SUMMER OF '68
REMEMBERING LANCE WYMAN'S OLYMPIC GOLD

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No. 01, 2012
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SEGd CHAPTER CHAIRS
Atlanta ————————— Lynne Bernhardt, lynne@sbs-architecture.com
Stephen Carlin, stevecarlin@coopercarry.com

BOSn ————————— Michele Phelan, michele@96pt.com
Amy Files, afiles@spdeast.com

Brisbane, Australia —— Jack Bryce, jack@jackbryce.com

Charlotte, NC ———— Kevin Kerm, kkern@designcollective.com
Scott Muller, smuller@pohloci.com

Chicago ————————— Maggie Allen, magnie.allen.r08@statefarm.com
Adam Cook, adam.cook@am.jll.com

Cincinnati ——————— Jeff Waggoner, jeffwaggoner@fuse.net

Cleveland ——————— Cathy Promet, cathy@studioqgraphique.com

Dallas ————————— Heather Chandler, heather@babendure.com

Denver ————————— George Lim, tangrandesign-george@comcast.net
Jon Misichle, jon@misichleecreative.com

Edinburgh ————————— Lucy Richards, lr@studiorz.com

Houston ———————— Duane Parthing, dfarthing@dfdesign.com

Kansas City ——————— Rick Smith, rsmith@dimin.com

Minneapolis ——————— Adam Halverson, adam@serigraphicsign.com

Montreal ————————— Michael Clairio, mclairio@signaturedesign.ca

New York ————————— Gary Anzalone, gma@precisionsign.com

Norman, Oklahoma ——— Justin Molloy, justin/molloy@signaturedesign.com

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San Francisco ——————— Sarah Katsikas, sarah@gnugroup.com

Seattle ————————— Cynthis Hall, chall@sffoo.com

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Society for Environmental Graphic Design
The global community of people working at the intersection of communication design and the built environment
Back in 2002, when it was proposed that SEGD become a magazine publisher, the idea seemed daunting. Yet finally, after much discussion by the SEGD Board of Directors (who took their roles as stewards of SEGD’s resources very seriously), SEGD took the plunge, agreeing to fund a magazine start-up on the promise that it would somehow, sometime down the line, pay for itself.

Almost 10 years and 36 issues later, the magazine has long since proven a good investment. It is paying for itself, it has garnered multiple awards for design, editorial, and printing quality, and it is still consistently ranked the number-one benefit of SEGD membership.

After a decade of only iterative design changes, we thought it was high time to reimagine segdDESIGN. A year ago, the talented design team at Holmes Wood (London) began working with us on the redesign. Our goal was to create a fresh, exciting, and energetic new package for the excellent content you’ve come to expect. We love the look and feel that Holmes Wood created, and best of all—due to some very clever design—the way it will shape shift for you with each issue.

And about the new name. After years of exhaustively studying potential names, simplicity won out and we selected eg. It stands for environmental graphics, of course, but it is also a graphically compelling, contemporized version of the Latin e.g. (example given). Because that’s just what the magazine does: shows the environmental graphics community, allied design disciplines, clients, and the world great examples of work in our field.

We hope you’ll enjoy exploring the new eg magazine, and continue to draw inspiration from it. We think it does SEGD and the discipline of environmental graphic design proud.
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Out There
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German fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld and HPP Architects collaborated on the Schwarzkopf Lightbox, a pop-up hair salon built on the lawn of Düsseldorf’s Graf-Adolf-Platz.

Up for about a month to coincide with the 2011 Eurovision Song Contest, the mobile hair temple consisted of a light steel frame and 60 interchangeable white-coated foil panels backlit to feature silhouettes from Lagerfeld’s Music Lovers photo exhibition, as well as Schwarzkopf’s distinctive silhouette logo.

The two-story structure, which has since traveled to Paris, Milan, and beyond, includes a ground-level café and upper-level salon featuring the hair-care company’s products.

Photos: © Jens Kirchner
NEW-AGE OF GIVING

When the Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia was looking for a way to thank its most generous donors, it wanted to look beyond the traditional brass plaque. CHOP wanted an elegant, dynamic solution that could be changed easily as new gifts are received, and one that could also encourage on-the-spot giving.

fd2s (Austin) led the multi-disciplinary design team that created the 55-foot-long, theatrically lit donor wall in the hospital’s newly renovated lobby. Chairman’s Circle donors are identified on etched-acrylic “ingots,” illuminated by LED fixtures concealed in horizontal rails forming a cropped-circle composition—a nod to the campaign name.

An interactive niche allows visitors to contribute or browse donor stories, patient testimonials, and other content.

The team also included Forge Media (interaction design), Charles Matsinger Associates (architects), The Lighting Group (lighting design), and City Signs (signage fabrication).

*Photos: Barry Halkin/Halkin Photography LLC*
Parking garages are typically not worthy of a passing glance. But the Santa Monica (California) Arts Commission considers municipal garages a perfect canvas for public art.

While the Santa Monica Place garage houses one type of wheels, the 3,000-square-foot mural by artist Anne Marie Karlsen was inspired by another kind of wheel—the recently retired Pacific Ferris Wheel on the nearby Santa Monica Pier.

Karlsen’s perspective-challenging composition evokes the whirling, topsy-turvy effect of being on the amusement ride. Fabricated by Winsor Fireform, Wheels is composed of 12-by-12-inch porcelain tiles, some in solid colors and others featuring photographic images of the Ferris wheel. The project called for formulation of eight spot colors to match the artist’s specifications.

Photo: Bill Short Photography
Belfast Streets Ahead is a major effort aimed at invigorating the city center and helping Belfast compete as a European city of choice. Over the past four years, 14 main streets have been transformed with new streetscapes and public art.

The latest installation celebrates the city’s rich shipbuilding history. A series of eight 16-meter-high (53-feet), dramatically lit sculptural masts sail above Donegall Place, the city’s main shopping thoroughfare. Each of the copper masts commemorates one of the great White Star Line ships built in Belfast—including the Titanic.

Designed by Atkins Lighting, the 3.5-ton masts are lit by LED technology from Traxon & e:cue. Backlit-copper sidewalk plaques provide an overview of the ships’ history, and banners link them to the Titanic Signature Project and Belfast’s maritime trail.

Photos: ©2011 AECOM/David Lloyd
Simply Iconic
By Sue Gould

Identify: Basic Principles of Identity Design in the Iconic Trademarks of Chermayeff & Geismar
Print Publishing, 2011

Their are the marks that have become part of our visual vocabulary: NBC, Chase Manhattan, Rockefeller Center, Mobil, the USA Bicentennial, National Geographic. Close your eyes and you can see them; they are that strong and that memorable, and often exquisitely simple—Chermayeff & Geismar’s own criteria for a successful symbol.

Identify is a rich presentation of the impressive body of C&G’s work.

Introductions by Isaac Mizrahi and Steve Heller comment on the social and historic implications of their work. “You could argue that they made us modern,” notes Mizrahi. “The simplicity and wit of these symbols are the very definition of the word. Plain honest images that would instill confidence in anyone. Order and strength. Leadership. Principles that reflect corporate culture, only after the fact of C&G. They taught corporate America how to think.”

Ivan Chermayeff and Tom Geismar’s own introduction focuses on their process—always starting with hand sketches and immersing themselves in their clients’ worlds and goals. They describe the strategic care with which they planned presentations to willful CEOs: waiting for rain to provide a backdrop before displaying a model of the great blazing red “9” on Sheldon Solow’s window sill; after an initial rejection by Giorgio Armani, winning his approval of the Armani Exchange identity by re-showing it in the context of fashion photos and mock ads.

Creating marks for the Bank of Taipei, Nippon Life Insurance, and other Asian clients inspired them to explore traditional Asian symbols. “At the end of the day,” they observe, “both client and designer came to terms with the extent to which the modernist movement and the abstract international style have learned from Asia.”

My personal favorite is the National Geographic brand, which brilliantly unites the society, the magazine, the TV channel, and the film and book divisions with a simple yellow frame and straightforward “housemark.” They may have been inspired by the yellow lacquered cabinet designed by Swedish artist Mats Theselius to accommodate exactly 25 years’ worth of National Geographic magazines, shown at the 1991 Salone di Mobile in Milan.

And this volume should stand as an inspiration to us all.

Sue Gould is president of Lebowitz | Gould | Design in New York, and a member of the SEGD Board of Directors.
Design by Nature: Using Universal Forms and Principles in Design
By Maggie Macnab
New Riders, 2012

Maggie Macnab regards nature as “the primary source of truthfulness,” and she uses her new book to illuminate the relationships between nature, art, science, technology, and design. A professor at Santa Fe University of Art and Design in New Mexico, Macnab says she wrote the book “to elevate our awareness of nature and its elegant problem-solving process.”

“Nature contains a language common to us all and is our oldest source of meaning,” she notes. “When we understand nature, we understand how to emulate its no-waste process—whether designing systems, products, or communications.”

Guide to Contemporary New York City Architecture
By John Hill
Norton, 2012

Hill provides a handy guide to urban exploration, New York City style. From the Hearst Tower to the Pratt Institute Security Kiosk (who knew?), and from the Shake Shack to the New 42nd Street Studios, here is an up-to-date walking guide that includes 200 of the most architecturally notable buildings and spaces constructed in New York’s five boroughs since 2000.

Pentagram Papers 41: WTC Photographs by Judith Turner
Pentagram, 2011

If you’re lucky enough to be on the receiving end of the Pentagram Papers—the serial but-random volumes that Pentagram has released since 1974 to celebrate the curious, the entertaining, the stimulating, and the provocative—you will have already marveled at Judith Turner’s photographs of the World Trade Center. Released in time to mark the tenth anniversary of the twin towers’ destruction, the images had never before been published. Turner began photographing Minoru Yamasaki’s modernist masterpiece in 1978 soon after its completion. The special edition includes a foreword by the infamous tightrope artist Philippe Petit.

The Nature of Place: A Search for Authenticity
By Avi Friedman
Princeton Architectural Press, 2011

Wallpaper magazine named Friedman, a professor of architecture at McGill University in Montreal, “one of the 10 people from around the world most likely to change the way we live.” Friedman’s tenth book chronicles his world-wide quest for environments that invite people to congregate. From the hospitality of a restaurant in Tuscany to the crowded streets of Hong Kong, and from the architectural harmony of London neighborhoods to the squatter settlements of Tijuana, he explores why such diverse places succeed in attracting people to gather and linger, and why the same principles that applied to urban planning in Roman times still work.

The Business of Design: Balancing Creativity and Profitability
By Keith Granet
Princeton Architectural Press, 2011

“Learn to say no” may be the most important takeaway from this business primer for designers. Granet focuses on the basics, but with a design sensibility and orientation specific to creative enterprises. He covers it all, from writing a business plan to marketing and public relations, project management, and human resources. A foreword by M. Arthur Gensler and interviews with the likes of Richard Meier, John Merrill, Victoria Hagan, and Michael Graves add another layer of credibility.
OUT THERE

INNOVATIVE MATERIALS, PRODUCTS & TECHNOLOGY
Perch is an interactive display system that, when activated by a shopper’s touch, provides product-specific information, animations, and branded media. Developed by award-winning interactive design firm Potion, Perch was designed to combine the best of online and in-store shopping experiences. It monitors hand movements so that as shoppers pick up or touch product samples, additional digital media content is revealed.

The turnkey system includes a compact digital projection unit and easy-to-use interactive software. Graphics, photographs, and text are generated by the software, which comes with a library of content that can be used in any combination. Custom graphics and other media can be incorporated via a simple uploading process.

**B**

**Transit Chair**

Artist Boris Bally works with recycled street signs because “making something people value from something they have discarded is the ultimate challenge.” Transit and Broadway chairs are made through Bally’s “humanufacturing” process that includes brake-forming, piercing, and finishing. Materials include the street signs, champagne corks, and steel hardware.

[borisbally.com](http://borisbally.com)

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**Infused Veneer**

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**DuPlex**

The new ADA Standards for Accessible Design (SAD), in full effect in the U.S. as of March 2012, allow designers new freedom in choosing visual fonts for accessible signage, while requiring them to incorporate 1/2 inch-tall, single-line text and accompanying Braille for the visually impaired.

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Down to Business, Down Under
Forward-thinking corporate environments, Aussie style
Uniforms extended the brand and supported wayfinding.

Design: Julia Murdoch, Lance Wyman
As the world descends on London for the 2012 Olympic Games, Lance Wyman’s design program for the XIX Olympiad in Mexico City still merits a Gold.

By Juanita Dugdale

In 1963, Mexico won the bid to host the XIX Olympiad, becoming the first Latin American site for the Games. Staging the Olympics gave the country a unique opportunity to showcase Mexico City as a modern capital with far more to offer than piñatas and fiestas—including a 7,350-foot altitude that supported record-breaking athletic performances.

Mexico’68 also posed daunting challenges, as Lance Wyman learned upon becoming director of graphic design for the games. With sport venues situated at the city’s heart, multilingual crowds would have to navigate one of the world’s most populous urban environments. The organizers’ budget, a fraction of that spent on the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, also limited new building construction. While design ingenuity successfully addressed these limitations and won deserved attention, no one could foresee that political unrest would nearly undermine the event.

Rocked by turmoil, 1968 signaled a turning point. *Newsweek* declared it “the year that made us who we are,” a global culture of high and low extremes. By December, glowing portraits of a placid Earth beamed in by the triumphant Apollo space mission could not erase memories of rising Vietnam War tolls, assassinations, convention violence, and political unrest. Even the summer games became associated with athlete protests and a bloody student insurrection. Despite this aura of controversy, Mexico’68 is best remembered for a remarkable, joyous design legacy still considered Gold medal-worthy.
Spring training
When Adolpho López Mateos, original chairman of the Olympic organizing committee and former Mexican president, took ill, Pedro Ramírez Vázquez replaced him. A distinguished architect and masterful organizer, Vázquez had recently designed the Mexican Pavilion for the 1964 New York World’s Fair as well as the national anthropological museum for Mexico City. Vázquez’s appointment ensured that design played a priority role in shaping and promoting Mexico’68.

Enter SEGD Fellow Lance Wyman, then a young designer at the George Nelson office in New York City who had worked on the Chrysler Corporation’s Pavilion for the same 1964 World’s Fair. Upon learning that Vázquez planned to hold an international design competition to develop the summer games logotype, Wyman requested and received the go-ahead to participate. He hastened to Mexico in November 1966, calling in colleague Peter Murdoch, a British industrial designer, to collaborate. After Wyman designed the winning logotype during a two-week trial period, the pair was selected to craft the basic visual language for Mexico’68. The Olympic branding, referred to at that time as a “look,” soon appeared all over Mexico and in the media.

To realize his ambitious vision, Vázquez needed talent capable of problem-solving with limited means. He assembled a small army of designers, architects, urban planners, and other creatives led by directors Eduardo Terrazas (urban design), Beatrice Trueblood (publications), Manuel Villazon (the student team), and Wyman, who headed the graphic design team with Peter Murdoch later directing special projects.

Branding Mexico’68
The armature of the Olympic brand is Baron Pierre de Coubertin’s 1913 symbol of five interconnected circles representing continents. Welding compasses and ruling pens, Wyman introduced numbers into the lockup by adjusting line widths and counter spacing. He recalls an epiphany: “Discovering that the geometry of those five rings could be expanded into the 68 was like a miracle!” Miraculous indeed, considering that no one has been allowed to reconfigure the official symbol so overtly ever since.

The next design iterations add the word MEXICO plus an infinite field of lines radiating outward that proved particularly effective for animation and supergraphics. Wyman relates the pattern to sound waves spreading outward but its concentricity also resembles a target focusing attention at the center. Very much of the moment, the logo channels the Museum of Modern Art’s influential 1965 Op-Art exhibition, Responsive Eye.

A New Jersey native first exposed to pre-Hispanic culture in Peru, Wyman immediately fell in love with Mexico and emigrated there with his wife Neila. They started a family and stayed on after the Olympics for Wyman to work on graphic design for the Mexico City Metro and 1970 World Cup. Wyman acknowledges the influence of pre-Hispanic indigenous art on the Olympic brand and symbol design, particularly Mayan glyphs featuring linear patterns.

The design team rapidly applied the Mexico’68 branding scheme to publications, posters, stamps, signage, and symbol systems, facing deadlines as challenging as a relay race. Otl Aicher, influential designer of the 1972 Munich Olympiad who paid a site visit, briefly unnerved Wyman by declaring that the German design team was already further ahead with years still to go. Another visitor casually commented that his Mexico’68 Olympic lettering was illegible. Fortunately Wyman ignored the criticism, ultimately producing a lively and memorable alphabet suitable for identifying sports venue names at long distances.
Pre-Hispanic art influenced the Olympic brand design, especially its emphasis on linear and concentric patterns.

Wyman’s logo studies on yellow tracing paper hark from a time when design exploration depended on skill with a compass and ruling pen.

Wyman’s stamp designs for the Mexican postal service resemble film strips of athletes in motion, and were partially inspired by the silhouetted figures representing the ancient Greek games in antiquity.

Lance Wyman, Neila Wyman, and Peter Murdoch on their first day in Mexico City, November 1966.
Pictograms were a key communication tool for the games. Wyman coordinated three separate symbol sets, each relying on essential iconic details.

**Design:** Lance Wyman, Eduardo Terrazas, Manuel Villazon, Beatrice Colle and Jose Luis Ortiz

“**A person who doesn’t speak the local language is just as illiterate as someone who can’t read. We’re all illiterate if we don’t understand how information is presented.”**

**A celebration of symbols**

Wyman visually coordinated three symbol sets that signify individual sports, cultural programs, and regulatory messages. He followed a design rationale already in place before he arrived that prescribed using a recognizable gesture or equipment detail to represent each sport. By emphasizing bold and simple forms, the system integrates well with a symbol-rich visual culture like Mexico’s. His saturated and diverse color palette is also appropriately festive rather than doggedly functional. Often displayed together, different symbols nestle or stack comfortably in radius-cornered square frames evocative of today’s iPhone icons.

Garry Emery, Principal of emerystudio in Australia and designer of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, praises Wyman’s achievements.

“As Wyman says, ‘Graphic design became an important visual ambassador.’ His bold and brightly coloured cubic totemic environmental graphics contributed to the ambiance of the Games. The clear pictograms and distinctive colors on these totems helped to reinforce a sense of place and create a memorable Mexican identity.”

Confronting a common assumption, Wyman objects that illiteracy drove Mexico ’68’s reliance on pictographic means of communication. “A person who doesn’t speak the local language is just as illiterate in a strange country as someone who can’t read at all. We’re all illiterate if we don’t understand how information is presented.”

Required to translate all text into Spanish, French, and English, the designers used icons to minimize verbiage. While Wyman raised the bar for coordinated Olympic pictographic design, earlier precedents exist. (The Nazi regime, for example, produced a carefully detailed and orderly system of sports symbols for the Berlin 1936 Games.)
Crowd control

Faced with directing multilingual crowds to venues spread around Mexico City, the team also favored a nonverbal wayfinding approach whenever possible. Murdoch developed a modular system of signage hardware to display icon panels grouped on pylons or standing signs with minimal text. The multi-use system could accommodate phones, mailboxes, maps, backlit display boxes, drinking fountains, and clocks, and could be modified as information kiosks or newsstands.

In addition to signage, the wayfinding system encompassed a transportation map, supergraphics, and floating balloons to identify stadium entrances, plus a highly efficient ticket design. Color-coded by day, each ticket displayed the brand, stadium name, sport icon, date, time, and ticket price. At the stadium, visitors used the ticket to guide their journey from gate to seat, keeping the stub as a colorful keepsake.

Color-coded by day, tickets provided wayfinding cues by presenting a hierarchy of logo, venue name, sport event, date, time, gateway, and row and seat number. The stub even served as a keepsake.

Design: Lance Wyman and Beatrice Colle

Information kiosks and exhibit towers used interchangeable panels depicting cultural and sports symbols.

Design: Peter Murdoch
“Measured in terms of graphic originality, innovative functional application, and its value to thousands of visitors to the Nineteenth Olympiad, the graphic design system developed by Wyman and his associates in Mexico was one of the most successful in the evolution of visual identification.”

**Home stretch**
Wyman recalls working on the Olympics as a young designer in a foreign culture enveloped by political unrest.

Televised to huge audiences, Mexico ’68 became irrevocably associated with protest. African-American members of the U.S. track team raised a black power fist salute during their award ceremony. Vera Caslavská, a Czech gymnast with four golds, made her own gesture of solidarity in support of the infamous “Prague Spring” that roiled Europe earlier. Germany, previously forced by the International Olympic Committee to compete as one team, was finally divided into East and West factions.

While the numbers are still in dispute, at least 40 people are known to have died. Avery Brundage, president of the IOU, did not cancel the games. During the opening ceremony, students flew a black dove kite over the presidential box to silently protest the repression.

Wyman appreciates Mexico ’68 as one of the last Olympiads to downplay corporate sponsorship but admits that the government’s heavy-handed damage control unsettled him. Working under deadline, the design team operated inside an Olympic bubble but, once outside, “you could cut the atmosphere on the street with a knife.”

Back to that Newsweek cover, it’s tempting to call 1968 the year that made Lance Wyman who he is. The Mexico ’68 creative legacy continues to excite design students and raise enthusiasm for the Olympics. In *A History of Graphic Design*, the late design historian Philip B. Meggs positioned it as one for the record books: “Measured in terms of graphic originality, innovative functional application, and its value to thousands of visitors to the Nineteenth Olympiad, the graphic design system developed by Wyman and his associates in Mexico was one of the most successful in the evolution of visual identification.”

After more than four decades at his own game, this prolific designer continues to deliver, having recently created a new edition of his popular Washington DC Metro map designed in the 1970s. 1968 was just the starting line.

Juanita Dugdale is a writer, editor, and former SEGD board member who directed a history research project for the SEGD Education Foundation.
Peter Murdoch’s multi-use signage and display system could accommodate phones, mailboxes, maps, backlit display boxes, drinking fountains, and clocks, and could even be modified as information kiosks or newsstands. 

Design: Peter Murdoch
Xlab 2012:
Tech in Context
November 7 & 8, 2012
Austin, Texas, USA

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ALL HAIL AJAX!

The Ajax Experience museum in Amsterdam scores a giant goal: sculpting architecture, graphics, and experience to tell the story of the legendary soccer club.

By Jenny S. Reising
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<td><strong>Budget</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Project Area</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Opened</strong></td>
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<td>Sid Lee Architecture, architectural design; Sid Lee branding and graphic design</td>
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<td>gsmprjct interactive and museum exhibition and multimedia; Jimmy Lee video production</td>
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<td><strong>Photos</strong></td>
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The museum entrance, called History Hall, maximizes soaring 26-foot-high walls and ample natural light to highlight the team’s history, timeline, and titanic soccer players from past to present.
All Hall Ajax!

AFC Ajax (pronounced EYE-ox), Amsterdam’s hometown soccer club, will always hold a hallowed place in the annals of soccer as a three-peat winner of the Euro Cup from 1971–1973. But the club’s greater claim to fame is not the trophies in its display case, but its legacy of creating “giants” who have gone on to dominate the global soccer field.

So when Ajax envisioned an experience museum for the 112-year-old club, the goal was to give visitors an insider’s look at how Ajax heroes are made.

While there was already a small museum in the Ajax arena outside Amsterdam, the club saw the need to build a larger, more experiential museum in the city center—maintaining ties to the club’s roots and keeping fans engaged between matches, says Henri van der Aat, Ajax Chief Commercial Officer.

“Nowadays, people need to be in touch with the club 24/7. We had so much content to share with the fans and wanted to reuse that content to get closer to them. That was the drive.”

The building is located in the Rembrandtplein, the city’s most popular square and close to where the club was founded in 1900. Montreal-based Sid Lee Architecture’s vision was to transform it into something sculptural and dramatic—a total immersion in the mighty Ajax.

Amsterdam-based Fiction Factory, which started out as set builders in the late 1980s, was responsible for translating Sid Lee’s vision into reality. Fiction Factory CEO Oep Schilling likened the creation of that experience to building a boat and ultimately producing “more than 1,000 square meters of stealth.”

Bringing history to life

The Ajax Experience is divided into seven sections, beginning with the free-to-the-public, 1,600-square-foot History Hall at the entrance, where tickets for the remainder of the experience are purchased.

“We decided early on to give part of the space to the city,” says Jean Pelland, Architect and Principal Partner at Sid Lee. “It was a way to reconnect Ajax with Amsterdam in a bold way.”

The building is located in the Rembrandtplein, the city’s most popular square and close to where the club was founded in 1900. Montreal-based Sid Lee Architecture’s vision was to transform it into something sculptural and dramatic—a total immersion in the mighty Ajax.

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“Sid Lee envisioned the museum as an enfilade of experiences: once visitors purchase tickets in the History Hall, they proceed on a prescribed path leading to the peak experience at the heart of the space.

Leaving History Hall, they ascend a flight of stairs to the Ajax Academy, which focuses on the team’s actual Academy—called De Toekomst, or “the Future”—where local youth are handpicked and trained to become professional soccer players. Dimly lit with an emphasis on audiovisual and experiential elements, the Academy explains the club’s TIPS (technique, insight, personality, speed) model used to train players.

Glass table-mounted backlit graphics wrap around a 65-foot-long display case that features players’ apparel and trophies.

The Academy also contains three 10-by-10-foot tempered glass-enclosed interactive technique stations designed by Montreal-based gsmprjct.

Here, visitors can learn about the technical aspects of soccer by demonstrating their own skills and having them analyzed.

After being immersed in the dark Academy space, visitors head to a partial replica of the Ajax locker room. In this lighter red and white space, looped videos of speeches by the Ajax coach—during both winning seasons and losing streaks—are retroprojected onto a mirrored wall, while visitors sit in seats labeled with actual Ajax players’
Sculptural steel interactive tables measure 3 by 6 feet and feature LED displays that demonstrate soccer-playing techniques.

The 10-by-10-foot tempered-glass technique booths give visitors a chance to test their skills. Flat panels with integrated screens in front of the booths show videos of the technique being demonstrated.

"MORE THAN 1,000 SQUARE METERS OF STEALTH"
numbers and names. “You sit there as if you’re a soccer player, the lights go out, and then the coach comes in and yells at you,” Schelling explains. “It’s not a hologram, but it’s pretty close.”

After the Locker Room, visitors walk through a 23-foot-long tunnel to reach the museum’s climax experience, the Stadium. The darkened passage features a wall treatment of full-height players’ silhouettes. Comprising cut-out metal with a pixelized effect, the static silhouettes are backlit with red light to give visitors the impression of walking alongside the players. An audio track with the mounting sounds of a crowd roaring and chanting builds excitement as fans enter the arena.

In the 2,000-square-foot Stadium, four 20-by-12-foot projections on the walls create an almost 360-degree effect of being in a stadium. Steps act as seating for the visitors as they watch moments of triumph and defeat in Ajax’s history. Black Astroturf underfoot extends the stadium feel, while round red lights projected onto the flooring loosely indicate player position.

From the Stadium, visitors enter the Ajax Around the World exhibit, which showcases all the soccer clubs that have benefited from the great players originating in Amsterdam. A red wall with a map of the world pinpoints where players have gone, while black and white imagery on a freestanding glass display gives general information about players who trained at Ajax and moved to other clubs around the world.

The Ajax Experience culminates with a trip back down the stairs to the Retail area, where sculptural red and white walls literally and aesthetically close the design loop from the entrance area. In fact, the checkout counter in the retail area also functions as the ticket counter from the other side.
Getting it right
As with any project, the Ajax Experience had its fair share of challenges, including budget (about $5.5 million Canadian). Because of the one-off nature of the design, much of the building budget went toward 3D engineering, says Schilling.

Getting the historical facts spot-on also required a great deal of time and research, as did finding imagery from the club’s key moments. “Soccer clubs are not specialists in archiving history, so we had to dig deep,” says Pelland. “Now Ajax has a very cleaned-up version of the most important historic moments.”

Of course, in a hallowed club such as Ajax, there was much discussion about which giants to highlight in the public area, says Van der Aat. Instead of highlighting 11 players as originally planned, the team went with 17 and left enough wall space to accommodate future giants. The museum’s summer 2011 opening was pushed back to the fall—after prime tourist season—so museum attendance is not meeting Ajax’s goals. But van der Aat is optimistic for 2012: “It’s running, it’s running correctly, and we’ve had a great response from visitors.”

Jenny Reising is a Cincinnati-based design writer and editor.
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Deborah Sussman and Andrew Byrom celebrate Charles and Ray Eames’ love of the commonplace in an intimate exhibition at the A+D Museum Los Angeles.

By Jennifer M. Volland
Living in Los Angeles, it’s easy to become jaded by the traffic congestion, the poor air quality, and the propensity for the superficial. Even a simple activity like visiting a cultural institution can seem daunting. So when one sees “… the uncommon beauty of common things …” plastered on the facade of the A+D Museum as part of the Eames Words exhibit, skepticism is a natural response. After all, can words really change perspective?

The creative team behind Eames Words banked on this simple premise in spite of the fact that Charles and Ray Eames—largely considered the most influential American designers of the 20th century—are traditionally known for their furniture and industrial design, architecture, exhibitions, and toys. When we see a presentation of the couple’s work, we expect to see a display of iconic form-fitting chairs, not walls of quotes. Yet it is this largely typographic presentation, coupled with everyday objects, that breaks our surface familiarity with the Eameses and shows them in an intimate new light.

In conceiving the exhibit, curator Deborah Sussman (SEGD Fellow and Founder/Principal of Sussman/Prejza, Los Angeles) offered something few could: an insider’s point of view. She had developed a close relationship with the Eameses while working for their office in the 1950s and 1960s, before establishing her own design practice in 1968. For a young woman studying at the Chicago Institute of Design, an internship with the Eameses was heaven, not just because of their innovative work but also because of the way they lived. Eames’ employees were an extension of their family, with workdays and weekends blending into one.
Occupying this world for a time, Sussman caught a rare glimpse into the couple’s life and philosophy. “People know about the products, but not many people know what it was like to be alive then,” she says. “I saw the exhibition as a catalyst for a way of revealing some truths about Charles and Ray.”

Type driven
These “truths” drive the experience, enveloping visitors in their words via black-and-white graphics integrated at varying scale on the walls, columns, display fixtures, and floor. With little time and literally no budget to create the exhibit, Sussman intuited that using the Eameses own words as a foundation would be an effective, inexpensive, and fresh way to tell their story. She named the exhibit accordingly, and invited typographer Andrew Byrom to collaborate on the design.

For the quotes that provide an interpretive backbone for the exhibition, Byrom specified DIN, a classic sans-serif typeface already used by the museum, but he manipulated size and weight to achieve a layered look. Some quotes are purposely large to grab visitors’ attention; others are small, allowing a process of discovery. Placement relates to their association with objects on display.

At the entrance, 8-foot high dimensional letters announce the show. As part of the Getty initiative Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980, Eames Words is one of many presentations of Southern Californian visual culture. At just under 5,000 square feet, the A+D exhibition is one of the smaller spaces (at the neighboring Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Living in a Modern Way consumes 11,000 square feet and includes a full-scale replica of Charles and Ray Eames’ living room). “We knew LACMA would be strong and dominant,” explains Byrom. “We wanted to scream to that crowd.”

But the show transcends materials and medium. Signage, exhibition graphics, and display serve dual purposes and reinforce the notion of the creative process so integral to the Eames philosophy. The superscaled “Eames” lettering stretches across the museum’s Wilshire Boulevard façade. The “A” and “S” are vinyl applied to the glass doors. The “M,” built of MDF, extends out from the building. And the two “E’s” elongate into the exhibition space, becoming the primary mechanisms for display, an idea put forth by Todd Erlandson and Lara Hoad of the

“The main idea was that you walk in and have no idea why these [everyday objects] are here. There is a bit of confusion ... by the end of the exhibition you find out what that all means.”
Quotes by Charles and Ray Eames provide both the philosophical and typographical underpinning of the exhibit. Integrated point-source lighting casts common objects in a new light.

Photo: Clark Dugger
Los Angeles architecture studio (M)Arch. This not only created continuity between the outside and the inside, it also solved the dilemma of how objects would be supported physically.

**Sweet symbiosis**
The design team contemplated visuals that would support the Eames quotes underpinning the exhibit. *Goods*, a 7-minute film Ray made as a tribute to Charles after his death and the final film produced by the Eames Office (1981), enchanted everyone on the design team. The film includes audio and a three-screen slide show—depicting images of kegs of nails, bolts of cloth, reams of paper, and other common objects that have inherent beauty—from a lecture Charles Eames gave at Harvard University in 1970.

Byrom suggested including objects from the film, as well as other objects that directly relate to the quotes, throughout the exhibition space—on the shelves, on the floor, and hanging from the ceiling. The relational connections between words and objects help narrate the exhibit. The unspoken rule: If something is referred to in a quote, it had to be there. So quote/object pairings range from an Army-green Willys jeep (“The jeep is an automobile that America can be proud of”) to an installation of Bob Evans’ Force Fins (“If you free yourself from the idea ‘I am going to design a new and novel glass’ then you have a chance—if you say in your mind, ‘I want this vessel to bring this liquid in the best possible way.’”) to real bread (“You can tell more about a country from its bread and its soup than you can from its museums and concert halls.”). “The main idea was that you walk in and have no idea why these [everyday objects] are here. There is a bit of confusion,” states Byrom. “By the end of the exhibition you find out what that all means.”

The “end,” as Byrom describes it, refers to the back of the museum, where visitors hear the voice of Charles Eames becoming more distinct the closer they get. The screening room loops seminal films like *Goods*, *Design Q&A*, and *Toccata for Toy Trains* on the main screen (several others play on a side wall). Paul Prejza (principal at Sussman/Prejza and friend of the Eameses) curated two walls of photography: a selection of Charles’ photographs of India and images from a slide show called *Konditorei* (1955).

That’s not to say *Eames Words* follows a linear progression. It’s preferable, in fact, to explore without direction, letting the organic assembly of objects and words draw you deeper into the couple’s psyche.

“**You can tell more about a country from its bread and its soup than you can from its museums and concert halls.”**
Finding freedom within constraints

The fact that *Eames Words* feels natural and unforced is difficult to believe given the complicated history of the project. Originally a different exhibit was meant to occupy the space. When that didn’t materialize, Tibbie Dunbar, the executive director of the A+D Museum, called on Sussman to conceive and curate a show with only four months until the opening date.

To call the museum a client, however, is a bit of a misnomer. Dunbar and staff didn’t impose any rigid institutional guidelines. Sarah Lane, Membership and Special Programs Coordinator, served as the liaison between the museum and the designers, coordinating site logistics. Her adulation for the so-called “Eames Team” is evident; she likens the members to superheroes. “We fully entrusted them to put together an amazing exhibit,” she says. “From the get-go, we knew it would be phenomenal.”

While the “Eames Team” enjoyed freedom within the creative process, they were restricted in other ways. All labor and materials had to be donated. “One of the lessons I learned from the Eameses was that you work within the constraints be it time, financial, or physical,” reflects Sussman. This guided the simplicity of the graphic approach, and materials were also kept to a minimum: vinyl, MDF, paint, and simple lighting.

Charles and Ray Eames left an indelible stamp on Los Angeles and the world at large, and their legacy has been honored many times over, in the form of exhibitions, publications, and most recently, a documentary. There’s always value in new scholarship, but the biggest blockade to understanding the past is how to bring clarity to why ideas are relevant now. In *Eames Words*, Sussman and Byrom allow the subjects to speak for themselves and, at the same time, situate their voices within a living laboratory. Utilizing a deceptively simple graphic program coupled with everyday objects, the exhibit conveys an authenticity typically lacking in architecture and design presentations. Quite simply, we feel connected.

“The public perception of the Eameses can often seem like a caricature, because of the collective cultural awareness of them,” says Byrom. “But this helps show them as real people.”

Jennifer M. Volland is a freelance writer and curator based in Long Beach, California. She co-authored *Long Beach Architecture: The Unexpected Metropolis* and is the co-curator of Grand Hotel. www.grandhotelexhibition.org

Most of the Eames quotes appear in black-and-white vinyl lettering, ranging from 72pt to larger than 720pt. Photo: Clark Dugger

... the uncommon beauty of common things...
### SEGD 2012 LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

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DOWN TO BUSINESS
Office environments are too often treated as purely functional, conformist containers for the daily toil. In most workplaces, creativity stops at the reception lobby. But some forward-looking companies are letting go of stifling corporate traditions to embrace flexible working styles and employee amenities that encourage creativity, collaboration, and ultimately, productivity.

Environmental graphic design is playing an important role in defining this brave new business world by anchoring the changing office environment in a sense of place. Projects by two Sydney design firms—Frost Design and THERE—reveal how branding and wayfinding systems can provide human-centered, inspiring places to work while also supporting environmental initiatives and the bottom line.
Within a sleek high-rise in Brisbane, Rio Tinto operates its regional hub as an environment connected to the company’s diverse mining activities around the globe.

“This new office makes it easier to share information and ideas, and to attract new people to our business,” says Grant Thorne, Rio Tinto group executive for technology and innovation. Frost Design worked with the Australian interiors firm Geyer on the project to create environmental graphics for 21 floors of workspaces occupied by about 2,000 employees.

“Geyer developed a very well defined interior design by working with the client over a year,” says Annabel Stevens, head of Frost’s environments team. “Building from this design, we conducted workshops to define the journey through the spaces, what staff and visitors should experience, and the wayfinding and signage information required for the different spaces.”

To give employees a greater understanding of Rio Tinto’s core operations and encourage collaboration, Frost connected this regional center to the company’s far-flung sites across the world with place-making elements, graphics, and signage expressive of Rio Tinto’s mining culture.

An “earth to sky” theme represents Rio Tinto’s process of extracting aluminum, copper, diamonds, minerals, and iron ore from the ground before the raw materials emerge into daylight to be worked into sought-after commodities.

For an exhibit of some of the company’s retrieved minerals, Frost created display cases from Corten steel, raw steel, copper, and aluminum to represent the eventual transformation of the metals on view. “This design encapsulates the idea of refinement, from a base metal to a manufactured product,” says Stevens.

Similar mining references continue throughout the offices, from architectural elements to signage. A sculptural central staircase inspired by a mining auger rises through the 25,000-square-meter headquarters to encourage employee mobility and connections among departments and projects.
Wayfinding signage expresses the topographical contours of a geological map. Sign bands in different metals and colors undulate from the wall, representing the stratification of the earth in an open-cut mine.
CHAIR REACTION: 3M

Asked to create a compelling environmental graphics program for 3M’s 8,000-square-meter Australian headquarters, THERE (Sydney) focused on the company’s collaborative work ethos and the chain reaction of ideas that create technology innovations.

Researching 3M’s extensive image library, THERE found geometric shapes revealed in macro photography of the company’s micro-replication technology, which is used in many 3M products. THERE appropriated these shapes—circles, triangles, hexagons, and diamonds—as a way to identify individual departments while establishing a common visual language used across entrances, meeting rooms, laboratories, and wall graphics.

The company’s leading scientists are also the heroes in the space, says Simon Hancock, creative director. “We created more than 15 large-scale illustrative and graphically treated portraits throughout the six floors that pay homage to important innovators and scientists from 3M’s history,” he notes.

The project also included an extensive program of wayfinding, identification, and statutory signage, including large-scale carpark supergraphics.

Utilizing 3M’s recognizable red brand color and expressing its culture of innovation, THERE designed signs made as single folded pieces of steel. The custom signage includes a 1.5-meter high gloss red 3M logo standing boldly in the entrance foyer.

A 1.5-metre-high gloss red 3M logo stands boldly in the entrance foyer.
Throughout the workspace, large-scale illustrative and graphically treated portraits pay homage to important innovators and scientists from 3M’s history.

In a breakout area, THERE expressed ideas around human interaction, collaboration, and creativity on a 25-meter-long, hand-drawn mindmap feature wall that illustrates 3M facts and achievements.

Custom signage is playful but functional, fabricated from single folded pieces of steel.

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**Client**
3M Australia

**Location**
Sydney

**Project Area**
8,000m²

**Opened**
October 2011

**Design Firm**
THERE
Paul Taboure project director,
Simon Hancock creative director,
Jon Zhu lead designer,
Sinead McDevitt designer

**Consultants**
Colliers Project Services
architect

**Fabrication**
Spike Design graphics
and signage,
Infracraft
timeline wall

**Photos**
Simon Hancock
“Determined to be different” is the slogan of Australia’s Commonwealth Bank, and its campus-style headquarters in Sydney’s Darling Walk stands out for its innovative approach to the white-collar workplace. Offices for the bank’s 5,000-person staff are housed in a pair of eight-story “green” buildings designed to support shared work spaces rather than fixed desks for every employee.

Embracing a new approach called activity-based working, the bank provides flexible “home zones” where employees are assigned to work but have their pick of any desk in that area as needed. Staff are encouraged to use wireless laptops and phones to roam the campus and brainstorm with colleagues. The arrangement aims to support an additional 20% of the bank’s workforce, since desks can be used by more than one employee, while allowing for future expansion and contraction of space as needed.

Given this ever-changing office setting, environmental graphics were critical to establishing a sense of direction and identity within the buildings. Frost responded by creating dynamic, sculptural designs for the entrance levels, playful graphics on the workplace floors, and subtle wayfinding integrated into the building fabric.

“Key designs are indicative of the bank’s forward movement and flexibility,” says Annabel Stevens, head of Frost’s environments group. The team extracted this theme into geometric, angular forms for the north building and more curvilinear forms for the south building.

Working with the interior design firms E.G.O. Group and Davenport Campbell, Frost created signage and wayfinding for each “home zone” to identify the work areas for different teams or departments. Repeating geometric patterns were used to reinforce the concept of connectivity and provide visual consistency across the large, multi-level floor plans.

The bank’s commitment to sustainability is displayed in a large digital installation in the north lobby. The wall communicates the “vital signs” of the green building, which is designed to save 2,500 tons of carbon emissions per year and reduce main water consumption by 92%.

“The building is about changing habits and modifying behavior within the corporation,” says Stevens. “The wall is fundamentally an internal communication to staff to use the stairs more, print out emails less, and know that they are part of an organization that is actively doing something to decrease our impact on the environment.”

In a building where employees are not assigned permanent desks, graphics provide an important place-making role.

Much of the Corian signage represents the flow and flux of work within the bank by turning corners, hanging over stair balustrades, and appearing to wrap in and out of walls.
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INSPIRATION

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Playing with Fire
Burning Man: community, art, and anarchy

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Workspace
RTKL's sustainable office, Miami style

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Sketchbook
The drawings of Ronald Shakespear and Wayne Hunt

(70)
Up Close
Paul Mijsenaar on wayfinding and apps
umultuous, thundering cheers echo into the evening air as fireworks begin to pierce the inky sky above the Black Rock Desert of Nevada. A 40-foot-tall wooden effigy rises into the air atop a 50-foot pedestal, waiting silently, patiently for his moment. His countdown clock reads 00:00:00.

There is a sudden flash of light, a tremendous WHOMP, and Burning Man ignites. And so it begins, a fitting end to all the waiting and a defining moment in tribal unity. For the more than 50,000 people who gather in the desert to participate in this climactic annual ritual, Burning Man is a monument to life, hope, and optimism. The burning of Burning Man signals the end of a “year,” the clearing of cast-off memories, and anticipation of the year to come.

Burning Man the event is a fiery celebration of art and community. It is also a pop-up city that magically materializes every August as Black Rock City, Nevada, then disappears a week later. It spawns inventive urban planning, groundbreaking art, an infamous party atmosphere, and a laboratory for social experimentation. And all against a ferocious elemental backdrop: desert sands, average temperatures of 115 degrees Fahrenheit, and frequent windstorms and whiteouts.
Burning Man started in 1986 when two artists built an 8-foot-tall effigy and burned it on Bakers Beach in San Francisco. It has grown to a following of more than 50,000 in the Black Rock Desert of Nevada. Burning Man 2003: Beyond Belief, explored rites, rituals, and temples. Photo: George Post © 2012
Playing with fire

Black Rock City covers 5 square miles of desert playa, a radial grid criss-crossed by streets, avenues, individual camps, theme camps, and villages. This photo was taken by GeoEye-1 satellite from an altitude of 423 miles (681km).

Photo: GeoEye

City of fire

Beyond its reputation as an anarchistic culture fest (which it is) and week-long campout, Burning Man is also a very controlled organization. Black Rock City LLC builds, manages, promotes, and produces the event and also administers the municipality known as Black Rock City.

Burning Man’s urban landscape is impressive and fantastical. Contained in a radial grid that covers 5 square miles of desert playa, Black Rock City is literally a city in a box, held in storage until it is “unpacked” each year by its very own Department of Public Works, volunteers who build its temporary roads, camp structures, and the Burning Man sculpture.

“Burners” camp out helter-skelter in all manner of temporary housing—tents, teepees, RVs, and geodesic domes that collectively form endless waves of sheltered encampments. Among the street grid, neighborhoods and theme camps emerge organically. Music pours through the streets and, as the week progresses, artworks spring from the desert floor in mind-boggling forms both monumental and small-scale. Burners walk the streets in all manner of costumes. The raison d’être of Burning Man, after all, is “radical self expression.” To visualize it, think of Mardi Gras combined with Halloween in the middle of Las Vegas and located on Mars.

Social incubator

Burning Man is also an incubator of disparate social experiments: experiential art, bizarre architecture (cardboard yurts), urban planning (commerce-free camping), and inside-out social norms (clothing optional).

Burning Man’s greatest resource is its spirit of community. Just about every aspect of the operation is volunteer-driven: Burners can join up with the Department of Public Works to help build the city, the ARTery to help manage the art, or Media Mecca, which deals with media queries from around the world. Another volunteer group, the Lamplighters, light more than 600 oil lamps every evening for street safety. The Rangers are an internal security force.

The vibe of social authenticity is reflected in the general camaraderie that infuses the week. For most Burners, it’s a time-out from the real world and the responsibilities of work and everyday life. Couple that with a free-swinging social atmosphere and lots of fantastic art, and you have the beginnings of some kind of a utopian Neverland. Or perhaps it’s closer to an annual Brigadoon.

While many rules govern how Black Rock City functions as a unique entity, perhaps the most amazing is its ban on cash. It is a commercial-free zone, meaning no vendors of any kind (except for the most valuable commodities, ice and coffee). Burning Man economics are defined by a gift culture—Burners exchanging gifts for no other reason than “just because.” Another stipulation is Burning Man’s “Leave No Trace” ethos, guided by the motto “Pack it In, Pack it Out.” Since the event is held in a pristine desert, and at the behest of the Bureau of Land Management, Burners have an obligation and a personal pride in leaving the desert as they found it.

Painting with fire

Art has always been at the core of Burning Man, and over the years several thousand magnificent artworks have been created there. Some are permanent, living second lives in private collections or as public art. But many are destined to be consumed by flames.

For all the performance art that occurs around Burning Man, none is more profound than using fire as a creative resource. The event began, after all, with a bonfire. In 1986, two San Francisco artists, Larry Harvey and Jerry James, built a wooden effigy and invited friends to a local beach to burn it. The flames caught, the following multiplied, and in 1990, Burning Man was moved to the desert.

At Burning Man, where one’s level of personal safety is self-defined, fire has become the paintbrush and the canvas for creative expression. That it inspires awe, spectacle, fear, and uncertainty is part of its power. Many of the artworks are predicated on challenging people’s comfort level with danger.

Any artworks installed at Burning Man are candidates for the torch. Paintings, wooden sculptures, theme installations—it’s all fair game—all in defiance of the notion (and the hubris) that art exists in perpetuity.
ANY ARTWORKS INSTALLED AT BURNING MAN ARE CANDIDATES FOR THE TORCH.
TO VISUALIZE IT, THINK OF MARDI GRAS COMBINED WITH HALLOWEEN IN THE MIDDLE OF LAS VEGAS AND LOCATED ON MARS.

Burners live in a wide range of temporary housing, from RVs to geodesic domes and cardboard huts. Photo: Louis M. Brill

Art cars and buses are a favorite medium at Burning Man. Photo: Louis M. Brill

Playing with fire

Art cars and buses are a favorite medium at Burning Man.

Photo: Louis M. Brill
To understand the existential creativeness of conflagrational artworks, one has to think in terms of art’s transcendence as a physical thing and its second life in memory.

**PHOENIX RISING**

The appeal of Burning Man is complex. Some Burners go for its 24/7 party-like atmosphere, while others value the sense of community. For the artists who populate the desert with their phantasmagorical creations, it is a blank canvas of unrestricted opportunity. And for all of its attendees, it’s a unique social event of cross-pollinating cultures, all existing in a chaotic harmony of ongoing celebrations. Day and night, the event is watched over by the Sphinx-like presence of Burning Man, destined for the flames at zero-hour on Saturday night. To those watching, its fiery light marks yet another new beginning.

Louis M. Brill is one of the 80 founders who brought Burning Man into the Black Rock Desert in 1990, and has attended the event every year since. He can be contacted at louisbrill@sbcglobal.net.
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**RTKL, Miami**

RTKL’s new 10,000-square-foot Miami office models the next-generation sustainable workplace and reflects the practice’s focus on hospitality design, as well as the city’s informal vibe—all within the context of the RTKL corporate brand.

The environmental graphics program adds color and texture to the loft-like space, creates a strong sense of place, and reinforces the brand. Bold patterns create a layered feeling and repetitive prints and more ornate cut-out patterns are applied as wall coverings, juxtaposed against bold colors and plain concrete.

The signature EGD element is a custom entry piece that blends an applied illustration with a back-lit dimensional logo and listing of office locations. The statement is unmistakable: you are in the office of a global design firm.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client</th>
<th>RTKL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Miami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>$19,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Area</td>
<td>10,000 sq. ft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opened</td>
<td>May 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos</td>
<td>Mike Butler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The entrance wall combines a custom illustration of the Miami skyline, a local project, and details with a back-lit dimensional logo and locations.

Bold colors and simple repetitive patterns create a rhythm in the space.

Delicate wall-covering patterns soften the space’s loft-like edges and finishes.
“Working in design for half a century, I have always found it difficult to tell my clients how the project will look, so my sketches give them a general idea. I usually sketch on pieces of scrap paper or whatever is at hand. Many of my preliminary drawings later prove to be true.

“Our professional value as designers is not only about good ideas and mastery of form, but also about understanding complexities. In cases like wayfinding systems, of our many daily obsessions—vandalism, erosion, perception of distances, placement, type, color,
Some clients ask me for a boat, when actually what they need is to cross a river. Defining an audience involves deciphering their codes. As Gilbert Chesterton said, it isn’t that they can’t see the solution. It’s that they can’t see the problem. Sketching is a way to communicate ideas and decipher the codes.
Wayne Hunt
Hunt Design, Pasadena, California
SEGD Fellow, 2004

“Drawing has always been important to me both personally and professionally. I love photography, but it’s just not the same. A major milestone for me about 15 years ago was putting aside the 35mm camera and picking up a sketchbook. I take it everywhere. I draw from life in the front of the book and flip it over and work from the back for project sketches, notes, lists, etc. When front and back pages meet in the middle, I toss it onto a shelf and start a new book. I’ve got about 50 so far.

Multi-use sketchbooks:
Personal drawings on one side and work sketches, lists, and notes on the flipside.
“Sketching is not only efficient for developing ideas quickly, but also provides a kind of iterative feedback not possible with the computer. I once heard that one’s inability to draw perfectly actually leads to productive variations as an idea develops—your mistakes suggest new directions. This is not possible on a computer where everything looks ‘perfect.’ My cryptic sketches often lead straight to tighter SketchUp and Photoshop presentations.

“For Descanso Gardens, I did quick doodles of three or four ideas, then tighter versions of a couple. The client asked for something in color so I made one more with ink and watercolor—still quite loose and not really architecturally correct.”

“Sketching is really about seeing things more clearly.”

Descanso Gardens, Los Angeles. Preliminary sketches and completed donor recognition display.
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Trained as an industrial designer, Paul Mijksenaar has focused much of his career on information design and the perceptual and cognitive aspects of wayfinding. A professor in Delft University of Technology’s Industrial Design Department, he has collaborated with cognitive psychology teams to explore the use of public information and safety symbols, color coding, human behavior in public buildings, emergency egress, use of maps, and other factors affecting visual information.

His long-term work at Schiphol Airport has resulted in what many experts call the “gold standard” for a passenger-friendly airport environment. And his firm has created wayfinding systems for many of the world’s largest and busiest airports. In celebration of the firm’s 25th anniversary, Mijksenaar and his colleagues distilled their wayfinding expertise into an iPhone app, Mijksenaar’s 99 Do’s and Don’ts of Wayfinding.

— Why did you decide to create an app?
I’m a big Apple fan, so the moment I had an iPhone, I wanted my own app. For my 60th birthday a few years ago, colleagues in our Berlin office designed the basic app in secret, with 60 do’s and don’ts. For our 25th anniversary, we decided to expand the do’s and don’ts to 99. That was a better number.

—— Who is your primary audience for the app?
Architects. They are the ones we need to inform about effective wayfinding. It is mostly still an afterthought for them; they design a building and later realize they have wayfinding problems. They need to consider it before they start sketching.

If the building is not intuitive, we’ll end up just adding signs but never creating a good wayfinding experience.

Also facility managers and clients. Most clients want some basic knowledge so they can talk to architects and facility managers without feeling dumb.
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Interior and Exterior
National and International
Manufacture and Installation
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designer spotlight

name: Harry Mark
studio: RMD Design
where: Santa Monica, CA
Harry Mark, RMD Design principal, brings the best of both worlds to the Studio: an impressive background with some of the world’s leading architectural firms, and a hands-on knowledge of international architecture and graphic design. Harry is involved in the development of all projects from conceptualization through fabrication. Learn more about Harry and the rest of his studio at www.rmdesign.net

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—Harry Mark, Redmond Schwartz, Mark Design

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