**Critical analysis questions, which can be tailored to address individual projects, provide a starting point to begin the analysis of the design.**

communicative function and purpose

Does the design reflect its function and purpose?

Is the delivery of the message appropriate, effective, and clear?

Does the design meet the client's objectives/goals?

Is there a balance between the design's communicative and aesthetic functions?

Is the design engaging, distinctive, and informative?

Does the integration of the visual elements create movement and rhythm?

Are the visual elements cohesive?

Does the design evoke the desired emotion, mood, and tone?

basic compositional factors

Is contrast used effectively to distinguish all visual elements?

Does the use of space direct the eye toward the positive areas of the design?

Are changes in scale of the visual elements effective?

Is the quantity of information in the composition too excessive or minimal?

Does the design exhibit depth, dimension, and perspective?

Are orientation and position of the visual elements used advantageously?

Is tension between the visual elements effective?

Is repetition used appropriately and without adding too many visual elements to the page?

Does the use of color add value without overpowering or distracting the viewer?

Do the graphic shapes and linear elements enhance the design?

Do the illustrations or photographs connote appropriate emotions and meaning?
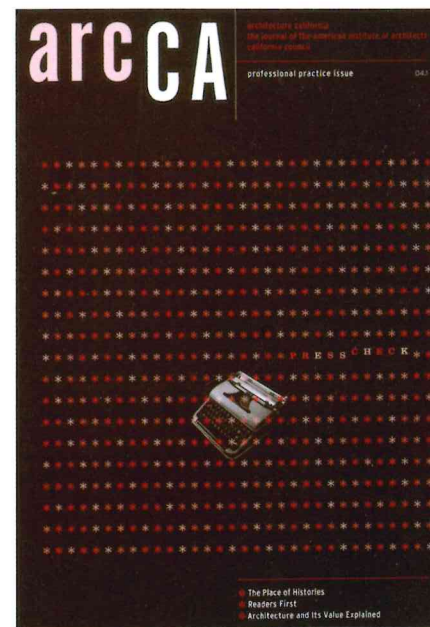
| aufuldish & warinner |

A bold type treatment commands the masthead of the architecture journal *arcCA*. Changes in case, color, and scale create contrast in the masthead and effectively distinguish content.

structure and organization

Is an underlying structure or method of organization evident?

Do horizontal and vertical spatial divisions provide alignment points for the visual elements?

Do the margins activate the positive areas of the design rather than frame the page?

Do the number of spatial intervals, columns, or modules suit the quantity of information?

Is symmetry or asymmetry used advantageously?

Are the visual elements consistently aligned across and down the page?

hierarchy

Is there a logical progression (sequence) through the design?

Is a strong systematic hierarchy evident?

Are the visual elements ranked and visually organized into dominant and subdominant levels?

Does a dominant focal point lead the viewer into the design?

Does the ordering system provide accessibility, continuity, integration, navigation, and variety?

Is there evidence of foreground, middle ground, and background?

Does the design avoid monotonous or overactive visual fields?

THE DESIGNER EXAMINES NOT ONLY THE BIG PICTURE BUT ALSO THE FUNCTION AND SUCCESS OF ITS PARTS.

typography

Does the typographic system encourage readability and comprehension?

Does the typography aesthetically invigorate the text with meaning?

Is the combination of multiple typefaces harmonious and optically matched?

Are the typefaces sending the appropriate attitude and personality?

Are true italic and bold fonts used, not improvised italic and bold styles?

Do the paragraph settings enhance the shape of the page?

Are changes in styles, weights, and widths distinguishing content effectively?

Is typographic contrast and color evident?

Are ligatures applied, if available, to the selected typefaces?

Are the typefaces legible and all text settings readable?

Are small capitals, as well as lining and non-lining numerals, used consistently?

Are all type sizes appropriate and not too small or large?

Are line lengths set in comfortable measures?

Is the leading between lines too tight or loose?

Does the typography need spacing (kerning and tracking) adjustments?

Do the paragraph settings suitably accommodate all the text?

Are all widows and orphans corrected?

Is attention paid to hyphenation and ragging?

Are indents used and consistently applied?

Are apostrophes and quotation marks used instead of prime marks?

Is attention paid to hanging punctuation?

Are hyphens, as well as en and em dashes, used correctly?

for in-depth typography information, refer to *chapter 7: typography*

FINAL THOUGHTS Analyze the design as a collective system versus an assortment of independent parts. Without a careful eye, the design may lack structure and organization, hierarchy, typographic proficiency, as well as clarity, value, and meaning. The designer pays close attention to every aspect of the design and makes numerous, thoughtful decisions along the way for its benefit.
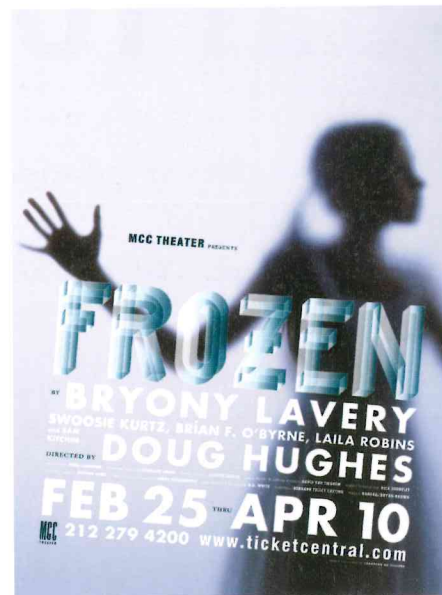
| **helicopter** | In the title treatment of the MCC Theater *Frozen* poster, letterforms create dimension. The stylized title is juxtaposed with sans serif type settings in a range of sizes to achieve hierarchy. The uppercase settings are aptly tracked with enough line spacing to enhance overall readability.