

**What world events influenced design in this period?**

**This was a decade of friction, revolt and change—geopolitically and artistically.** The blood shed began with the **Russo-Japanese War**, 1904-05. It was the result of the Russian and Japanese Empires' rival ambitions over Manchuria and Korea.

On **Bloody Sunday** in 1905, thousands of starving and oppressed Russian workers went on strike. Over 150,000 signed a petition demanding changes that “would overcome the ignorance and legal oppression of the Russian people”. The protest incited the first of several Russian revolutions that would by 1917 bring down the Czarist Russian Empire.

In the same year, 21 people, including 18 African-Americans, died in **race riots** in Atlanta, Georgia. Three years later the **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People** (NAACP) was founded. Race riots, against the Chinese and Japanese communities, also took place in Vancouver in 1907.

In 1906, a group of **B.C. First Nations Chiefs**, including Chief Joe Capilano, travelled to London to present a petition of grievances to King Edward VII. Their demands (to be allotted sufficient land to meet their needs and to be remunerated for the lands taken from them) were ignored. B.C. First Nations are still fighting for land rights.

Since the 17th century, the Great Qing imperial dynasty ruled China. A series of rebellions by state troops in 1911 led to the collapse of imperialism and a **Chinese Republic** was proclaimed. **Sun Yat-sen** was named the first president of the Republic. Vancouver's classical Chinese garden is named after him because of his efforts to promote cultural understanding between China and the rest of the world.

In 1914 the assassination of the heir to the Austrian throne, **Archduke Franz Ferdinand**, led to Austria declaring war on Serbia. This resulted in the outbreak of **World War I**. Over 15 million soldiers and civilians from 32 countries died in the conflict, with about another 25 million wounded. The total number of casualties was larger than the population of Canada. The same year the war began, an immigrant ship, the **Komagata Maru**, was refused entry to the port of Victoria, B.C. 20 South Indian passengers die in the confrontation.

**What were the key scientific/technological influences?**

**Science:** In 1910, the passing of **Haley's Comet** was recorded for the fourth time in history. Thousands of people feared the end of the world, as they had in 1682, 1607 and 1531.

**Transportation:** In 1914 the 82 km long Panama Canal was completed—over 30 years after construction began. The **Trans-Siberian Railway**—which took almost as long—was completed in 1916. It connected Moscow to the Russian Far East and remains the longest railway line in the world. In 1908 the **Model T Ford** was introduced. As the first affordable automobile, the car opened independent

travel to middle-class Americans. Four years later, after hitting an iceberg off the coast of Newfoundland, the **RMS Titanic** sank on her maiden voyage. About 700 of the 2200 passengers and crew survived.

**Technology:** In 1907 the Lumiere brothers used potato starch to create their **Autochrome colour negative process**. It heralded the birth of colour photography. That same year, Winsor McCay's **Gertie the Dinosaur** became the first keyframe animated film.

**What were the key design and literary influences?**

Artist, architect and designer **Peter Behrens** is considered to be **the father of visual identity design** (branding). In 1908, AEG (Allgemeine Elektrizitäts-Gesellschaft) retained him as an artistic consultant. His work for the German electricity company resulted in the first comprehensive visual identity program. Like William Morris, Behrens was interested in graphic design and typography, including typographic reform and sans-serif typefaces. He designed several typefaces including Behrens-Schrift, Behrens Mediaeval, Behrens-Antiqua and Behrens Kursiv.

Behrens was involved in the **Deutscher Werkbund**, founded by **Hermann Muthesius** in 1907. Unlike the Wiener Werkstatte in Vienna, the Deutscher Werkbund adopted the pragmatic approach of the French art nouveau movement. It fostered links between artists and industrialists. Muthesius wanted to develop a German identity of excellence through design and architecture. **Walter Gropius** and **Ludwig Mies van der Rohe** were two young designers involved in the Werkbund. They both went on to become directors of the Bauhaus School. The Werkbund also published several journals including **Die Form** which covered experimental design, typography and photography. Behrens' work for AEG demonstrated the viability of the Werkbund's ideas. By 1913 **Germany had overtaken Great Britain** in its contribution to world production.

**Lucian Bernhard** was a self-taught German artist who unintentionally created a radical new direction in poster design in 1905. He was asked to design a poster for **Priester Matches**. Faced with a tight deadline, he reduced the poster to two basic elements: the product name, and a product image. Using simple, flat, boldly coloured illustration, he created a message that was both impactful and effective. The client loved it and the style caught on. It became known as **plakatstil (poster style)**. The Berlin lithography firm of **Hollerbaum and Schmidt** monopolised production of such posters by contracting Bernhard and a number of his peers, including **Hans Rudi Erdt**, to work exclusively for them. **Ludwig Hohlwein** was another adopter of the simplistic style. These German advertising posters were the earliest examples of what we now call brand advertising—advertising that focuses on brand



recognition (remembering the name and style) rather than extolling the product attributes.

The **American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA)** was founded in New York in 1914. In 1920, it became the first graphic arts organization to include women designers. AIGA now has a network of over 25,000 members. At this point graphic design is still referred to as an applied art, not design.

### What were the key cultural influences?

#### Architecture:

**Peter Behrens** was one of the leaders of architectural reform at the turn of the century. He chose to design sleek, modern structures reminiscent of Rennie-Mackintosh and the Vienna Secession. He was a major designer of factories and office buildings in brick, steel and glass. His 1908 **AEG Turbine Factory** design is an early example of industrial classicism. Walter Gropius, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and the Swiss-French architect **Le Corbusier** were among Behrens's assistants. All three later became important figures in the modern architecture movement in Europe. Another less well-known European architect of the time was **Adolf Loos**. His theories on modern architecture were influential.

The young American architect **Frank Lloyd Wright** studied his craft under Louis Sullivan "the father of the skyscraper". He set up his own practise in Chicago in 1893 and became one of the founders of the Arts and Crafts inspired **Prairie School** of architecture. Lloyd Wright quickly became the driving force in the U.S. modern architecture movement.

In 1913 New York's 60-storey **Woolworth Building** became the tallest in the world. New York's **Grand Central** railway terminus and Penn Station opened in the same year. Both were built in the **Beaux Arts style**. Grand Central Station is famous for its elaborate style, celestial ceiling mural and four-faced clock.

#### Fashion:

Throughout the Victorian era skirts gradually narrowed and—with the help of S-bend corsets—the emphasis was increasingly placed on the bust. Influential French designer Paul Poiret's introduction of oriental influences later contributed to softer silhouettes and a move away from corsets and figure-hugging contours.

#### Popular culture:

The Anglo-Irish playwright **George Bernard Shaw** wrote over 60 plays around the turn of the century. An admirer of his contemporaries William Morris and John Ruskin, his work often addressed social and ethical issues. His comedy **Man and Superman** opened in London in 1905. It explored German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophical ideas about the evolution of mankind. Shaw opened plays in London and New York.

By 1905 the cinema's popularity was growing fast and there were close to 10,000 movie theatres in the U.S. In 1914 **Charles Chaplin** appeared for the first time in

his self-created role as **The Tramp**. His iconic character went on to entertain audiences for almost 20 years

### What were the key artistic influences?

Japanese artists learned perspective from European painters, while French painters moved still further from their realist roots with the exploration of **cubism**.

**Paul Cezanne** was the primary force, adopting the lack of perspective he saw in Japanese art. He began dismissing logic and playing with ambiguous perspectives. **Pablo Picasso** and Cézanne were on the same journey of discovery. Their use of shifting planes and multiple viewpoints would define the cubist movement. Picasso also took inspiration from African masks and sculptures, as he began to emulate their abstracted forms e.g. **Les Femmes d'Alger (O.J.)**, 1907. Others involved in the cubist movement include: **Georges Braque (France)**, **Marcel Duchamp (France)**, **Paul Klee (Switzerland)**, **Fernand Léger (France)**, **Marcel Duchamp (France)**, **George Grosz (Germany)** and **Juan Gris (Spain/France)**.

Around the same time as cubism emerged, another group of artists formed in France called **Les Fauves (the wild beasts)**. Their name came from their use of vibrant colour and fierce brushwork. This group, included **Henri Matisse**, **Georges Braque**, **Raoul Dufy** and **Marc Chagall**. The **expressionist** post-impressionist movement also emerged in the first decade of the twentieth century. The expressionist painters portrayed their feelings in a more visceral, and often dark way. **Vincent Van Gogh (Netherlands)**, **Paul Gauguin (France)**, **Edvard Munch (Norway)** and **Wassily Kandinsky (Russia)** were all important figures in the expressionist movement. Kandinsky (who would later teach at the Bauhaus School) founded the **Der Blaue Reiter (The Blue Rider)** German expressionist group. Other expressionists include: **Max Beckmann (Germany)**, **Paul Klee (Switzerland)**, **Oskar Kokoschka (Austria)**, **Amedeo Modigliani (Italy/France)** and **Jean Dubuffet (France)**.

In 1913 these painters participated, along with over 200 other European and North American artists, in a huge art exhibition at the 69th Regiment Armory in New York. **The Armory Show** has been called the most important exhibition ever held in the United States as it changed the way Americans thought about modern art. Not all the artists on show were radicals: works by American painter **Edward Hopper** and Canadian painter **David Milne** were also represented.

In Italy the focus was on the future and the speed of the modern world. **Filippo Tommaso Emilio Marinetti** was an Italian poet and editor who founded the **Futurist movement**. He brought attention to the movement with his 1909 **Futurist Manifesto** that was published in the Le Figaro French newspaper. Others in the movement included: **Umberto Boccioni (Italy)**, **Carlo Carrà (Italy)**, **Giacomo Balla (Italy)**, and **Natalia Goncharova (Russia)**.