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Alumni Profile

Grad grabs a Grammy

In high school when he idolized the Red Hot Chili Peppers band, [Matt Taylor](#) never dreamed he would be dropping by the Laurel Canyon, Calif., mansion where the musicians rehearse to discuss album covers with lead singer Anthony Kiedis.

But Taylor did just that, and in February 2007 he won a Grammy for his graphic design of the box set for the group's newest album, *Stadium Arcadium*.

"You kinda do whatever these guys want," says Taylor, BFA '99. That included incorporating Kiedis' crayon sketches, a spinning top and a bag of marbles into the product's package.

During a visit to Mizzou in April, Taylor talked to students in [Lampo Leong's](#) senior art seminar. Their burning question? How to get his job.

The key to success is "passion plus vision plus hard work," says Taylor, who lives outside Los Angeles in Culver City, Calif. "I love my job every day. I love being immersed in it all the time."

He doesn't even mind pulling the occasional all-nighter because, he says, "Hard work is always going to pay off."

Taylor got training in hard work at Mizzou, where he worked at the student design center and Museum of Art and Archaeology and waited tables at Glenn's Café and Les Bourgeois Bistro. Connections from being a server led to his first paid freelance gig, designing the logo and menus for Tellers Gallery and Bar in downtown Columbia. He also ferried around a guest speaker who later got him an interview at MCA Records in Los Angeles. The resulting "peon designer" job launched his career; among his tasks were creating "includes the hit" stickers for CD cases.

matt taylor

Matt Taylor, BFA '99, won a Grammy in February 2007 for his design of the Red Hot Chili Peppers' box set for *Stadium Arcadium*.

"Getting a Grammy is a pretty incredible experience," he says.

Now a full-time freelancer, Taylor creates album packages for musicians such as the Smashing Pumpkins, Josh Groban, My Chemical Romance and Paris Hilton. That last one presented a challenge, Taylor says. “I’m going to have to try to make people take her seriously.”

— Lisa Groshong

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