Handout 2 - Five Principles of Effective Logo Design

What is a logo?

A logo (also called logotype) is a symbol or graphic representation adopted by a business or organization to represent them and their product and/or service. In and of itself, a logo has no meaning, but through association with that which it symbolizes, it becomes identifiable and thus functions as a conveyor of meaning.

A logo **identifies**.
A logo **conveys meaning**.

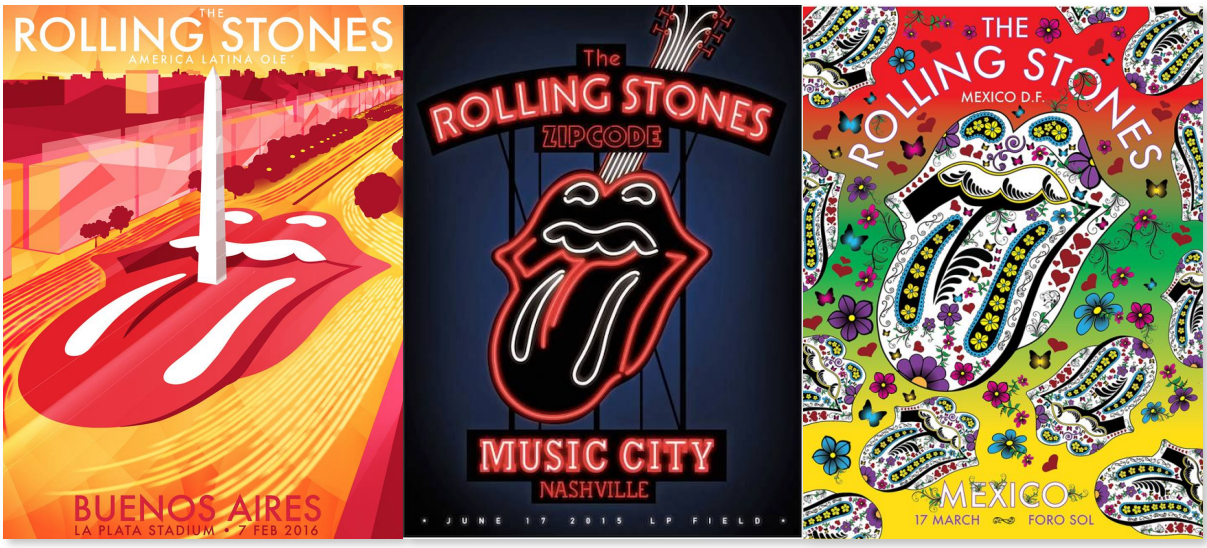
Every effective logo has a **strong concept** and **clear execution**.

Concept = the idea or message that the designer wants to convey.
Execution = how the idea is visually communicated through design.

What makes a logo effective?

5 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE LOGO DESIGN

1. **Simple.** A good logo is clear and straightforward. Excessive detail and color can obscure the message or idea behind the design.
2. **Memorable.** A good logo is relatable yet unique. It is easily understood, yet distinctive and appealing in such a way that sticks in one's memory.
3. **Timeless.** A good logo is not affected by trends, because trends come and go. An effective logo continues to be relatable, identifiable, and effective. Great design is timeless.
4. **Versatile.** A good logo is functional.
    a. It works in any format (e.g. vertical/horizontal)
    b. It is scalable, but still legible at small sizes. (Logos are normally designed in vector format which allows them to be scaled infinitely without pixelation).
5. **Appropriate.** A good logo is relevant to the purpose which it is serving. Color, shape, and typeface are important to consider in this regard. However a logo does not need to show what the business/organization sells or the service it provides; it's job is to identify.

Let's try and apply these principles to the Rolling Stones logo, "The Tongue," designed by John Pasche in 1970 and currently still in use...

1. The logo is **simple** and straightforward. It does not have excessive detail or color, and could be recognizable in other colors as well.
2. The logo is easy to relate to because everyone has a mouth and tongue, however it is cheeky and daring (like someone sticking their tongue out) which makes it **memorable**.
3. Though the logo was created by John Pasche in 1970, it could easily have been designed today. This makes it **timeless**.
4. Because the logo is very graphic, with clean and simple lines, it works in many formats and can easily be made smaller or larger without losing recognizability. Recent tour posters illustrate the **versatile** quality of this logo (see below).
5. It is said that the logo was inspired by Mick Jagger's mouth. Whether that is true or not, the logo continues to be **appropriate** in its function as the symbol for the Rolling Stones and everything they represent.