

## Memory Lane 4

### ***NID Days***

Pullver to Adrian Frutiger

My name is 'Pullver' he pronounced it with an emphasis on 'P' which was new to us. He was almost of our age. He was our teacher to learn type setting in the print workshop. I was remembering the very first day of our entry when Isu Patel showed us NID at 'Sanskar Kendra'. He was working on an animation based on letter 'i'! And the walls in his place were filled with number of 'i'- variations. 'i' was big, small, in multiples, ..... in different rupas. Those days you had to make hundreds of pictures to show simple movement of a character. NID had acquired a huge expensive, sophisticated animation table at that time.

In the orientation programme we were sent for '3' weeks to each of the workshops, to learn photography, printing, wood work, ceramics etc., For some strange reason we were not exposed to 'Textile weaving' though the facility was there!. We learnt with Mr. Pullver how to do the type setting and printing. Each letter was cast in lead alloy. To compose 'word' you have to pick up w, o, r, d metal types and put them together. Printing used a different scale called 'em scale'.

12 points = 1 em

6 ems = 1 inch

Even today Points are referred to size of the letter fonts! We learnt to compose and print on a proof printing machine! Mr. Pullver asked me to design a print layout to show the car gears using 'type setting'. I was little puzzled. It was not clear what is meant by 'design'. I tried arranging with numbers and lines. I played with thick and thin lines.

*For the first time I realized thick and thin lines can depict depth if used with right spacing and right lengths.*

Mr.Pullver appreciated my design. This gave me some confidence!

With this background we were kind of groomed to attend a 3 day-workshop by 'Adrian Frutiger' later. He was known for the design of "Universe' type face. We learnt what are 'serif' and 'San serif' letters. Frutiger introduced us to 'Pictograms' . He had a great sensitivity to 'negative space' or 'back ground' in 2D

figures. He showed us his book based on 'bible sayings' with impressive illustrations. Each page was a composition done in wood cut and printed. We could see the power of using form and space in 2D.

We made graphic variations using a grid sheet.

He also told us how complex is the design of 'type fonts' and how optical corrections are made for each letter. We learnt that a geometrical square and an optical square would have a slight difference in dimensions.

Frutiger designed the current NID symbol. The name of the Institute was changed from 'National Design Institute' to 'National Institute of Design', along with the introduction of the new symbol, where he made an effective combination of negative and positive space of the letters!

Frutiger also designed Devanagari Script in Universe type face along with NID designers.

His book [Signs and Symbols: Their Design and Meaning - Adrian Frutiger](#) ..published in 1989, is an important contribution to design field.

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