



Simon Owen

Communication Design Folio

2025

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Case Study 1:

University Assignment

Tao Te Ching

Design Challenge:

Reboot the Tao Te Ching, an ancient Chinese Taoist book of wisdom, into a contemporary publication

Key skills:

- Design for production (laser-cutting, UV printing)
- Videography, sound design, editing, and photography
- Publication design
- Conceptual design



one strap
LEATHER?

Brainstorming

- 9x9 GRID?
- MARK YOUR FAVOURITES?
- NON-LINEAR
- DECK OF CARDS
- PROGRESSION
- TEXT 'UNRAVELS'
- TRANSLATION
- OLD WORLD
- PAGE # IN CHINESE?
- CHINESE
- HAND BOOK BINDING
- COLOUR RED AND GOLD
- CURVING
- WINDING
- FLOW
- RIVER
- WISDOM
- SERIF FONT?
- 'WAY', 'PATH', 'ROAD', 'TECHNIQUE'
- SIMPLICITY — SANS-SERIF FONT.
- USER EXPERIENCE
- EASE OF USE
- EFFORTLESS
- POTENTIAL TYPE CHARACTERISTICS
 - PSYCHEDELLIC - HEADINGS
 - DROP CAPS?
 - FIRST TWO WORDS?
 - BODY - SERIF
 - SANS SERIF
 - } CLEAN, STRONG FONTS
- PIPE CLEANER SPINE?
- WIRE ARMATURE
- SPRING BACKBONE
- FATE & DESTINY
- DIVINATION
- TAROT CARDS AS INSPO
- MALLEABLE
- EBBING + FLOWING
- UNIVERSAL ENERGY
 - FORCE
 - MOVEMENT
 - STRING/THREAD
 - YIN AND YANG
 - BLACK + WHITE
 - YIN AND YANG (with yin-yang symbol)
 - SYMBOLS
 - ANCIENT CHILD
 - OLD MASTER
 - LAO Tzu (AUTHOR)
 - ABILITY TO PICK AT RANDOM
- 'THE BOOK OF THE WAY'
- THE ART OF INACTION
- TAO TE CHING
- 81 PASSAGES
- MEDITATION
- 道

Design Process Journal Entry

Playing with Bead Ideas
& Solution to Binding

Tried using felt balls as I thought it might give more cushioning, creating a smoother experience when moving the pages.

The colour is playful which suits the text but the materials of the clear acrylic and the wooden beads will be more harmonious.

Also, I plan to shoot with coloured lights and the felt balls wouldn't look good with different colours shining



The tactic with the binding is the pull it taught with two pliers, twist it up a few times, then trim it short- just enough so that it'll have strength. Then tuck the tail in? Not sure, it didn't really work well, but it's neat enough to have it exposed.

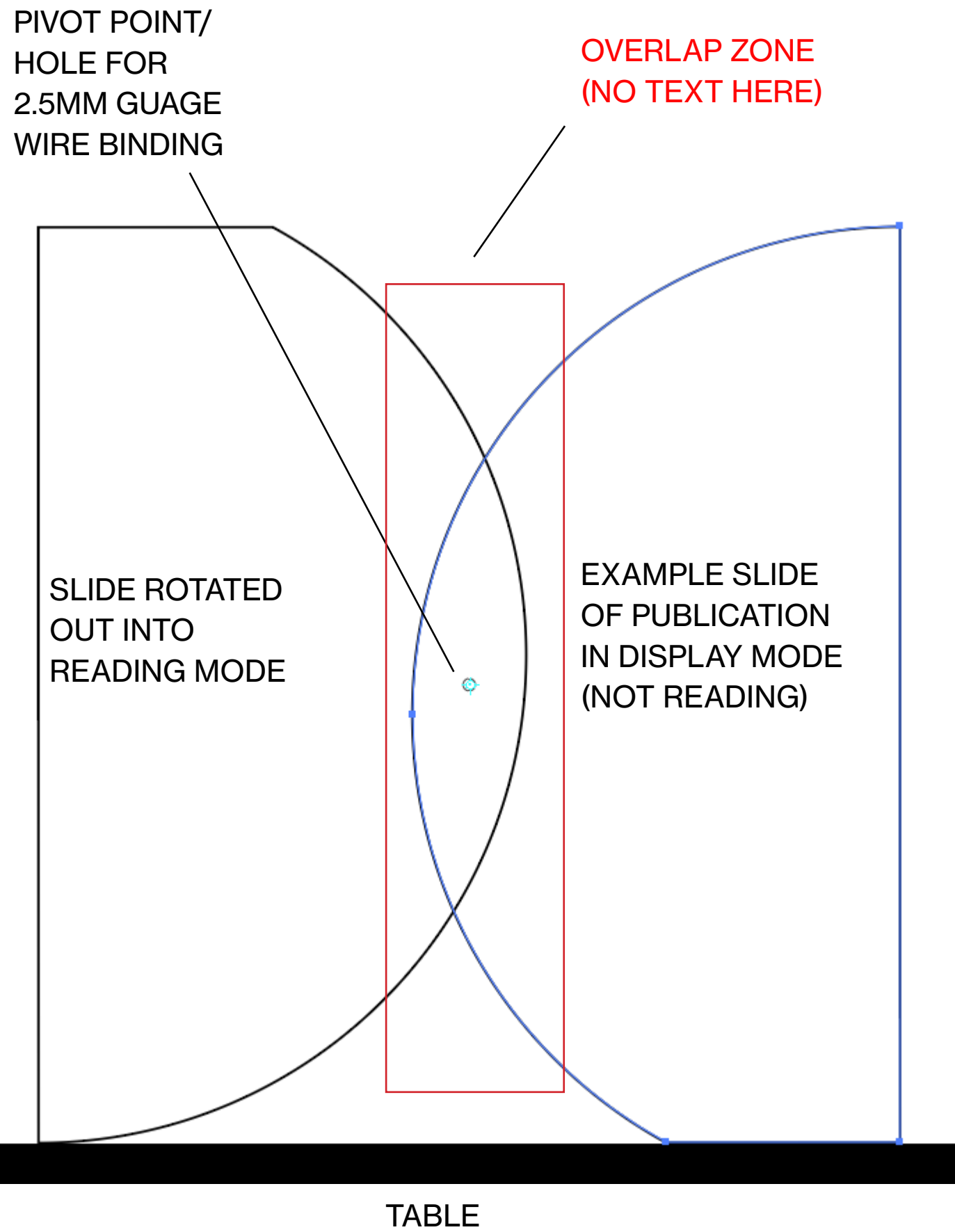


The form is so interesting when unbound, potential for future sculptures?

Mechanics of the Format

Working out the location of the hole punch
The slides must sit level on the table when rotated out into reading mode.

I used trial and error, selecting the pivot point of the rotate tool until when rotated 180 degrees the slide sits so that the lines of text would run parallel with the table surface.





Final Design

52 laser-cut and UV printed Acrylic slides,
bound with steel wire and wooden beads.

Keywords

- ancient codex
- intangible
- natural geometry
- movement
- malleable
- effortless
- rhythm
- inaction
- noble
- balance
- flow



Tao Te Ching with AI Generated
Leather Carry Bag Concept

Contents

i	Contents
ii - iii	Introduction
iv	Copyright
v	Natural breathing
vi - vii	Reverse breathing
viii	Dantian breathing
ix	Embryonic breathing
x - xv	Qi and the martial arts
1-37	Passages of part 1

light coloured bead



One passage which particularly influenced the design:

“We join spokes together in a wheel,
but it is the centre hole that
makes the wagon move.

We shape clay into a pot,
but it is the emptiness inside
that holds whatever we want.

We hammer wood for a house,
but it is the inner space
that makes it liveable.

We work with being,
but non-being is what we use.”

- Lao Tzu (Trans. Stephen Mitchell)



Magazine ad

Product showcase video demonstrating:

- Lighting
- Videography
- Editing
- Motion control
- Sound design

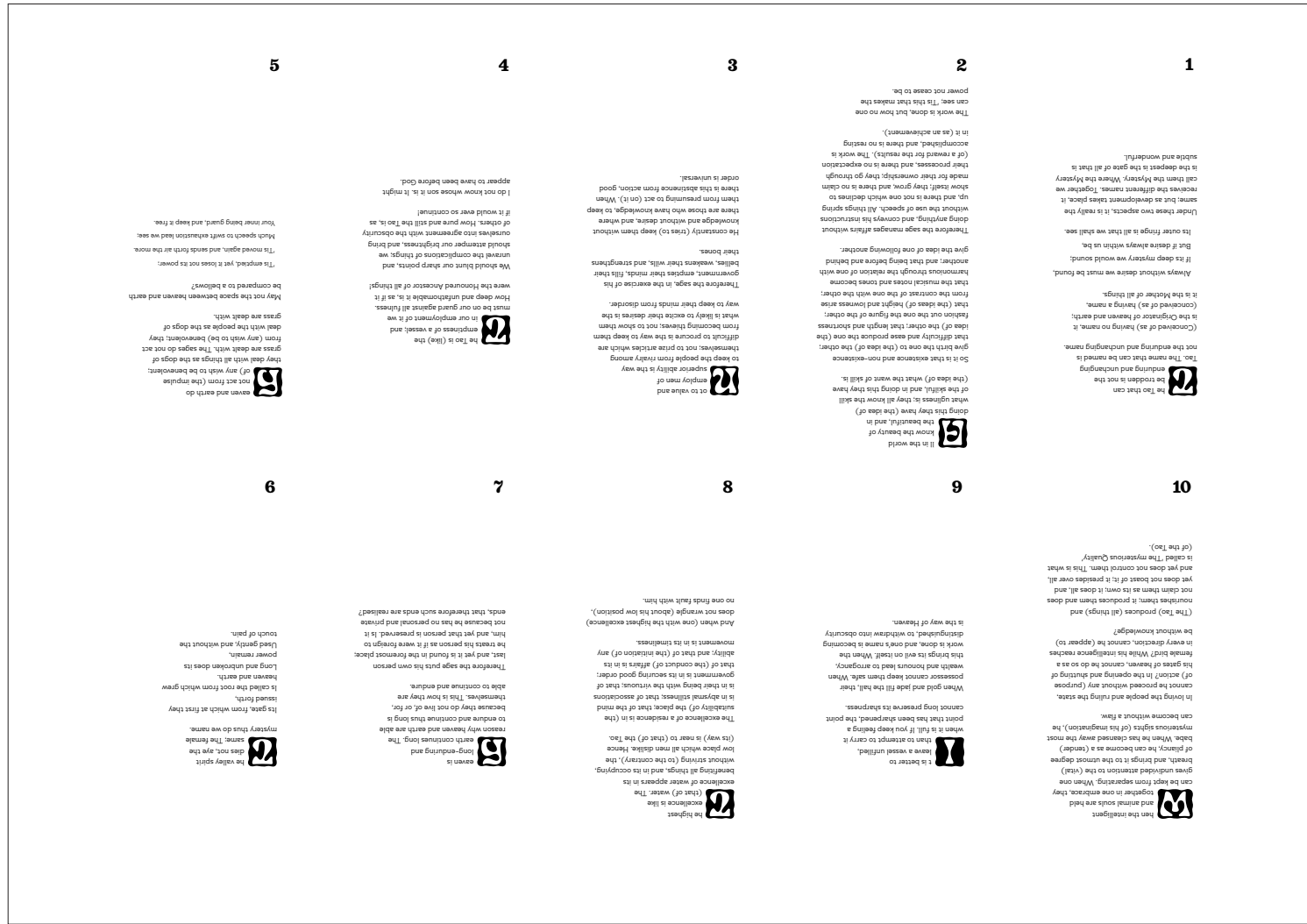
Click here for
YouTube video



Tech Specs & Production Diagrams

These explain how to prepare the materials, align the pieces between the laser-cutter and the UV printer, and

Stage 2: UV Printing Artwork Instructions



Client	Simon Owen Design
Project	Tao Te Ching Publication
Item	Acrylic Slides x 52
Stage	UV Printing
File	UV Print File 1 of 6 (p. 1-10)
Designer	Simon Owen

Flat size (mm) 420 x 594 (A2)
Correct margin between text and straight edge (mm) 3.5

Scale ~1:4.1
Quantity 100

Printing Guide

Print onto 10 slides at a time placed into template from laser cutter

Print colour Rich Black
C 40 M 60 Y 60 K 100

Instructions Invert file horizontally and place template and slides flipped horizontally on the Mimaki bed

Align bottom right to bottom right (the origin) of the bed

Photo of example individual slide

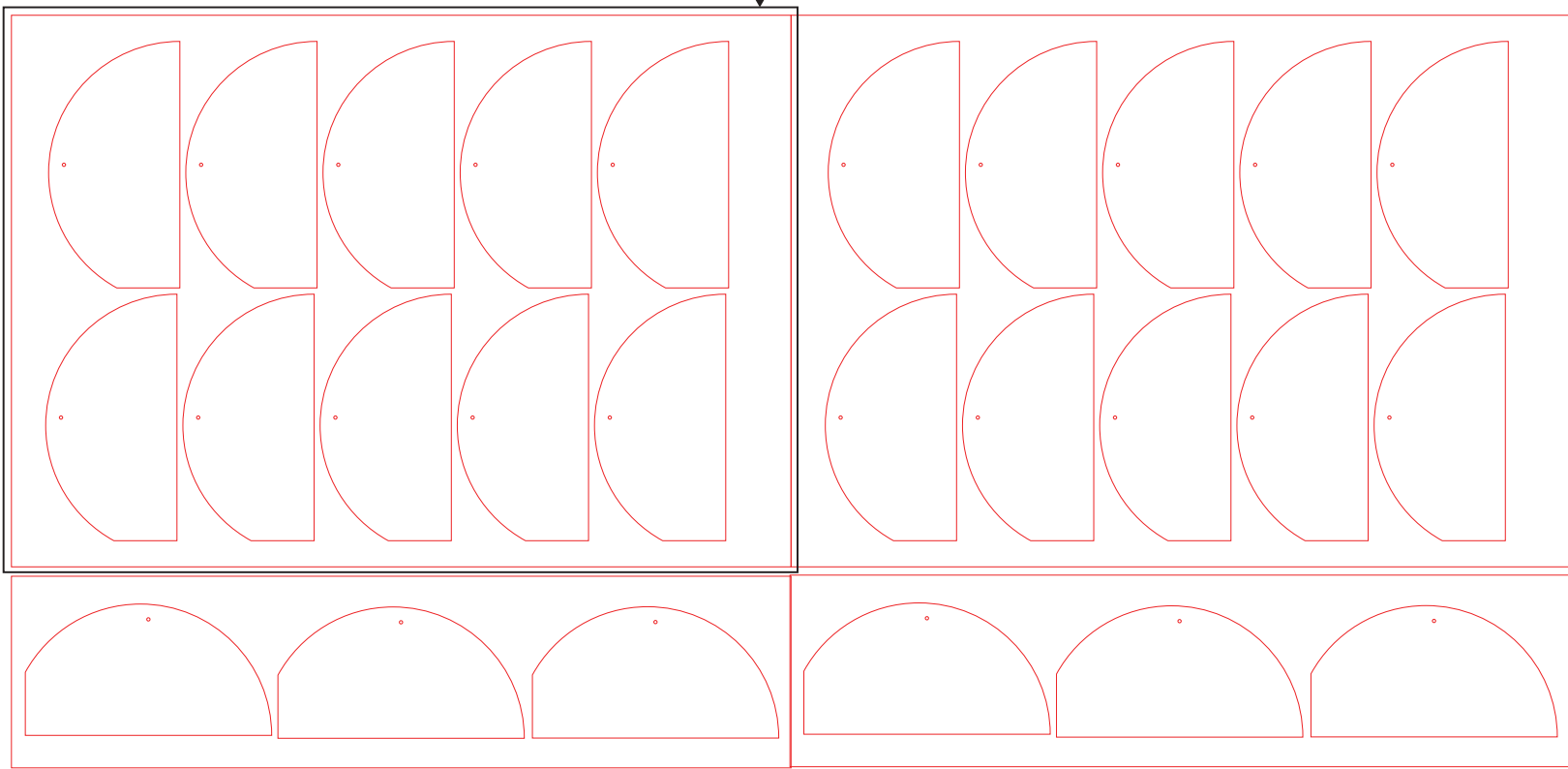
Front (non-printed side) Back (printed side)



Stage 1: Lasercutting instructions/ Dieline setup

IMPORTANT Instructions

This outline represents the full bed size of the Mamaki UV printing (420 x 594mm, A2).
For the next stage (UV Printing) you must retain this outline as a guide for aligning the print onto the slides



Client	Simon Owen Design
Project	Tao Te Ching Publication
Item	Acrylic Slides x 52
Stage	Lasercutting
File	Lasercut File
Designer	Simon Owen

Flat size (mm) 1200 x 600
Finished size of each slide (mm) 100 W x 187.707 H
Thread hole size (mm) 2.5
Scale ~1:4.1
Quantity 100

Cutting Guide

Material	3mm Trans Acrylic sheet 1200 x 600mm
Cut lines	R 255 G 0 B 0 0.01mm stroke

Photo of individual slide

Leave protective backing intact until stage 2



Stage 3: Manufacturing & Assembly Instructions

This publication is a laser-cut and UV printed acrylic sculpture hand bound with steel wire and wooden beads.

Material Specifications

- 3mm clear acrylic sheet
- 0.7mm steel wire
- 12mm wooden beads: 51 medium-coloured, 1 light-coloured

Description of Process (From Lasercutting to Fully Assembled)

Note: The protective backing on the non-print side is left on until the piece is fully bound, to prevent excessive scratching

- 52 identical acrylic slides are laser cut with a 2.5mm circular hole for the binding
- The 52 slides are reverse printed on the back-side.
- An 80cm length of 0.7mm steel wire is cut, and one end is kinked so that the slides don't fall off.
- Starting with the contents slide, a medium-coloured bead is threaded. This is repeated until after slide '37' a light-coloured bead is threaded.
- The form is propped up so that it can assume a ring shape.
- The two ends of the wire should be crossed once and then two pairs of pliers used to pull the binding taught as hard as possible.
- The two loose ends of the wire should be twisted into a tight braid using pliers.
- The braided end of the binding should be trimmed so it doesn't extend outward past the edge of the adjacent slide. This will leave a small but strong connection point which holds the entire piece together.
- The protective sticker is now peeled.

Start (to the left of light coloured bead): Slide 'i' (Contents page)

End (to the right of light coloured bead): Slide '37'



Photo and Diagram of Constructed Publication

Case Study 2:

Commercial Work For

TWØBAYS Brewing Co

Design Challenge:

To market beers as part of a dedicated gluten free range produced by a family operated Mornington Peninsula brewery, while staying within established brand guidelines.

Key skills:

- Design for posters, social media (organic and paid marketing), and web assets (banner and Shopify tiles)
- Product photography and retouching
- Communicating with manufacturers and printers



Launch of Märzen German Lager

Brief: Märzen is a German style beer, famous for being the Oktoberfest beer. Originating from Bavaria, design elements drawn from the blue and white diamond checkered flag.



Photography & poster: Simon Owen, can design: Tim Wilson

Launch of Pacific Ale

Brief: Pacific Ale is a beer style originating from the Aussie East-Coast. The design should capture that aesthetic and introduce the Pacific Ale as a new addition to the TWØBAYS core range.

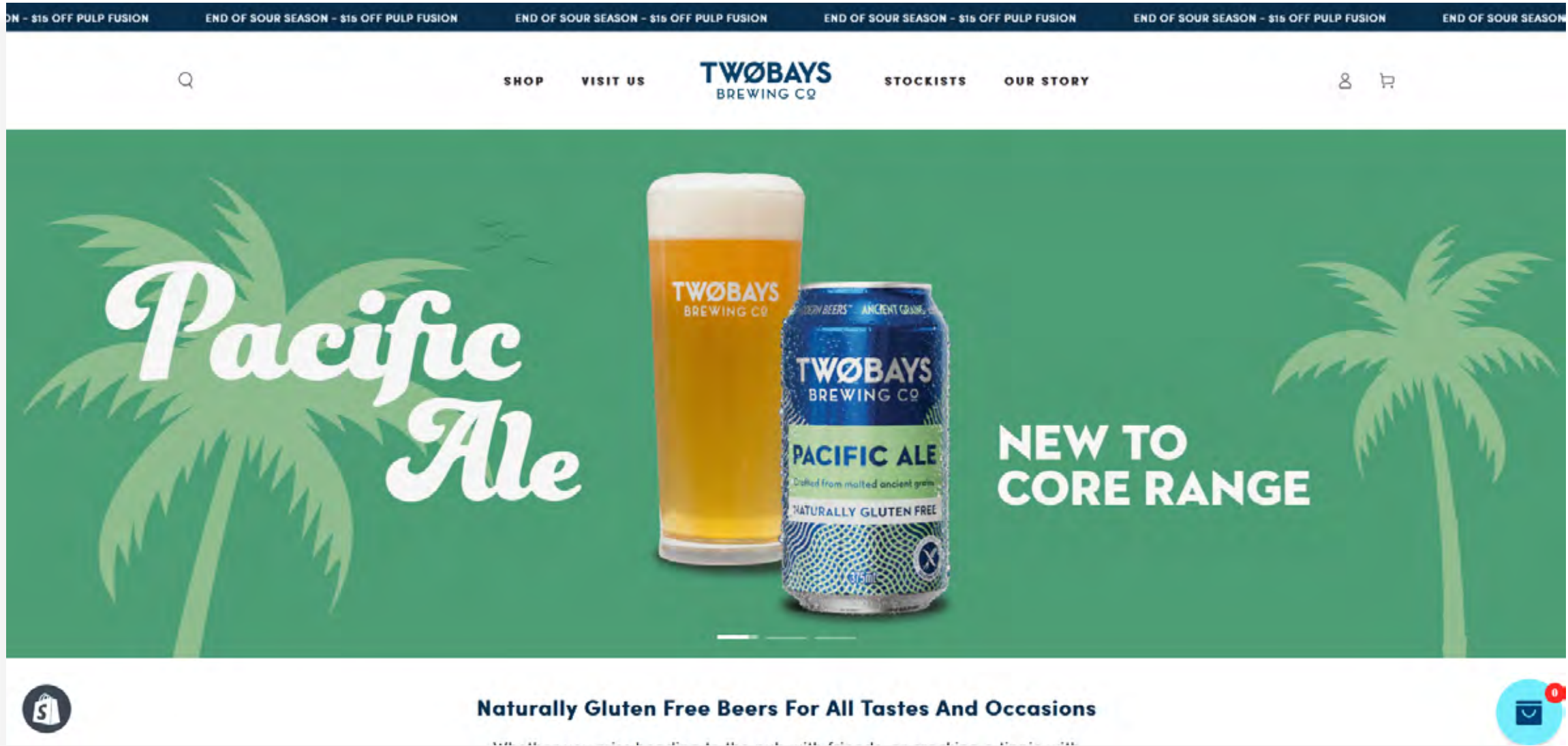


Product photography



Photography & poster: Simon Owen, can design: Tim Wilson

In context: web banner



Photos for product launch



Product Photography

Styling gluten free beer can be tricky because the head disappears more quickly than gluten-containing beers. I learnt to use a pipette to infuse air into the beer before taking the shot.

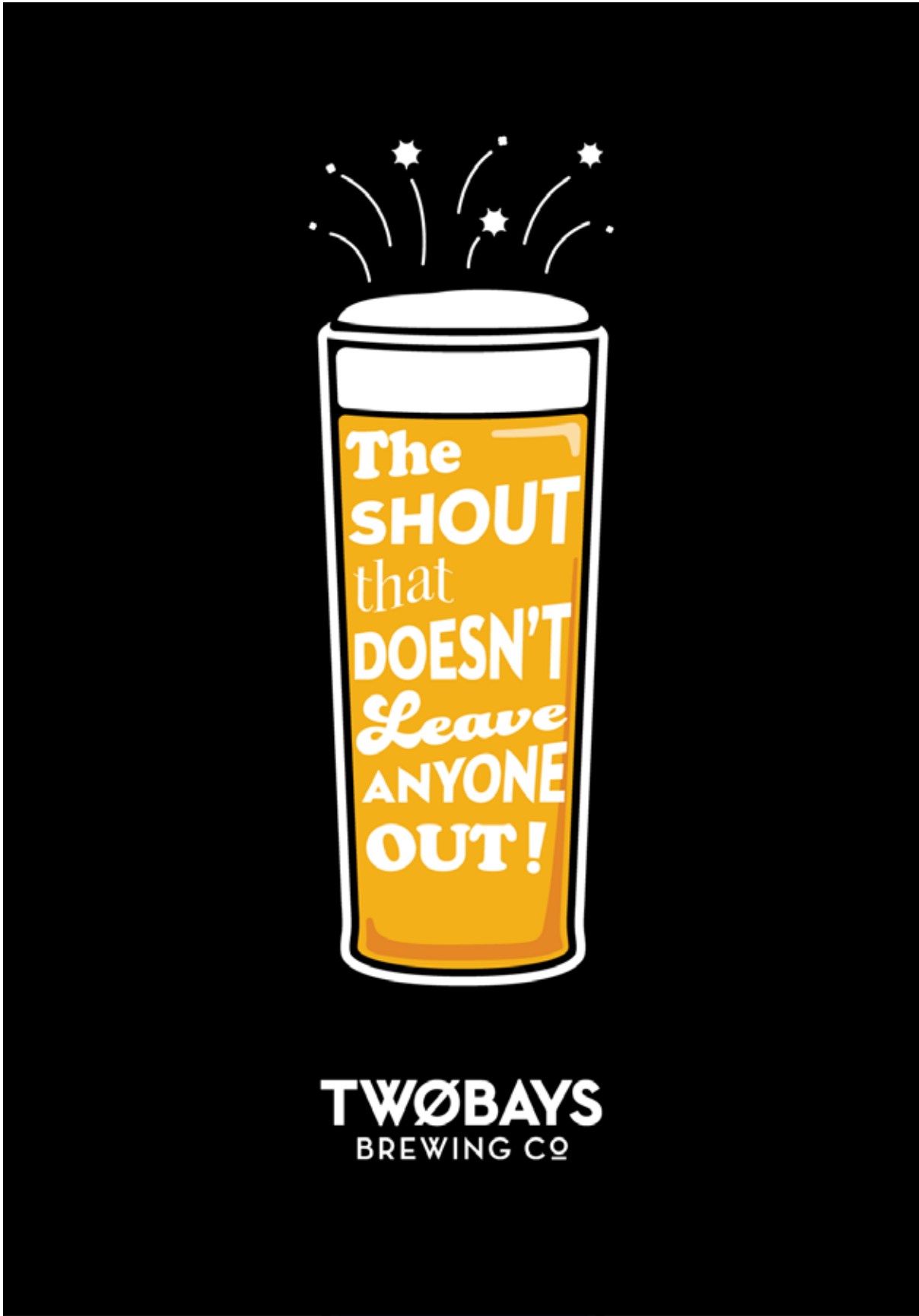
Photos required colour editing accurately to the beer's colour.



Australia’s Friendliest Beer Campaign

Tagline: ‘The Shout That Doesn’t Leave Anyone Out

This campaign strives for inclusivity of coeliac and gluten-avoiding consumers. My task was to create a graphic that can be printed on a t-shirt in a single colour



Unused concept

Digital Sketches

THE **SHOUT** THAT
DOESN'T LEAVE **ANYONE** OUT

THE **SHOUT**
THAT DOESN'T LEAVE
ANYONE OUT

THE **SHOUT**
THAT DOESN'T LEAVE
ANYONE OUT

THE SHOUT THAT
DOESN'T LEAVE
ANYONE OUT

THE **SHOUT** THAT DOESN'T
LEAVE ANYONE OUT

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THE **SHOUT**
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ANYONE OUT



THE **SHOUT**
THAT DOESN'T LEAVE
ANYONE OUT

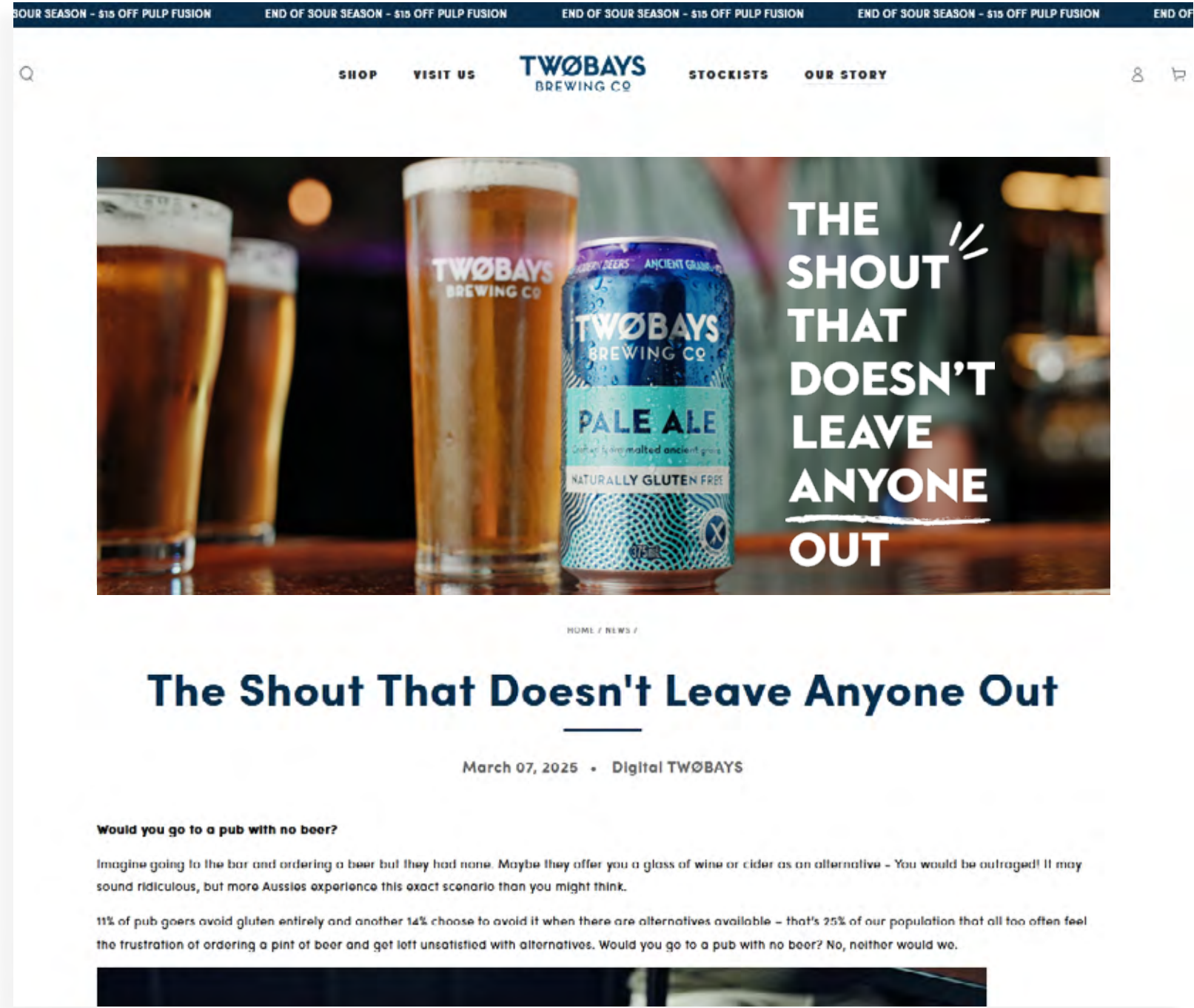
THE SHOUT THAT DOESN'T
LEAVE ANYONE OUT

THE SHOUT
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ANYONE
OUT

Final Design



Horizontal variation used in brand campaign video shot by Peninsula Films

Case Study 3: University Assignment *Oatland*

Design Challenge:

(self-written brief): Brand and market a fictitious new entry to the alternative milk category, an oat milk with a design inspired by full-cream milk and mid-century Aussie posters.

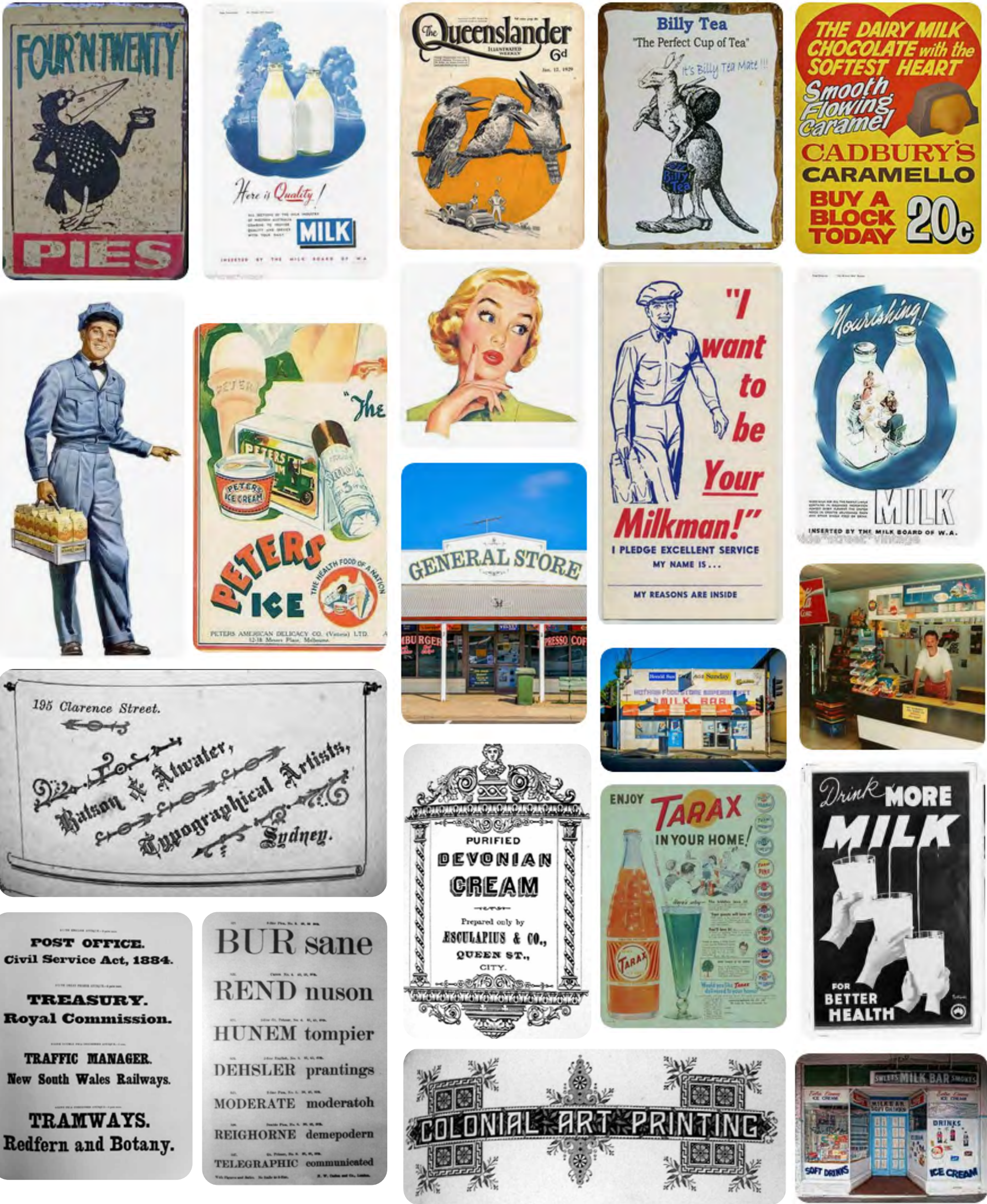
Key skills:

- Branding
- Illustration
- 3D modelling & rendering
- Animation & compositing



Synthesising Type Research & Inspiration

Mid-century: Aussie posters, milk bars, and type artefacts



Early class pin-up: Wordmark options (left) and tagline options (middle and right)

Oatland	WE PACK A PUNCH!	38% of your daily calcium intake
Oatland	IT'S OATS, JUST LIKE YOU KNOW 'EM	NATURALLY LACTOSE FREE
		<i>Delicious flavour</i>
OATLAND	MILKY GOODNESS IN A BOTTLE	Fully recycled and recyclable bottle
Oatland	OAT MILK	YUMMY, FULL-OAT FLAVOUR OF AUSTRALIAN GRAINS.
Oatland	CALCIUM, PROTEIN, PREBIOTICS, MINERALS	<i>Oats across the land</i>
Oatland	Australian Grown	<i>from Australian fields to fridge.</i>
Oatland	WHAT MORE DO YOU NEED IN A MILK?	<u>GOOD FOR YOUR GUT</u>
	HOME-GROWN OAT MILK... HOWZAT?	<i>Beat the bloat!</i>

Wordmark Development

Watercolour scans

Oatland

Oatland

Oatland

Oatland!

It's oats, just like you know 'em

Oat Land!

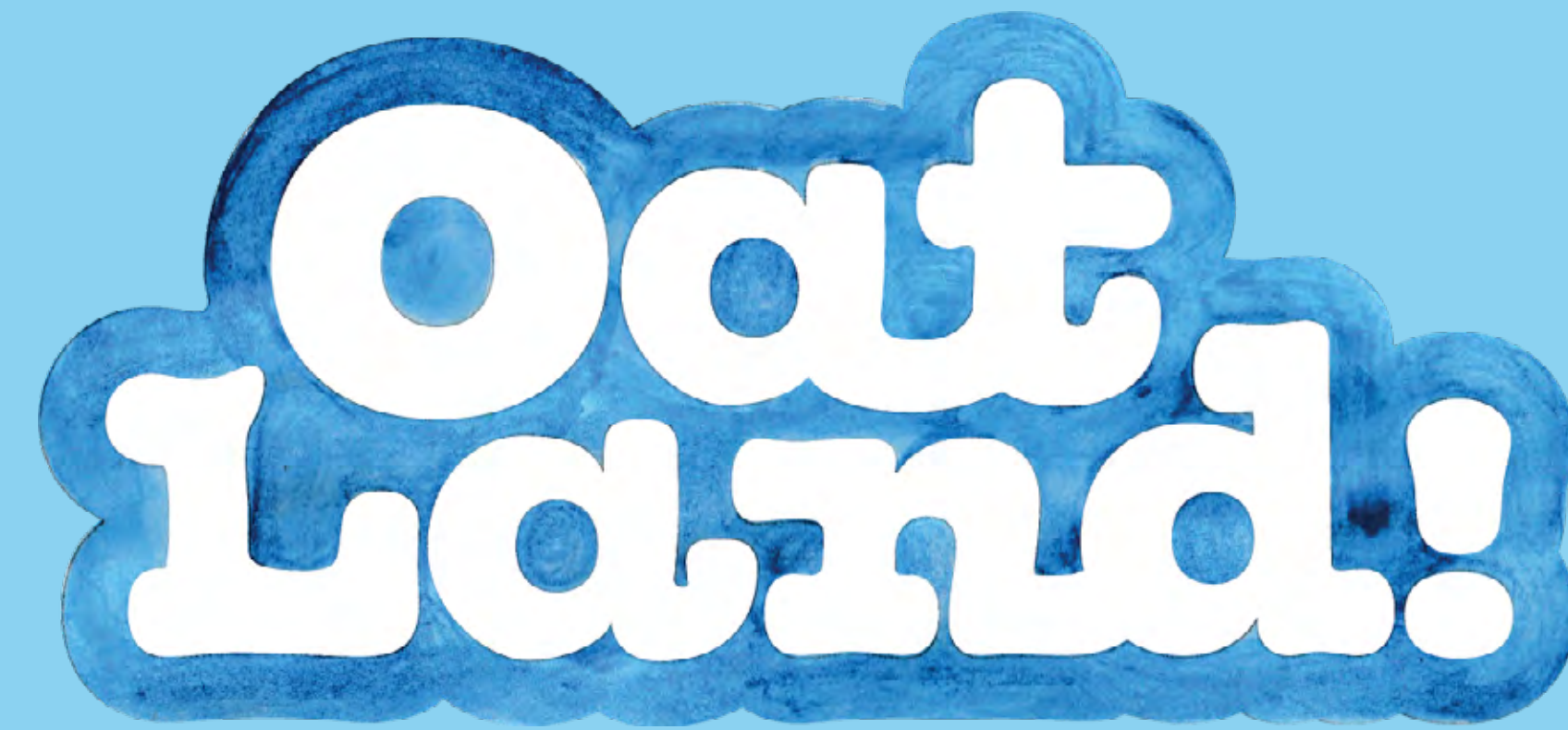
It's oats, just like you know 'em

Oat Land!

Oat Land!

Oat Land!



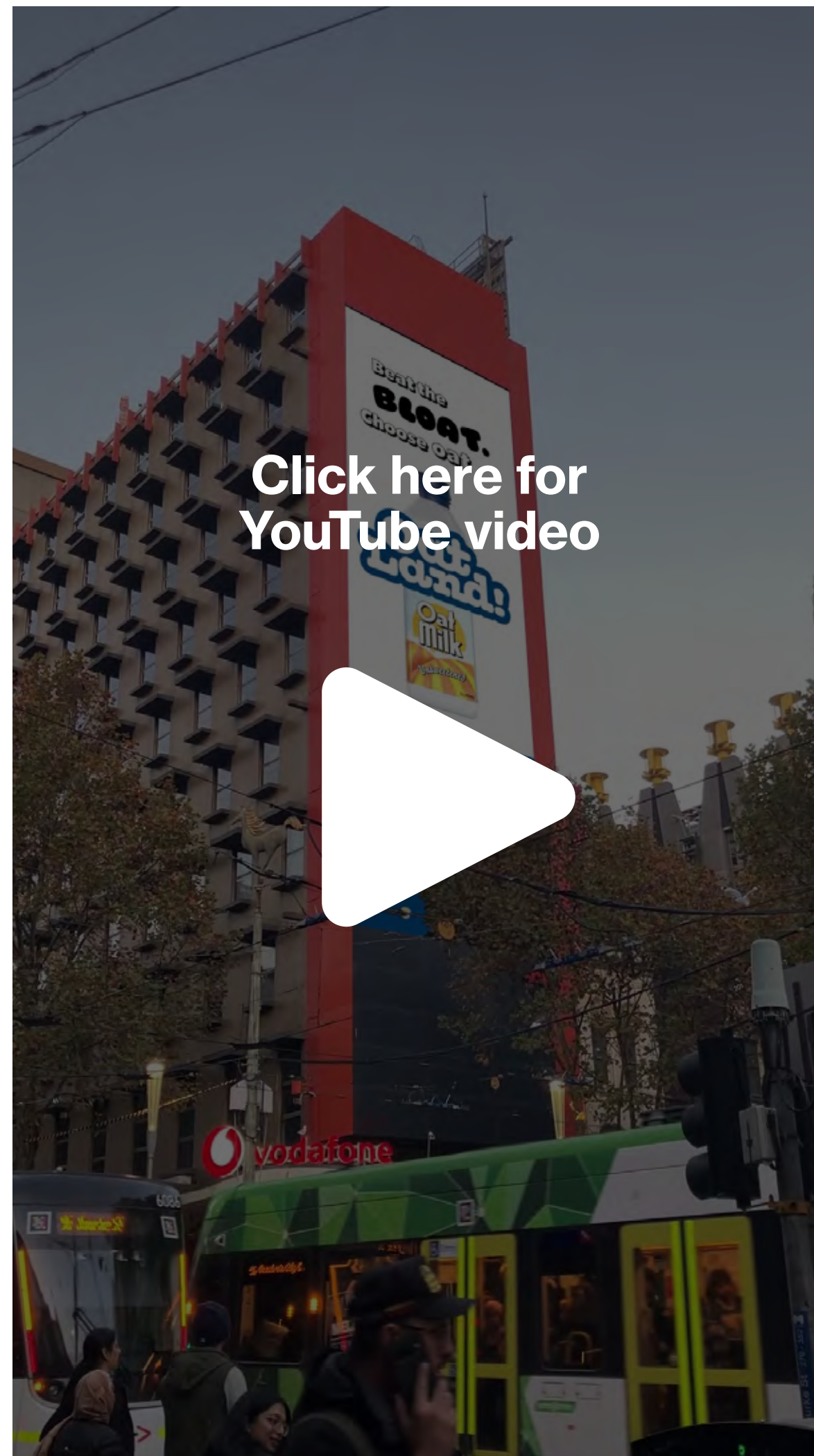


Final wordmark, watercolour

3D modelled and
rendered in Blender

Bourke Street Billboard

Animated billboard (AfterEffects)
composited into footage



Flyposters mockup

Gallery

Miscellaneous Works

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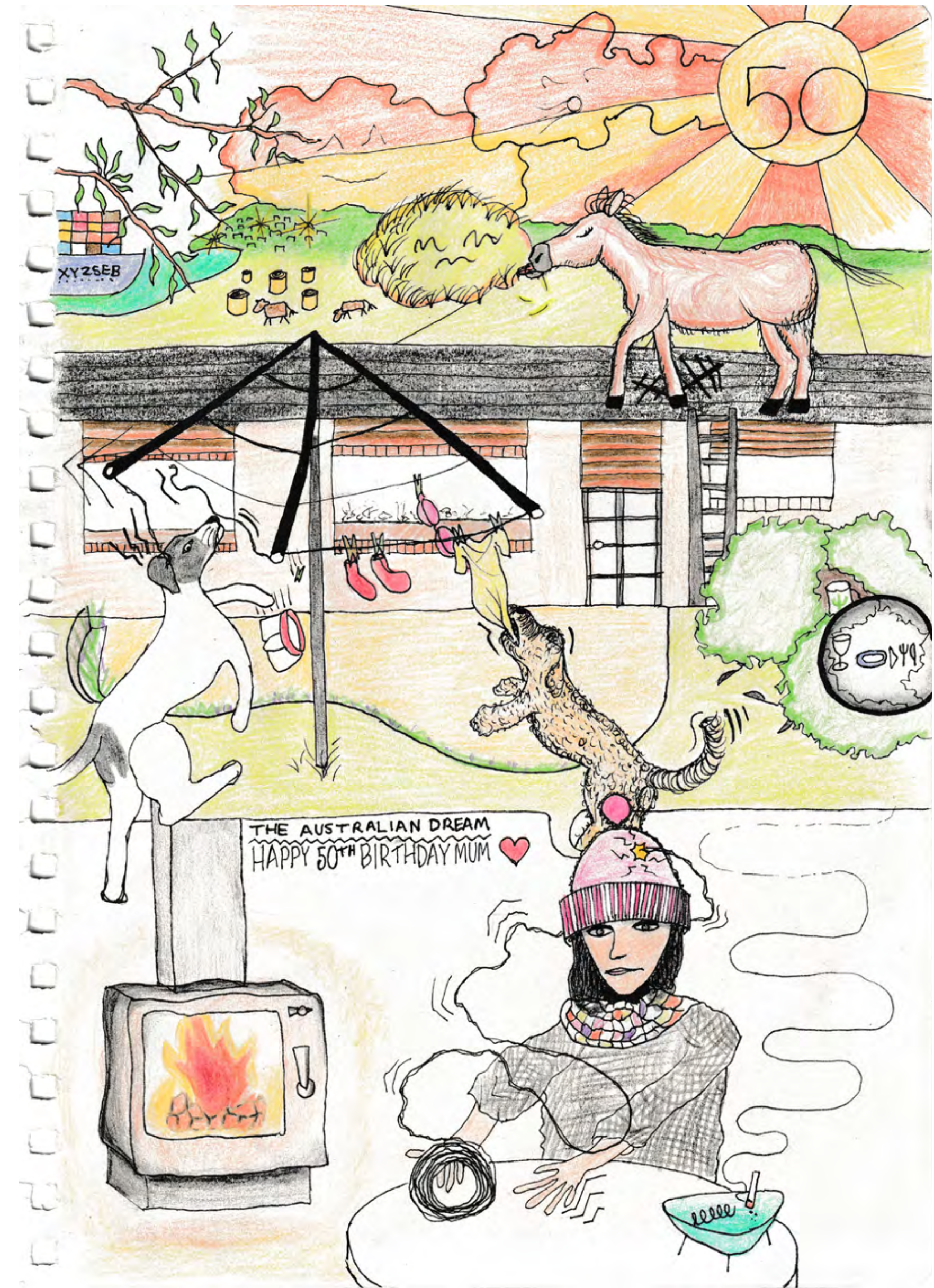
Zine cover illustration: hand-drawn, digitally coloured

University club logo





Suntory Boss Coffee tee design



Hand-drawn birthday card for my mum Annie Glass, a wire sculpture artist



Hand-drawn and vectorised illustration

Tri-fold brochure designed for print with 2 inks



Mock poster: photography, scanned elements, digital collage



Mock tourism posters: film photography

