

Dimensions in Typography



A Brief Overview

- Me
- A bit of theory
- Old-style typography
- New-fangled typography
- Into the great wide open...
- Some demos



A Bit About Me

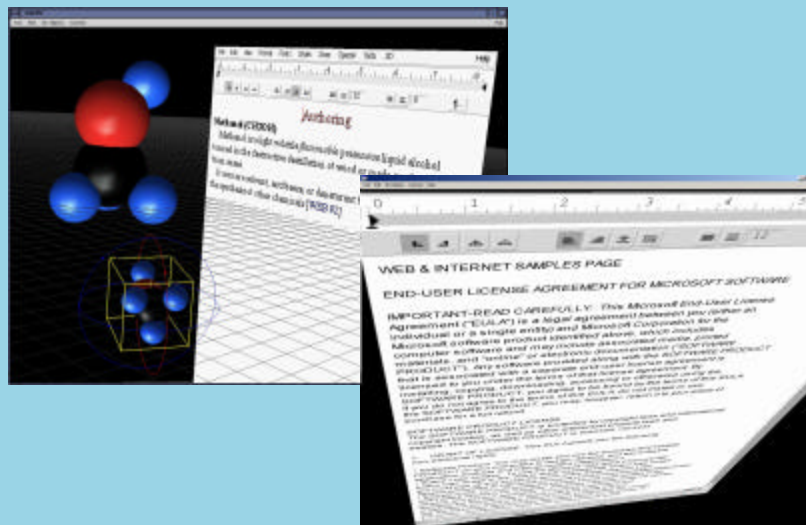
- Software engineer with Perspectix AG
- BA in Communications, Montreal CA
- MSc in Cognitive Science, B'ham UK
- PhD with Prof.Dr. Peter Stucki at UniZH
- ProjectionPort and ANISEED
- “Interaction Design” with Ph. Ackermann

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A Bit About Me (II)



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Some ideas

- Typography is Art
- Typography is Science
- Typography is Communication
- Typography is a Tool
- Typography is a Medium



More ideas

- McLuhan, “Understanding Media”, 1964
 - “The Medium is the Message”
 - medium must be subtracted for you to recover the message
 - the medium shapes the way we think
 - become the book!
 - the printing press changed the middle ages into a scientific society by changing the way we think



Some Typographic History

- Movable type first invented in China in the 1040s by engineer Bi Sheng
- Arrived in Germany in 1450s by way of Korea
- European success due to fewer characters needed for roman script
- Type succeeded rich history of script
 - a good scribe would know several scripts for different types of writing (sacred, legal, romantic, business, personal...)



More History

- The Latin letterform
 - roman type, descended from Imperial Roman inscriptions
 - italic type, a product of the Italian Renaissance
- Type as Art
 - renaissance: sensuous, light and space
 - baroque: active, more modelled
 - rococo: florid ornamentation
 - neoclassical: rigorous consistency
 - realist, modernist, expressionist, post-modernist....



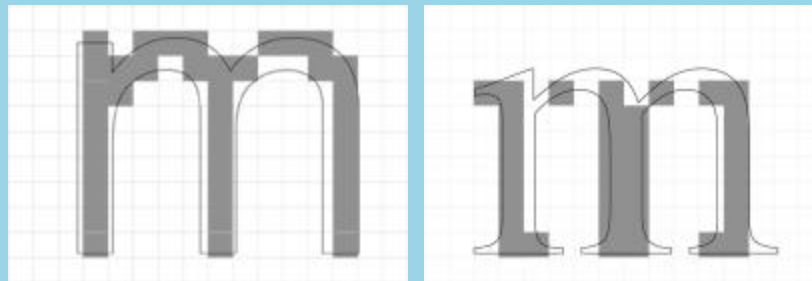
Typesetting in Brief

- 1880: Linotype, Ottmar Mergenthaler
- 1887: Monotype, Tolbert Lanston
- Phototype
- Digital
- Recutting of early metal types to digital



Problems for Digital Typography

- The Raster Tragedy



Simulated 18 pt fonts on 72 dpi raster using pixel-center rule



Digital Typography

- Bitmap fonts and Outline fonts
 - bitmaps: picture representations of type
 - outlines: spline representations of contours
- Three main contenders
 - PostScript (Adobe & Apple)
 - outline and hinting
 - TrueType (Apple & Microsoft)
 - outline and hinting
 - MetaFont (Knuth)
 - parametrics



Type in the Future...

- Mackinlay & Robertson
 - Cone Tree, Perspective Wall, Document Lens
- David Small
 - Virtual Shakespeare, Talmud Project
- Use the perceptual system, create a work of art
- Use visualisation to enhance and reflect the meaning of the text



Document Lens

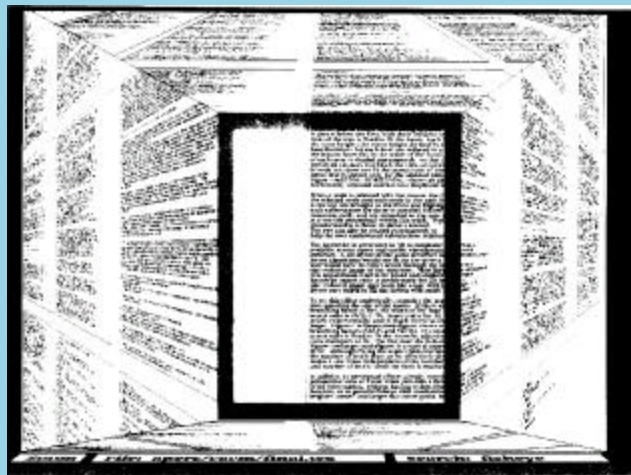


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Document Lens



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Virtual Shakespeare

BOTTOM
There are things in this comedy of Pyramus I think that will never please. First, Pyramus is a coward to kill himself, which the ladies cote. How answer you that?

SNOUT
By 'r the law, a p'rkus fear.

STARVELING
I believe we must keep the killing out, when all is done.

BOTTOM
Not a whit. I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue, and let the prologue see we will slay Pyramus with our swords, and that he is not killed indeed, and for the more better so tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, by the sword. This will put them out of fear.

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Act 1 Act 2 Act 3 Act 4 Act 5

Alls Well That Ends Well
Act 1 Act 2 Act 3 Act 4 Act 5

A Midsummer Night's Dream
Alls Well That Ends Well
Antony and Cleopatra
As You Like It
Coriolanus
Hamlet
Henry IV, Part 1
Henry IV, Part 2

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Talmud Project

L'LIBRARISSIME DES VILLES REFUGES

1 2

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(Extract from the...)

These cities (of self care, but medium a water supply and use to be establish populous districts, the neighbourhoods are brought chaotic traffic neither in an but the Sages perceive be left during occasion to come...

R. Isaac said: Why verse: and that is which means?

A Tanna taught by his master in means provide his this in the form of that is unworthy.

R. Johanan said: A College [Bet Midrash] When can it be From the version which a followed [Dinasonon n'y 4: 10] is applicable in this verse is and



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Some References

“The Elements of Typographic Style”
Robert Bringhurst

“Digital Typography”
Donald Knuth



The Demos

- [set 2](#)
- [set 1](#)

