

STRUCTURE

Wire-O-bound book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

12.5 x 20



TYPEFACES

FF DIN

FF DIN Text Pro

MATERIALS

Matte board

PVA glue

PAPER

Mohawk, Superfine,
100 lb

VENDORS

Limited Papers

RETAIL STORES

Office Depot
Pearl Art Supply



PRINTER

EPSON R1800

TIP A portfolio's design should not overshadow the work itself. Takach's expressive numbering system anchors project descriptions without being distracting.



PRODUCTION TIME

25 hours

PRODUCTION COST

\$125



Matthew Takach

IN 2007, DURING MY SENIOR YEAR AT THE KANSAS CITY ART INSTITUTE, I TOOK AN INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE CALLED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE. WE WERE ASKED TO DESIGN A STYLE IN WHICH TO PRESENT OUR WORK AND OUR SELVES, AND WERE REQUIRED TO ENGAGE IN AT LEAST THREE INTERVIEWS, OR PORTFOLIO REVIEWS, WITH WORKING PROFESSIONALS.

status

I first used this portfolio for three interviews in the fall/winter of 2007. By Thanksgiving, I had landed a summer internship, and my book was dormant for several months. In the summer of 2008, I reworked my portfolio and constructed a brand new book. Come autumn, I began interviewing for my first job.

approach

After I created an all-encompassing identity, I settled on a horizontal Wire-O-bound format that would allow for a large and luxurious presentation. I felt that my body of work should be presented as a single holistic product with an intentional progression, with built-in flexibility that allowed me to edit the content if necessary. For every project in this book, there are two spreads: the first shows the final piece, and the second is for the process work. I included examples of my initial stages, ideation, half-baked concepts, prototypes, and semi-final designs. I believe this helped others understand how I worked through a project, and to determine whether or not my process was similar, or compatible, to theirs. I made the covers with black matte board and Fabriano paper. I used a laser-cutter to carve the logo out of the board I adhered to the front. The interior pages were printed, french-folded, trimmed and collated, and the book was Wire-O-bound with a wrapping technique that hid the spine.

flexibility

Because my book was bound with a Wire-O, it was possible to cut the wire and replace pages whenever necessary.

display

In my experience, when designers are interviewing potential employees they want candidates to actively present their work—so this is what I always do. I've heard stories about interviewers who just

flipped through portfolios in five minutes and made snap judgments, but I haven't had that experience. Those whom I have met cared about the body of work and how it was presented, both visually and verbally. They also took the time to learn about me personally, which was smart, since co-workers sometimes spend just as much time together as families.

memories

Interviewers seemed intrigued, and they appreciated the visceral quality of the material—they touched the die-cut materials and asked technical questions about my production solutions. I wasn't always sure if they liked it or not, but at least it wasn't something they just wrote off. Although I intended to have a large book, I went overboard—when the book was open on a table, it spanned well over 3 feet. One time, I had an interview at a small, but very reputable firm, where they didn't have a large surface in which to present. I spent the whole time trying to balance this huge portfolio on a small plastic chair while holding my laptop on my knees, in order to show examples of my screen-based work.

online

I currently have an online portfolio, which complements my printed book. However, my web site is very systematic and consistent, in contrast to the more dynamic printed portfolio. I also do not show any process work, because that imagery really needs to be explained in person in order to be properly understood.

lastly

In some interviews, people were surprised by two things in particular: a) that I was presenting this large, old-school book; and b) that I included process work. I always thought it odd to *not* do these things.

MATTHEW TAKACH is a graphic designer in New York City. He received a BFA from Kansas City Art Institute. He has interned at Gravity Tank in Chicago, Illinois and Pentagram in New York City. He works at Oat Creative. WWW.TAKACH.ORG

STRUCTURE

Box with boards

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

9.125 x 11.5 x 2.5



MATERIALS

1/8" Birch plywood covers

Birch veneer sheets

Plexiglass

Black foamcore

8 x 10-inch 4-ply rag mounting boards

PAPER

EPSON, semi-gloss photo paper

RETAIL STORES

Light Impressions



PRINTER

EPSON Photo 1400

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

Cutting, sanding, staining, drilling and gluing

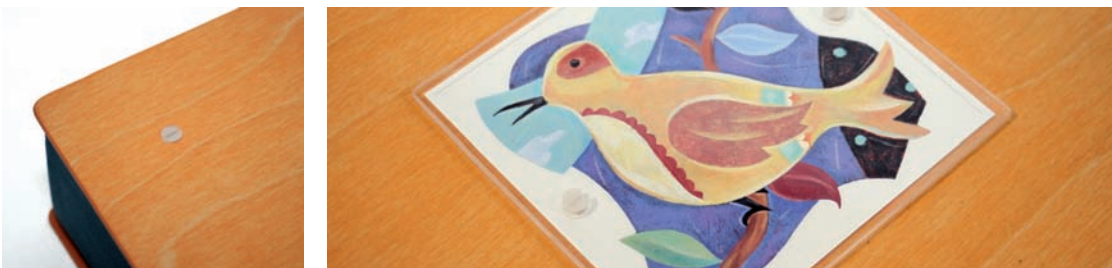


PRODUCTION TIME

3 Days

PRODUCTION COST

\$35 Per book (*2)



Sean Kane

BACK IN 2003 MY PORTFOLIO BOXES WERE LOOKING DATED, SO A NEW APPROACH WAS NEEDED TO REFLECT THE FREELANCE WORK I'D DONE IN ILLUSTRATION AND DESIGN. I NEEDED A PORTFOLIO THAT COULD BE USED FOR FREELANCE ASSIGNMENTS AND LICENSING PARTNERSHIPS.

status

I continue to use this portfolio, but now primarily for in-person meetings.

approach

I wanted an unbound, sample format book with a handmade quality that would allow for easy editing and effortless arrangement of content. I also wanted something that would have a gift-like quality—like a holiday present for the recipient—so I used an off-the-shelf archival clamshell photo box from Light Impressions that held 8 × 10-inch prints. I screwed paint-stained birch plywood using plastic nuts and bolts, and sprayed it with Crystal Clear to protect against fingerprints and the like. I also screwed a small Plexiglass frame to the front cover, where I showcased a small painting. For the inside, the same acrylic paint was used to stain the birch veneer, which was cut and adhered to black foamcore panels, and placed on each side of the box interior to cover the bolts of the plastic screws.

I mounted printed illustration and design samples on white 4-ply archival 8 × 10-inch boards—the box accommodated about sixteen of these mounted samples. All of it was designed to fit into a padded laptop bag, onto which I affixed a small logo/address label made from the orange birch laminate. The laptop bag fit snugly inside a large FedEx box.

Making a mock-up out of cardboard, in order to get all of the details worked out, was helpful. The nice thing is that none of the materials were expensive.

flexibility

The portfolio is very updatable. The samples are often swapped out and rearranged as the presentation dictates, or when the samples become worn or damaged. Updating the cover art is a bit more involved, but this is done by removing the inside left panel and unscrewing the Plexiglass.

display

Nowadays, this portfolio is mostly shown in person. I have a duplicate as backup. Also, the 6-pound shipping weight can be a bit of a factor in budget-minded circumstances, which is partially why it stays grounded most of the time.

memories

When presenting my work in this portfolio, the box would elicit the delighted response I'd been hoping for. This happened repeatedly. However, discussions concerning the box's creation tended to overshadow the presented materials.

A magazine's creative director once stated that they preferred the box over the illustrations it carried and asked if I could make them one. This was flattering, but not the outcome I'd intended!

previously

I've created others using off-the-shelf photo boxes for the base structure. I also had a book artist create three books in which she used a metal printing plate with my name and logo raised on the cover, with portfolio samples mounted on sheets of aluminum, intended for aircraft parts.

lastly Sadly, in my experience, agencies, design firms, and manufacturers are not as likely to request mailed portfolios. The ease and speed (and maybe the anonymity) of web site portfolio viewing, along with reduced shipping budgets, is likely part of the reason why my portfolio doesn't get sent out as often as I'd like.

On a positive note, new opportunities are presented every day with the advent of print-on-demand technologies (including consumer printers such as Shutterfly, iPhoto, Lulu, etc.). This allows designers to create representative samples of work that can function in ways similar to those of traditional portfolios, while remaining affordable enough to create custom books that could be used in targeted promo campaigns. Personally, I don't think these new avenues for presenting work can live up to the pleasure of viewing (and presenting) a one-of-a-kind portfolio.

SEAN KANE is an independent illustrator in Vancouver, British Columbia. Since 1993, he has been creating illustrations for clients like Amazon.com, Target, Volkswagen, The Wall Street Journal, and Habitat for Humanity, among others. WWW.SEANKANE.COM

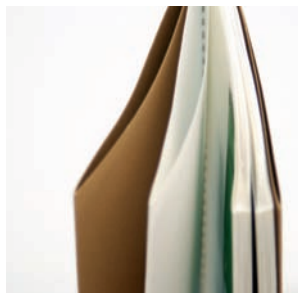
STRUCTURE

Wire-O-bound book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

Logo book: 6 × 6

Print book: 8.5 × 11



TYPEFACES

Scala Sans

PAPER

Cover: Gilbert Esse

**Interior pages:
Strathmore,
Writing, white**

RETAIL STORES

Paper store

Sam Flax



PRINTER

**Canon color
laser printer**

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

**Hand block-printed
cover**

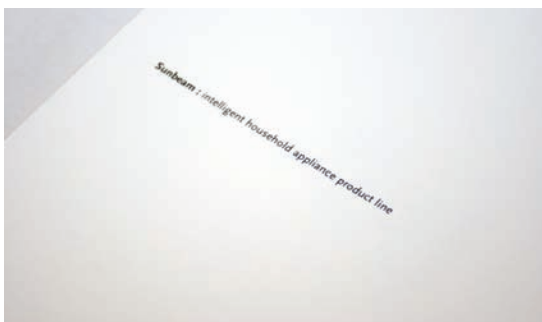


PRODUCTION TIME

A few days

PRODUCTION COST

**Minimal...
maybe \$30 in paper**



Jonathan Selikoff

I CREATED THIS PORTFOLIO IN MID-2002, WHEN I DECIDED TO LEAVE MY JOB AT LANDOR. IT WAS MEANT TO BE SHOWN TO POTENTIAL FREELANCE CLIENTS, AS I WASN'T LOOKING FOR A FULL-TIME JOB.

status

I used it for at least two or three years. Occasionally, I'll still show it, but I haven't updated it since it was first made.

approach

I had very few real print samples, so a box with scattered samples wasn't really an option. I've always appreciated the small leave-behind books that design graduates tend to put together, and wanted something that felt a little personal. Also, I didn't want to lug something big around. I developed two books—one for logos, and one for packaging and print-based projects.

It was made as cheaply as possible. I got some free Esse paper samples from Gilbert to use for the covers, and the interior pages were all done on a Canon laser copier with tabloid-sized paper. To avoid the difficulty of printing on both sides of the page, the entire book was french-folded, and bound with a silver Wire-O. For the covers, I printed up little name tags, hand-debossed the covers, then glued them in place. The final touch involved block-printing a large red capital "S" from my wood type collection.

flexibility

Not really flexible. In order to re-do it, I would have had to cut off the binding. That is the negative aspect; there's just a limited lifespan to it. However, I could print new pages, cut the binding off, and reuse the covers.

display

Since it is mostly used towards winning potential clients, I always present it in person.

online

I had a PDF mini-book that I could e-mail as needed, where the red "S" from the cover was carried through. I've since developed a web site for my business, and the letterpress "S" is at the heart of my identity.

previously

My student portfolio, which I kept very simple, was made out of 11 × 14-inch boards with photographic prints. I eschewed transparencies, which were popular at the time. Logos were presented as white rub-down transfers on the boards. These got a pretty good reaction from interviewers, although I nearly had a heart attack when one interviewer, intrigued by the process, rubbed her fingernail over the transfer. Thankfully, no damage was done.

lastly

My ideal portfolio is practical. My student portfolio was a reaction to the overproduced books I had seen done at the time; books with precious shelves and drawers for each sample, and big boxes requiring custom backpacks or luggage strollers. Too much! One student even had a small light table built into the case to view transparencies. I appreciate attention to detail and the desire to create something special to showcase one's work, but there's a point where it becomes more about the case than the work. Besides, you sweat enough when looking for a job. Why work up extra perspiration carrying around something gigantic?

JONATHAN SELIKOFF is a creative director and designer in West Orange, New Jersey, where he founded Selikoff+Company in 2002. He has a degree in history from Emory University and his design training comes from Portfolio Center in Atlanta, Georgia. He worked for five years at Landor Associates in New York City and Hamburg and had previously worked for Cornerstone Branding, Spring Design Associates, and Wages Design. WWW.SELIKOFFCO.COM

STRUCTURE

**Case with
three-ring binder**

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

20 x 16 x 3.5



TYPEFACES

Helvetica

Univers

MATERIALS

Aluminum

Felt

Presentation board

Velcro

Eyelets

Envelopes



SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

Silkscreen

VENDORS

Helipac Portfolios

RETAIL STORES

Michaels

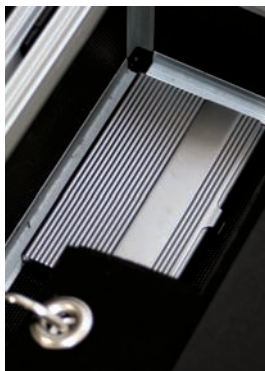


PRODUCTION TIME

1 Week

PRODUCTION COST

\$300



Daniel Kent

ALTHOUGH THE PRIMARY GOAL OF THIS PORTFOLIO WAS TO HELP ME FIND A FULL-TIME POSITION WHILE STILL IN DESIGN SCHOOL IN 2006, I ENDED UP USING IT FOR MANY FREELANCE OPPORTUNITIES.

status Still in active duty.

approach I wanted versatility, longevity, durability, and personality—anything that didn't require using acetate sleeves. After locating a great aluminum case and a three-ring binder that had the look and dimensions that matched my style, I went to a local arts and crafts store. While there, I figured out the interior according to what they had on stock. This included thick black presentation board, rigid felt sheets, bookbinding glue, eyelets, eyelet punch/setter, matte spray, and Velcro strips. I also ordered black 9 × 12-inch envelopes, which I used to create pockets. I sandwiched the board between felt strips that had eyelets matching the three-ring binder, and the bottom of the portfolio had felt glued to the corners to ensure that there would be no embarrassing scratches left behind. Finally, I sprayed a matte strip on the exterior, where I silk-screened my mark.

flexibility Pages could be added, subtracted, rearranged, and laid out according to the work. By using Velcro, I could attach whatever I wished to the interior.

display I have always shown it in person. I would have felt strange about leaving it somewhere.

lastly If your portfolio is hefty, you should do some upper-body work before taking it on a fairly long foot-journey. During the hotter months, I try to get to an interview ahead of the scheduled time so I can freshen up.

DANIEL KENT is a graphic designer in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He has Associate degrees from Bradley Academy for the Visual Arts and Penn State University. He has done work for large corporations and small start-ups. He occasionally designs rock posters. WWW.IKHOOR.COM

STRUCTURE

Perfect-bound book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

11 x 9



TYPEFACE

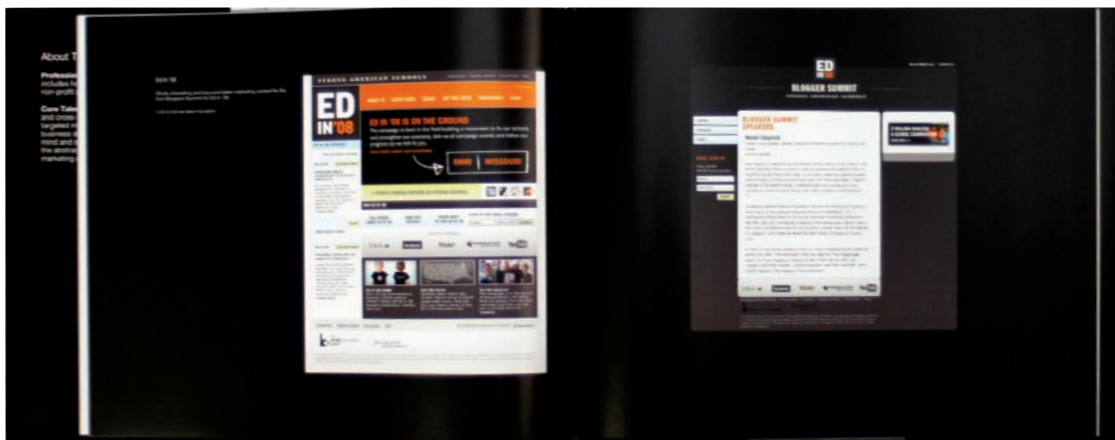
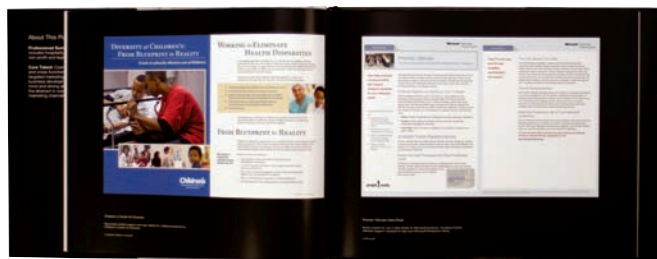
Helvetica Neue

PAPER

Glossy

PRINTER

Apple



PRODUCTION COST

\$60 Per book



Alex Liberato

I CREATED THIS PORTFOLIO AS SOON AS I GRADUATED FROM COLLEGE. I DIDN'T HAVE A LARGE AMOUNT OF COPYWRITING EXPERIENCE UNDER MY BELT, AND I HAD TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF DISPLAYING LARGE BLOCKS OF TEXT IN AN ATTRACTIVE, EASY-TO-BROWSE FASHION.

status

I first created this portfolio in late 2006, and have updated it periodically in order to acquire freelance opportunities.

approach

My area of expertise is primarily on copywriting and advertising. I've noticed that most interviewers merely want to breeze through my portfolio, since I'd already submitted a writing sample beforehand, so I've learned how to conjure a review succinct enough to give interviewers a sense of my style and accomplishments.

In order to create my portfolio, I simply used the Keepsake feature of Apple's iPhoto, which allows you to print photos, calendars, and memory books. I merely selected a template, and plugged in my images.

flexibility

At any given time I can expand on what I'd already developed and print a new version. However, each iteration can cost me upwards of \$60 (including shipping). Though it isn't the most cost-effective version of a portfolio out there, I consider it a worthy investment to make two or three times a year, as it increases the wow factor during interviews.

display

Unlike graphic designers or web designers, my work is not necessarily graphic or visual in nature. This acts as a showcase of my work experience.

memories

My Mac-generated portfolio was praiseworthy enough for me to land a good contract gig with a communications firm in Bellevue, Washington. However, chuckles ensued once they glimpsed "Made on a Mac" on the back cover. To my chagrin, I did not know how to turn this particular item off, and this was doubly embarrassing, as the firm catered almost exclusively to Microsoft.

lastly

A word of advice: do not leave the plastic wrapping on your Mac-created book when you go in for an interview. I made this mistake once, leaving the interviewer with the impression that I was obsessive-compulsive or, worse, a germaphobe.

ALEX LIBERATO works within the marketing department of the Seattle, Washington offices of Davis Wright Tremaine LLP, a national business and litigation law firm. He provides content support for advertisements, practice and industry content, and has spearheaded the firm's social media. Previously, he had contracted with Microsoft, American Express, Centurion Bank, and Best Western Hotels. @ALEXLIBERATO

STRUCTURE

**Box with
screw-post book**

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

11.5 x 14 x 2.75



TYPEFACES

Caecillia

Trade Gothic

MATERIALS

Walnut wood

**Aluminum
screw-post spine**



PAPER

Cougar, 80 lb cover

VENDORS

Shrapnel Design



PRINTER

FedEx Office



PRODUCTION TIME

2 Weeks

PRODUCTION COST

\$275



Isaac Arthur

MY PORTFOLIO WAS CREATED TO GAIN FREELANCE OPPORTUNITIES. I HAVE A LONG LIST OF SMALL BUSINESSES AND NON-PROFITS I'D LOVE TO WORK WITH: PLACES LIKE MICROBREWERIES, HUMANE SOCIETIES, AND FLY-FISHING SHOPS.

status

I presented my portfolio to dozens of people in New York at the 2009 Art Directors Club National Student Portfolio Review, and to twice as many potential freelance clients here in Indianapolis. It is still in use, although I am currently reworking some details. An updated version will soon make the rounds.

approach

I began my Capstone Portfolio Class at Herron School of Art and Design in January 2009. We began the semester by determining what we wanted out of life, how design fit into that plan, and how our portfolio and presentation helped to articulate and achieve such goals. I wanted a standard portfolio “book” to showcase my work, but also wanted to include process books, printed pieces, and assorted swag. I hated the idea of carrying everything loose in a case and wanted an excuse to get in the wood shop. So I started sketching and prototyping a hybrid book/box to meet my specific needs.

Rather stupidly, I had decided on a final size and format for my portfolio before knowing whether or not I could acquire the necessary materials. Luckily, I was able to get a screw-post hinge from Shrapnel Design, and some beautiful walnut wood from my local lumber store.

flexibility

I'm dealing with this now. I hate plastic sleeves that cover my work, so I designed my portfolio to have a raw texture that included uncoated, exposed paper. I wanted people to be able to touch the paper when viewing my work. While great in theory, the book is not as modular as it needs to be. For example, last week I showed my portfolio to a local nightclub, and I had to reprint several pages because a project I didn't want to show them was on the backside of a project I was including.

display

I only show my portfolio in person because I like to drive the discussion. If I want to work with someone in another state or country, I'll send them an introductory letter via post, with an invitation to check out my web site, and take it from there. I actually landed a cool freelance gig in Florida using this method.

memories

Before my first interview, I was waiting outside the studio, trying to get up my nerve. A bird flew overhead and shit on the messenger bag I used as a portfolio case—a disgusting smear down the front corner. Incredulous, all I could do was wipe the bag off in the grass and go inside to present.

online

My web site doesn't necessarily complement my portfolio. If I was looking for a job at a design firm, I might only show enough work to get them interested in an interview. However, thanks to my web site, I get a lot of work from people I've never met before.

previously

During my college years, I had a blog, and a goofy bundle of boards I used for my freelance adventures. Looking back, it's amazing that I managed to get any work, let alone the cool projects I was fortunate enough to be involved with.

lastly

I use every opportunity and bit of feedback I get to craft a better portfolio presentation. I'm amazed at how many young designers will get negative feedback on their portfolio and take it to their next interview without even considering what they'd heard—that's crazy.

ISAAC ARTHUR is a graphic designer in Indianapolis, Indiana, where he is co-founder of CODO Design, a research-driven brand consultancy. He is a graduate of the Herron School of Art and Design in Indianapolis. WWW.CODODESIGN.COM

STRUCTURE

**Bag with
three-ring binder**

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

11.625 x 10 x 1.5



TYPEFACES

Myriad Pro

PAPER

Laid, white, 32 lb

**Strathmore, Ridge,
New Black and
Greenbrier, 80 lb**

**Wausau, Royal
Metallics, Chalice
Silver**

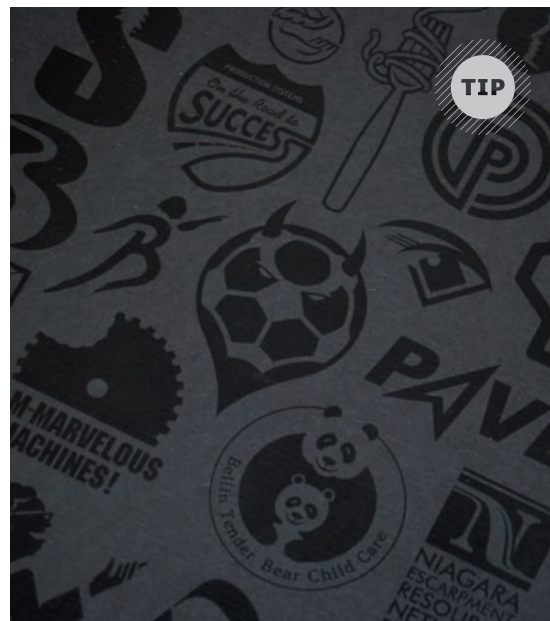
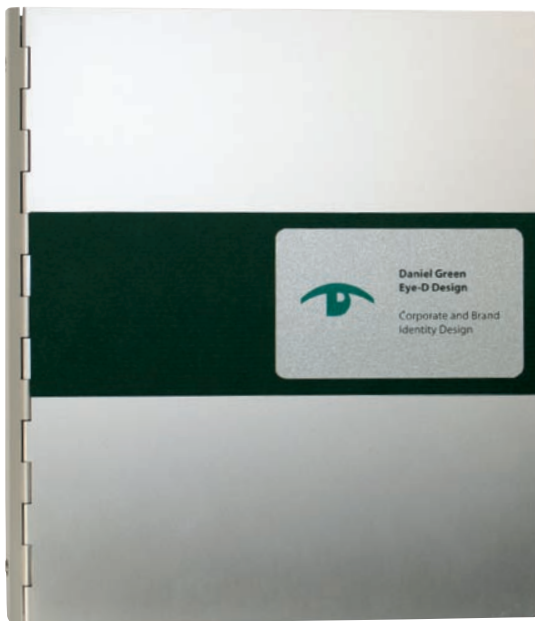
RETAIL STORES

Michaels

Office Depot

Office Max

Target



TIP

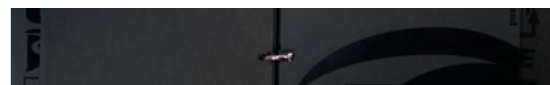
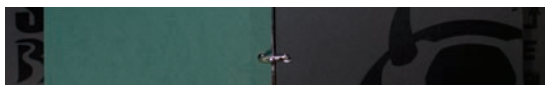


PRINTER

Xerox Phaser 7400

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

**Black laser printing
on black paper**

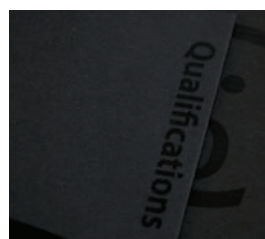


PRODUCTION TIME

**July 2008
to May 2009**

PRODUCTION COST

\$100



Daniel Green

POTENTIAL FREELANCE PURSUITS.

THIS PORTFOLIO, COMPLETED IN MAY 2009, DEFINES MY WORK. IT IS MEANT TO ENHANCE FUTURE EMPLOYMENT SEARCHES AND

status

I haven't pursued any interviews after completing it, so I guess you could say it's a virgin portfolio.

approach

I wanted a format that could work seamlessly across print and digital presentations. I wanted to be sure that the print version retained a tactile, craft-oriented appeal. I selected a range of papers: a laid finish (laser compatible) for the portfolio pages, and a ridged cover stock for spray-mounting on the back of each page, which included the custom end-papers and divider pages. This combination was carried through on my personal business cards. It could also be used for any future print applications such as CD packaging. The printing of black laser on black sheets for the end-papers and divider pages give it a look that is similar to a UV spot varnish... only it's a lot cheaper!

TIP Printing black ink on black paper with a regular laser printer gives the sophisticated effect of the much more expensive technique of spot varnishing.

flexibility

It is absolutely updatable, and designed for maximum flexibility. I can mix and match, add and delete pages for each presentation. As I design new projects, I can insert new pages or I can eliminate entire sections.

display

With the project descriptions it could act on its own, though I prefer to present in person.

memories

In 1984, during my first professional job interview, the guy who reviewed my old portfolio advised me not to bother entering the field. While he was off the mark in judging my potential, I've been much more mindful of the importance of presentation ever since.

previously

My move away from a large leather case and sleeves started in 1999, after reading Tom Peters' book *The Brand You 50*. I wanted to do something more personal and customized, rather than just shuffling stuff into a plastic sleeve. I began to explore more options. My current portfolio, which I started in July 2008, is actually the fourth iteration. Nevertheless, it's still a work-in-progress.

online

Three reasons why I have yet to develop an online version: 1) time, since I just finished the print version; 2) skill, since I need to do some research and training on web design; 3) lack of immediate need, as I am not currently looking for employment.

However, I do plan to explore that as a next step, since web-based portfolios are increasingly used to narrow down the interview pool.

lastly

I recall a discussion on UnderConsideration's blog Speak Up, in which author Tan Le bemoaned reviewing a metal portfolio that scratched up his table. I put felt tabs on the back of mine as a precaution.

DANIEL GREEN is a graphic designer in Green Bay, Wisconsin. For the last fourteen years he has worked for Foth, a consulting engineering, science, and construction services firm. He graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay with a degree in Communications and the Arts. Previously, he worked as a graphic designer for Bellin Health. He maintains a graphic identity practice on the side, Daniel Green Eye-D Design.

STRUCTURE
Newspaper

DIMENSIONS (IN.)
13 x 19



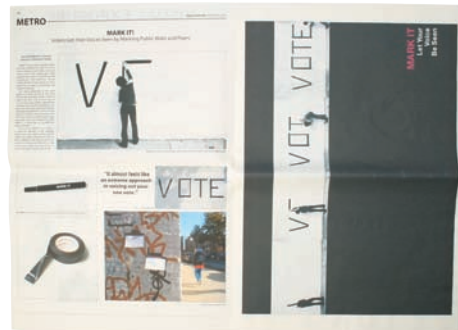
TYPEFACE
Univers

PAPER
**Mohawk,
Warm White**

PRINTER
Canon I9100



PRODUCTION COST
\$15 Per copy



D. Yee

I CREATED MY FIRST NEWSPAPER PORTFOLIO IN 2005, WHEN I WAS A STUDENT AT THE SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS; THE SECOND ISSUE WAS DONE A MONTH LATER. THESE TWO PORTFOLIOS CIRCULATED AMONG VARIOUS DESIGN FIRMS SHORTLY AFTER GRADUATION.

status

Long retired. The “newspapers” were active for about a year.

approach

At the time, most students were binding some kind of book. I felt confident that my work could be presented in other ways, as I had more product design than print projects. I wanted to challenge myself and steer away from the expected. I designed a newspaper as a portfolio. It felt “economic” and, at the same time, it did not.

I made a lot of visits to New York Art & Paper Central. I experimented with several paper types that represented newsprint, yet still retained the necessary print quality of a portfolio. Eventually, I found some Mohawk Fine Paper samples that worked. A lot of testing ensued as I worked with printer spreads, and experimented with printing on both sides of the paper.

flexibility

It is updatable, but very difficult to produce. It’s a challenge that requires a lot of patience, similar to the process of bookbinding. If I were to edit it today, I would get rid of the self-portraits, for these were a school requirement, and I was never comfortable seeing my face plastered on the page.

display

In person—sending it to UnderConsideration was its first delivery experience. [Ed.’s Note: It traveled and showed perfectly!]

online

No, there wasn’t an online version. At the time, newspapers were still mostly based offline!

lastly

I’ve seen many beautifully designed books presented with props, such as bookshelves or flowers. They prompted me to question whether or not they were too much of a “gimmick,” and I feared my newspapers fell into this trap. I find this to be the classic case of an artist embarrassed by older work—though I’m still proud of it.

D. YEE is a graphic designer, as well as a photographer and painter, in New York City. Currently, she works at the heart of the crossroads of the world, Times Square, in both print and outdoor installation. She studied graphic design at the School of Visual Arts. WWW.D-YEE.COM

STRUCTURE

**Case with boards
and transparencies**

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

19 x 25



MATERIALS

Wood

Paper

Foamcore

Black board

VENDORS

A2A Graphics

RETAIL STORES

Pearl Paint



PRINTER

**Cannon laser
color printer**

Iris inkjet printer

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

Bookbinding



PRODUCTION COST

\$125 Box

\$500 Printing

\$300 Photography

\$75 Boards and ribbon

\$1,000 Total



Daisuke Endo

THIS WAS THE RESULT OF MY 1999 SENIOR PORTFOLIO COURSE AT THE SCHOOL OF VISUAL ARTS, WITH INSTRUCTOR CARIN GOLDBERG. ITS MAIN PURPOSE WAS TO ATTRACT EMPLOYMENT, BUT IT WAS ALSO FUN AND EXCITING TO CREATE A PORTFOLIO AS A FINAL PROJECT IN SCHOOL.

status

Retired. I used the portfolio for a few weeks after graduating, before I snagged a position with Pentagram. As I started adding professional work, the student projects began to disappear—ten years later, I still have one or two student projects mixed in.

approach

It was Goldberg's suggestion. The big black wooden box wrapped in black paper was popular among students at the time. I printed posters and magazine covers with an inkjet printer and mounted them on black foamcore boards. For the magazines, I laser-printed spreads and saddle-stitched them. I had my 3D pieces professionally photographed (6 × 4-inch chrome), and framed them with black board.

flexibility

In theory, it is updatable—I could add and subtract pieces. In reality, I don't use the box anymore. It's too big to handle (lugging it around New York was a nightmare), and appears outdated. These days, I use a smaller box with pieces that I select according to circumstance, complemented by a simple online portfolio.

display

I showed it in person. I rarely delivered it for review, even though I did drop it off a few times—that's how I got the first job.

memories

Since I got my first real job with this portfolio, it's like a big trophy for me.

online

At the time, I didn't have an online version. Online portfolios weren't as common ten years ago. Also, I didn't have any web design projects, or motion graphics, in my portfolio. Now I have a simple online portfolio, since it's so much easier to show it to people.

evolution

Smaller versions of the same format—case with boards or loose items—and a complimentary online portfolio.

My portfolio is like my alter ego.

DAISUKE ENDO is a graphic designer and educator based in Tokyo, Japan. He graduated from the School of Visual Arts in New York City. Previously, he worked at Pentagram, and taught at Pratt Institute. He is a design director at Flying Machine, and an instructor at Musashino Art University in Japan.

STRUCTURE

**Screw-post book
with slipcase**

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

12 x 15



TYPEFACES

Agency FB

Frutiger LT Std

MATERIALS

Bookbinding board

Book cloth

PAPER

EPSON, matte

RETAIL STORES

National Art Supplies



PRINTER

Canon Pro 9000

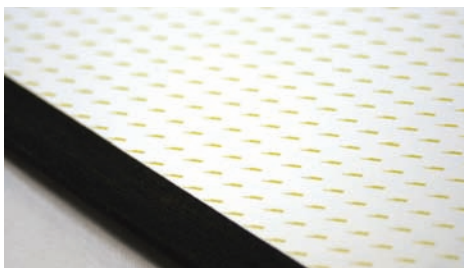


PRODUCTION TIME

12 Hours

PRODUCTION COST

\$100



Jeremy Wisecup

I DESIGNED AND BUILT THIS PORTFOLIO FOR MY SENIOR PRACTICUM DESIGN COURSE IN 2009, WHILE ATTENDING MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY. I HAD HOPED THAT IT WOULD HELP ME FIND WORK AND FREELANCE ASSIGNMENTS.

status

Currently, it is still active. It has seen battle a few times now.

approach

I wanted something that I could create from scratch. Once I had decided on a course of action, I bought all the supplies at a local arts shop, and constructed the entire book in my kitchen. I created the framing structure with standard bookbinding board, which I then covered with Hollander's Black Japanese book cloth. With a set of screw-posts, and the necessary amount of pages in place, I was ready to go.

flexibility

While the pages are easily interchangeable, it is somewhat limited to 14 pages—an inch in thickness. The inside can be updated by alternating the pieces of work, but the overall appearance is permanent.

display

Always in person.

memories

It took a very long night and an early morning to create, but I am very satisfied with the end result—a one-of-a kind item I built with my own hands—and it lets me showcase my craftsmanship, creativity, and individuality.

online

My online portfolio has a direct correlation to this book. The work showcased at any given time may be different but, ultimately, they are cohesively connected.

lastly

Create something for yourself, by yourself. It shows craftsmanship—an ability to create something from a blueprint. If well-executed, it will land you a job. After all, it worked for me.

A lot of people have decent work, but the presentation of their work lacks interest or attention to detail—details are what differentiate good design from great design.

JEREMY WISECUP is a graphic designer in St. Louis, Missouri. Currently, he is employed by Rivet Global. He has a BFA from Missouri State University.
WWW.JEREMYWISECUP.COM

STRUCTURE

Wire-O-bound book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

11.5 x 11.5



TYPEFACES

Bell Gothic

**Trade Gothic
Condensed**

MATERIALS

Illustration Board

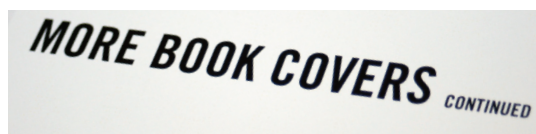
Wire-O

PAPER

Silk, 110 lb

VENDORS INVOLVED

Soho Reproductions



PRINTER

**Xerox DocuColor
7000**



PRODUCTION TIME

1 Day

PRODUCTION COST

\$100



Frank Gargiulo

I CREATED MY PORTFOLIO IN JULY 2007. AFTER YEARS OF HAVING A PORTFOLIO THAT CONSISTED OF 4 × 5-INCH TRANSPARENCIES, I NEEDED TO FIND AN EASIER WAY TO SHOW MY WORK TO FREELANCE CLIENTS AND POTENTIAL, FULL-TIME EMPLOYERS.

status

While the portfolio is still in use, my web site is the primary vehicle for my work.

approach

I wanted a creative portfolio with the feel of a magazine or book. Once printed and bound together with a Wire-O, the double-sided printouts were held in between two illustration boards that acted as covers.

flexibility

In some ways, yes, in other ways, no. Taking out the Wire-O binding and adding pages was fairly easy. The main difficulty was in the presentation of the music section. Every time a new cover was required, this meant an entirely new photo shoot. I was aware of this going into the project, but it wasn't an idea that I was willing to sacrifice.

display

It can be presented with or without my presence, I think the portfolio and work speak for themselves. It's a clear representation of who I am as an art director and designer.

memories

The music section was shot three times before it was successful. The first time, the photographer forgot his camera and my friends/models became grumpy during the wait for his return. So the photos didn't turn out as well as I would have liked, due to the circumstances. The second time, I tried to piggyback the work on a fashion shoot, and felt so rushed that I didn't get what I needed. The third time was a charm—my friend, Marcelo, handled the shoot with professional acumen.

online

Online and offline are somewhat related to each other. It's my goal to update the site in the near future, so that it will be comparable to the printed portfolio. I want to use more common elements, rather than the images of my friends holding the CDs. I'm not web tech savvy enough yet to create it, but I'll get there.

lastly

I went to see a leading headhunter in New York before creating this portfolio, since I wanted to get an idea of what they thought was au courant. I was shown dreadful portfolios, both in look and content—mostly heavy, leather-bound traditional portfolio monsters that screamed boring and serious. When I explained my concept to the headhunter, she sought to discourage me. I'm glad I didn't listen. A week after finishing my portfolio, I was offered two positions—one that I accepted.

FRANK GARGIULO is a graphic designer based in New York City and Portland, Oregon. He graduated from the School of Visual Arts, and has worked with various New York designers, including Alexander Isley, Tibor Kalman, and Helene Silverman. Previously, he worked at SpotCo and MTV, and has worked internationally in countries such as Denmark and Japan. He is creative director for Art Dictator. WWW.THEARTDICTATOR.COM

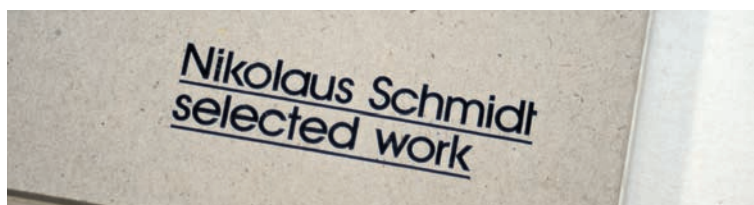
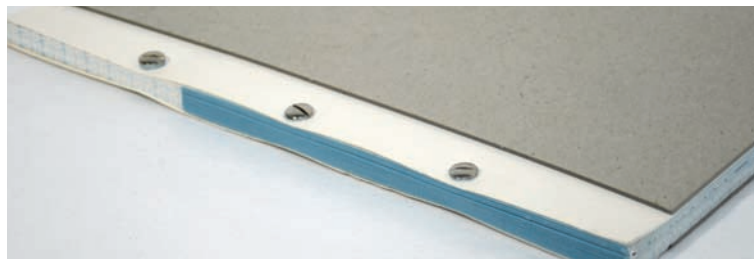
STRUCTURE

Screw-post book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

8.2 x 11.6

TIP Isolating project information on smaller, separate sheets ensures it is not missed and maximizes the display area for the work.



TYPEFACES

Avant Garde Gothic

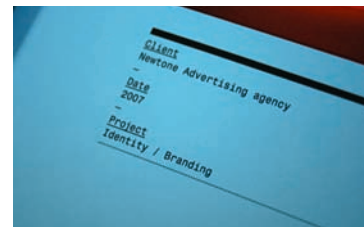
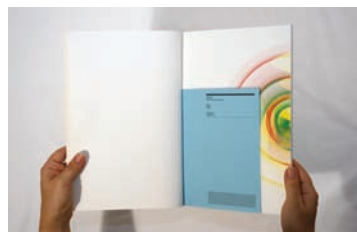
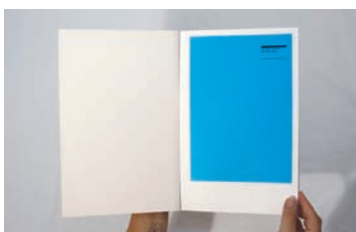
Monospace 821

MATERIALS

Alterna

Grey board

FIZZ



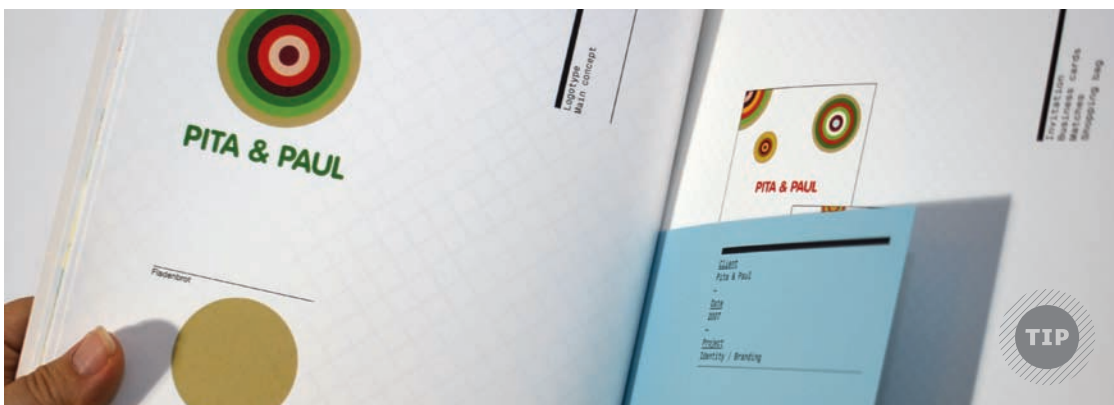
PRINTER

HP Indigo

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

Laminating

Letraset

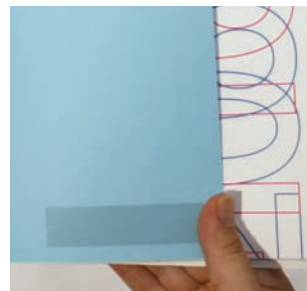
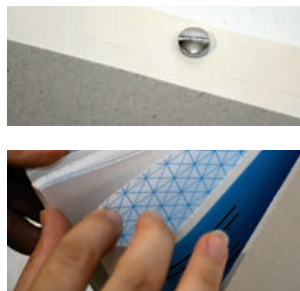
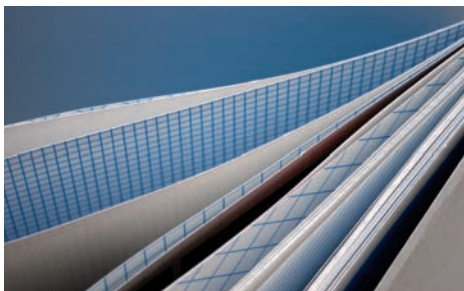


PRODUCTION TIME

2 Weeks

PRODUCTION COST

\$1,500



Nikolaus Schmidt

I CREATED THIS PORTFOLIO DURING TWO WEEKS IN APRIL 2008, AS A RESPONSE TO A CHALLENGE POSED BY AN INTERVIEWER WHO WAS LOOKING THROUGH MY WORK.

status It is still in use.

approach I had a meeting with a potential client, and came up with a simple presentation of my work. When I was finished, he said, “Nice work, but it would have been much better if you’d presented it in a more compact way that showed your approach to graphic design. Come back in two weeks and show me something extraordinary enough to share with other companies.” Although this person wasn’t able to offer me a job, I was grateful that he pushed me to do better.

I considered a lot of different formats and production techniques. In the back of my mind, there was always the issue of keeping the costs as low as possible, even though I wanted to create something special.

I wasn’t sure whether to produce something flashy to attract new clients, or to stick to my tried-and-true approach, which was definitely more content-driven. In the end, I stuck to my principles, and took this chance to experiment and create something that reflected my personality, as well as my approach to graphic design. It was carefully crafted, keen on details, made good use of typography, and, of course, maintained tactility. Finally, I wanted to design a portfolio with

In my opinion, working on a project for yourself is always more difficult than working on commissioned projects, especially when you have to put together the most interesting pieces of your work. With that said, you also need to think about how the work is placed within the book: the balance between experimental and commercial, and the overall first impression.

the ability to grow over a period of time, while incorporating as many different production techniques as my budget allowed. Thinking more about a rough and tactile sketchbook, as opposed to a glossy sales brochure, I used grey board for the cover, in order to contrast the very high, surface-uncoated paper from the interior pages.

flexibility As designers, we are all in a constant process of change and personal development. I used screw-post binding, which allows for maximum flexibility.

display Always in person. I think it’s quite hard for someone else to sell something if he or she is not personally involved.

memories I have to say that most “commercial clients” (lawyers, tax consultants, etc.) prefer a glossy brochure to a hand-bound book... at least that has been my personal experience. I guess that’s a common problem—some people seem to be more attracted to eye candy than content-driven work.

eventually I definitely would like to develop a new portfolio in the future. For the next format, I will probably play with a more glossy and flashy version, just to scope the different reactions.

NIKOLAUS SCHMIDT is a graphic designer in Vienna, Austria, where he has run his own studio since 2007. He studied marketing at the Advertising Academy of the Vienna Economics Institute, and later received a bachelor’s degree from the London College of Printing. He previously worked for the Education Congress Research GmbH, where he coordinated all visual communication projects. WWW.NIKOLAUSSCHMIDT.COM

STRUCTURE

Perfect-bound book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

4.25 x 6



TYPEFACES

Citizen

PAPER

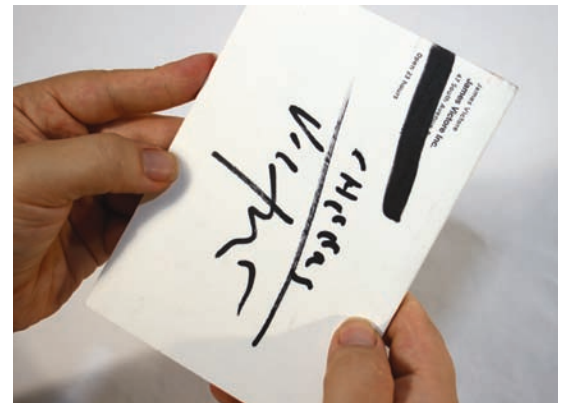
Cover: Uncoated

Interior: Gloss



PRINTING

CMYK + Fluorescent orange

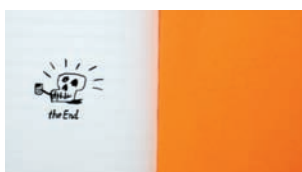


PRODUCTION TIME

1 Month

PRODUCTION COST

\$8,000



rare the five hundredth
y of the discovery of
Christopher Columbus.
trying to throw a stone
ybody's window. He
And this is the hallmark
total work. Victore is a
unfettered expressionist



James Victore

THE LITTLE BOOK TITLED WORK IS FROM 2001. IT WAS MY FIRST AND LAST ATTEMPT AT SELF-PROMOTION. I WAS FISHING FOR A FEW NEW CLIENTS.

status

I had 1,000 of these little books printed, as well as a lovely matching envelope, all at a significant cost to me. I then sent out ten because there were only ten people I wanted to work with. I am more of a single shot-sniper, rather than a strafe, carpet-bomb, blitzkrieg type of guy.

approach

I love little books. I would print one every six months, if I could find someone insane enough to give me \$20,000 a year to do it.

flexibility

Absolutely no updates, which was a bummer. I kept making changes on press, substituting work, moving things around. That's why I would need to make one of these every six months—to me, my best work is the stuff from tomorrow, not what I did today.

display

I found the contact info for ten cold calls and mailed the book out. Then I sat back with fingers crossed. Luckily, the phone rang, and I am still working with the guy who was at the other end of the line. I won't develop a promotional book or portfolio like this again—there are better ways to get your work out to the folks you want to work with, and I bet some smart people know those ways.

memories

One of the potential “clients” called me when he received it and left a message saying my work was “Really trippy.” I thought that was a great compliment.

online

My web site was a version of this little book. My latest web site is also a little “book.”

JAMES VICTORE is an independent graphic designer, illustrator, animator, and product designer based in Brooklyn, New York. He finished his first semester at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh with a 0.04 GPA, transferred to the School of Visual Arts, and was asked to leave after his first year. He has taught at SVA for the last fifteen years. He is a member of the Alliance Graphique Internationale. WWW.JAMESVICTORE.COM

STRUCTURE

Box with boards

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

21 x 17 x 3



MATERIALS

Photobox

Canson paper

Brown denim

Cotton straps

Quilting fabric

PAPER

EPSON

Red River, inkjet



VENDORS

Cenveo



PRINTER

EPSON 1280

RETAIL STORES

Jo-Ann Fabrics

Michaels

Pearl Paint

The Quilters Barn



PRODUCTION TIME

75 Hours

PRODUCTION COST

\$400.00



Tila Symons

I CREATED MY PORTFOLIO IN 2006, A YEAR AFTER EARNING MY BFA. I WAS UNHAPPILY WORKING AS AN ENTRY-LEVEL DESKTOP PUBLISHER FOR A MEDICAL DEVICE COMPANY. THERE WERE NO OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADVANCEMENT, SO I HAD TO LOOK ELSEWHERE FOR WORK.

status

I used this portfolio for a year. I took it with me on nearly thirty-five interviews. Toward the end, the boards were starting to show signs of wear, and now it's the perfect storage box for posters and other large samples.

approach

I made a box portfolio instead of a bound book because I thought my work looked better mounted. I also liked the fact that I could add or take out work without having to completely rebind a book. I found brown Canson paper, mounted on white board, and a photo box that was just the right size. Since the box was black, I decided to wrap it in matching brown paper—it took many sheets, in addition to Twin Tak, but it was worth it. I also used Twin Tak to wrap the backs of all my boards with my custom logo pattern. Finally, I sewed a bag to put the box in, making it easier to carry.

flexibility

If I wanted to, I could still update the portfolio and use it. The boards show less fingerprints than paper. If someone gets a huge fingerprint on one, you don't have to worry about replacing the whole portfolio. You simply replace the board.

display

Mostly in person, except for one time, when I dropped it off for a review.

memories

Though I accomplished my goal of creating a unique portfolio, it was bulky and heavy—especially when I was on the subway, and walking around Manhattan. There were a few awkward moments in tiny offices. I often had to place the box on the floor, which kept the interviewer from seeing it.

online

I've always had an online version. I could never understand why so many designers don't (especially these days). So many places ask to see a web site, and sometimes, it could prove to be the deciding factor.

previously

I constantly update my online portfolio, especially since my out-of-state clientele has increased.

If I do show my work in person, I now show samples kept in a small binder that I have customized in the same fashion as my box portfolio.

lastly

If you are looking for work in New York—or any major city with a public transportation system—do not go for the gargantuan box.

The most memorable students and designers I have come across are either those who have given me their well-designed business cards, or those with amazing online portfolios. If someone were to leave something behind, I'd want it to be useful, or so beautiful that I would want to save it.

As much as I want to leave a little something for my potential clients, I'm not a big fan of the leave-behind. The idea of giving people things they might not want, need, or appreciate—especially these days when many studios and companies are very waste conscious—simply does not work for me.

LILA SYMONS is an independent designer in Princeton, New Jersey. She attended the Savannah College of Art and Design and previously worked at Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia. WWW.LILASYMONS.COM

STRUCTURE

Wire-O-bound book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

9.5 x 13



TYPEFACES

Apex Sans

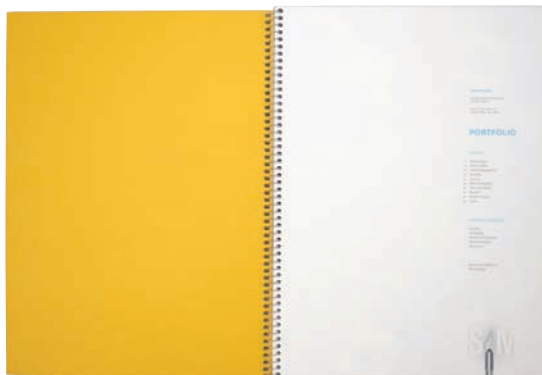
Dolly

MATERIALS

Aluminum covers

PAPER

**Moab Entrada,
double-sided matte
inkjet, 300 gsm**



PRINTER

**EPSON Stylus
Photo 1400**

VENDOR

**Unique Copy Center
Advanced Laser and
Waterjet Cutting**



PRODUCTION COST

\$750



Sam Becker

I CREATED THIS PORTFOLIO IN THE SPRING 2008, WHILE WORKING AT CBX IN NEW YORK CITY. MATCHING MY GRADUATING PORTFOLIO FROM SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, I SET OUT TO FIND MY NEXT JOB, AND TO DEVELOP A TANGIBLE ARCHIVE OF MY WORK.

status

I used it for three or four months. It is currently retired... Why do you ask? Are you hiring?

approach

Since I can remember, I have used this system of logos: the “A” in my name is a different design tool for each touchpoint. My favorite one has always been the X-Acto knife, which was my inspiration for the metal book covers that are composed of laser-cut, bead-blasted, anodized aluminum. The previous portfolio covers were brushed stainless steel, which turned out to be very heavy and picked up too many fingerprints—not to mention it looked dated!

Because of the unconventional dimensions (9.5 × 13 inches), a completely arbitrary size seeking uniqueness, I could not find any stock binding solution. I found an oversize artist’s paper book, from which I stripped the coil off every time I modified the portfolio—a \$19.99 binding fee, plus the burden of using one hundred loose sheets of bright white drawing paper.

flexibility

In theory it is updateable. The covers are permanent, and the pages can be punched at very specific office stores and copy centers. Unfortunately, I use page numbers in my design, so any new work requires complete repagination. It is impractical, but I love it. I won’t have it any other way.

display

Mostly in person. My web site should suffice when a personal interview is not possible.

memories

After I graduated from college, I flooded New York City with little employee care packages. I spent over an hour on each, and most firms received several. I went to an interview at Interbrand and they asked me to wait in their cafeteria. While I was sitting there, I overheard two people talking about this cool mailer that someone received with a “Sam” logo. One said to the other, “Oh, neat. We should really bring this person in for an interview one day.”

online

The physical portfolio is a labor of love. The web site, on the other hand, is a functional necessity. Most places I applied to required a web site, in order to be considered for an interview. My portfolio and web site share the SAM brand look and feel. The similarities, however, end there. I approached each medium differently, but with a similar goal: to provide an effortless way for someone to see the breadth of my work and the seriousness of my application.

lastly

The best portfolios can be consumed quickly; they allow the work to speak for itself. In my opinion, it is the best way to gauge a designer’s type and layout skills, because, presumably, they created their portfolio without the benefit of a design director.

SAM BECKER is a designer in New York City. He currently works on identity, packaging and interactive assignments at The Brand Union. He attended Syracuse University. He got his start at Crate & Barrel’s graphics department, and later worked at CBX in New York City. He writes for UnderConsideration’s Brand New. WWW.SAMBECKERDESIGN.COM

STRUCTURE

Screw-post book with slipcase

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

12.5 x 13.5 x 1.75



TYPEFACES

Caslon 224

News Gothic

MATERIALS

Brass screws

Engraved brass
nameplate

PAPER

Neenah, Classic
Crest, Natural White,
65 lb cover



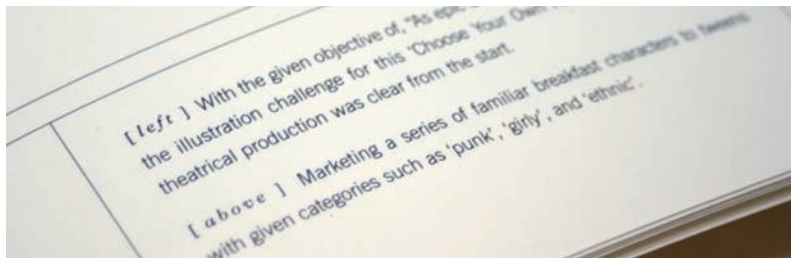
VENDORS

Talas



PRINTER

Canon c1 color
proofing press



PRODUCTION COST

\$50 Case

\$25 Paper

\$25 Nameplate

\$6 Screws

\$106 Total



Monica Katzenell

IN FEBRUARY OF 2009, AFTER TWO YEARS OF FREELANCE WORK, I REALIZED I MISSED WORKING AMONG—AND LEARNING FROM—A GROUP OF TALENTED INDIVIDUALS IN A STEADY POSITION. I DECIDED THAT I NEEDED TO START FRESH, SO I TOOK THIS OPPORTUNITY TO RE-IMAGINE MY PRESENTATION.

status

This portfolio was recently taken to a handful of interviews and client meetings. The original goal for this portfolio was to find a full-time position at a studio, but that hasn't happened yet. In the meantime, I am using it to meet new clients for freelance work—I find it useful for this purpose as well.

Previously, I would only bring relevant work samples to my first meeting with a client, or relied on the notion that the client had viewed my online portfolio beforehand. I have found that bringing a full portfolio—one that includes work beyond the scope of the project being discussed—can spark ideas for future projects, help to develop a certain amount of respect or trust, and lead to an interesting conversation that might not have taken place.

approach

I knew I wanted a screw-post book, since I found presentation boards to be clumsy and bulky. After researching my options, I could not bring myself to choose the ubiquitous and expected Pina Zangaro binders. Yet, after relentless online searching, I found a wonderful shop named

Talas that specialized in bookbinding. Among their options, they had a limited selection of “extras” catalogued online, which were custom-made for other purposes and available at a very reasonable rate. The drawback was the need to cover up a pre-existing blind-debossed name, and the unique dimensions for sheet size and printing. I matched the solution to the brass screw-posts by engraving my name on a thin plate of brass. Finally, I sampled different papers and found that the warmer tones of natural white were a perfect complement for the natural cloth.

flexibility

Absolutely, as the screw-post book allows for all necessary changes and substitutions, so long as you have the right paper.

online

The online version of my portfolio and the physical book are loosely related. They share the same clean aesthetic and typography, and both presentations are in the “no frills” category.

MONICA KATZENELL is an independent graphic designer in Los Angeles, California. She received a BFA in graphic design, with a minor in art history from the University of Florida. She previously worked at National Forest Design and Gel Communications in Glendale, California. WWW.MONICKATZENELL.COM

STRUCTURE

**One-of-a-kind bag
with loose samples**

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

19 x 14 x 7



MATERIALS

**My grandfather's
jib sail**

Marine-grade vinyl

PAPER

**Red River, Polar
matte, 60 lb**

VENDORS

**Technical Drawings:
Jason Drew**

**Production/seam-
stress: Sylvia Cadle**



PRINTER

**EPSON Stylus
Photo 2200**



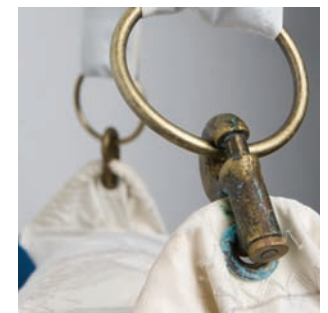
PRODUCTION TIME

3 Months

PRODUCTION COST

N/A Jib sail

**\$260 Labor and
materials**



Rachel Tranello

I CREATED MY PORTFOLIO IN APRIL OF 2009, JUST WHEN I WAS GRADUATING FROM PORTFOLIO CENTER. I WANTED TO HAVE A VESSEL FOR MY WORK, BUT I ALSO WANTED IT TO BE MEANINGFUL.

status Active.

approach I looked for a shoulder bag but couldn't find anything that worked or had any significance. In my search I stumbled upon items made out of sails, a material close to my heart and my roots. My grandfather bought a boat the year I was born. Twelve years later—complaining that no one wanted to go out on the boat anymore—he rigged the 25-foot boat to sail solo. I saw that kind of stubborn determination in myself, so I grabbed at this inspirational history and went to work.

I used the jib sail from my grandfather's sailboat—he'd replaced it with a motorized one—and marine-grade vinyl with brass hardware, including the original jib hanks from the sail. I was able to get technical drawings made from my design. After talking with a range of people—from seamstresses and tailors, to industrial luggage manufacturers—I found a woman who was able to make it for me.

flexibility I designed it with removable dividers, so I could use it as a regular messenger bag if I wanted to. At this time, I don't see the need to update it—I don't want to change a thing about it.

display I only show it in person. It's unique and irreplaceable.

memories I love people's reactions after they've seen it and I tell the story behind it. The best reaction was from my grandfather—he was thrilled with the result. I asked if it was what he'd expected, and he replied that he didn't know what to expect.

online I have a web site that shows my work but makes no mention of my portfolio. I wanted to save something unique for the interview; I didn't want to give away all my secrets in one place.

RACHEL TRANELLO is an independent writer, art director and photographer in Atlanta, Georgia. She has an Associate degree in applied science in business marketing from Alfred State College, and a bachelors degree of science in communications from College at Brockport, SUNY in addition to a degree in copy-writing, art direction, and photography from Portfolio Center. She previously worked at Jay Advertising in Rochester, New York. WWW.RNELLO.COM

STRUCTURE

**Case with
loose samples**

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

16 x 12 x 4.5



MATERIALS

Fabric

Hemming tape

Double stick tape

Staples

PAPER

**Bright white photo
inkjet paper of some
kind, 100 lb**

VENDORS

Etsy



PRINTER

Inkjet



PRODUCTION COST

\$50 Suitcase

**\$15 Each project
booklet**



Ash Huang

I HAD BEEN USING A BOX-STYLE PORTFOLIO SINCE MAY 2009, WHILE A SOPHOMORE AT CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY. EVENTUALLY, I DECIDED TO GO WITH A MORE PERMANENT SOLUTION THAT TRAVELED BETTER THAN A SELF-BOUND BOX. I HOPE THIS WILL HELP ME ACQUIRE AN AWESOME, POST-UNDERGRADUATE POSITION.

status Still active.

approach Having a box gives me great flexibility. Not only can I save time by plucking out pertinent material and discarding the less-relevant pieces with greater facility, I can also maintain a keen awareness of the interviewer's body language, making it easier for me to switch gears if I detect weariness or boredom. Also, since I am crazy about tactility and am in possession of a fair amount of small-dimensional work, it makes more sense to provide a first-hand display.

I purchased this suitcase on Etsy. It came with a quilted, puke-brown lining, complete with frills and a mirror. Using fabric, hemming tape, double stick tape and staples, I relined it in a more neutral tone. Usually, I print and bind mini-books for my unwieldy, digital projects.

flexibility This is probably the easiest portfolio to update. I can put the project in or remove it, even create a new little book, without breaking a sweat.

display I always show my portfolio in person. It's very important to me that someone sees not only my work, but hears my explanations and comprehends my worldview. If your plan is to drop off your portfolio as much as possible, this method wouldn't be the most practical.

memories When I arrive at an interview, my portfolio immediately attracts attention. It's interesting to note how interviewers look through my portfolio—some of them sit calmly and allow me to do all the directing, while others pry open the suitcase themselves and pull whatever

catches their eye. Both are fun in their own ways, but watching as reviewers pull my work usually tells me a lot about their company that can't be answered through direct questions.

online Through the grid, layout, and presentation of the projects in my online portfolio, I tried to mirror the interaction of the box-full-of-things effect by letting the user dig through the projects.

previously I strayed from the box approach for a few months and tried making a book instead. While a book allowed me to dictate the order of the projects under discussion, I found that, after a few runs, it killed the joy of improvisation I'd experienced during interviews. Although I thought I'd have more control with a book, I found it awkward or impossible to maintain a flow. The interviewer would often take the book, flip through it, and stop talking to me.

lastly Students: be faithful to your work. Many of us have gone overboard in production, which is a miscalculation, because the work can stand on its own. If you're going to spend eight grueling weeks and \$400 on your physical portfolio, then perhaps you should invest the bulk of that time and money on a great new project instead. Remember that your portfolio is a tool that not only flaunts your stuff, but also helps you to talk intelligently about it. What works for someone else might not work for you!

ASH HUANG is a graphic designer in San Francisco, California, where he works as a junior designer for Code and Theory. He graduated from Carnegie Mellon University's School of Design, where he was also the president of its AIGA student chapter. Previously, he was an intern at Atari and frog design.

WWW.ASHSMASH.COM

STRUCTURE

Screw-post book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

11 x 14



TYPEFACES

Archer

PAPER

Moab Entrada,
double-sided matte
inkjet, 300 gsm

RETAIL STORES

Lost Luggage



PRINTER

EPSON 1280

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

Tipped-on artwork
on black paper



PRODUCTION TIME

24 Hours

PRODUCTION COST

\$500



Jessica Hische

THIS PARTICULAR VERSION OF MY PORTFOLIO WAS CREATED IN LATE 2008, FOR PRINT MAGAZINE'S NEW VISUAL ARTISTS COMPETITION. I NOW USE IT TO PURSUE FREELANCE WORK, AS WELL AS POTENTIAL CLIENTS.

status Still in active duty.

approach I wanted a portfolio that I could easily edit and change depending upon who it was going to. A friend recommended Lost Luggage, a company that made really beautiful book portfolios for photographers and other businesses. The general look and feel that they provided complements my design and illustration work—they feel hand-crafted, yet are still very polished and sophisticated.

The actual book is made of wenge wood, aluminum, and leather, with a screw-post bind, wherein the screws are flush with the cover. I purchased pre-drilled Mohawk paper that prints excellently through Epson printers, which I alternated with black paper. They also offer customizable features, like silkscreening and engraving. The one I ordered has a metal tab engraved with my name in a typeface that I designed.

TIP Alternating between white and dark paper breaks the monotony of white and showcases the versatility of colorful work.

flexibility Very flexible. The way it is bound makes it easy to swap out projects, which I often do, depending on who the portfolio is sent to.

display I use this portfolio for send-outs more than anything else. I actually have two identical books, this way, I'll always have one on hand for an in-person review.

online My printed portfolio is definitely more succinct than my online portfolio. Because I do design, illustration, and typography, it would be impossible to show a wide range of work in a book portfolio. For that reason, the

printed portfolio tends to be tailored to specific clients. For example, if I'm submitting a portfolio for a holiday ad campaign, I have to be selective about the work that I send. The online portfolio is far more extensive, but I tried to give both the same general feel.

previously After graduation, I had a large box portfolio that was really impractical. Even though it demonstrated my range of work beautifully, to ship it would have cost me hundreds of dollars. Lugging it around town was such a pain that I'd end up trying to schedule geographically-convenient interviews. I also created a few small hand-bound portfolios after that, which elicited "ooohs" and "aaahs." Yet, they were impractical, because I couldn't tailor the content.

lastly I'm a huge believer in a portfolio that's easy to change and edit. Like a web site, if it's not easy to update, in the long run, you never will. You'd wind up starting over again in six months, when you have newer, and better, work. I always try to include a few actual pieces, along with the portfolio—seeing and holding books or packaging in person is different from seeing it printed out on paper.

I've seen some amazing and intricate portfolios with crazy die-cut covers or hand-bound edges, but in the end you should try to create a portfolio that makes your work look best. It's not always the flashiest one that is best suited for the job.

JESSICA HISCHE is a typographer and illustrator working in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from Tyler School of Art with a degree in Graphic Design. Previously, she worked in Philadelphia, at Headcase Design and as senior designer at Louise Fili Ltd., in New York City. She has been selected to STEP magazine's Fresh Talent, Print magazine's New Visual Artists and the The Art Directors Club's Young Guns. WWW.JHISCHE.COM

STRUCTURE

Accordion-fold book with slipcase

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

5.875 x 11.375 x 2.25



TYPEFACES

The Sans

MATERIALS

Binding board

White spray paint

PAPER

Inkpress, 2-sided matte, heavyweight, 13-inch-wide roll

Touche paper

Translucent vellum

Yupo synthetic paper



RETAIL STORES

B&H Photo

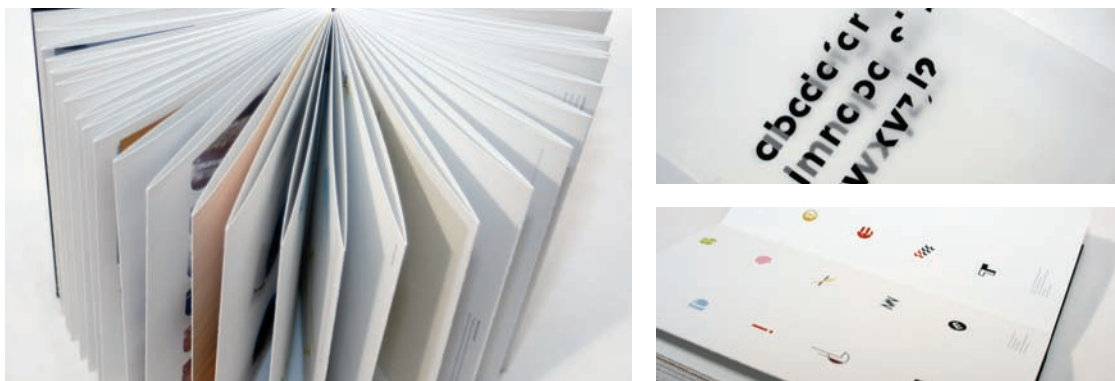
Talas

PRINTER

EPSON 2200

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

Black laser print on black paper

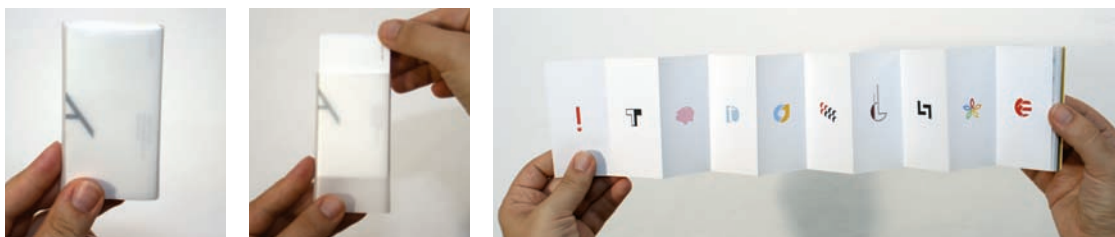


PRODUCTION TIME

3 Months

PRODUCTION COST

\$150



Hyun Auh

I DEVELOPED THIS PORTFOLIO IN 2005, DURING MY SENIOR YEAR AT THE FASHION INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY IN NEW YORK CITY.

I NEEDED A PROFESSIONAL-LOOKING PORTFOLIO FOR A REVIEW AT THE ART DIRECTORS CLUB AND, MOST IMPORTANTLY, TO SNARE ME A JOB UPON GRADUATION.

status

Now retired, I used it for about four months after graduating.

approach

I wanted to create a hand-made book that didn't look and feel as if it was hand-made. I chose the accordion style because it's minimal in design and materials, much like my work. I loved the fact that the whole book could be a single sheet that unfolded, creating a unique effect. It also

TIP Personalization always impresses. Auh wraps his portfolio in a disposable vellum printed with the name of the person reviewing it.

made sense on a personal level: I was born in Korea, and the binding style originated in eastern Asia.

I created the accordion fold using a heavyweight, inkjet paper roll.

The biggest trick was figuring out

how to print the entire book on one continuous sheet. It took countless nights of experimenting to figure it out. I used binding boards for the cover and case, then wrapped them in Touche paper. The book was inserted into a personalized vellum sleeve, then a case I built with binding boards and glue.

I also created several copies of a miniature version that I carried with me, which could be easily handed out to anyone I might come across.

flexibility

It was not built with the intention of getting updated, but if it was absolutely necessary, extra pages can be slip-sheeted into the book. Unfortunately, this would decrease the value, since the inherent quality of the book is that it is composed on one continuous piece of paper. The one aspect of the portfolio that can be updated is the translucent sleeve, which I personalized, depending upon whom I was going to send it to.

display

I dropped it off in many cases. It was hands-on only when I was called in.

memories

This portfolio is actually the second version. The first one was sort of a test run that I rushed because I needed it for an interview. I wasn't satisfied with the result and decided to improve upon it. That test run really helped fine-tune many things that I missed the first time around.

online

My technical skills in web design weren't up to par, so no online version was created. I wasn't very interested in web design anyway, and wanted to focus solely on print.

lastly

It was truly a labor of love. I hardly slept for weeks during production. There were numberless hurdles and unexpected mistakes along the way, no matter how many times I measured twice in order to cut only once...

A unique feature of this portfolio is the integration of the resume into the book itself. The portfolio was based on the design of the resume, as the dimensions and grid were developed in cohesion. The business card, resume, and book all have identical proportions.

HYUN AUH is a graphic designer in New York City. He currently works with C&G Partners (thanks in large part to this portfolio). He received his BFA from the Fashion Institute of Technology. WWW.AUHDESIGN.COM

STRUCTURE

Folder with loose samples and boards

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

9 x 12 x 2



TYPEFACES

DIN 1451

Mrs Eaves

MATERIALS

2-ply chipboard

Raw canvas

Canson paper

Spray paint

Embroidery thread

PAPER

Cardstock, white



PRINTER

Canon inkjet

TIP Don't hesitate to use tactile and textured surfaces that are hard to print on—spray paint can be applied to anything with a well-executed stencil.



PRODUCTION TIME

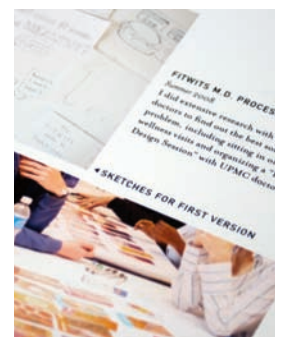
2 Days

PRODUCTION COST

\$20 Folder

\$30 Cards

\$50 Total



Caryn Audenried

I CREATED THE PORTFOLIO IN FEBRUARY 2009. I DID THIS IN PREPARATION FOR CONFLUENCE, CARNEGIE MELLON UNIVERSITY'S DESIGN JOB FAIR, WITH THE HOPE OF FINDING A SUMMER INTERNSHIP.

status Just starting to use it.

approach The work I do tends to take many different forms. I had a book, a set of cards, a magazine, and small boards to show during interviews. I wanted to find a way to keep all these pieces together, and a large folder made the most sense. The folder is made out of chipboard covered in raw canvas. For the typography on the cover I cut out the stencil and used spray paint to apply it.

flexibility I would say it is purposely updatable. I left all of the interior pieces loose, so I could rearrange them to suit the purpose. I'm always free to add or subtract pieces depending on whom I'm talking to. As a student, my work is constantly changing, and it's nice not to have to make a new portfolio every time I want to show new work.

display I only use this portfolio in person—it's quite heavy and I'd rather have people look at my web site if I'm not there to show it.

memories None so far, but I can say it is a vast improvement over the look-alike pizza box that held my work last year!

CARYN AUDENRIED is currently a fourth-year Communication Design student at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where she focuses on hand-made design processes and illustration. Previously, she studied fine art at the Barnstone Studios. WWW.CARYNAUDENRIED.NET

What kind of projects should be included in, or excluded from, the portfolio?

A portfolio represents how a designer visually and verbally approaches a problem, and how this relates to the intended audience. Anything that helps me to understand that process is great. Personal photography, illustration, and paintings are usually not worth including.

Steve Liska

I don't mind seeing one or two examples of personal work; though I'd much rather see how a young designer tackles an identity for a local dentist, or something equally mundane. How designers design the everyday is a good measure of their ability. Anyone can make a gig poster look good.

Adrian Shaughnessy

You should include the projects that best represent you. If you've done a lot of gig posters and CD packaging, you're probably not looking to work for a firm that engages in corporate communication. Be honest.

Petter Ringhom

They should be as varied as possible. We are a small company, so we all have a great amount of differing tasks to attend to. I am looking for the same varied qualities in the people I hire.

Stefan Sagmeister

I am fine with whatever you think best showcases your potential as a designer. If your portfolio is composed of all posters or personal projects, then so be it. I'd love to see some real experience, only this usually comes in the form of a dentist's web site or brochure for a landscaper.

John Foster

One personal project, and the rest composed of real-life scenarios.

Noreen Morioka

Students should use their time in school to push the boundaries of what's possible in graphic design—we're not terribly interested in the dodgy logo for the local hairdresser, or tacky gig flyers (unless they are brilliant). The placement/intern system works well for us, because we can see how someone whose mind is open can handle the day-to-day realities of graphic design. The colleges that stuff vocational, "real world" projects down their students' throats don't get much support from us because the students seem to have closed themselves too early. They develop an inability to think outside the box and that is a real pain. We have to undo all their preconceptions before they begin to work properly.

Michael Johnson

I hate "create an identity for a fake company" projects. I also don't want to see exploratory pages, wherein you examine how you put a single page of type together in black and white. I want to see projects that tell me who you are as a designer, and I want you to reinforce it again and again.

Patric King

Anything that represents your passion. I like to see projects in their true form—full-size posters, editorial projects that require thumbing through, or CD cases that have removable booklets. Touching the work makes me appreciate it on a deeper emotional level.

Petrula Urontikis

I have had it up to *here* with gig posters. So many of them today are so subjective that it becomes all about style. Now, if there is an idea that must be expressed, I'm willing to take a look. But more often than not, that whole angle becomes a dead-end if they fail to develop a truly unique style.

Marc English

It's less about the type of project and more about the thought and care that went into each project.

Hillman Curtis

I prefer projects that solve real problems. Maybe one fantastic personal project is all right, but generally those don't address whether or not the student knows how to solve problems.

Carin Goldberg

Personal projects are fine, but they can't be too esoteric.

Gail Anderson

STRUCTURE

Wire-O-bound book

DIMENSIONS (IN.)

10 x 12



TYPEFACES

Gotham

MATERIALS

Matte board cover

Acetate

Metal spirals

Double-sided tape

PAPER

Staples, photo
supreme, double-sided
matte paper, 61 lb



PRINTER

EPSON Stylus
Photo 1400

SPECIAL TECHNIQUES

Hand-punched holes
for the spiral binding

Custom-made
pockets on each page



PRODUCTION TIME

35 Hours

PRODUCTION COST

\$100

