

c. 1945—c. 1965:

The Influence of European + Japanese
Industries + Consumer Markets
on Design

POST-WWII RECOVERY OF EUROPEAN + JAPANESE ECONOMIES

- Postwar period sees a process of economic recovery. One indication is in the increase in exports, 1951-62:
 - Britain: 29%
 - France: 86%
 - W. Germany 247%
 - Italy: 259%
 - Japan: 378%

RECOVERY IN EUROPE

- The U.S. played a role in reviving + advancing many European economies (leading to increasing exports, higher % employment + disposable incomes).
- Major US initiative = Marshall Plan (1948-52). Fostered capitalist industry to counter “communist threat” of Soviet expansion into E. Europe. U.S. funded + provided training + consultants to European companies in exchange for expanding market for US products (incl. popular media).
- In immediate postwar period: U.S. = influential on the use of mass-production methods, planned obsolescence + regular use of industrial-design teams.

RECOVERY IN EUROPE

- Also crucial to the recovery of European industry = European state-supported design organizations.
- Some examples: British Council of Industrial Design (COID, 1944), German Design Council (1953).
- Such orgs. sponsored exhibitions, established awards, held conferences, commissioned reports, published books + journals (e.g.: COID pub. *Design* magazine from 1949).
- The orgs. promoted design along Int'l-Style modernist lines.

Italian Design

c. 1945—c. 1965

Marcello Nizzoli (painter + arch., Italian, 1887-1969), Lexikon 80 typewriter, 1948. Enameled metal housing. Manufactured by Olivetti ING.

-Olivetti was a celebrated example of recovery-by-prioritizing-aesthetic-design. Though hired in the 1930s, Nizzoli played a greater role in product design postwar.

-MoMA praised this design extensively in its catalog for a 1952 exhibition of *Olivetti* for the design's aesthetically balanced form, clarity + precise, unified integration of all mechanical parts.



1950s: Italian Design Promoted Internationally

- By museums:
 - MoMA: *Olivetti* exh. (1952), traveling exh. *The Modern Movement in Italy: Architecture and Design* (1954) + collection of Italian design.
 - Art Institute of America exh. *Italy at Work: Her Renaissance in Design Today* (1950; toured many US museums w/ 2500 items, incl. furniture, lighting, scooters, office + kitchen equipment).

1950s: Italian Design Promoted Internationally

- By international exhibition:
 - Milan Triennale (est. 1933): Those in 1951, 1954 + 1957 were all int'l exhs. of industrial design.

1950s: Italian Design Promoted Internationally

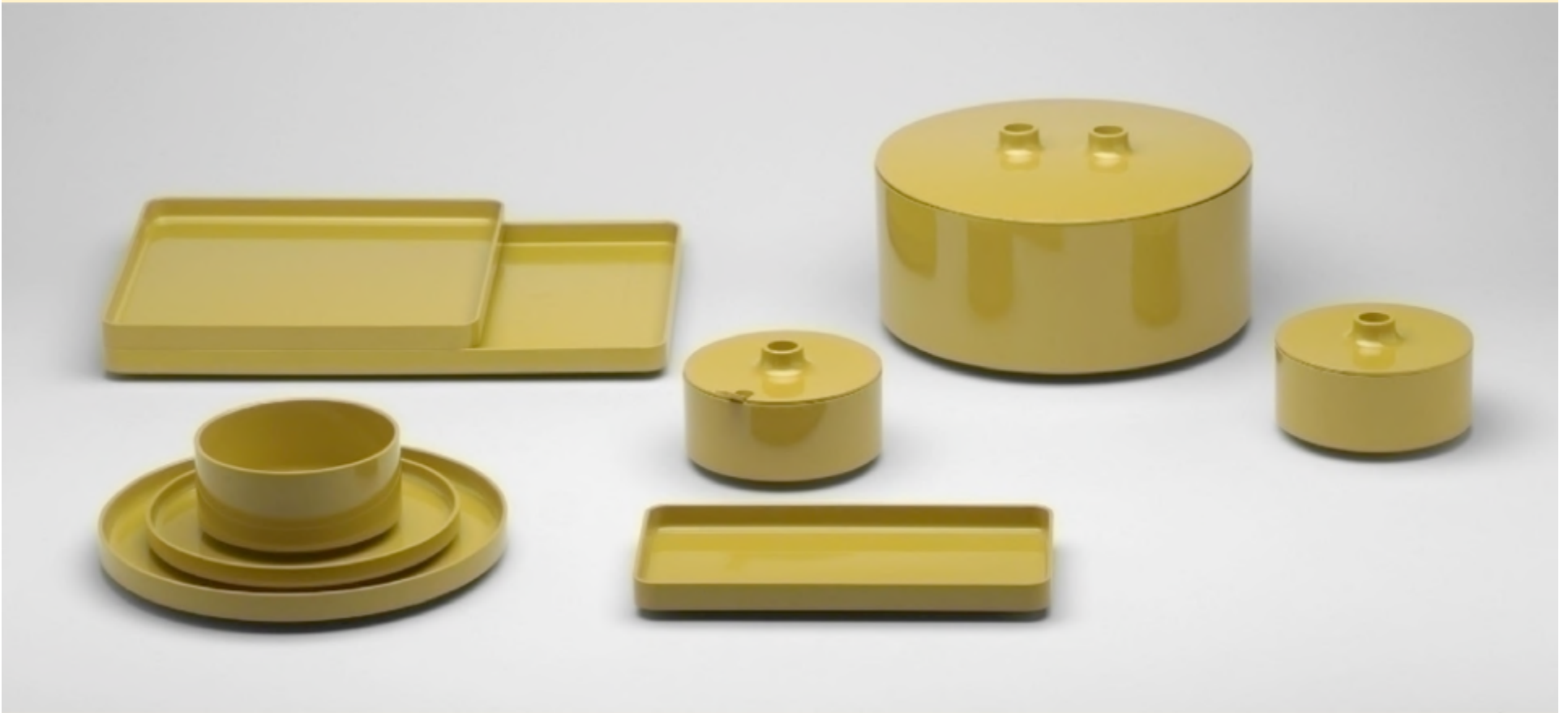
- By stores in Italy + the U.S.:
 - Kartell Co.
 - Italian, fnd. 1949, specializing in design of plastic products for affluent middle class
 - La Rinascente
 - Italian dept. store that, as in the 1930s, continued commissioning leading designers for mass market
 - La Rinascente founded the Compasso D'Oro design award in 1954
 - Leading US stores (e.g.: Knoll + M. Singer & Sons)

Massimo Vignelli (Italian, b. 1931), stacking dinnerware, designed 1964. later manufactured by Heller, USA. Melamine. MoMA, NYC.

-Italy, 1959-62: sees growing levels of affluence + conspicuous consumption domestically.

-As a result, increasing orientation toward the production of stylish status goods.

-Vignelli here adheres to Int'l-Style design principles: e.g., form deriving from function.



Massimo Vignelli, stacking dinnerware, 1964. Melamine. MoMA, NYC.

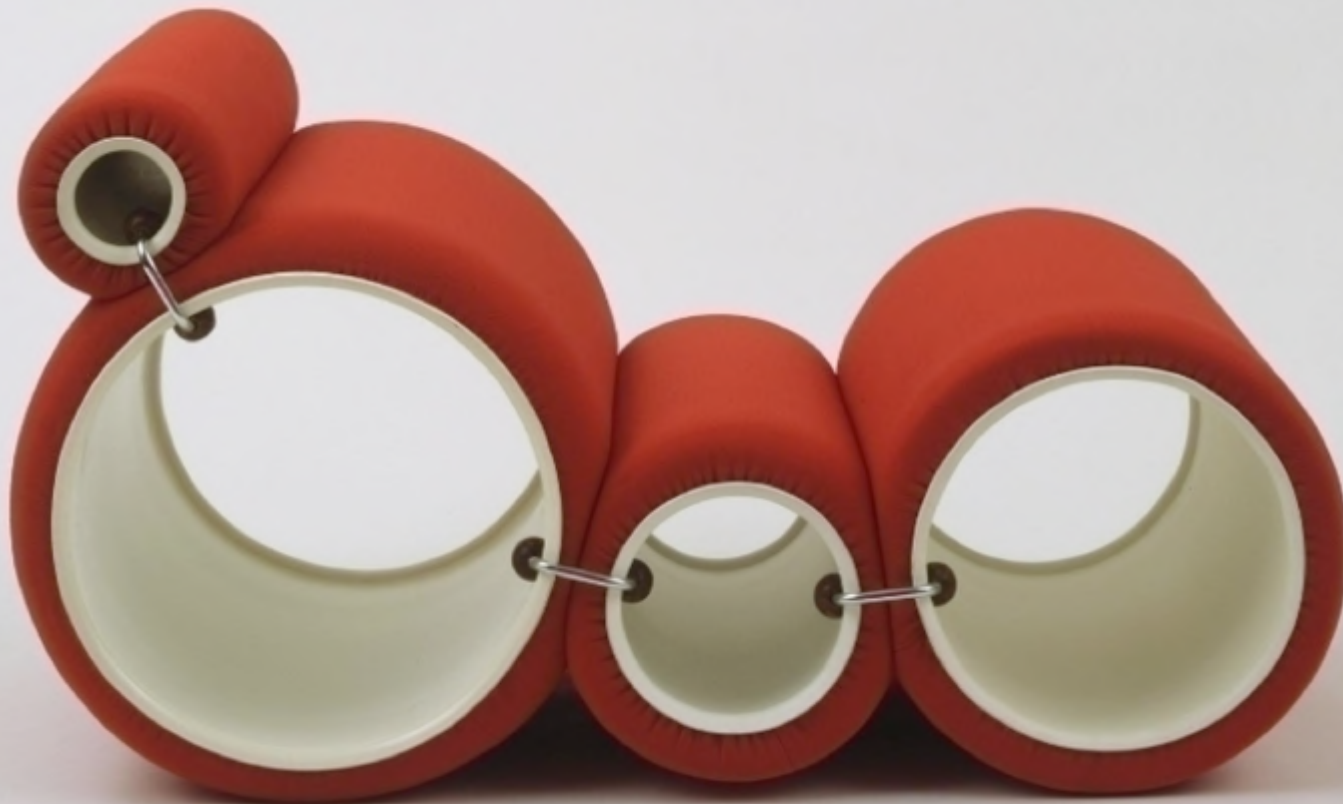
-The shapes, for example, enable easy storage.

-But his design also has aspects of whimsy or cleverness that respond to fashion + desire for visual + textural pleasure: trendy color, gloss, slickness—delighting surface effects (these aspects not always acknowledged).



Joe Colombo (Italian, 1930-71), Tube Chair of Nesting and Combinable Elements, designed 1955. Manufactured 1970 by Flexform, Italy. PVC plastic tubes, padded w/ polyurethane, covered in fabric. MoMA, NYC.

-The same is true here. Colombo follows Int'l-Style preferences for visibility of materials + structural components as well as use of modern industrial materials. But he also offers playfulness, even humor, + delights in the visual pleasure of strong color.



c. 1945—c. 1965:

West German Design

c. 1945—c. 1965: West German Design

- 1950-64: GNP rose faster than any other European nation.
- In the 1950s, German corporate representatives (like the French, British + Japanese) visited Detroit to study management, industrial production + design.
- By 1952: 500+ German companies were controlled by US capital, esp. in areas of electronic products, cars + chemicals.

c. 1945—c. 1965: West German Design

- One way German designers persuaded companies of their value = placing emphasis on systematic + scientific analysis of design problems.
- This “rational” approach = most famously associated w/....

HOCHSCHULE FÜR GESTALTUNG @ ULM

- Founded 1953 as private school w/ funds by US govt., German govt. + business sector.
- First modeled on the Bauhaus, w/ visiting teachers from Bauhaus (Johannes Itten, Josef Albers, Mies van der Rohe). Later asserted a new model of design education.
- HfG closed 1968 (lack of \$ + increasing govt. pressure to amend curriculum that deviated from the regional education system).
- While open, had productive relationship w/ the Braun Corp. (fnd. 1921, rebuilt 1945). HfG faculty such as Hans Gugelot + Dieter Rams designed for Braun.

Max Braun, Dieter Rams + Hans Gugelot, SK4 radio-phonograph, 1956. Manufactured by Braun.

-All visible parts = reduced to circular or rectangular forms + are arranged in a grid for simplicity + clarity.

-Braun was not for mass market. Aimed at those sympathetic to the International Style.



Dieter Rams, Gerd Alfred Mueller + Robert Oberheim, Braun "Kitchen Machine," 1957. Polystyrol housing.

-Another example of Braun's simplified functionalist design approach, generically called "Kitchen Machine." Formally economical + standardizing.

-MoMA put Braun products on permanent display in 1958, after critical acclaim + prominence @ 1957 Milan Triennale, Frankfurt Radio + TV Exposition + Berlin Int'l Building Exh.



W. German Design Gains an international reputation for...

- excellence, especially in the area of technical equipment, machinery, appliances.
- MoMA (then an advocate of International-Style design) put Braun products on permanent display in 1958, after critical acclaim + prominence @ 1957 Milan Triennale, Frankfurt Radio + TV Exposition + Berlin Int'l Building Exh.

W. GERMAN + SWISS “INTERNATIONAL TYPOGRAPHIC STYLE”

A post-war extension of The New
Typography that achieves worldwide
influence...

...just as International Style achieves the
worldwide influence of the European
modernist design movements (Esprit
Nouveau, De Stijl, Constructivism, the
Bauhaus + Scandinavian modernism) of
the 1920s + 30s.

W. GERMAN + SWISS “INTERNATIONAL TYPOGRAPHIC STYLE”

- A contemporary + ideologically parallel movement to International Style.
- Formed basis of graphic design education: at first for HfG @ Ulm + the Kunstgewerbeschule @ Basel; then international teaching.
- Promoted as standard bearer of “modern” graphic design via museum exhs. (incl. MoMA’s), journals, books. In Switzerland, strongly supported by govt., adopted as official Swiss style.
- Also influential via many corporate graphics, trademarks, books + posters.

Josef Mueller-Brockmann (Swiss, 1914-96), public-awareness poster project, Less Noise, 1960. Offset printing. 35.4 x 50". Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich.

The International Typographic Style was propagated in many ways.

One was the journal *Neue Grafik* (a Zurich magazine from which the alternative name of the International Typographic Style comes) founded by Swiss designer Mueller-Brockmann.

He is best known for his posters + signage.

Note the application of New Typography principles to produce an unmistakably clear, legible, bold message.



Max Huber (Swiss, 1919-92), Monza Motor Race, 1948. Offset printing. 39.4 x 55". Kunstgewerbemuseum, Zurich.

Huber won first prize for this poster-design competition for Monza Motor Race.

Huber = internationally influential, esp. in Italy, where he worked in Milan after early years in Zurich.

The International Typographic Style emphasized, as here, the use of typographical forms + symbols (like arrows) for imagery.

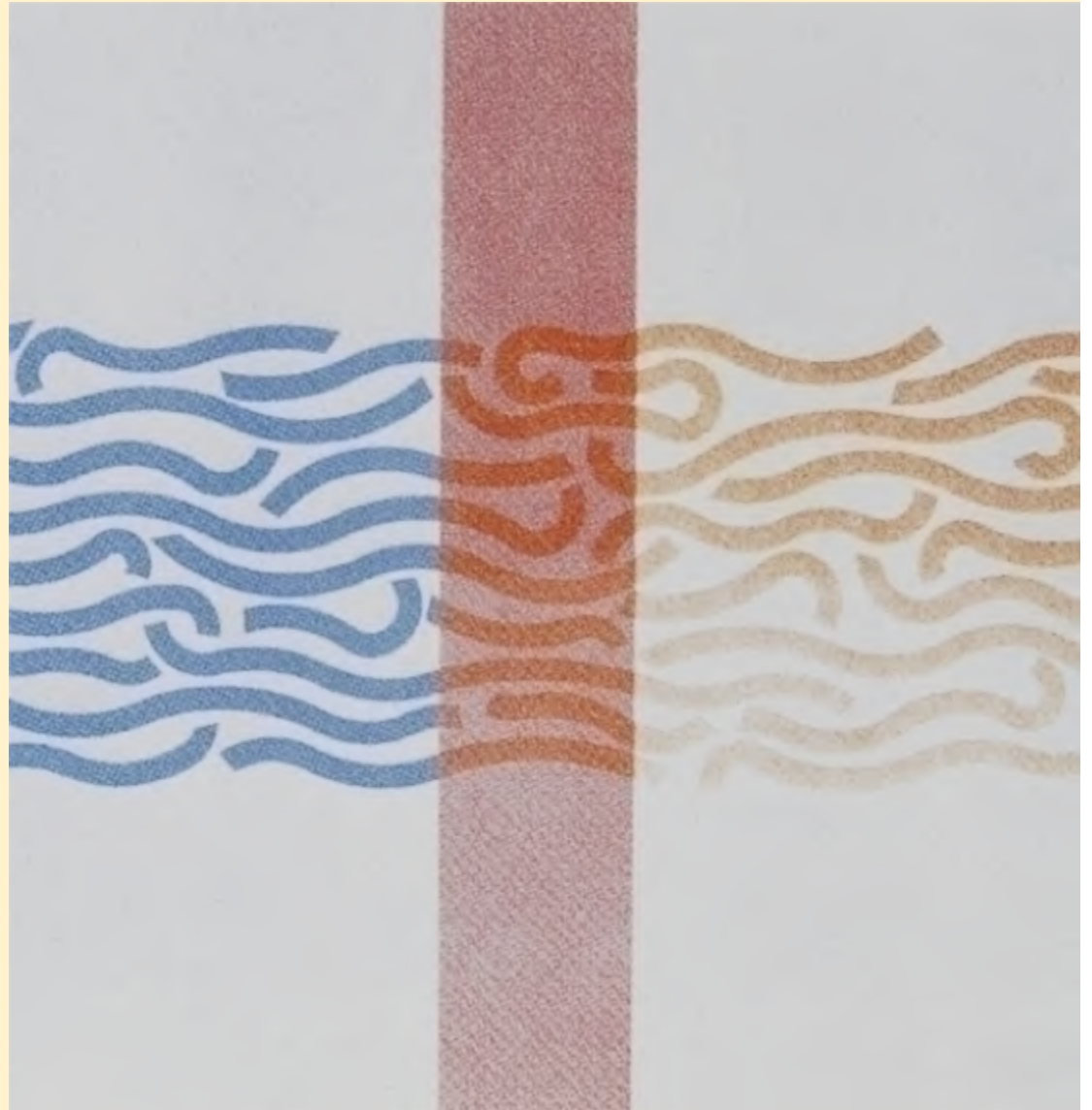


Anton Stankowski (Geman, 1906-98), page from a calendar for Viessmann (a heating systems co.)

The International Typographic Style = renowned for conveying complex scientific + other technical information simply.

Stankowski = significant figure in corporate graphic design. He was also Chair of the Committee for Visual Design for the Munich Olympics (1972) + he taught @ the Ulm School (HfG).

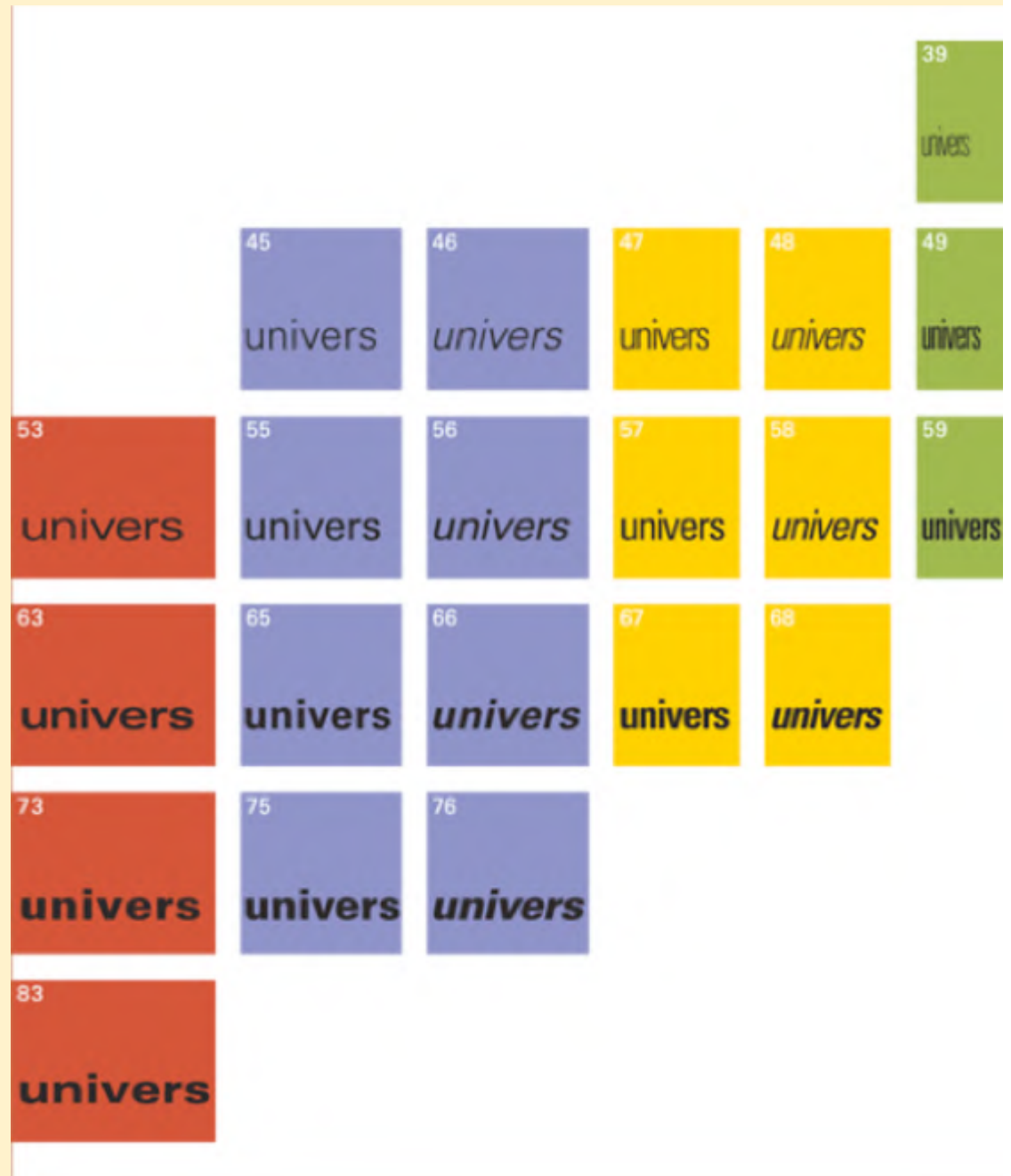
Here, Stankowski describes w/ simplified, abstract forms the chemical transfer of heat.



Adrian Frutiger (Swiss, b. 1928), schematic diagram of the 21 Univers typefaces, 1954. Typeface design 1950. Debegny Peignol Foundry, Paris, 1957. First digit refers to weight, second to regular (5), oblique (6), condensed (7). Typeface reworked by Frutiger 1995.

The International Typographic Style designers produced highly influential sans-serif typefaces.

Frutiger's Univers = a reductive sans-serif. Among the most popular typefaces ever designed.



Max Miedinger (Swiss, 1910-80), Helvetica typeface, 1957.. Developed at the Haas Type Foundry, Münchenstein, Switzerland, under director Eduard Hoffmann.

Miedinger designed Helvetica (originally called **Neue Haas Grotesk**, revealing its roots in the “Grotesk” faces—which = the earliest sans-serif typefaces of the late 18th/early 19th cs.).

Helvetica = widely used in corporate graphics then + now.

Designed to be neutral (letterforms having no pre-existing associations), legible + therefore versatile.

A B C D E F G H I J
K L M N O P Q R S
T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n
o p q r s t u v w x y z
@ \$ % & (. , : ; # ! ?)

c. 1945—c. 1965:

JAPANESE DESIGN

c. 1945—c. 1965: Japanese Design

- The US occupation of Japan ended in 1952. Economic recovery (w/ rising domestic + international consumption of Japanese products) was evident by the later 1950s.
- Already in 1951: The Japanese govt. established the Japan External Trade Research Organization (JETRO), which promoted Japanese exports.
- Beginning in 1955, it rented space at international trade fairs, ensuring the int'l visibility of Japanese products. (1960: Tokyo also hosted a World Design Conference; 1964: Tokyo hosted the Olympics, another design showcase.)

c. 1945—c. 1965: Japanese Design

- 1957: Japan's Ministry of Communications, Commerce + Industry founded the G-Mark, an award for quality + design originality.
- As in the U.S., the term "good design" (expressed as "*guddo dezain*") became prevalent + *Good Design* exhibitions organized by MoMA toured Japan.
- Thus International Style values were widely shared in Japan.

c. 1945—c. 1965: Japanese Design

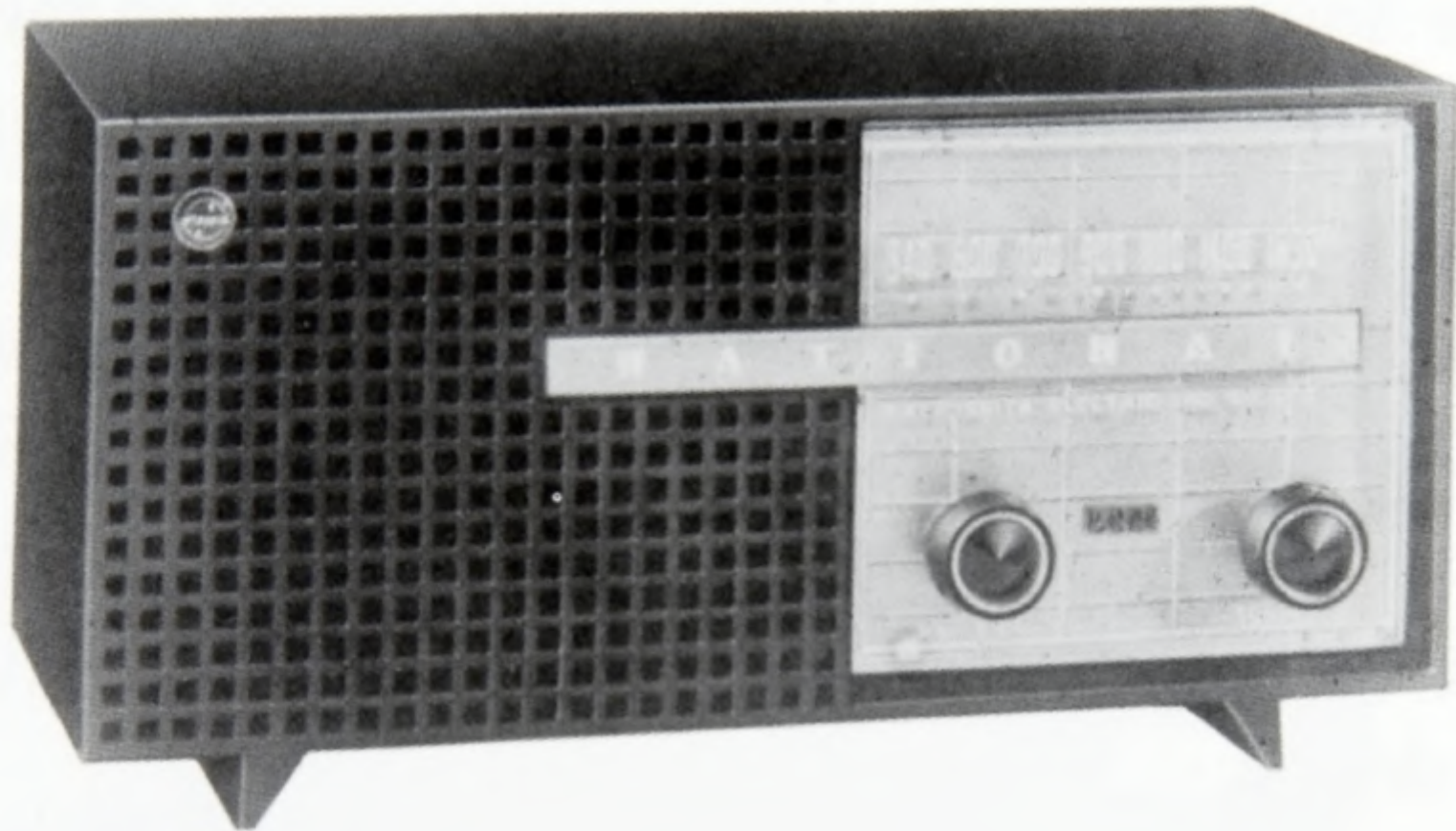
- The US model of industrial design (including the establishment of corporate design departments + planned obsolescence) was also influential in Japan.
- In the 1950s, Japanese business leaders toured the U.S. to study business management + industrial design.
- The Japanese also organized int'l seminars. Early 1950s: Raymond Loewy participated in a seminar in Japan.
- Also, JETRO (Japan External Trade Research Organization) sent 5-6 students/year on study exchanges (w/ Germany, Italy + U.S.).

c. 1945—c. 1965: Japanese Design

- Businessman Matsushita Kōnosuke led the way for Japanese companies to establish design depts. (M. had been interested in U.S. business practices even before the war. In emulation of GM, he had organized his company into divisions in 1933.)
- After a visit to the U.S. in 1951, Matsushita was the first in Japan to establish an industrial-design department.

Zenichi Mano, National Radio, 1953. Plastic. 7 x 14 x 5 ½". Manufactured by Matsushita Electrical Industrial Company, Osaka, Japan.

Early original + modern design from the Matsushita Company.



c. 1945—c. 1965: Japanese Design

- W/ govt. support, Japanese cos. developed competitive products for export, emphasizing more original designs.
- This overcame Japan's prior reputation for mass-production of cheap + copied industrial products. (By contrast, Japan's reputation for package design + traditional crafts had been strong.)
- By the end of the 1950s: Japanese designers + design firms were gaining recognition for excellence in product design.

In-house design, Toshiba Rice Cooker, 1957.

This design by Toshiba = one of the first recipients of the G-Mark prize (established 1957 by Japan's Ministry of Communications, Commerce + Industry).



GK Design, soy sauce bottle for Kikkoman Corporation, Japan, 1961. Glass + polystyrene plastic. 5 ¼ x 2 ½" x 2 ½". MOMA, NYC.

Another early celebrated postwar Japanese design.

Begun by 6 graduate students in 1957, GK Industrial Design Associates quickly became a celebrated firm.

This design for Kikkoman by Kenji Ekuan in 1961 was key to GK's early reputation.

This original design in a table-top size + shape for easy pouring effectively expanded the uses (+ sales) of soy sauce. Previously, soy sauce was sold in 1.8-liter containers.

Due to this design, Kikkoman became a market leader.



Sony Radio, Tokyo Telecommunications Engineering Corp., 1957. Plastic housing. 4 3/8 x 2 1/2 “.

Japan excelled in design
MINIATURIZATION: compact design for electronics.

This trend was pioneered by Akio Morita, founder of Sony. Morita purchased transistor technology from US company Western Bell Labs in 1953. Sony then made small portable radios + gained a reputation for miniaturization.

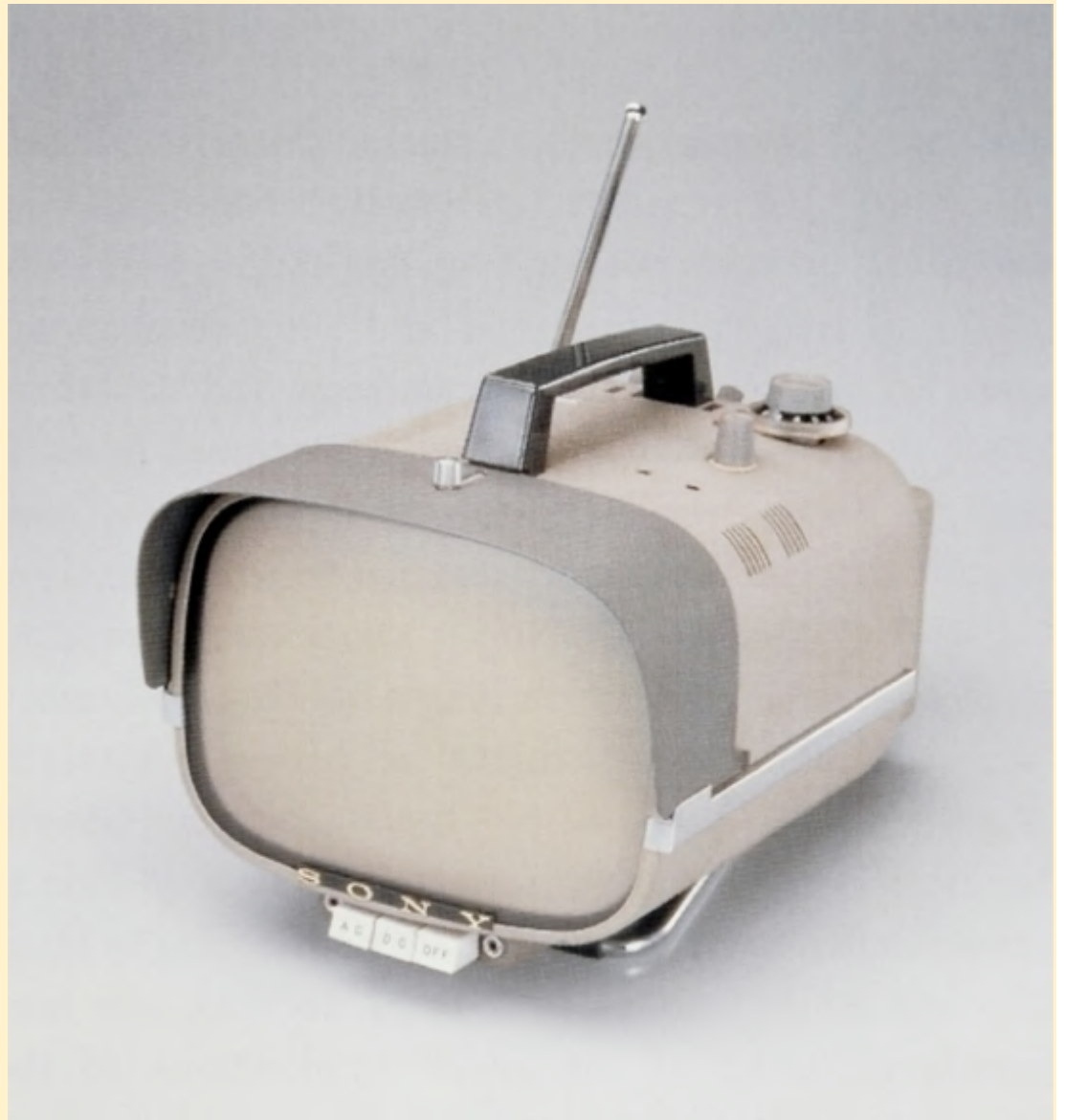
Miniaturization = associated w/ “modern” values of portability, space saving + flexibility.



Portable TV, 1959. Metal housing.
W: 8 ½ ". Manufactured by Sony
Corporation, Tokyo.

**Sony was a leader in design for
portable TVs using transistors
(begun 1959).**

**This first-ever small + portable TV
contrasted w/ common cabinet-like
 housings of wood + hinged doors
(in traditional styles, blending w/
other furniture).**



-Japanese companies Nikon + Canon competed w/ W. German companies such as Leica by making design modifications appealing to knowledgeable users.

-For example, the 1957 Nikon SP3 added wider viewing window than 1954 Leica M3.

-In the postwar years, Japan + W. Germany had both gained int'l reputations for excellence in design for electronic products + technical equipment.

Nikon SP3, 1957. Metal. 3 3/16 x
5 5/8 x 1 5/8"



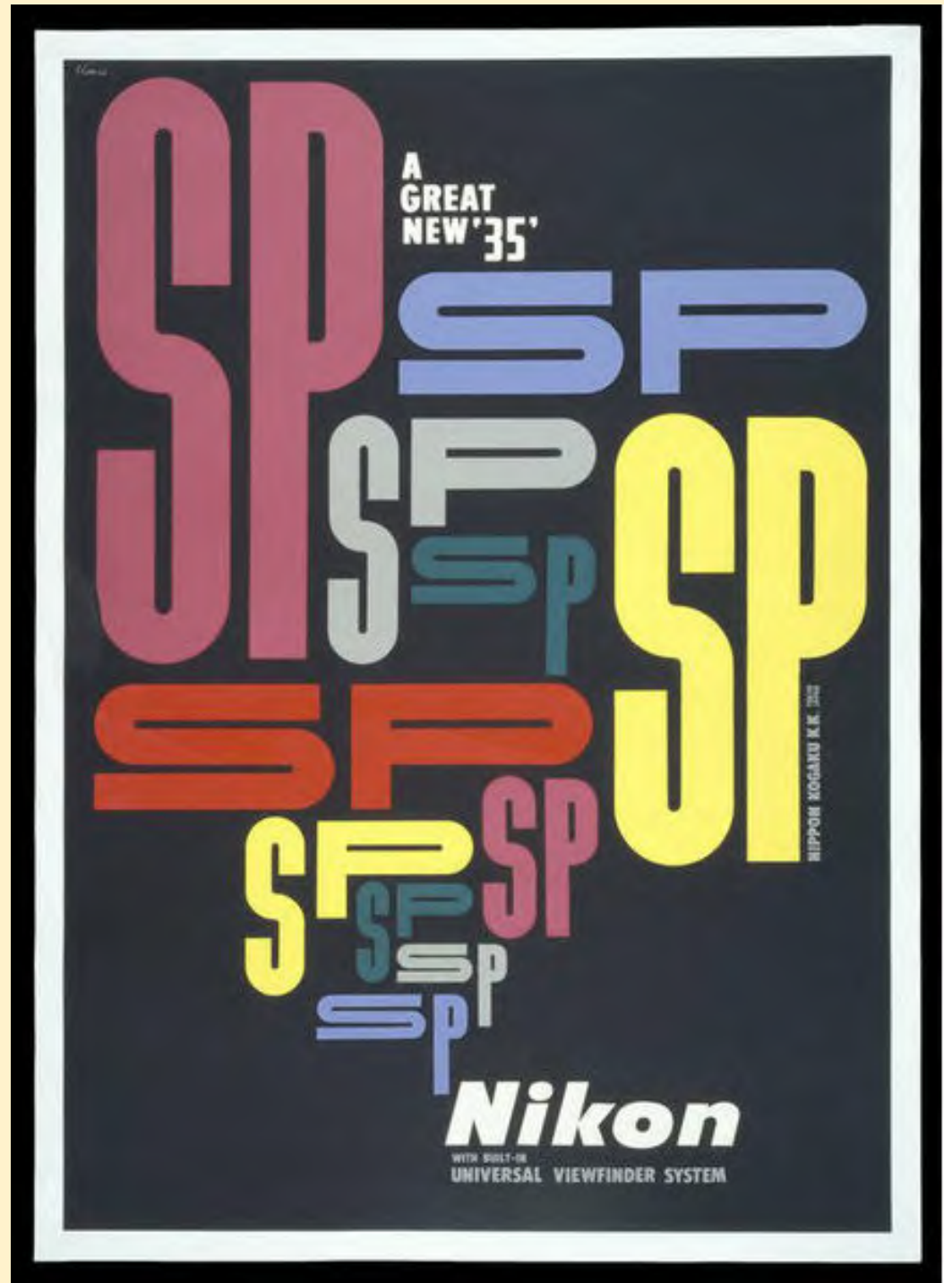
Ernst Leitz Gmbtt, M3 Leica camera, 1954. Injection-molded aluminum, brass. Wetslar, Germany.



Yusaku Kamekura (Japanese, 1915-1997), advertisement “A Great New ‘35’ SP Nikon,” for Nikon, Japan, c. 1958. V&A Museum, London.

As elsewhere, the International Typographic Style was very influential in Japan.

Yusaku Kamekura’s ad for Nikon exemplifies this style, w/ use of typography as a design element + emphasis on asymmetry + legibility.



Readings Discussion:

-Walter Gropius, "The Theory + Organization of the Bauhaus (1923)

-"Program of the Hochschule für Gestaltung, Ulm" (1958)

-Paul J. Nini, "Threading Ethics in a Design Curriculum" (2020)

- For each of the 3 texts:
 - What values does each one advocate?
 - How does each proposed curriculum manifest those values?
- Which values + curricula from these texts do you believe are most important to incorporate into design education today, and why?
- Which do you believe are the least important to incorporate into design education today, and why?