

UNDERWAY

THE BEAUTY OF THE NIGHT SKY OR A GLORIOUS SUNSET ARE IMPORTANT POINTERS TO THE ORIGINS AND THE ULTIMATE FULFILLMENT OF OUR HEART'S DEEPEST DESIRES. BUT IF WE MISTAKE THE SIGNPOST FOR WHAT IS SIGN-POSTED, WE WILL ATTACH OUR HOPES AND LONGINGS TO LESSER GOALS, WHICH CANNOT FINALLY QUENCH OUR THIRST FOR MEANING.
- ALLISTAR MCGRATH

28 SEPTEMBER 2006

Fabulous Flickr

Please note: My pictures of the Willem Boshoff installation is now up on my Flickr page. Bigger and better! (P.S. Love to read your comments, so don't be shy...)

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 6:55 PM 0 COMMENTS

27 SEPTEMBER 2006

Look here, Mommy, it's a racing track!



ABOUT ME



MARGARET JANSEN

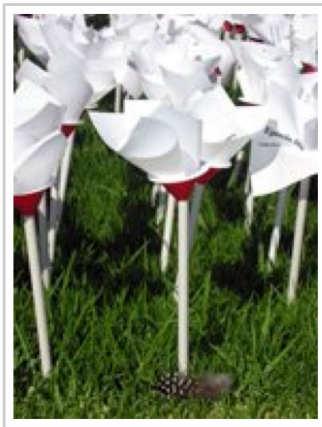
For a lack of better words, I'm simply going to answer the following two

questions: 1. Who? Hello, my name is: Margie, I'm a graphic designer. (Soon to be *freelance* graphic designer, illustrator, photographer, world traveller and Humanitarian NGO founder.) I'm currently employed by a packaging design studio placed in a very creative corner of Cape Town, South Africa. 2. What? I would like to use this space to share my creative work, ideas, ideals and inspirational finds with you. I'm a great believer in collaborative efforts: Feel free to comment, criticise or compliment to hearts content. Njoy!

[VIEW MY COMPLETE PROFILE](#)

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I had Friday off (because I had worked on Women's Day... shameful!), so I dashed off, in great excitement, to see the Willem Boshoff installation at Kirstenbosch. After some walking around, I stumbled across neat rows of lower-to-the-ground-than-expected white canvas flowers. Each craft-fully tied down with a red cup and stuck in the ground with white PVC pipe stems. "I have chosen red for the cups as red is the colour for threatened species - the red data list. Red is also the colour of the poppies in the memorial fields of Flanders," says Mr. Boshoff. He spent 25 years finding 15000 endangered plant species. The botanical and every vernacular name of each plant is printed on the canvas cloth. Though the effect is impressive and the concept brilliant, you

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LINKS

DRAWN!

Eduardo Recife

iconwerk

Meu

on-my-desk

Sabrina Ward Harrison

Stella im Hultberg

The Bin

Warren van Rensburg Photography

ARCHIVE

August 2007 (1)

July 2007 (1)

February 2007 (3)

January 2007 (5)

December 2006 (3)

November 2006 (6)

October 2006 (6)

September 2006 (13)

August 2006 (1)

www.flickr.com

shouldn't expect to be amused for hours. Pack your picnic basket or hiking boots and of course your camera.

(Blissfully unaware of the greater meaning behind the work, two young boys were using the two columns made by the negative spaces between the flower boxes as "racing tracks". Sweet.)

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 1:58 PM 0 COMMENTS

26 SEPTEMBER 2006

Random rhyme

If all the world were paper,
And all the sea were ink,
If all the trees
Were bread and cheese,
What should we have to drink?

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 5:38 PM 1 COMMENTS

20 SEPTEMBER 2006

Garden of Willem

Willem Boshoff is an award-winning South African conceptual artist. His current installation at the Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens, Cape Town, is not something I'm about to miss out on. (I'll be going there this weekend and will be sure to post pictures by Tuesday.) *Garden of Words III* is a memorial garden for threatened plants in anticipation of their extinction. Read more [here](#) and [here](#).

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 6:47 PM 3 COMMENTS

19 SEPTEMBER 2006

3-fold inspiration

One. Meet Daley Muller of Meu. Aren't those just the most delightful illustrations? And local! Couldn't keep my sticky paws off the Meu range at Exclusive Books at the V&A Waterfront. (Not available at Canal Walk's branch, though.)

Two. Robot Johnny is the editor of DRAWN!. His last few posts have been on the film festival currently on in Toronto where he lives. He's given up writing Haiku's, but, don't fret, he has come up with *Cinema Toast* - "poems" on movies. Entertaining. Plus, I just think documentaries and film festivals are such a great way of getting insights into other cultures... Oh, by the way, his last post

Missing Plug-in

what is this?

what is this?



is on Bunny Chow by South African director, John Barker.

Three. Emmie has inspired me to get that camera out more... And to get outdoors more with camera in hand.

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 7:06 PM 3 COMMENTS

18 SEPTEMBER 2006

May I interrupt?

Last Friday evening I rushed off to meet friends at the 3Continental Film Festival currently on at the Ster Kinekor Nouveau cinemas at the V&A Waterfront in Cape Town. 37 films about globalisation, human rights and social justice from Africa, Asia and South America. We saw *Favela Rising*, a documentary directed by Matt Mochary and Jeff Zimbalist. It deals with the issues surrounding the slums of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Afro Reggae is a performing arts group that has gained great respect amongst the communities, government and even some drug lords of these *favelas*. Anderson Sá and the rest of his group offer workshops for the youth of the *favelas*, so they may have an alternative to getting involved in drug dealing. At its core the vicious circle of money, drugs and the military police's inhumane disciplining, is about a lack of hope. But Afro Reggae is covering vast ground: Since their instigation in 1993, their participants have multiplied dramatically. And the number of drug-lords has decreased from more than 150 to less than 25. One man - who, at a young age, lost his brother in a brutal attack by military police - with no real hope, made a choice to turn away from easy money in the drug business. He used his passion for writing, music and percussion, dance and performing, to spread a powerful message and has had great influence and has seen astounding affect.

The Thursday night before, I went to a meeting at the church I belong to, *Friends First*. A South African couple, who established a church in the UK 6 years ago, is visiting in Cape Town and spoke on leadership. (Did you know that even an introverted person can influence around 10 000 people in his or her lifetime?) His message was one of love. Leading from this basis and not relying on authority, is the key. A good leader knows the needs of his or her followers.

These inspirational events come aptly at a time in my life while I conjure up ideas to somehow make a positive difference in the lives of people who need hope and inspiration. I believe we've each been created with a unique set of abilities and interests, so each of us might do our little part in the greater scheme of things.

Like I've mentioned before, I strongly believe in collaborative efforts and the concept which is community.

On Saturday morning I scratched out sets of old notes my final year lecturer, Charles Maggs, frequently used to pass on to us. I came across an extract from a book by Hillman Curtis; *MTIV - Process, inspiration and practice*. Here are a few bits and pieces:

This section of the book is based on the talk I gave that day. And the talk itself grew out of a simple practice of sharing we have at the studio.

It worked like this: If I was reading a great book - say, Making Movies by Sidney Lurnet, (Vintage Books) - I would hand it to our creative director, Ian Kovalik, as soon as I was done. He would then read it and hand it to Homera. Or perhaps Grant would come in, and, as his computer was starting up, turn and say to me, "Did you see the Viola show up on 57th Street? It's amazing," at which point I would shake my head in disbelief, ashamed that I wasn't aware that there was a new Bill Viola show. I would recover quickly enough, though, to mention the Phillip-Lorca diCorcia show at the Pace/MacGill Gallery in SoHo. And so on.

The point is that, in our small shop, we're always collecting inspiration and sharing it with each other. We then use those shared inspirations as starting points, like blueprints or maps, for our own work. Sometimes we even find ourselves using them to directly communicate our ideas, suggesting "a little Kyle Cooper" (Donnie Brasco, not Seven...) here, and "a touch of Brockmann" there. And always, always chanting the classic Hemmingway line, "Write the story, take out all the good lines, and see if it still works" as we go.

What I hope to make clear with this section is that we are all, as creatives, trying to do the same thing. That regardless of our medium, whether it be design, poetry, fiction, painting, filmmaking, or any other form of creative expression, at the core of everything we do lies the need to communicate.

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In preparing for my speech at the flashforward conference my co-workers and I started talking one day about epiphanies - those inspirational flashes that come seemingly out of nowhere - and drew a diagram to illustrate the idea.

But in talking more and looking at the diagram, we started to

question the direction we were moving in. We agreed that we had all, at some point, felt divinely inspired. But upon reflection, we concluded that before such moments occurred, we'd actually been seeking out inspiration, often unconsciously. Ultimately, though, we were always working toward inspiration.

It was in that room too that I learned not to think about anything that I was writing from the time I stopped writing until I started again the next day. That way my subconscious would be working on it and at the same time I would be listening to people and noticing everything... - Ernest Hemmingway

So we talked some more and came up with a new diagram. We discussed inspiration and where it comes from, what fuels our creative energy, and even why we became designers in the first place. As we talked it became clear that we, as creative, are walking a shared path, strewn with the ideas of those who have walked it before us. We felt that once on the path, we couldn't help but pick up some of those ideas on our way.

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In any given week, I'll visit a gallery, buy or borrow a few CDs, see a couple of movies, and study my favourite movies on DVD. I'll read art history, film theory, fiction and poetry. And, of course, I immerse myself constantly in design books and magazines.

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Finally, one night at home, my wife Christina was sharing with me some of the highlights of a poetry conference she'd just attended. ... Of many readers and lectures she heard, C.K. Williams really made an impression on her, as he would soon make on me as well.

A member of the audience asked the poet what he does when he's creatively blocked, when he can't start the next poem. Williams responded without hesitation: I fall in love with a master. Instead of immersing himself in the world of his peers, he explained, he looks further back, to those who perfected their craft long ago, to those who originally inspired him to write poetry when he was a young man.

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Our job is not an easy one. It takes tremendous dedication and

patience to become and remain successful in the creative field. We spend our days thinking of new ideas; we don't have the luxury of checking out mentally if we get tired and working on cruise control until our energy returns.

But as hard as being creative can sometimes be, its rewards are worth every bit of the effort. And to know that we're not alone, that countless others have followed and continue to follow the same difficult path, comforts me.

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I begin with an idea, and then it becomes something else. - *Pablo Picasso*

And so, I've changed my mind on having a blog theme each month. Instead, I intend this blog to be a sort of anthology of inspiration. A place where the thoughts, ideas and finds can be exchanged, borrowed and loaned. So, please, if you have anything to add, don't hesitate to comment.

(Rather than finishing my list of blog bookmarks, I'm going to be more selective when introducing the rest to you.)

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 1:38 PM 0 COMMENTS

15 SEPTEMBER 2006

And the list goes on, and on...

Here's my list of *Bookmarked Blogs*. They're mostly on illustration, so if you're not the gallery hopping type... Please add links you'd like to share to my list. Njoy! :)

MY ILLUSTRATIONS

This is my own **flickr** account. :) I've started adding some sketchbook thumbnails and will be adding a couple of photographs soon that you might enjoy. Please let me know what you think!

KAREN LITTLE

Ms Little is a med student from Pretoria. This link is to her exceptionally written and very funny blog. From there you can also link to Milfs Anatomy, her medical blog - also excellent. So good, in fact, that it was recommended by the NHS BLOGDOC himself.

BEWUSSYNSTROOM

GM se blog is in 'n pragtige Afrikaans. Hy is 'n student van Stellenbosch. Sy foto's is, onder andere, besonders goed... En natuurlik wys hy wie's baas onder journaliste.

ARCADIA

Arcadia is in Pretoria for most of the year; though she's been traveling to Cape Town and elsewhere to film her very own documentary. We can't wait to hear about the subject matter - she's being very secretive. In the meantime her excellent writing will suffice.

EMMIE SEES ...

...the most wonderful things. Treat yourself to a squiz through her archives.

KERRI SMITH

An acclaimed illustrator from the USA. She's written a couple of books too. I found her advice on starting out as an illustrator (and other topics) quite helpful.

You might have heard of DRAWN!. It was rated by TIME magazine as one of the top 50 websites. Of course, I've been supporting them all along! :)

I've run out of time, but there are a few more I'd like to share with you... So, keep watching this space.

Have fun this weekend!

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 5:53 PM 2 COMMENTS

12 SEPTEMBER 2006

Lists

In an effort to give *Underway* better structure, I've decided to dedicate a theme to each month of the year. My first theme (for the remainder of September) will be **Lists**.

I'm a list person. I make lists of everything. I have to-do lists, grocery lists, I list my goals (short-term, middle-term, long-term)... When things are written down, in an orderly fashion, it gives me sense of control. It's there, it's noted, I know I'll get around to it. When I don't write things down, they aimlessly float around in my head. And they interfere with my other thoughts. And I hate it when that happens. (Read in Meredith Grey - from Grey's Anatomy, of course - tone of voice.)

The Interpreter was on television last Sunday evening. In the movie Silvia Broome's brother, Simon, keeps lists of all the names of people who died - often in brutality - during political struggles. By naming each individual, and their cause of death, he lets them rest with dignity.

Lists give their items meaning, and noteworthiness. (Of course, I'm by no means comparing items on my to-do list to people who died for a cause.)

Do you keep lists?

(I've created a Flickr account too. So, instead of showing my sketchbook here, I'll be posting it here. There are only 2 little illustrations up at the moment, but there's lots more to come!)

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 1:22 PM 7 COMMENTS

11 SEPTEMBER 2006

Underway

As of tomorrow, my blog name will not longer be *Where to Begin*, but *Underway*. I think Allistar McGrath sums it up nicely for me:

Many have found the awesome sight of the star-studded heavens evoke a sense of wonder, an awareness of transcendence, that is charged with spiritual significance. Yet the distant shimmering of stars does not itself create this sense of longing; it merely exposes what is already there. They are catalysts for our spiritual insights, revealing our emptiness and compelling us to ask whether or how this void might be filled.

Might our true origins and destiny somehow lie beyond those stars? Might there not be a homeland, from which we are presently exiled and to which we secretly long to return? Might not our accumulation of discontentment and disillusionment with our present existence be a pointer to another land where our true destiny lies and which is able to make its presence felt now in this haunting way?

Suppose that this is not where we are meant to be but that a better land is at hand? We don't belong here. We have somehow lost our way. Would not this make our present existence both strange and splendid? Strange, because it is not where our true destiny lies; splendid, because it points ahead to where that real hope might be found. The beauty of the night sky or a glorious

sunset are important pointers to the origins and the ultimate fulfillment of our heart's deepest desires. But if we mistake the signpost for what is sign-posted, we will attach our hopes and longings to lesser goals, which cannot finally quench our thirst for meaning.

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 5:46 PM 1 COMMENTS

08 SEPTEMBER 2006

Friday afternoon diary

Here are to unrelated, but noteworthy events.

Firstly, for those in the area: My artist friend, Ian, told me that Tamsin Really will be the guest speaker for SWAG (an art group) at the Somerset West public library tomorrow (Saturday, the 9th) at 14.00 pm. She is a visual artist, illustrator and photographer.



And secondly, young Suri's passionate parents have finally decided to let the rest of us see her through the eyes of Vanity Fair. I wonder if she will jump (on couches) before she walks? They DO make a very pretty family.



POSTED BY MARGIE AT 1:58 PM 2 COMMENTS

07 SEPTEMBER 2006

A few random thoughts



Just a quick post while I steal a moment at work...

This is a quick illustration I did last night. I think she looks a bit like me, so she'll be my new profile snapshot.

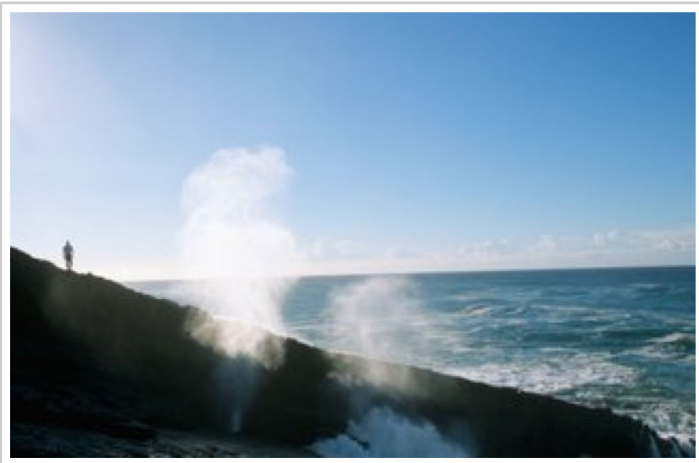
Next week I'll post some thumbnails from my sketchbook.

Thank you to everyone who's been visiting, commenting and emailing about my infant blog.

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 3:29 PM 3 COMMENTS

04 SEPTEMBER 2006

Finding faith



...when we
came over
the rise
where the
sea and
land
opened up
to us, I
stood in
stunned
silence and

then slowly walked toward the waves. Words cannot capture the view that confronted me. I saw space and light and texture and color and power ... that seemed hardly of this earth. Gradually there crept into my mind the realization that God sees this all the time. He sees it, experiences it, knows it from every possible point of view, this and billions of other scenes like and unlike it, in this and billions of other worlds. Great tidal waves of joy must constantly wash through his being. It is perhaps strange to say, but suddenly I was extremely happy for God and thought I had some sense of what an infinitely joyous consciousness he is and of what it might have meant for him to look at his creation and find it "very good" ... he is simply one great inexhaustible and eternal experience of all that is good and true and beautiful and right. This is what we must think of when we hear theologians and philosophers speak of him as a perfect being. This is his life.

Dallas Willard, *the Divine Conspiracy*

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 1:11 PM 3 COMMENTS

01 SEPTEMBER 2006

My second post

I'm dedicating my second post to the endorsement of my BLOG name.

At 24, I'm close to embracing my quarter life crisis and in anticipation of this event, I have resorted to feeling overwhelmed at times with thoughts like: "Where am I on my way to?!"

Heading somewhere, implies a STARTING somewhere. Hence the concept: Help M find her way. (Think of a maze in a children's activity book - the aim to reunite the mouse with it's cheese.) As a lover of maps, travelling, and blank canvasses, "BEGINNING" seems a very apt word. The idea is just to start. Start saving, start drawing, start thinking, just start.

POSTED BY MARGIE AT 5:59 PM 3 COMMENTS

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