



Alexey Brodovitch

DESIGNER'S FULL NAME: Remove this text and write name

DESIGNER'S PSEUDONYM/NICKNAME: None

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: 1898

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: Russia

YEAR DIED: 1971

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: France

RACE | ETHNICITY | RELIGION | POLITICAL ALIGNMENT: Russian | Religion and political alignment are not known.

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

Brodovitch grew up in a war-fervor ridden Russia which he almost joined in 1914. Despite being pulled from it, he managed to attend and graduate from military school. However, the revolutionary zeal that once engulfed the country was replaced with something more solemn. This caused Brodovitch and his family to migrate to France, where Paris was the pinnacle of artistic variety and experimentation. It was this environment that he ventured into and began to learn from and create with vigor.

DID THIS DESIGNER DO NOTABLE WORK IN FIELDS OTHER THAN WHAT WOULD TODAY BE CONSIDERED GRAPHIC DESIGN? EXPLAIN.

Brodovitch's area of expertise expanded to painting, photography, art direction and teaching. He also had experience with interior design. Through his constant experimentation, Alexey Brodovitch was able to reconsider photography's role in magazines and avant-garde design and elevate other mediums to new heights.

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

He is most noted for his role in *Harper's Bazaar* magazine in which he was the art director for over twenty-five years. Brodovitch's magazine cover designs changed the game on what was considered good, ground-breaking design and visual intelligence.

IS THERE ANYTHING CONTROVERSIAL ABOUT THIS DESIGNER? EXPLAIN.

There is nothing notably controversial about this designer.

EXPLAIN THIS DESIGNER'S EDUCATION/TRAINING, INCLUDING ACADEMIC, APPRENTICESHIPS, AND /OR MENTORSHIPS.

Brodovitch's artistic career really didn't take off until he and his family moved to France due to the changes overcoming post-wartime Russia. In Paris, he started out as a set painter for the Ballet Russe, which was founded by Diaghilev. After that, he worked with fabric designs for Arts et Métiers Graphiques with Deberny and Peignot. It was at this point his skills developed and his career started gaining traction. Brodovitch collaborated with several different photographers and artists for his magazine designs. Some notable artists are A.M. Cassandre, Richard Avedon, and Jean Contreau. The people that he worked with elevated their influence on popular culture at the time.

DID THIS DESIGNER PROMOTE A SPECIFIC IDEOLOGY IN HIS/HER WORK? EXPLAIN.

This designer did not promote a specific ideology in work.

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

Brodovitch is viewed as iconic not because he started from nothing to becoming internationally acclaimed, but because of his posters, magazines, photography and his design laboratories. He constantly strived for change in everything that he created -- no single work was the same as its predecessor. He was able to draw out the talent that was hidden inside of his students and effectively foster a love for avant-garde art.

IS THERE ANY OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO KNOW ABOUT THIS DESIGNER?

No.

YOUR NAME: Alliyah Kirkwood

STATE YOUR EDUCATED OPINION OF THIS PERSON AND THE QUALITY/IMPORTANCE OF HIS/HER WORK. EXPLAIN WHAT INFLUENCE - OR LACK OF INFLUENCE - THIS WORK HAS HAD ON YOUR OWN.

By exposing his American students to European graphic design and its ideas, Brodovitch became one of the first people to bring avant-garde art to the United States. Alexey Brodovitch is well-known for his contributions as the art director for Bazaar Magazine from 1934 to 1958. His knack for white space and “rhythmic” design layouts is what changed the game for magazine cover design for the future (Meggs 355). His influence spread through his teachings both in the New Bauhaus and in his own design laboratories when he moved to the United States later in his career.

The Russian-born painter, photographer, designer, and teacher was a constant experimenter. No two front covers of Bazaar Magazine -- or any of his works -- were the same. Brodovitch collaborated with many artists and photographers when it came to his designs. Some prominent names were A.M. Cassandre, Richard Avedon, Jean Cocteau(ADC Global). With the help of these artists, Alexey Brodovitch was able to shape the design landscape with his dynamic usage of photographs and text in the Constructivist and avant-garde style. Alexey Brodovitch is a legend that has inspired thousands of artists for generations to come.

Prior to exposing myself to Brodovitch’s works, it had no influence over my personal work in my artistic career. I believe that it is important to surround oneself with different ideas, media, nature and people to inspire growth. While considering myself as a designer, my primary focus is not on printed media and typography. There is something to appreciate about type and its application with photography. The ideas of form following function and the universality of type in order to create a message in its purity is something with which I resonate with. It makes me want to go back and look more closely at his works in order to fully analyze, understand and maybe even borrow from for my future work.

For instance, Brodovitch was known to create a sense of movement and energy in his double paged spreads. Photographs were often cropped in dynamic ways and placed on the page in overlapping fashion. Following the current trend in ideas about design at the time, Brodovitch commanded the pages he helped design by creating visual space between the images and the text on the page. In modern day magazine covers, it is easy to point out the similarities between both Brodovitch and the current magazine’s style.

In Brodovitch's *Ramon and Renita* (1935), it features a double page spread where an image covers one page and the other page has the text perpendicular to the image strips depiction the motion of the couple. The juxtaposition between the two pages showcases Brodovitch's proficiency in page layout (infographics.com). A Mockup-spread for *Harper's Bazaar* (c. 1940-50) is another double page spread that has a single image of a woman with an umbrella off-center on the spread. The text resides at the lower third of the right page.

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