The Logo Design Idea Book



Written by Steven Heller and Gail Anderson, *The Logo Design Idea Book* features 50 logos as examples of good ideas in the service of representation, reputation, and identification. Each logo is given a double-page spread, images on one side, text on the other. Many of the designs are well known, for brands such as LEGO, Amazon, FedEx, and IBM, while others aren’t, such as Edition Unik, Riot, Nourish, and Virto.

From the blurb, “Arrows, swashes, swooshes, globes, sunbursts, and parallel, vertical, and horizontal lines, words, letters, shapes, and pictures. Logos are the most ubiquitous and essential of all graphic design devices, representing ideas, beliefs, and, of course, things. They primarily identify products, businesses, and institutions, but they are also associated with the ethos or philosophy of those entities.”



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After a short introduction, the logos are divided into sections that include monograms, symbols, redesigns, mnemonics, wit, and secret signs. Here are a few spreads along with some brief, slightly edited excerpts.



Bob Noorda’s 1964 logo for the Milan Metro was inspired by the curves of Franco Albini’s fluid station railings, but was later scrapped due to politics within the transit agency. “Stupid is the word. Stupid because they have no notion of the idea behind certain choices,” Noorda wrote in *Bob Noorda Design* (2015).



The 1989 logo for PTT – a postal and telecommunications company in the Netherlands, was the work of Studio Dumbar in The Hague. The brief was to reinforce the relation of the divisions to each other within an overall system, while remaining loyal to elements of the earlier house style that included Univers type in a square. Gert Dumbar noted that the goal was anti-clarity because clarity can be very boring, as he told Eye Magazine.



The rebus variation (1981) of the iconic IBM logo (1972) by Paul Rand was used as a promotional poster for the computer tech firm. IBM’s mark before Rand was set in Beton Bold, a slab serif with nineteenth-century antecedents. Rand opted against a radical change because the mark was already recognisable to IBM’s customers, so his initial means to improve legibility was to replace Beton in 1956 with a more modern version called City, designed by Georg Trump.



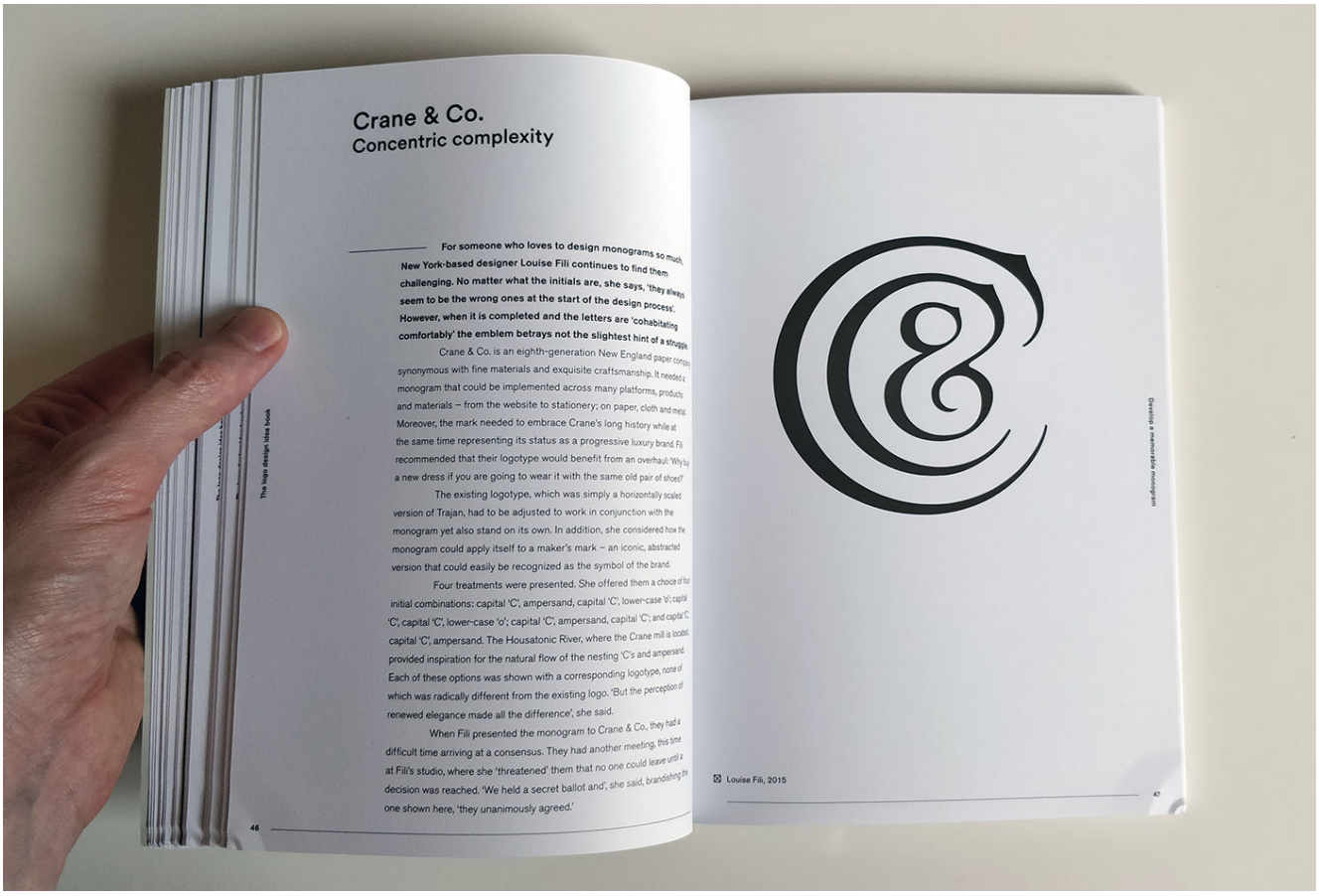
Graphic designer Stephen Doyle, a Cooper Union alumnus, created a mark for his old learning centre that would be animated on the Cooper Union’s website. Doyle used light and transparency to suggest the intersection of art and science.



Virto is the first corporate space in Spain to employ a state-of-the-art virtual assistant throughout the offices. The branding was created by SUMMA, and the logo was inspired by the shapes in the work of the Spanish painter and sculptor Pablo Palazuelo, whose twentieth-century art movement Trans-geometría sought to translate the organic rhythms of nature into plastic art. This philosophy also influenced the design of the building’s façade and interiors.



When Supero, a design agency based in La Chaux-de-Fonds and Neuchâtel, Switzerland, was commissioned to design the logo and menus for a sailing club's public restaurant, Restaurant du Circle de la Voile de Neuchâtel, it wanted to avoid clichés related to the world of Neptune and suggest instead the maritime world in a subtle way through typography alone.



New York-based designer Louise Fili designed the mark for Crane & Co., an eighth-generation New England paper company. The monogram needed to embrace Crane’s long history while at the same time representing its status as a progressive luxury brand. When four options were presented, Crane & Co. had a difficult time arriving at a consensus. They had another meeting, this time at Fili’s studio, where she “threatened” them that no one could leave until a decision was reached. “We held a secret ballot and,” brandishing the one shown above, “they unanimously agreed.”

I’ll finish with a notable excerpt from the introduction:

“Aside from the inevitable debates over the choices of typefaces, colours, or other graphic elements – which are subjective expressions of preference or taste – behind every strong logo there must be a solid idea that stands up to scrutiny. The ideas addressed here are the foundations on which logos are ultimately built. The rest, whether it is good or bad, memorable or forgettable, is up to the viability of

the establishments they represent.”

Couldn’t have said it better.

The Logo Design Idea Book is available from August 5th, 2019, and can be pre-ordered now on Amazon.com (.co.uk, .ca) or direct from Laurence King.

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