Blueprints

Occasional Musings of a New Jersey based architect
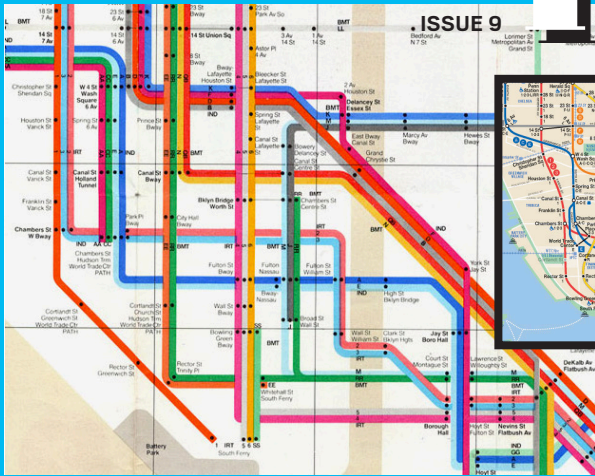
Vignelli's highly-stylized NYC subway map lacks the details of the current map.

GRAPHIC COMMUNICATION

GETTING FROM HERE TO THERE

When I moved to Manhattan for my first job after architecture school, the excitement of exploring the city also meant navigating the subway system. I taped a copy of the NYC subway map to my refrigerator, and would study it every morning while eating breakfast. The map (first introduced in 1972) by renowned graphic designer Massimo Vignelli was a wonder of colored lines interweaving themselves across an extremely stylized and geometric outline of the city, bold colors representing the different subway routes, with clear designation of express vs. local stops. It in no way resembled a "real" street map of Manhattan, but geographic accuracy wasn't the point. It was made to figure out easily how to get from point-A to point-B. Within a short time, I knew my way around large parts of the city without having to consult the map.

This iconic map was not well liked by New Yorkers, however, and in 1979 was replaced with one more geographically true, which in turn was amended over the years to

include connections to buses, ferries, commuter trains and other above-ground information. These new maps provided an integrated view of the city's transportation system in relation to the streets, parks and rivers.

Architectural plans are also a way of describing a method of reaching a destination- a finished building. During the design phase, the plans are simplified so that the Client can more clearly under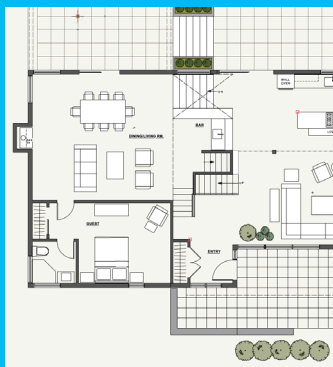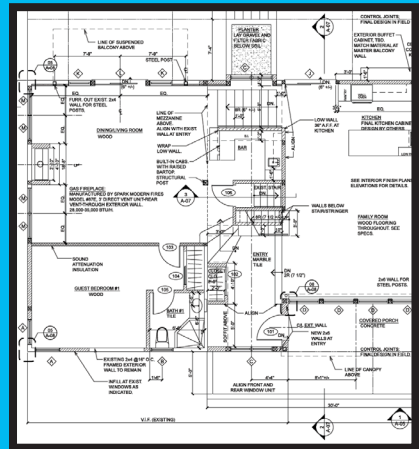stand the layout of rooms. Elevations or renderings further help to visualize the design. Like the Vignelli map, these drawings are graphic representations of the design intent. But ultimately, the drawings need to be developed into more detailed instructions from the architect to the contractor on how to take materials and products to fashion a building that keeps out rain, stands up to structural loads, and integrates finishes and fixtures. Notes get added, and references between drawings and specifications create a more comprehensive "map" of the whole building in a similar way to the subway map's references to the other systems. Ideally, the contractors study the plans before construction with the same determination that I used to learn the subway map.

The floor-plan my clients see is far more stylized than the "working drawings" the contractor will use.

8 New Graphic Design Trends That Will Take Over 2017

BY RYAN MCCREADY

1. Louder and Brighter Colors

Over the past few years, many tech leaders used muted, safe and easy to digest colors. This was in an attempt to create a very clean and controlled design scheme. It was almost an attempt to show people that the sleek, functional future they have seen in science fiction movies was already here. But now that everyone and their mom have seen this design style work for Apple, the copycats have killed the power it once held. Now, in 2017, there will be a shift away from neutral colors like whites, grays and black, to bolder and brighter colors.

2. Bold Typography

In 2017, bold typography will also fight against the ever-dwindling attention spans of readers, and the saturation of content. Big and daring fonts will be used to grab the eye. The shift to mobile and extremely high definition screens will also increase the need for bold fonts. Obviously, more and more people will be using their phones to get content, and the way that content is presented will need to keep up.

3. Google Fonts

I have been using Google Fonts for a while now because they are so versatile. If I need to design one thing online and then add it to my slide deck, I am confident the fonts will work together. And they play nice with about every blog or site you could build. Oh, and did I mention most of these 810 different fonts are free to use?

4. Authentic Photos

As the amount of content created each year continues to increase, the need for quality images has increased as well. And to maximize the shelf life of some of these images, the creators have had to make them as generic as possible. You need to start using authentic, original images that represent your brand. Stop using the most popular images and start making some of your own.

5. Hand-Drawn Graphics and Icons

The need for more authentic images will also influence icons and graphics. Recently we have seen brands embrace this wholeheartedly as they look to differentiate themselves from the pack. This will also add a personal or fun element back into your design or content work. And this can't be done with off-the-shelf icons or graphics.

6. Minimalism Will Get Back To Its Roots

If you were to describe what minimalism was to a stranger, you would probably talk about a lack adornment in design, with a focus on functionality. You would probably also think of a neutral color palette of blacks, grays, and whites. It seems that the true spirit of minimalism—pared down, functional design elements—has been lost and, instead, replaced with boring black and white color schemes. I suspect this was done to make up for the lack of processing power and screen size on mobile devices. In 2017, that will all change. This is the year that minimalism, hopefully, gets its groove back. And that involves using a lot more color. Mobile devices are now just as powerful as computers and some even have better screens.

7. Useful GIFs

Everyone (well, almost everyone) loves GIFs. They are the perfect little conversation helper that expresses emotion when text won't do the trick. Plus, they do not require any special software to run, usually have a small file size, and can be embedded just about anywhere. So they are better than videos and images, in most cases when loading time or data usage needs to be minimized. And I think that versatility is what will make them even better and more useful in 2017.

8. Duotones

Duotones are simply the combining of two colors on an image, usually using very bright or contrasting colors. They require a bit of design work but it is most definitely worth it.

Conclusion

The driving force of design this year is the rebellion of designers against the overly clean, white everything and almost too perfect aesthetic that the titans in the tech industry have pushed for the past few years. Now we will see design take a whole new approach to things they have been doing for so long. And it will be intense, innovative and beautiful.

Ryan McCready blogs for Venngage, an infographics design service. To see the full post on new graphic trends https://venngage.com/blog/graphic-design-trends/

Design Trends

2017

1 LOUDER & BRIGHTER COLORS

There will be a shift away from muted and neutral colors, like whites, grays and black, to bolder and brighter colors.

2 BOLD TYPOGRAPHY

Strong typography and daring mixed font combinations will fight against the ever dwindling attention spans of readers, and saturation of content.

3 GOOGLE FONTS

Google Fonts are universal across multiple platforms. And a majority of these 810 different fonts are free to use.

4 AUTHENTIC PHOTOS

The explosion of content has created a need for authentic, original images that represent your brand, instead of generic stock photos.

5 HAND DRAWN GRAPHICS & ICONS

Brands will embrace illustrations as they look to add the element of fun back into design and make their products more accessible.

6 MINIMALISM WILL GET BACK TO ITS ROOTS

The true spirit of minimalism has been lost and, instead, replaced with boring black and white color schemes and little adornment. But in 2017, color and flare is back!

7 USEFUL GIFS

GIFs are the perfect little content helper that express emotions when text won't do the trick.

8 VIBRANT DUOTONES

This bold use of contrasting colors in duotones will make images pop on the neutral backgrounds of social media sites and blogs.

The *International Style* equally at home in France, Israel and the US

International architecture, International clients

"International Style" architecture emerged in Europe during the 1920's and 1930's. The roots are traced to the Bauhaus School in Germany, where designers explored rational, functional, and sometimes standardized building types. In contrast to the prevalent styles of the day, simple forms, clean lines, no ornamentation, and the use of concrete, steel and glass as primary building materials defined the look. Although the principles were first adopted by architects and planners in Northern Europe, the term itself, International Style, was coined by Americans Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson in 1932 when they curated MoMA's first architectural show. The exhibition attracted much attention to the display of mostly foreign building models and drawings.

"The International Style is probably the first fundamentally original and widely distributed style since the Gothic," Johnson argued. "Today the style has passed beyond the experimental stage. In almost every civilized country in the world it is reaching its full stride."

The Bauhaus School was closed in 1933 under pressure from the Nazi regime, the school was seen as a center or communist intellectualism. The staff emigrated all over the world, many to the U.S., bringing their ideals with them. The modernist style was readily adapted to any climate zone, and since it is not beholden to historical and vernacular tradition, architects around the globe were able to implement this style in their home countries.

When I started architecture school, these International Style architects (Le Corbusier, Mies Van de Rohe, Alvar Aalto, Richard Neutra, and others) were the role models we learned form. So, after many years of continuing to design in a modern style myself, it is both notable and gratifying to see how many of my clients are in fact themselves immigrants from around the world. Perhaps the interest in modern design is stronger among these adventurous emigres than for native born Americans.

It's been fascinating to work with people from so many diverse backgrounds, all who have come here to participate in the promise of America. The map here shows countries of origins of some of the clients I've worked with, living their American dreams and International values.
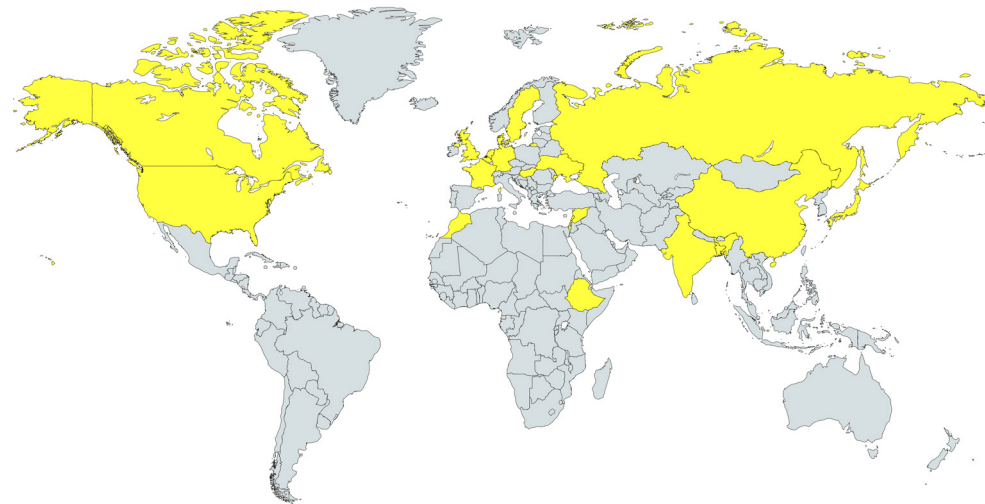
Do you love modern design? Considering a new home, addition or renovation?

Schedule a 20 minute phone consultation with Gary. If you or a friend are planning a project and need help, tell them to contact me and we will discuss their project. Maybe just to answer a question that is bugging them. Maybe to remove an obstacle that is stopping them. Maybe to work out their next best steps. It all starts with an idea and a conversation.
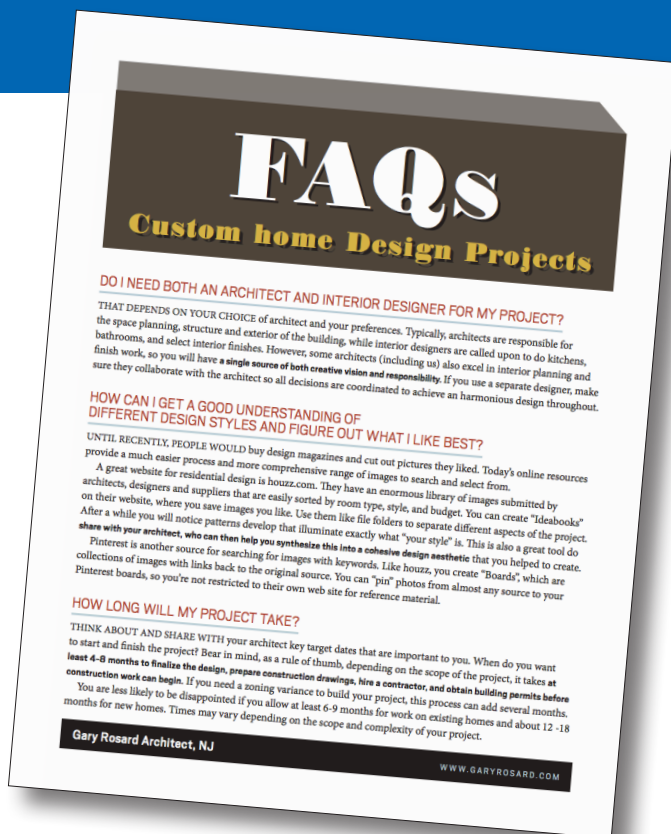
To schedule an appointment, email me at *info@garyrosard.com*

If you're not ready to talk, please download these useful guides at *garyrosard.com/resources*

- *How To Hire An Architect*

- *10 Mistake to Avoid- Custom Renovations and Additions*

- *From Fixer Upper to Modern Dream House- Cost Guide*

FAQs
Custom home Design Projects

DO I NEED BOTH AN ARCHITECT AND INTERIOR DESIGNER FOR MY PROJECT?

THAT DEPENDS ON YOUR CHOICE of architect and your preferences. Typically, architects are responsible for the space planning, structure and exterior of the building, while interior designers are called upon to do kitchens, bathrooms, and select interior finishes. However, some architects (including us) also excel in interior planning and finish work, so you will have **a single source of both creative vision and responsibility.** If you use a separate designer, make sure they collaborate with the architect so all decisions are coordinated to achieve an harmonious design throughout.

HOW CAN I GET A GOOD UNDERSTANDING OF DIFFERENT DESIGN STYLES AND FIGURE OUT WHAT I LIKE BEST?

UNTIL RECENTLY, PEOPLE WOULD buy design magazines and cut out pictures they liked. Today's online resources provide a much easier process and more comprehensive range of images to search and select from.

A great website for residential design is houzz.com. They have an enormous library of images submitted by architects, designers and suppliers that are easily sorted by room type, style, and budget. You can create "Ideabooks" on their website, where you save images you like. Use them like file folders to separate different aspects of the project. After a while you will notice patterns develop that illuminate exactly what "your style" is. You can **share with your architect, who can then help you synthesize this into a cohesive design aesthetic** that you helped to create.

Pinterest is another source for searching for images with keywords. Like houzz, you create "Boards", which are collections of images with links back to the original source. You can "pin" photos from almost any source to your Pinterest boards, so you're not restricted to their own web site for reference material.

HOW LONG WILL MY PROJECT TAKE?

THINK ABOUT AND SHARE WITH your architect key target dates that are important to you. When do you want to start and finish the project? Bear in mind, as a rule of thumb, depending on the scope of the project, it takes at **least 4-8 months to finalize the design, prepare construction drawings, hire a contractor, and obtain building permits before construction work can begin.** If you need a zoning variance to build your project, this process can add several months. You are less likely to be disappointed if you allow at least 6-9 months for work on existing homes and about 12 -18 months for new homes. Times may vary depending on the scope and complexity of your project.

Gary Rosard Architect, NJ

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Find answers to frequently asked questions about custom home renovations at our website:
GARYROSARD.COM/RESOURCES