

Studio Blue:
Design
for museums,
universities
and others
that serve the
public.

These are a few of our stories.

Studio Blue is a graphic design firm. We exist to make the complex clear, the old new, and the academic relatable. Through strategic thinking and sophisticated form making, we create brand identities, websites, books, environmental graphics, and communication programs for nonprofit organizations, with an expertise in cultural and academic institutions.

Clients seek Studio Blue when they are on a path to reshape their organizations. A new mission, vision, or approach requires a new way to communicate. Through design and strategic thinking we turn ideas into innovative objects and narratives that resonate with diverse audiences.

Contents

Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago Brand Identity; visual and verbal brand tools; website **p 4**

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum Mission and vision strategy; brand identity; visual and verbal brand tools; environmental; website **p 9**

Roosevelt University Brand identity system **p 15**

Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis Brand identity system; magazine; website **p 21**

Terra Foundation for American Art Brand identity; visual and verbal brand tools; annual report **p 26**

College of Visual and Performing Arts at Syracuse University
Brand identity; visual and verbal brand tools; publications; website **p 32**

Design clarity.

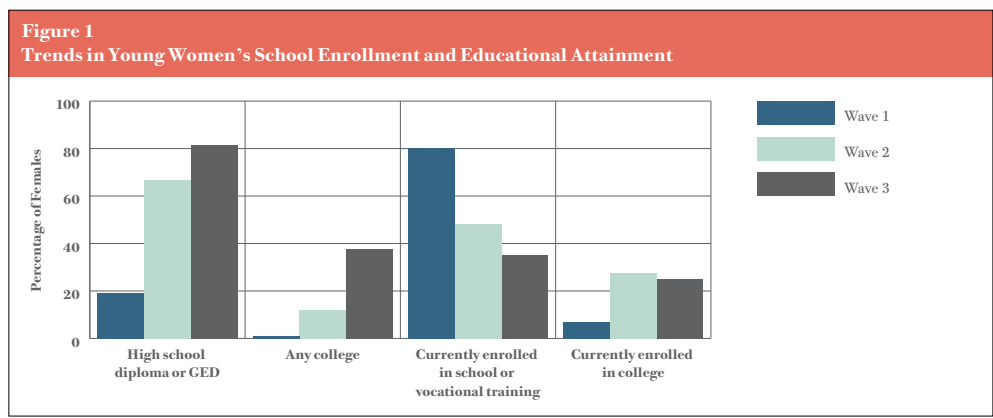
Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago is a prestigious policy research center “focused on a mission of improving the well-being of children and youth, families, and their communities.” Chapin Hall needed to clarify its position as a leader in knowledge creation, generating new ideas and providing insights that are actionable by fellow researchers, policy makers and social workers. Their approach is rigorous and systematic and their former identity did not accurately reflect this.

ChapinHall

The mark To make a powerful and clear statement, we frequently choose to build logos out of letterforms. Type can link an entity to other entities within an organization and make a quickly understood link to a parent organization. The Chapin Hall mark harkens back to the typography used by the University of Chicago. To retain a link to the University, we explored a range of typefaces and were inspired by the well-made serif, Walbaum. We explored ways to modify this 19th-century font, retaining its inherent qualities and evolving it to be contemporary in its look and feel and be representative of a research organization.



Typeplay We demonstrated the sophistication and quality of Chapin Hall through typography, creating an image voice of custom letterforms. "Typeplay" takes on a data-like feel, while maintaining a human quality reflective of the researchers who not only generate data, but also interpret and think deeply about their findings.



Systems thinking We developed a charting system that the client can implement without additional involvement from Studio Blue.

With Chapin Hall we found synergy and enjoyed collaborating with such rigorous and innovative thinkers. One of the pleasures of this project was working with an in-house writer who knows the organization well and fully embraced and influenced the typeplay image voice. We also had the benefit of working directly with the researchers to make their complex ideas clear to a broad audience. Our relationship continues from an annual holiday card to the design of a database interfaces used by policy makers.



Design appreciation.

The Richard H. Driehaus Museum To share his passion for how buildings and objects are made, Richard Driehaus established a museum housed in a Gilded Age mansion. The Museum is a premier example of historic preservation, offering visitors an experience of how the prevailing design philosophies of the period were interpreted by artists, architects and designers during the closing decades of the 19th century in Chicago.



Process The museum had been open for a number of months without a formalized mission and brand tools. We worked on parallel tracks to develop verbal tools (i.e. mission, vision, values, descriptors) as we explored the visual language. This provided a synergy that otherwise might not have been realized – typography influenced language; a logo helped form a vision statement.

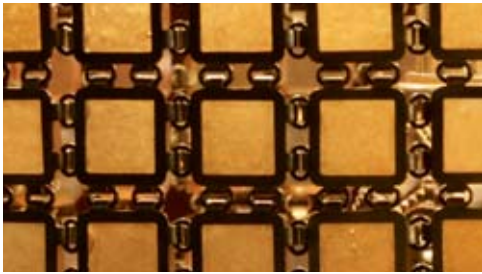
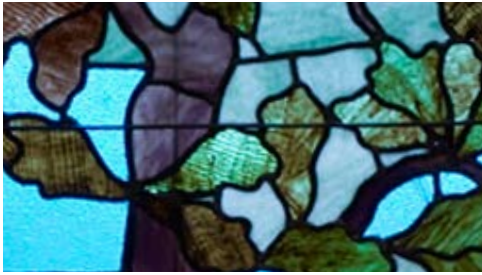
DRIEHAUS MUSEUM

The mark The mark strikes a balance between 19th-century aesthetics and Richard Driehaus's vision for preservation. It reflects the beauty of the restored mansion while looking to today for inspiration.



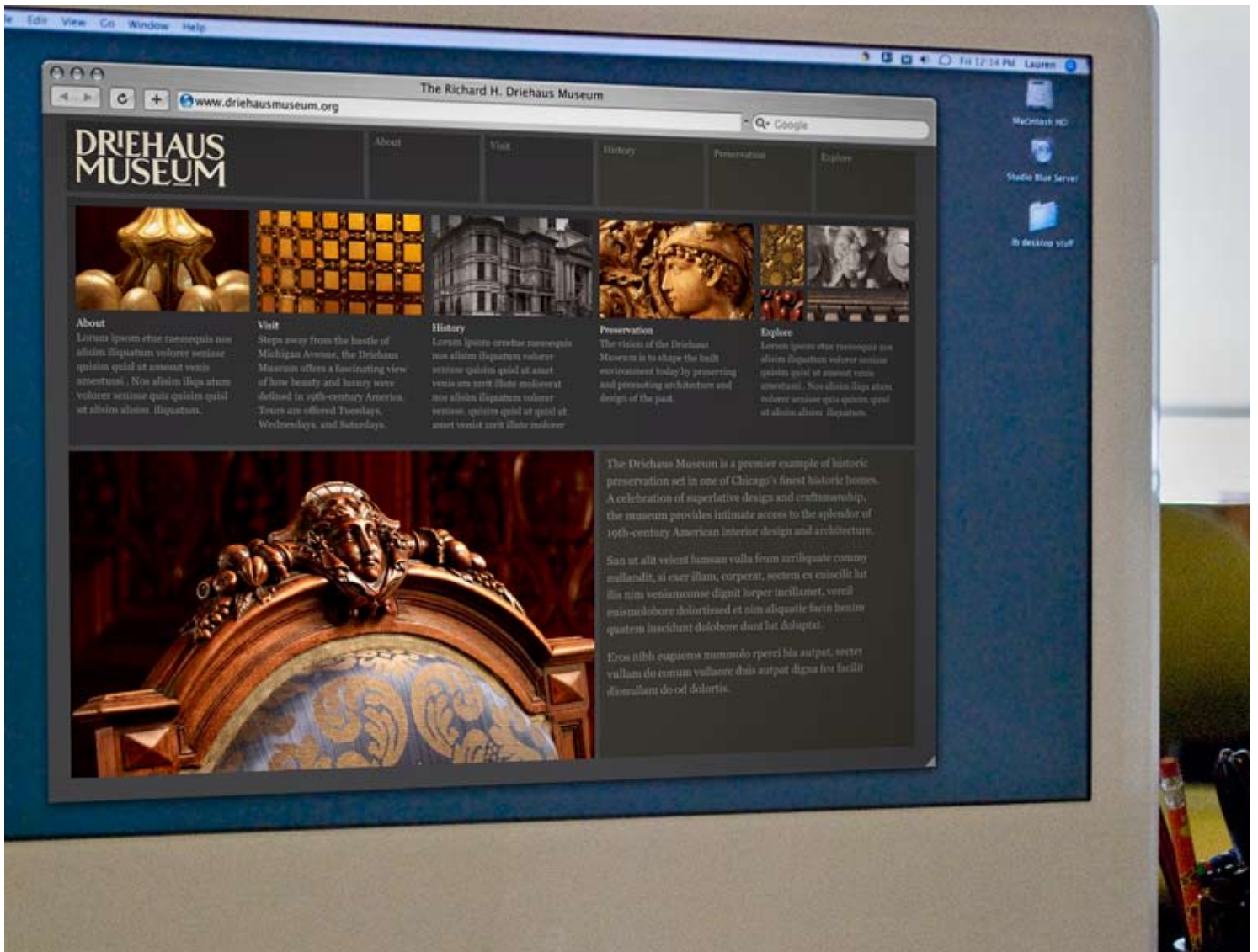
The Richard H. Driehaus Museum preserves and interprets the Gilded Age home of Chicago entrepreneur Samuel Mayo Nickerson in order to promote the understanding and appreciation of historic architecture and design.

Language The mission statement is the root for other verbal tools that include a vision statement and positioning text directed to a range of audiences – some with a passion for design, others curious about a Chicago cultural destination.



Imagery At the Driehaus Museum visitors are overwhelmed by the sheer abundance of stunning architectural details covering every surface in every room. Images became an important means to make the museum accessible to a range of audiences.

Our collaboration with the Driehaus Museum is furthering their ambitious mission and vision on multiple levels. Verbal tools are used to develop media and promotional tools. A website provides a virtual experience of the mansion and a series of rich text- and image-based case studies relate the founder's passion for preservation.



Design principles.

Roosevelt University was founded in 1945 as an independent institution open to all who qualified academically. Established on the principles of inclusion and social justice, Roosevelt offers academic programs in arts and sciences, business, performing arts and education. In 2009, Roosevelt completed a strategic assessment of its brand and position in the higher education landscape. Studio Blue was approached to build a brand identity system of marks for the institution and the newly reinstated athletics program.



ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY

The mark The identity is rooted in the university's values: real world access; community of individuals; progressive learning; catalyst for social change. We created a mark that reflects a balance of institutional gravitas and progressive spirit. It's clear, direct and bold. Overlapping greens represent the university's diversity of people, thought and culture.



ROOSEVELT
UNIVERSITY



ROOSEVELT
UNIVERSITY



ROOSEVELT UNIVERSITY
CHICAGO COLLEGE
OF PERFORMING ARTS

The system For a university with two campuses and seven colleges and schools, we needed an extensive system with flexible components to accommodate a broad group of sub-brands including the university's colleges and institutes.





The seal The system includes a redesign of the university's most formal emblem – its seal. The new seal remains true to the university's founding and enduring mission. We retained the legacy of the torch as symbol and designed the illustration and type style to align with the new brand system.

Athletic identity After much conversation about the true definition of a "Roosevelt Laker," it was determined that it is "a force to be reckoned with." Capitalizing on the iconographic nature of the institutional identity, we crafted a more aggressive 'R' formed from the powerful force of Lake Michigan waves.

Our goals for Roosevelt University were to create a brand identity that supports the school's mission and values, and reflects the spirit of this community of individuals. This is a set of brand tools for those who know the value of a Roosevelt University education. Go, Lakers!



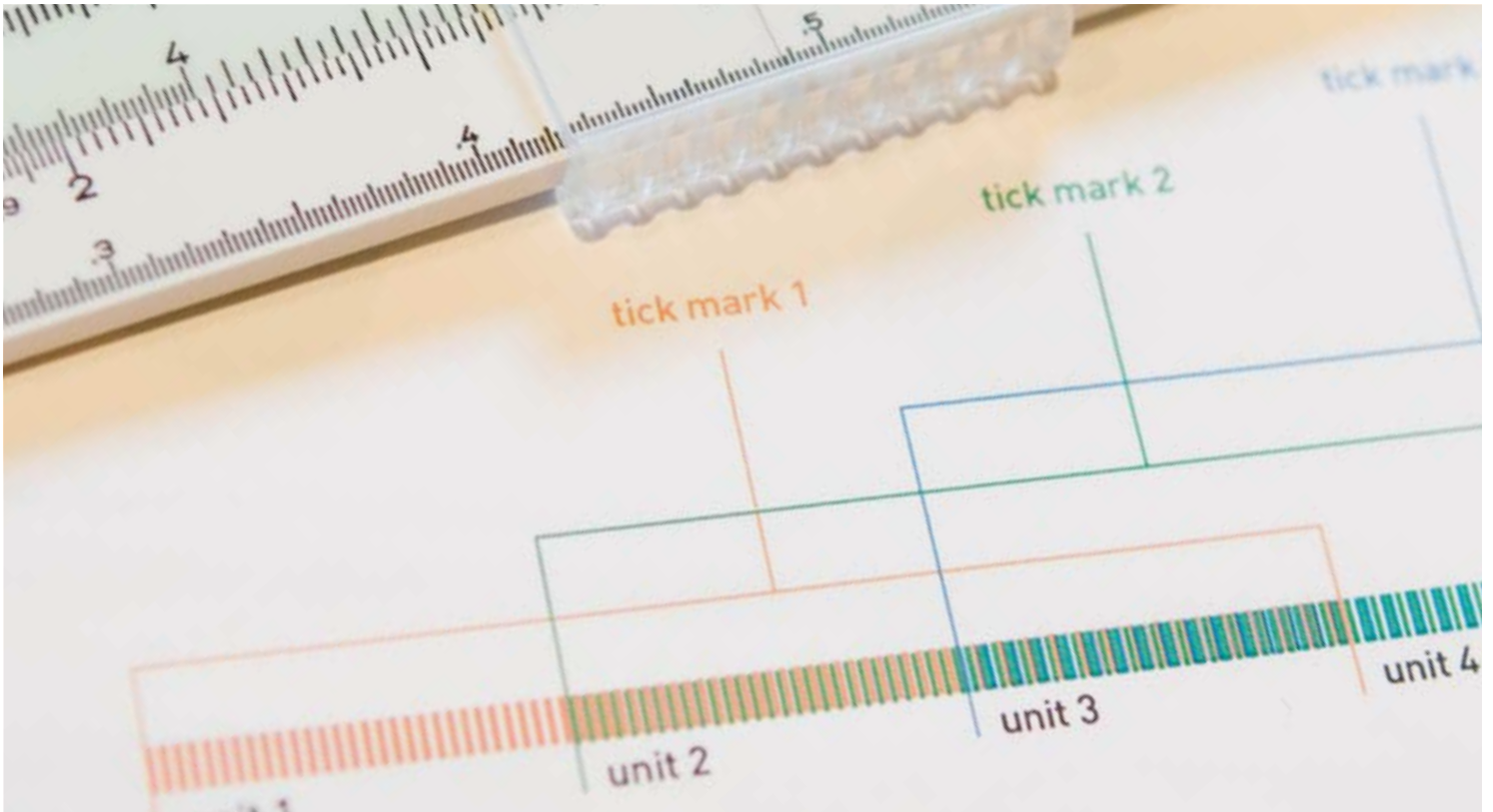
Design convergence.

Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis “Our foremost vision is to be a distinctive, forward-looking model for art, architecture, and design education.” This was the Dean’s charge to us – demonstrate this vision in a brand identity and website. To do this, we took cues from their strategic plan and the value placed on community, innovation, invention and dialogue. The physical structure, with primary buildings forming a courtyard, a very busy intersection of students, faculty and staff, inspired us. The strategic and academic aims were melded with the essence of a bustling environment. The result is a flexible identity system and innovative structure for the website.



SAM FOX SCHOOL OF DESIGN & VISUAL ARTS

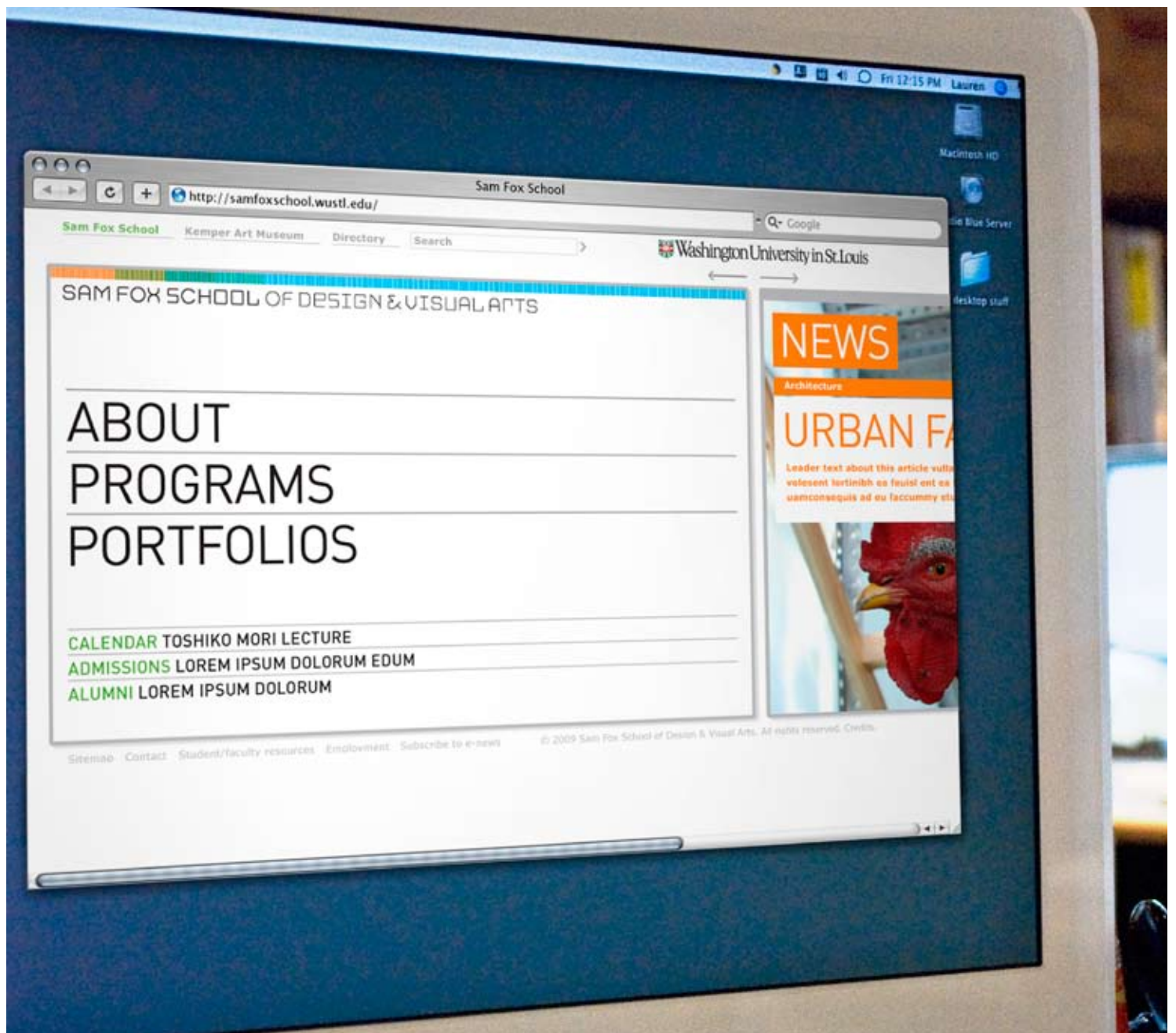
The mark A "color slide rule" served as the visual metaphor to ground design exploration. The school's three areas of practice – art, architecture, and museum – are represented by the color tick marks, when the colors overlap, the synergy of the school is represented.

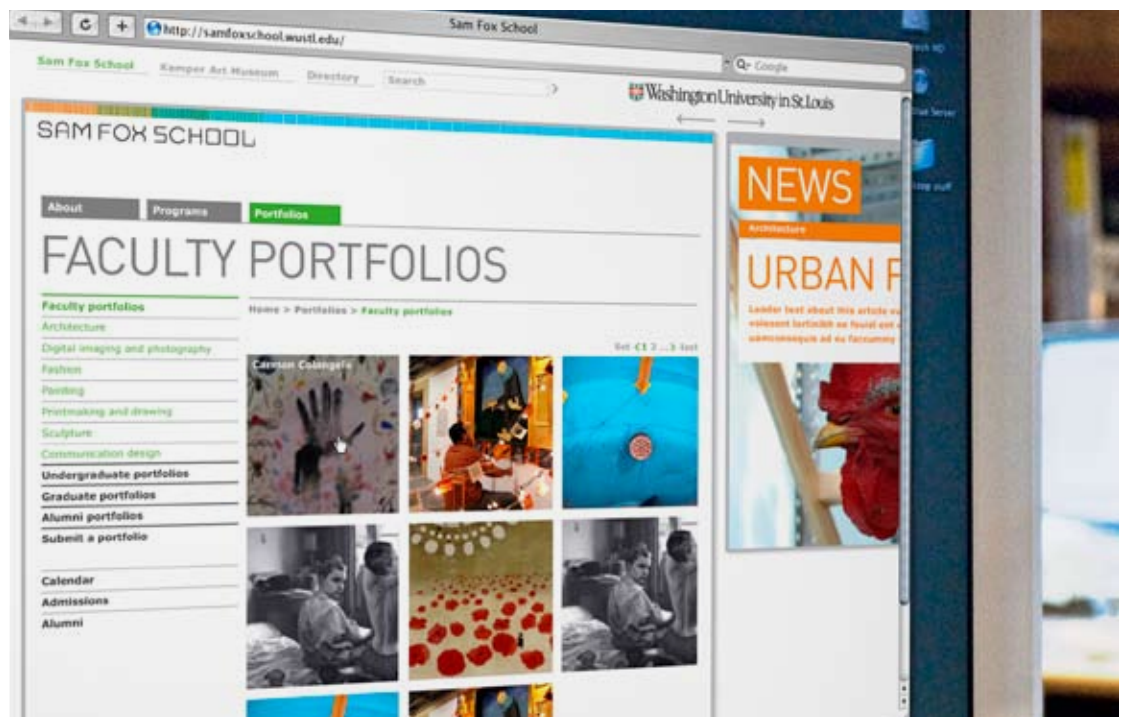


The system Responding to the ideas of collaboration, synergy, academic independence and excellence, a new identity was created. The identity is flexible enough to allow for each part of the whole

(i.e., museum, school, library) to be represented. The design process led to communication strategies to ensure successful implementation of the new identity system.

The new Sam Fox School website communicates the creative convergence of the two colleges and the museum with an integrated visual voice, clear navigational tools, and a flexible structure that gives each field plenty of expandability for the future. The site includes some innovative functionality such as the two sliding “panes” that take advantage of the larger screen size that many users have today.





Tell The persistent news section allows user-generated content to exist alongside news about the school's latest activities and creative collaborations. It's important that the school bring stories that exemplify their mission to the surface, which the news module allows them to do.

Show The site's portfolio section includes an expandable portfolio of work, contact information, an artist's statement and bio, and related links. It can be easily managed by the client team using the site's highly flexible content management system.

Design renewal.

Terra Foundation for American Art After more than twenty years making its collection available to visitors at Terra Museums in Chicago and Giverny, France, the Terra Foundation for American Art transitioned from being a museum-centered institution to a grant-making entity.



The mark Our concept for the mark: “revealing layers of meaning,” was a transparent square that could be used alone or layered over art from the collection. A rethinking of the original logo eliminated the dated feeling of extended type and introduced the square. The visual voice was updated in a subtle, yet contemporary way.



Image voice It was important to include the Terra's major collection of American art in the visual toolkit and identify the collection with the Terra. The image library includes two primary types of image details for use: portraits and landscapes. The portraits have an accessible human quality and are cropped to enhance that focus. The landscapes are quiet and tranquil, with a focus on color and detail. It was our recommendation to use the "people" images for general audience materials and the "place" images for scholarly communications.



The system The letterhead application evokes a sense of transparency on a plain white sheet. The introduction of a serif font, Whitman, helps to balance the quietly modern mark within a traditional framework.



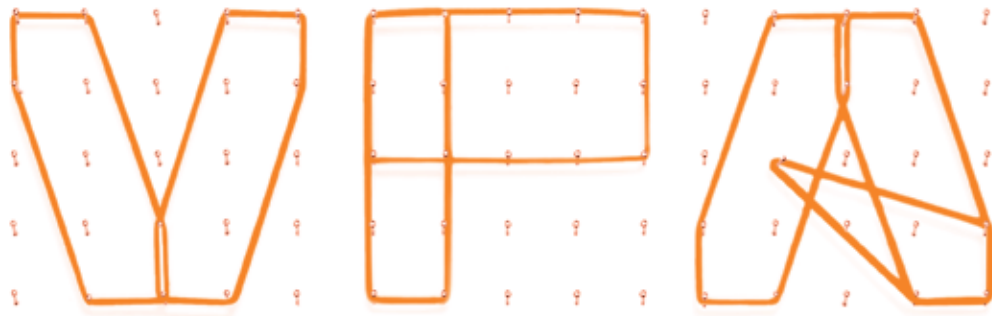
The tools The design of the annual report allowed us to test the visual tools over a broad range of content types and was an opportunity for the Terra to formally launch the system and the new logo.

As we considered the perspectives of our French and American colleagues and their respective audiences, we engaged in cross-cultural dialogue. The outcome provides a unified visual system with enough diversity to satisfy each constituency. It was a nice opportunity for us to put our client's brand goals and values into practice.



Design vision.

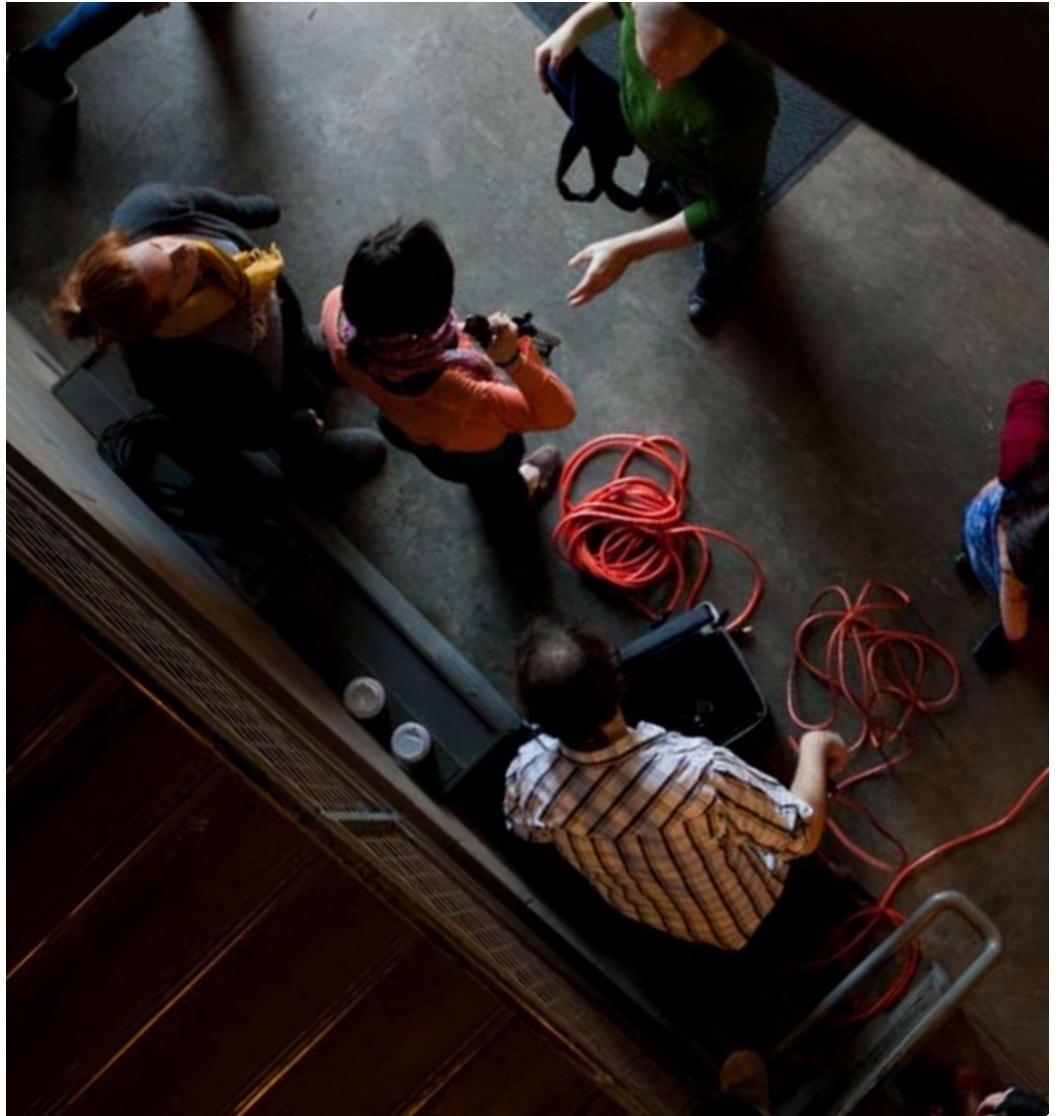
College of Visual and Performing Arts at Syracuse University VPA needed to refresh and unify its position as an educator of future cultural leaders. To assist a new dean in realizing her goals, we worked with faculty, staff and students to articulate why VPA matters, where the college is going and how to communicate who they are. With a clear sense of mission, vision and values, we defined a brand personality and translated it into a mark and system of verbal and visual tools.



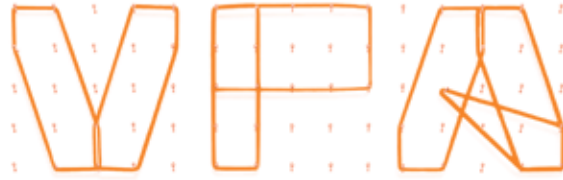
COLLEGE OF
VISUAL
AND
PERFORMING
ARTS

On site VPA has a classroom presence in downtown Syracuse, evidence of its position as an active participant, engaged with the world. A wall runs through this converted warehouse space from the main entrance. We extended the brand voice into a mural of text that describes the VPA experience and links to the social media tools found on the new website.

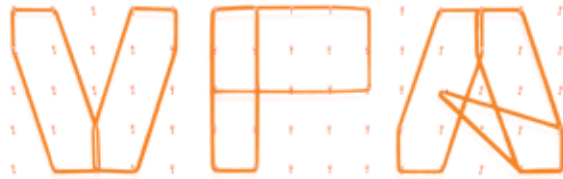




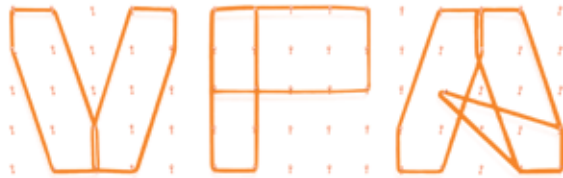
The system To help VPA move beyond a discussion of its parts – four schools (art and design, communication and rhetorical studies, drama and music) – we developed an image voice that presents VPA as collaborative and performative.



COLLEGE OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY



COLLEGE OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS
SETNOR SCHOOL OF MUSIC
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

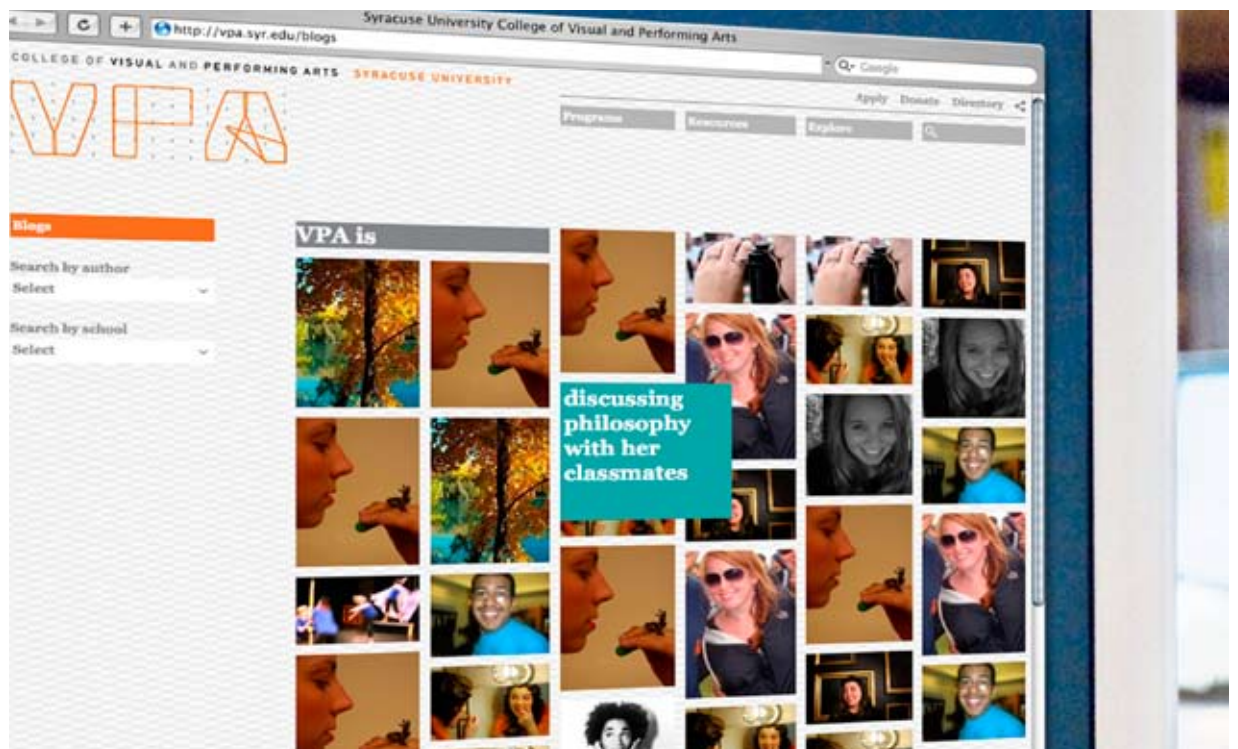
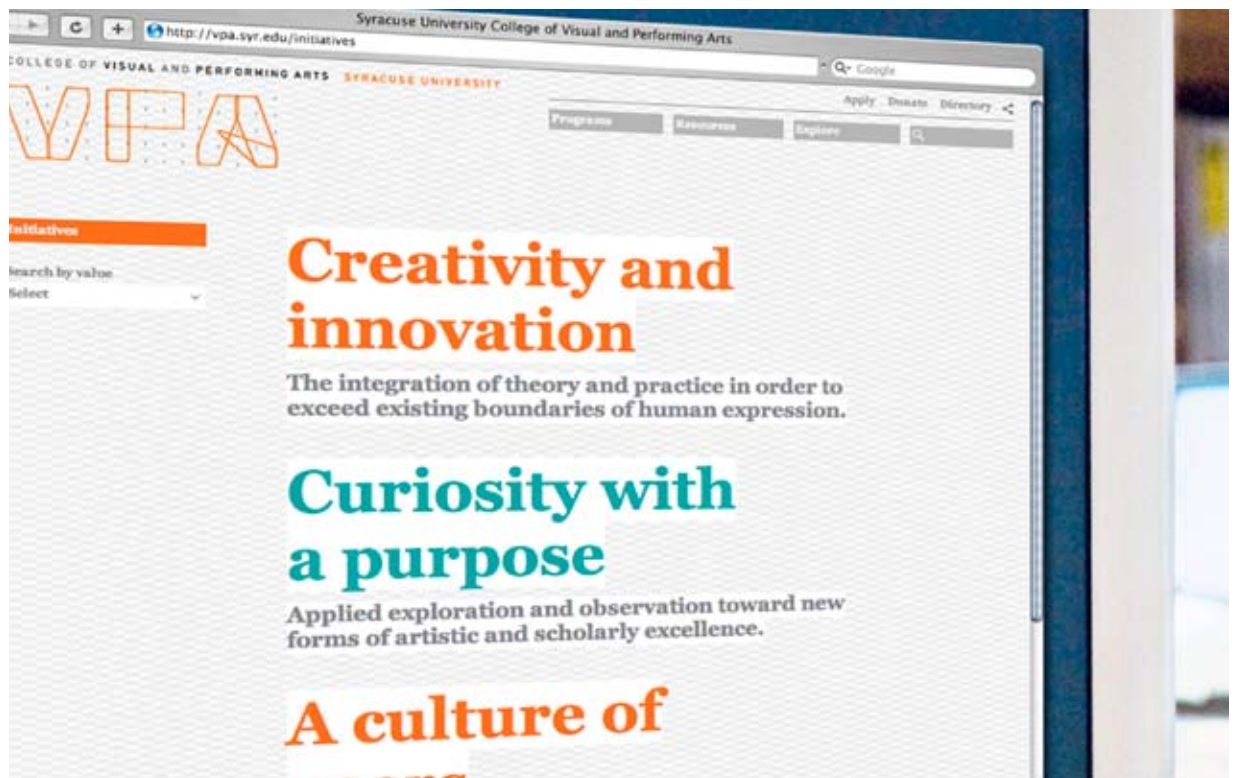


COLLEGE OF VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION AND
RHETORICAL STUDIES
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Lock ups Ensuring the mark can stand on its own is important. It was also critical to VPA that it be able to work with the range of individual school names.

Busy and vibrant, two VPA verbal tools that guided conceptual design of the home page. Our challenge was to position the college's four schools equally and ensure that the site's design and technology are relevant to prospective students. Social media elements and student work and ideas were the springboard for design and content.





Social media The social networking language, “VPA is ___” extends deeper into the site. To avoid staid photos of students and further convey the spirit of the place, we include background videos for each school that show a slice of daily life at the college.

www.studioblue.us

312.243.2241

800 West Huron Street

Suite 3N

Chicago, Illinois 60642

