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# Grafica Della Strada: The Signs Of Italy



## Synopsis

For more than three decades, renowned graphic designer and self-described Italophile Louise Fili has traveled the cities and countryside of Italy cataloging the work of sign craftsmen in whose hands type takes on new life with a tantalizing menu of styles. Classical, eclectic, or Futurist; in gold leaf, marble, brass, wood, wrought iron, enamel, ceramic, or neon; painted, carved, inlaid, etched, tiled, or stenciled— the creative possibilities are endless. *Grafica della Strada* is Fili's photographic diary of hundreds of Italy's most inventive restaurant, shop, hotel, street, and advertising signs. A major influence on Fili's own work, many of these marvels of vernacular design live on solely in this book, a typographic love letter to Italy that will be an inspiration to designers and Italophiles everywhere.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"...a treasure for all—especially those seeking inspiration in typeface and art direction." - Cool Hunting  
"Playful and bold, these signs evoke the charm and bustle of Italy's vital urban life." -Elle  
"More than just a visual feast, the journal will ignite the senses of anyone who has traveled in the country. The book is packed with brilliant type specimens, and rather than providing in-depth context, Fili lets her photographs do the talking." -Communication Arts  
"I wish everyone could experience the magic of Italy firsthand. In the meantime, *Grafica della Strada: The Signs of Italy* offers a marvelous taste of the visuals I've found so captivating. Literally a photo flip-book of signs from across the country -- storefronts, road signs, street art, and more -- it captures how Italy's elevated design aesthetic plays into everyday life...We can all use a reminder that life is as beautiful

as we make it."-MarthaStewart.com"Forget the museums-the street signs are beautiful too. In Italy, even storefront lettering and advertisements contain visual gems."-Entertainment Weekly"A visual cornucopia of typographic signs photographed in her beloved Italy. a reminder that design skill is not only a function of what we make, but manifests, too, in what we mindfully choose to record." -Design Observer

Louise Fili is director of Louise Fili Ltd, a New York-based design studio specializing in branding for food packaging and restaurants. Fili was art director of Pantheon Books for eleven years, where she designed close to 2000 book jackets. She is a member of the Art Directors Hall of Fame, and received the medal of lifetime achievement from the AIGA and the Type Directors Club.Fili is the author of *Elegantissima*, *Grafica della Strada*, and *Graphique de la Rue*. She also co-authored and designed *Italianissimo* and *The Cognoscenti's Guide to Florence*. With her husband, the design historian Steven Heller, she is co-author of *Italian Art Deco*, *British Modern*, *Dutch Moderne*, *Streamline*, *French Modern*, *Deco EspaÃ±a*, *German Modern*, *Deco Type*, *Design Connoisseur*, *Counter Culture*, *Typology*, *Stylepedia*, *Euro Deco*, *Scripts*, *Shadow Type*, *Stencil Type*, and *Slab Serif Type*. She has also designed *Perfetto*, *Tutti Frutti*, and *Brillante* pencils.

"Labor of love" is an over-used phrase -- but it perfectly describes this endeavor, by Louise Fili. Her comment/confession that her numerous trips to Italy were mere excuses to photograph more street signs, made me smile. (not that anyone ever needs an "excuse" for one more trip to Italy) But I knew what she meant. Her dedication and enthusiasm for typography and letter forms is on beautiful display here; and she has curated a lavish banquet of note-worthy signs for our enjoyment. Excellent photos that put us at eye level with the signs\*, stylish page design a la Fili, and a book that is also a beautiful object. My advice: Keep it out, and flip through often.\*As a sidebar, the final image in the book is of Louise taking photos in Bologna. Seen in profile, wearing a Raphael-esque red beret and black stockings, and holding her camera "extender" straight up; she looked very much like the Sienese "Alfieri" or flag-throwers from the Palio pageant. One of their many intricate maneuvers is to wind the huge heraldic flags into a tight vertical "rocket" and then shoot it right up into the air. I did a double-take!

I really like Louise Fili's design and work. There is no doubt of the historical importance for design and typography that the images in this book record. For type and design fans, who like Italian vernacular letters, this would be a great gift. Five stars there. But, I kind of wish it was

an e-book too since, it is all images.or a web site.The image quality would have been better if a pro photographer took the images with a full frame pro camera and lens.Of the two books, this one is better.

Stunning book, page after page. Filled with incredible signage and examples of Italian design that transports you to the streets of Italy. Louise Fili is not only a talented designer, but continually provides the design community (and really, anyone interested in design and architecture) with beautiful books on the history and craft of typographic style.

Every page a visual gem - signs that people see everyday - past and present - rich in color and content. You will look at it many times - it doesn't disappoint - this book will inspire you.

A beautiful book of vintage Italian typography and style.

Beautiful typography beautifully presented. An unexpected benefit from reading this book was the new insights it provided into the Italian character and culture. A visual treat.

Beautiful typographic study

This gorgeous compendium of Italian street signs also includes some very astute essays.

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