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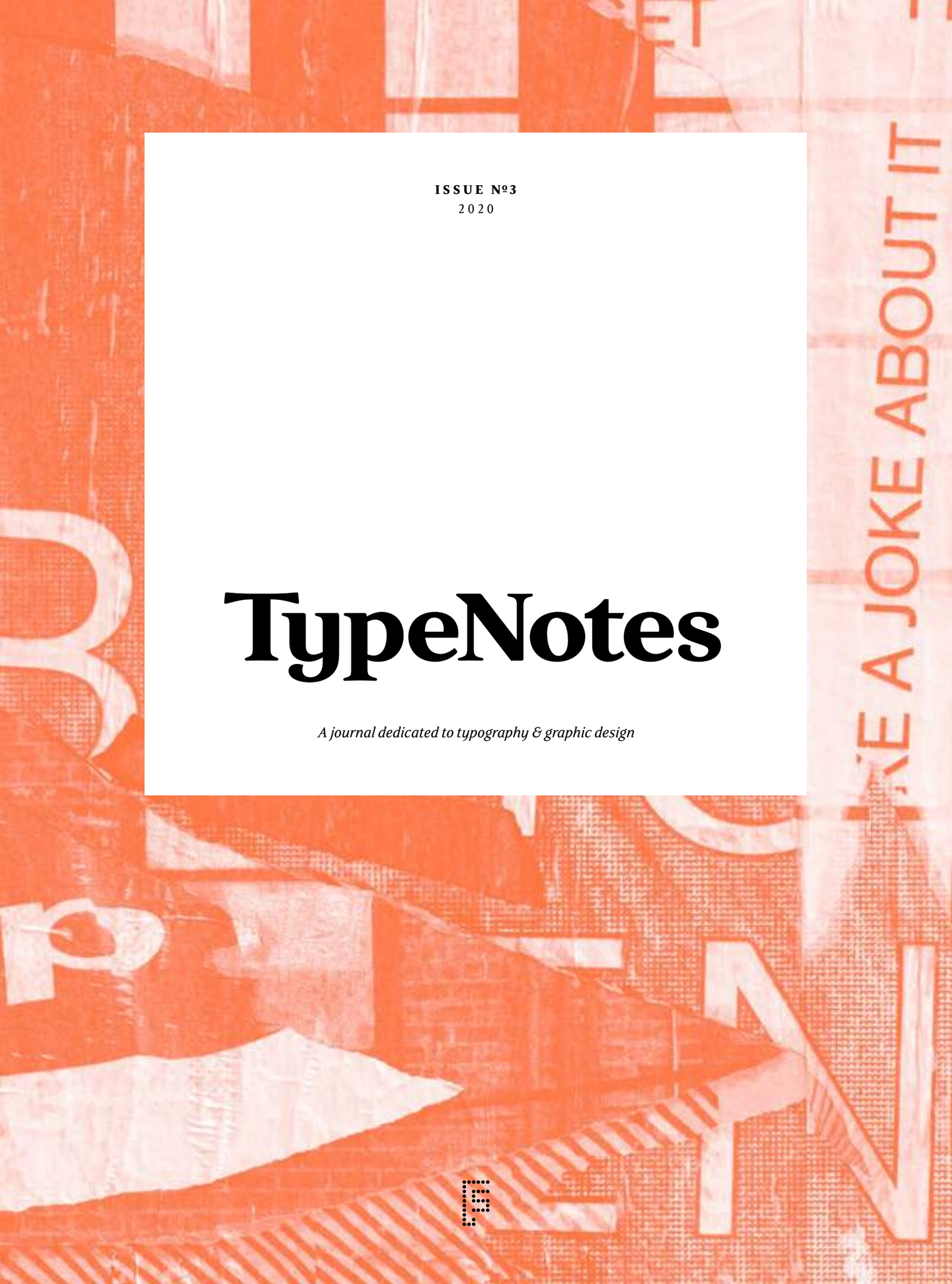
2020

TypeNotes

A journal dedicated to typography & graphic design



03

Welcome to the third issue of TypeNotes, *Fontsmith's magazine dedicated to typography and graphic design.*

In this special issue we have advice on creative block (we all get it) from five brilliant creatives; a collection of 1960s and 70s beer mats; typography in art; a guide to type styles; a big typographic night out; we go behind the scenes at St Bride Library, the British Film Institute archives and the fascinating bespoke print shop Perrott Press, and much, much more. ♠ The Fontsmith studio has been busy making new fonts and developments in the world of type design this year. ♣ Issue three of TypeNotes *has been a while in the making but well worth the wait we know you'll agree. ♥ Thanks as always to our brilliant editor Emily Gosling, designers Counter Studio and our contributors from around the world.*

Jason Smith
Founder, FONTSMITH

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Contributors
Chris Bolton, designer and founder, Pulp Culture

Erik Brandt, graphic designer, educator and founder, Ficciones Typografika

Luke Brown, design director, The Company You Keep

Lee Fagan, management team, Threads Radio

Georgia Fendley, founder, Construct

Dava Guthmiller, founder and chief creative officer, Noise 13

David Heasty, partner, Triboro

Adam Higton, artist and illustrator

Pum Lefebure, co-founder and chief creative officer, Design Army

Stephen Perrott and Catherine Perrott, Perrott Bespoke Printing

Chris Pitney, freelance graphic designer

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The periodical *Footnotes*, published by La Police in Switzerland. Reproducing a spread from issue A's reprint of *Typewriter typefaces* by Alan Bartram *(Typographica #6, 1962)* allowed us to generously illustrate Stuart de Rozario's article on typewriter typefaces in *TypeNotes* Issue Two. You can support it by purchasing a copy: readfootnotes.ch

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Creative director Jason Smith

Editor Emily Gosling

Design and art direction Elizabeth Ellis and David Marshall, Counter Studio

Marketing Tamasin Handley

Writers
Pedro Arilla, Tom Banks, Erik Brandt, Stuart de Rozario, Georgia Fendley, Phil Garnham, Emily Gosling, Krista Radoeva, Angela Riechers and Laura Snoad

Photographers
Tim Bowditch and Rachel Hardwick

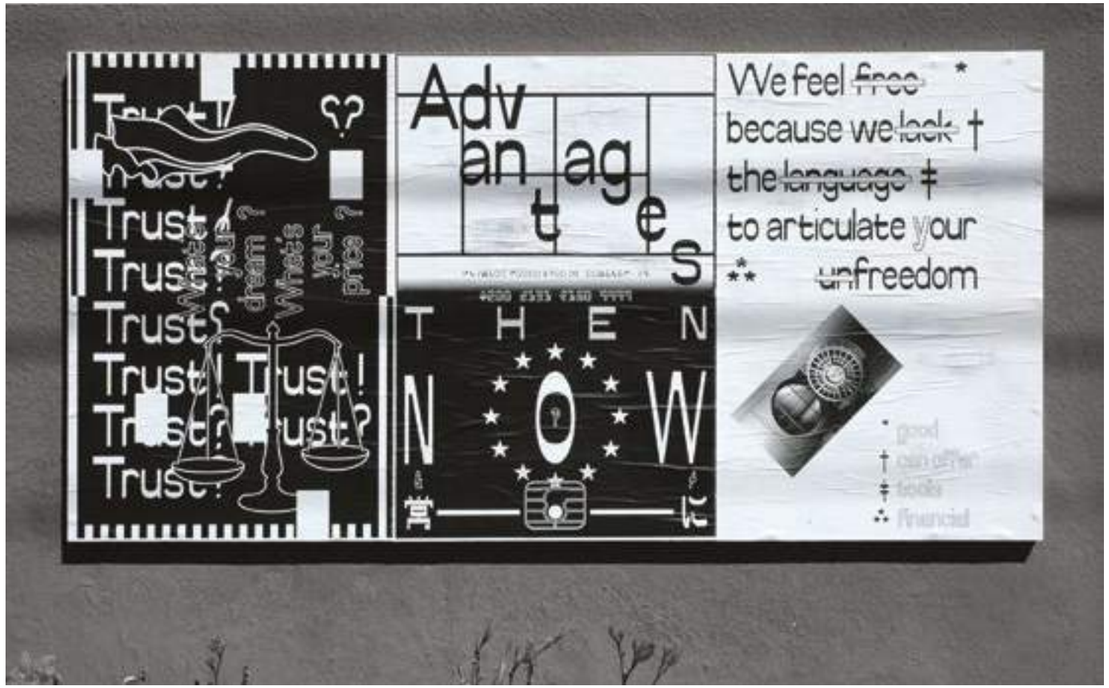
Illustrator Alva Skog

Contact
Tamasin Handley, marketing director
tam@fontsmith.com

FONTSMITH
26–27 Great Sutton Street
London ECIV ODS

+44 (0)20 7490 9380
fontsmith.com

THREE



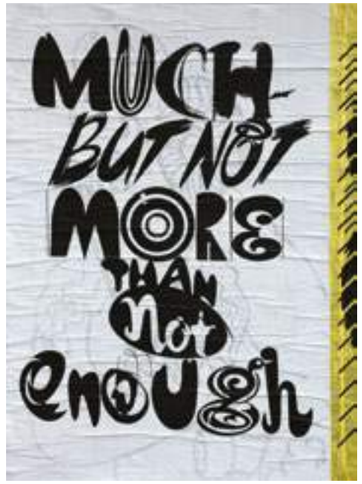
ONE BILLBOARD IN POWDERHORN, MINNEAPOLIS...

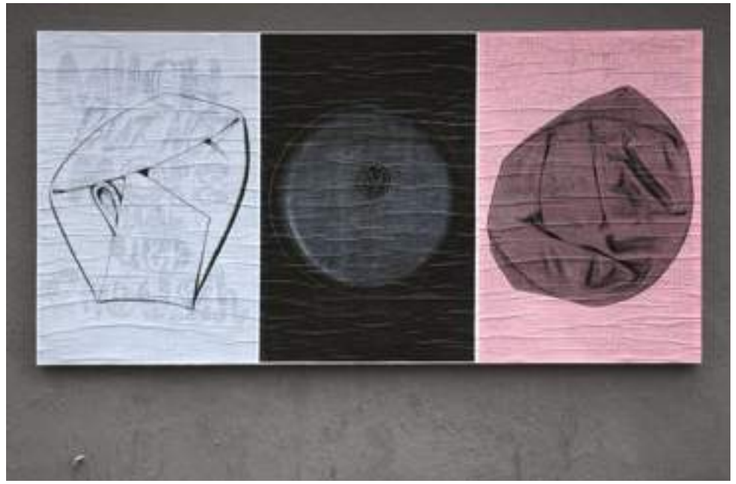
And how it spoke to a global type and design community, one poster at a time. Erik Brandt talks us through his thoroughly local but entirely global poster project.

Erik Brandt: a note on images
"With apologies to all contributors. It is really impossible to select images from the project, I have chosen these early pieces here as a simple reflection of a few stories that describe the roots of the project and how it evolved."

Back in 2013, Erik Brandt, a Minneapolis-based designer and educator, decided to embark on a bold and unusual project he called Ficciones Typografika; using the side of his garage in Powderhorn as an ever-changing exhibition space holding three 24" × 36" posters. What started as a very local, very personal project—the initial intention was for Brandt just to show his own work—soon snowballed into a global behemoth, a celebration of the printed format, collaboration and pushing the boundaries of what typography means. The works were shown online as well as physically, creating a dialogue around type and design in the digital sphere, as well as locally. The project came to an end last year, and since its formation 1,641 posters were shown from designers, typographers, artists, poets and more from across the world. Some were political, some were experimental, others simply beautiful.

This year, Brandt published a book that brought together the works into a single publication created in collaboration with Mark Gowing of publisher Formist Editions. Entitled *Ficciones Typografika 1642*, the weighty tome documents the project in its entirety, including an overprint of each individual digital file that became a poster. "Conceptually approached as the last Ficciones Typografika (hence the title 1642), the book is an expressive and visceral experience, rather than an encyclopaedic documentation," says the publisher. Here, Brandt talks us through the project that for six years, was a focus not just for him as a designer and teacher, but for the local community; and soon, a site of interest for designers around the world.





Above: Ed Fella, Ficciones Typografika 103 (24"×36"). Installed 20 October 2013.
"Love this man. When Ed sent this in, he told me to show it to my wife, a poet, and that she would get it. One of the wonderful parts of the project was the unexpected translucence that sometimes allowed unexpected collaborations—under Ed's piece is the brilliant Iman Raad, and Ed's is visible under Rejane's first, above."

Above: Rejane Dal Bello, Ficciones Typografika 106–108 (72"×36"). Installed 23 October 2013.
"I remember when Rejane's email came in, I was/am a massive fan of her work and was overjoyed to see her proposals. They really helped extend the project and what was possible."

Opposite page: Kia Tasbihgou, Ficciones Typografika 046–048 (72"×36"). Installed 7 August 2013.
"I'll never forget Kia's submission, it was one of the first that was aggressively contemporary but also extremely timely, intelligent, and political. Kia will also never forget it because I erroneously identified him as female, but his quick 'I'm a boy!' comment taught me a valuable lesson."

"The idea behind Ficciones Typografika was to be public about it, and I had this obviously semi-perfect location already. What was most perfect about it was that it was—and still is—a place where a poster exhibition really shouldn't be, this little neighbourhood in Minneapolis. That was part of the appeal of the project for people: that it was public, and the works were real—the posters would be printed and re-posted, but the work would also have a digital life before and after being printed. By far the most dominant audience was online, but it also created quite an impact in the neighbourhood: people changed the way they walked their dogs, they changed their commute to and from work. It was a really nice engagement with the community as well.

"There were some really weird but wonderful things that happened. One was around the time the police were pushing prostitution away from the main avenue five or six blocks away and the business was coming into this neighbourhood, and one woman made the poster site her spot, she'd be there most mornings. One day she was there and we had this fascinating conversation—her companion was surprised nobody had tagged it yet. I was laughing, and she said, "No, it's because people have respect for it!"

"There were loads of unexpected conversations with people. There wasn't any negativity, people were often just mystified. One time, a construction worker type guy drove past and came to a screeching stop, shouting "I have to know, what the fuck is this? I love it!" I explained the idea that it's not just for designers, but artists, poets, photographers... a place for experimentation in a public setting. That really appealed to people here. On two occasions when I had to take the board down for repairs, people stopped and were angry, saying "you can't stop the project!" When the end came, people who hadn't stopped before made a point of stopping by, and said they hoped it would continue.

"At the beginning it was invitation-only, and there was no brief: I literally only encouraged people to think experimentally. The only limitations were really the size of each poster, which was 24" × 36", and I could only print in black but with five different papers to choose from. I was defining typography quite broadly—much as I like to do with my teaching—so it allowed people to have an idiosyncratic response.

"The works came from all over: it was a nice balance between being a real thing that needed maintenance and changing, but also reaching a pretty large audience online. The invite-only period was actually very short. I was talking with Benoît Bodhuin, the French type designer, and he persuaded me to open it to submissions. At first I hadn't wanted to, as I was worried about the quality; then I worried about being the person that had to say "no"—I didn't necessarily want to be that guy. But when I did open it up, I was really pleasantly surprised, as the quality only increased. People had responded really well to the earlier pieces.

"At first the pieces would be up for a week or more, but the volume of submissions was massive so through 2014 I was hanging almost every day. It was really fun, I loved the constant repasting and the fast nature of it. That felt appropriate too, with the internet and the sort of speed we're used to seeing things. I had to

slow down after a bit for practical reasons, so by the end of the project it was maybe two posters a week. There was an organic pace that developed.

"The project had multiple intentions. For one, it was a pure celebration of the poster form and the phenomenon of the poster as a human phenomena, at a human scale. That's out of place in most American cities, as they're largely based on automobiles with few pedestrian zones. Where I grew up in northern Germany, posters are very much part of the culture, and reflect the culture.

"I also wanted it to be almost like a magazine like *Emigre* in a sense, which referenced culture but was also *the* place for the contemporary. Much like the jazz bebop musicians who turned their backs on people and played for themselves, I wanted it to be a place for designers to dismiss the client contract for a time and do something for themselves. So it certainly reached a design audience, but I think it went beyond that.

"There were some submissions that obviously weren't acceptable for whatever reason, but sometimes there would be pieces with a certain aesthetic or maybe a political agenda and I'd put them aside, as over time a longer narrative started to develop. Then at some point later down the line I'd go back to something submitted three years before, and the aesthetic or the message would be perfect.

"One part that I enjoyed the most was the interactions with people who wanted to be a part of it, and the conversations that came up around it. It was endlessly joyful.

"Mark Gowing did such a brilliant job with the book: it's a visceral experience, not a simple project by project documentation. His key idea to overprint the original files at 1:1 is just brilliant. It's such a pleasure to hold—every single one of the posters were in my hands to begin with, so it's really emotional to hold them again in a new way.

"It might sound clichéd, but the project became a natural extension of my practice, my teaching and my day-to-day. But I suppose the most joyful part was being a small part of what I think you can identify as clearly a global culture of design. It's not just a matter of people following and extending trends they're seeing in certain communities—there's a larger and genuine design and typographic voice developing. Some people are critical of that and see it more as trends or imitation, but I feel strongly that people are engaged in a global conversation around graphic design, and this was the place for that conversation.

"I had submissions from almost every country in the world, which was eye-opening. For example, what had been for many, the default location for the contemporary, Holland (for good reason) was exposed as illusory: I saw really strong, independent movements from France, Italy, Korea and many other countries. I think given the audience and the response, people genuinely wanted to contribute to this larger voice developing out of that. So it wasn't a subversion of graphic design or typography, it was a celebration of it. Toward the end, the level of submissions was still really high—I still get submissions every day that I would hang if it was still going—but I had a personal perception that it was becoming time to end it. It's not that it wasn't still popular—it was more popular than ever, if anything. But I think something new might evolve from it, something different. I do miss it, but I don't regret that it's over: it feels like it was whole and it came to the right conclusion; I hesitate to say "end" as I think it will still live on. But I do know it had an impact."

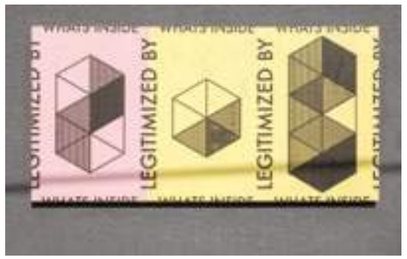
Louis Bullock, Ficciones Typografika 485 (24"×36"). Installed 3 June 2014.
"A perfect single, this one really showed off what was possible with the humble Océ printer and overcoming the limitations of one-colour printing."

Ficciones Typografika 055 – 057 (24"×36"). Installed 16 August 2013. From left to right, Andreas Kuhn, Bircan Ak, and Reza Abedini.
"All three of these contributors had sent in triptychs, and I was grateful for their agreement in allowing me to combine them. I feel it was a perfect balance that really embraced the broad definition of typography that Ficciones Typografika aspired to be."

Intermezzo
"One of my favourite parts of the project was the decollage process, which I titled, *Intermezzo*. I perfected a technique for carefully removing layers and exposing new and unintended collaborations as well complete ground changes. Adding hot water with a brush, I could even remove layers from single sheets, adding colour where there was none, for example.

"Here are just a couple of examples, including some of the originals as they appeared before the decollage process. The process was really a reverse painting. I have always been a touch envious of how much process painters can preserve in their work, for designers, this same 'building' is often lost once something goes to print. This was my way in engaging in the same result, backwards to be sure, but infinitely pleasurable."

Above and right: Erik Brandt, 2017. Ficciones Typografika *Intermezzo Veintisiete*.



Right: Esh Gruppa, Ficciones Typografika 1441–1443 (72"×36"). Installed 26 May 2017.
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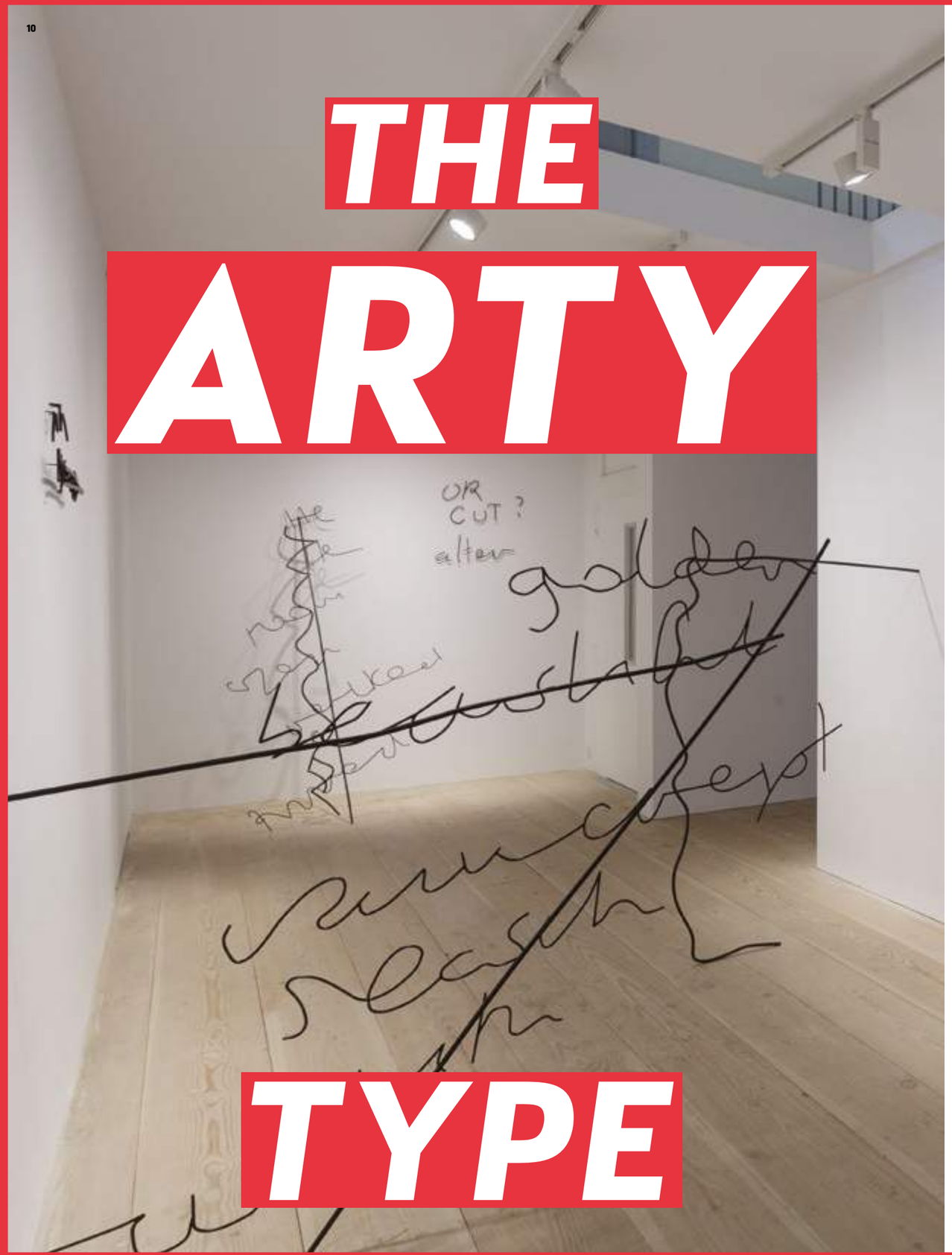
Far right: Kiersten Sjolund, Ficciones Typografika 1438–1440 (72"×36"). Installed 24 May 2017.



Typography inspired by Barbara Kruger, but set in FS Lucas Extra Bold Italic, instead of Futura.
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Left: Alex Mirutziu, *Between too soon and too late*, 2018. Installation view, Delfina Foundation, London.

Photography Tim Bowditch. Courtesy Delfina Foundation and European ArtEast Foundation.

Kern-ceptual

A look at the relationship between typography and fine art, from slogan subversions to lettering as dance, by Emily Gosling.

Typography is everything: it's storytelling, communication, design, craft. It's also art, and not just in the sense of its artistry, but in being the basis of work presented purely as art itself—not just design and communication, but fine art, and conceptual art.

Exactly where we draw those lines between art and design is, of course, a site that's often disputed yet somehow instinctually clear. Few would call a logotype fine art; and fewer would dub the type-based works of, say, Ed Ruscha, graphic design. We're not looking to unpick those categorisations or debate the usefulness of their existence, but to explore how and why typography becomes a medium for some of the artists that use it as such.

Much of the use of lettering in conceptual art can be seen through the lens of the emergence of conceptual art in the 1960s and 70s, and how that transformed the definition of art as a primarily visual exercise into an ideas-based form. This meant emergent "experiments with the ways in which the idea could be implemented conceptually through language rather than perceptually through vision", as academic Ruth Blacksell writes.

Language itself is multifaceted, of course, and used in art in so many formats and for so many purposes. Sometimes, it's in a very traditional sense of sorts—as poetry—though presented through more radical means. Take the work of Robert Montgomery, for instance, whose vast text-based pieces famously grace billboards as his self-penned poems become guerilla-style interventions. They appear like adverts at first—the things we'd expect on such billboards—which is of course the intention. His words subvert the sort of language that usually wants to sell you something. "I wanted to try and use that place to talk about more spiritual things, so it came from a kind of desire to erase what billboards say," he told *AnOther*.

Though he's described his work as "non-design design", Montgomery's choice of font is always the same across his works, whether rendered as billboard posters or as shining compositions in light. He uses a modified version of Futura, tweaked as to become slightly more jagged, a little more aggressive, yet subtly playful too.

There's something striking about that choice of font. Futura has a fascinating history in the art world; and especially among artists looking to use type in more politicised expressions. Perhaps one of the most famous and visible proponents of Futura is Barbara Kruger, with her instantly recognisable red, white and black text-based provocations. The font (for her, it's Futura Extra Bold Italic) fits her wider modus operandi: it's direct, economical and thoroughly legible. In other words, the perfect medium for her critiques of consumerism and explorations of gender politics, feminism and identity. She only veers from Futura when she needs type that has to be "set very tightly," when she goes for Helvetica Extra Bold caps, which she says "cuts through the grease". It's hardly surprising to learn that Kruger was once a graphic designer at publisher Condé Nast, and as such, an expert in contorting the conventions of design that sells, into art that provokes.

Her choice of Futura is even more interesting when you discover its historical uses. The typeface was created in 1924 by German designer Paul Renner, and has since found favour not just in the art world, but with people, brands and groups as diverse as Wes Anderson, NASA, Louis Vuitton and, er, the Nazi Party. Futura is a decidedly Modern font—modern as both with, and without a capital "M"—and is known as the first commercially available font to combine geometry with classical Roman monument proportions. It was conceived of as a font fitting for an age of industry: a no-nonsense, purposeful design, without unnecessary ornament. As such, it's a perfect conduit for artistic purposes: it

Top: Ed Ruscha,
The Old Tech-Chem Building, 2003.
Acrylic on canvas,
The Broad.

Middle: Ed Ruscha
Blue Collar Tech-Chem, 1992.
Acrylic on canvas,
The Broad.

Bottom: Ed Ruscha
Blue Collar Tires, 1992.
Acrylic on canvas,
The Broad.

"FUTURA PROVIDED A PERFECT PLATFORM BECAUSE OF ITS HERITAGE, ALLOWING FOR A SUBTLE CRITIQUE OF VAPID ADVERTISING AND MASS-MEDIA MESSAGING."

never detracts from the message, it feels ever-contemporary, it bears a paradoxically strident neutrality. For all its historical usage—for good and evil—Futura remains poker-faced.

Ed Ruscha is among the earliest artists to use it in his work, though it was far from his exclusive font—his early 1960s work, which riffed heavily on advertising with a coolly ironic stance, sees lettering in Frankfurter (spelling out SPAM), Cooper Black (GAS) and Stymie Bold (HONK). Rather than landing on a signature type, his choices change with his messaging; and he's also been known to create his own typographic styles, such as a ribbon-like, calligraphic script.

We could call Futura a feminist font. Many point to an over-saturation of its use in 20th century advertising as a catalyst for its prominence in feminist art: what was once used by the Mad Men of the 1950s and 60s to target women was later subverted by women to critique patriarchal structures and consumerism. Alongside Barbara Kruger, Guerrilla Girls also chose Futura for their searingly sharp poster-based art aggressions.

Formed in New York City in 1985, the anonymous (their identities are protected with gorilla masks) collective of artists that calls themselves Guerrilla Girls creates work that highlights the inherent sexism and racism they see in the art world. Among their potent, subtly humorous messages with Futura Bold Extra Condensed as their vehicle are 1989 posters reading, "Do Women Have To Be Naked To Get Into The Met Museum?" and "When Racism & Sexism Are No Longer Fashionable, What Will Your Art Collection Be Worth?"

Jenny Holzer, too, has often turned to Futura. As with Guerrilla Girls' and Kruger's work, her pieces often use text to subvert the language and strategies of mass media. Her *Truisms* project began in the late 1970s, for which she devised around 300 slogans that play on clichés and aphorisms, and metamorphose them into faceless, apparently detached captions. These have appeared in various formats including stickers, t-shirts, posters, electronic ticker-like displays and vast building projections. Whatever the medium, they present thought-provoking statements which somehow pack an emotional punch for all their apparent randomness ("morals are for little people"; "if you have many desires your life will be interesting"; "dreaming while awake is a frightening contradiction"; "a solid home base builds a sense of self") and inherent criticism of the "usual baloney" people are fed every day, as she puts it. For the projections, she uses Futura Condensed Extra Bold: sharp, to the point, unemotional.

For those artists, Futura provided a perfect platform because of its heritage, allowing for a subtle critique of vapid advertising and mass-media messaging. Lawrence Weiner, though, "looked for typefaces that carry little cultural baggage thus allowing the clarity of message," when developing his framework, according to Russell Holmes in a 1998 profile of the artist in *Eye* magazine. He plumped for typefaces such as Franklin Gothic Condensed and a "vernacular stencil type", with few criteria for the type in his work other than to avoid Helvetica.

"Helvetica has a nice enough typeface I guess, sort of dumpy, but it was taken on as showing intellectual power, and I don't like things that get away with just having power," Weiner told Emily McDermott in *Interview* magazine. "I had to find a Franklin Gothic, extra condensed. After a while, the work entered the culture so much that if anybody saw something in Franklin Gothic, they thought it was me and it wasn't."

Where artists like Kruger have used their chosen typeface as a sort of visual shorthand that makes their work instantly recognisable, Weiner's highly conceptual practice has seen him work across various type styles and frequently modify existing fonts. He has often created his own, too, including Margaret Seaworthy Gothic, which he designed in 1968.

At the crux of his entire oeuvre is language: textual arrangements form the building blocks of his messaging whether across books, as installations creeping across vast gallery walls, printed on posters and matchbooks, or as sculptural cast iron works (though he would deem his work in any format as "sculpture"). His type is overwhelmingly capitalised, and mostly rendered in simple, stencil-like lettering, such as his use of an adapted version of Dockland used as in the Artranspennine 98 exhibition.

In his notion of type as sculpture rather than purely message, medium, or accoutrement, Weiner's approach differs wildly to one of his American contemporaries, Ed Ruscha. Ruscha's work has a decidedly woozy sense of Americana, tempered by a harder, more cynical device: typography. His work came to prominence in the 1960s through his series of single-colour paintings that bore a single word, making the calmness of his painterly aesthetic feel somehow direct, yet utterly ambiguous. Text becomes as much the subject as the landscapes and colours.

Since then, such text has become a core component of much of his output. In 1981, he designed his own typeface, Boy Scout Utility Modern, a hard-edged sans serif: "If the telephone company was having a picnic and asked one of their employees to design a poster, this font is what he'd come up with," he told Kristine McKenna in a 2009 interview.

"There are no curves to the letters—they're all straight lines—and I've been using it for years. I guess it's my font, because it's become comfortable to me, and I can't get beyond it—and don't need to get beyond it."

Some have suggested the lettering is inspired by the strange, shortened typographic style of that gaudy bastion of America: the Hollywood sign. As such, it's easy to make the imaginative leap of reading his pieces like film titles, imbued as they are with a certain uneasy, cinematic feel. His use of text was a way of moving into Abstraction, making the familiar suddenly strange: early canvases bearing single words like "Damage," "Boss" or "Scream" invite the reader to make their own mind up about exactly what he's saying, and even what those words really mean. Ruscha later began using sequences of words and short phrases, such as "Lion in Oil"; which seems to mean nothing; or "pay nothing until April," a straightforward (so it seems) re-appropriation of advertising parlance"; or "Honey, I twisted through more damn traffic today", the banal extension of pop artist Lichtenstein's comic book melodramas.

Pentagram's Michael Bierut describes his love of Ruscha "not just as an artist but as a *graphic designer*, and I mean that as a compliment" in a piece on *Design Observer*. "Certainly other artists have incorporated the language of advertising and signage and publications and package design in their work. But where, say, Andy Warhol sought an offhand, almost sloppy, casualness in his mechanically reproduced small space ads and Brillo boxes, Ruscha's lettering from the early 60s (SPAM in Frankfurter, GAS in Cooper Black, HONK in Stymie Bold) is lovingly, respectfully precise."

But often, precision is anathema to what an artist wants in lettering. Sometimes, the more obviously hand-wrought, the better. Bob and Roberta Smith (real name, Patrick Brill) began his career working as a sign painter in New York, before taking his lettering skills into the world of fine art. His works are characterised by politically and socially engaged maxims, often concerned with the ongoing threats to arts education and the sad dismantling of creative opportunities for the working classes, or indeed, anyone who can't afford things like sky-high fees and unpaid internships. While his works are angry in that sense; his practice is also doggedly "Bobtimistic", as he'd term it: they propose solutions in their idealism, as well as diatribes. His 2015 show, *Art is Your Human Right*, was fittingly held at London's William Morris gallery, neatly aligning Smith's marriage of lettering, art and politics with that of the museum's namesake. The title was as celebratory as it was (and is) a call to arms, and his lettering style blends the two thanks to its wonkiness and imperfections.

Such messages would feel strange—hollow even—rendered on placards in a neat geometric sans serif. Smith knows exactly what he's doing in his craft, but the mark-making reflects the messaging: this is work made about, and for, the people. As the artist discussed at the time, at some level his art is about graphics and visual communication—just as Morris' was. Hand-painted, bold, punkish, almost carnivalesque lettering styles communicate his notions of democracy, art for everyone and creative liberation perfectly. The visual gestures underscore the political and social gestures he's making; the earthy vernacular of the paint matches that of the vocabulary it manifests.

While Smith's work takes hand-made mark-making and uses it to drive far wider issues and ideas, in other artists' work handwriting becomes a direct conduit to far more personal issues. Tracey Emin's entire art career has been built on articulations of painful, bleak, distressing points in her life. So it makes sense that when she does use lettering, it's her own handwriting—a script as expressive as the Egon Schiele works she so adores, and carrying within it so much that the words themselves can't convey alone. It's entirely personal: she writes her own narrative in her works, and doing so in a font by another would feel strange, disingenuous.

To end on a thoroughly contemporary note, Romanian-born artist Alex Mirutziu works across performance and installation pieces that often centre around typography. His 2016 dance-based piece *Stay[s] Against Confusion* was partly the product of his research into New Transport, the digital adaptation of the Transport lettering originally designed by Jock Kinneir and Margaret Calvert in the 1960s for use across the UK's motorways.

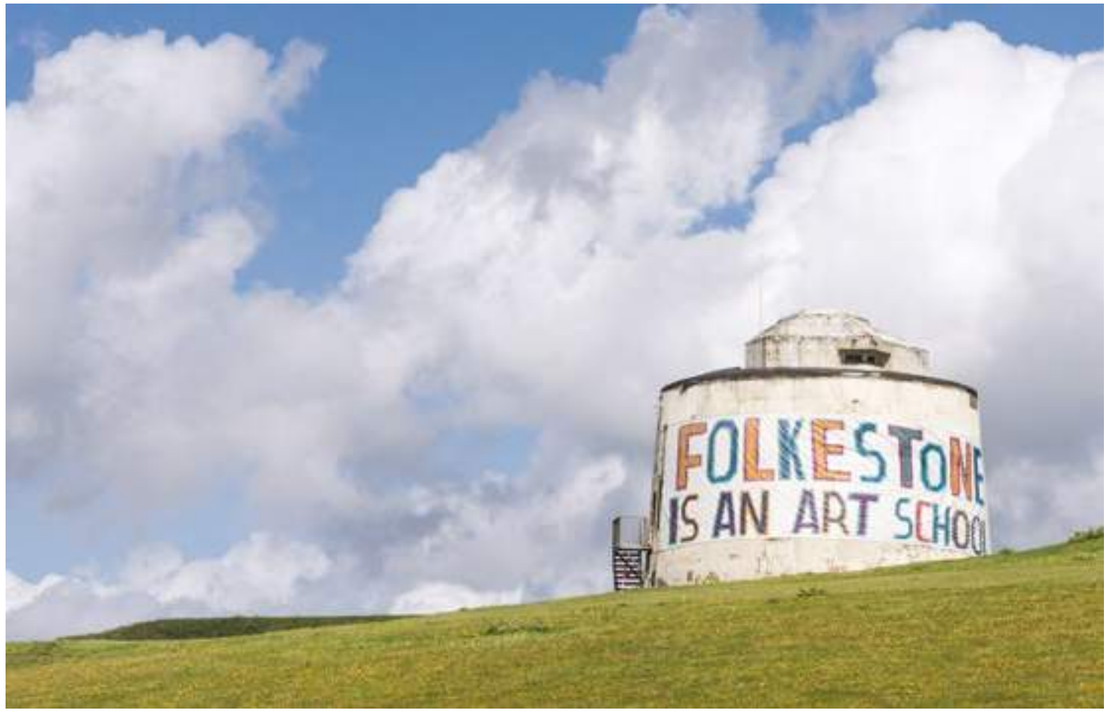
What fascinated the artist was how "typefaces have to be reliable but invisible", as Mirutziu puts it. For him, the negotiation between driver and text becomes a sort of performance in itself, and his piece enacts the reading of the type through dance. Having interviewed Calvert about her font, the artist learned that at the heart of its design was ensuring letters were spaced to enable readability from widely varied distances. Another aspect that appealed to him was the type's inherent national importance: "She created a system of orientation that had never been there before in England. When you think of it it's very important, we take it for granted as it's present everywhere, but it's comforting to know there will be a sign, that you're guided and accompanied on your way by good design that someone took care of. It's quite revolutionary."

In 2018 Mirutziu had a solo show at London's Delfina Foundation entitled *Between Too Soon and Too Late*, and again, typography played a significant role. A standout piece was *Prepared Poem #3*, an installation piece that saw a poem by Mirutziu written across transparent acetate sheets arranged on a spindly ladder-like rack. The piece uses the typeface SÖ by Swedish design agency Söderhavet, which also created the "national font" Sweden Sans. The result feels like concrete poetry taken to its ultimate conclusion: a very physical piece that demands work from the viewer, while also bringing them aesthetic pleasure. The artist worked with preparatory sketches of the typeface supplied by Söderhavet, and he spent a lot of time examining the "anatomy and analytical parts of the typeface—the stems, ascenders, descenders—that only designers usually know about".

"It's quite difficult to read the entire text from a specific point because of the overlaps," says Mirutziu, "so the idea of the work is that you only get glimpses of the text and it's up to you to fill up the voids and the gaps in between the letters. It's your imagination and interpretation that fills in the spaces of what's going on."

Only by physically moving yourself around the piece can you fully read it: type becomes action. "The physical place you put yourself in to read it, then that changing of your place in the space according to the work gives you another kind of knowledge or interpretation or feedback. It pushes the viewer to really feel the work."

As the work of Mirutziu and all the other artists discussed in this piece proves, poetry is not just the arrangement of words, but often, how they're used in a space—be that a gallery, canvas, billboard or anything else. Letterforms themselves—their idiosyncrasies, nuances, proportions and connotations—often speak volumes, whatever way they're arranged or however "invisible" they might first seem. The beauty of type isn't just in what it delineates that we read, but in its very form, and how it's manipulated for its message. Art makes us feel, and often, it's type that heightens that feeling.



Photography Thierry Bal.

Left: Bob and Roberta Smith, *FOLKESTONE IS AN ART SCHOOL*, 2017, part of Folkestone Artworks, commissioned by Creative Folkestone.

"BUT OFTEN, PRECISION IS ANATHEMA TO WHAT AN ARTIST WANTS IN LETTERING."

Below: Tracey Emin, *A Fortnight of Tears* 2018. Acrylic on canvas.

Five things... to tackle creative block

PUM LEFEBURE
Co-founder and chief creative officer, Design Army
—
designarmy.com

1. Go Mobile, or Excercise:
I get the best ideas when I'm on the plane, train or driving. When I'm in motion the ideas start flowing. With exercise, when my butt is in shape, my head is in shape.

2. Burn
I love candles. The smells take me to places like Capri, Paris or Kyoto. Using that sense expands my imagination and helps me dream bigger and better.

3. Escape
Travel is my greatest creative inspiration, especially going to new places and having wildly new experiences. A recent trip to Africa changed my world view, experiencing everything from five-star resorts to horrible, scary huts. Put yourself in a place that will challenge your mind; ideas will follow.

4. Sleep in
Getting a good rest might be the best thing you can do to beat creative block. When you're fresh, so is your creativity. Invest in the best bed you can afford to wake up clear-headed and refuelled each day... Or to realise that yesterday's great idea isn't that great after all.

5. Cheers
A good glass of wine always help the creative juices flow. Sometimes I have a second glass just to be extra creative.

HERO TYPE: FS MERIDIAN

01 Exercise

02 Burn

03 Escape

04 Sleep

05 Cheers

THE BIG TYPOGRAPHIC NIGHT OUT

We're all familiar with club photography: documentation of a night out wrought in bright flashbulbs, drink-clutching party-goers with arms aloft, sometimes grinning, often gurning into the lens. But what if we documented a night out not through the pubs, clubs and people in them, but through the type that brings those places alive? ¶ For our guide, we looked to Lee Fagan, formerly one of the management team at 199 Radio, which was based at New River Studios, north east London. He's now one of the core management team behind 199's new incarnation, Threads, which launched in early 2019. Like 199, it's a community internet radio station which aims to be a platform for all—anyone from students, nurses and teachers to top professional DJs can have a slot. In short, it's a glorious marriage of a DIY ethos, and programming that attracts some of the biggest names in dance music to its site above The Cause, a warehouse nightclub and events space in Tottenham with a focus on community outreach and charity work. ¶ As well as his production and DJing chops, Fagan's also garnered himself a bit of a reputation for knowing where the fun stuff's happening of a Friday night, so last year he took TypeNotes *and photographer Rachel Hardwick on a tour of a few of his favourite weekend nightspots. From those, we narrated partying from a new angle: we captured the neon fruit machine numerals promising a jackpot within; the myriad weird and wonderful flyer and poster designs; the brazen, no-nonsense charm of late-night, fried food signage; the lewd and rude and hilarious toilet scrawlings and more.*

DALSTON SUPERSTORE, KINGSLAND HIGH STREET, LONDON E8

Our first stop was a little pick-me-up in the shape of espresso martinis, over at Dalston Superstore. "Superstore's like my second home," says Fagan. "It's a unique LGBTQI+ space in this part of town: they have great music, and it's a friendly atmosphere from day to night. I've got lots of friends who've worked at Superstore, I've DJed here a few times, and I've always lived no more than about 10 minutes from the Superstore since I moved to this area. They often have quite big DJs who probably wouldn't play venues of this size, as it's a relatively small capacity dance floor, so you get to see quite renowned and always interesting DJs in a really intimate space. It's definitely a dance music venue with a hugely strident policy for inclusivity for LGBTQI+ people and I think it's stayed very much true to its roots."

KASHMIR KEBABISH,
RIDLEY ROAD MARKET, LONDON E8

"Normally this would be part of the end of the night," says Fagan, but today, it's part of the beginning. Offering three samosas for just £1, he considers it "one of Dalston's hidden bargains, a DHB." Fagan adds, "I saw it coming out the Sainsbury's one day, I saw my Indian brethren. I'm half Indian, and I felt a deep connection: with myself, and samosas."

WE TAKE IN THE SIGHTS OF THE GLORIOUS ART DECO-ESQUE SIGNAGE

Quote set in FS Industrie Condensed

A SAUNTER UP KINGSLAND HIGH STREET AND STOKE NEWINGTON ROAD

Here, we take in the sights of the glorious Art Deco-esque signage of the Rio Cinema, and a little crate digging from Fagan in the typographically rich pickings of the Kristina Records store's bargain buckets.

THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE, STOKE NEWINGTON ROAD, LONDON N16

While Fagan isn't usually a huge fan of pubs, he makes an exception for the Marquis, mostly thanks to how close it is to his home. "It hasn't changed one iota in five years," he says. "Dalston has changed a huge amount in that time, but this is still the same pub. I'm not entirely averse to pubs, and this is a comfortable pub to be in. They've got a jukebox with lots of heavy metal, there's a pool table and it's really easy to get home if my pub tolerance falls. It's still got a lot of locals who've been coming here for years, and I don't think it excludes people. It's not turned into a gastropub, and I think that's quite nice."

THEY'VE GOT A JUKEBOX WITH LOTS OF HEAVY METAL, THERE'S A POOL TABLE AND IT'S REALLY EASY TO GET HOME

Quote set in FS Industrie Condensed

DBL HEIGHTS

In a brief interlude, we swing by the flat Fagan shares with two friends (Dominic and Bonesy, hence DBL Heights), to pick up some sound equipment required for a radio streaming he's running from The Cause later that night. It turns out there's a lot of great type in rather unexpected places to be found in his home, not least on a little tin of ham and some latex gloves. What are they for? Earrings, apparently.

199 RADIO, NEW RIVER STUDIOS, EADE ROAD, N4

Our final stop is at the place where the magic happens: New River Studios, and more precisely, the little creative hub that when we went on this tour in 2018, housed 199 Radio. Fagan's role involved taking care of a lot of the technical side of running the station, as well as co-managing it through organising and curating new shows, and linking up with other organisations in the vicinity. "I'm acting as some kind of Pied Piper of dreams for younger DJs," says Fagan. "We're also trying to do more community-style shows, organising talk shows in the daytime for marginalised groups or people who work with them, and mental health groups and make it more than a place for house and techno DJs."

He adds: "By the nature of it, radio can be a very open space, and here, you don't need to work yourself up to get onto the station: if you have an interesting or valuable idea, we'll be pretty much open to allowing that to be on the station, so it's very democratic. There's a huge breadth of the ages of people we have on, and a lot of the people on here have amazing music taste and that I'm genuinely passionate about listening to, but they might not yet be able to get on a more established station like NTS. We have a very open ethos."

Never the bridesmaid, always St Bride

How London's 19th century type library offers a gold mine for today's graphic designers. By Tom Banks.

When it was founded in 1895, the St Bride Library served as a technical library to the burgeoning print newspaper businesses of London's Fleet Street, an industry which it has since outlived. Today it sees graphic designers, printmakers, students and typographers alike come through its doors each year to mine world-renowned specialist collections—its signage, lettering artefacts, type specimens and drafting notes by leading typographers are as treasured as its books.

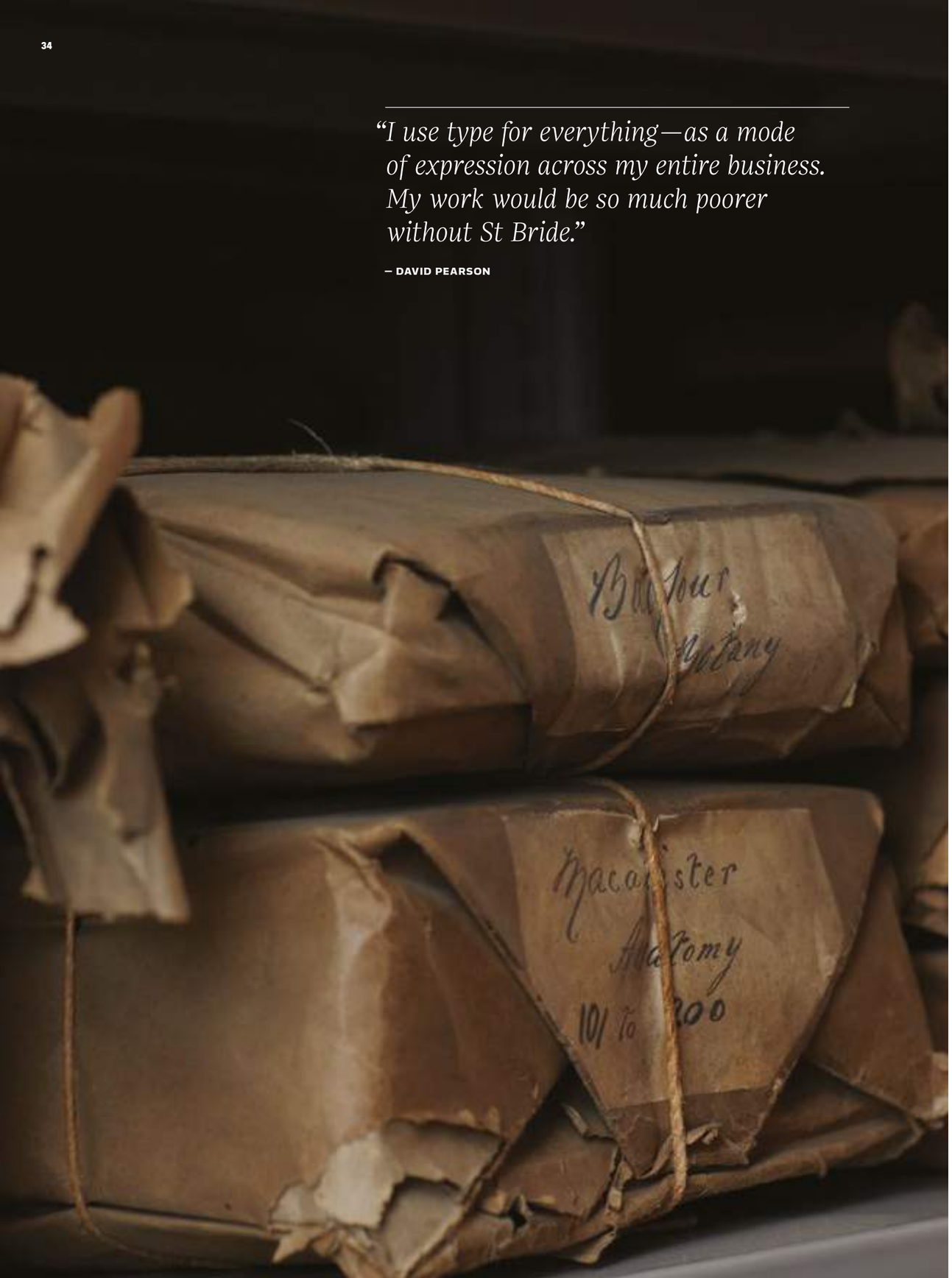
The 21st century hasn't been kind to libraries: the internet may have heralded an information age, but it was also a death knell for many public libraries which struggled to find their identity as visitors inevitably started to borrow less books. Against a backdrop of dwindling local authority and government funding, many closed despite offering space for diverse community activities, sometimes in beautiful 19th and 20th century Carnegie Buildings. According to late 2018 figures, more than 700 libraries in England have closed since 2010; and of the 3,600 or so that are left, a significant number are run by volunteers.

Specialist libraries like St Bride have weathered similar challenges. Having been independent from 1895 until 1966, it was acquired by the City of London, which then returned it to the care of St Bride in 2004 to make savings. It continues to operate as a charity as it has always done, and is part of the St Bride Foundation. Sadly it closed in 2015 but reopened later that year, staffed by a team of volunteers. In April 2019, the foundation appointed a new librarian, Sophie Hawkey-Edwards, who has a background working in specialist and public libraries. Hawkey-Edwards says she's "delighted" to join the team and help ensure the resource "remains as relevant for future generations as it has been during its illustrious past".

Today the St Bride Foundation building which houses the library and print workshop offers access to collections alongside type-based talks, tours and workshops, as well as a theatre, exhibition space and bar. Meanwhile it's a community thoroughfare for pilates classes, Muslim prayer, Weight Watchers groups and so on.

Its real value, though, is in the strength of its collections, as library manager Bob Richardson says. "We have many printed letters and architectural lettering in every form as well as artefacts such as the name plate from the funeral train of Edward VII; even the swing sign from the Printers Devil pub on Fetter Lane, which was frequented by Fleet Street printers."

The printers would also meet in St Bride itself, famously so during the Wapping dispute



"I use type for everything—as a mode of expression across my entire business. My work would be so much poorer without St Bride."

— DAVID PEARSON

in 1986 which saw print union workers take industrial action when News Corp founder Rupert Murdoch threatened, and succeeded in, moving production of titles including *The Times* from Fleet Street to Wapping.

At St Bride Library there are 200 artefact collections in addition to a lot of books of course, which might be on anything from 3D printing to ink formulation. But it's the specialist collections which really capture the imagination. These include Louis Pouchée's earliest types specimens from 1819. His company later produced elaborately decorated display alphabets with an overtly organic and floral look, which have been borrowed or referenced in many modern works.

"We've also got original artwork from arts and crafts type designer and printmaker Eric Gill, showing his inscriptional work along with hundreds of other portfolios, a substantial Monotype collection and specialist collections of company archives as well as work by engravers like Robert Gibbings," says Richardson.

Seemingly impossibly, much of the collections which used to be stored offsite have now been crammed into the modestly sized triangular St Bride Foundation building. Although this arguably adds to its charm, Richardson says "we're bursting at the seams and have to be very selective what we take on now".

Acquisitions are mainly donations, often from publishers; or when printers die and their "widows donate substantial numbers of their books," Richardson adds. Other income is generated for St Bride when publishers pay to print an image from the archive—St Bride receives a small income from this as it owns rights access.

Another volunteer at the library is Becky Chilcott, a sort of typographic poacher-turned-gamekeeper who has been a designer for 16 years. A frequent visitor to the talks and workshops run as part of the events programme (such as *Eye* magazine's quarterly Type Tuesdays talks, the proceeds from which are all donated to St Bride Library), she ended up taking it over and becoming lead curator.

Chilcott, who mainly works on the design of children's books, started going to talks around 2005. "I usually went to everything I could—even if I'd never heard of the speaker or knew nothing of the subject matter—as I soon learnt that the quality of the speakers was consistently good and I'd come away learning something new or feeling inspired."

However for Chilcott, as with many other designers, it's the community spirit of St Bride which captured her imagination. "What drew me in the most was the like-minded people I met through the lectures—especially in the pub afterwards—and for me this is one of the most important parts of the library today."

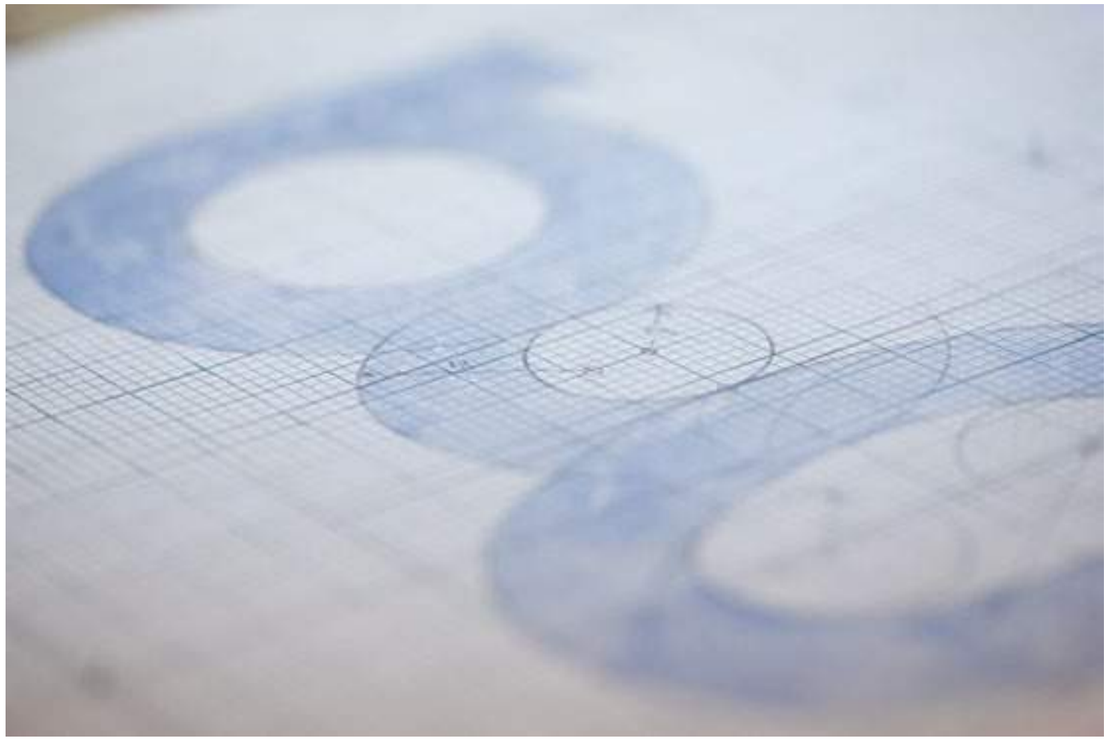
Chilcott has also familiarised herself with the collections through her own design work. Although she hasn't used it in her role as a children's book designer, she has used it when she was chair of the Wynkyn De Worde Society—a membership organisation involved in the world of printing.

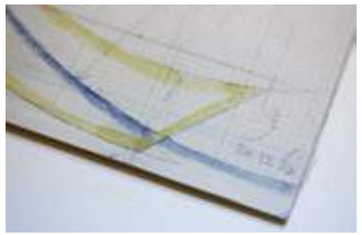
As part of her role, Chilcott hosted lunches, booking speakers and inviting guests. For one of these she invited the author Mark Forsyth to speak. Forsyth's books are concerned with the etymology of words, and knowing that he was due to include a section on the word "mooreefoc", Chilcott used this as the inspiration for the design of menus for guests.

"The word 'mooreeffoc' was coined by Charles Dickens as he was sitting inside a Victorian coffee room looking out through a window," says Chilcott. "The term was subsequently taken up by JRR Tolkein who defined it as 'the queerness of things that have become trite when they are seen suddenly from a new angle'."

To this end Chilcott decided to design the menu in the style of an etched glass or acid cut glass Victorian pub window, and print it with white ink on acetate. She enlisted the help of Richardson and set about compiling reference material of type specimens and

Above: Book covers for *Spitalfields Life* designed by David Pearson.





"What drew me in the most was the like-minded people I met through the lectures—especially in the pub afterwards—and for me this is one of the most important parts of the library today."

— BECKY CHILCOTT

Above & left: Original drawings for Gill Sans by Eric Gill.

Opposite page: Images from Alistair Hall's London Street Nameplates project *@londonstreetnameplates*.

decorative elements from the period, as well as publications on process, to show how such lettering was created at the time.

Chilcott says, "Without Bob [Richardson]'s knowledge and the resources at the library, my design wouldn't have felt as authentic or rich as a result, and it would have probably turned out very differently, particularly if I'd been lazy and just done a Google image search".

Book design specialist and typographer David Pearson has enjoyed a career-long love affair with St Bride. "Initially I was in awe of the place," he says. "My college tutor used to focus on the personality of letters; how they were emotive in different ways. He took us to St Bride to explore these ideas. It was clear straight away it was a world class library with world class exhibitions, and for someone who was new to London I knew it was also where I would find my tribe."

For Pearson, St Bride was a formative and developmental refuge where he could foster new skills. "The idea of expertise can be intimidating when you're young but St Bride always had experts on hand who were happy to demystify and show you things."

These early experiences taught Pearson that if you were looking for print and type examples, you could come to St Bride and touch them. "I use type for everything—as a mode of expression across my entire business. My work would be so much poorer without St Bride. If I'm creating a book cover, I use type to create image. I might be trying to evoke a place or looking for type that fits the book, and I know I can always meet those needs at St Bride." Pearson worked on the cover of a reedition of Dr Johnson's 1755 dictionary for Penguin Classics, and again, turned to St Bride for inspiration.

As well as being a mainstay in his career, the library is also a defining factor in the relationships he has with some other designers: "I always stay in touch with the type designer Paul Barnes through St Bride. We'll meet there, share ideas, go to talks together, work there."

Pearson's experience is echoed by Alistair Hall, founder of design studio We Made This. First introduced to St Bride as a Central St Martins student by tutors Phil Baines and Catherine Dixon, it became somewhere the young Hall would carry out project research and go to talks.

It set in motion what Hall calls "continuous and self-initiated learning", while at the same time socialising and embedding him with typographers and graphic designers. "It's almost cheating really. You meet a gang of like-minded people, have geeky conversations and learn about the historical precedence of the work that you do."

Hall's ongoing research into street name plates has seen him photographing them all across London, and documenting them on his @londonstreetnameplates Instagram account. He turned to St Bride Library to understand where they originate and who manufactured them, discovering that such signs date from anywhere between the 17th to the 19th century. "There's so much there to pick up on, going way back—various tablets and plaques—but they've also got some great stuff on the Jock Kinneir and Margaret Calvert-designed 1960s system and various maquettes," he says.

Hall is also involved in working with the library "in a low-key way", he says. He's previously designed a flyer for the £5-a-month Friends of St Bride membership scheme; and designed a poster in collaboration with Bob Richardson for the organisation's 2019 Collections and Collaborations fundraising event. "It's small donations like this which really make a difference to them. They're a charity and they often fall between funding schemes," Hall says. "To achieve safe status they really need this money."

St Bride is an unparalleled and world-renowned archive—a knowledge bank, now staffed by enthusiasts and expert volunteers. There's clearly a demand for it, but it remains an enigma for many designers—though hopefully one that more creatives will crack soon enough. Take it from Pearson: "I'm very indebted to the place; it's always in the middle of everything I do somehow". ℙ

Five things... to tackle creative block

DAVA GUTHMILLER
Founder and chief creative officer,
Noise 13
—
noise13.com

1. Go outside
Whether it's a short walk around the block with my dog, a long hike or simply sitting in nature, being away from the computer and letting my mind wander always brings new insight.

2. Get tactile
Sometimes you just have to get hands-on and make something with anything from watercolours to Lego. Try a new tool or just play off-topic for a bit to get those creative juices flowing.

3. Collaborate
When the creative mind gets too inward-focused, sharing ideas, work and soliciting feedback from peers (and even better, non-designers) is a great way to step back and get a fresh perspective.

4. View art
Look at, contemplate and experience anything that's outside your current project. I love spending even just 30 minutes in a gallery or museum, watching a great movie trailer or just flipping through a photo book.

5. Go back to the brief
What are you really trying to accomplish? Did you get all the right information and ask all the best questions? Going back to the beginning can help you get unstuck. If the project brief has missing pieces, you might find inspiration by filling in those blanks.

HERO TYPE: FS SPLIT SANS

01 Outside
02 Tactile
03 Collaborate
04 Art
05 Brief

Side projects are all well and good, but sometimes they can feel a lot like work. Here, Laura Snoad talks to four designers who use the hours beyond the nine-to-five to nurture their creativity in altogether different fields. Illustrations by Alva Skog.

AFTER HOURS

"Don't overthink things, embrace failure, it's OK to fuck up, you'll learn on the job. Experience is the best teacher"

– PEIGH ASANTE

WATER WORLD, PEIGH ASANTE

When injury put an end to his enthusiastic running habit, Peigh Asante—a freelance creative who now runs inner city swimming club Swim Dem Crew—was recommended to hit the pool by his physio for rehabilitation. "I didn't know how to swim; I picked it up very late in life," Asante says. "It was like anything: you suck at it the first time, but you keep trying and then you get better. First time you aim for one length, then two, then three. It's quite easy to measure your progression when you're counting in lengths."

A self-described "social media whore", Asante was constantly documenting his progress, shouting out to #SwimDemCrew on his socials whenever he hit the water. Given that was every day, it started becoming visible and grew traction. Whether working with clients like Rough Trade, XL Records and Adidas or mastering front crawl, Asante tends to go hard. Soon after he first learnt to swim, he started training for a triathlon and it was then, while training at London Fields lido, that he met Swim Dem co-founders-to-be Nathaniel Cole and Emily Deyn. People started to ask the trio whether they could join their swimming squad and in 2013 Deyn suggested taking it one step further and forming an official group. "I was reluctant at first because I was the weakest swimmer, and then eventually it grew from there," says Asante.

Now Swim Dem Crew meets several times a week, hitting some of the most spectacular swimming spots in the capital and beyond. Swim Dem has made it their business to grow a community around the sport, as well as using swimming as a tool for social inclusion and empowerment. "It's about representation," says Asante. "People of colour look at a sport like swimming and they don't see themselves. It's important for kids to look at us and see that they can learn to swim. We have a responsibility to say, 'actually, guys you can do this thing'."

Asante now spends time teaching kids and adults, and his crew has gone from three friends to an international community. "People have a knack for sniffing out things that seem disingenuous or don't feel honest and I think people can see we're just being ourselves, it's not contrived," he says. "I think that's why it's struck a chord with people, they can see themselves in us. That's important." Asante's penchant for "content, content, content" has also been important for the success of Swim Dem as a brand, with its awe-inspiring photography and range of slick merch. "People see our hats and come join us in the pool," says Asante. "It invites conversation and culture, which I think is sometimes missing in swimming—a lot of people just get in, get their head down and get out."

Aside from the swims, one of Asante's Swim Dem highlights has been making a documentary, *Beyond the Blue*, about Swim Dem's origins, which screened at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA) in London. Asante says, "Nat [Cole] had never been to the ICA before, and the first time he was there was to watch a film that he'd made—that was brilliant!" In terms of what Swim Dem Crew has brought to his practice, as well as some high profile partnerships with the likes of Android, it's the resilience to keep going. "When I started Swim Dem, I didn't know how to swim but I just chucked myself in the local pool and I taught myself," he says. "That there has given me an important life lesson—learn by doing. I apply that to my creative work. Don't overthink things, embrace failure, it's OK to fuck up, you'll learn on the job. Experience is the best teacher."

FAMILY FEAST, BONITA EBUEHI

"I don't know anyone that doesn't love brunch," says graphic designer Bonita Ebuehi, who created women's brunch club Sister Table with her twin Benjamina, alongside running her own stationery design business. In fact, you might recognise Benjamina from 2016's edition of *The Great British Bake Off*, where she reached the quarter finals and wowed Mary Berry with her perfect churros. The Sister Table side project started when the pair would cook for friends, inviting pals from all walks of life to eat and talk about their lives. "Benjamina and I are strong believers that when you share food with people it's an intimate thing, so we thought it would be a good idea to extend it out—to create a space where women could meet and feel included," says Ebuehi.

Their first event, a three-course brunch in a North London studio space in March 2018, featured classic breakfast staples like granola and smashed avocado, but each with a Sister Table twist. The former was roasted with tahini; while the avo swapped out the toast for buttermilk cornbread and fried plantains—a nod to the sisters' Nigerian heritage. The flavours of multicultural London have been a huge inspiration for Sister Table, as has building a dining club that's accessible and welcoming to women of colour—something sorely lacking on the London scene.

In fact, Ebuehi attributes part of Sister Table's success to the sometimes isolating feel of London. "I was born and raised in London and so my experience is different—I have a lot of friends here but many people come to London from different places," she says. "Colleagues tell me it's difficult to meet people, whether that's friends or romantic partners. It can be hard to connect."

Creating a warm atmosphere from the moment guests open the door is all down to Ebuehi's design skills, from understated yet Instagram-perfect decor to tone-perfect branding. "I'm into attention to detail, whereas Benjamina can be a bit all over the place at times," laughs Ebuehi. "We are yin and yang, it's seamless." Ebuehi is always scoping out inventive new ways to promote the events, and translate the brand into physical spaces. "This has taken what I view as creativity to a whole new level," she says.

Ebuehi effuses that Sister Table has been incredibly useful for her own business. "We have committed to doing almost-monthly events, and that doesn't mean we're always going to sell out—it's a risk," she says. "As a creative it's quite a vulnerable thing to put your art and your work out there—it's your baby that you hold dear and you really believe in. But the success of Sister Table so far has taught me that I can take more risks and that some will pay off."

HOT STUFF, ALEX SALAS-WARDMAN

Formerly of creative agencies Ustwo and Adaptive Lab, Alex Salas-Wardman is now head of design at fintech startup Acre. His former side hustle, however, was in chilli sauce. He'd been dabbling in the hot stuff as a hobby since 2013, and in 2016 set up the business with project manager and "the brains" Tanya Malekshahi and "agricultural whizz kid" Danny-Lee Seeley, though the project has been on hold since 2018. The trio sold their small but perfectly formed range of Salas Chilli Sauces on farmers' markets and through word of mouth, and created a cult following for their fiery flavours.

The idea stemmed from Salas-Wardman's Chilean father, who grew soft fruit and chillies in a polytunnel on the farm in Norfolk where Salas-Wardman was raised. "He'd make chilli sauce for himself from a family recipe he had from Chile," the designer explains. "It was really popular with my friends when they'd come round, and people went crazy for it at the market." Salas-Wardman later followed in his dad's footsteps, picking up growing chillies as a hobby. But not long after he got deep into UX design, his parents sold up and moved away. "I missed out on all of this really good land, which I never really appreciated when I had it available," he says.

Some years later, friend Malekshahi persuaded Salas-Wardman that his chilli sauce would make a great side business, so the pair joined heads with permaculture expert Seeley and rented a large organic warehouse, planting row upon row of chilli plants. "We wanted to grow as many of the ingredients as we could ourselves and source the rest organically," says Salas-Wardman. "It's something we wanted ourselves, as health-conscious millennials," he laughs. The recipes are variants on his dad's original, from a smokey chilli ketchup to a cilantro sauce using unripened green chillies and plenty of coriander.

The packaging told the story of the friends getting together over a shared aim, and is classic in its aesthetic. "Being a designer, it's impossibly difficult to design for yourself," says Salas-Wardman. The process taught him a lot about engagement through social media and viral marketing, but even the growing stretched his designer's brain. "Preparing the soil and farming without pesticides—to do that you have to get really creative in a way that many farmers take for granted," Salas-Wardman explains.

Always a UX designer at heart, it's the journey from field to plate that he found the most inspiring: "Getting right down to the agricultural level, starting from seeds and moving all the way to a finished product—it's unreal."

NET NERDS, JO MYERS AND BETH ROWBOTHAM

Being a woman who is passionate about football doesn't come without its annoyances. "Guys seem to think women like flowers and shopping and that's it!" says Beth Rowbotham, a creative at Manchester-based design studio Music and a massive Manchester City Football Club fan. "I find it quite funny when you sit back and just let somebody talk at you, and then you come back and wow them with what you actually know. They're soon like, 'Oh wow, sorry'."

But soccer-flavoured mansplaining is something that Rowbotham and fellow Music creative Jo Myers are deft at keeping away from goal, having been passionate about their club since childhood. Rowbotham grew up with her football-loving dad, and she made her Man City debut watching the team play Blackpool in 1997, complete with Barbies in tow. Myers has a brother ten years her senior, who was similarly a huge influence on what she liked growing up. "When you live in a city like Manchester you're roped into supporting a club from such a young age, it becomes a way of life," she says.

This way of life involves devotion—and if not a dash to the stadium, then somewhere the creatives can get a glimpse of the screen. "My boyfriend sometimes gets a little bit annoyed because our weekends revolve around it," says Rowbotham. "If we're not at home, it's always a case of working out where we're going to watch the football." It can get a bit obsessive, explains Myers, as you start looking into which matches will affect City games, and whether they need to be watched too. "There'll be times where there are three City games in a week and you've got to plan your life around that, otherwise you're going to miss out," says Myers. "Every game is so important these days."

Over Myers and Rowbotham's time as fans, Man City has gone through quite the transformation. After a period of decline, the club hit the Second Division in the late 1980s, but after some significant investment and a new stadium, the team has gone on to win the Premier League not once, not twice, but four times since 2011—including in the 2018/19 season. "It's a totally different world now to how it was when I was growing up," says Rowbotham. "For fans it's great, because you've got people from all over the world coming and playing in your stadium in Manchester. It's exciting. Everyone knows who we are." Myers adds, "The business has become a global brand—the level of football is incredible. It's beautiful to watch and to prove everybody wrong."

"Dream client" doesn't really cut it when describing the feeling when Rowbotham and Myers started working with the club as part of their roles with Music. Their fandom has put them at a real advantage—not only for their understanding of the club culture and their stats geekery, but also in terms of anticipating what scenarios could happen in upcoming games and how that could affect the competition.

When asked about the highs of their time as supporters, both are quick to mention Manchester City's 2011/2012 Premier League win—the first of its recent victories. "I have never seen so many grown men cry," says Myers, "It's the first time that I've actually seen my dad and my brother hug passionately. It was hilarious and emotional." Rowbotham adds, "Your hair stands on end when you think about it, it never gets old. It's still the best day of my life. I've said to my boyfriend already that when we get married, it's not going to come close."

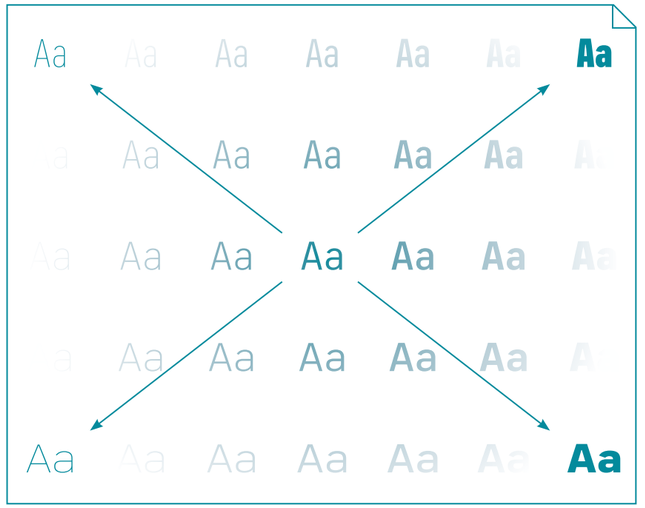
Variable fonts utilise powerful font technology, offering us an exciting invitation to rethink the way we create and speak with type in today's digital world, as Phil Garnham explains.

VARIABLE IS THE SPICE OF TYPE

FS Industrie VF
From a weight of 206 to 900, all at a width of 1.

FS Industrie
7 weights, 5 widths

Files	35
Total file size (mb)	03
Load time (sec)	8.06



FS Industrie VF
Infinite styles

Files	1
Total file size (mb)	0.54
Load time (sec)	1.12

While they're by no means brand new, variable fonts are getting more and more sophisticated—and more and more useful for today's graphics designers. Their shapeshifting, digital-first nature makes them an exciting invitation to rethink the way we create and speak with type in today's online world.

Never before have the systems of visual language been so adaptive and responsive; and now, fonts have the capability to adapt to light, distance, sound and motion. Increasingly, design structures for type need to adapt to their environment and be optimised for dynamic applications.

Variable fonts mean designers can both hone in on precise functionality, or create unexpected opportunities for creative expression; manipulating font data to all kinds of new shapes and dimensions. There are innumerable possibilities for enhanced responsive web design, texture, animated flourishes, interactive letterform experiences and more.

VARIABLE FONTS = BETTER WEB PERFORMANCE AND ACCESSIBILITY

One great thing about variable fonts is that their capabilities are packed into one small sized font file rather than the separate files used for traditional fonts. A variable font can pack a full family of styles into one, small, optimised TrueType or WOFF2 font file that operates like a full font family but one that offers creatives so much more—one font file to install, one font file to reference, one font file to load into a browser, so fewer files to maintain, manage and keep track of. As such, variable fonts improve web performance: traditional font files all have to load into your browser window at the same time to render the web page. Loading individual files can add up to a lot of data and that can be an issue on mobile connections. Variable font files often have a reduction in file size of between 70–85% with all styles in one file, reducing the lag between loading and displaying the fonts.

Variable fonts can also improve reading experience and accessibility as they can be programmed to adapt to things like context, device, user preferences or reader distance. Tweaking the grade axis, for instance, can subtly change a font's darkness (aiding certain visual impairments), making it bolder without affecting letter spacing or line-length. The size and shape of letters can also adjust to the pixel density of the device or device orientation, vastly improving the potential to tailor type for every individual reader.

THE TECHNICAL STUFF

When it comes to axes (the linear structures that give variable fonts their super powers); a traditional text font family you might find a set of standard or "registered axis" such as weight (wght), width (wdth), italic (ital), optical size (opsz) and slant (slnt).

But in a variable font, type designers can create all kinds of axes—the possibilities are almost limitless. What's more, all of the design transformations are carefully created within a framework known as the font "design-space". This "design-space" defines the boundaries of the font's playground so as a font user it's impossible to create any unexpected distortions.

—

See more at variable-fonts.com

Opposite page
Top: FS Kim VF showing the scope of the optical size and weight axes.

Bottom: FS Industrie VF highlighting the subtlies within variable fonts.

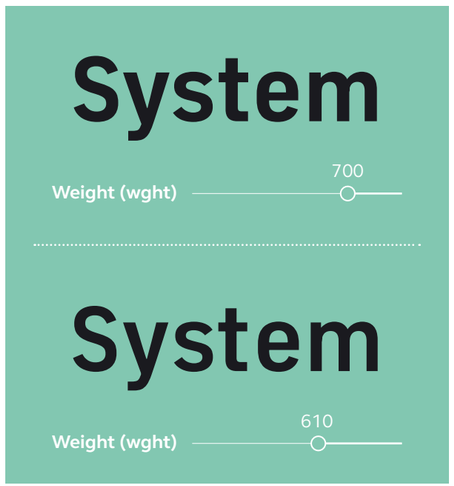
—

This page
Top: FS Kitty VF exploring the outline and shadow axes.

Bottom: FS Pele Italic VF demonstrating the range on the optical size axis.

BETTER OPTIONS FOR TAILORING BRAND TYPOGRAPHY

For a designer, variable fonts mean that if you decide to use a particular font for a brand identity (for the purposes of this article, we'll use the example FS Industrie) but would ideally use a weight that's slightly heavier than the Medium but lighter than the Bold, you can easily create a new "Semi-Bold" for the brand. All you have to do is slide the weight and width sliders or assign values in CSS to find the perfect proportions and level of boldness. Another instance might be that you're after an articulate serif type system, such as a high-contrast display serif for slick, punchy headlines and a low-contrast text-serif for smaller size text. With variable fonts, many (such as FS Kim) have an "optical size" axis meaning you can increase and decrease the contrast in each letter to improve the font's readability at specific pixel sizes. You can also implement the optical size axis as a smart feature in CSS, and the web browser will automatically implement the appropriate optical size of the font.



GET WITH THE PROGRAMME: A GRAPHIC OFF-SCREEN ROMANCE

Emily Gosling delves into the BFI's archive and unearths the gloriously experimental typography and layouts of the cinema paradise's programmes of yesteryear.

Bread & Butter, part two: American Thrillers, March —April 1961
Unknown cover designer.

I've got my gran to thank for discovering some of the most visually arresting type I'd seen in a long time. I've got her to thank for a lot of things, but in this case, her love of Gene Kelly led to a trawl of eBay, and from there to a chance discovery of vintage British Film Institute and National Film Theatre programmes. Striking block lettering spelling out Kelly's name jumped out; followed by some beautiful Milton Glaser-esque, 3D lettering that seemed to dance the words "Éric Rohmer".

Gene and Éric proved the introduction to a whole world of sublime type and bafflingly busy graphic techniques. The BFI's Reuben Library on London's Southbank, which is open to everyone, houses such programmes dating back from the 1950s to the present day. The vintage publications were sites of bold typographic experimentation and spectacularly daring layouts. While today the BFI uses an umbrella brand, limited typographic palette and grid system for its programmes; those designs of yore were often strange, joyfully chaotic zine-like creations. Multiple typefaces were used—sometimes even on a single page—and lettering was frequently manipulated to create illustrative interventions, with pages treated like posters slapped up right in the middle of these small pamphlets. Even within a single booklet you'd find aesthetics recalling the Swiss International Style; the wild west; the Bauhaus; Warhol-like hand-lettering; acid house vibes and more. The sense of play and joie de vivre is extraordinary.

The BFI's remit encompasses everything from programming and screening to producing the BFI London Film Festival; the online BFI Player; allocating National Lottery Funds; funding and exporting films; creating *Sight and Sound* magazine; archiving prints and film literature and more. It's one of the few cultural bastions that feels genuinely welcoming and inclusive, while totally authoritative—academic when you need it to be, fun when you're looking for it, and either way, an education.

But for all this fawning over the institution, I'd not really considered the graphics of the BFI until finding those programmes, with the exception of always admiring the old NFT logo on the side of the building. Designed by Norman Engleback in 1957, it feels like a relic of graphics past, and has recently been restored to its fully illuminated glory by London signwriting and manufacturing company Newman's Graphics.

Certainly the BFI's current print campaigns are often beautiful, and as any graphic designer working with existing artist or filmmaker materials would testify, it's not an easy feat to create something current, engaging and audience-relevant, while also being respectful of the existing imagery and not overshadowing the original artists' intentions. It's often a thorny, if thrilling brief; and one plagued by more stakeholders than most commissions. The nightmare of the artist (or their estate) hating the work must surely be a spectre hard to ignore.

The BFI has always had its own in-house graphics team, which sadly means it's nigh-on impossible to name those who created the sublime programme designs from the past. To this day it's those in-house designers who create the lion's share of the output; handing over to external agencies only for major projects, such as the 2006 rebrand by Johnson Banks which saw the introduction of the logo that makes the letters BFI seem constantly emanating from a cinematic light source. Otherwise, it's mainly more "conceptual" projects such as the BFI London Film Festival (LFF) or programmes like Black Star, a celebration of black actors in film and TV, that are handed over, as BFI senior marketing manager Darren Wood explains. In the case of Black Star, with a campaign in collaboration with the late Jon Daniel "it was a statement about communities, so we wanted to work with someone from that community," says Wood. For the 2018 campaign around Arcadia—billed as "an exhilarating journey through the magic and madness of rural Britain"—the eerie, folkish designs were created by illustrator Stanley Donwood (the man behind the artwork for Radiohead), a perfect fit to convey the strangeness of historic pastoral Britain.

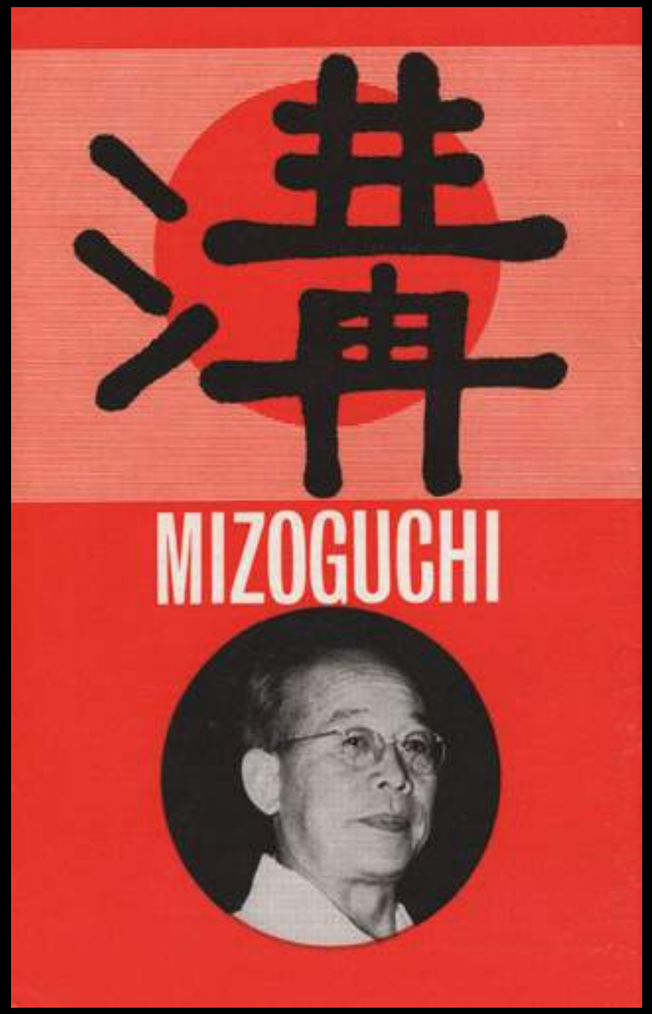
One of the main purposes of the 2006 rebrand was to "unify the BFI as an organisation" and "strengthen the brand," says Wood. Now that said brand has been cemented, he says the organisation is now "in a situation where we're able to be more experimental and playful with the personalities of the programmes".

The rebrand also moved away from blanket use of the font Caecilia, Richard Shaw, former BFI director of marketing told us. "There had been a particular tyranny around typography at the BFI where that ambition to label everything and make it look like a 'BFI thing' led to a set of posters for a while where every single season was in the same typeface—whether it was Hitchcock or Truffaut or Almodovar. I found something dispiriting in that we had to lay our brand over other creative brands: Hitchcock and Almodovar summon up completely different aesthetics; you can't just represent them in exactly the same way all the time. We need to use graphic design sensitively to tell those stories."

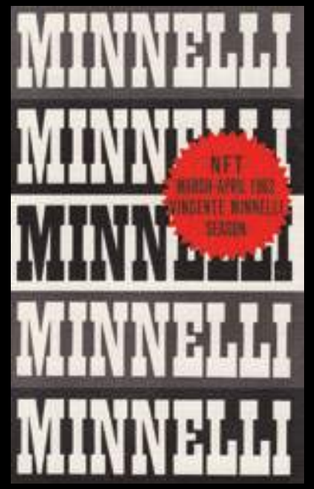
Shaw adds that the programme, which is always designed in-house, has "always been a very important piece of print," and one that's been steadfastly valuable over decades of change for the organisation.

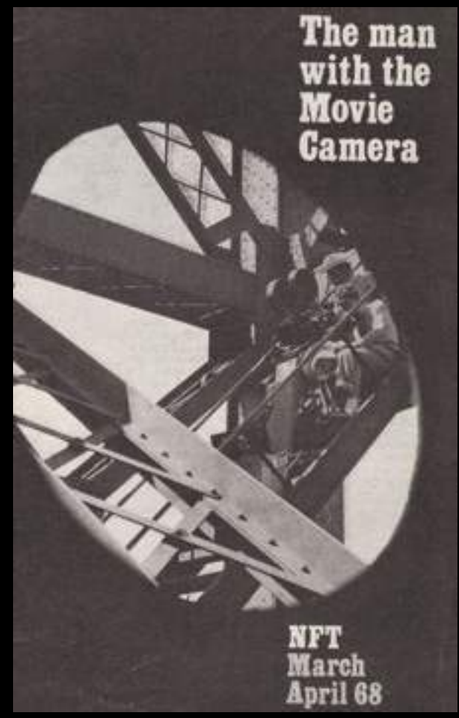
The programmes now use a standardised typographic approach, with body copy set in Caecilia, and individual campaigns sitting within that in their own style. And while they're certainly more unified and cohesive for the audience, they differ wildly from the deliciously scattergun graphic layouts of decades gone by. "Fanzine-like is a good way of describing it," says Wood. "There was a very chaotic, much more dynamic approach to typography and artwork generally."

"The vintage publications were sites of bold typographic experimentation and spectacularly daring layouts."

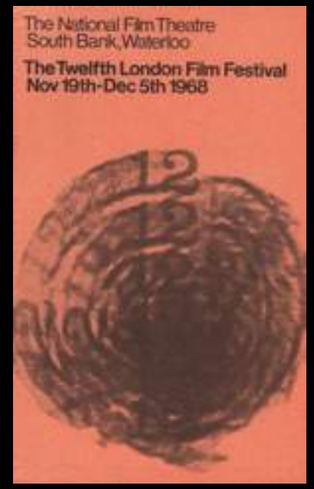


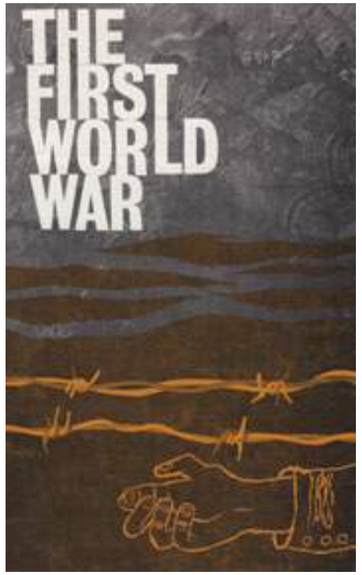
Above: Two Masters: Ozu & Mizoguchi, August—November 1963
Back cover designed by John Harmer.
—
Right: Vincente Minnelli Season, March—April 1962
Cover designed by John Harmer.





Above: The Man With The Movie Camera, March—April 1964
Unknown cover designer.
—
Below: The Twelfth London Film Festival, November—December 1968
Unknown cover designer.





Indeed, the design of the programmes reflects the modernity required of a communication tool from a vast, sprawling organisation. Yet the little piece of print's purpose hasn't really changed in the last 60 years: it's still created to serve a loyal, film-obsessed crowd who often look to it as a sort of bible. "Traditionally," says Wood, "it was very much a coterie of people for whom the brochures and booklets acted as a magazine. We've seen an evolution of the booklet as a sort of additional resource for people who are members to something that becomes much more about representing an organisation that's far more democratic in a lot of ways. Our remit is to reach a lot more people, and while our membership is obviously incredibly important to us, it's not just about that small group anymore."

Shaw adds: "We have around 22,000 members, so we still need to serve all those people who are passionate about film and come here and look forward to it just as much today as they did in years gone by—and look forward to getting something in the post that's physical, that they can wander through and circle and highlight. For as many people who like to look through it online, there's an enormous number of people who are our members who genuinely want that monthly guide and pore over it in just the same way as they did in the 1960s when we posted it out."

The design is a balancing act between legibility and personality, so the programmes are created according to a grid. "We take the hero artwork from a particular season and play that out, rather than do a patchwork all the way through," says Shaw. "It's incredibly labour intensive," he adds, pointing out that the BFI presents 3,000 screenings of 1,300 different films a year set into various genres or director-specific seasons alongside family events and other specific strands. "The volume of content we present is completely overwhelming, it's incredibly rich and ambitious," he says. Setting all that into a monthly piece of print is equally ambitious. Wood says: "We want it to be easy to navigate but also give you the sense of the personality of Agnès Varda or Stanley Kubrick, or whatever the season is about, coming through while you're reading it."

It makes sense, of course, to have that sort of standardisation: though typophiles may lament the loss of the sense of experimentation with letterforms seen in the guides from the 1960s and 70s, and earlier. "I think the notion of 'brand' wasn't as developed then as now," says Wood. "One of the outcomes of the rebrand was an incredibly strong set of brand guidelines around identifying the BFI over anything else, where before each output from the organisation was different, hence the zine-like feel.

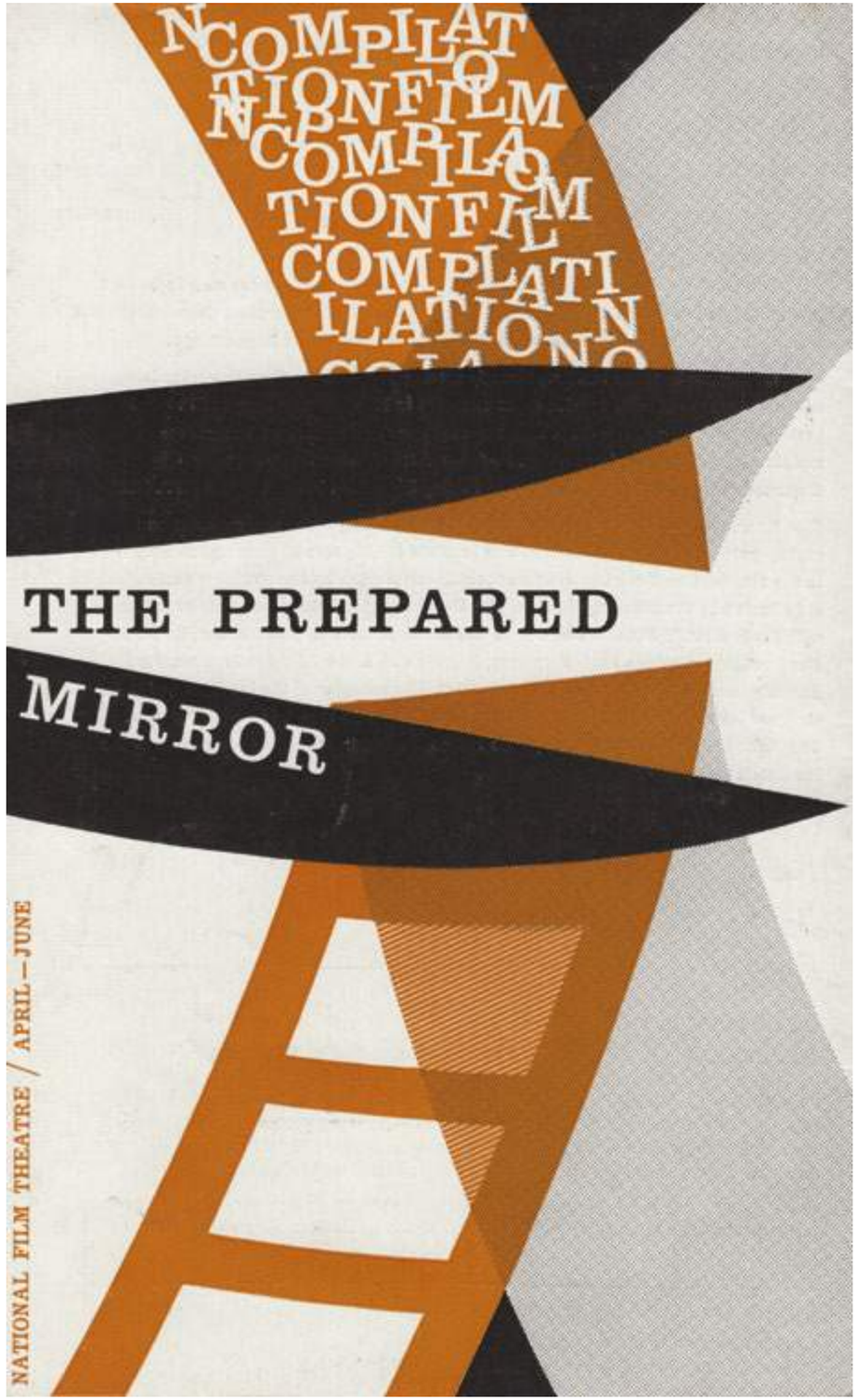
"Now, we try to establish a level at which the brand operates and then punctuate it with bits of artwork to give the programme personality."

Over these pages, we're celebrating those designs of yesteryear: this one's for you, unnamed designers—a celebration of typographic experimentation and printed chaos, and of nostalgia, and of the beauty of cinema itself.

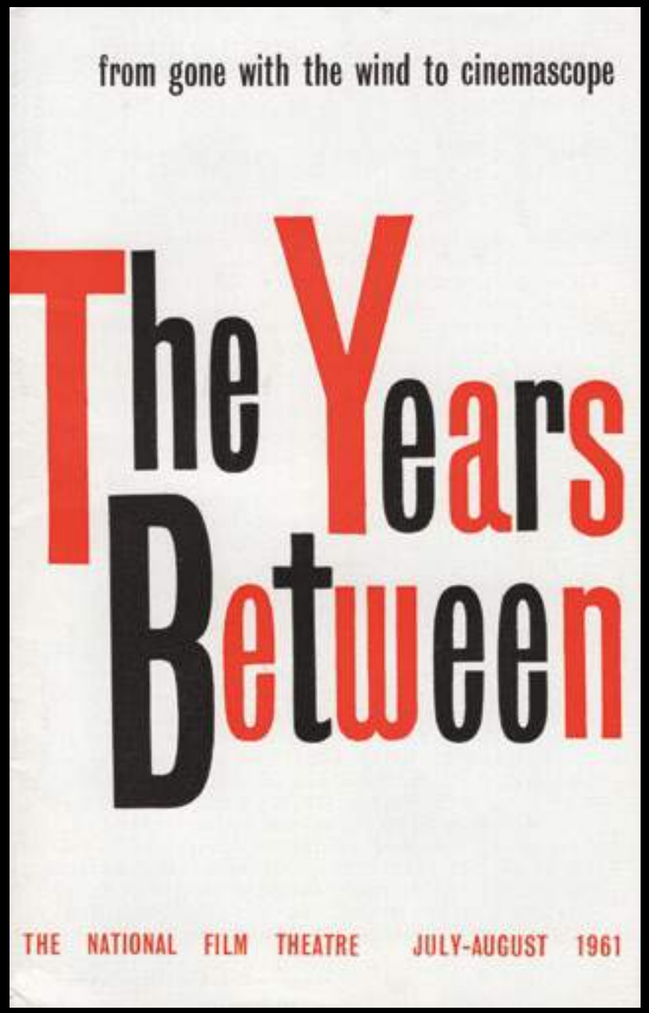
"Fanzine-like is a good way of describing it. There was a very chaotic, much more dynamic approach to typography and artwork generally."

— DARREN WOOD

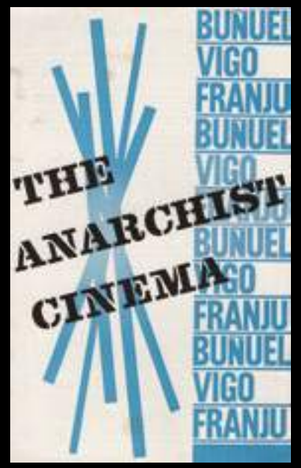
Opposite, from left to right: One Shots, September—October 1962
Unknown back cover designer.
—
The First World War, July—August 1962
Back cover designed by John Harmer.
—
The 14th London Film Festival, November—December 1970
Unknown cover designer.



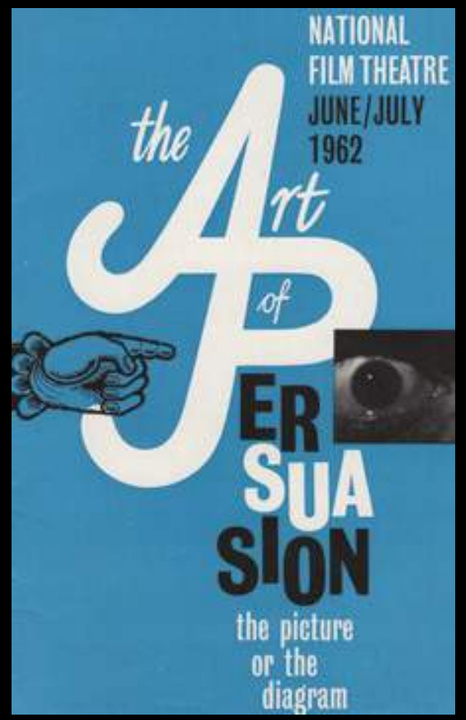
The Prepared Mirror, April—June 1963
Back cover designed by John Harmer.

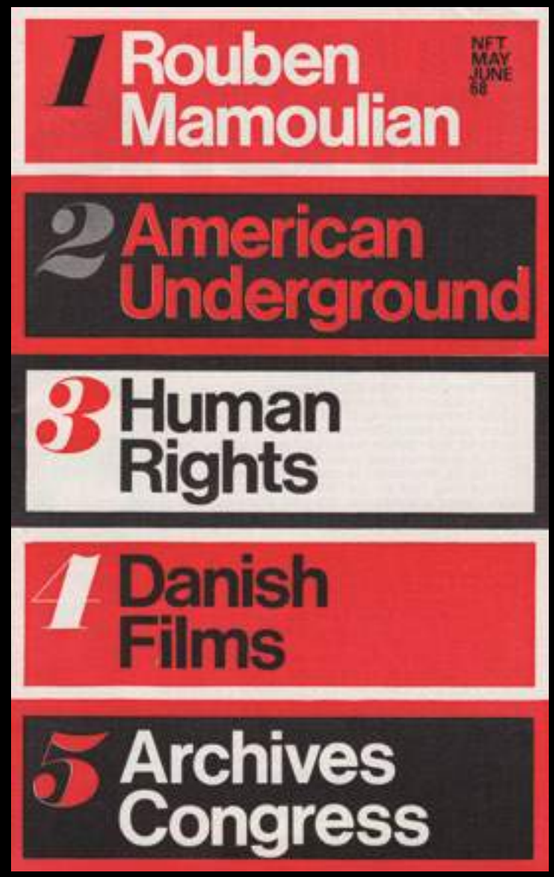


The Years Between, July—August 1961
Unknown cover designer.



Above and below: The Anarchist Cinema (back cover) & The Art Of Persuasion (front cover), June—July 1962
Unknown cover designer.





NFT, May—June 1968
Unknown cover designer.

Michelangelo Antonioni, January—March 1961
Unknown cover designer.

Five things… to tackle creative block

LUKE BROWN
Design director, The Company You Keep
—
tcyk.com.au

1. Go to a gallery or cinema
Inspiration injects new ways of seeing into the problem at hand. Often we're so closed off in our little worlds, hunched over our desks completely forgetting the universe outside. Spend some time with some other art.

2. Exercise / meditation
The over-caffeinated, anxiety-riddled abyss of the office can cloud our vision at times, and that can often be evaporated with physical exercise or a break for quiet reflection. I know if I go for a run a few times a week, matched with some mindfulness/ meditation practice, then I'm operating as my best self.

3. Workshop with the team
With a collaborative team, we're always pinning things up and tearing them down, conceptually and physically. Everyone has each other's back and we'll often be gathered around stress-testing ideas, proffering new ones and challenging conventions.

4. Take a break from it
Put it on the shelf, come back to it. If your creative block relates to a deep thinking problem, finding some menial tasks can create a much-needed reprieve. Think folio filing, folder structure reorganisation, clipping paths or image retouching. Put your headphones on and dive in.

5. Stop thinking, start doing
The counter to point four can simply be stop thinking about what you're doing and start doing it. If it's a design, start designing; if it's copywriting, start writing. The simple act of doing can produce those happy accidents, new unexpected ideas and aha moments.

HERO TYPE: FS SPLIT SERIF

01 Gallery

02 Reflection

03 Workshop

04 Shelve it

05 Doing

This page and opposite page:
Tanqueray Nº Ten by Design Bridge, London

That's the spirit

Sipping at the letterforms that make certain liquids seem so luxurious, by Angela Riechers.

The typographic imperative for premium spirits brands is to convey sophistication, exclusivity, and above all, luxury; to offer the consumer an exquisite experience and a small insight into a tempting alternate reality. The type needs to help position what's in the bottle as something aspirational—a magic potion that unlocks a would-be connoisseur's dreams of breaking free of the constraints of the ordinary. A look at how several drinks brands deploy typography shows that whether we're talking about a classic spirit or a newcomer on the scene, lettering style for booze is all about a smart approach to individuality and class.

The classic brands often lean on upper-class-related signifiers of good taste: script or classic serif fonts, gold foil embossing, the evocation of royalty and a spare, less-is-more aesthetic. The newcomers, meanwhile, frequently utilise an enhanced portrayal of handcraft. That's likely due to the hand-made's inherent connotations of time spent (the ultimate luxury) via the use of stickers applied to bottles, lavish illustrations, wax seals and additional layers of packaging in velvet or burlap.

THE CLASSICS

Stolichnaya Vodka: Stolichnaya's branding sees the product's name set in a severe sans-serif font in horizontal bands, contrasted with the brand name repeated in a graceful script set at a jaunty angle in the centre of the label. It's rendered in gold for the primary unflavoured spirit, and in black on labels for its flavoured versions, where beautiful, elegant illustrations of fruit speak to an adult customer looking for a change of pace from plain spirits.

Campari: The label for this bitter aperitif blasts the product name in a squared-off slab serif, outlined in gold on a navy blue background, while a swashy thin script in gold unfurls on a robin's egg blue rectangle beneath it. Layers of lettering in varying tones add texture underneath the script, and a gold crest of arms punctuates it all. The colours form a striking palette, with the bright red liquid within. The overall effect is of classic elegance and sophistication—not surprising, since the original design dates from 1912.

Chambord: This raspberry liqueur hit the market in 1982 as a revival of a 17th century spirit consumed by Louis XVI at the Château de Chambord. Fittingly, every aspect of the product identity hints at royalty—from the shape of the bottle, modelled after the Christian orb and cross, to the gold band belted around its middle, to the "Chambord" in gold lettering vaguely reminiscent of the Carolingian minuscule style of calligraphy developed around the year 780 and used by monks to create handwritten manuscripts for nobles and royals.

Jägermeister: A 2018 rebrand of this botanical digestif takes a slightly different tack by

evoking that bastion of modern good taste, the Bauhaus. Meister, a proprietary custom font designed by Noel Pretorius and María Ramos of NM Type for use in advertising and brand identity, is inspired by the geometric typefaces of the Bauhaus. It pairs nicely with the label's product name, set in blackletter type, and modernises the look and feel of the brand beautifully.

THE NEWER CONTENDERS

Wild Island Gin: This premium spirit is infused with hand-gathered botanicals from its place of origin—the rugged Hebridean Isle of Colonsay. Thirst Craft, the Glasgow agency responsible for Wild Island's branding, chose to pair artfully unpredictable watercolour splashes with a modern, minimal sans serif typeface to communicate the unruly beauty of the remote island. The bottle's cork stopper seals tight with a separate paper strip running over the top, reinforcing the exclusivity.

Tanqueray Nº10: This younger, more citrusy sibling to classic Tanqueray gin comes in a bright green bottle with a design evoking that of a 1930s cocktail shaker. Global branding firm DesignBridge chose to use a thin, understated silver band as the label, printed with chic black type in a mix of calligraphic and sans serif styles to set off the sculptural bottle. Every aspect of the integrated design whispers elegance.

Patagrande Mezcal: Mexico's Parámetro Studio devised a playful brand identity and name, derived from an "ancient legend" for this premium spirit, which launched in 2018.

The label pairs a modern geometric figure inspired by mystical Mexican creatures, with Patagrande set in tightly spaced, slightly thorny all-caps serif type. Randomly placed elements on the back of the bottle feature black and white photos of the agave plant; while a round, navy blue sticker with the creature and brand name knocked out in white provides a spot of colour in the otherwise monochromatic scheme. As a result, the packaging feels hand-assembled and collage-like.

Ketel One Botanical: In May 2018, Dutch premium vodka brand Ketel One introduced the very first diet vodka, Ketel One Botanical. It boasts 25% fewer calories than regular vodka and comes in Peach and Orange Blossom; Cucumber and Mint; and Grapefruit and Rose flavours. The labelling appears to take a page from Stolichnaya's book, with hits of gold here and there and botanical illustrations of fruits and flowers surrounding the Blackletter brand name. The rest of the type is a grab bag of condensed sans serif, all caps serif and brush script, creating an overall effect of lightness and delicacy that's perfect for low-calorie drinking.

Nalewka: Nalewka is a traditional Polish alcoholic beverage made by macerating fruits, roots, spices and herbs in alcohol. Adrian Chytry and Isabella Jankowska, partners at Poland's Foxtrot Studio, decided to make their own nalewka and design its custom packaging as a gift for their friends and clients. The very personal result is a triumph of attention to detail, from the label's careful mix of hand-lettering alongside condensed sans serif and serif caps, to the modern illustrations, to the paper neckband on the bottle and the colour-coordinated wax seal atop the stopper. The bottle comes in a burlap sack with an embossed wooden tag; which adds to the sense that this is a rare, homegrown luxury available to just a chosen few. It feels special, and will impart that feeling to the lucky recipient.

Opposite page:
Nalewka by Foxtrot Studio, Poland.
—
This page, top:
Wild Island by Thirst Craft, Glasgow.
Bottom:
Meister for Jägermeister by NM Type, Sweden & Spain.

Chris Bolton is a freelance designer, and like many creative types, appreciates the aesthetics of beer. So much so, that he's created a beautiful Instagram account called Pulp Culture (@_pulp_culture) devoted to beer mats, forming a collection of imagery that's at once a time capsule, a board-based slab of nostalgia and a charming dose of graphic inspiration. Here, he explains how the whole thing came about.

PULP CULTURE

Sadly my wife's grandad passed away in 2017. After the funeral she suggested we visit his house, which she described as a 1950s time capsule. It was: furry wallpaper, brown carpets and Bakelite plug sockets, and also a lot of Mid-Century furniture, which unfortunately had already been taken to the local dump —the family was unaware that it's so sought-after today.

In the attic we found two large wooden crates. My wife's uncle, who had been clearing the house, explained that one was just full of old beer mats, and that he planned to take them to the dump the next day. Then I discovered both crates and a large cardboard box were stuffed full of neatly organised and labelled beer mats, a graphic designer and type nerd's dream! I offered to take them.

It turned out that my father-in-law and his brother collected them as boys in the early 1960s. They were quite serious about it: they were members of various beer mat societies and clubs and would write to breweries and collectors all over the world to obtain and trade mats. I'd estimate there are roughly 1,000 beer mats within the crates, along with letters from traders as far away as Nigeria, club newsletters and other correspondence. The crates had sat untouched for the best part of 50 years in the attic, which explains why the quality and condition is generally very good.

I decided to start documenting them on Instagram in 2018 as a way of sharing inspiration and references. I follow people like Purveyors of Packaging and Graphilately and thought the beer mats would be similarly interesting, especially for designers. All the mats are from the 1960s but are extremely varied in style and content: some have very modernist typography and vibrant colours, some are very un-politically-correct, some have traditional illustration, some have very crude lettering, a lot of them fall into the Mad Men "Golden Era" of advertising.

I've always said that as long as I have more followers than posts, I'll continue, so it looks like I've got many more evenings scanning and sharing ahead of me.

"Some have very modernist typography and vibrant colours, some are very un-politically-correct, some have traditional illustration, some have very crude lettering, a lot of them fall into the Mad Men 'Golden Era' of advertising."

Take me in your arms

PETER PIPER PICKED A PECK OF PICKLED PEPPER. HIS FATHER PICKED A

DEVON ALE

THE SPICE OF LIFE

A DOUBLE DIAMOND works Wonders !

DRINK KK COLA

K.P.E.&S

Ansells makes friends

Bass TRADE MARK for men

Go the whole way

STOOMVAART MIJ. ZEELAND

S.M.Z.

HARWICH

LONDON

HOEK VAN HOLLAND

HOEK VAN HOLLAND-HARWICH

Whyte & Mackays SPECIAL Breathanalyzer

Instructions on back

How to use the Whyte & Mackays Special Breathanalyzer

Breathe onto the red circle.
If nothing happens, order another Whyte & Mackays Scotch Whisky.
If you see two circles, have your eyes tested . . . and walk home.

P.T.O.

BLAKES (NORFOLK BROADS HOLIDAYS) LTD.

47, ALBEMARLE

Sketching it out

A psychedelic, DIY-soundtracked trip through the woods: the doggedly analogue, charming world of Adam Higton's sketchbooks.

Adam Higton's work seems born of another time and place: a folklorish, 1970s woodland wonderland populated by sweet, strange, little scamps redolent in a palette of browns, greens and blue. His creations merge soft, autumnal hints of Arcadia with strange psychedelia-esque meanderings, and ultimately, they're rather magical.

Higton works across collage, drawing, comics and the occasional rug, and when he has time makes deliciously bonkers music using analogue electronic equipment, four-track recorders and the like under the moniker Cosmic Neighbourhood. Here, we delve into his sketchbooks, where his characters and shapes first take form.

"I tend to work mainly physically, and use the computer as little as possible, just for finishing off and sending it to print," says Higton. "I can't imagine making work with an iPad or anything like that—it seems really unnatural."

Most of his ideas stem from initial sketches, and from there can be realised as either collages—though sometimes these are born purely of paper cutting—or drawings, for which he tends to strip forms and shapes down to their basic components. For Higton, the sketchbook is about freedom as much as anything. "Sitting down with a sketchbook is really nice, it's nice to work so loose and let the ideas flow and not worry about the final finished thing," he says.

Since he focused more on collaging, he's moved away from the tiny books he used to sketch in and uses A4 sketchbooks for drawing, meaning he can group multiple ideas on a single page, while A7 is reserved for comic ideas and writing—though they're always Clairefontaine paper. "It feels like a real luxury to have those big pages," he says. "All my work is pretty small, so the sketchbooks are the only time I get to have a bit of space."

It was working with something of a dream client, Swiss zine publisher Nieves, that marked a turning point in Higton's process. The *Make A Joyful Sound* publication is a now-out-of-print collection of Higton's line drawings, documenting the mythical happenings in the "Cosmic Neighbourhood." According to Higton, until that point he'd been "only doing detailed drawings." Nieves encouraged him to work a little more loosely: "they liked my loose sketchbook stuff, and it spurred on a new way of drawing. I realised it was OK to use simple lines that seem less considered, and more experimental, overlapping compositions."

This page: Designs for Adam Higton's Fridge Folk and Cosmic Neighbourhood music project.
—
Opposite page: Adam Higton's sketches.

FOR THE BEAUTY OF WRITING

The basics of orthotypography, or how to use fonts to typeset texts beautifully, by Pedro Arilla.

Between us (you, the reader, and me, the writer) there is only a vital link called typography which exists, as Canadian writer and typographer Robert Bringhurst states, "to honour content". Type, then, is far from a frivolous craft. ¶ Broadly speaking, typography covers aspects such as the layout of letters, the choice of typeface, the arrangement of the text within a document and the right usage of typographic signs. This piece focuses on that last aspect, and one of the more easily ignored—which is known as orthotypography. ¶ Orthotypography defines a set of particular uses and conventions by which typographic signs govern the written elements. While correct typography looks good, correct orthotypography feels *good. This statement affects everything from classical poetry to a pithy text message or social media post. ¶ Here, we run through some of the main orthotypographic conventions; taking in tips, misconceptions and curiosities.*

SPACES

Typographic white spaces are as important as the rest of the character set. It's reasonably easy to use them on professional typesetting software, but they're not that accessible on other platforms. Here are the most common ones: word space (the space between words), em space (about the size of an "m"), en space (again, about the size of an "n"), thin space and hair space (a very thin space, put simply). Typographers use the widest spaces to relax a design; and the thinnest whites to subtly relieve elements without separating them.

SPACES		MAC	WINDOWS	WEB
[ ]	Wordspace	Spacebar	Spacebar	
[ ]	Em space	Software	Software	
[ ]	En space	Software	Software	
[ ]	Thin space	Software	Software	
[ ]	Hair space	Software	Software	

QUOTATION MARKS

Quotation marks, used to indicate quotes from other sources or direct speech; titles of items within publications (chapters in a book, episodes in a TV show, articles in periodicals, and so on); and irony or ambiguity. They are, without a doubt, the most frequently perverted.

With the aim of simplifying this issue, we'll only be considering the Latin script. Still, each language within that script follows its own conventions and marks. "English" and "Swedish" use such marks differently to „Dutch" and „German"; while «Spanish» and »Danish« use guillemets (also known as angle quotes, angle brackets or carets). Furthermore, even within the same language, conventions can change as in 'British' and "American" English. The use of quotation marks gets even more complicated when we have to switch to a different set of marks within a quoted sentence. Again, each language follows its own rules—e.g. *Carlos dijo: «No me puedo creer que me llamara "idiota" delante de sus padres.»* (Carlos said: "I cannot believe that he called me 'idiot' in front of her parents.")

Common mistakes when it comes to using quotation marks are straight quotes (or dumb quotes), which are frequently typed instead of curly quotes (or smart quotes) and apostrophes. It's an easy mistake to make, since straight quotes are immediately accessible on computer keyboards. But it shouldn't be done: straight quotes actually have no typographic function. They were artificially created for space-saving reasons: with only two keys (simple and double straight quotes) they could avoid having to include six keys (single curly opening; single curly closing/apostrophe; single prime, used for marking feet and minutes; double curly opening; double curly closing; and double prime —used for marking inches and seconds).

Furthermore, if you're typesetting in a language that uses guillemets as quotation marks, avoid the greater/less-than signs. A simple conclusion is that your word processor is sometimes more a hindrance than a help. Although some programmes automatically convert dumb quotes to smart quotes, the keyboard might be making your typing inaccurate. To avoid that, here are the shortcuts via a British keyboard.

QUOTATION MARKS		MAC	WINDOWS	WEB
‘	Single curly opening	⌥ +]	Alt + 0145	‘
’	Single curly closing/apostrophe	⌥ + ⇧ +]	Alt + 0146	’
“	Double curly opening	⌥ + [	Alt + 0147	“
”	Double curly closing	⌥ + ⇧ + [	Alt + 0148	”
‚	Single low curly opening	⌥ + ⇧ + 0	Alt + 0130	‚
„	Double low curly opening	⌥ + ⇧ + W	Alt + 0132	„
‹	Single guillemet opening	⌥ + ⇧ + 3	Alt + 0139	‹
›	Single guillemet closing	⌥ + ⇧ + 4	Alt + 0155	›
«	Guillemet opening	⌥ + \	Alt + 0171	«
»	Guillemet closing	⌥ + ⇧ + \	Alt + 0187	»

»HEI«
„HALLO"

DOTS

The period or full stop is, without a doubt, the rock star of the punctuation mark world. It's the first one we learn to use and the first one that we master: to mark the end of a sentence, after abbreviations or in email and website addresses. By the way, two spaces after a full stop is always wrong, whatever you might think.

When we want to mark an omission or rhetorical pause, or to show that a sequence continues in the same logic, we can use three dots. However, using three full stops is wrong: there's a punctuation mark with its own entity called *ellipsis* and we must use it in those scenarios. From a design point of view, it's usually spaced wider than a series of three full points.

Over the baseline, but not seated on it, there are some dot glyphs that are worth knowing about: interpunct, bullet and dot operator.

The interpunct or midpoint can be used to separate items in a horizontal arrangement. However, its most common use is in the Catalan language between two Ls in cases where each belongs to a separate syllable, for example "cel·la".

The bullet point is the fatter cousin of the interpunct, and is used as a typographical flag, commonly seen heading items on a list.

The dot operator is a symbol to indicate product in mathematics or to denote the "and" relationship in formal logic. It has to follow the design of the rest of the mathematic symbols. None of these dot symbols have to be rounded, necessarily, from a type designer's perspective.

DOTS		MAC	WINDOWS	WEB
•	Period	.	.	.
•••	Ellipsis	⌥ + ;	Alt + 0133	…
•	Interpunct	⌥ + ⇧ + 9	Alt + 0183	·
•	Bullet	⌥ + 8	Alt + 0149	•
•	Dot operator	Software	Alt + 250	⋅

DASHES

Among the horizontal marks, the dashes subgroup is the one which can present the most difficulty. They're a lot more than just little lines. If you want to be a orthotypography nerd (and you should, in my opinion), you need to truly understand the different symbols. Let's start with the easy one: the underscore, that dash above the baseline. It was introduced with typewriters as a way to underline words by moving the carriage back to the beginning of the word and over typing the low dash. Nowadays, it has a residual usage as a mere visual space creator when actual spaces are not allowed, such as in computer file names, server URLs, email addresses and so on.

Roughly centred in the x-height, we can find the hyphen, en dash, em dash and the minus. They vary in length and, usually, also in weight.

In classical Latin typography, their lengths were related to the body size: for example, an em is 12pt in 12pt type hence an en would be 6pt because it is half of an em. This tongue-twister triggered typographers to start to call ems muttons and ens nuts, to avoid misunderstanding.

In any case, the hyphen is the heaviest and shortest (around quarter of an em). It's used as a link for compound words (e.g. anti-nuclear), or to split words that don't fit into the current line. The en dash is used to concatenate sequences (e.g. 1984–2018). The longer em dash is used as a parenthesis — like this one — or an introduction to an aside. Finally, the minus sign is the mathematical subtraction operator and its length is about the same as that of an en dash. It must be used in maths settings rather than the hyphen.

DASHES		MAC	WINDOWS	WEB
_	Underscore	⇧ + -	⇧ + -	_
-	Hyphen	-	-	‐
–	En dash	⌥ + -	Alt + 0150	–
—	Em dash	⌥ + ⇧ + -	Alt + 0151	—
−	Minus	−	- or Alt + 45	−

FIGURES & RELATIVES

Personally, I find the standardisation of lining figures painful. There are three main sets of numerals and each one has its specific function. Old-style figures (or lowercase figures) are designed to match the lowercase letters in size and colour. They must be used in body text. If we use lining figures (or uppercase figures) they will stand out, because they're designed to match the uppercase letters—unless the text is typeset in all caps, of course. The third group is tabular figures, similar to the lining ones but with an even width. That makes them perfectly suitable for typesetting tables.

Check the character set of your favourite fonts: if they're high-quality, they will also include superior and fraction figures.

A good designer should be able to use mathematical and currency symbols properly; seeking those specifically designed to match numbers such as plus, minus (not the hyphen), multiply (not the letter x), divide, equal and so on.

You can access most common currency symbols using your computer keyboard, but you have to be careful with how you typeset them. While in English a beer might cost £4.99, in Spanish we would say 4,99 £. Note the position of the currency symbol, the decimal separator and the thin space between the number and the pound sign.

Lining figures

789

789

Old style figures

FIGURES AND RELATIVES		MAC	WINDOWS	WEB
123	Old style figures	Software	Software	.class {font-variant-numeric: oldstyle-nums;font-feature-settings: "onum";}
123	Lining figures	Software	Software	.class {font-variant-numeric: lining-nums;font-feature-settings: "lnum";}
123	Tabular figures	Software	Software	class {font-variant-numeric: tabular-nums;font-feature-settings: "tnum";}
+	Plus	+	+	+
−	Minus	−	− or Alt + 45	−
×	Multiplication	Software	Alt + 0215	×
÷	Division	⌥ + /	Alt + 0247	÷
=	Equal	=	=	=
≠	Not equal	⌥ + =	Software	≠
£	Pound	⇧ + 3	⇧ + 3	£
€	Euro	⌥ + 2	Alt Gr + 4	€
$	Dollar	⇧ + 4	⇧ + 4	$

Dot-Dot-Dash
Morse code uses dots and dashes as letters, as shown left, reading from the bottom to the top. This is saying "hello" using interpuncts and hyphens.

IN CONCLUSION

As with every aspect of life, context matters. That means that these conventions are not hard and fast rules. As we've seen, conventions in quote marks vary for every language, for instance.

The art of orthotypography is intricate but delightful. This is only the beginning of the road: the rest is paved with vertical signs, brackets, question marks, asterisks, ampersands, semicolons, arrows and more.

Most importantly, let your texts feel good, using all the potential that fonts offer. Do it for the beauty of writing.

Five things... to tackle creative block

CHRIS PITNEY
Freelance graphic designer, former design director of MultiAdaptor

—

1. Acknowledge it
Acknowledging an idea isn't working with the team might seem difficult, but you're probably not the only one thinking it. It gives you a starting point to address the problem.

2. Give your eyes a break
Staring at the screen gathering eternal references or designing the hundredth iteration is my worst nightmare. You have to remember a computer is your tool, not a creative crystal ball.

3. Read
Grabbing a few books from our sometimes neglected library often throws up something a lot more inspiring than trawling through blogs.

4. Talk it out
I'll always look to sit down a fellow designer, or non-designer (imagine that!) for a good chunk of time to talk through my ideas. It helps me rationalise it on the fly. If I can't explain it simply, it's probably not a good idea.

5. Sketch and explore
My favourite part of any project is letting myself loose with a pen and pad. Exploring words, sketching ideas, categorising and pinning to boards—it's the most expressive form of idea generation.

HERO TYPE: FS INDUSTRIE, FROM CONDENSED TO EXTENDED

01 Acknowledge

02 Break

03 Read

04 Talk

05 Explore

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

We take a look behind the scenes at Perrott Bespoke Printing's die stamping workshop in London. Photographs by Tim Bowditch. Written by Emily Gosling.

Estd. 1926

Previous page:
A collection of die stamping plates used by Perrott.
—
Left and opposite page:
Stephen Perrott demonstrates the die stamping process.

Near what's come to be known to estate agents and those conversing in part-irony as the Haggerston Riviera, sits a studio that defies the 21st century. A stone's throw from the Regent's Canal in east London—a waterway that's as much filled with shopping trolleys and gunk as real estate jargon—is Perrott, a bespoke printers that's as east London as the Queen Vic, and that trades in printed luxury.

Perrott specialises in bespoke printing, and has done since its founding in 1926. Its history spans four generations, lots of very heavy machinery, a client list including the Royal Family and Quentin Blake, and a dedication to a supremely high level of craft mostly now lost to computer software. The company is most well-known for its die stamping—a method of printing using an inked die to produce raised print from engraved steel or copper plates—though Perrott also works across blind embossing, thermography and lithography.

TypeNotes met Stephen Perrott and his daughter Catherine Perrott, to talk through the business and witness the complex and beautiful machinations of die stamping. Stephen's face is likely the one you'd see next to the dictionary definition of "a real character" in the best way possible: bearing a hearty chuckle and a breathtakingly encyclopaedic knowledge of his trade, it's clear that printing has been not just his job for more than 40 years, but his passion.

The lion's share of Perrott's work is in stationery and more recently wedding invites, with many clients having been long-standing collaborators. It's not hard to see why clients come back: the vibrancy and detail on die cut prints are stunning, a testament to the skill of the printers and the power of the machinery that's used. "These machines last forever, so they don't make them any more," Stephen explains.

The business was started by Stephen's grandfather in 1926, a die stamper who initially bought and worked on a baby weight machine from nearby Tabernacle Street, under a fish and chip shop. He soon got his family involved, and as the business grew it moved to Sun Street, by what's now Broadgate. Stephen's father set up on his own in 1966, and bought a machine that's still in use today.

The Perrott studio of today has been on the same site since 1971, around the time Stephen joined his father full time, working alongside his brother-in-law. The machines each have their own stories: one came from an old Victorian steam bath complex hidden away and left to rot in King's Cross, for instance. Indeed, the whole business and process is filled with stories; ones that thanks to the results of the printing, transcend decades—the type and colours feel steeped in tradition, yet glimmer and shine with a timeless modernity. "You can always tell when it's a computer script, but with hand engraving you get the flow and you just get that lovely detail from start to finish. It's a lovely process," says Stephen.

"Everything now is digital—you press a button and boom, off it goes. Here, it's all hands on—levers, mechanical arms—it's not something you can just go and change on a computer. It's all hands-on knowledge you pick up. I'm learning all the time—every time a job comes in—there's different levers and bolts to turn and twist, there's a pad underneath you can twist a certain way... there are so many different things you can do."

Catherine adds: "It's just the craft of it—no matter what job it is, it'll always be different as you're doing everything by hand, it always changes." That sense of care and uniqueness makes the process a natural fit for wedding

Left:
One of Perrott's die stamping machines, some of which have been in use by the family since the 1960s.
—
Below:
Tools of the trade.
—
Opposite page:
Stephen Perrott demonstrating creating a print using metallic ink, which is mostly brass with a touch of real gold.

"These machines last forever, so they don't make them any more."

— STEPHEN PERROTT

stationery: "people throw their whole selves into designing it, it's so nice to have that personal touch," she says.

Perrott's work comes in mostly through word of mouth and existing clients—helpful, since copper plates can be reused over and over again. Usually, Stephen is sent a PDF design, which is sent to the engraver. Then once the engraved plate comes back, a rubbing is done with black ink to ensure the design is correct for sign-off. Today, copper plates are used for the most part rather than steel dies, which are "more expensive, but they'll last forever," says Stephen. The main restriction in what can be printed is size, thanks to the paper that the machines were built to take—to create an A4 design, for instance, you can either use a special machine extender or use two dies for different halves of the piece, and print it in sections.

Father and daughter agree that when it comes to styles that lend themselves best to die stamping, simplicity always wins. "Die stamping is such a beautiful process, it doesn't need to be all-singing-all-dancing," says Catherine. "More traditional styles work, but there's still something that feels really modern about the finished product. Serif fonts work really well, because the serifs become so detailed and die stamping picks that up really well. With sans serifs you wouldn't notice it as much." Logos work well, Stephen points out, and "any metallic inks come out really, really nice—we use a brass with bits of real gold in it," he explains.

While there's no shortage of work for Perrott, Stephen is in "semi-retirement", usually working from around 7am until about 2pm. You get a sense, though, that he'll be working for a long while yet.

Catherine is now the fourth generation at Perrott, and has been learning the ropes—a hard process not only in terms of the technicalities, but the physical strength it takes to operate the machines. "One day, she'll be able to run a job from start to finish like I do, and keep the tradition going," says Stephen. She works full time as a graphic designer, and as a student the die stamping machines at Perrott were a popular spectacle for her peers—one friend even ended up writing their dissertation on the process. "The craft will always be around, because there's nothing that can beat it," she says. "But it's the new designers that'll make this stuff come to life and progress it—it's that collaboration between designer and printer that keeps these things living."

So what is it that makes 21st century designers still swoon for this decidedly complex, analogue process? "As it uses an engraved plate, you can get such intricacy and achieve really fine lines. There's nothing else that'll give you that kind of detail," says Catherine. "It's the quality, there's no two ways about it," Stephen adds.

"Once you've experienced die stamping, you're never going to..." Catherine doesn't finish her sentence. She doesn't really need to.

Left:
One of the many printing machines at Perrott.
—
Opposite page:
Stephen Perrott preparing a bespoke hand-cut "force" before the print run.

A GUIDE TO TYPE STYLES

By Krista Radoeva.

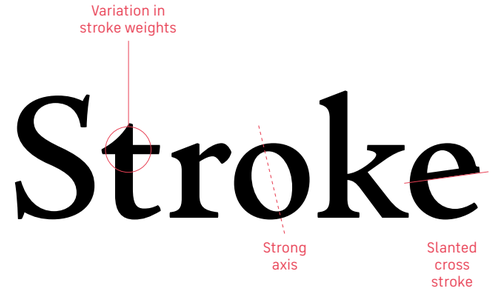
When it comes to commonly known type categories, you might be able to think of sans, serif, script and maybe slab. Four categories would be simple and easy, but it would also make design boring. Thankfully there are many more categories and subcategories to explore. ¶ Historically we've seen many different classification systems, some based on their era, others entirely on the visual features of typefaces, and some a combination of both. Some notable classification systems include Official Vox/ATypI, a mix between historical terms and visual attributes; British Standard, a simplified version of Vox; and Gerrit Noordzij Theory, the idea that every typeface can be traced back to the handwriting tool that it's based on. This eliminates all the difficulties of historical classifications, but falls apart for anything outside the given parameters. ¶ Most of the existing classification systems are considered outdated, subjective and confusing. Indeed, type design is a complicated discipline with many variables. A lot of contemporary typefaces don't fit in to any of these historical categories, so it's considered impossible to come up with a system that includes every type design possibility. ¶ Type is constantly evolving, and one system doesn't fit all. However, an understanding of type design history will help a designer make better choices, in situations such as in pairing fonts, or finding the right type style for a logo or piece of lettering work: knowing the historical connotations of certain styles, or simply their visual features. ¶ Understanding classification also enables you to start noticing more subtle differences between typefaces. It helps you when describing a chosen font to a client, or commissioning a custom one; and enriches your design palette more holistically. ¶ Instead of focusing on the existing systems or trying to come up with a new system, this piece looks to demystify some useful terminology and help you recognise the most common Latin type styles.

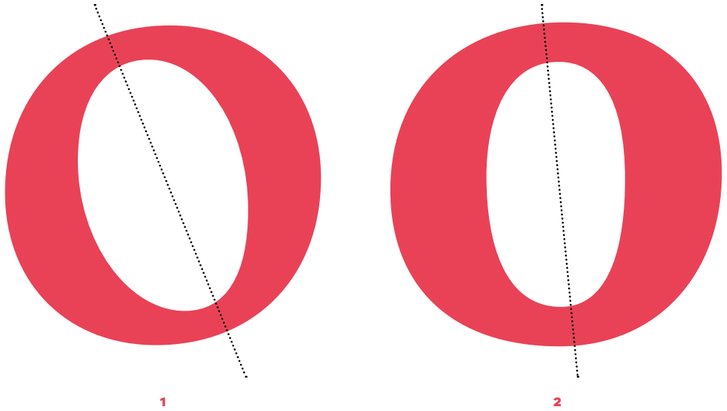
HUMANIST SERIF

The first Roman type was derived from calligraphy, so the shape of letterforms is based on formal writing with a flat brush or a broad nib pen. The term Humanist has traditionally been used for serif typefaces, but nowadays there is also Humanist Sans.

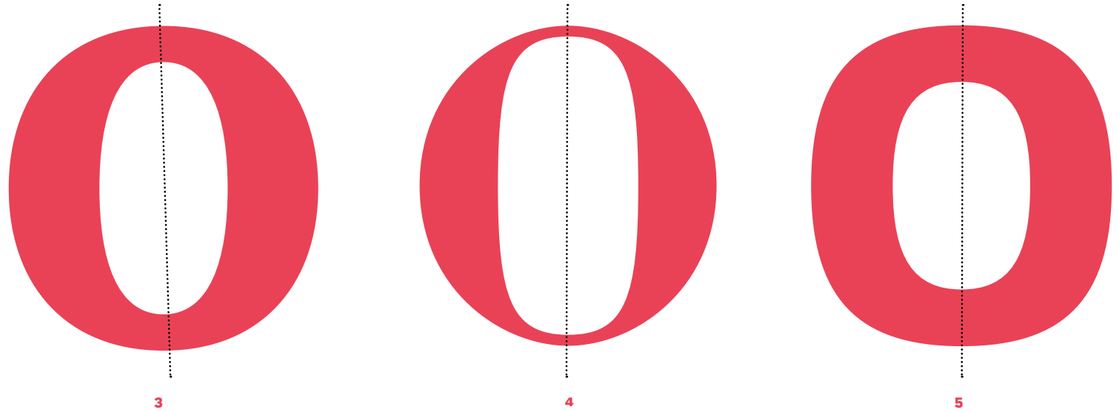
Characteristics
– Axis is at a strong angle
– Small x-height
– Interrupted construction
– Variation in the stroke weights
– Short bracketed serifs
– Serifs at an angle
– Slanted cross stroke on the "e"
– Lower contrast between thick and thin

Examples
Adobe Jenson, Centaur, Cloister, Guardi, Lutetia, Lynton, Stempel Schneidler





Axis
Since more serif typefaces are influenced by writing with calligraphic tools, they have inherited an axis. This is the angle where the thinnest part of the letter is.
—
1 Humanist Serif
2 Garalde
3 Transitional
4 Didone
5 Slab

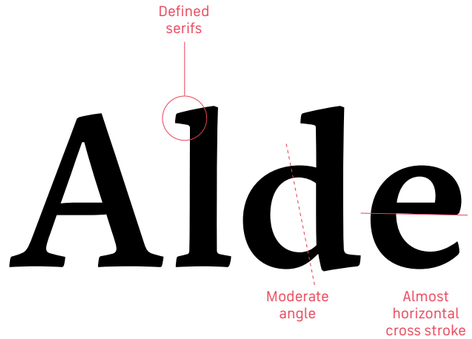


GARALDE

Named after the two most notable type designers of the period between the late 1400s until the 1700s—French punchcutter Claude Garamond and Venetian printer Aldus Manutius—Garaldes are a step forward from Humanist, and are still influenced by formal calligraphy. Many technical improvements in printing and punchcutting during that period brought about new opportunities for refinement and the production of many typefaces, revivals of which are still widely used for setting books or long texts. Also known as Aldine after Aldus Manutius; and sometimes Old-style, but this term is occasionally used for all Humanist, Garalde and Transitional typefaces.

Characteristics
– Refined proportions
– Axis is at a moderate angle
– Serifs have better defined shape
– Middle stroke of lowercase “e” is horizontal

Examples
Bembo, Caslon, FS Brabo, Galliard, Garamond, Janson, Palatino

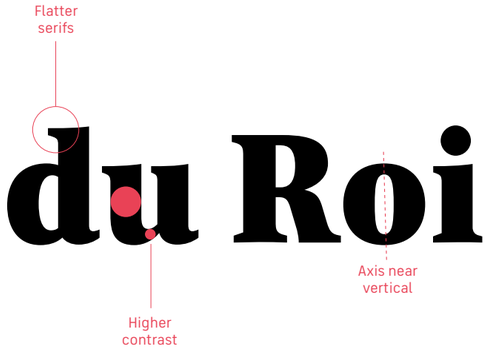


TRANSITIONAL

At the end of 17th century, Louis XIV wanted to renovate the French government’s printing press (the Imprimerie Royale) to find a replacement for Garamond type styles and to compete with the development and quality of printing elsewhere in Europe at that time. He commissioned the French Academy of Sciences to create a new typeface for him, and the result was the Roman du Roi—86 typefaces designed on a strict system of grids, mathematics and engineering. Notable type designers from this period are John Baskerville, Simon Fournier and Christophe Plantin. Another name for Transitional is “realist”, which comes from the Spanish term for “royal” (it has nothing to do with realism), thanks to the typeface made for the Spanish King Phillip II by Plantin.

Characteristics
– Contrast is even stronger than in the first two groups
– Axis is nearly vertical
– Serifs are flatter, and details are very refined
– It’s easy to recognise Transitional typefaces if you think of them as the “transition” between Garaldes and Didones

Examples
Baskerville, Bell, Fournier, FS Neruda, FS Sally, Joanna, Times

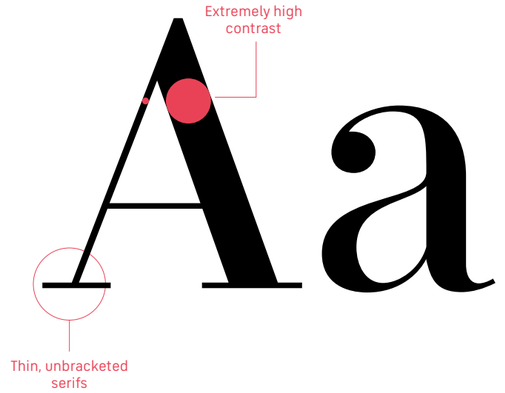


DIDONE

The term Didone is derived from the names of type founders Firmin Didot and Giambattista Bodoni. They were both incredible craftsmen, and through their professional rivalry pushed the limits of type design, punchcutting and printing. Also known as “Modern”—not a hugely helpful name, thanks to the confusion with adjectives like “modern” and “contemporary”.

Characteristics
– Extremely high stroke contrasts
– Influenced by writing with a pointed nib held at a 90°, which produces very thin horizontal strokes
– Axis is completely vertical
– Thin unbracketed serifs

Examples
Ambroise, Bodoni, Didot, FS Ostro, ITC Fenice, Scotch Roman, Walbaum

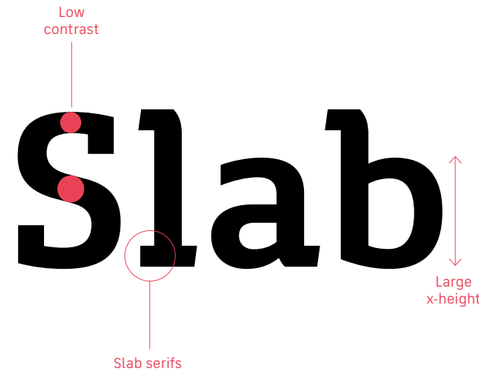


SLAB

There are many different terms for Slab: Mechanical / Mechanistic, Antique or Egyptian. Associated with blocky thick rectangular serifs, they were originally created to attract attention in advertising, posters and large-scale media. They embody the spirit of the Industrial Revolution at the beginning of the 19th century, and were specifically designed for large display use. This category includes typefaces with square unbracketed serifs (often called Egyptians) as well as bracketed ones (called Clarendons or Ionics).

Characteristics
– Very large x-height
– Low stroke contrast
– Egyptians: unbracketed, squarish, mechanical
– Clarendons: bracketed, more subtle and gentle

Examples
Clarendon, FS Rufus, FS Clerkenwell, FS Silas Slab, Memphis, Rockwell, Sentinel



GROTESQUE

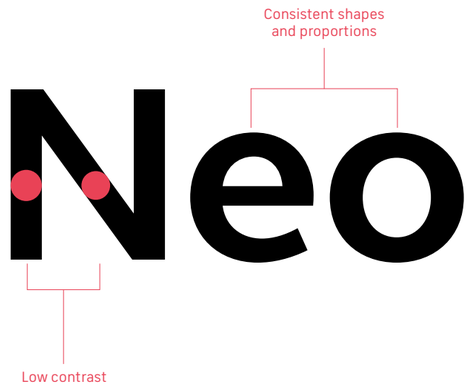
A form of sans serifs that originated in the 19th century which, as some of the earliest sans serifs, tend to have a lot of peculiar characteristics. They were influenced by the Didone serif typefaces, so the first examples are attempts to draw a bolder Didone without serifs and lower contrast to use in headlines and advertising. ¶ Many examples only used capital letters, but through the development of the Grotesque style we see sans serif lowercase for the first time.

Characteristics
- Varying contrasts between thick and thin, often applied or exaggerated in weird places and unrelated to calligraphic contrast logic
- Round shapes and curves are squarish
- Terminals are often horizontal or curling inward
- "G" often has a spur, and sometimes the "R" has a curved leg

Examples
Bureau Grot, Franklin Gothic, FS Meridian, Ideal Grotesk, Knockout, Schelter Grotesk, Venus

NEO-GROTESQUE

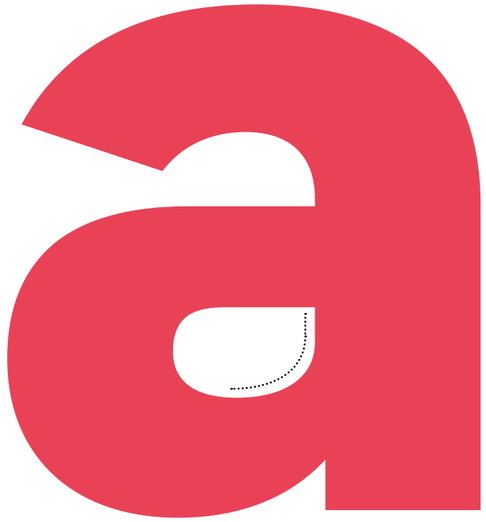
The successors of later Grotesque typefaces, this category includes some of the most popular sans serifs to date: Helvetica and Univers —though the many different digital versions might not be as close to the originals as you might think. ¶ Whereas Grotesques were only ever intended for bold headlines and advertising, Neo-Grotesques were developed with simplicity, legibility and a wider range of uses in mind. They were the first typeface families to include multiple variations of weight and width, designed to be used in any application and at all sizes.



Characteristics
- Less contrast than Grotesques
- More regularity and consistency in proportions and shapes
- Unlike Grotesques, there is no spurred "G"
- Lowercase "g" is often single-storey

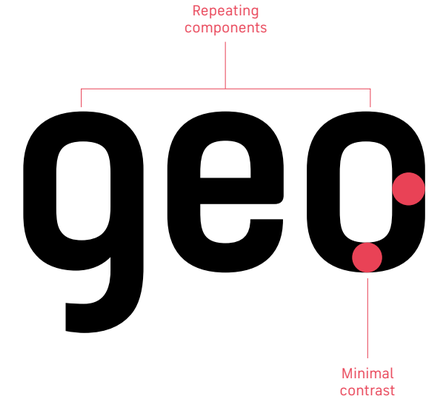
Examples
Bell Centennial, DIN, Folio, FS Elliot, FS Industrie, Helvetica, Univers

Type of construction
Left: Interrupted construction is a term defining when a letter has sharp corners where two parts of the letter meet (e.g. FS Irwin).
—
Right: Running construction means smooth, curved connections (e.g. FS Industrie Wide). It's often more noticeable in typefaces that have a calligraphic influence.



GEOMETRIC

As the name suggests, these are sans serifs constructed from simple geometric shapes. Geometric fonts might seem simple and easy to design, but in reality there are lots of subtle optical adjustments to make the shapes look pure and monolinear. ¶ One approach to Geometric typeface design follows the first examples from the 1920s and 1930s, which have variation in the proportions, and use a range of geometric shapes to achieve this. ¶ The other approach—inspired by simplified industrial letterforms usually cut in stencil, metal or plastic—takes the idea of using repetitive, geometric elements to construct each letter, giving less variation in proportion and a more uniform appearance.

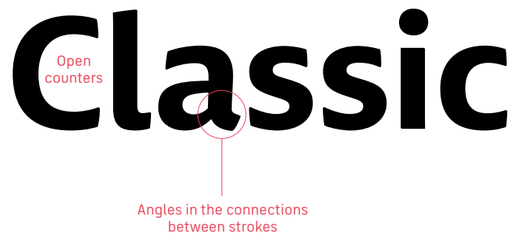


Characteristics
- Usually have minimal contrast
- Construction is based on repeating components, such as circles, squares and triangles
- Most commonly, they have a single-storey "a" and "g" to complement the geometric simplicity.

Examples
Bank Gothic, Erbar, Eurostyle, FS Dillon, FS Lucas, Futura, Kabel

HUMANIST SANS

Just as Humanist Serif typefaces are strongly influenced by broad nib calligraphy, Humanist Sans also look in the same direction for their inspiration. The calligraphic influence is visible in the construction of letterforms. Their proportions are often based on the classical roman model. This makes the Humanist Sans a better choice for continuous reading than the Grotesques and Geometric sans serifs.

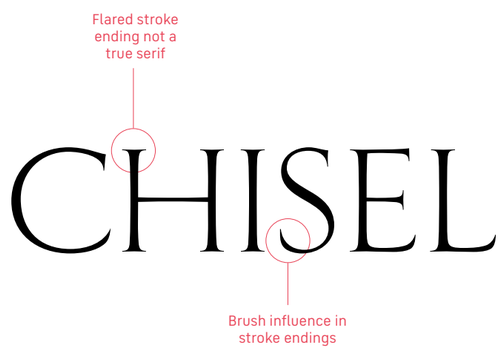


Characteristics
- Contrast is often much lower than Humanist Serifs but it is still visible and often at an angle
- Open counters
- Angles in the connections between strokes
- Often a double-storey lowercase "a" and "g"
- Often have a true cursive italic, instead of just a slanted roman

Examples
FS Irwin, FS Millbank, FS Siena, Gill Sans, Johnston, Optima, Scala Sans

INCISED

Also called Glyphic, these are typefaces which are influenced by the engraving or chiselling of characters in stone, as opposed to calligraphic handwriting. A lot of Incised types are based on Roman inscriptions and might only contain capitals, such as Trajan, which is based on the lettering from the Trajan column. Other examples, that are not a strict revival of the classical forms, manage to incorporate the incised characteristics into lowercase letters too, using flared stroke endings and calligraphic construction. ¶ They might be confused with some of the calligraphic based serif fonts, but the shapes' origins mean that the serifs are a result of the production process, not a design feature.



Characteristics
– Small serifs, often just flares at stroke endings
– Characters follow proportions of classical Roman capitals

Examples
Albertus, Copperplate Gothic, Exocet, Fritz Quadrata, FS Benjamin, FS Rome, Lithos

SCRIPT

Inspired by handwriting styles, Scripts can often be differentiated by the different tools used to create them, such as brushes, markers or pointed nibs. They can be very formal—often based on classical penmanship—or very casual.

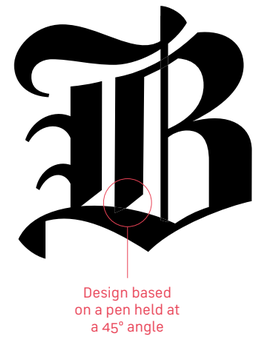
Characteristics
– Letters are often connected to each other and slanted, like in cursive writing
– A lot of script typefaces have several versions of each letter in order to replicate the dynamic and versatile look of handwriting or hand-lettering

Examples
Bello, Bickham Script, FS Sammy, FS Shepton, Mistral, Snell Roundhand, Zapfino

Incised or serif?
True serifs are different from the flared terminal endings on an incised typeface. FS Neruda (left) has bracketed serifs, whereas FS Kim (right) is influenced by calligraphy and stone carved letter shapes and so has incised terminal endings.

BLACKLETTER

This style originated with 15th century German printer Johannes Gutenberg, and the first Blackletter type styles are directly based on these manuscript forms. Gutenberg's printing success increased the popularity and usage of Blackletter, but eventually it was replaced by more readable serif types. Nowadays, you might only ever see it in use on beer labels, or on metal and hip hop music ephemera. It might sometimes be known as Gothic or Textura. ¶ You may think that the distinct characteristics of Blackletter belong to the Graphic or Script category, but Blackletter is also based on writing with a broad nib pen, but with a very different technique: the pen was held at a steep 45° angle.

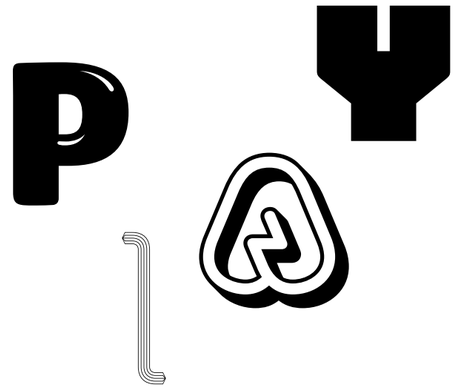


Characteristics
– Mostly constructed of thick straight lines with some thick and thin diagonals
– Proportions are very narrow, making the text appear very dense and sharp

Examples
Canterbury, Fette Fraktur, Fraktur, Goudy Text, Linotype Textur, Notre Dame, Old English

GRAPHIC

Graphic describes pretty much everything else that doesn't fit any other category: display, ornamented, decorative, layered, textured, stencil, shadow... ¶ If you're not sure what it is, or it doesn't look like it's based on any writing tool or geometric principle, but it looks drawn or constructed from arbitrary shapes or with applied effects, then it's a Graphic typeface.



Characteristics
– Generally designed for use for display purposes and in large sizes for emphasis

Examples
Banco, Calypso, Fournier Le Jeune, FS Conrad, FS Kitty, FS Pele, FS Pimlico Glow

LOVELY CORITA

The Hollywood sister and graphic design luminary finally getting her due: how former nun and printmaking darling Corita Kent created a quiet revolution in how we learn about, draw, view and interact with lettering and symbols. By Emily Gosling.

"We're seeing in the art world and art history a revising of the canon, and who was exiled. It's not just white men," says Dr Ray Smith, the director of Corita Art Center. Finally, a new body of work is emerging, from female bodies as well as male. And with that reworking of the A – Z of the art and design canon, another loosely alphabetic system has been heralded: that of Corita Kent.

Corita Kent (often referred to as Sister Corita Kent) was an artist, educator and social justice advocate born in Iowa in 1918, and raised mostly in Los Angeles. When she was 18 she entered the religious order Immaculate Heart of Mary, in Hollywood. Later, it was there that she formed one of the most celebrated art teaching departments of the time, forming what's since been described as an "avant garde mecca" where bold pedagogical practises were introduced. Before long, some of the most fascinating minds of the time flocked to her—among them, Buckminster Fuller, John Cage, Saul Bass and Charles and Ray Eames. Her printmaking work merged the worlds of scripture and pop culture, taking in influences from Medieval art, advertising slogans, song lyrics and Bible verses.

It's rare we see the worlds of religion and art intersect in such powerful, visceral ways as in those manifested by Kent: perhaps because religion in her work is the underpinning for positivity, for social justice concerns wrought in primary colours and bold, unabashed letterforms.

It would have been her 100th birthday in 2018, and a deserved flurry of celebrations took place, including exhibitions worldwide featuring or starring her pieces; and new or reissued publications of her work. One of the most impressive of such publications is *International Signal Code Alphabet*, a stunning monograph produced in collaboration with the Corita Art Center. While the series was created more than 50 years ago, it feels as pertinent and fresh today as ever.

"I think the messaging of her work with social justice and her attention to those issues are really timely right now, and the way she approached those in the late 1960s have a real anger and frustration in them," says Smith. "But for the most part, she was addressing social justice ideas from a space of positivity, saying 'let's address these things through love.' But they came from her faith, and that's a different approach to the sort of messaging we're used to—it really draws you in."

Smith adds, "There's a very DIY, handmade quality to her work—it wasn't really slick. She was largely self-taught, especially in type making and lettering, she was interested in that from childhood, and was always practising handmade lettering and typography."

Kent's interest in lettering flourished while at Immaculate Heart College, and according to Smith her order of nuns "encouraged her to pursue artistic expression in the vein of 'if god has given you talent, he wants you to use it'."

By 1968 Kent had chaired the art department at Immaculate Heart College for four years, shown in more than 230 exhibitions, and her artwork found itself in private and public collections across the world. Finding herself exhausted by what had become a gruelling schedule of lecturing, teaching and exhibiting nationwide; as well as ongoing conflict with the archdiocese, she sought dispensation from her vows. She relocated to Cape Cod, and it was there that she dove into her serigraphy work, creating the International Signal Code Alphabet that merges the characteristics of her previous work—a joyful reconfiguring of signs and lettering through disparate textual elements, rich textures and bold colours—with new coastal influences. She never formally returned to teaching.

"The International Signal Code Alphabet reflects two main influences in Corita's work: the tendency for her creations to reflect her environment and her interest in letterforms," says Smith. Kent's work had always been informed by the things she found in her day-to-day life, as well as the higher powers of religion, pop culture and literature. Street signage and text from her students were frequent source material, and with her move from a busy area of Hollywood to quieter Boston came more natural imagery. The biggest new source of inspiration that manifested in the International Signal Code Alphabet, however, was the multicoloured flags used for communication by sea vessels.

Images courtesy of Corita Art Center/Immaculate Heart Community, Los Angeles, from 'International Signal Code Alphabet' by Corita Kent, published by Atelier Editions.

Top: *g is for game.*
—
Right: *c is for clowns etc.*
—
All Corita Kent, 1968.

Away from the workshop at Immaculate Heart College, Kent printed her words at a professional print studio, adding a new vibrancy to the tones. "The idea that each flag visually represents a letter must have been appealing to Corita, who said in 1970: 'As important to me (if not more so) are the shapes and colours of the words. They should be fun to look at even if one doesn't understand English'," says Smith. She clearly delighted in pushing those limits of meaning in the International Signal Code Alphabet, where several prints such as *L for Ladybug* and *P for Palm* eschew depictions of the letter the flag actually represents. In others, she plays with the discrepancy between the written and spoken word—take *Q for cutie pie*, for instance.

Each piece in the series uses bold colour contrasts, with images and textual accoutrements from a range of sources including books and illuminated manuscripts; quotes from Leonard Cohen and George Harrison; lyrics from The Doors; and passages from kids' books such as *Winnie the Pooh* alongside those from the *New Testament's Book of Revelation*. "Some messages are naïve and accessible, others quite confrontational; perhaps illustrative of the intense psychological pressure Corita was under while contemplating a separation from her religious community," says Smith.

That separation, however, enabled Kent to further engage with the issues that had always been a critical component of her œuvre: she had long espoused messaging around love, peace and feeding the hungry—ideas that could sit comfortably alongside her position in the religious order. "If you look at the history of the Catholic Church at that time, there's a schism to make it innovate and more accessible; and also maintain the old ways," says Smith.

"The sisters of Immaculate Heart were about saying, 'let's renew and make it easier to reach people.' Corita herself had a dry wit and that was her personality, but the Archdiocese in LA was very conservative. That caused a lot of problems and it manifested in a lot of different ways, and that was one of the reasons she left." Kent was asked not to depict the holy family, for instance, and Smith adds that sometimes her art was "seen as a little too weird," such as some of her work that alluded to the Virgin Mary as being "the juiciest tomato of all", as in a 1964 piece bearing that title.

"She was addressing social justice ideas from a space of positivity, saying 'let's address these things through love'."

— DR RAY SMITH

Above: *l is for ladybug* Corita Kent, 1968.

Corita Kent, c.1979.

Clockwise from top left: *e is for everyone; a is for astrology; z is for zorba; n is for caution*. All Corita Kent, 1968.

Images courtesy of Corita Art Center/Immaculate Heart Community, Los Angeles

Having been liberated from her vows, Kent was free to amp up the more political side of her messages, and she created work around events such as the Watts riots in LA and the implications of police racism within that; the deaths of John F Kennedy and Martin Luther King; and her vehement condemnation of the Vietnam War.

Kent's work is characterised by deft use of layering: while usually there are four layers on a serigraph, some of her works use up to 26 different colours. Another tenet crucial to Kent was the idea that art should be accessible and democratic: "she made prints in multiples so that lots of people could have them," says Smith. "The idea that you make one picture that just one person could see was very antithetical to her. She was making work for newspapers and for *Time* magazine, so the work was everywhere. I think a lot of work has been influenced by it, consciously or subconsciously. I see a lot of her influence in text-based art, and screen printing generally."

So why has her name, until relatively recently, not been up there with the (mostly male) pop artists of the canon, or the designers making a splash at the same time as Kent was? "I think she's definitely less recognised than her peers, and gender discrimination is probably at the heart of it," says Smith. "By the time she started working there had also definitely been a shift in that religious art was seen as one thing and modern art was something else, so people didn't know where to put her work.

"Her work wasn't like other modern art at the time as there was a religious bent—God was right in your face—so I think that's part of it too. And then there's the commercial aspect: she wasn't just trying to make art available to an elite group, where in the art world there's a slant towards favouring the things that are least attainable, and those being the things we put most value on. Hopefully we're rethinking that now."

Kent remained active in social causes right up until her death in 1986; with such views underpinning more than 800 serigraph editions, hundreds of watercolours and numerous public and private commissions. Throughout her entire career though, her works are unified by a focus on peace and love; and the DIY, democratic nature of her aesthetic and the implicit joy within it are as contagious to viewers today as they ever were.

FIVE THINGS... TO TACKLE CREATIVE BLOCK

DAVID HEASTY
Partner, Triboro
—
triborodesign.com

1. Stay positive and just make a decision, any decision
See the blank page not as an absence of ideas, but rather an unlimited number of potential possibilities. It's best to not hesitate: plunge in and make a mark, make a sketch, make a decision, and a path begins to open up.

2. Reread the brief, check your notes, find inspiration in what was given to you
Usually there's a seed of an idea hidden somewhere. We likely missed it, or it seemed insignificant, but by retracing our steps we often notice a small footnote that can form a major idea.

3. Look at another project
In rare cases, a failed idea on one assignment might be just the right approach for another. It's always best to try to keep your mind open to possibility, letting inspiration flow from one project to the next.

4. Take something away
A useful way to make something new is to remove an essential aspect that defines it. It's a good way to avoid clichés and invert an audience's expectations.

5. Do something else, go somewhere else
Not an original idea, but it often works. A lot of my best ideas have come when I was not distracted and in a meditative state: while taking a shower or staring out a window on the train. An unfamiliar setting can be enough to spark new ideas.

HERO TYPE: FS CHARITY

01 PLUNGE

02 NOTES

03 FLOW

04 REMOVE

05 AWAY

DAN MEE

Georgia Fendley is the founder of London-based creative agency Construct. Here, she discusses her love of the work of Jean-Paul Goude, and the occasionally problematic implications of him as a "design hero".

Opposite page: *Sylvia*, Jean-Paul Goude, cut-up photo, Paris 1968.

Far left: Constructivist maternity dress, in collaboration with Antonio Lopez, New York 1979.
—
Left: *The Queen of Seoul*, pencil on paper plate, Paris 1994.
—
Right: *Cry Now, Laugh Later*, painted photo, sticky tape and cardboard, New York 1982.

All by Jean-Paul Goude.

I have a confession. I'm a graphic designer, and I really love my work; but my inspiration usually comes from those creative thinkers and makers on the edge of the world of graphic design —I admire the polymath, the lateral creative thinker, the socially and culturally engaged and challenging. In life, too, I most readily identify with the outsiders, non-conformists and underdogs. I'll always enjoy the struggle more than the comfortable win, and this restlessness is reflected in my choice of "design hero".

As a child growing up in South Wales in the 1970s, this feisty spirit was unsurprising—in fact it was necessary—as this was a time of strikes and power cuts, oppression, political bullying and true austerity. My 1970s didn't look like a warm Instagram filter: they were black and white, politically aware and phenomenally empowering. I was born in 1971, and my dad is a graphic designer, my mum an illustrator. Dad worked for Monotype, Galeries Lafayette in Paris and the BBC before setting up Design Systems, an agency in Paris, London and Cardiff too, after he met my mum. Mum worked for *Punch* magazine and the Globe Theatre, and thanks to being too much of an extrovert to work alone in the studio for long periods, she also taught at Cardiff and Newport Art Colleges. My childhood was one rich in inspiration, as my parents and their friends were all designers and artists. My parents took me everywhere with them, and this was a time of boozy lunches when children were left to entertain themselves. My mum's idea of family time was watching John Berger's *Ways of Seeing* together or trips to the Arnolfini Arts Centre, to arthouse cinemas and gallery after gallery.

As a naturally rebellious kid I kicked back: I hated the culture, found galleries boring and lusted after a life glimpsed beyond the boundaries of my own. I secretly watched *Charlie's Angels, Miami Vice* and *Dynasty;* lusted after lip gloss; got my hair highlighted and started spending all my time at nightclubs, when I was 14. I liked shiny, I liked fabulous and I liked "fuck you feel good"—things not readily available at home or anywhere in the valleys of South Wales at that point. My lifelines were magazines, especially *Interview* and *The Face*. There, I found an exciting, alternative creative reality. I wanted to hang out with Keith Haring, Basquiat and Warhol. Then I discovered Jean-Paul Goude, and my life changed overnight. I always knew I was a graphic designer—it wasn't a choice, it was how I was made—and now I had found the kind of graphic designer I wanted to be.

Jean-Paul Goude studied at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs; and has often spoken of a love of American magazines and 1960s advertising. He's said that when he

JPG

Left: Galeries Lafayette, Bêtes de mode, Paris 2006.
—
Below: *Mia*, painted photo, New York 1971.
—
Opposite page: Kenzo, Paris 2013.

All by Jean-Paul Goude.

"For me, Goude's women were intense, diverse, exciting, unexpected, non-conformist and badass."

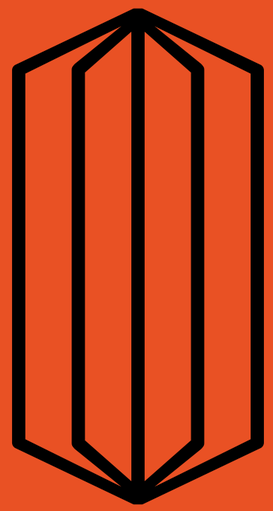
saw an issue of *Esquire* with a George Lois cover, he knew what he wanted to do. After graduation Goude was working as an illustrator when *Esquire* editor Harold Hayes commissioned him to art direct a special edition of the magazine to celebrate the 75th issue. This was 1968: Paris was blowing up and New York was kicking off. Goude didn't hesitate—he took everything he owned and moved to New York, where he worked and lived for the next seven years. Here, he was exposed to the world of publishing at a time when *Esquire* was on fire: it represented New Journalism, publishing writers like Norman Mailer, Tom Wolfe, Raymond Carver and Truman Capote. Goude mentioned bumping into Gore Vidal in the corridors, and Diane Arbus was contributing photographs. The *Esquire* of this period was revolutionary—more a general interest than a men's magazine, and one that tackled tough subjects. It published "An American Atrocity", for instance, one of the first reports of US atrocities against Vietnamese citizens.

Firmly part of the New York scene, Goude was partying at Studio 54 and in 1977 met Grace Jones, who would become his client, muse and the mother of his son. This period of his life reflected both professional and personal obsessions, some of which have led to criticism. His style really emerged at this point: strong, graphic, colourful, fetishistic, humorous and avant garde. Goude was playing with perfection and distortion, creating extreme creatures. Body modification and surreal concepts were his stock in trade, and he quickly became fashion's favourite graphic designer. One of the things I love about his work is the phenomenal diversity of his delivery: he directed films, and worked across photography, graphic design, event design and ad campaigns. I also admire his ability to remain relevant without ever compromising his personal creative work. He is prolific, and the private work is even more extensive than the published commercial projects.

Goude's work reflected my other passions—music, culture, fashion, film and luxury—a kind of high-low mix that's never stuffy, always impactful. His event design, especially, is an explosion of aesthetic purpose manifested to impact every sense. His client list is simply extraordinary, from *Esquire* to Grace Jones, Alaia, Chanel, Shiseido, Perrier, Galeries Lafayette and beautiful books which bring his obsessions to life. In many ways Jean-Paul Goude was ahead of his time: his fascination with tribal motifs, blurring of racial boundaries, body distortion and surreal humour seems strangely prophetic, and many of these aesthetic obsessions have become mainstream in the past decade. It was with Goude's help that Kim Kardashian "broke the internet" in 2014 with the recreation of his 1976 portrait *Carolina Beaumont*. His fetish has become the new beauty standard in an age of image creation, manipulation and constructed identity.

It's also refreshing to see that the concept of creative polymath is more widely accepted today—think Virgil Abloh and Tyler, the Creator. Goude paved the way for future generations to challenge their niche: designers make great directors, for instance, and they're often great at product and business too. This is something I absorbed and held onto early on: I didn't want to be in one box, I wanted a greater creative and commercial platform for expression. For me, the journey from print to digital to film to event and even business has been something natural and inevitable.

The one hesitation I had in sharing Jean-Paul Goude as my inspiration is the controversy and criticism of the perceived sexualisation and objectification of black women in his work. It is a criticism I am sensitive to, however not one I spontaneously recognise—to me, his images always felt powerful—the women are strong, sensual and in control of their beautiful bodies. As a girl growing up in the sexist culture of the 70s, and a female founder, creative director and 100% shareholder of a design agency (sadly more unusual than you might imagine), I am of course very interested in the positive portrayal of women. For me, Goude's women were intense, diverse, exciting, unexpected, non-conformist and badass. He showed us that the female could be fierce, in every sense of the word. This inspiration was more than simply a creative one.



TO THE POINT.

Let's hear it for the little guys: this series looks at the origins, applications and delights in designing some of our more unusual punctuation marks.

Full stops.
Left to right:
- FS Shepton
- FS Pimlico Glow
- FS Kitty Shadow
- FS Conrad Text
- FS Kim Inline

Question mark?

BY STUART DE ROZARIO

Who? What? Where? When? Why? All valid questions when it comes to the question mark. But the big question is, is it even punctuation at all? Some theories have suggested that it is, in fact, an abbreviation of the “q” and “o” of the Latin word “questio”, emphasising a question, interrogation or line of enquiry. Other names for the question mark include the rather extravagant Punctus Interrogativus, alongside interrogation point, query and eroteme.

Origins

This quirky-looking fellow made its first appearance around the 6th century in the form of a few dots (more like the modern colon) in Ancient Syriac texts. A few centuries later in around the 8th century, scribes and scholars of the time —most prominently Carolingian period scholar, clergyman, poet and teacher Alcuin of York—started using dots and squiggles at various heights like this: •~.

The earliest question marks echoed the musical notation of the time, where the main stroke gradually appeared as a horizontal stroke aiming at the dot like a zigzag. It’s interesting to note that the dot and squiggle (like a vertical tilde, ~) would position the dot at the front left, with the squiggle following towards the right.

Fast forward a few hundred years to the 17th century, and the modern form developed its inquisitive appearance, based on a vertical wiggly shape that resembles a sickle, coat hanger, a cat’s tail or Captain Hook’s left hand. The written form starts from the capital height and snakes towards the full point on the baseline: ?

Design

Designing the question mark often allows the type designer a little bit of creative freedom—there’s a fair bit of room for expression. In drawing an elegant, bulbous, curly, cursive italic or an upright Roman, the flavour of a typeface can really show through in its question mark. The proportions of the glyph are loosely based on the capital “S” and lowercase “s”, with the top section like a mirrored “S” redrawn to resemble the figure “2”. The lower section can be a more tilde-like squiggle. Its form can be sharp, curved or even a spiral; but is generally visually centred. A full point is usually used for the dot.

Modern applications

When using this mark in English we replace the period (full stop) with a question mark at the end of a sentence or question. It can also be used when a date is uncertain, for instance (1272?–1277).

Our Spanish friends require an interrogation mark with an opening “¿” and a closing “?”. Omitting the opening “¿” is considered an error, with the exception of when an inverted exclamation mark is used at the beginning “¡”. In Arabic, Persian and Urdu, a question mark that is mirrored is used, and written from right to left. Hebrew and Yiddish are also written right to left but use the question mark in the same direction as the Latin alphabet. The Greeks use a completely different letterform to indicate a question, which resembles the original Syriac text shape of two dots but is also similar to the Latin semicolon “;”.

FS Split Serif
FS Siena
FS Benjamin
FS Brabo
FS Pimlico
FS Albert
FS Kitty

FS Marlborough
FS Irwin
FS Berwick
FS Alvar
FS Aldrin
FS Blake
FS Cattle

FS Century
FS Charity
FS Clerkenwell
FS Untitled
FS Dillon
FS Elliot
FS Emeric

FS Kim
FS Me
FS Hackney
FS Industrie
FS Pele
FS Industrie Wide
FS Meridian

FS Sally Triestina
FS Ingrid
FS Jack
FS Joey
FS Ostro Display
FS Lola
FS Lucas

FS Maja
FS Matthew
FS Kim Inline
FS Millbank
FS Olivia
FS Koopman
FS St James

FS Rufus
FS Sally
FS Neruda
FS Truman
FS Silas Slab
FS Sinclair
FS Split Sans

Exclamation mark!

BY PHIL GARNHAM

It's... shouty! A surprise! A warning! A joke! The exclamation mark is omnipresent, and for some it can be even more irritating than the overuse of Helvetica. Formally, it has two names: the exclamation mark and the exclamation point. Informally, it has many others: screamer, gasper, slammer and startler in the printing community; and in hacker culture, it might be dubbed the bang, shriek or pling. It's most commonly used in Latin languages but does also appear in other scripts such as Arabic, Korean and Chinese.

Origins

One theory suggests that the shape was born in the Middle Ages, when the word "io" was used to indicate joy at the end of sentences. Over time the "i" became a stroke and the "o" became the dot.

In the 1950s, American typesetting manuals referred to the exclamation mark as "bang," assumed to be a nod to the visual language of comic books and their "Boff!", "Thwack!", "Kerpow!" onomatopoeia.

The mark itself didn't arrive on a keyboard until the 1970s. In the early days of typewriting, hack jobs were common in the form of a full stop followed by a backspaced apostrophe.

Design

The key to designing a solid exclamation mark is in characterising the main stem, making it harmonious to other stems in the face yet more refined and elegant, sometimes tapering to a narrower base which hovers over and lends more gravitas to the point. You can't just copy a stem above and be done with it—this stem needs careful consideration. The form of the point relates to the dot of the "i" or the period (full stop): sometimes it's smaller in size, more noticeably in bold font weights.

The exclamation is terminating, and should never be followed by a period or question mark. The general rule is that a sentence ends with only one terminal punctuation mark.

Modern applications

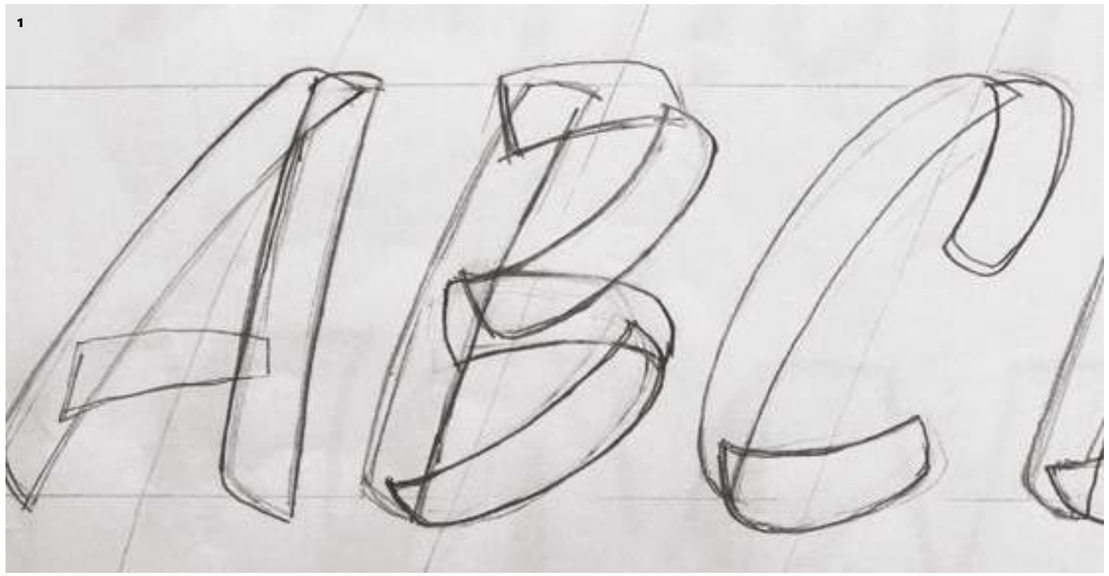
The "!" also has a companion, the inverted exclamation that's very much an established punctuation tool in Spanish, as used like this: "¡Hola!". Used for exclamatory sentences, the "¡" mirrors the end of a word or sentence, for example "¡Guau!" ("¡Wow!" in English.)

When asking using a sentence that requires both a question mark and an exclamation mark, you must place the "!" after the "?", for instance, "I can't stand that play, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?!*"

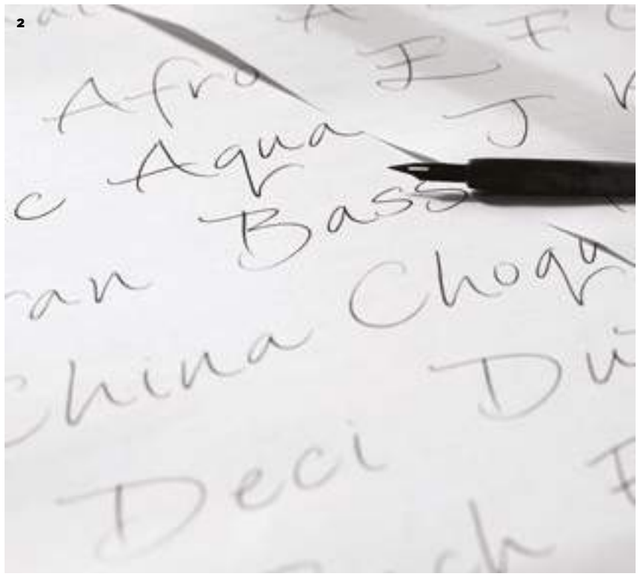
As a symbol of interjection and placing emphasis, the exclamation mark exists as the perfect graphical form. Its singular stroke acts as a line that the eye cannot cross and the punctuating point radiates on the baseline, calling for attention.

Sok! FS Blake
Bif! FS Berwick
Blap! FS Portland
Pow! FS Sally

1



2



3

4

Letters page

1: A ‘casual’ sign painters brush style with constructed stroke outlines in pencil by Fernando Mello.
—
2: Letters written with dip pen, vintage nibs and calligraphy ink by Rachel Yallop.

3: Expressive calligraphic letterform explorations by Andy Lethbridge. Written with a wide ruling pen and calligraphy ink.
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4: Sketches with a rangeof marker pens by Pedro Arilla.