



## NAME OF ARTIST HERE

DESIGNER'S FULL NAME: Jan Tschichold

DESIGNER'S PSEUDONYM/NICKNAME: None

GENDER: Male

YEAR BORN: 1902

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER BORN: Germany

YEAR DIED: 1974

COUNTRY IN WHICH DESIGNER DIED: Switzerland

### 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.

Tschichold began his life in Germany and became enamored by Bauhaus following the school's 1923 exhibition. Since he lived in Germany during the rise of the Nazi party and worked in Constructivism, he was arrested and incarcerated for six weeks. Being forced to emigrate he moved to Switzerland, and later to England. His proximity to WWII and the sources of Swiss style influenced his views on how design should be utilized.

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

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

FOR WHAT IS THIS DESIGNER MOST NOTED? EXPLAIN.

Tschichold is most noted for writing and publishing the book *Die neue Typographie* (The New Typography). This book provided graphic designers both inside and outside of the Modern design circle with physical examples of the New Typographic Style of Modernism. It was notable not because it contained a great amount of new information, but because it provided an understandable guide to this new and progressive style.

IS THERE ANYTHING CONTROVERSIAL ABOUT THIS DESIGNER? EXPLAIN.

As Tschichold grew older, he came to disagree with his earlier assertions of the New Typography and Swiss Style being the absolute design aesthetic. This change of mind came just as Swiss Style was finally making it into the mainstream. He threw out his old ideals for those of more traditional typographic styles and centered layouts, and he even became a designer of Roman type. This seemingly polar change in design ideals shocked the Modern world, and left many feeling as though one of the fathers of Swiss Style had forsaken them.

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

Tschichold was the son of a designer and sign painter, and gained an interest in calligraphy at a young age. He trained as a calligrapher, letterer, and print designer at a college in Grimma, near Leipzig. He was a favorite at Grimma and was introduced to writings of the Italian Renaissance through Professor Hermann Delitsch. By 19 he was appointed to be the assistant in charge of the

evening classes in lettering at the Leipzig Academy by Walter Tiemann, the Academy's director. Tschichold was introduced to the New Typography movement through the 1923 Bauhaus exhibition. He taught at the Leipzig Academy and eventually Berlin before emigrating to Switzerland.

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

When he was young, Tschichold promoted Modern ideals such as the International Typographic Style, but he later grew to feel that the rigidity of these concepts exemplified the Nazi party and he criticized its unwillingness to compromise. He moved toward more traditional compositions employing centered Roman type and even ornamental type in certain instances, which he believed had a refreshing effect.

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

Tschichold took the hard-to-understand and very niche design ideals of the Bauhaus and put them in a format which could be accessed by everyone in the design world. While he was not well known outside of Germany since all of his publications were in German, he made a large impact in the design community by taking lengths to popularize what would evolve into Swiss Style.

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

No

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YOUR NAME: Joseph Erwin

GIVE 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.

Jan Tschichold was a man who had a great influence on the popularization of the “new typography” that became Swiss Style, as well as the resurgence of the classical style of book cover design. I personally feel as though he took the ideas of Modernism, popularized them, and then showed how those ideas could be applied in works that were not Modernist. In his later years he believed in a freedom of design that did not align with the rigidity of his publication called “The New Typography”.

At an early age, Tschichold was influenced by Bauhaus. By 1925, he had created his first piece of Modernist literature in a leaflet titled “Elementare Typographie”, which explained asymmetrical type to printers, typesetters, and designers. In 1928, he went further and created a book titled “Die neue Typographie”, or “The New Typography”, which took the ideas and design choices of Modern Typography and put them in a form that was widely accessible. Before this, the new typographic style was regarded as a niche movement and only enjoyed and employed by a small group of designers. Tschichold took this complex way of thinking and designing and made it accessible to the creative masses, opening up Modernism to the world and paving the way for the popularization of the new typography and Swiss Style. In my opinion, the effort he put into making this design style palatable is admirable, and his hard work has helped shape the world of design today.

One of Tschichold's most important contributions to the design world, and to my work, is his philosophy on design. He helped popularize a new way of creating typographic works, and then later in life cast the rigidity of his own previous assertions aside. While he still believed that there was a place for the new typographic style, such as advertising industrial products, he advocated for freedom of thought and the utilization of all of design history when searching for an expressive solution to typography. He even occasionally utilized ornamental typography, saying that it had "a refreshing effect, like a flower in rocky terrain." This change in thought has helped influence the way I look at art and design as a whole. To me there is no one solution to effectively communicate an idea, one must draw upon different influential styles of the past to come up with a solution. While Tschichold had an early affinity for the dogmatic ways of the new typography, he later chastised these assertions and compared them to the Nazi regime.

Tschichold took great lengths to popularize the Modern style, which had a lasting influence on European design and later American design, and he also led to a revitalization of more classical book cover design. He influenced multiple areas of art in both aesthetics and ideas, helping to shape the visual world as we know it. His efforts have proven to be a priceless addition to art history, and to me there is not a single practicing artist alive today that is free of his influence.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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