CHAPTER 12

The Genesis of Twentieth Century Design
As the 19th century drew to a close and the 20th century began, designers across the disciplines of architecture, fashion, graphic, and product design searched for new ways to express themselves.

The design of the Art Nouveau focused on creating invented forms rather than relying on the historical models of the Victorian era.

But the 20th century brought about new inspiration involving rectilinear motifs and spatial organization. Artists like Frank Lloyd Wright, Charles Rennie and Margaret (Macdonald) Mackintosh, Josef Hoffmann, and Peter Behrens brought about tremendous change and are particularly important influences for today’s designers.
Frank Lloyd Wright

- Title page for *The House Beautiful*, 1896 - 97

- Underlying geometric structure imposes a strong order

- Intricate textural design
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DECORATIVE DESIGN

Margaret Macdonald

- Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh

- poster for the Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts, 1895
Margaret Macdonald

- 1896, reproduced in *Ver Sacrum* in 1901
- Depicts Wisdom protecting her children within the leaflike shelter of her hair before a symbolic tree of knowledge
- Linear structure based on Macdonald’s metalwork
Margaret Macdonald
Charles Rennie Mackintosh

- design theme of rising verticals and simple structural detail
Charles Rennie Mackintosh

- major contribution to design in interiors, furniture, patterned fabric and printed motifs
BOOK DESIGN

Jessie Marion King
Talwin Morris

- bindings for the Red Letter Shakespeare series, c. 1908
- standardized format
- subtle graphic lyricism
- economical commercial editions

http://www.fulltable.com/BG/tma.htm
**BOOK DESIGN**

**Talwin Morris**

- page ornament from the Red Letter Shakespeare series, c. 1908

- the name for this small, modestly priced set derives from its two-color printing with character names in red

- each volume had a graceful black ornament with a red oval
Talwin Morris

- pages from the Red Letter Shakespeare series, c. 1908
- Format included: rigorous linear structures and graceful ornamented capitals
POSTER DESIGN

Gustav Klimt

- poster for the first Vienna Secession exhibition, 1898
- large open space in the center is unprecedented in Western graphic design
**POSTER DESIGN**

**Koloman Moser**

- fifth Vienna Secession exhibition poster, 1899
- metallic gold bronze figure and olive green background are printed on yellow tone paper that forms the contour lines of the image
Koloman Moser

- cover design for *Ver Sacrum*, 1899
- stencil-effect technique
- reduction of the subject to black and white planes, gives the suggestion of high-contrast photography
Alfred Roller

- cover design for *Ver Sacrum*, initial issue, 1898
- illustration of a tree whose growth destroyed its pot, allowing it to take root in firmer soil, to symbolize the Secession
Alfred Roller

- cover design for *Ver Sacrum*, 1898
- stipple drawing of leaves becomes a frame for the lettering
- square gives the impression of a collage element
HEADPIECE DESIGN

Josef Hoffmann

- headpiece from the premiere issue of *Ver Sacrum*, 1898
- berries, drawn in the free contour line favored by many Secession artists
- plaque that proclaims “Association of Visual Artists of Austria. Secession.”
TEXT FRAME DESIGN

Joseph Olbrich

- frame for *Ver Sacrum* article title, 1899
- fluid repetition of forms and symmetry
- decorative botanical frame
- dense black color
- lively contrast to the typographic page
Josef Hoffmann (border) and Koloman Moser (initial)

- page from *Ver Sacrum*, 1898

- Hoffmann’s modular berry motif and Moser’s figurative initial combine to produce an elegant page
Alfred Roller

- design and illustration for *Ver Sacrum* calendar for November 1903
- exuberant border brackets a seasonal illustration
- hand-lettered, rectangular numbers and letters
Alfred Roller

- Roller’s lettering style in the early 1900s was the precursor to the popular style of the sixties.
**MONOGRAMS**

Various designers

- personal monograms, 1902
- monograms designed by Secession artists
- reproduced in a 1902 exhibition catalogue
Koloman Moser

- poster advertising Fromme’s calendar, 1899
- used by the client with color changes for fifteen years
- Moser’s design depicts a goddess of personal destiny holding a snake ring and hourglass, symbols for the eternal circle of life and the passing of time
Koloman Moser

- poster for the thirteenth Vienna Secession exhibition, 1902
- mathematical patterns of squares and rectangles contrast with the circular forms of the figures and letterforms
Walter Crane

- diagram from *Line and Form*, 1900
- widely read book foretold the evolution of form toward the geometric purity of the Vienna Secession and post-cubism avant-garde
Alfred Roller

- design for a pocket watch cover, 1900
- night and day are symbolized by two snails with Asian yin yang attributes (positive and negative principles in nature)
Alfred Roller

- poster for the fourteenth Vienna Secession exhibition, 1902
- dense geometric patterns animate the space
POSTER DESIGN

Berthold Löffler

- poster for a theater and cabaret, c. 1907
- masklike faces were simplified into elemental linear signs
TRADEMARKS

Vienna Workshops

- registered trademark and monogram applied to products of the Vienna Workshops

- harmony of proportion, lyrical geometry, and clarity of form characterize the design
ARCHITECTURE

Josef Hoffmann

- Austrian architect and designer of functional objects and consumer goods
POSTER DESIGN

Josef Hoffmann

- Wiener Werkstätte exhibition poster, 1905
- Repetitive blue geometric pattern was created by a hand-stencil technique after the lettering and two lower rectangles were printed by lithography
- This lettering was combined with other patterns for use in an advertisement and other posters
Josef Hoffmann

- bookplate design, 1903

- in a large series of figure studies, Hoffmann reduced the image to elongated contours and simple shapes signifying hair or hats
Josef Hoffmann

- functional furniture, flatware, glasses and fabric all maintain his trademark use of simple black and white elements on an elongated vertical or horizontal plane.
Peter Behrens

- German artist, designer, and architect was an early advocate of sans serif typography and use a grid system to organize elements in his layouts.

- He is considered to be the first industrial designer for his manufactured products such as streetlamps and tea kettles.
CATALOGUE DESIGN

Peter Behrens

- catalogue page for AEG teakettles, 1908
- variations of the modular system of interchangeable, shapes, handles, materials, and textures are shown
- spatial division by rules to create zones of information
Peter Behrens

- text pages for Celebration of Life and Art. A Consideration of the Theater as the Highest Symbol of a Culture, 1900

- blue-gray borders and red initials surrounded by rust-colored decorations frame the unprecedented sans-serif running text
Peter Behrens

- title and dedication pages for a 25-page booklet called a *Celebration of Life and Art*, 1900
- the layout explored formal geometric design motifs
BOOK DESIGN

Peter Behrens

- cover for *Dokumente des Modernen Kunstgewerbes* (Documents of Modern Applied Arts,) 1901

- decorative geometric design and sans-serif lettering based on a square, foreshadow the style of art deco design of the 1920s and 1930s
FONT DESIGN

Peter Behrens

- Akzidenz Grotesk (referred to as Standard in US) is designed by the Berthold Foundry.
- showed 10 variations of the same font
- designers and compositors could create unified contrast and emphasis in layouts with using only one font
J. L. M. Lauweriks

- these diagrams illustrate Dutch architect J. L. M. Lauweriks’s compositional theory elaborating grid systems from a square circumscribed around a circle.
ARCHITECTURE

Peter Behrens

- Anchor Linoleum exhibition pavilion, 1906

- classical forms and proportions are combined with mathematically derived geometric structure and pattern in a search for a twentieth-century language of form
POSTER DESIGN

Peter Behrens

- poster for the Anchor Linoleum exhibition pavilion, 1906
- Lauweriks’s grid theory is applied to graphic design
Peter Behrens

- guidebook covers for the AEG pavilion at the German Shipbuilding Exhibition, 1908
- translation drawing reduces the architectural structure to flat planes
- lettering became a basis for the AEG visual identification system as shown in their logo
Peter Behrens

- architecture was part of the AEG corporate design program that included designs for storefronts to the massive Turbine Hall
- became the prototype for future design evolution—other than the AEG logo and the name on the end of the roof, there is little ornament in detail
- structure and proportions suggest its function—an industrial factory for the assembly of steam turbines
Peter Behrens

- Behrens played a key role among designers who revolted against the Victorian historicism and art nouveau design, adopting a more spartan approach, void of any decoration.
Edward Johnston

- The London Underground symbol, revised by Edward Johnston in 1918

- Shown is the 1972 version which is still used today
KEY TERMS

The Studio
the first of nearly a dozen new 1890s European art periodicals, it had a strong influence on a group of young Scottish artists who became friends at the Glasgow School of Art.

The Glasgow School (The Four)
a collaboration of four students from the Glasgow School of Art: Charles Rennie Mackintosh, J. Herbert McNair, and Margaret and Frances Macdonald. These young collaborators developed a unique style of lyrical originality and symbolic complexity. They innovated a geometric style of composition by tempering floral and curvilinear elements with strong rectilinear structure. Their designs are distinguished by symbolic imagery and stylized form. Bold, simple lines define flat planes of color. Their influence on the Continent became important transitions to the aesthetic of the twentieth century.

Sezessionstil (The Vienna Secession)
formed by Gustav Klimt, Joseph Maria Olbrich, Josef Hoffman, and Koloman Moser. It came into being on April 3, 1897, when the younger members of the Künstlerhaus, the Viennese Creative Artists’ Association, resigned in a stormy protest. Technically, the refusal to allow foreign artists to participate in Künstlerhaus exhibitions was their main issue, but the clash between tradition and new ideas emanating from France, England, and Germany lay at the heart of the conflict. Theirs became a countermovement to the floral art nouveau that flourished in other parts of Europe. The group’s rapid evolution ran from the illustrative allegorical style of symbolist painting to a French-inspired floral style to the mature style, which drew inspiration from the Glasgow School. A major difference between this group and art nouveau is the artists’ love of clean, simple, sans-serif lettering, ranging from flat, blocky slabs to fluidly calligraphic forms. Their elegant Ver Sacrum (Sacred Spring) was more a design laboratory than a magazine.
KEY TERMS

Ver Sacrum (Sacred Spring)
Designed by the Vienna Secession and published from 1898 until 1903, this was more a design laboratory than a magazine. It focused on experimentation and graphic excellence and enabled designers to develop innovative graphics as they explored the merging of text, illustration, and ornament into a lively unity. The magazine had an unusual square format, and its covers often combined hand lettering with bold line drawing printed in color on a colored background.

Line and Form
A book by Walter Crane in which he diagrammed the evolution toward elemental geometric form and foretold the geometric purity of the Vienna Secession and postcubism -cubism avant-garde.

Wiener Werkstätte (Vienna Workshops)
An outgrowth of Sezessionstil, this spiritual continuum of William Morris’s workshops sought a close union of the fine and applied arts in the design of lamps, fabrics, and similar objects for everyday use, including books, greeting cards, and other printed matter. The goal was to offer an alternative to poorly designed, mass-produced articles and trite historicism. Function, honesty to materials, and harmonious proportions were important concerns; decoration was used only when it served these goals and did not violate them.

Celebration of Life and Art: A Consideration of the Theater as the Highest Symbol of a Culture
This booklet by Peter Behrens may represent the first use of sans-serif type as running book text. All-capital, sans-serif type is also used in an unprecedented way on the title and dedication pages.
KEY TERMS

Berthold Foundry
designed a family of ten sans-serif typeface that were variations on one original font. This Akzidenz Grotesk (called Standard in the United States) type family had a major influence on twentieth-century typography.

Akzidenz Grotesk
a typeface designed by the Berthold Foundry and called Standard in the United States. This typeface permitted compositors to achieve contrast and emphasis within one family of typefaces.

Behrensschrift
Peter Behrens’s first typeface, released by the Klingspor Foundry, was an attempt to reduce any poetic flourish marking the forms, thereby making them more universal.

Deutsche Werkbund
(German Association of Craftsmen) Founded in 1907 in Munich, this association was created to inspire high-quality design in manufactured goods and architecture, advocating a marriage of art with technology. It recognized the value of machines and advocated design as a way to give form and meaning to all machine-made things, including buildings. Soon after it formed, two factions emerged. One, headed by Hermann Muthesius, argued for the maximum use of mechanical manufacturing and standardization of design for industrial efficiency. This group believed form should be determined solely by function and wanted to eliminate all ornament. Muthesius saw simplicity and exactness as being both functional demands of machine manufacture and symbolic aspects of twentieth-century industrial efficiency and power. A union of artists and craftsmen with industry, he believed, could elevate the functional and aesthetic qualities of mass production, particularly in low-cost consumer products. The other faction, led by Henry van de Velde, argued for the primacy of individual artistic expression.
KEY FIGURES

Frank Lloyd Wright
Charles Rennie Mackintosh
Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh
Talwin Morris
Gustav Klimt
Josef Hoffmann
Alfred Roller
Peter Behrens
Edward Johnston