

Jessica Hische: Crazy Cat Lady known for her Lettering, Silly Projects and Occasional Foul Mouth

As a Web Design student, it is hard to find role models. Graphic Designers have hundreds of role models, contemporary and otherwise, thanks to about a century of history. Web Designers, on the other hand, usually have to resort to graphic designers who have decided to make a neat portfolio website. It was a nice surprise to find Jessica Hische, a Graphic Designer who also dabbles in web design in more than a I'll-make-my-portfolio-online-look-nice sort of way. No, it's not her main focus, but the humor and creativity she injects into each of her forays in web design is refreshing.

Part of the refreshing part of her work is from her own quirkiness. Not many designers would provide a tweetable line for the press that states: "Jessica Hische is a crazy cat lady known for her lettering, silly projects, and occasional foul mouth." Her strong work in type is most likely attributed to the time she spent as a Senior Designer at Louise Fili Ltd. While there, she spent about 6 hours working for Louise and as many if not more for freelancing work. Perhaps this drive to work and need to multitasking is what led to her coining the phrase "procrastiworking"; the tendency she has to procrastinate on her client's work to work on her own personal projects. She also asks the viewer not to ask her about recommending a similar font to anything she's made because "I won't know what to tell you and then I'll feel like a lame designer." Also a very friendly person, she does accept brief, friendly correspondence from bloggers and students directly.

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However she does gently ask that they check her FAQ page before asking questions, and to have patience if she doesn't reply, as she is a very busy person. Her FAQ page is very extensive and offers lots of great tips and advice to young designers and illustrators, so her request is reasonable. In addition to this, she also offers to help web developers and designers find work. While it's not a guaranteed job, she helps put their name out there with clients who might appreciate the web designer's style.

EDUCATION AND INSPIRATION

Jessica's love for art is varied and stretches far back into her personal history. Transferring to a different high school just to take additional art classes. She went on to Tyler school of Art, Temple University in Philadelphia, trying out various art electives, trying to figure out what her focus would be. Among the electives she tried on for size were glass, woodworking, painting and drawing. Eventually she took a design class, and discovered that she enjoyed having parameters to work within, a problem to solve and a message to clearly convey. She began to

procrastinate on her other work just to do more design work. She graduated with a BFA in Graphic Design. During college she had three internships, and one, Headcase Design, took her on as a full time employee after she graduated. After working with them for a while, she went to be a Senior Designer at Louise Fili Ltd. She credits some of her love and inspiration from Louise's collection of vintage type ephemera, which also coincides with her love of vintage packaging and furniture design. Jessica also goes online to look at images and design blogs. Talking to strangers, silly puns, and interior decorating are other sources of inspiration for her.

WEB WORK

If you haven't yet, go check out her personal website—<http://jessicahische.is/awesome>—as well as some of her web projects ranging from the informational (Mom, This is How Twitter Works) to the design oriented (Daily Drop Cap) to the downright strange and hilarious (The Internet Sends Me Cake). In each of her websites, the overall aesthetic is one of clean lines, muted, pale or overall subdued

color palette. Each also uses type that is not just the standard web safe fonts (Arial, Verdana, Georgia, etc), meaning that she embeds the fonts into her HTML and CSS page. They don't seem to be ones that she has made herself, but the attention to the typefaces she uses for each website shines through and underscore her day job as a graphic designer and typographer. The star of her projects, Daily Drop Cap, showcases drop cap letterforms that she has made, twelve iterations for each letter, as well as some guest artists drop caps as well. Even her own personal website has small nuggets of humor embedded throughout it, including a small toggle button at the top of most pages between "normal" and "Teen Girl Mode".

CLIENTS AND DESIGN WORK

Jessica has a wide variety of work that fits her varied career and clients. Ranging from Target, Tiffany & Co., Penguin Books, The New York Times, American Express, Leo Burnett, and Wired Magazine, her work fits the needs of each of these clients. She has been featured in several magazines, and has been recognized as an

emerging artist by several associations and companies including Forbes, GD USA, and STEP Magazine. She is also on the Type Directors Club Board of Directors. She leads a busy life, spending her time in San Francisco, Brooklyn and many airports while she is on her way to design and illustration conferences. Makes you wonder when she has time to produce such fabulous work.

HER PERSONAL WEBSITE PROJECTS

				
Daily Drop Cap	Mom, This is How Twitter Works	The Internet Sends Me Cake	The Accidental Hipster	Should I Work for Free?