

The Bielenberg Institute
at the Edge of the Earth
25 Congress Street
Belfast, ME 04915

INFORMATION AND
APPLICATION PACKAGE

Project M Midwest 2009

August 26 - September 11
Detroit, Michigan

“No Results +
Excuse \neq Results”

-Chris Lochhead

ABOUT

In 2000 I had the extreme good fortune to hear architect Samuel Mockbee speak. Samuel co-founded The Rural Studio for architecture in Alabama and won the MacArthur Prize for his work inspiring young architects to design and build homes and community buildings in Hale County Alabama. As I sat watching Samuel's presentation, I thought "why isn't there anything like this for graphic design?"

By 2001, I had moved from San Francisco to the coast of Maine intent on creating a program inspired by The Rural Studio.

2003

The first group of designers arrived in Maine for a month-long investigation into "Thinking Wrong" in May of 2003. During that inaugural program, we produced a publication that pushed the traditional form and expectations of a book. The American Institute of Graphic Arts selected the book as one of the 50 best designed of the year.

2004

Project M traveled to the Guanacaste Conservation Area in Costa Rica to do a communication project for Dan Janzen, the area's founder. The amazing book that resulted from this is finished and will, hopefully, be published soon.

2005

In addition to working on a project with The Womens Trust, which does micro-financing in Ghana, Project M purchased a used

ambulance and converted it into a rolling design studio. Our first expedition was to deliver donated equipment and supplies to Gulf Coast designers displaced by hurricane Katrina.

2006

Our project involved a trip in the ambulance to East Baltimore. The "This is not grass" book was designed to encourage donations to build parks on abandoned urban lots in East Baltimore. See www.thisisnotgrass.com

2007

This was a breakthrough session for Project M where we actually produced something during the 4 week program. Our Buy-a-meter campaign has been very successful and you can check it out at www.buyameter.org.

2008

We created a permanent Design Lab space in Greensboro, Alabama. Situated on the HERO campus which includes a bunkhouse for up to 10 people and lodging for visiting advisors. Plus the Project M Lab website went live. www.projectmlab.com

2009

(North) PieLab brings conversation, inspiration, and pie to the rural south. www.pielab.org

(South) Ashholes.org was created to raise awareness about environmental injustices in poor rural communities and (blank)LAB a bare bones mobile studio was developed to bring designers and communities together. www.blankLAB.org

FORMAT

One session in 2009 for 8 young creative people starting August 26th and finishing on September 11th.

PROGRAM

Together, we will pick at least one significant project to conceive and produce during the 2 week session.

Guest advisors will help with critiques, guidance and will make hands-on contributions to the project.

This session is being led by Jeff Caldwell, Project M Advisor and Doug Kaisor Chair, Graphic Design Department College for Creative Studies.

THINKING WRONG

The human brain tends to think along pre-determined linear thought pathways. Such linear thinking can inhibit true innovation and creative exploration. Project M will encourage, and provide techniques for, "thinking wrong" to generate new ideas and design directions.

TUITION

Project M is not a school and has no tuition. Every attending person will share the expenses of producing Project M. The expenses for 2009 Detroit will be \$1500 each. Some M'ers have been very creative about raising this amount.

Travel to and from Detroit, MI and daily meals and incidental expenses are in addition to this amount.

WHO SHOULD JOIN PROJECT M?

This program was developed for passionate young creative people (although all ages are welcome to apply). Attendees should have training and skill in either design, writing, photography or film/video. (Hopefully, more than one)

HOW TO APPLY?

1. Please tell and show me anything about you and your work that you would want me to know or see. (This can be as long or brief as you need)
2. Explain why you are interested in Project M 2009 Detroit. Please be clear and honest. (This is the important part of the application)
3. Draw nothing. (This doesn't mean send a blank sheet of paper)
4. Email this by July 31, 2009 to:
jeff@vegaproject.com

Detailed information about logistics and procedures will follow upon acceptance.

Thank you so much for your interest. Feel free to contact either of us with any questions.

John Bielenberg
Project M Founder and Director
john@c2llc.com | 207-323-0792 (cell)

Jeff Caldwell - Advisor
jeff@vegaproject.com | 415-515-7385 (cell)

JOHN BIELENBERG

Since 1991, John has produced an ongoing series of projects under the pseudonym Virtual Telemetrix, Inc. that address issues related to the practice of graphic design and Corporate America. The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art has acquired 6 of the VT projects and staged a Virtual Telemetrix exhibition and mock IPO (Initial Public Offering in 2000.

In addition, John was recently nominated for 2 National Design Awards from the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, served on the AIGA National Board of Directors, taught at California College of the Arts in San Francisco and has written articles on design for Communication Arts Magazine, Critique Magazine, "Looking Closer 2 - Critical Writings on Graphic Design," and "Design Issues- How Graphic Design Informs Society."

John is a member of AGI (Alliance Graphique International) and is the former Vice President and Director of the Pop!Tech Institute, which strives to inspire people to change the world by fostering visionary conversations about the future.

In 2001, John co-founded C2 in San Francisco with Erik Cox and Greg Galle.

PROJECT M ADVISORS

For the past 7 years, a group of advisors has been helping to conceive, define and inspire Project M. They are designers, artists, writers, photographers, and thinkers.

SEAN ADAMS
ERIK ADIGARD
BOB AUFULDISH
RICH BINELL
KIM BLANCHETTE
ADAM BRODSLEY
JEFF CALDWELL
MICHAEL CARABETTA
ART CHANTRY
RYAN CLIFFORD
BRIAN COLLINS
ERIK COX
MARC DIAMOND MD
NILUS DE MATRAN
KAREN FISS
GREG GALLE
STEFF GEISSBUHLER
BILL GRANT
ERIC HEIMAN
JAMIE KOVAL
BRUCE LINDSEY
MICHAEL MABRY
JIM MCNULTY
JENNIFER MORLA
OLIVER MUNDAY
VICTOR JOHN PENNER
SAM PERRY
LANA RIGSBY
LAURIE ROSENWALD
GREG SAMATA
MASSIMO SANTANICCHIA
STEFAN SAGMEISTER
THOMAS SEVCIK
CHRISTOPHER SIMMONS
RICK VALICENTI
MICHAEL VANDERBYL
JAMES VICTORE
MIKE WEIKERT
CHRIS WILLIAMS
ANN WILLOUGHBY
ANDREW ZOLLI