

CLASS OF 2023

Our academic journey through the pandemic and beyond has culminated a cohort of adaptive beings who have overcome and found ways around our obstacles, to create and be creative, despite restrictions and limitations. This adaptability has enabled us to embrace a fluidity to how we work, find solutions and continue on our individual journeys. Like liquid, we have had to change states depending on our environment. We have separated, we have come together, and we have fluxed to a continually changing environment. While embracing our challenges, we find ways to stay connected, celebrate togetherness and complement our unique states and creative outputs. adaptable, and fluid.



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FOREWORD

FROM JANE ANDERSON

The word 'flux' — with its contemporary meaning of 'constant change' and its etymological roots in the Latin fluxus (from fluere: to flow) — is a highly appropriate name for this year's grad show. It brings to mind a sense of what this cohort experienced during the first year of their studies, through the lockdowns and remote learning imposed by the pandemic. Perhaps more positively, this idea of 'flow' — captured so well through the visual identity developed for the show — also reflects what this year group have had to become in order to deal with a constantly changing landscape: flexible, adaptable, and fluid.

The work in this catalogue offers an insight into the sheer diversity of creative practices demonstrated by this year group — from branding and packaging to motion design and 3D; from art direction and advertising to editorial and print — and so much more in between. It would be true to say that this cohort is one of the most talented we've seen when it comes to technical skills — and what's more, many of them are multidisciplinary practitioners, who can respond to a problem or brief in a number of ways.

Despite going some way to demonstrate the breadth of our students' work, this exhibition and catalogue only really offer a snapshot of what has been an exciting and jam-packed final year. As a course we've strengthened our industry connections, with students working on competition briefs set by globally-leading design agencies and organisations — such as Bulletproof, Turner Duckworth, and RSA — where we've seen individuals on the course both shortlisted and awarded. All of us — staff included — came away inspired after a guest talk from top agency DixonBaxi. Many of our students have taken on live projects in collaboration with businesses, and are already making an impact out there in the world.

This past year has also been a real opportunity for community-building, with students making the most of trips to cultural locations such as London, Berlin, and New York — and we had a fantastic time somewhat closer to home on a residential trip to the YHA at Ironbridge. It has been wonderful to see a sense of community being forged through the student-led initiative Creative Exchange, which has brought students together not just on our own course but across the whole University.

Class of 2023: what a pleasure it has been to be a part of your creative journeys. We are proud of all you've achieved with us, and we can't wait to see what exciting things you go on to do next!

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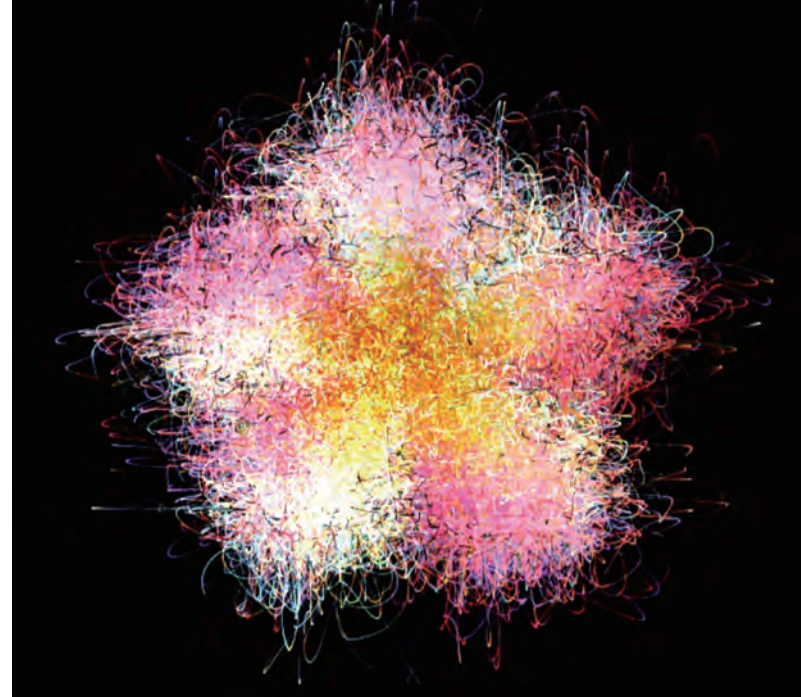


STUDENT WORK | A—F



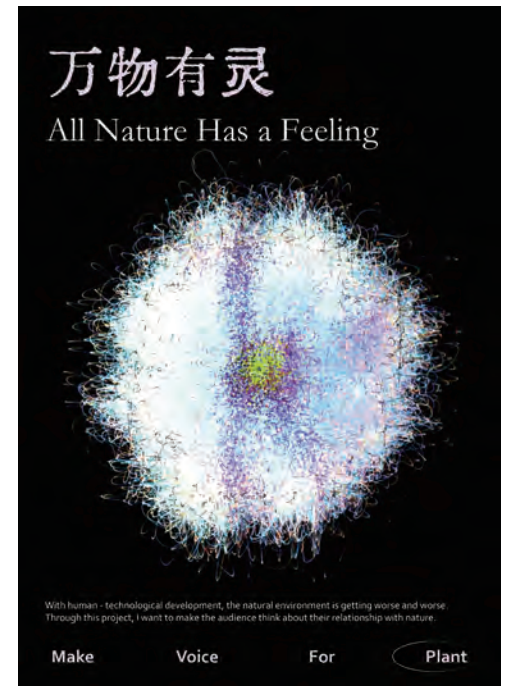
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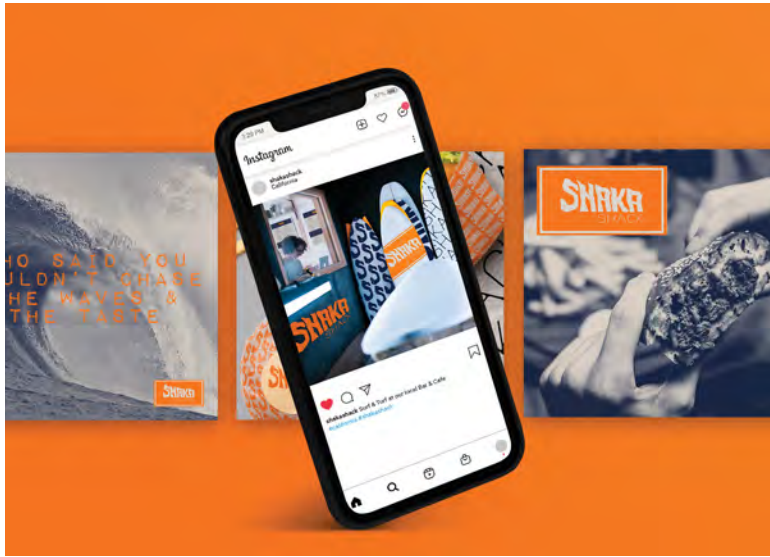
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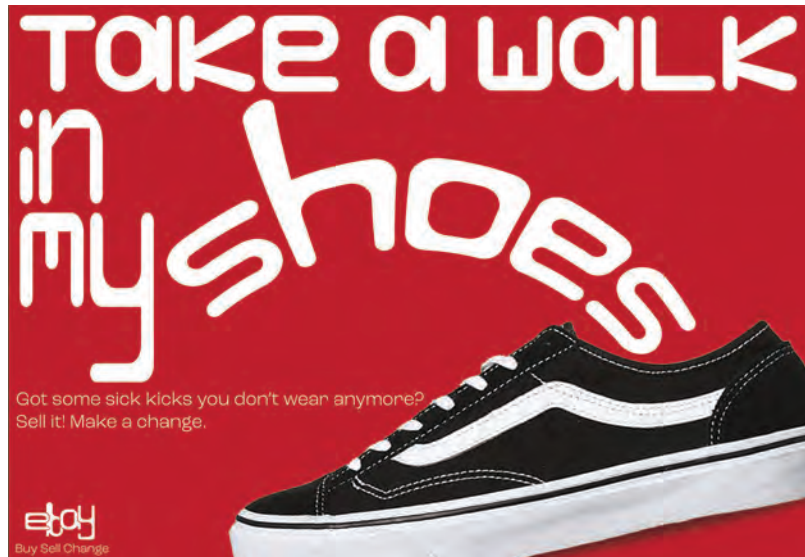
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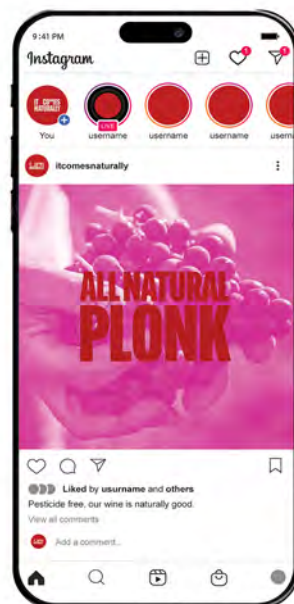
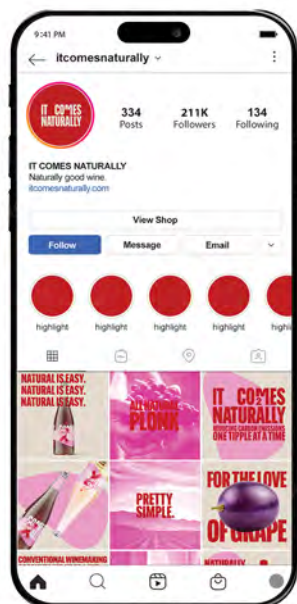


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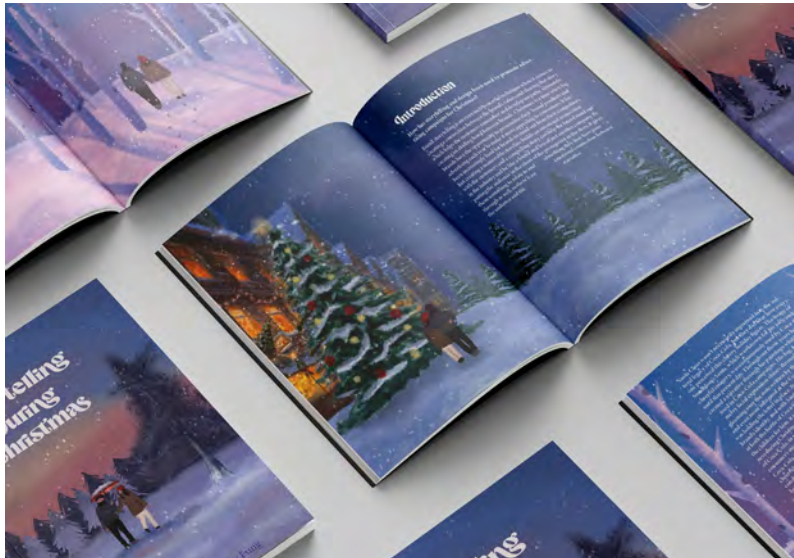
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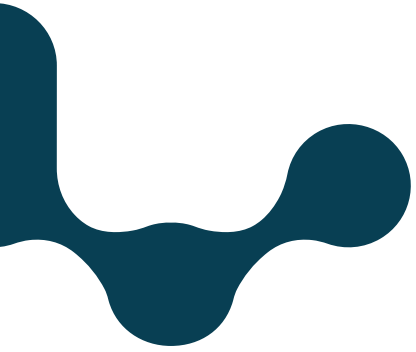


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ALEXIA LANGFORD

BRANDING, PRINT & ILLUSTRATION

What's the one thing you will take away from your whole time at university?

As a year group our university experience hasn't been a typical one however that has also probably made us stronger, flexible designers. Most of my time studying Graphic Design I've never really known where I actually wanted it to take me, but especially the past year I've found the confidence and direction of where I fit in the Graphic Design industry and that has allowed me to really enjoy creating.

How has meeting industry guests benefited you as a designer?

Meeting industry guests has shown how wide the Graphic Design industry is. The guests have shown the wide range of clients that we could potentially be working with, the different variety of projects we could be working on and where in the world it could possibly take us. They show that there is consistency in projects but also variety. Mostly, they inspire you when you become intimidated by the industry you're soon to be going into.



How will you make your first step into the industry following on from university?

I already have a few unpaid clients I work with and they're really supporting helping me get my name and designs out into the world. I hope to work locally in a print shop where I can print designs, make signs, vinyl decals and really work on what I enjoy creating. I hope that until I secure a job I can also expand my own business and continue to get my designs into the world. I mostly aim to focus on continuing to find enjoyment.



CHECK OUT P48
& INSTA, TO SEE
ALEXIA'S WORK

How has meeting industry guests benefited you as a designer?

Sometimes it can be hard for students to understand how certain things work within the design industry so having the opportunity to listen to industry guests experiences and ask them questions is always beneficial. In some cases, hearing about guests struggles or mistakes within the industry can help settle nerves and doubts in students who possibly relate.

How will you make your first step into the industry following on from university?

After building on my confidence and design processes over the last few years, I will start posting more of my design work on socials to increase my engagement within the industry and continue networking on LinkedIn.

BOBBIE PEARHOUSE-OLIVER

BRANDING, PACKAGING & ILLUSTRATION

What's the one thing you will take away from your whole time at university?

In first and even second year, I lacked a lot of confidence surrounding my work as a designer and struggled with receiving feedback. However I have learned to push myself out my comfort zone by engaging in more peer reviews and tutorials. Doing this allowed me to understand that not all feedback is bad, and even bad feedback does not make you a bad designer. We as designers never stop adapting and improving, and sometimes this takes receiving bad feedback.



CHECK OUT P63
& INSTA, TO SEE
BOBBIE'S WORK!



YASMINA FREJ

MULTIDISCIPLINARY, EDITORIAL
& ART DIRECTION

What's the one thing you will take away from your whole time at university?

The one thing I would take away from my time at BCU would definitely be the incredible connections that I have made with my peers, tutors, and industry guests. I don't think I would have ever had the chance to make such brilliant connections if I didn't go to university.

How has meeting industry guests benefited you as a designer?

I think meeting people who are already where I envision myself in the future was a great chance to give to talk to them and to obtain hope that one day I could be where they are. It was also a great chance to me to network and get my name out in the creative industry.



How will you make your first step into the industry following on from university?

I will start applying to different agencies and try to take part in different initiatives that relate to where I want to be. One of the great initiatives that I plan to volunteer at this summer is the Birmingham Design Festival, because it's a great chance to meet up with creatives and network with the industry.



CHECK OUT P30
& INSTA, TO SEE
YASMINA'S WORK!

How has meeting industry guests benefited you as a designer?

Leaving university is the beginning of your learning and skill development. Approaching the course, I thought I would be doing just logos and I would lose that exploratory skill set I developed from fine art, but seeing industry guests do experimental work pushed me out of my comfort zone to try unconventional ways of designing such as creative coding, and artificial intelligence. It has made me appreciate how broad graphic design is and its continuous development with new technologies, trends, and discussions.

How will you make your first step into the industry following on from university?

I think it is preparing myself to expect the unexpected. As mentioned, the industry and I are forever changing, and things could take a different turn one day to the next. Also using the connections, I have developed through university to guide me to the next stage of my career. Because of connecting with Luke Tonge at Birmingham Design, I am grateful to have received a job offer from an agency, so I feel more comfortable in this transition to start at a very welcoming community.

AMBER CHARLTON

MULTI-DISCIPLINARY, ART DIRECTION
& BRANDING

What's the one thing you will take away from your whole time at university?

Look beyond the obvious and explore a range of research from academic to pop culture. It is very easy to go with the first idea from doing your research, but I think the great insight comes from exploring a concept in greater depth. It makes your portfolio stand out amongst graduates and makes you feel proud and confident of the work you have created. In an ever-changing industry, you want to make sure you are bringing fresh ideas to the table.



CHECK OUT P18
& INSTA, TO SEE
AMBER'S WORK!



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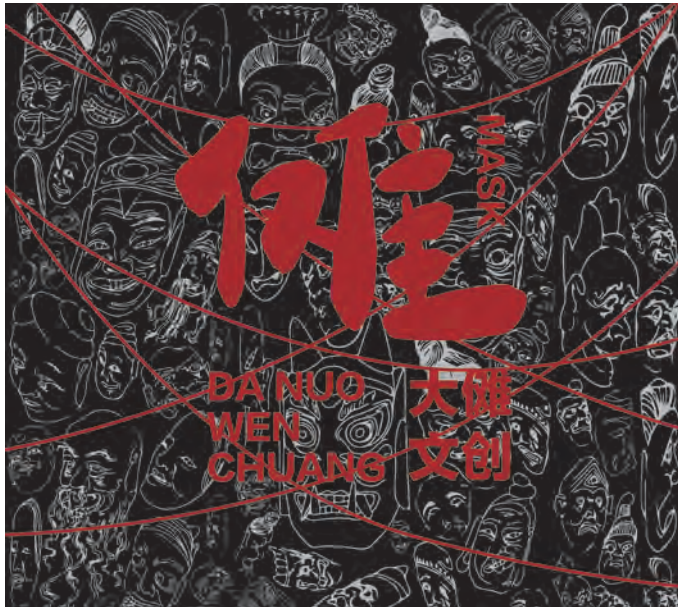
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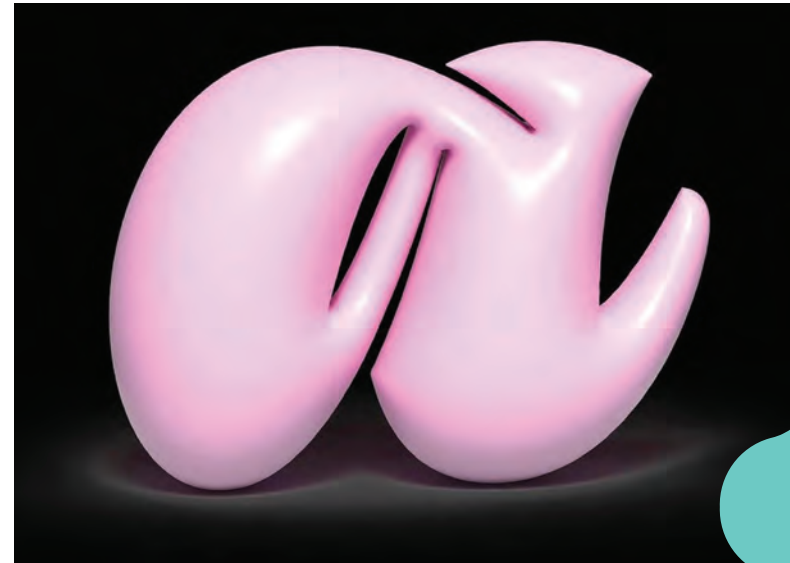


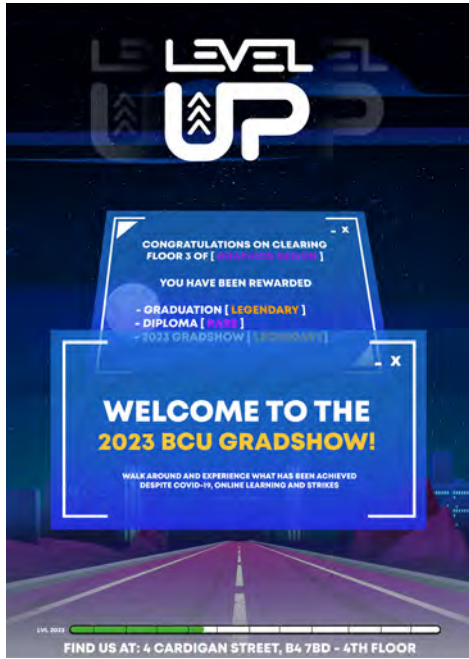
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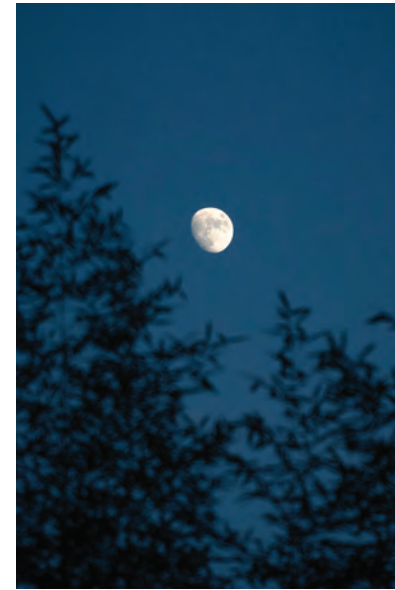
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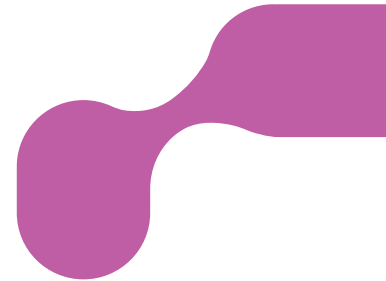


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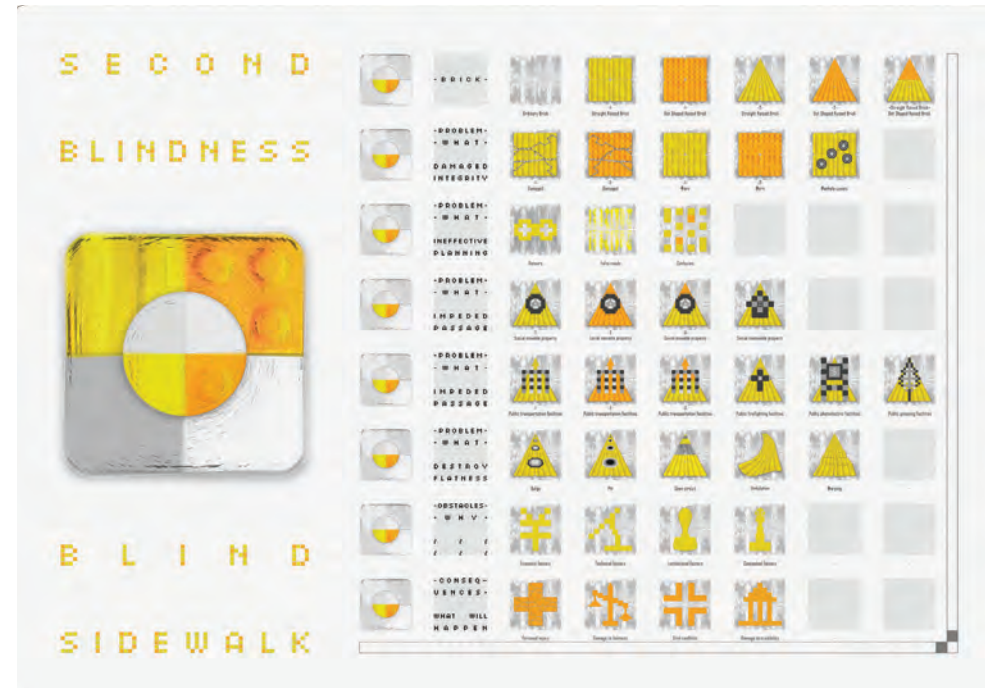
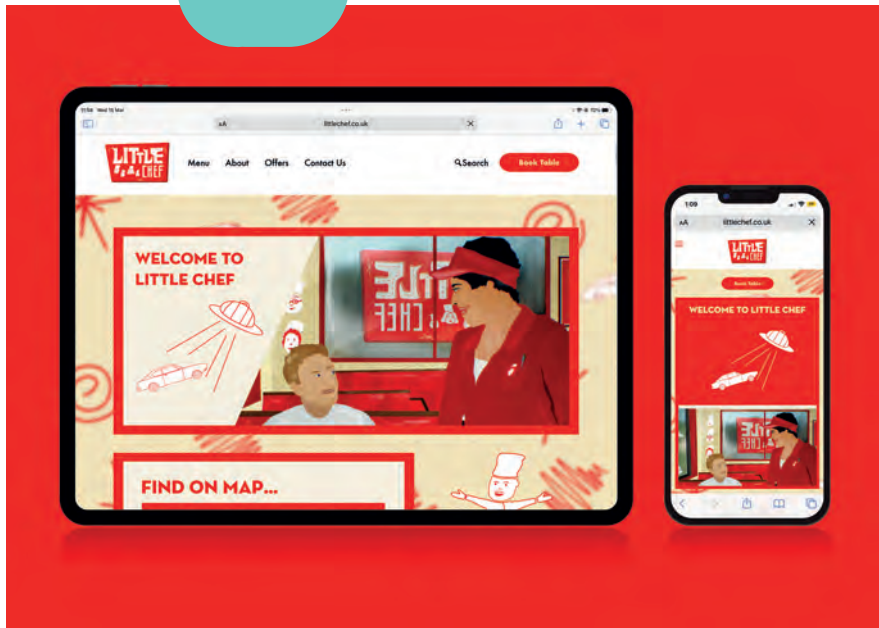


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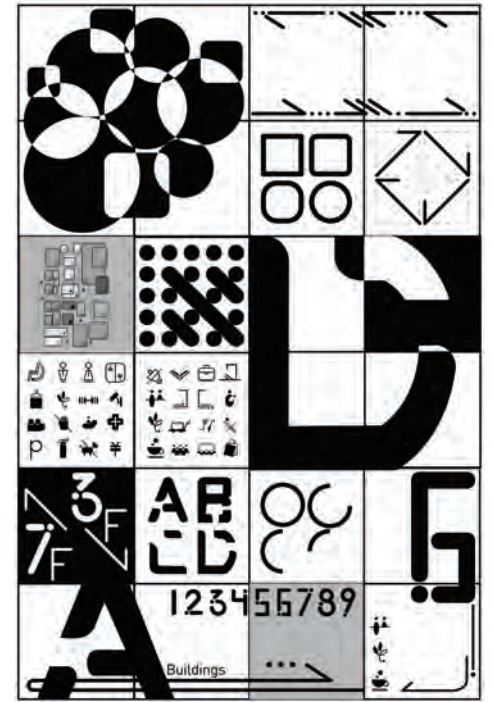




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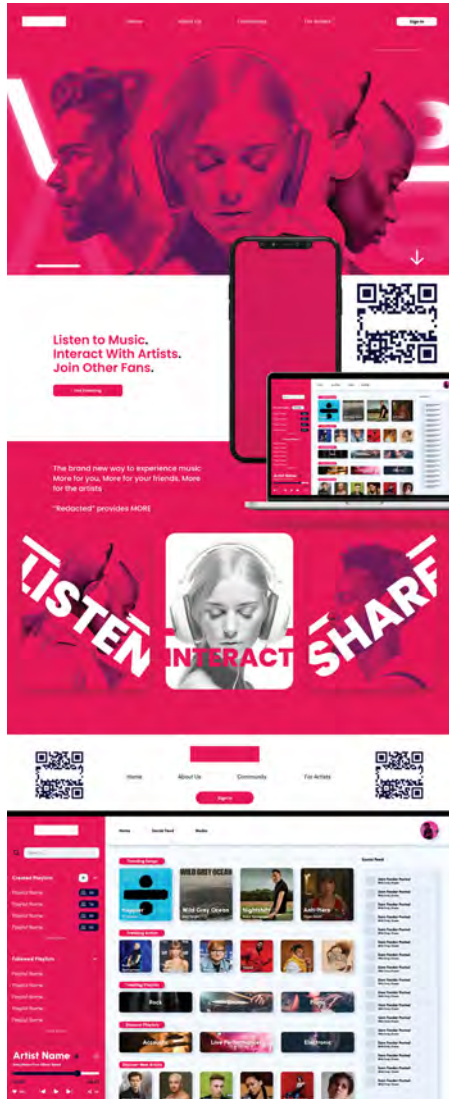
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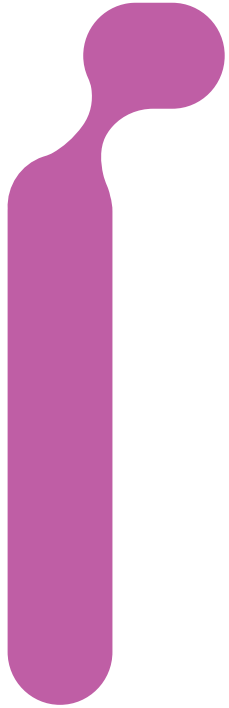


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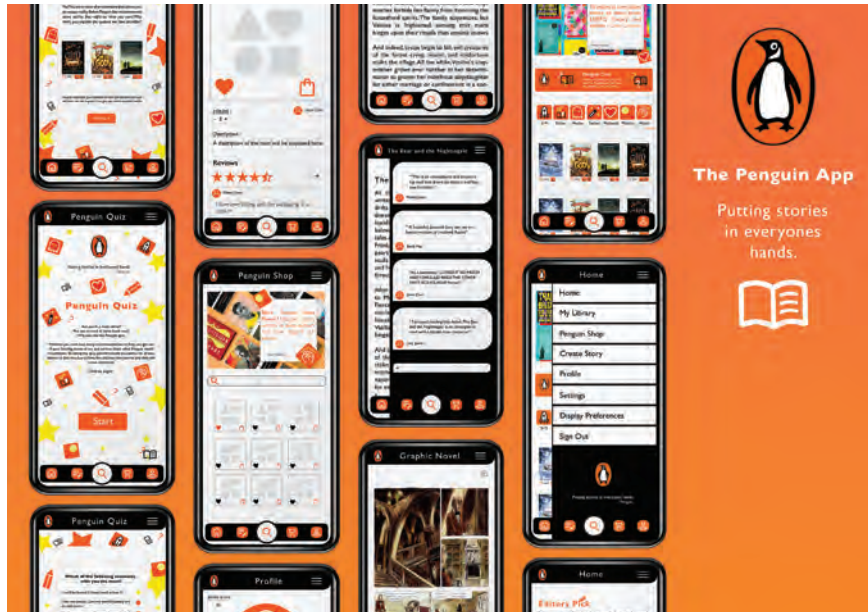
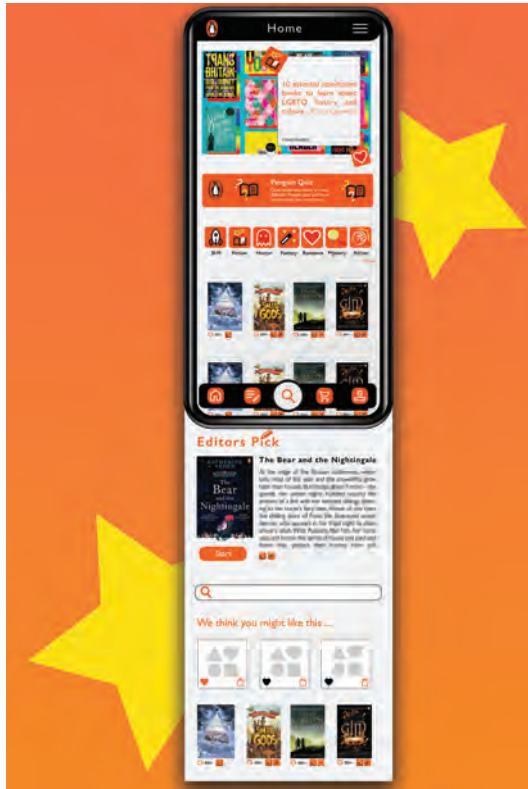


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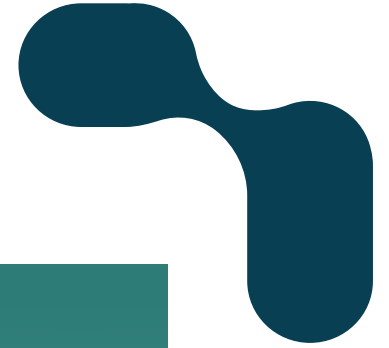


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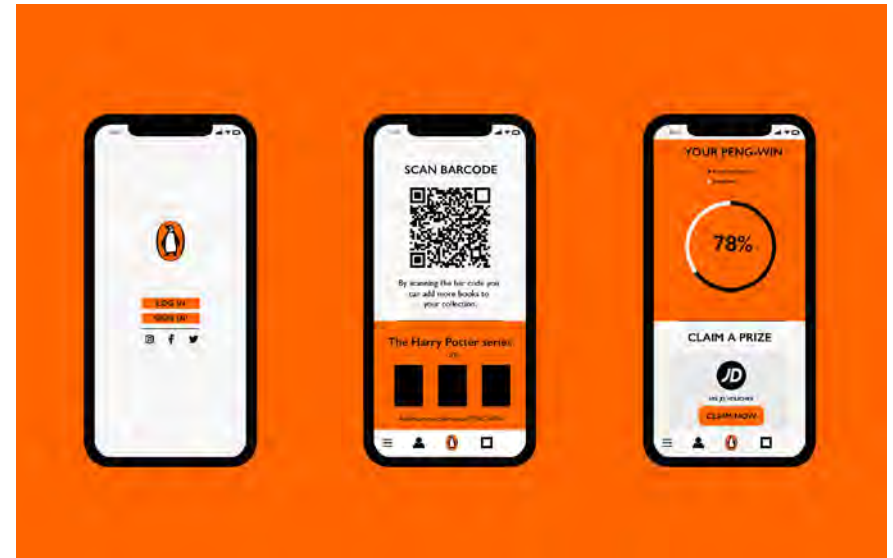


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BRANDING, PACKAGING &
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What's the one thing you will take away from your whole time at university?

The biggest things I will take away from my time at BCU will be the industry connections, new friends and industry experience. Going to a new city to study can be scary however I have made lots of friends within my course and with other courses at university. Personally, I had never studied graphic design before university so I was curious to see if it was a good fit and I am grateful that I took that jump since it has worked out really well for me. I have gained so much confidence with pitching by pitching to many live clients and learning how to communicate and maintain a professional relationship. Even though our first year was online due to covid I still managed to make friends and you have to remember that everyone is in the same boat.

How has meeting industry guests benefited you as a designer?

My favourite studio talks have been Dixon Baxi and Turner Duckworth, both were so inspiring and gave an insight into the structure of teams within a design agency. They helped me realise how attainable a job in this field is and the importance of pushing yourself outside of your comfort zone to improve as a designer. There have also been great talks from Keep Track which interviewed past creative graduates from BCU and where they are now, understanding the steps you need to take in order to reach a dream job in the creative industry has been crucial in my learning. The university inviting these guests has opened my eyes to the community and made it less overwhelming for me.

How will you make your first step into the industry following on from university?

I have recently been short-listed for the Turner Duckworth competition so if that is successful it will allow me to have a paid internship for some weeks. If I am not successful in that I know I can apply for similar roles and internships at other agencies. I have also won a few live brief pitches and have been freelancing during my studies so I will be able to keep that going until I find a full-time design job. I know that I have produced some great work here at BCU so I am not worried about finding a job following university as I know the right position will come at the right time for me.



CHECK OUT P08
& INSTA, TO SEE
HARRIET'S WORK!



ANDRE SAMUELS-WEAVER

BRANDING & ILLUSTRATION

What's the one thing you will take away from your whole time at university?

I think the one thing that I will take away from my time at university is networking. Something that I didn't take as seriously until later into my time at BCU. This would have benefited me greatly in my earlier years and was crucial in developing my skills as a designer. I think networking no matter in what industry is an amazing part of the process of growing as a person, and in my case as a designer.

How has meeting industry guests benefited you as a designer?

Meeting industry guests was a massive help for me, and inspired me to have a lot more confidence in my creative process. One in particular that stood out to me was Jonny Costello. I think he made me realise that the journey of being a creative, is a never ending path that is constantly changing direction. Seeing where he got to in his career really inspired me to push the boundaries of design and try to be as much of an outside of the box thinker as possible.

How will you make your first step into the industry following on from university?

I think my first step into the industry will be to make a stand out portfolio that is completely different to the rest, and apply for as many jobs as I can. I want to also do as much freelance work as I can in-between and build my name as a designer myself, but my main priority will be hunting for experience in a studio or an agency. I feel as though I still have a massive amount of development to go through as a designer but I am hoping I will find somewhere within industry that will allow and help me to achieve this.



CHECK OUT P70
& INSTA, TO SEE
ANDRE'S WORK!



SERLINA SMALL

ART DIRECTION, BRANDING
& EDITORIAL

What's the one thing you will take away from your whole time at university?

My time at BCU has shown me that commitment to your craft and personal development is recognised, nurtured, and rewarded. Commitment to my personal goals and ambitions has enabled me to forge incredible relationships across the faculty and gain many accomplishments that have ultimately enhanced my work and my practice to a standard that I am proud to be graduating with.

How has meeting industry guests benefitted you as a designer?

Having continuous exposure and connection to industry professionals organised by the teaching team has meant that as I've grown in my craft, I've been able to ask questions in real-time that have helped me to define my career direction beyond graduating. The invaluable insights guest speakers have shared have helped me



CHECK OUT P73
& INSTA TO SEE
SERLINA'S WORK!

realise we are all human; we all make mistakes and our individual journeys are what makes our own unique story an exciting one.

How will you make your first step into the industry following on from university?

Sharing my portfolio with the creative industry in person and online will be the most exciting project yet. This is where I can showcase my breadth of skills, varied outcomes, and all of my accomplishments over the last three years and beyond. It will summarise my entire learning journey and highlight all of the best work I have worked hard to produce. Knowing the immense effort and dedication to my learning that this has taken, makes me confident in knowing the right opportunity will align itself with me that enables me to continue on this incredible journey and be successful in my new design career and beyond.

ZOÉ COPPIN

BRANDING, PACKAGING & ILLUSTRATION

What's the one thing you will take away from your whole time at university?

The power of teamwork, whether within the ideation process or the final design, collaboration has opened my eyes massively. I had always been the kind of person to do everything by myself but BCU has opened my eyes to receiving help from others. Having a second pair of eyes to check designs or expand my ideas has really allow me to push my work further. I now really appreciate and consider my peer's and tutors feedback and ideas.



How has meeting industry guests benefitted you as a designer?

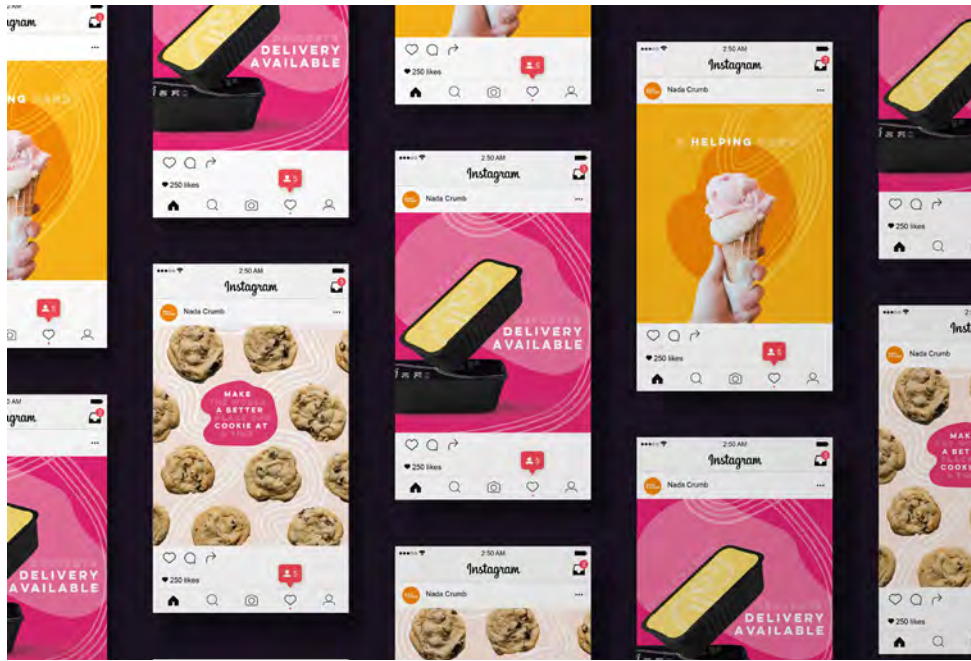
Meeting industry guests has allowed me to see the different journeys people have taken to get to where they are now. It isn't always linear and things don't always go as planned but if you work hard and want to achieve then eventually you will end up doing work that you love. The main thing I have taken from these opportunities are that job rejections (something I have always been anxious of) aren't always a negative thing, they give you chances to improve and find somewhere that is a better fit for you.

How will you make your first step into the industry following on from university?

My plan is to apply, apply, apply. I am very motivated to begin working in industry and already have a few favourite agencies that I dream of being a part of. Perfecting my portfolio and tailoring it to each agency will allow me the best chances of my work catching their eye and making me a part of their team.

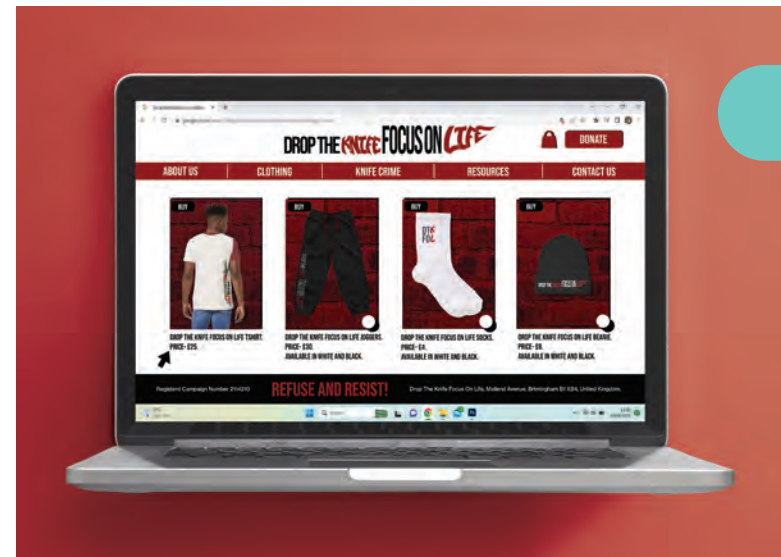


CHECK OUT P21
& INSTA TO SEE
ZOÉ'S WORK!



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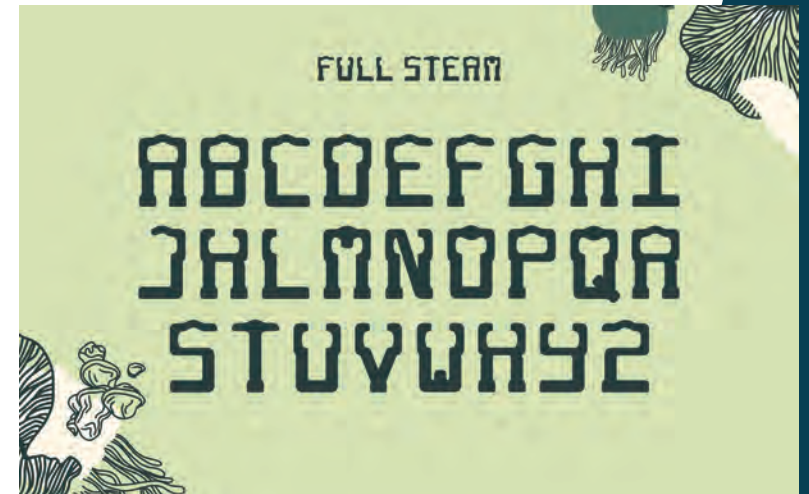


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HANGOVERLESS
BOTTLE TO WIN
THE HOLIDAY OF
YOUR DREAMS**



**ENTRANTS MUST BE 18+
TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY**

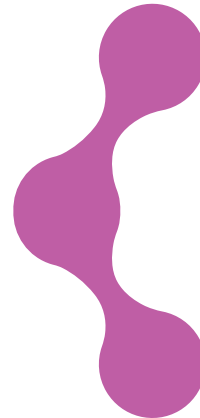


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SERLINA SMALL

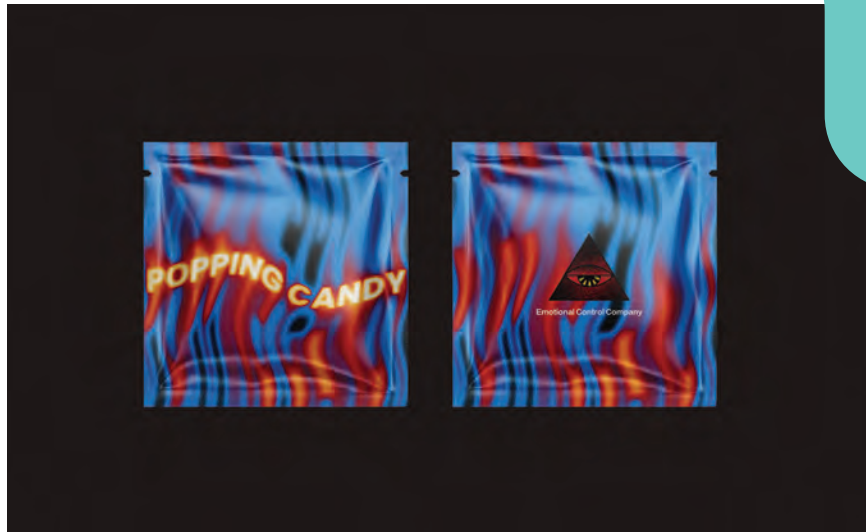
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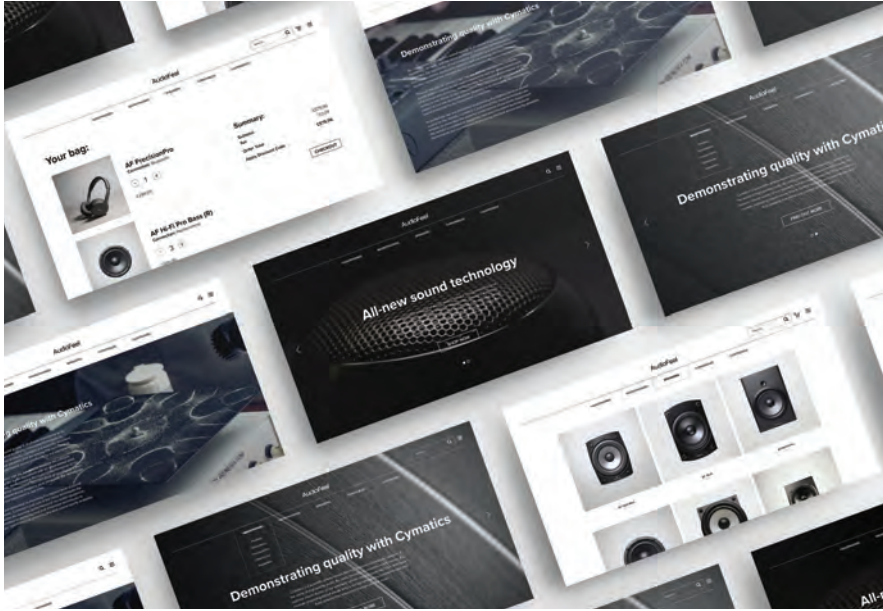
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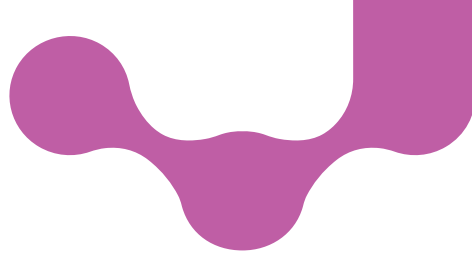


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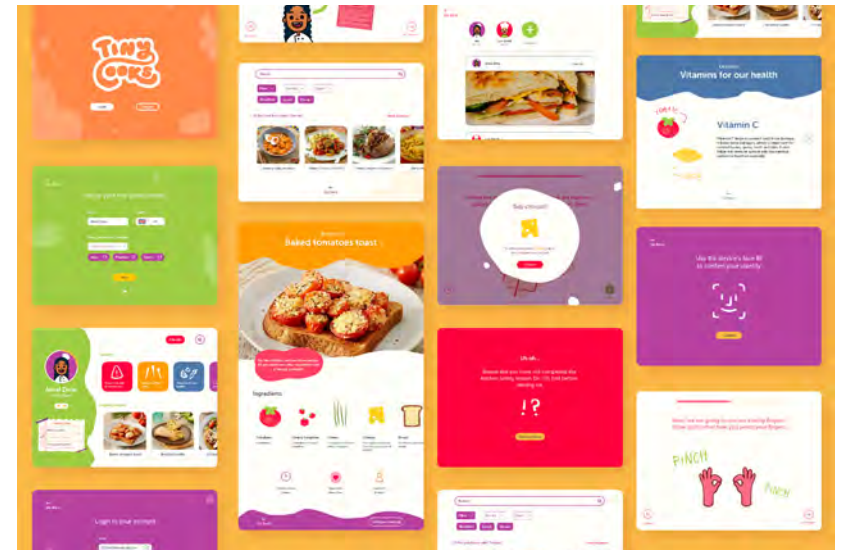


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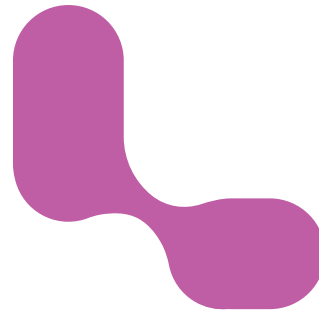


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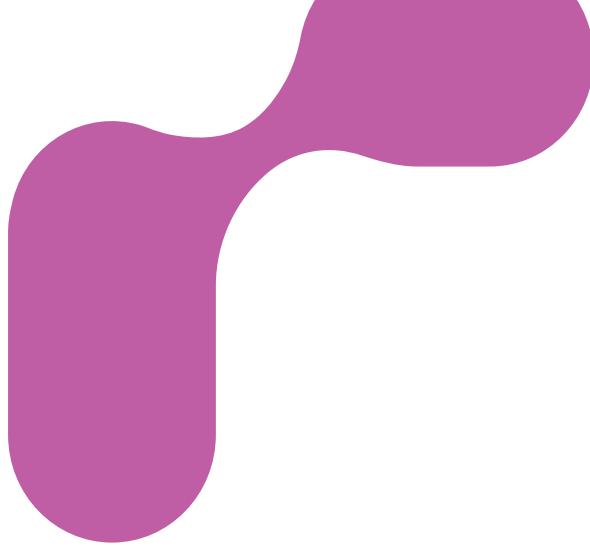
Sideline is a student community based project led by Graphic Communication lecturer Martin Donnelly and co-directed by a cohort of student partners. At its heart is an inquisitive appetite to discover, play, explore and expand creative thinking. Looking at the intersection between digital and analogue processes and exposing students to new visual perspectives Sideline allows students time to develop without constraint. Through the generosity of industry practitioners, the program has seen a wealth of collaborative conversation and workshops from the likes of Studio Dumbar, Christoph Grünberger, Thomas Kurppa, Semiotik Design and Accept & Proceed.



Keep Track believes in the importance of keeping in contact with alumni, that is why they provide three years of contact after graduation with resources, one-to-ones and more. Keep Track is a Visual Communication Alumni Networking Group created to guide students and graduates into the industry. Resources include podcasts, videos, worksheets, and events which engage and draw together the ever growing community. Run by Tracy Allanson-Smith designed by this year's graduate Amber Charlton (see her work on page 18 and interview on page 37) and aided by a group of student volunteers, it is an inclusive group and point of call for industry networking and employability.



Creative Exchange is run by students, and this year, led by current graduate L6 Graphic Design student Yasmina Frej (see her work on page 30 and interview page 36). It is a creative student union society which continues to encourage a sense of community through weekly student-led workshops and other activities. These provide a platform for students to share their skills with others and encourage collaboration. The society encourages a range of creative workshops and trips for students across the university keen to learn new creative skills, as well as building connections between students across different courses. Throughout this year we've had a range of workshops such as photography, 3D printing, Radio, VR, Tie dye, hand-lettering and so much more.



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Clarkeprint, a leading creative print provider in Birmingham city centre, have been committed to supporting the creative industry for 40 years, and know first-hand the long-lasting impact print can have. Their printing services include digital (with speciality metallic gold and silver, opaque white and clear inks), litho, garment and large format.

In addition to the above services, Clarkeprint also have their own 'Print Innovation Room', a place where designers, creatives and marketing professionals can get hands-on with premium paper and printed samples, with free tours of the print factory also available.

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Birmingham Design is a resource that champions, connects and inspires the West Midlands creative community. From organising events to connecting designers with people that need them, our mission is to help the West Midlands become the creative powerhouse it deserves to be. The Birmingham Design network includes Birmingham Design Festival, Gather, Ladies Wine & Design, Fuse Birmingham, BFF Mentoring and Find a Freelancer.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

& THANK YOUS

We would like to thank the staff and tutors at BCU for their encouragement, enthusiasm, and support throughout the duration of our course; so in alphabetical order, a big thanks goes to Tracy Allanson-Smith, Jane Anderson, Danielle Clarke, Tony Davis, Martin Donnelly, Joseph Frascina, Jonathan Griffiths, George Hart, Gemma Ince, Colette Jeffrey, Freya Jensen, Mattie Lynch, Ioana Macovei, Geraldine Marshall, Chris Morris, Ranveer Nandra, Koray Pezukoglu, Emily Springall, Ally Standing, Luke Tonge, Emma Turland, Ruth Yeates and everyone who has played a part in our incredible journey. Your continuous energy to inspire us to become the next generation of creative thinkers and innovators will not go unheard.

A special thanks goes to Jane Anderson for going above and beyond as Course Director in our final year. We would also like to thank our tutors Martin Donnelly and Gemma Ince for their continuous support and guidance throughout the grad show process — we could not have done it without you.

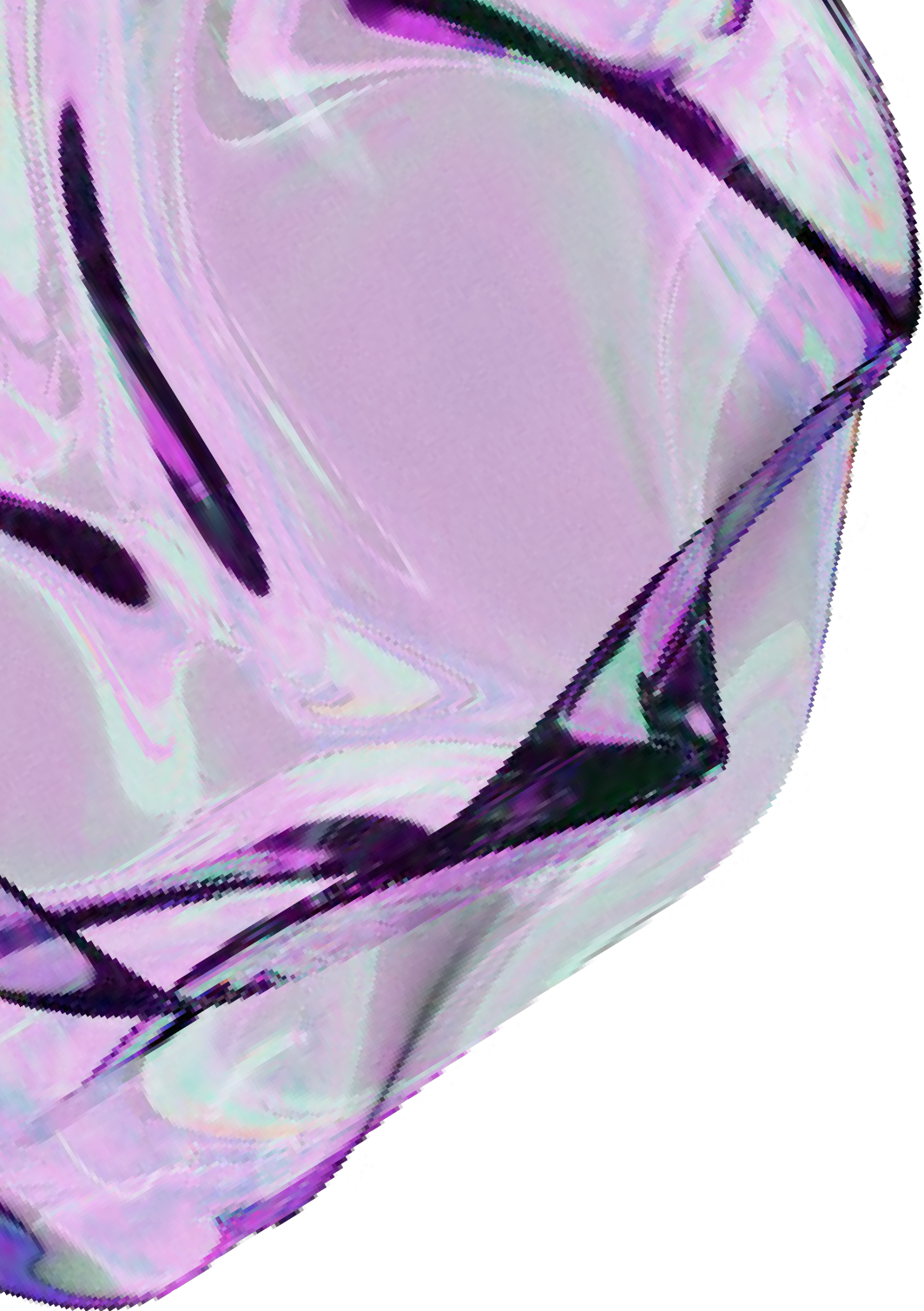
A loud cheer and thank you to the students who have helped organise, design and contributed to bringing FLUX to life, no easy task, with a range of very multi-disciplinary skills from branding, concept, digital, UX, motion to print.

So in alphabetical order, congratulations for the huge team effort: Harriet Allmark, Amber Charlton, Zoé Coppin, Tudor Dragomir, Rebecca Eastment, Yasmina Frej, James Gibson, Jade Hopkins, Hannah Hussain, Alexia Langford, Jack Lloyd, Berenice Lunn, Chloe Pashby, Bobbie Pearshouse-Oliver, George Pym, Vlad Raboj, Ami Ray, Serlina-Anne Small, Curtis Vaughan, William Westlake and Yumna Zahid.

A massive shoutout to all the students who have attended meetings, offered feedback, provide their gorgeous work for the showcase and have given up their time to contribute towards the show. You have been amazing, and we appreciate your time and effort. Thank you!

Thanks too to the Birmingham Design team for welcoming us into the West Midlands creative community. The advice, support, and expertise you have provided us as well as organising a range of wonderful events is a big part of what makes our student experience so great. We'd also like to thank you for letting us be a part of the Birmingham Design Festival Conference. You are incredible!

We'd also like to say a huge thank you to Joelle Preddy from GF Smith for help with supplying the beautiful front cover paper for the catalogue. Our vision wouldn't have been brought to life without Ian Clarke and Nigel Clarke from Clarkeprint. Thank you for helping us throughout the printing process to create something we are proud to put our name on.



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