Elevating the craft of building
ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Whether you are a small print publication, a like-minded nonprofit, or an organization just interested in learning how we can best support you—ARCADE is actively pursuing organizational partners for events, publication support, and advertising partnerships!

Please contact us at info@arcadenw.org or reach out to one of our board members. You can find a full list on our sponsors page!

OPPORTUNITIES

ARCADE wants to support emerging writers and designers through mentorship programming based on our long tradition of engaging unique feature editors and new designers for each issue.

ARCADE is restructuring this practice to offer more hands-on support in the publication process, editorial, issue conceptualization, and publication design, to provide space for more emerging writers and designers.

ARCADE values the work of arts, architecture, and design writers and creative makers and shares this by compensating participants and connecting each applicant with an established and experienced mentor.

If you love design and are interested in publication processes, please reach out to our design and editorial staff for information, editor@arcadenw.org and let us support you!

APPLICANTS TO OUR DESIGN AND EDITORIAL MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

ARCADE'S MISSION

ARCADE’s mission is to host an inclusive and insightful dialogue on the designed environment. We do this through our print and digital publications and our community programming. ARCADE’s vision is to expand the idea that design at every scale of human endeavor impacts our quality of life.
As we take part in the Seattle Design Festival, let's celebrate the opportunity to “Be the Exception” in ways that continue to make our built environment—and our design dialogue—a better place.

We hope you enjoy it.

Ruth Baleiko, on behalf of the ARCADE Board.

This issue of ARCADE represents a wonderful collaboration with Seattle Design Nerds in time for the Seattle Design Festival. As an all-volunteer non-profit organization dedicated to design in the public realm, their focus on making exciting things for the public that can be experienced in unexpected locations & ways—along with ARCADE’s focus on writing and dialogue on design is a complementary pairing; bringing together the strengths of both groups.

This issue, Exception, focuses on people, experiences, and artifacts that were Exceptions in their time. By examining these talented designers and their experiences we are acknowledging the journey we are on in toward increasing diversity, equity and inclusion within our built environment. This issue also gives an intentional moment to recognize the ways in which our professions have in the past been exclusionary.

When having some initial meetings about this latest issue of ARCADE, the theme of “Exception” came quickly to the fore. Lately, we have shifted our focus to singular themes for the whole issue (as with “Refraction” for 39.1) rather than columns and a themed feature. We like the breadth this allows.

This issue’s theme of “Exception” combines singularity and ambiguity in its layers of phonetic and conceptual interpretations. Exceptions to the rule; exceptional things off the beaten path; that which has been left to the side— or looking sideways to find something new. Those whose work didn’t get the attention it deserved in its time, the ways our normality is shifted by events where exception becomes a new norm, ways of doing things that don’t conform to the “standard” approach but manage to find ways to express themselves transcendentally.

As ARCADE moves through its 40th year, we want to highlight gaps in design’s established history and canon by bending, breaking, and challenging rules and narratives about what design is and can be, and which designers contributed to its evolution. “Exception” brings forward excerpts from the unseen and amplifies intuitive solutions outside of the accepted norms of what design accomplishes.

We hope you enjoy it.

Sean Wolcott
Early in the pandemic, we saw a brief, rapid cheering of the air. We also learned firsthand what bearable is, when and for whom face-to-face interaction mattered. Young schoolchildren struggled, but older kids and desk workers, including architects, likely preferred some form of in-person presence and the resilience they appear to be the one workplace when many people go in to the office. Tuesday or Thursday is the popular choice for a second in-office workday. This is hybrid work, which predates the pandemic.

People want to interact with others, but on their own terms. Phones that usa high in remote locations, like streaming and food delivery, are wobbling, eclipsed by a pent-up demand for real spaces, live performances, and indoor dining. Is the office workplace worth the commuting? Are the eye-easing courtyards of metropolitan life worth paying? Many, including architects, openly question the work and living options on offer. Their expectations are high and their post-pandemic patience is wearing thin.

The push to unionize architecture firms, still mostly unfulfilled, is alive among younger architects who resist the late-capitalist “normal” their firms are pitching. Firm leaders, who often did well from it, are loyal to the idea that the marketplace will deliver employee diversity and socio-economic equality. Their younger employees are doubtful. They see the marketplace delivering private goods, not the public services, the Green New Deal suggests, a new context to which we can add the vernacular richness—the demotic layer that’s been missing in too much recent city-making—a city needs a creative symbiosis that led to parklets and homeless. We gained a renewed appreciation for the urbanity that results from myriad small, place-specific acts. “To quote Bucky Fuller, we relearned how to think globally and act locally.” Things like beauty and resilience come along when a city-dweller’s connection to it starts at her front door.

We’re all citizens of a cosmos whose warning lights are flashing. We’re all local and ideally active for the kinds of basic socio-political changes the Green New Deal suggests, a new context to which we can add the vernacular richness—the demotic layer that’s been missing in too much recent city-making—a city needs a creative symbiosis that led to parklets and homeless. We gained a renewed appreciation for the urbanity that results from myriad small, place-specific acts. “To quote Bucky Fuller, we relearned how to think globally and act locally.” Things like beauty and resilience come along when a city-dweller’s connection to it starts at her front door.

The very real shortages in below-market housing can only be solved if the public sector steps up its funding, with a tax regime to match. Without it, we’re left with the market’s off-shelf “products” reflecting inflated land prices, glacial entitlements, and local governments only too willing to see homelessness as a temporary problem. We’re all local and ideally active for the kinds of basic socio-political changes the Green New Deal suggests, a new context to which we can add the vernacular richness—the demotic layer that’s been missing in too much recent city-making—a city needs a creative symbiosis that led to parklets and homeless. We gained a renewed appreciation for the urbanity that results from myriad small, place-specific acts. “To quote Bucky Fuller, we relearned how to think globally and act locally.” Things like beauty and resilience come along when a city-dweller’s connection to it starts at her front door.
In early 1966, the New York gallerist Leo Castelli was preparing a show of new work by the not-yet-world-famous minimalist sculptor Donald Judd. A small ad for the show ran in Art Forum magazine’s February issue. There were no illustrations or photography to give a sense of Judd’s style or entice potential buyers. Instead, in small black letters, the name of the artist and bare details of the show were arranged into a strict square shape tucked into the lower-left corner of a larger white square shape. The strength and precision of the sans-serif lettering was meant to communicate everything you were supposed to understand about Judd and his work: expect the uncompromising, it seemed to say, expect the unadorned and the new. Also, more to the point, expect square shapes. It is a perfect communication of Judd’s ethos, and yet it’s just a black & white typographic ad.

This kind of art advertising wasn’t a revolutionary choice for Castelli’s part. Flipping through mid-century issues of important art magazines like Artforum, Art News, or Art International reveals that it was an entirely standard practice for galleries to announce new shows with very simple ads in nothing but black & white lettering. The clean open-layouts lending the gravitas of a black marble gravestone to a simple ad, while imparting instant authority to the artist. Other examples are full of frisson & energy, and, with incredible economy, announce a spirit of contemporary relevance that still resonates today. The ads are often just one or two words, but still tell a story, hinting at something more, offering a viscerally satisfying contrast that told you at once “I’m something special.”

And what a decade! My favorite of these ads range from the 1950s to the 1970s. These were the years of fresh, new work from the Abstract Expressionists to the Pop, the Minimalists to the Conceptualists. It was an era of extending art objects into new, surprising territories beyond the walls of pristine gallery spaces. The risks taken by contemporary art gallerists were often more from idealism than Wall Street-style speculation. As for the ads themselves, they were crafted with care and the age of Linotype and hand-driven lettering. Even the serious constraints in these ads have the personality of a thoughtful designer in them. Computers were still room-filling machines owned solely by IBM or the Defense Department. But production of these ads were purely analog, and its now to picture them being made by hand, carefully, on wood type desks under the warmth of electrically heated lamps, to the sounds of gently static-y music coming through a transistor radio, as they were. The ads were often drawn alongside competing ads, and a simple square, sitting amongst so many competing ads, but the strategy was always to stand out from the crowd. These ads, month after month, year after year, for decades.

Frank Stella
New Edition
Eccentric Polygons
Sept 21-Oct 5
Castelli Graphics
4E77 New York

Ruda
Paula Cooper
Sept 9 to Oct 8
155 Wooster Street New York

Fischbach
29 W 57 NY
Fischbach
29 W 57 NY
Fischbach
29 W 57 NY

Galerie
Richard Foncke
27 Rue de la Verrerie
75004 Paris
Jean Gorin
Paintings
Reliefs
Silkscreens

*Galerie Denise René
124 Rue La Boetie
196 Bd. St Germain
Paris

*Galerie Denise René
Hans Mayer
Grabbeplatz 2
Dusseldorf

*Galerie Denise René
6 West 57
New York

*Exhibition: February

DON JUDD

LEO CASTELLI NEW YORK

DON JUDD

HISHELMAN GALLERY ST. LOUIS

DON JUDD

Producing fine books on art, architecture, and more for over 40 years.

LUCIA MARQUAND

KIEHNOLZ
WATER COLORS

EUGENIA BUTLER 615 N. LA CIENEGA LOS ANGELES
The immoral omission in the history of Graphic Design
By Pierre Bowins

My research has put me on the path of exploring the missing Black American designers in the field of graphic design. My purpose is to bring to the forefront those persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa who contributed to design, with little to no recognition, in the 20th century. I believe that as we are meant to discover these designers’ having origins in any of the origins of the peoples of Europe who have significantly impacted the design profession.

Throughout my research, I have found some design work of Black American designers reminiscent of some well-known Euro-American designers. These designers’ works are from the three decades, 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. When comparing the work of two designers (one Black American designer and one Euro-American designer), I have found that similarities are glaring. My research tasks the questions: “Why are the works of these Black American designers not represented, overlooked, or highlighted in design history books or classrooms?” “Why, indeed, have only the works of the Euro-American designers with similar styles been described, overlooked, or highlighted in what books or classes?”

I first considered two early poster designs from the 1920s by French designer Paul Colin. Colin started his career in 1925 and was one of the foremost graphic artists of the period. He was best known for his poster designs featuring Josephine Baker from the French jazz issues, “Le Revue Negre.” Colin designed about 2000 posters during his career. I compared the posters with two cover designs from the same era, one from the magazine Opportunity, and a cover from the magazine New Masses. Both designers’ works juxtaposed overlapping geometric objects and showed elements of Cubist and Art Deco influences.

Jumping forward 40 years to the 1960s, I compared four popular logo designs. Each logo was very simplified in style and form, allowing the design to get the point across without too much thought. The UPS logo portrayed a package wrapped up neatly with a bow, and the stylized “R” of Wrigley gum were examples of this approach. Both logos were designed by Paul Rand, one of the most famous and recognized American designers of the 20th Century who is best known for his simple logo style with a focus on need and function. His design philosophies are still taught in design classrooms. I compared his logo designs to the Motorola “Batwing logo,” a double peak arching into an abstracted “M” symbolizing progressive sound waves and the Peace and Love movement of the period. Both logos were designed by Thomas Miller. Miller, one of the least recognized designers of the 20th Century, which shows, in my opinion, a clear emphasis on discrimination as a catalyst that led to the omission of his work and others’ in design history books.

Modernist reworking and logos both used sans-serif fonts that lent an air of efficiency to their typographic messages with clean, no-nonsense shapes. Anyone who has taken a design history course would know Masaccio and Lella Vignelli, who designed housewares and memorable logos. Their New York City Subway System maps and goal was to help people navigate without difficulty—designing on modernist fonts and the use of geometric forms.

If you’ve been to the Central Park Zoo in New York or the campus of Columbia University, then you’ve benefited from the design systems of Sylvia Harris. Throughout her vibrant career, she redecorated herself to removing barriers with her public information systems based on modernist and geometric forms. She considered herself a Citizen Designer and upheld the belief that everyday people need good design.

Of these six designers, three are of European or Euro-American descent, while the other three are of Black American descent. The first three are all mentioned in the three leading design history books used in today’s classrooms; while the latter three are not. In those three books, only one Black American is mentioned: Meggie History of Graphic Design cities Georg Olden, who Maggie refers to as “the first prominent African American designer.” Although he began his career in the 1940s, Olden wasn’t mentioned until Maggie’s books third edition (1998).

I challenge the idea that Olden was the “first.” There were clearly other prominent designers before him, like Aaron Douglas. Although he wasn’t the “first,” Olden was definitely a prominent designer and the pioneer of broadcast graphics.

My research opened my eyes to the impact of some exceptional Black American designers who are far too well known to those who should be. It gave me a sense of the challenges that today’s Black designers face. My goal is to draw attention to these Black American designers, who have been the victims of the sin of omission in design history, and give them their rightful place in graphic design history as conveyed in design history books.

Gail Anderson
Designer Gail Anderson is, in my words, a “type choreographer” because she makes the type move on a page. She is well known for her ability to design and create typefaces using a variety of unique mediums in her work. Her passion and eye for design began when she crafted title magazines on the Parisian Playbill and Jacksons’ by collaging together images from other magazines. While studying at the School of Visual Arts in New York, she had a piece of her work published in the New York Times as an advertisement for Lincoln Center. After college in 1964, Anderson worked briefly at Vintage Books before landing a job at The Boston Globe. She worked on the Boston Globe Sunday Magazine under art director Ronn Campbell, a proponent of eclectic typography who pioneered the new newspaper design of the late 50s. Anderson was definitely a prominent designer and the pioneer of broadcast graphics. Moving on to Rolling Stone in 1978, Anderson worked with Paul Waddell. Together, they expanded how and exciting materials to create that magazine’s eclectic designs.

By Pierre Bowins

“Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.”
James Baldwin
Sylvia Harris
Designer Sylvia Harris was noted for her unwavering desire to see her research and skills help others. Growing up in the 1960s, her experience of desegregation provided the foundation for her interest in social systems and their effects. After receiving her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University, she moved to Boston. Through her connections with VASB, she found positions at the Boston Globe and the New England Sunday Press. Harris was encouraged to enroll in Yaddo’s Master in Graphic Design program. After graduating from Yaddo in 1980, Harris and two classmates co-founded Two Twelve Associates. It was then that she began to explore how to design public information systems. In 1994, Harris left Two Twelve Associates to found Sylvia Harris, LLC, focusing more on design planning and strategies.

In her role as creative director for the US Census Bureau’s Census 2000, her rebranding efforts helped to encourage the participation of the underrepresented. As a faculty member of Yale, the School of Visual Arts, Cooper Union, and Purchase College.

Charles Dawson
Charles Dawson was a prominent Chicago designer and artist in the 1920s and 1930s, best known for his illustrative advertisements. He attended the Tuskegee Institute for two years before leaving for New York and becoming the first Black American admitted to the Art Students League. Sadly, he fell complacent to the ease of the better race he experienced in the South. Later, Dawson achieved his dream of being accepted into the Art Students League. Americans. His work was severely limited by the racism prevalent during that time. Eventually, Dawson left Two Twelve Associates to found Sylvia Harris, Associates. It was then that he began to explore how to design public information systems. In 1994, Harris left Two Twelve Associates to found Sylvia Harris, LLC, focusing more on design planning and strategies.

Aaron Douglas
Designer Aaron Douglas was one of the most influential artists of the Harlem Renaissance. He played a key role in developing a unique African style of art by blending Art Deco and Art Nouveau with connections to African motifs and themes. Douglas’ illustrations provided African American artists with new directions in the Harlem Renaissance. He played a significant role in the evolution of African American art from a cultural to a commercial level.

Louise E. Jefferson
Designer Louise E. Jefferson learned her craft from her father, a calligrapher for the U.S. Treasury. During her high school graduation, she became an active member of the artist community. In 1935, she joined Augusta Savage, Aaron Douglas, Selma Burke, Gwendolyn Bennett, and Jacob Lawrence as a founding member of the Harlem Renaissance. Throughout her career, she designed book jackets and maps. Jefferson continued to freelance throughout her career, designing pieces for Opportunity and The Negro In Art Week.

LeRoy Winbush
Designer LeRoy Winbush left Detroit for Chicago in 1936, following his high school graduation. To become a graphic designer, inspired by the South Side’s sign designers, he worked as an apprentice for the Regal Theater’s sign shop, which hired him in 1936. Soon after, his design talent landed him a job at the Chicago American to head the Chicago Bureau of the Great Depression. He was a key figure in the development of the graphic design profession among Black American artists.

Emory Douglas
Designer Emory Douglas had an unconventional childhood, but his life changed after moving to San Francisco in 1953, where he was raised. He first became involved in graphic design and typography at various Chicago universities. At 17, he was hired by Chicago Engravers. He then began working for companies such as Warner, which produced some of the best illustrations of that time. Douglas’ full-page images, paired with compelling text, enjoyed so much he decided to take up scuba diving. Winbush combined his love for design and to create iconic exhibits for Disney’s Epcot Center and Hong Kong’s Ocean Park Museum. He also designed exhibitions on the Underground Railroad. Winbush ended his career as an associate professor and design consultant at Chicago’s DuSable Museum.
Art Sims

Designer Art Sims’ career started with the “Draw My” logo featured in magazines and in TV Guides in the 1950s. He attended Detroit’s Cass Technical High School, known for its dedication to the arts. From there, he went to the University of Michigan. In the summer between his junior and senior years, he created a job with Columbus Records in New York to design a series of album covers. Wanting to do something different, he moved to Los Angeles, where he scored a job with EMF. He was ultimately let go by EMF for doing freelance work, then worked for CBS Telewision where he was uprooted about his freelance work, but CBS kept him so busy he didn’t have time for outside work. In time, he left CBS to set up his own firm, 124 Advertising Design. After seeing one of Spike Lee’s films, Sims felt compelled to work with the director. He designed posters for Lee’s films Just Lost City, Do the Right Thing, Malcolm X, and Mo’ Better Blues. He is particularly proud of its depiction of racial stereotypes. Sims is now exploring the social media arena with a new networking site for Black Americans. Always an entrepreneur, he has also developed a greeting card line and writes screenplays while teaching graphic design at a predominantly Black middle school.

Dorothy E. Hayes

Dorothy E. Hayes is a creative thinker and educator. Committed to being a graphic designer while attending high school in Alabama, she went on to study at Alabama State College. Her determination and conviction to study Graphic Design took her to New York City, where she attended Pratt Institute. New York Institute of Advertising and Cooper Union School of Art receiving a degree in 1957.

Working respect as a Graphic Designer, the odds were stacked against her as a woman and even more so as a Black woman. While attending school in New York City, she quickly became disheartened by the lack of encouragement from fellow Black artists. Hayes won a trip to the November/December 1958 issue of PRINT Magazine Article, Black Experience in Graphic Design, as saying “I don’t think I have ever experienced more discouragement and suppression of Black artists. In art, instructions from the Black Studio of Morton Goldblatt Associates, are to work in black and a tremendous threat to the instructor, when the student is trying to do is develop talent.” Although she attempted to make connections professionally, at a glance there seemed to be no Blacks in the design field. Even more discouraging, after landing her first job, she finally came across black professionals and asked for guidance, but no one was willing to provide input.

While working for a well-known broadcasting company, she found her skill was as a map cartographer. In what she thought was a creative position, she was never given creative work. Later she was told her employment was simply a form of tokenism: “Not understood by the experience, Hayes went on to work for various firms as a layout and mechanical artist, on an art director and an art production supervisor, and an art director. Subsequently, Hayes opened her own firm, Dorothy’s Door, a commercial art and design company in New York City providing work for clients such as CBS Radio and AT&T. She also taught at the New York City College of Technology, where she is now a full-time Black professor in their design program.

Always motivated to set an example and be a mentor to the future of Black design, he also starts a movement to Black accomplishments in a white-dominated industry, she was invited to assemble the exhibition, Black Artists in Graphic Design, together with co-chairs June Hopkins, a Black designer with Harper & Row. This was the first-ever exhibition to feature Black Americans about communications. The exhibition featuredactivo works and thought leaders, including the heads of Dorothy Akutuio, Godwin Dih Jr., Jawanza Brooks and Ruth Porot, and Dave Division. The exhibition opened on January 6, 1970 at Gallery 203 in New York City, and in April of the same year, it began touring to universities, art museums, and galleries around the United States and Canada. In January 1971, the Japanese magazine, IDEA, chronicled the exhibit and affirmed the history of Black graphic design which had never been done before including visuals and biographies of the designers.

Spike Lee’s “Do the Right Thing”, Poster Design, 1989

Top: SORG Architects, Brand Identity, 2009
Bottom: Stealth, Poster Design, 2007

Type Talks, Cover Design, 1955

Motorola Logo, Brand Identity 1955

Fashion

Ann Lowe

A noted fashion designer, Ann Lowe was taught to sew by her mother and grandmother, who sewed for the leading families of that era in Montgomery, Alabama. As a child, her favorite activity was to sew fabric flowers. Her mother passed away when Lowe was 16, leaving her with four unfinished ballroom dresses. Through this work, she found her asset for dress-making. Her talent garnered her a position as an apprentice for a white Baltimore designer. The following year, she was accepted into New York City’s FIT, Taylor Design School, a unique opportunity since she had not graduated from high school. Although she was segregated from her classmates while attending St. Taylor, her projects were used as examples because of her skill, quality and attention to detail. After graduating in 1952, she returned to Tampa and opened the Ann-Cohen Dress Salon at age 21. There she designed dresses for rich upper-class white women. Lowe returned to New York in 1929 to work on commissions for stores such as Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue. Although not credited for her work, she designed Oliva de Fraylans dress for the 1946 Academy Awards. Lowe attended Paris Fashion Week in 1947 where she was introduced to Christian Dior. On her return, she got a job at Saks Fifth Avenue and was one of its most sought-after designers. Later, she opened The American House of Ann Lowe, making her the first African American woman to open a boutique in New York City. In 1952, she designed her most famous dress, Jacqueline Bouvier’s wedding gown for her marriage to Senator John F. Kennedy. Lowe retired with her sister, living on Manhattan Avenue in Harlem.

Charles Harrison

Industrial designer Charles Harrison, whose father was a teacher of industrial arts, was inspired by his mother to observe the beauty of nature and its natural forms. After graduating from high school, he moved to California with his older brother to attend City College of San Francisco. In 1942, he received a scholarship in the Art Institute of Chicago, receiving his Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1945. He was drafted into the Army and deployed to West Germany, where he was the only Black American draftsman in the cartographic unit. He returned home early after being accepted into a new masters-level industrial design program at the Art Institute of Chicago. Designer Henry Glass, a Holocaust survivor who understood discrimination, mentored Harrison and employed him at Henry P. Glass Associates.

In 1958, Harrison joined Robert Pedalt Designs, where he redesigned the International Thermo-Electric Corporation’s“Do the Right Thing” poster as well as hat boxes and stockings. In 1970, he joined Gestetner, where his unsung policy of hiring Black Americans and gave Harrison a full-time position in his design department. During his 32 years at Sears, Harrison became the first Black American executive and led a design team which designed more than 750 products before retiring. Harrison’s favorite design was the first ever polypropylene garbage can with a snap-lock lid, designed in 1952. Since retiring, Harrison has taught industrial design and served as a senior advisor for the Organization of Black Designers.
Traditional musical notation— with its ubiquitous five-line staff, various clefs, note shapes, and expressive markings— has nearly always had a singular goal in music making: to allow the reader to replicate a specific set of sounds with great precision and detail. The reader can be told what pitch to play, for how long, how loud or soft, how the note should develop over time, and how the note should be begun. But what if the desired outcome of the music is meant to include more variables? What if the performer’s instincts and creativity are meant to become a part of the process? The answer to that question has been often found through alternate forms of notation.

While musical notation, in some form or another, has existed for thousands of years across many cultures, “alternate notation” merely refers to anything outside the Western framework of the five-line staff system that has been used for the better part of the last 300 years— generally referred to as modern music notation. As symbols and shapes have been codified and well-documented over the history of music, and as the sounds and styles of music evolved over time, the limits of traditional notation sometimes became apparent as the world entered the 20th century.
How does one notate the subtle spin of Louis Armstrong’s trumpet sound on a long note during “West End Blues”? How does one notate the feeling of swing, which doesn’t fit into the finely-tuned mathematical machine of modern music notation? Certainly, something else would be needed to notate these new musical sounds, and with all that jazz and blues would bring (and the many styles of music to follow), a whole new “extended” series of notational devices were invented – the shake, the fall, the doit, plunger mute markings, and more.

Meanwhile, the classical world was leaning towards new sounds with terms like “polytonal” and “atonal” and “pantonal” at the forefront of music criticism and analysis in the early 20th century. But as these sounds were explored experimentally, with varying degrees of success, another path began to emerge – one where the notation was deliberately abstract in some way, whether that left the outcome to chance, or the performer, or the audience, or some other agent whose input was different for each composer using these techniques.

The terms “alternate notation” and “experimental music” have always seemed to go hand-in-hand, whether one is discussing composer and music theorist John Cage or saxophonist and professor Anthony Braxton, two different in the works of both these forms. Their scores immediately come to mind if I close my eyes and think about these terms. But the detailed scribblings and shapes of John Cage or the simple shape and color designs of Braxton, they both share and exemplify a move towards greater freedom, more improvisation, less specificity, and ultimately, a gateway to new sounds and approaches to music making.

As a young music student, I was truly thankful to be exposed to a genuine wealth of experimental music by some of its most significant modern practitioners. Stuart Dempster, Pauline Oliveros, William O. Smith, Richard Karpen – all of them are well-acknowledged titans in the field of experimental music. When I was at the University of Washington in the early 1990s, their music and presence were the air. They influenced many of us who had the pleasure to take a class, study with, or be around them. It was through them that I first encountered alternate forms of music notation, how to interpret it, and how it was conceived.

Stuart Dempster commissioned, performed, and premiered some of the most significant works for trombone of the last 100 years, most of which used alternate musical notation. John Cage’s “Solo for Sliding Trombone,” Luciano Berio’s “Sequenza V,” and Robert Erickson’s “General Speech” – which features the trombonist in military dress performing a speech by General MacArthur through the trombone in diaphonous-like effect – are just a few of the pieces direct the performer towards extended techniques that can create sounds that are less traditional: in one case, the trombone’s bell is played alone, and in another, a plunger mute is used with great specificity.

But it is Dempster’s work with composer Pauline Oliveros that represents what most people think of when they hear the term “alternate notation.” That is, the concept of the graphical or visual score – where the music is dictated more often than not, without the use of anything similar to modern music notation. Sometimes it takes the form of shapes or diagrams, as in Oliveros’ composition “Rose Moon,” the score for which might seem most at home in an astronomy textbook, with its central circle split into four slices and orbiting compass points. But with little more than the musical directions on the page itself, much is left up to the performers.
Richard Karpen at the University of Washington’s Digital Music Lab once presented an experiment for public viewing where a simplified musical staff was used and all the notes and their varying qualities were expressed in rectangles of different colors, where color equaled pitch, brightness equaled volume, and shape and size equaled duration. But the most fascinating part was a line that scrolled through the music, much as one’s eye would while reading music, that could both speed up and slow down at the composer’s discretion— and also go backwards! I’d never seen anyone read music backwards, and definitely not using an alternative form of music notation, but with Richard Karpen controlling the speed of the “performance pointer” and then adjusting following along, the piece could be performed dozens of times with different results, each seeming to be exactly what was intended.

One such experimental notation needed no interpretation; it contained no musical notation of any kind, or anything prepared for that matter. The rehearsal took place in an open dance studio, and perched in the middle was a pile of magazines. Legendary composer and improviser William O. Smith directed each of us to find one page with a single picture. Once we had taped the pages on the walls, about 20 feet apart, and then we were instructed to improvise with those pages as if the music was written on the page. All the music was on the pages, for all the performers could do was move on to the next page for another improvisation. The 1,000 questions that ran through my 19-year-old brain as I looked at the first picture of a bird in a tree were new, exciting, and stimulating to no end. Do I play bird sounds? Do I play the way the picture makes me feel? What does a nice sunny day sound like? Or should I play the tree? And then we started playing.

I recall a conversation with William O. Smith where we discussed the unique improvisational and notational approaches of some of the more experimental jazz composers like George Russell and Anthony Braxton. I had commented to him that I was having trouble replicating their methods—or rather, replicating their results using their methods. I felt that I understood the “how to do it” part, but my results didn’t sound like theirs. He replied, “It’s not about how to do it, it’s about what you can do with it.”

Alternative musical notation always works when the meaning and intent can be directly communicated to the performers. The most successful performances of jazz with alternative notation, in my experience, have always been those in which the composer and performers worked together—and in many cases, were one and the same. Experimental music, by its very nature, tends to have wider degrees of success and failure, and no one gains with alternative notation. As the gateway to new sounds, new approaches, and new concepts, it always works better for the person who came up with it.

Alternative musical notation always works best when the meaning and intent can be directly communicated to the performers. The most successful performances of jazz with alternative notation, in my experience, have always been those in which the composer and performers worked together—and in many cases, were one and the same. Experimental music, by its very nature, tends to have wider degrees of success and failure, and no one gains with alternative notation. As the gateway to new sounds, new approaches, and new concepts, it always works better for the person who came up with it.

Slap sounds (strings) or slap tongue sounds
Slapping sounds (tambourine)
Slurred sounds
Smooth sounds
Soft sounds
Soft sound attacks (or soft attack sounds)
Sound (and note sounds)
Sound beam
Sound body
Sound block
Sound column
Sound mass
Sound mass (adding in the process of)
Sound mass (reducing in the process of)
Sound pattern
Sound shape (or shapes)
Specified scale system sounds
Spiral sounds
Staccato long sound
LELLA VIGNELLI

By Roger Remington

Vignelli Distinguished Professor of Design Emeritus
Rochester Institute of Technology

Lella Vignelli was an exceptional designer in every way and a leading creative force in the postwar Modernist era of design in the world. As the longtime collaborator of her partner and husband, Massimo Vignelli, Lella was either seen as paired with him or in his shadow. She needs her own prominent place, separate from him, in the history of design. To see why, it is worth considering how she got there and what one can learn from her very special example.

She was born in Udine, Italy, on August 13, 1934 into a family that would produce three generations of architects. Her education was primarily at the University of Venice, School of Architecture. In 1957, soon after marrying Massimo Vignelli, another architect/designer, the couple first came to the United States, where Lella had received a tuition fellowship as a special student at The School of Architecture at The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). The following year the young couple moved to Chicago, where Lella joined the architecture firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill as an architect in the interiors department. In 1960, the Vignellis returned to Italy and founded The Vignelli Office of Design and Architecture, where Lella concentrated on interior and product design. Late in 1965, they returned to the U.S. and settled in New York permanently, ready to set up an office of Unimark International. In 1966, they moved to New York City. Lella headed the interior design department of the interior design firm of Unimark International. The firm, founded by the Vignellis, was the largest international design firm of its era. In 1971, the Vignellis left Unimark and started Vignelli Associates, a multidisciplinary design firm, where Lella was president. In 1978, she founded and was the CEO of Vignelli Designs Inc., which concentrated on royalty-producing products and furniture. She became a naturalized U.S. citizen in 1979, becoming one of the few women to hold an executive position, likely the first in the nation.
Lella Vignelli’s design work is consistently outstanding in its breadth. She worked seamlessly between many facets of the design business: interior design and furniture, corporate showrooms and exhibits, product design such as glassware, china, and silver, clothing, and environmental design such as the St. Peter’s Church at Manhattan’s CitiGroup Center. Working with Massimo, she designed pew pillows, liturgical silver objects, and the massive wood altar.

Lella Vignelli saw design as a profession with the potential to make the world a better place. Her mission of “better design for a better world” was consistent across her half-century career: fighting ignorance and ugliness, creating understanding, adding beauty, meaning, and elegance to the artifacts of everyday living. She railed against those who would see design frivolously or carelessly because, true to the tenets of the Modernist movement, she viewed social and cultural responsibility as an underlying base for all design. As a woman working in largely a male environment, Lella’s design solutions contributed significantly to the success of such major organizations as American Airlines, the U.S. Park Service, the MTA in New York, Bloomingdale’s, Xerox, IBM, Lancia cars, Kroil, and many others. She put her views into broader view through advisory roles for the National Endowment for the Arts, Presidential Awards and for many professional organizations and academic institutions.

Her working relationship at Vignelli Associates and Vignelli Designs Inc. was a close and near-constant collaboration with her husband Massimo, and their shared ethos was “Design is One.” This important characteristic of the “Vignelli culture” meant that Lella and Massimo viewed design not as separate disciplines but as one unified creative endeavor. Their accomplishments evidence this approach in terms of breadth and variety.

Beyond her design contributions, she was the business arm of Vignelli Associates and she played a key role in the firm’s success. Lella managed most of their projects and directed the day-to-day operations of the company. Throughout her stellar career Lella’s design accomplishments brought a number of awards including two Compasso d’Oro awards, the Presidential Medal from Rochester Institute of Technology, and two honorary doctoral degrees.

“Lella’s work, and her life, was a fantastic blend of logic and playfulness, spirit and pragmatism, down-to-earth logic and idealistic vision”
Massimo Vignelli

“Massimo is the dreamer. I am the realist. Sometimes he flies high and I have to pull him down”
Lella Vignelli

---

Previous: Lella Vignelli with her Ars line of furniture. Designed for Driade, 1982
Opposite-Bottom: My Islands Cologne Stacking Bottles, Industrial Design, 1966
Opposite-Right: Silver rings & bracelet for San Lorenzo Silver Jewelry Design, 1970s
Top: Saratoga line for Poltronova, Furniture Design, 1964
Bottom-Left: Rank Xerox Showroom, Interior Design, 1964

---

Exception
“Lella’s role was significant. Our borders within design
were often blurred, and we liked to keep it that way.”
Massimo Vignelli

Massimo held her in the highest esteem. She was “an
inspiration to all women designers who forcefully stand
on the power of their merit,” he said, adding that while
her role “was significant, our borders within design were
often blurred and we liked to keep it that way.” As we’ve
learned from other women collaborators of this era, like
Denise Scott Brown, the focus was on the man.

Designer Michael Bierut, now of Pentagram, worked for
the Vignellis. He remembers that Lella, “served as the
critic, editing the ideas and shaping the best ones to fit
the solution. Massimo was the dreamer, focusing on the
impossible. Lella was ruthlessly practical, never losing
sight of the budgets, the deadlines, the politics, the
real world. I learned from Lella that talent and passion
were crucial, but that alone they were not enough. If a
designer really wanted to make a difference in the world,
she needed to also have brains, cunning, confidence,
and relentless drive. These traits turned abstractions
into reality, converted doubtful clients into passionate
advocates, and transformed trivial notions into ideas of
consequence.” (Design Observer)

Massimo was an extrovert, “out in front” in their
partnership. Over the years Lella received much less
recognition for her accomplishments. It’s past time
to celebrate them and frame her story as one of the
outstanding woman designers of her generation. “Most
often people don’t remember the name of the designer
who affected their life.” (Noupe) This is the ultimate lesson
from Lella Vignelli’s design.

Readers interested in more information are urged to visit:
Designed by: Lella Vignelli
vignellicenter/files/documents/
Designed%20by%20Lella.pdf

“When asked about the altar at St. Peter’s,
she said, “it had to be exceptionally large because,
after all, it is God’s table.”
Lella Vignelli

Top-Left: Knoll Handkerchief Chair,
Furniture Design, 1982

Top-Right: Design Vignelli clothing
sketches, Fashion Design, 1992

Bottom-Left: Heller Glass Bakeware,
Industrial Design, 1970

Bottom-Right: Ciga Hotels silverware,
Industrial Design, 1979

Opposite: Saint Peter’s Church,
Interior Design, 1977
Exceptions

By Sean Wolcott

As we thought about the concept of “Exception,” we couldn’t help but think of how ARCADE magazine has embraced exceptions-to-the-rule in its 40-year run. We have been finishing digitizing every issue of ARCADE ever. This has included such things as “Self-Propelled Future” (Vol 6, No. 4, Page 11, 1986), written and illustrated by Stephen J. Walker. The article proposes multiple mobile furniture designs and analyzes their hypothetical purposes, function, strengths, and weaknesses, all in the name of fun.

Three issues later with “Call for Macs: ARCADE tries desktop” (Vol 6, No. 2, Page 5, 1986), ARCADE transitioned from analog to digital for the first time. Near the end of ARCADE’s “Column of Many Orders” section, sandwiched in between “Seattle Votes Cap” and “Design News,” one of the staff members writes about their first experience using a Macintosh II. The short blurb thanks an advertiser, Binary Graphics, for providing support and training with the hope of streamlining the design process. However, the lack of access to Macs at the time meant getting more external help. Fortunately, three-plus decades later, making issues in such a manner continues to be effective and collaborative in ways we could only have dreamed of.

Three years earlier, in 1986, ARCADE published “Landscape as Sculpture: Notes from an artist’s sketchbook” (Vol 6, No. 3, Pages 4 & 5, 1986). The issue focused on fusion, and this feature is both a visual and ideological fusion of different styles. It was also an exception design-wise, as it took a rough, sketched look rather than a precisely designed approach to reflect the ideas within the article. This mimics the organic nature of the natural landscape itself.

At ARCADE, we love to find and embrace these “Exceptions” and look forward to many other new discoveries in the years to come. In the meantime, discover exceptions from ARCADE’s past at our online archive at https://arcadenw.org/magazine, which we are adding to regularly to include every issue in ARCADE’s long history.

The good eye may notice some design changes in this issue of ARCADE resulting from our trial run with electronic publishing. The issue was produced on a Macintosh II with Aldus PageMaker software. We would like to thank John Knapp at Binary Graphics for providing training, technical advice and moral support to the just learning ARCADE electronic design staff. The process looks hopeful as a means of reducing the pre-press costs of producing ARCADE and the hours required of our design/production volunteers.

Only one small problem ahead, a lack of Macintoshes. Being that ARCADE could only occasionally supply sharp Exacto blades to its old crew, it is not in the position to supply a Macintosh laboratory. We are looking for firms which might consider making their Macintosh(s) available to two or three ARCADE staff persons during off-work hours. This would involve a weekend or several evenings per issue. Call Kathleen Randall at 324-5120 if you would like to help the electronic cause.

At ARCADE, we love to find and embrace these “Exceptions” and look forward to many other new discoveries in the years to come. In the meantime, discover exceptions from ARCADE’s past at our online archive at https://arcadenw.org/magazine, which we are adding to regularly to include every issue in ARCADE’s long history.

CALL FOR MACS: ARCADE TRIES DESKTOP

The good eye may notice some design changes in this issue of ARCADE resulting from our trial run with electronic publishing. The issue was produced on a Macintosh II with Aldus PageMaker software. We would like to thank John Knapp at Binary Graphics for providing training, technical advice and moral support to the just learning ARCADE electronic design staff. The process looks hopeful as a means of reducing the pre-press costs of producing ARCADE and the hours required of our design/production volunteers.

Only one small problem ahead, a lack of Macintoshes. Being that ARCADE could only occasionally supply sharp Exacto blades to its old crew, it is not in the position to supply a Macintosh laboratory. We are looking for firms which might consider making their Macintosh(s) available to two or three ARCADE staff persons during off-work hours. This would involve a weekend or several evenings per issue. Call Kathleen Randall at 324-5120 if you would like to help the electronic cause.
GRAY DESIGN AWARDS 2022
ENTRY PORTAL OPEN NOW—AUG 5
ARCHITECTURE • INTERIORS • LANDSCAPE • FASHION • PRODUCT DESIGN
NEW THIS YEAR: 20 MORE CATEGORIES
graymag.com/awards

Save the Date
Join us at the GRAY Awards Party
December 5 • Seattle

We help solve the planet's energy and water challenges.

TALK TO US ABOUT
- Washington Clean Buildings Law
- Sustainable District Planning
- Carbon Footprint Analysis
- Renewable Energy Systems
- Building Performance Analysis

Seattle Design Festival
August 20-26
seadesignfest.org
This is our intro brief TGeorge’s note about challenging yourself. work hobby entertainment. brief This is our intro brief This is our intro brief This is our intro brief This is our intro brief This is our intro brief This is our intro brief This is our intro brief This is our intro brief This is our intro brief
WRITE YOUR NAME USING FOUND OBJECTS

HELLO, MY NAME IS

HELLO, MY NAME IS

HELLO, MY NAME IS

HELLO, MY NAME IS

What else could you write with these objects? How would things change if they were different?

TELL ME A STORY ABOUT THIS IMAGE.
SPATIAL PROBLEM SOLVING
CONNECT TWO POINTS
BY DRAWING A SELF
PORTRAIT.

Share your drawing on social media
with #ConnectedFace
ITERATION
SELECT ANY WORD FROM THIS ISSUE & MAKE 13 DRAWINGS OF IT.

ABSTRACT CONNECTIONS
SEND YOUR PAST SELF A MESSAGE WITHOUT USING WORDS.

What sounds or shapes might convey feelings or importance?
REVISE
NAME AN OBJECT YOU USE MORE THAN 8 TIMES A DAY.

INTERACTION
TAKE A PAD OF STICKY NOTES FOR A WALK.

Describe a situation with this object that elicited the following emotions?

What new signs might be helpful on your way? What messages might you share?
OBSERVE
SCAN A QR CODE
& DESCRIBE THE SIMILARITIES & DIFFERENCES OF THE IMAGES YOU RECEIVE.

What might be the reasons for the differences in these objects?
If you were to add another object to this collection what would it be?
What features might it have and why?
EDUCATE
SHARE YOUR SKILLS WITH OTHERS.