Scholarship Q & A

An interview with Kristine Jenniges on March 22,2004

Q: What inspired you to become a designer?

A: A number of different things inspired me. First, my love of fine art and writing; with design I could combine both of my abilities. Second, Mr. Rogers Nieghborhood, the PBS television show. When I was younger, while I was watching the show, Mr. Rogers went on a field trip to a book binding plant. I told my mother after that that I wanted to be a 'book-maker.' She thought that I meant I wanted to write books, but really I wanted to design them. I started making my own little books with stories that I wrote. Third, the computer. On father daughter work day, my father introduced me to a graphic designer who was doing some really neat stuff on the computer. I grew up in the age of the computers, we had Atari when I was younger, and we got our first Mac computer at our house when I was about eight-years-old. I used to play around on the computer a lot designing cards and a book of my own poetry.

Q: What gives you the drive to design?

A: First, my love of coming up with creative solutions to tackle difficult problems. I also always find myself critiquing the ways that things are designed and wondering why they were designed that way. With each project there is a new problem to tackle and I love this variety. Second, my new found love of type. 'Yes, I'm a type geek.' I love pointing out the typefaces used in film titles and credits or basically were ever I see a typeface that I recognize.

Q: What contribution do you see yourself making to design?

A: I see myself doing what drives me to design tackling difficult problems and coming up with creative solutions. I'm not really sure what the future holds yet or what my contributions to design might be yet, it's to soon for me really to determine that. I plan to let the field of design take me to where my nitch is and were I can make valuable contributions to design, but I need to find that place still. I would love to design a great book and to give back to the community what I have learned through teaching and through designing for the community. I also have a love of illuminated manuscripts and the calligraphic typefaces that are used in them, I would love to design a typeface based on these faces. But I leave myself open to other opportunities to design.

Q: What importance do you see design playing in today's world?

A: Design is about communication and good design can help ease the communication process. Today, there's definitely a need for design to play a role in the organization of information on the web so that we can use this great new tool most efficiently. But I believe that there will always be a need to design printed pieces because in the fast paced computer world of today it's really refreshing and almost nostalgic to hold something in your hands. Design, the organization of information to communicate more efficiently, has been around for thousands of years, since the cavemen wrote on the walls of caves, and will continue to be an important part of the world for years to come.