

# Title design

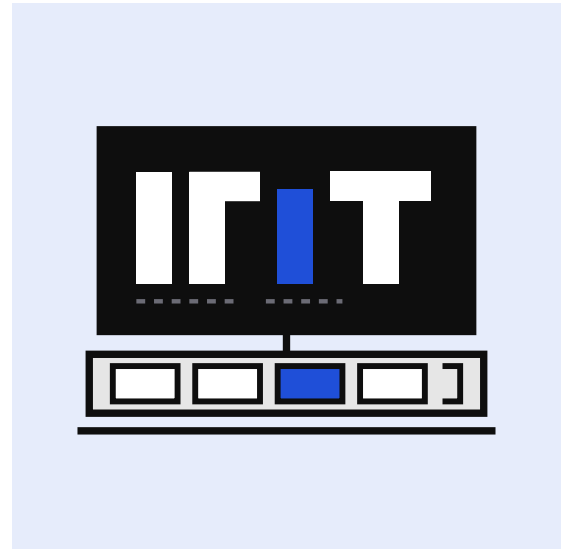
Designs the credit sequences at the start or end of a film or series, using type, image, motion and music, to set the tone and introduce the story.

In Spanish

*Diseño de títulos de crédito*

Origin

Titles since silent film; Saul Bass turned them into a designed piece in the 1950s (Bass and Kirkham, 2011)



## What problem it addresses

Credits have to name many people and, at the same time, prepare the audience for what's coming, in a few minutes and without giving too much away.

## Principles

### One idea that sums up the film

A symbol, a shape or a color condenses the theme before the first scene.

### In time with the music

Type and images appear and move following the sound.

### Names can be read

Each credit lasts long enough and has contrast, even when the sequence is expressive.

## Applications in design

### ✓ Use it like this

Look for a single visual idea that says what the story is about and develop it with the music.

### ✗ Avoid

Telling the plot or giving away surprises in the credits.

### 👁 Don't fall for it

Check the sequence on the real screen: if a name can't be read in time, hold it longer or raise its contrast.

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# Connections

Related to

■ Graphic design

■ Sound design

■ Typography

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## Authors and works

|      |                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1955 | <b>Saul Bass</b>                      | In Otto Preminger's «The Man with the Golden Arm», white bars on black move to Elmer Bernstein's jazz score until they form a broken arm, a symbol of the main character's addiction. |
| 2011 | <b>Jennifer Bass and Pat Kirkham</b>  | Gathered the work of Saul Bass, who with Elaine Bass made credits a piece that gives the film mood and context.                                                                       |
| 2007 | <b>Gemma Solana and Antonio Boneu</b> | Surveyed the history of title sequences, including pioneers before Bass and many designers who for decades went uncredited.                                                           |

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## Sources

### Secondary sources

- Bass, J., & Kirkham, P. (2011). Saul Bass: A life in film & design. Laurence King.
- Art of the Title (n.d.). The Man with the Golden Arm (1955). Extracto de Bass, J., & Kirkham, P. (2011), Saul Bass: A life in film & design. [View source \(https://www.artofthetitle.com/title/the-man-with-the-golden-arm/\)](https://www.artofthetitle.com/title/the-man-with-the-golden-arm/)
- Thrift, M. (2020, May 8). Celebrating Saul Bass's centenary: 10 essential title sequences. BFI. [View source \(https://www.bfi.org.uk/lists/celebrating-saul-basss-centenary-10-essential-title-sequences\)](https://www.bfi.org.uk/lists/celebrating-saul-basss-centenary-10-essential-title-sequences)
- Solana, G., & Boneu, A. (2007). Uncredited: Graphic design & opening titles in movies. Index Book.

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