

## THE ARTS INFLUENCE DESIGN

Esther Hamel's book, *The Encyclopedia of Judging and Exhibiting*, which is no longer on the required reading list, has a wonderful chapter on Contemporary Styles of Design that are "borrowed" from the field of Art. In rereading this, it seems to me that we can go a step further and almost imagine where some of our newer design types come from.

I put forth that designs, such as the STRETCH, might have evolved from the Salvatore Dali era of influence when he had things such as clocks sliding off his canvases; stretched out in unnatural ways. Perhaps it was the elongation of Mondigliani's forms that influenced some designer to stretch his/her design out. We can further deduce that the Cubist Period could have influenced designers to begin putting things in FRAMES containing spaces, giving rigid structure to designs and showing that these hard, boxy angles could indeed be so contrived as to have rhythmic lines. Perhaps SYNERGISTIC designs were influenced by Duchamp's "Nude Descending the Staircase", where all the forms, working together, are better than the parts taken individually or separately; certainly the interplay of the overlapping forms show movement and depth (actually moving down the stairs) and thus, rhythm...could this also have been the influence for a STABILE?

From the Purist Movement, it is apparent that we get our CONSTRUCTION from this art form...here the artists used components for their shape, color, form, or texture, without regard to what they really were...much as we do when we use bunched carnations as a 3-D circular form of a particular color and for texture rather than as individual flowers. It probably goes without saying that our MOBILES were influenced by the great master, Alexander Calder. (He was influenced by Naum Gabo, a Russian Constructivist artist)

One other question we might ask is where did these great artists, who have influenced us, get their inspiration? You can bet that these innovators didn't adhere to the old "we've always done it this way" attitude! They certainly dared "step out of the box of normalcy", consider new ways of using the same old 'stuff' to create something entirely new and different. Was everything they did readily accepted? I seriously doubt it.

Did we discard the treasured works of art in the Vatican or the Louvre or the Ancient Pyramids for Andy Warhol? No, but we did let "ole Andy" influence us right along with those other treasured works of art...whether we liked OP ART or not.

Like building blocks, all art takes from the past, refines and redefines use, form, function, expressions and beauty. When you encounter new designs, think of the past...think ART.

What other influences from the art world can you think of...even if you have to stretch your imagination for the connection? This might be a great discussion or program in your Judges' Council meeting...try something new and different!

by  
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