

From MA to PhD: a reflection on—and a proposal towards—a critical evaluation on the impact of Ravensbourne's contribution within and beyond UK graphic design education 1963–1996.

In my 15 minute presentation I showed two slide sets (pages 1–8) were constructed for the Dissemination and Impact unit, the final unit of UAL's MA Academic Practice in Art, Design & Communication. This is where I began to think about my identity as a researcher.

The second slide set (pages 9–17) were constructed for a PhD interview. I will be undertaking this at Central Saint Martins to research the pedagogy of basic design and typography under the supervision of Dr Catherine Dixon and Dr David Preston.

I presented the two sets at the symposium to evidence my learning journey. Click on the yellow notes to read my crib notes for each slide.



The learning gained from my
Major Project research including a
**reflection on the development
of my researcher identity** and an
evaluation of project impact.

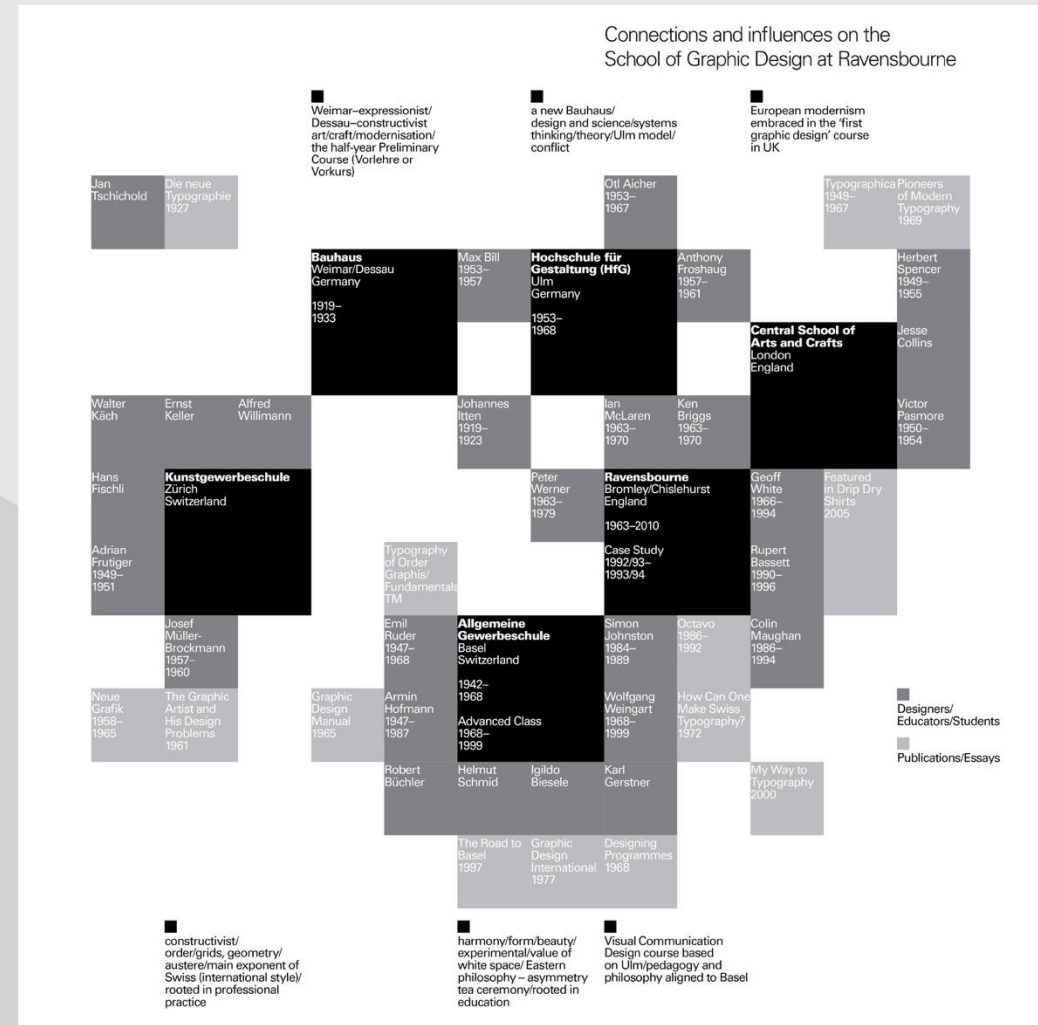


Project title

Snap to grid: The first-year student experience of the Graphic Design School at Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication 1992/3 & 1993/4 and its relevance for graphic design education today.

Research question

How were a group of individuals affected by the institutional adoption of a particular methodological approach and what relevance does it have for graphic design education today?





‘[Teal Triggs] calls for more trained design historians to provide a context to the understanding of graphic objects, movements, and people and she desires that they celebrate the practitioner-historians who have the capacity to locate, explain, and contribute to the development of graphic design practice’.

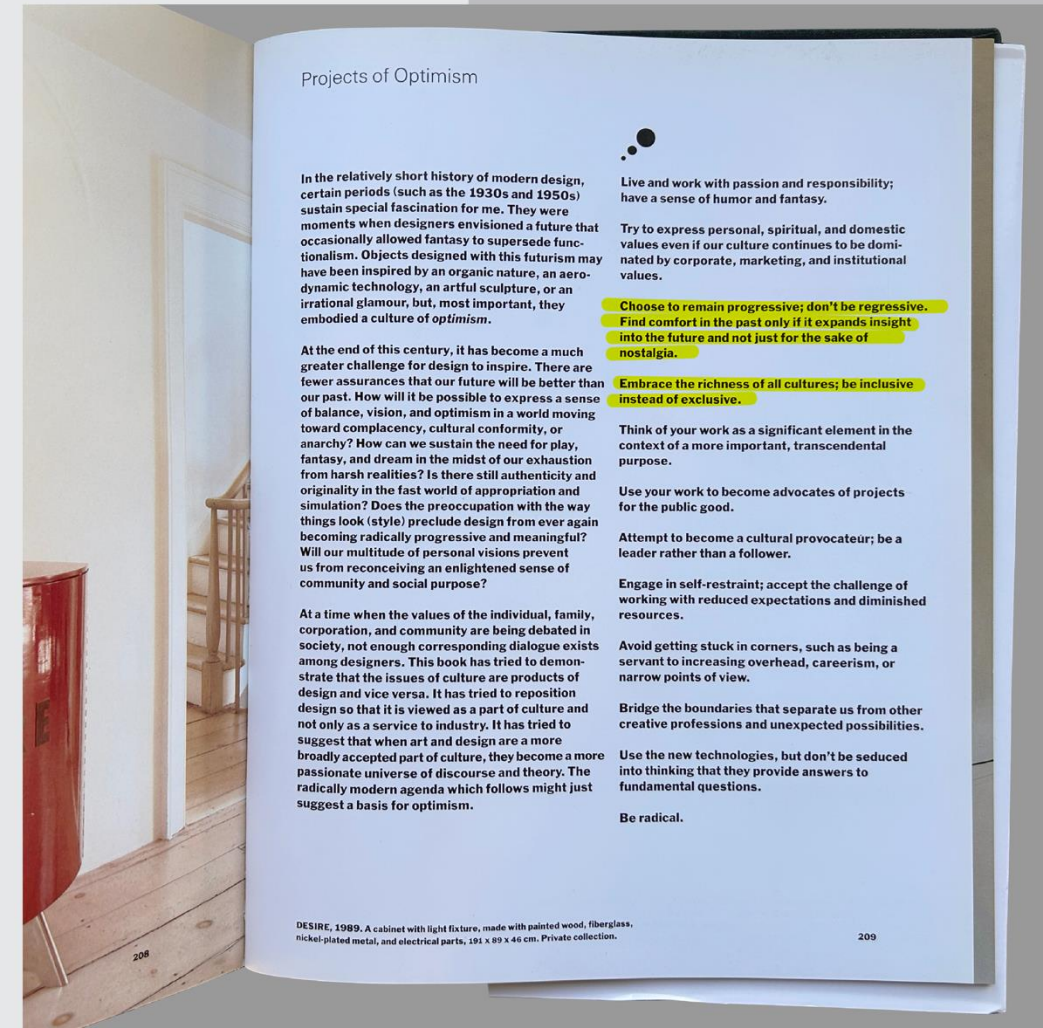
Fornari, D. et. al. (2021) ‘Introduction: New Perspectives on Swiss Graphic Design’. *Design Issues*, 37 (1), pp. 4-9. Available at: doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/desi_e_00620.



A sample of print collateral from Geoff White's and my own archive.

'Basic design should not be confused with purely aesthetic and remote exercises. Instead it is an advanced study that introduces the way one unifies doing, searching, and thinking in all of the visual arts'.

Friedman, D. (1994) *Radical Modernism*. New Haven: Yale University Press. p. 42.



Friedman, D. (1994) *Radical Modernism*. New Haven: Yale University Press. p. 209.

‘MA creates a space for intervention.
How can I use my research to make
a change?’

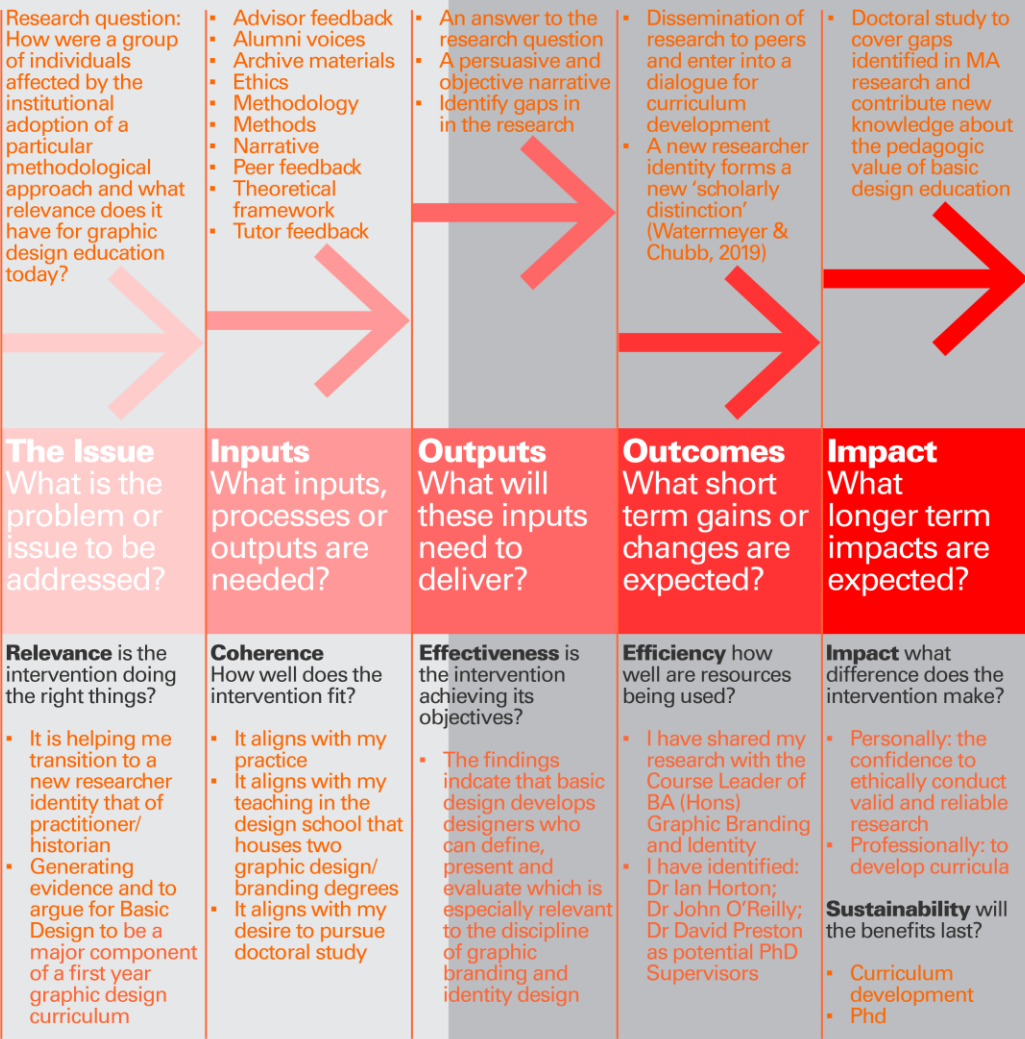
Smith, C. (2022) Research Methods and Practices unit briefing, 11 January.

‘Impact is really important, it is
synonymous with change, its
transformation, what has changed
as a result of your project?’

Crawley Jackson, A. (2024) LCC Research drop-in: Reader and Professor Progression, 9 October 2024.

‘What difference has an intervention
made? Impact evaluations focus on
the changes caused by an intervention;
measureable achievements which
either are themselves, or contribute
to, the objectives of the intervention’.

HM Treasury (2020) *The Magenta Book: Central Government Guidance on evaluation*. p. 15. Available at: www.gov.uk/official-documents.



Jones-Devitt, S. and Austen, L. (2021) 'Establishing a Logic Chain' in *A Guide to Basic Evaluation in Higher Education*. OAA Scotland. Available at: www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk OECD (2024) *Evaluation criteria*. Available at: <https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/development-co-operation-evaluation-and-effectiveness/evaluation-criteria.html>. Watermeyer, R. & Chubb, J. (2019) 'Evaluating "Impact" in the UK's Research Excellence Framework (REF): liminality, looseness and new modalities of scholarly distinction' in *Studies in Higher Education*, 44(9); pp. 1554–1556. Available at: doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2018.1455082>

Evaluation of Major Project impact

Ethical concerns for the impact of my research on others

Dissemination and Impact | Presentation | 4 December 2024 | Slide 6/8



'Revisiting my experiences at Ravensbourne has been a rewarding endeavor, and I am more than willing to engage in further discussions or interviews on the subject'.

'I have loved the reflection that this has prompted'.

'I have to say it was unexpectedly cathartic; I enjoyed doing it'.

Research Participants' feedback.

'Such an original and compelling piece of work'.

O'Reilly, J. (2024) Assessment Feedback: Andrew Slatter, 18 October.



Salter, R. (c.1992/93) Two of my research participants (foreground) as students in the School of Graphic Design, Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication, Chislehurst.

Evaluation of Major Project impact

Developing expertise and contributing original knowledge

Dissemination and Impact | Presentation | 4 December 2024 | Slide 7/8



'What impact do you want it to have (and with any future PhD study)? Is this to provoke a review of the curriculum and the direction of design education? **So what?**'

Pritchard, T. (2024) Email to Andrew Slatter, 28 October.

'I was thinking that your research does align very well with my interests: design history; methods; ways of practice and pedagogy. **What do you want your PhD to do that your MA didn't?**'

Preston, D. (2024) Text message to Andrew Slatter, 16 October.



McLaren, I. and Pritchard, T. (2024) *Modernist Graphic Design in Britain 1945-1980*. Manchester: the modernist. Photo: Tony Pritchard.



I suggest my research is translational – adapting the term ‘bench to bedside’ into study to studio.

Michael, M. (2018) ‘Valuing and Validating: On the “Success” of Interdisciplinary research’, in C. Lury et al. (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Interdisciplinary Research Methods*. Oxon: Routledge, pp.269–278.

‘It is crucial that critical thinkers who want to change our teaching practices talk to one another, collaborate in a discussion that crosses boundaries and creates a space for intervention’.

hooks, b. (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. Oxon: Routledge.



Johnston, S. (1986) *Identity for Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication*.
Novorol, T. (2013) *Portrait of Andrew Slatter*. BA (Hons) Graphic Branding and Identity badge.



*Ravensbourne
College of Design
and Communication
Identity*. London:
8vo (Simon Johnston,
1986).



**Snap to Grid:
Ravensbourne's
contribution
within and beyond
UK graphic design
education
1963–1996**

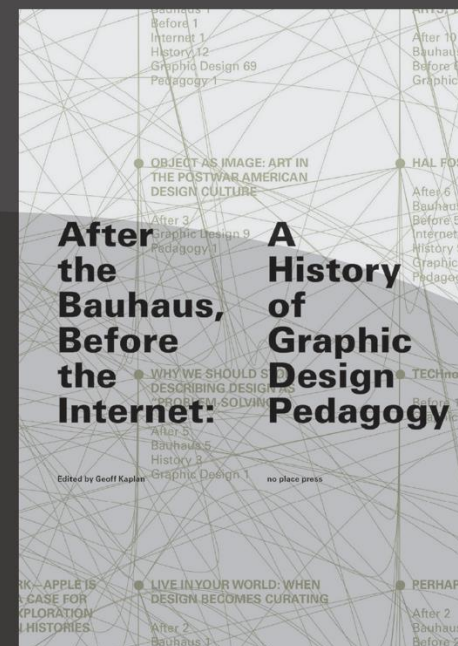
Ravensbourne



‘Foreground education as a lived phenomenon, a type of everyday experience, rather than a rarefied intellectual exercise – the product of bodies as well as minds’ (Fanning, 2022).

‘There are many elements of design pedagogy such as methods, processes and the teaching of form, typography and imagery that are in need of documentation and analysis, particularly from groundbreaking programs’ (McCoy, 2022).

*After the Bauhaus,
Before the Internet:
A History of Graphic
Design Pedagogy.*
New York: No Place
Press (Kaplan, G. (Ed.)
2022).





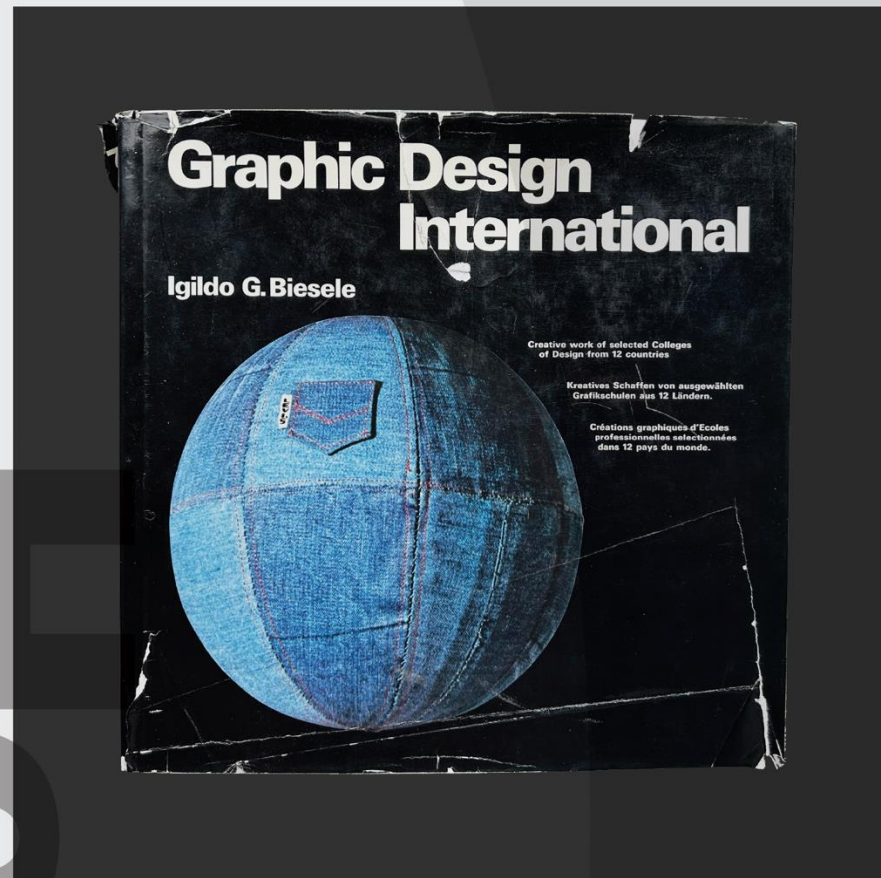
Design Issues,
37(1); pp. 51–63.
Available at: doi:
[https://doi.org/
10.1162/desi_a_
00624](https://doi.org/10.1162/desi_a_00624)

‘By Investigating the migration of ideas, objects, and people in connection with design, this article can be understood as a contribution to a post-national design historiography that seeks to expand the discourse on Swiss graphic design and other national design narratives beyond its own borders’ (Lzicar, 2021).

...this article seeks to address: first, the transnational construction of national narratives, canons, and labels in design history, and second, the role of foreign designers in their international promulgation and dissemination. Tracing the trajectory of Swiss graphic design beyond the borders of Switzerland, this article contributes to an understanding of the “transnational nature of design and its histories” (Lzicar, 2021), (Fallan and Lees-Maffei, 2016).



How has Ravensbourne contributed to a transnational discourse that re-presents Swiss graphic design as a negotiated form of cultural identity beyond a narrative of historical style?



Igildo G. Biesele (1977) selected design Colleges from 12 countries, for being pioneers and whose individual characteristics that define a school or its curriculum afforded a reputation.

*Graphic Design
International.*
Zurich: ABC Verlag
(Biesele, I.G., 1977).

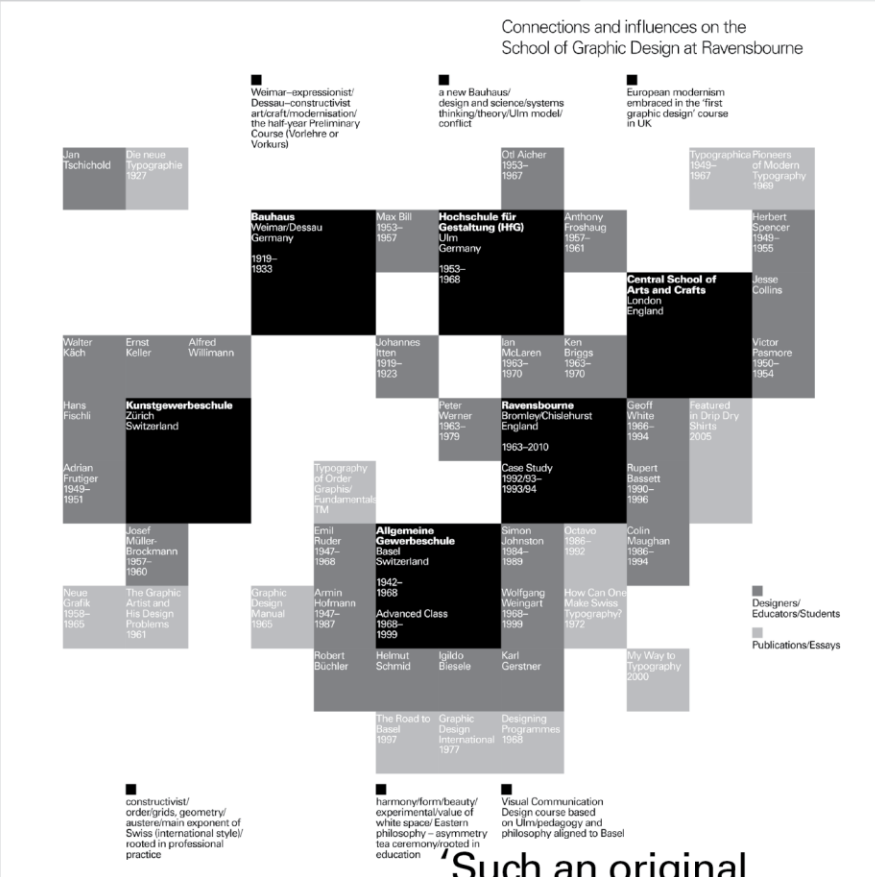


'I had become "Daniel son"
from the Karate Kid film with
Geoff White as "Mr. Miyagi".
I was "waxing on, waxing off"
and "painting the fence"
(Research Participant, 2024).

**What did the experience of teaching and studying
at Ravensbourne have on the bodies that were its subjects
as was framed by its ethos of form with function?**



The Karate Kid.
Theatrical
Release Poster
(Anon, 1984).



‘Such an original and compelling piece of work’
(Dr John O’Reilly, 2024).

MA Academic Practice in Art, Design and Communication, 15,000 word dissertation (Slatter, 2024).

Snap to grid: The first-year student experience of the Graphic Design School at Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication 1992/3 & 1993/4 and its relevance for graphic design education today.



- What does it consist of?
- How large is it, and what is it stored in?
- Are the materials created by Geoff, or collected by him but created by someone else; ie. are there published works?
- What condition is it in?
- Anything else you can tell so we can consider its suitability' (Sarah Mahurter, 2022).

Accession of Geoff White's archive to UAL Archives and Special Collections Centre.

*The Penguin Pool
at the London Zoo.*
Chislehurst:
Ravensbourne
(White, 1977).

The Penguin
Pool at the
London Zoo

On Monday
15 March
at 11.15am

A 2nd year
lecture by
Francis Carr



'The sort of philosophical
attitude which underlies
the design of the
Penguin Pool ... was
based broadly on a
rationalistic conception.
The affirmation in terms
of composition of a
certain order and rational-
ity of human relations'
Berthold Lubetkin

The brilliant Russian-
born architect, Berthold
Lubetkin, arrived in
London in 1930 and in
1932 formed the group
known as 'Tecton' with
six young graduates
from the Architectural
Association. The Penguin
Pool was designed for
the London Zoo in 1934
by 'Tecton' in association
with Ove Arup the
structural engineer.



A qualitative methodology with a variety of methods.

- Archival document analysis
- Case study analysis of each decade (1960s–90s)
- Content analysis of texts
- Critical literature review
- Review of past and current college curricula for comparative analysis
- Interview Alumni and surviving Tutors

*Bodies and Personalities
Frame for 1992/93 cohort
Year 1 entry. Content
Analysis as a Method
for MA Academic Practice
Final Major Project.
London: UAL (Slatter, 2024).*

about (1) absolute (1) academic (1) act (1) adults (1) after (1) again (1) always (2) amazing (1) any (1) appear (1) approaches (1) approve (1) are (2) arrival (1) arrivals (1) asked (1) available (1) aware (1) back (1) be (3) beautiful (2) became (1) because (1) become (2) been (1) being (2) believe (2) book (1) books (2) borrow (1) briefing (1) bunch (1) burke (2) bus (1) called (1) calligraphy (1) careful (1) carson (1) clear (1) clearly (4) colin (7) collaborative (1) collaboratively (1) college (1) coming (1) common (1) compared (1) complain (1) computer (1) correct (1) could (1) course (5) credit (2) criticism (1) crowell (1) daniel (1) david (1) dawn (1) day (2) decided (1) dedicated (1) dedication (1) deeper (1) degree (2) dennis (1) design (8) designers (1) detail (1) didn't (1) different (1) direction (1) discuss (1) do (2) doing (5) drank (2) encouraged (1) enthusiastic (1) escapes (1) especially (1) establishing (1) even (2) every (2) everyone (2) exercise (2) exercises (1) expanded (1) expecting (1) experience (1) eye (1) featured (1) fearless (1) fed (1) feedback (1) felt (1) few (1) film (1) first (1) flair (1) fortunate (1) forward (1) foundations (1) functional (1) fundamentals (1) gently (1) geoff's (1) geoff (26) getting (1) gifted (1) girls (1) graphic (2) greatly (1) green (1) group (2) guidance (2) guru (1) handle (1) happy (1) have (8) he (4) headed (1) helped (1) him (7) his (4) horizons (1) how (1) human (1) if (1) illustrative (1) impress (1) includes (1) indeed (1) individually (2) individuals (1) influence (1) influenced (2) information (1) inspiration (1) intensity (1) interested (1) interviewees (1) introduced (2) jargon (1) jim (1) jobs (1) josef (1) just (1) karate (1) key (1) kid (1) knowledge (2) last (1) later (1) layout (1) layouts (1) learn (2) leave (1) lecturers (1) lectures (1) legends (1) less (1) letting (1) levels (1) library (1) life (1) light (1) like (2) limited (1) lock (1) longer (1) looking (2) lovely (1) made (1) make (1) many (1) mark (1) maughan (1) me (7) meism (1) miss (1) miyagi (1) modernist (1) moments (1) more (4) most (1) me (1) much (3) muller-brockmann (1) must (1) my (4) myself (1) name (3) natural (1) nd (1) needed (1) net (1) never (1) new (1) nicholas (1) no (2) not (1) nothing (1) now (2) often (1) oliver (1) one (1) only (1) onwards (1) opening (1) other (1) others (1) our (5) out (1) part (2) passed (1) patrick (8) paul (1) peers (1) people (5) personal (2) peter (1) photography (1) phrase (1) pointing (1) practising (1) pre (1) pressure (1) print (2) pushing (1) quitting (1) rand (1) randomly (1) real (2) really (1) recollection (1) redacted (2) reference (1) references (2) remember (3) research (1) reviews (1) rhetoric (1) right (2) rupert (2) sadly (1) same (2) say (1) second (1) see (1) selection (1) service (1) sessions (1) set (2) share (4) shared (1) side (1) skills (1) slip (1) small (1) some (3) something (1) son (1) source (1) specifically (1) started (2) steer (1) step (1) still (2) stop (1) stribley (1) student (1) students (8) studies (1) suggesting (1) surreal (1) talk (3) tandem (1) taught (1) teach (1) teal (2) telling (1) testament (1) thank (1) them (3) think (2) thought (1) thought (1) through (2) time (4) tutor (2) tutors (7) two (1) type (1) typography (2) unacquainted (1) understand (1) understanding (1) unified (1) unrivalled (1) up (1) us (6) vaughan (1) view (1) visual (1) we'd (1) we (13) week (1) weekly (1) weingart (1) when (3) where (1) which (1) whilst (1) white (5) who (2) with (1) without (1) wolfgang (1) work (4) worked (2) working (3) world (1) would (7) writing (1) year (2) yes (1) yet (1) you (7) your (1)



Biesele, I.G. (1977)
Graphic Design International.
Zurich: ABC Verlag.

Fallan, K. and Lees-Maffei, G. (2016) 'Real Imagined Communities: National Narratives and the Globalization of Design History' in R. Lzicar (2021) 'Swiss Graphic Design: A British Invention?' in *Design Issues*, 37(1); pp. 51–63. Available at: doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/desi_a_00624

Fanning, C. (2022) 'Design Pedagogy's Trace: Notes on Evidence and Method' in Kaplan, G. (Ed.) (2022) *After the Bauhaus, Before the Internet: A History of Graphic Design Pedagogy*. New York: No Place Press.

Lzicar, R. (2021) 'Swiss Graphic Design: A British Invention?' in *Design Issues*, 37(1); pp. 51–63. Available at: doi: https://doi.org/10.1162/desi_a_00624

McCoy, K. (2022) 'Designing a Discipline' in Kaplan, G. (Ed.) (2022) *After the Bauhaus, Before the Internet: A History of Graphic Design Pedagogy*. New York: No Place Press.

Research Participant (2024) 500-word reflection on the first year experience in Slatter, A. (2024) Snap to grid: The first-year student experience of the Graphic Design School at Ravensbourne College of Design and Communication 1992/3 & 1993/4 and its relevance for graphic design education today. Unpublished Research.

