mark's mock up that he completed by hand for a trucking company.





In North Carolina, some of our greatest works of art never hang in a museum.

Dove-In-The-Window
Star of Bethlehem, Wild Goose
Chase, Wedding Ring
High in the North Carolina

mountains, quilts are made to be purely practical. Yet their ageless patterns make them purely beautiful. Quilts

however, are just one expression of our highland artistry. Some people can put their penknife to a block of sugar

maple and magically reveal the form of a wild turkey or a good hunting dog.

Others make sturdy pots with glazes as guardedly secret as prized family recipes. And still others display

their art in jars of jam and jelly or in jugs of amber apple cider found at roadside stands.

Wherever you travel from our mountains to our shore, you'll be certain to find art that exhibits itself proudly

So, if you're the kind of person who appreciates finer things you really don't have to visit the museums.

Come to North Carolina, and visit us instead.

North Carolina

Columbia Sportswear 1979

PREVIEW PAD

Advance drawings and notes on Columbia Sportswear's newest ideas for Fall and Spring active apparel.

Mac Pherson Mt. Parka

Trim fitting but super functional. No hood. Lined with 80% wool/20% nylon blend. Big, bold repeat plaid pattern, very busy.

Shell: Long-lasting 65% Polyester/35% Cotton with oversized #7 zipper. Contrasty narrow waist corduroy echos plaid colors.

Pockets: One vertical zip breast, top 2-way cargo handwarming, one zippered interior breast.

STYLE NO. 1606
MAC PHERSON PARKA (Men's)
Sizes: XS, S, M, L, XL
Shell Colors: Navy, Forest Green, Tan, Rust, Royal, Silver
Lining Colors: Blue & Green Plaid, Rust & Royal Plaid
Cost: \$36.00
Delivery: Fall '79

STYLE NO. 1706
MAC PHERSON PARKA (Women's)
Sizes: S (6-8), M (10-12), L (14-16)
Shell Colors: Navy, Forest Green, Tan, Rust, Royal, Silver
Lining Colors: Blue & Green Plaid, Rust & Royal Plaid
Cost: \$36.00
Delivery: Fall '79

at McCann Erickson that Mark was put into contact with copywriter Bill Borders.

Taking a Leap of Faith

Bill Borders and West Perrin, both employees at McCann Erickson, decided to split off from the company in 1977 and start their own agency. They invited Mark to come with. Taking a leap of faith, Borders Perrin and Norrander, or BPN, was founded in 1977. Mark is quick to bring up how important his teammates were during the growth of the company and how it couldn't have happened without them. Facing the trials that all new companies face, BPN pushed through and became a prominent ad agency that is still around today!

When I asked Mark what his favorite projects were he brought up two different clients. First, Mark reflects on a project of his that BPN did for Washington State

Lottery. The ad campaign headline was, "Some lucky dog's gonna win it." Mark talked fondly about one commercial with a smile on his face. It was TV commercial that was shot in a old train car that was turned into a diner. Mark positioned a line of customers sitting on the stools, and then had the director crop in so only part of their backs down to their butts was showing. The shot panned along the row of people while this "spokesperson," dressed as a waiter, working at the diner gave a talk about the lottery. When the camera got to the end, the spokesperson says, "And some lucky dog's gonna win it." The final customer sitting at the diner has a dog tail that is wagging back and forward.

Top Left: A group photo of Borders Perrin and Norrander. Bottom Left: An advertisement that BPN created for NC travel. Above: Pages from an advertisement book for Columbia that BPN created showcasing some of their new styles.



The other client that Mark brought up was working for Columbia Sportswear. He wasn't completely sure how they acquired the account, but has a feeling that someone referred their account executive West Perrin to them. He does recall that it was in the beginning of Columbia starting up. They were using GORE-TEX when no other company was and that helped set them apart from the competition. A recent article from Travel Oregon about Gert Boyle (Columbia President and daughter of the founder) talked about how BPN played a role in the early days of Columbia. "About those advertisements: In 1984 Portland ad agency Borders Perrin and Norrandner launched a campaign that would last more than two decades and put Gert's per-

sonality on an international stage, 'To be really frank,' Gert told *AdAge* magazine, 'how many ways can you make a coat? There's a front, back and two sleeves.' Advertising was Columbia's path to originality." Together with Columbia, BPN won many awards and had write ups in magazines and newspapers such as *Communication Arts* and *New York Times*. They opened up a second office in Seattle, and Mark moved nearby, to Bainbridge Island to man that branch of the office. Mark retired from BPN in 1990 and the company went on without him.

The Finer Things

I asked Mark why he retired, as to his coworkers, it seemed sudden. He simply said that he felt the company had run its course for him and it was time. Post-retirement, Mark resided Bainbridge Island where he spent years fly-fishing and building boats, while also taking up fine art. He taught himself how to paint with tempera, a painting technique that uses eggs to bind the pigment to the surface. Using this style, Mark reconnected with his youthful mindset of creating art for the sake of art, because it brought him joy. He painted abstract works that were based on landscapes. He would make these paintings in a painstakingly long process using the smallest brush he had and making individual strokes until it filled up the canvas. It almost felt like a form of meditation. Mark created over one hundred paintings, having art shows at a local gallery in Bainbridge until he felt that had run its course as well.



I get the sense that currently Mark lives a peaceful life. He stayed involved with the Portland design community over the years, making trips to the city here and there to visit. When I asked him if he had any regrets he said that he didn't. But I felt a longing from him when I asked about his friends and fellow designers. "I'm one of the only ones left alive," he relayed and his eyes grew

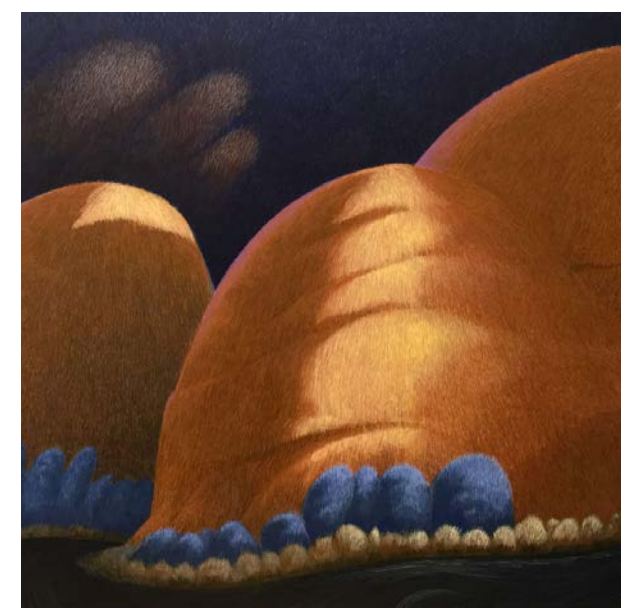
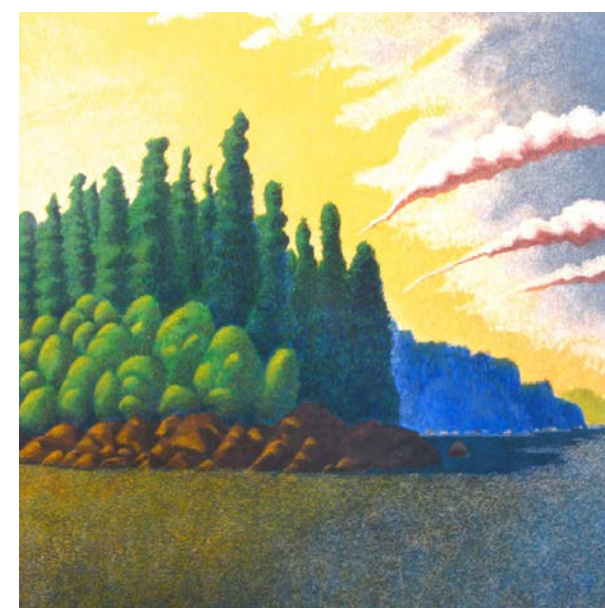
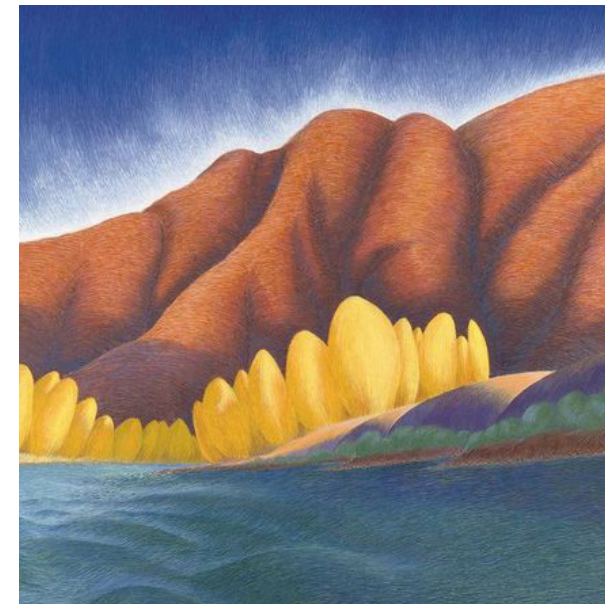
Left: Mark Norrandner fly fishing in one of his favorite spots.
Above: A boat that Mark built himself.

Mark Norrander



New Work

gallery
FRAGA

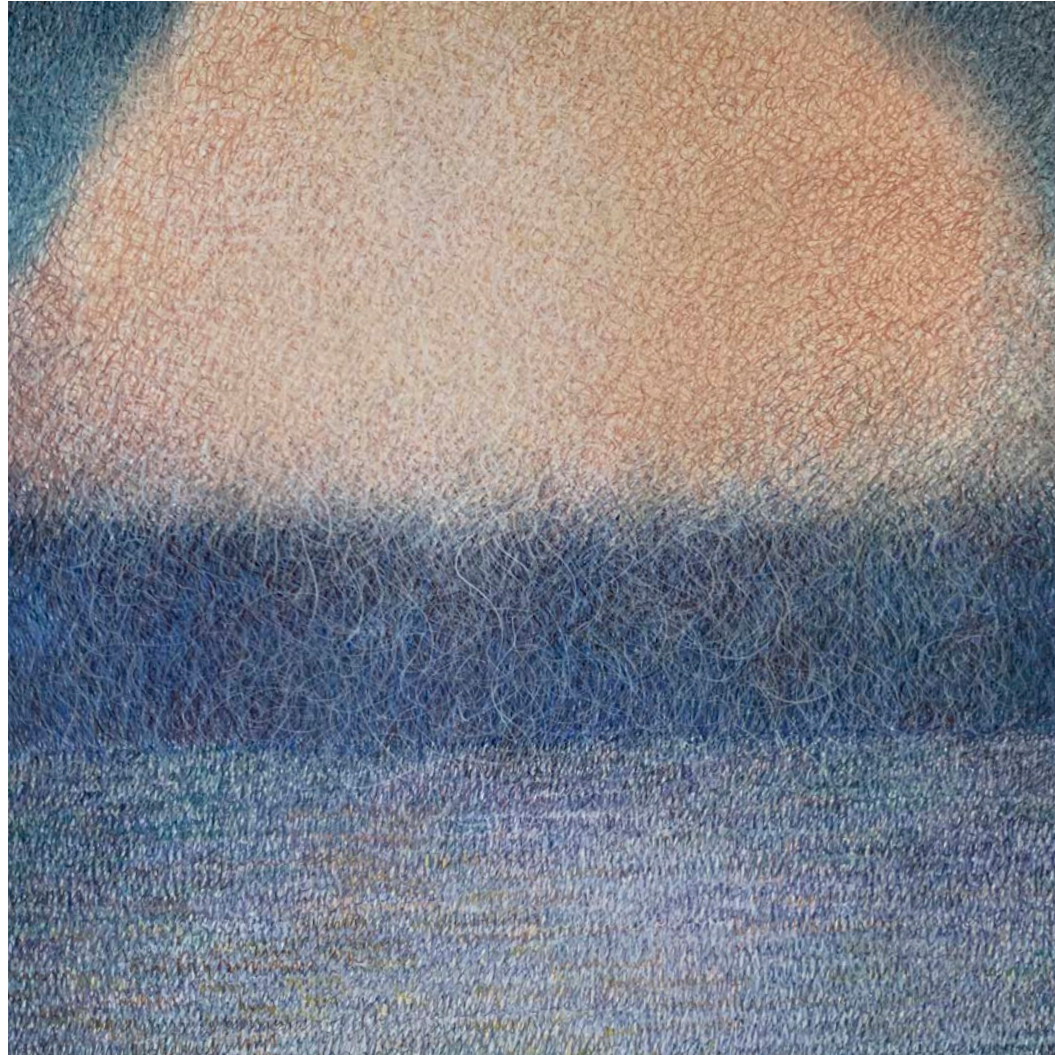


slightly more distant. This is completely understandable. When you build the community and friendships that Mark did with the people you work with, it's hard not to miss them. When you give them credit for your success, and they are your fly-fishing partners, they become more than just friends, they become family.

I was fortunate enough to have a conversation with Mark in his apartment where he currently lives with his wife. It's in a small, sleepy town and the apartment itself is nice and feels humble for a man that has accomplished as much as Mark. There is a collection of

artwork that hangs around Mark's place that he gave me a tour of. Most of it is work that he has created over the years after his retirement but there is also a portion of his collection that is from friends that he acquired at Studio 1030 and working at BPN. They are mementos of emotion and tokens of connection. They are hung around his apartment with pride.

Left: A handout advertising some of Mark's new work that was showcased at the Gallery Fraga. Above: Four paintings that Mark created after retirement.



Mark Norrander was one of the most successful and thoughtful people I have had the opportunity to talk with. He illustrates an important point to me, that the idea of a lone artist working in isolation is a romanticized reality that doesn't exist. We all draw on outside inspiration and resources to create and grow. We are nothing without our friends and family, blood family or found family and they can make life exponentially easier. That community is an important thing for a career but also for us as humans to live fulfilling lives. •

Above: Mark's painting made in retirement.
Right: Mark building a boat in his spare time.

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A Designer's Impact

The Career and Life of Joe Erceg

By Nicola Cheadle

Joe Erceg was a graphic designer and an influential figure in the design community who shaped Portland's design history. Joe's career spanned from 1956 up until 2014. He was also a photographer, box art assemblage artist and neon sign collector. Joe's career was several decades-long and he did a variety of freelance work for dozens of clients in Portland that touched many lives.

Early Life

Joe grew up during the Great Depression. His parents were poor and not native English speakers who had traveled from Croatia with their eldest child, Millie, to Portland. The rest of Joe's siblings excluding Millie and Mary, who was born in Pennsylvania, were born and raised in Portland. He had seven older sisters and one younger brother. Joe attended Central Catholic High School and for college he attended the University of Portland where he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in History. He then served in the Army, and



after his discharge, he used the GI Bill to pay tuition at the Museum Art School (now PNCA), where he was a professor later in his life. Joe spent time after school at Artworks Associates during 1955-56. Joe states in a 2014 interview, "When I finished my college work and

my classes at the museum, they asked me if I wanted to become an apprentice in Artwork Associates. That was a big thing and I made a whole 85 cents an hour." 85 cents an hour is so different from the current minimum wage standard and casts a nostalgic light on Portland in the 1950s. Before Joe discovered graphic design he was very interested in automobile design. He wrote to the Los Angeles Art Center, showed them his automobile sketches, and asked whether he was good enough to be accepted. He was good enough, they said, but he was not going to move to Los Angeles. Instead, he took his work to the Museum Art School and was advised by the dean to take a graphic design course. Joe found he loved graphic design within only a few days in the

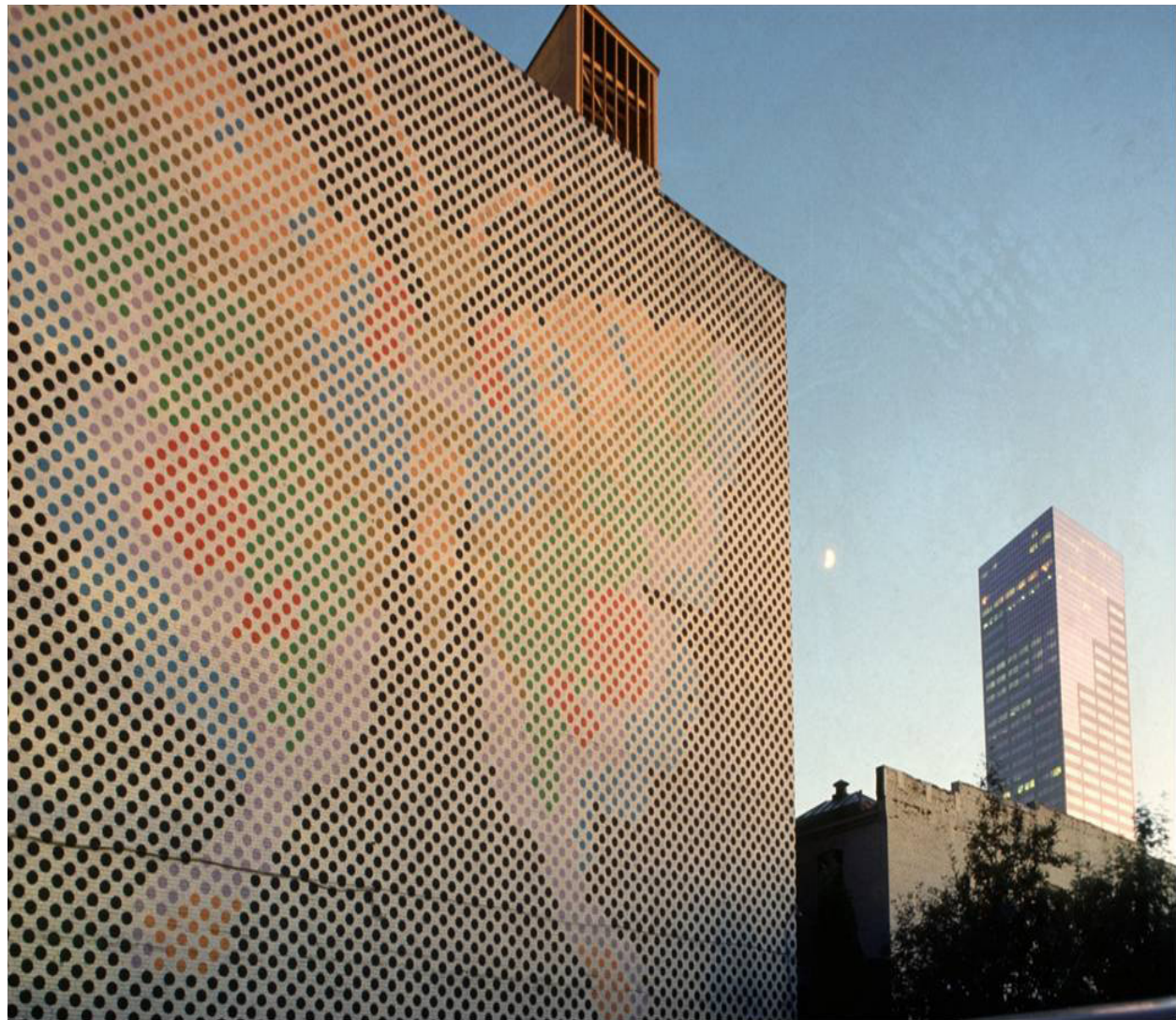


course and did not look back. As a student, Joe worked under Doug Lynch at Doug Lynch and Associates. Doug Lynch was a prominent designer and teacher in Portland. Joe was a member of Studio 1030, an influential design studio in the 1960s. Studio 1030 was stationed right across from Powell's Books.

Joe was married to Elsa Warnick in 1968 and the couple welcomed their son Matt in 1973 and their son Milan in 1975. Matt became a graphic designer and worked with his father on and off for 25 years. He first started working at his father's office in the summer of 1990 and came to work full time after graduating high school in 1991. Joe's design business was one of the last to switch to digital design when computers overtook the industry. When they made the switch, it was gradual with Matt taking over the computer work and Joe directing the projects and making paste ups for Matt to take and digitize into the computer. Because Matt was working digitally for him, Joe decided not to switch to computer design and worked on his own method until he retired in 2014. As a working designer, Joe worked with a lot of schools and colleges like Lewis and Clark and the University of Portland, as well designed for



Bottom Left: Young Joe Erceg as a student. Bottom Right: Joe's Design for the Portland Junior Symphony's concert pamphlet. Top Right: One of Joe's assemblage boxes.



the Portland Junior Symphony Orchestra by winning a contest to design the symphony's pamphlet.

Joe was also known for being one of the first Portland designers who worked with Helvetica, a mostly unknown typeface to Portland at the time. He was introduced to Helvetica and Swiss Modernism by Irwin McFadden, a type designer. Joe applied this style of modernism to his work, a prime example would be his work for Air West.

His Prominent Works

One of Joe's more prominent and known works was the *Butterfly Mural* in Old Town on a building owned

by Bill Naito. Bill wanted a mural created on the north side of the Fleischner Block Building so people driving over the Steel Bridge would see it. Joe was chosen from several working artists/designers around town, one being his own wife, who created designs for the mural competition. Joe's design was a butterfly done in a pointillism style, and was so admirable that he was awarded the "Politzer Prize" by Charles Politz, a Portland designer. His mural stood from 1976 until 2000.

Joe was a talented photographer, showing in galleries, shooting events, and studying the craft. He attended the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in Washington D.C. on August 28, 1963 and his

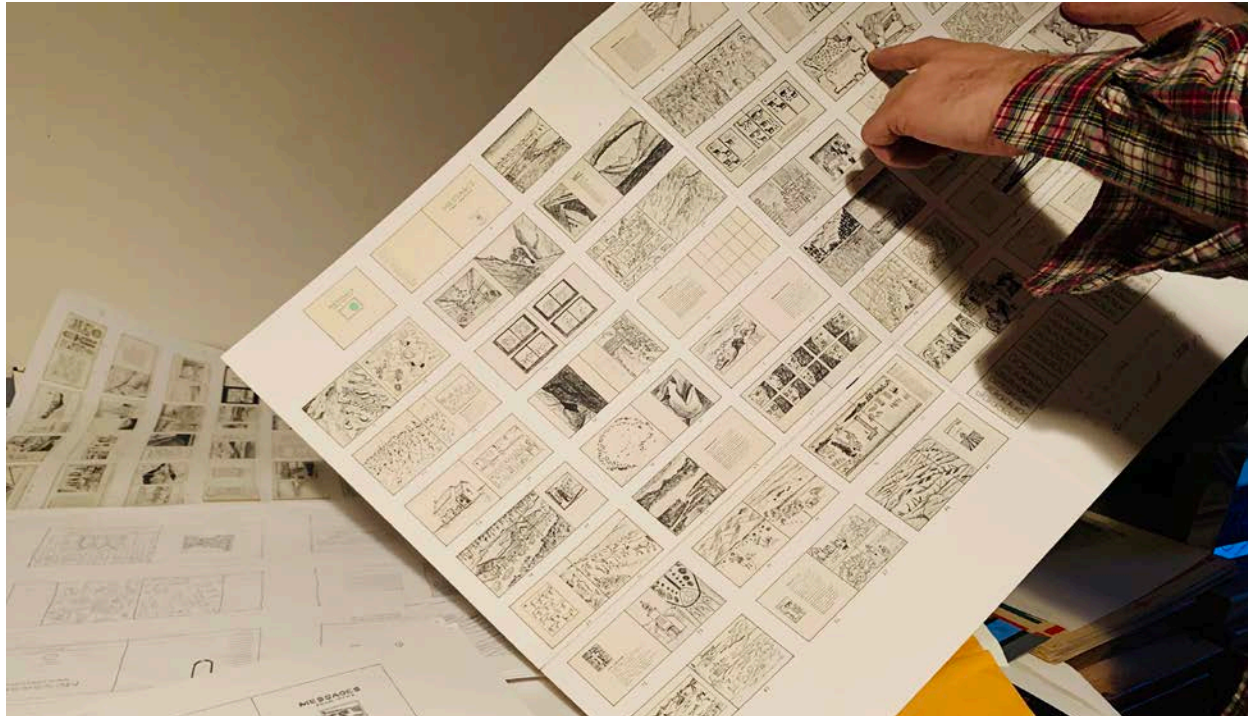


photographs were later used in a publication about the march. Additionally, he designed a book of his own photography showcasing places around Portland that was published and can be found in the Multnomah County Central Library. Joe studied with prominent photographer Minor White in 1966 by taking his photography workshop. Minor White was a modernist American photographer who worked in black and white and had shot many Portland scenarios as a part



of the Works Progress Administration in the 1930s. Joe was involved in the making of the logo and branding of the prominent airline company, Air West. Air West was an airline that operated in the western United States and was the result of three other airlines merging. Those three airlines were Pacific Airlines, Bonanza Airlines and West Coast Airlines. Joe was brought on to redesign the logo and create the whole brand including products such as napkins, coffee sleeves, brochures, tickets, pamphlets, etc. When looking at all the pieces together, you can see the strength in the designs and common theme that each piece carried from the color

Opposite Page: Butterfly mural. Top Left: Air West model plane. Bottom Left: Air West pamphlet. Top Right: Air West letterhead and envelopes.



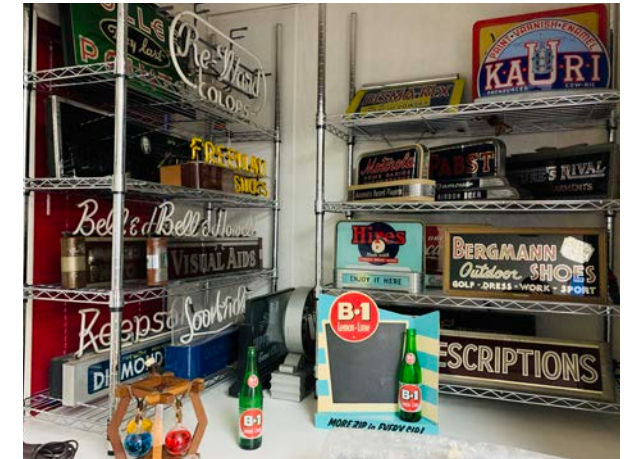
palette to the typeface and hierarchy. Even the texture and color of the paper carries a nostalgic feel. Originally Joe's brother Donald (also a designer) designed West Coast Airlines logo and Joe designed a calendar for West Coast Airlines. Eventually, the company was changed to Hughes Airwest in 1971 and was rebranded for a third time with another designer. When Matt showed me the Hughes West branding, I thought it didn't compare to Joe's work.

A large part of Joe's career was work done behind the scenes. He created beautiful, yet simple work, and passed his knowledge on. Fellow designer and Joe's student, Mel Ulven put it best when he stated "Joe Erceg was a teacher, and the absolute designer's designer. He made a distinction between himself and teachers who could just draw." It is interesting that he made that distinction, as the skills can overlap. After seeing Joe's sketchbooks from his time as a student it is clear that he could draw. Joe often gave lectures at schools such as Portland State University and taught design at the Museum Art School. Joe's work was often not flashy,

but functional. That isn't to say that his work is not visually attractive, he had a keen eye for color usage and he excelled at type layout. He used these skills to design magazines and books. One such magazine that Joe worked on was the *Portland* magazine for the University of Portland. He was the magazine's art director. He handled the design, layout, typography, grid system, cover page, feel of the pages and photography. He worked with the staff photographer and freelance illustrators. He was very hands on and put much effort and time into each edition of the magazine. Working alongside Joe on the publication for many years was Brian Doyle, a renowned Portland author. Joe began working for the *Portland* magazine in 1986. Brian began working with him on the magazine in 1993. The two worked together for 24 years. They had a creative and productive work relationship, despite both having the tendency to be stubborn. Their partnership ended when Brian Doyle was diagnosed with a brain tumor in November 2017 and could no longer work. He passed away on May 27, 2017. Joe retired not long after.

Joe worked in book design. One of the books he designed was called *Messages from Montana*. His original storyboards are stored safely in an art drawer at Matt's house along with many other works-in-progress. All his work over the decades had different styles and functions but all look well-designed. One of these was the work he created was the original Lloyd Center logo. Joe was hired to update the logo and introduced it with a full page ad in the *Sunday Oregonian*. His work was seen on everything from ads to napkins. Aside from work that was done for his design business, I saw from just walking through Joe's home that he did a large amount of work for himself, close friends and family. Matt joked to me that his father was originally an assemblage box artist that took a break for 60 years to be a graphic designer. That form of art was definitely a passion for and Matt. The upstairs has many assemblage boxes Joe created over the years that are very creative, interesting, well-made and thought-provoking. Looking at them makes you want to understand the message and the mind behind the work. He had a "light" theme, not just in his box art, by using bulbs and wires, but also in his neon signs collecting. His box art and neon signs were a personal hobby, but had a whole life of their own and showed another side of Joe's personality and love of knick knacks.

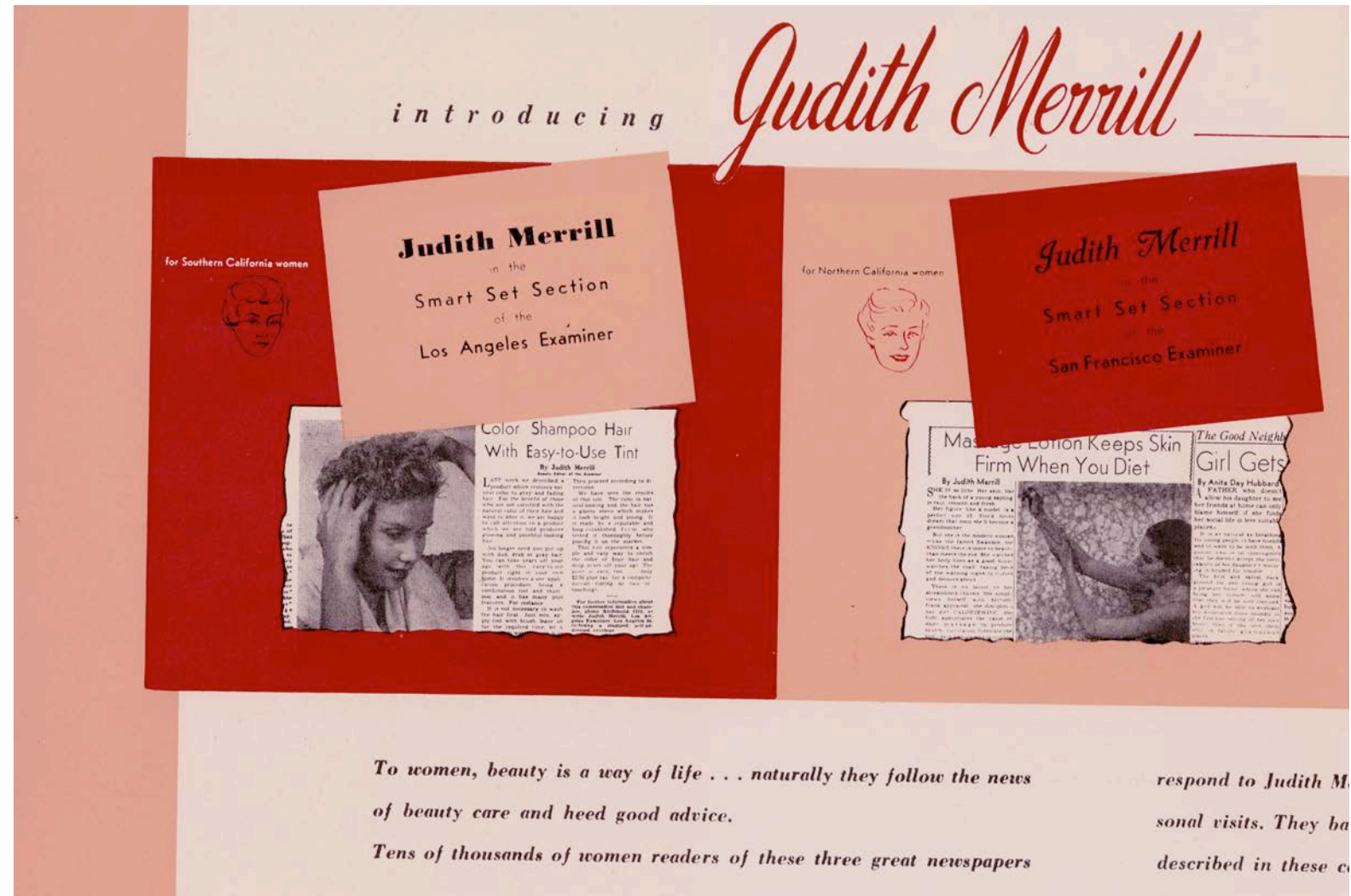
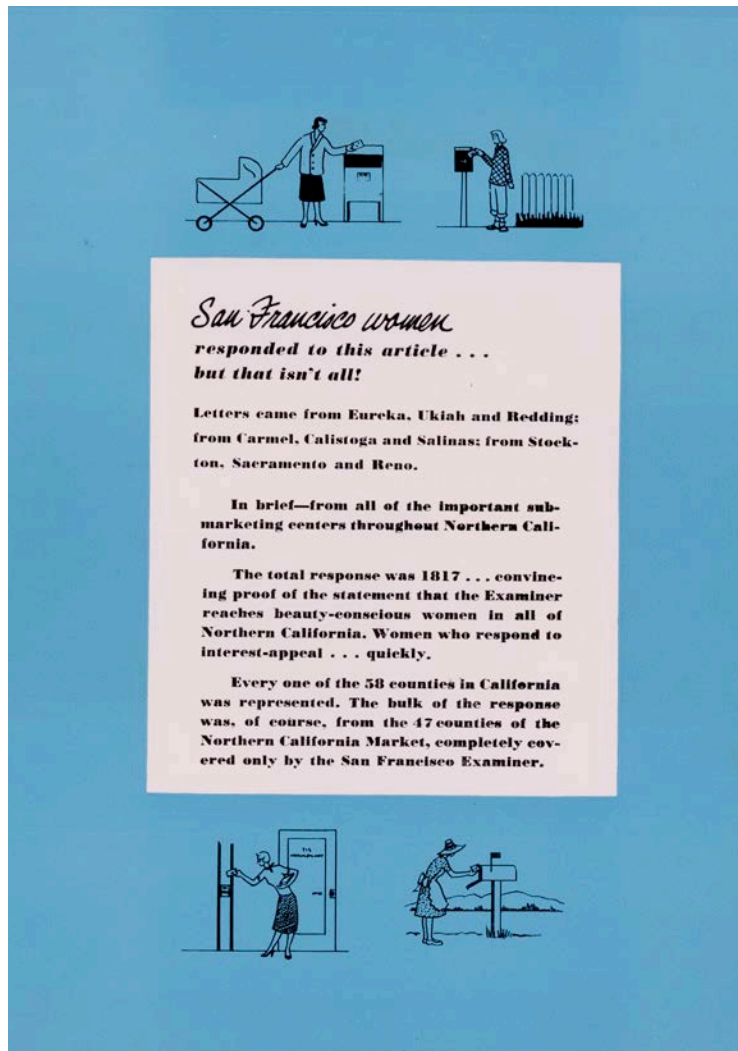
From when he started as just a student until he retired, Joe Erceg was known as a "no frills designer" that had a powerful impact on Portland design history. His quiet demeanor did not overshadow his stunning work. The classes he took at Museum Art School set Joe on a path that allowed his amazing work to unfold. His work with schools such as PNCA, companies like Lloyd Center, Air West Airlines and paper companies such as Columbia paper had a lasting impact. •



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Top Left: Joe's design layout sketches for the book, *Messages from Montana*. Top Right: A portion of Joe's neon sign collection.



workforce. It was this gap that helped enable Marilyn and her friends to quickly acquire work in their field.

Within a month of arriving, Marilyn landed her first job in California at Hubbard and Baird, a commercial art studio. Harley Jessup, a student of Marilyn's later in life, remembers her stories from this period. "She mentioned that as the only woman in the office she would inevitably be expected to make the coffee in the morning. She felt she had no choice but to put up with it. Her patience with that kind of nonsense was long gone by the time I met her and I loved hearing her articulately correct a client who was talking down to her."

Not one to stand still for long, Marilyn jumped around from job to job every year or so — from advertising agencies to print shops to newspapers — earning rave reviews along the way. But the job changes were not always Marilyn's decision. Her boss at one advertising agency during this period called her into his office and laid her off without warning. "I need someone I can talk football with," he explained. The San Francisco 49ers had just been founded and in the days before Title VII (which was passed in 1964) you could indeed fire someone simply based on their sex (or sports preference, apparently).

Joan relates, "In retrospect, she realized that there were aspects of the (working) climate that were wrong." But, what was certainly a setback didn't derail Marilyn. It seems as though there was always work to be had, and Marilyn had talent and experience on her side.

She settled with Hearst Advertising in 1951, the same year that the notorious proprietor of the company, William Randolph Hearst, died. Hearst Advertising was the advertising arm of the *San Francisco Examiner*, a daily newspaper. Marilyn was creating illustrations for clients such as Saks, Revlon and other fashion and retail advertisers. This was a time when women were mostly

Top Left: Print piece Marilyn designed promoting The Examiner as good place to advertise to women." Top Right: Print piece Marilyn designed for Judith Miller, "beauty consultant to a million and a half Pacific Coast women."

Marilyn knew she wanted to be an artist, and her parents encouraged her, even as war broke out in Europe. Marilyn graduated from high school in 1940, with optimism, talent and a dream.

Marilyn had decided to attend the University of Oregon (UO) and major in drawing and painting. Now known by her nickname, Miki, Marilyn was described as vivacious, and exuded confidence with her Judy Garland-esque haircut. Joan recalls that Marilyn's father "...was very supportive of her attending UO. But one time she got quite tipsy at a holiday dance and threw up in the potted palm tree in the lobby of the Multnomah Hotel, today an Embassy Suites. 'Never again' he said, or he'd withdraw her college fund." It is unknown if she actually heeded her father's warning, but it is clear from her records that Marilyn didn't let a good time get in the way of her studies, and vice versa.

She distinguished herself right away, becoming president of the Association of Women Students and vice-president of Alpha Chi Omega Sorority. She was recognized by the Motar Board (an honor society for women) as an outstanding student in scholarship, leadership, and service.

By 1943, men were leaving for war and women were stepping up to take their places in all facets of life, on campus and off. Marilyn graduated in 1944, and with all of her leadership and business experience, she was ready for the workplace.

Her first job out of school was for *The Oregon Journal* (Portland's daily newspaper until 1982) as a "promotion artist". While trained as a fine artist, at *The Oregon Journal* she tried her hand a wide variety of projects in this new realm of graphic arts. According to a letter of recommendation from her supervisor, "At

The Journal Marilyn did newspaper layouts, black and white drawings for advertising and editorial use, designed direct mail pieces in color, made posters and did book illustrations. She is a capable commercial artist with a varied experience. Without reservations I can commend her for employment."

In 1946, after two years with *The Journal*, Marilyn left the safety of her Portland home and her stable job to be a "big city career girl" in San Francisco.

A Woman Before Her Time

With newfound confidence in her role as a promotion artist, Marilyn and a handful of girlfriends from college set out for San Francisco. The friends all lived together in a house in the Mission District. It was 1946 and many of the men returning from war went straight to college thanks to the GI Bill, leaving a gap in the

used to design and sell things made for other women. Joan says, “She would model shoes for The Examiner because she had tiny size 5½ feet. She had a TON of shoes!” When she finally left The Examiner in 1958, her colleagues presented her with a going away present: “one of her peep-toe pumps, bronzed and mounted on a plaque in her honor.” Marilyn was very proud of her early years with the paper and held on to that plaque her whole life.

Marilyn and her girlfriends were very close in those early days, in a new city with their new careers. The post-war years were all about booming advertising agencies, martinis, and bridge parties. As years went on, the girls started to get married (three of them even shared the same wedding dress, in the frugal post-war years). Marilyn herself married Frank Holsinger in 1949 and in 1956, moved out to a mid-century modern house in Marin County, where she had her daughter. But her marriage didn't last and Marilyn decided her days as a “big city career girl” in San Francisco were over. A newly single mother, she packed up her Hillman (gasp what a beauty!) and drove with Joan from Marin back to Portland in 1959.

Becoming Marvelous

Once in Portland, Marilyn had the support of her retired parents who, along with subsidized daycare, cared for Joan, enabling her to continue her career. This may be common practice for working women now, but was rare for 1960. Her Portland career in the 60s was short, but boy was she busy! In the five years after returning from San Francisco, she worked at three different jobs, acquired her masters degree, and maintained freelance clients and a board position for the Portland Art Directors Club, all while raising a daughter.

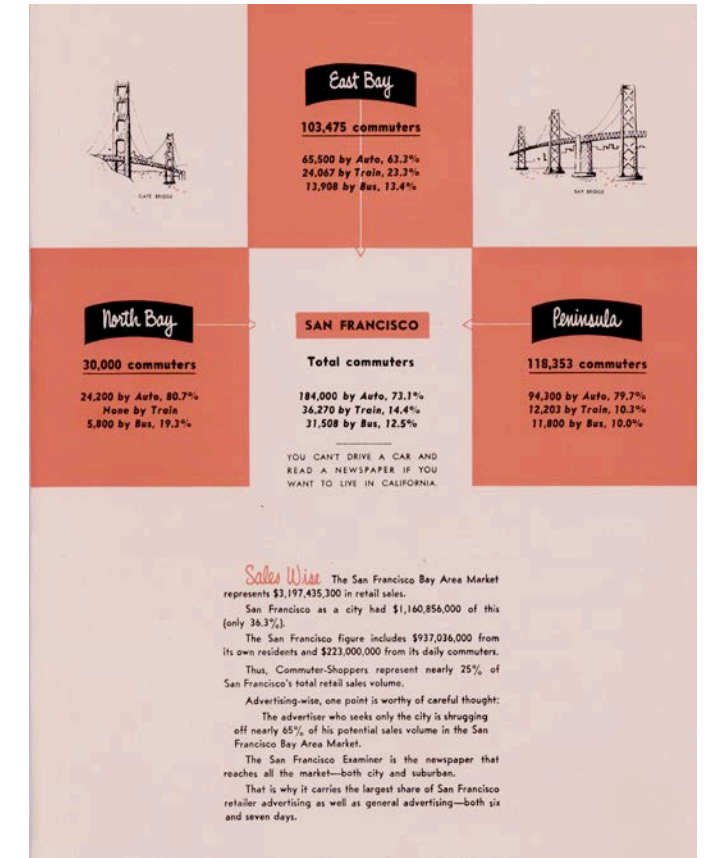
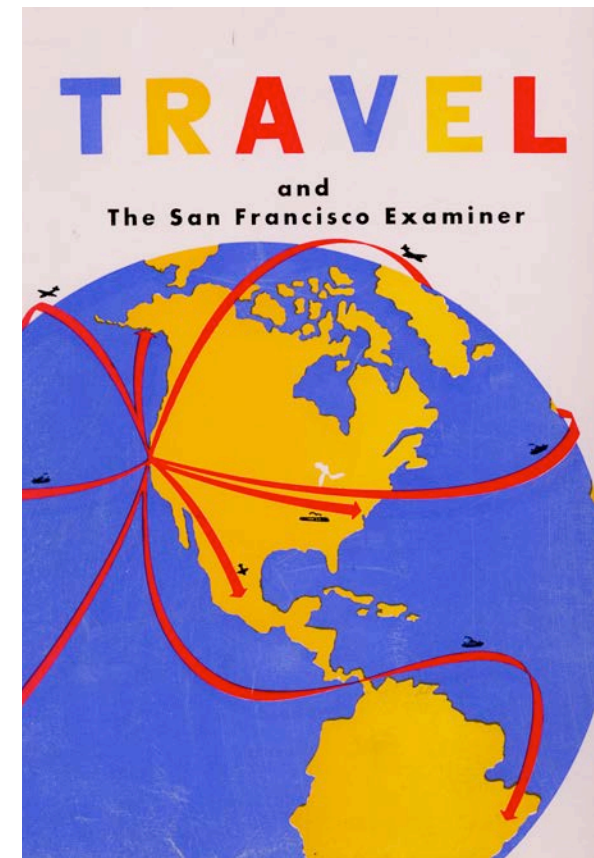
Her first official job in Portland was with Studio 1030. If you've been following this series, you know that Studio 1030 was a collective of independent designers,

illustrators, photographers, etc. who managed their own projects, but also collaborated collectively. Marilyn was the sole woman at Studio 1030.

Her duties there ran the gamut from receptionist to project manager, to assistant to the art director. On her resume, she called herself a graphic designer, which



is likely the position she sought at the time. After all, Marilyn was not a beginner. With her slim figure, short hair and cat eye glasses, Marilyn had already been a working designer for 15 years. She had taken San Francisco by storm, working for some of the top agencies during the post-war years. But in Portland, at Studio 1030, she was relegated mostly to admin duties, squeezing in time at the drawing board when she could. It's possible that moving to Portland set her career back a notch. There were fewer woman in the design industry in Portland compared to San Francisco. It was 1960 and *The Feminine Mystique* had yet to be published. “The struggle to be recognized and be taken seriously as a professional is the desire, the goal and motivation of a designer,” Marilyn said in a 1978 article, reflecting on her work. It is hard to know if her sentiment applied more so to her as a woman, or more generally as an artist in the newly defined field of commercial arts.



Opposite Page: Marilyn on her return to the Northwest. Top: Print pieces Marilyn designed for The Examiner. Left: Layout comp for a Revlon ad designed by Marilyn. Above: Marilyn as receptionist at Studio 1030.



Studio 1030 produced promotional sheets for all their artists, and thanks to Joan, I now have the full collection! The promotional sheet about Marilyn states, “Marvelous Marilyn: Studio 1030’s only woman artist, Marilyn Holsinger, alternates between the telephone and the drawing board. Marilyn is the Studio’s receptionist and assistant to Jack Myers, Executive Art Director. Marilyn keeps tabs on the work being done by the other 14 artists at Studio 1030, so that she can answer clients’ questions and type the invoices. In addition to assembly, Marilyn orders typography, photo-stats, and generally combines all the elements which go in to the final mechanical.”

While not fully recognized for her own design work, given her many duties and the collaborative nature of the studio, Marilyn made good friends and valuable

connections at Studio 1030. Then she jumped around again, working as an illustrator for Ken Weber Advertising in 1961, and in the advertising department at iconic Oregon retailer Meier and Frank in 1962.

Marilyn’s career trajectory changed in 1963 when she was awarded the Ford Foundation Fellowship, which allowed her to get an accelerated Master’s Degree (MAT) at Reed College in teaching art. There, she was taught by famed Reed professor Lloyd Reynolds. Like other Portland Design History interviewees, Marilyn cited Lloyd Reynolds as a strong influence. His calligraphy class turned her on to a whole different aspect of her profession. “That changed her life forever,” Joan says, “she became a wonderful calligrapher. It became her avocation and her love.” In a Reed college article, Marilyn is quoted as saying, “Having Lloyd Reynolds

as my teacher not only gave my artwork a new skill (calligraphy), but also gave me a fulfilling new philosophy of life.” Her friendship with Lloyd Reynolds lasted long after she graduated, and she regularly attended workshops and retreats with him decades later.

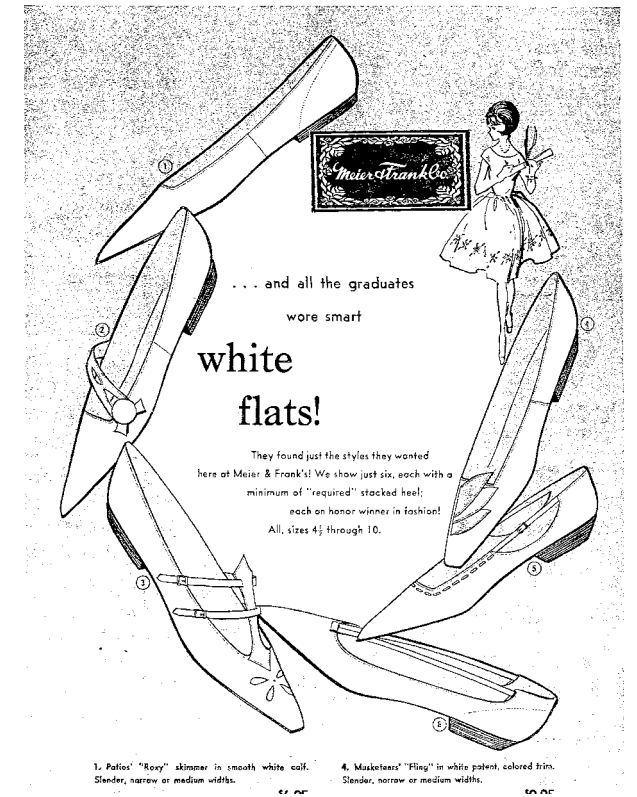
It was also during this time when Marilyn fell in love with teaching. She began teaching evening classes, while still working as a freelancer in Portland, and raising Joan.

She achieved her masters degree in 1964 and she left Portland for a federally-funded grant program, creating graphics for Teaching Research at Western Oregon University in Monmouth, and then landed the publications designer position at Oregon State University (OSU) in Corvallis in 1970, which is where she stayed for 10 years. Marilyn was finally setting down roots.

Bouncing the Letters

At OSU, she was responsible for the design, production and art direction of promotional and internal publications, including the typographic logo the university used throughout the 70s, and book covers for the OSU press. She often incorporated her knowledge of calligraphy into her work. On publication design, Marilyn was quoted in a 1978 article as saying, “Publications usually serve two purposes, promotional and usefulness. The challenge is to take an idea in a disorganized state and change it into an attractive publication that people want to read.” On finding inspiration, the article relates, “Some of her ideas stem from observations she has while jogging. She likes to run about 15 miles a week.” She said, “Sometimes something you see will trigger the connection. New ideas are just combinations of old ideas.”

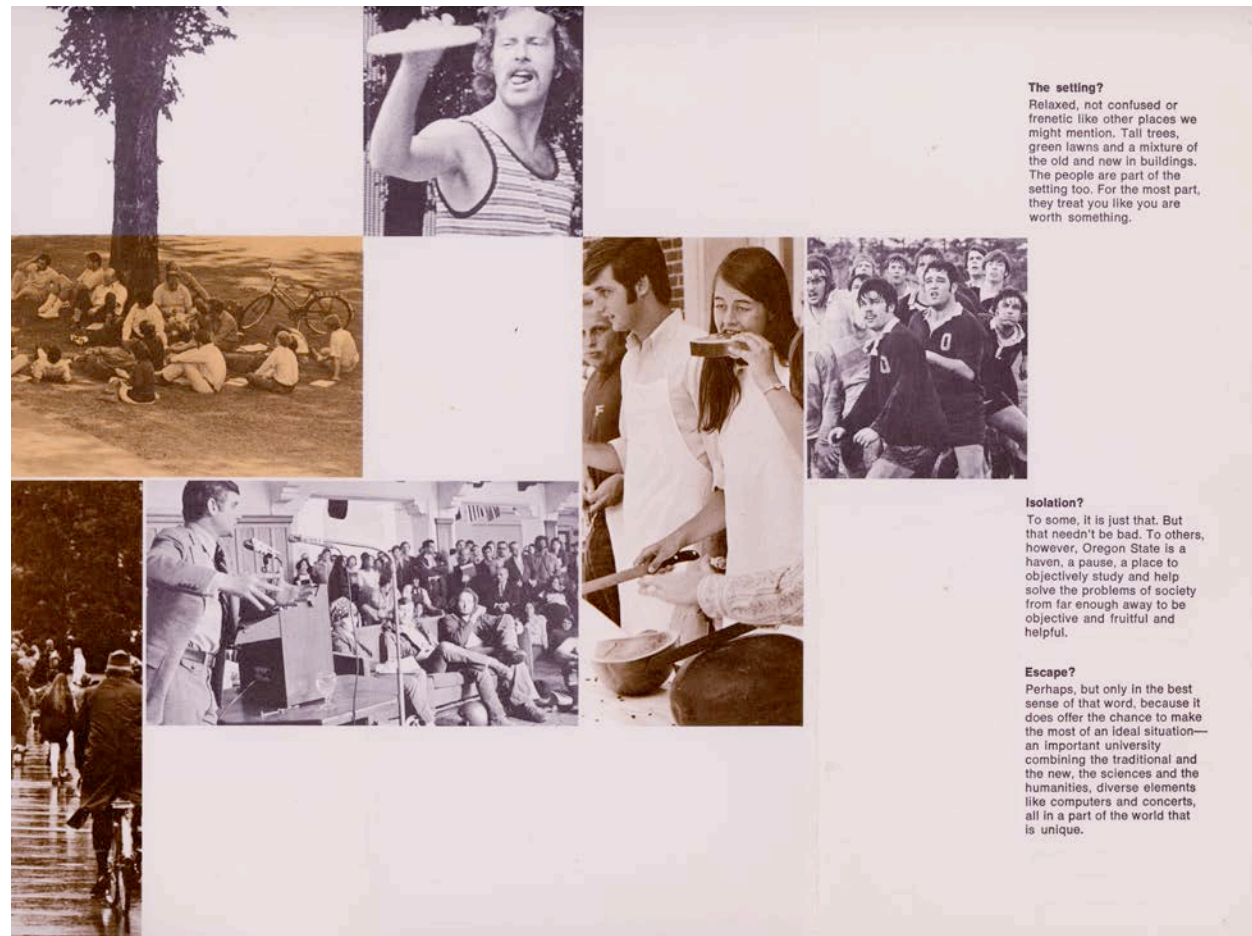
Marilyn understood that design was a collaborative process with the client. She is quoted in a book saying, “Sometimes you say the craziest things possible in these meetings just to get across ideas. That’s what your job is, to get across ideas. You meet like this so minds can spin off, act as foils for the development of ideas.” Like all designers, Marilyn struggled to balance the client’s



demands with her ideas of how to design effective communication. “Sometimes it is not easy to find an idea that a client will like, so the designer must compromise and create a design that will get the job done.” Marilyn explained. Designers of today can relate.

Harley Jessup (now an Academy Award winning production designer and visual effects art director at Pixar) was a student and intern in Marilyn’s office at OSU in the 1970s. Harley remembers, “Her friends at OSU were all artists, designers and writers and she opened my eyes to a world of design and art that I didn’t know existed. Her taste in design was flawless and her redesign of the university logo in 1972 made an elegant statement that reflected all of Marilyn’s quiet brilliance

Left: Friend and colleague Jack Myers was the ringleader at Studio 1030 and would have Marilyn work on mechanicals and pre-press. Together they tackled clients such as Viewmaster. Above: This ad for Meier & Frank was designed during the period Marilyn was employed. While I cannot verify that this was her hand, with her reputation for shoe illustration, it seems likely that it was.



Her devotion to her daughter Joan was central to her life and I heard about some of her struggles early on as a single mother working in the very chauvinistic world of advertising design. What I remember most about Marilyn though is her charm, her laugh, her talent, bright intelligence — and especially her generosity of spirit toward an awkward 19-year-old OSU student at just the right time.”

Marilyn was very particular with letterforms. Her calligraphy was featured in the book, *The Design of Advertising* by Roy Paul Nelson and she is cited as critiquing it. The passage reads, “This is a first try. For this word, Holsinger would redo the ‘c’ to make it as heavy as the other letters. And, to stress the informality of this lettering, should would bounce the letters a bit. Right now they line up too severely, she feels.” In another book on communication, Marilyn speaks about the role of typography. “I consider type an art in itself. It is

greatly underrated. It is a mood setter along with the illustrations, the paper, the photos, the size, the color, the whole impact of the piece. They all create a mood, but type is central to what kind of impression the publication will make, and to how the reader will respond.”

After nine years working as a staff designer for OSU, and teaching part-time two evenings a week while her daughter was growing up, (at Bush Barn in Salem, and at Linn Benton Community College) Marilyn transitioned full-time into teaching. She taught calligraphy, lettering, and graphic design at OSU before accepting her final position at age 60 at the University of Missouri in Columbia. There she taught Lynn Giunta, now a lettering artist for Hallmark, who recalls, “One of my Marilyn memories is that she didn’t like how Missouri made you get your car inspected before you could get your tags renewed. I’m not sure if she thought her Volvo wouldn’t pass inspection or if she just ran out of time. For whatever reason, she used her excellent comping skills to render a new up to date tag to put on her license plate. I’m pretty sure one of her students was in the car with her when the policeman pulled her over. He admitted that he couldn’t tell exactly what wasn’t right with her car tag, but he was sure something wasn’t legit and that she’d better get a current tag.”

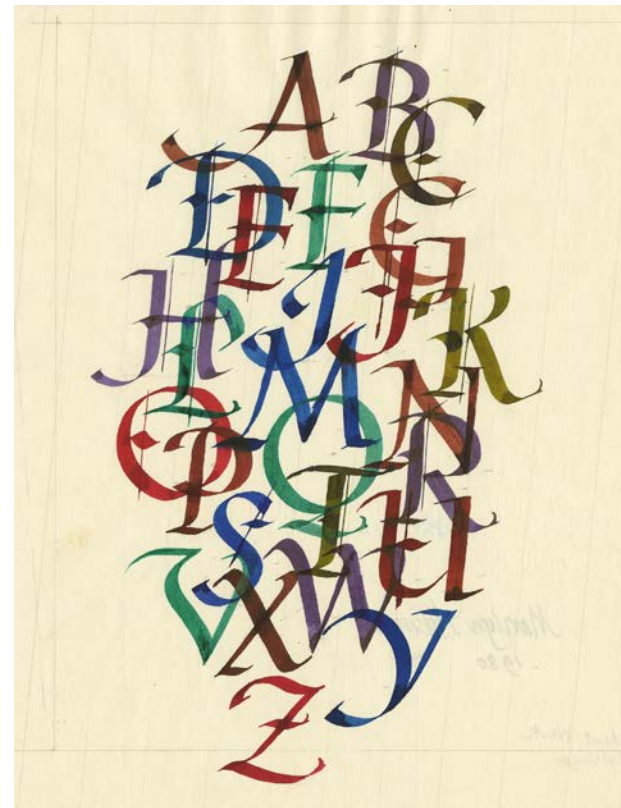
Marilyn in Motion

Marilyn was a force. She was an artist, calligrapher, advocate, organizer, mentor, academic and a consummate professional. She was always in motion. She survived breast cancer and a leg fracture from a ski accident, but continued on as a cross country skier and a runner. She competed in many road races and earned awards in her age group until she was 68.

Marilyn passed away in 2015. I wish I’d had the chance to ask Marilyn directly what it was like to enter the job market in the midst of WWII, about those early San Francisco years, or how it was to work as the sole woman at Studio 1030. I can only deduce from the



Opposite Page: Marilyn’s designs for OSU.
Above: Marilyn as teacher at OSU.



Opposite Page Top: Lettering by Marilyn. Opposite Page Bottom: "October" lettering featured in *The Design of Advertising*. Top: Lettering by Marilyn. Bottom: Marilyn consulting with famed Reed professor Lloyd Reynolds, her teacher and mentor.

glimmer in her eye and the cocktail in her hand that she was not one to wait around for life to happen to her, rather she approached it head-on, with a pen in hand.

Over her decades practicing calligraphy, she illustrated many quotations that she jotted down in notebooks over the years. Her obituary used this one,

"You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you truly stop to look fear in the face...you must do the thing you think you cannot do."

-Eleanor Roosevelt

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Caught on Film

Peter Corvallis's Career in Photography, Film, and Production

By Olivia Ridgley

It is hard to miss the name Peter Corvallis when browsing *The Oregonian* archives from the 1960s to 1970s. It is equally hard to avoid seeing Peter Corvallis Productions box trucks zooming around Portland today. Though Peter Corvallis himself passed away in 2016 at the age of 85, he has a permanent place in the history of the city of Portland. During his lifetime, Peter moved fluidly from a youthful passion for cinema to a career in photography and film, and finally into building his own production and event company that kept him busy until his passing. A man about town, Peter was a local staple in the 1960s and 1970s Portland social scene, as his daughter told me unboastingly, "Everybody knew him, he was almost a celebrity." His place behind the camera afforded him a unique position in which to witness the culture of the city, capture it, and share it with others.

Early Years

An eccentric Greek with a magnetic personality, Peter found his love of film early. At the age of nine Pe-

ter was known to project movies for his friends in his parents NE Portland home. A graduate of Irvington Elementary School and Grant High School, Peter has been ingrained in Portland from the start. During high school Peter worked at a local movie theater. Before digital projection, movie theaters shared reels between locations. Peter's job was to bike the reels from theater to theater and make it in time for the next showing.

Finding His Way in Film

After high school, Peter's passion for film translated into an interest in pursuing photography as a career. He applied to Brooks Institute, a well reputed photography school in Southern California. After acceptance to the school, plans changed for Peter. He joined the army in 1956 and studied film-making at The Signal School at Ft. Monmouth, NJ. This education led him to the 82nd Airborne Div. at Ft. Bragg, NC. Where he served as the base photographer. After his hiatus in the military, Peter reinstated his admission to Brooks, and ventured down to California to further his knowledge in photography.



Above: Peter standing in front of The Hood Theater, owned by Henry Moyer. Moyer was Peter's employer and the owner of more than six movie houses throughout the Portland area. The Hood Theater opened its doors June 2, 1950.



As it turned out, he already knew everything he needed. He dropped out and headed back north. When asked, about his departure from Brooks, his eldest daughter Maria stated, “He didn’t learn anything. He was teaching them.” Following his time at Brooks, Peter returned to Portland with a camera in his hand.

In the Newsroom

Back in his hometown, Peter got a job capturing his surroundings in another way, he found himself in the news industry. Instead of toting around film reels for the local movie theaters, Peter was the man behind the camera. KOIN-TV, Peter’s employer, was the very first VHF (Very High Frequency) television station in the city and a pioneer in the transition from radio broadcast news to televised news. The station went on air in October of 1953, and just a year later aired its first color television broadcast. When discussing the local news program to *The Oregonian*, Sig Mickelson, KOIN-TV television director of news and public affairs

stated, “We are trying to cover news in a new way. We are trying to create a new form of pictorial journalism that will enable the public to get its news swiftly, interestingly, colorfully... television can combine all these elements—motion, detail and personality—with a speed which enables it to illustrate the hard news of the day.” Peter was the first local TV news cameraman in the state of Oregon. Being one of the first filmmakers in the state, Peter used his skills to work on other projects, including many for Hollywood studios.

Tied to the Community

Leaving his position with KOIN-TV in 1959, Peter made his way into the world of print. Hired on as a staff photographer for *The Oregon Journal*, and (after the 1961 merger) *The Oregonian*, he began a decade-long career in photo journalism. Peter’s portfolio at the paper is vast and diverse, largely though he covered local news. When describing exactly what topics Maria said, “He could really do it all, except sports.” Whilst browsing

through boxes and boxes of glossy black and white photos from Peter’s *Oregonian* days I was able to catch just a glimpse of the Portland he was so enmeshed in. As Maria said, shuffling through a handful of photos that captured everything from the construction of the Fremont Bridge to a visit from John F. Kennedy, “How much history this man saw, like I said it was the Renaissance of Portland. Soft news was a big deal in the newspaper.” In the photos I can see that energy and excitement, the city of Portland was having a cultural hay day and Peter was there to capture it. During his time at the papers he had more than 10,000 photos published. Among those were the portraits and candid snaps of icons both local and national like Louis Armstrong, Jayne Mansfield, Jane Russell, the Jantzen girls, and Andy Williams. Peter also received five regional news and feature awards for his photography from the Associated Press photography contests. What was the first color photograph to be printed in *The Oregonian*? It was Peter’s shot of the opening of the Civic Auditori-



um (now known as The Keller Auditorium). I had the opportunity to meet with a journalist and co-worker of Peter’s at *The Oregonian* and when asked about the overall work experience at the paper, Judy McDermott relayed, “I found newspapering to be exciting, creative and challenging. The journalists I worked with were

proud of their profession and shared a commitment to accuracy and fairness”. When Peter’s tenure at the paper came to an end, it did so through a slow and natural transition into being his own boss.

A Friend at the Paper

During his time at *The Oregonian* Peter worked along side a man named Joe Bianco. In a letter to Peter’s family on his 70th birthday, Joe shared a story of their trip to Vancouver, British Columbia. *The Oregonian* was doing a travel column on what Joe called “Fun Cities” in the Pacific Northwest. Joe’s story goes like this:

“On assignment one night we interviewed the one and only Jayne Mansfield who was performing center stage in a fashionable nightclub in Vancouver, B.C. Miss Mansfield was most obliging and gave us a private interview backstage. Pete shot photos from every such angle. I leered and lusted, he didn’t. He was very businesslike. Anyhow, we had a lot of fun and as usual got back to the hotel late at night. It was always a long day...full of work. On the night we interviewed Miss



Opposite Page Left: A brochure Peter received about the path to a profitable career in photography from Brooks Institute.
Opposite Page Right: Peter behind the camera for KPTV, Portland’s first TV station and part of the CBS, KOIN-TV family.
Above Left: Jane Russell photographed by Peter.
Above Right: Sen. John F. Kennedy photographed by Peter.



Mansfield several urgent messages were waiting for us. They were from our wives. Each wife had the same message. The messages were short and to the point. 'We've been trying to reach you for hours. Please note: Come home now. This was your last 'fun city.' Work or no Work.' The messages were unsigned but the tone was very familiar. It was our last 'fun city'..." This letter gives a glimpse into Peter's life at *The Oregonian* and the work ethic and professional drive that would be a theme throughout his career.

Striking Out on His Own

While still working at the newspaper as a staff photographer, Peter was following opportunity and building a company of his own. Using his charismatic personality, videography skills, and desire to document his

surroundings Peter started moonlighting as a photographer in the basement of The Hilton Hotel downtown, which opened in 1963. Peter's job at The Hilton was to photograph all the events that took place in the hotel, such as Pendleton Fashion shows in the ballroom, they even set him up with a small darkroom. During this time Peter took on a third job as a wedding photographer. As Maria puts it, "He had three jobs and he was staring to fail." She goes on to tell me about letters she discovered from his co-workers at *The Oregonian* trying to encourage him to buckle down on his work for the

Opposite: Peter in his prime, apparently the cigarette was a staple part of his work uniform throughout the 50s and 60s. Above: Crowning of Miss Raindrop and her court at Lloyd Center Mall, photographed by Peter. Miss Raindrop was the star of the Merrykhanna Parade, the rowdy predecessor of the Rose Festival's Starlight Parade



paper. As the Hilton gained notoriety as an event venue Peter was presented with yet another work opportunity. Instead of only being the photographer for these hotel events, he started to acquire equipment, things like projectors and lights, and rent these things out as a part of his service. This was successful and as this facet of his work took up more of his time and he left *The Oregonian* entirely. When the Red Lion opened, Peter used his contacts from previous jobs to set up an office in the new hotel as well. Having found a niche in the hotel industry, Peter continued to partner with the new hotels springing up in Portland until he had around six audio visual offices. Why exactly did the hotels need these offices, you might be asking. Maria explained to me that they provided the hotels with all the essentials for conducting business, or throwing an event, this might have meant screens, projectors, lights, cameras, microphones, or speakers. It's harder to grasp now, with how easy it is to have almost anything you want delivered straight to your location, sometimes within the same day you ordered it, but this was a different time.

Maria explained, "Think of ordering something without the Internet." She went on to explore the situation the hotels faced in the 1970s, "So you are in Portland, Oregon and you want a slide projector, where do you go? It's so different now." Peter was there to supply these events with audio visual necessities on demand.

Everything Came Together

When Mother's Day came around, the Red Lion was throwing a large brunch, but found themselves lacking in plates, Peter found another need to fill. This is the moment Peter took the step from supplying purely audio visual goods, to providing all the party supplies as well. His client base and company grew as he moved into the business of orchestrating whole events. During this time Peter got an office of his own, and *Peter Corvallis Audio Visual* transformed into *Peter Corvallis Productions and Audio Visual*. This meant providing decor, doing the staging for events, catering, and creating settings for everything from weddings to The Rose Festival. He worked with notable Portland fashion brands, Pendleton, Jantzen, and White Stag, putting on fashion shows and setting up trade show booths. Maria joked, "People would call him asking if he had something and he would say, 'yes', and then he would go buy it and rent it to them. He filled all these warehouses doing that for years." Running his own company, Peter had transitioned from the boy riding his bike to facilitate the event, to the student and photographer working hard to capture it, and finally into the conductor, using his tenacious work ethic and eye for design to produce events for others. Peter followed opportunity and applied himself to filling the needs he witnessed in the community around him. Peter and his family grew the company into one of the largest production event rental companies in the Northwest. Peter had an insatiable appetite for documenting and collecting the world around him, lucky for us, his world was Portland. •



Opposite: Peter's capture of a Troutdale house tumbling into the Sandy River during 1964 flooding. Peter received first place from the Associated Press Northwest News photo contest for these photos. Above: Spring 1978 runway setup for White Stag done by Peter.



Above: Print room for *The Oregonian*, photograph by Peter.

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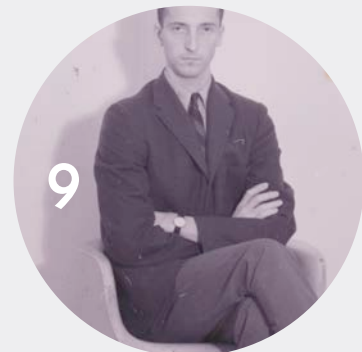
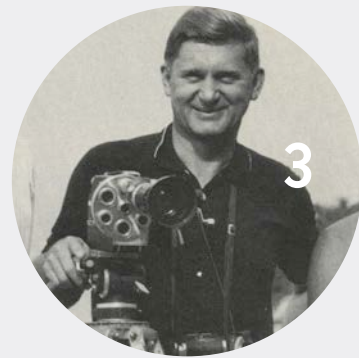
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Portland State University Library Special Collections
Multnomah County Library
Portland Art Museum

*Top: Museum Art School (Now PNCA),
1930s, SW Madison and 10th.*

*Bottom: 1963 Studio 1030 portrait
of Mark Norrand, Bennet Norrbo,
Joe Cannon and Joe Erceg.*





- 1. Charles Politz pg.8
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