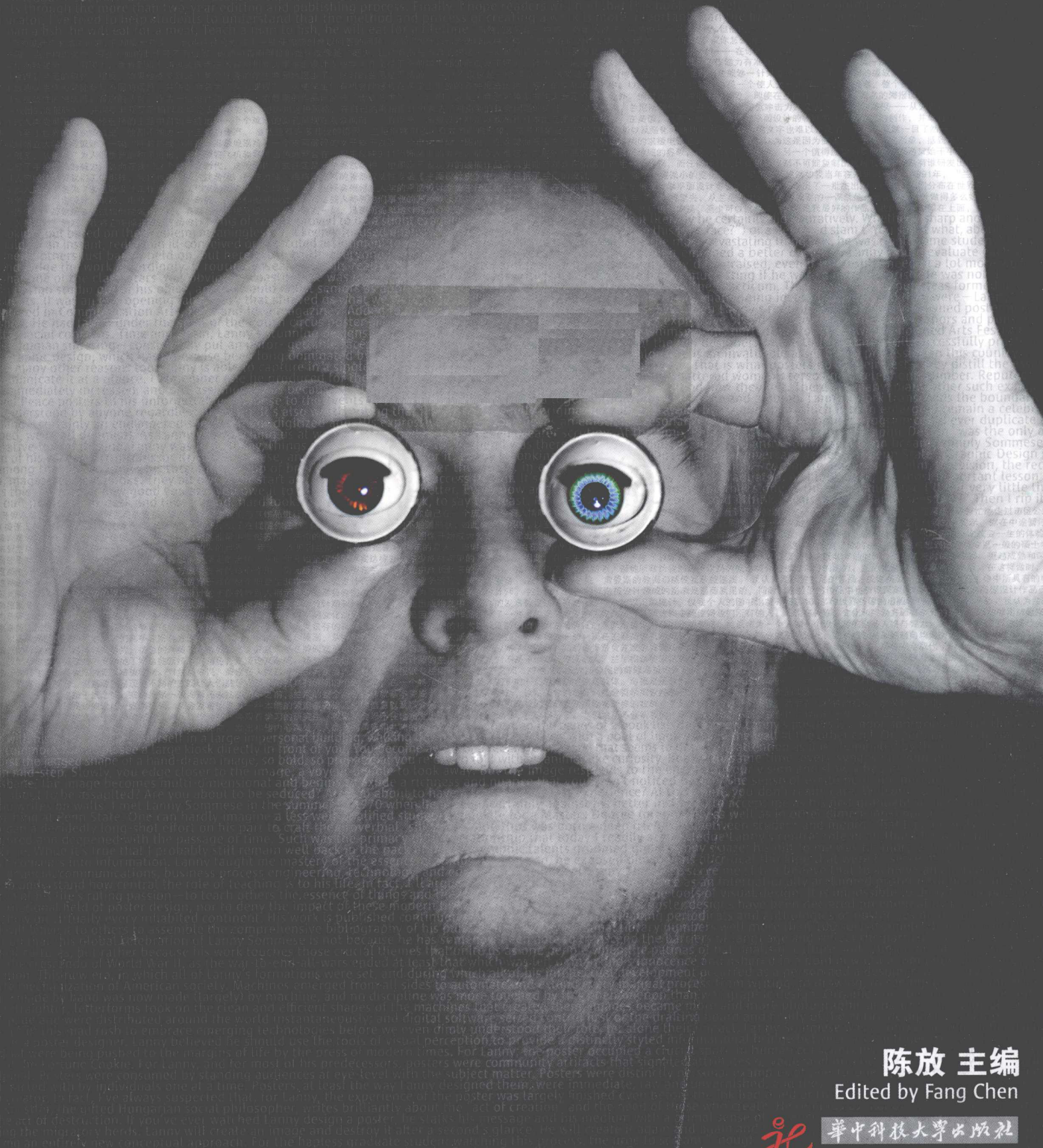


透视 兰尼·索曼斯

Lanny Sommese : X-ray Vision



陈放 主编

Edited by Fang Chen



华中科技大学出版社

Huazhong University of Science & Technology Press

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

透视兰尼·索曼斯：英汉对照/陈放主编. —武汉：华中科技大学出版社，2010年1月
ISBN 978-7-5609-4784-6

I. 透… II. 陈… III. ①平面设计-作品集-美国-现代②平面设计-高等学校-教学参考资料-英、汉 IV. J534 J506

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2009)第094656号

透视兰尼·索曼斯

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出版发行：华中科技大学出版社(中国·武汉)
武昌喻家山 邮编：430074 电话(027)87557437

印刷：武汉精一印刷有限公司

开本：889mm×1240mm 1/16
版次：2010年1月第1版
ISBN 978-7-5609-4784-6/J·142

印张：16
印次：2010年1月第1次印刷

字数：510 000
定价：198.00元

Creative Director | Art Editor : Kristin Breslin Sommese
Editor | Translator : Fang Chen
Design | Production : Jase Neapolitan

创意指导 | 艺术编辑：克莉斯汀·索曼斯
主编 | 翻译：陈放
设计 | 制作：杰斯·纳珀勒斯

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中国·武汉

Wuhan China

Preface

More than a decade ago, I launched a series of books, which primarily showcased the work of several international designers. The series format was very well received, to the point where similar publications flooded Chinese bookstores. However, since then graphic design in China has experienced dramatic changes. Contemporary Chinese design is now established in the international scene and Chinese readers/buyers are more sophisticated — no longer interested in superficial picture books, which simply show work that is readily available on the Internet. Rather, they seek a deeper level of information about the design process, research methodologies and the analytical thinking that is behind the final solutions.

Although I briefly touched upon conceptual analysis in my earlier books, whenever I go back to review them I always am regretful that I didn't expand that area. Teaching graphic design in the United States since 2002 has offered me a good opportunity to experience and appreciate American graphic design as well as design education in person. I have also had the privilege of working with some skillful American designers and teachers. As a result, I revisited the idea of publishing a book with a special focus on the design process. And since many young Chinese are learning to speak English, I felt it was important to use both Chinese and English simultaneously, which would allow readers with English skills to avoid ideas being "lost in translation" and apprehend more genuinely the book's content.

The Pennsylvania State University, where I'm presently teaching, is an important research institution in the United States and the graphic design program at Penn State is also one of the top programs in the country. The head of the program, Lanny Sommese, is an internationally known designer who has been practicing, teaching and writing about graphic design for nearly 40 years. In short, he was a perfect subject for my book idea. Many thanks to both Lanny and his wife/partner Kristin (who

主编的话

十多年前,我在国内首次推出了介绍国际平面设计师作品的系列丛书,深受广大读者欢迎。时至今日,类似出版物在中国内地图书市场上已经有很多了。我注意到这期间中国的平面设计也经历了徘徊、模仿、反思、创新的过程,取得了长足的进步并有了日新月异的发展,在当代国际平面设计界也确立了其应有的地位。随着电脑技术的高速发展以及大量设计信息和图片资料在互联网上广泛传播,以往那些仅仅停留在欣赏设计作品表面形式层面的图书,对于设计类书籍的读者和购买者来说,早已不再具有吸引力。而有关设计过程、研究方法以及设计思维等深层次的内容则日益成为广大读者的主要诉求。

在我早期编撰出版的十多本书中,尽管我也曾经力图将撰写的重点放在设计意念的解析方面,但囿于当时主观和客观的条件,现在看来亦有诸多的不足甚至错误之处,对此我一直多少有些遗憾。旅美任教多年,我对美国的平面设计及其设计教育有较为深入和系统的切身了解,而与此同时,与一些有经验的设计师和设计教育工作者共事及近距离地接触,也使我得以直接了解到他们的工作方式和设计过程,所以便萌生了重新撰写有关设计意念解析书籍的想法。我希望借出版的机会来与我的中国同行和学生分享这些经验。考虑到读者,尤其是众多青年读者学习英语的需要,本书以中英两种文字编写,中英对照,既帮助理解设计意念又有助于提高英文水平,一举两得。同时也使有条件的读者朋友可以避免本书在翻译过程中可能流失的英语语境所特有的内涵,而直接“透视”本书的内容。

我所任教的宾夕法尼亚州立大学是美国一所著名的研究型大学,而该校的平面设计专业在美国也卓有声誉。宾州州立大学平面设计专业教研室主任兰尼·索曼斯教授是一位国际知名的平面设计师,他在平面设计的实践、设计教学以及有关设计的著述方面积累了近40年的丰富经验,所以我将他的设计和教学理念作为本书的主题介绍给广大读者。感谢兰尼·索曼斯及他的妻子克丽斯汀(她同时也是兰尼的设计合伙人,主要负责本书的装帧和排版设计),他们毫无保留地提供了本书的资料,包括设计作品、立意

designed the book) for opening up the Sommese archives and sharing the work, stories, ideas, analysis, methods and processes in detail with us. I truly hope these images, descriptions, remarks and commentaries will help readers understand designing and teaching design at a deeper level, not just the final solutions, but the intricate process behind the scenes as well. That is why I titled the book "X-ray Vision".

Obviously, since the conceptual approach of this publication was outside the norms of design books in China, it was not an easy sell to publishers. Fortunately, during my lectures in Wuhan, China, I met Ms. Wang, a chief editor of the Huazhong University of Science and Technology Press. My publication idea got her and her colleagues' support, and there are plans to expand the idea into a series of books with similar characteristics. I would like to thank editor Wang and her colleagues for their professionalism and efforts through the more than two-year editing and publishing process.

Finally, I hope readers will find that this book is a useful reference for doing and teaching graphic design. Over the years, as an educator, I've tried to help students to understand that the method and process of creating a work is more important than the final presentation. As an ancient Chinese philosopher once said "Give a man a fish, he will eat for a meal; teach a man to fish, he will eat for a lifetime."

Fang Chen, 2010 at the Pennsylvania State University

构思的分析介绍以及具体操作的方式、方法等。我希望书中大量的作品图例及评论和注释文字将有助于广大读者深入了解美国平面设计及其教育。不仅知其然，更知其所以然。这也就是为什么笔者将本书名冠之以“透视”的初衷。

由于我所提出的这个编辑构想明显与时下某些设计类的图书不尽一致，而且由于东西方文化差异和思想观念上的碰撞，在本书编写过程中面临着许多挑战和困难，要将这一构想付诸实施并非易事。所幸两年前在我回国讲学期间，在武汉遇见了华中科技大学出版社的策划编辑王女士。我的上述想法得到她和她同事们的鼎力支持，而且双方还计划在有条件的情况下将该选题扩展成为一套系列丛书。在长达两年的沟通和合作过程中，我们通过互联网及其他方式就本书编撰的相关问题进行了反反复复磋商。借此机会我愿对王编审和她的同事们在本书编辑出版过程中所表现出的职业精神以及所付出的努力表示感谢。

最后，我希望广大读者将本书视为一本有益的平面设计及教学参考书，而不是一本在书店里只需简单一瞥就能一览无遗的设计师个人作品集。多年以来，作为一名教育工作者，我一直强调掌握平面设计过程中创造方式的重要性，而并非仅仅只是关注设计最后呈现的结果。诚如一位中国古代哲人所说：授人以鱼，不如授人以渔。在教学中是如此，在写作中同样希望是如此。

陈放 2010年于美国宾夕法尼亚州立大学





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Jesus, What if Lanny
Sees This? Foreword by Chip Kidd

如果兰尼看到这个设计？
齐帕·基德

If you were a freshman at Penn State University in 1982 and you wanted to enter the Graphic Design program (as I did), sooner or later you encountered the name Lanny Sommese. It's an odd name (more appropriate for a baseball player or a band leader) but when you heard it, it was spoken in a tone of such hushed awe that any inclination to make sport of it was immediately extinguished. Then you encountered the man himself. Gulp. Lanny, as he was referred to by everyone (never Mr. Sommese—the informality only added to the mystique), reinvented the school's Graphic Design curriculum when he arrived in 1970. His reputation for ferocity in class critiques was legendary. The word was that if he didn't like your project, he burned it. In front of you.

如果1982年你是宾夕法尼亚州立大学一年级的学生，而你又像我当年一样想进入该大学平面设计专业学习，那么迟早你都会听到兰尼·索曼斯这个名字。这是一个不同寻常的名字（听起来更像是棒球选手或乐队领班的名字）。但是当你听到人们在悄悄地且以带有敬畏的声调谈论这个名字时，任何想开玩笑的想法都会消失得无影无踪。然后你就会遇到他本人。哦，兰尼，正如每个人在提到他时所称呼的那样（很少有人称他为索曼斯先生——这种亲切随意的称谓倒平添了几分神秘感）。1970年，兰尼来到宾夕法尼亚州立大学，他着手改进了该校的平面设计课程。他在课堂上评价学生的作业时以严厉著称，具有传奇色彩。据说如果不喜欢你的作业，他会当着你的面将它烧掉。



Chip and Lanny
at the Sommese
wedding

齐帕·基德和兰
尼在兰尼·索曼
斯的婚礼上

This of course proved to be a slight exaggeration, although if he didn't do it literally he certainly did figuratively. Whether a sharp and withering observation ("This is nice looking; but based on the problem, meaningless."), a keenly focused unanswerable question ("Why did you choose this type face?") or a deserved slam ("You spent what, about ten minutes on this?"), Lanny could, in an instant, reduce an ill-conceived or -executed assignment to ashes in your mind, if not on the wall. And the most devastating thing was, he was right.

Some students thrived in this environment, others just barely held on, but here is the truth: everyone I saw who entered the program and stuck with it emerged a better designer. Lanny would evaluate each student's level of ability and judge the work accordingly. If routinely weak students really busted their butts and made a breakthrough, they'd be praised, even if the results needed a lot more work. Conversely, if he sensed that one of the class "stars" was obviously coasting, he was merciless. I don't think his criticisms would have had as much sting if he were a mere theorist. He was not. Lanny ran a thriving one-man design studio out of his office, and he would enlist seniors as apprentices on various projects in a program called the Practicum. This allowed us to put ideas formed in class to the test of actual clients. It was an eye-opening laboratory that showed us what we were to be up against when we left, and how to get challenging ideas approved. And they were—Lanny's work had already been featured in Communication Arts, Print and Idea magazines.

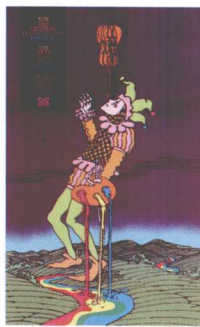
Added to this was his love of silkscreening posters. Even then Lanny's reputation as a world-renowned poster maker was well established. He had fallen under the spell of the Polish circus poster movement of the sixties, and applied that style's

当然,这只是种略带夸张的说法。虽然他并没有这样做,但他的严厉却是千真万确的。他会以一种犀利的目光审视你的作业,然后使人难堪地一瞥道:“这的确很好看,但对于你的设计所要解决的问题,却毫无意义。”他也往往会专注于一些使你感到难以回答的问题:诸如“为什么你会选择这种字体?”或者在你作业做得很糟时,他会厉声道:“怎么搞的,是不是只花了十分钟在这个方案上?”兰尼可以在瞬间就发现并指出你作业中的问题所在——诸如在哪一点上构思欠佳、哪些方面的制作还不到位等。他那中肯而到位的批评就像是一把火,让所有那些愚蠢的想法——即使你还没来得及将其画出来挂到墙上去让他评价——在你的心中化为灰烬。然而,最不可思议的是——他是正确的。

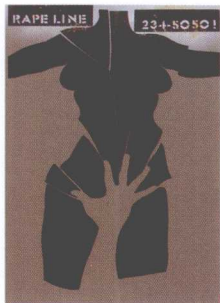
在这种教学环境下,有些学生受益匪浅,有些学生则勉强为之。事实上,我看到每个通过遴选而进入宾州州立大学平面设计专业学习并坚持下来的学生都成为了好的设计师。兰尼通常会对每个学生的水平及工作能力有准确的评价。一旦那些程度一般的学生在作业中有所突破,即使其结果还需要进一步完善,他们往往会得到兰尼的称赞;相反,如果他感觉到班上某个优秀的学生明显退步了,这时的兰尼是无情的。

兰尼不仅仅是一个理论家,这就是为什么他在评价设计作品时往往能够一针见血地指出问题之所在。兰尼开设有一个业务兴旺的个人设计工作室,他安排平面设计专业四年级的学生作为学徒参与不同的项目,并将此命名为“实习课程”。这使学生们有机会能够在课堂上形成的各种想法运用于客户的实际项目之中,

expressive brand of illustrative visual metaphors and puns to posters addressing more vital social concerns. Time and again, Lanny's stunning designs for a wide range of topics—from the inspired whimsy of his harlequins for the town's renowned Arts Festival, to his trenchant images of human suffering—consistently put an unforgettable face on whichever subject he chose. Lanny is one of the few designers in the United States still successfully practicing this unique form of graphic design, which has otherwise been long dominated by artists in Europe and Japan. For this reason alone he is an invaluable asset to the profession in this country, and the world.



But there are many other reasons too. Lanny is able to capture in a single metaphorical image, what would fill reams of prose. That is what posters do at their best—they distill the essence of a message and communicate it at a glance. I remember one he produced for the PSU campus rape hotline that depicted a literally shattered woman's torso and a telephone number. Reputedly, calls to the service immediately increased, and one assumes it was because victims felt that the agency's volunteers actually understood how they felt. There are many, many other such examples, from his acclaimed Peace posters to his unforgettable response to the events of 9/11 which brilliantly fused together drawings of a plane and a bomb.



Lanny's work transcends the boundaries of language and can be understood by anyone regardless of origin. It's also worth noting that his posters (usually originating with a drawing by croquill pen which is then enlarged) remain a celebration of the work of the hand—certainly an endangered species in our digitized age. His expressive line

work achieves an emotional resonance that no extant computer program could ever duplicate (and if one is ever developed, we're all doomed).

As Lanny was watching us at work, we watched him, with even greater scrutiny. At the time, Philip Meggs' "A History of Graphic Design" was the only organized and authoritative text of its kind. Lanny was in it.

Today, things are basically as they were when I was there, with a few changes. In 1991 Lanny Sommese Design became simply Sommese Design with the addition of his wife and co-professor Kristin Sommese, and is all the stronger for it. Lanny is looking

得到实践的检验。这是个使人大开眼界的开放实验室，整个实习过程教会了学生们如何将理论与实际结合，以及如何使自己具有挑战性的想法得到客户的认可。作为一位设计师，兰尼·索曼斯的作品已经被《传达艺术》、《印刷》以及《意念》等杂志作为专题介绍。

此外，他对丝网印海报十分喜爱。即使在兰尼作为一位世界著名的海报设计师的声誉早已确立的情况下，他仍然沉溺于波兰20世纪60年代马戏团的海报研究，并深受其视觉隐喻以及悖论表现的影响。他运用这种风格，在自己的海报设计中表达了对重要社会问题的关注。一次又一次，兰尼创作的那些具有强烈视觉冲击力而又内容广泛的海报——从为城市著名的艺术节创作的风格迥异的丑角喜剧形象，到人类受难图像——自始至终把一个难忘的面孔呈现在观众面前。一直以来，海报设计都是以欧洲和日本艺术家为主导。在美国，只有少数设计师仍在平面设计领域从事海报创作，并卓有成效，兰尼就是其中之一。仅仅基于这个原因，在这个国家，乃至世界的专业领域里，他都不愧为宝贵的资产。

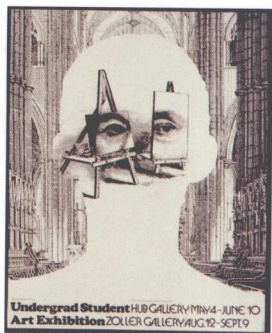
当然还有许多其他原因。兰尼能够创造出有效的隐喻形象，这种形象在浓缩信息精华以及强化沟通功能方面是再多文字也难以企及的。它能使观众能一目了然——这也正是海报所能呈现的最佳品质之所在。我记得他为宾州州立大学校园设计了一幅“呼救热线”海报，形象地描绘了一个支离破碎的女子躯干以及一个电话号码。据说，这幅海报发布之后，打给该机构的求援电话立即增加了，有人认为这是因为受害人基于海报的形象，感到该机构的义工确实能够理解她们的感受。

类似这样的例子还有很多，从他那广为赞誉的和平海报，到那将飞机和导弹出色地整合在一起反映9.11恐怖袭击的海报，都令人难忘。兰尼的作品超越了语言和地域界限，为人们广泛理解。另一个值得注意的是他的海报通常始于手绘，然后再将手绘稿扩大至海报尺寸，他的海报因而凸显了手绘作品的魅力。然而在我们这个数字化时代，这种创作方式注定是一个濒危物种。他那富于表现力的线描作品常常更能与观众在情感上产生共鸣，而任何现有的计算机程序都不可能复制出这种效果（倘有人研发出这种计算机程序，我们就注定失业了）。

正如兰尼在过去曾经注视着我们工作那样，我们也密切地关注着他，在非利浦·梅格斯撰写的首部权威性专著《平面设计史》中，就包括了兰尼的设计。

今天，除了一些微小的变化之外，很多事情依然如我当

forward to his thirty eighth anniversary as head of Penn State's Graphic Design program, and can count among the alumni under his tutelage a group of brilliant designers all over the world, in every discipline of Graphic Design—corporate, advertising, film, television, the recording industry, fashion, magazines, and books. They all owe their start and some part of their success to him.



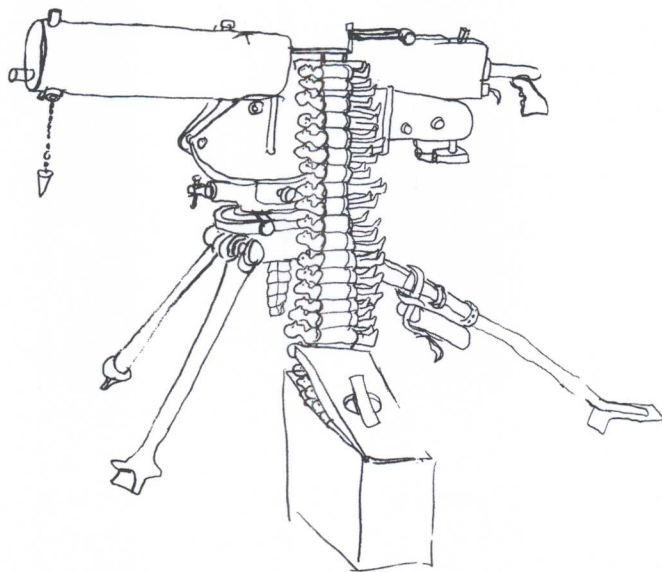
It's over two decades now since I graduated. As I look back, the most important lesson I learned from Lanny is this: No matter how good you are, you owe it to yourself to try to be better. Every now and then I'll crank out some job that's due at the last minute and I'll put very little thought into it. I print it out, put it on my desk and take a good, hard look. It's not my best work, to say the least. My name's going to go on it, and I think "Jesus, what if Lanny sees this?" Then I rip it up and start over.

Chip Kidd, 1986 graduate of Penn State's graphic design program, has become an author as well as an internationally acclaimed designer at Knopf Inc., in New York City.

年在那里时一样。1991年，“兰尼·索曼斯设计工作室”在他的妻子克丽斯汀·索曼斯加入后遂更名为“索曼斯设计工作室”，工作室的实力也为之增强。兰尼担任宾州州立大学的平面设计专业主任已逾三十八年，在他的指导下，宾州州立大学平面设计专业的校友中涌现出了一批杰出的设计师，他们分布在世界各地，遍及平面设计的每一个应用领域——企业形象设计、广告设计、电影、电视、唱片业、时装、杂志和图书设计。所有这些都将是他们事业的开始及成功归功于兰尼。

我毕业至今已二十多年了。回首望去，从兰尼那里学到的最重要的一课就是：无论你的设计多么好，对自己来说都远远不够，你对自己应有一份责任——就是去尝试如何能做得更好。常常有这种情况，在设计任务很紧时，我就迅速而简单地处理，然后将其打印出来，放在我的案头，进行审视。至少可以这样说，这不是我最好的作品，那上面可是要印上我名字的啊。于是我就想：“天呐，如果兰尼看到这个设计，他会怎么想呢？”然后，我将它撕掉并重新开始设计。

齐帕·基德1986年毕业于宾州州立大学平面设计系，后成为国际知名设计师和作者，现在纽约knopf公司工作。



Lanny Sommese:
The Man Who Writes on Walls
Introduction by Leo Mullen

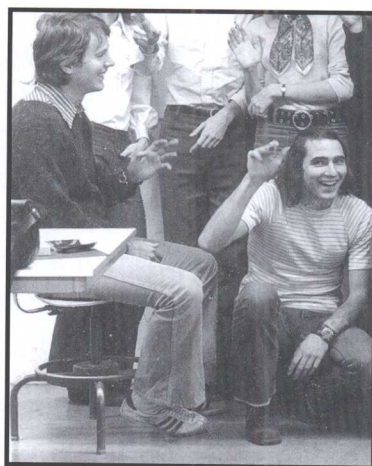
兰尼·索曼斯

—— 一个在墙壁上写作的人¹

利奥·穆伦

To those who know him well, Lanny is a unique character, perhaps even a graphic anomaly among the handful of pure image-makers practicing in contemporary Western society. In spite of today's unending deluge of digital communications technologies (and the accompanying post-digital anxieties), Lanny stands resolute in his decision to ignore the Poster-As-Vanishing-Art-Form Syndrome and press on with his agrarian art form. Somehow, Lanny knew all along that Marshall McLuhan was dead wrong. The medium isn't the message; the message is the message. Lanny's genius is using the medium to define the experience of the message.

对于那些熟悉他的人来说，兰尼是一个独特的人物。甚至在当代西方社会为数不多的、运用纯粹图像从事设计创作的艺术家，他或许也是一个异端。如今，数字通信技术无休止地泛滥（且伴随着后数码时代的种种焦虑），但兰尼立场坚定，他不理会那些所谓海报是一种消亡艺术形式的恐惧综合征，恪守特立独行的艺术形式。不知何故，兰尼一开始就知道马歇尔·麦克卢汉²是错误的。媒介不是信息；信息才是信息。兰尼的天才在于运用海报这种媒介去界定信息的传递过程。



Lanny and Leo in
the studio circa
1971.

兰尼·索曼斯和
利奥·穆伦在设计
工作室 1971
年

Turning the pages of a book like this to view Lanny's posters is a poor approximation of the way he intends us to interact with his work. Imagine yourself in a large impersonal building, walking down a long, dark hallway with a pool of light washing the wall at the other end. Or, perhaps it's late and you're hurrying across the city commons when you see a large kiosk directly in front of you. You become aware of a rectangular shape that seems to draw your attention as it is illuminated by the dim bulbs in the canopy above. You notice first the jagged shape of a hand-drawn image, so bold, so primal that you're drawn to it with an animal-like curiosity.

But at the same time, every synapse in your brain is flashing caution and you pause in mid-step. Slowly, you edge closer to the image, a voyeur unable to look away. But the image responds to the energy of your vision and slowly begins to come to life. As your eyes scan the poster shape, the image becomes multi-dimensional and begins to exude a richness and nuance that you hadn't noticed before. The sense of excitement and nervousness mount in equal measures. Are you about to be assaulted? Are you about to be seduced? Are you about to have a transformational experience? At this point, you don't really care. Welcome to the world of Lanny Sommese—the man who writes on walls.

I met Lanny Sommese in the summer of 1970 when he agreed (certainly against his better instincts) to accept me as his first graduate student, and launched his inaugural year teaching at Penn State. One can hardly imagine a less well-qualified student candidate for a Masters Degree (graphically as well as in other dimensions) nor a more stoically determined teacher.

翻开像本书这样的读物去观看兰尼的海报，相对于他期望我们与其作品进行的互动是远远不够的。设想你自己在一个庞大而没有人情味的建筑物内，走在漫长而黑暗的走廊里，看到尽头的墙壁被一小片光亮照得雪白。也许是在深夜，你匆忙走过市区空地，看到一座大售货亭就在前面。在檐篷上投下的黯淡的灯泡光线下，你意识到一个矩形，似乎在提醒你注意。你注意到首先是手绘的不规则形状，如此大胆而粗犷，以至于你像动物一样好奇地被它吸引。

但与此同时，每一个突触在你大脑里的每根神经都频频发出警示，你在中途暂停。慢慢地，你一点点靠近那个图像，像偷窥者一样无法挪开视线。那图像在你目光的能量中慢慢苏醒。在你眼睛扫描海报形状时，图像开始成为多维，呈现出你此前不曾注意到的丰富和微妙的变化。兴奋感与紧张感俱增。你会被袭击？还是被诱惑？你即将有一次改变一生的体验？此刻，你真的不在乎了。欢迎来到兰尼·索曼斯的世界——一个在墙壁上写作的人的世界。

我第一次见到兰尼·索曼斯是在1970年夏天，当时他刚刚开始任宾州州立大学任教，他同意接受我作为他的第一个研究生（这显然违背了他的初衷）。很难想到比我程度更一般的硕士学位攻读者（不论是在图形设计方面还是其他方面），也难以想到比他更能容忍、更坚定的老师。从此他开始坚定地雕琢我这棵并无多少成材希望的“朽木”。因此，在学生和导师之间产生了真挚的友谊，这种友谊不仅持续了长达近40年，而且随着时间的推移，更趋成熟和深厚。

Thus began a decidedly long-shot effort on his part to craft the proverbial “silk purse” and thus was born a deep friendship between student and mentor that has not only lasted nearly 40 years, but has matured and deepened with the passage of time.

Such was the primacy of this relationship that today I readily acknowledge Lanny’s central role in all that I have been fortunate to accomplish in my lifetime. While it’s true that I probably still remain well back in the pack of notable graphic talents groomed under Lanny’s gaze, his gift to me was far more valuable than merely the ability to visualize concepts into information. Lanny taught me mastery of the essence of things. In doing so, he exposed dimensions of critical thinking that were to serve me across a career spanning graphic design, financial communications, business process engineering, technology, and education. The gifts of Lanny Sommese serve me still.

I believe that to achieve an appreciation of Lanny’s work, it is crucial to understand how central the role of teaching is to his life. In fact, I’ll argue that Lanny’s remarkable emergence as an internationally acclaimed poster designer is simply one channel’s extension of his life’s ruling passion—to teach others the essence of things and the essence of themselves through the tools of visual design.

It is impossible to deny the impact of Lanny’s work on the international field of poster design, nor to deny the impact of these modern times on the body of his work. His poster designs have been declared preeminent by the juries of virtually every major poster show on virtually every inhabited continent. His work is published continuously and voraciously by the leading periodicals and anthologies of poster design in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. While I will leave it to others to assemble the comprehensive bibliography of his published work, my personal library numbers well more than 100 such examples from around the world. It is my contention that this global celebration of Lanny Sommese is not because he has somehow been able to transcend the barriers of language and reflect the particular attributes of these many individual cultures, but rather because his work touches those crucial themes that unite us as one people when the patinas of nationalism, culture and religion are stripped away.

Lanny Sommese was born in the crescendo of World War II, as the war-to-end-all-wars ended at least that which was left of mankind’s innocence and ushered in a bold new era of ominous technology and ubiquitous information. This new era, in which all of Lanny’s formations were set, and during which all of his intellectual development occurred as a person and a designer, was characterized by the utter and complete mechanization of American society. Machines emerged from all sides to automate and extend every manual process from writing, to drawing, to

这是至高无上的关系，我一直都十分感激兰尼在我一生的事业以及成就方面所发挥的核心作用。毫无疑问，在那些在兰尼的目光中成长起来的人才中，我可能仍不算名列前茅，但他所教给我的远不仅是将概念转化为视觉信息的能力，兰尼教会我把握事物的本质。在这样做时，他揭示了批判性思维的多个层面，这种思维及设计方式使我受益良多，而且一直贯穿我的整个职业生涯——平面设计、金融通讯、业务流程、技术和教育。直至今日，兰尼·索曼斯的教诲仍然使我获益匪浅。

我认为要欣赏兰尼的作品，关键是要了解教学在他的生命中所具有的中心作用。事实上，兰尼仅仅只是延长和扩展了他生命激情的渠道——通过视觉设计的手段教导别人揭示自然以及自身的本质——便成为了国际知名的设计师。

兰尼的作品对国际海报设计领域的影响是显而易见的，同时，在兰尼的作品中也有很深刻的时代烙印。他的海报设计作品已经几乎在世界各地所有最重要的海报展览中胜出。他的作品持续不断地发表在欧洲、亚洲和美洲的主要平面设计期刊、年鉴及其他出版物之中。具体的发表数目还有待他人进一步加以汇编统计，仅我个人的图书馆就有超过100多种世界各国的出版物刊载有兰尼的作品。我认为兰尼·索曼斯之所以能在世界范围获得如此成功，与其说是因为他的作品能够超越语言障碍并兼顾到了不同文化属性，莫如说是因为他的作品涉及了人类至关重要的主题内核——而这些主题使我们所有的人，无论种族、文化和宗教方面有多大差异，都能够团结起来成为一个整体。

兰尼·索曼斯出生在第二次世界大战期间，其时战争正如火如荼地进行。战争毁灭了人类仅存的良知，预示着一个以冷酷的技术以及泛滥的信息为主要特征的、无所畏惧的新时代到来。兰尼作为人和设计师的全部人格与智力，都形成于这个以美国社会完全彻底机械化为特征的新时代。机器的涌现改变和扩展了人们几乎在所有方面的行为方式——从书写到绘画，从获取信息到传递信息，过去所有曾经用手来做的一切，现在主要都由机械来完成了。平面设计专业更是如此：有机线条越来越趋于均匀；曲线变得更加平直；由机械制作的字型呈现出清晰和规范的形状；图形越来越像照片；信息传播不再依赖纸张，并且几乎在瞬间就可以被传播到世界各地；数字软件先是控制了绘图板，然后逐步蚕食并改变着传统的以铅笔、钢笔和画笔为主要工具的设计方式，最终完全取代了设计师的桌面工作系统。

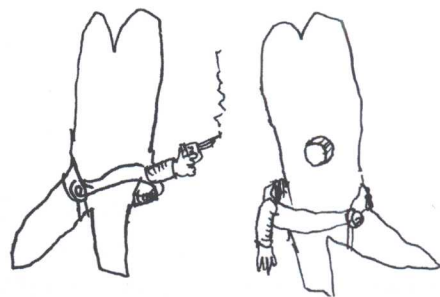
seeing, to communicating. Everything that was once made by hand was now made (largely) by machine, and no discipline was more touched by this phenomenon than was graphic design. Organic lines became evenly-weighted; curved lines became straighter; letterforms took on the clean and efficient shapes of the machines that created them; images became more and more photographic in nature; communications lifted off the printed page and were distributed around the world instantaneously; and digital software seized control first of the drafting board and finally of the entire designer's desktop—pencil, pen, and brush.

In the face of this mad rush to embrace emerging technologies before we even dimly understood their role, let alone their impact, Lanny Sommese was a contrarian who defined a unique role for himself as a poster designer. Lanny believed he should use the tools of visual perception to provide a distinctly styled informational bridge between a sometimes confused society and its human values that were being pushed to the margins of life by the press of modern times. For Lanny, the poster occupied a crucial space in human consciousness existing somewhere between the Op Ed Page and the Fortune Cookie. For Lanny, and for most of his predecessors, posters were community artifacts that signaled attributes of value and urgency—political, social, educational, or recreational. Posters were consumed by standing audiences at eye-level with the subject matter. Posters were distinctly personal examples of one-to-one communications, designed to be confronted and interacted with by individuals one at a time. Posters, at least the way Lanny designed them, were immediate, raw and unvarnished, and they took little pains to disguise the passion of their human creator.

In fact, I've always suspected that, for Lanny, the experience of the poster was largely finished even before the ink had dried or the first copy had been attached to the waiting kiosk. Arthur Koestler, the gifted Hungarian social philosopher, writes brilliantly about the "act of creation" and the need of those who create. He reminds us that a fine line separates the act of creation from the act of destruction. If you've ever watched Lanny design a poster, he stalks his message and his medium with a primal sense of urgency much like that of a great cat on the Masai Mara following the migratory herds. Lanny will create an image and destroy it after a second's glance. He will create it again and again and again, each time refining a detail, changing a shape, or producing an entirely new conceptual approach. For the hapless graduate student watching this process, the urge to scream "enough, already" is strong indeed. But Lanny doesn't listen to my voice because he can't. He no more knows at that point in the creative process what the final design will be than I do. Lanny's simple genius lies in his ability to not stop until he hears the pure-pitched harmonic resonance between the poster lying exhausted on the sheet in

在狂热拥抱新技术之时，很多人并不清楚地了解这些新技术的角色，遑论其影响。将自己定位为海报设计师的兰尼·索曼斯，不是随波逐流的人。兰尼相信他应该使用视知觉工具，在时时混淆迷茫的社会和人类价值观之间提供一座风格鲜明的信息桥梁，而人类这些普适的价值观由于现代生活的巨大压力正在被边缘化。对兰尼来说，海报在人类意识中占有重要地位——介于报纸专栏和幸运签饼³之间。对兰尼以及大部分他的前辈海报设计师来说，海报是人类社会的信息载体，它不仅传递有关紧急政治事件以及社会、教育或休闲等方方面面的信息，同时也反映着价值观念。海报通常呈现出不同的主题让人们驻足观看。海报具有鲜明的个性色彩，在一个特定时间内是人们一对一交流互动的信息载体。海报是迅疾的、原始的、未经粉饰的——至少兰尼是这样设计的——而且它们在不经意间流露出创作者的激情。

事实上，我一直很怀疑在纸上墨迹未干之前，或是第一张海报还未挂在商亭之前，兰尼的整个海报创作就基本完成了。阿瑟·凯斯特勒，这位天才的匈牙利社会哲学家曾经就“创作行为”以及创造者的需求发表过精辟见解。他提醒我们，一条细线就可以将创造行为与破坏行为区分开来。如果你观看过兰尼是如何设计海报的，就会发现他是以一种本能的紧迫感去接近他的信息以及媒介的，就像一只玛塞马拉猎豹紧紧跟随着迁移的牧群。兰尼常常创作出一个图像，然后在几秒钟扫视之后又将它毁掉。他一而再、再而三地创作，每次完善一个细节，或更改某个形状，或是干脆提出一个全新的概念。对此，作为在一旁观看学习的研究生，我常常忍不住地想发出尖叫敦促道：“够了，已经很好了。”但兰尼不会听我的，他根本听不到。在创作进行的这一刻，对于最后的设计结果究竟会怎样，兰尼和我一样不知道。兰尼的天才在于他有能力不停地探索，直到那张海报筋疲力尽地躺在他面前，发出和他内心深处无人能及的声音相共鸣的纯净回响为止。



front of him and that voice buried deep inside of him that none of us can hear.

There are really three special dimensions to Lanny's poster design work that distinguish him among the world's great masters of the medium. Lanny's unique design signal relies upon a frequently unexpected blend of human imagery, line quality and juxtaposition of shapes. Largely through the character of his line, Lanny's work carries the frenetic energy of his own creative process that may give his audience a uniquely poignant feeling — as if their eyes have arrived upon this image seconds after the pencil has departed; such is the freshness of the ink on the paper. The uninitiated viewer who leafs through a portfolio of Lanny's designs can be forgiven if

his first thought is "it's time to up the medication." Lanny's imagery is not for the faint of heart and will probably never be employed to advertise conspicuous consumption for the beautiful people. However, it's always about people, even when it's not. And it's almost always about a sexual tension that lies not very far beneath the surface. Many examples of Lanny's work begin with the same premise—two individuals, one male, one female, confront each other in profile on the page creating a third shape with the negative space between them. It's safe to say that Lanny has been exhaustively thorough in exploring the many ways the male and female bodies fit together in a graphic sense. Almost always there is an exchange between these figures that causes us to pause and think again about the nature of human interaction. Sometimes sexual innuendo adds interest to the image, as with the poster announcing the presentation of Lanny and Kristin Sommese's corporate design work.



Sometimes, the male and female figures are compressed so tightly together, as in the *Tango Workshop* poster, that two become one, which after all, is what the tango is all about. Sometimes Lanny's people are "dimensionalized" with shading and detail, as in the *Missles? What Missles?* poster, but most often they are rendered in the simplest of gestural outline. Other times, Lanny succeeds by using parts of human anatomy. In one memorable example, a poster designed for *EXPO 2010 in Shanghai China*, Lanny visualizes the simple act of a handshake between East and West. The fingers of both outstretched hands become interlinking lanes on a labyrinth maze that speaks to the enormous complexity of

兰尼的海报设计作品确有三个特殊的层面，正因如此使得他在世界海报设计大师中鹤立鸡群。兰尼的独特设计符号经常来自于意想不到的人物意象融合、线条的特质以及形态的并置。兰尼在作品中往往会通过别具一格的线条，向观众展示自己创作过程中的激情。看兰尼的作



品，人们往往会有栩栩如生的感觉。人们的目光仿佛是在落在一个画笔刚刚挪开数秒钟之后的图像上——纸上油墨清香尚存。对于那些缺乏经验的观众，当他们草草掠过兰尼的设计作品时，有些人可能会想：“这些设计简直就是一个疯子所为，应该让这个家伙服一些镇静药。”他们产生这样的

想法是可以原谅的，兰尼的图形不是为孱弱的心脏而设计的，可能也从来不为那些哗众取宠的广告商青睐。不过，它却与人有关，即使有时它的主题不一定是如此。而且它们几乎都具有一种“性”的内在张力。兰尼的很多作品都设有相同的前提——两个人，一男一女，正面和侧面同置于一幅作品的画幅之中，而正形彼此之间的负形又形成了第三个人物。可以肯定地说，兰尼曾经在图形中就男性和女性形体配合的种种可能性，进行过深入探索和研究。在这些人物形状之间几乎总是有一种交流，它迫使我们不得不暂停下来，就人类本质的互动进行再思考。有时，“性”增添了海报形象的趣味，正如我们在兰尼和他妻子克里斯汀的设计工作室自我宣传海报中看到的那样。而有时候，男性和女性的形状又被紧紧地交缠在一起，如他所设计的探戈舞培训班海报，男女形状合二为一，然而这也正是探戈的精华所在；还有时候，兰尼笔下的人物在阴影和细节烘托下呈现出“多维度化”，如他反映伊拉克战争的海报《导弹？什么导弹？》。即使如此，在多数情况下，它们往往是以简单的轮廓线表达出



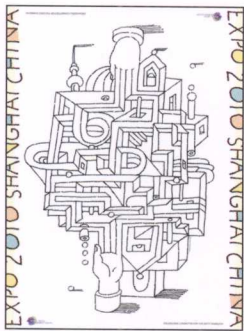
来的。其他时候，兰尼也会巧妙利用人体结构中的部分。在为2010年中国上海世博会设计的海报中，兰尼将握手这种简单的人类行为加以视觉化处理，以强调东西方之间的联系。两只伸出的手形成了相互连接的迷宫路径，以示弥合特定文化差异的巨大复杂性，使人印象深刻。

兰尼的作品不包含尤其是背景之类的元素，这也是其独特所在。兰尼几乎所有的海报图像都没有背景或说明。

bridging that particular cultural divide.

Lanny's work is also unique for what it doesn't contain—specifically, backgrounds. All of Lanny's poster imagery exists without context or apology. And in a world comprised of an endless palette of grays, his work defines meaning in the stark vocabulary of black and white with the moral clarity of a Pentecostal preacher. The viewer may agree or disagree, love the work or hate it, but there is precious little middle ground when dealing with a Lanny Sommese poster design. Lanny clearly believes that the primary communicative tool in his arsenal is the image. Typography plays a distinctly supportive role—it's there to help the viewer unlock the meaning of the visual. One memorable poster launched in protest of some piece or another of this country's war-making is simply entitled *Why?* Interestingly, it is the darkly silhouetted soldier with gas mask and weapon who seems to be asking the title question.

So the question I've been asking myself for more than 30 years is this. Why, in a time of cascading technological change in graphic design, does Lanny stay true to his medium of poster design? The answer seems perhaps clearer to me now as the question seems less relevant. Lanny discovered a process and a set of tools that allow him to investigate the essence of things and the rest of us to better understand that essence within ourselves. So while Lanny has built a career upon the principles of teaching and mentorship, in the final analysis, writing on walls isn't really about communications as much as it was just the primal first pupil



is always himself.

I am humbled to finally understand the extraordinary talent that blossomed during Lanny Sommese's career writing on walls at Penn State. I am even more gratified to see the impact Lanny has made on his global audience with powerful reminders of the value of simple design and

essential communications during troubled times. Like Haley's Comet, we'll not see the likes of Lanny Sommese again anytime soon.

Leo Mullen studied under the tutelage of Lanny Sommese at Penn State University in the early 1970's before moving on to become a highly successful design professional and entrepreneur.

在这样一个由无穷灰色系组成的世界里，兰尼的作品鲜明地表达了自己的主题思想，如同一个圣灵布道者明确坚守道义。对于兰尼的海报设计，观众可以同意或者不同意，可以喜欢也可以不喜欢，但决不可能介于两者之间。兰尼确信在他的设计武器库中，图像是其主要的交流工具。文字相对而言发挥着明显次要的作用，它们只是帮助观赏者扩展图像所传达的意思。在一张令人难忘的反战海报中，简洁的标题《为什么？》赫然醒目。有趣的是，海报中戴着防毒面具、身背武器的黑色剪影士兵似乎正在问海报标题中提出的问题。



在过去30年多年里我一直问自己这样一个问题，在一个平面设计技术迅猛变革的时代，为什么兰尼仍然对海报设计情有独钟？现在，问题似乎无关紧要，而答案对我来说似乎更明确了：兰尼发现了一个过程和一套工具，这个程序以及这套工具不仅能使他自己有效地揭示事物的本质，而且还能让其他人更好地理解这种本质。虽然兰尼在教学和指导原则上建立了他的职业生涯，但从根本上讲，在墙壁上书写并不是为了交流，因为第一个学生永远是自己。

我很惭愧，到现在才认识到兰尼·索曼斯于宾州州立大学执教期间，所展现的非凡才能。我更高兴地看到，在这个混乱的时期兰尼对他全球的观众产生了重大影响，他让人们领略到简单设计与本质交流的价值。如同哈雷彗星，像兰尼·索曼斯这样的天才在相当长的一段时间内都将是难得一见的。

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利奥·穆伦是导航艺术公司的行政总裁。他曾在宾州州立大学获哲学学位。在20世纪70年代初，他成为兰尼·索曼斯的第一个研究生。毕业后成为非常成功的设计专业工作者和企业家，现在华盛顿特区工作。

1. “书写在墙上的文字”在西方是一种用作预言的表达方式，它最早出自丹尼尔的圣经，在书中，一种超自然的力量在墙上写下了巴比伦帝国覆灭的咒语。随后，这种预言的表达方式被广泛运用在西方的语言和文字中。

2. 马歇尔·麦克卢汉（1911—1980）是加拿大著名的教育家、哲学家和学者，以率先提出“媒介即信息”和“地球村”等概念著称于世。

3. 幸运签饼是一种由面粉、糖、香草以及食用油制作的松脆空心小甜饼，通常在里面夹着一张印有吉祥祝福话语的小纸条。在美国和加拿大等国的中餐馆是作为饭后甜点赠送的，但在中国国内却鲜为人知。