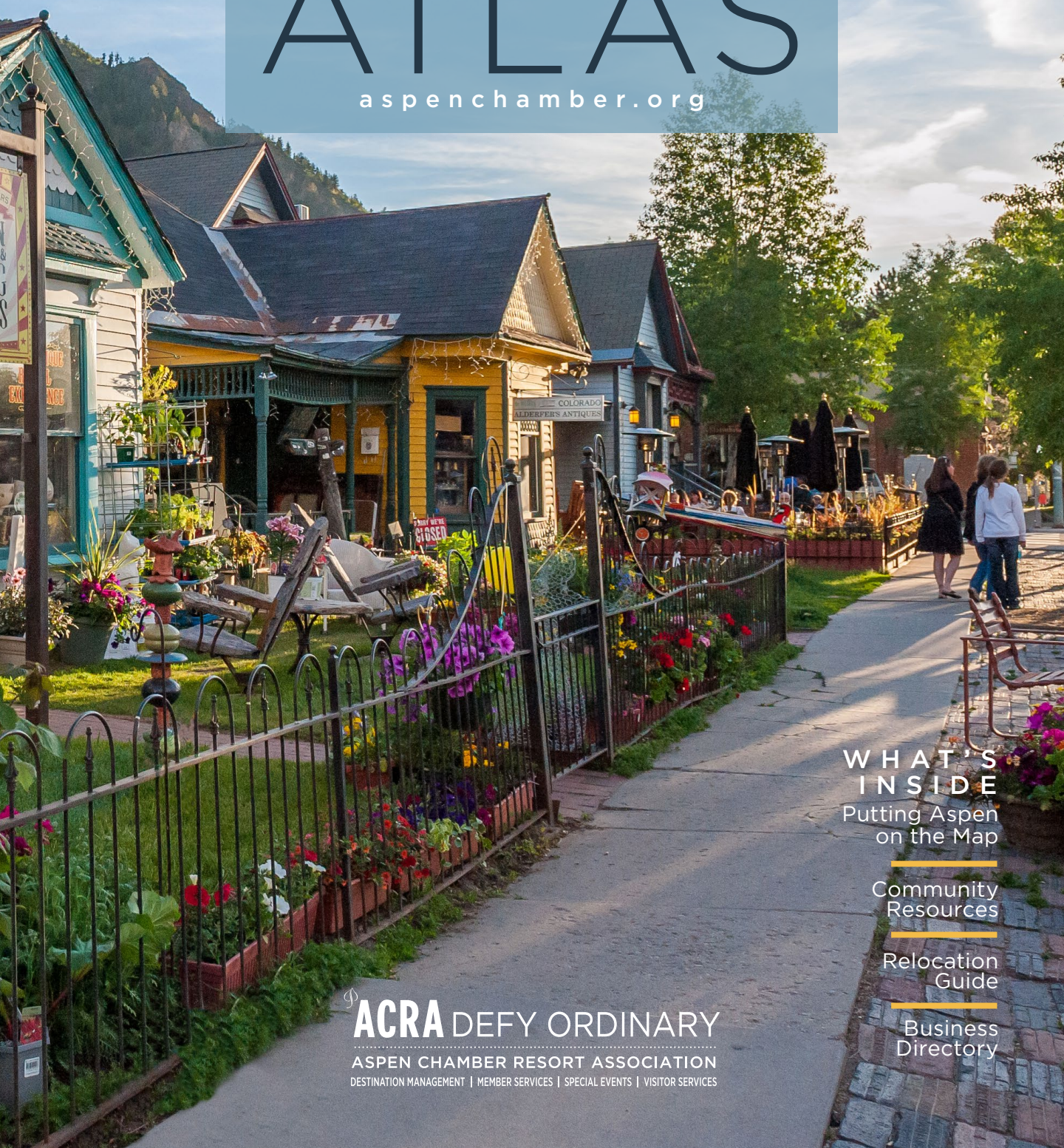


2023-2024

# ASPEN ATLAS

aspenchamber.org



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# PUTTING ASPEN ON THE MAP

BY AMIEE WHITE BEAZLEY



“Concept of a Visualist: Herbert Bayer’s World Geo-Graphic Atlas,” the newest exhibit at Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies at The Aspen Institute, examines one of the more obscure but influential and complex pieces of work produced by the revered, mid-century Bauhaus artist.

Bayer, a student of and master teacher at the groundbreaking German school of art and design, emigrated to the United States before the second World War in 1938. He was hired by Walter Paepcke, one of the founders of modern Aspen, to create artistic concepts for Paepcke’s Chicago-based company Container Corporation of America. Bayer, both architect and graphic designer, and Paepcke worked together to reimagine the role American business could have on global arts and culture, and much of the work they did together was conceived, produced, and endures today, including the design of the Aspen Institute campus itself.

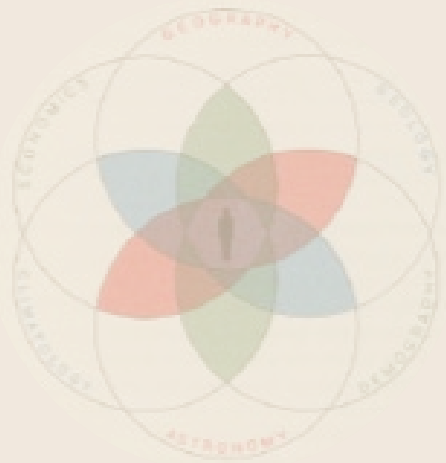
When Bayer was tasked with designing an atlas to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Container Corp., he took his assignment above and beyond how atlases had been previously conceptualized. Along with his assistants Henry Gardiner, Martin Rosenzweig, Masato Nakagawa and wife, Joella – Bayer worked for five years on the atlas from an art studio attached to his home at 234 W. Francis St. in Aspen.

Bayer’s World Geo-Graphic Atlas was first showcased at the 1953 International Design Conference in Aspen (IDCA), and in the 70 years since, the landmark publication has come to occupy a key place within graphic design and art history, transforming the look and character of subsequent geographic atlases and popular scientific illustration.

Drawing on a wide range of original artworks, print media and photographic documentation, the exhibition at The Bayer Center examines



Herbert Bayer, *World Geo-Graphic Atlas: A Composite of Man's Environment* (Chicago: Container Corporation of America, 1953)



the sources, creative processes, and intellectual exchanges through which Bayer and his collaborators realized the atlas, which not only provides geographic information but also that which pertains to astronomy, meteorology, climate and geology.

“Our inaugural exhibition focused on Bayer’s work as a fine artist; this next installment focuses more on his graphic design expertise and the intersection of science, information and art,” says Lissa Ballinger, Acting Director, The Bayer Center. “This Aspen Institute campus-wide exhibition highlights a signature element of Herbert Bayer’s career, and will appeal to a broader audience, including art and design aficionados, cartographers, geographers, historians, political scientists, climatologists, and visual educators.”

Benjamin Benus, art historian and associate professor at Loyola University, New Orleans,

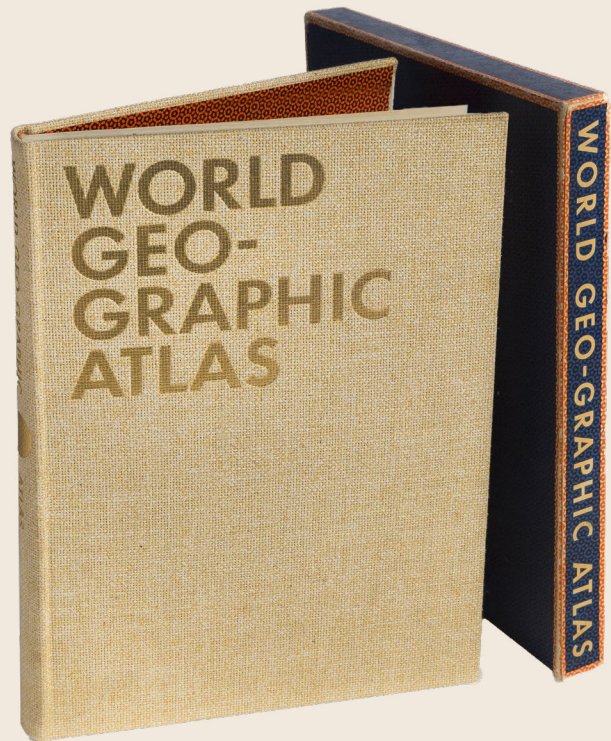
“Concept of a Visualist: Herbert Bayer’s World Geo-Graphic Atlas,” opens at The Bayer Center in June 2023 and runs through April 2024. In conjunction with the center’s primary exhibition at The Bayer Center, a year-long complementary education presentation titled, “Charting Space: Herbert Bayer’s World Geo-Graphic Atlas at 70” will be shown at the Resnick Gallery of the Doerr-Hosier Center. It will feature a recreation of Bayer’s “Outside-In Globe,” an immersive art sculpture suspended from the Isaacson room ceiling representing an updated 21st century map.



has written a book on Bayer's atlas, Herbert Bayer's World Geo-Graphic Atlas and Information Design at Mid-Century, and will co-curate the Aspen exhibit alongside Bayer expert, Bernard Jazzar.

"Bayer's atlas is visually very distinctive when compared with other atlases from the same period," says Benus. "He used visually compelling graphics to make specialized knowledge and scientific information engaging and accessible to general audiences."

The atlas also addressed ideas of how aviation, travel and flight transformed people's understanding of world geography. The atlas's overarching message proved to be prescient, with emphasis on conserving natural resources and its warnings of potential environmental catastrophe.



*"This visionary narrative, unusual for the atlases of the time, highlighted the costs of environmental degradation, the toll industrialization and population growth were taking on the natural environment and suggested to readers steps they could take to address these crises", says Benus.*

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## If you go

### **"CONCEPT OF A VISUALIST: HERBERT BAYER'S WORLD GEO-GRAPHIC ATLAS"**

*June 2023 through April 2024*

**Resnick Center for Herbert Bayer Studies  
on The Aspen Institute Campus**

610 Gillespie Ave.

Free and open to the public

For hours and tours call (970) 544-7899 or visit [thebayercenter.org](http://thebayercenter.org)