

Designer as Author

“Traditional? Modern? Postmodern? Forget those worries, and go back a step. Think what it is that you want to do. Think for yourself! Disregard preconceptions, models, influences. Consider what you know and what you have to hand. Then you can plot a course that makes sense for you and for everyone else involved in the enterprise, not least the user or reader.”

—Robin Kinross, *More Light!*



Michael Rock 2x4, New York City

Designer as Author (1994)
(Graphic Authorship)
Eye Magazine



**Designers should
act as authors
(or: self-initiated work)**

**It's not about content,
but about form.**

Auteur Theory

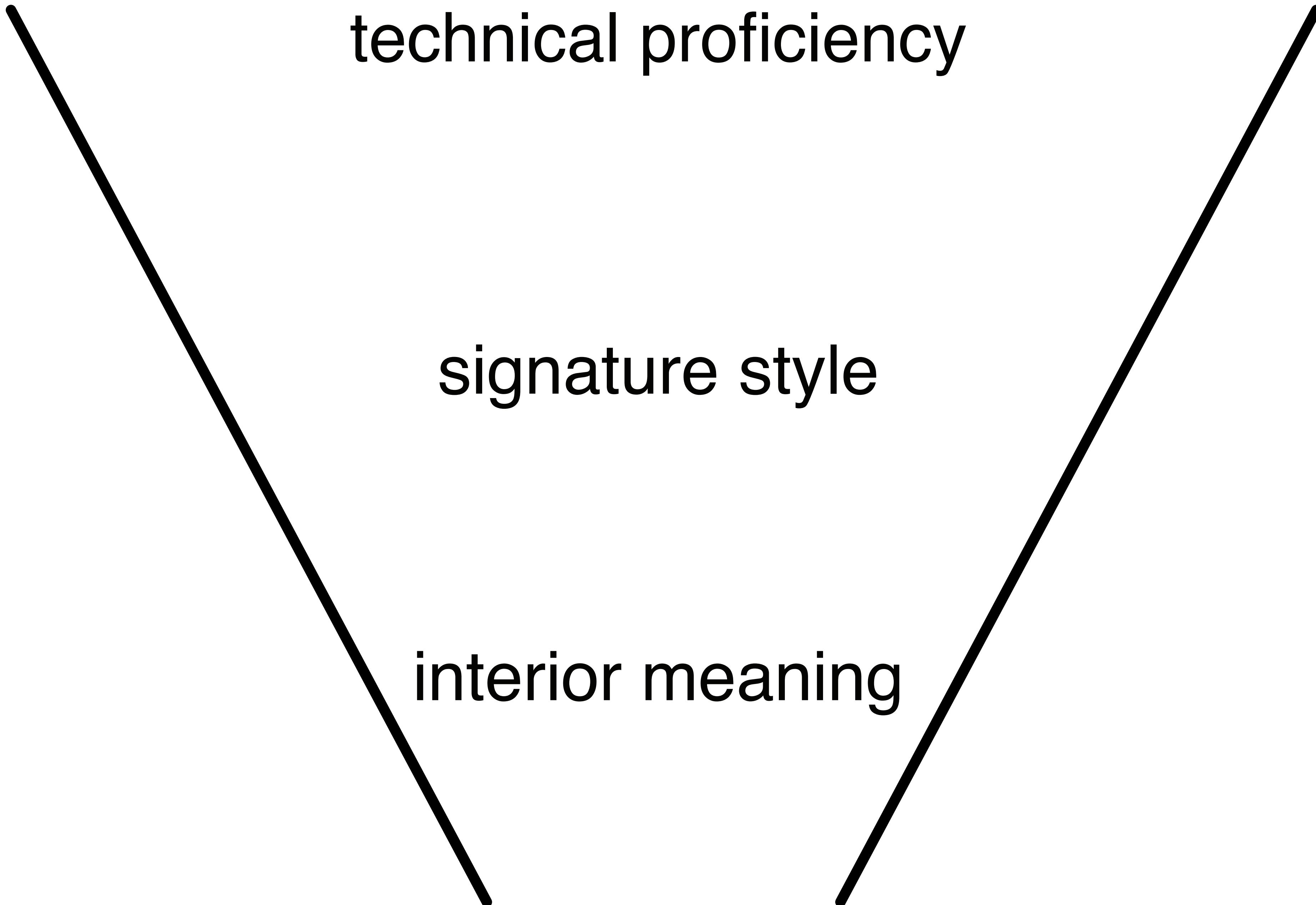
“The way a film looks and moves should have some relationship to the way a director thinks and feels.”

— Andrew Sarris





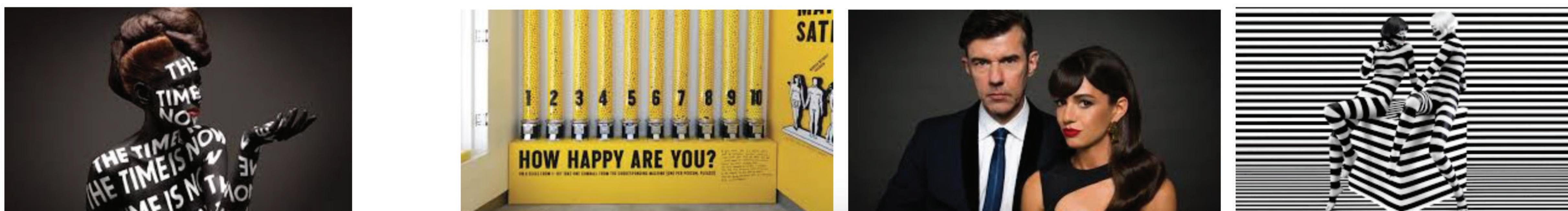
“If we apply the auteur criteria to graphic designers we find a body of work that may be elevated to auteur status. Technical proficiency could be fulfilled by any number of practitioners, but couple technical proficiency with a signature style and the field narrows. The list of names that meet those two criteria would be familiar, as that work is often published, awarded and praised. But great technique and style alone do not an auteur make. If we add the third requirement of interior meaning, how does that list fare? Are there graphic designers who, by special treatment and choice of projects, approach the realm of deeper meaning the way a Bergman, Hitchcock or Welles does?”

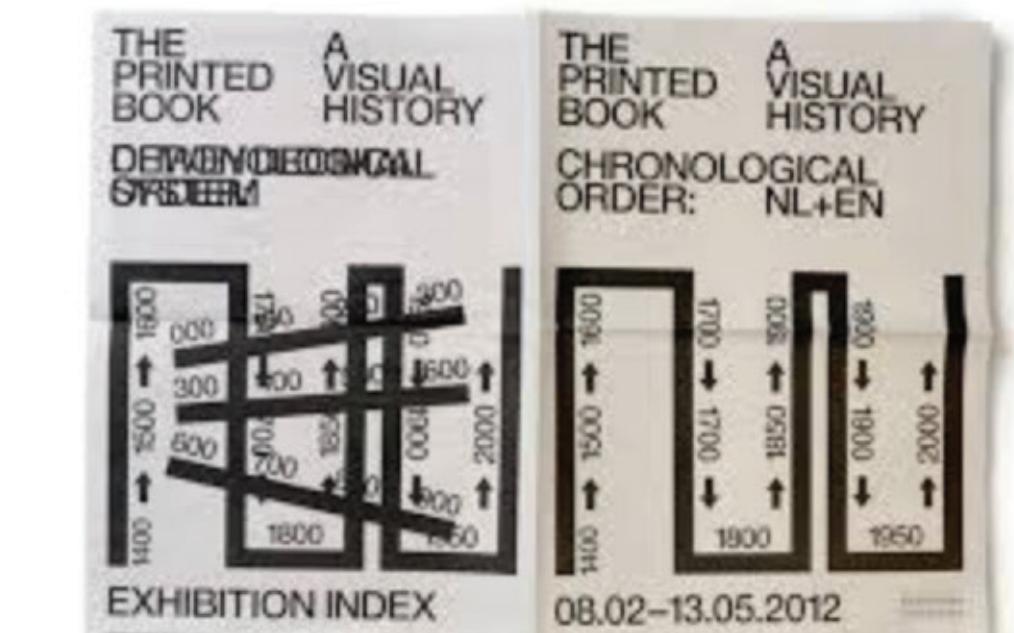
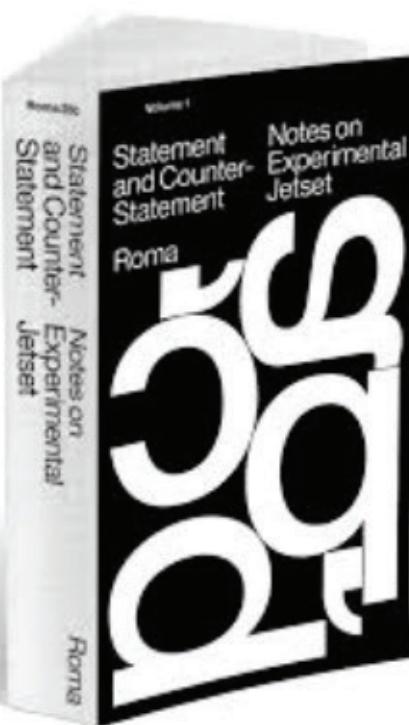
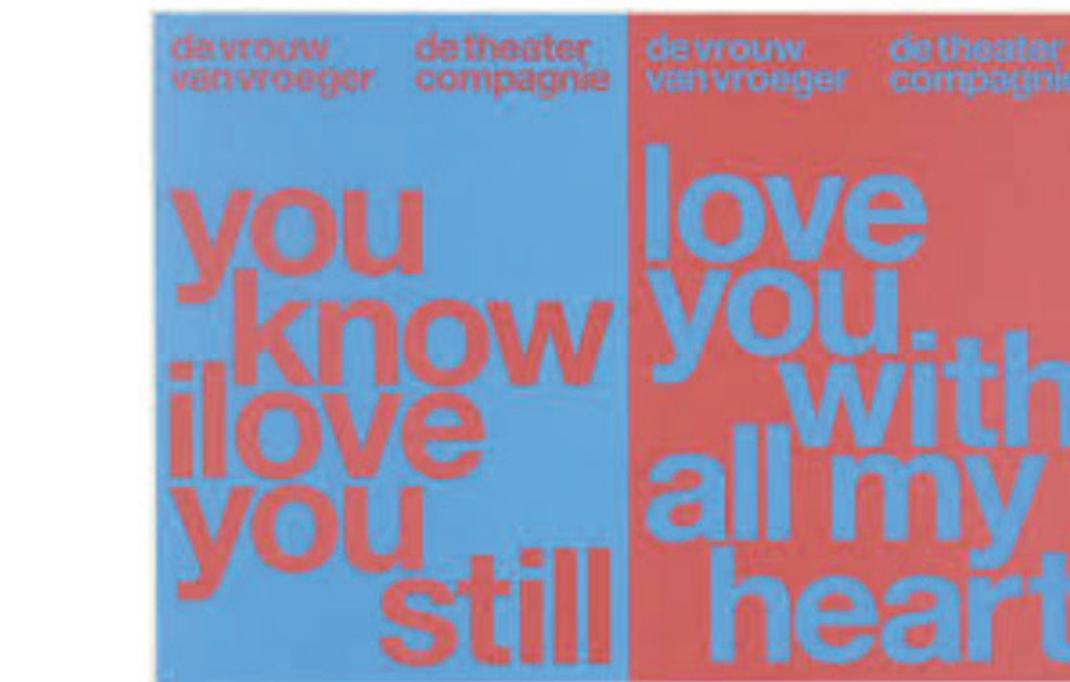


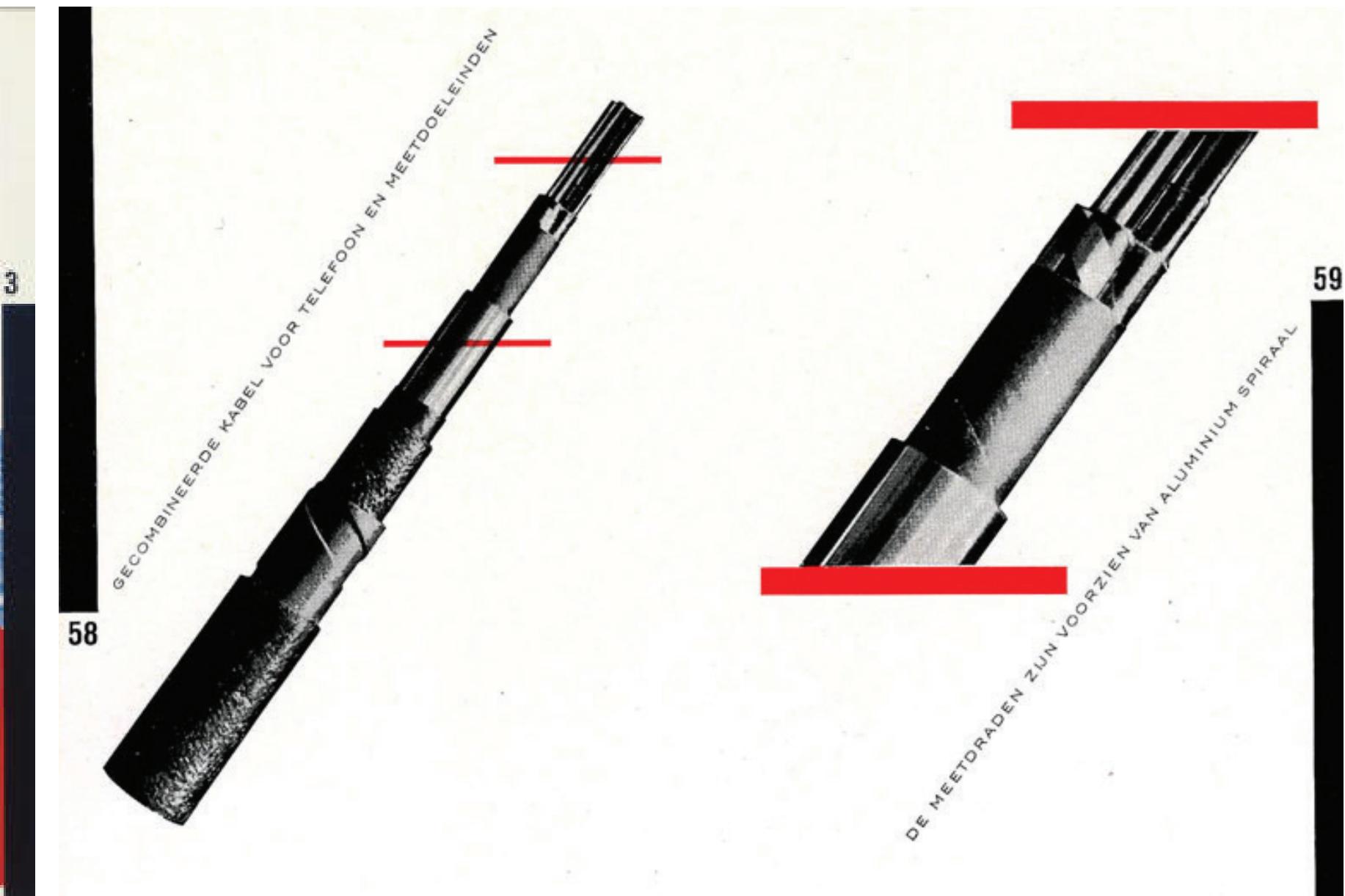
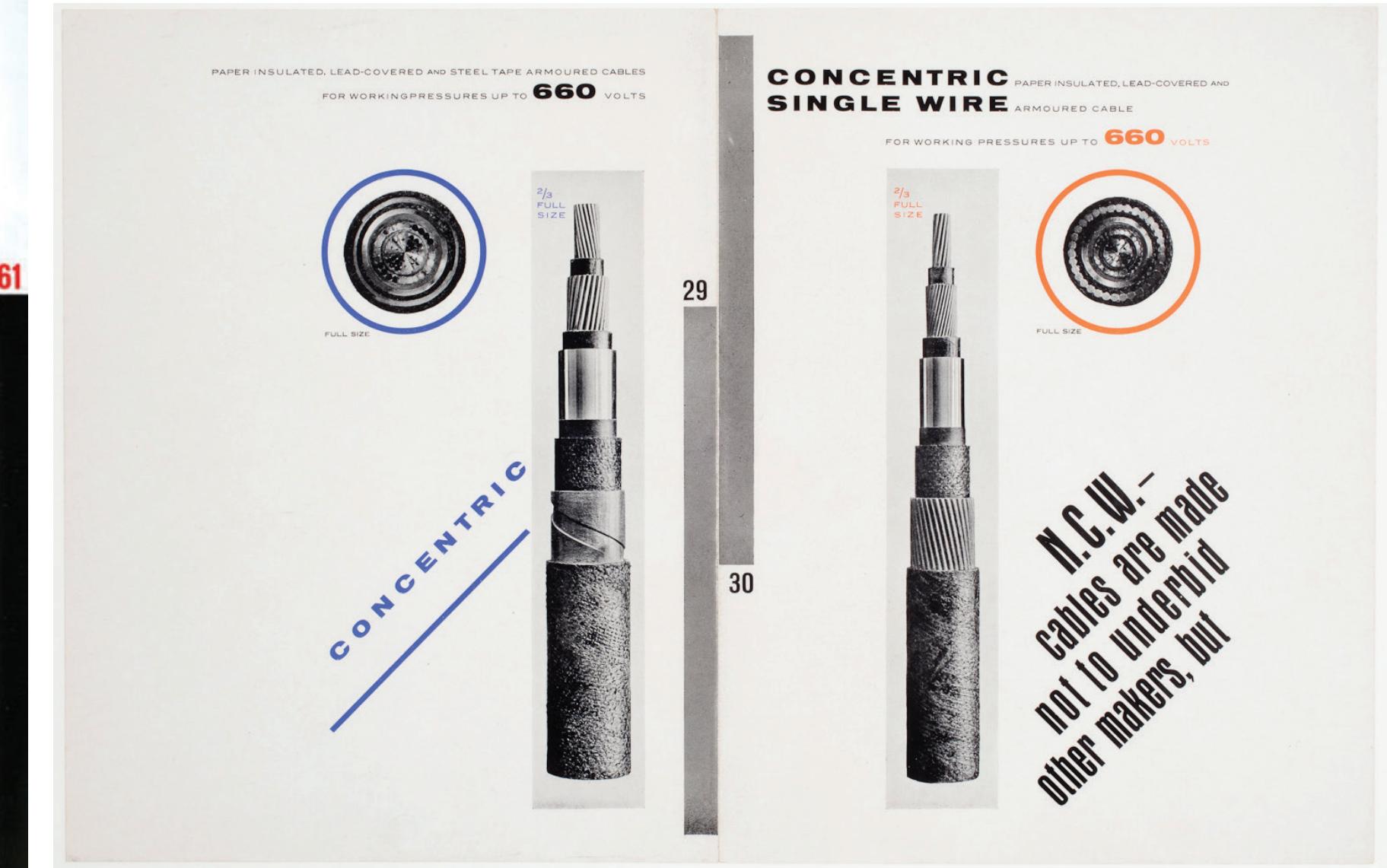
technical proficiency

signature style

interior meaning







KRALİÇE HACKED, JANUARY - APRIL 2013
BY ECAL / ANNA BITZER

SALT EXPLORES CRITICAL AND TIMELY ISSUES IN VISUAL AND MATERIAL CULTURE, AND CULTIVATES INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS FOR RESEARCH AND EXPERIMENTAL THINKING.







Smithsonian
Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum

Graphic Design— Now in Production

Free exhibition presented by
Cooper-Hewitt at Governors Island

Graphic Design—Now in Production is co-organized by the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, New York, and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis.

Cooper-Hewitt's presentation is made possible by support from the August Heckscher Exhibition Fund and CONVERSE.

Additional support is provided by the Ehrenkranz Fund, Behance, the Esme Usdan Exhibition Endowment Fund, Mondriaan Foundation, Amsterdam, Cooper-Hewitt Master's Program Fund, public funds from the Netherlands Cultural Services, and the Netherland-America Foundation.

Media partners: [VoxVox](#) and [AIGA](#)

Now in Production
Typography

Registration required for the exhibition. The registration fee includes admission to the exhibition and a copy of the exhibition catalog.

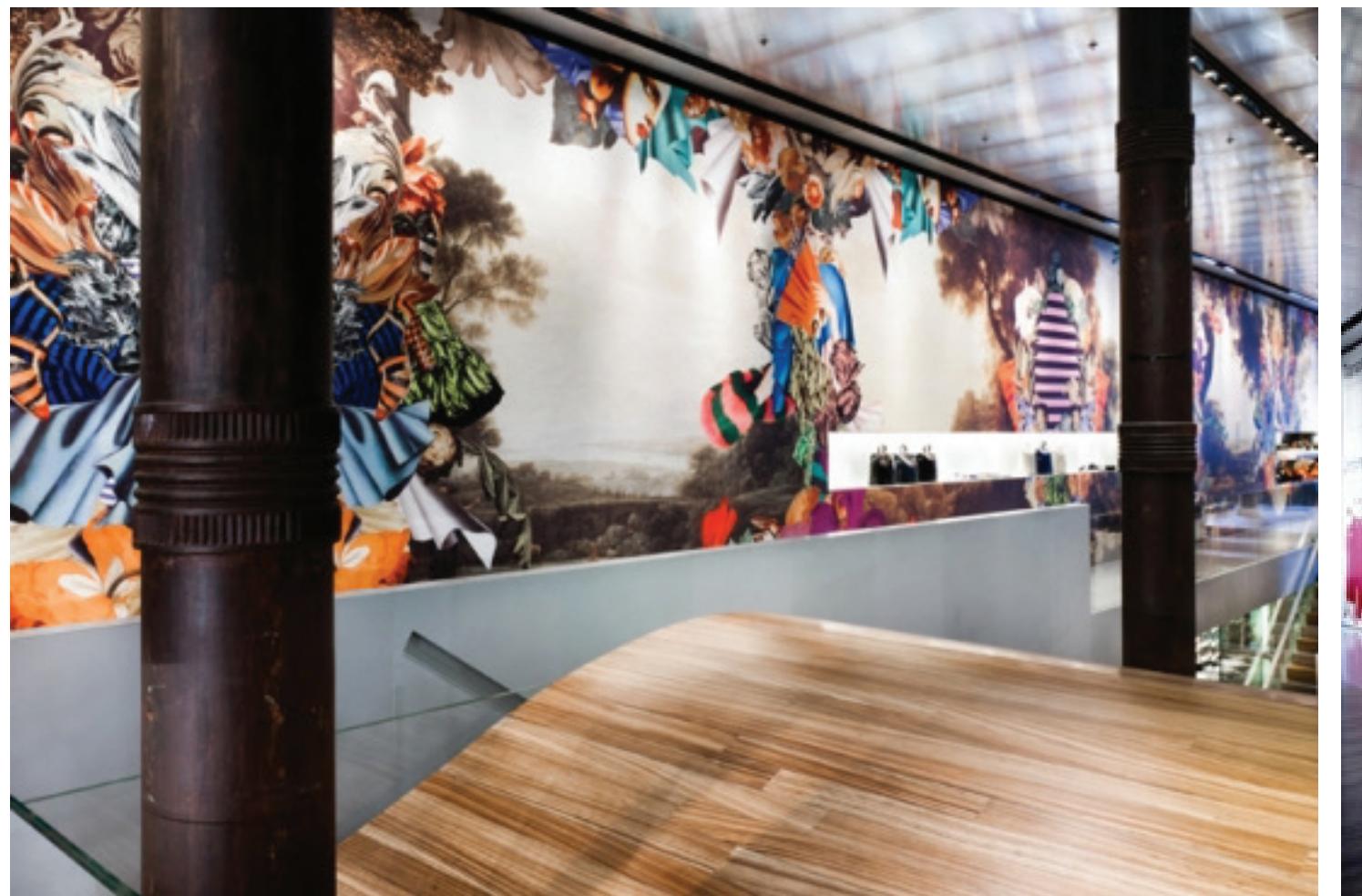
On view through Sept. 3
Saturdays, Sundays and
holiday Mondays
10 a.m.–6 p.m.

Free ferry from Manhattan
and Brooklyn

For more information, visit:
cooperhewitt.org/graphicdesignnow







**It's not about content,
but about form.**

~~It's not about content,~~
~~but about form.~~

The form is the content.



“The elements we must master are not the content narratives but the devices of the telling: typography, line, form, color, contrast, scale, weight. We speak through our assignment, literally between the lines.”

—Michael Rock

**Style is not surface.
Design is not decoration.**

What kind of designer do you want to be?

What are your interests? How do they find their way into your work?

How can your work be a type of authorship?