



Welcome to the Premier Issue

Welcome to the launch of AIGA Baltimore Connect. I recently quoted a design piece describing the challenge of designers. "Designers are a special breed of thinkers" it started and continued by pointing out the many ways designers connect with their surroundings. Amongst the chief reasons we are so happy to debut our newsletter is to connect with you and inspire—and be inspired—by the bountifully creative Baltimore community. Design is not an afterthought and it's up to you to make sure that your individual motivations and perspective comes in to help shape a point of view that reaches people and

creates a reaction within them. With the economy flagging, the design unit needs to be poised to provide even more creativity to the clients' project—and their budgets. Let's continue to provide a new way of seeing. They need fresh imagery and perspective to help imagine a better world. In the increasingly evident diversity in the world, let's have our background reflect a range of poignant messages and imagery that compliments that diversity. So let's hope that our talking, working and putting together ideas can help to shape and reshape society.

Chris Jones, AIGA Baltimore President



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A Dying Artform? Think Again.

Interview by Stacy Ross. Article by Nicole Jovel.

The design industry is in a constant state of evolution, morphing and changing at an ever-increasing pace, but occasionally evolving means looking back at the roots from which it came. At Gilah Press + Design in Baltimore, part of design's history is being revisited in the form of letterpress printing.

Gilah owner Kat Feuerstein says it was after using a friend's letterpress to print wedding invitations that she immediately fell in love with it. "Initially what drew me to it was the combination of graphic design and fine art, and being able to mass produce something in a fine art way," she says.

Although she had a full-time design job at the time, she went out and bought a press and began toying with it to learn how to use it. After a year of self-teaching, Kat decided she was ready to strike out on her own and Gilah Press + Design was born.

Kat says the appeal of letterpress is in its uniqueness and the timeless quality it produces. "The great part about letterpress is that as it prints it debosses the

paper so it's more tactile. It's a different kind of experience for the viewer when they are holding that versus a flat piece," she says. "Once people see the presses and the results we achieve, they understand its lure."

A Chandler & Price (C&P) Platen Press from the 1800s is Gilah's workhorse and it used for the majority of Gilah's projects, but they also have two additional presses – a smaller C&P press also from the 1800s, and a Heidelberg Windmill press from the late 1970s which is used mainly for die cutting and scoring. "Typically a creative business is who we find ourselves working with," says Kat. "The smaller creative clients lend themselves well to the jobs we design and print on the letterpress."



For more on Gilah Press+ Design, visit gilahpress.com

Now in its fifth year, Gilah is part of the letterpress revival, often referred to as the Small Press Movement, that began in the 90s, which Kat feels is a kind of revolt against the digital era. "People have gotten so far removed from personal correspondence and written letters. Everything has been so digitized. People barely even talk on the phone anymore, it's all e-mail and social network-

ing," she says. "The letterpress revival seems to be a little bit of a kickback from that."

And in that kickback, you can find printed pieces that bridge the gap between history and design's evolution. With letterpress, it's all about making an impression... literally.

