

The Modern Movement in America

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The modern movement did not gain an early foothold in the United States. When the fabled 1913 Armory Show introduced modernism to America, it generated a storm of protest and provoked public rejection of modern art and design. Modernist European design did not become a significant influence in America until the 1930s. As the billboards in a Walker Evans (1903–75) photograph demonstrate (Fig. 17–1), American graphic design during the 1920s and 1930s was dominated by traditional illustration. However, the modern approach slowly gained ground on several fronts: book design, editorial design for fashion and business magazines catering to affluent audiences, and promotional and corporate graphics.

When Tschichold’s “Elementare Typographie” insert was publicized in American advertising and graphic arts venues, it caused considerable excitement and turmoil. Editors and writers savagely attacked it as “typographic fireworks” and a “typographic revolution” of “insane jugglings of type by a band of crazy, foreign type anarchists.” But a small number of American typographers and designers recognized the vitality and functionalism of the new ideas. In 1928 and 1929 new typeface designs, including Futura and Kabel, became available in America, spurring the modern movement forward. A number of book designers, including William Addison Dwiggins (1880–1956), were transitional designers whose work ranged from the classical tradition of Goudy and Rogers to the new typography of Tschichold. After two decades in advertising design, Dwiggins began designing books for Alfred A. Knopf in 1926. He established Knopf’s reputation for excellence in book design, experimenting with uncommon title-page arrangements and two-column book formats. His stenciled ornaments (Fig. 17–2) combining the sensibility of the cubist collage with the grace of traditional ornament. His eighteen typeface designs for Mergenthaler Linotype include Caledonia (1938), a graceful text face; Electra (1935), a modern design with reduced thick-and-thin contrast; and Metro (1929), Linotype’s geometric sans serif designed to compete with Futura and Kabel.

17–1. Walker Evans, untitled, 1936. Evans’s Atlanta photograph contrasting decaying homes and Depression-era movie posters documents a chasm between reality and graphic fantasy.

17-2. William Addison Dwiggins, title pages from *The Power of Print and Men*, 1936. This title shows Dwiggins's ornaments, his Metro and Electra typefaces, and his passion for subtle color combinations.

17-3. S. A. Jacobs, title page for *Christmas Tree*, by e.e. cummings, 1928. Typography implies an image, which joins with rules and ornaments to suggest a landscape.

17-4. Merle Armitage, title page for *Modern Dance*, by Merle Armitage, 1935. Sans-serif capitals are letterspaced and separated by hairline rules.

17-5. Lester Beall, cover for *PM*, 1937. This cover is evidence of Beall's growing interest in European modernism, and the color and diagonal typography suggest the influence of the Bauhaus and constructivism. However, his use of the nineteenth-century typeface on the lower left gives the design its own dimension. This issue contained an article on Beall's own graphic design.

Other important book designers of the period include S. A. Jacobs, whose prolific oeuvre includes several books of e. e. Cummings's poetry (Fig. 17-3), and Merle Armitage (1893-1975), whose typographic expressions ranged from Renaissance-inspired designs to books for avant-garde music and dance that helped define the modernist design aesthetic in America (Fig. 17-4).

Lester Beall (1903-69) was a Kansas City native who moved to Chicago and earned an art history degree in 1926. Beall was primarily self-taught; his extensive reading and curious intellect formed the basis for his professional development. After gaining experience in the late 1920s and early 1930s as a graphic designer whose work broke with traditional American advertising layout, Beall moved his studio to New York in 1935. In the challenging social and economic environment of the Depression era, he attempted to develop strong, direct, and exciting visual forms. Beall understood Tschichold's new typography and the Dada movement's random organization, intuitive placement of elements, and use of chance in the creative process (Fig. 17-5). Admiring the strong character and form of nineteenth-century American wood types, Beall delighted in incorporating them into his work during this period. Often, flat planes of color and elementary signs such as arrows were combined with photography, as Beall sought visual contrast and a high level of informational content. The design of Figure 17-6 has strong horizontal movements contrasting with a rhythm of verticals. Images are layered in space; here a transparent illustration of a pioneer overprints two photographs. Beall's posters for the Rural Electrification Administration, a federal agency charged with bringing electricity to the less populated areas of America, reduced pro-electrification messages to elemental signs (Fig. 17-7). One poster series combined photomontage with the red and white stripes of the American flag (Fig. 17-8).

In 1951 Beall moved his studio from New York City to his country home at Dumbarton Farms in Connecticut. In this new environment, and in response to client and social changes, Beall became increasingly involved in the emerging corporate design movement of the 1950s and 1960s (see chapter 20).

Immigrants to America

17–6. Lester Beall, title pages from a promotional brochure, c. 1935. Victorian wood type contrasts with sans-serif type, and photography contrasts with drawing.

17–7. Lester Beall, poster for the Rural Electrification Administration, c. 1937. The benefits of electricity were presented through signs understandable to illiterate and semiliterate audiences.

17–8. Lester Beall, poster for the Rural Electrification Administration, c. 1937. Patriotic graphics and happy farm children imply a rural life improved by government programs.

17–9. Erté, *Harper's Bazaar* covers, July 1929; July 1934; and January 1935. Erté's covers projected a sophisticated, continental image on the newsstand.

17–10. Martin Munkacsi, editorial photograph from *Harper's Bazaar*, 1934. Rejecting the conventions of the studio, Munkacsi allowed outside locations and the natural movements of his models to suggest innovative possibilities.

A migratory process began slowly, then reached a crescendo by the late 1930s, as cultural leaders from Europe, including many graphic designers, came to America. The design language they brought with them, and the changes imposed on their work by their American experience, forms an important phase of the development of American graphic design.

It is a curious coincidence that four individuals—Erté (born Romain de Tiroff, 1892–1990), Dr. Mehemed Fehmy Agha (1896–1978), Alexey Brodovitch (1898–1971), and Alexander Liberman (1912–1999)—who brought European modernism to American graphic design were Russian-born, French-educated immigrants who worked in editorial design for fashion magazines. Erté was a Russian admiral's son, born in St. Petersburg. After becoming a prominent Paris illustrator and set designer working in the art deco manner, he was signed to an exclusive contract from 1924 until 1937 to design covers and fashion illustrations for *Harper's Bazaar* magazine (Fig. 17–9). Renowned for his fashion designs, set designs, illustrations, and graphics, Erté became a major proponent of the art deco sensibility. His work combined the stylized drawing of synthetic cubism, an exotic decorativeness, and the elegance of high fashion.

Dr. Agha was the first art director trained in modern design to guide the graphic destiny of a major American periodical. Born in Ukraine to Turkish parents, Agha studied art in Kiev and received advanced degrees in languages in Paris. After working in Paris as a graphic artist, he moved to Berlin and was there in 1928 when he met Condé Nast, who had come to close down the unprofitable Berlin edition of *Vogue* magazine and was seeking a new art director for the American *Vogue*. Impressed with Agha's graphics, Nast persuaded him to come to New York as *Vogue's* art director. Energetic and uncompromising, Agha soon took over design responsibilities for *Vanity Fair* and *House & Garden* as well. He overhauled Condé Nast's stuffy, dated approach to editorial design by introducing bleed photography, machine-set sans-serif type, white space, and asymmetrical layouts.

At the rival *Harper's Bazaar*, which had been purchased by newspaperman William Randolph Hearst in 1913 and rejuvenated through the use of photography, Carmel Snow became editor in 1933. She was keenly interested in the visual aspects of the magazine and hired Hungarian Martin Munkacsi (1896–1963) as a staff photographer. Long-held conventions of editorial photography were slapped in the face by Munkacsi's new compositions (Fig. 17–10). Munkacsi was one of a new breed of editorial and advertising photographers who combined the visual dynamic learned from Moholy-Nagy and Man Ray with the fresh approach to photography made possible by the new 35mm Leica "miniature" camera. Invented by an employee of the Leitz Company of Germany in 1913, this small portable camera was introduced much

later, because its production was delayed by World War I. With the addition of faster, higher-resolution films, photography became an extension of the photographer's vision.

Snow invited Alexey Brodovitch (1898–1971) to become art director of *Harper's Bazaar*, where he remained from 1934 until 1958. Brodovitch, a Russian who had fought in the czar's cavalry during World War I, immigrated to Paris and established himself as a leading contemporary designer there before heading to the United States in 1930. With an affinity for white space and sharp type on clear, open pages, he rethought the approach to editorial design (Figs. 17–11 and 17–12). He sought “a musical feeling” in the flow of text and pictures. The rhythmic environment of open space balancing text was energized by the art and photography he commissioned from major European artists, including Henri Cartier-Bresson, Cassandre, Dali, and Man Ray. In addition, Brodovitch taught designers how to use photography. His cropping, enlargement, and juxtaposition of images and his exquisite selection from contact sheets were all accomplished with extraordinary intuitive judgment (Fig. 17–13 and 17–14). He saw contrast as a dominant tool in editorial design and paid close attention to the graphic movement through the editorial pages of each issue.

Born in Kiev, Russia, Alexander Liberman (1912–99) spent his early years in Paris and studied at the École des Beaux Arts. After working for Cassandre he was hired as a layout designer by the French weekly magazine *Vu* and in 1933 was appointed as its director (Fig. 17–15). In 1940 he emigrated to the United States, where he joined the design section at Condé Nast. Initially a layout designer for *Vogue*, he succeeded Agha as the magazine's art director in 1943. Using photographers such as Irving Penn, Cecil Beaton, and Lee Miller, he enlivened *Vogue* with current images. He was appointed editorial director of all Condé Nast publications in 1961 and remained in that position until his retirement thirty years later (Fig. 17-16).

Joseph Binder came to the United States in 1934 for a series of lectures and workshops and soon received wide acclaim. Encouraged by the response to his work, he settled in New York the following year. In America, Binder's technique became more refined, partly because he had begun to use the airbrush to achieve highly finished forms. His strong cubist beginnings eventually yielded to a stylized realism.

In Binder's 1939 New York World's Fair poster (Fig. 17–17), the trylon and perisphere, emblems of the fair, combine with spotlights, a skyline, and modern transportation images to symbolize America's coming of age on the eve of World War II. World events would soon force the United States to cast aside its neutrality, traditionalism, and provincialism; the new embrace of modernist design was part of this process. Traces of cubism remained in Binder's work, as can be seen in his 1939 poster for iced coffee (Fig. 17–18), where two-dimensional planes support the illustrative content. During his Vienna period (see Fig. 14–55). Binder had constructed images from planes; now the subject matter became dominant, and design qualities were subordinated to pictorial imagery.

17–11. Alexey Brodovitch (art director) and Man Ray (photographer), pages from *Harper's Bazaar*, 1934. The figure's oblique thrust inspired a dynamic typographic page with several sizes and weights of geometric sans serifs.

17–12. Alexey Brodovitch (art director) and Man Ray (photographer), pages from *Harper's Bazaar*, 1934. The forms and texture of the experimental photograph are amplified and complemented by the typographic design.

17–13. Alexey Brodovitch, photography by Herbert Matter, *Harper's Bazaar* cover, June 1940. Brodovitch often used repetition as a design device, as with the round forms on the butterfly wings and the eyes of the model.

17–14. Alexey Brodovitch, cover for Harper's Bazaar, June 1951.

In this striking cover the feeling of summer is captured by the bold colors. The cropping of the image draws attention to the beach clothing rather than the model herself.

17–15. Alexander Liberman, cover for VU, 1933. VU was one of the first publications where photography played a leading role and was the inspiration for magazines such as Life and Look in the United States.

17–16. Alexander Liberman, Vogue cover, 1945. With surrealistic overtones Liberman fuses an appeal for the Red Cross with high fashion.

17–17. Joseph Binder, poster for the New York World's Fair, 1939. America's embrace of modernism, technology, and global power is signified.

17–18. Joseph Binder, poster for A & P Coffee, 1939. Flat shapes and airbrushed modulations create strong value contrasts, requiring the viewer to fill in the details of Binder's edited naturalism.

The Works Progress Administration Poster Project

As part of the New Deal of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the federal government created the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in 1935. Direct relief for the unemployed was replaced by work opportunities, and billions of dollars were inserted into the economy as an average of more than two million workers were paid from fifteen to ninety dollars per month from 1935 until 1941. Launched in the fall of 1935, the WPA Federal Art Project enabled actors, musicians, visual artists, and writers to continue their professional careers. A poster project was included among the various cultural programs. Sculptors and painters joined unemployed illustrators and graphic designers in the studios. As many designs were by artists, it is not surprising that the project took a strong aesthetic approach to typography, used as both compositional element and message communicator.

From 1935 until 1939, when the Federal Art Project was abolished, over two million copies of approximately 35,000 poster designs were produced. Most of the designs were silk-screened. Silk-screen printing's characteristic flat color combined with influences from the Bauhaus, pictorial modernism, and constructivism to produce a modernist result that contrasted with the traditional illustration dominating much of American mass-media graphics of the era. Government-sponsored cultural events, including theatrical performances and art exhibitions, were frequent subjects for the poster project, as were public-service communications about health, crime prevention, housing, and education.

The flight from fascism

The rise of Nazism in Europe created one of the greatest transnational migrations of intellectual and creative talent in history. Scientists, authors, architects, artists, and designers left Europe for the haven of North America during the late 1930s. Among them were the artists Ernst, Duchamp, and Mondrian. When the Nazis closed the Bauhaus in 1933, faculty, students, and alumni dispersed throughout the world and made modern design a truly international movement. Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Breuer transplanted the functionalist architectural movement to the United States, and Bayer and Moholy-Nagy brought their innovative approaches to graphic design. Other European graphic designers who came to America and made significant contributions to design include Will Burtin (1908–72), Jean Carlu, George Giusti (1908–90), Herbert Matter, and Ladislav Sutnar.

Sponsored by the Association of Arts and Industries, Moholy-Nagy arrived in Chicago in 1937 and established the New Bauhaus. This closed after just one year due to inadequate financial support, but Moholy-Nagy managed to open the School of Design in 1939. The primary source of financial support

came from Moholy-Nagy himself and other faculty members, many of whom agreed to teach without pay if necessary. Both Carlu and Bayer also found it difficult to find clients who comprehended their work during their first months in America.

Burtin, recognized as one of Germany's outstanding designers, fled Germany in 1938 after refusing to work for the Nazi regime. His work combined a graphic clarity and directness with a lucid presentation of the subject matter. The "Design Decade" *Architectural Forum* cover (Fig. 17–19) demonstrates his ability to bring together structural form and symbolic information in a cohesive whole. The dates, printed on acetate, combine with the architect's tools to signify design during the preceding decade; shadows become integral forms in the design. Burtin's keen understanding of science is reflected in designs for the Upjohn pharmaceutical company, interpreting such complex subjects as bacteriology (Fig. 17–20). In 1943 Burtin left Upjohn to work on government training manuals, followed by three years as art director of *Fortune* magazine. In 1948 he became a design consultant for Upjohn and other companies, making a major contribution to the visual interpretation of graphic information.

A patron of design

A major figure in the development of American modern design beginning in the 1930s was a Chicago industrialist, Walter P. Paepcke (1896–1960), who founded the Container Corporation of America (CCA) in 1926. Paepcke pioneered the manufacture of paperboard and corrugated-fiber containers. Acquisitions and expansion enabled CCA to become a national company and the nation's largest producer of packaging materials. Paepcke was unique among the large industrialists of his generation, for he recognized that design could both serve a pragmatic business purpose and become a major cultural thrust on the part of the corporation. His interest was inspired by his wife, artist Elizabeth Nitze Paepcke (1902–94), who prompted her husband to hire perhaps the first corporate design director in America. In 1936 Egbert Jacobson (1890–1966) was selected as the first director of CCA's new department of design. As with Behrens's design program for AEG early in the century, CCA's new visual signature (and its implementation) was based on two ingredients: the vision of the designer and a supportive client. Jacobson had an extensive background as a color expert, and this knowledge was put to use as mill and factory interiors were transformed from drab industrial grays and browns to bright colors. A new trademark was applied to stationery, checks (Fig. 17–21), invoices, vehicles, and signage. A consistent format used sans-serif type and a standard color combination of black and shipping-carton tan.

17–19. Will Burtin, cover for *Architectural Forum*, 1940. Burtin gave graphic form to abstract ideas, such as passage of time.

17–20. Will Burtin, cover for the first issue of *Scope*, 1941. To signify new "miracle drugs" under development, a color illustration is superimposed over a black-and-white photograph of a test tube.

17–21. Egbert Jacobson, logo for Container Corporation of America (CCA), 1936. This logical symbol, combining an image of the major product with a map suggesting the national scope of the firm, was innovative for its time.

17–22. A. M. Cassandre, advertisement for CCA, 1938. A strong statement—"Research, experience, and talent focused on advanced paperboard packaging"—is illustrated with near hypnotic impact.

Paepcke was an advocate and patron of design. He had maintained a long-standing interest in the Bauhaus, perhaps as a response to the school's experiments with paper materials and structures. Moved by Moholy-Nagy's commitment and determination, Paepcke provided much-needed moral and financial support to the Institute of Design. By the time of Moholy-Nagy's tragic early death from leukemia on 24

November 1946, the institute was on a firm educational and organizational footing.

CCA's advertising agency was N. W. Ayer, where art director Charles Coiner (1898–1989) made a major contribution. Beginning in May 1937, Cassandre was commissioned to design a series of CCA advertisements that defied American advertising conventions. The traditional headline and body copy were replaced by a dominant visual that extended a simple statement about CCA (Fig. 17–22). In contrast to the long-winded copywriting of most 1930s advertising, many CCA advertisements only had a dozen words.

Cassandre was also commissioned by Brodovitch to design covers for *Harper's Bazaar* (Fig. 17–23). When Cassandre returned to Paris in 1939, CCA continued his basic approach by commissioning advertisements from other artists and designers of international stature, including Bayer (who was retained as a consulting designer by Jacobson, then served as chairman of CCA's department of design from 1956 to 1965), Léger, Man Ray, Matter, and Carlu.

The war years

While the trauma of war disrupted the ability of many governments to produce graphic propaganda, a diverse group of painters, illustrators, and designers received commissions from the U. S. Office of War Information. America's wartime graphics ranged from brilliantly conceived posters to informational training materials and amateurish cartoons.

In 1941, as America's entry into the global conflict seemed inevitable, the federal government began to develop propaganda posters to promote production. Charles Coiner became its art consultant as America's colossal defense buildup began. He commissioned Carlu to create one of the finest designs of his career, the famous "America's answer! Production" poster (Fig. 17–24). Over 100,000 copies were distributed throughout the country, and Carlu was recognized with a top award by the New York Art Director's Club Exhibition.

Intense feelings about Hitler, Pearl Harbor, and the war seemed to pull powerful communications from the graphic designers, illustrators, and fine artists commissioned to create posters for the Office of War Information. Illustrator John Atherton (1900–52), creator of numerous *Saturday Evening Post* covers, penetrated to the heart of the problem of careless talk, gossip, and discussion of troop movements as a source of enemy information (Fig. 17–25). Binder's poster proposal for the U.S. Army Air Corps (Fig. 17–26) is potent in its simplicity, signifying the essence of the air corps through minimal means. Impact is achieved by dramatic contrasts of color and scale. Kauffer was commissioned to design posters to boost the morale of the Allied nations (Fig. 17–27); an image of Hermes, the classical Greek messenger of the Gods, combines with an American flag to make a powerful graphic symbol. The social realist Ben Shahn (1898–1969), whose paintings addressed political and economic injustice during the Depression, reached a larger audience in posters conveying Nazi brutality (Fig. 17–28). He achieved communicative power with intense graphic forms: the implication of a prison by closing the space with a wall; the hood masking the victim's identity; the simple, straightforward headline; and the factual urgency of a telegram.

The posters Bayer produced during and after the war were surprisingly illustrative compared to his constructivist approach during the Dessau Bauhaus period. His 1939/40 cover for PM was one of the last designs he made before this change in his design approach became evident (Fig. 17–29). Sensitive to his new audience and oriented toward communications problem solving, Bayer painted illustrations with a simplified realism, then combined these with the hierarchy of information and strong underlying composition he pioneered at Dessau. In his poster promoting egg production, the large white egg centered against the black sky becomes a strong focal point (Fig. 17–30). The headline to the left balances the flaming town to the right, and the diagonal subheading echoes the shadow cast by the egg.

17–23. A. M. Cassandre, cover for Harper's Bazaar, 1939. A perfume-bottle nose, lipstick mouth, and powder-puff cheek achieve simultaneity.

17–24. Jean Carlu, poster for the Office of Emergency Management, 1941. Visual and verbal elements are inseparably interlocked into an intense symbol of productivity and labor.

17–25. John Atherton, poster for the U.S. Office of War Information, 1943. The placement of the two-part headline implies a rectangle; this symmetry is animated by the off-center placement of the white cross.

17–26. Joseph Binder, poster proposal for the U.S. Army Air Corps, 1941. Extreme spatial depth is conveyed by the scale change between the close-up wing and aircraft formation.

17–27. E. McKnight Kauffer, poster promoting Allied unity, c. 1940. The Portuguese headline translates, "We Fight for the Liberty of All."

17–28. Ben Shahn, poster for the U.S. Office of War Information, 1943. A dire crisis is conveyed using the most direct words and imagery possible.

When one compares Bayer's 1949 poster for polio research (Fig. 17–31) with his 1926 poster for the Kandinsky Jubilee Exhibition (see Fig. 16–20), these two designs are clearly worlds apart. The Kandinsky poster was designed by a twenty-six-year-old typography teacher at a young school optimistically hoping to build a new social order by design; the polio research poster is the work of a forty-eight-year-old designer living in a foreign land, after a European war in which twenty-six million people were killed. The photography and typography of Bayer's Bauhaus period yielded to hand-painted illustration and hand-lettering, but the commitment to functional communication, the integration of letterforms and imagery, and the asymmetrical balance remained constant.

During World War II, CCA innovated uses for paperboard packaging, which freed metals and other strategic materials for the war effort. A "Paperboard Goes to War" advertising campaign (Figs. 17–32 and 17–33) continued the design experimentation of the earlier institutional ads. Before the war there was still a degree of public concern about the strength of paperboard; this campaign prepared the way for its extensive use after the war. Each advertisement showed a specific use of a CCA product in the war effort. Bayer, Carlu, and Matter joined Jacobson in creating powerful economical statements directly striking the essence of the communications problem. Strong visuals were used with two or three lines of typography, often placed diagonally in counterpoint to compositional lines from the illustration or montage.

After the war

The United States demobilized millions of troops and converted industry from wartime needs to consumer markets after World War II. Seeking another institutional advertising campaign using fine art, CCA decided to commission paintings by artists from each of the then forty-eight states (Fig. 17–34). A simple copy line appeared under each full-color painting, followed by the CCA logotype. The series served to advance a Bauhaus ideal: the union of art with life. Once selected, artists were allowed the freedom of their artistic convictions. A major corporate art collection, now housed in the Smithsonian Institution, was assembled.

After the state series was completed, CCA developed one of the most brilliant institutional campaigns in the history of advertising. Elizabeth and Walter Paepcke were attending the Great Books discussion group conducted in Chicago by Robert M. Hutchins and Mortimer Adler. These two scholars were also

editing the Great Books of the Western World series, which included two volumes discussing the ideas contained in the series. Walter Paepcke approached Adler with the possibility of an institutional ad campaign presenting the great ideas of Western culture. Each would present an artist's interpretation of a great idea selected by Adler and his colleagues. The Paepckes joined Bayer and Jacobson to form a jury to select the visual artists who would be asked to bring graphic actualization to these abstract concepts. Beginning in February 1950, this unprecedented institutional campaign transcended the bounds of advertising, as ideas about liberty, justice, and human rights were conveyed to an audience of business leaders, investors, prospective employees, and molders of public opinion. The campaign ran over three decades, with 157 visual artists creating artwork for almost two hundred "Great Ideas" advertisements. Art ranged from painted and sculptural portraits to geometric abstraction, symbolic interpretations (Fig. 17–35), and collage (Fig. 17–36).

17–29. Herbert Bayer, cover for PM, December 1939/January 1940. This issue included articles on Bayer's work, his design philosophy, and his ideas about typography.

17–30. Herbert Bayer, poster to encourage egg production, c. 1943. Black and white predominate, intensifying the muted primary colors.

17–31. Herbert Bayer, poster supporting polio research, 1949. The diagonal shaft of the test tube leads the eye from the red and blue headline to the flowing yellow light that is beginning to dawn, linking the elements in the same manner as the thick black bars of Bayer's Bauhaus work.

17–32. Herbert Matter, advertisement for CCA, 1942. A thunderstorm amplifies the copy concept of paperboard packaging protecting goods from weather and spoilage.

17–33. Herbert Matter, advertisement for CCA, 1943. A unified complex of images suggests global scope, paperboard boxes, and food for troops in harsh environmental conditions.

17–34. Ben Cunningham (artist), Leo Lionni (art director), N. W. Ayer & Son (agency), CCA advertisement honoring Nevada, 1949. Artists commissioned to interpret their native state were given complete artistic freedom.

17–35. Herbert Bayer, CCA "Great Ideas" advertisement, 1954. Protection from injustice and oppression is asserted by hands warding off arrows penetrating into the page.

17–36. Herbert Bayer, CCA "Great Ideas" advertisement, 1960. Theodore Roosevelt's admonition about threats to America found expression in a collage depicting affluence and decadence.

Just as CCA set the standard of excellence for institutional advertising in the postwar era, Brodovitch remained the preeminent designer for magazines. In addition to his skills as an editorial designer, Brodovitch developed an exceptional gift for identifying and assisting new talent. Photographers Richard Avedon (1923–2004) and Irving Penn (b. 1917) both received early commissions and advice from Brodovitch. Art Kane (1925–95) was another Brodovitch protégé. Kane worked as a photo retoucher and art director of *Seventeen* magazine before turning to photography. He was a master of symbolism, multiple exposure, and the reduction of photography to essential images needed to convey the essence of content with compelling conviction.

During the early 1950s Brodovitch designed the short-lived visual arts magazine *Portfolio* (Fig. 17–37). At the height of his graphic powers, Brodovitch gave this publication a seldom matched elegance and visual flow through pacing, the cropping of images, and use of color and texture. Large images, dynamic space, and inserts on colored and rough-textured papers (Fig. 17–38) contrast with smooth, coated white paper. A 138-centimeter (4-foot) foldout photographic essay (Fig. 17–39) on the Mummer's Parade, punctuated with vertical columns of filmstrips, is sequential and kinetic.

In addition to freelance design commissions for CCA, Matter received design and photographic assignments from other clients, including *Vogue*, *Fortune*, and *Harper's Bazaar*. Matter's editorial design solutions deftly exploited photography, as shown in his cover for the October issue of *Fortune* (Fig. 17–40). In 1946 he began a twenty-year period as graphic-design and photography consultant to the Knoll Associates furniture design and manufacturing firm, and he produced some of his finest work for this design-oriented client. Advertisements for molded-plastic chairs by Eero Saarinen are remarkable in their dynamic composition (Fig. 17–41). Biomorphic shapes, while quite fashionable during the late 1940s and early 1950s in painting, furniture, and other design forms, became trapped in this time frame and are now associated with the sensibilities of the period. It is a tribute to Matter's strong grasp of design fundamentals that the advertising series he created for Saarinen furniture has maintained its vitality long after the forms of the era have become dated.

During the 1950s Matter turned toward more purely photographic solutions. His ability to convey concepts with images is shown in the folder (also used as advertisements on two consecutive right-hand magazine pages) unveiling a new line of molded-plastic pedestal furniture (Fig. 17–42). Matter's "Chimney Sweeper" proved to be the most enduring advertisement in the history of the company (Fig. 17–43).

At other times Matter developed almost purely typographic designs. In his catalogue cover for an Alexander Calder exhibition at the Guggenheim Museum in New York, the suspended letters of Calder's name are used to imply the mobile sculptures (Fig. 17–44).

With his powerful shapes and well-defined subjects, Joseph Binder remained a force on the American design scene until the 1960s. His ubiquitous military recruiting posters (Fig. 17–45) were among the last manifestations of pictorial modernism and became ingrained in the American consciousness during the 1950s. The geometric and symbolic shapes of pictorial modernism were converted into monolithic masses symbolizing military might and the technological accomplishments of a new era of sophisticated weaponry.

17–37. Alexey Brodovitch, cover for Portfolio, 1951. Screen tints produce the illusion that translucent rectangles of pink and blue-gray have been placed on the stencil logo slashing down the back cover.

17–38. Alexey Brodovitch, pages from Portfolio, 1951. A masterful scale shift occurs in the transition from the small, scattered cattle brands around the bull to the large cattle brands of the portfolio's first page.

17–39. Alexey Brodovitch, pages from Portfolio, 1951. Two pages from the Mummer's Parade fold out to reveal a dynamic cropping and juxtaposition of images.

17–40. Herbert Matter, cover for *Fortune*, October, 1943. Here photograms and geometric shapes are combined with photographs of ball bearings to construct a forceful image.

17–41. Herbert Matter, advertisement for Knoll Associates, 1948. Photographs of organic chair components combine with flat yellow "shadows" to generate the energy of a Calder mobile.

17–42. Herbert Matter, brochure covers introducing a Knoll chair, 1956. When the translucent cover page is turned, the strange wrapped object is revealed to be a chair.

Born to Italian and Swiss parents, George Giusti worked in both Italy and Switzerland before coming to New York City in 1938 and opening a design office. He possessed a unique ability to reduce forms and images to a simplified, minimal essence. His images become iconographic and symbolic. Giusti's freely drawn images included evidence of process in his work; an image painted in transparent dyes has areas of flooded and blotted color, and his three-dimensional illustrations often include the bolts or other fasteners

used to assemble the elements. Beginning in the 1940s and continuing well into the 1960s, Giusti received frequent commissions for his bold, iconographic images for advertising campaigns and for cover designs of *Holiday* (Fig. 17–46) and *Fortune* magazines.

Informational and scientific graphics

Sutnar came to New York as design director of the Czechoslovakian Pavilion at the New York World's Fair in 1939, the year Hitler seized his country. Sutnar remained in New York and became a vital force in the evolution of modern design in the United States. A close association with Sweet's Catalog Service enabled Sutnar to place an indelible mark on the design of industrial product information. A new trademark (Fig. 17–47) established the typographic character of Sweet's printed matter.

Since 1906 Sweet's had provided a compendium of architectural and industrial product information. Working closely with Sweet's research director, Knut Lönberg-Holm, Sutnar developed a system for structuring information in a logical and consistent manner. In two landmark books, *Catalog Design* and *Catalog Design Progress* (Fig. 17–48), they documented and explained their approach to a generation of designers, writers, and clients. Informational design was defined as a synthesis of function, flow, and form. *Function* is utilitarian need with a definite purpose: to make information easy to find, read, comprehend, and recall. *Flow* means the logical sequence of information. Sutnar felt the basic unit was not the page but the “visual unit,” that is, the double-page spread. He rejected traditional margins and used bleeds extensively. He used shape, line, and color as functional elements to direct the eye as it moved through the design seeking information. The format of *Catalog Design Progress* itself has a coding system (Fig. 17–49) of signs, numbers, and words, with a triangle at the bottom of title pages pointing the reader forward.

As Sutnar approached problems of form, static and uniform arrangements of catalog information gave way to dynamic information patterns and clear, rational organization. Each catalogue has a unifying graphic theme, and visual articulation of type—underlining, size and weight contrasts, spacing, color, and reversing—aided searching, scanning, and reading. A simple visualization language with emphasis on graphic charts, diagrams, and pictures clarified complex information and saved reading time. The upper-right corner is each visual unit's point of entrance and contains the identifying title (Fig. 17–50). Optical unity resulted from a systematic use of line, shape, color, and type. These elements were combined into *visual traffic signs* to assist the user in the search for information.

17–43. Herbert Matter, “Chimney Sweeper” advertisement for Eero Saarinen's womb chair, ca. 1955. This was Knoll's longest running advertisement, appearing in the *New Yorker* from 1958 until 1971.

17–44. Herbert Matter, catalogue cover for an Alexander Calder exhibit, 1964. The letters of Calder's name hang from the sky as pieces of sculpture.

17–45. Joseph Binder, recruiting poster for the U.S. Navy, c. 1954. Echoes of Cassandra's steamship posters remain, but the strength expressed is more powerful and forbidding.

17–46. George Giusti, cover for *Holiday*, 1960. Part cubism and part expressionism, this simplified image depicts the legend of Romulus, the founder of Rome, who was raised by a wolf with his twin Remus.

17–47. Ladislav Sutnar, trademark for Sweet's Catalog Service, 1942. Disarmingly simple, this mark has a beautifully harmonious figure-ground relationship.

17–48. Ladislav Sutnar, title page for *Catalog Design Progress*, 1950. Bars and rectangles containing type become compositional elements to be balanced in dynamic equilibrium.

17–49. Ladislav Sutnar, section divider page from *Catalog Design Progress*, 1950. Signs and shapes declare “part one, section two, topics four, five, and six: structural features.”

17–50. Ladislav Sutnar, page from *Catalog Design Progress*, 1950. These upper-right-hand corner designs are from five different catalogue systems.

17–51. Herbert Bayer, pages from the *World Geo-Graphic Atlas*, 1953. Planets are in scale with respect to each other and the sun; a photograph of a solar eruption and illustration of a solar eclipse appear on the right.

17–52. Herbert Bayer, page from the *World Geo-Graphic Atlas*, 1953. Color coding, symbols, cross sections, maps, and illustrations provide a visual inventory of earth resources.

17–53. Herbert Bayer, page from the *World Geo-Graphic Atlas*, 1953. Immediate visual comparisons about population and energy use can be made.

An important milestone in the visual presentation of data was the publication of the *World Geo-Graphic Atlas* by CCA in 1953. In an introduction, Paepcke spoke of a need for “a better understanding of other peoples and nations.” The designer and editor, Bayer, labored for five years on the project. Once again, Paepcke behaved unlike the conventional businessman, for CCA published a 368-page atlas filled with 120 full-page maps of the world supported by 1,200 diagrams, graphs, charts, symbols, and other graphic communications about the planet. This atlas was distributed to clients, suppliers, libraries, and museums. Bayer assembled information from multiple scientific disciplines, including geography, astronomy (Fig. 17–51), climatology, economics, and sociology, and presented it through symbols, charts, and diagrams. Detailed information about states and countries was presented (Fig. 17–52). Bayer and his assistants delivered each page to the printer as a single gouache painting with Futura type pasted onto an acetate overlay.

Bayer was ahead of his time in his effort to inventory earth resources and study the planet as a series of interlocking geophysical and life systems. Prophetically, the final section of the *World Geo-Graphic Atlas* discusses the conservation of resources, addressing population growth and resource depletion. Bayer used R. Buckminster Fuller’s Dymaxion Projection, a map that shows the globe in two dimensions without distortion, as a base for pictographs representing population and rectangles of black dots symbolizing energy consumption (Fig. 17–53). It demonstrated that North America had only 8 percent of the world’s population but consumed 73 percent of its energy.

Many of the immigrants who brought European design concepts to the United States arrived virtually penniless and with minimal possessions, but they were armed with talent, ideas, and a strong belief in design as a valuable human activity that could contribute to the improvement of human communication and the human condition. The American experience was greatly enriched by their presence.