



Henry Steiner

石漢瑞



兩件事改變了我一生：一是設計成為我的職業，二是我為此感到自豪。

Two things have changed my life – one, design gave me a profession, the other, I took pride.

Clearly Culturally Intelligently

Cross-cultural Design Pioneer
Henry Steiner

Henry Steiner will tell you there is no such thing as the Steiner design, per se.

We can examine the legacy.

The Steiner design is deeply rooted in his European origins, an academic mentorship with the renowned Yale educator Paul Rand, admiration for the likes of Henry Wolf, Alan Fletcher, Tanaka Ikko, Milton Glaser, Ivan Chermayeff, Tom Geismar and Michael Bierut, a Sorbonne sojourn in Paris, a desire to emulate Hollywood's Saul Bass, an early career with *The Asia Magazine* in New York, a lifetime passion for Japanese art, fifty years of living in Hong Kong, and the recognition received as the cross-cultural designer in Asia for the likes of, among many others, Acer, *Asiaweek*, Chase Manhattan Bank, Dow Jones, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, Hilton, HSBC, IBM, Jardine Fleming, Mandarin Oriental, San Miguel, Shangri-La, Ssangyong, Standard Chartered, Prudential and Unilever.

Henry Steiner will tell you design is a solution, a deadline.

He will go on to say it is cross-cultural, an urban crossroads, and left brain/right brain confluences.

But most importantly, Henry Steiner will tell you design is intelligence.

"Some designers want to be artists, some artists designers. I never wanted to be anyone else. I am comfortable being a designer.

"I really was the first person to say I am a graphic designer, a graphic design pioneer, and to do it in a professional way, in Hong Kong."

Born in Vienna, raised in the United States from a young age, Steiner began living in Asia in his twenties. But even before then, his design sense was influenced by a "love of the Japanese style, the Japanese woodblock print with their surfaces and spacing, and even Akira Kurosawa and this filmmaker's contemporaries because there was a mutual respect for the modern Japanese design style... The Chinese, the Hong Kongese, the Japanese, the Taiwanese, their common thread is calligraphy. I think if

we talk about East Asian, it seems to inspire design, the placement of calligraphy, the feeling of a painting allowing space, the white area. This gives a sense of Asian design to it. I think this is a common denominator.

"If you say anything distinguishes my work, you can say it is the modernist style, something rooted in the 50s and 60s... a cross-culturalism, a sense of communicating from English to Chinese, or even other broadly different cultures."

Steiner remembers his first university courses. "Initially, I went into the painting stream, where we had very good teachers, artists who were part of the New York School of Abstract Expressionism... The important influence in this early stage [was] Alan Fletcher, a Yale friend and colleague, a very important designer [who said] that a designer tries to help solve his clients' problems." Steiner says it was Paul Rand who taught him about methodology. From them, he developed his own sense of professionalism.

海納百川 渾化無跡 香港平面設計先行者 石漢瑞

在石漢瑞看來，無所謂石氏設計。海納百川，渾化無跡，才是自家風格。

他的人生經驗本來就是跨文化的：學術上他追隨過著名的耶魯大學設計教育家保羅·蘭德；他欣賞的平面設計師有奧地利出生的美國人 Henry Wolf，英國的 Alan Fletcher，日本的田中一光、美國的 Milton Glaser，Tom Geismar 和 Michael Bierut，生於倫敦畢業於耶魯的車臣人 Ivan Chermayeff 等人；他曾留學巴黎索邦大學，想過效法荷里活電影海報設計師 Saul Bass... 一生酷愛日本藝術、半輩子居於香港，獲譽為亞洲獨當一面的跨文化設計師，香港的平面設計之父，曾替無數客戶設計，如 Accel 電腦、《遠東經濟評論》英文雜誌、希爾頓、香港上海匯豐銀行、IBM、Jardine Fleming、香港文華東方酒店、香港生力啤酒酒廠、香格里拉酒店、韓國雙龍車廠、渣打銀行、英國保誠保險公司、聯合利華公司等。

石漢瑞認為設計是一個解決方案，也是一個最後限期。如他的人生，設計必然是跨文化的，處在都市的十字路口，是左右腦交匯的地方。最重要的，設計是需要花心思的。

「有些設計師想當藝術家，有些藝術家想當設計師，我可從不想當其他人。我就是設計師，心安理得。我確實是第一人，坦然承認自己是平面設計師，是香港專業平面設計的先行者。」



HSBC
corporate identity, 1983
香港上海匯豐銀行標誌
1983

Design is an intellectual exercise

For Steiner, professionalism includes meeting the clients' needs, including their deadlines. He speaks about this adamantly, "I say this without being ironic. I respond when people ask me from where I get my inspiration, and I say, literally, from the deadline. I mean that. It's like a car, it doesn't start until the ignition sparks... When I have a problem, then I start thinking about it. It's like a speck of sand in the oyster shell," irritating, but stimulating, "or it's like a man with a hammer, a nail and a piece of wood. The deadline plays a big part. It's not a totally rational process."

Steiner feels there are four main principles to design, calculating them more like an engineer than as an artist.

The first principle is "the analysis of the idea. This was the first thing Paul Rand taught: you have to write something on the back of an index card. This is the idea. And this was in the first class! Someone replied, 'I have a feeling, a sense of nature.' Paul retorted, 'You don't have an idea.'"

He continues with the second principle. "Form follows function. This is a cliché, but a lot of people just don't think about it, they just don't get it, and they just don't get inspiration from it. To me, design is to do something to satisfy function."

And the third principle? "I don't like the idea of fusion. This is a serious threat to design. Just throwing everything in. I think the ideas should be distinct, but should deliberately work together, an element of the Asian and an element of something else."

The fourth principle, quite simply, "context and content. No need for an explanation," Steiner speaks intently, "You either get it or you don't!"

Steiner has strong views on style. "A designer should not have a style. This is another serious threat to design. This is important. I do not want people knowing this design is mine, to look at one of my designs and say it is Steiner's. I try to make my designs different every time. I do it FOR the client, not FOR me!"

(right)
Steiner designed 5 series of the Standard Chartered banknotes – the first set was issued in 1979, subsequently in 1985, 1993, 2003 and the current series in 2010.

自1979年至2010年，石漢瑞曾為渣打銀行設計五套鈔票。

Standard Chartered 150th anniversary commemorative banknote, 2009
渣打銀行一百五十週年紀念鈔票

[Steiner's emphasis] It must be the client's design, rather than Steiner's design... Style makes things prettier," design "adds something that wasn't there before."

For Steiner, the client and the solution always come first. "Very often, the designer asks the client, 'What do you like?'. But I mean, YOU are the designer. YOU should be telling the client what to do. YOU are there to solve the problem. And so YOU must tell the client the solution."

Equally, the idea is paramount. The designer's mind must actually 'see' and 'understand' where the client wants to go. The designer must find a way to deal with the idea, to express the idea, and how to find a memorable way to communicate the idea.

"This is an intellectual exercise... you absorb as many ideas and problems and facts as you can, then you have that static period, and then something happens. I do think the consciousness does not have any control. You wake up, and something clicks... Once



「如果說我的作品有甚麼特別，不妨稱之為現代主義的風格吧，一種根源於五六十年代的跨文化特色，從英語跨到漢語，甚或與其他不同文化溝通交流。」

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石漢瑞生於維也納，小時候隨父母移居美國，年輕時在那裡受教育。身處美國的他，已經與亞洲甚有淵緣，為一份發放到亞洲的英文雜誌《The Asia Magazine》工作。二十多歲時，他受邀到香港擔任雜誌的設計總監。受尊敬的平面設計師兼朋友 Henry Wolf 鼓勵，他決定接受這個為期九個月的遠距離挑戰。原本只是到此一遊，卻漸漸落地生根，一直走到今天。來亞洲以前，他的設計感早已受到日本風格的影響，如日本的浮世繪的畫面和空間佈局，甚至黑澤明及其同代導演所敬重的日本現代設計風格。他說：「中國人、香港人、日本人、台灣人，共同之處在書法。東亞地區對設計的啟發就在書法：字體如何安放？空間如何留白？這都帶出亞洲設計的特有味道。」

The strength of a good brand is that it associates with something that is valid.



you lay down the principles, the parameters, and you say you have to do this, and you have this to finish, it is as though it is already done.”

Contrast is also crucial. Steiner speaks fondly that the concept was one of the most important lessons he learned at Yale. “Unexpected contrast. Sometimes it is about what you know, and what you don't know. The yes, I have seen that before, but I haven't seen it like that. This must be very clear, and very purposeful. It is how to express things in different ways. It is how to express things in ways people have not seen before, an explicit different way of looking at things. The what you know, and the what you do not know. The what you expect, and the what you do not expect. If you start playing with these, they are very powerful.”

Steiner illustrates the concept of contrast – and unexpected contrast – with an example of the twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac. “We portrayed the twelve traditional Chinese animals, and with the rat, we

gave it a piece of Swiss cheese. Chinese people were shocked, because they had never seen the traditional portrayed with the contemporary. This is contrast.”

Language is yet another fundamental aspect of design. “When you are solving a problem, clients cannot usually tell if something looks good, modern or anything else, and cannot explain it either. I am heavily right brain. I have a problem with numbers. But I like literature. I like James Joyce. I tried talking that way to clients who tended to be very much left brain. But they just wanted facts and figures. So you have to give them an explanation they understand using their language. This was the case for the HSBC logo. It was based on the company flag, then we created more triangles on it. The idea was East, West, and the interpretation.”

Another example is an HSBC annual report. “The subject was a pair of hands, one with a handful of wheat, the other

with a handful of rice. It's that kind of thing that is understood. I find a lot of left brain people are graphically inapt, and I don't mean in a sense that they can't see, but they can't perceive.”

Henry expounds on this rationalization in greater detail because he thinks some people do not understand contextual relationships. He discusses a commission from a Japanese financial company. “Essentially, I thought I would use a coin, a Japanese coin, which is round and which has a small cut-out square in the middle of the coin.” Graphically, “this is a round shape, the circle, and a diamond shape. A coin and a diamond are very auspicious, especially for a financial concern. I won't say I didn't know what I was doing, but equally I won't say I did. But when you look at it and explain it to the client, you start seeing the pattern to things” and you can explain that in an intelligent way. Henry uses another example, the logo for Hongkong Land which is “a floor plan of a building, yes, but also if you look at the negative space,

(left)
American Chamber
of Commerce in
Hong Kong 2006
香港美國商會 2006

The Hong Kong
Jockey Club
brand identity,
1996

香港賽馬會標誌
1996

(right)
Hongkong Land
brand identity
1969

置地公司標誌
1969

Lane Crawford
brand identity
1964

連卡佛標誌
1964

Hong Kong Hilton
Hotel brand identity
1962

香港希爾頓酒店標誌
1962



好的品牌設計，總是有根有據。

專業態度包括想辦法滿足客戶的需要，在指定期限內完成工作。他斬釘截鐵地說：「當人家問我的靈感從哪兒得來，我說從限期得來的，絕不是在說反話。就像開汽車一樣，只有『捷匙開車』的一刻，車子才能說開動了。所以，死線日期很重要，創作不完全是個理性過程。」

石漢理的設計秉持四大原則：第一個原則是意念分析。「保羅·蘭德教我們的第一件事，就是構思。他說，如果你不可以在一張索引卡背後，寫下你對一個設計的構思，那個便不算設計。他第一堂課就這麼教！有人回答：我有種感覺，一種自然的感受。保羅反駁說：那不是意念。」

第二個原則是：「形式以功能為依歸。這是老生常談，但很多人就是不加反思，根本不明白這句話，也不能從中獲得靈感。在我看來，設計就是為了滿足功能需要而去做些事情。」

至於第三個原則，他說：「我不喜歡混合體這種想法，以為把所有東西一股腦兒放進去就好，這對設計危害極大。我認為意念之間應有明確分別，但同時需要特意安排讓不同的構思互相協作，如某種亞洲的元素加上某種別的元素。」

第四個原則很簡單，就是「重視文化背景，內涵言之有物。」他說：「這句話不必多作解釋，要麼馬上明白，要麼始終無知。」

設計師必須「看到」意念

石漢理對風格的見解很有自己的一套：「設計師不應有既定的風格，否則會規範了設計。我不想人家知道這設計出於我手，一看到我的作品，就說這是石漢理設計的。我設法令設計每次不同，因為我是為客戶設計，而不是為我自己！這設計必須屬於客戶，而不是我的。」他認為風格只是把事物美化，而設計是把原先沒有的東西添加進去。

對石漢理來說，客戶的問題和解決的方法，總是他的優先考慮。「設計師常常問客戶：你喜歡甚麼？但我的想法是，你是設計師，該由你來告訴客戶該怎麼做，由你來解決問題，也由你來提出答案。」

身為設計師，意念十分重要。設計師的腦海里，必須真的「看到」，也真的「明白」，客戶到底想去哪裡。他必須找出方法，處理這個意念，表達這個意念，想出一個傳達這意念的方式，能令人過目難忘的方式。

「這是一回智力的鍛煉：你儘可能把意念、問題及事實吸收進去，越多越好，然後靜待變化，這時候就會有意想不到的事情發生。我真的覺得人的意識是不可控制的。有天你早上醒來，可能靈機一觸，一旦你把大原則定下來，定出框架，跟自己說這個必須做，那個又必須完成，那就有推動力真的完成它們。」



(left top)
House
advertisement for
The Asia Magazine.
An issue devoted to the subject of
Eurasians,
21 January 1962.

《The Asia Magazine》
雜誌廣告，以歐亞
跨文化為主題，1962年
1月21日。

(left bottom)
HSBC annual report
from 1967 to 1984
香港上海匯豐銀行
年報1967-1984



(right)
The Far Eastern
Economic Review
cover (5 January
1989) showing a
dollar sign created
by a snake on a
bamboo ladder.

1989年1月5日《遠東經
濟評論》封面，以蛇和
竹梯組成金錢符號。



Servus Hong Kong book
cover, 2005

《Servus Hong Kong》
書籍封面，2005

it's an older written form of the Chinese character 壽 (longevity) which is very appropriate for a building company. This gives you the rationalization." He says this intellectualization, these explanations, help designers talk to people who are left-brained; it also helps to communicate across cultures. It is necessary to speak with people in ways that they understand – clearly, culturally, intelligently.

Steiner concludes with humble honesty. "I do not have a particular predisposition to design, but I do believe the reason we don't think about something is because we don't have a problem. The solution though, must be indestructible, it cannot be screwed up, regardless who uses it or how it is used, yet open to variations. A good thing, you should not change. The longer it stays the same, the better it is."



對比的無窮威力

石漢瑞也提到對比，他說這觀念是他在耶魯學到的重要一課：「意料之外的對比，有時是『你所知道』與『你所不知道』的對比，有時是『這是我見過的』，可『我沒見過它』，這需要很清晰，目標要很明確，才能以不同方式表達事物，即把事物表現為『人們從沒有看過的樣子』，為『看待事物的不同方法』。要是你能在『你所知道的』及『你所不知道』，在『你所期待』及『你始料不及的』對比之間游刃有餘，就能體會到這些對比的無窮威力。」

石漢瑞以中國的十二生肖為例，說明對比，尤其是意料之外的對比，有何力量：「我們利用十二生肖來設計，如鼠年，就讓老鼠吃一口瑞士芝士。中國人看了大感意外，因為他們從沒看過傳統鼠年當可以這樣合併在一起。這就是對比。」

語言也是設計的基本元素：「當你在解決問題時，客戶通常說不出某一設計是否好看，是否現代或甚麼的，也解釋不來。我是個右腦特別發達的人，不懂處理數字，但我喜愛文學，喜歡愛爾蘭作家詹姆斯·喬伊斯。我盡力以這種方式跟那些以左腦思考的客戶解說，但他們要的只是事實和數字。所以你得用他們那一套語言給他們解釋明白。匯豐

銀行的標誌就是一例。那設計是根據該公司十九世紀所用的徽旗，加上更多三角形而來。背後的意念是東方、西方及由此衍生的詮釋。令匯豐銀行明白這些畫面的意義。」另一個例子是匯豐銀行其中一屆年報：「主題是一雙手，一手捧滿小麥，一手捧滿稻米，就是那種東西才讓人明白。」他覺得很多慣用左腦的人，對平面構圖都視而不見。

有次他替一家日本財經公司設計商標，想到用日本的錢幣，外面圓，中間有個小方形。視覺上就是一個圓形和一個鑽石形。錢幣和鑽石，對財經公司當然是很吉利的意頭。還有香港置地公司的標誌是一棟大廈的平面圖，但若看圖中的留白空間，則是一個吉祥的「壽」字的古字。要清晰準確，交代出設計背後的文化心思，這樣解釋才能令客戶明白。

石漢瑞謙虛的說：「我沒特別偏愛哪種設計，但設計的解決方案必須無懈可擊，經得起時間考驗，流傳越久越好。」

他今年七十八歲，時間在他身上留下的，是國際級設計大師的身份，離開離也納移居美國，再選擇留在香港，正如作家喬伊斯，總是以故鄉都柏林為小說背景，卻始終自我放逐在外，沒有回去，人家問起原因，回答道：「我從來沒有離開過。」也許正因如此，石漢瑞的跨文化設計才構成東西方的奇妙對比。

設計師不應有既定的風格，否則會規範了設計。



A designer should not have a style. This is a serious threat to design.

Artspec 'imaginary self-portrait' poster 1989

Artspec「虛構的自畫像」海報，1989

Western Campsite Monument, a photography exhibition held in 2011, marks the 50th year of Steiner's residence in Hong Kong

石漢雄於2011年舉行的 Western Campsite Monument 攝影展，記錄了他居港五十的感觸。



石漢雄 一九三四年生於維也納，成長於紐約，在耶魯受教育，師從商標設計家保羅·蘭德，後獲傅爾布萊特獎學金到巴黎索邦深造。

石氏於一九六四年在香港創立石漢雄設計公司，是世界傑出的品牌設計顧問公司，業務範圍廣泛，包括企業形象、建築設計、產品設計、包裝設計、書籍及雜誌設計、鈔票設計。客戶有英孚教育、香港賽馬會、香港上海匯豐銀行、渣打銀行等等。至今設計過眾多套香港通用鈔票，另曾替新加坡造幣廠設計硬幣。

Henry Steiner Born in 1934 in Vienna and raised in New York, he was educated at Yale, where he studied with Paul Rand, and at the Sorbonne on a Fulbright Scholarship. His experience and reputation are international.

Steiner&Co. founded in Hong Kong in 1964, is one of the world's leading branding design consultancies. The company's scope is comprehensive, encompassing corporate identity programmes, corporate literature, architectural graphics, product design, packaging, book and magazine design, and banknotes. Clients include EF Education First, Hong Kong Jockey Club, HSBC, and Standard Chartered Bank. The

company created several series of banknotes for Hong Kong and coins for the Singapore Mint.

A distinguished body of work has led to professional recognition: President, Alliance Graphique Internationale; Fellow, American Institute of Graphic Arts, Chartered Society of Designers, and The Hong Kong Designers' Association; Honorary Member, Design Austria; and, Member, The New York Art Directors Club.

Henry Steiner was named Hong Kong Designer of the Year, a World Master by Japan's *Idea* magazine, and is included in Icofrada's *Masters of the 20th Century*. *Next* magazine cited Steiner

as among the one hundred most influential people in Hong Kong's history.

He was also awarded the Golden Decoration of Honor of the Republic of Austria (2006) for design achievement and received an Honorary Doctorate (2004) from Hong Kong Baptist University. He is also an Honorary Professor at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University School of Design.

Steiner has co-authored *Cross-Cultural Design: Communicating in the Global Marketplace* (Thames & Hudson, 1995) and published a monograph titled *Henry Steiner: Designer's Life* in 1999.



石氏憑卓越的作品享譽國際，歷任國際平面設計聯盟會長、美國平面設計學會及紐約美術指導聯合會會員，特許設計師協會及香港設計師公會資深會員、奧地利設計學會榮譽會員。

石氏屢獲多項本地及國際殊榮，包括香港設計家年獎、日本 (Idea) 雜誌世界大師榮譽、二〇〇二年更榮登國際平面設計社團協會 (Icofrada) 之「二十世紀大師榜」，又獲《壹周刊》雜誌譽為香港歷史上一百個最有影響力的人物之一。近年還獲頒香港印製大獎之傑出成就大獎、亞歐基金商標獎。

二〇〇四年，他榮獲香港浸會大學頒授榮譽博士學位。二〇〇六年獲奧地利共和國頒授金級榮譽勳章以表彰他的設計成就。現為香港理工大學設計學院榮譽教授。

石漢雄曾合著《跨文化設計：全球市場的溝通及交流》一書 (Thames & Hudson 出版社，一九九五年) 及論述其作品的中文著作：《石漢雄：平面設計師之設計歷程》(一九九九年)。