



museum of arts and design

**AN EXPLORATION OF MIDCENTURY GRAPHIC DESIGN AND
A VISUAL HISTORY OF MAD'S EXHIBITION CATALOGUES
HIGHLIGHTED IN *EYE FOR DESIGN*, OPENING JUNE 7**

Eye for Design:

June 7, 2016–September 18, 2016



NEW YORK, NY, May 26, 2016 – Drawn from its own archive and that of the American Craft Council, the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) presents *Eye for Design*, an exhibition that explores the unique graphic identity created by the Museum (then the Museum of Contemporary Crafts) in the 1960s and 1970s through its imaginatively designed exhibition catalogues and related ephemera. As the field of graphic design became increasingly corporate driven, the designers featured in this exhibition—including Emil Antonucci, John J. Reiss, Sam Richardson, and Linda Hinrichs—dared to break graphic conventions and captured the spirit of the Museum

with hand-drawn illustrations, playful use of typography, vibrant color, fresh design, and inventive adaption of the catalogue form.

“MAD embraced a very open definition of craft in the 1960s and 1970s, as the exhibition history highlighted by these catalogues demonstrates,” said MAD’s Windgate Research and Collections Curator Elissa Auther. “Alongside medium-specific exhibitions of ceramics or textiles, the Museum also produced an unusual series of shows featuring sound, immersive environments, audience-driven ‘scores’ for exploring the city, and the art of baking, among many other creative practices and experiences.”

“The graphic design included in this exhibition, particularly the work of Antonucci, Reiss, and Richardson, captures a sense of humanity—through their hand-rendered illustrations—that goes missing in graphic design of the later decades of the twentieth century,” added Assistant Curator Samantha De Tillio. “Today it has come back to the field through a revival of independent presses and artist books.”

Eye for Design

The Museum of Arts and Design (then the Museum of Contemporary Crafts) first opened its doors in 1956 with the mission to recognize the craftsmanship of contemporary American artists. *Eye for Design* highlights the celebrated exhibitions of the 1960s and 1970s—organized under Paul J. Smith’s directorship, which embraced an expansive definition of craft, including forms of practice and sensory experiences that remain unorthodox in the art world today.

The exhibitions and graphic design illustrated in *Eye for Design* fuse pop culture, art world influence, and fashion, and the catalogues are expressive artworks in their own right, as opposed to mere devices to capture contents of an exhibition:

- The cover of Emil Antonucci’s *The Art of Personal Adornment* evokes Henri Matisse’s famous figural cut-outs. The catalogue, for the exhibition of the same name, epitomizes the illustrative style of the designers included in *Eye for Design*, and Antonucci’s hand-rendered drawings of jewelry in the interior pages emphasize the personal nature of craftsmanship.
- John J. Reiss’ exhibition catalogue for *Amusements Is...* explores the expression of fun, play, and humor through objects that encourage public participation through a “please touch” policy, a radical change from the traditional museum practice. For the exhibition catalogue, Reiss used images of toys from the exhibition to construct fantastical scenes that replicate a children’s counting book, complete with nonsensical limericks.
- Tony Lane’s *Levi’s Denim Art Contest: A Catalog of Winners*, the exhibition catalogue for *Denim Art*, captures the denim craze that swept the United States during the socially and politically tumultuous era of the 1960s and 1970s. From thousands of submissions, 25 winners and 25 honorable mentions were chosen and organized into a nationally touring exhibition, which premiered at the Museum in 1974.
- Linda Hinrichs’ designs are close to pop art in her use of bold design and color. Her cover design for *The New American Quilt* features the quilt *Landscape in Blue* (1973) by Gwen-Lin Goo, whose repeat lip pattern is reminiscent of Salvador Dalí’s *Mae West Lips Sofa* (1937) and Andy Warhol screen prints.
- Eight objects made by artists featured in the many exhibitions highlighted in *Eye for Design* will be included from the permanent collection of the Museum. Artists include

Katherine Choy, Arline Fisch, Marvin Lipofsky, Gertrud and Otto Natzler, Lenore Tawney, and Marian Clayden, whose *First Ceremonial Enclosure* (1971) was included in *Fabric Vibrations/Tie and Fold-dye Wall Hangings and Environments* (1972).

EXHIBITION CREDITS

Eye for Design is organized by MAD Windgate Research and Collections Curator Elissa Auther and Assistant Curator Samantha De Tillio.

Support for *Eye for Design* is provided by KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, the Official Airline of MAD.

RELATED PROGRAMMING

The Print Shop: Screenprinting with Kayrock

Fridays, June 17, July 22, August 12, September 9, 2016, 6 to 8 pm
Free with Museum admission
2nd Floor Galleries, MAD

Since the 9th century, screenprinting (also known as silk-screening and serigraphy) has been employed by a variety of creative practitioners to produce a myriad of works ranging from posters, paintings, advertisements, decorative wallpaper, and subversive fashion to political ephemera.

Join artists and designers from Kayrock Screenprinting as they use MAD's custom screenprinting press, designed and constructed by François Chambard of UM Project. Over the course of the exhibition *Eye for Design*, Kayrock will create prints inspired by the graphic art of Emil Antonucci through a series of live demonstrations. Museum visitors are invited to stop in and observe these makers in action as they demonstrate this continually evolving medium.

Kayrock Screenprinting was founded in 1998 by Karl LaRocca—a.k.a. Kayrock—and is currently located in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, in a 100-year-old former rope factory. Kayrock specializes in hand-printed fine art editions, posters, cards, books, shirts, tote bags, graphic design, and custom projects.

Teachers' Professional Development

Thursday, June 9, 2016, 8:30 am to 3:30 pm
\$40 general admission
7th Floor MAD

Unpack the processes involved in creating good design, in a variety of media, and the many formats through which design can be explored in the art classroom. In this day-long professional development workshop, MAD's artist educators will lead participating teachers on tours of the exhibitions *Studio Job MAD HOUSE*, *Eye for Design*, and *Atmosphere for Enjoyment: Harry Bertoia's Environment for Sound*.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields and presents the work of artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill. Since the Museum's founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum's curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving twenty-first-century innovation, and fosters a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design.

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