

DESIGN FOR CURIOUS MINDS / DECEMBER 2010

SPECIAL ISSUE: THE BEST AMERICAN DESIGN OF THE YEAR
HIGHLIGHTING AWARD-WINNING WORK FROM THE GOLDEN GATE TO THE EMPIRE STATE

print

**REGIONAL DESIGN
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10 *Packaging for Justin Boots' "Bent Rail" product line* DESIGN FIRM Balcom Agency ART DIRECTOR Trey Sprinkle DESIGNER Carol Clover CITY Fort Worth, TX

11 *Packaging for Tres Leones tequila* DESIGN FIRM Deuce Creative ART DIRECTOR Kristin Moses DESIGNERS Carissa Renfro, Jenny Oroz WRITER Aimee Heimbinder CITY Houston, TX

10



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Southwest

“Visual styles move so quickly and are exchanged so freely online that it can be difficult to pin them to a geography,” says Southwest judge Randy J. Hunt.

“I think what we see regionally has more to do with industry (which clients are located here) and economy (budget and scale),” Hunt says. When judging, he considered “possible audiences, what seemed to be the intent, the use of materials, and the attention to detail and craftsmanship.” The pieces that exhibited high-end physical materials like the *Pentagram Signs* book really stood out, as did those that made creative use of modest materials like Johnson’s Backyard Gardens.

The work presented here also reflects a surprising trend toward being referential to historical and colloquial styles such as with the understated Trés Leones packaging design. “It felt established, confident, and old, which is exactly what you want a good bottle of liquor to look like (and how you want it to make you feel, too),” Hunt says. And this, he continues, is a primary criterion of good design, whether work has an interesting “feeling.” Throughout judging, he asked himself, “Do I respond to this at a visceral level?”

“Good design informs,” he says. “Sometimes it does so through clarity, others through ambiguity and intrigue.”

“The design community in Phoenix has really started coming together in the last few years. Sometimes we envy those who live and work in creative hubs like New York City, but more and more we’re finding inspiration locally.”

—ANGELA HARDISON SEESAW DESIGNS

“Dallas has an amazingly close-knit design community. We look out for each other, and, though we’re all competing for the same business, when we get together that gets left at the door.”

—JEFF BREAZEALE THE MATCHBOX STUDIO

“Fort Worth doesn’t have a huge concentration of ad agencies competing for local market share—there are enough to keep us on our toes but it isn’t as cut-throat as other markets. One of the bigger challenges is breaking out of the small-town agency stereotype to add larger clients nationally.”

—TREY SPRINKLE BALCOM AGENCY

“In Austin I’m surrounded by so many creative people and a wide variety of cultural influences and creative outlets. The influx of creative professionals pushes you to be better, but makes it difficult for anyone looking for employment.”

—DERRIT DEROUEN THE MADHOUSE

“There’s a broad client base in Houston that allows us to learn and work on projects from many different industries—from research and medicine to food distribution to fashion.”

—DEUCE CREATIVE

“My favorite thing about being a designer in Dallas is the great relationships among the graphic designers and vendors. My most challenging thing is overcoming the three-digit-degree weather.”

—SHARON LEE ROVILLO DESIGN ASSOCIATES