

# EPIISODE 046

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## CHATHAM

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Jesse Reed + Emily Klæbe, Order

AND

Alex Chatham, Chatham

### **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to The Follow-up, a weekly podcast that goes in depth into projects recently reviewed on Brand New featuring conversations with the designers, and sometimes their clients, uncovering the context, background and design decisions behind the work.

### **BRYONY GOMEZ-PALACIO**

Hi, this is Bryony Gomez-Palacio and welcome to episode 46 of The Follow-up.

This week we are following up on Chatham, a new (yet very old) brand of wool blankets produced by Alex Chatham, the great-great-grandson of Alexander Chatham, who founded Chatham Manufacturing Company in 1877. Located in Elkin, North Carolina, the wool mill produced high-quality blankets and remained in operation until the 1990s when it was shut down. After a successful Kickstarter campaign by Alex, Chatham is back in business with the Blue Stripe Throw, based on the original Chatham Blanket recreated using archival material. Working with a mill in Connecticut that has been operating since before the Civil War, the first — new — Chatham blankets came to market in December of 2021.

The project, designed by Brooklyn, NY-based Order, was posted on Brand New on February 1, 2022. You can pull it up on your browser at [bit.ly/bnpodcast046](https://bit.ly/bnpodcast046) that is B I T dot L Y slash bnpodcast046, all in lowercase.

This week we are joined by Jesse Reed, Partner at Order; Emily Klæbe, Designer, at Order; and Alex Chatham, Owner of Chatham.

In this conversation we learn about how closely the design remained tied to the archival material but also how important it was to not let it be a simple reproduction. We hear from Emily and Jesse about the many considerate steps they took to build a full alphabet — with punctuation to spare! — from only a few existing characters and how they breathed new life into graphic “gems” from the archives that were implemented with a remarkable amount of restraint given how nice they turned out. From Alex we hear what every designer wants to hear which is a client trusting their designer but also pushing back when things didn’t feel right as was the case with the original primary blue color presented that didn’t make the cut... And, after hearing them all discuss that, it’s clear the project was all the better from that decision.

Now let’s listen in as Armin follows up with Jesse, Emily, and Alex.

**ARMIN VIT** Hello everyone today, we’re getting ourselves knee-deep in the world of slab serif typography, and wool. Two things that are awesome on their own, but even more awesome when put together as is the case in the new combined world of Chatham. Emily, Jesse, Alex, welcome to The Follow-Up.

**ALEX CHATHAM** Hello. Thanks for having us.

**ARMIN** If you could let us know who’s who with your name and title, just so that our listeners can recognize the voices.

**JESSE REED** I’m Jesse Reed, one of the Partners at Order, on the design side of this project.

**EMILY KLAEBE** I’m Emily, I’m a Designer at Order.

**ALEX** I’m Alex Chatham, the owner of Chatham Manufacturing.

**ARMIN** Perfect. Alex, we’re gonna start with the you. Between the case study, that Order put together and the Kickstarter campaign that you launched, which has a great video in it, there’s plenty of historical information and a great origin story about what Chatham

Manufacturing Company was and what it did. So I don't wanna spend too much time on its history. Instead, I would like to focus on its revival. So as a two-part question, when did you first become interested in the idea of bringing Chatham blankets back to life? And what were you doing professionally before that?

**ALEX** I was, and still am an industrial designer. That's my main career track; consumer product design. I'd been working at Peloton when I started this project, I was kind of working freelance. I've had a lot of design consulting experience doing all kinds of products from cars, to bags, shoes, phones, household goods, furniture. And I would say that I really got serious about this project about six years ago, obviously had always kind of known about my family's history and the company, but always as a back-of-the-mind thing that you know, was kind of gone and buried in the past. And somehow I got interested in reading more about the history of it. And then I was struck with the idea of somehow bringing a product back. And as an industrial designer, I do a lot of work with factories, designing things that get made. So, I kind of went through the research of figuring out whether or not it would actually be possible to bring this back. Who would I have to work with, figuring out things like pricing and product would work, and then really learning as much as I could about the wool industry, and talking to as many people as I could.

**ARMIN** In that initial research. Was there a moment where you went, oh, I can do this! This little key to the whole operation is what will allow it to happen? Or was it just a combination of everything that, oh yeah, it can be done with the right things in place.

**JESSE** It's been very hard to find someone that I could work with to actually make this happen. And I feel like the longer I spent trying to find someone that could do this... almost the more I was dug in. So rather than a moment that was like, okay, yes, this is gonna work. There were lots of little moments that were like, okay, I've invested so much into doing the research and having the conversations. For example,

when I started this, I was talking with Woolrich who is a historical wool manufacturer in Pennsylvania, and while I was talking to them, their entire mill shutdown and the company got bought by a European investment group. And then it was okay, well, we can't work with them. Who else is out there? And then more research, more emails, and more conversations.

**ARMIN** It's a little bit of a malady that happens to designers that we become stubborn and obsessed with making something happen. Even when everything points to like, no, you should stop now before it's too late [laughter].

**ALEX** Right.

**ARMIN** [laughter] In regards to your childhood, were the blankets a part of it? Like, you obviously share the last name with your great great grandfather who was the founder, but more directly with your parents. Was it a thing in your household?

**JESSE** Oh yeah, definitely. I mean, my parents still have dozens of old wool Chatham blankets just kind of lying around the house. Half of them are moth eaten and I'm sure each one has a lot of stories. They were always there. Plus there were always little knick-knacks, like model trucks with Chatham written on the side and stuff like that. Postcards of the mill...

**ARMIN** That's wonderful.

**JESSE** We never saw those model trucks by the way.

**ALEX** Oh really?

**JESSE** This is new information to me.

**EMILY** —gonna say....

**ALEX** I gotta show you them.

**EMILY** We need to make them....

**JESSE** —we could made this. Yeah, yeah.

**ARMIN** Could have probably changed the trajectory of the design completely, and you had no idea. [Laughter] It was a gold mine of little trains, little toy trains there.

**ALEX** Yeah.

**ARMIN** You launched the Kickstarter campaign in 2021?

**JESSE** I believe it was 2020.

**ARMIN** Okay.

**ALEX** The end of 2020.

**ARMIN** And how long did that run for?

**ALEX** The Kickstarter itself was only a month. And, and I kind of promised everyone that they would be done within a couple months after that. And then it actually ended up taking about a year from the end of the campaign to when I had product in hand.

**ARMIN** Yeah. Which seems to be semi-normal for Kickstarter. Everybody [laughter] has great ambitions of delivering two weeks after it's been funded, but that rarely happens in real life. Now, Jesse, when did Order become involved in the project?

**JESSE** So I had to look this up because my memory was getting foggy. It was almost a year ago to the date. It was in January of 2021. Yeah. I looked up the email and it's quite an entertaining email, the way that Alex phrased it. And basically, he might not like this but I'm gonna quote him saying that he needs to juice up the identity. [Laughter] Order was tasked with juicing up the identity. And Alex, and I know each other from college. So we went to the University of Cincinnati together. He was studying industrial design, I was in the graphic program and that school is great because all of those disciplines mingle and interact with each other. And everyone's roommates with one another. So, still

to this day, I'm friends with the fashion design friends and students... say it's fashion, or industrial, or architecture.

**JESSE** And then yeah, eventually everyone goes off and most people start a company or do something. And then they just call up the person that they knew from school, in the other discipline. I do the same thing. I call up all my industrial design friends to help us render products for our identity jobs. Alex got in touch. We had kept in touch over the years, and I was a backer of the Kickstarter campaign. And he just wanted to, I think, take the brand a little bit more seriously and had the vision to not have it only be one blanket, but actually produce a line of products in the future. I think him and I had casually talked about what we do, and sort of concept of an identity system, not just the logo and always the back of my mind, I saw the potential that he was sort of sitting on. Yeah. It started about a year ago.

**ARMIN** And Alex, did you have other designers you approached? Or did you just know Jessie, and that was your first and only stop?

**JESSE** I actually had worked with another designer earlier on in the project, but they was very limited work. We didn't produce that much together. And I knew that I wanted something bigger than what he had given me, or was probably capable of doing on his own. And I knew like in the back of my mind that I'd wanted to work with Jesse this whole time.

**ARMIN** And did you—

**JESSE** Good answer.

**ARMIN** [Laughter] Yeah. That is a great answer for extending the bond that unites you. I don't mean this in like, were you not aware of how identity works, but did you have a sense of how an identity could help your brand? Or once you got talking to Jesse, did the ambition of the project grow based on your initial conversations with him?

**ALEX** I think I've always had a sense of how important it would be, and what a complete system would be like. But I just knew that that's a relatively big project. And just in the sort of order of prioritizing what you want to get done when you start... one of those things that you feel like, okay, you need this, like you wanna set your company up kind of on the right footing from the beginning, but it's a big project to pull the trigger on, right away. So I was kind of mixed between those two things when we started or when we were talking about it.

**ARMIN** Yeah. You know, to make money, you gotta spend money in a way [laughter]. And it's always hard to make that decision on identity. Now, Jesse and Emily, what was the initial brief or direction you got from Alex other than juicing things up, which is, I think that should be the brief we should all get. Like, yes, I'll juice it up. I can do that. No problem. But beyond that, what were some of the initial directions that you received for tackling this project?

**JESSE** Uh, yeah. I mean, it was rather straightforward in the sense of, well, what it wasn't was Alex coming to us saying, I want a custom typeface for our identity and that's what we need. It was strictly around building out the identity—and like primarily focusing on the website. I think that was a key deliverable that needed to exist beyond the Kickstarter 'cuz you know, the Kickstarter happened, it was over, it's still visible, but there needed to be a place to purchase the same blanket in the future, and then other products. I would say those were the deliverables. It was the identity, a website, but I mean, unless I'm forgetting anything for either Alex or Emily to correct me, there wasn't something so specific that Alex was looking for in terms of design direction. I think it was us actually knowing that a lot of the archival material existed because it was displayed on the Kickstarter page.

Secretly. I could see very clearly where this could go... in the back of my mind. I was always, Ooh, we could just do so much typographic goodness somewhere in there. I didn't know like which specimen we would choose from, but there just so much rich material to pull from, that I just wanted to convince Alex to let us do the project, [laughter]

and then we'll figure it out and present something afterwards. Identity, website, and then the rest sort of just developed itself.

**ALEX** From my perspective, I felt like there's a lot of archival material, but none of it is very cohesive. There are a lot of different eras with different typography. There was never a super cohesive period just in terms of like identity in the company's history. And even within certain periods they would use different logos and fonts on different things. What I really wanted was for Jesse and Emily to look through things, with their eyes and their taste and judgment, find what felt right and felt natural because I knew that it would all be authentic. Whatever they picked from all that material would be true to the heritage in some way, but just finding the thing that is authentic, but isn't too antiquated and makes sense with modern... leaning towards timeless sensibilities.

**ARMIN** And where did all the archival material come from?

**JESSE** Honestly, a lot of it is stuff that I've purchased and collected from different people. There's some stuff that going through like drawers of my parents' stuff, pulled from there. A lot of stuff that I bought on eBay. There's some things in libraries and museums. I met a few collectors that just had things. So a lot of different places.

**ARMIN** Now, Emily, out of all that stuff, was there something that stood out to you from the beginning?

**JESSE** Yeah, I think from the very beginning Alex's tendencies and inclination towards what he was leaning towards, you can see on the Kickstarter, on the original Chatham label is that slab there does I from 1930s, '40s, Chatham history. So we approached it with a very thorough timeline and audit that we had the framework for on the Kickstarter. When we were first looking into it and then dig in even further and really look decade by decade. What are the trends? What's the language that's occurring in the typography? And the photography? They were are a few other key areas that we were drawn to, and interested in that felt

very significant for Chatham's memorable, iconic representation. But that slab lettering was pretty unique to Chatham and very specific in its rendering. I think Alex was spot on in that, and that was what we were drawn to as well, and what we expanded on pretty early in the beginning, the first presentation, I would say.

**ARMIN** Speaking about that first presentation, it sounds like there was a clear inclination towards that slab, and I can see why, but did you explore other routes beyond that? Or was it just like a laser focus on that, and just trying to make it work with just one design option to show Alex?

**JESSE** The short answer is no. We presented one option, but one option in a very large way. Emily did this incredible—and she does this every time—where she just totally unpacks the history of a company. I mean this one was just sort of, again, rich with material to do that. Gave a little Chatham history lesson in the very beginning of the presentation. And we always do this audit of a company, no matter what time period they've existed from, but this one was just telling the story, unpacking the material that we saw and that we had and categorizing each of those decades, seeing themes, and then ultimately coming to this very clear direction with one unifying voice, which revolved around this slab. So we did go all in on it. And as you can see in the case study, there are a lot of supporting actors and there's a lot of devices that are included.

So it's not just the slab, but there are also like iconography and photography, product photography, and other textural materials that were included. We rarely do that. We have done it before. Typically you're presenting design directions and there's like three, the golden number, maybe there's five, very rarely two, but this one just felt like we could build the story. And it just made so much sense where there was like, you know, no questions left unanswered from what we've found. We risked it. And Alex was very forgiving, or I don't know, [laughter] allowing us to show him one option without giving multiple.

**EMILY** Just to add onto that. That is all very true. And then the two other key moments in the history that we were first looking at in the exploration phase for the typeface was the original 1877 building signage. And then later kind of a Gotham-esk packaging lettering that was on one of the Chatham boxes from the fifties. We teased those out originally, and looked at sketches and explorations for them, but ultimately those didn't have the same grab as the slab, like Jesse saying.

**ARMIN** And if I remember correctly, that lettering on the mill was fairly similar to the Gage & Tollner design, wasn't it?

**JESSE** [Laughter] Yeah, it had, I don't know if they're flourishes... but more Art Nouveau... these very organic forms. Emily tried a bunch of stuff that I think Alex didn't see fully, but at the same time and not to sort of jump to this part of the identity, but those explorations still lived on when we did a whole series of different "C's" that were pulled from different decades of Chatham's history. So that work actually led itself to a place. It wasn't the primary voice, but those different letter forms and type references still made it through.

**ARMIN** Alex, what was your reaction to that first presentation? Jesse says that there were no questions left to be asked, but I'm sure you had questions.

**ALEX** [Laughter] Yeah. I mean, you know, what I rely on Order for is their impeccable taste. And for me, if they say something is the right thing, I trust that. I would say the only part where we diverged was when we were picking a color for the brand.

**JESSE** Yeah.

**ALEX** And they'd initially pick a blue that was a beautiful blue, but I just thought that it didn't feel right. So then we did an exploration of just that, but for the typography itself, I felt like they know their stuff. And if they think this is it, then I think it's it.

**ARMIN** That makes sense. So let's talk a little bit, bit more about this blue versus green. How did that, uh, evolve since it sounds like an interesting challenge.

**JESSE** I could just quickly say, I mean, the blue was pulled from the blanket that Alex launched on Kickstarter. We were overly logical and we were like, well, if we need a color, there's a color on that blanket. So why don't we just use that color and put it in the identity? Alex, maybe you could speak to this sort of, what was wrong with the blue. I can't actually remember what, wasn't feeling right about it that led us to a different place.

**ALEX** I think it was two part. I think somehow I felt like the blue color didn't seem like timeless enough. I don't know how to say this, it seemed like a newer color somehow to me, a color that wouldn't have existed a hundred years ago and somehow that part of it, it just didn't read as authentic to me. And then I don't know why, but in my mind, I think I just said that the colors were either a deep red or deep green. And I think I was just stuck on that somehow.

**JESSE** Yeah.

**EMILY** Yeah.

**JESSE** It was too RGB.

**ALEX** Yeah.

**EMILY** Yeah. I was gonna say on bluegate, it was definitely very digital, and I think Alex's reaction to the color was so spot on. And even though in the physical application of the blue, on the original Kickstarter blanket, it feels very warm and inviting, but in the digital setting and translation, it didn't have that same tone. And so the green was a really good solve for that.

**ARMIN** There's a very different feeling that comes across from a blue on screen, as opposed to a blue on what looks like a beautiful wool texture. I think it just humanizes it so much more that you just can't replicate

that on screen. Let's talk a little bit more in detail about the wordmark and the ensuing typeface. Emily, how did it develop? Because the end result looks so simple, straightforward, which is the hardest thing to achieve—for something to feel so... that it just came out so effortlessly, but I'm sure that was not the case. So talk to us a little bit about going from initial sketch to the final design.

**JESSE** I love that question, it's very spot on. The typeface in the wordmark word developed at the same time. So they were working in parallel with each other. That helped us in a lot of ways. And we had so much control over the letter forms, making sure the lockup was visually cohesive across the board. We just had complete control over, which was very exciting. And I think there were a lot of natural tendencies in the letter forms of the slab, that we were pulling from the source material, that resolved typically those areas in spacing with the letter combinations that would be trickier. Like that "A" and that "T", the "A's" next to the "H" and the "M"... like looking at the "C" for example, all of the round forms, and the letters, and a typeface are traditionally more square. So we kind of have this perfect opportunity to line things up in just a more cohesive, balanced way. I think we were very lucky in that sense, but also there was a very strategic move in how we were thinking about those forms together. Yeah.

**ARMIN** And just in terms of extra geekery for our listeners, what software are you using to build the typeface?

**JESSE** We use Glyphs.

**ARMIN** Okay.

**EMILY** That might be controversial to some [laughter], but was the right move for us.

**ARMIN** Yeah. I think we're sort of past that controversy. It has become the defacto software. I still remember the days of Fontographer, but that is just dating myself too much. Now, Alex, how involved are you in the process of the typeface? Or are you just like, I trust you, just tell me

what it's done and when can I load it on my computer and start typing things with it?

**JESSE** They showed me the work in progress, which, you know, it's enjoyable for me to see the process. I wouldn't say that I gave any input because I don't know enough about the nuances of typeface to be critical. So when they were developing it, I was like, this is cool, I enjoy seeing this process, but I trust you with that.

**ARMIN** It's a little bit like finding the right person to operate the wool machine. It's not your area. You can appreciate how it's done, but when it comes to the nitty gritty of it, let someone else figure it out. I'm not trying to compare glyphs to a beautiful piece of wool machinery, but there's a metaphor—

**ALEX** No, it is in a way. The lettering is handcrafted. It's bespoke. I mean, it's beautiful, right? It's perfect. It's authentic and unique in the end.

**ARMIN** And let's talk just a little bit more about the typeface. There was all this great punctuation. Why do those? And I'm not saying like, why bother? It seems like there was a little bit too much energy spent on the punctuation, and the arrows, and stuff like that. Is that just something where you just got carried away? Like this is cool. Let's just extend it to these fun glyphs that may never be used?

**JESSE** [Laughter] Emily has no limit of energy to spend on additional glyphs or punctuation. So just came out. But I don't know. Emily, why did you get so excited with those?

**EMILY** That's the base, the baseline for us? [Laughter] That's the minimum, no, I think a little indulgent, but also practicality to it. In that we wanted to make sure the whole type system and the amount and availability in the different forms was gonna last a long time, and that there would never be a need of, oh, we need this currency symbol, and we're extending into this market and we need this. So, that was very much intended to have longevity to it. It was also a great opportunity for us to bring more of the character that was inherent in the original source

material, into it. Like with the ink traps, we really wanted to emphasize those with the condensed forms, and bring the slabs into areas and punctuation where maybe it wouldn't typically be... for example, with the arrows. So that was I think, a great opportunity to extend all of those traits that were originally there in the history of it and bring out the quirks more.

**JESSE** I think it was exciting because we really only had the words “Chatham Blankets” to work from. We sort of had to invent the rest of the alphabet and then punctuation all that stuff. I think once you figure out how the typographic letterform system works, and then you start drawing one glyph after the next, and ones that aren't sort of in the source material, it's really exciting to see how far you can go and reinvent those letter forms. Even though there are historical slabs that we looked at and chose characteristics from. But I think like the numerals in particular, those are so weird, in a good way—the ways that the slab sort of come off the nine and the six and like the threes. Yeah. It just actually became exciting to see how far we could take it.

**ARMIN** Agreed those numerals are great. And I think if Alex, if you sold them as numbers for houses, I think they would sell really well in really nice materials. [Laughter]. Moving away from the typeface, even though we could speak about it for another hour, you also pulled in some additional icons and typographic badges from the historical archives that are used with a lot of restraint Why did you decide to keep this ones the quieter side, and I'm mostly asking because they're really cool and it would be super fun to see them take on a bigger role, but that's not a criticism of the work, just like the little sheep and the little candle, like they were all really cool drawings. How did you choose what you chose? And why did you then choose to keep them a little bit on the downlow?

**EMILY** Yeah, I mean, we thought the exact same. We saw all of them and it was so beautiful and we wanted to use all of them at once! And we explored that and it kind of diluted the effect that they had when you

were using them in a composition, or around any other elements of the identity. And so the solution to that was kind of having a strict system of using two to three at the most, any more than three and you're losing the emphasis in the story of each individual one. Because all of those symbols and graphic elements span over a century. So there's very unique stories to be told through each one of those, and Jesse coined this great term for them as we were like digging through the research and finding it, I think it was "gems". So we were excited to pull those in.

**JESSE** Graphic gems, yeah. And now that my memory is being jogged, I think the one thing that Alex told me in the very beginning when we were starting, he said, yeah, I just don't want this to be eclectic... a bunch of stuff going on, like a bunch of old symbols happening at the same time. I think he wanted it to be a higher end brand and then something a little bit more simpler. My first inclination was, yeah, let's just like use all of those symbols at once. And it's just this big eclectic graphic identity. But I think that's the one thing he said not to do. But then we decided, well, what if we just turned it down to one or two and did it in that way? Yeah. It worked.

**ARMIN** Alex, do you have a particular favorite gem?

**JESSE** I'm partial to the sheep, the older sheep that's based on an engraving. Symbolically I feel like the most significant, but I love the fact that we have those little symbols and somehow they found a good way to... you know, 'cuz there's so much material, there's so much history, and like Jesse was saying you wanna bring it all there. But for me, a strong brand is very concise and has a single clear statement, but then somehow being able to hold those symbols that you can use that are authentic, part of the heritage, and it doesn't all somehow just get wasted, all this sort of great material that there was. And so I really love that.

**ARMIN** Yeah. And hopefully there's more opportunities in your future and the future of Chatham to keep using those. Now, a question for all of you.

At what point in the process, did you design something in the case of you Jesse and Emily, or see something in your case Alex, where you went, ok we got this, this is the way to go?

**ALEX** I think I almost felt that way in the first presentation. The handling of the cohesion, which is the biggest thing that I had a hard time wrapping my mind around, was having all this material and knowing vaguely that I wanted to do something, but not knowing how it would all tie together and just seeing them apply their eye and their organization, and making sense of things, and having that reassurance that, oh yes, they're gonna juice it,

**ARMIN** [Laughter] Taking it back to the very beginning. Hold on.

**JESSE** Yeah. I think it's when we did start to extend it into these other applications beyond the label, which was the first piece that we were focused on. It was like, let's get that label that Alex is already using, but do it a little bit more concise in how we would do this from like a typographic point of view from spacing and all that. So we got the label, right? And then we started to extend it to digital applications. I mean, this is such a physical product. I mean, that's what it is, it's a blanket. And then once you start to create the typeface, and start to type things out that aren't Chatham Blanket, and you start to see it in a much broader context, that's when I was like, oh, this works! And it's not just a logotype or a wordmark, but it could actually extend to become the voice of the brand.

Emily probably typed out some very short sentence on the homepage and it just clicked. You could really see the extension that the wordmark could go to from that label, to all the other applications. So I think it was probably the digital applications. We now sort of crossed the border from the physical to digital space.

**EMILY** Yeah. I definitely think echoing that, in the construction of this typeface and then seeing it pulled into digital. But I think especially for me, an area I was really excited about and excited to see come together was

that plethora and the sea of different Chatham “C’s” that we had, and pulling from various parts of the typographic language. I was really excited that we were able to find a way to use those very minimally and just call back to all of the different eras and decades that have existed. Since it’s such a rich history. I feel like that’s such an exciting part to celebrate and exciting way to bring in the diversity of past generations who have really enjoyed Chatham Blankets. Personally, my grandparents have Chatham Blankets and I saw them during the process. So being able to call back to those historical moments is very exciting.

**ARMIN** Great answers to tricky question. Alex, now that you have an identity in place, and the production of the blankets is in progress, what’s next for this new iteration of Chatham? Do you plan on offering other blanket designs? Adding other wool-based products? What happens next?

**ALEX** I think building out a line of patterns that are based on historical patterns, working with textile designer to basically do what Order has done with the graphics. But you know, with the actual textile patterns themselves... and use archival material to make things that are authentically-based, but feel fresh. And then working on some new sort of fibers, the blankets that we have now are plain wool and we are working on a cashmere construction and talking about using some other finer fibers, let’s say.

**ARMIN** Perhaps a delicate question in terms of that you have a full-time job, but is there an end goal to do this full-time? To have mass distribution somehow? Is there an ambition to grow it beyond what the Kickstarter started?

**JESSE** Yeah, absolutely. Right now that will involve reaching out to investors and raising some money to get it to the next place. You know, my dream is for this to be kind of a true American luxury company. And I think for that to happen, there needs to be more investment in the product. And then of course, just in communication and community.

**ARMIN** That's usually the hardest part of any product, not just coming up with the idea and coming up with a process, but expanding it. That is just so difficult. Good luck on that front [laughter].

**ALEX** Thank you.

**ARMIN** Jesse, now a question that between this project and Gage & Tollner, you have a couple of projects that build on this rich and deep history of the businesses, and you've done a fantastic job serving as design archeologists of sort. Are you considering having a new business policy where any new client must have first been established before the 1900's?

**JESSE** [Laughter] Yeah. I don't know how long Order would last if that policy was implemented, but in a dream world, that would be a lot of fun. I will say. I mean these projects, when you do have the material to pull from, and not to always say like, it's the only way to do this... I mean, even if a company has hundreds of years of history to it, it doesn't always mean that you need to resurrect the past in such a direct way. I think for this, it became the identity without us having to do actually too much, and sort of disrupting that existence would've done a disservice. But I think an organization can have a long history, but it doesn't always mean that you have to revive it in such a direct way. And Gage & Tollner was yeah, essentially the same thing. I mean, we took that mark and didn't implement a new version of it, but I think we supported both of these brands with contemporary typefaces, and color palettes, and the application into a digital world. But no, I think we allow brand new companies into our arms, but I do love the idea of design archeology as one of our services.

**ARMIN** It's a rare thing to be able to do well because it's so easy to just replicate what's there. And I think what you've been able to do with those two projects is what you just mentioned, give it a new interpretation, for a new era that honors the past, but doesn't just say, all right, here you go. This worked a hundred years ago, here it is again, verbatim, but actually giving it a new visual language that makes sense today. Final

question for all three, sort of looking back at the process, looking back at where you started, where you ended up, what was the most exciting aspect of working on this project?

**EMILY** Something that I really value is a product that you can have, and it will last a lifetime, plus plus, in theory. And that's not a very common thing these days. I think as consumers, we strayed away from that—sometimes we're good sometimes for bad, but I am very excited and very honored to have worked on a project with a product that I completely stand behind and I'm excited to own for my lifetime, and pass on to my kids.

**JESSE** Mine's probably not a design related answer... semi-cheesy, but I think it was very fun to work with a client who's also a friend, and someone that you know—the pressure seems to be somewhat taken away in the sense of that we had like a previous relationship, and this was a very fun project to work on. And I think we had more fun than we did fear. I think sometimes when you have a new client relationship, you're sort of feeling each other out. You're like dating for a little bit. You're not ready to commit to a full time relationship. And I think this one, there sort of was a casual nature to the project where we truly could enjoy it. And I think that came through in the work, mostly if not entirely, due to Emily and her developing the typeface, all these sort of supporting devices, and yeah, it was just fun to work with a friend. The moral of that story is keep everyone that you go to school with very close to you or that, you know, in life. I mean, any your neighbor, I don't know your taxi cab driver that drives you to the airport. Like you never know, who's gonna hit you up for a new business. And it's much more fun to work with friends than someone completely new, even though new relationships are great to build on. But yeah, it was a lot of fun to work with a friend on this.

**ARMIN** Slightly cheesy answer, but a good one, and a good lesson [laughter] in there. I think—

**JESSE** I warned you.

**ARMIN** No, I think one of the key aspects of doing anything good in life is being nice to people because you never know when you're gonna make a good impression on someone, for whatever it is, and that that will eventually one day lead to something else that benefits everyone. So yeah, I think being nice to everyone is a good rule of thumb. Alex for you, what was the most exciting aspect of working on this? And now taking this forward with the possibilities for Chatham?

**ALEX** I'll say that I've been a huge fan of Order Design. I've loved their work for years. And for me there's a certain satisfaction in making that work for me, and kind of owning some of that work. I don't know if that's kind of perverse, but yeah, I got some of that Order work now... there's a lot of satisfaction just watching their process. For me, a particularly satisfying part of it is seeing this completeness, and the cohesion, and then seeing it expanded out across applications. There's just a tremendous satisfaction in that part of it. So like the first presentation where they showed what the complete system would be like, the lettering and then how it would make sense was yes, this is what I wanted.

**ARMIN** I really like that perverse idea of owning that magic of the design from Order. And I think the result shows this great synergy between your past relationship and friendship, and the trust Alex that you put in Order, and Order your ability to re-vive this wonderful visual language that was already there, and giving it a that new spin and giving people the option to buy these beautiful blankets. They look so amazing, and they were presented so well. I'm gonna stop rambling because this is the point where I tend to ramble. So Alex, congratulations on getting this off the ground, the product is beautiful. Jesse and Emily, great design, great identity, very lovely presented as usual. Thank you all for being on The Follow-Up today. It is time to go cozy up with a blanket, and a cup of coffee... or keep working, either one works.

**JESSE** Thank you so much. Yeah.

**EMILY** Thank you.

**ALEX** Thanks for having us.

**BRYONY** Not all friendships can turn into successful, working, business relationships but the existing camaraderie and comfort between Alex and Jesse certainly helped pave the way for a fruitful process that started from, as Jesse mentioned, a place of fun rather than fear. A feeling that clearly extended to Emily who took the challenge of designing the brand typeface and wordmark with evident gusto. On that topic, it was great to hear Alex compare type design to wool-making as a product requiring equal levels of consideration and craft. In this case, that sentiment rings true as both the inaugural blanket and the resulting slab serif typeface —and all of the identity — reflect a deep commitment to quality.

Today, thanks for listening. Until next time, we'll be here, we hope you'll be there.