**Penguin by Design: a Cover Story 1935-2005**


**Type of Research:** Book  
**Creators:** Baines, Phil and Pearson, David  
**Description:**  
"Penguin by design: a cover story 1935-2005" was commissioned to celebrate the company's 70th birthday. Although certain periods of the company's history have been well-documented in the design press, this is the first comprehensive overview of their cover designs to be published. The book draws heavily on the company's published archive at Rugby; the documentary archives of the company and its founder at the University of Bristol Library Special Collections; and interviews and email correspondence with many of the designers whose work featured in the book. I worked closely with the book's designer David Pearson to choose covers that represented the company's development, changing editorial policies and introduction of new series. Because of the period under discussion, the book also tells the evolving and wider story of the emergence of the discipline of graphic design in Britain from the confines of the printing trades. To more fully inform the discussion of the cover designs and their specific stories, each period is contextualised by a description of company development generally and the external forces which influenced it.

**Official Website:** [http://www.penguin.co.uk/nf/Book/BookDisplay/0,,9780713998399,00.html](http://www.penguin.co.uk/nf/Book/BookDisplay/0,,9780713998399,00.html)

**Additional Information (Publicly available):**  
Phil Baines  
Research Interests  
- Typography  
- Graphic design  
- Public lettering  
- Signing  
- Penguin Books  
Current Research  
My design practice includes high profile, one-off commissions; general graphic design for arts organisations; and type design. Underlying themes include an interest in history & experimentation, and in the relationship between form & content. History & experimentation are most obvious in the award-winning Great Ideas cover designs for Penguin Books. Two series of these have been published (2004 & 2005) with a third is being prepared. Ideas about form and content inform my approach to book and publication design and vary according to the requirements of a particular client. For some, my hand is almost invisible and the design arises out of careful collaborative discussions between myself, the gallery, and the artist or curator as appropriate; on other occasions, a more subjective approach is taken. Current work includes a books by Richard Layzell (for ResCen); about Alan Aldridge (for Thames & Hudson); and about Alison Turnbull's installation Vinus vitera L. at One Vine Street (for Matt's Gallery). A commission by Neville Brody for his Fuse project in 1991 led me into type design, and that first font gained considerable notoriety, and subsequent wider exposure as a 'Fuse Classic' when released by Fontshop International. In 2003 Linotype released Vere Dignum. Other fonts are in various stages of production or feature in my own design. My research interests are of two main kinds. One strand is closely related to my practice and includes aspects of graphic design history. Penguin by design has become central to this research into different aspects of the company's design continues. The other strand is an on-going photographic documentation of aspects of public lettering and signing. Much of this is a collaboration with Catherine Dixon and has resulted in articles, a book, website and many presentations. Current work includes documentation of the King's Cross railway lands.

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Phil Baines’s scholarly book, jammed with more than 500 covers, is a straightforward, no-frills chronicle of the evolution of Penguin’s design aesthetic and the publishing circumstances behind the icon. The tale really begins with Allen Lane, who hatched the idea to publish ‘cheap, good-looking reprints of fiction and non-fiction in paperback’. The classic horizontal grid was devised in 1935 by Penguin’s first production manager, Edward Young, and reformed in 1948 by Jan Tschichold, whose subtle changes (using Gill Sans and vastly improved letter spacing among them) solidified the Penguin iden