

Features

Danny's job log: 1

Written by Danny Smith, September 2010

Danny Smith is a Fine Art graduate. He has a job as a teaching assistant, an unquenchable thirst, and a fledgling freelance career.

Hello, my name is Danny Smith.

I enjoy drinking and writing, and seeing as no one is willing to pay me to drink (believe me, I've looked) I am trying to write for money.

I am one of those not-quite-young, not-quite-old, 'creative' types. One of this generation's flotsam bobbing around on the tides of society, knowing what sort of job they want, but finding themselves in the cultural storm of a country rapidly reorganising itself. Living under a Tory government (and make no mistake, this is a Tory government) with no strong opposition is not a good place for anyone wanting to earn a living being creative.

The degree I have is a Desmond Tutu in Fine Art, and while it taught me many useful things; critical reasoning skills, idea development and networking. It also left me with a deep resentment and mistrust of the art world. In fact, the reason my mark was so low is because I pretty much dropped out in the last year, deciding never to make art again. I had decided writing was what I wanted to do, so set about doing that.

Since then I have been plugging away sending my writing to various magazines and websites becoming a regular contributor at various times to a local listings magazine, a comedy website, and a regular columnist. I have yet to be paid.

About six months ago after a series of lubricated conversations with a friend of mine, we decided that if the magazine as a format was to survive, then the magazine itself would have to become a fetish object. We also lamented that most magazines were created backwards, that is the advertisements come first, then the words and illustrations are fitted around them.

So in a dying industry and with no real money to gamble with we created our own.

We gave it a theme, knowing full well that complete creative freedom is one of the most paralysing things a person can have. We put out a call for writers and illustrators contacting the ones whose blogs or articles we already enjoyed and after the lightest of editorial feedback, laid it all out.

We reckon that we can make our money back on a series of events where the entry prices includes a copy of the magazine, but this is still unproven and I am spending a lot of time trying to organise the grand opening, which happens at the end of the month.

I am bricking it.

I don't know what I'm hoping to achieve, certainly not money. It is a project for its own sake, a reaction to the frustration of trying to break into an industry closing its ranks and tightening its belts.

So looks like I'm still making art after all.



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