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September 30 2020



“Does it make sense?” by April Greiman is a poster which was part of the Design Quarterly’s 133rd issue, and was the beginning of a new wave of creativity and expression. A new wave of communicating for the new generation of design at that time. She created this piece using a Macintosh 128k and a camera that can digitize stills from a video. The piece consists of a nude picture of April Greiman , a timeline at the bottom of the piece, colorful atmospheric images and bitmapped text. To see this type of design in the present day is not unusual, however in 1986 in which the piece was showcased in *Design Quarterly* magazine this was never done before. Before April Greiman and other visionaries of the postmodern wave, designers didn't see any use for computers being a part of the design process.

April Greiman states that “I got so tired of famous men... saying things like *this is the end of everything* and that the Mac is crap and they’ll just stick with their pencil ... I would

challenge some of these men by saying *you know how much crap has been done with a pencil over the last couple of thousands of years*” (AIGA).

These ideas rebelled against the international swiss style many designers were used to. The international swiss style lacked typographic expression, designs were rigid, and strictly grid based.

Greiman and post modern designers were doing more than just broadening their creativity. They were starting a new style of typography, and photography while using technology as an aesthetic enhancement tool. After Grieman’s push into a new direction of design, design became more expressive. Designers began using printers and computers to their advantage, experimenting and creating a whole new look. Type was used to show a feeling or a mood, photography was pushed in different directions.

Designers from the Bauhaus such as Herbert Bayer and Laszlo Moholy Nagy both had similar theories on what direction design should take in the future. *On Typography* by Herbert Bayer mainly talks about typography evolving in a way to make communication efficient. He sees typography as a type of art and typographers as artists. April Griemans piece does not focus on typography, but the idea that evolution is needed to create new, expressive forms of communication.

“Formalism and straightjacket of a style lead to a dead end. The self changing pulse of life is the nature of things with its unlimited forms and ways of expression. This we must recognize and not make new clichés out of old formulas”(Herbert Bayer *On Typography* 1967). Herbert Bayer was not only speaking of the state of design and typography of that time period, but he was ahead in understanding that design will not evolve unless designers are willing to try new things and stray away from the old formulas they were taught. Almost twenty years after

Bayer wrote *On Typography* in 1967, a new wave of digital communication and expression in design emerges.

Technology has been a co-creator tool for many designers. With the use of technology design has become more universal and precise for communicating a message thoroughly. April Griemans “Does it make sense” embodies Bayer’s idea of forgetting the old to make room for the new.

Laszlo Moholy Nagy wrote “Typophoto” in 1925 which is all about typography and photography evolution. He believed that combining photography and typography would bring a new and better form of communication. “Typophoto is the visually most exact rendering of communication” (Nagy). “Does it make sense” is a representation of this idea. Even though the message that she is communicating isn't clear to everyone that may view it, she was mixing images and type to create something never done before. Her typophoto recreation paved the way for how designers use text and images, and inspired designers to see creative expression as a priority in one's work.

Where would design be if the pioneers of digital communication design did not use technology to their advantage? What if Grieman and other visionaries listened to their design peers and stuck with using just pencils as their design tools? If it wasn't for designers like April Greiman exploring the Macintosh as her new pencil, design wouldn't have been able to evolve. Adobe programs like Illustrator and Indesign probably wouldn't have been created. This is part of the theories designers such as Herbert Bayer, Laszlo Moholy Nagy and El Lissitzky had. Using the same techniques and standard rules of design becomes boring and outdated. Every designer should have their own style, it's boring to create the same things with the same old

techniques. What April Grieman did with “Does it make sense” is what most designers do today.  
Using different forms of the digital world to communicate a message.

## **Sources**

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- “On Typography” By Herbet Bayer
- “Typophoto” By Laszlo Moholy Nagy