

A Week In The Life Of Richard Brownlie-Marshall



The Pret brand is injected throughout



Richard Brownlie-Marshall is an Edinburgh-born designer and creative living in London; he has worked with brands including Zizzi, Candy Kittens and The Archbishop of Canterbury. Richard's past role as Head of Creative at Tossed saw him establish all areas of its design including marketing, packaging and interiors. He is currently the Creative Designer at Pret A Manger, working for the brand in the UK and internationally.

Saturday

On Saturdays I always try to organize something in the morning, so its gets me up early and helps me make the most of the weekend. Today I'm meeting up with a friend for brunch, and when I'm not frequenting my regular spots of Balan's Soho or The Book Club, I enjoy trying somewhere new. The location today is The Grain Store in Kings Cross, which is a great industrial space, where an open plan kitchen spills into the

dining area. I opt for yoghurt and chickpea pancake with chorizo sausage and avocado salad – highly recommended!

Over the years, I have been lucky to be given a lot of good advice and met some inspirational figures in the world of design, so that's why I like to make sure I am paying it forward by meeting up with those starting out in design or who might be considering a career move. ▼



Richard Brownlie-Marshall



The Tossed store at Westfield Stratford

▲ This afternoon I'm meeting up with someone just starting to consider retail design, so I take her to one of my first big projects at Westfield Stratford. We meet at the Tossed store I designed, and talk through project from start to finish and along the way notice how some things have been added or taken away since I've last seen it. It's funny to see how your work is altered over time, but I guess it's quite a nice feeling that the space breathes and grows long after you leave it.

Sunday

Sundays are altogether a more relaxed affair for me, and today starts at the Marylebone farmers' market, shopping for fresh Kale with my brother. Living in the area, I think everyone heads to the market, so you normally bump into someone you know. With weather not our side this morning, we retreat to our local haunt of La Fromagerie for something to warm up.

My brother and I live in the same townhouse, he's upstairs from me, so we

head back for a movie and make some Kale crisps from the morning's purchase. Afterwards, I have some writing to catch up with for my blog, which I do with a pot of chamomile tea.

Monday

The Pret A Manger head office is based at Hudsons Place near Victoria Station, so I head there to start my working week. Every Monday the creative team sits down to discuss all the jobs that are currently on-going and also which new projects





Menu or artwork?

Memphis, and tonight I'm heading back to see it for the second time. I don't normally go and see something twice, but as there's about to be a cast change over, I thought it was worth seeing another time – and it certainly was!

Tuesday

Tuesday morning at Pret begins with a complete team brief at The Pret Academy, along the road from the Hudsons Place office. At the weekly event, all departments come together for a meeting to report on the company as a whole and around the world. It's always taken by a different department and today is the pioneer team, reporting on the launch of the 'Good Evenings' store, which saw us reimagining what Pret would be like as an evening dining model.

▲ have to be briefed in. I have always been in jobs where there are a wide variety of tasks going through, and Pret is certainly no different. In any one week I could be involved in packaging, campaigns, interiors and web-based projects.

London is incredibly lucky to have so much going on in terms of performance, so I always take an opportunity to see something on the West End. One of my favourite shows currently running is

When joining the company, it was one of my bigger projects and looked into how a space could be used for breakfast and lunch, yet transform into a different dining experience after hours. We injected the Pret brand into

Today some of the items I am working on are store hoardings for an East London store and another in Hong Kong. This is an example of same mediums with quite different results, as for each hoarding we like to do something individual to get people excited about Pret's arrival. In Bethnal Green we are doing something a bit different for the brand and instead of using imagery, it's pared back to a painted grey background with gold and white cut lettering, telling the Pret story purely through typography. This is fun as it's a fusion of the brand and the area, and a great lead up to what the interior will also be.



The Good Evenings interiors feature a darker colour palette

Having a history in theatre myself, I think

the table setting with placemats, crockery and glassware. The interior takes on a darker colour palette and images are printed onto wood and craft paper to give a real depth of texture. The team brief is a great opportunity for all departments to see what work is going through the business.

After the team brief I'm staying in the Academy as I have a project looking at the online learning for team members and taking training to a more digital standpoint. Having done quite a few websites in the past, I quite enjoy getting into the

iconography and digital layouts.

In the evening I'm out to meet up with some of my Northumbria University classmates for a spot of pizza and a new find, Homeslice in Neil's Yard. They serve amazing 20-inch pizzas with great toppings and the wine comes in magnums, so watch out!

Wednesday

Today is quite a rushed day in the office, as I'm flying over to work in the US offices this afternoon, so it involves a lot of catching up

to round off projects before I go.

I arrive at JFK around 8pm and head straight to the Ace Hotel where I'm staying. I walk into a buzzing reception area-slash-bar, and after the long flight I don't know whether to check in or grab a drink first! The rooms are all individually themed, with a great mix of dark grey walls and book pages covering a statement wall. I have a perfect view of the Empire State Building from my room, so my trip already shrieks of Americana! It's an early start in the morning, so I soon retire to the comfort of the bed. ▼



Team briefings take place at the Pret Academy



Pret at Harbour Island in London's Docklands

▲ Thursday

Today I'm heading out to Boston for a shop tour, so I arrive at Penn Station for 8am to meet with the US Graphic Designer, Michelle. A new Pret has just opened in the station; so I have a quick stop off to pick up a coffee over ice and check out the store build. We take the AmTrack to Boston, my first time in that city.

It's a long day of visiting all the shops, and interesting to see the mix of stores and also see the teams working in the area. Overall it was a really positive experience to see how the Pret vibe translates around the world and I am left very impressed by the stores

we see. A lot of the layouts go through the UK office, so I can pick up where some elements might have been mis-represented on site and also have an opportunity to see where we can improve, knowing how we look in the UK.

To reward ourselves for the trip, and after recommendations from team members, we stop off at James Hook & Co for their famous Lobster Roll; a tasty way to round off the day-trip and much needed after being on my feet all day.

Friday

For Friday I'm staying in New York to

work at Pret head office located in Union Square. Compared to the London office, this is much smaller and probably closer to what Pret was if you go back quite a few years, it reminds me a lot of how it was working at Tossed. They are signing off the summer campaign today, so it's a busy day of finalizing artwork and getting it to print. While it is still fresh in my mind, I work up some drawings from yesterday's trip, proposing the changes in the store.

It's been a busy week, but I seem to have held off any signs of jet lag and certainly learned a lot from my brief time stateside.