



David Carson

Designer's full name: David Carson

Designer's pseudonym/nickname: "The Father of Grunge"

Gender: Male

Year Born: September, 8th, 1955

Country Born: Corpus Cristi, Texas, U.S.A.

Year Died: Still alive in 2020.

Country Died: Still alive in 2020.

Religion | Political Alignment: Information unavailable.

How did any of the above affect either his/her life experience or work because it/they provided a challenge at the time?

None of the above qualities of the designer provided a challenge for the time.

Did this designer do notable work in fields other than what would TODAY be considered graphic design?

David Carson recently has put up photography element pieces on his personal website as well as prints.

For what is this designer most noted in relation to design? EXPLAIN.

He is most noted for his pioneering of influential style. He invented the grunge style of design and typography.

Is there anything controversial about this designer? Explain.

He was controversial during the early 1990s for his typography. While he was an inspiration for young designers at the time, he also made many other designers angry because they believed he was "crossing the line between order and chaos."

Explain this designer's education/training, including academic, apprenticeships, and /or mentorships.

He got a Bachelor of Arts degree from San Diego State University, attended a two-week commercial designing class at the University of Arizona, studied graphic design at the Oregon College of Commercial Art, and attended a three-week workshop in Switzerland for his degree.

Did this designer promote a specific ideology in his/her work? Explain.

He has an attitude of "why not?" that carries throughout his work.

Why is this designer viewed as iconic in the history of graphic design?

He is viewed as iconic for his chaotic typography that was not held by the current rules of design in the 90s. He broke these rules to redefine graphic design.

Is there any other important information to know about this designer?

He won an AIGA Medal in 2014.

Student: Gavin Chase Cunningham

State and explain the one most important effect that your assigned artist and the quality/importance of his/her work had on the history of graphic design.

David Carson is one of the most accomplished graphic designers. Through his use of typography and design, he has transcended what design could be and opened doors for graphic designers across the globe. Carson was even granted the title of "The Father of Grunge" through his innovative designs and typographic style. David Carson's revolutionary designs and typography in the field of graphic design destroyed the walls of mainstream design and opened new doors for the design world and changed what graphic design could be.

The first major turning point for David Carson's career was at a magazine called Transworld Skateboarding, which he worked at from 1984 to 1988. In these four years he became the art director for the magazine and began to develop his style, which made use of "dirty" photographic techniques and typography in a way far from mainstream design. Albert Watson described the way he uses type as "the way a painter uses paint, to create emotion, to express ideas." After his time at Transworld Skateboarding, Carson landed another job at Beach Culture as their art director in 1989. Carson only worked at the company for 6 issues of their magazine because the company folded; however, he was still able to make a name for himself. During his time at Beach Culture, David Carson earned around 150 awards for his work in his unconventional style. After his time at Beach Culture, Carson was picked up by Raygun.

While working at Raygun, Carson helped to improve their sales with his appealing work and cemented his legendary status. Raygun was an alternative-music magazine where publisher Marvin Scott Jarrett picked Carson to be the art director in 1992. At Raygun, Carson helped their circulation triple over three years of work with his radical designs. The reason for the extreme increase was all due to Carson's work heavily appealing to the younger audience of the magazine.

Because of his astounding success and designs major companies/corporations such as Nike and Levi Strauss and Co started to commission him. In 1995, Carson left Raygun and started his own company called David Carson Design. His new company was an instant hit which attracted many rich corporate clientele. This

allowed Carson to then create highly experimental works such as "2nd Sight, Trek and Fotografiks" and his book *The End of Print: The Graphik Design of David Carson* (1995). He still works in his own firm today (when he isn't surfing).

Carson's designs and typography were revolutionary in the design world and were like nothing that had been seen before. They were groundbreaking and often rule-breaking. Carson's use of collage and how he destroyed photos in such a way that created new and unique images out of chaos was unlike any other person before. His work in the field of graphic design broke the ground for a new breed of designers allowing new never-before-seen visuals. Carson created this opportunity for other designers by following his own ideology and not conforming to the restrictive rules of the design world. He contorted type, layouts, and used unique photographic visuals which coined his work as "grunge typography".

His "grunge typography" was mostly characterized by its messy style and how it broke the rules of the design world. It made use of overlapping photos, word cutouts, and disorganized/chaotic typography. This grunge typography helped shape graphic design into a cultural force with its own ideals and direction. This cultural force helped to heavily influence the grunge movement in the 90's and broke the design mold allowing artists to take new innovative approaches toward design.

Through his transcendent and revolutionary designs, Carson has had an achievement-full career. He has created an entire genre of design, earned over a hundred awards, and earned himself the title "the Father of Grunge." Carson's designs and ideas opened up the design community to a new world of design possibilities.

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