

Bradbury Thompson

Inspired *typography*

"Bradbury Thompson has expanded the boundaries of printed page and influenced the design of a generation of art directors."

Allen Hurlburt, *Communication Arts*, 1988

Type is a thing of constant interest to me.

It is sometimes a serious and useful tool,
employed to deliver a message,
sell a specific article,
or give life to an idea.

At other times it is a plaything
that affords personal amusement and recreation.
It is fun to produce fresh designs and spontaneous ideas
with letters and numbers –
by themselves
or together with other graphic objects.

Type is a medium of philosophical enjoyment.
It is interesting to discover typographic rules
containing inconsistencies in logic,
which are in use only because of tradition.
It is also interesting to ponder the origin of these errors,
impractical reasons for their perpetuation,
and to suggest remedies.
An interest in Type

provides a broader knowledge of history,
including the appreciation of such related arts
as painting, architecture and literature –
and even business and politics.
This affords opportunity for pleasant romantic indulgence.
At the same time,
it develops confidence in one's practical ability
to specify appropriate typefaces
to accompany creative works of specific periods.

In short,
Type can be a tool, a toy, and a teacher;
it can provide a means of livelihood,
a hobby for relaxation,
an intellectual stimulant –
and spiritual satisfaction.

I believe an avid interest in type
necessarily includes a zest for everyday life.

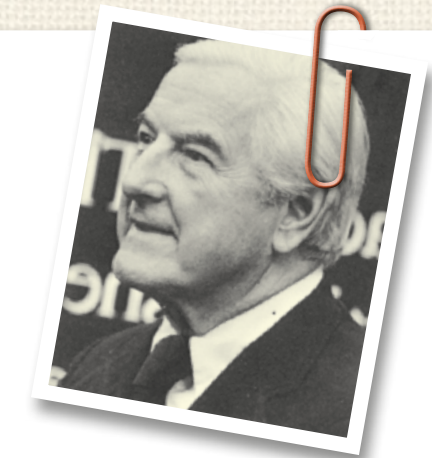
*International Graphic Design Conference,
New York City, 1956*

Bradbury Thompson

Bradbury Thompson is one of the most important graphic designers of the twentieth century. The art director of *Made-moiselle* and design director of *Art News* and *Art News Annual* in the decades after World War II, he also designed the formats for some three dozen other magazines, including *Smithsonian*. Thompson is in addition a distinguished designer of limited edition books, postage stamps, rationalized alphabets, corporate identification programs, trademarks, and sacred works (most notably, the *Washburn College Bible*, in which the words are set in the cadence of speech). His hallmark has ever been the adaptation of classic typography to the modern world.

Thompson is perhaps most well known as the designer of more than sixty issues of *Westvaco Inspirations*, a magazine published by the Westvaco Corporation and distributed to thousands of printers, designers, and teachers to show the range and versatility of the designer himself. He also has been responsible for numerous innovative design projects for the paper company.

Bradbury Thompson has served on the faculty of the Yale School of Art for



over thirty years. He has been consultant to the Howard University graduate school of business administration and the Cornell University department of publications. He has received honorary DFA degrees from Washburn University and Rhode Island School of Design, and the Frederic W. Coudy Award from Rochester Institute of Technology. His profession has honored him with all of its highest awards, including those of the American Institute of Graphic Arts, the National Society of Art Directors, the Art Directors Club, the Type Directors Club, and the Society of Publications Designers.

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