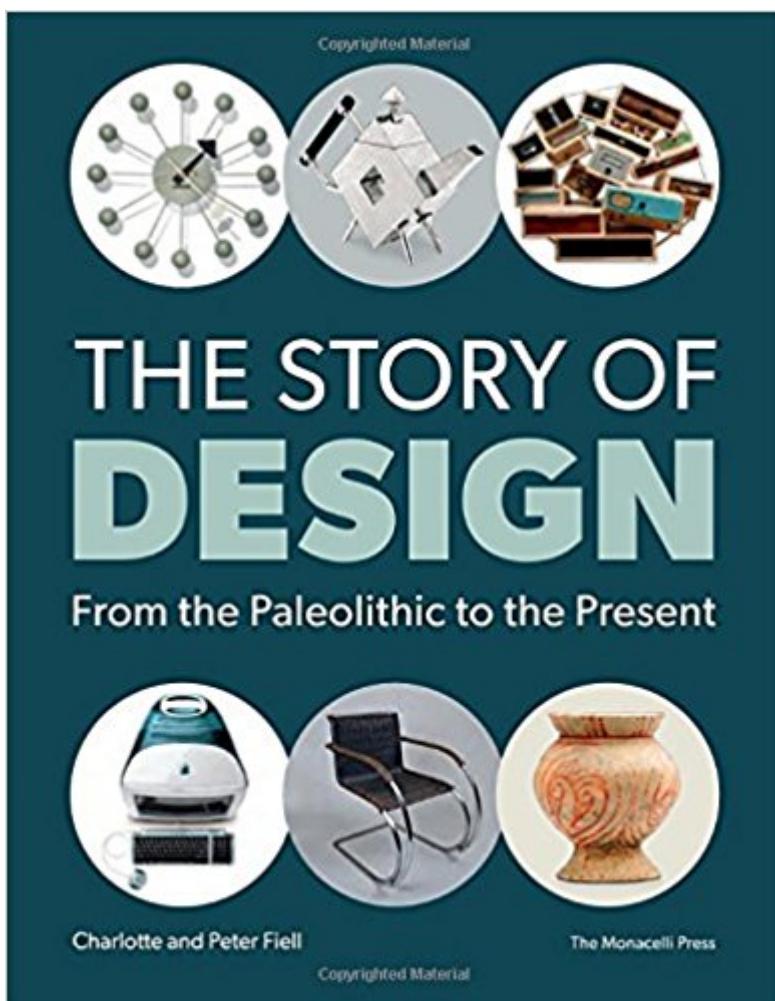


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# The Story Of Design: From The Paleolithic To The Present



## Synopsis

Encompassing the fields of architecture, graphics, industrial design, and interior design, this definitive account surveys design from the prehistoric era and the ancient world, through the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution and Modern Movement, to our own digital era. Design is the story of how all man-made things came into being; its history is as long as the history of humanity. A multidisciplinary approach to problem solving that has always uniquely reflected humankind's aspirations, needs, and desires, design has both shaped and mirrored the spirit of our times. The Story of Design is a multifaceted account that is truly comprehensive in its scope, introducing the styles, movements, theories, materials, processes, technologies, pioneers, and companies that have shaped every significant era of design. Contextualizing developments in design with regard to wider social, cultural, and political concerns, this is an indispensable overview of creative enterprise in the pursuit of more useful, more beautiful, more effective objects, tools, and products. Through authoritative text, careful analysis, and hundreds of exquisite illustrations leading authorities Charlotte and Peter Fiell uncover the real importance of this unique yet all-encompassing creative activity, and assess its crucial role in the future of society.

## Book Information

Paperback: 512 pages

Publisher: The Monacelli Press (October 25, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1580934706

ISBN-13: 978-1580934701

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 1.2 x 9.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 3.6 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 17 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #303,939 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #129 in Books > Arts & Photography > Decorative Arts & Design > Design History & Criticism #168 in Books > Arts & Photography > Decorative Arts & Design > Industrial & Product Design

## Customer Reviews

Charlotte and Peter Fiell are leading authorities on the history, theory and criticism of design and have written over fifty books on the subject. Charlotte studied at the British Institute in Florence and at Camberwell College of Arts (UAL), London, where she studied the History of Drawing and Printmaking with Material Science. She later trained at Sotheby's Institute of Art in London,

where Peter had also previously studied. In the late 1980s the Fiells opened a design gallery in London's King's Road and through this acquired a rare hands-on knowledge of modern design. In 1991, the Fiells' first book Modern Furniture Classics since 1945 was published to widespread acclaim. Shortly afterward, Peter received an MA in Design Studies from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design (UAL), London, and the Fiells decided to concentrate exclusively on communicating design more widely through authorship, curation, and teaching. From 1993 to 2007, they were the Editors-in-Charge of design books at Taschen, and subsequently established their own design-led imprint in 2008, which later merged with the Carlton Publishing Group. In 2013 they moved to Chipping Campden, Gloucestershire, drawn by its associations with the British Arts and Crafts Movement, and where they continue to work as freelance authors, editors, and publishing consultants, as well as working increasingly within the realm of design legacy management.

Excellent resource. Helps me with teaching!

What an incredibly fascinating book! I've been thumbing through it for the last several days and find myself engrossed in the pages again and again. I am just an amateur to design so the writing style and the simple explanations were perfect for me. The framing of history through the lens of design was perfectly executed and the accompanying photos were appropriately selected to show the concepts discussed. The pages are glossy, the photos sharp, everything you want in a coffee table book with the added benefit that you get to learn so much. Among the more fascinating topics: planned obsolescence. How it used to be that engineers tried to create a product that was durable and well made, but the problem arose that once a consumer bought that high-quality item, they didn't need to buy it again. So in the 20s, they began to rebrand things. Designers replaced some engineers and they began to redesign the exterior of products so that even though it was essentially the same thing on the inside, it was new and shiny on the outside and the new would be fashionable and the old was just a has-been and got tossed in the trash. And thereby our consumer-based economy was born. I think we're seeing a re-branding now. It used to be a a razor was just a razor and soap was just soap, but now they're repackaged so that men need a specific soap and razor, and women need a different soap and razor for some reason. That's just one example of the fascinating tidbits that I've encountered in this book. Can't recommend the book enough, definitely worth the read. By the way, I would recommend the paperback because it's a thick book. Even with the paperback my wrists were complaining. I'm sure if I had the hardback I'd have been suffering

greatly.

An impressive and thoughtful history of design that covers it all in five hundred pages. Design historians Charlotte and Peter Fiell pull together the various creative strands stretching back over the centuries. Though they start with simple tools created by earliest man I think the story really begins with Middle Age craftsman and then takes off with the development of mass production, in the eighteenth century, allowing the same item to be made thousands of times. A good example of this is the simple but elegant model fourteen cafe chair designed by Michael Thonet in 1859. It cost less than a bottle of wine and by 1891 had sold 7.3 million units. Thonet's mass produced simple chair was made a little later than the 1851 Great Exhibition at Crystal Palace, London, housed in a huge glass pavilion. The chapter called 'High Victorian style and dishonest design' reveals that many of the exhibits were of questionable design and manufacture. They had been chosen to represent the best of contemporary art and production but the consumer items were covered with ornament and heavy patterns, the more excessive the better, the complete opposite of Thonet's chair. The book reveals plenty of examples of good design versus commercial mass-market products and the reasons for the existence of both. I thought the coverage impressively broad with a chapters on, for example, Springfield Armory and the American Civil War, Vienna Secessionists, WW2 military design, Memphis and the last chapter on 3D printing. One of the strengths of the book is the way the editorial is divided into sections. The twenty chapters are each split into three, four or five additional clearly defined sections revealing the various design themes and styles which makes them very accessible to the reader. There are also several hundred photos and graphics (all beautifully printed on a matt art paper) to illustrate the text. I thought the book was a fascinating and revealing explanation of why things look like they do and how they got that way. Nicely the writing is jargon free so that the pages can be enjoyed by the general reader or design professionals.

Wow! What an awesome journey through history of mankind on Design. The language in the book is almost like a subtle poetry at times, as if we are being flown through a time-machine, with a commentary on the achievements of mankind on Design. First of all, I would like to comment on the actual physical quality of the book. I got the soft cover book. And the quality of the paper, the cover, the illustrations, the photos - it's premium; something you would cherish and keep in your great room library. This book has been an initiator of lots many conversations between me and my 8 year old daughter, we would pick some area, some photo, research about it, and learn on the internet. The authors are renowned folks in the field of Design. And it shows in the way they reflect

on the subject. A reviewer by the name of 'Robin' has put a great review of this book with so many "screen-shots" of the book - I applaud him for his effort. The book takes you through the various eras and thinks over personalized individualized design and commercial bulk producing items. Simple things like chairs, wine bottles, clocks - the kind of stuff we take for granted, how did they come to be? Everything that man has produced, you feel proud of after reading this book. I highly encourage you to take the journey of mankind through Design with the authors. I recommend this book for your home use, for encouraging kids in this era of smart phones and computers - a welcome break into paper, for school libraries, for workplace book clubs. Great book, great price, and a subject that will stay the course of time, and is immortal - even if we colonize to Mars, the one thing that will always stay in our nature as explorers and inventors - Design.

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