

# Graphic design and architecture



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An individual's preconceptions of design play a role in how that individual views and creates aesthetic imagery. In order to achieve unique results, graphic design elements have often been applied to contemporary architecture, incorporating a dynamic two dimensional environment into a pragmatic three dimensional space. Graphic design results in works that are more ephemeral, fundamentally lacking the rigid laws of physics that ultimately bound architecture. When coupled with architectural structures, this results in a fluidity of design that stems from the creator's definition of design. Architecture and graphic design are fundamentally linked as communication tools, they may be coupled to create unique modern results, and the theory of design plays a role in cross-over of design elements between the two design disciplines. Architecture and graphic design are fundamentally applied forms of design, or those that work within a pragmatic framework and often designed for commercial applications (Andruchow). The two types of design share a fundamental goal: communication. Architectural design seeks to communicate to the viewer or occupant many different messages, ranging from practical issues such as how to navigate a building to more subjective areas, such as communicating the culture of the buildings intended occupants. Architecture used as a communication tool is particularly evident in modern constructions, such as the Prada building in New York, in which architecture is utilized to convey a brand image. The Prada building provides a unique example of the coupling of elements of graphic design with those of architectural design. The commonly accepted elements of design apply across the fields of design, and the Prada design leverages the elements of line, shape, texture, space, size, value, and color in both a three-dimensional architectural form and a two-dimensional

juxtaposition of elements across the architectural form (Tuscaloosa K-12). The color palate chosen mimics the human forms of mannequins and Prada products, using graphic communication to engender a sense of a space enclosing, almost as if attentive to the customer (2x4, Inc.). The juxtaposition of elements used architecture and graphic design to promote a sense of urgency and a sense of personal isolation, as if the Prada client is the star in a theatre, where it seems hundreds of eyes focus on their every move. In a modern sense, the definition of design has grown from mere aesthetic sense and the ability to create attractive objects to a complex interaction to plan and produce desired outcomes through the senses (Andruchow). The changing face of design as an industry responsive to cultural and technological changes has made it difficult to establish a defined body of graphic design theory, as graphic design is often applied to many media types, ranging from web and print to dynamic integration with architecture (Andruchow). Graphic design may be applied to architecture to communicate a more complex message than permitted by architectural forms alone. Additionally, graphic design may provide a media less limited by constraints of both physics—often resulting in architectural forms that are impossible to erect or prohibitively expensive—that may be coupled with architectural forms to enhance the messages communicated by these structures. Graphic design enhances architecture by establishing a less physically limited, and often more cost effective, method for communicating the message of the structure to onlookers and occupants that can be understood by examining the link between architectural and graphic design as communication tools, the unique results of combining the two design forms, and the theory of design. Because graphic design is primarily a two-

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dimensional form of design, graphic elements may be applied to three-dimensional architectural surfaces in order to generate unique forms.

Additional of unexpected elements, such as human forms in the case of the Prada store design, to architectural design can elicit an emotional response from onlookers. In the case of commercial venues, like the Prada store, this can serve the creator's purpose of reinforcing brand image and establishing urgency. Works Cited 2x4, Inc. Portrait of a studio in 1000 images. New York, accessed 19 July 2011. . Andruchow, Robert. Defining Design. University of ALberta MDes Thesis Program, accessed 19 July 2011. . Tuscaloosa K-12. The Basics of Graphic Design. Tuscaloosa City Schools Online Technology Learning Center, accessed 19 July 2011. .