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Alexander
Gelman



设计新视点丛书

亚历山大·格尔曼的平面设计

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亚历山大·格尔曼的平面设计

当我们怀着奇怪厌恶的心情回顾过去二十年由电脑引发的平面设计时，亚历山大·格尔曼是我们想到的那一代中少数几个没有失去光彩的设计师之一。当成百上千的“PHOTOSHOP”软件使用精英们在先进的电脑技术帮助下，用“加亮”和“变灰”做武器狂轰滥炸的时候，格尔曼仍然专注于使用更传统的电脑设备——他的大脑。

当我在日本工作时，第一次在设计杂志上见到格尔曼的作品。画面是一盏抽象的灯和野蜂的图案。让我觉得奇怪而引起我注意的是，解说中说他是一位年轻设计师。我以为是我的日语阅读能力的问题，因为从作品的深度和表现的技巧来看，作者应是一位年龄较大的人。

几年以后，当我即将第一次与他见面时，我预想我会见到一位留着灰白长发和胡子的人。而令我吃惊的是所见到的与我预料的相反——一位基本上没有毛发的人。这是我对格尔曼的哲学——“消减冗余”有了初次的认识。

当我观看格尔曼的大部分作品时，我首先想到的是GESTALT心理学的可视试验品：我不断感到好像自己的某种认知能力或笨拙正被测试。

格尔曼曾对我说，大脑好比肌肉。他喜欢让他的大脑保持着高强度的锻炼。格尔曼的设计经常让我的大脑遭受刺痛，让我们也得到锻炼——使我们的大脑处于更快乐与健康的状态。

约翰·梅达

麻省理工学院媒体实验室副总监

麻省理工学院设计与电脑副教授

When we look back at the past 20 years of computer-inspired graphic design with odd disgust, Alexander Gelman stands out as one of the very few untarnished designers of that generation. While thousands of elite photoshop warriors powered their glitter bombs and blur grenades with the latest computers, Gelman was concentrating on using a more traditional computation device -- his mind.

I first encountered the work of Gelman in a design periodical while I was working in Japan. The images were of a minimal lamp and an abstract bumblebee pattern. I think that the first thing that struck me as odd was that the caption said he was a young designer. I had taken this as some mistake in my ability to read Japanese as the depth and skill of the work pointed to someone much older.

Years later when I was to first meet him, I had expected someone with long, gray hair and a beard. I was very surprised to meet quite the opposite -- a man with no hair to speak of. This was my first introduction to Gelman's philosophy of 'subtraction.'

As I look at Gelman's body of work, the first thing that comes to mind is the visual experiments of Gestalt psychology; I constantly feel as though I am being tested for some perceptual skills or ineptitudes.

Gelman once told me that the brain is a muscle and he likes to keep his own brain highly exercised. The way that Gelman's designs often inflict pain on my brain signal to me that he is making us exercise as well -- helping our own brains to live happier and healthier lives.

John Maeda

Associate Director, MIT Media Lab

Associate Professor of Design and Computation, MIT









“设计机器”公司的从无到有

当格尔曼告诉我他想“做一切有可能的事情”时，对他不断加深的景仰是促使我加入“设计机器”公司的一个主要原因。他通过极为广泛而丰富的体验来实现他的设计生命：他向大学生授课，撰文写书，作公开演讲，担任评判及在委员会中任职，在画廊和博物馆展出他的作品，管理他自己的公司，创造新的字体，他把所有这些都作为一种享受和松弛。他对“设计机器”公司发展方向的态度也近乎同样的彻底。督促我们的小公司努力在商业活动，个人作品，纯设计研究和试验各方面达到新的平衡。我觉得自己很幸运，因为格尔曼想做一切有可能的事，我现在自己也能尝试所有的事情。无所不能的感觉实在太棒了。

格尔曼个人的设计理念“消减冗余”是一句奇妙的隽语，它的意思包括什么也不做。当他看了我的一件新作品后会说“太多刻意的设计了”，并且马上给我指出每一处不必要的装饰。所有不需要或太多的元素，直到什么也不剩下除了纯粹的概念本身和支撑它的最精简的载体结构。“什么是最少的所需信息，它能够以最丰富的方式传递一种概念？”这是“消减冗余”提出的问题。知道何时何处点到即止并不容易。格尔曼自己每次总是小心翼翼地遵循给出的只比“无”多一点。因为他精明地发现观者的思想会填充每一处空隙。这样做的结果是，又一次珍奇完美自制的实践和又一件非常引人入胜的作品。格尔曼这样用“无”的力量来克制每一处“有”是他独特设计智慧的实证。

戈兰·莱温

纽约“设计机器”公司互动媒体总监

P6-7 格尔曼与 KAORU SATO 在“设计机器”公司进行“消减冗余”项目，2001

P6-7 Gelman and Kaoru Sato at Design Machine working on "Subtraction", 2001

P8 “新！1999”，“设计机器”公司新年贺卡，采用美国超市的视觉语言，1998

P8 New! 1999

The New Year's holiday greeting from Design Machine appropriates the visual language of the American supermarket, 1998

Everything from Nothing at Design Machine

One of the chief reasons I joined Design Machine was the respect I developed for Gelman when he told me that he wanted to "do everything". His approach to a life of design is admirably comprehensive: he teaches university students, writes articles and books, gives public lectures, serves on juries and boards, exhibits his work in galleries and museums, manages his own company, and creates new typefaces as a way of relaxing from it all. His attitude towards the direction of Design Machine has been similarly exhaustive, pushing our small company to strike a novel balance between commercial work, personal work, and pure design research and experimentation. I'm fortunate: because Gelman wants to do everything, I get to explore everything, now, too. It's great to feel so unlimited. The wonderful irony is that Subtraction, Gelman's personal philosophy of design, involves doing nothing. "Too much design!" he will declare upon seeing one of my new pieces, taking direct aim at every unnecessary decoration, and every superfluous or redundant element, until there is nothing left but the pure idea itself and the most lightweight structure to support it. "What is the least information necessary to communicate an idea in the richest possible way?" This is the question to which Subtraction is addressed. And knowing when and where to stop is no small matter. Carefully providing next to nothing himself, Gelman astutely recognizes that the viewer's mind will fill in every gap. The result is a rare and masterfully restrained practice, and a tremendously engaging body of work. That Gelman thus restrains the tide of everything by summoning the force of nothing is a testament to the paradox of his unique design wisdom.

Golan Levin

Director of Interactive Media,

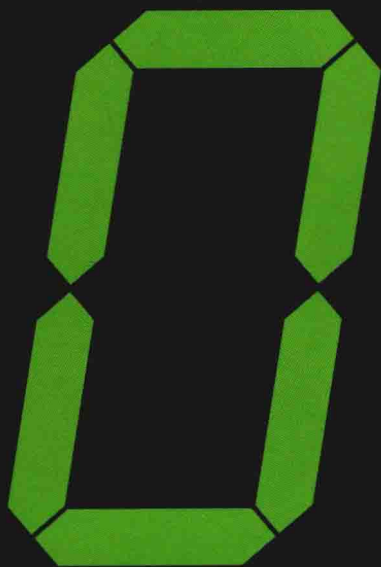
Design Machine, New York

P11 "设计机器"公司新年贺卡, 1999

P11 New Year's holiday greeting from Design Machine, 1999

P12-13 "设计机器"公司品牌项目进度表, 1999

P12-13 Design Machine process chart for branding projects, 1999



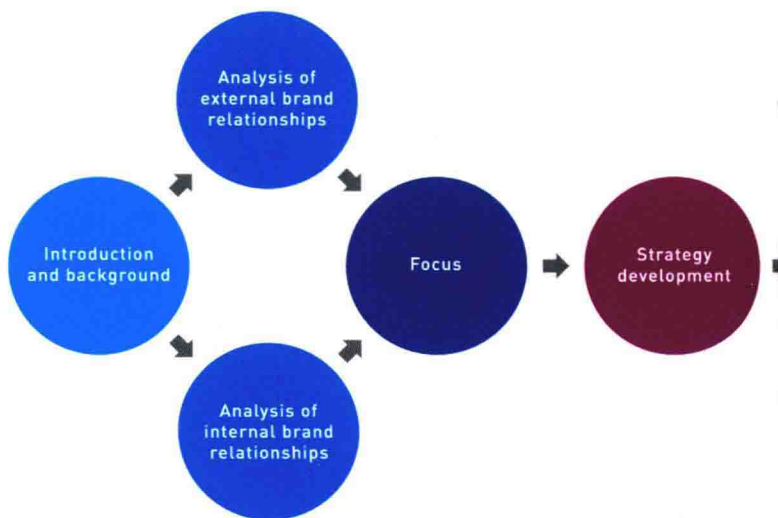
Design Machine

The process

(corporate brand identity projects)

New York

1999



1 First, we consider possibilities for the project and **absorb information** about the client's company and the industry itself.

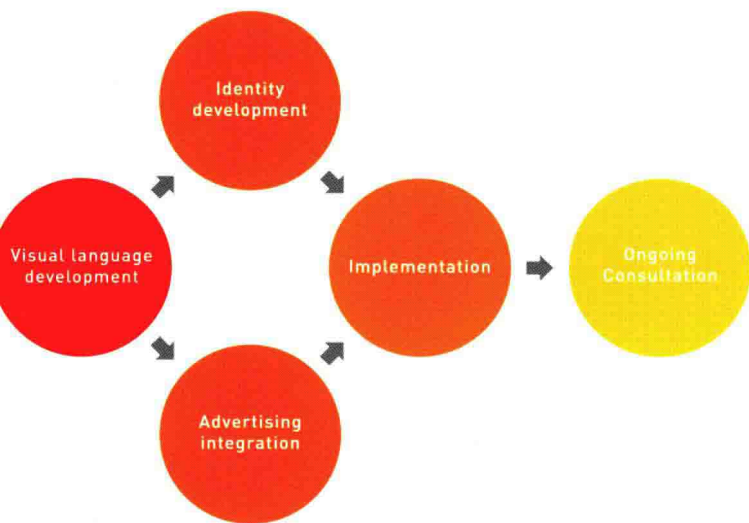
2 We **evaluate** the client's position in the market: its perceived **strengths and weaknesses** vis-à-vis competitors; its actual and potential market.

3 At the same time we investigate how **sub-brands** relate to each other within the company—their **structure** of differentiation and subordination.

4 Based on compiled information and analysis, we identify **precise** problems that reveal the **direction** for further strategy development.

5 We define a long-term attitude for the company with its visual communication and establish an attitude.

6 We develop a language of visual communication and serve as a visual communication.



position
the industry
...

that reflects the
flexible **base** for
s.

6 We use this language to develop a visual **identity system** that communicates the company's message to customers, clients, vendors and internal staff.

6 At the same time, we use the language to develop **advertising** directions that are visually and conceptually integrated with the company's new identity.

7 We design and **produce** all the elements of the new identity system and **launch** the first integrated advertising campaign.

8 We help to maintain, **update and coordinate** the established brand identity and its elements.



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