

This year **D&AD** released as part of the student awards a brief to rebrand the **City Of London**. The project set by Venture Three, stated that this was a valid brief because "We need the city to work for our saving and our student loans." Students, who are one of the groups who had suffered the most as a result of the banking crisis with widescale withdrawal of higher education funding, were now being asked to use their talent, suppress their anger and rebrand the very people who were causing their hardship in the first place.

Occupy Design contacted **D&AD** to ask why this project was being set, only to receive the answer that students would at some point have to learn to suppress their opinions anyway, so maybe they should get used to it now. This we felt unacceptable, why seek to tell students that they have to limit themselves, stifle their opinions before they have even got started on their careers? And of all the places to ask them to use their goodwill and skills for why the City Of London? A completely unaccountable organisation that is at the very root of our problems. Asking them to work on this project sent out a very bad message about the moral issues involved in design.

As a result we thought we would set up our own competition to tell people what students really think of this and **D&AD**, an organisation who appear to be completely unsympathetic and out of tune with the students they are claiming to help. So we want you to rebrand the City Of London in a way you think honestly reflects your feelings about it. A very simple but clear brief which will give you and others space to express their true feelings about what the City has done and the false expectation from the 'industry' that as young designers you will not be expected to say what you think, but keep your head down, shut up and just work for the money because it's the only way you can build a 'career' or get on in life.

The deadline for submission is **10th June**. The best entries will be put on our website on the **26th June**, the same day as **d&ad** announce their winners. This will stand as a counter to their project that shouldn't have been set in the first place. It will also be a place where those people who believe doing this kind of rebranding is utterly against everything they stand for.

There are no prizes, your work will be immediately be in the public domain. Don't be scared, the idea of your design as a commodity that can be bought, sold, paid for won't function in this case because we have been talking to the **Occupy London** movement about this competition and they would like the best work to be used as posters and other publicity for the upcoming campaigns against The City. Much better that your stuff is out there on the streets, telling people what you really think than on a piece of board doing nothing in a dusty **d&ad** judging room.

So why do all this? You get the satisfaction of knowing you are connected with your own views in your work, not forced to compartmentalise them. You also can feel proud that you have helped the **Occupy London** movement, something that has brought these issues into the mainstream of British life when politicians didn't have the courage to stand to do so. We at **Occupy Design** get the satisfaction of knowing we have helped show that Design is not the commodified field that most people believe it to be. That the new generation of designers are actively challenging this perception not being suppressed in their aims to change the world for the better through design.

Your submissions can be any size or any form but must be easily and cheaply reproducible. Send them to: **rebrandthecity@occupydesign.org.uk**



“**THE SCALE OF THE SUPPORT CURRENTLY PROVIDED TO UK BANKS HAS FALLEN FROM A PEAK OF £955 BILLION TO £512 BILLION, BUT THE AMOUNT OF CASH CURRENTLY BORROWED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO SUPPORT BANKS HAS RISEN BY £7 BILLION SINCE DECEMBER 2009. IT IS LIKELY THE TAXPAYER WILL BE PROVIDING SUPPORT FOR YEARS TO COME.**”
NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE

The financial crisis of 2008 can be seen as the symbolic end of neo-liberalism. For 30 years previously, finance, big business and the market were to run everything in society. The unquestioned dogma was high profits = wealth creation = increasing societal well-being. The illusion of stability came to an abrupt end when the reckless finance crisis of 2008 brought the world to its knees. The UK, for instance, was two days away from the cash machines running dry. The banks were bailed out and this bill has now been imposed on taxpayers. The 99% will feel the impact of this crisis for decades.

One single organisation is to more to blame than any individual banker or politician for the financial crisis. One organization is largely responsible for the corruption in our dysfunctional economic system. One organization functions as a lobby group on steroids at the heart of our political life. This one organization is the City of London Corporation. A recent report from the Centre for Research of Socio-Cultural Change details how the City of London Corp., acting with the power of a city state, shaped a thirty-year settlement. The deal gave financial institutions in the City of London freedom from regulation in return for the resulting tax revenue being ploughed into public sector employment in ex-industrial areas. Typically, the City of London Corp. and the banks used the lack of regulation and the enormous power they won with this agreement to vastly increase profits – while not fulfilling their own side of the bargain. There is clear evidence that the tax revenue benefits from financial services have been grossly exaggerated. The City remains a major force in lobbying for financial institutions to continue to remain unregulated (i.e. to get its side of the bargain in the settlement).

The City Lobbyists undermine the democratic will of the British people. The City culture of high bonuses and light regulation is inherently anti-democratic as the rest of the UK suffers the consequences of extreme austerity – caused by the banks! The City of London Corporation, through its consistent pressure to deregulate the sector, is largely responsible to the financial crisis in the UK.

DE REBRAND

 **Occupy Design**

FOR FURTHER INFO & LINKS TO RESEARCH THE CITY
GO TO **WWW.OCCUPYDESIGN.ORG.UK**