CHAPTER 18

The International Typographic Style
In this chapter:

- Introduction, 356
- Pioneers of the movement, 356
- Functional graphics for science, 359
- New Swiss sans-serif typefaces, 361
- A master of classical typography, 361
- Design in Basel and Zurich, 363
- The international typographic style in America, 370
International typographic style

- begun in the 1950s in Switzerland and Germany
- style included a unity of design achieved by asymmetrical organization on a mathematically constructed grid.
- sans serif typography expressed the spirit of a more progressive age
- personal expression were rejected for a more universal and scientific approach to design problem solving
- clarity and order was ideal
- Ernst Keller, Théo Ballmer, and Max Bill were the pioneers of the movement
- roots of this style found in the curriculum of the School of Design in Basel, Switzerland
Ernst Keller

- poster for the Rietburg Museum, undated
- demonstrates symbolic imagery and simple geometric forms with vibrant contrasting colors
Théo Ballmer

- applied De Stijl principles to graphic design
- used an organized grid to construct visual forms
- poster for an office professions exhibit, 1928
- poster for a traveling exhibition of industrial standards
- uses strict symmetrical grid
- exhibition poster, 1929
Max Bill

- studied at the Bauhaus from 1927-1929
- exhibition poster, 1945
- diamond-shaped photographs are placed within a strict grid system
- “It is possible to develop art largely on the basis of mathematical thinking.”
Anthony Froshaug

- English typographer and professor of graphic design in Ulm, Germany
- cover for the Quarterly Bulletin of the Hochschule für Gestaltung, Ulm, 1958
- four-column grid system, uses one font and only two type sizes
Anton Stankowski

- German designer
- use of visual forms to communicate invisible processes and physical forces was his major contribution to graphic design
- designed a trademark for the city of Berlin that used a thin horizontal line with a short vertical one to the right of the word Berlin to represent the divided city
Adrian Frutiger

- designed Univers, a 21 font family of sans serif typography
- all 21 have the same x-height (the height of the body of lower case letters) and identical ascenders and descenders which created greater harmony
Hermann Zapf

- German calligrapher and typeface designer
- Designed Palatino, a widely used serif typeface
- Zapf Chancery, a script face
- Optima, a thick/thin sans serif face
- and Zapfino, an elegant but overused script
Edouard Hoffman and Max Miedinger

- together designed a sans serif typeface with a larger x-height and even positive and negative shapes
- became the most widely used typeface during the 1960s and 70s
- renamed Helvetica, the latin name for Swiss.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhKKIXDypxk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yhKKIXDypxk)
• The font Arial was introduced in 1982 by Robin Nicholas and Patricia Saunders for Monotype and is often confused with Helvetica.

• http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1Z8knDPlu4&feature=related
LOGO

Armin Hofmann

- logotype for the Base Civic Theater, 1954
- hand-lettered logotype joins the letters into forms that create visual unity and rhythm.
SCULPTURE

Armin Hofmann

- exterior sculpture for the Disentis, Switzerland, high school, 1975

- altered direction of the boards of the molds used to cast the concrete relief produces a vigorous textural contrast
Armin Hofmann

- poster for the Basel theater production of Giselle, 1959
- organic, kinetic, and soft photographic image contrasts intensely with geometric, static, and hard-edged typographic shapes
Armin Hofmann

- trademark for the Swiss National Exhibition, Expo 1964
- E for Exhibition links with the Swiss cross. The open bottom permits the white space of the page to flow into the symbol
Armin Hofmann

- poster for Herman Miller furniture, 1962
- shapes and silhouettes of Herman Miller chairs cascade through space, anchored to the format and the type by the red logo at the top center
POSTER

Josef Müller Brockmann

- public awareness poster, 1960
- red type declares “less noise,” while the photograph graphically depicts the discomfort noise causes
Josef Müller Brockmann

- “Der Film” exhibition poster, 1960
- against a black field, the words demonstrate a universal design harmony
Josef Müller Brockmann

- typographic style using succinct and efficient presentation of information
- often used extreme scale with poster imagery
Rudolph de Harak

- American graphic designer opened his design studio in New York City in 1952
- Like the Swiss designers, he communicated clarity and visual order in his work.
Jacqueline Casey

- worked as a graphic designer for Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- created over 90 posters and record covers between 1963 and 1990
KEY FIGURES

- Ernst Keller
- Théo Ballmer
- Max Bill
- Anthony Froshaug
- Anton Stankowski
- Adrian Frutiger
- Edouard Hoffman and Max Miedinger
- Hermann Zapf
- Armin Hofmann
- Carlo L. Vivarelli
- Josef Müller-Brockmann
- Rudolph de Harak
- Jacqueline S. Casey
KEY TERMS

International Typographic Style
a design movement that emerged from Switzerland and Germany and has also been called Swiss design. The visual characteristics of this style include a unity of design achieved by asymmetrical organization of the design elements on a mathematically constructed grid; objective photography and copy that present visual and verbal information in a clear and factual manner, free from the exaggerated claims of propaganda and commercial advertising; and the use of sans-serif typography set in a flush-left and ragged-right margin configuration.

Art concret
a manifesto formulated by Max Bill calling for a universal art of absolute clarity based on controlled arithmetical construction. Paintings in this style were constructed entirely from pure, mathematically exact visual elements—planes and colors. Because these elements have no external meanings, the results are purely abstract.

Semiotics
the philosophical theory of signs and symbols.

Semantics
a branch of semiotics that focuses on the study of the meaning of signs and symbols.

Syntactics
a branch of semiotics that focuses on the study of how signs and symbols are connected and ordered into a structural whole.
KEY TERMS

Pragmatics
a branch of semiotics that focuses on the study of the relation of signs and symbols to their users.

Tectonic element
an underlying element relating to architecture found in Anton Stankowski’s design program for the city of Berlin.

Univers typeface
a visually programmed family of twenty-one sans-serif fonts designed by Adrian Frutiger in 1954. The palette of typographic variations—limited to regular, italic, and bold in traditional typography—was expanded sevenfold. Numbers replaced conventional nomenclature. Because all twenty-one fonts have the same x-height and ascender and descender lengths, they form a uniform whole that can be used together with complete harmony.

Helvetica typeface
this new sans serif, with an even larger x-height than that of Univers, was released as Neue Haas Grotesk by Edouard Hoffman and Max Miedinger. When this design was produced in Germany by the now defunct D. Stempel AG in 1961, the face was renamed with the traditional Latin name for Switzerland.

Manuale Typographicum
These two volumes, published in 1954 and 1968 by Herman Zapf, are outstanding contributions to the art of the book. Encompassing eighteen languages and more than a hundred typefaces, they consist of quotations about the art of typography, with a full-page typographic interpretation for each quotation.

Golden mean
a three-to-five ratio considered the most beautifully proportioned rectangle by the ancient Greeks.