

THEORY AT WORK

Contemporary Design

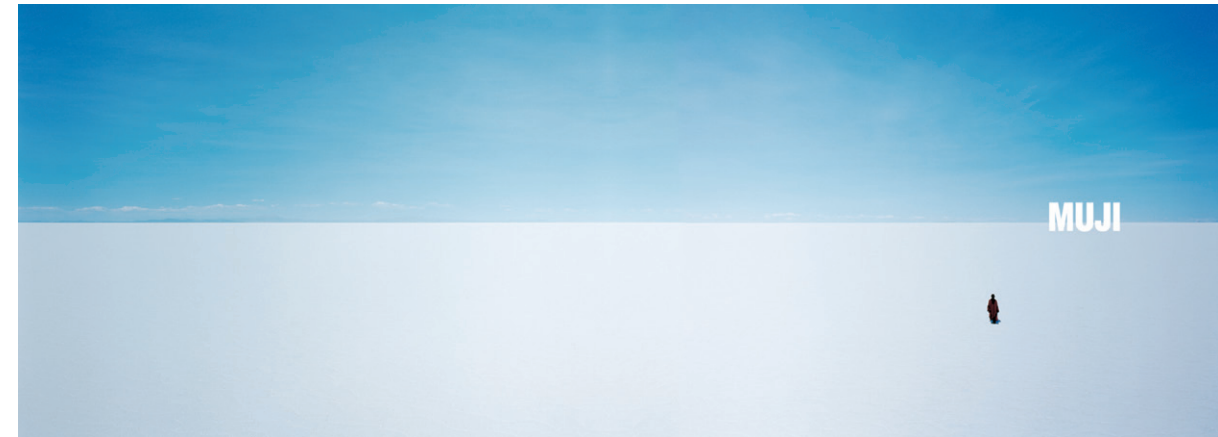
KENYA HARA MUJI advertisements, 2003 (above) and 2004 (below). As creative director and advisory board member of MUJI, Hara does not advocate a philosophy of business and design meant to stir up individual desire. Instead, he embraces what he terms, “global rational value,” a philosophy that

advocates the use of resources and objects according to an exceedingly rational perspective.” MUJI advertising images suggest “moderation” and “detached reason,” speaking not to the egotistical mind but the rational one. Kenya Hara, *Designing Design*, trans. Maggie Kinser Hohle and Yukiko Naito (Baden: Lars Müller, 2007), 240.



KENYA HARA *Paper and Design*, 2000. Book project for an exhibition to commemorate the centennial of the Takeo Paper Company. This project exemplifies Hara's reframing of books as “information sculpture.” As he notes in *Designing Design*, “If electronic media is reckoned a practical tool for information conveyance, books

are information sculpture; from now on, books will probably be judged according to how well they awaken that materiality, because the decision to create a book will be based on a definite choice of paper as the medium.” Kenya Hara, *Designing Design*, trans. Maggie Kinser Hohle and Yukiko Naito (Baden: Lars Müller, 2007), 201.

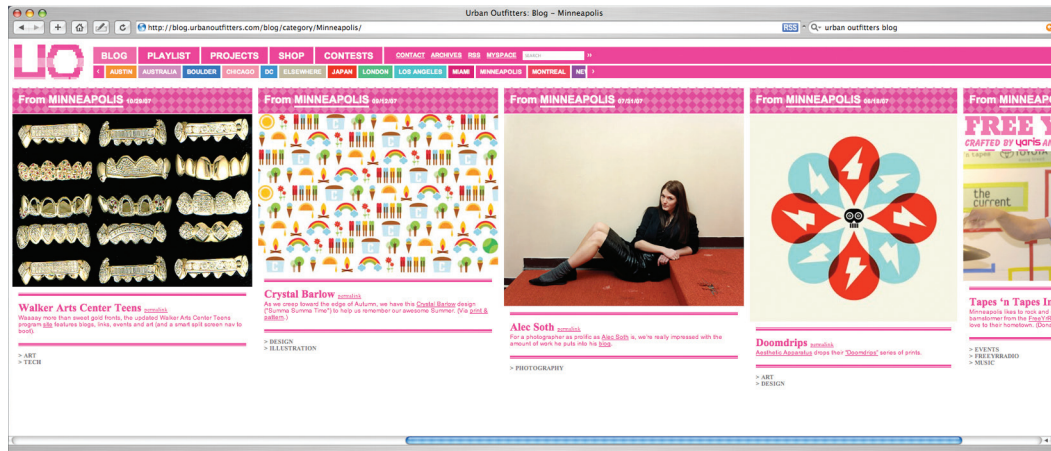




JAN VAN TOORN Spreads from the visual essay "Panorama of Habits—Ten Everyday Landscapes" in van Thorn's book, *Design's Delight* (Rotterdam: 010, 2006). Each spread is meant to be closely read and interpreted by the reader. Through such work van Toorn suggests that designs are never neutral. The designer should expose the manipulation of the message inherent in the work and encourage readers to do the same.



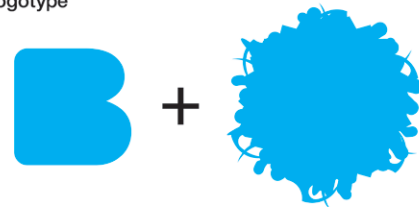
DMITRI SIEGEL Design for Nicholas Herman et al., *Russian Art in Translation*, 2007. This book is a catalog of emerging and established artists whose practice engages Russian identity and its complex legacy as a (failed) radical utopian state. Siegel produced this book through his publishing venture Ante Projects, which he founded with Herman in 2002 while they were students at the Yale University School of Art.



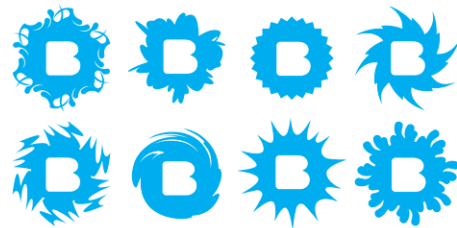
DMITRI SIEGEL Urban Outfitters Blog, 2008. The UO blog is the first horizontal scrolling blog in the history of the internet. It compiles brand inspiration from around the world that can be easily filtered by city or keyword. Siegel designed the site to emphasize the uniqueness of

authentic local “scenes,” attempting to subvert the homogenizing tendency of many digital social networking sites. Blog formats like this illustrate what Siegel terms “postsumerism—the simultaneous production and consumption of content.”

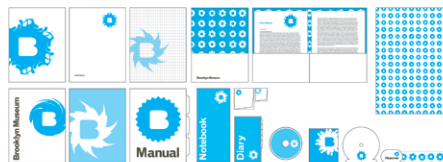
Logotype



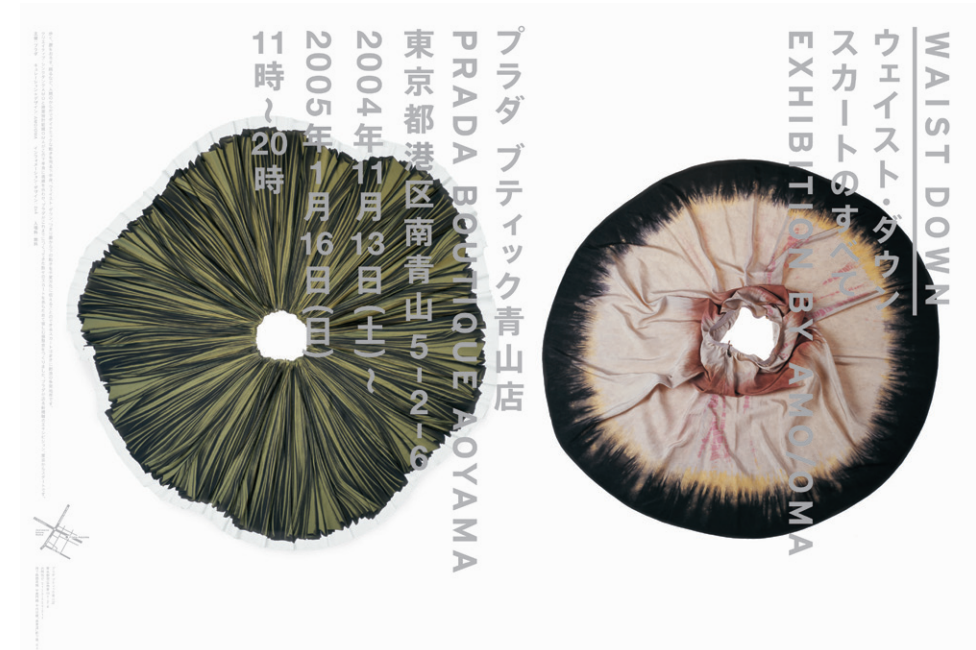
Logotype Variations



Print Collateral



MICHAEL ROCK Identity for the Brooklyn Museum, 2004. Rock's Brooklyn identity, designed by his firm 2x4, is an early example of flexible logo systems that have since become popular. Such variable systems take full advantage of the multiple digital media now at play. Although some core visual remains consistent in such systems, the identity itself includes variable elements. The sharp contrast between the static controlled logos of twentieth-century designers like Paul Rand and new dynamic identities reflect the changing aesthetic emphasized by media theorist Lev Manovich.



MICHAEL ROCK Poster from Waist Down, a traveling exhibit originally sited in the Prada Tokyo Epicenter, 2004. Rock's firm, 2x4, worked with exhibition designers at OMA-AMO to develop the exhibit and all collateral materials. Simultaneously working in Rotterdam, Milan, New York, and Tokyo, 2x4 took full advantage of the current global working climate. Such work demonstrates the kind of collaboration for which Rock is known.