

“Use Spades not Ships” by Abram Games 1941-1945

I wind the spring and the public, in looking at the poster, will have that spring released in its mind. You have to involve the viewer in your thought process. – Poster Journeys: Abram Games and London Transport - 2008

Games started his Graphic Design journey after dissatisfied with St. Martins School of Art and leaving in 1930 after only 2 terms. In 1935, whilst only 22, he won the first prize in a poster competition for the London County Council. After that, he started his freelancing career with commissions from the London Transport Museum and many others. He got so experienced with the airbrush that he even signed documents with it and used whenever possible in his design. To me it gave a “hard-worked” look to it. With posters almost solely made with airbrush and sometimes lithography when he had the chance; this was pre-War times and the posters were mainly for the London Transport Museum.

His Design process consisted of up to 30 sketches in a single sheet, circled the few that he seemed “up to par” and combined them into the final piece. This was usually his trademark, along with using photographic elements, taught by his father and done in his studio, to make such strong and remarkable designs for the age. Only after the family and friends approval process, we would sign the art piece with a full stop after the signature “A. Games”.

I never work large because posters seen from a distance are small. If ideas don't work an inch high, they will never work.

The poster in question, “Use Spades not Ships”, done in 1942; portrays a split graphic of a Ship and a spade, while the background shows the sea and the land. This project was one of many designed for the “Dig for Victory” campaign. In Saussure’s theory, the given *Langue*, is the following – the campaign, the War-time difficulties and the scarcity of food were major factors in the making of this poster, as it is meant for families to start growing their own food instead of relying on imported goods. The *Parole* is the designer’s way to communicate the message. All elements chosen carefully; colours, fonts and textures to create a piece of artwork to turn heads and make them think about it,



Figure 1 - Use Spades not Ships. Grow your own food And Supply Your Own Cookhouse

without making too complicated. The poster in its essence, is a well-done specimen of a “Call-to-action” poster. Also, the symbolism for both the spade and the ship is a well-defined syntagm, using the simplicity of both designs not to undermine each other but to elevate their meaning against one another; since the main objective of the poster was to persuade people to use the empty lawn space for agriculture, instead of wasting on money on U-boats that were taken down by German Forces.

On the paradigmatic way, the choice of graphics used to relay the message is presented accordingly to the context, for different tools instead of the spade or means of transportation instead of the ship would not have the same weight or legibility for the poster. His motto was ‘maximum meaning minimum means’; he worked by this rule and

created some of the most well-known design the UK has seen, some of the examples were the poster made for the London Transport Museum in 1936/1937; “Blonde Bombshell” War-poster done in 1941 and the famous emblem for the Festival of Britain in 1948, not forgetting the public’s favourite British Broadcast Corporation ident “Bat Wings”

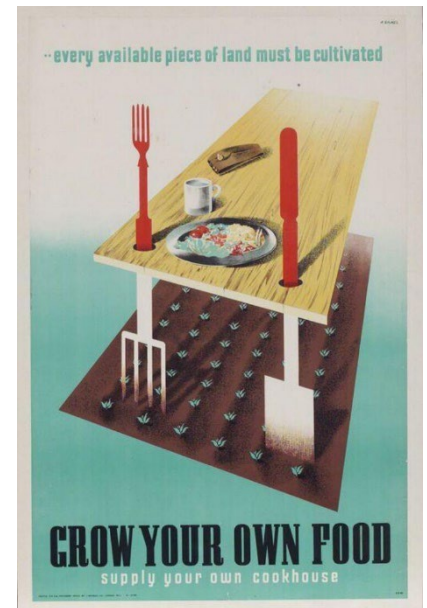


Figure 2 - Grow your Own Food Poster



Figure 3 - Concerts



Figure 4 - Join the ATS



Figure 5 - Festival of Britain emblem



Figure 6 – BBC’s first moving Ident

1. To add, to integrate, to disperse, to subtract, to divide, to texturize, to make it bigger, smaller, wider, higher, narrower, traced, copyrighted. For what purpose?
2. The purpose is to show, to see, to amaze, to make art, to redirect, to teach, to reinvent, to build. To design.
3. I am not a jury to judge, a player to play with people, a killer to kill dreams. I am a Designer to Design.
4. **I do it to create, to be side by side with God, to be with to Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Socrates and Carson all at once; and be yourself at the same time.**
5. To design and to be designed. To mentor and be mentored. To live by and lived with.
6. I am a mentor. I am a Designer. I am a student of the Family of Life and a teacher of Their ethics.
7. **Design is to understand without thinking, speaking without words, showing without colour.**
8. **To make simple is not to make easy. Sometimes, its hardly simple.**

To make simple is not to make easy. Sometimes, its hardly simple.

I thought of this quote when me and my classmates from college used to joke that "design is actually easy, if a program or a website can do it, super easy". I reflected upon that statement many times when I was lost in life, just didn't know where to go or to continue pursuing this dream or career that I was trying to have. That way of "designing" might be easy to do, but it's no simple at all. All the hours spent to write the code to make that website think of a logo for your quote is hardly simple or easy. Same with designing by your own hand, some might have "talent", others rely on hard work, others procrastinate and others rush themselves to do it whenever possible. To design is to think on all possibilities at the same time while u try to put on the paper, or screen, for other people to see, to understand, to feel even.

Design is to understand without thinking, speaking without words, showing without colour.

This quote was a bit weird to write, as I kept thinking about the time my Design teacher in college asked the class in the first week: “write a paragraph with the theme ‘What is Design?’”. No one had a clue at the time, we were just searching in Wikipedia and many other random websites to try and find an explanation, an answer to the riddle. With this assessment and the time to think on it properly, to me, the quote above is the answer. An answer that might question many other trains of thought, but that’s kind of what design is about. To question, discuss, tear apart in rage, shred in disbelief or to draw in hope. (Graphic) Design is an amalgam of fields almost the size of Medicine. It joins Art, Engineering, Architecture, Sculpture and maybe more maybe less fields that we, as Humanity had to learn to evolve. Design is this beautiful thing where minds link to understand the thought behind a logo, to talk without words while seeing a poster, to see the possibilities of using nothing but black in a sketch.

I do it to create, to be side by side with God, to be with to Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Socrates and Carson all at once; and be yourself at the same time.

This quote came to me while I was in an epiphany of ideas while not being able to work on the assignment that I was trying to do at the time. I reckon that we should not only run away from the static movements of shape and colour and recreate, but sometimes pay an homage to some of the Greatest. If something really good happens, why not thank Him? If you had a herculean moment of energy and were able to win the argument needed for your career to follow through, why not thank Socrates, or Mandela even? This might sound farfetched but I’m not even that religious of a person. I don’t go to Church on Sunday or pray before going to bed; but

even if someone does or doesn't believe in God, give a "boost" to the heritage some of the "Greatest in History" made for us.

Reflective Writing – Bauhaus 93 Typeface Magazine Cover and Double Spread



The work presented above is the design I chose for a Typeface Cover and Double page Spread for the typeface Bauhaus 93. Applied with some the main traits of early Bauhaus thinking process, with only using red, yellow, blue and black; with shapes being only squares, triangles or circles. This work gave a hard time, as I tend to overthink while doing an assignment that I enjoy the content and of, therefore many previous designs were way too complicated, but empty of sorts.

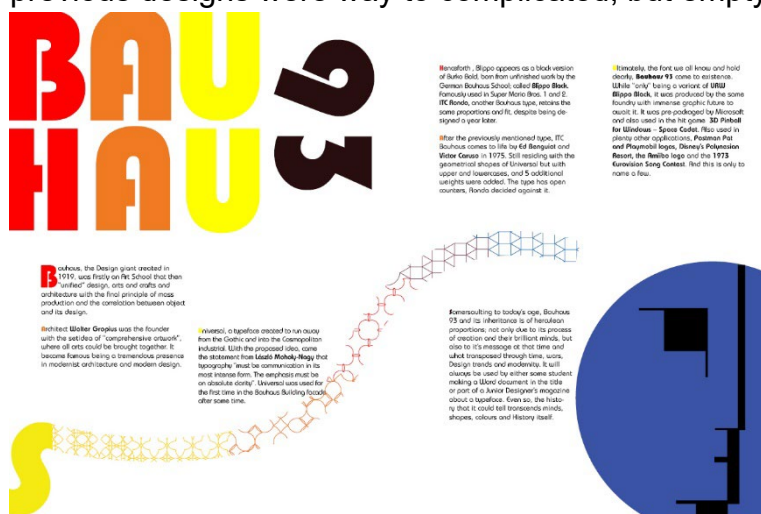


Figure 9 - First Double Spread Design

minimum means.