



express our perspective,

and celebrate the

details that tend to get

lost in the rush of it all.

This is UNREAD.

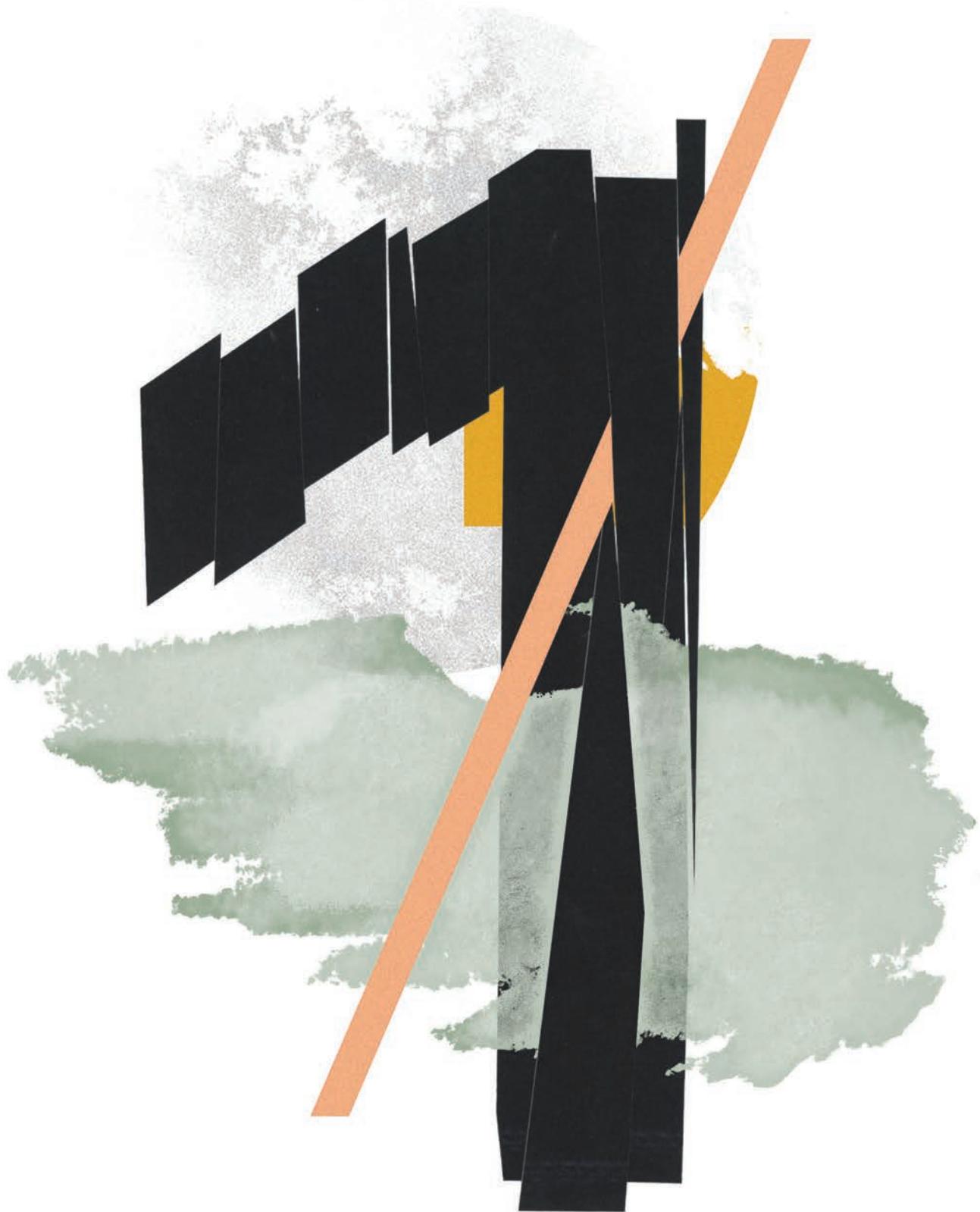
Twice a year, we get a

chance to read between

the lines—to push a

part of our process

into the spotlight,



A WORD FROM ONE DESIGN

We're happy you found your way to our first proper publication.
It also just so happens that the entire journal is about firsts.

Our first time traveling around the world to hear the voices
of a rapidly growing global brand; our first time creating a
comprehensive hospitality experience from the ground up,
designed to serve the art community; and our first time talking
to one of our most curious, collaborative cohorts, Jim Coudal,
about how constant inquiry drives all facets of his endeavors—
including whom he decides to partner with.

The thread that ties what we do and who we are as a team
together is our innate and driving desire to learn. To be curious.
To question. To not ask "what," but rather, "why?"

All blog posts and annual reports aside, UNREAD is our
first time deeply articulating the One Design philosophy and
what, both individually and as a team, defines us.

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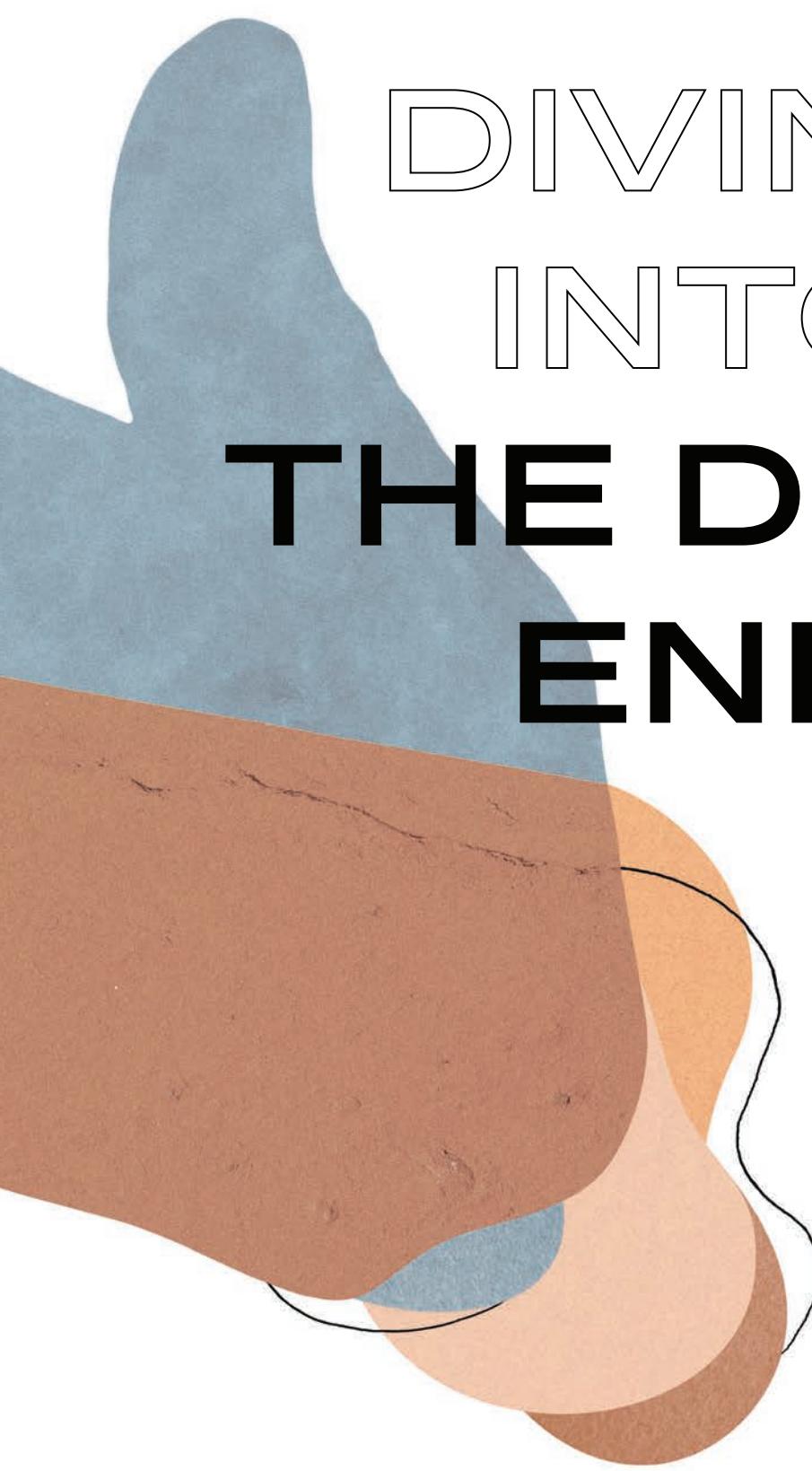
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CURIOS? WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE.

SINCERELY,
ONE DESIGN

UNREAD





DIVING INTO **THE DEEP END**

A PEEK BEHIND THE
CURTAIN—WHAT IS CURIOSITY
AND WHY DO WE CARE?

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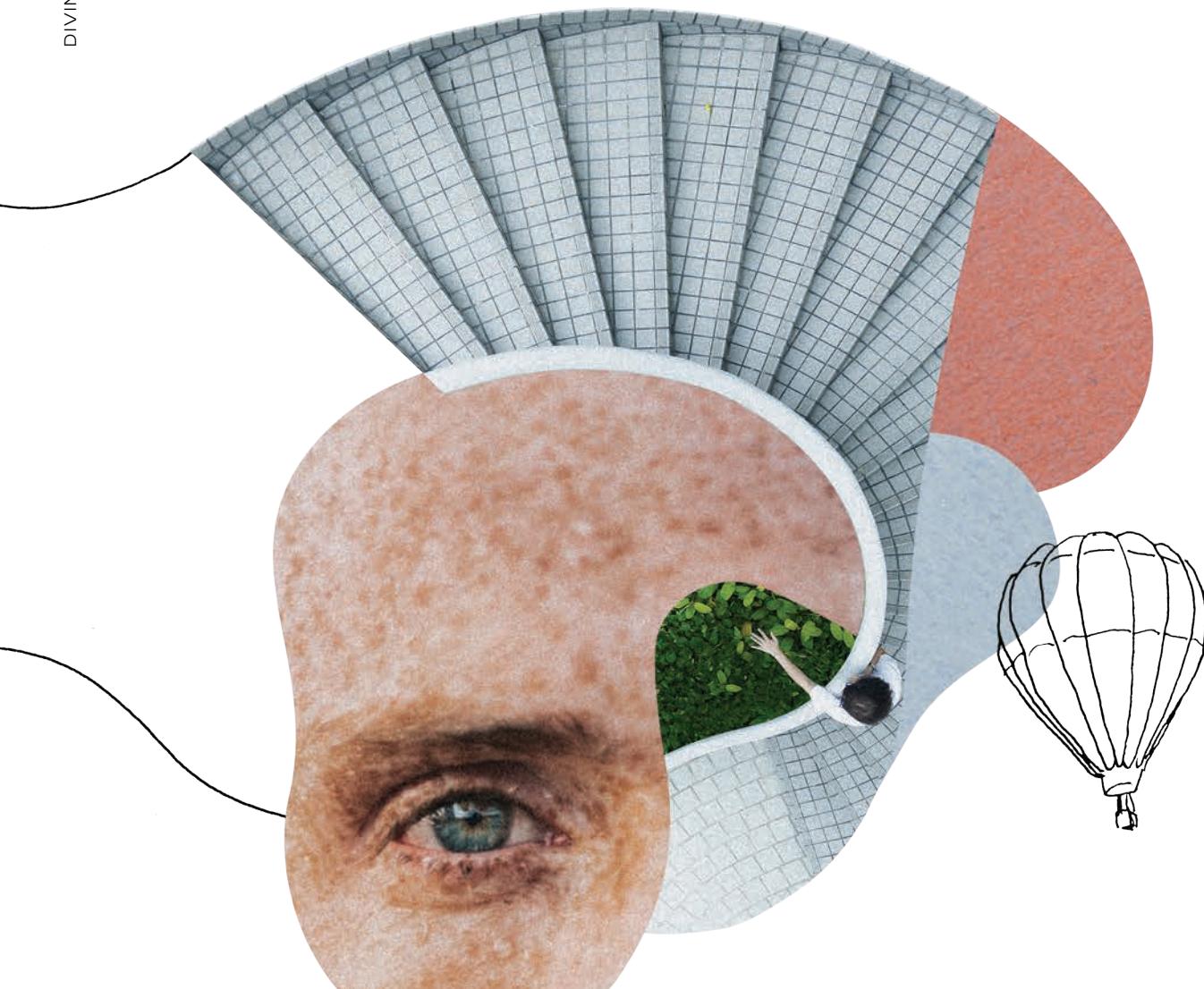
There are spots in the office where the aftermath of the ocean that is possibility is present.

BEAUTIFUL
TRASH

And we unabashedly have a lot of pride in them. Pinned to the cork wall facing the northernmost windows. In stacks wherever surface is available in meeting rooms. Scattered across desks.

The piles of beautiful trash—design and strategy and copy and wireframes that didn't quite make the cut—act as persistent reminders: beginning something may be messy, but damn, is that mess indicative of a process worth swimming through.

This pervasive curiosity is a continuous thread through all of our work. From strategy to software, you'd better bet that a driving need to understand those using whatever we're designing permeates everything we do at One Design. We'll go as far as to say you can't be a designer or a writer or a developer or a strategist or a creative director if curiosity isn't in your DNA.





All of us individually have an inherent and relentless desire to learn. And it extends beyond the conventions of our established processes. Think extended trips out of the country. Taking up a new hobby. Having tough conversations. Reading as many books as possible. Outside of work, we all agree: we need to study and explore the world around us.

And of course, this perspective has infected the collective studio mindset. We need to be curious in

order to make anything that sticks. How can you discover anything if you aren't a little bit uncomfortable? If you don't expose yourself to every possible perspective? If you don't ask questions and let yourself be swept up in it all?

Without curiosity, our work would be lifeless and we wouldn't feel the least bit full. Our sense of wonder gives everything we create more than just a skeleton—it gives it a power that only tireless inquiry can produce.

SO, WHAT DOES
IT LOOK LIKE?



DIVING INTO

SEARCHING
FOR ANSWERS

**Curiosity needs an invitation.
A question that keeps
needling you: Why? How?
What in the fresh hell is that?
It's a leap of faith.**



When you're constantly asking questions and probing for answers like we are, you can start to see the patterns: A creatively minded person will probably answer like "this." A client will probably want "this." When you start to get more than one person in the room making decisions, the answers and needs inevitably become more complex. Interestingly, when it comes to the discovery phase of a project, more answers are al-

ways better than one—blowing those answer patterns out of the water and running full force into the unknown. That's how you move away from the answer you think you're looking for and find the answer you actually need. But what do you do when you can't get all the stakeholders in the same room? You hit the road and turn simple interest into hands-on observation. Show is better than tell.



Encore Event Technologies—a meeting and live event partner—was experiencing a period of rapid growth on a global scale. Acquisitions, mergers, and expansions all contributed to the progress. The team was quickly realizing that alongside that growth came fragmentation—the central heart of their brand was getting lost as they absorbed individuals, team, methods, and perspectives from around the world.

With all the change Encore was experiencing, employees lost sight of their place within the organization and the value of the company at large—especially in their new landscape.

The One Design team was tasked with helping them realign their brand. But how do you dig in and uncover the essence of a company that's comprised of thousands of unique voices—and often disconnected experiences? Asking questions is the obvious place to start. But as the adage goes, actions speak louder.

You need to watch. Listen. Observe. Experience firsthand what they do best, as well as where they fall flat. Speak with visionary minds as well as folks on the ground around the world. Gather data. Observe patterns. Uncover incongruities. Identify opportunities. And filter it all into a point of view. So we took to the skies.

Turns out, in a world where business relationships have taken on an increasingly impersonal tone that is downright depressing, Encore employees go out of their way to make sure personal connections are front and center in the event technology space every day.

We saw an impressively strong internal culture that stretched not only across multiple properties, but across geographies, as well. That culture encouraged team members to take on responsibility and grow. Some members of the Encore team built such strong rapport with their clients that they were invited to their childrens' baptisms. Watching them do their thing, we learned more about the business and how they do it than we ever could have by gathering information from afar.

And as a result, our strategy was more relevant, our design work was more nuanced, our messages more resonant, and ultimately everything just felt closer to home. Almost 70,000 miles flown to seven different cities in five different countries to speak to 83 different people later, we had a pretty good handle on the thousands of answers to hundreds of questions that would prove instrumental to defining a global positioning strategy, refreshed visual expression, multiple websites, and counting.

A research-fueled trip around the world turned out to be the key to uncovering the thread uniting Encore at its core—talk about setting a strong foundation. Jumping from place to place wasn't the easiest feat—but in the grand scheme of things, when a bit of curious observation is the key to happy clients, a successful design team, and a united global workforce, we'll take it.

BUT SOMETIMES THE CLIENT "ASK"
ISN'T SO EASILY UNCOVERED



Sometimes—more often than not—the solution to a problem is messy.

3/3

And these solutions, in our experience, are birthed from questioning what is asked of us. Answers are made up of a lot of disparate parts, a true culmination of needs from different pockets of users.

When Marcus Hotels and Resorts approached us last winter, you could say we were highly intrigued. They wanted to transform an existing hotel property in downtown Milwaukee into an art hotel. Our first thought was, "Okay, we're so down. But what does that mean?"

What is an art hotel? What is an art hotel in Milwaukee? Should we even attempt to try and answer what qualifies as art? And furthermore, even though we're makers ourselves, our project team's perspective was only one lens that had the potential to inform this new hospitality brand.

It became clear very quickly that working outside of our four walls was the only way we were going to form an accurate, meaningful perspective.

We had to build relationships with folks that could represent the voice of a city and the many communities this space needed to serve. We spoke with Marcus team members, representatives from major art organizations, local makers and community builders, Chicago-based community builders, and travelers representing a wide demographic spread—what did they imagine an art hotel looked like? What did they need for this space to feel alive? Inclusive? Essential?

Artwork: Daniel Arnold
Kelly Frederick Mizer
Mark Mulhern

FINDING
A COMMON
THREAD

Despite these different groups having very different needs, we were able to find a handful of common threads in our sea of long talks: a big one being that creative expression is a tool for connection. This hotel had to celebrate creation and the vibrancy of the creative process. It needed to be a dynamic and changing space, engaging early and often with local makers.

The problem we set out to solve had less to do with defining “art,” and more to do with embracing “art” as this ubiquitous force with the power to unite people from all different backgrounds—a tool to build bridges between people and place.

And arguably the most meta, “a-ha” part about that revelation was accepting that in order for “art” to act as a bridge between people and

place, the actual space had to be truly adaptable. A space that was constantly evolving and unafraid of the unknown. More than just a place to spend the night, it had to foster an environment where asking questions was the norm—about art and all its faces, about problems facing Milwaukee’s many communities, and about the world at large.

So even though the answers we found were uncomfortably open-ended, we reminded ourselves that the beauty of this particular search was that it should never end. And this is the thread through all of our work, no matter where the client, the insight, or the final form takes us: the journey is messy, endless, and rewarding. And with that ever-changing rhythm, we got to work.

* See the full case study
at onedesign.co/saintkate

THE DEEP END

SEE THE RESULTS AT
SAINTKATEARTS.COM





UNREAD





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CHATTING WITH
JIM COUDAL

Instead of an “end,” maybe this act of seeking answers is more of a window. A jumping-off point for every design, copy, and code opportunity. What if curiosity is the skeleton key to feeding the creative spirit and our clients’ needs at the same time? What if “why” is the first step in our process—not because as designers, strategists, and engineers you have to start someplace, but because inquisitiveness fuels all we do.

Our friend Jim Coudal (of Coudal Partners and Field Notes fame) gave an interview a couple of years ago in which he hit the nail squarely on the head, saying, “the curious will inherit the earth.” We have to agree. In fact: Hell yeah. Tell us more, Jim.

UNREAD

THE CURIOUS WILL



Can someone be too curious?

Is that a thing?

ONE
DESIGN

JIM
COUDAL

You can be completely unfocused, which is not the same thing as too curious.

In business, there is a focus that needs to be on things. Deadlines have to be met. You know—that annual report had to be at the printer on Thursday or the winter edition had to be at the printer on Thursday. It's the same thing.

At Field Notes, we've done 41 editions and we've learned a lot about a whole bunch of really interesting things—from the NASA missions to the moon to the history of the development of the paperback in 1860 in New York City. Tons and tons of other things of about publishing and about American design and history.

We used to always say we were completely focused on what we were doing until we saw something shiny in the grass to the side. Then we'd be like, 'There's something shiny over there.'

If you own having a short attention span, that's okay. That short attention span is our superpower in a way. You should be a slave to it as opposed to trying to fix it. That level of excitement you get on a new project, that's the juice. Everything else is bullshit.

That's what you want. You want that, 'Holy hell. This could be a thing that we can work on. What else can I learn about this? What do you know about this? I don't know anything about it. I'm going to go find out. We're going to do this. Let's talk to somebody.'

But I have this whole theory about creativity—that it's not about coming up with new things. It's about finding new connections—the unexpected combination of juxtaposition—between existing things.

Think of James Joyce taking stream of consciousness and marrying it to the entire history of Ireland and Dublin. Or Stanley Kubrick taking Thackeray's novel about Barry Lyndon and modern cinematic techniques that allowed him to shoot completely in natural light, marrying modern technological innovation with this old, beautiful novel. Or Picasso seeing multiple sides of a table full of things simultaneously. All of a sudden, painting is not a moment frozen in time. It's out of time.

For someone or a group of people with a short attention span, it's always 'How is this connected?' That is where it happens.

INHERIT THE EARTH



Well, where do you start? Is it really just a matter of stumbling across things and saying, 'I want to know more?'

Yes. In general, I tend to bounce from one thing to another until I want to know more about it.

I'm certainly not responsible for all the ideas for all the quarterly editions—I'm more the traffic cop of them. I do come up with a lot of them, but everybody does here.

We have conversations. Beer helps. Here's a good example. We did an edition last year in the

fall called the Dime Novel, which was based on a chapter—no pun intended—in American publishing history, in which two brothers in New York basically invented the paperback. They did it by making these little adventure stories that they could sell for ten cents a piece.

This is going to be way too long, but I'm going to tell it anyhow.

Please.

I came across how they would get the art and the type together for something that they could print with metal type. That led to discovering how they could make what was called a 'stereotype'.

They would make the whole thing out of metal type, and then they would cast plaster. When the plaster hardened, they would take it apart, and then they would take all the type apart. They needed all the 'Es' and the 'Os' and the 'Ts' and everything for other projects.

They would fill that plaster with lead and make a lockup; they couldn't edit it anymore, but they could print it over and over and over again.

Somehow, it led to this masthead from the dime novel series. I clicked on another link, and I clicked on another link. I went on eBay and I bought one for way too much money. I discovered the University of Northern Illinois was a place that had lots of them. Another university had this large article about them. I started to get excited about it because Field Notes—if it's anything, it's an American brand. This was a chapter in American publishing and design history.

Bryan is our lead designer. I'm like, 'Bryan, do you know anything about these dime novels?'

He's like, 'I think I've heard the term before. I don't really know what they are.'

I'm like, 'Does anybody know about this?' Then I called Aaron.

Aaron is a student of American design. I'm like, 'Aaron, do you know about these dime novels in New York from the 1860s?'

He's like, 'I've never heard of them.'

I go, 'They were orange.'

'Nope. Never heard of them.'

I'm like, 'If I don't know about it, and Bryan doesn't know about it, and Aaron doesn't know about it, that means nobody knows about it.'

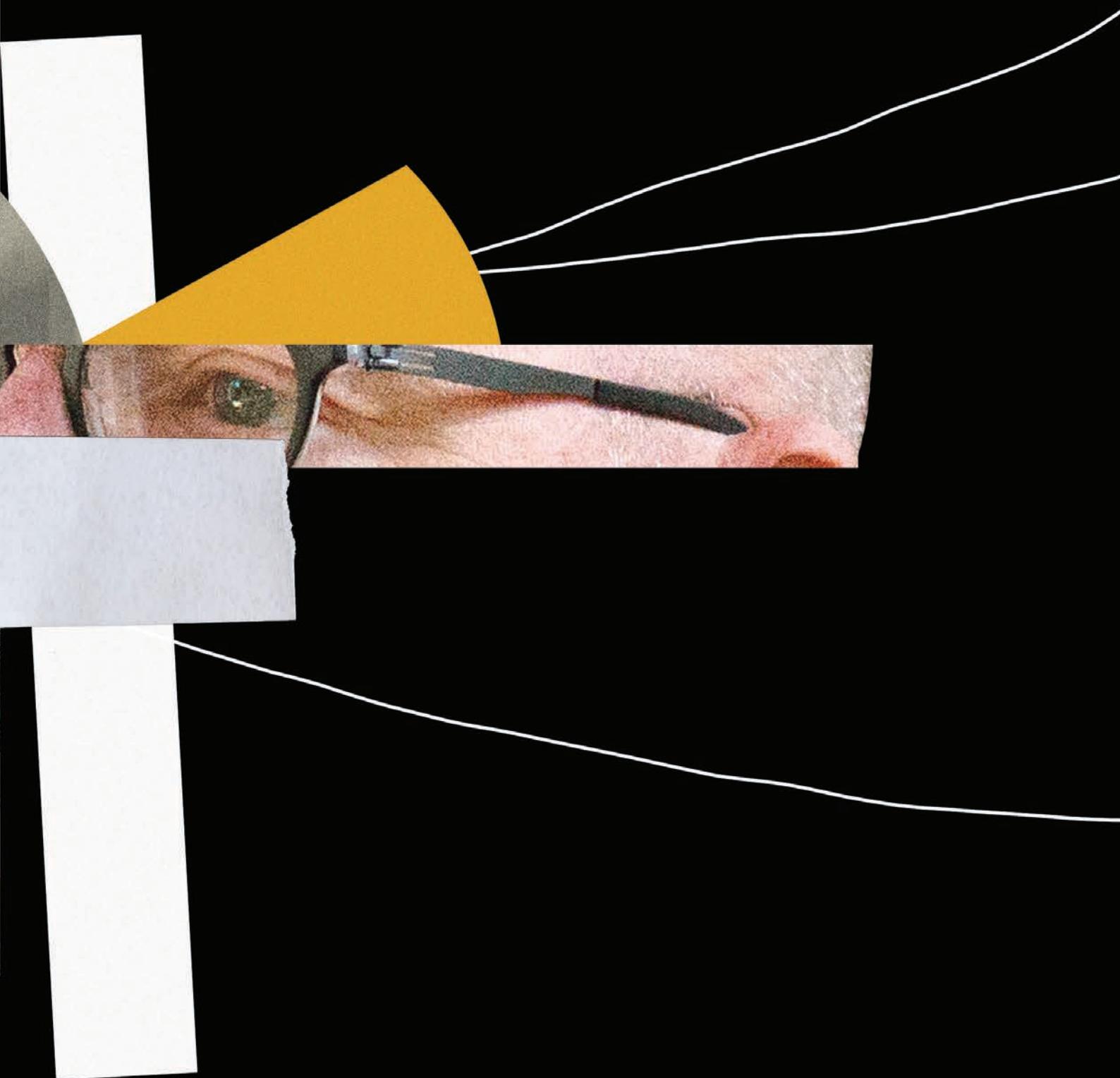
We should get into this and make an edition.'



It was the most satisfying edition ever because, going into it, we knew nothing about it. Sometimes you have to be open to it all.

* Want more?
Listen to the full interview at
onedesign.co/coudal







HAVE WE SATIED YOUR CURIOSITY?

Observation and curiosity don't always have a concrete deliverable you can nail to quantifiable results or ROI. But it's not just about wanting to have a reason to take a jet plane around the world, either. The best part of being a maker and a problem solver is getting your hands dirty, so you have a feel for what you're working with. And collecting all that raw data together, cleaning it up, and putting a nice shiny bow on it. That's how you find the answers you need to design well, with purpose, for the future.

Encore asked us to help them unify their growing global company by uncovering a strong foundational identity. That meant tripping the light fantastic around the world to visit the places where they do business.

Marcus asked us to help them establish a platform for constant, meaningful conversation with the art community in Milwaukee. That meant searching for a foundational definition of "art" that fit the sensibilities of the people who live, breathe, and make there.

Being open to everything naturally requires a fearlessness of failure. And that's the whole point. Fearless tinkering. Asking the questions that may not have answers. Running full tilt at a problem over and over and over again. As makers and people walking the Earth, we have an innate desire to be fed and to feed. Curiosity drives that hunger. When we find something that satiates it, we feel compelled to share. We're more than a company that churns stuff out.

WE LIKE TO MAKE
A BIT OF A MESS.

WE CERTAINLY HOPE NOT.

UNREAD

FROM

UNREAD - VOLUME TWO

IDEAS

THE TRUTH ISSUE

TO

COMING FALL 2019

ACTION

