

Communication Arts

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Design on the “Beautiful Island”

Visual Communication Design in Taiwan

Robert L. Peters, FGDC

Peters shares his observations on visual communication design in Taiwan in this 12-page feature. He has previously contributed CA features on design in Russia, Japan, Brazil, China, Cuba, Australia, New Zealand, and Portugal as well as congress reports from Portugal, Uruguay, Australia, Korea, and Denmark.

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TAIWAN

To successfully personify Taiwan, the descriptors “beautiful, rich, smart, talented and hard-working” would go a long way—yet this fascinating island land in the Pacific is unknown by most, understood by relatively few, and offers considerably more than meets the eye.

Dynamic, prosperous and culturally-rich, Taiwan is a fascinating island in the Western Pacific, blessed with a marine tropical climate, breathtaking scenery and an amazing array of natural environments ranging from tropical beaches to snow-capped mountains. Shaped like a sweet potato and lying 180 km (110 miles) across the Taiwan Strait from the southeastern coast of China, Taiwan has a land area of 35,800 km² (13,820 square miles), slightly smaller than the Netherlands, or about the same size as the US state of Maryland. The island’s eastern two-thirds has rugged mountains running from north to south, with flatter plains in the west, home to most of Taiwan’s population of 23 million—a people known for their “impressively friendly spirit.”

Long isolated, quickly colonized...

Evidence exists of human settlement as far back as 30,000 years, though it was some 4,000 years ago that the ancient ancestors of Taiwan’s current Aborigines first settled on the island. Several dozen groups of Aborigines held control of farmlands and hunting forests, and fought and traded with each other and the outside world in what remained a wild and untamed island until a mere 500 years ago—outside of the great Chinese empire nearby, and untouched by any other foreign powers or states.

Though a Portuguese sail-by sighting of the main island in 1544 led to the name “Formosa” (beautiful island), it was the Dutch who were actually the first colonizers, establishing a commercial base at Tayoan City (present day Tainan) in 1624. The Spanish briefly occupied northern Taiwan as a settlement from which to extend their commercial trading in 1626, though the European colonial period was limited to a few short-lived decades before defeat by Chinese naval and troop assaults.

Qing Dynasty rule (by China) began in 1683 with the formal annexation of Taiwan, under jurisdiction of Fujian province. Though the Qing imperial government’s attempts to reduce piracy and vagrancy met with some success (more so than edicts to manage immigration and respect Aboriginal lands), the next 200 years gave rise to numerous conflicts in the region. In 1885, Taiwan’s status was upgraded from a prefecture of

Fujian to a full province (20th in the Chinese empire) with its capital in Taipei, a move followed by modernization that included the building of the first railroad and introduction of a postal service.

Japanese empirical rule

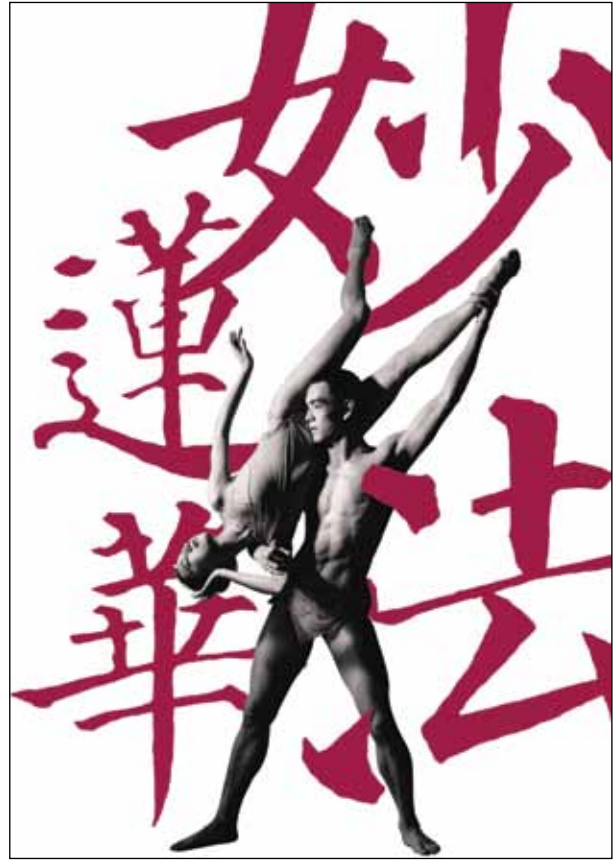
Located only some 1,300 km (800 miles) southeast of Japan’s largest islands, it follows that Japanese shoguns had designs on verdant Taiwan since before the advent of the Edo period (1603–1868). Though a small number of fishing bases had been established by the beginning of the seventeenth century, actual invasion attempts by this powerful northern neighbor had proved unsuccessful. The defeat of the Qing Dynasty in the First Sino-Japanese war in 1895 ceded full sovereignty of Taiwan to the Empire of Japan, heralding an “imperialistic” period of industrialization, expansion of railroads and road networks, development of extensive sanitation systems and revision of the public school system (under which education in the Japanese language became compulsory). On a less positive note, full-scale battles against Taiwan’s Aboriginal tribes raged throughout the five decades of Japanese rule, part of an island-wide assimilation project to repress diversity and bind the island more firmly to the Japanese empire.

Japanese rule of Taiwan ended in 1945 after it lost World War II, with most of the 300,000+ Japanese settlers being repatriated. The 50-year period of Japanese rule had long-lasting effects on the Taiwanese people and culture—many over the age of 70 in today’s Taiwan speak Japanese better than Mandarin, and Japan is still looked to for fashion, entertainment, pop-culture and design trends.

Make room for the Nationalists...

The years immediately following WWII were a tumultuous period on the island, marked by political instability and hyperinflation. Following widespread clashes against the newly-landed nationalist Kuomintang (KMT) troops from the Republic of China (who had been ferried in by the US Navy to accept formal surrender from the Japanese military forces, and were seen as occupiers by many Taiwanese) a period of martial law was imposed. Known as the “White Terror,” this resulted in the arrest, torture, imprisonment and execution of thousands of local Taiwanese who were persecuted for their real or perceived opposition to the KMT.

When, in 1949, the Chinese Civil War on the mainland turned in favor of the Communists under Mao Zedong, the Republic of China (ROC) government lead by Chiang Kai-shek, along



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Robert L. Peters supplied the caption information.

Posters inspired by **Chinese calligraphy**. Su Tsung-Hsiung, art director/designer; Justin Chiu, photographer; The Lemon Yellow, Inc., design firm.

"A public art project for a new MRT station on the **former site of a historical leprosarium**. The designer explains: 'Sometimes, to make progress, we eradicate old things. But after we take such an action, we need to self-examine what we have done, and the essential act of self-examination is to listen to everything around us.' The platform acts as a place of meditation for pedestrians who can remember the sounds they used to hear in this place, along with sounds of the moment. The sculpture also is an access-point for video documentaries accessed by Internet-enabled mobile phones (keyed to QR-code labels on the ground) that convey the memories and reflections of fifteen former residents of the leprosarium." Hsin-Chien Huang, designer; Storynest Co., design firm; Taipei Rapid Transit Corporation, client.

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with some two million Nationalists, fled to the island of Taiwan to establish rule—with the hopes of one day regaining control over China. As part of its escape from the Communists, the ROC took with it nearly all of China's national treasures, including the nation's gold and foreign currency reserves—a point of ongoing chagrin and dispute with today's (mainland) People's Republic of China (PRC). Through iron-handed rule, the ROC (as the KMT nationalists referred to Taiwan until recently) remained a de facto single-party state until the late 1980s, when gradual liberalization and democratization finally led to the end of martial law, a period which had lasted for over 38 years.

Marked by the constant fear of a Communist invasion from the nearby mainland, along with the threat of increased missile deployment along China's southeastern coast (a favorite topic of political rhetoric for many decades), the repressive influence of the KMT nationalists on Taiwan's population was considerable. As one Taiwanese designer explained to me, "...there were many taboos, everyone had to be cautious about what they said and drew, and many symbols could raise sensitive issues, for example: no red stars, certain simplified (Chinese) characters were off limits and even showing a flag on top of a building that was facing to the left could get one in trouble."

From small sweet potato to Asian Tiger

During the 1960s (the height of the Cold War, aided by the American pledge to defend Taiwan against threat of a Communist invasion, along with considerable economic support), the country began its rapid half-century rise to become the prosperous industrialized export-nation we know it as today. Much of the world first learned of Taiwan through the ubiquitous "Made in Taiwan" country-of-origin designation that predated today's dominant "Made in China" by over three decades, practically achieving the status of a pop-culture meme (even Buzz Lightyear of *Toy Story* fame realizes he is actually a "Made in Taiwan" toy after watching a "Buzz Lightyear Action Figure" TV commercial), and appearing on everything from plastic toys and household goods (1970s), bicycles (1980s) and, since the 1990s, anything and everything related to advanced technology, engineered electronics, precision equipment, computers and related peripherals (for example, Taiwan now produces over half the world's laptop notebooks).

Taiwan's rapid economic growth during the latter half of the past century has been called the "Taiwan Miracle" for good reason, bringing with it benefits such as rapid modernization, elevated education, improved healthcare and upward mobility for the masses. From a dismally-low per-capita gross national product (GNP) of \$170 (on par with Congo in 1962), per-capita GNP adjusted for purchasing power parity had risen to over \$33,000 by 2008—in 2010 the International Monetary Fund estimated Taiwan's GDP-PPP at over \$34,700, surpassing

Finland, France and even Japan in one fell swoop. Nor does this success appear to be slowing; Taiwan's economic growth last year topped ten percent, total international trade reached an all-time high of USD \$526.04 billion and new records were set in both exports and imports.

Land of (urban) prosperity

Wealth and opportunity are decidedly centered in Taiwan's cities; many see urban life as offering the only path to economic success—and in turn, happiness. Over 30 Taiwanese cities have populations of over 100,000; the largest are the capital Taipei at the island's northern tip ("Greater Taipei" including New Taipei City, population 6.9 million); the southwestern industrial port city of Kaohsiung (2.8 million); west-central Taichung (2.6 million) known for its prosperous, diverse economy; and southern Tainan, home to the first Dutch colonists (1.9 million).

Taipei is the political, economic and cultural center of Taiwan, as well as a truly global city. Reflecting over a century of development in the Taipei Basin, the city is part of a major industrial area connected to all parts of the island by railways, high-speed rail, highways, bus lines and airports. Massive memorial structures and lofty skyscrapers define the skyline (Taipei 101, ranked officially as the world's tallest building from 2004 until the opening of the Burj Khalifa in Dubai last year, has become a recent icon), fashionable shopping districts bustle with consumers seeking the latest from around the globe, numerous night markets dot the city, while quiet back alleys, riverside park green-spaces and numerous temples (Buddhist, Taoist and Confucian) provide sought-after quietude.

A paradise worth experiencing

Taiwan has been enjoying a considerable surge in tourism (now some 5 million tourists per year, doubled in the ten years since 2000), though in spite of increased efforts to attract tourists from the United States, Europe, Australia and other parts of Asia, most visitors now come from China. Seen by the government as a source of many jobs and an "industry without smokestacks," tourism also offers attractive diversification to help prevent economic over-reliance on high-tech electronics.

While Taiwan's scenic national parks and resorts, historic temples and glittering urban offerings attract much attention, the Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall and the National Palace Museum in Taipei are the prime tourist destinations (particularly for visitors from the Chinese mainland). This remarkable museum venue boasts the world's single largest collection of Chinese art and antiquities, with over 650,000 pieces of bronze, jade, calligraphy, painting and porcelain—all moved to Taiwan by the KMT from Beijing's Forbidden City when the Republicans fled the mainland in 1949.

Taiwan is touted by many as a culinary paradise and a "dream-



Images from top left to bottom right: The **flag of the Republic of China** was first used in mainland China by the KMT in 1917. It features a white sun with twelve triangular rays (symbolizing the twelve months); colors represent the “Three Principles of the People.” Designed by Lu Hao-tung in 1895, modified by Sun Yat-sen in 1906. © Holgs, iStock; **Kaohsiung National Stadium**, opened to showcase the 2009 World Games, is shaped in a semi-spiral (like a dragon) and covered in solar collection panels; design by Japanese architect Toyo Ito. © Peelden, Wikimedia; **Taipei 101**, the landmark skyscraper located in Xinyi District, Taipei; designed by C.Y. Lee & Partners. © Sambarfotos, iStock; The famous **National Chiang Kai-shek Memorial Hall**, erected in memory of the former President of the Republic of China; designed by architect Yang Cho-cheng. © Ang Mo Kio, Wikimedia; **The Jadeite Cabbage** is a piece of jadeite carved into the shape of a Chinese cabbage head. It is considered the “most famous masterpiece” of the collection of the National Palace Museum in Taipei. © Peelden, Wikimedia; The 26-meter tall **Great Buddha** statue in Changhua. © Ang Mo Kio, Wikimedia; **Lotus Lake pagoda** in Kaohsiung, Taiwan’s second largest city. © Ang Mo Kio, Wikimedia.

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land for foodies,” with a range and quality of gastronomy in a league of its own—the result of a happy fusion of Fujianese, Hakka, Japanese, Aboriginal and foreign influences. Seafood figures prominently, in addition to traditional pork and rice dishes, and of course the abundant market-fresh vegetables and the wide variety of locally-grown fruits, including mango, papaya, pineapple, guava, star fruit, melons and citrus fruit.

Peoples apart

Taiwan today has fourteen officially recognized indigenous tribes (up from nine twenty years ago) each with distinct cultural traits and language. Most historical linguists consider Taiwan to be the original homeland of the Austronesian language family, and trace linguistic and genetic ties to ethnic groups in Hawaii, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Madagascar and Oceania. Now only representing two percent of the land’s total population (an exact reversal of the indigenous/immigrant proportion at the beginning of the seventeenth century, before the inevitable encroachment on indigenous cultures via war, intermarriage and assimilation), Taiwanese natives live mostly in the mountainous parts of the island and along the scenic flatlands of the eastern coast. The Amis (or Pangcah, as they call themselves) are the largest of the officially recognized tribes, though all are becoming better known for their rich cultural traditions, their outstanding handicrafts (wood and stone carving, weaving, clothing handicrafts), their warm hospitality and their close relationship with the natural environment.

Self-respect and pride are burgeoning among these indigenous

This page: “This poster was designed for the **Nike Air Force 1** exhibition in Taipei. The Chinese character ‘mong’ stands for ‘dream.’” Akibo Lee, designer/illustrator; akibo works, design firm; Nike, client.

“The poster exhibition sought to express the relationship between **ecological environment and earth**.” Leo Lin, designer/illustrator; Leo Lin Design, design firm; The Chubu Creators Club of Japan, client.

Right: Rebranding of **Taiwan High Speed Rail** beginning in 2003. Michael Ming-Chia Wang, designer; Andre Hsieh, creative director; Patrick Lin, photographer; The Brand Union/St. Michael Wang Graphic Design Studio, design firms; Taiwan High Speed Rail Corporation, client.

“This package recreates the everyday fun of wrapping pickles in newspaper; **modern packaging** technologies rekindle the customer’s memory of traditional fine food.” Hsi-Yi Peng, designer; Arty Design, design firm; Flavor of Delicacies Farm Commodities Enterprise, client.

Eco-friendly package for Hakka traditional persimmon cake. Hsi-Yi Peng, designer; Arty Design, design firm; Shinpu Jin-Han Persimmon Cake Farm, client.

“This **packaging series design** affords a direct view of the goods on display; the use of recycled materials with minimal printing conforms with regulations against excessive product packaging by the EPA, and ROC.” Hsi-Yi Peng, designer; Arty Design, design firm; Guo Jia Zhuang Pickle Shop, client.

“**Gu Dou Xiang Ji** in Chinese means aromatic grains and also sounds like ‘antique cameras.’ We designed the package like an antique pinhole camera with the focus adjusted by shifting the inner candy box container.” Hsi-Yi Peng, design; Arty Design, design firm; Whey Sound Com, client.





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peoples, exemplified by incorporation of cultural elements in commercially successful pop music, and their political activism regarding environmental issues (they are at the forefront of the anti-nuclear movement). In spite of the fact that native languages are under threat of extinction and the reality that many Aborigines are marginalized economically, recognition of the unique attributes the indigenous people impart to Taiwan's identity is growing, and several Taiwanese designers I spoke with suggested that these original peoples with their ancient values and practices may offer new visions for sustainable, environmentally sensitive solutions for a viable, livable future for others in years to come on this densely-populated island.

Made in Taiwan -> Designed in Taiwan

Focused Taiwanese education in the visual arts began in 1955 with the establishment of the National Academy of Arts (now the National Taiwan University of Arts), introducing courses in Chinese art, Western art, sculpture, music, dance and industrial design—the latter offered majors in craftsmanship and applied art, combining Japanese academic traditions and Bauhaus theories.

The 1960s saw the formation of Taiwan's first professional design association, the Graphic Design Association of the Republic of China (now GDA-Taiwan), with the first wave of prominent designers involved in the design of corporate identification schemes and packaging. In 1971, a group of alumni from the National Taiwan University of Arts founded Taiwan's second design association, the Amoeba Design Association (now TADA), with the goals of creating exchange with design counterparts in Korea and Japan through exhibitions, and introducing avant-garde influences into the extremely conservative atmosphere that dominated the Taiwanese design field.

Through the 1970s, in support of an emerging export economy (Taiwan was rapidly becoming one of the world's major OEM suppliers), demand grew for design services, photography, packaging and catalog printing. By 1976, Taiwan's First Package Design Exhibition was organized by GDA-Taiwan, followed in 1978 by the Times Advertising Awards (hosted by the *Times* newspaper)—competitive events which began to raise the bar for design quality while also broadening visibility for the field. In 1979, the Design Center of the China External Trade Development Council (CETRA) was established (the predecessor of today's Taiwan Design Center, or TDC) with a mandate to improve and upgrade the quality of design used by Taiwan's exporters, support the development of international markets, and engage in public and private initiatives to further design development.

By the early 1980s, Taiwan had become the world's most prolific manufacturer of assembled items ranging from umbrellas, to bicycles, to footwear, to tennis rackets. Exports were booming, as was the island's economy, bringing more

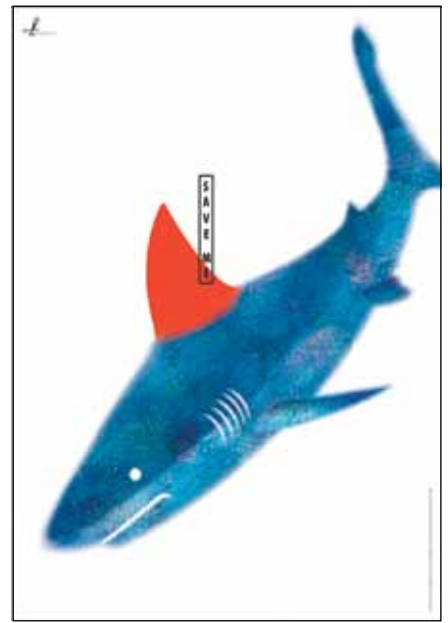
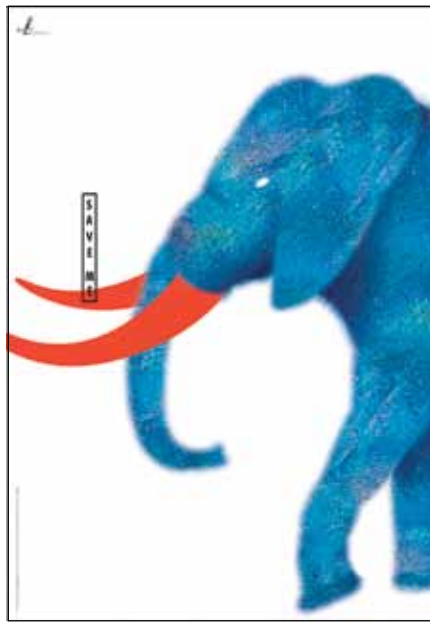
opportunities for the design profession. Like elsewhere, Taiwanese companies were enthusiastically investing in corporate identity systems (with the methodical Japanese approach to CIS predominating), and Taiwan's creative industries were garnering international recognition in fields including commercial filmmaking, print advertising and poster design. Events such as the successful World Poster Design Exhibition (hosted by GDA-Taiwan) and YODEX (Young Designer's Exhibition) organized by CETRA were bringing energy, recognition and excitement to the design community (YODEX became the world's largest exhibition for student designers, attracting international participation from over 100 design schools and organizations).

The Taiwan Image Poster Design Fraternity (now the Taiwan Poster Design Association, or TPDA), begun in 1990, focuses on developing traditional design culture, creating design value and promoting international design exchange—its members hold an annual exhibition in Taiwan, and participants have been winning awards at international poster design events for over two decades. Taiwan's National Design Awards were introduced in 1993—an annual design-promotion program that continues to gather momentum under the auspices of Taiwan's Ministry of Economic Affairs' Industrial Development Bureau. Other design highlights for Taiwan included the hosting of "Icsid '95 Taipei," the World Congress and General Assembly of the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design, the participation of a group of Taiwanese designers at a corporate identity conference in Beijing (unprecedented) and a touring Taiwan Image Poster show with events and exhibitions in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Singapore (with later extensions in New York and Paris).

As designer Jason Fan explains, "The year 2000 introduced the golden age of design to Taiwan; design became one of the most popular programs of university study; and design students from Taiwan set new records for the number of international design awards won." Fittingly, in 2004, the Taiwan Design Center was created as an integrated platform to promote creative design and economic development with explicit goals that include "improving national competitiveness, upgrading originality and creativity of Taiwanese designers, promoting international design exchanges," and "announcing to the world that the era of "Designed in Taiwan" has come.

What has impressed me in the past decade (I began traveling to Taiwan in the early 2000s) is the remarkable level of effort invested by the Taiwanese government to further design, in recognition of the important role that design can play in moving their country from a smokestack-based economy to a knowledge-based future. Designers in many countries can only dream of that kind of "vision" and commitment from their governments.

This was a special year for design in Taiwan—in late October, the inaugural International Design Alliance (IDA) Congress in



"Mankind's desires have deprived **animals' rights** to live." Horng-Jer Lin, designer; Hug Top Design Co., design firm; Taiwan Poster Design Association, client.

A poster for the performance of **Cloud Gate Dance Theatre in 2005**. Liu Kai, art director/designer; Liu Chen-Hsiang, photographer; Liu Kai's Creation and Development, design firm; Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, client.

An environmental poster that expresses the need to **cherish our water sources**. Leo Lin, art director/designer; Thomas Huang/Leo Lin, illustrators; Leo Lin Design, design firm; Taiwan Poster Design Association, client.

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Taipei took place, a unique gathering of thought leaders (IDA is a strategic multidisciplinary venture between the global design organizations: International Council of Societies of Industrial Design [Icsid], International Council of Graphic Design Associations [Icograda], and the International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers [IFI]).

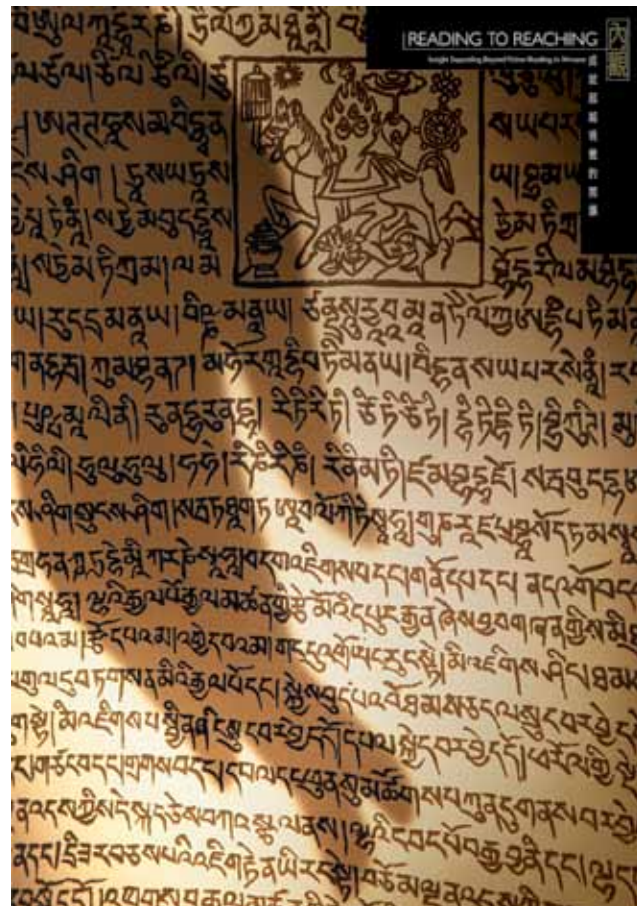
Graphic design on the “island of beauty”

When writing a feature piece such as this, I usually attempt to answer a number of questions (at the risk of broad-brush painting, of course—with ample exceptions notwithstanding) such as: “What do Taiwanese designers do best?” and “What, if anything, is distinctive about Taiwanese communication design?” To augment my admittedly outsider, Western, observation skills, I polled a group of industry-leading design practitioners and educators in Taiwan, who shed light on some interesting points.

I would tend to personify Taiwanese design/designers as energetic, enthusiastic, with a refreshingly-fresh sense of naïveté as regards global trends (resulting from being slightly “out of the mainstream,” at least when compared to nearby colleagues in Hong Kong, or Singapore for example)—yet at the same time, possessing a certain ease with multicultural diversity, the deft skill of mixing traditional and modern media (thanks to Leo Lin for this point), and a deep understanding and respect of their own culture and heritage. Predominantly, this “culture” could be characterized as southern Fujian (influenced by local temples, dietary habits, folk customs and cultural behavior) along with a mixture of Japanese, a smattering of indigenous Aboriginal and occasional Western influences. There’s no question that contemporary Taiwanese visual expression (in the past few decades, specifically) benefits from the inherent freedoms of a prosperous, democratic society, bolstered by the support from a government focused on cultural and creative industries.

While lacking a distinct national “style,” a trait discernable in much Taiwanese graphic design is the high degree of traditional craftsmanship, detailed execution and technical rigor as a result of the dominant educational focus to “respect the masters and value the grand path,” rather than push individual creativity. Designer Leslie Chan notes, “Designers in Taiwan are easily influenced by others and unconsciously imitate others; we do not have much self-determination.” Designer Michael Ming-Chia Wang adds, more pointedly: “We used to be a copycat—now we’re a copytiger!”

Yao-Sheng Tseng points to an advantage that today’s Taiwanese designers possess by dint of recent history. Having been spared the rampages of the People’s Republic of China’s 1966–1976 “Cultural Revolution” (the decade-long chaotic purge by the Communist Red Guards of ancient buildings,





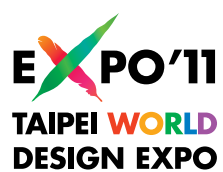
Left: Taiwan International Design Competition **Call for Entries poster**. Jun-Liang Chen, art director/designer; Freeimage, design firm; Taiwan Design Center, client.

"Poster titled **Expanding Beyond Vision Reading in Nirvana** that explores reading beyond what we 'see.'" Jennifer Tsai, art director/designer; Justin Chiu, photographer; Proad Identity, design firm; Taiwan Poster Design Association, client.

This page: "With the **Story Island album**, designer Qing-Yang Xiao shares his appreciation of natural beauty and his concerns about environmental deterioration through artworks of paper cutting." Qing-Yang Xiao, digital imaging; Shout Studio, design firm/client.

"In 2011, National Taiwan University of Arts introduced Taiwan's first PhD doctoral program in creative industrial design. This '**surface graffiti**' poster series signals culture as the foundation of learning." Ken-Tsai Lee, art director/designer; Ken-Tsai Lee Image Design Company, design firm; Graduate School of Creative Industry Design, National Taiwan University of Arts, client.

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artifacts, relics, antiques, books, paintings, etc. in their ideological attempt to advance socialism and “remove capitalist elements;” a damaging movement that resulted in the evaporation of social norms [subtlety, delicacy, moderation, honesty], a decline in literacy and a brain-drain of persecuted intellectuals), Taiwanese creators can now draw from a deeper cultural inkwell than their Mainland counterparts. As Tseng explains, “Compared with the neglect it receives in mainland China, classical Chinese culture has been preserved and cultivated in Taiwan, and has taken root in this island—it prevails in everyday life, and presents itself in the form of the peoples’ sense of propriety.”

The significance of this point, combined with the multicultural experience and proven ability of Taiwanese to fuse Eastern and Western influences, should not be underestimated—particularly in light of the advantageous geographic, political and economic position Taiwan currently enjoys. As Leslie Chan explains, “We have market and manufacturing support from China and we receive orders from the us, therefore Taiwan is in a very favorable situation...China has a high dependency on Taiwanese enterprises, and the us needs our manufacturing, integration and creative services.”

It’s fitting to close with the final question I posed, “What is your outlook regarding the future for design in Taiwan?” Not surprisingly (and almost without exception) Taiwanese creatives expressed optimism for “a bright future” and “prosperous opportunities—though not without much effort.” I’ll toast to that... **CA**

Editor’s note: See page 228 for Robert L. Peters’s notes.

Left: The emblem’s design is based on **the first Chinese character in the city’s name, “kao,”** which means high or superior in English. Horng-Jer Lin, art director/designer; Hug Top Design Co., design firm; Kaohsiung City Government, client.

Logos (from left) for Taiwan Geographic Information System Center; Taipei World Design Expo 2011; Taipei City Agricultural Identity System; and The Uni-Resort, Taiwan. Jeff Liao, designer; Focus Design Associates, design firm.

“The concept for this **herbal tea** is health.” Stony Cherng, art director/designer; Stony Image, design firm; Taitung County Farmers’ Association, client.

“The package design is shaped like the **imperial jade seal**, conceptually expressing the quality of the rice.” Stony Cherng, art director/designer; Stony Image, design firm; Rice growers in Chihshang Township, client.

“The **Avalokitesvara (Kuan-yin) Sutra box** is molded out of ebony with the title engraved with seal-cutting characters. **The Vajra Sutra (The Diamond Sutra) box** and cover are sculpted of cypress, the title inlaid with green Malachite.” Yao-Sheng Tseng, art director/designer; Kai Chin, photographer; Delta Design Corporation, design firm; Chu-Lung Culture Publisher Ltd., client.

This page: Cultural poster, titled **“If you wish sincerely, it will be granted.”** Taddy Ho, designer; Taiwan Image, client.

“The poster features a favorite folk activity in Taiwan—**release of sky lanterns** (Kongming Lanterns) during the annual Lantern Festival.” Ming-Lung Yu, art director/designer; Han-Yuan Chen, photographer; Cherry Yen, illustrator; Yu Ming-Lung Co., design firm; Taiwan Poster Design Association, client.

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Author's notes:

Robert L. Peters has visited Taiwan numerous times during the past decade, as a design juror, lecturer and advisor. Peters would like to express thanks to the numerous Taiwanese collaborators, and the designers that contributed their viewpoints and work for this article, including: Akibo Lee, Alice Yingchu Chen, Apex Lin Pang-Soong, Enrica Hsiao, Hung-Tu Ko, Hsin-Chien Huang, Hsi-Yi Peng, Jeff Liao, Jeffrey T. H. Su, Jennifer Tsai, Jun-Liang Chen, Ken-Tsai Lee, Leslie Chan, Horng-Jer Lin, Leo Lin, Ling-Hung Sophia Shih, Liu Kai, Michael Ming-Chia Wang, Ming-Lung Yu, Oliver Lin, Qing-Yang Xiao, Stony Cherng, Taddy Ho and Yao-Sheng Tseng. Special acknowledgement and thanks go to Jason J. S. Fan for his helpful insights, coordination assistance and support.

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