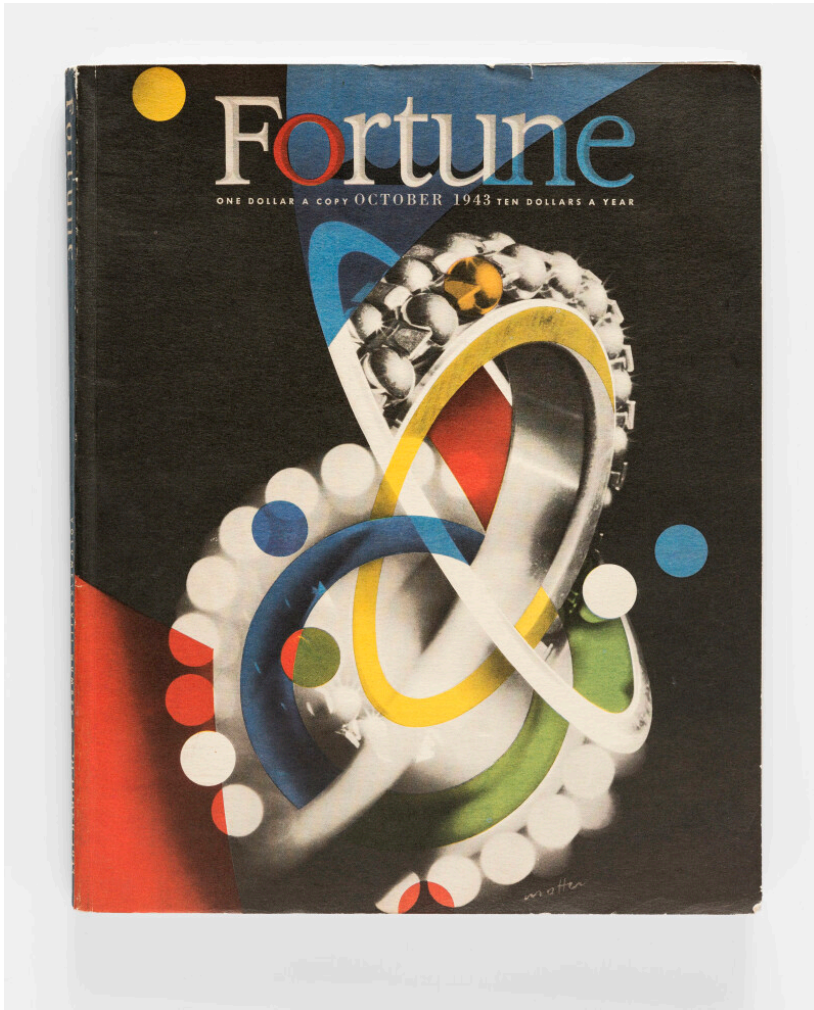


Zeitschrift, Umschlag, Fortune 4, 1943  
Gestaltung: Herbert Matter  
Herausgabe: Time Inc., New York, US  
33 × 26.5 cm  
Donation: Lawrence Wolfson  
Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK



Dancing letters, chairs floating in the air, clouds drifting by: Herbert Matter's (1907–1984) American oeuvre is marked by the lighthearted, playful use of elements from modern image design. A striking number of his works created in the United States—over a period spanning five decades—revolve around the theme of movement.

When Herbert Matter left Switzerland for the United States in late 1935, the young photographer and graphic artist already had an impressive portfolio. Its contents ranged from promotional materials for the wintertime health resort of Engelberg to a series of photo posters advertising Switzerland as an international tourist destination. Matter's designs caught the viewer's eye with their adventurous pictorial montages. Skiing, and the wavy tracks it leaves in the snow, was a recurring motif in his work. Matter was fascinated by movement—especially when it was captured by the camera and conceived as an aesthetic experiment in the style of László Moholy-Nagy. His fascination continued in the United States, where he found ideal objects for study in Alexander Calder's mobiles. The photographer made use of a strobe flash to

capture the phases of rapid movement. In the fall of 1943, Matter presented some of these photographs in the exhibition *Action Photography* at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York. His cover photograph for the October 1943 issue of the prestigious *Fortune* magazine appeared at the same time. The theme of the issue was the American postwar economy, so Matter pictured a ball bearing. However, he did not depict the tangible object as such. In contrast to Josef Albers's 1934 book cover for *Machine Art*, also created for MoMA, Matter used rotation, superimposition, and geometric spots of color to turn the mechanical object into a sparkling piece of jewelry. The object traces spherical orbits, like the planets, simultaneously integrating the title letter O into its universe. (Karin Gimmi)

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/fortune-4/>