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AIGA Medalists Who Designed Postage Stamps: Herbert Bayer by Bruce L. Johnson

Herbert Bayer (1900-1985) (Fig. 1) is one of the individuals most closely identified with the famous Bauhaus program in Weimar, Germany. Together with Walter Gropius, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, and Wassily Kandinsky, Bayer helped shape a philosophy of functional design that extended across disciplines ranging from architecture to typography and graphic design. Endowed with enormous talent and energy, Bayer went on to produce an impressive body of work, including freelance graphics commissions, Modernist exhibition designs, corporate identity programs, and architecture and environmental designs.

Bayer was born in Haag, Austria and, at age 19, became an apprentice of Linz artist Georg Schmidhammer. While studying in Schmidhammer's workshop, Bayer designed letterheads, posters, and advertisements. The next year, Bayer moved to Darmstadt where he apprenticed in the workshop of Viennese architect Emmanuel Margold at the Darmstadt Artist's Colony. While there, Bayer was trained in Art Nouveau styles and became interested in the design ideas described by Walter Gropius in his Manifesto of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar (April 1919). He left Darmstadt

in 1921 and was interviewed by Gropius in Weimar. He was accepted to the Bauhaus and during the next four years he studied under the guidance of the school's great professors.

Founded on the principles of the Arts and Crafts movement, the aim of the Bauhaus was to incorporate art and industry; it existed from 1919 until 1933 and came to represent an almost utopian ideal that "modern art and architecture must be responsive to the needs and influence of the modern industrial world and that good design must pass the test of both aesthetic standards and sound engineering."

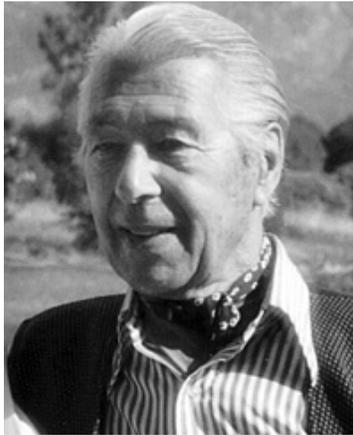


Fig. 1: Herbert Bayer
 Photograph held by the Aspen
 Historical Society

After passing his final examination, the journeyman's exam, Bayer was appointed by Gropius to direct the new "Druck und Reklame" (Printing and Advertising) workshop to open when the Bauhaus moved to the city of Dessau in April 1925; Bayer became one of its most prominent faculty members. The German black-letter types of that era were overly ornate for his taste and their use of capital letters for every proper noun was annoying. Logically, in 1925 Bayer developed a sans-serif alphabet of lower-

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Great Britain, and Italy. For a complete list of past winners, see <americantopicalassn.org/pdf/dtplist.pdf>.

The selection committee consists of Donald Smith (chair), Donald Beuthel, Jack H. Green, George Griffenhagen, Dorothy C. Smith, Dalene Thomas, and Mark H. Winnegrad. The deadline for nominating letters is 31 December 2013. Send nominations to: Donald W. Smith, Post Office Box 576, Johnstown PA, 15907.

Last year's winner was Jean C. Stout, active ATA board member, founder of the Penguins on Stamps Study Unit, and an ATA ambassador.

Albert F. Padley Jr. (1916-2013)

Albert Frederick Padley, Jr., a Connecticut native, a long-time resident of Pasadena, California, and a member of the Graphics Philately Association since 1998, died on 21 May 2013, at his residence in Irvine, California. A graduate of George Washington University, Mr. Padley entered the military in late 1940. He was accepted into Officer's Candidate School

and by 1944 had been promoted to the rank of Captain. He served in North Africa and Italy during World War II. After the War, he returned home and worked as an intelligence officer with the Department of State. He spent most of his career in Southern California, serving on protective details for at least five Secretaries of State and leading protection details for numerous foreign dignitaries and heads of state. He retired in 1975 after 39 years of Federal Service.

Mr. Padley was an accomplished bookbinder and a longtime member of the Guild of Book Workers. He volunteered in the conservation lab at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, where his work was considered among the very best. A lifelong stamp collector, Mr. Padley was a 50-plus year member of the American Philatelic Society and devoted much of his private life to the writing of an extensive book on the history of American foreign policy through stamps, "Philatelic Diplomacy."

Albert Padley is survived by five sons, seven grandchildren, and a great-grandson.

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Figure 2: Herbert Bayer designed Universal at the Bauhaus in 1925; the font consisted of only lowercase letters constructed with circles and straight lines.

case letters, "Universal" (Fig. 2), now issued in digital form as Bayer Universal, which helped to define the Bauhaus aesthetic. Bayer is one of several typographers of the period including Kurt Schwitters (1887-1948) and Jan Tschichold (1902-1974) who experimented with the creation of a simplified more phonetic-based alphabet.

Bayer left the Bauhaus in 1928 and moved to Berlin where he opened a graphic design firm whose clients included the trend-setting magazine *Vogue*, headquartered in New York.

During this period, he also created or art-directed a number of memorable exhibitions. As with other designers of his generation, Bayer became alarmed over the increasingly repressive political situation in Germany; in 1938 he left for the United States. Within a short time, he was well-established as a designer in New York City and, among other achievements, had organized a comprehensive exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art on the early Bauhaus years, 1918-1928.

In 1944 Bayer became a United States citizen. Two years later he was hired by industrialist and visionary Walter Paepcke and moved to Aspen, Colorado. Bayer's architectural work there included co-designing the Aspen Institute and restoring the Wheeler Opera House. While living in Aspen, Bayer had a chance meeting with the eccentric oilman, outdoorsman, and visionary ecologist, Robert O. Anderson. The friendship between the two men helped nurture Anderson's interest in collecting contemporary art. When he later formed the Atlantic Richfield Company, his personal art collection grew quickly, and ARCO soon held the unique distinction of possessing the world's largest corporate art collection, under the critical eye and sharp direction of Bayer as the company's Art and Design Consultant.

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In 1966 Bayer was asked by Kurt Wiener, a member of the Stamp Advisory Committee, to design a United States postage stamp to publicize the 5,600-mile Great River Road connecting New Orleans with Kenora, Ontario. The River Road followed the Mississippi River most of the way. Colonel J. Lester White, head of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission, had submitted a request for a River Road stamp in May 1964; he quickly obtained the support of every member of Congress from Mississippi Valley states. Postmaster General Lawrence F. O'Brien, however, didn't authorize the commemorative until 18 April 1966, which was when Wiener turned to Herbert Bayer for his design services.

Postmaster General O'Brien considered three Bayer sketches, the first symbolizing the River Road as a dual highway stretching off into the distance (Fig. 3). Another emphasized the river



Fig. 3: One of two preliminary sketches Bayer submitted for consideration.
Belmont Faries Files. American Philatelic Research Library, Bellefonte, PA.



Fig. 4: The second sketch featured the entire continental United States, not just the Mississippi River basin.
Belmont Faries Files. American Philatelic Research Library, Bellefonte, PA.

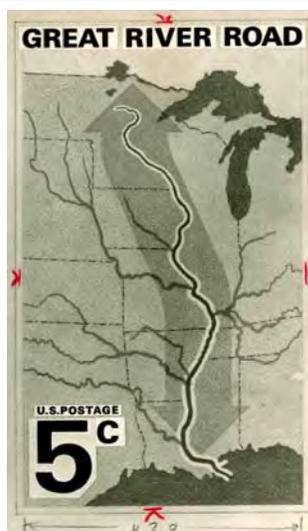


Fig. 5: The winning design focused on the Mississippi River Basin.
Belmont Faries Files. American Philatelic Research Library, Bellefonte, PA.

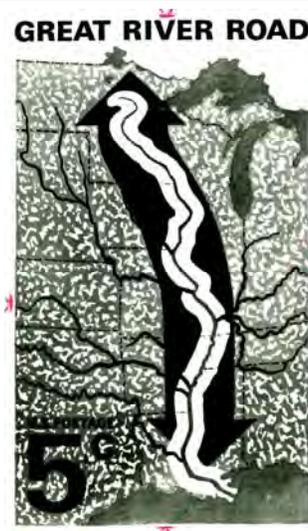


Fig. 6: In his model for the stamp, Jones made only one major design change—he enlarged the curving white area symbolizing the scenic route on both sides of the Mississippi River.
Belmont Faries Files. American Philatelic Research Library, Bellefonte, PA.

basin on a map of the entire continental United States (Fig. 4). O'Brien eventually selected a third design that depicted only the central portion of the United States and represented the River Road by a two-headed arrow (Fig. 5).

Robert J. Jones at the Bureau of Printing and Engraving prepared a model for the stamp (Fig. 6). Joseph S. Craemer, Jr. engraved the master dies for the pictorial portion of the stamp, and Kenneth C. Wiram did the lettering.

The Bureau printed the yellow background of the stamp and the red arrow by offset lithography; the parts printed in blue and green, plus the red of the "Great River Road" were added by recess engraving. Eight offset plates were made for the yellow and red of the first impressions, but only four were used. A flat master plate was made for the engraved portions of the design and 13 curved printing plates were made from it for the four-plate Giori press. One of the 13 was cancelled with no impressions taken, and two others were never used. To meet a Post Office Department request for phosphor tagging, 12% of the order was overprinted with colorless luminescent ink on a Harris offset press.

The result was the five-cent stamp issued by the United States on 21 October 1966 (Fig. 7:



Fig. 7: United States, Scott 1319, a plate block with a green intaglio plate number visible on the left side. The stamp was printed by the Bureau of Engraving and Printing on its Giori press, first used in 1957. Named for its inventor, Gualtiero Giori, the press permitted two-color or even three-color engraving from a single plate, in one pass through the press. The secret was in the rubber inking rollers. The surfaces were precisely cut, applying each ink selectively to parts of the same plate.

Scott 1319). First day ceremonies for the Great River Road stamp were held on 21 October 1966 on the State Capitol Grounds at Baton Rouge, Louisiana. The Post Office Department later reported that 330,933 first day covers (Fig. 8) were cancelled and 602,746 stamps were sold at Baton Rouge that day.

As someone who set standards of excellence over a lifetime of work and made individual contributions to innovation within the practice of design, Bayer received the AIGA Medal in 1970. He also formed important connections with the publishers of Life and Fortune magazines, General Electric, and Container Corporation of America. He remained in Aspen until 1974, when he moved to California, where he worked on various environmental projects until his death in 1985.

References

Belmont Faries, "On the Record: Great River Road," in *S.P.A. Journal* (June 1968), pages 657-661. Thanks to Tara Murray of the American Philatelic Research Library, Bellefonte, PA., for her help in identifying this source. www.herbert-bayer.com/ (Accessed on 22 June 2013). www.library.rit.edu/gda/designer/herbert-bayer (Accessed on 22 June 2013). www.restorations.net/bauhaus/bauhaus.htm (Accessed on 22 June 2013). www.tclf.org/pioneer/herbert-bayer (Accessed on 22 June 2013).



Fig. 8: A selection of only three of many FDCs issued on 21 October 1966.