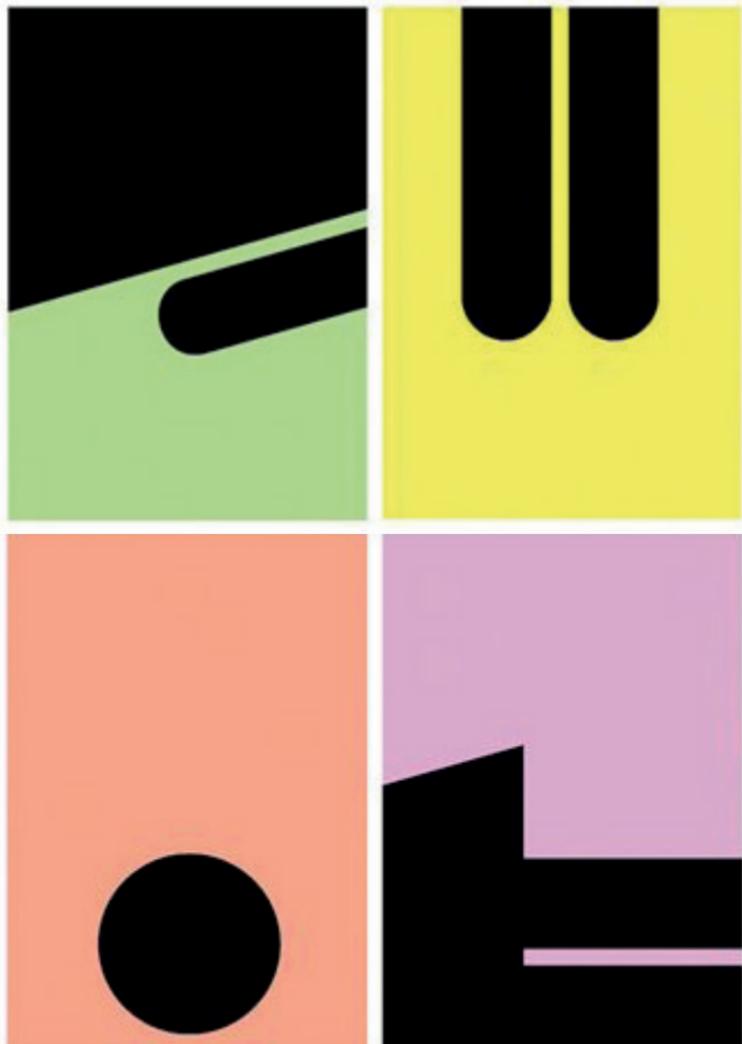


I'M CARIN GOLDBERG.



Surviving as a woman and a designer

**I'M A WOMAN.
I'M A MOTHER.
I'M A WIFE.
I'M A DESIGNER.**

I'M A WOMAN.

»Women do continue to have to deal with the same old, tired challenges of being female in an male environment. We still occasionally have to be loud and insistent.«



Madonna, *Madonna*, 1983,
Sire/Warner Brothers
Records, Album Jacket
Design. Carin Goldberg

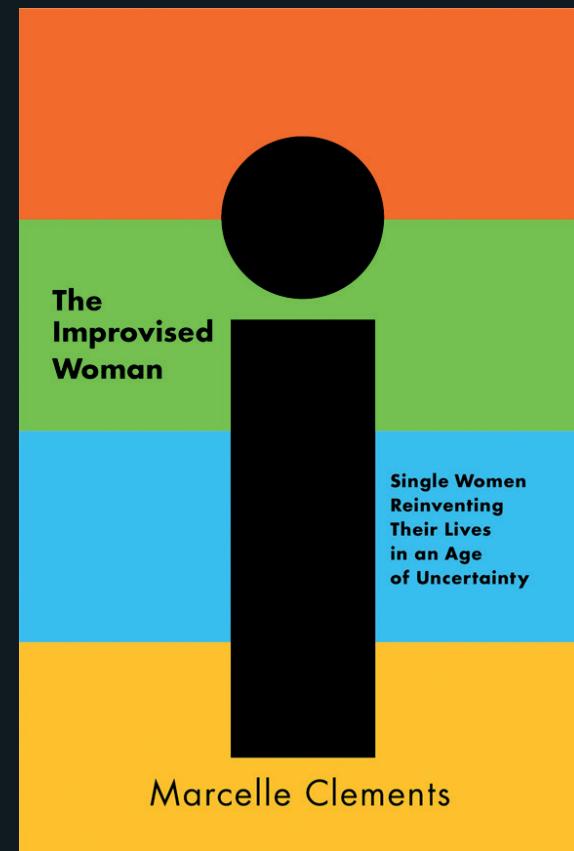
>*Madonna*< is the debut studio album by American singer-songwriter Madonna. >*Madonna*< peaked at number eight on the Billboard 200, and was certified five-time platinum by the Recording Industry Association of America.

When we asked Carin if she had any female role models, she replied that absolutely, without Paula, Henrietta and some clients, she would not have survived in this profession.

In the early 80's she started her own company, Carin Goldberg Design, she has worked herself together with assistants for most of her professional life. Carin is best known for her book covers and she seemed a little tired of representing book design. »During a period in the 80's, something really happened in book design,« says Carin, »There were several of us, it was Louise Fili, Paula Scher and Lorraine Wilde to name a few and we did something new and got a lot of attention. But I have not made a single book cover in almost 10 years.«

We asked her if she thinks there is any difference between being a woman and a graphic designer and she firmly answers that she does not believe in women who say that it makes no difference. »I just don't buy it!«. As an example, she told that John Maeda when he was to present Paula Scher in connection with her receiving a gold medal presented her as »The best female graphic designer« and everyone in the audience just screwed up and thought that what is he saying?

Like several of the other American design women we have researched, Carin Goldberg is extremely well-formulated and fun to listen to. As she herself says: »So, it's not like I'm trying to sell myself all the time, but it can not be a shy violet if you want to survive as a woman in this industry. Women do continue to have to deal with the same old, tired challenges of being female in male environment. We still occasionally have to be loud and insistent.«

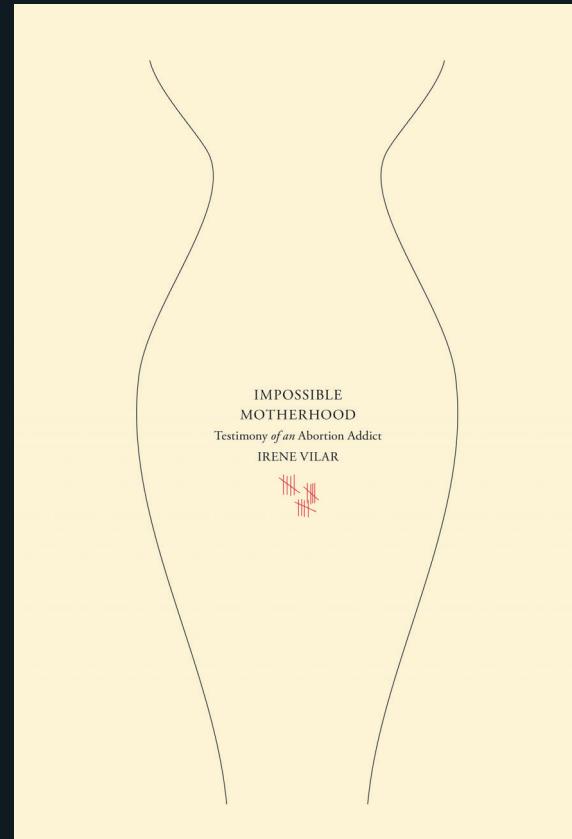


The Improvised Woman,
Marcelle Clements, 1999,
W. W. Norton Company
Book Jacket Design. Carin
Goldberg

The heart of this book is the individual voices of the women answering these questions, heard in all their tenacity and humor. They speak with stunning frankness and eloquence on subjects such as power, status, money, class, family, work, sense of home, romance, love sex, fears of old age and death, loneliness, spirituality, and the future of gender.

I'M A MOTHER.

»It's a day-to-day balancing act between my professional and family life and it's tougher to get what I want creatively into my work.«



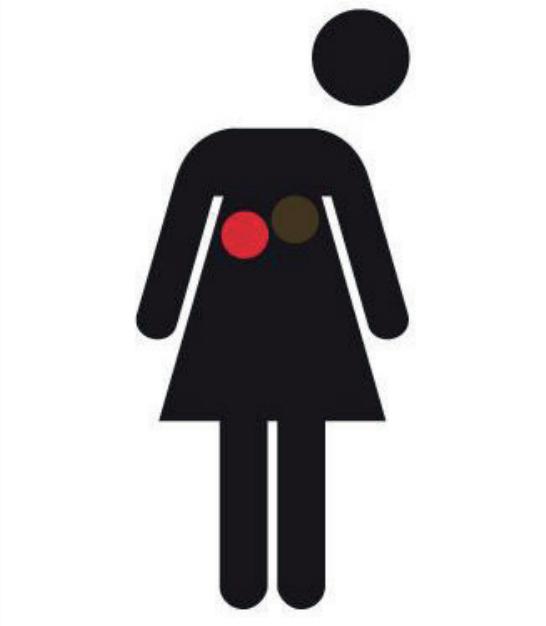
Impossible Motherhood,
Irene Vilar, 2009, Other
Press, Book Jacket
Design. Carin Goldberg

It is a story that looks back on her traumatic childhood growing up in the shadow of her mother's death and the footsteps of her famed grandmother, the political activist Lolita Lebrón, and a history that touches on American exploitation and reproductive repression in Puerto Rico.

Since being on her own, Goldberg has moved her studio many times. Size or expense usually dictated the moves. However, her priorities changed twelve years ago with the birth of her son. »A certain place was fine when he was a baby, but when he got older and more mobile it wouldn't do, so we relocated and so on. Finally, three years ago, I made the big plunge and moved my studio out of the city to the country house that my husband and I have in Stanfordville, a sleepy burg in upstate New York.«

Goldberg says that she has found that it's more difficult to work outside of the city because it's so much easier to get involved in being a mother, making dinner and helping with homework. »It's a day-to-day balancing act between my professional and family life and it's tougher to get what I want creatively into my work. Even book jackets. If I send my idea in I have to rely on someone else to sell it. Besides, many more people are involved in the approval process than there used to be. My designs always seem to get compromised by people telling me to use this color or that typeface.«

Lopsided. How having breast cancer can be really distracting. A memoir by Meredith Norton.

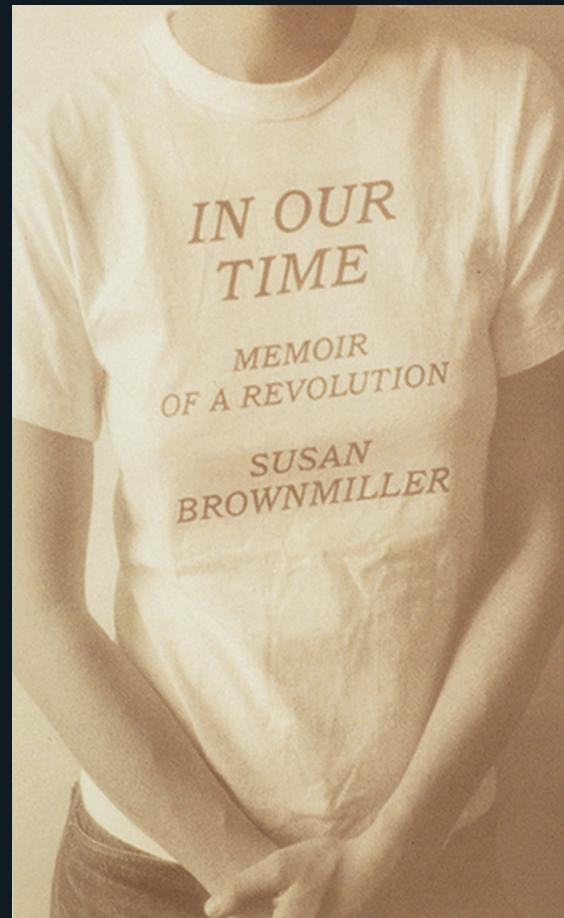


Lopsided. How Having Breast Cancer Can Be Really Distracting, Meredith Norton, 2008, Viking Adult, Book Jacket Design. Carin Goldberg

Lopsided is not your ordinary cancer memoir. Irreverent and incredibly funny, Norton rails against self-pity and victimhood and rants about the innumerable copies of Lance Armstrong's cancer survival book pressed on her by well-meaning family and friends.

I'M A WIFE.

»The demand to read reams of pages of manuscripts, to consistently come up with inventive solutions and then to run home everyday and be a mother and a nice attentive wife was a nearly impossible challenge. The >nice wife< part was definitely lost in the battle on occasion.«



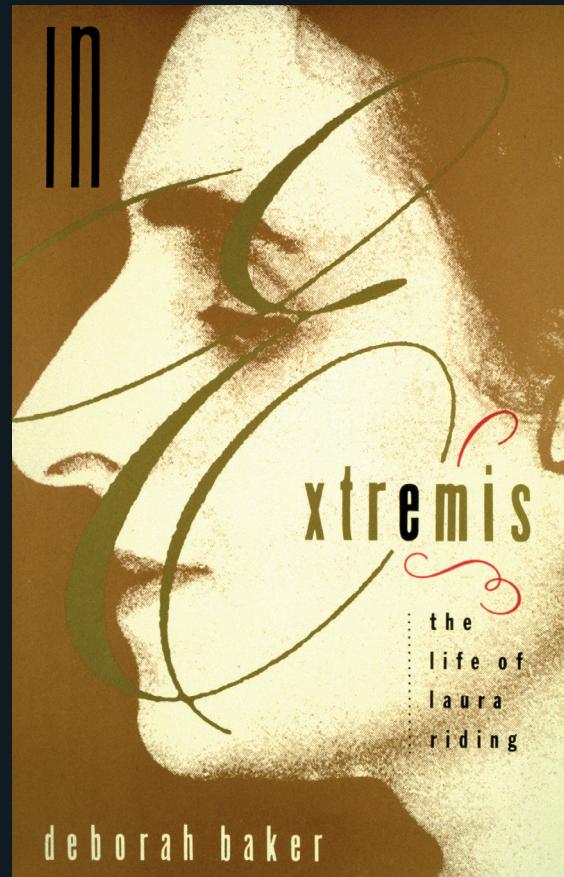
In Our Time, Susan Brownmiller, 2000, The Dial Press, Book Jacket Design. Carin Goldberg

In Our Time takes us behind the scenes to meet the passionate and provocative "foremothers" who steered the rising tide of feminism in America. And it reveals the real stories behind the headlines that heralded womankind's quest for freedom.

I learned early on that it is difficult to keep a career alive. Iwwt is difficult to both be seen and uphold your name while working on your assignments and taking care of a family.« She describes life as a freelance designer with children as extremely difficult. It was like climbing Mount Everest. »The demand to read reams of pages of manuscripts, to consistently come up with inventive solutions and then to run home everyday and be a mother and a nice attentive wife was a nearly impossible challenge. The >nice wife< part was definitely lost in the battle on occasion.«

Nobody wants to talk about this, nobody wants to admit it, because it's such a sensitive subject but to say that it does not matter... that it does not matter if you are a woman or a man, it is not true. Money and family life dictate the conditions for women in the industry. »I can say this now that I've turned 57.« She likens herself to a small stubborn train struggling up a hill and showing with her whole body how tough she has been. »I never give up, but I have cried a lot.«

To succeed in the industry today, you must create a name, you must be able to maintain and be seen. Many men in the industry, such as Tibor Kalman and Stefan Sagmeister, have been phenomenal at it, says Carin. Whether it is meant as a compliment or not, she leaves unsaid. She does not know if it is more difficult for women to, as she says, wear »the monkey suit« or if they are less interested in it and thus end up in the shadows. She says that one of the reasons why she applied for design herself, on the contrary, was the collegial aspect and the opportunity to be the person behind it, someone who is not visible. That's not how the industry works today.



In Extremis, Deborah Baker, 2018, iUniverse, Book Jacket Design. Carin Goldberg

In her poetry, fiction, essays, and public statements, Laura Riding tackled Freud, feminism, communism, language and belief, sexuality, and the coming of age of the American dream.

Profile #1.

Scientist,

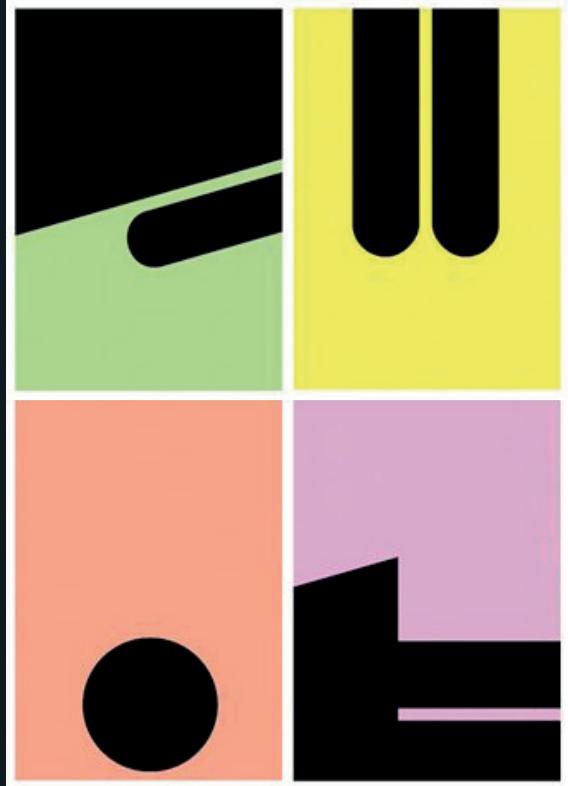


Superwoman Series,
Hong Kong Heritage
Museum, 2020. Poster
Design. Carin Goldberg

»I was invited by the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, along with a very esteemed group of international designers, to interpret and evoke the meaning of >Superwoman< in the 21st century. I responded by using generic, »clipart< imagery as a vehicle to imply irony, ambiguity, anonymity and identity.«

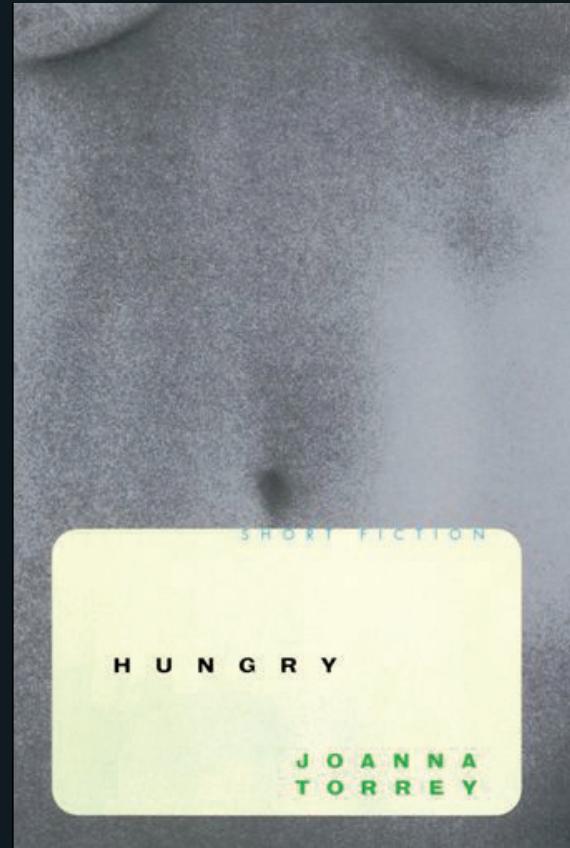
Superwoman Series,
Hong Kong Heritage
Museum, 2020. Poster
Design. Carin Goldberg

»I was hoping to avoid making specific statements about women or feminism and wanted more to respond to the superficiality of the brief and to avoid the trivialization of a gender.«



I'M A DESIGNER.

»Designing for me is intuitive. The goal is to solve each problem intelligently, and hopefully make it beautiful too.«



Hungry, Joanna Torrey,
1999, Crown, Book Jacket
Design. Carin Goldberg

A delicious literary banquet, served with panache and wit, this collection of six short stories and a novella, written in a style that is subversively honest and shamelessly sexy, explores the many aspects of female hunger--sexual, psychic, material, and gastronomic.

Goldberg's approach is anything but formulated. »Designing for me«, she says, »is intuitive. The goal is to solve each problem intelligently, and hopefully make it beautiful too. I have stopped calling myself a graphic designer, I only call myself a designer to point out that my profession is about other things than just making something look good. With the help of the computer, many people can succeed in doing things that look like design but are not really.«

The remarkable career of Carin Goldberg reflects one woman's ability to tap into her cultural moment and create a series of icons that have functioned in the brutal arena of retail sales while also engaging-head-on-the cultural debates internal to the design profession. Known primarily for her book covers and jackets, Goldberg helped reinvent this field in the 1980s and successfully navigated its second renaissance in the early 90s. Today, she is heading into new waters, leaving behind an area of design practice that has become increasingly corporate and codified.

Coldberg's work has always been tied to the cultural sector, but not to the elitist sphere of museum identities and academic publishing. Post-modernism was not a singular movement, and its attack against modernist orthodoxy yielded a diversity of positions that divided-and energized-graphic design in the 80s. Tibor Kalman, who did more than anyone to keep that decade interesting, attacked the work of Goldberg-and many others at the AIGA's national conference in San Antonio, Texas, in 1989. Kalman lambasted her Rilke cover for "pillaging history".

A few years later, he minted the phrase "jive modernism" in references that, he claimed, ignored the utopian, revolutionary basis of the avant-garde while



Unravelling, Elizabeth Graver, 1996, Hyperion, Book Jacket Design. Carin Goldberg

Growing up on a small New England farm, a determined young nineteenth-century woman named Aimee Slater ventures to Lowell, Massachusetts, to find work, a move that leads to a split with her mother.

producing empty, commercially-driven decoration. While some designers were embittered by Kalman's polemics, Goldberg responded to the uproar with a sense of humor. Her work had been pushed into a fray that was dividing the design world, and it was more exciting to be part of the fight than to be left out at the margins. »It didn't kill me.« she recalls. »I was surprised by the intensity of the discussion. While I was busy pillaging history, Tibor was busy pilaging the vernacular. We were all pillagers.«

Goldberg's use of history is part of its own historical continuum, that of New York pop design. She employs historical imagery sporadically, not programmatically, referring to past styles not to as a matter of principle, but as a matter of appropriateness. In fact, modernist quotations are few and far between in Goldberg's work. Goldberg came of age under the ascendance of the Pusch Pin designers, who forged an indelible American design ethos—at once artistic and commercial—that freely incorporates diverse styles. Her design for *>Unravelling<* consists of a small typographic label—reminiscent of 19th century packaging—that punctuates a pale, soft photograph of eggs cradled in a woman's hands.

The post-modern 80s had come to a close, and the introspective '90s had begun. The cultural shift away from happy formalism towards darker, more ambiguous visual narratives is seen in Goldberg's own work in the 90s. On the cover for *>Hungry<*, a spare, label-like field floats across the belly of a nude female torso, suggesting repressed desire—gustatory or erotic. *<Mother Said>* presents a plain black purse—a vessel of maternal secrets—embraced in quotation marks.

Goldberg became increasingly dissatisfied with the cover and jacket business, a fact linked not to changes

MOTHER SAID

{ POEMS }

BY

HAL

SIROWITZ



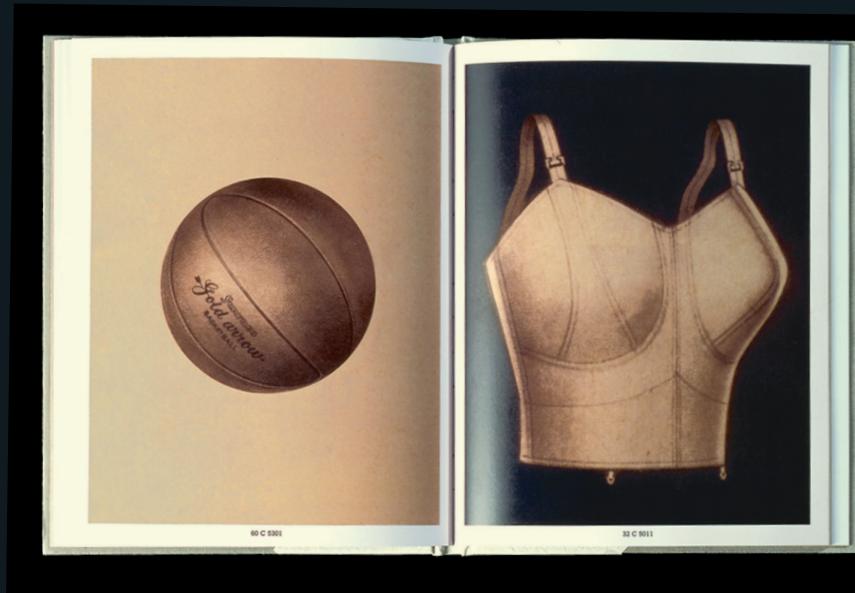
Mother said, Hal Sirowitz,
1996, Crown, Book Jacket
Design. Carin Goldberg

Before her death in December of 1993, Estelle Sirowitz ladled out the usual maternal advice—from wearing clean underwear (without holes), to believing in God. Nearly fourteen years ago Sirowitz began turning his mother's advice into poetry.

in cultural appetites or prevailing styles but to changes in the industry itself. Whereas the '80s and early '90s were vibrant times for freelance cover and jacket designers, the field gradually became dominated by in-house design departments. Marketing divisions became more involved in approving designs, and freelancers, relying on art directors to advocate their work within publishing houses, were not close enough to the process to prevail against in-house designers.

Goldberg took this change in climate as an opportunity to shift the direction of her career. She is relocating her family—architect Jim Biber and their son Julian—from a charming but remote town in upstate New York back to Manhattan, where she can be part of the day-to-day fray of the design process and pursue more ambitious, large-scale projects. As a cover designer, Goldberg worked in relative solitude, creating single images with tightly circumscribed functions. Now, she is working as a magazine consultant and is designing total publication projects.

Even more exciting is a self-authored book, *>Catalog<*, to be published by Stewart Tibori and Chang in 2001. The book transports photographs from a '50s mail order catalog into a series of spare pages, where disembodied bras, girdles, and shoes float with serene dispassion. These mundane accoutrements of middle-aged womanhood—designed to lift, separate, and constrain—are liberated under Goldberg's hand into icons that are at once funny and erotic. The book seems prophetic of Goldberg's own transformation as she outfits herself for the next phase of her career. Her sexy sense of humor will surely prevail.



Catalog, Carin Goldberg, 2001,
Harry N. Abrams

Carin Goldberg, ever on the lookout for useful images for her graphic projects, acquired a mail-order catalog dated winter 1951 to 1952. Here, Goldberg noted, were consumer goods presented as icons.

I'M CARIN GOLDBERG.

TEXT Showroom: Carin Goldberg, 2000, novum | Carin Goldberg's Variations on Book Design, Ellen Lupton, 2001, GRAPHIS | Be brave and trust yourself: Carin Goldberg on studying, Marianne Hanoun, Carin Goldberg, 2018, Creative lives in Progress | Hall of Femmes: Carin Goldberg, Hjärta Smärta, 2010, Oyster Press | Success Tips from Master Graphic Designer, Will Sherwood | <https://www.goodreads.com> EDIT/DESIGN Hyeonah Kim, dudus2@naver.com SUPPORT Prof. in Silke Juchter, Prof. Wolfgang Sasse PUBLISHER Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg Steintorplatz 20099 Hamburg +49 (0)40 428134-880 service@mkg-hamburg.de

»Trust yourself enough to know when something or someone isn't for you. It's about making decisions that are good for you. With everything in Life - a course, a teacher, a friendship, a relationship, a job - if you're finding it an unresolvable problem where nothing is satisfying you, and find your confidence diminishing, get out. Don't ask 100 people what they think. Begin to cultivate a trust in yourself. Learning what you don't want to do is just as valuable as knowing what you do want to do.«