Armin Hoffman (Swiss Graphic Designer)

For this research work I chose the Swiss graphic designer Armin Hofmann because his distinguished posters are full of simplicity and elegance. Armin Hofmann is a twentieth century Swiss graphic designer. Born on June 29, 1920, Armin Hofmann grew up in Winterthur, Switzerland. He attended the School of Arts and Crafts in Zurich and later took up a job as a lithographer in Basel and Bern. Armin Hofmann followed the concept of the Swiss style in perfection and simplicity. The *Swiss Style* is a graphic style which follows the idea of minimalism and perfectionism. The key characteristic of the Swiss Style is the clear organization of elements according to a grid system. Subsequently, he opened a design studio.

The immeasurable influence on generations of designers is one of the many distinguishing qualities of his work. Moreover, he is looked up to by his students as the most inspiring graphic design teacher. Later with the opening of his design studio he met Emil Ruder who with Armin Hofmann and joined the faculty of the Schule für Gestaltung Basel (Basel School of Design). Emil Ruder who was a Swiss typographer and graphic designer who shared the news that the Basel School of Arts and Crafts was looking for an art teacher. Armin Hofmann is considered one of the most influential designers of this style that favors simplicity, legibility and objectivity. In 1947, Hofmann decided to take the job as a teacher and from then on he taught there for four decades. During the 1950s and 1960s, he designed posters for some cultural clients which hold typographic and photographic clarity. In 1965, Armin Hofmann created a design book outlining the important principles in teaching design titled "Graphic Design Manual" This manual
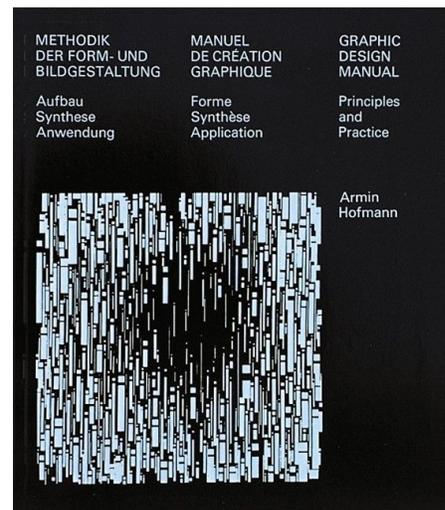
contains the elements of image and form discussed and contemporary design techniques in addition to the distinguished Hofmann methods to the requirements of modern design practices. In a few words, his designs were didactic demonstrations of the principles he discussed in his book. His independent ideas as an educator, coupled with his rich and innovative powers of visual expression, created an enormously varied body of work: books, exhibits, scenery, logos, symbols, typography, posters, sign systems, and environmental graphics.

In 1968, Hofmann entered the advanced graphic design class with a short time later he had an appointment as head of the graphic design department. He taught at Yale University where he played a key role until his resignation. His dedication to visual resolution represented a larger vision of civilized society. Hofmann's work, especially his poster designs, always seemed to emphasize an economical and efficient use of colour and typefaces. This was in reaction to what Hofmann called the "trivialization of colour." His posters have been exhibited as works of art in major galleries all around the world, including the New York Museum of Modern Art. He retired in 1987 but his legacy lives on in his hugely influential body of work. Armin Hofmann, exemplar of the Basel, Swiss approach to Modern graphic design, turned 100 on June 28.
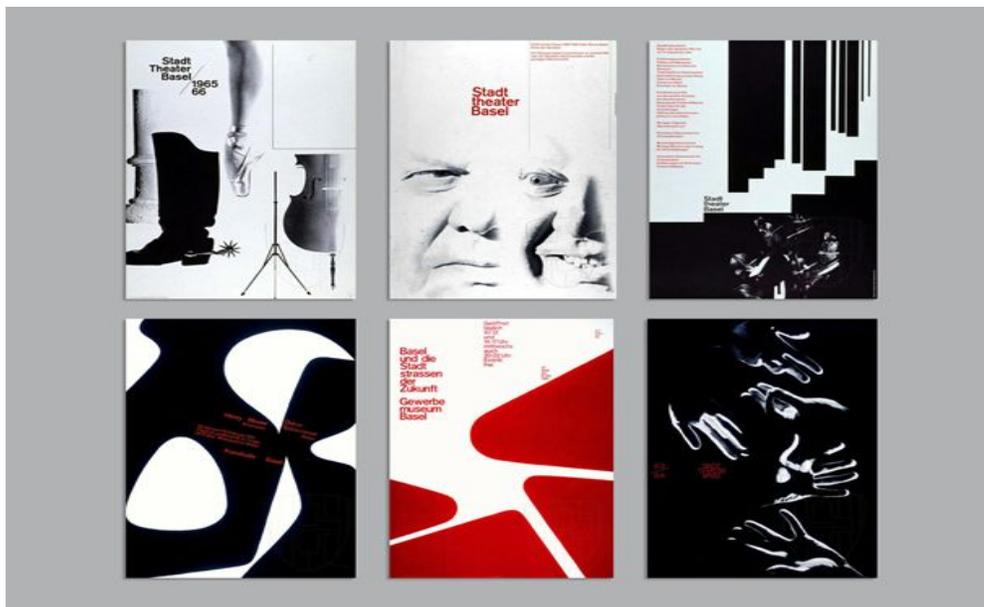
(Armin Hofmann, Stadt Theater Basel)
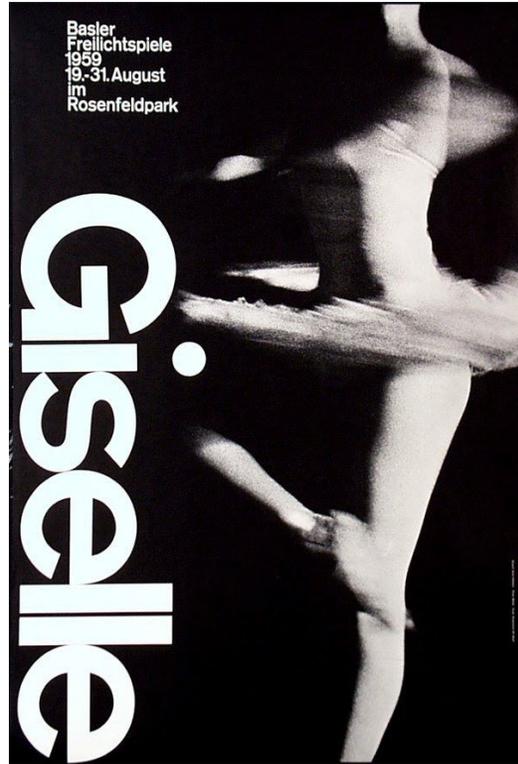
(Armin Hofmann, Giselle, 1959)

(Theater Bau Von der Antike bis zur Moderne 1955)

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