



DEZINE er en spalte av HALVOR BODIN, grafisk designer i SUPERLOW/OSLO COLLECTIVE www.superlow.com online-versjon med back-katalog publiseres på www.superlow.com/dezine feedback: dezine@superlow.com

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Finigan Hopewater is the owner of the copyright of the following words: demeanor, lamp, umpire, candle (not the plural) and grip. He maintains a certain level of notoriety in the Helipants Club, a collective of over 45 year old men, who have completely forgotten why and where they meet, mostly due to Mr Gibbons (RIP 1987) losing an itinerary in 1976, thus leading to the present dilemma. Most of his spare time is spent keeping a careful eye on a tree that he feels is growing particularly slowly, and has documented considerable proof that there is

something quite queer going on. His son Hope, has dismissed his fathers watchful infatuation as either eccentric or calamitous, but has yet to make a decision on which. There is no doubt though that Finigan Hopewater is a true suburban genius, and has celebrated his dry wit with a spit and polish boot camp holiday in Echuca for the last 33 years. His loving wife Glenda (nee Farp) died in a yoghurt accident on a holiday in the French Pyrenees, while watching a documentary about Echuca. Finigan, although upset by his wife's untimely demise, re-

covered quite quickly and maintained an emotional connection to a 'mock stone' which he named Glenys, after forgetting his wives name after 4 hours from the moment she passed away. Although the mock stone has a vibrant and pleasant texture its cooking leads much to be desired and has been known to spread all the condiments on the front lawn, and on one occasion burnt all the towels in the family sedan, rendering the remainder of the family 'wet' for the next 30 minutes.

Finigan is now employed by the Martin Service, whose recent efforts to recreate the opening of the first Gable-Mart on Gipps Street caused serious traffic congestion and a frightening increase in 'burping' at the local primary school. Mr Hopewater is gardening as this article is being written and periodically waves to me from the back of his double ended refrigerator. Today he is wearing Gemucci and has a tan from the House of The Rising Sun solarium and is maintaining oral hygiene with Wreppen, the mouthwash of champions.

Intervjuet denne gang er på engelsk for å bevare språket mest mulig autentisk. Jeg regner med at KF sine lesere er bedre i engelsk enn Timothy Dahle i *Get Ready To Be Boyzvoiced*:-) Australiske SELDON HUNT er utdannet ved Swinburne University of Technology og jobber som grafisk designer, illustratør og forfatter i Melbourne. Han gjør platecovere, plakater og T-shirts for musikkartister som *Isis*, *Lotus Eaters*, *Earth*, *KK Null*, *Mick Harris*, *Khanate*, *KidGo6*, *Neurosis*, *House Of Low Culture* og *Pelican*. Seldon lager sine egne silketrykkede og offset-trykkede plakater og skriver absurdist-fiction (som teksten på forrige side) og tekster for band og musikklabels. Han samarbeider med ulike internasjonale kunstnere og designere med tegneserier, publikasjoner, ziner, grafitti, stickers og kunstsutvekslingsprosjekter. Hunt forbereder for tiden en separatutstilling i Melbourne og arbeider med en nitimeters vegg «maleri» i perforert aluminium for *Lismore Memorial Baths*.

Dezine: How is living and working in Melbourne?

Seldon: Living in Melbourne has changed a lot in the last 5 years and as a consequence has affected the working environment. The city has become largely gentrified across the board, destroying many independent pockets where artists and musicians thrived in low rent, artistic communities. The office workers have consumed the city and built neat apartment blocks in all directions, complaining about noise from nearby pubs that have been hosting punk/metal/experimental gigs for nearly 20 years in some cases, and having them black banned. Invariably they get closed and replaced by mock sub culture theme bars that of course have a cool DJ that plays conventional dummy friendly music for number punching fashion victim morons. Generally I find living here pretty uninspiring on the whole and I don't even feel like I work here as the majority of work I do is for people and groups based in the USA and Europe. So I tend to work in these places by proxy. I have a small group of friends and we do some interesting projects together but generally I have virtually nothing at all to do with design and art here.

D: You do work and projects both in the us and Europe. Can you describe how it is to be a part of an active networking artist community related to trash art and sub culture?

S: Working within an international art community, especially when it is pretty well entirely devoted to a sub culture that grows as each year goes by is really inspiring. Its amazing to watch other people find out about bands and artists and to watch it grow. I am constantly amazed even at the level of recognition I have gained from working within this community, considering I have little recognition in my own city. It feels important to be contributing to a 'movement' that is in opposition to everything I despise in much of modern conventional culture. I feel that one has to contribute to something that prevents mainstream culture becoming the only source of 'creative' entertainment. So it does create an excellent inspirational arena to contribute your desire to really push the way things are represented and to be committed to providing your true talents and skills in a pro-passionate environment. I find it really satisfying to be putting all my energy into this sub culture that I believe is important in its purpose. So in a sense it's like being part of particularly like minded international community where different geographical cultures share and contribute to various projects and occasionally collaborate on things as well. The internet has been quite amazing in allowing people who might not normally have the ability to discuss ideas and work in a very immediate borderless environment without necessarily having the funds or government funding that lets more recognized 'conventional' artists do exchanges or residencies.

D: What kind of magazine is Rotkop and how did you start contributing?

S: *Rotkop* would be more accurately be considered a 'zine', as it is essentially photocopied, but it also contains original art-pieces inside as well in terms of hand drawn images or screen print sections and even insects. Many people in Europe in the

independent art communities in Belgium mostly contribute. It is still largely based around aspects of squat culture and euro street and music/art. Each issue varies significantly through each issue having a theme. So in a way its hard to define what appears in each issue, rather it would be more accurate to say its fairly experimental and thematically challenging in due to its often 'offensive' images. I originally got involved after meeting a group of these guys while I was staying in Antwerp to do an album cover for this mad Carlo guy (*Audiobot*) who introduced me to heaps of people such as Jan Le-maire who started the zine with some other locals. It kind of all stemmed from him.

D: Can you say something about the process of collaboration. For example the ongoing projects with Dennis Tyfus and designer/musician Stephen O'Malley?

S: Recently Stephen O'Malley and I did a fairly abstract comic which is being published in two parts in the UK in the coming months. I wrote limericks for it and drew fairly detailed almost abstract images. I sent these as original streamlined Illustrator files to Stephen who then coloured and destroyed them. Which was the idea, to destroy and make them into an almost entirely new image. The results were really pleasing, and his layout skills and typography were essential in setting the whole thing off. I'm really looking forward to seeing the finished product. We have also had loose ideas about reproducing each image in really large colour digital print and having an exhibition. Dennis Tyfus and I are doing a 'drawingovereachothersdrawings' thing via conventional mail, so we are just going to see how we go by drawing over others images and sending them back and forth. It should be quite chaotic.

These collaborative projects are vital as it does give me the chance to exchange ideas with people on a singular outcome, as usually I work completely alone on my art and also the music design work. So I like the fact that something unusual that I didn't even visualize manifests.

D: The Lismore Memorial Baths seem to be not exactly a house of low culture... I checked some photographs on the web with some monuments with propellers from a warplane or something. A 75 year old building. Are they replacing it with a new building or is it being renewed? How did you get involved with this? Lismore is not close to Melbourne either...

S: The Lismore Memorial Baths is a project that I am doing in collaboration with Bzowy Architecture. I am working with Rick Bzowy, who has designed many contemporary aquatic centres in Australia. The baths are essentially being completely redesigned, with only a heritage facade remaining, the mural itself will contain a non linear historical overview of the region which exists within the tropical rainforests and has a typical pioneer history of settlement in difficult circumstances. There are basic industries like sugarcane and timber, which the region is renowned for producing and the client, the council, is providing historical documentation with which I work conceptually with Rick Bzowy on then move on to creating the design and visual narrative myself. Bzowy Architecture is located in Melbourne and I have collaborated with Rick before on an environmental signage project, the Reservoir Civic Centre. I really enjoy this process of working with contemporary architecture, especially dealing with physical structure and the public environment.

D: You obviously work seamlessly with self-initiated and commissioned work. How is your relationship with the graphic design community in Australia?

S: I have absolutely no connection to the graphic design community in my own country. The work that I do, especially for the heavy and experimental music scenes in the States and Europe is not at all like anything that is being done here. Generally the Australian industry is far more fearful of trying anything too radical, and often this is the client's problem rather than the talent of designers here. But still a lot of 'contemporary' graphic design here seems to me to be aligned only with skateboarding, Los Angeles, hip hop, afros, sneaker yo yo bitchin'

homeboy street tagging graffiti culture, which leaves me out of the picture completely. For me this culture is alien to where I live, being really just a fashionable alternative to corporate and 'modernist' design forms. So, my work has really no 'place', in that it is not identifiable with a particular scene, and secondly metal/extreme music is kind of viewed as low brow trailer trash culture by the design industry which is pretty much solely linked to more 'sophisticated' music genres like jazz/dance and of course hip hop. I don't know what it is like in other countries, but here its a complete avalanche of hip hop related design culture, and it drives me crazy. It's only style. It has no content at all, as it is rarely used to promote hip hop gigs, usually jeans, or soft drink or design firms inhabited by sneaker beaver afro white boys whose dream is to appear in *Vice* magazine at some stage in their life and who probably wear their 'go usa' truckers cap to bed.

D: Do you connect your own texts and your own visuals in your artwork or are they separate outputs?

S: My text and art are completely separate. I have entertained many thoughts of illustrating a series of absurd stories at some point.

D: Could you say something about the issue music and visualization?

S: I find it very much suits me to create a visual link or illustration for a particular band or genre of music. I work with bands like *ISIS* and *sumno*), *Khanate* etc because they are extremely innovative and very serious about their intention in an almost mystical shamanistic manner. I tend to work entirely in an abstract realm, which is fairly unusual these days, probably harking back more to the psychedelic posters of the 60's, but in a contemporary discordant harsher less optimistic manner! Providing visuals is brilliant as I find it easy to just feel enveloped by the sonics of these bands and I tend to work with the volume turned to totally stupid levels which must drive my elderly neighbours insane. But I enjoy trying to create some kind of visual representation of the power and mystery/modernism of the music itself. I also try to define a style that is original and identifiable with the music. Its what I always wanted to be as a student, when I related to the Vaughn Oliver - 4AD relationship very much, probably like 4 million other design students of course, but I definitely want to help define a style that is associated with a genre of music I love.

D: Is it possible to buy your T-shirt designs in shops?

S: At this stage my t-shirt designs are not in shops basically due to the fact that it is winter here and I am hoping to get a range out by the start of summer. Which means I better get my act together as that is not all that far away. I am also going to be selling them from my site.

D: You obviously do your screen printed posters yourself. Do people buy from your website or do you need gallery exhibitions to show them?

S: I have participated in group shows here a few times but screen printing here is once again dominated by the LA bright coloured registration perfect, Kozik style school. Screen printing is completely associated with either naked women on cars, or skateboarding graffiti culture, as described above. I am so not into this, it bores me shitless, so many people are borrowing a style from a city they have probably never been to (Los Angeles, New York), so essentially they are only copying from TV shows and advertising. Secondly I think its pathetic, because although they see themselves as really street and rebellious, they are relying on iconography from a country that I think just doesn't need any more pro-advertising of itself. It amazes me just how 'cool' the USA is, even now. It's demented! Working with contemporary artists from the USA is great, but using iconography that is purely iconographically American I find idiotic. Most of my work is quite messy and I don't even bother with registration, and people somehow don't identify it with screen printing. I have got some great feedback from other artists here, which is cool, yet as far as selling goes, it hasn't exactly been a huge success. I sell tour

posters on the net and some people have been purchasing the more detailed offset prints that I have done with a printer here, James Taylor, who allows me carte blanche on a CDO, so I have produced up to 12 colour, highly detailed experimental prints. I love doing these as its something else to have the definition capacity of offset techniques with which to play around.

D: Now, when you have the opportunity, what would you like to say to the advertising agency workers of Norway?

S: Well, I guess like all advertising workers in any country, I think it's important to think about how you chose to use your gift of creativity. I think it is very simple really. Much like many films, say the *Star Wars* trilogy or *Lord of the Rings*, as obvious examples, but definitely in many forms of literature and film, there is a war going on between the light and the dark. In all these cases the dark side offers the rewards of power to use the gifts of magic to the weak and greedy, which is much like advertising to me, in offering young artists and designers the finances to make 'short films', through tv's. but the output exists only to subvert the population to purchase and to make the insensitive gluttonous companies richer and bigger. Working in advertising to me is just basically providing the most insidious propaganda for the motivations of people like George Bush etc. Advertising provides the de-stabilisation of free thought and is essentially just a terrible propaganda tool that keeps people paranoid and also makes people depressed and greedy. I think working in advertising is awful. People only work in it for money, and that's it. I think advertising has so many awards because how else can you make such an evil industry palatable to the people that do it? Awards for being the cleverest at making people spend hard earned money on something they don't need??? It's like eating your own shit. Obviously there are agencies that deal specifically with social awareness issues, and that's great, but that's like 1%! I think people in advertising should think about what they are doing, and what effect they are having on society. So many people in agencies love music and independent film and art, yet they spend their days providing the very power that makes independent film or art or music have to be 'independent'. The reason it is independent is because advertising makes commercial ideology the norm, leaving the alternative creators to go without much cash and a less than desirable day to day lifestyle. How dumb is that? How can you live with yourself? So, sitting in a comfy office using your gift to promote the massive death of originality and beauty then going out at night and being entertained by the very people you are working to destroy is so shithouse and fucked up! It just reminds me of films where the evil overlords sit and smoke cigars and laugh evilly whilst watching some poor captive dance till they die of exhaustion... I think it is difficult to live in society and feel like you are being completely honest and non-destructive, but I think it's not that hard to NOT work in advertising! So in a sense I think people who work in advertising lack courage, because it takes a bit to try and do non-commercial design or art in this society. They can all go to hell. They lack conviction. They are the drones of the enemy. I just cant see how they can watch movies with heroes who are inevitably associated with being 'independent of thought', noble, self-sacrificial and being under extreme duress with a small group of like minded courageous people. The enemy is inevitably a massive dark evil force that threatens individuality through propaganda and lies. How can people in advertising even remotely empathise with main characters in fiction without feeling enormous guilt!!!!!!?

D: Standard question: What are your favorite shoes and what shoes are you wearing now?

S: I am in bare feet right now. My favourite shoes are these strange black nylon 'mock cycling' shoes. I worked in the warehouse of a 'major brand' fashion outlet for a while last year when things got a bit tough financially and purchased them at half price. I quite like em though, but I ain't sayin' the brand! Especially after the diatribe above!

