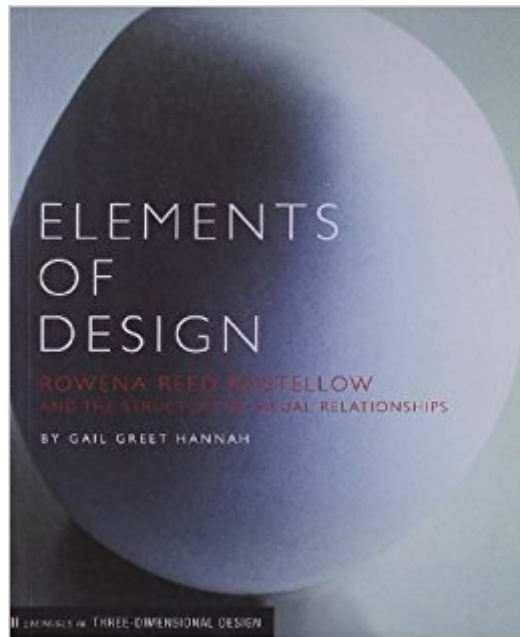


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Elements Of Design: Rowena Reed Kostellow And The Structure Of Visual Relationships



Synopsis

A hands-on book design students and designers alike will welcome. Elements of Design is a tribute to an exceptional teacher and a study of the abstract visual relationships that were her lifelong pursuit. Rowena Reed Kostellow taught industrial design at Pratt Institute for more than fifty years and the designers she trained-and the designers they're training today-have changed the face of American design. This succinct, instructive, invaluable book reconstructs the series of exercises that led Kostellow's students from the manipulation of simple forms to the creation of complex solutions to difficult design problems. It includes her exercises and commentary along with selected student solutions, and concludes with examples of work from former students who became leaders in the field, including such well-known figures as Tucker Viemeister, Ralph Applebaum, Ted Muehling, and many others.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I do believe I am somewhat qualified to review this work. After all I was one of Rowena's "boys" in the early 1960s. The last time I saw Rowena in 1985 she told me she was working on a book. At the time, I was teaching three dimensional design at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. I too wanted to write a book about three-dimensional design and had given it a good start. Along the way I realized the impossibility of writing about dimensional design. It can't be done. It can be approached, as this present work does. But when you get right down to understanding the words on the page, they are as slippery in writing as they were with Rowena in person. I couldn't conceive

how she could write it down. It is not surprising that she did not finish it. Her thoughts were too abstract to concretize them. I recall one dialog with her: "Not quite," she said turning my work. "Just look at it." "I'm looking, Rowena," I replied. "Well look at it some more. You need to get the balance." The book outlines a series of exercises that Rowena used to develop the ability to see dimensionally. As her student, I did all those exercises, and looking at them in the book and reading the comments of others (many of whom were my classmates) brings back many memories. I recall how, four years after graduation, I was working in an ID office designing a typewriter, when suddenly it all became clear. I phoned her that evening. "Well, you were a smart kid, Winston. I figured you'd get it." And then six more years from there, seeing the "convexity" problem that my parents had so proudly displayed in their living room, and realizing that I now *at that instant,* saw why she had been disappointed with it. My experiences are echoed by many of those quoted.

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