Olympic Games cultural identity and visual communication
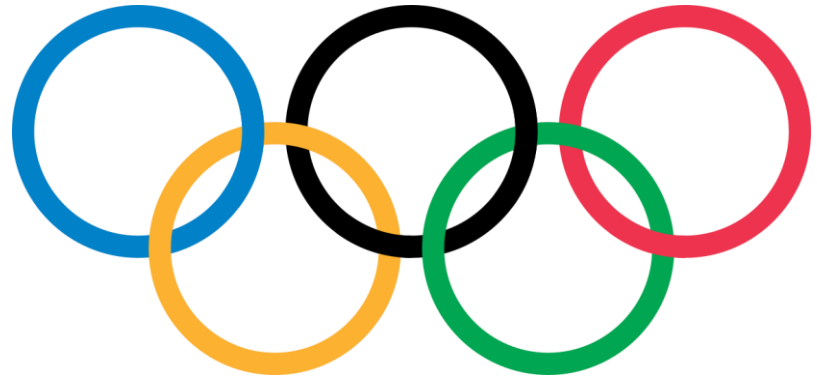
Jia Ling Lin Huang

Image by Dribble

Olympic Games

It's major international multi-sport event normally held once every four years in different cities.

Emblem Values

Universal symbol of peace and union through sports.

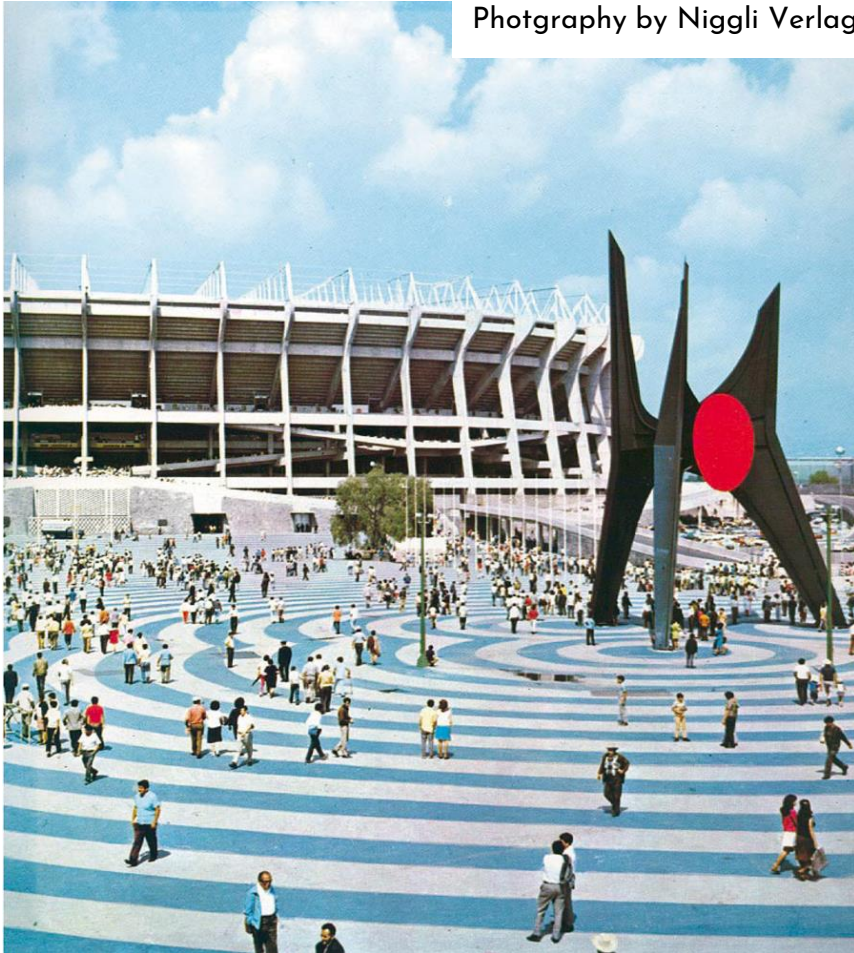International Olympic Committee emblem - Coubertin, 1913

Olympic Design

The design plays a very important role because prepares everything like medals, tickets, pictograms, advertising, etc.

Los Angeles 1984 - RGD Association of Registered Graphic Designers

Olympic Games Cultural Identity

Olympic Logo for Mexico 68
by Lance Wayman

Athens 1896

Barcelona 1992

Sydney 2000

Olympic Games Pictograms

- "It should have the following characteristics: easy identification, clear visualization, accessibility and legibility, and clear graphic representation."

- "Because pictograms are used during the Olympic events, they must be visually acceptable to people from various cultural backgrounds; they must also be understood easily, quickly, and accurately by the general public.

Pictogram Understanding

	2000	2004	2008	2012	2016	2020
Wrestling						
	6	2	1	4	5	3

Olympic Games Pictograms
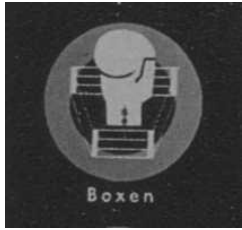
Berlin 1936

London 1948

Mexico 1968

Munich 1972 – Montreal 1976

Moscow 1980

Los Angeles 1984

Barcelona 1992

Atlanta 1996

Sydney 2000

Athens 2004

Beijing 2008

London 2012

Rio 2016

Tokyo 2020

Mexico City, Mexico
SUMMER 1968

These pictograms represent the Mexican culture and history, since pre-Hispanic glyphs (in special the Huichol Indians) was the bases for their design.
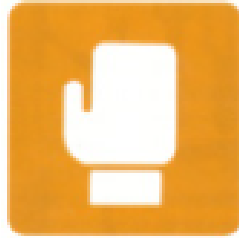
Sydney, Australia
SUMMER 2000

Archery	Athletics	Badminton	Baseball	Basketball	Beach Volleyball	Boxing
Canoe Slalom	Canoe Sprint	Cycling	Diving	Equestrian	Fencing	Football
Gymnastics	Gymnastics Rhythmic	Handball	Hockey	Judo	Modern Pentathlon	Rowing
Sailing	Shooting	Softball	Swimming	Synchronized Swimming	Table Tennis	Taekwendo
Tennis	Triathlon	Volleyball	Water Polo	Weightlifting	Wrestling	

For the Sydney 2000, the designer committee created a series of pictograms based on his logotype. Each pictogram is composed of boomerangs that represent the natives of Australia.

Athens, Greece
SUMMER 2004

Archery	Athletics	Badminton	Baseball	Basketball	Beach Volleyball	Boxing
Canoe Slalom	Canoe Sprint	Cycling	Diving	Equestrian	Fencing	Football
Gymnastics Artistic	Gymnastics Rhythmic	Handball	Hockey	Judo	Modern Pentathlon	Rowing
Sailing	Shooting	Softball	Swimming	Synchronised Swimming	Table Tennis	Taekwondo
Tennis	Trampoline	Triathlon	Volleyball	Water Polo	Weightlifting	Wrestling

For the pictograms of Athens 2004, the Olympic Designers were inspired by the Cycladic Figures and the Ancient Greek vases. Their objective was to express the Greek heritage in a modern and understandable way.

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Beijing, China
SUMMER 2008

Chinese Characters were initially formed by pictograms. The early Chinese writing was made by symbols. These pictograms looks like a Chinese character but at the same time is recognizable to all the international audience.

Image Sources

https://dribbble.com/shots/16095454-Olympic-Games-Tokyo-2020
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https://www.olympic-museum.de/index.html