

# Is it Art?

I don't know but it makes people look! BY DAN KAUFMAN

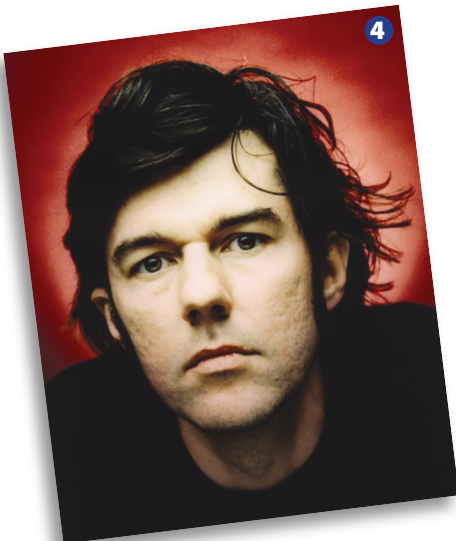
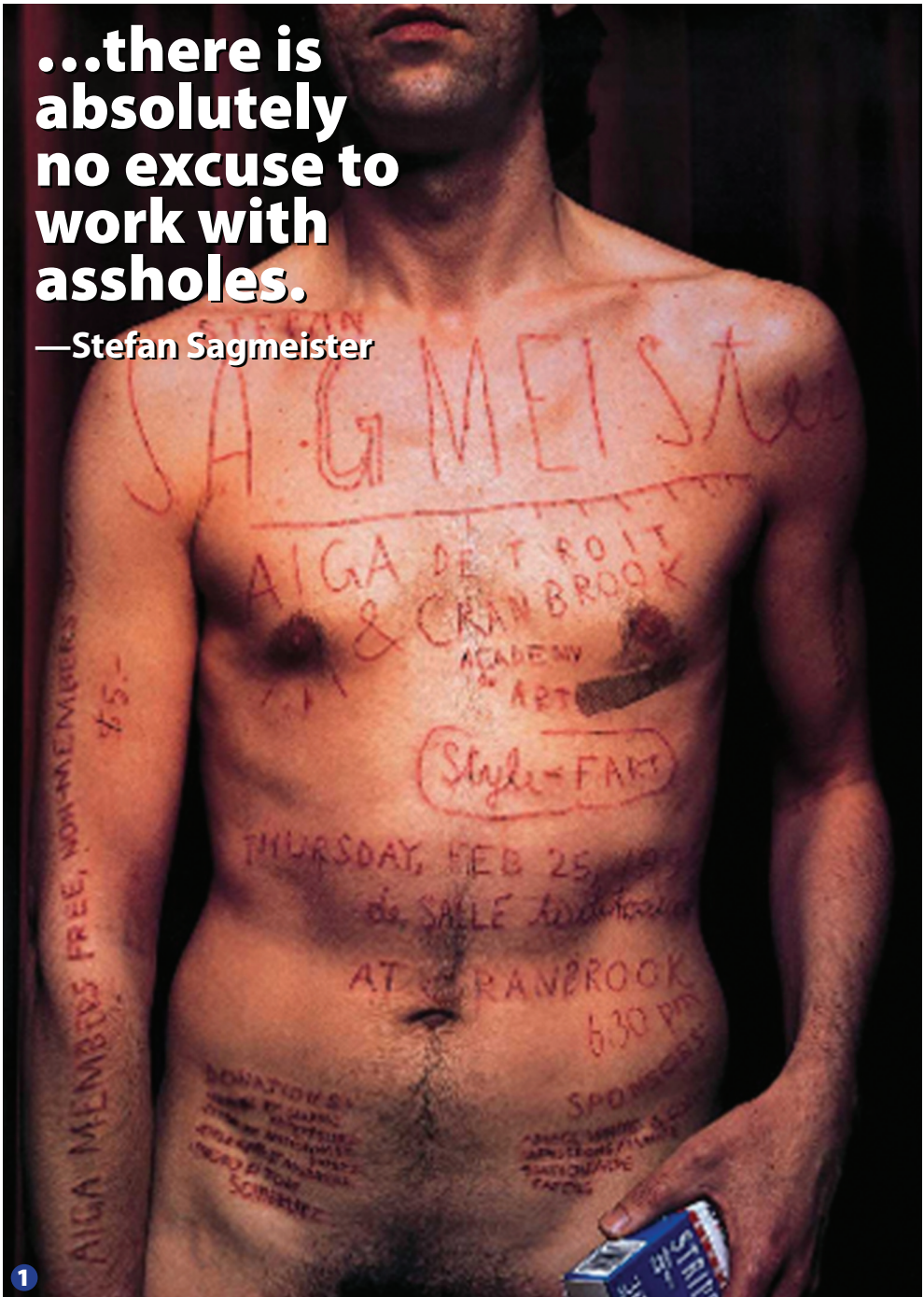
**S**tefan Sagmeister (1962–) is a “Rock-Star” artist in the graphic design world. Based out of their intentionally small New York design firm, the house of Sagmeister # 1 brand concern seems to be “Sagmeister”. With a huge ego and self-admitted limited artistic ability, Sagmeister carefully chooses his clients and only works for people and organizations he likes and believes in. Perhaps more “fine art” than “commercial art”, his output is generally seen as quick take puns, clever one-liners and superficial shock value.

Sagmeister is well aware of the inherent phoniness of commercial art. His background education in art and design is extensive and his artwork and designs may very well have a deeper meaning and significance than the first glance reveals. To the general public he can come off as a flippant con artist instead of a designer. However, he has done an excellent job in convincing a small niche market (rock stars and artsy groups) to finance his pursuits. Sagmeister seems to relishes the spotlight and controversies he's stirred up and he's developed a strong cult of personality around his name. He has won many design awards and his name is held in high esteem in the world of art and design.

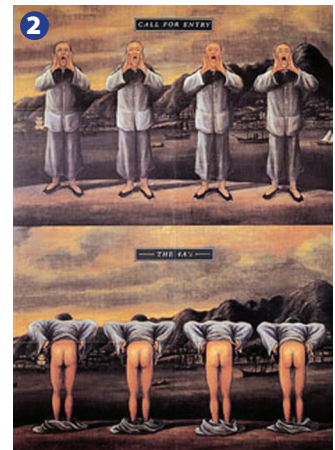
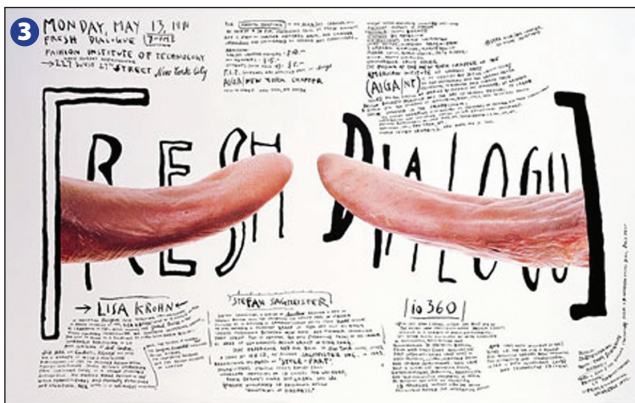
Positive or negative, Sagmeister's body of work gets reactions and clients. ■

...there is absolutely no excuse to work with assholes.

—Stefan Sagmeister



Clockwise from the top—(1) Poster for AIGA—(2) 4AD Awards Show Poster—(3) Fresh Dialogs Conference Poster—(4) Sagmeister Promotional Portrait



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