



Katherine McCoy

DESIGNER'S FULL NAME: Katherine McCoy

DESIGNER'S PSEUDONYM/NICKNAME: None

GENDER: Female

YEAR BORN: 1945

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: United States

YEAR DIED: ---

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: ---

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.

Caucasian, American, Christian Scientist, Unaffiliated. These things brought her to write, "Good Citizenship. Design as a Social and Political Force."

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

She was also a writer. She explained in an interview her interest in writing and how not a lot of US designers were really required to read and write, so they just didn't. Her works include *About Design: Insights and Provocations for Graphic Design Enthusiasts* and *Teaching Children from Conception*.

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.

Work Shop.

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

This is one that is known mostly in design circles.

DOES THIS WORK EXEMPLIFY ASPECTS EXPLAINED IN PREVIOUS QUESTIONS?

It does not.

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

She is most noted for her award winning designs, such as her Frontier Airlines ticket counter posters and Supplier Communications Manual.

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?

Her materials were printed and designed digitally.

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

She graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in Industrial Design in 1967.

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?

She is a highly decorated designer. She was elected to the Alliance Graphique Internationale and was the first ever Design Mind Award from the Smithsonian National Design Museum. She is also considered one of the pioneers in digital design in the postmodern era, as she began to question the ways students were being taught design while she was co-chair of the design department at Michigan's Cranbrook Academy of Art.

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

Explain here and remove this explanation text. If nothing else, then write, "No."

YOUR NAME: Hayden Harsson

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.

Katherine McCoy's work, at first glance, is very chaotic. There are words all across the page and overlapping images and themselves. In so doing, the words often become unrecognizable. Despite this, her work still maintains some clarity and is very clearly well thought out. The designs are well balanced, and the colors she chooses go very well together. Looking at her work, it is very clear how she has become as famous as she is.

The "Cranbrook Recruiting Poster" is a great example of her style. The background features a collage of seemingly random images arranged with seemingly no care. This is not the case however, because the objects are arranged to create a sort of diamond shape, and draws diagonals across the page in so doing. Text also goes all the way down the page. There are lines of text straight down the middle of the composition going directly over the collage in the background. Because of this, most of the text is very difficult to read, even up close. There are small boxes on the left and right side of the composition as well. Some of them are small photos, while others are single words. Their position brings out near perfect symmetry in the overall composition. There are also dotted lines running between the small boxes and behind the central collage. This goes to reinforce the diagonals running through the composition. Color is split down the middle, with magenta on the left and cyan on the right. This goes for both the background and the foreground.

Her Workshop design is very different in a lot of ways. Its background looks similar to an excel spreadsheet. The entire design is in black and white, with the negative space being black. At the foreground in a large sans serif is the word

“Work.” Intertwined within that word is the word “Shop,” which is white with smaller black dots running throughout. This is an asymmetrical design, but it still maintains balance. That is something I always find impressive in designs. At the bottom of the design is her own signature. The entire thing is designed in such a way as though it would be a professional document. Unfortunately, I also found it difficult to understand what the design was actually for. I had to look at it for several minutes before I noticed the “Philadelphia College of Art Student Schedule” at the top, and that filled in the blanks.

After looking through her work, it is plain to see that she is a very talented graphic designer and her work is both well thought out and well executed. Despite this, I cannot say that I am particularly a fan of her work. The most striking thing about her work is how illegible most of the text is. It is my own mentality that a work of design should be able to convey a message in as simple and understandable a manner as possible. Her work just doesn’t do that in my eyes. Because of this, I cannot say that her work has had much impact on the way that I design. That of course is not to say that I have any less respect for her or her work as a designer. It is plain to see that she puts a lot of work and care into her designs. It just simply isn’t a style of art that I am fond of or would like to create myself.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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