**LOBBY WALLS**

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**Quotes:**

I was just doing what they were doing in Europe. I didn’t claim that this was any great, original stuff, because it wasn’t. It was influenced by Surrealism and Picasso.—Interview with Steven Heller, 1988

To design is to transform prose into poetry.—*Design Form and Chaos*, 1993

The principal role of a logo is to identify, and simplicity is its means.… Its effectiveness depends on distinctiveness, visibility, adaptability, memorability, universality, and timelessness.—*Design Form and Chaos*, 1993

A style is the consequence of recurrent habits, restraints, or rules invented or inherited, written or overheard, intuitive or preconceived.—*AIGA Journal* *of Graphic Design*, “Good Design is Good Will,” 1987

I started reading because of a remark of Moholy Nagy… I remember, Moholy asked me, “Do you read art criticism?” And I said, “No.” The only thing he said was, “Pity.”—Interview with Steven Heller, 1988

Functionalism does not preclude beauty, but it does not guarantee it either. —*Print Magazine*, January/February 1960

Ideally, beauty and utility are mutually generative. In the past, rarely was beauty an end in itself.—*Thoughts on Design*, 1970

I always steered towards humorous things. People who don't have a sense of humor really have serious problems.—Interview with Steven Heller, 1988

Sentimentality provides only a momentary response to a work of art; nostalgia provides a momentary escape from reality.—*From Lascaux to Brooklyn*, 1996

I hate words that are abused, like “creativity.”—Interview with Steven Heller, 1988

I just always was interested in art. It’s like asking me how do I have breakfast; you know, you just have it.—Lecture Presented at “A Paul Rand Retrospective”, Cooper Union, 1996

Ideas may also grow out of the problem itself, which in turn becomes part of the solution.—*Paul Rand: A Designer’s Art*, 2000

Without the aesthetic, the computer is but a mindless speed machine, producing effects without substance, form without relevant content, or content without meaningful form.—*From Lascaux to Brooklyn*, 1996

You’re not doing museum stuff; whatever you’re doing should communicate, so the guy on the street should know what the heck you’re trying to sell.—Interview with Steven Heller, 1987

There is no science in advertising.—Interview with George Lois, 1986

…the plethora of bad design that we see all around us can probably be attributed as much to good salesmanship as to bad taste.—*Paul Rand: A Designer’s Art*, 2000

Ideas are fuel for the imagination; they are the unique response to a meaningful question.—*From Lascaux to Brooklyn*, 1996

Without play, there would be no Picasso. Without play, there is no experimentation. Experimentation is the quest for answers.—Graphic Wit “Paul Rand: The Play Instinct” 1991

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Intro: The problem that I see with this piece is that it’s a hybrid. It’s both a personal statement by the curator, but also intended to be the who, what, where, and why intro to the exhibition. I think that it plays the role of personal statement perfectly well, but I do not think that it really does the who, what, where, when, and why job adequately. If the audience doesn’t know who Paul Rand is, they start to get an understanding with this, but I think we could be a bit more explicit. I suggest that we do one of two things:

* Consider putting this piece as a personal statement on another wall (perhaps by the elevator) and writing another intro statement that is less personal and acts as a true introduction to the exhibition
* Adapt this piece so that it’s not in the first person and so that it acts as a true intro to the exhibition and use it as the intro

Paul Rand: Defining Design

Photo by: Simpson Kalisher

Part of being a designer is looking for inspiration, and that’s exactly what I found when I discovered the work of Paul Rand. The whimsical charm, visual simplicity, powerful communication and thoughtful writing completely changed the way I view my role as a designer, as well as my understanding of what the term “design” truly means.Rand’s work is known around the world, and just about everyone on the planet has seen it—if you’ve ever shipped a package (UPS), watched television (ABC) or used a computer (IBM), then you have seen his work because he designed the corporate identities of these and many other companies. The books and articles Rand has written on the subject of design are not as well-known, but they are no less powerful. The first time I read *A Designer’s Art* I was amazed at how well Mr. Rand was able to translate and illustrate complex ideas on subjects like aesthetics, content and form so effortlessly.

It is in these articles and books? where the magic of Rand’s work lies and what this exhibit is based around. Even though his books are out-of-print—his his first book was published in 1947—his thoughts on design are just as relevant today as they were nearly 70 years ago. It is my hope that as you view the work and read the words, you are as enlightened about art, aesthetics, color, typography, humor, form, content… as I was.Enjoy, be inspired, and continue to learn.— Daniel Lewandowski Curator and founder of paul-rand.com

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**Hallway, design primer:** OK, here we hit up against another interesting problem. It seems that your desire is not to use an authoritative voice, but rather to let Paul Rand’s voice be the authority. I don’t think that we’ve clearly let the audience know that is what is going to happen. As well, if you enter into the hall and just start reading this, without knowing anything about *Lascaux to Brooklyn*, you might not really know what Rand is trying to accomplish. I understand that they can discover what he’s up to by reading all the text, but many people will not do so, and so we probably need to let people know what’s going on and why this text is important. I do think it’s important that people experience Rand’s writings, but for non-designers, we need to help them along and help them understand what we are trying to accomplish.

**Preface*Lascaux to Brooklyn*, 1996**

The premise on which this [exhibit] is based draws no distinction between the so-called fine arts and the applied arts or artifacts. Even the terms art and design, artist and designer are used interchangeably. Unlike the practitioners of *l’art pour l’art*, I believe what determines the status of art is not genre but quality. Thus, a beautifully designed advertisement, poster, or piece of printed ephemera, assuming that it is both utilitarian and aesthetically satisfying, is as much a part of the genus art as is a painting or sculpture. In fact, as I see it, if a printed piece focuses only on the aesthetic, ignoring the practical, it does not qualify as art.The [exhibit] is my attempt to define, as best I can, aesthetics and the aesthetic experience as they affect the designer, the student, the marketer, and the researcher and to help designers articulate some of their problems.

In his 1996 book, *Lascaux to Brooklyn*, Rand argued that there is no essential difference between the fine arts, the applied arts, and artifacts and that what determines the status of art is not genre but quality. He wrote:

*…a beautifully designed advertisement, poster, or piece of printed ephemera, assuming that it is both utilitatrian and aesthetically satisfying, is as much a part of the genus art as is a painting or sculpture.*

Rand then went on to demonstrate how the same aesthetic principles that guide the creation of the fine arts affect the designer, the student, the marketer, and the researcher. He reinforced his idea that aesthetic principles are universal by comparing the ancient cave paintings of Lascaux to other works of art and design.

I’m presuming that we’ll have an image of the cave of Lascaux and this text will be next to it.

The cave of Lascaux was discovered in September 1940 by four boys roaming through the woods near Montignac in the Dordogne inFrance. Among the many drawings of ibex, oxen, bison, and antelope is the sophisticated drawing of a wild horse, sometimes referred to as the Chinese horse because it seems to have been transplanted from an old Chinese print. Leroi-Gourhan's chronology for paleolithic art places the images in the ancient Magdalenian period, circa 15,000 b.c.

The Paleolithic paintings in the cave of Lascaux were discovered in 1940 by four boys roaming through the woods in the Dordogne region of France. Dating to about 15,000 BC, the paintings depict ibex, oxen, bison, and antelope, but the most celebrated of the images is that of a wild horse, sometimes referred to as the Chinese horse, because it seems to have been translated from an old Chinese print.

In *From Lascaux to Brooklyn,* Rand wrote: “The great lesson of the cave paintings of Lascaux is that art is an intuitive, autonomous, and timeless activity and works independently of the development of society.” He also used the cave paintings to demonstrate his idea that art is an intuitive, autonomous, and timeless activity and to link principles of aesthetics to practice of design.

Q.

What do the cave paintings of Lascaux have in common with…

Danny – we really need to think about how to present his so as give it the most power it can have without asking people to spend an hour reading the hallway text. It’s important, I think, because it sets up the parameters by which Rand worked and helps people understand his way of thinking about design, but we want them to have energy to go beyond this section and not to be exhausted by it. We need a balance of image and text. Right now it’s exceedingly text heavy.This may sound crazy, but what about making the image of the Tower really big and then pointing out various elements upon which Rand comments, like:

* Relationship between diagonal and vertical elements
* Tension created by perception of impending disaster
* Harmony of cylinders, semicircles and oblongs
* Contrast of negative and positive space, light and shade

And then, because all that becomes more of a point and look graphic exercise, we include a shorter Rand quote?

**…The Tower of Pisa?**A Romanesque campanile on the Arno, built in the twelfth century of white marble, 293 steps to the top. Its oblique orientation, for which it is famous, is 14 feet off the perpendicular.Ironically, it is this very aberration that produces so dynamic a composition in relation to its surrounding buildings. But is it the formal composition, the relations between diagonal and vertical elements, or the perception of impending disaster that is so arresting? The element of tension is no small factor when one first experiences this building.The tower, a study in the harmony of heterogenous elements — cylinders, semicircles, and oblongs — is also a study in negative and positive space, light and shade; in addition, it is a fine example of rhythmic animation, contrasting textures, and the hypnotic repetition of elegant arches — multiple miniatures of the leaning tower.“In the visual arts all content and forms depend on optical, tactile and motor sensations—the first are dominant in painting, the second in sculpture, and the third in architecture.”Like the paintings on the walls of the caves of Lascaux, the tower of Pisa evokes all three.Max Raphael, The Demands of Art(Princeton, 1968), 215

**…Cézanne’s Apples?**Cézanne’s still life is not three apples poised on a white dish but the effect of three apples on the interested spectator. His brush strokes are formal means of pulsating contrasts.The colors are not the subject’s but the painter’s; they are complementary effects, the vibrancy of paint, not the imitation of things.“One must not reproduce it,” said Cézanne, “one must interpret it; by means of what? by means of plastic equivalents and color.”“No one who has a real understanding of the art of painting,” said Roger Fry, “attaches any important to what we call the subject of a picture—what is represented.To one who feels the language of pictorial form, all depends on how it is represented, nothing on what. Cézanne, who most of us believe to be the greatest artist of modern times, expressed some of his grandest conception in pictures of fruit and crockery on a common kitchen table.”Fry’s statement about form is as applicable to the paintings of Lascaux as it is to Cézannes apples. The lasting intrigue of the cave paintings is due not only to what they depict but to their astonishing skill and arrangement.John Reward,Paul Cézanne(New York, 1948), 180Roger Fry,The Artist and Psychoanalysis(London, 1914), 6

Paul CézanneStill Life with ApplesNational Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.Charles A. Loeser

**…The Baptistry of Florence?**Simple geometric shapes—rectangles, squares, diamonds, and half circles of dark green marble—embellish every surface, a Euclidian inventory of abstract images. The structure, an octagon covered by a pyramidal roof, with each facet enveloped by three dramatic arches, is a model of the geometer’s art.One quickly realizes that simplicity and geometry are the language of timelessness and universality.But it is the toylike quality of the baptistery that is so startling. It seems coincidental that the building i which Dante was baptized, and which is still used to baptize the children of Florence, should underscore Baudelaire’s notion that the toy is the child’s first initiation into art.Charles Baudelaire,“The Philosophy of Toys” in Essays on Dolls(London, 1994), 18

**…Brueghel’s Children’s Games?**The texture of Brueghel’s pictures is a complexity of contrasts, movements, and expressions united in a symphony of light and shade, curves, angles, and emotions—the whole gamut of conflicting phenomena.In Brueghels’ Children’s Games, sturdy buildings serve as visual backdrops for frolicking kids; the passive and the active, simplicity and complexity are in harmony. Each compact and stocky little figure seems to have been patiently whittled out of some magic substance. And each game, though clearly articulated, seems somehow to be part of one giant ensemble of fun and frolic.In the end one experiences the collective joy of children, colors, and forms at play.Pieter BrueghelThe Children’s GamesKunsthistoriches MuseumVienna

**…Romanesque Capitals?**These capitals, where ornaments, animal, and rider are treated as isolated fragments in an imaginary space, share a kinship with children’s art.To the illiterate the capitals were and are the living text of the Bible—an ageless art that appeals to all ages.“I learned from poetry that art is best derived from artless things.” This is what one senses experiencing Romanesque art.The same universal qualities of naiveté and simplicity that characterize the work of all primitive cultures are in he rent in this art. Even the means of expression by the great painters of our time is related to Romanesque art.Léger’s equalization of animate and inanimate things in this pen and ink drawing is equivalent to the way the horse, rider, and surrounding ornaments cohere on the Dintorni capital.Jimmy Carter,Always a Reckoning(Times Books, 1995)Fernand LégerPen and ink drawing, 1944Author’s collection

**…The Fountains of the Alhambra?**Geometry, which has always played a significant role in Muslim art, permeates the design of the Patio de los Leones in Grenada, from its twelve silent lion sentinels to its dodecahedron base and basin.The highly simplified, delicately carved lion details contrast dramatically with the elaborate arches in the background.The richness of ornamentation in the whole complex, the abundance and variety of tile configurations, the orientation and flow from room to too, area to area, provide a unique architectural experience.Even water was considered a sculptural elements; it hangs as if frozen in mid-air. The toylike stylization and simplification of the twelve lions hint at a more than cursory understanding of formal relations among the different components.The Patio de los Leones, an ode to the geometer’s art, was also the last achievement of Muslim art in the Iberian peninsula.

**…The Parthenon?**Ictinus, the architect of the Parthenon, was not the only practitioner who applied the principles of Greek geometry to his structures. Yet the magnificence of the Parthenon outshines similar buildings of the period.The beauty of any artifact cannot be attributed solely to its proportions.What a particular proportion contains, and how it is designed, are more important than the shape of its containment.Proportional systems are an incentive for some, an inspiration for others, and a crutch for too many.Diagrams shows one of many constructions of the golden section (1.618) constructed on a right-angle triangle and two contiguous circles.

**…African Sculpture?**The exaggerated body and facial features of this sculpture are typical of the art of African sculpture. Furthermore, the artist managed to preserve the spontaneity, imagination, and unselfconscious vision of the child’s world.Its creator understand that emotions can best be expressed visually by overstatement rather than by literal depiction.Was what attracted Picasso, Braque, and others to African art not what it stood for but what it looked like, its for, much more than its mysterious content? Is this the same impulse that motivates us to adorn our walls with African art?“Every work of art,” said Coleridge, “must have about it something not understood to obtain its full effect.”African art played more than a passing role in the art of Cubism. Freedom of expression, simplicity, imagination, fantasy, spontaneity, and innocence were part of its formal language.What was ritual and symbolism to one was invention and formalism to the other.

**…Katsura Palace?**Serenity and order crown the splendor of this enchanted summer palace. Coleridge's unity in variety is everywhere. To experience Katsura is to experience perfection…The variety of patterns made possible simply by moving the shoji (rice-paper screens) is endless — a tribute to the architect's sensitivity and the craftsman's ingenuity.Here, “form followed function long before Horatio Greenough and Louis Sullivan voiced their beliefs. Mondrian's aesthetics were there long before Mondrian.”Master of yin and yang, Katsura Palace is a skillful integration of contrasts and rhythms: horizontal facades, vertical posts, diagonal roofs; dark and light, long and short, wet and dry; water, stones, grass, wood, and paper — a haven of tranquillity and beauty.The poetry of Zen is embodied in the gardens and architecture of Katsura.The wild horse of Lascaux, also called the Chinese horse, evokes this Zen-like quality as well.

**… A Fisherman’s Buoy?**Modest subject matter, modest means, and modest talent do not always prevent an artifact from offering an aesthetic experience to the viewer.These buoys, clearly the product of loving hands, are made by fishermen or craftsmen who know their job.Their colors, arbitrary or not, may have come from paint cans lying around a boat yard.It is the effect that matters.The arrangement and juxtaposition of objects is not accidental; in fact, it is the contrast of the casual and the careful that is meaningful in the end.What of they share are the virtues of economy, simplicity, and modesty of means.This is a useful object lesson for designers who believe that mundane subject matter, like soap or soup, is a hindrance to creativity.

**…A Gorgan pitcher?**The decor of this Gorgan pitcher defines its personality; sensitivity, subtlety, and simplicity determine its form.The swelling blue stripes embellishing the belly of the vessel accentuate its profile and, like blue veins, impart life to an otherwise lifeless object.Decoration, often given a pejorative gloss is the essence of this object. Without decoration, the pitcher would appear less interesting, almost naked, to the viewer.Form fixes the appearance of things, what things look like. Matter is what it shares with other objects.Grace, dignity, passion, and pleasure signal the presence and suffuse the atmosphere of anything worthy of the accolade art; a persuasive poster, a painting, an elegant room, a Gothic cathedral, or a simple utensil.“Art changes our whole attitude to life, not merely our understanding of it but also our evaluation of it, in fact, all our perspective.”

**…Tipu’s Tiger?**This wooden effigy, a kind of non-musical hurdy-gurdy that simulates growls of a tiger and the cries of his victim, is at first disturbing.But its expression and scale are so toylike, its color so brilliant, that the impression is merely startling.A tragic event treated in a lighthearted manner combines to create the humorous effect of this giant (about one meter long) toy.The gold-leaf pattern that embellishes the animal’s body is an ingenious evocation of the tiger’s natural habitat. The delicate handling of the decoration and the fanciful form of the tiger make a dramatic foil to the deadly nature of the occasion depicted.This is an interesting example of form mollifying content.The spirit that permeates this sculpture is similar to that which is evoked by the fountain of lions — a quality it shares with objects designed to entertain.

**…A Photograph of Nature?**A work of art is a dialogue, a picture filtered through the mind and then transformed. Lyrical understanding of the subject, trained observation, special feeling for patina, an eye for revealing detail, and poetic content comprise what Walker Evans describes as the photographer’s magic.A work of nature is not a work of art. Hegel referred to natural beauty as “the prose of the world.” The photo of this cactus is artistic only to the extent that the photographer has selected and interpreted the subject.The quality of a picture is measured not by how much it adheres to nature but how far it departs from it.When one encounters a beautiful landscape, suggested André Malreaux, one is possibly experience that landscape as the work of a great painter like Constable, or Monet, or…“Artistic beauty stands higher than nature, for the beauty of art is beauty that is born — born again, that is — of the mind, and by as much as the mind and its products are higher than nature and its appearances, by so much is the beauty of art higher than the beauty of nature.”

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**Gallery A:**

**Direction Magazine**From Lascaux to Brooklyn, 1993*Direction Magazine* (1935-1945) was a self-supporting, one- woman operation; Marguerite Tjader Harris was proprietor, publisher, and editor.A sophisticated traveler, she was able to meet, befriend, and cajole distinguished personalities to write for her and support her ideas: Theodore Dreiser, Le Corbusier, Julius Meier Graefe, and many others were among those who provided material for the magazine — a politically oriented, anti-facist publication.In 1938, at the age of 24, I was asked to do one of the covers on a pro-bono basis. Eventually, I was bartering my work for Le Corbusier’s watercolors. This turned out to be more than ample payment for my efforts.These covers were designed between 1938, the time of the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the end of World War II. It was a time of turmoil not only on the world order but also in the world of art, with modernism on the upswing.The designers reflect the influence of the isms, and they are also concurrent visualizations of war, upheaval, and ultimate victory.In one of the early issues, Le Corbusier’s *When the Cathedrals Were White* appeared for the first time in the English language.There were many articles of a similarly pioneering nature dealing with artistic, social and political issues by critics, cartoonists, artists, and writers of great distinction around the world.William Gropper, the American social satirist, was featured in many of its pages.It takes more than luck, good ideas, and goodwill to accomplish meaningful—let alone distinguished—work. A receptive and intuitive patron, who understands the ways and wiles of the creative creature, is indispensable; Maggie Harris was certainly that.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 demonstrate 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.

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 geometries;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-operateas an instrumentin the service of communication.

If this is all meant to be text for Direction Magazine, I think we really really need to think about how to take it down to its essence. No one will read this much (and I have great faith in MODA patrons to read) and we’re leaving non-designers with the very big job of figuring out what’s important.

**Collage and MontagePaul Rand: A Designer’s Art, 1985**It is a truism that the fundamental problem of the advertiser and publisher is to get the message into the readers mind. Commonplace images and unimaginative visualization afford the spectator little reason to become engrossed in an advertisers product. Radio and television 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. Collage and montage permit the integration of seemingly unrelated objects or ideas in 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. The complex message presented in a single picture more readily enables the spectator to focus his attention on the advertisers message.In one sense montage and collage are integrated visual arrangements in space, and in another sense they are absorbing visual tests that the spectator may perceive and decipher for himself. He may thus participate directly in the creative process.

On the RCA Ad“The Design Concept”, Allen Hurlburt, 1981Our account department had learned that the lucrative RCA advertising business might be up for grabs, and the agency decided to run an ad to make a pitch for the account. That was on Monday and the ad had been scheduled to appear on Thursday so we were in our usual rush situation. Nothing much came out of the morning meeting of the plans board, and the afternoon brainstorming was equally unproductive. As was so often the case, I took the problem home to Weston, Connecticut, with me.The more I analyzed the problem the more I became convinced that General Sarnoff was the key. I knew that while a million eyes might see that copy of the Times, the only eyes that mattered were his. I knew that his career in radio had begun as a wireless operator with Marconi, and somewhere I had heard that his proudest moment was when he was one of the first to pick up the distress call from the Titanic. This brought me to the Morse code. The letters sos might have made an arresting headline in code, but I didn’t think RCA or the agency would appreciate the connotations. It was then that I decided to try RCA in code. My dictionary provided the symbols of the International code, and I knew I had the foundation of an idea.The next morning on the 8:05 heading for the office I began putting the pieces together. In the convenient white space of someone else’s ad in my morning paper, I began to sketch out the layout. From the beginning the use of Caslon typography seemed right to me. It not only had the ultimate contrast with the boldness of the dots and dashes, but it had the proper earnest tone derived from its years of association with fine books.My first sketch was slightly top-heavy and the ad signature seemed weak. It was while I was pondering this problem that the added twist that the idea needed came to me. Almost automatically I noted that the dot and dash of the last letter in my headline became a perfect exclamation mark when it was turned on end. It was only later that I realized that the A in advertising related to the symbol. Later when the layout was submitted in finish form to the agency, the usual flack developed, and it was only when our television director joined in its defense that the idea was approved.Did the advertisement work? If attracting a lot of attention means anything it was a big success. On the morning the ad appeared, when I arrived at the Saugatuck station, the first thing I noticed was a group gathered around a man with his copy of the Times open to my ad, and on the trip into New York I overheard a lot of comment. But what happened on the executive floor of the RCA Building? General Sarnoff must have seen it, because there was a call from his office later that morning to set up a meeting with our agency people. In the end the agency didn’t get the RCA business for reasons unrelated to the ad and its objectives.

Once again, it’s length that concerns me. I like Rand’s tone, but I feel as if our viewer is going to want some more introductory information. When does this fall in Rand’s career? What year did he do this?

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**Gallery B:**

A.

The cave paintings of Lascaux are objects of aesthetic experience, irrespective of time, place, purpose, style, or genre.

Aesthetics is the standard by which a work of art is judged. It is essentially the study of the successive or simultaneous interaction of form and content.How skillfully these components are fused will determine the aesthetic quality of the work in question.There are two parts to this hypothesis. One relates to the artist, who, unlike the spectator, is intensely involved — intuitively, emotionally, and perceptually; the other, to the object, which possesses a plastic unity that differentiates it from the ordinary artifact.“It is at least arguable that the purely formal element in art does not change; that the same canons of harmony and proportion are present in primitive art, in Greek art, in Gothic art, in Renaissance art, and in the art [and design, traditional or trivial] of the present day.”To this one may add the canons of: order, unity, variety, contrast, grace, symmetry, asymmetry, rhythm, rhyme, regularity, movement, interval, coherence, dissonance, balance, tension, space, scale, weight, texture, line, mass, shape, light, shade, color, ad infinitum. These are among the tools of form — by design, by chance, by improvisation.The endless conflicts between the spiritual and material, between ends and means, form and content, form and function, form and facture, form and purpose, form and meaning, form and idea, form and expression, form and illusion, form and habit, form and scale, form and style need to be resolved.It is the merging of these conflicts that determines the aesthetic quality of a painting, a design, a building, a sculpture, or a printed piece.

A work of art, then, is the resolution of conflicting relations. It is a unity of opposites, a series of steps reflecting Hagel’s dialectics: thesis, the subject;antithesis, the conflict; and synthesis, the resolution.Whatever one’s belief, art is commentary, art is revelation, art is the culmination of the creative process. It is a by-product, not a goal, a point of view about a particular object that rises above and it’s topical source.

It is not just a facsimile but an opinion expressed visually in a distinctive way.Art is reality enhanced.

**The Designer’s ProblemThoughts on Design, 3rd Edition, 1970**An erroneous conception of the graphic designer’s function is to imagine that in order to produce a “good layout”1 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.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.2 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 the 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. 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, intuition, 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.

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 painting2. 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

**Ideas About IdeasPaul Rand: A Designer’s Art, 1985**The source of the creative impulse is a mystery. Where do ideas come from?Wildly heterogeneous as his inspirational treasures appear, curiosity is the common denominator and the pleasure of discovery an important by-product. The artist takes note of that which jolts him into visual awareness. Without the harvest of visual experience he would be unable to cope with the plethora of problems, mundane or otherwise, that confronts him in his daily work.Ideas may also grow out of the problem itself which in turn becomes part of the solution.This profile with a staring eye, which I recalled seeing in a book on Etruscan art, prompted the idea for the illustration of this 1946 Container Corporation advertisement. The haunting eyes are germane to the message the advertisement is designed to convey.

**The Symbol in AdvertisingPaul Rand: A Designer’s Art, 1985**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. Words like simplified, stylized, geometric, abstract, two-dimensional, flat, non-representational, non-mimetic are commonly associated, sometimes incorrectly, with the term symbol.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!… In these illustrations the form is intensified by dramatic narrative association. The literal meaning changes according to context; the formal quality remains unchanged.

**Versatility of the SymbolThoughts on Design, 3rd Edition, 1970**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.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.

**Integrating Form and ContentThoughts on Design, 3rd Edition, 1970**Visual statements such as illustrations which do not involve aesthetic 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, that seeks to express the essence of an idea, and that is based on function, fantasy, and analytic judgment, is likely to be not only unique but meaningful and memorable as well.In the examples that follow, the abstract, geometric forms (attention-arresting devices) tend to dominate, while the representational images play a supporting role. The complementary relationship between these two types of images is dramatized when human expression is introduced.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 that 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 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.

The dividing line between representational and nonrepresentational images is often very slim. In this advertisement for Ohrbach’s the window shade acts as a formal as well as a poignantly suggestive image (1946).Occasionally purely nonrepresentational images function even more effectively without the support of explanatory illustrations which tend to confine an idea and limit the imagination. The spectator is thus able to see more than is actually portrayed.

“Originality is a product, not an intention.”Graphic Wit “Paul Rand: The Play Instinct” 1991

**Typographic Form and ExpressionPaul Rand: A Designer’s Art, 1985**One of the objectives of the designer who deals with type matter involves readability. Unfortunately, however, this function is often taken too literally and 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 that 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.With asymmetric balance, he is able to achieve greater interest. Bilateral symmetry offers the spectator too simple and too obvious a statement. It offers 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, and in thus acquiring some sort of aesthetic satisfaction.

Two letters from a Cresta Blanca Wine logotype (1943) demonstrate how the simple addition of ornament changes a commonplace letter (associated more with bold newspaper headlines than with delicate vintage wines; to a memorable image. Here, contrast plays a significant role.

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 by contrasting two apparently unrelated subjects - nineteenth-century wood engravings and twentieth-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 numeral as a means of 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.

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

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

**The TrademarkPaul Rand: A Designer’s Art, 1985**

A trademark is a picture. It is a symbol a sign an emblem an escutcheon…an image.There are good symbols… like the cross. There are others…like the swastika. Their meanings are taken from reality.Symbols are a duality. They take on meaning from causes …good or bad. And they give meaning to causes …good or bad.The flag is a symbol of a country. The cross is a symbol of a religion.The swastika was a symbol of good luck until its meaning was changed.The vitality of a symbol comes from effective dissemination… by the state by the community by the church by the corporation. It needs attending to get attention.The trademark is a symbol of a corporation. It is not a sign of quality… it is a sign of the quality.The trademark for Chanel smells as good as the perfume it stands for This is the blending of form and content.Trademarks are animate inanimate organic geometric. They are letters ideograms monograms colors things. Ideally they do not illustrate they indicate …not represent but suggest… and are stated with brevity and wit.A trademark is created by a designer but made by a corporationA trademark is a picture an image… the image of a corporation.The symbol for Westinghouse (1960) as it appears today is an adaptation of an earlier trademark. The problem was to transform an existing lackluster emblem, consisting of a circle, a W, and an underscore, into something unique. Updating and modernization were a byproduct and not the focus of this program.The final design, which comprises a circle, a series of dots, and lines, was intended to suggest a printed circuit. One of the comments this design evoked when it was being presented was that it resembled a mask. Although this idea was never intended, I believe that the effectiveness of this symbol is due partly to its anthropomorphism. The mask, since recorded history, has served many functions; to disguise, to pique, to simulate, to enhance, to identify, or simply to entertain. Not unlike the mask, the trademark is a potent and succinct means of communication — for good or for evil.

The need for simplicity is demonstrated in the blurred image of the abc trademark. How far out of focus can an image be and still be recognized? A trademark, which is subject to an infinite number of uses, abuses, and variations, whether for competitive purposes or for reasons of “self-expression,“ cannot survive unless it is designed with utmost simplicity and restraint – keeping in mind that seldom is a trademark favored with more than a glance. Simplicity implies not only an aesthetic ideal, but a meaningful idea, either of content or form, that can be easily recalled.

A logo is less important than the product it signifies; what it means is more important than what it looks like.

**The PresentationDesign Form and Chaos, 1993**Canned presentations have the ring of emptiness. The meaningful presentation is custom designed — for a particular purpose, for a particular person. How to present a new idea is, perhaps, one of the designer’s most difficult tasks. This how is not only a design problem, it also pleads for something novel. Everything a designer does involves presentation of some kind — not only how to explain (present) a particular design to an interested listener (client, reader, spectator), but how the design may explain itself in the marketplace. Not all assignments are equally interesting. The designer is expected to be inspired by the most mundane subject matter, no less by a dead fish than by a beautiful race horse. But subject matter in itself is not always inspirational. The relevant idea and its formal interpretation become the decisive factors.A presentation is the musical accompaniment of design. A presentation that lacks an idea cannot hide behind glamorous photos, pizzazz, or ballyhoo. If it is full of gibberish, it may fall on deaf ears; if too laid back, it may land a prospect in the arms of Morpheus.The following brochures were designed for the purpose of presentation. They follow a simple pattern, with generous use of white space and color to establish certain rhythms and to leave room for necessary pauses and logical transitions. White space is used as a functional not as an arbitrary device. It indicates timing and pacing and may be a determining factor in a given presentation. Its purpose is to help dramatize — a kind of backdrop separating one scene from another. To encourage reading, text is kept as brief and as readable as possible, with no attempt to confuse the reader with picturesque, typographic trickery. If type is shown in color, it is for reasons of emphasis, not theatrics.

**Seeing StripesPaul Rand: A Designer’s Art, 1985**Nature has striped the zebra. Man has striped his flags and awnings, ties and shirts. For the typographer, stripes are rules; for the architect they are a means of creating optical illusions. Stripes are dazzling, sometimes hypnotic, usually happy. They are universal. They have adorned the walls of houses, churches, and mosques. Stripes attract attention.The stripes of the IBM logo serve primarily as an attention getting device. They take commonplace letters out of the realm of the ordinary. They are memorable. They suggest efficiency and speed. The recent spate of striped logos in the marketplace attests to their effectiveness.Visually, stripes superimposed on a cluster of letters tend to tie them together. This is especially useful for complex groupings such as the letters ibm, in which each character gets progressively wider, thereby creating a somewhat uncomfortable, open-ended sequence.

**The Meaning of RepetitionPaul Rand: A Designer’s Art, 1985**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 of time and space) should not be minimized. The possibilities of repetition are limitless. Repeat patterns are only one familiar form. There is repetition of color, direction, weight, texture, dimension, movement, expression, shape, and so on. Repetition is an effective way of achieving unity.Repetition also means remembrance. The efficacy of a trademark, for example, is dependent less on its design than on its repeated exposure to public view. Familiar things, as well as a touch of humor, are effective mnemonic devices.

“I just like things that are playful; I like things that are happy;I like things that will make the client smile…”Lecture, A Paul Rand RetrospectiveCooper Union, October 3rd, 1996

**The Role of HumorPaul Rand: A Designer’s Art, 1985**Readership surveys demonstrate the significance of humor in the field of visual communication. The reference is not principally to cartoon strip advertisements or to out-and-out gags, but to a more subtle variety, one indigenous to the design itself and achieved by means of association, juxtaposition, size relationship proportion, space, or special handling.The visual message that professes to be profound or elegant often boomerangs as mere pretension; and the frame of mind that 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 entrepreneurs who have successfully exploited humor as a means of creating confidence, goodwill, and a receptive frame of mind toward an idea or product.“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 deepen”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 to 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.1. Printers’ Ink, December 28, 1946.2. Roger Fry, “Some Aspects of Chinese Art, Transformations, 79 81.“Innovation leads one to see the new in the old and distinguishes the ingenious from disingenuous.”Design Form and Chaos

**A House to Live With*Esquire*, August 1953**A man who knew the secrets of living, Henry David Thoreau, once wrote: “I sometimes dream of a … house, standing in a golden age, of enduring materials, and without gingerbread work…containing all the essentials of a house, and nothing for housekeeping…”Ann and Paul Rand wanted such a house, too, an enduring, essential house, built for beauty and privacy, security and shelter, peace and an intimacy with its surroundings. So they designed theirs as if this were the first house ever built. Within commuting distance of New York City, the compact and spacious modern home of Paul and Ann Rand takes issue with Connecticut’s rustic traditions.The Rand home is set in wooded Connecticut acreage, and by coincidence meets the formula of the ideal setting defined by the Japanese; a hill to the north, a brook to the east, a road to the west, looks to the south. Compact, spacious, it neither tosses the inhabitants out into the open by too much “picture-window” exposure, nor shuts them off from the outdoors by conventional barriers.

87 Goodhill RoadWeston, ConnecticutDesigned by Paul and Ann Rand1951-52

These drawings are adapted from the original.Nos. 13 and 14 are additions made by Paul Rand to the original 1951 plan.Plan (NTS)1: Front Entrance2: Master Bedroom3: Guest Room4: Living Room5: Courtyard6: Dining Room7: Kitchen and Pantry8: Library9: Bedroom10: Utility Room11: Laundry Room12: Storage/Studio13: Office14: Studio Studio Entrance Service Entrance

East Elevation

West Elevation

South Elevation

North Elevation

Living RoomPhoto by Dan Meyers

Living RoomPhoto by Dan Meyers

StudioPhoto by Dan Meyers

Main EntrancePhoto by Dan Meyers

HallwayPhoto by Dan Meyers

StudioPhoto by Dan Meyers

LibraryPhoto by Dan Meyers

Master BedroomPhoto by Dan Meyers

Exterior Front