

Graphic composition, basic principles of communication products.

The discipline of Graphic Design as it was established in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries has among its roots the tradition of **typographic composition** and **book production** as it has evolved from the fifteenth century to today. This tradition has given to contemporary Graphic Design a complex of compositional principles and rules that still constitute today a fundamental tool for the design of any communicative artifact, of a conventional (e.g. paper) or innovative (digital) type.

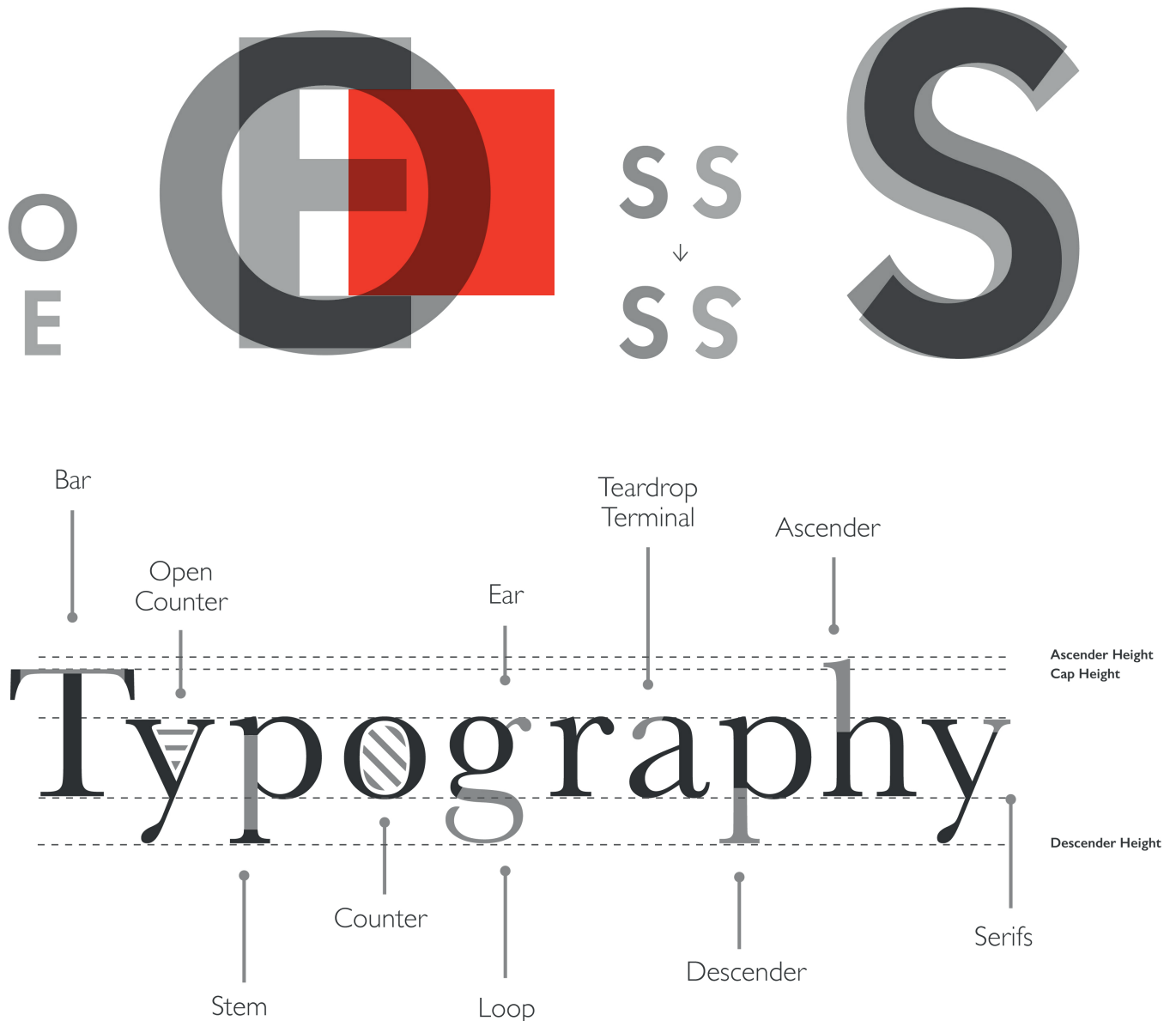
The knowledge of these principles, which range from the characteristics of typefaces, types of composition, layout cages, up to the peculiarities of products such as brochures, flyers, books, in terms of design and implementation, is fundamental for future designers. Through these rules they will be able to set up and design any communicative product, from a portfolio to the tables of a competition or a digital communicative product. The other fundamental contribution to Graphic Design comes from the world of images, and from the ability of these to be complementary to textual communication. The composition of text and image, in addition to being a constant of almost every communicative product, is the basis of the contemporary concept of **visual identity** whose basic elements are the brand, typography and institutional colors. In the "brand" component there is almost always an interaction and complementarity between text (logotype) and graphic image (pictogram).

The interaction between text and image and the rules of composition between these two essential components of communication are the basis of the proposed exercises.

Focus on

To understand these rules, it is necessary to study the characteristics of the book, as it has evolved to date, with the identification of the external (cover) and internal component parts, and on which the design of other simpler products but very popular in contemporary communication is based. These products, printed or digital (flyers,

brochures, catalogues, websites, apps), inherit the guidelines from the book tradition and the evolution of contemporary graphics. The tutorials are also an important opportunity to learn more about the tools that are used for graphic design, including some fundamental software such as **Adobe Illustrator** and **Adobe Photoshop**.



To know more

Ambrose G., Harris P., The Fundamentals of Creative Design, AVA publishing, 2011.

Garfield S., Just my type, Profile Books London, 2011.

Massimo Vignelli's work as a book designer:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MDjJSvaXsLM>

Short exercise #1

The first exercise starts with identifying the component parts of the book and the principles that define its external and internal layout. In particular, the student is invited, through the experience of famous designers, to reconstruct the compositional grid and the compositional characteristics (graphic and typographic) of a book of their choice.

know more about books

pick a book from your shelf
observe it



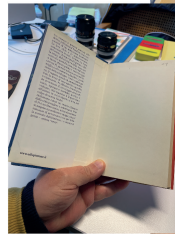
cover
copertina

spine
dorso

back cover
quarta di copertina

and more...

left wing

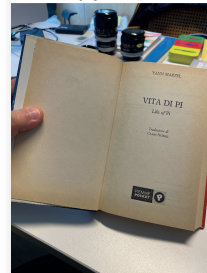


right wing

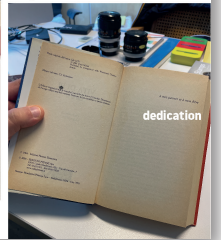


more...

title page



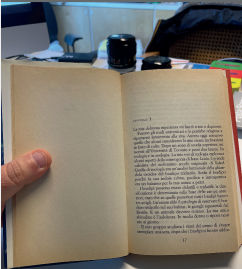
colophon



dedication

...

starting page



inner page



first task!



pick a book
measure it
draw its grid
(aka cage)

i show you how

BUT

Don't be ruled by the cage, you rule the cage.
A typography cage is like a lion's cage:
if the tamer stays there too long, the lion eats him.

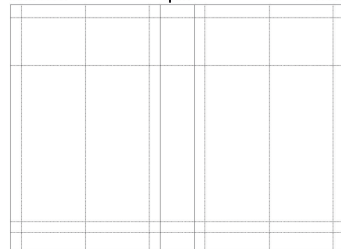
Cover



back cover

spine

cover



mm 110

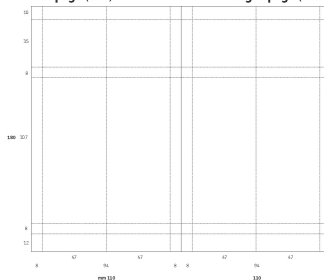
25

110

Inner pages

left page (odd)

right page (even)



mm 110

110

Cover



back cover

spine

cover



mm 110

25

110

Short exercise #2

The second exercise proposes the design of a simple communication product, but with an extremely evocative meaning, such as an invitation to an exhibition about a renowned designer. The characteristics of the invitation are specified in the explanatory tables, but an essential element is the construction of non-photographic images, but of the reworking of photographs, to train the student in the construction of a personal and original iconographic apparatus.

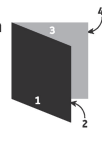
so here it comes the second task!

design the
invitation to a
exhibition about
massimo vignelli

task 2 data:

format 20x20 cm
4 pages

contents:
page 1 cover
title, place
and dates
to be composed
with 1 image



page 4
infographic
about
exhibit layout
and credits

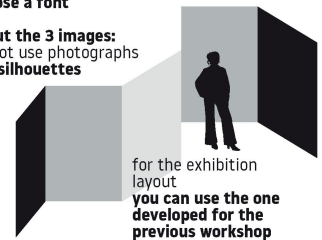
page 2/3
inner pages
short text (ita/eng)
about vignelli life and
works to be composed
with 3 images

task 2 more data:

define a paging grid

choose a font

about the 3 images:
do not use photographs
use silhouettes



what is a silhouette?

a silhouette is the image of a
person, animal, object or scene
represented as a solid shape
of a single colour (often black)
with its edges matching the
outline of the subject



you can use silhouette of massimo, and/or things designed by him

you must draw the silhouette!



and elaborate it!



armchair
intervista
lella and
massimo vignelli
1989



massimo vignelli cityscapes



napoli juliano givella march may 2022



massimo vignelli cityscapes

napoli juliano givella march may 2022

