

WORLD SUMMIT, KARLSTAD 2010

WS EDUCATION: PROMOTING CREATIVITY

Start the helicopter!

The Essentials of Visual Communication from new angels.

Bo Bergström



There is a risk of inbreeding as a communicator when collecting information and inspiration from familiar and safe places only.

We are no islands but the mainland, so, start the helicopter and you will find so much you can use, that you might not know exit. Distance gives clarity and from the helicopter you can see clearly.

Out there you will find many different professionals, which have something to tell.

They will all come up on stage and through my intermediary give their views on visual communication.

It will be a big meeting which might provide new angles and more nuance.

Fasten your seat belt, we are taking off.



The spotter

This spotter does not only have an eye on how people dress, what they eat or whispering about but also how the texts and images get new meanings in a new era.

For example, the image above is perceived as a warm portrayal of a grandfather teaching his grandchild to play piano, at least many, many years ago when it was published. But today? When we can read, almost every day, about the clergy abusing children. What do we really see in the picture? Time and the spirit of time thus create new meanings.



The surrealist

Few have such a good overview of the communicative texts and images as the editor of a newspaper. He not only chooses the texts and images but get them to interplay in a sensible way. The same applies to a creative team at an advertising agency, as they know that a tempting interplay between a headline and a photograph can strengthen the message to unprecedented heights.

They let themselves be inspired by the surrealist, the artist, who knows how to interplay with text and image. The tools are *harmony* and *disharmony*. In the first case text and image are interplaying in harmony in order to teach something, like in a cookbook. In the second case the purpose is to generate attention and lure us into ads and banners by using disharmony, that is text and image say different things, as above, the surrealist to the left and a poster to the right.

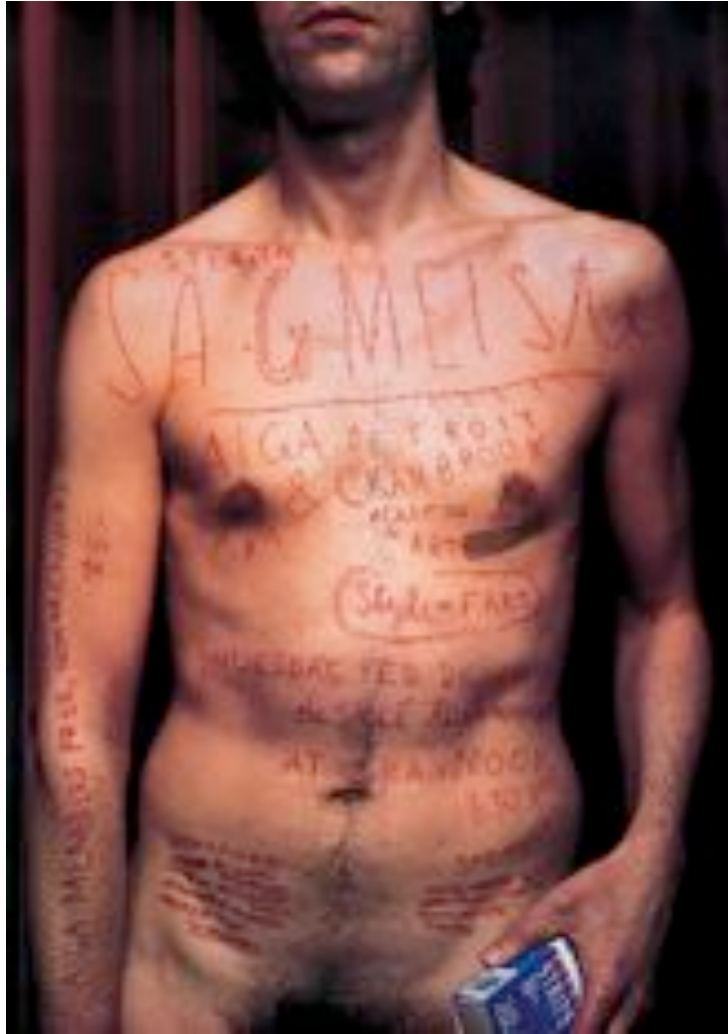


The rhetorician

Some rhetoricians don't talk, they have no requirements to act as a Churchill or an Obama, no, they use image rhetoric that quietly reaching us and touches us deeply.

Synecdoche is one of many rhetoric images and is about the part saying something about the whole. Like the hotel sign above with a missing L and no one cares to put it back again. It says a lot about the hotel (maybe a long time without guests) and about a city in hopeless poverty.

Metaphor is a comparison picture, which Tele2 uses to make us understand how different, bold and attractive their company is. They compare themselves quite simply with a black sheep, he is called Frank.



The dermatologist

She has a good insight in visual communication and can teach us a lot about the skin and how useful it is when communicating.

The skin is the body's largest organ, which protect against infections, loss of body fluids, let us feel heat and cold and in particular enables desirable close contact with others.

In visual communication the skin is frequently used. It is written in, torn, carved, printed, glued and tattooed on. No one can look away.



The researcher

A researcher has actually more to say about visual communication than you might think. And what he conveys is simply stated: “Simplify the message, concentrate on the most important, nothing else. The less you send to the receiver, the more he or she will build up in their heads. As simple as that!”

Researchers call it *information* (the slim message) and *exformation* (what is build in the head of the receiver).



The thief

Many communication amateurs google a word, click “images” and thereby simplify the creative image search. They steal images instead of creating them.

It is important to know that what you find on Google is the answer to what you should **not** use.

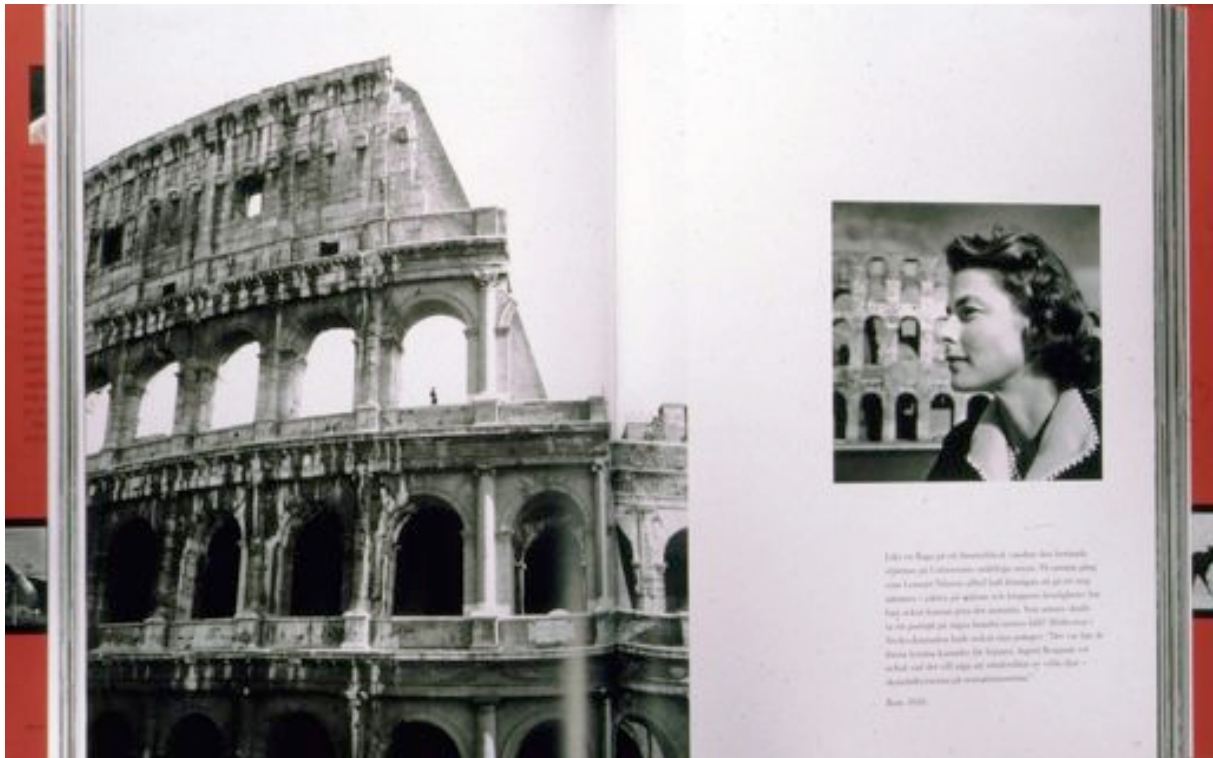
Otherwise, there is a significant risk that the communicative work becomes enormous conventional and traditional. As above, the word was participation.



The artist

Why communicate from A to Z when it might be more tempting for the receiver to read the message from Z to A?

The pop band Oasis would introduce their latest (last) CD and decided to do everything opposite. Instead of starting with the commercials and posters, they invited street singers of New York to a studio in SoHo. There the Gallagher brothers rehearsed all the songs with them, when fully skilled the street singers were sent out to their familiar street scenes. The New Yorkers immediately sensed how fresh tracks the musicians were playing and the cd quickly became a success.



The psychologist

Among all available psychologists, we choose a specialist, psychologist of learning, who constructs so-called *reinforcement schedules* to tempt us into a catalogue, a magazine or a website. He not only attracts us to step inside but also makes us want to turn the page and click us further and further inside.

The solution is called a *variable-interval reinforcement* that no one can resist. You just have to see what is coming up next. Variation vitalizes an article, a brochure and a website and motivates the reader to assimilate the complete material.

Books to read

Below you will find some of the books on visual communication and image communication, which the lecturer has written.



Effektiv visuell kommunikation, Bo Bergström, Carlssons, 2009 (seventh edition)
Essentials of Visual Communication, Bo Bergström, Laurence King Publishing, London, 2008 (also in Spanish, Portuguese, Polish, Hungarian and Latvian).
Bild & Budskap, Bo Bergström, Carlssons, 2003
Samspel text bild, Bo Bergström, Carlssons, 2010

More information about the lecturer you will find on www.bobergstrom.se

