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BA HONS GRAPHIC DESIGN

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QUESTION- From the research strand of lectures, choose a theme, movement, or selection of artists or designers that relate to your practice or interests, and construct a 2,500-word essay. Critically assess primary themes, key writers, and relevant practitioners.

Imagine reading an article, with no font, no design and no layout. Just plain text typed on a paper.

Seems boring right? That is what editorial design is for. Magazine and editorial design are basically

just giving a personality to the content. It is also used to attract and retain the readers. It forms a

framework for a story to be read and interpreted. Using diagrams, imagery and well-designed text,

we can explain complex topics easily to a wider range of individuals. Editorial design also captures

the cultural snapshot of the era it was produced in 1960s magazines like Nova and Oz showed the

visual vibrancy of the decade Magazine design is a field that has always interested me. The way

every magazine has a different design and layout and has the power to educate, inform and

entertain the viewer is something I want to pursue in the future. Magazine design basically

encompasses communicating an idea or story through the power of organisation and presentation

of words. There are also digital magazines which have online articles and navigation links. Magazine

design is important because it influences what the reader experiences when reading the magazine.

Therefore, it is important to design a magazine that is attractive and engaging. In addition, a magazine can make a statement by using bold or dark colours in the cover, which can give the magazine a striking appearance. It is a complex field that encompasses graphic design and typography to photography and illustration

In the book *Designing for newspapers and magazines*, the author says how the first world war saw the move into more elaborate display with introduction to multi column headings, like in the *EXPRESS* (Frost and Routledge, 2012) The article *understanding media and culture*, has a chapter about history of magazine publishing which gives us the information on its history. The first magazine was introduced in Germany in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It then moved across Europe. News magazines started coming in picture too. After Europe, the Great Britain also started producing magazines. The most influential magazines in the 18<sup>th</sup> century were Daniel Defoe's *The review*, Sir Richard Steele's *the Tatler* and Joseph Addison and Steele's *the spectator*. Family magazines, children's magazines and women's magazines were also produced during the 1830s

Photojournalism, or telling stories through photographs was one of the most popular trends in 20<sup>th</sup> century. This led to the production of picture magazines. The most influential picture magazine was Henry Luce's *Life*, which was regularly published between 1936 and 1972. (Publisher, 2016)

**COLOUR-** Colour is one of the main elements of design, not just magazine design. Choosing the correct colour is a science, and it is based on psychology. Every colour has a different meaning and

evokes different kind of emotions. Colour is also a big differentiator when it comes to the brand.

Every brand we come across has a prime colour associated with it, like Facebook has blue, and

MacDonald's has red and yellow. This helps us distinguish different brands. Because of how easy it is

to differentiate colour from its brand, it is used in magazines to distinguish different types of text,

like headers, and different paragraphs. Colour can help catch the viewers' attention in a busy visual

environment. Colour combinations also play a huge role in designs. There is endless number of

colour combinations, each having either a positive impact on a design or negative consequences. A

lot of magazines follow a specific colour palette. For example, introspective digital magazine follows

the less is more approach, with only black and white photography with strong fonts.

Louisville Magazine (figure 1) – No Justice, No Peace is also a magazine with a lovely color scheme of yellow, black and white.



FIGURE 1- LOUISVILLE MAGAZINE

## TYPOGRAPHY

Just like colour, we are surrounded by letters and typography as well. Right from the ingredient list on the back of a biscuit packet, or to the menu in a café, we are influenced by typography everywhere. Typography is not the art of making your own typefaces, instead its main purpose is to work with typefaces that already exist. There is loads of typefaces like serif, sans serif, with different type of styles like futuristic, brush, geometric etc. When typography is bad, it can be distracting and make things unreadable. In The article The Best Fonts for Magazine Design: Editorial, Crisp & Memorable, **Ciera Holzenthal** tells us about the best typefaces for magazine design, which is really helpful.

She mentions loads of typefaces like Isidora Sans, which is a sans serif font that contains geometric, clean typefaces. This typeface is recommended for titles, books, magazines and corporate design.

We can also say that typography and communication are correlated. One without the other limits the potential to convey information effectively. Designers shape language with type which helps them give words life. It is a great medium to provoke emotion. A lot of time, typographic characters are abstract constructs or images with no text. This is a very aesthetic style of design

Digital type has created an explosion of available fonts and good professional typography design requires a set of disciplines to think of the reader first and then artistic embellishments later. Gothic style lettering, for example, might work for an audience of gothic fans, but it probably doesn't connect with people who are not familiar with that style.

According to (Shillington Design Blog, 2019) It's critical to master the fundamentals of typography so that you can follow them as you develop your designs. Every designer should be familiar with the following five fundamental principles of typographic design or any other sort of graphic design:

1. Balance that communicates a regular structure
2. Organisational and directional hierarchy
3. Use contrast to bring out key points
4. Repeating something to make it recurrent and recognisable
5. Alignment to display a clear and organised image

According to the article Chapman (2019) gives us a lovely explanation on how to effectively organise content within a design. She says how size, weight, colour, contrast, case and alignment are some of the factors that affect typography hierarchy.

## MINIMALISM

Utilising a pared-down, straightforward aesthetic to produce a clear and uncomplicated visual experience is known as minimalism in magazine design. Following are a few essential components of minimalist magazine design:

1. Use white space: The space around and between design elements is referred to as white space or negative space. The style of minimalist magazine designs frequently has a lot of white space, which makes them appear tidy and uncluttered.
2. Limited colour palette: Minimalist magazine designs frequently employ a small colour scheme, frequently made up of neutral shades like white, black, and grey. One or two accent colours may occasionally be used sparingly to enhance interest. Simple typography: Minimalist magazine design often uses simple, clean typography with a limited number of font styles. Sans-serif fonts are often favoured for their clean lines.
3. Minimalist photography: Minimalist magazine design often features photography with a minimalist aesthetic, using simple compositions, natural lighting, and neutral tones.
4. Grid-based layout: Minimalist magazine design often uses a grid-based layout, with a focus on symmetry and balance. This helps to create a sense of order and clarity.

Overall, minimalist magazine design is about creating a simple and elegant visual experience that allows the content to shine. It can be an effective approach for creating a modern, sophisticated look for a magazine.

### David Carson

David Carson is a graphic designer who has made a significant impact on magazine design. He is known for his experimental approach to typography, which challenged the traditional rules of design. Carson's designs were characterized by their unconventional layouts, distorted typefaces, and use of negative space. He was the art director for the magazine Ray Gun, which was known for its alternative music and culture content.

Carson's work for Ray Gun( figure 2) was ground-breaking and influential in the magazine industry. He used a range of typefaces, including handwritten fonts, and combined them with images in unexpected ways. His designs often featured overlapping text, and the text was sometimes illegible, forcing readers to focus on the visual elements of the page. Carson's designs were a departure from the clean, minimalist designs that were popular at the time and demonstrated the power of experimentation in design.

Carson's influence on magazine design can still be seen today. His approach to typography has been adopted by many designers, and his work has inspired a new generation of designers to push the boundaries of design. David Carson has been one of the greatest designers who has broken the usual mold of graphic design.



FIGURE 2- RAY GUN MAGAZINE



FIGURE 3- BANGKOK

Looking at some of David Carson's work, it can be said that he believes in design being limitless.

According to Carson and Blackwell (2000), David Carson is without a doubt the most well-known and talked-about graphic designer of the 1990s, having amassed a following of both supporters and critics over the course of his career.

The evolution of graphic design has been altered by Carson's ongoing reimagining of the link between design and type.

His work is distinguished by the disorganised typography and pattern it exhibits, the jumble of pictures that are layered on top of one another, and the surface meaninglessness that conceals a bigger vision. While his novel approach to visual communication drew new readers, it also turned off those who thought his work was fragmented and hence deceptive.

He believed that the big reason why graphic design was so boring was that people let the software in the computer build and arrange the grid, and almost did not join. "People" own ideas

David's first issue of "Ray Gun" ( figure 2) uses countless new custom fonts sent to him by people all over the world. It has no grids, formulas or formats, and allows music and individual articles to determine the

design and layout. The direction, although this is design will make it much more work than most magazines have to deal with, but it is also much more interesting

April Greiman

April Greiman will forever be one of the greatest influences of graphic design. She was one of the first to try digital art and adding technology to your work, instead of the traditional approach to design. By addition of technology in her design proves, her work started encompassing a unique aesthetic. This marker her to be famous and a turning point in graphic design era.

“The digital landscape fascinates me in the same way as the desert.”

—April Greiman

In her work, she explored the various styles of typography, and how a flat two-dimensional canvas can be made into three dimensional.

“April Greiman is a pioneering graphic designer known for her innovative use of technology in the field of design. She was one of the first designers to embrace computer technology in the 1980s, and her work has had a significant impact on the development of digital design. April Greiman's contributions to the field of design have been ground-breaking, especially in terms of her adoption and utilization of computer technology.” (Famous Graphic Designers, 2019)

The motivation behind many of Greiman’s most well-known works has been a genuine interest towards and strong conviction in new technology as a tool to advance design. This has been hidden under the contentious aesthetics of new wave typography and post modern style.

From early computer graphics workstations to the Macintosh, she transitioned from photographing i

images to creating video-based imagery.

She was creating "hybrid imaging" pieces that combined handset type with digital elements when computers were just becoming widely available. She received a lot of criticism for being an early adopter, but the benefits to design are indisputable.

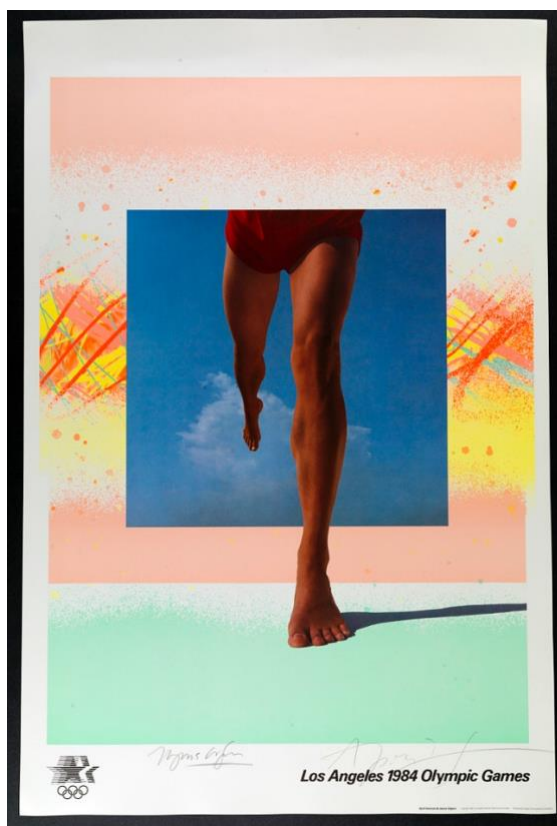


FIGURE 4-1984 SUMMER OLYMPICS GAMES POSTER

One of her best works is the poster she designed for 1984n Olympic Games in Los Angeles. This poster beautifully uses surrealism with bright colours. The use of bright colours shows the excitement for the event. There is also use of geometrical shapes with a darker colour to evoke the energy.

## ARMIN HOFFMAN

Hofmann has been described as one of the most outstanding personalities in Swiss graphic design history. Hoffman has spent much of his career designing posters because he felt that it was one of the best and most efficient forms of communications. Elena in her article also says how “Armin’s teaching methods were unorthodox and broad based. Relying on the fundamental elements of graphic form - **point, line, and shape**, Hofmann created a body of work enormously varied - books, exhibitions, stage sets, logotypes, symbols, typography, posters, sign systems, and environmental graphics.”(www.widewalls.ch, n.d.)

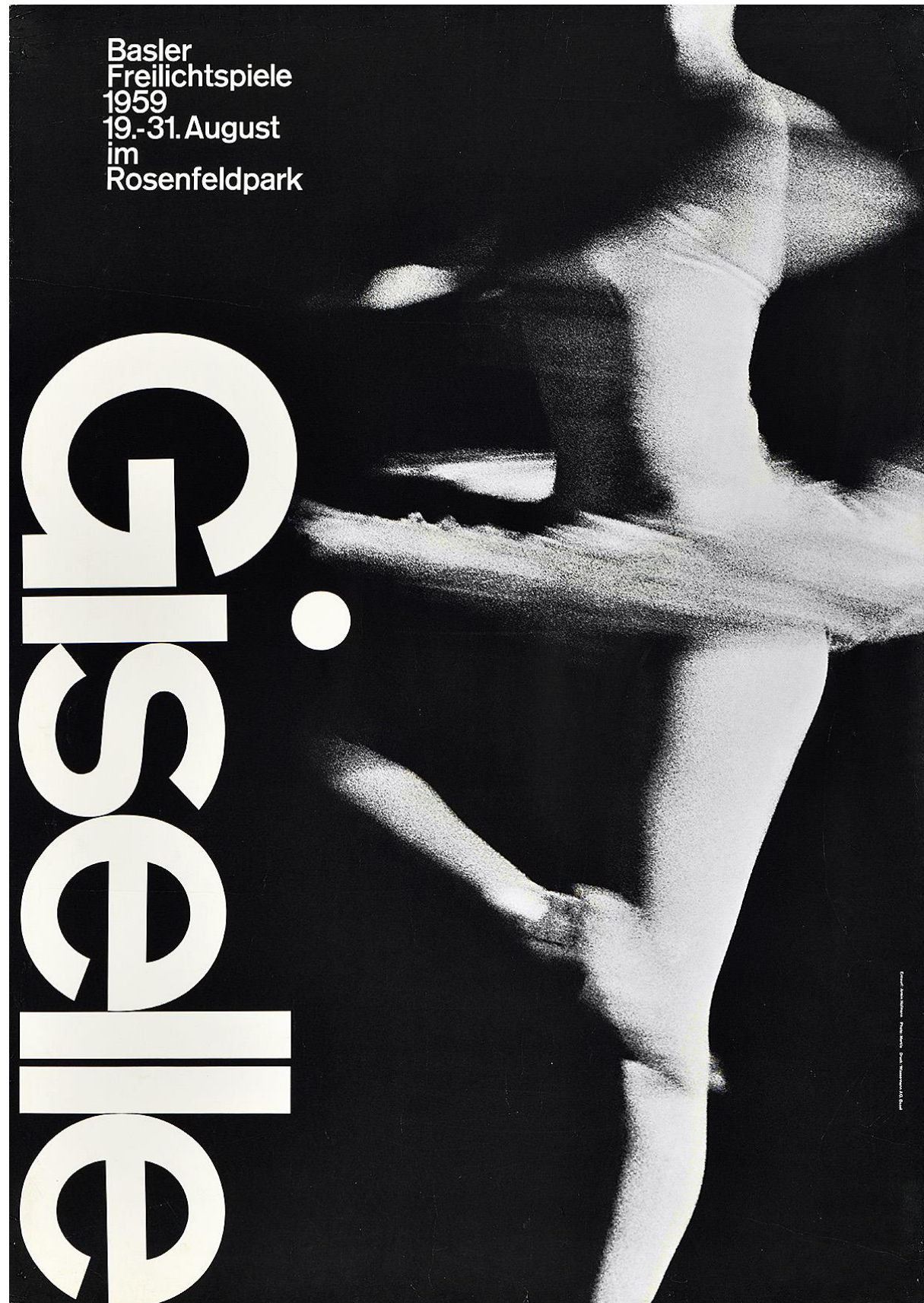
.His posters have been shows as works of art in art galleries round the world. His work is varied from books, exhibitions and logos.



FIGURE 5- BASEL CITY THEATRE POSTERS

Hoffman produced various posters for the Basel city theatre in the 1950s and 1960s, as may be seen in the aforementioned works (Figure 5). One of his most well-known pieces is the first one (top left),

which he frequently referred to as "feet" due to the inclusion of a ballet slipper and a cowboy boot.



## Figure 6- THE GISELLE

One of his most memorable posters, in my opinion, is the one shown above (Figure 6), which was created for an outdoor production of Giselle. The dot atop the I goes beyond the letterform itself, slightly indicating the location of the dancer's knee. Additionally, the billboard neatly conveys movement rather than merely showing a human figure.

Eye magazines is one of the main magazines that inspired me to write on this topic. It is one of the most famous publications in the world and it is regarded as the benchmark for design. It's design reflects high standards and attention to detail. It is the best example of how colour, minimalism and typography can be used in magazine design.

The use of typography in this magazine is the most noticeable elements. The typefaces range from traditional sans serif fonts to display styles. There's a great attention paid to spacing, hierarchy and the typeface in a way that it wraps the content.

Eye magazine also incorporates colour and graphics along with typography. It has bright-eye catching colours. It also includes lovely images and illustrations to make every article as appealing as possible. Internally, the layouts are organised and structured by a consistent grid system, which is clean and elegantly designed with lots of white space. It also employs a well-chosen colour scheme that increases the visual impact.

Typically, colours are chosen carefully in order to establish contrast, draw attention to crucial details, or communicate an atmosphere or tone.

Although the colour scheme may change from issue to issue, it is typically harmonious and cogent, making for a visually appealing reading experience. It also uses the principles of minimalism. It uses negative space to create a sense of balance, the colour palette in the issues is minimalistic with a limited number of colours. The design of EYE magazine is frequently minimalistic with an emphasis on harmony, symmetry, and empty space. The material can be easily understood and enjoyed while also conveying a sense of tranquilly and order thanks to the simple design.

In conclusion we can say that magazine design is a vast field with loads of aspects. There are thousands of publications with magazine of different topics, ranging from sports, home, lifestyle, fashion and the list goes on. Although most of my research has been confined to the three elements- colour, typography and minimalism, there is so much more to magazine design like layout, illustrations, branding etc. Reading and researching about these elements in depth also helped me increase my understanding about them, especially after looking at the artists put these elements into their own work. I have also written about David Carson, April Greiman and Armin Hoffman have been designers who have inspired me since a long time. These designers, the elements and magazine design as a subject itself helped me form a connection between the three of them. Eye magazine was my chosen magazine to talk about and I linked the elements to the designs in the magazine.

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