Armin Hofmann was one of the most important leading figures in the international reputation-building of Swiss design who embedded the styles principles during the 20th century. His contribution to the movement has been and will continue to be influential.

Known for his systematic and minimalist approach to design Swiss design shows the clean, grid-based and a type face driven practices of graphic design that uses and promotes the clarity, objectivity, practicality of the simplicity.

In the 1950s Swiss design emerged as a counter reaction to the emotional and subjective style of the designs that were in fashion at the time, for example the Expressionism style and its use of undefined and its paint like colour palette.

His career began as a teacher in 1947 working at "Schule für Gestaltung Basel" also known as the basel school of design (in his mid-twenties). And later became world renound for his innovative style.

Hofmann has written many books, one of his most famous and well-known books is *"GRAPHIC DESIGN MANUAL Principles and Practice" in this some of the thing he discusses are: utilizing contrast (shapes and colours), the use of balance withing the work (the relationship between elements), the proportions of everything that is in the piece (the size and scale) and the unity of how all the different aspects of ther art work comes and unites together to create a uniform systematic piece. He also talks about using a grid system to lay out the work. He mentions a "visual hierarchy" that directs the viewers' attention to what exactly Hofmann wants the focus of the work to be or what he deems the most important part of the pieces.*

Giselle ballet, Basler Freilichtspiele poster, 1959

"There should be no separation between spontaneous work with an emotional tone and work directed by the intellect. Both are supplementary to each other and must be regarded as intimately connected. Discipline and freedom are thus to be seen as elements of equal weight, each partaking of the other."

Armin Hofmann created this piece of art for the purpose of branding and advertising the Basel Theatre in 1959, to promote the performance "Giselle". The image has hints of musical and a poetic feeling, with the social aspect of trying to bring people in to come and watch at the Basel theatre.

Hofmann used an actual image of a ballerina, that he distorted and contrasts using various methods such as: light to dark, curved lines to straight lines, form to counter form, soft shapes/ image to hard, dynamic to static etcetera. The use of bold, sharp, big, geometric and oversized

pleasing sans -serif typeface poses as a juxtaposition to the very organic, elegant, alive form of the dancer.

There are a few much smaller texts on this piece, for example the name of the place the performance is located and the dates of which it will be open to viewing, all of this is done to advertise to the viewers. Also, the drastic size difference of typefaces further helps the contrast of the word "Giselle" in relation to everything else but especially the image.

Hofmann uses a very minimalist approach on all his work throughout his career in Swiss graphics design. He tends to limit the number of colours he uses to 2 or 3 on average per poster design he creates. This rule tends to be followed across Swiss design as a modernism trends from other countries such as Russia and their use geometric, Bauhaus from Germany and De Stijl from the Netherlands. This piece the implementation of only using a monochrome palette. There are not any recuring shapes or patterns. The text stands out by being a flat bold white colour with no texture, whist the rest of the image has a very grainy texture.

The distortion of the image creates a sense of illusion and mystery, as you are unable to see the whole of the ballerina. This may have been done to intrigue the viewer that this performance may vairy from regular ballet as most advertising for such event would have more elegant or classy promotion posters.

The image feels quiet, as ballet is a peaceful artform. However, the graininess of the image conveys a strong sense of noise, making it dramatic. The image presents itself as relaxing, but it is black and white and has grungy aspects to the work

This piece intends to portray an ethos of professionalism and authenticity, this is achieved by using an image of a ballerina mid pirouette with correct form, wearing a full classic outfit in ballet   for the Basel Theatre. The image contains a musical and poetic feel as ballet is very much associated with both.

Other works by Armin Hofmann include pieces such as "Municipal Theatre Basel 63/64, theatre poster 1963" this in particularly like "Giselle" at it uses a mostly monochrome palette and they both use highly contrasting images to the text that is used. The use of a poster for advertising makes it a tool for bringing people together as a community to collectively enjoy a form of art.

The piece titled 'Stadt Theatre Basel' 1962, created by the artist Armin Hofmann.

This piece presents two main images, of a human eye and ear, and it is comprised of a monochrome colour palette, with a ratio of fifty percent black to white. The artist's deliberate use of a hugely contrasting colour scheme highlights the dramatic separation at the halfway point of the piece. The lower half of the piece displays a white background and the image of the eye. The eye links to the wider theme of strong contrast that continues throughout the piece, contrasting elements such as, the dark grey iris encompassing a mostly black pupil against the

bright white of the reflection shown across the eye. These details convey a sense of conflict within the piece, portrayed by the distinctive colours that make up the eye.

The upper half of the piece contains the image of the ear and a pitch-black background, positioned on the left. The image of the ear furthers the theme of contrast within in piece by exhibiting abrupt disparities between the colours used and the details within the piece. The ear displays colours such as bright white and shades of grey and pitch-black, the bright white fades gently into the texturized details of the grey shades. In opposition to this the darkness appears suddenly within the image, inside of the ear, where light is incapable of reaching. This causes the inside of the ear to lack the level of detail exhibited by the outer regions and creates a metaphorical auditory void.

As well as the theme of strongly contrasting colours, this piece of has a perpetual(means constant but better) theme of human anatomy, however, unexpectedly the typical human uniqueness and warmth of these facial features is absent, these features instead appear cold and lifeless due to removal of the human body's natural colour, this use of the monochromatic colour scheme gives the piece an unusually cold and intense tone unlike the familiarity of lively and colourful human features.

The piece in its entirety possesses an immensely grainy and pixelated texture, and the background has a texture that mirrors that of paper. The piece uses a simple, clear yet bold Sanserif font, which continues the theme of contrast against the pixelated background of the piece. Additionally, the piece's dark tone is conveyed by its dark and grungy imagery. Overall, this demonstrates Hofmann's intentions for the piece, which is to advertise the Stadt Theatre of Basel as it draws viewers attention.

The piece creates a mood of eeriness and evokes the unsettling sensation that the viewer is being watched and listened to. The eye is staring straight forward at the viewer, and the ear Is positioned in a similar fashion, creating the illusion that these images are watching and listening. This introduces substantial metaphoric value and symbolic meaning to the piece, the advertisement mirrors how at the Stadt Theatre in Basel, the audience use their eyes and ears to consume and enjoy the forms of art produced. The separation of the eye and ear, through the use of harshly contrasting colours, suggests that viewers can receive vastly different experiences via their different senses, auditory or visual, and that without the experience of one, viewers would lose out on a holistic experience.

Hofmann's piece, 'Stadt Theatre Basel' 1962, created to promote the Stadt Theatre, is similar to other works such as, "Giselle" by Armin Hoffman. The observable similarities include the use of a grainy texture and a bold sanserif font.

Armin Hofmann created this piece "[Gewerbemuseum Basel – Basel und die Stadtstrassen der Zukunft "](#)

 This work consists of a colour 50/50 ratio, the background is an off white / light pale cream colour. Every other element of the image is a strong slightly darker red.

For starters Hofmann consistently used a simple bold sans serif type face throughout most his work throughout his career. The text in the image is staggard along the top half of the piece and proceeds to increases in size the further left it is placed; this is most likely used to present the information and emphasise the more important using a bigger font size. The rest of the image consists of shapes that have rather exaugurated softened curved edged that look like triangles that are all in varied sizes and all have different curve levels on their points. They are positioned in an off-set star like shape/ fashion, all focused to one almost cantered point. The image presents a sensation that the shapes have motion and are rotating clockwise, whilst increasing in size. The image

creates a slight mechanical or a somewhat industrial feeling. The image is soothing and peaceful. The piece is nor happy or sad, it is in a way rather emotionless.

Hofmann created this image for the purpose to promote the Gewerbe museum of Basel. Hofmann significantly influenced the development of the Swiss Style, which emphasized simplicity and minimality. This design method primarily uses sans-serif fonts, grid frameworks, and a basic arrangement style. Hofmann and similar designers strived to create layouts that prioritise concepts in a clear and direct way. This visual style gained popularity in various fields including advertising and branding design.

One of Hofmann's fundamental principles was application of a grid systematic in design. He believed that the grid facilitated balance, clarity, and a sense of order, while also enabling flexibility in the organization of information. He placed a strong emphasis on sans-serif typefaces.

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- Armin Hofmann

Creativity has two important parts: emotions and intellect. Hofmann says that both are needed. Emotions bring passion, while intellect provides order.

These two parts help each other. Emotions can guide thinking, and clear thinking can improve emotional ideas, leading to better creative results. Hofmann also says that a mix of rules (intellect) and freedom (emotion) helps creativity.

Having some structure allows for new ideas to be explored. He believes that neither rules nor freedom is better; they both work together. This view encourages a balanced approach to creativity, valuing both feelings and logical thinking.

For artists and creators, this means they should develop both their emotional and thinking skills. This will help them have a more complete and lively creative process.

Inconclusion, Hofmann utilized the grid system and simplistic colour palettes, along side a combination of grainy images, to create a visual language that is both striking and thought-provoking. He creates structure and frames his work to draw attention to text that is important to the purpose of the work. He has managed to influence the graphic design industry internationally over the mid 20th century. He has change what was deemed as "conventional" graphic design at the time.