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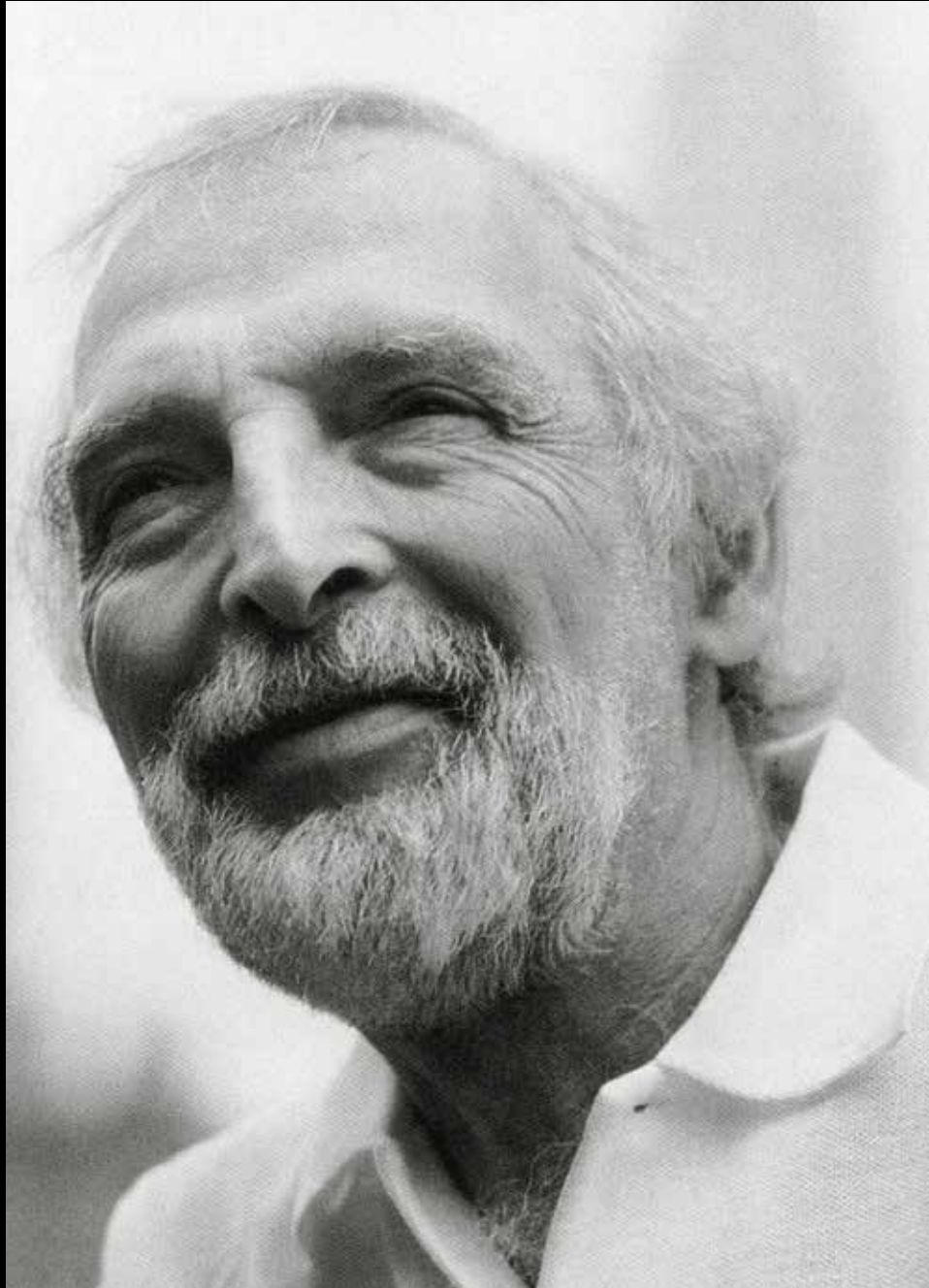
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Herb Lubalin

He Shaped Modern Design

by Yang Yuxin



AIGA, Herb Lubalin, 1980

Herb Lubalin (1918-1981) was an American graphic designer, type designer, typographer and teacher.

Studied design at Cooper Union in New York and graduated in 1939. In the same year, he worked for the World Exhibition in New York. After that the magazines "Eros", "Avant Garde", "Fact", and "U & Ic" designed in the 1960s brought a huge impact to graphic design in Europe and America. In 1964 he set up his own studio, Herb Lubalin Inc. Then founded the International Font Company (ITC) with Aaron Burns in New York in 1970. 1972-1981, taught at Cornell University and the Cooper Union in New York. In 1981, awarded the highest honor by the Professional Design Association of the United States. He received more than 500 awards in his life, along with Sol Bath and Paul Lang, is known as the greatest trio of American graphic design.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herb_Lubalin

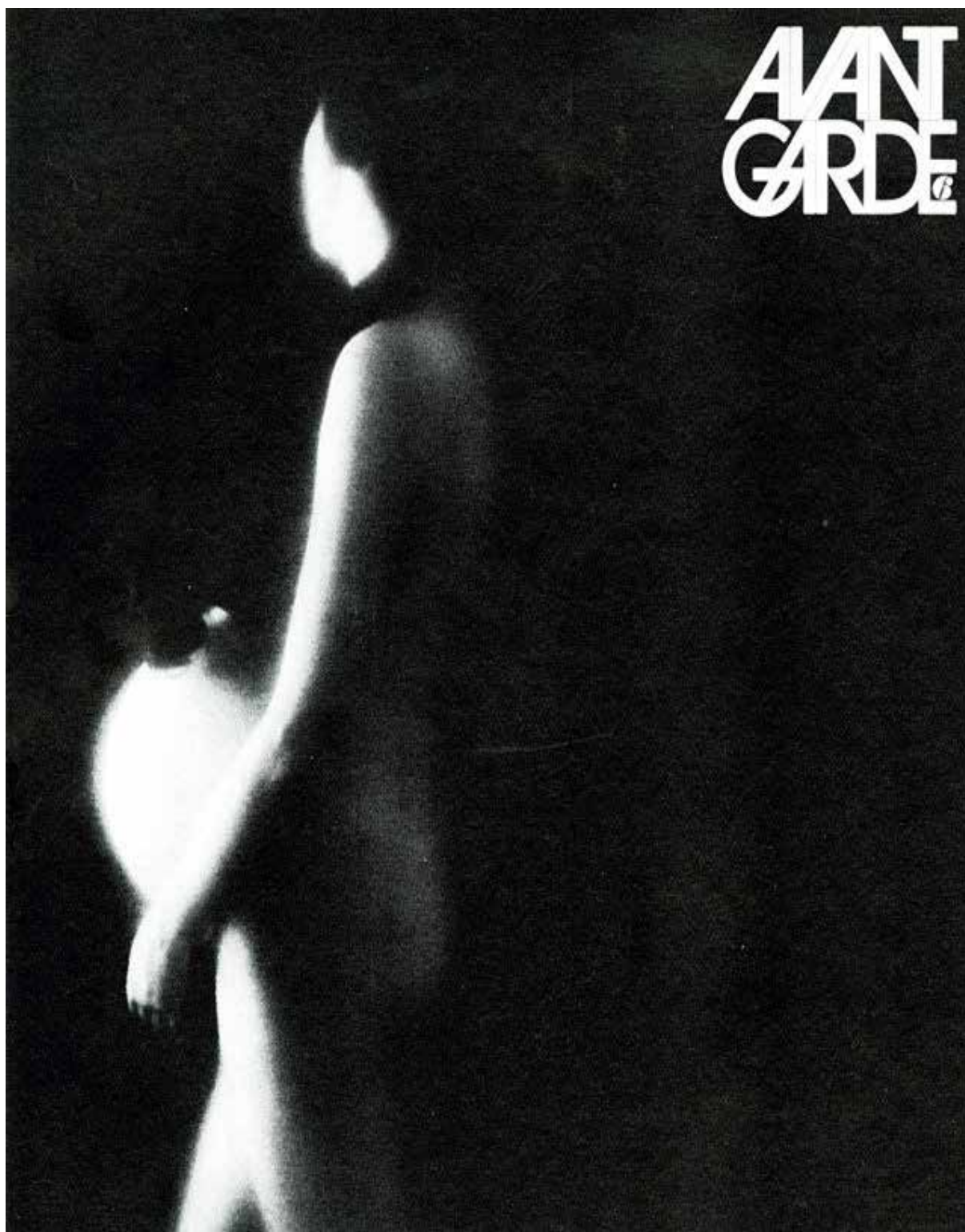
AIGI Medalista: Lubalin

Herb Lubalin was two years old when AIGA awarded its first medal to the individual who, in the judgment of its board of directors and its membership, had distinguished himself in, and contributed significantly to, the field of graphic arts. That individual was Norman T. Munder. There has been a lot of history between that moment and the evening in January 1981, when members, directors, friends and admirers gathered in the Great Hall of the New York Chamber of Commerce building to be with Lubalin as he accepted the 62nd AIGA medal. A lot of that history, at least in the graphic arts, had been written—and designed—by Herb Lubalin. And Lubalin has been recognized, awarded, emulated for it.

written about, imitated and been recognized, awarded, written about, imitated and emulated for it. There's hardly anyone better known and more highly regarded in the business. Lubalin's receipt of AIGA's highest honor was never a matter of "if", only "when". Coming to terms with Herb Lubalin's work takes you quickly to the heart of a very big subject: the theory of meaning and how meaning is communicated—how an idea is moved, full and resonant, from one mind to another. Not many have been able to do, typography is a key. It is where you start with Lubalin and what you eventually come back to. But, "typography" is not a word Lubalin thought should be applied to his work. "What I do is not really typography,

26
good
reasons
to use
Lubalin
Graph
Book

Alphabet, Lubalin graph, 1975



Magazine Cover, Avant Garde, Herb Lubalin, 1969

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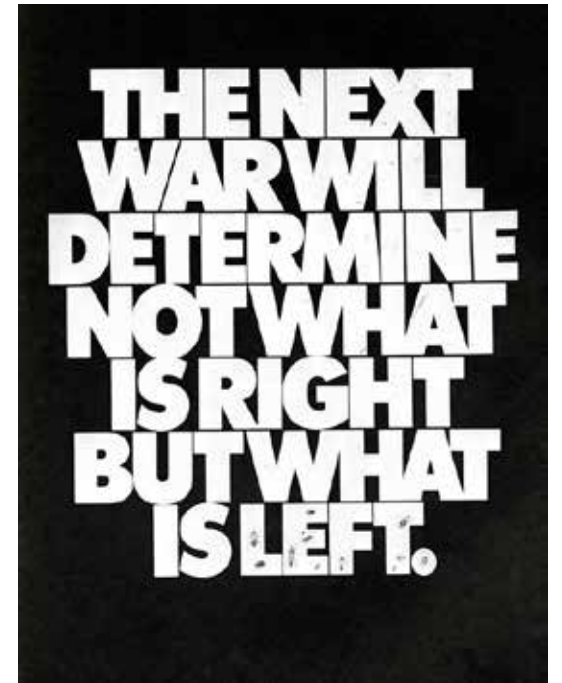
Aaron called it 'typographics', and since you've got to put a name on things to make them memorable, 'typographics' is as good as a name for what I do as any" Lubalin was a brilliant, iconoclastic advertising art director - in the 1940s with Reiss Advertising and then for twenty years with Sudler and Hennessey. Recipient of medal after medal, award after award, and in 1962 named Art Director of the Year by the National has also been a publication designer of great originality and distinction. He designed startling Eros in the early 60s, intellectually and visually astringent Fact in the

mid-60s, lush and luscious Avant Garde late in the same decade, and founded U & Ic in 1973 and saw it flourish into the 80s.

But it is Lubalin and his typographics - words, letters, pieces of letters, additions to letters, connections and combinations, and virtuoso manipulation of letters - to which all must return. The "typographic impresario of our time," Dorfman called him, a man who "profoundly influenced and changed our vision and perception of letter forms, words and language."

Lubalin at his best delivers the shock of meaning through his typography - based design Avant Garde literally moves ahead. The Sarah Vaughn ahead. The Sarah Vaughn Sings poster does just

*The Next War,
Herb Lubalin, 1972*



that. Ice Capades skates. There is a child in Mother & Child, and a family in Families. If words are a way of making meaning, then the shapes of their letters give voice, color, character and individuality to that meaning. The shock of meaning, in Lubalin's artful hands, delivers delight, as well, delight that flows from sight and insight. "Lubalin," praises Dorfsman, "used his extraordinary talent and taste to transform words and meaning from a medium to an inextricable part of the message? and in so doing, raised typography from the level of craft to art." And it is in his paper U & Ic that a lot of threads in Lubalin's life and

career get pulled together. It is publication dedicated to the joyful, riotous exploration of the complex relationships between words, letters, type and meaning - an ebullient advertisement for himself as art director, editor, publisher and purveyor of the shock and delight of meaning through typography and design. "Right now," he said, "I have what every designer wants and few have the good fortune to achieve. I'm my own client. Nobody tells me what to do." And 170,000 subscribers which, with a conservative pass-along estimate, yields 400,000 readers, benefit. Herb Lubalin's unique contribution

to our times goes well beyond design in much the same way that his typographic innovations go beyond the twenty-six letters, ten numerals and the handful of punctuation marks that comprise our visual, literal vocabulary. Lubalin's imagination, sight and insight have erased boundaries and pushed back frontiers. As an agency art director, he pushed beyond the established norm of copy-driven advertising and added a new dimension. As a publication designer, he pushed beyond the boundaries that constrained existing magazines - both in form and content. In fact, some said he had pushed

beyond the boundaries of "good taste" though in retrospect that work is more notable today for its graphic excellence than for its purported prurience. Lubalin helped push back the boundaries of the impact and perception of design - from an ill-defined, narrowly recognized craft to a powerful communication medium that could put big, important ideas smack in the public eye. And finally, he pushed back what were believed to be the boundaries of design for entire generations of designers who were to follow.

<https://www.aiga.org/medalist-herblubalin/>

Herb Lubalin: Peace on Earth Good Will Towards All Men



Advertisement, Herb Lubalin, 1959

From the 1980 AIGA Medal Profile: "Coming to terms with Herb Lubalin's work takes you quickly to the heart of a very big subject: the theory of meaning and how meaning is communicated – how an idea is moved, full and resonant, from one mind to another. Not many have been able to do that better than Lubalin. "Typography is the key. It is where you start with Lubalin and what you eventually come back to. However, "typography" is not a word Lubalin thought should be applied to his work. "What I do is not really typography, which I think of as an essentially mechanical means of putting characters down on a page. It's designing with letters. Aaron Burns called it, 'typographics,' and since you've got to put a name on things to make them memorable, 'typographics' is as good a name for what I do as any." "Lubalin was a brilliant, iconoclastic advertising art director – in the 1940s with Reiss

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*Some Of Our Best Friends,
Herb Lubalin, 1968*

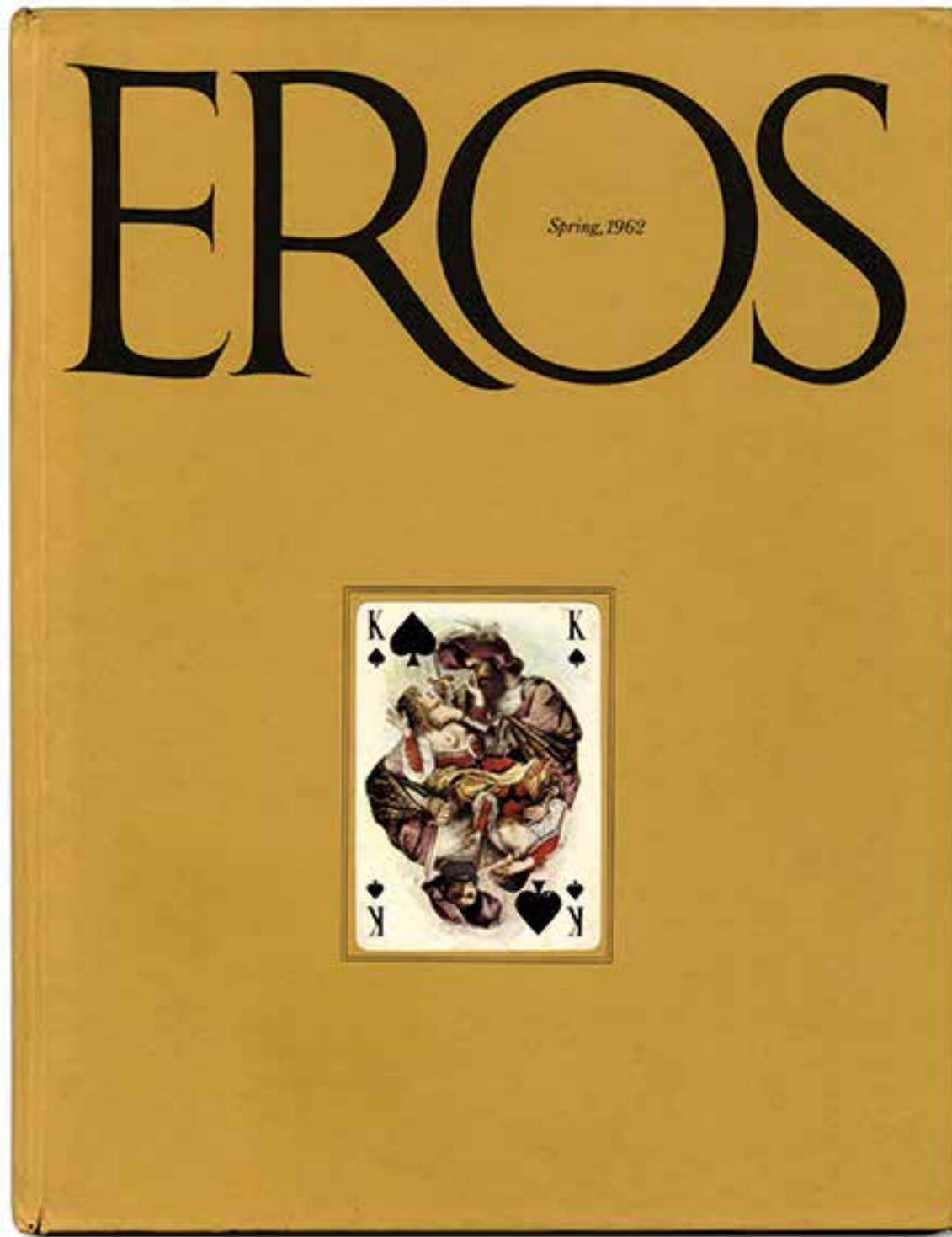


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http://modernism101.com/products-page/graphic-design/lubalin-herb-peace-on-earth-good-will-toward-all-men-new-york-herb-lubalin-c-1955/#.Xt4_LHduJPY

Herb Lubalin: the Most Avant Garde Designer of All



Eros, Herb Lubalin, 1962

Born on this day in 1918, Herb Lubalin was an experimental typographer unlike any other. Always having a playful approach to what the letterform stand for, Lubalin designed the letters individually, changing the weight and the meaning of words with the skills that define a master. "It is Lubalin and his typographics, words, letters, pieces of letters, additions to letters, connections and combinations, and virtuoso manipulation of letters, to which all must return" comments AIGA of the designer that never settled for anything. He experimented with his work throughout his life and he was on a continuous evolvement in context with the harsh political times he lived. An idealistic designer, yet brave enough to

acknowledge his status - "Right now, I have what every designer wants and few have the good fortune to achieve. I'm my own client. Nobody tells me what to do" he once said - Lubalin was a progressive liberal even when this was regarded a bad quality for business. His close collaboration with Ralph Ginzburg put him at the forefront of the 1960s free speech movement. In 1962 they published the controversial erotic magazine Eros, a publication that got shut down by it's fourth issue for "violating federal obscenity laws in the USA". Fact Magazine followed, yet legal troubles put a premature end to it as well. But it was six months later when their most iconic publication



Eros, Herb Lubalin, 1962

hit the shelves.

"As most of the world's ills are traceable to old imperatives, old superstitions, and old fools, this magazine is exuberantly dedicated to the future" Probably the most 'offensive' thing about Eros was not its soft-core sex – though it was risqué at the time – but 'Black and White in Colour', photographer Ralph M. Hattersley Jr's landmark 'tone poem' about interracial sex. In the early 1960s, black was not yet beautiful, and interracial sex was unlawful in many states. Ginsburg, formerly an editor at Esquire, really knew how to get at the

heart of American taboos – the same, final issue of Eros featured an overview of 'Love in the Bible'. The four issues published in 1962 were art directed by Herb Lubalin, who often worked with Ginsburg. Lubalin had a liberal political streak, like many of the 'Big Idea' art directors in New York, but politics (especially revolutionary politics) was not his aim. He was a designer with a mission, and Eros was a great outlet for testing his design principles.



Fact, Herb Lubalin, 1964

Fact

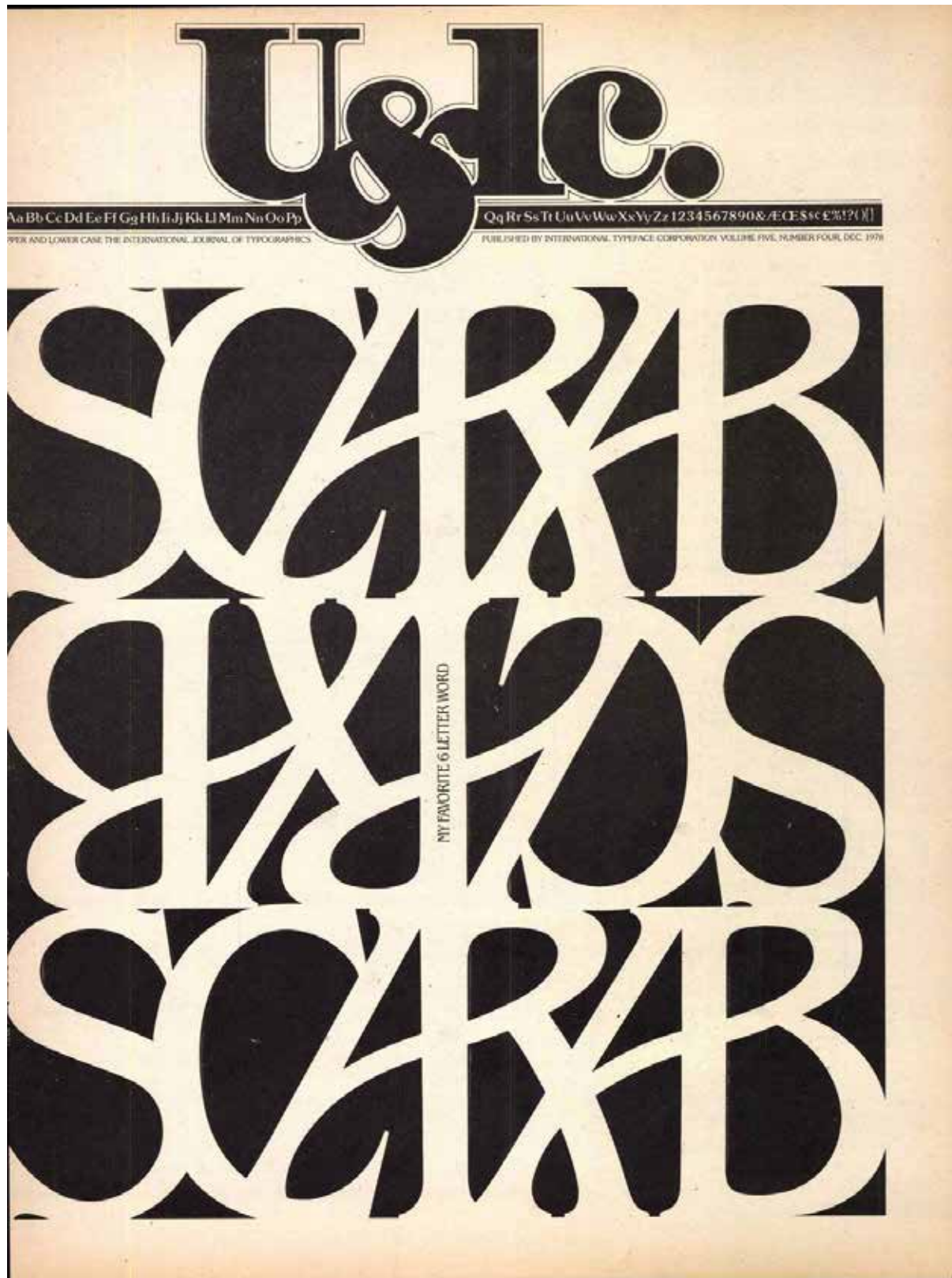
After Eros, Fact magazine was a similar venture by the two that was equally controversial, although it shifted the subject matter from sex to culture and politics.

The magazine was sued by presidential candidate Barry Goldwater for their publication of an article that said Goldwater was psychologically unfit to be president of the United States. The punitive damages of the case caused the magazine to cease publication.

Avant Garde

The most notable of the three, Avant Garde was reminiscent of Eros in its hardbound format and controversial content. The magazine combined aspects of both Fact and Eros and published articles and imagery that were often sexual, critical of the American government and radically different than traditional publications. While there was no direct legal actions brought against Avant Garde it was forced to shut down when Ginsburg went to prison for the Eros scandal.

<http://www.designishistory.com/1960/fact-eros-avant-garde/>



U&lc: the Most Prestigious Magazine in Typesetting

Yang Yuxin
May 12, 2020

U&Ic magazine is a famous
magazine designed by Herb
Lubalin, It's a font magazine.

ITC founded it in 1974, but until now he is the most prestigious magazine in the world. From the magazine layout, U&Ic generally uses four columns, text arranged vertically. even though it is a normal layout, but U&Ic uses interspersed pictures to make typography not unique, moreover, a part of the blank is left at the top of the article, so that the entire page layout will not be too compact, and it ie easier for readers to read.

And the colour of magazine

is also a content that must be mentioned. "U&Ic" magazine uses a white background and black color matching. The overall color is uniform and concise. The code of background is S 0300- N, color code of font and pictures is S 9000-N.

After talking about its gabbia and colour scheme, let's talk about the content of magazine. As mentioned before, it is a font magazine, so most of the magazine's pictures are related to font design, and the content of the magazine is also related to the process of font design, for example, vol 1.1 "IS AVANT GARDE AVANT GARDE?"

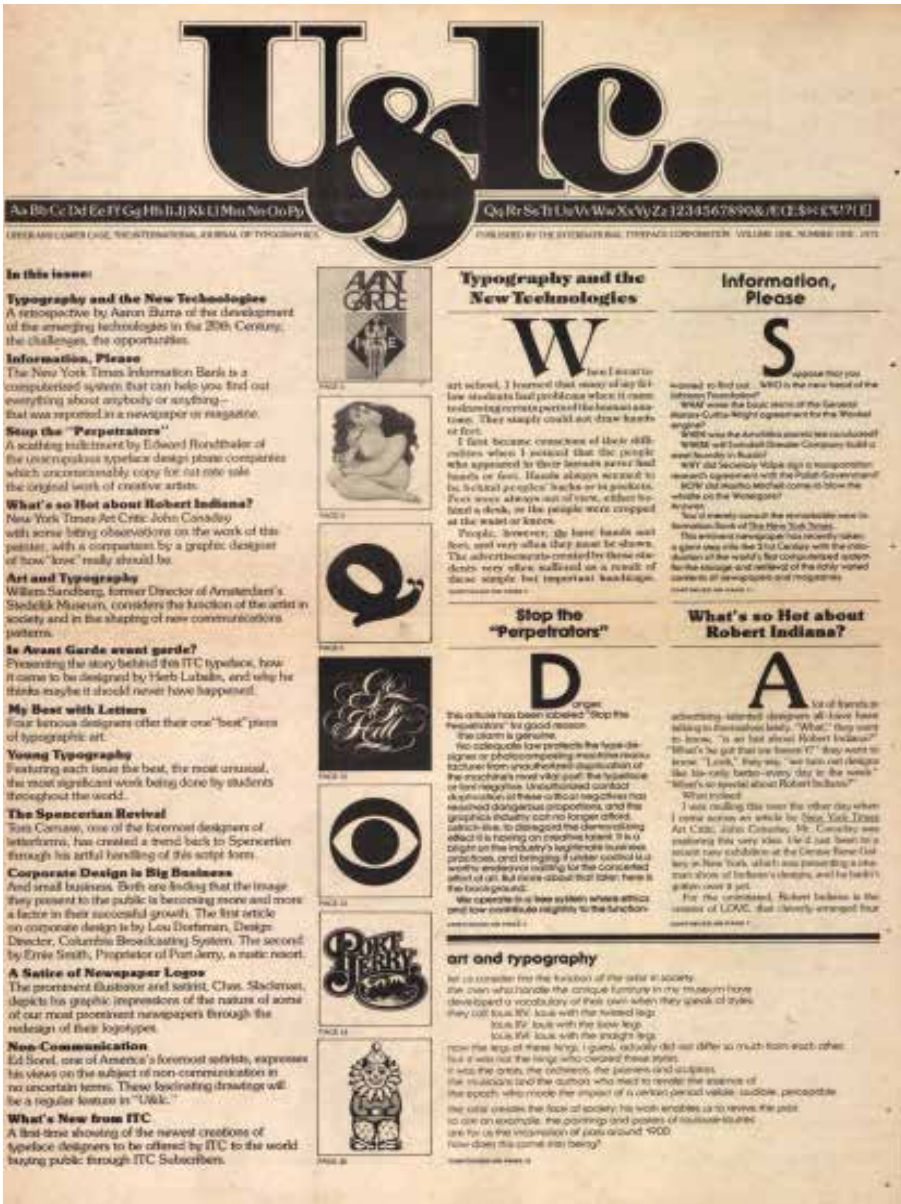


Table of contents of
U&Ic's first issue, 1973.

Why U&Ic?

The world of graphic arts is alive today with new technological advances, so vast and difficult to comprehend, that they strain the imagination of even the most knowledgeable and creatively gifted among us. New materials, new tools, new ways to plan work are becoming mandatory for efficiency, quality, economy — presenting problems for all — printers, typesetters, artists, writers, advertisers, publishers — all the creative people who have anything to do with preparation of the visual word.

How to keep up? How to stay in touch with what is current? How to plan for tomorrow? To envision a future essential to decision-making today?

Vital questions for the interested professional. Yet where can he find the most recent information on trends, styles, fashions? Where can he read about all and everything that is happening in the graphic arts and sciences?

To help make this broad body of knowledge and information available — and, hopefully, to provide some answers — International Typeface Corporation introduces this first issue of "U&Ic," the International Journal of Type/Graphics, designed by Herb Lubalin and distributed worldwide.

"U&Ic" will have broad general appeal, covering important graphic events and presenting original articles by world leaders in the typographic arts, as well as reprints of articles of importance that have appeared in other publications.

"U&Ic" will feature outstanding examples of typographic design in all fields of visual communication, from the best-known creators to the undiscovered shops.

"U&Ic" will offer in-depth analysis of the material presented and study the direction of current work and developments in typographic technology.

In brief, "U&Ic" will provide a panoramic window, a showcase for the world of graphic arts — a clearinghouse for the international exchange of ideas and information.

It is the intent of the editorial staff and the directors of ITC that "U&Ic" will come to serve as the international journal for all who want to have their finger on "what is new," "what is happening," and "what to look for" in the world of typographics.

The Editors

THIS EDITORIAL PAGE SET IN ITC TYPEFACIAL MODERN.

Stop the "Perpetrators"

Copyright © 1973 ITC

ing of business. Business law has built our great economic machine, but it is our day-by-day ethic that provides the oil to keep the giant from grinding to a halt. Some years ago a popular treatise on economics — aptly named "The Promises Men Live By" — pointed out that law alone is not enough to keep our economy healthy. Widespread voluntary adherence to moral and ethical business principles is the lubricant that makes the whole thing work.

Every enterprise needs ready access to the tools of its trade — in this case typefaces. But if this need is satisfied through unethical means, particularly when there is an ethical alternative, then we are in trouble. When a thief takes pennies from a newsstand, it's called stealing. But when a duplicator lifts design material without paying for it, it's likely to condone the act with the half-excuse "It's not illegal." Under our present laws it's not illegal, but it's highly unethical.

Protecting a type design from piracy is a problem as old as typefounding itself. The alphabet has never enjoyed much legal status. Type designer and manufacturer have long been victims of this unfortunate situation. A parallel condition plagues the fashion industry where brilliant creations by eminent couturiers are quickly copied and mass produced. Even so — until recently — the enormous cost of engraving duplicate matrices gave a certain minimal protection to metal type. Enough, at least, to discourage piracy or at best the most popular forgeries, and enough to encourage manufacturers to continue to create new styles — in the hope, perhaps, that the new types would not be quite popular enough to attract the pirate. The whole situation has been far from ideal. It has restricted certain designs to certain typesetting machines. Caldoneo, for example, is found only on Linotype. Modern 18 on Monotype. Radiant on Ludlow, etc. This has been awkward for the graphic communicator — almost as if red paint could be applied only by roller, blue only by brush, and green only by spray — yet he has learned to live with it.

While no one has been known to copy a certain sign very often, changes in works in the field of typography (world inner have drastic erosion of it. Diplomatic iery. There is merit will an when nothing give legal p eal on the d does not bu in the field a WFO and U "dropped" pre unauthorize gram" has i P was origi ing the U.S.) converted it then the leg dom. Swede the documt usability on one expecte precedent. I for John M onal comm widespread Law — last i are des



The logo of U&Ic is also interesting, they thickened the font and made the parts of letters more rounded and full. The straight lines are still straight, and the arcs are compared with the straight lines, and the spacing between the letters is narrowed, making the logo more overall, more design,

and easier attract reader's attention. There are some small parts of the connection of the letters. The sense of squeeze caused by this connection makes the sign more lively. At the same time the sign has a font-to-rear relationship and is more spatial.

Gianni Berengo Gardin

Man in Black and White

by Chen Rui



Gianni Berengo Gardin

Gianni Berengo Gardin was born in Santa Margherita (Liguria) on October 10, 1930, and spent his childhood in Rome. His family moved to Venice after World War II. Berengo Gardin, who became a young, amateur photographer early on, decided to go professional, working as a photo reporter for *Il Mondo*, up until 1965. In 1964 he moved to Milan where he opened a studio for fashion, commercial and still life photography. Many of his pictures are currently on display as part of the large 'Grandi Maestri. 100 Anni di Fotografia Leica' exhibition in Complesso del Vittoriano – Ala Brasini, Rome, from November 16, 2017, till February 18, 2018. With this title, the successful touring exhibition 'Eyes Wide Open! 100 Years of Leica Photography', has found its ninth location.

<https://www.leica-oskar-barnack-award.com/en/insights/gianni-berengo-gardin.html>

Images of Human Toil and Struggle

*Rachel Spence
April 8, 2014*

If anyone has captured his country's capricious psyche, it is Berengo Gardin. Now in his 84th year, he has spent more than half a century documenting Italian mores, from Olivetti factory workers to Sicilian gypsies and the protests of 1968. In the 1970s, when he turned his Leica on the inmates of psychiatric institutions, his testimony of cruelty led to more humane legislation. Equally impressive is his achievement in revealing something rare and true about Venice, that most overexposed of cities. Berengo Gardin's empathy is part nature, part nurture. He was born in Liguria in 1930, to a Venetian father and a Swiss mother, who,

he says, instilled in him a sense of social justice: "She was a feminist before anyone knew what feminism was." He first picked up a camera in the mid-1940s. By then, the family had moved to Rome. When the German occupiers ordered the citizens to hand in their cameras, recalls Berengo Gardin, "I went out to take photographs just because I liked to disobey!" Like all young Italians at the time, he had little choice but to join the Fascist youth movement. But he realized the party was an abomination when, en route to a rally, his troupe leader descended from the bus to beat up a road worker who refused

to salute him. "That's when I understood how violent fascism was." When the war ended, the family moved to Venice. "At first I was a dilettante photographer, taking shots of sunsets and old ladies." Revelation occurred with a parcel of books from an uncle in America that included work by the great documentary photographers Walker Evans and Dorothea Lange. As he gazed at farmers reduced to gaunt despair by the Great Depression, Berengo Gardin found his calling. "It was the first time I realized that photography could tell stories that mattered." In Venice, he became part

of a vibrant, avant-garde arts scene that included Peggy Guggenheim, Vedova, Santomaso and the composer Luigi Nono. "To grow up there connected you into an extraordinary culture," Gardin remembers, before adding sadly: "Today Venice is a violated woman." One of his most recent assignments, from La Repubblica newspaper, was to photograph the giant cruise ships that are threatening the city's social and environmental balance. Boosted by commissions from Olivetti and Fiat, Berengo Gardin became fascinated by the subject of work. The result is a body of images that maps the



Venice, 1960, Gianni Berengo Gardin

toil on which modern Italy was built. From a young factory worker adrift in an ocean of machines to the man with a ruler- straight spine carrying huge loaves on a plank across his shoulders through a Basilicata village, these pictures remind us, whatever the nature of our labour, of our collective soul. "I have always been close to the working classes," he concurs. "Once they were exploited to the maximum. They still are to an extent, although now at least there are unions." His most renowned image of Venice was taken in 1960, on a vaporetto with mirrored doors so that the passengers are trapped in a mosaic of reflections.

Simultaneously mundane – the travelers are ordinary commuters – and exotic, it captures the paradox of a city trapped in an excess of representation. Unlike so many images tainted by pity or romanticisation, Berengo Gardin's photographs capture the way in which his subjects see themselves. "Even the poorest people have dignity," he observes. Important too is his predilection for a wide-angled lens, which he owes to William Klein's photographs of New York. "If I take your face now in close-up, that could be interesting. But if I take it with a wide-angle, I will narrate your context."

<https://www.ft.com/content/6a77b166-b8c2-11e3-835e-00144feabdc0>

Berengo's Take on Photography

A Collection of Interviews

*"Wine is red and photography is black and white"
"Color creates disattenzione"
He declares.*

Humans are always at the centre of your work. Why is that?

Because humans are at the centre of everything. I realized that when I was photographing factory workers on the production line in the 1960s. I did it to tell their story, but underneath it all was a basic need to defend their dignity. That's what really interests me. When Carla Cerati and I took some photos inside psychiatric hospitals, I learned how mental illness can humiliate people and rob them of their dignity.

What cameras do you use? Do you still stick to film?

I have recently tried out the Leica Monochrom, which appeals to me because it's

a black and white camera, but I'm still a firm believer in film so I'm still using my Leica M7 and M6. Digital has undoubtedly revolutionized the world of photography. The Leica Monochrom that I used delivers absolutely outstanding performance, but I find digital to be too perfect if that's possible. It's not something I'm looking for in my photographs. I believe that film is still more flexible and, crucially, it generates a negative – something tangible that can be archived and will stand the test of time.

In today's world, I may seem like I'm anti-digital, but it's not something I'm against per se; it's more some of the bad habits that digital photography has

created, like excessive and disproportionate reliance on post-production. So many people take photos casually or half-heartedly because they know they can always touch them up on Photoshop. I believe a photo should be created immediately, right from the moment you look through the lens.

What do you think constitutes a beautiful photo?

I don't like 'beautiful' photos. I think they're totally useless. That's something I've learned. I used to think "what a beautiful photo", but one time, when I was still very young, Ugo Mulas was showing me his photos and I kept saying "what

a beautiful photo" or "that's a beautiful shot". The more I said those things, the more annoyed he got. Eventually, he said to me: "If you say that one of my photos is beautiful one more time, I'm kicking you out." Feeling a little embarrassed, I asked him: "But sir, how else should I show my appreciation?" He replied: "You should say they're good. Beautiful photos might be aesthetically perfect and well constructed, but they don't say anything. A good photo tells you things, stories... it communicates something. Beautiful photos communicate too, but what they communicate is useless." So from that moment on, I've always said "good photo" rather than "beautiful photo".

Is photography style or substance?

Both, up to a point. I love telling a story – it's something Koudelka taught me. He and Salgado are great friends of mine, and while he taught me that a photo should always have a story to tell, Salgado taught me that content should go hand in hand with form. If I had to choose between a stylish photo and a photo of substance, I would always go for the latter, but a bit of style would also make that photo easier to interpret. The two should almost always go together, but substance will always be the most important thing for me.

You once said: "Wine is red and photography is black and white"...

Actually, I took color photos for the Touring Club Italiano for 15 years, although they were only landscapes and buildings; all my photojournalism has been done exclusively in black and white. If you cut me open, I would bleed black and white. When I began taking photos, films were in black and white, TV was in black and white and 99% of the great photographers I admired worked in black and white.

You don't like photographing women, do you?

Actually, I think it's more that women don't like being

photographed by me. I once shot Anna Magnani. We were by a window and I asked her if we could move because the light was showing up her wrinkles. She replied: "One by one, these wrinkles have got the better of me and I want all of them to be seen!" I was surprised but had to admire her honesty. I tend not to do portraits, but I do like environmental portraits, which show people in their familiar surroundings.

Your photos always seem to capture a fleeting moment. How do you do that?

A lot of expertise, a lot of experience and a permanently attentive and

curious eye. I believe in the 'decisive moment', but I don't think it exists in the situation that is being photographed. It's you, as the photographer, who decides when it is the decisive moment. And that moment depends on each individual's point of view. Everything depends on the photographer, because after all it is their reality that they choose to interpret and show to other people.

You have often said that the decisive moment in a photograph is the prerogative of the photographer. Have you ever been pleasantly caught off guard by a decisive moment that was not under your control?



Untitled, Gianni Berengo Gardin



Untitled, Gianni Berengo Gardin



Untitled, Gianni Berengo Gardin

Yes, a few times. There are two kinds of photographs. The ones you take when you “feel” or you expect something to happen. Sometimes an unexpected event can come up, something entirely different from what you had imagined, however confusedly. This first category of photographs paradoxically includes the ones you don’t take because you “get there” too late, you’re not ready, and you lose the moment. The other kind of photograph is the category of images designed for larger and more complex works, such as books or photo features. This type is not as instantaneous, and requires weighing different

options and thinking things over a lot more. It’s a slower, longer process. Both genres, however, have great value.

Have you ever wondered who or what makes things happen?

No, never. I simply try to record things as they happen, and when they don’t happen I simply don’t take photos. I have never thought of what is behind events: my only thought is to take good photos of what happens.

You are a stern critic of digital technology. Yet you have recently taken some photos with a Leica Monochrom, a digital camera.

Yes, I took a few shots. The Monochrom gives an exceptional performance, worthy of an optical bench. I gave it a try – just once – for a number of reasons: it has an exceptional grayscale, no flash, and allows you to turn digital files into film... but digital photography still does not interest me.

Why not?

First of all for the post production process, which I find so irksome I cannot stand it. Digital technology offers only two advantages. The first is the ability to immediately send a photo to anyone in the world; this is something that does not

interest me at all, because I like to wait a few days before I let anyone see my work. But I do understand that immediacy is a very important aspect for breaking news photographers. The other advantage is the possibility to vary ISO depending on light. But except for those two things, I think everything else is a disadvantage.

Do you see any other disadvantages in digital technology?

In my opinion it will lead to the end of archives, because only negatives can make up a real archive. We do not know what will happen in the next ten



Sicily, 1982, Gianni Berengo Gardin

years, and what tools we will have at that point to read digital files... I already have CDs from a few years back that are useless garbage now. And I always work with the archive in mind: I am not interested in making art, but only in documenting and witnessing reality, so I want photos to outlive me, to survive the passage of time so that, many years from now, someone will have the chance to look at them and understand history...

You have photographed Italy and its landscapes many times.

Yes, I know Italy very well because for fifteen years I worked for the Touring Club and the Istituto Geografico De Agostini.

Of all the books I've published – there are more than two hundred – some were commissioned by others and some I proposed myself. But I have always photographed landscapes, regardless of the job, because they are a passion of mine.

Italian cities are also a frequent subject of your photographs...

Yes, I have several “metropolitan loves”, such as Venice and Milan. I don't generally care for touristic cities: with Rome, for example, I have a complicated relationship. I like to be there for three or four days, then I have to leave. Venice is an exception. I love it especially at night, when

there are no tourists around. Of course they have every right to visit such a beautiful city, but I try to avoid the crowds. Sometimes I feel as if I were in the middle of an overcrowded beach during the summer, where you have to fight against the flow of people to reach the shore, and cannot even read a book in peace...

Speaking of books, what is your relationship with literature?

I have a strange bond with poetry. I don't like to read it, I don't understand any of it, but I like to hear someone else read it. On the other hand, I'm omnivorous with prose: I like to read anything from mystery

stories to the most complex essays. After the war I became a great fan of American authors: Fitzgerald, Faulkner, Hemingway, Steinbeck and, above all, Dos Passos, whom I especially liked because in addition to being a great writer he was also an anti-imperialist. Among the French, I am especially fond of Simenon. Some of his descriptions are almost photographic.

Which photographers do you appreciated the most, and from which have you learned the most?

There are so many, and some of them I have met and gotten to know in person, such as Salgado, Koudelka, Cartier-Bresson...

***They call you the
“Italian Cartier-Bresson”...***

And they are wrong. “Italian Willy Ronis” would be more accurate, because I learned so much more from him. Cartier-Bresson is on a whole different level, out of reach. I am very proud to have (he points to a framed autograph of Cartier-Bresson) this statement of his “admiration” for my work... it’s something to be proud of, isn’t it?

***Have you ever intentionally set up
a scene for your photos?***

I have shot a million and a half photographs, and I’ve “designed” – declaring it openly – only three or four.

***How can you learn to
become photographer?***

First of all, you have to look at

the work of the great masters, think about it and about why they created those images. In my life I have devoured books by the great American and French photographers. You can also learn a lot from contemporary authors. For example, I owe a lot to Gabriele Basilico, who has been a great inspiration of mine for architectural photography. And you can learn a lot from artists...

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<https://www.italianways.com/interview-with-g-berengo-gardin/>

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<https://www.leica-camera.blog/2017/11/15/leica-hall-fame-award-2017-winner-gianni-berengo-gardin/>

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Varese, 1987, Gianni Berengo Gardin

“A Leica isn’t just any camera, it is THE camera”

On November 15, 2017, in Rome, Leica Camera AG honored the Italian photographer, Gianni Berengo Gardin, with the Leica Hall of Fame Award for his life’s work. This is second great recognition that connects him to Leica, as he was already the recipient of the Leica Oskar Barnack Award in 1995. Twenty-two years span the two events, and during that period the world of photography has been totally transformed: as a medium, structurally and also aesthetically. In this regard, Berengo Gardin’s oeuvre appears all the more classic today, yet it has lost none of its quality. The photographer’s work and career have been closely associated with Leica for over 60 years: “My relationship with Leica began even before the M system existed. Long before that, with a Leica IIIC. Then, when the

M3 came out in 1954, it became an irrepressible passion. I’ve had every M model that came out since then. Up until the M7, which I still use. It’s the one I use most. For me, a Leica isn’t just any camera, it is THE camera.” It is hardly surprising then, that all his cameras have found a place of honour in a display cabinet in his home. This is where the circle is completed, because, within the framework of the Leica Hall of Fame Award, he can now add another one to his collection: a Leica M-A produced especially for him – fully mechanical and analogue. This ensures that the photographer can remain faithful to his working style, and makes the twenty-two year gap no longer appear quite so large.

<https://www.leica-oskar-barnack-award.com/en/insights/gianni-berengo-gardin.html>



Inside the Nomad Camp, Florence, 1993, Gianni Berengo Gardin

On a Vaporetto, Venice

Chen Rui
May 12, 2020

Vaporetto, 1958, Gianni Berengo Gardin



This, considered to be Berengo Gardin's most iconic image, was shot on the artist's first roll of 400 ASA film given to him by Cornell Capa. The image was taken inside a vaporetto and ingeniously reassembles the sharp-suited men aboard in the reflecting glass and mirror.

At the first glimpse, one might not be perfectly aware of the content of such a photograph for its compositional complexity and the deceptiveness of those glasses and mirrors. However if we look closely, this image could be broken down to four main sections - three in the background and the other in front of all. Every single man in 'Vaporetto' seems to be moving though it's just a shot - it's like the moment has been captured in an instant when a surveillance

camera stopped working, every part of it seemed incredibly natural.

Berengo Gardin is a fanatic of black and white photography, not just because he's lived in a time when everything was in black and white, but this passion has lasted till later days. 'Vaporetto' was shot in 1960 in Venice, where people live on the beauty of the waterway intertwining throughout the entire city. The photograph managed to reflect this aspect in a metaphorical way - people with different backgrounds crowded the ship just like those people in Venice coming and going. It is very easy to get lost in such dazzling scenes.

This photograph owes a significant debt to Cartier-Bresson,

a debt that Berengo Gardin has readily acknowledged, and it reminds us of the very considerable impact of Cartier-Bresson's work on emerging photographers in the fifties, not least in Italy through his 1953 exhibition at the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence and through the dissemination of his books.

The way in which 'Vaporetto' blends documentary observation with a complex layered and fragmented structure develops lessons by Berengo Gardin from this mentor, and specifically references the stimulus of a photograph made in a pub in Brighton published by Cartier-Bresson in *The Europeans* in 1955.

Tina Modotti

Beauty, Politics, Passions and Revolution

by Tian Junyao



Tina Modotti, 1925

The Incredible Story of Tina Modotti

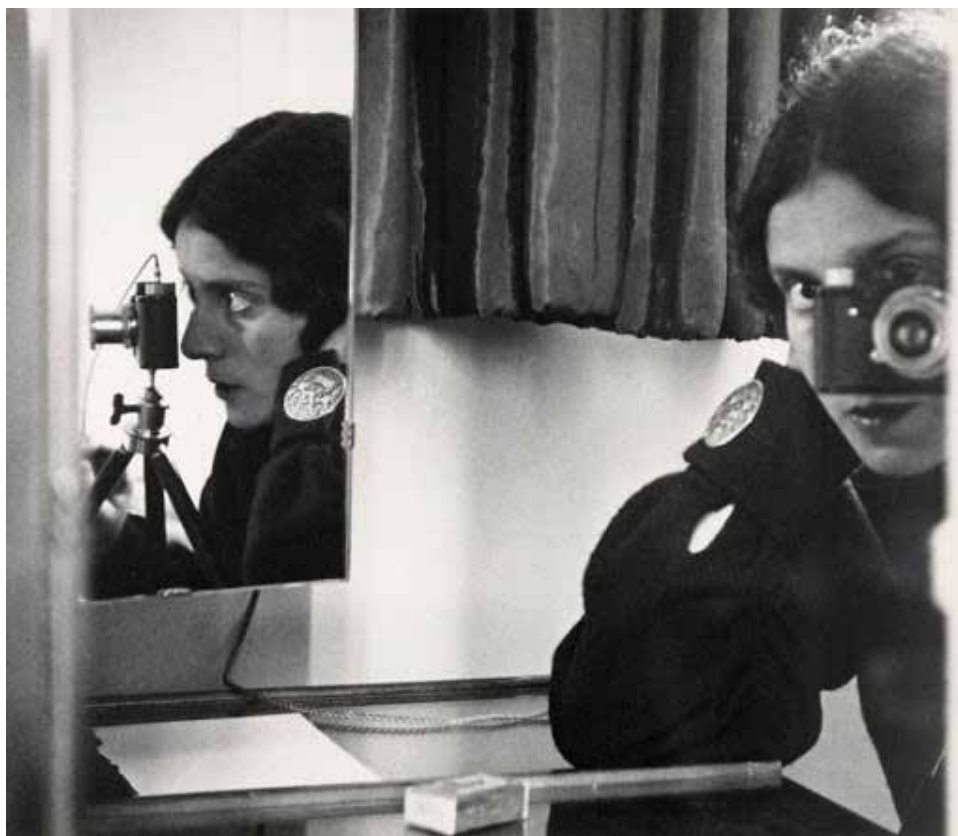
*Daniela Ambrosio
February 21, 2020*

Tina Modotti, an Italian photographer, actress, has left an indelible mark on the history of contemporary photography. Her famous shots, which make up the collections of the most important museums in the world, are the symbol of an emancipated and modern woman, whose photographic art is inextricably linked to her social commitment. During her short life, she worked at the forefront of a freer and fairer humanity, to bring relief to civilian victims of conflicts. She will never be able to return to her beloved native land because of her anti-fascist activities and an untimely death at the age of 46, to which artists such as Picasso, Rafael Alberti and Pablo Neruda paid tribute to her.

<https://www.mudec.it/eng/tina-modotti-women-mexico-and-freedom/>

Intelligent, charming, politically committed. The life (and art) of Tina Modotti has something "cinematographic" about it. And, not surprisingly, her career as a photographer begins right in the cinema when, after acting for some Hollywood productions, she meets the great Edward Weston. But let's go back in time, to Udine, at the end of the nineteenth century. Tina was born into a poor working class family. Her parents are socialists and when they decide to emigrate to Austria in search of better economic conditions, the eldest daughter Tina is only two years old. Even there, however, things are not going well and on returning to Friuli, Tina begins to work

as a worker to help the family. These are difficult years, and the hope of leaving Italy does not abandon the Modotti family: finally, in 1913, Tina manages to leave for the United States with her father. In San Francisco she finds work in a textile factory, but in the young girl's life there seems to be room for something else: she starts studying theater and dreaming of a life in Hollywood. The dream came true when, after marrying an aspiring painter, she moved to Los Angeles and was hired as the protagonist of the film *The Tiger Coat*. It's 1920 and the "roaring years" are just beginning. The possibility of becoming a movie star opens up before the young girl from Friuli:



Self-portrait with Leica, 1931

she is very expressive, she has an exotic, bewitching charm. However, Tina soon feels uncomfortable in the role of the femme fatale and, after two more films, she decides to end her acting career. The reason is also another: she had known the photographer Edward Weston. She will be his model first, then his lover, and thanks to him she will discover that her destiny is to become a

photographer. She follows him to Mexico City, where she meets and gets touch with the most important characters of Mexican communism. She photographs them, and falls in love with many of them and becomes their lover. Tina is a passionate woman, without taboos: on her way she also meets the painter Frida Kahlo, and has a relationship with her. Loves, militancy and photography: in these years that



Tina Modotti and Frida Kahlo, 1928

photographic art matures and asserts herself: in the portraits of Mexican women, in the images of the Revolution, in the looks of the protagonists of Mexican Muralism. If it is true that her passion for photography began when she was in Italy and, still a child, her uncle who ran a photographic studio had given her the cy. In Modotti's first rudiments, it is in Mexico that she manages to express all her

skill and sensitivity. In fact, her photographs always pervaded by political commitment and aesthetic tension, by the pictorial dimension of the images - learned over the years with Weston desire - and by the desire to express the crudest reality and militancy. In Modotti's poetics, these two apparently antithetical aspects dissolve and find balance in each other. In 1929, she was expelled from

Spain, Russia and an Unclear End

Pino Cacucci
October 1, 2013

*Tina Modotti, sister, you don't sleep, no, you don't sleep: maybe your heart feels the rose
grow yesterday, the last squad of yesterday, the new squad.
Rest sweetly, sister ...
Pablo Neruda January 5, 1942, epitaph dedicated to Tina Modotti*

Mexico, the country she had chosen as her chosen homeland. The motivation is obviously political: she is accused of taking part in the attack on the president, Ortiz Rubio. Thus began a period of travel - perhaps it would be more correct to call them escapes - from Rotterdam to Berlin, from Moscow to Paris. Tina has a nomadic spirit, and is well suited to change. To guide it, the political faith in Communism, which subsequently takes her to Spain, where she participates

in the convulsive events of the Civil War. The last years of her life were marked by an increasingly intense political commitment, by accusations (according to some she was involved in the assassination of Trotsky), by the deep sentimental bond with the anti-fascist Vittorio Vidali. Her own death remains a mystery today: it seems that she was killed by Vidali himself, for political reasons.

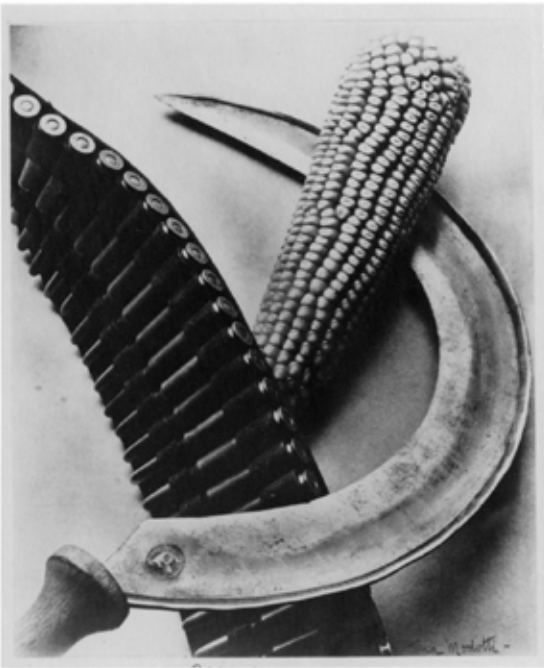
<https://www.elle.com/it/magazine/storie-di-donne/a30983297/tina-modotti-fotografa/>

In the communist party she met Vittorio Vidali, who quickly became her lover. There is also talk of a relationship with the painter Frida Kahlo, sure it is that the two women fought many battles in the name of political ideals together, and were close friends. Due to her political activities, she was expelled from Mexico. This also resulted in her ending and artistic career. She works rare after this event and her transfer to Russia. When she arrived in Russia

she joined the Soviet secret police and took part in many missions for them traveling throughout Europe. Then she stopped in Spain during the civil war with her companion Vidali, and after a year in disguise they headed back to Mexico. Her life became more complicated every day, crushed by the weight of clandestine activities. clandestine activities. According to some historians, the photographer was involved, together with her lover Vittorio Vidali, in the assassination

of Lev Trockij. Tina died in Mexico City on January 5, 1942, in circumstances that some call suspicious. Diego Rivera claimed that she had been murdered, and that Vidali himself had been the author of the murder. Tina could "know too much" about Vidali's activities in Spain during the civil war. The official truth, and perhaps the most probable, is that Tina that night, after having dined with friends in, was struck by a heart attack, and died in the taxi who was taking her home. Her grave is in the great Panteón de Dolores in Mexico City, and it bears part of an epitaph written for her by Pablo Neruda.

<http://www.grandi-fotografi.com/tina-modotti>



Tina Modotti, Sickle panicle cartridge, Mexico 1927



Tina Modotti and Edward Weston on the Anniversary of the Arrival in Mexico, 1924

Her Legend Returns Home

Umberto Verdat
August 23, 2019

History and personality beyond its art make Tina Modotti a legendary figure. In the first decades of the last century a beautiful, independent, artist and revolutionary woman, linked by strong passions to men with great artistic and political aspirations totally shared by her, could only become a myth.

In 1922 Robo, painter and husband of Tina, died of smallpox during a trip to Mexico, she left the USA to attend the funeral and in that sad circumstance she was fascinated by this land. A year later she moved to Mexico with the photographer Edward Weston, with whom she had started a romantic and professional relationship. Already from the early years it was perfectly inserted in the artistic renewal and the nascent protagonism of the women of the Central American country. The exhibition is divided into two sections, the first, "Occhi di Tina", brings together most of the photographs from 1929

exhibition, found thanks to the Cinemazero collection, images made solely by Tina. The portrait of Julio Antonio Mella predominates. The young Cuban revolutionary was her great love and also at her side intensified the work of committed photographer and political militant. Mella was killed in the streets of Mexico City by the assassins of the Cuban dictator Gerardo Machado just as he was returning home with Tina. Here we note the great portraiture of Modotti who, starting from the teachings of the photographer Edward Weston, finds her own path full of pathos.



Tina Modotti, Worker's hands, Mexico 1927

We then move on to the shots that characterize her art, from 1926 onwards, her goal becomes an instrument of investigation and social denunciation.

- the farmers are photographed from behind and wear very similar hats, they convey a sense of unity;
- the straw sombreros that dominate the photo highlight a symbol of Mexican culture;
- many of the sombreros appear blurred to make the idea of movement, a compact mass that advances. Of course, there is no shortage of icon photos, such as the woman with the anarchist flag or the women of the people with their children and their daily work.

"Manos supporting a shovel", "Manos de mujer lavando ropa" are the hands of men and women who work, express the fatigue of the daily life of poor people. Moving on to the second section, clearly separated from the first, "Eyes on Tina", about twenty shots that portray it, made by Edward Weston and other photographers, have been exhibited. In this section you can admire an absolute first: seventeen year old Tina photographed by her uncle Pietro Modotti. In January 1942 Tina Modotti died of a heart attack in a taxi that is taking her home. As had already happened after the assassination of Julio



Tina Modotti next to her works University of Mexico City 1929

Antonio Mella, the reactionary and scandalistic press tries to transform Tina's death into a political crime and attributes responsibility to Vittorio Vidali, then her life partner. Pablo Neruda, outraged by these controversies, writes a strong poem that is published in all newspapers: "... on the jewel of your sleeping body she still holds out her pen and bloodied soul as if you could, sister, rise again and smile over the mud. "

<http://www.strisciarossa.it/tina-modotti-la-sua-leggenda-torna-a-casa/>



Tina's tomb in the Pantheon de Dolores in Mexico City, with the profile designed by the sculptor Leopoldo Mendez and the first verses of the poetry of Pablo Neruda

Tina Modotti and the Importance of Honest Photograph

*Tian Junyao
May 12, 2020*

Modotti adheres to the avant-garde currents and in particular to extridentism, a current very attentive to social issues. In 1927 she joined the Mexican Communist Party. Her photographic exhibition of 1929, which a painter of the time called "The first revolutionary photography exhibition in Mexico", represents both the culmination and the beginning of the end of her artistic career. The unresolved conflict between life and art defines the events leads to light. She does this through a deep, sharp and confident gaze,

at the same time directed by a unique sensitivity and a disarming delicacy. We can intuitively see that this is a pair of puppet show hands. Its composition elements are simple, with only one pair of hands and props for puppet show. Tina Modotti was participating in the Mexican Revolution when she took the photo. She wanted to reflect the cruelty of the revolution through the suffering of the grassroots working people. She just wanted to use this way to reflect the social status quo at that time.



A photo taken by Modotti in 1929: "The hands of the puppeteer", Mexico City, now preserved at the Minneapolis Institute of Art in the USA

In this photo, the hand, a symbol of action, industriousness and perseverance, are thus transformed into a concrete conjunction of man with life, confluence and metaphor. Tina Modotti's artistic vision is the result of a passionate and passionate life, and of a determined character that begins to define itself from its humble roots, and which over time becomes a force and spirit of observation, in a form of social responsibility only photographic art in its ability to capture the present moment.

"Photography, precisely because it can only be produced in the present and because it is based on what exists objectively in front of the camera, represents the most satisfying medium for objectively recording life in all its aspects and it is from this that it derives its document value. If we add to this sensitivity and intelligence and, above all, a clear idea of the role it should have in the field of historical development, I believe that the result is something that deserves a place in social production, to which we should all contribute."
(Tina Modotti, 1929).

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“You can do a good ad with poor typography, but you can’t do a great ad with poor typography.”

— *Herb Lubalin*

“Wine is red and photography is black and white.”

— *Gianni Berengo Gardin*

“Whenever the words ‘art’ or ‘artist’ are used in relation to my photographic works, I feel an unpleasant sensation undoubtedly due to the misuse of these terms. I consider myself a photographer, and nothing else.”

— *Tina Modotti*