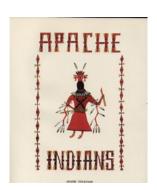**The People's
Graphic Design
Archive**

The People's Graphic Design Archive Announces Launch
The crowd-sourced virtual archive that expands and preserves graphic design history

For immediate release, September 1, 2022– Los Angeles—With contributions currently numbering over 5000 and over 10,000 global users, the site includes everything from finished design projects, process, photos, correspondence, oral histories and interviews to published/unpublished articles and links to other archives. [The People's Graphic Archive](#) (PGDA) launched its innovative archive on September 1, 2022.

This crowd-sourced effort counterbalances conventional gate-keeping for archival materials and instead facilitates collective input on what constitutes graphic design history. Rich tagging allows diverse meanings and interests to emerge with great potential for new historical interpretations. As a research resource, the populated site serves a global audience of scholars, students, educators, and those looking for inspiration without the limits of a physical location. The PGDA represents an inclusive approach to historical preservation and a newly-defined representation of this rich cultural history.

The PGDA was conceived in 2014 in response to the potential loss of remarkable historical design material produced by unrecognized designers. Renowned designer and educator Louise Sandhaus, recently recognized with the [AIGA medal](#), uncovered such materials during the research for her acclaimed book, *[Earthquakes, Mudslides, Fires & Riots: California and Graphic Design, 1936–1986](#)*. Given few archives that preserve graphic design history, the concept was to provide a virtual repository to which anyone could preserve cultural treasures—from anywhere in the world—that would otherwise be lost.

First tested and modeled with Sandhaus' students at California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), the breakthrough came in 2020. Advised by the team behind another crowd-sourced virtual collection, Fonts in Use, the PGDA team launched a living prototype in Notion—an off-the-shelf wiki software.

After receiving generous financial support from Lynda Weinman and Bruce Heavin (founders of Lynda.com), Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, and CalArts, they were able to hire developer Rob Meek and visual designer Abby Chen to realize the project. With the early site now retired, the new, custom platform allows users to quickly and easily add items to the site and offers many ways for viewing, searching, and browsing.

Site Credits
• Co-Directors: Brockett Horne (Northeastern University), Briar Levit (Portland State University, *Graphic Means* and *Baseline Shift*), Morgan Searcy, Louise Sandhaus
• Designer: Abby Chen
• Developer: Rob Meek
• Design Advisors: Stephen Coles, Kate Long, Nick Sherman

peoplesGDarchive.org

As part of The PGDA's ongoing efforts to raise awareness of overlooked history, they mount Graphic Design Roadshows modeled on the popular PBS series Antiques Roadshow and Add-A-Thons. The events allow attendees to particpate in adding items to The People's Graphic Design Archive. These festive events uncover hidden treasures, introduce an audience to PGDA and help build a more comprehensive record of design. Upcoming events will be posted on peoplesgdarchive.org, and announcements will be sent to newsletter subscribers. Everyone is encouraged to become part of this grassroots community effort by creating a free account.

The PGDA is a Letterform Archive Digital Collective member. The Collective is a connected family of online resources for design education, inspiration, and research. To contribute financial support or volunteer to help, contact Louise(at)peoplesGDarchive.org

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