

# WORKS

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Jan Tschichold

Pablo Picasso

Avant Garde

Jan

Jan Tschichold was born 1902 in Leipzig, Germany. He was the son of a sign painter which led him to become interested in type and calligraphy at a very young age. Though Tschichold's interest in type and calligraphy, he did not decide to become a graphic designer/typographer until he was a bit older. The 1914 World's Fair for Books and Graphics left a significant impression on young Tschichold; it was this strong impression which encouraged him to pursue the study of typography in a professional manner. At the Leipzig Academy of Graphic Arts and Book Production, Tschichold was looked upon as a bit of a prodigy; he possessed a high level of knowledge about type and calligraphy prior to attending the academy (Milosevic, 2016). However, Tschichold was still in the infancy of his design career; he primarily concerned himself with Gothic fonts, such as Maximilian Grotesk (Milosevic, 2016). Maximilian Grotesk was created by another German designer, Rudolf Koch, who primarily specialized in fantastic Gothic/Grotesque style fonts (Devroye, 2018). Tschichold's early design years were heavily influenced by Koch's work.

Design and type in Germany during this period was largely dominated by the gothic fonts, also known as blackletter, such as Maximilian Grotesk (Milosevic, 2016). Freedom to experiment with font styles was not limited by concerns of readability (within reason), which was evident in many German newspaper undergoing a monumental shift during this time. In 1919, the Bauhaus Exhibition opened. The Bauhaus Exhibition was a collection of the German school of art and design's work; everything from textiles

to canvas was displayed (MoMA, 2018). Tschichold was highly influenced by the Modern art aspect of the exhibition.

Though there was no concrete connection between Tschichold and the Bauhaus, his style was highly impacted by this new artform which was occurring. In his early 20s, he began gaining reputation for his design work; in 1928 he published one of the most influential pieces of work of his career, *Die Neue Typographie* (The New Typography).

In *The New Typography*, Tschichold renounces much of the "supposedly 'artistic' intention," which was found in the, then, present-day design. He believed that the connection to historic blackletter style was outdated; such designs were outdated due to the innovation of industrialization (Tschichold, 1928, p.11). It was through mechanization of type that the Modern style was born, in Tschichold's mind. The precision and ability to create, "perfection of form," drove much of Tschichold's call for design reform (Tschichold, 1928, p.12). Tschichold's style was also highly influenced by the Dadaist movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century (Tschichold, 1928, p.56).

ing about great change to the realist, quasi-impressionist, era of painting in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century (Finocchio, 2004). However, the initial criticism eventual faded and both influences were widely adopted in a matter of years. Tschichold's style was incredibly influential on the use of sans serif fonts used in posters and easily read type; Picasso inspired much of the surrealist movement and subsequent abstract art seen in much of Modern art museums (Keedy, 1998).

A noteworthy intersection between Tschichold and Picasso is how Picasso indirectly influenced Tschichold's design mindset through Modern art. In *The New Typography*, Tschichold states that, "In order to fully understand the new typography, it will help to study the most recent developments in painting and photography," (Tschichold, 1928, p.30). The book delves into the development of Modern art as it was, and the many influences which culminated in his era's art style. Tschichold notes that cubism, "freed painting," from the Renaissance styles; similarly, Tschichold took the opportunity to free typography from blackletter decadence (Tschichold, 1928, p.36). Tschichold talks about the movement toward sharp lines and the crispness found in Modern, specifically abstract, art. These styles were much of his inspiration and justification for, *The New Typography* and the need for modernized typography and design (Tschichold, 1928, p.41).

Tschichold and Picasso are lauded as masters in their respective fields, and their lasting impact supports this claim. Sans serif, modern, type would not have been as successful and widely used, had it not been for Tschichold's deliberate efforts. Likewise, the art world would not have been the same without Picasso's heavy influence on cubism, surrealism, and Modern art. Picasso's influence was so widespread, that Tschichold himself became somewhat of a student of his work, as acknowledged in *The New Typography*. Without these Masters, art and design would not be the same; and as designers and artists, it is our responsibility to understand and appreciate their legacy in the work we pursue today.

Pablo Picasso

# Jan Tschichold

Tschichold and Picasso were both highly influential Avant Garde figures in the art/design world in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both creatives helped their respective fields step out of classical styles, and into the Modern period. In their formative years, Tschichold and Picasso were critical students of the classical style; both took much influence from the Renaissance, which they pursued through the work of Masters. However, regarding their development of style, each were unique in their path to greatness. Picasso did not finish schooling at either of the academies he attended; for Picasso, learning directly from the greats themselves (in art museums) was the kind of learning he pursued. Tschichold, was more of an academic; at the Leipzig Academy of Graphic Art and Book Production, Tschichold made many inroads with the academy's faculty (The Art Story, 2018).

Tschichold and Picasso's lifestyles were further divergent; Picasso led a Bohemian lifestyle full of travel and women. Tschichold, however, was a mild-mannered designer into his later years; apart from moving to Switzerland and England, Tschichold upheld a relatively stable home-life with his wife. Though their personal lives were somewhat at ends, both were intimately touched by the impact of the rise of the Third Reich. Tschichold was arrested and forced to flee due to political persecution; Some of Picasso's close friends were killed by the Nazis during WWII. In both instances, the effects of the Nazi party influenced their work.

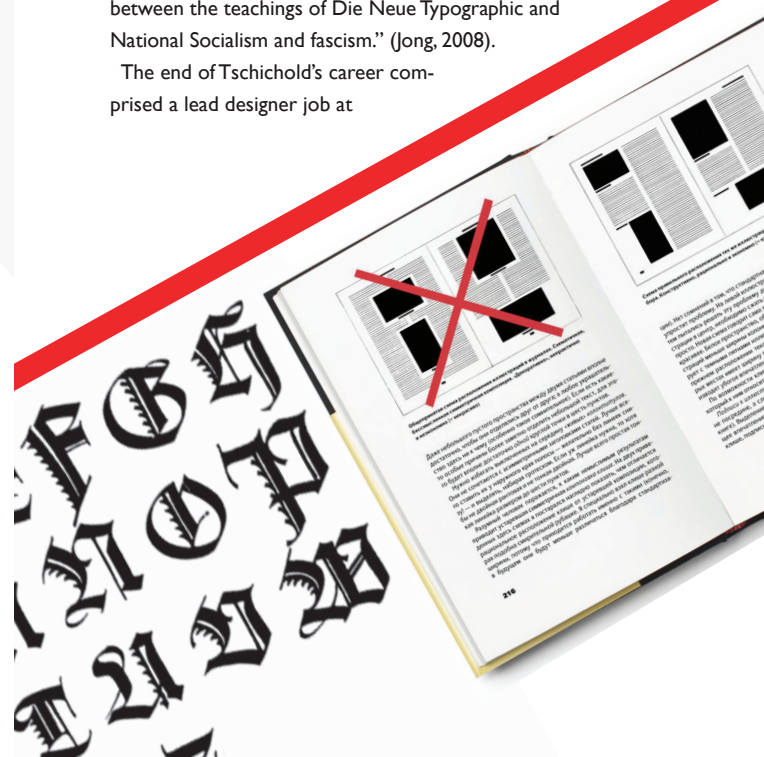
One major difference between Tschichold and Picasso was their methodology behind the change they brought to the art/design world. Tschichold was clearly motivated to innovate the design/type world. His, *The New Typography* and strict guidelines at *Penguin Publishing* were noteworthy endeavors to impact the design climate of the era. Through his concerted effort, profound change was brought about, even if it was at his dismay later in life. Conversely, Picasso had no intentions of changing the art world. Rather, he was exploring art as a method and way of expression. "When we invented cubism we had no intention whatever of inventing cubism. We simply wanted to express what was in us." (Picasso & Barr, 1946, p.17).

Though both created momentous change in different ways, their change was received in a similar, highly criticized, fashion. Both Tschichold and Picasso received raving reviews about their destruction of the styles they were replacing (Trachtman, 1996). Tschichold was disrupting the print industry which was entrenched in the blackletter style; Picasso was bring-

However, Tschichold's ideas were not met with immediate praise. Much of his work was considered controversial and outrageous; he was going against design principles which had existed for centuries (Design History, 2011). One of his biggest opponents to his work was the Nazi Party. In 1933, The Third Reich took power of Germany and only ten days later, Tschichold was in jail for being a "cultural bolshevik" with anti-German views. Fortunately, Tschichold and his family were able to escape to Switzerland; in Switzerland Tschichold had little difficulty continuing his design career in Switzerland (Milosevic, 2016).

Tschichold's alienation from Germany also alienated him from the Bauhaus style he had embraced. Slowly, over the next two decades, Tschichold's viewpoint on design shifted once again toward the classical style he had started his career with. He renounced his book, *The New Typography*, going so far as to say he saw, "shocking parallels between the teachings of Die Neue Typographic and National Socialism and fascism." (Jong, 2008).

The end of Tschichold's career comprised a lead designer job at



# Typographer Designer

Penguin Publishing. He cleaned up the books and imposed strict design standards; these standards improved the quality of the books, all the while creating a more accessible, affordable, product for consumers (Milosevic, 2016). Tschichold moved further and further away from his Bauhaus, Modernist, style; however, the impact and influence of much of Tschichold's work, especially, *The New Typography* changed the design world, whether Tschichold agreed with it or not.



Pablo Picasso is regarded as one of the most influential artists of all time. His timeless pieces and enigmatic styles are perceived as genius and revolutionary. He was born in 1881 to a Spanish painter. From an early age, Picasso studied art under his father and later moved to Barcelona with his family to further his studies. He was influenced by several renowned artists, like Edvard Munch (impressionist) and Henri-Toulouse-Lautrec (Art Nouveau/Poster Art) having crossed paths with them in Barcelona (The Art Story, 2018). It was artists such as these whom introduced Picasso to the new concepts such as Art Nouveau and Symbolism (The Art Story, 2018).

Picasso was enrolled in the Barcelona Academy of Arts when he was 13, however he later dropped out. He enrolled into another school, the San Fernando Royal Academy of Fine Arts, which he also ended up leaving early (Early Works, 2018). Picasso took inspiration from Masters and spent much time in museum halls studying their works. It was in Picasso's teens to early 20s where he mastered the classical realist style of painting and drawing; this caused him to renounce the style and move toward the Art Nouveau style (Early Works, 2018).

Around 1907, (though debated) Picasso started creating the first pieces which were considered Cubist. Picasso's early work was influenced by African sculpture and Iberian art; his early pieces were seen by Braque, and the two would later collaborate on the Cubist style. The style consisted of the fragmentation of subjects and backgrounds, and later exaggeration would become a key component of the Cubist style. Additionally, the subject and background become one-in-the-same, integrating them into one, cohesive, fractal (The Art Story, 2018).

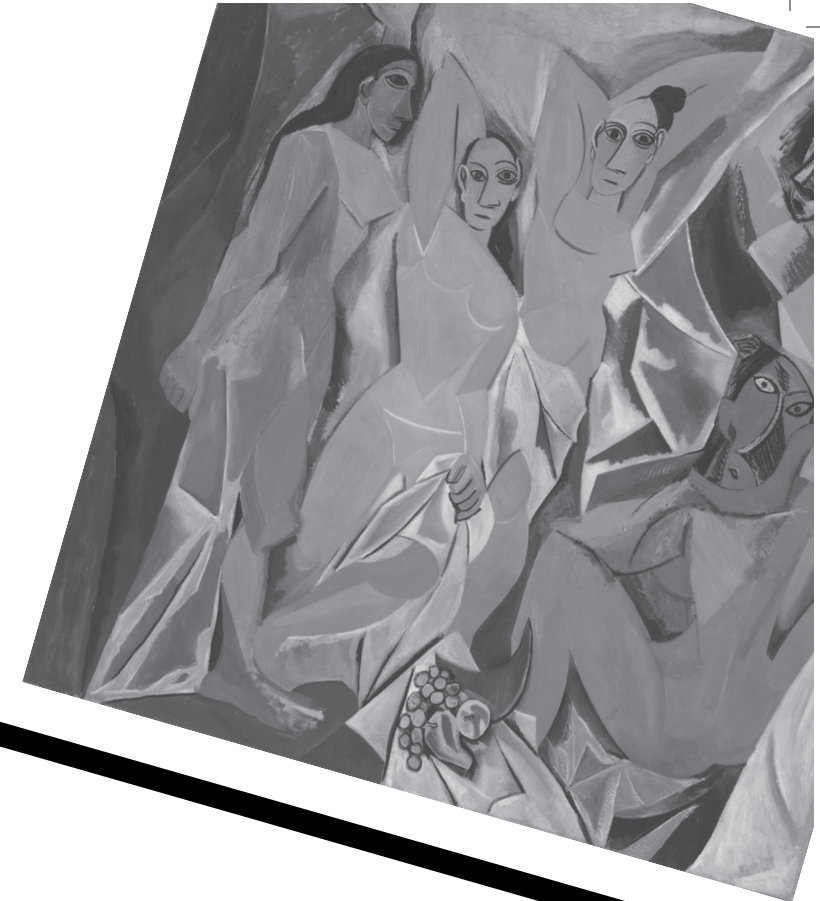
Picasso also started to experiment with collage and using fragments of paper to create images. This was somewhat reminiscent of Dadaism and may have been a point of

departure for the Dadaist movement (Tschichold, 1928, p. 51). Picasso continued his varied art direction in designing for the Ballet Russes around 1916. In the 1920s, Picasso dabbled with surrealism while changing the subject matter of his work. The pieces were notably more violent or sexual during this period. These changes were attributed to the change in his love interests; much of Picasso's work was said to be highly influenced by the woman(en) of interest during the time of creation (The Art Story, 2018).

In the 1930s and 40s, Picasso became increasingly political. In the 30s he responded to the bombings of Spain by the US (Fast, 1955). While in the 40s, his pieces paid homage to those he lost to the Nazi regime (The Art Story, 2018). Additionally, in the late 40s Picasso became a part of the Communist party, some of which is reflected in his work like *War in Korea*.

*"When we invented cubism  
we had no intention whatever  
of inventing cubism.  
We simply wanted to express  
what was in us."*

*-Pablo Picasso*



Picasso's later years were much quieter than his prior years. Much of his art was portrait based and many of his pieces were not received as well as his earlier in his career (The Art Story, 2018). Picasso's adherence to the Communist party left some critics questioning his validity; his strong politicization of work made him both controversial and even more widely known. Nevertheless, Picasso remains, by far, one of the most influential painters and art figures in history.

