Pretty Ugly: Visual Rebellion in Design

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Aesthetic rampages by the trailblazers of tomorrow's design.
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. The painting The Young Ladies of Avignon by Picasso was initially scorned but is now considered to be seminal to the development of both cubism and modern art. The dissonance and complex rhythm structures of Stravinsky's ballet music The Rite of Spring caused a scandal when it premiered, but the composition now ranks among the most important musical works of the twentieth century.
While art was allowed to be ugly, design had to function. Although for hundreds of years new artistic styles were established through aesthetic upheaval, new trends in graphic design and visual communication were, until recently, variations on what was generally considered to be appealing. But in the last few years, those working in these creative disciplines started to rebel. Dada-esque graphics or unreadable typography began to be used as a way to claim a unique style advantage.
Pretty Ugly is a diverse collection of these recent aesthetic rampages not only in the fields of graphic design and visual communication, but also in product design, furniture design, art, and photography. The originators of this work consciously use unusual or negatively perceived forms, colors, and perspectives in an attempt to blaze new creative trails.
The variety of examples in Pretty Ugly makes clear that creative leadership in today's design world is less a matter of skilled craft and more about mastering elements that give's one's work a unique visual identity. The elements shown here may still be considered by some to by ugly, but they are already influencing the vanguard of tomorrow's design.
Pretty Ugly is edited by former Hort designer Martin Lorenz and his wife Lupi Asensio, who currently work together as Two Points.Net.

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