



Paul Rand

DESIGNER'S FULL NAME: Peretz Rosenbaum

DESIGNER'S PSEUDONYM/NICKNAME: Paul Rand

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: 1914

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: U.S.

YEAR DIED: 1996

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: U.S.

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.

He changed his name from Peretz Rosenbaum to Paul Rand because he wanted to hide his Jewish identity while modernizing his name.

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

Notable work from this artist has only been classified as graphic design.

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

Paul Rand is most noted for simplistic designs, mostly concerning logo design. His flat, clean, and balanced designs played a part in kicking off Modernism in America. His logos also heavily influenced future corporate advertisement and practically introduced the concept of branding.

IS THERE ANYTHING CONTROVERSIAL ABOUT THIS DESIGNER? EXPLAIN.

Rand has famously taken issue with the designs coming from the Postmodern wave of graphic design, writing "order out of chaos, it seems, is not the order of the day." He found the unorganized and discombobulated style of design unappealing, and while no one publicly challenged Rand on the topic, it is quite a controversial stance.

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

He attended Pratt Institute, and the New School for Design (Parsons School of Design), but his design techniques were mostly self-taught and learned from studying contemporary artists in European magazines.

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

His work often incorporated a simplistic design language that was meant to be easily understood. He wrote about his Modern design ideologies in his later years, authoring many books on the subjects of design language.

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

Rand is viewed as iconic because he incorporated elements of European designs into American ad designs. His work stood out among the designs of his American contemporaries and had a major influence on American graphic design as a whole.

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

No.

YOUR NAME: Triston Harlan

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.

Paul Rand is objectively one of the most important figures in American graphic design. Many publications such as the Huffington Post, as well as other graphic designers such as George Lois, have referred to Rand as “The Father of Modern Graphic Design”. In my view, this admirable title fits Paul Rand quite perfectly. I find the way Rand studied the works from European Modernism movements like what occurred in the Bauhaus, and incorporated that style into logo and ad design is very interesting. The simplicity of his designs are what make his designs timeless and effective. It is as if you can split the history of American ad design into two groups: “Before Paul Rand” and “After Paul Rand”, and observe two distinct styles of visual communications. To overstate Rand’s importance in graphic design would be almost impossible.

Rand’s philosophy (much like those of the Bauhaus) was that a design is perfect when there is nothing left to remove from it. He once said “Simplicity is not the goal. It is the by-product of a good idea and modest expectations.” This way of designing is what separated Rand from other designers at the time, and what makes him so appealing to me. His logo for Steve Jobs’ NeXT Inc. is one of my favorite logos by the artist. It exemplifies his philosophies and is also a great representation of how his designs were so simplistic yet so engaging. While I find most of what Paul Rand does captivating, there are certain designs that I find underwhelming to a degree. A number of his logos, to my eyes, seem to be no more than the name of the client’s business in a sans serif typeface.

The Bab-O logo from 1951 and the Air- Wick logo (which I could not find a date for) do not particularly impress me. Even the logo for ABC from 1962 I find somewhat overrated. At the same time, however, I understand that they are incredibly influential and simplistic for the time, especially considering there were no computer programs to create them with.

As a person, Paul Rand is someone who is inspiring while also a bit disappointing to me. I think of Rand as one of those pioneers of a certain aspect of society who come into the world, change it and educate others on how to change it, and leave a legacy behind. I find his confidence extremely inspiring and his words of advice on designing are always well articulated and words that I live by. He was definitely someone who understood their field inside and out, and knew what was best for his clients, which is exactly how I’d like to be as a designer. However, his critiques on the Post-Modernism movement quite disappointing. Out of all designers, Paul Rand should know more than anyone how America does not immediately welcome new styles of design. Instead of ridiculing the new waves of design, I would have liked to see him support the new ideas and young designers whom looked up to him as a huge influence.

His work in adverts such as his ads for Flair Magazine in 1950, contains a style from Rand that I find influences work of my own. The black, white, and red color scheme (inspired from European Modernism) always ends up in my work on ad- related assignments at some point. When I designed a poster for a hypothetical Kendrick Lamar concert for a class assignment, I noticed myself using those colors and using simplistic shapes and silhouettes much like Rand and the European artists he was influenced by. Even for copy, I find myself drawn to sans serif typefaces and play with the form of the letters together much like Rand's work for AIGA in 1982. I also find myself placing shapes behind the type, which is something that Paul Rand perfected throughout his career.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

"Paul Rand." Accessed October 28, 2019. <https://www.famousgraphicdesigners.org/paul-rand>

"Logos." Accessed October 28, 2019. <https://paulrand.design/work/NeXT-Computers.html>

O'Hagan, Aine. "Paul Rand." Accessed October 28, 2019. <http://aineoh.github.io/AAD116-essay/essaypage.html#bibliography>

Weinreich, Regina. "Paul Rand: The Father of Graphic Design at the Museum of the City of New York." Huffington Post, March 28, 2015. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/paul-rand-the-father-of-g_b_6962342

Heller, Steven. "Paul Rand 1914-1996." *Design Issues* 13, no. 1 (1997): 82.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1511589>.

Quito, Anne. "How to Design an Enduring Logo: Lessons from IBM and Paul Rand." Qz.com, 23 July 2015, qz.com/461040/how-to-design-an-enduring-logo-lessons-from-ibm-and-paul-rand/.

