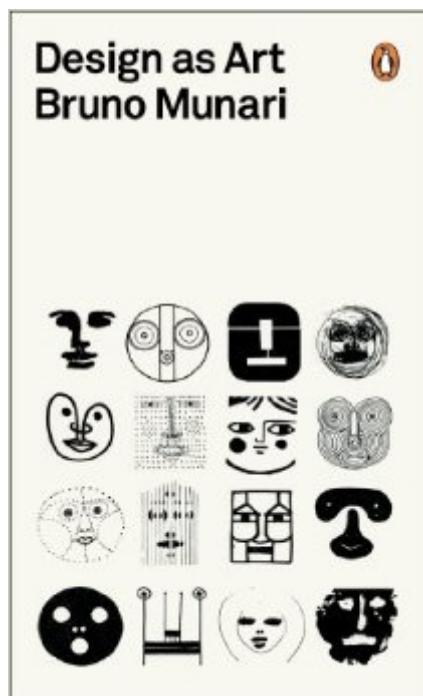


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Design As Art (Penguin Modern Classics)



Synopsis

One of the last surviving members of the futurist generation, Bruno Munari's Design as Art is an illustrated journey into the artistic possibilities of modern design translated by Patrick Creagh published as part of the "Penguin on Design" series in Penguin Modern Classics. Bruno Munari was among the most inspirational designers of all time, described by Picasso as "the new Leonardo." Munari insisted that design be beautiful, functional, and accessible, and this enlightening and highly entertaining book sets out his ideas about visual, graphic, and industrial design and the role it plays in the objects we use everyday. Lamps, road signs, typography, posters, children's books, advertising, cars, and chairsâ "these are just some of the subjects to which he turns his illuminating gaze. How do we see the world around us? The Penguin on Design series includes the works of creative thinkers whose writings on art, design, and the media have changed our vision forever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I find it strange that this book is not available except for used copies printed in Canada around 20 years ago. I decided to study design after reading this book, even though I grew up being told I would be an architect or a writer. On the visionary chapter titled "what is a designer", Munari made it clear to me that design is a much needed public and collaborative art. He wrote as translated to english in 1966: "Art is once more becoming a trade, as it was in ancient times when the artist was summoned by society to make certain works of visual communication (called frescoes)..." and keeps going. It never made sense to me that art could only be self absorption hidden in galleries,

but I guess that is yet another kind of trade. He writes with humour and honesty, and keeps me focused on my discipline. I owe Munari a great deal.

This is a review for the new edition of this book by Penguin: Part social commentary in a world of design, part designerly musing, and part thoughtful criticism at a world filled with abused objects, Munari's new publication by Penguin is a welcoming oasis of short essays (many merely one page long concisely argued and written) to the tyranny of cognitive science and user research tomes dominating design thinking today (think Norman and IDEO combined). Clearly, Munari was writing in and for another period. That was a period spearheaded by designers-thinkers from the ranks of Nelson, Eames, Maldonado, Rittel, Bill, Aicher and Dreyfuss. Like Munari, these designers offer the insight that acute observation combined with thoughtful reflection of the material world is one of the most powerful forte of a designer. In this book, I like the Munari's insight of 'wearing' best. He asks us to look at how objects become worn in their everyday use. Should we design objects on the sole merit of personal aesthetics and upon the Platonic plane of Ideal Geometry? Or should we design objects according to a limited sampling of user-needs study? Or as Munari suggests, should we design objects according to how it has been worn across time? Munari did not answer his question (neither would I!). But it is this pensive quality of his work that merits his presence in the mind of every design thinker--a mind that seeks to ponder the thoughts on design across time.

Bought this on a whim, the cover looked cool and the title was intriguing. I'm a graphic designer by trade. I had no idea who Bruno was but his writing is easy to read. It flows pretty well and you definitely learn a lot. It gives me a bit of extra leverage when I'm defending what my job is and isn't. It's more of a philosophy of design.

I have read it again this year after more than 20 years. When this book ceases to be relevant to designers, that will be the day design ceases to have meaning and value in our societies. A gem of a book from one of the greatest designers of all time, still fresh and inspiring after almost half a century.

This book deserves its "classic status". It is also very strong on design as design. Great for organizing once scattered thoughts on the subject and very well written. A great book to include as foundation reading on design, on art, on communication --even perhaps software development.

A beautiful book by the 'Leonardo Da Vinci' of product design and the master of playful graphic design to make the kids react and understood. You can learn a lot of this book. About the simplicity in our place we live, in our life and the objects we buy. To do this, Bruno Munari makes a study in Japanese traditional way of living.

Buy this book! Doesn't matter if you're a designer, anyone artistic will benefit from this book. The chapters are short; they're more monographs on a wide variety of subjects. Mostly, Munari makes you think. Have you ever realized that a car is mobile sculpture?

This is a brilliant book. It is short and not an easy read. It is a book that does need to be read carefully, and picked up again from time to time. Bruno clearly shows how design can be used as art, and he takes you through the initial design process, and then through applications and critiques with care. The writing style is lucid, and clear. He also debunks many myths. What I like, is the complete lack of any pomposity in his writing, and the fact that through his book, I started to look at art and design with new eyes.

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