

MIL

TON

LIFE AND WORKS

GLA

SLR

» DESIGNVERSO

“I think that, to some degree, this is part of my character as a designer: To keep moving and not get stuck in my own past. This is what I try very hard to do.”

Milton Glaser


EDITORIAL

Trying to maintain the double way of reading, the series has been conceived in two parts to offer a wider and more complete viewpoint on the designer taken into consideration as to show not only the author's work, but also his legacy. Being that in the communication design field the worth of an artwork depends on how deeply it affects society.

The monograph is divided into two parts, each of them consisting of three columns: the first, *Artistic Influences*, the second, *Places*, the third, *Graphic*. Their contents, in turn, are divided into subsections that vary according to the designer taken into account.

In the first part, *Life and Works*, about the life and the work of the designer, the columns are respectively about those artists that had an influence on him, the places he has a close relationship with, and his artistic production. Instead the second one, *His Influence on the World*, covers his influence on society and the design culture. The three columns deal with his role as an influencer for the new generation of designers, his works that helped shaping the cities he worked in and the artwork inspired by the ones he did.

In *Life and Works* to each one of the columns is given a context given by a biographical excerpt and a brief outlook on some of the aspects of the designer's philosophy. Lastly, there's a closer examination on the author's use of color at the end of each column.

To widen the experience some pages and images with can be scanned to enjoy extra contents with the Layar app. 

Elisa Nicolini, Ludovica Piro, Doriana Pompili

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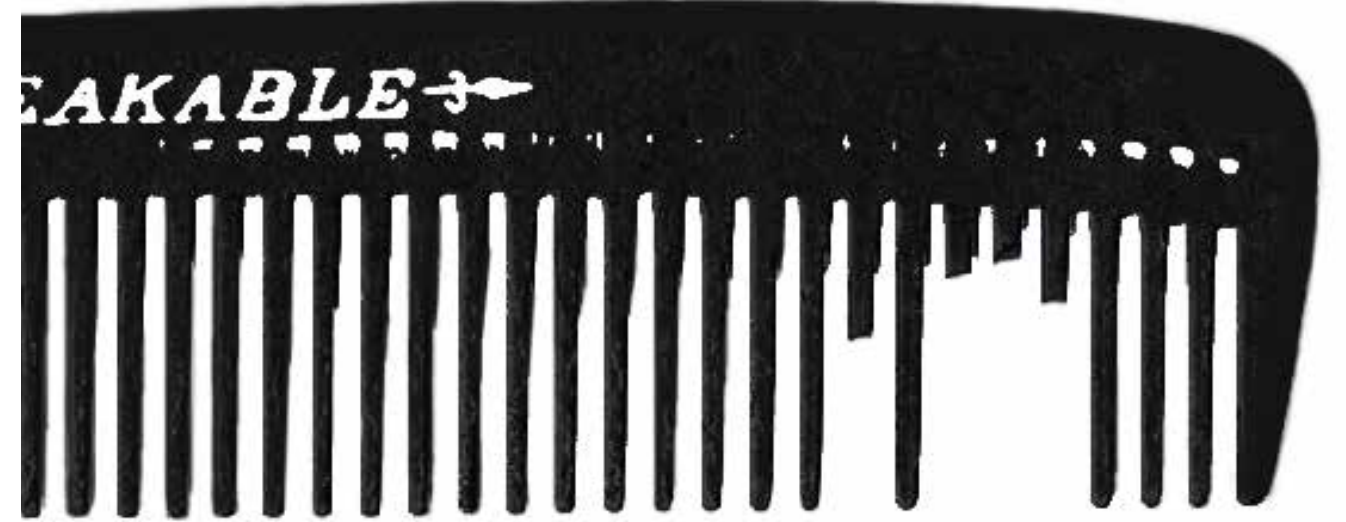
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ARTISTIC INFLUENCES

THE MODELS

OF THE GREAT

DESIGNER

BIOGRAPHY



The Cooper Union, founded in 1859 by Peter Cooper, New York. Photo by Beбето Matthieus

Milton Glaser, Milton Glaser website, 2016

To many, Milton Glaser is the embodiment of American graphic design during the latter half of this century. His presence and impact on the profession internationally is formidable.

Immensely creative and articulate, Glaser is a modern renaissance man – one of a rare breed of intellectual designer-illustrators, who brings a depth of understanding and conceptual thinking, combined with a diverse richness of visual language, to his highly inventive and individualistic work.

Born in New York in 1929, Milton Glaser was educated at the High School of Music and Art and the Cooper Union art school in New York and, through a Fulbright Scholarship, at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, Italy.

From the start of his career, Milton Glaser has been an active member at the School of Visual arts, New York since 1961, and is on the Board of Directors at the Cooper Union, New York.

What can be considered art?

Milton Glaser, Art is Work, 2000

If one of the definitions we have concerning art is that it serves its public by reflecting and explaining the world at a particular moment in history, it is hard to believe that design does not serve in a similar way.

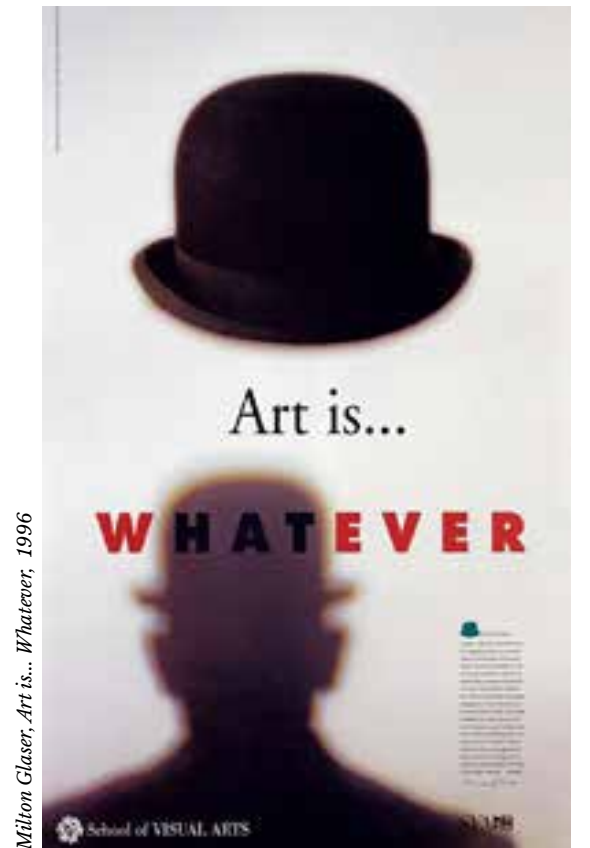
In any case, the issue has become blurred since art currently seems mostly about money, and designers seem to be increasingly concerned about ethics, the environment, and their effect on the world. There seems to be much confusion about what we mean when we use the word art.

I have a recommendation.

We eliminate the word art and replace it with work and develop the following descriptions:

1. Work that goes beyond its functional intention and moves us in deep and mysterious ways we call great work.

Milton Glaser. Photo by Catalina Kulczar



2. Work that is conceived and executed with elegance and rigor we call good work.
3. Work that meets its intended need honestly and without pretense we call simply work.
4. Everything else, that sand and shoddy stuff of daily life, can come under the heading of bad work.

This simple change could eliminate anxiety for thousand of people who worry about whether they are artist or not, but this would not be its most significant consequence.

More important, it could restore art to a central, useful activity in daily life- something for which we have been waiting for a very long while.

Milton Glaser on George Salter: my mentor at Cooper Union

Milton Glaser, foreword to Thomas S. Hansen, Classic Book Jackets: the design legacy of George Salter, 2005

It seems to me that mentoring is at its best when it is, to some extent, at arms length. Which is to say, that where there is no self-interest in it. Where there is neither a desire to control nor any erotic component in the relationship. [...] I have had true mentors, starting with my junior high school chemistry teacher who gave me a box of Conte Crayons when I graduated, to a wonderful man by the name of George Salter, who was one of the shapers of design in our times.

I was privileged to be a student of George Salter at the Cooper Union School during the late 1940s. At the time, the school's commitment to the study of calligraphy and the book arts, including typography, was the centerpiece of its commitment to the field of graphic design. Calligraphy's significant educational role was propelled by an outstanding group of teachers, with George himself, Paul Standard, Leo Manso, and Phil Grushkin (his former student). He was a wonderful teacher and created an atmosphere of high expectations in the classroom. I must admit that although I never saw him act cruelly I feared his disapproval or, more accurately, his sense of disappointment when I did less than my best work.

He was inordinately generous to his students and developed lifelong mentoring relationships with many of them. [...] George provided me with a model for how to be in the world. He was more urbane and culturally sophisticated than anyone I had ever met up until that time and considered his profession to have a significant

social meaning as well as an aesthetic one.

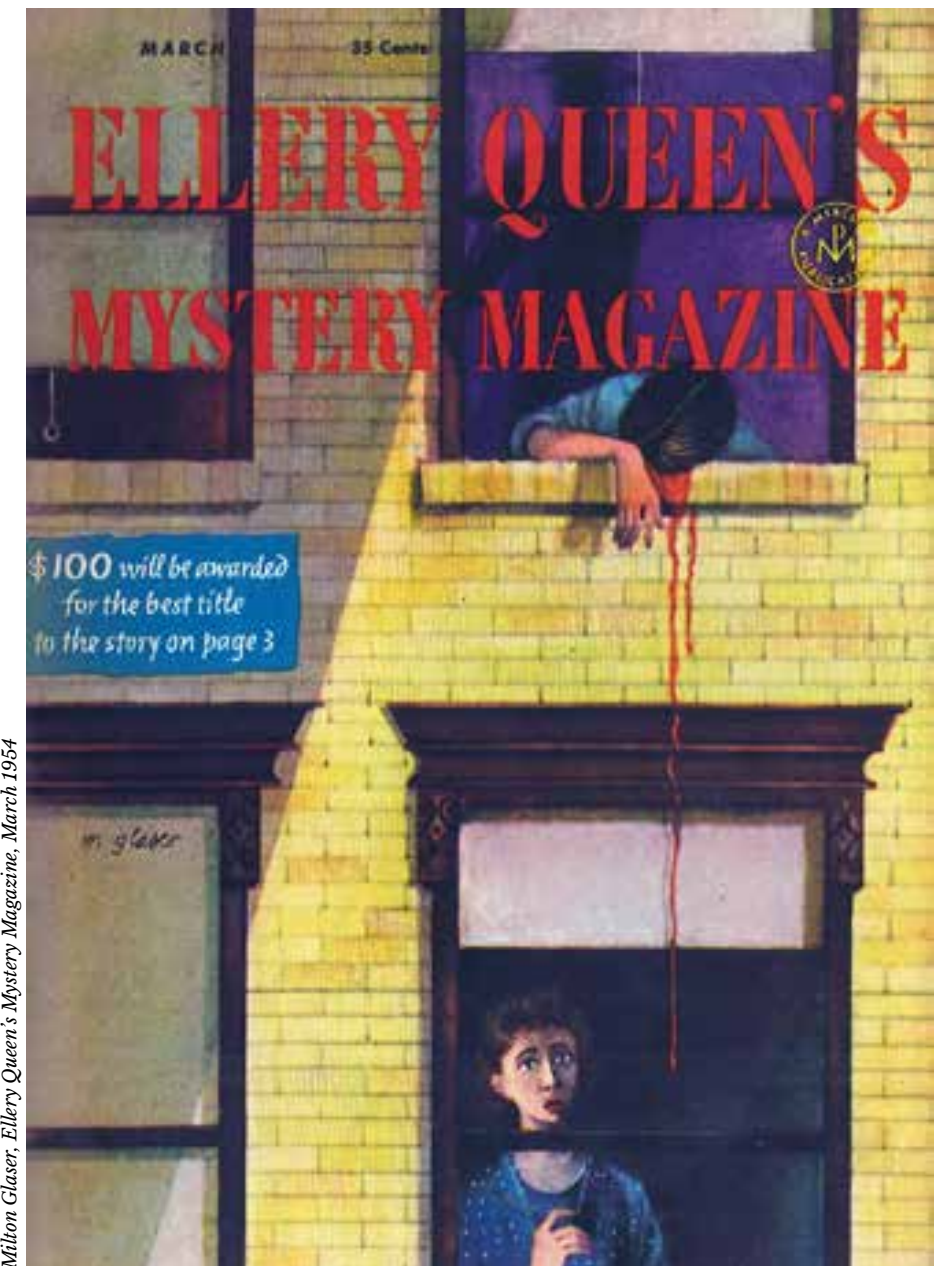
When I returned from my Fulbright year in Italy in 1954, George, with his customary generosity, offered me the opportunity to take over one of his important accounts, the covers of Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine.

I was pleased and flattered for the opportunity and for George's belief in my ability to continue the work he had started. I designed a cover that was used for the March 1954 issue, but I immediately had misgivings about continuing. I felt, even at this early part of my career, it was not quite what I wanted to be doing. I was apprehensive and embarrassed about revealing this to George, but I finally arranged to see him.

He was seated at his tiny drawing table in his apartment when I told him my concerns. He looked at me with his characteristic wry smile and said, "Ok". He never mentioned the subject again. There was never any indication of disappointment about my decision, for which I am eternally grateful. He was a unique and wonderful man.

"He was a man of great integrity, and he was an influential teacher, so decent, so nurturing. I've been teaching for 50 years, and a good part of my life is making sure that the values you have are transmitted. And sometimes you can't do that in your work, you have to do that in a personal way."

Milton Glaser



Milton Glaser, Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine, March 1954

Glaser's reflections on Giorgio Morandi

Milton Glaser, *Art is Work*, 2000

Perhaps the most profound mentor I have ever had is a man by the name of Giorgio Morandi, who was a teacher and painter/etcher, who very much changed my perception of what it meant to be in the world. Some years ago, I had a show with Giorgio Morandi at the Museum of Modern Art in Bologna.

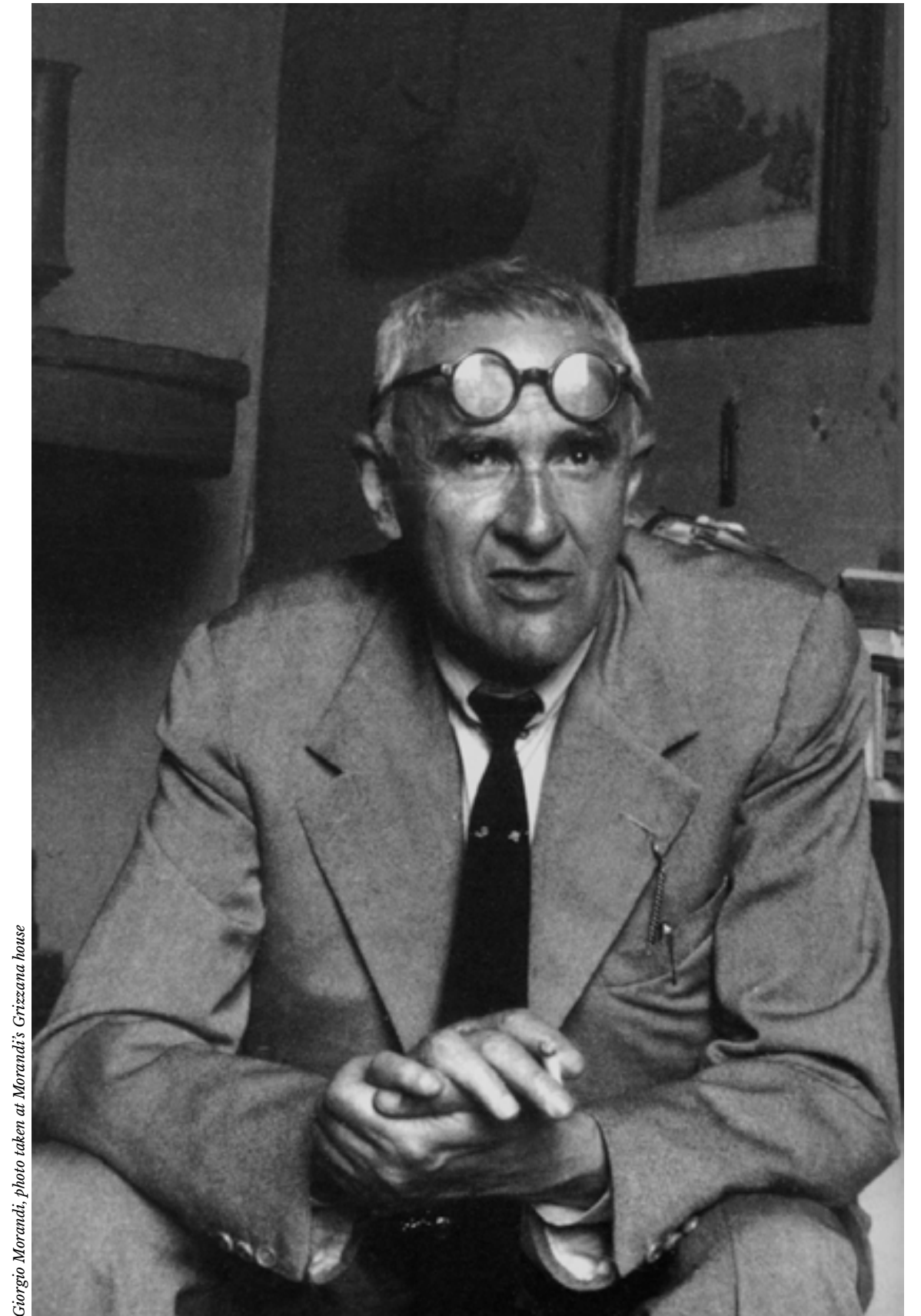
In 1953 I enrolled at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Bologna to study etching with Giorgio Morandi. I had originally proposed to study the iconography of 15th century Florence and Venetian painting (a proposal that from the beginning had little chance of being realized).

My Fulbright adviser suggested that I might study at the Accademia in Bologna, a city conveniently located between Florence and Venice, which geographically might help facilitate my project. And so I found myself in a cold dreary room at the academy together with ten or twelve teenage high school students awaiting the arrival of the teacher, Giorgio Morandi.

He entered the room, a tall, trim slightly stooped man already in his sixties with his white hair combed over his forehead not unlike Laurence Olivier in the movie, "Hamlet". He projected a sense of modesty and calm that was immediately reassuring. In all of my time at the Accademia we

only spoke about art on one occasion. We were standing by the sink where the etching plates were cleaned. There was a small reproduction of an etching of shells by Rembrandt pinned on the wall above the sink. Morandi leaned over my shoulder and in a conspiratorial voice said, "It's impossible to make black as black as Rembrandt did. I believe he might have used Dutch mordant and let the plate etch in it for many days".

With those words he turned and he never mentioned anything about art or etching to me again, except for his legendary "coraggio!" as one was about to plunge the copper plate etch into the acid bath. What I learned from Morandi was conveyed by the very essence of his being. He appeared to be free from the pull of money or desire of almost any kind. He only taught hard ground etching, an unforgiving technique where a multitude of precisely overlaying lines could produce the illusion of tonality. It's instructive



Giorgio Morandi, photo taken at Morandi's Grizzana house

“The thing that I love about Morandi is his clarity of vision: the fact that everything is so rational and unencumbered by emotionalism, although you, as a viewer, have an emotional response to the work.”

Milton Glaser

that Morandi, the most tonal of all 20th – century painters, would chose this medium to produce some of his most significant masterpieces.

His life seemed to me then as it does today, the ideal life of a true artist. Lucidity and balance are the words that come to mind when I think of Morandi. He lived silently and produced monuments.

In those days, the idea of ever having a show with Morandi was incocevable. It still is. The grace of Morandi’s work is in the spiritual dimension; the nature of my work has always been in the world of commerce. Morandi is all about transcendence.

The subject of all meaningful works of art is about moving people to action or influencing their perception about things or events. In my time, there has been more concern than ever in history about keeping these to descret activities clearly separated. this is especially true since art has increasingly begun to replace religion as something to believe in. There is a profound desire to keep art pure and uncorrupted by wordly considerations. Curiously, the erosion of art does not come from the encroachment of the

implied or commercial arts, but rather from the cynical and conspiratorial efforts of collectors, dealers, periodicals, and museums to manipulate art as a comodity. For me, our exhibition is not about the question of art versus commerce, but rather how the trajectory of someone’s life can be changed by even a brief contact with a remarkable person or a special place. Finally, it is an act of closure and gratitude for the privileged time, almost forty years ago, spent in Bologna with Giorgio Morandi.

I have actually had two artistic models in my life. One was Pablo Picasso, the man who wanted everything – all the money, all the fame, all the women. [...]Morandi, on the other hand, wanted nothing. If you wanted to buy a painting from Morandi, he would take \$200 and sign your name and address on the back of a canvas. Some years later, when he finished a painting, he’d turn it over, find out who it belonged to, and send it to you in the mail. This was at a time when his paintings were selling for \$10.000 to \$15.000. He wanted no power, except the most significant power, the power over his own life.



Adam Tihany, Milton Glaser, Table lamp, 1986

Works inspired by Morandi

Milton Glaser, Art is Work, 2000

A table lamp that resulted from a collaboration with the celebrated interior designer Adam Tihany, to produce a series of outrageous lamps for the Italian lamp manufacturer, Foscarini of Murano. One of the lamps was an homage to Giorgio Morandi.[...]

I recorded the most recurring objects in his etchings and paintings (Morandi’s still lifes used the same beloved bottles, vases, and pitchers continually), and sent the drawings to Luciano Vistosi, one of the preeminent glass masters in Murano. He cast them in crystal. There is a light source beneath each object so that they can be illuminated individually or all at once. This sublime Morandi etching demonstrates why I think of light when I look at Morandi.



Giorgio Morandi, Still life, 1928

Pablo Picasso, the influence of a brave artist

Brad Holland, «Step-By-Step Magazine», 1986

BH: You've previously mentioned Morandi and Picasso as your two models. I think anyone could understand Picasso's influence on you. His work is so protean, as yours is. But the influence of Morandi is less obvious. What does he mean to you?

MG: For me, Picasso and Morandi represent a full range of human artistic possibilities. Morandi seems parochial and narrow. He went to Paris once, didn't like it, and never went again. [...] Picasso, on the other hand, seems to have been one of the most egocentric, narcissistic men in human history. For him, there was no world except Picasso. Others were just instruments to be used, like subjects of a painting. He wanted all the money, all the fame, all the accomplishment. He sucked all the air out of a room.

I can't imagine two more opposite manifestations of human potential, and I think I am equally affected by both: Morandi's modesty, his dedication, his simplicity, his desire for nothing except the work; and this raging lunatic who wanted to devour the world. [...]

BH. Modesty is not a quality one normally identifies with Picasso. He was the poster-boy

for self-expression. The original gangster with genius. Frankly, I always thought he was less original than Matisse, who in some ways he pursued as if he were Captain Achab trying to catch Moby Dick.

MG: Picasso was constantly referring back to Matisse. He considered Matisse his great adversary, but he had tremendous admiration for him. When Matisse died, Picasso, with his usual self-admiration, said, "Now I will have to paint for both of us."

What I like about Picasso – and you could say this about Matisse as well – was his willingness to take chances. He abandoned one thing after another: surrealism, analytical cubism, synthetic cubism. He was always willing to give it up. Artistic courage is usually overdramatized, but it's the ability to leave something behind and try something else when you don't know where you're going. That is admirable and I love that quality. You never lose the fear that you're going to fuck up and your reputation will be ruined. He was fearless about what he did. There have been very few figures like him in history, willing to abandon success in favor of discovering other possibilities.



Pablo Picasso, *Violin and grapes*, 1912

Works inspired by Picasso

Milton Glaser, Art is Work, 2000

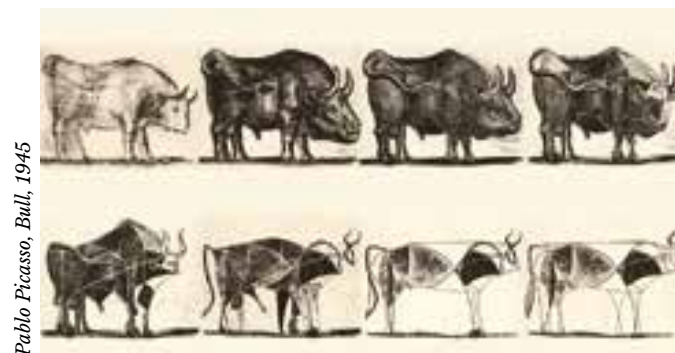
I was asked by a French ad agency to design a mural for their office that would serve as an entry and interior image. Because the agency is in the Marais, a part of Paris near Picasso Museum, I thought the minotaur, a favorite subject of Picasso, would be a good image. The top of the minotaur is at the entry on two panels that come together and cover the door at the end of the business day. The bottom of the minotaur is on the ceiling of the reception area. [...]

this study on a single etching plate, originally used for a story by Balzac, was one of the most important influences of my life. When I saw this series of prints I realized for the first time that style deserved no loyalty. The question is always one of quality, regardless of the stylistic assumptions.

At the opposite page, a cubist poster influenced by a painting by Picasso. My client was concerned that musicians would be horrified by the image of a cello cut in half, but the poster became quite popular with the students and the teachers at the school.



Milton Glaser, mural inspired by Picasso, Paris



Pablo Picasso, Bull, 1945



Milton Glaser, Juilliard cubist violin, 1991

Piero della Francesca through the eyes of a designer

Aldo Colonetti, Glaser for Piero, in Andrea Rauch, Milton Glaser - Piero della Francesca, 1991

Each person is responsible for what he designs, for what he creates. Some advice: don't go seeking your Piero della Francesca, or the presumed philologically scientific Piero in Milton Glaser's works, otherwise the subtle game of references, quotations and transparencies would be stilted by copious and learned footnotes.

Milton Glaser's attitude towards Piero's artistic and existential itinerary was that of one who, referring to his own disciplinary identity and hence to his own symbolic horizon has read each visual sequence in analytic terms: «the strong deviation between the practice of art and reflections on art, the common denomination of the various analytical experiences, takes on a greater magnitude in the conceptual investigation which assumes a marked distance between doing and the physical components of art, using language as a rhetorical tool, a sort of mnemonic device to attain the sensitivity to the abstract, the physical nature of the thing (object, image, word), to the mental processes that preside over the formation of art and its evaluative statutes.»

This is the basic reason that led Milton Glaser to a conceptual exaination of Piero della Francesca's visual heritage in the sense of high-lighting a series of linguistic elements which, otherwise would have remained in the artist's memory and hidden fabric. Interpreting, in this case, means introducing the communicative potential of some images which have long been part of that immense and timeless iconographic wealth of symbols in the mechanisms of the most widespread and approachable representation, overlapping the ancient tradition of contemporary stimuli. Glaser does not create dissonance with previous

experiences, he does not neutralize the existing esthetic heritage. Rather, he enters on tiptoe, favouring some areas, some parts of paintings and frescoes, to isolate given element that thus enters Glaser's esthetic circuit without denying his origins. [...]

In essence, it is as if Glaser, looking at Piero's creative journey, especially the Arezzo phase, reinforces his own identity as a designer through an analytical attitude that tends to favor the semantics of form and sign, isolated from a traditional context.



Milton Glaser, watercolor for the anniversary of Piero della Francesca, 1991

Milton Glaser's TED talk

In this interview for Ted Milton Glaser comments on his paintings for the anniversary of the birth of Piero della Francesca. From here, he reflects on what makes a poster convincing, by breaking down an idea and making it new.



I was asked, I guess about six years ago, to do a series of paintings that in some way would celebrate the birth of Piero della Francesca. And it was very difficult for me to imagine how to paint pictures that were based on Piero until I realized that I could look at Piero as nature; that I would have the same attitude towards looking at Piero della Francesca as I would if I were looking out a window at a tree. And that was enormously liberating to me. Perhaps it's not a very insightful observation, but that really started me on a path to be able to do a kind of theme and variations.

Inspiring designers

Caitlin Dover, «Print», 2010

Milton Glaser has been showing the world what design means, and showing designers what they can be, for five decades. His ability to reflect the best of the discipline to those within it and outside it, and his embodiment of the designer as someone engaged with the world, make him the de facto leader and face of American design. This year, Glaser was recognized for that achievement by President Obama himself with a National Arts Award. Glaser is the first graphic designer to receive that honor, a milestone that he notes with characteristic thoughtfulness. [...]

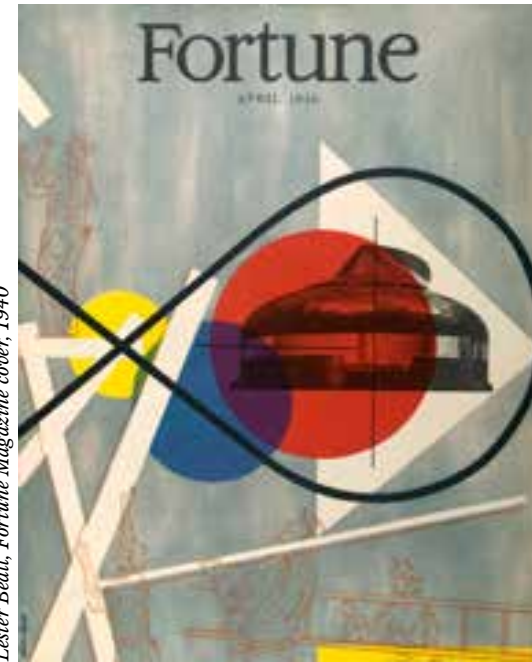
As the award confirms Glaser's influence on us today, we wanted to find out whom he considers to be his own influences. Generous to a fault, Glaser emphasized that the fear in assembling such a list is leaving people out. Think of these names, then, as part of a much larger community of designers, artists, collaborators, and clients who have been important to Glaser within the legacy of American design. "We have a short but rich history," says Glaser. Here are some of the people who shaped it.

Herbert Bayer

Glaser says that his work has always been informed by the fact that his formative years were in the postwar era, and that he was around to see the designers of that time produce their seminal work. "Herbert Bayer was an important transitional figure in bringing European ideas to the U.S.," Glaser says. "Rand got the idea, but Bayer lived it — he was really a European. Paul Rand made it American — there was a translation of what made it from Bayer to Rand that made it interesting." [...]



Herbert Bayer, Bauhaus Magazine cover, 1928



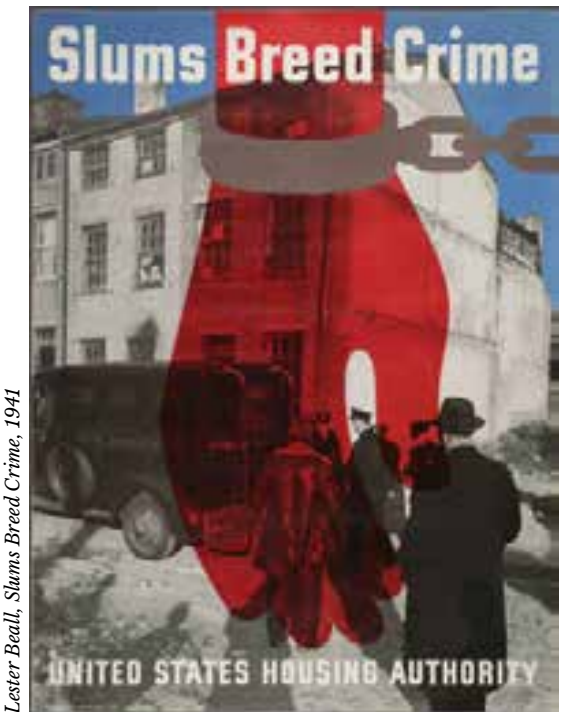
Lester Beall, Fortune Magazine cover, 1940

Lester Beall

Of the American-born designer and poster artist, Glaser says, "He had consistency and graphic rigor, and he was intelligent." Musing further on designers of this period, Glaser adds, "What is interesting is the high level of quality from beginning to end. The totality of work from these designers is impressive. As an old geezer, the fear is plateauing. These people didn't have that disinterest that makes the work decline."



Lester Beall, Cross Out Slums, 1941



Lester Beall, Slums Breed Crime, 1941

Paul Rand

“I personally was influenced by Paul Rand,” says Glaser. “He created a kind of platform for everyone to work from. He was in many ways a thorny man but uncompromising in his work. He showed you could do first-class commercial work. He set a durable standard — his work has an ongoing, universal, nonstylistic value. His stuff looks appropriate for our time as well as that time.”



Paul Rand. Photo by Peter Arnell

Joseph Baum

Glaser counts his longtime clients as being just as important to his professional development as the designers he admires. “In this profession, it’s important to have good clients to work with — a friendly or affectionate relationship. The secret of success is affection. Only work with people you like.” The late restaurateur Joseph Baum, once the president of Restaurant Associates, was known for resuscitating classics like the Rainbow Room (one of his many collaborations with Glaser). “He was wonderful to work with. Every time you started a project to do a restaurant, he started as if there was no such thing as a restaurant: ‘OK, where on the table should we put the silverware?’ I learned more about design from Joe, who was not a designer, than anyone else.”



Milton Glaser, Joseph Baum, 1995



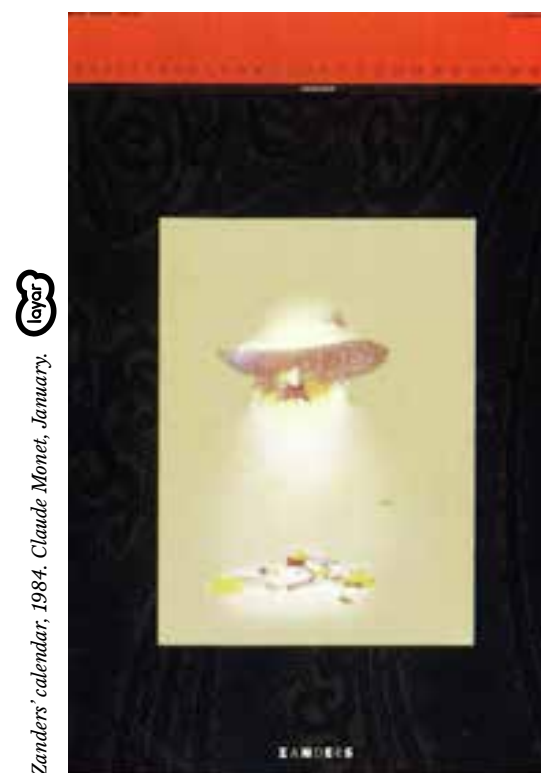
Milton Glaser, design for the Rainbow Room, 1934

Milton Glaser discusses inspiration

In this interview for OnCreativity.tv Milton Glaser talks about the importance of inspiration, that can be found everywhere and is very important in the professional life of a designer; he says that searching for inspiration a designer can always learn about his work.



*I have often said that everything is inspiring, or anything can be a subject for inspiration. I'm always surprised of what I'm inspired by.
The best thing about being in design, as a professional activity, is that I can always try to learn something that I didn't know at the beginning of the day, and that is a rare opportunity in professional life.*



Zanders' calendar, 1984. Claude Monet, January.

Zanders' calendar: a tribute to color

Milton Glaser, Art is work, 2000

The Zanders paper company has a long tradition of producing impressive annual calendars to demonstrate the quality of its product. They approached me with the idea for a calendar on the theme of color (perhaps because their paper is particularly good for color printing). A dream assignment. I proposed a series of portraits of artists whose works were notable for their color. I attempted to execute each portrait in a manner that would reflect some aspect of their work. There also is a thematic "frame" around each portrait to create an additional narrative. I might have been inspired by a show of Seurat paintings in which he frequently continued his painting on the frame.



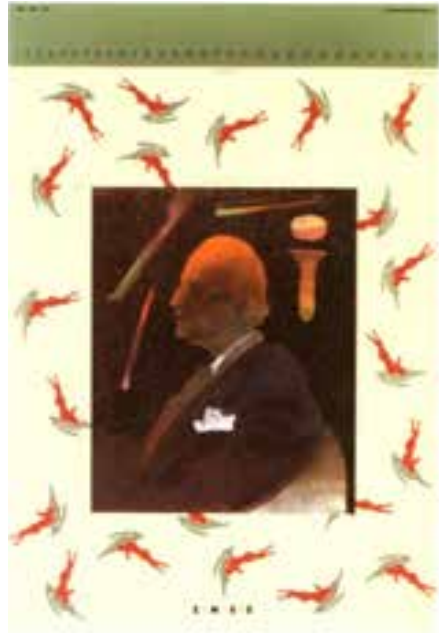
Georgia O'keeffe, February



Utamaro, March



Wassily Kandinsky, April



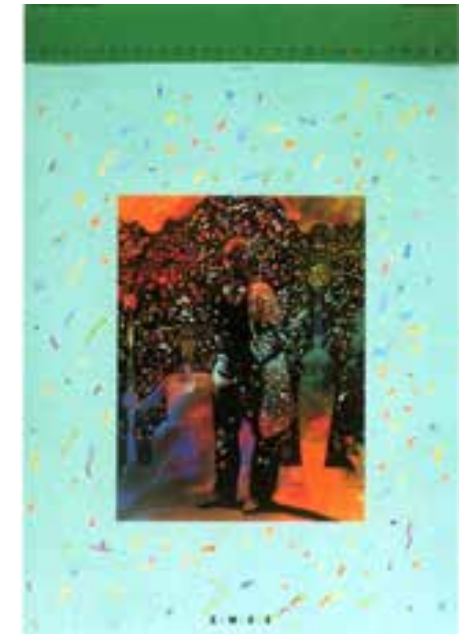
Edvard Munch, May



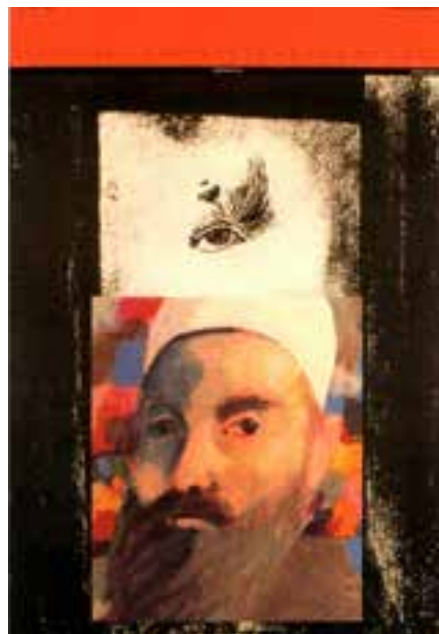
Paul Klee, June



Sonia Terk Delaunay, September



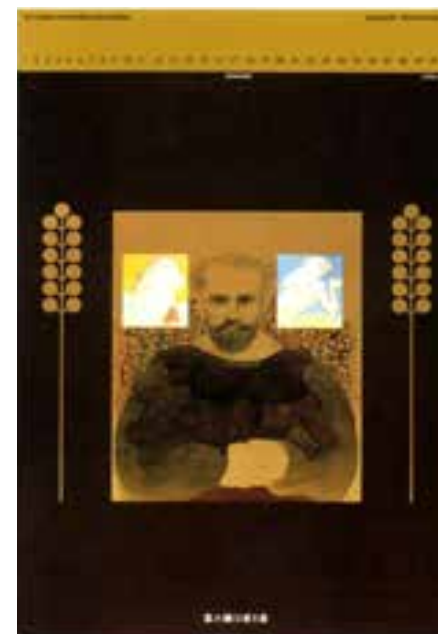
Max Ernst, October



Odilon Redon, July



Piet Mondrian, August



Gustav Klimt, November



Giorgio de Chirico, December

PLACES

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THE
CITY

BIOGRAPHY



The Bronx in the 50s

Arianne Wack, Hyperallergic, 2014

A New Yorker by birth and by ethos, Glaser was brought up in the South Bronx by Hungarian immigrants. His family lived adjacent to one of the city's first cooperative apartment buildings. The neighborhood was home to a lot of Eastern European immigrants and working-class families, and left wing to its marrow. Glaser grew up slow-roasted in New York's liberal legacy. He describes the neighborhood as "very militant left wing and anti-capitalist" and admires that it was "the first neighborhood in the country to have interracial couples. But it was a pervasive atmosphere in that area of the Bronx, at that moment in time." That moment was wedged between the end of World War I and the start of World War II. Many Eastern Europeans were fleeing the rise of despotism on all sides: the Weimar Republic was giving way to Nazi Germany, Italian Fascism was burgeoning under Mussolini, Stalin had begun a campaign to stain all of Soviet Russia red. Glaser remembers seeing his mother's passport (he never saw his father's) and thinking it was "funny" because it read "Country of Origin: Hungary, Romania, and Czechoslovakia." Birthplaces were unable to keep pace with the continually blurring borders. Europe clearly had its problems, but so did the United States, with the Great Depression just settling in for the long haul. [...]

The godfather of modern design

Arianne Wack, *Hyperallergic*, 2014

The east-facing windows of Milton Glaser's studio on 32nd Street overlook a school playground. Every day at 2:35 pm, a deluge of rowdy grade-schoolers surges into the courtyard as their parents float and mingle along the perimeter. Yellow buses queue up dutifully between the parked cars that line both sides of the street. It requires perfect timing to find a parting in this afterschool sea and skip across the sidewalk, through the heavy front door of Glaser's building. Etched into the glass window above the storic entranceway is Glaser's mantra: Art is Work. [...] Glaser's motto, 'art is work,' is what he lives by, a way of existing in the world that he's damn near close to perfecting. "One must always be aware of what one is doing," he says, perhaps harking back to the meditation and yoga he practiced in the late '60s "like everyone else," in his words. "At a certain point you stop going to classes, but I've always been involved in Buddhist thought and tried to integrate it into my life." But while awareness is a practice he is very, very good at, sitting still is not: he is as restless in his chair as he

Milton Glaser's studio, 207 E 32nd St, NYC, 2014. Phot by Jeffrey Zeldmann



Milton Glaser's studio, 207 E 32nd St, NYC, 2014



is in his design style. Constantly leaning forward and back, Glaser gives the impression of either pondering things from a distance or inspecting them most intimately. There is something uniquely ubiquitous about Glaser's work, which has made him somewhat a figure of legend - the self-appointed ambassador of ostensibly the world's greatest city, his devotion to which is indelible. But while Glaser's body of work is daunting, his studio digs are welcoming, slightly bigger than a decently sized New York apartment and covered in the creative, joyful abundance of artistic paraphernalia. Above his desk the wall is bedecked with floral printed horse heads, loose sketches, a laughing bronze moon, rulers, and Victorian-looking fans, along with postcards of other artists' work.

The front room is private, separated from the studio space by two sliding wooden doors with simple stained-glass windows. Lining either side of the room are tiered countertops displaying some of his works.

[...] Glaser's ferocious belief in simply "doing the

work” is also a denouncement of the belabored struggling artist trope, which he abhors. “There is so much of this conversation about creativity and flow and hardship and all that - it’s bullshit. I mean, it’s work, like everything else. You have to spend time doing it. But for me it’s quite the opposite. There is no hardship. There is only pleasure. But that’s not to say there are no difficulties. There are difficulties in everything. But what else is life about? I always tell people the privilege of being able to make things in your life - devoting your life to being able to make things - is unsurpassed.” Art is work, but one of the greatest tragedies in life is that you often can’t do the work you think you’re capable of doing. “Most people are shunted into a series of events where you have no choice,” Glaser says. “You get a job, you find you get ten dollars more if you stay another two years and you think, ‘okay.’ You get married, you have two children, they have to be sent to school, and before you know it your life is over [and] you haven’t done anything you

wanted. But that is the story of most people’s life. It’s a life without choice.” [...] Glaser gives his listener the sense that conversation with him could be endless, and endlessly fascinating, if she asks the right questions. When the conversation moves on to the dire and straits of finding your life’s calling, Glaser cites a David Brooks column in the Times, in which Brooks asked people over 70 what they’d done well or poorly in their own life. “Fifty to sixty percent said they chose the wrong line of work and as a result felt like they hadn’t led their own life,” Glaser explains. “Fifty to sixty percent! That was breathtaking to me, and I realize how privileged anybody is who spends their life doing what they love, what they find meaningful. And how rare that is.” [...] “The problem of our time,” he says, now warmed up, “as we’re sort of in the death throes of capitalism, is that the artistic hero is kind of the invention of the 19th century. With the emergence of capitalism and entrepreneurial activity and building a business and making money and

Milton Glaser, 1960s. Photo by Sam Haskins



“Art is work, but one of the greatest tragedies in life is that you often can’t do the work you think you’re capable of doing.”

Milton Glaser

making more money than others - and, as you know, seeing yourself in a position of class rather than in a position of tribal identification, comes the idea of being competitive in the market place, which is all you hear in our culture, including at SVA [where Glaser teaches]. What you see in our time is the inevitable path of predatory capitalism on the psyche of human beings.” His dedication to the city, its institutions and liberal laurels, underlines his belief in companionship and commune. “The competitive idea that you can make it - this whole idea of America - that you can be better than anybody else, you can make more money and all you have to do is want it and have the guts to do it, is largely, as you know, a myth. But the fact that competitiveness is built into the economic and the, you might say, psychological structure of our country, it’s very hard not to be competitive. It’s an inevitable consequence that comes out of an economic system that is perverse.” All of which leaves me wondering if I’ve just been absolved or implicated.

About New York and New Yorkers

Jen Doll, Villagevoice, 2011

In this interview premium designer Milton Glaser shared what he thinks it means to be a New Yorker, his thoughts about the City and why this is the only place for “real New Yorkers” to live.

What do you think makes a “real New Yorker”?

First, have a sense of the ironic. If you don't have that, nothing else is possible. Usually it's someone who, for one thing, thinks this is the only place in the world to be. Which is to say, you don't think of the other options one would have in life, you don't think of living in a retirement community in Mexico or a villa in Italy - for better or worse you're here, and doomed to be here. I almost believe there is no New York; there is only a set of projections, and it can be anything you want. You hear it every day, so it must be true! It has the worst people, it has the best; it's the worst, it's the best. After all of these contradicting visions, you have to say there is no place like New York. It is the acceptance of the contradictions and illusions. The older you get, the more you realize how much of your life is an illusion. If you come to New York, maybe you're aware of that earlier. In another place, the contradictions are not as apparent, visible, or demanding. You have to get used to the idea of ambiguity here. If you're not tolerant, it makes it very hard to be here; you start dreaming of other realities.

When you are here, you're here because you don't have a choice. I've lived in other places, but there is no other place for me. Professionally there's no other place with the same opportunity. As hard as it is to find, it's still here.

If you are somebody like me, where work is central to your identity and what you're about, this is the place it happens.

For the last 100 years, maybe more, it has been the place of greatest opportunity for those who want something deeply about their lives. It is that sense that things are possible here that wouldn't be anywhere else. You even lose your ability to evaluate them.

You just assume that if you have a life that is focused on doing work, work of a particular kind, work of the imagination, work of the mind, you will find companions -- you won't be the only painter in town -- and you will have the possibility for finding an audience here that you couldn't find elsewhere. Where you'd be just an eccentric in another town, here, you're one of millions. Now matter how peculiar you are, you're still normal by New York standards. [...]

INFLUENCED BY



Empire State Building, Midtown, NYC, 2014

How do you feel the city has changed in your years here?

I was born in the Bronx, and I moved out of the Bronx, but now people are thinking of moving back to the Bronx. It's complicated. It's gotten in some ways worse, in some ways better. In the mid-70s when I did the *I (heart) NY* logo, my wife and I would have discussions about whether or not to go out at night, we were at 67th Street, because it was too dangerous. The city is so much safer now. If you were looking at that one attribute, it's a much better city than when you were concerned about crime and break-ins and your car windows being smashed.

The city is feeling optimistic about itself in many ways. It's a question of perception. It probably is in worse condition in terms of economics and the way people have to live, but it doesn't feel that way. It feels affirmative and positive.

It's so atmospheric, it's in the streets, there's a sense of energy, of looking for pleasure and finding it.

Do you have favorite New York City spots?

We have a neighborhood restaurant, a place where we feel welcome. We like city life; it's our city. We feel we own it. My life is so connected with New York - I went to school here, I went to Cooper Union, I started New York with Clay Felker. I couldn't transfer that feeling anywhere else.

What's your advice for surviving in New York City?

I think the most simple-minded and fundamental thing is the recognition that things are always changing. This endless capacity for reinventing itself defines the city and also the opportunity that exists here. The thing about New York is, it's based on the idea of change. It is the most mutable of places; its strength comes out of that. It doesn't cling to its own history and has been free to invent new ones. Some changes are horrible, others lead us somewhere. They're discomfiting because no one likes change, but eventually, you end up somewhere else, and you discover you like that place. As I look back on my life here, the city seems to have changed and grown and improved and challenged, this pattern of adaptation leading to a new moment, a new population. Look at the nature of the population, enormously affirmative and enhancing of life. You may hate Starbucks, but it's done something, and eventually it, too, will disappear.

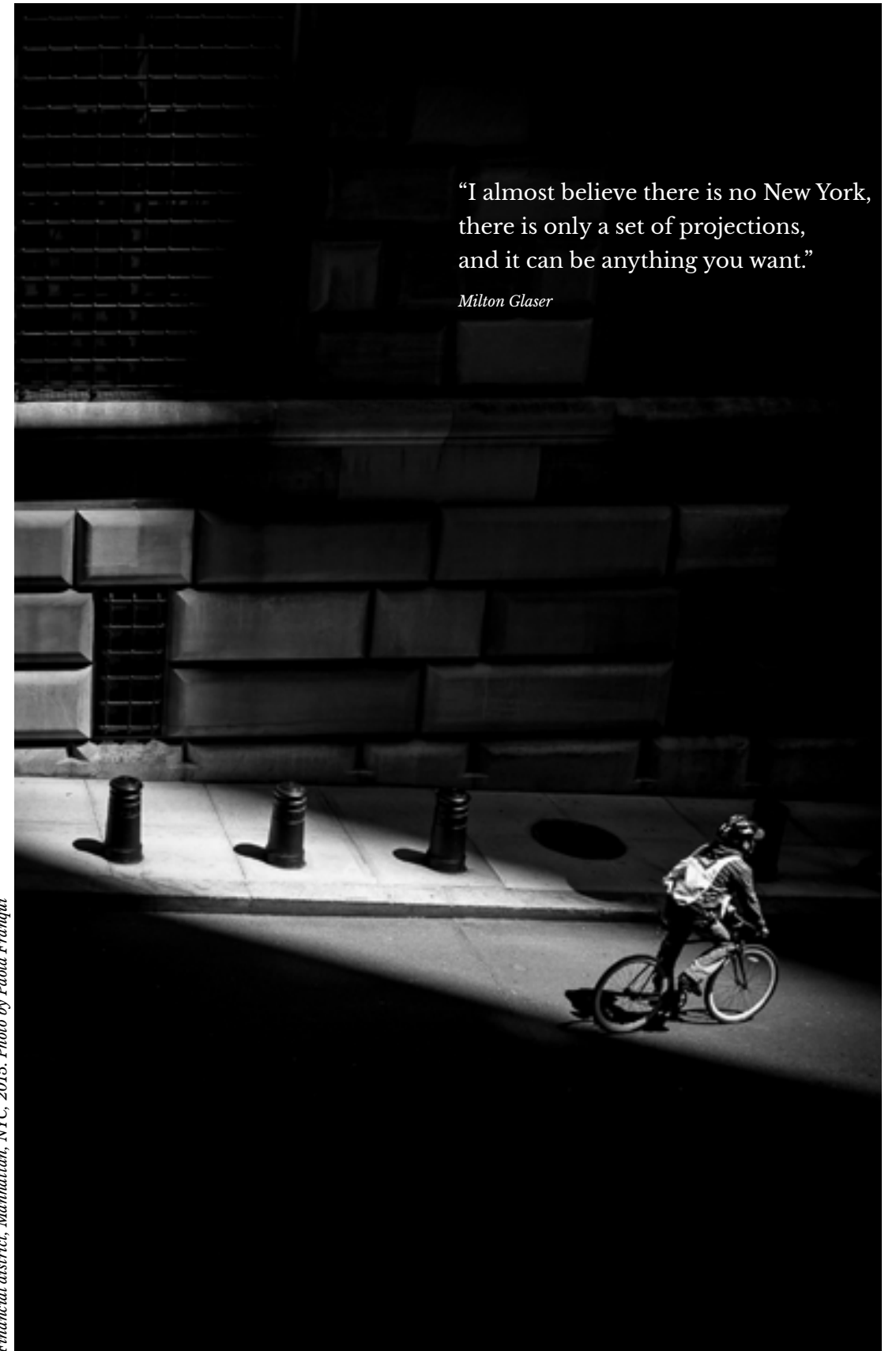
Do you love New York?

In any relationship, you can alternatively love and hate somebody everyday. New York is so mutable and surprising. Even if you don't love it, it is always compelling, always interesting, and never boring... I do love New York.

"I almost believe there is no New York, there is only a set of projections, and it can be anything you want."

Milton Glaser

Financial district, Manhattan, NYC, 2015. Photo by Paola Franqui

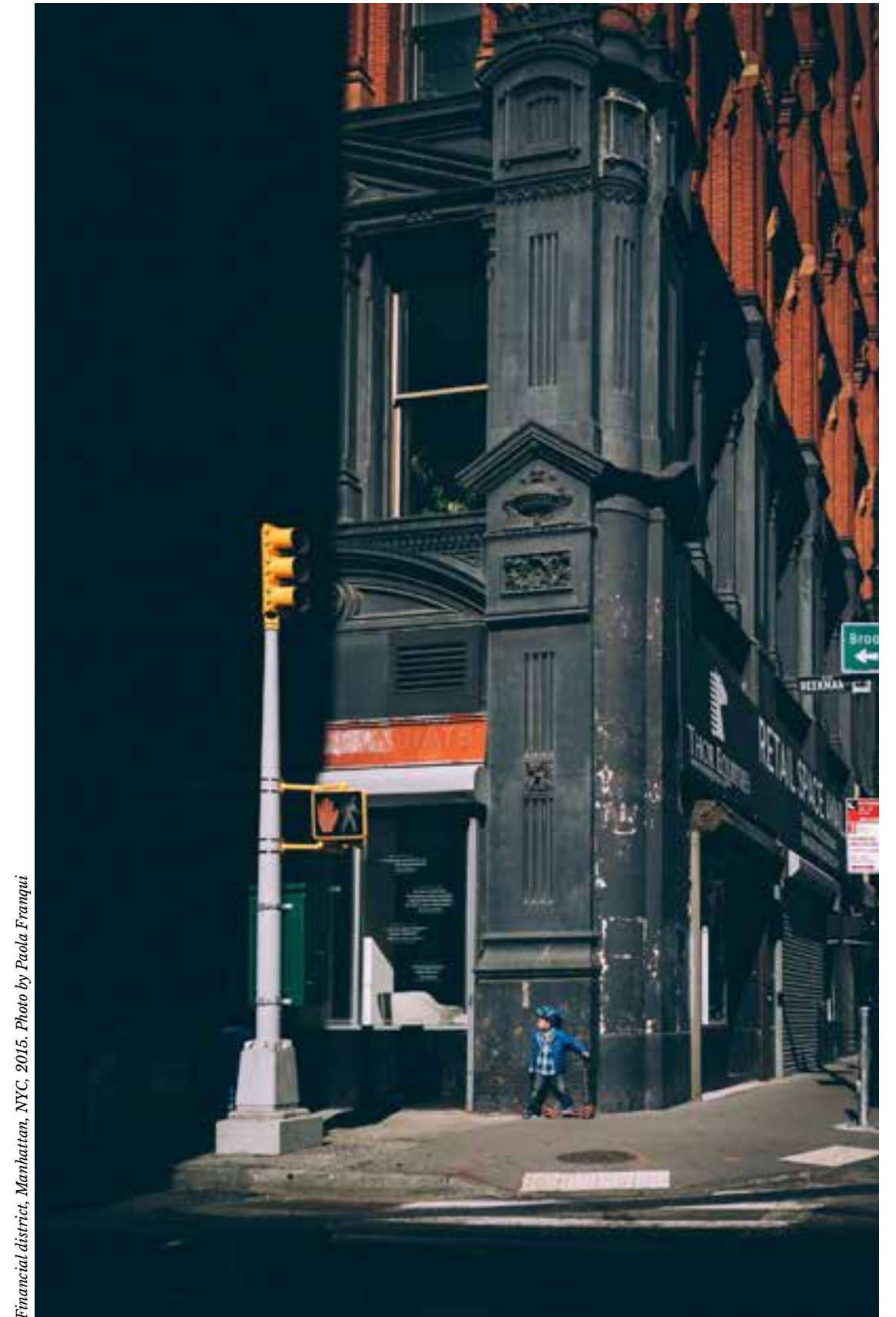


New York States of mind

In this video interview *New York States of Mind's* Co-Founder and Editor in Chief, Christine Murphy, sat with Milton Glaser, legendary creator of the I heart NY logo and Co-Founder and former Creative Director of "New York Magazine".



I can't even think of myself as a human being, without thinking myself as a New Yorker. Because everything about my life stands from the fact that I'm from here, I've lived here all my life, except some years in Italy. The opportunities to learn are so incredible here, there's nothing that parallels it, but also the extraordinary people that the City attracts: you can study with the best violin player in the world, with the best painters in the world, that opportunity to be with people of extraordinary quality, I don't think there's anywhere on earth that has that opportunity or that density of talent that the City represents.

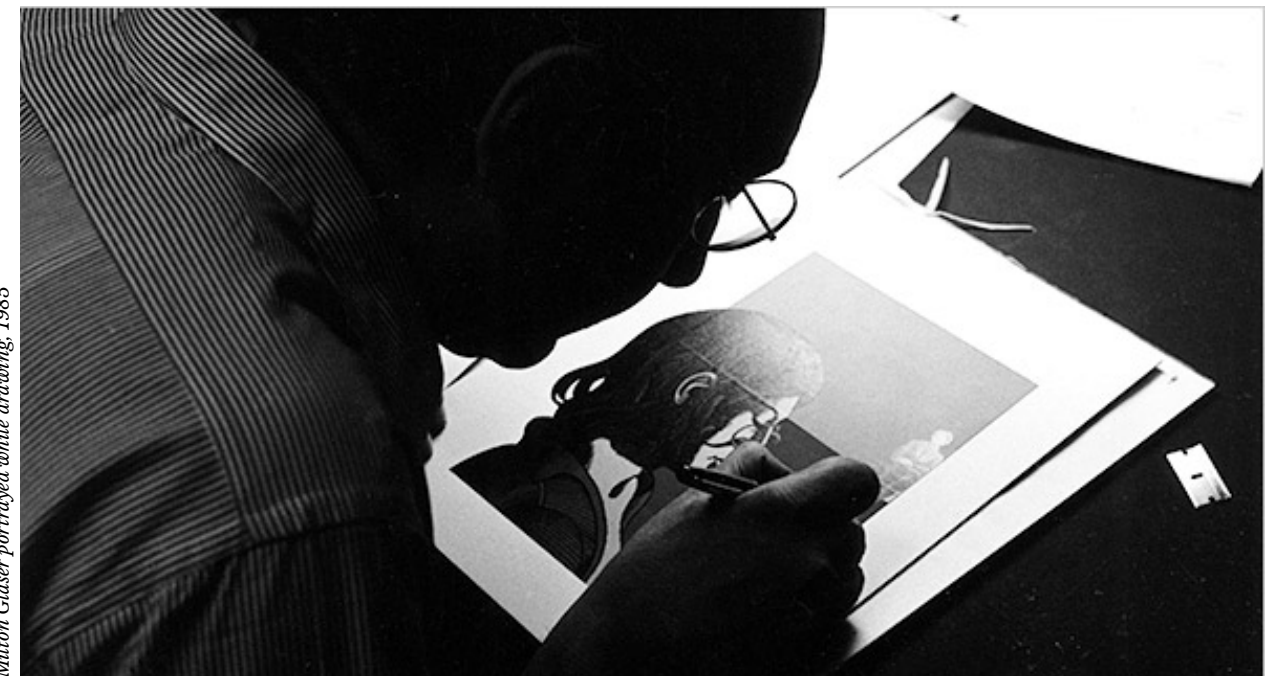


Financial district, Manhattan, NYC, 2015. Photo by Paola Franqui

Fulbright student to Italy, 1952

Milton Glaser, Fulbrightprogram, 2012

I had a Fulbright experience in Italy at a very appropriate time, 1952, which was a wonderful moment throughout the world but particularly in Italy at that time when it was recovering from a long and oppressive war time experience. You don't come across those moments very often. It is hard to remember why I wanted to go to Europe but I had the feeling living in New York that I didn't know enough about what I was supposed to know. I thought, you know, if I really had some time I could learn how to draw properly. I thought if I could learn how to draw in the traditional manner, maybe from life-casts, it would be useful to me. For that reason and others I decided I would apply for a Fulbright grant. I was there actually studying, etching, with Giorgio Morandi, who was an artist I admired much while I was here and never realized that I would have the opportunity to study with him. During that time I finally learned the true rudiments of etching and the old manner was very traditional. That experience has served me exceedingly well. The experience of being in Bologna, and being abroad, and being away from everything that I knew was eye opening and transforming in a way that I could not have expected. It challenged every assumption that I had made about what the meaning of life was. The Fulbright grant was enormously influential on my life in so many ways that it is hard to even understand it. One of the things that I realized how little I knew about everything, about architecture, about food, about life itself. There is nothing I can think of more ultimately beneficial to the personality than a year abroad. All of you out there who are thinking about that possibility, please accept my encouragement because it will be the most profound experience of your life.



Milton Glaser portrayed while drawing, 1985

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BIOGRAPHY



The Push Pin Studios members. Milton Glaser is the 6th standing from the left

Patric Argent, Aiga, 1972

His historical roots in design were as co-founder of the New York-based Pushpin Studio in 1954, with Seymour Chwast, Edward Sorel and Reynold Ruffins. In Pushpin, Glaser was in the vanguard of a movement that reacted against the strict authoritarianism and austerity of modernism. Exploring and re-interpreting the visual material of previous era's of both fine art and commercial art, (including that of Victoriana, wood-cut illustration, comic books, Art Nouveau, and Art Deco), they sought to bring fresh ideas, humour and a new decorative and illustrative approach to the design of record sleeves, book covers, posters and magazines.

In the 1960s, Glaser began designing for Kevin Eggers' record company Poppy Records. By the 1978, the company had changed names several times, finally morphing into Tomato Music Company. Glaser, throughout the long lasting collaboration, created the company's new logos, as well as iconic posters and album sleeves.

Reputations: Milton Glaser

Steven Heller, «Eye Magazine», 1997

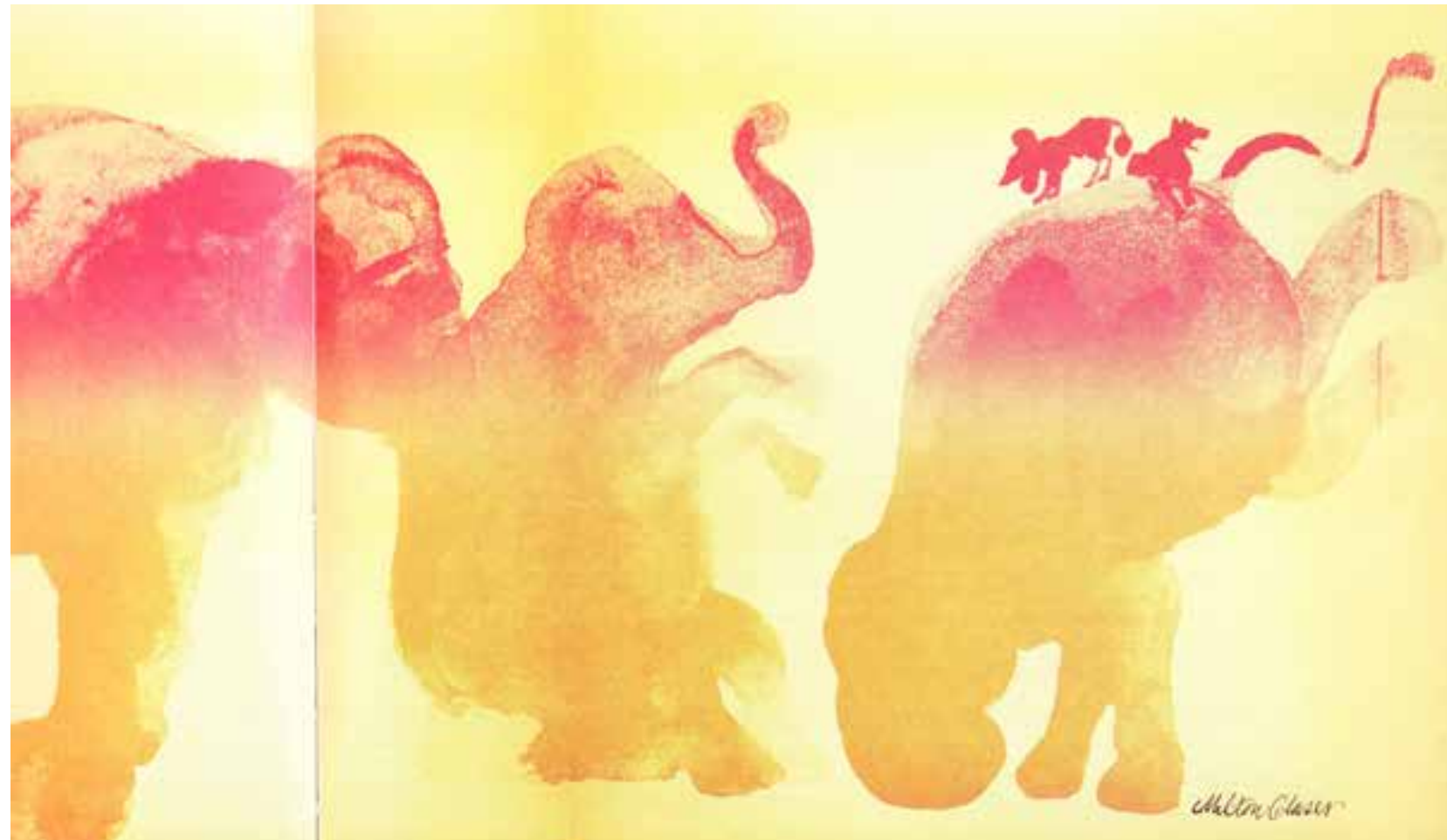
SH: You have admitted that your impetus for becoming a designer was, among other reasons, to bust the Swiss canon which was dominant in the 1950s. Wasn't that ideologically subversive?

MG: Every emerging generation has to find something to fight against. You have to struggle against a resistant canon in order to move towards something that is your own. I understood that the idea of Modernism and the Swiss School was a great theory, but I also understood that I couldn't adapt to it or do it as well as the practitioners who had already mastered it. So I knew that I had to go elsewhere. And when you go elsewhere, you end up challenging the larger idea. A single way of doing things seemed too doctrinaire, too limiting, when there was so much beauty, so much excitement, so much potential in what the world had already offered. Curiously, [Push Pin Studio's] post-historical efforts were to find out what it was in history that was an interesting as Modernism.

SH: Was that a conscious decision?

MG: Part of it as a sense that [Modernism] was

Milton Glaser, illustration for the Push Pin Monthly Graphic No. 28, 1960



Milton Glaser, Font specimens, 1960s

used up. As the Chinese say: "Everything at its fullness is already in decline." We were looking at stuff that we had seen for many years, and it wasn't going anywhere, it was not improving on the original model. It seemed to have limited people's opinions enormously. It's not that you couldn't do beautiful work within the tradition – and people still do – it was just that in terms of its expressive potential, it seemed to me it had reached its fullness.

SH: Is historical ignorance really detrimental? Don't we make our own historical context?

MG: When I go to school, Abstract Expressionism was in its ascendancy and most of the students began painting in that way. One of the great attractive qualities of avant-garde work is that you put yourself in a position where you can't be easily criticised because one can always say that the critics don't understand the new value system. One of the great attractions of doing Abstract Expressionism for a lot of ordinary kids was that they could not be judged!

SH: And the consequences of that?

MG: The consequences were very sad, because once Abstract Expressionism had passed, the adherents were thrown back on their resources, and those who were not trained had nowhere to go. I think that analogy may hold up today. The attractiveness of working in the manner of today's expressionistic nihilism is that it looks cool and explores new territory. The bad part is that its surface qualities can be easily mastered without discipline or understanding. It celebrates the decorative and the expressive at the expense of other things.

SH: The paradox is that this field feeds on style. And clients are coming to the designer looking for style. It seems a vicious circle ...

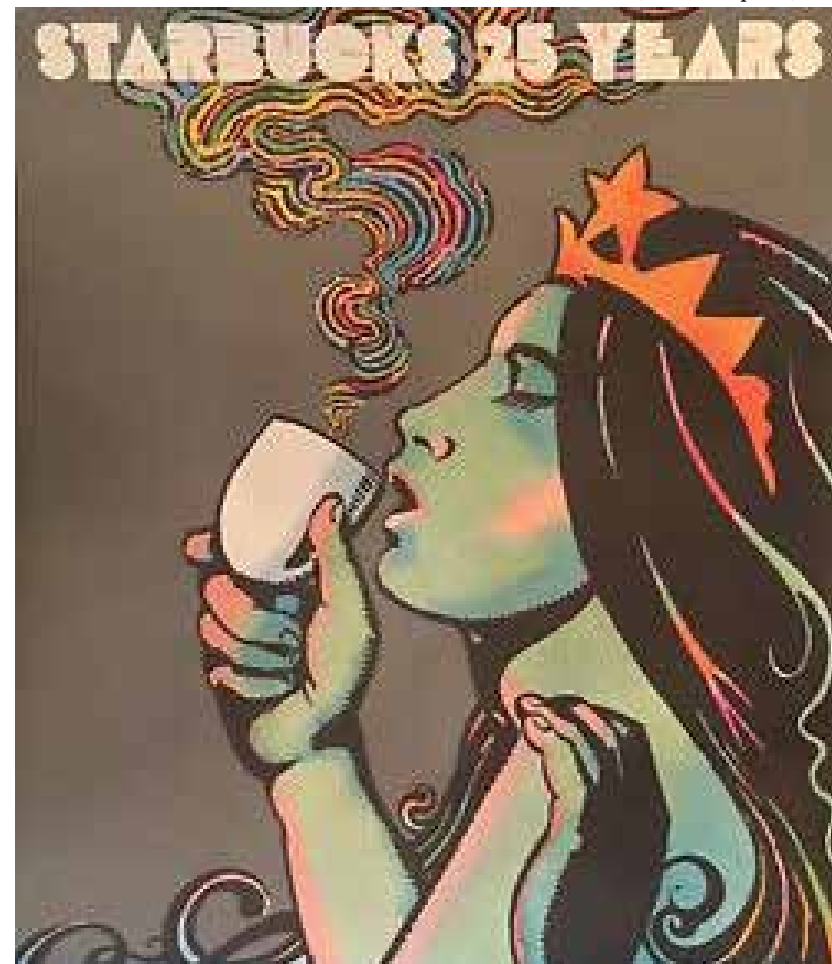
MG: In personal terms the question becomes: should you follow each passing style to stay hip and on the cutting edge, even when you recognise that the style of the moment is transitory and trivial? I suppose this question is no different than how you choose to dress at a particular moment in time. One of the

social roles of fashion is to define generational difference. I assume the same rule applies to the world of design. I would be embarrassed to imitate the work that is fashionable now for the same reason that I will not wear my old bell bottoms when the style returns. The most style-conscious designers inevitably find themselves in a dilemma when the style that made them famous is no longer of the moment and begins to recede. The larger question might be: how can you retain your interest in doing what you are doing for a lifetime? How do you stay in this field without becoming a service provider?

SH: Let me ask you, then, about Starbucks, the chain of American coffee-houses. Consistent with their retro-based corporate identity, they hired you and Victor Moscoso, among others, for your historical or nostalgic style. So do you reject the offer because it makes you into an oldie but goodie, or do you accept it because it's a good paying job?

MG: That's a good question. When they gave me the job I had to consciously try to replicate

Milton Glaser, Starbucks' poster, 1996



“A consequence of professionalisation is that accidents don't happen as much and there is more conformity based on the previous success. Accidents are often the opportunity that people have for expressing ideas and personal vision.”

Milton Glaser

an old style of mine. It was hard for me to do it. I couldn't do it very well in any case. But in this case doing a self-parody seemed okay. I've been doing very different work in recent years, and people who know anything about my work could recognise the distinction between something I might do today and a work of self-parody.

SH: Well, the cognoscenti would know. But on the other hand, Starbucks is appealing to an audience that does not know you, and that your work is self-parody.

MG: For this time it doesn't matter. I didn't think that would have much meaning to either the cognoscenti or the people in the street. I don't approach any of these jobs indifferently, but my work has gone in another direction. I think the poster I did for the “Art Is” campaign [for the anniversary of the School of Visual Arts] is much more representative of what I am doing currently, and I don't think there is any relationship to my identification as a 1960s icon.

Push Pin Effect

Steven Heller, The Push Pin Graphic, 2004

The Push Pin approach took time to evolve. While studio members would work together on design projects, editorial illustration was individual. A collective impulse to broaden the boundaries of accepted methods and to unify design and illustration was the impetus to rename and expand the Almanack into the Push Pin Graphic. From the outset this visually exuberant periodical caused a stir in the design community. It was not only an effective means of showing off the studio's talents, but proved to be a major influence on the design and art direction of the late Fifties and early Sixties, specifically in the convergence of illustration and design.

Push Pin was, in fact, creating contemporary contexts for once viable forms, foreshadowing the Post-Modernism of the Eighties but not purposefully reacting to current practices or theories.

While being part on the studi, Glaser had the opportunity to experiment freely with diverse tecnique; here sme examples.

EXPERIMENTING WITH GRAPHIC: PUSH PIN STUDIOS



Monthly Graphic, issue 3, 1957

Drawing is inking

The Graphic was a design laboratory and in issue 3 Milton Glaser shows his newfound interest in calligraphic drawing using a Japanese reed pen as his basic tool. He also took a small image and enlarged it to enhance its graphic impact.

In issue 22 he drew in ink on thin newsprint and then used the mirror image on the opposite side of the paper for reproduction.



Monthly Graphic, issue 22, 1959

Limited colors for unlimited solutions

Glaser experimented with the use of limited colors and overprinting in the first holiday issue. "It would have been a child's play with the computer, but of course, hand was the primary 'digital' tool back then."

Milton Glaser, *Monthly Graphic*, issue 10, 1957



Setting trends

The illustration by Ruffin, Glaser and Chwast fit into box with rounded corners. Chwast notes that this "started a trend for such corners among designers at the time."

Glaser, Ruffin, Chwast, *Monthly Graphic*, issue 20, 1959



Monthly Graphic, issue 10



Sign of the Times: Bob Dylan

Owen Edwards, «*Smithsonian Magazine*», 2010

Aside from billboards and movie posters, advertising posters were never quite as important, or as ubiquitous, in the United States. The rise of rock 'n' roll in the 1960s, however, generated a particular genre of poster art in this country. Among the most iconic is Milton Glaser's 1966 image of singer Bob Dylan. Glaser was just beginning his extraordinary career as an artist and graphic designer when he undertook the Dylan project. John Berg, then art director at Columbia Records, asked Glaser to create a poster to be folded and packaged into Dylan's "Greatest Hits" LP. Glaser was new to the form. "This was probably my third or fourth poster," he recalls. It would become one of the most widely circulated of all time; six million or more were distributed with the enormously popular album.

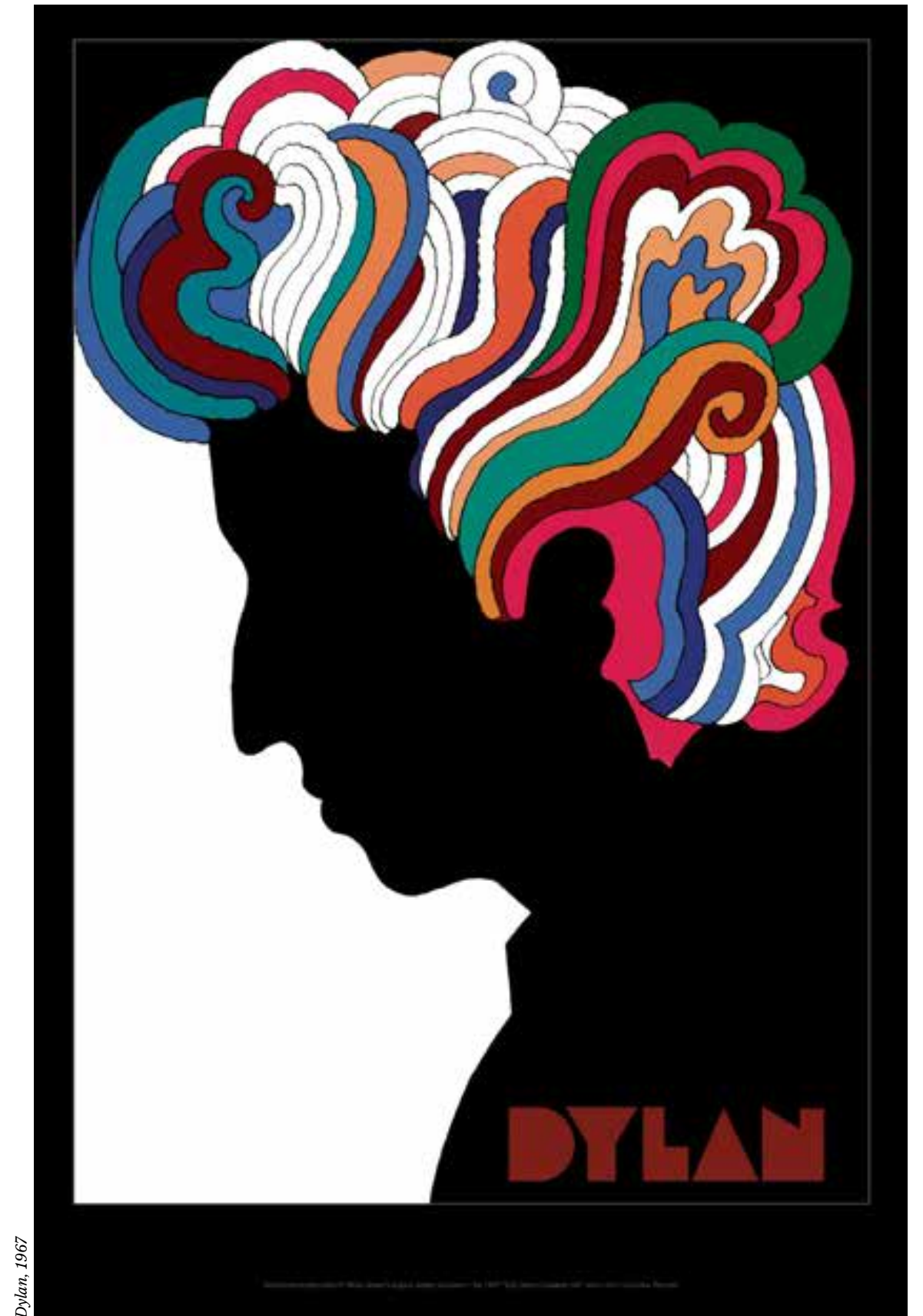
Depicting Dylan with kaleidoscopic hair, the Glaser poster has been described as "psychedelic" and is often associated with rock posters produced in San Francisco at the same time. But Glaser, who had studied in Italy on a Fulbright scholarship in the early 1950s, is a formalist with a broad awareness of artists and art movements, and he took his inspiration for

the Dylan profile from a 1957 self-portrait by Marcel Duchamp. Though Glaser used a similar composition, the transformation of Dylan's curly mane into a tangled rainbow was his own invention.

Glaser says he also tapped into an earlier art movement. "I was interested in Art Nouveau at the time," he recalls. "That was an influence for the colors and shapes in the picture." The contrast of vivid colors with the dark silhouetted profile reflects Glaser's response to the Modernist "Less is more" dictum: "Just enough is more." For the single word, "Dylan," Glaser invented a typeface, one that he would use again on a poster for a Mahalia Jackson concert at Lincoln Center.

Despite the millions of distributed copies, the Dylan poster has become a hot collectible that sells for hundreds of dollars. How does Glaser feel today about his most famous piece? "I would have redone the hair," he says today. "It's a little clumsy."

Glaser has yet to share his opinion with his subject. On the day that the artist received his White House honors, another recipient was otherwise engaged: Bob Dylan.



Dylan, 1967

From Poppy... ...to Tomato

Beth Kleber, Caitlin Condell, Glaser Archive, 2015

Glaser produced several gorgeously surreal posters for the Poppy Records, like the Poppy Foot for Townes Van Zandt and The Mandrake Memorial, Poppy Gives Thanks, and From Poppy With Love. All expressed the power of music to flourish in unexpected places.

Poppy gives thanks (on the right), the "Poppy head turkey poster," dated 1968, is a rather strange early poster with a surreal intent combining Poppy, the music company, and the idea of Thanksgiving.

About "Poppy Foot" (on the left) Glaser says: "Townes Van Zandt and The Mandrake Memorial were the most important performers for Poppy Records. I literally made a Poppy emerging from a foot (everyone's foundation) as a kind of surrealist image that might create conversation."

By 1978, the company had changed names several times, morphing into Utopia, then Atlantic Deluxe, and finally, Tomato Music Company. (It later became known as Tomato Records). The independent label featured an eclectic group of artists, including country musician Townes Van Zandt, jazz pianist Dave Brubeck, blues singer John Lee Hooker, and avant-garde composer John Cage.

With such a diverse roster of recording artists, conveying the music label's identity to an audience demanded a unique approach. Glaser created the company's new logo, a graphic red tomato, as well as this now iconic poster that you see on the left. In the poster, a dark, atmospheric room is punctuated by ornately patterned wallpaper and a floral carpet. A red curtain is pulled back to reveal the night sky out the window. On an end table a vase of roses sits beside a lighted cigarette. Resting off the corner of the table, the cigarette's whiplash curl of smoke suggests that it has just recently been set aside by the occupant of the green velvet armchair. The whole environment appears to be the ideal place for listening to a great album of any genre. But there's just one thing...

...there's a giant tomato in the room.

The plump, red fruit's presence lends the scene a decidedly surreal air. You can't look away. You must know more. The tomato demands your consideration. You are already on alert, but Glaser reinforces the point through his use of a matter-of-fact slogan: "Tomato: something unusual is going on here." Time to pay attention.

"You can only work for people that you like. I discovered that all the work I had done that was meaningful and significant came out of an affectionate relationship with a client. I am talking about a client and you sharing some common ground. That in fact your view of life is somehow congruent with the client, otherwise it is a bitter and hopeless struggle."

Milton Glaser



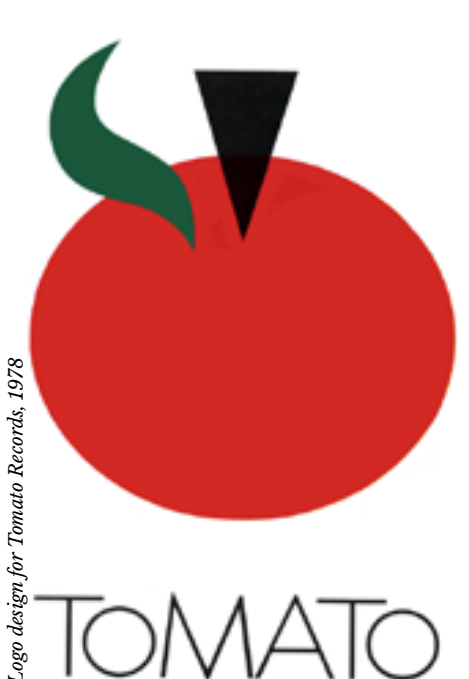
Poppy Foot, 1968



Poppy head turkey, 1968



Tomato: Something unusual is going on here, 1978



Logo design for Tomato Records, 1978

Milton Glaser's posters strike a high note for Cooperstown classical fest

Joseph Dalton, «Times Union», 2016

2016 marks the 15th year that Milton Glaser designed a poster for the Cooperstown Summer Music Festival. All of the posters revolve around the theme of a cow with a violin, a nod to Cooperstown's rural setting, and the Festival's start at The Farmers' Museum. The Festival is honored that Milton Glaser continues to offer his unique and varied talents to give us a legacy both visual and musical.

In summer 2002, Linda Chesis had her hands full organizing another season of the Cooperstown Chamber Music Festival, which the professional flutist and young mother founded in 1999. True to form for a fledgling venture, some well-meaning but probably clueless friend came along and said something on the order of "Hey I know this guy who should do your graphics!" This friend of a friend, however, turned out to be Milton Glaser, one of the most celebrated graphic designers of the past half-century. Glaser brought his lighter side to bear on the festival: Picking up on the fact that Chesis was bringing chamber music to farm country, he delivered a poster of cows holding string instruments. The playful and utterly memorable graphic gave the festival its focus. "We wanted to say that chamber music is fun, not elusive or aloof," said Chesis, who lives in

Manhattan and has a home near Cooperstown. "I love doing music-related things, and the (festival) seemed eminently worthy," said Glaser, who gained fame in the 1970s for his poster of Bob Dylan in profile with colorful hair. "I'm a sucker for a needy arts organization." Glaser's talent helped make the festival a great deal less needy: "The poster boosted our profile dramatically in terms of publicity and increased ticket sales," Chesis said. After the success of the 2002 poster, Chesis was overjoyed when Glaser contacted her the next spring to say he'd be happy to do a second poster. The new image arrived within days: more musical cows. "It was already done in his mind," she said. "I love doing theme and variations," said Glaser, who estimated that he's completed 60 different graphic treatments of William Shakespeare.



CCMF, 2015



CCMF, 2011



CCMF, 2013



CCMF, 2012



Cooperstown Chamber Music Festival, 2016

“One of the things that interests me most, both musically and artistically, is that you can take a single theme and milk it endlessly like a cow.” Glaser recalled how the first time he showed Chesis his ideas, he sensed a certain trepidation. “At first, there was a certain degree of discomfort about linking this high-minded chamber music ... to this fiddle-playing cow,” he said. “When people are taken aback slightly, I know I’m on the right track,” he said. “Good work has the characteristic of being disconcerting and unexpected. It’s the reason there’s so much banal and familiar work in the culture: It’s for an audience that already understands it.” For her part, Chesis recalls trying to initiate a dialogue about one of the early posters only to receive Glaser’s gentle admonishment, “I do not design by consensus.” But after five years of posters that get displayed and collected by fans, she calls him “a genius of marketing.” “When I’m daunted by the prospect of doing another festival, I’m encouraged and motivated by the prospect of another Milton Glaser poster,” she said.



CCMF, 2011



CCMF, 2010



CCMF, 2009



CCMF, 2008



CCMF, 2007



CCMF, 2006



CCMF, 2006



CCMF, 2004



CCMF, 2003



CCMF, 2002

Go ask Alice

Beth Kleber, *Glaser Archive*, 2010

In 1967, Milton Glaser, Seymour Chwast, and James McMullan produced psychedelic “travel” posters for an issue of *The Push Pin Graphic*. In typical Push Pin fashion, the series brings together various disciplines, slyly marrying psychedelia with examples of trippy classic literature that are cautionary tales in their own way.

Glaser’s poster contains a long excerpt on the back from Book IX of Homer’s *Odyssey*. Here’s just a portion from *The Land of the Lotus-Eaters*, featuring some tough love detox:

Thence for nine whole days was I borne by ruinous winds over the teeming deep; but on the tenth day we set foot on the land of the lotus-eaters, who eat a flowery food. So we stepped ashore and drew water, and straightaway my company took their midday meal by the swift ships. Now when we had tasted meat and drink I sent forth certain of my company to go and make search what manner of men they were who here live upon the earth by bread, and I chose out two of my fellows, and sent a third with them as herald. Then straightaway they went and mixed with the men of the lotus-eaters, and so it was that the lotus-eaters devised not death for our fellows, but gave them of the lotus to taste. Now whosoever of them did eat the honey-sweet fruit of the lotus, had no more wish to bring tidings nor to come back, but there he chose to abide with the lotus-eating men, ever feeding on the lotus, and forgetful of his homeward way. Therefore I led them back to the ships weeping, and sore against their will, and dragged them beneath the benches, and bound them in the hollow barques. But I commanded the rest of my well-loved company to make speed and go on board the swift ships, lest haply any should eat of the lotus and be forgetful of returning.



Milton Glaser, *Poster for the Push Pin Graphic NO. 52, 1967*

'Mad Men' enlists the graphics guru Milton Glaser

Randy Kennedy, «New York Times», 2014

It was Milton Glaser, who probably more than any graphic designer of his generation - forged the sophisticated, exuberant advertising look of the late 1960s, the time "Mad Men" is now traversing, and whose work to publicize the show's new season will begin appearing next week on buses and billboards around the country.

Over the years of producing and writing the show, Mr. Weiner has become something of a student of graphic design and commercial illustration. And he said he had long dreamed of Mr. Glaser's having a hand in the show's ads because he embodied the ethos of the era, as the clean-lined, clean-conscience advertising of the 1950s and early 1960s fractured, along with the culture, into something more chaotic, self-doubting and interesting. "I grew up with a poster by Milton in my house" said Mr. Weiner, describing a 1966 promotion for WOR-FM radio showing five Beatles-esque performers rendered in a wildly colorful style that evoked both Art Deco and hard-edge painting.

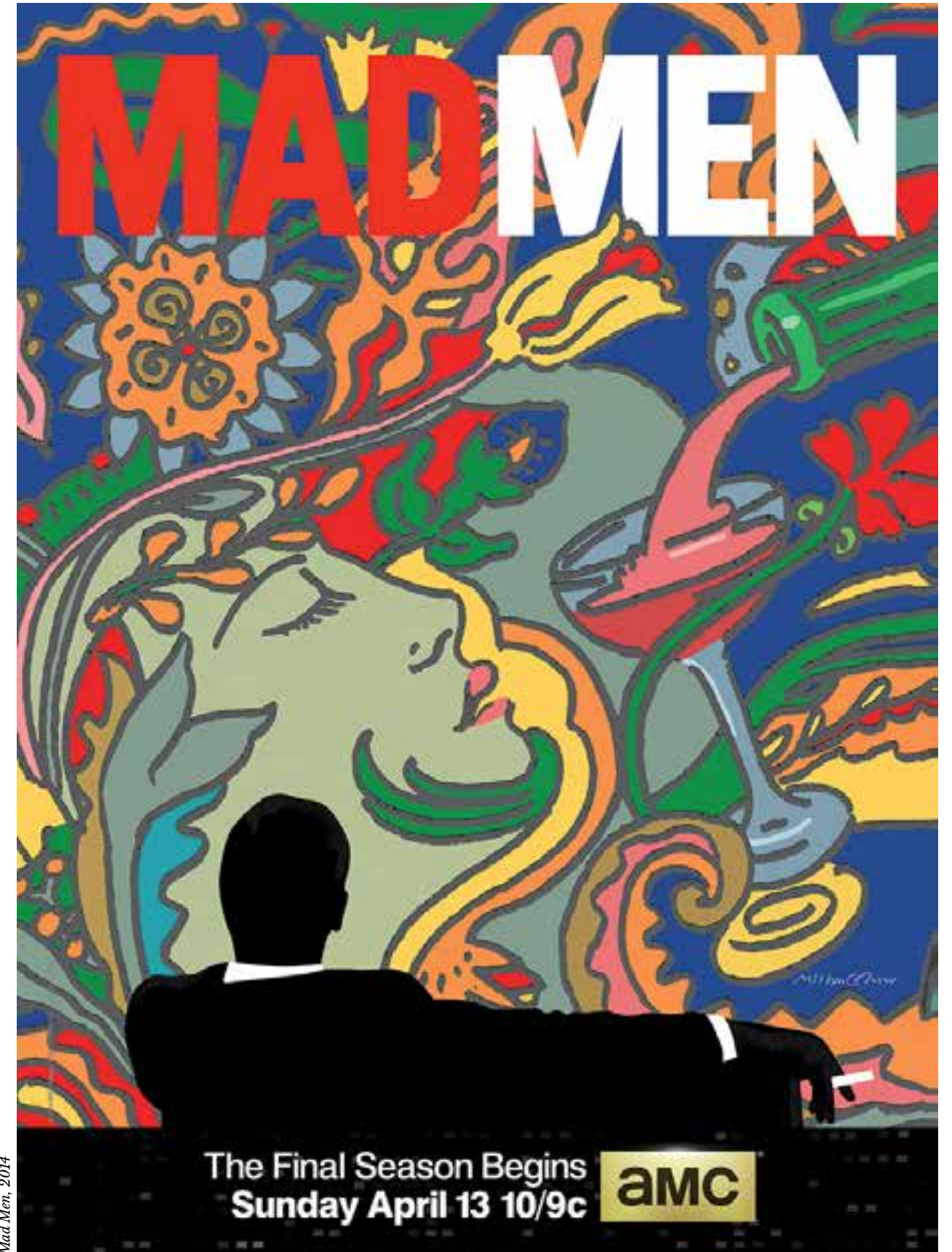
Mr. Weiner said he made it known in broadly general terms that he had in mind only something "a little furry" and "kind of Luddite,

I guess" and "as strange as it might sound, something with flowers."

Mr. Glaser said his concern was trying to make work that suggested a late-1960s feel without pillaging his own late-1960s feel. "I haven't been working this way for 30 years or so," he said. "My anxiety was that people would think, wait a minute, I'm still doing this sort of thing."

The poster and ads he came up with read like a sly reappropriation of his past, a shaggy explosion of color, flowers and Art Nouveau curves on top of which is the by now familiar back-of-the-head silhouette of Don Draper with his arm extended over a chair and a cigarette in his hand. What first reads as abstraction resolves into a profile of a woman's face, the spire of the Chrysler Building and a glass into which wine is being poured.

"There is a dreamlike quality to it, and believe it or not, it is related to the show, and not because it's psychedelic," said Mr. Weiner, dressed appropriately for the period, with a buttoned-up suit vest but also a bright pink patterned tie. "That's not what it's about. What it's about is the material and the immaterial world, and that's what I loved."



Drawing is Thinking

The only proper way to conclude this column about graphic is to share some of Glaser's thoughts about the activity of drawing. In this video he talks about the importance of drawing as he considers it as a way to understand the world.

The reader is invited to express his thoughts about the subject on the blank page at the end of the column with sketches as *Drawing is thinking*.



When you draw something you have to be attentive. And being attentive is the only way to understand what is real, because most of us, as you know, walk through life asleep.



Colorvision!

Beth Kleber, Glaser Archive, 2010

In what essentially looks like a lost issue of the Push Pin Graphic, Colorvision, “an entirely new concept of color in clothing!” describes the magic of a Blendscent:

Colorvision combines the richness of the blenders (e.g. gold, bronze, olive) with the heartiness of the ground shades – (blacks, blues and browns). The result is a Blendscent. In color blending the basis of a Blendscent is the ground shade. The key to the subtle arrangement of color is the proper blender. But regardless of the blended colors – the ground shade always retains its vital definition.



Colorvision illustrations for Phoenix Clothes and Hanover Hall, 1963

An exploration of pattern making and color effects in textiles

Julie Washington, Lapchi press, 2012

Milton Glaser has turned his omni-talented hand to carpets, as can be seen in the glowing exhibition *Milton Glaser: Drawings and Rugs* at Carl Solway Gallery.

“Glowing” is used advisedly, as the execution of Glaser’s designs, handmade in Nepal using a particular knotting technique known as the Tibetan style, incorporates Tibetan wool and fine silk, the silk imparting both shimmer and glow. “Milton’s designs require time and attention,” said Lapchi artistic director Andrew Neave, who worked closely with Glaser on this project.

“He’s reinterpreting everything,” Neave said. “He doesn’t want to be pigeonholed into one look.” The designs flit from an exploration of mystical Tibetan symbolism to a contemplation of nature, expressionist sensibility to bold, playful freeform.

Coming from a pixel-precise profession such as graphic design, Glaser first had to understand the technical limits of handweaving.

Though it wasn’t as exacting as graphic design, one can manipulate perception by changing the color, material, or method, which affects the way the light, bounces off the rug, explains Neave.

The color palettes and combinations are both fearless and subtly rich, but figuring out how to translate the artist’s colors and designs into textiles was challenging. Sample rugs shuttled back and forth until Glaser was satisfied as it was discovered that the light in Katmandu, where the rugs were handwoven, is more golden-yellow than the harsh sunlight in Los Angeles. The same color looked different in each location, Neave said. Thus each color was custom mixed by Lapchi in Nepal for this collection.



Applique, 2013

“Best Flower Pattern” celebrates the traditional flower theme in rug design. It called on the rug-makers to cut the background’s pile lower than the flowers so that they catch the light differently; the amount of silk in the flowers varies so that some are pearly and others are quite shiny.

“Dutch Grid,” a black on black grid interrupted by bright lines of color playfully recalls the abstract simplicity of Pac-man’s maze. Those familiar with Glaser’s work will recognize the grid style from his other work. Despite what the eye perceives as two shades of black, there is actually only one type of black dye used throughout the rug. The grid was created by looping and cutting knots on the rug, changing the way light bounces off the same material.



Best flower, 2013



Dutch grid, 2013

MILL

TON

HIS INFLUENCE ON THE WORLD

GLA

SELR

DESIGNVERSO

“There’s nothing more exciting than seeing someone whose life has been affected in a positive way by something you’ve said.”

Milton Glaser



Politecnico di Milano, Scuola del Design
Corso di Laurea in Design della Comunicazione
A.A. 2015-2016, sezione C2
Laboratorio di Fondamenti del progetto
Docenti: Daniela Calabi, Cristina Boeri, Raffaella Bruno
Cultori della materia: Dott.ssa Margherita Facca, Dott.ssa Lia Prone

DesignVerso: una collana dedicata ai designer della
comunicazione immaginata come allegato alla rivista
Multiverso, Università degli Studi di Udine.

Gruppo 5
Artistic Influences: rubrica a cura di Doriana Pompili
Places: rubrica a cura di Elisa Nicolini
Graphic: rubrica a cura di Ludovica Piro



Collegamento alle animazioni
della copertina

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ARTISTIC INFLUENCES

A MODEL

FOR THE NEW

GENERATION

Milton Glaser: being an influence

Steven Heller, Teresa Fernandes, Becoming a graphic designer, 2010

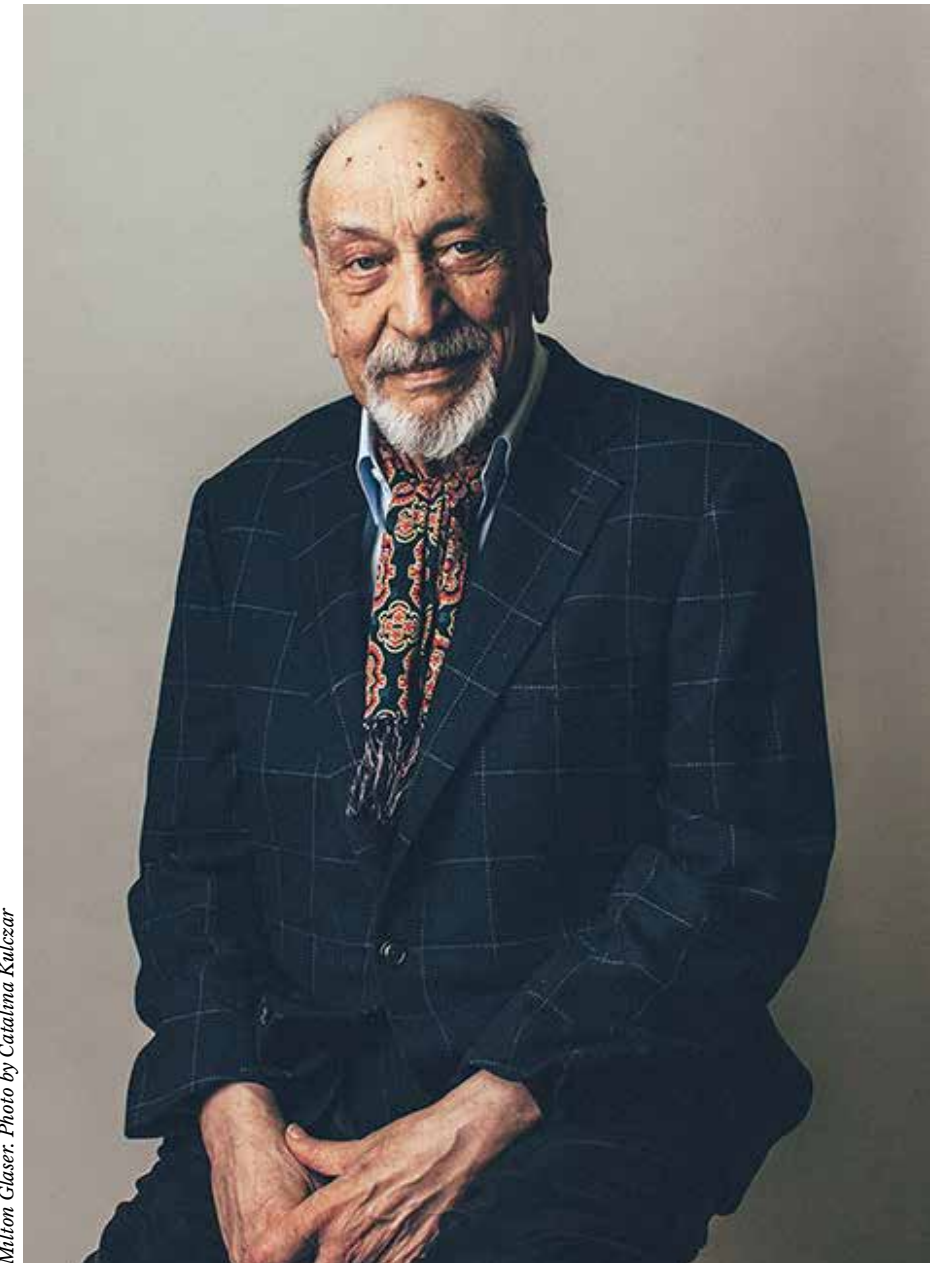
SH: Many of the designers we interviewed for this book mentioned you and your work as an influence on them. This is a big responsibility. How do you see your influence on the design community?

MG: Any practitioner wants to be influential, fundamentally. I've always seen myself as someone who worked in the realm of ideas and who was susceptible to influence. My own practice is one where I consciously try to absorb and be influenced by many of my experiences, so the idea of influence and being influential is important to me. My entire vocabulary, you might say, could be analyzed as a series of influencias. The idea is being in the stream of artistic ideas, as someone who sees himself not so much as somebody who has a private vision but rather who is in the stream and who wants to continue that stream, and who wants to participate in disseminating ideas.

I imagine it's the same impulse that keeps me teaching. The idea of teaching is basically for students to see themselves as part of the continuity of ideas and visual history, rather than as a deviation from that. So if, in fact, I have been influential, it's extremely pleasing to me.

“The things that I think are important for a good life: teaching, which I've been doing for well over half a century; and feeling that whatever you know has a possibility of being transmitted and shared.”

Milton Glaser



Milton Glaser. Photo by Catalina Kulezar

Teaching design at school

Steven Heller, «Eye Magazine», 1997

SH: How has teaching changed since you began?

MG: many design teachers don't seem to understand the degree to which the nature of the audience is really the pre-eminent influence on design. The focus in Art School is often on me-me-me and "my" expression and "my" vision and "my" career, linked to the delusion that if you reveal your soul, people will be willing to spend money for it.

SH: How do you teach?

MG: Well, I try to be very specific and propose that every problem starts with the same questions: "Who am I talking to? Who are these people? What do they know? What are their prejudices? What are their expectations?" etc. The three cardinal rules of Design are: Who is the audience? What do you want to say to them? If you don't follow this sequences, you're always going to make some terrible mistake.

SH: Were does the personal expression fit in?

MG: If fits in the cracks – because the drive to express things personally is so profound that no matter how objectives the rules, good people want to make it their own!

But given the choice between making it your own and not communicating versus communicating and not making it your own, there seems to be

very little question about which is the more appropriate role for a designer.

SH: Have your students changed considerably over the past ten or fifteen years?

I generally get people who choose to study with me, which suggests that there is something in my work that they already value.

So it's a little difficult for me to say that my students are different. They are different in the sense that most of them literally cannot work without a computer.

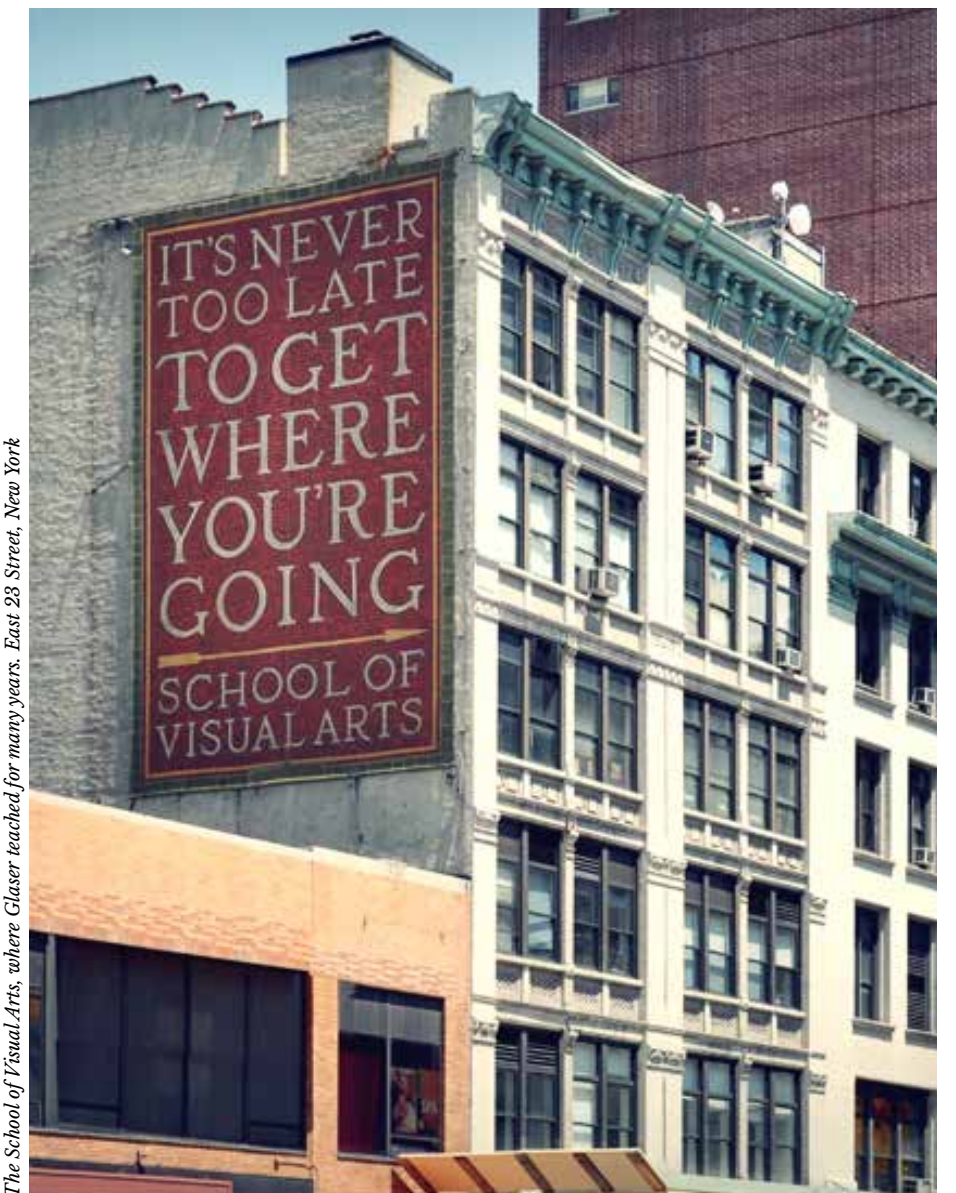
SH: Are you tolerant?

MG: They can work any way they want, as long as they are thinking straight. Personally I find it regrettable that people no longer have the skill to address even a simple problem without the computer. There is no way of preventing its use at this point, since even the most rudimentary drawing skill seems to have vanished.

Drawing skills are not about becoming an illustrator. The most fundamental way of understanding the visual world is through the act of drawing. When you are about to draw something you become attentive to its appearance (and sometimes humble before it) for the first time. I know of no better way of preparing yourself for a career in the visual arts.

"I believe that you convey your ideas by the authenticity of your being. Not by glibly telling someone what to do or how to do it. I believe that this is why so much teaching is ineffective. Good teaching is merely having an encounter with someone who has an idea of what life is that you admire and want to emulate."

Milton Glaser



The School of Visual Arts, where Glaser taught for many years. East 23 Street, New York

Working under Milton Glaser: a unique privilege

Bryon Gomez-Palacio, Graphic design referenced, 2010

When Deborah Adler was a student in the School of Visual Arts Designer as Author MFA program, her 2002 thesis project – a reaction to her grandmother accidentally taking her grandfather’s pills laid the blueprint for Target’s innovative ClearRX prescription bottle and redesigned communication system, launched in 2005. Through a partnership with Target and collaboration with Milton Glaser, Deborah managed to address a half-century-old problem. The new amber-colored prescription bottle sits firmly on its cap. Each family member is assigned a band color that identifies his or her bottles. Labels clearly show the medication name on top, followed by dosage instructions, doctor information, and refill options, while the back features clear warning icons. A card with additional patient information is tucked behind the back label.



Deborah Adler, design for Target's ClearRX bottle. 

DESIGNERS INSPIRED BY GLASER

“I had the unique privilege of learning and working with Milton for five fulfilling years. My invaluable experience and growth as a designer under his influence has been the backbone of my career. I am forever grateful for his guidance, generosity and friendship. Most important, he has instilled the conviction that the chances of learning more never disappear.”

Deborah Adler



Deborah Adler, graphic designer

Michael Bierut, a book can change you

Introduction: Bryon Gomez-Palacio, Graphic design referenced, 2010
Interview: Tina Essmaker, «The Great Discontent», 2015

Michael Bierut's determination to become a graphic designer started when he was 15 years old as he stumbled on *Aim for a Job in Graphic Design/Art*, a 1968 book by Columbia Records, art director S. Neil Fujita, in his school library. Two books later – *Graphic Design Manual* by Armin Hoffman and *Graphic Design* by Milton Glaser, Bierut was hooked. [...] Bierut's first job in 1980 was with one of the most prominent designers of the time, Massimo Vignelli. After ten years and a rise to vice president of design at Vignelli Associates, Bierut joined Pentagram in 1990 as a partner in the New York office and has since become one of the firm's most visible personalities.

TE: Describe your path to what you're doing now.

MB: Around the holidays, my mom and dad asked me what I wanted for Christmas, and I said, "I just want a book called *Graphic Design Manual*." There was no such thing as Amazon, Borders, or Barnes & Noble in those days, so my mom – God bless her – must have called bookstores to find it. Back then, little bookstores didn't have art or photography books, let alone graphic design books. [...]

But my mom hit the jackpot: she called a big department store in downtown Cleveland and they had it in stock. However, even before I opened it up on Christmas morning, I could tell that it wasn't the right book; it was too big and too thick. My mom asked, "This is it, right?" When I unwrapped it, I saw that it was the wrong book, Milton Glaser: *Graphic Design*. If you know that

book, you know that it's the opposite of the Armin Hofmann book: eclectic, colorful, exuberant, and fun. It was all about food, culture, book covers, records, and posters for rock musicians.

To me, both books were great, but they may have perpetually confused my aesthetic approach to design to this day.

TE: Have you had any mentors along the way?

MB: You can tell by my account so far that I'm very impressionable; I'm prone to influence.

I still have designs that I did when I was 15, it's clear that my style changed the minute I found the Armin Hofmann book: everything I did turned into flat colors and imitated Helvetica. And when I found the Milton Glaser book, my work started becoming more psychedelic and exuberant. Those guys who I'd never met were, in effect, mentors to me through those books.



Michael Bierut, poster, Beaux Arts Ball, 1999



Milton Glaser, SVA poster detail



Michael Bierut, graphic designer

PLACES

SHAPING

THE

CITY

His heart was in the right place

Alastair Sooke, Telegraph, 2011

Milton Glaser was in the back of a yellow taxi in Manhattan when he experienced the “eureka” moment that would define his life. It was 1977 and the American graphic designer had been asked to come up with a logo that would regenerate the fortunes of New York State. He pulled a red crayon from his pocket and began to sketch on the back of an envelope: first an “I”, then the simple outline of a heart, followed by two letters, “N” and “Y”. Glaser’s doodle contained the germ of one of the most successful advertising campaigns of all time, so successful, in fact, that the torn envelope bearing his original idea is now in the permanent collection of the MOMA in New York.

“That little scrap of paper is probably worth as much as a small Picasso,” he says with a smile. From the signage of the London Underground to the logo for Apple, 20th-century graphic design permeates popular culture. But few logos have the ubiquity of Glaser’s “I [heart] NY”, which has the elegant perfection of the Wild West.”

In 1977, an extensive blackout prompted sustained rioting and looting, resulting in 4,500 arrests.

“That was the lowest point,” says McGuire, who compares starting as police commissioner with “walking into a meat grinder”. To make matters worse, the city’s coffers were almost empty. In 1975, after President Ford denied federal assistance to save NYC from bankruptcy, the Daily News ran a front page with the headline: “Ford to City: Drop Dead”.

To combat all the baleful publicity, New York State’s department for economic development commissioned the Madison Avenue advertising agency Wells Rich Greene to build a campaign that would generate tourism. The city’s big selling point was Broadway, and before long the agency had come up with a slogan (“I Love New York”), an uplifting jingle by the composer Steve Karmen and a television commercial featuring the actor Frank Langella. But they still needed a logo — and that’s where Glaser came in. [...]

When Glaser scribbled down the first incarnation of his “I NY” logo in the back of the taxi, he says: “I felt excited. My design had a sense of inevitability. The form and the content were united in a way that could not be taken apart.”



The Bronx, 30th Street, 9th and 8th Aves., 1970s. Photo by Leland Bobbé

As he developed the preliminary idea, Glaser decided to “stack” the characters, so that the “I” and the heart sat on top of the letters “NY”. In doing so, he concedes, he may have been “subliminally” influenced by the American Pop artist Robert Indiana’s steel sculpture Love, which was first shown in New York in 1970. Next, Glaser needed to choose a typeface for the letters. He went with American Typewriter. “But it had to be redesigned,” he says, “because the actual typeface is clunky, and in an aesthetic sense it didn’t quite work with the shape of the heart.” Using a symbol of a heart was a masterstroke, as Kate Carmody, a curatorial assistant in the design department at the Museum of Modern Art, explains: “Today we represent how we feel using emoticons and this was the very beginning of the shorthand that we use on computers,” she says. “Moreover, because of the success of this design, typographers have had to add a heart to every typeface.” In 2009, Glaser became the first graphic designer to be awarded America’s National Medal of Arts, in part because of the success of “I NY”. He believes that the logo works because of the tension between the emotive heart and the coolly geometric

letters. But, he adds: “there’s another thing that happens, too. To understand the design, you have to translate it. First of all you have to figure out that the ‘I’ is a complete word, then you have to figure out that the heart is a symbol for an experience, then you have to figure out that ‘NY’ are the initials for a place. We know that the issue in all communication is moving the brain, and puzzles move the brain. This one makes everyone feel good because they solved the problem. The upbeat message of Glaser’s design, which resembles the kind of joyful graffiti that a young lover might carve into a tree, appealed to New Yorkers as well as tourists. “You don’t think of a logo as a catalyst for the restoration of a city,” McGuire says, “but in many ways, without that slogan, the turnaround in New York’s fortunes wouldn’t have been achieved so quickly.” Glaser says he still has “no idea why it became an icon not only for New Yorkers but for the whole bloody world. It’s very mysterious. “But all through the history of symbolism, the things that move us have a largely unconscious effect — like the Cross. You might even call my design a work of art,” Glaser smiles. “But it ain’t the Sistine Chapel.”

“I (heart) NY” logo design, 1976



New York Magazine: the story behind it all

Byrony Gomez-Palacio, *Graphic design referenced*, 2010

Originally published as the Sunday supplement of the New York Herald Tribune Newspaper in 1964, New York had two of the most galvanizing personalities in New York's publishing industry, its editor, Clay Felker, and staff writer, Tom Wolfe. When the Herald Tribune closed in 1968, Felker and prior collaborator Milton Glaser decided to extend the life of New York as a weekly magazine covering every perspective – real estate, finance, dining, fashion, politics, shopping, everything – of living, working, and playing in the city. With Felker as editor and Glaser as design director, the first issue was launched in April 1968.

The magazine they made had a new palette of interests, with no brow distinctions. Restaurants were as important as business, or politics. Everything that went on in a city dweller's mind was something to be curious about.

It rode an ascendant wave of attention and acclaim until media mogul Rupert Murdoch snatched away the publication in 1977. New York continued, but it was not the same without Felker, Glaser, or its art director of nine years, Walter Bernard.

Beginning in 2004, the magazine underwent big changes, the new editor and design director went back to New York's editorial and visual origins to create a new interpretation. The result was a tightly packed magazine that managed to feel both traditional and contemporary through the combination of various ingredients: several typefaces mixed and matched freely; Oxford rules as active framing devices; dynamic charts and diagrams; bold photography; and a redrawn logo by Ed Benguiat that ties together more than 40 years of publication.



NY Mag, April 8th, 1968



NY Mag, November 4th, 1968



NY Mag, May 3rd, 1988



NY Mag, July 18th, 1978



Glaser at work with colleagues, 1970s

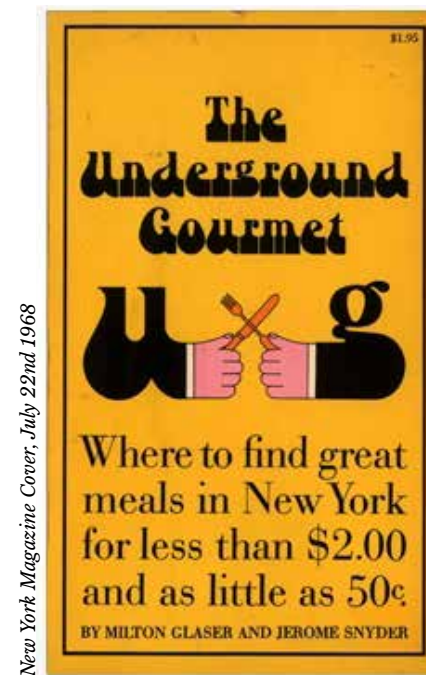
“I think in the last five years it's been a terrific magazine - it's found its path and its voice in a way that doesn't always happen. Perhaps it's not the magazine I would have invented, but I'm happy to read it these days.”

Milton Glaser

Between the lines

Peter Blake, «New York Magazine», 1968

Milton Glaser and Jerome Snyder, authors of *The Underground Gourmet* and contributors of this week of what Milton calls “a catholic look at Jewish food” appear at first sight to be a latter-day comedy team, a Costello and Costello, perhaps. Both of them are art directors, Milton of this magazine, Jerome of *Scientific American*; both are tall, both wear glasses; both are sort of, well, big. They both sport a snappy line in outrageously wide, outrageously patterned ties: Milton favors stars and Jerome stripes. They started writing *The Underground Gourmet* mainly as a result of one-upmanship contests as to who knew his way around New York in general and New York restaurants in particular, the better. For the book they had about 20 favorite places as a basic starting point; after that they discovered the rest of their restaurants mainly by walking the streets. They used to eat out a lot then – “about six or seven times a week” – but now that they’re writing only articles they’ve cut the number down. Little restaurants have a nasty way of closing down overnight so, come Christmas, a new revised, updated version of *The Underground Gourmet* will hit the book stores. It should sell well. The present *Gourmet* is a bestseller in New York (2400 copies last week, for instance). Milton and Jerome are modest about it all, however. Are they good cooks? They go into a double-take routine, and shake their heads deprecatingly. “Milton’s very good” says Jerome. “But Jerome is better” says Milton.



New York Magazine Cover, July 22nd 1968



The Underground Gourmet. New York Simon & Schuster, 1966

Milton Glaser talks: “The Underground Gourmet”

John L. Walters, «Eyemagazine», 2014

Food has always been an interest of yours. In another life could you imagine being more involved in food and less in design?

It's a great subject. People ask me why I was interested in it, and I very often say it's because my mother was such a terrible cook it inevitably led me to an interest in the subject. [...] At a certain point, before we had started *New York Magazine*, I began to write a column for the old [New York] *Herald Tribune* with Jerome Snyder. And we wrote a column that we thought was startling at the time, which was a column on cheap food in the city. No-one was writing about cheap food, because the restaurants were not ones that advertised in magazines. (Basically you would only review restaurants you could get an ad out of.) So all the cheap restaurants went unnoticed by newspapers. But we started writing about cheap restaurants and discovered there was an enormous interest and appetite for cheap restaurants. We carried it over into *New York Magazine* and it was an enormously popular column because everybody was looking for good cheap restaurants. I mean cheap is okay but cheap and good is really something.

And did you do this under cover?

We just walked the streets... When friends of ours knew we were doing it we got recommendations. There were parts of the city where we knew we could find good places... particularly in the ethnic parts. We knew if we went to Chinatown we would find something if we looked long enough, or Korea Town, or sections of Little Italy.

More than than now, the city was more locally ethnic before the millionaires came in and bought up every inch of space. So you could find local ethnic places all over the city. And people were dying to discover that. And it was terrific to be able to find a place where you could have lunch for four dollars.

We enjoyed doing that. We always were surprised at how responsive people were. We wrote about a little restaurant in the jewellery district that had six seats and a counter. And so many people turned up that they had to close down. So there are consequences. But it got me started in the food business. I started restaurant design with Joe Baum, the great restaurant developer and entrepreneur.

“The difficulty and discomfort that one may encounter before getting around to eating the rather good food at the Mi Tierra may be enough to discourage all but the most dedicated value seekers. The restaurant is a visual disaster... The wallpaper is a peeling simulated brick. Overhanging the entrance is an enormous blue-painted air conditioner which originally must have been used for cooling a battleship... Your order is taken promptly enough, but the length of time until the dish itself materializes before you is both inexplicable and interminable and, if you are very hungry, unendurable. The authors have averaged a 50-minute wait even when there was only one other customer in the restaurant. The reward turns out to be authentically prepared, tasty, quite well-arranged Mexican food at a reasonable price... Mi Tierra, in addition to its good food, provides an interesting experience. The critical question for the individual diner to decide for himself is whether his discomfort threshold is high enough to endure some of the environmental difficulties.”



Sketch for MiTierra Restaurant, *The Underground Gourmet Book*

Interiors: about Restaurant Design

Marshall Blonsky, «Graphis 270», 1990

MG: I'll tell you why I love to design restaurants. It's because they deal with many elements of form that I'm interested in, including light. I'm very interested in the effect of light on color, in space issues that don't exist on a flat surface. I'm very interested in the fact that you can create, through the use of space, light, and color, a place where people are transformed emotionally.

One of the things that happens when you come into the Trattoria [Dell' Arte] is you get a lift, you suddenly feel a little lightening of your spirit. It's created by the use of color, form, and shape.

I love the social effect of restaurants: the fact that for a brief moment you feel better there than elsewhere. Listen to the conversation, the laughter, look at the physiognomies; people seem more sophisticated, more knowledgeable, more elegant – in the right restaurant, you feel enlarged. Why do people feel good in a space? How can you transform the psychology of personality and make people happier? A restaurant can make you feel comfortable, agreeable. The light that's cast from

the side on a woman's face makes her look more beautiful than she looks outdoors. I love the idea that people, through the intervention of these elements, are changed into another state of mind, that they're protected from the world for the brief moment of the meal.

MB: I listen to you and I think of your Trattoria, where you have the noses of famous Italians from Dante to Durante, as a "Paradiso" for today.

It also can be an interpersonal "Inferno". The restaurant is where you tell your lover that you're breaking up. But it can also be the place where you first declare your love. Restaurants are now the social center of people's lives. You meet your friends in restaurants. Very often people go to dinner, have a conversation, and go home. To exchange intimacies if you aren't already living with someone – where do you do that? On a bench? In your apartment? No, you do it in a restaurant. Not enough attention has been paid to the real significance of restaurants in people's lives.

Windows on the World skyline view at sunset, 107th floor, North Tower, WTC, 2001



The new Rainbow Room

Paul Goldberger, «New York Times», 1987

For two decades now the style of the 1930's has been viewed with a combination of envy and awe. This interest has bordered on obsession - and by now, we have seen so much direct imitation, crude parody and trite allusion to Art Deco, Art Moderne, Streamline Modern and everything else with some claim on that time that it is as easy to associate the 1930's with boredom as with excitement.

This project is one of the finest evocations of the 1930's yet created, and here it comes, right at the moment when fashion is moving on, away from that fertile decade.

Does this matter? Not at all. If anything, the fact that reviving the 30's has not been the latest game in town for a while makes this spectacular project all the better, for it allows the new Rainbow Room to prove itself on its merits: it is wonderful because it is wonderful, not because it is a follower of the latest trend. The real curiosity is not that the Rainbow Room is yet another revival of a style that has been revived repeatedly over the last generation, but why it took this long for someone to do the 30's this well.

This project, designed by Hugh Hardy of the firm of Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer Associates, has the ability to make us think we are looking at the 1930's for the first time, to wipe away all of the trite knockoffs of Art Deco and bring us back to that moment when we first realized that there was something utterly glorious to the world of great 30's design. Some of this sense of revelation comes from the fact that this is, after all, the Rainbow Room, a place whose name has the power of

legend, a place that is an icon of 1930's New York, is exactly what you have always dreamed was on top of Rockefeller Center - even though, in truth, only a small portion of what is there now was there before. One of the better-kept secrets of New York is that the Rainbow Room of legend was in fact far from perfect. By the time it closed in 1985, the complex that filled the 64th and 65th floors of the RCA Building had just one decent space, the dark, high-ceilinged Rainbow Room itself; the various lounges and dining rooms that were ancillary to it were little more than 1950's coffee shops raised to grandeur by virtue of their address.

Mr. Hardy worked in association with the restaurant impresario Joseph Baum and designer Milton Glaser, and they did exactly the right thing - they restored and subtly improved the Rainbow Room itself, and then they gutted and virtually rebuilt from scratch the rest of the two floors. The result is a gently improved version of the main room that we all remember, and then a series of new rooms that are not at all like what was there before, but which are completely appropriate. They are what should always have been there - what would have been there had these top floors



The Rainbow Room, Christmas ball, Comcast Building, Rockefeller Center, NYC, 1987

been completed perfectly in the 1930's as the ultimate New York suite at the top of a skyscraper. The team conceived the Rainbow Room complex as a kind of stage set - everything from the decor to the staff uniforms to the service plates was designed to come together to make a coherent whole, in a style that very slightly exaggerates, gently but respectfully, the motifs of American design of the 30's. It is a subtle exaggeration, never too broad or too obvious, and never compromising the basic sense of elegance. [...] There is a myriad of splendid details in this sequence of rooms. The most completely successful new space is the bar on the south side, with that view that celebrates the wonderful position of the RCA Building in the city: you are not far away from other buildings, as at the Empire State Building, or almost too high in the sky, as at the World Trade Center, but right in the middle of things, so close you feel you could reach out and touch the other tower tops. In this room and in all of the new rooms the architects have raised the floor by roughly 16 inches to enhance the view still more. This gesture turns the ornate parapet around the edge of the RCA Building, which in the old Rainbow Room blocked much of the vista, into a much more benign and unobstructive piece of decoration. The Rainbow Room proper has always been

a kind of touchstone of romantic New York, a room that is central to the image we all carry around in our minds of what we believe the 30's to have been. The room is tall and dark, not black as most people remember it, but a very deep purplish brown on its north and south surfaces and mirrored on its east and west surfaces. This combination of opaque and reflective walls gives the room a strangely dematerialized quality, as if its walls were all free-floating planes, sliding away from each other. The room is not round, but it feels round, for it has a central round dance floor under a low dome, and is terraced in curves up from the dance floor, with cast glass balustrades ringing each level, and a sumptuous crystal chandelier in the center. The drama of entrance is as wonderful as the space itself: It is a room that you enter from the corners, on the diagonal, and then walk down several steps.

Another part of the Rainbow Room complex that has been newly designed is the series of private dining rooms on the floor below that not only represent a loving tribute to Donald Deskey, the designer of the interiors of the Radio City Music Hall but to all of Rockefeller Center - and, by extension, to all the aspirations and dreams of New York in the 30's. The reality of New York then was surely not as good as the magical image of it that the Rainbow Room gives us now.

RAINBOW!

Logo design, The Rainbow Room, 1987



Menu design and service plate, The Rainbow Room, 1987

Menu Design for the World Trade Center

Zachary Sachs, *Glaserarchives*, 2012

Designer Milton Glaser created a series of restaurant menus and identities over the course of his career. One curious feature about Glaser's menu collection is its organizational style, which was based on the way the materials were donated by the designer. A bunch of these come from his role designing restaurants and bars at the World Trade Center in the mid-1970s.

The most notable restaurant was probably Windows On The World: on the 107th story of the World Trade Center, the view was legendary and it commanded sky-high prices; their combination resulted in the highest-grossing restaurant in the world.: it is important to note that Glaser produced design for two distinct phases of the restaurant's history: the founding in 1976 and the re-design in the mid-90s. Being two decades apart the projects appear stylistically very different. One of the major differences between the two is the use of colors: softer for the 1976 version, with tan and salmon tessellated graphics of the sun bisected by the horizon and bolder for the 1996 one. Though the treatment of the menu uses the same sun-motif, the scale has changed.

Along with the menus, Glaser also designed sun and moon-motif china in sharply-outlined blue and banana - which now survive at the Smithsonian.



Service plate, 1996 redesign



Menu design, Windows on the World 1976



Logo redesign, Windows on the World, 1996

“Usual logos are simple and reductive. In this case we wanted the logo for Windows on the World [1995] to be expansive to convey a sense of generosity.”

Milton Glaser

Checks please! The Big Kitchen

Diane Dowling, Cinilittle, 2011

In 1977 food service mastermind Joe Baum opened The Big Kitchen in the underground concourse of The World Trade Center. For the everyday visitor to the World Trade Center and so many of the thousands that worked there, stopping in the Big Kitchen was a part of the daily routine. It was a marché concept before the industry knew the word. There were 8 stations, each with food displays to tantalize and tempt the buyer. Baum was a visionary, and knew how important aesthetics were to the dining experience. So he gave his life-long friend and coworker Milton Glaser creative reign at The Big Kitchen.

Glaser introduced large-scale, freestanding 7.5 foot high sculptural sans-serif letterforms that announced “Big Kitchen”, as well as functioned as seating, counter space and privacy “hedges” for enclosing the café and dining areas of the restaurant. Each monumental letterform, based on a costum typeface also designed by Glaser was covered in a checkerboard motif as a graphic reference to old-fashioned dining establishments. This was a really great place brought to life by two major talents. Joe Baum was this fantastic restaurant guy who loved design and Milton Glaser was (is) the preeminent Graphic Designer who loves all things food. The perfect pairing.

Standing letterforms, The Big Kitchen, 1977



A trip to Asia

Irina L. Aiga, 2011

In 2004, the Rubin Museum opened in Chelsea, New York City, becoming the only museum of Himalayan art in the Western hemisphere.

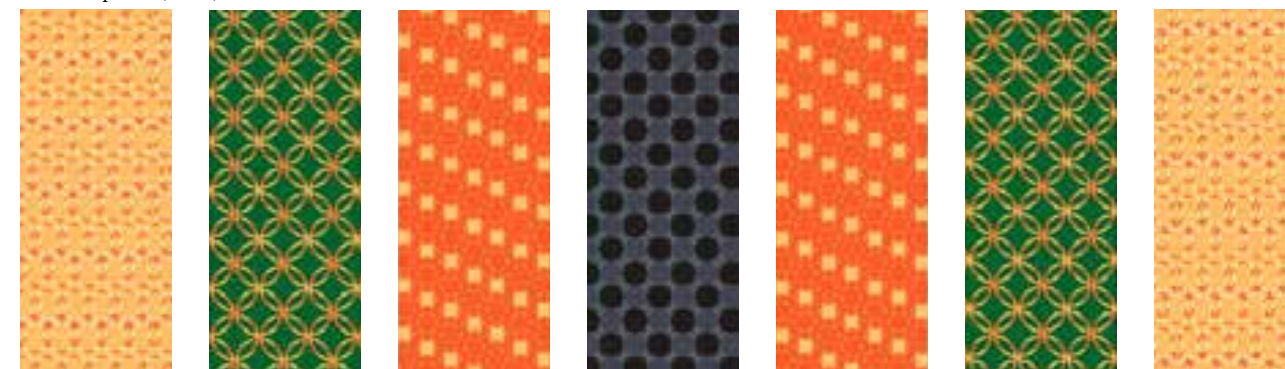
Glaser explains that the underpinning of his recent work for the museum was his study of Kundalini yoga “with a guy named Rudi, who owned an Asian art gallery on Fourth Avenue in the East Village.” Kundalini yoga, Glaser adds, “is all about releasing serpent energy that resides at the base of the spine.”

Glaser’s interest in Buddhism, which shares some of his own philosophies on connectedness, helped frame his approach for the work he designed for the museum: he developed an engaging identity system based on the geometric schematic of a square inside a circle, which is the spatial organizing plan of the Mandala, the primary painting form of the museum’s art collection.



Logo design and sketch, RMA, 2004

Decorative patterns, RMA, 2004



In a mandala painting, the Buddha sits in the center of the circle, and other pictorial elements revolve around him — a visual metaphor for the Buddhist ideal of placing the Buddha’s teachings at the center of one’s life.

Glaser’s identity system employs a vibrant palette and a playful exploration of the square within a circle motif, expressed in exterior signage and banners, a series of window posters, and a variety of decorative patterns used in the museum’s publications.

The RMA also commissioned a series of prints, which Glaser titled “Tantra”, capturing his fascination with simple shifts in color. Without compositionally changing any element on the page, the meaning of the print dramatically changed with the color shift. Glaser recalls starting to design patterns and rugs because of his curiosity with lightness and darkness. Through experimenting with values and colors Glaser moved into directions that he could not

anticipate. “You have to remove yourself from the practice, to benefit from the experience” he said. This formative experience is cataloged in his book and clearly reveals the continuity and change between Glaser’s work.

This exercise helped gauge and actualize Glaser’s lack of understanding of the profound importance of such seemingly rudimentary principle: color.

Glaser said, “one of the problems in professional life is that you never get the opportunity to change color, either arbitrarily or capriciously, because the use of color more often than not is found by the context, by the photograph, by whatever else you are doing, so we end up in the kind of work we do, generally being rudimentary in our sense of color change. And we never have the opportunity to play enough to understand what this change means.” That recognition helped fuel his experimentation and explorations with color over the following years.



Hevajra Mandala, RMA, 18th century



GRAPHIC

P O S

T E R

B O Y S

Homages

Ludovica Piro

Being one of the fathers of modern graphic design, Glaser was bound to have a great influence on the following generations of graphic designers. His works is so identifying of an era, the sixties, that it still has a heavy influence in the contemporary imagery, and it's quoted and tributed in the works of today artists.

Woody Pirtle- Milton Glaser

Amy Mueller, *Design and Media Principles*

This is a poster by the artist Woody Pirtle. The poster is entitled "After Dylan" and was done for the Dallas Society of Visual Communication announcing a lecture by Milton Glaser on the subject of plagiarism. This poster is a "copy" of Glaser's famous poster from Bob Dylan's Greatest Hits Album 1967.

Pirtle used Glaser's aging silhouette, glasses, receding hairline, and all to illustrate the concept of plagiarism.



Poster, Woody Pirtle, Glaser, 2011



Dustin Amery Hostetler, Glaser Laser!, 2000s

Glaser Laser!

This work by Dustin Amery Hostetler a.k.a. UPSO, an American Graphic Artist, Creative Director & Curator based in the Midwest is based upon Milton Glaser's poster for the exhibiton "Great illustrator of our time" held in New York in 1982. On his website he says that this illustration is "dedicated to one of my favorite illustrator." Milton Glaser's poster attempts to represent illustration as a product of the eye and the hand. The color variation intends to show the range of different approaches in an exhibition where many illustrators were represented.



Great Illustrators 1982

XTC's Oranges & Lemons

JOYELLO, Fardrock

The cover is Beatles' inspired, but it's not just a tribute: the artwork is inspired by a famous poster, made by the well-known Milton Glaser, for WOR-FM radio station, which had already been a source of inspiration for Heinz Edelman when he designed the Beatles' characters for the Yellow Submarine cartoon. In different websites it's reported that Oranges and Lemons' cover was made by Heinz Edelman himself, but in the footnotes it's actually written that the artwork was made by Dave Dragon and Ken Ansell from The Design Clinic of London following singer of the band Andy Partridge's instructions.



Dave Dragon, Ken Ansell, Oranges & Lemons, 1989

Gallery label from *Making Music Modern: Design for Ear and Eye*, November 15, 2014–January 17, 2016

«The Sound is WOR-FM 98.7»

Glaser was recruited to capture what Robert Smith, general manager of RKO's new flagship station in New York, termed the "bright young spirit. . . WOR-FM will definitely not be a screaming station but will be modern with a distinctive sound. . . Our strength lies in the stereophonic sound." Glaser's four-color poster presented a graphically stylized image of contemporary musicians, complete with electric guitars, mod costumes and "in" hairstyles. Before the station went on the air it was posted (and often removed by fans) on New York subway platforms, buses, and billboards in the tristate area. Ratings for the new station soared.



Milton's very first poster. "The sound is WOR-FM"; 1966. It's the first in the style that defined the 60's. 22" x 17"



When irony takes over

Ludovica Piro

Nothing has a single interpretation; the contest is, in fact, heavily responsible of how something is interpreted and read. Take as an example the the last verb of the previous sentence “read”; the spelling does not inform the reader of the tense that is being used, but the sentence, that is the context itself, does.

In this resides the power of irony, a rhetorical tool used to emphasize an idea or just to make something humorous. Here some examples of how irony is used to reinterpret Glaser’s works.

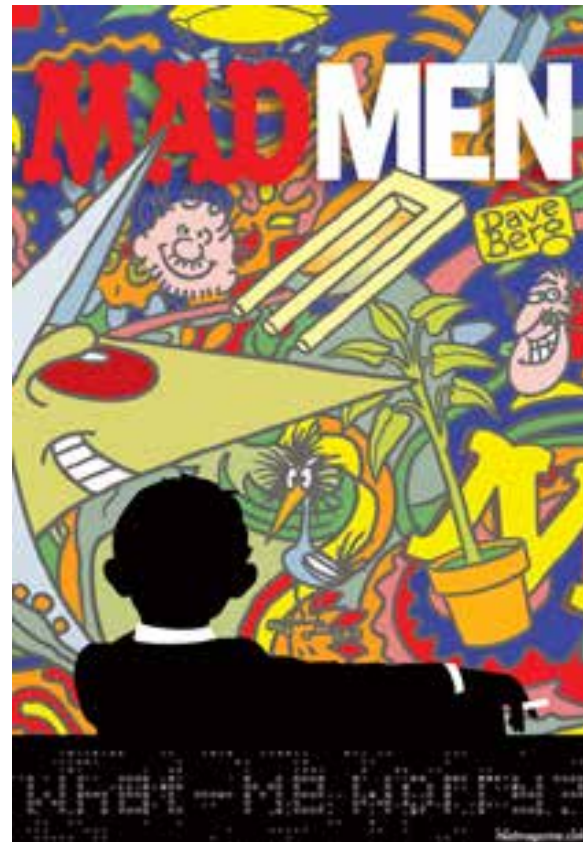
A Kick in the Ads dep.

TheEditor, «MadMen Magazine», 2014

The final season of Mad Men debuts on Sunday, and the ad campaign leading up to it features the famous silhouette of Don Draper sitting in front of Milton Glaser art. But everyone knows that The Usual Gang of Idiots are the original Mad Men — so we took the liberty of adjusting the image accordingly.

Mad is an American humor magazine founded in 1952 by editor Harvey Kurtzman and publisher William Gaines.

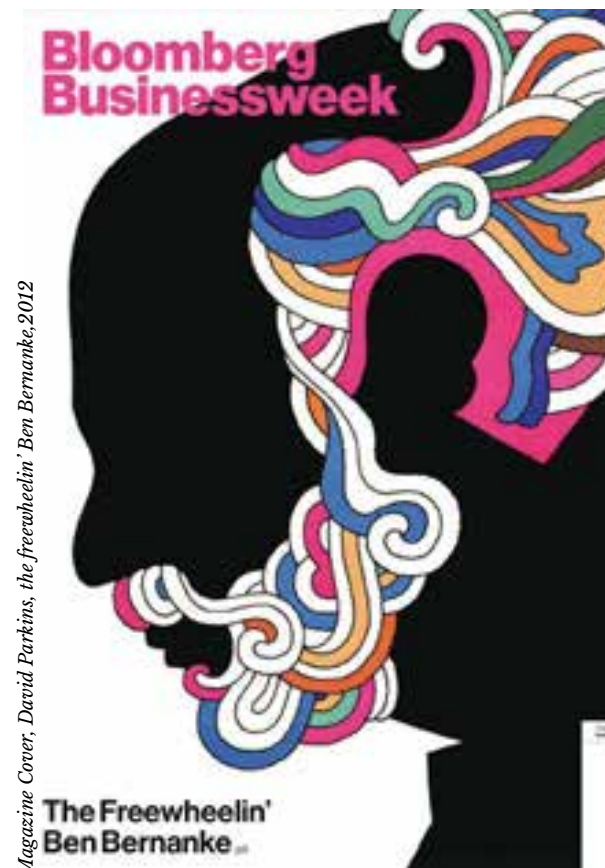
Mad is known for the stability and longevity of its talent roster, billed as “The Usual Gang of Idiots”, with several creators enjoying 30-, 40- and even 50-year careers in the magazine’s pages.



Poster, Dave berg, what-me worry?, 2014

“You have been widely imitated, even by our magazine. Are you delighted when you see that, or does it irk you a little? I have to admit, I love seeing that my work has entered into use. One of the reasons you become involved in the communication business, whether you’re a reporter, or a journalist, or a designer, is because you want to feel that your work has effect. That people see it and respond to it. And that is the great reward: seeing that your work is not merely known, but responded to.”

From an interview with Milton Glaser by Bradford Weiners for «Blumberg Businessweek», 2016



Magazine Cover, David Parkins, the freewheelin' Ben Bernanke, 2012

Ben Bernanke & Bob Dylan

Type eh? about style and graphic

Cautious and reserved Fed Chief Ben Bernanke has been compared to a number of men before him; think Alan Greenspan and Paul Volker. But Bloomberg Businessweek has a new one this week: Bob Dylan.

The cover story, “Don’t Think Twice, It’s All Right” by Peter Coy, takes its name from a Bob Dylan song off the 1963 album “The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan” and, as a spokesperson says, “examines how radical the currently cautious Fed Chairman has already been – and may be again.”

Repetita iuvant

Lianna May Wrag, liannamaydesign

The Bob Dylan poster is so ubiquitous that it has become a source of inspiration for many amateur artists: while surfing the net you can find countless reinterpretations with all kinds of people substituted to the musician. Here a couple of examples.

The hoary issue

Whose idea was this? That's the question. While in this artwork is evident the reference to Milton Glaser's poster for Bob Dylan's Greatest Hits, tracking down the sources and give proper credits to the original autor isn't always an easy task as it's cleverly suggested in the note above Marie Antoniette's beheaded head. It reads as it follows:

I copied Milton Glaser, who was inspired by Marcel Duchamp who used as a referce a XIX sec work that was made after an etching of Marie Antoinette, whose author...

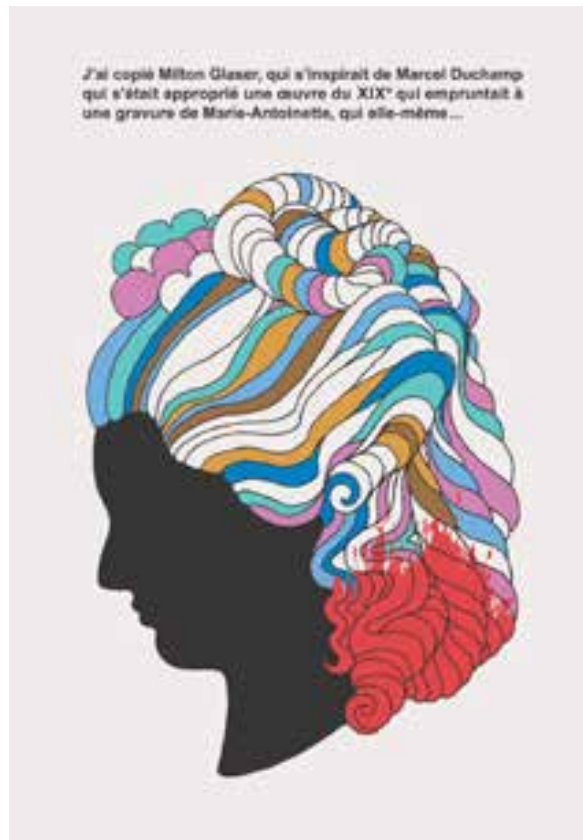


Illustration by a student of Brien Leas School, 2008



Really Arty Poster Contest Finalist: "Conchords" by Jetter, 2009

Flight of the Conchords

Flight of the Conchords are a band from New Zealand, popular also for their HBO TV show. A little bit of a spoof/funny rock band, this is reflected very much so in the artwork for their series, albums and promotions. Recently they needed anew posters so they announced the "Really Arty Flight of the Conchords Poster Search." They were hoping some arty types could help. Apparently, there were a lot of artytypes who were more than capable and willing to help. This is one of the ten postr finalist based on Glaser's famous poster for Bob Dylan Gratest Hits.



Official artwork of Samus Aran for the Metroid series game Metroid: another M, 2010

Metroid: another Dylan

Metroid is a series of science fiction action-adventure video games created by Nintendo. It chronicles the missions of space-faring bounty hunter Samus Aran, who protects the galaxy from the depredations of the Space Pirates and their attempts to harness the power of the eponymous Metroids. Over the years it has become so popular that many fans made themed artworks. Here's a peculiar one.



Illustration, Jonch Sidhom, Samus from the Metroid game series, 2010