



Hello World: Where Design Meets Life

Alice Rawsthorn

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Hello World is Alice Rawsthorn's definitive guide to design and modern life

Design is one of the most powerful forces in our lives. When deployed wisely, it can bring us pleasure, choice, strength, decency and much more. But if its power is abused, the outcome can be wasteful, confusing, humiliating, even dangerous. None of us can avoid being affected by design, whether or not we wish to. It is so ubiquitous that it determines how we feel and what we do, often without our noticing.

Hello World explores design's influence on our lives. Written by the renowned design critic Alice Rawsthorn and designed by the award-winning book designer Irma Boom, it describes how warlords, scientists, farmers, hackers, activists and designers have used design to different ends throughout history: from the macabre symbol invented by 18th century pirates to terrorise their victims into surrender, to one woman's quest for the best possible prosthetic legs and the evolution of the World Cup ball.

At a time when we face colossal changes, unprecedented in their speed, scale and intensity - from the deepening environmental crisis, to giant leaps in science and technology - Hello World explains how design can help us to make sense of them and to turn them to our advantage.

Hello World: Where Design Meets Life Details

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Author : Alice Rawsthorn

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From Reader Review Hello World: Where Design Meets Life for online ebook

Tomáš Zahradník says

Celkem fascinující a veeelmi obsáhlé poznatky o historii designu. Spoustu p?íb?h? a spojitostí jednotlivých designér? mezi sebou. Pro m? zdlouhavé ?tení, do kterého se mi v?tšinou moc necht?lo, ale p?inosné to p?ecejen bylo.

Rochelle March says

Interesting history of "design thinking," but mostly on the history of product design. Got some great snippets, but was left wanting more. Tough topic to encapsulate, however, in one book. Perhaps her next one will be more pointed.

Ev says

This book was much broader in scope than I expected. Rather than focusing on any one aspect of design, the author discusses "design thinking," a form of problem solving that can be generalized to any area. The examples discussed are compelling; the writing is admirable. Well worth the year wait (I ordered it to my library last July, and here it is now) and the month it took me to get through. And yes, for the record, I did like the tiny margins and Helvetica text.

Veronica Watson says

3.5 Stars

This book was recommended by Paola Antonelli, Senior curator of Design and Architecture at MoMA. I can see why as she is mentioned multiple times in the text and featured heavily in the bibliography. It is an all around good text on design, covering some breadth of historical examples as well a many contemporary ones. As indicated by programming reference in the title, Rawsthorn covers elements of digital and computer design. For me these were the most interesting parts of the book.

Rawsthorn also engages with larger questions about the definition of design, what is good design, why design should be sustainable, and the overall responsibility of design. She does not shy away from voicing her strong opinions on design, many of which I found valid and insightful.

At times I wished that her approach was a bit more art-historically rigorous in approach but I understand that is not what she was trying to do here. However the bibliography seems very good for future research. Also I kind of wish the publisher had been more attentive with the reference images, as they would have benefited from a gloss paper, I could not see the greyscale images in their low resolution! (the Helvetica typeset was very nice though :))

Vuk Trifkovic says

Very good, but not great. The first few chapters are very insightful. However, the rest settles into an essayistic pattern and chapters are bit disconnected.

Odd choice of typography. Helvetica did not work as main text font.

Ninakix says

There is a big difference between practicing something and critiquing it. Which is fine, but this book makes me feel acutely that this is someone who has never practiced design. And that's fine, but the criticism doesn't feel very nuanced or attuned to what all of this means either. This is a "because I like design" kind of book. But at some point, example after example of design and design history becomes just that — a retelling, without meaning or interpretation. Perhaps it would make for a good textbook, except for the bizarre lack of imagery for such a visual field. What little imagery there is seems only incidental in building meaning or insight. Or perhaps it's just the prose that struck me as difficult to absorb and really understand what was being said. Each chapter certainly had a point about design that it wanted to make, but these points didn't feel compelling or in depth. And so I'm just a bit confused.

Kate says

Neat and cleanly written introduction, if not exactly revelatory e.g. on the effectively manipulative gaucheness of Google's logos, "Google's corporate identity excels thanks to its [logo's] aesthetic flaws". I do wonder how persuasive Rawsthorn's centralisation of "integrity," which "embraces environmental and ethical responsibility" in design would be to someone who doesn't already agree with her, as I do; conversely I wished for more of her sophisticated yet clear analysis of particular examples of design meeting life (hello, subtitle) and a little less of the obvious, basic political manifesto stuff.

Martyn Perks says

Useful historically, very knowledgable and broad coverage of design practice. However she's similar to so many: thinks design ought to be more responsible, socially-deterministic and consequently, intervene more in order to give design a broader purpose. Can't agree. She's also packed it with examples from her friends. So can't take the research so seriously. More like an in-the-know view of design. Finally, she ignores many broader social and political reasons of why designers do what they do, and why business need designers more than the other way round.
