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The Fine
Art of
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P E R

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Corporate
Advertising
Design,
Nation +
Empire in
Modern
Japan

GENNIFER WEISENFELD

S I O N



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Advertising Design,
Nation + Empire
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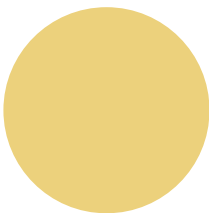
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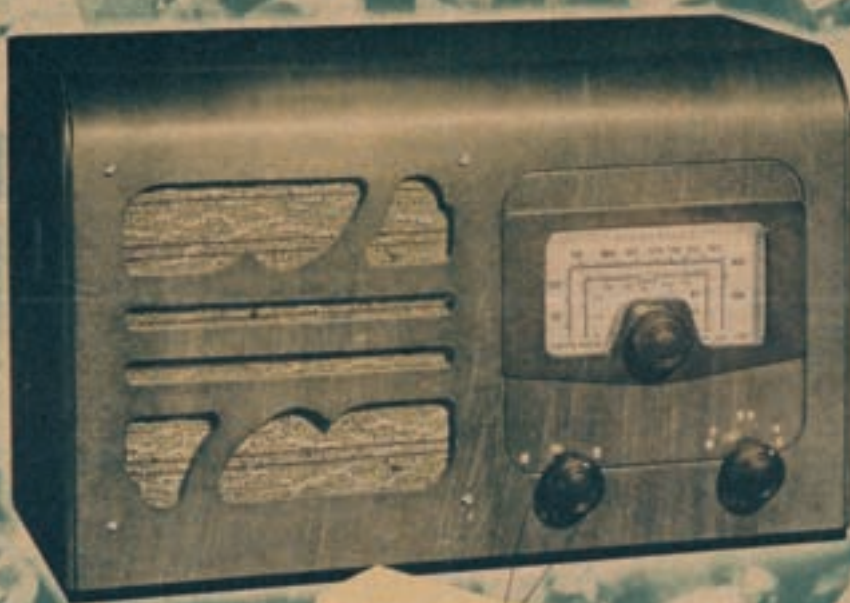
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INTRODUCTION

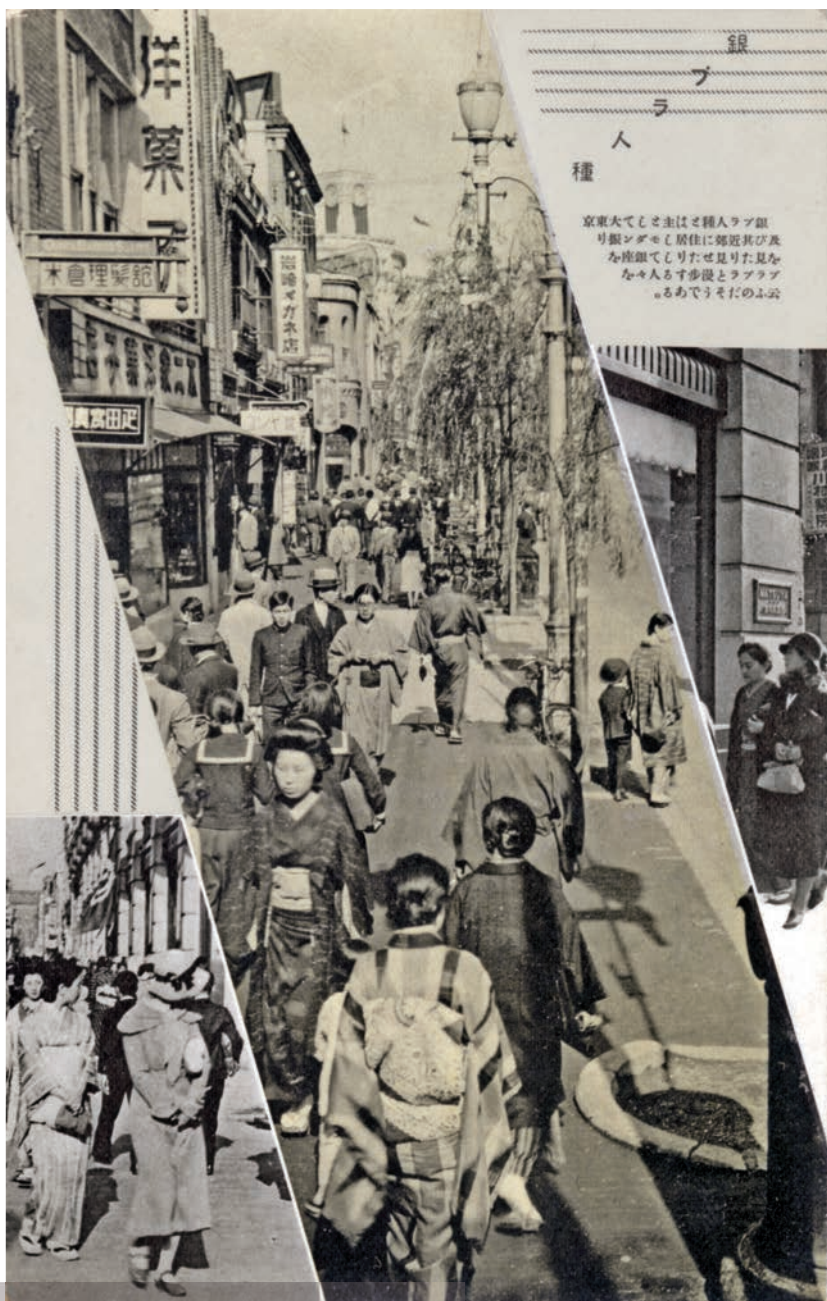
A good design is fundamentally persuasive; it convinces by its presence.
—HOLBROOK JACKSON, *Commercial Art* (1928)

Imagine strolling down one of the main boulevards in Tokyo's fashionable Ginza district. It is the early Showa period, around 1930. You are engaged in *ginbura*—the popular activity of sauntering and window-shopping in this high-profile commercial area (figure I.1). On all sides stand department stores and shops with decorative show windows displaying textiles, clothing, books, and household goods. Advertising signs and banners adorn the streets like an exposition fairground. Then day turns to night, and a flood of electric light and neon signs transforms the street scene into an even more dramatic illuminated theatrical stage (figure I.2).¹ A vibrant modern Japanese design movement produced this transformation of the urban environment—what many critics at the time referred to as the “artification” of the streets.²

This book tells the story of the birth of commercial art—modern advertising design—in Japan from the turn of the twentieth century through its global efflorescence in the total design event of the 1964 Tokyo Summer Olympic Games. While the transformation of the city street into a publicity space certainly began much earlier, new technologies in communication, transportation, and mass production expanded and accelerated the production of advertising that bombarded the consumer on an everyday basis. Japanese advertising designers

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I.1 *Ginza Strollers*, postcard,
ca. 1932. Collection of the
author

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1.2 *Ginza Late at Night*,
postcard, ca. 1932. Collection
of the author

worked for modern companies to parlay these technological innovations into new forms of publicity for a mass consumer audience.³ Public commercial spaces like the Ginza district became modern advertising design's playground. At the same time, along with private ventures like the department store, commercial artists also worked in spectacular state-sponsored exhibitionary spaces around the globe, designing domestic and colonial industrial expositions as well as international world's fairs.⁴ They extended design from the indoor display environment to the outdoor theater of the street, tying together consumer culture and urban space.

By examining the critical cultural role of commercial art as it developed in tandem with mass media and advertising, I map the social relationship between art and commerce in modern Japan. I not only demonstrate how integral advertising was to the creation of a national society but also reveal the vast network of design professionals who promoted the brand-name goods that profoundly impacted common perceptions of a modern Japanese lifestyle. This network extended transnationally from Asia to Europe, the United States, and the Soviet Union.⁵ These commercial art specialists were early developers of "corporate identity systems" in Japan. They systematically developed ways

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to visualize brand and corporate identities that enabled differentiation of consumer products in the market.⁶

Brand image definition was increasingly important for the success of most major Japanese companies. According to business historian Louisa Rubinfen, Japan's "commercial world of ordinary household goods had evolved not only from a commodity- to a brand-oriented market, but also from a merchant- to a manufacturer-dominated market."⁷ This focus of corporate manufacturers on selling brands nationally rather than supplying goods locally led to a heavy reliance on aesthetics to inculcate aspirational desires among the consumer public, even when that public often did not have the financial wherewithal to purchase such goods. I argue that advertising design's aesthetic and affective surplus provided substantial added value necessary to compensate for the markedly higher prices of brand-name goods. Aesthetic surplus was the extra artistic investment in advertising design to convey more than practical information about the product and imbue it with appealing qualities. Affective surplus conjured emotive layers around commodities that mobilized the consumer's feelings in connection with the product or company—a precursor of present-day "mood advertising." These surpluses provided visual and sensory pleasure, entertainment, and emotional experiences that exceeded the use value of the products they promoted. The corporate sponsors that I consider here were all consumer-oriented companies that invested considerable capital into advertising and design to establish their brands in the market. It is noteworthy that after more than a century in business, they are all still major companies with well-known national and global brands.

Without creative design in advertising, brands could not subsist. And "if art is the most persuasive of all methods of expression," as Holbrook Jackson wrote in *Commercial Art* in 1928, "it may be assumed that the association of the artist with the display of merchandise would increase the persuasiveness of display, and therefore augment that turn-over which is the life-blood of commercial enterprise. Excellence of design and beauty of form are the most persuasive of all things."⁸ Prominent Japanese toothpaste manufacturer and active design sponsor Lion Dentifrice declared advertising a kind of "fertilizer" for the enhancement of commodities.⁹ If we follow this agronomic metaphor, then design is the carefully cultivated flower that attracts the bees and provides nectar to facilitate pollination. Bringing into focus a range of design forms, I demonstrate how commercial artists diversified the sensorial impact of advertising campaigns, amplifying their reach and social significance. These include the creative realms of letter design, packaging, postcards, show window displays, and kiosks and other modes of outdoor publicity, as well as the better-known

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forms of posters and print advertising—all originally embraced under the category of commercial art.

This book seeks to advance the global turn in design history by centering Japan as an active node of production in an international design network and as a real-time participant in a transnational dialogue rather than a latent and passive cultural recipient on the periphery. The editors of the volume *Global Design History* note that such a global orientation is imperative to correct “the lopsided” and still overly dominant representation of the history of design as the main preserve of Euro-America. We must, as they recommend, expand our understanding of design as a field that is practiced and consumed around the world.¹⁰ Still, a national lens is equally important within the larger global context because the national and local also condition design, helping to create markers of national identity while simultaneously revealing the constructed nature of such stereotypes or myths.¹¹ We can diversify the notion of the national by highlighting the plurality of traditions and modern experiences that it encompasses.

Perhaps more than anywhere else in the world at the time, Japanese corporations and their upper management were taking a hands-on role in spearheading advertising design for everyday consumption. This was not only a deliberate choice but also a point of pride that is evidenced in the staggering amount of archival material that they collected and preserved for posterity. Unlike the distributed agency characteristic of design work abroad and in Japan’s postwar period, prewar Japanese commercial advertising was solidly rooted in companies. It was an exemplar of consolidated agency.¹² Design historians in Japan widely recognize the importance of corporate sponsors in the history of the country’s visual culture, regularly exhibiting their work in major exhibitions. They have been less concerned, however, with how these artistic contributions were enmeshed with business and political histories, particularly the history of empire.¹³ I analyze Japanese advertising and commercial art production within the broader context of world design history while also considering the wide-ranging cultural implications of Japan’s emerging consumer capitalism and the ideological formations of nation and empire building.¹⁴

Unlike a conventional singular object of study, advertising design can be truly understood only when one appreciates the immense scale of production and the often-totalizing nature of the campaigns. Advertising saturated the senses in every realm of daily life—visual, tactile, olfactory, auditory, and, if you count sponsored eating establishments like the Shiseido Parlour and Morinaga Candy Stores, gustatory as well. Advertising design was also decidedly intermedial, as product designs and logos were cross-referenced in print advertisements, and

print advertising was incorporated into point-of-purchase displays and show windows, while photographs of show windows were used to illustrate company public relations magazines. Yet advertising design is not merely a mode of material or visual production; it is a lens through which corporations and the state filtered and communicated their desires to a consuming national public. This cultural mediation had real-world effects in the construction of consumer identity and daily life. In exploring how corporate marketing and advertising transformed products into desirable commodities, we must also consider the active role of the consumer who experienced such commodities and media spaces in differentiated ways. Not enough attention has been paid to Japanese commercial design's nuanced gendering of consumption as a social act that demarcated identity and social class. Advertisers stood among a range of competing interests, both public and private, who were attempting to mold the spheres of women, men, and the family. Corporate advertising interpellated an array of gendered consumer types that often overlapped: good wives, wise mothers, efficient housewives, new students, cosmopolitan beauties, audacious modern girls, dandified modern boys, romantic couples, vigorous athletes, productive laborers, suited salarymen, brave soldiers, invincible supermen, patriotic imperial subjects, and—very important—healthy, clean, and playful children, just to name a few. While often advocating the ethics of virtuous consumption, corporate advertisers carefully straddled the line between extravagance and necessity—pleasurable wants and utilitarian needs. Consumer-subjects in turn bought into these identities but also commingled them. As sites of democratization or incorporation into the larger body politic, designed commodity spaces encouraged experimentation with these new consumer subjectivities. But in the larger framework of Japan's official lifestyle reformation movements, companies frequently joined the state in mobilizing women to construct new concepts and practices of domesticity that intertwined aesthetics, hygiene, and national identity.

Transwar Design

While scholars widely acknowledge that the corporate creation of new consumer markets was key to Japan's miraculous revival after its catastrophic defeat in World War II, this market-creating activity actually began early in the century.¹⁵ Market creation was abundantly evident in the spheres of health and beauty, food and beverage, and electrical goods for labor and leisure, and even for selling commodified forms of nation and empire. Designs for international publicity efforts like tourism campaigns, for example, were forerunners in the field of what scholars now refer to as *nation branding*.¹⁶ These campaigns pro-

duced consumable images of “Japan” at home and abroad while also helping manage the country’s reputation for diplomacy and international relations.

By the 1930s, just sixty years after its founding as a modern nation-state in 1868, Japan was already claiming an expansive empire that included Taiwan (1895), Korea (1910), and Manchuria (Manchukuo) in Northeast China (1932). In creating a unified imperial marketplace, commerce, and by extension commercial design, linked the Japanese metropole and its colonies through a web of consumption and products. The coupling of art and industry through design was also instrumental in the aestheticization and commodification of politics. Publicity and propaganda were points on the same continuum. Design for advertising purposes is inherently an art of persuasion, which, as Walter Benjamin has argued, under capitalism “seeks to veil the commodity character of things” through spectacular displays and symbolic arrangements.¹⁷ In this respect, it functions in a similar fashion to modern political propaganda, which often seeks to represent the fragmentary and alienating experiences of modernity in terms of a utopian and unified national body. Thus, it is not surprising that various state and quasi-governmental organizations enlisted many of the most talented Japanese commercial designers to work for the national project of social mobilization that preceded Japan’s entry into war with China in 1937 and continued through the war in the Pacific.

This book demonstrates how, under the militarist regime of imperial Japan, national politics were effectively commodified and marketed through the same modern mechanisms of mass culture that socially progressive artists developed under more democratic market systems.¹⁸ In many cases, the work of these designers effectively blurred the lines among avant-garde art, reportage, advertising, and national propaganda. Designers skillfully instrumentalized cutting-edge international modernist aesthetic strategies to serve both the commercial and political spheres. The melding of modernist commercial design and nationalist propaganda calls into question the often-facile association of progressive aesthetics with progressive politics, offering a much-needed opportunity to interrogate the relationship between style and ideology. Moreover, Japanese corporate interests allied themselves with state interests that ranged from daily-life rationalization efforts during the 1920s to full-scale social mobilization during wartime. They created new needs that benefited both. Still, while purportedly catering to these basic needs, they produced desires that went well beyond national concerns.

As the eminent historian John Dower has written, despite its horrors, World War II was paradoxically a “useful war” in terms of producing profits and setting the economic stage for the postwar period.¹⁹ Just as with economics, the

connections and advantages that spanned the war are abundantly evident in the history of design. Even with radical changes in the Japanese sociopolitical landscape, the continuous activities of several key designers (and corporate sponsors) served as a bridge across the war, forming the basis of contemporary design practice. Even more than seventy-five years after the end of the Asia-Pacific War, there is still a lingering taboo about discussing wartime activities in Japan that has done considerable collateral violence to design history. The pervasive *tabula rasa* narrative of postwar Japanese design ascension not only expunges the continuity of individual careers, the honing of professional skills, and the development of networks that were all crucial for the reemergence of the postwar Japanese design community with such exceptional expertise but also ignores the underlying persistence of nationalism in the visual sphere—a nationalism that subtly shifted from wartime mobilization to postwar democratic peace. In fact, the publicity mechanisms (and their related industries) that transitioned from the consumer advertising of the interwar years into the marketing of nation and empire through the 1930s and 1940s were essential building blocks of postwar reconstruction.

Designers transformed practices forged in the distinct sociopolitical climates of the prewar and wartime eras to suit postwar needs. This argument goes against the grain of most standard design histories, which usually maintain a decisive break between the pre- and postwar periods, often strategically erasing the genealogies and continuities of Japanese design through the century.²⁰ I resurrect these important historical transwar connections to resuture the fractured history of modern Japanese design.

Creating Modern Advertising Design

Modern Japanese advertising design had strong roots in the media forms and publicity practices of the Edo (1603–1868) and Meiji (1868–1912) periods, including decorative signboards (*kanban*); advertising handbills (*hikifuda* or *bira*); posters (*ebira* or *ekanban*); leaflets (*chirashi*); fans (*uchiwa*); hand towels (*tenugui*); exterior door curtains (*noren*) with shop names (*yagō*); banners (*nobori*); illuminated paper lanterns (*chōchin*); distinctive crests, emblems, or logotypes (*mon* or *monshō*); promotional games (*sugoroku*); free giveaways (*omake*); lettering design (*Edo moji*); and postcards (*ehagaki*) (after the establishment of the postal system in 1900), not to mention innovative use of mobile handcars, baskets, and live musical promotion. Decorative wrapping paper and packaging (*tsutsumigami*) were also long-standing promotional media in Japan. Customers saved and reused them, producing an ongoing promotional effect simi-

lar to stylish shopping bags branded with identifiable logos that people now carry as accessories. Japanese advertisers dubbed packaging the “silent salesman.”²¹ Early modern advertising practices also utilized sophisticated product placements and plugs in popular culture entertainment as well as celebrity endorsements, even from the afterlife.²² Design critic and historian Nakai Kōichi has identified the 1860s as an important starting point for defining modern advertising in Japan because of the advent of mass circulation, independent daily newspapers that carried news and advertisements for consumer goods and services such as the *Yokohama mainichi shinbun* and *Bankoku shinbunshi*. The *Asahi shinbun*, one of Japan’s oldest and largest national dailies, began publishing in Osaka in 1879.²³

The implementation of a national education system in 1872 that expanded the literate consumer public beyond the elite social classes, combined with large-scale urbanization starting in the late 1890s, also greatly contributed to the so-called massification (*taishūka*) of Japanese culture. While there were still great disparities in wealth among the Japanese populace, the standard of living generally rose for most sectors during the interwar period. This was particularly true for the expanding middle class, as well as a segment of this population who became wealthy due to the boom economy during World War I. Increased prosperity provided many Japanese people with extra money and time to spend on recreation. Consumer demand for goods and entertainment rapidly expanded. This expansion in consumerism produced valuable work opportunities for artists in the commercial sector.

Early publicity firms, known as *hiromeya* or *tōzaiya*, pioneered outdoor advertising such as men wearing sandwich boards and costumed marching bands (*chindonya*) that would perform theatrical skits to promote products. In 1890 they sponsored a parade through Tokyo with marchers dressed as beer bottles for Meidiya’s campaign to promote Kirin beer. By 1910 these marching bands were so common in Japan’s cities that they had to be regulated and restricted to a maximum of ten people and three vehicles because they were causing traffic accidents and becoming a general nuisance.²⁴

At the same time, press entrepreneurs founded media brokering companies known as *kōkoku dairiten* (advertising agencies), forerunners of contemporary advertising agencies, to sell space in newspapers and magazines. Former newspaperman Takagi Sadae established the first major media brokering firm, Mannensha, in 1890 in Osaka, quickly opening branches throughout the country. By 1897, just two years after the end of the Sino-Japanese War, there were over 150 such advertising agencies in Japan, including one of the current advertising industry leaders, Hakuhōdō, founded by Seki Hironao in 1895. A few

years later, in 1901, Mitsunaga Hoshiro (also known as Mitsunaga Hoshio) founded Nihon Kōkoku Kabushiki Kaisha (forerunner of Dentsu, currently Japan's largest advertising firm) as the first advertising corporation with significant investment capital, and it included a telegraphic wire service called Denpō Tsūshinsha.²⁵ These agencies did not, however, produce advertising design until after the Asia-Pacific War. Rather, in this early period, they simply brokered space in mass media outlets for work produced either in-house by Japanese companies or by small independent design firms. Most commercial advertising and publicity design before 1945 was produced in-house by company management and employees.

Traditionally an artisanal field in Japan, advertising design became a major area of artistic endeavor in the first few decades of the twentieth century. This gradual recognition of design's aesthetic as well as functional value has shaped the field's evolution and defined its central importance in the visual arts ever since. The construction of a new social status for design was not a coincidental development. Designers who sought aesthetic and social legitimacy for the profession aggressively forged it through the discursive spaces of specialized publications circulated through mass media. They also professionalized the field by systematizing and standardizing theoretical and technical knowledge, while establishing institutional degree programs to credential this expertise.²⁶ Japan's newly emerging modern companies hired legions of these freshly credentialed young commercial artists to advertise brand-new lifestyle commodities and to define corporate identities in the public visual sphere, generating a wealth of creative advertising design that was buoyed by trailblazing marketing strategies. This dynamic sphere of publicity transformed Japanese artistic production by making it accessible to a mass audience while still staying closely linked to the culturally legitimizing aesthetic values of fine art.

Global Advertising Design

Japanese art and design were long engaged in an aesthetic dialogue with the world. For decades, scholars have ably explored the global craze for Japanese woodblock prints as well as the country's traditional and export-style decorative arts exhibited at world's fairs that ignited the widespread *Japonisme* boom across Euro-America. These scholars have also illuminated the mediation of important Japanese culture brokers in this exchange. Although its proponents viewed Japan through a distorted Orientalist lens that Anne Cheng has recently labeled "Ornamentalism," *Japonisme* was still a critical contributor to international aesthetic movements such as art nouveau, art deco, and even

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the Bauhaus, which designers then selectively reinterpreted back into modern Japanese design.²⁷ With great interest, Japanese designers viewed high-profile international events such as the art nouveau extravaganza of the 1900 Paris Exposition Universelle and the much-heralded 1925 Paris International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts (Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes) that launched the wildly popular international design trend of art deco. *Art deco*, a new catchall term derived later from the shortening of *Arts Décoratifs*, described the globally circulating *style moderne* that exhibited strong geometric and abstracted compositions combined with highly stylized, sleek machine-age aesthetics.

In addition, Japanese commercial artists recognized Germany as a hothouse of professional design activity throughout the decade as the country hosted a series of landmark public events, including the first Congress of International Progressive Artists in Düsseldorf in 1922. This event heralded the dynamic movement of international constructivism and was attended by some of the foremost avant-garde artists of the period, many of whom were interested in expanding their art practice beyond the circumscribed arena of fine art into the art of daily life. Murayama Tomoyoshi (1901–1977), one of several influential interlocutors of international constructivist graphic design techniques in Japan and later founder of the important Japanese artist collective Mavo, attended the congress.²⁸ Not only did Germany have the famous Reimann School of commercial art and display, which launched an international offshoot in Britain, and Kurt Schwitters's dynamic multinational Circle of New Advertising Designers (Ring neue Werbegestalter) innovating in commercial typography, but the country also held many major advertising fairs throughout the decade, such as the Berlin National Advertising Fair (Reichs-Reklame-Messe) in 1925, which was publicized throughout the city by a dramatic parade of masked figures.²⁹ And just a few years later, in 1928, Germany hosted the massive International Press Exhibition in Cologne, known as Pressa, which centered on the modern news media, publishing, and advertising industries and featured the now-legendary Russian artist El Lissitzky's avant-garde displays using the photomontages of Gustav Klutis and Sergei Senkin for the pavilion promoting Soviet culture, which shook the design world to its core.³⁰ The pavilion vividly brought avant-garde design into the professional and commercial sphere.

Japanese artist and critic Nakada Sadanosuke (1888–1970) wrote a series of influential articles on his impressions of the celebrated German Bauhaus school of art and design (1919–33) after visiting in the early 1920s.³¹ He was followed by others, most notably the high-profile design couple Yamawaki Michiko (1910–2000) and Yamawaki Iwao (1889–1987), who studied there in

the early 1930s.³² Bauhaus design, even after the school's closure by the Nazis and the diaspora of many of its main participants to the United States, continued to be an enduring inspiration for the Japanese.³³ Their collective writings promoted the Bauhaus into one of the most influential international forces for modern Japanese design, just as countries and corporations around the world were also enthusiastically discovering the communicative potential of print and editorial design, particularly the creative combination of photography and text in photocollage and photomontage.

The “almost supernatural clearness” of photography, argued German designer Jan Tschichold, offered a major advantage for modern advertising by building up optical associations when used with typographic design in modernist “composite” (montage) images, “double-copy” compositions that overlapped printing of plates, or “photograms,” where objects were laid directly on light-sensitive material.³⁴ Montage’s creative fusing of disparate images and texts, observes curator Christopher Phillips, could “divert the photograph from what it ‘naturally’ seems to say” and “underscore the need for the viewer’s active ‘reading’ of the image.”³⁵ In other words, it required the viewer’s cognitive interaction to complete and interpret the image. In this sense, it addressed the spectator “conversationally.”³⁶ In the commercial arena, advertising artists employed composite images to start this conversation with consumers while creating nonlinear promotional narratives with parts synecdochically standing in for wholes that then metonymically linked the product and its concept. Such composites provided a multiple, but still controlled, perspective that sought to sway the consumer through the accumulation of layers of meaning. They were also able to establish new hierarchies within the image through manipulation of scale, particularly through dramatic foregrounding. These composite images soon became a dominant contemporary mode of representation in publicity.

Newspapers, private companies, design groups, and individuals brought a host of world artistic movements to Japan, sponsoring important public exhibitions throughout the period. After World War I, there was widespread international interest in posters, which were rapidly introduced to the Japanese public. This global movement generated influential publications about the poster’s ideological efficacy, such as Deutscher Werkbund member and leading proponent of expressionism Adolf Behne’s *Das politische Plakat* (The political poster), published by Verlag “Das Plakat” in 1919 and soon translated into Japanese. In 1921 the Osaka *Asahi* and *Yomiuri* newspapers, both deeply invested in print media and the art of persuasion, sponsored major shows of international posters, displaying hundreds of sample works.³⁷ Japanese design-

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ers working abroad—like Paris-based Satomi Munetsugu (1904–1996), who was originally from Osaka but resided in France for most of his life, working alongside some of the foremost French designers of the period, such as A. M. Cassandre (Adolphe Jean Marie Mouron) and Jean Carlu—were also important culture brokers, bringing work back and forth between the countries. In 1934 Satomi arranged the International Commercial Art Exchange exhibition (Kokusai Shōgyō Bijutsu Kōkanten), organized at Matsuya department store in Ginza, which was covered by editor Murota Kurazō in a special issue of the Japanese journal *Advertising World* (*Kōkokukai*), followed by the All American Advertising Art Exhibition (Zenbei Kōkoku Bijutsuten), featuring work by the American Academy of Arts in Chicago. In 1935 Satomi and Murota collaboratively organized an exhibition of Japanese poster art for display in Paris that was very positively received and led to Japanese work being included in the poster pavilion at the Paris World's Fair in 1937. In addition to these exhibitions and their designated impresarios, new professional trade journals were the most important intermediaries for introducing world design to the Japanese public, and Japanese design to the world.

By the 1930s, modern design was a dynamic sphere of knowledge production that spanned the globe. The design community used mass media to promote their profession. Design historian Grace Lees-Maffei has identified the importance of “mediating channels” like professional trade journals in circulating this knowledge.³⁸ Japanese magazines participated in a real-time global conversation with corresponding publications from across Europe and the United States. This constituted a transcultural and transnational traffic of ideas and images traveling on a media highway that flowed in all directions. The Japanese commercial art community was familiar with most of the major Western design trade publications, and the information that these journals presented played a central role in the instrumentalization and globalization of modern styles.³⁹ Translated excerpts from original publications and editorial commentaries by Japanese critics frequently accompanied copious journal illustrations. In an age of lax or nonexistent copyright laws, Japanese publishers were able to reissue foreign images with impunity, providing a rich encyclopedia of styles for local reference and adaptation.

Trade journals in Japan served as important supplements to school training, publishing practical how-to information on state-of-the-art techniques, as well as reports on current trends in media and advertising research. And importantly for the history of design, they brought visibility to artists working behind the scenes in the commercial sphere. When considered in combination with the

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multitude of published design collections that collated information for producers and retailers, it is clear how these publications nurtured the nascent professional field of commercial art and sustained a lively discourse on design.

Though any national design history must be situated within a global comparative framework, even seemingly universal media could have distinctly divergent characteristics in local contexts. In Europe and the United States, posters, for example, were largely mass-produced outdoor ephemera placed on city streets to attract the masses. Their designers strove for immediate impact through bold graphic representation. In Japan, however, posters were primarily placed indoors and were more like mass-produced ornaments for extended aesthetic appreciation. Japanese posters were mounted in frames or on metal rods and hung inside retail and entertainment establishments as well as on trams and trains as a kind of promotional interior decoration. Some were used as backdrops in show window displays. The Japanese government first allowed advertisers to place posters in train station waiting rooms in 1889; Kirin beer, under the auspices of its wholesaler and business partner Meidiya, was among the first to mount posters at Shinbashi and Ueno stations in Tokyo, the next year commissioning posters for major railway stations nationwide. By 1910 posters hung in every major Japanese train station, and six years later, framed advertisements were introduced into train cars. Since many posters were intended to hang for long periods of time, sometimes upward of a year, they needed to have enduring appeal. So, in this sense, they functioned more like artworks than mass-culture ephemera.⁴⁰ Still, they had mass appeal. “Posters,” wrote well-known Kirin beer poster designer Tada Hokuu (1889–1947), were “a visual form that directly influenced society,” as well as “an exceptional art form of daily life, textbooks for aesthetically edifying the masses, and pioneering forms for expressing period taste.”⁴¹

Private associations, schools, and companies all over Japan founded groups to study emerging global trends in advertising and design. This phenomenon was so widespread in the 1930s that design historian Kawahata Naomichi has gone so far as to dub it the country’s “era of design study groups,” identifying over sixty associations formed during this time.⁴² While interest in design boomed in the prewar period, the study of design in historical context from a contemporary vantage point presents several challenges. Principal among them is advertising design’s general anonymity. Although it is an explicit form of visual communication produced to convey complex sets of ideas and messages about companies, products, consumers, and the larger social field, advertising design was usually created behind closed doors by unidentified individuals in private offices, thus obscuring the context and means of production. This study’s extensive excavation of corporate archives greatly illuminates these ac-

tivities and the groundbreaking work of a broad network of advertising design specialists, including those working in the important new professional role of art director (*āto direkutā*).⁴³

Defining Design

Prominent design theorist and advocate Hamada Masuji (1892–1938) argued early on for designers to be pulled out from behind the scenes and given due social recognition. He was, however, faced with deeply ingrained biases. Despite the lack of a clear distinction between arts and crafts in premodern Japanese artistic practice, a new term distinguishing the fine arts, *bijutsu*, had come into use soon after the founding of the Japanese nation-state around the time of the Vienna World's Fair in 1873. Having seen the social status enjoyed by artists in Western countries, many Japanese artists—along with concerned government bureaucrats and influential cultural ideologues—returning from abroad fought to establish fine art as an autonomous sphere of cultivated intellectual endeavor worthy of social recognition. In the process, however, they rigidified the previously fluid boundaries among fine arts, decorative arts, and crafts, thus creating a self-conscious artistic hierarchy on the model of the West. The Ministry of Education (Monbushō) reinforced this categorization by establishing an official salon in 1907 called the Ministry of Education Art Exhibition (Monbushō Bijutsu Tenrankai, abbreviated as Bunten), which was dedicated to exhibiting fine art.⁴⁴ By the 1920s, the art establishment and art education had well inculcated this hierarchical mentality, although in actual practice the areas still blended. Most artist-designers themselves did not consider design activity their principal artistic contribution and emphasized their “pure art” (*junsui geijutsu*) work as of greater aesthetic importance.⁴⁵ There were prominent artists, like the celebrated neo-traditional Japanese-style (*nihonga*) painter Yokoyama Taikan, who were adamantly opposed to the incorporation of design under the rubric of fine arts because of its aesthetic unworthiness. Art historian Michelle Bogart has noted a similar enduring prejudice against commercial art in the American context during the same period. She partially attributes this to power politics within the field, as claiming jurisdiction over fine art was a means of acquiring cultural authority.⁴⁶

The social recognition of modern Japanese commercial design and designers was a gradual process that culminated only in the postwar period. In the early years, after the Meiji Restoration, commercial art's fate was inextricably linked with all the applied arts—traditional and modern. Promoting what design historian Sarah Teasley has called “design-fronted diplomacy,” the new Japanese

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government, following the lead of Britain, France, and later the United States, where industrial arts and crafts were receiving extensive governmental support to boost national commerce and trade, was an active participant in the major display venues of international world's fairs as well as domestic industrial exhibitions, inaugurated in Japan in 1877.⁴⁷ The establishment of a set of trademark regulations (*shōhyō jōrei*) in Japan in 1884, replaced by a full-fledged trademark registration law in 1899 (*Shōhyōhō*), marked an important milestone in the public recognition of brand identity. In 1888 the Japanese Patent Office (*Tokkyōchō*) introduced the first authoritative set of “design regulations” (*Ishō Jōrei*) as a first step toward legal registration and protection of products and aesthetic designs. These were revised into the official Design Law (*Ishōhō*) of 1909. The state also established the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce (*Nōshōmushō*) in 1881 to help promote industrial development, which included supporting Japanese design work, mainly the decorative arts (*sōshoku geijutsu*). With the dual national slogans “rich country, strong army” (*fukukoku kyōhei*) and “increase production, encourage industry” (*shokusan kōgyō*) echoing through the halls of government, in 1913 the ministry began mounting yearly exhibitions of works for sale that explicitly valorized design (*zuan*) and applied works (*ōyō sakubin*) in the context of Japan's industrial expansion.⁴⁸ When the ministry was subsequently split in 1925 into the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry (*Nōrinshō*) and Commerce and Industry (*Shōkōshō*), the latter, directed by the powerful political figure Takahashi Korekiyo, took on the mantle of the yearly exhibition.⁴⁹ Along the way, by its sixth annual showing in 1919, the exhibition shifted to using the broader design term *kōgei* (meaning industrial arts, or the artistic and skillful production of practical objects for daily life) in its title, which was increasingly the most common term for design in the Taisho period (1912–26). In 1928 the ministry founded an influential design study center, the Industrial Arts Research Institute (*Kōgei Shidōjo*, or IARI) to investigate rationalized modes of design for mass production, issuing the widely disseminated journal *Industrial Art News* (*Kōgei nyūsu*).⁵⁰

The varied categories and nomenclature used in this exhibition clearly indicate that design terminology and taxonomy were in flux during this period. Japanese design historians have charted a gradual conceptual shift around the turn of the century from the long-standing artisanal notion of design (*ishō*) based on sets of forms and patterns (*binagata* or *kata*) to one that implied more personal autonomy and professional standing on the part of the designer, expressed in the increasingly common terms *zuan* (design), *shōgyō bijutsu* (commercial art), and later *dezain* in the 1950s. The term *design* and its newly coined Japanese translation *zuan* were also introduced into the Japanese lexicon at the

time of the Vienna World's Fair by prominent artist-designer Nōtomi Kaijirō (1844–1918), who attended and went on to become an influential educator in the field.⁵¹ Originally, the first kanji character used for *zuan* included the hand radical as an intrinsic lexical building block, but as the term became standardized, this radical was dropped, indicating a shift in perception of the field from one of the hand to one of the mind. It became, according to Morinaga designer Shiihashi Isamu, “a job in the world of ideas.”⁵²

Still, the meanings of these terms were highly unstable and continued to evolve. The term *ishō* continued to be used interchangeably or in combination with *zuan* throughout the prewar period. Hamada Masuji coined the Japanese term for commercial art, *shōgyō bijutsu*, around 1926 as a direct translation from the English to serve as a “general term for all practical art” (*jissai geijutsu*). By 1932 it was listed in standard reference publications and was in common use. It was, in Hamada’s words, a form of “artistic industry” (*bijutsuteki sangyō*).⁵³ And not, he further clarified, merely any art used in advertising, such as the ubiquitous pictures of beautiful women (*bijinga*) that frequently appeared in publicity. It was art that formally and intentionally embodied its commercial function. This marked a departure from previous practice where it was common in high-visibility projects to select or commission a work by an already well-established artist in the world of fine arts that would then be used for advertising purposes. This work was generally not intended to represent pictorially a particular product or industry. Rather, businesses sought to invest their trades with the refined image of fine art, thereby distancing themselves from direct association with commerce. This reflected a persistent social bias against those directly involved with commercial activity, partially rooted in Edo-period neo-Confucian morality. Thus, posters of beautiful women, which had been used for hundreds of years to represent style, sophistication, and elegance, were still the most appealing for promotional purposes. For example, the first senior managing director of Mitsukoshi department store, Hibi Ōsuke, selected renowned academic oil painter Okada Saburōsuke’s (1869–1939) prizewinning painting *Portrait of a Woman*, exhibited at the Tokyo Industrial Exposition in 1907, to be adapted into the now-famous Mitsukoshi department store poster, requiring only the simple addition of the store’s name (figure 1.3). Like many of his academic colleagues, including his illustrious teacher at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Kuroda Seiki, Okada produced paintings that were adapted for commercial use throughout his career.⁵⁴ Still, the professional identity of these artists was always solidly situated within the lofty precinct of fine arts.

For Hamada, authentic commercial art required the skillful manipulation of aesthetics to “attract the consumer’s eye” and “make the product stand out,”

1.3 Okada Saburōsuke, poster for Mitsukoshi department store, 1909 (original work, *Portrait of a Woman*, 1907). Mitsukoshi Department Store



effects that furthered commercial interests.⁵⁵ According to art critic Harada Jirō, writing in 1930 for the international audience of *Commercial Art*, Hamada understood commercial art in ideological terms as a “productive art,” while so-called fine art was “non-productive and consumptive.” Commercial art was proletarian, while fine art was bourgeois. Ultimately it was commercial art’s “intensive and universal quality” and “inseparable affinity to the life of the people” that gave it cultural significance.⁵⁶

Such new perceptions of commercial design were emerging around the globe. The new anglophone term *graphic designer*, usually attributed to American designer William Addison Dwiggins, was coined around this time in 1922. This term was used to denote the professional sphere of utilitarian printing that included letter design, typography, book design, packaging, ephemera, posters, and press advertisements.⁵⁷ The Japanese term for commercial art, now principally synonymous with two-dimensional graphic design, was originally more capacious, comprising three-dimensional forms such as show window displays, freestanding signage, and packaging. Sometimes such design was termed *sōshoku bijutsu* (decorative art). It also overlapped with elements of industrial design, known as *sangyō bijutsu* (industrial art) or *sangyō kōgei* (industrial crafts), which included product design. As time went on, the Japanese

term for commercial art was often used interchangeably with the new terms for advertising art and publicity (*kōkoku bijutsu* or *senden bijutsu*), with *senden* later taking on a valence closer to political propaganda during the war years, particularly when used in the expressions *kokka senden* (national propaganda) and *kokusaku senden* (national policy propaganda). It is also worth noting here that in pre–World War II anglophone literature, the term *propaganda* did not have pejorative connotations and was often synonymous with *publicity*.

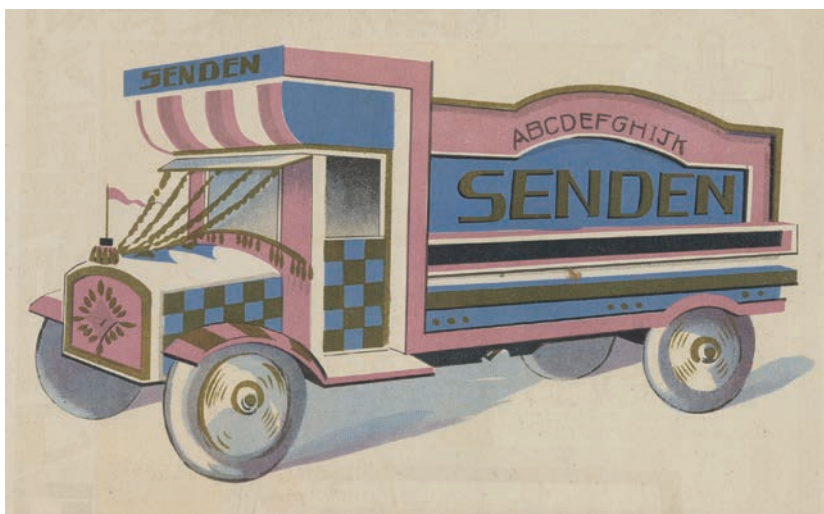
Prominent Shiseido cosmetics designer Yamana Ayao (1897–1980) later wrote that he ultimately preferred the term *advertising art* (*kōkoku bijutsu*) because “advertising work is a much wider area incorporating production that has social and political implications. In current terminology,” he noted, “this would probably put design under marketing and communication.”⁵⁸ In the end, “design” in the Japanese interwar period was a lexical and theoretical *mélange*, and it is only in a specific contextual deployment that its meaning is best understood.

Parading Publicity

The spaces of design were multiple and diverse—indoor and outdoor, corporate and national, static and mobile—expanding in all dimensions. The street was often the designer’s canvas and stage. In addition to large-scale painted, electric, or neon billboards, outdoor publicity included street kiosks, known as “advertising towers” (*kōkokutō* or *sendentō*), which were attention-grabbing columns or small buildings that functioned primarily as architectural signboards.⁵⁹ There were “sandwich boards,” which were wearable signboards paraded through the streets amid pedestrian traffic by “sandwich men.” Alongside them, stylishly costumed “mannequin girls” (literally, living mannequins) demonstrated products and performed for the public.

Modern technology also revolutionized outdoor promotion, spawning decorated automobiles, trucks (figure I.4), and even advertising balloons and aerial banners. Along with trains, ships, and airplanes, automobiles and trucks were the most representative new transportation technologies of the modern age. For advertising purposes, they were highly effective because they enabled long-range mobile promotion. Furthermore, it was argued that a moving device was infinitely more visually stimulating than a stationary one. This fact was not lost on avant-garde designers in Soviet Russia, for example, who actively decorated trains and ships for agitprop (agitation propaganda) to disseminate Bolshevik ideas across the country after the revolution.

The 1920s saw the birth of prominent publicity parades sponsored by commercial firms around the world, such as the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade,



1.4 Design mock-up for advertising truck. Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū*, 10:4

inaugurated in 1924, with giant balloons debuting in 1927. They also caught on in Japan, an extension and consolidation of local promotional street events that emerged out of the long-standing practice of costumed marching bands that would wend their way through commercial districts starting around 1845. In 1930 the first Japanese national advertising festival parade took this to a new scale (figure 1.5). Enthusiastically covered in the press, the event was declared in *Advertising World* as “the parade that drove three million Tokyo residents crazy.”⁶⁰ It was timed to coincide with the culmination of the capital restoration project that rebuilt Tokyo after the devastating 1923 Great Kantō Earthquake and its public celebrations. In many ways, the parade was as much a celebration of the rebirth of the capital city as it was a celebration of consumer advertising in Japan. As a representative for the Nippon Polydor Gramophone Company wrote, “This year’s advertising festival is not just for showcasing the signature products of each company, but it is also intended to display to the world Japan’s recovering economy, as part and parcel of the capital restoration project.”⁶¹

Organized by the advertising firm Shōjikisha and held on March 26, 1930, from 2 to 8 p.m., the festival included over two hundred participating companies marching more than half a mile through Ginza and downtown Tokyo. Radio broadcasts promoting the event drew city residents to the streets in droves. Participants wrote candidly in *Advertising World* about their com-



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1.5 Photograph of advertising
festival parade (Ginza).
Advertising World 7, no. 5
(May 1930): 8. Shiseido
Corporate Museum

pany's plans, expectations, execution, and budgets—a form of behind-the-scenes debrief. Many also described their failures and “most embarrassing moments” due to inadequate planning time (the organizers gave them only three days' advance notice) and budget constraints or unforeseen circumstances of weather (wind particularly), visibility (from the street and the rooftops), and technical difficulties. One company even described building a gigantic head on its float that did not fit through one of the gates on the thoroughfare and eventually lost the back of its skull when employees had to force it through the opening. Writing for the Nippon Gramophone and Nippon Columbia Companies, Itō Toyota noted:

It is our nation's first advertising festival ever, and it was a huge success. However, our company failed. Due to the limited budget and time and other company responsibilities, we had no alternative but to leave the whole plan to a third agency. It goes without saying that from the general plan to the detailed parts, we ourselves are the most suitable because we are most familiar with our products. Indeed, it was a pity for us this time. . . . My feeling is that the decoration should be bigger and simpler. Slogans should be raised up higher for better visibility.⁶²

Lobbying hard for regularizing the event, the participants hoped to rectify these failures in future festivities.

Watanabe Sei, representing the Akabō Necktie Company, explained how his team wanted their parade float to provide a “holistic experience,” where the display would look as good to those walking on the streets as those standing on top of buildings with a more bird's-eye view.⁶³ Representing Shiseido, advertising section chief Takagi Chōyō praised the festival as a huge success in terms of scale and popularity, calling it “a milestone in the history of advertising in Japan.” He lamented, however, the lack of modernity communicated by many of the companies. “We are already in the 1930s, but they are still obsessed with a seemingly out-of-date ornamentalism and gaudy colors,” he complained. “As a new industry in Japan, advertising should be equally fresh and original. I prefer nuanced styles to garish colors, delicate creativity to coarse humor.” Heavily committed to investment in advertising, Shiseido was already advanced in differentiating itself as a modern Japanese company. Takagi mused about this, “In a word, our presentation tried to look like a delicate painting and modern architecture simultaneously. It would have been even better with an added touch of humor.” While he was not entirely satisfied with the result, he pondered aloud about how the company might re-

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spond better to the needs of the public and serve an appropriate social role, asking rhetorically, “As an influential company, isn’t Shiseido responsible for enlightening the public?”⁶⁴

Equally important in the world of advertising design, Morinaga and Company was represented by Koyama Masanari, who praised the event as “an epoch-making moment in the advertising industry” that deserved all the attention and acclaim it was receiving. He described “waves and waves of crowds—approximately two million people in total” watching the event, exclaiming that there had never been a better chance for companies to promote their products. Concurring with Shiseido’s Takagi and many others, he acknowledged that humor was a very important aspect of advertising. Consequently, Morinaga injected a lighthearted jocularly into its parade floats, which promoted four separate products: milk, dry milk, milk caramels, and milk chocolate. For milk, two employees dressed in cow costumes, leaving their own legs visible so that they looked like cows walking on four legs. For dry milk powder, which was marketed as a nutritious product for children and a “must-have for every mother,” they designed a large stroller with babies seated in it. As the stroller moved, the babies’ heads bobbed humorously. For milk caramels, the team capitalized on the image of a smiling baby face, creating a large model of the company’s distinctive caramel box with its yellow packaging and six dolls with smiling faces going in and out of the box. This was an instant sensation. Last, they struggled with how to convey the image of Morinaga’s Napoleon brand milk chocolate, ultimately creating a horse made of chocolate with a Napoleon-like soldier in the saddle swinging his sword and giving orders. The billboard beside him read, “Chocolate is my favorite—Napoleon.” The crowds cheered for these fun displays.⁶⁵

Writing for the Calpis beverage company, advertising chief Mannen Amehashi noted that the company’s overarching goal was to display its motto in a humorous and distinctive way. Anticipating that many companies would use parade trucks, the team chose to use a small “cute” automobile, treating their display like a piece of fine art. Spending days and nights on their elaborate billboard, they spotlighted the company’s logo.⁶⁶ At the same time, representatives for Right Ink were particularly ingenious, recognizing that in an age of speed, they should use an airplane to stand out from the crowd and be visible to viewers beyond the parade. With the goal of impressing people with their originality, they inscribed their company name on the wings of the plane and had the pilot drop small colorful flyers over the city, which were also coupons for the product.⁶⁷

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In his concluding “Editor’s Note” about the parade in *Advertising World*, Murota marveled at the event, writing, “It never occurred to us that the advertisement festival would attract over 200,000 participants. The festival has enlivened the atmosphere and spring is also in the air. Warmly surrounded by the enthusiasm and applause of our citizens, more than 130 parade cars and over 1,000 life-size models ambled through the city center. Standing atop the Matsuya department store, you could easily lose yourself in the delight.” He exclaimed, “Finally, we have ushered in a new era for advertising.”⁶⁸

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NOTES

INTRODUCTION

Epigraph: Holbrook Jackson, “Design and the Display of Merchandise: The Influence of Modernist Painting and Architecture,” *Commercial Art*, no. 4 (January–June 1928): 204.

1. The first neon sign was erected in Ginza in 1918. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 142.

2. Newspaper reviewers referred to the work of the Commercial Artists Association (Shōgyō Bijutsuka Kyōkai) as an “art of the streets” (*gaitō bijutsu*). Hamada Masuji, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū* (hereafter *GSBZ*), 24:10–11.

3. The first domestic telegraph was set up between Yokohama and Tokyo in 1870, and another was established between Tokyo and Kyoto two years later, in 1872. By 1871 the British Foreign Ministry had already set up a telegraph between London and Nagasaki connecting Japan to the rest of the world in real time. The first railroad was built between Yokohama and Tokyo in 1872. The first lithographic poster was printed in Japan in the early 1880s, while offset printing was introduced in 1914 and the HB printing process in 1922. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 129, 145. For more on the development of mass media publications in Japan, see Marshall, *Magazines and the Making of Mass Culture in Japan*.

4. For the rich literature on Japanese department stores, see Hatsuda, *Hyakkaten no tanjō*; and, more recently, Tipton, “Department Store”; Aso, “Consuming Publics”; and Hong, “Transcultural Politics.”

5. Although not the focus here, recent scholarship has begun to explore the modern East Asian design network. While still primarily concentrating on national and regional developments, such scholarship also illuminates transnational connections, particularly Japan’s central role as an imperialist hub of colonial modernity in this system connecting

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East Asia to Euro-America, specifically for design education. See Fujita and Guth, *East Asian Design*. And for East Asian design historiographies in Japan, China (the People's Republic of China), Hong Kong, Taiwan, and Korea, see the *Journal of Design History* 24, no. 3 (2011); and the brief introductory overview by Kikuchi, "Design Histories."

6. Baker, "Re-reading *The Corporate Personality*," 289.

7. Rubinfiel, "Commodity to National Brand," 3.

8. Jackson, "Design and the Display," 203.

9. Raion Kabushishiki Kaisha, *Raion Hamigaki 80-nenshi*, 92.

10. Teasley, Riello, and Adamson, "Towards Global Design History," 2.

11. Lees-Maffei and Fallan, "Real Imagined Communities," 5, 17. See also Lees-Maffei and Fallan, "National Design Histories."

12. Adriasola, Teasley, and Traganou, "Design and Society," 4–5.

13. For example, Tōkyō Kokuritsu Kindai Bijutsukan Kōgeikan, *Zuan no henbō*; Tōkyōto Bijutsukan and Asahi Shinbun, *1920 Nendai Nihon-ten*; Sezon Bijutsukan, Hyōgo Kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, and Asahi Shinbun, *Geijutsu to kōkoku*; Wakayama Kenritsu Kindai Bijutsukan, *Nihon no grafikku dezain*; and Okazaki-shi Bijutsu Hakubutsukan, *"Ara, sentanteki ne."*

14. In his general survey, D. J. Huppatz addresses the importance of empire in modern Asian design history with a specific focus on architectural and industrial design. Huppatz, *Modern Asian Design*.

15. For a discussion of different aspects of modern consumerism in Japan and post-war consumption trends in a global context, see Garon and MacLachlan, *Ambivalent Consumer*.

16. Kaneva, "Nation Branding."

17. Benjamin, quoted and discussed in Koepnick, *Walter Benjamin*, 195.

18. Kenneth Ruoff has made a similar argument about Japan's wartime tourism culture and industry. Ruoff, *Imperial Japan*.

19. Dower, "Useful War."

20. It is important to note here that the design historian and curator Mori Hitoshi has long been a vocal proponent of thinking transwar, and his extensive research supports this argument by carefully charting a range of important personal connections that extended from the war years, specifically advertising design specialists involved with the Imperial Rule Assistance Association (IRAA), through the Occupation, and into the 1950s. He often describes the 1950s as a "rebirth" (*saisei*) for Japanese design. See, for example, Mori, "Nihon saikai no 1950 nendai." For historical surveys of Japanese design that also argue for connections across the war, see Nagata, Hida, and Mori, *Nihon kindai dezain-shi*; and with a particular focus on industrial design, see Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*.

21. Nakada, *Kōkoku no naka no Nippon*, 26.

22. See Ōbushi, *Shiryō ga kataru*; and Tinios, "Fragrance of Female Immortals."

23. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 3, 19–23.

24. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 106. For a discussion of the history of *chindonya*, see Abe, *Resonances of Chindon-ya*. For the corporate history of Kirin beer, see Kirin Bīru Kabushiki Kaisha Kōhōshitsu and Kirin Bīru Kabushiki Kaisha Shashi Hensan Iinkai, *Kirin Bīru no rekishi*.

25. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 111–12.

26. The Tokyo School of Fine Arts (Tōkyō Bijutsu Gakkō, present-day Tokyo University of the Arts [Tōkyō Geijutsu Daigaku]) established a design section in 1896, one of the first art schools to do so. Later, in May 1923, the section was subdivided into a division for design (*zuan*) and a division for architecture (*kenchiku*). Larger governmental initiatives, however, had established independent design schools prior to this in the mid-Meiji period to promote product design and national industry for the benefit of the Japanese economy. Tokyo Higher Industrial School (Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgyō Gakkō) was the first official school, originally founded in 1881 as the Tokyo Worker's School (Tōkyō Shokkō Gakkō), renamed Tokyo Industrial School (Tōkyō Kōgyō Gakkō) in 1890, and then renamed as a higher school of industrial arts in 1901 when the industrial design department (*kōgyō zuanka*) was added. In 1914 the school's industrial design division was merged with the Tokyo School of Fine Arts and abolished. Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgyō Gakkō, *Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgyō Gakkō nijūgo nenshi*. When the Tokyo Higher Industrial School abolished its design division in 1914, the division director, the prominent Western-style artist Matsuoka Hisashi, began discussions with the Ministry of Education about establishing a new school dedicated to industrial art and design education. This new institution, the Tokyo Higher School of Industrial Arts (Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgei Gakkō), was officially opened in 1922 with Matsuoka as school director. For a detailed discussion of the influential school curriculum, see Mori, "Tōkyō Kōtō Kōgei Gakkō," 23.

A parallel institution, the Kyoto Higher School of Industrial Arts (Kyōto Kōtō Kōgei Gakkō), was established in the western Kansai area in 1902. It is now called the Kyoto Institute of Technology (Kyōto Kōgei Seni Daigaku). Sarah Teasley provides an excellent historical survey of design education in Japan with a primary focus on industrial design. Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, 86–101. On early design educators, see also Fujita, "Nōtomi Kaijiro"; and Amagai, "Japanese Industrial Design Concepts."

27. Cheng, *Ornamentalism*.

28. For Murayama's important role in communicating the avant-garde graphic styles of international constructivism, see Weisenfeld, *Mavo*, 165–215.

29. Suga, "Modernism, Commercialism."

30. Aynsley, "Pressa Cologne, 1928." See also the "Pressa Exhibition in Cologne / Internationale Presse-Ausstellung in Köln," The Fostinum: A Photographic Collection, accessed February 23, 2022, <https://www.fostinum.org/pressa-exhibition-in-cologne.html>.

31. Nakada Sadanosuke, "Kokuritsu Bauhausu (I)," *Mizue*, no. 244 (June 1925): 2–7; Nakada, "Kokuritsu Bauhausu (II)," *Mizue*, no. 245 (July 1925): 8–12; Nakada, "Bauhausu Goki," *Mizue*, no. 248 (October 1925): 37–38; Nakada, "Wārutā Guropiusu Susan," *Kenchiku shinchō* 6, no. 10 (October 1925): 1–5; and Nakada, "Bauhausu o kataru," *Kōgei jidai* 2, no. 1 (January 1927): 113–22. Murayama Tomoyoshi was also instrumental in introducing the design theories of artists associated with the Bauhaus, particularly László Moholy-Nagy. See Murayama, *Kōseiha kenkyū*.

32. Čapková, "Transnational Networkers"; and Čapková, "Bauhaus."

33. Yamano, *Dezain to Bauhausu*.

34. Jan Tschichold, "The Composite Photograph and Its Place in Advertising," *Commercial Art*, no. 9 (July–December 1930): 238, 244, 248.

35. Phillips, introduction, 28.

36. Roberts, *Art of Interruption*, 35.

37. Nakai, *Nihon kōkoku hyōgen gijutsushi*, 145–46, 159.
38. Lees-Maffei, “Production—Consumption—Mediation Paradigm.”
39. The extant copies of these journals in private Japanese collections and institutional archives are evidence of their availability in the Japanese design community.
40. For a detailed history of the modern Japanese poster and advertising in a national and international media context, see Takeuchi, *Kindai kōkoku no tanjō*.
41. Tada Hokuu, “Posutā no kōka to gikō,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 2:38. For more on Tada, see Weisenfeld, “Tada Hokuu.”
42. Kawahata, “Kokusaku senden,” 143.
43. The history and status of Japanese business archives and company histories are discussed in Matsuzaki, “Business Archives in Japan.” I am grateful to the Japan Business Archives Association for its invaluable assistance. The 1922 launching of the New York Art Directors Club indicates that recognition of the new professional role of art directors was an international trend.
44. For a discussion of the construction of the term *bijutsu*, see Kitazawa, *Me no shinden*, 105–55. It was not until 1927 that the Bunten, renamed in 1918 the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition (Teikoku Bijutsuin Tenrankai, abbreviated as Teiten), inaugurated an “industrial arts” (*bijutsu kōgei*) section in which design and decorative arts were exhibited.
45. Hamada, “Shōgyō bijutsu sōron,” in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:15.
46. Bogart, *Artists, Advertising*, 7.
47. Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, 59. For an overview of Japan’s early exhibitionary history and subsequent participation in world’s fairs and domestic expositions, see Edo Tōkyō Hakubutsukan and Edo Tōkyō Rekishi Zaidan, *Hakuran toshi Edo Tōkyō*. And for information about the arts and crafts exhibited at Meiji expositions, see Tōkyō Kokuritsu Bunkazai Kenkyūjo Bijutsubu, *Meijiiki bankoku hakurankai*. Also, Yoshimi Shunya’s landmark study explores the political implications of modernity’s expository gaze; see Yoshimi, *Hakurankai no seijigaku*.
48. The first exhibition was titled the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce Exhibition of Design and Applied Works (Nōshōmushō Zuan Oyobi Ōyō Sakuhin Tenrankai), commonly abbreviated as the Nōten.
49. The Ministry of Commerce and Industry was later split again in 1949 to produce the highly influential Ministry of International Trade and Industry, or MITI, which was responsible for crafting Japan’s postwar industrial policy.
50. For a comprehensive historical consideration of the term *kōgei* and its relationship to design discourse, see the excellent study by Mori, *Nihon “kōgei” no kindai*. The brain-child of the ministry bureaucrats Kishi Nobusuke and Yoshino Shinji, the IARI has been in operation under various names and leadership since its founding. Many cities throughout Japan replicated its research model. The center published its journal from 1932 until 1974, with a brief hiatus during the late war years and early Occupation from October 1944 until May 1946. *Kōgei, Kōgei nyūsu*. For a discussion of the important history of the IARI, see Teasley, *Designing Modern Japan*, 98–101, 124, 137–38, 178, 184, 190, 193.
51. Kayano, *Kindai Nihon no dezain bunkashi*, 56–58; Gossot, “L’affiche publicitaire,” 82; and Kashiwagi, “Nihon no kindai dezain,” 169. For the influence of Asai Chū in the transformation of the conception of design in Japan, see Marquet, “Asai Chū to ‘zuan,’” 178–79, 182.

52. Fujimoto and Shihashi, *Kōkoku yarō gojūnen*, 185.
53. Hamada, "Shōgyō bijutsu sōron," in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:15.
54. Saga Kenritsu Bijutsukan, *Nihon kindai yōga no eiga*.
55. Hamada, "Shōgyō bijutsu sōron," in Kitahara, *GSBZ*, 24:11–13.
56. Harada, "Japanese Looks at His Country's Advertising," 266, 268.
57. Aynsley, *Graphic Design in Germany*, 12.
58. Quoted in Namba, *Uchiteshi yaman*, 21.
59. Fujita, *Gendai dezain ron*, 182–86.
60. "Sanbyakuman no Tōkyō shimin nekkyō seshimetaru kōkokusai no gyōretsū," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 5 (May 1930): 4.
61. "Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita: Sanka kōkokunushi no mita kōkokusai," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 5 (May 1930): 51.
62. "Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita," 51.
63. "Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita," 51.
64. "Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita," 52.
65. "Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita," 54.
66. "Kōkoku sōshoku wa kōshite dekita," 57.
67. "Sanbyakuman no Tōkyō shimin nekkyō," 4–9; and Nagaoka Itsurō, "Rittai kōkoku jidai kuru," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 5 (May 1930): 23–24.
68. Murota Kurazō, "Henshū goki," *Kōkokukai* 7, no. 5 (May 1930): 92.

CHAPTER 1. PROMOTING THE PROFESSION

Epigraph: Hamada Masuji, "Shōgyō bijutsu sōron," in Kitahara Yoshio, ed., *Gendai shōgyō bijutsu zenshū* (Tokyo: Ars, 1930), 24:13.

1. Regina Blaszczyk coined the term *fashion intermediaries* to describe magazine editors and retail buyers. See Blaszczyk, *Producing Fashion*; and Jones, *Beauty Imagined*, 7.
2. Published by the company Uindo Gahōsha. The American Window Manufacturers Association began publishing the US trade journal *The Show Window* in 1898.
3. Photography was introduced to Japan in the mid-nineteenth century and was largely employed for commercial purposes: portraits and tourist postcards. It began to appear in print advertising from the late 1890s and came to prominence only in the late 1920s. The advent of cost-effective technologies of photomechanical reproduction such as the halftone process and offset printing popularized photography in advertising. Mitsukoshi, always a pioneer in advertising and promotion, first set up an in-house photography division in 1907. Nakai, *Komāsharu foto*, 5. The advertising planning division of Oriental Shashin Kōgyō published *Photo Times* from March 1924 to 1941. Kimura Senichi edited the journal, later joined in 1931 by Watanabe Yoshio. Tamura Sakae took over editorship in 1933, and in January 1941, due to wartime exigencies, the journal was merged with *Photjournalism* (*Hōdō shashin*). *Kōga* (1932–33; eighteen issues), published by Shūrakusha, was a short-lived but important coterie magazine of an influential group of modernist photographers who were also engaged in commercial photography, including Nojima Yasuzō, Nakayama Iwata, Kimura Ihee, and critic Ina Nobuo. Iizawa, *Kōga*.
4. Marcel Emile, "Les Galeries Lafayette: The Art of Window Display," *Commercial Art* 2, no. 9 (March 1927): 118.