# Typography and The Langue of Architecture

A Major Study presented to the Department of Architecture,Oxford Brookes University in part fulfilment of the regulations for the Diploma in Architecture.

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Signed

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# Introduction The Purpose Of Written Communication

Written communication is an integral part of human endeavour, it has acted as a vehicle for social change, and a source of inspiration and artistry; without it, almost all of what we know and use today could never have been brought to fruition. The purpose of written language is the representation of audible information via physical marks. The process of transference to this communication is not a natural step; it is a wholly artificial creation and a phenomenon of language. If we compare two forms of communication



### spoken and written we see:

Spoken Language	Written Language	
Primary: individuals and languages develop speech before writing	Secondary: follows speech	
Acquired: absorbed spontaneously	Learnt and constructed	
'Natural'	'Artificial'	
Original	Сору	
Interior to the mind	Exterior to the mind	
Organized in time	Organized in space	
Aural: is heard	Visual: is read	
Three-dimensional, situation	Two dimensional, planar	
Ephemeral	Permanent	
No equipment	Requires equipment	
Often devalued	Prestigious 'valued'	
Addressee generally present	Addressee generally absent	
Dialogue	Monologue	
Feedback immediate	Feedback delayed	
Spontaneous, shared development of ideas	Considered, planned narrative, revised and edited	
Quick	Comparatively slow	
Characterized by pauses and fillers: oh, er, um	Characteristically cohesive and coherent	
Syntactically fragmented: sentences lack clear boundaries	Syntactically cohesive: sentence boundaries clearly defined and reinforced through punctuation	

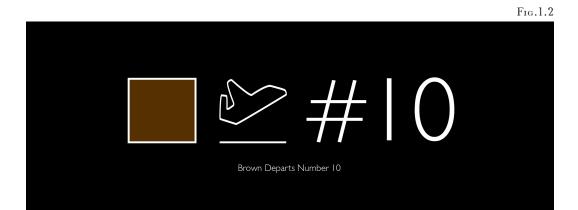
Banes, P., Haslam, A. (2005. p.18).

Natural language is a gateway to further learning, and one that precedes all other formal education.

Ferdinand de Saussure, the 'father' of modern linguistics, breaks writing systems into two seemingly similar, but dichotomised, groupings: visualising ideas and visualising sounds. The way we read these forms is taken almost entirely for granted and given little thought, but the make-up of how we read, either as an ideographic or phonetic system, are incredibly complex. Both adhere to the above table and, as such, they are modifications of the original and natural form of communication, and require a previous understanding of situation, context, meaning, composition, and culture. These rules become a code for comprehension, in not just written systems but in any communicative form, for example: the colour red

meaning hot, warning, love; a silhouette of a person meaning pedestrian zone, stand still. These codes are what create a collective understanding of the world we see around us.

To use an ideographic system, a base of symbols has to be established with meanings attached, as is the case for Chinese, Japanese and Korean writing systems where the meaning of a character, inferred by its basic parts, are open for continuous creation. In the dictionary-Yitizi Zidian-published in 2004 there were an official 106,230 characters Taiwan Ministry of Education (2000). Online Help. Available at: http://dict.variants. moe.edu.tw/start.htm Accessed 17/04/2011. Experimentation in western ideographic forms has not proved as successful, and has been used in a more playful way, in the case of some rebus writings, FIG.1.2 & 1.3; the combination of image



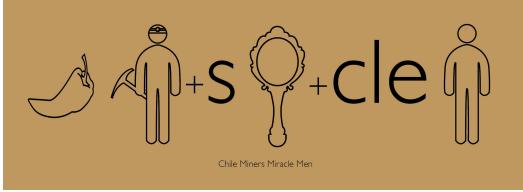


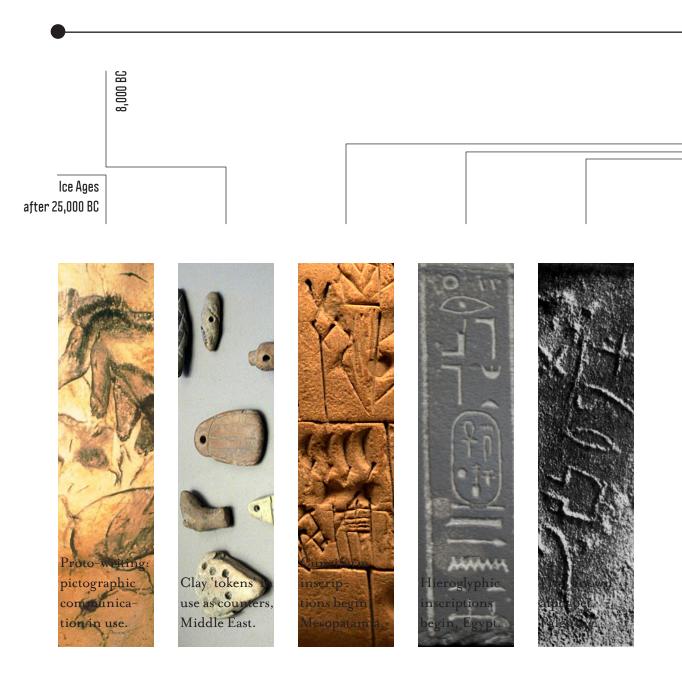
Fig.1.3

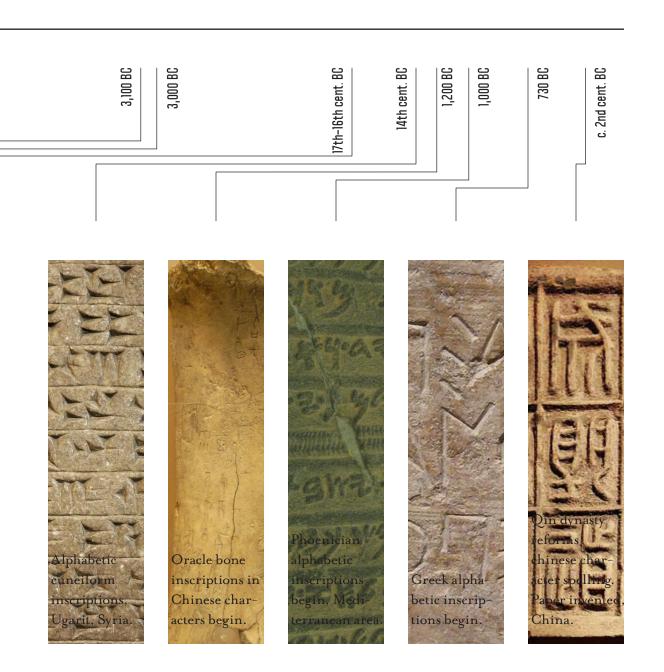
and lettering creating a single message. In other aspects the use of ideograms make up our basis for gathering information regarding our surroundings but, in the vast proportion of cases, must be paired with an overall message of background context to aid in understanding the situation.

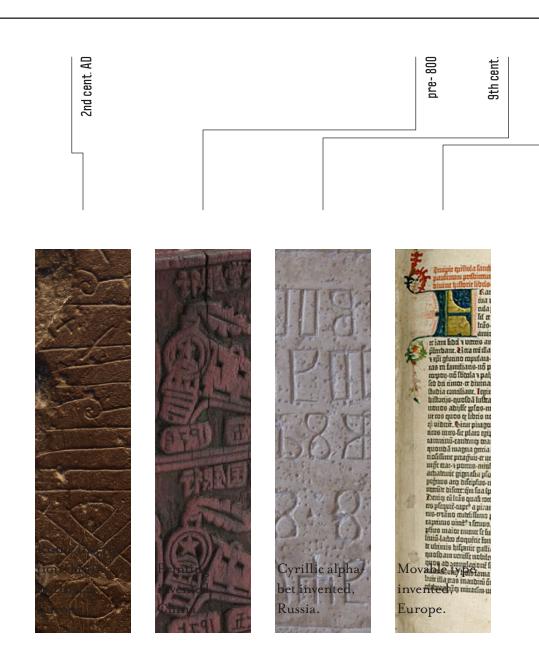
The second form of written communication, of visualising sounds, stems from a phonetic dismantling of the constituent parts of an aural vocabulary. In many western cultures this takes the form of an alphabetic script, of which there are multiple variations: Cyrillic, Greek, Armenian, Hebrew, to name but a few. This work will focus on the Latin variation of the alphabetic script, which has been evolving since the Seventh century BC; passed down through the Etruscans, Greeks, and early Phoenicians, throughout each stage taking on new and modified dialects, grammars and letters. The alphabetic system consists of a series of phonemes, an aural pattern that marks the sounds of a language, for example, 'k' is pronounced differently in kit or skill, creating two different phonemes. This has lead to a charting of between 42 and 45 phonemes in the English language, created from 26 letters, resulting in the aural communication we use today. Many other European languages have various accentuations and tonal varieties represented through diacritical marks or context in the sentence to produce subtle changes, for example in Hungarian "toke means capital, but töke means testicles" Baines, P., Haslam, A. (2005. p.20).

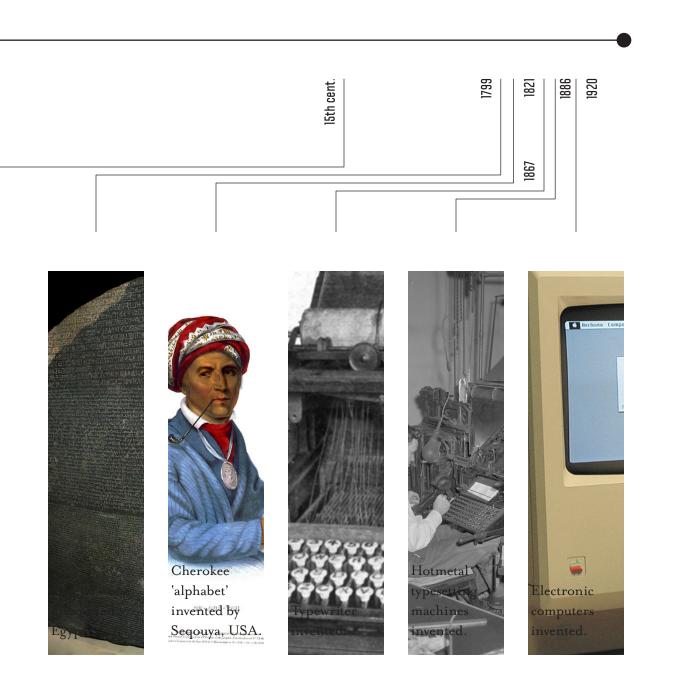


## Selected Chronicle Of Writing









### Introduction To Typography

Today what we call typography was born from the work of Johannes Gutenberg and his invention of the moveable type. Archeologists have found concentrated examples of printed, and calligraphic language at multiple sites around the world, from pre-historic 'proto-writing' to chinese porcelain lettering up until approximately 1040AD. What Johannes brought to printing in around 1450 was the use of metal blocks to produce individually printed letters. The durable material, and intricate skill needed to manipulate and produce forms allowed for a profession and artistry to emerge, creating the important realisation that typefaces could be spread, shared and sold.

Until the nineteenth century the majority of typographic development was carried out by artisans and drafters, assigned by wealthy interested parties to produce a type for their family, or institution. They designed typefaces known as humanist fonts, based on compositional rules and principles from fifteenth century renaissance manuscripts. During this time few typefaces were available and fewer still that were widely used. In England, for example, type was commissioned by royal decree, and publishing was limited by law to Oxford, Cambridge, and London, thus many typefaces used at the time were of Dutch origin. Study into readability, block composition, punch cutting tools, printing methods, inks and paper began to experiment with typography as an art in itself. From this experimentation the garalde style of type was developed, offering a stronger contrast in stress than the humanist fonts. Garalde typefaces like the 'Les Grece Du Roi', designed by Claude Garamond were cultivated by the social elite, and made the style of official documentation in France under King Francis I in 1541. What is now known as the 'transitional' style brought the axis into a more vertical alignment and increased the contrast on strokes, this style was epitomised by the typeface 'Baskerville'. Designed by John Baskerville as a study into legibility, the work was exhibited using specifically developed paper and ink and was of great inspiration to later typographers.

In Italy and France continuous progression of typesetting and type

design was carried out by Giambattista Bodoni and Firmin Didot into what is largely defined currently as 'modern'. Working into a fully vertical axis of stress and the elegance of the letter form, both took great care in their punch cutting of the typeface to create highly contrasting lines and un-bracketed serifs, generally known as the didone style, refer to 'Anatomy of The Typeface.

Plotting the chronological development of typeface styles becomes highly interlaced at the beginning of the nineteenth century as design and practicality rarely work together to form a coherent direction. Technological progression prompted new stylistic changes, and with the industrial revolution came a demand, and the ability, to produce mass printed media at a comparatively low cost. This became a problem for earlier, more delicate, typefaces as serifs and hairlines would become damaged easily; slab serifs (Egyptian) and heavy stroke weights were designed to cope with intensive use. Due to its bold and eye catching design with large serifs and low stroke contrast, they became the convention for newspapers and poster design.

Lineale, sans-serif, or 'grotesque', as it was first coined by William Thorowgood, credited as the first person to

produce a lower case sans-serif, were originally a serif typeface with the serifs removed. The architect John Soane was among one of the first professionals to start using fonts known as grotesque; they were seen as a more neutral style, with basic symmetry and a less decorated form. It took time for this new form of typeface to gain acceptance from a traditional audience, and so found its waylike the Egyptian typefaces-onto posters, amongst other publicising media for its new striking and bold appearance. At the beginning of the twentieth century sans-serif font became more popular for its un-decorated design, and came to be a standard bearer for modernist publications at the beginning of the twentieth century as directed by the work of Jan Tschichold and members of the Bauhaus. During the Second World War numerous typographers fled Germany and central Europe, many to America, some to the United Kingdom. This migration aided the transition of the sans-serif style around the world, it took up a following in post war America where it prospered with the commercialism that required a more 'neutral' appeal. Advertising, public graphic design, government administrative papers, all took up the considered, un-intrusive, clean new style,

FIG.3.1. Work from Swiss foundries in the 1950's were imported to this new market as advertising created an uncluttered aesthetic compared to the stylistically amateur designs of the previous years, FIG.3.2. As this 'international style' became more popular foundries turned their attention to neutrality; neo-grotesque fonts were brought into fashion with a more open face, logical weights and almost monoline strokes, during this time it was difficult to escape the use of these fonts, and their legacy has held true to the present day. Typography had become a distinctly commercialised field, popularised in its own way and was a major contributor to graphic design.

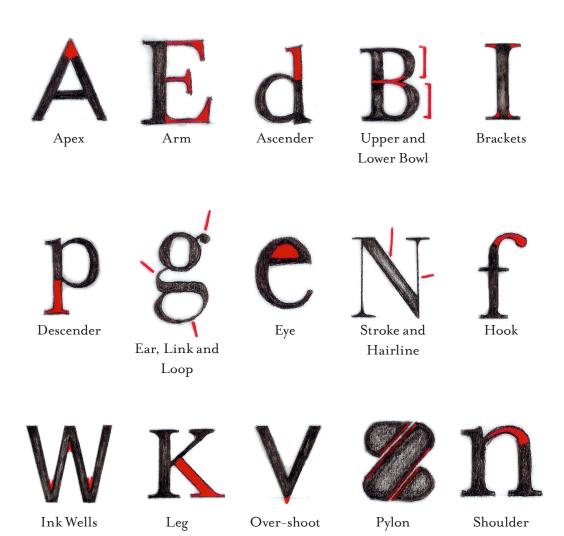


FIG.3.1 October 1951. Blatz beer advert for Gourmet Magazine.



F1G.3.2 1964. Coke drink advert for Family Circle.

## Anatomy of The Typeface







Spur

Stem

Swash

Tail





### Variations of Serif Design: Cupped, Rounded, Hairline, Bracketed, Wedge, and Slab

Variations of Spur Design:



# aa JJ 24 24 aa

**True** Italics

Weight Univers 55 and 65 Drop Figures

In-line Figures

**Oblique** Italics



Stroke Stress



Superior and Inferior Figures



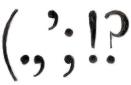
Stress Axis

Majuscule and Minuscule

Xx



Ligatures



Punctuation



Em and En Squares

AVAIL

Metric and Optical Letter Spacing

AVAL

ninir

Tight and Loose Letter Tracking -

# **Contemporary Trends** Recent History of Typographic Design

Due to the great quantity of experimentation and technological advancement that has occurred in the contemporary field of typography, the study must encompass the last 50 years of design; this requires that the author can only summarise the most important factors to this study. In general terms, after the modernist and neutral styles that ran through to the 1950's and 1960's there came a new generation of designers, artists, and typographers who questioned the boundaries that had been laid before them. With progression towards cheap, fast and relatively more available printing processes, this new generation could explore their ideas. It would be blinkered not to mention the progress in graphic design, as psychedelia became a liberating force, from art studios to musician record covers and poster design, like the work showcased in IT, OZ, and Gandalf's Garden, FIG.4.1. The release of design on the page became a driving force in terms of creating an overall graphic that showed the expression of its creator. However, within the text that it portrayed, this



Cover of *IT Magazine* 15th December 1967. By Eileen Astrahan.

lack of cohesion left a vast proportion of typographic theory broken, un-usable, and with no direction. During the late 1980's and 1990's personal computers with graphic software opened the market to a new breed of designer, and what is now known as the democratisation of type and graphic design. This period saw the rise of the 'amateur professional', epitomised by Raygun magazine, edited by David Carson, they took the design of the page to a heightened level of experimentation and, at times, purposefully un-readable level Fig.4.2. The students of typography and graphic design in the new millennium came to a subject where theories had been pushed to the limits of their communicative abilities.

Throughout this time, more practical work was carried out into the scientific aspects of legibility, these findings were incorporated into our daily use of technology, with very little notice, but profound impacts in the use and flexibility of typographic design. Developments in electronic computing and more specifically display outputs required an understanding to optimise the technology available. The work of Matthew Carter has recently been recognised by the MacArthur Foundation for its "unequaled elegance and precision" MacArthur Foundation (2010). MarArthur Fellows, Matthew Carter. Available at: http://www.macfound.org, retrieved 16/2/11, this work has transformed our day to day

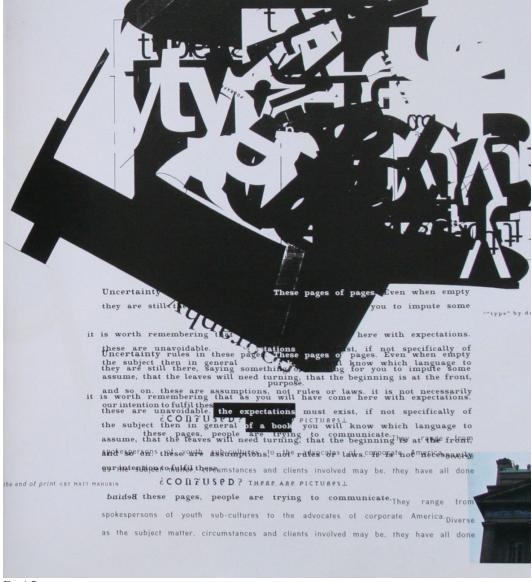


FIG.4.2 Page 16 of *End Of Print* by David Carson.

lives, and interaction with computers.

With the technological improvements and the use of desktop publishing applications there began a separation of designers from the traditional type foundry, to harnessing the potential of the systems that were available at the time. The Emigre digital type foundry founded by Rudy VanderLans and Zuzana Licko in California, worked almost exclusively for this new market, exclusively designing typefaces that did not require the industrial processes normally found in the production of type. This designing technique was made possible by a series of innovations in type display and output: the advent of dot-matrix, vector and post-script based systems. These advances gave the designer the ability to produce type at

any size and weighting, combined into families of type, and later super-families, spreading across various typefaces with a common style. Patience and skill were required to make these styles appreciable on the digital screen, as with smaller sizes of text a method called hinting must be used to keep the design of the type to its original aesthetic, Fig.4.3.

All these improvements in technology have created waves of new designers, artists, and hobbyists, able to produce work at a much faster rate. But has this come at the cost of what many believe to be good design and originality; with typefaces that can be edited by either the amateur or professional and re-released as new.

Fig 4.3

Differences between hinted (bottom), and un-hinted text (top).

abcfgop abcfgop

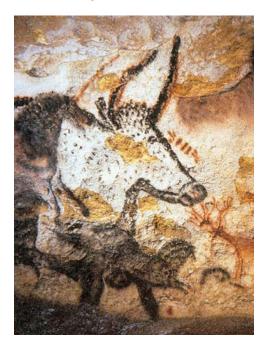
abcfgop AO *abcfgop* abcfgop AO *abcfgop* 

### Selected Relationship of Typography and Architecture

As previously mentioned, the architects Sir John Soane was among the first to start using sans-serif typefaces within his drawings, but the relationship between typography and architecture has released many of our understandings of language and its use today. Throughout history peoples from all over the world have carved, painted, etched, and sculpted works into architecture, drawn inspiration from and have works replicated within, FIG.5.1.

#### Fig. 5.1

Cave drawings at Lascaux, France.



The Egyptians, while already having possession of a more cursive, alphabetic system, choose to depict their culture through the use of the ideographic system within their walls. During the Roman Empire carvings were made into monuments of victory, most famously, and heavily studied, has been that of the Trajan Column in Rome. Depicting their victory in the Dacian wars, the base is carved with, what would now be sensibly named a captioning to the journalis-

### Fig.5.2

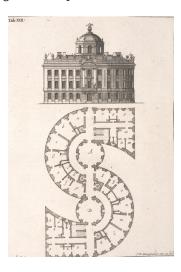
Engravings at the base of The Trajan Coulmn, Rome



tic image. At the time of the renaissance the study of the human form was being applied to architecture and typography alike, proportions of buildings and typefaces were carefully designed to suit the humanist form, FIG.5.2. In 1773 Johann David Steingruber published a typeface based on drawings of buildings as an attempt to find new and inventive designs for the living conditions of the time, FIG.5.3 & 5.4.

These influences between subjects have carried through to current times with varying levels of expression and pastiche including a genre of graphic and architectural design called 'Typotecture'. FF Scala, old-style typeface was

FIG.5.3 Steingruber's alphabet: 'S'.



designed expressly for the Vredenburg Music Center in the Netherlands in 1990, taking influence, like the building, from Dutch baroque styles and rhythmic form. Typography has also taken a dynamic attraction to architecture with applications of digital works adorned to the facades of buildings, for example: Kunsthaus, the modern art museum in Zurich, and the installation SPOTS in Potsdamer Platz, Berlin, FIG.5.5 & 5.6. Each of these buildings has changeable and varied nature of typography engrained within their architecture, focusing on contemporary technology, the fields become more tightly intertwined.

### F1G.5.4 Steingruber's alphabet: 'A'.

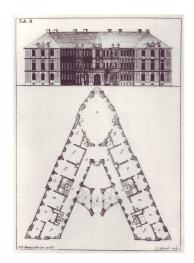
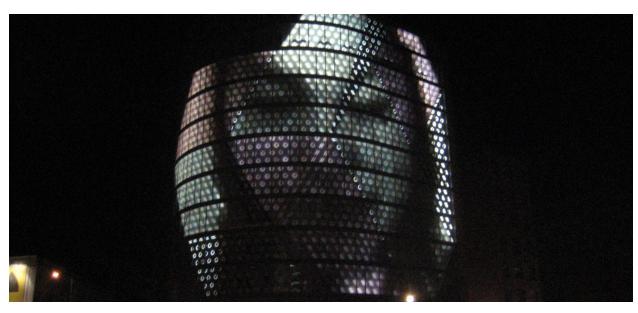




FIG.5.5 BIX Installation at the Kunsthaus, Zurich.

Fig.5.6

SPOTS Installation at an office building; Potsdamer Platz, Berlin.



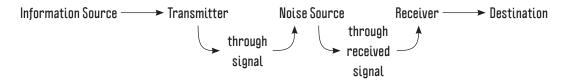
23

# Semiotics Part 1

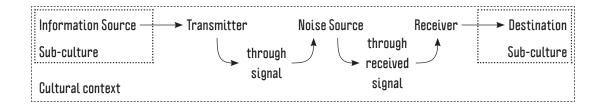
De Saussure was among the first people to study the relation of written and spoken language and assess its influence on the way we interpret messages in our language and surroundings. Published posthumously, his most influential work *Course In General Linguistics* lays down the beginnings of a field of linguistics known as semiotics. This field proposes a theory of how to make sense of the signs and symbols that make up language. The three main headings to the semiological system are: pragmatics—the relation between signs and the effects they have on the people who use them, semantics—the relation between signs and their meaning, and syntax the relation of signs in the structure. All communication can be reduced and evaluated using these tools.

De Saussure applied these rules and identified the 'concept' and 'soundimage' models, and their relationship within a communicative society to one another. He states that "two elements are intimately united, and each recalls the other" *Saussure, F. de* (1966. p.66) and that after they have been entwined within a society, the wordsmith would be unable to dismantle the 'concept' from the 'sound-image', which he later describes as the 'signifier' and 'signified' as the constituent parts of an overall 'sign'. He asserts that although the method of reducing language to a naming process, "linking of a name and a thing", "is a very simple operation—an assumption that is anything but true" *Saussure, F. de (1966. p.66).* This point can be proved very simply by making a simple change to the association we have made with an object and it's meaning. If a society called what we know as a table, a chair then it would be given the name of a chair, without the meaning; thus object and meaning are separable and the linguistic sign is arbitrary.

To define the process of communication we can refer to a model used in telecommunications:



This model covers the basic levels that electronic communication can be broken down into, in a physical sense. However, its usage in human communication, is inherently flawed, by the use of what linguists call, 'codes', something that this model cannot take into account. Codes are the basis of cultural dissemination, the most obvious at a conscious level being our spoken language, which is also made up of narrative signs, and emotional discourse. These codes, as put forward by De Saussure, must be accepted by the community as a whole, so that conventions are created and meaning conveyed. In simple terms, the above model can be made to work in terms of visual, and aural analogous communication, with the addition of context as shown.



Around each information source, and destination points a sub-culture must be applied, these sub-cultures can be different, even in the slightest way as an addition to the context of an overall culture, which can consist of an entire species, or geographical location.

This idea of the transmitter as author and irrefutable creator of the message and meaning is a central role of modernist typography, and design in whole. We must remove the connection to modern as being synonym for contemporary, the use of modern here is to cover a style and ideology, similar to that of the Russian Constructivists and the Dutch De Stijl movements. The principle followed, to the point of dogma, by modernist designers is that the form should always be derived from the function, a principle that has tried to remain relevant in contemporary

### ${\rm Fig. 6.1}$

Massimo Vignelli's re-design of the New York City subway system map. 1972.



design.

The work of Massimo Vignelli, famed for his use of typography on the New York City Metro signage, and map design, Fig.6.1, showcases the theories and design choices of Modernist typography and graphic design. Vignelli set up a company in 1964 called Unimark, the name itself is purposely phrased, as it describes the metanarrative that the author believes will be the message they have designed to be transmitted. This belief and design ethic, required a style of typography that related itself to this subject, and was adaptable enough to be used in a multitude of scenarios. The work on the New York City Metro signage personifies the metanarrative of the modernist condition. Before 1960, signs at each station had different styles and positioning, some with mosaic patterns and others in handwritten scrawl, Fig.6.2-5; in 1960 the decision was made to employ Bob Noorda and Vignelli of Unimark, and make the official typeface of the metro Helvetica. It took 30 years of design, political bureaucracy and contract work, but in 1990 the design was finally achieved, unifying the entire system.

In Jan Tschichold's book, *Die Neue Typography*, translated in 1998 to *The New Typography*, he strongly proclaims a series of rules regarding the use of colour, size of paper, justification of text, cropping ratios of images, and dismisses the use of any typeface that is not sans-serif. This is a bible of modernist design, and describes the standardised design that would be most effective for the reader, or decoder. Later in his life Tschichold renounced most of the ideals he set out in The New Typography but maintained the key elements of designing for legibility and ease of information communication. During his work for Penguin Books he hand designed every cover, taking great care that each, typographically, was true to the content.

This relationship between the author and the decoder, the message and receiver, underpins the principles of Tschichold's, Vignelli, and other modernists. The theories laid down by De Saussure in 1916 are criticised as being outdated, and in some respects with the progress of society and technology, they do have flaws. However, the influences his ideas have had on modern humanities and social sciences have been extraordinary.



Fig.6.2 Canal Street Station.



F1G.6.3 Grand Central Station.

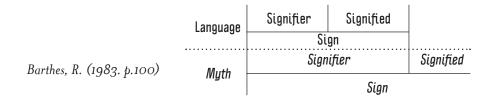


Fig.6.4 59th Street Station.



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Fig.6.5
57th Street Station.
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Roland Barthes is a celebrated poststructuralist linguistic philosopher who has developed and reacted against the axiomatic nature of the message that modernism creates. He postulates a system of communication in the 'myth' of semiology where the myth becomes the message and vice versa, with this point established he describes how "myth cannot possibly be an object, a concept or an idea; it is a mode of signification, a form." *Barthes, R. (1983. p.93).* Communication within a culture is the uniting principle that guide meaning from context, and with this understanding Barthes has built upon the structuralist principle of single level, and focused meaning. Working from this point, with the aid of the table below, the movement of information through audible or visual methods is a layered process that takes into account the disproportion between signifier and signified.



We can assume the assimilation of visual communication into this model, as with meaning comes a call for a lexis, an overarching terminology that can, with context, be brought into understanding. As shown previously this lexis in western formats is brought into cultural communication by the inclusion of media, an alphabetic system, which by itself has no semantic value. The physical creation of the letterpress encapsulates this idea as "letters used in writing do not exist before the text in which they occur. With alphabetic letterpress print is otherwise. Words are made out of units (types) which pre-exist as units before the words which they will constitute" *Ong, W. J. (1982. p.118)*. This arbitrariness of signs keeps the semiological system in equilibrium; borrowing De Saussure's use of the 'tree' or 'arbor' as a concept, or signifier; creating the signified of the object or image. The personal interpretation of the tree offsets the original sign to create the myth. This movement of communication rests, eventually, with the reader, for the final and also renewed position of the message and not, as is believed in the more structuralist philosophy, with the design from the author.

This interpretation of the secondary level of language is at the core of postmodern ideology. To borrow a practical analogy of wine making, we can see that both the bottle itself and the base understanding of the product, as a fermented, alcoholic, fruit drink and the signified which is the shared cultural decision that this drink is wine, of certain vintage and colour. The second level language here is that in French custom the wine is regarded as a sign of virility and national identity. However, in another culture, for example, Algeria, where wine is also grown it has religious connotations, as per Muslim law the drinking of wine is forbidden. Therefore this whole process of cultural and personal interpretation of the first sign then becomes another sign in itself.

The designer and graphic design teacher John Lewis titled a chapter 'Rules are Made to be Broken' *Lewis*, *J.* (1967. p.70), within which he introduced the area by asserting that "before you start breaking rules, you should know what they are. Once you know the correct procedures you can look at them critically and see wether by deliberately flouting them you can add anything new to normal methods of communication." *Lewis, J. (1967. p.70)* For those with an academic grounding and an invested interest in the education and knowledge they had received and cultivated this was an obvious point to make, but it was aimed directly at those who came to the subject with little understanding of past experiences.

While postmodernism has been, and still can be, a jovial subject in academic circles, it has also been described as a parasite that lives off modernism. Rick Poynor, a critical writer of graphic design describes the difference as being "its loss of faith in the progressive ideals that sustained the modernists, who inherited the eighteenth century Enlightenment's belief in the possibility of continuous human progress through reason and and science" Poynor, R. (2003. p.11). This view does not help fight the belief that postmodernism exists only as a reaction against modernism, but it does illustrate other points that need to be expressed. Jean-François Lyotard's use of the term metanarratives, describes a grand, unifying solution to design and communication.

However, postmodernism does not seek to re-create the world, but work with what is already present; creating a level field between the high, and low classes of design. The work of Stefan Sagmeister and his book *Things I have Learnt In My Life So Far* can be drawn upon to demonstrate this acceptance, and conditions of existence, Fig.7.1-3. Also with his work on the website of the same name, where users are invited to post their own visually designed sayings based on personal experiences of current world conditions.



F1G.7.1 'Always Mean What You Say' By Deanna McDonald 2010.



F1G.7.2 'Do What You Want' By Anonymous 2008.

> Frg.7.3 'Everybody Always Thinks They Are Right' By Stefan Sagmeister 2008.



Typography and its relation to cultural context and application can be examined in much the same way as the making and selling of wine described earlier. The eventual interpretation can be swayed by typographical use and the content it is being used to communicate. The Crystal Goblet by Beatrice Warde, initially an address given to the British Typographers Guild in 1932, sets out the use of type as either an invisible veil of crystal, that does not incumber of draw attention away from the content of the message, and is designed perfectly for the task of information retrieval; or, as a heavily leaden design of gold or clay, to have the experience of being in what is believed to be desirable. The person who chooses the crystal goblet would be labelled as being Modernist. Warde believed that the user should create no disturbance between the signifier and signified, and should create a vessel fit for the purposes of its intended use instead of its aesthetic. This analogy of typographic design being the glass in front of the message has come to prevalent use, the reader can choose to focus on the glass, or, the underlying content. It is challenged as to wether the glasstypography-should be noticed by the

drinker—reader—or not, and by how much it should or can influence their decipherment of the communication. While John Lewis, and some of postmodernisms most influential characters believe that the rules of typography can be bent, broken, and warped to the point of illegibility, maintain that the pages of a body text should be made as clear as possible.

There needs to be a distinction in the treatment of type and the design of the typeface itself between body, or book, text and that intended for display. These variations for the use of type should be viewed as distinct groups, however, when applied to an overall design the study will allow for all to be analysed as a singular piece. Distinctions in the nature of sources for analysis should be noted as being contemporary; do to this being a contemporary study, and dealing with contemporary issues.

To understand how we perceive typographic treatment in almost all we see, we can use Barthes' analogy of the car window. If we take the passing scenery to be meaning or message, this being the designers original intentions based on the cultural background and commonality of their understanding 33

of what it is they have produced. Then the form as the car window, empty, separating us from the message; these presuppositions allow us to focus on the glass and the scenery at the same time. According to Bathes, this situation leads us to the point where "its form is empty but present, its meaning absent but full" *Barthes, R. (1983. p.110)*. The typographic treatment of a message, when imposed onto this scenario becomes the form, or the glass, and has the ability to codify the experience of the scenery or meaning, or information behind it. A fine script type displaying a message of condolence, or a heavy slab serif reporting of the days events, Fig.8.1. We can also step back a level further and examine the observer, or reader of the design, from this point the level at which we can see that the type treatment, the paper, the message, the conditions of reading the text, are all parts of the form that go towards creating the second level of language, or the myth.

Fig.8.1.

Sincerest condolences

Today's News

# Sincerest condolences

# **Today's News**

# **Printed Media** The Portraval of Architecture in Print

In the same way that typefaces can be categorised into their respective, if defunct, classifications, and designed with aims of use in mind; so too can the published media. This study will focus on two styles of print, and then discern their application in architecture: newspaper and magazine. This may seem like an obvious point, and will cover journalistic modes of print, but when applied to their use in architecture, and more precisely the treatment of type in such publications, the rules become more interesting, and the outcomes startling.

At first glance we can easily see differences between the design and layout of the newspaper and magazine, their physical attributes of size and texture for example, are often what we would use to classify this difference. In the scope of the newspaper, a cultural divide has been forged between the 'broad sheet' and 'tabloid' style papers. However, in recent years, financial and supposed ecological factors have led

many of the traditional broad sheets to bring their size down to the easier, and less cumbersome tabloid form. From the cover page, much information about the contents and information held can be gleamed, depending on the style of the publication-as a general rule, a more main stream magazine or newspaper, for an example of this style we can make reference to throw-away publications like TV Guide, FIG.9.1, which will show punchy phrases from articles on the cover. Where as a more niche or art based magazine or newspaper like Emigre will show very little information with regards to its contents, Fig.9.2. Note must be made of the variations in some publications between their subscription service designs and the common

### Fig.9.1

*TV Guide*. February 2009.



styles that can be bought in single issues. Mostly an art based phenomenon, and almost always contained to the cover image, it has connotations in the way we perceive the individual and group design.

Once opened more classification can be found between the various styles of printed media. Layout is an incredibly diverse factor, yet it is based on many years of publishing experience and consumer comfort. Similarities can be drawn between the production and style of a publication, the usability of a typeface, and architectural design; all must be 90% the same as any other style that has gone before it. For example, the latin alphabet can be containing 26 letters must imply the basic components

F1G.9.2 Emigre. No.63 2002.



of each letter to be readable; or a design for a building at some level must contain a recognisable floor, wall and roof; this 90% keeps the design within cultural understanding. The remaining 10% will give the reader a feeling of change, and allow for progress to occur as the evolution of social codes to continue. More than this amount of difference and the layout can seem bold, new, and even unintelligible, just as with a typeface. This focus can be disseminated into the publications intended market audience, with readers of newspapers generally absorbing short fragments of stories, with information attempted to be rationalised and ranked according to what the editor believes is important and what the readers will want to read.

The readers of magazines, on the other hand, will purchase a volume or title they select for the express purpose of wanting to read about that subject, this allows for a more in-depth and expressive layout and a continued niche market.

The first newspapers circulated in the seventeenth century as mass printed periodicals to wealthy subscribers, replaced the handwritten news sheets of previous years. *The London Gazette* (then *The Oxford Gazette*) was considered to be the first and most influential newspaper to introduce the columned text layout which is so prevalent today. The design of newspapers has since evolved with technology and has allowed for a more adaptable grid. The advent of computer publishing pushed this ability of control

### Fig.9.3

<image><image><image><image><image><image><caption><text><text><text><text>

Die Neue Typographie. Jan Tschichold. 1928

over the page layout to a point of almost infinite form. The Modernists and sister movements carried out work on the proportion of the grid structure and its adaptability in printed media. Jan Tschichold's *Die Neue Typographie* released dogmatic rules of publication for all types of design, from postcard size flyers, to journal entries, and posters to billboards, Fig.9.3.

Definitive properties of a newspaper include: publicity, periodicity, currency, and universality; the last element is very important when applying the title, newspaper, to the field of architecture. Due to the architectural publications specialist nature, it therefore does not satisfy all the criteria to be labelled a newspaper, and at best, a supplement. A mimicry in style, layout, and information are an interesting and poignant set of classifications to be achieved. The magazine Building Design FIG.9.4, which is the largest architectural news publication in the United Kingdom, boasting over 22,000 copies a week in circulation Building Design Online (2011). About BD. Available at: http://www.bdonline.co.uk/aboutbd/ retrieved 22/03/11, relies heavily on the lexis of newspaper design, especially the tabloid form. With its bold title, top highlights section, front page image designed to spark interest. Title and

points intended for immediate interpretation are set in a bold sans-serif typeface, of minimal stroke contrast and tight letter spacing draws the attention of the eye; this agenda is made even more deliberate by years of shared cultural connection of these forms to seemingly important messages. Body text is set in a transitional serif, designed and used with a stronger contrast to give the page a more open feel, whilst containing the text. In terms of its adaptation for an architectural publication there is limited differences between Building Design and other more traditional publications. The signification of similarity to the design of the newspaper reminds the reader of the sign of a information source, pertaining to cultural and current news.

In contrast, but keeping with a purely architectural theme, the monthly publication *Architectural Review*, FIG.9.5, does not pertain to any illusions of being a newspaper. It boldly states its intentions as a niche artistic magazine for those interested in the field of architecture. Operating in the changing parameters of the IO% described earlier, the magazine stays within the bounds of page and layout convention that can be easily recognised and interpreted without direction. With shadowed text, and







RSHP warns Oxley residents

WORLD NEWS Making good connections

Are engineers undervalued? Arup's Tristram Carfrae Foster's Piers Heath dise

Shadow minister speaks out as coalition accused of double standards on design

Khan centre floats on

'In every school there is the same basic message: something's got to give'

BAN TRAW

Brighton's ups and Down

CULTURE Days to remember

Service with Style HADDONSTONE www.haddonstone.com

Fig.9.4 15th April 2011. Cover of Building Design Magazine.



### FIG.9.5 March 2011 Cover of Architectural Review.



## London's most expensive address redefines mansion block life for the super rich

achieving the world-record

price of more than £6,000 per

square foot struck a dissonance

with the news that 20 per cent

Described by Rogers concisely

but vaguely as 'a 21st-century

monument', the building was

symbolically by the Guardian

as 'a monument to the ever-

recession unscathed'.

columnist Alexander Chancellos

widening gap between rich and

poor and to the unique ability of

the very wealthy to ride out the

Perhaps this is true. But

in a sense, what's new? If the

scheme is such a monument,

for a site gazing north across

it would hardly be an innovation

Hyde Park. And indeed it used

to be much worse: in previous

centuries the 'public' was even

excluded from the 'public space

remarked in his Reminiscences

of 1863, you did not see 'any of

the lower or middle classes of

London intruding themselves

in regions which, with a sort of

itself. As one Captain Gronow

read more critically and

of young people in Britain

are currently unemployed

WILL HUNTER

The pressure on us as archit o find a way of mediating between the public's expecta and those who have spent hundreds of millions nurchasing a site is intense,' explains Graham Stirk, perhaps a little defensively, about the design that he has led for Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (RSH) at One Hyde Park. The media has given the architects - who have been known to make socialist noises – a rather a rough ride for completing what is reputed to be the world's most expensive residential address in their own capital city. Financed by a company owned by the Qatari prime minister, the luxury developer Candy & Candy approached the

practice to create the scheme during the economic uplands of the mid-noughties. One global economic meltdown later, the grand opening of the 86 apartment development in Knightsbridge finally took place at the end of January. On the day of the celebrity-studded launch party, publicits chirping about tacit understanding, were then given up exclusively to persons of rank and fashion'. Many buildings that run along the park's southern edge were born of and long-commemorate this aristocratic milieu. Of these, the scheme is equidistant between two examples that appear as

particular points of reference. On the park's east corner is Robert Adam's Apsley House (1771-78), the former home to the Duke of Wellington; the ultimate forebear for opulence status and significance, the Grade I-listed mansion has for centuries been known as 'No. 1, London' – a sobriquet that surely influenced those who named One Hyde Park. To the west, of more typological interest, are the Albert Hall Mansions designed by Richard Norman Shaw (1880-87) These started to sell the idea

of apartments to the English upper classes, who had always associated such arrangements with either poor people or, worse, continental foreigners.

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW / MARCH 2011 / VIEW 015

FIG.9.6 March 2011. PI4 & 15, spread article in Architectural Review. transparent face, it utilises our interpretation of the figure and ground relationship, relying on our previous experiences with the forms of type. Most striking is the cover image, which cannot be read without the surrounding text, maybe not the words themselves, but certainly their arrangement on the page and their backing, colour, spacing, and the typeface itself. The designer of this cover page has aimed their work at being innovative, eye-catching, and generally inaccessible to those with little interest in the styles it is portraying.

Inside we notice another of the design magazine traits, that of full page advertising. Aimed by the advertisers to be in keeping with the style of the publication, but just different enough to stand out, whilst it tries to offer a stylish and fashionable solution to attract a potential customer. At the front of the magazine, like so many others, is the the contents page, itself an inaccessible design for the un-initiated, with bold eye catching shapes and typographic treatment, it is a proving ground for the eye. It can hold this detail of design and strength of shape by its pronounced grid structure, this allows the design to be contained and allow the reader to absorb the information in stages, rather than a total overview of what is

to come. From the cover and now into the contents page, tones of typography are being developed: the use of a tall, bold, monoline, geometric/humanist typefaces to emphasise their building sections, a bold bracketed slab-serif with extra leading for subtitles and points of importance, and lastly a seemingly lighter version of the slab-serif that contains less stroke contrast and lower weights to stroke lines to ease transition into body text found later; we can also take note of small-print style type that uses a monospacing and light variation of the bold monoline described earlier. These typefaces are used throughout the publication, however it is the study of forms and treatment applied that will be of interest to this study of architectural langue further on.

In Architectural Review, FIG.9.6, the bold and expressive, yet abstract, treatment of their section titles gives the impression of novelty, and fashionable design; incorporated within this the eye is drawn to an image of the building under description in the next title zone. Firstly, let us deconstruct the image given to us, in context to the 'architectural photograph' and the 'press photograph'. Immediately we know we are in a dense urban environment by the high rise nature of the buildings and its

surrounds, a crane on the side describes the changeable fabric and the continuous development of the area, an iconic London Transport sign tells us within a few miles the location of the subject and finally the use of structural context accentuates the contemporary style of the building in question. Next we can study the treatment of the photograph itself, as the streaked lighting of vehicles in the foreground shows the length of exposure, and demonstrates the busy road system, distanced by the deep blue to light purple sky placing the building firmly away from the domain of those beneath.

Long before the photograph has been exhausted of information the facing page draws the readers attention, as the image sprawls over into the grid structure presented with hairlines at the centre of each of the columns of text. Integrated into the these hairlines is the section title which collaborates with the photograph, each define the other; drawing from De Saussure's application of concept and sound image, where one will give meaning to the other. The text, created from vertical hairlines, echos the building in focus and pull our vision downwards towards the article and opening phrasing, the same bold slab-serif as described earlier is used here at a much larger size expressing the importance of the article and its bitesize informational appeal. Unlike the newspaper design where information is continuously vying for attention, thus great detail and consideration must be extended to the ranking of interest. The magazine is dedicated to the one piece, the one over-powering block of information that will be interpreted without the readers knowledge, much less waiting for approval.

# The Language of Printed Architecture: Part 1

De Saussure's coining of the terms 'parole' and 'langue' respectively referring to the communication within a culture at an individual and social level, can be applied to architects in their work with others of the profession, the context of the construction industry and to the public as a whole. These terms find their grounding in convention, which can be used as another term for the use of applied cultural codes. The book Archispeak by Tom Porter tries to bridge the gap of verbal communication between architects with-what is described as-their very own language, and the nonspecialist. It collates a series of architectural jargon terms. It should be noted that these can only be labelled as jargon to those that do not have a use of its subject, as any field of study will make use of their own vocabulary that seems alien to others. Within the book, it gives a definition for the use of the word convention, a term that is synonymous with stereotypes and a praxis:

"A convention is a given, a rule, an established practice or ritual that is consolidated by majority consent... Architectural drawing particularly is governed by a code of conventions that determines everything from the appropriate thickness of a line to the direction of sunlight entering a plan or elevation." *Porter, T. (2006. p.39)* 

These conventions are the result of De Saussure's parole and langue terms, they are created by the continuous evolution of a profession that prides itself on design and technology. Basing the code system on yet more factors, the community is forced to categorise and rationalise the forms in which they are presented, thus creating stereotypes. Typography is awash with social stereotyping, it has been used as a form of preconception and cultural standing for many centuries. In second century Rome, three different variations of typographic form dictated the users role or recipient of the message. For statues, buildings and laws of great importance the style called 'Monumental' (capitalis monumentalis) was used, now known as a typeface called Trajan, after the inscriptions at the base of the Trajan Column in Rome. In other areas where papyrus was to be saved and in advertising they used 'Rustic Capitals' (capitalis rustica); a condensed vertical handwriting. Finally the peoples script, 'Cursive', intended for day-to-day use. This stereotyping has been used in cultures throughout



Graffiti on the side of a New York City subway train.

history. In Western English speaking countries there is a tendency to pay tribute to the origins of the alphabet, that of Latin. Generally reserved for the regality and social elite, shown by its use in the naming of kings and queens eg. Queen Elizabeth I or King Henry VIII; and engravings in ceremonial manners for special events; the clock face of Big Ben is inscribed with roman numerals to depict prestige and importance. Since the 1970's the development of the cursive script founded expression for the masses in the form of graffiti, a method of social liberation as well as reproach FIG.10.1 & 10.2. The way we use typography influences how we view the subject, and has done for many centuries.

Magazines publicising architecture

focus primarily on the photograph, capturing the design and aiming to portray the focus of the article within the two dimensional image. There is another layer to the architectural communication, which is reserved, chiefly, for the consumption of more specialised information; the drawing. It is of principle importance that unlike a photograph, a drawing, no matter how infinitely detailed and correct to the truth it would like to be, will always be created subjectively, and thus not a true depiction of reality. The architects drawing is often a bewildering compromise to this fact, as it does not aim to re-produce reality, rather than give the reader pragmatic information with regards to the design. These kind



Graffiti tagging inside New York City subway train.

of images are reserved for dedicated architectural magazines and surrounding profession publications, as to the average lay person they hold very little interest. As described earlier the aural communication of language is a natural step, and the addition of a written form, in either the representation of ideas or sounds, is an artificial step. The drawing or diagrammatical depiction of either a set of instructions or more detailed design information can therefore be understood as a tertiary level of the artificial, that does not embody the form of ideas or sounds.

"Thanks to its code of connotation the reading of the photograph is thus always historical; it depends on the reader's 'knowledge' just as though it were a matter of a real language [langue], intelligible only if one has learned the signs" Barthes, R. (1977. p.28.).

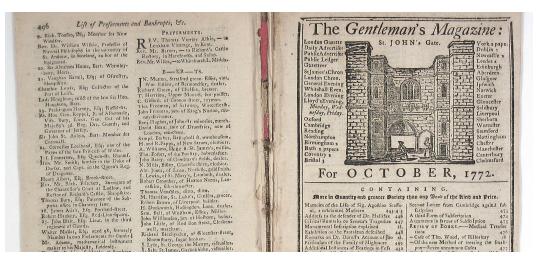
Like the codes of the photograph, the drawing has been worked into the historical culture of the architect; it is not how we experience reality, but how we communicate this expression to others. Signification of the various aspects of this representational method must be taught and learnt, at a level beyond that of normal communication. The inclusion of such images into a publication will create the idea of a technical system, one that will narrate a more precise version of reality. It is unlikely that a magazine will offer information that it believes is beyond the level of its intended readership, thus the dissecting of an architectural detail or master-plan will be reserved for the interpretation of the architectural purveyor. The pragmatic functions of the drawing are immediately apparent, they can be replicated, and mimicked for use in other designs, it is the use of background knowledge that makes the drawing recognisable and in a sense, readable. As a drawing is read, much like a piece of text, the eyes scan for identifiable traits that can act as bench marks for the rest of the translation, to draw data into semantic, syntactic and pragmatic information. As a whole it can be seen just as a treatment of type: the arrangement of elements, the space between strokes, and finishing details or decoration to the drawing itself. The idea of legibility inside an architects plan, obviously depending on its recipient, will be along various levels for the multiple requirements it may need to meet.

When applied to a magazine page the image will always be accompanied by a description, designed to aid and speed its desired understanding. This captioning works only in a semantic dimension, as without the image it offers very little. In contemporary captions the relationship is reversed and the image is used as the description of the caption; this allows for a separation of meaning, as the image validates the caption. The way in which the relationship is portrayed will in turn influence the dissemination of information displayed in the photograph. The text's positioning, backing, colour, size, shape will prejudice the semantic understanding of the communication, these parameters will be greatly dependent on the designed intentions initially for the image, but in totality it will be the over-riding design aesthetic of the publication which will set the tone of the communication between reader and author.

# The Language of Printed Architecture: Part 2

Magazines offer their readers a comprehensive design style that they feel will offer the greatest functionality, in terms of their guiding aesthetic. We can describe the design of a magazineor almost any publication—in this way through the cultural history of message retrieval. Long before Jan Tschichold standardised page layouts, cropping of images and the treatment of text, the contemporary logic and understanding of how a magazine should be arranged was embarked. Sylvanus Urban, a pseudonym for Edward Caves, coined the use of the word 'magazine' from the military, originating from the Arabic

term mahkzin meaning storehouse. He designed *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1731, FIG.11.1, it quickly became the most influential publication of the time, setting the code of this style within the majority of cultural understanding. Since this time there have been many improvements in usability and communication in magazine design. It is largely agreed that the digitisation of the procedure has allowed for an almost infinitely varied and flexible structure. As the speed at which a design within this structure could be edited increased, so did the desire for change.



## Fig.11.1

Gentleman's Magazine from October 1772.

"Working on a poster took us days, and now within half and hour you have your ideas, you can make variations and make a good choice. You can't do better design with a computer, but you can speed up your work enourmously" *Crouwell, W. (2007. In: Helvetica 11:22–11:39)* 

The study of Icon, an architecture and design based magazine, which boasts many awards including that of "best use of typography at the Magazine Design Awards" Icon Magazine (2011). About Icon. Accessed at: http://www.iconeye. com (Accessed 5/4/2011), has a circulation of 26,000 a month and broader readership than that of Architectural Review or Building Design and so does not employ such strong langue of the architectural profession, but rather how it believes architecture should be portrayed. The magazine itself deals with most forms of design, and thus, varied requirements as to the representation of the products and articles displayed between the covers. It is read by design professionals who are looking for the latest information on trends and influential styles, as well as interviews with leaders in their fields. It also brings in readers from the general public who are interested in the areas of architecture and design. As it has a broad readership across various skills and fields of design, it will use less

of a technical language style than some other more dedicated publications. The style of this kind of magazine will use more photographic communication as it is a widely accepted form of language, containing within it the focus and, aided by the caption, meaning that will wish to be conveyed. However, the photograph uses the signifier and signified spectrum, where the code must have been learnt in a historically cultural context, so the reader will define the interpreted message. This context is continuously developing, almost yearly the magazine is re-designed, thus creating and adapting to the code of the style depicted. The effect of time on any publication will have repercussions on how the reader interprets the design, as no change in design will also have a meaning embodied with in it. Just like the content it features, the magazine must keep ahead of, or with, the nature of the trend to which it has been associated; the representation of architecture in Icon is therefore carried with this same aesthetic.

This single style carried throughout the magazine will not be customised for individual articles and images regarding architecture, it will treat it in the same parameters of the full magazine. This condition is true for most depictions of architecture throughout printed and non-printed media, from books to websites, there is a design rhetoric that will impose itself on the architectural content. The influence this has on the reader of the volume with regards to the architecture is defined; within the framework of a magazine to the wider public it allows easy digestion with a heavy emphasis on the photograph, however, in a more specialist based magazine, the emphasis is on information retrieval of various forms, in technical details as well as artistic concept.

As a contrast of content and readership, the magazine Detail, with a worldwide circulation of 27,775 a month, can be drawn on to fulfil the highly specialised criteria of architectural drawings, with priority given to detail work, rather than the photograph. This extensive use of professional language and focus makes for a very different style of publication. With all publications a code of understanding, to which it is aimed, will be probed. The more specialist form of convention which fills the pages of Detail will need to be learned and replicated to be granted the majority consent. As the magazine is currently celebrating its 50th year in publication it would be reasonable to assume that its influence and language have been accepted into societies code of architecture.

How the reader interprets the material being read is influenced by this design style, and the information that is offered to them. By the common conceptions, stylistic details and overall design, the aesthetic of the magazine can be used as a measuring device for the signs and langue of architectural presentation. The magazines design also gives us a way of discerning how they believe architecture should be publicised in the media and the development of the architectural code in public consciousness. To appreciate and understand the ephemeral nature of this trend based system, a linguistic response can be used to follow the communicative use of such designs. Thus we must look at the sign in totality to follow the evolution of the code, and basis of convention in design. Unless recommended or taken out of context, the initial point of common grounding is the cover of a magazine, it is the signifier that sparks the signified of the rest of the publication. As such a cross section of architectural portrayal in the printed media can be ascertained by a study of the cover graphic and the incorporation of the typographic treatment therein.

The dissection of the cover graphic can be represented across a series of categories, these can overlap and relate to each other in various ways, each with a level of graphic control: logo, image, text. For the logo we can look at its typeface, connection to the page, colour, and placement; with the image we can also view its connection to the text and logo, the composition, content, and bordering; with the text, the typeface and positioning are incredibly important, there is also a question of style, grounding and the presence of borders; these conditions of control over the page, brought about by the sections marked before, sets the equilibrium that the page is defined by, they permeate every stage of the full page graphic and are a primary level signifier of what is to come.

Detail have dealt with the effect of time in a very contrasting manner compared to *Icon*, and denotes a very different message to their readers. *Detail* has forged a strong cultural understanding of its design style, which will be recognised instantly by its readers. It focus's on the presentation of information and relies on the use of clear, legible, and single order typography to give a universal meaning to the subjects it portrays.

# **Graphical Analysis** Dissection of The Elements of Architectural Media

The logo for *lcon* is a humanist sansserif typeface with tight, overlapping letter spacing, and set in full minuscule. Until issue 64 it was placed with very clear spacings at side and top, after this point the typeface changed to a more geometric style which reduced the horizontal width and moved it against the spine; the first issue to showcase this design change allowed some easing as the image depicted created a boundary line of black paint that allowed the viewer to feel it filled the recognised title area more similarly to the previous design. It was also up to this point in October 2008 that the logo had been seen as a playful addition and tool to the cover page, with overlapping designs, and interwoven segments worked into the overall aesthetic, the logo was intrinsically part of the cover design. After issue 64 the logo created a boundary line to the content of the cover image that would be placed over any underlying design. As of issue 90 (December 2010) the logo has been fully re-designed, returning to the use of surrounding space and more humanist proportions of the first typeface, however, with a much more open counter to the 'C' and appearing in a full majuscule face. There are intricate details on the 'I' and 'N' that remind the reader of a more geometric and stronger style, which is reiterated throughout the cover.

The cover image of Icon has been versatile over previous years and has mostly featured a portrait of their key feature that month, the politics and reasonings behind these choices are of little interest to this study. However their relationship to the overall graphic and typographical whole has been powerful, and full of information that can be charted and conclusions drawn. Initially in 2003 the image content was at the centre of the design concept, all focus was drawn to this image as it subjugated the surrounding text and logo. Gradually, and commencing at issue 20, in February 2005, more importance was given to the text, by a coloured background to draw attention to its overspilling nature. The image had full reign over the bleed of the page as a full element that either became the focal point of the page-eg. issues: 46, 48 and 61, or as a base for the text to hang and find space in-eg. issues: 39, 58 and 78. Along with the redesign of the logo, in December 2010, came the

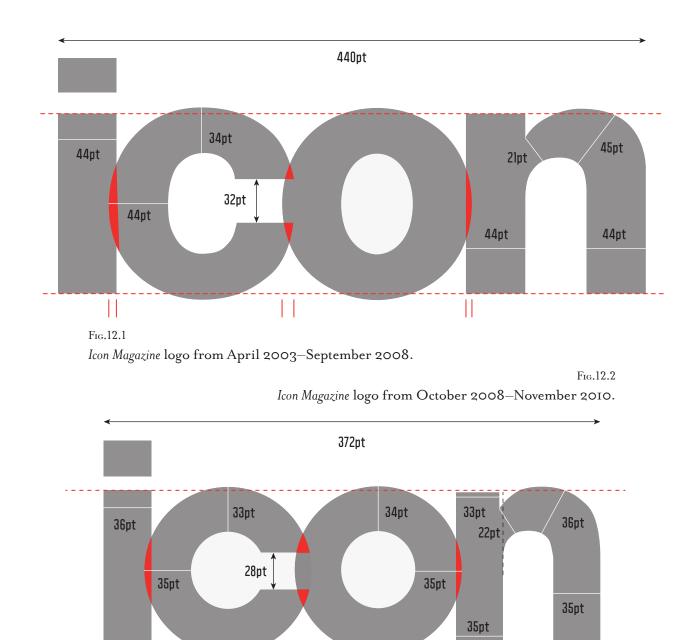
imposition of specified spaces for the elements of the page, this created a border around the image that holds it in place, much like the white space that can hold, or allow a typeface to flow through the page; or a building that frames a view or element within a facade. The inclusion of the structuring of the page like this brings along with it a hinting towards the standardised grid structure of the modernists and to a lesser extent the hierarchy of information within the field of newspaper design.

Text on a magazine cover often highlights articles and features of interest that are worded and designed to catch the readers attention after the main graphic and draw them through between the covers. As with the other main elements of the cover design it was incorporated to respond with minimal interference with the image, and was aligned to no obvious grid structure, but placed at the will of the designer to the image. Initially set in a slab serif typeface with striking pinching contrasts it pushed for a less obvious display, and one that was synonymous with high design. The font called Cholla Sans was designed by the digital type foundry Emigre in 1999; and as such took advantage of contemporary design techniques to create large detailed families of typefaces for many purposes. The feature text would take on many guises over the coming years including emphasis as a bold script font to denote a casual design nature and then to a light rounded uniform geometric typeface; this kind of type treatment continued until October 2008, issue 64 when a full majuscule face imposed itself onto the page; this text was still freely mobile around the page, and brought accent to various areas of the image. Exception issues include: October 2006 (40), with its collaged image layering and hand drawn type which flows through the piece, and December 2009 (78); which displays article contents in a striking pink small type that gives the impression of two solid blocks intersecting each other, with the use of the captioning text secured in the joint; there has been a general sense that the text is secondary to the image and its composition.

These levels of control within the page have created the code of design magazines. With their wide circulation they have the ability to influence popular judgement of the current trends and state of design, with this is bundled the design of architecture.

Whilst *Detail* magazine has been operating since 1961, it is the contemporary version that will be studied here. Since the beginning of the twenty-first century there have been no changes to the Detail logo, not one. It is of European design with a low Caps height and centred bar to the 'E' and to the counter of the 'A', the letters are functional but with a fair contrast between the light and dark strokes and small amount of flair to the 'E'. Like the magazine itself, they display to the reader the sense of what will be found between the covers. Secondary text on the cover is set in a thin sans-serif font, very similar to the typeface Helvetica Neue Lt, a font designed for its neutrality and lack of overstatement; the text is fully justified thus making full use of the layout space it has available.

Images used are enlarged line drawings of what is assumed to be building details, with sections filled with block colour, which is used elsewhere on the cover, in bullet points of areas of special interest. The general image is one of technical distinction, basing itself on the information offered and not leading edge display styles and graphics. It follows very strong but minimal grid layout orders and from the graphic examples shown, has again, not changed in the last eleven years.



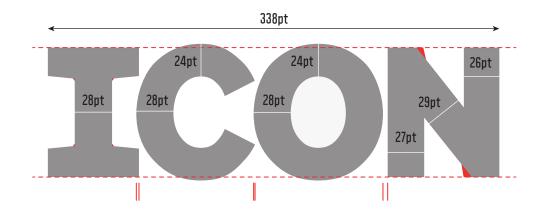


FIG.12.3 Icon Magazine logo from December 2010–present day.



Icon Magazine logo. Comparison of stress and weights in the letter 'O' and 'C'.

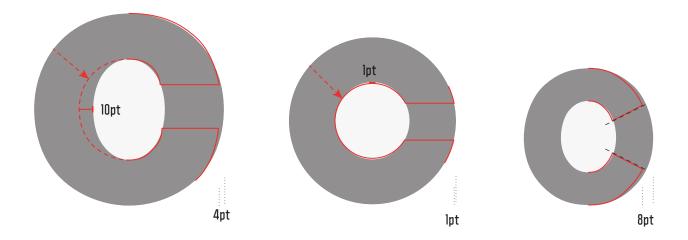




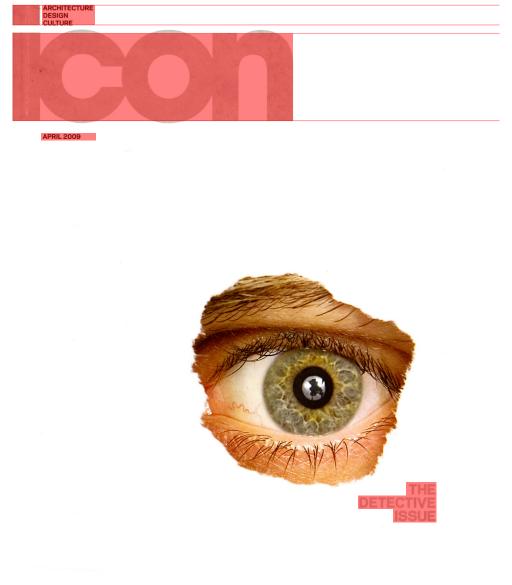
FIG.12.5 Icon Magazine. Issue 10, February 2004.



Fig.12.6 Icon Magazine. Issue 54, December 2007.



F1G.12.7 Icon Magazine. Issue 64, October 2008.

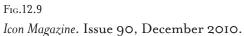


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F1G.12.8 Icon Magazine. Issue 70, April 2009.

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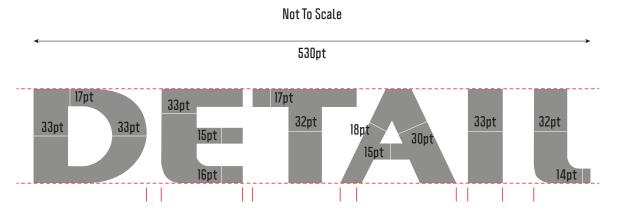




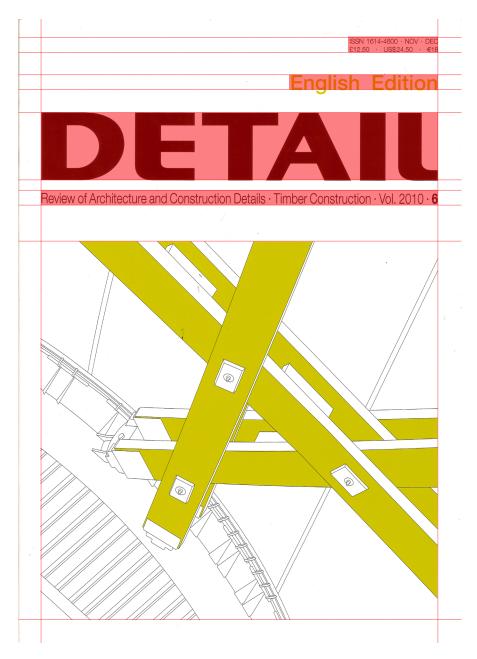


F1G.12.10 Icon Magazine. Issue 95, May 2011.

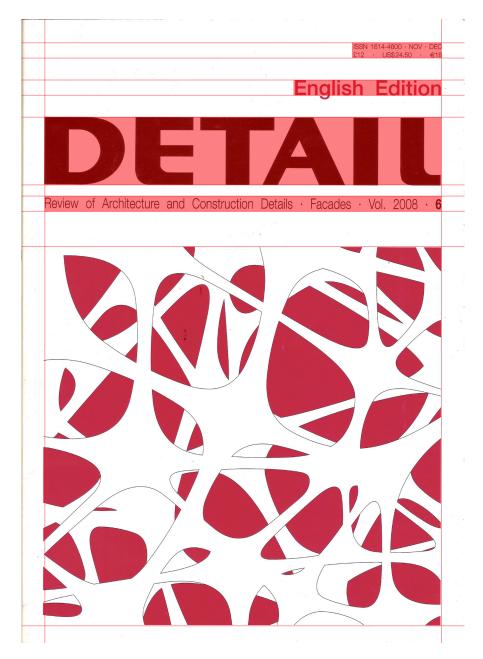
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# **Conclusion** The Future of Specialists

The architectural magazine can be read at any scale, from the shape of a single letter, the spacing between lines, and the minute alignment details that give flow to a layout; or at the scale of totality, guided by shapes and colours to see the overall aesthetic. All marks on the page, and the lack of marks, will denote a message to the reader, from which the connoted will become apparent and interpreted. Using the magazines detailed previously we can see how the formations of shapes on a page will be intentionally designed to give the reader the ability to instantly recognise style of the content, whilst manipulating their perceptions of the information delivered. The relationship between content and identity, signifier and signified, has been fought over in magazines since their inception. The large proportion of debate regards who is in control of the final understanding of the sign, the designer or reader. We can see that no matter the design intentions and the various use of communication there will almost always be some level of end-user interpretation through their personal culture and history. The idea of shared cultural history embodies the evolving publication of architectural design, it is an overwhelming message that can colour our daily lives, as we seek to interpret the world around us.

Since Barthes wrote of the myth as a of second-order signs many technological and cultural changes have occurred; focusing on the design and treatment of type, these changes have prominently come through the medium of computing. The expectations and abilities of the consumer have been elevated far beyond the capacities of the basic systems found at the beginning of post-structuralist debate. Few objects or innovations manifest this technological advancement more succinctly than that of the mobile, customised, and dynamic device. The inclusion into the cultural understanding of information retrieval of these devices creates an un-paralleled demand, and ability to constantly selectively re-order the typographical treatment of data. This brings about unsettling principles of the same data can becoming received and interpreted in various ways, not, as we have seen many times in previous years, by the designers choice, but by the consumer or reader. Placing the design of the signifier in the hands of the reader negates Barthes

Death of The Author, removing the identity of design from the author, and creating one entity that is both author and reader at once. Thus this layer of signifier adaption can be placed between De Saussure's concept and sound-image model, and that of Barthes' mythology model, augmenting the Barthes' second-level signifier. In the school of Semiosis, the study of signs, there is the term metasign; used to describe a cultural context of learning experiences. Including this metasign into the models allows for personal choice and free-will, within the bounds of the program; accommodating the pluralistic nature of reader and consumer identity, FIG.13.1. Choice in signifier will have consequences on the stereotyping of typography that has been perceived throughout history. As the conventions of type display have been cemented into culture the metasign may, initially at least, have minimal impact due to the fact that language will be connoted to us through previous design applications. The direct result of such flexibility will be unclear for a large period of time for this reason.

The application of this change to the representation of architecture, as a profession of permanence, can only become more specialised. Adaption to the acceleration of the ephemeral

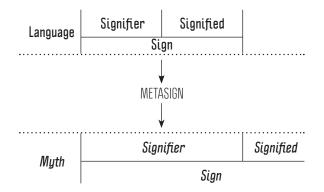


Fig.13.1

Augmentation of De Saussure and Barthes linguistic models to include the Metasign.

demands of democratic design has been to separate into more thinly rooted genres, with searching theories trying to find the current and next 'ism'. The magazine, and the body of information available within, will have to rely on their individual language used in imagery and text for its transmission of identity and design. At present the magazine is in direct competition with many other media to supply the message of architectural design; this competition causes a diversification in supply styles. The current media use graphic language to deliver the code of design, and how they feel it should be delineated; augmentation of this langue is not bringing designs together with common uniting principles, but rather branching further apart. It is a condition that will continue for the foreseeable future

as, quoting Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown: "architects are out of the habit of looking non judgementally at the environment because orthodox Modern architecture is... dissatisfied with existing conditions." Venturi, R., Brown, D. S. (1977. p.3) This Modernist view of the current state of representation denies the existence of the historical, and thus the culture attached. Typified in design by Beatrice Warde's Crystal Goblet as she primes the example of design for function, but stereotypes the context that the crystal was created in, that of the clay or gold chalice.

The typographical choices of the various media available embody the state of architectural design; the pluralistic society driven by demand and supply, once thought of as a singularity, has been awakened to the openness of design. This multiplicity of cultures and theories takes its form in the way information is displayed. From the examples studied we can see a deepening of cultural language, and a craving for the attention of their intended market. As changes take place and theories diversify "information as a scarce commodity is replaced by overabundance, creating intense competition for human attention-rendering attention itself scarce." Poggernpohl, S. H. (2002. p.247). The eventual neutrality of publications that try to circumvent the varied, and almost spontaneous nature of design theories and trends, can only be to the detriment and isolation of the architectural language manifested in the graphics used. The democratisation or type and design across the 1980's and 1990's has lead to a community able to perceptively achieve anything, and has thus created for itself a multitude of different identities. Magazine design for the subdivided genres captures a moment of the cultural zeitgeist for study and interpretation; designs of the cultural code created by these moments influence our perceptions. Demand and supply of the architectural narrative is becoming stretched, and weakened by the consistent evolution of image, bringing mediocrity to the masses. There is only a

small niche for the specialist, they will become the craftsman, perfecting their art and becoming ignorant of the other branches of communication.

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