

Chapter 7 – Renaissance Graphic Design

Introduction, 98

Graphic design of the Italian Renaissance, 98

Italian writing masters, 105

Innovation passes to France, 105

Basel and Lyons become design centers, 113

The seventeenth century, 116

Key Terms (in order of appearance; the first page number of their appearance is listed)

1. *Renaissance* (“revival” or “rebirth”), page 98
2. *Trademark*, page 99
3. *Reversed designs*, page 100
4. *Type specimen sheet*, page 100
5. *Fleurons* (printer’s flowers), page 100
6. *Humanism*, page 102
7. *Pocket book*, page 104
8. *Cancelleresca*, page 104
9. *Renaissance man*, page 107
10. *Headpiece*, page 108
11. *Tailpiece*, page 113
12. *Arabesque*, page 114
13. *Imagines Mortis* (*The Dance of Death*), page 114
14. *Bracketing*, page 118

Key People and Their Major Contributions (in order of appearance; the first page number of their appearance is listed)

1. *Johannes de Spira* (d. 1470), page 98, (Fig. 7-1)
2. *Nicolas Jenson* (c. 1420–1480), page 98, (Fig. 7-2)
3. *Erhard Ratdolt* (1442–1528), page 100, (Fig. 7-8 and 7-12)
4. *Johannes Nicolai de Verona*, page 102
5. *Aldus Manutius* (1450–1515), page 102, (Figs. 7-18 through 7-22)
6. *Francesco da Bologna*, surnamed *Griffo* (1450–1518), page 102, (Fig. 7-17)
7. *Lodovico Arrighi* (d. c. 1527), page 105, (Fig. 7-27)
8. *Henri Estienne* (d. 1520), page 107, (Fig. 7-29)
9. *Simon de Colines* (d. 1546), page 107
10. *Robert Estienne* (1503–1559), page 107
11. *Geoffroy Tory* (1480–1533), page 107, (Figs. 7-35 and 7-36)
12. *Claude Garamond* (c. 1480–1561), page 107
13. *Oronce Finé* (1494–1555), page 111, (Fig. 7-40)
14. *Johann Froben* (1460–1527), page 113
15. *Hans Holbein the Younger* (1497–1543), page 114, (Figs. 7-43 and 7-44)
16. *Johann Oporinus*, page 114, (Fig. 7-45)
17. *Jean de Tournes* (1504–1564), page 114, (Fig. 7-47)
18. *Robert Granjon* (d. 1579), page 114
19. *Christophe Plantin* (1514–1589), page 116
20. *Stephen Daye* (c. 1594–1668), page 116, (Fig. 7-51)
21. *Christoffel van Dyck*, page 118, (Fig. 7-54)

Chapter 7 – Study Questions

Multiple Choice

1. _____, the center of commerce and Europe's gateway to trade with the eastern Mediterranean nations, India, and the Orient, led the way in Italian typographic book design.
 - A. Milan
 - B. Rome
 - C. Florence
 - D. Venice
2. A goldsmith from Mainz, Germany, _____ was given a five-year monopoly on printing in Venice. He printed the first typographic book with page numbers, the 1470 edition of *De civitate dei*, and designed an innovative and handsome Roman type that cast off some of the Gothic qualities found in earlier fonts.
 - A. Johannes de Spira
 - B. Henri Estienne
 - C. Christophe Plantin
 - D. Ludovico Arrighi
3. _____, who had been master of the Royal Mint of Tours, France, was a highly skilled cutter of the dies used for striking coins. He established Venice's second press. One of history's greatest typeface designers and punch cutters, his fonts were characterized by extreme legibility and established a new standard of excellence, with wider letterforms, lighter tone, and a more even texture of black strokes on the white background.
 - A. Erhard Ratdolt
 - B. Nicolas Jenson
 - C. Geoffroy Tory
 - D. Hans Holbein the Younger
4. Fear and superstition were swept away as scientists began to understand natural phenomena, leading to a shift in content for graphic design. In Erhard Ratdolt's

_____, sixty diagrams printed in black and yellow were used to scientifically explain solar and lunar eclipses. The understanding of eclipses moved from black magic to predictable fact, and the book contains a three-part mathematical wheel for calculating solar cycles.

- A. *Geometriae elementa*
 - B. *Calendarium*
 - C. *Lune Solarium*
 - D. *Ars Moriendi*
5. Roberto Valturio's manual on warfare, *De re militari (About Warfare)*, which is identified as having been printed by Johannes Nicolai de Verona, includes examples of the fine-line style of woodblock illustration that became popular in Italian graphic design later in the fifteenth century. This extraordinary book is a compendium of contemporary techniques and devices for scaling walls, catapulting missiles, ramming fortifications, and torturing enemies. The text is set in a tight column with wide margins, and the freely shaped images are spread across the pages in dynamic, _____ layouts.
- A. symmetrical
 - B. asymmetrical
 - C. reversed
 - D. bordered
6. A new concern for human potential and value characterized Renaissance humanism, a philosophy of human dignity and worth that defined man as capable of using reason and scientific inquiry to achieve an understanding of the world and self-meaning. This new spirit was accompanied by a renewed study of classical writings. _____ was an important humanist and scholar of the Italian Renaissance who established Aldine Press and published major works of the great thinkers of the Greek and Roman cultures.
- A. Robert Granjon
 - B. Nicolas Jenson
 - C. Aldus Manutius
 - D. Ludovico Arrighi
7. In 1501, the Aldine Press published Virgil's *Opera (Works)*, which was the prototype of the _____ book. This edition had a 3.75-by-6-inch page size and was set in the first italic type font. Between the smaller type size and the narrower width of italic characters, a 50 percent gain in the number of characters

per line of a given measure was achieved over Nicolas Jenson's and Francesco Griffo's types.

- A. type specimen
 - B. abecedarian
 - C. pocket
 - D. incunabula
8. _____ was a brilliant typeface designer and punch cutter who cut Roman, Greek, Hebrew, and the first italic types for Aldine Press editions. His initial project in Venice was a Roman face for *De Aetna* by Pietro Bembo in 1495, which survives as the book text face Bembo. He researched pre-Caroline scripts to produce a Roman type that was more authentic than Nicolas Jenson's designs.
- A. Erhard Ratdolt
 - B. Johannes de Spira
 - C. Aldus Manutius
 - D. Francesco Griffo (Francesco da Bologna)
9. The publication of Ludovico Arrighi's small volume of 1522 entitled *La Operina da Imparare di scrivere littera cancellerescha* was the first of many sixteenth-century _____ manuals and marked the beginning of a new era that ended the exclusive domain of the scriptorium.
- A. illustration
 - B. printing
 - C. reading
 - D. writing
10. With the sack of Rome, the Italian Renaissance began to fade and eventually innovation in book design and printing passed to _____, where two brilliant graphic artists, Geoffroy Tory and Claude Garamond, created visual forms that were embraced for two hundred years.
- A. The Netherlands
 - B. France
 - C. England
 - D. Spain

11. A true renaissance man, Geoffroy Tory's accomplishments include the following. Which does **NOT** belong? _____
- A. Translating, editing, and publishing Latin and Greek texts
 - B. Introducing the apostrophe, accent, and cedilla to the French language
 - C. Issuing the first printer's type specimen sheet
 - D. Writing books on the proportions of roman letters.
12. _____, the first punch cutter who worked independently of printing firms, established his type foundry to sell cast type that was ready to distribute into compositors' cases. The fonts he cut during the 1540s achieved a tighter fit that allowed closer word spacing and a harmony of design between capitals, lowercase letters, and italics.
- A. Francesco Griffo
 - B. Geoffroy Tory
 - C. Antoine Augereau
 - D. Claude Garamond
13. A mathematics professor and author, his abilities as a graphic artist complemented his scientific publications. _____ illustrated his own mathematics, geography, and astronomy books and worked closely with printers, particularly Simon de Colines, in the design and production of his books. The border on the title page for his 1533 book *Arithmetica* used carefully measured strapwork, symbolic figures representing areas of knowledge, and a *criblé* background. This border, combined with de Coline's typography, created a masterpiece of Renaissance graphic design.
- A. Hans Holbein
 - B. Oronce Finé
 - C. Robert Estienne
 - D. Jacques Kerver
14. When a serious arm injury ended Christophe Plantin's bookbinding career in the early 1550s, he changed his occupation to printing, and the Netherlands found its greatest printer. His company became the world's largest and strongest publishing house and printed a full range of material, including classics and Bibles, herbals and medicine books, music and maps. Plantin's main design contribution was the use of _____ to illustrate his books.
- A. stylized renderings

- B. copperplate engravings
 - C. delicate arabesques
 - D. contour-line woodblock prints
15. A _____ is a word, phrase, symbol, or design—or a combination of words, phrases, symbols, or designs—that identifies and distinguishes the source of the goods or services of one party from those of others.
- A. colophon
 - B. *criblé*
 - C. fleuron
 - D. trademark
16. In 1639, _____, a British locksmith and his son, designed and printed the first book in the English American colonies, *The Whole Booke of Psalms* (now called *The Bay Psalm Book*). The design and production of this book understandably lacked refinement. In spite of strong censorship and a stamp tax on newspapers and advertising, printing grew steadily in the colonies.
- A. Stephen and Matthew Daye
 - B. Robert and Henri Estienne
 - C. Hans Holbein the Elder and Hans Holbein the Younger
 - D. Robert Granjon and Christophe Plantin

True/False

1. The Medicis, a wealthy family in Florence, embraced humanism but rejected the technology of printing. _____
2. The Aldine Press trademark, designed around 1500, consisted of a lion and a shield that signified the epigram, “Make haste slowly.” _____
3. Aldus Manutius designed new capitals for his book *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (*The Strife of Love in a Dream* or *The Dream of Poliphilus*), which used a one-to-ten stroke weight to height proportion advanced by leading mathematicians of the era and made the height of the lowercase ascenders taller than the capitals to correct an optical color problem that had plagued earlier Roman fonts. _____
4. The 1476 book entitled *Calendarium (Record Book)* by Regiomontanus contained the first complete title page used to identify a book. _____

5. The *pot cassé* trademark Geoffroy Tory used on the sign of his bookseller's shop in Paris was symbolic of the death of his daughter. _____
6. Tory's *Champ Fleury* was the author's attempt to analyze, describe, and prescribe rules of the French language, both spoken and written. _____
7. Hans Holbein the Younger created a series of forty-one woodcuts illustrating *Imagines Mortis (The Dance of Death)*, in which skeletons are depicted leading the living to their graves. _____
8. Not much innovation occurred in typography during the seventeenth century in Europe. Since there was an abundance of stock ornaments, punches, matrices, and woodblocks, there was little incentive for printers to commission new graphic material. _____

Matching

I. Match the key terms with the correct definitions.

1. bracketing _____
2. fleurons _____
3. headpiece _____
4. tailpiece _____
5. trademarks _____
6. type specimen sheet _____

- A. An emblem designed to identify a book produced by a certain printer
- B. Decorative elements cast like type
- C. The connecting curves that unify a serif with the main stroke of a letter
- D. An ornamental design at the top of a page
- E. An ornamental design at the bottom of a page
- F. Displays a range of typographic sizes and styles—Erhard Ratdolt issued the first one upon his return to Augsburg, Germany from Venice

II. Match the key people with their accomplishments.

1. Francesco da Bologna, surnamed Griffio _____
2. Claude Garamond _____
3. Robert Granjon _____
4. Nicolas Jenson _____
5. Aldus Manutius _____
6. Geoffroy Tory _____

- A. A master of the Royal Mint of Tours, France, he was a highly skilled cutter of the dies used for striking coin. He established Venice's second press shortly after Johannes de Spira's death, and became one of history's greatest typeface designers and punch cutters, whose ability to design the spaces between the letters and within each form created an even tone throughout the page. The characters in his fonts aligned more perfectly than those of any other printer of his time. His types first used in Eusebius's *De praeparatione evangelica (Evangelical Preparation)* present the full flowering of Roman type design.
- B. An important humanist and scholar of the Italian Renaissance, he founded the Aldine Press, which published major works of the great thinkers of the Greek and Roman worlds and the prototype of the pocket book, which addressed the need for smaller, more economical books. Especially noteworthy is Aldine's 1499 edition of Fra Francesco Colonna's *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili (The Strife of Love in a Dream or The Dream of Poliphilus)*, a masterpiece of graphic design that achieved an elegant harmony of typography and illustration that has seldom been equaled.
- C. A brilliant typeface designer and punch cutter at Aldine Press whose initial project in Venice was a roman face for *De Aetna* by Pietro Bembo, in 1495, which survives today as the book text face Bembo.
- D. A true renaissance man who introduced the apostrophe, the accent, and the cedilla to the French language and developed a uniquely French Renaissance school of book design and illustration, as seen in *Champ Fleury* (subtitled *The art and science of the proper and true proportions of the attic letters, which are otherwise called antique letters, and in common speech roman letters*). In *Champ Fleury*, first published in 1529, he discusses the history of roman letters and compares their proportions with the ideal proportions of the human figure and face, which influenced a generation of French printers and punch cutters. He became the most influential graphic designer of his century.

- E. A typeface designer and punch cutter who was the first to work independently of printing firms, he established his type foundry to sell cast type ready to distribute into compositors' cases. The types he cut during the 1540s achieved a mastery of visual form and a tighter fit that allowed closer word spacing and a harmony of design between capitals, lowercase letters, and italics. The influence of writing as a model diminished in his work, for typography was evolving into a language of form rooted in the processes of making steel punches, casting metal type, and printing instead of imitating forms created by hand gestures.
- F. He created delicate italic fonts featuring beautiful italic capitals with swashes to replace regular capitals that were being used with italic lowercase letters. The fleurons he designed were modular and could be put together in endless combinations to make headpieces, tailpieces, ornaments, and borders.

Image Identification

I. Identify the designer, title, and date of the following images.

- A. Figs. 7-9 and 7-10 _____
- B. Fig. 7-12 _____
- C. Figs. 7-19 and 7-20 _____
- D. Fig. 7-33 _____
- E. Fig. 7-35 _____
- F. Fig. 7-36 _____
- G. Fig. 7-44 _____
- H. Fig. 7-45 _____

II. Match each of the images shown with the name of its designer.

- 1. Fig. 7-12 _____
- 2. Fig. 7-39 _____
- 3. Fig. 7-51 _____

A. Simon de Colines

B. Erhard Ratdolt

C. Stephen and Matthew Daye