

2 Shillington Winners of TDK Awards '20

Big congratulations to our two Shillington winners of the TDK '20 Awards! The competition is now in its 8th year, with entries coming from around the world and only 30 winners. This year, part-time Sydney graduate Scarlett Starling was selected by Sally Woellner from Canva in Sydney and part-time Brisbane graduate Sydney Su was selected by Vince Frost from Frost* Design in Sydney.

The Design Kids invited 10 industry leaders to judge the awards this year. They were chosen based on their industry

involvement and standard of work. As part of the judging process, they were told to “pretend they were hiring for a junior role and to pick 3 people they would get in for an interview based on all the applications.” More than half of them also have a background in teaching and have a clear understanding of student limitations. The TDK 2020 judges included Micheal Bierut, Pentagram (New York), Jade Purple Brown (Chicago/New York), Vince Frost, Frost* Design, (Sydney), Lauren Wong, Character (New York), Sally Woellner, Canva (Sydney), Mitzi Okou, Where Are The Black Designers (New York), James Horwitz, Two Times Elliott (London), Giulia Giannini McGauran (Melbourne), Evan McGuinness, Bielke&Yang (Oslo) and Johanna Roca & Jason Little, For The People (Tasmania).

Read on to meet the two Shillumni winners from Australia and hear their stories!

Scarlett Starling, Shillington Sydney Part-Time Graduate

Sally Woellner's pick: Elegant and restrained, with a beautifully warm and human touch that makes each project relatable and inviting.

Brilliant use of illustration, this portfolio is such a joy.

How does it feel that Sally Woellner from Canva selected you as a winner of the TDK Awards '20?

It feels incredibly surreal to have my work recognized and to be honored with this award, especially by someone so accomplished as Sally Woellner.

Could you share your process behind the Public Thread branding identity project?

Public Thread is a custom T-shirt company that's aimed at creative individuals wanting to expand their designs and ideas into real-life, good-looking, quality T-shirts. I wanted the brand to focus on the creators and the consumers, starting from the name, Public Thread (threads for the public), all the way to the welcoming, engaging and interactive copy and illustrations.

Public Thread is inspired by making, sharing and getting support from the public. Shirts designed by you, for you and others like you, creating a connection and community. The brand's strategy focuses on the quality of the product, being approachable and convenient for the consumer.

What were you up to before Shillington? Why did you decide to study design part-time?

Funnily enough, I already had a Bachelors's Degree in Graphic Design prior to studying at Shillington, which may seem bizarre that I doubled down on design. When I finished up my degree I pretty much went straight into a grad job. It was for a media agency company, and while the people were wonderful, the work wasn't as fulfilling as expected. I wasn't working as the type of designer I wanted to grow into and there wasn't an opportunity to learn the skills I was interested in or improve my critical and conceptual thinking for brand development.

After about a year, I didn't have anything new to add to my portfolio and I felt that I has outgrown some of my university

projects and I was commuting for 3 hrs a day which didn't leave much time to find freelance work to fill my portfolio. I wanted to expand my knowledge, fill the gaps that my grad job didn't give me and build my portfolio to gain further employment in the area of Graphic Design that I was most interested in.

I had heard the Shillington program was great and was impressed with the work produced by previous students. I had no objections to doing a course that starts from the very start again, as I wanted to surround myself with like-minded people, grow as a designer, network and have a space to think conceptually again.

How did you find juggling the course work and your job?

It could be hard at times as I was commuting from Wollongong to Sydney for work, so it was tiring at times, but I'm lucky my grandparents live in Sydney so I didn't have to commute back at night after classes. I made it a priority and it helped that I was loving doing the type of design I was interested in again.

How has your career changed since graduating from Shillington?

After Shillington, I went straight into working for myself. I was fortunate that I met some absolutely wonderful people in my class, which has led to some amazing jobs, collaborating and working with some incredibly talented people. I knew I wanted to focus my work on branding and illustration, which I have made a priority. I have worked on a wide range of projects, which have allowed me to keep growing as a designer and illustrator and I'm very thankful for the great opportunities and clients I've had.

Where do you find creative inspiration?

I definitely use Pinterest, Behance, Dribbble and Instagram to

collate inspiration. I also look for and draw inspiration from the talented people I've worked with and any real-world examples that I find.

Check out Scarlett's website and Instagram for more.

Sydney Su, Shillington Brisbane Part-Time Graduate

Vince Frost's pick: I would hire her tomorrow. Everything I look for in a designer, great thinking, strong ideas and art direction.

A lovey breadth of work 'crafted' with a careful eye.

How does it feel that Vince Frost from Frost* Design selected you as a winner of the TDK Awards '20?

It feels like Christmas morning and I'm giggling with joy like a kid at this gift he left me. I am very honored to be seen by Vince and looking forward to working with him in the future.

Could you share your process behind the Wabi-Sabi handmade project?

After reading the book several times, I began to discover what the author wanted to say about the idiosyncrasy of beauty. Part of it was to understand that there are certain aesthetic sensibilities that resonate with certain people. It is felt before you can intellectualize about them. This concept of 'Wabi-Sabi' discovers the beauty in imperfection, whilst accepting the cycle of life and death. The Japanese philosophy moved me deeply in a difficult year because life is unexpected. With COVID, I slowed down and started redesigning my life to allow myself to see beauty spill out of brokenness everywhere so I can be human.

The art direction came from my accidental play in my own playground where I forgot that I left a decaying flower in the freezer. A few days later, I rediscovered it while reaching for ice cream! My desire was to approach the subject with honesty and authenticity. The result of the frozen decaying flower injected this emotional aspect that seamlessly melds into a Wabi-Sabi like experience. Good things come from your own playground.

What were you up to before Shillington? Why did you decide to study design part-time?

I was working full-time as a high school teacher and counselor at Citipointe Christian College. Initially, I reached out to one of our alumni who is also a Shillumi to ask about her experience at Shillington for one of my students. Then I started entertaining this idea for myself... and decided within three days after talking to the most incredible human being—FRANKIE YOUNG!

How did you find juggling the course work and your job?

I think prioritizing is the right word because you can never juggle or balance between both important commitments. My

calendar was scheduled according to when I worked most effectively while triaging all tasks to avoid burnout. Let's be honest, I clearly wasn't thinking straight to work full-time while studying part-time at Shillington.

Big thanks to my strong support both at work and at home! Advice for all future students—your mental health is important.

How has your career changed since graduating from Shillington?

It opened a door for me to dream and believe like a child again—it's very special. The great Tia Queen said in our class that 'people like to make your dream come true!' and that will always stay with me as I journey on.

Where do you find creative inspiration?

As a high school counselor and teacher, I get to collect stories. It's an incredibly humbling job to be able to sit with humans at their most vulnerable state. I am forever drawn to spaces, poetries and the beauty of craftsmanship. Personally, analog photography taught me a new way of seeing in this fast-paced world.

Every day, I'm collecting random moments that I lingered-upon and basically just taking the stuff that God has created and letting it shape my life to become art. My friends say my eyes light up when I see 'a moment'. So, if you were having a coffee with me and I suddenly see some light flickering on the table, I will take a photograph.

Check out Sydney's website and Instagram for more.

Big congratulations again to Scarlett and Sydney! If you'd like to study design and win awards like this, learn about the Shillington course in New York, London, Manchester, Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane or Online.

<https://www.shillingtoneducation.com/blog/2-shillington-winner>

s-of-tdk-awards-20/