

## BRIAN MICHAEL BUIRGE

## Curriculum Vitae

W www.brianbuirge.com 601 East Crain Avenue  
 E brian@brianbuirge.com Kent, OH 44240  
 P 412.716.2757

## EDUCATION

**Kent State University** KENT, OH 2010–2013

Master of Fine Arts

**Kent State University** KENT, OH 2004–2008

Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Communication Design (2D concentration)

**Osaka Shoin Joshi Daigaku** OSAKA, JAPAN 2006 (SUMMER)

Certificate of Language Study

## EXPERIENCE

## TEACHING

*I have been teaching at the university level for the past seven years. During that time, I've had the opportunity to teach a variety of undergraduate design classes including foundations level courses, technology courses, online courses, and advanced courses covering design strategy and concept development.*

**Kent State University** KENT, OH 2009–PRESENT

Instructor of Record, School of Visual Communication Design

- **DESIGN RESEARCH (SPECIAL TOPICS)** ONLINE GRADUATE LEVEL  
 Exploration of research methods employed in the professional practice of visual communication design. Students develop an understanding of research strategies, tactics, tools, and applied use. Focus is directed on the design process, research and ideation skills, and understanding the context of today's design profession.
- **TYPO/PHOTO** STUDIO SENIOR LEVEL  
 The course focuses on integration of text and image at the senior level. Analysis and expressive interpretation of content is achieved primarily using the language of typography.
- **GRAPHIC DESIGN II** STUDIO JUNIOR LEVEL  
 As a continuation of *Graphic Design I*, students are challenged to solve unframed graphic design problems utilizing basic layout skills with strong emphasis on concept as applied to problem-solving methodologies through a series of rapid prototyping exercises and long projects.
- **GRAPHIC DESIGN I** STUDIO JUNIOR LEVEL  
 Continuation of *Introduction to Visual Communication Design* and *Introduction to Typography* in the structuring of 2D communication design utilizing headline, body copy and illustration with the addition of limited conceptual content.
- **VISUAL DESIGN FOR MEDIA** ONLINE/LECTURE JUNIOR LEVEL  
 An introductory lecture course on the theoretical principles of design and their relation to content in magazines, newspapers, television and online media, etc.

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- **INTRO TO TYPOGRAPHY** STUDIO SOPHOMORE LEVEL  
 Historical study of letter forms and their application to the development of new forms. Execution and use of letter forms as design elements in layout and illustration using fundamental typographic theories and rules of spatial organization.
- **INTRO TO DESIGN RESEARCH** LECTURE SOPHOMORE LEVEL  
 Introduction to research methods employed in the professional practice of visual communication design. Students develop an understanding of research strategies, tactics, tools, and applied use.
- **KINETIC AND SEQUENTIAL GRAPHIC DESIGN** STUDIO/LECTURE SOPHOMORE LEVEL  
 A technical, studio course designed to teach the fundamentals of newly emerging technologies including Web design and Motion design in the visual communication design profession. Material is presented through series of demos and hands-on exercises.
- **INTERMEDIATE COMPUTER FOR GD/ILL** LECTURE SOPHOMORE LEVEL  
 Addresses the issues of page layout and design, digital manipulation and vector graphic illustration for graphic design professionals. Covers Adobe Creative Suite software including: Photoshop, Illustrator, and InDesign, as well as instruction in foundational level HTML and CSS.
- **VISUAL DESIGN LITERACY** ONLINE FRESHMAN LEVEL  
 Examines the topics visual communication design theory, two-dimensional graphic design, environmental graphic design, typography, illustration, photographic illustration, and interactive media. Introduction to how and why professionals in the field of design create meaning and context through their work. Students explore the language of visual communication, how it is influenced by form, content and context.

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**ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL EXPERIENCE**

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*I hold an instructor-grade rank in martial arts with over 15 years of active, ongoing practice. I've had many great experiences teaching martial arts, self-defense, and combat techniques to students of all ages and walks of life, which has given me a comprehensive perspective on working with a diverse group of people.*

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<b>Naka Ima Kan Karate Dojo</b>	KENT, OH	2014 – PRESENT
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Chief instructor teaching private classes two to three times a week covering foundational principles to advanced techniques. Topics of instruction include: conflict avoidance and resolution, striking techniques, punches, kicks, joint locks, take downs and chokes from a standing, sitting or lying position.

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<b>Rapid Response Defensive Systems</b>	FRANKFORT, KY	2007, 2009, 2012
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Assistant instructor responsible for working with a group of 40+ students during a multiple-day workshop series. Many of the attendees were active duty law enforcement personnel.

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**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE**

*During the past five years I've had a variety of professional experience working for firms in Pittsburgh and Cleveland as well as working for myself as a freelancer. Most recently I have become a partner and co-founder of a design agency called Work where we provide an array of design services to local, regional, national, and international clients.*

**GFDA / Jason Bacher LLC.** KENT, OH 2010-PRESENT

PRINCIPAL/CREATIVE DIRECTOR/ART DIRECTOR/DESIGNER/HEAD JANITOR/CO-FOUNDER

GFDA is a combination online design inspiration site, lifestyle brand, and decentralized design agency I co-founded with my business partner Jason Bacher while in graduate school. We've worked with companies, universities and non-profit organizations at the local, regional, national, and international level. Jason and I both wear every hat at GFDA including: accounting, business development, project management, as well as all creative aspects.

**The Tannery Communications** KENT, OH 2011-2012

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

As part of my Graduate Assistantship I worked as the Creative Director managing the undergraduate students working at the Tannery. I served as the buffer between the client and the students, helping students to gain positive experience when working with real clients, hard deadlines, and tight budgets. I also wrote strategy briefs, did design and production work, and managed client expectations.

**Wall-to-Wall Studios, Inc.** PITTSBURGH, PA 2009-2012

IN-HOUSE AND REMOTE FREELANCE DESIGNER

Contributed to design, illustration, content development, and strategy for print and web communications. Worked closely with staff to develop solutions for a variety of projects and companies including: the Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History, The Children's Museum of South Dakota, Carnegie Mellon University, The Gettysburg Foundation, The American Museum of Natural History, and Koppers Inc.

**Flourish, Inc.** CLEVELAND, OH MARCH-JULY 2009

IN-HOUSE FREELANCE DESIGNER

Responsible for art direction, design and concept development for clients; contributions included: rebranding The Music Settlement, packaging design for BlondersHome, and advertising and marketing materials for Cleveland State University; also gained valuable experience with on-location photoshoots

**Wall-to-Wall Studios, Inc.** PITTSBURGH, PA 2007, 2008 (SUMMER)

SUMMER INTERN

Summer intern primarily responsible for print design, concept and production; also gained valuable experience with interactive design concepting, corporate identity development and, client interaction

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**Glyphix**

KENT, OH

AUG 2007 – MAY 2008

## DESIGNER

Designer responsible for design and production of print and web materials for a variety of clients.

## RESEARCH

**M.F.A. Thesis: Decentralized Design Management**

Collaboration is a key factor to fostering innovation, and in the creative economy innovation is indispensable to success. Advances in technology are evolving the ways in which designers, as well as people in every profession, collaborate. The growth of social networking, instant messaging, web conferencing, online project management, and even distance learning are clear indicators of this evolution.

Currently within the design profession, twenty-five percent of people are self-employed working as a freelancer or an independent contractor. This figure is approximately five times the proportion for all professional and related occupations and is likely to grow in coming years. As larger companies continue to downsize from top-heavy, centralized approaches to leaner, more nimble organization structures, centralized in-house design functions are likely to be outsourced or downsized along with them.

With companies downsizing and the need for creative collaboration increasing, it is necessary to develop better leadership of decentralized creative work. This thesis will define best practices for design managers to use when overseeing creative teams that are geographically dispersed.

Better collaboration of fragmented teams will become a key differentiator in attracting, supporting, and maintaining a healthy client base. With the necessity for long distance collaboration growing, a smoother management process will help to increase efficiency, maintain a common creative culture, and keep team members connected and working with greater continuity.

Research shows that larger companies which have a model in place to manage the design process benefit the designer, the business itself, and the user/market. Analyzing the research from these larger companies will help determine what aspects of decentralized management can be scaled and applied to smaller business models.

**Cleveland Sight Center**

2010 – 2011

Conducted as a year long research study, eleven design graduate students from Kent State University were challenged by an unframed issue of securing employment for Cleveland Sight Center clients who are blind or visually impaired (BVI). The issue resulted from clients of the center receiving competitive career training yet having difficulty obtaining employment. Bridging the divide between employer and potential employee meant addressing a myriad of systemic and discriminatory issues.

Design thinking processes were used, a protocol for solving problems utilizing research methods from the Social Sciences and applying them to a Visual Communication Design practice. A comprehensive Literature Review substantiated the foundation of the study from many perspectives. Primary research included qualitative and quantitative research methods leading to a summary analysis where data synthesis was examined to reveal design opportunities.

The study outcomes demonstrated that research enabled us to collect a unique body of data, frame the topic to identify multiple areas requiring solutions, build a summary analysis of the research, and deliver a design system that addressed the entire opportunity at hand. We were introduced to new ways of thinking about our practice, demonstrating that visual designers can produce substantive, impactful and sustainable results for many projects.

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## PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

**SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AND WORKSHOPS**

*Since establishing my business in 2010, I've been regularly invited to lecture about the role of entrepreneurship and business in design practice as well as instruct workshops about importance of storytelling, design research, and concept development a vital component of design and branding.*

**May 2015**

- *Invited*, Lecture at Hyperakt Lunch Talk BROOKLYN, NY

**November 2014**

- *Invited*, Lecture at World Usability Day Cleveland Museum of Art CLEVELAND, OH

**October 2014**

- *Invited*, Lecture at Hike Conference CHICAGO, IL
- *Invited*, Lecture at UHeart Digital Media Conference for University of Toledo TOLEDO, OH

**May 2014**

- *Invited*, Lunch with Leader Series for AIGA Cleveland CLEVELAND, OH

**April 2014**

- *Invited*, Workshop and lecture at Lamar University and Dishman Art Museum BEAUMONT, TX

**March 2014**

- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Cleveland CLEVELAND, OH
- *Invited*, Lecture at UX Akron MeetUp KENT, OH

**February 2014**

- *Co-host*, What If: The Conference PHOENIX, AZ

**November 2013**

- *Invited*, Lecture and workshop at Escuela de Comunicación Monica Herrera EL SALVADOR
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Central Pennsylvania YORK, PA

**October 2013**

- *Invited*, Lecture and workshop at Escuela de Comunicación Monica Herrera EL SALVADOR
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Central Pennsylvania YORK, PA
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Iowa DES MOINES, IA
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Pittsburgh PITTSBURGH, PA

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- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Blue Ridge FREDERICK, MD
- *Invited*, Lecture at Design Exchange Boston (Design Week) BOSTON, MA
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Vermont BURLINGTON, VA
- *Invited*, Lecture at Moore College of Art and Design, AIGA Philadelphia PHILADELPHIA, PA
- *Invited*, Lecture at Corcoran College of Art and Design WASHINGTON, D.C.
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Richmond RICHMOND, VA
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Triad WINSTON-SALEM, NC

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**September 2013**


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- *Invited*, Lecture at 'On Press' at The Half and Half COLUMBIA, SC
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Nashville NASHVILLE, TN
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA New Orleans NEW ORLEANS, LA
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Houston HOUSTON, TX
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Arizona PHOENIX, AZ
- *Invited*, Lecture at Title Case SAN FRANCISCO, CA
- *Invited*, Lecture at University of California Berkeley, Innovaton Design Group SAN FRANCISCO, CA
- *Invited*, Lecture at UPGlobal, Start-up Weekend SEATTLE, WA
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Colorado DENVER, CO

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**August 2013**


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- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Omaha OMAHA, NE
- *Invited*, Lecture at Belly Inc., CHICAGO, IL
- *Invited*, Lecture at AIGA Indianapolis INDIANAPOLIS, IN
- *Invited*, Lecture and Workshop at What If: the Conference — Bali BALI, INDONESIA

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**March 2013**


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- *Invited*, Lecture at University of Cincinnati, DAAP CINCINNATI, OH

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**February 2013**


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- *Invited*, Lecture and Workshop at What If: the Conference — DR DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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**November 2012**


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- *Invited*, Workshop at University of Central Oklahoma EDMON, OK
- *Invited*, Workshop at Kent State University KENT, OH

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**October 2012**


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- *Invited*, Lecture at Thought at Work: Conf., Rochester Institute of Technology ROCHESTER, NY
- *Invited*, Lecture at SND (Society for News Design) Annual Conference CLEVELAND, OH
- *Invited*, Lecture at Shawnee State University PORTSMOUTH, OH

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**October 2011**

- *Invited, Lecture at AIGA Oklahoma* OKALHOMA, OK

## PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

**INDUSTRY AWARDS + PUBLICATIONS**

*During the past five years, I've been honored to be recognized for professional achievement in a variety of capacities both nationally and internationally.*

**2015**

- *Communication Arts: 2015 Typography Annual*  
 Winning entry for art direction of wood-cut poster design. (Designer: Todd Wendorff)

**2014**

- *Applied Arts Magazine: 2014 Design Awards - July/August 2014*  
 Winning entry for 2012 SAW Inc. Annual Report
- *Print Regional Design Annual - December 2014*  
 Winning entry for 2012 SAW Inc. Annual Report (1 of 350 winners out of 4,000 entries)
- *DesignGood: April 2014 Online Feature*  
 Featured interview as part of the online blog/studio Design Good.

**2013**

- *Design: Portfolios & Self-Promotions: A Seductive Collection of Alluring Graphic Design* by Craig Welsh  
 Short case study of promotional materials featured in upcoming (Spring 2013) Rockport publication.
- *Akron Addy Awards*  
 Gold Addy for College of Architecture View Book (while working at The Tannery Communications)
- *Akron Addy Awards*  
 Silver Addy for CCI 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Brochure (while working at The Tannery Communications)

**2012**

- *LogoLounge 7: 2,000 International Identities by Leading Designers* by Bill Gardner & Anne Hellman  
 Two logos for different clients featured in Rockport's publication
- *Akron Addy Awards*  
 Silver Addy for College of Architecture Poster (while working at The Tannery Communications)
- *Pittsburgh Addy Awards*  
 Silver Addy for Gettysburg Foundation web site (while working at Wall-to-Wall Studios, Inc.)

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**2011**

- *Print Regional Design Annual*  
 Winning entry for self-promotional poster design
- *uMag: German Arts and Culture*  
 Featured in a short article about turning passion projects into profitable business ventures
- *Pittsburgh Addy Awards*  
 Gold Addy for Children's Museum of South Dakota web site(while working at Wall-to-Wall Studios, Inc.)

**2009**

- *Akron Addy Awards*  
 Gold Addy for Moving Minds RTA Poster (while working at Glyphix)
- *Regional Addy Awards*  
 Silver Addy for Moving Minds RTA Poster (while working at Glyphix)

**2008**

- *Kent State University*  
 Excellence in Typography: Awarded for my undergraduate portfolio

**CLIENTS**

*Below is a selected list of clients whom I've worked with directly though my business, since its inception. We work with clients ranging from small local businesses to large international corporations, all while providing a variety of services including: web site design and development, interaction design, user experience design, usability testing, prototype development, branding, identity/logo design and application, design strategy, experience design, e-commerce design and strategy, and print design.*

**International**

Eaton Corporation, Cleveland, OH, USA  
 Intuit, Inc., Cleveland, OH, USA  
 Echo International, Pittsburgh, PA, USA  
 What If the Conference, Vancouver, BC, Canada  
 Escuela de Comunicación Monica Herrera, San Salvador, El Salvador  
 Republic Publishing, San Francisco, CA

**National**

BCS Communications, Kansas City, MO  
 Gethrr, Philadelphia, PA  
 Noise Firm, Nashville, TN  
 Koshin-ha Chito-ryu Karate Association, LLC., Palm Beach, FL



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**Regional**  
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Kent State University, *Kent, OH*  
Pittsburgh Tissue Engineering Institute, *Pittsburgh, PA*  
Terra Valley Excavating, *Belleville, OH*

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**Local**  
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SAW, Inc., *Cleveland, OH*  
Jenn + Ken Visocky O'Grady, *Cleveland, OH*  
Bailey Sorts, *Kent, OH*  
OpenArc, LLC. *Wexord, PA*  
Wall-to-Wall Studios, Inc. *Pittsburgh, PA*