**BRIAN FASSETT: - ARTIST STATEMENT**

I am an artist, teacher, and designer, not necessarily in that order. For years I told people that I was a graphic designer and, "by the way, I teach at the university." It's how I saw myself. I don't exactly know when my viewpoint changed. I'm still an active designer, though sometimes less often. I still make art, but now I know that I'm a teacher. I find that my thinking, my reading, my experimentation, my exploration is all directed toward better teaching of art and design, and not exclusively toward better personal studio performance. I certainly maintain a broader view of art than I would if I was not teaching, and I delight in it.

My eclectic tastes in image, medium, and process must certainly be post-modern though I have great respect, admiration, and affinity for the modern mindset. My personal fine art style in drawing, painting and sculpture has generally been figurative and naturalistic, but there is a distinct and recurring passion for non-objective sculptural form, both static and kinetic.

As a graphic designer I am, as is the case with most designers, a generalist. However, as a specialist, typography is my unique strength. My typographic experience, ability, and interest have encompassed calligraphy, handset foundry types, hot metal line casting, letterpress and offset lithographic printing, computer photo setting, digital laser and desktop publishing page makeup systems. I am fascinated by the printed word and passionate about letterforms. I have always been in awe of the intrinsic beauty of language, mankind’s greatest achievement, but its true significance would be diminished without the visual invention of the alphabet, subsequent development of typography, and high-volume publishing. Carl Sagan so eloquently spoke of the book when he said, “For the price of a modest meal, you can contemplate the rise and fall of the Roman empire.” The visual beauty of our symbols of language astounds me. I find their versatility in size, weight, color, proportion, texture, and placement to be unrivaled as elements of design.

Design is not a cosmetic addition. It is essential to survival. There is a desperate need for good design — for excellence, for good communication skills, for things to be done with purpose and conviction. One of the reasons I entered the design profession is that I saw so much bad design being done. I wanted to make a difference. Teaching art/design is the way to make a big difference. I can affect thousands of people with what I design, but I can affect

millions of people with what my students will design.