

COMPREHENSIVE GRAPHIC AND DIGITAL DESIGN PROGRAM IN NEWLY REOPENED MoMA COMPLEMENTS ARCHITECTURAL AESTHETIC

NEW YORK, November 15, 2004—The newly reopened Museum of Modern Art features a comprehensive graphic and digital design program that complements the architecture of the expanded and renovated building designed by Yoshio Taniguchi. The graphic components—directional and honorific signage, high-definition display screen presentations, product packaging, and printed materials—inform and guide Museum guests while enhancing the total Museum experience. Creating an integrated aesthetic experience, the Departments of Graphic Design and Digital Media partnered with several outside consultants, technical experts, and designers to develop and apply the new elements. An innovative digital design project spearheaded by the design and production agency Imaginary Forces with MoMA incorporates promotional, educational, and artistic imagery and information into a dynamic display on high-definition screens above the ticketing desk in the lobby. The digital media components permeate the entire Museum experience, from the lobby ticket desks to an online project allowing remote access to MoMA’s collection, which will launch following the opening.

Drawing inspiration from the architectural aesthetic of the Taniguchi-designed building, the Graphic Design Department commissioned designers to create the fundamental elements of an original graphic system, including a refreshed MoMA typeface, a series of pictograms, and a suite of custom color specifications. These elements were then employed in a signage and wayfinding system applied by Bruce Mau Designs for the Museum galleries and lobby.

Ed Pusz, Director of Graphic Design, said, “Just as Yoshio Taniguchi’s design allows for a fuller expression of the unchanging core mission of the Museum, the graphic design program seeks to honestly communicate and support the artwork and integrity of the artists of the MoMA collection.”

Allegra Burnette, Creative Manager of Digital Media, said, “The combination of extremely creative and dedicated outside collaborators, and a solid cross-departmental internal team, has resulted in several projects that are designed to be both beautiful and functional on opening day and also to allow us opportunities for growth and development as we learn more about our new space and the way people interact with it.”

Graphic Fundamentals

The MoMA Graphic Design team engaged in an extensive archival research process—specifically, examining the history and evolution of the acronym MoMA—to develop the definitive visual principles guiding all graphic and visual design work. One of the first steps was to update the

typeface used in the MoMA logo and in signage throughout the Museum. Working from reclaimed foundry (cast metal) type, typographer Matthew Carter restored Morris Fuller Benton's Franklin Gothic Typeface of 1912 to create the new typeface MoMA Gothic—a sans serif type—that forms the familiar MoMA acronym. Carter designed two weights, one for the signage system and the other for small-scale print applications.

Graphic systems at the new MoMA will feature custom iconography by designer Kevin Dresser of Dresser Johnson. Specifically commissioned to complement the new typeface and work effectively within the signage system, the icons are playful interpretations of easily recognized symbols for wheelchair access, restroom locations, and listening tours.

The MoMA Graphic Design Department worked with the Pantone company to develop MoMA LC Red, the Museum's new proprietary color. The new color is of a rich oxblood hue that also shares the qualities of depth common to Japanese lacquer work and early printmaking. It is comprised of four base colors, including a special fluorescent ink.

These three elements have facilitated the development of a new stationery system, MoMA's homepage, and the more than 250 printed pieces produced by the Graphic Design Department in addition to the signage and navigational systems in the building.

Signage and Navigational Systems

The Museum's environmental graphics and wayfinding system were conceived and created by Bruce Mau Design (BMD). Utilizing the fundamental MoMA design elements, in collaboration with Entro Communications, BMD created an unobtrusive design program to guide visitors through the building.

The experience begins with an 8 by 40-foot-high, one-inch-thin white glass banner announcing "MoMA" to 53rd street, while reflecting into the black glass and granite of the new building. Produced and installed by Visual Graphic Systems, 1/8-inch-thick acrylic letters match the anodized aluminum finish used throughout the building.

Visitor guides and gallery brochures take their cues from the simplicity and clarity of the architecture. Hand-rendered maps accentuate navigational elements in Taniguchi's design. Each of the departmental galleries is represented by a detailed installation brochure that reflects the distinct qualities of each curatorial department, while the design system connects them back to the Museum as a whole.

The product and fixture sign system for the new MoMA Design and Book Store were developed by Bureau Mijksenaar, in conjunction with the team of Gluckman Mayner Architects. Designs for the store include product information acrylic sign holders, sign templates for communicating product information, book bay sign systems, poster display and stock signs, and logo treatments to the store's exterior.

The MoMA designers, in partnership with the team from Union Square Hospitality Group, sought to express the distinct function of the new restaurant and two cafes within the Museum as

well as their relationship to one another. The fine-dining restaurant was conceptualized as one that would serve Museum visitors during the day and those seeking a “destination” eatery at night.

Terrace 5, the cafe on the fifth floor opposite The Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Painting and Sculpture Galleries orients itself towards the view to the city across and The Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Sculpture Garden below. The identity of the cafe utilizes the numeral “5” to create punchouts in the wall, the menus, postcards, and other attendant items. The menu is a double-sided anodized aluminum placard that presents the items in five rectangular cutouts on either side, echoing Taniguchi's square cutout in the garden wall.

Cafe 2 is a more casual space modeled on the Italian *rosticceria*. The design elements are driven by a need for both flexibility and clarity. The menu is communicated both on disposable paper menus printed on butcher paper and on a 16-foot-long matte black steel wall with magnetic letters and icons. Illustrations of the menu items and of the ordering process add to the casual atmosphere and communicate the offerings. Bold numbers rendered in MoMA Gothic on the cafe tables facilitate the ordering system.

Digital Display Screens Project

One of the distinct features of the newly designed Museum is the lobby that connects 53rd and 54th Streets. Central to Taniguchi's design, the lobby serves as a public walkthrough and an introductory point for visitors. A series of nine high-definition display screens greets visitors with information on events and exhibitions presented in a cohesive and engaging way while subtly calling MoMA's collection to mind. Images of works from the collection were digitally compressed into thin, animated slivers of color, generating a “digital fingerprint” that represents the Museum's distinct character through a curtain of light.

The display screens are run by a built-in scheduling program that creates a choreographed “performance” of information drawn from a dynamic database. The movement across the screens is determined by inaudible inputs that translate the musical rules of composition, harmony, and rhythm into a kind of visual symphony. The imagery on the display screens is the result of a collaboration between MoMA's Digital Media and Graphic Design departments, along with Imaginary Forces, a world-renowned design firm specializing in motion graphics and media installations. The staff at Imaginary Forces (IF) collaborated extensively with Paola Antonelli, Curator, Department of Architecture and Design, and representatives of the Museum's Graphic Design and Digital Media departments. The IF team then developed the digital fingerprint concept and its visual, animated representation. The custom programming was done through a collaboration between Oliver Delano and Alessandro Sabatelli, of slinc.realtime, and video artist Kurt Ralske, using a combination of proprietary and existing software.

Online Public Access Project

The Department of Digital Media, in collaboration with the Museum's curatorial, education, and collection and exhibition technologies departments, has embarked on a long-term project to facilitate public access to information about the Museum's collection. The first phase of this effort is the launch of the online collection project this winter. The eventual goal of the online collection project is a centralized source of content that can be used not only on MoMA.org, but also on kiosks, object labels, PDAs, and other displays throughout the Museum.

Visitors to the site can browse through collection highlights or an index of artists, or they can search by keyword, department, date, and other criteria. Works are shown both in thumbnails for quick browsing and in enlargements, with interpretive texts and alternate views where available. Links to other works by that artist, to the Museum Library's DADABASE catalogue, and to MoMA's Online Store are included, in addition to other links and a printable view.

A large portion of MoMA's collection has already been catalogued. The launch of the online collection includes approximately 3,000 works from four of the Museum's six curatorial departments, and that number will increase as information is reviewed and approved.

MoMA's main consulting partner on this project, Cognitive Applications, has a long history of working with collections access projects, beginning with their work on London's National Gallery of Art Micro Gallery in 1991. Cognitive Applications has been a key collaborator in terms of both the programming and development of the site and its basic functionality and various data-approval and publishing processes.

Several related endeavors have also been developed in conjunction with the project, including a new E-Card site that is integrated with the online collections and an application that will aid in the production of object labels.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF GRAPHIC DESIGN

The Department of Graphic Design has grown from its early roots in catalog and exhibition design into a staff of 16 full- and part-time designers and producers. The department's core mission is to support the Museum while being sensitive to the different needs of unique departments. Working with curatorial, education, and exhibition design departments the designers create didactic text and labels for the more than 1,500 works reinstalled from the collection, and environmental graphics for special exhibitions, as well as brochures, teaching and special access materials, invitations, and other ephemera. With the Marketing group, designers conceptualize and produce all of the museums advertising and promotions. For Visitor Services, materials to guide all aspects of visitor interaction—from translated museum guides to signage—are produced. The Graphic Design Department created a signature packaging system and MoMA identity products for MoMA Retail, as well as collaborated with outside vendors to produce unique design items for sale.

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF DIGITAL MEDIA

The Department of Digital Media was founded with the launch of MoMA.org in 1996. Since that time, the department has collaborated with many Museum departments, including design, curatorial, and education on a variety of projects, such as the online collection project, the digital display screens, and the kid's site, Destination: Modern Art. The creative group within Digital Media also oversees the design and production of the Web site and related online, kiosk, and other digital projects, including such award-winning sites as What Is a Print?, Kiki Smith, and, most recently, *Tall Buildings*. The department was responsible for the redesign of MoMA.org in 2002, as well as the most recent design revisions for the opening of the new MoMA. The technology side of the department has recently grown to include audiovisual and e-commerce technology.

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MoMA Partners in Graphic Design and Digital Design

Bruce Mau Design

Bruce Mau Design has gained international recognition for innovation across a wide variety of projects, from book design to visual identity and branding, environmental graphics, programming and exhibitions and product development. The studio has collaborated with some of the world's leading architects, artists, writers, curators, academics, entrepreneurs, businesses, and institutions. His latest initiative, *Massive Change: The Future of Global Design* is a collaboration between his studio Bruce Mau Design and the Institute without Boundaries, a design program he founded in collaboration with George Brown, Toronto City College.

Bureau Mijksenaar

Founded by Paul Mijksenaar in 1986. Bureau Mijksenaar specializes in consultancy on visual information systems based on a highly analytical and systematic approach.

In order to maintain a high degree of flexibility coupled with low overheads, the Bureau regularly engages specialists to work on projects calling for their particular expertise, be it construction, lighting, traffic engineering, ergonomics, computer science, audio-visual techniques or design implementation.

Bureau Mijksenaar began its American activities in 1999 with a commission for the Schiphol Terminal at JFK International Airport in New York. Since then, the firm has developed various wayfinding projects for the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, and has been consulted by various other American airports.

Carter & Cone Type Inc.

Matthew Carter is a type designer with forty years' experience of typographic technologies ranging from hand-cut punches to computer fonts. After a long association with the Linotype companies he was a cofounder in 1981 of Bitstream Inc., the digital typefoundry, where he worked for ten years. He is now a principal of Carter & Cone Type Inc., in Cambridge, Massachusetts, designers and producers of original typefaces.

Carter & Cone have produced types on commission for Apple, Microsoft (the screen fonts Verdana and Georgia), *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Wired*, *U.S. News & World Report*, *Sports Illustrated*, *The Washington Post*, and the Walker Art Center.

Cognitive Applications

Cognitive Applications is an international new media consultancy founded in 1985. Originally working in artificial intelligence, the company started using digital multimedia in the late 1980s and is now one of the most experienced of its kind in the world. Cognitive Applications helps clients plan and deliver Web sites, touchscreen systems, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, online publishing systems and other forms of innovative online and interactive software. Current clients include Manchester United, The Museum of Modern Art, and the Home Office. The company's aim is to produce well-conceived and beautifully executed projects that will provide lasting value for client organizations and enrich the lives of the people who use them. The company has offices in Brighton, England, and Washington, D.C.

Dresser Johnson

Kevin Dresser studied graphic design at Pratt Institute, and in 1997, began a tutelage in font design with Jonathan Hoefler of The Hoefler Type Foundry. Some of his projects at the Type Foundry and beyond include signage fonts and icons for the landmark renovation of Radio City Music Hall; original lettering and font work for *Food & Wine* and *The New York Times Magazine*; and illustration for Little, Brown and Company. In January 2000, Dresser left the Type Foundry and started his own studio, Dresser Johnson.

Paulette Giguere

With her small company of independent painting and silk screening artists, Paulette Giguere has been serving MoMA and other museums and institutions on the east coast for almost 20 years. She creates and installs on-site graphic design, and murals for exhibitions, installations and environments.

Imaginary Forces

Imaginary Forces is an entertainment, design, and production agency based in Hollywood and New York. Their award-winning work spans the diverse industries of commercial advertising, branding, feature production and marketing, architecture, sports, and interactive media. Imaginary Forces (IF) has previously produced commercial campaigns for Herman Miller, Smirnoff Red Label, and Nike; network packages for Animal Planet, The Discovery Channel, Lifetime, and MTV. IF has created teaser/trailers for such films as *The Stepford Wives*, *Men in Black I and II*, and *Christmas with the Kranks*; television main title sequences for *Touching Evil*, *NASCAR Drivers: 360*, and *Band of Brothers*. Fusing architecture and media, IF has produced branded experiences for Morgan Stanley, IBM, BMW, and the NFL's Baltimore Ravens. IF's work also includes main title sequences for the films *Hellboy*, *Spider-Man*, *The Cat in the Hat*, and *Se7en*. Upcoming title sequences include *Ray*, and John Sayles's *Silver City*. Currently, IF is in post-production on its third film, *Blade: Trinity*. While IF is perhaps best known for their innovative film-title sequences—including *Se7en* (1997), *Fight Club* (1999), and *Spider-Man* (2002)—their work as part of the United Architects team was recently represented in the *Tall Buildings* exhibition at MoMA QNS.

Pantone

Pantone is the design industry leader in color specification and management. In addition to maintaining the Pantone Matching System, a library of thousands of unique colors used in print and product design, Pantone also partners with clients to create unique proprietary colors.

Visual Graphic Systems

For over 20 years, VGS has been committed to providing the best signage and visual communications systems in the industry. VGS partners with clients to design, fabricate, and install visual communications systems. Previous clients are among the best-known companies in the architectural, food service, hospitality, and retail industries. VGS offers a range of competitive solutions: from off-the-shelf products to custom-tailored programs, planning, installation, and fulfillment services.