Seymour Chwast

Seymour Chwast was born in New York City in 1931. He is a graduate of Cooper Union and there he studied illustration and graphic design. Probably the most famous thing he’s known for is that he is a founding partner of the celebrated Push Pin Group, and is actually the director. Chwast’s design and illustration have been exhibited in major galleries and museums in the United States, Europe, Japan, Brazil, and the Soviet Union. Mr. Chwast and Pushpin were honored at the Louvre in Paris in a two-month “retrospective exhibition” entitled The Push Pin Style. His work was also in the Kunsthocherdmuseum in Zurich, The Gutenberg Museum in Mainz and The Museo de Arte in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Besides that he has had several one-man shows of his painting, sculptures and prints in this country. His posters are in the permanent collection of New York’s Museum of Modern Art, the Cooper Hewitt Museum of the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, the Gutenberg Museum and the Israel Museum. And besides all these honors several books and magazine and newspaper articles were written about Seymour Chwast and he was inducted into the Art Director Hall of Fame.

Seymour Chwast has contributed his rare sense of wit and humor to the field, more than style and technique (which he has many). Although his work is rooted in the decorative traditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they are “keenly conceptual”, and really modern and up to date. There are many parts to Chwast. He is part traditional illustrator or interpreter of texts; part cartoonist or author of concepts; part commentator or graphic pundit. His work then also serves many functions. They highlight, enlighten, and compliment the messages of others. They also really reveal and supplement his imagination. Given the media he’s worked for during his long career his collected work would fill good sized warehouse. He’s had thousands of editorial illustrations. The best of his collection equals more than many artists could produce in a lifetime. Seymour Chwast’s work is classic.