Message
Mapping Eclecticism Through Practice (Inaugural publication)
Communication Design, Graphic Design, Illustration, Visual Communication et al.
Where if any do the mutual theoretical frameworks and methodologies lie?

Call for academic submissions
Scholarly submissions are invited for consideration in the full colour, large format, international journal, Message.
Message, Mapping Eclecticism through Practice will be published in December 2013.
Authors of published papers and reports will be invited to present these at the Plymouth University, Message symposium in 2014.

MAPPING ECLECTICISM THROUGH PRACTICE

Communication Design and Illustration have less developed theoretical frameworks than other established academic subjects. We are inviting other visual researchers and practitioners to explore and map a potential theoretical framework, the strength of which is its eclectic nature.

This publication asks for submissions that place a piece of Communication Design and/or Illustration at the centre of the discourse. The intention is to create not only a practice focused and discursive academic publication but also to begin to map the terrain to see where, if any, areas of commonality may lie. Successful Communication Design and Illustration often requires creative alignments and engagements across an eclectic range of disciplines, processes, methodologies, media, ideas and cultural contexts.

Whilst the last decade or so has seen Design establish itself as a credible and coherent academic discipline, could it be argued that this progression has led to an emphasis on, and validation of, the method/process rather than the outcome/solution? Within an academic context, Communication Design, Graphic Design, Illustration, Visual Communication et al (the diversity of nomenclature does suggest an ambiguity of identity and coherence), appear to be still in the process of mapping and establishing their theoretical frameworks, methodologies, processes, nomenclature and terminology.

Communication Design, Graphic Design and Illustration often craft tangible, novel, inventive, provocative, interactive, decorative, useful, behaviour-changing artefacts or solutions. These may be imbued with personal perspectives and agendas of their creators and/or commissioners. These may vary from financial to philanthropic; from sustainability to self-expression; from educational to entertainment and from social responsibility to self-aggrandisement. Should we embrace all of these perspectives and agendas because they may lead to new insights, possibilities, knowledge and applications?

The complex mesh of motives, the permeable boundaries of roles, plus the impact of technology, have made it problematic for Communication Designers and Illustrators to develop coherent theoretical frameworks distinct from disciplines such as Advertising, Art & Design History, Design, Drawing, Media, Narrative, Painting, Photography and Semiotics. Indeed due to their nature, is it necessary for Communication Designers and Illustrators to define themselves as a separate "academic discipline" or indeed align themselves at all?

Background
Message is a peer-reviewed academic journal that consists of blind reviewed academic papers plus one to three commissioned essays/articles. It is dedicated to the development and discussion of contemporary Visual Communication research particularly within Art & Design with an emphasis on Practice, Outputs and Artefacts.

The aim of the Message journal is to explore and expand the boundaries of Visual Communication within Art & Design through an experimental and developmental ethos, challenging the practitioner, the development and use of technology, as well as questioning Visual Communication values and social, ethical and sustainable practices.

The Message journal welcomes contributions from national and international Visual Communication researchers and practitioners from a variety of perspectives – theoretical, conceptual, educational, industrial.

The Message journal has been initiated by the Message research group at Plymouth University. The group's research focuses on the areas of graphic design, illustration and visual communication. The Plymouth University Message journal and research group is committed to enhancing the development of these subject areas, both in education and commercial design, through research and enterprise.

Message is proud to be at the forefront of this by recently hosting the VaroomLab symposium 'Boundaries, Illustration-Practice-Research' at the Plymouth International Book Festival 2012. The event explored how new technologies, concepts and professional issues are encouraging innovation, shaping the subject and pushing the illustration community to practise in new ways. In addition to the symposium was a touring 'Boundaries, Illustration-Practice-Research' exhibition and published book 'Making great illustration' by Jo Davies.

Message is involved in The Second International Symposium on Augmented Reality Visualisation and Art, part of the 17th International Conference on Information Visualisation, iV2013, July 2013, London, UK, plus the ICCI 360 immersive multimedia environment, Conference, 'Time around Space' June 2013, Plymouth UK.

It is also actively engaged in the development of the Plymouth Design Festival in 2015 and is holding a 2013 symposium with a focus on design underpinned by research.

Message advisory board
Professor Teal Triggs Associate Dean at Royal College of Art, UK
Associate Professor (Reader) Multimedia and Web Technology Dr Vladimir Geroimenko Plymouth University, UK
Professor Dóra Ísleifsdóttir Iceland Academy of Arts
Associate Professor & Head of MA Design Maziar Raein. Oslo National Academy of the Arts, Norway
Professor Phil Cleaver Middlesex University UK,
Patrick Baglee, design consultant and journalist, NY

Process
Contributions can take the form of:
Research papers (4000–6000 words)
A critical analysis and contextualisation of initial stages, on-going or completed practice based research projects (to include research question(s), methods and where appropriate outcomes and findings).

Position papers (4000–6000 words)
Put forward and debate a position on a particular issue.

Reports (4000–6000 words)
Reports that document advances in the field for example new collaborations, technological developments, processes, methods etc.

All papers are considered with the understanding that they represent at least 80% original material and have not been previously published.

Dates for submission: 14 June 2013

Submission must include: written paper or report, images (with evidence of permissions), captions

Email: v.squire@plymouth.ac.uk

Receipt of your submission will be made within 5 working days

Style guide
1. Dates
   The 1990s rather than the '90s
2. Quotes
   Use double quotation marks around a quote. If the quote is from an interview conducted by the writer it's better to break it up, by inserting, he/she 'says', 'reflects', 'continues' etc. But also, paraphrase is very helpful in keeping the reader engaged, and looks less forbidding than a large indented block quote.
3. Names
   Use italics for a book, film, work of art, etc.
4. Numerals
   Numbers spelled out from One to Nine, for 10 and over we use numerals.

Please note: Submissions must follow Harvard system of referencing.

Peer-review
Papers and reports selected by the Editors will be peer-reviewed by international professionals and scholars – all material will be "blind" read and commented by, at least, two reviewers.

The peer-review of each paper or report, will concentrate on whether the research paper or report is sufficiently well conceived, has potential to be well executed, and is appropriate to be included in Message.

• Reviewers will be invited to consider submitted papers and reports within their expertise.

• Each submission will be reviewed against clear editorial criteria. Feedback will be provided.

• After consideration by the Message editorial team a decision will be sent to the author within a specified timeframe.

Editors will respond to authors according to the following
- accepted without revision
- accepted with minor revision
- rejected

It is essential that all authors finally provide a thoroughly proofread and checked manuscript along with images in the specified format with proof of permissions.

Selection of peer–reviewers

The Message editorial board will in the first instance identify appropriate reviewers for a particular paper or report. Reviewers will be chosen according to factors including their expertise, reputation and knowledge. We intend to build a database of academic expertise around relevant subject areas.

As part of our editorial procedure, the Message team will brief potential reviewers before sending them papers and reports to review and all correspondence will be treated confidentially. Reviewers will remain anonymous during the peer-review process and impartiality will be our aim.

Feedback
All comments from reviewers to the editors will be treated confidentially.

A good review would answer the following questions:

- What are the main aims of the paper/report?

- Are the aims of the piece well situated in the context of any other known research around the subject?

- Who would find this paper of interest? And why?

- In what further directions would it be useful to take the current research?

Confidentiality
The review process will be seen as confidential by the Message editorial board and reviewers. As the author may have chosen to exclude some people from this process, the reviewer should not discuss nor consult other colleagues or experts about the review unless this has been agreed with the Message editorial team. Where appropriate we will request any feedback that might help to strengthen the paper or report to send to the author.

The Message editors may edit comments made by reviewers. In their comments to authors, reviewers are encouraged to be honest but not offensive in their language.

It will be the responsibility of the Message editorial team to send the decision to the author with any reviewers' comments.

Final publishing decisions are made by the Message editorial team. In the event that these are different from the reviewer's recommendations this will have been the result of a robust process of consideration. Authors of printed contributions will receive three copies of the relevant Message issue.

Message Editorial board – Victoria Squire, Peter Jones, Esther Dudley

Message Publisher – University of Plymouth Press

Paperback journal: ISBN 978-184102-347-2
ebook ISBN 978-184102-348-9
Current UK retail price per issue £10
For more details of Message (including guidelines) visit:
http://messageresearch.net