

who are we, really?

## the Wisdom of Creative Process

by steven august papa

“This has never happened before!”

Clear as a bell, his voice much louder than the bustling sounds of the printer’s busy workshop, I can’t pretend I don’t hear him. Standing in the production office doorway, half-way across the building, I silently watch the crew beginning to huddle around the press.

“Steven,” the art director calls out as she waves, “You’ve got to see this.”

I wave back, walking slowly with a growing list of questions on my mind. Why is the art director calling me over? What’s going on? I thought the eight-pass layering looked fantastic on the color proofs. Were the interlocking elements too complex? With trepidation, I make my way toward the assembled group and continue wondering how it has all come to this...

Believe me, going independent in October of 1991 without a logo or a tagline was only intended to be a temporary situation. With each passing year I considered countless concepts. And, yes, I know that old cliché “the shoemaker’s children have no shoes.”

In between projects I continually asked myself “Who am I, really?” Writer. Creative Director. Motivational Speaker. Director. Producer. I can wear any number of hats depending on the assignment, client or colleague. My mission statement, both personal and professional, has always been to be recognized, regarded and respected as a hallmark of creative excellence. It’s noble, sure, but don’t I need a *hook*!? Shouldn’t I have an allegorical logo or a mysterious motto like boutique agencies in New York, LA, London, Milan and Paris?

In theory, I just needed the right concept and nothing seemed to fly. In reality? I was finding out that time (and gray hair) waits for no man.

One sunlit morning, while sipping coffee on the back porch and reviewing notes for a client meeting, a ladybug landed on my hand. “Fabulous,” I thought, “good luck has come to me!” I smiled. Me. I paused. I questioned. Me?

No, I was, momentarily, stunned. *Me!?*

And then, finally, the light came on. *Me!* Steven. August. Papa. I couldn't believe it. After spending so much time thinking my corporate identity should employ an abstract art treatment or an esoteric tagline; all I ever really needed to be was me.

Transformed by this new but-obvious-as-the-Italian-nose-on-my-face awareness, I felt confident as well as a bit apprehensive. Could I create something effective? Do I have realistic or unrealistic expectations of perfection? Fear of failure? Fear of success? Am I afraid of change? Do I have the courage to create?

Excited and inspired, I went about producing all-new media: logo, website, on-line writing portfolio, studio promo reel and print collateral. Collaborating with a wonderful team of creatives, I was enjoying every moment experiencing the very process I've been leading my clients through for nearly twenty years...

Everything appeared to be going smoothly yet, here at the printer for our collateral press check, I'm being called over because "this has never happened before." Preparing for a worst-case scenario I take a deep breath, cautiously step forward and attempt peering over the huddled onlookers.

"Dude, check it out. Awesome!"

Wait. What? Did he just say *awesome*? Motioning me to move in closer, the pressman nods and parts the crew.

"Look," glows the art director, "isn't it amazing?"

And there, resting serenely on the metal grid above the ink well and gently waving its wings back and forth is a remarkably enchanting butterfly.

## the wisdom of creative process

Stepping outside of our proverbial box, we become empowered by the experience of change making the world ever new.

Guided by the power of vision, authentic creativity materializes when we accept ourselves for who we are and discover our courage to create.

☞ Happiness is a butterfly, which when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.

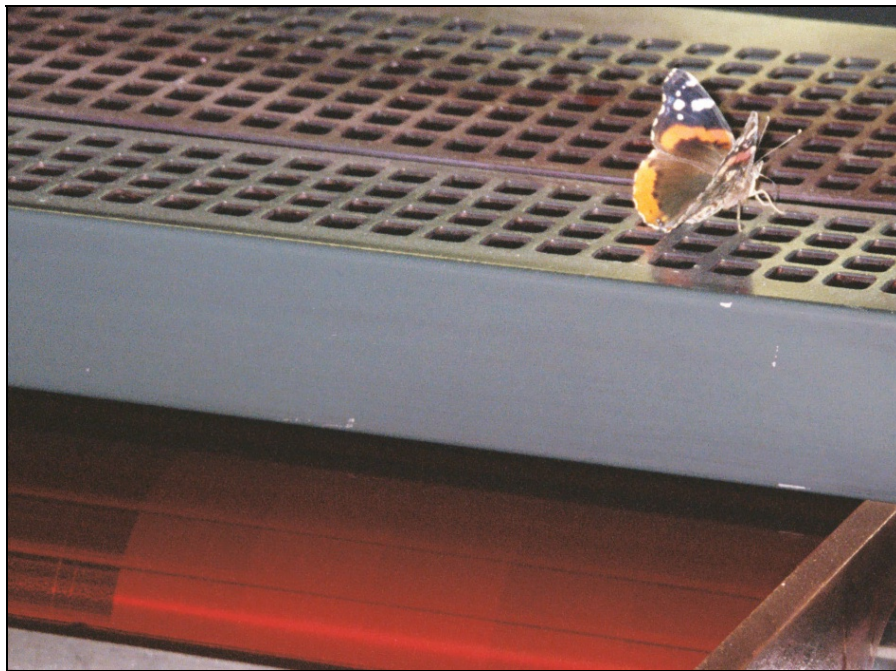
Nathaniel Hawthorne

☞ I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was a butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly dreaming I am a man.

Chang-Tzu

☞ How does one become a butterfly? You must want to fly so much that you are willing to give up being a caterpillar.

Trina Paulus



“stefano augustino lepidoptera” Photo by Tre Webb

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## a note from the author



**Collaborate. Communicate. Conceptualize.** “There are three essential personal abilities that, when cultivated, empower us to step outside of our proverbial box and experience change making the world ever new. Whether we’re at home, school or the workplace; our willingness to collaborate, communicate and conceptualize makes all the difference in achieving our professional and personal goals.”

With inspirational and motivational conversations, essays and short stories, Steven August Papa warmly illustrates the power of vision as a key component to happiness and success.

## | the power of vision



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