

Matthew Piper

matthew@matthewpiper.tv

www.matthewpiper.tv

Introduction

I am a graphic designer with over twenty years experience of working in television.

I began my career working for Yorkshire Television in Leeds. Two years later I moved to London and after a winter with the Weather Channel I took a job at Sky as a designer and director on the Sky One team, where I worked for three years. I then spent five years working for two broadcast design agencies - Kemistry and BDA - on a range of projects for clients in the UK and abroad. For the past ten years I have designed for the BBC's portfolio of channels and programming.

Some of the clients and companies I have worked for are:

BBC, BSKyB, Discovery, DITG, five, Hallmark, ITV, Lifetime UK, Living TV, National Geographic, Red Bee Media, Cinenova, Kanal 2, RTL, Sky Italia, TV Norge, Endemol, Granada, Ninja Tune, Railfilms, Thames Talkback, Barclays, Coca-Cola, Disney, Freuds, Mykindaplace, Sara Lee, Qatar Airlines, Streets Online, Sony SCEE.

I have created work for on-air, print, and digital media. This includes logos, channel identity, on screen presentation packages, on-air promotions, title sequences, sponsorship sequences, and automated design systems. During the design process I like to generate my own ideas, plan the schedule, and manage the project from briefing to delivery.

I approach graphic design as a problem solving process - using a combination of typography, space, and the visual arts to represent or communicate an idea or message.

Work History

2010 - Present day

Freelance

The vast majority of the freelance work I have done has been for the BBC. Produced through Red Bee Media.

Specific projects have included:

BBC Proms 2014 and 2015: visual identities which were used across all on-air, print, and digital media to promote the annual music concerts. One of the most rewarding things about this project was seeing my work printed large and used to decorate the exterior of The Royal Albert Hall in London.

BBC Radio 4 Foreign Bodies: a season of documentaries about fictional European detectives. Alongside these ran dramatisations of the influential Martin Beck novels written by Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö. I created and illustrated an on-air trailer plus a series of book covers for each episode of the radio series.

BBC Radio's Asian Network: a cinema trailer that communicated the diversity of music played on the station and the broadness of it's audience.

BBC World News: on screen presentation for the global news channel. This included the structure of break junctions as well as the design of the graphics package. The project later extended into a series of genre based projects that used colour coding to differentiate and promote the channel's content on-air and online.

BBC Arts and Music: packaging for monthly arts programming on BBC Two and BBC Four. This took the form of a typographical poster template that made bold use of the channels colour palettes and the BBC's font.

BBC Music Day 2015: a package of on-air animations, digital, and print media. The package covered everything from animating tv menus, to website designs, social media content, posters, back stage pass lanyards, and looping animations for giant screens at the live concerts.

BBC Two: branding for online content that appears away from traditional channel architecture. This required a character based animation and a watermark / branding device. I designed a solution that combined both, by creating a logo animation of the '2' that began full screen and resolved to a smaller logo. The smaller logo stayed over the VT for the duration of the content.

During this time I have also refreshed the on screen presentation for A+E's Lifetime UK. This also included cross promotion to A+E's other UK channels.

2005 - 2010

Red Bee Media / BBC

At Red Bee I worked for the BBC on their portfolio of channels and programmes. This included individual projects for BBC One, BBC Two, BBC Three, BBC Four, CBBC / CBeebies, BBC News, BBC iPlayer, and BBC Radio. I also worked on cross promotional activities for the BBC.

I created design heavy promotions for BBC One Dramas such as Dracula, Jekyll, Sweeney Todd, Life on Mars, and Ashes to Ashes. I also designed trailers for a wealth of other programmes such as the BAFTA film awards, Doctor Who, EastEnders, Eurovision, and Strictly Come Dancing.

I worked annually on the on screen presentation for BBC One Christmas. Packaging up a whole new OSP each year that would be used by the BBC network, nations, and regions over the Christmas and New Year period.

Storyville is BBC Four's international documentary film strand. I created a logo and a multi-lingual animation for the series which appears during the opening of every film.

I also formulated various automated design systems such as end credits and cross promotional menus that were used across the BBC.

2002 - 2005

BDA

While employed for the design and promotions agency BDA, I was mainly engaged on channel identity projects. I also worked on promotions for channels such as Hallmark and Reality TV, as well as projects for companies such as Barclays and Sky Italia.

The major projects I worked on were for ITV. These included:

ITV2 new channel identity and on screen presentation package. I came up with the concept as well as designing and creating all of the deliverables. The idea was that ITV2 was the 'flip-side' of ITV1. A thought that described the channel's content and also the ambition of encouraging ITV1 viewers to flip to ITV2 at the end of a programme for extra content of their favourite shows.

Launched a new series of sub-brands for ITV2 that highlighted the extra content available on ITV2. This included design work and live action trailers for each of the sub-brands, which I directed.

ITV1 new on screen presentation package. Rather than a full rebrand, this was a refresh of the ITV1 graphics package, to bring it in line with the work I had done for ITV2. This involved a visual effects shoot to create a library of backgrounds that created different moods, appropriate for different programmes.

Cross promotional work ITV such as end credits and logo design. I also worked on corporate identity for the broadcaster.

2001 - 2002

Kemistry

During my time at the design agency Kemistry I designed channel identity, title sequences, and logos for clients in the UK and abroad.

Some of my highlights were:

A channel identity and on screen presentation package for Cinenova - a dutch movie channel that showed Hollywood blockbusters. This involved filming live action idents for every film genre and designing an on screen presentation package.

Logo design and title sequences for:

National Geographic's travel based quiz show 'Nat-Geo Genius'

Thames Talkback drama series 'Family Affairs'

ITV drama series 'Night and Day'

Endemol / RTL Belgium talent show 'Star Academy'

ITV's football show 'Big Match Live'.

Design work for Sony Europe / PS2 Network. This was an identity and interface concept for the Playstation 2, which was about to introduce early networking / internet capabilities to the console.

1998 - 2001

Sky

Early in 1998 the first digital television services began to launch in the UK. I moved to work for Sky as they prepared to switch from analogue to digital.

I worked for Sky's entertainment channel - Sky One - designing for on-air promotions that included Friends, ER, Buffy the Vampire Slayer, The X Files, Alias, Pokemon, The Simpsons, Futurama, and Family Guy.

Alongside promotions I designed strand identities for special event and themed evenings. This involved logo design and the production of title sequences, stings, and promo packaging.

I also worked on the channel's identity and on screen presentation. The look of the channel at the time was based on live action imagery, so I directed a large number of shoots while I was there.

During my time at Sky I directed over 35 live action film shoots, with full crews, across a range of projects. These were a combination of studio and location based shoots. Some were green / blue screen but most were entirely in camera.

Many of the programmes were sponsored by well known brands. The design team created the ad spots that went around the programmes and commercial breaks. I created several of these which involved working with the client and an external agency, coming up with a concept, and directing the sequences. The brands included Brylcreem and Vladivar Vodka.

In 1998 a revitalised Apple began releasing newly designed Macs with advanced G3 processors. Up until this point the Mac had been seen as a typesetter or desktop publishing machine. The

development of packages such as Premiere and After Effects meant the Mac became viable for video, visual effects, and animating graphics. I was among the first to embrace this at Sky; combining work I generated or processed on the Mac with work on Quantel Paintbox and Hal.

During my time at Sky semi-professional, broadcast quality, digital video cameras became available too; allowing me to shoot for myself when the budget was smaller or time unavailable.

1997 - 1998

The Weather Channel

After moving to London I took a job at The Weather Channel for a few months where I designed information graphics, title sequences, and content graphics for the channel.

This included maps and weather symbols for seasonal forecasts, such as ski reports.

I created titles sequences for documentaries describing weather phenomenon such as El Nino and programmes about winter sports or holiday destinations, for example.

I also worked on the channel's on-air presentation.

1995 - 1997

Yorkshire Television

I began my career in Leeds, producing graphics for science education programmes that were produced by Yorkshire Television.

I then moved on to creating graphics for the on-air promotion team. At the time regional ITV franchises had their own identity and promotion teams who made trailers for both network and regional programmes.

I designed graphics that promoted popular entertainment shows such as Poirot, Inspector Morse, Taggart, London's Burning, The Bill, Emmerdale, Coronation Street, and European Football.

I learnt Quantel Paintbox and later Hal, using them to combine elements that I created on the paintbox and captured through a rostrum camera. Before Hal I worked with an editor to combine elements from paintbox using an Abekas A53 digital effects and A64 disc recorder system.

1994 Work Experience

BBC News and Current Affairs

During my final year of my degree course I did my work placement at BBC News and Current Affairs at TV Centre. This served as my introduction to the techniques and production of television graphics.

Other Work

Hot Fuzz - 2007

Logo design based on a police badge. Used in all print / promotional material and as an explosive logo animation at the end of the film.

Coldcut / Ninja Tune music video - 2005

Visuals for Coldcut music video 'Everything is Under Control'. I created style images by combining photographs of the actors that I took at the video shoot, photographs of London, and propaganda posters that I designed.

Shaun of the Dead - 2004

Received a credit for helping out with typography used in the opening credit of the movie.

TV Norge - 2003

Revamp of news and weather broadcasts for Norwegian channel. The client wanted a cleaner, more modern look than they had at the time.

BBC Top of the Pops - 2002

Directed a live action trailer promoting the long running music show. Featuring presenters Fearne Cotton and Simon Grant, music artists Ms. Dynamite, Liberty X, S Club Juniors, Ronan Keating, Atomic Kitten, Sugababes, and Blue. The script described seamless transitions between the pop stars and presenters. Rather than computer generated visual effects I used in camera transitions and editing.

Design Skills

- Originating and developing ideas
- Problem solving
- Designing across a range of media and disciplines
- Taking, writing, and interpreting briefs
- Researching subject matter
- Scheduling and managing projects
- Creating visuals
- Presenting ideas and work in progress
- Understanding of production and post production techniques
- Directing shoots - live action, visual effects, blue / green screen, graphic elements
- Image processing and colour grading
- Designing for automated caption and broadcast systems
- Producing work accurately and efficiently
- Organising and delivering complex graphics packages
- Archiving projects
- 20 years experience creating logos, typography, image making, graphics animation, on screen presentation, on-air promotions, sponsorship, title sequences, stings, break junctions, channel identity, strand identity, style guides, design systems, online, digital, and print work

Craft / Technical Skills

- Adobe Illustrator
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe After Effects
- Adobe Muse
- Adobe Lightroom
- Cinema 4D: Creating visuals, building and animating logos, icons, type, geometry, graphic shapes, simple models, particle animation, and lighting
- Final Cut Pro
- Up to date and in depth knowledge of using macOS / iOS
- Technical understanding of television and other media
- QuickTime codecs, compression, and file sequences
- Working with different file formats
- Photography, photographic equipment, and processing

Education

1991-1994 Wolverhampton School of Art

Bachelor of Arts Degree (Hons) Visual Communications: Graphic Design

1989-1991 York College of Arts & Technology

BTEC National Diploma in Graphic Design

1988-1989 York College of Arts & Technology

BTEC Diploma in Design

During my six years at art school I studied and practiced many disciplines of art and graphic design;

Printmaking, photography, typography, animation, fashion, storyboarding, illustration, editorial design, poster design, packaging, branding, corporate identity, advertising, life drawing, still life, materials, colour theory, communication. As part of the courses I also studied the history of art, design, and film. The six years at art school had a transformative effect on how I think and understand the world.

Almost all of the work I produced at art school was created by hand. For example, I visualised typography by hand - either by drawing it or by setting it with metal type / wood blocks. Towards the end of my degree Apple Macs became available at art school but were in high demand. Like most people, I mainly used the Mac to set and print out type - as a replacement to expensive bromide typesetters that output photographic prints. I'd then trace the type, photocopy it, manipulate it, or use other techniques to integrate it into my work.

While I was at college I made the decision to concentrate on generating ideas and my art and design skills, rather than spending too much time fighting to get onto a handful of computers. I decided that learning software packages was something that I could pick up quite quickly at a later stage. Although this didn't help me get work for the first year after I left college, it was something that didn't take me too long to learn.

In September 1994, a couple of months after I graduated, Tim Berner's Lee founded the World Wide Web Consortium. A year later I finally got a job at Yorkshire Television. My first project was to design a title sequence for an educational CD-ROM that introduced people to the internet and World Wide Web.

Interests and Influences

Art, Design, History

I love stories about art movements and the moments in history from which they emerged. The lives of artists, designers, architects, film makers, writers, and musicians. The places and times they grew out of, and the way they approached their work. The ideas that inspired them, their lifestyles, the people they knew, and the artists who studied alongside them.

One of the eras that I'm most drawn to is 20th Century art, particularly in post-war America. From New York, the west coast, and the places you may travel through on a road trip between the two. It's an era that didn't just spawn ground breaking art but major scientific breakthroughs such as the Space Race and emergence of Silicon Valley. I think it's a period in time when new ideas and rebellion spanned many disciplines; advertising, graphic design, art, architecture, photography, product design, film.

In America - Abstract Expressionism, Pop Art, Modernist Architecture, The New York School of Photography. Artists such as Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol, and Ed Ruscha.

From Europe - throughout the 20th century - Art movements such as De Stijl, Bauhaus, Pop Art, Constructivism, Modernism. Artists that include Piet Mondrian, El Lissitzky, Wassily Kandinsky, Egon Schiele, Francis Bacon, Lucien Freud, Paul Nash, Richard Hamilton, David Hockney, Peter Blake, Bridget Riley.

Logo design and typography design are my favourite disciplines of graphic design and some of my favourite designers emerged from post-war America. They produced designs that have lasted, often for large corporate companies. Simple solutions born out of a clever thought or idea. Herb

Lubalin, Paul Rand, Milton Glaser, Saul Bass, Lance Wyman, Ivan Chermayeff & Tom Geismer. From Europe; Josef Muller-Brockmann, Armin Hoffman, Bob Noorda, Massimo Vignelli, Walter Landor.

I am also interested in architects and architecture. From skyscrapers to city planning, from interiors to exteriors, and from public spaces to bespoke homes. I like conceptual designs that appear impossible, or use materials and technology that aren't yet available. My favourite architects include Richard Rogers, Norman Foster, David Chipperfield, Renzo Piano, Frank Lloyd Wright, Zaha Hadid, Daniel Libeskind, Peter Zumthor, Frank Gehry, Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier, and Charles Eames.

I find architectural structures a great inspiration for graphic design. Abstract, geometric shapes, navigation and signage, use of space and negative space, use of light and shade. They are also amazing things to photograph.

Contemporary artists and designers I appreciate include Grayson Perry, Jeremy Deller, Anthony Gormley, Tracey Emin, Anish Kapoor, and Jeff Koons. During my time at college Peter Saville, Terry Jones, and Neville Brody were influential designers. Peter Saville through his work for Factory records. Terry Jones for i-D and Neville Brody for The Face.

I'm interested in history and like visiting and photographing National Trust properties and other heritage sites. I like the combination of art, architecture, design, history, landscape design, and the natural landscape. I also enjoy the escapism. I watch history programmes on television, especially those tied to architecture, archaeology, artefacts, and any aspect of design. Along with documentaries about art, I enjoy watching an enthused and informed presenter decode a building, painting, or artist.

I like to visit galleries and museums. I also enjoy spending time in their bookshops and as a result I have built up a collection of monographs by some of my favourite artists and photographers.

Radio, Television, Film, Music

Like many people my age 'new things' that didn't arrive through school instead arrived through radio or television. Radio and television are still among the most important sources of information and ideas.

The television series that I remember the most include;

Tomorrows World, Horizon, The Sky at Night, Swap Shop, Screen Test, Blue Peter, Take Hart, Top of the Pops, The Word, MTV, The Kenny Everett Show, The Muppet Show, The Young Ones, Spitting Image, Friday/Saturday Night Live, Blackadder, Fawlty Towers, Monty Python reruns, Dave Allen, Vic Reeves Big Night Out, The Last Resort, The Day Today, Brass Eye, Newsnight, The South Bank Show, The Late Show, Moviedrome, Twin Peaks, Band of Brothers, The Wire, natural history programmes by David Attenborough on the BBC, and Survival Specials on ITV.

Moviedrome was a cult movie show presented by Alex Cox that ran between 1988 and 1994. This coincided with the six years I was at art school. Some of the films I saw for the first time during this series were; The Man who Fell to Earth, Jabberwocky, THX1138, Sunset Boulevard, Brazil, The Terminator, An American Werewolf in London, The Good The Bad and The Ugly, Manhunter, Escape From New York, Andromeda Strain, Darkman.

Around the same time Twin Peaks was on British television along with documentaries about David Lynch and screenings of his films. One of the documentaries was presented by Jonathan Ross (For One Week Only), who also presented a series called The Incredibly Strange Film Show. This series looked at directors such as Sam Raimi, Russ Meyer, and George Romero. At college we watched films that included Alien, Bladerunner, The Wild One, Brazil, The Warriors, The Fly, Dead Ringers, Naked Lunch, Reservoir Dogs, Terminator 2, Delicatessen, spaghetti westerns, Kubrick movies., and films by the directors featured in the book Easy Rider, Raging Bulls.

Some of my favourite movies of recent years include Drive, Brick, Under The Skin, Primer, Juno. I usually keep up to date with the latest cinema releases through Apple TV film rentals.

I began listening to Radio 1 around 1986, while doing my homework in the evenings or playing on my computer. After the daytime schedule finished at 7.30pm Janice Long's show was on until 10pm - playing new music and indie bands - and after that John Peel. After the chart show on a Sunday night I'd listen to Annie Nightingale's Request Show, which also played it's fair share of new music. This obviously broadened my taste in music and I'm sure it also influenced my decision to go to art school. Now I listen to 6 music most of the day. I use iPlayer to seek out all sorts of programmes on other Radio stations.

I'm also a big fan of the music documentaries shown on BBC Four and often watch them again when they are repeated or on iPlayer. As well as the music I also enjoy seeing the evocative archive footage, photography, and styles of the time. Knowing the history behind the music and how it was recorded changes the way I listen to it. Among my favourites are; Synth Britannia, Once Upon a Time in New York: The Birth of Hip Hop, Disco, and Punk, Blondie: One Way or Another, Joy Division, Kraftwerk: Pop Art, The Story of Ziggy Stardust, Nile Rodgers: The Hitmaker, Northern Soul: Living for the Weekend, The Kate Bush Story, George Harrison: Living in a Material World, and Sound It Out.

Photography

About ten years ago I reignited my interest in photography. I initially focussing on modern architecture and landscapes in London and the south east of England. Since then I have taken well over one hundred thousand photographs. Many of the images reflect my graphic design background through their abstraction, composition, and use of geometry.

My work is editorial so after I've processed the photographs I arrange them into sequences of images and save them as a sets. I archive the sets under various subjects; Architecture, Fragments, Heritage, Industrial, Landscapes, Vehicles. These are subjects that I am interested in and have become on-going projects. I also have other projects. One being a walk along the Thames path though London, between the points where the Thames is crossed by the M25 to the east and west.

I love wandering around and discovering somewhere new with my camera. It's another way of exploring. Almost in the spirit of *dérive*; psychogeography as described by The Situationists. Perhaps similar to the act of free roaming in open world video games such as Assassin's Creed and Grand Theft Auto, many of which provide the player with a virtual camera that they can use at will.

I've done several photographic shoots, including the last shoot at BBC Television Centre for a BBC Four programme called Goodbye Television Centre. The photographs were used in the titles and set design.

I have taken photographs since I was a child. My first camera was a Kodak Brownie 127 camera followed by a Voigtlander Perkeo, before receiving an SLR in my early teens - a Zenit EM. For a couple of years I used my Zenit every Saturday at York station, taking photographs of trains. I also took photographs whenever I visited other railway centres, stations, depots, and sidings around the country.

In 1990 I upgraded to a Pentax P30N, which I used throughout my time at art school. I would also develop my own film and process my own photos, experimenting with different techniques such as making photograms and solarisation. I would either combine my images with my design work, or keep them as images in their own right. The kind of photographs I took were macro images, or abstract compositions that left space free for typography.

In 1998, while working for Sky I bought a 35mm compact Olympus mju2. I used this camera for location reces and documenting film shoots, which was something I really enjoyed. Taking photographs on the recce was a great way to pinpoint camera positions and storyboard the shoot. My first digital camera was another compact camera - a Canon Ixus 400, which I bought in 2004 for a similar purpose.

The first digital SLR I bought was a Nikon D70 in 2005. I used this to photograph images that I'd layer into graphics based projects. It was while capturing images for one design job that I decided to start taking more photographs. It would be an alternative pursuit to some of my design work that involved a lot of time sat in front of a display. It was also an excuse to explore my broader interests. Photography was an added motivation or reason to go somewhere.

Another compact followed - a Leica D Lux 3, which I could carry around with me all the time. As I became more serious and as digital sensors improved, I purchased a Nikon D300 in 2007 and began to collect a series of full frame lenses, which I still use. I used this camera extensively and at the same time experimented with other cameras that I had always wanted to use and was curious to learn more about.

I returned to film with a medium format Hasselblad 500 and a rangefinder Leica M6. These were great as the limited amount of film in the camera and it's expense slowed me down. Having to wait for the film to be developed was a nice thing to look forward too. I'd get the film developed and then scan the negs in and process them myself. I also bought a twin reflex Mamiya C220, and two Nikon SLRs - a Nikon FG-20 and Nikon FE2.

I had fun with plastic cameras - a Holga 120 and a Lomo 35mm. I enjoyed carrying one of these around in my camera bag. I'd use my digital camera most of the day and also run off a couple of rolls of film that I could look forward to getting back later.

I upgraded my Nikon D300 to a full frame D800, which made full use of my lens collection, which I continue to build. This is a really high resolution camera which is great for architecture, landscape, and studio photography. I also have a Ricoh V which has a sensor in it similar to my old Nikon D300 but without an anti-aliasing filter. It fits in my pocket or the side of my camera bag and is perfect for street photography.

My latest camera is a Leica M (type 240) - a digital version of my Leica M6. I alternate between using the Leica M and the Nikon D800, depending on what I want to photograph or how I'm feeling. I have a few lenses for the Leica but love going out with just the body and a single lens. It is a great discipline that forces me to move around. It is also light, compact, and discreet. If I could only have one camera and one lens, I'd have my Leica M with a 35mm lens attached.

Computing

In 1983, towards the end of my final year at Primary school, I remember the headmaster proudly showing off the school's first BBC Micro computer and telling us that we had no idea how this would transform our futures.

My introduction to computing had begun through television programmes such as Tomorrow's World, The Computer Programme, Making the most of the Micro, and later Micro Live - which also introduced me to computer graphics and animation; including Pixar's Luxo Jr.

The first experiences I had of using computers were through neighbours who owned early machines including the ZX81, ZX Spectrum, Acorn Electron, and a PC running DOS which was connected to Prestel. The first computer I owned was in the spring of 1987 - an Amstrad CPC 464. It had a built in tape deck, 3 colour resolution modes, and a colour palette larger than other 8-bit computers. I later upgraded to a CPC 6128 which had a built in disc drive and 128k memory, instead of 64k.

I taught myself Amstrad Basic and wrote short programs that drew colourful geometric shapes, repeat patterns, and spirograph style diagrams. I also used two art packages; Rainbird's Advanced OCP Art Studio and AMX Pagemaker. At school I used BBC Micros running BBC Basic to write a betting game and a version of hangman as part of my Computer Studies GCSE.

When I began art school in 1988, BBC computers were still around running AMX Super Art. The odd Apple Mac began to appear running Macromedia's Freehand, allowing fonts to be scaled, edited, combined with vector graphics, and printed out with smooth curves. While I was at school books and magazines such as 'Typography Now' and 'Octavo' documented the influence the Mac was having on graphic design.

I first used a Quantel Paintbox in 1994, during my work experience with BBC News. Between 1995 and 1997 I used Paintbox everyday at Yorkshire TV and from 1996 I also used Quantel Hal. Machines I'd seen introduced on television programmes such as Micro Live. I continued to use the Mac to set type because the Paintbox and Hal had a limited range of fonts.

In 1998, after accepting a job at Sky, I bought my first Apple Macintosh - a G3 Tower. I taught myself how to use Photoshop, After Effects, Illustrator, and a 3D package called Infini-D. Two years later I bought a G3 PowerBook. The arrival of broadcast quality video cards made it possible to create final sequences on the Mac and play them out to Digital Betacam tape.

In 2002 I replaced my G3 Tower with a G4 Tower. I replaced my G3 PowerBook with a G4 iBook in 2003. In 2007 a MacBook Pro became my main graphics workstation, which I replaced with a Mac Pro in 2010.

I've followed Apple from the days when getting your hands on their products meant visiting anonymous warehouses on industrial estates. I've tuned into the keynotes and press conferences down the years. Watched the evolution of the operating system and the arrival of the apps. I've owned numerous generations of Apple devices including; iPods, iPhones, iPads, Apple TV's, and now the Apple Watch.

The ability to author DVDs and later publish work on my own website transformed the way I could promote myself and get work. A big leap from the days of typing up letters and sending out VHS showreels in jiffy bags. Although I've steered clear of social media, I find sites like Behance, Tumblr, and Flickr are extremely useful as scrapbooks for my work.

I first used the internet and sent an email in 1998, while working for Sky Television. Dial-up internet came to my home in 2000, broadband in 2002, and fibre broadband in 2015.

Video games

My interest in puzzle games probably began with Palitoy Pocketeers. Collectable, mechanical games that were about the size of an iPhone. As the name suggests, you could put them in your pocket and take them anywhere. The games were simple, varied, challenging, addictive, and fun. Perhaps it isn't a coincidence that the same formula applies to the best mobile app games today.

Soon after games like Pac man and Space Invaders arrived in the arcades, small battery powered versions began appearing in shopping catalogues and toy shops. The design of the plastic casing felt as futuristic as the games themselves. There was also Nintendo's range of Game & Watch devices which were as collectible as the Pocketeer games. I had a few electronic games and first played Space Invaders on a table cabinet at the local swimming paths; which is perhaps why even now I play computer games but can't swim.

The first video game system I owned was a Grandstand sports console that plugged into your TV. Tennis, Squash, Football, and Skeet; each a variation of the game Pong. The difficulty level could be changed by flicking a switch to change the size of the bat or target.

The first game I played on a home computer was Asteroids on a 1-bit Sinclair ZX81, followed by Thro' the Wall (a version of Breakout) on the 8-bit ZX Spectrum. I played Thrust at school on the BBC Micro, turning the monitor upside down when reverse gravity kicked in.

After buying my Amstrad CPC and playing the pack of 12 games that came with it, Harrier Attack being the classic, I played games that included; Head over Heels, Elite, Starglider, Gauntlet, Winter Games, Commando, Driller - a game running on an early 3D engine called Freescape, Darkside, Exolon, Cybernoid, Jinxter, Knight Lore, Spellbound, Marble Madness, Dizzy, and Feud. Thanks to tape-to-tape decks I played a large number 8-bit computer games.

At art college in 1992 I bought the first Nintendo Game Boy along with the games Tetris and SuperMarioLand. The console and games became so mainstream that their recognisable audio was sampled into dozens of dance tracks. The other games console around at the time was the imported Nintendo Super Famicom, released later in the UK as the SNES. An early hint of what was to come.

Edge magazine launched and soon announced the arrival of 32-bit consoles, which included the first PlayStation. In 1995 the futuristic racing game Wipeout had a soundtrack full of artists like Leftfield, The Chemical Brothers, and Prodigy. The cover art, in game graphics, and user interface were designed by the Sheffield based Designers Republic, who'd designed for fashion labels and people such as Pop Will Eat Itself. The game and console were demo'd in night clubs before the high street.

Design, music, films, animation, graphic novels, electronics, and fashion seemed to have merged into this single thing. Other game franchises I played on the first PlayStation were; Resident Evil, Metal Gear Solid, Driver, Silent Hill, Tomb Raider, Command and Conquer, Medal of Honour, Gran Turismo.

Memorable titles I played on the PlayStation 2 (launched in 2000) were Ico, Grand Theft Auto III, The Getaway, Red Dead Revolver, Black, Killzone, Gungrave, Metal Gear Solid 2, and Rez.

I bought the Nintendo Gamecube in 2003, mainly to play the Star Wars games that looked just like the movies. Other gems I played on this console were Viewtiful Joe, Resident Evil 4, Zelda The Wind Waker, Super Mario Sunshine, and Mario Kart. Hard to beat Nintendo when it comes to fun.

The PSP in 2005 had a great version of Wipeout called Wipeout Pure. The handheld device also had internet access and you could upload / download videos onto it. This made it a useful tool at meetings for playing a showreel or a project's work in progress.

The PlayStation 3 launched in 2007 and my favourite games included; Portal 2, Red Dead Redemption, Assassin's Creed, Call of Duty 4, Flow, Flower, Journey, Little Big Planet, Metal Gear Solid 4, L.A.Noire, Wipeout HD, and GTA V.

A year after it's launch in 2014 I bought the PlayStation 4 and the first game I played was The Last of Us. I was persuaded to buy The Last of Us after watching a few minutes of the game being played on Twitch; the Amazon owned gaming platform that clocks up over a billion hours of broadcasting every month.

My favourite iOS games are the ones that work with the touch screen and don't over stretch themselves when it comes to virtual controls. Angry Birds I played a lot. Dark Nebula and Monument Valley are among my favourites.

Science

Around the same time that I was learning about the planets and solar system at school, the first Space Shuttle launches and landings were on television.

Every Christmas I watched The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures on television. I'd also watch science programmes such as The Great Egg Race, Tomorrow's World, Horizon, and The Sky at Night. And, of course, science fiction from Star Wars to Red Dwarf. I built Airfix kits and played with Lego, Lego Technic, and had a model railway. I also had Meccano and learnt about electric motors, pulleys, and gearing before I was taught it at school. At school Biology, Chemistry, and Physics were among my favourite subjects. I also visited a lot of museums including The Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester, The Science and Natural History Museums in London, and The National Railway Museum in York.

In my early teens I spent a large amount of time watching trains at York station. York was a major railway town with its own railway works. It was a hub for trains travelling between Scotland, Newcastle and London, between Scarborough, Manchester, and Liverpool, and between York and the South West of England. I knew all the different classes of locomotives, their names, their different liveries, and how they worked. I collected everything from timetables, tickets, badges, stickers, brand guidelines, to postcards of old railway posters. Some years later when I was at art school the Railway Museum was a warm place to go with a sketch book.

I follow Formula One, motor sport, and enjoy the nostalgia of the Goodwood Revival. These are also great places to go and take photographs.

I enjoy watching documentaries about space missions and astronomy such as Voyager, the Mars landers, Cassini-Huygen, New Horizons, The Moon shots, The ISS, Hubble, The Space Shuttle, the Russian space programme, The Big Bang, and Black Holes. I follow the progress of science experiments and discoveries on Earth, like the push for Nuclear Fusion, Quantum Computing, Climate Change, and the work carried out at the Hadron Collider. Excited by the possibilities that will come from any discoveries. On the Radio I listen to programmes such as The Life Scientific and The Infinite Monkey Cage. I also listen to online programmes such as The Guardian's Science Podcast and TED speeches. I read Wired and New Scientist magazine.

I'm interested in the history of science and the stories of scientists. How they thought, made their discoveries, and explained their theories. The way scientists like Einstein made leaps of the imagination to visualise a concept that can't be seen. How Feynman used graphic symbols to describe the world. How the mathematician Poincaré worked for 2 hours in the morning, 2 hours in the evening, and left his subconscious to work on problems for the rest of the day. I think there are similarities in the way artists or designers think, create imagery to describe abstract concepts, structure their time, and use methodology to approach their work.

Astrophotography is something that I am interested in and something I plan to explore in the future. It's an opportunity to learn something new and to use my photography, image processing, and image creation skills.

S.T.E.A.M.

Many of the things I am interested in are made possible by the marriage of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Maths.

Graphic Design has always embraced and influenced scientific and technological developments; paper, ink, the book, the printing press, moveable type, gas filled tube lighting, television screens, graphical user interfaces, digital devices.

Art has been heavily influenced by mathematics and scientific understanding. The golden section, ideas of perspective, the so called rule of thirds. Da Vinci learnt anatomy during his apprenticeship as an artist. He worked as an engineer; inventing solutions for the civil and military authorities. He also set his mind to coming up with concepts for flying machines.

The production of art has also pushed technology; whether that's the programmable looms that increased production at textile mills during the industrial revolution, or the software required to render flowing fabrics that are worn by characters in a Pixar movie.

Musicians have an emotional bond or obsession with their technology, even making it part of the performance. Instruments, electric guitars, amps, synths, samplers, microphones, decks, vinyl records. The technology has defined or created new sounds or genres of music.

Technology and art combine to create industrial and product design. The work of Dieter Rams for Braun, Robert Loewy, The Eames, and numerous furniture designers, car designers, and architects. All working with engineers to create beautiful things. Most recently Apple became the most valuable company in the world by combining technology, engineering, and design.

The radio and television industry is reliant on science, technology, and engineering to capture and broadcast the content that the arts create. From television cameras to satellites in space. Movie visual effects and video games use the mathematics of fluid dynamics to create computer generated water, crowd animations, and particle animations. Silicon chips, hardware, and software calculate these at increasing speeds.

Photography requires chemistry for the film and processing. Physics is used to describe the way light travels through the lens, to build the exposure meter and the modern digital sensor. Precision engineering for the shutter mechanism, focussing the lens, and setting the aperture. Art for the design and ergonomics of the camera, and the creative act of taking a photograph.

My interest in photography reflects this. I enjoy handling nice cameras and lenses. I like operating a camera; choosing which lens to use, deciding on the depth of field, selecting the aperture and the shutter speed. At the same time I approach photography from an artistic and editorial viewpoint.

One of the reasons I wanted to be a graphic designer was because I followed the development of futuristic computer graphics as I was growing up. I also had a curiosity about how television worked. Art school opened up a whole new world to me that I have continued to explore.

September 2015