

Practitioner's Statement

Celebrity Head Re-Design

Anastasia Mavrides

Basefun Pty Ltd (Basefun) is a toy and game wholesaling company, which is responsible for the development and distribution of the board game, Celebrity Head™. I was approached by Basefun to re-design the packaging and branding of the official game, providing me with an authentic brief for my practical work. Since its original launch in 1992, the game has faced a decline in sales due to the high competition faced with similar electronic and social media products. With the anticipated re-release of the game, my main task was to redesign all aspects of the board game to reflect contemporary design and to appeal to a new audience. The key requirements of the brief involved the company conveying the key concept of the game and having some resemblance to the previous editions through the retention of visual elements. The brief required me to create the box and packaging, board, Big Hint and name cards, rules and two banners advertising the board game and app (including an artistic impression of the app).

I commenced the research stage of the design process with an in-depth analysis of the game and previous designs. This included the analysis of colours, shapes, sizes and textures featured in the previous editions of the board game. I also identified the features and aspects of the game, which needed to remain consistent in order to comply with the brief and to resemble previous versions for easy identification by the consumer. Undertaking market research was also an integral component, which involved visiting toy stores to analyse the various board games on the market, and to identify their key visual features. This research and interviews with the client formed the foundation of my design work, where I discovered the designs of conventional board games were mostly busy, with colourful and detailed illustrations.

The style of my design was heavily influenced by flat design, a contemporary design trend where all elements centre on the idea of simplicity. Incorporating negative space, crisp edges, vivid colours and two-dimensional, flat illustrations enabled me to achieve a minimalistic design, establishing a point of difference to other designs on the market. The vivid colours used in my design emphasise the key features by contrasting with the surrounding illustrative detail. In addition, the use of sans serif typography provides a clean, crisp supplement to illustrations, with text that is concise and to the point. The simplified illustrations used throughout the game's design were inspired by illustrator Irina Kruglova, who predominantly works with character design and digital art drawn through stippling, monochromatic strips and flat design in pastel colours. Additionally, aspects of the Psychedelic 60's movement such as abstract swirls of intense colour with curvilinear calligraphy reminiscent of [Art Nouveau](#) inspired my illustrative patterning. My illustration features key celebrities drawn into a twisted pattern, which clearly resembles the abstract swirls of this era, especially the psychedelic works of Wes Wilson.

My final design has successfully fulfilled the parameters of the design brief, through the careful consideration of the product's functionality as stated in the brief. Taking into consideration maximum exposure on the shelf and efficient packaging for distribution, it was necessary to restrict the box shape to either a rectangle or square. Other box shapes, which I observed in store, took up excess shelf space and the exposure to the public was limited. In order to work within this constraint, yet still produce a design that was innovative, I experimented with other aspects of the box. For example, rather than the box completely closing, I designed the base to be elevated to reveal a portion of the base below.

This not only reduced the suction but also created visual interest through contrast between the lid and base, through the hues of blue and patterning. I also followed through the key ideas of the game to maintain its identity. As the client identified the headpiece with the red hands as an integral aspect of the game, I incorporated the headpiece within the typography of the logo to ensure it remained a recognisable feature of the brand. My targeted audience are families, with a suggested age of eight years and above. This was considered through the curvature in my drawings and shapes complemented by bright, playful colours used to soften the design, making it more appealing to the intended audience. The idea and concept of the game was conveyed through illustrations on the box, such as the vector eyes looking up with a puzzled expression. The guessing nature of the game was also implied through the patterned illustration consisting of only the key features of various celebrities. In a time where board games face difficult competition against electronic games it was crucial that my design engaged consumers, through not only the game's concept but also through the visual aesthetic. The aim of my design was entirely about creating a visual that was playful, fun, yet simplistic in order for it to stand out to the consumer on a shop shelf.

Through the creation of a product that will be mass-produced, I have recognized the importance of the design theory 'form follows function'. I considered printing, functionality, practicality and marketing in order to create a successful product. The continuous communication with packaging and printing companies enabled me to ensure a balance was achieved between the form and function of my final design. My philosophy throughout the design process of this project was to go outside of conventional design and develop and create something beyond the boundaries of an expected outcome.

My personal design aesthetic and style has evolved through undertaking each stage of the design process. Using the key stylistic features from various movements and practitioners as a key influence, I have developed a style that includes illustrative elements, with vibrant colour and clean typography. I've realised the importance of form follows function, by finding a balance between the visual elements and the usage of the product. Following the completion of this task, the new edition of Celebrity Head™ will now feature a vibrant design that is playful yet simplistic, generating consumer intrigue and interest.