Money for Fonts

How I made a career designing typefaces

Nick Shinn

Introduction

I've always been fascinated by how civilization works, and how it became the way it is and where it might go, and that's one reason I've gravitated towards designing typefaces—the alphabet and typography being at the centre of it all, from the Renaissance to the latest media, at the intersection of technology, culture and commerce.

In looking back on my career in this essay, I've focused on those three areas, in six successive generations of font business since the 1960s.

When I started out as an art director in the 1970s, I never imagined that it would be possible to make a living solely designing typefaces, but it happened.

1 Dry transfer
2 Phototype
3 Desktop publishing
4 Indie explosion
5 Web fonts
6 Variable fonts

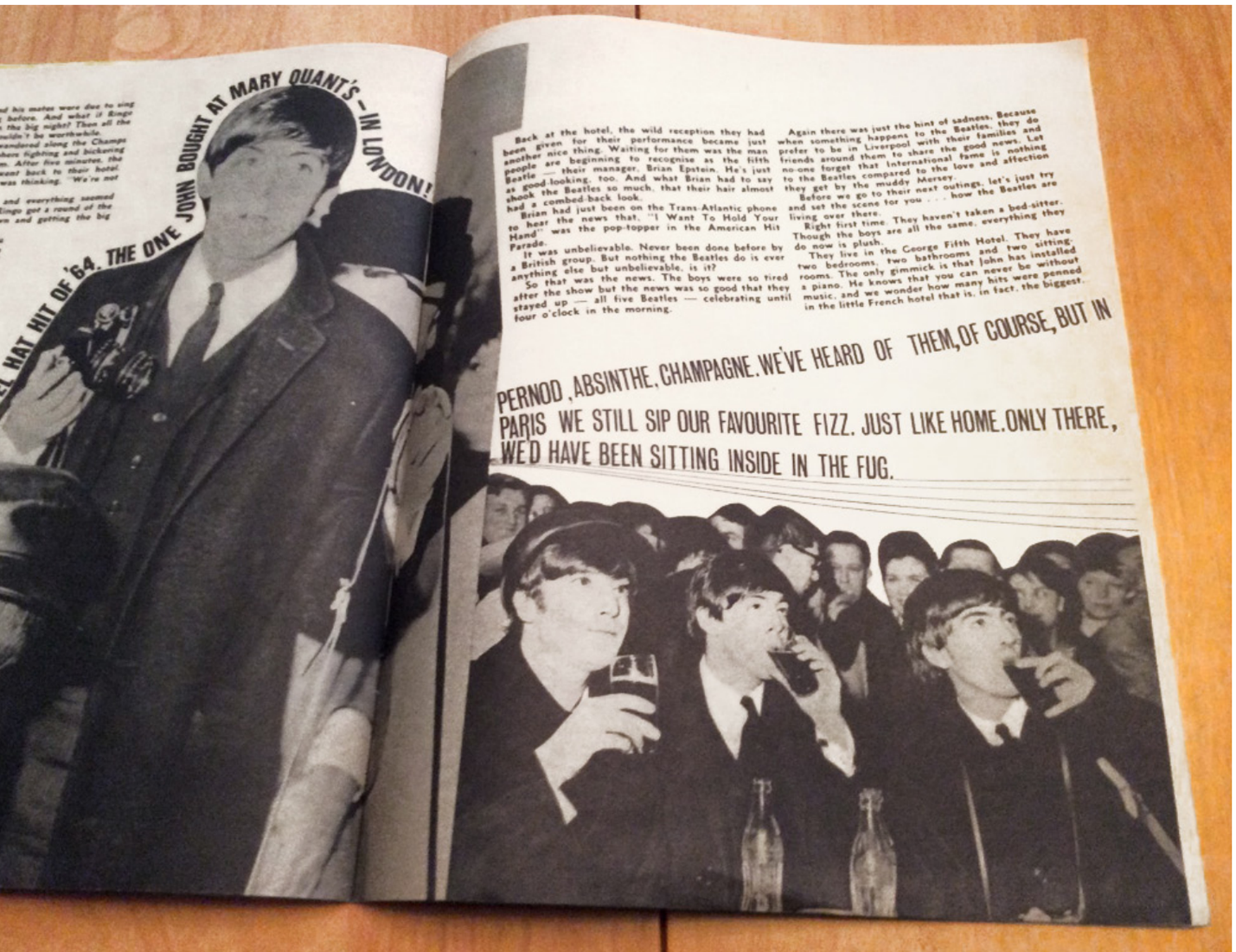
1 Dry transfer 1960–1990

Technology	**Dry transfer (rub-down)**
Culture	**Do-It-Yourself**
Commerce	**Royalty per sheet**



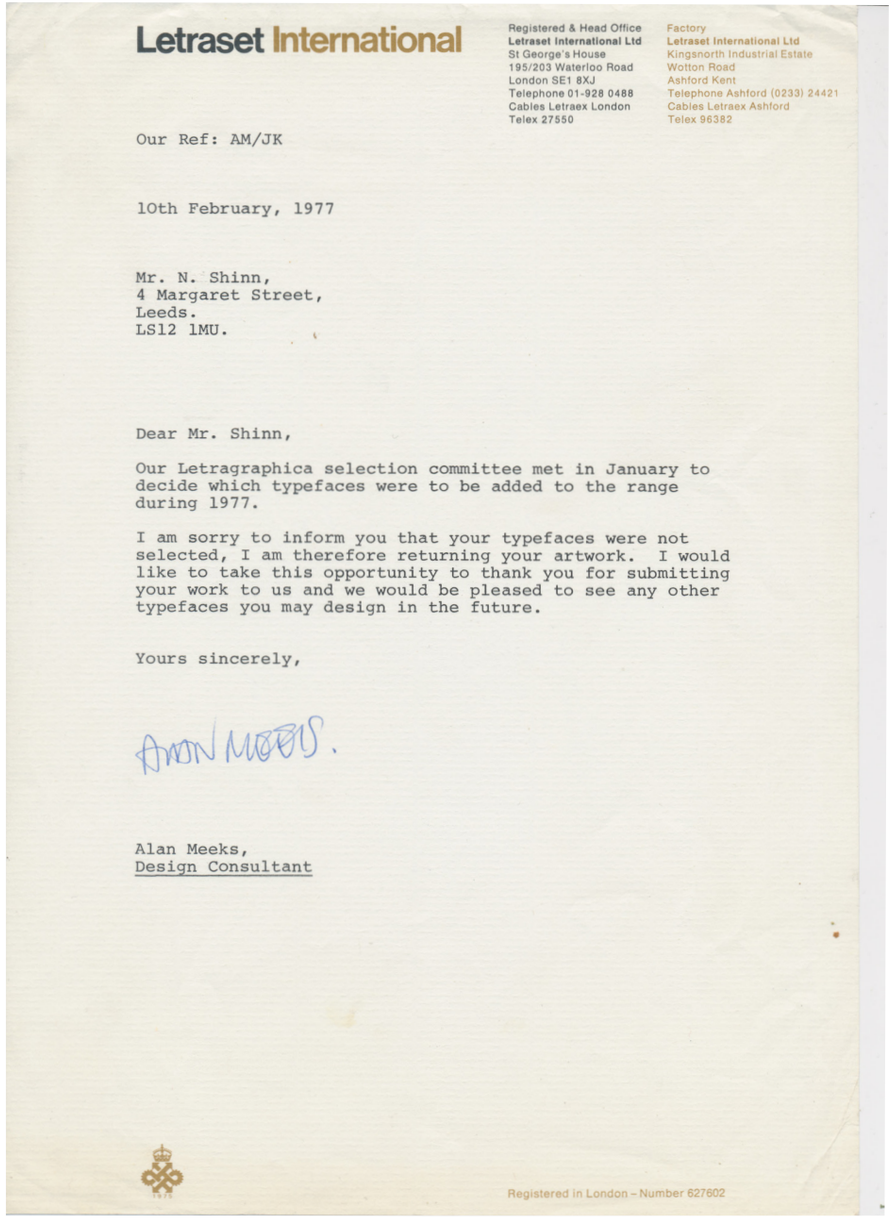


I was 10 when I first encountered Letraset, in 1962. My parents were architects and had adopted this new form of lettering. I used their office printer to reproduce my Christmas cards that year, with "Merry Christmas" rubbed down in Clarendon above a drawing I'd made of an old-fashioned sports car with a pile of presents on top of its trunk, hand coloured.



Letraset revolutionized graphic design, giving designers the ability to set headline type in a hands-on manner, without the need for expensive galleys professionally produced by typesetting companies. The effect was stimulating, liberating, and a little bit crazy, as evidenced by this spread from a Beatles fanzine of 1964. On the left, the art director has cleverly set "type on a path" around a close-cropped Paul, while on the right, clearly struggled with consistent word spacing and apostrophe position—because while there were marks on the Letraset sheets to indicate letter spacing, there were none for word spacing, and no apostrophes, for which one repurposed commas.

Although I'd studied fine art, when I graduated in 1974 I didn't pursue a career as that kind of artist, but went into advertising on the bottom rung, as a mechanical assembly or "paste-up" artist. Aware that Letraset type designers received a royalty per sheet (a similar arrangement to musicians, for gramophone record sales), the idea of rock star income from type design was appealing, if unrealistic. And so I began to send annual submissions to Letraset—to no avail. Perhaps the designs were no good, but I later realized that my presentation may have been an issue. In my advertising work I was used to making rough comps (comprehensive layout sketches) for ads, brochures and posters, so, although my typeface submissions were more polished than the Manville comp (next page) they were still not finished art. Ironically, my first digital type design, Fontesque, was much informed by the facility at casual drawing which I'd acquired as an art director wielding marker pens.



Letraset International

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Telex 27550

Factory
Letraset International Ltd
Kingsnorth Industrial Estate
Wotton Road
Ashford Kent
Telephone Ashford (0233) 24421
Cables Letraex Ashford
Telex 96382

Our Ref: AM/JK

10th February, 1977

Mr. N. Shinn,
4 Margaret Street,
Leeds.
LS12 1MU.

Dear Mr. Shinn,

Our Letragraphica selection committee met in January to decide which typefaces were to be added to the range during 1977.

I am sorry to inform you that your typefaces were not selected, I am therefore returning your artwork. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for submitting your work to us and we would be pleased to see any other typefaces you may design in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Alan Meeks,
Design Consultant

Registered in London – Number 627602

This is one rejection I cherish!
Such exemplary professional etiquette, a quality that extends from the cool understatement of the modernist typography, through the tactile sincerity of the manual typewriting and pen signature, to the polite, formal and somewhat elaborate prose. Backspacing and going over the final line again with the underline key concludes with authority.



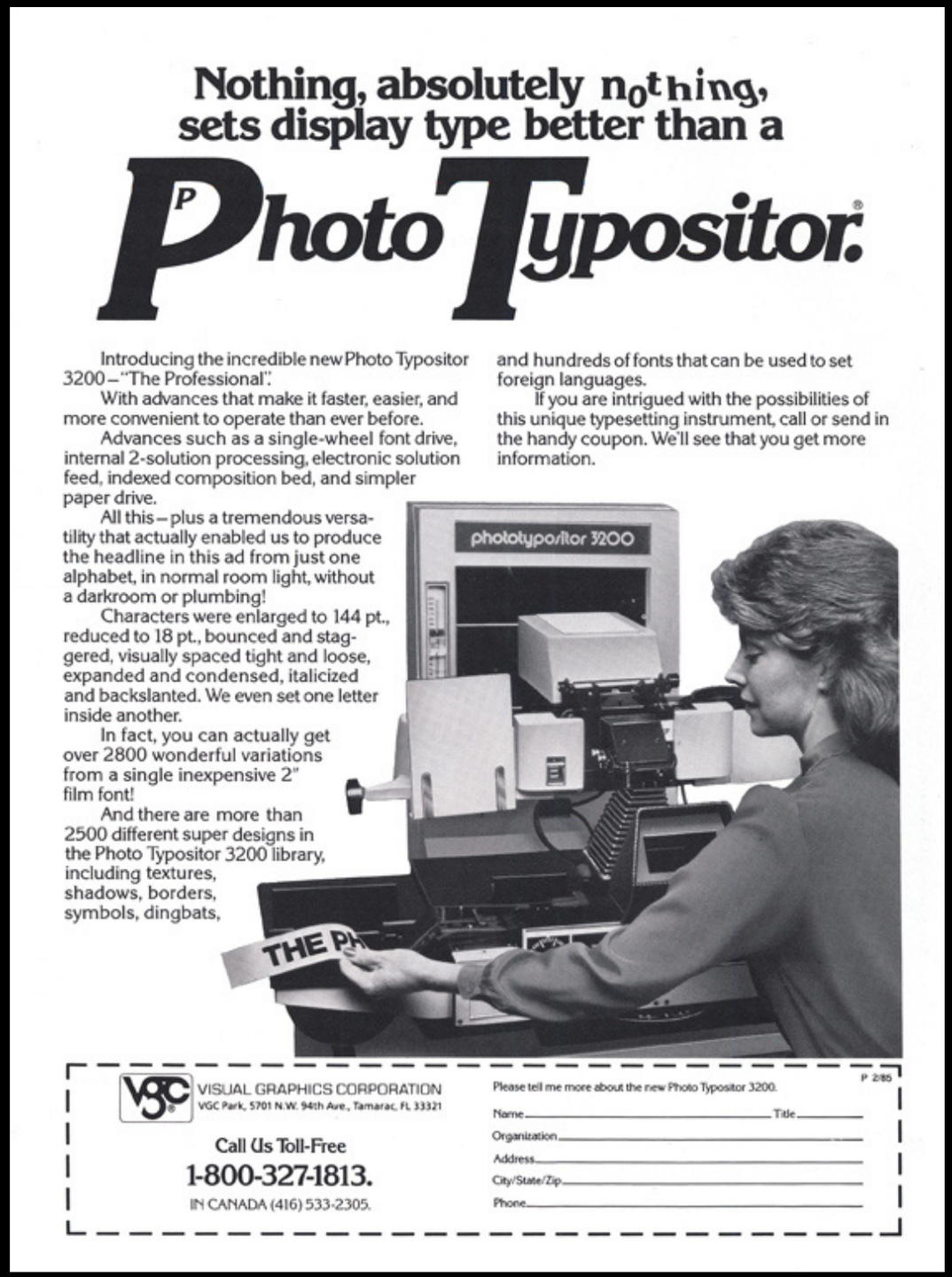


Rough comp and magazine advertisement,
Nick Shinn, Art Director, Toronto, 1982.
An epic clash of titans in a vast and desolate landscape,
with plastic and Helvetica Bold triumphant.

2

Phototype
1960–1990

Technology	2″ filmstrip
Culture	Kerned headlines
Commerce	Royalty per word



Nothing, absolutely nothing, sets display type better than a

Photo Typositor®

Introducing the incredible new Photo Typositor 3200 – "The Professional".

With advances that make it faster, easier, and more convenient to operate than ever before.

Advances such as a single-wheel font drive, internal 2-solution processing, electronic solution feed, indexed composition bed, and simpler paper drive.

All this – plus a tremendous versatility that actually enabled us to produce the headline in this ad from just one alphabet, in normal room light, without a darkroom or plumbing!

Characters were enlarged to 144 pt., reduced to 18 pt., bounced and staggered, visually spaced tight and loose, expanded and condensed, italicized and backslanted. We even set one letter inside another.

In fact, you can actually get over 2800 wonderful variations from a single inexpensive 2" film font!

And there are more than 2500 different super designs in the Photo Typositor 3200 library, including textures, shadows, borders, symbols, dingbats,

and hundreds of fonts that can be used to set foreign languages.

If you are intrigued with the possibilities of this unique typesetting instrument, call or send in the handy coupon. We'll see that you get more information.

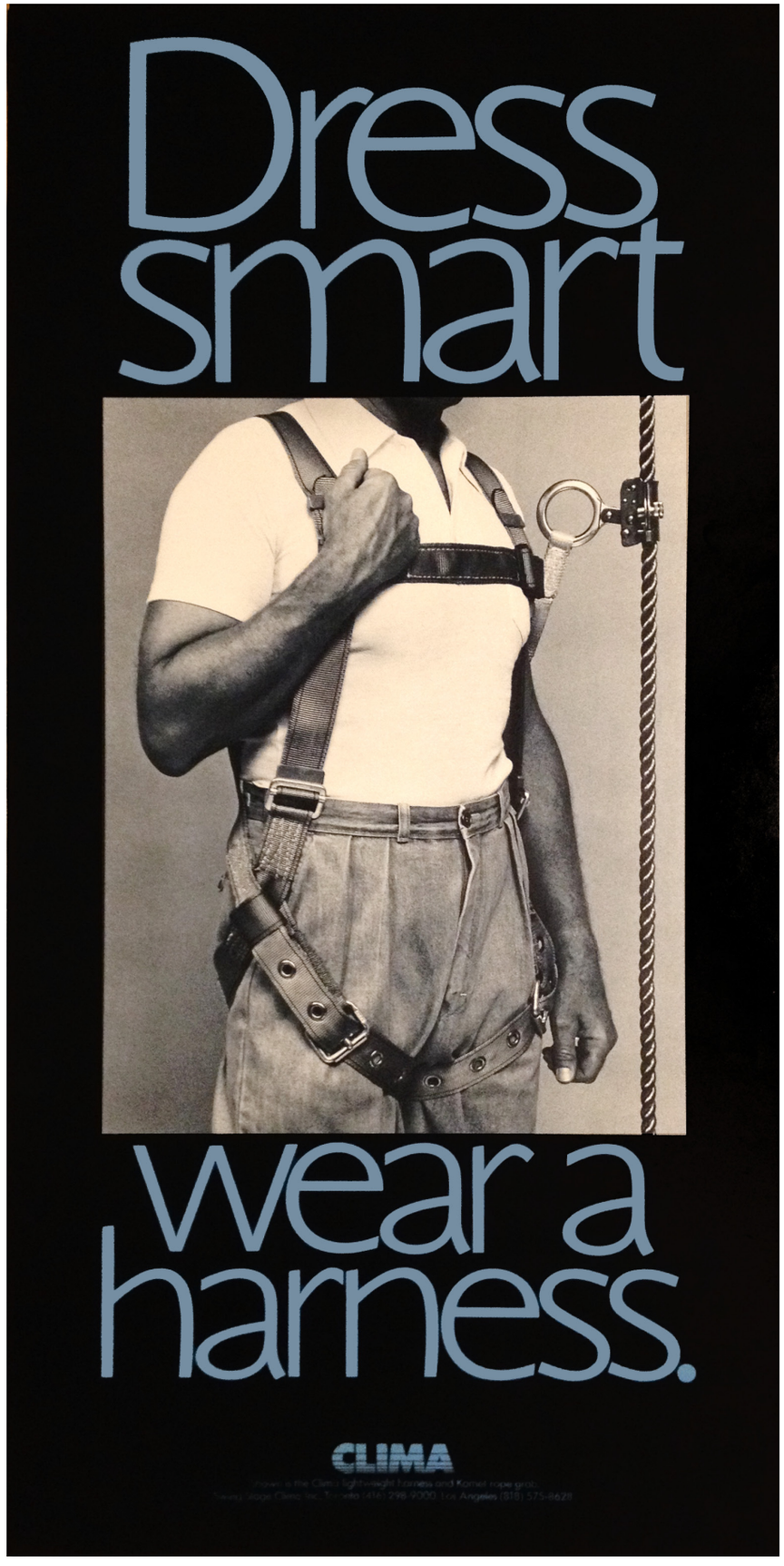
VGC VISUAL GRAPHICS CORPORATION
VGC Park, 5701 N.W. 94th Ave., Tamarac, FL 33321

Call Us Toll-Free
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IN CANADA (416) 533-2305.

Please tell me more about the new Photo Typositor 3200. P 2/85

Name _____ Title _____
Organization _____
Address _____
City/State/Zip _____
Phone _____

Marketing poster, 12″ x 24″.
Nick Shinn, Art Director, 1987.
Richard Swiecki's photo was printed in duotone and the type, Shinn Sans, in a spot colour.



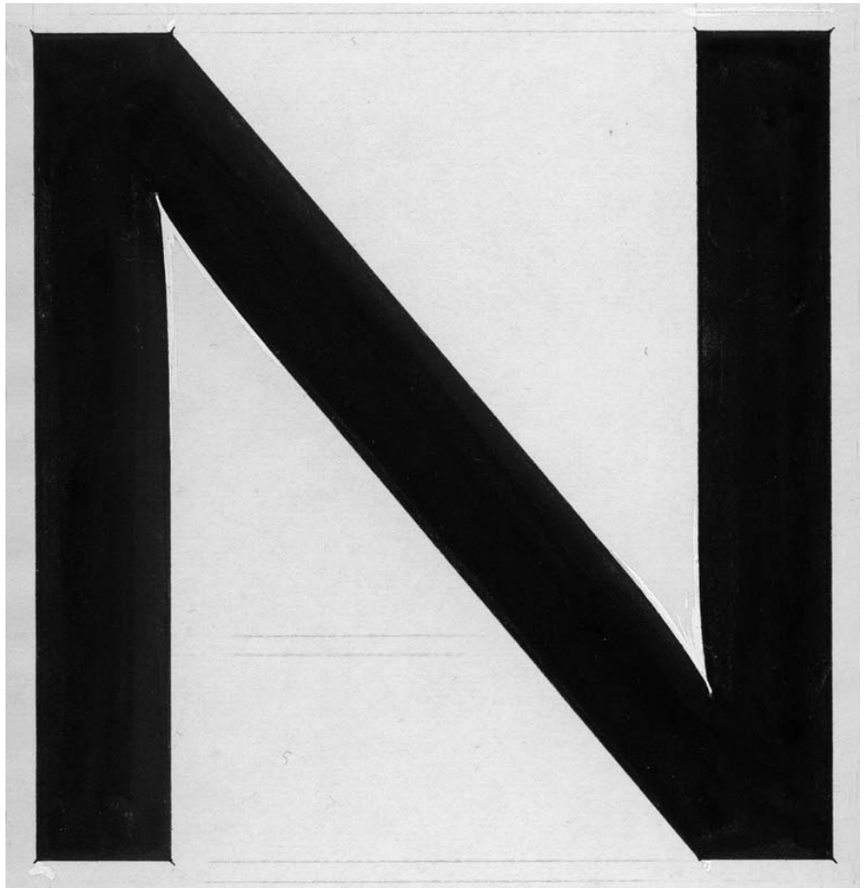
Prior to the digitization of the graphic trades that occurred around 1990, the equipment used for typesetting headlines and titles was quite different from that used for body text. Photo-process services emerged in the 1930s, offering headlines by photographing words assembled from printed master alphabets. This was improved in 1959 by the introduction of the phototypositor, with which typesetters exposed letters from a two-inch filmstrip onto photographic paper, one character at a time. Kerning was critical, and the finesse possible led to a very close-set style of typography, epitomized in the work of Herb Lubalin, in which further refinement was added by tweaking individual letters. For this poster that I designed in 1987, typeset in Shinn Sans by Typsettra in Toronto, note how the arm of "r" is truncated according to the following letter, for the "tight but not touching" aesthetic.



Detail of a page from the Headliners specimen booklet, 1982.

My first published type design was Gryphon, for typositor company Headliners International in 1980. I was paid a fee for the artwork, with subsequent royalties calculated on per-word usage by Headliners' franchised type houses, about forty of them, mostly in the USA, with one in Toronto at Cooper & Beatty. But the quality of Gryphon wasn't that great and the face had scant appeal. However, taking it to finished art and seeing how it performed in real jobbing work provided the experience to make my next design, Shinn Sans, a "master-piece", in the medieval sense of the word—it's the work which demonstrates that the craft has been mastered.

Shinn Sans, rejected in rough by Letraset, was taken up by the renowned type designer Les Usherwood (Caxton, Administer, Flange, Leawood), owner of Typsettra, which was both Canada's hottest typesetting firm and not incidentally the workshop for dozens of



Finished art, Shinn Sans, 3½" x 3½", 1983.

typefaces—original designs, genre exercises and adaptations of classics—by Usherwood and company, which were used in-house and also licensed out through manufacturers such as Berthold, Letraset and ITC. Sadly, I received no guidance from him as he died abruptly in 1983, shortly after giving me the go-ahead. The letters (see above) were drawn with pen, ink and white-out. I worked on Letraset brand marker paper, drawing the glyph outlines with a Rapidograph technical pen, using a T-square, set-square and various french curves, then

filling in the body with india ink by brush. I drew on the back of the paper, which was smooth and coated with a film of plastic, having just enough tooth to engage a pen and hold ink—and marginally transparent, for tracing over my roughs using a light box. This also enabled me to copy shapes from one glyph to another with a fine mechanical pencil, before firming up the curves with pen and template. In the letter shown (previous page), note the positive and negative "ticks" which pre-empt softening of hard corners during photographic reproduction.

Typsettra paid a fee of $1500 for each of the three weights I produced, which were then made into filmstrip fonts for typositor setting, and Diatronic fonts for text photosetting; but the company closed in the late 1980s without adding the fonts to its catalog. The rights to its typefaces, including Shinn Sans, were acquired by Steve Jackaman, who digitized them for his foundry Red Rooster in 1994.



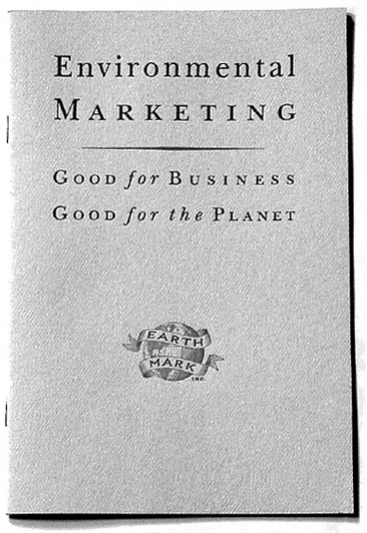
Shinn Sans was chosen for use thoughout this British magazine, for several years at the turn of the millennium, because it is a typeface "with a sense of humour".

3 Desktop Publishing 1990–2000

Technology	Digital, Fontographer
Culture	Retro, grunge and deconstruction
Commerce	Direct mail promotion, royalty per software licence fee



Apple made a big splash in 1983 with its Superbowl ad directed by Ridley Scott. And although IBM dominated the personal computer market, the Macintosh took over the graphic trades. The first vector drawing program for the Mac was Fontographer, in 1986, almost two years before Adobe Illustrator. I knew about this, but didn't pursue it—I had other concerns. Then a chain of circumstances led me back to type design, slowly and indirectly.



Earthmark brochure, 1989.

With the long, hot summer and recession of 1989, everything changed. Out of work, disgusted by consumer culture and motivated by the Brundtland Report, I bought a Mac Plus and, with partners Richard and Ron Fisher, founded Earthmark, an environmentally-conscious marketing business. Unfortunately, the green agenda didn't always pay the bills, so I also operated the Shinn Design studio, and began designing financial marketing newsletters on the Mac for another start-up, Ariad Custom Publishing. Earthmark folded in 1991 and Ariad went from strength to strength. Shinn Design also created dozens of book covers for Harlequin Enterprises (romance novels) and James Lorimer & Company (non-fiction, Canadian content), as well as working pro bono for various environmental organizations.


April 1999

MONEYGUIDE™

Canada's newsletter on preserving and building wealth

America's bull run

Why investors around the world are holding their breath. *By David Rawlings*

When U.S. equity markets faltered in the fall of 1998, many investors predicted the beginning of the end. Russia was in trouble, Asia's prospects for recovery looked shaky, and growth in corporate earnings was slowing. The collapse of Long Term Capital Management appeared to be the final nail in the coffin.

Today, many of these problems have receded into the background as the record-setting recovery in late 1998 and early 1999 has pushed U.S. equity markets back to their old highs and left some investors shaking their heads. The rally in stocks can be attributed to aggressive interest rate cuts by the U.S. Federal Reserve Board, some stabilization in international markets, and the surprising resilience of the U.S. economy.

Two opposing views

Some investors believe that the U.S. stock market may have rebounded too far, too fast, and fear a correction at some point in the near future. The reasons? Lower anticipated growth in corporate earnings, a possible interest rate hike, a negative savings rate, and instability in emerging markets — any of which could make it difficult to support historically high stock market valuations.

A more optimistic view argues that the U.S. continues to be an ideal environment for stocks — with a U.S. budget surplus, low interest rates, no foreseen threat of inflation, and rising corporate profits (albeit more slowly). In addition, as the baby boom generation enters their prime saving years, they are projected to pour a considerable amount of money into equities in preparation for retirement.

A disciplined approach

Which view is the "right" one? It's tough to say. With an increasingly linked world economy, and change becoming the norm rather than the exception, no one can predict with absolute certainty what the short-term direction of the U.S. equity market will be.

While there are certainly risks, excluding U.S. stocks from investment portfolios may be the greatest risk of all. Whether it moderates or continues to rise, the U.S. equity market remains the largest in the world and history shows that not being invested there can hurt performance. *Continued on Page 2*


Published quarterly by: The Public Committee for Safe Sewage Treatment in Metropolitan Toronto, c/o David Done, Secretary, 360 Willow Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4E 3K7 Telephone: (416) 698-6680

Safe Sewage NEWS

Free to members of the Public Committee for Safe Sewage Treatment in Metropolitan Toronto. Annual membership fee for individuals and citizen groups: $10. Others interested in subscribing, please enquire. Printed on recycled paper.

VOL. 1, NO. 3 — THE PUBLIC'S VOICE ON AN IMPORTANT ISSUE — SUMMER 1992

Metro's Billion Dollar Bluff

Faced with a marginal increase in sewage flow, Metro Works Department is justifying its huge sewage system expansion plans by a combination of wishful thinking and manufactured demand.

EDITORIAL

THE PATTERN OF the past is clear: Toronto has grown, and its sewage treatment system has grown with it. For reasons of power, prestige and income, the status quo [the various Works Departments with their consultants and contractors] would like to see this situation continue. So it comes as no surprise to find them proposing a huge expansion of the Main Treatment Plant [MTP] and its sewers, based on projections of increased future capacity requirements.[1] The problem is, this need exists only in their imagination.

PRECIPITATION & WASTEWATER FLOW

Precipitation [Grey line] Annual Total mm

Wastewater Flow [Black line] MTP Daily Average 000m³

1000 800 600 400 200 0

Discounting the influence of precipitation [grey line], Toronto's wastewater flow showed little increase during the economic boom years of the 'eighties.

1982 1983 1984 1985 1986 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991

Sources: Precipitation: Environment Canada Downsview Station; Toronto Wastewater Flow: Metro Works Annual Report 1990, Metro Works Department

Wishful Thinking

What will create this anticipated 40% increase in wastewater flow? Firstly, they project a 10% increase due to population growth. In fact a *decrease* is just as likely: the number of people in the MTP service area has hardly changed since 1976.

Population of MTP Service Area[2]

1976 1,741,937
1981 1,699,363
1986 1,710,340
1991 1,772,435

Certainly, there has been a marginal increase in wastewater flow during the past decade, but this is due to increased precipitation [see graph]. Precipitation has a major effect on the system because, on average, at least 25% of the wastewater entering the MTP is rain, collected in the City of Toronto's oldest sewers.

Secondly, they project a 7% increase in wastewater flow, based on increasing water consumption. That would seem logical, but in reality the relationship between these two is far from clear. This is demonstrated by Metro Works statistics[3] which show an 18% increase in water consumption during the decade of the 1980s, but only a 10% increase in wastewater flow. Go figure.

Manufactured Demand

The third cause of a projected increase in wastewater flow is for the proposed treatment of Combined Sewer Overflow [CSO]. This will require a huge capacity increase of 25%.

Let us explain. About a quarter of all the sewers in Toronto are Combined Sewers. These are the oldest sewers, and collect both sanitary sewage and rainwater, all mixed together. [Latterly, these ingredients have been kept apart, and collected in different systems.]

Combined Sewers carry their contents to the treatment plant, except during heavy rainfall when the volume becomes too great and the flow is discharged, or "overflows" into rivers and the lake.

Now the City of Toronto has decided to do something about the pollution from CSO. It is planning to construct 19 kilometers of sewers—up to 8 meters in diameter—to take the sanitary sewage in CSO, from all over Toronto, to the MTP for treatment. The problem is, a deluge of rain water will be coming along for the ride.

So, the engineers in Metro Works Department are planning to expand the Main Treatment Plant to accomodate all this. They say there is a projected demand for increased capacity. But as you can see, this demand comes not from an increase in public sewage, but from the engineers in the City of Toronto Works Department. It is a manufactured demand.

Toronto's sewer megaproject will divert the City's CSO problem to Metro's MTP. For the City, this will be less expensive than separating their Combined Sewers, because they don't have to pay the costs of enlarging the MTP and processing its increased flow. But the real [*cont. over*]

In editorial design for both financial services marketing (top) and activist causes (below) I used similar methods.



Fontesque sketch, 1993

It was hard keeping pace as desktop publishing digitized the graphic trades. We design pioneers wrestled with tiny hard drives and the primitive, rapidly mutating quality of Quark XPress (page layout), Adobe Illustrator (vectored images) and Photoshop. I had no time for font making.

Then I was recruited by David Michaelides. I had first met him when he was working as a book seller with his partner, Tina Hajidimitriou. I bought a set of Art Directors Club of Toronto annuals, volumes 1-15, from them in 1987. Subsequently, David became manager of the FontShop franchise in Toronto in 1990. Yes, it was a real downtown shop, selling fonts on floppy discs.

Fontesque specimen booklet, 1994, created in Pixar Typestry with leather from a royalty-free "textures" CD.



In 1992, FontShop held a seminal event at Toronto's King Edward Hotel, with speakers Matthew Carter and Neville Brody, then at the height of their fame. That was the pull which lured me back into type design, and David provided the push. As the Canadian distributor of FontFonts, the house brand of FontShop International (FSI), he was aware that with the exception of a few designs such as Trixie—the "X-files" distressed typewriter face—this European product line wasn't into the grungey, deconstructed thing that was happening in North America. So he asked some Canadian designers to design typefaces for FontFonts. Val Fullard's Mambo (1992) was hugely successful. I dived into Fontographer and struck gold with Fontesque.



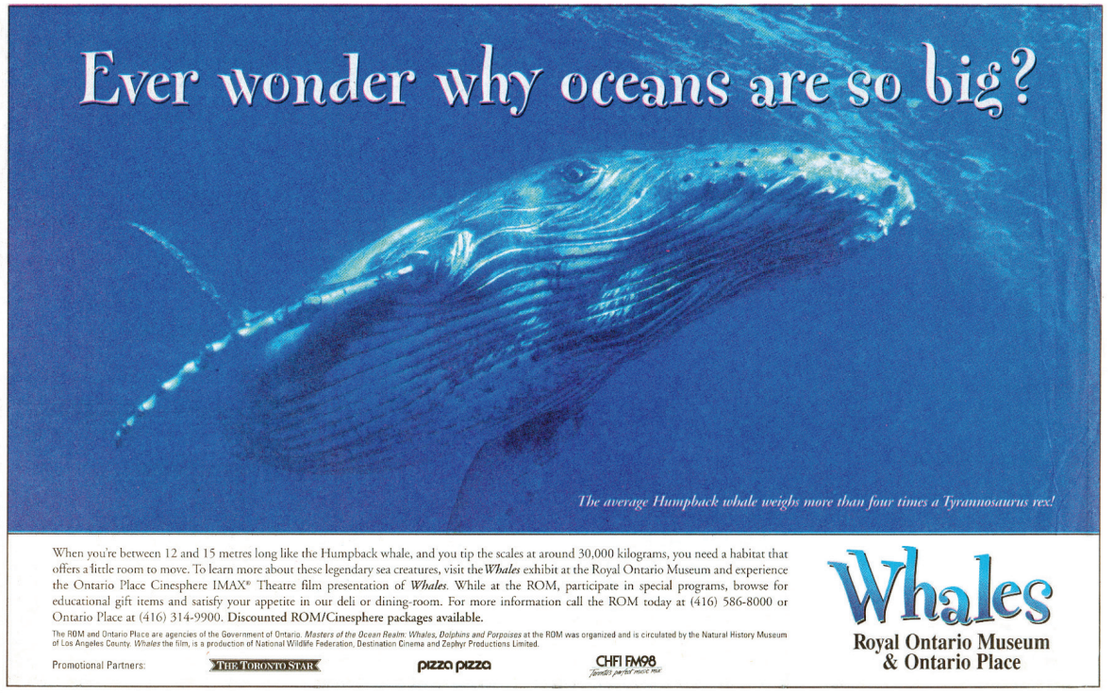
Prior to the World Wide Web, fonts were advertised in trade magazines and direct mail flyers targeting graphic designers who used the Macintosh computer—a relatively small market compared to what would come.

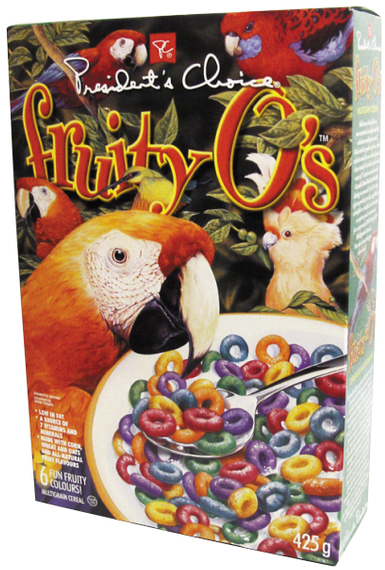
I supplied FSI with font files which the foundry copied onto branded floppy discs that were mailed to customers who had ordered their font choices by phone, or purchased at a store—rather like music CDs.

Another innovation: the fonts were not actually bought but, being software, were licenced for use on a certain number of computer terminals, for an appropriate fee.

The distributor (or franchisee) and designer, in turn, have contracts with the foundry which stipulate royalties as a percentage of the licence fee paid by the purchaser.

Newspaper advertisement 1995







Food packaging 1995

Fontesque captured the radical style of "the end of print" (as dubbed by David Carson) which inexpensive digital technology had made possible. Deconstruction, grunge and profuse invention were in the air, and I filtered the vibe through my own experience and interests, especially a taste for history. I had become bored with uniformity in typography, and for relief mashed up various tropes:

Contrast of proportion—*Renaissance faces like Bembo with tiny x-heights, more recently Locarno (1922) and Bernhard Modern (1937).* Each character of Fontesque is stretching, with sinuous curves and proportions that don't divide evenly.

Organic art nouveau letters—*Irregularity and the allure of antiques that are hand-made.* Fontesque is animated, the characters can't stand still. This liveliness is expressed globally by irregularity of size, varying angles of the "uprights", and non-adherence to the baseline.

Casual lettering—*Many of the new grunge typefaces were sloppy and amateurish, others cute and curly.* My professional experience informed Fontesque with a polished and precise appearance, despite its wonkyness.

The wit of Dwiggins, Goudy and Cooper—*American designers and lettering artists whose heyday was the historicist 1920s and 1930s, who believed that type shouldn't be too perfect, yet drew their imperfections impeccably.* I wanted to catch that crazy old-style feeling in Fontesque, and really push it. No two serifs are identical. The characters are free spirits, and while it may be considered a novelty face, it sets like real type, with good colour. There are bold weights and proper italics, three optical sizes, and a large set of matching ornaments.

All the fonts used thoughout "Canada's National Newspaper" —sans, serif, text and display—are designed specifically for it.

A major direction in my typeface design practice came through collaboration in the 2000s with publication designer Tony Sutton of News Design Associates, who commissioned typefaces (Worldwide, Goodchild, Walburn) for use in dozens of his newspaper designs, around the world. Through experience in this genre, I've enjoyed an association with *The Globe and Mail*, "Canada's national newspaper," continuing through redesigns in 2001 (Brown), 2005 (Pratt, Sense and Sensibility) and 2011 (Pratt Nova).



THE GLOBE AND MAIL • THURSDAY, APRIL

SURESH NARINE, 39 BIOMATERIALS

Seeds hold the secret to

Much of the materials we use are made from non-renewable and environmentally harmful petrochemicals.

Dr. Narine's lab aims to change that by using chemistry and phys-

panding the use of what they grow beyond food. There are also issues like not supplanting food crops with biofuel crops and taking into account water and land use. And the group is working with other countries, including



10 GLOBE STYLE ADVISOR | TRAVEL 201

omnibus

What's new, noteworthy, cool and stylish in travel

BEAUTY

ROAD TO MOROCCO

"Ask a woman for directions," says Roohi Qureshi as we squeeze past a donkey cart, seeking an exit from Marrakech's bustling medina. "Women are too busy working to give you the run-around. Those men, leaning on their motorcycles, always expect something in return."

Sure enough, a berobed woman laden with produce appears from behind the hustlers to point the way to the Djemaa el-Fna market. "See," Qureshi says with a smile on her face, "women are the real deal."

Qureshi didn't set out to become an advocate for women. Like her latest career – she is the founder of the Toronto-based natural skin-care brand **LEAVES OF TREES** – it happened organically. Her first visit to Marrakech was as a tourist six years ago, when she was still practicing occupational medicine full time. During a tour to the coastal city of Essaouira, she discovered a cooperative for Berber women producing argan oil, the hydrating nut extract popularized by the now-ubiquitous MoroccanOil range.

Back in Canada, she put her master's in chemical engineering to work, using the oil to concoct soaps and lip balms out of her studio apartment. Her friends, who often shared the bounty, spurred her on, prompting Qureshi to wonder how she could

Above left: Pratt Nova on newsprint.
Below Left: Pratt Nova on coated stock, in *Style* magazine.



THE GLOBE AND MAIL

OTTAWA/QUEBEC EDITION ▪ TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2023 ▪ GLOBEANDMAIL.COM

Postmedia and Nordstar abandon merger discussions

Newspaper chains cite lack of agreement on terms, regulatory and financial uncertainty in decision

JOE CASTALDO
ANDREW WILLIS

The country's largest newspaper chains called off merger plans on Monday, with the owner of the Toronto Star citing "financial uncertainty" that came with a proposed marriage to debt-heavy partner Postmedia Network Canada Corp.

Postmedia and Nordstar Capital LP, parent to the Toronto Star, said they were unable to reach agreement on terms of a deal, two weeks after they announced detailed plans to combine the two businesses. The potential transaction would have required approval from the federal Competition Bureau.

In a press release on Monday, Postmedia and Nordstar said the lack of agreement on terms, and "the added backdrop of regulatory and financial uncertainty led them to make the decision to end their negotiations."

Nordstar executives were concerned with Postmedia's debt structure, even though Postmedia's lenders were planning to swap the majority of the company's loans for equity, according to a source familiar with the negotiations. The Globe and Mail agreed not to name the source because they are not permitted to discuss the transaction.

"These are challenging times for media companies, but we intend to keep working hard to give Canadians the news they need to stay informed," said Jordan Bitove, owner of Nordstar and publisher of the Toronto Star, in a press release.

In late June, Postmedia and Nordstar said combining forces would help the companies deal with the "existential threat" they face from tech platforms such as Facebook parent Meta Platforms, Inc. and Google owner Alphabet Inc., which are winning an increasing amount of revenues from advertisers.

The two tech giants have threatened to drop Canadian news content from their platforms because of a dispute with the federal government over Bill C-18, which will require them to pay news organizations for posting or linking to their work.

POSTMEDIA, A13

EXTREME WEATHER

HEAVY RAIN BATTERS ASIA, U.S.

As destructive floods sweep across areas ranging from New Delhi to New York, scientists warn climate change will make such events more common A5

A street in Kurume, Japan, is buried under debris Monday after heavy rains hit wide areas of Kyushu island. Floods and mudslides have left two people dead and at least six others missing in the country. KAZUHIRO NOGI/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Twenty-five years after 'astonishing' Hong Kong airport's closing, photographer's images recall the excitement in the air

JAMES GRIFFITHS
ASIA CORRESPONDENT
HONG KONG

Flying into Hong Kong in the 1980s, Canadian photographer Greg Girard never tired of the thrill of arriving at Kai Tak Airport.

Often described as one of the most dangerous approaches in the world, planes landing on the small runway jutting out into Victoria Harbour first had to fly over the densely packed neighbourhoods of Kowloon, seemingly skimming the tops of high-rise apartment blocks.

Mr. Girard called the airport's proximity to the city "absolutely astonishing," all the more so because most Hong Kongers didn't really seem to think so. "There was a world-weary kind of indifference to what, for an outsider, made the place so extraordinary."

Kai Tak was closed 25 years ago, on July 6, 1998, almost a year after control of Hong Kong had passed from Britain to China. It was replaced by the far larger Hong Kong International Airport (HKG), built on reclaimed land off the coast of Lantau Island, some 40 kilometres from the old airport, which has since been transformed into a cruise terminal.

HKG would become one of the world's busiest airports, but older Hong Kongers look back fondly on Kai Tak.

It looked more or less like any other airport of its day, but it was slightly less sterile than modern ones. It offered many their first taste of international travel and features in iconic movies such as Wong Kar-wai's *Chungking Express*, which can help obfuscate memories of the occasionally heart-stopping moments they had on approach.

For pilots, landing at Kai Tak is hard to forget.

AIRPORT, A8

Kai Tak Airport was often called one of the most dangerous approaches in the world owing to its close proximity to the city. BIRDY CHU/COURTESY OF BLUE LOTUS GALLERY

FOREIGN AFFAIRS
Former U.S. trade czar chides Canada in new book A7

LIFE & ARTS
The Game of Love and Chance plays with improv at Shaw A13

REPORT ON BUSINESS
Ottawa proposes regulations to address C-18 concerns B1

Archibald ouster casts shadow over AFN's annual meeting

PATRICK WHITE

A major overhaul of the Assembly of First Nations is on the agenda at the organization's annual meeting in Halifax this week, where hundreds of chiefs will gather against a backdrop of controversy over leadership and governance.

The AFN's annual general assembly is a chance for First Nations to set the group's course for the year, but much of the coming meeting, which begins on Tuesday and ends Thursday, could instead focus on the recent past.

The group's national chief, RoseAnne Archibald, was voted out last month during a special assembly of AFN chiefs, under a cloud of accusations that she had bullied and harassed AFN staff. In a Facebook video posted last week, Ms. Archibald characterized her ouster as political payback and encouraged supporters to attend the annual meeting, in person or online, and share their displeasure with her removal – especially with the regional chiefs who preside over the organization's powerful executive committee.

"I'm just one woman and I'm up against this big system, and I've been jumped by these 10 regional chiefs," she said in the video.

The upheaval threatens to draw attention away from a major AFN initiative to overhaul its governing charter and reorient the powers of those regional chiefs.

That initiative was chaired by Khelsilem, who is also the chair of the Squamish Nation.

AFN, A15

Turkey agrees to support Sweden's entry into NATO: Stoltenberg

KARL RITTER
SUZAN FRASER
VILNIUS, LITHUANIA

Sweden's membership in NATO took a big step forward on Monday after Turkey agreed to remove one of the last major roadblocks in return for help in reviving Turkey's own chances of joining the European Union.

At talks in the Lithuanian capital Vilnius, where U.S. President Joe Biden and his NATO counterparts are meeting for a two-day summit starting Tuesday, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan committed to put the Nordic country's accession protocol before Parliament "as soon as possible," the head of NATO said.

"This is a historic day because we have a clear commitment by Turkey to submit the ratification documents to the Grand National Assembly, and to work also with the assembly to ensure ratification," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters after a series of high-stakes meetings.

Sweden's NATO accession has been held up by objections from Turkey since last year. The Turkish parliament's ratification of the accession protocol is one of the last steps in the process.

Mr. Stoltenberg made the announcement after talks with Mr. Erdogan and Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson on the eve of the NATO summit.

"Today we took a very big step on the road toward complete ratification," Mr. Kristersson said.

NATO, A3

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THE GLOBE AND MAIL • TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2001

Tribute A3

PETER TYM/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

'Richler' will become the official typeface of the Giller Prize.

TARAS KOVALIV/THE GLOBE AND MAIL

After reading Barney's Version by Mordecai Richler, type designer Nick Shinn felt he had the inspiration to design 'a fine scotch of a typeface.'

Richler typeface fits the author

Writer's memorial robust, with attitude

BY SANDRA MARTIN

As a typeface, Mordecai Richler is robust and full of attitude. That was the consensus at a news conference yesterday to unveil the unique memorial to the celebrated Canadian author who died in hospital in Montreal on July 3.

The specially commissioned font was created by Canadian type designer Nick Shinn, who designed the Walburn and Brown headline typefaces for The Globe and Mail.

"Richler" will become the official typeface of the Giller Prize and will be used by Random House to typeset Mr. Richler's posthumous collection, *Dispatches from the Sporting Life*, which will be published next spring. Gradually, all of Mr. Richler's books will be reset in the typeface, as they are redesigned.

The unveiling of the Richler font took place on the eve of the gala dinner to select the winner of the $25,000 Giller Prize for fiction. Giller founder Jack Rabinovitch, a Toronto businessman, paid tribute to his old friend at the news conference at Massey College at the University of Toronto. Mr. Richler's widow, Florence, and his children were present, with the exception of Emma, who is on a promotional tour for her first novel, *Sister Crazy* (Knopf).

Mr. Richler, an adviser on the Giller Prize from the beginning, served twice as a judge and won the coveted prize in 1997 for his last novel, *Barney's Version* (Knopf). Mr. Rabinovitch remembered Mr. Richler calling him in a panic just before the first gala dinner to say, "The tuxedo doesn't fit." On a more serious note, Mr. Rabinovitch remembered that, "He was the first to say, if it [the Giller] can't stand on its own, let's not do it."

Now the names Richler and Giller will be even more closely connected. The new Richler typeface — with its "slightly offbeat quality that mocks both artful pretension and mindless conformity," according to Mr. Shinn — will appear on the Giller program for the first time tonight and will subsequently be used on all Giller letterhead and other printed materials.

Joking about possible memorials to Mr. Richler, a trenchant critic of ultranationalism, Mr. Rabinovitch adopted a satirical tone worthy of the late writer. "I thought Montreal might change de Maisonneuve to Richler, or that the federal government might want to rename some mountains in Alberta the Richler Range," he said. Instead, the Richler family has accepted the typeface as an unusual but fitting memorial, after a suggestion from Kelly Duffin, director of marketing for Random House and also senior administrator of the Giller Prize.

While several fonts bear the names of famous literary figures, such as Erasmus, Chaucer, Swift or Bunyan, the Richler font is the first designed as a tribute to a contemporary writer.

Initially, the font, which belongs to the Richler family, will be used exclusively for Giller- and Richler-related projects, but the plan is to use it much more widely in the future.

"Decades from now," said Louise Dennys, executive vice-president of Random House of Canada, "a reader will pick up a book by an author we've yet to know and it will be set in Richler." In that way, the typeface will be a link to the past and the future.

Before receiving the commission to design the typeface, Mr. Shinn had not read any of Mr. Richler's novels. After reading the structurally postmodern *Barney's Version*, with its "layers of different narrators, starting with Richler," Mr. Shinn felt he had the inspiration to design "a fine scotch of a typeface." He explained that the final touch was to "square up" the round letters to make them look "sturdier."

After examining the Richler font, David Pratt, The Globe's chief designer, said it is "a rather transparent typeface, attractive to look at and pleasant to read, while not calling any special attention to itself." That's a perfect recommendation for a typeface that's going to be used for setting books, said Mr. Pratt — as it is a fitting memorial to a writer who hated pretension and always called himself "a scribbler."

While Mr. Pratt admired the "strongly calligraphic italic," he particularly praised the "stoutly individual characters," all of which "have some sort of personality," he said. "Some are positively quirky: the R and the K, for instance, with their cocked legs . . . and the Q with its cranky-looking tail."

The dingbats are "extraordinary," Mr. Pratt said. Traditionally, these are fairly generic devices used as bullets to draw attention to a line of type or to form a break between paragraphs. The Richler dingbats, which include a cigar, a glass of whisky, a tomato and a pair of reading glasses, reflect the late writer's habits and tastes. Instead of having to use a design created in the 16th century, Mr. Pratt said, "how wonderful to be able to use something human."

Mr. Shinn explained "how Mordecai Richler came to influence the typeface that bears his name."

"You have an idea, you follow it through and then you get used to it," he said.

At least, he said, "that's Nick's version."

That I abandon

Stoutly individual characters, all of which have some sort of personality. Some are positively quirky: the R and the K, for instance, with their cocked legs . . . and the Q with its cranky-looking tail.

The Globe and Mail's Chief Designer, David Pratt

Give me a doctor partridge-plump,
Short in the leg and broad in the rump,
An endomorph with gentle hands
Who'll never make absurd demands
That I abandon all my vices
Nor pull a long face in a crisis,
But with a twinkle in his eye
Will tell me that I have to die.

W.H. Auden

all my vices

Samples of the Richler typeface. Mr. Richler admired W.H. Auden's work.

The Richler typeface was commissioned in 2001 to commemorate Canadian author Mordecai Richler.

This newspaper feature is a veritable Shinn-o-rama, appearing in *The Globe and Mail* with the types that I made for David Pratt's 2000 redesign of the paper, Brown Gothic and optical sizes of Walburn.

During the late '90s I created several typefaces (Merlin, Oneleigh, Fontesque Sans) for FSI and Agfa (Paradigm), while building up the stock of designs that would comprise the first offering of my new type foundry in 1998. These were:

1. Designs rejected by FSI and Adobe.
2. Designs commissioned by ad agencies and design studios for corporate clients.
3. Designs for Tony Sutton.
4. New designs for the new foundry.

At this point, despite the success of Fontesque, the majority of my income still came from art direction and graphic design.

Four of the typefaces with which Shinntype was launched—Handsome, Bodoni Egyptian, Brown and Beaufort—would become the foundry's best sellers, consistently since 1998. They are designs which were in the right place at the right time, exploiting qualities of the new media to register a definitive presence in the new digital culture,

Handsome

Robot writing that disguises its artifice behind a shifting cast of character alternates.

In a round-nib style and a broad-nib style and a ballpoint style and a flexed-nib style

becoming established as minor classics. Addressing the potential of digital media for new ways of conceptualizing the process of design, Handsome was written directly into Fontographer with a Wacom stylus and tablet, as a skeletal path of zero thickness, which was then rendered with different monoline weights and pen-like effects. Following the introduction of the OpenType format, Handsome Pro was created in 2005, with code embedding the joining rules of traditional cursive script into the Contextual Alternates feature, to better mimic real handwriting.

Bodoni Egyptian®

An historical fiction.

The Bodoni Egyptian family too was based on algorithmic stroke expansion, a slab-serif design in which, flouting convention, every stem of the capitals, small capitals, lower case and serifs is the same thickness in all but the heaviest weights. Released in 1999, Bodoni Egyptian followed the old master's letter shapes quite closely, and was the first monoline slab serif typeface with old style "g" and curly-tailed "R", departing from the model established by Emil Weiß (Memphis, 1928), which was devoutly geometric.



The designers of this German magazine went to town with the wide range of Bodoni Egyptian styles.



Photo: Stephen Coles



The serifs of Beaufort® come to a point, which means that, unlike pre-digital fonts, they are sharp at any size, limited only by the resolution of the print medium or pixel screen.



Brown

ABCDEFGHIJ
KLMNOPQRS
TUVWXYZabc
defghijklmno
pqrstuvwxyz
0123456789!

This semi-condensed, neo-grotesque type is distinguished by gently stylized distress that enhances legibility at small sizes, while imparting subtle visual interest to headlines and titles.

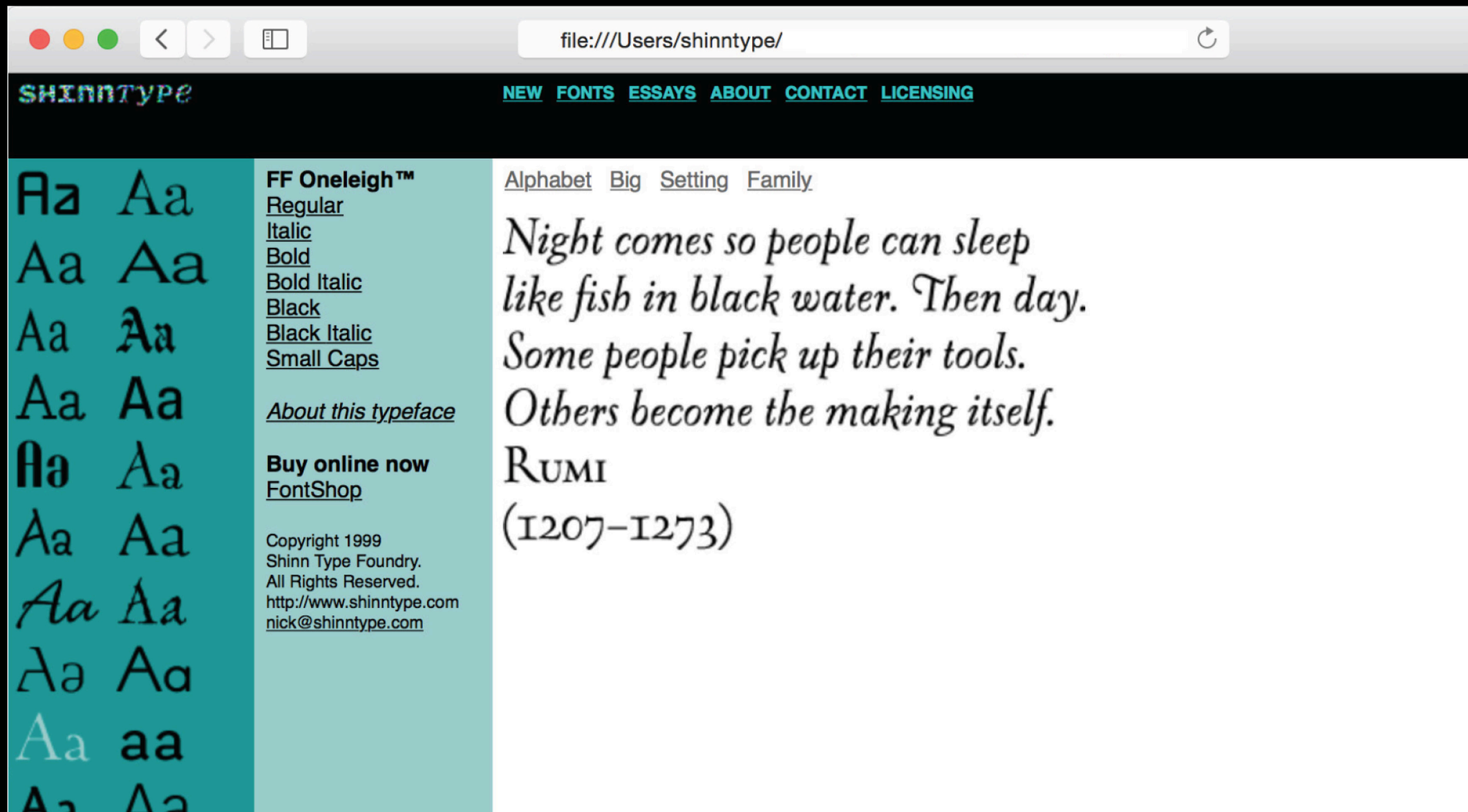
© 2023 Shinn Type Foundry Inc.

Brown, with its micro-details informed by the trace of process that subtly eroded the purity of sans serif letter forms (in both letterpress and phototype reproduction), expressed the moment that one generation of technology superseded another. McLuhan termed this "retrieval", the ground of the old becoming the figure of the new.

These four typefaces—Handsome, Bodoni Egyptian, Beaufort and Brown—initially released in font formats with limited character sets, were upgraded to the OpenType format later in the decade, with extended language support and many features.

Indie explosion
2000–2010

Technology	FontLab, OpenType, the World Wide Web
Culture	Sophistication, extended language support, “expert” features
Commerce	eCommerce, the Long Tail

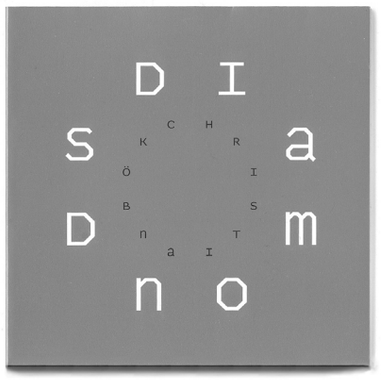


Specimen page from the first Shinntype web site, 1999.

The colour palette was designed to harmonize with the Internet Explorer web browser.

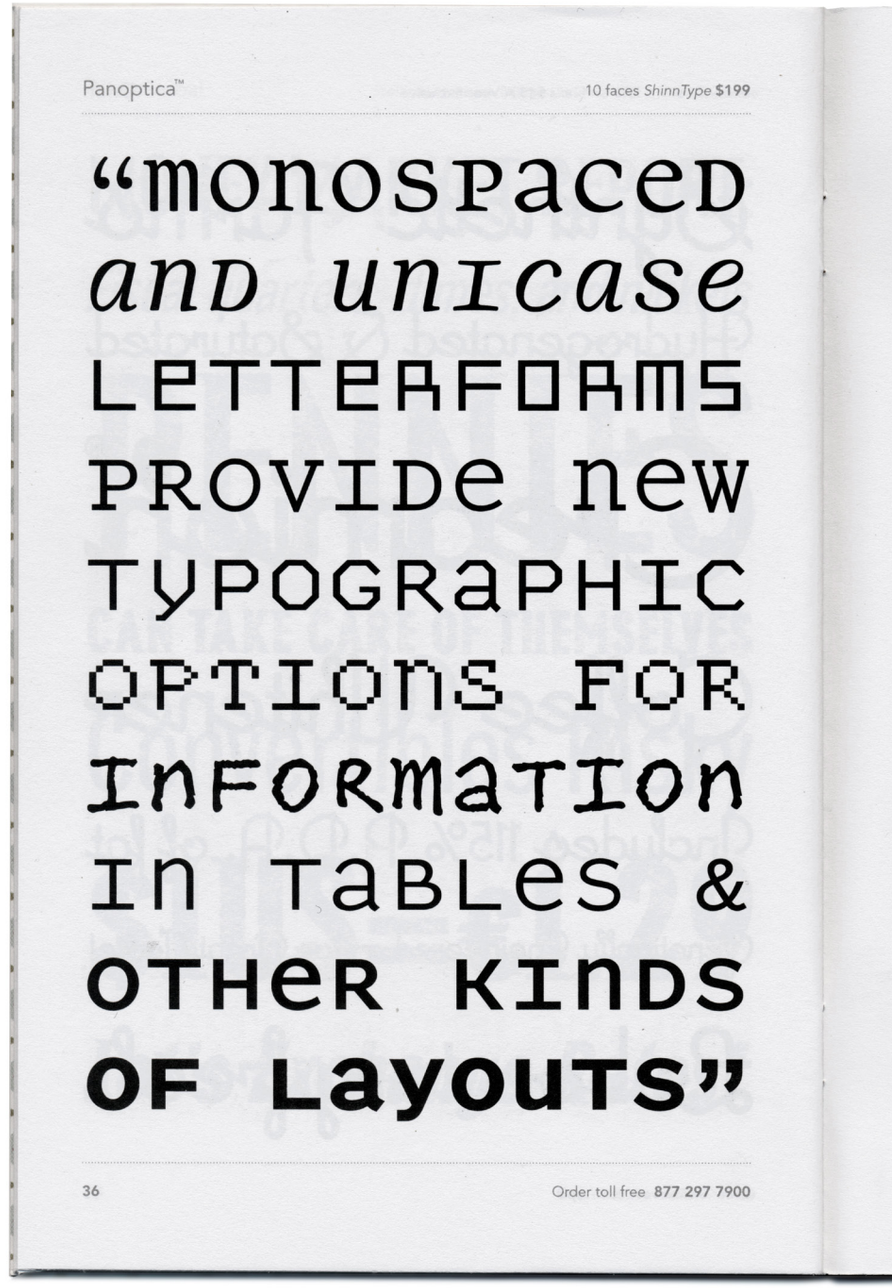
The logo was an animated gif in two styles of Panoptica, with flickering noise.

A page from Veer's *New Type* specimen booklet, 2004, written and designed by Jon Parker. Veer sold stock images and fonts by indie foundries at its web site, with printed mailings every month.

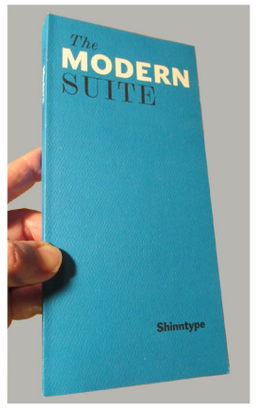


The Panoptica typeface was designed in 2003 for *Diamonds*, a book of constraints-based verse by Christian Bök. It was then developed as a multi-style family for release through the Shinntype network of distributors.

After a decade of experience with the growth of Apple and Adobe as they reshaped the graphic trades, all the while following the tech hype in *Wired* magazine, it was hard not to be aware of the financial potential of the World Wide Web, and be swept up in the dotcom craze of the late '90s. Ecommerce was tailor-made for a digital product such as fonts, providing access to a global market vastly greater than Mac users on a mailing list. The concept, a simple transaction in which a font file is downloaded in exchange for a fee paid online by credit card or PayPal, was brilliant. Karey, my wife and business partner, and I registered Shinn Type Foundry Inc. in 1998, and ShinnType®, with the intercap branding then in vogue. We acquired the shinntype.com domain, and I designed and coded our first web site with Altsys Dreamweaver.



Now, on a web browser, Shinntype was a bona fide foundry and typeface publisher for all the world to see. A key role was provided by Makambo, the first independent font distributor, which offered an online ecommerce service for new foundries—stimulating the emergence of a diverse font culture and economy driven by individual designer-owners. Shinntype.com did have its own ecommerce facility for a while, but it was an area of business that never appealed to me, and with more and more font distributors in the new millennium, I eventually secured a network of a dozen resellers.





The 2008 specimen booklet for the *Modern Suite* (Scotch Modern and Figgins Sans) required 160 pages to show all the glyphs in all the fonts—Latin, Greek and Cyrillic. It was distributed in goody bags at type conferences.

The first few years of the online type market were by and large dominated by classic sans serif typefaces from the early and mid-twentieth century—modernist, but nonetheless historical. By 2010 things had changed, as both self-taught type designers such as myself, and those who had graduated from the new type design courses at Reading University and KABK in The Hague, established a presence with new material—a lot of new material, in terms of the sheer quantity of languages, characters and features that the new OpenType (2004) format could accomodate, and the large number of weights that became de rigueur for sans serif families.

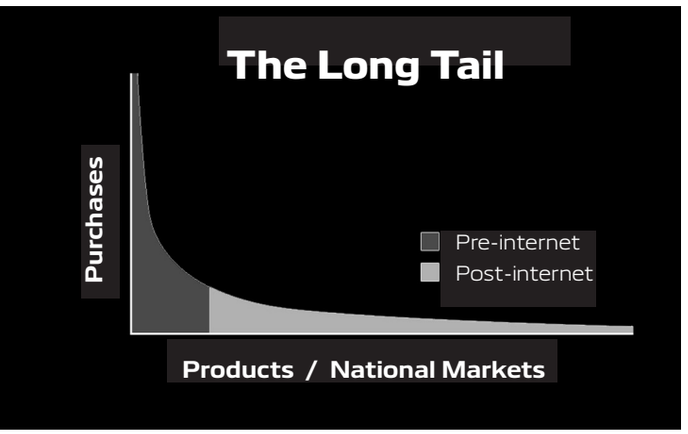


Branding for Bavarian State Opera by Bureau Borsche, 2015. Scotch Modern.



Online advertisement for a 2016 exhibition at the Kremlin Museum. I had spoken on the Scotch Modern at the ATypI conference in St. Petersburg, Russia in 2008.

I was enthralled by the possibilities of OpenType, and decided to tackle it head on with a suitably mammoth project—the *Modern Suite*, which I worked on from 2004 to 2008. Matched sans (Figgins) and serif (Scotch Modern), revivals of 19th century styles, comprised a mega-family with copious features such as small capitals and ten sets of figures, and extended language support in Latin, Cyrillic, and polytonic Greek. Also included were optical sizes of Scotch Modern for display, normal and micro text. There was a lot to learn, and very little of it in books. The online forum Typophile and the annual conference TypeCon (of which I was a board member) were instrumental in sharing knowledge, as independent type designers discussed, questioned and educated one another on emergent matters.



The first crop of Shinntype fonts had a couple of hundred characters, and the cost of a basic licence was $39. By contrast, the *Modern Suite* comprised 13 fonts of 1600 glyphs at $79 each, catering to a niche of sophisticated users, part of the Long Tail of sales performance existing in the global marketplace. The Long Tail is a particularly apt metaphor for how and why fonts sell—at least, it's worked well for me. I've built a large catalogue of many typefaces, in an eclectic range of genres, at different price points, which sell incrementally through many distributors, as someone, somewhere, licences something of mine, at some time.

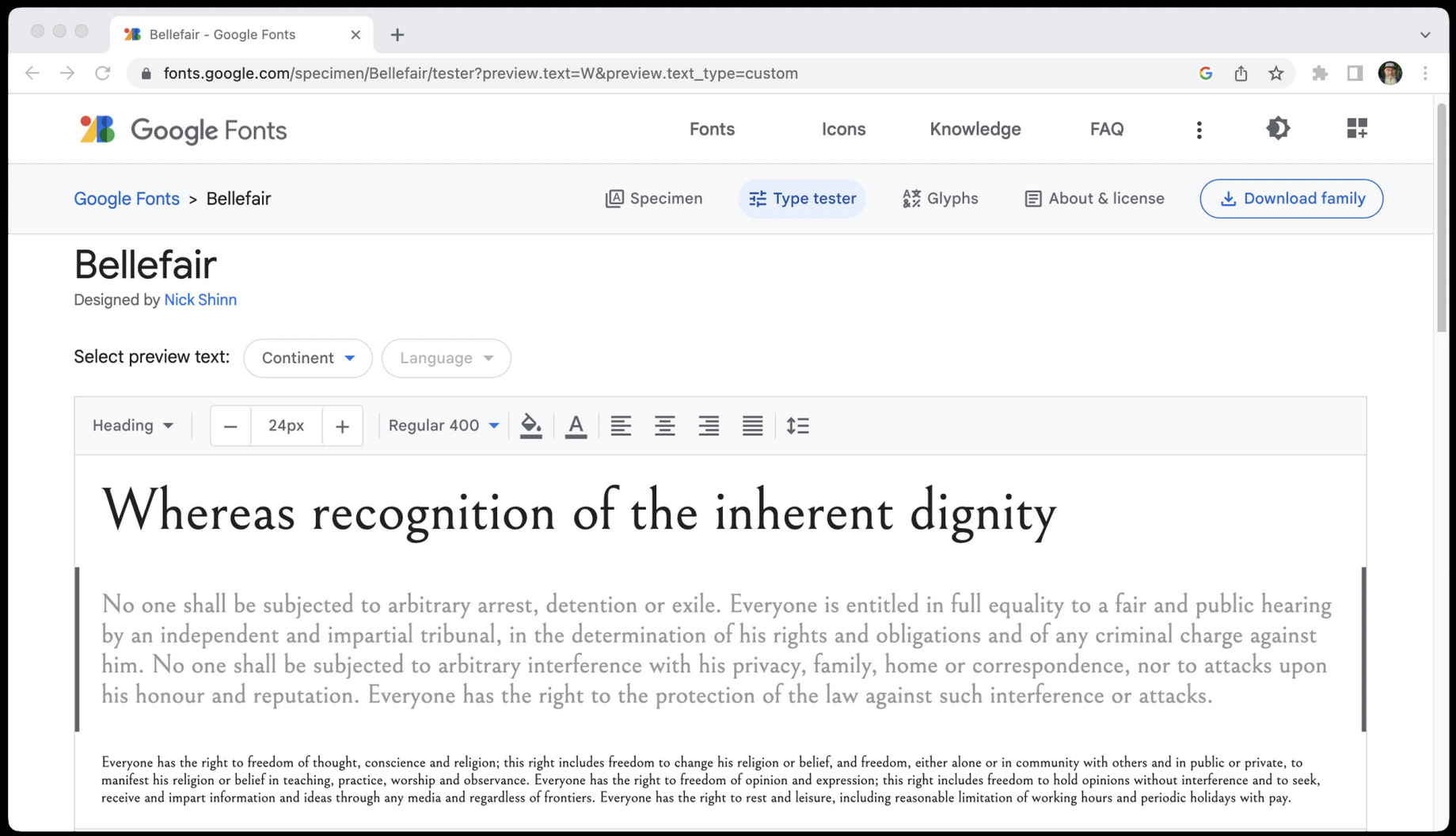


Usually when I updated my earliest fonts to OpenType, I added features. Thus Oneleigh (1999) acquired swash capitals and lining small cap figures in 2008, options which add nuance and structure to layouts such as this.

Web fonts
2010–

Technology **High-res screens, third party hosting**
Culture **Proliferation of genres**
Commerce **Licencing complexity, distributor consolidation**

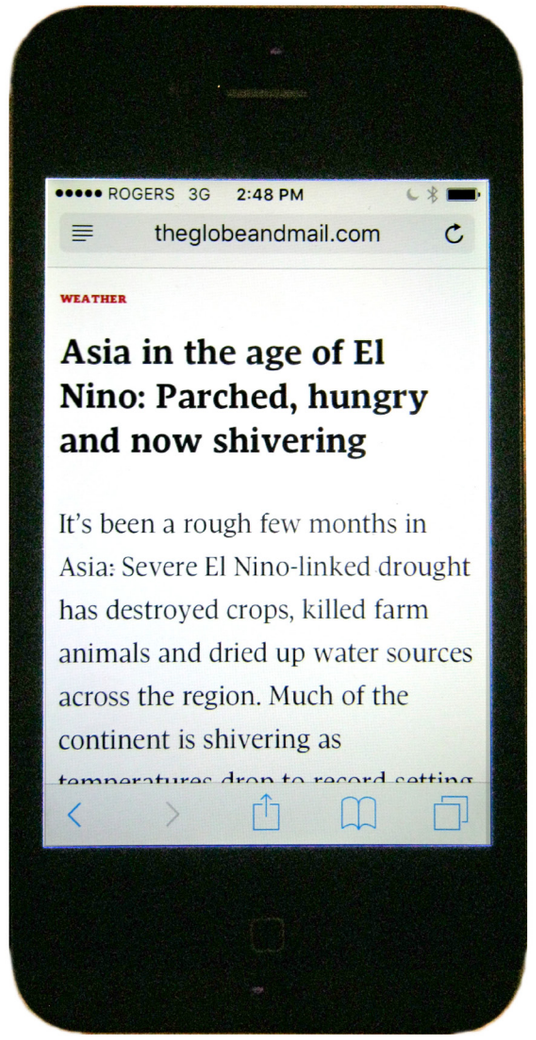
Google Fonts was launched in 2010, with fonts—by many font designers, paid by fee (no royalties)—which were distributed as free and open source software. This fostered a massive contingent of free-font users, diminishing the market share of designer-owned foundries that derive passive income from licence sale royalties. I designed Bellefair for Google in 2012, to check out the phenomenon.



A new decade, a new font format, a new market.

For the first ten years of the World Wide Web, web site designers had few options for fonts. Without piracy protection or a licensing agreement, the "@font-face" rule, which downloads the fonts specified by a web site to users, was not supported by browsers, and users were limited to those fonts installed on their devices. A lot of Georgia and Verdana, Times, Helvetica and Comic Sans. Then in 2008 a web font format was worked out that satisfied all stakeholders, and a new market emerged: web licences purchased by page-view volume, and, sign of the times, also by subscription. Now, all Shinntype fonts are available in web format.

What's truly remarkable is the high resolution screen, beginning with Apple's Retina in 2010, which enabled web designers to elaborate in fine detail, as in print typography. I designed Bellefair accordingly, for Google in 2012—it's an elegant "book face" style, related to Beaufort, with discreet serifs and a demure x-height. *The Globe and Mail*, which had been using Georgia on its web site, responded to greater resolution by switching to Pratt Nova, thus syncing its typography with the print edition. The Light weight, a display cut on newsprint, is used for body text on screen.

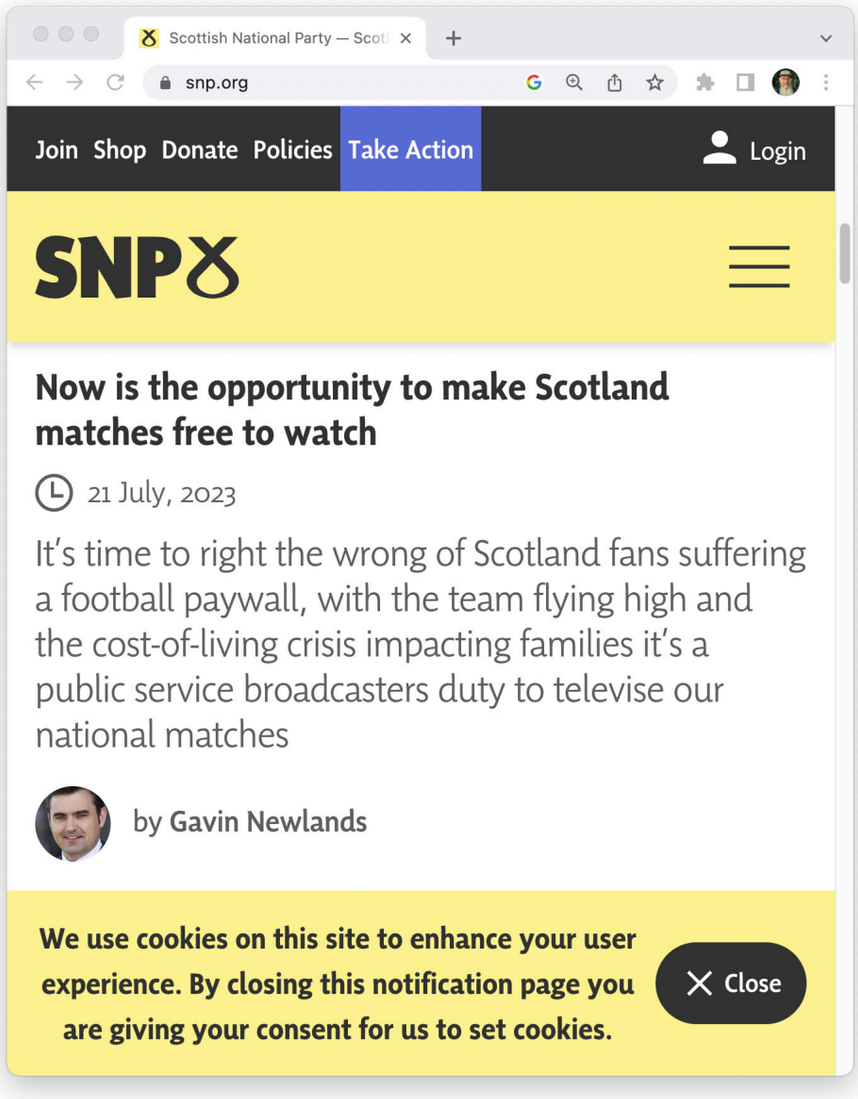


The Globe and Mail on an iPhone 5 (the second generation of Retina screens) in 2014, with Pratt Nova Black, Heavy and Light web fonts.

Online gaming site *League of Legends* employs lots of Beaufort, leveraging its classic design as suitable for fantasy worlds, the cut of its sharp little serifs ready for battle.



The font business changed dramatically in 2012, when Monotype bought MyFonts, the biggest distributor of fonts from independent foundries. It then acquired FontShop. Following this consolidation, my three main distributors became one. With their dominant position, Monotype and MyFonts have been able to reduce the royalty rate they pay foundries significantly. Of course, market size has expanded with web fonts as a product, but the process of Chokepoint Capitalism is nonetheless disconcerting. Fortunately, I acquired Adobe Type as a distributor in 2022, so Shinntype’s fate is not entirely in the hands of Monotype.



The Scottish National Party uses Sensibility throughout its branding.

6 Variable fonts 2020–

Technology **Parametric design axes**
Culture **Animation**
Commerce **A marketing challenge**



Parametric fonts—in which users can, in layout applications, incrementally adjust values such as weight and horizontal scaling, were introduced commercially by Adobe in 1991. But the "Multiple Master" format didn't catch on, and was abandoned in 1999. It was cumbersome for end users, and a headache for font developers. I designed Beaufort with two parametric axes, but was unable to generate bug-free fonts with the software at my disposal, so instead published it as a large family. The concept was reintroduced, and fully supported by Adobe's Creative Cloud in 2020. Beaufort Variable was released in 2023.



Beaufort VF has eight named weights, from Extra Light to Ultra, but there are 13 weights here, made possible by the font's variable weight axis. The VF upgrade also adds Greek, Cyrillic and Vietnamese. Doll couture and photography by Karey Shinn.

Commissioned work accounts for 20% of Shinntype income. Because fonts are a licenced product, it's a best practice for foundries to offer clients two options for such work: either a complete buy-out or with the rights reverting to the foundry after a period of exclusivity; this latter option for a lesser fee. Consequently, I've produced designs, such as those for the Kobo e-reader, which are not commercially available, and others, such as Pratt Nova and Sense, initially designed for *The Globe and Mail* in 2010, which are.

In general, I'd much rather work on my own ideas for Shinntype fonts than follow someone else's art direction on commission, but there is also something to be said for the rigor and circumspection demanded, and the serendipity that can occur, in collaboration.

For the future, I continue to pursue a concept of creative design which is antithetical to AI prompt-ability.



Nick Shinn, Orangeville, July 2023