

WHAT DID WE LEARN?

We can start taxonomizing users by type

Not MBTI, but something like it: dynamic, situational, related to immediate goals, familiarity ...

We learned about forcing behavior, not just incentivizing or nudging

We met Richard Ladner and gave him respect!

From Ladner, we learned a lot of telecom inventions came out of desire to help deaf or blind

Including the telephone, the video chat, the closed captions, text messaging

Will vAI (voice AI) as vUI (voice user interface) replace?

We learned the CURB CUT helps everyone

We learned Ladner cites Knuth but very likely not vice versa (tbh, TeX is a UX disaster!)

We learned why expert modes don't get implemented

The best we have is "I'm on your side and don't want this UX failure to haunt your career"

We learned there is a better argument for expert modes but forgot what it was

Prof learned to say the new idea before telling the long story so he doesn't forget it (never learns)

FOCUS GROUP 1 DUE SAT OCT 3 NO PENALTY EXTENSION TO OCT 10

We looked briefly at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14606925.2017.1352649>

The Design Journal 2017

An International Journal for All Aspects of Design

ISSN: 1460-6925 (Print) 1756-3062 (Online) Journal homepage:

www.tandfonline.com/journals/rfdj20

Beautiful interfaces. From user experience to user interface

Letizia Bollini

Form follows function?

Starting from the Vitruvian definition of the 3 pillars of architecture:

“Haec autem ita fieri debent, ut habeatur ratio firmitatis, utilitatis, venustatis.” [“In tutte queste cose che si hanno da fare devesi avere per scopo la solidità, l'utilità, e la bellezza.”] (Vitruvio, 15) to the three element's of

The art & science of web design defined by Jeffrey Veen (2001),

the issue of the aesthetic dimension in design disciplines is always central and critical.

The relationship between form and function has become an explicit debate after the industrial revolution representing the opposite position of the aesthetic values and technical issues.

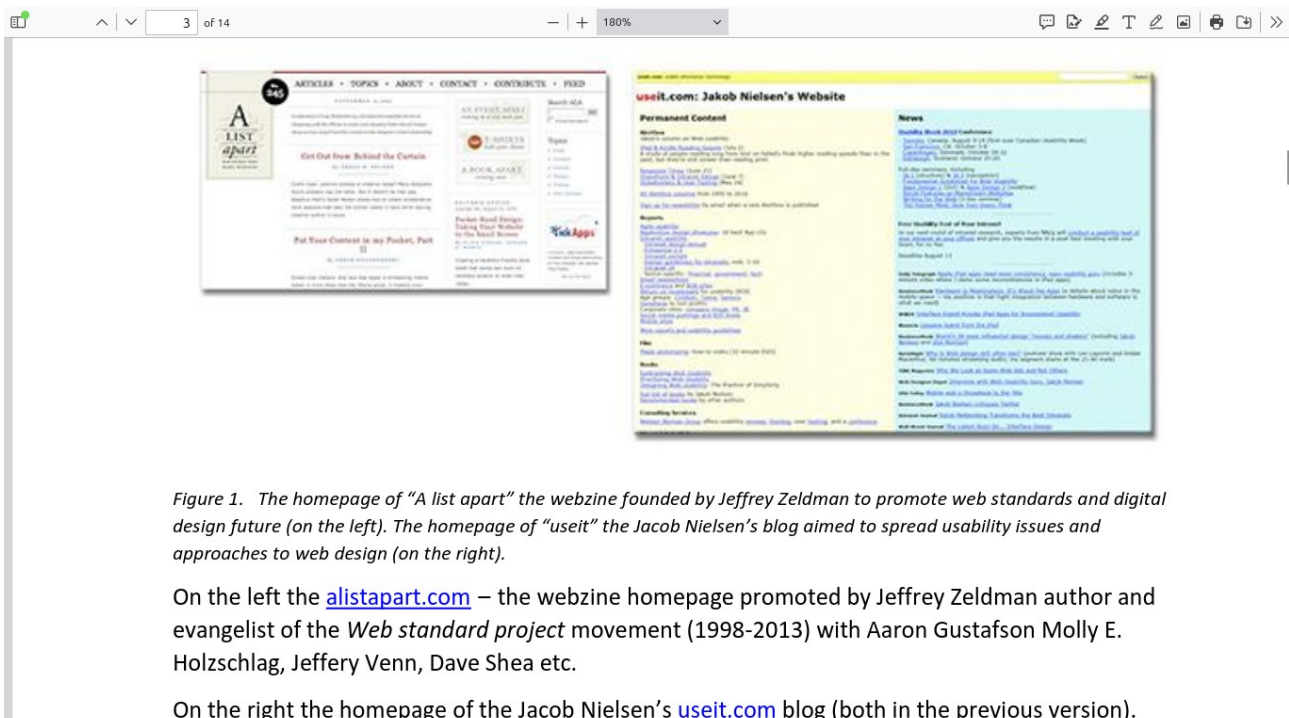


Figure 1. The homepage of “A list apart” the webzine founded by Jeffrey Zeldman to promote web standards and digital design future (on the left). The homepage of “useit” the Jacob Nielsen’s blog aimed to spread usability issues and approaches to web design (on the right).

On the left the alistapart.com – the webzine homepage promoted by Jeffrey Zeldman author and evangelist of the *Web standard project* movement (1998-2013) with Aaron Gustafson Molly E. Holzschlag, Jeffery Venn, Dave Shea etc.

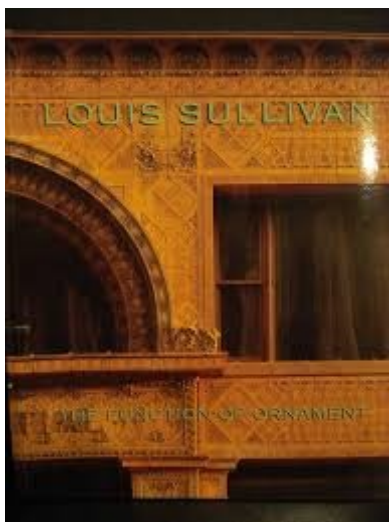
On the right the homepage of the Jacob Nielsen’s useit.com blog (both in the previous version).

She is cited 117x. *My In Praise of Scripting IEEE COMPUTER 2008* has 63.

The discussion involved along the evolution of design – intended as theoretical, practical and productive discipline – single personalities such as Sullivan and whole school – the Bauhaus above all – or intellectual movements ...

Understanding Sullivan's View

- **Original Phrase:** Sullivan actually wrote "**form ever follows function**" in his 1896 essay "The Tall Office Building Artistically Considered". [\[1\]](#)
- **The Role of Ornament:** He did not mean buildings should be completely plain or stripped of beauty. He viewed organic ornament as an **integral part** of a building's identity and emotional resonance. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#), [\[3\]](#)
- **Later Writings:** Toward the end of his life, he published *A System of Architectural Ornament* (1924), detailing how decorative art connects humans to nature. [\[1\]](#)
- **Later Distortion:** Later modernist architects stripped his idea down to mean that all decoration is useless, turning "form follows function" into a rigid rule he never intended. [\[1\]](#), [\[2\]](#)



The Most Misunderstood Quote in Architectural History

"Form follows function"
- Louis Sullivan

What he meant:

Different sections of a building have different functions and uses. These changes in use on the interior should be expressed on the exterior with consistency. A building should have a base, a middle and a top, much like Greek temples.

What later architects
thought he meant:

The only important factor in a building's design is function. A building's aesthetics are unimportant and ornamentation should not be a part of a building's design.

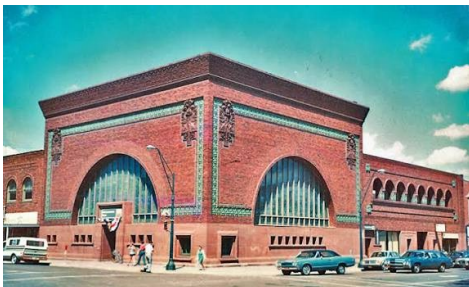
What he designed:



What they designed:



Images: Amazon.com, Wikipedia, Reddit, National Park Service of Owatonna MN building, Ohio.org of Sidney OH building, Conrad Schmitt Studios of Newark OH building



Italian, French, Swedish, and Japanese designers think they are doing fine art

If you really are interested, see this <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjqe6cmvzPY> (Ayn Rand stealing the Charles Eames story of being expelled from WashU School of Architecture for defending modernism and Frank Lloyd Wright)

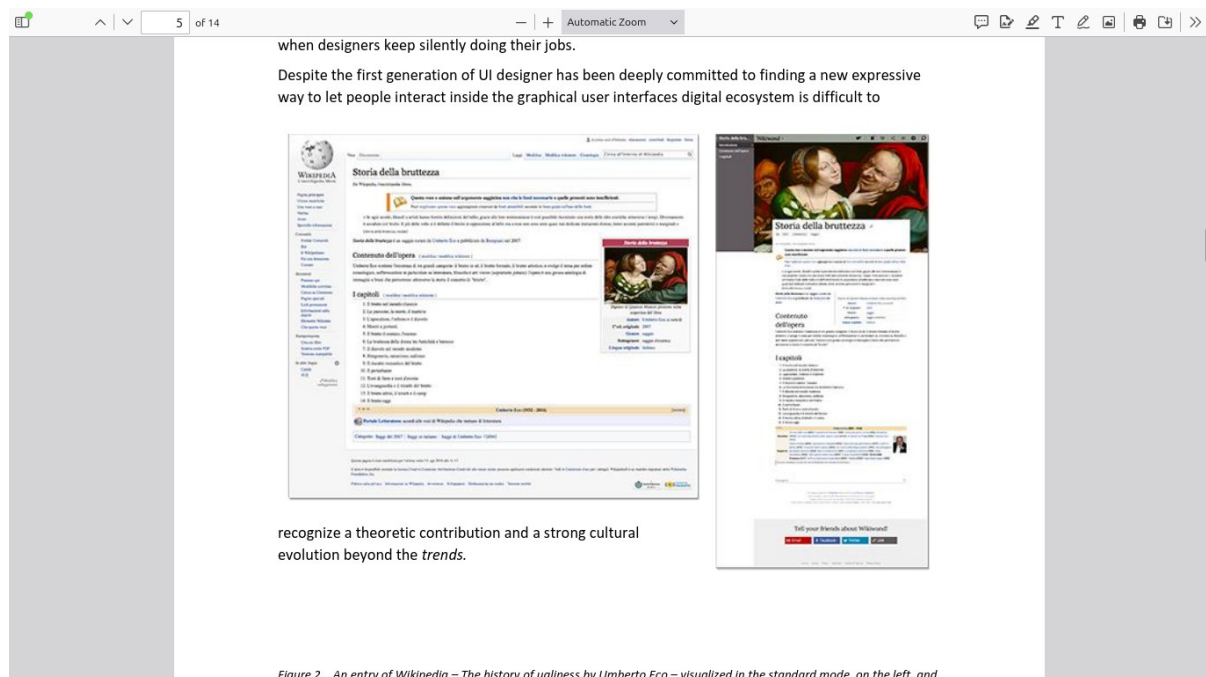
Ironically (1) Rand said editors were evil, but her screenplay is much better than her bloated book, and (2) the architectural ideas in the film are still revolting to most who see the movie

Eames Demetrios was in my college class...

Is this even a fair comparison? Landscape vs Portrait

But you need to understand the spirit of the designer, the desire of the designer to do great work

... the story of Julie H the “successful” designer next door ... from StL Art Museum menu to her unfinished purple back door



“It’s ugly, but it works”

Kurosu & Kashimura 1995: the apparent usability is less correlated with the inherent usability compared to the apparent beauty which showed the correlation coefficient of 0.589

shift of focus —

from rational to emotional elements—

restores the centrality of visual design and its languages

Further irony

CMA:

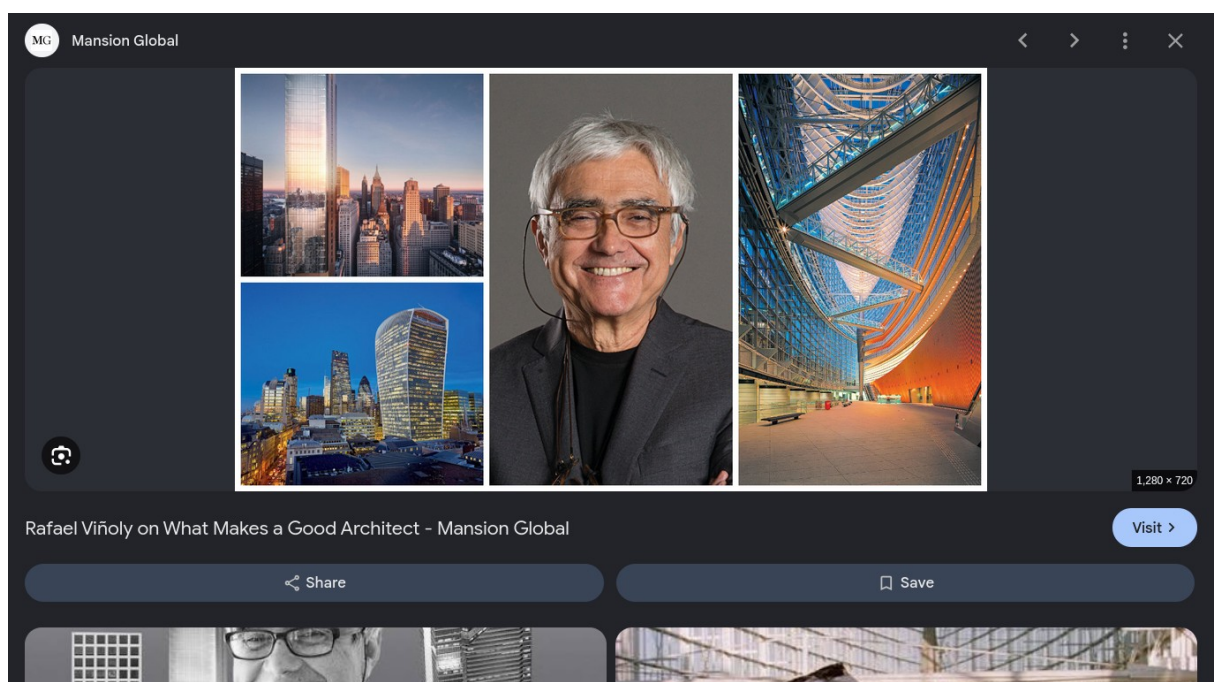
1916: It was designed by the prominent local Cleveland architectural firm **Hubbell & Benes**. Constructed from white Georgian marble, the building was planned as the grand centerpiece of Wade Park

1971: The museum's former Education Wing and North Lobby were designed in 1971 by renowned modernist architect and Bauhaus veteran **Marcel Breuer**

2013: completely transformed the institution's spatial flow while celebrating its historical legacy. Rather than asserting a loud, competing signature style, **Rafael Viñoly** approached the project with his famous “jewel in the ring” concept

Prof Loui's favorite place on the planet

Images: Architizer, Cleveland.com





What else did Viñoly do?

Three generations of architects have put form over function.

They used to educate structural engineers to do buildings.

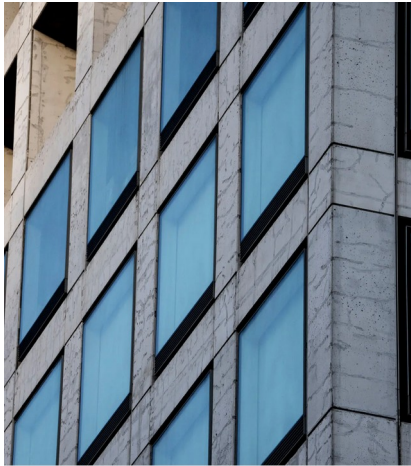
Now they take aspiring artists and train them to do public art ego statement.

This is exactly what a generation of UI over UX has done to software.

KEEP THIS IN YOUR VEST POCKET!



“Color or Cracks”



The New York Times

A Tower on Billionaires' Row Is Full of Cracks. Who's to Blame?

A superstar team of architects and developers insisted on an all-white concrete facade. It could explain some of the building's problems.

The late architect **Rafael Viñoly** played a central and complicated role in the "form over function" compromises at 432 Park Avenue. While he was a **visionary modernist**, his architectural philosophy—coupled with intense pressure from developer Harry Macklowe—**prioritized pure geometric minimalism over structural realism**, paving the way for the building's current failures. [1, 2, 3, 4]

Viñoly's involvement in the design trade-offs breaks down into three major areas:

The Aesthetic Obsession (The "Trash Can" Inspiration)

Viñoly's core vision for 432 Park Avenue was based on an **absolutely pure, unembellished square grid**. He famously admitted that the design was **inspired by a sleek, minimalist, \$200 mesh steel trash can** designed by Austrian architect Josef Hoffmann. [1, 2, 3]

- **The Form Overlap:** Viñoly wanted a perfectly straight, rectilinear tower to create a "pencil sketch" on the New York skyline. **He resisted aerodynamic tapering** or curved geometry that would typically mitigate high-altitude wind forces. [1, 2, 3, 4]
- **The Consequence:** Because the building's shape completely ignores wind dynamics, it suffers from the intense swaying that causes resident motion sickness, creaking walls, and jammed elevators.

... told they could cover the concrete so it would not fail...

Macklowe was stubbornly committed to an "absolutely pure" architectural vision and did not want to compromise the building's raw, pristine white concrete aesthetic.

NYC's \$3B Supertall Has a 10-Inch Crack in Its Spine — And ...



24:49

... **failure**. This is a choice that someone made, in writing, before ... **432 Park Avenue** Is Sinking Faster Than Anyone Predicted. AMERICAN ...

YouTube · Luxury Edge · 5 days ago

What Went Wrong With This Skyscraper?



2:37

The supertall tower at **432 Park Avenue** was designed to be the jewel ... But the building is facing serious **problems** — and may need a ...

YouTube · The New York Times · Oct 20, 2025

Here's Why 432 Park Avenue Won't Stop Cracking



18:58

The sway after floor 70 can easily make you sea sick. Many of the apartments have drywall and molding cracks constantly. The ONE service ...

YouTube · MadeFor · 1 month ago

This Manhattan Tower Was Built to Fail



11:07

The tallest residential building in the Western Hemisphere, **432 park avenue**, was once seen as a triumph of New York luxury.

YouTube · **Engineering Excellence** · Apr 16, 2026

Image:
Architect's NewsPaper

Why Bauhaus is Focused on Form

- **The "No Ornament" Rule is an Aesthetic:**
Stripping away decoration does not eliminate style; it creates a very specific, stark, geometric style. A pure white wall or a black steel tube chair is an aesthetic choice, not a pure mathematical output of utility. [1, 2, 3, 4]
- **Stylized Function:**
True function-driven design often looks messy, complex, or accidental. Bauhaus smoothed, squared, and color-blocked objects to make them look clean and harmonious, prioritizing visual order over raw utility. [1]
- **The Irony of Mass Production:** Founder Walter Gropius wanted designs that were simple enough to be built by machines for everyday people. Over time, these sparse geometric looks became a high-art status symbol, proving that the look itself was always the main goal. [1]

