

Typography &
Architecture

D E S I
G N · S T
U D I O
N I N E

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STATEMENT OF DESIGN

“Graphic design is the communication framework, through which these messages about what the world is now... reach us.”

Poynor, R. (2007, *Helvetica*, 2:48–3:06).

The purpose of design is to communicate the message. A standard bearer for the power of visual arrangement and typographical treatment. There is more than just the designer of the piece involved in the understanding of the message, the reader interweaves their own interpretation.

Design in the twenty second century has to accept this as fact to design thoughtfully and with reason. This applies no less to the field of the media’s portrayal of architecture. There is nothing stopping architecture from being able to stand out on its own, instead of being caught in the whimsical and ephemeral nature of trends. It is a profession of permanence and deserves design to suit.

With such pluralism available in the world of design, however, a single style can no longer be applied to any field within this world. Tailored solutions to the varying genres of architecture will show their worldliness and ability to assign themselves to permanence.

“If we’re standing on the shoulders of giants, what are we reaching for?”

Emigre no.65, 2003.

On the cover of Emigre no.65 there is a the quote by Rudy VanderLans, which summarises the position of contemporary design. The magazine, created by VanderLans and Zuzana Licko, contains the thoughts and designs of some of the worlds greatest designers. It debates the goals of what would be called ‘good’ design and where the profession is directing itself, and with what reason. Goals like these should be discussed as openly, and frequently as possible to keep the theories alive within practical application.

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on the Shoulders
of Giants
What are we
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“A stained glass window of marvelous beauty but a failure as a window.”

Beatrice Warde. 1932.

Given as an address to the British Typographers Guild.

The address given to the British Typographers Guild in 1932, entitled ‘The Crystal Goblet’ is one of the most inspiring and appreciable pieces to have analogised the position of modernist design. Warde describes two vessels, both for the drinking of wine. One, a clay/gold chalice, encrusted with diamonds and other rare jewels, a stunning sight for the eye. The other, a crystal goblet of impossible clarity, designed perfectly to showcase all the properties of the wine: its colour, bouquet, and taste. The drinker who chooses the crystal is labelled a modernist for their choice of reciprocal.

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“Pictures with meaning, like writing, call for a lexis.”

Roland Barthes. 1983.
p.95 *Barthes: Selected Writings*.

Roland Barthes is a celebrated post-structuralist philosopher, credited with works like ‘Mythologies’, ‘Image, Music and Text’, and ‘Empire of Signs’. Challenging the idea of single message and the relationship between the author (designer) and the reader. His work in the field of semiotics has provoked much inspiring questioning into the realities of design communication. This particular quote, in a theoretical method at least, calls for the thousand words a picture is worth to be recognised and understood.

PICTURES
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“Typography is a beautiful group of letters not a group of beautiful letters.”

Matthew Carter.
Typographical saying.

Typography is the colour of a page, individual characters create a very small proportion of what is available for creative solutions. Characters come together on a page to form a whole image, or colour, this dictates the achievements of the design as a whole. Matthew Carter has worked in almost every form of typographical design, from metal punch cutting to pioneering digital typefaces that have become synonymous with daily life. The importance of education in design and typography can surely be championed by Carter, regarded as the most widely read man in history. In our computer based world he has been crucial to the use of the word processor and from there, any text on any digitised screen. Designing fonts like ‘Georgia’, ‘Tahoma’, and ‘Verdana’ he is read everyday on computers across the world.

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