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1.10.10
DEAR
DESIGN
STUDENT

A collection
of thoughts
about design
school &
creative
practice.





STUDENTS, DEAR DESIGN

01

There's some stuff I think you should know.

02

At some point, you are just gonna have to do the work.

03

SEE everything.
Develop informed opinions.
Decide what matters to you.
Make work like you give a SHIT.

04

Your teacher is not your boss, art
director, client, manager, parent, or supervisor.
Your teacher is your partner.

05

Also learn PHOTOGRAPHY.

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06

At some point, you will have to answer this question:
“WHAT MATTERS?”

07

Remember that we're critiquing,
evaluating, & analyzing your work.
We aren't critiquing, evaluating, & analyzing you.

08

PLEASE. MASTER. TYPOGRAPHY.

09

NEVER, EVER, EVER feel hesitant or awkward about
asking to get paid.



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10

Clever is not the same thing as good.

11

School is the best possible place to make horrible, awful work.

12

Try everything.

13

Design is a very, very small world. Everybody knows everybody.

Try not to be an asshole.



15

An excellent way to make great work is to not be afraid of making bad work.

16

See more art.

17

It's not about learning how to do it the way I do it. It's about learning how to do it the way *you* do it.

18

It's much easier to find *the* job when you have *a* job.

19

Sometimes you have an idea, then make. Other times you make, then have an idea.

20

Don't forget to actually take a break this week.

21

Every project—every single project—is a chance to make something interesting and/or learn something new. Enjoy it.

22

I have lots of advice on owning a small studio & being a professor. I have no advice on getting a job at Pentagram.



24

Your teachers are constantly being asked if they have any students they can recommend for jobs. Act accordingly.

25

Do first. Apologize later. (And if what you did was fantastic, you won't have to apologize at all.)

26

Make things, NOT excuses.

27

Comfort leads to predictability and stagnation. Learn to be uncomfortable in your work as often as possible.

28

Start at the start. End at the end. Pay close attention to what happens in the middle.

29

Good designers are design students forever.

30

College is the easy part.

31

Critique should not be performance art.



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32

Make your own decisions about who your heroes are.

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No amount of big words, clever arguments, or elaborate justifications will ever be a substitute for doing the work.

34

There will be many moments when you will have to decide between making excuses or making work. Choose wisely.

35

Read books, watch movies, see lectures, & experience things not about design. It will make you a better designer.

36

If you only do things you already know how to do, it's hard to discover new things. Confusion is your friend.

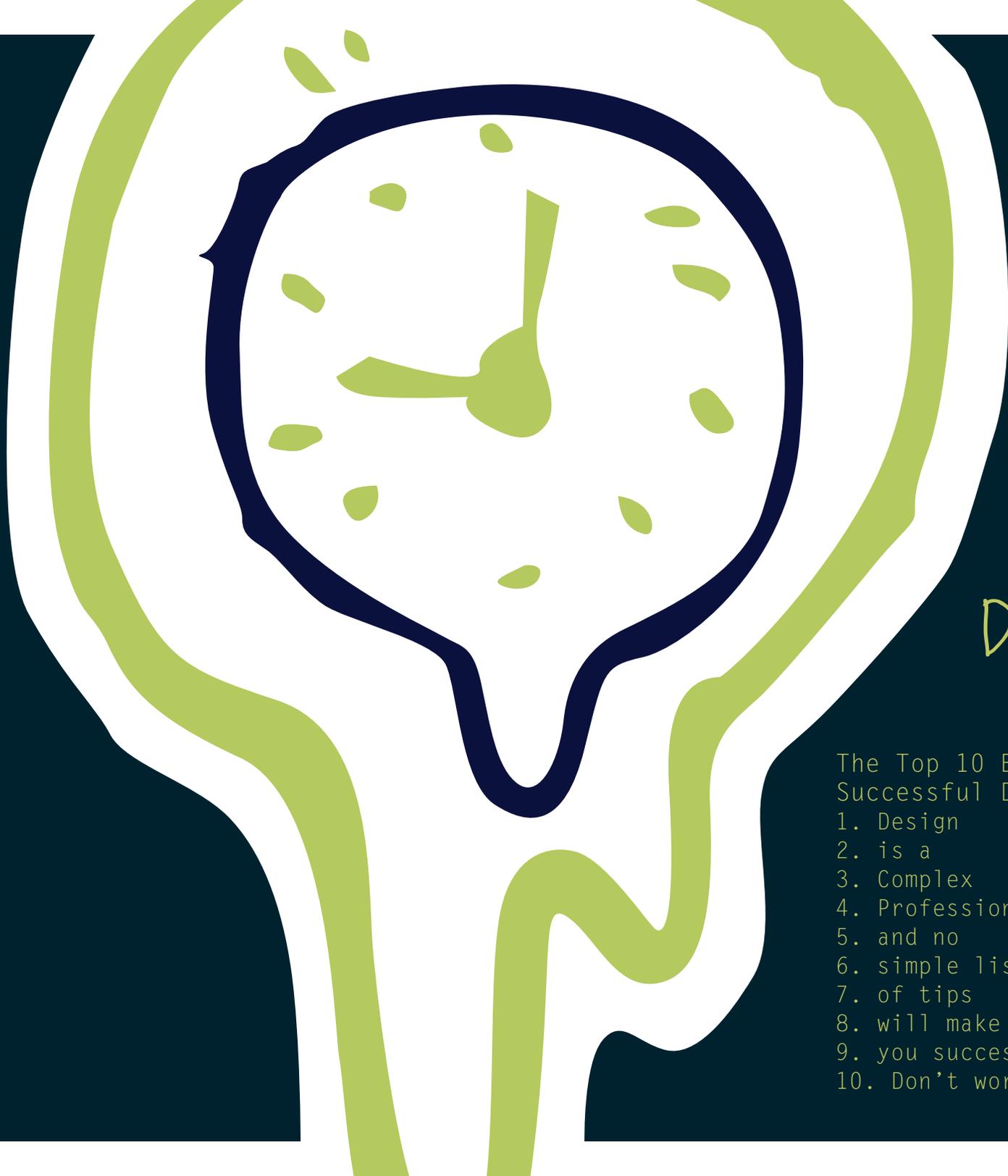
37

Google that shit.

38

Grades are fleeting.

The "AHA!" moments about your work are forever.



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The Top 10 Best Tips to be a
Successful Designer:

1. Design
2. is a
3. Complex
4. Profession
5. and no
6. simple list
7. of tips
8. will make
9. you successful.
10. Don't work for or with toxic people.

