

国 际 广 告 设 计 大 师 丛 书

乔治·契尔尼
简洁的方式
丰富的内涵

George Tscherny
Minimum Means
Maximum Meaning



东南大学出版社

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乔治·契尔尼
平面设计五十年

George Tscherny
Five Decades
of Graphic Design

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国际平面设计协会 (AGI)

余秉楠

国际平面设计协会, 原文为 Alliance Graphique Internationale, 简称 AGI.

AGI 创建于 1951 年的法国巴黎, 首任主席是法国的卡尔吕(Carlu)。它集中了全世界最优秀的和最有影响的著名设计师, 领导着现代平面设计的潮流。

1919 年, 由格罗皮尤斯(Gropius)在德国创建包浩斯学院。它所创造的充满生命力的现代设计风格, 深刻影响着包括建筑、产品和视觉传达等诸方面的设计。1933 年, 包浩斯学院被纳粹解散, 它的许多重要人物迁至英国和美国。其中巴耶尔(Bayer)以及在美国的其他欧洲移民莱昂尼(Lionni), 伯丁(Burtin), 宾德尔 (Binder), 马特 (Matter), 契尔尼 (Tscherny)和在英国的施勒格尔 (Schleger), 亨利容 (Henrion)后来成为 AGI 创建时的第一批会员。与此同时, 第二次世界大战前后在平面设计领域做出杰出业绩的一个由八位设计师组成的来自英国的天才集体被接纳为 AGI 会员。

在法国, 30 年代最成功的海报设计师有三个“C”, 其中的卡尔吕(Carlu)和卡桑德雷(Cassandre), 以及其后的一些优秀设计师成为会员。法国人认为文化是最优先的, 设计师与画家、雕塑家一起享有声誉和得到社会的承认。因此, 巴黎很自然成为 AGI 的基地。

通常来说, 当时的一些重要设计的产生很少得到工业上的, 也就是相信设计对工业和日常生活的重要性的组织的支持, 然而德国的 AEG (通用电器公司) 和意大利的 Olivetti 打字机公司显然是当时的先锋。平托利 (Pintori)是 AGI 的第一个意大利成员, 他承担了 Olivetti 的所有视觉传达设计, 他的天才创意和半抽象的设计方法对于世界范围的平面设计有着广泛的影响。

在瑞士, 米勒·布罗克曼 (Müller-Brockmann)和霍夫曼 (Hofmann)致力于建立和发展瑞士的国际风格。由诺伊堡 (Neuburg)等人创刊的《新平面设计 (New Graphic Design)》就是瑞士国际风格的代表。赫德克 (Herdeg)于 1942 年创刊了《平面 (Graphic)》杂志, 它在世界平面设计领域中广为流传。他们都先后成为 AGI 的成员。比勒 (Bühler) 和布龙 (Brun)是创建 AGI 的成员, 他们是杰出的海报、展示、广告的设计家, 同时也是巴塞尔学校有影响的教育家。卡里吉特 (Carigiet)作为海报设计家的大师之一早已享誉远近, 他在 1957 年加入 AGI。里谢茨 (Richez)是 AGI 的第一个比利时成员, 他在 1958 年的布鲁塞尔世界博览会的海报设计, 使他蜚声海内外。美国的杂志设计在国际上有极高的影响力,《时代》、《生活》、《观察》等杂志创办时的创意指导, 在新型的传播媒体中占有重要的角色, 吸引了许多一流的本地和欧洲的天才设计家, 他们中的大多数人是 AGI 的成员。还值得一提的是比尔 (Beall), 他早在 30 年代创立了典型的美国平面设计风格。

1955 年, AGI 在巴黎的卢浮宫举办首届展览, 展出了来自 11 个国家的 75 位成员的作品。虽然包浩斯时期所产生的国际风格日趋明显, 但由于历史的原因, 展览会上各国的气质差异十分明显。仅仅在一年以后, 针对 1956 年在伦敦的 AGI 展览, 评论家埃尔文 (Elvin)这样写道:“很明显, 国际风格已经统领一代潮流。”自 1951 年 AGI 建立起, 每年轮流在世界各地举行聚会 (1973 年由于中东战争取消了在耶路撒冷的会议), 会员们在友好和相互尊重的气氛中, 进行认真和富有成果的学术探讨, 举办会员作品展览, 培训有才能的平面设计大学生和青年设计师, 并用平面设计的方法帮助世界各国的企业、公司和它们的跨国组织的发展。1969 年, AGI 将总部从巴黎移至瑞士的苏黎世。目前, AGI 除拥有上述国家外, 还有德国、澳大利亚、加拿大、捷克、丹麦、芬兰、伊朗、以色列、日本、墨西哥、荷兰、挪威、波兰、西班牙、瑞典、韩国和中国等国大约 300 名会员, 清华大学美术学院 (原中央工艺美术学院) 的余秉楠于 1992 年被接纳为 AGI 的第一个华人会员,

AGI 作为各国著名设计师的联合组织, 是国际平面设计界的权威组织, 在国际上享有崇高的声誉。

The Alliance Graphique Internationale (AGI)

Yu Bingnan

The Alliance Graphique Internationale, abbreviated as AGI, was founded in 1951 in Paris, France. Its first president was Carlu from France. Among its ranks are the most outstanding and influential famous designers worldwide. It leads since then the trends of the modern graphic design.

In 1919, Gropius has founded the Bauhaus in Germany. The modern design style developed by the Bauhaus influenced deeply many creations in the fields of architecture, industrial products and visual communication. After the Bauhaus was closed by the Nazis in 1933, many of its teachers fled Germany and worked in Britain or the United States. Some of them, e. g. Bayer, along with other emigrates such as Lionni, Burtin, Binder, Matter, Tscherny in the United States and Schleger, Henrion in Britain became the first members of AGI. At the same time, a talented body of eight British designers, who had proved their worth before and during the war, became eligible members.

In France, the most successful poster designers in the Thirties of the last century were the three Cs. Two of them, Carlu and Cassandre, together with other excellent designers afterwards, were members of AGI. Art and artists have been always much respected by the French people. Like painters and sculptors, designers in France enjoy a reputation and an acknowledged place in society. It was, therefore, natural that Paris became the new AGI headquarters.

Generally speaking, around that time many important designs are not supported by the industry and neglected by the organizations which should have believed in the meaning of design in the industrial and daily life. AEG in Germany and Olivetti Typewriter in Italy, however, played a pioneer role in this aspect. Pintori, the first Italian AGI member, was responsible for all the visual communication of Olivetti. His imaginative and semi-abstract approach became a worldwide influence on graphic design.

In Switzerland Müller-Brockmann and Hofmann were instrumental in evolving and establishing the Swiss approach internationally. "New Graphic Design", of which Neuburg was a founder member, became the mouthpiece of the new Swiss International Style. Herdeg started "Graphis" magazine in 1942. This covered graphic design worldwide, with a much more general approach. Both of them were received as members of AGI. Bühler and Brun, the two founder members of AGI, had been well-established designers of posters, exhibitions and advertising and both were influential teachers at the Basel School. Carigiet was already well known as one of the masters of posters. He was made an honorary member in 1957.

Richez is the first Belgic member of AGI. His poster for the Brussels World Exhibition has brought him international reputation.

American magazine design became highly influential on an international scale. "Time", "Life", "Look" established the creative art director of a magazine as the most important figure in this new communication medium. Magazine design in the United States attracted the best native and European talent. The majority of these art directors were AGI members. Special mention here must be made of Beall who had created a typical USA graphic style as early as the Thirties of the last century.

At the first AGI exhibition at the Louvre in Paris in 1955, at which the work of seventy-five designers from eleven countries was shown, although the International Style, existent since the Bauhaus, had become more important, but the national characteristics of most were evident in the exhibits, for the historic reasons given. Only one year later, however, when referring to the 1956 London exhibition, the critic Elvin stated: "Clearly the International Style had begun to dominate the scene."

Since the foundation in 1951 AGI holds assembly meeting every year in different places all over the world (except the meeting 1973 in Jerusalem due to the Middle East crises). In a friendly atmosphere members discussed seriously but fruitfully issues of graphic design, held exhibitions of their works, trained talented students and young designers in this field, and helped with their experiences enterprises, companies and their joint ventures all over the world.

In 1969 AGI has moved the headquarter from Paris to Zurich in Switzerland. Along with the members from the above mentioned countries, AGI has at present around 250 members from Germany, Australia, Canada, Czech, Denmark, Finland, Iran, Israel, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Korea and China. Yu Bingnan of the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University, has become in 1992 the first Chinese AGI member.

As an Network of famous designers from all over the world, AGI is an authoritative association worldwide in graphic design, which enjoys high reputation internationally.

Photo: Richard Frank



George和 Sonia Tscherny在他们位于曼哈顿家中的后院
George & Sonia Tscherny in the backyard of their house in Manhattan

在20世纪的最后25年间，美国的平面设计在风格上和方法上都有令人炫目的进步。新艺术风格，装饰艺术风格，维多利亚式风格的复兴；从瑞士引进的国际字体风格；Push Pin风格；波普艺术的影响；以及“后现代主义”对现代艺术运动的作用等等：这些是一些近年来较具深远意义的平面设计风格。在设计师的眼里，每个新风潮都致使它之前的风格成为过时的。然而，面对这些变化的潮流，George Tscherny在从事平面设计事业中依然保持了特别的始终如一的态度与方法。

在这样一份随时会受不断的变化影响的职业中，过时的构思、式样和形象不断被丢弃，而Tscherny的作品却使他自己始终保持在潮流最前沿。他成功的秘诀是什么呢？Tscherny的工作成功的一个重要方面是：他的作品都运用了表达事物精髓的方法。每个作品都只含有表达精髓的那些元素，而不用再增加任何无关的或装饰性的东西。

当Tscherny用照片做出一个设计时，照片的形象总是被修饰得很简化，只包含那些说明问题及扩展编辑内容的必要组成因素。当某个设计要求用绘画或插图来解决时，Tscherny随意的画法看来就像图画符号。

这种经济的方法并没有退化成枯燥平淡的表达，因为它与温柔、人性的体现是密不可分的。在选择摄影插图时，Tscherny会选择那些有突出的感情并且很高贵，端庄的形象。他在作品中，运用手写和表现质感的方式来做到相类似的人性体现。

Tscherny的经济的方法的倾向在他作为印刷者的工作中也体现出来。人们倾向于把他叫做经典印刷者，并不是因为他的作品效仿了高贵传统的私人印刷品，或是文艺

复兴时期的书的老传统，而是因为经典的印刷术的基本特质在他的方法中表现出来。这包含对清晰度的注重及谨慎细心地注意到印刷的细节，选择合适的字体，及决定大小尺寸，重量和间隔的正确感觉也都包括在内。令人高兴的是：现代印刷设计中的骗人的花招，古怪的玩意，反常的东西却大多没有出现。结果是所有的信息皆直观且开放地呈现出来，做为说明Tscherny的两个品质的范例。

平面设计是构筑的过程，由一步步的构造形式而得，或者它也可以是想像的进程，通过绘画、标注来实现。对于Tscherny来说设计常常是一种选择，而这种选择也是设计程序的中心，或许Tscherny的平面造型设计的方法中特别重要的方面就是他对艺术鉴赏的眼光，这种特质使得他三十年来一直坚持自己的见解又始终保持一种突出的高水准。一个设计师作出种种努力决定去发展一个企划，但在选择纸张，印刷，色彩和摄影中一个错误的决定就会毁掉整个计划。Tscherny用一种对想要的结果的准确无误的感觉仔细地比较每个因素及它们与整体之间的关系，阐明了结果。预定的信息没有被离题信息或不清楚的形式阻碍而最终传达给读者。

Tscherny的例子使我们相信真正的广告传播工作者可以从七嘴八舌的大众传媒与不可能持久的风格中跳出来，真实可靠地面对设计师的眼光、委托人的意向及观众的需要。

George Tscherny by Philip B.Meggs

Reprinted from Graphis #230; March/April 1984

During the last quarter of a century, American graphic design has witnessed a bewildering progression of styles and approaches. Revivals of Art Nouveau, Art Deco and Victorian ornament; the objectivity of the International Typographic Style, imported from Switzerland; the Push Pin Style; Pop Art influences; and the 'Postmodernist' reactions to the modern movement: these are some of the more significant graphic gyrations of recent times. In the eyes of its practitioners, each New Wave renders previous styles Old Hat. Yet throughout this period of flux, George Tscherny has maintained a remarkably consistent attitude and approach in practicing graphic design. In a profession so susceptible to constant change – in which the discarding of ideas, styles and images is almost planned obsolescence – Tscherny's work has enabled him to remain at the forefront. What, then, are its ingredients?

One important aspect of Tscherny's work is an economy of means, addressing the essence of the problem at hand. Each project contains only those elements needed to convey its message, without the addition of any extraneous or decorative material.

When Tscherny solves a problem with photography, the image is often simplified by cropping. Only those components necessary for the photograph to tell its story, or expand the editorial content, are included. When the problem calls for drawing or illustration as the solution, Tscherny's freely drawn image-making approach presents his subjects as almost pictographic signs.

This economy of means does not degenerate into arid or bland communication, for it goes hand-in-hand with a gentle, human warmth. In the selection of photographic illustrations, Tscherny chooses images that project feeling and dignity. He achieves a similar human

presence in his fluid gestural drawings as a result of their calligraphic and textual qualities.

Tscherny's bent toward an economy of means also figures in his work as a typographer. One is tempted to call him a classical typographer, not because his work imitates the grand tradition of the private press and the Renaissance book but because the basic attributes of classical typography are present in his approach. These include a concern for legibility and a meticulous attention to typographic detail. Also in evidence are appropriate typeface selection for the message and the audience, as well as a sense of rightness in determining sizes, weights and intervals. Refreshingly, the gimmicks, fads and eccentricities of much contemporary typographic design are absent. The result is that the message has a presentation which is direct and open, exemplifying two qualities of the Tscherny economy.

Graphic design can be a process of construction, resulting from procedures for building forms. Or it may be a process of visualization, realized through drawing and marking. For Tscherny, design is often a matter of *selection*, which is central to the design process. Perhaps the single most important aspect of Tscherny's approach to graphic design is the sensitivity of his vision—that attribute which, for more than three decades now, has enabled him to follow his own lights and yet maintain a remarkable level of quality. In the dozens of decisions made by a graphic designer in developing a project, one wrong choice in the selection of paper, typography, colour or photography can undermine the whole. Tscherny carefully weighs each element and its relationship to the totality with an unerring sense of the intended outcome. Clarity results. The intended message is conveyed to the audience unencumbered by irrelevant information or unclear forms.

George Tscherny's œuvre provides reassurance that the work of the true communicator can rise above the cacophony of mass communications and transient styles, remaining authentic to the designer's vision, the client's purpose and audience needs.

1988年, George Tscherny获得美国平面设计艺术协会的奖章以表彰他在“平面艺术中的杰出成就与贡献”。

再版自美国平面设计10, 美国平面设计艺术协会



George Tscherny简洁的平面设计

Steven Heller

30多年前, George Tscherny就认为平面设计真正的乐趣在于使自己牢牢掌握所有的设计课题,而不是监督其他设计师的工作。现在的他就像他一贯所做的那样,工作在纽约市某处一楼狭小的办公室内。那里有他,他的妻子Sonia以及两到三个助手正为一些美国最具声望的公司作广告传播服务。他的周围环境并不炫耀,可他的设计却很有力度很刺激并有很高的概念性。虽然没有被设计原则和理论约束,但是Tscherny尊重现代的传统,这为他的海报、年刊和广告作品中体现随和与刺激之间的平衡所证明。

Tscherny这30多年来给予他的委托人很多新鲜的点子,但更有意义的是他推翻了Goliath公司给平面设计及设计师的错误印象。Tscherny的职业生涯都奉献给教育那些商业管理者一个道理:平面设计不只是装饰服务而是公司文化必不可少的组成部分。他作为设计师的成功可以追溯到他的童年、青少年及早期职业生涯时,命运的变化使他了解到坚持到底有多重要。

Tscherny于1924年生于布达佩斯,但在两岁时就去了德国,并在那里长大,他说,“匈牙利”对我来说是存在于出生证明上,他母亲是一个有强烈反法西斯倾向的匈牙利人,所以她非常不赞同她祖国的独裁者Admiral Horthy,她发誓决不让她的孩子说匈牙利语。他的父亲是俄国人,所以姓Tscherny并不是匈牙利文,而是俄语“黑”

的德语拼法。Tscherny不太能回忆起早年在德国的岁月。他只记得父亲因非法入境而被逮捕,关了两天后就被允许居住柏林。然而,他却可以完整地记起激发他职业根基的文化因素。其中有一个记忆是有关邻近的电影院,一个真正的视觉殿堂,有着大型展示窗,展示了当时上映电影的舞台造型广告,“我记得《西线无战事》”的展示,他们陈列了真的散兵坑、防毒面具和头盔。但更令人印象深刻的是挂在建筑物一面墙上的巨幅手绘明星海报。这是我第一次认识平面设计,直到后来我明白这就是我想做的。”

Tscherny先是平安地生活在一个贫穷的劳动阶层街区。然后,阿道夫·希特勒时代到来,犹太人,尤其是外国犹太人,不再被“新德国”所欢迎。然而,对George和他弟弟来说,纳粹法令强加于人的困苦并没有像对其他人那样地具有毁灭性。直到1938年11月10日14岁的Tscherny的安全才受到威胁。

Kristallnacht——如玻璃一样破碎的那晚,所有犹太人的商店和机构都受到纳粹的攻击,这是恐怖来临的先兆。而接下来的那个月,George和弟弟偷偷穿过德国边界逃到荷兰。他们希望最终能与被禁止离开德国的父母团聚,荷兰是安全的“避难所”,荷兰人欢迎成千上万的年轻难民。当Tscherny的父母终于获准离开德国时,寻回儿子们的期望却被战争的爆发及1940年德军入侵并占领荷兰而打碎。德国人命令所有难民搬至离边界30公里处,而年轻的Tscherny则在一户户家庭之间穿梭避难。最后他弟弟进入一家犹太人孤儿院而他则被暂时地送往一所农场。

1941年Tscherny父母获准带着他们的孩子去美国,他们原想在法国找条船,但法国也被纳粹占领,而唯一能横渡大西洋的路线就是从葡萄牙的里斯本离开。“这是一个不可逾越的障碍。”Tscherny回忆道。为了到达里斯本,他们需要一张能够穿过其邻邦西班牙的通行证,但葡萄牙不会发给这种通行证,除非西班牙发,但西班牙也不会发。“在当时我16岁,但我知道唯一会发这种通行证的就是柏林的领事馆。”Tscherny回忆,所以1941年Tscherny返回德国首都,在那里他得知他的父母因为是不受欢迎的外国人而被驱逐,而他自己也遭到同样的待遇。他记得他被召唤到盖世太保总部:“一个近卫队的人向我吼叫‘在你被驱逐后就永不准回来,你怎敢回来?’,然后我被命令离开德国。”但多亏一件奇怪的事情,柏林的前警察局长,一

个犹太人,竟然奇异地在政府内仍保有一些影响力,他帮助了Tscherny得到了他要的通行证。

当1941年6月21日Tscherny和他的弟弟乘着他们叫做“漂流集中营”的船来到纽约港时,他们都已是很有经验的难民了。“那条船整晚都停在Staten岛外。”他回忆了cathartic事件,说:“早晨,一条拖船拉动船侧,一个船员举着一张《每日新闻》的头版,标题写着‘德国侵略俄国’。”

他的父母已在新泽西的Newark安居, Tscherny找到一份做汽车灯的工作,每小时30美分,这对于一个不会说英语的生手来说已很不错,但对一个决心要改善自己境遇的男孩来说却是微薄的。1942年,他加入了一个政府发起的培训机构,“他们只用了6个星期就使我成为一个机械工。”他说。然而,18岁时入伍是“我做的最好的一件事”。有每月52美元的薪水,规律的三餐,及一个住所, Tscherny还从没这么好过。不久他被命令出国。具有讽刺意味的是他于1944年6月21日到达法国,距他到达纽约整整3年。在欧洲期间,他作为一名翻译后来又成为盟军政府指挥部的一个工作人员,偶然地, Tscherny认识了一个中士,他是一位商业画家,在未从军前,曾为美国一家大型广告机构工作。在得知Tscherny的愿望是成为一名广告画家时,他把他纳入翼下。“我从他那里获得了设计的启蒙教育。”Tscherny说。

退役后,他进入内瓦克(Newark)美术与工业美术学校学习。但是他一直想去布鲁克林的Pratt学院学习,不过进那里要一张高中文凭。所以,除了白天在美术学校学习之外,他在晚间也参加了文化课程的学习。当他发现他缺少一些学科的修习学分时,他甚至利用午饭时间参加当地一所高中的科目学习。一年后,他被Pratt录取。但是对Tscherny来说一件更有深远意义的事这时在他的生活中发生了。作为一名现代舞的爱好者,他经常去看纽约老Ziegfeld剧院的演出,在那里他遇见了Sonia Katz。她同样也来自于被迫离开欧洲的说德语的犹太家庭。如果他们仍然待在欧洲(当然是在和平年代),由于深刻的阶级障碍观他们的生活可能永远都不会出现交汇,因为Sonia来自一个富有的家庭。然而在美国,他们却都很了解被迫移民的痛苦。后来,他们结婚了并从此生活在一起。Tscherny实在不能想像如果没有她的智慧与爱的影响,他的生活将会变成怎样。

在Pratt学院，工业设计是一项热门。当时Tscherny对动手制作东西很在行，“我很担心工业设计是一项要求智力活动的工作。我对数学很恐惧而对平面设计却感到很喜欢，我想我可以由此‘蒙骗’过去。”然而，“欺骗”并不是Tscherny作业计划的一部分。在学校的第一年他学得很快也很狂热。第二年他被编入由Herschel Levit担任老师的班级，那是一个很受欢迎的老师。“就好像我已在泥泞的沼泽里走了一年突然碰上一块干地。”Tscherny说。

40年代后期是美国设计业明显进入现代化的时期，当时制药的广告及唱片的封面设计都达到了一个创造性的高潮。在不同的范例典型中Tscherny努力消化Lester Beall, Bill Golden 和 Bradbury Thompson 的作品。同时他也开创了自己的方法，很快他成了Levit评价最高的学生。Levit推荐Tscherny为Donald Deskey 做第一份工作。Deskey是最后一位富有魅力的工业设计师并因为设计了广播城音乐厅的流线型内部而成名，但在40年代后期他的工作室却为Proctor和Gamble设计古板的包装盒。虽然Tscherny并没有对这一工作的前景充满兴奋，但他却被劝说接受这个工作。在毕业前的6个星期，他去找院长希望院长能够同意他接受这份工作并允许他兼职完成剩下的课业以取得资格证书。而院长是一个刻板执行制度的人，院长拒绝了他的要求，Tscherny则没等到毕业就离开了Pratt。他在Deskey的工作室开始学习为牙膏和洗发水做包装设计。“两年半后我离开的时候，我还在设计同类包装。”

1953年Tscherny被George Nelson雇作Irving Harper 的助手。George Nelson 是一个富于幻想的家具和工业设计师和评论家，而Irving Harper 则是负责设计家具制造先驱Herman Miller 公司的广告设计。作为一个低层员工，Tscherny被分配了一项工作，那就是设计一页杂志六个广告中的其中一个。“我决定要把我的设计成为它们之中最好的。”他骄傲地说，而他确实做出了令人赞赏的作品，这使他得到了设计一整页广告的工作机会。他最终成了平面设计部的主管，拥有了自己的手下。“与Nelson一起工作可能是我职业生涯中发生的最重要的一件事。”Tscherny说，“首先，在那些日子里，Nelson 的办公室是工作的好地方，而他的主要委托人Herman Miller 公司同Knoll同样享有家具公司的桂冠之位。我完全待在一群最优秀的设计师身边。但更重要的是，Nelson 是少数能清楚表达设计观点的人之一，而他的想法后来成为

我的一部分。实际上最经久耐用的一课就是不要对任何案例事先带人先入为主的观念。当Nelson 要设计一把椅子时，他从不先假设它有四条腿。”但是对Tscherny 最有帮助的事是Nelson 对平面设计没有兴趣。“他只对三维建筑物感兴趣。”Tscherny 继续说道。“他认为平面设计是短暂的。”

“虽然他喜欢我也赏识我的作品，可他却并不会把他自己卷入我的领域，也就是说我可以在合理范围内做任何事，也可以尝试新东西而不会有人在一旁检查。”Tscherny 相信表现力“最好的设计就是当它精减到只剩必要元素时”。他也反对某些设计理论中意识形态上的陷阱。他的理论并非从事先就有的正确形式中得出，而是主要靠直觉。他最有意义的成就之一就是在Nelson 工作室时打破家具宣传的陈词老调。大多数广告机构都认为。要想有个有效的促销，家具（还有很多其他商品）在照片中必须在它前面站着一些漂亮女人。Tscherny知道虽然一些消费者能被这种肉弹美女所迷惑。但这种方法也有其消极的一面。例如，一个矮胖的人可能会认为被侮辱因而不买这种产品。他更进一步意识到专业观众想看见单独的商品，但又直觉地认为有人象征地出现也很重要。作为结论，他开发了一个新方法叫“暗示人类因素”。

这种方法在1955年一个宣布新米勒展览室在达拉斯开张的广告中首次运用。这是一个特别简单的设计，它的特点是两条细线的无衬线字体及一张高对比度的黑白照片，里边有一张椅子，座位上放着一顶牛仔帽。整个画面覆盖着红颜色，只有椅腿是白色的。“加上牛仔帽，我寓意，这是在达拉斯，”Tscherny解释道，“同时我显示家具有人用而暗示有人类存在。”Tscherny的宣传广告中并没有显示胖或瘦，平凡或美丽，男人或女人，而是建立了一个邀请台。几年后他又为视觉艺术学校设计了一个相似的暗示性海报，上边有一个石膏的耳朵，耳朵后夹着一只真的铅笔，用来象征艺术学习，也暗示了人类的练习。人类的表示而非单纯的几何学图案才是Tscherny 设计的重要特征。

30岁时，Tscherny 决定他要开始自己做生意。然而，他却不不想做得太大以至于和他的原始积累的材料失去接触。他也承认：“我担心仅仅干工作还不够，若没有一个前辈或搭档来帮我表达，我自己得表达出我在做什么。”他认为能磨练说服力的技巧的最好方法就是教书。“如果你是一个

严谨的老师，你不会仅仅告诉学生那个东西是丑或是美。你必须告诉他们为什么。在视觉艺术学校教设计八年（最初主要教漫画与插图）训练我成为Sonia所说的能言善辩的人。”在Silas Rhodes的领导下，Tscherny在视觉艺术学校开拓了新路。因为没有正式的平面设计课程存在，他最初的课程是基于“如果我是学生我希望了解什么，而我作为学生缺少了什么”之上的。除了工作外，Tscherny 也播放爵士乐录音并探索它的由来，他带学生们去百老汇剧院，向他们展示与设计经验有联系的文化活动。他教学方法已走到开拓思维教学范围的极致。“我试图像 Nelson教我那样教这些孩子，不要有先入为主的观念而且要对新想法有感悟力。当我做我称之为‘塔乐木迪设计’时我确实很开心。我把问题从头到尾看一遍，自问问题，自己回答，而最重要的就是不要迷恋任何一个答案，直到内心灵感之铃响起。”Tscherny用Henri-Cartier Bresson经典的关于画面形象的书《决定性的一刻》来解释设计并不仅仅是装饰表面的类型或样子，而更需要去获取一个东西的本质精髓，不论是在胶片，画布或机器板上。“决定性的一刻常常都是被制造出来的。”他说。“广告中你常能看到这样的时刻。甚至在Iwo Jima建立升旗仪式。所以我鼓励学生，无论对待什么题目要去发现它们的问题本质并让他成为焦点。”在他自己的设计中，这种方法拥有各种不同的形式，比如白脸Marcel Marceall在一幅红色海报中，并命名为“Bip”，他完全抓住了幽默剧的精髓。又比如另一幅海报，关于展览毕加索雕刻、版画及绘画的广告，Tscherny在海报上复制了毕加索在这三种形式上的微妙区别的签名。

8年的教学生涯后，Tscherny意识到他已经学到所有能学的东西：“在这以前，我设计时像牛吃草一样，只知道大量生产却不懂真正含义。在视觉艺术学校我学到如何谈论设计及明确了一些不能磨灭的概念。当我开始时，那还是一片处女地，”他沉思道。“Silas Rhodes是最好的委托人。他能意识到什么是好的，也允许我想走多远就走多远。我的早期海报给了视觉艺术学校一种品味。”此外，Tscherny对在学校给学生当一名管束人员感到不耐烦。这是20世纪60年代，学生们都变得很叛逆，“很可能在我的办法中我显得有些普鲁士人味”他承认。“但我总是说除非学生们真地认为他或她什么也不知道（这不是真的）而老师知道所有的事（这也不可能），教学过程变得很难完成。

学生必须有很好的接受能力并充满信心。但这是一个把质疑权威与老师辩论成为运动的时代。我越来越多地有了挫折感。”

此时，他在设计那些让人印象深刻的商业广告及设计家具工业促销广告的领域已经建立了声望。虽然他只有一间个人工作室，他却试图在其他领域寻找顾客。最先找到的是做芭蕾和戏剧纪念品的独立制造商。Silas Rhodes这样评价Tscherny的作品：“人们从中看到流行艺术达到了最高的水平”。实际上，他经常依靠现成的物体——不一定是文化艺术品，例如说旧画、明信片、面具和瓷砖都被他用作表现那些海报、年历和书籍等等，而只要这些东西能提供一个作品所需要的神秘的图像信息。其中一个例子是，当他为Ernst和Ernst大型会计公司改名为Ernst&Whinney作图片宣传时，他发现，运用恰当的字体来表现，例如当把“E”字倒转90°时，E会变为“W”。多么简单又多么令人难忘的发现！一个更加生动的有关这种“意外发现”的例子是给Monadnock纸厂设计的展示其纯白纸对比度的海报。当标题为NY的海报折叠起来时，看起来像一个西班牙教堂的完全轮廓剪影，但当打开折叠时，却显示着原来这个教堂是在纽约世贸中心双塔前。这并非蒙太奇手法，也非人为刻意产生的效果，而是机智地运用了“意外发现”这个方法。

虽然为纸张公司、印刷机及家具公司委托设计广告很有挑战性。但当他进入公司广告交流这一“拜占庭”世界时，他才遇到了真正最有挑战性的工作。他的第一个顾客是“福特基金会”，他要为他们设计所有的出版物。“所有这些带我进入另一个层次。”Tscherny说，“我开始与印刷工一起工作，这里是我第一次与控制质量的技工一起干活。”这也是他第一次与“公司年度汇报”这样的“凶猛野兽”进行搏斗。自此之后，他驯服了不少这样的“野兽”。

Tscherny也和那些叫做“困难顾客”的保守的公司合作，这些公司曾认为那些不寻常的设计招数不会令人信服。他也有幸与“一人说话便算数”的那些人一起工作。Uris建设公司是50年代末60年代初纽约的主要建筑公司之一。他为Uris设计的年度汇报封面是黑白对照的，只有几幢不规则排列的无艺术性的建筑体块呈现在那里。这是一个简略但很愉悦的设计。他后来说“之所以侥幸获得通过也是因为一个决定性的人认为这是合适的象征性设计。”

在为科学器材制造商Millipore所做的公司标识设计过程中，Tscherny认为公司传播设计的“圣经”——样式手册几乎毫无意义，因为“不好的设计师会错误使用它，而好的设计师又不应该受这么多约束”。他没有沿用一贯的精致而昂贵的设计系统，而是设计了一系列“公司标识设计图例”，在其中只是简略地叙述了设计者所要遵循的图片参数。这一次，他的公司合作者又一次理解了他的设计理念而予以通过。

在70年代早期，他和泛美航空公司的一个果断的决策者一起工作。关于这个决策者，Tscherny说，“我来到美国后，对美国人的印象是从电影中获得的。他们就像加里·格兰特一样的人，总是把脚翘在桌上，能很快地做出决定，又很有幽默感。我遇见的有这些特征的第一个顾客却是个英国人。他很机灵，他的决定95%的时候都是对的，在一个古板的公司里能做到这样，真是不简单。”Tscherny和此人一起“疯狂地搞出些设计”，包括他们首创的用于给旅行公司推广泛美的度假地点的组合展示版系列。这是一个让Tscherny运用他的“速描”画技巧，以及把他在自己旅行中所拍照片派上用场的机会。Tscherny也参加了泛美航空的“波多黎各战役”。“泛美航空经营到波多黎各的专线已多年，”Tscherny解释道，“他们变得比较傲慢，直到美国航空公司也来参加这条航线的竞争。这时，泛美得罪过的那些乘客转乘美国航空公司的飞机。那么，我就得说服泛美航空，如若公司不尊重不善待乘客的话，有再好的广告和宣传册也没用。”他认为人的因素是提升泛美形象的关键，所以在他设计的宣传品中，强调了对乘客的重视度。在他设计的印刷宣传册，公司终点站展示牌，和波多黎各游行花车上，都体现了用现代角度对波多黎各当地文化的诠释。

Tscherny的顾客包括那些有明显保守倾向的公司，例如大众动力公司、琼生公司、CPC百货产品公司和SEI公司等。Tscherny为Liggett & Myers香烟公司设计了一套香烟小型装的组合设计式样，乃面向女性市场的四小盒一套装。在15年前Tscherny受雇设计W.R. Grace公司的年度报告之前，这样的设计工作为平面设计者的难题。也许Tscherny的成功相对于其他人的失败归功于他相信“为这些公司顾客设计所面对的挑战，第一是要做得比他们想要的更好，第二是引导他们接受那些能强调他们产品的设计概念和他们所未想像过的设计哲

学。”

Tscherny常把他被人拒绝的设计稿再次提交上去。例如他为W.R. Grace设计的1984年度报告的封皮。封皮上面是从纽约曼哈顿第42街面北看的纽约黄昏天空图景，其中Grace公司大楼连同他的商标处于画面之前。（附带地说，这是显示其为Grace年度报告的唯一标志）要完成这幅照片需要三种不同的摄制段。而Tscherny的很多成功归功于Sonia（她并非平面设计师），Sonia有难以言传的辨别好坏与否、正确与否的能力。Tscherny承认因为Sonia的敏锐洞察力和悟性，他自己的双眼才能更准确地从“平凡的事物中发现艺术”。

Tscherny的设计方法并非概念性或表面性的。图画是为了增进其内容，而不是装饰它或掩藏它。Phillip Meggs写道：Tscherny的设计过程是“选择的过程”，即选择合适的工具来传递顾客想要表达的信息。Jerome Snyder写道：“Tscherny坚信设计者是他自己视觉语言的发明者，而‘反复运用’的形式违背了这个宗旨”。但Tscherny的不少作品却是由传统的图像和标识组成，并基于原来的摄影和图示。不过在他的手中，传统的东西被赋予新的生命而新的东西被神奇地成为永恒。这在1970年他设计的纽约社区道德文化“早中餐艺术拍卖”项目的封面中就得到生动体现。他于其中机智地用现代和经典标识将艺术和早餐天衣无缝地联系在一起。在这个过程中，他说“一加一等于三，用少表现多，如做得成功，将给我莫大满足。”

Tscherny的设计方法违反了严格归类法，但从他设计的大量图片材料看，他的成功设计含有三个基本要素：一是微妙顽皮的幽默感，二是精致又愉悦的印刷（“于印刷中我力求可辨性和可读性，除非我不强调这些”），最后，也是最重要的是，他是能把复杂问题找出简单解决办法的天才。Silas Rhodes对Tscherny的作品做了最好的评价：“优雅而不赶时髦，严肃而不矫饰，有板有眼却不枯燥，他设计的海报、年刊等作品愉悦双眼，振奋精神。这让顾客公司与设计者之间的分歧彻底消失。作为为美国工业上层公司服务的设计者，Tscherny展现了解决图片展示中的问题而不失其美学特质的才能。自由而大胆使他的设计成为经典。”

In 1988 George Tscherny received the *Medal of the American Institute of Graphic Arts* in recognition of "distinguished achievements and contributions to the graphic arts."

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The Disarmingly Simple Design of George Tscherny

by Steven Heller

Over 30 years ago, George Tscherny decided that the real "kick" of design was to keep his hands firmly on all projects, not to supervise other designers' work. He is now, as he always has been, the sole proprietor of a small office located on the ground floor of his narrow New York City brownstone where he, his wife Sonia ("the conscience of the office"), and two or three assistants attend to the communications needs of some of America's most prestigious corporations. His surroundings are unpretentious, but his design is strong, provocative, and highly conceptual. Though not constricted by design canon or theory, Tscherny is respectful of the modern traditions, as evidenced by the balance between the accessibility and excitability in a broad range of his posters, annual reports, and advertisements.

Tscherny has given fresh design ideas to his clients for over three decades but more significantly, he has toppled corporate Goliaths' misconceptions of graphic design and designers. Tscherny's professional life has been devoted to educating the people who manage business to the idea that design should not be a cosmetic service but an integral part of their corporate culture. His success as a designer can be traced

back to his childhood, adolescence, and early professional years when his resolve to overcome the vicissitudes of fate proved to him how important tenacity can be.

George Tscherny was born in Budapest in 1924, but was raised in Germany from the age of two. "Hungary," he says, "exists for me only on my birth certificate." His mother, a Hungarian with a fervent anti-fascist bias, so disapproved of her nation's dictator, Admiral Horthy, that she vowed never to let her children speak Hungarian. His father was Russian, so not even the name Tscherny is Hungarian, rather a German spelling of the Russian word for *black*.

Tscherny recalls little of those early years in Germany. He knows only that his father was arrested for illegally entering the country, jailed for two days, and then allowed to settle in Berlin. However, he has total recall of the cultural stimuli on which his career is based. One such memory is of a neighborhood movie theatre, a virtual palace with huge display windows featuring a visual tableau advertising the current film. "I remember the display for *All Quiet on the Western Front*. It had real foxholes, gas masks, and helmets. But more impressive was the huge handpainted poster of a movie star on the side of the building. This was my first awareness of graphic design—and even then I realized it was what I wanted to do."

The Tscherny family lived in relative peace in a poor working-class district called Moabit. Then came Adolf Hitler. Jews, especially foreign Jews, were unwelcome in the new Germany. Yet for George and his younger brother the hardships imposed by Nazi decrees were not as devastating as for others. Not until November 10, 1938, when the 14-year-old Tscherny's security was turned topsy-turvy. *Kristallnacht*, the night of broken glass, when all Jewish businesses and institutions were attacked by the Nazis, was a vivid omen of the terror to come. The following month George and his younger brother escaped across the German border into Holland. Eventually they hoped to be reunited with their parents who were

prevented from leaving Germany at that time.

Holland was a safe haven, and the Dutch welcomed thousands of youthful refugees. But when Tscherny's parents were finally allowed to leave Germany, hopes of retrieving their sons were dashed by the outbreak of war and the 1940 invasion and occupation of Holland. The Germans ordered all refugees moved 30 kilometers away from the border, and the young Tschernys were shuttled from home to home. Finally his brother went to a Jewish orphanage, and George was sent to a farm for a brief period.

In 1941 Tscherny's parents obtained the papers necessary to bring the boys to the United States. But France, where they hoped to find a ship, was already occupied by the Nazis, and the only scheduled transatlantic departures were from Lisbon, Portugal. "It was a Catch-22 situation," recalls Tscherny. In order to get to Lisbon, he needed a transit visa to pass through neighboring Spain, but Portugal would not issue one unless Spain did, and Spain would not do so unless Portugal did. "At this point I was 16, and I learned that the only place such visas were issued were at the consulates in Berlin," he recalls. So in 1941 Tscherny returned to the Nazi capital, where he learned that his parents had been deported as undesirable aliens and that he, too, was subject to the same order. He was summoned to Gestapo headquarters and remembers that "an SS man screamed at me: 'Where do you get the nerve to come back after having been deported?' I was ordered to leave Germany." But owing to bizarre events, the former Berlin police prefect, a Jew who miraculously continued to have some influence in official circles, helped the boys obtain the proper papers.

Tscherny and his brother were seasoned refugees by the time they arrived on what he calls a "floating concentration camp" in New York harbor on June 21, 1941. "The boat sat all night off Staten Island," he says about the cathartic event, "and in the morning a tugboat pulled alongside, and a crewman held up a *Daily News* front page with the

headline reading 'Germany Invades Russia.'

His parents were already settled in Newark, New Jersey, where Tscherny took a job making automobile lights for 30 cents an hour. Not bad for a greenhorn who knew little English, but paltry for a boy who was determined to improve his lot. In 1942 he joined a government-sponsored training unit. "They made me a machinist in just six weeks," he says. However, enlisting in the army when he was 18 years old was "the best thing I could have done." With the \$52 a month pay, regular meals, and a roof over his head, Tscherny had never had it so good.

Soon he was ordered overseas. Ironically, he landed in France on June 21, 1944, exactly three years to the day of his arrival in New York. While in Europe he served as an interpreter and later was attached to the headquarters of the Allied Military Government. Fortuitously, one of Tscherny's sergeants was a commercial artist who, in civilian life, worked for one of the big American advertising agencies. After learning about Tscherny's own desire to become an advertising artist, he took him under his wing. "I got my first understanding about design from him," says Tscherny.

After being discharged, he enrolled in the Newark School of Fine and Industrial Arts on the GI Bill. He wanted, however, to attend Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, but needed a high school diploma. So in addition to going to art school by day, he took academic courses at night. And when he found that he was lacking a few credits, he even took a course at a local high school during his lunch hour. A year later, he was accepted into Pratt.

But an even more significant piece of Tscherny's life fell into place at this time. As an aficionado of modern dance, he regularly attended performances at New York's old Ziegfeld Theatre where he met Sonia Katz. She, too, came from a German-speaking Jewish family forced to leave Europe. If they had remained in Europe (in better times, of course), their paths might never have

crossed since class barriers were profound, and Sonia was from a wealthy family. But in the United States, they both understood the tribulations of being immigrants. They married and have been together ever since. Indeed, Tscherny cannot conceive of how different his life would have been without her intelligent and loving influence.

At Pratt Institute, industrial design was the hot department. While Tscherny was pretty good at making things with his hands, "I was afraid that industrial design would require too many intellectual activities. I was terrible at math and felt more comfortable going into graphic design where I believed I could bluff my way through." Bluffing, however, was not part of Tscherny's *modus operandi*. In his first year, he learned fast and studied feverishly on his own. In his second, he was placed into a class taught by Herschel Levit, a highly acclaimed teacher. "It was as if I had walked through a swamp for one year and all of a sudden hit dry land," Tscherny says.

The late 1940s was a distinctly modern era of American design when pharmaceutical advertising and record album covers were reaching a creative crescendo. Tscherny devoured the work of Lester Beall, Bill Golden, and Bradbury Thompson, among other exemplars. He also developed his own approach, and soon became Levit's "prize pupil." Levit recommended Tscherny for his first job with Donald Deskey.

Deskey was the last of the glamorous industrial designers and had earned his reputation for the streamlined interiors of Radio City Music Hall, but in the late forties his office was doing staid packaging for Proctor & Gamble. Though Tscherny was not terribly excited about the prospect, he was urged to take the job. And only six weeks before graduation he went to the dean requesting permission to accept the job while completing the remaining assignments on the side in order to qualify for the diploma. The dean, a stickler for procedure, denied the request, and Tscherny left Pratt without

graduating. Tscherny cut his teeth at the Deskey office rendering comps for toothpaste and shampoo packages. "By the time I left, two-and-a-half years later, I was still comping virtually the same packages."

In 1953 he was hired by George Nelson, the visionary furniture and industrial designer and critic, as an assistant to Irving Harper who was responsible for designing trade advertising for the vanguard furniture manufacturer, the Herman Miller Co. As low man, Tscherny was given the sixth-of-a-page magazine ads to design. "I decided to make plums out of them," he says with pride, and he did an admirable job which earned him the full-page ad assignment. He eventually became head of the graphics department with a staff of his own.

"Working with Nelson was probably the most important thing that happened to me professionally," says Tscherny. "First of all, in those days the Nelson office was *the* office and Herman Miller Co., his main client, shared the crown of *the* furniture company along with Knoll. I was literally thrown in with the elite of design. But more important, Nelson was one of the few articulate spokesmen for design then—and his ideas rubbed off on me. In fact, the most enduring lesson was not to bring preconceived ideas to any project. When Nelson designed a chair, for example, he didn't start with the assumption that it had four legs." But the key advantage for Tscherny was that Nelson had no proprietary interest in graphics. "He was interested in building three-dimensional monuments," continues Tscherny. "And he thought that graphic design was ephemeral."

"Although he liked me and appreciated what I was doing, he had no pressing need to involve himself in my area. That meant I could do almost anything within reason; I could experiment without anyone looking over my shoulder."

Tscherny believes that "design communicates best when reduced to the essential elements." Yet he has resisted the ideological traps of some design theory. His method derives not from a

preordained rightness of form, but primarily from instinct. Indeed one of his most significant accomplishments at Nelson's was to break the cliché of how furniture was advertised. Most advertising agencies believed, that to sell effectively, furniture (and for that matter, many other products) should be presented in a photograph with some goodlooking woman in the foreground. Tscherny knew that while some consumers might be seduced by this cheesecake, the approach also had negative connotations. For example, a heavy-set person might be insulted and therefore not relate to the product. He further realized that the professional audience wanted to see the product alone, but intuited that signifying a human presence was important in both cases. As a consequence, he developed a method called "the human element implied."

A 1955 advertisement announcing the opening of a new Miller showroom in Dallas was the first time this approach was used. An extraordinarily simple design, it features two spare lines of sans serif type and a high contrast black-and-white photo of a chair with a cowboy hat resting on the seat. The ad is bathed in red ink with the chair legs dropped out in pure white. "By including the hat, I suggest Dallas," explains Tscherny, "while at the same time, I show the furniture in use, suggesting the human presence." Tscherny's promo did not discriminate against heavy or slim, ordinary or beautiful, male or female, but set an inviting stage. Years later he made a similarly provocative School of Visual Arts poster showing a plaster cast of an ear, symbolizing the study of art, with a real pencil tucked behind the ear, suggesting human practice. Human expression, rather than pure geometric form, has been the key feature of Tscherny's design.

At 30 years old, Tscherny decided that he wanted to start his own business. However, he did not want to become so big as to lose contact with his materials, and he admits, "I was afraid that it wasn't enough to simply *do* the work. Without a frontman or a partner who spoke well, I would have to *verbalize*

what I was doing." The best way to hone persuasive skills, he thought, was by teaching. "If you are a conscientious teacher, you cannot just say to a student that something either stinks or is beautiful. You must tell them why. Teaching design for eight years at the School of Visual Arts [which was initially geared primarily for cartoonists and illustrators] trained me to the point where Sonia says that I can justify anything."

Under the direction of Silas Rhodes, Tscherny blazed a trail at the School of Visual Arts. As no formal graphic design curriculum existed, his initial course was based on "what I would like to know if I were a student and what I missed as a student." In addition to assignments, Tscherny played recordings of jazz music and traced its origins, took students to off-Broadway theater, and exposed them to those cultural activities that were related to the broader design experience. His teaching method ran the gamut of philosophical extremes. "I attempted to teach the kids—as Nelson taught me—not to have preconceptions, but rather to be receptive to new ideas. Indeed, I am happiest when I do what I call 'Talmudic design;' when I look at the problem from top to bottom, ask myself questions, provide answers, and most important, try not to fall in love with any one answer until a mental bell rings."

Tscherny used Henri-Cartier Bresson's classic book of images *The Decisive Moment* to explain that design was not merely the decorative layering of type and image, but rather the need to capture, whether on film, canvas, or mechanical board, the essence of a subject. "Very often the decisive moment is manufactured," he says. "One sees it with commercials all the time. Even the flag-raising at Iwo Jima was set up. So I encouraged the students, regardless of subject, to find that essence in their problems, and let it be the focal point." In his own design, this takes various forms, such as the white face of Marcel Marceau in an otherwise red poster entitled "Bip," in which he captures the quintessential symbol of the mime. Or a poster advertising an exhibit of Picasso's sculpture, lithographs, and

drawings on which Tscherny reproduces the three subtly different signatures Picasso used to sign each medium.

After eight years of teaching, Tscherny realized that he had learned all he could. "Up to that point, I designed like a cow grazes; just churning it out without really knowing. At SVA I learned how to talk about design and established certain concepts that have become indelible. When I started, it was virgin territory," he muses. "Silas Rhodes was the perfect client. He sensed what was good and allowed me to go as far as I wished. My early posters gave SVA a sort of presence." Moreover, Tscherny became impatient at having to be a disciplinarian. It was the 1960s, and students were becoming rebellious. "Chances are that I may have been a little what one might call Prussian in my methods," he admits. "But I always said that unless the student really assumes that he or she knows nothing (which is not the case) and the teacher knows everything (which is not the case either), the teaching process is difficult to accomplish. The student has to be extremely receptive and believing for it to work. But this was a time when questioning authority and arguing with the teacher became a sport. And I was increasingly frustrated."

He had already established a reputation for designing striking trade ads and promotions for the home furnishings industry, though as a one-man studio he sought clients in other fields. One of the first was an independent producer of souvenir programs for ballets and plays.

Silas Rhodes wrote of Tscherny's work that "one sees popular art raised to the highest level." Indeed, he frequently relies on found objects—not necessarily cultural artifacts, such as old picture postcards, masks, and tiles, which he has used to illustrate some posters, calendars, and books—but secret graphic clues that he finds within a problem. One such discovery came when he had to graphically show that Ernst & Ernst, a large accounting firm, was changing its name to Ernst & Whinney, and found that by using the right typeface, if he turned the "E" 90 degrees it would become a "W." How simple and how

memorable. A more vivid example of serendipity is a poster for Monadnock Paper Mills designed to show the contrast of its pure white paper. When folded, the poster entitled "NY" shows a stark silhouette of what appears to be a Spanish mission, but when unfolded, reveals that the church is actually in front of the gargantuan twin towers of the World Trade Center. Neither a montage nor manipulation, it was an intelligent use of a chance discovery.

Though assignments for paper companies, printers, and furniture clients are challenging, Tscherny's foremost challenge came when he entered the byzantine world of corporate communications. His first retainer client was The Ford Foundation for which he did all publications. "And that brought me to another level," Tscherny says. "I started working with printers—my first experience with quality-conscious craftsmen." It was also the first time he assaulted that ferocious beast known as the corporate annual report. He has since tamed many.

Tscherny has worked with a lion's share of what could be frankly called *difficult clients*, those relatively conservative corporations which tend to view uncommon graphic ideas as suspicious. Yet he has also had the good fortune to collaborate directly with that one person making decisions, whom Tscherny calls a "corporate rabbi." For the Uris Buildings Corporation, which during the late 1950s and early 1960s was one of the major construction firms in New York, he designed a black-and-white annual report cover showing a few artless building blocks asymmetrically composed—a decidedly abstract yet playful idea, which he says "sneaked its way through because one man was convinced that it was the right symbolism." For Millipore, a manufacturer of scientific instruments for which he designed the identity, Tscherny determined that a style manual—the sacred bible of corporate communications—had little value because "bad designers will use it improperly, and good designers should not be constricted by too many rules." Instead of a typically elaborate and costly system, Tscherny produced a

series of "corporate identity samplers" which concisely describe the graphic parameters within which the designers should work. Again, his corporate mentor saw the logic in this strategy.

During the early 1970s, he worked for a strong decision maker at Pan American Airways, about whom he says, "When I came to this country, I had an image from the movies of what an American businessman is like. It was Cary Grant, who always had his feet up on the desk, made quick decisions, and had a good sense of humor. My first client, who matched those specifications turned out to be, to my surprise, an Englishman. He was so astute that his decisions were right 95 percent of the time, which in a starchy company like that, was quite a feat. " Together they "churned out graphic stuff like mad, " including an innovative series of modular display panels used by travel agencies to promote Pan Am's vacation spots. This was an opportunity for Tscherny to play with his own "shorthand drawings," as well as with original photographs he had taken on his travels. He also worked on Pan Am's Puerto Rico campaign. "Pan Am had had the exclusive route to Puerto Rico for years," he explains. "And they became quite arrogant until faced with competition from American Airlines, when all those passengers who had been mistreated for many years switched their loyalties. I had to convince Pan Am that good advertising and promotion are senseless unless the airline treats the customer with respect." The human element, Tscherny felt, was the key to improving Pan Am's public image. And concern for the customer was underscored by Tscherny's designs, which included print promotions, airline terminal displays, and a float for the Puerto Rican day parade, all influenced by the country's folk arts interpreted in a modern idiom.

Tscherny's clients include other outwardly conservative corporations, including General Dynamics, Johnson & Johnson, CPC grocery products, and SEI Corporation. For the Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co., he developed a unique modular design system for small cigarette packs that were aimed at a

female market and sold in shrink-wrapped sets of four boxes. Before Tscherny took on the W. R. Grace & Co. annual report 15 years ago, this conglomerate was known as a revolving door for graphic designers. Perhaps Tscherny succeeds where others have failed owing to his belief that "the challenge of working for these corporate clients is to do better work than they think they want and to educate them into *accepting* graphic concepts that underscore their product or philosophy in ways that they'd never imagined."

Tscherny often resubmits rejected ideas year after year. Such was the case with the wraparound cover for the 1984 W. R. Grace annual report showing the skyline of new York at dusk, looking north from 42 nd Street, with the Grace building in the foreground crowned by its logo. (Incidentally, it was the only type on the front cover, to indicate it was Grace's report.) It was a *tour de force* requiring three different photographic sessions to achieve the perfect picture. Much of Tscherny's success is attributed to Sonia (who is not a graphic designer) for her invaluable ability to distinguish good from bad and right from wrong. Tscherny admits that his own eyes are more accurately attuned to the "art within commonplace things" because of Sonia's keen perceptions and sensitivity. "Indeed, nothing leaves the office without her seeing it."

Tscherny's approach is neither about conceit nor surface. Graphics are used to enhance content, not to decorate or hide it. Philip Meggs wrote that Tscherny's process is one of "selection," a choice of appropriate tools to convey a client's message. Jerome Snyder wrote that "[he] strongly believes that the designer is the creator of his own visual vocabulary and the 'recycled' form is a denial of that commitment." Yet an equal amount of Tscherny's work is formed by traditional images and icons as it relies on original photography and illustration. In his hands, however, the traditional is afforded new life, while the new is made curiously timeless. This is vividly seen in the 1970 "Art Auction Brunch" program cover that he designed for the New York Society for

Ethical Culture, showing how the disparate ideas of art and breakfast are wittily combined using contemporary and classic symbols as one seamlessly evocative image. About this process, he says, "One plus one equals three . . . Expressing more with less is a challenge which, if successful, gives me great satisfaction."

Tscherny's approach defies strict categorization, though after viewing the vast amount of graphic material he has produced, his recipe for successful communications can be characterized by three principal ingredients: a subtle, yet subversively impish, sense of humor; a refined, yet playful, typography ("In typography I strive for legibility and readability—except when I don't"); and last, but most critical, a genius for transforming decidedly complex problems into disarmingly simple solutions.

Silas Rhodes best characterized Tscherny when he wrote that the work is "elegant but never chic, serious but never pretentious, disciplined but never dull, his posters, annual reports, etc., delight the eye and revive the spirit. They shatter once and for all the myth of the incompatibility of commercial enterprise and graphic integrity. As a designer for the highest echelons in American industry, Tscherny reveals how problems in graphic communication may be solved without the loss of aesthetic sensibility. At once free and daring, his work becomes the most classical."



1992 年大师系列展览的一部分：
一个幻灯片讲座的广告。

*A part of master's exhibition in 1992 :
A poster of a lecture by slides*

印制《大师系列：Tscherny在视觉艺术博物馆》一书引言

在很多年前的一篇文章里，我已表达了对George Tscherny工作的尊敬之情。他作为一流前沿设计师的时间之长，使我对他更加尊敬，也让我觉得不该多说太多。而下面是我必须说的：

一直以来，美国平面设计被批评为缺乏美国风格。设计作品太过于依赖欧洲根源，太为未被消化的美术作品的影响所累，太急于反映变化的时间与潮流。美国平面设计不是因它的庸俗而被嘲笑，就是被认定是有意无意的抄袭。

有意思的是，有一个来自欧洲落后地区的移民，却被认作是过去十年里其作品发展了真正的美国风格的几个设计家之一。

在George Tscherny的作品中，人们发现流行艺术上升到它的最高点。美国的生活方

式，表现在我们对爵士乐的喜爱，对乡村音乐的热情，对节奏和酷态的好感等等，我们的起伏的渴望及我们不加思索的慷慨都可以被巧妙地用于平面设计之中去。

优雅而不赶时髦，严肃而不矫饰，有板有眼却不枯燥，他设计的海报，年刊等作品愉悦双眼，振奋精神。这让顾客公司与设计者之间的分歧彻底消失。作为为美国工业上层公司服务的设计者，Tscherny展现了解决图片展示中的问题而不失其美学特质的才能。自由而大胆使他的设计成为经典。

Tscherny的工作与他所得到的、来自多种类型顾客的赞扬完全相称，他在美国国内及国外也得到一致的公认。他在几个方面还需在此给予高度评价。

在他的海报艺术中，他把美国海报广告艺术从陈腐中拯救出来，并使之达到以前只有欧洲广告才能达到的卓越高度。他在创

造公司形象和商标过程中运用印刷标识的办法是全新的和可信的。在他的目录和其他邮件设计中，他的设计方法不局限于直观表现。一句话，Tscherny作为设计师虽然主要为商业广告来设计方案，但是他所运用的方法却使其设计清楚、准确又极具欣赏魅力，成为我们视觉享受之佳作。

*Folio Four, May 1963

在视觉艺术馆中展出的艺术大师作品系列，1992

Masters Series Exhibition at the Visual Arts Museum, 1992

