

Paul Rand | The Simplicity of Design

HIS LIFE, WORK & THOUGHTS ON DESIGN

A MODA EXHIBIT PROPOSAL



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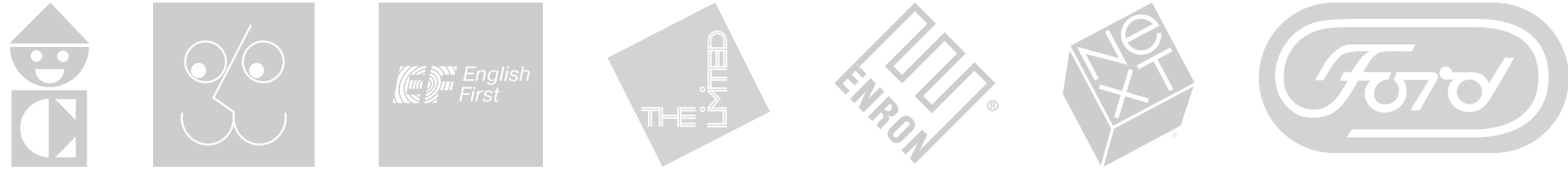
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A MODA EXHIBIT PROPOSAL

Sponsorship proposal for a MODA exhibit





Ever wonder where a logo is born?

A poster?

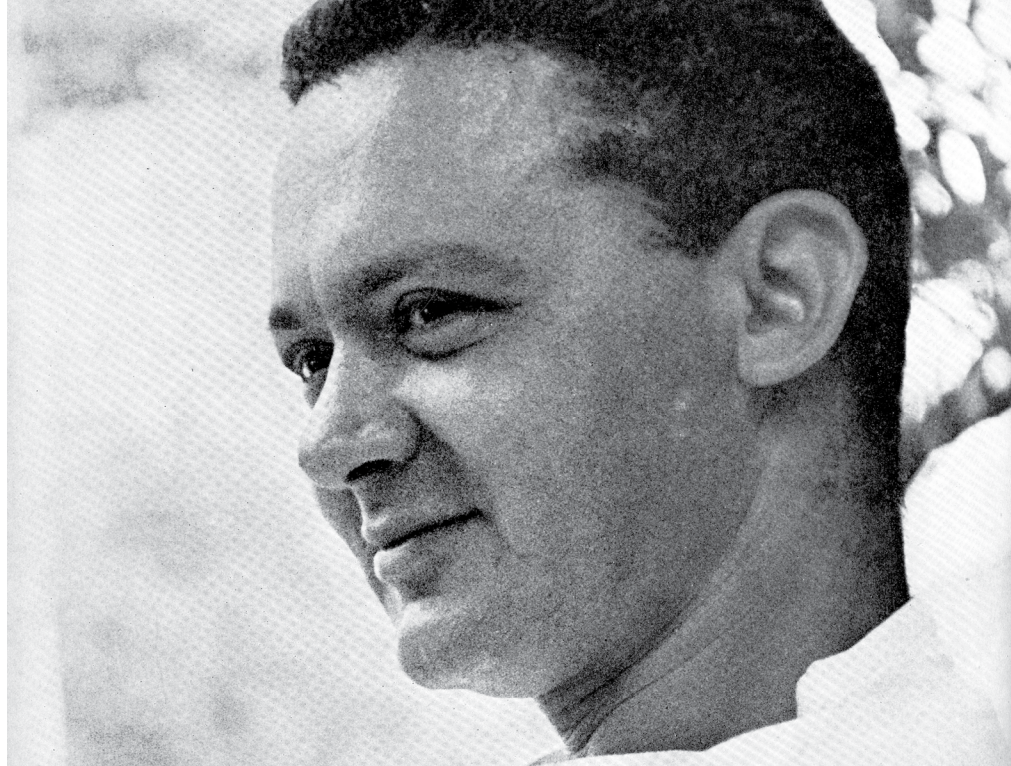
A book cover?

A magazine ad?

Even though we see hundreds everyday,
we don't ever stop to wonder why or who created them.

Design and branding has always been an integral part
of our society, influencing the shape of our products,
our likes, our dislikes...

But who are these people creating these objects with
such power?



Paul Rand is considered one of America's greatest and most prolific designers. Whether it be advertising, posters, book covers, or logos, he has created some of the longest lasting, most recognized identities and symbols in the world. IBM, ABC, UPS, Westinghouse...these are just a few that have been seen by billions.

His work and teachings about the fundamentals of design laid the groundwork for modern design and branding that are as fresh today as when they were first written.

Generations of designers and artists who shape our culture have been and continue to be influenced by him.

Paul Rand was born Peretz Rosenbaum on August 15, 1914 in Brooklyn, New York where he discovered drawing as a child by copying the advertisements in his family's local grocery shop. He would sit for hours drawing and would even create murals and signs for his elementary school. His formal arts-related training included Pratt Institute, Parsons School of Design, and Art Students' League with George Grosz. Most of his classes he found useless and uninspiring, prompting him to look for inspiration in magazines and books, proclaiming "whatever little [he] learned, [he] learned by doing [him]self."

Spending hours at the New York Public Library studying what he could find, he stumbled upon *Gebrauchsgraphik*, a publication from Europe featuring some of the greatest modern artists at the time including Paul Klee, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Le Corbusier, E. McKnight Kauffer and many others. Studying not just their styles but also their philosophies, young Rand was drawn to the art and power of the visual language. He became a voracious reader and his eventual library housed thousands of the most important design books of the time. They informed and shaped the development of his ideas on design for the rest of his life through 3 distinct design careers, spanning over 60 years.

His first formative years as a freelancer were filled with the standard fare of paste-up artwork and other menial tasks. But because of his fierce tenacity and passion for design, he was given full creative license as Art Director of *Esquire* and *Apparel Arts* magazine at the age of 22, an unparalleled feat at the time. This newly found artistic freedom allowed him to create historic covers and editorial layouts for *Direction* and *Apparel Arts*. Following the success and visibility this afforded him, he became the Art Director at William H. Weintraub Advertising Agency from 1941-1955. Clients included Coronet Brandy, El Producto Cigar Company, Disney Hats, Dubonnet, Stafford Fabrics, Ohrbach's Department Store, Kaufmann's Department Store, Olivetti Typewriters and many others.

While there, he explored "branding" before it was a mainstream term. His developing theories on design and die-hard nature to maintain the highest artistic standards possible allowed him to create highly memorable brand identities for his early clients. This work informed and educated him in the finer understandings of public advertising consumption.

So much so that he authored several books and articles that are considered some of the finest examples of writing on design ever produced. His first book "*Thoughts on Design*", written at the age of 33 in 1947, became an instant classic and is one of the most sought-after design books. His simple, direct writing style, paired with examples of his own work was in stark contrast to similar books written in heavy, sometimes difficult to follow prose. This book not only solidified his own thoughts on design, but also his place as one of the greatest American designers in history.

By 1956, he began his consulting career with IBM which lasted until 1993. He was commissioned by Thomas Watson, Jr. to work with many other contemporary designers such as Joseph Müller-Brockman, Charles & Ray Eames and others to create the visual and product identity for all of IBM. Rand's iconic striped logo set the stage for countless projects including packaging, tradeshow,

posters... virtually any type of marketing collateral, including the historic "Eye Bee M" rebus poster, first seen in 1981.



Throughout the 1960s his branding career blossomed with famous marks for companies such as UPS, ABC and Westinghouse among others. He continued to write many other articles for trade magazines that constantly reaffirmed his positions. Rand was also professor of graphic design at the Yale School of Art, where generations of students were influenced by his modernist innovations and his rigorous teaching. He also taught in the Yale Summer Program in Graphic Design at Bresago, Switzerland, from 1977 to 1996. This time was considered to be his second career, as teacher.

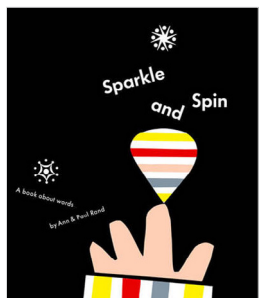
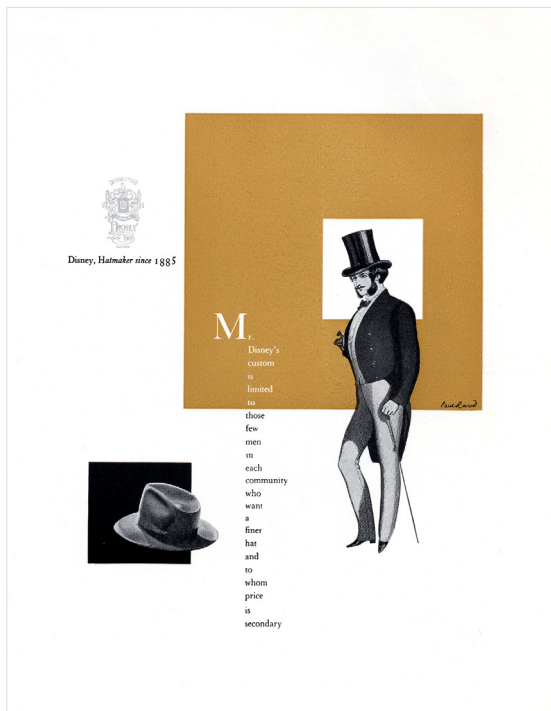
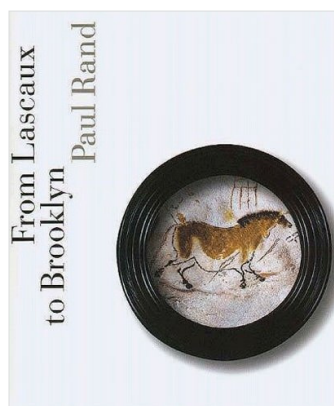
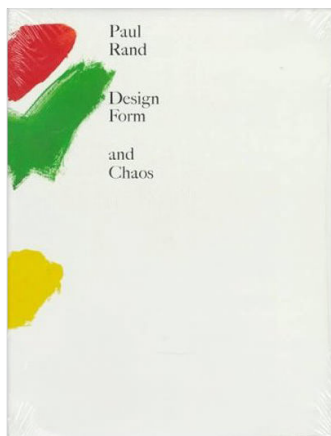
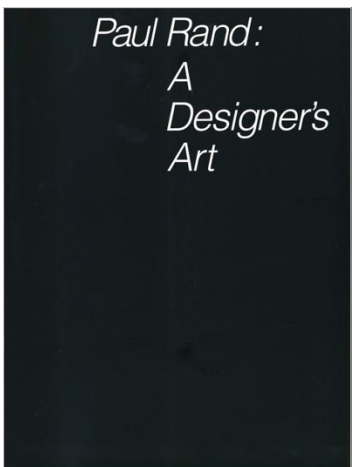
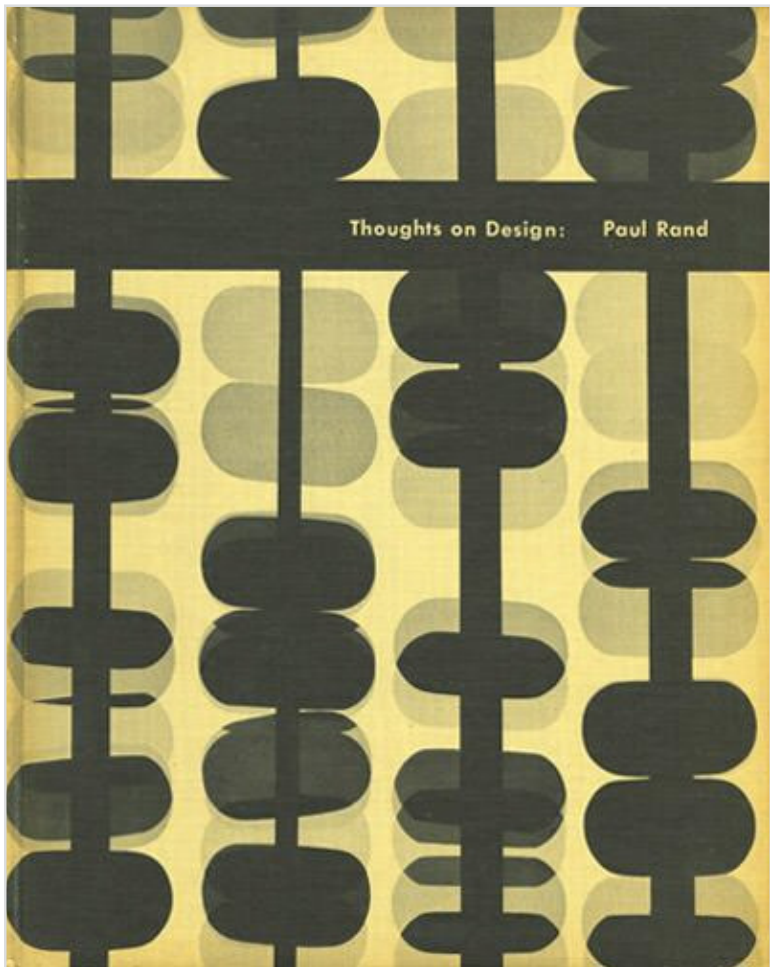
During the final decades of his life he published three important books, *Paul Rand: A Designer's Art*, (1985), *Design Form and Chaos* (1994), and *From Lascaux to Brooklyn* (1996). Not just retrospectives, these books codified the principles he adhered to in his professional life (Heller). This time was considered to be his third career, as author.

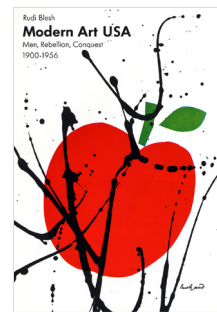
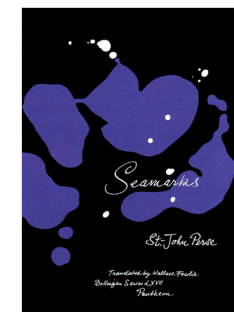
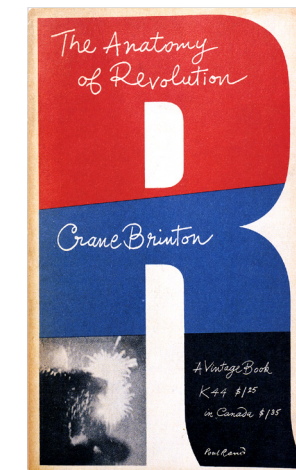
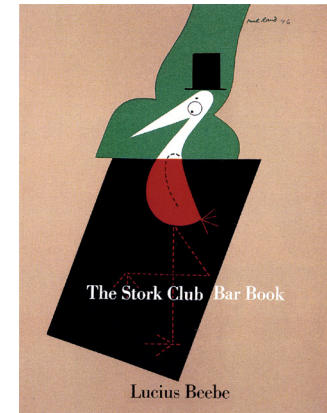
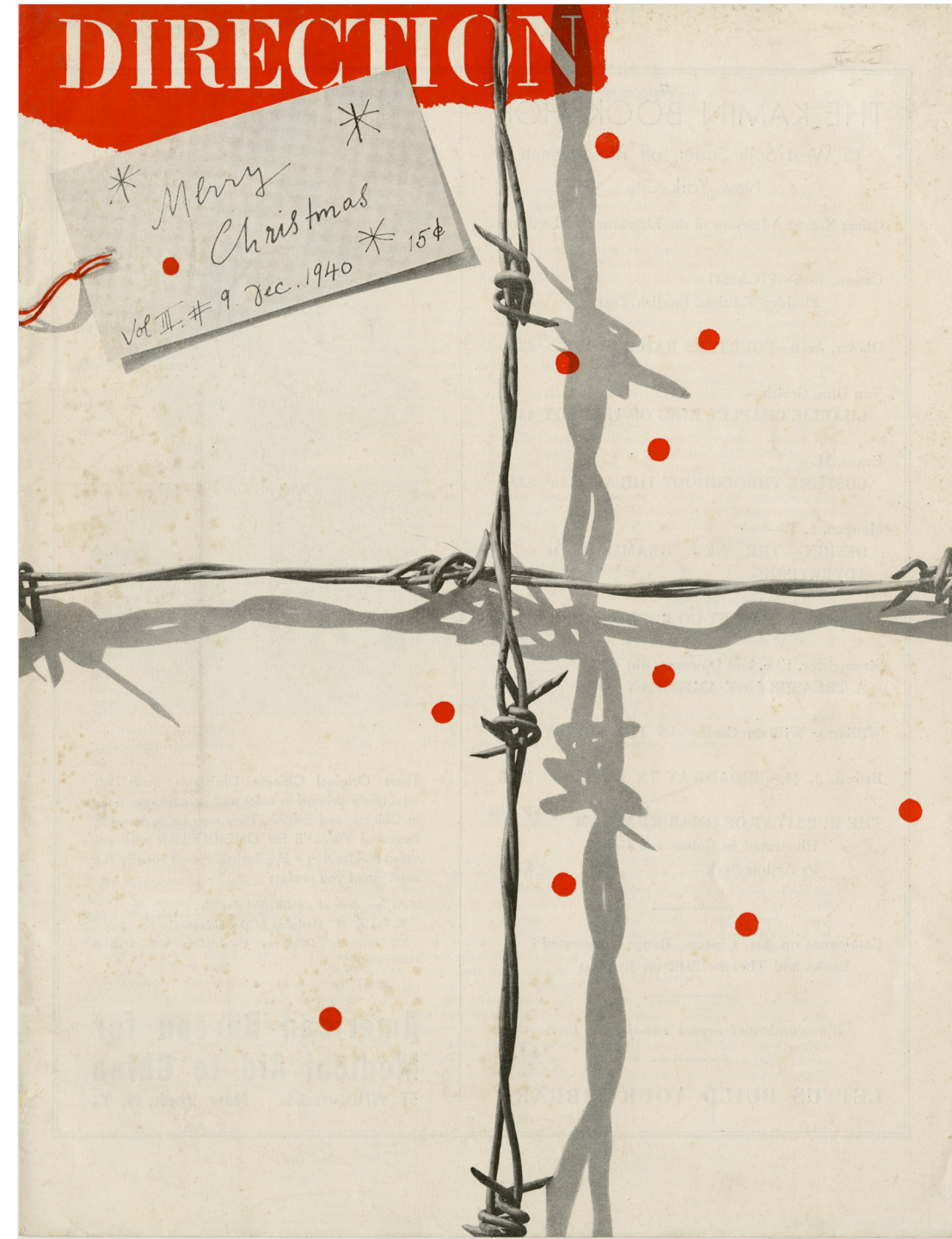
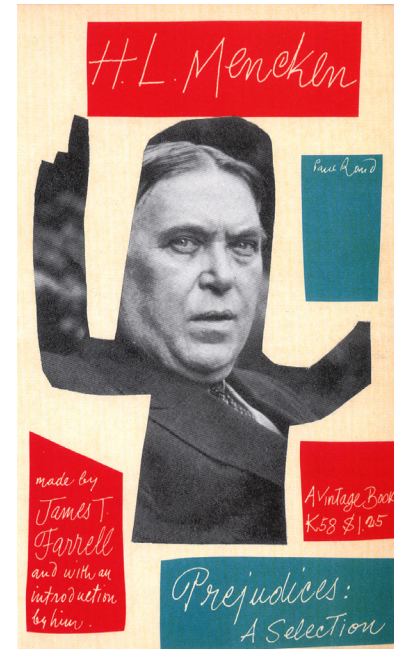
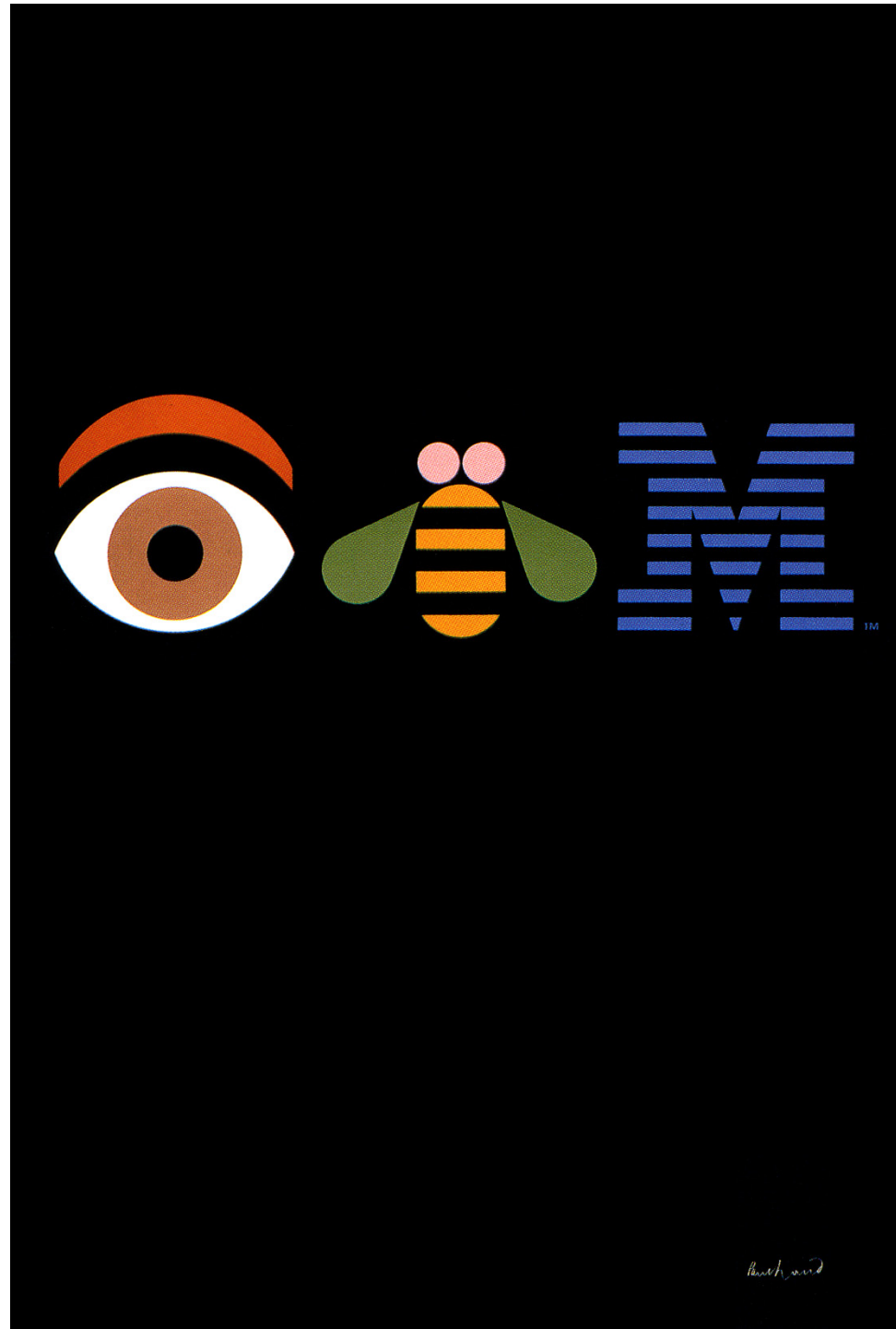
Throughout the 90s he continued to write, design and teach while remaining a lightning rod of design criticism. He was criticized heavily for his dogmatic stance on aesthetics & form in light of the new computer generation and radical typography that was the trend.

On November 26, 1996, he passed away in Norwalk, CT and the design field loses a great leader and mentor.

Through his own radical alteration of the design practice, Rand transformed the field for thousands of others. He never faltered, never changed, never questioned the rightness of his mission.









“Paul Rand is an idealist and a realist, one who uses the language of the poet and the businessman. He thinks in terms of need and function...but his fantasy is boundless.”

—L. Moholy-Nagy

“Design is the synthesis of form and content.”

“Good design adds value of some kind, gives meaning, and, not incidentally, can be sheer pleasure to behold; it respects the viewers’ sensibilities and rewards the entrepreneur.”

“Simplicity is never a goal; it is a by-product of a good idea and modest expectations.”

“Innovation leads one to see the new in the old and distinguishes the ingenious from the ingenuous.”

“Don’t try to be original, just try to be good.”

“I like things that are playful; I like things that are happy; I like things that will make the client smile.”

The Exhibit

This exhibit will showcase a wide variety of Rand's work with an emphasis on the "how" and "why" of his creations. That almost everyone in the world has seen his work, but do not realize it, showcases the simple, effective solutions he was known for his entire career. It also reinforces that design plays an important part of our daily lives.

The goal is not to be an exhaustive retrospective exhibit of his life and work, but rather to restate and reintroduce Mr. Rand's works and teachings to new generations of designers and artists. It will cover many of the main areas of his work, interspersed with samples of his writings relating to specific topics.

The exhibit will open with a timeline to introduce visitors to Mr. Rand. For even greater context, other timelines of historic and design-related events will give visitors a broader context of what happened during the time of Rand's design work. The timeline will span the main hallway and feature original work samples of key items.

Opposite these timelines will be a visual representation of Rand's "language of form." These are the basic building blocks of art and design and include concepts like balance, scale, rhythm, light, texture, pattern and many others. Rand's thoughts on design are rooted in the core concepts of what defines art and aesthetics which makes this section of the exhibit exceptionally educational. Similar to the timelines, original samples will be interspersed throughout to give concrete examples of these principles in use.

This overview begins to educate visitors and create a common language about art and design that will be used throughout the exhibit.

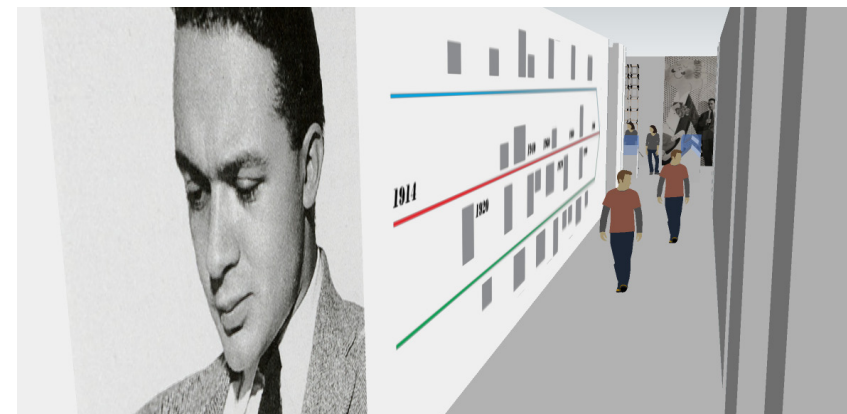
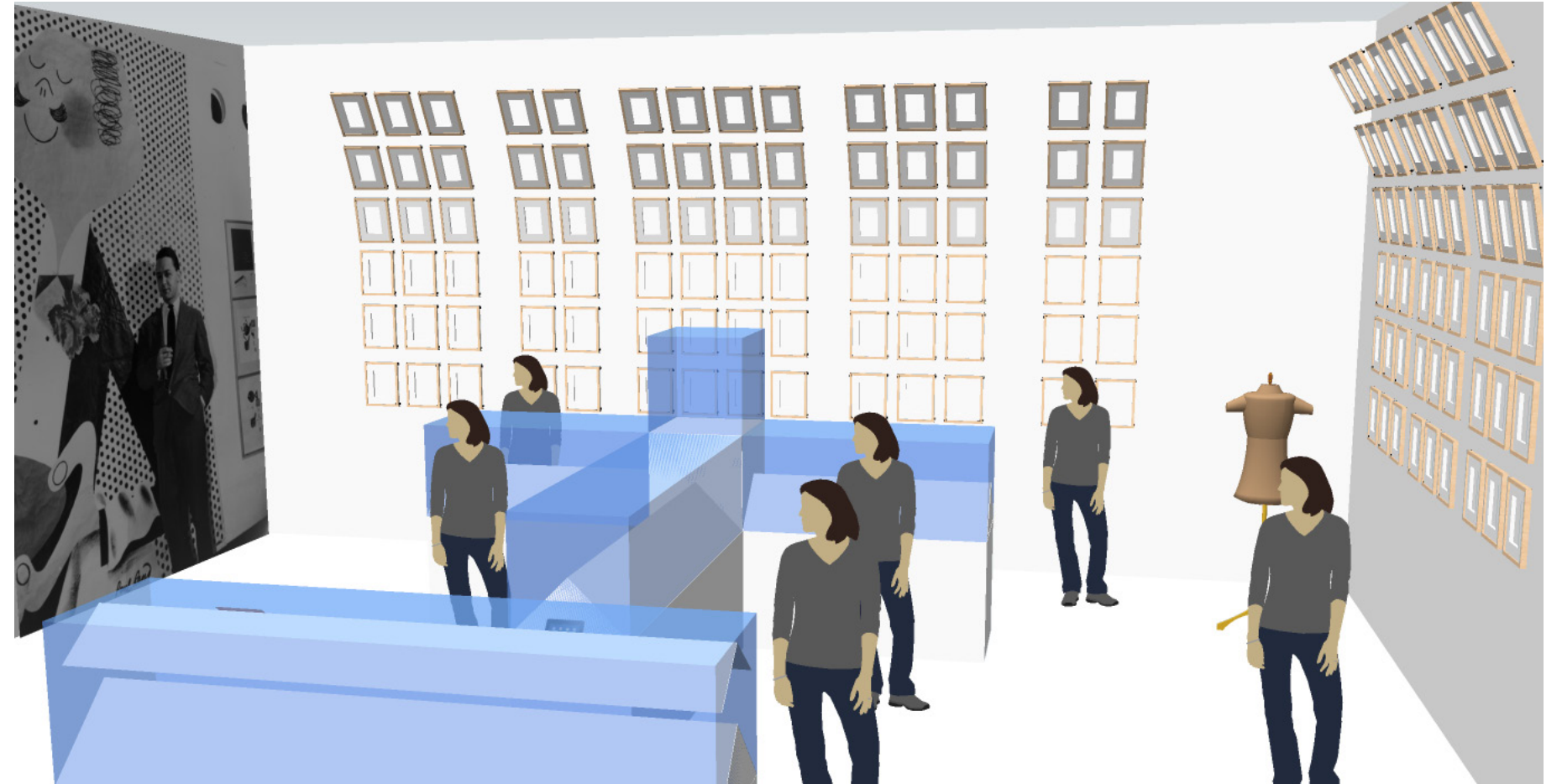
Once inside the main gallery visitors will continue to learn the reasons for his work through various displays. Beginning with advertising, several key accounts he was most known for will be presented in a uniquely framed fashion. As examples get higher on the walls, they will protrude away from the wall and angle downwards. This will create a wave-like effect and also aid visitors in viewing each sample more clearly.

Continuing around the room, each type of design practice will be grouped into sections: posters, packaging, editorial, brand identities, etc. Each section will be complimented with quotes and sample writings about each section to, again, reinforce Rand's thoughts on design.

His "process books," created for clients to walk them through his creative process will give visitors and inside glimpse into how he arrived at his final solutions. These books are a key part of the exhibit and provide an unparalleled level of insight into his work. They will be featured on their own wall along with many of his other logo executions along with iPads that will allow visitors to read through them in their entirety.

The second gallery will be divided into two sections. The first will showcase his extensive contribution to books and book covers. Each of these covers are unique pieces of art in themselves and utilize all of Rand's creative abilities. The second half of the gallery will be a viewing and reading area. A small seating area will project videos of Mr. Rand speaking about design. One in particular include the 27-minute movie "Conversation with Paul Rand" and will be made available in the MODA store for purchase. The other side will feature an iPad reading bar which will let visitors read, in full, many of his articles and books.

This rounded view will give visitors a fully educational experience not only about Mr. Rand, but design, aesthetics, form and function—the fundamental principles of art, design, branding and their combined power to impact the world.



MODA

MISSION

MODA is the only museum in the Southeast devoted exclusively to the study and celebration of all things design. MODA examines how design affects our daily lives through engaging exhibitions, K-12 educational outreach and exciting adult programming. MODA regularly features exhibitions on architecture, industrial and product design, interiors and furniture, graphics, fashion and more.

HISTORY

MODA was formerly known as the Atlanta International Museum of Art & Design. In 2003 the MODA Board of Directors, staff and community advisers made the decision to redefine the museum’s mission and direction and the Museum of Design Atlanta was born.



PROGRAMS

Design is everywhere. From the buildings we work and live in to the graphic messages that allow us to share information and from the way we interact with our computers to the clothes we wear: design pervades our lives.

MODA strives to engage the community in this design discussion in a variety of ways.



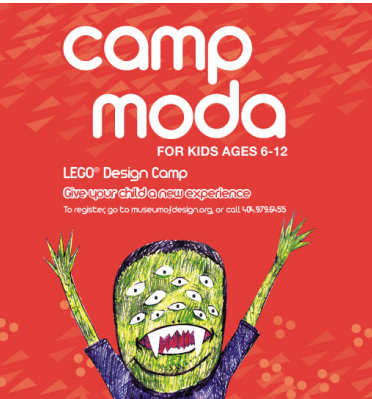
DESIGN CONVERSATION

A monthly session inviting prominent speakers to discuss their role in design and how it influences them. They share and enlighten our crowds on a variety of topics—from music to art to fashion, and more.



DRINK IN DESIGN

MODA is open late on Thursday evenings and we invite you to join us between 6pm and 8pm for our hip and happening Drink in Design events.



CAMP MODA

At camp MODA, students 6–12 years old learn about engineering, programming principals, and science, technology, engineering, art, design and math concepts while having fun!