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Seven Questions for 'Font Fetishist' Reed Seifer

By Stephanie Murg on November 12, 2012 3:50 PM



(Courtesy Reed Seifer)

We've been fans of graphic designer and artist [Reed Seifer](#) since 2010, when he pulled off a multi-sensory triumph at the Armory Show, simultaneously giving some much-needed visual punch to the art fair's staid branding and infusing cavernous Pier 94 with [an aromatherapeutical concoction designed to make fairgoers forget their recessionary woes](#). Since then, Brooklyn-based Seifer has brought his razor-sharp and wonderfully understated visual sense to other art fairs, book projects ([this one](#) is sure to take your breath away), and identities for galleries such as [Zach Feuer](#), [CRG](#), and [James Graham & Sons](#). Read on to learn about Seifer's favorite font, his recent project for the freshly expanded [Sean Kelly Gallery](#), and his formative meeting with—*gasp!*—[Paul Rand](#).

1. You work with a lot of clients in the art world, including The Armory Show, Creative Time, and top galleries. How did you come to specialize in working with these very aesthetically minded—some might say hypervisual—clients?

As a designer, artist, and minimalist, I feel I have a rare sensibility and understanding of how design and art may compliment one another. In the art world, where many businesses have similar visual identities and graphic practices, having a brand which harnesses well-composed, thoughtful typography makes a potent statement to a hypervisual audience. I love working with words and letterforms in that capacity. I am a font fetishist. So the way I came to specialize in working with hypervisual clients is by doing what I love and promoting myself well.

2. Tell us about the new hand-drawn wordmark you've created for Sean Kelly Gallery:

SEANKELLY

What did you seek to capture in this custom logo?

When I first met with [Sean Kelly](#), he mentioned [Duchamp](#) as being of his favorite artists, so I wished to express the unconventional but as it spoke in the context of typography.

3. Turning to non-custom type, what's your favorite typeface and why?

Comic Sans hands down, because as [Nina Garcia](#) says, "It is the sweatpants of fonts."

4. What was the last book you read?

[Creative Visualization](#) by [Shakti Gawain](#)

5. What is the last thing you bought and loved?

Knee-high soccer socks, red.

6. What do you consider your best or most memorable design encounter?

I met [Paul Rand](#), designer of IBM, ABC, and vintage UPS logos, at an exhibition of his work in Connecticut when I was a teenager. It just so happened that day I went to see the show he was giving a tour of the exhibition to students from RISD. He was up in years and seemed rather surly. When a student asked him what designers he admired today he said, "None." But when I asked him to sign my copy of his book he said, "Reed Seifer, that's a good name." Later I learned he had changed his own name from [Peretz Rosenbaum](#).

7. What do you consider your proudest design moment?

When [the optimism MetroCard I designed](#) was featured on the homepage of *The New York Times* website.

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