



Forms in Modernism: The Unity of Typography, Architecture and the Design Arts 1920s-1970s

Virginia Smith

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What do typefaces and buildings have in common? A great deal, according to typographic design expert, and former university professor, Virginia Smith. Smith believes that typography is the unifying discipline through which we can understand, analyze, and compare form in a wide range of visual media. This visually delightful book sets out to prove that point, by studying forms - shapes and their varieties and permutations - in all of the other design arts. The main focus is on architecture, but the book also looks at fashion, furniture, and common artifacts. Smith believes that there is a "visual landscape" of periods in design, where all of the visual arts treat form in similar ways. FORMS IN MODERNISM identifies some of these similarities - including striping, skewing, stretching, compressing, and elongating - across media. All of her examples appeared in the first half of the 20th Century, and lasted from early European modernism up through the American mid-century and the International Style. More than just a book designed to prove a thesis, FORMS IN MODERNISM provides an interesting visual journey through the styles of the first half of the last century.

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