

I reflect on my practice and see things I like and things that jar. I see clarity and progression; **conflict** and **confusion**

I spoke with Deshna on values and value led design.

My two dialogues directly reflecting the **conflict** and **challenges** I find myself, and my practice, situated in.

I spoke with Shem about commercial magazine editorial practice in the contemporary climate.

On the one hand feminist, value led design, that is responsible and challenging / exposing norms.

On the other hand the real world setting of having a job in the juggernaut of commercial and capitalist led publishing houses.



PICTURE CREDIT

Shem Law is the current Editor of the *Radio Times* magazine. Previously he was Art Director for *Observer*, *Q*, *The Daily Mail*, *Allure* and *Seventeen*.

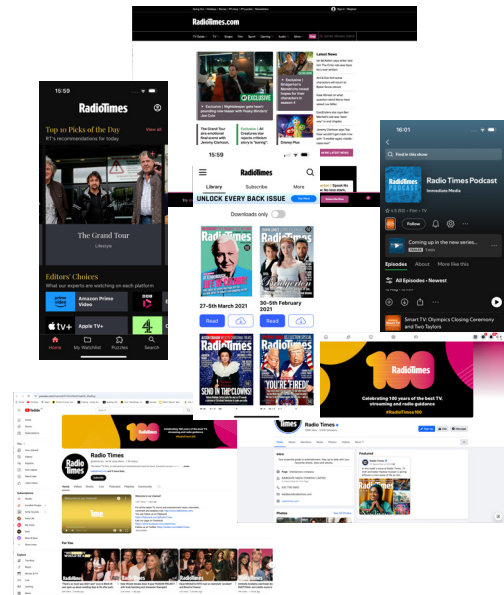
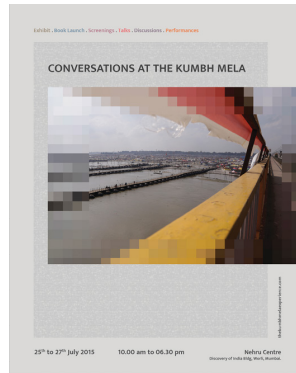
My two dialogues directly reflecting the **conflict** and **challenges** I find myself, and my practice, situated in.

On the one hand a medium I love and have worked in and with for 25 years.

On the other hand the real world setting of having to work with digital in the juggernaut that is the technological revolution of the internet infiltrating every aspect of commercial and capitalist led society.

My position being at the intersection of commercial practice and subverting to expose the deception of perception (Gibson, 1986).

My position shifting over the summer being within *Unknown Quantities* where our theme is Lost and Found. Through an exploration and development of writing and design a discovery of a duality, a conversation, a dialogue, between two contrasting perspectives. Of 'lost' and of 'found'. That both provoke and inform each other, without one needing to be 'right'.



And so I wonder if my two conflicting subconsciousnesses can be in conversation with each other, an open dialogue that can advance and inform one another to progress a deeper criticality of what is right in front of you.

So I write in the font Inika to express the value led discussion I had with the lovely Deshna, whom asked me what my deeper motivations were, which brought to the surface what I knew deep down lived in my subconscious, that I never voiced: a distrust, sadness and frustration of contemporary culture’s reliance on digital, that, to me, on the surface appears to be a never fulfilled appetite whose diets consists of content, consumption and speed. Creativity, value, time and care seems to be absent, and it saddens me that people live in this perpetual, infinite space of nothing ever being enough. Which as I reflect on subconsciously throughout the summer, reflects my theme of Unit 2 to date of interior/exterior. We are ‘accepting’ of ‘other’ and ‘celebrate other’ in all its forms, but when it comes to self,

**being the ‘same’ seems more important. This question has been with me for some time.**

So I write in the font Interstate as that is the neutral typeface used by the *Radio Times*, a commercial magazine in a capitalist society who I learnt now has German parents, who demand more profit on an already squeezed ship (which actual parents ask their own children for money?), who now not only produce a weekly printed publication, but a gigantic website, an app, a podcast, a YouTube channel, an Instagram channel, a TikTok channel, a twitter /x feed, and a pinterest page (go figure). No longer a publisher by traditional standards, but a multi media content provider. Everything to everyone. Not generic at all. Not the same as Every. Other. Company. On. The. Planet?

**being the ‘same’ seems more important? This question has been with me for some time...**

# SIGNALS

PICTURE CREDIT

By drawing on my findings from Deshna and Shem a society based on capitalism and consumerism emerges. A place where nothing is ever enough. We tell ourselves, “I am enough” but how can we truly feel we are enough, living in an infinite hoover of enough.

Deshna picked up on my subversion of content, but not design, and drew my attention to work of others in a space created by others. A value led space that designs responsibly and creatively. She picked up on the interior/exterior theme and challenged me with familiar/unfamiliar, constant/changing, or coincidence. This lifts my soul and challenges my work moving forward as I continue to explore familiar/unfamiliar within design (this is the start of an exploration of that) and coincidence.

Shem drew my attention to the print designer role in digital – which is that there isn’t one other than to supply the content. There is no digital editorial design; there is digital art direction. There is a person who ‘uploads’ content to a predefined series of boxes that create the digital counterpart / sibling / mutation (of the established, well reputationed print Father - note how I use the word father to emphasise the print versions authority, prestige and power? Bad me). Shem said there had been a recent shift whereby ‘clicks’ and ‘data’ no longer equate to success in the digital landscape (HALLELUJAH!), that value is becoming the driver to allow a paywall to be a source of income rather than relying on advertising. The prestige, reputation and heritage of the printed magazine is what drives the brand and it’s being realised that this is required online as well. Praise be. (Note how I use a religious terms to emphasis my jubilation, relying on prestige, reputation and heritage of the church to convey my feeling. How very ‘reverbrant’ (Barthes, 1977).). This lifts my soul, and inspires my work moving forward, challenging me to create creative value led editorial in the digital space. Challenging myself to reverse the process and take digital to print to see what can be learnt. How can each inform the other in a more in depth investigation.

# THE START

The conflicting voices start to create a harmony  
The conflicting voices start to create a harmony whereby the many  
whereby the many strands that have emerged start  
strands that have emerged start to work with each other,  
to work with each other, as opposed to against each  
as opposed to against each other.  
other. Positions through Dialogue has initiated a new  
Positions through Dialogue has initiated a new conversation that is in  
conversation, that is in conversation with my findings  
conversation with my practice,  
and feedback from Midpoint, Deshna and Shem, that  
which has always felt  
have provoked an advance in my enquiry that asks  
conflicting  
me to investigate how and why commercial magazine  
editorial design is the way it is, to look at how other  
and separate,  
cultures and feminists design, to look at digital and  
one thing  
print from a new (reversed?) perspective and to use  
or the other,  
these avenues to build on what has already emerged  
values  
on perception and patriarchy in commercial magazine  
or commercial,  
editorial design through magazine editorial design, to  
when in actual fact this duality is a conversation,  
further advance my enquiry into commercial editorial  
a dialogue,  
magazine design in a hybrid world with the wider  
whereby each can inform  
aspects of commercialisation and capitalism emerging.  
and progress the other.

Then I speak to Anoushka. And it all goes blurry again. She  
says embrace art school, forget the real world to progress  
my work.



She says use capitalism and commercialism to my own  
means, use construction and perception to direct the  
reader to the important parts and away from the capitalist  
and commercial bits, to use design to help the reader  
spend time with the good bits. She said to use design  
sneakily and to look to the history of feminist design in the  
UK, specifically at *Spare Rib* and *Bad Attitude*. And then I  
think about the word blurry and wonder why its blurry, and  
I think its because she has injected new challenges that are  
in conflict with where I was. My head is in a spin, and I think  
about the word spin and why I use it and when things spin  
things become blurry and it's not blurry afterall, maybe it's  
just spinning and if I get off the ride things may settle and  
become clear again so I go to the cinema and watch

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how Tim Burton has used a  
commercial, capitalist film to project  
an alternative viewpoint that makes  
subtle, humourous and cutting  
commentary on contemporary culture

And on the way home I think about  
spinning and how I can show words spinning on a static  
page and I think it would need to be a spiral, but a spiral  
has an end or disappears and isn't a cycle so that wouldn't  
work, but I think it would in digital and then I find this



and I wonder if it's a  
coincidence?

Anoushka Khaladwana is a lecturer on BA Graphic  
Communication Design at Central Saint Martins,  
researching at Decolonising Arts Institute, questioning  
colonial ways of seeing.