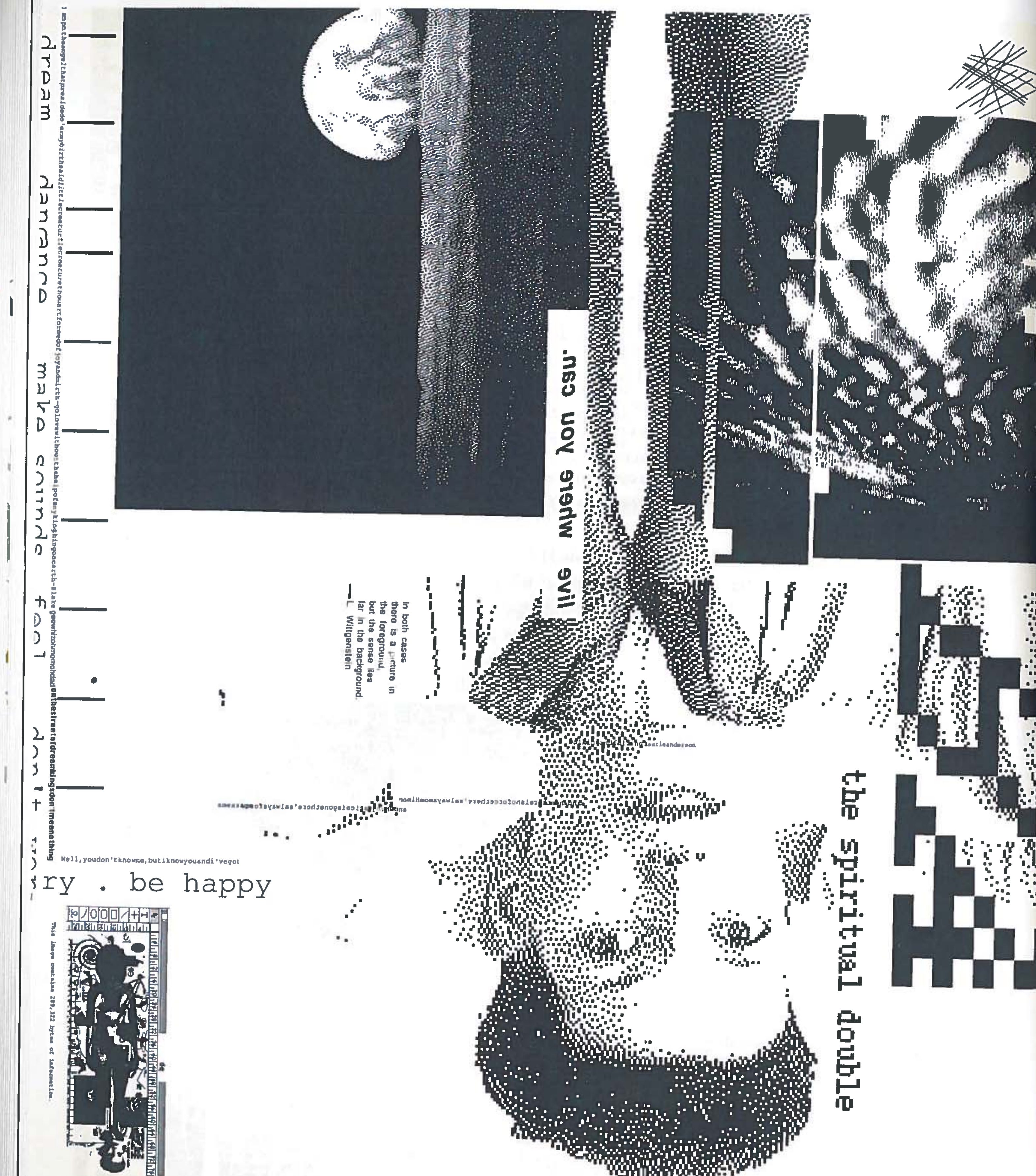

dream dancance make sounds feel don't worry . be happy
Well,youdon'tknowme,butiknowyouandi'vegot
live where you can.
In both cases there is a picture in the foreground, but the sense lies far in the background.
—L. Wittgenstein
the spiritual double

A Brief History of Graphic Design

2

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

AFTER READING THIS CHAPTER, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- Discuss how the Industrial Revolution led to graphic design as a distinct profession.
- Summarize how the Arts and Crafts, Aestheticism, and Art Nouveau movements evolved in response to industrialization.
- Explain how the trend toward abstraction enabled artists, designers, and architects to convey ideas with more complexity.
- Analyze how Modernist movements were expressed in graphic design.
- Describe how political and social changes were expressed through art, design, and architecture.
- Explain how utopian concepts led to the New Typography.
- Compare the styles of graphic design inspired by Modernist ideas from Europe.
- Describe the New York School's approach to design.
- Explain how graphic designers pushed Modernist thought further by taking a more conceptual approach.
- Analyze Postmodernism's origins and growth in the digital age.

Exercises and Projects

Research and write about a graphic designer; match a designer with a musical genre; pair examples of architecture with graphic designs; research a twentieth-century graphic designer and create a poster on him or her.

Graphic design has been shaped by social, cultural, political, and technological circumstances throughout its evolution. Egyptian hieroglyphs were created to record history, chiseled into stone to last an eternity (Figure 2.1). Chinese woodblock printing, which began in the third century as a method of printing on cloth, made the reproduction of both text and image economically possible (Figure 2.2).

I feel that any course of study that fosters visual literacy is extremely valuable, particularly now when our attention levels are reduced considerably.
—Steven Heller

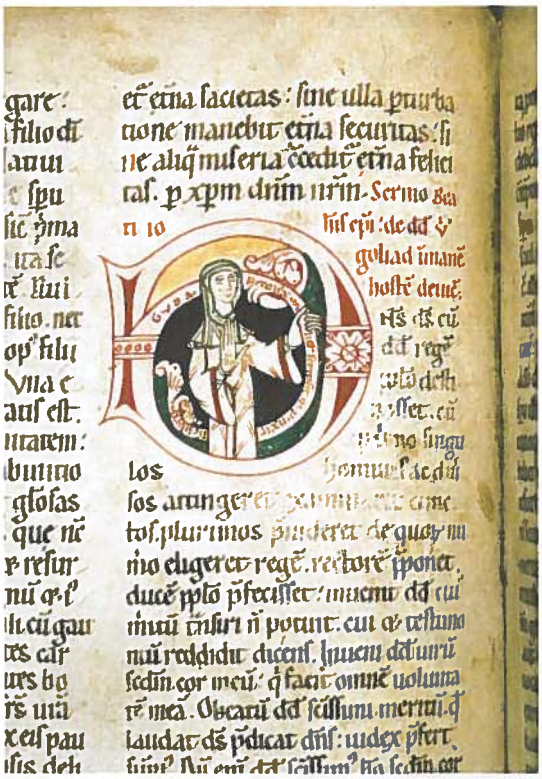
Watch the Video on **myartslab.com**

Opposite page: APRIL GREIMAN. Poster (detail) from *Design Quarterly*, no. 133, 1987 (full image, see Figure 2.83).

Photograph © 2012 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

2.1 Ancient Egyptian carving of offerings being made to the sacred barque of Amun at the great temple of Amun at Karnak, Luxor in Egypt.

2.2 Chinese woodblock print of Wenshu, Bodhisattva of Supreme Wisdom. ca. 950 A.D.



2.3 Page with self-portrait of the nun Guda. *Book of Homilies*. Early 12th century.

Paper, invented in China as a substitute for printing on cloth, later became a substitute for parchment skins in the West in the eighth century. The first bound books made entirely of paper soon followed in the Middle East, their pages protected from humidity by flattening against one another. Although the Chinese had started printing processes, European Bibles continued to be scribed with quill pens for centuries. The exhaustive, time-consuming process was a religious rite for monks serving as copyists, editors, and teachers (Figure 2.3), until Johannes Gutenberg printed a Bible using movable type (see Chapter 7). Each innovation reflected the cultural and economic needs of the society that produced it.

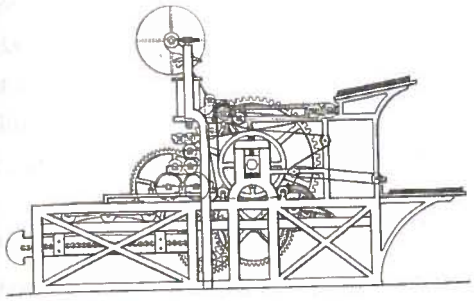
Today is no different. The imagination of graphic designers is guided by the innovations and needs of contemporary society; their designs are a reflection of the social, cultural, and political worlds in which they live. In looking back at the history of their art, graphic designers can better understand their own work within a broad context. As with any field, knowing the history gives one the knowledge and freedom to innovate and grow.

Industrial Expansion

An acceleration of technology began to take hold in Europe in the late 1700s as economies shifted from manual labor to machine-based manufacture. Inventions such as the steam engine, perfected by James Watt (1736–1819) helped drive this Industrial Revolution, especially in England. By the 1850s, England's national economy was dominated by manufacturing, and its power structure shifted from landowners to industrialists. As people began filling cities to work in factories, their purchasing power grew. Products offered to them kept pace, as did advertising. Newspapers, magazines, and posters thrived.

For European inventors, England was an outlet. Nicholas Robert (1761–1828) of France devised his first machine for making paper by the roll in 1799, leading to patents and further development in England by the Fourdrinier Brothers. Steam-powered printing soon followed, brought to the *Times of London* in 1814 by a German, Friedrich Koenig (1774–1833) (Figure 2.4). Paper manufacturing and press speed reduced the cost of printed promotions, making them more available to the public. As a result, the design of advertisements and fliers became a specialized activity, which was considered a separate task from printing and production. Commercial and artistic possibilities developed as the technology available to designers advanced.

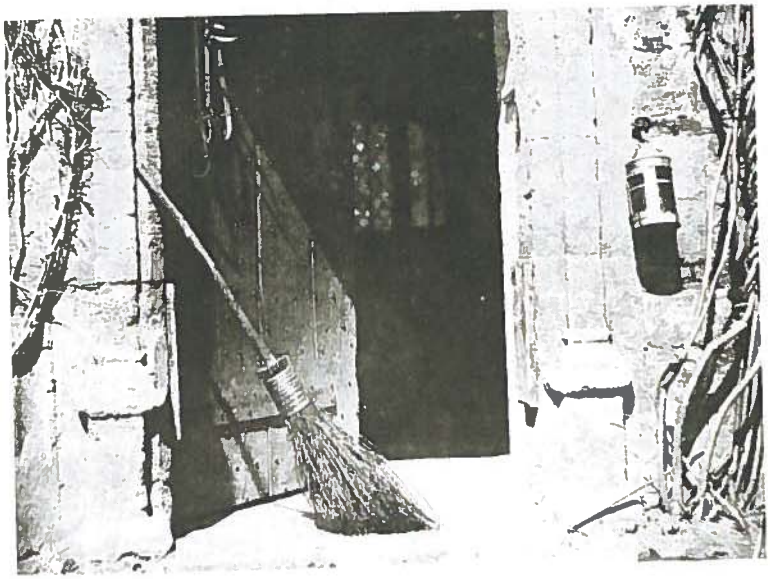
The first permanent photograph was made in 1826 by the French inventor Joseph Nicéphore Niépce (1765–1833). Niépce's partner Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787–1851) refined the invention further by speeding up the developing process from eight hours to thirty minutes and by inventing a way to fix the image on the exposed silvered plate. In 1839, the invention of daguerreotype, the term for this type of early



2.4 The first steam-powered cylinder press. 1814.

photograph, was formally announced, and a New York magazine, *The Knickerbocker,* wrote: "Their exquisite perfection almost transcends the bounds of sober belief." Photographs seemed at first unreal to a general public more comfortable with handmade illustrations of products and events. Soon, however, newspaper companies and advertisers began to rely on published photographs to sell their newspapers and products. Consumers not only could see actual images of the corsets, hats, and carriages that were being sold but also could view them in an indisputable and immediate way.

Another early developer of the photographic process, English scientist William Henry Fox Talbot (1800–1877), created a negative image from which an unlimited number of paper prints (called *calotypes*) could be made. A brilliant scientist, writer, and photographer, Talbot was also a graphic designer. His publication *The Pencil of Nature* was the first photographically illustrated book, and Plate 6, called *The Open Door,* is an example of meaningful communication created through this new medium (Figure 2.5). Composed much like a sixteenth-century Dutch genre painting (popular in England at the time), everyday objects are loaded with symbolism and meaning: a handmade broom, as a metaphor of the old agrarian world (drawing and painting), leans outside of an aging cottage. The broom aligns with the opened door's shadow—they both point to the darkened interior. At the back of the cottage, light comes through a window. Talbot tried to portray a world beyond the frame and a future for the new, mechanically based medium of photography.

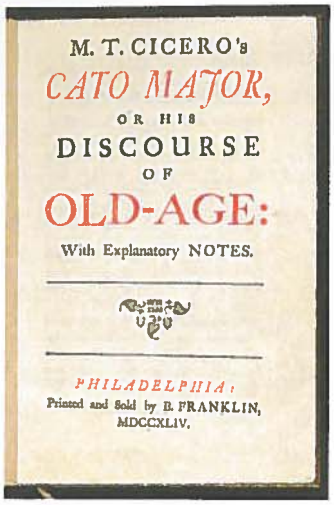


2.5 WILLIAM HENRY FOX TALBOT. *The Open Door.* 1843. Science Museum, London. Fox Talbot Collection.

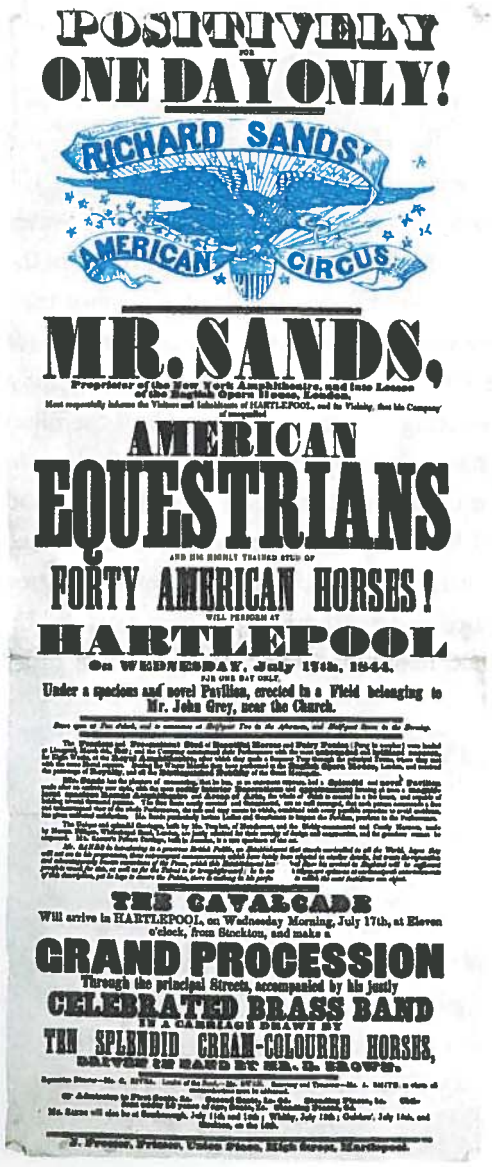
Typesetting was changing, too. Until the nineteenth century, printing was primarily limited to books. The Industrial Revolution brought a demand for printed brochures, product ads, and advertising posters. A variety of wooden display typefaces came into existence along with type-specimen catalogs. Up to that point, handbills looked similar to title pages

EXCERPT: The Pencil of Nature, 1844, by Fox Talbot

It frequently happens, moreover—and this is one of the charms of photography—that the operator himself discovers on examination, perhaps long afterwards, that he has depicted many things that he had no notion of at the time. Sometimes inscriptions and dates are found upon the buildings, or printed placards most irrelevant, are discovered upon their walls: sometimes a distant dial-plate is seen, and upon it—unconsciously recorded—the hour of the day at which the view was taken.


M. T. CICERO's
CATO MAJOR,
OR HIS
DISCOURSE
OF
OLD-AGE:
With Explanatory NOTES.
PHILADELPHIA:
Printed and Sold by B. FRANKLIN,
MDCCXLIV.

2.6 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN. Title page using Caslon type. 1744.


POSITIVELY
FOR
ONE DAY ONLY!
RICHARD SANDS'
AMERICAN CIRCUS
MR. SANDS,
Proprietor of the New York Amphitheatre, and late Lessee of the English Opera House, London,
AMERICAN
EQUESTRIANS
AND HIS HIGHLY TRAINED STUD OF
FORTY AMERICAN HORSES!
WILL PERFORM AT
HARTLEPOOL
On WEDNESDAY, July 17th, 1844.
FOR ONE DAY ONLY.
Under a spacious and novel Pavilion, erected in a Field belonging to Mr. John Grey, near the Church.
THE CAVALCADE
Will arrive in HARTLEPOOL, on Wednesday Morning, July 17th, at Eleven o'clock, from Stockton, and make a
GRAND PROCESSION
Through the principal Streets, accompanied by his justly
CELEBRATED BRASS BAND
IN A CARRIAGE DRAWN BY
TEN SPLENDID CREAM-COLOURED HORSES,
DRIVEN BY HAND BY MR. D. BROWN.

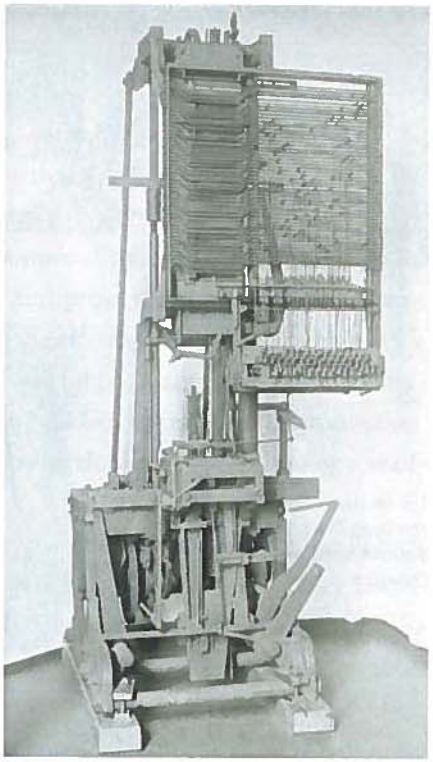
2.7 Woodtype poster using Fat Face types. 1844.

of books, the book types merely enlarged (Figure 2.6). Two eighteenth-century English founders of typefaces include William Caslon (1692–1766), whose typeface of 1724 was so distinct and legible it was used to set the Declaration of Independence, and the printer John Baskerville (1706–1775), whose typefaces were adopted by the U.S. government for its publishing.

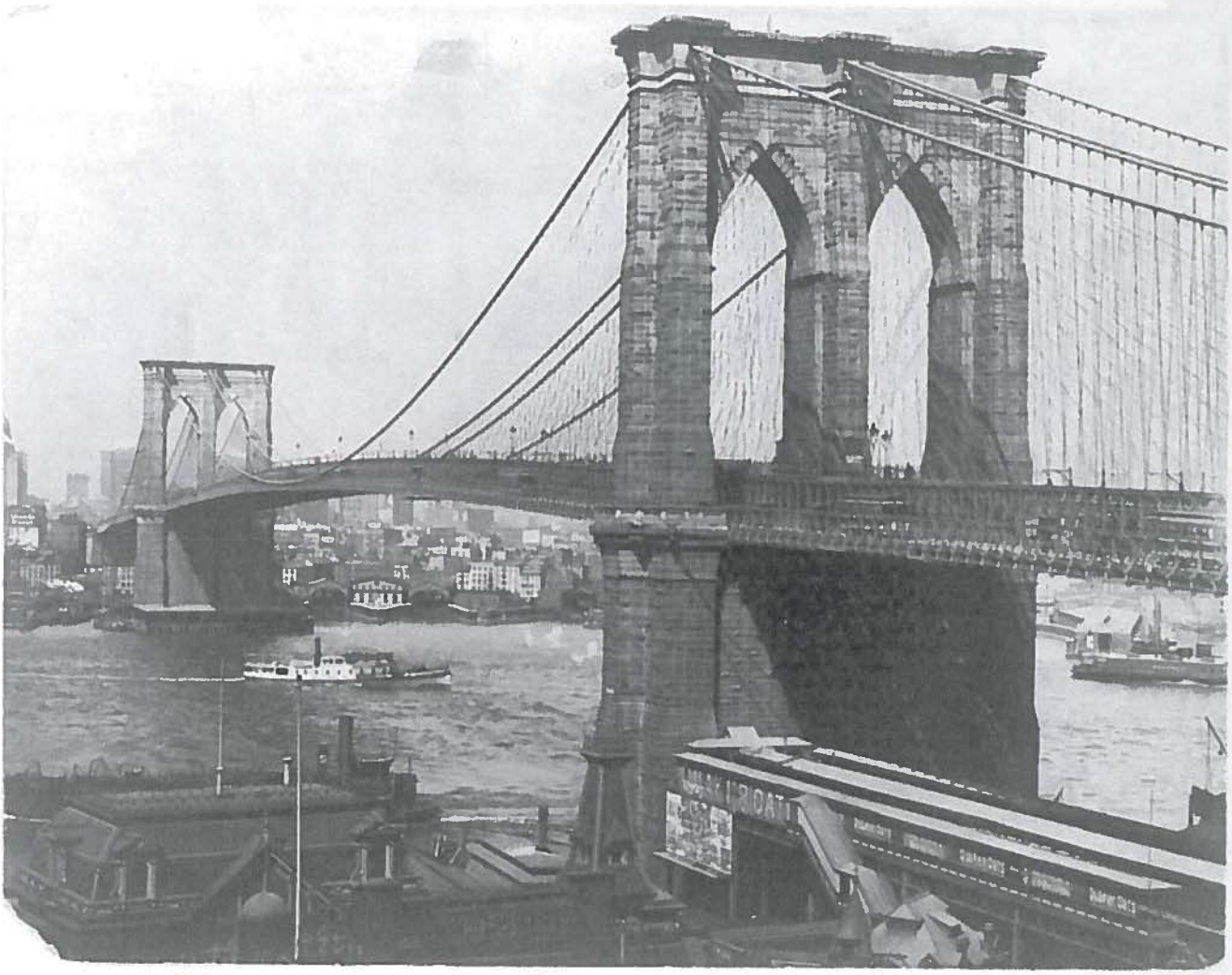
In advertising, new display typefaces were being introduced. Slab Serif types from Britain were designed to help information stand out noticeably. These typefaces were used on pamphlets, posters, and anything that had short lengths of text. British type designer Robert Thorne (d. 1820) coined the term Egyptian serifs to describe these thick Slab Serifs because the letterforms resembled the weight and bluntness of hieroglyphs. In 1803, Thorne developed what he called Fat Face typefaces, which had an even bolder look and weight than the Egyptians. Fat Faces appealed to advertisers because of the impact they created on the page (Figure 2.7). Many variations of the Fat Faces soon followed, including forward and backward sloping italics, inline, shadow, and three-dimensional relief letters.

Book typesetting also kept pace with the growing demand as literacy increased, and in 1886, the German inventor Ottmar Mergenthaler (1854–1899; Figure 2.8) perfected what he called his "Linotype machine" (Figure 2.9). The mechanical process of composing type transformed the industry. The slow hand-setting of type, letter by letter, was replaced with type composed from a keyboard and transmitted to a series of matrices that held brass letterforms, which cast slugs of raised lead lines of type ("line o' type").

2.8 Ottmar Mergenthaler.



2.9 The Model 5 Linotype machine. Courtesy of the Mergenthaler Linotype Company, Melville, NY.



2.10 JOHN AUGUSTUS ROEBLING. Brooklyn Bridge, New York City. 1867–1883.

> *Industry without art is brutality.*
>
> —John Ruskin, 1870

A Turn-of-the-Century Response to Industrialization

As the Industrial Revolution advanced, artists, writers, and social critics began to object to the dehumanizing effects of mechanization. The most vocal critic, the British writer and painter John Ruskin (1819–1896), believed that the handcrafted Gothic style of the late Middle Ages, with all its imperfections, was worth reviving as a way to offset the mechanical ordinary nature of modern mass production. Ruskin's chapter, "the Nature of Gothic," in *The Stones of Venice,* Vol. II (1851–1853) explains that we should find a kind of pleasure in an object that was made with pleasure.

Ruskin's writings inspired a **Gothic revival** in England and across the Atlantic to America. The Gothic style (which in architecture included the pointed arch, the ribbed vault, and the flying buttress) permeated art and design. The Brooklyn Bridge (1883), designed by German immigrant John Augustus Roebling (1806–1869), is a grand example of the Gothic style, its pointed arches contrasting with the steel-wire suspension system, the first of its kind and the leading construction technology of its day (Figure 2.10).

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What is the value of learning and understanding graphic design history?

What's the value of learning about any field? Some say then we're not doomed to repeat the mistakes. That's one way of looking at history. Another is as a primer for current practice. Graphic design has not changed all that much from the early days of commercial advertising—the late nineteenth century. Styles have come and gone and returned, but the basic formal issues and practical concerns are the same. So history puts this into perspective. We can still invent things, but we don't have to reinvent things. Now that the web has become a design venue, new paradigms are being created, but even in this new digital world many of the old conventions are relevant. Studying design history places these conventions in context, but also reveals how new ideas (and ideals) were introduced. Historic graphic design also serves as a primer for current practice. History is not some musty notion but rather a living link to many traditions.

What role does design history play in "everyday" problem solving?

The most practical use of history in problem-solving is the practice of borrowing. Pastiche [imitation of older styles] is a large component of graphic design, and where else does one acquire the raw material other than from history lessons? Aside from this, history offers a blueprint for problem-solving. Can you tell me that a designer can compartmentalize historical knowledge from contemporary practice? No. Since little has changed, other than technology, from the "good-old-days" to today one is still able to use historical lessons as textbook examples of how to make design, if not overtly, then subconsciously.

To what degree do outside influences such as technology, politics, and pop culture affect graphic design?

If you don't practice design by rote—if it has more meaning than sweeping a floor—then outside influences will affect the way graphic design is created. Technology often determines how design will look (and be made); politics is often the theme of design. And pop culture? Well, graphic design is pop culture, as well as influenced by it (music, art, film, video, and so on, all have been tapped for graphic designs). To be a well-rounded designer means to have knowledge about all these things. To be a hack, means to ignore them.

Opposite page: Exhibition of Steven Heller books at the School of Visual Arts in NYC.

2.11 WILLIAM MORRIS. Kelmscott Press trademark. 1892.

2.12 WILLIAM MORRIS. Page from *The Canterbury Tales*. 1896.

2.13 AUBREY BEARDSLEY. *Salomé*. 1892.

Arts and Crafts Movement (1880–1910)

The first full-scale **art movement,** or focus on a particular approach to art, that surfaced from Ruskin's theories was the **Arts and Crafts movement.** William Morris (1834–1896) led the way, prolifically devoting himself to a philosophy of art that advocated looking back to the Middle Ages and, in particular, to the natural forms that were embraced in that era. "The past is not dead, it is living in us, and will be alive in the future which we are now helping to make."

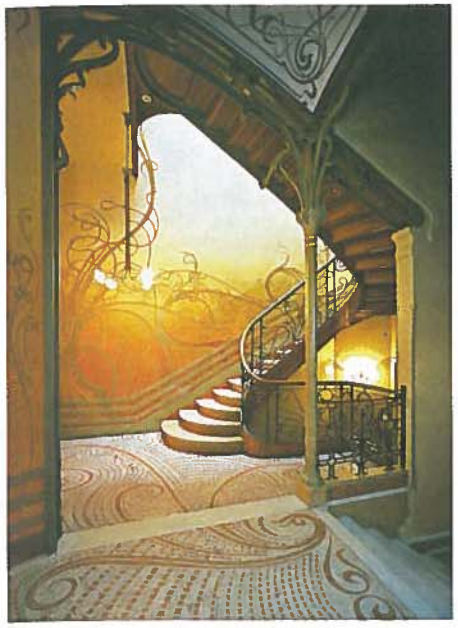
Morris's trademark for his Kelmscott Press is a beautifully crafted example of a commitment to recapturing the handcrafted art forms of the past (Figure 2.11). Some of the greatest examples of the art of the printed book came out of the Kelmscott Press. In the page design for *The Canterbury Tales*, Morris also designed the three typefaces used (Golden, Troy, and Chaucer), each modeled on fifteenth-century type styles (Figure 2.12). The philosophy of the Arts and Crafts movement was that handcrafted forms brought physical and spiritual pleasure to one's work. Morris led by example, with a repertoire that included furniture and cabinet making, wallpaper, ceramics, as well as textile and stained glass design—an entire man-made, yet organic, environment.

Aestheticism (1870–1914)

The Aesthetic movement took the issue of the purpose of art further than the Arts and Crafts movement, advocating a complete separation of art from morality and utility. **Aestheticism** began as early as 1818 when the French philosopher Victor Cousin (1792–1867) coined the phrase "art for art's sake." Based on a search for ideal beauty, the Aesthetic movement's ideology wanted to remove art completely from commerce and industry and form a more direct relationship between art and life. Two of its greatest proponents were the writer Oscar Wilde (1854–1900) and the illustrator Aubrey Beardsley (1872–1898). In fact, Beardsley won widespread notoriety in 1894 with his illustrations for Oscar Wilde's play *Salomé* (Figure 2.13). By blending the curvilinear style of **Art Nouveau** with contrasting forms found in Japanese woodblock prints, he created drawings that were new, elegant, and sensual.

Art Nouveau (1890–1910)

The Arts and Crafts and Aestheticism movements directly inspired Art Nouveau, which quickly became the most encompassing of the turn-of-the-century art movements. In addition, Japan began trading with the West after 1853, and Japanese woodblock prints and ornamentation



2.14 VICTOR HORTA. Stairway, Tassel House, Brussels. 1892.

2.15 Trademark for General Electric. ca. 1890 (top) and current mark (bottom).

2.16 HENRI DE TOULOUSE-LAUTREC. *La Goulue (with enlarged detail).* 1891.

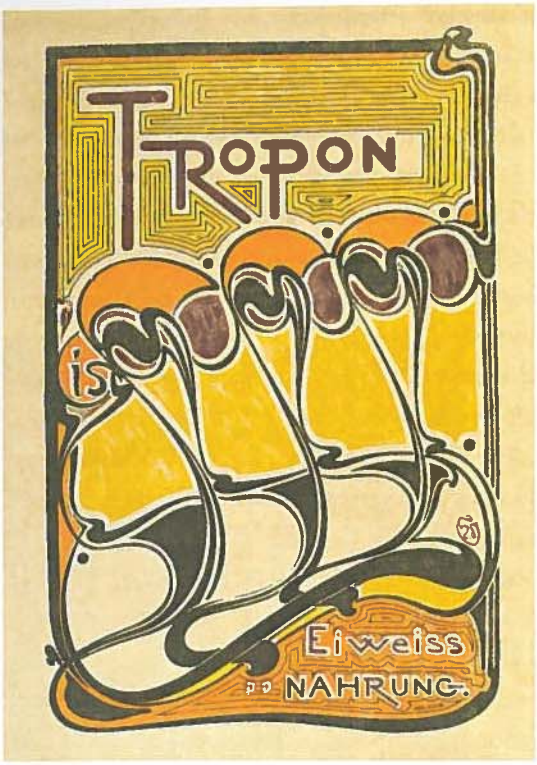
influenced a generation of Western artists. Art Nouveau's vocabulary of natural forms included birds, flowers, and vines, which were translated into high-contrast shapes and patterns. The impact and energy of these forms were appealing but also reflected the West's break from traditional dependence on history and the classics for its subject matter.

The style began with the architectural work of Belgian architect Victor Horta (1861–1947). The centerpiece of his work for his Tassel House project was a stairway (Figure 2.14). Its integration of pattern with space moved architecture away from the rigid box and brought an organic flow to both exteriors and interiors. As Art Nouveau developed, nearly everything painted, manufactured, or designed was affected—from teapots to subway entrances. The General Electric (Figure 2.15) and Coca-Cola trademarks designed in this period have been in continuous use ever since with only slight modifications.

Art Nouveau's most exuberant expression was in the work of French artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901). Commercial printing was at a point where graphics and color could be reproduced without much loss of quality, and this development inspired artists like Lautrec to work in the medium. The inspiration from Japanese woodblocks is seen in Toulouse-Lautrec's *La Goulue* through his use of flat color and line (Figure 2.16). Those elements create visual impact, as does the contrast of the cancan dancer against the solid black crowd in the background. Her undergarments go completely white, the paper itself becoming part of the drawing. Repeating the words "Moulin Rouge" in the poster, Toulouse-Lautrec also made typographic strides as he mimicked the bouncing rhythm of the dance hall. Rather than sit as a separate title, the words integrate into the poster's space.

View a Closer Look for La Goulue on **myartslab.com**

Look closely and you will see something else not seen before in poster design—Toulouse-Lautrec's personal observation. The face of the dancer is psychologically distanced from the setting, with an almost sad expression. That sadness, contrasted against the joyous setting, was a personal nod to the budding feminist movement that was gaining acceptance in Europe. Toulouse-Lautrec was dedicated to depicting the social life in Parisian cafés, theaters, dance halls, and brothels, and his inclusion of this subtle suggestion of unhappiness shown in the work, signaled new and expressive possibilities for graphic design. A very public medium suddenly had room for a personal voice.



2.17 HENRI VAN DE VELDE. Poster for Tropon food concentrate. 1899.

> *I wish to replace the old symbolic elements, which have lost their effectiveness for us today, with a new, imperishable beauty... in which ornament has no life of its own but depends on the forms and lines of the object itself, from which it receives its proper organic place.*
>
> —Henri van de Velde, 1901

Moving Toward a Modern Sensibility

As the twentieth century began, the everyday lives of people became much more complex. Innovations in all fields of human study were beginning to be driven by concepts that could be expressed only abstractly. Albert Einstein's (1879–1955) special theory of relativity (published in 1905) changed our understanding of space and time, just as Karl Marx's (1818–1983) writings changed our understanding of politics and government. In the arts, photography offered realistic visual representation of our world, prompting painters to shift to other modes of gesture and expression. Artists increasingly focused on the intrinsic qualities of their media—line, form, and color. The process of distilling information down to basic elements or qualities became known as **abstraction.** Under its banner, artists and designers were free to shed the limitations of literal representation. Architects could abandon past styles in favor of a form of architecture based on essential functional concerns. All of the visual arts were significantly transformed by these revolutionary changes.

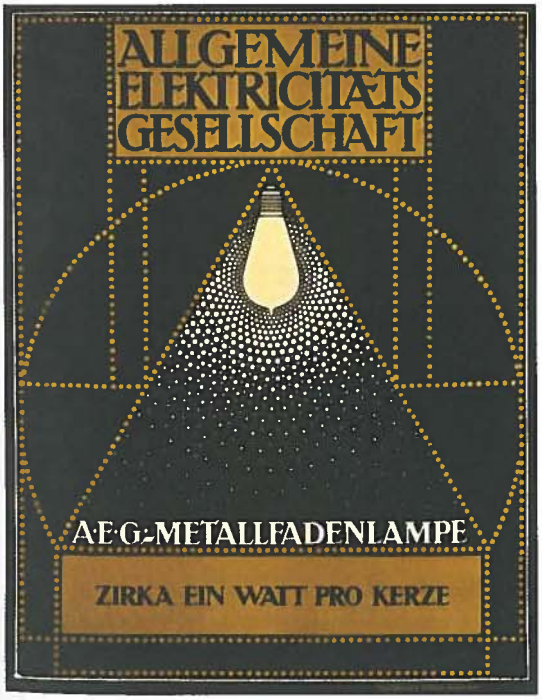
Henri van de Velde (1863–1957) brought a modern sensibility, a heightened awareness and responsiveness, to graphic design. Trained as a painter in Belgium, van de Velde was strongly influential in the birth of Art Nouveau in that country. A disciple of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement, he believed in the concept of total design—a union between the fine and applied arts. In contrast to Morris, van de Velde adopted a contemporary attitude in his work by looking toward the future rather than the past. A poster for Tropon food concentrate illustrates the modern idea he was striving for (Figure 2.17). It has the look of Art Nouveau, but the form of the poster is not simply decorative. Tropon's manufacturing process becomes part of the poster's content—the fluid center shapes are abstracted interpretations of eggs being separated from yolks. The intricate spiral designs are directly determined by the shapes of the letters in the word "Tropon." In this sense, the poster was a precursor to functional **Modernism**—the dynamic expression of abstract form with practicality and purpose. In fact, van de Velde, in his later years, reorganized the Kunstgewerbeschule (School of Arts and Crafts) in Weimar, Germany, laying the foundations for the Bauhaus to follow (see page 53).

Architecture and graphic design were beginning to share modern sensibilities of abstraction. Each affected the other. The work of architects Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928) and Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959) showed signs of this new geometry. The grid and linear patterning of Mackintosh's Salon de Luxe is a refined and almost eccentric example of geometry and abstraction (Figure 2.18). There are still hints of Art Nouveau in the linear patterns, but the interior charted new territory. Wright's living room of the Francis Little House also reflected the spiritual and organic feel of Art Nouveau, but the geometry and integration of the space, furniture, and windows, edges even closer toward the

2.18 CHARLES RENNIE MACKINTOSH. Salon de Luxe, Willow Tearoom, Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow. 1904.

2.19 FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT. Living room of the Francis W. Little House, Wayzata, Minnesota, designed 1912–1914.

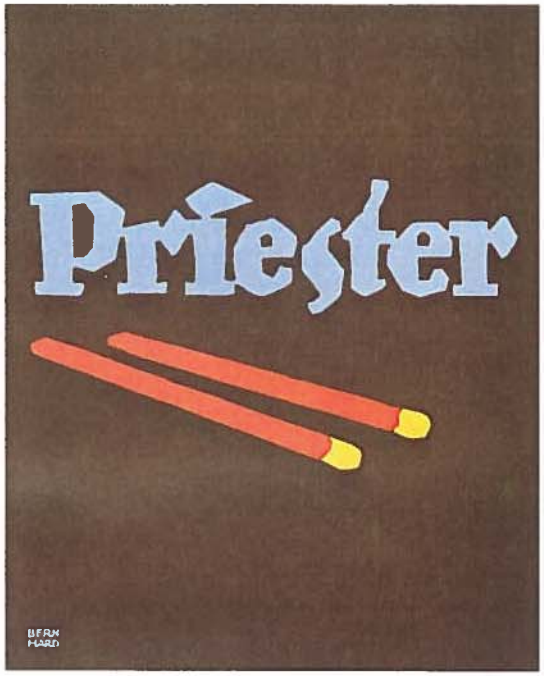
2.20 PETER BEHRENS. Trademark for the Allgemeine Elektricitäts-Gesellschaft. 1908.



2.21 PETER BEHRENS. Poster for AEG electric lamps. 1910.

clean lines and simple forms that were more in keeping with Modernism (Figure 2.19). The architect Peter Behrens (1868–1940) brought this same thinking into graphic design.

Like many artists of his era, Behrens was influenced by the design ideals of the Arts and Crafts movement. In 1907 he was hired as artistic adviser of the world's largest electrical manufacturing company, Allgemeine Elektricitäts-Gesellschaft (AEG) in Berlin. Behrens's job was to determine and manage AEG's visual image, from architecture to industrial and graphic design. His turbine factory (1909–1910) in Berlin for AEG was his most successful display as an architect, but as a graphic designer, he set a completely new standard and modern tone for the field by unifying art and industry. The logotype for AEG reflects the bridge he was creating, the letters interconnected by a geometric honeycomb (Figure 2.20). Behrens developed an entire typeface for AEG, unifying all of its publicity. In a poster promotion, the entire arrangement of the page has the structure of the AEG logotype, with tiny circles not only set linearly to create the grid lines but also spaced together to create an abstract image of light (Figure 2.21). Behrens also designed AEG's industrial products, making him the first industrial designer. He stripped all ornamentation out of his designs in the belief that utility had a beauty of its own. In fact, a new mode was being found for modern times that included proportion, geometry, and abstraction. His approach would help lead the architecture and design world fully into the twentieth century, and his staff, architects Walter Gropius (1883–1969), Ludwig Mies van der Rohe (1886–1969), and Le Corbusier (1887–1965), would go on to refine this logical and systematic thinking well into the century to come.



2.22 LUCIAN BERNHARD. Poster for Priester matches. 1905.

The Modern World

The work and writings of the artist Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) helped determine the direction that visual abstraction would take. His emphasis on basic forms—the cylinder, sphere, and cone—had a huge impact in the art world. Graphic designers, influenced by Cezanne, absorbed the principles of abstraction and return to basic forms, bringing this new design thinking to book jackets, postage stamps, posters, packaging, trademarks, and signage.

The poster art of the young designer Lucian Bernhard had wide-reaching effects on graphic design's reductionist approach. Bernhard's submission for a competition by Priester matches eliminated parts of a larger picture that he had created (Figure 2.22). The table, cigar, ashtray, tablecloth, and dancing girls were blackened out until all that was left was the product being advertised, matchsticks, and the name, Priester. The jury reviewing this design initially rejected it, but one of the jurors, a printer named Ernst Growald, saw the genius in the design. He convinced fellow jurors that it should take first prize, and thus the modern poster was born. An "economy of means" attitude was established, and such an approach would continue to flourish, impacted by political and cultural influences, throughout the rest of the century.

Cubism (1907–1921)

2.23 PABLO PICASSO. *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*. 1907.

The artist Pablo Picasso (1882–1973) was greatly influenced by the work and words of Cezanne. Picasso combined Cezanne's philosophy with his own interest in the raw, abstract qualities of traditional African art. Picasso's paintings and sculpture led to the development of **Cubism,** one of the most influential art movements of the twentieth century. His milestone painting *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (Figure 2.23) involved figures that were broken up into semi-abstracted forms. Picasso showed these figural forms from multiple points of view simultaneously, thus questioning established notions of viewpoint, reality, time, and space. This painting was completed just after Einstein's special theory of relativity was published, which explored completely new theories of space and time. Gertrude Stein (1874–1946), a close friend of Picasso's, used the same theories of simultaneous space and time in her writing. Composer Erik Satie (1866–1925) also embraced similar concepts in his music, revisiting the same musical themes from different angles. He collaborated with Picasso on the ballet *Parade*. The visual arts, literature, music, and science were all evolving and influencing one another.

Another fellow artist and friend Georges Braque (1882–1963) especially appreciated how Cubism discarded all the techniques of the past (perspective, foreshortening, modeling, and chiaroscuro, or representation through light/dark contrasts) and helped Picasso envision an entirely new movement in art. Together, Braque and Picasso painted a new reality

2.24 FILIPPO MARINETTI. *Les mots en liberté*. 1919.

2.25 E. MCKNIGHT KAUFFER. Poster for the *Daily Herald*. 1918.

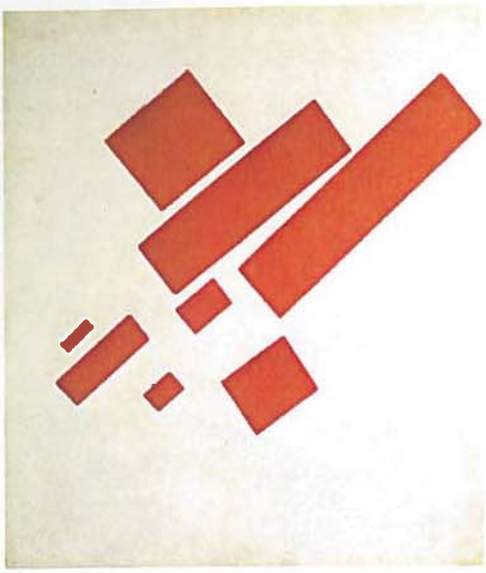
that left the previous time-honored theories of art by the wayside. Cubism didn't imitate nature. Its new approach could be applied to all the arts, both fine and applied, giving them the freedom to interpret form and space in a new way. It was a complete break from the past and offered an opportunity to explore creativity in a way artists had never experienced before.

Futurism (1910–1918)

Artists, graphic designers, and typographers also found new freedom in an art movement known as **Futurism.** Poet and writer Filippo Marinetti (1876–1944) established the movement in 1909 with a manifesto that claimed, "Motion and light destroy the materiality of bodies." Marinetti's visual language was based on science rather than on classical forms. In his 1919 poem *Les mots en liberté (the words to freedom),* the chaos of war, noise, and speed were embedded in the visual poetry of the page. Gone were the horizontal and vertical alignments of typography. Letters were used as expressive objects, the printed page as a work of art (Figure 2.24).

The work of two graphic designers, E. McKnight Kauffer (1890–1954) and A.M. Cassandre (1901–1968), exemplify the influence of Futurism on the applied arts. Kauffer, an American expatriate who was one of Europe's most influential poster designers in the 1920s and 1930s, used the dynamics of motion to create a poster for the progressive English newspaper the *Daily Herald* (Figure 2.25). Fragmented birds, clearly influenced by Cubism, soar off the top of the page, filled with energy, especially in contrast to the large expanse of empty space in the center of the poster. Cassandre, an acclaimed French poster designer, integrated typography and image in an energized composition for *L'Intransigeant,* where telegraph wires lead straight to the ear of an abstracted face (Figure 2.26). Again, the Futurist attributes of motion and speed are fused with Cubist abstraction. The result is a hybrid of styles in service to the applied art of promotion.

2.26 A.M. CASSANDRE. Poster for the French daily newspaper *L'Intrans*. 1925.



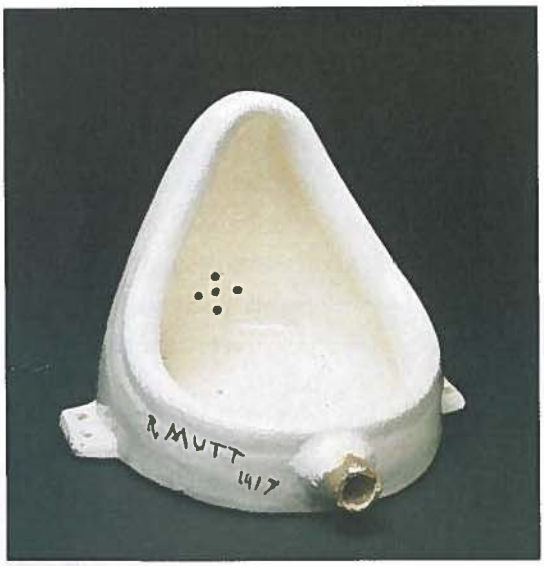
2.27 KAZIMIR MALEVICH. *Suprematist Painting (Eight Red Rectangles).* 1915.

Suprematism (1915–1934)

In Russia, artist Kazimir Malevich (1878–1935) referred to the blend of Cubism with Futurism as *Cubo-Futurism.* Both fractured and energized, its distillation led to Malevich's *Suprematist Painting (Eight Red Rectangles)* (Figure 2.27). **Suprematism,** a movement in art conceived by Malevich, was short for "the supremacy of pure feeling in creative art." His movement launched an art form that completely eliminated objects and representation. Composition became a pure geometrical abstraction and hinted at a kind of metaphysical spirituality—a quest for a greater truth. Reducing everything to the basics was a way to start over in the visual arts, just as the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 sought to start over by leveling society into a classless, stateless, social organization. Suprematism, with its belief in pure form and pure concept, continues to influence the visual arts today.

Dada (1916–1923)

World War I (1914–1918) was fought with machine guns, tanks, airplanes, and poison gas. This mechanization unleashed a level of killing the world had never seen before. The **Dada** movement was a reaction by artists to what they perceived as a world gone mad. Alternate perspectives, including irony, irrationality, and even anarchy, seemed better choices than the logic and reason that led to such unspeakable horrors. The Dadaists rejected all traditions and standards in art; its publications and manifestoes, all written by Tristan Tzara (1896–1963), claimed that whatever art stood for, Dada stood for the opposite. This nonsensical spirit began in a small cabaret in Switzerland, but spread, establishing footholds in Germany, France, and America.



2.28 MARCEL DUCHAMP. A flipped urinal that Duchamp titled *Fountain.*

In New York, Marcel Duchamp's (1887–1968) approach to art making was ironic, shocking, funny, and, at the time, highly intellectual. By elevating mundane, everyday objects into new gallery contexts, Duchamp simultaneously proved that everything could be art, and, by default, art was dead. His urinal, submitted in 1917 to the Society of Independent Artists, of which he himself was director, was an ordinary plumbing fixture (Figure 2.28). Flipped upside down, titled *Fountain,* and signed "R. Mutt," it was promptly rejected by the committee but succeeded in turning the understanding of art on its head. It inspired a whole school of art known as "readymades," or found art, and remains one of the most famous works of art of the twentieth century. After *Fountain,* anything was possible.

> *I am interested in ideas, not merely in visual products.*
> —Marcel Duchamp

In Germany, the Dadaist artist Hannah Höch (1889–1978) brought a feminist perspective to the work she created. She was one of the pioneers of photomontage, a new technique where multiple photos were joined together to create a seamless whole. In her photomontages, Höch ironically portrayed the culture of beauty in fashion photography by contrasting images of female perfection with photos of real women. In her work

2.29 HANNAH HÖCH. Collage titled *Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada through the Last Weimar Beer Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany.* ca. 1919.

Cut with the Kitchen Knife Dada through the Last Weimar Beer Belly Cultural Epoch of Germany, she swapped out heads and bodies and fused newspaper type with newspaper images to critique the male-dominated culture of the Weimar Republic and to reflect the Dadaist disgust with German nationalism (Figure 2.29).

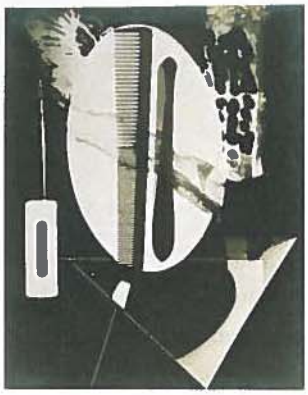
Höch's colleague and photomontage artist, Helmut Herzfeld (1891–1968), was equally critical of the Weimar Republic. As a protest against German militarism, he changed his name to the more English-sounding John Heartfield. He took special aim at the Nazi party—in everything from book jackets and posters to magazines and newspapers. In *Have No Fear—He's a Vegetarian,* Heartfield depicted a butcher, his head replaced by Hitler's, sharpening his knives, hungrily eyeing a rooster, the symbol of France (Figure 2.30). *Have No Fear* reflects the critical irony of Dada in a shocking and effective political statement.

Surrealism (1924–1955)

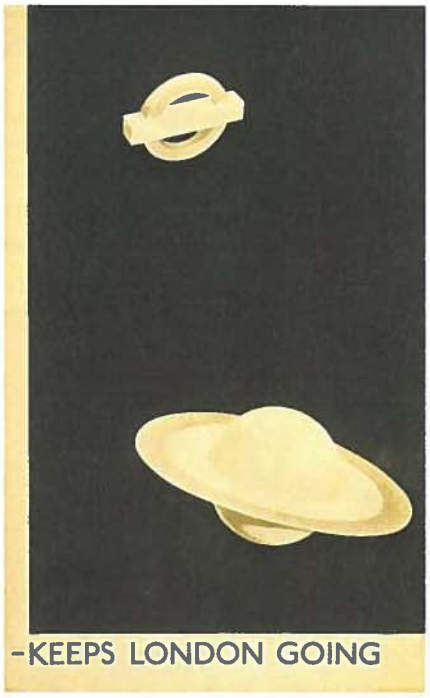
As the Dada movement was coming to a close, another twentieth century art movement came into being; **Surrealism** grounded its investigations on psychologically based images, especially ones that caused shock and surprise. The dream analysis work being done by Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) fed this movement; the exploration of the unconscious became new territory for artists. The work of American Dada artist Man Ray (1890–1976) marked a transition from Dada to Surrealism.

Emmanuel Radnitzky (1890–1976) changed his name to Man Ray because of the prevalent anti-Semitism in the United States at the time. The artist's group he cofounded was called "Others," reflecting his affinity with artists fleeing World War I in Europe. Man Ray became acquainted with Marcel Duchamp, who came to New York in 1915. He followed Duchamp back to Paris in 1921, believing his creative spirit would thrive there. It did, especially in a camera-less photographic process he called "rayographs."

2.30 JOHN HEARTFIELD. *Have No Fear—He's a Vegetarian.* Photo-montage in *Regards* no. 121 (153) (Paris). 1936.



2.31 MAN RAY. *Champs délicieux.* 1922.



2.32 MAN RAY. *Keeps London Going.* 1932.

2.33 VLADIMIR TATLIN. *Project for Monument to the Third International.* 1919–1920. Destroyed.

In *Champs Délicieux*, Man Ray expanded the possibilities of photography as an expressive medium (Figure 2.31). Through pure inventiveness, he created shapes and shadows that shimmer with a three-dimensional appearance, an effect he achieved by moving beams of light across the photo paper.

Surrealism's impact on graphic design has been profound, both visually and conceptually. Man Ray's poster for the London Underground showed how the Surrealist theory could be applied to graphic design (Figure 2.32). Here, the analogy made between the logo and a planet creates an effective and humorous communication. Unfortunately, mass media has exploited Surrealism to the point that the manipulation of dreams and the use of psychology are recognized more as an advertising campaign than an art movement, but for many years, Surrealism's influence on the graphic arts was highly significant and opened designers' minds to unbridled creative possibilities.

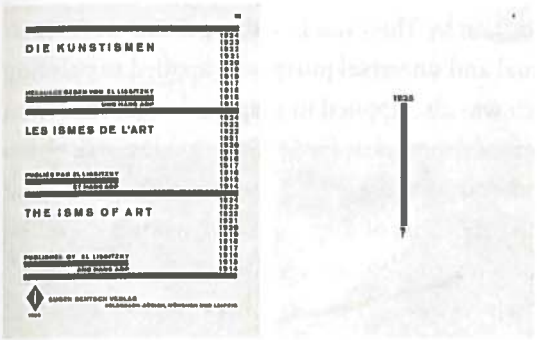
Designing Utopia

As World War I and the Russian Revolution came to an end, artists began searching for renewed purpose in their work. A sense of starting over was in the air. Whereas Dada sought to flip art upside down in response to the absurdity of a world war, other movements saw creativity in more rationalist terms. Creative centers began to emerge, and major innovations in the arts were changing how graphic designers understood themselves and their role in the society. Some would align themselves with certain political perspectives, leading to **Constructivism** and Soviet propaganda art. Others would stand in complete opposition to those approaches, as was the case with Bauhaus principles in Germany. In all cases, there was cross-pollination as the movements influenced one another through lectures given by their proponents, exhibits, and a shared empathy between like-minded social activists. Artists began to see themselves as having a role far beyond the visual: they became spokesmen for political and social change.

Constructivism (1919–1934)

In Russia, Vladimir Tatlin (1885–1953) founded Constructivist art, which embraced Communism, rejected art for art's sake, and proclaimed that art should have a social purpose. His *Monument to the Third International* was a spiraling construction of glass and steel glorifying the technological determinism of the Bolsheviks (Figure 2.33). Meant to exist as a propaganda center, its streamlined form followed its function as an unadorned symbol of industry. If built at full scale, it would have dwarfed the Eiffel Tower. Yet merely as a model, it expressed a manifesto of sorts in support of the Constructivist aesthetic. Constructivism was concerned mostly with space, materials, and movement. Its intent was to move all the arts

2.34 ALEXANDER RODCHENKO. *Books*. 1924.



2.35 EL LISSITZKY. Title page and page 1 from *The Isms of Art* by Hans Arp and Lissitzky. 1925.

2.36 EL LISSITZKY. *Russian Exhibition*. 1929.

from expressions of personal style toward a collective style based on the machine. Writers, photographers, and designers could all follow this path.

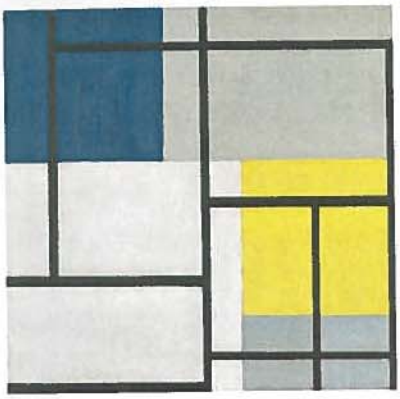
Alexander Rodchenko (1891–1956), El Lissitzky (1890–1941), and the brothers Vladimir Stenberg (1899–1982) and Georgii Stenberg (1900–1933) helped create bold graphic designs that spoke the Constructivist language. In Rodchenko's literacy poster for a Lenningrad State Publisher a woman yells out the words "Books In All Branches of Knowledge" into a megaphone-shaped space. The socialist message and its layout are extremely utilitarian (Figure 2.34).

Lissitzky's layouts for *The Isms of Art* expressed how the functional and machined language of Constructivism could be used typographically (Figure 2.35). Because Lissitzky spoke multiple languages and collaborated with many artists and designers, he was able to spread this visual, sans serif, Constructivist language throughout Europe. Inspired by Lissitzky, designers further refined and built a complete system of typography. Lissitzky was also able to fuse his approach with the social aspects of Communism, as seen in his poster for a Zurich exhibit (Figure 2.36). In the poster, Lissitzky used a double portrait to represent the idea of equal stature of male and female youth in the Soviet Union.

For the burgeoning Soviet cinema, the artists and designers Vladimir Stenberg and Georgii Stenberg designed extraordinary work in the Constructivist mode. Working as a team, the Stenberg brothers basically invented the film poster genre, combining abstraction with visual narrative. The Stenberg brothers' poster for *Man with a Movie Camera* used typography, color, and perspective in ways that had never been seen before (Figure 2.37). The Bolsheviks saw the usefulness and value of graphic design in these commercial applications. These films, and the posters that promoted them, helped signal to the masses that a new social order was in place.

2.37 STENBERG BROTHERS. Poster for *Man with a Movie Camera*. 1929.

2.38 GERRIT RIETVELD.
Schröder House, Utrecht, the Netherlands. 1927.



2.39 THEO VAN DOESBURG.
Simultaneous Composition.
1929.

De Stijl (1917–1931)

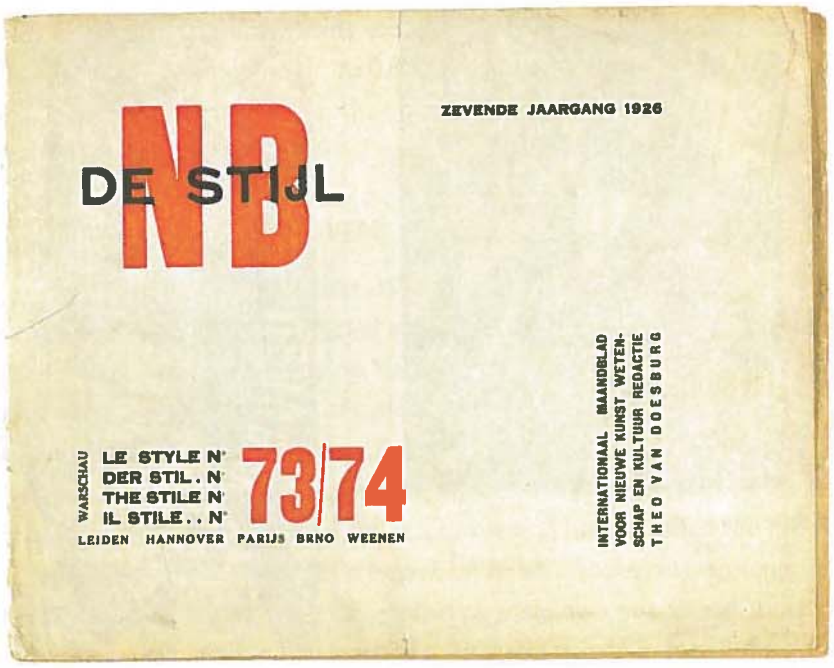
A Dutch abstract-art movement called **De Stijl** ("The Style") was known for its straight lines, right angles, and primary colors. In 1920, Piet Mondrian (1872–1944) published De Stijl's manifesto titled *Neo-Plasticism,* which became another name for the movement. In his manifesto, Mondrian rejected symmetry and favored the manipulation and arrangement of geometric forms and color into what he called "dynamic equilibrium."

Gerrit Rietveld (1888–1964) brought the clean lines and dynamic asymmetry of De Stijl to architecture. His Schröder House was, in a way, the offspring of work initiated by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and Frank Lloyd Wright (Figure 2.3). Rietveld, however, made a complete and radical break from the past, establishing what would later be known as the "International Style."

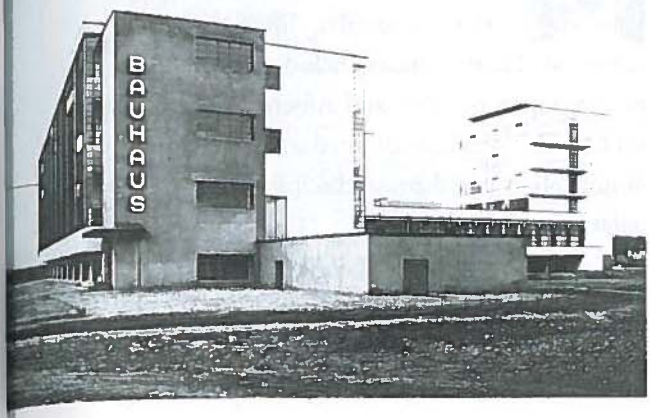
Simultaneous Composition by Theo van Doesburg (1883–1931) is an example of how this spiritual and universal purity was applied to painting (Figure 2.39). The approach was also applied to graphic design, as seen in van Doesburg's many forms of promotion for De Stijl that the artist handled, including posters and booklets. A typeface van Doesburg designed in 1919 proved how far the deletion of curves and diagonals could be taken (Figure 2.40). The focal point of the movement was Van Doesburg's magazine *De Stijl,* which helped spread the movement's theories (Figure 2.41). The magazine's page layouts expressed the same dynamic conviction found in the movement's paintings and architecture. Van Doesburg's typographic arrangements were structurally poetic, like furniture on a floor plan. The typographic refinement and space created on the page matured into graphic design's typographic International Style.

ABCDEFGHIJKLM
NOPQRSTUVWXYZ

2.40 THEO VAN DOESBURG.
An Alphabet. 1919.



2.41 THEO VAN DOESBURG.
Cover of *De Stijl (The Style).*
1925.



2.42 WALTER GROPIUS. Bauhaus building, Dessau, Germany. 1925–1926.

2.43 LASZLO MOHOLY-NAGY. Brochure cover for *Fourteen Bauhaus Books*. 1929.

2.44 HERBERT BAYER. Banknote for the State Bank of Thuringia, Germany. 1923.

Bauhaus (1919–1933)

No other movement influenced graphic design more directly than the **Bauhaus** (meaning "House of Construction") (Figure 2.42). The art school, founded in Weimar, Germany, in 1919 by the architect Walter Gropius, set as its goal to eliminate the distinction between the fine and applied arts. In its place would be a union of arts, crafts, and industry, working together for the greater good. Gropius and the other members of the Bauhaus formulated an approach to design that became the foundation for much of the thinking about art, architecture, and design in the twentieth century.

The Bauhaus was intensely influenced by the Expressionist theories of the artists Johannes Itten (1888–1967), Josef Albers (1888–1976), Lyonel Feininger (1871–1956), Paul Klee (1879–1940), and Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), who were all associated with the Bauhaus school. They established a foundation of spirituality, intuition, and universality, which focused on the physical nature of materials. From its beginnings in 1919 until 1922, Itten taught at the Bauhaus and developed the innovative preliminary course that introduced students to the basics of composition, color theory, and material characteristics.

As the Bauhaus program developed, other movements also had their influence. Theo van Doesburg promoted De Stijl's elegant geometry and economy of means on visits to the school; and El Lissitzky promoted Constructivism's socialist purpose. When Laszlo Moholy-Nagy (1895–1946) replaced Itten as the preliminary course instructor in 1923, a real shift occurred. Moholy-Nagy arrived with a vision to fully embrace the machine aesthetic as a means for connecting art and design to the masses. His design for *14 Bauhausbücher (Fourteen Bauhaus Books)* exemplifies the approach (Figure 2.43). A photo of handset metal type in its composing stick was used for the cover image of the catalog. The metal type would have been used to create the cover's title with all the proper letters in place, but instead was used to reveal the method of production. The cover also conveyed the school's emphasis on the applied arts over the fine arts.

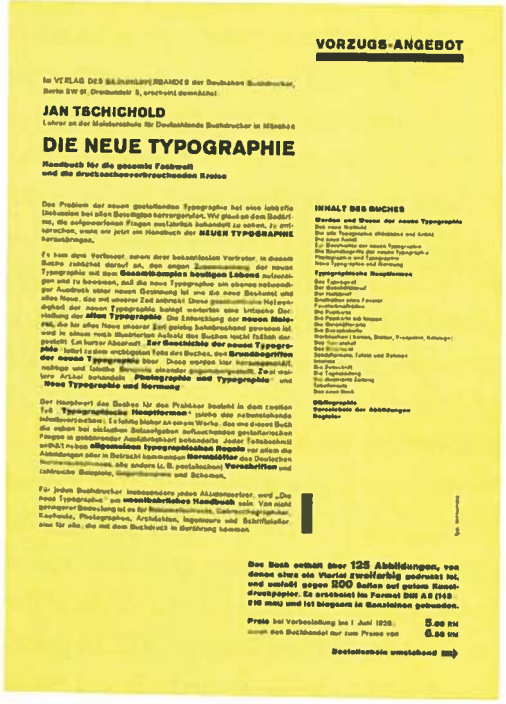
Herbert Bayer (1900–1985) pushed the influence of the applied arts even further, designing a banknote and using multiple color overprints, instead of ornamental line engravings, to prevent counterfeiting (Figure 2.44). Bayer's solution showed how the Bauhaus agenda of applied art could advance social progress rather than merely create luxury items.

In 1925, the Bauhaus relocated from Weimar to Dessau, then moved to Berlin in 1932 when the Nazis in Dessau cut off its funding. Nazi officials wanted art and architecture that expressed their grandiose vision of Germany, not the functional, cosmopolitan International Style of the Bauhaus, and they forced the school to close completely in 1933. Its greatest legacy is its teachers and students who spread its methods and ideals

throughout the world. Bauhaus influence on furniture and textile design, architecture, and color theory has a lasting effect even now. Many art schools today base their foundation classes on similar, fundamental elements that the Bauhaus incorporated in its courses, including the theories on the interaction of color developed by Itten and Albers. For graphic design, the Bauhaus proved how the synthesis of unadorned functionalism, technology, and communication could bring discipline, order, and structure to design's vocabulary.

2.45 KURT SCHWITTERS. Cover of *Merz* 8/9 magazine. 1924.

2.46 JAN TSCHICHOLD. Advertisement for the Leipzig Trade Fair. 1922.



2.47 JAN TSCHICHOLD. Brochure page for *Die neue Typographie*. 1928.

Ideological Independents and the New Typography

Some designers found the philosophies of movements like Dada, Constructivism, and De Stijl too dogmatic or political. However, many designers were influenced by the innovations of these movements and made their own significant contributions to graphic design.

Kurt Schwitters (1887–1948) synthesized Dada, Constructivism, and Surrealism into an art movement he called *Merz*. The name *Merz* was derived from a scavenged piece of paper with the word *Commerzbank* on it that Schwitters included in one of his collages, which made a social comment about the commoditization of art. Schwitters's cover for *Merz* magazine went further, creating a self-inflicted parody of betrayal, or selling out (Figure 2.45). Its design has the typographic order and toughness of Constructivism, with the nonsensical humor of Dada. In 1937 Schwitters's work was included in the Nazi Degenerate Art exhibit, and he fled Germany for Norway and, later, rural England where he continued making creations from everyday materials.

Inspired by a Bauhaus exhibit in Weimar, Jan Tschichold (1902–1974), a recent graduate of the Leipzig Academy for Graphic Arts and Book Trades, conducted typeface experiments of his own. (See Chapter 7 for an introduction to typography.) Although the black letter, or Gothic script, was widely used in Germany, Tschichold looked at simplified typefaces to bring a modern sensibility to the country's design output, which eventually led to a practice of **New Typography**. Two examples of his work help explain how drastic his type transformation was. His centered, hand-lettered advertisement for the Leipzig Trade Fair is characteristic of the layout treatments most German designers used (Figure 2.46). Size and direction from top to bottom are the only hierarchies. In contrast, his asymmetric approach for the brochure page is architectural in its construction (Figure 2.47). He used only sans serif type and completely removed all ornament. Most important, the page elements have an integrated, functional relationship with one another, using rhythm, proportion, and tension. Tschichold's writings on the subject, especially his

2.48 PIET ZWART. Personal logo. The black square represents the designer's last name, which is Dutch for "black." 1927.

2.49 PIET ZWART. Inside page from a printing company's type catalog. 1931.

2.50 HERBERT MATTER. Magazine Cover: Typographische Monatsblatter. 1933.

1928 book, *Die neue Typographie (The new Typography),* became a handbook for modern designers and helped describe Modernist typography to the world. The rise of Fascism convinced him that Modernist design was authoritarian, and he later condemned the New Typography as too extreme. By 1947, when Tschichold became typographic designer for Penguin Books in London, he preferred classical roman typefaces and layout.

The Dutch designer Piet Zwart (1885–1977) worked a blend of Dada and De Stijl together into his projects. You can see it reflected in his personal logo where the geometry of a simple black square became a visual pun of his last name, which in Dutch means black (Figure 2.48). For a printing company's type catalog, Zwart overlaid various sizes and styles of type into a playful, Dada-like arrangement, yet they are somehow orderly and complete with the straight lines, right angles, and the primary colors of De Stijl (Figure 2.49). Zwart's Dutch contemporaries Paul Schuitema (1897–1973) and Willem Sandberg (1897–1984) also applied modern principles to page layout and commercial advertising, though they did not become members of any particular movement.

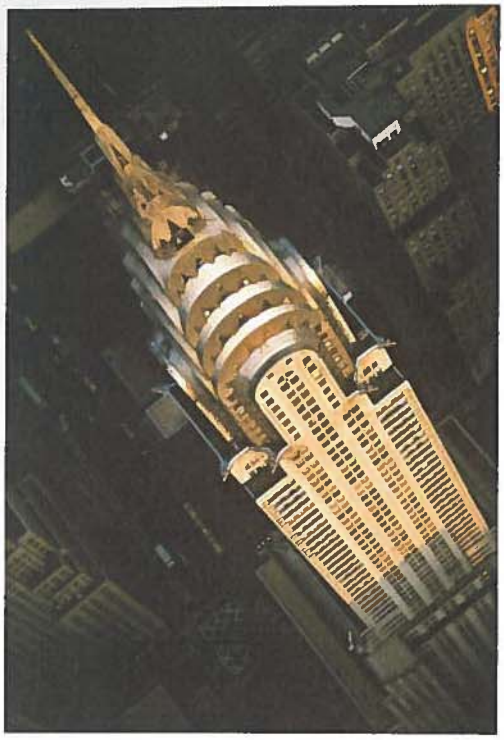
The Swiss artist Herbert Matter (1907–1984) studied with the painter Fernand Léger (1881–1955) in Paris and later assisted the graphic artist Cassandre and the architect Le Corbusier (1887–1965). By the mid-1930s, Matter developed an international reputation through his use of photography as a design tool. In his cover for a typographic journal, Matter collaged his photos with type (Figure 2.50). The elements are visually organized, yet surreal and complex: a grid of the hockey net projects onto a woman's face while the title of the magazine slides diagonally over larger type. Matter's unique visual language was a blend of playful photography with New Typography that he could also apply diversely. Matter photographed covers for Condé Nast publications, including *Vogue,* designed corporate image programs for Knoll furniture and the New Haven Railroad, and later taught photography and graphic design at Yale University.

In England, however, the British sculptor and designer Eric Gill (1882–1940) carried on the tradition of William Morris and the belief in the spiritual value of work done by hand. In his book design for *The Four Gospels,* a modern dynamic integrates all the elements, but the roman typeface and woodcuts look back to the humanist past rather than to the new, machine-oriented future (Figure 2.51). In this case, Gill was a dissenter to New Typography.


FORASMUCH AS MANY HAVE TAKEN IN HAND TO SET FORTH IN ORDER A DECLARATION OF THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE MOST SURELY BELIEVED AMONG US, EVEN AS THEY DELIVERED them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, That thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.

THERE WAS IN THE DAYS OF HEROD, THE KING OF JUDÆA, A CERTAIN PRIEST NAMED ZACHARIAS, OF THE COURSE OF ABIA: AND HIS WIFE WAS OF THE DAUGHTERS OF Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and

2.51 ERIC GILL. Page from *The Four Gospels.* 1931.



2.52 WILLIAM VAN ALEN. Chrysler Building, New York. 1928–1930.

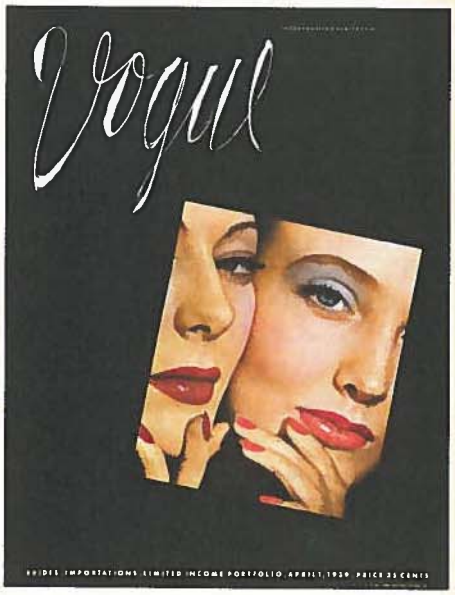
Modernism in America

The Paris Exposition (1925) made Americans aware of **Art Deco** and its machine-inspired Modernism. Art Deco's sleek lines and geometry were an exciting replacement for the floral patterns of Art Nouveau. Art Deco was essentially a decorative movement, however. It lacked any specific inner philosophy and was vulnerable to superficial interpretation. It quickly became commercialized, and its architectural achievements such as the Chrysler Building became more representative of opulence and sophistication rather than a path for design and the common good (Figure 2.52).

The rise of Nazism caused many creative artists from Europe to flee to the United States. These designers and architects were invigorated by the Bauhaus and its philosophical approach; design and education communities, corporations, and publications embraced them. A pioneer in magazine design, Dr. Mehemed Fehmy Agha (1896–1978) paved the way for the functionalist approach. The son of Turkish parents, Agha was raised in the Ukraine, schooled in Paris, and worked in both Paris and Berlin. The publisher Condé Nast brought him to the United States in 1929 to be the art director of its publications, and there, Agha applied his sans serif typography and full-bleed imagery, showing how design can integrate with the editorial aspect of magazines. Agha had a unique vision for seeing layout possibilities in magazine design, but he also recognized the creative talents in people. In the midst of the Great Depression Agha hired Cipe Pineles (1908–1991) to be his full-time design assistant at Condé Nast. Pineles worked alongside Agha on the design of *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* before becoming the first female art director of a mass-market American publication, *Glamour* magazine, in 1942 (Figure 2.53). Pineles

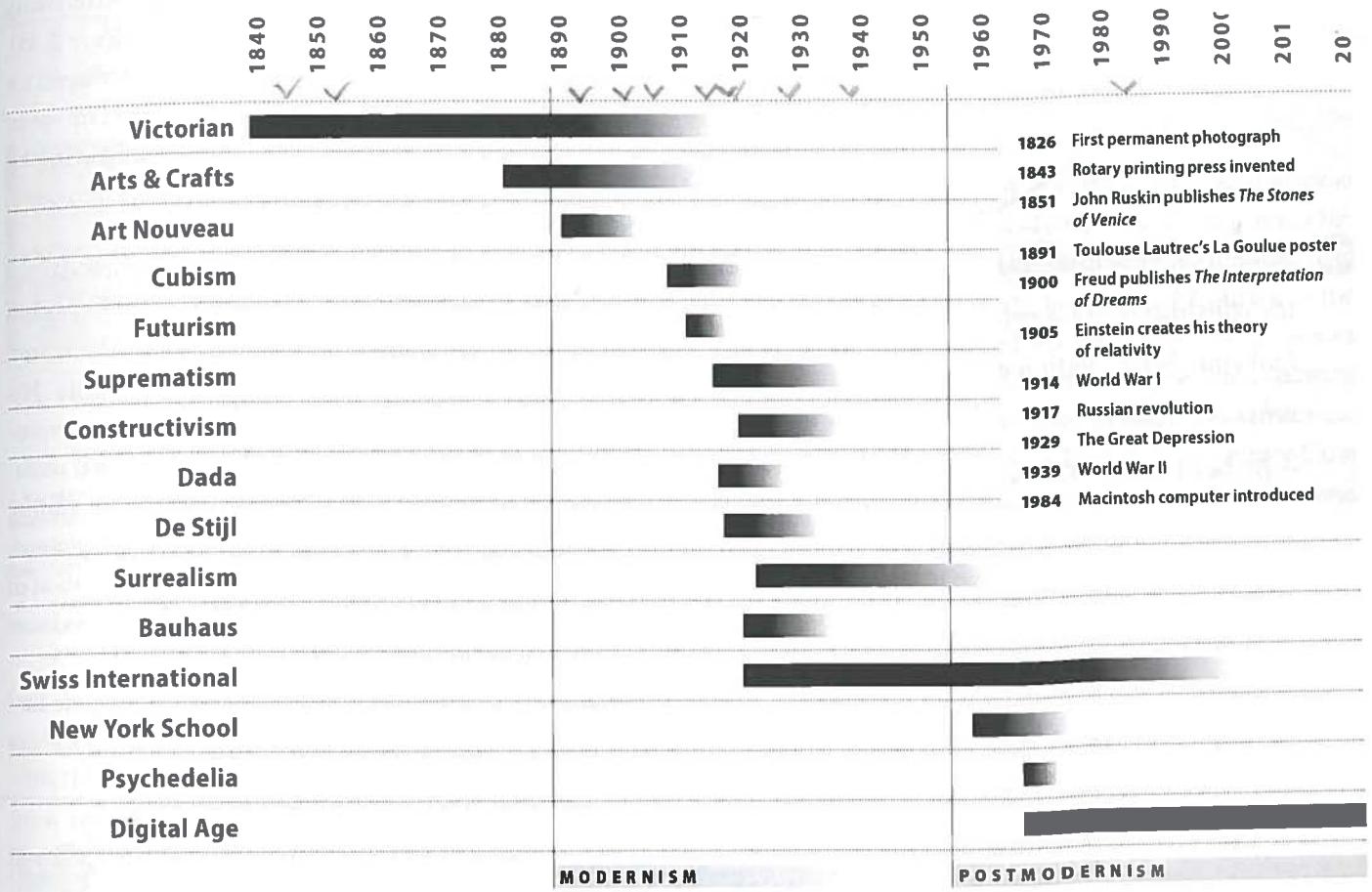
SPEAKOUT: Cipe Pineles by Jan Uretsky, design instructor, Pratt Institute

The designer who had the biggest impact on me was Cipe Pineles. A protégé of Mehemed Fehmy Agha, Cipe went on to art direct *Glamour, Seventeen, Charm,* and *Mademoiselle* magazines. Her designs were elegant and playfully Modernist. But it wasn't so much Cipe's exceptional work that I admired—it was that Cipe lit the way for women to enter and excel in our field. She understood the culture of her time, especially the world of fashion, and translated it to a graphic design format brilliantly.



2.53 CIPE PINELES. Cover for *Vogue* magazine. April 1939 issue.

TIMELINE OF MAJOR MOVEMENTS AND EVENTS



2.55 HERBERT BAYER. Advertisement for the Container Corporation of America. 1943.

moved to *Seventeen* magazine in 1947, where she was the first to hire fine artists to create illustration work for a magazine, and then moved on to *Charm* and *Mademoiselle*. Pineles also broke ground by becoming the first female member of the Art Director's Club.

In 1937, Walter Paepcke, chairman of the Container Corporation, invited Bauhaus teacher Laszlo Moholy-Nagy to develop a similar school in Chicago. Dubbed "The New Bauhaus," it taught the same principles of functionalism and experimentation to students in America as the original Bauhaus did in Europe. Unfortunately, the school lost backing after only a single year and closed. In 1939 Laszlo Moholy-Nagy opened the School of Design, which transformed later into the Institute of Design. Moholy-Nagy's book *Vision in Motion* documented the school's curriculum, which had influenced generations of educators and design programs.

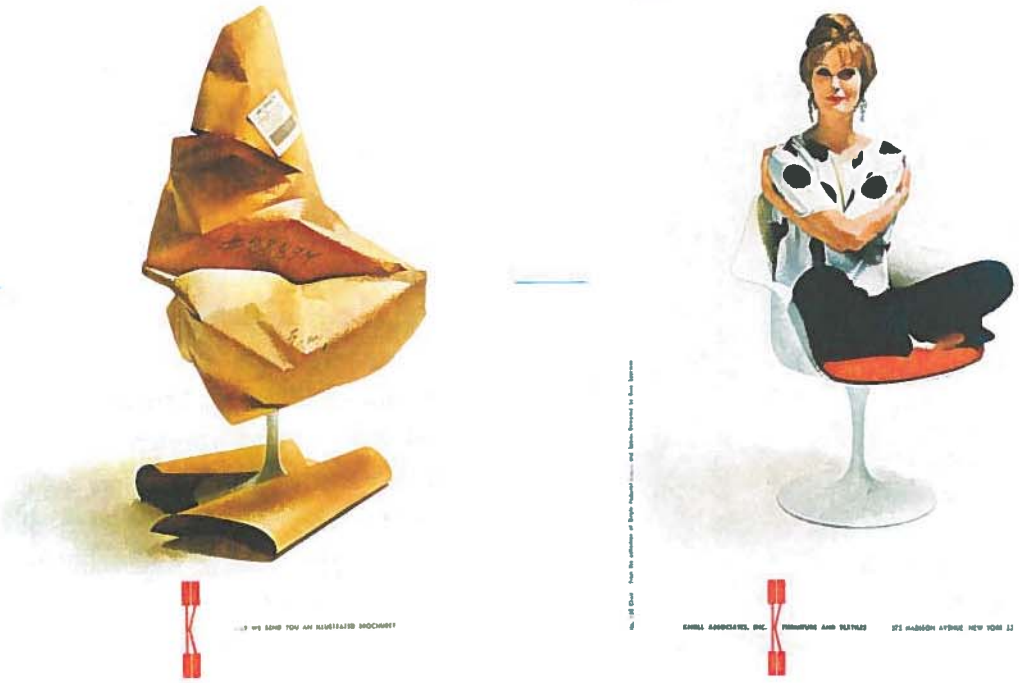
Herbert Matter and Herbert Bayer also brought their modern and functional approaches to American corporate advertising. Bayer's work for the Container Corporation clarified, through clean typography and imagery, how the company's efforts were supporting the war effort (Figure 2.54). Matter's advertising design for companies such as Kno

furniture, which included his logo design for the company, photography, and page layout, were playful, smart, and elegant. His design advertising Eero Saarinen's Tulip chair involved two consecutive ads (Figure 2.55). In the first version, you see a wrapped chair with the request to send an illustrated brochure. In the next version, you see an unwrapped image of the chair with a young woman looking very happy to be sitting in it. The set created a mini-narrative and visual tone that the viewer couldn't help but respond to.

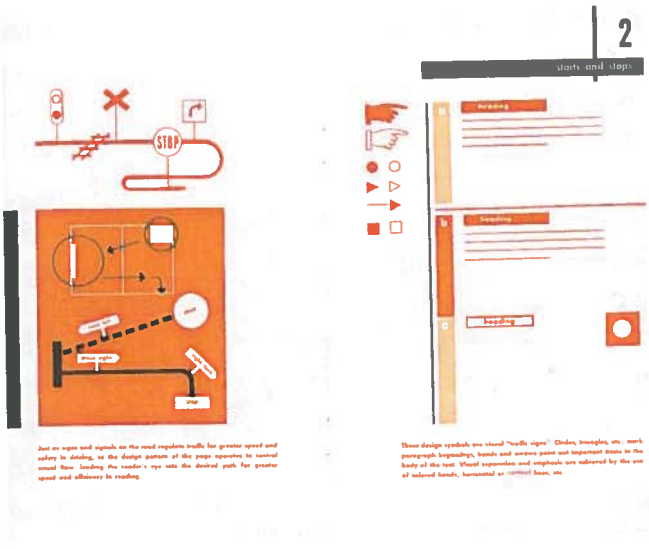
> *Modernism released us from the constraints of everything that had gone before with a euphoric sense of freedom.*
>
> —Arthur Erickson (1924–2009)

Ladislav Sutnar (1897–1976) was an established Czech designer when he came to work on Czechoslovakia's pavilion for the 1939 World's Fair in New York. Just as the fair opened, the Nazis invaded his country, so Sutnar stayed in New York City and established a design studio. His strong graphic vocabulary and discernible voice contributed to the evolution of information design. We see examples of this informational sensibility in the systems he created for Bell Telephone and for Sweets building product catalogs. In his book *Visual Design in Action* Sutnar explained, "The term 'information design' should be understood as the integration of meaning [content] and visualization [format] into an entity that produces a desired action" (Figure 2.56).

Agha, Moholy-Nagy, Matter, Bayer, Sutnar, and other émigrés had a great deal of influence on American graphic design, but U.S. designers were also making their mark. One early leader was Lester Beall (1903–1969). Born in Kansas City, this self-taught designer referenced the work of Dada and the Bauhaus and combined it with his own background and thinking. His output was a uniquely American style complete with woodcut types used in place of European sans serifs (Figure 2.57). In Beall's



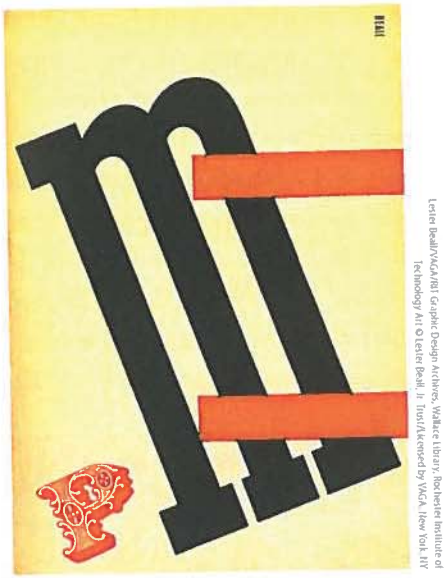
2.55 HERBERT MATTER.
A pair of advertisements for Knoll Furniture. 1956.



2.56 LADISLAV SUTNAR. Page spread from a paper sampler explaining controlled visual flow. 1943.

Rural Electrification poster, the metaphor of connection and support is simple and direct (Figure 2.58). Reminiscent of El Lissitzky's *Russian Exhibition* poster of two youths, Beall's photograph brings social purpose down to earth—the future of these everyday young Americans depends on the success of the program.

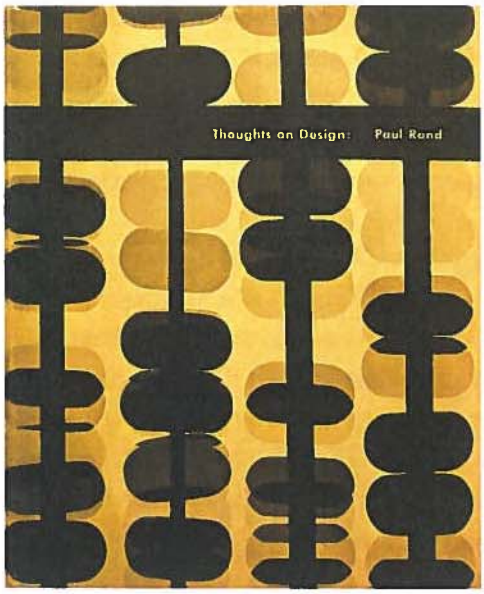
Probably one of the most influential American graphic designers was Paul Rand (1914–1996). His writing, teaching, and work have inspired generations of designers. Rand, who lived in Brooklyn, studied illustration at Pratt Institute in the early 1930s and later continued his design studies at Parsons School of Design and the Art Students' League. His education was built on a solid foundation in aesthetics, but his investigation of the Bauhaus and of the New Typography convinced him that illustration could be integrated within the overall design of the page. Rand switched his focus from illustration to graphic design. By age twenty three, he was art director of both *Apparel Arts* and *Esquire* magazines.



Lester Beall/VAGA/RIT Graphic Design Archives, Wallace Library, Rochester Institute of Technology, NY. © Estate of Lester Beall, Jr. Used/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY

2.57 LESTER BEALL. Cover of the graphic arts journal *PM* using a Modernist-inspired composition with a nineteenth century letterform (in the lower left corner). 1937.

2.58 LESTER BEALL (DESIGNER/PHOTOGRAPHER). Poster for the Rural Electrification Administration. A simple connection is made between the stripes of the American flag and the strips of a rural fence. 1937.



2.59 PAUL RAND. Cover for *Thoughts on Design*. 1946.

2.60 PAUL RAND. Cover for *H.L. Mencken, Prejudices: A Selection*. 1958.

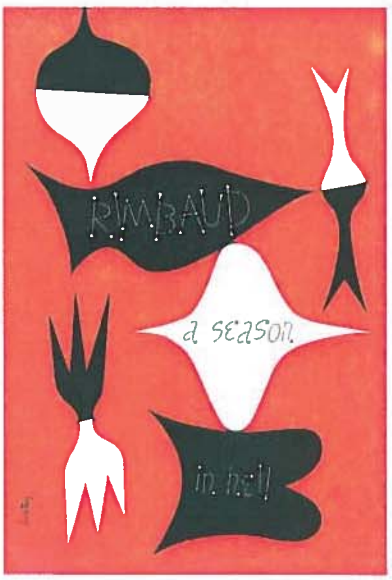
2.61 PAUL RAND. Westinghouse trademark. 1960.

In 1946, at age thirty three, Rand wrote his first of four books, *Thoughts on Design* (Figure 2.59). His published work helped to explain design as a process that involved reason, intuition, and intelligence—and as a service that could enrich life. Rand sought to elevate the most mundane products to a category that could be both beautiful and useful.

A book jacket for Vintage Press typifies Rand's work, the design simplified to the point of becoming iconographic (Figure 2.60). Rand used a cutout shape of the book's author, H. L. Mencken. One arm is raised upward, the gesture reflecting the author's authoritative writing. The cover was one of Rand's favorites, embodying his two greatest influences: the rough-cut edges and playful collage are directly inspired by the child-like play of Paul Klee and the Cubist collages of Picasso. In fact, Rand was considered by many to be graphic design's version of these two great artists.

You can see Paul Rand's playful and illustrative approach also in his corporate identity work. He designed trademarks for giants such as IBM, ABC, UPS, and Westinghouse (Figure 2.61). In each case, the witty, humanist voice of Rand comes through. To be able to integrate this voice into the corporate culture was a feat in itself.

Born in Colorado, Alvin Lustig (1915–1950) studied at the Art Center College of Design in California and then briefly with Frank Lloyd Wright. Later, as a teacher at both the Art Center and Yale, he shuttled between Los Angeles and New York. In addition, he operated a freelance design business that brought in a variety of projects, including advertising, furniture, fabrics, interiors, exhibits, and even the design of a small helicopter. Lustig is best known for his book jackets for the publisher New Directions. His cover for *A Season in Hell* by Arthur Rimbaud is a beautiful example of his philosophy that painting and design should inform and influence each other (Figure 2.62). Here, form and content are integrated—the contrasting colors represent heaven and hell but share an overriding biomorphic language honed directly from the Surrealist paintings.



2.62 ALVIN LUSTIG. Cover for Rimbaud's *A Season in Hell*. 1944.

> *I make solutions that nobody wants to problems that don't exist.* —Alvin Lustig

2.63 BRADBURY THOMPSON. Spread from *Westvaco Inspirations for Printers #152*. 1945.

> *Creativity is essentially a lonely art. An even lonelier struggle. To some a blessing. To others a curse. It is in reality the ability to reach inside yourself and drag forth from your very soul an idea.*
>
> —Lou Dorfsman

Another American designer, Bradbury Thompson (1911–1995), from Topeka, Kansas, worked for a small print shop before moving to New York in the late 1930s. Hired by Westvaco paper company, Thompson worked on their periodical *Westvaco Inspirations for Printers* from 1938 until 1962. Westvaco appreciated Thompson's vision and simple, modernist language as he replaced the old-fashioned and decorative designs with the simple and rational Modernist aesthetic (Figure 2.63). Thompson's love of experimental typography and image manipulation made *Inspirations* one of the leading avant-garde publications in the field.

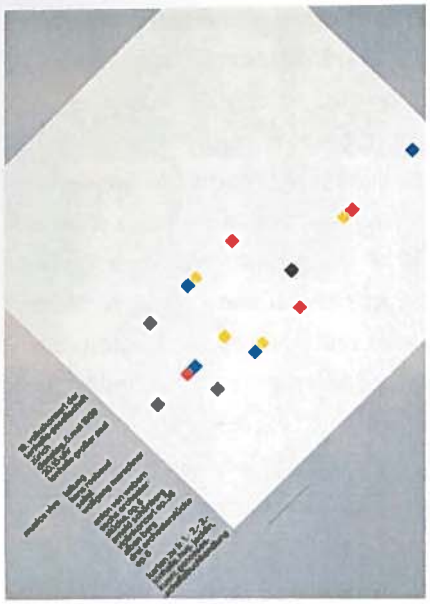
Other designers of note during this early Modernist era include William Golden (1911–1959), who created benchmark identity work at CBS; Lou Dorfsman (1918–2008), who continued the work at CBS after Golden's sudden death; Will Burtin (1909–1972) from Germany, who created groundbreaking designs and exhibits for scientific and pharmaceutical companies; and George Tscherny from Berlin via Budapest, whose sensitive and elemental solutions educated large corporate clients to the positive strategies of using graphic design for more than mere page decoration. West Coast designers include Louis Danziger (b. 1923) and Saul Bass (1920–1996). Danziger studied under Lustig and brought a sense of design history to his teaching and practice. Bass coherently unified film logos and titles with bold simplicity, thus creating a new field of work for graphic designers—motion design.

As America entered World War II, Modernism was just beginning to take hold. By the end of the war, a new vision for the American dream was in place, hand in hand with Modernism's utopian dream. Simplicity, clarity, and timelessness defined the language that corporations used to reach a global market.

American design programs began to train their students under the tenets of Modernism, and the country began to develop its own Modernist personality. The lens through which American designers saw didn't shift again until the 1970s, as Modernist ideals began to give way to a Postmodern attitude of irony and fragmentation.

The Swiss International Style

As the Modernist design sensibility became familiar in contemporary design consciousness, a philosophy of refined type and image use began to be formulated in school curriculums, especially in Switzerland. By the 1950s, outstanding design programs in Zurich and Basel developed into a clean, flush left and ragged-right typography—what became known as the



Swiss International Style. A poster by Josef Müller-Brockmann (1914–1996) is a characteristic example, the musical subject expressed through a rhythm of colored squares (Figure 2.64). Brockmann's arrangement of information achieved a visual harmony based in large part on the mathematical organization of the page.

Designer and educator Armin Hofmann (b. 1920) refined the Swiss International Style further by unifying photography and typography into striking design compositions. Hofmann's poster for a performance of *William Tell* is a perfect example (Figure 2.65). Here, a perched apple is cropped and distorted to the point of near abstraction, with sans serif typography stacked in perspective to create the perception of depth on the page—as if it is moving toward its target. Using only shades of black and

2.64 JOSEF MÜLLER-BROCKMANN. *Music Viva* concert poster. 1959.

SPEAKOUT: **Hans Rudolf Bosshard** by Willi Kunz, author of *Typography: Macro- and Microaesthetics*, and *Typography: Formation+Transformation*

Graphic design today is pluralistic, divergent, and subjective. In this bewildering field every student needs a guiding role model that inspires not only as a designer but also through personal character and conduct.

My formative years as a designer were profoundly influenced by Hans Rudolf Bosshard, typography teacher at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Zürich, Switzerland.

Mr. Bosshard's teaching was based on the principles of twentieth century Modernism that defined Swiss typography in the 1950s and 1960s. However, aware of the limitations of the "Swiss" approach, he strongly encouraged us to explore new directions, even at the risk of failing. While he respected the commercial aspects of design he was against mimicking professional practice and following prevailing trends. For Mr. Bosshard, school was a laboratory for new ideas. This certainly is in stark contrast to design education today where teachers encourage students to use existing styles, follow trends, and imitate stars.

Mr. Bosshard's broad interest in architecture, painting, sculpture, photography, film, literature, philosophy, and music made him a fascinating teacher. He often started class by reading a few pages of avant-garde literature or Dada poetry, followed by discussing why these topics, seemingly unrelated to typographic design, were important to our education. He would bring to class original constructivist books and posters from the 1920s and 1930s for analysis and comments. The highlight of each semester was a field trip to a major museum or a modern architectural site. Each trip contributed to our education and opened our student eyes to the wider world outside the classroom.

Mr. Bosshard always reminded us to look beyond typographic design and to strive for a broad-based education in the disciplines he personally was interested in. Students today would consider this education doctrinaire; however, it was the strong guidance I needed to find my way as a typographic designer.

2.65 ARMIN HOFMANN. Poster for a Basel open-air performance of *William Tell*. 1963.

white, the design seems more like an abstraction, yet we understand it in relation to the story of William Tell. The idea is conveyed with the utmost formal restraint.

Basel teacher Wolfgang Weingart (b. 1941) took a different approach to the Swiss style. A student of Emil Ruder (1914–1970) and Armin Hofmann, Weingart challenged the traditional system established by his teachers, prompted in part by the fact that typesetting was moving from lead hot type (created with molten lead), to cold type (created through photographic exposure). Weingart used this cold type process to literally sandwich type with photo-screened dot patterns. His poster for the Kunstgewerbemuseum in Zürich took advantage of the moiré patterns created by this method (Figure 2.66). The effect is controlled chaos—structured, yet rich and energized. The international students who studied under Ruder, Hofmann, and Weingart brought Swiss design and typography back to their own respective design programs throughout the world.

1960s Psychedelic Language

While Swiss typography was in full swing in America, an obscure poster language developed in San Francisco's Haight Ashbury neighborhood. The hippies who lived there embraced past styles such as Victorian and lived alternative lifestyles as an act of defiance against the clean, corporate, and modern aesthetic. The word **psychedelic** means mind-expanding, and hippies believed that the drug LSD, or acid, helped expand one's thinking and increase creativity. Hallucinogenic experiences were often accompanied by electronic music and experimental light shows, and many poster artists empathized with and shared these counterculture attitudes.

2.66 WOLFGANG WEINGART. Poster for an exhibition on Schreibkunst (penmanship). 1982.

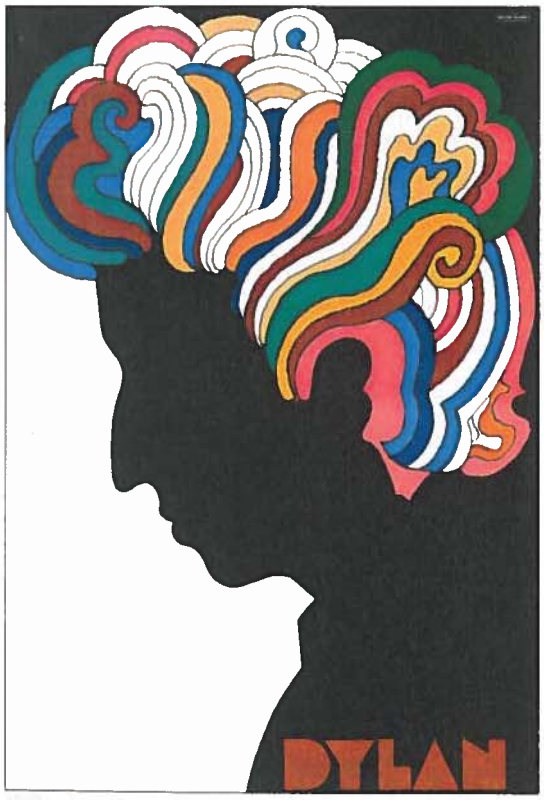
In a Fillmore Auditorium poster, Wes Wilson (b. 1937) used hand-rendered type instead of mechanical type for two reasons (Figure 2.67). First, the designer didn't have enough time or money to set mechanical type, and second, hand-drawn type could be made deliberately illegible and then become a coded message for a specific audience. This layer of counterculture rebellion clashed nicely with traditional advertising messages that focused on broad readability.

Victor Moscoso (b. 1936) was one of the few formally trained designers creating this new work. Although he arrived in San Francisco with an MFA in graphic design from Yale, Moscoso had to unlearn many of design's rules when he began making psychedelic posters. The traditional knowledge that he did use was the color theory he learned in his intensive study with Bauhaus artist Josef Albers, then chair of the Department of Design at Yale University. The psychedelic posters he made incorporated "hot" color palettes in which hues contrasted

View a Closer Look for Schreibkunst on myartslab.com

2.67 WES WILSON. Concert poster for The Association. 1966.

2.68 VICTOR MOSCOSO. Concert poster for the Chambers Brothers. 1967.



2.69 MILTON GLASER. *Dylan*. Poster advertising Bob Dylan's Greatest Hits album. 1966.

with one another so intensely that they appeared to vibrate, a phenomenon that Albers taught in his color theory class. Moscoso brought this knowledge to his poster work (Figure 2.68).

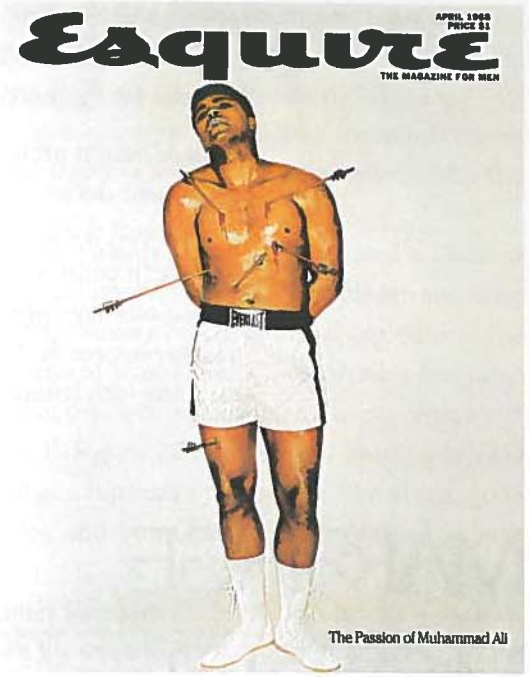
Psychedelia entered the American dialect quickly, and soon, even established graphic designers were speaking the fluid language. Milton Glaser (b. 1929) brought a conceptual approach to his illustrative work at the Push Pin Studio along with his fellow classmates, including Seymour Chwast (b. 1931) who continues to operate the studio today. Glaser's poster for Bob Dylan, which became an icon for the 1960s experience (Figure 2.69), brought psychedelic language to mainstream America.

Advertising Design and the New York School

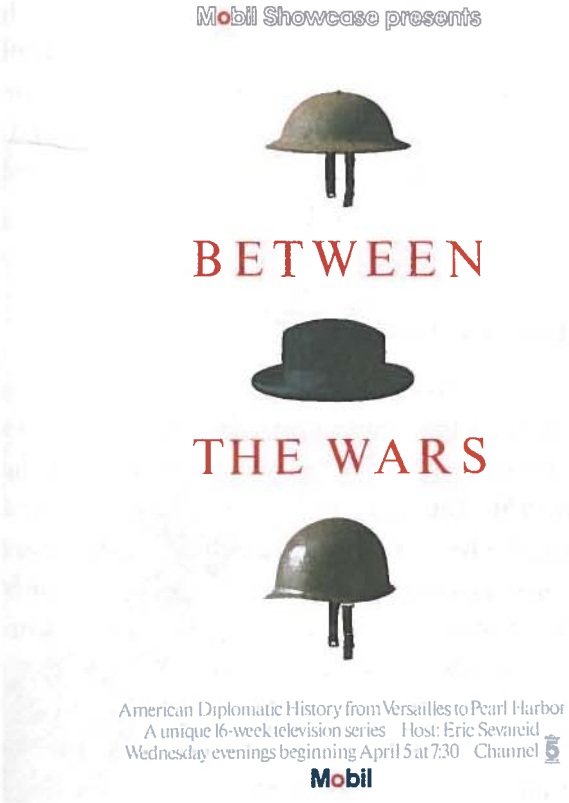
A unique and humorous approach to advertising design developed during the 1960s around New York City's Madison Avenue, an approach in which text and image harmonized in a union not seen before. This union, known as the **New York School,** depended on a working relationship between content and form, and Paul Rand, with his playful designs for local businesses, acted as a proving ground for the approach. Rand's copywriting colleague, Bill Bernbach (1911–1982), from the Weintraub advertising agency where they had worked together, brought this word and image integration to national campaigns.

The "Think Small" campaign for Volkswagen by the advertising agency Doyle Dane Bernbach is an example of this new advertising approach (Figure 2.70). The ad, designed by art director Helmut Krone (1925–1997) has a lovable, and somewhat surreal and austere, quality. The layout and the supporting text work in union as a concept, asking the

2.70 HELMOT KRONE (ART DIRECTOR) AND WRITER JULIAN KOENIG (WRITER). Advertisement for Volkswagen. 1960.



2.71 GEORGE LOIS (ART DIRECTOR) AND CARL FISCHER (PHOTOGRAPHER). *Esquire* cover. April 1968.



2.72 IVAN CHERMAYEFF. Poster for a television series about American diplomatic history titled *Between the Wars*. 1977.

reader to "think small." The audience was confronted with a small, economy-minded car in a country that was used to thinking big. This cool advertising, with a witty sense of humor, connected with an audience ready for change.

The art director George Lois (b. 1931) perfected this new blend of word and image with his work for *Esquire* magazine. Lois brought advertising's conceptual approach to the design of magazine covers. A 1968 cover story on Muhammad Ali posed the fighter in the stance of Saint Sebastian (condemned by the Romans for his religious beliefs) and symbolized conscientious objector Ali's refusal to be inducted into the U.S. Army (Figure 2.71). It was a provocative image with a strong social message.

Other graphic designers also incorporated this conceptual approach into their projects. Ivan Chermayeff (b. 1932) created a strong connection between word and image in a poster design for Mobil Oil Corporation's sponsored television program about events that happened between the two world wars (Figure 2.72). Chermayeff bracketed a diplomat's hat between World War I and World War II military helmets as well as the program's title *Between the Wars*, conveying meaning through the arrangement. Its centered layout forces the reader to focus on interpreting the idea. In addition, the Mobil logo itself, which was also designed by Chermayeff's design studio, is a word and image construction—the name and its circular letterforms suggesting mobility.

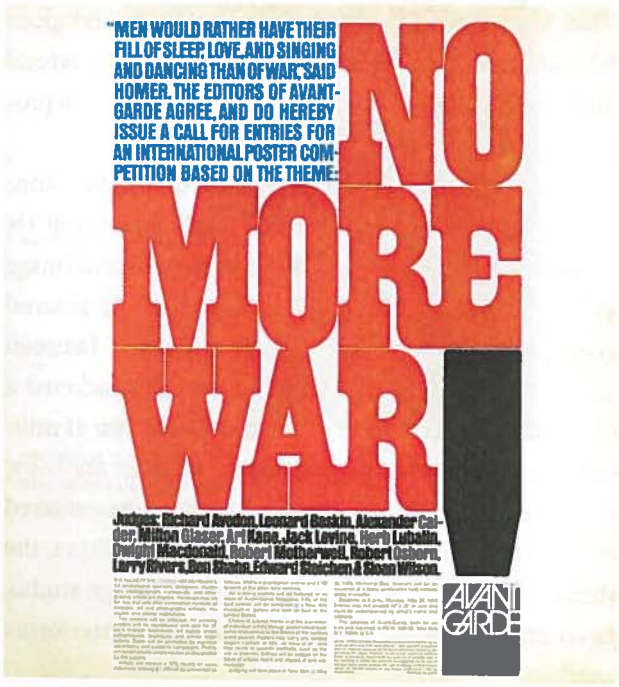
SPEAKOUT: Armin Hofmann, Tadanori Yokoo, and Herb Lubalin

by Peter Wong, professor of graphic design, Savannah College of Art and Design, Atlanta, Georgia

College design professors were my first and foremost influence. They exposed me to the work of prominent designers who made a mark in design history. The first was Armin Hofmann, whose posters and book, *Graphic Design Manual,* introduced me to the workings and subtleties of Swiss Design. In contrast, Japanese designer Tadanori Yokoo, whose posters used complex imagery, juxtapositions, layering, and a multitude of colors, demonstrated how diversity and variety could be another approach. New York's Herb Lubalin stands out for his ability to communicate ideas and meaning with letterforms. His "typographics" inspired my life-long study of typography.

2.73 HERB LUBALIN. Typograms: Marriage (1965), *Mother & Child* (1965), and *Families* (1980).

During the 1960s, as the way type was created changed from solid lead casts to a more flexible process in which letterforms were exposed onto photographic paper, designers quickly adapted. Herb Lubalin (1918–1981) showed how letterforms could be made into malleable forms to communicate ideas. His **typograms,** as he called them, had a double duty of both reading and creating pictures. These visual poems in miniature extended to page layouts, book covers, and advertisements (Figure 2.73). For example, his announcement for an antiwar poster contest, which appeared on the back cover of *Avant Garde* magazine, carried the image of type and flag and communicated the power of design and protest (Figure 2.74). Lubalin, art director for *Avant Garde* magazine from 1968 to 1971, also designed its masthead (see the ad's exclamation point). He developed the font he used for the masthead into a full typeface of the same name, a typeface that came to define the phototype period.



2.74 HERB LUBALIN. Announcement for *Avant Garde* magazine's anti-war poster contest. 1968.

Conceptual Image Makers

Surrealist philosophy, part of an outgrowth of Dada, may have triggered an approach to graphic design problems that began to take hold in the early 1950s and gained more followers in the 1960s and early 1970s. The method of juxtaposed images, placed side by side, helped solve more complex problems that designers were tackling. These images spoke louder and more conceptually in conveying ideas that went beyond single-image, narrative solutions. War and protest offered an appropriate channel.

Polish designer Tadeusz Trepkowski (1914–1956) used juxtaposition in a powerful antiwar poster—an appropriate channel to voice concern in the aftermath of World War II (Figure 2.75). Rather than depict a bomb exploding or a city destroyed, Trepkowski's poster reaches further. The silhouette of a bomb reveals a glimpse of a bombarded city, the horror of war expressed simply and directly by creating a montage of the two images. A single word makes the demand quite clear—"Nie!" (No!).

2.75 TDEUSZ TREPKOWSKI. Antiwar poster. 1953.

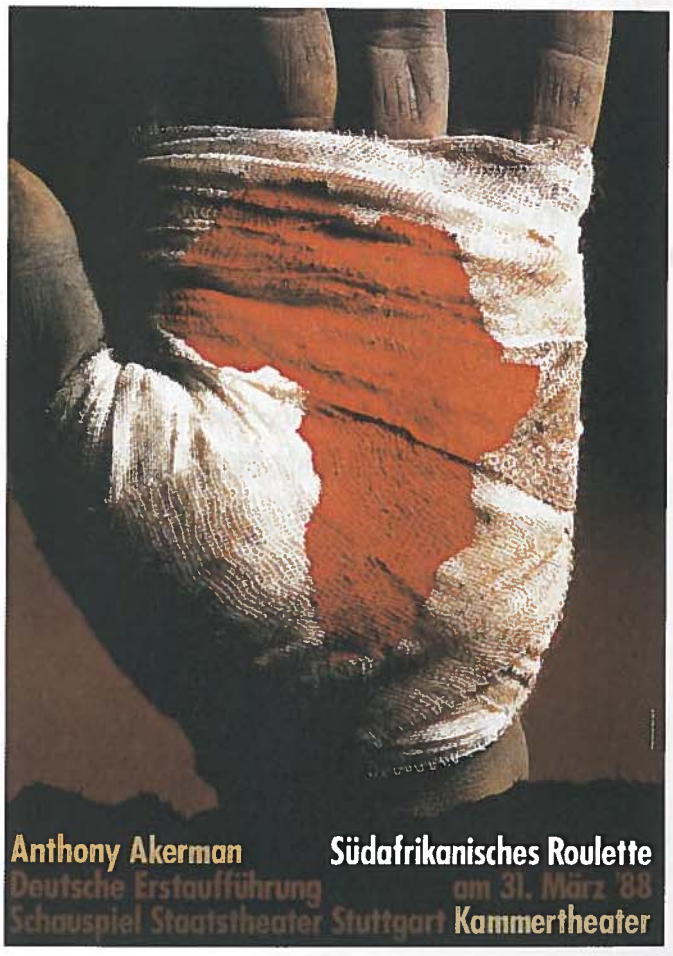
2.76 Jerzy Janiszewski. Solidarity logo. ca. 1980.

2.77 SHIGEO FUKUDA. Poster for *Victory*. 1975.

Twenty-eight years later, another Polish designer, Jerzy Janiszewski (b. 1953), applied conceptual thinking to another protest, one for the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarity" (Figure 2.76). Here, a crowded street protest is conveyed through an ingenious use of letters, its characters standing together to form a unified whole, with the Polish flag streaming behind.

In Japan, designer Shigeo Fukuda (1932–2009) created a body of work using nonverbal conceptual images. Fukuda's designs are shocking yet playful communications. His *Victory* poster, a surreal depiction of the thirteenth anniversary of the end of World War II, was awarded first prize by the 1975 Warsaw Poster Contest, a competition whose proceeds went to the Peace Fund Movement (Figure 2.77). The shell heading toward the gun instead of out of the gun flips one's perception. The idea is quite complex, loaded with paradox and irony, but Fukuda's drawing is both disarming and clear.

German designer Gunter Rambow (b. 1938) also brings a Surrealist edge to photography with his work for theaters and publishers. In his poster for *Südafrikanisches Roulette* (South African Roulette), the concept of using the shape of Africa bleeding through a bandage powerfully symbolizes the play's theme of pain, suffering, and revolution in South Africa (Figure 2.78).



2.78 GUNTER RAMBOW. Theater poster for *Südafrikanisches (South African) Roulette*. 1988.

2.79 ANTHON BEEKE. *Een Meeuw (The Seagull)* poster for the play by Anton Chekhov for the Theatercompagnie, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. 2003.

> *In Modernism, reality used to validate media. In Postmodernism, the media validate reality. If you don't believe this, just think how many times you've described some real event as being "just like a movie."* —Brad Holland

Dutch designer Anthon Beeke (b. 1940) integrates performance art with photography to explain his conceptual thinking. Beeke was a member of the 1960s neo-Dada movement called *Fluxus*, and its influence on his work is especially obvious in his designs for Dutch theater companies. In *Een meeuw (The Seagull)* the image is first perceived to be a flower with a face in its center (Figure 2.79). It has a carnival-like atmosphere which, on the surface, appears simple and direct. However, when the viewer realizes that the flower was created out of feathers, and the face and feathers are splattered with blood, another layer of meaning with a much more cryptic message is revealed.

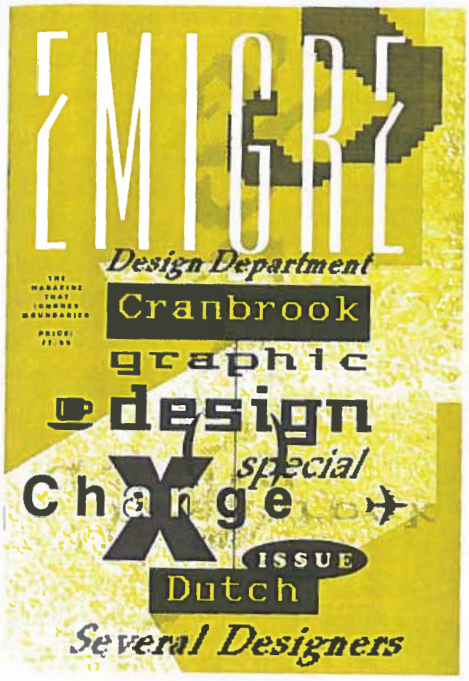
Today, Beeke's conceptual images are representative of work in this genre that relies less on stabilized ideas, ones that hit you over the head with their intent, and more on ideas that are open ended and complex in their subtlety. They do more than deliver a message; they deliver a message filled with nuance. This approach reflects graphic design's expansion into territories that were once the province of the fine arts. Juxtaposing meaning and gesture may prove to be the ultimate goal for the graphic designer as cultural image maker.

Postmodernism and the Digital Age

Fascism and Communism proved that the struggle for finding *the* perfect way, the ultimate system, could lead to frightful extremes. In response, there was a shift away from utopian ideals or movements that involved the pursuit of timelessness or perfectionism. **Postmodernism** was born after World War II and, as is clear in its name, defines itself as that which comes after Modernism. If Modernist "isms" such as Cubism, Futurism, and Surrealism shared the goal of finding an ultimate truth, then Postmodernism suggests an end to this belief in truisms and a preference for a more open-ended approach that draws from various sources, an approach with no easy answers.

French writers were the first to present an awareness of the limitations of Modernism. France's Vichy government collaborated with the Nazis, which may be the reason why French citizens had to look so carefully at the social and cultural structures that made that situation possible. By the 1960s, critical writers including Jean Baudrillard (1929–2007) and Jacques Derrida (1930–2004) proclaimed searches for anything absolute (a painting style, building form, or communication structure) as impossible paths to continue.

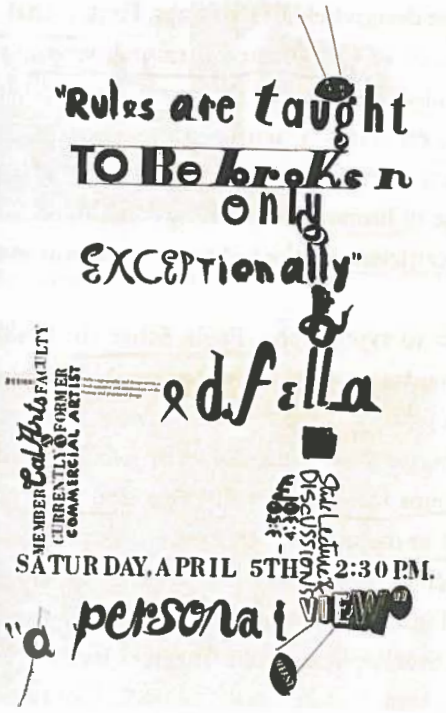
In architecture, Robert Venturi (b. 1925) taught a new generation of architects to appreciate the fragmented and eclectic nature of life and to work this untidy approach into a kind of counterrevolutionary architecture that could be loaded with symbols and historic references. Venturi's maxim "Less is a bore," challenged the International Style's "Less is more" functional creed that had dominated architecture since the Bauhaus. In his book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, Venturi wrote: "I



2.80 GLENN SUOKKO. Cover design for *Emigre* magazine #10. 1989.

2.81 P. SCOTT MAKELA. *Dead History* typeface for the Emigre type foundry. 1990.

2.82 ED FELLA. Lecture announcement. 1995.



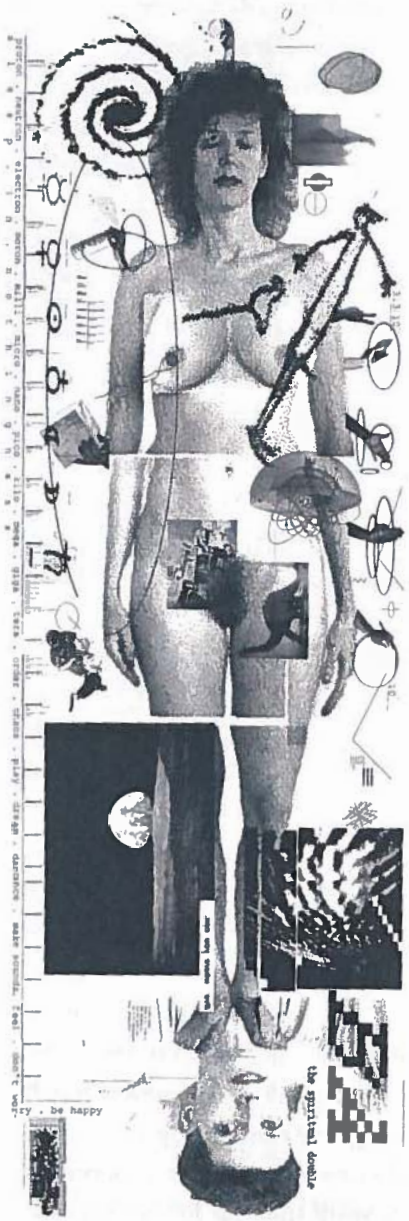
am for a richness of meaning rather than clarity of meaning.... I prefer 'both-and' to 'either-or,' black and white, and sometimes gray, to black and white." Venturi and his wife and business partner, Denise Scott Brown, together created buildings that referenced the vernacular art languages, those of untrained, local styles, culminating in their book *Learning from Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form.*

By the 1970s, the general public was fully experiencing Postmodernism in popular culture. Punk rock music most blatantly exemplified this new attitude and literally shocked the establishment in its reaction to conservative British politics and the processed muzak and disco of that decade. In Great Britain, most punk musicians and their fans were not interested in the skilled playing of their instruments. What mattered more was the energy and passion that Punk exuded.

Graphic design took its cues from this questioning of established structures and how designers operated within them. Layouts that had been expected to be clean to the point of antiseptic began to reveal the working process. Grid lines, tape, and pencil marks were intentionally left in the finished designs. The introduction of the Macintosh computer in 1984 didn't stop the anti-aesthetic investigation graphic designers were exploring. The raw and gritty bits of the new medium were textures to be included, not hidden.

The 1980s represented a definite rift between the residue of Modernist sensibilities and Postmodernism. And no outlet better reflected this rift than a magazine called *Emigre* (Figure 2.80). Created in 1984, its publisher, Rudy VanderLans (b. 1955) provided a forum for alternative design concepts and approaches. *Emigre* challenged established rules about legibility while embracing design's emerging **digital age.** A like-minded soul, designer Katherine McCoy (b. 1945), was found within the design department at Cranbrook Academy of Art in Michigan. Under her guidance, Cranbrook surfaced as a laboratory for graphic experimentation. Many graduates showcased their work through *Emigre* magazine. Perhaps no student epitomized the postmodern fusion of typeface design and technology better than P. Scott Makela (1960–1999). His typeface *Dead History* for the Emigre type foundry pilfered historical faces, mixed them together, and made them digitally ready for their recontextualized use (Figure 2.81).

Another Cranbrook graduate, Ed Fella (b. 1938) brought a hand-drawn quality to the critical experiments happening there. Fella melded his knowledge of traditional design rules with eccentric letterforms and personal statements. For example, he created a series of hand-lettered fliers, but distributed them only after the events were over, thus causing the fliers to lose their function as announcements and change into what he calls "design/art" (Figure 2.82). This reconfiguring of design's tools, materials, and function extended graphic design's boundaries far beyond its basic service to the business community.



2.83 APRIL GREIMAN. Poster from *Design Quarterly*, no. 133. 1987.

2.84 TIBOR KALMAN. Print advertisement for Restaurant Florent. 1987.

A pioneer of the digital realm of design, April Greiman (b. 1948) originally trained in the Modernist tradition. During the 1970s, she studied in Basel, Switzerland, with Armin Hofmann and Wolfgang Weingart, and this experience set a solid foundation for her work that ventured into primitive, computer territory. When she returned to the United States, Greiman set up shop in Los Angeles where she began to incorporate spiritualism and Eastern philosophy into her design process. The result, stylistically labeled "California New Wave," was initially interpreted as merely a departure from the neutral, grid-oriented work in which the design community was grounded, but Greiman's work went further. It pointed to a new conceptual direction for graphic design, one driven by technology. Her magazine layout for *Design Quarterly* blended a three-by-six foot poster into the unfolding pages and layered her own revealed and digitized body into what she referred to as a "landscape of communications" (Figure 2.83). Greiman saw digital technology as its own new language "to use these tools to imitate what we already know and think is a pity."

Tibor Kalman (1949–1999), dubbed the bad boy of graphic design during the 1980s, challenged the status quo of graphic design with wit and humor. His recontextualized retro graphics looked back instead of forward with Postmodern irony. For Kalman, graphic design needed a boost because its leaning toward the corporate track was killing the creative spirit. An advertisement for a twenty-four-hour New York City diner, Restaurant Florent, exemplifies Kalman's unique perspective (Figure 2.84). Plastic letters, stuck to a letter board, were the only elements he used. Simple as they are, they succinctly communicate the everyday quality of the diner without any undue fuss. Kalman's unconventional approach broadened the design field in two ways. First, it challenged designers to see unexpected energy in the untrained, vernacular languages they normally avoided. Second, his approach showed that authenticity trumped aesthetics, especially when used in a conceptual context. Kalman changed design thinking with a Duchampian flair. His work showed a distinct sense of humor and a strong sense of social responsibility, exhibiting a wry criticism on the nature of consumption and production.

With her playful approach to typography, Paula Scher (b. 1948) has been highly influential in the design world. She has created corporate identities for Perry Ellis, Bloomberg, Target, Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the New York Botanical Garden, and others. Scher claims her work stems from the density, size, and noise of New York City, which pushes her to make dense, energetic, bold designs.

For The Public Theater, Scher revitalized bold wood block typefaces by angling their baselines (Figure 2.85). The result is an active series of posters whose treatment has become The Public Theater's identity as much as the logo she created for them.

2.85 PAULA SCHER/ PENTAGRAM. 1995–96 season campaign poster for The Public Theater.

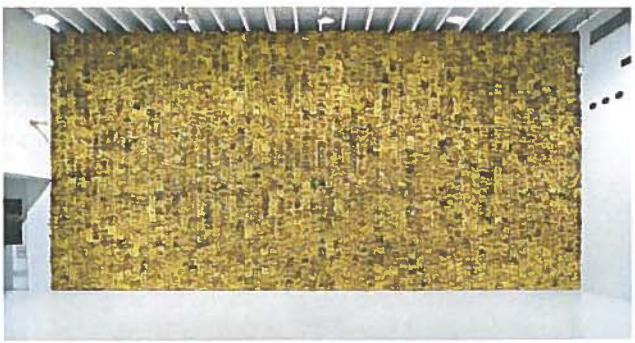
2.86 DAVID CARSON. Spread from *Ray Gun* magazine. 1994.

David Carson's (b. 1954) association with revitalizing magazine work might best reflect the evolutionary turn toward a digitally produced, fragmented, and Postmodern design. In the same way that Punk musicians weren't interested as much in musicality as in energy, Carson's interest in magazine design isn't in its legibility or convention, but in its energy and expression. *Ray Gun* magazine (published from 1992 to 2000) was one in a series of magazines Carson art directed that was so visually engaging that it approached being a fetishized object (Figure 2.86). Most important, he was able to achieve this level of devotion on an international scale, inspiring graphic design students throughout the world.

At the opening of an exhibition at Deitch Projects, an art gallery in New York, Stefan Sagmeister (b. 1962) featured a wall of 10,000 bananas. Green bananas created a pattern against a background of yellow bananas, spelling out the sentiment: "Self-confidence produces fine results" (Figure 2.87). After a number of days, the green bananas turned yellow too and the words disappeared. When the yellow background bananas turned brown, the words (and the self-confidence) appeared again, only to go away when all bananas turned brown at the end of the four-week run.

Sagmeister relates the piece to his own process of having self-confidence—"to appear and disappear, just like my own self-confidence comes and goes." His visualization included typography as well as time and smell (as the bananas ripened). The piece was provocative not only because it reflected Sagmeister's personal idiosyncrasy but also because, despite all the technology available, Sagmeister chose a material that is more analog than digital. He also recognized that graphic art that is ephemeral and short-lived is just as valid as work that is published or reproduced. This notion is even reflected in the exhibit's announcement. Instead of distributing a postcard with an image of a banana, the gallery used a real banana—a very apt and memorable announcement for the show.

2.87 STEFAN SAGMEISTER. (ART DIRECTION), RICHARD THE, JOE SHOULDICE (DESIGN). Deitch Installation and invitation (banana). 2008.



KEY TERMS

Abstraction (p. 44)

Aestheticism (p. 42)

Arts and Crafts movement (p. 42)

Art Deco (p. 56)

Art movement (p. 42)

Art Nouveau (p. 42)

Bauhaus (p. 53)

Constructivism (p. 50)

Cubism (p. 46)

Dada (p. 48)

De Stijl (p. 52)

Digital age (p. 69)

Futurism (p. 47)

Gothic revival (p. 39)

Modernism (p. 44)

New Typography (p. 54)

New York School (p. 64)

Postmodernism (p. 68)

Psychedelic (p. 63)

Suprematism (p. 48)

Surrealism (p. 49)

Swiss International Style (p. 62)

Typogram (p. 66)

In Perspective

Though its origins can be traced back to ancient cave paintings, graphic design is actually a very young profession. It has a rich history that was influenced by the major art and design movements of the twentieth century. Industrialization created a need for graphic designers, while the Arts and Crafts movement helped temper the inhumanity of the machine; Art Deco introduced Modernism as a design style, and the Bauhaus refined Modernism into a true design philosophy.

Graphic design is affected by, and simultaneously reflects, contemporary events and the world community in which it exists. For example, the Constructivist art movement of the 1920s and the Punk music genre of the 1970s both changed design in profound ways: one with the concept of abstraction, the other in its application of a stripped-down energy. The dates and audiences were different, but design's goal was the same—to communicate the aesthetics and sensibilities of an era.

This integration of graphic design and the time periods in which it is expressed emphasizes how important it is for design students to learn all they can about the history not only of their field but also of the world in which they live. An historical understanding of graphic design will help ground their ideas, and an equally important understanding of contemporary culture will bring an educated inspiration to their work. Successful designers must understand their work within the milieu of their own time.

The next chapter will focus on how to create and develop a concept. Yet we can't forget that, by looking back, we are researching how others created concepts in the context of their day. With this idea in mind, we can look to past design giants such as A.M. Cassandre or Paul Rand and see how they taught through their work. Each piece in the puzzle of design is a relevant example of how we must look back to move forward.

SPEAKOUT: Vaughan Oliver by Tamar Cohen, graphic designer, New York

Having graduated college with no formal graphic design education, I found myself working as an intern at a packaging design studio in London. I wasn't even sure that graphic design was the profession I wanted to pursue until I sat across from Vaughan Oliver. He made me laugh, had amazing taste in music (he worked for the seminal British music label 4AD), and showed me that design did not need to fit into a neat little package. He challenged convention, saw beauty in the most unexpected places and worked intuitively—more like an artist than a designer.