

FIRST

appreciating graphic design and the graphic designer

an exhibit's job is to convey a message,

an audiences's job is to comprehend the message,

the graphic designer's job is to further both ends
with graphic design that is

effective and cohesive,
provocative and beautiful,
informative and entertaining.

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graphic design

Maritime Museum
June 9, 2004

SECOND

hiring graphic design

I good interpretive content is not the same as good graphic design and hiring an exhibition design firm is not the same as hiring a graphic design firm or graphic designer [make sure your exhibition design firm has a graphic designer in-house or in-contract and ask to see a portfolio or vitae]

II solicit portfolios and vitae

III do you like the work?
because what you see is what you get.
all design problems have distinct and specific design solutions, but if you see a portfolio full of eclectic and conceptual work, expect something challenging and experimental

IV do you like them?
A the working relationship is paramount, especially with the complexities and deadlines of exhibition design
B alternately firm and flexible when you need them to be one or the other
C check references or visit exhibits

V price point?

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THIRD

graphic design for really smart and really nice people
who, nevertheless, are not graphic designers

the end: conveyance and comprehension of message

the means:

I heirarchy and white space

- A contrast [variation in size, color, density] will help highlight or emphasize your message—if everything is big or full, nothing is noticeable
 - B use design and layout to create a narrative flow, supply your audience with visual and cues and anchors to navigate the story
 - C establish a relationship between text and artwork
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II vicinity and comprehension

- A graphic design is never experienced from just one vantage or distance
 - B vantage
 - 1 americans with disabilities [ADA]
 - 2 kids
 - 3 basketball players
 - C multiple messaging for multiple distances
 - 1 from far away: emotive distance
color and texture create atmosphere and impression, inviting audience in
 - 2 from 5-20 feet or oblique: allurement distance
primary images and headlines express content/topic, attracting audience to invest themselves
 - 3 from 3-6 feet away: comprehension distance
primary and supporting images and texts convey message
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III typography

- A use 2-4 typefaces, not a gazillion
 - B serif and sans-serif typefaces can be equally readable or unreadable depending on font and usage [do not prejudice yourself or your designer for or against anything until you have seen it working, or not working]
 - C a typeface can reflect or evoke a time, a place, or a story, but remember, this is an exhibit, not a themepark
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IV artwork

- A one picture [or artifact] is worth one thousand words, but a bad picture will read like a text book, and a good one, like a bestseller.
 - B use fewer but better pictures and artifacts
 - C the unexpected or the unconventional can give new life
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V color

- A emotion and memory: energy, calm
 - B sensation and experience: hot, cold
 - C experienced from all vantages and distances and applicable to exhibit above and beyond graphic panels or interpretative displays
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FOURTH

graphic design review of an exhibit



anatomy of a graphic panel

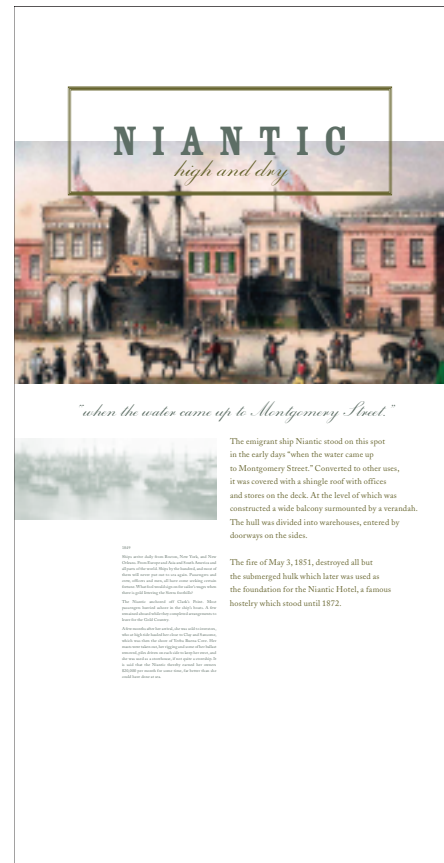
primary title

primary image

primary text
supporting images and texts

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FIFTH

production

your graphic designer can be/should be a liaison between yourself and the multitude of technical issues and problems of production

I design and layout

- A quark; indesign; ms word
layout and compilation of artwork and text
 - B illustrator, freehand
illustration, typographic manipulation, vector artwork
 - C photoshop
photographic manipulation, raster artwork
 - D acrobat, power point
supporting programs for presentations and reviews
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II artwork

- A image type
 - 1 raster, resolution dependent
image is described by data: physical points
are described by physical pixel, limiting scaling possibilities
 - 2 vector, resolution independent
geometric description, unlimited scaling capabilities
 - B color space
 - 1 bitmap [1 bit, on or off black or white]
 - 2 grayscale [black, white, everything in between]
 - 3 rgb [red, green, blue; additive color process]
 - 4 cmyk [cyan, magenta, yellow, black; additive color process]
 - C resolution: inverse proportion between size and resolution
 - D file type: tif, eps, jpg
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III process

- A offset printing
 - B digital printing
 - 1 lambda
 - 2 ink jet
 - 3 b/w laser printing
 - 4 color laser printing
 - C screen printing
 - D internet
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