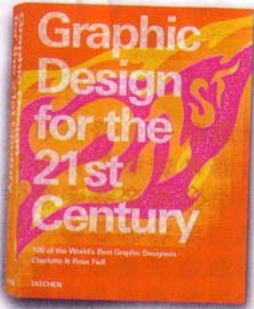


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Graphic Design for the 21st Century

Edited by Charlotte and Peter Fiell
 192 pages, flexi-cover, \$39.99
 Published by Taschen
www.taschen.com

With its Icon series, Taschen has found a stylish way to celebrate today's leading international design with petite, image-packed, "flexi-cover" books. Maybe because this is not the usual oversized hardcover or because editors Charlotte and Peter Fiell have set high standards for inclusion, *Graphic Design for the 21st Century* reads less like self-congratulatory navel-gazing or a who's who in hi-land and more like a handbook of advice for producing forward-thinking, thoughtful and socially significant design. They've chosen 45 studios (mostly European) who tackle today's technology-driven convergence of disciplines and the globalization of marketing

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campaigns with sometimes humorous, always intelligent solutions, who weigh style and content as equal in importance, and who take risks with their work, replying to needs of both clients and society. "Many designers are challenging traditional notions of beauty with provocative work expressing radical ideas." Each studio is represented by three or four samples of work plus a few paragraphs "in their own words" of wisdom/inspiration/motivation for others. British studio Hi-Res!, who created the intriguing Web site for the movie *Donnie Darko*, says, "Our philosophy is simple: never do a job you don't believe in. Do every job with as much enthusiasm as if it was your first and as much attention to detail as if it was your last." American *provocateur extraordinaire* Stefan Sagmeister titles his scolding paragraphs "Style = Fart" and writes, "I think the main reason for all this fluff is that most designers don't believe in anything. We are not much into politics, religion, have no stand on any important issue." But striving for honesty, clarity, caring and ethics in design aren't the only bits of advice. London studio Suburbia drolly admits, "We are reaching for a perfect synergy of information, image, design and parties."
 —Angelynn Grant

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