



## Aldus Manutius

DESIGNER'S FULL NAME: Aldus Manutius

DESIGNER'S PSEUDONYM/NICKNAME: None

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: 1449

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: Bassiano, Italy

YEAR DIED: 1515

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: Venice, Italy

### RACE | ETHNICITY | RELIGION | POLITICAL ALIGNMENT

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.

Aldus Manutius is a Caucasian Italian from Bassiano. He was a Humanist, which can be described in art terms as art that focuses on human value and worth. It was an intellectual movement that was carried out through scholars, writers, and other leaders during the time period he lived in of 14th-15th century. This affected his art in a way that when he created portraits or imagery of humanistic figures it gave evidence to what was going on in their time period. The way he captured emotion and balance in the human form, and the layout of the design he created.

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

He founded the Aldine Press in 1494. Its major contribution to graphic design is introducing italics.

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.

Aldus Manutius had great absolutely incredible work with his typography in his Aldine Vergil of 1501. The use of text wraps can be seen around a single beautiful first letter of a sentence in color surrounded by a geometric square. Most of this text was aligned to the left in serifs. Liberal use of ornamental designs that usually had some sort of other worldly story with abstracted figures and floral weavings, pastel colors, and gold was also present.

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

His fame was known through the areas of design and cities in which he studied in.

DOES THIS WORK EXEMPLIFY ASPECTS EXPLAINED IN PREVIOUS QUESTIONS?

His work exemplifies these aspects in the use of his typefaces. The honing of his skills and mastering of the elements of typography were evident in his works. The way his artwork communicated with viewers and challenged them gave evidence of his mark.

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

Manutius studied in Rome first before going to Ferrara. It wasn't until later around 1490 he studied with Greek scholars and composers in Venice. And from this point is where he began to start his career off printing. He also founded the Aldine Press.

IS THERE ANYTHING CONTROVERSIAL ABOUT THIS DESIGNER? EXPLAIN.

There is nothing notably controversial about this designer.

WHAT MATERIALS WERE MOST OFTEN USED BY THIS DESIGNER IN THE CREATION AND PRODUCTION OF WORK?

Aldus Manutius founded the Aldine Press in 1494. His materials used were the printing press, the ink, and the paper was the material it was printed upon.

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

After studying in places like Rome, Ferrara, and Venice, he became a printer in 1490. And just five years afterwards he presented his first book *Erotemata* of Constantine Lascaris. Many different prints of his work stemmed on from this point in his life into greater works and achievements until his death.

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

Besides being a humanist and crafting his work around showcasing human structure interaction in gridded designs, I believe he focused heavily on structure and color. And with the ideology of creating elements in his design that played with the viewer's eyes, I think he really wanted to get across the point of seeing things around you.

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

As a printer, I believe he was an iconic designer because of his typography prints. These designs not only followed a grid, but also designed around the grid. Not only that, but being away of leading in these prints was also key. You can see how in his prints with paragraphs there's always breathing room, and direction of color is always in mind. His use of color of hierarchy with the first letter of the paragraph also wraps well with the paragraph and draws you in.

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

He carried pocket editions & big ideas with him. In these he would edit, have some works, or retain ideas.

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YOUR NAME: Cor'Darius Brown

GIVE YOUR EDUCATED OPINION OF THIS DESIGNER AND HIS/HER WORK. ALSO EXPLAIN WHAT INFLUENCE, IF ANY, THIS WORK HAS HAD ON YOUR OWN. A LACK OF INFLUENCE MUST BE EXPLAINED.

Aldus Manutius was fascinating in more ways than one. His ideas of art were much influenced in his time period by humanistic ideas that thrived in the late 14th and 15th century. In his works I found it really easy to convey what style art was going on as well as what typeface (or style) flourished in this time period. Going with the flow of his studies, I could see his art start to evolve into more realistic figures. But not only that but his use to create other worldly figures framing in text was also subjective of the time period. One of the things that stuck with me through my readings is his expression in art. The way he moved through woodcuts, prints, and type were always so controlled to his subject matter. As an artist I find what is most important is craftsmanship. He was precise with each element on his page and even in his prints with paragraphs I noticed that no element was overbearing. Even the colors were spot on most would put a highly contrasted color against the pages but he used pastels instead. Knowing he trained under many different schools reiterated the idea that you can always learn new things.

His artwork influenced my art in ways that challenged me to think about shape and space. The way he uses type in his artwork is very ornamental. One of his works that brought this to my attention is Initials from the Bestiary that was published in 1579. The illustration artwork behind serif typefaces created a visually pleasing design. The animals are accompanied by lacey floral and organic shapes as each figure is stacked behind a capital letter. I enjoy this design for its use of shape and space. The designs are busy but do not create tension between design and type. Visually both aspects of the design stand out without overpowering one another. This is important for a designer because elements on a design should not conflict. Aldus Manutius artwork challenged me to think about the way I place my designs around type. In my designs I can establish beautiful art as well as type placement from working with contrast and space like he did.

Also his art made me understand that not everything beautiful has to be flushed in color. Knowing how to use color in designs is also a core skill graphic designers must focus on. When I use type I tend to work with the type that best suits the message I am trying to convey. I learned during typography that not every type that I found would suit the needs of the designs. Most people go the safe route choosing typefaces they are comfortable with like Helvetica, Garamond, and Futura. Breaking that chain I began exploring a wider range of typography that was beautiful, clean, and structurally appealing to each particular design. The most important lesson Manutius's influence had on me was the need to explore art not just in design styles but in finding what type best fits a design's needs.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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