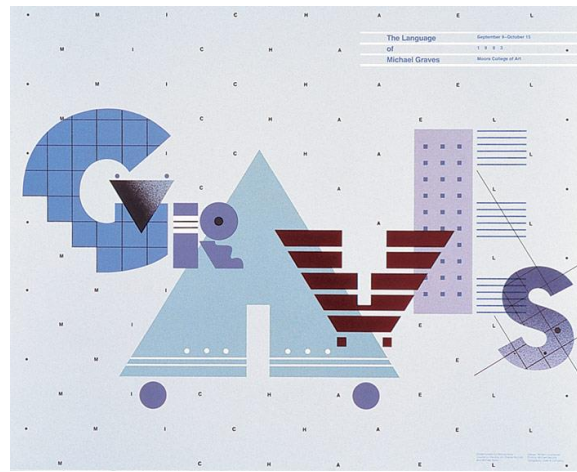


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The Language of Michael Graves

The poster, *The Language of Michael Graves* was designed by William Longhauser for an exhibition of the works done by one of the best postmodern architects of the time Michael Graves. Longhauser designed this poster in 1983 in regard to post-modernism. The design elements of this poster make several references to the postmodern architectural structures designed by Michael Graves. What made Michael Grave so successful was his post-modern architectural designs of the buildings that broke boundaries and gave it a look that seemed impossible at the time. One of the most recognizable references in this poster is the letter V which references the Portland building in Portland Oregon, this building was very significant because it was a symbol that was known for the arrival of postmodern architecture. This poster is amazing because the language here is very unique, it uses the Architects name and references

some of the amazing work he has done over the years in one single poster, which alone makes this poster creative and appealing.

The language in this poster is understood fully based on visual illustrations and the typography but it's not going to be extremely understandable to every audience since some of the letters are not an actual typeface rather it was created using the illustration itself. This reflects some of the points made by De Saussure on *The General Linguistics*, it mentions "Time changes all things; there is no reason why language should escape this universal law."(77). Lonhauser did just that he tried to create a language that is unique to his design and a language that is fresh. Longhauser knew that this poster may not be understood by every audience but still went with this approach because he was referencing the most well-known architecture of that time who designed some of the most recognizable and iconic structures of all time. Most likely every individual knew about Michael Graves and his works at the time and Longhauser took this to his advantage and focused on creating a language that revolves around Michael Graves and his works. Two of the key elements in making the language in this poster stronger are first the name Michael Graves last name and second, the referenced building structures that are done by him. If a person is unable to get the message of the poster through typography then he will look at the illustrations and certainly, he/she will recognize the building references which will make them think of the designer who made those. The first and last letter of the last name is very legible and anyone can recognize it, so once an individual identifies the building references it will be very easy for them to recognize the name even if the type is not legible. That is the reason why the poster was named *The Language of Michael Graves*. This form of thinking creates a unique language that is very interesting and can be understood in various ways.

According to Munari, a designer is the artist of today not because he is a genius but because he is capable of establishing contact between the public and the art. This is exactly what Longhauser tried to accomplish in this poster, he established a connection between his work and the public through his unique approach. Munari also mentioned in *Design as Art* “ he has the humility and the ability to respond to whatever demand is made of him by the society which he lives in because he knows his job. And the ways and means of solving each problem of design and finally because he responds to the human needs of his time.”(32). Similar to Munari's ideology, Longhauser also looked for the demands and trends of his time. Graves was very demanding at the time because of his amazing and unique postmodern building structures. No one created structures like him at the time and people were very curious about his way of construction and building design. Longhauser saw this demand of him and his work in society and among the people of his time which is why he developed this poster revolving around him. Through this poster, Longhauser almost put up a summary of Michael Graves's work at the time and since this was meant for an exhibition of Graves works more people will be excited for the exhibition when they see this poster.

The thinking that went into creating this poster for Longhauser was very vast and critical, he was both looking at the language this design speaks and the demand the society where he lives makes. In the end, William Longhauser created this poster which not only makes a connection with the public but addresses the amazing introduction of the postmodernism design techniques used by the great architect of the time Michael Graves.

Work Cited

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