



Design Observer



Michael Bierut | Essays

05.27.14

Massimo Vignelli, 1931-2014



I learned how to design at design school. But I learned how to be a designer from Massimo Vignelli.

In June 1980, I graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a bachelor's degree in graphic design, and moved to New York City to take a job at *Vignelli Associates*. I can barely picture the person I was 34 years ago. I was from a middle class suburb on the wrong side of Cleveland, Parma, Ohio, the newly-hired, lowest-ranked employee at Vignelli Associates.



Michael

Bierut studied graphic design at the University of Cincinnati, and has been a partner in the New York office of Pentagram since 1990. Michael is a Senior Critic in Graphic Design at the Yale School of Art.

More from **Michael Bierut**

Remembering Gordon

Michael Bierut remembers the best teacher he ever had, Gordon Salchow.

S6E12: Todd Bracher

Todd Bracher is founder and creative director of Todd Bracher Studio.

S6E11: Valerie Casey

Valerie Casey is head of design at Walmart.

S6E10: Bon Ku

Dr. Bon Ku is assistant dean for health and design at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia.

S6E9: Isolde Brielmaier

Isolde Brielmaier is the executive director of arts culture and community at Westfield World Trade Center.

The tasks I would be doing at my new job would be barely comprehensible to young graphic designers today, menial operations involving rubber cement thinner, X-acto knives and Photostat developer. I was a schlub, a peon, a punk. I knew nothing. Massimo and his wife Lella were to discover very quickly that Parma, Ohio, and Parma, Italy, had very little in common.

Today there is an entire building in Rochester, New York, dedicated to preserving the Vignelli legacy. But in those days, it seemed to me that the whole city of New York was a permanent Vignelli exhibition. To get to the office, I rode in a subway with Vignelli-designed signage, shared the sidewalk with people holding Vignelli-designed Bloomingdale's shopping bags, walked by St. Peter's Church with its Vignelli-designed pipe organ visible through the window. At Vignelli Associates, at 23 years old, I felt I was at the center of the universe.

I was already at my desk on my first day of work when Massimo arrived. As always, he filled the room with his oversized personality. Elegant, loquacious, gesticulating, brimming with enthusiasm. Massimo was like Zeus, impossibly wise, impossibly old. (He was, in fact, 49.) My education was about to begin.

At Vignelli Associates, I was immersed in a world of unbelievable glamour. If you were a designer – even the lowest of the low, like me – Massimo treated you with a huge amount of respect. Everyone passed through that office. I met the best designers in the world there: Paul Rand, Leo Leonni, Joseph Muller-Brockman, Alan Fletcher. And not just designers. I remember one time Massimo was working on a book project with an editor from Doubleday, and he decided to give her a tour of the office. He brought her to my desk and introduced me. It was Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis. “Mrs. Onassis, this is one of our young designers, Michael Bierut,” said Massimo. “It’s an honor to meet you,” said the former First Lady. I think I just said, “Guh, guh, guh.”

From Massimo, I learned that designing a book wasn’t about coming up with a clever place for the page numbers. He taught me about typography, about scale, about pacing, about refinement. I learned to think of graphic design as a way to create an experience, an experience that was not limited to two dimensions or to a momentary impression. It was about creating something lasting, even timeless.

Most importantly, I learned about the world. From my hometown I knew only the Parmatown Mall, anchored with Higbee's and May Company. Massimo taught me about the Galleria in Milano. I learned about architecture, fashion, food, literature, life. It was with Massimo that I had my first taste of steak tartare and my first taste of stilton with port. Imagine, raw meat for dinner and cheese for dessert! For Massimo, design was life and life was design.

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Finally, from Massimo I learned never to give up. He was able to bring enthusiasm, joy and intensity to the smallest design challenge. Even after fifty years, he could delight in designing something like a business card as if he had never done one before.

It was Massimo who taught me one of the simplest things in the world: that if you do good work, you get more good work to do, and conversely bad work brings more bad work. It sounds simple, but it's remarkable, over the course of a lifetime of pragmatism and compromise, how easy it is to forget: the only way to do good work is simply to do good work. Massimo did good work.

I intended to stay at Vignelli Associates for 18 months and then find something new. Instead, I stayed there for ten years. I loved my job. But I had finally reached a point where I realized I had to move on. Quitting was the hardest thing I've ever had to do. I had a speech all prepared, and the night before I was driving on Interstate 87 and rehearsing the speech in my head. Suddenly I saw the lights of a police car right behind me. I was pulled over. "Do you know how fast you were going?" "Um, 65?" "Try 85. You pulled up right behind our squad car" – it was a marked squad car, by the way – "passed us on the right, and then cut us off." They made me get out of the car, checked the trunk, and took me to the State Trooper barracks for 90 minutes while they ascertained that I wasn't a drug addict or a terrorist. Massimo had that kind of effect on people.

The next day, when I told him I had decided to leave, Massimo was the same as he always was: warm, emotional, generous. He had had many other designers work for him before me and would have many others afterwards. But for me, there would only be one: my teacher, my mentor, my boss, my hero, my friend, Massimo Vignelli.

Massimo died this morning at the age of 83. Up until the end — I saw him four days before he died — he was still curious, still generous, still excited about design. He leaves his wife, Lella; his children, Luca and Valentina; and generations of designers who, like me, are still learning from his example.

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Comments [47]

Thanks Michael - perfectly captured. I too was able to spend some time with him recently. That infectious smile and spirit stayed with him to the end - and will never leave my consciousness. Thank God.
- Graham

Graham

05.27.14

10:47

Thank you for this beautiful post Michael. I first met Massimo Vignelli in 2007, after I cold-called him to see if he'd be willing to let me interview him for my first book. I called his studio expecting a receptionist to tell me he wasn't available. Instead, when I asked the person who answered the phone if I could speak to Massimo Vignelli, the voice on the other end joyfully stated, "SPEAKING!" It was Massimo himself! I nervously asked if I could interview him either by phone or email. He responded by inviting me to his studio to meet face-to-face. Somehow, I wrote down the wrong date and ended up showing up at his studio the day after he thought I was supposed to show up. In what I think now was an unprecedented effort to help me relax, he suggested that this new, unexpected time was better for him and waved the mistake away. We then sat down in his gorgeous studio for three of the most interesting, entertaining and wonderful hours of my life. Massimo was not only one of the most brilliant and important designers of our time, he was also generous, kind, warm and he truly cared about people. The world is simply not the same place without him. RIP dear Massimo, and much love and gratitude to you, forever.

Debbie Millman

05.27.14

11:57

Though this is a sad day, designers everywhere are looking at Massimo fondly. His memory, story, and work is timeless. We should all be so lucky to make an impact a tenth of a percent as big as his.

Tanner Woodford

05.27.14

12:16

What a wonderful tribute, Michael. I first met you and Massimo back in 1988, when Robert Kliment & Frances Halsband commissioned Vignelli Associates to do their new graphics. I had just started working for Robert and Frances, and was rather in awe of them both, and then to meet the man who designed the subway map... I think I was much like you when you met Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis! He was definitely larger than life. I am sorry for your loss, and for our loss in the design community, too.

Jennifer Greene

05.27.14

12:18

Thanks Michael. A great tribute to a great man.

John Waters

05.27.14

12:28

I just wish some people never died.
Thanks Michael, lovely what you wrote.

Simone Wolf,
Italy

05.27.14

12:49

Thank you, Michael.

Aleks Dawson

05.27.14

01:17

Michael, this a lovely tribute to Massimo. Thank you, Laura's daughter,
Francesca

francesca59

05.27.14

01:23

In the Spring of 2011, I was in Boston for my MFA study tour. One night, with nothing to do, I saw that Massimo would be giving a lecture at the Cyclorama, about a five-minute walk from my hotel. It was part of a Boston Arts Center event and cost \$10 to enter the show, of which Massimo's lecture was included - a trivial amount.

Finding my way to the room where he would speak, it was practically empty - seats for over 100, but maybe 25 people there. Nevertheless, Massimo arrived with Lella and proceeded to talk for over an hour about his career, with a ton of slides. When he was done, he graciously stayed to answer questions, including mine.

I consider myself fortunate to have met both Tony Palladino and Massimo along the way in my career. I'm quite saddened by this week and hope the old wives tale of things happening in threes skips a beat.

Joe Schwartz

05.27.14

01:26

I last saw Massimo in Texas in 2006 at a lecture he and Lella gave at the Fort Worth Modern. That venue was meaningful to me because while in college I had two posters on my apartment wall that he had designed for that Museum's predecessor, the Fort Worth Contemporary. Those posters (from the mid-70's), were the only things that I owned that were designed by a graphic designer other than record album covers, magazines, book covers or advertisements. They stood out then as examples of what good design could be, and I can still see them in my mind's eye. Massimo stated that design should be visually powerful, intellectually elegant and timeless. Those qualities certainly apply to the man himself. Bravo Massimo!

Doug May

05.27.14

01:29

I sit at the airport on this sad day; perhaps in flight I'll be closer to that irrepressible spirit one more time. Massimo's final days were filled with family and friends; he said his goodbyes to all of us and finally, quietly, with Lella at his side, he passed from our world. I am still not quite grasping that his award-winning smile and his enthusiastic greetings are gone, but I am thankful for vibrant memories that will live forever. RIP Massimo Vignelli.

Jan Conradi

05.27.14

01:41

What a lovely tribute, Michael. Massimo will be missed as far as here in India. As you are now immortal, Massimo, thank you in advance for all your guidance and inspiration that present and future designers will continue to receive. You will henceforth live in many hearts.

Mayank

Bhatnagar

05.27.14

01:46

Beautiful tribute, Michael. In a business that is not known to be kind to the elderly, the wisdom and energy of someone like Massimo Vignelli is rarely acknowledged. Your tribute reminds us that greatness is ageless. Thanks for this!

will novosedlik

05.27.14

01:46

"The life of a designer is a life of fight: fight against the ugliness."

I have had this quote etched into my mind since I first heard of Mr Massimo Vignelli. Having never met the great man, I have admired him from afar, be it his work, writings, occasional film appearance and have always admired his honest approach to life and design.

A really touching article Michael, thank you for sharing.

Such a sad day for graphic design. Rest in peace Mr Vignelli.

RayRayUK

05.27.14

01:48

I did not have a chance to work with Massimo, but ever since our first meeting I was amazed by his attention, kindness, and respect he bestowed on me, a young Russian immigrant who just arrived in New York.

Much has been written about a mysterious affinity between Russian and Italian souls. Our friendship was a testament to this enduring connection. For me, Massimo's interest in Russian people and culture was a proof of his child-like curiosity and open mind. I will miss him very much.

cboym

05.27.14

02:06

I wish I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Vignelli. He truly was – and will continue to be, an inspiration to so many Graphic Designers.

Joe Nicklo

05.27.14

02:07

This is beautiful, Michael. Thank you for this tribute.

SeanMetcalf

05.27.14

02:12

Bravo Michael. Bravo Massimo.

Bill Dawson

05.27.14

02:28

This is a great eulogy. Massimo was a lion.

Rick Slusher

05.27.14

03:20

What a great tribute to him. Thank you for sharing your insights. You knew him so well. Such a huge loss for the graphic design industry. I admired his work very much.

ericreagan

05.27.14

03:21

Wonderful memories, Michael. Eloquent as always.

I never got to meet the man in person, but his work made me feel like I had. Powerful, awesome stuff.

Tim Lapetino

05.27.14

03:21

Michael, what a wonderful and moving piece for Massimo. He was very lucky to have you as a mentee, employee and friend.

Kate Wright

05.27.14

03:22

Very moving and eloquent, and I can confirm that when I worked with Massimo back in the late 90's he also treated me with respect in spite of my obvious inexperience and ignorance. He was gracious, patient, and truly a great master (Maestro) -- always willing to teach and explain. Disciplined, witty and cultured, Massimo was really a gentleman.

I never got to meet Jackie O, but was lucky enough to have Massimo as a friend and mentor. He will be missed but his lessons live on.

Andrea Ruggiero

05.27.14

03:40

Well said. Thank you, Michael.

Charlie Flexon

05.27.14

03:44

My condolences to you on the loss of your mentor and friend Michael. Such a beautifully written tribute. Thank you for sharing such an intimate view into an incredible man who's work touched and influenced so many of us who were in our formative years back then, and who continues to do so today to design students and new graduates.

Matt Warburton

05.27.14

04:17

Michael, thank you for your heart-warming story about Massimo. I loved him AND the years sitting on the edge of the Vignelli office —all those designers, stories, late nights, dinners, parties...perhaps massimo and dave are sharing an illicit cigarette together...

Jane Cullen Law

05.27.14

05:07

A gentle man
A tough man
A quiet man
An opinionated man
A versatile man
A unique man
A demanding man
A rigid man
A totally flexible man

Known by most as the designer of an ultimately silly but beautiful subway map, he should be known for so much more. For about 50 years he and his partner Lella quietly transformed much of graphic design in this country to a European perspective and helped to internationalize what had once been little more than an unskilled trade. Whether you agreed with his ideas or did not: there was never a question that his ideas formed the foundation of his work. I worked with him only once; on a project in my opinion he was badly chosen for (I never felt Massimo understood or had much of a feeling for the pre Target low end mass market). Consequently the work was difficult, at times painful and the eventual result satisfying to none. He wasn't wrong and neither was the client. But they were wrong for each other. For me as a young designer on the client side it was frustrating as well as fascinating and incredibly instructive. At the dawn of the digital age I once saw him debate (it was more a gentle discussion) the virtues of the computer's potential impact on design with Milton Glaser. Massimo predictably for, Milton, not so convinced. Thirty years later, they were both right. Massimo was a giant among us and those of us who knew him if only briefly were illuminated by the glow of his soul. Blessings.

robinbugbee

05.27.14

06:01

Michael -

Your remembrance made me smile. Massimo's work stands as a legacy. But his humanity is what I will remember. Here's a story I posted on my FB wall earlier today:

I've been reflecting on this 2007 Icoграда Design Week in India - especially the evening of student workshop critiques. We arrived back from a very late dinner. Conventional wisdom would have been to delay the crits to the next morning. From Massimo, I learned a valuable lesson: 'They've waited for us, we owe them our time.' At 2am, he was as engaged as if it was 2pm. Rest well, Massimo.

I'm eternally grateful for that life lesson. And more so for having shared rich conversation and a few laughs while we were together in India.

It is the person behind the work that I will miss.

All the best,
Brenda
**Brenda
Sanderson**
05.27.14
07:25

Such wonderful years with Massimo and Lella! I joined Vignelli Associates in 1978, after participating in the Great Subway Debate at Cooper Union at the point the MTA was replacing the Vignelli diagram with the Tauranac map, and after 7 wonderful years left in 1985. As others have noted, Massimo was a charming, generous, disciplined, passionate, elegant and witty guy. I thought I'd focus here on a few of the lessons I learned from him.

Lesson One: First find an elegant idea, then execute it well

Massimo looked for the kind of design idea that thrills because it is so logically, practically and/or theatrically sound, provoking the observer's delight as well as appreciation for a simple, surprising and grounded idea. Some graphic design example:

- In designing a shopping bag for Knoll, he decided to leave the large sides blank and instead put the logotype in its gussets, creating a moment of excitement when one opens what appears to be a blank bag to reveal large colorful logos. When in use, the bag became a billboard for those approaching from in front or following from behind: the main angles of view on a sidewalk or Design Center hallway.
- He designed a corporate jet with an extremely minimal and disciplined appearance when passengers approached to board, but with a huge red sunburst pattern on the plane's bottom, visible to those on the ground when the plane was in flight.
- He designed an elegant formal invitation for a show of their work, then scrunched it into ball and sent it in a fattened envelope, so the invitee gets to unfold what initially appears to be a discarded item to be revealed as a refined and by then elegantly textured invitation.

The two-step nature of his design process — the conceptual ah-ha, followed by careful execution staying true to the idea — was new to this largely Basel-trained graphic designer.

Lesson Two: Design Language

Massimo believed deeply that the job of a designer is to create a design language and then make a life's work of exploring it. This was new to me: I had thought the graphic designer's job was to either master the Basel style or adapt existing styles to suit one's stylistic design challenge. The two key benefits I see to developing a disciplined, recognizable, consistent but versatile enough design language were that it allowed him and those who worked under him to focus on cracking the information architecture challenge at hand, as we weren't tackling both design language and information design issues at the same time, and that it provided clear Vignelli brand identity out in the world.

Lesson Three: When, and when not, to stick to your guns
In the 1980's modernists, including Massimo, were under assault by what we then called "postmodernists", among whom were designers Massimo respected. He initially stuck to his design language, but was troubled by what was happening, wanting to dismiss it as a passing fad though suspecting it had more substance than that. His confusion lifted, and design language shifted some, when he found a chart created, as I remember, by Charles Jencks, that articulated the differences between the deep structures of modernism and postmodernism He distributed it to us all for our guidance and experimented with incorporating some its principles into his design language. A good lesson in when and how to respond to change.

But another time, he didn't give a millimeter on something no one would have noticed: a decision I greatly admire. In the mid 1970's Massimo was asked to submit a poster design on the theme of the melting pot for America's Bicentennial Celebration. As an immigrant who had experienced Mussolini's Italy, he greatly valued our much freer press. His idea was to create an American flag collage out of strips of New York City's foreign language newspapers gathered on a single day: one newspaper per flag stripe. The poster was a hit as it made its way up the government's approval process until at the last level, a multilingual general saw reference to Vietnam in a few places, and said he would approve the poster only if Massimo eliminated them. Massimo refused because such censorship went against the point of the poster and what Massimo held dear about America, and his design was therefore not included in the poster collection.

Yet the Vignelli American flag does endure and remains relevant because of his decision to refuse to make the change, and his perseverance since in telling its story. To my mind, it also endures as the best symbol of his design skill, perseverance, integrity, timelessness, timeliness, and passion for what is right, good, true...and well expressed.

Peter Laundry

05.27.14

08:17

Great tribute Michael; how wonderful for you to have had the opportunity to work with Massimo. Those employers, who give us our first break are so special, and if they are as genuine as Massimo was, well your were quite fortunate indeed.

JoceCreative

05.27.14

08:59

:(

:)

marc_english

05.27.14

09:11

Massimo, thank you for pointing us in the right direction “!”



Michael, thank you for writing this personal tribute to Massimo. When I was just starting my career as a designer, I had the opportunity to work for the special people at ITC on a design history book called *Typographic Communications Today* written by Edward Gottschall. In those days we still received the posters and books from Design firms. Part of my job was to send out license agreement letters for ITC, collect the artwork and have a studio photograph the original artwork. I can still remember the excitement of unpacking and looking at the original work from Vignelli Associates.

Carl W. Smith

05.27.14

09:33

Soulfully written for a man who influenced so many, enriched countless lives, and across multiple disciplines, forever changed the face of design.

:byDesignPartners.

05.27.14

10:08

My grandfather always said "one is alive as long as he is remembered." Michael, the picture you paint of Massimo and the office is exactly as I remember it too. Thank you for that glimpse into the past. He has certainly touched all our hearts and will remain dear to those who knew him. I remember his voice full of enthusiasm, so vividly... as if I could walk into the next room right now and see him there with everyone else you describe. Starting my own career at Vignelli Associates has profoundly influenced the way design has become

inseparably intertwined in everything I do and see. The experience was a precious gift I will never forget.

Kathryn Scott

05.27.14

10:58

What a beautiful post. How fortunate you were to have had him as your mentor for a decade. Although, like most designers, I've held him in the utmost regard as truly the greatest designer of our era. Still my unexpected meeting of him on a subway trip? I recognized him. Then we chatted, then some more as we walked a few blocks to our lunch dates. We talked briefly, but still about life, food and design. Only in NYC, on the subway, and with Massimo, could a life memorable exchange take place. I know you know. I just got a small glimpse of the most generous and engaging man, beyond the legend.

twomeya

05.27.14

11:05

I'm saddened that I never will have the chance to meet such a great and wonderful human in person. But I'm glad to have met him, his philosophy and his warm sense of humor through his work and his videos.

As a you study design, someone like Massimo is made immortal in your mind's eye. However, it comes as a painful reminder that he was most definitely human, in every expression of the english language.

As opposed to the God(s), he was of the earth – down to earth. A warm presence burning with life that belonged to man.

Above all, it was his humanity which has made him timeless.

Meagan Roach

05.27.14

11:29

I came from Sardinia, an island in the Mediterranean. It was one of those extraordinary weeks of study at the Armando Milani's Moulin, in Provence. Massimo and Lella were very kind to me, a no longer young designer coming from the province. The eyes of that laughing falcon have been with me ever after, in all things that I tried to do as a designer. Thank you, Massimo. And thank you, Michael.

Stefano Asili

05.28.14

02:31

I first spoke with Massimo Vignelli in 2009 when he agreed to be one of ten designers featured in a book I was writing on graphic design for kids. This legendary designer treated the task with such care and respect--truly a class act. When asked what words of wisdom he would give to the next generation of aspiring young designers he said,

"Knowledge of the past to understand the present and forecast the future. Discipline, appropriateness, and timelessness in every design."

Thank you, Massimo.

peasedesign

05.28.14

07:28

Not only well written, but more importantly, a life well lived. RIP

Raj V12 Studios

05.28.14

01:48

Dear Mr. Bierut (Michael),

I've met Massimo once, you twice, and at one point both of you on the same day at Massimo's honorary degree at RIT so many years ago. I was a sophomore and Massimo's words so eloquently remain with me today. It is for your chronicle of candid experiences with Massimo, his influence on you and both of your influences on me that have made me a passionate designer (and the ability to appreciate the timelessness, thoughtfulness, and consequence of good design).

I'm truly sad that he is gone, but I am extremely thankful, that like you, my life and my career was affected by him. Your words are a testament to his affect on so many and for that I thank you.

cheenajain

05.28.14

03:11

Thank you Michael for your tribute to a very gentle and beautiful soul. I met Massimo during a judging of a design show, and to this day, I have never felt so charmed in all my life by a man. We didn't talk about design then we were both just breathing it. My condolence goes out to his family.

casado

05.28.14

05:40

Beautiful Michael.

Bubbles

05.28.14

07:58

Thank you Michael for that beautiful and accurate tribute .

My first job in New York nearly 30 years ago was with Vignelli Associates, on the 3D side. I had just returned from a 3 year working stint in Europe after graduating from SCI-Arc, and was hired to work on the new Vignelli west side offices for one week . The week turned into years, in which time my budding career in Architecture changed

forever, exposed to a new world of design at every detail, curated by Massimo and Lella. Massimo's design sensibility was everywhere and in everything. The Vignelli's brought us into their family, with their warmth and humor and occasional arguments about design. I won't forget those late night charrettes drinking Campari or Johnny Walker with Massimo, Lella, David Law and Michelle Kolb, discussing proportion and grids and intangible details. Massimo could draw a quick perspective from his head with that Caran d'Ache pencil that would perfectly match what we built months later. He was a great designer, and he was also a great person. That combination is rare. I too thought that Massimo was old when I meet him (he was 53), but have now changed my mind. We all owe much to Massimo.

Briggs

MacDonald

05.28.14

08:20

Michael, thank you for this beautifully written tribute to Massimo. Though I only had a brief encounter with him once, it was clear to see that he was such a gentleman and a very grounded individual. His enthusiasm for clear, concise design and a joy for life has been a gift to all designers who have come after him.

Within all my projects—even the ones that have more visual layering to them—I keep in mind the importance of clarity, restraint and communicative intelligence, which Massimo crafted in the purest manner.

Cathy

Laskiewicz

05.28.14

11:28

A beautiful and fitting tribute Michael. I remember several years ago, you telling me of your decision to leave Vignelli and join Pentagram. You were so fortunate to have such an influential figure as a mentor. We were all fortunate to have Massimo as our design father figure for all those years.

Tim Smith

05.29.14

11:32

Oh, Michael, you bring back such memories of working in the Vignelli office in the 1980s.

The first time Massimo met me, he said something totally charming: "Carapellucci. One of those easy names for me."

After knowing him for years, I heard him say that to many other Italian-Americans; it was one of his "lines," I realized. But that didn't change the thrill of receiving such a completely different message after a lifetime of people only complaining about my "long" name.

Plus I experienced the fun of being around someone who actually knew how to pronounce it. He liked to yell my name from one end of the office to the other -- "CarrrrrapayLOOchee!" -- which I loved.

One time we were discussing our childhoods and I told him I came from a family with six children. He scrunched his eyes in concentration, doing mental calculations on my age, I soon realized when he blurted out, "But they had tv then," in a genuinely perplexed, curious manner. I laughed and laughed (and told my parents the story later.) He's the only person I know who could say something that was actually kind of insulting in such a disarming, really funny way. You just couldn't dislike him.

Once I sat next to him at a design conference when a guy onstage was talking about his famous-designer boss. I whispered to Massimo, "Maybe someday I'll be up there talking about you." He whispered back, "Just don't bore them."

That would be impossible, Massimo. You, boring? In life and in death -- never.

**Janice
Carapellucci**

05.30.14

02:48

Such a great trip down memory lane, Michael. I had the honor of visiting Massimo right out of college. It was the most intimidating one-on-one I've ever had to this day, however, he put you at peace with his calm demeanor and wise words.

I discuss life with a lot of people these days in my career. I often talk about "the dash". On your tombstone, there's a dash between the dates. What does that dash mean? Massimo left a dash of lasting impact and generosity, among so many other meaningful adjectives. We lost a legend but his legacy carries on.

John Feldhouse

06.03.14

05:14