



The Beggarstaff Brothers

DESIGNER 1 FULL NAME: James Pryde

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: March 30, 1866

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: Edinburgh, Scotland United Kingdom

YEAR DIED: February 24, 1941

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: London United Kingdom

EDUCATION/TRAINING: In 1872, James attended George Watson's Boy College. Then from 1885-1888 he studied at the Royal Scottish Academy. He then went to Paris to study under William-Adolphe Bouguereau at the Académie Julian. Three months into it, he decided to return to Scotland.

DESIGNER 2 FULL NAME: William Nicholson

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: February 5, 1872

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: Newark-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire United Kingdom

YEAR DIED: May 16, 1949

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: Blewbury, Berkshire that is now Oxfordshire United Kingdom

EDUCATION/TRAINING: William Nicholson attended Herkomer Art school. He then went to Paris to study at the Académie Julian.

RACE | ETHNICITY | RELIGION | POLITICAL ALIGNMENT

IF ANY OF THE ABOVE AFFECTED EITHER THE GROUP'S LIFE EXPERIENCE OR WORK BECAUSE IT/THEY PROVIDED A CHALLENGE AT THE TIME, PLEASE EXPLAIN.

None of the above effected their work.

DID ANY OF THE DESIGNERS DO NOTABLE WORK IN FIELDS OTHER THAN WHAT WOULD BE CONSIDERED GRAPHIC DESIGN TODAY? EXPLAIN. No

LIST AT LEAST ONE OTHER WORK THAT IS NOT NAMED IN THIS TIMELINE FOR WHICH THIS DESIGNER IS WELL KNOWN. IF WORK CO-CREATED, LIST THE OTHERS INVOLVED.

They made a poster called Don Quixote. It was made for Sir Henry Irving's production at the Lyceum Theatre.

EXPLAIN IF THIS FAME IS ONLY WITHIN DESIGN CIRCLES OR ANY OTHER SUBSET OF THE POPULATION.

This fame was only from the design circle. They actually didn't even get to have this design printed because it wasn't liked by the client. These designs were different from what was going on in that period, which was art nouveau.

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER GROUP MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

They created the new technique called "collage" Explain. They created modern poster designs by cutting out pieces of paper and moving them around on a board. This gave their design a kind of flatness. They also created designs using the true forms of an object. This was different from anything Europe was experiencing at the time.

IS THERE ANYTHING CONTROVERSIAL ABOUT THIS DESIGN GROUP OR ITS MEMBERS? EXPLAIN.

Well the designers had completely opposite opinion about design when they came to work together.

WHAT MATERIALS WERE MOST OFTEN USED BY THIS DESIGN GROUP IN THE CREATION AND PRODUCTION OF WORK? Stencils, paint, colored paper, grey-brown wrapping paper, lithography, scissors, and glue.

DID THIS DESIGN GROUP PROMOTE A SPECIFIC IDEOLOGY IN ITS WORK? EXPLAIN.

They came up with the idea of presenting images in their purest form during a time when design was very decorative and intricate. They started doing their poster designs during art nouveau, very into the swirly design, but they went totally opposite with their design style.

WHY IS THIS DESIGN GROUP VIEWED AS ICONIC IN THE HISTORY OF GRAPHIC DESIGN?

I believe they were iconic in history because they introduced a design that no one was doing at the time. They truly influenced how posters were being made.

IS THERE ANY OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO KNOW ABOUT THIS DESIGN GROUP?

They first collaborated the summer of 1894.

They split in a short period of three years.

YOUR NAME: McKenna Baldwin

GIVE YOUR EDUCATED OPINION OF THIS DESIGN GROUP AND ITS WORK. ALSO EXPLAIN WHAT INFLUENCE, IF ANY, THIS WORK HAS HAD ON YOUR OWN. A LACK OF INFLUENCE MUST BE EXPLAINED.

Under the pseudonym "the Beggarstaff brothers" two men created a new form of art that, for three years, struggled to make a showing in a world of the art nouveau movements. Some would refer to them as commercial failures while others were amazed by their new, not so extravagant, style of artistry. One commentator said they would have looked like Laurel and Hardy. One was tall and heavier while the other was short and thinner. They were total opposites in not only looks, but also in the way they were raised, a quiet home versus a home with very outspoken and bold family members

Evidently the differences in the upbringing, attitudes, and lives of the two young men in their twenties from opposing sides of the

world brought about a new form of art that expressed the two sides combined as one. It is amazing that these two, who had opinions that were so different, were able to compromise and impact the world of art for such a short period of time, only three years. Their approach, with such a radical distinction from the popular art of the time, with so few lines and a flat appearance, was so different from the bright, colorful, and twirling lines of art nouveau.

The “Beggarstaff Brothers” were different in the use of materials and supplies for creating their art. One chose to use scissors while the other chose a knife for cutting. Their styles clashed, yet became the groundwork for a short-lived radical approach to art history.

It seems that the two men could “feed off of each other’s thoughts”. What one couldn’t see, the other could. Sometimes seeing the lines of another’s work of art can form a new idea in the other artist’s mind and blend it together to form a beautiful piece.

They created designs in their purest form when design was very intricate and decorative. Even though it was difficult for others to accept the Beggarstaff artwork in purest form, it was more accepted by people in Europe and the United States. It brought about the beginning of a new art form referred to as the Modern Era. I’m sure they were frustrated that it didn’t last as long or be accepted by others as they had hoped. Due to the lack of acceptance they parted ways and occupied their time with their own preference of occupation.

The “Beggarstaff brothers” have had an influence on some of my work. I never heard about the Beggarstaff brothers, but I have used several techniques, such as “collage” and the use of figures, in their purest form. An example would be, while studying visual thinking, I did a collage piece about animal abuse. I cut pictures from different magazines to form a composition of a beaten dog and a child that had the words “It doesn’t just stop with animals”.

I appreciate the desire of two individuals to pursue something so different from what was considered the norm in that period. Though they were total opposites, they came together to change the world of art for the better, and their lives live on through the art we see of today.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Meggs, Phillip B. and Alston W. Purvis. *Meggs’ History of Graphic Design, 5th Edition*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012.

Scots, Scotsman. “Please Tell Us Why You Have Visited Art UK Today.” James Ferrier Pryde (1866–1941) | Art UK. Accessed April 04, 2018. <https://www.artuk.org/discover/artists/pryde-james-ferrier-18661941>.

“Stories.” William Nicholson (1872–1949) | Art UK. Accessed April 04, 2018. <https://artuk.org/discover/artists/nicholson-william-18721949>.

“The Beggarstaffs - Biography.” RoGallery. Accessed April 04, 2018. <http://rogallery.com/Beggarstaffs/beggarstaffs-biography.html>.

Douglas, Ava. “James Pryde.” History of Graphic Design. 2017. Accessed April 04, 2018. <http://historygraphicdesign.com/?catid=0&id=144>.

• Lindsay, Martin S. “Hamlet Poster by J. and W. Beggarstaff, the Beggarstaff Brothers.” The Art of the Beggarstaff Brothers. January 20, 2010. Accessed April 04, 2018. <http://beggarstaffs.com/catalogue/01-hamlet.html>

- Lindsay, Martin S. "Kassama Corn Flour Poster by J. & W. Beggarstaff, (1894)." The Art of the Beggarstaff Brothers. January 20, 2010. Accessed April 04, 2018. <http://beggarstaffs.com/catalogue/08-kassama-corn-flour.html>.
- Tonna, Andrew. "The Beggarstaffs Brothers." Andrew Tonna | Blog. Accessed April 04, 2018. <http://andrewtonna.weebly.com/blog/the-beggarstaffs-brothers>