



The Art and Science of Enhancing Your Mission, Attendance and Fundraising

The Design Article – Part 2 of 2

# Monkey Business

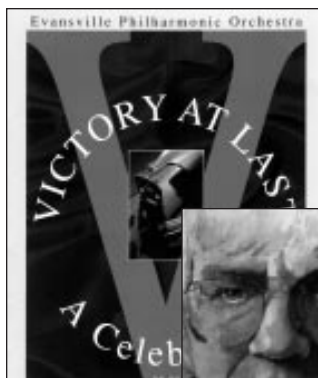
*You Will Recall This  
 Headline Because  
 It Is Drawing  
 Attention to Itself*



by HENRY RUDDLE

**H**ere's the new mantra of season brochure design – find your monkey! You no doubt recall the story about the con man who travels from village to village selling a potion guaranteed to turn ordinary rocks into gold so long as the villagers can avoid thinking about monkeys while they stir the pot. Of course, once the villagers get those monkeys into their heads, they can't get them out.

So, if you can find a memorable “monkey” to feature in your next season brochure, your prospective subscribers and ticket buyers will have a harder time getting your upcoming season out of their heads.



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### Organization Monkeys

For its 1998-99 season, the **Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra** had the benefit of a multimillion dollar monkey – it moved into a new home, the Victory Theatre, an acoustically restored movie house.

While undoubtedly echoing some of that romantic “Victory at Sea” style heroism in its design, the cover of the orchestra’s brochure has one significant flaw – the monkey is hiding on page 2. Although the only graphics the designers had were artist render-

ings of the not-yet-finished-at-press-time restoration job, at least one of them could have appeared on the cover so that recipients of the brochure would know what the big “V” was all about.

### People Monkeys

Although featuring a big-head illustration of **Maestro Helmuth Rilling** on the cover of its brochure is commonplace for the **Oregon Bach Festival**, the 1998 watercolor commissioned for his 65th birthday was

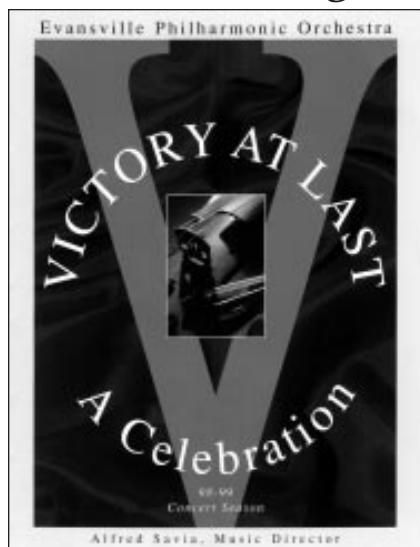
particularly mesmerizing. Since the personality of the artistic director often drives organizations such as the Festival, Rilling’s big birthday made a marvelous monkey.

As with Evansville, the only design change that would have significantly improved the cover would have been to highlight the “65” more.

### Community Monkeys

With the civic-pride building power of the Utah Jazz making it to the 1997 and 1998 NBA finals, it was an

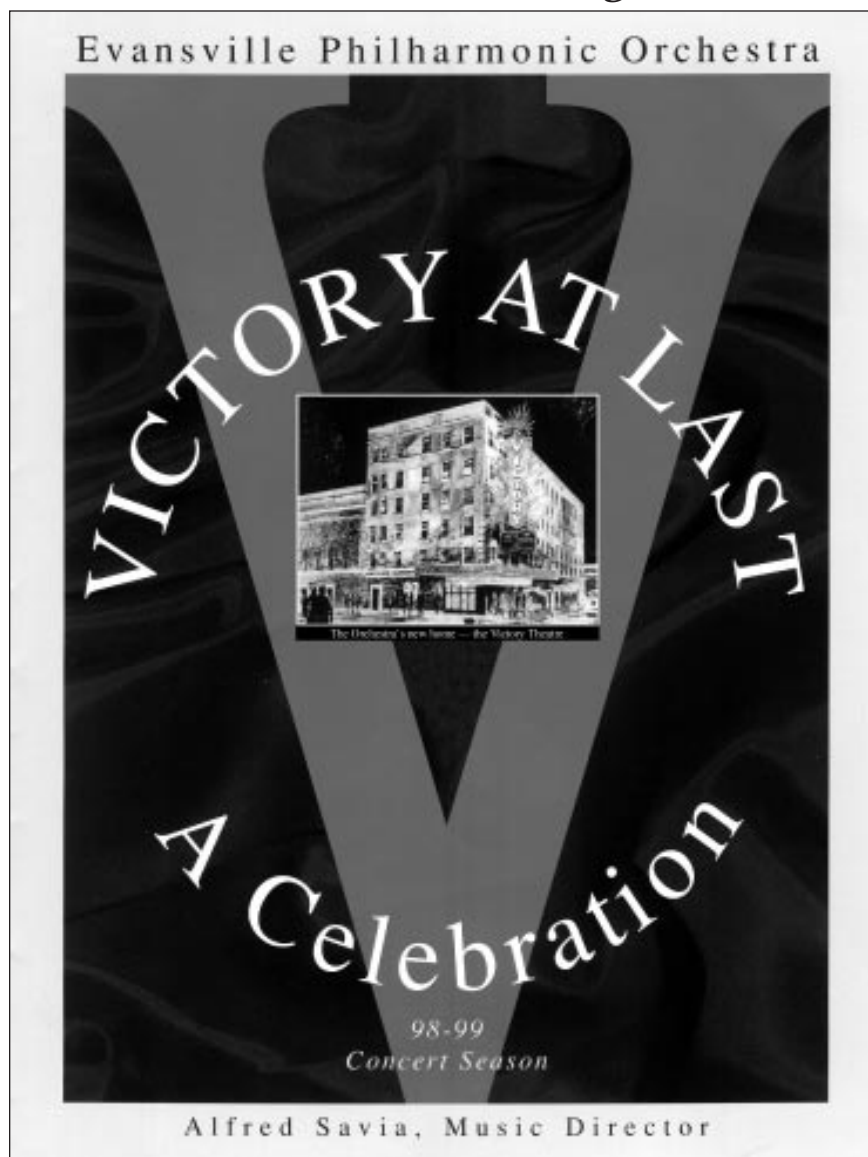
### *Old Cover Design*



*The Evansville Philharmonic Orchestra’s “Victory at Last” brochure (above) could have used a more explicit visual showing the restored Victory Theatre (right) – for one easy example of how to make use of the attractive illustrations (below).*



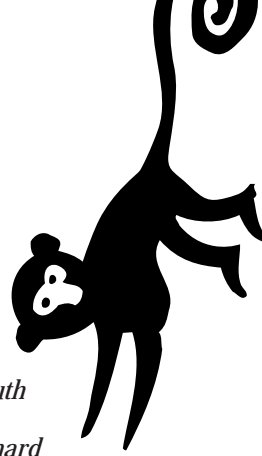
### *Our New Cover Design*



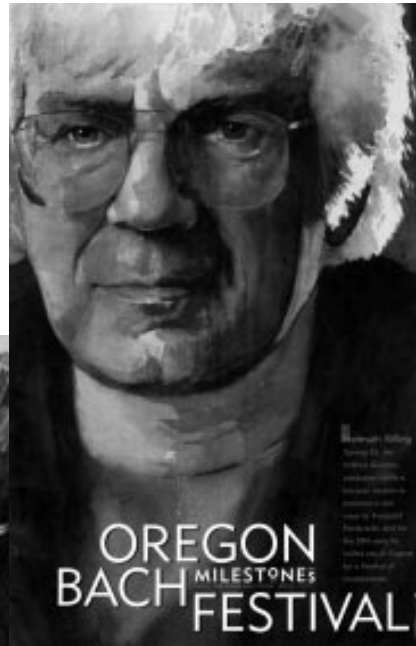
excellent idea for the **Utah Festival Opera Company** to ride the basketball team's shoe laces to fame in its season brochure. Any opera company can feature a glowering *Pagliacci* on its brochure cover, but very few can contrast that tragic clown with the town's exuberant sports heroes.

Unbeknownst to the casual recipient, the company's 1998 season brochure featured costumed Utah Jazz owner Larry Miller and Team President Frank Layden to highlight each production. Miller dressed up for *Gianni Schicchi* and *I Do! I Do!*, while Layden doffed make-up for *The Pirates of Penzance*, *Musica Magnifica*, and, dare we surmise, *Pagliacci* himself.

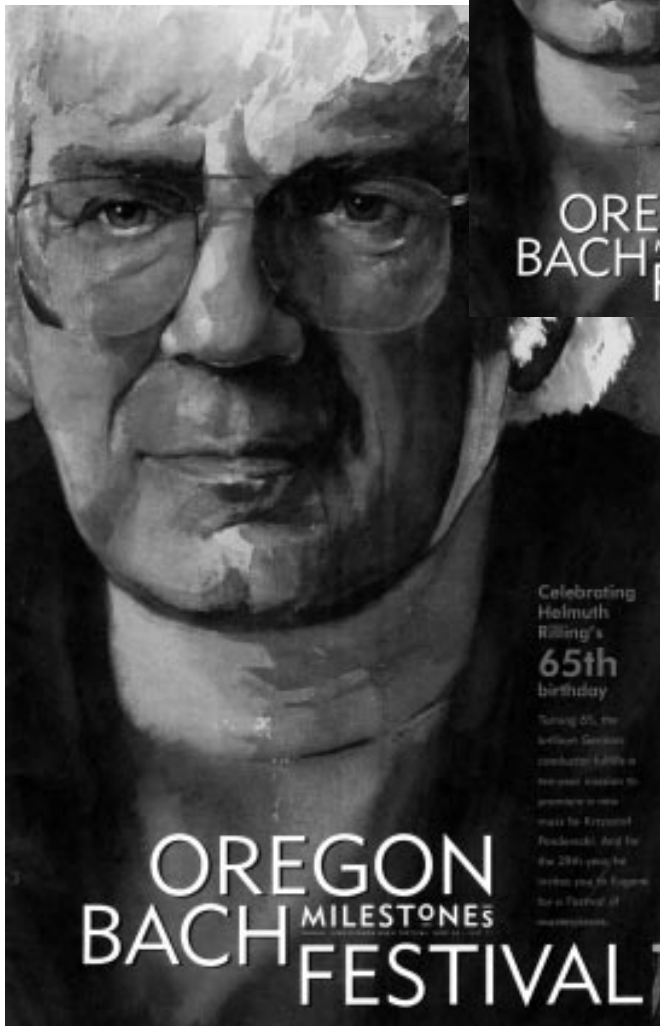
Unfortunately, as noted above, the brochure designers left these shenani-



*Although Helmuth Rilling's water-colored face is hard to forget (below right), the season brochure ought to have made his 65th birthday more prominent on the cover (below left).*



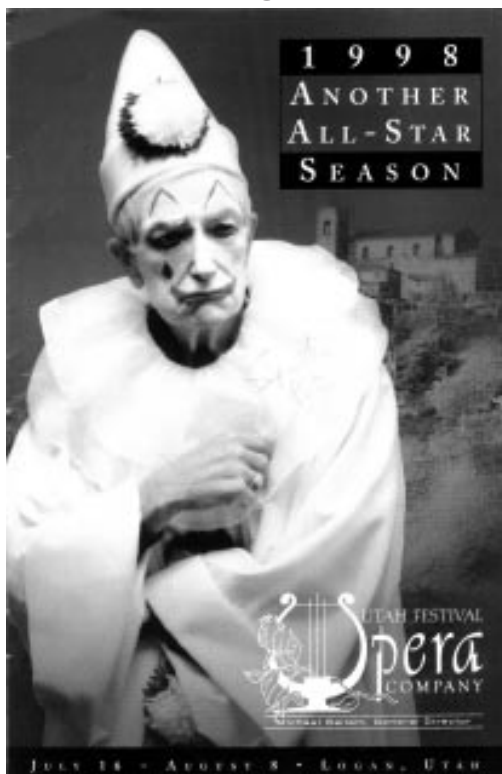
▲ *Old Cover Design*



◀ *Our New Cover Design*

*Continued on the following page*

## Old Cover Design and Inside Pages



Pagliacci may know how to manage a basketball team (left), but brochure recipients won't know it unless you tell them (below).



The brochure does not identify the photo models as both the president and owner of the Utah JAZZ, but it does provide a photo without make-up on page 2 (left) to compare with the other photos (right).



### MONKEY BUSINESS, continued from page 21

gans “unbeknownst.” The cover in particular avoids mentioning the basketball finals or the Jazz identities of the photo models – as if the designer was ashamed of what the photographer was doing. Surely not all of the recipients of the brochure were such rabid basketball fans that they would recognize the team president or owner in make-up and costume. The brochure’s “in joke” was “in” a bit too far. ■

Henry Ruddle founded Ruddle Creative in 1988. The firm produces publications and brochures for a wide variety of companies and non-profit organizations, including orchestras, theatre companies and ballet troupes. For information, visit [www.ruddle.com](http://www.ruddle.com), or contact him at 1-800-778-3353 or [henry@ruddle.com](mailto:henry@ruddle.com).



## Our New Cover Design

Using an inset and caption to show the “true identity” of Pagliacci and Gianni Schicchi makes the basketball connection more explicit.