

Over the summer I have been thinking about the process of redirection, especially as it relates to design and visual storytelling. They both operate in a similar way: they connect through expectations and conventions, and come alive through redirecting them. To redirect is a tactical decision, a redirection can jump right at you through a bold juxtaposition, or can slowly creep up on you through a subtle sequencing. I see redirection as a process that includes collection, assimilation, and transformation, and considers origin as well as the destination.

Thinking back on my two years at Yale, the work I find most memorable displayed an element of surprise or mystery, and often played with genre and convention. A website that tells you the real-time weather...*and how it can kill you*. A vacant parking garage...*that is a horror film*. A public service announcement...*for the magical power symbol Nebiros*. These projects stand out for me because design is operating as a vehicle of redirection to deliver a variety of things from the ironic to the abstract.

I am interested in extending the idea of redirection to include the creative process, a self-redirection of sorts. Brian Eno has been a key figure in leading me to this interest, most notably through his Oblique Strategy card set, and the creative experiments he did on David Bowie during the recording of the 1995 album *Outside*. This coming year I intend to investigate the tactics of redirection, both outward and inward. I also intend to concentrate more directly on my use of genre, and further explore the relation between design and visual narrative.

Bowie, David. Outside. BMG, 1995.

An album recorded by using both narrative and experimentation, the *Outside* sessions have become legendary. At one point David Bowie and the musicians were each given fictional biographies penned by Brian Eno (varying from being a musician on an asteroid mining colony to the master of a new Japanese form of music based around a powerful new drug) and told to begin playing without revealing who they were told to be.

Clowes, Dan. Ice Haven. Seattle:

Fantagraphics, 2005. A play on genre and narrative, Clowes builds a complexity out of the most mundane and low-brow. Uses all the elements comics have to offer.

Collins, Lauren. 'Banksy Was Here.'

New Yorker Magazine. May 14, 2007.

Public redirection as high art, and the problems of being a public protagonist.

Dr. Strangelove. Dir. Stanley

Kubrick. Columbia Pictures, 1964.

In a stroke of genius, Kubrick decided to remake a 1958 thriller novel about nuclear accident (*Red Alert* by Peter George) into a black comedy. It is even said that there were some actors he filmed separately, never telling them it was intended as a comedy.

Eno, Brian. A Year with Swollen

Appendices. London: Faber and

Faber, 1996. Full of experiments and musings, this diary is an insight into Eno's thoughts and processes.

Hyde, Maggie. Introducing Jung.

London: Icon Books, 1992. A summation of the philosophical and psychiatric ideas of Carl Jung. There are many things I find fascinating in his thoughts, especially the concept of the archetype.

McCormick, Carlo. 'Pranks and the Avant-Garde.'

Re/Search: Pranks! San Francisco: Re/Search, 1987.

An essay proclaiming pranks as the central role of the postmodern artist. 'The intrinsic nature of a prank—a trick

or the performance of an unexpected act which undermines the patterned predictability of the norm—is grounded in conscious deviance and anti-authoritarianism, from which the *art of the improbable revelation* is born.'

Murakami, Takashi. Little Boy.

New Haven: Yale University Press,

2005. An exploration into the Japanese *Otaku* culture, the book argues that Japan as a society has redirected the damage the atomic bomb did to their national psyche into art obsessed with childhood and appropriation.

Sim, Dave. Cerebus. Kitchener:

Aardvark-Vanaheim Press, 1977-

2004. This 6,000 page graphic novel shows the process of an artist redirecting himself over time. What begins as a Conan the Barbarian parody starring and aardvark and ends as a serious meditation on theology and humanity. The series spawned the term 'Cerebus syndrome' which wikipedia describes as 'the situation when a light, gag-a-day comic adds layer after layer of complexity to its characters and set-up. Eventually, the strip comes to the point where the strip bears little resemblance to its roots; whether the transformation is successful is another matter entirely.'

The Five Obstructions. Dir. Jør-

gen Leth and Lars von Trier. Koch

Lorber Films, 2003. A movie about literal re-direction as Von Trier challenges his mentor Leth to remake his film *The Perfect Human* multiple times, each time assigning him a new set of obstructions.

Homemade Pasta. John Currin, 1999. 'Controversial and driven by his own unique vision, Currin is heralded as one of the most important artists of his generation and more specifically in the powerful position of re-directing art history back to discussions of painting's relevance and closing the gap in the disjointed lineage of genre painting.' – Christies Catalogue entry for the painting from November 10, 2004



Untitled Film Still #21. Cindy Sherman, 1978. Two constants in her work are herself and the fact that she is never herself. As much a play on genre and implied narrative as it is about identity.



St. Anthony Triptych. Hieronymus Bosch, c. 1500. Bosch was a master of complexity and personal encoding, giving just enough reference and mystery to continue debate over his paintings.



Colors Notebook, 2007. Colors magazine published a blank issue and had it sent around the world for people to fill. They then collected and exhibited the notebooks. This is a simple example of setting up a simple system that allows multiple forms of redirection.

http://www.colors magazine.com/notebookflash/COLORS_Notebook.mov



Oblique Strategies. Brian Eno & Peter Schmidt, 1975. 'Over one hundred worthwhile dilemmas' presented by Eno and Schmidt to get one out of a creative rut. A personal favorite is 'Honour thy error as a hidden intention.'



MF DOOM has built a rap career off taking the identity and origin of the Marvel Comics villain Dr. Doom and reapplying it onto his world (he even hides his identity by always wearing a metal mask similar to that of Dr. Doom). What comes out is at times extremely articulate and hard-hitting as he constantly finds parallels between his life, the situation of black America, and the questioning of Dr. Doom's label as a villain.



Bossy Burger. Paul McCarthy, 1991. McCarthy has always fascinated me because of his ability to create such powerful and disturbing environments. Often using innocent, childlike objects, McCarthy alters them and perverts them to a point that leaves one almost psychologically damaged in the experience.



The Problem We All Live With.

Norman Rockwell, 1964. Understanding his work to be an established genre of sorts, Rockwell was able to generate surprise and alarm with civil rights paintings such as these. Radical and inviting, optimistic and heartbreaking, it is an example of a self-redirection intended for the public as well.



Thomas Demand creates enormous photographs of environments created out of paper. A total shift in perspective happens after this realization. An example of something that remains subtle until a major shift is realized.



Yokoland is a graphic design and illustration studio based in Oslo. Often juxtaposing environments and elements, they are playful and fearless in a way that is inspiring.

