

SPATIAL GRAPHIC DESIGN: ARCHETYPICAL DESIGN PRACTICES AND THEORY
STUDIES ON CONSTRUCTING A NARRATIVE OF PLACE

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Cornell University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

by

Juliana Richer Daily

January 2012

© 2012 Juliana Richer Daily

ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on identifying, classifying and naming of unnamed Spatial Graphic Design archetypes in contemporary interiors that are derived from reiterative historical designs. The study is a component of the Intypes (Interior Archetypes) Research and Teaching Project established in 1997 at Cornell University. An Intype is an ideal example of a historically determined design strategy from which similar models are derived, emulated or reiterated.

This thesis outlines the study of five new Spatial Graphic Design Intypes, based on a comprehensive content survey of design trade journals, secondary sources, and scholarly articles, as well as site visits to relevant existing interiors. The newly identified Intypes are Repeat Repeat, Colorbrand, Understate, Activate and Saturate. This group of new Intypes is best understood in two distinct categories—brand strategies (Repeat Repeat, Colorbrand) and brand concepts (Understate, Activate, Saturate). These strategies represent specific design choices coupled with one another or various other design elements in an effort to achieve the larger umbrella concept for the space. The interiors analyzed in this study span a wide range of practice areas, including everything from workplace to nightclub, dating back upwards of five decades in addition to continued use in contemporary practice.

In addition to this research thesis, the Spatial Graphic Design Intypes developed in this study will be disseminated through the free and open website – www.Intypes.Cornell.edu - a web-based research and teaching site that makes design history and contemporary practice accessible to academics, professionals, and students.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH



Juliana Richer Daily was born and raised Syracuse, New York where she found a passion for art and design at a young age. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science from Cornell University's Design and Environmental Analysis program in 2010, Juliana looked to the pursuit of a graduate degree as an opportunity to investigate the relationship between her varied interests in both interior and graphic design. Under the guidance of Professor Jan Jennings, Juliana completed this thesis as a partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Arts at Cornell University, utilizing interior design history, theory, and criticism to define the new area of Spatial Graphic Design.

To acknowledging the challenge

And rising to it.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis chair, Professor Jan Jennings. Together we have worked through a long year of personal struggle and triumph, and countless hours of academic discovery. I consider Professor Jennings to be both a mentor and a friend, and am ever grateful for her support and unwavering faith in my pursuit of this new area of study. I am also indebted to the other members of my committee, Leah Scolere and Paula Horrigan, for the unique perspectives and ideas they each brought to this study from their prospective fields and backgrounds. Their creative insights have helped expand the horizons of my research, and their encouragement has been an integral part of my successful completion of this academic endeavor. To all of the faculty and staff of the department of Design and Environmental Analysis, I am so very blessed to have been surrounded by such a nurturing and supportive group of individuals throughout the duration of my five years at Cornell. To my family and friends, I owe you the world for the boundless love and support you continue to give me. I could never have made it through this year without you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Biographical Sketch	iii
Dedication	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	vii
Chapter 1: The Study	1
1.1 The Study	2
1.2 Introduction and Premise of the Study	2
1.3 A Brief History of Spatial Graphic Design Design	5
1.4 The Intypes Research and Teaching Project	13
1.5 Research Protocol	14
1.6 General Literature Review	16
1.7 Analysis and Summary of Findings	19
1.8 Assessment of Research	20
Chapter 2: Repeat Repeat	23
Chapter 3: Colorbrand	44
Chapter 4: Understate	67
Chapter 5: Activate	80
Chapter 6: Saturate	98
Appendix	113
Works Cited	126

LIST OF FIGURES

Fig. 2.11 North Hills Shopping Center	28
Fig. 2.12 Vidal Sassoon	30
Fig. 2.13 Hygiene Industries Showroom	31
Fig. 2.14 PearlrIDGE Shopping Center	32
Fig. 2.15 E.A.T. Restaurant	33
Fig. 2.16 Stein Roe & Farnham Funds Center	34
Fig. 2.17 Becton Dickinson	35
Fig. 2.18 Carolines Comedy Club	36
Fig. 2.19 Joe Boxer New York Showroom	37
Fig. 2.21 Vitra Showroom	39
Fig. 2.22 Murray's Showroom	41
Fig. 3.11 PDQ Carry Out Restaurant	48
Fig. 3.12 Franklin Simon	50
Fig. 3.13 Design Center Northwest Haworth Showroom	51
Fig. 3.14 Osgood & Associates	52
Fig. 3.15a Miu Miu Los Angeles	53
Fig. 3.15b Miu Miu Paris	54
Fig. 3.16 Qiora Store and Spa	55
Fig. 3.17 CNET Networks	57
Fig. 3.18 Catherine Malandrino	58
Fig. 3.19 Citroën Showroom	59

Fig. 3.21 House of Barbie	60
Fig. 3.22 Livestrong Headquarters	62
Fig. 3.23 AT&T	64
Fig. 4.1 First State Bank	71
Fig. 4.2 Per Spook Fashion Showroom	72
Fig. 4.3 Knoll Showroom	74
Fig. 4.4 Venn Works New York Office	75
Fig. 4.5 Red Bull Los Angeles Headquarters	77
Fig. 5.1 Graph: Charting The Brand Experience	82
Fig. 5.2 Burlington Domestics Showroom	85
Fig. 5.3 Coca-Cola Enterprises	87
Fig. 5.4 Christian Lacroix	89
Fig. 5.5 Night Hotel	91
Fig. 5.6 AOL Los Angeles Headquarters	92
Fig. 5.7 Johnson & Johnson New York Office	95
Fig. 6.1 Olimpo Discotheque/Piano Bar	103
Fig. 6.2 Kabaret's Prophecy	104
Fig. 6.3 Abercrombie & Fitch New York Flagship Store	106
Fig. 6.4 Louis Vuitton New York	108
Fig. 6.5 Swatch New York Flagship Store	110

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.1 THE STUDY

The focus of this thesis research is the development of a series of Spatial Graphic Design archetypes for the on-going Intypes (Interior Archetypes) Research and Teaching Project. Initiated in 1997 at Cornell University, this project creates a typology of contemporary design practices that are derived from reiterative historical design that span time and style. These Intypes identify contemporary design practices that have not been named, thereby providing designers with an interior, history, and contemporary design specific vocabulary.

This study will examine various interior environments by summarizing discourses about patterns, typologies, practices and/or paradigms in contemporary design usage and provide a comprehensive argument about various precedents related to the use of Spatial Graphic Design. This research is an original study that draws from primary source materials. The research protocol is systematic and comprehensive, and explores primary source material from trade journals. All Intypes named in this study work to directly enhance the way one experiences and understands the built environment.

1.2 INTRODUCTION AND PREMISE OF THE STUDY

Description of area of study and parameters

Graphic design and interior design have long existed as distinct areas of practice, each with their own history, discourse and design precedents. Increasingly, however, the overlapping

relationship between these two fields is becoming more commonplace in contemporary design practice.

As the breadth of graphic and interior design practices are already so expansive in their own right, trying to define the relationship between the two would be near impossible without first focusing the extent of this thesis study. In an effort to contain the scope of my research, I eliminated the study and analysis of several areas of design practice—namely residential, showroom, museum and healthcare facilities.

As a starting point and reference for much of my work, I turned to the Society for Environmental Graphic Design (SEGD) to get a sense of what kind of knowledge had already been amassed regarding design practice in fields related to my research. The organization, founded in 1973, is a “global community of people working at the intersection of communication design and the built environment.”¹ Environmental Graphic Design (EGD) includes design disciplines ranging from graphic design to architecture, landscape and industrial design, and all aspects of visual communication, wayfinding, identity, and the communication and shaping of the idea of place.

For this study, I chose to narrow the focus of my research to the spatial experience of the interior environment specifically. To distinguish this more interior’s specific niche from the larger practice of Environmental Graphic Design, I chose to name my area of study Spatial Graphic Design (SGD). In this study, I survey the overlap between the distinct fields of graphic and interior design through historic and theoretical analysis of reiterative practice. The aim of this

¹ “About Us,” Society for Environmental Graphic Design. Accessed 14 May 2011. <http://www.segd.org/home/index.html#/about-us/index.html>.

analysis is to define the complex relationship between these two areas of design and the narrative of place that is created at their juncture.

Significance of study

Remarkably, although the practice of graphic and interior design have been present for decades and are often used in tandem with one another, an effort to define their unique relationship has never been the subject of any academic study. This thesis offers the first documentation and comprehensive analysis of this previously unnamed area of design, and will hopefully set a precedent upon which future research can build.

Most of the strongest examples of SGD that I found during my research have been from the past decade or so, making the case that this is an emerging Intype that is becoming increasingly more relevant to the design world. Many companies and brands are relying more heavily on the introduction of graphic design and brand vocabulary into their interiors as a way to connect to users within the space—be they employees, consumers, patrons or simply visitors. Rather than simply a space, elements of graphic design or a brand vocabulary add “layers of complexity, nuance and subtlety,”² making for a more resonant experience of the brand.

The process of naming helps to establish the relationship between two creative fields, offering a look at the history and development of this interdisciplinary practice and establishing a framework through which this relationship can be understood and explored. In defining and offering an interiors specific vocabulary, Spatial Graphic Design can be discussed, analyzed, and employed as a unique design practice.

² Alice Twemlow, *What Is Graphic Design For?* (Brighton, UK: Rotovision, 2006), 6.

Thesis organization

The first chapter is followed by five chapters of newly defined Intypes. Each Intypes chapter constitutes an argument for a particular archetypical practice with a description of each type, a historical trace of its development over the past several decades supported by a photographic sequence of examples of its application, and finally, an analysis of the use and effect of the Spatial Graphic Design element within the space.

These five new Intypes are divided into two categories – Spatial Graphic Design strategies and Spatial Graphic Design concepts. The first two Intypes chapters (Repeat Repeat, Colorbrand) are considered design strategies, while the latter three Intype chapters (Understate, Activate, Saturate) are considered umbrella design concepts. The relationship between these two categories of Intype can be best understood as component parts making up an overall gestalt for the design of an interior space. The strategy Intypes, when coupled with one another and/or other various design elements (lighting, material selection, feature forms, etc.), work to achieve the overall umbrella concept for the space. This larger concept represents the scale or level of brand intervention used to communicate the interior’s narrative of place.

1.3 A BRIEF HISTORY ON THE ORIGINS OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

Tracing the origins of Spatial Graphic Design specifically is near impossible, as it is a previously unnamed practice whose interdisciplinary constituents have had a meandering relationship for almost a century. However, understanding the origins of Graphic Design and its communicative properties serves this study well in helping to clarify the narrative function of an SGD interior.

The overarching art of visual communication has a very long history, dating back centuries to include everything from Paleolithic drawings on cave walls of Lascaux to intricate and elaborate narrative murals of the Egyptians. “Complex symbol-making activity dates back at least 300,000 years—the approximate date of the earliest known example of intentional use of symbolism in engraving.”³ In each of these early instances, the imagery used plays a role in a system of signs meant to convey a particular meaning or idea. For instance—in early cave art, pictograms offer more than just descriptive illustration. Their context and positioning relative to one another craft a unique meaning. Some are argued to have religious and ritualistic significance, while others are communications about hunting and animal migrations.

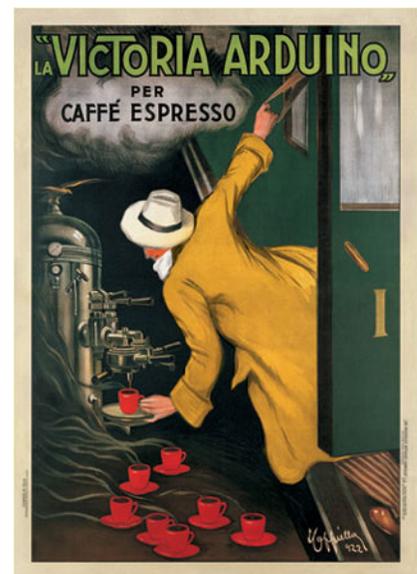
When asked “what is graphic design?” in an interview with Félix Béltran, published scholar and design history professor Victor Margolin responded, “Graphic design does not have a fixed meaning. In a broad sense it is the production of visual statements.”⁴ The widest definition of graphic design necessarily includes the whole history of art, encompassing all instances of a visual statement produced on some surface—be it paper, canvas, or a computer screen (although painting and other related aspects are generally regarded as art history). A more specific definition of graphic design, as it is most commonly understood, denotes any combination of imagery, color, and letterform to convey a specific message or meaning. Some instances are primarily image-based, while others rely more heavily on text or type. Frequently, a combination of both is used, with various elements informing one another in crafting a particular message.

³ Phillip B. Meggs, *Type and Image: The Language of Graphic Design*. (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1992), 4.

⁴ Victor Margolin. “Toward a History of Graphic Design”. Interview with Félix Béltran. 2000. Transcript obtained from The University of Illinois at Chicago, <http://tigger.uic.edu/~victor/articles.html>.

Says Margolin, there was no specific moment when “graphic design” appeared, rather the various related practices often associated with graphic design (typography, illustration, etc.) each have their own histories of varying durations that started mingling at different points throughout time. Although the term “graphic design” first appeared in a 1922 essay by American book designer William Addison Dwiggins⁵, graphic design has only existed as a recognized profession since the middle of the twentieth century.⁶ Prior to this time, such services were generally provided by “commercial artists”, combining such skills as visual planning, typesetting, and illustration.

As such, one of the earliest forms of graphic design was more aptly considered “graphic art”, and came in the form of the art poster. Popularized in the 1800s for presentation and promotional purposes, the art poster was one of the earliest examples of an element of visual communication being used for advertising or branding purposes. Such posters often combined beautiful illustrations or paintings with stylized typography and were used to advertise everything from theatrical performances to government propaganda. In all cases, the combination of an eye-catching and often narrative visual with communicative text aimed to offer a compelling and memorable message.

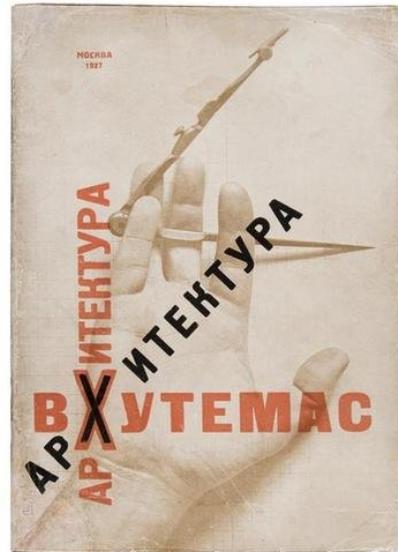


La Victoria Arduino
Leonetto Cappiello, 1922

⁵ Johanna Drucker and Emily McVarish, *Graphic Design History: A critical Guide* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2009).

⁶ Richard Hollis, *Graphic Design: A Concise History* (London: Thanks & Hudson, Ltd., 1994), 8.

Serving as the cultural ambassador of these new Constructivist ideas was Lazar Markovich Lissitzky, a Russian artist and designer who would bring his expertise in photomontage, typography, exhibition, poster and book design to Berlin in the 1920s. The foundation of Lissitzky's career lay in his belief in "goal-oriented creation"⁹ and the idea that the artist could serve as an agent for change. While in Germany, Lissitzky shared his theories through lectures and commercial works, some of which left their marks on the Bauhaus and De Stijl movements.

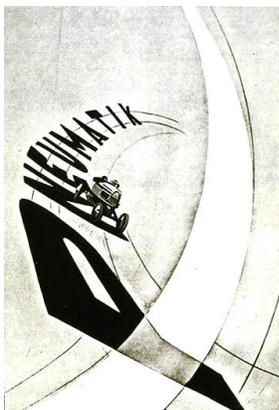


Lissitzky illustration, 1927

Founded in 1919 by Walter Gropius, the Bauhaus School existed in Germany during the lull between the first and second World Wars. The Bauhaus represented the first model of the modern art school, whose teachings and style of would have a profound influence on developments in Modernist architecture and design. While the aim of the school was to bridge the gap between art and industry, it represented an antithesis to the Arts and Crafts movement in many ways. Embracing 20th century machine-culture, the school's focus was noticeably urban and technological, emulating the machine aesthetic's reduction to the essential in its approach to design.¹⁰ The graphic design that came out of the school was characterized by unadorned type prints, whose layout was articulated by areas of color highlighting distinct symbols and type elements. Bauhaus professor Moholy-Nagy stressed the underlying function of typography as a

⁹ Anna Glazova, "El Lissitzky in Weimar Germany", *Speaking In Tongues*. Accessed 17 Aug 2011. <http://spintongues.msk.ru/glazova27eng.htm>.

¹⁰ "The Bauhaus," *History of Graphic Design: A Graphic Design Primer*. Accessed 12 Aug 2011. <http://www.designhistory.org/Bauhaus3.html>.



Nagy typophoto, 1923

medium for communication, and that clarity of message was paramount. Nagy experimented with interrelated compositions of text and photography as a visual medium for pure communication, offering some of the earliest instance of word and image used together in a graphic setting. He later coined the term “typophoto” to describe his so-called “new visual literature.”¹¹

During both world wars, avant-garde artists from all over Europe fled to the neutral haven of Switzerland, bringing with them influences of Constructivism, De Stijl and the Bauhaus which ultimately resulted in the creation of the Swiss International Style. This new design style represented the graphic design equivalent of Modernism, void of any visual references to one particular history, culture or tradition making it highly adaptable on a global scale. The Swiss style was typified by mathematically ordered but asymmetrical visual structures, sans-serif typefaces, and a highly structured, rational, and objective visual presentation.¹²

The first seeds of American graphic design were planted as new reproductive technologies advanced the arts of typesetting and printmaking, and as Modernists emigrated to the States from post-war Europe. These European émigrés saw design as “a balanced process involving the powerful multiple modes of seeing and reading, [with] the possibility of theory and methods as guiding the creative process—the first rudimentarily seeds of professionalism.”¹³

¹¹ Phillip B. Meggs, *Type and Image: The Language of Graphic Design*. (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1992), 329.

¹² “The History of Posters,” *History of Graphic Design: A Graphic Design Primer*. Accessed 12 Aug 2011. http://www.designhistory.org/The_History_of_Posters.html.

¹³ “Advertising: American Graphic Design,” *History of Graphic Design: A Graphic Design Primer*. Accessed 12 Aug 2011. http://www.designhistory.org/advertising_fall_08.html.

Several individuals were integral players in the early American advertising scene. Leo Burnett, whose career started in 1935 and spanned nearly six decades, was known as the “master of symbols”.¹⁴ Famous for divining such iconic corporate identities as the Marlboro Man, Pillsbury Dough Boy and the Jolly Green Giant, Burnett’s work centered around the belief that the “share of market” could only be built on “share of mind.” His designs worked to circumvent the critical thought of the educated viewer or consumer and instead tap into their subconscious. “The thought force of symbols,” he said, “we absorb it through our pores, without knowing we do so. By osmosis.”¹⁵ It was this targeting of the viewer’s subconscious that elevated the value of visual impressions in the advertising world to a new high. Burnett believed that it was only through “visual eloquence” that advertising could do its best work, and would encourage his staff to seek out “visual archetypes that would leave consumers with a brand picture engraved on their consciousness.”¹⁶

One of Burnett’s contemporaries was William Bernbach, one of the first “ad men” of his time to utilize a multidisciplinary approach to his advertising, teaming up art directors and copywriters to work on the same creative teams. Bernbach’s “concept approach” had a trademark simplicity and efficacy, pairing high-impact imagery with hip, often off-beat taglines. Perhaps the most infamous of



Bernbach Volkswagen campaign, 1950s-1960s

¹⁴ Stuart Ewen, “Leo Burnett: The Sultan of Sell,” *Time Magazine*. 7 Dec 1998, Accessed 20 Aug 2011. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,989783,00.html>.

¹⁵ ¹⁵ “Advertising: Leo Burnett,” *History of Graphic Design: A Graphic Design Primer*. Accessed 12 Aug 2011. http://www.designhistory.org/advertising_fall_08.html.

¹⁶ Ewen, “Leo Burnett: The Sultan of Sell,” *Time Magazine*. 1998.

Bernbach's campaigns was for Volkswagen, using tongue-in-cheek headlines such as "Lemon" and "Think Small" to promote the new Beetle. Bernbach was one of the leaders in what was considered advertising's "Creative Revolution of the 1960s and 70s"¹⁷, pushing copywriting into a realm of simplicity, honesty, and wit. To Bernbach, "Advertising is not a science, it is persuasion, and persuasion is an art, it is intuition that leads to discovery, to inspiration, it is the artist who is capable of making the consumer feel desire."¹⁸

It was this art of feeling and branding of the subconscious that began to push the boundaries of what "graphic design" was to incorporate a broader experience. The actual functions of the practice soon began to outstrip the term itself, instead ushering in the concept of communication design and visual communications. As the role of graphics and branding in American consumer culture began to expand, the arenas in which they functioned grew to encompass much more than simply print media and marketing material. "Graphic design is for communicating with people: audiences, viewers, readers, users, receivers, visitors, participants, interacters, players, passers-by, experiencers, members of the public, communities, inhabitants, consumers, customers, subscribers, and clients."¹⁹

At the heart of all graphic design is the communication with the viewer, but when introduced into an environmental setting, a spatial dimension is added to the mix making the communication an experience as well. The Society for Environmental Graphic Design (SEGD), was founded in 1973 as a global community focused on that juncture where communication design and the built

¹⁷ Paul Suggett, "The Changing Face of Copywriting: The Evolution of a Profession," About.com: Advertising. Accessed 13 Sept 2011. <http://advertising.about.com/od/careersource/a/The-Changing-Face-Of-Copywriting.htm>.

¹⁸ Mary Wells Lawrence, *A Big Life In Advertising* (New York, NY: Knopf, 2002), 2-3.

¹⁹ Alice Twemlow, *What Is Graphic Design For?* (Brighton, UK: Rotovision, 2006), 8.

environment meet. Visual relationships now span various scales and spaces, the most intimate space being the interior, where we spend upwards of 90% of our time.²⁰ People are no longer just presented with a graphic identity as something to view, they are offered an experience of it that they can live. “The customer goes to the Genius Bar at the Apple Store for education, the American Girl Place for afternoon tea, and the sushi bar at Whole Foods for a free taste of something new.”²¹

The designer world is becoming ever more interdisciplinary and collaborative, and new avenues are being explored as to how to communicate a brand narrative to the public. Said Victor Margolin in his interview with Felix Beltran, “We probably need another new term to describe what communication designers [now] do but I don’t know what that is.” And therein lies the premise for this study.²²

1.4 THE INTYPES RESEARCH AND TEACHING PROJECT

The Intypes (Interior Archetypes) Research and Teaching Project at Cornell University creates a typology of contemporary interior design practices that are derived from reiterative historical designs that span time and style and cross cultural boundaries. Intypes identify contemporary design practices that have not been named, thereby providing designers with an interior-specific, history and contemporary design vocabulary. The project also offers an innovative approach to further design criticism and design sustainability. The Intypes Project produces a new knowledge

²⁰ “Buildings and Their Impact on the Environment: A Statistical Summary,” last modified 22 Apr. 2009, <http://www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/pubs/gbstats.pdf>.

²¹ Alina Wheeler, *Designing Brand Identity: an essential guide for the entire branding team*, (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009), 8.

²² Victor Margolin. “Toward a History of Graphic Design”. Interview with Félix Béltran. 2000. Transcript obtained from The University of Illinois at Chicago, <http://tigger.uic.edu/~victor/articles.html>.

base for the creative dimension of design. It is the first project of its kind to assemble contemporary design theory in a searchable database using primary source imagery. The key deliverable is its web site—www.intypes.cornell.edu.²³

There are few research studies that examine how workplace interiors have been designed in terms of creating spatial experiences through color, display aesthetic, lighting, material, seating arrangement and spatial composition. There are no interpretive works or theoretical studies that have been written about interior design precedents for contemporary workplace design.²⁴

1.5 RESEARCH PROTOCOL

The Intypes Project’s methodological structure produces the first typology of interior design—a grouping of design productions in which some inherent characteristics make them similar.

Initially, the project derives types from the published work of designers. To discover that body of knowledge the graduate student researcher undertakes seven different staged protocols:

- 1) A content review and analysis of approximately 1,100 issues of trade magazines (primary sources) and secondary source materials. Research begins with tracing a series of design practices by conducting content surveys in primary sources, such as *Interior Design* and *Architectural Record*.
- 2) Identifying composites of traits that typify (through time) a dominant characteristic that has been used repeatedly by designers as interior architecture or design;
- 3) Isolating these traits by naming and defining them and illustrating examples chronologically;

²³ Jan Jennings, “A Case for a Typology of Design: The Interior Archetypes Project,” *Journal of Interior Design* 32, no. 3 (2007): 56.

²⁴ Jennings, “A Case for a Typology of Design,” 49.

- 4) Preliminary development and proposal (draft stage) of specific Intypes;
- 5) On-site field studies to various locations to test the Intypes developed from photographs in trade magazines against built projects;
- 6) Revising the Intypes based on observational evidence;
- 7) Developing the Intypes in the web-based format.²⁵

The methodological approach of the thesis is historical, theoretical, and critical. Thinking about design precedents as a continuum, or a series of replications, owes much to George Kubler's *The Shape of Time*. Kubler believes that every important work can be regarded both as historical event and as a hard-won solution to some problem. To him, every solution links to a problem to which there have been other solutions. As the solutions accumulate, a conception of a sequence forms. The boundaries of a sequence are marked by the linked solutions describing early and late stages of effort upon a problem. In the long run, a sequence may serve as scaffolding for new design.²⁶ Other theorists, such as Robert Maxwell approach design history similarly. According to Maxwell, the dialectic of the new and old is a complex one, "for within the new there is something of the old, which precisely renders the new recognizable; and within the old the new is already pregnant."²⁷

Some sequences of historical or theoretical solutions may come and go over time, but many become so powerful that they represent continuity. The Intypes become the basis for

²⁵ Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design," 53-55.

²⁶ George Kubler, *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1962), 31-82, in Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design," 49.

²⁷ Robert Maxwell, *Polemics. The Two Way Stretch: Modernism: Tradition and Innovation* (London: Academy Editions, 1996), 12, in Jennings, "A Case for a Typology of Design," 48-68.

understanding the relationship between contemporary design and historic precedents in interior design.²⁸

An Intypes researcher may choose to look for design traits historically and moving forward to present practice, while others may analyze traits from the present and work backwards. I used a combination of both approaches, starting with a historic content survey and then realizing that much of contemporary practice would likely help define the parameters of my study. It was in the overlap of these two surveys where I found the strongest cases for my study, strengthening some earlier hypotheses and leading me to discard others.

1.6 GENERAL LITERATURE REVIEW

The following offers a general summary of the sources for this thesis that were found to be the most useful in understanding the evolution of graphic and interior design practices as they pertain to the definition of Spatial Graphic Design as a new area of study.

Primary Sources

I made use of both primary and secondary sources in my research. Primary source materials are documents or artifacts closest to the period of time being studied, and may include letters, newspapers, photographs, audio recordings, to name a few. In this study, trade journals such as *Interior Design* offer a first hand look at the designs used in the interiors of a given day. *Interior Design* began publication in 1932, providing extensive photographic documentation of interior design practice from the early 20th century to present day. My survey of this publication focused

²⁸ Jan Jennings, "Dialectic of New and Old: Theory Investigations in Studio Design," *Interiors and Sources* (Mar. 2003): 74-77.

on publications from the 1960s onward, over 1,000 issues in total. While I considered a survey of *Architectural Record*, I ultimately found most of the spaces it documented irrelevant to my study, as the focus was primarily on the exterior and overall architecture of the space.

Additionally, I made use of an interview with published scholar and design history professor Victor Margolin, done by Félix Béltran. In *Toward a History of Graphic Design*, Margolin explains the challenges of drafting a thorough history of the practice, and the idea that graphic communications of all kinds are ultimately rooted in the cultural and societal context in which they are presented. Margolin's interview spoke to many of the challenges that I myself encountered in my research, and made a call for some definitive research about graphic design and its history.

I was also fortunate enough to interview Beth Novitsky, a Senior Graphic Designer Gensler's New York office²⁹. Gensler is a highly renowned international architecture firm whose services, among Architecture, Interior Design, Planning and others, include Brand Design. This Brand Design studio includes a department dedicated specifically to Environmental Graphic Design, making Gensler one of the first of a few firms acknowledging and championing this specific discipline as a unique and meaningful practice area. Speaking with Novitsky offered an inside look at the growing field from the perspective of a practicing professional, providing insights into how her graphics team worked with clients to develop a vision into a finished product, how the EGD studio interacted with the rest of the Gensler firm, and where she saw the practice going in the future.

²⁹ Juliana Daily, "Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design" (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 113-125).

Secondary Sources

There are few, if any, academic or scholarly works written specifically on Environmental Graphic Design, and none on my particular area of focus, Spatial Graphic Design. This afforded me the freedom to explore the topic myself, making for an exciting and new study, though it also made for little precedent or specific historical context to help frame my research.

The following texts are those I found most useful in understanding the history, practice, and critical thought surrounding graphic design, which in turn helped inform my own analysis and definition of the relationship these graphic elements have within spatial interiors.

What Is Graphic Design For? (2006) by Alice Twemlow tries to answer the ever pressing question of how to define Graphic Design and the role that it plays. The text explores various factors that shape a design practice and the way it functions in a society – from ethics and theory, to technology and culture. Twemlow discusses the role that the graphic designer plays as a multimedia communicator – working in different settings, with different mediums, to relay a message or idea to different kinds of people – and how of this presentation of information is becoming ever more interdisciplinary.

Type and Image: The Language of Graphic Design (1992) by Philip B. Meggs analyzes and explains the basic elements essential to the communicative nature of graphic design – signs, symbols, text, images, forms – which he calls “graphic resonance”. Grounded in a succinct history of early symbol-making, Meggs’ text explains the evolution of graphic design, its duality

as a language of communication and visual form, and the way that we as viewers are able to comprehend its message. Meggs also stresses the importance of the context and visual literacy of the audience in bringing meaning to the information being presented. The foundation of much of my study is based on this very idea that it is context – a spatial interior, specifically – which shapes the interpretation of a given graphic vocabulary.

Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide For The Entire Branding Team (2009) by Alina Wheeler is an extremely comprehensive guide to understanding the creation and function of a brand identity. Wheeler carefully outlines specifics such as color, type, signage, as well as overall environment, and explains how these elements come together to form an emotionally resonant, lifelong relationship between consumer and brand. In particular, Wheeler's text acknowledges a whole systems approach to branding where experience is paramount. This idea is the basis for the narrative of place that exemplifies Spatial Graphic Design.

Contemporary Color Theory & Use (2005) by Steven Bleicher was most relevant to my writing of Colorbrand, speaking to ways color is perceived from both a physiological and emotive standpoint. Bleicher's text offers insights on traditional color theory and color systems, as well as color application and its effect in different environments.

1.7 ANALYSIS AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The research and subsequent analysis of this thesis study resulted in the identification, naming, and development of 5 new Spatial Graphic Design Intypes: Repeat Repeat, Colorbrand, Understate, Activate, and Saturate. As these new Intypes span multiple practice areas, including

retail, hospitality, showroom, and workplace, among others, Spatial Graphic Design falls more readily into the category of “element” rather than a distinct practice area. Other elemental Intype categories include Light, Material and Transformative Interior.

Throughout my research, I found the most interesting and exemplary instances of SGD within the past two decades, and can conclude that its use is becoming ever more prevalent to current interior design practices. This increased exploration and use of Spatial Graphic Design points to future growth and evolution of such design elements and strategies.

1.8 ASSESSMENT OF RESEARCH

Tackling an area of design that has yet to be studied presented several challenges from a research standpoint. The lack of a strong body of published works or research documents on the subject gave me little precedent to base the structure of my own research on. I spent a significant portion of my initial research phase trying to find the best way to organize, sort, and define categories for my findings. Ultimately, portions of my findings were necessarily discarded as they were too general or lacked sufficient evidence to make them relevant to my overall study. While this was initially frustrating, I ultimately found there was much to be gained from such a thorough survey, allowing me to be more highly selective in choosing examples of best fit to support my Intypes.

In surveying the trade journals, early black and white photographs made it difficult to distinguish any use of a color palette related to the brand vocabulary. Also, many spaces were not documented in full, often only showing a featured space such as a lobby or common area. Because my study focuses on the experience of a brand narrative throughout the entirety of an

interior space, this lack of thorough documentation often made it difficult for me to draw conclusions about the interior as a whole. More successfully, I frequently found the accompanying text in the trade journal articles to be a helpful tool in my analysis. It often described the company for whom the space was designed, allowing me to further research their brand and draw conclusions as to how it was articulated in the space.

Due to scheduling and travel constraints, I was unable to interview as many architecture and design firms as I would have liked to gain more perspective about the current use and future of Environmental and Spatial Graphic Design. My interview with Gensler's Beth Novitsky was both interesting and extremely insightful, and I would have liked to be able to compare her thoughts with those of other practicing professionals.

Conclusion

The completion of this thesis has been an exciting and challenging endeavor, ultimately adding to the expanse of knowledge already compiled as a part of the Intypes Research and Teaching Project. It is my hope that my contribution to the Intypes Project will serve as a resource for both students and practicing professionals, offering historic grounding and a vocabulary with which to discuss, analyze, and understand interiors as they relate to elements of graphic design.

In this first study, I hope that I have laid the groundwork for future scholars to build upon my research and further develop the Spatial Graphic Design Intypes. I am exceptionally proud to have pushed myself into a realm of relative academic unknown and fashioned a body of work based solely upon my own analysis and conclusions. This thesis has allowed me to explore what

it means to be a researcher and a historian, testing my analytical skills and building my confidence in my own intellect. As this thesis investigates a very new area of study, I am excited to see how this topic is developed, questioned, and explored by future scholars and practicing professionals alike.

CHAPTER 2
REPEAT REPEAT

Definition

Repeat Repeat is a brand strategy referring to the reiterative use of a graphic element, color application or spatial motif in multiple locations and/or scales within an interior space. This practice is implemented as a means to reinforce an occupant's sense of place and to establish brand identity within the interior. This strategy is generally used in conditions of elevated brand intervention (Activate, Saturate).

Description

The Interior Archetypes Activate and Saturate are concepts, the umbrella ideas, for designing Spatial Graphic Designed interiors. Repeat Repeat (and Colorbrand) are strategies that may be used to create one of the concepts.

Repeat Repeat relies on taking a singular visual element within an interior space and using it multiple times. This strategy can take on varying forms, depending on which element is being repeated and in what way. Most commonly repeated elements include a company logo or name, decorative patterns, and structural geometric forms, although others, such as repeated imagery/icons of a similar style, may also be included. Instances of Repeat Repeat are typically confined to a planar, two-dimensional application on a horizontal or vertical surface, or are a three-dimensional, geometric extrusion that is situated structurally within the space.

The earliest instances of Repeat Repeat were presented primarily through the recurring use of a brand logo or logotype. In the most general sense, a logo is a visual representation associated with a company or organization that serves as an identifying visual element. It is often

characterized by a name, monogram, emblem, symbol or some combination of such graphic components, designed to be easily recognized and remembered.

The origin of and techniques that gradually led to the use of modern day logos date back tens of thousands of years, arguably to the stamping of early coins and decorative coats of arms.

Merchant's marks or the trademark seals used to denote the commercial goods of seafaring traders, have been dated back as far as the Bronze Age (approximately 3000 BCE).³⁰ Often a combination of simple letterforms and decorative aesthetic elements, these marks represented the earliest of trademark emblems and were continued to be used by traders, craftsmen and artisans for centuries as a means to authenticate and identify their wares.

With the Industrial Revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries came a period of profound change in the expression, production and printing of letterforms, much accredited to the invention of the printing press. Developments in photography and lithography further allowed image and type to be combined as a singular expression.

It was at this time that poster art became a popular form of expression and advertising. Bolstered by means of mass production and the development of inexpensive printing techniques, posters were used for everything from playbills and placards to government proclamations and announcements. While the advent of chromolithography allowed for the printing of vibrant colors, the venue of the poster allowed for creative typographic expressions as well. Moving far beyond the legible, modest serif typefaces found in printed books, the typography used in poster

³⁰ D.H. Kelley and B. Wells, "Recent Progress in Understanding the Indus Script," *Review of Archaeology* 16, no. 1 (1995): 15-23.

art became increasingly bold and ornamental, fostering new styles and means of visual communication.

As a response to the mass-production heyday of the Industrial Revolution, the late 19th century Arts and Crafts Movement ushered in a renewed interest in honest craftsmanship and one-of-a-kind wares. With this pride of artisanry came a desire to take ownership and credit for these unique works.³¹ With this came the creation of individual logos and trademarks, much like the merchant's marks of old.

Simultaneously, a derivative form of the visual expression used in poster art was being applied to manufactured goods. Some of the earliest uses of a visual component to supplement a product's brand identity came through the use of paintings. For American chocolate manufacturer Baker's, the decision to use Swiss artist Jean-Étienne Liotard's *La Belle Chocolatiere* (The Chocolate Girl) to brand the packages of their breakfast cocoa came in 1872.³² The company then formally adopted the artwork as its trademark image in 1883. Remarkably, the image is still used in Baker's marketing today, well over a century later. The longevity of a brand such as Baker's speaks to the strength that such iconic imagery has as a part of the visual vocabulary that makes up a lasting brand identity.

While the Baker's Chocolate Girl is noted as the first US trademark, the earliest registered trademark symbol belonged to Britain's Bass Brewery. The brewery's distinctive red triangle

³¹ Philip B. Meggs, *A History of Graphic Design* (John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998), 162–67.

³² Ronald Hambleton, *The Branding of America* (Dublin, NH: Yankee Publishing Incorporated, 1987), 11-12.

and script *Bass* company name was trademarked in 1876.³³ This marked the first combined use of graphic symbol and logotype, the precursor the current era of logo design.

Beginning in the 1950s, contemporary logo design developed from the European Modernist movement, which by this point had become an international, commercially integrated part of popular culture. Logo design was characterized by Mies van der Rohe's infamous mantra that "less is more", making clarity of message and visual simplicity paramount to the design process.³⁴

Logos today take many forms, with varying combinations of text, symbol or icon, color and various other graphic elements. The strength of the logo lies in its ability to convey a message a simple and powerful way, as well as its ability to foster brand recognition. When used in a spatial setting, a logo can strengthen the association between the visual brand identity and the spatial experience of a related interior environment and the products and services that it houses. This association is furthered when the logo is used repeatedly throughout the space. In these instances, people no longer simply view the brand, they experience it.

Chronological Sequence

In 1967 Raleigh, North Carolina's North Hills Shopping Center was home to countless vendors and retailers, including J. B. Ivey & Company's department store.³⁵ Fig. 2.11. Department

³³ Celia Lury, *Brands: The Logos of the Global Economy* (London: Routledge, 2004), 83.

³⁴ Meggs, *A History of Graphic Design*, 407.

³⁵ North Hills Shopping Center [1967] Lebalme Associates; Raleigh, NC in Anonymous, "Design Within Design," *Interior Design* 38, no. 4 (Apr. 1967): 206-207; PhotoCrd: Gil Amiaga.

stores, pioneered in Paris in the late 1860s³⁶, are known for the wide selection of merchandise that they offer, often selling everything from clothing to home goods and electronics, all within one, large retail footprint. These departments of goods are often further arranged by brand, especially in areas of apparel. Goods of a particular brand are clustered together within the department, making for ease of shopping for customers as well as more seamless back-end operations of re-stocking, bookkeeping and inventory. Often, a signage system is implemented to help customers navigate the various departments, which is usually accompanied by a brand kiosk of sorts to denote the brand clusters within the larger department.



Fig. 2.11. North Hills Shopping Center [1967] Lebalme Associates; Raleigh, NC in Anonymous, “Design Within Design,” *Interior Design* 38, no. 4 (Apr. 1967): 206; PhotoCrd: Gil Amiaga.

Within such a labyrinth of products and name brands, it is easy to see where the identity of the department store as a whole may get lost amongst its various component parts. In J. B. Ivey’s, a calculated effort was made to establish a clear sense of place for consumers within the store.

Situated on a plinth (likely at a central loci where several departments met), a double-height,

³⁶ Matthew Beaumont, “Shopping in Utopia: Looking Backward, the Department Store, and the Dreamscape of Consumption,” *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 28, no. 3 (2006): 191-209.

floor to ceiling panel was stamped in a 14x8 grid with the word “IVEYS”. This large-scale tiling of the company name was flanked by two spherical sconces and served as a backdrop for a well-dressed female mannequin and a decorative, freestanding shelving unit adorned with various decorative home goods. The introductory scene was set to welcome customers and give them a taste of all that Ivey’s various departments had to offer. While a sampling of various goods was shown, it was firmly anchored in the recurring assertion of Ivey’s name brand, serving as a reminder that no matter what department, or which wares, one was shopping at J. B. Ivey’s.

In Vidal Sassoon’s barber shop in New York’s 1970 Bonwit Teller’s, a vinyl wallcovering bore the tiled pattern of the company’s logo.³⁷ Fig. 2.12. The space, designed by Billy McCarty to exude the understated elegance of a “twenty-first century men’s club”, was filled with rich finishes and dark leather upholstery. Outfitted to serve as the image-conscious gentleman’s alternative to a high-end ladies beauty parlor, the décor was reserved in its proclamation of anything remotely salon-esque. Still, McCarty was careful to incorporate Vidal Sassoon’s brand as a part of the overall experience of the space. The repeated logo created a pattern adding visual interest to the otherwise conservative lobby space and helped to establish Vidal Sassoon’s brand at the customer’s point of entry.

³⁷ Vidal Sassoon [1971] Billy McCarty; New York City in Anonymous, “Vidal Sassoon’s Barber Shop,” *Interior Design* 42, no. 10 (Oct. 1971): 144-45; PhotoCrd: Louis Reens.



Fig. 2.12. Vidal Sassoon [1971] Billy McCarty; New York City in Anonymous, “Vidal Sassoon’s Barber Shop,” *Interior Design* 42, no. 10 (Oct. 1971): 144; PhotoCrd: Louis Reens.

These two instances (Ivey’s and Vidal Sassoon) exhibited Repeat Repeat as a singular planar element, with a logo or brand name tiled on a surface to create a contiguous visual experience on that plane. When viewed as a whole, a tiled grouping of such elements created a pattern, thus serving a decorative function as well as playing a part in scripting the interior space’s brand narrative.

With the early 1970s came the advent of another variation on the Repeat Repeat strategy—the use of geometric forms and visual motifs in multiple locations. Hygiene Industries, a shower curtain manufacturer, sought to do just that with its New York showroom.³⁸ Fig. 2.13. Designer Harriette Levine styled Hygiene’s space to defy the “commercial” and “ordinary” precedents established by its peers and to give its showroom a true sense of corporate identity. The unifying motif used in the space was the geometry of a rounded rectangle, which evolved from the

³⁸ Hygiene Industries Showroom [1972] Harriette Levine, interior design; New York City in Anonymous, “Hygiene Industries,” *Interior Design* 43, no. 4 (Apr. 1972): 164-67; PhotoCrd: Anonymous.

rounded corners of the space's existing front doors. This motif was then translated to display units along the space's perimeter, showcasing tasteful domestic vignettes, as well as to metal frames used as racks for hanging additional swathes of curtains. In addition to displaying products, this geometry was interpreted as a scaled down pattern for a wall covering found near the rear of the showroom. The motif also offered more than just the visual experience of display or décor. The motif also defined the spatial experience with the use of rounded rectangle archways.



Fig. 2.13. Hygiene Industries Showroom [1972] Harriette Levine, interior design; New York City in Anonymous, "Hygiene Industries," *Interior Design* 43, no. 4 (Apr. 1972): 164-67; PhotoCrd: Anonymous.

Hawaii's Pearlridge Shopping center (1973) playfully dispersed its brand throughout the large floor plate, making for a unified spatial experience as customers moved through the corridors

and common areas amongst its 170 retail spaces.³⁹ Fig. 2.14. Three concentric, colored arches made up the mall's original logo, which was suspended at regular intervals from the ceiling plane over the wide thoroughfares running through the perimeter of stores. In addition to these mobile-like expressions of the logo, which varied slightly in orientation and color to add visual interest, variations \ were also expressed as structural elements throughout the space. Doubling as seating areas, sculptural geometries formed by extruding the logo's arches dotted the floor in a central atrium space, encouraging mingling and providing a point of respite. As with J. B. Ivey's department store, PearlrIDGE's abstracted use of its logo helped the mall solidify its own visual identity among the countless other retailers that it housed.



Fig. 2.14. PearlrIDGE Shopping Center [1973] Robert P. Gersin Associates, interior design; Oahu, HI in Anonymous, "PearlrIDGE Shopping Center," *Interior Design* 44, no. 4 (Apr. 1973): 106-108; PhotoCrd: Augie Salbosa.

³⁹ PearlrIDGE Shopping Center [1973] Robert P. Gersin Associates, interior design; Oahu, HI in Anonymous, "PearlrIDGE Shopping Center," *Interior Design* 44, no. 4 (Apr. 1973): 106-111; PhotoCrd: Augie Salbosa.

Across the country in upstate New York, the humble interior of the burger and sandwich shop E.A.T. was outfitted in white tiles and light wood paneling.⁴⁰ Fig. 2.15. Color was introduced by way of light fixtures (a vibrant teal) and hanging banners that punctuated the periphery of the ceiling plane. On these orange banners, the restaurant's moniker was spelled in capitalized teal letters. First introduced on the glass pane of the restaurant's front door, the reiteration of the name on the interior provided visual interest and rhythm to the otherwise unadorned space, leading visitors from the entry back towards the rear of the space where the service counter was located.



Fig. 2.15. E.A.T. Restaurant [1979] Stockman & Manners Associates; upstate, NY in Anonymous, “E.A.T.: In Upstate New York,” *Interior Design* 50, no. 10 (Oct. 1979): 237; PhotoCrd: George Cserna.

In a mixture of both geometric form and planar instances of Repeat Repeat, designers at RMM, Inc. made clever use of Stein Roe & Farnham's logo when crafting a space for the mutual fund.⁴¹ Fig. 2.16. The logo was made of three consecutive rectangular pillars, incrementally increasing in height and all canted to the right, mimicking the italicized font that they flanked. Designers borrowed the logo's geometries as the basis for the construction of partial-height wall partitions

⁴⁰ E.A.T. Restaurant [1979] Stockman & Manners Associates; Upstate, NY in Anonymous, “E.A.T.: In Upstate New York,” *Interior Design* 50, no. 10 (Oct. 1979): 237; PhotoCrd: George Cserna.

⁴¹ Stein Roe & Farnham Funds Center [1983] RMM, Inc.; Chicago, IL in Anonymous, “Offices Under 10,000 Square Feet,” *Interior Design* 54, no. 11 (Nov. 1983): 184-185; PhotoCrd: Howard Kaplan.

between various workspaces. The three-dimensional extrusion of the logo's basic geometric structure served a space planning function, separating the multiple brokers' workstations. It also created a tempoed spatial experience with the regular, rhythmic placement of the partitions while solidifying the space's sense of identity with the reiterative use of the company logo.

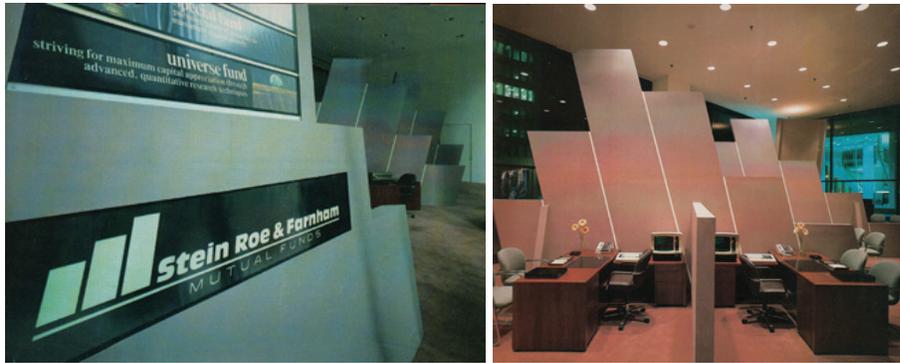


Fig. 2.16. Stein Roe & Farnham Funds Center [1983] RMM, Inc.; Chicago, IL in Anonymous, "Offices Under 10,000 Square Feet," *Interior Design* 54, no. 11 (Nov. 1983): 184-85; PhotoCrd: Howard Kaplan.

With the design of the Becton Dickinson, a medical technology company based in California, Gensler and Associates was presented with the challenge of unifying the overall campus.⁴² Fig. 2.17. The project was a renovation, with Becton Dickinson moving into a space that once housed an old electronics production company. The existing complex consisted of three steel frame buildings connected by a central atrium. As a part of the rehabilitation, Gensler designer Christine Banks looked for way to connect the sprawling interior, settling on a series of "geometric garden elements" that dotted the length of the atrium space. Three-sided square enclosures made up of white slats enclosed "pool areas" of blue tile that were each fed by four yellow cast-concrete fountain spheres. Many of the pools of water also accommodated cylindrical red-tile planters that housed lush greenery. A total of twelve of these pool areas ran

⁴² Becton Dickinson [1991] Gensler; San Francisco, CA in Monica Geran, "Becton Dickinson," *Interior Design* 62, no. 8 (Aug. 1991): 100-104; PhotoCrd: Nick Merrick/Hedrich Blessing.

along the 400-foot atrium space, offering an aesthetic feast of primary color and repeated pattern. For a space as large as the Becton Dickinson headquarters, the atrium space, which connected the three buildings both literally and visually, was key to a unified experience of the overall interior.



Fig. 2.17. Becton Dickinson [1991] Gensler; San Francisco, CA in Monica Geran, “Becton Dickinson,” *Interior Design* 62, no. 8 (Aug. 1991): 100, 102-103; PhotoCrd: Nick Merrick/Hedrich Blessing.

A saturated example of Repeat Repeat can be found in Manhattan’s Caroline’s Comedy Club.⁴³

Fig. 2.18. The diamond motif, reminiscent of a colorful Harlequin (Intype),⁴⁴ began with the

⁴³ Caroline’s Comedy Club [1993] Haigh Architects; New York City in Edie Cohen, “Haigh Architects,” *Interior Design* 64, no. 2 (Feb. 1993): 136-41; PhotoCrd: Elliott Kaufman.

⁴⁴ The Interior Archetype *Harlequin* refers to a checkered pattern (alternating colored squares) oriented in a 90° or a 45° angle typically made of marble, wood, or clay tiles. It has been identified in both house and hotel practice types. <http://intypes.cornell.edu/intypesub.cfm?inTypeID=1> (accessed Sep. 7, 2011)

marquee on Broadway, making the comedy club an iconic fixture in New York City's Theater District. The Harlequin motif carried through to the minutest of elements in the interior. It was used on almost every surface possible—from the walls flanking the stage to the table tops from which audience members could enjoy a drink while watching the show. Harlequin was even used on the restroom doors. The front panel of the bar, as well as the wall following the gentle curve of the staircase leading upstairs, showcased this bold diamond pattern. The diamonds, all rich in color, ranged from crimson to marigold, umber to vibrant green, and were all cast on a black background.



Fig. 2.18. Carolines Comedy Club [1993] Haigh Architects; New York City in Edie Cohen, "Haigh Architects," *Interior Design* 64, no. 2 (Feb. 1993): 136-140; PhotoCrd: Elliott Kaufman.

Marta Mendez, "Theory Studies: Archetypal Practices of Contemporary House Design." M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2008, 76-87; Nathan James Wasilewski, "Theory Studies: Archetypal Practices of Contemporary Hotel Design." M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2011, 55-81.

Joe Boxer is a brand name notorious for its playful, winking smiley faces and the bright colors used in its underwear line.⁴⁵ Fig. 2.19. Its New York City showroom, intended to be just as fun of an experience, capitalized on the products' vibrant colors and graphics as a Repeat Repeat. Visitors were introduced to the spirited aesthetic of the space upon first entry into the showroom's lobby. Bold black and white striped ceiling fabric complimented supersized iterations of the company name, repeated on both the floor and walls. Mirrors reminiscent of a funhouse played up the lighthearted whimsy of the interior, and were carried through to the main floor of the showroom.



Fig. 2.19. Joe Boxer New York Showroom [1999] FTL Happold; New York City in Anonymous, “That’s Entertainment,” *Interior Design* 70, no. 4 (Apr. 1999): 220-22; PhotoCrd: Elliott Kaufman.

⁴⁵ Joe Boxer New York Showroom [1999] FTL Happold; New York City in Anonymous, “That’s Entertainment,” *Interior Design* 70, no. 4 (Apr. 1999): 220-22; PhotoCrd: Elliott Kaufman.

Joe Boxer's space itself was a White Box, letting the furnishings and products create the palette. The same bold stripes from the entryway adorned cartoonish exaggerated pieces of furniture, and the JOE BOXER name ran vertically up the panels of almost every display system. Quotes pushed the brand concept even further: "The brand is the amusement park. The product is the souvenir" and "Have you driven a brand lately?".

For Swiss company Vitra's Los Angeles showroom, it was the products that ultimately translated into the space's repeated graphic motif.⁴⁶ Fig. 2.21. The interior renovation of the two brick buildings, originally a 7,000-square-foot 1940s Air Force recruiting center, was a collaborative effort by designers at Sevil Peach Gence Associates and New York City's graphics team 2x4. The space was gutted, revealing a timber bow-truss ceiling as well as a slew of challenging spatial divisions, both in the separation of the buildings and in a twenty-eight inch disparity in elevation. For designers, the challenge was connecting two disparate buildings both physically and visually. The change in elevation was resolved with a gentle, sloping interior ramp, making for an ADA compliant solution that was both functional and aesthetically pleasing. The two buildings were joined by wood-decked patio with an overhead trellis, serving to transition between the white epoxy concrete floors of the front building to the maple flooring in the back.

⁴⁶ Vitra Showroom [2003] Sevil Peach Gence Associates; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, "Vitra, Va-Va-Voom," *Interior Design* 74, no. 1 (Jan. 2003): 204-11; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.



Fig. 2.21. Vitra Showroom [2003] Sevil Peach Gence Associates; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, “Vitra, Va-Va-Voom,” *Interior Design* 74, no. 1 (Jan. 2003): 204-07, 211; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

In both Vitra buildings, furniture was laid out comfortably as if it were a home rather than a furniture warehouse, making the expansive interior more accessible. Without a partitioning system, other tools had to be implemented to bring order and cohesion to the space. The iconic and often sculptural furniture housed in the showroom, was translated into supergraphics that dotted perimeter walls of the space, turning a Maarten van Severen .03 chair into a spiraling shell, and a Panton Heart Cone into a kaleidoscope-like circular array. These abstractions made for a consistent graphic presentation of the furniture, used throughout the space to offer a unique visual presentation of the showroom’s wares.

From its humble beginnings in 1940 as a wholesale butter and egg shop, Murray's Cheese grew as an established brand, becoming a destination hotspot in New York's Greenwich Village.⁴⁷ Fig. 2.22. The cheese shop, which now boasts two Manhattan locations, expanded both in size and in range of services. It offers classes, catering and private events, and a three-day cheese boot camp. The flagship Greenwich location was tucked in among other food related retail stores (Amy's Bread, The Lobster Place, Faccio's Italian Specialties) on the tree-lined corner of Bleecker and Leroy. The wide array of small specialty food shops and bodegas lining the street earned the name "Sandwich Alley".

Not one to get lost in a crowd, Murray's bold storefront was a standout on the street corner. A horizontal, mustard colored sign ran flush with the building's façade, reading "THIS IS MURRAY'S CHEESE". Its logo, a vivid red in a classic ballpark script, is written on a gently ascending diagonal, a wonderful contrast to the white, sans-serif block letters that surround it. Below this sign, the shop's awning borrowed the red of the logo with the words "cheese" and "dairy" printed in the contrasting mustard yellow.

⁴⁷ Murray's Cheese [2011] Magdalena Keck Interior Design; New York City; Site Visit, Juliana Daily, 31 Mar. 2011; PhotoCrd: Juliana Daily, Intypes Project, 31 Mar. 2011.



Fig. 2.22. Murray's Cheese [2011] Magdalena Keck Interior Design; New York City; Site Visit, Juliana Daily, 31 Mar. 2011; PhotoCrd: Juliana Daily, Intypes Project, 31 Mar. 2011.

This initial presentation of the company's brand identity set the stage for the palette used throughout the rest of the interior. Inside, the shop was a hubbub of all things Murray's, a mixture of clean, bold graphics, hand-lettered chalk boards and rustic wooden crates. A dropped soffit behind the deli counter was painted the bright red of the Murray's logo with large, yellow block letters filling every inch. The words offered tasty cheese descriptors (decadent, bold, lingering, savory, nutty) establishing a text-block motif used in various applications elsewhere in the store. Shelves and coolers were stacked high with every kind of cheese imaginable, each tagged with custom Murray's labels bearing the same string of colorful text found behind the deli. Even cheese paper was for sale, carefully rolled and secured with individual red and yellow Murray's ribbons. The company colors made for a saturated theme, covering every painted wall, every piece of signage, and every chalkboard frame. Given the space's relatively small size and

high density of merchandise, the brand experience was even more highly saturated and sensory. Already known for being the oldest cheese shop in New York, Murray's made and maintained a name for itself as being the best.

Repeat Repeat is one of the oldest and most utilized archetypical practices associated with Spatial Graphic Design. Also seen in the Johnson & Johnson Headquarters (Understate) and the Night Hotel (Activate), Repeat Repeat is a strategy for designing spatial experiences.

Evidence for the archetypal use and the chronological sequence of Repeat Repeat in Spatial Graphic Design was developed from New York City site visits to Murray's Cheese and Louis Vuitton in 2011 and from the following primary sources: **1960** North Hills Shopping Center [1967] Lebalme Associates; Raleigh, NC in Anonymous, "Design Within Design," *Interior Design* 38, no. 4 (Apr. 1967): 206-207; PhotoCrd: Gil Amiaga / **1970** Vidal Sassoon [1971] Billy McCarty; New York City in Anonymous, "Vidal Sassoon's Barber Shop," *Interior Design* 42, no. 10 (Oct. 1971): 144-45; PhotoCrd: Louis Reens; Hygiene Industries Showroom [1972] Harriette Levine, interior design; New York City in Anonymous, "Hygiene Industries," *Interior Design* 43, no. 4 (Apr. 1972): 164-67; PhotoCrd: Anonymous; Pearlridge Shopping Center [1973] Robert P. Gersin Associates, interior design; Oahu, HI in Anonymous, "Pearlridge Shopping Center," *Interior Design* 44, no. 4 (Apr. 1973): 106-111; PhotoCrd: Auge Salbosa; E.A.T. Restaurant [1979] Stockman & Manners Associates; Upstate, NY in Anonymous, "E.A.T.: In Upstate New York," *Interior Design* 50, no. 10 (Oct. 1979): 237; PhotoCrd: George Cserna / **1980** Stein Roe & Farnham Funds Center [1983] RMM, Inc.; Chicago, IL in Anonymous, "Offices Under 10,000 Square Feet," *Interior Design* 54, no. 11 (Nov. 1983): 184-185; PhotoCrd: Howard Kaplan / **1990** Becton Dickinson [1991] Gensler; San Francisco, CA in Monica Geran, "Becton Dickinson," *Interior Design* 62, no. 8 (Aug. 1991): 100-104; PhotoCrd: Nick Merrick/Hedrich Blessing; Caroline's Comedy Club [1993] Haigh Architects; New York City in Edie Cohen, "Haigh Architects," *Interior Design* 64, no. 2 (Feb. 1993): 136-41; PhotoCrd: Elliott Kaufman; Joe Boxer New York Showroom [1999] FTL Happold; New York City in Anonymous, "That's Entertainment," *Interior Design* 70, no. 4 (Apr. 1999): 220-22; PhotoCrd: Elliott Kaufman / **2000** Vitra Showroom [2003] Sevil Peach Gence Associates; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, "Vitra, Va-Va-Voom," *Interior Design* 74, no. 1 (Jan. 2003): 204-11; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

CHAPTER 3
COLORBRAND

Definition

Colorbrand is a brand strategy characterized by the use of color in an interior space as an explicit representation of the space's brand identity. This color is most often derived from the company logo or graphic identity and is the principal color or colors used on an otherwise neutral interior palette. This strategy is used at all levels of the strategic continuum of brand intervention (Understate, Activate, Saturate).

Description

The Interior Archetypes Understate, Activate and Saturate are concepts, the umbrella ideas, for designing Spatial Graphic Designed interiors. Colorbrand (and Repeat Repeat) are strategies that may be used to create one of the concepts.

In receiving and interpreting sensory stimuli from the world around us, our brains rely most heavily on visual inputs—with upwards of 80% of our sensory inputs being visual. Thus, the associations and perceptions triggered by color play an essential role in our experience of and interaction with our surroundings.

“Color is, in some sense, most closely related to music. They both have rhythm and harmony and are used to add emphasis and feeling. They can play directly on our sense and emotions and bypass our conscious minds, or they can be used for purely intellectual pursuits. There is a poetic aspect to each that can be hard to define.”⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Steven Bleicher, *Contemporary Color Theory & Use* (Clifton Park, NY: Thomson/Delmar Learning, 2005), xv.

Color has always been heavily imbued with meaning. It helped our primitive ancestors distinguish between foods that were safe to eat and those that were potentially poisonous or spoiled. Color has been a symbol of status and wealth, a mark of belonging to various groups, and a symbol to mark rites of passage. Used to mark family crests, accompany religious rites, differentiate nationalistic flags, and designate teams, we have long relied on color as a means to both distinguish ourselves from one another and as a symbolic entity under which we can come together.

Research has shown that our response to color is total, with both emotive and physiological effects. Color's healing therapies have long been used in both traditional medicine and alternative therapies. Studies have found that spectral reds are more likely to increase skin temperature, raise blood pressure and elevate respiration, while opposing blues are more calming, lowering blood pressure, pulse and respiration.⁴⁹ These cooler blues and greens have also been found to be more welcoming, making it easier for individuals to adjust to new surroundings. For these reasons, use of these cool colors has been explored in medical settings as a means to bring calm to what is usually a stressful and uncertain environment.

In contrast, warmer colors make for a more highly stimulated environment and can even have an effect on our relationship with food and our appetites. The physiological stimulation from the bold, hot hues used in McDonald's, Burger King or Wendy's—all bright yellows, reds and oranges—are no accident. These colors increase appetite and speed of consumption, ideal for fast food settings where increased purchasing and high rates of turnover are a key part of the business

⁴⁹ Bleicher, *Contemporary Color Theory & Use*, 36-44.

model. And from a retail standpoint, a remarkable 60% of a consumer's decision to buy a product is based on color alone.⁵⁰

The emotive properties and physiological responses to color are now being actively harnessed as a branding tool. In studying the sequence of perception, scientists have documented the order in which the brain receives and interprets sensory stimuli—first shape, then color, and, finally, linguistic form.⁵¹ This knowledge of our neural hierarchies has shaped the way companies approach branding. Having the power to evoke emotion and convey personality, color plays an integral role in the construction of a visual identity. In developing a brand vocabulary, colors can be both unifying—tying together an overall brand—or used to distinguish various areas of brand architecture—subsidiary brands, different departments, various flavors, etc. Families of color are developed around the primary palette developed for the logo and logotype, and are often translated into marketing materials, packaging, and spatial environments.

This translation of brand aesthetic to interior environment creates a spatial expression of the brand narrative, connecting individuals in the space to the brand identity in a more immersive and emotive way.

Chronological Sequence

It is worth noting that in my content survey of *Interior Design*, articles were printed in black and white through the late 1960s making this Intype a challenging one to document in trade sources prior to that time. Additionally, the logos accompanying some examples (primarily from earlier

⁵⁰Alina Wheeler, *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide for the Entire Branding Team* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009), 128.

⁵¹Wheeler, *Designing Brand Identity*, 52.

decades) were unavailable. Therefore, visual analysis for these examples was based solely on the images provided.

Once color photography was introduced to design trade journals, one of the earliest instances of Colorbrand was found in Chicago's 1971 PDQ Carry Out restaurant.⁵² Fig. 3.11. The fast-service, carry out restaurant was a fairly understated space, with neutral tile walls and laminate wood booth seating. Floor tiles were much darker, but equally neutral in color. The only areas where color was introduced to this space were in the laminate table-tops and half-height partition walls separating the two rows of booths, as well as pendant lamps overhead.



Fig. 3.11. PDQ Carry Out [1971] ISD, Inc.; Chicago, IL in Anonymous, “Concourse Level Restaurants,” *Interior Design* 42, no. 10 (Oct. 1971): 125-26; PhotoCrd: Idaka.

In all of these instances, the color used remained the same – red. The use of this bold, primary color aligns with findings that warmer, brighter colors increase appetite and rate of consumption,

⁵² PDQ Carry Out [1971] ISD, Inc.; Chicago, IL in Anonymous, “Concourse Level Restaurants,” *Interior Design* 42, no. 10 (Oct. 1971): 125-26; PhotoCrd: Idaka.

fitting for this fast food environment. While no single iteration of the restaurant's logo was found in the article, it could be seen tiled in white block letters in a single row running across a full-height glass partition that separated the booth seating from a sprinkling of smaller, round, freestanding table tops towards the front of the space. The white PDQ logo was again seen in the foreground of the photograph on red cups sitting on one of the booth's tables. Although the logo itself was never shown as a standalone entity, it can be inferred from its use on the red cups and in the context of the red booths that the white text of the logo was meant to be understood in conjunction with the color red.

The following year, a Franklin Simon department store made a bold statement with their Atlanta location.⁵³ Fig. 3.12. Visitors were greeted with an expansive wall of rich, vibrant purple, embellished with a larger than life image of a butterfly, fashioned from vertical metallic strips. Immediately next to this decorative butterfly silhouette was the store's name, printed in white text that was accentuated by the deep purple of the wall. Below, two benches were placed, upholstered in the same purple as the wall behind them. This seating element mimicked the gentle curves of the large butterfly with its organic, rolling form. From this point of entry, customers moved down a wide corridor towards the open department store floor. This corridor, as well as a series of columns that follow, were also painted in the vivid hue first introduced at the store's entrance.

⁵³ Franklin Simon [1972] George Nelson & Co.; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, "Franklin Simon," *Interior Design* 43, no. 4 (Apr. 1972): 121; PhotoCrd: Alexandre Georges.



Fig 3.12. Franklin Simon [1972] George Nelson & Co.; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, “Franklin Simon,” *Interior Design* 43, no. 4 (Apr. 1972): 121; PhotoCrD: Alexandre Georges.

Purple eventually gave way to white, which remained the predominant backdrop for the remainder of the space, allowing the products and their displays to stand at the fore of the customer’s shopping experience. Despite this more neutral environment, the rich purple of the store’s entrance was not abandoned all together. The vibrant benches first positioned under the store name were also scattered throughout the overall floor plate, peppering the otherwise White Out⁵⁴ interior with regular splashes of color. For a retailer that housed countless brands, using Colorbrand to establish a cohesive undercurrent of self-identity throughout the store helped

⁵⁴ White Out describes a space in which all planar surfaces (wall, ceiling, floor), as well as furnishings and furniture are a bleached, bright white. It has been identified in Boutique Hotel, Resort & Spa, Restaurant and Retail practice types. Jasmin Cho, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Practices of Contemporary Restaurant Design,” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2009), 38-45; Rachel Goldfarb, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Practices of Contemporary Resort and Spa Design,” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2008), 52-59; Kristin Malyak, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Retail Practices in Contemporary Interior Design,” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2011), 202-31; Mijin Juliet Yang, “Theory Studies: Contemporary Boutique Hotel Design,” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2005), 92- 94.

maintain a sense of place for customers and also reaffirmed the Franklin Simon brand first introduced with the initial purple wall.

A 1986 Haworth showroom took a more understated approach to the Colorbrand strategy.⁵⁵ Fig. 3.13. There were no floor-to-ceiling walls of flashy color, and yet the space, although outfitted primarily in various neutral tones, was not without hints of the Haworth logo. A series of red metal frames crawled along the perimeter of the space creating a visual border for the row of columns that lay directly behind them. The conjoining edges of the frames met one another at an acute angle, forming a zigzag reminiscent of the “w” in Haworth’s own logo.



Fig. 3.13. Design Center Northwest Haworth Showroom [1986] Wyatt Stapper Architects; Seattle, WA in Anonymous, “Haworth, Seattle,” *Interior Design* 57, no. 7 (Jul. 1976): 233; PhotoCrd: Robert Pisano.

In the circulation space in front of these columns, the carpet was dotted with red triangles at regular intervals. These accentuated the red motif started with the metal frames and also reiterated the angle formed at the frames’ juncture. This Haworth red was also subtly woven into

⁵⁵ Design Center Northwest Haworth Showroom [1986] Wyatt Stapper Architects; Seattle, WA in Anonymous, “Haworth, Seattle,” *Interior Design* 57, no. 7 (Jul. 1976): 233; PhotoCrd: Robert Pisano.

the space by way of the frame for the suspended ceiling tiles. This use of Colorbrand, although much more subtle than that of Franklin Simon, allowed the color and angles drawn from the text of Haworth's logo to activate the space.⁵⁶

The distinctive color palette of design firm Osgood & Associates' corporate logo proved to be a highly successful unifying element in the space.⁵⁷ Fig. 3.14. The emblem, a "cobalt blue O and a splintered triangle, the latter vaguely suggestive of an ampersand and the former streaked with chrome yellow",⁵⁸ was situated prominently in the firm's lobby, serving as an introductory element to those entering the space.



Fig. 3.14. Osgood & Associates [1990] Osgood & Associates; Atlanta, GA in Monica Geran, "Osgood & Associates," *Interior Design* 61, no. 7 (Jul. 1990): 233; PhotoCrd: Rion Rizzo.

⁵⁶ *Activate* is a brand concept where applications of the brand vocabulary are distributed throughout the space on various scales and elements, often positioned strategically to get the highest impact from the most important locations in space, creating an active and dynamic experience of the brand narrative. Juliana Daily, "Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design" (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 80-97.

⁵⁷ Osgood & Associates [1990] Osgood & Associates; Atlanta, GA in Monica Geran, "Osgood & Associates," *Interior Design* 61, no. 7 (Jul. 1990): 233; PhotoCrd: Rion Rizzo.

⁵⁸ Geran, "Osgood & Associates," 146.

The cobalt and chrome yellow were used consistently throughout the firm’s interior, from the vibrant blue receptionist’s desk to the sunny panel of pivot-hinged doors leading into an adjacent conference room. Private offices were outfitted with tasteful yellow chairs, and vertical drywall partitions of the same hue rhythmically punctuated the workstations on the open office floor. For the budget conscious start-up firm, this exploration of Colorbrand offered a low-cost approach to unifying the space and doubly served to enforce their newfound brand identity.

Luxury brand Miu Miu took a similar approach in both its Los Angeles and Paris stores, creating a signature aesthetic that remained relevant to the brand for years.⁵⁹ Fig. 3.15 a-b. The younger sister of Prada, Miu Miu boutiques held consistent image paramount. Adopting a striking vermilion as its trademark color, Miu Miu’s otherwise understated palette of black, white, aluminum and concrete was graced with splashes of the brilliant red. For the brand’s creator, Miuccia Prada (also the head of Prada), a principal goal in the design of the space was to create an original yet subdued interior that allowed the product to take center stage.

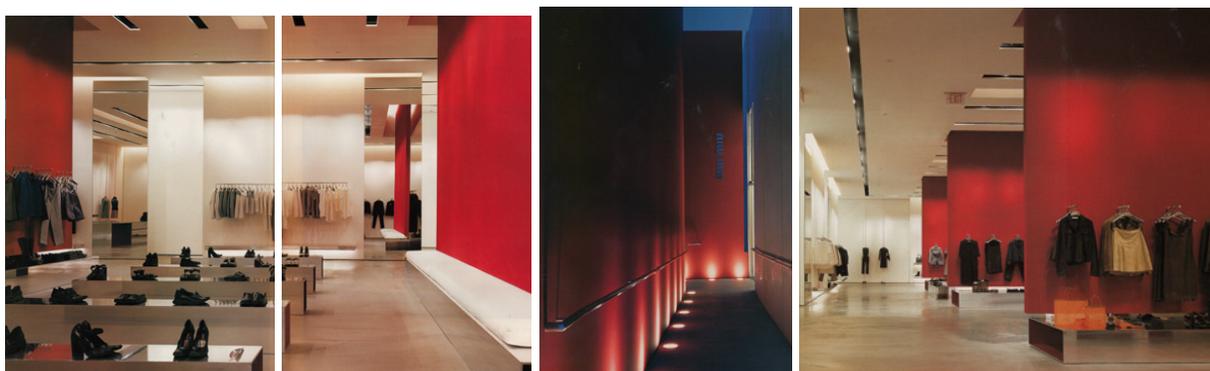


Fig. 3.15a. Miu Miu [1999] Roberto Baciocchi; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, “Miu Mix,” *Interior Design* 70, no. 4 (Apr. 1999): 160, 162-64; PhotoCrd: Toshi Yoshimi.

⁵⁹ Miu Miu [1999] Roberto Baciocchi; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, “Miu Mix,” *Interior Design* 70, no. 4 (Apr. 1999): 160-65; PhotoCrd: Toshi Yoshimi; Miu Miu [2002] Roberto Baciocchi; Paris, France in Edie Cohen, “Fashion International,” *Interior Design* 73, no. 4 (Apr. 2002): 190-95; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.



Fig. 3.15b. Miu Miu [2002] Roberto Baciocchi; Paris, France in Edie Cohen, “Fashion International,” *Interior Design* 73, no. 4 (Apr. 2002): 190, 193-95; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

Although the architecture and space planning remained simplified and minimalist, designers looked to the brand’s signature color as an opportunity to add drama and character to the interior. Panels of the vibrant red hung suspended just above the floor plane and were anchored deep in recessed cavities in the fourteen-foot ceilings, creating the illusion that they are hovering in the space. These panels, as well as several full-height white walls, were affixed with metal bars bearing a select number of hanging garments. Low-lying display fixtures within the space were polished aluminum rectangular prisms topped with accessories, shoes, and a sparse sampling of folded garments. Almost as if was meant to be kept secret, the red lining of these display units only revealed itself to passersby when viewed from a certain vantage point, a restrained reiteration of larger panels of red elsewhere in the store. For a space where “product supremacy” reigned, moments of Miu Miu’s signature vermillion made the experience of the unadorned interior dramatic and memorable.

Qiora, a spa and skincare products line, touts its focus on the connection between body and mind as the key to reaching a state of deep and pure relaxation.⁶⁰ Fig. 3.16. The complete line of cleansers, serums and lotions were all packaged in gentle shades of cerulean derived from the company's simple, delicate logo. The Japanese skincare brand had recently expanded to locations throughout the United States, bringing to each store a consistent interior aesthetic unified around the product's packaging. The Madison Avenue location boasted a double-height glass façade, allowing for full display of the gracefully outfitted interior from the exterior.

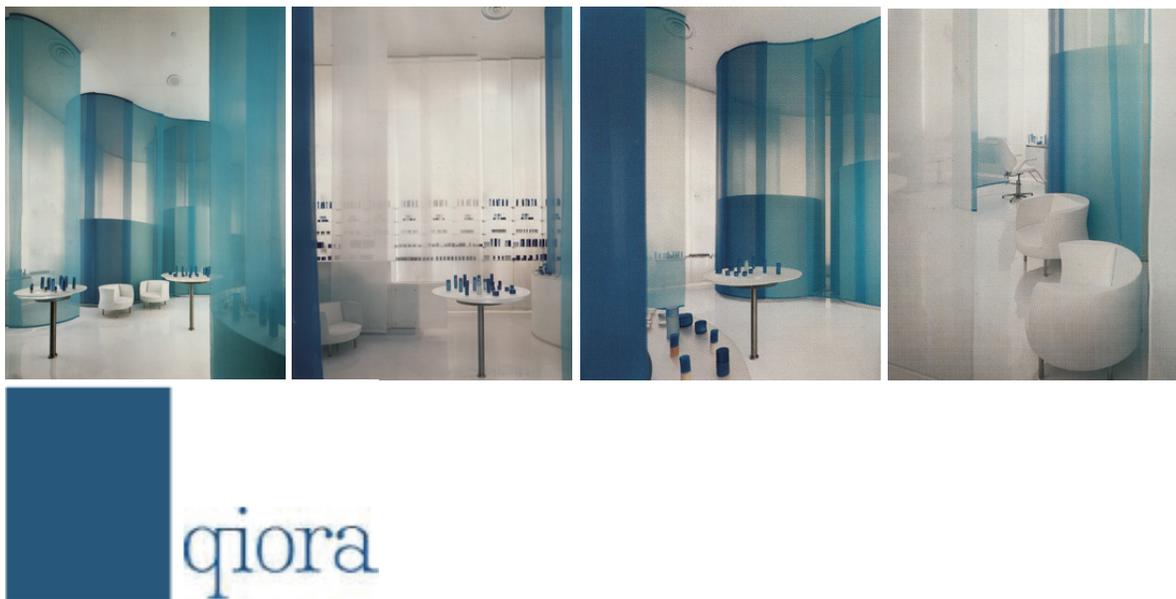


Fig. 3.16. Qiora Store and Spa [2002] Architecture Research Office; New York, NY in Phillip Nobel, “Dance Of Veils,” *Interior Design* 72, no. 4 (Apr. 2001): 195-97; PhotoCrd: David Joseph.

The otherwise white space was partitioned by full-height organza panels, suspended from the ceiling in shades of blue and aqua. The gently curving planes of fabric meandered through the center of the space, complimenting round pedestal tables displaying samplings of products and implying organic circulation paths through the rectangular space. Additional display was

⁶⁰ Qiora Store and Spa [2002] Architecture Research Office; New York City in Phillip Nobel, “Dance Of Veils,” *Interior Design* 72, no. 4 (Apr. 2001): 194-97; PhotoCrd: David Joseph.

reserved for the interior's perimeter, with products dotting a series of low profile shelves carrying the same shades of blue to the white walls. The space felt immediately calm and relaxed, with the wash of blues working doubly as both a reiteration of the brand's color and as a psycho-physiological tool to shape visitors' experience of the store. Cool colors, such as blues and greens, have been shown to elicit more relaxed emotive responses from individuals who are exposed to or surrounded them, making such colors a fitting choice for a store whose products work to promote sense of well-being and inner balance.

When CNET Networks decided to consolidate its scattered locations into one centralized headquarters, the San Francisco media company took the change as an opportunity to rebrand itself.⁶¹ Fig. 3.17. Visitors to the space were first introduced to the company's new logo—a vibrant, red-orange circle with a glowing backlit glass panel situated behind the receptionist's desk. With the guidance of Gensler, the corporate color ultimately became a unifying element in the interior, used on various scales throughout the remainder of the space. Employee workstations were outfitted with detachable shelving, filing cabinets and other desk accessories, all in the same brilliant red-orange. Two stories of conference rooms were stacked atop one another, circled on three sides by a curved wall painted the trademark CNET color and fronted with glazing that overlooked a double-height staff lounge. Dropped soffits in an upper level conference room were also painted red-orange, an inconspicuous use of the color visible primarily from outside the building through the large panes of glass on the building's façade. Smaller applications of the color included an understated wayfinding system and the upholstery

⁶¹ CNET Networks [2003] Gensler; San Francisco, CA in Monica Geran, "Rising Star," *Interior Design* 74, no. 2 (Feb. 2003): 150-55; PhotoCrd: Elizabeth Felicella.

on a selection of chairs, making the total experience of the company's new space and fresh brand identity both cohesive and distinct.



Fig. 3.17. CNET Networks [2003] Gensler; San Francisco, CA in Monica Geran, “Rising Star,” *Interior Design* 74, no. 2 (Feb. 2003): 150, 153-55; PhotoCrd: Elizabeth Felicella.

The unmistakable lemon-yellow of Catherine Malandrino's New York boutique made the space a standout on its corner lot in New York's meatpacking district.⁶² Fig. 3.18. In what was once an abandoned warehouse, a graceful, C-shaped banquette was now upholstered in vibrant yellow leather, and translucent acrylic display towers of the same color showcased the brand's stylish accessories. A twenty-six foot feature wall, shingled in golden mirrors, snaked its way through

⁶² Catherine Malandrino [2005] Christophe Pillet, design; New York City in Claudia Steinberg, “Rain Or Shine,” *Interior Design* 76, no. 4 (Apr. 2005): 188-93; PhotoCrd: Bärbel Miebach.

the space repeatedly reflecting the various yellow elements and adding a sparkling contrast to the raw structural elements left exposed in the interior retrofit. Full-height lacquered glass and a lemon colored half-wall towards the rear of the space completed the sunny interior of the sophisticated boutique, setting a colorful stage for the store's high-end apparel.



Fig. 3.18. Catherine Malandrino [2005] Christophe Pillet, design; New York, NY in Claudia Steinberg, “Rain Or Shine,” *Interior Design* 76, no. 4 (Apr. 2005): 189-191; PhotoCrd: Bärbel Miebach.

Fast cars and the color red seem to go hand in hand, as exhibited in Citroën's Paris showroom. Fig. 3.19. The carmaker, founded in France in 1919, quickly earned a reputation for its creativity and engineering prowess. The design of this 2008 showroom, located on the Champs-Élysées, demanded a bit of ingenuity of its own. Being a tall but very narrow space by showroom standards, with a footprint of thirty-six feet wide by 110 feet deep and a 115 foot atrium,⁶³ designers at Manuelle Gautrand Architecture were presented with the challenge of how to best display the vehicles despite spatial constraints.

⁶³ Citroën Showroom [2008] Manuelle Gautrand Architecture; Paris, France in Judy Fayard, “In The Driver's Seat,” *Interior Design* 79, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): 194-201; PhotoCrd: Jimmy Cahrssen.



Fig. 3.19. Citroën Showroom [2008] Manuelle Gautrand; Paris, France in Judy Fayard, “In The Driver’s Seat,” *Interior Design* 79, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): 194, 196, 200-201; PhotoCrd: Jimmy Cohrsen.

The impressive solution came in the form of a “tree of cars” situated in the five-story atrium space clearly visible from the street. This “tree” was really a oversized column of sorts, made up of eight circular platforms stacked vertically in the atrium, each supporting a unique make of Citroën car. The outer rim of these platforms, as well as the support column to which each is affixed at the rear, were the shiny, lacquered red of the company’s logo. As if the structure was not remarkable enough on its own, the base of each platform also rotated in place, showcasing the cars from every angle and adding an extra ounce of dynamism to the space. From the ground level, a glass enclosure revealed stairs to the showroom’s basement, completely colored in the

company's fire-engine red. Several chevrons of red tinted glass, referencing the Citroën logo, were interspersed throughout the almost 7,000 square-feet of glass used in the space. The rest of the space was clad entirely in a shiny white, the logo's compliment to its vibrant red. Although the brand's logo has since been re-envisioned to mark the company's 90th anniversary in February of 2009, it retains the signature red of its predecessor.

Arguably one of the most iconic brand colors is Barbie pink. Mattel's fashion doll, launched in March of 1959, has become one of the most famed toys of all time. The script text of the logo has varied slightly over the decades, but its signature Barbie Pink (Pantone 219) has remained a constant. Designed in 2009 in commemoration of Barbie's 50th anniversary, a six story Shanghai flagship was the first store of its kind to be dedicated solely to the iconic doll.⁶⁴ Fig. 3.21.



Fig. 3.21. House of Barbie [2009] Slade Architecture; Shanghai, China in Andrew Yang, "Barbie's Dream House," *Interior Design* 80, no. 4 (Apr. 2009): 193-94, 196, 201; PhotoCrd: Iwan Baan.

⁶⁴ House of Barbie [2009] Slade Architecture; Shanghai, China in Andrew Yang, "Barbie's Dream House," *Interior Design* 80, no. 4 (Apr. 2009): 192-201; PhotoCrd: Iwan Baan.

From the lobby of the former office building, visitors traveled via an escalator tunnel, whose white walls were illuminated by pink neon lights, to the main floor of the store. From here, a double-height atrium could be traversed by way of a large spiral staircase whose enclosure was made up of stacked, clear acrylic boxes reminiscent of Barbie's packaging.⁶⁵ Each Vitrine⁶⁶ was home to a different doll, each dressed, naturally, in pink. This motif of transparent material coupled with Barbie Pink was echoed in the building's impressive glass façade that glowed pink from within come nightfall. Plush pink carpeting and pink lacquered shelving units were used throughout the playful, fantasy dream house. The space was over-the-top pink, and appropriately so, as an all-encompassing celebration of the iconic doll.

The Lance Armstrong Foundation (LAF) was established in 1997 by World Champion cyclist Lance Armstrong after his battle with advanced testicular cancer. The foundation has been working to support and advocate for the cancer community for more than a decade, raising awareness and offering a multitude of community resources. The foundation's hugely popular 2004 "Wear Yellow Live Strong" yellow wristband campaign made Livestrong a household name, selling over 70 million wristbands to date and raising well over its target goal of \$25.1 million. Five years later, the Lance Armstrong Foundation officially began going simply by the name Livestrong, and with renaming came a relocation to Texas. The new Livestrong Headquarters, located in one of Austin's most diverse neighborhoods, was designed by architecture firms Lake-Flato and the Bommarito Group as the area's first gold-certified LEED

⁶⁵ "Mattel History," Mattel, Inc. Accessed 26 Jun 2011. <http://corporate.mattel.com/about-us/history/default.aspx>; "Barbie Facts," Mattel, Inc: Barbie. Accessed 26 Jun 2011. <http://www.barbiemedia.com/?subcat=23>.

⁶⁶ Vitrine is a glass showcase for the display of significant or ordinary objects. Kristin Malyak, "Theory Studies: Archetypical Retail Practices in Contemporary Interior Design" (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2011), 232-95.

facility.⁶⁷ Fig. 3.22. Using the existing building foundation, and repurposed floor and ceiling wood to name a few, literally tons of existing on-site materials were reused in the new building.



Fig. 3.22. Livestrong Headquarters [2011] Lake-Flato and Bommarito Group; Austin, Texas; Photos courtesy of the Livestrong Media Room; PhotoCrd: Lake-Flato, Bommarito Group.

The interior was humble and understated, with polished concrete slab flooring and exposed services at the ceiling. Reconstituted wood boards enclosed small, free-standing meeting rooms

⁶⁷ “Our Home: Livestrong Headquarters,” Livestrong. (accessed 27 Jun 2011). <http://www.livestrong.org/Who-We-Are/Our-History/Our-Home>.

that dotted the interior, and also made up a horizontally paneled wall behind the reception desk. It was here, immediately upon entry into the space, that visitors were first introduced to the foundation's signature yellow color. Even the application itself was reminiscent of the Livestrong wristbands that made the color so famous. The color ran the length of the wall in a horizontal band engraved with the Livestrong name—a larger than life replica of the popular wristbands. A similar yellow stripe was applied to the glass panels that made up the fourth wall of the various meeting rooms with a vinyl appliqué. Here, the Livestrong name used in the lobby was replaced with cutouts of inspirational phrases emphasizing “Knowledge Is Power”, “Strength In Unity” and “Attitude Is Everything”. The iconic color was used again in a bold proclamation of the foundation's manifesto, the yellow coloring a block of text that spoke of unity, strength and hope. This simple but memorable motif became a unifying element throughout the interior, connecting visitors to not only the space, but also to the foundation's mission and identity.

Prior to 2006, both AT&T and Cingular Wireless had independently strong and distinct graphic identities. AT&T, Inc. is one of the longest standing telecommunication companies in America, founded in 1885 as the American Telephone & Telegraph Company⁶⁸. Although the company's mobile wireless arm didn't come into existence until 2000, the company has been a staple on the telecommunications scene for decades. Its infamous blue “world globe” logo was designed in 1984 by Saul Bass⁶⁹, replacing the dated bell logo that the company had been using for almost a century. A slightly more modern take on the striated sphere was implemented in 2005, maintaining the signature blue.

⁶⁸ “A Brief History: Origins,” AT&T. Accessed 27 Jun 2011. <http://www.corp.att.com/history/history1.html>.

⁶⁹ “Saul Bass: Graphic Designer (1920-1996),” Design Museum. Accessed 26 Jun 2011. <http://designmuseum.org/design/saul-bass>.



Fig. 3.23. AT&T [2011] Unknown; various locations; Photos courtesy of ShareATT1 Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/shareatt/>; PhotoCrd: Anonymous.

A much younger company, Cingular’s signature orange color was first introduced with the company’s bulbous “X” logo, first conceived with the company’s founding in 2000 as a joint venture between SBC Communications and BellSouth.

In a 2006 merger, the two companies would become one, both now operating under the name AT&T.⁷⁰ Fig. 3.23. In the year or so leading up to the telecomm union, subtle marketing tactics were employed to gradually marry the two brands. Cingular began by introducing AT&T’s signature blue into the color palette of their logo, changing what was formerly black text to the more vibrant hue.

⁷⁰ AT&T [2011] Unknown; various locations; Photos courtesy of ShareATT1 Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/shareatt/>; PhotoCrd: Anonymous.

Around this time, Cingular also changed its slogan from “Fits You Best” to “Raising The Bar”, readying for a fresh ad campaign to introduce the AT&T merger, while simultaneously alluding to the raised standards and improved service that the merger would bring. The widely popular “Raising The Bar” campaign played on the company’s new tagline as well as the tagline’s graphic accompaniment—five incrementally increasing bars, a nod to the standard industry icon for a full cellular signal. A series of commercials would capture a “real world” series of five bars with each pan of the camera—five sequential buildings in a skyline, five jets of water shooting out of a fountain, towels folded and neatly stacked side by side in five piles—all mimicking the cell signal emblem. A male voiceover concludes: “More bars in more places, thanks to Cingular and AT&T Wireless joining forces. Welcome to the new Cingular, we’re raising the bar.” Gradually, this sign-off would become “Cingular, now the new AT&T”, and finally “AT&T, Rethink Possible” as the two became a fully integrated entity.

This gradual assimilation was a marked effort to ease consumers into the new company image and an attempt to maintain brand loyalty despite the obvious changes from both sides. Even now, although the Cingular name was completely out of the picture, the new AT&T maintained the former brand’s trademark orange and used it in many of its stores as the primary color for walls, signage and packaging. The story of these two wireless giants has been thoughtfully colored, promising a resilient future for the new brand.

Colorbrand is one of the most widely used Spatial Graphic Design strategies, whose application can be scaled for use on all levels of the strategic continuum of brand intervention.

Evidence for the archetypal use and the chronological sequence of Repeat Repeat in Spatial Graphic Design was developed from following primary sources: **1971** PDQ Carry Out [1971] ISD, Inc.; Chicago, IL in Anonymous, "Concourse Level Restaurants," *Interior Design* 42, no. 10 (Oct. 1971): 125-126; PhotoCrd: Idaka / **1972** Franklin Simon [1972] George Nelson & Co.; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, "Franklin Simon," *Interior Design* 43, no. 4 (Apr. 1972): 121; PhotoCrd: Alexandre Georges / **1986** Design Center Northwest Hawthorn Showroom [1986] Wyatt Stapper Architects; Seattle, WA in Anonymous, "Haworth, Seattle," *Interior Design* 57, no. 7 (Jul. 1976): 233; PhotoCrd: Robert Pisano / **1990** Osgood & Associates [1990] Osgood & Associates; Atlanta, GA in Monica Geran, "Osgood & Associates," *Interior Design* 61, no. 7 (Jul. 1990): 233; PhotoCrd: Rion Rizzo / **1999** Miu Miu [1999] Roberto Baciocchi; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, "Miu Mix," *Interior Design* 70, no. 4 (Apr. 1999): 160, 162-164; PhotoCrd: Toshi Yoshimi / **2001** Qiora Store and Spa [2001] Architecture Research Office; New York, NY in Phillip Nobel, "Dance Of Veils," *Interior Design* 72, no. 4 (Apr. 2001): 195-197; PhotoCrd: David Joseph / **2002** Miu Miu [2002] Roberto Baciocchi; Paris, France in Edie Cohen, "Fashion International," *Interior Design* 73, no. 4 (Apr. 2002): 190, 193-195; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel / **2003** CNET Networks [2003] Gensler; San Francisco, CA in Monica Geran, "Rising Star," *Interior Design* 74, no. 2 (Feb. 2003): 150, 153-155; PhotoCrd: Elizabeth Felicella / **2005** Catherine Malandrino [2005] Christophe Pillet; New York, NY in Claudia Steinberg, "Rain Or Shine," *Interior Design* 76, no. 4 (Apr. 2005): 189-191; PhotoCrd: Bärbel Miebach / **2008** Citroën Showroom [2008] Manuelle Gautrand; Paris, France in Judy Fayard, "In The Driver's Seat," *Interior Design* 79, no. 1 (Jan. 2008): 194, 196, 200-201; PhotoCrd: Jimmy Cohrsen / **2009** House of Barbie [2009] Slade Architecture; Shanghai, China in Andrew Yang, "Barbie's Dream House," *Interior Design* 80, no. 4 (Apr. 2009): 193-194, 196 201; PhotoCrd: Iwan Baan / **2011** Livestrong Headquarters [2011] Lake-Flato and Bommarito Group; Austin, Texas; Photos courtesy of the Livestrong Media Room; PhotoCrd: Lake-Flato, Bommarito Group; AT&T [2011] Unknown; various locations; Photos courtesy of ShareATT1 Flickr: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/shareatt/>; PhotoCrd: Anonymous.

CHAPTER 4
UNDERSTATE

Definition

Understate is a brand concept that occupies the lowest condition of a strategic continuum ranging from the least intervention to the most (Saturate). In this understated condition, brand identity is subtly repetitive, minimally distributed spatially, and applied at a limited number of scales and elements. The understated interior relies on the strength of brand recognition to solidify the narrative of place.

Research

In the broadest sense, graphic design represents a language of visual communication, adding layers of “complexity, nuance and subtlety”⁷¹ to the comprehension of whatever information is at hand. When introduced to an interior environment, the added spatial dimension coupled with these graphic elements takes this communication one step farther, making it an experience.

The Intypes research category Spatial Graphic Design defines a new sub-type of environmental graphic design that is interior-specific and based on the establishment of a spatial narrative of brand or theme. Spatial Graphic Design is a multidisciplinary approach that may include components of graphic design, industrial design, interior design and architecture. Applications of brand in interior settings relies on the interaction of various design elements to create layers of meaning, serving as a vehicle for the storytelling of the space’s narrative of place. This narrative embellishes and reaffirms itself through varied use of material, color, lighting, and signage, among other design elements. The communication of an interior’s brand concept or spatial narrative can be articulated in varying degrees, employing a range of communicative devices to make the expression more literal or more abstract, highly immersive or more discreet.

⁷¹ Alice Twemlow, *What Is Graphic Design For?* (United Kingdom: RotoVision, 2006), 6.

To understand this varied range of brand concept, the argument is made for three brand *concepts or frameworks* for analyzing or designing Spatial Graphic Design interiors—Understate, Activate, Saturate. This range is best understood as a continuum, spanning every increment level of narrative expression. The aim of the following three chapters is to define three nodes along this strategic branding continuum. Defining the two extremes (Understate and Saturate) and the median point (Activate) of this continuum helps to give structure to the larger spectrum of which they are a part. While understanding these three points helps to define the larger picture, it is equally important to see the continuum that they are a part of as a means to understanding the full range of brand concept that can be articulated within a space.

Two archetypal strategic practices, Repeat Repeat and Colorbrand (see chapters 2 and 3), punctuate the experience of space and may be used in any of the concepts.

To make the case for each category, the chronological sequence was limited to the very best exemplars. For Understate, in the 1970 to 2010 period, there are five examples representing the following practice types: bank, retail, showroom, workplace. Each photographic example is coupled with a visual analysis highlighting the dominant graphic components in the space that are used to articulate the brand concept.

Description

In the understated interior, typically 1-2 Spatial Graphic Design strategies or elements of graphic design (such as the use of Colorbrand⁷², a feature form, or a singular use of logo/logotype) are used to articulate the concept. Often, a powerful and singular instance of brand vocabulary is presented to set the tone for the rest of the space, which remains fairly neutral. Because of this context, these one or two elements become the features in the space.

In such spaces, less is indeed more when it comes to crafting an experiential narrative of place. Often, the function of the space dictates its level of brand application. In workplace settings, a bombardment of branding and marketing could serve as a distraction to employees, while a more understated presentation of brand helps to reinforce a sense of place without detracting from the space's function. In certain retail environments, the use of literal expressions of brand vocabulary are intentionally restrained allowing the products to be the focus of the spatial experience. In such environments, the brand name and its associated graphic vocabulary have often been established well enough that they can be used minimally and still communicate a strong sense of place and identity within the retail interior.

Chronological Sequence

New Jersey's First State Bank was a quintessential 1970s interior, complete with olive green carpeting throughout and white laminate used for countertops, desks, and planters alike⁷³. Fig. 4.1.

The rest of the space's material palette was modest, with white floor tiles, several brick columns,

⁷² *Colorbrand* is a brand strategy characterized by the use of color in an interior space as an explicit representation of the space's brand identity. This color is most often derived from the company logo or graphic identity and is the principal color or colors used on an otherwise neutral interior palette. Juliana Daily, "Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design" (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 44-66.

⁷³ First State Bank [1976] Raymond C. Perko, Inc.; Toms River, NJ in Anonymous, "Setting The Scene," *Interior Design* 47, no. 2 (Feb. 1976): 97; PhotoCrd: Jaime Ardiles-Arce.

and a few splashes of wood veneer. Although much of the décor was apt for a bank of its time, the First State Bank was not without an assertion of its individual identity. In a singular use of Repeat Repeat (Intype)⁷⁴, the bank’s initials, FSB, were tiled along the wall behind the bank teller stations. The raised block lettering ran horizontally down the full length of the wall, visible to patrons wherever they chose to stand along the teller counter. Although the logo was repeated multiple times in the string of letters, the application was far from overbearing. The letters themselves were the same matte white as the wall behind them, making the statement restrained yet effective.



Fig. 4.11 (a, b). First State Bank [1976] Raymond C. Perko, Inc.; Toms River, NJ in Anonymous, “Setting The Scene,” *Interior Design* 47, no. 2 (Feb. 1976): 97; PhotoCrd: Jaime Ardiles-Arce.

In many retail environments, it is common for the products to be left to speak for themselves.

One such space was the Kenneth Walker interior for designer Per Spook’s Paris showroom—the

⁷⁴ *Repeat Repeat* refers to the reiterative practice of using a graphic element, color application or spatial motif in multiple locations and/or scales within an interior space. This practice is implemented a means to reinforce an occupant’s sense of place as well as to establish the interior’s (brand) identity. Juliana Daily, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 23-43.

picture of understated elegance.⁷⁵ Fig. 4.2. The Norwegian fashion house was known for its apparel that was both “graceful and polished but also witty and lively”⁷⁶, making frequent use of bold prints and asymmetrical cuts. In designing the brand’s showroom, Walker leaned heavily on the strong image of the apparel itself, creating an understated interior that allowed the signature pieces to take center stage.



Fig. 4.2 (a, b). Per Spook Fashion Showroom [1982] Kenneth Walker, AIA; Paris, France in Anonymous, “Study in Black and White,” *Interior Design* 53, no. 1 (Jan. 1982): 199; PhotoCrd: Peter Paige.

⁷⁵ Per Spook Fashion Showroom [1982] Kenneth Walker, AIA; Paris, France in Anonymous, “Study in Black and White,” *Interior Design* 53, no. 1 (Jan. 1982): 199; PhotoCrd: Peter Paige.

⁷⁶ Kevin Almond and Mary Ellen Snodgrass, “Spook, Per,” *Fashion Encyclopedia*, accessed 8 Jul. 2001, <http://www.fashionencyclopedia.com/Sp-To/Spook-Per.html>.

A singular instance of the company name—the trademark whimsical black lettering set on a white square—was presented on the black wall behind the reception desk upon first entering the showroom. While the perpendicular mirrored wall served to double the logo, it remained unseen in the remainder of the showroom. Black walls and black carpeting were carried throughout the interior, punctuated occasionally by a square black and white illustration on the walls, white task chairs, and, of course, the brand’s colorful clothing. The use of the logo’s diametric colors created a spatial experience that was both minimalist and dramatic, allowing the vibrant couture to stand as the showroom’s focus.

Spare of even its signature Knoll red, Lee Stout’s design of furniture company’s Brussels showroom offered a minimalist approach to showcasing the well-known brand.⁷⁷ Fig. 4.3. Entering the space, visitors were met by a massive, columnar element that was uniquely geometric, bearing the Knoll name in raised white lettering. The piece’s substantial size, countered by its matte white finish, matched the bare walls of the showroom. The rear plane of this statement piece was canted at about 30 degrees, a distinctive touch that was replicated on the interior wall running opposite the windows of the building’s façade.

⁷⁷ Knoll Showroom [1986] Lee Stout; Brussels, Belgium in Anonymous, “Knoll, Brussels,” *Interior Design* 57, no. 7 (Jul. 1986): 226-227; PhotoCrd: Architekturfoto Engelhardt & Sellin (Munich).

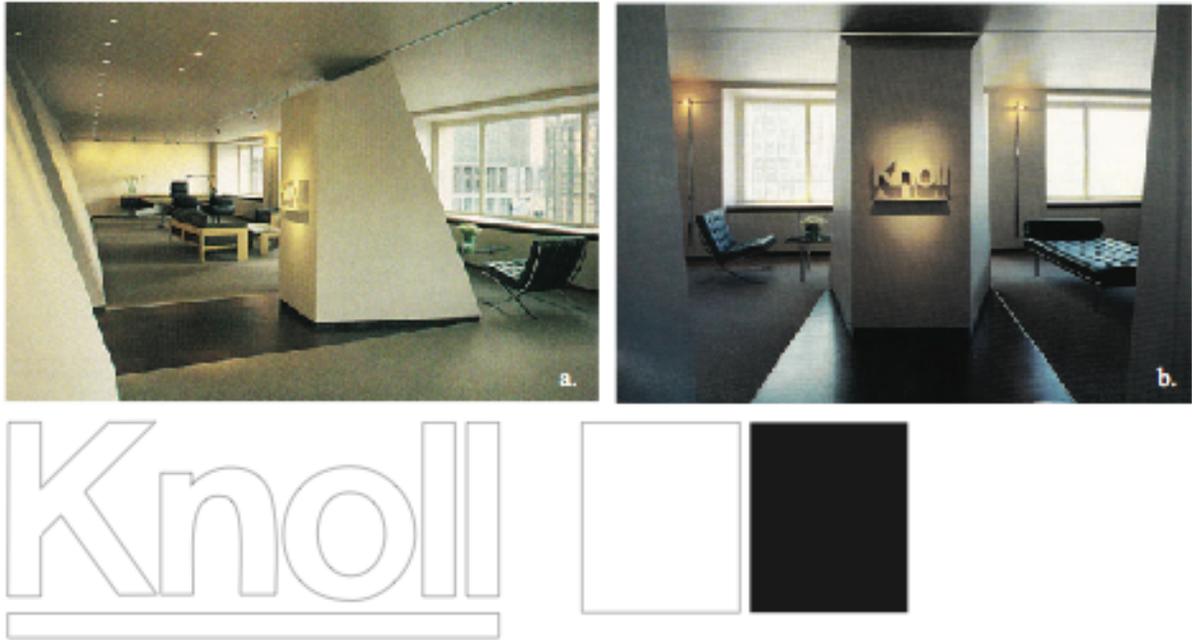


Fig. 4.3 (a, b). Knoll Showroom [1986] Lee Stout; Brussels, Belgium in Anonymous, “Knoll, Brussels,” *Interior Design* 57, no. 7 (Jul. 1986): 226-227; PhotoCrd: Architekturfoto Engelhardt & Sellin (Munich).

These unique structural geometries aside, the space was furnished sparingly and devoid of any color, unusually subtle for the brand whose signature red was so widely recognized. After the initial presentation of the company name, the brand’s only other expressions in the space were by way of the furniture. Tasteful selection of Mies van der Rohe’s Barcelona chairs and couch, all upholstered in tufted black leather, made for a stark, elegant contrast against the interior’s white walls. Surrounding a large desk at the far end of the space were several Eames executive chairs, also in black leather. The use of such iconic, high-end seating was a thoughtfully calculated design decision on the part of Stout, aiming to solidify the association between the Knoll name and such coveted pieces of furniture.

In a similarly demure workplace in New York City, designer Tom Krizmanic of Studios Architecture crafted a glowing office for small investment firm VennWorks.⁷⁸ Fig. 4.4. A singular introduction of the company's logo as an oversized mural in the space's lobby gave way to a much more sedate palette of concrete slab flooring, brushed stainless steel and softly lit white walls. Indeed, it was the lighting that made this space so spectacular.



Fig. 4.4 (a-b). VennWorks New York Office [2002] Tom Krizmanic, Studios Architecture; New York, NY in Monica Geran, "Wise Investment," *Interior Design* 73, no. 11 (Nov. 2002 Supplement): S44-45; PhotoCrd: Alberto Ferrero.

⁷⁸ VennWorks New York Office [2002] Tom Krizmanic, Studios Architecture; New York, NY in Monica Geran, "Wise Investment," *Interior Design* 73, no. 11 (Nov. 2002 Supplement): S44-45; PhotoCrd: Alberto Ferrero.

Taking every advantage of the peaked roof on the upper level of the 1920s commercial building, Krizmanic implemented three massive, 75-foot square skylights, illuminating the space below with soft daylighting. In the lobby area, a large, backlit acrylic pane served as a faux skylight, adding the illusion of height to the 9 foot ceilings. Perimeter offices were separated from corridors with etched glass, providing privacy and also reflecting light from the building's façade into the space's core. Save the lighting, the office's material palette was neutral and modest. Moments of color were reserved the golden yellow of the larger-than-life logo and a set of chairs arranged in a double-height seating area, upholstered in the same company color.

First developed in the late 1980s, Red Bull fast became an internationally popular energy drink.⁷⁹

Fig. 4.5. Expanding its aggressive marketing campaign (“Red Bull gives you wiiings!”) to include celebrity endorsements, sports team ownerships, and tournament sponsorships, the company now even boasted its own record label⁸⁰. Closely associating itself with the rapidly growing arena of extreme sports, Red Bull sponsored everything from motocross and snowboarding to cliff diving and Formula 1 racing. This was a logical partnership for the energy drink that staked its claim as a “functional beverage”⁸¹, enhancing focus and performance. The brand's logo, two red bulls sparring, came as a derivative of the Thai energy drink Krating Daeng⁸² that inspired the company's own product; *daeng* meaning red, *krating* being a reddish-brown bovine slightly larger than a bison.⁸³ Despite the company's widely popular marketing tactics and iconic logo, the company took a considerably less brand-heavy approach in the design of its Los Angeles headquarters.

⁷⁹ Red Bull L.A. Headquarters [2006] HLW; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, “Ramping It Up,” *Interior Design* 77, no. 10 (Oct. 2006): 286-287, 289; PhotoCrd: Benny Chan, Fotoworks.

⁸⁰ “Home,” Red Bull Records, accessed 25 Jun. 2011, <http://www.redbullrecords.com/>.

⁸¹ “Red Bull Energy Drink,” Red Bull Homepage, accessed 25 Jun. 2011, http://www.redbull.com/cs/Satellite/en_INT/red-bull-energy-drink/001242937921959/.

⁸² “Krating Daeng: Devising a Marketing Strategy for the Thailand Market,” U21 Global, accessed 25 Jun. 2011, http://www.u21global.edu.sg/portal/corporate/docs/AA-2009-002_InspectionCopy.pdf.

⁸³ “Red Bull,” Wikipedia, accessed 25 Jun. 2011, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Bull.



Fig. 4.5 (a-g). Red Bull L.A. Headquarters [2006] HLW; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, "Ramping It Up," *Interior Design* 77, no. 10 (Oct. 2006): 286-287, 289; PhotoCrd: Benny Chan, Fotoworks.

Taken on by a design team at HLW, the project turned more heavily to the sporting analogy so oft associated with the brand than to the company's own visual identity. Not a bull to be seen and only a brief moment of red in the space's café, the interior was a wash of charcoal grey carpeting, white laminate, brushed aluminum and a warm, sienna colored paper-resin. It was this paper-resin composite that made up the interior's most notable feature—a massive ramp, undulating in 15-foot-high arcs anchored in beds of river rock, running almost the entire 500-foot length of the interior. A nod to the ramps found in skate parks, the massive structure aptly transformed the 100,000-square-foot brick warehouse into a corporate playground for the spirited company.

Nestled under the apex of one of these sweeping arcs was the staff café; glass-fronted conference rooms were tucked beneath others. Surrounded by clusters of workstations, the ramp eventually flattened out to become the floor of a 125-seat theatre, finally terminating in the curve of the theatre's canopy. The distinctive feature could be viewed in its entirety from the mezzanine level that also housed a boardroom, private offices and additional workspaces. Although the vocabulary of highly recognizable colors and icon of the Red Bull logo were noticeably absent from the workplace, the one-of-a-kind ramp feature form was remarkable enough to make a name for the headquarters all on its own.

The understated interior can be effectively implemented in many practice areas, offering an experience of brand narrative that can be simultaneously restrained and also quite dramatic in its minimalism.

Evidence for the archetypical use and the chronological sequence of Understate in Spatial Graphic Design was developed from the following primary sources: **1976** First State Bank [1976] Raymond C. Perko, Inc.; Toms River, NJ in Anonymous, "Setting The Scene," *Interior Design* 47, no. 2 (Feb. 1976): 97; PhotoCrd: Jaime Ardiles-Arce / **1982** Per Spook Fashion Showroom [1982] Kenneth Walker, AIA; Paris, France in Anonymous, "Study in Black and White," *Interior Design* 53, no. 1 (Jan. 1982): 199; PhotoCrd: Peter Paige / **1986** Knoll Showroom [1986] Lee Stout; Brussels, Belgium in Anonymous, "Knoll, Brussels," *Interior Design* 57, no. 7 (Jul. 1986): 226-227; PhotoCrd: Architekturfoto Engelhardt & Sellin (Munich) / **2002** VennWorks New York Office [2002] Tom Krizmanic, Studios Architecture; New York, NY in Monica Geran, "Wise Investment," *Interior Design* 73, no. 11 (Nov. 2002 Supplement): S44-45; PhotoCrd: Alberto Ferrero / **2006** Red Bull L.A. Headquarters [2006] HLW; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, "Ramping It Up," *Interior Design* 77, no. 10 (Oct. 2006): 286-287, 289; PhotoCrd: Benny Chan, Fotoworks.

CHAPTER 5

ACTIVATE

Definition

Activate is a brand concept that occupies the middle condition of a strategic continuum ranging from the least intervention (Understate) to the most persistent and pervasive (Saturate). In the activated condition, applications of the brand vocabulary are distributed throughout the space on various scales and elements, often positioned strategically to get the highest impact from the most important locations in space, creating an active and dynamic experience of the brand narrative.

Research

In the broadest sense, graphic design represents a language of visual communication, adding layers of “complexity, nuance and subtlety”⁸⁴ to the comprehension of whatever information is at hand. When introduced to an interior environment, the added spatial dimension coupled with these graphic elements takes this communication one step farther, making it an experience.

The Intypes research category Spatial Graphic Design defines a new sub-type of environmental graphic design that is interior-specific and based on the establishment of a spatial narrative of brand or theme. Spatial Graphic Design is a multidisciplinary approach that may include components of graphic design, industrial design, interior design and architecture. Applications of brand in interior settings relies on the interaction of various design elements to create layers of meaning, serving as a vehicle for the storytelling of the space’s narrative of place. This narrative embellishes and reaffirms itself through varied use of material, color, lighting, and signage, among other design elements. The communication of an interior’s brand concept or spatial

⁸⁴ Alice Twemlow, *What Is Graphic Design For?* (United Kingdom: RotoVision, 2006), 6.

narrative can be articulated in varying degrees, employing a range of communicative devices to make the expression more literal or more abstract, highly immersive or more discreet.

To understand this varied range of brand concept, the argument is made for three brand *concepts* or *frameworks* for analyzing or designing Spatial Graphic Design interiors—Understate, Activate, Saturate. This range is best understood as a continuum, spanning every increment level of narrative expression. The aim of the following three chapters is to define three nodes along this strategic branding continuum. Defining the two extremes (Understate and Saturate) and the median point (Activate) of this continuum helps to give structure to the larger spectrum of which they are a part. While understanding these three points helps to define the larger picture, it is equally important to see the continuum that they are a part of as a means to understanding the full range of brand concept that can be articulated within a space.

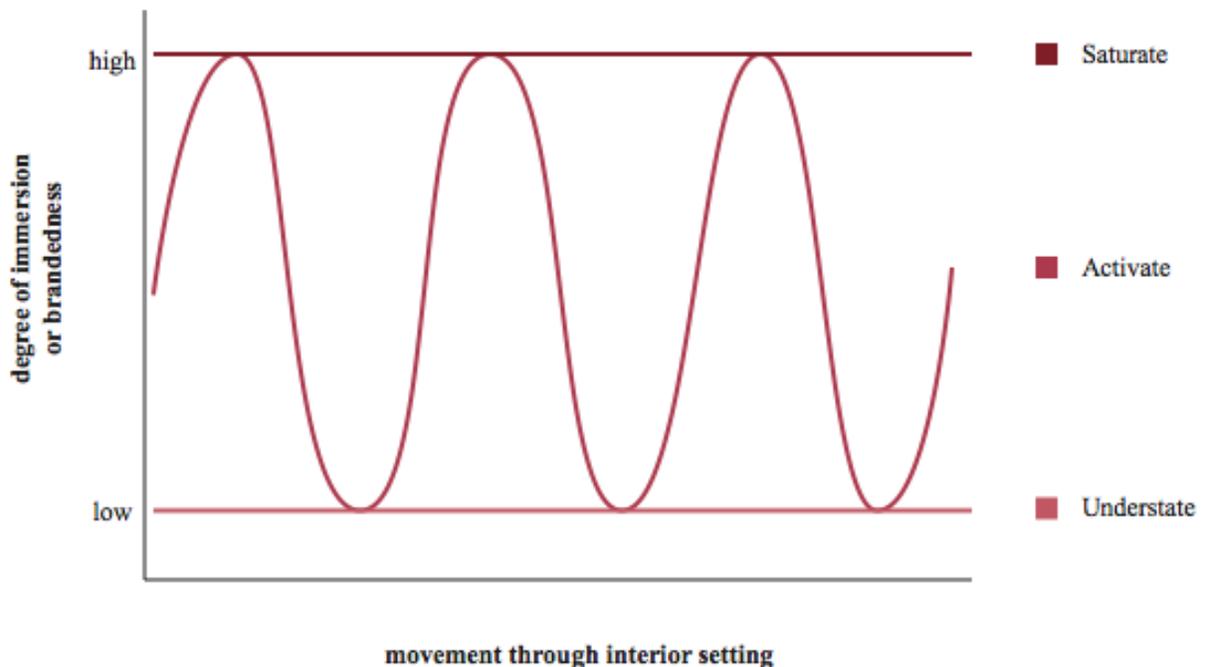


Fig 5.1 Charting the brand experience

Two archetypical strategic practices, Repeat Repeat and Colorbrand (see chapters 2 and 3), punctuate the experience of space and may be used in any of the concepts.

To make the case for each category, the chronological sequence was limited to the very best exemplars. For Activate, in the 1970 to 2010 period, there are six examples representing the following practice types: showroom, retail, boutique hotel, workplace.

Each photographic example is coupled with a visual analysis highlighting the dominant graphic components in the space that are used to articulate the brand concept.

Description

Certain applications of brand in interior settings are more persistent than others, with multiple instances of the brand's aesthetic vocabulary used throughout a space as a way to craft an extended spatial narrative. This narrative embellishes and reaffirms itself through varied use of material, color, lighting, and signage, among other design elements. As compared to Understate⁸⁵, Activate represents a more pervasive brand experience, with more of the interior real estate dedicated to being the canvas for showcasing these various elements.

The concept of “breadcrumb” navigation, typically associated with the navigation of webpages or internet operating systems, is a term derived from the popular children's fairytale *Hansel and Gretel*. Much like Hansel left breadcrumbs in the woods to find his way home, internet users

⁸⁵ *Understate* is a brand concept that occupies the lowest condition of a strategic continuum ranging from the least intervention to the most (Saturate). In the understated condition, brand identity is subtly repetitive, minimally distributed spatially, and applied at a limited number of scales and elements. Juliana Daily, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 67-79).

often need to retrace their steps while navigating through a website.⁸⁶ For internet users, these cyber breadcrumb trails help to position them within the site they are browsing and allow for linear backwards navigation to previous locations within the site.

Similarly, activated interiors position moments of brand vocabulary to create a sequential experience of the brand narrative. These touch-points can serve as landmarks that help physically locate individuals within the larger interior landscape, and also work collectively to craft an extended experience of the interior narrative of place. Activated interiors often use of a “kit of parts” approach to articulating the brand concept, typically drawing on Spatial Graphic Design strategies, such as Colorbrand⁸⁷ or Repeat Repeat,⁸⁸ or the use of other elements of graphic design, such as the singular use of logo/logotype, icons/imagery. The use of these strategies *punctuates the experience of the space*, with moments of explicit expression of brand balanced by neutral moments of reprieve.

While practice areas that utilize Activate are varied, this brand concept is often used in expansive interior settings, such as workplace or educational institutions, among others. In such settings, the periodic reintroduction of brand vocabulary helps establish a sense of place, identity, and belonging for occupants as they move throughout the space’s large floor plate. Here, the

⁸⁶ “Breadcrumb Navigation: Further Investigation of Usage,” Bonnie Lida Rogers and Barbara Chaparro, WSU Psychology, (accessed 20 Sept. 2001), <http://psychology.wichita.edu/surl/usabilitynews/52/breadcrumb.htm>.

⁸⁷ *Colorbrand* is a brand strategy characterized by the use of color in an interior space as an explicit representation of the space’s brand identity. This color is most often derived from the company logo or graphic identity and is the principal color or colors used on an otherwise neutral interior palette. Juliana Daily, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 44-66.

⁸⁸ *Repeat Repeat* is a brand strategy referring to the reiterative use of a graphic element, color application or spatial motif in multiple locations and/or scales within an interior space. This practice is implemented as a means to reinforce an occupant’s sense of place and to establish brand identity within the interior. Juliana Daily, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 23-43.

activated interior offers an experience of spatial identity that is extended though not totally immersive, as so not to distract from the function of the space.

Chronological Sequence

Showroom settings have always presented a unique mix of challenges for designers. These interiors demand a balancing act of focus on product display with simultaneous assertion of company identity, often within very large retail footprint. This Atlanta based Burlington Domestics showroom was no exception, housed on an 8th floor corner section of the Atlanta Merchandise Mart.⁸⁹ Fig. 5.2. The expansive 1,500-square-foot floor plate was dedicated to the display of the company's expanded line of sheets, towels and bedspreads. The colorful textiles enlivened the otherwise subdued material palette of the space, a wash of the company's signature dark brown and off-white.



Fig. 5.2 (a, b). Burlington Domestics Showroom [1973] Alan L. Ferry Designers, Inc.; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, "Graphic Approach: Corporate Identity Projected Through Design," *Interior Design* 44, no. 1 (Jan. 1973): 102-103; PhotoCrd: Bob Smith.

⁸⁹ Burlington Domestics Showroom [1973] Alan L. Ferry Designers, Inc.; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, "Graphic Approach: Corporate Identity Projected Through Design," *Interior Design* 44, no. 1 (Jan. 1973): 102-103; PhotoCrd: Bob Smith.

Burlington's identifying colors were first introduced in the showroom's lobby, where the interior view of the space was framed by an "open sculptured wall"—a rounded rectangle archway with the company name tiled in off-white letters on the dark brown surface behind them. This geometric motif of the rounded rectangle was carried throughout the space, used for archways and recessed wall niches alike, offering rhythm and cohesion to the sprawling interior. The Burlington name itself was also used multiple times, an expression of Repeat Repeat (Intype)⁹⁰. After the tiling in the lobby, the company name was also used several more times with the letters themselves transformed into more sculptural elements. In one instance, 4-inch x12-inch blocks of wood carved out giant letters of the Burlington logo. The letters were outfitted in the same brown and cream laminate found elsewhere in the space and were supported by vertical chrome rods. Another application of the company name was found in a custom, free-standing display unit. A combination of bronze and Plexiglas, the unique piece utilized a seemingly suspended shelving system as another opportunity to weave the Burlington Domestics logo into the space.

Although subdued, the repeated affirmation of brand was threefold—with color, geometric motif and company name used in multiple instances through the whole of the showroom. While display was reserved primarily for Burlington products, the brand's identity was far from lost in a sea of the colorful textiles. Rather, repeated moments of the brand's identifying vocabulary were used to provide a consistency of experience for customers visiting the space.

Myriad imagery comes to mind when thinking of the empire created by The Coca-Cola Company.⁹¹

Fig. 5.3. With an almost limitless vocabulary of image and icon to work with, designers at Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart Interiors were selective in their choices when articulating the

⁹⁰ *Repeat Repeat* refers to the reiterative practice of using a graphic element, color application or spatial motif in multiple locations and/or scales within an interior space. This practice is implemented a means to reinforce an occupant's sense of place as well as to establish the interior's (brand) identity. Juliana Daily, "Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design" (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 23-43.

⁹¹ Coca-Cola Enterprises [2000] Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart Interiors; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, "Soda Pop," *Interior Design* 71, no. 5 (May. 2000): 284-86; PhotoCrd: Jon Miller, Hedrich-Blessing.

brand's identity in the Enterprise's Atlanta, Georgia headquarters. The company's signature red made an immediate appearance in the lobby and waiting area, with bright half-height panels surrounding a portion of the reception desk. The red was again used to upholster several substantial armchairs in the waiting area.

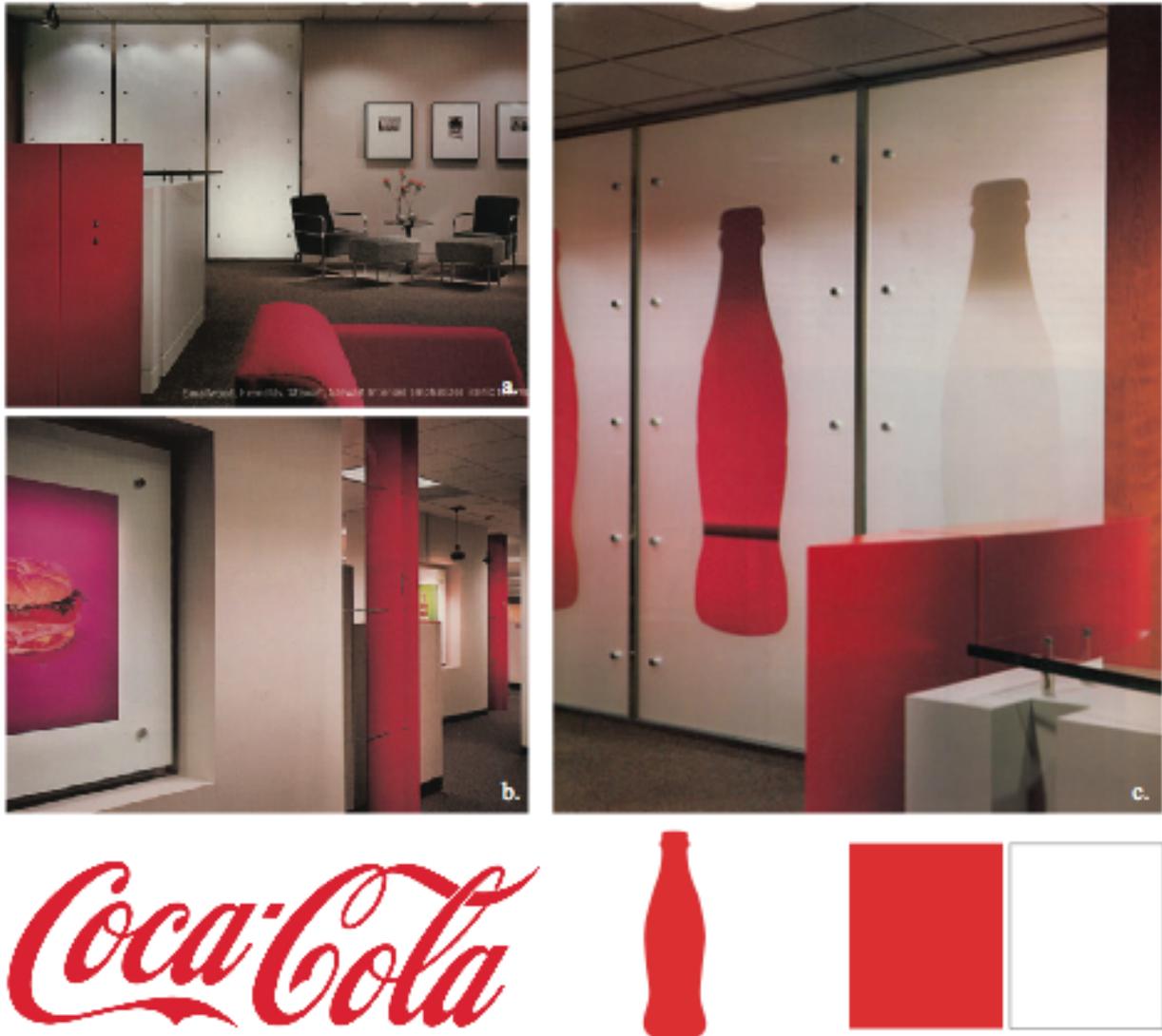


Fig. 5.3 (a-c). Coca-Cola Enterprises [2000] Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart Interiors; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, "Soda Pop," *Interior Design* 71, no. 5 (May. 2000): 284-86; PhotoCrd: Jon Miller, Hedrich-Blessing.

Although the color was not overwhelming in the rest of the office—the majority of it outfitted with matte white walls and warm grey carpeting—it was ever present. Vertical I-beams, painted

the classic red, were used as structural members throughout, bringing rhythm and continuity to the winding corridors. Full-height panels of etched glass bore the iconic totem of the Coca-Cola bottle, which read the same crimson when colorful panels came into view from behind.

Rectangular niches set intermittently into the white walls housed bold, framed prints of imagery associated with the iconic soda—a carefully staged image of a hamburger, a pyramid of Coke cans—expanding the brand vocabulary to include photography as an expressive medium. A decidedly more subdued approach to expressing the brand than many of Coca-Cola’s marketing campaigns, the design decisions made in this Atlanta interior painted a cohesive picture of the company’s story within the office interior.

Halfway around the world, a Christian Lacroix boutique in Japan was crafted as a colorful and playful space to house the French designer’s fashions.⁹² Fig. 5.4. The store, located in Tokyo, used whimsical graphic applications and transparent colored glass panels to compliment Lacroix’s bold apparel. Large French words, scrawled in a colorful script, adorned the store’s three story glass façade offering a taste of what was to follow inside and highlighting the cultural juxtaposition of the brand’s roots with the store’s setting. Immediately upon entry, a full-height atrium space opened onto the main retail floor and also led up a staircase to two upper levels. Peppering the atrium’s white walls were various abstract artworks, suggestive of the colorful patterns of Lacroix’s own textiles.

⁹² Christian Lacroix [2002] Christophe Carpenet Architecture & Interior Design; Tokyo, Japan in Deanna Kizis, “All Clear,” *Interior Design* 73, no. 4 (Apr. 2002): 217-18, 220-21; PhotoCrd: Nacasa & Partners.



Fig. 5.4 (a-d). Christian Lacroix [2002] Christophe Carpenle Architecture & Interior Design; Tokyo, Japan in Deanna Kizis, "All Clear," *Interior Design* 73, no. 4 (Apr. 2002): 217-218, 220-221; PhotoCrd: Nacasa & Partners.

Set against the otherwise white interior of the retail floor, displays made of colored glass punctuated the space in blocks of fuchsia, navy, orange and lime. Although bold, the transparent nature of the material kept the space feeling bright and open. A more solid use of this patchwork color-blocking was reserved for the front of the cashwrap and several columns running the full height of the space. While the use of color in the space was pervasive, it was thoughtfully articulated allowing the designer's apparel to remain the focus of the space.

In creating the third boutique hotel in his family's line of Hampshire Hotels and Resorts, Vikram Chatwal knew that the urban location's lack of interior real estate could be made up for in strength of concept.⁹³ Fig. 5.5. The dramatic and alluring Night Hotel came as the brainchild of designer Mark Zeff of Zeff designs, widely known for his "attention to small details and big branding." In the case of the Night Hotel, the design concept was constructed around the persona of a fictional "bon vivant"⁹⁴, a character that Zeff dubbed Mr. Knight. "From there," said Zeff, "we developed the idea of the hotel as the character's home, a 21st century manor house." The tone of the interior was immediately set—"chivalrous and sexy." The 22,000-square-foot hotel created this narrative with a mix of classic and contemporary, dramatic finishes and a dichromatic color scheme. First introduced with a massive vertical banner on the building's narrow façade, the hotel's logo—a lone Gothic-script "N"—was repeatedly used on planar surfaces throughout the interior.

⁹³ Night Hotel [2006] Mark Zeff, Zeff Designs; New York, NY in Bob Morris, "When Darkness Falls," *Interior Design* 77, no. 4 (Apr. 2006): 200-209; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

⁹⁴ *A French term for one who enjoys luxuries, especially good food and drink.*



Fig. 5.5 (a-d). Night Hotel [2006] Mark Zeff, Zeff Designs; New York, NY in Bob Morris, “When Darkness Falls,” *Interior Design* 77, no. 4 (Apr. 2006): 202-203, 206-207; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

The graphic “N” was mirrored in white lettering on black carpet tiles, supplementing a traditional application of Harlequin⁹⁵ for the interior’s flooring. An instance of Repeat Repeat (Intype),⁹⁶ the logo motif was pervasive in the space, used on carpeting throughout the lobby, corridors and lounges, and inlaid in the granite flooring of the vestibule. Zeff’s specialty, “creating an atmosphere based on a narrative”, was apparent in his juxtaposing materiality and subtle detailing in the 72 guest rooms and suites. Said the designer, “Hotel guests like to own the idea of a place.” Detailed wallpaper of an oversized thistle pattern, black and white pinstriping tucked away in the interior walls of closets, and Moroccan-style brass lanterns in the hotel’s small restaurant all came together to create the Night Hotel’s unique interior narrative.

⁹⁵ *Harlequin* refers to a checkered pattern (alternating colored squares) oriented in a 90° or a 45° angle typically made of marble, wood, or clay tiles. Wasilewski, Nathan James. "Theory Studies: Archetypical Practices of Contemporary Hotel Design." M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2011, 55-81; Marta Mendez, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Practices of Contemporary House Design.” M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2008, 76-87 (accessed Oct. 4, 2011), <http://www.intypes.cornell.edu/intypesub.cfm?inTypeID=1>

⁹⁶ *Repeat Repeat* refers to the reiterative practice of using a graphic element, color application or spatial motif in multiple locations and/or scales within an interior space. This practice is implemented a means to reinforce an occupant’s sense of place as well as to establish the interior’s (brand) identity. Juliana Daily, “Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design” (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 23-43.

With the last decade's exponential rise of the internet came a slew of new competition for former internet goliath America Online.⁹⁷ Fig. 5.6. With young, hip Googles and YouTubes springing up left and right, AOL was forced to reconsider its brand image and its future position in a rapidly expanding internet landscape. With this image overhaul came a new Los Angeles headquarters for the company. "Branding the building as AOL's posed a chief challenge," remarked Clay Pendergrast, HOK's Interior Design Director who played a pivotal role in the design of the space. Outfitting the 65,000-square-foot Beverly Hills workplace was challenging enough in that it needed to accommodate everything from a film studio to an internet café, with traditional offices as well as hoteling workstations. The company's recent "citrus-colored" graphics campaign supplied the color palette that was used for the interior, highlighting the building's curvilinear forms and creating a cohesive experience of brand throughout the new workplace.

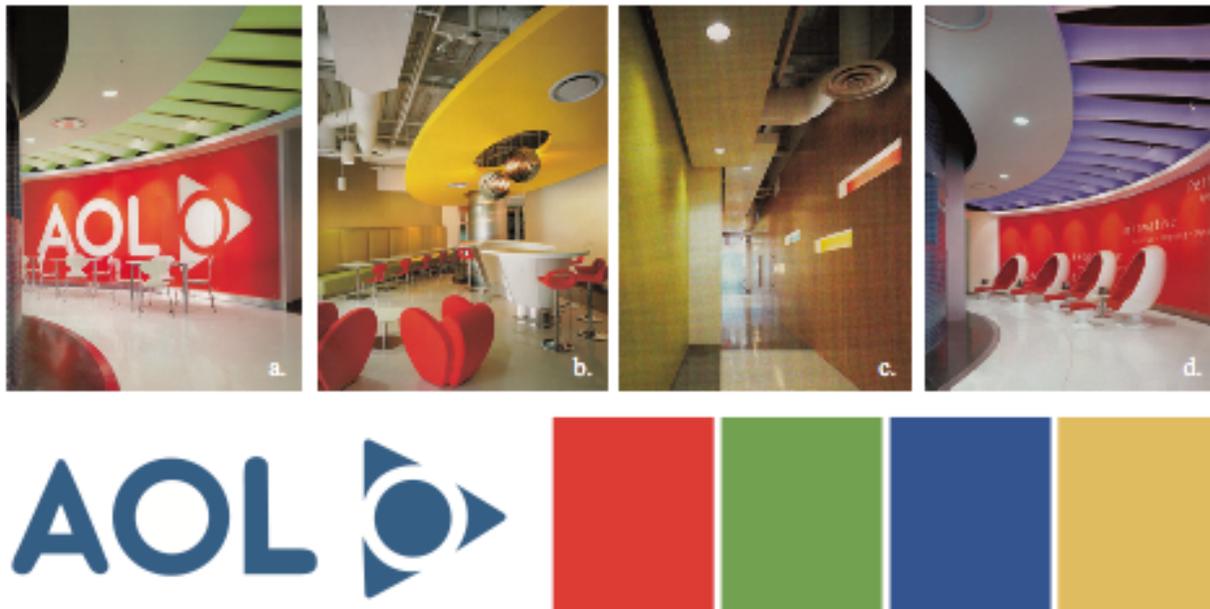


Fig. 5.6 (a-d). AOL Los Angeles Office [2007] HOK; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, "You've Got Style," *Interior Design* 78, no. 1 (Jan. 2007): 195, 197, 200-201; PhotoCrd: Benny Chan, Fotoworks.

⁹⁷ AOL Los Angeles Office [2007] HOK; Los Angeles, CA in Edie Cohen, "You've Got Style," *Interior Design* 78, no. 1 (Jan. 2007): 160-67; PhotoCrd: Benny Chan, Fotoworks.

The reception area's impressive rotunda offered the perfect space to introduce the AOL brand to employees and the visiting public alike. One concave wall of the double-height feature was lined with acrylic panels, back-painted a brilliant red-orange and etched with a massive iteration of the company emblem. This vivid plane was offset by white terrazzo flooring dotted with white Arne Jacobsen Ant chairs. In "pre-function" space, the same tangerine color also found itself used as the woolen upholstery of banquette seating and was continued up to the ceiling with uplit glass wall tiles.

The feature in workplace's internet café was an elliptical plane of bright yellow drywall, suspended from the ceiling as a canopy for the horseshoe-shaped bar. The otherwise white space was punctuated by colorful seating—a lime green banquette along the wall, and Ron Arad's parabolic Size 10 lounge chairs, more of Jacobsen's Ant chairs, and several polypropylene bar stools all in the company's red-orange hue.

A more metaphorical use of Colorbrand (Intype)⁹⁸ was explored in a circulation corridor, where colorful blocks of backlit acrylic disrupted a seamless wall of wheat-board paneling. Pendergrast explained: "When AOL sends out information, it's basically in the form of light."⁹⁹ The design of these glowing rectangles used the company colors to quietly allude to this data transfer, solidifying the association between AOL and high-speed information exchange. Of the finished design of the space, "It's fresh and current but not trendy," concluded Pendergrast. "No late-'90's dot-com look."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ *Colorbrand* characterizes the use of color in an interior space as an explicit representation of the space's brand identity. This color is most often derived from the company logo or graphic identity and is the principal color or colors used on an otherwise neutral interior palette. Juliana Daily, "Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design" (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 44-66.

⁹⁹ Cohen, "You've Got Style," 196.

¹⁰⁰ Cohen, "You've Got Style," 200.

First founded in 1886 in New Brunswick, New Jersey by the Johnson brothers, health care products and pharmaceuticals company Johnson & Johnson has survived and flourished through over a century of change.¹⁰¹ Fig. 5.7. For the company's first Manhattan office, designers from Lalire March Architects were brought on board to execute the space's interior. According to designer Christopher March, "The space [had] a pure beauty that didn't need disturbing." Partner Rex Lalire added, "The design deliberately [forged] a connection between the very strong, important history of J&J and a start-up that explores new ground." Bearing these design intentions in mind, the retrofit of the former upholstery shop maintained a primarily open floor plan, exposing and highlighting existing features in the space—1930s mushroom-cap concrete columns, steel-framed ribbon windows, and poured concrete flooring. The reception area was quick to introduce the brand on several scales. On the concrete-block wall behind the custom reception desk, a vintage wooden J&J logo salvaged from one of the company's old New Jersey facilities was prominently displayed. On a perpendicular white wall, an abstract installation displayed a starburst "constellation" of packaging from J&J products. The waiting area was outfitted with lapis-blue Saarinen womb chairs and a red Piero Lissoni sofa. These furnishings were completed with a stack of plywood tabletops, reclaimed from the design team's previous office and stacked to create a low coffee table, the J&J credo printed on its glossy white surface.

¹⁰¹ Johnson & Johnson NY Office [2008] Lalire March Architects; New York, NY in Jen Renzi, "First-Aid Kit," *Interior Design* 79, no. 5 (May. 2008): 276-85; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

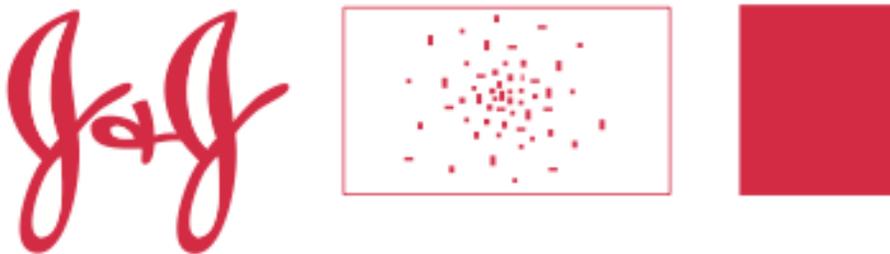


Fig. 5.7 (a-f). Johnson & Johnson NY Office [2008] Lalire March Architects; New York, NY in Jen Renzi, “First-Aid Kit,” *Interior Design* 79, no. 5 (May, 2008): 277-80, 285; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

Other relics of the company’s history peppered the space—a vintage blue first-aid kit casually placed on a plywood cabinet separating two workstations; vintage Band-Aid boxes set on the table in a breakout room. The placement of these artifacts was contrasted with clean, crisp applications of the company color. The corner of a concrete-block wall was wrapped with red painted-aluminum signage bearing the company name in its signature script. The trademark red also lined the inner surfaces of shelving units in the custom workstations. In acknowledgement of the company’s

employees, each desk was individually identified with a custom red name card clipped to a vertical spring, offering a rhythmic interpretation of the company color and giving staff a sense of ownership of their space.

This middle condition of the branding continuum offers a unique experience of the interior's narrative. Oscillating between moments of very literal, overt expressions of brand vocabulary and more neutral, interim periods, the experience of the space's identity is notably dynamic and active.

Evidence for the archetypal use and the chronological sequence of Activate in Spatial Graphic Design was developed from the following primary sources: **1970** Burlington Domestic Showroom [1973] Alan L. Ferry Designers, Inc.; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, "Graphic Approach: Corporate Identity Projected Through Design," *Interior Design* 44, no. 1 (Jan. 1973): 102-103; PhotoCrd: Bob Smith / **2000** Coca-Cola Enterprises [2000] Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart Interiors; Atlanta, GA in Anonymous, "Soda Pop," *Interior Design* 71, no. 5 (May. 2000): 284-286; PhotoCrd: Jon Miller, Hedrich-Blessing / **2002** Christian Lacroix [2002] Christophe Carpentre; Tokyo, Japan in Deanna Kizis, "All Clear," *Interior Design* 73, no. 4 (Apr. 2002): 217-218, 220-221; PhotoCrd: Nacasa & Partners / Night Hotel [2006] Mark Zeff, Zeff Designs; New York, NY in Bob Morris, "When Darkness Falls," *Interior Design* 77, no. 4 (Apr. 2006): 202-203, 206-207; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel / Johnson & Johnson NY Office [2008] Lalire March Architects; New York, NY in Jen Renzi, "First-Aid Kit," *Interior Design* 79, no. 5 (May. 2008): 277-280, 285; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

CHAPTER 6

SATURATE

Definition

Saturate is a brand concept that occupies the most elevated condition of a strategic continuum ranging from the least intervention (Understate) to the most. Making use of one or multiple branding strategies simultaneously, the saturated condition borders on intrusive; the brand identity is overly repetitive, distributed throughout the entirety of the space, and is applied at almost all scales to the vast majority of elements.

Research

In the broadest sense, graphic design represents a language of visual communication, adding layers of “complexity, nuance and subtlety”¹⁰² to the comprehension of whatever information is at hand. When introduced to an interior environment, the added spatial dimension coupled with these graphic elements takes this communication one step farther, making it an experience.

The Intypes research category Spatial Graphic Design defines a new sub-type of environmental graphic design that is interior-specific and based on the establishment of a spatial narrative of brand or theme. Spatial Graphic Design is a multidisciplinary approach that may include components of graphic design, industrial design, interior design and architecture. Applications of brand in interior settings relies on the interaction of various design elements to create layers of meaning, serving as a vehicle for the storytelling of the space’s narrative of place. This narrative embellishes and reaffirms itself through varied use of material, color, lighting, and signage, among other design elements. The communication of an interior’s brand concept or spatial narrative can be articulated in varying degrees, employing a range of communicative devices to make the expression more literal or more abstract, highly immersive or more discreet.

¹⁰² Alice Twemlow, *What Is Graphic Design For?* (United Kingdom: RotoVision, 2006), 6.

To understand this varied range of brand concept, the argument is made for three brand *concepts or frameworks* for analyzing or designing Spatial Graphic Design interiors—Understate, Activate, Saturate. This range is best understood as a continuum, spanning every increment level of narrative expression. The aim of the following three chapters is to define three nodes along this strategic branding continuum. Defining the two extremes (Understate and Saturate) and the median point (Activate) of this continuum helps to give structure to the larger spectrum of which they are a part. While understanding these three points helps to define the larger picture, it is equally important to see the continuum that they are a part of as a means to understanding the full range of brand concept that can be articulated within a space.

Two archetypal strategic practices, Repeat Repeat and Colorbrand (see chapters 2 and 3), punctuate the experience of space and may be used in any of the concepts.

To make the case for each category, the chronological sequence was limited to the very best exemplars. For Saturate, in the 1970 to 2010 period, there are five examples representing the following practice types: nightclub, retail.

Each photographic example is coupled with a visual analysis highlighting the dominant graphic components in the space that are used to articulate the brand concept.

Description

The saturated condition offers the most highly immersive experience of an interior's narrative of place. This concept is sometimes articulated through the use of one design strategy, sometimes by several working together simultaneously. Whether one or several, the distinguishing factor in the saturated condition is the level or degree to which these strategies are implemented. Rather than a singular instance of a brand strategy (Understate)¹⁰³ or a series of elements punctuating an otherwise neutral space (Activate)¹⁰⁴, strategies used in the saturated condition are applied to almost every plane within space, encapsulating the viewer.

The constant level visual overload found in the saturated interior actually makes for a less dynamic experience than one might find in an activated interior. Every element in the space is featured, keeping the level of immersion at an invariable high rather than peppering an otherwise neutral space with momentary pops of brand vocabulary (see Fig. 5.1).

In such interiors, the brand narrative is often less literal than those found in the understated and activated interior. Rather than the explicit use of brand vocabulary—logo or logotype, slogans, icons—the narrative is often a more abstract representation of the space's personality or

¹⁰³ *Understate* is a brand concept that occupies the lowest condition of a strategic continuum ranging from the least intervention to the most (Saturate). In this understated condition, brand identity is subtly repetitive, minimally distributed spatially, and applied at a limited number of scales and elements. Juliana Daily, "Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design" (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 67-79).

¹⁰⁴ *Activate* is a brand concept that occupies the middle condition of a strategic continuum ranging from the least intervention (Understate) to the most persistent and pervasive (Saturate). In the activated condition, applications of the brand vocabulary are distributed throughout the space on various scales and elements, often positioned strategically to get the highest impact from the most important locations in space, creating an active and dynamic experience of the brand narrative. Juliana Daily, "Theory Studies: Archetypical Spatial Graphic Design Practices in Contemporary Interior Design" (M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2012, 80-97).

character, relying more heavily on the use of lighting, color, specific patterns and prints, imagery and artifact to round of the spatial experience.

Saturated interiors are often found in retail or hospitality settings, where a highly emotive visual and spatial experience enhances the function of the space, engaging consumers in a relationships with the products they are about to buy and transporting hotel and nightclub goers on an escapist vacation from their everyday reality.

Chronological Sequence

With a combination of color, material, lighting and iconic super-sized imagery, the Olimpo discotheque/piano bar created a totally immersive and mysterious atmosphere for nighttime club-goers.¹⁰⁵ Fig. 6.1. The thematic discotheque/piano bar was styled after the story of Mount Olympus, the heavenly home of the Greek Gods, and was complete with larger-than-life imagery of such mythological figures as Bacchus, Diana and Laocoon. Ironically enough, the bar was located below street level and in Rome, Italy. The imaginative interior came as a result of the free rein granted to designer Pino Piantanida, who crafted the space as a mix of “mythical antiquity [and] historic fact.” The site of the bar was once a complex of ancient Roman baths, inspiring the deep turquoise tiling used throughout on walls, steps and even the bar itself. The blue color was a prominent theme in the space, covering walls in murals of clouds and sky dotted with images of ancient Greek figures.

¹⁰⁵ Olimpo Discotheque/Piano Bar [1987] Pino Piantanida; Rome, Italy in Helen Barnes, “Olimpo,” *Interior Design* 58, no. 4 (Apr. 1987): 264-67; PhotoCrd: Giovanna Piemonti.

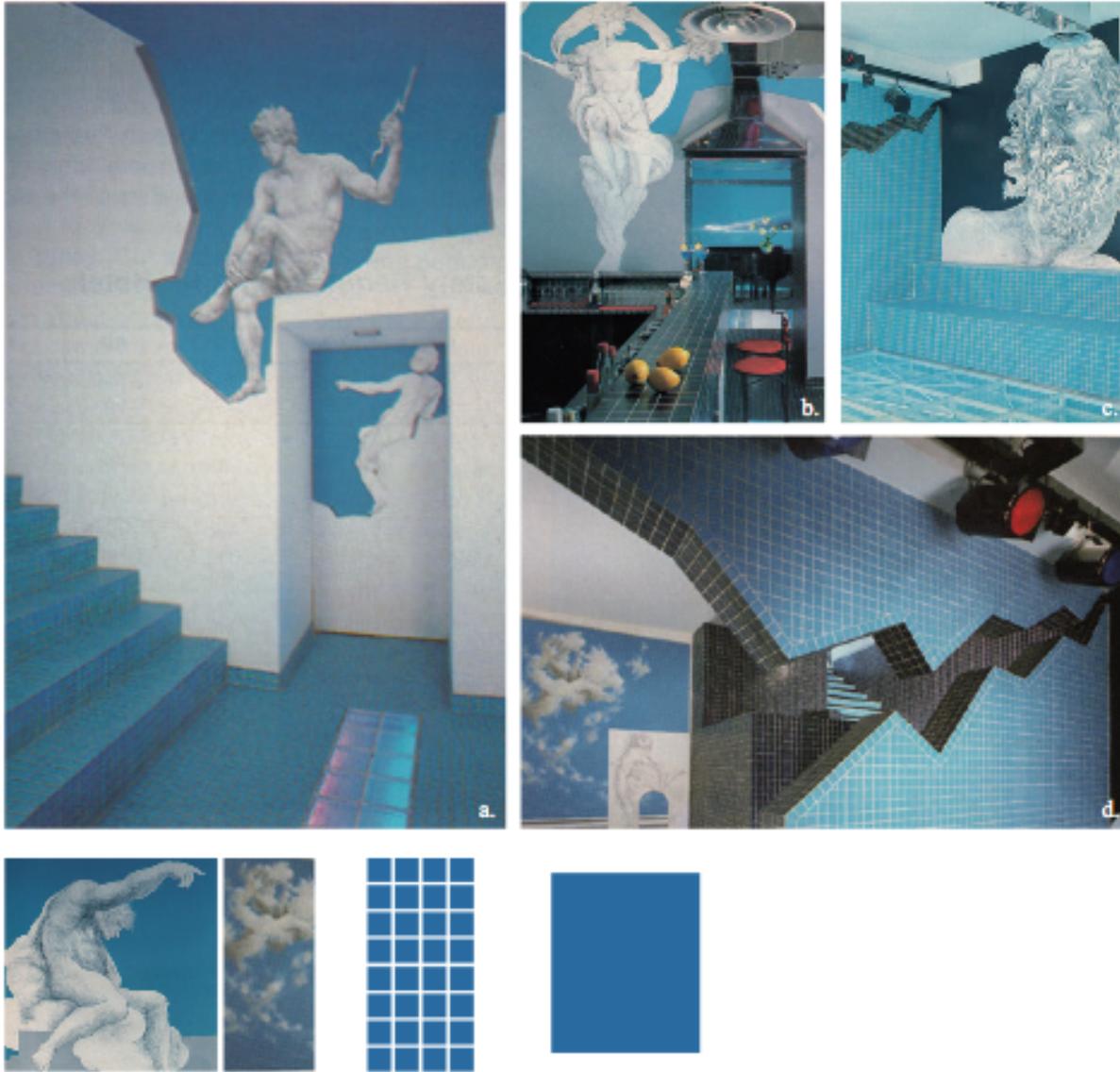


Fig. 6.1 (a-d). Olimpo Discotheque/Piano Bar [1987] Pino Piantanida; Rome, Italy in Helen Barnes, “Olimpo,” *Interior Design* 58, no. 4 (Apr. 1987): 264-67; PhotoCrd: Giovanna Piemonti.

The 3,800-square-foot interior was divided into 3 main rooms and a small bar, connected by a labyrinth of corridors meant to extend the spatial experience for patrons moving between rooms. Although much of the space was a vibrant blue, lighting was kept low, adding to the mystique of the experience. One of the few sources of lighting, the disco floor was made of structural glass, lit from below adding to the ethereal feeling of dancing in the heavens.

Located in London, Kabaret’s Prophecy came as a bold addition to the city’s members-only club scene, quickly becoming a notorious hotspot in the city’s nightlife.¹⁰⁶ Fig. 6.2. The exclusive subterranean nightclub was a graphic tour de force—graphic in every sense of the word—combining color, pattern, lighting, bold super-sized imagery, and text. Said designer David Collins, “In a club atmosphere, you have to keep things constantly changing. Kabaret's Prophecy is like an on-going project, with elements evolving constantly.”¹⁰⁷

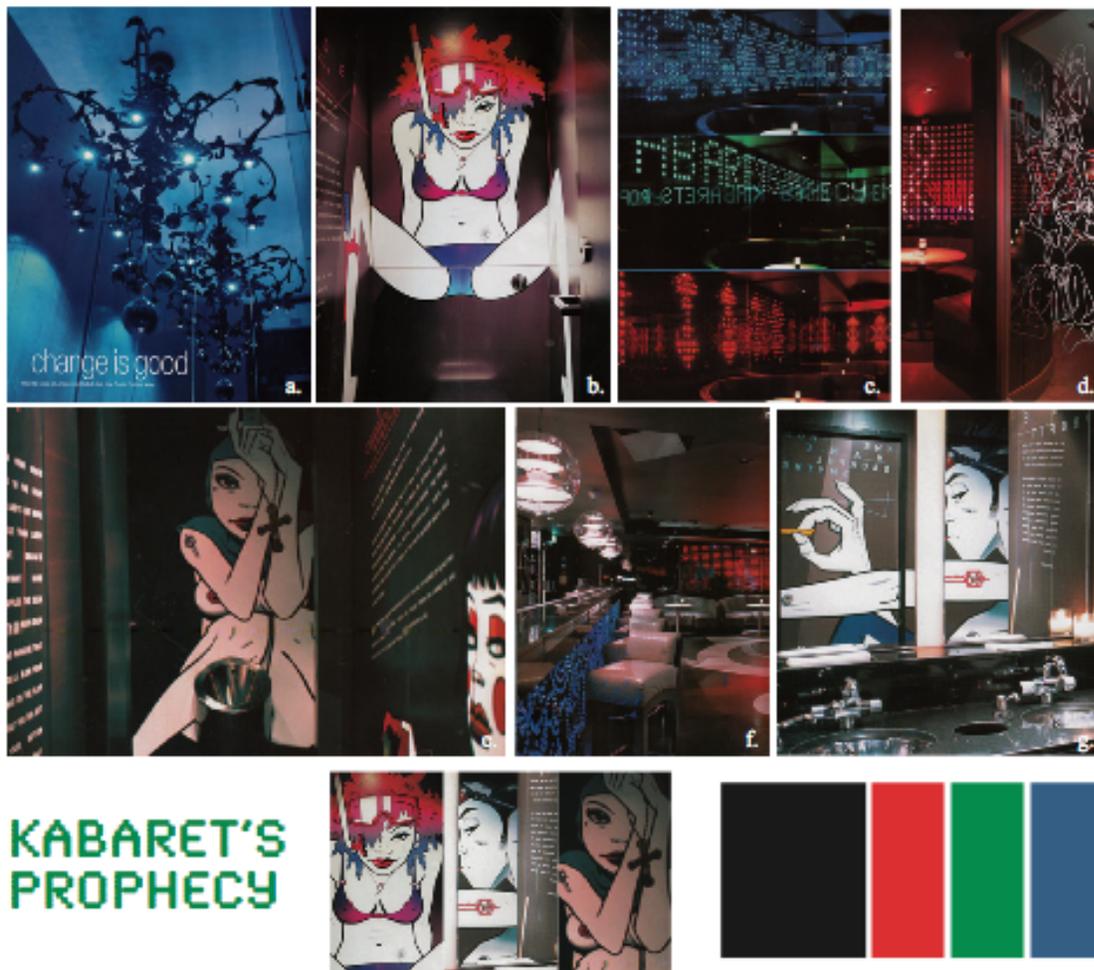


Fig. 6.2 (a-g). Kabaret’s Prophecy [2004] David Collins; London, England in Stephen F. Milioti, “Change Is Good,” *Interior Design* 75, no. 8 (Aug. 2004): 162-69; PhotoCrd: Adrian Wilson.

¹⁰⁶ Kabaret’s Prophecy [2004] David Collins; London, England in Stephen F. Milioti, “Change Is Good,” *Interior Design* 75, no. 8 (Aug. 2004): 162-69; PhotoCrd: Adrian Wilson.

¹⁰⁷ Collins, “Change Is Good,” 163.

To achieve this dynamic and versatile interior experience, Collins partnered with graphic engineers and live-performance video specialists, installing cutting-edge audio/visual technology throughout the club's main dance floor and bar area. Chameleon LEDs created pinpoints of colored light, alternating between shades of red, green, and blue. Two of the space's four primary walls were dedicated to featuring multicolored graphic animations and text that alternated nightly. Modular intelligent LED pixel blocks displayed live video feeds as lasers designed by light artist Christ Levine swept across the laser-cut vinyl dance floor.

Distinctive super-sized illustrations by cartoonist Jamie Hewlett broke up the otherwise charcoal-grey walls. Prints of the provocative characters lurked in corners and were plastered on doors—some even appeared to straddle the bathroom stalls. Elsewhere, glass doors were embellished with etchings of intimate and voyeuristic line drawings by artist Natasha Law. “It’s tongue-in-cheek trashy,” said Collins. “It perfectly achieves that retro-pop 1970’s feel.” The space creates an atmosphere of both maximalism and intimacy, with scintillating colors and lighting set to the dark, mysterious backdrop of London nightlife literally gone underground.

Another space whose design heavily revolved around the application of a mural was Abercrombie & Fitch's NY Flagship store.¹⁰⁸ Fig. 6.3. The 30,000-square-foot, four story interior was anchored by a massive mural running the full height of the space, even onto its ceiling. Painted in a classic style “best described as WPA meets Thomas Eakins meets Chariots of Fire”, the mural narrated scenes of strapping young men rowing, wrestling, climbing ropes

¹⁰⁸ Abercrombie & Fitch NY Flagship Store [2006] Annabelle Selldorf; New York, NY in Raul Barreneche, “Hot Property,” *Interior Design* 77, no. 4 (Apr. 2006): 186-91; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

and engaging in other such displays of masculine physical prowess. The rugged scene was complimented by the low lit interior's rich material palette of water-picked granite floor tiles, oak paneling, and custom display racks made of blackened steel.



Fig. 6.3 (a-f). Abercrombie & Fitch NY Flagship Store [2006] Annabelle Selldorf; New York, NY in Raul Barreneche, “Hot Property,” *Interior Design* 77, no. 4 (Apr. 2006): 186-91; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

This image of timeless Americana, an homage to A&F’s 114 year history, was heightened with artifacts such as a taxidermy moose head and a stack of vintage wooden canoes, as well as small vignettes of bronze floor lamps and leather armchairs. Such relics were sharply contrasted by the company’s signature soundtrack, thumping beats you’d be more likely to find in a nightclub than a retail interior. For the company’s target demographic, primarily teens and young adults, the loud music, low lighting and pungent aroma of A&F’s signature cologne played on the brands

often sexualized image, striking a balance with the interior's craftsmanship and material richness. Different locations "require different attitudes," said designer Annabelle Selldorf, "but they'll still feel similar. The identity comes from the clothes."

The bold New York flagship store for Louis Vuitton, on its corner lot at 5th Avenue and East 57th, offered its first colorful display of iconic brand identity prior to even entering the store itself.¹⁰⁹ Fig. 6.4. The frosted glass of the multi-story façade was described by designer Jun Aoki as "a playfully sleek meditation on crystalline transparency and clouded translucency."¹¹⁰ The transparent and opaque checkers were reminiscent of patterns often found on Louis Vuitton textiles, and at night it was often lit with colorful arrays of the company monogram. This motif was carried through to the store's interior, transforming the iconic logos and graphic patterns found on the brand's textiles onto spatial elements. Throughout the interior retail space, these patterns were scaled to fit various surface applications, backing display niches, covering walls, and upholstering the occasional bench. The most notable applications adorned the interior's two features—it's so-called "Wonder Wall" and "Bag Bar". The former served as the core to the interior's staircase, climbing three stories through the center atrium of the space. Backlit cubes of alternating color, again evoking the checkered print, were etched with a variation of the circle/diamond motif that so often accompanied the monogram pattern. The wall made a colorful statement with constantly changing spectral light, and was visible from virtually everywhere within the space.

¹⁰⁹ Louis Vuitton [2011] Jun Aoki; New York, NY; Site Visit, Juliana Daily, 31 Mar. 2011; PhotoCrd: Juliana Daily, Intypes Project, 31 Mar. 2011.

¹¹⁰ "Louis Vuitton Store, New York", Galinsky, accessed 18 Aug. 2011, <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/louisvuittonny/>.



Fig. 6.4 (a-d). Louis Vuitton [2011] Jun Aoki; New York, NY; Site Visit, Juliana Daily, 31 Mar. 2011; PhotoCrd: Juliana Daily, Intypes Project, 31 Mar. 2011.

The same circle/diamond motif was also used on the store’s infamous “Bag Bar”. Located on the second floor overlooking the atrium, the back wall of the bar was made up of a series of cubes recessed to different depths and adorned with various iterations of the same pattern. The spotlight cubes were affixed to motorized tracks, moving laterally to reveal merchandise hidden behind. A bar, complete with bar stools, was situated in front of the wall, where customers could sit and “sample” the products displayed behind. The statement feature was built custom for the store and has become a staple in many other Louis Vuitton locations, allowing for a unique and personalized experience of the LV merchandise.

Swatch watches, first sold in 1983, made a name for themselves as being slim, fashionable and high quality, while still being extremely affordable.¹¹¹ With interchangeable watch faces and colorful bands, partnerships with notable artists and designers, and official timekeeping for events hosted by big names such as O’Neill, UCI BMX, and Red Bull, the Swiss brand has remained current through decades of changing fashion trends. In 2003, the brand brought on architects at the Zamparelli Architectural Group to tackle the design of their worldwide flagship store in Manhattan.¹¹² Fig. 6.5. The store’s prominent location in the heart of Times Square promised high pedestrian traffic as well as competition from surrounding stores, demanding a visually impactful retail presence to match. The design of the space made the most of its corner location, engaging visitors before they even entered the store. A substantial brushed metal column defined the façade’s exterior footprint, introducing the company name as well as the circular motif carried through the rest of the interior.

¹¹¹ “The On-Going Story: Swatch History,” Swatch, accessed 25 Sept. 2001, http://www.swatch.com/zz_en/about/history.html.

¹¹² Swatch [2011] ZAG Architects; New York, NY; Site Visit, Juliana Daily, 27 Jul. 2011; PhotoCrd: Juliana Daily, Intypes Project, 27 Jul. 2011.



swatch[®] 



Fig. 6.5 (a-e). Swatch [2011] ZAG Architects; New York, NY; Site Visit, Juliana Daily, 27 Jul. 2011; PhotoCrd: Juliana Daily, Intypes Project, 27 Jul. 2011.

Once inside, the store offered an experience of all things swatch. Massive circular chandeliers hung from various points on the ceiling, constructed of hundreds of colorful Swatch watches. Display plinths shaped like watch gears rose from the ground, showcasing a wide variety of the company's latest product lines. White walls were covered in supergraphics (of stylish models

and oversized images of the watches themselves, as well as repeated instances of the Swatch name and logo. Even navigating the space offered an experience of the idea that was the foundation of the entire brand – time. The orientation of the display units made for winding, irregular circulation paths, slowing down passage through the space and extending visitors' temporal experience of the relatively small retail footprint.

The highly experiential saturated interior is a much more contemporary trend in the construction of a branded interior, offering a more abstracted presentation of a space's character and personality as a counterpoint to the overt branding and marketing strategies so often used to target today's consumers.

Evidence for the archetypal use and the chronological sequence of Repeat Repeat in Spatial Graphic Design was developed from New York City site visits to Louis Vuitton and Swatch in 2011 and from the following primary sources: **1980** Olimpo Discotheque/Piano Bar [1987] Pino Piantanida; Rome, Italy in Helen Barnes, "Olimpo," *Interior Design* 58, no. 4 (Apr. 1987): 264-267; PhotoCrd: Giovanna Piemonti / **2000** Kabaret's Prophecy [2004] David Collins; London, England in Stephen F. Milioti, "Change Is Good," *Interior Design* 75, no. 8 (Aug. 2004): 162-169; PhotoCrd: Adrian Wilson / Abercrombie & Fitch NY Flagship Store [2006] Annabelle Selldorf; New York, NY in Raul Barreneche, "Hot Property," *Interior Design* 77, no. 4 (Apr. 2006): 186-191; PhotoCrd: Eric Laignel.

APPENDIX

Gensler New York Interview
Beth Novitsky, Senior Graphic Designer
4 Jan. 2011

(JD: I'm a graduate student at Cornell and I'm doing my thesis work on EGD and I know you [here at Gensler] have a specific studio in house that's dedicated to that. So I want to get the company perspective on how it all works.)

JD: How do you define Environmental Graphic Design and how those specific projects that you have listed under that category are distinguished from other projects that you work on?

BN: We—our environmental graphic design practice or discipline is within a studio – Gensler is set up in studios instead of having this big massive company, it's broken up into smaller studios, so the studios tend to be more focused on a particular area of expertise. You know, airport design, or financial services firms or whatever. That's all the interior design people. We have a studio called brand design, and most of us have graphic design backgrounds as opposed to architecture. Sometimes we'll have a product designer or something like that but we're mostly graphic designers. So EGD is basically the graphic design part in an environment, so kind of how to weave...for us that means how to weave the thread of the brand into the space. So, we do a lot of different kinds of projects where we do that. There are projects that are retail design projects, so we'll be designing a store, often, well sometimes...we occasionally come up with the whole name of the store and the whole identity of the store, and we'll try to get that brand into the store both from an architectural point of view—you know, what are the shapes and what are the fixtures

and the materials and all that kind of stuff—but also from our point of view, the brand point of view, how are you communicating on signage, is there a wallpaper that you’re using that’s a custom wallpaper treatment, is there an interactive exhibit-like space, something that people can interact with and touch and mess around with and really experience. Environmental Graphic Design as a discipline in the world, you know if you look at a professional organization like SEGDC, there are different kinds of facets even within that. I think it’s mostly a catch-all phrase for signage, but even signage can be a lot of different things. So it’s kind of become broader than that, it’s really again how you express a brand, and brand maybe is too broad a word even. How to express a certain kind of stylistic point of view, and it’s like another tool in the toolbox beyond the architecture and materials. You know, you have furniture, you have finishes, things like that, and then you have the other ways of having a subtle thread of connection to the business that you’re trying to design for. So, retail design, another area that we work a lot in is corporate interiors, so we have a huge corporate interiors practice that’s doing spaces like this one. And what we’ll do is we’ll add another layer on top of that one. [...] On our [glass] office fronts, instead of just doing a little distraction mark, we have a little design element that’s quotes from famous designers and buildings and chairs and whatnot. You know, that was done as another way of expressing our point of view. So, like I said, it’s another tool besides architecture and interiors to get that point of view across. So it’s a way of getting messages in, words, pictures—

JD: So it sort of becomes a narrative of place?

BN: Yeah, yeah.

JD: And I've been trying to tease out in my research what specific elements other than just signage and wayfinding and graphics are part of that larger kit of parts. Do you guys find that there are certain components that hold more weight than others? You know, material, color or does it depend on the project?

BN: Yeah, it really depends on the project. We do so many different kinds of projects, it's hard to get specific. We are doing more of these sort of "after-market"—for lack of a better word—projects where there's been an interior designer involved, and it looks nice, it's perfectly serviceable and the finishes are nice and the colors are nice or whatever, but you walk in there and you don't necessarily feel like you're at any one place. There's nothing really distinguishing the space from any other space. So we've had increasingly more projects where we come in after the fact to help them again kind of express the brand better. We did a big project for the Bacardi headquarters in Miami, which is still kind of ongoing, but they moved into the space and it's perfectly nice looking space, but you didn't get any sense of the history of the company, you didn't get any sense of these powerful brands that they have. They have so many other great brands other than Bacardi. They have Grey Goose Vodka and Duers Whiskey, Bombay Sapphire. All these brands that have a great history in and of themselves. And the Bacardi brand, if you really get to know it, isn't just the bottle. It's this whole family that's gone back for 150 years, and this history connected to Cuba. It's really amazing. They have an archivist and all these great old photos and old paintings and all this great stuff. So rather than just slap that stuff up on a wall, we helped to kind of curate an experience. So we add this whole other layer. In one case it was a wallpaper that we designed, a custom wallpaper. Sometimes we

did a custom wallpaper with framed images on top of it. In some places it was more dialed up. There was this one hallway that was this crazy S shape – so we turned it into a sugar cane field, you know with a distillery at the back so you feel like you’re walking through a sugar cane field. So some of it is a little themey, but it all kind of led back and let this story imbue itself in the space. Rather than just seeing a Bacardi sign on the wall to know you’re at Bacardi, instead you’ll go to a pantry area that have this very strong column element and we wrapped the columns in drink recipes. So there’s this big, bold type and it’s very graphic and it says, just to tie the people back to why they’re at work. There’s another wall that has a bunch of ingredients that go into making gin—all the raw elements because most people really know those kinds of things. It’s these little ideas, these little novelty moments in the space that help to bring it to life a bit more. And we’re doing more of those, because people are realizing that they want their employees to connect to something and understand. And we do these sessions sometimes where we’re asking questions about the brand and “where are you going?” and whether it’s a financial company, there’s a brand behind it. And obviously for retail it’s easier because they’re used to talking about their brand and they’re used to selling to people, and they have brand managers and all that kind of stuff. While at a regular services-based company, they’re not really used to talking about that kind of stuff. We had a session a few weeks ago—we were getting their marketing people to talk to us about, you know, “where are you going?” and “what are your values?” and “what’s the direction of this company?” and these other people that aren’t in marketing were like, “Wow, I’ve never heard that!” So it’s not the kind of thing that gets communicated very often. We kind of tease it out of them and then figure out ways to get it into the space, to help bring that connection forward for people.

JD: Do clients generally seek you guys out specifically to do this kind of work—except for in the case of this after-market sort of thing—or do you do it in tandem with the rest of the project?

BN: We prefer to do it in tandem and we try to pitch it tandem whenever we can. It depends a lot on the company, the space, the project at hand, and their tolerance for that kind of thing.

JD: How long have you guys had the EGD studio in-house?

BN: We've had this discipline for quite a while—maybe about 20 years—but I think for a lot of that time we were seen as the people who did the signage package. Clients would come to us, and maybe we had enough time, maybe we didn't, to throw some signs up and do the code package and do the stuff that they know they need in order to move in. There are some design directs from the interiors side who still think that that's all you need. But the tide is shifting and I think the tide is shifting because workplaces are changing, and our clients are realizing that "Oh, I can't just have the swanky space, it's got to have soul to it." We've also had some successful projects, some of these "intervention" projects or "after-market" projects, people are seeing those and thinking "Oh, that's cool!" The other factor I think is that budgets have been low. Build-out and construction budgets have been slashed. Five years ago, you could have done fantastic materials and beautiful design elements and this that and the other thing, and you get top of the line everything. And that made it's own kind of statement. But when budgets get slashed, all that stuff goes and you're left with "vanilla" stuff that you can afford. So it was seen as a cheap way of getting some personality in—you know, "Let's do some graphic stuff". And that's fine, it's

kept us in business I guess [*laughs*]. Like I said, we have some successes and we have a bit of a ground swell, and through working on some projects I think people are understanding the value of it, and the value of bringing in an integrated team. Especially if we're pitching a workplace project for a retail brand [i.e. the headquarters for a fashion house], it's becoming increasingly more critical that that kind of thinking is brought to the project. Sometimes we don't end up doing all that much—it ends up being an elevator lobby and core spaces. Sometimes we'll help figure out a tour path, you know—who's visiting and how we bring people through. So it's not like you have to stick stuff everywhere that anyone ever works.

JD: Like little touchpoints?

BN: Yeah, and that's actually a good point because you don't want to overwhelm it, overwhelm people. There can be too much. Too much brand and too much environmental stuff. And you kind of just want to focus on doing your job and you don't want to get beat over the head with marketing all the time. So, it's kind of a balance. It depends a lot on the organization and where their heads are and their tolerance for lots of messages. Some companies are all about messages, and some don't really care. We call it the "volume" of the brand, and how overt you want to be about it, versus subtle. So there's that angle, too.

JD: I'm going to be in the city for a few more days. Are there any recent projects that you guys have worked on that you recommend I check out? I know you guys did HBO, right?

BN: Yeah, we did the HBO store. I mean, I wouldn't really say the HBO store is about Environmental Graphic Design. It's kind of about an idea—you know, the colors changing and all that.

JD: You worked on Absolut, right? Is that in the city?

BN: Yeah, Absolut is a great workplace. I don't know how you would get in to see that, but that's a good one because we worked hand-in-hand with the interiors team to try and think of clever ways—so it wasn't like, ok we're doing the interiors and now we're passing it to you, and you guys can put some stuff on the walls—it was much more integrated than that. So, we came up with places to do some unusual...you know, they had a great brand to work with, obviously, so it was kind of easy. For example, there's this chandelier that's made out of bottles, frosted Absolut bottles. I don't even know whose idea that was, it was just part of the process.

JD: Do you find that there's more of a trend towards that? The more integrated approach to projects between you and the interiors team?

BN: Yeah, there is. For all those reasons—the budget being tighter and clients being more aware of it and understanding that it helps. And then our own internal understanding of it has shifted as well. What would be another good one to see... We've done so much workplace work. *Virgin Mobile has a space. We did a “touch-down” space for them. Their headquarters are in New Jersey and they have a lot of people that are in and out of the city, that either work in the city or salespeople that are in the city a lot. So they did this space that's not very big, but they wanted

people to be able to work at one of their work stations. So we did this very small space, and when you first walk in it's got this giant mural with a crazy collage and their spray painted looking logo. There's a chandelier and a disco ball, and their space consists of just this big long kitchen table kind of thing that everyone just sits at with their laptops and they all have their cell phones. It's a big, casual...it's got a very distinct personality to it. If you can't see it, you can definitely see pictures of a lot of it. I don't know if they're on our website or what. From a retail point of view, I'm trying to think of what else we've done in New York. PS from Aeropostale is a project – there's one in the Manhattan Mall. That, from a true brand perspective, is a good story. Aeropostale—you know, high school kids, hoodies, t-shirts, all that—a couple years ago they realized there was this big untapped market for the younger sibling of their typical shopper. So, the ten or twelve year old who wanted to wear that stuff but it was too big for them. They wanted to do this junior brand, so we went through this big exercise with them to figure out what to call it. So we came up with the name and then we did the identity. Kind of helped them with the overall graphic look and feel, and then did the stores. And the stores are really pretty cheaply built. They're mass-market so they didn't have a lot to spend on build-out. But you'll see the little, subtle details. There's this interesting pattern on the ceiling, kind of like clouds, and there's stuff in the dressing rooms. There's just some little clever moments that help kids to relate to the brand. One of the criteria they gave us when we came up with the name and the identity was that it had to look good on a hoodie [*laughs*], it had to be symmetrical. It was really funny, we actually printed out a bunch of names instead of just on a piece of paper we actually laid them out on sweatshirts. So that's not necessarily EGD, it's more brand development, but then it gets expressed in everything. And everything that we express it in is Environmental Graphics. So in a retail context it can also mean the marketing stuff that you put in. The posters and sale signs and

all that kind of stuff is effectively part of it too. So that's a good one to see, that's one of our more recent projects in the last couple of years. We did the NHL Store, which is across from HBO, that is also worth seeing. We did American Girl, which is worth checking out because it's such a fantastic experiential place. You see people coming from all over the country to go there with their little girls. It was designed and built I think maybe seven year ago? And they've actually done a couple of rounds of refresh, so some of the stuff we did isn't there anymore. They've kind of been evolving it. I actually haven't been in there myself in a while, so I know that some of the original signage package has been changed or some of the—we tried to dress a whole room by doing some stuff above, because the big challenge in retail is that you can only sell to this high, and you have to fill in the other space. Oh! Another one to see is the NYU Bookstore, which is on Broadway...I can't remember the address. It's around Union Square, not Union Square.

JD: Washington Square Park?

BN: It's to the East of that...Astor Place. That just opened last spring I think. A big part of that, again, was budget. They had to go pretty minimal, and it's a big open space with a lot of fixtures, and they didn't have a whole lot to work with. So we created this giant kind of free element that wraps the whole space, that is this stretch fabric scrim kind of thing that has all these photos of the neighborhood, and it's very colorful and really brings the space to life in such a way that if it wasn't there, the space would be kind of boring. So, that's a good space to check out from a retail point of view.

JD: Yeah I could probably cruise down there today even, if they're open after the holiday.

BN: Yeah, they should be. Part of the effort with that was that they wanted it not to just be for students, but to be for the whole neighborhood. To be a functioning bookstore for the whole neighborhood, and it's got a café in it and a nice feel to it. It's huge, and it's interesting to try and figure out. The front left side is like a regular bookstore and the front right side is where they sell all their sweatshirts and whatnot, and as you get further in it's more for students with textbooks, so it's a good cross-pollinated project that was a little bit about education and a little bit about architecture and brand and stuff. So that's a good one.

JD: I have a question that's super specific to what I'm doing for my research that has to do with the nomenclature that I'm using. I'm looking very specifically just at interior spaces, and I know on the SEGD website and in some of your stuff, some of it is façades or external wayfinding and whatnot. So my thesis advisor and I have been trying to come up with a way to distinguish the interiors specific portion of Environmental Graphic Design and—I'm just curious as to your opinion on this—and at this point we're calling it Spatial Graphic Design, which doesn't totally resonate with me but I'm not sure if there is a better way to distinguish that subset of the larger practice.

BN: That's hard. A term we use is branded environment, which doesn't specifically say graphics in it. It talks about an environment and talks about the bigger issue of creating a brand for it. I'm always having to explain Environmental Graphic Design, because it really has nothing to do with "green" per se, but no one really thought of a better way of referring to that. They knew it is kind

of part of a larger industry, so within interiors....Interior Graphic Design? Yeah, I don't know, I don't have an easy answer! [*laughs*]

JD: Yeah we're chewing on that. I figured I'd just see if you had any thoughts. Well, thank you this has been so helpful. Do you have any thoughts on the future, as technology changes? I'm sure that's becoming more of an integral part of what you guys are doing.

BN: Yeah, it definitely is. Things are becoming more...definitely technology is more of a baseline now than like a whizzy "Oo, we have to have technology" sort of thing. I think people are wanting technology if it's useful and not just for technologies sake, and not just to be clever about it but to give it a real reason. We did a project in DC for *PNC—we're doing a ton of PNC work—and we do headquarter spaces, workplace interiors. We also do a lot of their branches and all that kind of stuff. We actually did the whole building in DC, our DC office designed the building, and then we did all the interiors for the workplace, and then the ground floor has a branch in it. So the DC branch acquired a bank that was called Riggs that had a huge history in DC, it was the bank for presidents, and so it has this amazing archive with checks from Lincoln and all this crazy stuff. Richard Nixon's check to the power company in 1970 whatever. So there's all this really interesting stuff, and they wanted to get it into the branch, but because it's open to the public they didn't want it to be some stuffy, boring history wall. And they also didn't want to use real artifacts. So we had this one wall that we dedicated to this, and we did a rail system and it had these panels floating in it with acrylic with facsimiles, and then the whole center section is these three touch-screen monitors tucked behind a piece of glass, and the whole thing is a big touchscreen. And we worked with an interactive company—as you walk up to it

things are kind of moving around and moving in and out, and you can touch one and it will come up and it will enlarge and have information about it and you can play around and learn about some of the other artifacts that they have that you can't see. So it looks very modern and cool and tech-oriented, but it's this old story that we're telling, and that was what they were interested in—the old and the new. But rather than just having an off the shelf piece of interaction technology, they wanted to do something that was really unique. That's why we worked very carefully to design the aesthetic of the interface, so it would feel like them and feel interesting and different. So I think technology has several purposes. The ability for things to change is key, and that's the reason that people will opt for a technology wall over anything else—the ability to program it to be different so that you can update your lobby or whatever your space is without redoing everything all the time. So we are doing more of that, and probably pretty much every project now—a lot of time what happens, and especially in these “after-market” projects, is someone will locate a flatscreen on a wall in a lobby and say “okay, you have technology now.” But that just means you put CNN on and that doesn't really get you anywhere. So, we're trying to think of ways of doing things a little differently. If it's projected or if it's interactive, or if you do it vertically instead of horizontally, it becomes more of a poster element and you just sort of think about it the way you would think about a poster on an easel. We're getting there, and actually there are cases—we finished a project for the *New York Stock Exchange that was a really unusual and different interpretation of technology, where they have a series of regular monitors but they're behind one-way mirrors, so you don't really see the monitors, you just see the stuff that's lighting up. And it's this very interesting combination of the logos of all the brands that are running on the exchange. I think it has something to do with how they're performing? Higher ones and lower ones or something. It's self-managing, you don't have to

touch it, but it's a different way of interpreting information. They did something similar with the Bank of America tower, which we didn't actually design, but it's like this helix kind of thing and it'll show how the market's changing. There's a lot of big, interesting stuff like that that's real-time self-managing, self-updating so someone doesn't have to sit there and input anything, it's sort of just feeding on itself. That's becoming more of a trend too. Those are kind of the buzz-words in technology integrated into space, that's what we're seeing.

WORKS CITED

- Almond, Kevin and Mary Ellen Snodgrass, "Spook, Per." *Fashion Encyclopedia*. Accessed July 8, 2001. <http://www.fashionencyclopedia.com/Sp-To/Spook-Per.html>.
- AT&T. "A Brief History: Origins." Accessed June 27, 2011. <http://www.corp.att.com/history/history1.html>.
- Beaumont, Matthew. "Shopping in Utopia: Looking Backward, the Department Store, and the Dreamscape of Consumption." *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 28, no. 3 (2006): 191-209.
- Bleicher, Steven. *Contemporary Color Theory & Use*. Clifton Park, NY: Thomson/Delmar Learning, 2005.
- Design Museum. "Saul Bass: Graphic Designer (1920-1996)." Accessed June 26, 2011. <http://designmuseum.org/design/saul-bass>.
- Environmental Protection Agency, The. "Buildings and Their Impact on the Environment: A Statistical Summary," last modified 22 Apr. 2009, <http://www.epa.gov/greenbuilding/pubs/gbstats.pdf>.
- Ewen, Stuart. "Leo Burnett: The Sultan of Sell," *Time Magazine*, December 7, 1998, Accessed August 20, 2011. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,989783,00.html>.
- Galinsky. "Louis Vuitton Store, New York." Accessed August 18, 2011. <http://www.galinsky.com/buildings/louisvuittonny/>.
- Glazova, Anna. "El Lissitzky in Weimar Germany." *Speaking In Tongues*, Accessed August 17, 2011. <http://spintongues.msk.ru/glazova27eng.htm>.
- Hambleton, Ronald. *The Branding of America*. Dublin, NH: Yankee Publishing Incorporated, 1987.
- History of Graphic Design: A Graphic Design Primer. Accessed August 12, 2011. <http://www.designhistory.org/>.
- Hollis, Richard. *Graphic Design: A Concise History*. London: Thanks & Hudson, Ltd., 1994.
- Jennings, Jan. "A Case for a Typology of Design: The Interior Archetypes Project." *Journal of Interior Design* 32, no. 3 (2007): 56.
- Jennings, Jan. "Dialectic of New and Old: Theory Investigations in Studio Design," *Interiors and Sources* 3 (2003): 74-77.
- Kelley, D.H. and B. Wells. "Recent Progress in Understanding the Indus Script." *Review of Archaeology* 16, no. 1 (1995): 15-23.

Kubler, George. *The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1962.

Lawrence, Mary Wells. *A Big Life In Advertising*. New York, NY: Knopf, 2002.

Livestrong. "Our Home: Livestrong Headquarters." Accessed June 27, 2011.
<http://www.livestrong.org/Who-We-Are/Our-History/Our-Home>.

Lury, Celia. *Brands: The Logos of the Global Economy*. London: Routledge, 2004.

Malyak, Kristin. "Theory Studies: Archetypical Retail Practices in Contemporary Interior Design." M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2011.

Margolin, Victor. "Toward a History of Graphic Design". Interview with Félix Béltran, 2000. Transcript obtained from The University of Illinois at Chicago:
<http://tiger.uic.edu/~victor/articles.html>.

Marinetti, F. T. "The Futurist Manifesto." via Shafe: Art History. Accessed August 12, 2011.
http://www.shafe.co.uk/art/The_Futurist_Manifesto_1909.asp.

Mattel, Inc. "Mattel History." Accessed June, 26 2011. <http://corporate.mattel.com/about-us/history/default.aspx>.

Maxwell, Robert. *Polemics. The Two Way Stretch: Modernism: Tradition and Innovation*. London: Academy Editions, 1996.

McVarish, Emily and Johanna Drucker. *Graphic Design History: A critical Guide*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2009.

Meggs, Phillip B. *Type and Image: The Language of Graphic Design*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 1992.

Red Bull. "Red Bull Energy Drink," Accessed June 25, 2011.
http://www.redbull.com/cs/Satellite/en_INT/red-bull-energy-drink/001242937921959/.

Red Bull Records. "Home." Accessed June 25, 2011. <http://www.redbullrecords.com/>.

Rogers, Bonnie Lida and Barbara Chaparro. "Breadcrumb Navigation: Further Investigation of Usage." *WSU Psychology*. Accessed September 20, 2001.
<http://psychology.wichita.edu/surl/usabilitynews/52/breadcrumb.htm>.

Society for Environmental Graphic Design. "About Us." Accessed May 14, 2011.
<http://www.segd.org/home/index.html#/about-us/index.html>.

Suggett, Paul. "The Changing Face of Copywriting: The Evolution of a Profession." About.com: Advertising. Accessed September, 13 2011. <http://advertising.about.com/od/careersource/a/The-Changing-Face-Of-Copywriting.htm>.

Swatch. "The On-Going Story: Swatch History." Accessed September 25, 2011.
http://www.swatch.com/zz_en/about/history.html.

Twemlow, Alice. *What Is Graphic Design For?* Brighton, UK: Rotovision, 2006.

U21 Global. "Krating Daeng: Devising a Marketing Strategy for the Thailand Market." Accessed June 25, 2011. http://www.u21global.edu.sg/portal/corporate/docs/AA-2009-002_InspectionCopy.pdf.

Wasilewski, Nathan James. "Theory Studies: Archetypical Practices of Contemporary Hotel Design." M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2011.

Wheeler, Alina. *Designing Brand Identity: An Essential Guide For The Entire Branding Team*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2009.

Yang, Mijin Juliet. "Theory Studies: Contemporary Boutique Hotel Design." M.A. Thesis, Cornell University, 2005.