

1 The Making of Letters

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ART 4930 Experimental Lettering
Sect 602 Summer B 2016

Mon / Wed 8:30AM-12:30PM [office hours by appointment, HBR 210]

141 Harbor Hall

description In Type 1, you learn fundamental rules regarding typographic anatomy, layout, formatting, grid structures, context, and meaning in relation to form, primarily by working with a range of existing, classic typefaces. In this course however, you are encouraged to learn about letterform anatomy and systems by breaking these rules and building your own, from the ground up. By investigating a wide range of experimental letterform generative processes through physical means, you will come away with an unique swatch of treatments, one of which will be digitized and developed into a typeface.

This condensed, six week studio course covers:

- 1) Hand lettering tools, techniques, and processes
- 2) How to digitize hand-lettered specimens + make a font
- 3) Contemporary type designers, studios, and foundries
- 4) Advanced and unique typographic applications

deliverables 1) Five complete + unique lettering swatch phrases
2) One original, type-able (.OTF file) typeface
3) Type Sample or Gig Poster showcasing original typeface
4) Your Choice: Custom application using your typeface

policy All assignments, critiques, and classes* are mandatory and participation is expected. Readings advised. All work is due pinned up for crit at the start of class, even if you're absent. Assignments will NOT be accepted by email. Late work is NOT accepted [F].

* You get 1 freebie absence, no questions asked.
2 absences = drop one letter grade, 3 total absences = Fail. Bring any missed work to following class. If work

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is not presented on the next attended class period, you will not receive credit for the work (meaning a 0).
Tardy = anytime past roll-call; 2 Tardies = 1 Absence.

Your faculty, as a general rule, will work with you if you communicate effectively in advance of absences and problems. We respond to emails. We do not respond to "Day Before" emails. No grace is extended for computer problems: DO NOT lose your work.

No plagiarism. Stealing = failure. Appropriation is not theft. See also, RIP: A Remix Manifesto.

structure Given the open structure of the class, self-discipline is integral and considered in overall course evaluation. Critiques require mandatory participation. Materials must be physically brought in to class. Class time is to be used for production: Anyone without something to work on will be asked to leave. Revisions are always ongoing.

grading 4 Projects = 25% each (Due at end of semester)
Basis: authorship, craft, finesse, time management, ideas, content, form, experimentation, investigation, inventiveness, originality, relevancy, coherence, evolution, impressiveness, participation, attitude, attendance. Grades received at culmination of course.

documentation Final Class: At the end of the semester, students must hand in ALL physical work along with relevant digital files [collected digitally]. Photograph all physical work prior to final crit. Bring all physical work to final crit. Documentation required to receive a final grade.

suggested text New Typographic Design, by Fawcett-Tang
Made With FontFont, by Jan Middendorp + Erik Spiekermann
Vintage Graphics, by Steven Heller + Louise Fili
Scripts: Elegant Lettering from Design's Golden Age,
by Steven Heller + Louise Fili
Dimensional Typography: Words in Space, by Abbott Miller
Hand to Type: Scripts, Hand-Lettering and Calligraphy
by R. Klanten + Jan Middendorp
Typography Sketchbooks, by Steven Heller + Lita Talarico
Little Book of Lettering by Emily Gregory
Drawing Type: Intro to Illustrating Letterforms,

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by Alex Fowkes

Creative Lettering and Beyond, by Gabri Joy Kirkendall
Leon Ferrari & Mira Schendel: Tangled Alphabets,

by Andrea Giunta

I Wonder, by Marian Bantjes

Elegantissima: The Design and Typography of Louise Fili
Lettering & Type, by Bruce Willen + Nolen Strals

Fraktur Mon Amour, by Judith Schalansky

Edward Fella: Letters on America Hardcover, by Blackwell

Type in Motion, by Jeff Bellantoni + Matt Woolman

American Wood Type, by Rob Roy Kelly

Type Addicted, by Victionary

Type, Image, Message, by Skolos + Wedell

Hand Job, by Mike Perry

materials TypeTool 3, Adobe Illustrator/InDesign/Photoshop, light
table or LightTracer light box (suggested), flat edged
(chisel tip) felt marker, assorted Micron Pens (005
through 08), India ink, assorted pencils, Staedtler
Mars plastic white eraser, tracing paper, pad of white
sketchbook paper, pad of newsprint, 2+ sheets of 22"X30"
white Stonehenge, artist tape, Scotch tape, assorted
brushes, 36" cork-backed metal ruler, X-Acto knife #11,
replacement blades #11, scissors, self-healing cutting
mat 12 X 18"

Materials will vary on a student-to-student basis: TBA.

TypeTool 3 1 year subscription to Type Tool: (academic discount)
Purchase from: <http://www.fontlab.com/academic-purchases/>

For clarification, here is the PDF:
[http://www.fontlab.com/downloads/documents/
AcademicOrderForm.pdf](http://www.fontlab.com/downloads/documents/AcademicOrderForm.pdf)

[The PDF is also attached to the end of this document]

That gets emailed to: orders@fontlab.com

collaboration Students are encouraged to collaborate in various ways as
a reflection of design reality. Please ask about how to
make a collaborative thesis function. Minimally, use your
peers to help critique and document work.

disability From the Office of Student Disability Services:
Any student with a disability is encouraged to meet with me privately during the first week of class to discuss accommodations. Each student must bring a current Memorandum of Accommodations from the Office of Student Disability Services, which is a prerequisite for receiving accommodations. Accommodated examinations through the Office of Student Disability Services require two weeks notice.

ALCs

01 CONTENT/DISCIPLINE SKILLS

Demonstrate the ability to create and develop visual form in response to communication problems, including an understanding of principles of visual organization/ composition, information hierarchy, symbolic representation, typography, aesthetics, and the construction of meaningful messages.

02 Possess an understanding of tools and technology. Relevant tools and technologies include, but are not limited to, drawing, offset printing, photography, and time-based and interactive media (film, video, computer multimedia).

03 Demonstrate a basic understanding of design business practices, including ability to organize projects and work as a productive creative team member.

04 COMMUNICATION SKILLS

05 Write clearly and effectively: well-organized, well-developed papers.
Exhibit functional oral communication

06 CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

07 Solve visual communication problems, including skills of problem identification, research and information gathering, analysis, generation of alternative solutions, prototyping and user testing, and evaluation of outcomes. Demonstrate ability in conceptual, logical, and intuitive thinking as applied to graphical analysis.

08 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

09 Show respect for persons of different cultures, genders, and ethnicities
Gain experience beyond the classroom working with area cultural or non-profit institutions.
10 Recognize the social and ethical responsibility of creating visual design.

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- 01 JUN 27 M intro course : Lettering Lecture : ASSIGN Deliverables :
look/photograph books : **WORKSHOP 1 Kit of Parts / Modular
Numerals** : HOMEWORK Acquire Materials + Finish Modular +
10+ photos of different+cool signs/lettering specimens
- 02 JUN 29 W Critique Modular : **WORKSHOP 2 Collaborative Drop Caps** :
Critique Drop Caps (end class) : HW **WORKSHOP 3 Fabricated**
- ** JUL 04 M HOLIDAY : NO CLASS
- 03 JUL 06 W Critique Fabricated : **WORKSHOP 4 Mutation** (+HW)
DEMO Vectoring in Illustrator
- 04 JUL 11 M Critique Mutation : **WORKSHOP 5 Negative Space Priority**
(+HW)
- 05 JUL 13 W Critique Negative Space : **WORKSHOP 6 3D** (+HW) :
DEMO Making a Font in TypeTool
- 06 JUL 18 M Critique 3D : **WORKSHOP 7 Context-Dependent** (+HW)
- 07 JUL 20 W Critique Context-Dependent : **WORKSHOP 8 PhotoGrid** (+HW)
- 08 JUL 25 M Critique Photo Grid : Critique Typeface : Open Studio
- 09 JUL 27 W Critique Type Sample or Gig Poster : Open Studio
- 10 AUG 01 M Open Studio
- 11 AUG 03 W Critique : **ALL 4 DELIVERABLES DUE FOR GRADE** : deliver
prints + digital-file documentation : individual meetings

******* BRING EVERYDAY:** Assorted Micron Pens (005-08), flat-edged
(chisel tip) felt marker, India ink, assorted pencils,
Staedtler Mars plastic white eraser, tracing paper, pad
of white sketchbook paper, pad of newsprint, artist tape,
Scotch tape, assorted brushes, 36" cork-backed metal ruler,
X-Acto knife with replacement blades #11, scissors,
cutting mat 12 X 18", light box, digital camera

HW = Homework

- 4 Deliverables 1) Lettering Swatches
- Exhibit 3 to 5 word phrases
 - 10 X 10" or 9 X 12" (pick proportions that make sense)
 - Laser printed on cardstock or photo paper
 - Polish 5 of your best studies from the 8 workshops:
- Modular:** Kit of parts, repetition of form, follows grid
- Drop Caps:** Reiterated, eclectic found signage
- Fabricated:** Inking with unconventional objects
- Mutation:** Combine 2 subjects (for example, letter+object, U&lc, roman+bold, calligraphy+bitmap)
- Negative Space Priority:** Inside + in between letterforms
- 3D:** Paper engineering + lighting, translated back to 2D via photography, photocopier, scanner
- Context-Dependent:** What strokes are absolutely essential?
- Photo Grid:** A) Photography that composes space to read alphabetically, or B) Strip a photo for its grid which then informs systematic treatment of letterforms
- 2) Original Typeface
- Formal decisions cater to the needs of the typeface
 - Complete alphanumeric set, also includes glyphs:
! @ # \$ % ^ & * () [] | \ / - _ = + , . ? < > ' "
 - U&lc (upper and lower case)
 - Choose 1 of the workshop swatches to develop and expand
 - Origin: Physically handmade letterforms (inked)
 - Digitized: Must be type-able .OTF file (via TypeTool)
 - Hand-in: inked specimen, .OTF file, and 11 X 17" laser print clearly showing alphanumeric set and glyphs
- 3) A. Type Sample Poster
- 24 X 36", dedicated to your typeface, any print method
 - Highlights its most relevant and distinctive qualities
 - You may only use your typeface and no other images
 - Shows complete digitized U&lc alphanumeric set + glyphs
 - Include the following information: typeface name, the designer, type foundry; not required but you might consider: describing the anatomy, classification/style, formal characteristics, families/weights, what it is drawn for (purpose), context, and process work
- B. OR Gig Poster
- 24 X 36", any print method
 - Uses your typeface and makes sense with the event
 - 3 levels of hierarchy, text + image, +1 other font

Assignment The Making of Letters

4) Your Choice: Custom Application

- Must make sense with the purpose of your typeface
- "Considerably involved," meaning it wasn't conceived/produced last minute. On the same scale as 1 and 2.
- Utilizes your typeface and is primarily typographic
- Either time-based or physical in nature (no digital "mockups," i.e. it's the finished product)

Specs Basis of Grades: impressiveness, uniqueness, authorship, craft, finesse, time management, ideas, content, form, experimentation, investigation, inventiveness, originality, relevancy, coherence, evolution, attitude, participation, attendance.

Everything Due Class 11 [AUG 03]
(See Schedule for periodic Critique dates)

Cheat Sheet The Making of Letters

Type Designers Marian Bantjes
 Jessica Hische
 Ellen Lupton
 Erik Spiekerman / Edenspiekerman
 House Industries
 Ken Barber / House Industries
 Ben Kiel / Typefounding
 Tobias Frere-Jones / Hoeffler & Co.
 Jonathan Hoeffler / Hoeffler & Co.
 Laurie Haycock + P. Scott Makela
 Kyle Cooper
 Ruxandra Duru
 Jeff Keedy
 Gail Anderson / TDC
 Jonathan Barnbrook / Virus
 Erik van Blokland / LettError
 Just Van Rossum / LettError
 Christian Schwartz / Commercial Type
 Anna Fahrmaier, Thomas Gabriel, Michael Hochleitner /
 Type Jockeys
 Tal Leming / Type Supply
 Martin Majoor + Jose Buenvenga
 Willi Kunz
 Ed Fella
 Nick Sherman / Type@Cooper
 Paul Barnes
 Dan Milne / Type Lab
 Village Type
 Ed Benguiat
 Louise Fili
 Jesse Ragan / Pencil Factory
 Alex Trochut
 Ewan Clayton
 Jean François Porchez / Typofonderie
 Stephane Elbaz
 Karen Charatan
 Luca Barcellona
 Matteo Bologna / Mucca Design
 Doug Clouse + Angela Voulangas / The Graphics Office
 Paul Shaw
 Cyrus Highsmith
 Mark Jamra

Daniel Morris
Dan Rhatigan
Sara Soskolne
Alexander Tochilovsky
Erik Brandt
Deanne Cheuk
Jim Datz
Carin Goldberg
Post Typography
Veronica Burian + José Scaglione / TypeTogether
Ina Saltz
Herb Lubalin
Rob Carter
David Shields
Rob Roy Kelley
Elliott Earls
Zuzana Licko / Emigre
Miguel Sousa
Paul Hunt / Adobe
Christopher Slye / Adobe
Sandie Maxa
Oliver Munday
Todd Childers
Sam Cox + Justin LaRosa / Physical Fiction: Lego Pixel
Letterpress
Chris Clark
Stone Type Foundry
Ellen Lupton
Kim Elam
Steve Heller
Jan Middendorp
Abbott Miller 3D Type
Mike Perry
Michael Bierut
David Barringer
Herbert Bayer
Kris Sowersby / Klim Type Foundry
Wolfgang Weingart
Nomads
Jim Sherraden / Hatch Show Print

Modular



Drop Caps



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Fabricated

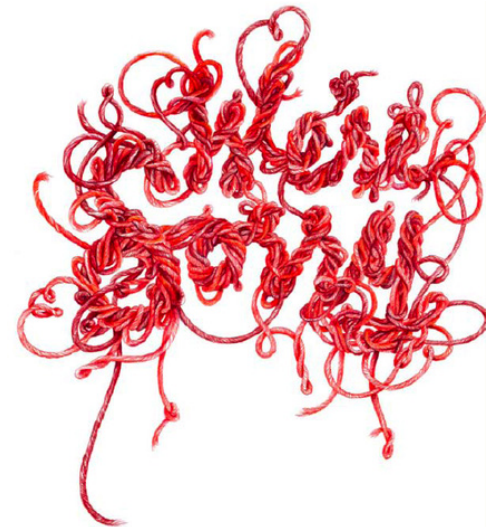
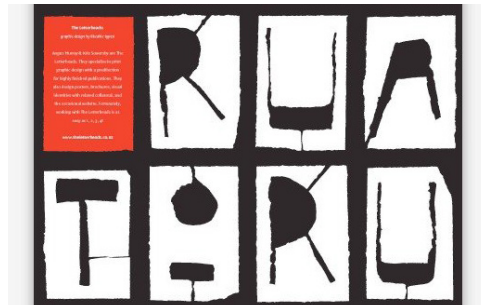


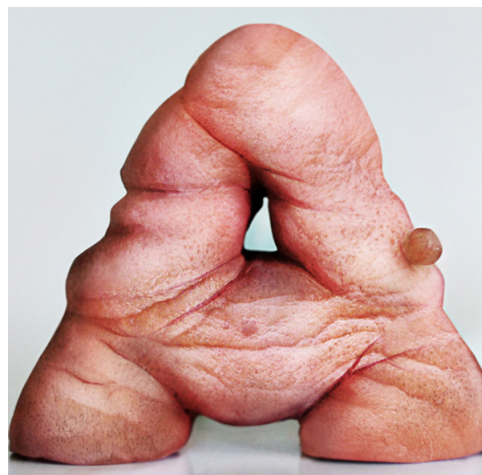
Photo Grid



Mutation

Dead History Bold

!#\$%&()*+, .0
123456789?"
"@ABCDEFGH
IJKLMNOP
QRSTUVWXYZ
[]abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
{}£¢•



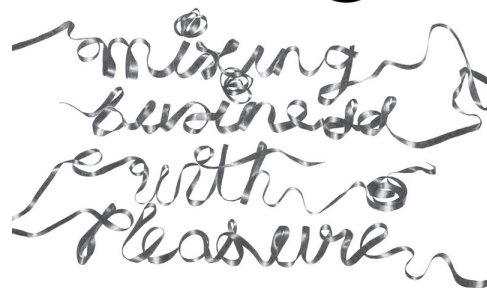
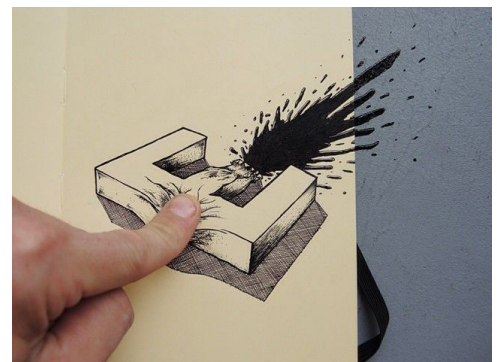
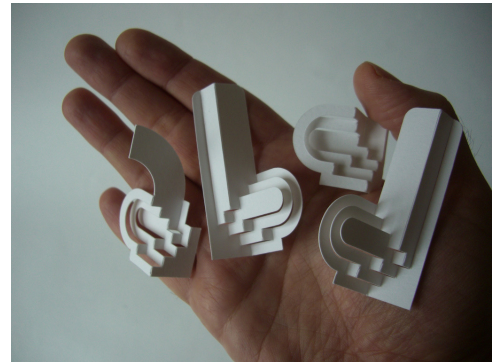
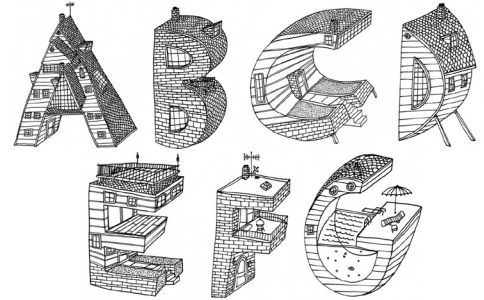
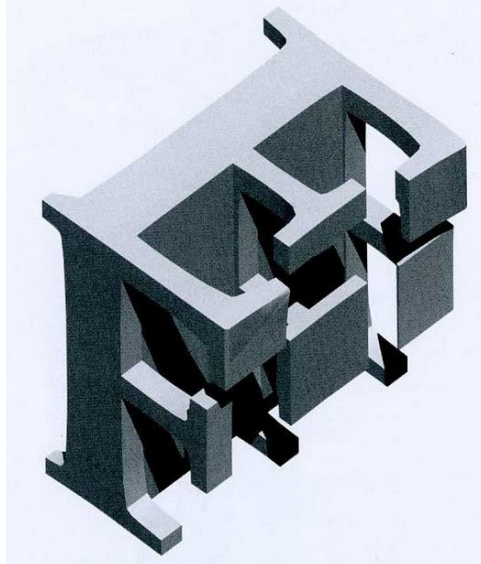
Assignment The Making of Letters

Negative Space
Priority



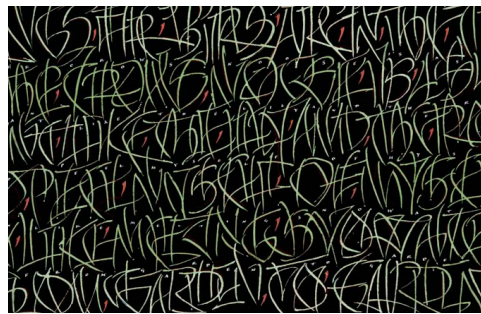
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3D



Context-
Dependent

4ING
FASHION
FASHION



prozac was an experiment to make a universal alphabet with as few shapes as possible. After much work we managed to convey the whole font using just six shapes which are clipped or rotated. The new prozac comes from the aesthetic of the font. It looks like it was designed by someone in a 'utopian' environment, where everyone would be equal. It is a relationship between the simplicity of the letters and the complexity of the meaning conveyed through words.

a comment on the power of language—the idea that certain words are so powerful that they are almost physically painful. They are also great indicators of the social structure: some words lose their offensive nature, others become unspeakable.

IS A COMMENT ON THE POWER OF LANGUAGE—THESE WORDS ARE SO POWERFUL THAT THEY ARE ALMOST PHYSICALLY PAINFUL. THEY ARE ALSO GREAT INDICATORS OF THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE: SOME WORDS LOSE THEIR OFFENSIVE NATURE, OTHERS BECOME UNSPEAKABLE.

a comment on the power of language—the idea that certain words are so powerful that they are almost physically painful. They are also great indicators of the social structure: some words lose their offensive nature, others become unspeakable.

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