



# UPPERCASE



*a magazine for the  
creative and curious*

**19**



# UPPERCASE MAGAZINE FOR THE CREATIVE & CURIOUS

*In early 2013, it was announced that Art Central,  
the building that we called home since 2005, was to be demolished.  
This is a commemoration of UPPERCASE's first studio.*

*Various magazine letters  
along the gallery wall  
while busy work from  
every one continues  
making its progress.*



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF UPPERCASE

PHOTOS BY TRACEY AYTON  
AND JAHINE YANGGOL

Local Calgary readers will be familiar with Art Central, the building that has been UPPERCASE's home since its inception. Suite #204 was just an empty shell without shelving or lights when I first saw the space in late 2004. By early 2005, I was a happy tenant in a building concept with a lot of potential. With gloriously large windows, an old brick wall and a white slab of a gallery office, the space was endlessly inspiring and motivating. The building was a three-level complex located in the downtown core, it was home to artists' studios, galleries, shops, a restaurant and a café.

Initially, freelance graphic design was my main occupation and UPPERCASE-related projects were side projects and creative experiments. "UPPERCASE gallery, books & papergoods" sold greeting cards of my own design and handmade notebooks, hosted illustration shows, had a small selection of books on design and a nice supply of pretty paper goods for a growing number of walk-in customers. In tandem with the physical store, I began to sell my offerings online and to dedicate time to growing an online community through the UPPERCASE blog.

In 2007, UPPERCASE hosted an annual gallery exhibition and launched its first book. The *Shatner Show* was an illustrated homage to William Shatner (of Captain Kirk fame) featuring 70 illustrations of his life and career. Endorsed by the man himself, the show was a great success and was featured on international newscasts and garnered a lot of positive press. But more importantly, it showed me my true calling: publishing.

In short succession, I released a few more books and decided to launch a magazine modelled after my own creative interests. My blog readership had grown modestly and I hoped that if even a small portion of those readers would support a print endeavour, publishing a magazine on a regular basis could be feasible. The inaugural issue was released in April 2009. (And I officially "retired" from freelancing; there was simply not enough time in the day to do it all.)

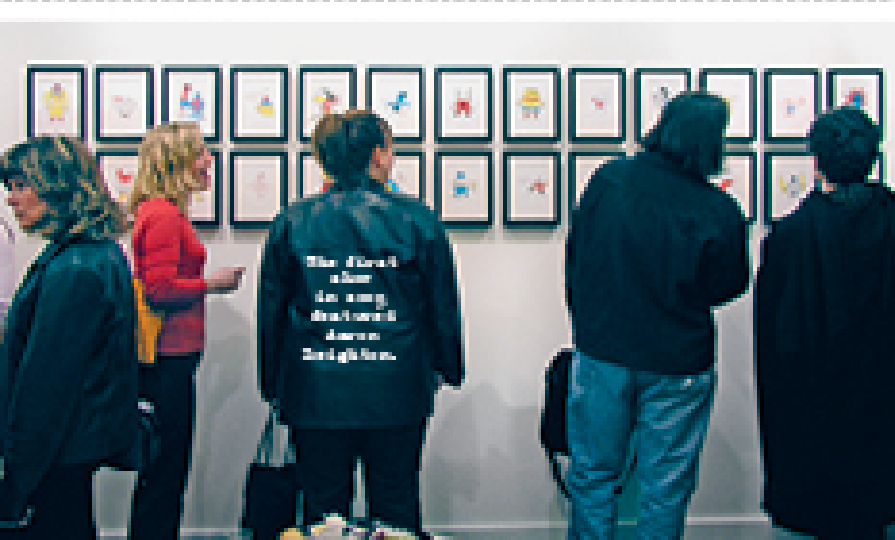




The massive atrium and skylight.



Business cards by Alison Carrington.



The floor is covered in tiny, beautiful drawings.

Fortunately, the magazine was well-received but I quickly discovered that it was far more work than I could ever have guessed. At the end of 2009, I closed the retail aspect of *UPPERCASE*. Expecting a baby as well, I knew that though I could juggle a lot at once, new motherhood plus publishing plus retail was just too big of an equation. I have no regrets about losing my retail store, though I do miss all those lovely stationary goodies and the joy people expressed when stopping by for a visit!

A couple of years ago, the Art Central building was sold to a new owner—a property company that purchased the building along with many others in the downtown core. They purchased the building—they did not, however, take on stewardship of the Art Central concept, a concept that had been hurt by the economic downturn and seriously malnourished for many years prior. Tenants relying on foot traffic were struggling and vacancies increased; the once promising arts hub had lost its momentum. In spring, it was confirmed that the building will be demolished to make way for a skyscraper.

My work and my life have been intricately woven with Art Central for eight years. At first it was difficult to say goodbye to the place I have called my creative home for so long. As you can see from these photos, the space was vibrant, with great natural life and full of the staff I loved. From gallery shows, book launches and button-making workshops to mass-producing 10,000 handmade notebooks, the space adapted to what we needed to accomplish. Publishing books and a quarterly magazine has been far more challenging and exhilarating and fulfilling than I could have dreamed. I am very lucky to be doing what I do. I would like to take these few pages to commemorate the place that gave the foundation of everything that *UPPERCASE* has become.

Fortunately, we've found a new home in an old heritage-protected building (it can't be knocked down!) and as this issue goes to press we're happily settling into this new location. I look forward to seeing how this workspace will inspire new projects and new horizons. ☺

[uppercasemagazine.com](http://uppercasemagazine.com)



The party for the People by Oppenheimer books.

I have a thing for old vinyl!



The People's Demand Project's Demand the Issues 14, a beautiful one still available in our shop. [shop.spearscommunications.com](http://shop.spearscommunications.com)

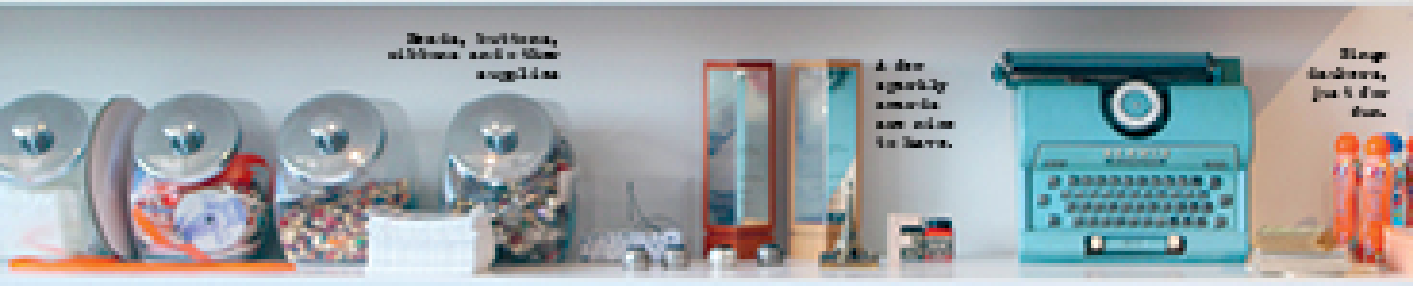
I want to have time to make quilts and more!



Four/Well flags from Elizabeth's Biking in Paris.

The gift from my friend Wendy Williams.

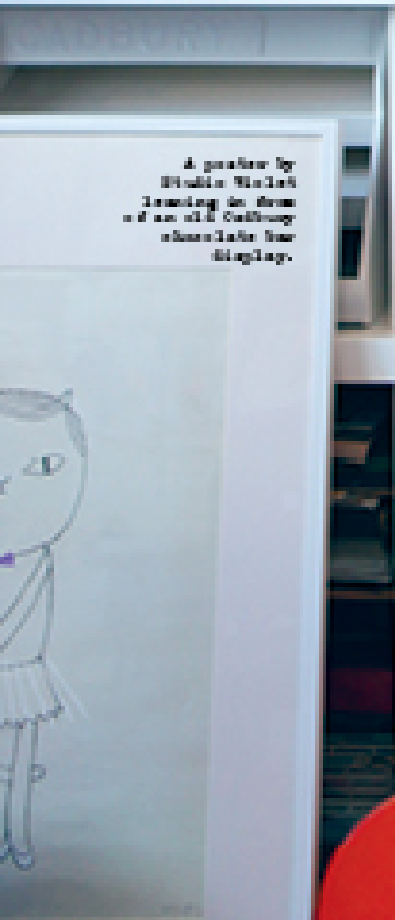
My green bowl I found in the alley behind my house.



Books, quilts, pillows and a few supplies.

A few quirky items are nice to have.

My typewriter, just for fun.



A poster by Hilda Winkelman in honor of an old Caltech scientist for biology.



Books for review and inspiration.



Boxes full of vintage papers and ephemera, drawings and sketchbooks.

A nonfunctional typewriter that I found in my back alley (I only played it in a I painted orange).