Artist Statement

DJ Watts

Since early youth I have been hyper-visual. As far back as I can remember I have been deeply affected by what my eyes take in. Color, form, shape, texture, pattern, line; I have always been extremely tuned-in to these things at a level that is almost visceral. Creative activity has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember.

Although I have always felt myself to be a “creative”, it wasn’t until my 30’s that I discovered my love for design. I excelled in the arts throughout my formative years, and when I finished high school I continued to pursue art in college. I wasn’t really sure what field or medium suited me most, I just knew that I loved creative problem solving. I chose sculpture as my major, but soon discovered that I lacked the discipline and maturity required to do well in school. I dropped out and years later, when I decided to return, I spent a lot of time soul-searching. I took aptitude and personality tests to help me choose the best career path. ‘Graphic Designer’ kept appearing in my results as a strong career choice. Looking back, it’s strange that it took me so long to see this. One of my favorite creative activities as an adolescent was creating imaginary rock bands and designing logos for them. I had been a lover of typography even before I was a teenager. I’m not sure why I hadn’t made the connection sooner, but once I did, I knew I’d found my creative path.

Graphic design is everywhere; in every product you buy, every book, magazine and brochure you read and every app and website you use. It’s in the videos and movies you watch. Graphic design is in your living room, it’s in your bathroom, kitchen, and closet. It’s in your transportation to and from your jobs and classrooms—which also contain elements of design. Graphic designers are even employed by city and state governments for projects like signage, bus routes and subway mapping. One cannot live through a full day in today’s world without witnessing the work of graphic designers. In our ever-increasing visual culture, graphic design is a powerful medium. My love
of design dovetails nicely with the fascination I have of mass media and the power of imagery.

I have never considered myself an artist: the title never agreed with me. It’s rather strange—almost like I knew at some level that I was a designer and not an artist. Many of my peers see design and art as synonymous. I do not. Design is deliberate. It serves utility and beauty simultaneously. Design must be discernable. Its purpose is to communicate something and that something needs to be received by its audience. “Artists” can play fast and loose with whatever meaning they see fit. Loose interpretation is practically the definition of ‘art’. This is not the case with design. A designer must be very intentional about what they are trying to communicate. There is much less room for loose interpretation. If I’ve delivered a solution that my audience can’t discern, then I have failed as a designer. That being said, there are many ways to solve design problems, and there are times when one can and should employ subtlety. But at the end of the day, design should solve a problem. Often the ideas that designers are trying to express are quite complex. It is a designer’s job to simplify complex problems and deliver simple solutions. I find design as a whole to be deceptively simple.

Delivering simplicity can be a very complicated endeavor, and designers know this best. Irreducible simplicity is what I strive for in my design. I want people to experience my design and think, “This is the way it is supposed to be. What other way could it be?”
**Title**

**Figure 1:** Book Cover Illustration Series

**Figure 2:** The Grapes of Wrath Dust Jacket Illustration

**Figure 3:** Restaurant Rebrand: Menu Design

**Figure 4:** Restaurant Rebrand: Logo and Packaging

**Figure 5:** Newspaper Broadsheet: Infographic

**Figure 6:** Magazine Spread Illustration

**Figure 7:** Hitchcock-themed Movie Poster

**Figure 8:** Smithsonian Institution Playing Cards: American Heroes

**Figure 9:** Corporate Identity: DC Rogues: Infographic

**Figure 10:** Corporate Identity: DC Rogues: Packaging

**Figure 11:** Corporate Identity: DC Rogues: Uniforms

**Figure 12:** Corporate Identity: DC Rogues: Logo
Figure 1: Book Cover Illustration Series.
Figure 2: The Grapes of Wrath Dust Jacket Illustration.
Figure 3: Restaurant Rebrand: Menu Design.

DESSERT | FALL 2013

CHOCOLATE ICE BOX PIE | 8
Chocolate cookie crust, mocha cream, white chocolate shavings.

PEACH UPSIDE DOWN CAKE | 8
Vanilla cake with peach amaretto ice cream and caramel.

COLORADO RED VELVET CAKE | 8
Hazelnut praline, huckleberry compote.

BAKED APPLE CRISP | 9
Salted caramel-pecan ice cream, Giant Farms tart cherry compote.

HOME STYLE CARROT CAKE | 8
Vanilla bourbon cream cheese frosting, candied pecans.

CHOCOLATE COCONUT TRUFFLE | 9
Coconut chia sorbet, pomegranate sauce.
Figure 4: Restaurant Rebrand: Logo and Packaging.
The Perfect Hat For Your Ugly Mug

by BRETT & KATE MCKAY

Up until the 1960s, men were rarely seen out and about without a hat sitting snugly on their head. Since that time, the wearing of hats has been a paradoxical decline. No one is surprised today when they see the downcast head of a man wearing a beret—after all, men wore hats in his inauguration, then forever banished them as absurd. This is an old myth, however, as we proudly donned hats a few days joyfully. So, the dressing of men has simply been led to changing styles and the ongoing trend towards a more casual look. With the decline of the traditional hat, men have been led to change as well. They have discovered that a hat can be not only a fashion statement but also a functional tool. A man can wear a hat not only to look good but also to protect himself from the elements. They can even wear a hat just to keep their head warm and their cheeks from being blown away by the wind. All hats, no matter how simple or elaborate, are a must for men who want to look their best.
"I am going to be a little boring."

Sherry Turkle announces as we sit down to tea in the living room of her sprawling Boston townhouse. "And you're going to be a little boring, too."

Turkle, for the record, is not boring. She is a psychologist and a professor at MIT whose primary academic interest—the relationship between humans and machines—is especially relevant in today's networked age. Her most recent book, Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Technology and Less From Each Other, explores our reliance on devices that can isolate us under the auspices of connection. Published in 2011, it poured 384 pages' worth of water onto technological optimism at a time when most of the culture preferred to focus on the promise and allure of digital devices. In this environment, Turkle has been one of only a handful of experts willing to come out as tech-skeptical, which has made her a regular on the op-ed/Colbert Report/TED Talk circuit.

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Figure 7: Hitchcock-themed Movie Poster.
Figure 8: Smithsonian Institution Playing Cards: American Heroes.
The Cost of Going Rogue

Dan Snyder spends $20 million on brand overhaul. Here's how it breaks down.

$2 Million
For new uniforms (both home and away), new helmets, pads, gloves and other new apparel.

$3 Million
For merchandise, including apparel for men, women and children and various other products.

$5 Million
For digital, including new logos, website, development, new smartphone app and new social media presence.

$10 Million
For stadium changes which include a new name, exploring the hog through the statue, a new scoreboard, new seats and an entire new line of merchandise.

The Cost of Not Rebranding

In its first 26 years, Washington Redskins owners Dan Snyder and his family have toiled to make the team into a big business, but even the owners admit to making some mistakes along the way.

Perennial sellouts at FedEx Field, the team has faced criticism for a variety of reasons, including its name, which Snyder and his family had hoped would draw in fans.

They also have a history of tweaking logos, uniforms and other elements of the team's image, but the constant changes have only served to confuse fans and detract from the team's overall identity.

For years, the team's logo has been a subject of controversy, with many fans and experts alike calling for a change to a more modern, more representative design.

The team's current logo, featuring a red, white and blue shield with a red, white and blue eagle, has been in use since the 1980s and has not been updated since.

Snyder and his family have said they are considering making changes to the team's logo, but have also expressed a preference for keeping the current design in place.

The team's uniform has also been a source of debate, with some fans calling for a more traditional design, while others have praised the team's current look for its boldness and creativity.

The team's stadium, FedEx Field, has also been the subject of criticism, with many fans calling for the stadium to be modernized and expanded in order to better accommodate the team's fans.

For years, the team has been one of the highest-earning franchises in the NFL, but its success has been marred by controversies and controversies.

The team's ownership has been involved in numerous legal and ethical disputes, including a landmark lawsuit brought by former players over head injuries, as well as a number of allegations of sexual misconduct.

Snyder and his family have been criticized for their handling of these issues, and have been accused of being slow to respond to the concerns of their fans and the wider public.

In recent years, the team has made a number of moves to improve its image, including hiring new coaches, executive staff, and playing a more active role in the community.

Despite these efforts, however, the team's image remains a source of controversy and debate, with many fans calling for even more changes to be made.

The team's ownership has said that they are committed to making the team a better organization, and have expressed a willingness to listen to the concerns of their fans and the wider public.

The team's fans, however, have been quick to point out that change is needed, and that the team must do more to address the issues that have plagued the team in recent years.

The team's owners have said that they are committed to making changes and to improving the team's image, but have also said that they will not make changes that are not in the best interests of the team or its fans.
Figure 10: Corporate Identity: DC Rogues: Packaging.
Figure 11: Corporate Identity: DC Rogues: Uniforms.
Figure 12: Corporate Identity: DC Rogues: Logo.