

UNDER EMBARGO UNTIL TUESDAY 8 SEPTEMBER, 10AM BST



Image credit: Margaret Calvert's Studio courtesy of Margaret Calvert

Margaret Calvert: Woman at Work

21 October 2020 – 10 January 2021
the Design Museum
#WomanAtWork

The Design Museum announces display celebrating the work of graphic design pioneer, Margaret Calvert

The display explores Calvert's co-designed wayfinding systems for transport networks across the UK and her impact on modern information design, alongside insight into her creative process and 'play' projects

In collaboration with Network Rail, the display also celebrates the launch of the new customised typeface designed by Calvert in collaboration with Henrik Kubel, *Rail Alphabet 2*, which will be introduced through several waves of new Network Rail design manuals and rolled out across selected Network Rail managed stations

With a career spanning over six decades, graphic designer Margaret Calvert has helped shape the nation's visual identity. Her work with Jock Kinneir has defined our roads, rail stations, and airports, and her work with Kubel has changed the face of the Gov.UK website. Opening on 21 October 2020, this display celebrates Calvert's incredible influence on design and

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designers, and her continuing impact through projects such as the new *Rail Alphabet 2* typeface for Network Rail, designed in collaboration with Kubel.

Discover how typography and wayfinding systems are designed. Starting with initial drawings and proposals, to familiar finished pictograms and transport signs, visitors will be guided through the display with commentary from Calvert herself. Featuring hand-drawn process materials; insight into early projects that shaped her design process, including her first commission; the original British Rail corporate identity manuals; a 3D flythrough of a station as it would appear with a wayfinding system designed by SpaceAgency, using the new Rail Alphabet 2 typeface; and Calvert's personal projects, such as special edition road signs starring Disney characters and the 'Woman at Work' print for Jealous Gallery & Print Studios.

Visitors will get to know Calvert through three timeless typefaces: *Rail Alphabet*, designed by her in the 60s and used in train stations and on an array of railway related material; *Calvert*, her iconic face used for the Tyne & Wear Metro and the identity for the Royal College of Art; and *Transport*, for the UK road signs which, despite minor modifications, are still in use today. New Transport, a commercial face, was designed at a much later stage with Kubel. It is now the official face for the Gov.UK website.

Margaret Calvert said:

"It's been wonderful for me to have been given a chance to re-visit the original Rail Alphabet, designed by me in the Sixties, as a starting point for the design of Rail Alphabet 2, for Network Rail, which will be used for both wayfinding, and as a text face for specific publications."

Deyan Sudjic, Director Emeritus of the Design Museum said:

"Margaret Calvert showed Britain the way into the modern world. Her brilliant signage system made sense of the new motorways in the 1960s, welcomed us into a generation of new NHS Hospitals, and guided us through brand new airports and railway stations."

Sir Peter Hendy CBE, chair of Network Rail, said:

"The original rail alphabet designed by Margaret was an enduring design icon of the 1960's, and heralded the rebirth of the modern British railway system. She is a true pioneer of design and I'm delighted we've been able to work with her and Henrik Kubel on Rail Alphabet 2."

"There's a muddle of different fonts used on railway signage which are hard to read and confusing for passengers, so we were keen to work on a clean and consistent design to make journeys and stations better."

"This is just one of the ways in which we are taking a fresh, collaborative approach to design and putting passengers first"

Follow the design story behind the railways from the 1960s to the launch of Network Rail's new custom typeface, *Rail Alphabet 2*, which will be used in their design publications and eventually sign all Network Rail managed stations. Learn more about wayfinding as a design field and how new systems are designed to create a safer and more inclusive travel environment. Explore the creative processes that led to the *Rail Alphabet* typeface; and see how rail signage, printed matter and station architecture have changed for the present day.

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Due to COVID-19 restrictions please check the Design Museum website for specific booking information.

Ends.

Notes to Editor

Supported by Network Rail

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About Margaret Calvert:

Margaret Calvert OBE RDI is best known for her collaboration with Jock Kinneir on the design of Britain's road signing system — starting with the motorways in the late Fifties and early Sixties, and finally coming into effect on the 1st January, 1965, with the all purpose roads. Much of her work has been in the public domain for clients such as British Rail and the British Airports Authority, followed by the Tyne and Wear Metro which opened in 1980, where she used her own lettering for the signing system. Now marketed under the name 'Calvert', for Monotype. Her most recent project has been the design of Rail Alphabet 2, in collaboration with Henrik Kubel, for Network Rail. Her long association with the Royal College of Art, from 1966 to 2001, included a full-time appointment as Head of Graphic Design from 1987 to 1991. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by the Royal College of Art in 2016.

About Network Rail – Buildings and Architecture:

The Buildings and Architecture team is responsible for setting the standards, policy and long-term planning for Network Rail's built environment, ensuring the highest design standards are attained whilst preserving and enhancing the legacy of Britain's railway.

We run a large and diverse operation; responsible for a wide variety of buildings from iconic stations like London Paddington and Glasgow Central to the signal boxes and maintenance depots that are vital in providing a safe and reliable railway for our passengers.

With an outward-looking and collaborative culture, we work closely with the wider design community to develop our approach to quality, sustainable design. In partnership with the Design Council, we've created a framework - 'Principles of Good Design' - which describes our long-term vision and ambitions.

It is our mission to deliver a better travelling experience for the millions of passengers who use our railway each day through good design, and to provide world-class infrastructure which will consider the individual whilst connecting the nation.

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networkrail.co.uk

About the Design Museum:

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to contemporary architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989 the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over seven million visitors and showcased the work of some of the world's most celebrated designers and architects including Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray and Dieter Rams. On 24 November 2016, The Design Museum relocated to Kensington, west London. Leading architect John Pawson converted the interior of a 1960s modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programmes.

designmuseum.org