
PRACTICE

In Identity

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Logos

For many graphic designers, the logo is the ultimate expression of graphic design—a literal, figurative, or abstract icon, or a compelling wordmark that represents a product or organization and makes it instantly identifiable. Logos by themselves can't tell the complete story or describe all the attributes of a product or organization; they are beholden to the behaviors of who or what they represent and the associations triggered by their reputation. Logos are also rarely deployed alone; rather, they are accompanied by a complementary visual system (an identity program) that enhances and supports its presence. Nonetheless, there is something infinitely satisfying about a strong, memorable, innovative, and clever logo—especially one that can stand on its own.

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Identity Programs

Building a visual language that can serve as an encompassing identity for a product or organization requires the definition of colors, typefaces, and other graphic elements and their integration in an expandable system that is consistent but adaptable to different communication needs and mediums. Identity programs range from the sparingly simple, defining a small range of colors and applications of the logo, to infinitely expandable systems, with multiple versions of a logo or a comprehensive library of imagery and graphics that acts as a kit of parts that can be assembled at the discretion of designers or vendors inheriting the program. Neither direction is better than the other, and both require a disciplined application to achieve consistency and relevance.

to *PeaceNews* magazine editor Hugh Brock. "I drew myself: the representative of an individual in despair, with hands, palm outstretched, outwards and downwards in the manner of Goya's peasant before the firing squad. I formalised the drawing into a line and put a circle round it." Holtom presented this design to DAC, which embraced it as its rallying visual for the march, and afterwards CND adopted it as its official logo, putting it front and center as it hosted other rallies to Aldermaston in subsequent years. Social-minded graphic designer Ken Garland

designed many of the CND's posters and flyers beginning in 1962, activating the symbol in different ways.

Attending the 1958 rally was Bayard Rustin, an American civil rights activist who is one of the acknowledged connections in bringing the symbol to the United States and separating it from its connections to the CND for use in civil rights demonstrations. It later gained popularity as a symbol to protest the Vietnam War and then became associated with the hippie subculture. Gradually, however, it became a symbol simply

for peace. Because the CND never registered the symbol as a trademark, it has become the property of everyone, and in opening that ownership the symbol has gained its true strength, made ever more prevalent and meaningful as people render it in different ways and imbue it with their own personalities.

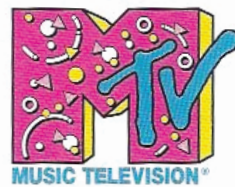


REINTERPRETATIONS, APPROPRIATIONS, AND MANIFESTATIONS OF THE PEACE SYMBOL / Photographers, from left to right: Mika Hiironniemi, CarbonNYC, Jayel Aheram, aturkus, cogdogblog, jeffpearce, dental ben, hashmil, eyeliam, normanack, NatalieMaynor, Clarita / All images uploaded to Flickr under a Creative Commons Attribution license

MTV

Working with John Lack, the executive vice president of Warner Satellite Entertainment Company (WASEC), Robert Pittman, a successful radio programmer, helped establish a groundbreaking cable television channel: MTV, the music channel. Fred Seibert, a former jazz record producer and radio station promotion coordinator, was hired by Pittman to oversee the identity of the channel. Seibert turned to his lifelong friend Frank Olinsky, who had just established Manhattan Design with two partners, Pat Gorman and Patty Rogoff, to create the logo. The process was remarkably collaborative: Rogoff first drew the big *M* and worked with Gorman to determine its perspective; then Gorman suggested a pointy *TV* to its side, which Olinsky took and spray-painted it. Meanwhile, the *M* was subjected to productive tomfoolery, with the partners rendering it in bricks, polka dots, and zebra stripes, and suggesting the logo could be all these things.

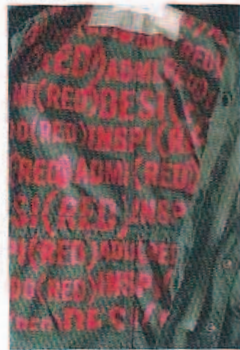
Seibert presented the mutating logo to Pittman and Lack, and met resistance to both the solution and the firm behind it. Seibert was asked to hire a big-name designer like Push Pin Studios [168](#) or Lou Dorfsman [173](#) to do the logo. He did, but as the process extended and time became a problem, Manhattan Design's was approved. Seibert next focused on the station identifications for broadcast, which Pittman equaled to radio jingles, instantly recognizable and memorable. The first pool of collaborators comprised production houses like Broadcast Arts, Colossal Pictures, and Perpetual Motion Pictures, who created surreal ten-second animations that gave life to the MTV logo. For MTV's top-of-the-hour identification, illustrator Candy Kugel at Perpetual took the still images of Neil Armstrong's moon landing (available in the public domain) and colored the MTV logo on top of the American flag. On August 1, 1981, at 12:01 a.m., to the unmistakable sound of MTV's guitar riff, this image launched a new generation of viewers, artists, designers, and citizens.



(RED)

In January 2006, Bono, the lead singer of U2, and Bobby Shriver, a philanthropist-cum-producer-cum-city councilmember, launched (RED), a new business model, to help raise awareness about the AIDS epidemic in Africa and to provide a sustainable flow of money for the Global Fund, the international financing organization that invests the money it receives to fight AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria. (RED) partners with some of the most visible brands that license the (PRODUCT) RED brand to market specific products or services, with a percentage or a set amount of the profits going to the Global Fund. Apple has released (RED) editions of its iPod Nano and iPod Shuffle, Converse has launched a collection of Chuck Taylor All-Star shoes made from canvas sourced in Africa, and the Gap has created a (RED) collection of T-shirts and accessories. Marrying together all the products and services is a simple visual device created by Wolff Olins . 206.

For the main brand—the name was selected because red is the color of emergency, which certainly applies to AIDS—RED is rendered in a sans serif typeset within parentheses. For the license brand, (PRODUCT) RED, the logo of the partner is placed within the parentheses and RED becomes a superscript; the combination is meant to be read as, for example, “Apple to the power of RED.” The simplicity of the identity barely hints at the complexity of Wolff Olins’s task: finding a way to create a new, strong brand for (RED) that could be integrated with some of the best-guarded and most carefully developed brands, turning untouchable assets like Starbucks green and American Express blue to red. While consumerism and philanthropy still remain an oxymoron, (RED) demonstrates, through action and design, a possible blueprint for their convergence...well, a (RED) print for their convergence.



Walker Art Center

From 1965 to 1995, the Minneapolis Walker Art Center had employed a series of sans serif type-

faces—Univers 372, Helvetica 373, Franklin Gothic 370, and DIN 377—as its logo, and its overall identity displayed, as design writer Peter Hall once described it, an “unwavering adherence to the clinical International Style.” In 1990, Laurie Haycock Makela joined the Walker as design director, replacing Mildred Friedman, who had held the position for 20 years, and in 1995 she introduced a remarkably different, and distinct, identity based on a new type family, Walker. Designed by Matthew Carter in collaboration with Haycock and her team, Walker is, at its barest, a sans serif just like its predecessors, but the full typographic system provides a kit of parts that can render innumerable permutations: Five styles of “snap-on” serifs can be attached to each character and selectively added to the top or bottom, left or right, or all. It also included variants for heavy rules at the top, bottom, or both; a range of connectors to create custom ligatures; and, to top it all off, italic versions of each variant. Taking the place of a typical logo, the Walker typeface unifies all the materials of the museum and gives it a highly individual identity. It also established the Walker Art Center’s in-house design studio as one of the most innovative.



1965

WALKER ART CENTER

1971

Walker Art Center

1985

Walker Art Center

1977

Walker Art Center

1990

PREVIOUS WALKER ART CENTER LOGOS / USA, 1965–1990



THE SPACE BETWEEN THE LETTERS, Moira Cullen for Eye magazine reprint / Laurie Haycock Makela, Deborah Littlejohn / USA, 1995

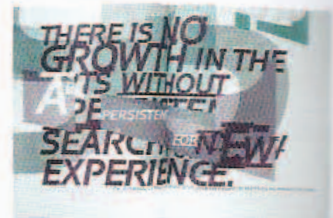
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ&ÆŒ
 HEMBME1234567890
 THE WALKER FONT
 CONTAINS FIVE DIFFERENT
 “SNAP-ON” SERIFS AND THREE
 JOINING STROKES:

⋮ H H H ⋮ H H H
 ⋮ H H H ⋮ H H H
 ⋮ H H H ⋮ H H H

WALKER TYPEFACE / Matthew Carter / USA, 1995



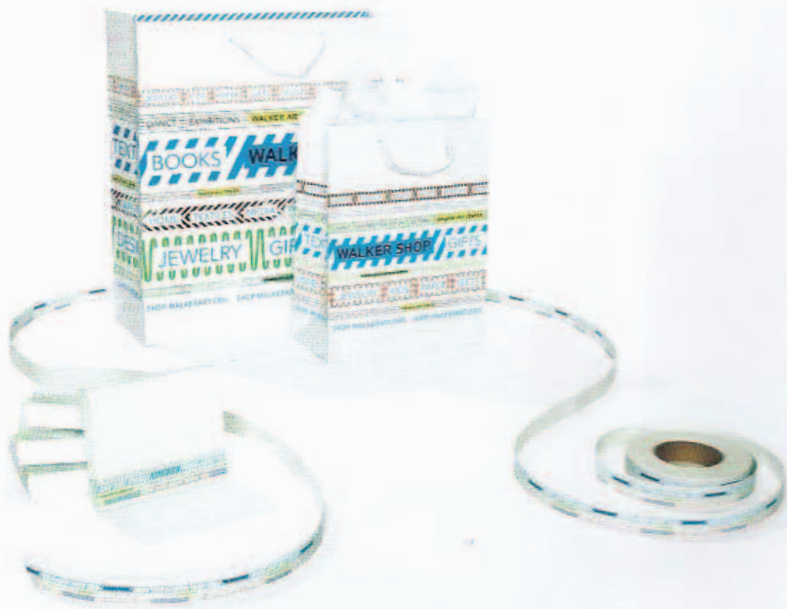
DIANA THATER EXHIBIT INVITATION / Matt Eller / USA, 1997



WALKER DESIGN NOW INVITATION / Laurie Haycock Makela / USA, 1996

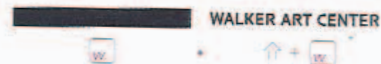
In 1998, design educator and writer Andrew Blauvelt took on the role of design director and further developed the design studio and its output, overseeing the revitalization of the museum's identity in preparation for its momentous expansion in 2005. Still foregoing an institutional logo and looking to extend the viability of its previous approach, Blauvelt and designer Chad Kloepfer designed Walker Expanded, an expansive range of vertical striping rendered in different patterns and motifs, with bright colors that hold a series of words that, together and only when applied, form the identity. Set mostly in Avenir with select words rendered in Carter's Walker, the system is again typographic, but instead of being built around styles like italic or bold, it is arranged around groups of words and

patterns and motifs. So, for example, the Peer-to-Peer "weight" includes language from within the institution, like *Film/Video*, a department name, while the Public Address "weight" contains more typical language, like *movies*. The system is complex, and it requires conscious manipulation from the designers—who benefit from a font developed by Eric Olson, who runs Process Type Foundry in Minneapolis and is a former designer at the Walker's design studio, that makes the combination of words and patterns more easily accessible. Instead of simply replacing it, Walker Expanded builds on the legacy and innovation of its former flexible identity and creates a new language—literally, visually, and metaphorically.



SHOPPING BAGS, BOXES, AND TAPE / Andrew Blauvelt, Chad Kloepfer / USA, 2005

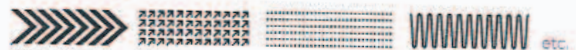
Step 1 Select a font and choose a word by typing the corresponding character



Step 2 Delete space bar to overlap elements



Step 3 Choose a pattern



Step 4 Overlap the two lines by setting the leading to zero



Step 5 Repeat to create a line and customize the color



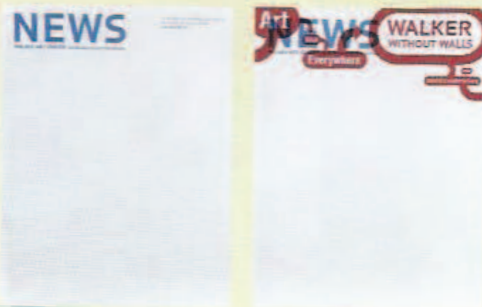
CUSTOM FONT USAGE INSTRUCTIONS / Andrew Blauvelt, Chad Kloepfer, Eric Olson / USA, 2005

No Walls, No Problem

During 2004, while the Walker's main building was closed for the expansion, the interim "Walker Without Walls" identity was introduced to maintain the visibility of the museum and acknowledge its transition. A standardized system of curves, arrowheads, and bubbles was designed to generate endless variations for short-lived collateral and could also be applied directly over existing collateral.



INTERIM WALL GRAPHICS / Andrew Blauvelt, Alex DeArmond / USA, 2004



ORIGINAL NEWS RELEASE (LEFT) WITH OVERLAID INTERIM IDENTITY / Andrew Blauvelt, Alex DeArmond / USA, 2004



WALL GRAPHICS / Andrew Blauvelt, Chad Kloepfer / USA, 2005

OBAMA '08 PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

On Saturday, February 10, 2007, the junior senator from Illinois, Barack Obama, announced his candidacy for the presidency of the United States at the Old State Capitol building in his state's capital city, Springfield. At the front of the podium and in the glove-covered hands of attendees in the form of placards, the Obama '08 campaign logo was introduced. The glowing blue O with the red and white stripes of the flag

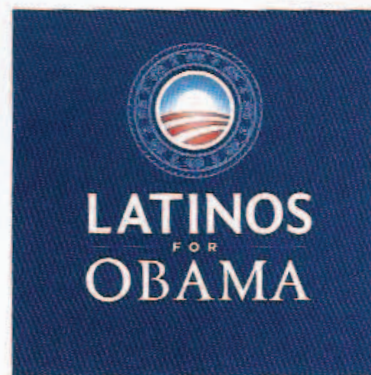
swooping across it to form a horizon was unlike any other presidential campaign logo ever produced. This is neither hubris nor rhetoric: Until that point, campaign logos were always typographic solutions that clumsily attempted to integrate stars and flags. Obama '08 was a simple icon that could stand by itself, no differently than successful consumer brands like Nike, Target, and Apple. The logo was created by Sender LLC,

a Chicago-based design firm headed by Sol Sender, who was approached by motion graphics firm mo/de, which in turn had been contracted by AKP&D Message and Media, the consulting firm of David Axelrod, top campaign advisor to Obama. With two weeks to develop options, Sender and his design team, Andy Keene and Amanda Gentry, created over a dozen logo options, gradually filtering the proposals to two



OBAMA '08 LOGO IN TWO-COLOR VERSION / Sender LLC / USA, 2007

"O" LOGOMARK IN ONE-, TWO- AND FOUR-COLOR VERSIONS / Sender LLC / USA, 2007



EIGHT OUT OF FOURTEEN LOGO APPLICATIONS FOR DIFFERENT SECTORS AND CULTURES OF THE POPULATION / Obama '08 Campaign / USA, 2008

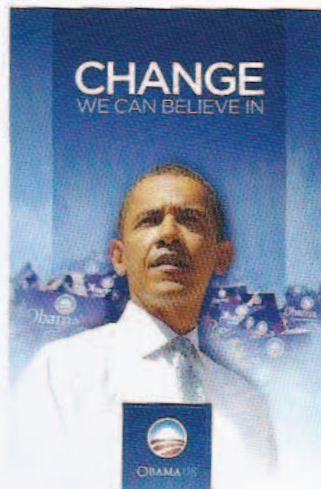
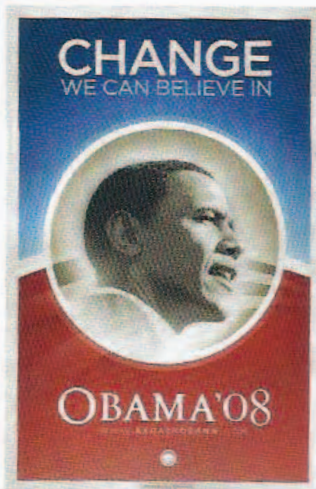
or three viable options, with the *O* rising as the most successful.

Sender delivered the identity assets to the campaign with a set of standards and guidelines to ensure consistency, as different vendors had to manufacture numerous campaign artifacts. He never expected the permutations that made the campaign's identity even more impressive. With John Slabyk as art director and Scott Thomas as director of new media, the campaign developed a broad and cohesive identity

that exploited the simplicity of the logo. To reach and connect with different segments of the population, they adapted the logo in clever ways, whether it was replacing the flag with a lined sheet of paper for students or replacing the *O* with a colored rainbow for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community.

In addition, a cadre of creatives began interpreting the image of Obama himself and what he stood for. The most notable was Shepard Fairey, whose self-published, three-color

portrait of Obama featuring the word *hope* ignited the trend. The campaign later officially commissioned Fairey, as well as Lance Wyman, Jonathan Hoefler, and Scott Hansen, among other artists, to create prints. The logo, meanwhile, at a grassroots level, took on the shape of cookies, muffins, chili dishes, and Halloween pumpkin carvings, generating a contagious creative aura. On Tuesday, November 4, 2008, Barack Obama was elected the 44th president of the United States of America.



CHANGE WE CAN BELIEVE IN POSTERS / Obama '08 Campaign / USA, 2008

POSTERS BY RON ENGLISH IN SAN FRANCISCO / Photo: Flickr user Jef Poskanzer / USA, 2008



POSTERS BY SHEPARD FAIREY IN WASHINGTON, D.C. / Photo: Flickr user Daquella manera / USA, 2008



OBEY LOOK-ALIKE OBAMA POSTER / Photo: Flickr user Jef Poskanzer / USA, 2008



MURAL ON THE SIDE OF THE OBAMA '08 CAMPAIGN HEADQUARTERS IN HOUSTON PAINTED BY AEROSOL WARFARE BASED ON DESIGN BY SHEPARD FAIREY / Photo: Flickr user jetherlot / USA, 2008

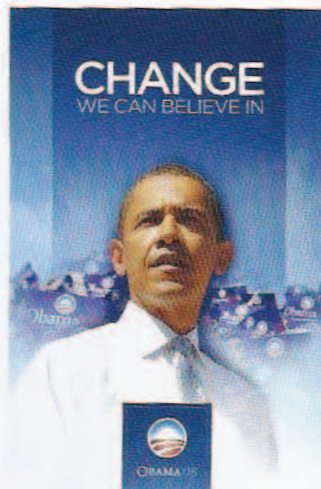
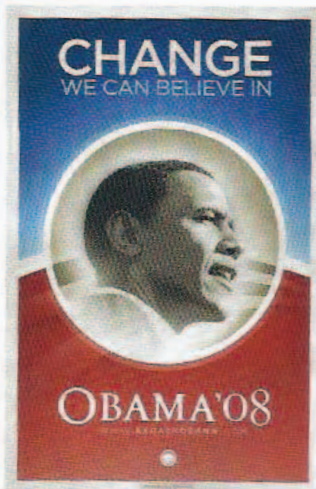
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