A few months back Louise Sandhaus contacted me to see if I was interested in creating an issue of *Emigre* that would document *101: The Future of Design Education in the Context of Computer-Based Media,* a symposium she had organized at the Jan van Eyck Academy in Holland. The symposium explored questions about what future graphic designers are being educated for and what the role of the designer will be. To encourage me to publish this information, Louise assured me that people were probably “chomping at the bit for *Emigre* to introduce this material in some intelligent and interesting way.”

While ambivalent about the value of such crystal ball events, what intrigued me about this request was how *Emigre* continues to be regarded as the place where the Next Big Thing, for lack of a better term, is not only regularly covered but also expected to be covered. The many disgruntled letters about our recent shift in editorial policy away from such popular phenomena underline this fact.

This *feeding the trout* as one letter writer put it, the act of somehow keeping our readers abreast of trends, is an impossible task. Having been privy to the making of one trend in no way prepares one to recognize the harbingers of the next. I’m unsure whether this is because the Next Big Thing is simply a product of hindsight, or because it is human nature to regard ground-breaking work as the final solution, nullifying the possibility of the next Next Big Thing. The latter is particularly tempting to believe when you’ve had your moment in the sun while riding the Next Big Thing wave, butqiues the younger generations who are eager to have their own experiences of experimentation and discovery.

Still, if you think about it, after hundreds of years of formal, typographic experimentation on the page, you would assume that we must at some point have exhausted the possibilities. Someone will come around, though, and disprove this, I’m sure. Tibor Kalman thinks otherwise when he states in *Eye* that “People haven’t started fucking with the printed page in a serious way yet...” 1 Pictureing what has passed before us, however, I cannot for the life of me think of what it could be that hasn’t already been done. Actually, one could argue we reached that saturation point quite some time ago. Anything in print that appears new today can be considered a variation on age old themes. Purely from a formal point of view, that layered Thing was fairly well explored by Piet Swart and Wolfgang Weingart. That Anti-Mastery Thing was pretty well exhausted by Fluxus and Punk; that Deconstructivist Thing was long ago mastered by just about everybody from Apollinaire to Edward Fella and that Illegible Thing was difficult to top after Victor Moscosa and Wes Wilson were done battling over who could make the reader more cross-eyed. The only significant contribution introduced to graphic design in the last 10 years or so, as Laurie Haycock Makela once pointed out, might have less to do with anything visual than with how design is produced and who it is produced by.

While the idea of the Next Big Thing is ludicrous to some, it’s obvious that many hunger for it. Having documented, for a while at least, one such Next Big Thing, our magazine continues to receive inquiries from journalists and critics alike curious what the next Next Big Thing might be and where to find all the young energetic designers doing crazy new things. You can smell the desperation — with the absence of the Next Big Thing, what do they write about?

But let’s imagine for a second that there will be no Next Big Thing in design. At least not for a while. Nothing to catch the attention of the design press, to sweep all the design awards, to receive all the lecture invitations, to function as a source of inspiration and discussion for all. Here’s an idea to fill that void; we can try our hand at judging design by its content, by the ideas and messages that it attempts to communicate. Imagine design competitions picking winners based solely on the value of what they communicate, instead of how they communicate. The moral, ethical and political biases of the judges would come to the fore, for sure, but no more or less than the formal biases of judges who rule competitions now. Design would be discussed only as it affects the message. For instance, a submission could be considered of great public value but would not win an award simply because the design, although formally stunning, obscured the message. What would the AIGA annual look like then?

Of course it will never happen, because designers are visual types who have a tendency to either obsessively reduce or overly complicate the ideas of their clients, often without much concern for what is actually communicated. It is not that designers are insensitive or disinterested in the social and cultural functions of the messages they give form to; it’s just that they don’t always see the necessity (or have the opportunity) to integrate their personal ideologies into their professional work. They enjoy giving form to ideas. If designers were made of ideas, they’d be their own clients.

The World Wide Web is often hailed as the Next Big Thing in graphic design, but it’s a problematic environment for graphic designers. One problem is that it has limited graphic possibilities. The coarse resolution of the computer screen, the inability to
writes that the advent of the World Wide Web has brought about a change in reading habits. The Web, he suggests, is bringing about a radical shift in how people consume information, with a growing preference for multimedia content that is interactive and engaging. This shift in reading habits, Roberts argues, means that designers need to adapt their approach to digital media, to create formats that are more user-friendly and interactive.

However, Roberts also notes that the transition from print to digital media is not straightforward. He cites the work of graphic designers like David Carson, who have experimented with different approaches to digital design, but also acknowledges the challenges that designers face in adapting their skills to the new medium. Despite the difficulties, Roberts remains optimistic about the potential for designers to play a key role in shaping the future of digital media.

In his article, Roberts explores the implications of this change for designers, and argues for a more flexible approach that takes into account the needs and preferences of the audience. He emphasizes the importance of understanding the audience and adapting to their changing habits, rather than simply adapting existing print-based designs to the new medium. This requires a willingness to experiment and take risks, but also a recognition of the potential rewards of doing so, in terms of creating more engaging and effective digital formats.

In conclusion, Roberts's article provides a valuable perspective on the challenges and opportunities that designers face in adapting to the digital age. It highlights the importance of understanding and responding to the changing habits of the audience, and the potential rewards of doing so. It also serves as a reminder of the need for designers to remain open to new ideas and approaches, and to continue to push the boundaries of what is possible in digital media.
better remember what they read. Granted, it did take me quite a bit of work to figure out that the sentences in the essay needed to be read from bottom to top. But what I end up remembering about the essay is not so much what I read, but how difficult it was to read it at all. This type of work, as Andrew Blauvelt suggests, has less to do with redefining the notion of readability or literacy than with creating product differentiation and establishing the personal style of the designer.

But if designers have a tendency to apply their signature styles willy nilly to whatever commissions come down the pike, design critics often tend to paint with a rather broad brush to establish their holier-than-thou agendas regarding the social responsibility of the designer, the public good, fellow readers and other such stuff. The new theories, as some critics claim, have no interest in such noble causes. However, when voicing their objections regarding the new theories and the work it has spawned, the critics conveniently steer clear of addressing specific designs, and instead use bodies of work such as Rick Poynor’s anthology *Typography Now: The Next Wave*. These anthologies present anything but a unified collection of work or theory. They consist, for the most part, of posters, covers and other commercial, experimental and student projects especially short on text, big on image, and particularly suited for reproduction in small format. Here too, besides functioning as the Next Big Thing (as the book’s title claims), the work can hardly be considered as serious research addressing the needs of future communication modes. But for the critics, who rarely judge designs within their specific context, they serve perfectly in pointing out all that is wrong with today’s empty, self-centered designerism. This is usually followed by bizarre acts of overextension leading to conclusions that the new theories are not concerned with society’s more mundane yet invaluable means of communication such as novels, educational texts, timetables, instructional manuals, application forms, etc.

If the new theories are not much concerned with these, it is because they acknowledge that the old theory provides most of the answers for these applications. What the new theories are concerned with is that the old theory does not properly address the new media and the multiplicitous environments and audiences that graphic design now both serves and is comprised of. Which brings me back to the Next Big Thing.

If the new theories have generated disappointing results concerning conventional print design, then the old theory has shown little ability to adapt to the new environments of electronic publishing. For instance, if legibility is a social concern, why then have our most respected typographers largely ignored issues of typographic excellence on the computer screen? As we’re entering the information age, which will most likely play itself out on low resolution monitors, you can either ignore what is going on around you and then later complain about the irresponsible behavior of today’s designer and the general downfall of literacy and all that, or you can help provide a solution. For the graphic adventurers among us, this probably means having to abandon certain personal expressive preferences, and for our most learned typographers, it might mean adapting sophisticated typographic traditions to fit the still primitive world of electronic publishing. Somehow this combined knowledge must be able to generate a visual language capable of being both legible and engaging.

The following might seem paradoxical, because at *Emigre*, for the short term at least, as we’re trying to deal with the new technologies that surround us, we see more use for the teachings of the young Jan Tschichold than the writings of, let’s say, Frances Butler. While we’re being primed for sensory overload, the reality of electronic publishing still consists of system crashes, tedious downloading problems, links gone dead, incompatibility and the many stylistic restrictions described earlier. The simplicity and social concerns of Tschichold’s ideals, that “communication must appear in the briefest, simplest, most urgent form,” as outlined in the text *Elementare Typographie*, are far more practical than the multi-level, interactive, hypertextual and audiovisual forms of communication that, according to Butler, will better match the “fluid, additive, non-syntactic, and above all, extremely sophisticated thought process that are the natural birthright of all humans.”

3. Published in *Typographische Mitteilungen*, no. 10, 1925, pp.199-200
The Next BIG Thing revisits with class and humor the fantastic movie genre with a modern, funny adventure packed with hints and references made to popular movies and TV shows. The story introduces the couple of charismatic heroes Dan Murray and Liz Allaire involved in an incredible and crazy adventure, full of twists and packed with moments of pure comedy! While they prefer not to communicate more about the story of "The Next BIG Thing" yet, Pendulo Studios stay faithful to their unique graphic style that puts their games close to actual animated movies. The new game also maintains R 1. NEXT BIG THING WHY OUTSOURCING GRAPHIC DESIGN PROJECTS IS THE By Varun Aggarwal & Rahul Aggarwal, Founders www.designhill.com. I got to work with more than 30 logo designers who were very responsive and professional. The customer service was great and the whole experience was just perfect. - Vuri Matija, Vurimatija.com

This is the first time I have ever used a logo design website and Designhill made it very easy. Most of the logos were awesome and delivered in only 7 days. 24/7 Customer Support and they were able to answer any questions or concerns I had throughout the contest period. I received a number of creative and unique logos in very affordable price. - Lina, Nuuk-digital.com.