The Conceptual Image

21

Sensing that traditional narrative illustration did not address the needs of the times, post–World War I graphic designers reinvented the communicative image to express the age of the machine and advanced visual ideas. In a similar quest for new imagery, the decades after World War II saw the development of the conceptual image in graphic design. Images conveyed not merely narrative information but ideas and concepts. Mental content joined perceived content as motif. The illustrator interpreting a writer's text yielded to the graphic imagist making a statement. A new breed of image-maker was concerned with the total design of the space and the integration of word and image. In the exploding information culture of the second half of the twentieth century, the entire history of visual arts was available to the graphic artist as a library of potential forms and images. In particular, inspiration was gained from the advances of twentieth-century art movements: the spatial configurations of cubism; the juxtapositions, dislocations, and scale changes of surrealism; the pure color loosened from natural reference by expressionism and fauvism; and the recycling of mass-media images by pop art. Graphic artists had greater opportunity for self-expression, created more personal images, and pioneered individual styles and techniques. The traditional boundaries between the fine arts and public visual communications became blurred.

The creation of conceptual images became a significant design approach in Poland, the United States, Germany, and even Cuba. It also cropped up around the world in the work of individuals whose search for relevant and effective images in the post–World War II era led them toward the conceptual image. In the most original work of the Italian graphic designer Armando Testa (1917–92), for example, metaphysical combinations were used to convey elemental truths about the subject. Testa was an abstract painter until after the war, when he established a graphic design studio in his native Turin. His 1950s publicity campaigns for Pirelli tires had an international impact on graphic design thinking (Fig. 21–1). Testa borrowed the vocabulary of surrealism by combining the image of a tire with immediately recognizable symbols. In his posters and advertisements, the image is the primary means of communication, and he reduces the verbal content to a few words or just the product name. Testa effectively used more subtle contradictions, such as images made of artificial materials (Fig. 21–2), as a means of injecting unexpected elements into graphic design.

The Polish poster

The violence of World War II swept over Europe on 1 September 1939 with Hitler's lightning invasion of Poland from the north, south, and west without a declaration of war. Seventeen days later, Soviet troops invaded Poland from the east, and a six-year period of devastation followed. Poland emerged from the war with enormous population losses, its industry devastated, and its agriculture in ruins. The capital city of Warsaw was almost completely eradicated. Printing and graphic design, like so many aspects of Polish society and culture, virtually ceased to exist. It is a monumental tribute to the resilience of the human spirit that an internationally renowned Polish school of poster art emerged from this devastation.

In the communist society established in Poland after the war, the clients were state-controlled institutions and industry. Graphic designers joined filmmakers, writers, and fine artists in the Polish Union of Artists, which established standards and set fees. Entry into the union came after completion of the educational program at either the Warsaw or the Krakow Academy of Art. Entry standards for these schools were rigorous, and the number of graduates was carefully controlled to equal the need for design.

The first Polish poster artist to emerge after the war was Tadeusz Trepkowski (1914–56). In the first decade after the devastation, Trepkowski expressed the tragic memories and aspirations for the future that were deeply fixed in the national psyche. His approach involved reducing the imagery and words until the content was distilled into its simplest statement. In his famous 1953 antiwar poster (Fig. 21–3), Trepkowski used a few simple shapes to symbolize a devastated city, superimposed on a silhouette of a falling bomb.

Henryk Tomaszewski (1914–2005) became the spiritual head of Polish graphic design after Trepkowski's early death and became an important impetus for the movement from his position as professor at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts. The poster became a source of great national pride in Poland; its role in the cultural life of the nation is unique. Electronic broadcasting lacked the frequency and diversity of Western media, and the din of economic competition was less pronounced in a communist country. Therefore, posters for cultural events, the circus, movies, and politics served as important communications. In 1964 the Warsaw International Poster Biennial began, and Muzeum Plakatu—a museum devoted exclusively to the art of the poster—was established in Wilanow, near Warsaw.

The Polish poster began to receive international attention during the 1950s. Tomaszewski led the trend toward developing an aesthetically pleasing approach, escaping from the somber world of tragedy and remembrance into a bright, decorative world of color and shape (Fig. 21–4 and Fig. 21–5). In an almost casual collage approach, designs were created from torn and cut pieces of colored paper, then printed by the silkscreen process. Typical of this style is the film poster for *Rzeczpospolita Babska* (Fig. 21–6) by Jerzy Flisak (b. 1930). The symbolic female figure has a pink, doll-like head with round, rouged cheeks and a heart-shaped mouth. The circus poster has flourished as a lighthearted expression of the magic and charm of this traditional entertainment since 1962, when concern about mediocre circus publicity inspired a juried program to select a dozen circus posters per year for publication by the Graphic Arts Publishers in Warsaw. The word *cyrk* (circus) is the only type or lettering on each poster (Fig. 21–7). Printed strips with typographic information giving full particulars for the specific engagement were pasted under the poster image on kiosks and walls.

21–1. Armando Testa, poster for Pirelli, 1954. The strength of a bull elephant is bestowed on the tire by the surrealist technique of image combination.

21–2. Armando Testa, rubber and plastics exhibition poster, 1972. A hand made of synthetic materials holds a plastic ball in a distinctive and appropriate image for this trade exhibition.

21–3. Tadeusz Trepkowski, antiwar poster, 1953. A passionate statement is reduced to just one word, No!

The next major trend in Polish posters started to evolve during the 1960s and reached a crescendo in the 1970s. This was a tendency toward the metaphysical and surrealism, as a darker, more somber side of the national character was addressed. It has been speculated that this represented either a subtle reaction to the social constraints of the dictatorial regime or a despair and yearning for the autonomy that has so often been denied the Polish nation during its history. One of the first graphic designers to incorporate this new metaphysical sensitivity into his work was Franciszek Starowiejski (b. 1930). In his 1962 poster for the Warsaw Drama Theater, a serpent hovers in space, coiling around two circles that become shaking hands (Fig. 21–8). This enigmatic image was a harbinger of things to come in Starowiejski's work, which sometimes tends toward the slime-and-gore school of graphics, and in the work of a number of other Polish graphic designers. Jan Lenica (b. 1928–2001) pushed the collage
style toward a more menacing and surreal communication in posters and experimental animated films. Then, during the mid-1960s, he began using flowing, stylized contour lines that weave through the space and divide it into colored zones that form an image (Fig. 21–9 and 21–10).

Lenica and Starowiejski were joined in their break from the mainstream by several others of the emerging generation who realized that the Polish poster was in danger of fossilizing into an academic national style. This potential pitfall has been avoided, as designers including Waldemar Swierzy (b. 1931) have arrived at unique personal visions. Approaching graphic design from a painterly viewpoint, Swierzy draws on folk art and twentieth-century fine art for inspiration (Fig. 21–11). This prolific artist has created more than a thousand posters in a wide variety of media. He often incorporates acrylics, crayon, pencil, and watercolor into designs. In his famous poster for the American rock musician Jimi Hendrix (Fig. 21–12), Swierzy animated the large portrait with swirling energetic gestures. The spontaneous quality of much of his work is deceptive, for Swierzy sometimes devotes three weeks to a poster and might even execute a poster five or more times before being satisfied with the results.

An exiled Polish poster artist, Roman Cieslewicz (1930–96) lived in Paris from the 1960s on. Closely associated with the Polish avant-garde theater, Cieslewicz took the poster, a public art form, and transformed it into a metaphysical medium to express profound ideas that would be difficult to articulate verbally (Fig. 21–13). Cieslewicz's techniques include enlarging collage, montage, and halftone images to a scale that turns the dots into texture, setting up an interplay between two levels of information: the image and the dots that create it (Fig. 21–14).

In 1980 shortages of food, electricity, and housing led to strikes and the formation of the illegal Solidarity labor union, whose logo (Fig. 21–15), designed by Jerzy Janiszewski, became an international symbol of struggle against oppression. As a result of government censorship during Poland's social unrest, the country's posters frequently addressed issues ranging

21–4. Henry K. Tomaszewski, football poster for the Olympic Games in London, 1948

21–5. Henry K. Tomaszewski, poster for the play Marie and Napoleon, 1964. Tomaszewski led Polish graphic design toward colorful and artistic expression.

21–6. Jerzy Flisak, cinema poster for Rzeczpospolita Babska, undated. Bright colors and informal shapes convey the delightful resonance of the 1950s Polish poster.

21–7. Roman Cieslewicz, circus poster, 1962. Collage elements superimpose the word Cyrk and a clown on a high-contrast photograph of an elephant.

21–8. Franciszek Starowiejski, Warsaw Drama Theater poster, 1962. The cube drawn in perspective transforms the flat page into deep space, forcing the strange complex above it to float.

21–9. Jan Lenica, Warsaw Poster Biennale poster, 1976. Meandering arabesques metamorphose into a winged being.

21–10. Jan Lenica, poster for Alban Berg's Wozzeck, 1964. As with many of Lenica's posters, the spirit of art nouveau is evident.

21–11. Waldemar Swierzy, Ulica Hanby poster, 1959. The painterly lettering becomes an extension of the lipstick.

21–12. Waldemar Swierzy, Jimi Hendrix poster, 1974. The electric vitality of gestural strokes on the cobalt blue portrait suggests the vigorous energy of hard rock music.

21–13. Roman Cieslewicz, poster for Vertigo, 1963. A target on the forehead of a skull, also alluding to the film's title, is combined with a fingerprint in this enigmatic interpretation of the Polish version of Hitchcock's film.

21–14. Roman Cieslewicz, Krackow Temporary Theater poster, 1974. With this surreal image, the viewer may try to complete the portrait by seeking an image in the clouds, but the effort will prove fruitless.

21–15. Jerzy Janiszewski, Solidarity logo, c. 1980. Crude letterforms evoke street graffiti, and the crowded letters are a metaphor for people standing solidly together in the street.

21–16. Marian Nowinski, political poster, 1979. A book bearing the name of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, whose works were banned and burned by the Pinochet regime, is closed by large metal spikes.

21–17. Reynolds Ruffins, illustration for Amtrak Express magazine, 1983. Decorative color and abstracted forms typify Ruffins's work over a half century.

21–18. Milton Glaser, record album cover for The Sound of Harlem, 1964. In this early example of Glaser's contour line and flat color period, the figures are weightless shapes flowing in musical rhythm.

beyond its boundaries rather than internal political struggles such as the banning of Solidarity. An international issue is the subject of a poster by Marian Nowinski (b. 1944) eloquently (Fig. 21–16) lamenting censorship and the suppression of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda. For many viewers it also expresses solidarity with the Chilean struggle for democracy and independence. Powerful images such as this transcend their immediate subject matter to become universal statements about censorship and the suppression of ideas everywhere.

The legalization of Solidarity and its overwhelming victory in the May 1989 elections ended one-party communist rule and marked the beginning of a new era in Polish history. For half a century, the Polish poster developed as a result of a conscious decision by the government to sanction and support poster art as a major form of expression and communication. The posters were creative statements trafficking in ideas rather than commodities. Despite political changes, a tradition of excellence bolstered by strong design education may ensure a continuing poster art form in Poland. Inventiveness is already being demonstrated by younger graphic designers entering the profession.

American conceptual images

During the 1950s the golden age of American illustration was drawing to a close. For over fifty years narrative illustration had ruled American graphic design, but improvements in paper, printing, and photography caused the illustrator's edge over the photographer to recede rapidly. Traditionally, illustrators had exaggerated value contrasts, intensified color, and made edges and details sharper than life to create more convincing images than photography. But now, improvements in materials and processes enabled photography to expand its range of lighting conditions and image fidelity. The death of illustration was somberly predicted as photography made rapid inroads into the profession's traditional market. But as photography stole illustration's traditional function, a new approach to illustration emerged.

This more conceptual approach to illustration began with a group of young New York graphic artists. Art students Seymour Chwast (b. 1931), Milton Glaser (b. 1929), Reynolds Ruffins (b. 1930), and Edward Sorel (b. 1929) banded together and shared a loft studio. On graduation from Cooper Union in 1951, Glaser received a Fulbright scholarship to study etching under Giorgio Morandi in Italy, and the other three friends found employment in New York advertising and publishing. Freelance assignments were solicited through a joint publication called the *Push Pin Almanack*. Published bimonthly, it featured interesting editorial material from old almanacs illustrated by the group. When Glaser returned from Europe in August 1954, the Push Pin Studio was formed. Ruffins left the studio after a time and became a prominent decorative and children's book illustrator (Fig. 21–17). In 1958 Sorel started freelancing, and he later emerged as one of the major political satirists of his generation. Glaser and Chwast continued their partnership for two decades; then Glaser left to pursue a wide range of interests, including magazine, corporate, and environmental design. Chwast remains as director of the renamed Pushpin Group. The *Push Pin Almanack* became the *Push Pin Graphic*, and this experimental magazine provided a forum for presenting new ideas, imagery, and techniques.

Push Pin Studio artists' philosophies and personal visions attained global influence. Graphic design has often been fragmented into separate tasks of image making and layout or design. Like turn-of-the-century graphic designers Mucha and Bradley, Glaser and Chwast united these components into a total communication conveying the individual vision of the creator, who was also involved in the total conception and design of the printed page. Using art and graphic history from Renaissance paintings to comic books as a data bank of form, images, and visual ideas, Push Pin artists freely paraphrased and incorporated a multiplicity of ideas into their work, often reshaping these eclectic sources into new and unexpected forms.

Glaser's singular genius is hard to categorize, for over the course of several decades he "reinvented himself as a creative force" by exploring new graphic techniques and motifs. During the 1960s he created images using flat shapes formed by thin, black-ink contour lines, adding color by applying adhesive color films (Fig. 21–18). This almost schematic drawing style echoed the simple iconography of comic books, the flowing curvilinear drawing of Persian and art nouveau arabesques, the flat color of Japanese prints and Matisse cutouts, and the dynamic of contemporary pop art. As with other graphic designers whose work captured and expressed the sensibilities of their times, Glaser was widely imitated. Only his ability to maintain a steady stream of innovative conceptual solutions, along with his restless exploration of different techniques, prevented him from being consumed by his followers.

While the images described above are formed by the edge, another approach developed by Glaser evolved from the mass. Inspired in the late 1950s by oriental calligraphic brush drawing and Picasso aquatints, Glaser began making gestured silhouette wash drawings that tease by only suggesting the subject, requiring the viewer to fill in the details from his or her own imagination.

Glaser's concert posters and record-album designs manifest a singular ability to combine his personal vision with the essence of the content. Glaser's 1967 image of the popular folk-rock singer Bob Dylan (Fig. 21–19) is presented as a black silhouette with brightly colored hair patterns inspired by art nouveau sources. Nearly six million copies of the poster were produced for inclusion in a best-selling record album. As did Flagg's Uncle Sam poster, it became a graphic icon in the collective American experience. A photographer told Glaser about being on assignment on the Amazon River and seeing the Dylan poster in a hut at a remote Indian village.

In a rejected poster design for the Museum of Modern Art's Dada and surrealism exhibition, the words themselves take on a metaphysical afterlife as objects (Fig. 21–20). "Dada" is impaled through the tabletop to hover over its wayward offspring, "surrealism." Like the art movements it represents, this design defies

rational interpretation. Glaser often assimilates spatial devices and imagery from surrealism to express complex concepts (Fig. 21–21).

During the 1980s and 1990s Glaser became increasingly interested in illusions and dimensionality. His drawings from this time are presented as dimensional objects in ways that intensify their meaning (Fig. 21–22). For Glaser, geometric forms, words, and numbers are not merely abstract signs
but tangible entities with an object-life that allows them to
be interpreted as motifs, just as figures and inanimate objects are interpreted by an artist. In very personal works, the dialogue between perceptual and conceptual iconography is explored (Fig. 21–23).

Chwast's vision is very personal, yet communicates on a universal level. He frequently uses the technique of line drawings overlaid with adhesive color films and experiments with a large variety of media and substrata. Echoes of children's art, primitive art, folk art, expressionist woodcuts, and comic books appear in his imaginative reinventions of the world. Chwast's color is frontal and intense. In contrast to Glaser's spatial depth, in Chwast's work, an absolute flatness is usually maintained. Chwast's innocent vision, love of Victorian and figurative letterforms, and ability to integrate figurative and alphabetic information has enabled him to produce unexpected design solutions. His album cover for *The Threepenny Opera* (Fig. 21–24) demonstrates his ability to synthesize diverse resources—-the German expressionist woodcut, surreal spatial dislocations, and dynamic color found in primitive art—into an appropriate expression of the subject. In his 1965 moving announcement for Elektra Productions (Fig. 21–25), each letter in the word lumbers across the space, endowed with its own form of transportation. From antiwar protest (Fig. 21–26) to food packaging and magazine covers, Chwast has reformulated earlier art and graphics to express new concepts in new contexts.

21–19. Milton Glaser, Bob Dylan poster, 1967. Transcending
subject and function, this image became a symbolic crystallization of its time.

21–20. Milton Glaser, Dada and Surrealism exhibition poster, 1968. The smaller table isolates the word real within the longer word surrealism.

21–21. Milton Glaser, Poppy Records poster, 1968. A poppy blooming from a granite cube symbolizes a new, independent company breaking through the monolithic conventions of the recording industry.

21–22. Milton Glaser, "Bach Variations" poster, 1985. A variety
of drawing approaches signifies the diversity of Bach's musical oeuvre.

21–23. Milton Glaser, "Art Is" poster, 1996. Visual and verbal meanings are explored by manifesting a hat as a photograph, a shadow, a word, a pictograph, and a written definition.

Both Chwast and Glaser developed a number of novelty display typefaces. Often these began as lettering for assignments, then were developed into full alphabets. Figure 21–27 shows the logo Chwast developed for Artone Ink; the graded version of Blimp, based on old woodtypes; a geometric face inspired by the logo Glaser designed for a film studio; a typeface based on lettering first developed for a *Mademoiselle* poster; and the Buffalo typeface, originally devised for a French product named Buffalo Gum, which was never produced.

The term *Push Pin style* became widely used for the studio's work and influence, which spread around the world. The studio hired other designers and illustrators in addition to Glaser and Chwast, and a number of these younger individuals, who worked for the studio and then moved on to freelance or to other positions, extended the boundaries of the Push Pin aesthetic. The Push Pin approach is less a set of visual conventions, or a unity of visual techniques or images, than it is an attitude

21–24. Seymour Chwast, album cover for The Threepenny Opera, 1975. Diverse inspirations combine to capture the resonance of the renowned German play.

21–25. Seymour Chwast, moving announcement for Elektra Productions, c. 1965. Walking, riding, or propelled by locomotive power, the client's name travels to its new location.

21–26. Seymour Chwast, poster protesting the bombing of Hanoi, 1968. A mundane advertising slogan gains new life when combined with a blue woodcut and offset printed green and red areas.

21–27. Seymour Chwast, display typeface designs. Chwast playfully echoes Victorian, art nouveau, op art, and art deco forms.

21–28. Barry Zaid, book jacket for Bevis Hillier's Art Deco, 1970. Decorative geometry of the 1920s is reinvented in the context of the sensibilities of a half-century later.

21–29. Barry Zaid, cover for the Australian Vogue, 1971. The rotund geometric forms of Léger and modernist pictorial art are evoked.

about visual communications, an openness about trying new forms and techniques as well as reinterpreting work from earlier periods, and an ability to integrate word and image into a conceptual and decorative whole.

An influential young graphic designer in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Barry Zaid (b. 1939), joined Push Pin for a few years during this period. A Canadian who majored first in architecture and then in English during college before becoming a self-taught graphic designer and illustrator, Zaid worked in Toronto and then London before joining Push Pin Studio. As a graphic archeologist basing his work on a thorough study of the graphic vernacular of bygone eras, Zaid became an important force in the revivalism and historicism that were prevalent in graphic design during this period. He was particularly prominent in the revival of 1920s art deco decorative geometric forms (Figs. 21–28 and 21–29), including the cover of the 1970 book *Art Deco* by English art historian Bevis Hillier. Zaid's historicism did not merely mimic nostalgic forms, for his spatial organization, scale, and color were of his own time.

Among the other illustrators and designers who passed through Push Pin Studio, James McMullan (b. 1934) revived watercolor, a medium that had declined from a position second only to oil paint for fine art and illustration, and restored it as a means of graphic expression. McMullan achieved prominence during the 1960s with energetic ink-line and watercolor illustrations that often combined multiple images with significant changes in spatial depth and image size and scale. Moving into the 1970s, McMullan's watercolor technique became increasingly masterly, and he developed a photo-documentary approach emphasizing sharp detail and realism. At the same time, however, a concern for total design asserted itself, and McMullan began to make fluid lettering an important part of his images. In his 1977 poster for Eugene O'Neill's play *Anna Christie* (Fig. 21–30), the intimate portrayal of a figure sitting in an interior is superimposed on an ocean scene. The dual image combines to communicate the locale of the play while creating an engaging spatial interplay.

Another Push Pin alumnus who moved toward a total design approach is Paul Davis (b. 1938), who first appeared in the *Push Pin Graphic* with a series of primitive figures painted on rough wood panels with

superimposed targets. From this beginning Davis moved toward a painting style of minute detail that drew inspiration from primitive colonial American art. He evolved into a master of meticulous naturalism; the solid shapes of his forms project a convincing weight and volume. Like McMullan, Davis often became involved in a painterly integration of image and words. His work demonstrates enormous inventiveness in relating sensitive portraits to environmental backgrounds and expressive lettering (Fig. 21–31).

The Push Pin school of graphic illustration and design presented an alternative to the narrative illustration of the past, the mathematical and objective typographic and photographic orientation of the International Typographic Style, and the formal concerns of the New York School. Warm, friendly, and accessible, Push Pin designs project vitality with lush color and unashamed allusions to other art. Although not formally associated with the Push Pin Studio, graphic designer Richard Hess (1934–91) turned to illustration and developed a painting technique closely related to the work of Paul Davis. Hess had a stronger inclination toward surrealism than Davis and was inspired by René Magritte's spatial illusions. An understanding of the folklore and imagery of nineteenth-century America enabled Hess to produce a number of images that thoroughly captured the essence of this earlier period (Fig. 21–32).

The Push Pin group did not maintain a monopoly on the conceptual image in America, for a number of autonomous designers forged individual approaches to communications problem solving while combining the traditional conceptualization and layout role of the graphic designer with the image-making role of the illustrator. One such person, Arnold Varga (1926–94), practically reinvented the retail newspaper advertisement. Varga entered the field in 1946. Beginning in the mid-1950s, his newspaper advertisements for two Pittsburgh department stores, Joseph P. Horne & Co. and Cox's, turned this usually pedestrian form of visual design into memorable image-building communications. Many of Varga's ads used carefully integrated white space and headlines with large, simple illustrations to break through the monotonous gray of the newspaper page. A multiple-image picture-and-caption approach, such as the gourmet shop advertisement for Joseph P. Horne (Fig. 21–33), achieved notable public response—people actually offered to buy this advertisement to hang on their walls!

Conceptual image making is not the exclusive province of the illustrator. Designers such as Paul Rand, Lou Danziger, Herbert Leupin, and Raymond Savignac incorporated the technique of creating a central image to communicate visual ideas by combining two symbols together to create a "fused image." This was a means of combining form and content to create memorable images for book covers, posters, and advertisements.

Paul Rand's cover design for *Modern Art in Your Life* (Fig. 21–34) uses a common household place setting and artists'

21–30. James McMullan, Anna Christie poster, 1977. McMullan often calls attention to the physical properties of the medium; the red background changes into painterly strokes, then becomes lettering.

21–31. Paul Davis, poster for For Colored Girls, 1976. The urban environment is evoked by a graffiti-like title and subway-mosaic theater identification.

21–32. Henrietta Condak (art director) and Richard Hess (illustrator), album cover for Charles Ives: The 100th Anniversary, 1974. A complex Victorian poster format frames many images from the composer's time.

21–33. Arnold Varga, newspaper advertisement for Joseph P. Horne, c. 1966. The joys of food and cooking are conveyed. (Reproduced from a proof not showing the Horne logo and text at the bottom of the page.)

21–34, Paul Rand, Modern Art in Your Life cover design, 1949. With this MoMA publication Rand makes modern art seem as accessable as a daily meal. As Steven Heller aptly stated in his superb biography of Rand, published in 1999, "Rand's jackets and covers were both mini canvases and mini posters. He composed the limited image area for maximum impact."

tools as a visual metaphor to communicate with wit and reinforce the content of the title. Lou Danziger uses the American flag and an artist's paint brush (Fig. 21–35) to create a memorable image for American painting at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Paint tubes turn into skyscrapers (Fig. 21–36), becoming a cover for *The New York School: The First Generation*. Herbert Leupin's poster advertisement for the *Tribune de Lausanne* (Fig. 21–37) combines the newspaper with the coffee pot to suggest timely news every morning. The French poster artist Raymond Savignac (b. 1907–2002) creates a humorous advertising poster for Gitanes by using cigarettes as confetti and alternating both shape and color (Fig. 23–38) to help communicate the idea of night and day.

Designers and art directors call on the entire range of image-making possibilities to convey concepts and ideas. This is particularly true of graphic designers working in the music recording industry. Art and music share a common idiom of expression and experience. The same words (rhythm, texture, tone, color, and resonance) are used to convey the perceptual and spiritual dimensions of both visual and auditory experiences.

21–35. Lou Danziger, "American Paintings from the Metropolitan Museum of Art" poster, 1966.

21–36. Lou Danziger, "New York School, The First Generation" poster, 1966.

21–37. Herbert Leupin, poster for Tribune de Lausanne, 1955.

21–38. Raymond Savignac, poster for Gitanes, 1954.

21–39. John Berg, record album cover for the William Tell Overture, 1963. In "the new advertising," complex visual organization was replaced by the simple presentation of a concept.

21–40. John Berg (art director) and Virginia Team (designer), record album cover for the Byrds' Byrdmaniax, 1971. An enigmatic image transcends normal portraiture as masklike faces emerge from an oily fluid.

21–41. Woody Pirtle, logo for Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Hair, 1975. In this graphic pun, the comb relates to the client's name, which is spelled by the comb's teeth.

21–42. Woody Pirtle, poster for Knoll furniture, 1982. A hot pepper becomes a red and green chair, signifying the availability of Knoll's "hot" furniture in Texas.

The design staff of CBS Records operated at the forefront of the graphic interpretation of music. Conceptual image making emerged as a significant direction in album design during the early 1960s, after Bob Cato (1923–1999) became head of the creative services department and hired John Berg (b. 1932), who served as art director at CBS's Columbia Records until 1984. Photographs of musicians performing and portraits of composers yielded to more symbolic and conceptual images, as in Berg's New York Philharmonic *William Tell Overture* album (Fig. 21–39). For two decades Berg and his staff wrested the maximum potential from the large 961-square-centimeter (150-square-inch) format of vinyl long-play records that preceded compact-disk technology. The art director became a conceptualizer and collaborator, working with illustrators and photographers to realize imaginative expressions for the spectrum of musical experience. The fantastic, the real, and the surreal joined the classical and outrageous in Columbia Records' graphic repertoire (Fig. 21–40).

Illustrative, conceptual images and the influence of Push Pin Studios often mingled with Wild West, Mexican, and Native American motifs and colors in a regional school of graphic design that emerged in

Texas during the 1970s and became a major force in the 1980s. A high level of aesthetic awareness, an open friendliness, and a strong sense of humor characterize graphic design from the Lone Star State. Intuitive approaches to problem solving combine with a pragmatic emphasis on content. Texas designers acknowledge the importance of Stan Richards (b. 1932), head of the Richards Group in Dallas, as a catalytic figure in the emergence of their state as a major design center. The work of Woody Pirtle (b. 1943), one of many major Texas designers who worked for Richards during their formative years, epitomizes the originality of Texas graphics. His logo for Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Hair (Fig. 21–41) evidences an unexpected wit, while his Knoll "hot seat" poster (Fig. 21–42) ironically combines the clean Helvetica type and generous white space of modernism with regional iconography. In 1988 Pirtle moved on to join the Manhattan office of the British design studio Pentagram.

The 1980s saw graphic design in the United States become a truly national profession. Outstanding practitioners emerged all around the country, often far from the traditional centers. *Print* magazine, the American graphic design periodical founded in 1940, instituted a regional design annual in 1981 to reflect the emerging national scope of the discipline.

The poster mania

In contrast to postwar Polish posters, which were patronized by government agencies as a national cultural form, the poster craze in the United States during the 1960s was a grassroots affair fostered by a climate of social activism. The civil rights movement, the public protest against the Vietnam War, the early stirrings of the women's liberation movement, and a search for alternative lifestyles figured into the social upheavals of the decade. Posters of the period were hung on apartment walls more frequently than they were posted in the streets. These posters made statements about social viewpoints rather than spreading commercial messages. The first wave of poster culture emerged from the late1960s hippie subculture centered in the Haight-Ashbury section of San Francisco. Because the media and general public related these posters to antiestablishment values, rock music, and psychedelic drugs, they were called *psychedelic posters* (Fig. 21–43).

The graphics movement that expressed this cultural climate drew from a number of resources: the flowing, sinuous curves of art nouveau, the intense optical color vibration associated with the brief op-art movement popularized by a Museum of Modern Art exhibition, and the recycling of images from popular culture or by manipulation (such as reducing continuous-tone images to high-contrast black and white) that was prevalent in pop art.

Many of the initial artists in this movement were largely self-taught, and their primary clients were rock-and-roll concert and dance promoters. Dances in the 1960s were intense perceptual experiences of loud music and light shows that dissolved the environment into throbbing fields of projected color and bursting strobes. This experience was paralleled graphically in posters using swirling forms and lettering warped and bent
to the edge of illegibility, frequently printed in close-valued complementary colors. A Grateful Dead poster (Fig. 21–44)
designed by Robert Wesley "Wes" Wilson (b. 1937) contains swirling lines and letterforms, which are variants of Alfred Roller's art nouveau. Wilson was the innovator of the psychedelic-poster style and created many of its stronger images. According to newspaper reports, respectable and intelligent businessmen were unable to comprehend the lettering on these posters, yet they communicated well enough to fill auditoriums with a younger generation who deciphered, rather than read, the message. Other prominent members of this brief movement included Kelly/Mouse Studios and Victor Moscoso (b. 1936), the only major artist of the movement with formal art training (Figs. 21–45 and 21–46).

Some aspects of the psychedelic-poster movement were used in the exceedingly popular art of New York designer Peter Max (b. 1937). In his series of posters during the late 1960s, the art nouveau aspects of psychedelic art were combined with more accessible images and softer colors. One of his most famous images, the 1970 "Love" graphic (Fig. 21–47), combined the fluid organic line of art nouveau with the bold, hard contour of the comic book and pop art. In his finest work, Max experimented with images and printing techniques. His posters and merchandise, from mugs and T-shirts to clocks, offered a more palatable version of psychedelic art and found a mass audience among young people across America. After the poster mania reached its peak in the early 1970s, American poster art of inventive quality retreated to the university campus, one of the few surviving pedestrian environments in America. Because universities sponsor a large number of events, the campus is an ideal poster-communications environment.

21–43. Wes Wilson, concert poster for The Association, 1966. Lettering becomes an image, signifying a cultural and generational shift in values.

21–44. Wes Wilson, concert poster for the Grateful Dead, Junior Wells Chicago Blues Band, and The Doors, 1966. Hand-drawn line art is printed in intensely vibrating colors.

21–45. Victor Moscoso, poster for the Chambers Brothers, 1967. The vibrant contrasting colors and Vienna Secession lettering inside of the sunglasses implies the drug culture of the period.

21–46. Victor Moscoso, Miller Blues Band concert poster, 1967. The shimmering nude female figure in the center of the poster reflects the uninhibitedness of the 1960s.

21–47. Peter Max, "Love" poster, 1970. Max's split fountain printing resulted in colors lyrically dissolving into one another.

21–48. David Lance Goines, classical film screening poster, 1973. The directness of image and composition gains graphic distinction from a poetic sense of color and sensitive drawing.

David Lance Goines (b. 1945) proves that even in the late twentieth-century era of overspecialization, it is possible for individual artists and craftsmen to define a personal direction and operate as independent creative forces with total control over their work. A native of Oregon, Goines had an early interest in calligraphy that blossomed into serious study at the University of California at Berkeley. He was expelled from the university at age nineteen for his participation in the free-speech movement and learned graphic arts as an apprentice pressman at the radical Berkeley Free Press, where he wrote, printed, and bound a book on calligraphy. When the Berkeley Free Press failed in 1971, Goines acquired it, renamed it the Saint Hieronymous Press, and continued to print and publish books while developing his poster style. Offset lithography and graphic design are unified in Goines's work, becoming a medium for personal expression and public communications. He designs, illustrates, and hand-letters posters, makes the negatives and plates, and then operates the press to print the edition. This thoughtful and scholarly designer has evolved a highly personal style that integrates diverse sources of inspiration. Symmetrical composition, simplified line drawing, quiet planes of flat color, and subtle stripes rimming the contours of his forms are characteristics of his poster designs (Fig. 21–48).

During the 1980s, a conservative decade characterized by economic disparity between rich and poor, environmental indifference, and limited social activism, many American posters were produced as decorative objects. Limited-edition images of photographs or paintings became posters rather than reproductions because the artist's name and often a title—frequently letterspaced in elegant, all-capital type—
were added. These were sold in specialty shops and department stores. Typical subjects included flowers,

high-performance sports cars, and fruit presented against simple backgrounds with exquisite composition and lighting.

European visual poets

Poetry was once defined as bringing together unlike things to create a new experience or evoke an unexpected emotional response. In Europe, beginning in the 1960s and continuing into the 1990s, there emerged a poetic approach to graphic design based on imagery and its manipulation through collage, montage, and both photographic and photomechanical techniques. The graphic poets stretched time and typography, merged and floated objects, and fractured and fragmented images in a sometimes disturbing but always engaging manner. The conservative, traditional, and expected were rejected by these graphic designers, who defined the design process not as form arrangements or construction but as the invention of unexpected images to convey ideas or feelings. A receptive audience and client list developed for their book
and album covers, magazine designs, and posters for concerts, television, and radio.

A German master of this movement is Gunther Kieser (b. 1930), who began his freelance career in 1952. This brilliant imagist has consistently demonstrated an ability to invent unexpected visual content to solve communications problems. Kieser brings together images or ideas to create a new vitality, new arrangement, or synthesis of disparate objects. His Alabama Blues poster combines two photographs, a dove and a civil-rights demonstration, with typography inspired by nineteenth-century wood type (Fig. 21–49); these diverse elements act in concert to make a potent statement. Kieser's poetic visual statements always have a rational basis that links expressive forms to communicative content. It is this ability that separates him from design practitioners who use fantasy or surrealism as ends rather than means.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s Kieser began to construct fictitious objects that are convincingly real. Viewers stop in their tracks to study the huge posters bearing color photographs of Kieser's private visions to determine if they are having delusions. In a poster for the 1978 Frankfurt Jazz Festival (Fig. 21–50), Kieser and his photographer almost convince us that a moss-covered tree stump can grow in the shape of a trumpet.

Launched in Munich in 1959, the German periodical *Twen*, whose name—derived by chopping the last two letters from the English word *twenty*—signified the age group of sophisticated young adults to whom the magazine was addressed, featured excellent photography used in dynamic layouts by art director Willy Fleckhouse (1925–1983). With a genius for cropping images and using typography and white space in unexpected ways, Fleckhouse made the bold, uninhibited pages of *Twen* a milestone in editorial design. While the Brodovitch tradition was undoubtedly a resource for Fleckhouse, the dynamic of scale, space, and poetic images in *Twen* made a provocative and original statement (Figs. 21–51 and 21–52).

One of the most innovative image makers in late-twentieth-century design is Gunter Rambow (b. 1938) of Frankfurt, Germany, who often collaborated with Gerhard Lienemeyer (b. 1936) and Michael van de Sand (b. 1945). In Rambow's designs, the medium of photography is manipulated, massaged, montaged, and airbrushed to convert the ordinary into the extraordinary. Everyday images are combined or dislocated, then printed as straightforward, documentary black-and-white images in an original metaphysical statement of poetry and profundity. In a series of posters commissioned by the Frankfurt book publisher S. Fischer-Verlag for annual distribution beginning in 1976 (Fig. 21–53), the book is used as a symbolic object, altered and transformed to make a statement about itself as a communication form. The book as a means of communicating with vast numbers of people is symbolized by a huge book emerging from a crowd scene: the book as a door or window opening on a world of new knowledge is symbolized by turning the cover of a book into a door one year and a window the next (Fig. 21–54). These metaphysical and symbolic advertisements carry no verbal information except the logo and name of the client, giving the

audience of editors and publishers memorable and thought-provoking visual phenomena rather than a sales message.

21–49. Gunther Kieser, Alabama Blues concert poster, 1966. A concert announcement becomes a potent symbol of the longing for freedom and justice contained in the music.

21–50. Gunther Kieser (designer) and Hartmann (photographer), Frankfurt Jazz Festival poster, 1978. Symbolic fabrications are disseminated through photographs of sculpted objects.

21–51. Willy Fleckhouse (art director), cover for Twen, 1970. Graphic communications often become political symbols in the struggle between alternative value systems and generations.

21–52. Willy Fleckhouse (art director), pages from Twen, 1970. Sensitive cropping, a full-page photographic symbol, and white space create a dynamic and expansive layout.

21–53. Gunter Rambow (designer/photographer) and Michael van de Sand (photographer), S. Fischer Verlag poster, 1976. The portability of the book is conveyed in memorable fashion.

Rambow often imbues straightforward photographs with a sense of magic or mystery (Fig. 21–55), and he uses collage and montage as a means of creating a new graphic reality. Images are often altered or combined and then rephotographed. In the 1980 poster for the play *Die Hamletmaschine* (Fig. 21–56), a photograph of a wall was placed under a photograph of a man s

21–54. Gunter Rambow (designer/photographer) and Michael van de Sand (photographer), S. Fischer–Verlag poster, 1980. The book and the concept of reading as a window on the world gain intensity from the luminous sunlight streaming from this volume.

21–55. Gunter Rambow (designer/photographer), Gunter Rambow and Gerhard Lienemeyer (typographers), poster for the play Antigone, 1978. Pathos and isolation are conveyed by the burning chair photographed from a low vantage point at dusk.

21–56. Gunter Rambow, poster for the play Die Hamletmaschine, 1980. A chilling sense of anonymity is produced by this self-inflicted act of vandalism.

21–57. Gunter Rambow, poster for Othello, 1978. The pathos of the play is expressed by an image within an image: a tattered poster hanging on a wire fence in front a bleak apartment complex.

21–58. Gunter Rambow (designer/photographer) and Michael van de Sand (photographer), theater poster for Südafrikanisches Roulette (South African Roulette), 1988. A bandaged hand with a bloodstain shaped like Africa conveys the pathos of suffering and revolution.

21–59 through 21–62. Robert Massin (designer) and Henry Cohen (photographer), cover and double-page spreads from Eugene Ionesco’s La cantatrice chauve, 1964. The pictorial directness of the comic book is combined with the expressive typography of futurist poetry.

tanding in front of this wall, then part of the top photograph was torn away. The final rephotographed image presents the viewer with a perplexing impossibility. This image seems to be capable of self-destruction—a figure appears to possess the existential ability to negate itself (Fig. 21–57). The iconic power of Rambow’s images can be seen in the *Südafrikanisches Roulette* theater poster (Fig. 21–58), designed by Rambow and photographed by Rambow and Van de Sand.

During the 1960s literary and graphic design communities throughout the world were astounded and delighted by the experimental typography of French designer Robert Massin (b. 1925), who designed

editions of poetry and plays for the Paris publisher Editions Gallimard. As a young man, Massin apprenticed in sculpture, engraving, and letter-cutting under his father. He did not seek formal design training but learned graphic design under typographic designer Pierre Faucheux. In its dynamic configurations and use of letterforms as concrete visual form, Massin's work has affinities with futurist and Dadaist typography, but his intensification of both narrative literary content and visual form into a cohesive unity expressing the author's meaning is unique.

Massin's designs for Eugene Ionesco's plays combine the pictorial conventions of the comic book with the sequencing and visual flow of the cinema. The drama of *La cantatrice chauve* (*The Bald Soprano*) is enacted through Henry Cohen's high-contrast photographs (Fig. 21–59). Each character is assigned a typeface for his or her speaking voice (Fig. 21–60) and is identified not by name but by a small photographic portrait. By printing typography via letterpress onto sheets of rubber and then manipulating and photographing it, Massin created unprecedented figurative typography (Fig. 21–61), while a major argument in the play provided him with the opportunity to generate an explosive typographic event (Fig. 21–62). Visual vitality, tension, and confusion appropriate to the play are graphically conveyed. In his design for Ionesco's *Délire à deux* (*Frenzy for Two*), words become the expressionistic image (Fig. 21–63). Massin's manipulations of typography anticipated the elastic spatial possibilities inherent in bitmapped computer graphics of the 1980s. His many years of research into letterforms and their history led to the important 1970 book *Letter and Image*, which explores the pictorial and graphic properties of alphabet design through the ages.

During the May 1968 student revolts in Paris, the streets were filled with posters and placards, mostly handmade by
amateurs. Three young graphic designers, Pierre Bernard
(b. 1942), François Miehe (b. 1942), and Gerard Paris-Clavel
(b. 1943), were deeply involved in the radical politics of the day. Bernard and Paris-Clavel had each spent a year in Poland studying under Henryk Tomaszewski, who stressed an attitude of being both artist and citizen. His teaching advocated an intellectual rigor and clear personal conviction about the world. These three young designers believed publicity and design were directed toward creating artificial demands in order to maximize profits, so they joined forces to turn their graphic design toward political, social, and cultural rather than commercial ends. Seeking to address real human needs, they formed the Grapus studio in 1970 to realize this mission. Grapus was a collective; intensive dialogue took place about the meaning and means of every project. The starting point of Grapus's problem solving was a thorough analysis and lengthy discussion about content and message. The most significant aspects of the problem and the kernel of the message were determined, and then a graphic expression of the essence of the content was sought. (In those days, French left-wing radicals were called *crapules staliniennes* [Stalinist scum]. This phrase was melded with the word graphic to produce the group's name.)

Grapus favored universal symbols with readily understood meanings: hands, wings, sun, moon, earth, fireworks, blood, and flags. Typographic refinement and technical polish yielded to handwritten headlines and scrawled graffiti, creating a raw vitality and energy. Often a palette of primary colors was used for its intense graphic power.

21–63. Robert Massin, pages from Eugene Ionesco's Délire à deux, 1966. The words leap and run and overlap and smear into ink blots in a calligraphic homage to the nonrepresentational, surreal ideas of Ionesco, a master of the theater of the absurd.

21–64. Grapus, exhibition poster, 1982. A layering of emotionally charged graphic symbols contradict each other and unsettle viewers.

Grapus was motivated by the dual goals of achieving social and political change while striving to realize creative artistic impulses. A 1982 poster (Fig. 21–64) for an exhibition of Grapus graphics features a central figure holding a dimensional arrow with cutout letters. Bounding into the space on a jack-in-the-box spring, it layers an arresting group of cultural icons: the ubiquitous yellow smile face, Mickey Mouse ears, and Hitler's hair and mustache. Its eyes are the communist and French tricolor indicia, and a small television antenna sprouts from the top of its head. Grapus spawned many imitators. The shocking verve of its statements, especially the dynamic informality of its spatial organization and casual, graffiti-like lettering, was copied by fashionable advertising.

The third-world poster

From the end of World War II until the dismantling of the Iron Curtain in 1989, the industrialized nations formed two groups: the capitalist democracies of Western Europe, North America, and Japan, and the communist block led by the Soviet Union. The emerging nations of Latin America, Asia, and Africa have been called the third world. In social and political struggles, ideas are weapons, and the poster is a major vehicle for spreading them. The medium is effective because access to newspapers, radio, and television is often limited in these countries, where the poster is sometimes used with the intensity and frequency of European posters during World War I.

In this context, posters become vehicles for challenging authority and expressing dissent untouched by the traditional censorship of government, business, and newspapers. Some are spontaneous expressions, crude folk art created by unskilled hands, while others are created by accomplished artists. In both cases, the artists/advocates who create such posters have an agenda and seek to alter viewers' perspectives.

Third-world posters address two constituencies: In their native lands, they tackle political and social issues, motivating people toward one side of a political or social struggle; a secondary audience exists in the industrial democracies, where distributors such as Liberation Graphics in Alexandria, Virginia, make posters available to Westerners who feel strongly about international issues.

Cuba became a major center for poster design after the revolutionary force led by Fidel Castro defeated the regime of President Fulgenico Batista on New Year's Day in 1959. Over the next two years, Cuba's Marxist course led to a complete breakdown in diplomatic ties with the United States and a close association with the Soviet bloc. The creative arts had been virtually ignored under Batista, but three meetings in June 1961 enabled artists and writers to meet with the Castro regime to forge a mutual understanding. At the final meeting, on 30 June, Castro delivered his lengthy address "Words to the Intellectuals," defining his policy toward the creative arts. Castro assured artists and writers "that freedom of form must be respected," but freedom of content was seen as a more subtle and complex matter. He said artists and intellectuals "can find within the Revolution a place to work and create, a place where their creative spirit, even though they are not revolutionary writers and artists, has the opportunity and freedom to be expressed. This means: within the Revolution, everything; against the Revolution, nothing." Each person could "express freely the ideas he wants to express," but "we will always evaluate his creation from the Revolutionary point of view." Castro defined "the good, the useful, and the beautiful" as whatever is "noble, useful, and beautiful" for "the great majority of the people—that is, the oppressed and exploited classes." Popular art forms—cinema and theater, posters and leaflets, songs and poetry—and propaganda media were encouraged. Traditional painting and sculpture were seen as relatively inefficient in reaching large audiences with the revolutionary message.

Artists and writers admitted to the union for creative workers receive salaries, work space, and materials. Graphic designers work for a variety of government agencies with specific missions. Leading Cuban graphic designers include Raul Martinez, a painter who creates illustrative designs (Fig. 21–65),

and New York-educated Felix Beltran (b. 1938). Beltran served as art director for the Commission for Revolutionary Action (COR), which creates internal ideological propaganda and maintains public consciousness of the revolution by promoting commemorative days (Fig. 21–66) and past leaders.

Bureaus and institutes have responsibility for motion pictures, musical and theatrical events, publishing, and exhibition programs, and use graphics to promote these cultural events. Emphasis is on outreach—unlike in many countries, where cultural programs are only available to the urban population, in Cuba a serious attempt is made to reach the rural areas. Film posters are lively and happy affairs printed in an uninhibited palette of bright silk-screened colors.

Posters and leaflets for export throughout the third world are produced by the Organization of Solidarity with Asia, Africa, and Latin America (OSPAAAL) to support revolutionary activity and build public consciousness for ideological viewpoints. OSPAAAL posters are printed via offset and use elemental symbolic images readily comprehended by people of diverse nationalities, languages, and cultural backgrounds. The Castro government sees itself as being involved in an ideological war against "Yankee imperialism" for the hearts and minds of people in the emerging third-world countries. The eye of the beholder is tantalized while revolutionary consciousness is formed through repeated exposure. The international distribution of OSPAAAL graphics is evidenced by the presence of Arabic, English, French, and Spanish typography on each poster.

Lacking artistic traditions, Cuban graphic designers have assimilated a variety of resources. American sources—including pop art, the psychedelic poster, and Push Pin Studio—
and the Polish poster are important inspirations. The "heroic worker" school of romanticized realism prevalent in the former Soviet Union and in China is avoided. The icon, ideograph, and telegraphic message are far more effective in developing nations. Myth and reality have been unified in a powerful graphic symbol based on the image of Ernesto ("Che") Guevara. A leader of the Cuban revolution, Guevara left Cuba in the mid-1960s to lead guerrillas in the South American country of Bolivia, and on 9 October 1967 he was killed in a gun battle in the jungle village of Higuera. Graphic designers have converted Che's image, one of the most reproduced of the late twentieth century, into a symbolic icon (Fig. 21–67) representing struggle against oppression throughout the third world. Drawn in light-and-shadow planes like high-contrast photography, the fallen guerrilla wears a beard and a beret with a star; his head tilts slightly upward. A specific person, Ernesto Guevara, was converted into the mythic hero or savior who sacrificed his life so others might live.

21–65. Raul Martinez, poster honoring the Cuban people, c. 1970. Leaders and workers are cheerfully depicted in a comic book
drawing style and bright, intense color.

21–66. Artist not identified, poster for COR, 1967. Clouds part
to reveal an orange sun, symbolizing the ill-fated 26 July 1953 assault on the Santiago army barracks, which launched the Cuban revolution.

21–67. Elena Serrano, "Day of the Heroic Guerrilla" poster, 1968. An iconographic image of Che Guevara transforms into a map of South America in a radiating image signifying revolutionary victory.

The importance of conceptual images in the second half of the twentieth century developed in response to many factors, and ideas and forms from modern art have filtered into popular cultures. By usurping graphic art's documentary function, photography and video have repositioned graphic illustration toward a more expressive and symbolic role. The complexity of the political, social, and cultural ideas and emotions

graphic artists need to communicate can frequently be presented more effectively by iconic and symbolic rather than narrative images.