22

Corporate Identity and Visual Systems

The technological advances made during World War II were staggering. After the war, productive capacity turned toward consumer goods, and many people believed that the outlook for the capitalist economic structure could be unending economic expansion and prosperity. With this bright view of the future in mind, "Good design is good business" became a rallying cry in the graphic-design community during the 1950s. Prosperity and technological development appeared closely linked to the increasingly important corporations, and the more perceptive of these comprehended the need to develop a corporate image and identity among diverse audiences. Design was seen as a major way to shape a reputation for quality and reliability.

The use of visual marks for identification had been in existence for centuries, of course. In medieval times, proprietary marks were compulsory as a means of enabling the guilds to control trade. By the 1700s virtually every trader and dealer had a trademark or stamp. The arrival of the industrial revolution, with its mass manufacturing and marketing, increased the value and importance of trademarks for visual identification. But the visual identification systems that began during the 1950s went far beyond trademarks or symbols. The national and multinational scope of many corporations made it difficult for them to maintain a cohesive image, but by unifying all communications from a given organization into a consistent design system, one could be projected to accomplish identifiable goals.

Pintori at Olivetti

The first phase in the development of postwar visual identification resulted from pioneering efforts by strong individual designers who put their personal imprint on a client's designed image. This was the case with Peter Behrens at AEG (*see* chapter 14) and with the Olivetti Corporation, an Italian typewriter and business machines company whose dual commitment to humanist ideals and technological progress dated from its 1908 founding by Camillo Olivetti. Adriano Olivetti (1901–70), son of the founder, became president in 1938. He had a keen sense of the contribution that graphic, product, and architectural design could make to an organization. In 1936 he hired twenty-four-year-old Giovanni Pintori (b. 1912) to join the publicity department. For a thirty-one-year period, Pintori put his personal stamp on Olivetti's graphic images. The logotype he designed for Olivetti in 1947 consisted of the name in lowercase sans-serif letters, slightly letterspaced. Identity was achieved not through a systematic design program but through the general visual appearance of promotional graphics.

Pintori's ability to generate graphic metaphors for technological processes is shown in a 1956 poster for the Olivetti Elettrosumma 22 (Fig. **22–1**). There is a casual and almost relaxed quality to Pintori's organization of space. Even his most complex designs have a feeling of simplicity because he is able to combine small elements into unified structures through a repetition of size and visual rhythms. This complexity of form was well suited to Olivetti's publicity needs during the 1940s and 1950s, for the firm sought a high-technology image to promote advanced industrial design and engineering. Pintori was particularly adept at using simplified graphic shapes to visualize mechanisms and processes (Fig. **22–2**). His abstract configurations suggest the function or purpose of the product being advertised.

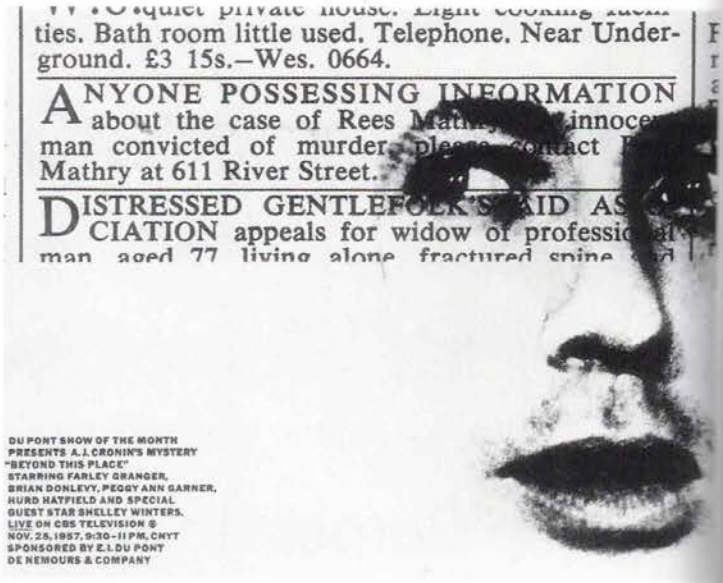
22–1

22–1. **Giovanni Pintori, poster for the Olivetti Elettrosumma 22, 1956. An informal structure of cubes with numerals suggests the mathematical building process that takes place when using this calculating machine.**

22–2

22–2. **Giovanni Pintori, poster for the Olivetti 82 Diaspron, c. 1958. A schematic diagram depicting the typewriter key's mechanical action combines with a photograph to communicate two levels of information.**

22–3

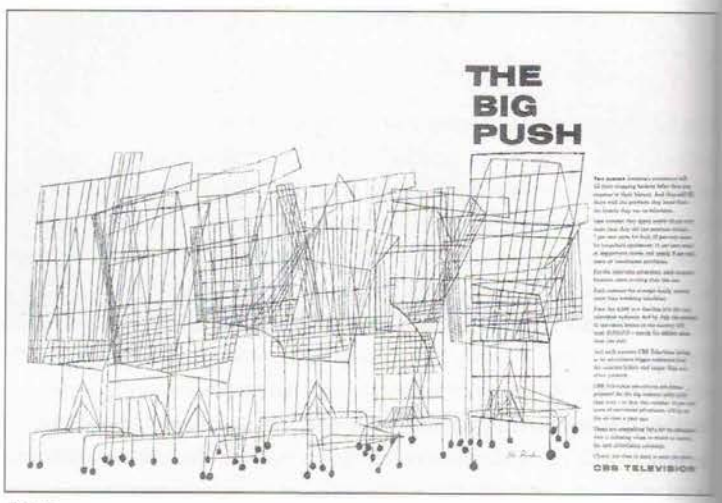


22–4

22–3. **William Golden, CBS Television trademark, 1951. Two circles and two arcs form a pictographic eye. Translucent and hovering in the sky, it symbolizes the awesome power of projected video images.**

22–4. **William Golden, program kit cover for *Du Pont Show of the Month,* 1957. Classified advertising typography is layered over the actor's face. Tight cropping and the leftward glance convey a mystery program.**

22–5. **William Golden (designer) and Ben Shahn (illustrator), trade ad for CBS Television, 1957. Textured shopping carts and text type unify into a horizontal band. This tonal complexity contrasts with a bold headline in the white space above and the staccato repetition of the black wheels below.**



22–5

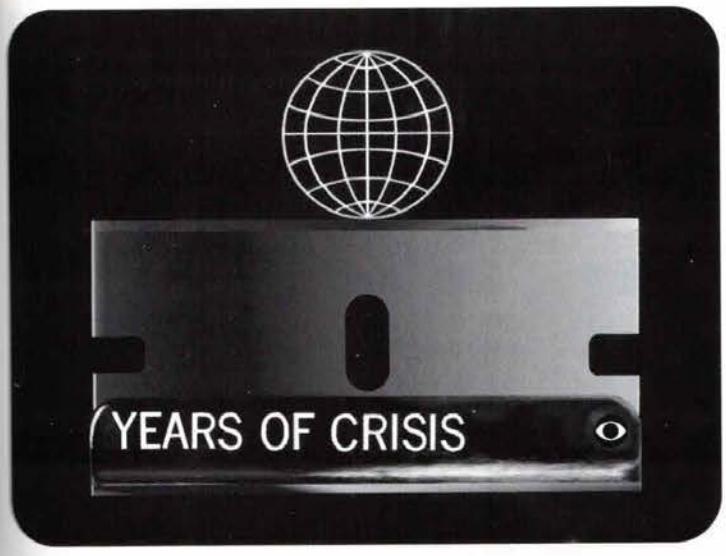
Olivetti's corporate policy focused on design excellence and cultural programming, and the firm received international recognition for its commitment to design excellence.

Design at CBS

The Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) of New York City moved to the forefront of corporate identity design as a result of two vital assets: CBS President Frank Stanton (b. 1908), who understood art and design and their potential in corporate affairs, and William Golden (1911–59), CBS art director for almost two decades. Golden brought uncompromising visual standards and keen insight into the communications process. The effectiveness of the CBS corporate identity did not depend on a regimented design program or application of specific graphic elements, such as a single corporate typeface, to all corporate communications. Rather, the quality and intelligence of each successive design solution enabled CBS to establish an ongoing and successful corporate identity.

Golden designed one of the most successful trademarks of the twentieth century for CBS (Fig. **22–3**). When the pictographic CBS eye first appeared as an on-air logo on 16 November 1951, it was superimposed over a cloud-filled sky and projected an almost surreal sense of an eye in the sky. After one year, Golden suggested to Frank Stanton that they might abandon the eye and seek another logo. Stanton reminded Golden of the old advertising adage, "Just when you're beginning to get bored with what you have done is probably the time it is beginning to be noticed by your audience." The eye remained. In applying this trademark to the corporation's multitude of printed material, from shipping labels to press releases, care and concern were used in even the most modest graphic designs. Dogmatic consistency in how the CBS trademark was used was not considered necessary. It was used in print with a variety of different company signatures, and Golden and his staff avoided forcing it where it did not belong. Even in printed advertising, it was sometimes omitted if it conflicted with the rest of the design. The effectiveness of the CBS symbol demonstrated to the larger management community how a contemporary graphic mark could compete successfully with more traditional illustrative or alphabetic trademarks.

A corporate philosophy and approach to advertising emerged in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Advertising was created not by an outside agency but by internal staff; this permitted CBS to maintain a unified approach to advertising and other graphics. Golden's CBS Television ads often used unusual spatial relations (Fig. **22–4**). Fine artists including Feliks Topolski, René Bouche, and Ben Shahn were



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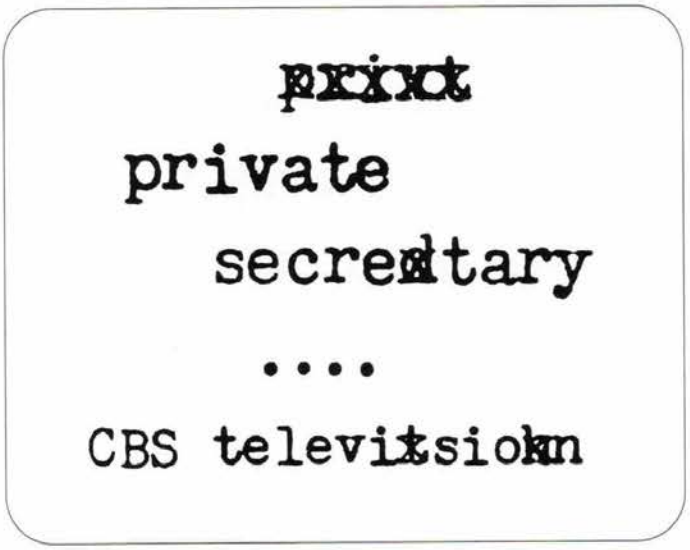

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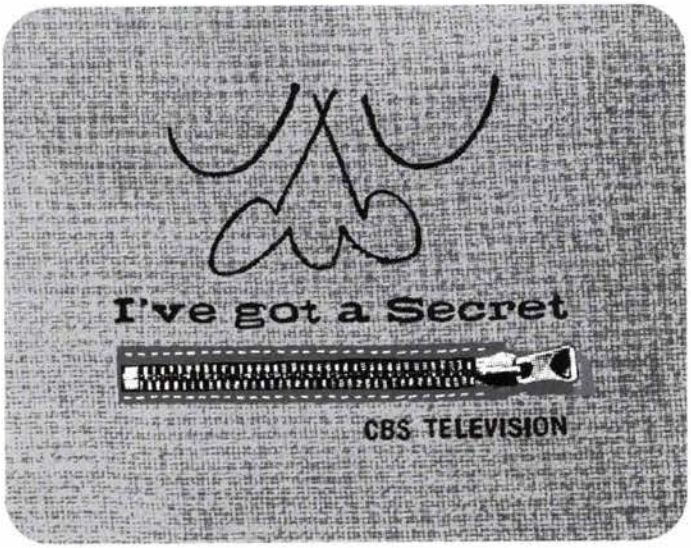


22–8

22–6. **Georg Olden, television title for "Years of Crisis," 1950s. Two ordinary images combine to make a compelling visual statement for a news special.**

22–7. **Georg Olden (art director) and Bob Gill (designer), television title for *Private Secretary,* c. 1956. Typing errors imply the bumbling of an incompetent secretary.**

22–8. **Georg Olden, television title for *I've Got A Secret,* 1950s. The zippered mouth becomes an immediate and unequivocal symbolic statement.**

commissioned to create illustrations for CBS advertisements. The climate of creative freedom encouraged them to accept these commissions and resulted in a high artistic level relative to typical newspaper and trade publication advertisements of the period. A classic example of this approach is "The Big Push" (Fig. **22–5**), which appeared in business and advertising trade publications during a booming economy. The text says Americans will purchase more than in any other summer in history and recommends television advertising during this big summer sales push. Shahn's drawing adds an ambience of quality and distinction to the commercial message.

In a 1959 lecture at a design conference, Golden called upon designers to have a sense of responsibility and a rational understanding of the function of their work. He declared the word *design* a verb "in the sense that we design something to be communicated to someone," and added that the designer's primary function is ensuring that the message is accurately and adequately communicated.

Stanton's recognition of the importance of design resulted in designers being given executive and administrative authority. In 1951 Golden was named creative director in charge of advertising and sales promotion for the CBS Television Network.

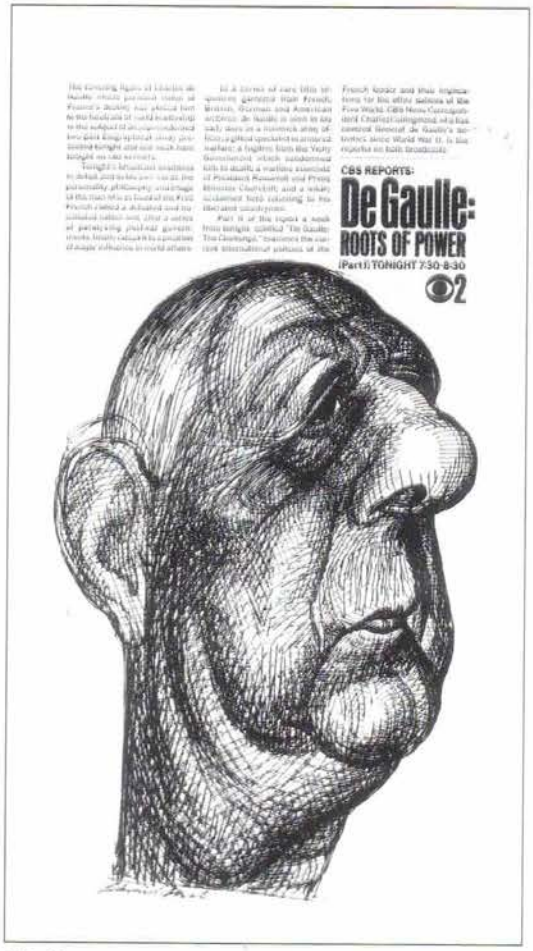
In 1945 CBS hired Georg Olden (1920–75) to establish a graphics department to design on-air visuals for its new television division. Television was a fledgling medium poised to grow rapidly in the next few years. Only about ten thousand television sets were in use when wartime restrictions on their manufacture were lifted in 1946; this number grew rapidly to a million sets in 1949 and soared past the fifty-million mark when Olden left CBS to become television group art director at BBDO Advertising in 1960. During his fifteen-year tenure at CBS, Olden played a major role in defining the early development of television broadcast graphics.

Olden realized the limitations of early black-and-white television. The medium was incapable of differentiating between subtle color and tonal contrasts, and television sets often markedly cropped the edges of the signal. Two-dimensional titles were only on the air for a few seconds, requiring rapid viewer comprehension. To overcome these problems, he designed on-air graphics from the center out, using simple symbolic imagery with strong silhouette and linear properties. Emphasis was placed on concepts that quickly captured the essence of each program using the connotative power of simple signs, symbols, and images (Figs. **22–6, 22–7,** and **22–8**).

Olden, the grandson of a slave from a northern Kentucky plantation who escaped to the north as the Civil War broke out and eventually joined the Union army, was the first African American to achieve prominence as a graphic designer. He accomplished this in

22–9

22–10



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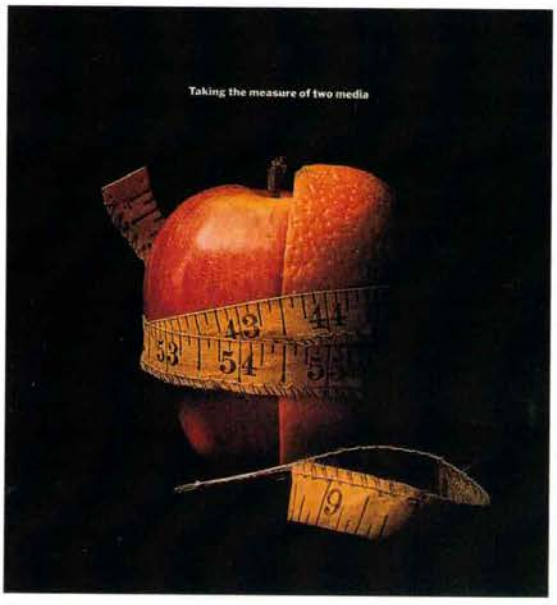

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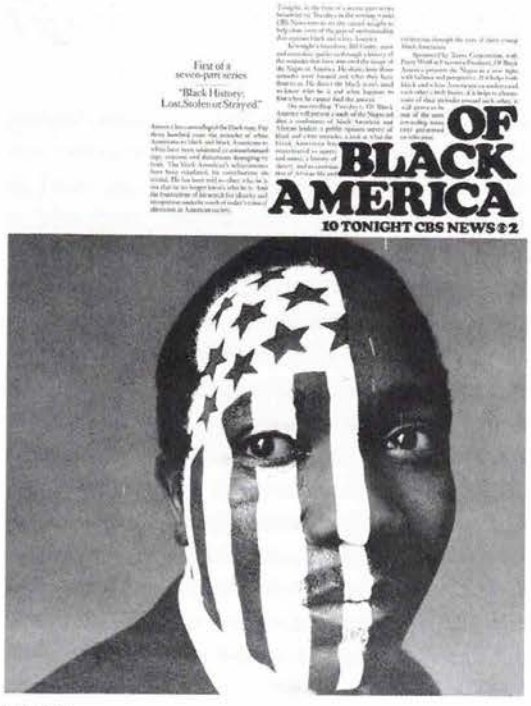


22–13

22–9. **Georg Olden, stamp for the centenary of the Emancipation Proclamation, 1963. Olden reduced a complex subject, slavery's end, to its most elemental expression.**

22–10. **Lou Dorfsman (designer) and Andy Warhol (illustrator), program ad for CBS Radio, 1951. The open, direct presentation is typical of Dorfsman's work.**

22–11. **Lou Dorfsman (designer) and Edward Sorel (illustrator), ad for *CBS Reports*, 1964. To overcome the graphic jungle of the American newspaper, Dorfsman's program ads were simple, arresting, and distinctive.**

22–12. **Lou Dorfsman, sales presentation cover, undated. An old adage, "It's like comparing apples and oranges," becomes a photographic metaphor for the cost-effectiveness of two communications media.**

22–13. **Lou Dorfsman, advertisement for a program series, 1968. Image combination carried tremendous shock value, gaining viewers for important news programs.**

the era before the civil-rights movement, when very few blacks held professional positions in America. Olden's role in graphic design has been compared to Jackie Robinson's in professional sports. Robinson became the first black major-league baseball player when he joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. Another African American to achieve early prominence in graphic design, Reynolds Ruffins (b. 1930) was a founding partner in Push Pin Studios (*see* Fig. **23–14**).

The United States Postal Service commissioned Olden to design the postage stamp for the hundredth anniversary of the Emancipation Proclamation (Fig. **22–9**), making him the first African-American designer to be accorded the honor of designing a United States postage stamp. This stamp design possesses the economy and directness of his television graphics.

Lou Dorfsman (b. 1918) became art director for CBS Radio in 1946. He combined conceptual clarity with a straightforward and provocative visual presentation (Fig. **22–10**). Typography and image were arranged in well-ordered relationships using blank space as a design element. In 1954 he was named director of advertising and promotion for the CBS Radio Network. As art director of the CBS Radio Network during the 1950s, Dorfsman forged a design approach combining a pragmatic sense of effective communication with imaginative problem solving. He did not advocate continuity in typefaces, spatial layouts, or imagery; rather, the high quality of his solutions to communications problems during four decades with CBS enabled him to project an exemplary image for the corporation.

After Golden's sudden death at age forty-eight, Dorfsman became the creative director of CBS Television (Figs. **22–11, 22–12,** and **22–13**). He was named director of design for the entire CBS Corporation in 1964 and vice president in 1968, in keeping with Stanton's philosophy that design is a vital area that should be managed by professionals.

When architect Eero Saarinen (1910–61) designed a new CBS headquarters building in 1966, Dorfsman designed all aspects of the typographic information, right down to the numerals on the wall clocks and elevator buttons, exit signs, and elevator-inspection certificates. These last two items required Fire Department and City Building Inspection approval before they could replace their mandatory but graphically inferior predecessors. Dorfsman also applied his graphic design sense to film, computer animation in the production of promotional spots, informational materials, and network title sequences.

The CBS approach to corporate image and design was not dependent on a system or style but rather on the management policy toward design and the creative abilities of its design personnel. The strength of this approach is a varying and dynamic corporate design that can shift with company needs and evolving sensibilities; the potential danger is the lack of a fallback position if management or design authority move into less insightful hands. CBS's era of design leadership lasted until the late 1980s. After the company was purchased by new owners, the philosophy about design changed and Dorfsman resigned.

The CIBA corporate design program

An early effort toward a comprehensive international corporate design program was launched by CIBA (Society for Chemical Industry in Basel), which had grown from a small manufacturer of brilliant chemical dyes into a global chemicals, plastics, and pharmaceuticals firm by the early 1950s. In mid-1951 James K. Fogleman (b. 1919) was hired as design director of an American subsidiary, CIBA Pharmaceutical Products Incorporated of Summit, New Jersey, and he began to evolve a design program. The lengthy corporate name was reduced to CIBA, consistently printed in an outline Egyptian type style. A range of three typefaces was used for product identification; Fogleman believed that this variety of style and weight was necessary for design flexibility. In 1953 he persuaded CIBA in Summit to adopt a standardized, square format for promotional material. In addition to the recognition value of the infrequently used shape, economics was a key factor in its adoption. Artwork could be used throughout a series, and gang press runs of promotional materials for several products significantly reduced production costs.

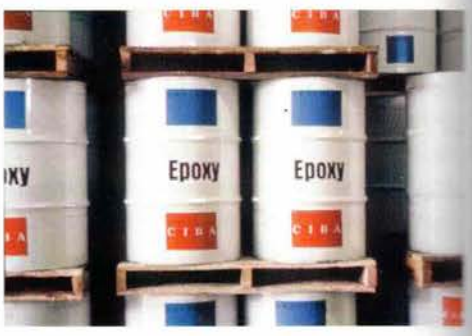
In a talk before a 1953 international conference of CIBA employees, Fogleman spoke of the "need for integrated design, or a controlled visual expression of corporate personality, which plays a large role in achieving *corporate identity* [italics added]." Speaking before the management committee in Basel, he called for "a sense of unity, clarity or singleness of viewpoint," and argued that "policies are necessary which will, after a period, tie together into a unified or corporate expression of the company's character and personality." CIBA's Basel headquarters became concerned about the need for a uniform corporate identity, and a logo designed by Fritz Beuhler of Basel was selected for international use. The initials *C I B A* were letterspaced to about the width of the capital height in transitional-style letterforms.

The importance of the CIBA program was not in the logo but in the almost programmatic consistency with which it was applied to packaging, stationery, signage, promotional graphics, and vehicles (Figs. **22–14** and **22–15**). Fogleman popularized the corporate-image concept through frequent lectures and writing. He urged his audiences to see each communication, including advertising, as having two functions: the immediate communicative need (to promote a particular product or identify a plant, for example), and the development of the firm's reputation and image, which might be the more important function in the long run.

The New Haven Railroad design program

A short-lived but highly visible effort at corporate identity occurred in 1954, when Patrick McGinnis, president of the New York, New Haven, and Hartford Railroad, launched a corporate design program. The New Haven Railroad was in the midst of a technological updating with new engines, cars, and signal systems. McGinnis believed a contemporary logo and design program replacing the old logotype and olive-green and Tuscan-red color scheme would enable the firm to project a modern and progressive image to industry and passengers. Herbert Matter was commissioned to design the new trademark. He developed a geometric capital *N* above an *H* and a red, black, and white color scheme (Fig. **22–16**). The traditional industrial feeling of slab-serif type, long associated with the railroad industry, was updated to project a curiously modern feeling due to the mathematical harmony of parts.

Marcel Breuer was commissioned to design the interiors and exteriors of the new trains. Using Matter's color scheme and logo,



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22–14. **CIBA design staff, corporate identity program, 1953–1960. Continuity in trademark use resulted because each new application was consistent with all previous ones.**

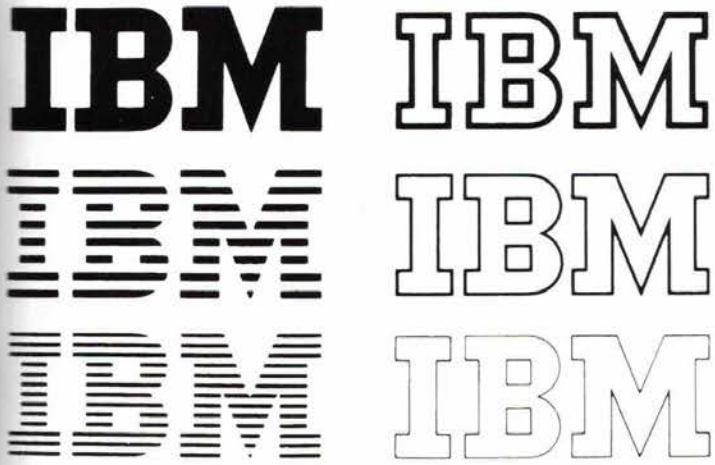
22–15. **CIBA design staff, CIBA pharmaceutical packaging system, 1956–60. Typeface selection, symbol placement, spatial division, and color were used repetitively, creating a unified corporate image.**

22–16. **Herbert Matter, New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad trademark, 1954. The mathematical harmony of parts demonstrates how alphabetic forms can be unified into a unique gestalt.**

Breuer designed a passenger train that looked like a Russian constructivist painting roaring along the New Haven's 1,700 miles of track. The dingy gray and earth tones previously used for freight cars were replaced by solid red or black. Plans called for implementation of a comprehensive corporate-identity program encompassing everything from stations to matchbooks, but the commuter railroad developed financial woes and suffered from a consumer uprising in protest of late trains, poor scheduling, and rising fares. On 20 January 1956, McGinnis resigned as president and the corporate-identity program came to a screeching halt. The new management continued to apply the logo and color scheme whenever possible. Printed pieces designed by Matter offered a degree of guidance, and the strength of the logo and color scheme provided some semblance of continuity.

Corporate identification comes of age

While World War II left most industrial countries devastated, the manufacturing capacity of the United States escaped undamaged. An era of unprecedented industrial expansion took place, with corporations playing an important role in developing and marketing products and services. During the 1950s and 1960s many American designers—including Paul Rand, Lester Beall, Saul



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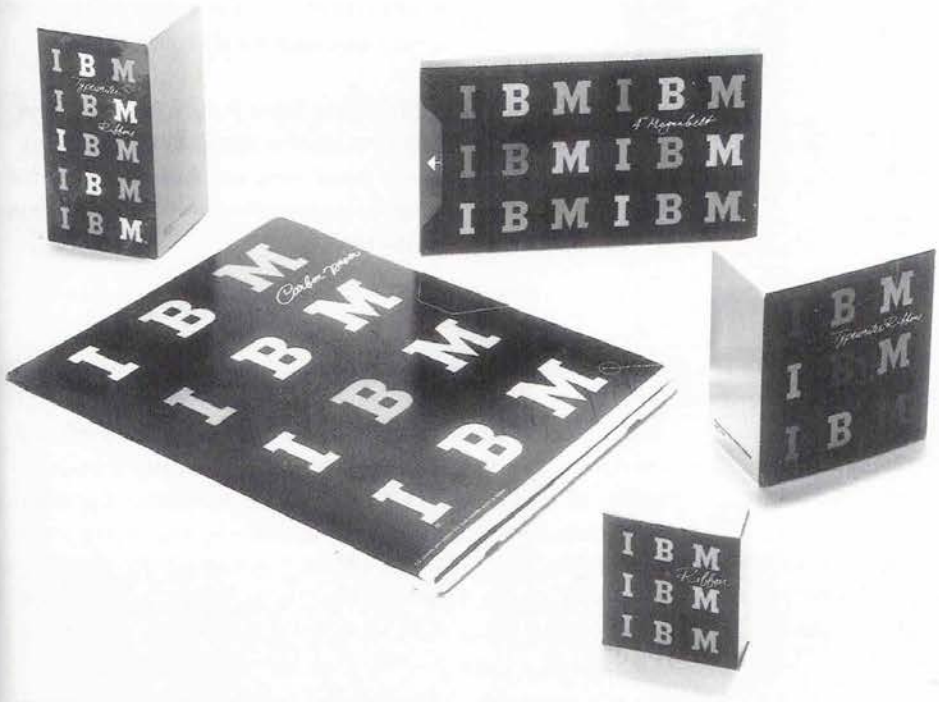

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22–17. **Paul Rand, IBM trademark, 1956. The original design is shown with outline versions and the eight- and thirteen-stripe versions currently used.**

22–18. **Paul Rand, IBM package designs, late 1950s. A strong corporate identification was produced by a repeating pattern of blue, green, and magenta capital letters on the black package fronts, white handwritten product names, and blue package tops and sides.**

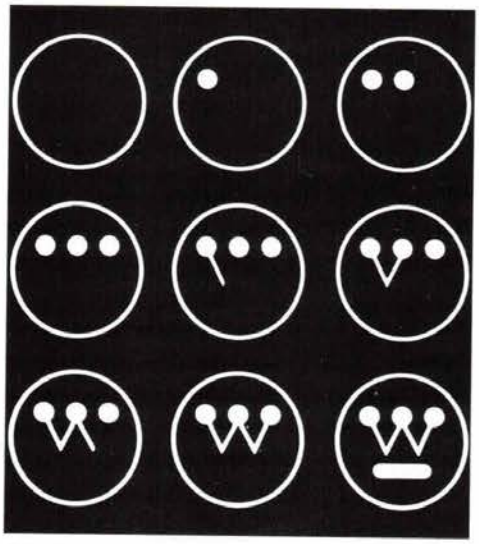
22–19. **Paul Rand, IBM package design, 1975. After two decades the original packaging design program was replaced by an updated design using the eight-stripe logo.**

and design firms such as Lippincott & Margules and Chermayeff & Geismar—embraced corporate visual identification as a major design activity.

After playing a pivotal role in the evolution of American graphic and advertising design during the 1940s and early 1950s, Paul Rand became more involved in trademark design and visual identification systems in the 1950s. Rand realized that to be functional over a long period of time, a trademark should be reduced to elementary shapes that are universal, visually unique, and stylistically timeless.

Rand's trademark for International Business Machines (Fig. **22–17**) was developed from an infrequently used typeface called City Medium, designed by Georg Trump in 1930. This geometric slab-serif typeface was designed along lines similar to Futura. Redesigned into the IBM corporate logo, a powerful and unique alphabet image emerged, for the slab serifs and square negative spaces in the *B* lent a unity and uniqueness. In the 1970s Rand updated the logo by striping it to unify the three forms and evoke scan lines on video terminals. Package designs by Rand show the application of the logo in the 1950s (Fig. **22–18**) and after its redesign in the 1970s (Fig. **22–19**).

Eliot Noyes (1910–77), IBM's consulting design director during the late 1950s, wrote that the IBM design program sought "to



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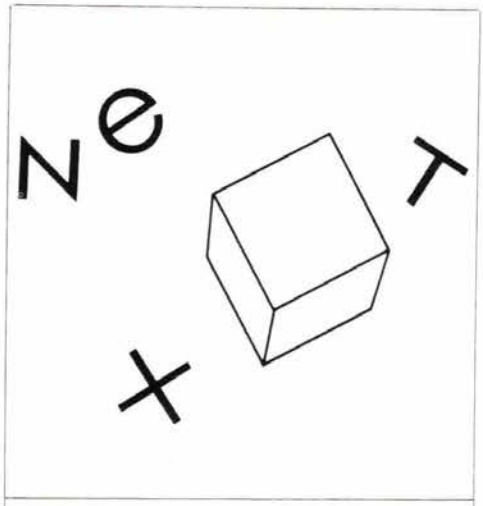
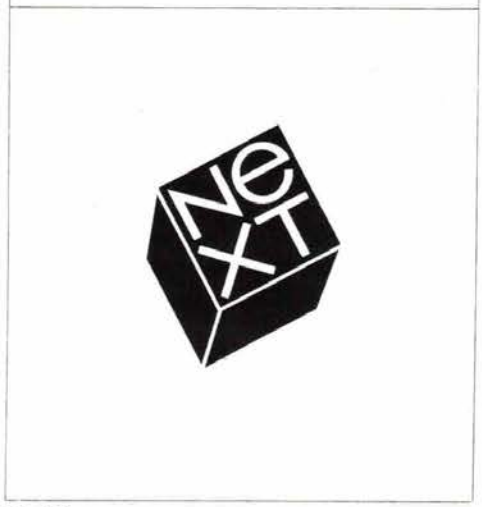




22–22

22–20. **Paul Rand, Westinghouse trademark, 1960. This mark is shown as it might be constructed in an animated film sequence.**

22–21. **Paul Rand, American Broadcasting Company trademark, 1965. The continuing legacy of the Bauhaus and Herbert Bayer's universal alphabet informs this trademark, in which each letterform is reduced to its most elemental configuration.**

22–22. **Paul Rand, NeXT trademark, 1986. The four-letter name is separated into two lines to startle the viewer by giving a common word an uncommon image.**

22–23. **Paul Rand, IBM annual report, 1958. Advanced technology and organizational efficiency were expressed through design.**

22–24. **Robert Miles Runyan (designer) and Ovid Neal (photographer), Litton Industries annual report cover and interior pages, 1959. Large symbolic photographs establish a tone for the text.**

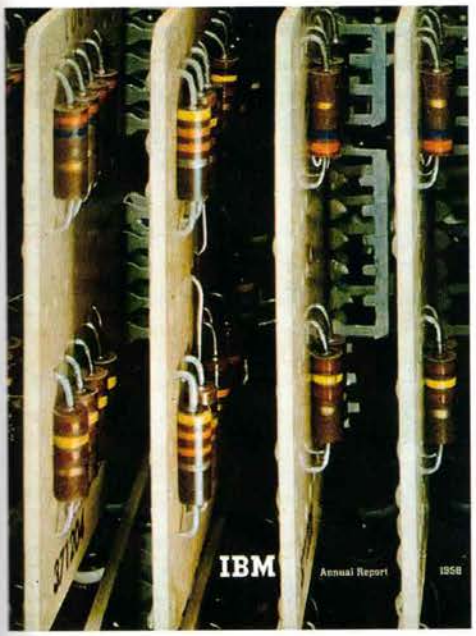
express the extremely advanced and up-to-date nature of its products. To this end we are not looking for a theme but for a consistency of design quality which will in effect become a kind of theme, but a very flexible one." The IBM design program was flexible enough to avoid stifling the creativity of designers working within the guidelines of the program. The model developed by IBM, with design consultants such as Rand and internal staff design departments whose managers have the authority to maintain the corporate visual identity, produced an evolving design program while it upheld a consistent level of quality.

After a 1959 study of the "public faces" of the Westinghouse Corporation, a decision was made to redesign its "Circle-W" trademark. Rand was commissioned to symbolically incorporate the nature of the company's business in a new mark that would be simple, memorable, and distinct (Fig. **22–20**). General graphic forms, rather than specific signs or symbols, suggest Westinghouse products by evoking wires and plugs, electronic diagrams and circuitry, and molecular structures. Rand, who also developed a typeface for Westinghouse, applied these new elements to packaging, signage, and advertising.

Rand's 1965 redesign of the trademark for the American Broadcasting Company (Fig. **22–21**) reduced the information to its simple essence while achieving a memorable and unique image. The NeXT computer logo (Fig. **22–22**) was designed in 1986 after IBM agreed to loan its long-time design consultant to a competitive computer company. The black box at a twenty-eight-degree angle signified the NeXT computer, which was a black box.

The annual report to stockholders, a legal publication required by federal law, evolved from a dry financial report into a major communications instrument during the postwar period. Landmarks in this evolution include the IBM annual reports designed by Rand during the late 1950s. The 1958 IBM annual report (Fig. **22–23**) established a standard for corporate literature. Imagery included close up photography of electronic components that almost become abstract patterns, and simple dramatic photographs of products and people. The typographic system combined clarity with restrained elegance. Los Angeles designer Robert Miles Runyan (b. 1925) also played a major role in redefining this genre, notably in his 1959 Litton Industries annual report (Fig. **22–24**). An editorial ambience is produced by full-color, bleed, still-life photographs showing Litton products with artifacts signifying areas of corporate activity.

Lester Beall helped launch the modern movement in American design during the late 1920s and early 1930s (*see* Figs. **19–5** through **19–8**). During the last two decades of his career, Beall created pioneering corporate-identity programs for many corporations including Martin Marietta, Connecticut General Life Insurance, and International Paper Company. He also contributed to the development of the corporate-identity manual, a firm's book of guidelines and standards for implementing its program. Beall's manuals



22–23

capacity and logical ability. It can be used for business or scientific applications.

• Basic accounting machines, the 1401 Series 50. This product line includes a wide range of IBM punched card accounting machines designed to meet the needs of smaller enterprises.

During the year a new 1210 banking system was developed. This equipment processes ordinary paper checks of various sizes by "reading" numbers printed on the checks in special magnetic ink. These numbers, which meet the specifications of the American Bankers Association, can also be read visually. 1210's check handling equipment is connected with standard data processing equipment to make up a completely automated system for performing demand deposit accounting.

Electric Typewriter Division:

The year marked the 25th anniversary of the IBM electric typewriter, and during this anniversary year the division shipped its one millionth machine. From the new typewriter plant at Lexington, Kentucky, also came the first production models of the 632 Electronic Typing Calculator, a compact, easy-to-operate office machine that combines typing and calculating in one unit.

In addition, the Lexington plant tooled for the introduction of a newly engineered and dramatically restyled IBM electric typewriter for shipment early in 1959. Advanced technical features on the new machine include a faster, quiet plotting carriage, and a luxury-size keyboard for personalized touch typewriting. There is a Standard Model and an Executive Model with proportional spacing which produces letters having the appearance of fine printing.

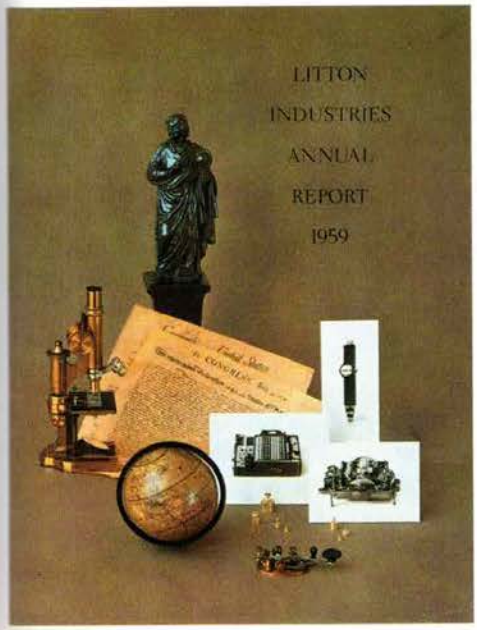
Supplies Division:

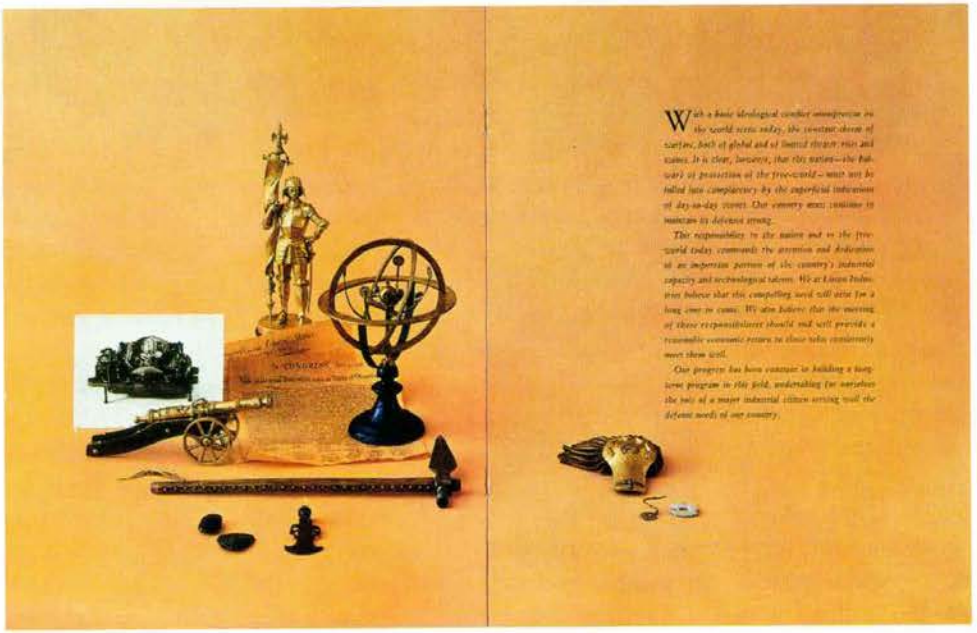
Punched cards, magnetic tapes and other supplies used in IBM data processing systems are designed and produced by this division. These materials are basic documents in many areas of business, science, government and education. The punched card has become a part of almost everyone's daily activity, for example, utility bills, credit cards, motor vehicle registrations, checks and magazine subscription notices.

Under the terms of the consent decree entered into with the Department of Justice on January 25, 1956, the Corporation is required to make available to competitors the card manufacturing machinery which it pioneered. Many competitors are now using these machines.

To improve further its service to customers, the division has constructed additional manufacturing facilities. During 1958, a new card plant, serving the Southwest, was dedicated at Sherman, Tex. The division opened another plant at Dayton, N. J.; broke ground for another at Concord, Mass.; and acquired land at Campbell, Calif. for relocation of its present facility in San Jose, Calif.

Right: The newly engineered and redesigned IBM electric typewriter.





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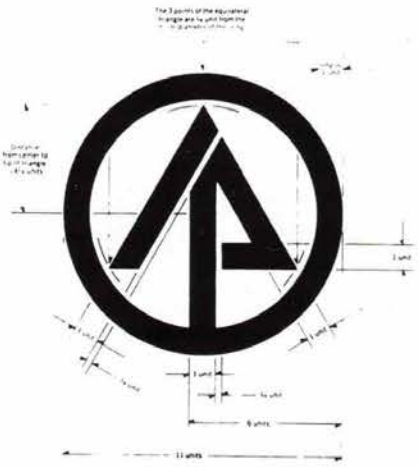


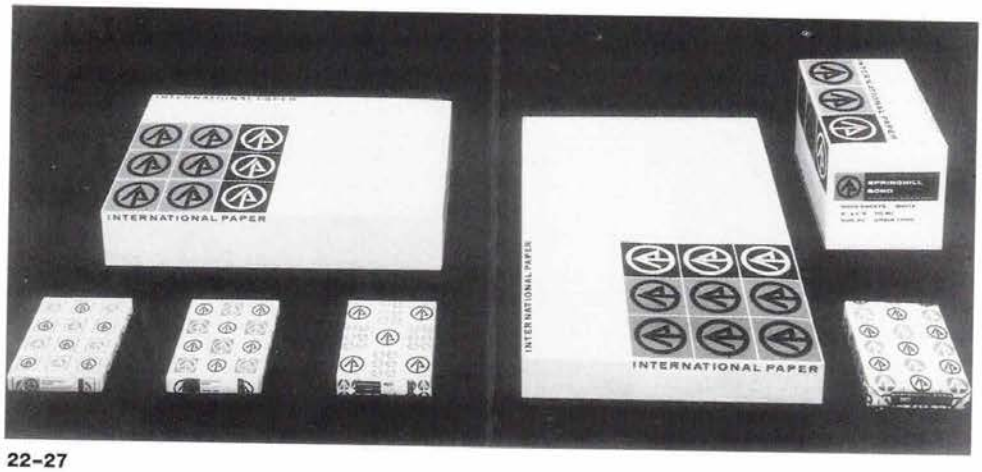
22–25

22–26

22–25. **Lester Beall, International Paper Company trademark, 1960. Initials, tree, and upward arrow combine in a mark whose fundamental simplicity—an isometric triangle in a circle—assures a timeless harmony.**

22–26. **Lester Beall, International Paper Company trademark, 1960. For a forest-products company, stenciling the mark on a tree is one of numerous applications that must be considered.**

22–27. **Lester Beall, International Paper Company packaging, 1960. Used in repeated patterns, the trademark becomes a decorative element.**



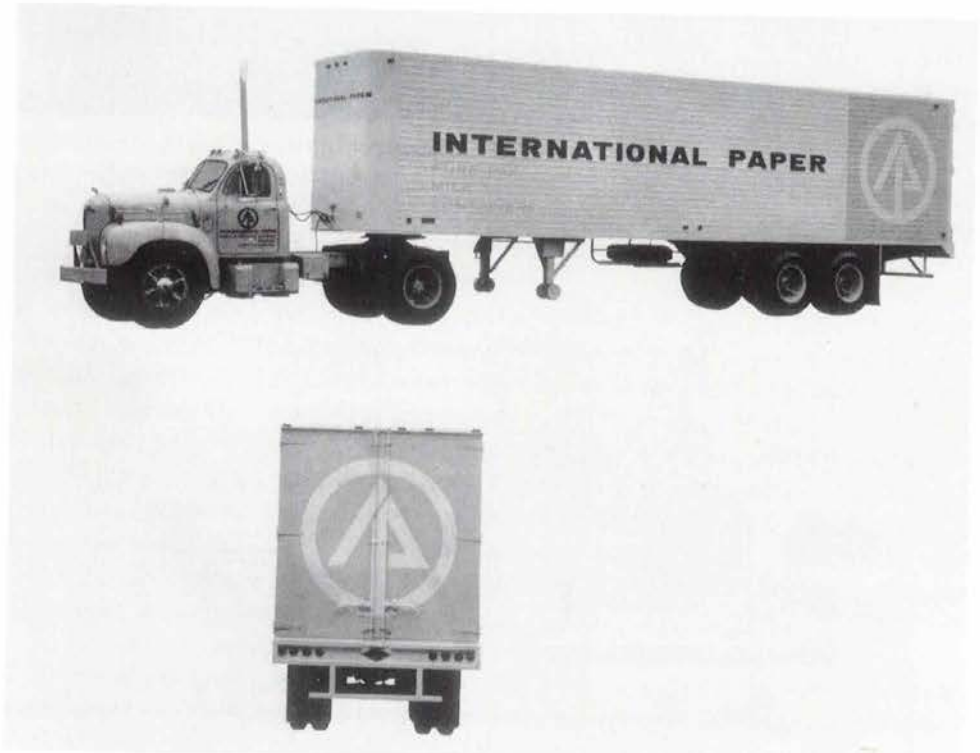
22–27

22–28. **Lester Beall, International Paper Company truck, 1960. Transportation applications extend the identity program throughout society.**

22–29. **Lester Beall, International Paper Company sign, 1960. Workmen fabricate a large-scale illuminated sign.**

22–30. **Chermayeff & Geismar Associates, Chase Manhattan Bank corporate-identity program, 1960. Consistent use of the mark, color, and typeface built recognition value through the process of visual redundancy.**

22–31. **Chermayeff & Geismar Associates, typeface and signage for Chase Manhattan Bank, 1960. Architectural signage requires attention to the texture and surface of building materials, integration of signage and architectural form, and the effects of distance and viewing angle upon legibility.**



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specifically prescribed the permissible uses and forbidden abuses of the trademark. If a plant manager in a small town retained a sign painter to paint the trademark and name on a sign, for example, the corporate design manual specified their exact proportions and placement. In discussing his mark for International Paper Company, one of the largest paper manufacturers in the world, Beall wrote, "Our assignment was to provide management with a strong mark that could be readily adapted to an immense variety of applications. This ranged from its bold use on the barks of trees to its intricate involvement in repeat patterns, carton designs, labels, trucks (Figs. **22–25** through **22–29**). In addition to its functional strength, the new mark is a powerful force in stimulating and integrating divisional and corporate identity with positive psychological effects on human relations." The International Paper Company trademark was initially controversial: The letters *I* and *P* are distorted to make a tree symbol, and critics questioned whether letterforms should be altered to this extreme. The continuing viability of this mark since its inception indicates that Beall's critics were overly cautious.

Chermayeff & Geismar Associates moved to the forefront of the corporate-identity movement in 1960 with a comprehensive visual image program for the Chase Manhattan Bank of New York. Chase Manhattan's new logo was composed of four geometric wedges rotating around a central square to form an external octagon (Fig. **22–30**). It was an abstract form unto itself, free from alphabetic, pictographic, or figurative connotations. Although it had overtones of security or protection because four elements confine the square, it proved a completely abstract form could successfully function as a large organization's visual identifier.

A distinctive sans-serif typeface was designed for use with the logo. The selection of an expanded letter grew out of the firm's study of the bank's design and communications needs. Urban signage, for instance, is often seen by pedestrians at extreme angles, but an extended letterform retains its character recognition even when viewed under these conditions (Fig. **22–31**). The uncommon presence of the expanded sans-serif type in this design system launched a fashion for this kind of letterform during the first half of the 1960s. Consistency and uniformity in the application of both logo and letterform enabled redundancy, in a sense, to become a third identifying element.

The Chase Manhattan Bank corporate identification system became a prototype for the genre. Other financial institutions seriously evaluated their corporate image and the need for an effective visual identifier. The rapid recognition value gained by the Chase Manhattan mark indicated that a successful logo could, in effect, become an additional character in the inventory of symbolic forms carried in each person's mind. Tom Geismar observed that a symbol must be memorable and have "some barb to it that will make it stick in your mind." At the same time it must be "attractive, pleasant, and appropriate. The challenge is to combine all those things into something simple."

One of Chermayeff & Geismar's most far-reaching corporate design programs was for Mobil Oil, a multinational corporation operating in over a hundred countries. The name (Fig. **22–32**), executed in an elemental geometric sans-serif typeface, is the ultimate in simplicity. The word *Mobil* is executed in five vertical strokes, the diagonals of the *M,* and two circles. The name became the trademark, with the round, red *O* separating this word from the visual presentation of other words. The emphasis on the circle is projected as a visual theme throughout the identification program and in the design of Mobil gas stations (Fig. **22–33**).

Chermayeff & Geismar has produced over one hundred corporate design programs, including the trademarks illustrated in Figure **22–34.** In addition to corporate identification, the design firm has developed innovative exhibition techniques. One is called the supermarket principle. A large variety of objects is clustered to collectively convey an insight. At the 1976 Nation of Nations exhibition in Washington, DC, for the United States bicentennial, for example, an exhibition of diverse spinning wheels brought to America from European countries communicated the cultural variety and diversity of the people who ventured across an ocean seeking a better life. By stacking illuminated signs used to identify American corporations in many foreign countries and languages, the concept of global trade was projected. Chermayeff & Geismar continues to

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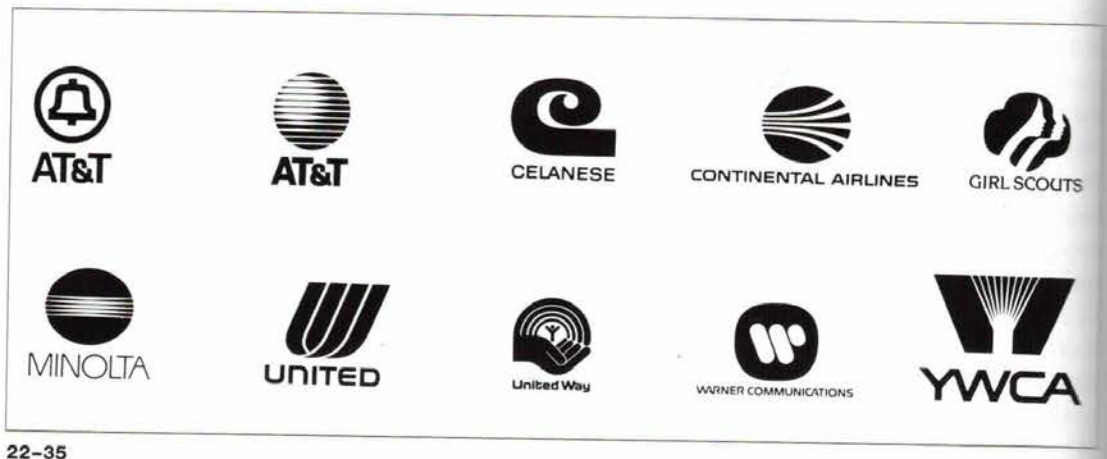


22–35

accept a steady stream of smaller projects, such as posters, requiring immediate, innovative solutions. Design consistency from project to project is rejected in favor of allowing each solution to evolve from its problem.

Saul Bass's mastery of elemental form (*see* Figs. **21–19** and **21–20**) was applied to visual identification problems as his firm—Saul Bass & Associates, later renamed Saul Bass/Herb Yeager & Associates—produced iconic and often widely imitated trademarks. Bass believes a trademark must be readily understood yet possess elements of metaphor and ambiguity that will attract the viewer again and again. Many Bass trademarks have become important cultural icons (Fig. **22–35**). Within two years after Bass redesigned the Bell Telephone System bell trademark, its recognition rose from 71 to over 90 percent of the public. After the AT&T long-distance telephone network was split from the local Bell system telephone companies in 1984, Bass designed a new mark to reposition the firm as "a global communications company" rather than "the national telephone system," with information bits circling the globe. This concept was expressed in computer-graphics animation as the identification tag for AT&T television commercials (Fig. **22–36**).

22–32. **Chermayeff & Geismar Associates, Mobil Oil trademark, 1964. The old pictorial trademark, a red flying horse, was replaced by a simple and direct presentation of a memorable word.**

22–33. **Chermayeff & Geismar Associates, Mobil service station exhibition, c. 1968. A predominance of cylinder forms and a thematic repetition of circular bands brings design order to a type of retail outlet long noted for visual pollution and clutter.**

22–34. **Chermayeff & Geismar Associates, trademarks for (left to right, top row to bottom) the American Film Institute, 1964; Time Warner, 1990; the American Revolution Bicentennial, 1971; Screen Gems, 1966; Burlington Industries, 1965; the National Broadcasting Company, 1986; Rockefeller Center, 1985; and the National Aquarium in Baltimore, 1979.**

22–35. **Saul Bass & Associates, trademarks for (left to right, top row to bottom) AT&T (Bell), 1969; AT&T (Globe), 1984; Celanese, 1965; Continental Airlines, 1965; Girl Scouts, 1978; Minolta, 1980; United Airlines, 1974; United Way, 1972; Warner Communications, 1974; and YWCA, 1988.**

22–43

22–43. **Massimo Vignelli and the Unimark New York office staff, Knoll Graphics, 1966–1970s. Knoll is renowned for furniture design, so the graphic program signified a strong design orientation.**

porate character. Unless it meets these requirements, the company image it seeks to create will never coalesce into a unified whole, but will remain a mosaic of unrelated fragments."

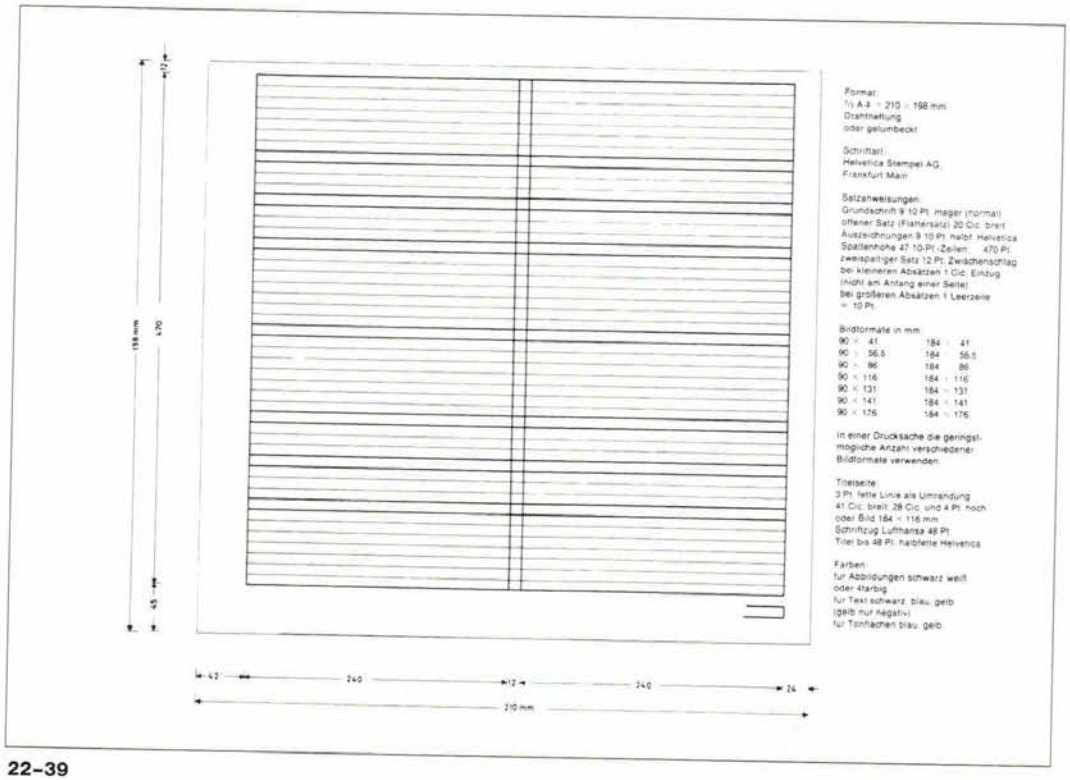
John Massey (b. 1931) joined CCA in 1957 and became the director of design in 1964. Under his direction, corporate design and the International Typographic Style merged. Visual identification and systems design in general—and design in Chicago in particular—were broadly influenced. Massey adopted Helvetica as the corporate typeface and developed standardized grids for all signage and publications. A strong advocate of design consistency and unity, Massey used thematic and visual continuity in such diverse communications materials as the annual report to stockholders and trade advertising as early as 1961. The "Great Ideas of Western Man" advertising campaign had undergone pendulum swings of typographic approaches during the 1950s; now it entered a two-decade period of typographic continuity.

In 1964 CCA established the Center for Advanced Research in Design, an independent design studio that worked on advanced and experimental projects and received commissions from other organizations. The center developed a comprehensive visual identification system for Atlantic Richfield, a major petroleum products company whose name changed to Arco.

Active as a painter and printmaker, Massey explores "geometric patterns and volumes as they relate to the order of the universe." This sense of order, and the bringing of a wholeness to a sphere of activity, strongly informed Massey's work as a corporate design manager, as evidenced in CCA publications (Fig. **22–42**). CCA was purchased by Mobil Oil in 1976, then sold to the Jefferson Smurfit company in 1986. Decentralized and lacking an autonomous identity, CCA's era as a design patron drifted to a close.

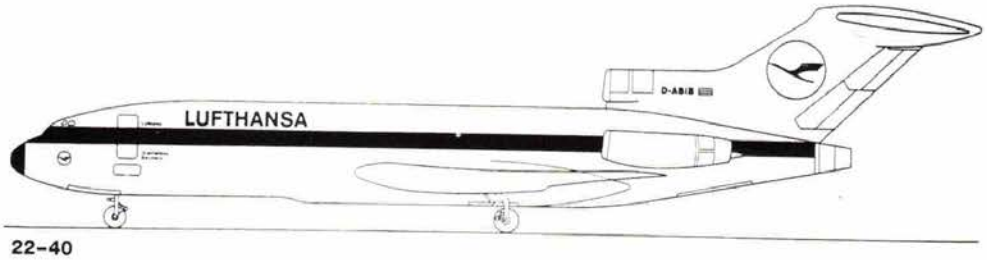
Unimark, an international design firm that grew to 402 employees in 48 design offices around the world, was founded in Chicago in 1965 by a group of partners including Ralph Eckerstrom, James K. Fogleman, and Massimo Vignelli (b. 1931). Unimark rejected individualistic design and believed that design could be a system, a basic structure setup so that other people could implement it effectively. The basic tool for this effort was the grid, standardizing all graphic communications for dozens of large Unimark clients, including Alcoa, Ford Motor Company, JCPenney, Memorex, Panasonic, Steelcase, and Xerox. Helvetica was the preferred typeface for all Unimark visual identity systems, as it was considered the most legible type family. Objectivity was Unimark's goal as it spread a generic conformity across the face of multinational corporate communications. The design programs it created were rational and so rigorously systematized that they became virtually foolproof as long as the standards were maintained.

The graphic excellence of Unimark design programs can be seen in the Knoll program (Fig. **22–43**), directed by Massimo Vignelli, who was Unimark's director of design and head of the New York office. This program set the standard for furniture-industry graphics for years to come. But Unimark's far-flung design empire—with offices in major North American cities, England, Australia, Italy, and South Africa—was vulnerable to the effects of



22–39

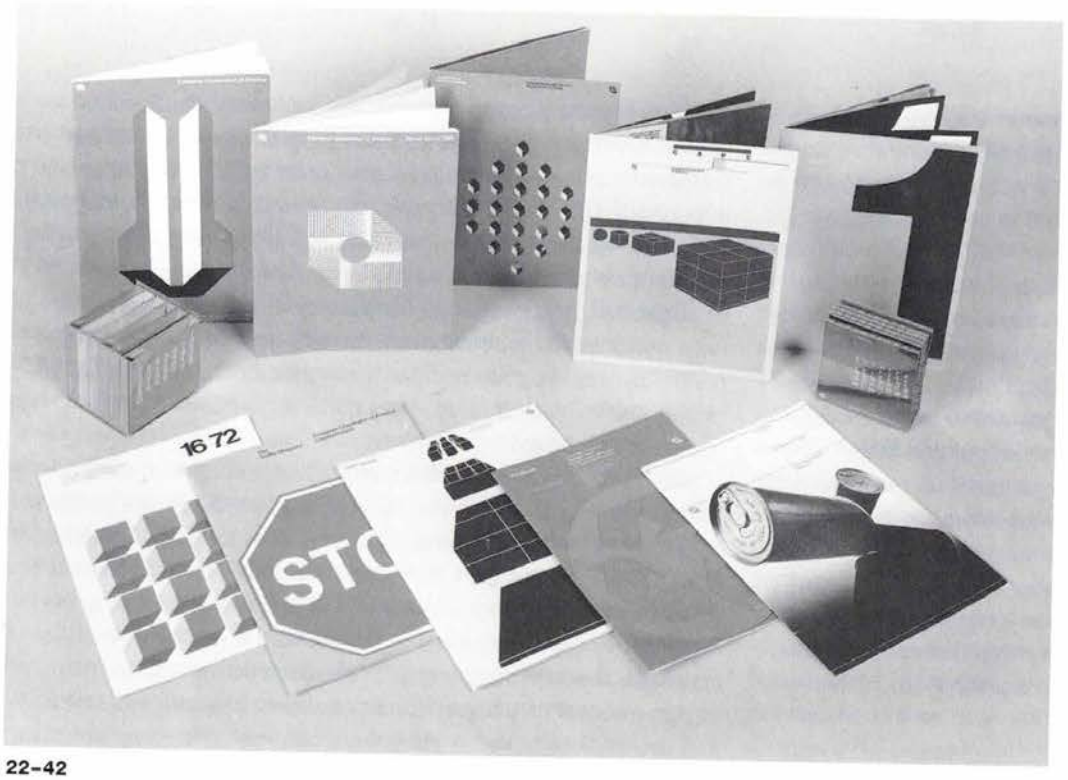
22–39. **Otl Aicher in collaboration with Tomás Gonda, Fritz Querengässer, and Nick Roericht, page from the Lufthansa identity manual, 1962. Carefully constructed grid formats regulated all publications formats.**



22–40

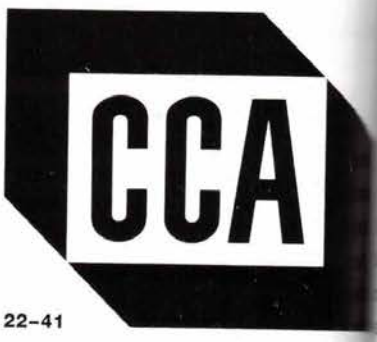
22–40. **Otl Aicher in collaboration with Tomás Gonda, Fritz Querengässer, and Nick Roericht, aircraft identification from the Lufthansa identity manual, 1962. Color and insignia are standardized.**

22–41. **Ralph Eckerstrom, trademark for Container Corporation of America, 1957. A flat image becomes an isometric optical illusion, signifying packaging while provoking visual interest.**



22–42

22–42. **John Massey and other Container Corporation of America staff designers, including Jeff Barnes, Bill Bonnell, and Joe Hutchcroft, publication covers and calendars, 1966–78. Graphics from two decades show consistency and excellence in the corporate design program.**



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22–43. **Massimo Vignelli and the Unimark New York office staff, Knoll Graphics, 1966–1970s. Knoll is renowned for furniture design, so the graphic program signified a strong design orientation.**

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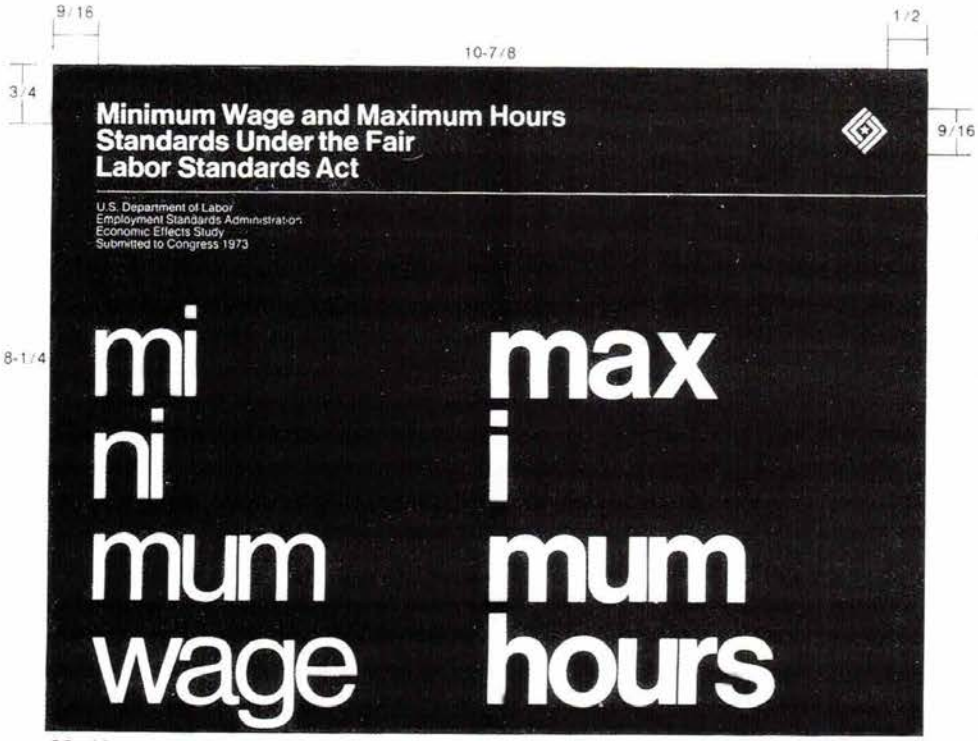


22–46

22–44. **Vignelli Associates, cover designs for *Skyline* magazine, 1979. Tall, condensed typography becomes a metaphor for the New York skyline.**

22–45. **John Massey, trademark for the U. S. Department of Labor, 1974. Stripes on the *L* forms suggest the American flag's stars and stripes.**

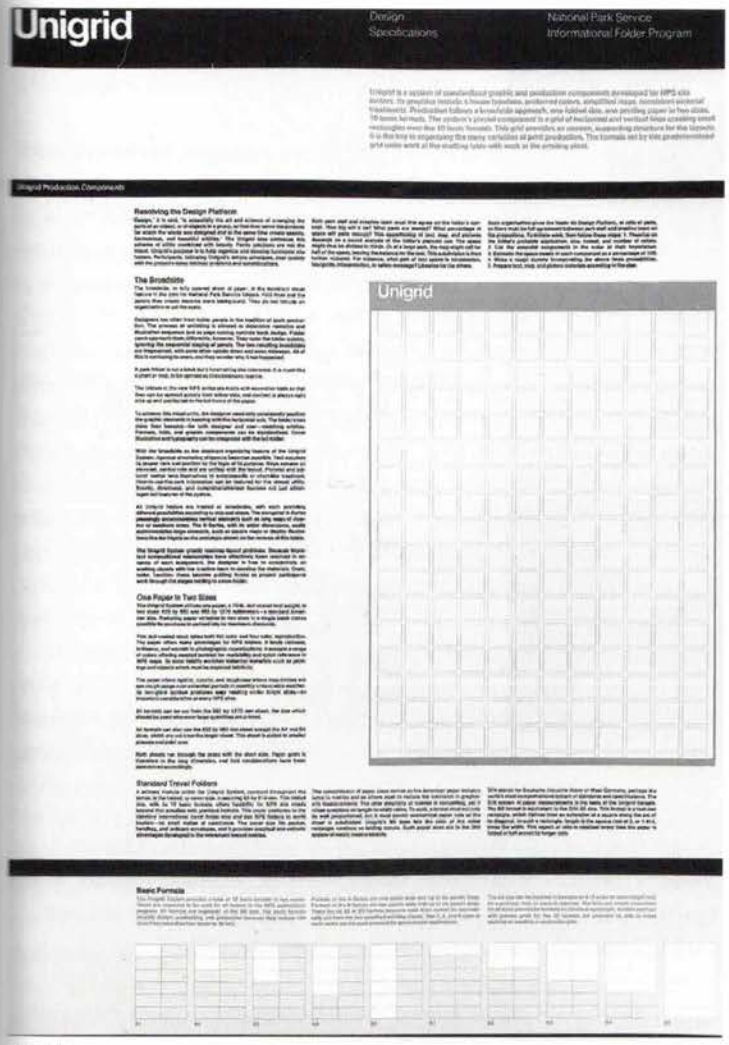
22–46. **John Massey, typographic cover format from the U. S. Department of Labor graphic standards manual, 1974. Standardized formats bring economy and efficiency to the design process.**

recession in the early 1970s, and a retrenchment process began.

The Unimark philosophy continued as its founders and the legion of designers they trained continued to implement its ideals. When the New York office closed, Vignelli Associates was founded by Massimo and Lella Vignelli in 1971. Their typographic range expanded beyond Helvetica to include such classical faces as Bodoni, Century, Garamond, and Times Roman, but the rational order of grid systems and emphasis on lucid and objective communication remained a constant. Horizontal rules divide space into zones of information; large-scale type gives words a strong presence (Fig. **22–44**). Vignelli continues to put his imprint on the evolution of information design.

The Federal Design Improvement Program

In May 1974 the United States Government initiated the Federal Design Improvement Program in response to a growing awareness of design as an effective tool for achieving objectives. This was coordinated by the Architectural and Environmental Arts Program (later renamed the Design Arts Program) of the National Endowment for the Arts. All aspects of federal design, including architecture, interior space planning, landscaping, and graphic design, were upgraded under the program. The Graphics Improvement Program, under the direction of Jerome Perlmutter, set forth to improve the quality of visual communications and the ability of governmental agencies to communicate effectively to citizens.



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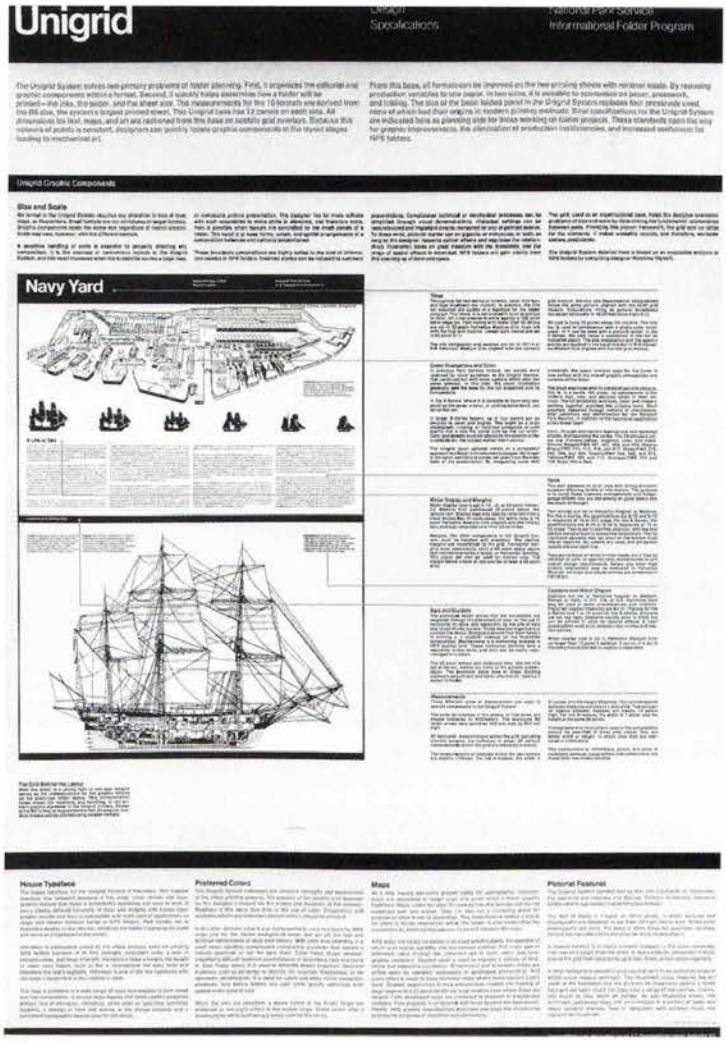

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22–47. **Massimo Vignelli (consulting designer), Vincent Gleason (art director), and Dennis McLaughlin (graphic designer), Unigrid system for the National Park Service, 1977. Design specifications for the Unigrid system and standard formats are presented on a large broadside.**

22–48. **Massimo Vignelli (consulting designer), Vincent Gleason (art director), and Dennis McLaughlin (graphic designer), Unigrid system for the National Park Service, 1977. The reverse side of Figure 22–47 demonstrates and specifies all graphic components on a sample broadside.**

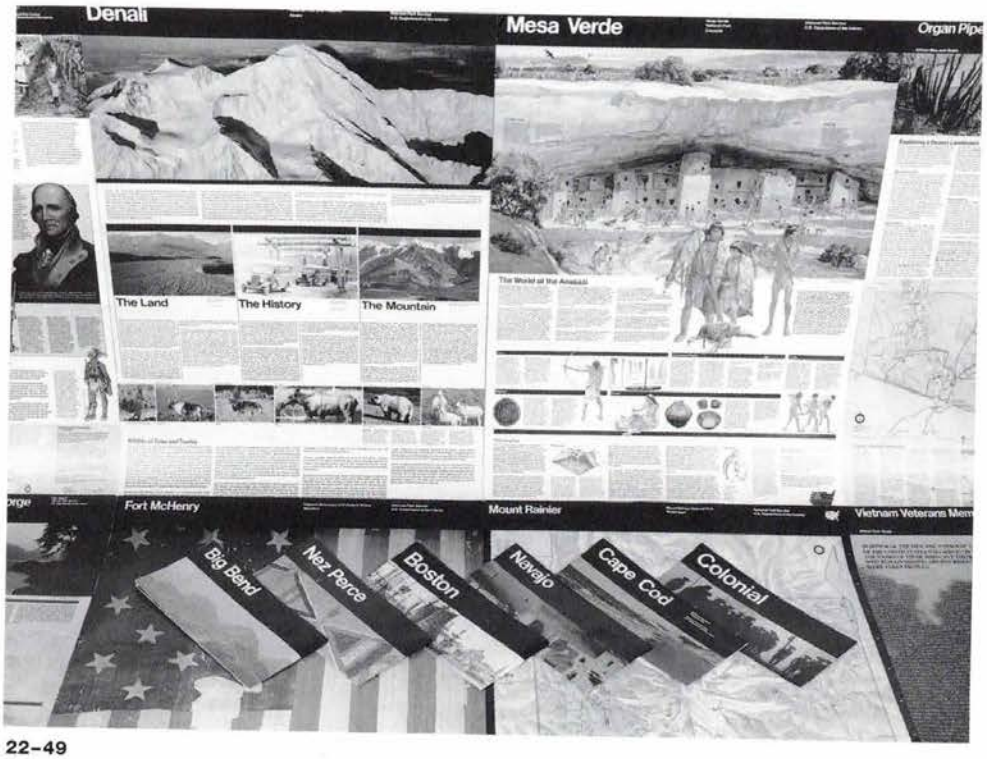
The prototype federal graphic standards system was designed by John Massey for the Department of Labor. Problems identified by this case study included outmoded, unresponsive, and impersonal images, a lack of uniform and effective communications policies, and insufficient image continuity. Massey's goals for the new design program were "uniformity of identification; a standard of quality; a more systematic and economic template for publication design; a closer relationship between graphic design (as a means) and program development (as an end) so that the proposed graphics system will become an effective tool in assisting the department to achieve program objectives."

A graphic standards manual established a cohesive system for visual identification and publication formats. Standards for format sizes, typography, grid systems, paper specifications, and colors realized tremendous economies in material and time. These standards, however, were carefully structured so that the creativity and responsiveness to each communications project would not be seriously hampered. With the mechanics of the printing and format predetermined, Department of Labor staff designers were able to devote their time to the creative aspects of the problem at hand.

The Department of Labor communications mark (Fig. **22–45**) is composed of two interlocking *L*s forming a diamond configuration around a star. A set of publication format sizes provided economy of production and minimized paper waste, while a series of grid systems and uniform typographic specifications ensured consistency (Fig. **22–46**). Routine printed materials, including stationery, envelopes, and forms, were given standardized formats.

Over forty federal departments and agencies initiated visual identification programs, and many of the leading designers in America were called upon to develop them. One of the most successful is the Unigrid system, developed in 1977 for the United States National Park Service by Vignelli Associates in collaboration with the Park Service Division of Publications, headed by Vincent Gleason.

The Unigrid (Figs. **22–47** and **22–48**) unified the hundreds of informational folders used at about 350 national park locations. It is based on exquisitely simple basic elements: ten format sizes, all derived from the Unigrid; broadside or full-sheet presentation of the folders, instead of layouts structured on folded panels; black title



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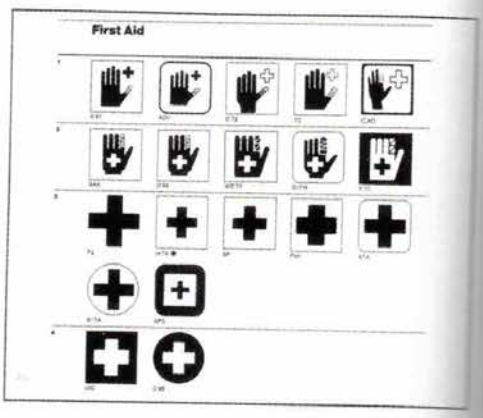

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22–51

22–49. **National Park Service publications staff, including Vincent Gleason (chief), and designers Melissa Cronyn, Nicholas Kirilloff, Dennis McLaughlin, Linda Meyers, Phillip Musselwhite, and Mitchell Zetlin, publications created with the Unigrid, 1977–90.**

22–50. **Various artists/designers, nineteen first-aid symbols from various systems throughout the world. Semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic values of existing programs were evaluated.**

22–51. **Roger Cook and Don Shanosky, signage symbol system for the U. S. Department of Transportation, 1974. This poster introduced the thirty-four symbols to a wide audience.**

bands with park names serving as logotypes; horizontal organization of illustrations, maps, and text; standardized typographic specifications; and a master grid coordinating design in the studio with production at the printing plant. A single, white, dull-coated paper in a standard size is used, allowing economical carload purchases. Typography is restricted to Helvetica and Times Roman in a limited number of sizes and weights.

The standardized format of the Unigrid enables the Park Service publications staff to focus on achieving excellence in the development and presentation of pictorial and typographic information (Fig. **22–49**). The program proved so successful that a format was also developed for the Park Service's series of 150 handbooks. The Unigrid's continued vitality and effectiveness prove the value of design systems for large organizations.

To attract outstanding architects and designers to government service, traditional civil service procedures were supplemented by portfolio reviews conducted by professionals. Designers were recruited by a publicity campaign with the theme "Excellence attracts excellence." However, by 1980 momentum for federal design excellence became a casualty of the Reagan administra-

tion's tax cuts and huge federal deficits. Many established design programs for such agencies as the Park Service were maintained, while others sank back toward mediocrity.

Transportation signage symbols

Major international events, large airports, and other transportation facilities handling international travelers have commissioned graphic designers to create pictographs as part of overall signage programs to communicate important information and directions quickly and simply. The development of these sign-and-symbol systems involved considerable time and expense, and near duplication of effort often occurred. In 1974 the United States Department of Transportation commissioned the American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA), the nation's oldest professional graphic design organization, to create a master set of thirty-four passenger- and pedestrian-oriented symbols for use in transportation facilities. The goal was a consistent and interrelated group of symbols for worldwide transportation facilities; these were meant to bridge language barriers and simplify basic messages.

The first step was the compilation and inventory of symbol systems developed for individual transportation facilities and international events (Fig. **22–50**). A committee of five prominent graphic designers, headed by Thomas H. Geismar, acted as evaluators and advisors on the project. The Department of Transportation provided the AIGA with a list of message areas. Research, examples, and manuals from around the world were gathered and compiled. Prior solutions to the thirty-four subject areas were evaluated by each member of the advisory committee; then the committee prepared a summary recommendation to guide the design of the symbol system. Some existing symbols were deemed adequate for inclusion in a system. In other subject categories, a totally new glyph was needed. The final set of symbols (Fig. **22–51**) was designed and drawn by the outstanding design partnership of Roger Cook (b. 1930) and Don Shanosky (b. 1937), of Cook and Shanosky Associates in Princeton, New Jersey. Clarity of image was their overriding goal—the resulting symbol system combined overall harmony with a visual consistency of line, shape, weight, and form. This effort represented an important first step toward the goal of unified and effective graphic communications transcending cultural and language barriers in a shrinking world. A 288-page book published by the Department of Transportation provides invaluable information about the design and evaluation process used to arrive at the system.

Design systems for the Olympic Games

By the late 1960s the concept of comprehensive design systems had become a reality. Planners realized that comprehensive planning for large organizations and events was not only functional and desirable but actually necessary, if large numbers of people were to be accommodated. This was particularly true in international events, including World's Fairs and Olympic Games, where an international and multilingual audience had to be directed and informed. Among many outstanding efforts, the design programs for the 1968 Mexico City Nineteenth Olympiad, the 1972 Munich Twentieth Olympiad, and the 1984 Los Angeles Twenty-Third Olympiad were milestones in the evolution of graphic systems.

A theme—"The young of the world united in friendship through understanding"—was adopted by the organizing committee of the Nineteenth Olympiad, chaired by Mexican architect Pedro Ramirez Vazquez. Realizing that an effective information system encompassing environmental directions, visual identification, and publicity was needed, Vazquez assembled an international design team, with American Lance Wyman (b. 1937) as director of graphic design and British industrial designer Peter Murdoch (b. 1940) as director of special products.

Because the Nineteenth Olympiad took place in and around Mexico City itself, rather than in a special location built for the purpose, the design system had to be deployed throughout one of the world's largest cities. Traffic control, urban logistics, and a multilingual audience compounded the scope of the challenge. During Wyman's initial analysis of the problem, he determined that the solution should reflect the cultural heritage of Mexico instead of the design approaches of New York or Basel. An exhaustive study of ancient Aztec artifacts and Mexican folk art led him to employ two design ideas: the use of repeated multiple lines to form patterns and the Mexican love of bright, pure hues. Throughout the country, arts and crafts, adobe homes, paper flowers, marketplaces, and clothing sang with joyous, pure color, and this exuberant color spirit figured importantly in Wyman's planning.

Designing a logotype for the Olympiad was the first step (Fig. **22–52**), and it formed a basis for the further evolution of the design program. The five rings of the Olympiad symbol were overlapped and merged with the numeral 68 (the year was 1968). This emblematic symbol was then combined with the word *Mexico.* The repeated-stripe pattern observed in traditional Mexican art was used to form the letters. Following development of the logotype, Wyman extended it into a display typeface (Fig. **22–53**) that could be applied to a range of graphics from tickets to billboards and from uniform patches to giant color-coded balloons hovering over the arenas. The system encompassed pictographic symbols for athletic (Fig. **22–54**) and cultural (Fig. **22–55**) events, formats for the Department of Publications, site identification, directional signs for implementation by the Department of Urban Design throughout the city, informational posters, maps, postage stamps (Fig. **22–56**), film titles, and television spots. Tickets were coded in a universal visual language of colors and symbols (Fig. **22–57**). The top portion identified the sport (by pictograph) and location; the bottom portion identified the date and time, color-coded to the day of the week and coordinated with the program of events. The middle portion was coded to the color of the seating area and used pictographs to identify the gate, ramp, row, and seat.

For the exterior environmental signage system, Wyman and Murdoch collaborated on the development of a complete system of modular functional components with interchangeable parts (Fig. **22–58**). These combined directional and identification signage (Fig. **22–59**) with mailboxes, telephones, water fountains, and so on. Color was used in both decorative and pragmatic ways. Information kiosks were vibrant with colorful pictographs (Fig. **22–60**). The rainbow of colors used to identify major routes on the official map was painted on the curbs of the corresponding streets; a person wishing to travel from the hotel on Avenue Universidad to the track-and-field races at the stadium on the Avenue de Los Insurgents Sur (identified by a pictograph of a foot) followed the purple line along Avenue Universidad until it crossed the red line at the intersection with the Avenue de Los Insurgents Sur, after which the person could follow the red line along the curve until arriving at the stadium, where a large foot-race pictograph announced the

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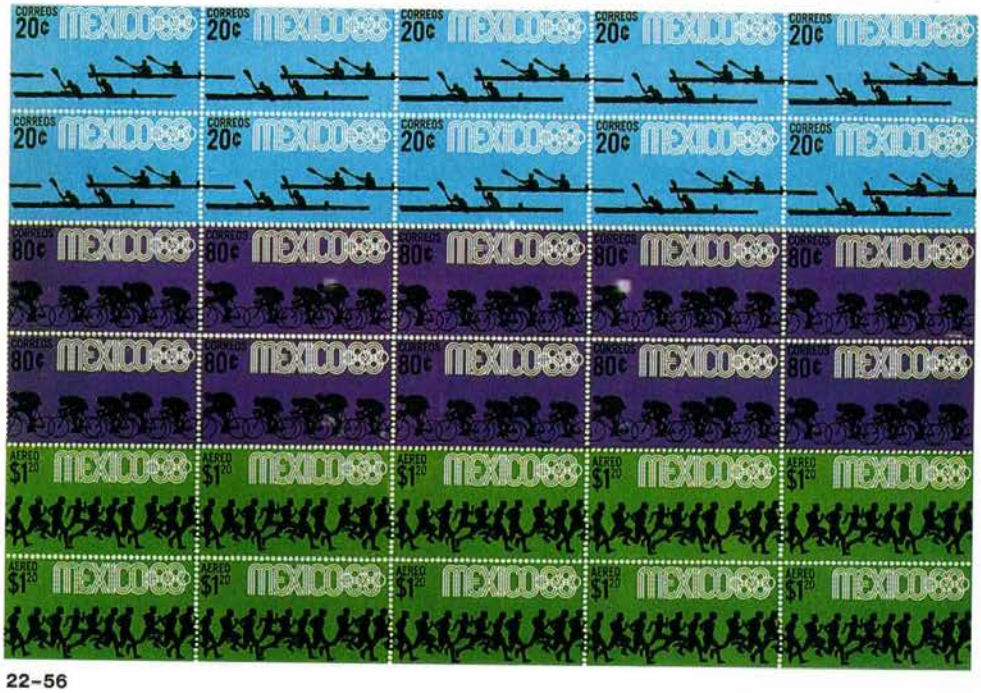

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22–52. Lance Wyman, logo for the Nineteenth Olympiad, 1966. This sequence shows the development of the logo and how it was extended into a dynamic animated film.

22–53. Lance Wyman, alphabet for the Nineteenth Olympiad, 1967. Composed of five bands or ribbons, the alphabet echoes design motifs from early Mexican folk arts.

22–54. Lance Wyman, Eduardo Terrazas, and Manuel Villazon, sports symbols for the Nineteenth Olympiad, 1967. Sports-equipment pictographs permitted immediate identification by an international audience.

22–55. Lance Wyman and Eduardo Terrazas, cultural symbols for the Nineteenth Olympiad, 1967. The cultural events expressed as pictographs are a Youth Reception, Film Festival, Youth Camp, World Art Exhibition, Music and Performing Arts Festival, Sculptors' Conference, Poets' Reunion, Children's Art Festival, Folklore Festival, Ballet, Folk Arts Festival, Olympic Flame, Stamp Exhibit, Olympiad History Exhibition, Nuclear Energy Exhibition, Space Research Exhibition, Human Genetics and Biology, Olympiad Facilities Exhibition, Advertising in Service of Peace, and Films of Olympiad Games.

22–56. Lance Wyman, Mexican Olympiad postage stamps, 1967–68. Silhouetted athletes are printed over brilliant color backgrounds. The images were designed to flow from stamp to stamp in a continuous design.

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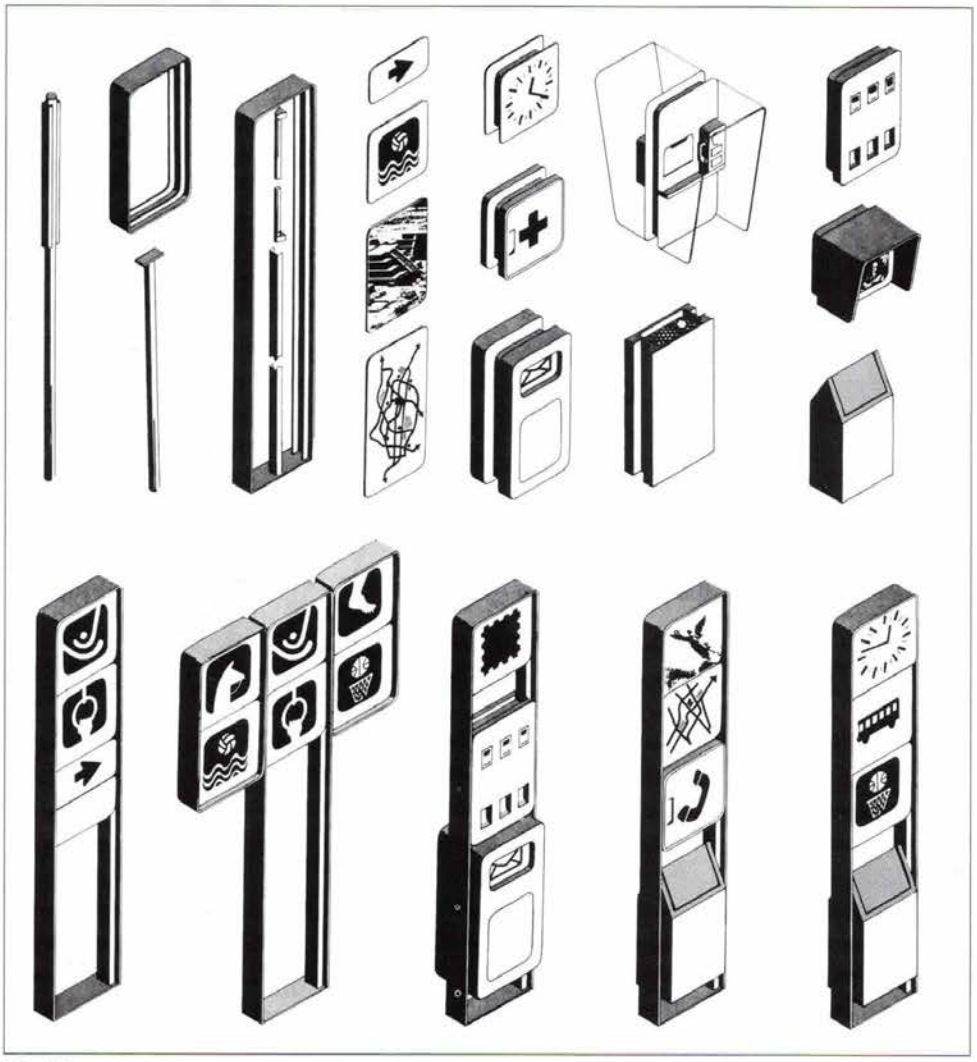

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22–57. Lance Wyman and Beatrice Cole, Mexican Olympiad tickets, 1968. Color and glyphs transcended language barriers.

22–58. Peter Murdoch, preliminary studies for the Mexican Olympiad signage and facilities, 1968. Modular components were assembled into units throughout the city.

22–59. Peter Murdoch (structures) and Lance Wyman (graphics), Mexican Olympiad signage system, 1968. The flexible system enabled information to be disseminated throughout the city.

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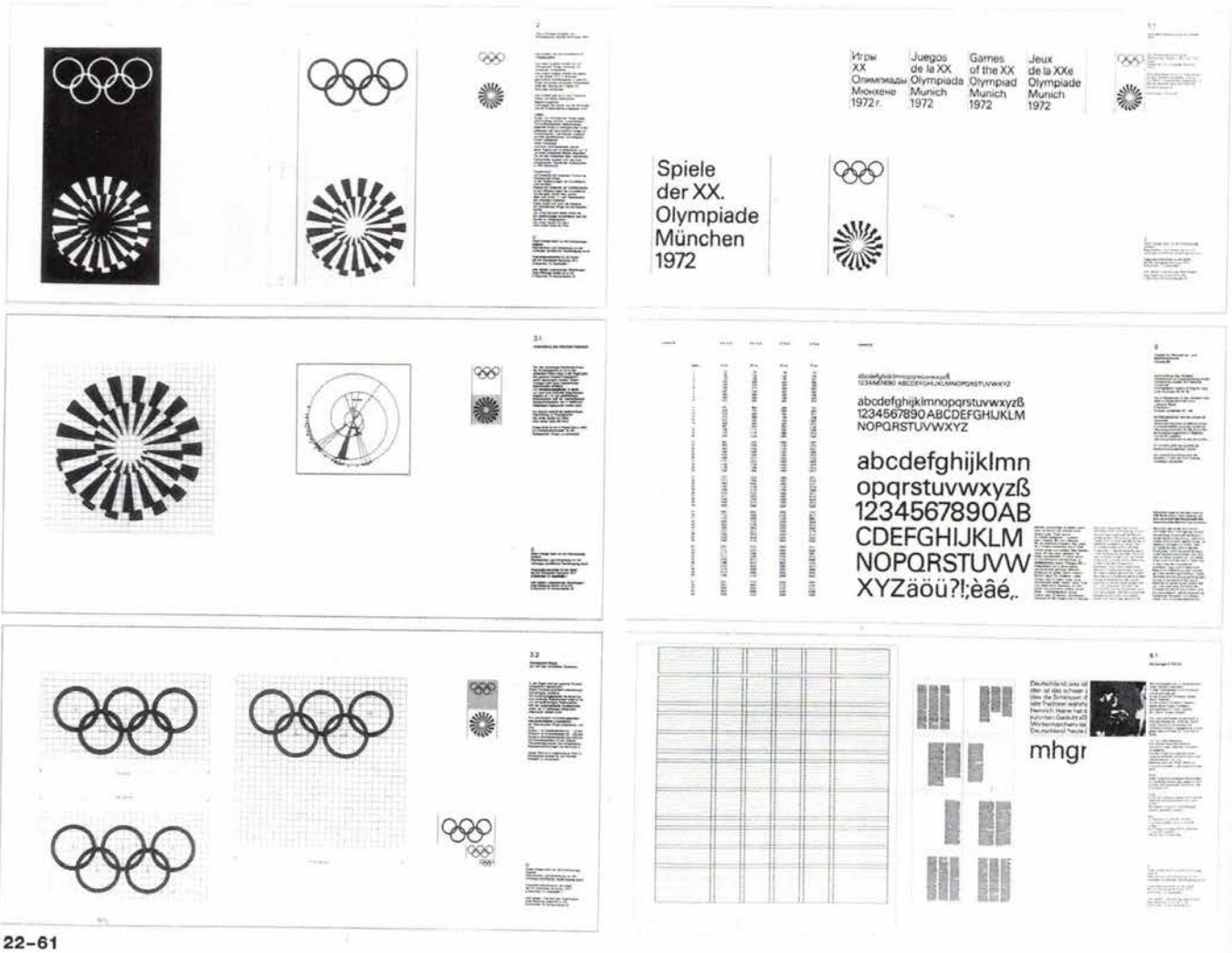
22–60. **Peter Murdoch (structures) and Lance Wyman (graphics), Mexican Olympiad information kiosk, 1968. Thirty brightly colored information kiosks were placed in strategic locations.**

22–61. **Otl Aicher and his staff, Munich Olympiad graphics standards manual pages, c. 1970. Every detail of the graphics program was determined.**

22–62. **Otl Aicher, grid for the Munich Olympiad pictographs, c. 1972. The complexity of the grid permitted an infinite range of permutations.**

22–63. **Otl Aicher and his staff, sports pictographs for the Munich Olympiad, c. 1970.**

22–64. **Otl Aicher and his staff, informational graphics for the Munich Olympiad, 1972. Pictographs function as signifiers and illustrations.**



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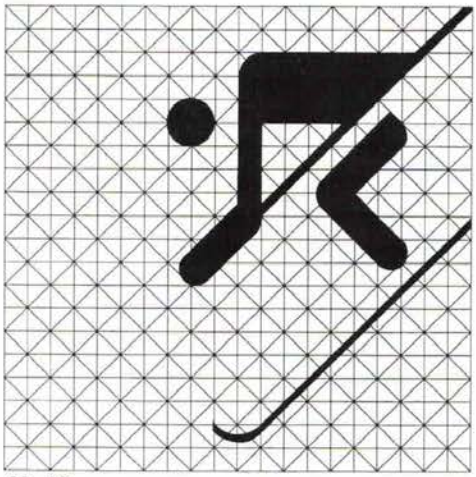

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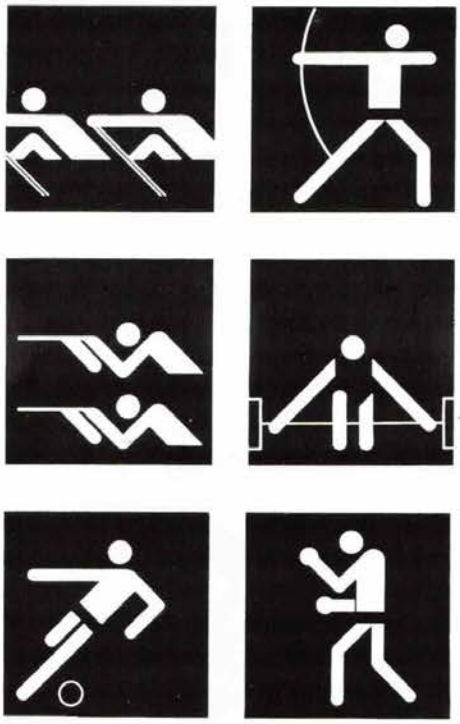

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sporting event held in that location. This design system was so effective that the *New York Times* proclaimed, "You can be illiterate in all languages [and still navigate the surroundings successfully,] so long as you are not color-blind."

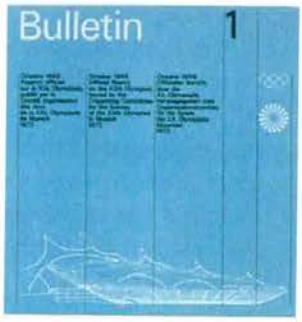
In antiquity, the Olympiad concept embraced the physical and intellectual unity of the whole person. Nineteen cultural events were added to the 1968 program in an effort to restore this concept; these required another set of pictographic representations. To immediately separate cultural from athletic events, the cultural symbols were placed in the silhouetted shape formed by the 68 of the logo.

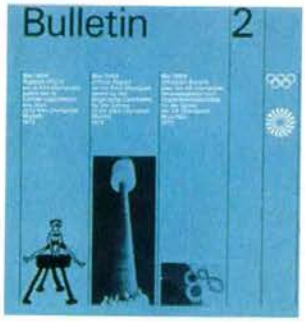
Wyman's goal was to create a completely unified design system easily understood by people of all language backgrounds and flexible enough to meet a vast range of applications. Measured in terms of graphic originality, innovative functional application, and its value to thousands of visitors to the Mexican Olympiad, the graphic-design system developed by Wyman and his associates in Mexico was one of the most successful in the evolution of visual identification. After completing the two-year Olympiad project, Wyman returned to New York City and reestablished his design firm, where the expertise gained on the Mexican project has been applied to comprehensive design programs for shopping plazas and zoos.

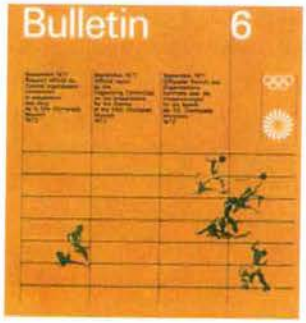
For the 1972 Twentieth Olympiad in Munich, Germany, Otl Aicher directed a design team in the development and implementation of a more formal and systematized design program. An identification manual (Fig. **22–61**) established standards for use of the symbol, a radiant sunburst/spiral configuration centered beneath the Olympic rings and bracketed by two vertical lines. Univers was selected as the typeface, and a system of publication grids was established. The color palette consisted of a partial spectrum composed of two blues, two greens, yellow, orange, and three neutral tones (black, white, and a middle-valued gray); red was not used. Excluding one segment of the spectrum in this way created a unique color feeling generated by the harmony of analogous colors and projected a festive air.

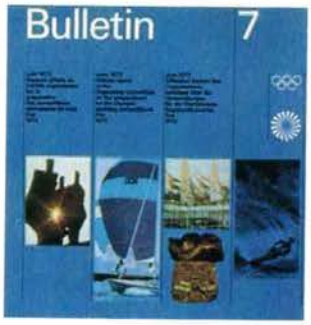
An extensive series of pictographs was drawn on a modular square grid divided by horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines (Fig. **22–62**). For each Olympic sport a pictograph was designed (Fig. **22–63**) that emphasized the motion of the athletes and the diagrammatic indications of their equipment—immediate identification was achieved in spite of language barriers. These pictographs were widely used in printed graphics (Fig. **22–64**) and identification signs. The cool geometry of the pictographs were in counterpoint to another level of imagery: high-contrast, posterized photographs of athletes used on publications (Fig. **22–65**) and a series of twenty-two commemorative posters depicting major Olympic sports; these used the modified-spectrum palette of four cool and two warm colors. The track-events poster (Fig. **22–66**), for example, defines the track and runners in the lighter green and two shades of blue against a dark-green field. Other posters in the series had orange, yellow, blue, or gray as their primary background color.

The 1984 Los Angeles Twenty-Third Olympiad saw a sprawling city transformed into a joyous environment of color and shape that unified twenty-eight athletic sites, forty-two cultural locations, and three Olympic Villages for housing athletes in an exuberant celebration of the event. Hundreds of designers and architects working for over sixty design firms were involved in this vast project. Continuing the practice of combining a symbol specifically designed for this edition of the Olympics with the traditional linked









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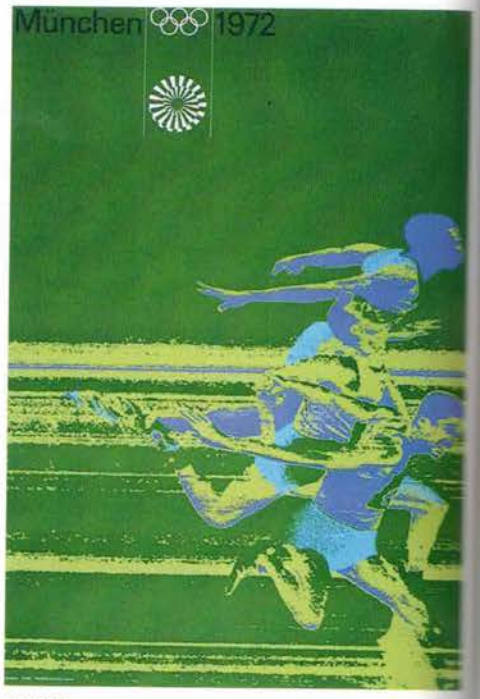

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22–65. **Otl Aicher and his staff, covers for the *Munich Olympiad Bulletin,* 1971. An inventive variety is achieved with a consistent format. In number six, the grid becomes a part of the illustration.**

22–66. **Otl Aicher and his staff, poster for the Munich Olympiad, 1972. Each poster had a wide expanse of one dominant color as a ground for a posterized photograph of athletic competition.**

22–67. **Jim Berté (designer) and Robert Miles Runyan (art director), symbol for the games of the Los Angeles Olympiad, 1980. The "star-in-motion" is generated by three weights of horizontal lines.**

22–68. **Debra Valencia (designer) and Deborah Sussman (art director), design guide for the Los Angeles Olympiad, 1983. The design parameters allow diversity within a fixed range of possibilities.**

22–69. **Deborah Sussman, *Design Quarterly* cover, 1985. This periodical cover captures the graphic resonance created for the Los Angeles Olympiad.**

22–70. **The Jerde Partnership and Sussman/Prejza & Co., Los Angeles Olympiad stadium graphics, 1984. Graphics provided a unifying signature for the television broadcasts.**

rings, the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee selected a dynamic star-in-motion configuration (Fig. **22–67**) in a 1980 competition by leading Los Angeles design firms.

Lacking the huge government subsidies of many earlier Olympic games, the Organizing Committee decided to use twenty-six existing athletic facilities, adding only one new swimming pool and a cycling track. The design problem was well defined: how to temporarily transform these far-flung facilities to create a unified celebratory feeling, express the international character of the games, and invent a designed environment to work effectively both on site and for the global television audience. For help in addressing these challenges the Organizing Committee called on two design firms to spearhead the effort. An architectural firm, The Jerde Partnership, directed by Jon Jerde (b. 1940) and David Meckel, joined with an environmental and graphic design firm, Sussman/Prejza & Co., headed by Deborah Sussman and Paul Prejza, to collaborate on planning the visual vocabulary—architecture, color, graphics, and signage—for this massive event. Due to the limited amount of time from the start of the design process to the start of the Olympic games, existing technologies, prefabricated parts, and rented items were used extensively. The brief time frame of the Olympics combined with Los Angeles's mild, dry climate to permit the use of fragile and ephemeral materials.

A "parts kit" was assembled to provide a uniform idiom for designing components and environments. Forms were simple and basic. Sonotube columns, normally used as molds for casting concrete columns but used here as columns themselves, were decorated with colorful painted stripes. The sonotubes were lined up to make colonnades, combined with rented tents to make colorful pavilions, or topped with flat graphic pediments echoing the forms of earlier Olympiads. A poster-size design guide (Fig. **22–68**) was produced to provide all participants with consistent parameters for using the parts kit. Gateways and monumental towers were built from aqua-and-magenta scaffolding and punctuated with ornaments and banners.

Sussman selected a bright, vibrant palette with hot magenta as the basic color. Its primary supporting palette consisted of vivid aqua, chrome yellow, and vermilion. A secondary palette included yellow, green, lavender, and light blue, with violet, blue, and pink accents. Graphic forms were derived from the stars and stripes of the American flag combined with the stripes of the star-in-motion logo. These elements were freely pulled apart, recreated in the dazzling color palette, and combined in a layering of stripes—light against dark, thick against thin, and warm against cool. The program was infinitely adaptable, while adherence to the color palette, stripe-and-star motif, and approach to spatial organization permitted diverse materials (Fig. **22–69**) to evoke the Los Angeles Olympics.

These graphic themes were used extensively on entryways and sports arenas, providing a dynamic backdrop for events telecast around the globe to over two billion viewers. Each sports arena was transformed with its own color combinations and visual motifs (Fig. **22–70**) developed from the design guidelines. Entryways to

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22–71. **The Jerde Partnership, Sussman/Prejza & Co., and Daniel Benjamin, entrance to the Los Angeles Olympiad swimming competition venue, 1984. All information booths had yellow "wizard's hat" tents for easy identification.**

22–72. **The Jerde Partnership and Sussman/Prejza & Co., Los Angeles Olympiad village entry, 1984. Scaffolding, fabric, sonotubes, and spheres created a festive entryway.**

22–73. **Sussman/Prejza & Co., identification signage for the Los Angeles Olympiad, 1984. Color and decorative shapes transformed information graphics into a part of the celebration.**

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the sporting events became festive colonnades (Fig. **22–71**). Imaginative possibilities for combining the temporary forms were explored in designing environments—for example, the Olympic Village entries (Fig. **22–72**).

The informational signage system (Fig. **22–73**) was consistent yet flexible. Economical materials, such as hollow-core doors, styrene panels, and the ever-present sonotubes were painted in the bright colors, then Univers typography, bright bars of color, and large star-and-confetti patterns were applied. Staff uniforms, street banners, and food packaging extended the graphic theme to all aspects of the event.

Scores of designers and design firms produced Olympic graphics and environments conforming to the design guide developed by the principal design firms; it is not possible to list all of them here. The 1984 Los Angeles Olympics thus occurred within an environment of joyous graphics, which brought a festive vitality to the event. In a sense, graphics helped restore the Olympics as an international celebration after political boycotts (1980, 1984) and terrorist activities (1972) had tainted the games.

The Music Television logo

Music Television (MTV) first went on the air in 1981. Media visionary Bob Pittman initiated the idea of a round-the-clock music television station at a time when music videos had not yet reached full flower as a creative medium and only eighteen million American households subscribed to cable television. The fledging network commissioned a logo design from Manhattan Design, a New York City studio noted for its independent, risk-taking experimentation, especially for music-industry clients. Partners Pat Gorman (b. 1947), Frank Olinsky (b. 1950), and Patti Rogoff (b. 1945) all had fine-arts backgrounds; in addition, each had a bold, iconoclastic approach gained from an interest in comic-book art. Olinsky's father was an animator and illustrator, while Gorman's father was an actor. Gorman spent hours growing up in studios playing with equipment, so television became her native language.

During the design process, Gorman felt Olinsky's sketch of a bold, three-dimensional sans-serif *M* needed further development, so she scrawled a large, graffitilike *tv* on its face, and one of the most memorable and influential trademarks of the twentieth century was born (Fig. **22–74**). The network's working name had been "The Music Channel"; Manhattan Design suggested changing the name to "Music Television" to reflect the proposed logo's initials.

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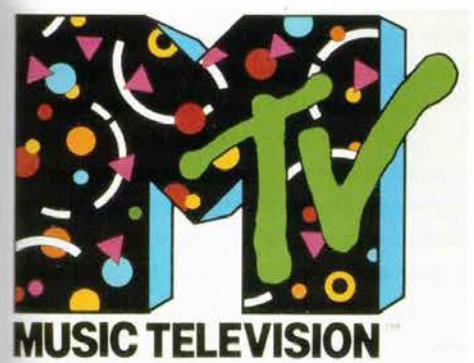

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22–74. **Manhattan Design, MTV logo, 1981. By realizing the logo's surfaces and strokes were capable of infinite metamorphosis and variation, the designers made a profound leap toward the digital age.**

22–75. **Pat Gorman and Frank Olinsky of Manhattan Design (design) and Broadcast Arts (fabrication), MTV "taxi" logo, 1981. As a dimensional object, the logo appears in limitless guises and environments.**

22–76. **Pat Gorman and Frank Olinsky of Manhattan Design, MTV "Colorforms" logo, 1985. Random patterns of geometric shapes convey a playful resonance.**

22–77. **Pat Gorman and Frank Olinsky of Manhattan Design, MTV "puzzle" logo, 1985. The logo is assembled, dismantled, melted, and shattered without losing its ability to verify identity.**

A moment of insight occurred when the designers realized the logo, with the broad flat surface of the *M* and the vigorous *tv,* could be altered through infinite variations of color, decoration, material, three-dimensionality, viewing angle, and motion (Figs. **22–75, 22–76,** and **22–77**). It could become many objects—a birthday cake, a Chinese takeout food carton, a block of ice. The logo could assume different personalities, participate in animated events, and even be demolished. The concept of a logo with a constantly changing persona is contrary to the widely held belief that trademarks and visual identifiers should be absolutely fixed and used in a consistent manner. Once this concept was decided upon, Manhattan Design produced hundreds of sketches to show possible variations.

During the network's early years, the MTV logo appeared as a ten-second network identification at the top of each hour. Manhattan Design, MTV internal staffs, and several animation studios storyboarded an unending stream of ten-second identification spots and quick station tags. The ability to constantly create new identification sequences allowed an ongoing creative collaboration involving animation, illustration, photography, and direct manipulation of the video medium (*see* Fig. **26–29**).

Each variation received an affectionate name as three alphabet characters took on a life and personality transcending their role as the call letters for one among dozens of new television channels spawned by the cable television revolution.

Gorman observed the MTV logo "changed the *face,* the *idea,* and the *speed* of graphic design"; it played a major role in redefining visual identity in the electronic age. During the 1980s print graphics began to reflect the influence of television in the use of color, texture, decorative graphic elements, and sequence.

The MTV logo harbingered the kinetic world of motion graphics soon to explode as cable television, video games, and computer graphics expanded the variety and range of kinetic graphic messages. On 8 September 1996, the *New York Times* observed, "The move of information from the printed page to other media has changed the nature of graphic identity. The MTV logo, which emerges from an unexpected metamorphosis, is probably the ultimate in animated identity." By 1995 MTV reached over 250 million homes in 58 countries, and this logo's worldwide recognition factor was second only to that of Coca-Cola.

In the last half of the twentieth century, visual identity gained increased importance in the information age. Complex international events, large governmental entities, and multinational corporations required complex design systems developed by graphic designers to manage information flow and visual identity. While accomplishing these pragmatic goals, design systems can also create a spirit or resonance, helping to express and define the very nature of the large organization or event. The identity of a large organization can be created or redefined by design. A design program for an international event can even establish or clarify the self-identity of the host city or country, contributing to a sense of community.