

THE 27 CHICAGO DESIGNERS AT 50

In an elegantly festive mid-September dinner party in Chicago, the 50th anniversary of the Twenty-Seven Chicago Designers was duly celebrated. In attendance were present members, past members, wives and husbands of present and past members, and assorted friends and well-wishers. And capping a program awash with visual and verbal nostalgia, copies of Volume 36 of the organization's core publication were distributed to the dinner guests.

As anniversaries go these days, an organization's first half-century is not a real big deal. After all, our own youngish nation celebrated its second century a full decade ago, and the weekend super bash that marked the centennial of New York City's "Lady Liberty" lingers still in our memories of the summer of '86. But while the family nature of the Twenty-Seven's celebration attracted neither fireworks nor tall ships, its accomplishments in that period do merit an appreciative salute from the larger design community.

For openers, this organization published the first of what has turned out to be a durable, proliferating breed: the graphic arts SOURCEBOOK. In its 50-year span, there have been thirty-six volumes (one every 1.388 years on average), all produced in quantities sufficient to meet each designer member's own mailing list needs, plus substantial overruns for sale in selected bookstores. In 1940, for example, the price at Kroch's and Brentanno's for Volume 5 was a bargain at \$2.50. And Volume 36, at \$22.50, isn't bad either, as contemporary art books go.

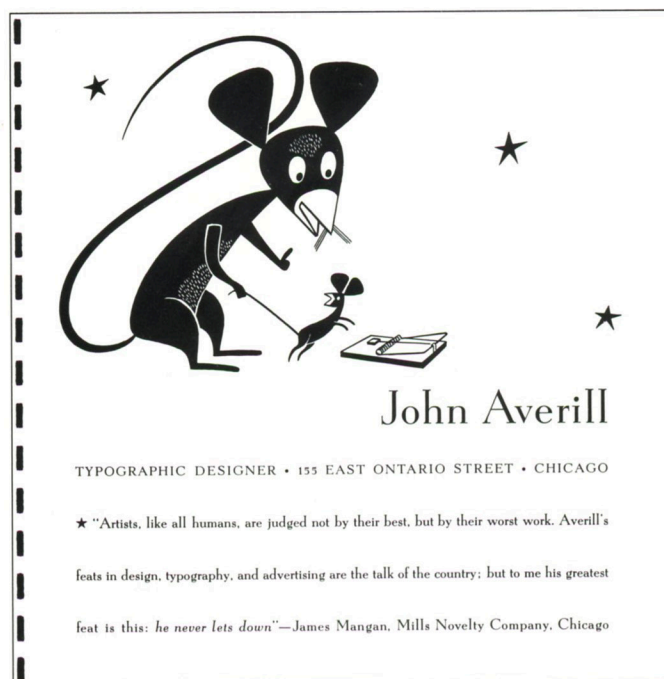
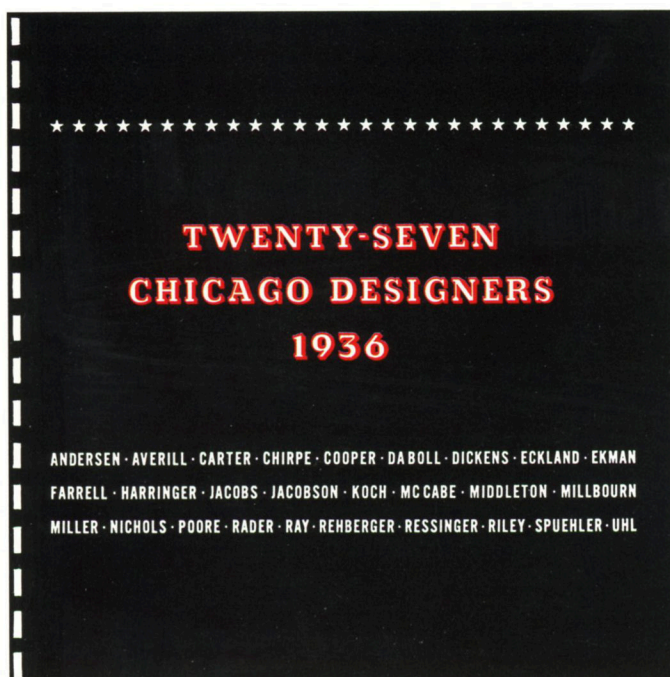
Second, the founding Twenty-Seven somewhat brashly listed themselves as "Designers" at a time when most of their fellow practitioners still felt more comfortable (and undoubtedly less challenged) by calling themselves "Commercial Artists" or "Advertising Artists."

And certainly not least was the resolution of the Twenty-Seven to maintain their independence as designers in these exercises in cooperation. The organizing premise was—and is—to produce an impressive graphic forum in which to showcase the work of twenty-seven *individual designers* in one appealing collection.

The foreword of Volume Eleven (1947) reiterated the goal forthrightly: "These designers have come together not to form an organization, but to produce work representative of the creative ability to be found in the graphic arts of Chicago. Each designer planned and produced his own insert, and positions in the book were determined alphabetically. It is the hope of the participants in this enterprise that this book will serve as a means of better acquainting those interested with the work of Chicago designers—enabling them to distinguish between the different designers and their special fields of work—and that it will bring more business to the designers and better design to business?"

That particular mission view—from decades back—works well for design and designers today.

—Rhodes Patterson





Cover of the first 27 Designers book, published in 1936. Printed on uncoated papers, the book was 8" x 8" with a plastic comb binding. Each designer produced a four-page insert, and these were bound in alphabetical sequence, a form that has been continued over the fifty years.

Below, left to right: Title page of the book.

First page of John Averill's insert.

Opening page of Oswald Cooper's insert.

Opening page of Elmer Jacobs' insert.

As an experiment: **15** *Serifs applied to stems of similar weight to test serif influence in letter design*

The examples are letters without curves, without much accuracy, without enough care by the router!

By Oswald Cooper of Berlich & Cooper, Typographers, Chicago

MALAY *Semi-Serif — "Not letters, merely the skeletons of letters." Idea: To add serifs and see what we get. Usually, weights were altered a little, which spoils the test but makes the catalog more comprehensible.*

Latin Antique, now obsolete, had rudimentary serifs. Dilliant cousin is serif of National Oldstyle (Goudy). Without serifs, but seeming almost to have them, are Stellar (Middleton) and Ultra Modern (Mechanics). **MEANT**

THANK *2* *Copperplate Engender's serif shows some following hooks — engraver needs it to finish ends of lines. Not inspirational to designers generally, but Bonagura used variation of it in heading for American Magazine.*

Dalla Robbia, now deprecated by its designer, T.M. Cleland, has serif influenced by Renaissance lettering. Design has had vitality enough to gain it place in four editions of ATF specimen book. **3** **HEAVE**

E L M E R J A C O B S

THE 27 CHICAGO DESIGNERS

ORIGINAL 27

Norman Andersen*
 John Averill*
 Joseph Carter*
 Rodney Chirpe*
 Oswald Cooper*
 Ray Daboll*
 Robert Sidney Dickens
 Everett Eckland*
 Stanley Ekman
 Harry Farrell*
 Henry Harringer*
 Elmer Jacobs*
 Egbert Jacobson*
 Karl Peter Koch*
 Ed McCabe
 R. Hunter Middleton*
 M. Vaughn Millbourn
 Edgar Miller
 Dale Nichols
 Taylor Poore*
 Doug Rader*
 Bert Ray*
 Gustav Rehberger
 Paul Ressinger*
 Frank Riley*
 Ernst Spuehler*
 Earl Uhl*

CURRENT 27

David Anderson '82
 Jeff Barnes '82
 Hayward R. Blake '62
 Ron Bradford '75
 Bobby Cochran '86
 Robert Lee Dickens '72
 Joseph Michael Essex '79
 Joseph Godlewski '86
 John Greiner '82
 Susan Jackson Keig '75
 Wendy Pressley Jacobs '82
 Robert & William Kaulfuss '62
 Diane Kavelaras '82
 James L. Lienhart '70
 John Massey '69
 Bill McDowell '84
 Franklin McMahon '50
 Carol Naughton '82
 Art Paul '70
 Norman Perman '57
 Henry Robertz '67
 Randall R. Roth '59
 Greg Samata '83
 Don Strandell '84
 Peter Teubner '79
 Rick Valicenti '86
 Jack Weiss '76

OTHER ALUMNI

Franz Altschuler '57
 Carl Anderson '51
 Robert Askren*
 Bruce Beck '55
 Ed Bedno '65
 Rainey Bennett '47
 Ed Boehmer '39
 Charles W. Bracken '51
 David L. Burke '69
 John F. Carafoli '72
 David Chapman*
 Francis Chase '38
 Jay Conley*
 John Dolby '82
 Gene Douglas*
 Pat Dypold '77
 Cliffe Eitel*
 R. Vale Faro '47
 Joseph Feher '38
 A. William Fleming '44
 Morton Goldsholl '49
 James Hayes '48
 James Higa '68
 Edward Hughes '69
 Joseph Hutchcroft '79
 M. Martin Johnson '37
 E. Willis Jones*

Steve Keller '82
 Larry Klein '57
 Elsa Kula '57
 Janet LaSalle '60
 Joe LaViolette '51
 David Lawrence*
 Charles MacMurray '70
 Lindell Mabrey '57
 Gordon Martin*
 Don Marvine '71
 John McKee '49
 Everett McNear*
 James Minnick '68
 Phoebe Moore*
 Ken Olson '43
 Rhodes Patterson '68
 Joe Pearson '53
 Park Phipps*
 Herbert Pinzke '57
 Weimer Pursell '38
 Phillip Reed*
 Carl Regehr*
 Mike Reid '69
 David Root '71
 DeForrest Sackett '39
 Robert Sinnott*
 Willard Smythe '37
 Fred Steffen '55
 Edward Sullivan*
 John Temple '51
 Robert Vogeles '79
 Lute Wassman '63
 Wayne Webb '69

* Deceased

Photograph by Rhodes Patterson



Guests at the 50th Anniversary dinner viewed a display of the books.

Right: Center spread of Egbert Jacobson's insert, 1937.

Center spread of R. Hunter Middleton's insert, 1937.

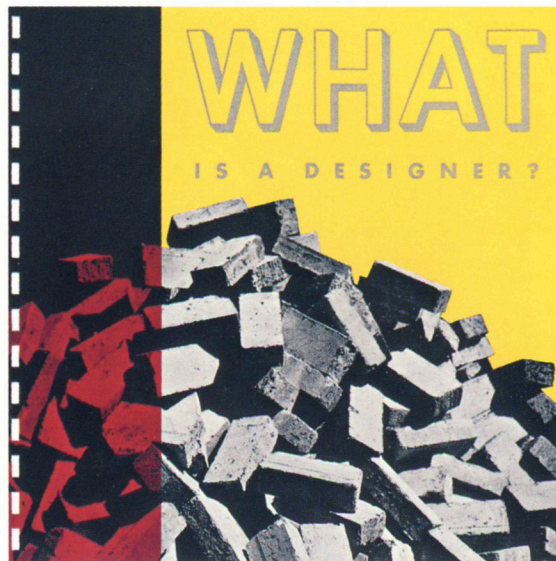
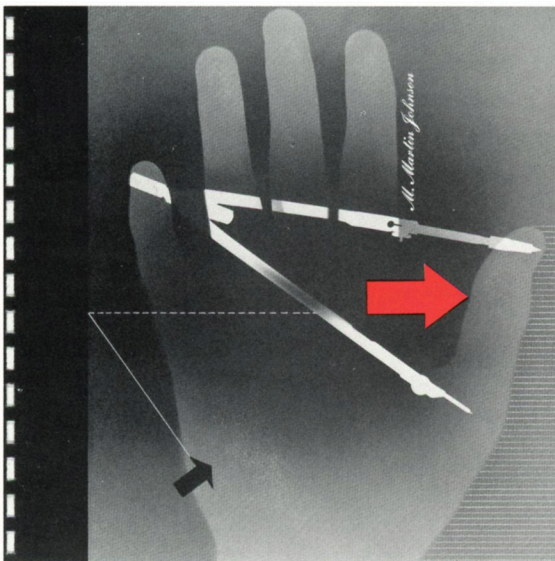
Opening page of M. Martin Johnson's insert, 1939.

Page of Bert Ray's insert, 1939.



Permanent International Package Exhibit and reception room in the New York office of Container Corporation of America, Egbert G. Jacobson, Art Director

<p>Tempo Light Tempo Light <i>Italic</i> Tempo Medium Tempo Medium <i>Italic</i> Tempo Bold Tempo Bold Condensed Tempo Heavy Tempo Heavy <i>Italic</i> TEMPO INLINE</p> <p>Eden Light Eden Bold</p> <p>UMBERA</p>	<p>Nicolas Jensen <small>des. by E. G. Jacobson</small> Nicolas Jensen <i>Italic</i> Nicolas Jensen Bold Nicolas Jensen Bold <i>Italic</i> Nicolas Jensen Open</p> <p>Cameo Cameo <i>Italic</i></p> <p>Magfair <i>Cursive</i></p> <p>Ludlow Black Ludlow Black <i>Italic</i></p>
<p>LUDLOW TYPEFACES • DESIGNED AND DRAWN BY R. HUNTER MIDDLETON • DIRECTOR OF TYPEFACE DESIGN</p>	
<p>Garamond Light Garamond Light <i>Italic</i> Garamond Bold Garamond Bold <i>Italic</i></p> <p>DELPHIAN</p> <p>Karnak Light Karnak Intermediate Karnak Medium Karnak Black Karnak Black Condensed Karnak Obelisk</p>	<p>Stellar Light Stellar Bold</p> <p>Mandate</p> <p>Bodoni Modern Bodoni Modern <i>Italic</i> Bodoni Black Bodoni Black <i>Italic</i> Bodoni Campanile</p> <p>The Ladjetette</p>



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Page from Stanley Ekman's insert, 1942.

Page from Joseph Feher's insert, 1942.

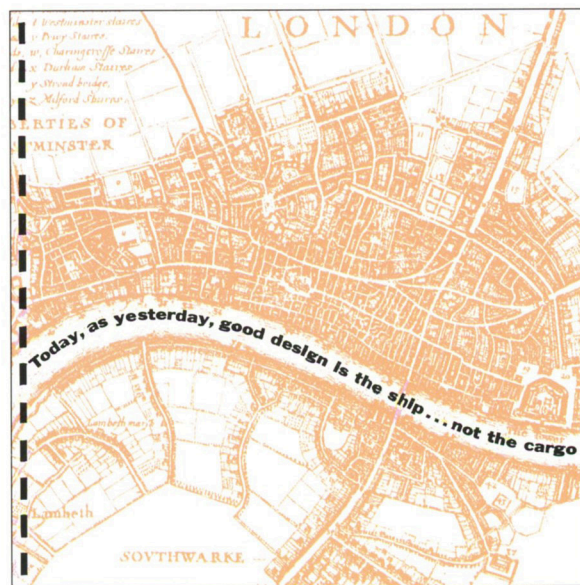
Opening page of Joe Pearson's insert, 1953.

Opening page of Charles W. Bracken's insert, 1953.

Right: Spread from Phoebe Moore's insert, 1957.

Spread from Gordon Martin's insert, 1958.

Spread from Bruce Beck's insert, 1958.



packaging
folders/booklets
advertising design
editorial design
promotional design

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Design for the Carriage Trade

GORDON MARTIN
448 GRANT PLACE
CHICAGO 14
LINCOLN 9-5422

a designer wears many hats; one day that of a specialist in packaging;
the next that of an expert in corporate identity; then the one of a
designer of printing, or books, or annual reports, or exhibitions.
Each of these activities is based upon the same talent—
the ability to see a problem in relation to a client's needs,
and to solve it in terms meaningful to the public.

BRUCE BECK DESIGN DEarborn 2-3333 203 West Wacker Drive, Chicago 6, Illinois

THE 27 CHICAGO DESIGNERS

Page from Hayward R. Blake's insert, 1962.

Opening and second page from Robert Sidney Dickens' insert, 1965. The format had changed from the square of earlier books to a horizontal, 10 x 8½, perfect bound.

Right: Cover of the 1986 book.

Page from Susan Jackson Keig's insert.

Spread from Jeff Barnes' insert.

Page from Rick Valicenti's insert.

Page from Norman Perman's insert.

The current book is 10 x 8½, perfect bound. As in the previous books, the individual designers arranged for their own typography, color separation and printing. To achieve continuity, all of the inserts were printed on Ikonolux Gloss 100lb. Text; the divider sheets with biographies and photographs of the designers were printed on Ikonofix Matt Color 75lb. Text, Red.



Best orange juice package / Designed by Nature



Second best package / Designed by Dickens

