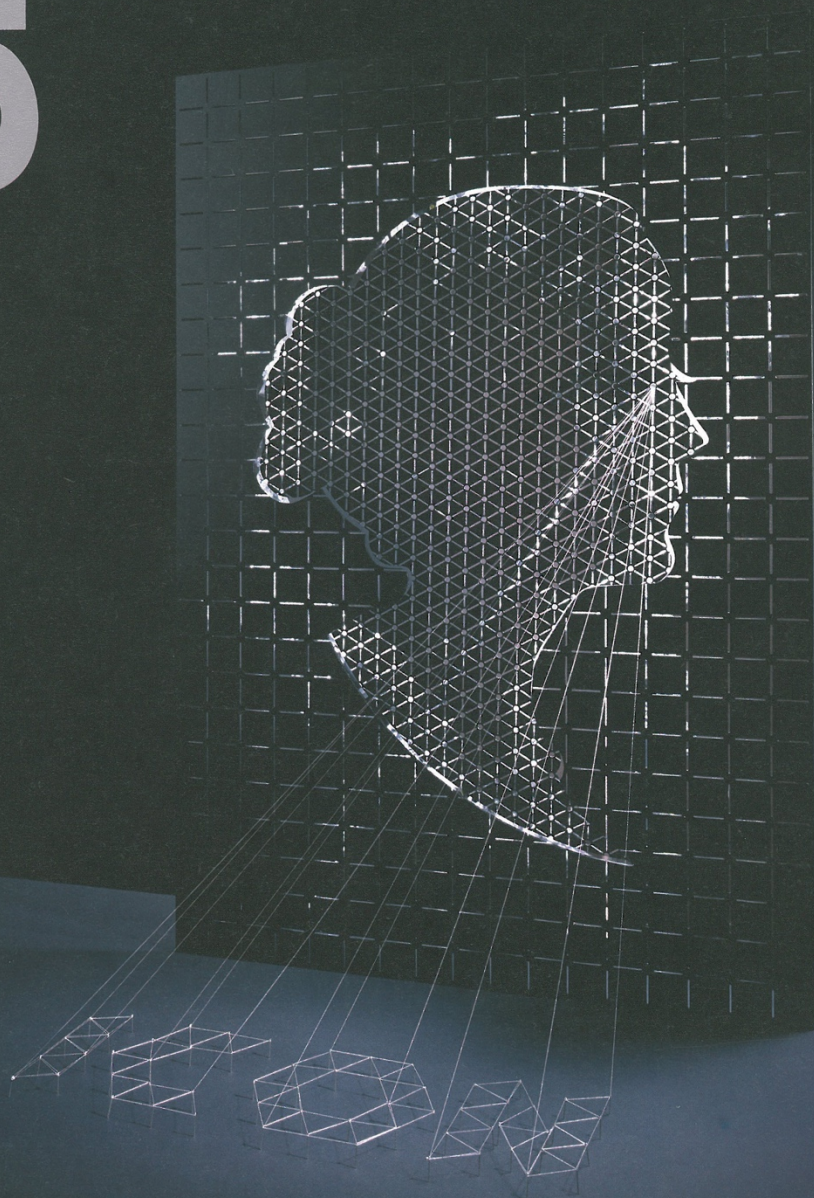


# artid mag

**Special Report**  
Graphic  
Design Heroines  
**Profile**  
Hudson-Powell  
**July 2008 £8**





**Mute Magazine Graphic Design**  
By Pauline van Mourik Broekman,  
Simon Worthington and Damian Jaques  
Published by Eightbooks, £19.95

Despite the rather misleading cover (which ditched the authors' names altogether), this book wasn't actually written by Adrian Shaughnessy. He just wrote the intro, which attempts to put this cult art, politics, technology and critical theory-based magazine of the Nineties into some sort of context with the publishing climate of 2008. It's all a bit doom and gloom right now for print-based magazines as far as Mr Shaughnessy's concerned, given the onslaught of digital media. With the aid of funding from the Arts Council, Mute went through many incarnations in its lifetime, and it's still going strong with a content-rich website and a hefty quarterly magazine. As publishing stories go, this one's anything but straightforward, and it's the narrative that makes for the most interesting aspect here. Design-wise, it's a bit all over the place. An acquired taste (and one slightly more suited to those fifty-something blokes who remember the original magazine), we suspect.

**Fragiles**  
Edited by Robert Klanten  
Published by Gestalten, £33

Something rather enchanting seems to have been happening in the world of porcelain, glass and ceramics over the past couple of years, and this rather nice book from DGV has picked up on that. Separated into sections covering subjects such as L'Art pour L'Art, Tableware and Porcelain as Canvas, there's plenty here to give the sleepy world of ceramics a right royal (Worcester) kick up the backside. With items ranging from fully functional plates and cups to some borderline-bonkers art pieces, there's really something here for everyone. The work featured is often beautiful, sometimes baffling but sure to make you crack a smile. One of the most recurring objects throughout is the figurine—this kitsch mantelpiece-dwelling ornament has been subverted in all sorts of weird and wonderful ways. Heads and limbs have been ripped off, figures are covered with flowers and butterflies and have had their heads transposed with birds (and vice versa). Granny would not be amused.

**Lemon Poppy Seed**  
Edited by Robert Klanten  
Published by Gestalten, £25.99

Ah, what's this? The publisher formerly known as DGV has finally discovered the joys of baking (well, it worked for Phaidon). Let's see... there's Hort's fairy cakes, Non-Format's favourite baked Alaska recipe and Lord Saville's sausage rolls. Only joking. It's nothing of the sort, though quite why it's called Lemon Poppy Seed is anyone's guess—maybe inspiration struck in the queue at Starbucks one morning. The contents are loosely gathered together under the pretty much all-encompassing subhead "Multitasking Creativity", which is something any designer worth his or her salt would be capable of, one hopes. It's pretty much standard-issue DGV format from the past five years—there's the good, the bad and the so-so, the big fish and the plantlife, no text, no context, just acres and acres of eye candy for the visual junkie (if you'll pardon the clichés). There's not much here to get your teeth into, but sometimes there's simply no point in fighting these things—all you can do is revel in the sheer Technicolor vacuousness of it all and enjoy the ride.

# Review Six Books





**Last Stop**  
By Ralf Obergfell  
Published by Breedon Books, £14.99

One of Mayor Boris's more appealing (if financially impossible) vote-winning tactics was to promise the return of the Routemaster bus—universally loved by all Londoners (except perhaps the ones that have fallen off them) and, much to everyone's disdain, retired from all but a fraction of the routes in late 2005. This lovingly put together paean to London's favourite method of transportation comes courtesy of Ralf Obergfell, who photographed the bus during its final eighteen months of service, mainly on routes 19 and 38. Steering clear of cliché-ridden shots (although there are a couple on Westminster Bridge with Big Ben in the background), the book also goes behind the scenes to the bus garages and drivers' canteens, featuring the drivers and conductors as well as the bus's numerous iconic design features. We see the Routemaster at its best (speeding through the West End at night), and at its worst (looking very tragic with the seats ripped out in the garage). Definitely one with kerb appeal.

**Fashionable Technology**  
By Sabine Seymour  
Published by Springer Wein New York,  
£30.50

For longer than Grafik cares to remember, discussions about technology and fashion invariably featured assorted science geeks banging on about wearable computers. While wearing an oversized parka with wires sticking out of it may have made you resemble the quiet one from the Pet Shop Boys, it was hard to see how it would have any effect on the man in the street. Fast forward a few years, and we're all wired up to mobile phones, iPods and Blackberrys, meaning that we can get emails about knock-off Viagra 24/7, wherever we are (that's progress for you). This fascinating book looks at the next generation of textile-based inventions, where fashion and hi-tech collide to form all sorts of intriguing (if often impractical) pieces. There are far too many to single out here—some are decorative, some are practical, some are whimsical and some (e.g. the walking/talking Sevenmileboots) are just plain barmy. It's definitely worth investigating, but a word of warning—unless you are one of life's natural-born exhibitionists, we really wouldn't advise anyone to hit their local baths in Manuel Torres's Spray-on Bikini just yet.

**Custom Kicks**  
By Maki  
Published by Laurence King, £12.99

According to Laurence Harvey in *The Manchurian Candidate*, the world is divided into two sorts of people—those who, when entering a room, immediately switch the TV on, and those who, when entering a room, immediately switch it off (and they generally end up getting married to each other). Well, Grafik begs to differ. We reckon that the world is divided into two sorts of people—those who think that drawing on a box-fresh pair of trainers is the height of nonconformist cool, and those who think that it's a crime against the goddess Nike. This neat little volume from Dutch design and illustration studio Maki is obviously aimed at the former camp, and showcases the work of 140 artists and designers who have used shoes as a medium of expression. There's something for the ladies here too—as you'd expect, it's trainers which dominate the proceedings, but there's a smattering of stilettos, high-heeled boots and a pair of roller skates to mix things up a bit—plus a very useful guide to anyone who's never pimped a pair of shoes before. There's an enjoyably eclectic mix here from the self-consciously cool to the more novelty choice. Hamburger shoes, anyone?

