



DAMIEN VESSEY

ART DIRECTOR

INFO

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SOCIAL MEDIA

You can find me on:

- LinkedIn
- Pinterest

SKILLS

Creative direction
Art direction
Editorial design
Communications design
Magazine launches
Magazine relaunches
Graphic design
Corporate branding
Visual communication
Brand architecture
Logo design

Photo commission
Illustration commission
Client pitches

Adobe Creative Suite
Google Suite
Office 365
Native Mac apps
QuarkXpress
Squarespace
Airtable
Trello
Lumapps
Workday
Kodak Insite Prepress
Mac and PC platforms

PROFILE

I am a highly experienced and accomplished Art Director and have retained a passion for producing beautiful, innovative work over the course of my varied career. I now lead a talented team at the John Lewis Partnership, where I direct the busy Communications art department to deliver on the needs of the business, ensuring that quality and creativity are reflected in everything we do.

Over a 25-year-long career I've applied my design aesthetic and creative vision to many rebrands and relaunches and have always had a strong focus on communications design. I've been fortunate to work with some of the most talented photographers and illustrators in the industry and my passion for the work is as strong as ever.

EMPLOYMENT

Communications Art Director, John Lewis Partnership

October 2017 to present

Following restructure, I now manage the Communications Art Hub, the team that design the Gazette (weekly internal Partner magazine, print and online), Connections (monthly retired Partners magazine, bought in-house) and all corporate communications ensuring visual direction and messaging are aligned across all channels, helping our 75,000 Partners to engage with the UK's largest employee-owned business.

I oversee creative output from initial briefs through to finished projects, and as the lead strategic design role in our Corporate division I also have responsibility for ensuring creative projects fit within, adhere to and positively reflect the Partnership's wider business objectives. My collaborative and objective approach ensures that all communications design promotes Partner engagement, our Purpose, the benefits of our employee-owned business or our Partnership [Business] Plan, which I regularly present to wider team colleagues and Senior Leadership Teams.

I art direct the team on projects that can range from the magazines to corporate branding, external-facing brochures to videos, online assets to short- and long-term Partner campaigns. Often this involves briefing and directing commissioned external agencies or freelance designers. I was shortlisted for the 2021 BSME Art Director of the Year – B2B.

I work daily with our wider editorial team, Partner Engagement Managers (Account Managers), SLTs, Internal and External Communications, and other strategic corporate teams such as Sustainability & Ethics.

Art Editor, Group, John Lewis Partnership

June 2011 to September 2017

Art Editor for the Gazette, the weekly Partner magazine of the John Lewis Partnership and the UK's oldest staff publication. I design the weekly magazine and associated online assets. I regularly commission photographers from all over the UK (and abroad) and illustration agencies, giving me extensive experience of art directing a variety of shoots – portrait, location, product, lifestyle and reportage. I undertake photo editing/manipulation and vector work, as well as the magazine's weekly production.

I oversee and advise on branding for the Partnership's Corporate division and provide design advice and support to other internal journalists and designers within John Lewis and Waitrose. I worked on the Project Team for our Partner Intranet app and redesigned the print Gazette for relaunch in January 2017. My first redesign of the Gazette, in 2014, won Redesign of the Year at the IoIC Awards.

Freelance Art Editor, Which? magazines

August 2009 to June 2011

I was contracted to the redesign of Which? magazine, relaunched in January 2010. I art directed the first two issues, including photography commissions (food, product, technology and lifestyle shoots), conceptual work, layouts and creation of all templates. I also designed content and redesigned the covers of the other Which? lifestyle titles – Computing, Money and Gardening – and art directed two issues of Which? Holiday, which I redesigned for relaunch as Which? Travel in January 2011. After art directing



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AWARDS

2021

Shortlisted for BSME Art Director of the Year – B2B

September 2014

Class Winner – Redesign at the Institute of Internal Communications Awards, for Gazette redesign

EDUCATION

Degree

Human Geography at Leicester University, 2:2. Subsidiary in Economics

President

Leicester University Orchestral Society, leading a team of three in organising University concerts

A Levels

Art [B], Geography [B], English Literature [B] and General Studies [C]. Eight GCSEs grades A–C

INTERESTS

Cycling
Running
Music
Photography
Travel

REFEREES

Available on request

two further issues of Which? Travel I art directed the Summer 2011 issue of Which? Car, their newsstand motoring title, including cover and feature photography.

Freelance Art Editor, Which? marketing (maternity cover)

September 2008 to August 2009

Managing the marketing design team, I oversaw the design, artworking and packaging of a diverse range of print materials including guides, adverts, posters, direct mail, campaigns literature and manifestos, for internal and external audiences. I had responsibility for quality control, adherence to brand guidelines, and for ensuring projects were completed on time and within budget. I was also involved in the launch of newsstand magazines and bookazines – a new venture for Which? – and I project managed the artwork for the annual Which? Awards held at the British Museum.

Freelance, various

July 2008 to September 2008

Working freelance at Time magazine, Sunday and Grist Publishing.

Art Director, Engage Publishing

October 2007 to July 2008

A contract publisher focusing on B2B and B2C titles for the business, IT and finance sectors. I had responsibility for the output of the design studio – booking freelancers, ensuring costs and schedules were adhered to – undertook client pitches and directed photo shoots. Highlights included: redesigning the publishing portfolio of DSGi Business (owners of PC World); designing new titles for The Law Society, Ladbrokes.com and HSBC; creating magazine pitches and web microsites for Yell.com, Baker Tilly, First Direct, KPMG and Intel. Unfortunately, due to the recession, I was made redundant from this position.

Associate Art Director, Time Inc & various

October 2005 to October 2007

As a freelance Designer I worked for various publishing and design clients including an eight month placement with Time magazine as Associate Art Director. I ran the busy London Art Department and managed the weekly close – liaising with the New York and Hong Kong Art teams. I worked autonomously on concepts, cover designs and new templates, with regular illustration commission and daily collaboration with the UK editorial team and photo desks. Across lifestyle, sport, travel and business titles, other clients included: SevenC3, EMP Media Plc, Engage Publishing, One Week To Live Magazine, Jake Judd Associates (Creative Agency), Creative Industry Ltd (PR and Marketing Communications Agency), KPM Music House (EMI Records) and Music For Film and TV Ltd.

January 2005 to October 2005

Undertaking a round-the-world trip.

Designer / Design Manager, Brandnation

August 2001 to January 2005

A PR and creative agency for the beauty, sport, fashion and lifestyle sectors. I designed a wide range of material including magazines, brochures, corporate literature, logos, adverts, POS and computer graphics. I also worked on location and studio shoots. In August 2004 I was promoted to Design Manager in recognition of my responsibility for the creative output for their PR clients. Highlights included: creating logos and brochures for the Nick Faldo Golf Company; publicity material for the national, annual Outdoor Show; interface graphics for the Stuart Little II computer game for SynchroArts/Dreamworks. Other clients included BBC Technology, USA Pro Sportswear and Silhouette Sunglasses.

Design Editor, Scope

April 1997 to August 2001

Design Editor for Disability Now, the UK's leading disability publication. I designed the monthly publication, created marketing materials, advised external clients and commissioned photographers and illustrators. Other responsibilities included proof reading, press passing and co-ordination with print managers and repro houses.