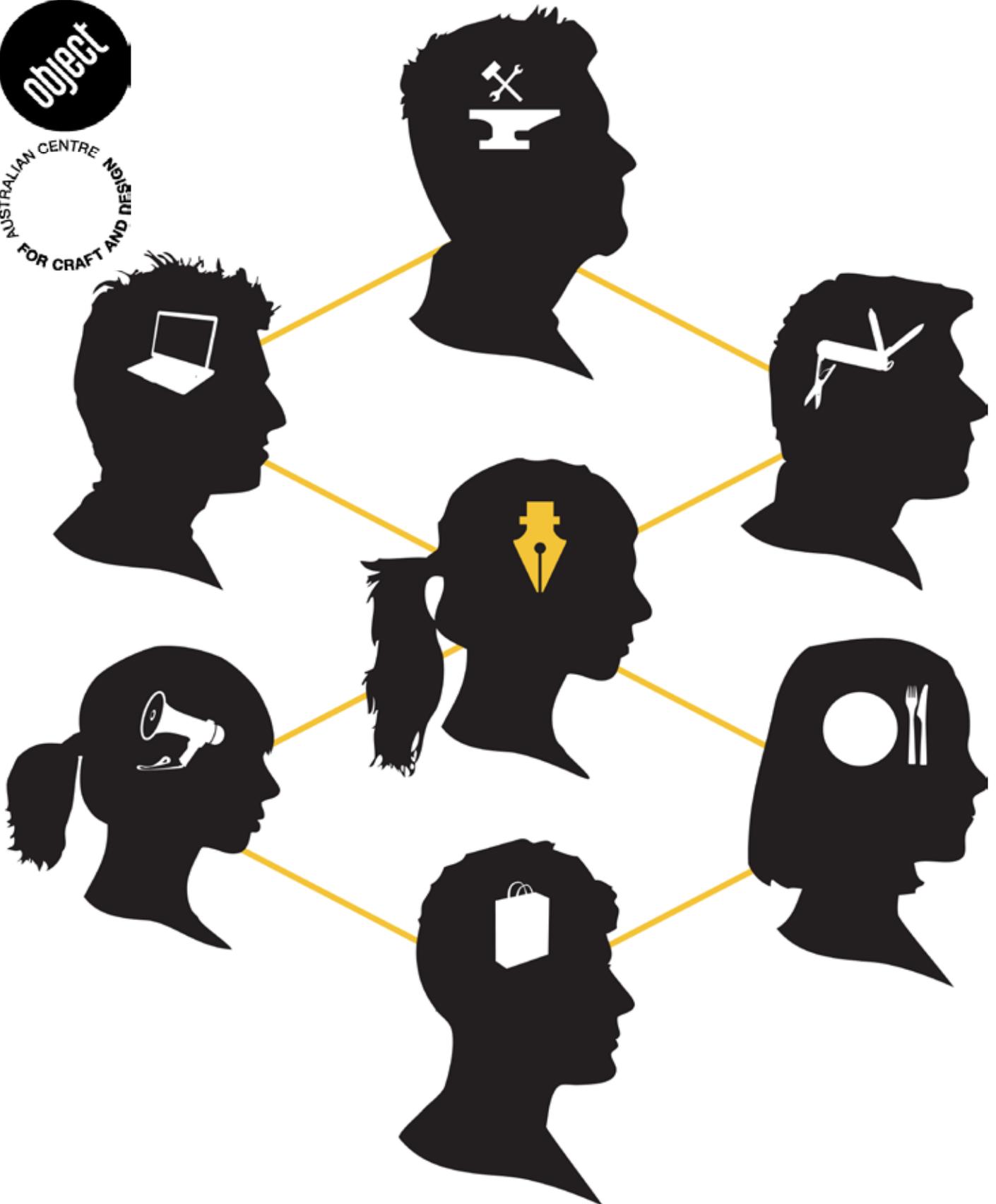




AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR CRAFT AND DESIGN



In Good Company

29 JANUARY - 3 APRIL 2011

EDUCATION KIT



In Good Company

CURATED BY & COMPANY

900
900
900

MEET YOU



In Good Company

TEACHERS NOTES



SYLLABUS LINKS

In Good Company is a unique exhibition that draws back the curtain to reveal what happens behind the scenes of Sydney's creative community. Design often calls for creative collaborations with mates, mentors, makers, marketers - a complex network of skilled and passionate individuals. *In Good Company* introduces audiences to the people that make it happen by bringing together over 20 emerging and established designers, manufacturers, makers and retailers.

In Good Company explores what local, sustainable, and intelligent design really means, revealing the hands that help shape it, and exploring how objects arrive in a shop window, ready to be bought, carried home and loved.

This education kit explores some 'big ideas', how designers, manufacturers, makers and retailers work together. Most of the information comes directly from these people through quotes and images. A case study is included that focuses on the network of relationships between individuals and companies and how a product might be designed, made, marketed and sold.

Design and Technology Stages 4 and 5

- Knowledge and understanding of the work of designers and the issues and trends that influence their work. 4.3.1, 4.3.2; 5.3.1, 5.3.2
- Knowledge and understanding of and skills in innovation, creativity and enterprise.

Design and Technology Stage 6:

- Knowledge and understanding about design theory and design processes in a range of contexts. P1.1; H1.1, H1.2
- Knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the interrelationship of design, technology, society and the environment. P2.1, P2.2; H2.1, H2.2
- Creativity and an understanding of innovation and entrepreneurial activity in a range of contexts. P3.1, P3.2; H3.1

Visual Design Stage 6

- Explores concepts of artist/designer, kinds of designed works, and interpretations of the world and audience/consumer response in their making of designed works.
- Investigates the roles and relationships among the concepts of artist/designer, work, world and audience/consumer in critical and historical investigations.

Education Kit developed and written by Annette Mauer & Gillian Thomas

Education Kit design: Sarah Profilio

In Good Company was curated by Anna Lise De Lorenzo

Photos courtesy of &Company & Nick De Lorenzo

Exhibition photography: Jamie Williams

Illustrations: Katie Dean

Exhibition graphics: Emma Warfield



PRINCIPAL FUNDING

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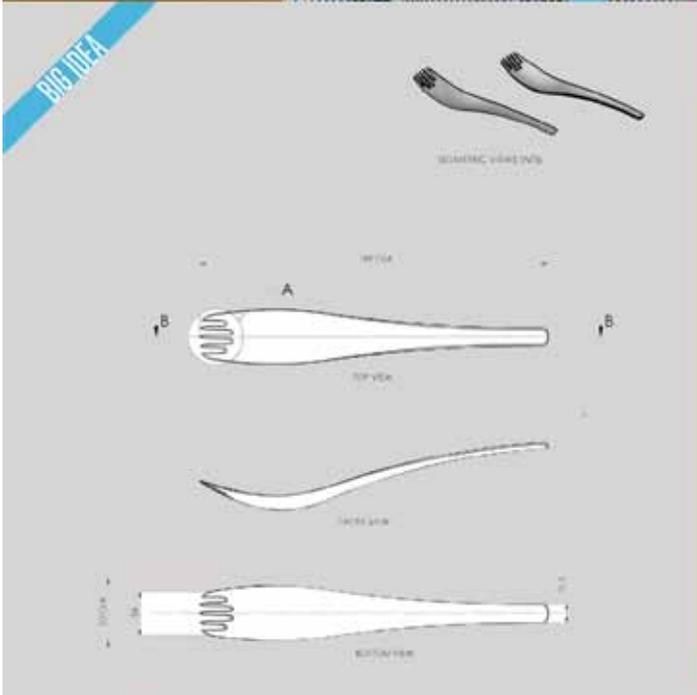
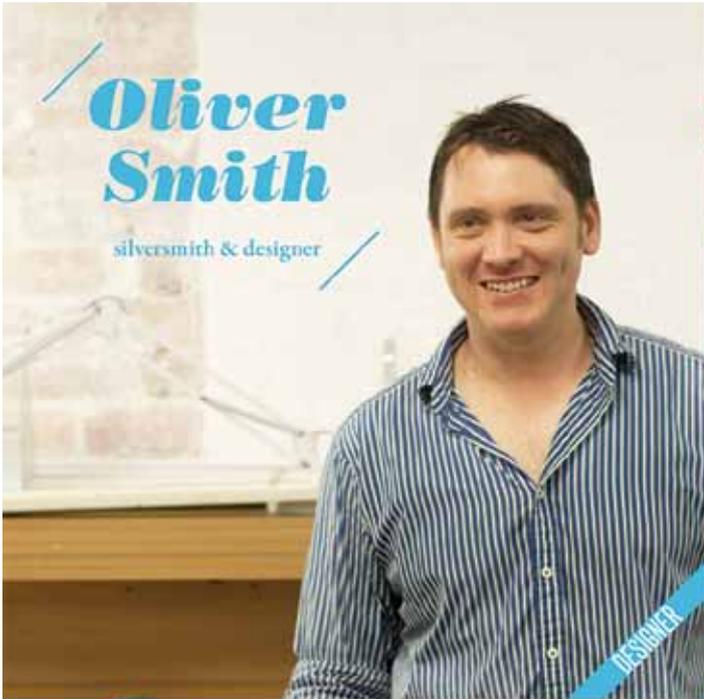
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WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?



Can big ideas actually change the world? Is all this talk about 'consciousness' and 'sustainability' getting us to where we need to be? Designer-citizens are exploring new ways for design to address the needs of a changing world. We ask for a specific example – a new idea or existing one, a product or approach to working, micro or macro – ideas that impact our daily lives for the better.





“We understand the impact good food has on our wellbeing and increasingly view the method of food production and ecological relationships that surround what we eat as embodied in the ingredients. The actual food is part of a system. The same thinking should apply to objects, materials and manufacturing. The implication is that designers have the opportunity to nourish society on multiple levels. Good design is healthy.”
Oliver Smith, Silversmith & Designer.

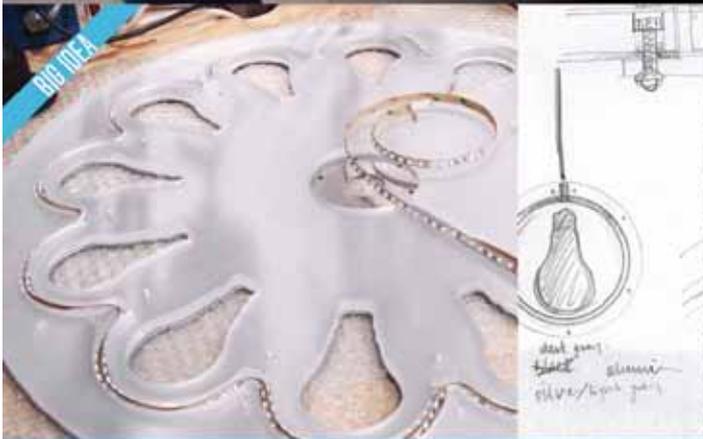
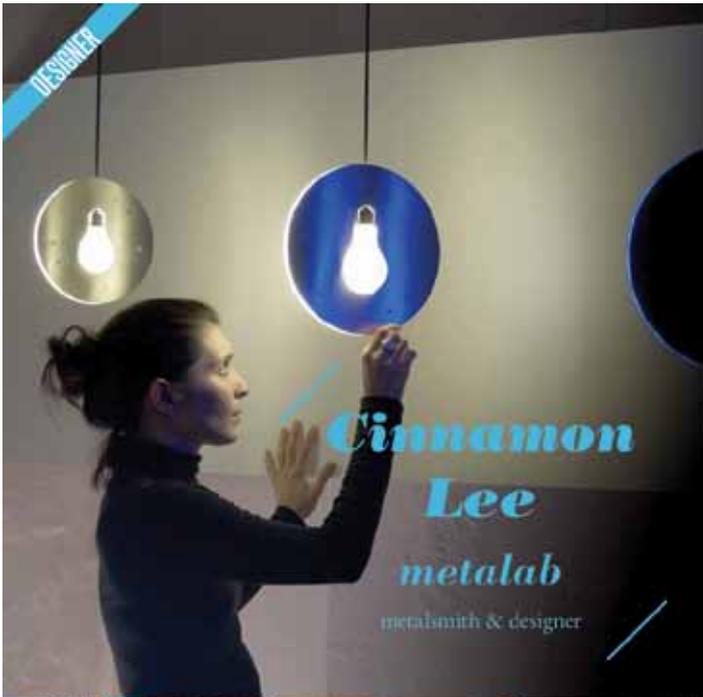
Explain how design is a system that extends beyond the manufacture of a product.

How can designed objects affect the way we live? What does Oliver mean when he says that “good design is healthy”?

Oliver is both a craftsman and designer. As a silversmith specializing in hammer techniques he works directly with materials. Explain the relationship between craft and design.

Look at Oliver’s other tableware at his website <http://www.oliversmith.com.au/> . Describe his style.

Create your own tableware design.



“Although new technologies may offer new understanding, as history has illustrated and contemporary culture continues to articulate, it is almost impossible to avoid re-sampling the past whilst anticipating the future. The *Long-life Bulb-light* offers a solution for sustainable lighting based on re-use and re-sampling. As the humble filament bulb fades/is phased out, its symbolic significance is prolonged by this lamp, which allows for the ghost of a familiar friend to glow a little longer.”

Cinnamon Lee

Visit Cinnamon’s website: <http://www.cinnamonlee.com/gallery.asp?gID=8>

Look at the lighting projects based on the incandescent bulb.

What could *Long-life Bulb-light* represent to people?

Create your own designs based on this type of light bulb or on an object that is no longer in use.

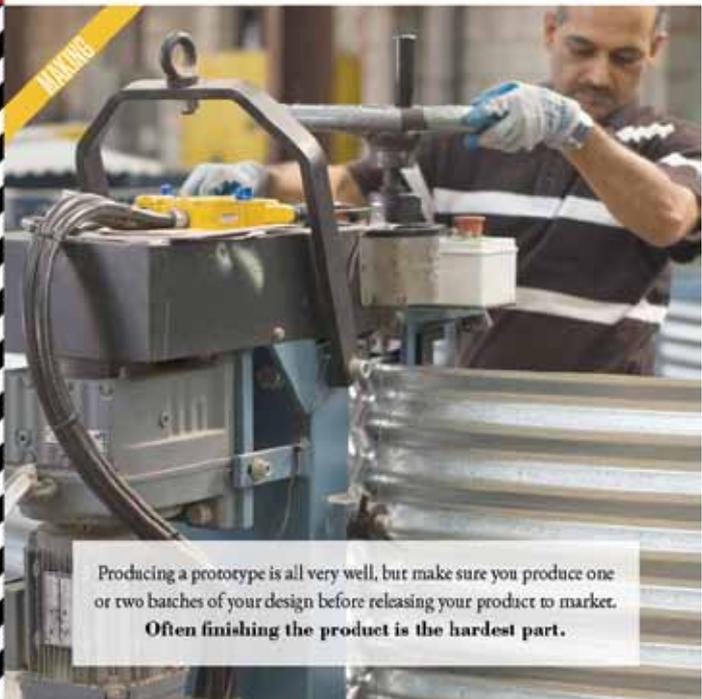


**Sarah Gibson &
Nick Karlovasitas**
design by them
product designers



Corro Bowl is made from corrugated metal, a material synonymous with the rural Australian landscape and modern Australian architecture.

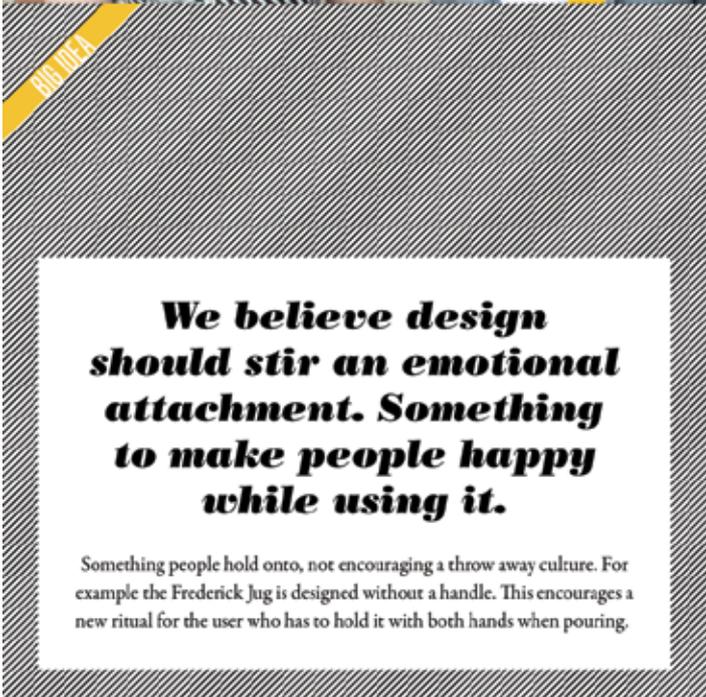
The bowl transforms this iconic material, accentuating its inherent strength and fluidity. Corro bowl can be used as either a fruit bowl or table centre piece, with the corrugations forming ideal troughs for nesting fruit.



Producing a prototype is all very well, but make sure you produce one or two batches of your design before releasing your product to market.
Often finishing the product is the hardest part.

Design is not only functional but can be symbolic. How does the *Corro Bowl* represent the Australian landscape?

Corrugated iron is used by architects such as Glenn Murcutt. Find an example of one his buildings that incorporate corrugated iron. Why this material is considered iconic?



We believe design should stir an emotional attachment. Something to make people happy while using it.

Something people hold onto, not encouraging a throw away culture. For example the Frederick Jug is designed without a handle. This encourages a new ritual for the user who has to hold it with both hands when pouring.



It is best to have ideas fully resolved through drawings and prototypes so manufacturers are aware of what you want to achieve. Producing the designs locally allows for hands on experience, overseeing production, ease of troubleshooting and immediate feedback.

Why do designers want to make connections between people and objects?

Many designers speak of an emotional attachment or bringing a sense of joy to using a product. What are some of the ways that a designed object can do this?

Find other examples of the way designed objects can alter the way people behave.



Terri Winter
top3 by design

Each of the following designers shows varying styles of a design business. Whether a single designer with one product to get to market, or a small company establishing a stable of products for an international market, the important part is to maintain your vision, keep up the quality and most importantly: understand the process of getting your product to market.

You need efficient pricing not the cheapest, but realistic so that the product is viable at market. You need to understand the margins expected from distributors or retailers. **Retailers are the window to your target audience, look after those relationships**, and make it easy for them to sell (and re-order) your products. Just ask them how!

Every product is designed - some are considered and others are not. Even the most poor of products was not spat out of a machine - someone realised the object and produced it. At any given point someone had a choice - whether to make it the best it could be - or not.

Design has the power to create meaningful connections for people,

and increasingly we are very attached to our products, from our garlic crusher to our coffee maker or mac computer.

I am excited to see a move away from "sustainability" as a category to it being an overall consideration of the design process. Simply creating products which can dissolve into the dirt (in how long?) or are made from recycled cardboard are not necessarily contributing to the environmental cause any more than the selection of a product which has a long life and does not need to be replaced. Design classics are life long friends, never ending up in landfill. Design to create a meaningful connection to an object also means we are far less likely to feel the need to constantly replace it.

Design By Them

The most professional young business we deal with. *Design by Them* understands the importance of updating supply availabilities (or delays) in the supply of new orders. Communication is key to a great relationship. I like their quality control and passion for their products. Quality photography that's professionally shot equates to more PR.

Design By Them have vision and business acumen.

Page 33

This is a passionate partnership with a small stable of great products. *Page33* understands the commercial reality of pricing, and manufacture quality products priced for sell-through. Packaging is simple but effective. An unpackaged item is difficult to sell, expensive to dispatch, and creates more instances of product damage. *Page 33* is an ideas company.

What is meant by the term 'sustainable'?

Why does Terri Winter wish to see a move away from 'sustainability' as a separate category?

Visit the *top 3 by design* website. What is Terri's philosophy in choosing products for her shops?

What are some of the qualities that this retailer looks for in her relationships with designers?

MARKER'S MARK

object

Would you make it yourself, set up your own in house mini-factory or outsource to a manufacturer? For most designers this is a tricky undertaking filled with unforeseen challenges and opportunities. Whose skilled hands have brought these products into existence? What lessons have been learned along the way?

"Glass Artist Jonathan Baskett introduced me to Andrew Simpson and his team at Vert Design and I saw the opportunity of utilising computer rendering and rapid prototyping in my practice. Subsequent commissioned CAD designs by Vert and collaborations with Andrew have allowed me to evolve from my foundation as a silversmith to include other materials and processes."

Oliver Smith, Silversmith & Designer.

"Our strengths lie in the prototyping stage. High volume production on the other hand is not suited to our set-up. Our experience and skill with glass blowing and finishing processes allow us to bring great versatility when working with the designer, and as ideas are fine-tuned."

Edols and Elliot

"It is best to have ideas fully resolved through drawings and prototypes so manufacturers are aware of what you want to achieve. Producing the designs locally allows for hands on experience, overseeing production, ease of troubleshooting and immediate feedback."

Evie Group

"The best advice I can give to young designers is to learn about all steps of the manufacturing processes that bring their creations to life. For example, we produce castings of complex shapes in precious metals, which require spruing to ensure the molten metal reaches all parts of the geometry. The production process can be made simpler and give better results if the designer adds sprues where required at the time of design. Smart design for efficient production is a reality that modern designers can't ignore."

Justin Elsey, Rapid Prototyping Services

"Our top tip when manufacturing in Australia is to do your research about capabilities. One of the things you need to appreciate is that whilst we have some really great manufacturers here there are limitations in terms of some processes as the industry is so small. This needs to be factored in when you design the product. Find people to work with that you genuinely like and can connect with. We have been working with some of our manufacturers for ten years now and view them as key partners in our business."

Koskela

- Explain the role of prototypes and their importance to the designer and manufacturer.
- Some makers are not manufacturers and concentrate on the prototyping stage. What can these people bring to the design process and how can they enhance the final product?
- Why is it important to fully understand the manufacturing process when designing a product?
- What is rapid prototyping and how does it differ from more conventional prototyping methods?
- What should designers know about a manufacturer before the work with them?

TO MARKET TO MARKET



Marketing could be described as something of a black art. How best to present your product, tell your story, and forge loyal ties with retailers and customers, without too much self-flagellation? Sydney retailers and designers share their top tips on product-selling and story-telling.



“Develop your own unique story. The customer really wants to know you so keep your story real, honest and engaging.”

Julie Paterson, Cloth

“Top tip: The best tip we can give to designers looking to retail their wares is : know your retailer. Understand the concept for the store and where your product sits in the mix. Working closely with a retailer can give you some very rewarding feedback and increase the potential for repeat business.”

Metalab

“The most professional young business we deal with Design by Them understands the importance of updating supply availabilities (or delays) in the supply of new orders. Communication is key to a great relationship. I like their quality control and passion for their products. Quality photography that’s professionally shot equates to more PR. Design By Them have vision and business acumen.”

Page 33

“You need efficient pricing not the cheapest, but realistic so that the product is viable at market. You need to understand the margins expected from distributors or retailers. Retailers are the window to your target audience, look after those relationships, and make it easy for them to sell (and re-order) your products. Just ask them how!”

Design By Them

“Communicate your story and passion to the people who’ll be selling it – the better they understand what you do the better they’ll sell. Try and do business with nice people!”

Mud Australia

- What is meant by communicating a story to customers?
- How would a designer or retailer go about doing this?
- How would a designer select the type of shop they would like their products to be sold in?
- What are the some of the issues surrounding supply and demand?
- Create your own design shop or on line shop. How would you select the products and display them.

CASE STUDY

object

ANDREW SIMPSON: INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER & DIRECTOR OF VERT

Andrew Simpson is the founder and head designer at Vert Design (pronounced v-air design) a design house. Andrew believes that the distinction between a studio and a house is that a design house is also involved in the production and sales of their works. *Vert* also takes on design work for other companies and designers. Andrew employs 4 other designers and works for companies like Sony as well as small start up businesses.

Vert takes an environmentally friendly approach to the design process seeking to achieve sustainability by producing products aimed to last over time through physical durability, function and novelty. In cooperation with local producers Vert enhances the use of materials with the smallest possible environmental impact (like recycled plastics or plastics from natural resources) always with a focus on client needs.

At the heart of Andrew's designs is a desire to create work that is beautiful to look at, use and hold. His interest in the human side of design and deep respect for the planet ensures his designs connect with people and diminish environmental impact.



WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA?

"My big idea is all about making products elegant to use and refining the form with the function foremost in mind. For example, the wine decanter *Vin Ampole*, has a considered relationship to the hand and body of the person pouring, the way wine pours in and out, it's footprint on the dinner table, the volume and weight of the glass, The design makes the user feel in control and able to produce small movements effectively and elegantly, promoting a refined interaction between wait staff and their customers."

Ease of use was a large factor in the design process of *Vin Ampole* and this can be seen in the handle of the decanter. Coming out at a height that is very easy to reach, it is natural to pick up. Details such as the way you pour have also been taken into consideration. When pouring, people tend to pour forward and away from themselves. This decanter helps this by the position of the pour being off center to allow a more natural feeling position. The handle also makes it easier for you to twist and rotate your arm while pouring. The decanter is also slightly indented at the bottom making it stable.



“The idea was simple, to create a wine decanter entirely driven by its function.”

VIN AMPOLE WINE DECANTER

Andrew Simpson’s original design for the *Vin Ampole* wine decanter was made by Glass artists Ben Edols and Kathy Elliot “Glass blowing is fast passed, hot, expensive and stressful. Glass blowers are very talented and creative people but if you cannot communicate well you will not get the results you are after.” This is important for any creative collaboration..



“As designers we get to work across a huge range of professions and tasks. In the last month I will meet with business owners, factory staff, engineers ,technicians, marketing people add agencies, polymer chemists, artists, venture capitalists, IP lawyers, graphic designers, interior designers, architects, politicians and crafts people. When your work is good everyone is happy to see you.”
Andrew Simpson

ANDREW’S PRACTICE

Empathetic research is a common tool used by many designers to understand how people behave, how other people experience things differently and how they might use a product or system. Andrew creates a character and imagines how they would use a product, or have them be in a space describing what they see. He claims that it is a very good way to quickly understand the user and find out what they need. It also removes him from the idea, which seems to help the creative process. Andrew uses cad and hand models to resolve forms and to get proportions correct.



CREATIVE COLLABORATIONS



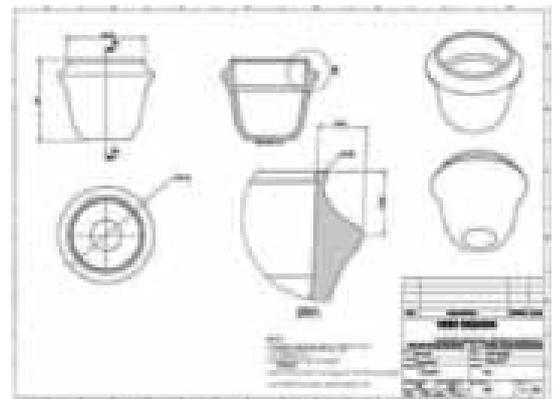
BRUCE - THE COFFEE CUP ANDREW SIMPSON & MALCOLM GREENWOOD

Many designs originate from designers themselves. In this case Andrew was not happy with the cup his morning coffee came in at his local cafe. As his own client he came up with a design he was comfortable using and created a prototype. The ring of the cup replaces the need for a handle. It keeps your hand cool and makes the cup a pleasure to drink from and to hold. The lid acts as both a lid and a saucer.

An architectural firm saw Andrew's cup and liked it so much they wanted 500 of them as gifts for their staff and clients. Making 500 cups demanded that the design be fine-tuned. Ceramicist Malcolm Greenwood made the cups and they are currently for sale on Vert's website.

Visit Malcom's website to view the plans and process:

<http://www.malcolmgreenwood.com/ideatofinishedpiece.html>



Malcolm Greenwood is able to work from either the most basic idea/request or the most detailed engineering drawing to produce special pieces to meet very specific customer requirements.

"It is important to have a thorough understanding of the materials and processes you wish to work with or you feel you have an affinity to... ideally you will serve an 'apprenticeship' of sorts to obtain a broad experience and knowledge of these materials and processes. Then you will know what is possible, what is not possible and what may be possible when you push the boundaries of design, material and process. It is important to remember that anything is possible... but there will be a cost involved: dollars and/or design. And ultimately you must be able to sell your design."

Malcolm Greenwood

STILLA WINE CARAFE

ANDREW SIMPSON & OLIVER SMITH



"Glass Artist Jonathan Baskett introduced me to Andrew Simpson and his team at Vert Design and I saw the opportunity of utilising computer rendering and rapid prototyping in my practice. Subsequent commissioned CAD designs by Vert and collaborations with Andrew have allowed me to evolve from my foundation as a silversmith to include other materials and processes."

Oliver Smith, Silversmith & Designer.



HOW DO DESIGNERS GET NOTICED?

Like artists and architects designers often enter competitions and awards. *Stilla Wine Carafe* designed collaboratively by Oliver Smith and Andrew Simpson won the PYD Award product of the year in 2009. Andrew and Oliver were also finalists in the 2010 Bombay Sapphire Design Discovery Award.

Vert's designs are sold on line through their website and in retail outlets such as Workshopped in Surry Hills Sydney.

http://www.workshopped.com.au/articles/news.asp?news_id=39

- Research the work of other design houses such as Alessi. Which well known designers produce work for Alessi? Find some interesting examples.
- Try some empathetic research before you begin designing. Create personas – give them ages professions and interests and investigate how these people might use a particular product or system.
- Create a questionnaire using open ended questions – avoid questions that only require yes or no answers Look at the Vert website and the products they designed and sell. What are the benefits and drawbacks for both the designer and shopper when buying a designed object on line?
- Andrew states that he works across a range or professions. What do these people do and how do they contribute to the final product and the business?
- What are the benefits of manufacturing and making things locally?
- Have you heard the saying Form Follows Function? What does it mean? How does it apply to Andrew Simpson's designs? Give other examples of form following function.
- Vert designs works with other designers such as Oliver Smith. How has this collaboration enriched the work of both Oliver and Andrew?

