

# STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

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HELLO

The best moments in life are those between time and space, where a split second can turn into minutes. The all-encompassing buzz of people evaporates and what once was unclear becomes sharp. One cold Saturday morning this past fall, I was smoothly turning the cranks of my bicycle, pedaling south on the Pacific Coast Highway, just as the marine fog floated away across the road ahead. In that moment, the complex gradations of the world around me became clear and vivid. Moments like these seem serendipitous to most; however to those who seek them out and work to understand what lies beneath, they become solid memories of clarity. I believe that higher education within a specialized program, such as the Masters in Branding at the School of Visual Arts, will challenge, exercise and build on what I have already accomplished: providing clarity and a clear path towards my future.

As I retrace the route I have taken, two influential moments stand out. One from my academic experience, and one as a young professional in Los Angeles. As part of the Visual Communications program at the University of Arizona, Professor Jackson Boelts took our Design Studio I class to the grocery store. I clearly remember standing in front of the orange juice, discussing the subconscious characteristics of packaging. He made a point of how rare it is to find the color black used in food packaging, with Minute Maid as the exception. I understood the basics of what he was telling us at the time, about how the color black represents rot or decay if strongly used on food packaging. However, it was not until early in my professional career that what he taught us that day clicked by happenstance, while having drinks with an acquaintance.

It was a Friday night at a sailor-themed bar in Koreatown, Los Angeles called the HMS Bounty. A group of friends had gathered before the Los Angeles Critical Mass bike ride. Typically social, I found myself completely engrossed in a conversation with an anthropologist named Michael Powell, who works for an architecture firm, aiding in the design of grocery stores. Barely sipping our bottles of Anchor Steam ale, we went on about the subconscious and why we do what we do as it related to design and architecture. It was one of the most fascinating and professionally connective conversations of my life. I bridged the moment in front of the orange juice with what Michael was saying about retail design and consumerism in the larger sense. This was the catalyst that led me to seek out higher education; to hopefully one day be able to visualize the worlds complexities at one-tenth the level of Michael or Professor Boelts.

For nearly seven years I have weaved through the lanes of graphic design as a freelancer, an in-house corporate designer, entertainment design, automotive advertising, online retail design, numerous conferences, and volunteering with AIGA Los Angeles (American Institute of Graphic Arts). I started working for myself within six months of leaving the University of Arizona and taught myself business and client management skills, cultivating a handful of regular clients throughout the years. If there was one project I am most proud of, it has been the on going pro bono nose-art illustrations I do for a group of fighter pilots from the 416th flight test squadron out of Edwards Air Force Base.

Before that as an undergrad, I became the first student known by my professors to pursue and complete two separate Bachelor of Fine Arts degrees simultaneously. I graduated Cum Laude with a BFA in Visual Communications: Illustration, and a second BFA in Media Arts: Film Production. My parents desperately urged me to be an engineer, but two days into Physics 101 it became clear

that quadratic equations were not for me. After five years, and 200 units of coursework, I learned of myself that I do not settle for adequate.

I have devoted myself to smart design; creating work that is well researched, trendy, different, properly formatted, organized and special. I have been an active member of AIGA since joining as a student in 2005. Every March I strap on my cleats, and pedal my bicycle the 150 miles from LA to San Diego to attend the AIGA Y-Conference for what I like to call "Draino for the Brain".

After that night at the HMS Bounty, I met with professors at several art and design colleges in the greater Los Angeles area, and also researched Anthropology degrees and MBA's. Yet I was unable to find a program that felt like it could be both theoretically and professionally valuable. It wasn't until recently, while surfing Armin Vit's Brand New that I came across an ad for the Masters in Branding program. The fall curriculum alone with behavioral, business and commerce studies was what I had been searching for in a Masters Program. I attended the open house on November 17th, and felt more relaxed and welcome than I had at any other school. The observations wall, branded water bottles and rich stories from such a diverse hand picked group of alumni was inspiring. If that were all, it would be enough, but then faculty like Ken Carbone and Dan Formosa, whom I have seen speak at conferences, make the program a surreal opportunity. I hope Ken brings his steel guitar to class.

I see branding as the act of breathing empathy into commerce by tapping into the subconscious through language and imagery, creating effective reaction. Human centered branding within the outdoor industry is where I would ultimately like to take this education. Specifically as more brands market towards women as equal players and exploring the role social media plays when targeting younger audiences.

I have always felt that I lack the key parts of education that can incite major professional growth. An understanding of business, practical cultural theory, typographic laws and most importantly professional presentation skills could become my greatest strengths. I have built a strong professional resume, and clearly have a passionate obsession for design and the subconscious role it plays in everyday life. Advancing my education is necessary to reach the next level of understanding and subsequent practical application with an effective reaction.

At the moment, I am currently developing a new brand for Electrosonic, the corporate technology firm I have been with for nearly two years in Los Angeles. The company has another office in Manhattan, which could allow me to continue working throughout the program.

What I hope you take from this statement, is that I am a committed, ambitious, and imaginative. As a person, I am known more for my generosity, humility, and leadership. I look at the Masters in Branding program, and see a windy, beautiful, deliciously steep mountain that I need to pedal up on my bicycle. It won't be easy, but at the top is an unparalleled view that can slow time and turn seconds into minutes. I am ready for the next big challenge, and am confident that my background and personality will enhance the class of 2014 and the School of Visual Arts.



**THANKS**