

DAVID BALLUFF

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www.slowburn.com

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

During the past 15 years, I have been an artist, educator, graphic designer, writer, web designer, and projectionist. I ran my own graphic and web design company in San Francisco from 1995-2001, working for a variety of non-profit, film and arts-related companies.

An artist and designer, I am especially passionate in the intersection of new media forms, art, communication, and the way that we as a society express cultural truths and fictions. In my artistic practice, I frequently start with a fictional construct, then populate the world around it with cultural detritus. As a result, these art works become the very artifacts which prove my wild claims. The viewer is presented with a logical boggle where one absurd fiction supports the other, yet both remain ultimately unprovable.

In graduate school, the Topical Learning Center became an umbrella organization for a wide variety of non-existent products and services including Witch Removal Kits, tanning balm and the *Aggression Therapy Booth*. For *Hokum*, my graduate thesis show, I created a digital print, *The World Domination Plan*, which mapped out the myriad points of connection between various projects that I worked on during my time at RPI. Since my work is primarily about experimentation and communication, its expression necessarily takes a variety of forms: audio, video, painting, sculpture, interactive media, digital prints, a web site... or in the case of one Topical Learning Center item, a pataphysical Power Point presentation entitled *How to Be Invisible*.

My proximity to advertising and mass media has given me the ability to graft my own narratives onto familiar plotlines and archetypes as a form of "cultural counter-point" to assumed notions of identity, gender, context and memory. By blurring the lines between certainty and doubt, I create opportunities for the imagination to play.

I am influenced by theorists Edward Tufte and George Lakoff, as well as by artists Fred Wilson, Guillermo Gomez-Peña, Barbara Kruger and Marcel Duchamp.

TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

During the two years I lived in Asia, I worked for both small after-school *bushibans* (ages 6-15), and in adult education, for corporate clients like Motorola and 3M. In the U.S., I have also taught at high school and college levels, so I have a good sense of my teaching style. As an educator, I am patient with students and generous with my knowledge. I believe learning goes both ways, and I try to maintain an open exchange of ideas for everyone. However, I do hold students to high standards, and expect them to challenge themselves.

In my current position as an Artist/Educator, I often give museum tours on Warhol's art, and my primary strategy for any tour is to find ways for visitors to meaningfully connect with the work. My goal as an educator is therefore to similarly engage students minds, and to encourage them to express their ideas well, and with clarity. I tend to goad students into thinking beyond traditional solutions to common design problems by setting up challenging assignments where thinking outside the box is a necessity.

CURRICULUM VITAE

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EDUCATION

MFA	2003-2005	Electronic Arts	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
BA	1989-1991	20th C. Art & Lit	New College of California
	1986-1988	BFA coursework	University of Wisconsin, Madison

Areas of Specialization: Printing, New Media, Dada/Surrealist Art and Literature, propaganda and rhetoric

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2007-2009	Educator, Zeum, San Francisco, CA
2005-2007	Artist/Educator, The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, PA Includes co-teaching the AWM's after school publications program, tours
Fall 2004	Adjunct Professor (2mos.), Advanced Digital Imaging class, RPI, Troy, NY
2003-2004	Research Assistant to the Chair of the Dept. of Electronic Arts, RPI, Troy, NY
2001-2003	Lead designer, Mail Direct of Iowa, Davenport, IA
2000-2001	Journalism teacher, French-American International School, SF, CA
1995-2001	dba Burning Hand Graphics, graphic/web design firm, San Francisco, CA
1992-1994	English teacher, Taipei, Taiwan

GRANTS/FELLOWSHIPS

2003-2005	RPI Graduate Fellowship
1986	Alcoa Four Year Scholarship

EXHIBITION RECORD (* denotes solo show)

2006	<i>In Lieu of Condemnation</i> , Pittsburgh, PA
2005	<i>Hokum</i> , MFA thesis show with Julia Reodica, Contemporary Artists Center, North Adams, MA
2004	<i>In Frequencies</i> , Graduate Student exhibit, RPI, Troy, NY
2003	*OAE NWY, urban art installation, Troy, NY
2003	<i>Margin Release</i> , Graduate Student exhibit, RPI, Troy, NY
1990	* <i>Spiral Agnew</i> , Eye Gallery, San Francisco, CA - graduation exhibit for the New College

VISITING ARTIST LECTURES

2006	Master Classes in Photoshop, InDesign, podcasting, Samara and Belaya Kalitva, Russia
2005	Contemporary Artists Center, North Adams, MA
1998	Central High School, Davenport IA - guest speaker on web design
1997	Bay Area Video Coalition, San Francisco, CA - guest speaker on web design

TECHNICAL ABILITIES

I have years of experience in a variety of software on either Mac or PC platforms: Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign, Acrobat, GoLive, Dreamweaver, BBEdit, Quark, Flash, Director, Final Cut, Garage Band, Motion.

Additionally, I am well-versed in current standard practices regarding typography, information/UI design, color theory, photography (traditional, digital), drawing, painting, and various printmaking techniques (lithography, silkscreen, xerography, letterpress, digital archival).

PUBLISHED WORK

- 2005 *Journal of Aesthetics and Protest*, "Weddings of Mass Destruction" ad published
2004 *In Passing*, image published in this book by Todd Herman exploring death and loss
1998 *A La Brava* magazine, "In the Ring with Rosa" two page spread
1997-1998 *Poor Magazine* - Pro bono layout and design for Vols. 2 & 3
1993-1994 *New Taipei*, Taipei, Taiwan - writer, layout assistant for Chinese/English weekly paper

EXHIBITIONS CURATED

- 2006 Screening of Nathan Gibbs' short film *The Crayola Monologues*,
as part of The Warhol's Weekend Factory for visitors
1994 *Burst the Spirit Experimental Motion Festival*, Taipei, Taiwan and Hong Kong
Butoh inspired performances from Hong Kong, Taiwan, US, and Australia
1990 *Urban Scrawl*, AP Gallery, Cheap Art Store, San Francisco, CA
1990-1991 Film programming, Roxie Cinema, San Francisco, CA
Jan Svankmajer, Brothers Quay, Marlon Riggs scheduled screenings

COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS

- 2005-2006 Warhol: Resources & Lessons, website designer for this project, created in collaboration
with staff from the Education Department at The Andy Warhol Museum
edu.warhol.org
2005 *Harvey Orders a Pizza*, performance with Chris Skinner, Troy, NY
2004 *You're a Grand Old Flag*, The Troy Show, CAC, North Adams, MA
Performance collaboration with Nao Bustamante, Chris Skinner
2004 *Voting PSA*, 5 min. video, with Chris Skinner
1995-1998 *In the Ring with Rosa*, a web novella created with Nao Bustamante
www.slowburn.com/rosa
1989 *What's Wrong with This Picture? Artists Respond to Censorship*, in collaboration with
Boy With Arms Akimbo, SF Arts Commission Gallery, SF, CA

REFERENCES

Kathy High, Chair of the Department of Electronic Arts, RPI
highk@rpi.edu 518-209-6209

Nao Bustamante, Assistant Professor of New Media and Live Art, RPI
bustan@rpi.edu cell: 646 232 3104

Tressa Varner, Director for Education & Interpretation, The Andy Warhol Museum
varnert@warhol.org office: 412-237-8355

TRAVEL/FOREIGN LANGUAGES SPOKEN

I have traveled extensively, visiting seventeen countries in the last twenty years. I speak Spanish, French and Mandarin Chinese to varying degrees.

COURSE PROPOSAL

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Disruptions in Visual Narrative

Advanced Digital Media course

We are media saturated yet rarely pay close attention to this barrage of images and words. We rely on context and design motifs to glean information and make assessments about what we see. The focus of this course is on using various digital techniques to blur the lines between found and created media by encouraging students to re-appropriate the visual conventions of various commercial forms. To create convincing illusions, students must familiarize themselves not only with a variety of illustrative styles and techniques, but also with typography, design conventions, and color theory. As a historical context, the course will delve into the history of satire and social critique in contemporary art forms as assignment examples.

Software: Photoshop, Illustrator, Flash, Final Cut Pro, Acrobat, InDesign and Quark

Assignments:

Work to be turned in as digital print, web page(s), video or Flash movie. Students would be required to turn in one print, web and multimedia project over the course of the semester, but would be free to choose which media they use on any given assignment.

Assignment descriptions are followed by artists/works cited as class examples.

- Caricature/alteration of a public figure/icon
Techniques: illustration, compositing

Marcel Duchamp - *L.H.O.O.Q.*
Andy Warhol - *Vote McGovern, Mao*
John Heartfield - anti-Nazi collages
Robbie Conal

- Insert a fictional character into familiar cultural or personal context
Techniques: photo compositing, scanning, digital retouching

Banksy - Palestinian wall murals
Cindy Sherman
Nao Bustamante - Ronaldo McDonald
Tara Mateik - Neverland video

- Dada product sales pitch
Techniques: commercial product design, logo design, illustration, marketing

Yes Men - Survivalball
Magritte - *C'eci n'est pas une pipe*
Church of the Subgenius
Alfred Jarry & Pataphysics

- Create an Alter-ego
Techniques: digital photography, design composition and layout

William S. Burroughs - El Hombre Invisible
Andy Warhol as art star, in drag or as a zombie
Guillermo Gomez-Pena's *Cyberbato*
Sasha Baron Cohen's Borat

- Mimic a pre-existing, well-known ad/image to tell a very different story
Techniques: illustration, composition, image manipulation, retouching

Joel Peter Witkin - Las Meninas
Andy Warhol - Brillo, Heinz boxes
G. Gomez-Pena, E. Chagoya - *Codex Espangliensis*
Michael Thompson and Michael Hernandez
De La Luna - fake postal stamp art

- Fake evidence of an alien encounter
Techniques: audio/video or photo manipulation

Robbe-Grillet - Last Year at Marienbad
Joey Skaggs - Cemetery Amusement Park
Walid Raad - The Atlas Group Archives

IMAGES

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Key Cuts

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NO MONEY BACK GUARANTEED!

Observations series,
2004-2007 (2 of 24)
Oil on wood, 5x5" each

World Domination Plan, 2005
Digital print, 46x34"

How to Be Invisible,
2004 (detail)
Power Point

Lost, 2005 (detail)
Digital print, 60x52"

Topical Learning Series 6 "NOT NECESSARILY FOR THE FAINT OF HEART"

How To Be INVISIBLE

Who Needs To Be Invisible?

Benefits of Invisibility

There are many situations where invisibility can be advantageous. Here are some examples:

- Free Admission to Events or Transport
- Fugitive from Justice
- Escaping Paparazzi
- Avoiding a Summons
- Bad Haircuts or Unightly Blemishes
- Unscheduled Days Off
- Your Turn to Mow the Lawn
- Hiding from Jealous Lover
- Skipping Out of a Duel
- Nosy Neighbors
- Ugly as an Iguana



Hey Skinny!, 2004
Digital print, 24x42"

Holy Toast series, 2005 (detail)
Plastic containers, bread

