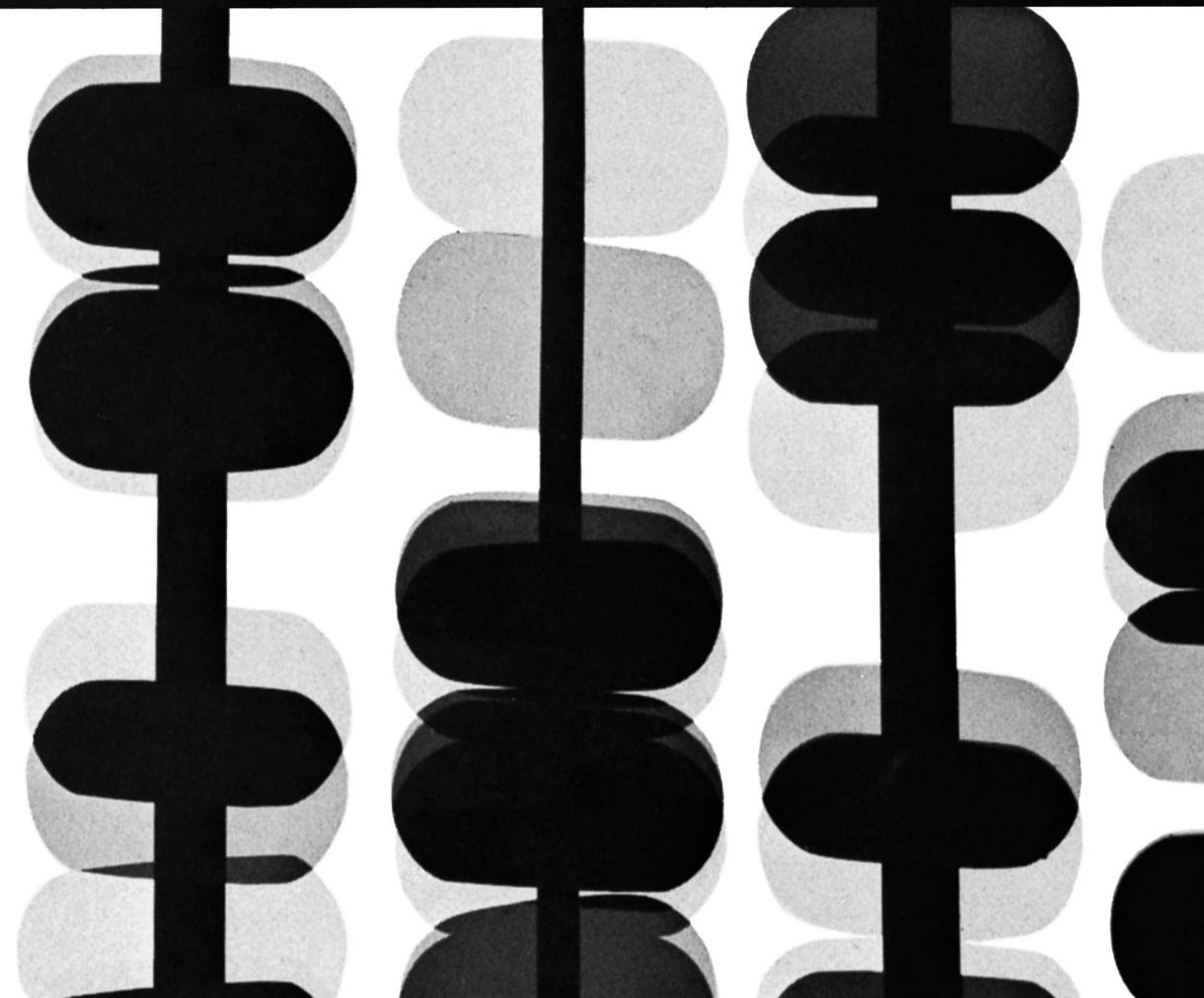




Thoughts on Design   Paul Rand



Paul Rand

# Thoughts on Design



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When Paul Rand sat down in 1947 to write the book that would become *Thoughts on Design*, he was thirty-three years old. The designer, born in Brooklyn and largely self-taught, was already a sensation. Appointed chief art director at the agency William H. Weintraub & Co. just six years before, he was credited with revolutionizing the clichéd and buttoned-down world of Madison Avenue by introducing the bracing clarity of European modernism. His signature appeared on book covers, posters, and ads.

He was young. His logos for IBM, ABC, and Westinghouse — all would be incorporated in the book's subsequent editions — were still in the future. So were his induction into the Art Directors Club Hall of Fame, his position on the faculty at the Yale School of Art, the AIGA Medal, and all the accolades that would establish him as his country's greatest designer by the time he died in 1996. Thirty-three years old was, perhaps, early for a book, but Rand was ready.

Paul Rand admitted all his life that he was insecure as a writer. It was his passion for his subject that made him such an effective one. In his day job on Madison Avenue, he had learned the virtues of saying more with less. As a result, *Thoughts on Design* is almost as simple as a child's storybook: short, clear sentences; vivid, playful illustrations. Ostensibly, it is nothing more than a how-to book, illustrated with examples from the designer's own portfolio. But in reality *Thoughts on Design* is a manifesto, a call to arms and a ringing definition of what makes good design good. This, perhaps, has never been said better than in the book's most quoted passage, the graceful free verse that begins Rand's essay "The Beautiful and the Useful." Graphic design, he says, no matter what else it achieves, "is not good design if it is irrelevant."

László Moholy-Nagy said of Paul Rand, "He is an idealist and a realist, using the language of the poet and business man." That balance between passion and practicality was never displayed better than in *Thoughts on Design*. Its message is still relevant. We are lucky that the designers of today and tomorrow have this new edition.

Michael Bierut, New York City  
2014

Preface  
to the Third Edition

In this edition of *Thoughts on Design*, the writer has made certain emendations. However, these do not materially alter his original thoughts or intentions. It is for the purpose of clarifying some of the ideas and enriching the visual material that a portion of the text has been revised and a number of illustrations have been replaced.

When this book was first written, it was the writer's intention to demonstrate the validity of those principles which, by and large, have guided artists (designers) since the time of Polycletus. The author believes that it is only in the application of those timeless principles that one can even begin to achieve a semblance of quality in one's work or understand the transient nature of the "fashionable." It is the continuing relevance of these principles that he wishes to emphasize, especially to those students and designers who have grown up in a world of pop and minimal art.

The author is indebted to all the advertisers, publishers, and manufacturers who have provided the opportunities for creating the visual material shown in this book. He also wishes to express his thanks to the typesetters and proofreaders for their help, and to the publishers for making a new edition of this book available.

P. R., Weston, Connecticut  
January 1970

Preface  
to the First Edition

This book attempts to arrange in some logical order certain principles governing contemporary advertising design. The pictorial examples used to illustrate these principles are taken from work in which I was directly engaged. This choice was made deliberately and with no intention to imply that it represents the best translation of these principles into visual terms. There are artists and designers of great talent whose work would be perhaps more suitable. But I do not feel justified in speaking for them nor secure in attempting to explain their work without any possibility of misrepresentation. This is not to say that this book is purely the result of my efforts alone. I am indebted to many people — painters, architects, designers of past and present — for many theories and concepts. Many philosophers and writers, particularly John Dewey and Roger Fry, have helped to crystallize my thinking on the subject and to accelerate such progress as I have made. I have tried to pay my debt by quoting some of them.

P. R., New York City  
January 1946

## The Beautiful and the Useful

Graphic design –  
which fulfills esthetic needs,  
complies with the laws of form  
and the exigencies of two-dimensional space;  
which speaks in semiotics, sans-serifs,  
and geometrics;  
which abstracts, transforms, translates,  
rotates, dilates, repeats, mirrors,  
groups, and regroups –  
is not good design  
if it is irrelevant.

Graphic design –  
which evokes the symmetria of Vitruvius,  
the dynamic symmetry of Hambidge,  
the asymmetry of Mondrian;  
which is a good gestalt;  
which is generated by intuition or by computer,  
by invention or by a system of co-ordinates –  
is not good design  
if it does not co-operate  
as an instrument  
in the service of communication.

Visual communications of any kind, whether persuasive or informative, from billboards to birth announcements, should be seen as the embodiment of form and function: the integration of the beautiful and the useful. In an advertisement, copy, art, and typography are seen as a living entity; each element integrally related, in harmony with the whole, and essential to the execution of the idea. Like a juggler, the designer demonstrates his skills by manipulating these ingredients in a given space. Whether this space takes the form of advertisements, periodicals, books, printed forms, packages, industrial products, signs, or TV billboards, the criteria are the same.

That the separation of form and function, of concept and execution, is not likely to produce objects of esthetic value has been repeatedly demonstrated. Similarly, it has been shown that the system which

regards esthetics as irrelevant, which separates the artist from his product, which fragments the work of the individual, which creates by committee, and which makes mincemeat of the creative process will, in the long run, diminish not only the product but the maker as well.

John Dewey, commenting on the relationship between fine art and useful or technological art, says: “That many, perhaps most, of the articles and utensils made at present for use are not genuinely esthetic happens, unfortunately, to be true. But it is true for reasons that are foreign to the relation of the ‘beautiful’ and ‘useful’ as such. Wherever conditions are such as to prevent the act of production from being an experience in which the whole creature is alive and in which he possesses his living through enjoyment, the product will lack something of being esthetic. No matter how useful it is for special and limited ends, it will not be useful in the ultimate degree — that of contributing directly and liberally to an expanding and enriched life.”<sup>1</sup>

1. John Dewey,  
*Art as Experience*,  
“Ethereal Things,” p. 26.

The esthetic requirements to which Dewey refers are, it seems to me, exemplified in the work of the Shakers. Their religious beliefs provided the fertile soil in which beauty and utility could flourish. Their spiritual needs found expression in the design of fabrics, furniture, and utensils of great esthetic value. These products are a document of the simple life of the people, their asceticism, their restraint, their devotion to fine craftsmanship, and their feeling for proportion, space, and order.

Ideally, beauty and utility are mutually generative. In the past, rarely was beauty an end in itself. The magnificent stained-glass windows of Chartres were no less utilitarian than was the Parthenon or the Pyramid of Cheops. The function of the exterior decoration of the great Gothic cathedrals was to invite entry; the rose windows inside provided the spiritual mood. Interpreted in the light of our own experiences, this philosophy still prevails.



Parthenon, Athens  
447–432 B.C.

### The Designer's Problem

An erroneous conception of the graphic designer's function is to imagine that in order to produce a "good layout"<sup>1</sup> all he need do is make a pleasing arrangement of miscellaneous elements. What is implied is that this may be accomplished simply by pushing these elements around, until something happens. At best, this procedure involves the time-consuming uncertainties of trial and error, and at worst, an indifference to plan, order, or discipline.

1. Because of its popular acceptance, the term *layout* is used. Unfortunately, a layout is deprecatingly interpreted as a blueprint for an illustration. I should prefer to use composition in the same sense in which it is used in painting.

The designer does not, as a rule, begin with some preconceived idea. Rather, the idea is (or should be) the result of careful study and observation, and the design a product of that idea. In order, therefore, to achieve an effective solution to his problem, the designer must necessarily go through some sort of mental process.<sup>2</sup> Consciously or not, he analyzes, interprets, formulates. He is aware of the scientific and technological developments in his own and kindred fields. He improvises, invents, or discovers new techniques and combinations. He co-ordinates and integrates his material so that he may restate his problem in terms of ideas, signs, symbols, pictures. He unifies, simplifies, and eliminates superfluities. He symbolizes — abstracts from his material by association and analogy. He intensifies and reinforces his symbol with appropriate accessories to achieve clarity and interest. He draws upon instinct and intuition. He considers the spectator, his feelings and predilections.

2. The reader may wish to refer to R. H. Wilenski, *The Modern Movement in Art*, for a description of the artist's mental processes in creating a work of art.

The designer is primarily confronted with three classes of material:  
a) the given material: product, copy, slogan, logotype, format, media, production process; b) the formal material: space, contrast, proportion, harmony, rhythm, repetition, line, mass, shape, color, weight, volume, value, texture; c) the psychological material: visual perception and optical illusion problems, the spectators' instincts, intuitions, and emotions as well as the designer's own needs.

As the material furnished him is often inadequate, vague, uninteresting, or otherwise unsuitable for visual interpretation, the designer's task is to re-create or restate the problem. This may involve discarding or revising much of the given material. By analysis (breaking down of the complex material into its simplest components . . . the how, why, when, and where) the designer is able to begin to state the problem.

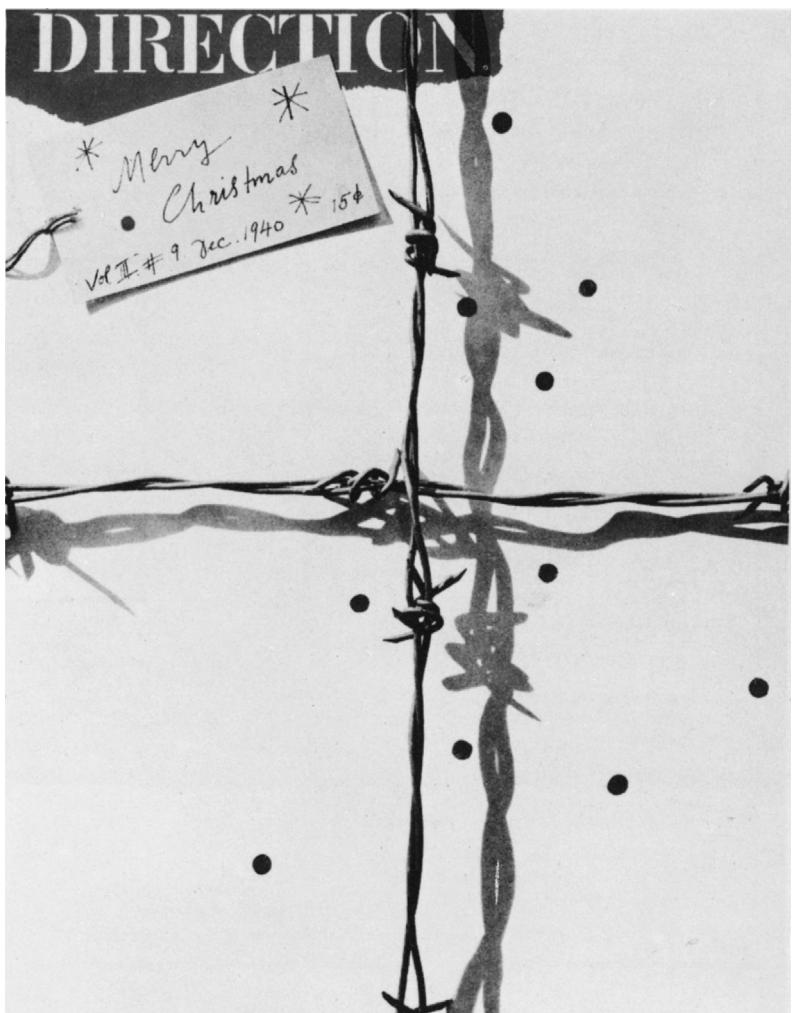
Because advertising art, in the end, deals with the spectator, and because it is the function of advertising to influence him, it follows that the designer's problem is twofold: to anticipate the spectator's reactions and to meet his own esthetic needs. He must therefore discover a means of communication between himself and the spectator (a condition with which the easel painter need not concern himself). The problem is not simple; its very complexity virtually dictates the solution — that is, the discovery of an image universally comprehensible, one which translates abstract ideas into visual forms.

It is in symbolic, visual terms that the designer ultimately realizes his perceptions and experiences; and it is in a world of symbols that man lives. The symbol is thus the common language between artist and spectator. Webster defines the symbol as "that which stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental but not intentional resemblance; especially, a visible sign of something invisible, as an idea, a quality or totality such as a state or a church; an emblem; as, the lion is the *symbol* of courage; the cross is the *symbol* of Christianity. 'A *symbol* is a representation which does not aim at being a reproduction.' (Goblet d'Alvielle.)"

Words like simplified, stylized, geometric, abstract, two-dimensional, flat, non-representational, non-mimetic are commonly associated, sometimes incorrectly, with the term symbol. It is true that the depiction of most distinctive symbols does fit the image these words help to characterize visually; but it is not true that the symbol has to be simplified (etc.) in order to qualify as a symbol. The fact that some of the best symbols are simplified images merely points to the effectiveness of simplicity but not to the meaning of the word *per se*. In essence, it is not what it looks like but what it does that defines a symbol. A symbol may be depicted as an "abstract" shape, a geometric figure, a photograph, an illustration, a letter of the alphabet, or a numeral. Thus, a five-pointed star, the picture of a little dog listening to his master's voice, a steel engraving of George Washington, or the Eiffel Tower itself — are all symbols!

Religious and secular institutions have clearly demonstrated the power of the symbol as a means of communication. It is significant that the crucifix, aside from its religious implications, is a demonstration of perfect form as well — a union of the aggressive vertical (male) and the passive horizontal (female). It is not too farfetched to infer that these formal relations have at least something to do with its enduring quality. Note the curious analogy between Occidental and Oriental thought from the following excerpts: Rudolf Koch, in *The Book of Signs*, comments: “In the origin of the Cross, God and earth are combined and are in harmony . . . from two simple lines a complete sign has been evolved. The Cross is by far the earliest of all signs and is found everywhere, quite apart from the concepts of Christianity.” In the *Book of Changes* (Chou Yih) it is stated: “The fathomlessness of the male and female principles (Yang and Yin) is called God.” This conception is illustrated by the Taichi symbol expressing the “two regulating powers which together create all the phenomena of Nature.” The essence of Chinese philosophy is revealed in the expression: “All things are produced by the action of the male and female principles.”

. . . In this illustration the form is intensified by dramatic narrative association. The literal meaning changes according to context; the formal quality remains unchanged.



Magazine cover  
red and black on white  
1940

a design students' guide  
to the New York World's Fair  
compiled for  
P/M magazine . . . by Laboratory School  
of Industrial Design



Booklet cover  
black and white  
1939

# A BELL FOR ADANO

A novel endearing as it is important, which has stirred the hearts of thousands of readers.

Selected by eight out of ten of the nation's leading critics as "the best novel of the year."

Credited by *TIME MAGAZINE* with "a clean sweep of critical and popular honors for the year."

Chosen by *Harry Hansen* and *Orrville Prescott*, in their annual summaries, as . . . "the best novel of the year."

Declared an "Imperative" by the Council on Books in Wartime.

An immediate success in its stage version; "one of the finest war plays you will ever see," says *Howard Barnes* in the *NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE* . . . "a new bell which probably will be shaking the theatre district for some time to come," says *Lewis Nichols*, *NEW YORK TIMES*.

"Likely to stay for the duration." . . . *LIFE MAG.*

*John Hersey's*

"terrific little masterpiece"

*A Bell for Adano . . .*

is on sale at all

bookstores at 2.50

It is a *Borzoi Book*

published in New York by

*Alfred A. Knopf.*

*Paul Rand*

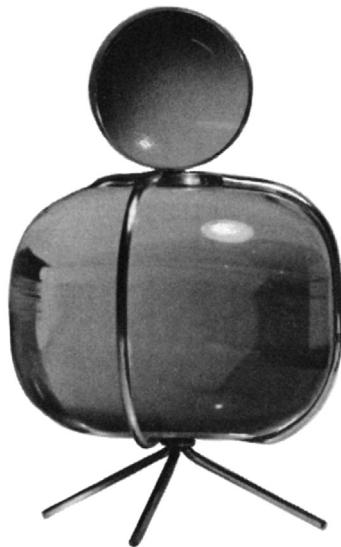
Magazine advertisement  
Alfred A. Knopf  
February 1945

## Versatility of the Symbol

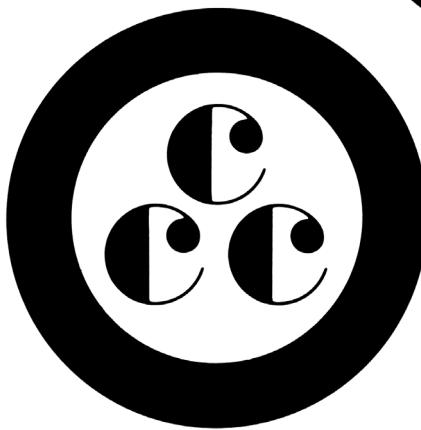
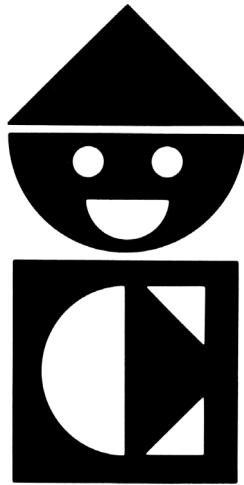
The same symbol is potentially a highly versatile device, which can be used to illustrate many different ideas. By juxtaposition, association, and analogy, the designer is able to manipulate it, alter its meaning, and exploit its visual possibilities.

1. Amedee Ozenfant,  
*Foundations of Modern Art*, p. 249.

Distinguishing between the literal and plastic meaning of images, Ozenfant declares: “Every form has its specific mode of expression (the language of plastic) independent of its purely ideological significance (language of the sign).”<sup>1</sup> The circle as opposed to the square, for instance, as a pure form evokes a specific esthetic sensation; ideologically it is the symbol for eternity, without beginning or end. A red circle may be interpreted as the symbol of the sun, the Japanese battle flag, a stop sign, an ice-skating rink, or a special brand of coffee . . . *depending on its context*.



Perfume bottle,  
gold wire and crystal  
1944

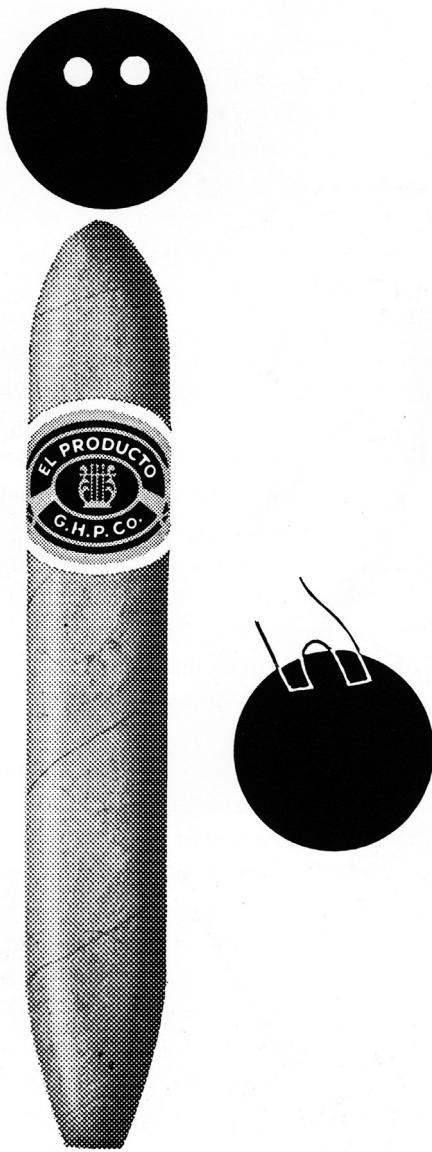


Trademark  
Colorforms  
1959

Trademark  
Consolidated Cigar Co.  
1959

Trademark  
American Broadcasting Co.  
1962





Brochure  
black and yellow, Autocar  
1942

Illustration  
GHP Cigar Company  
1952

## The Role of Humor

Readership surveys demonstrate the magnetic force of humor in the field of visual communication, in advertising, editing, and in a multitude of miscellaneous design problems. The reference is not principally to cartoon strip advertisements, nor to out-and-out gags, but to a more subtle variety, one indigenous to the design itself and achieved by means of juxtaposition, association, size, relationship, proportion, space, or special handling.

The visual message which professes to be profound or elegant often boomerangs as mere pretension; and the frame of mind which looks at humor as trivial and flighty mistakes the shadow for the substance. In short, the notion that the humorous approach to visual communication is undignified or belittling is sheer nonsense.

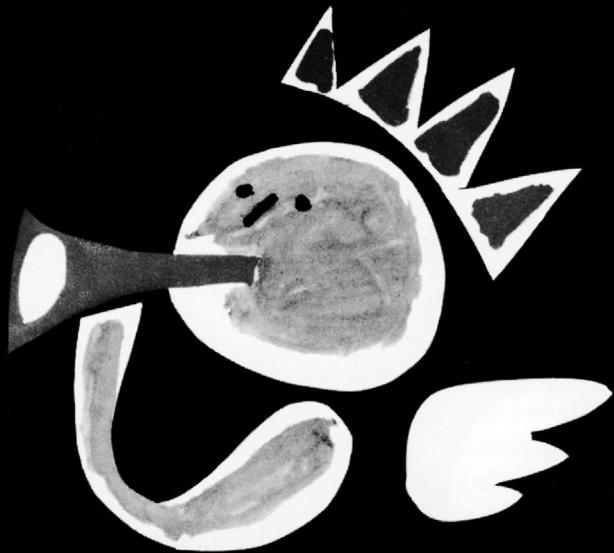
This misconception has been discredited by those advertisers and publishers who have successfully exploited humor as a means of creating an atmosphere of confidence, goodwill, good fellowship, and the *right frame of mind* toward an idea or product. Radio and TV commercials have made tremendous strides in the use of humor as a potent sales device. And, as an aid to understanding serious problems in war training, as an effective weapon in safety posters,<sup>1</sup> war bond selling, and morale building, humor was neglected neither by government nor civilian agencies during the Second World War.

Stressing the profound effects of entertainment, Plato, in *The Republic*, declares: "Therefore do not use compulsion, but let early education be rather a sort of amusement . . ." The arts of ancient China,<sup>2</sup> India, and Persia reflect a humorous spirit in the design of masks, ceramics, and paintings. American advertising in its infancy also demonstrated this tendency toward humor: the cigar store Indian, the medicine man. And that humor is a product of serious contemporary thought is revealed in the significant paintings and sculpture of our time. "True humor," says Thomas Carlyle, "springs not more from the head than from the heart; it is not contempt, its essence is love, it issues not in laughter, but in still smiles, which lie far deeper."

Cover design, red and green  
American Institute of Graphic Arts  
1968



*Paul Rand*



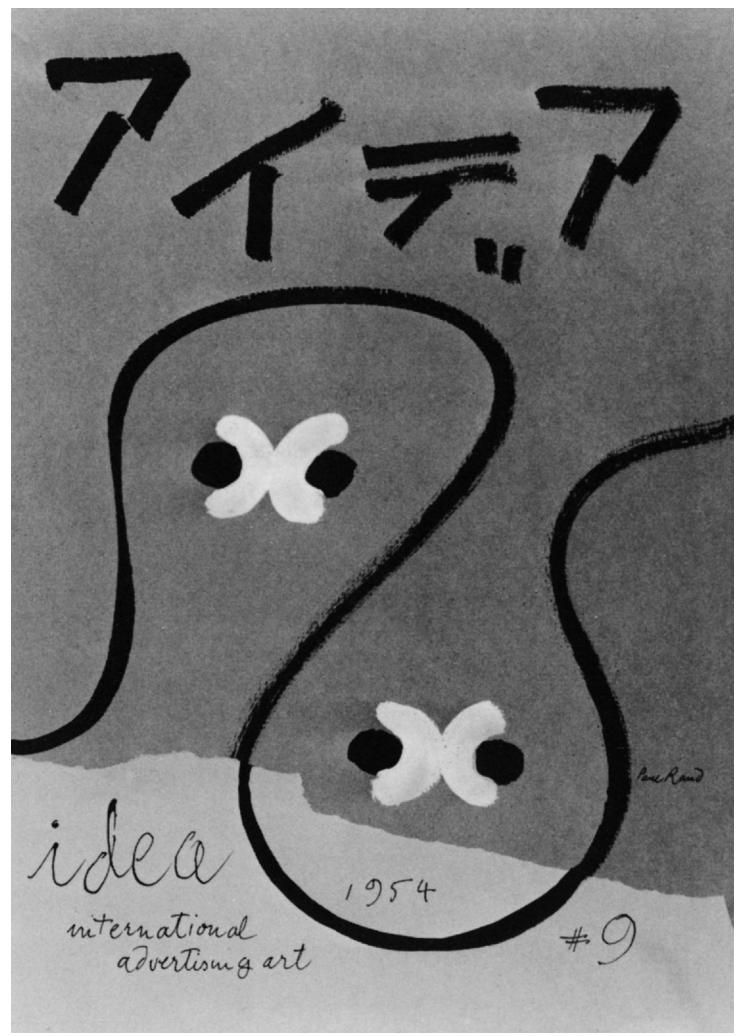
# *Interfaith Day*

*Sunday September 26, 1 p. m.*

*Central Park Mall*

*All Star Program*

One sheet poster  
full color, Interfaith Movement  
1954



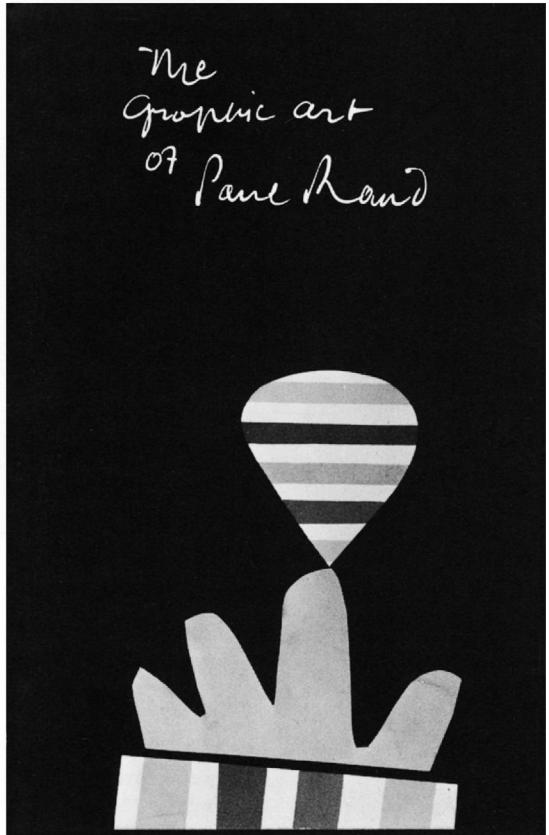
Magazine cover  
pink, tan, and black  
1954

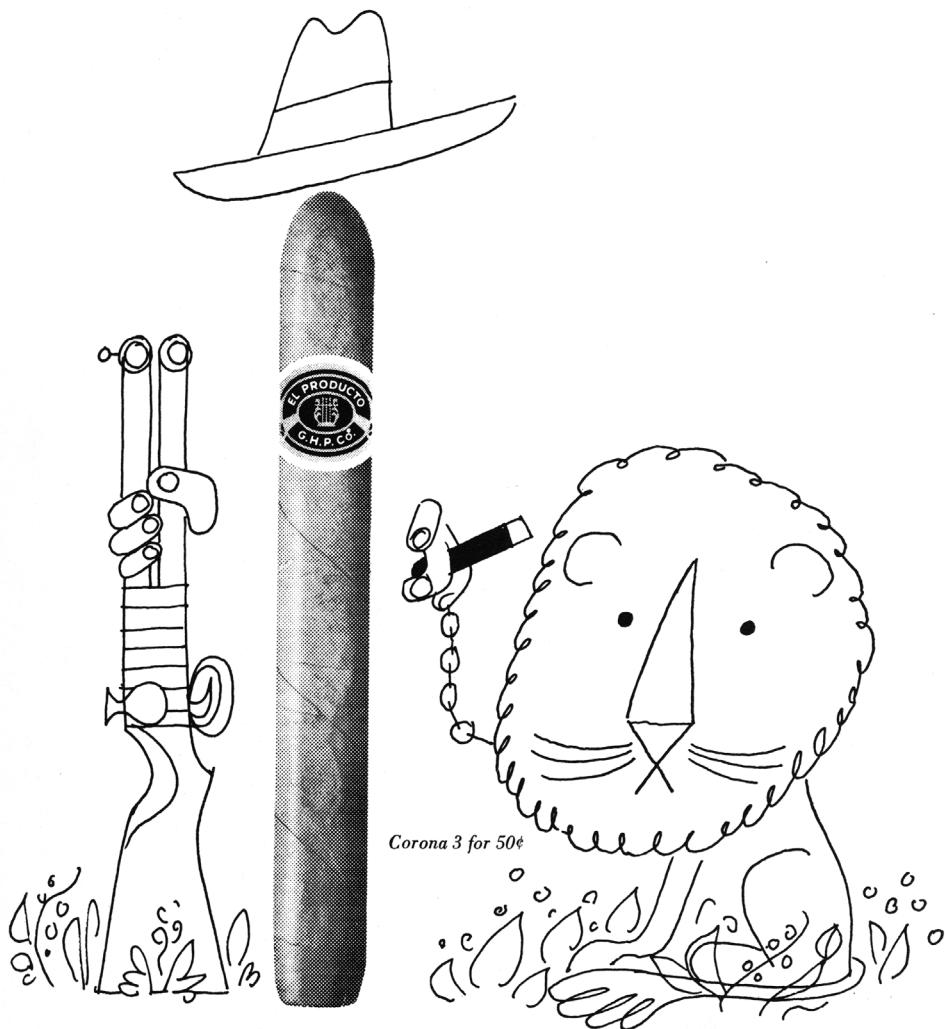


Illustration  
Smith Kline & French  
1945

Exhibition poster  
IBM Gallery, full color  
1970

The  
Graphic art  
of Paul Rand





Newspaper advertisement  
GHP Cigar Company  
1957

The kind of humor expressed by the “Dubonnet man” (originated by Cassandre) is inherent in the design itself. The “funny” face and general attitude seem to *suggest* rather than *illustrate* a quality of conviviality. To adapt this figure for an American audience, the problem was to impart this same spirit without altering the original visual conception.



Magazine advertisement  
detail, Dubonnet Corporation  
1942

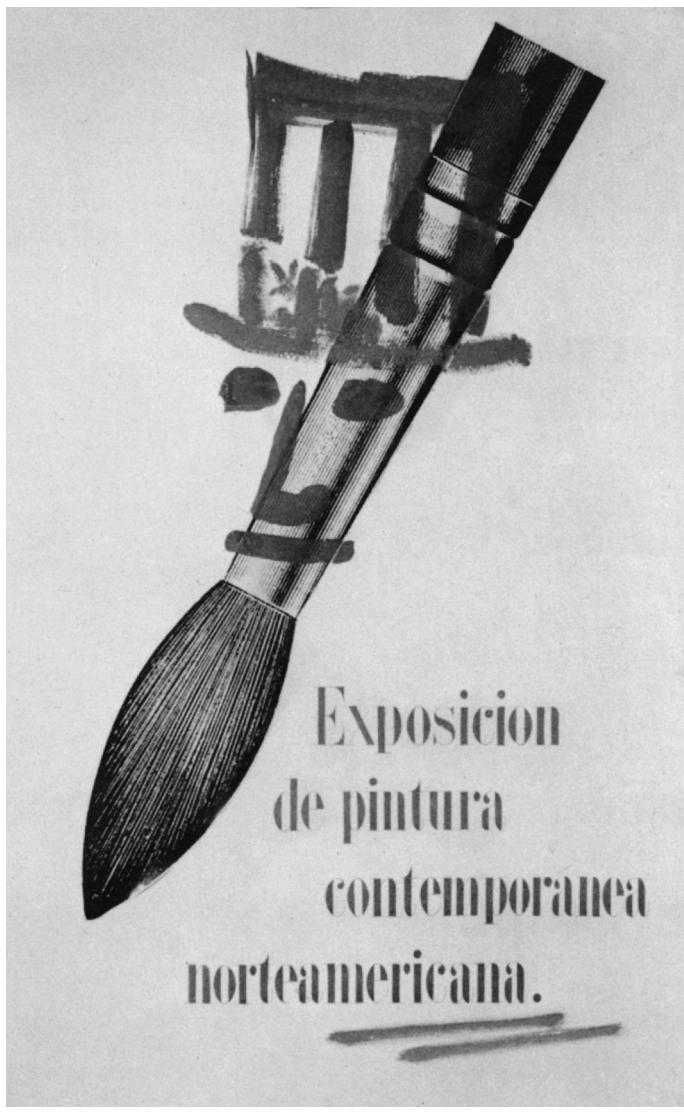


Magazine advertisement  
montage, full color  
1943

# SPRING



Paul Rand



... The "visual pun," in which a double meaning is projected graphically, can be as informative as it is entertaining.

Poster  
color montage, *Apparel Arts*  
1939

Poster, color montage  
Museum of Modern Art  
project, 1941

**orpi\***

permanent oil colors  
made in the U.S.A.  
by the manufacturers  
of the  
Rembrandt colors  
studio tubes  
.25 .35 .50  
3 inch tubes .10 .15  
Talens & Son, Inc.  
Newark, N. J.  
write for color card

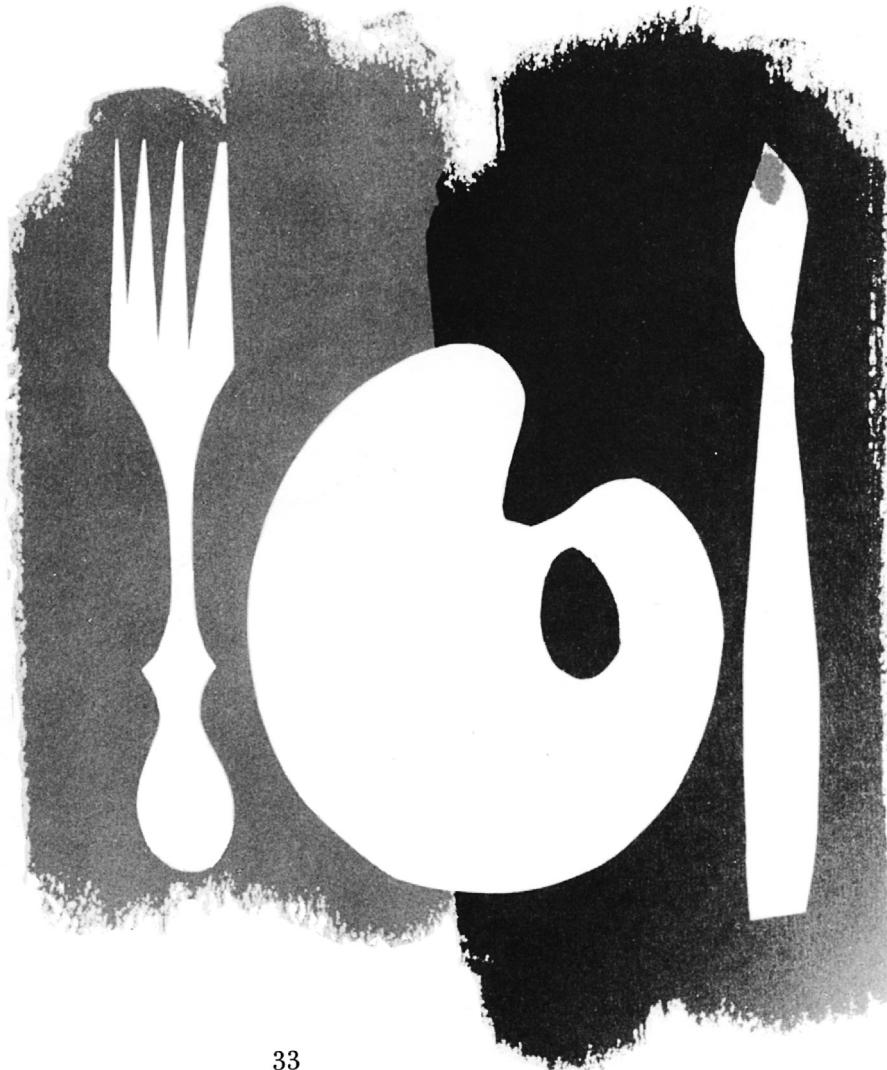
\*original Holland formulae

Magazine advertisement  
black and white, Talens & Sons  
1942

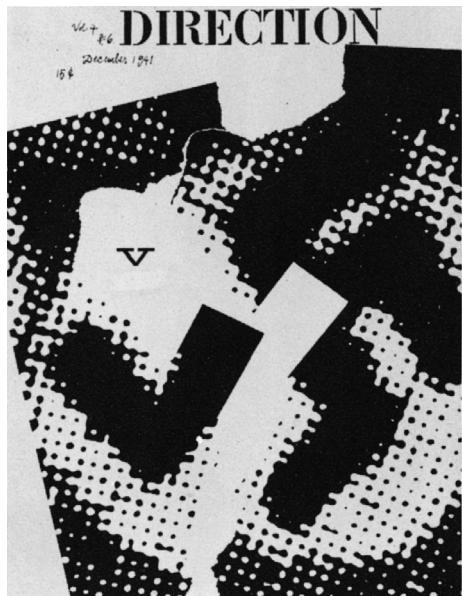
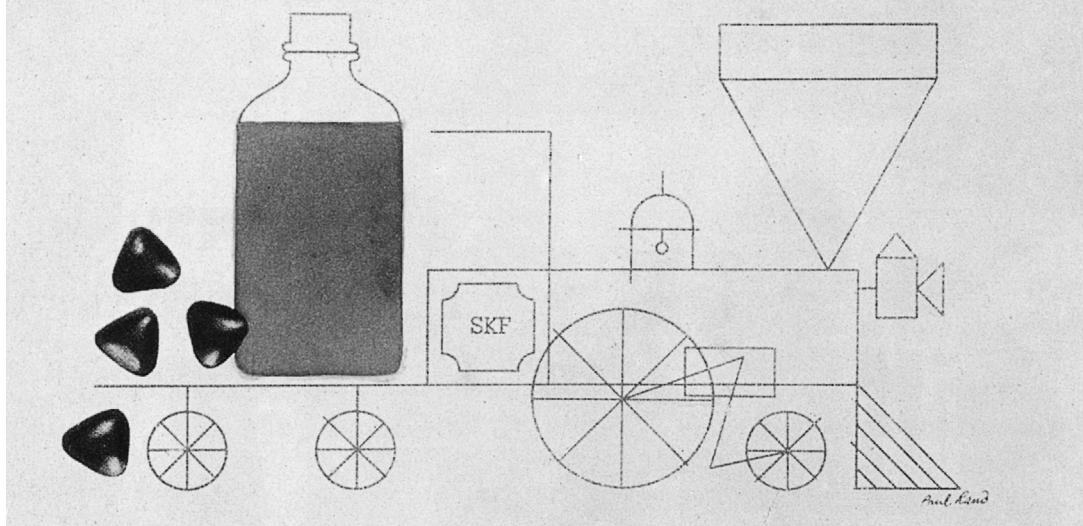
Cover design  
red and black  
1949

The Museum of Modern Art

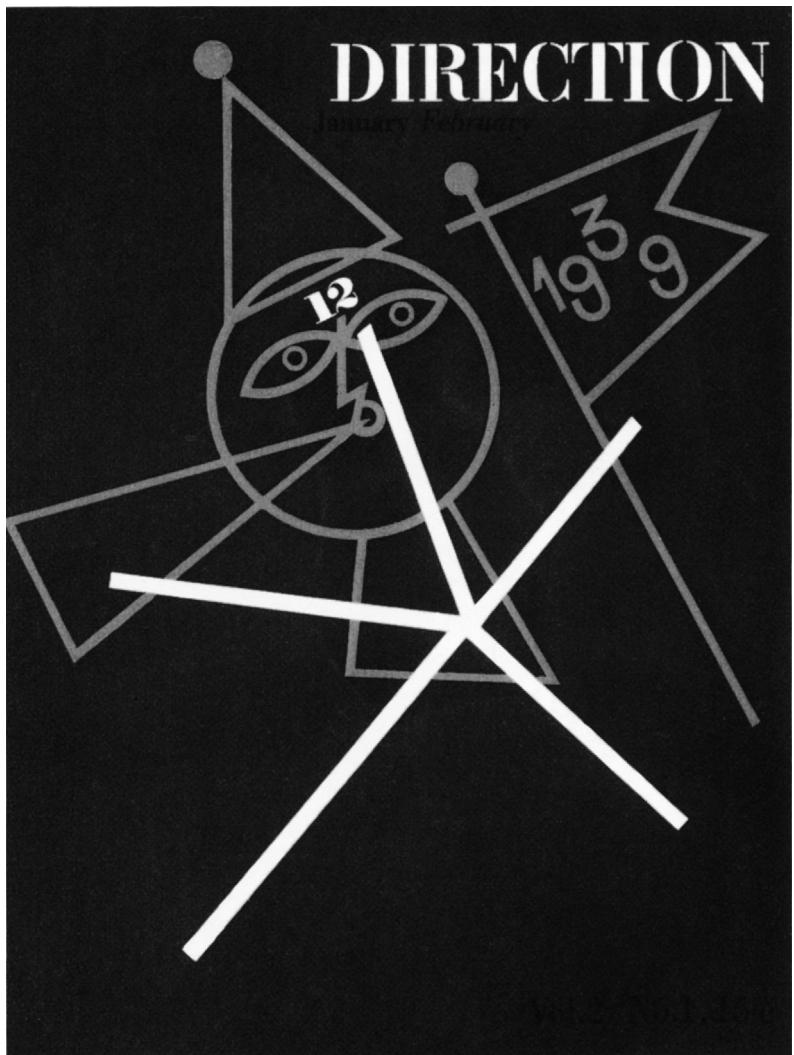
# Modern Art in Your Life



From the Menarche to the Menopause . . . Woman requires 4 times as much iron as man.



Folder, red, green, black  
Smith Kline & French  
1946



Cover  
black and white, *Direction*  
1941

Magazine cover  
red and green  
1939

## Imagination and the Image

Frequently, trite ideas or unimaginative translation of those ideas is the result not of poor subject matter but of poor interpretation of a problem. In the absence of a fresh, visual solution, subject matter sometimes becomes the scapegoat. Such difficulties may arise if: a) the designer has interpreted a commonplace idea with a commonplace image; b) he has failed to resolve the problem of integrating form and content; or c) he has failed to interpret the problem as a two-dimensional organization in a given space. He has thus deprived his visual image of the potential to suggest, perhaps, more than the eye can see. And he has denied himself the opportunity of saying the commonplace in an uncommonplace way.

Roger Fry, commenting on the problem of integrating representational and plastic elements, states: "This may, perhaps, give us a hint as to the nature of such combinations of two arts, namely, that co-operation is most possible where neither of them are pushed to the fullest possibilities of expression, where in both a certain freedom is left to the imagination, where we are moved rather by suggestion than statement."<sup>1</sup>

Visual statements such as illustrations which do not involve esthetic judgment and which are merely literal descriptions of reality can be neither intellectually stimulating nor visually distinctive. By the same token, the indiscriminate use of typefaces, geometric patterns, and "abstract" shapes (hand or computer generated) is self-defeating when they function merely as a vehicle for self-expression. The visual statement, on the other hand, which seeks to express the essence of an idea, and which is based on function, fantasy, and analytic judgment, is likely to be not only unique but meaningful and memorable as well.

In practice, when an advertisement is submitted for approval, it is prettied up with mat and cellophane and judged as an isolated fragment. Under such conditions, and in the absence of competition, the purely conventional type of illustration may seem quite effective. However, for an advertisement to hold its own in a competitive race, the designer must steer clear of visual clichés by some unexpected interpretation of the commonplace. He does this partly by simplifying,

by abstracting, by symbolizing. If the resulting visual image is in any way ambiguous, it may be supplemented by one which is more clearly recognizable. In the examples which follow, the abstract, geometric forms (attention-arresting devices) tend to dominate, while the photographic images play a supporting role.



24-sheet poster  
20th Century Fox  
1950

H. L. Mencken

Paul Rand

made by  
James T.  
Farrell  
and with an  
introduction  
by him.

A Vintage Book  
K.58 \$1.25

Prejudices:  
A Selection

Cover design  
blue, terra-cotta, black  
1958

... There are, however, instances when recognizable images are of sufficient plastic expressiveness to make the addition of geometric or "abstract" shapes superfluous.

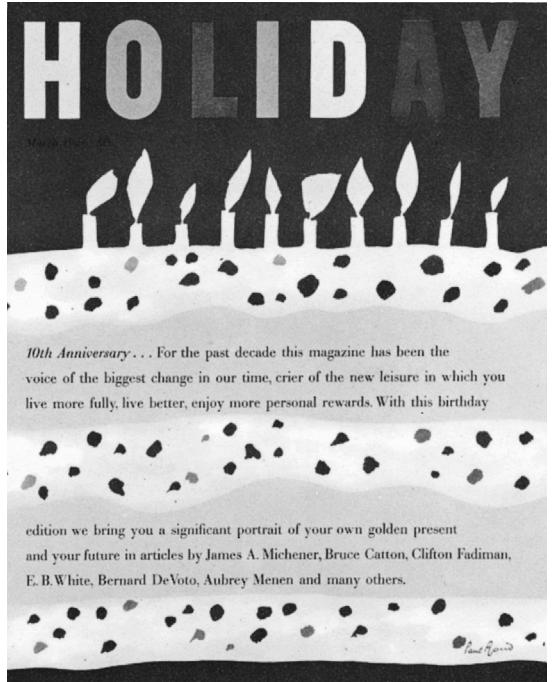
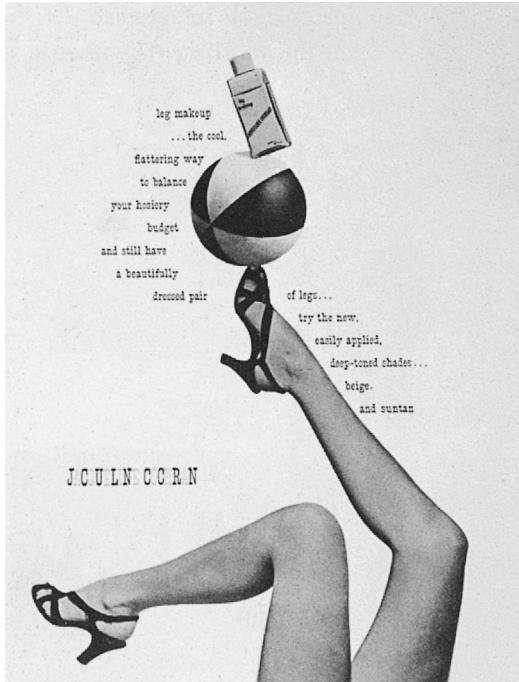
The advertisement features a large, thick 'X' drawn across the page. Inside the top-left section of the 'X', the text '45 years go to work for victory' is printed. To the right of the 'X', there is a vertical decorative element consisting of a series of small, horizontal dashes. To the right of this decorative element is a black and white photograph of a large Autocar truck's front end, showing its headlight and grille. The bottom half of the page contains two columns of text. The left column discusses Autocar's history and contributions to the war effort, mentioning its 45-year history and various engineering firsts. The right column emphasizes Autocar's commitment to mechanical perfection and its role in the war, stating that their vast experience is at the service of the government and that they are meeting their responsibility to national defense by putting their experience to work in helping to build a motorized armada.

45 years go to work for victory

From its very inception in 1897 every Autocar activity has trained the Company for its vital role in the war program. For 45 years without interruption it has manufactured motor vehicles exclusively, concentrating in the last decade on heavy-duty trucks of 5 tons or over. For 45 years Autocar has pioneered the way, developing many history-making "firsts" in the industry: the first porcelain spark-plug; the first American shaft-driven automobile; the first

circulating oil system. For 45 years Autocar insistence on mechanical perfection has wrought a tradition of precision that is honored by every one of its master workers. These are achievements that only time can win. The harvest of these years, of this vast experience, is at the service of our government. Autocar is meeting its tremendous responsibility to national defense by putting its 45 years' experience to work in helping to build for America a motorized armada such as the world has never seen.

Brochure  
black and yellow, Autocar  
1942



Advertisement  
tan and black, Jacqueline Cochran  
1944

Magazine cover  
full color, Curtis Publishing Company  
1956

Newspaper advertisement  
black and white, Ohrbach's  
1946

if only you  
could be seen  
in lingerie\*  
from Ohrbach's!

Ohrbach's

14th Street facing Union Square

Newark store: Market and Halsey Streets

"A business in millions... a profit in pennies"

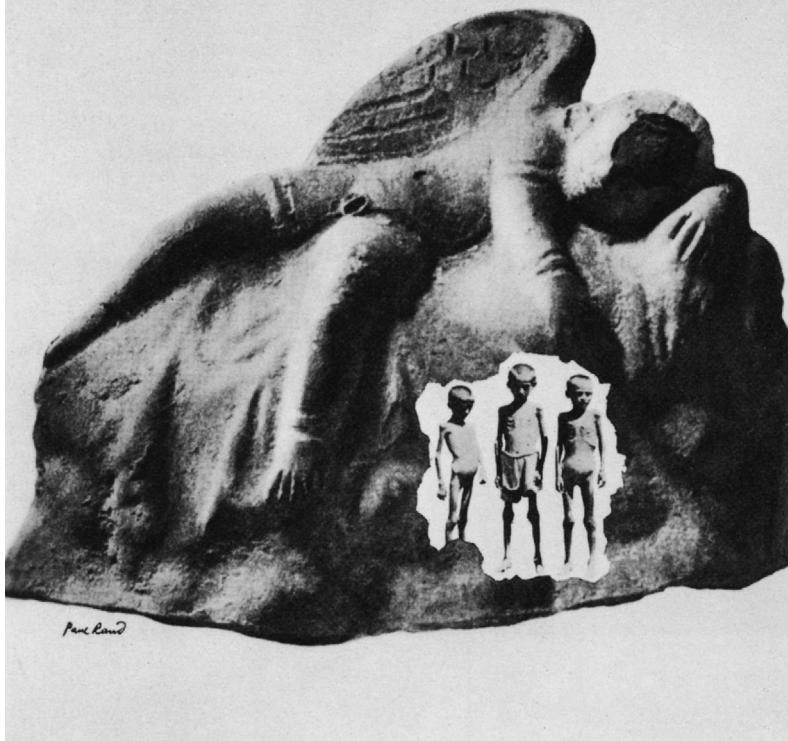


Vol. 6, # 4

# DIRECTION

25¢

Christmas 1943



Magazine cover  
pink and olive green  
1943

Westinghouse



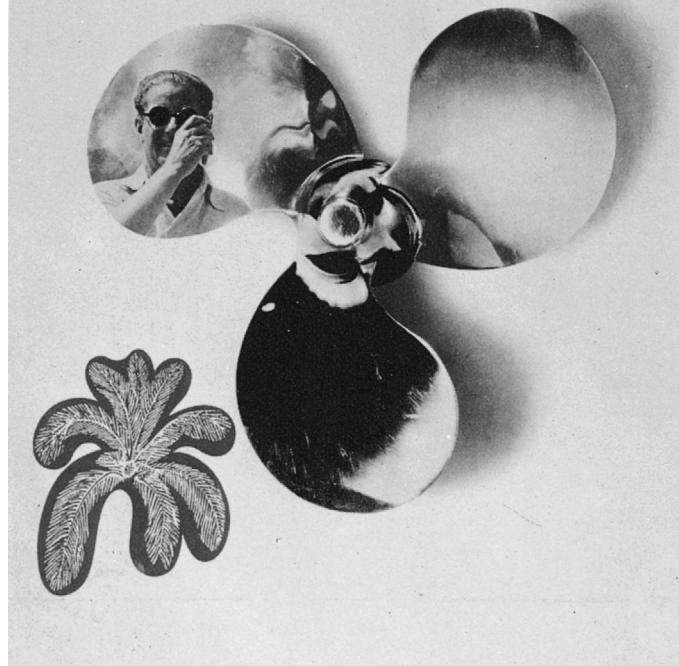
### To Catch a Hummingbird

Suppose you had to capture alive one little hummingbird flying a known course high over the Amazon jungle. Difficult? Sure, but no more so than the job assigned to a new radar system Westinghouse is building for the NASA-Gemini space program. The bird is an Agena rocket, orbiting the earth at 17,500 miles per hour. The hunter, in an intersecting orbit, is the Gemini spacecraft, to be built by McDonnell Aircraft. And so the hunt begins. The space craft radar finds the target and starts an electronic question-and-answer game. A computer keeps score, giving the astronauts continuous readings on angles and approach speeds until the vehicles are joined. The hummingbird is caught. The Gemini experiments will be a prelude to the first moon trip. And Westinghouse is already working on advanced radar systems for lunar landings and deep space missions. You can be sure . . . if it's Westinghouse.



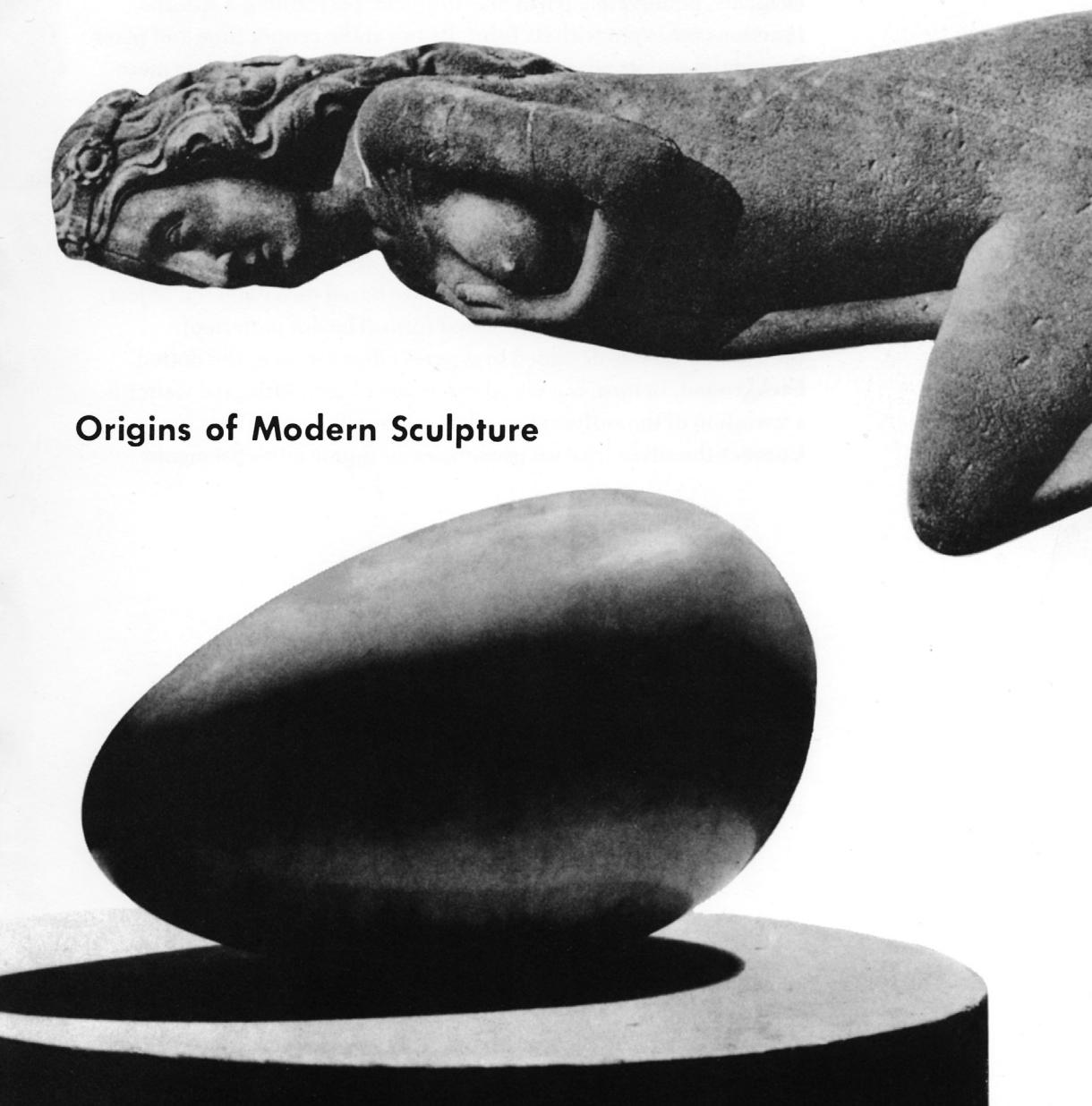
Magazine advertisement  
full color, Westinghouse  
1963

# APPAREL ARTS



Magazine cover  
black and green, *Apparel Arts*  
1939

Book jacket  
Wittenborn & Schultz  
1946



## Origins of Modern Sculpture

The virtue of the symbol, its ready availability, may, in the long run, prove to be disadvantageous if it is used indiscriminately. It should therefore be used in a manner that will not diminish its effectiveness.

What we commonly understand as “originality” depends on the successful integration of the symbol as a visual entity with all other elements, pointed to a particular problem, performing a specific function consistent with its form. Its use at the proper time and place is essential and its misuse will inevitably result in banality or mere affectation. The designer’s capacity to contribute to the effectiveness of the basic meaning of the symbol, by interpretation, addition, subtraction, juxtaposition, alteration, adjustment, association, intensification, and clarification, is parallel to those qualities which we call “original.”

The Coronet Brandy advertisements are based on a common object — the brandy snifter — in animated form. The dot pattern of the soda bottle was designed to suggest effervescence; the dotted background, in turn, is a visual extension of the bottle; the waiter is a variation of the snifter glass; the oval tray individualizes for Coronet the silver tray we used to see in liquor advertisements.

Magazine advertisement  
full color, Brandy Distillers  
1943



Reader  
Participation

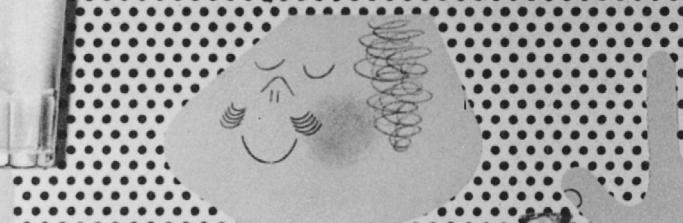
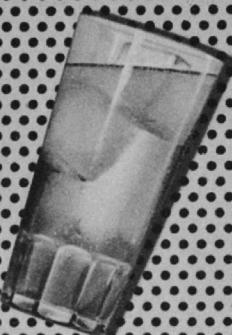
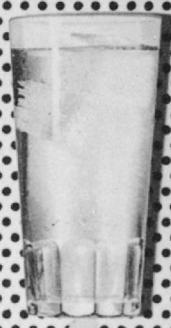
It is a truism that the fundamental problem of the advertiser and publisher is to get the message into the reader's mind. Commonplace images and unimaginative visualization afford the spectator little reason for becoming engrossed in an advertiser's product.

Radio and TV advertisers, who use media by which it is possible for studio and home spectators to take part in the proceedings, have discovered the value of audience participation. Producers of print advertising, on the other hand, must devise methods of engaging the eye and attention of the reader in a manner consistent with the printed form. Picture puzzles, cryptograms, quizzes, memory tests, and teaser devices have been employed to this end from time to time.

Contemporary advertising techniques, resulting from experiments and discoveries in the fields of psychology, art, and science, suggest many possibilities. Among the great contributions to visual thought is the invention of collage. Collage and montage permit the showing of seemingly unrelated objects or ideas as a single picture; they enable the designer to indicate simultaneous events or scenes which by more conventional methods would result in a series of isolated pictures. Compactness of the complex message in a single picture more readily enables the spectator to focus his attention on the advertiser's message.

Contemporary as it may seem, the concept of simultaneity takes us back to ancient China. The Chinese, aware of the need for a means of expressing in one picture simultaneous actions or multiple events, devised a form of oblique projection. They also devised a means of showing one object behind, above, or below another, by free disposition of elements in a composition, completely disregarding the illusions of visual perspective. This was essentially a method of formalizing or "neutralizing" the object. It was a transformation resulting in formal arrangements rather than conventional illustration. In one sense montage and collage are integrated visual arrangements in space, and in another sense, absorbing visual tests which the

Magazine advertisement  
full color  
1946





N

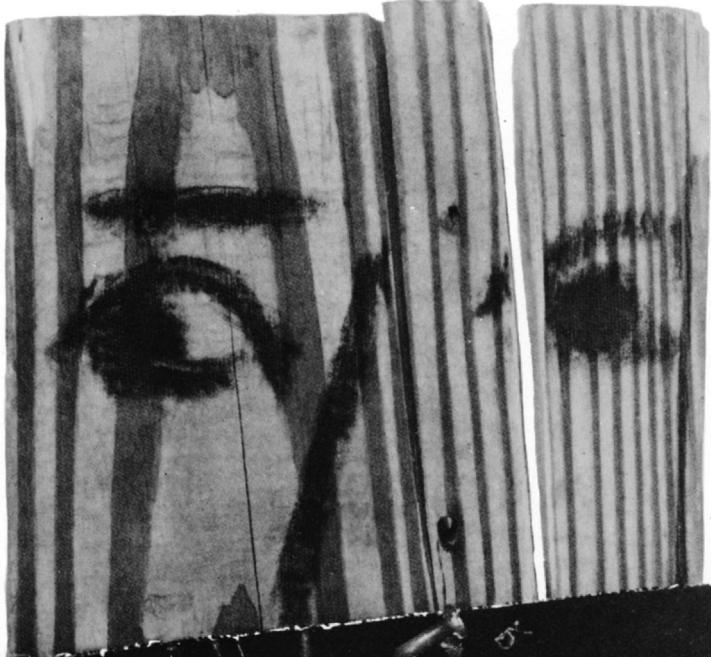
S

spectator may perceive and decipher for himself. He may thus participate directly in the creative process.



Poster  
full color, *Apparel Arts*  
1940

Magazine advertisement  
full color, Olivetti  
1953

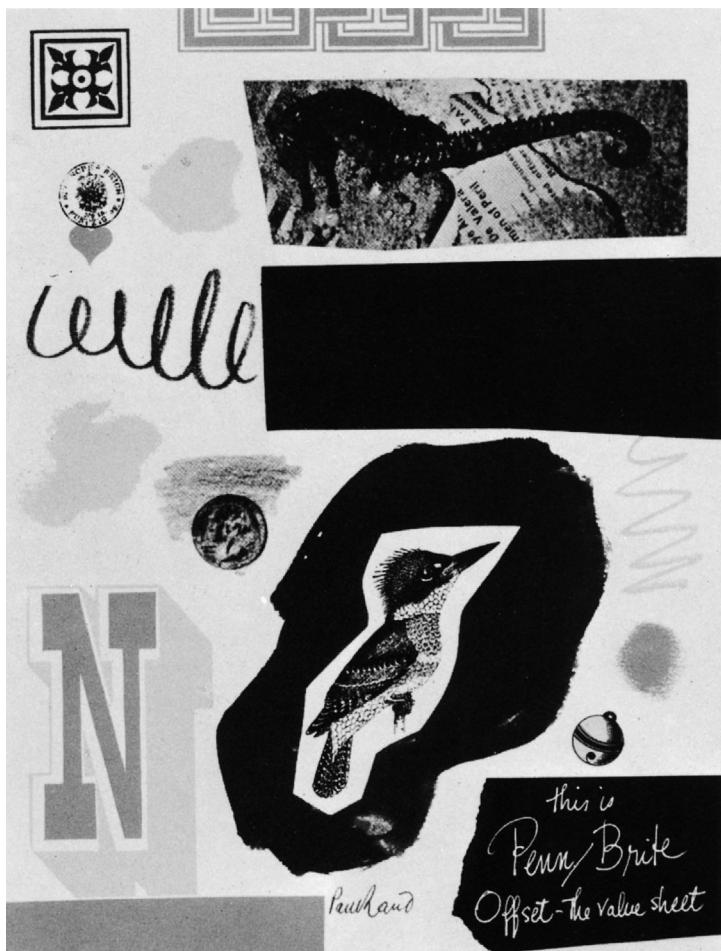


THOMAS ERSKINE on the Advantages of Free Speech

When men can freely communicate their thoughts and their sufferings, real or imaginary, their passions spend themselves in air, like gunpowder scattered upon the surface; but pent up by terrors, they work unseen, burst forth in a moment, and destroy everything in their course.

(Rex v. Paine, 1792)

Paul Rand



Magazine advertisement  
full color, Container Corporation  
1954

Magazine advertisement  
full color, montage  
1964

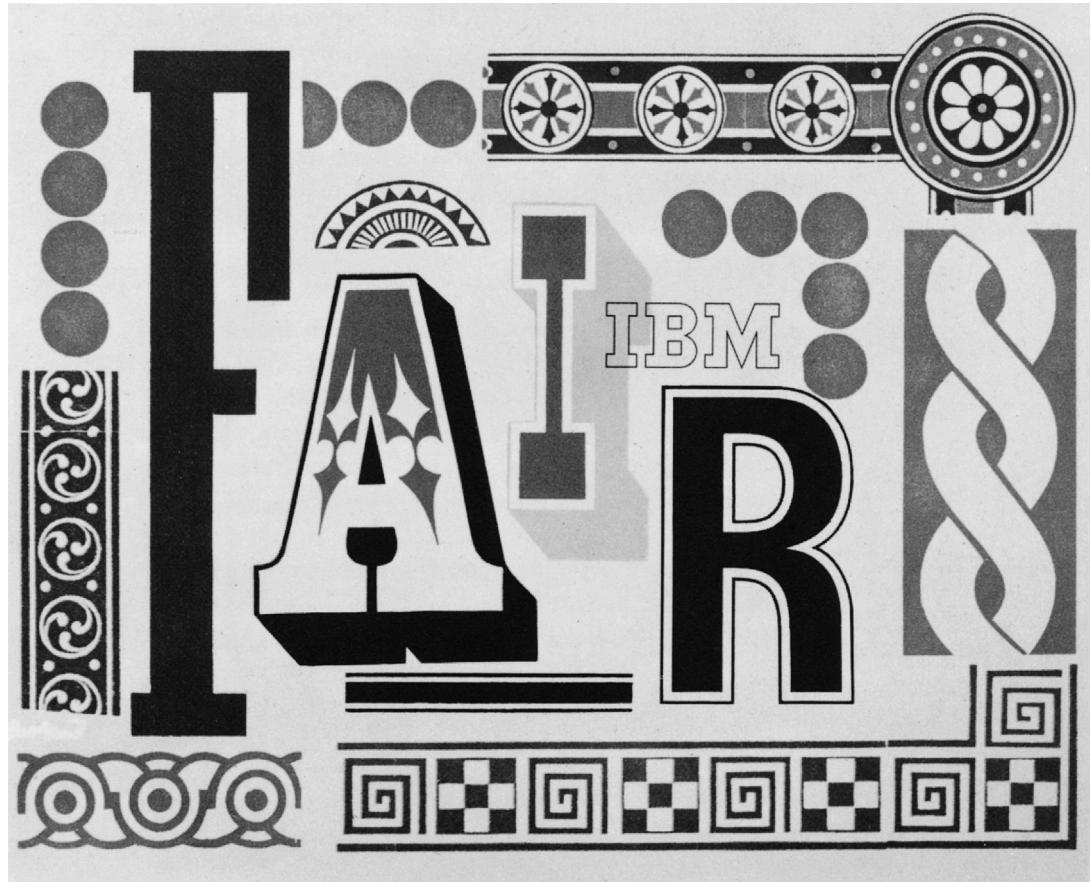
# DIRECTION

march 1939 . . . volume 2 number 2



15 cents

Magazine cover  
red and black  
1939



Cover design  
full color, IBM  
1964

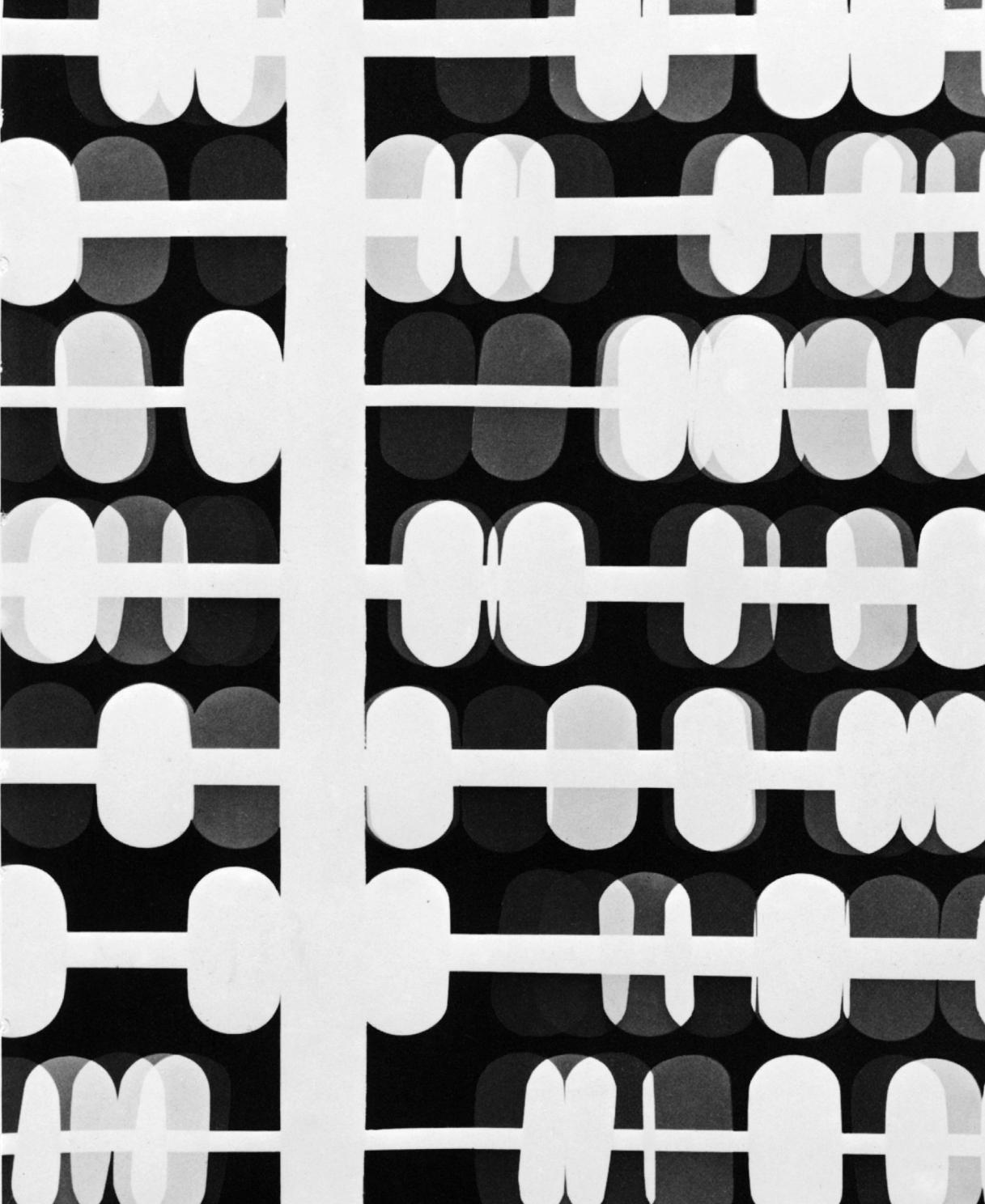
The idea of the photogram or cameraless photography goes back as far as the 18th century. In our time the pioneers of photography without the use of a camera were Man Ray in France, Lissitzky in Russia, and Moholy-Nagy in Germany. One of the first to apply this technique in advertising art was the constructivist, El Lissitzky, who, in 1924, designed a poster for Pelikan inks. Picasso, at a later date, also made use of the photogram. In advertising, the photogram has yet to be fully exploited.

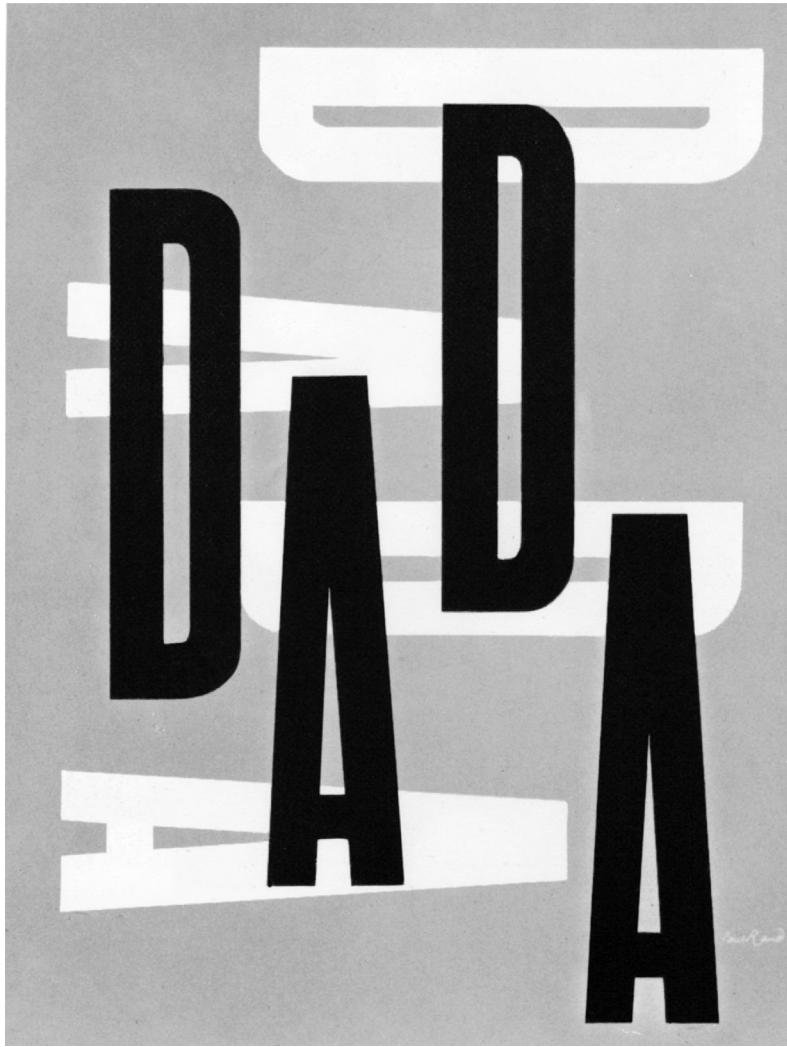
Although the effectiveness of the photogram depends chiefly on straightforward mechanical methods (light on sensitized paper), it offers the designer ample opportunity for esthetic, manual control. In a sense, it is not a picture of the object, but the object itself; and, as in stroboscopic photography, it makes picturization of continuous movement possible. Although some of its effects may be approximated with pen, brush, or scissors, the quality inherent in the subtle light modulations can be achieved only by means of the photogram. The following illustrations will help to point out the qualitative differences between the photogram and other techniques.



Package design  
photogram and color  
1952

Book jacket  
photogram  
1943





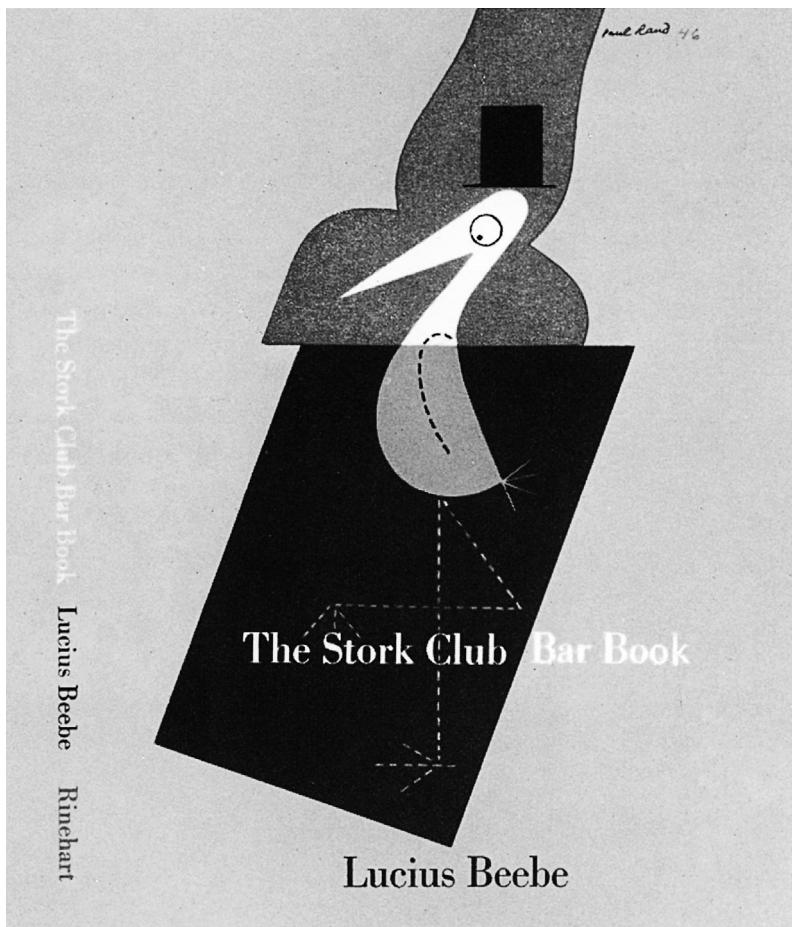
Book jacket  
blue and black, Wittenborn & Schultz  
1951



Title page  
photomontage, *Esquire*  
1938



going back to school...

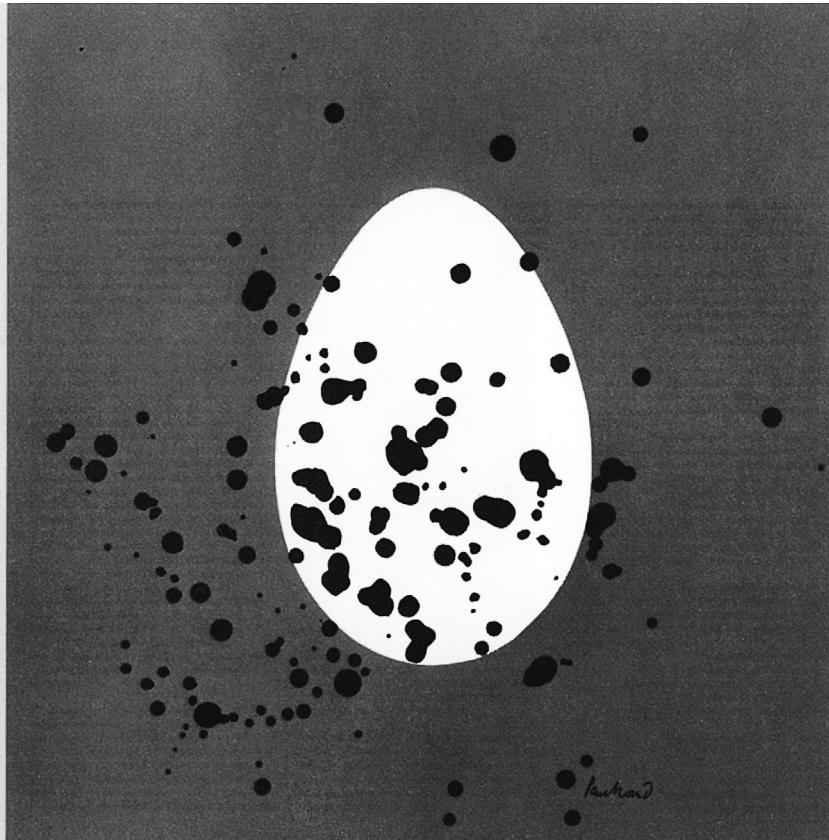


Title page  
black and yellow, *Esquire*  
1939

Book jacket  
black, red, green, and brown  
1946

Sources and Resources  
of 20th Century Design

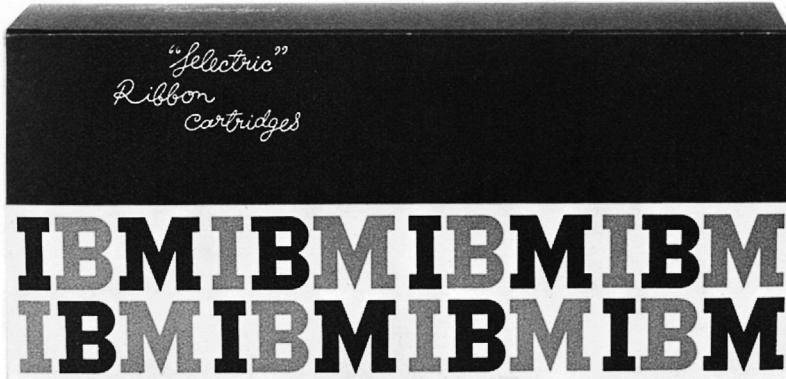
June 19 to 24, 1966  
The International Design  
Conference in Aspen



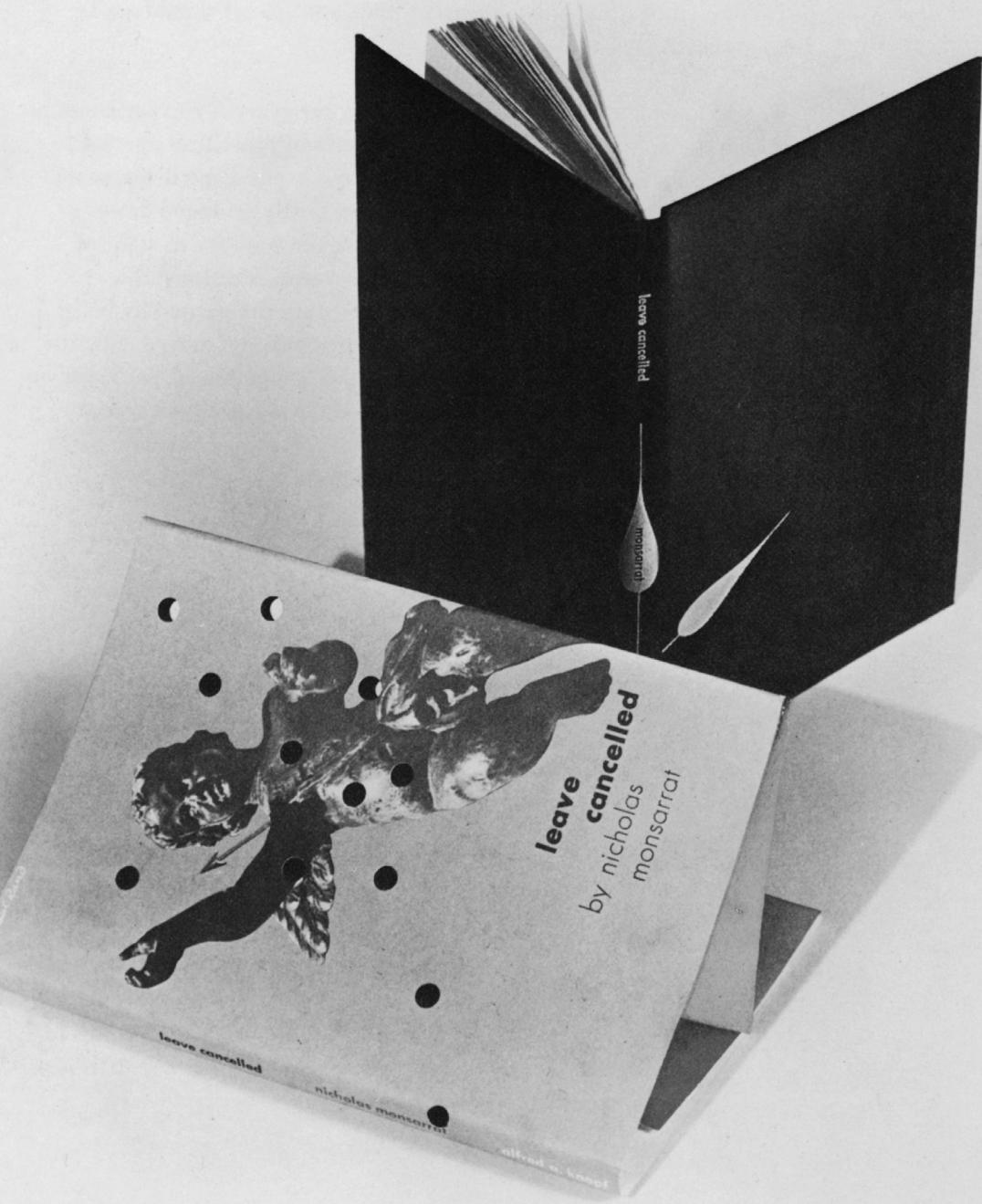
Poster  
red and black  
1966

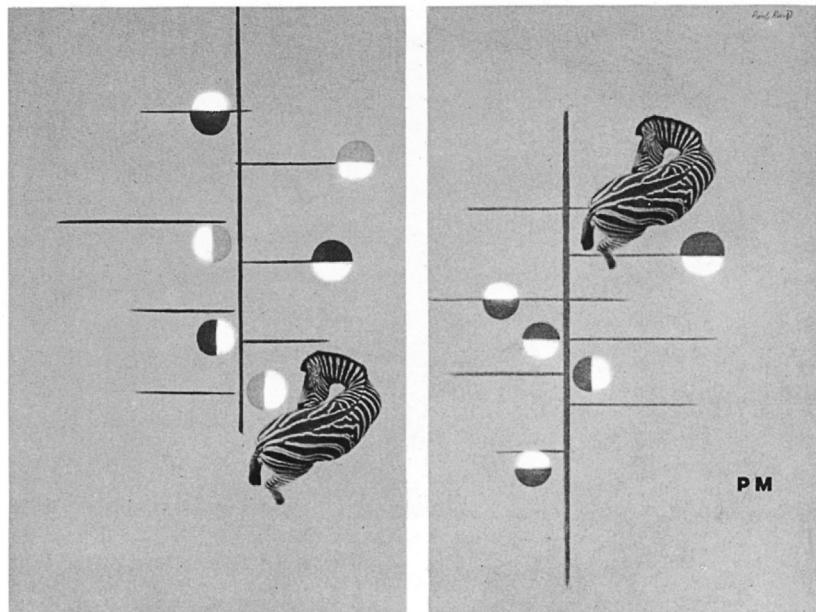
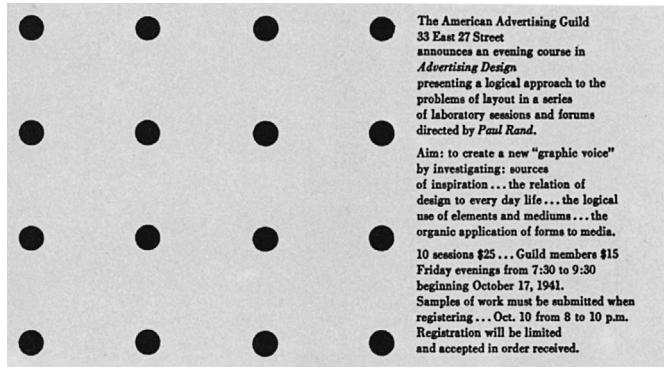
The emotional force generated by the repetition of words or pictures and the visual possibilities (as a means of creating texture, movement, rhythm, indicating equivalences for time and space) should not be minimized.

The following are but a few instances of our everyday experiences in which the magical, almost hypnotic, effects of repetition operate: the exciting spectacle of marching soldiers, in the same dress, same step, and same attitude; the fascination of neatly arranged flower beds of like color, structure, and texture; the impressive sight of crowds at football games, theatres, public demonstrations; the satisfaction we derive from the geometric patterns created by ballet dancers and chorus girls with identical costumes and movements; the feeling of order evoked by rows of methodically placed packages on the grocer's shelf; the comforting effect of the regularity of repeat patterns in textiles and wallpapers; the excitement we experience at the sight of plane formations or birds in flight.



Package design  
cerise and black, IBM  
1956

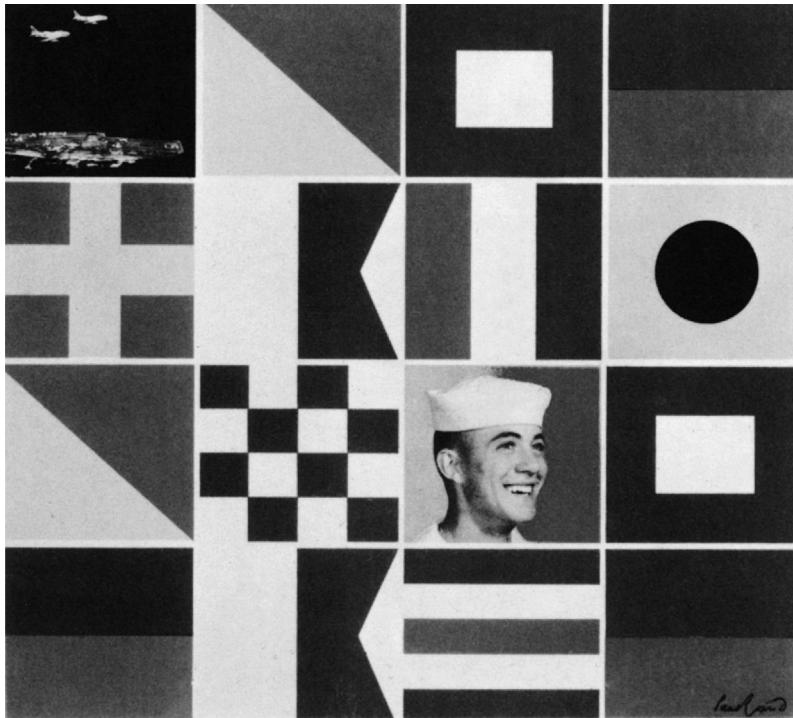




Jacket and binding  
pink, green, and gold  
1945

Announcement  
black and white  
1941

Magazine cover  
full color, *PM*  
1938



Brochure cover  
full color, U.S. Navy  
1959



Our custom is limited to those few  
men in each community who want a  
finer hat...and to whom price is secondary



Disney, Hatmaker since 1885

Magazine advertisement  
black and tan, Disney  
1946

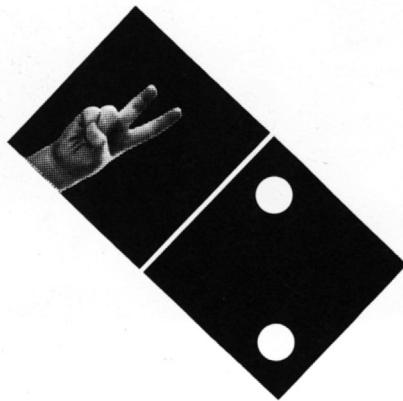
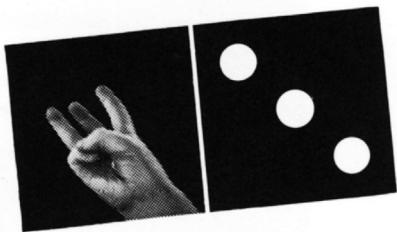
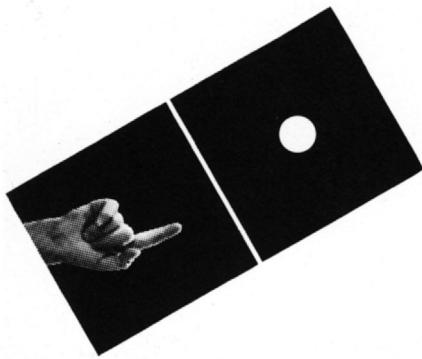
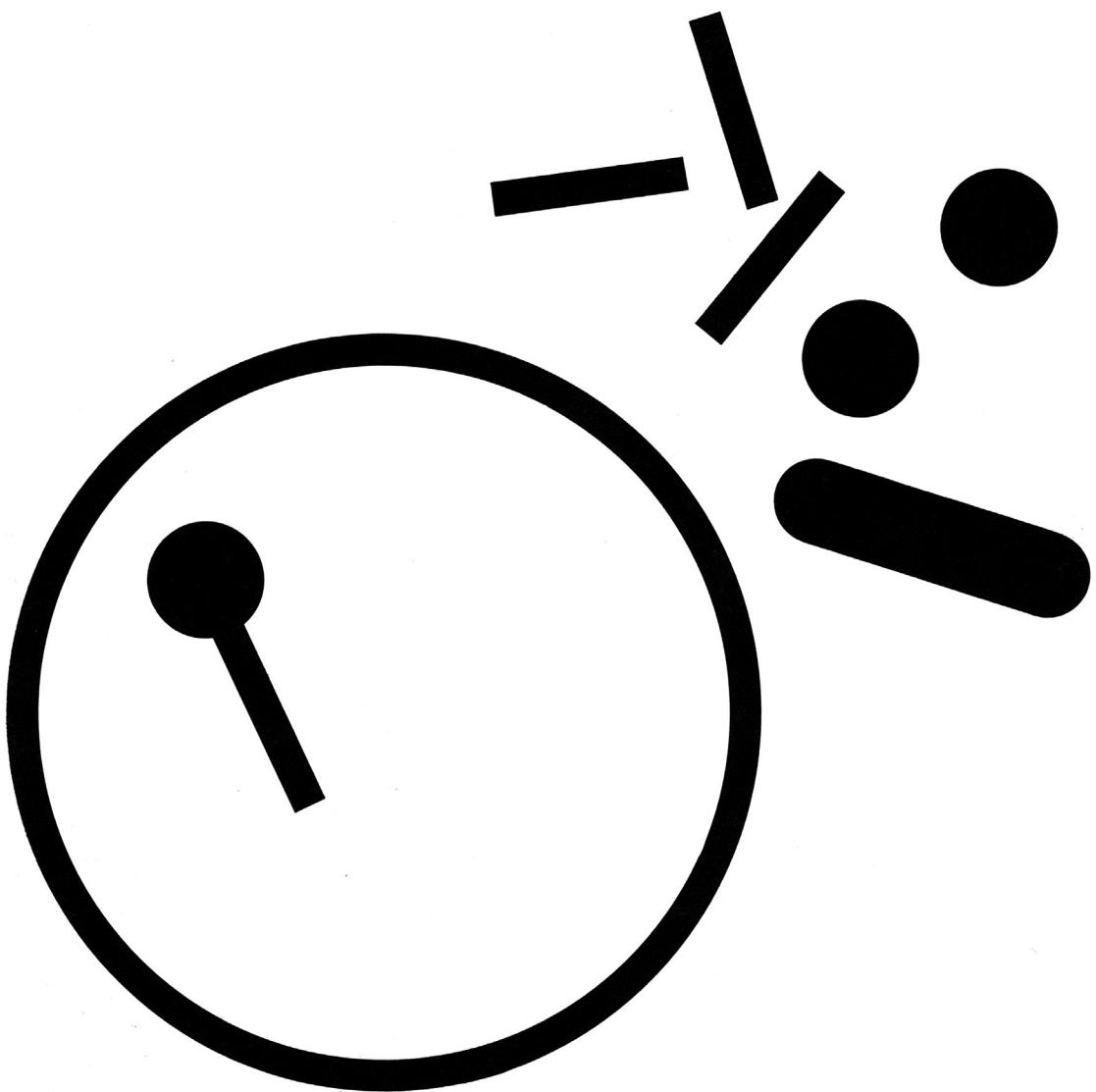


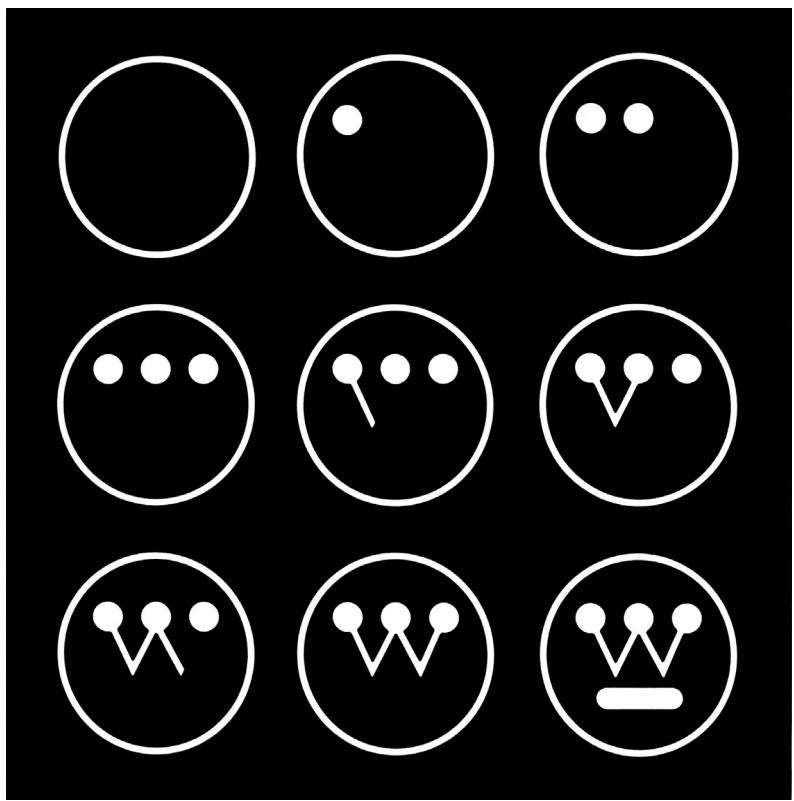
Illustration  
SKF Laboratories  
1946

Wall covering  
gray and black, IBM  
1957

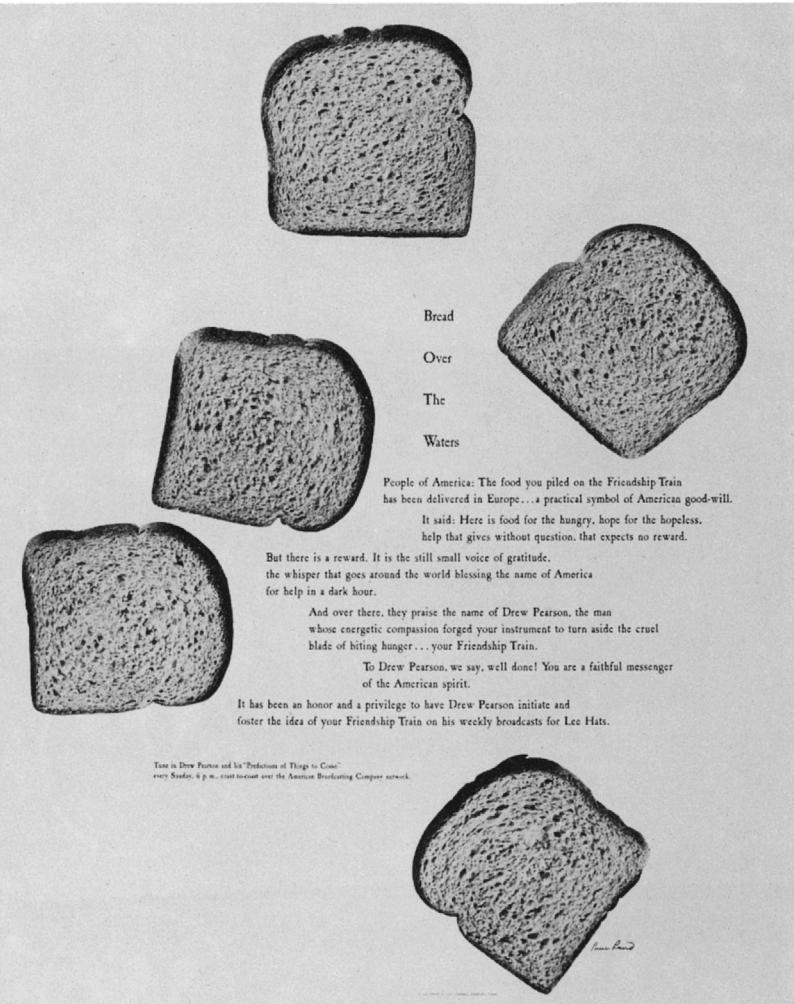
International  
Business Machines  
Corporation



Advertisement  
illustration, Westinghouse  
1968

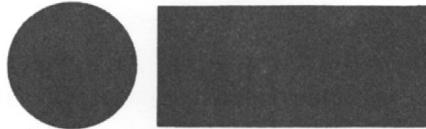
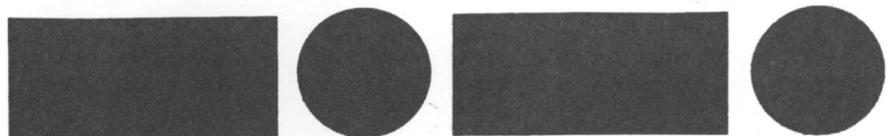


Trademark  
TV billboard, Westinghouse  
1961



Newspaper advertisement  
Frank H. Lee Co.  
1947

Newspaper advertisement  
black and white  
1954



To the executives and management of the Radio Corporation of America:

*Messrs. Alexander, Anderson, Baker, Buck, Cahill, Cannon, Carter, Coe, Coffin, Dunlap, Elliott, Engstrom, Folsom, Gorin, Jolliffe, Kayes, Marek, Mills, Odorizzi, Orth, Sacks, Brig. Gen. Sarnoff, R. Sarnoff, Saxon, Seidel, Teegarden, Tuft, Watts, Weaver, Werner, Williams*  
Gentlemen: An important message intended expressly for your eyes is now on its way to each one of you by special messenger.



*I William H. Weintraub & Company, Inc. Advertising*

*488 Madison Avenue, New York*



## Yesterday and Today

Disputes arising between the two schools of typographic thought, the *traditional* on the one hand and the *modern* on the other, are, it seems to me, the fruits of misplaced emphasis. I believe the real difference lies in the way “space” is interpreted: that is, the way in which an image is placed on a sheet of paper. Such incidental questions as the use of sans-serif typefaces, lowercase letters, ragged settings, primary colors, etc., are at best variables, which merely tend to sidetrack the real issue.

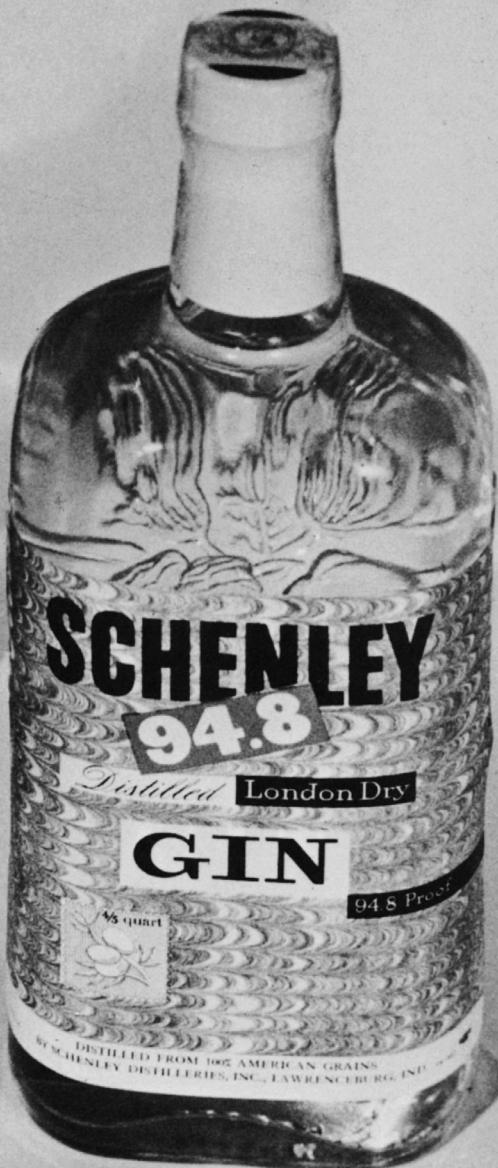


“But great original artists,” says John Dewey, “take a tradition into themselves. They have not shunned but digested it. Then the very conflict set up between it and what is new in themselves and in their environment creates the tension that demands a new mode of expression.” Understanding modern and traditional in this light, the designer is able to bring into a new and logical relationship traditional graphic forms and ideas together with “new” concepts based on a present-day point of view. This union of two supposedly divergent forces provides conditions which lead to fresh visual experiences.

In advertising one is often faced with the problem of conveying a quality of age. In the example which follows, traditional “ornaments” combine with geometric forms to establish new relationships. This transition from old to new may be accomplished by arranging these familiar devices in some surprising manner:

Book cover  
red and yellow, Wittenborn & Schultz  
1944

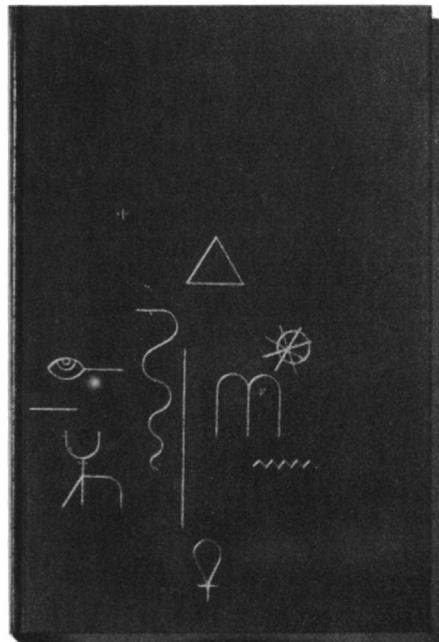
Label designs  
full color, Schenley  
1942



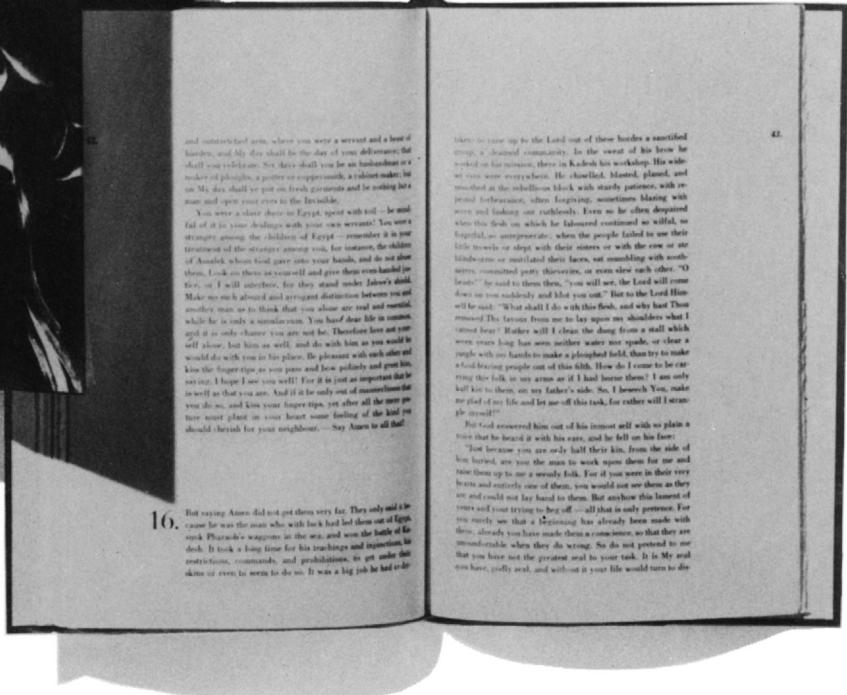
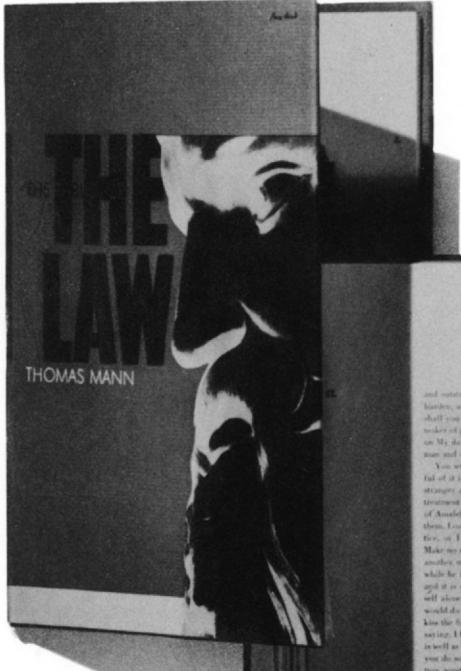
## Typographic Form and Expression

One of the objectives of the designer who deals with type matter concerns readability. Unfortunately, however, this function is often overemphasized at the expense of style, individuality, and the very effectiveness of the printed piece itself.

By carefully arranging type areas, spacing, size, and "color," the typographer is able to impart to the printed page a quality which helps to dramatize the contents. He is able to translate type matter into tactile patterns. By concentrating the type area and emphasizing the margin (white space), he can reinforce, by contrast, the textural quality of the type. The resulting effect on the reader may be properly compared to the sensation produced by physical contact with metal type.



Book jacket and binding  
tan and black, Alfred Knopf  
1945



16. But saying Anna did not get them very far. They only said it because he was the man who with luck had them out of Egypt. Pharaoh's wagons in the sea, and won the battle of his death. It took a long time for his thoughts to penetrate his skin, or even to seem to do so. It was a big job he had under

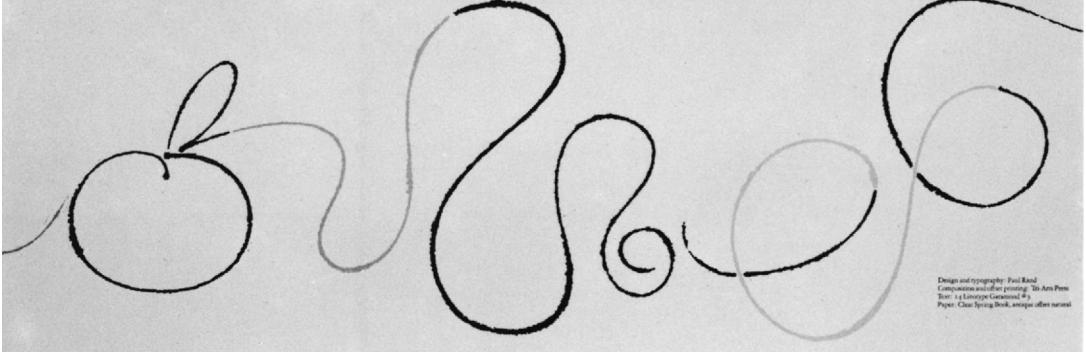
and unuttered now, where you were a servant and a host of hosts, and My day shall be the day of your deliverance; that shall you celebrate. Six days shall you be on an ebb-tidehouse or a maker of phantasies, a patterer or capayennes, a riddot-makor, but on My day shall we put on fresh garments and be nothing but a man and open our eyes to the Invisible.

You were a slave there in Egypt, spent with me. We suffered it all in your company with your own strength! You were a servant there, the children of Egypt — remember it is your treatment of the slaves among you, for instance, the children of Anatole whom God gave into your hands, and do not allow them. Look on them as yourself and give them even-banded justice, or I will interfere, for they stand under Jehovah's judgment. Make us such absurd and arrogant distinctions between us and another man as to think that you alone are real and essential, and that I am only a shadow, a dream, a hard dream life in common, and it is only chance you are not he. Therefore leave out yourself, but him as well, and do with him as you would be would do with you in his place. Be pleasant with each other and kiss the finger tips as you pass and have patience and good will, I hope I see you well! For it is my opinion that he is as well as that you are. And I am really out of countenance that you say so. Kiss each other's finger tips, yet also all the more give sweet pleasure in your heart some feeling of the kind you should cherish for your neighbour. — Say Amen to all that!

takes no time up to the Lord out of these bodies a sanctified group, a dedicated community. In the sweat of his brow he worked on his mission, there in Kodesh his workshop. His wife, we were everywhere. He chiseled, blasted, planed, and smoothed at the rebellious block with sturdy patience, with repeated forbearance, often foraging, sometimes blazing with anger and looking one roundly in the eye, until the block, as he had planned on, when he laboured continued as valid, as forged on, amazement, where the people failed in use their little towels or slept with their sisters or with the cow or ate hamsas or mutilated their faces, sat muddling with mouth-severed committed partly elsewhere, or even elsewhere still? "O leviathan," he said to them then, "you will not be sent off to the depths of darkness and gloom!" — Here the Lord Himself did he wish: "What shall I do with this flesh, and why hast Thou rejected? The favour from me to lay upon my shoulders what I cannot bear? Rather will I cleanse the dung from a stall which seven years long has seen neither water nor spade, or clear a tangle with my hands to make a ploughed field, than try to save a countless number of people out of the depths of hell, if he can bring the folk in me to do it if I had known them? I am only half kin to them on my father's side. So, I beseech You, make me glad of my life and let me off this task, for either will I strangle myself!"

But God answered him out of his innermost self with no plain answer that he heard it with his ears, and he fell on his face. The living ones are only a few, and the dead on the side of his house, are too many to work upon them for me and raise them up to me a sensible folk. For if you were in their very hearts and entirely one of them, you would not see them as they are and could not lay hand to them. But anyhow this lament of yours and your trying to beg off — all that is only pretence. For you surely see that a beginning has already been made with the living ones, and that they are incorrigible, whether they do or do not. So do not pretend to me that you have not the greatest zeal in your task. It is My seal you have, profly seal, and without it your life would turn to dust.

1. Now the serpēt was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, "Did God say, 'Ye shall not eat of any tree of the garden?'"
2. And the woman said unto the serpēt, "Of the fruit of the trees in the garden we may eat."
3. But of the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God hath said, "Thou shalt not eat it; neither shall ye touch it, for ye die."
4. And the serpēt came and sotte the women. "Ye shall not surely die;
5. for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes will be opened, and ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil."
6. And when the women saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit, and did eat; and she gave also unto her husband, with her, and he did eat.
7. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves girdles to cover their shame.
8. And the voice of the Lord God came into the garden, when he was walking in the midst of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.
9. And the Lord God called unto the man, and said unto him, "Where art thou?"
10. And he said, "I have heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."
11. And he said, "Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whence I commanded thee, saying, 'Thou shall not eat?' And the man said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."
12. And the Lord God said unto the woman, "What hast thou done?" And the woman said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."
13. And the Lord God said unto the man, in saying, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee, saying, 'Thou shall not eat of the fruit of the field,' upon the belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."
14. "I will multiply thy travail ninefold, and thy days of life shall be shortened; and thine husband shall be thy master, and between you and thy seed; they shall be at enmity; and he shall rule over thee."
15. Unto the woman also he said, "I will greatly multiply the pain of thy travail; in pain thou shalt bring forth children; and thy days shall be in the husband, and he shall rule over thee."
16. Unto the man also he said, "I will multiply thy days upon the earth; in pain thou shalt eat of the ground; for out of it was thou taken; it is thy back unto it that thou must return."
17. And the man called his wife's name, Eve, because she was the mother of all living.
18. And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins, and clothed them.
19. And the Lord God said, "Behold, the man is become like us to know good and evil; now, let us put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and when he eateth thereof, he shall die."
20. Therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, so that he could not return.
21. So he drove him out, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden the cherubim, and the flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way to the tree of life.



Design and typography: Paul Rand  
Compositions and/or printing: 'In Art Press'  
Type: 14 Linotype Garamond #5  
Paper: One Spring Deck, except after initial

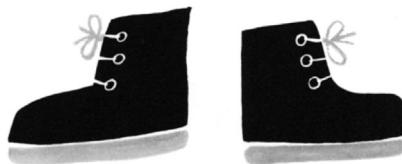
... In ordering his space and in distributing his typographic material and symbols, he is able to predetermine, to a certain point, the eye movements of the spectator.

Broadside  
full color, Westvaco  
1968

Children's book  
*I Know a Lot of Things*, Harcourt Brace  
1956

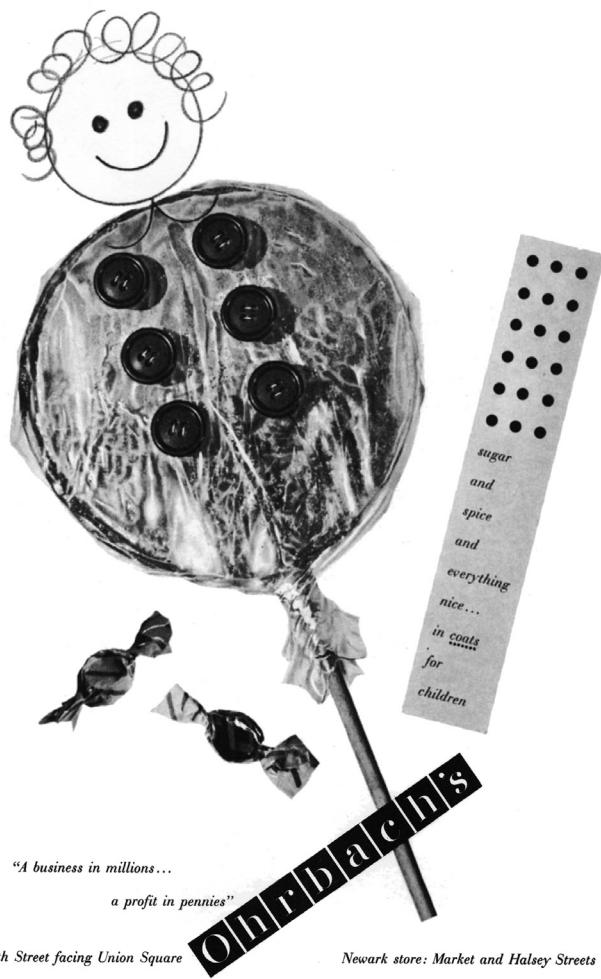


Oh  
I know  
such  
a  
lot  
of  
things,  
but  
as  
I  
grow  
I know  
I'll  
know  
much  
more.



... With asymmetric balance, he is able to achieve greater reader interest. Bilateral symmetry offers the spectator too simple and too obvious a statement. It offers him little or no intellectual pleasure, no challenge. For the pleasure derived from observing asymmetric arrangements lies partly in overcoming resistances which, consciously or not, the spectator has in his own mind, thus acquiring some sort of esthetic satisfaction. (For a more comprehensive discussion along these lines, see Roger Fry's essay on "Sensibility."<sup>1</sup>)

1. Roger Fry,  
*Last Lectures.*



A typeface which sometimes is described as having *character* often is merely bizarre, eccentric, nostalgic, or simply buckeye.

To distort the letters of the alphabet in “the style of” Chinese calligraphy (sometimes referred to as chop suey lettering), because the subject happens to deal with the Orient is to create the typographic equivalent of a corny illustration. To mimic a woodcut style of type to “go with” a woodcut; to use bold type to “harmonize with” heavy machinery, etc., is cliché-thinking. The designer is unaware of the exciting possibilities inherent in the *contrast* of picture and type matter. Thus, instead of combining a woodcut with a “woodcut style” of type (Neuland), a happier choice would be a more classical design (Caslon, Bodoni, or Helvetica) to achieve the element of surprise and to accentuate by contrast the form and character of both text and picture.



Logotype  
Cresta Blanca Wine Co.  
1942

In this logotype for Cresta Blanca wine (a product which ordinarily might suggest a more conventional type style, Didot or Spencerian, to evoke a sense of gentility and pedigree), simple, bold, sans-serif letters are combined with delicate line drawings. This contrast revitalizes — gives new meaning to — familiar images:

Newspaper advertisement  
black and white, Ohrbach's  
1946

**cooking sea food?**

**quick-acting air-wick**

**kills all**

**unpleasant**

**kitchen odors!**

**Air-wick** is the only household product of its kind that "activates" Chlorophyll... makes indoor air country-fresh. An air-freshener and household freshener is fully protected by U.S. patent no. 2,286,672.

Sea food is plentiful, non-nitrogenated and good for you. Everyone should eat more of it. And you don't have to worry about fish odors if you use **Air-wick**, the sensational new product, containing "activated" Chlorophyll. **Air-wick** kills all unpleasant kitchen odors.

**Air-wick** makes indoor air country-fresh all through the house. It quickly freshens bathroom, smoke-filled living room, stuffy closets; helps to eliminate fresh-paint smells. **Air-wick** is simple to use. Just open the bottle; pull out the wick and **Air-wick** goes to work. It's so economical, too. A bottle lasts so long that it costs only a cent or so a day. And it's non-nitrogenated.

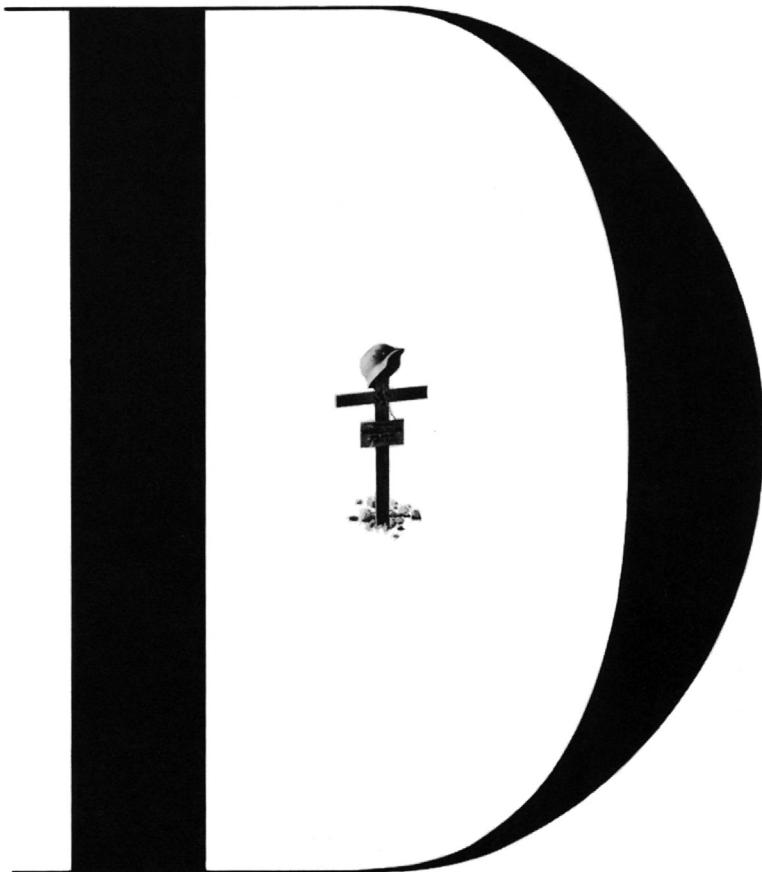
Order **Air-wick** today, at your grocery, drug, variety, hardware, chain or department store.

By contrasting type and pictorial matter, the designer is able to create new combinations and elicit new meanings. For instance, in the Air-Wick newspaper advertisement, the old and the new are brought into harmony. This effect is achieved by contrasting two apparently unrelated subjects — 19th-century wood engravings and 20th-century typewriter type. The surrounding white space helps to separate the advertisement from its competitors, creates an illusion of greater size per square inch, and produces a sense of cleanliness and freshness.

... The isolated letter affords a means of visual expression which other kinds of imagery cannot quite duplicate. Letters in the forms of trademarks, seals, and monograms — on business forms, identification tags, athletic jerseys, or even handkerchiefs — possess some magical quality. They serve not only as status symbols but have the virtue of brevity as well.

Newspaper advertisement  
Seeman Brothers  
1944

# DIRECTION



Magazine cover  
black and white, *Direction*  
1945

# DIRECTION

Vol 4  
#3

March '41.

15¢



Stocks  
General  
Tokaro  
S. S.  
Urtime  
Herd  
Sony  
Chicago  
D. O.  
aramoun  
republic  
Ind. Corp.  
N. Y. Central  
U. S.

Treas. 2 1/2% 1  
Treas. 3 1/4% 1  
Motors - Motors 2 1/2%  
Wright Electric 6%  
Vacuum 4%  
V. T. & S. Fe  
Co. 18%  
Pan Pictures 4%  
Steel 4%  
son 1%  
Cover 1%

84.8  
2.45  
1.65

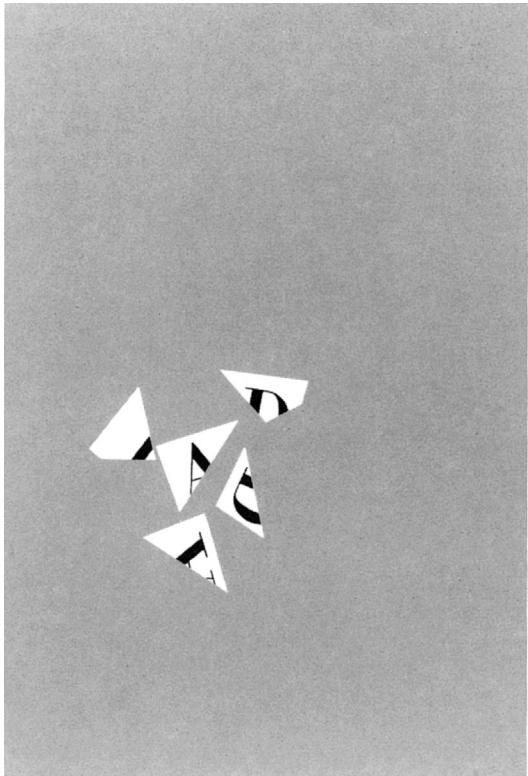


**with the sense of sight,  
the idea communicates the emotion...**  
**Alfred North Whitehead**

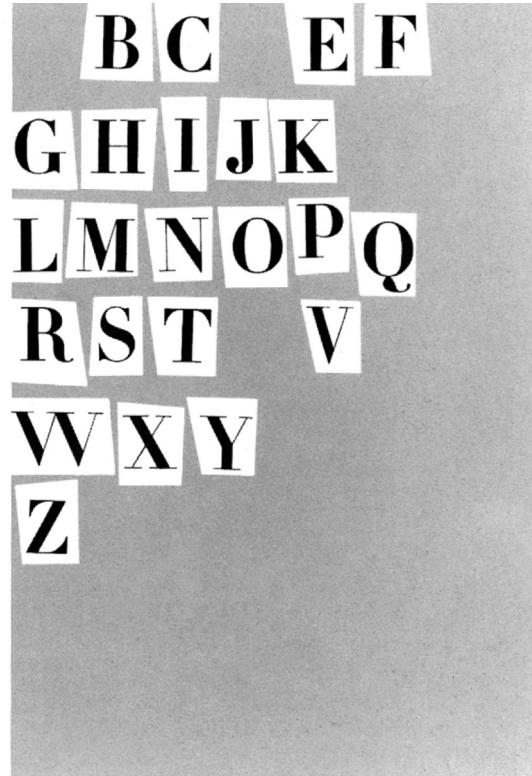
Magazine cover  
black and red, *Direction*  
1941

Poster, full color  
Advertising Typographers Association  
1965

IBM



Building sign  
aluminum  
1957



Magazine cover  
black and pink, *AD Magazine*  
1941

**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz st  
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
1234567890\$¢ &!?.,:—“”’()**

Alphabet design  
Westinghouse  
1961

Bulb packages  
blue and white, Westinghouse  
1968

bulbs

0

100

extra  
life\*  
bulbs

ZET-100-100  
Made in USA



extra  
life\*  
light  
bulbs



extra  
life\*  
light  
bulbs

100

watt



Trademark  
United Parcel Service  
1961

# 1

A better means of nasal medication... In a recent survey, 77% of the pediatricians interviewed stated that they use Benzedrine Inhaler, N.N.R., in their practice. The Inhaler has achieved this widespread pediatric acceptance because: (1) children accept it willingly, and show none of the hostility which so often complicates the administration of drops, tampons and sprays; and (2) it does not give rise to any significant degree of secondary resurgence, asty, or bogosity when used as directed.

Benzedrine Inhaler is strikingly effective in reducing the congestion of head colds, allergic rhinitis and sinusitis.

#### **Benzedrine Inhaler, N.N.R.**



Paredrine-Sulfathiazole Suspension

# 2

#### **Microform Sulfathiazole Suspension**

# 3

A general-purpose fluid sulfonamide for local use...

In pediatric practice, Microform Sulfathiazole Suspension, 20%, is pre-eminently useful in pyogenic skin infections and minor injuries.

For example, Horst<sup>1</sup> employed this

Suspension in the treatment of 15 children with impetigo contagiosa, and brought all lesions under control within a single day.

Microform Sulfathiazole Suspension, 20%, offers: (1) enhanced therapeutic effect, due to the Microform (microcrystalline) sulfathiazole; (2) chemical stability and neutral pH; (3) deposition of a closely adherent, catamine-like blanket.

Horst, T. H.: J. Am. Med. Ass'n, 205, 705, 1962.

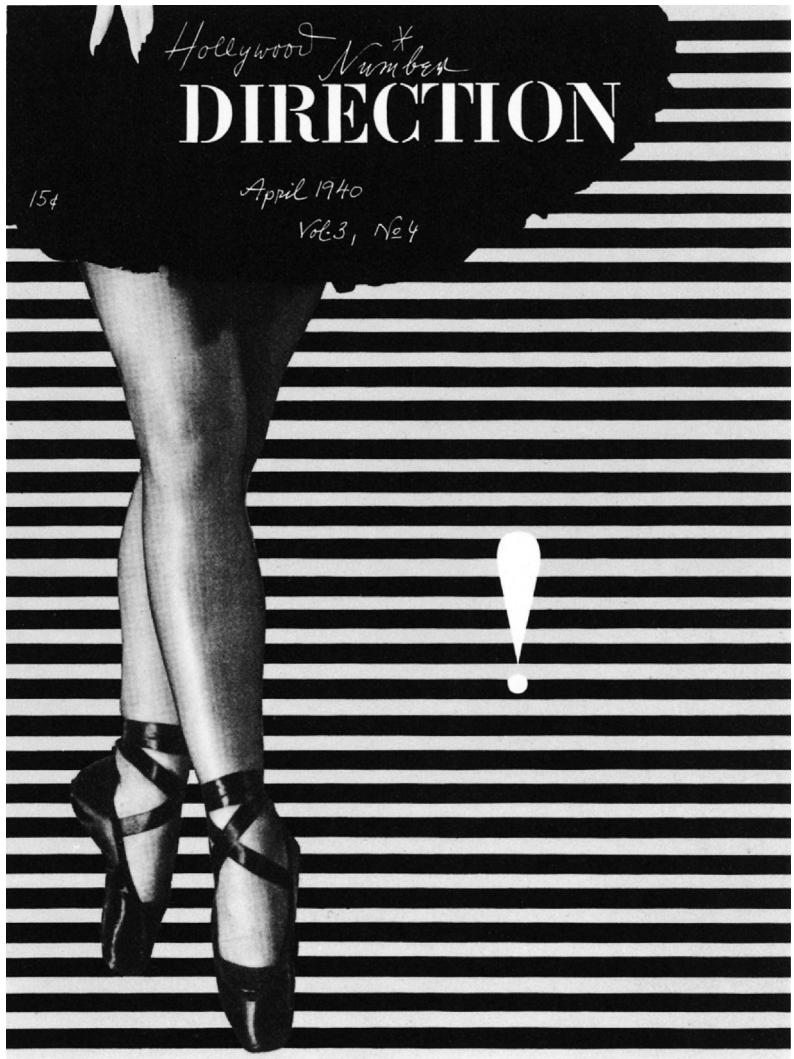


... The numeral as a means of expression possesses many of the same qualities as the letter. It can also be the visual equivalent of time, space, position, and quantity; and it can help to impart to a printed piece a sense of rhythm and immediacy.

Folder  
full color, SKF Laboratories  
1945

design 63

Poster, tan on white  
N.Y. Art Directors Club  
1963



... Punctuation marks, as emotive, plastic symbols, have served the artist as a means of expression in painting as well as in the applied arts.

Magazine cover  
*Direction*  
1940

Coco, mostraram, aos fazendeiros, o primeiro arado que, jamais, viram. No futuro, as refeições, destes fazendeiros, serão melhores.

#### Os Homens:

Estes variados planos que dizem respeito à saúde, reconstrução e alimentação, são orientados por homens competentes, cujas funções variam, desde as negociações com o governo, até a edificação de hospitais de seis andares; desde da montagem de mosquitos à organização do indústria da fibra; desde o trabalho de exterminar ratos, por meio de longas-chamas, à construção de acampamentos para trabalhadores.

Os homens, que realizam este mister, devem saber como enfrentar terremotos, incêndios, enchenças, secas, cobras, pulgas, orruas venenosas, peixes elétricos, vampiros, formigas carnívoras... e a propaganda nazista.

Entre estes profissionais, se encontram diplomatas, contadores, sanitários, economistas, engenheiros sanitários, especialistas em medicina tropical, enfermeiros e fazendeiros, cujo objetivo é proporcionar um padrão de vida mais elevado, para todas as Américas.

Em uma palavra, o objetivo, destes pioneiros e colaboradores, é estabelecer ambiente social em que o simples cidadão, irritado com meras palavras, possa conseguir uma refeição substancial, quando fomos, e cuidado médico, quando doente; sim, um ambiente social em que todos vivemos uma vida digna de ser vivida. **O Homem, Quanto Vale?**

...Para nós, nas vinte e uma repúblicas da América,

ele vale tudo

Imagem Pela Comissão de Assuntos Interamericanos, Washington, D.C.



Booklet  
red, black, and green, U.S. Government  
1943

Where the basic appeals of visual communication can be interpreted most graphically by abandoning the literal approach, it is the artist's business to do so. If he translates them into a visual message which is not only arresting and persuasive, but imaginative, dramatic, and entertaining as well, he has fulfilled his obligation to his audience; and perhaps he has also fulfilled his obligation to more personal standards.

Even if it is true that the average man seems most comfortable with the commonplace and familiar, it is equally true that catering to bad taste, which we so readily attribute to the average reader, merely perpetuates that mediocrity and denies the reader one of the most easily accessible means for esthetic development and eventual enjoyment.



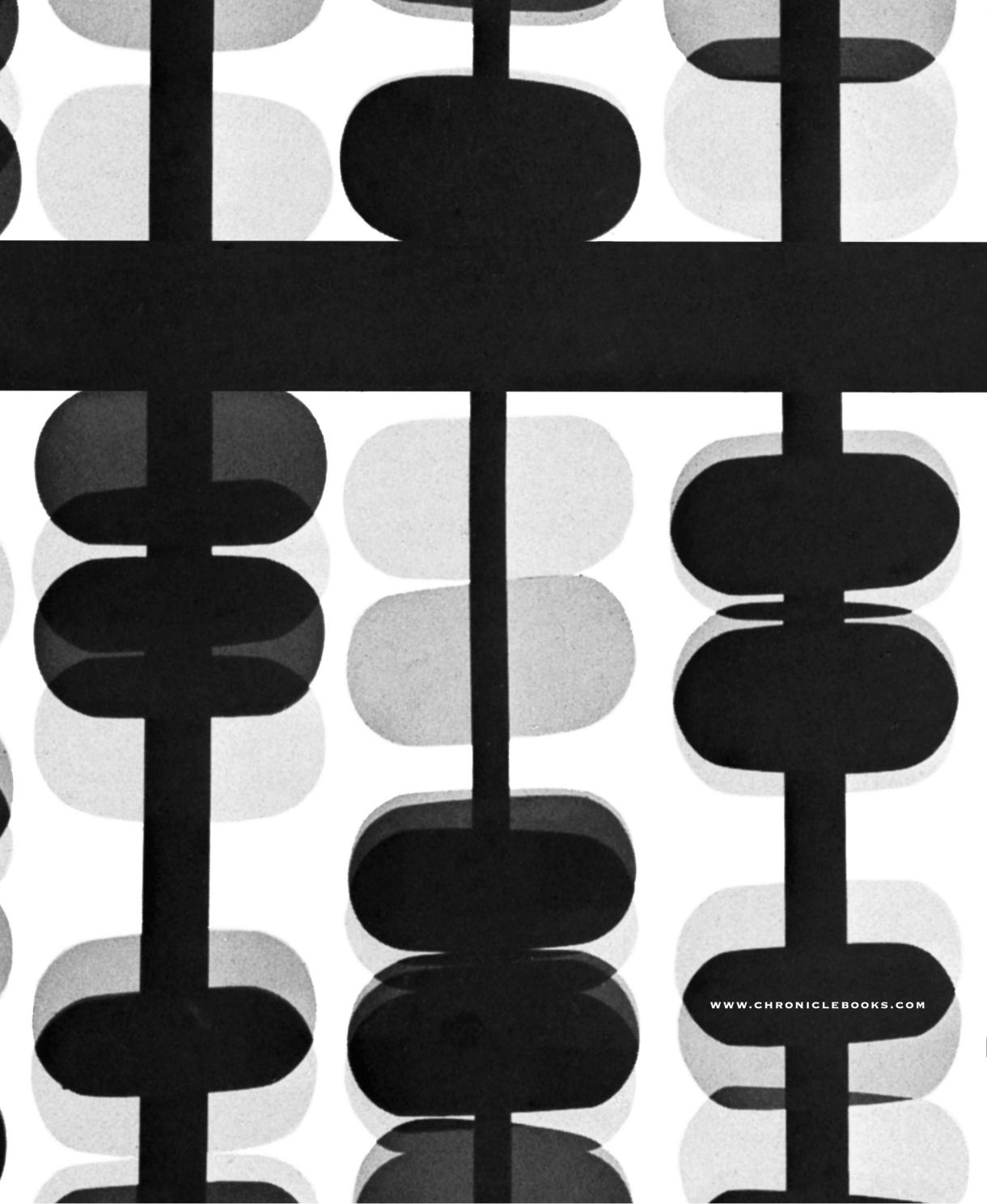
Book jacket  
black and pink, Alfred Knopf  
1945



Paul Rand (1914–1996) was known to his admirers as the “Picasso of Graphic Design,” and is recognized as one of the most influential designers in the history of print. His legendary career spans graphic design’s formative years, and his progression through different roles and spheres of influence constitutes a roadmap for contemporary graphic design professionals—from launching his career in media promotion and cover design at *Esquire*, to art direction on groundbreaking ad campaigns, to designing some of the most enduring corporate logos of the twentieth century, including those for IBM and ABC. He was named one of the ten best art directors in history by the Museum of Modern Art, and his numerous accolades include awards from the AIGA, the New York Art Directors Club, and the Type Directors Club.

Manufactured in China.

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