The Late Twentieth Century AD 1960–1990

A Survey of the History of Typography

Typography Fall 2011
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Dedicated to

the fearless leaders of the 19th and 20th centuries of typographic art

The Cultural Landscape
of the 1960s and 1970s

The late 20th century was a time for new youth. It was a time of rebellion and going against societal norms, to break free of the status-quo. This generation had been sent to fight in the Vietnam war and were seeing the impacts of Civil Rights. Young adults were breaking rules, not only politically but artistically and typographically.

Similarly, the world was making large strides in technological advancements, and life was beginning to digitalize. It was a time for moving off the grid and into new forms of experimentation, especially in the world of typographic design.

United States, South African and Malaysian road signs

Typography and the Road Sign

Typography plays a cruicial role the in legability of road signs. Interstate signs must to legible to drivers from far and close distances, and readable at fast speeds.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Typeface

The FHWA typeface is not as legiable as the Clearview typeface, especially at night when letters are illuminted from car headlights

Before and after the Clearview typeface adoption

Clearview Typeface

Clearview is a legiable and inviting typeface. It was developed for a mixed-case signage. It has larger counter spaces and a higher x-height compared to previous FHWA typacefaces.

Clearview became the approved alternative to the Standard Highway Alphabet in 2004. It is expected to gradually replace the FHWA typefaces. More the 20 states have requested authority to use it from the Federal Highway Administration.

In the 1960s under the direction of Armin Hoffman and Emil Ruder, who were outstanding models for a modernist design education, the Basel school was started. The Basel School of Design was located in the Northern part of Switzerland, boasting a design program with roots in the rich heritage of the Swiss graphic design scene of the 1950s and 1960s. The name of the school represents an educational approach which perpetuates their ideas: to lay a strong and broad foundation for the major design disciplines.

The Basel School of Design
simplicity, legibility and objectivity

1955, Josep Muller-Brockmann. Auto Club of Switzerland Poster

The Basel School favors simplicity, legibility, color limitation, and hard-edge objectivity.

The Basel School and its educators, focus on the didactic experience, as well as the refinement of process and form-oriented instruction within the field of design.

A taste of their typography programme

Armin Hoffman

1914–1970

The Swiss graphic designer Armin Hoffman was well known for his poster-work, which emphasized an economical use of colors and fonts. He wrote the book, Graphic Design Manual, widely used for design education in the 60s and 70s. He taught for several years at the Basel School of Design and emphasized his teaching in the Swiss International style.

Hoffman also practiced and taught techniques of photo-typesetting, photo-montage and experimental composition which heavily enforced sans-serif typography. The beauty in his work is emphasized through his use of simplicity and modernity with limited color.

1960, Kunstgewerbemuseum Zurich Ausstellung

1963–1964, Stadt Theatre Basel Poster

Emil Ruder

1914–1970

Emil Ruder worked alongside Armin Hoffman and taught typography at the Basel School of Design, and played a key role in the development and maturation of the Swiss style. Together, Ruder and Hoffman created a program that focused on the principles of objectivity and design. Ruder was a designer who put a heavy importance on sans-serif typefaces and his work was clear and concise.

Ruder was fond of asymmetry in his work, and was always concerned with the counter, shape and white space.

He used grids in his designs, which largely influenced the development of web design. Ruder also wrote the typographic book, Typographie: A Manual for Design, which explains his various systematic theories of the art of typography in depth.
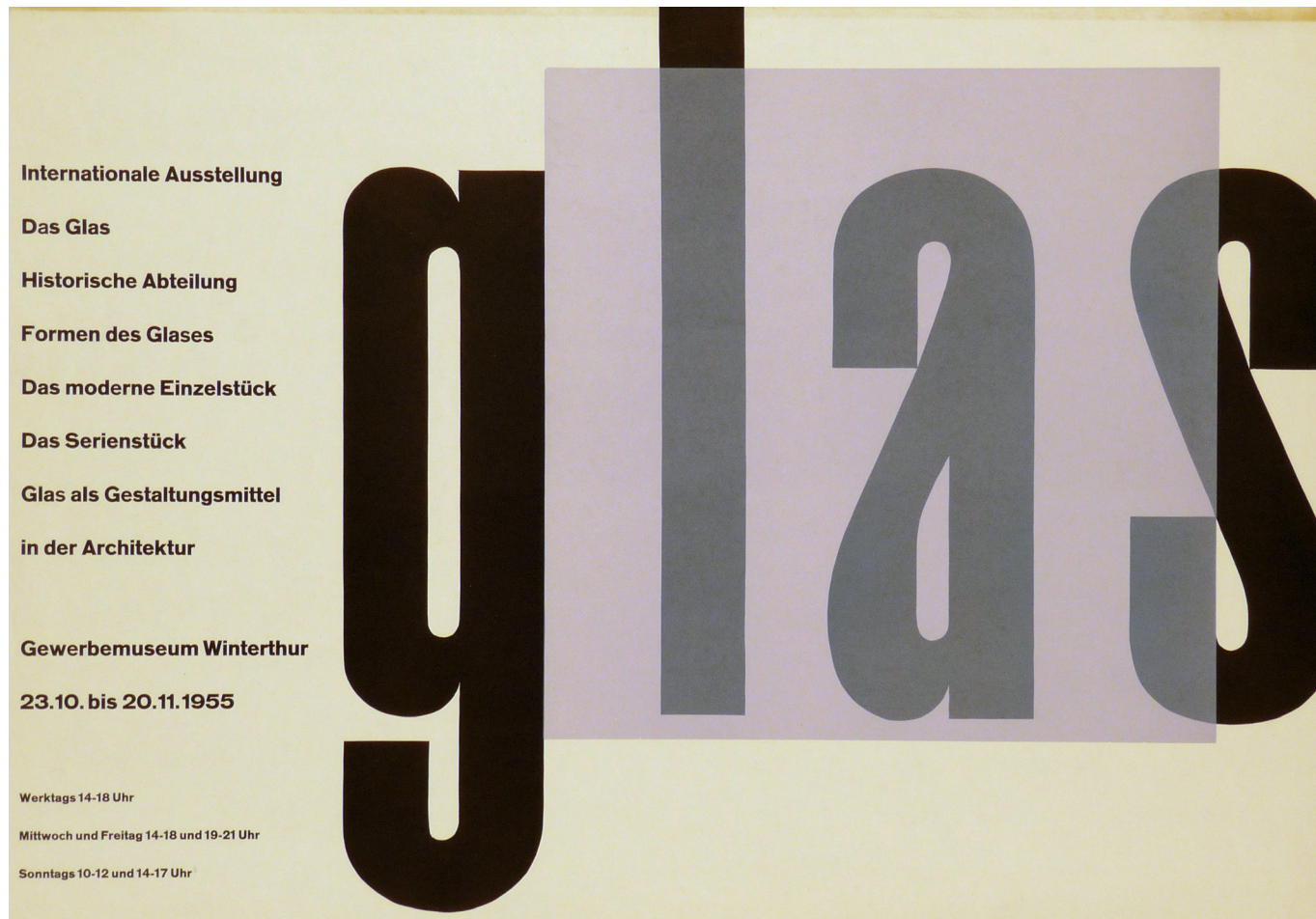
1955, Glas

"Typography has one plain duty before it
    and that is to convey information in writing" – Emil Ruder

What is International Style?

Graphic design typography was developed in Switzerland in the middle years of the 20th century and was a template used and adapted by designers for more than fifty years. It's origin was pan-European and its consummation and achievements were Swiss. But now, it is just known and described as the International Style.

"Typography Today." Special Edition of Idea. Tokyo. 1980. Pg. 5

Wolfgang Weingart

"use every technique to solve the problem"

As a graphic designer in 1959, and born in the midst of World War II in Germany, Wolfgang Weingart began to follow his study in design by the International, or Swiss Style. After just one year, he noticed that this style had limitations so he got rebellious and started his own work.

Wolfgang Weingart taught at the Basel School of Design, and was an appointed instructor of typography in 1963. Weingart taught a new approach to typography, which influenced the development of New Wave, Deconstruction and much of the design in the 1990s. New Wave design is considered to be a movement that defined itself, or rather, refused to define itself as a reaction to modernism.

Wiengart is convinced that a classical education in design needs to be delicately transported into a new way of thinking that is made for a constantly changing world. He felt that globalization in the design world is obvious.

Weingart continues to his students to teach themselves, giving them open-ended projects and lectures to stretch their minds in order to truly create.

Weingart is a master in typographic rules, which allows for him to break them.
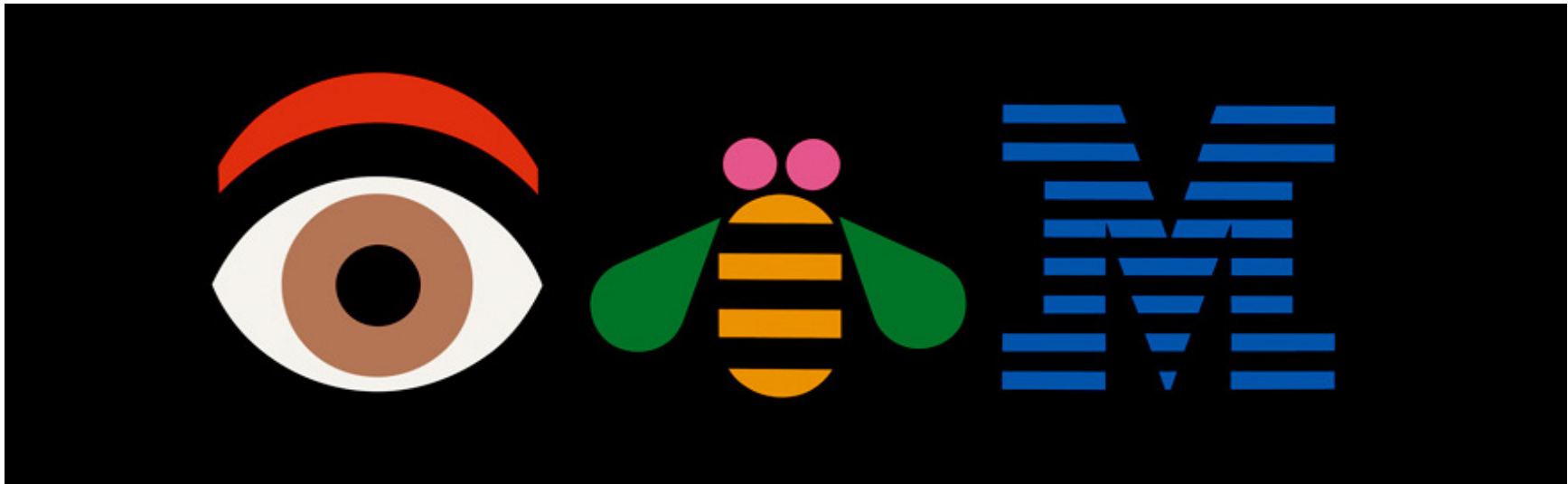
On Wolfgang Weingart

from his book, Typography

"Always interesting, always the result of a meaningful idea, without which form is mere decoration. His work, abstract or concrete, though the product of trail and error, is never gratuitous, never decorative, his form is always functional, full of meaning and rich possibilities."

- Paul Rand

Paul Rand

american modernist

Paul Rand was one of the originators of the Swiss style of graphic design. He is widely known for his corporate identity designs. His logos designs include IBM, UPS, ABC, Enron, and Westinghouse. His designs are characterized by "whit and simplicity". He created logos that combined simplicity, neutrality, and clarity with playfulness. He believed a logo "cannot surive unless it is designed with the upmost simplicity and restrait".

Paul Rand received his education from the Pratt Institute, Parsons The New School for Design, and the Art Student League. He originally built a repuation for himself with his work in page design. In 1936, he designed the page layout for an *Apparel Arts* magazine aniversary issue. At the age of 23, he was responsibe for Esquire's fashion pages. He was also resonpsible for the cover art for *Direction* magazine December 1940 cover.

Later in his life he taught design at Yale University. In 1972 he was inducted into the New York Art Dictors Club Hall of Fame.

On Paul Rand

from "Thoughts on Rand"

"The idea behind the design of a logo should, if possible, be elicited from the name it symbolizes. It should be distinctive - make some kind of statement"

- Paul Rand

"He almost singlehandely convinced business that design was an effective tool. [...] Anyone designing in the 1950s and 1960s owed much to Rand, who largely made it possible for us to work. He more than anyone else made the profession reputable. We went from being commercial artists to being graphic designers largely on his merits."

- Steven Heller, 1997

The Limited

The Limited logo, by Paul Rand

Word Orientation

The key word is emphasized and the two words at right angles to each other suggest the shape of the letter *L*. The *L* becomes "an optical memory image", which is easily recognized for a distance.

Triple Letter Combination

Dotting the verticals of the *M* makes the word *Limited* more compact, more distinctive, and more memorable. The triple letter combination creates the image of two people holding hands. The two dots can also be interpreted as two eyes.
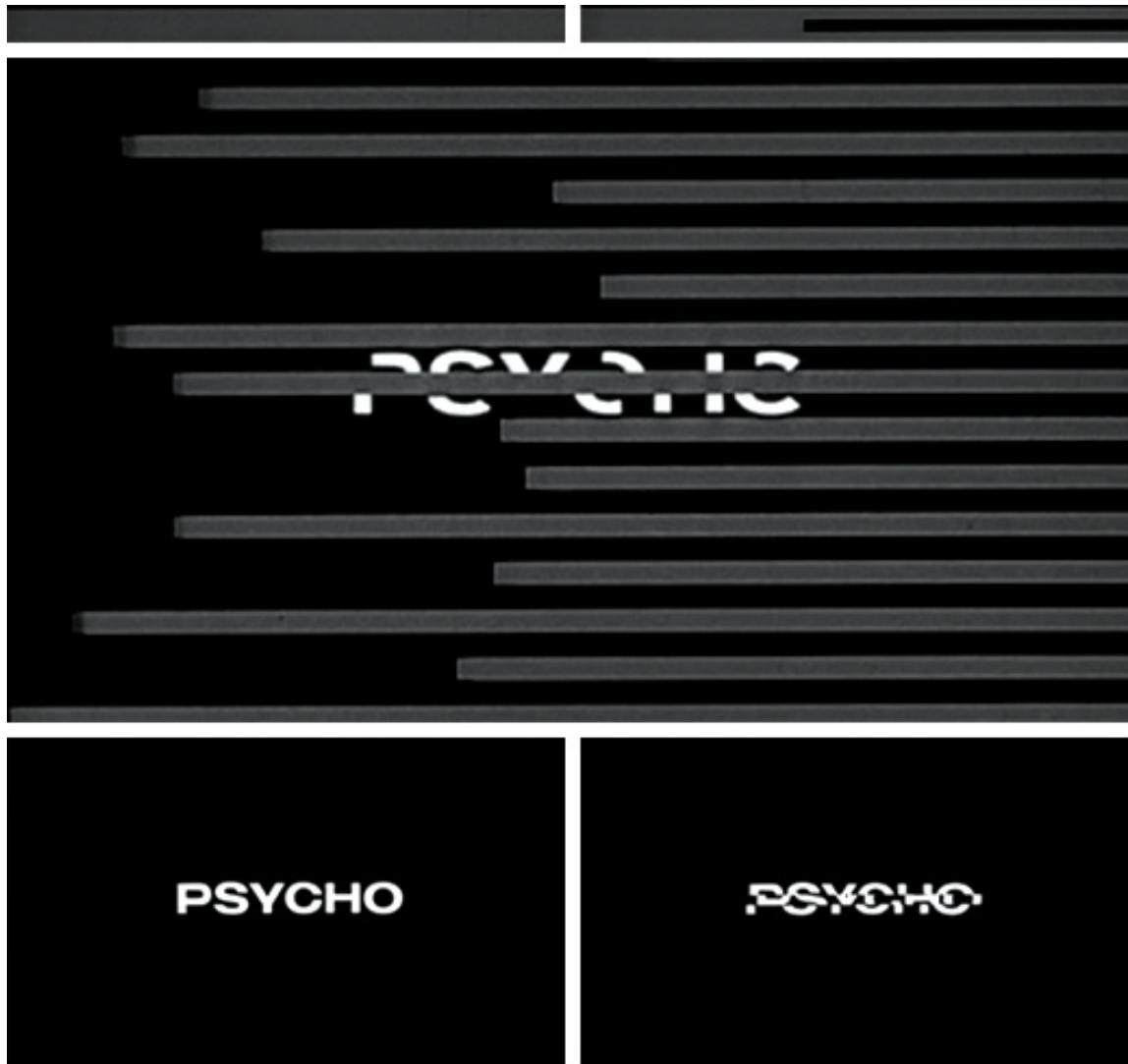
"Exodus" poster, by Saul Bass

Saul Bass

"design is thinking made visual"

Saul Bass was best known for his work on famous motion picture title sequences from movies such as "The Man with the Golden Arm", "North by Northwest", and "Psycho".

He was one of the first to realize the creative potential in the opening and closing sequences of movies. His sequences were always unique to the movie and used to enhance the viewers' experience. For the opening credits of "Psycho", Saul Bass used sweeping bars with a frenzied motion to demonstrate the fractured psyche of Norman Bates.

Saul Bass was also a successful graphic designer. His cilents included Girl Scouts, United Airlines, AT&T, and Warner.

Psycho title sequence, 1960

stedelijk
van abbemuseum
eindhoven

fernand leger

dagelijks geopend
van 10-17 uur
zondag
van 13-17 uur
dinsdag- en
donderdagavond
van 20-22 uur

2 februari tot
10 maart 1957

1957, Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven

Wim Crouwel
1914–1970

Wim Crouwel was an expressionist painter as well as a functionalist designer, which blended both of these worlds into one. As a popular designer he was interested in the rational aspect of design, like the Swiss-inspired international style. Crouwel's work has always consisted of two elements:
the emotional aspect and
the rational one.

Crouwel felt related to the Swiss International
style, and similarly was welcoming to incorporating
the machine into the world of design. He did
however state that, "a machine cannot replace
the precision of the human eye and human feeling."
Crouwel would look at the work of an artist,
get an impression and then translate it in
his own typographic work.

He used and enjoyed sans-serif type faces,
also using heavy lines around his images.
He was constantly searching for abstraction
that would catch the eye.

stedelijk van abbemuseum eindhoven

dagelijks geopend
van 10-17 uur
zon- en feestdagen
van 13-17 uur
dinsdag- en
donderdagavond
van 20-22 uur

hiroshima

panelen van iri maruki en toshiko akamatsu

30 maart tot
15 april 1957

The CND logo or peace sign on the American flag

Gerald Holtom

inventor of the peace sign

Gerald Holtom was a British designer, artist and graduate of the Royal College of Arts. In 1958 he created the logo for the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), which later became the international peace sign.

During the Second World War, Gerald Holtom was a conscientious objector. His symbol incorporated the semaphore letters N, for nuclear, and D, for disarmament.

On the creation of
the CND logo

*"I was in despair. Deep despair. I drew myself: the
representative of an individual in despair, with hands
palm outstretched outwards and downwards in the
manner of Goya's peasant before the firing squad.
I formalised the drawing into a line and put a
circle round it."*

- Gerland Holtom

Herb Lubalin

1918 – 1981

Herb Lubalin was an art director, iconoclastic advertiser, and a man enthralled with the theory of meaning and how meaning is communicated.

He designed typefaces for magazines popular of the times. Eros in the 60s, Fact in the mid 60s and Avant Garde in the 1970s. These revolutionary publications allowed for Lubalin to gain popularity and notoriety for their visual beauty. It is through his typefaces that Lubalin came to be known for the shock he delivered through his typography. He constantly pushed the boundaries of both design and type, making the shapes of the letters in words have a voice, color and vivid character.

"What I do is not really typography...
    It's designing with letters."

Lubalin is the "typographic impresario of our time," designer Lou Dorfsman called him, "a man who

profoundly influenced and changed our visual perception of letter forms, words and language

[...] he raised typography from a level of craft to art."

1980 AIGA Medal Winner, 1981.
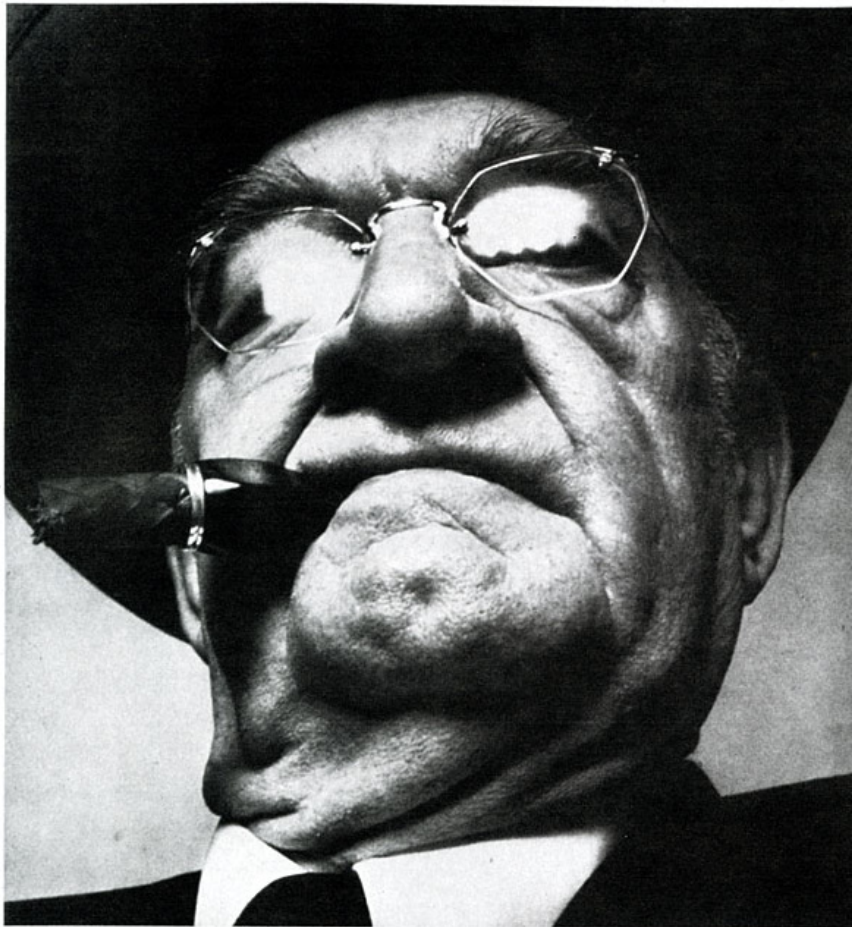
Some of our best friends are bigots.

For years the American bigot has loudly defended his Jim Crow-given right to persecute the Negro. For years the bigot has gotten away with murder. But thanks to a Supreme Court that believes in liberty and justice for all, the bigot is at the end of his rope. Every day he finds it tougher to practice what he preaches. Maybe that's why he's screaming louder than ever.

Or maybe it's because 20,000,000 Negroes earn $30 billion a year, and make up 28% of the central city aggregate population in 28 key cities, and represent huge percentages of the customers in downtown stores and retail outlets all over the country.

Whatever the reason, we consider it pretty white of the bigot to sound off. Because the more he rants, the more he calls attention to the growing affluence and size of the Negro market. And who are we to feel unkindly about a race review? Ebony gets to the heart of the Negro market.

For example, every month Ebony reaches 63% of the Negro households in the country. 2,500,000 households. Of which 34.1% of the male heads earn more than $10,000 a year. An audience that includes a large percentage of professional people, managers, and business owners. People with a median income of $6,648 a year. Consumers who spend more of their income on food, home furnishings, and personal care items than white people of comparable income do.

Ebony does more than reach the Negro. It gets to him in a way that no white-oriented mass media could: with reports on Negro Masons, Negro Elks, Negro weddings, with editorials on separate but unequal school systems, white-only jobs, and black-only ghettoes. In other words, Ebony gives the Negro what he hungers for: identification and recognition as a person.

That's why advertising in Ebony moves goods and services. Can any businessman be prejudiced against that?

Ebony.
The magazine that
gets to the heart
of the Negro market.

EROS

*Spring, 1962*

A Taste of the 80's
bold, neon and jagged

Brighter hues, strong statements, and defined lettering to carried out the Me Era, of the 1980's. This was when typefaces were experimental. Designers were influenced by anti-consumerist social movements that were focused on subverting the mainstream cultural institutions, and creating contemporary art. Borrowed elements were used in the creation of new work, and there was an insurgence of graffiti and electronic art. The typefaces of this new age were best showcased in the popular 80's magazine, Emigre. The 1980's was the beginning of a new era of Digital Type Design, that would take the world by storm.

Neville Brody
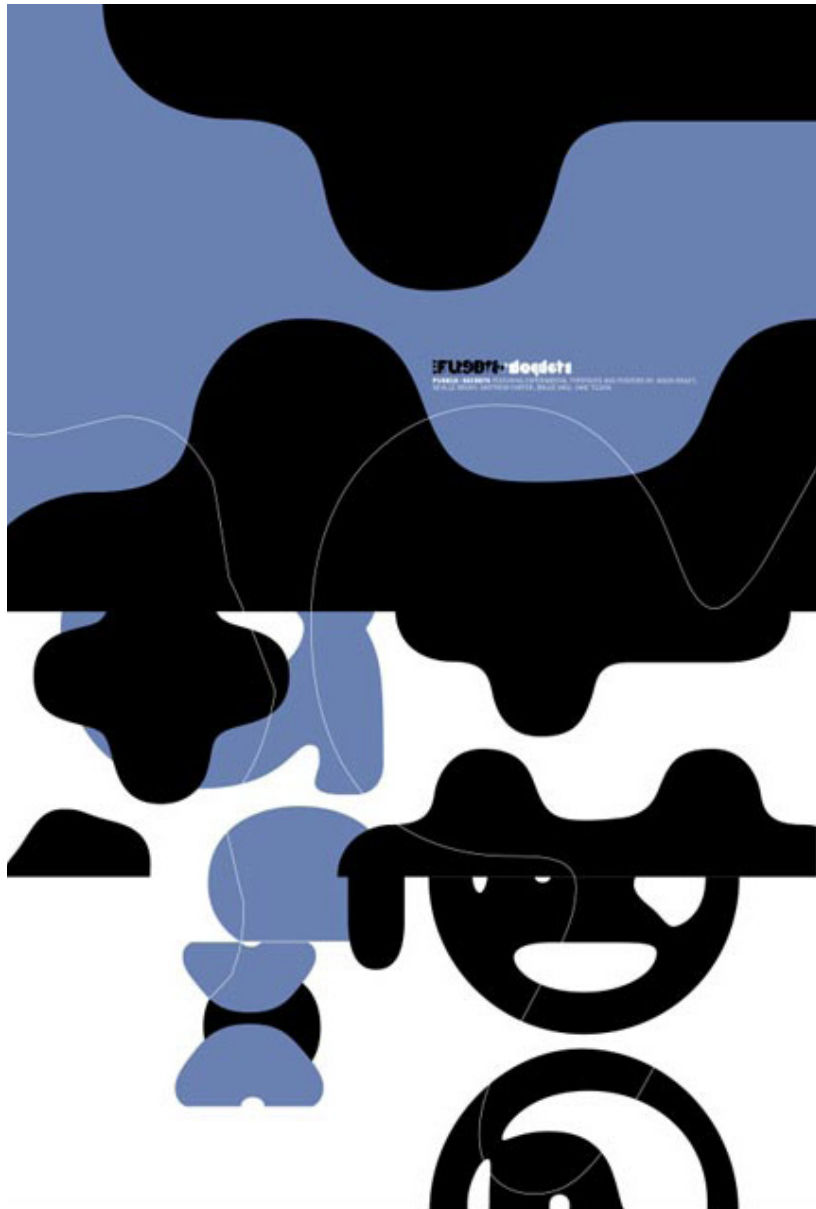
Neville Brody is a graphic designer who studied at the London College of Printing and made his way when he joined a record design agency, Rocking Russian, where he created album covers. Brody emerged from the 1970s, punk rock world and frequently used images degenerated by photocopying or tv screen projection. He frequently used impulse symmetry to create bold patterns in his work.

His use of bold images and colors further emphasized his edgy London background. Brody is a member of the first generation to have escaped instruction in the habits of the now departed metal typography, and this fuels both a sense of freedom and severe limitations. His approach is intuitive and every job carries his stamp, which is only meant for a defined clientele.
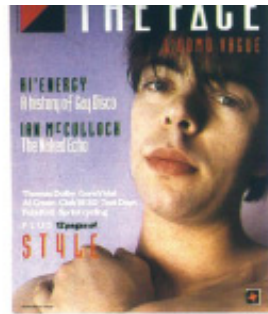
He was an art director for the street magazine, The Face before he moved to the men's style magazine called, Arena. His monograph, The Graphic Language of Neville Brody, was published in 1988 becoming one of the world's best selling graphic design books.

Various posters designed by Philippe Apeloig

Philippe Apeloig

"It's important that students don't limit themselves to what they learn from their teachers"

Philippe Apeloig is a graphic designer from Paris. He studied at the École Supérieure des Arts Appliqués and the École Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs. He is known for his posters and typography.

Many of Philippe Apeloig's posters are displayed at the MoMa and his famous typefaces inlcude Octobre and Drop.

"The Poster", by Philippe Apeloig, 2000

Philippe Apeloig gained an appreciation of pixellated, low resolution work and moired textures after taking an internship in Los Angeles from April Greiman, a typographer. He descibed the experience of, "jumping into the future with all these people with their keyboards and their screens". He came to the realization he would not be able to return to Paris without learning to produce his work on the emerging Macintosh computer.

Comodore 64 personal computer, 1980s

The Rise in Digital Communication

Comodore 64 personal computer keyboard, 1980s

the Digital Revolution

the change from analog mechanical and
electronic techology to digital technology

The Digital Revolution started in 1980 and continues to the present day.

the Peronsal Computer

A major landmark of the digital revolution was the widespread adoption of personal computers in the 1980s. The first personal computers were released in the 1970s and by the 1980s were considered familiar household machines. Between 1982 and 1994, 17 million Commodore 64 computers were purchased for home use. In the late 1980s, knowledge of computers became necessary for many jobs.

the Mobile Phone

In 1983 Motorola created the first mobile phone, the Motorola DynaTac. However, this mobile phone used analog communication.

Digital Music

Another landmark of the digital revolution was the transition from analog to digital recoreded music. In the 1980s, the analog formats of music, vinyl records and cassettee tapes, were replaced by the digital compact discs.

the Internet

In the 1990s the World Wide Web was released to the public. By 1996, the Internet was considered mainstream. Many businesses had company websites. By 1999, most counties had a Internet connection, and half of Americans regulary used the internet.

Zuzana Licko

Zuzana Licko was the co-founder of Emigre Magazine, founded in 1984 and garnering much fame after its publication. Emigre was published between 1984–2005, with a total of 69 issues created rather irregularly. It was originally intended as a cultural journal to showcase artists, photographers, poets and artists. Not only did the magazines catalogue typography and graphic design, but they also catalogued one-of-a-kind ceramics made by Zuzana Licko herself. Licko worked with Macintosh computers and a bitmap font tool, and began creating fonts for the magazine itself. Similarly, Licko's designs for digital typefaces were incorporated with the first generation of the Macintosh computer.

All About Zuzana Licko

One of the most popular serif fonts that Zuzana Licko was Mrs. Eaves, created in 1996 and licensed by Emigre. This font was a revival of types of the English printer, John Baskerville. Mrs. Sarah Eaves was Baskerville's housekeeper, turned mistress, who helped him with typesetting and printing. The name of Licko's font honors just one of the many forgotten women in type history.

How is Mrs. Eaves like Baskerville?

- Lower case g : open lower counter and a swash-like ear
- Upper case C : has serifs at the top and bottom
- Upper case G : has a sharp spur

Mrs. Eaves is used on the covers of Penguin Classics and Penguin Books

PENGUIN CLASSICS

The Penguin Book of
First World War Stories

"People read best what they read most."

A phrase coined by Zuzana Licko in,

Emigre #15, 1991

Pointing out that what makes certain typefaces easier to read than others is our familiarity with them.

Low-Resolution
1980

Zuzana Licko designed a series of coarse bitmap fonts, which were created on the Macintosh computer with a simple public domain software. Fonts were considered by many designers as just a computer effect. Typefaces such as these are seen to be idiosyncratic with limited applicability and obsolete upon the arrival of high resolution computer screens and output devices. Today, lower resolution typefaces are less expensive and have had a slight comeback in popularity.

PostScript

*a programming language for printing
visually rich documents*

PostScript is a programming language for printing graphics
and text. It provides a convenient language that describes
images in a device independent manner.

Apple's original LaserWriter PostScript printer, 1985

the Creation of PostScript

In 1982, John Warnock and Chuck Geschke founded
Adobe Systems Inc. They named their company after
Adobe Creek, an Indian creek near John Warnock's
residence. Around the same time, Steve Jobs,
founder of Apple Computers, was searching for a
solution for the high quality office printing system
problem. Steve Jobs asked Adobe to develop a system
to drive a laser printer. In 1985 the first PostScript
printer, the Apple Laserwriter, was released and sold
to the public for $7000.

PostScript Fonts

The first Apple LaserWriter contained thirteen fonts:

Times Roman – 4 fonts
Helvetica – 4 fonts
Courier – 4 fonts
Symbol

The Adobe PostScript fonts were a significant jump in quality over existing fonts. The new Adobe PostScript fonts were stored in an outline format that was filled with bitmaps upon printing. They required less memory and were scaleable. They were about to create characters at sizes ranging from 1 point to 1000 points. Adobe PostScript fonts could also be purchased separately for use on other high-resolution devices.

"Desktop Publishing" – Paul Brainerd

The combination of the Adobe PostScript language with the Apple Macintosh, and the Apple LaserWriter and Aldus PageMaker – the first page layout program for the personal computer.

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