THE PLAYFUL CHARACTER OF CREATIVE ALPHABETS

THE CASE OF COVER ART BETWEEN THE 1930s AND THE 1970s

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What links Thomas More to Filippo Tommaso Marinetti? And how is the creativity of alphabets related to the cover art of vinyl records? And yet there is a common thread called lettering, which is variously articulated in the expressiveness of the typographic characters of the artists. There is a bi-planarity present in the letters of the alphabet: that of expression and that of content –signifier and signified meaning, but there is also an arbitrariness that does not connect, in any way, one to the other, the will of an alphabet to exist as an autonomous form of art. Lettering is perhaps the most appropriate area of graphics for experimenting, thinking, inventing, narrating and playing with elementary forms. Letters represent an extreme synthesis of the meanings of nature and of geometry and suggest unusual alphabets, prompting us to invent new stories. From the artistic avant-gardes of the 20th century, the playful revolution of lettering also invested the field of music with cover art. Many records are often first remembered, even more than for their music, for their cover art. The graphic design of the covers, moreover, often offers an intuition, at first glance, of the musical genre of the album and the personality of the artist. Today, the graphic design and the imaginative lettering of record covers have now become recognized as true forms of art.

INTRODUCTION

In all periods of history, the characters of writing and lettering have represented and still represent an essential aspect of culture. However, only in a few rare cases is the name of the authors known for the product realized and their art often remains in the shadows. While the names of the innovators in the classic artistic disciplines of all eras, such as painting, music and literature, are part of the general heritage of knowledge, the names of the creatives of lettering are often forgotten. Only in some rare cases are the authors of works of lettering known, although the influence of writing and typography is constantly present in all fields of human activity. Without writing and typography, exchanges of information, which today seem natural to us in terms of quantity and speed, would not be conceivable.

The association between sign and content of writing belongs to the cultural traditions that over time have established its codes and conventions (Frutiger, 1996); we are aware that there is a tension that arises from the relationship between message and image, amplified by lettering. For this reason, the signifier does not only affect the 'readability', but also the meaning that the reader attributes to the entire text. Just as colors activate certain areas of our perception associated with different emotions depending on the type of chromatic frequency we are dealing with, so, too, do characters and fonts stimulate a similar response by our brain.

The way in which something is written –specifically, the type of lettering used– can evoke in the reader a precise framework of perceptions and orient the message towards a specific emotional response.

When we look at a particular typographical character, we do not stop with the simple act of reading, instead, we interpret it. Some studies have defined this approach as 'cross-modal', that is the receptive capacity of our brain to activate and re-elaborate multiple sensory information with visual reading (Merleau-Ponty, 1965).

Similarly, to all aesthetic and social factors, the ability to translate one's own thought into language, and language into text, and text into emotions, has always been a factor of power, and this means that lettering co-determines the message.

Stability and objectivity, that is, tradition, confidence, elegance, as well as creativity, rebellion and hope are feelings that are solicited by the communicative process and, also thanks to a hyper-development of visuality, today we can approach our typographical heritage in a dynamic and conscious manner.

UTOPIA AND CHANGE: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND THE REVOLUTION OF CHARACTERS

Going back in time, Thomas More, in the first pages of *Utopia*, published in Latin in 1516, presents an alphabet composed of 22 letters called Utopian alphabet, perfect in its geometric forms and intentions for achieving absolute happiness; it was created with the elementary forms of the circle, the square and the triangle. Thomas More, creator of the utopian notion of 'living according to nature', felt the profound need to propose his concepts through a writing composed of expressive letters, capable of adequately representing the principles of his theory.

The idea of dealing with alphabets and lettering capable of highlighting the bi-planarity of the signs of the alphabet starts with a 16th century utopianist: that of the expression and that of the content –signifier and signified meaning– which also declares an arbitrariness that can underline the effects of one on the other.

The strength of writing, in addition to the textual meaning, lies in its 'de-sign', a representation capable of tracing links between the visual and the verbal.

In 1914, almost five hundred years after *Utopia*, *Zang Tumb Tumb*, the literary work of the Italian Futurist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, was published in Milan. In this *poemetto*

inspired by the siege of Adrianople during the Bulgarian-Turkish war, in a mad utopian idea of the conquest of the world and the rejection of conventions, of the exaltation of the struggle and technological progress, the author uses particular printing methods, inserting typographic characters of various sizes, thus creating a visual effect able to carry the reader back to the center of the battle fought in 1912. The text, with a strong visual character, making great use of bold type and italics, is composed of 'words in freedom', a Futurist writing technique disengaged from the literary canons of the time, which provides for the use, furthermore, of onomatopoeic terms suitable to represent in written form explosions and other sounds of warfare.

Utopia perseveres and inspires. From Thomas More to Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, revolutionary thought requires a vigorous expressive need through coherent, significant and strongly communicative graphics. Thus, in the early years of the 20th century, the great revolutionary typographic change was realized, not only with Futurism, but also with the other avant-garde currents, from Dadaism to De Stijl, to Suprematism, Constructivism, the Bauhaus school and more.

Today there are more than five thousand typographic characters and they are used to compose words that in turn correspond to a content. The character is the signifier, that is the graphic representation of the word which, through its modes and types, can expand the sense and the meanings of the text itself[1].

Over time, writing and lettering have undergone numerous additions and innovations, the principle characters have been refined with or without serifs, secondary characters have been generated that define and personalize the signs of the alphabet even more, so much so that, in the typographic forms of each era, the technical and aesthetic advances that distinguish them are denoted.

The intelligent use of typographic design and typefaces is a source of imagination and identity. The lettering indicates the fundamental characteristics of the text: whether con-

temporary or historical, serious or funny, scholarly or entertaining. Often the concordance between typefaces and text is such that the sense of writing prevails over that of reading[2].

THE 'TYPOGRAPHIC REVOLUTION' OF THE 20TH CENTURY

The 20th century was a period of great upheaval, that of changes in all fields, both artistic and cultural. The legacy of past centuries was deliberately put aside to make room for the new. In the liberal arts, this change manifested itself in the transition from figurative painting to abstract painting; various pictorial themes, never practiced until then, met with strong disapproval in the traditional world that later gave rise to alternative avant-gardes. Parallel to this, the idea of the harmony, of the balance of forms and proportions was changing. Typography, which after Gutenberg had only undergone relative evolutions and had remained within the framework of fixed rules, was infected and contaminated by this air of renewal. If until then it had been an orderly medium used for the purpose of reading and writing, it also set itself 'in movement'. Font designers broke away from a purely pragmatic work to create alphabets whose purpose was not only that of being read, but of existing in their own right.

The many interactions between artisan and technique, theory and practice, between functional and experimental designs, have made the study of typefaces one of the most important components of our culture. It contributes to learning and understanding writing and typography in a more conscious manner.

The roots of lettering and modern typography are closely intertwined with 20th century painting, poetry and architecture. Photography, technical changes in development and printing, new reproduction techniques, social changes and new lifestyles helped to break down the boundaries between graphic art, poetry and typography; all these contributed to place typography on a more visual level, less linguistic or

merely linear, and much more communicative. The new vo-
cabulary of typography and of graphic design, from the be-
ginning of the 20th century, in less than twenty years, under-
went a radical transformation[3].

At the end of the 1920s, the foundations for a new and
different creative phase having been laid, a search, more for
consolidation rather than real innovation, continued. How-
ever, modern typography was not the fruit of a rapid inven-
tion by an individual or an avant-garde group, but, rather,
arose as a response to the new demands and new opportu-
nities that the preceding century brought. The violence with
which modern typography burst onto the scene starting in
the 20th century reflects the aggressiveness with which the
new concepts of art and design, in each field, undermined
conventions and principles, and attacked attitudes by then
outdated in a highly industrialized society.

The typographic revolution was not initially measured
against the traditions of industry and business, but it is fitting
to remember that the graphics and printing industry had, for
some time, been implementing technological research that
was more advanced inn respect to traditional printing. The
real revolution was supported by painters, writers, poets, ar-
chitects and cultural figures who approached printing from
fields outside the industrial world. These artists were full of
ideas and oriented toward a new concept of art and society;
they were all determined to make their voices heard in a con-
crete way and dedicated themselves to printing with great
passion, because they acknowledged its fundamental value
in the contemporary world, increasingly engaged in the field
of communication.

Graphic design and printing represented a great medium
for transmitting ideas and information, surpassing what un-
til then had been the area of reference determined by the
previous era. It was a question of reconsidering writing as a
form of decorative art, the mirror of an evolving society.

The so-called 'typographic revolution', in any case, had
to deal with the printing industry, since the rapid growth of

industry and mass production had generated the need to create new forms of printing, also to efficiently control the process of production and distribution; in addition, the great growth of advertising graphics had increased competitiveness and stimuli for production.

The first Cubist compositions painted by Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso in 1908 represented further fundamental steps towards the new horizons. The following year, in 1909, the *Manifesto of Futurism* had an immediate repercussion with great impact on modern typography design, by then ready for innovation.

The Futurists sought new forms that would allow them to overcome the limitations of the two dimensions, for celebrating 'revolution and movement', in resorting to illusory visual effects. The propaganda technique they used, violent and incendiary, was later extensively imitated throughout Europe, from the Dadaists in France, Switzerland and Germany, to the Russian Constructivists, as well as De Stijl in Holland and many others.

POST AVANT-GARDE PASSAGES

Futurists opposed *l'art pour l'art* and at the same time rejected any idea that simply invited them to play with form or to realize typographic innovations just for the sake of doing so. They imposed the fact that in typography form intensified content, going to the extent of creating the literary style of 'words in freedom' or *paroliberismo* which consisted in overcoming the syntactical and grammatical rules of phrases and sentences; punctuation, accents and apostrophes were also abolished.

The principles and rules of this literary technique were identified and written by Marinetti in the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* of May 11, 1912 and were also taken up again in the subsequent *Destruction of Syntax. Wireless Imagination. Words in Freedom* of May 11, 1913.

"I initiate a typographical revolution aimed at the bestial, nauseating idea of the book of passéist and D'Annunzian verse, on seventeenth-century handmade paper bordered with helmets, Minervas, Apollos, elaborate red initials, vegetables, mythological missal ribbons, epigraphs, and Roman numerals. The book must be the Futurist expression of our Futurist thought. Not only that. My revolution is aimed at the so-called typographical harmony of the page, which is contrary to the flux and reflux, the leaps and bursts of style that run through the page. On the same page, therefore, we will use *three or four colors of ink*, or even twenty different typefaces if necessary. For example: italics for a series of similar or swift sensations, *boldface* for violent onomatopoeias, and so on. With this typographical revolution and this multicolored variety in the letters I mean to redouble the expressive force of words" (Marinetti, 1913).

A revolution, in short, that concentrated the characterizing traits of the new poetic era in the signifier –the typographic characters– more than in the signified meaning –the text; in the container –the book– more than in the content. It is not a coincidence that he had declared again: "Three elements which literature has hitherto overlooked must now become prominent in it: 1. Noise (a manifestation of the dynamism of objects); 2. Weight (the capacity for flight in objects); 3. Smell (the capacity of objects to disperse themselves) [...]. Only the asyntactical poet with words set free will be able to penetrate the essence of matter and destroy the mute hostility that separates it from us" (Marinetti, 1913).

The poetic results of that period, in the light of a current re-examination, at times have more historical value than aesthetic taste, and of this, most probably, the first to notice were actually the more sensible Futurists who, in fact, soon evolved towards other forms of writing.

In the post-war period the concept of Futuristic 'words in freedom' came together and was re-amalgamated into other new avant-gardes. A passage from Marinetti's *Manifesto* reads: "Words freed from punctuation will radiate out toward one

another, their diverse magnetism will intersect, in proportion to the continuing dynamism of thought.

A white space, of varying length, will show the reader the pauses or rests of the intuition of their differing lengths. Uppercase letters will inform the reader which nouns contain a dominant analogy. The destruction of the traditional sentence, the abolition of adjectives, adverbs, and punctuation, will necessarily bring about the collapse of the much vaunted stylistic unity, so that the Futurist poet will at last be able to make use of every kind of onomatopoeia, even the most raucous, that eco the countless number of sounds made by matter in motion" (Marinetti, 1913).

Typographic freedom was achieved through a multiple and multiform collocation of the word, which can be written in different ways and with different characters, arranged according to variable lines –vertical, oblique, curved, sinuous– broken down and disjointed in its components up to the use of a figure.

Towards the end of the 1930s, while graphic design was in full development, after the experiences of the Futurists, Constructivists, Neo-Plasticists, Functionalists, Bauhaus, etc. Marinetti himself could rightly note that the 'words in freedom' had not only conditioned the new art of typography but, by influencing advertising, had in fact conquered the urban environment; the new means of visual communication such as posters and notices, advertising, are still affected today by Futurist philosophy which, indeed, is exasperated by the electronic devices of the end of the century. Visual advertising is futuristic in its graphics and content; its compositional oddities, literary transgressions, neologisms, conceptual flights of fancy are announced in Marinetti's *Manifesto* because he, at the dawn of the 20th century, had already sensed the development of graphics in the field of communications.

Commercial companies, on the other hand, demanded increasingly concise advertising, with a clear message and a strong communicative impact. Posters became an exceptional training ground for the revolution of 'words in freedom'. In ur-

ban environments, advertising, and its typographic plasticity with perspectives, elevations, different depth planes, with its free spelling, its disruptive movement of verbs eluding syntax and literary habits, gave life to 'words in freedom'. These were seen in flashing lights running across the pediments of buildings and the terraces of houses. During this period, the Futurists created pieces of *Parolibero* mural poetry, accompanying the realizations with a reflection on typographic art, a theme that also involved specialized magazines, such as *Campo grafico*, *Graphicus* and *Typographische Monatsblätter*, where Futurism was given the merit of having opened the way to the work of contemporary graphic artists[4].

CHARACTERS AND MUSIC: COVER ART

From the first steps of Modernism, visual art and music formed a symbiotic relationship. From Henri Matisse's *Music* (1910) to the 'sound poetry' of Hugo Ball *Karawane* (1916) to the visual *Reciprocal Accords* by Wassily Kandinsky (1942), the 20th century gave rise to increasingly fruitful encounters between sounds and forms, signs and melodies, compositions and visual performances.

Typographic research remained no stranger to the immense field of visual communication and found itself occupying a role of great importance, expressed through album covers which, between the 1930s and 1970s, had a real artistic explosion. A period that represented a rich source of trends, novelties, experimentations with fonts, graphics and logotypes. Each genre of music holds within itself unique peculiarities, eccentricities, or minimalist rigors, references

Fig. 1 Alex Steinweiss, cover art for some album, (from left) *Smash Song Hits* by Rodgers & Hart, *Eroica* by Bruno Walter, *Boogie Woogie* compilation, *At the piano* by Frankie Carle, 1939-1945 (Spampinato, 2017).

to writing or to the most avant-garde forms of visual art. In this field, the font has assumed a substantial role in the visual communication of covers, a point of reference that must aim to reflect the soul of the artist and his music. Frequent is the use of characters that are not part of font families, but are used in an altered way: they are manipulated, deformed, re-invented to become unique, as unique as the music they intend to communicate.

ALEX STEINWEISS, "I WANTED PEOPLE LOOKING AT THE COVERS TO HEAR THE NOTES"

Before music videos were invented, it was album covers that made music 'visible'. Vinyl records offered a space of just over 30x30 centimeters, where photographers, designers, painters and typographers could give free rein to their talent and inspiration, and also produce real works of art.

Alex Steinweiss, artistic director of Columbia Records, started a real revolution in the recording field in 1939, proposing to his record company the introduction of an illustrated record cover. Until then, in fact, vinyl records did not have a cover but were sold in monochrome sleeves, totally anonymous, which served to protect them from dust.

The introduction of personalized covers immediately made record sales skyrocket: emblematic was the case of a re-release of Ludwig van Beethoven's *Symphony No. 3 Eroica*, whose graphic re-visitation increased sales by about nine hundred percent. Since then, record covers have become increasingly popular and some of them even legendary.

Many records are often first remembered, even more than for their music, for their cover art. Their graphics often let you intuit, at a glance, the musical genre of the album; the covers of vinyl records have become an integral part of the album they hold and, today, the graphic and structural design of covers is now recognized as a true form of art, cover art (Iuppariello, 2012).

For over three decades, Steinweiss produced thousands of original classical, jazz and pop music records for Columbia, Decca, London and Everest, as well as logos, labels and advertising material. He inaugurated the golden age of cover design and influenced the generations of designers who came after him. From the very beginning, the combination of images and lettering constructed by Steinweiss created an important graphic coherence and the characters, often hand drawn, contributed to giving impact to the content of vinyl records (Figure 1).

MUSIC AND ARTWORKS BETWEEN SOCIAL PROTEST AND MARKETING

The year 1967 was crucial not only in the relationship between art and youth music, but above all for the role that pop music assumed as a new vehicle of expression and communication for the new generations.
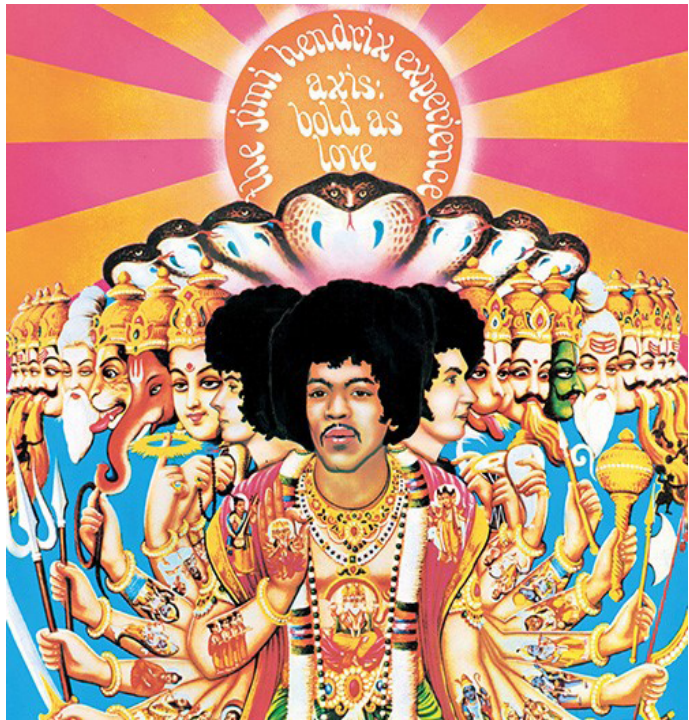

Fig. 2 Roger Law & David King, cover art for the album *Axis: Bold as Love* by Jimi Hendrix Experience, 1967. Retrieved May 4, 2020 from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axis:_Bold_as_Love#/media/File:Axiscover.jpg.

Fig. 3 Peter Blake & Jann Haworth, cover art for the album *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* by The Beatles, 1967. Retrieved May 4, 2020 from https://www.moma.org/collection/works/185449.

At the end of the 1960s, young people assumed, for the first time in history, full self-awareness as a social group and potential actors of change. It was in fact the uprisings of university students that in the mid-1960s stirred up turmoil on American campuses with protests regarding the issues of civil rights, racial discrimination and the Vietnam War.

From there, protest demonstrations spread all over Europe –from Paris to Prague, from Rome to London– where the dream of freedom coming from those boys and girls born after the Second World War had to be acknowledged. It was that generation –even amidst utopias, contradictions and false starts– that changed the public and the private realms, and pursued new languages of art.

In this scenario, music had a fundamental role, as it became one of the most effective means of expression and communication. Music not only represented a source of inspiration for visual art in those years, but was also seen by artists

as a way to expand the scope of their research and to reach a wider and more general public. Likewise, musicians, singers and bands saw art as a source of inspiration, but they also understood that art could allow them to deepen the intellectual scope of their production. The record, therefore, became the herald of an imaginary countercurrent expressed through music, words and images, while still remaining a commercial product, accessible to the masses.

PSYCHEDELIC STYLE AND INDIAN INFLUENCES

In the 1960s, in the years of counterculture, a strong artistic current of rupture with the past developed, in preference of an escape from reality through hallucinogenic experiences. Psychedelic visual arts played an important role in pop and rock music[5]. Concert posters, album covers, liquid light shows, fluorescent light art and more not only reflected the kaleidoscopic color patterns of synthetic drug hallucinations, but also revolutionary political, social and spiritual feelings, inspired by insights resulting from altered states of consciousness.

In an overview of some of the most famous covers in the American world of those years, we would like to dwell on the political use, as a means of peaceful revolt, that some artists wanted to promote, thanks to the coordinated use of images and lettering.

The case of Jimi Hendrix, for the cover of the long-playing album *Axis: Bold as Love*, realized by the illustrator Roger Law and the graphic designer David King, presents a strongly alternative and 'anti-American' image (Figure 2). The band was depicted as Hindu gods on a cover inspired by a religious poster entitled *Viraat Purushan-Vishnuroopam*; the characters of the titles, inscribed in a sun, create an impression of belonging to precise identity orientations, and re-propose Tamil or Malayan calligraphy to give a further idea of energy and innovation, or of protest.

ALPHABETS AND BRITISH POP ART

After the Second World War, all those objects of common use that had become the new symbols of consumer society came into play in the world of art; an idea of popular art, called Pop Art, which unlike the other artistic movements that developed in this period, generated social criticism through the decontextualization of these objects, emphasizing their playful and creative aspects[6]. The urban environ-

Fig. 4 Arthur Wood, cover art for the album *A Wizard, a True Star* by Todd Rundgren, 1973. Retrieved May 4, 2020 from https://www.discogs.com/it/Todd-Rundgren-A-Wizard-A-True-Star/release/3774323.

ment in which this new form of expression took shape was characterized by a pervasive idea of commercial consumerism, sometimes enslaved by it, sometimes in contrast. The city in which Pop Art was born is described as an aggressive place, full of contradictions and false idols, but also reassuring, capable of assuming a lively, familiar role (Barthes, 1992; McLuhan, 2008). The recognized founder of British Pop Art is Richard Hamilton[7] –besides Peter Blake– who in 1967 created the cover art of the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* LP, perhaps the most celebrated work in the history of music, considered an authentic pop icon (Figure 3).

The art of the collage and of the consequent decontextualization of the images creates a complex vision, full of references, but the part with lettering, which would appear relegated only to the writing on the bass drum, is precisely what gives order, offering a key to the understanding of the images, thanks to its position at the center of the composition. The parterre at the bottom presents the writing 'Beatles' realized in red flowers, creating a strong chromatic contrast with the false blue sky in the background and, on the right, the same flowers placed in a circle create a small 'o' that fueled the urban legend of Paul McCartney's hypothetical death[8].

FANTASY CHARACTERS AND THE ONIRIC DIMENSION

One aspect that is often exalted by the graphics and lettering of the vinyl records of the 1960s and 1970s, is the desire for an escape into fantasy, away from the real world, in search of wonderment. There is an inseparable link between music and Fantasy. Many traveled in search of a hippy-like escape, re-evaluating the philosophy of the journey celebrated by Jack Kerouac and of the western world's dream of adventure, as well as the return of Fantasy as a thought of protest.

The first references to Fantasy can be intuited in the two parallel movements of the second half of the 1960s, on the one hand, the psychedelic movement of the early Pink Floyd,

Grateful Dead and Quicksilver, and on the other hand, the more folksong sounds of artists such as Gryphon, Fairport Convention and Jethro Tull, more interested in the romantic aspect of Fantasy thinking. But in addition to psychedelia and folk, there was also horror, magic, the imponderable, the esoteric. Among the latter we have chosen the cover of one of Todd Rundgren's most beautiful works, *A Wizard, a True Star*, realized by Arthur Wood (Figure 4). The cover has the charm of a Fantasy cartoon, and is an intense mix of geometry, surrealism, and references to Pop Art. The writings on the dice thrown up into the air form the magic of the title and some of the letters seem reflected in a mirror, all in a context of geometrical figures, marbles and dice floating above the doubled figure staring into empty space. It is interesting to note how the theme of utopia celebrated by Todd Rundgren winds through his projects, as in the name, *Utopia*, given to his rock band.

CONCLUSIONS

This brief excursus on art album covers and their bold, imaginative, creative lettering follows the rhythm of a particular strand of cultural history. Even today, in the field of music, the branch of lettering has a movement that shows no sign of stopping. The covers of vinyl records, like those of CDs, reveal how modern, postmodern and conceptual art, as well as Pop Art and Street Art, have flooded this sector of visual production and accompanied the mass distribution of music with often memorable images that instinctively evoke a sound experience. The accompanying text is 'harmoniously' in line with the experiments in cover art realized by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Banksy, Damien Hirst, to name the most recent; an artistic experience shared earlier by Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg and many other artists, graphic designers and type designers. Just as the authors of many artistic works have expressed the

best of an era, in the same way many artists, creators of characters, have given the words of their time the most appropriate and communicative form.

They are characters that dance and compose harmonies for the mind, wonderful letters that compose words and phrases, those that remain there to cultivate and enrich our time with culture.

NOTES

1 The study of visual languages, painting, photography, spatiality, television, advertising, etc., use a semi-symbolic semiotic functioning to produce their texts, regardless of the subject matter of the expression they use or the content they convey. Think of the case of newspapers, which customarily play with the body of their headline typefaces to give more or less prominence to a news item.

2 *Pogo*, an American comic strip created by Walt Kelly in 1943, famous for examples of expressive typography. The author, to express the flowery eloquence of the local politician Mr. Bridgeport, used a wide selection of different 19th century fonts to compose an election banner.

3 Grafica editoriale. (n.d.). In *Enciclopedia Treccani online.* Retrieved May 4, 2020 from http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/grafica-editoriale_%28XXI-Secolo%29/.

4 Among the most well-known: *La Città Futurista* (1928-1929), *La Città Nuova. Quindicinale di arte-vita* (1932-1934), *La Terra dei Vivi. Turismo arte architettura* (1933), *Stile Futurista* (1934-1935) and *La Forza. Mensile dei Gruppi Naturisti-Futuristi Italiani* (1935) are essentially architecture magazines originating in Turin within the activities of the *Edizioni Sindacati Artistici* and very similar to each other in their graphic design. *Stile Futurista* was the only one with a rotogravure format, in coated paper and in color. In each of these modern publications there are announcements, posters, theoretical and programmatic texts aimed at exalting the most recent achievements of the Futurist movement.

5 The word 'psychedelic' (coined by the British psychologist Humphry Osmond) means 'manifestation of the mind'. With this definition, all the artistic efforts to describe the inner world of the psyche can be considered 'psychedelic'.

6 As, for example, Happenings and Neo-Dada phenomena.

7 Think to Richard Hamilton's 1954 collage *Just what is it that make today's homes so different, so appealing?* .

8 The cover fueled the legend of Paul McCartney's untimely death through graphic signs and cut out images of objects that could indicate clues or messages, including the flowers used in the place of letters.

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