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APPLYING THE ART OF DESIGN



TERMINOLOGY

(See glossary for definitions.)

Age of Information
Industrial Age
industrial design
environmental design
graphic design
Web and multimedia design
research
thumbnails
roughs
comprehensives
design studio
in-house design

KEY POINTS

This chapter defines the field of graphic design and describes its processes. It describes and illustrates the stages in the development of a finished design. Finally, it introduces potential career choices to demonstrate the wide parameters of this challenging field of study.

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES

This book is about applying the *principles* of visual perception to the *practice* of visual communication. The premise is that a course of study in graphic design should begin by applying the principles and theory of basic design. Interwoven with information about how we perceive and shape a two-dimensional surface will be its application to graphic design problems. As you learn specific graphic design terminology and techniques in this text, you will also discover how closely this ties in with the basic theory of 2-D design introduced in previous classes.

Students often believe that a class in graphic design or computer graphics is about the hardware and software. That's only a partial truth. The computer is a powerful, complex, exciting tool to be mastered, but the end product is no better than the concept that defines it. The computer is a tool and a partner that aids in the development of an original concept. The artist and designer are responsible for the research, concepts, and visual development necessary to realizing the final design.

Graphic design is sometimes defined as *problem solving*. Problems in graphic design almost always relate to visual communication. There are specific methods of creating a design that communicates visually and conceptually. This text discusses them in simple and straightforward language and contains many fine illustrations throughout, from various periods of art and design history. Discover how applying basic design theory and principles can enhance communication. Explore the nature of visual perception, the role of visual illusion, and the relationship between visual and verbal communication, as well as the full range of basic design skills.

The study of shapes on a flat ground yields a great deal of information about how we see, understand, and interact with the image on the page. This information can be applied to solve a wide range of graphic design problems.

A designer is not in search of one solution, but several. There is no one correct answer in graphic design, but a rich set of possibilities. This book presents principles such as gestalt unit forming, balance, emphasis, and eye direction as tools, not as rules. Use them to increase your options and widen your vision. These methods may become intuitive after a while, but in the beginning, practice studying and consciously applying them. Later, you will learn to interpolate and experiment, combining formal study with a more personal, intuitive approach. The poster by John Mattos (www.johnmattos.com) shown in **Figure 1-1** incorporates several design principles to deliver a dynamic sense of excitement. This portrait was created for the *Baltimore Sun* newspaper in the Illustrator program.



1-1 John Mattos. *Portrait for the Baltimore Sun. This digital illustration created in Adobe Illustrator uses a dynamic series of diagonal lines to express the energy of the musical sound. Visit the artist's Web site at www.johnmattos.com. Courtesy of the artist.*

WHAT IS GRAPHIC DESIGN?

Graphic design is traditionally defined as problem solving on a flat, two-dimensional surface. Package design, Web design, and multimedia expand the field into 3-D and time-based 4-D applications. New-media designers sometimes refer to themselves as *information architects*, referring to the importance of organizational hierarchy. *The organization of information is a vital part of all graphic design.*

The designer conceives, plans, and executes designs that communicate a specific message to a specific audience within given limitations—financial, physical, or psychological. A poster design, for example, may be restricted to two colors for financial reasons. It may be physically restricted in size by the press it will be run on or because of the mailing method. It may

be restricted by the standard viewing distance for a poster in a hall or store window, by the size of a Web surfer's screen, or by the age and interests of the group for whom it is intended. Nevertheless, the designer must say something specific to a given audience about a given product or piece of information. Communication within specific parameters is the vital element in graphic design.

It is this element of communication that makes graphic design such an interesting and ever-evolving contemporary field. Designers must present current information to modern taste with up-to-date tools, staying informed about trends, issues, inventions, and developments. The Web site design by Planet Propaganda in **Figure 1-2** is an excellent and lively but at the same time disciplined example (www.planetpropaganda.com).



(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)



1-2 This Web site for the Planet Propaganda design firm uses repetition and variation to present and unite their varied creations. Visit the studio's Web site at www.planetpropaganda.com/work/. Courtesy of the studio.

Design education is a lifetime activity. Constant change requires constant renewal. Graphic design is not a career for a slow-paced, nostalgic person. To keep up with this fast-changing field, you must approach the basic principles, new technologies, and practices with a flexible and curious mindset.

Values

Our current Western society is based on processing information more than producing goods. We are in the *Age of Information*, no longer the *Industrial Age*. The Industrial Age was characterized by a population evenly divided between agricultural and manufacturing industries. The development of large-scale energy production and metallurgy are examples of technological innovations vital to the Industrial Age.

The Age of Information is a term applied to the period when movement of information became faster than physical movement, during the late 20th century. The product itself, the information disseminated, the point of view illustrated, and the mode of communication

used all contribute to shaping the world in this Age of Information.

Ask early in your career how you feel about goals and values. As a designer you will make career decisions that shape your life and contribute to shaping the character of our society. **Figure 1-3** is an example of design work that expresses a personal vision for peace created by illustrator Ronald J. Cala II.

A successful designer vividly described one of his early career decisions. His first job out of college was as a junior designer at a small advertising firm, where he was put to work designing a hot dog package. After preparing several roughs, he presented them to the client, only to be sent back to the drawing board. Rejected time after time, the designer grew more familiar with hot dogs than he ever wanted to become. He persevered, learned the basics, and now has his own firm specializing in educational and service-oriented accounts. This allows him more creative freedom and work that is consistent with his personal values.

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1-3 This poster created by **Ronald J. Cala II** for Calagraphic Design in Pennsylvania is part of a campaign for peace. The negative space creating the dove graphically expresses the idea that peace can be achieved only if we work together. Courtesy of the artist. 



April Greiman, a well known contemporary artist and designer, created this mural (**Figure 1–4**), titled “Big Bowl of Rice Finished.” A video still of this 8200-square-foot public art commission was captured and translated into oil paint. Rice is a symbol of abundance. This is an example of creative freedom that is expressed through an integration of media on a large scale.

Most beginning design jobs do not usually offer many opportunities for the exercise of creative freedom. For the most part, we are designers working in a consumer society. Designers are integrally involved in the production and marketing of consumer goods and disseminating information. However, we must consider our potential impact on society. The major artistic movements of the 20th century each had a theory of society that provided a structure and direction for their artwork. The futurists, constructivists, dadaists, and surrealists actively helped define and reflect their society and their role in relationship to it. As designers, we have a vital role that needs to be continually examined as it shifts and changes.

Creating a design that is appropriate for a given product and its audience may not always give you an opportunity to exercise your own sense of aesthetics. Laying out a motorcycle products catalog may not provide much of an opportunity to experiment with visual effects. But the application of sound design principles always applies. This in itself can be very rewarding. In addition to directing the visual to a particular audience, the designer must also consider the individual client’s preferences. There are many different kinds of

jobs in this field, and a beginning designer is wise to plan on staying at an entry position only until skills and experience permit advancement.

Each of us must satisfy our own values in our career path, as well as learn to satisfy the requirements of the workplace. Try asking yourself these questions: Are there products or points of view you do (or do not) want to promote? How important is salary? What will make this career successful for you? What kind of lifestyle do you want for yourself? How hard are you willing to work? Where do you want to be in 10 years? How can you plan to achieve your goals?

Design Fields

The field of applied design includes industrial design, environmental design, graphic design, and Web and multimedia design. *Industrial design* is the design and development of three-dimensional functional objects.

Figure 1–5 shows a strikingly elegant teapot by Marianne Brandt, considered an important landmark in the history of functional design. Ms. Brandt (1893–1983) is best known as a Bauhaus designer and metalworker, although she also worked in a variety of other media. She is regarded as one of the leaders of the Bauhaus style. Brandt’s designs for household objects such as teapots, lamps, and ashtrays are considered the origins of modern industrial design.

Machines, tools, kitchen implements, and other products are among the objects shaped by the industrial designer. Package design for these objects is often placed in the category of graphic design because it



1–4 April Greiman. Wilshire Vermont Mural. Courtesy of the artist.



1–5 Marianne Brandt. *This teapot beautifully integrates positive and negative shapes into this utilitarian object.* Brandt, Marianne (1893–1983) Teapot, 1924. Nickel silver and ebony. height, 7" (width), 9". Manufacturer: Bauhaus Metal Workshops, Weimar, Germany. Phyllis B. Lambert Fund. (186.1958.1a-c) Location: The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, U.S.A. Photo Credit: Digital Image © The Museum of Modern Art/ Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY / © 2010 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn



must be designed and printed flat before assembling. The industrial designer attempts to simplify the use and manufacture of objects as well as increase their safety and efficiency.

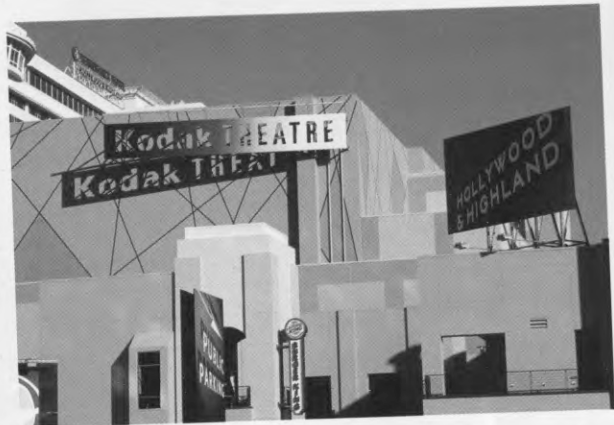
Environmental design is a large general category that includes the design of buildings, landscapes, and interiors. Again, the designer attempts to fashion designs that are safe, efficient, and aesthetic. Environmental design develops physical environments. It focuses on engaging people as they move through space. Deborah Sussman has long been a leader in the field of environmental graphic design. **Figure 1-6** shows her dynamic integration of typography and environment. She has worked at the interface of graphic and environment design for more than 30 years. Her credits include the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, Seattle's opera house, and Disney World. She creates permanent and temporary installations for architectural and public spaces.

Graphic design is the design of things people see and read. The field is constantly expanding. Posters, books, signs, billboards, advertisements, commercials, brochures, package design, Web sites, and motion graphics are what graphic designers create. They attempt to maximize both communication and aesthetic quality.

Web and multimedia design are the design of interactive, often motion-based graphics. Graphic designers are often expected to have skills in both print and Web design. Multimedia design is information in more than one form. It may include the use of text, audio, graphics, animations, and full-motion video. **Figure 1-7** shows a still from Planet Propaganda's TV ad sampler for the Wisconsin Film Festival. View the full multimedia creation on this book's accompanying Web site. 

Buildings, environments, products, Web sites, and written communications affect us whether they have been carefully and deliberately designed or not. A printed piece always communicates more than words alone, because it uses a visual language. It may, however, communicate exactly the opposite of the intended message. It can damage the image of a company or cause. Learning to apply the *theory* of design and information processing to the *practice* of graphic design helps achieve the intended communication. *There is an intricate relationship between form and function.* That is the underlying premise of this text. All information is structured to help with this goal.

Designers must interface with fields other than their own. They need to address the basic marketing con-



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1-6 a, b Sussman/Prejza & Company created this dynamic 3-D signage for the Hollywood & Highland development, which houses the Kodak Theatre (home of the Academy Awards), cinemas, shopping, entertainment, and overnight accommodations. The designs for project identity, signs and graphics use the interplay of shadows and light to evoke Hollywood glamour. Deborah Sussman is recognized as a pioneer of environmental graphic design. Visit their Web site for more details. 



1-7 This animated Wisconsin Film Festival TV ad sampler is created by the design firm **Planet Propaganda**
Courtesy of the studio.



cerns of the client; the concerns of colleagues such as illustrators, photographers and Web designers; and the requirements of the printing and online distribution processes.

Some graphic designers do a whole range of work—typography, illustration, photography, corporate identity, logo design, and advertising. Others specialize in only one of these areas. Whatever area of design or illustration you pursue, it is always best to follow the design process.

THE DESIGN PROCESS

Research

The first step in preparing a design solution is *research*, or determining the parameters of the problem. Who is the audience? What constraints are there in format, budget, and time? What is the goal of the project?

The next step is to gather and study all the related materials. Presenting this design to a client (or an instructor) will be easier if it is backed with solid research and justified from a perspective the client will understand. Designers may work in a large firm or agency where most of the research and information gathering is done by marketing professionals. Visual research, however, is the designer's area. It's important to know what has been done before and what is being created locally and nationally for this type of design situation. Develop a feeling for contemporary work by studying design annuals, periodicals, and Web sites.

Designers also keep an electronic and/or print file of anything that is interesting or well done. A personal file of such samples can be useful to look through for ideas to build on. Subscribe to graphic design magazines and plan to save all the back issues. The Internet is also an excellent source of good design. For example, the AIGA Web site shows thousands of award winning designs. Never simply lift another designer's solution; that is unethical. Looking at how someone else solved a particular problem, however, is part of your education. Designers are expected to build on the work of others. We do not create in a vacuum, but are influenced and inspired by the thousands of samples of good and bad design we are exposed to every day.

Your challenge as a beginning designer is to expand your visual vocabulary. Use that vocabulary to build new designs. This is similar to an author using a word vocabulary developed over time. An author does not have to create a new alphabet or a new language in order to create an original piece of literature. He or she needs to combine these elements in an original fashion.

As part of the research stage, search for a creative approach to your design problem in as many ways as possible. Build your visual and conceptual vocabulary. Try looking up a dictionary definition of your topic. Look in an encyclopedia for additional background. Search the Internet for information on the topic. Use a thesaurus. Make a word-association list of everything you can think of that is associated with your topic. Save personally significant visuals and collectibles. *Approach a design as both prose and poetry.* Be both logical and intuitive.

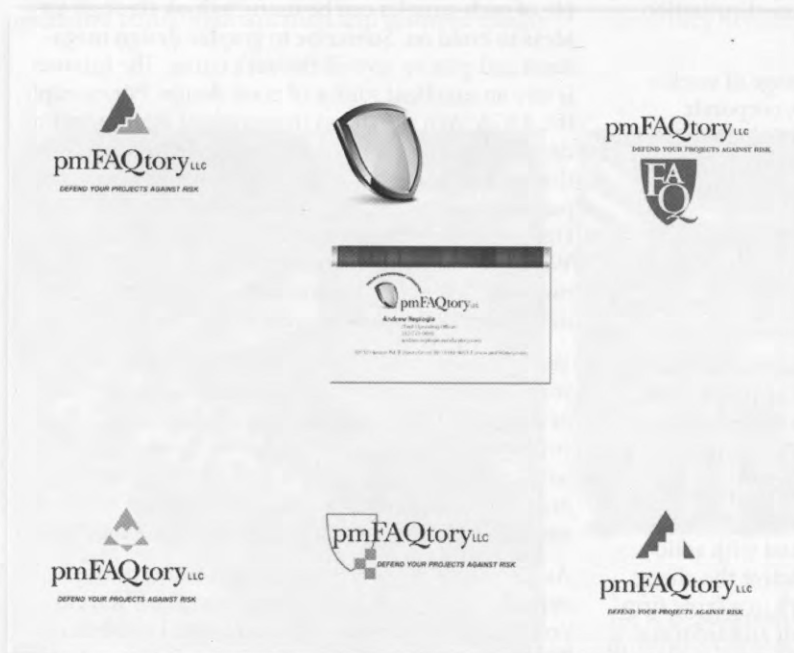
Thumbnails

A designer needs to explore many alternative solutions. *Thumbnails* are the second step in the design process. They are idea sketches that provide visual evidence of the thinking, searching, and sorting process that leads to final solutions.

Exercising the mind with thumbnail sketches is like exercising any muscle. The more it is exercised, the more powerful it gets. The more you work to develop ideas through small, preliminary sketches (pencil or computer), the richer will be the range of solutions available to choose from for the final design. Never shortcut this stage, because it determines the strength of the final solution. For a student, the thumbnails are more important than the final project, because they demonstrate thinking, experimentation, and growth. Keep these thumbnails. The ideas in them may be of use to you in other projects, and prospective employers may wish to see evidence of the flexibility and tenacity of your thinking.

Figure 1-8 shows a series of thumbnails created by designer Candy Thieme for her client. She used Adobe Illustrator to generate very polished “thumbs.” PmFAQtory’s goal is to provide prospective clients across the United States with project management–related consulting services and products. The shield device reflects a strong defense in battle. The triangle reflects scope, time, and cost. See this book’s accompanying Web site for more information on this design process. 

Thumbnails are usually small because they are meant to be fast and not detailed. They are drawn in *proportion* to the dimensions of the finished piece. Fill a sheet of paper with ideas. Never reject an idea; just sketch it and go on. Work through the idea with your pencil or mouse from every perspective you can imagine. Then try taking one good idea and doing several variations on it. If you’re using a pencil, tracing paper or lightweight bond is excellent for this purpose. You may also want to cut and paste and recombine existing images



1-8 Freelance designer **Candy Thieme** created this series of thumbnail proposals for her client’s logo. The final choice is shown in a business card prepared for press output in Adobe Illustrator. A description of the process can be found at this text’s Web site.  Courtesy of the artist.

for new effects. It may be faster to work at a size determined by existing elements. In that case, the thumbnails may become larger or smaller. The principle of “sketching through” ideas holds true no matter what the size or format of your preliminary investigation. Be as neat and precise as is necessary to show the relationship between elements and their general shapes. The stages of thumbnails, roughs, comps, and camera-ready art often blend together when executed on a computer. The danger with this blending is that although software may help provide quick, workable solutions, it can be tempting to shortcut the planning stages. Thumbnails are often successfully done by hand. They are vital to good design and in whatever size or stage of polish they must exhibit flexible, tenacious visual thinking.

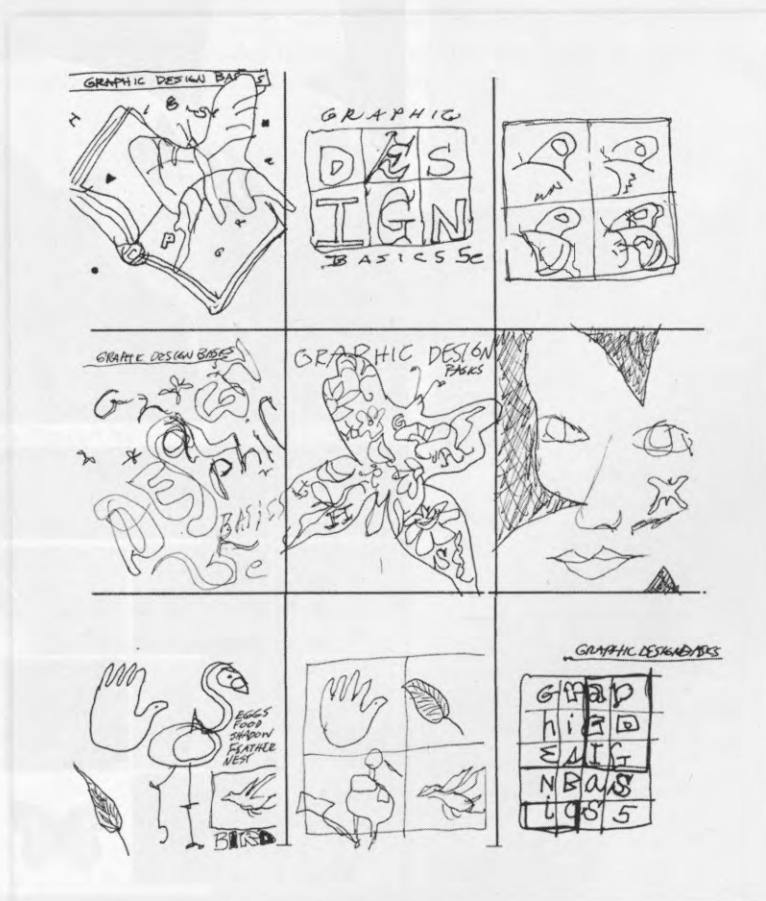
Figure 1-9 shows how the pen-and-ink thumbnails for the cover design of the fifth edition of this text investigated a variety of approaches.

Roughs

Once the range of ideas has been fully explored, select the best thumbnails for refinement into more polished half or full size designs called *roughs*. Talk this choice over with other designers and with the instructor. Later, as a professional designer, you will present the thumbnails to an art director or the *roughs* to a client for review. Or you may be the art director who is reviewing someone else's design. Often, considerable redefining and rethinking occur at these stages. The thumbnail process may begin all over again. Be prepared to be flexible in this field.

When using computer, you may want to do a full-size rough. The purpose is to test whether the original idea works on a larger scale. Take this opportunity to work out small problem areas that you could not deal with or foresee at the thumbnail stage. The typestyle,

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1-9 Initial pen-and-ink thumbnails by the author investigated various ideas for the cover of GDB 5. A. E. Arntson.



the other shapes, the relationship of these elements to the edge of the format, and the color and value distribution can all be refined at this stage. **Figure 1-10** shows three of the rough designs presented for the cover of the previous edition of this text. Consider which you prefer, and what new design you would propose.

Comprehensives

The *comprehensive*, or *comp*, is the fourth step in the design process. It is the piece of art presented to the client for final approval. Although based on the rough, it is much more precisely executed. Once again, it is important to consult with art directors, editors, or the instructor before choosing the rough idea to refine for a final solution.

The client can judge the design solution from the comp because it looks much like the finished printed piece. There is no need to explain “what would go there” or how “this would be smoother.” A comp is usually computer generated, with all components assembled and exactly positioned. It can include such diverse elements as photographs, computer-generated type, electronic illustrations, and a scanned pen-and-ink rendering.

In most projects from this text, the comp will be the final step. These comps will form the basis of a student portfolio that is built upon throughout a course of study. In the workplace, the final stage is the printed project.

Comps take different forms depending on the media for which they are intended. Television and film ideas are presented as storyboards, with key scenes drawn in simplified and stylized fashion, or as abbreviated animation saved on CD. The three-dimensional comp for a package design may be presented in multiples in order to demonstrate the stacking display possibilities of the package. **Figure 1-11** shows the potential complexity of a CD package. A multipage publication such as an annual report or a newsletter is usually represented by the cover and certain key pages in the layout design. A Web site proposal, on the other hand, is presented to the client with a flow chart and key pages completed.

Roughs and comps can be sent to a client for approval via CD, e-mail, or fax. This streamlines the process and makes the designer and client’s diverse locales a less important consideration.



1-10 Computer-generated rough designs were created by the author based on the initial pen-and-ink sketches for the cover of the previous edition. A. E. Arntson. Letterforms in version 3 designed by Seth Vandeleeest.



1-11 Planet Propaganda created this Grammy-nominated CD package for jazz musician Ben Sidran’s Concert for Garcia Lorca. Courtesy of the studio.



Presentation

Practice promoting your concept verbally before presenting the visual solution. Refer to the client's perspective and goals. Discuss the design enthusiastically in terms the client or art director can understand. Be prepared, however, to listen and to compromise. If revisions are called for, note them carefully. In this text, students are often asked to write a brief presentation to accompany the visual solution. Class critiques provide an opportunity to practice verbal presentation and listening skills.

Ready for Press

Once accepted, the job is now ready for production, as discussed in Chapter 11. The comprehensive shown to the client may look exactly like the finished piece, but it often cannot be used to produce the final printed product. Everything must be sent to the printer ready for press. In a two- or three-color design, printer's inks must be indicated. Paper selection is an important part of the process.

The file must be cleanly prepared, with all links and fonts included. Electronic files that print well inside a classroom may not "RIP" on an imagesetter at the printing company. Figure 1-8 shows a final print-ready version of a file prepared in Adobe Illustrator. Many designers are responsible for selecting and communicating with a printer. Often the work must be bid on by two or three printers, giving each an opportunity to estimate costs. Finding a good printer and establishing an easy working relationship are important. A good printer can be an excellent reference for answering tricky production questions and suggesting alternate solutions to an expensive design.

The first chapters in this text focus on building concepts and understanding design structure, whereas later chapters discuss the reproduction process. Build a strong design before focusing on how to reproduce it. Begin the first project with a respect for precision, accuracy, and cleanliness. *There should be no compromise with perfection in this line of work.*

CAREERS

The design field encompasses many working environments. What suits one person may feel like a limitation or undue pressure to another. It is wise to have an idea of what the opportunities are before beginning a job search. The following categories give an idea of the array of design positions available.

Design Studios

Clients with various needs and backgrounds may seek the assistance of a design studio. The studio will have designers, production artists, account service representatives, and often illustrators and photographers on staff or on call. Design studios hire freelance creative help when their regular staff is too busy or lacks specific skills to handle a project. Designers working in a studio generally have other artists around to discuss and share ideas. The number of working hours spent on each assignment is logged and the time billed to a client's account or to the studio itself. A high value is placed on an ability to work quickly and with a clear understanding of the client's needs and preferences. Clients consist primarily of various advertising agencies and large and small companies or institutions. The graphic design work prepared for these clients includes brochures, mailers, illustration and photography, catalogs, display materials, Web sites, and promotional videos. Studios vary in size and in their client roster. Small studios with only a couple of designers who have good skills and equipment can provide full-service design. Such a small studio can provide a rich opportunity for design variety. Larger studios can provide room for advancement and a stimulating creative environment with other designers. **Figure 1-12** shows an illustration by Matt Zumbo, who has his own design studio.

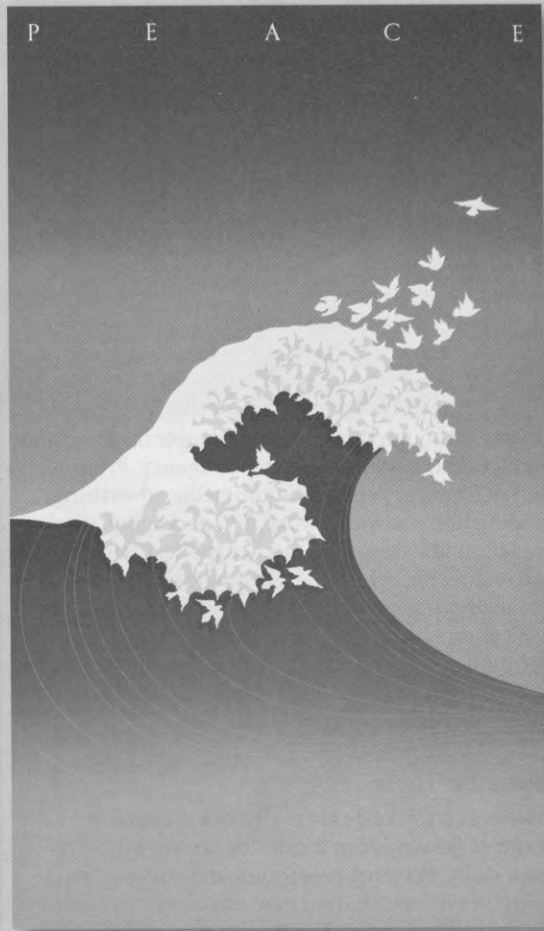
In-House Design

Many institutions employ their own in-house design staff. These in-house designers serve the particular needs of a wide variety of institutions, including hospitals, banks, newspapers, insurance companies, publishers, museums, colleges and universities, and large and small manufacturing concerns. In-house design organizations vary greatly according to the type of product or service their institution provides. **Figure 1-13** is a personal statement by university designer McRay Magleby. For many years, Magleby was creative director at Brigham Young University, where he and his staff produced publications, books, and posters. Recently, he worked for the University of Utah, while also creating independent design projects. *How* magazine named him as one of the "Twelve Most Influential Designers Today."

In-house designers work on projects that relate to the parent institution's activities. Individual designers may keep track of their hours if the design department bills its time to other departments. But many in-house design operations offer services free to the other departments within the company. Individual designers may work closely with the client or receive



1-12 Freelance illustrator **Matt Zumbo** created this illustrated logo for *The Frog Bucket*. His projects range from national to regional to local clients. Courtesy of the artist.



1-13 **McRay Magleby** created this *Wave of Peace* poster. The choice of color and creation of shapes reinforce the concept. Research the Web for more information on this significant designer, who is a professor of graphic design at the University of Utah and formerly the creative director for BYU. McRay manages his own studio, *Magleby and Company*. Courtesy of the artist.

all information and instructions funneled through an art director.

An in-house design organization may lack the challenge of interpreting and representing various clients that a design studio provides. However, an advantage to working in an in-house operation is the opportunity to get to

know one company in depth by developing a relationship with it and its various departments. Often the deadline pressure is less and the job security better than in a studio. The growth of computer software has caused a boom in in-house design as more and more companies find it possible to meet many of their publication needs in-house.

Printing Companies

Many positions for designers exist at local printing companies. These companies sometimes have their own in-house design departments or hire interns to do prepress work. A printing company can be an excellent place to gain valuable experience in the technical aspects of reproduction.

Advertising Agencies

Ideas and sales are the cornerstones of the advertising agency. It is dominated by people who deal in words. Account executives bring in the jobs and develop the advertising concepts with the creative director. The creative director, designer, and copywriter execute the concepts, although the number of people involved and the exact tasks vary from agency to agency. Projects cover all forms of print and multimedia advertising, including film and video work, TV, packaging, display, print ads, billboards, and Internet applications. A good creative director is versatile. He or she is skilled at conceptualizing and presenting ideas verbally and visually as well as directing others and organizing assignments. More money is spent on advertising than on any other area of graphic design, which is reflected in the salary a designer can expect to earn in this field.

Freelance

Working as a freelance artist allows a maximum amount of freedom, but it calls for certain business-related skills. Personal promotion, networking, and a constant vigilance to find new customers will help

establish a freelance career. Good organizational skills in billing and record keeping, excellent design and illustration ability, and hard work keep a freelance business going. Computers make it possible to live outside a metropolitan area and still maintain client contact once it is established. One of the drawbacks to a freelance career is the lack of health insurance and retirement benefits. It can also be comparatively lonely though creatively fulfilling work. Figure 1-12 was created by Matt Zumbo, who has his own illustration business. Visit his web site to see the full range of artwork created for a wide variety of clients.

New Media

Web site creation calls for design skills in page layout, logo design, scripting, illustration, typography, and animation. Many companies now use the Internet to communicate with prospective clients, and designers play an important part in facilitating this informational and persuasive communication. Motion graphics and multimedia design are exciting and rewarding careers.

THE CHALLENGE

The challenge of being a graphic designer involves working through the restrictions and demands of the design process. It involves visualizing the completed job, although the actual finished product will not be done by hand. It may be completed on a press with printer's paper and inks, with elements that may have been photographed or drawn by other artists, and with copy written by others. Or it may be shown on a Web site or via another electronic mode of presentation. It involves meeting *personal* design standards as well as the needs of the client and the audience. It calls for organization and self-discipline to meet the constant deadline pressure. In the classroom, students generally get one project at a time and a generous length of time to complete it. The emphasis in school is on learning. On the job, designers work on several projects at once and must uphold design standards while concentrating on time and money issues. Designers must constantly update their education and stay current with new technologies. Technology makes major changes in the design field every year, and greater changes are always on the way.

The final design challenge is to take a responsible stance in the world. Traditionally, it has been the fine artist who has set new visual trends and opened fresh creative ways to see ourselves. The designer now also plays this role. **Figure 1-14** by illustrator and artist Diane Fenster (www.dianefenster.com) asks us to "Look, Listen, Think, Feel."



DIGITAL FOCUS

Careers

Graphic designers work at an array of jobs, using a variety of software to prepare their files. Opinions differ on how best to prepare a student for this field. Some academic programs separate their software instruction from their classes in graphic design concepts but teach them concurrently. Other programs begin the first classes with non-digital techniques, intending to build strong design skills through concentrating on principles before spending time on software rendering skills. Some programs integrate the two from the beginning in all classes, believing they are best and most efficiently learned together. Whichever approach a program takes, *a designer needs a command of both graphic design principles and concepts and the related digital techniques.*



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1–14 Diane Fenster, LookListen. Fenster was the first artist to be inducted into the Adobe Photoshop Hall of Fame, in September 2001. Courtesy of the artist.

One of the issues facing contemporary design is the impact of our printed product on the environment. Recycled paper products are part of an attempt to lessen the negative impact of printed materials on the environment. Online graphics are also helping. The aesthetic qualities of design affect our lives in many ways, but the total effect

of a design solution has numerous varied and important impacts on our lives. As designers, we are continually in the process of redefining our field. We need to examine how our culture and other cultures function, and how our perceptions and our values shape, and are shaped by, the world around us.

EXERCISE

As a class, research the types of employment opportunities in your geographic area. Find samples of a design firm, an in-house facility, and an advertising agency. Arrange a field trip.

If a field trip is not an option, do the research on the Internet, investigating the designers in your area or those presented in this chapter. Prepare a brief report, sharing the verbal and visual information with classmates.

Visit the accompanying Web site for research links and step by step interviews with the artist. 