

Speaker 1

Welcome to the More Life Podcast, where creative problem solvers and entrepreneurs talk about squeezing more out and finding meaning in this crazy thing we call Life. Let's dive in. Welcome back, guys. Again for another episode of The More Life Podcast this week. I'm here at Ren from Ottawa Design Club and from the Zen from the Ottawa Design Club in please say Hello to everyone.

Speaker 2

Hello, everyone of them.

Speaker 1

We were literally just talking about how to stop myself to make sure that we're not spoiling all the information for all the listeners who are listening worldwide about getting into print, getting jobs as designers. And immediately I thought of when I was in College, that was like, everyone's dream was to design a magazine. That was like, the coolest thing. Now it's like, I don't know, make a cool branding logo or a website. But way back, yester, years, it was like if you were to design something that would be featured in communications art, that'd be like, Whoa, you're really good.

Speaker 1

The world has changed a lot since then, and yet you guys have chosen to come out with a magazine in the year 2020. I would love to know all the answers to all the questions.

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

Tell us a little bit about yourself first, and then we'll jump into the time a little bit after.

Speaker 2

Sounds good. Yeah. I'm a graphic designer that actually works primarily in print. Still. So that might give you guys a clue of my age. But I've been in design for over ten years now, and a little bit of my background how I got into design is, well, I went to College at last to get a job here in Ottawa is a French College. I took her three year graphic design course, and actually, before starting that course, I didn't even know what graphic design was. There was nothing.

Speaker 2

We didn't talk about graphic design in high school or anything like that back then. So I had no clue what it was. And I was a bit lost. And I kind of applied blindly to the program. And, yeah, it was a good idea because it clicked pretty quickly, and I knew that I was in the right thing in the right part. That was great. So there's a program that I got internship that we get kind of during our studies, and that wasn't in a design agency.

Speaker 2

And I got a job from that internship. I was very lucky. Everything was going very well, so great. But I kind of hated it. I hated working in the agency. I think I was lacking a lot of confidence. I was a little too fresh out of school and that world of agency and extreme pressure, deadlines and having to come up with these amazing ideas. And I think that was me putting that pressure on myself and not really anyone else. But I kind of quit that and quit that job.

Speaker 2

I worked in other things for a while, I did a bit of freelance, and then I got the opportunity, got offered a job at the University of Ottawa. So all this Oops rambling to say that I work in house as a senior graphic designer at the University of Ottawa. I work in a marketing team there, and I've been at the University for eight years.

Speaker 1

Which when did you become senior? Because that's another one of those things. That when I was back in school, like, man, one day I'm going to make I went to work in an agency and be the senior

designer or one of the senior designers. That's awesome.

Speaker 2

Yeah. I started as a junior or just graphic designer with my title, and I did a little bit of project coordination. I replaced someone while they were away on The Journey Leaves. I got experience in project coordination, which is huge. And I'm very grateful for that. And I've been senior graphic designer for three years now. And at first I was a solo designer as a senior designer in the new team I was part of. But now there's another designer. So we're a team of school. Yeah, that's great.

Speaker 1

Are there also, like other junior designers or like anybody like associate interns that work at the University, like, for their program, if they have a design program.

Speaker 2

They don't have a graphic design program at the University of Ottawa. So there is a visual arts program, but there isn't anything specific to graphic design, but there is a few departments were over 4000 employees at the University of Utah. There's a lot of marketing teams in there for faculties or for different things. So I work at student affairs. We're only two designers there. We work with about ten marketing agents, social media, strategist, translators, etc. And then there's another big team of marketing that I used to be part of.

Speaker 2

Where there's more designers. I think there's four designer, UI, designer, project coordinators, etc. So there's, like, two big, bigger teams marketing. And I'm part of one of them.

Speaker 1

I got to check out the auto website and check out all their stuff.

Speaker 2

Yes.

Speaker 1

It's really cool. Like, I don't know. The more I learn more about people who are in this industry, the more I kind of feel like it's all about networking. Personally, I think I've said this before it could have even been on our mutual friend is the episode. But I do love Ottawa. It's one of my favorite places in Canada, and I've been lucky enough to be a lot of places. It's like the big little town that could you know what I mean? Like, there's so much vibrancy there, even though technically it's smaller, it still feels or bigger, but it feels a little smaller in Quaint.

Speaker 1

And the more I meet people, the more I start to find people online. I'm just seeing how we all have a shared experience. We all have busting your jobs or learning the crafts as you go and just developing these similar skills. And it's so unique and so amazing. I want to hear a little bit more about how you feel like you progressed, or maybe something that happened while you were learning more about design, print principles that you feel like, oh, I really feel more comfortable because you mentioned you were a little bit, maybe putting extra pressure on you when you're in an agency, which, like, get.

Speaker 2

Yeah, exactly. I was really lucky because and what I love about the University of Auto is that they really trust the designers to be the experts in our field, and they don't try and kind of micromanager be the hovering our director behind the shoulder. And when I first started, I was freaking out. They gave me my first project, and I was so scared, like I was working on it, didn't want anyone to see what I was working on while until it was done. But I sent it and waited, and I was so scared.

Speaker 2

And then the feedback came back super positive and constructive. And from that point on, I think I was like, oh, I think what freaked me out so much of the agency was that our director was very, very

blunt. And I probably wasn't used to that. And then seeing someone giving feedback in a different way in a little bit more of a friendly way, constructive way, it was just better for me. So it was an environment that I could really thrive in. There were two senior designers to help out another junior designer.

Speaker 1

I should say, have you ever seen The Devil Wears product?

Speaker 2

Yeah.

Speaker 1

My first agency and only agency job, because I swore I'd never go back was a little bit like that where there was somebody who was, like, Meryl Streep in that movie and all the downcast intern who is just trying to be a good junior designer and can do nothing right. And my boss would show up and not not in real life. But the part in the movie where Meryl Streep just keeps throwing her coat and bag on the girl to it. That's how they gave feedback to the work that I would do and spend hours up until, like, 200 in the morning doing that's kind of how it was 100%.

Speaker 1

Understand what you're talking about.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Exactly. And it's funny because when I announced that I left, they were very disappointed. So my perception of the whole thing, I think skewed from my lack of confidence.

Speaker 1

I'll give you a little bit more credit because I feel like there was this era. This is before Bernie Brown and all this cognitive understanding of how to treat employees. It was like, the tougher you are, the more I like you because I'm trying to push you to do great work, and that's such a conflicting, manipulative environment, because it's like, okay, after the fact, I understand that you say that. But during the process it does not feel good. And I don't want to do my best work because I'm scared.

Speaker 1

I'm literally scared right now because I don't want to disappoint any of the people that I'm working with. But, yeah, it's such a unique world, like working in an agency or developing your craft in the way that you move through your career. I feel like a lot of people who listen to this podcast do things on the side. We have this new era of the side hustle or people who freelance or do something just a little bit after work is over. How did you find doing freelance work?

Speaker 1

Because, again, it's one of those things. It's a shared experience. Everyone who a designer has done it. And usually I did that for six months, and then I got a real job because you freak out and you have so much stress trying to do it. And then there's other people who kind of like, oh, yeah. I just started freelancing, and it was great. And now I make six figures and everything's wonderful.

Speaker 2

Yeah. It's funny to say that because I for a while self like, not a real designer. Not as cool as the other designers because I was working in house. I wasn't a freelancer or having my own business. And it seemed like everyone out there was saying, quit your job, quit your job. You have to, you know, become your own boss because freelancer. And for a while, I was like, oh, my gosh, like, I want to be a freelancer. And I would put all this energy after work, like he said, to do projects to build that portfolio.

Speaker 2

That's outside of just you auto stuff. And I did. I did a bunch of it, but I realized I really like my job.

Speaker 1

Why am I doing this again? Who said this was cool? This hasn't cool. I don't like this. And it's true. Not for everybody.

Speaker 2

Yeah. I think that yes, of course, if you're unhappy and your job, there's other things out there you can do. But I'm very fortunate because the University of Auto is so broad. I get to work on varsity athletic stuff on one day, and then the next day, I'm working on a report for mental health and wellness. It's so varied. So I think I hit the jackpot with that job. Yeah.

Speaker 1

I also see, sorry to cut you off there. Or delay is coming through. No worries. It's all good. I also have seen other people who are very happy. I have a friend of mine who works for a local city here in the GTA, been there 15 years right out of College. Same job. Loves that. Cannot pick yourself doing anything else. And I just find it once you find it, you don't always have to have this whole, oh, we're going to democratize creativity and all that type of stuff.

Speaker 1

It's like, no, there's a lot of people who are happy with a job, especially if it's a good job, especially if it sums of benefits. Hello. We live in Canada. Yeah, I see you wearing glasses. I wear glasses, too. That's not covered in our, quote, unquote free health care. And also, if you find a job that supports you and helps you become better, that's like, the ultimate. I feel like I do that a lot now in the role that I'm in in running our agency. If I try to be as good of a boss as possible, if I feel like the employees are well taken care of, they'll do their best work.

Speaker 1

And that has been proven to be very true. I just try to do nice things. And I think a couple of weeks ago we use slack for messaging back and forth. I put, like, a Starbucks card in there. I said, listen, the Starbucks card is on auto refill until 06:00 tonight, so I don't know. You guys figure it out, whatever you want to do. But after 06:00, that card is done. It doesn't exist anymore. And people posting pictures with their Starbucks drinks and Chris trying to take care of people and make sure that they're feeling that they're growing professionally and that we kind of I have a more casual approach in general.

Speaker 1

So I also like to have that as well in the business. At some point along your journey, you met and were introduced to the wonderful is, how did that happen? What was it that drew you towards her other than her looking like Livy McGuire?

Speaker 2

No, that's the only reason. No, it's a really funny story, actually, because I had always wanted to. I love creative conferences, creative events and activities that was going on in the city. We have a creative mornings. We had I know eventually I love creative bombings.

Speaker 1

Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 2

I would always go to those things most of the time on my own. And I'm a more shy person introverts. So I'm not the one to go to those events and talk to anyone, to anybody else, just kind of hang out my own, drink, my coffee and have my Donuts. But I always wanted to be a part of them in a bigger way somehow. And I was like, I could start my own thing someday. But like, how do I do that? Who do I do that with?

Speaker 2

I don't know. And I have been following the Montreal Design Club for a while. I had never been, but I was following them on Instagram, and I saw the post one that that said, Montreal Design Club is coming to Ottawa, Ottawa Design Club. And I freaked out. I was like, oh, my God. It was just

announced, you know, not much. It's a little teaser. And I reached out to the account, and at first I somehow thought it was someone from Montreal that was gonna do a one in Ottawa.

Speaker 2

Anyways, I thought I was talking to someone in Montreal at first, and I was like, hey, if you need volunteer, I'd love to be in the wall in this. It sounds great. Blah, blah, blah. And then Izzy was on the other side of that message and she invited me for coffee to see. So we didn't know each other at all. She had already announced The Automat Design Club is when we met, I met her coffee with her and we she said, Well, how can you help?

Speaker 2

How do you want to get involved? And I wasn't exactly sure. We just kind of had a chat, left it and said, let's touch base later. And I got back to her the next day and said, Well, I can help out as a volunteer at your events, like, just give me a task and I'll do that. But what I would really prefer is if you don't mind, be part of the actual organization and the core team of gathering from club. So I just put it out there and it worked out.

Speaker 2

I started helping out with a few things and we just really got along from the get go, and it worked out really well. I think that her strength. She's a social butterfly, people person. She's so great at that, connecting with people. And then so we balance each other out very well in that way. So it's been great.

Speaker 1

What's your Instagram handle again? It's the shy designer, the shy creative, the shy creative. Even though you don't seem shy on this podcast. I'm just saying, what would you say your style is, though, because I know you work on a wide variety of things, and I've seen some of your artwork. For those of you who are listed, you can go to the Shy Creative on Instagram, and you'll see some of the stop. How would you describe a bit?

Speaker 2

That's a good question. It's funny, because I never thought I had a style until we had our panel recently about finding your style. It is just because I like, I do client work. I don't consider myself an artist. I really consider myself a designer, but the Zen, we always put a piece ourselves in the theme that represents the theme, and that has pushed me to create stuff that's a little bit more a focus on solving a problem focus. It's more just an interpretation of a word or a theme.

Speaker 2

So my style is very light, cheerful, colorful and type focused, typography focused. And I'm not a photographer, and I don't pretend to be. So my best friend is typography shapes and color patterns. Yeah, but I don't know how to do it very bubbly and bright.

Speaker 1

Are you artistic by nature? Like, do you draw some of your own elements and then import them into, like, Figma or illustrate or anything like that? Or are you more of a mouse and pen tool? I strictly design on the computer type of person.

Speaker 2

I am an artistic person. My mom is a visual artist. I grew up drawing my whole life and everything like that. I have let that go, as many people seem to do in adult life for some reason, although exactly. But I do sometimes will incorporate some hand drawn or hand Britain fonts in my stuff. But it's not like the focus of my some people. You'll go on Instagram Fetus. You can tell there's that hand drawn hand.

Speaker 1

Yes.

Speaker 2

Tactile element. You don't get that from me very much, but I do try to do it. Actually. We're working on Z number three right now. And in that one, I have very a piece with a lot of hand. Oh, really?

Speaker 1

So I remember when I first told my mom, but I wanted to go to school for graphic design, and she's like, what is that? And my family is from Haiti, and we spoke French at home, and I didn't have the vocabulary to explain it. I was just like, I don't know. You design a sign on a building, and she's like, Can you get a job with that? And I'm like, yes, she's like, Are you sure? I've never seen you draw anything before. I don't have to draw anything.

Speaker 1

There's something called Photoshop. And she was not impressed at all. Again, as a child of an immigrant, engineer, doctor, lawyer. Those are the top three. The arts. Not so much. Unless you're going to be, like, the best. Okay. Like, you were like, a savant pianist or cellist or something like that. And I was not that either element down in that position as well, because I took piano lessons for 13 years. But that's for my therapy session next week. We're going to solve that eventually. One day.

Speaker 1

Yeah. Like, trying to explain to somebody who knows me personally how I'm a designer. She's like, Well, you didn't draw anything growing up. I've never seen you, like, sketching things, but I think I lean more towards the problem solving creativity where I still have a very linear brain. And it's almost like a Rubik's Cube. And if you do, it just the right way. You get the colors to align and the idea to come across. And the message to be clear. And I feel like both of those things are almost necessary.

Speaker 1

If one is not better than the other, you need to have the more artistic stuff because there are some things that there's only so many geometric shapes, which is my style. I love geometric shapes. There's only so many geometric shapes you can use for, let's say, somebody who wants to sell hand soaps. It's like, okay, wow. That's interesting. It's supposed to be very feminine and delicate. And here I am with my rhombus and ovals and square. It's not going to give the same vibe that people are looking for, but I'm trying to broaden our horizon, and it's very unique.

Speaker 1

I think I even spoke about this. For those of you who are listening on the podcast. Now I did a take over for the Auto Design Club. In fact, it's still going on right now, even though it's 730 P-M-I already stopped a picture. You're going to be on your own channel later on tonight. And in that I asked a question about business or artistry. How do you balance or should you or how do we find the median between the two? Because I'm at the point right now where I don't design as much as I used to.

Speaker 1

I now manage people who design things more than actually design things. We have a developer and a designer and a copywriter and a project manager, but I'm almost like now I'm like the creative director where I set the tone. I still approve a lot of the mood boards because I love photography as well. So those things matter to me, which images are we associating with these messages and the colors that go along with that. So I feel like there's less of me in the artistry, even though I used to tell people I'm not somebody who just designed things.

Speaker 1

I am a designer now. I feel like I'm like, I'm an agency owner. Really. I'm not a designer, technically, because I only do it sometimes, maybe occasionally on Friday, if you know what I mean. Like, it's so random and rare, but yeah, I'd love to hear I know you posted something, but I love to hear even more of your thoughts about that about, like, you work a more refined balance of the two where you work somewhere, that there is already the structure built for you and probably a pathway for progression in your career in built in there as well.

Speaker 1

The longer you stay and in your dealings with artists in Association to the vine and the Design Club,

how do you perceive that whole idea of, like, if you are so good at your art, it becomes a business. Do you lose the artistry behind it?

Speaker 2

All right. I don't know. I feel like art and design aren't either the same thing. And in my different people I've worked with, I've noticed a big difference in people that are artists first and people that are designers, or, let's say, problem solvers first. In the way that how they are receptive to feedback, the people that are really struggle with feedback. And because it's more of a personal thing that they're doing. Whereas I tend to be able to detach myself very easily from the work I put out there.

Speaker 2

And because it's not art, it's not an expression of my emotions in any way. Yeah.

Speaker 1

It's not tied to you personally, you know.

Speaker 2

No. Exactly. And I do a little bit like you in my role as a senior designer. Now I design a lot less than I used to, and I think it's because I recognize that the designer I work with now, she's better than me. She's right out of school. She's great. She's amazing at everything. And I'm like, oh, well, I will guide you and be a bit of an art director. And I actually really like that. I like that progression because I realized at this point I'm I still love design.

Speaker 2

I still keep up to date with everything but the people that are, you know, people that are better than me at it. And I'd rather they do it so that the work is the best that it can be. And anyway, I think it's a teamwork. I do push them to make it even better because I see it in a different way. And I know the client maybe very well at this point. But that's why I was saying it was a mix. I do still do design, and I get to kind of pick what I work on.

Speaker 2

I guess I don't know where I'm going with this. I feel like I'm going in circles, but.

Speaker 1

Yeah, I feel that I feel that, like, our current designer creative partner, I think, is 18 years old, and somebody referred her to me, and she designed a logo for me, and she wanted to use it for I told her I'd pay her. She said, no, I'll do it for free. Could I use it for my application for school? I said, sure, of course. And once I saw her first ideas, I'm like, hey, are you looking for a job? And she was like, okay. And I was like, You're really good.

Speaker 1

Do you know that? And I'm sure Isabel is listening right now to this. She edits parts or makes quotes. What's up, Isabel? This is another Isabel, not the first is I know this is getting confusing now, but the skill level is really high, and it's coming way younger. And I feel like I can help shape some of these ideas and helps save some time to somebody who's really talented and say, Listen, if you want experience, I can give you tons of work and you'll have tons of experience.

Speaker 1

And then when you're ready, you can move into whatever role you want to because you'll have the portfolio to back it up, because we're like I said in the beginning, I now manage people who get to do the cool thing. It used to be me. Like, yeah, I designed that. That was really cool. But it's like, no, I give direction to the thing. That's really cool. But now Isabel gets to say, I designed that. That's really cool. So it's just a progression in how the work goes.

Speaker 1

And I feel like I end up being more creative on this side than what I was. I don't get to use the skills I'm not up to trend on. When I was in school, it was Cork Express, and now we're talking about Adobe in

design, and now we just changed our whole agency to Figma, literally, like, three weeks ago. So we're trying to stay relevant and using the right tools to do the right job. But it's harder for me to keep up with all of that also want to grow this into something that funds my next project, because to me, that's the ultimate goal with creative partner and even creative partner is what allowed us to do the podcast.

Speaker 1

That's what funds the podcast, because we don't have a sponsor. If anyone's listening, it wants to sponsor this. And then we also have other stuff that's coming down the pike as well. But, yeah, it's just a unique flow of the artistry, the business side or even the management side. And how do you balance those two things? And how do you see the light at the end of the tunnel? Because there's a little bit, at least for me in maybe year two and three, because I'm on year four now where it felt like all I was doing was writing systems and processes, helping people make decisions.

Speaker 1

And I'm like, I'm just a manager. I could be a manager at Walmart right now. The way I'm working, making schedules, doing payroll. It's not as sexy as it once was. I want to shift gears a little bit about more about the Zen and talk a little bit about that. There is I got addition to I never even new Isabel Pale, like is for the purposes of this, we're going to call her is I never even knew it. And then I she came on the podcast.

Speaker 1

I figured out what the Zen was. I ordered the next one as soon as they came out. I know you guys had lots of issues with getting the colors just right. I chewed the bubble gum, I opened it up. It was fantastic. And I would love to know the inspiration behind it. How you guys kind of started with that concept. It's kind of like a for designers by designers, a love letter back to the community. And it's really, really cool. I love it.

Speaker 2

Yeah. So the first edition, and as he talked about it when she was on the podcast, let it was about creativity during quarantine. And that's how we started the Zen was that was the theme or the idea that sparked creating a Zen? We're like, there's so much going on in our community. They're creating amazing things during this lock down. And so we wanted to put that all together into in. But then we also were like, this could be interesting as a a long term project, a publication, not just a one time thing.

Speaker 2

So we started to think, okay, well, how are we going to structure this? Will it be a theme, a different theme each time we brainstorm all these different ideas. And we did decide to kind of to have a theme guide each issue. And is the number two pool is the famous as pop culture. And I think we went for pop culture just because everything's so grim.

Speaker 1

And that's true.

Speaker 2

And pop culture seemed like something fun. And also pop culture is something that we had been or the aspect of pop culture that is, television and movies that we had been consuming. Or that's all we had been doing for the last year when we were all in lockdown. It's just like Binging TV show. So I think that's a little bit what sparked the theme. But then it grew way beyond that. And we created a very interesting narrative around it. And Isabel, with her background in visual arts.

Speaker 2

And I think she talked about that during her episode. If you guys want to go back and listen to it. But she talked about how in visual arts she could she learned how to create a narrative or in an exhibit. You kind of create a narrative throughout your pieces. And that's what we want to do with the genes. But we don't really have control on what the pieces are going to be. But if a call for submissions, right. So we send it out there, give the theme to everybody, and we wait to see what happens.

Speaker 2

But through pop culture came the idea of pink and bubblegum pink, and, you know, Britney Spears and Barbie. And then we realized there was a very interesting parallel between chewing bubble gum and pop culture. How, you know, a gum is disposable and you get sick of it very quickly. But then you throw it out and it just kind of stays there forever. It doesn't decompose it's just stick to the bottom of your shoe to lots and just follows you everywhere. We were super pleased with how it all came together.

Speaker 2

And then the pieces that were submitted fit with that narrative. So well, we're very thrilled with that issue. Some people talk about pop culture in a very positive way. Some people talk about it in a very negative way. And so it's kind of those two sides of everything, right? There's two sides to everything and how we consume it. How social media, our relationship to social media anyway, there's a lot of interesting ideas in it. And so the format of the Zen for those of you that might not quite grasp it is that it's a small magazine that is filled with each spread is an artist artwork as well as their kind of statement about the theme.

Speaker 2

So they'll explain they might explain their art a little bit, but also kind of give and mini essay are many thoughts about even a limited publication. Yeah. So limited publication of 250 copies. We still have a few available.

Speaker 1

So everybody is on the podcast. We'll get one right now. It's only, like, \$15.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Exactly.

Speaker 1

Not living.

Speaker 2

That great. We're working on the third one right now, and I'm working on the layout. Raw is the theme. So that one's super interesting, so different from the last two.

Speaker 1

And I was debating submitting something, but you ain't got no time for that.

Speaker 2

To find a time. We got so many submissions every time we get more, and it makes our job harder. We will have more artists featured in the next one and some new things. We always try to bring in some new ideas and new things. That a pile of beans.

Speaker 1

But yeah, well, I feel like Isabel is a very good community person. And with my passion projects like the podcast and I also have another thing we're waiting to launch, which is like a clothing brand. It's always something that helps bring a community aspect. I feel like my job for so long as a solopreneur and freelancer. It's always been by myself. So I created selfishly. I created a podcast to talk to my friends. I'm like, you meet all these cool people at network event, especially pre COVID and on Instagram, especially.

Speaker 1

I think the time at Isabel, I just said, You're cool. I like your vibe. And then she was like, oh, thank you. And then you should come on my podcast. I have a podcast. And then she said, sure, that's how it happened. But this is all part of my master plan. I spend too much time in front of the computer and you don't always get a chance to talk with friends or the cool people that you you have in your contact

list. But he's like, I don't have a reason to talk to them.

Speaker 1

This is the reason it's the podcast.

Yeah.

Speaker 1

And you guys do that, too. I feel like I know the Ottawa Design Club was intended to be in person events that side of the community aspect. But you almost problem solve that and say, well, in the meantime, we could have this thing that everyone can have this shared experience of. We all submit stuff together. Some people get selected, and then we all read it together and we all talk about it. And that's really, really cool. And I'm sure whatever else you guys do, we'll have some type of community aspect because I feel like you guys do a really good job of, I don't know, keeping tabs on the culture, especially locally to you guys, which is really, really cool.

Speaker 1

And I think that's a creatives. I'd love to see even more of that kind of stuff, especially out here in the Toronto area. It's not as collaborative as I feel it is, at least from a distance what I see online in Ottawa or in Montreal or in other places, even in sometimes in British Columbia, in the States. You either the more of a communal hub. And I'd love to see more and more of that. I'd love to know even a little bit about some of the I guess, the pitfalls or the hardships you got to go through with, like, a passion project timelines, budgets.

Speaker 1

The money has to come from somewhere, right. Like, for all these things, printing stuff, which I know that you guys had issues printing that color for the cover of the second edition, just because or is he posted about it. And yeah, it takes a lot of work, even this podcast, a lot of work. It really is a labor of love, and it costs a lot of money. So it just does. But I'd love to hear a little bit about the Zen and how you guys are overcoming these obstacles in a passion project context.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Well, for sure, you touch on a lot of things. But the first thing I can talk about is that it's a passion project thing. So this is obviously. Well, maybe not, obviously. But I'll tell you now, for people listening, it's all volunteer thing, you know, with the automated design clubs, a non for profit. The money we make with the Gene helps fund the next Zene and so on and so forth. Even that, like you said, it costs a lot of money to print. So we need sponsors.

Speaker 2

And we do have amazing sponsors. But that's a challenge in itself is finding sponsors for something. Asking people for money is not an easy thing.

Speaker 1

But more physical product.

Speaker 2

Yeah, exactly. But we've been amazed at the support from the community. People have reached out to us and offered to sponsor a project because they want to be part of it. So that's amazing. It's not all of them are like that, obviously. But we did have some luck there. And people that is crazy to me that people that I've admired from a distance are now part of this project with us. And the club has given media opportunity as the opportunity to become friends with those people blows my mind.

Speaker 2

The the photography studio that takes our photos for the Zen House of Common. They're like the coolest photography studio in town. Everyone knows that. And they're part of our project.

Speaker 1

Which I allow my mind. They're cool.

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. They're very cool. They're too cool. They're like, you know, how I said, I don't know if I did, but how I felt like I wasn't cool enough to talk to the cool kids at these conferences and everything like that. And now now part of these. They're part of our project. It's just amazing that's one thing, funding it, finding money. And then printing was a huge the V number two is a roller coaster ride. It started off well, but it's all volunteers that help us.

Speaker 2

So we have people that review the text for us, make sure there's no mistakes there's, people. And while we take care of the layout, organizing everything, making sure we have all the proper files as some of the files we receive in the submission might not be exactly the same size. You have to go back and forth and get those things from everyone. So it's a lot of organization of the content, then getting it reviewed. But you're working with volunteers, right? Have other things going on in their life, and it's hard.

Speaker 2

It can be hard sometimes to to just have everything on the deadline that you need, when it's when it's volunteer and when it's during a pandemic where everyone kind of out of it and doesn't feel like it. And then the printer. Well, we sent our files to print and the lock down, whatever lock down that was number three or four was listed. But then we went back into lockdown and the printer had to close shop for a while. And and we didn't know if it was going to get printed in time.

Speaker 2

We didn't know if it would get printed at all. So we were a little bit discouraged when we weren't, you know, hearing back from our printer. So we decided to see. Okay, well, let's try a different printer. Maybe they can do it because we didn't. We had to announce a date to everyone. We had built this up for a while now, and having a build up with no drop is kind of just kind of hanging in space there for a bit. So, like, we were talking about the colors.

Speaker 2

So with this other printer, we got our color proof back, and the inside of the scene is everything. There's a lot of pink in there, and the colors were off. Some of the photography was very off. The contrast was completely out of whack, and we can't do that. We can't do that. Someone's photography. It's important that it's nice and that it comes out nicely and that every issue is like every copy is the same. We don't have same storing. Yeah, exactly. So we just struggled a lot, and we ended up getting it done, getting it printed and we're happy.

Speaker 2

And it's good. But it was it was hard because we've released it probably a month after we were originally supposed to. So even us had kind of lost a little bit of our moment of, yeah, the energy.

Speaker 1

It takes a lot. And printer sometimes can really screw things up. I used to be in charge of messing things up. My first job ever out of College was in a printing press, was the pre flight technician. And then I was also the plate master. So they showed me how to make the plate for this or press. And, man, it wasn't good. It was not good. I'm needless to say, I'm no longer a plate master where you have to make these very delicate sheets of metal engraved in this machine and you have to hold it very gently and all this type of stuff and bring them over to our head print technician and get that stuff loaded up.

Speaker 1

So I just stuck with the computer and the design need list to pay. But I totally get it when you trying to produce something, you know, and I appreciate that you guys keep a very high level for yourself. You're like, no, we want to. If we're going to do it, we're going to do it right. And that's really cool. Yeah. Ariana, I'm so happy that you were able to be with us. This was so much fun. I feel like I already know

you just because in talking with Ivy and us talking on IG and me looking at all your artwork on Instagram, I feel like we're like lost friends, but yeah, where can people find you?

Speaker 1

Where can people ask you questions to be under next podcast or anything like that?

Speaker 2

Yeah, I am at the shy creative on Instagram. I am not the most active person on Instagram, as you probably saw Bar, but I am there, and I do answer questions. If everyone wants to reach out, and then we're at OTT Design Club for the Auto Design Club. If you want to be part of that community, everyone is welcome. And then, yeah, OTT Design Dot Club is our website and you can find all the info there to purchase the theme.

Speaker 1

That's awesome. I'm really excited to see what people have submitted for the Raw issue. And before we go, actually, is there a subscription for can I buy a twelve pack?

Speaker 2

Twelve past. We're a biannual Zen. I guess our subscription would be for two, but we don't have a subscription model at the moment. Not because there's such small quantities for now. Not for now. Maybe in the future.

Speaker 1

Maybe in the future.

Speaker 2

That's it. And then look out for issue number three. It's going to come out in October. It's all it goes in on wood.

Speaker 1

Awesome. Well, guys, this has been the more life podcast. Go check out the Auto Mall Design Club. You'll find out the information for the being goal and follow Arian there. You'll be able to see some of her artwork and some of her typography styling super glad that you guys have listened all the way through Peace out by.