

Exclusive Highlight on TAXI Design Network
Interview with Henry Steiner

TAXI >> You were born in Vienna, raised in New York, and educated at Hunter College, Yale University and the Sorbonne. Settling down in Hong Kong in 1961... has she managed to feed your appetite as a creative professional despite culture, tradition and language difference or was it different from what you expected it to be when you first started out?

Henry Steiner>> Living in Asia has been beneficial because of the differences in culture, tradition and language (especially in its written form). Working in an area with an alien visual system is stimulating and gives my work an unexpected flavor. I expected nothing when I came to Hong Kong, anticipating not staying more than nine months. It's been 45 years so far.

TAXI >> In 1985, you were the co-author of **Cross-Cultural Design: Communicating in the Global Marketplace**. Edward B. Marks from New

York mentioned that the most interesting part about the book is how poorly the mid-80s to mid-90s design work has held up over time. How do you think design has improved from 1985-1995?

Henry Steiner>> Our book was published ten years later, in 1995. The rather peevish review to which you refer is actually credited to one A. Ross of Washington, D.C.

On the contrary, I feel the quality of graphic design has declined steeply in the last ten years from a consensus that meaning mattered to the broad acceptance of a mindless, low resolution style which I name Grafitti Rococo. (Also interesting that today's iconic magazine is aptly named Wallpaper.)

TAXI >> Is there a specific message that you look forward to share over your presentation at Icograda Design Week in Seattle?

Henry Steiner>> Understanding other cultures and learning how to communicate with them is not just good for global business (and survival), it can be enlightening and enjoyable. Attendees will be entertained with many vivid examples of work from varied sources.

