

Careers

Jonas Berthod

It is not uncommon for budding graphic designers to start their studies without quite knowing what the profession is about. Unlike many other professions, graphic design does not offer a single career path, a job definition, or so much as a consensus on what it is precisely a practitioner should be doing. To muddy things further, neither oath nor exam is required to start working, let alone set up an office—or even procure clients. This lack of a clear definition can be explained by the relatively recent establishment of graphic design as a profession.¹ It is also continuously evolving, as the emergence of new posts shows. The latest is chief design officer, arguably just another of the “plethora of titles, terms, sub-categories, movements and zeitgeist-capturing phrases” that professionals use to define their practice.² So it should come as no surprise that designers hold contradictory views on what constitutes a successful career.

For Serge and Nanette Libiszewski, for instance, the Milanese department store *la Rinascente* represented the pinnacle of the vanguard. Counting the store as a client enabled them to develop cutting-edge work. Indeed, such large companies had unrivalled

financial means after the war. The role played by economic affordance is also raised in Fritz Gottschalk’s description of Walter Ballmer’s position at Olivetti. According to him, his job was one of “the best worldwide” thanks to the seemingly endless financial means available. These allowed him to develop his work almost without consideration for schedule or budget.³ For other designers, however, working for large commercial clients was of no interest. This was notably true for those who were at the beginning of their careers in the 1990s or 2000s and whose clients were mainly small, independent, and cultural.

This absence of a linear career development encourages us to focus instead on designers’ professional environments. The concept of affordance⁴ is handy to describe the range of constraints and possibilities that affect the definition of a career. The notion initially described aspects of an environment that influence an organism’s function, either enabling or hindering its actions. The definition has since been expanded to include psychological, social, and cultural influences.⁵ Organizational anthropology further developed the concept in the context of the creative industries by proposing a “circuit of affordances,” a series of constraints and possibilities which guides the choices that designers make.⁶ They are techno-material, temporal, spatial, social, representational, and economic. Some were already

acknowledged in the excerpts mentioned previously; by mapping the circuit of other affordances, we can unpick complex factors that influence professional progression.

Techno-material possibilities in particular had a major influence on the evolution of representational, temporal, and social affordances in the 1990s and 2000s. The link between technology, design, and careers is observable in two aspects evoked by designers: the role played by type-design software, and the emergence of the Internet. On the one hand, new software allowed designers to draw custom typefaces for a single project, demonstrating the change of pace allowed by digital tools and blurring the boundaries between two separate professions, those of the typographer and the graphic designer.⁷ On the other hand, the emergence of the Internet provided a new model for the distribution of digital typefaces, and in 1998 two online digital foundries were launched in Switzerland: Optimo and Lineto.⁸

Windlin, who founded Lineto with Stephan Müller, was particularly motivated to start publishing his typefaces because of the difference between what an older, more established generation and a younger one accepted as type design. This self-organized approach, sustained by new technological possibilities, became a shared career model for many younger designers. While it was partly sustained by technology, the model also has to be situated within

a broader context. In the 1980s and 1990s, designers expressed a desire to challenge the definition of their profession as “service providers” and to reclaim a form of authorship.⁹ This may in part explain the loss of interest in professional associations, which no longer represented practices that were of interest to younger designers. The decline of these associations meant that the social spaces they had previously afforded were lost.¹⁰ Designers replaced them with informal networks between small, independent practices that helped them to develop a personal voice.

To further their careers while developing this personal voice, designers needed appropriate clients. This often meant working in the cultural field.¹¹ But the opposite was also true. Gavillet points out that the commercial sector was not interested in what his studio had to offer. He had to create a network of clients that went beyond local institutions, and so created a long-standing working relationship with Lionel Bovier and the printer Che Huber. These career milestones are clear markers of the possibilities afforded by social connections and collaborations. Another strategy linked with self-organization is illustrated in NORM’s interview: they used self-publishing to launch their careers as independent designers and to adopt a new approach to their practice. With *Introduction* (1999), the designers were able to mark the opening of their studio and a move away from their previous design philosophy.¹²

Winning the Swiss Design Awards afforded them admission to social networks that they had previously been unable to access, and allowed them to get a teaching position at ECAL.¹³ These strategies have to be seen in a broader context of redefining the profession on the part of younger designers, who did not “want to be servants anymore.”¹⁴ Instead of envisaging the designer-client relationship as one of service provision, they wanted to use commissioned work to explore “the potential of the graphic arts” and to interrogate “its ‘philosophical’ underpinnings.”¹⁵

The design historian Victor Margolin has argued that designers have “invented the subject matter of their profession as they have gone along,” and this is corroborated in the accounts that follow.¹⁶ The interviews retrace a mixture of “drifts”—changes that require almost no effort from designers, such as new collaborators or clients—and “revolutions” such as those afforded by a new technology that clearly demarcates different generations and practices.¹⁷ However, other career changes

are absent. Indeed, designers are unlikely to willingly recount the mishaps, dead-ends, and failures that will have undoubtedly accompanied their professional development. Furthermore, certain voices are not heard, such as those whose career might have been relatively ordinary, did not take off, or changed course completely.

Designers’ own perspectives on their careers offer us two main layers of interpretation. First, they provide information on commissions and projects that may not appear elsewhere in design histories but proved influential for their careers. Secondly, true to the tradition of oral history, their accounts offer a perspective on how designers perceive and present themselves professionally. Rather than painting a linear progression or a monolithic image of the profession, the selected voices highlight strategies employed by graphic designers to adapt to changes in their environment, but also exemplify how the retelling of careers is as much about self-image as it is about affordances.

1 Hollis 1994: 8–10.

2 Goggin 2009: 32.

3 Barbieri & Fornari 2018: 817.

4 Gibson 1979.

5 Culpepper 2018.

6 Moeran 2016.

7 See “Typography,” in the present volume.

8 Berthod 2019a.

9 Barnes 2012; Heller 1993; Triggs 2009.

10 See “Associations,” in the present volume.

11 Heller 1993. See also “Clients,” in the present volume.

12 Berthod 2018a; 2018b.

13 Berthod 2018a. See also

“Awards,” in the present volume.

14 Wolfs 2003: 28.

15 Ibid.

16 Margolin 1995: 12.

17 Becker 1982: 300–350.

Serge and Nanette Libiszewski

Conversation with Chiara Barbieri, Milan, Oct. 4, 2017.

SL La Rinascente era una ditta progressista al massimo. Era all'avanguardia in tutto: come merci, come pubblicità, come vetrine. [Fig. 9] Era più avanti dei grandi magazzini in Svizzera! Ed era quindi un luogo di pellegrinaggio per gli svizzeri. Mi vengono i brividi a pensare che era l'immediato dopoguerra. Nel '56, erano appena dieci anni dalla Seconda guerra mondiale. Ma di guerra nessuno parlava, si parlava solo del futuro. Non era ancora il boom. Era l'inizio del boom.



Fig. 9
Art director Adriana Botti Monti,
graphic design Giancarlo Iliprandi,
photo Serge Libiszewski, "Uomo
la Rinascente Moda Maschile," 1963,
offset, 99 × 68 cm, Museum für
Gestaltung Zürich.

SL La Rinascente was a progressive company at its best. It was at the vanguard in everything: product design, advertising, and window-display design. [Fig. 9] It was way ahead of the department stores in Switzerland. It was a place of pilgrimage

for the Swiss. And I shiver, thinking that in 1956 it was the immediate postwar period, just ten years since World War II. Nobody spoke about the war; we spoke only about the future. It was not the [economic] boom yet. Just the beginning of the boom.

Fritz Gottschalk

Conversation with Chiara Barbieri, Zurich, Mar. 22, 2018.

FG [Walter Ballmer] most likely had one of the best jobs worldwide as a graphic designer at that time.* I could only mention one or two others in New York at the same level.

Cornel Windlin

Conversation with Lionel Bovier, Zurich, ca. 1998, on the occasion of the exhibition *Freie Sicht aufs Mittelmeer: Junge Schweizer Kunst mit Gästen* at Kunsthaus Zürich (Bovier et al. 1998).

LB [...] Ich habe Kunst nie nur als blosses Schaffen von Objekten verstanden, sondern als ein Schaffen von Werten. [...] Manche Gestalter sind durchaus in der Lage, beidem gerecht zu werden, den Bedürfnissen eines Kunden und ihrer ganz persönlichen Reflexion, d.h. der Produktion eines alternativen Wertesystems gegenüber dem herrschenden Gesellschaftssystem.

CW Ich persönlich stimme dir zu – allein, die Verhältnisse, sie sind nicht so. Was ist der springende Punkt, wann wird etwas als Kunst bzw. als Gestaltung rezipiert? Es geht nicht zuletzt auch

* Ballmer worked at Olivetti as art director from the mid 1950s to the early 1970s. See also “Corporate Printed Matter,” in the volume *Visual Arguments*.

um den Rahmen, in dem etwas stattfindet. Da sind nach meiner Ansicht die Grenzen nicht so offen. Es geht mir aber nicht um Territorialkämpfe, nicht um die Diskussion, ist das jetzt Kunst oder nicht, auch nicht um die Frage, ob ich jetzt ein Künstler bin oder nicht. Es geht mir darum, ein Selbstverständnis zu etablieren – als Arbeitsgrundlage; damit ich eben nicht als Künstler definiert sein muss und trotzdem aus einer gewissen Haltung heraus arbeiten kann. Darin liegt das Problem für mich: dass ich per definitionem auf eine Handlungsweise festgelegt werde, die mit mir eigentlich nichts zu tun hat [...]

LB [...] I never understood art merely as creating objects, but as creating values. [...] Some designers are quite capable of satisfying both the needs of a customer and their very personal reflections, i.e. the production of an alternative value system to the dominant social system.

CW While I personally agree with you, the circumstances are not like that. What is the main point, whether something is received as art or as design? It is not least about the framework in which something takes place. In my opinion, the boundaries are not so open. But it's not about territorial disputes, it's not about this boring debate if something is "art" or not, it's not about the question of whether I'm an "artist" or not. It's about establishing a sense of self—as a working basis. I don't want to be forced to assume the role of an artist in order to create a coherent body of work, borne out of a certain position and imbued with a defined attitude. That's where the danger of being a "designer" lies, from my point of view: to be confined to an approach and a role that essentially has little to do with me [...]

Gilles Gavillet

Conversation with Jonas Berthod, Geneva, Apr. 6, 2017.

GG Au début de notre studio [en 2001], nous développons nos projets éditoriaux – comme *Timewave Zero: the Politics of Ecstasy* – dans un modèle économique fragile, mais qui nous offre le cadre de travail et d'expérimentation recherché. À ce moment, on travaille généralement dans l'optique de dessiner un caractère typographique par projet. Ces derniers sont par conséquent souvent le fruit de commandes, ou disons liés à des commandes [de design graphique]. La volonté est de poursuivre un développement très organique entre design graphique et typographique et de produire des signes à la fois contemporains et spécifiques. C'est le cas pour le projet de communication du club musical d'Expo.02 – le Cargo – pour qui nous réalisons un caractère custom, le Cargo. [Fig. 10]



Fig. 10
Gavillet & Rust, *Cargo: Rootsman Productions presents Reggae masterpieces from Jamaica*, 2002, silk-screen printing, 70 × 23.5 cm, Expo.02 (Swiss National Exhibition), ZHdK, Museum für Gestaltung Zürich.

GG When we set up our studio [in 2001], we developed our editorial projects—such as *Timewave Zero: the Politics of Ecstasy*—in a fragile economic model, but one that offered us a structure that let us work and experiment in the way we wanted. At that time, we were generally working with the aim of designing a typeface for each project. The latter are therefore often the result of commissions, or let's say linked to [graphic design] commissions. Our desire was to pursue a very organic development between graphic and typographic design and to produce signs that are both contemporary and specific. This was the case for the communication project of the Expo.02 music club—the Cargo—for which we produced a custom typeface, Cargo. [Fig. 10]

Cornel Windlin

Conversation with Bice Curiger and Catherine Hug, Zurich, Aug. 2002, on the occasion of the exhibition *Public Affairs* at Kunsthhaus Zürich (Curiger 2002).

CH Einerseits geht es hier also um [eine] gemeinsame Aufbruchstimmung, andererseits scheinst Du bei Differenzen auch den Konflikt nicht zu scheuen. Ganz schön anstrengend, stelle ich mir vor ...

CW Ja ja, aber viel weniger anstrengend, als zum Beispiel Akkordmaurer zu sein.

BC Kulturelle Institutionen tendieren dazu, sich von der Kreativität zu entfernen, indem sie den "Dienstleistungsauftrag" zu stark betonen. Und gerade ein Grafiker bewegt sich in dieser Grauzone zwischen Dienstleistung und künstlerischer Aussage.

CW Erstens: "den" Grafiker gibt es nicht mehr. Dieser Begriff ist missverständlich, und er

impliziert vieles, was mit mir und meiner Arbeitsweise nichts zu tun hat. Zweitens: Diese Tendenz ist nicht nur bei kulturellen Institutionen zu sehen, es gelten in den verschiedensten Bereichen sehr ähnliche Spielregeln, die einen auf eine bestimmte Handlungsweise festlegen und gewisse Abläufe und Hierarchien festschreiben wollen. Drittens: Dienstleistung und Aussage schliessen sich nicht aus – sei sie künstlerisch, politisch, oder sonstwie motiviert. Im Gegenteil: Meine Fähigkeit, eine Dienstleistung zu erbringen, erschliesst mir einen Raum, in dem über die entsprechenden Medienkanäle sehr effizient und wirkungsvoll Aussagen gemacht werden können. Es ist mir tatsächlich sehr wichtig, dass meine Arbeit nützlich ist und ihren objektiven Zweck erfüllt, aber – und das ist zentral – wie das geschehen soll, kann ich nicht dem Diktat anderer überlassen. Es gibt die Bedürfnisse des Auftraggebers, die ernst zu nehmen sind, es gibt die unvermeidlichen Interessen des Publikums (eine fiktive Grösse, die oft bloss zur Legitimation der eigenen Interessen bemüht wird: “ist nicht zielgruppenkonform” ist Quatsch und bedeutet bloss “gefällt der Freundin des CEOs nicht” oder schlicht “passt mir nicht”), und nicht zuletzt gibt es auch meine eigenen Ansprüche. Die Herausforderung für mich ist nun, diese drei Dinge in ein Spannungsverhältnis zu bringen und in Schwingung zu versetzen. Das ist meine Dienstleistung, und das ist meine Kunst.

CH On the one hand, this is about a shared spirit of get-up-and-go, on the other hand, you do not seem to shy away from conflict in the face of adversity. Pretty exhausting, I imagine ...

CW Yes, yes, at times, but a lot less exhausting than being a bricklayer, for example.

BC Cultural institutions tend to move away from creativity by over-emphasizing the “service mandate.” But a graphic designer tends to operate in this gray area between service and artistic expression.

CW First off: “the graphic designer” you refer to no longer exists. The term is misleading, as it implies much that has nothing to do with me and my way of working. Secondly, this tendency cannot only be seen in cultural institutions. Similar conditions are in place in many fields, and they determine a specific course of action and establish certain processes and hierarchies. Thirdly, a service mandate and making a statement do not exclude each other—regardless of whether the motivation is artistic, political, or something else. On the contrary: my ability to provide a service opens up a space in which statements can be made very efficiently and effectively through the relevant media channels. In fact, it is very important to me that my work is useful and fulfills its objective purpose, but—and this is central—I do not know how to do that to the dictates of others. Of course, there are the needs of the client, which you have to understand and take seriously, but there are the unavoidable interests of the audience (which is a mere notional entity that is often taken hostage to legitimize one’s own interests: to claim that something “is not target-group oriented” is usually nonsense and simply means “the CEO’s girlfriend doesn’t like it” or “it doesn’t suit me”), and, last but not least, there are also my own preferences, interests, and goals. The

challenge is to make these three overlapping spheres correlate in ways that create something uniquely vibrant. *That* is my service, and that is my art.

Gilles Gavillet

Conversation with Jonas Berthod, Geneva, Apr. 6, 2017.

JB Est-ce qu'à l'école [ECAL, 1993–1998], tu t'imagines déjà pour qui tu aimerais travailler plus tard?

GG Je ne sais pas à quel point je sais pour qui je souhaite travailler, mais en tout cas dans quel contexte je souhaite évoluer – ça c'est assez important. Au milieu des années 1990, on voit émerger des structures collectives comme Tomato ou Antirom, chez qui je passe un été, qui offrent un modèle intéressant. Et à Zurich, à ce moment-là se mettent en place des studios, comme celui de Cornel, qui offrent une approche très attirante tant pour la pratique du design graphique que pour les clients qui y adhèrent.

JB When you were at art school [ECAL, 1993–1998], did you already imagine who you would like to work for, later on?

GG I don't know how much I knew for whom I wanted to work, but I did know in what kind of context I wanted to evolve—that's quite important. In the middle of the 1990s, collective structures emerged like Tomato or Antirom, where I spent a summer, which offered an interesting model. And in Zurich at that time, studios like

Cornel's were being set up, which offered a very attractive approach both for the practice of graphic design and for the clients who subscribed to it.

Hi (Megi Zumstein and Claudio Barandun)

Conversations with Jonas Berthod, Zurich, Apr. 6, 2017
and Nov. 13, 2017.

JB When you were a student at art school [in Lucerne and Zurich from 1996 to 2001], did you already know what you wanted to do [after graduating]?

MZ The long-term plan was that I would have loved to have my own studio, but at the beginning, it was clear that I had to gain more experience. [...] And we always found that working for big agencies was a bit boring. It wasn't really the thing that I aimed for. After working for [small design studio] Format 53 [...] I won [the 2002 SDA and] went to London with GTF* for six months. That was really cool. I think that saved me from changing [careers] again, because I was a bit bored in the beginning of my working career. I thought, "OK, is this it, what I studied for? Coming back to the market, and discussing with people about red and green?" But with GTF it was interesting—nice people, nice projects—it was cool.

JB And at some point you decided to found your own studio with Claudio [Barandun].

* Graphic Thought Facility is a London-based graphic design agency founded in 1990 by Paul Neale, Nigel Robinson, and Andy Stevens after they met at the Royal College of Art. See Stevens, Neale & King 2001 and Ryan 2008 for more information on the studio.

MZ Yes. Because Claudio had his own studio in Lucerne [...].

CB I [graduated] in 2003. During my studies [Michel Steiner and I] started working together on different projects. [...] [The two of us] started [a studio] right after my graduation. We had our own business for two years and then we split up, because [...] I wanted to make more radical designs [...].

MZ But then [Claudio] worked alone, and we lived together so we thought, OK ... I was looking for someone to make my own studio and everybody I knew from my studies was organized already, after three to four years, so we thought, why don't we start together?

Gilles Gavillet

Conversation with Jonas Berthod, Geneva, Apr. 6, 2017.

GG D'une part nous étions intéressés par le domaine culturel, et plus spécifiquement celui de l'art contemporain, et d'autre part le domaine culturel avait également un intérêt dans ce que nous offrions, ce qui n'était pas du tout le cas des clients commerciaux. Même vingt ans après, les frontières des contextes de travail sont toujours relativement fermées en Suisse. Le domaine culturel nous permet de faire converger nos intérêts pour l'imprimé, la typographie et nous offre un véritable espace d'expérimentation et de développement – le rôle d'un catalogue d'art n'étant pas de contribuer au financement d'une institution à travers ses ventes, cela libère en effet le graphiste de certains prérequis.

Lorsque j'arrive à Genève [en 2001] pour collaborer avec Lionel Bovier qui développe JRP Editions, je l'entrevois comme une étape à court terme. À l'époque, les clients

intéressants se trouvent principalement à Zurich alors qu'en Suisse romande, la culture graphique est relativement conservatrice – je ne vois pas pour qui je pourrais travailler. Le milieu culturel local ne s'intéresse pas à ce qu'on fait et le marché suisse romand est très verrouillé. Werner Jeker a un certain monopole sur les institutions lausannoises, musées ou théâtres, et la communication visuelle à Genève est complètement figée. Dans le domaine éditorial, le contexte technologique de l'époque rend la production d'un livre plus laborieuse et onéreuse qu'aujourd'hui et par conséquent l'accès à ce type de mandat plus rare.

Dans ce contexte, le livre *Across/Art/Suisse/1975–2000* [2001] est sans doute un moment pivot. Il est publié chez Skira, un éditeur relativement établi et distribué à l'époque. Lionel développe un projet ambitieux. [...] Pour lui comme pour moi, cette expérience est un prélude à la suite de notre collaboration et à un projet éditorial plus complet. [Fig. 11]

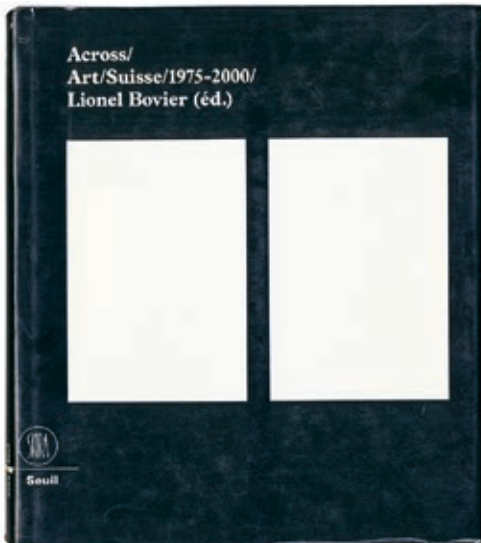


Fig. 11
Gilles Gavillet, *Across/Art/Suisse/1975–2000*, Lionel Bovier (ed.), Milan: Skira, 2001. Cover and headline typeface: Index Bold, designed by Gavillet for the book and subsequently released by Optimo in 2003.

GG On the one hand we were interested in the cultural field, more specifically in contemporary art, and on the other hand the cultural field also had an interest in what we were

offering, which was not at all the case with commercial clients. Even twenty years later, the boundaries of work contexts are still relatively closed-off in Switzerland. The cultural field allows us to combine our interests in print and typography and offers us a real space for experimentation and development—since the role of an art catalog is not to contribute to the financing of an institution through its sales, it does indeed free the graphic designer from certain prerequisites.

When I arrived in Geneva [in 2001] to collaborate with Lionel Bovier, who was developing JRP Editions, I saw it as a short-term step. At the time, the interesting clients were mainly in Zurich, whereas in French-speaking Switzerland, the graphic culture was relatively conservative—I didn't see who I could work for. The local cultural scene was not interested in what we were doing and the market in French-speaking Switzerland was very closed. Werner Jeker had a certain monopoly on Lausanne institutions, museums, and the theater, and visual communication in Geneva was completely frozen. In the publishing field, the technological context of the time made the production of a book more laborious and expensive than today, so access to that type of commission was rarer.

In this context, the book *Across/Art/Switzerland/1975–2000* [2001] was undoubtedly a pivotal moment. It was published by Skira, a relatively established publisher who was widely distributed at the time. Lionel developed an ambitious project [...] For him, as for me, that experience was a prelude to our collaboration and to a more complete editorial project. [Fig. 11]

NORM

(Dimitri Bruni, Manuel Krebs, and Ludovic Varone)

Conversation with Jonas Berthod, Zurich, Jun. 15, 2017.

DB On a fondé le bureau en 1999. En 2000 ou 2001 on a

commencé à l'ECAL. C'est très tôt. Ça faisait une année qu'on était là. Je pense qu'il y a eu un moment clé parce qu'on avait produit *Introduction* [1999], et avec ces bourses fédérales tout d'un coup ... il y a quelque chose qui s'est passé. On a eu beaucoup de retour avec ça. L'attention ... Je pense que Pierre [Keller], tu vois comme il est, "on a besoin de gens, dis-moi des noms ..." En une semaine c'était réglé. Pour nous, c'était un tournant, un moment clé quand il nous a appelés. On s'est rencontrés et hop on était enseignants à l'ECAL. On a fait ça pendant trois ans, on y était une fois par semaine. Ça a été [un moment pivot] pour le bureau NORM, si on parle de *Silex* et NORM, si on veut faire ce passage de l'un ou l'autre. C'était l'endroit où on a rencontré François [Rappo], tous les gens qui circulaient à l'école, tous ces étudiants. On était plus vieux, mais on était peut-être une demi-génération plus vieux qu'eux. Nous avons une relation assez étroite.

MK L'ECAL ils ont eu un super ... Ce que Dimitri dit aussi c'est [l'importance de ces] réseaux. C'est les gens qui sont venus à l'ECAL, on a aussi rencontré beaucoup de gens qui ont fait des cours, qui ont fait des interventions qui étaient très importantes pour nous. Par exemple, on avait vraiment un manque de [connaissances historiques] – je dis ça comme ça, mais François [Rappo] il nous a fait voir, fait comprendre tellement de trucs qui pour nous étaient des blancs, dont on n'était pas conscients ... Toute l'histoire de la typo.

DB We founded the office in 1999. After that, in 2000 or 2001, we started teaching at ECAL. It was very early. We'd been around for a year. I think there was a key moment, because we produced *Introduction* [1999], and then with these Swiss Design Awards all of a sudden ... something happened. We got a lot of feedback from it. The attention ... I think Pierre

[Keller],* you know how he is, “we need people, tell me names ...” In a week it was all sorted. It was a turning point, a key moment when he called us. We met and then, before you knew it, we were teachers at ECAL. We did that for three years; we were there once a week. It was [a pivotal moment] for the NORM office, if we are talking about *Silex* and NORM, if we were to make that transition from one to the other. It was the place where we met François [Rappo], all the people who used to go to school, all the students. We were older, but maybe half a generation older than them. We had a close relationship.

MK ECAL had a great ... What Dimitri is also saying is [the importance of these] networks. It was the people who came to ECAL, we also met many people who gave classes, who gave workshops that were very important for us too. For example, we really lacked [historical knowledge]—I’m just saying that in passing, but Rappo made us see, made us understand so many things that were blanks for us, of which we were not aware ... The whole history of typography.

* Pierre Keller (1945–2019) was director of ECAL between 1995 and 2011 and is widely credited for transforming it from a local art school into an internationally recognized institution (Fairs 2019; Grandjean 2019).