

Project 2:

Classy Typeface

Objectives

- + Understand the process of creating a typeface from start to finish
- + Improve hand skills
- + Learn type terminology and anatomy
- + Gain a sensitive eye towards type detail
- + Learn the general classification of type

Description

Students will divide into groups of 5-6. Each group will design a typeface based on one of the general classifications of type. Each typeface must include all upper and lower case letters and numbers. Additionally each student will present their group's typeface as a unique poster. The poster must include all the letters and include a pangram (a sentence that uses all the letters of the alphabet).

We will use Ellen Lupton's classification system:

Humanist/Old-style Serif
Transitional Serif
Modern Serif
Humanist Sans serif
Transitional Sans serif
Geometric Sans serif
Egyptian/Slab serif

Ongoing

Bring examples of interesting typefaces and unique letter design solutions.

Part 1

Split up into groups and assign classifications. Experiment with calligraphy to learn about the structure of letterforms.

Part 2

Each student should sketch out several versions of the letters "R" and "O" to serve as the basis of their typeface. The group will vote on a favorite to follow.

Part 3

Each group will present their design direction and the historical context for their design. Additionally, each group should present a plan on how they will split up the work. Consider the similarities among the letterforms and the difficulty of rendering certain shapes.

Part 4

Work on your typeface according to your plan.

Suggested process: Create your letters at 4 inches in pencil sketch form on marker paper or thick tracing paper. When you are satisfied with your sketches, photocopy the original 4" sketches of the letters to be refined. Manually refine forms for even widths, thickness,

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boldness, etc. Scan refined sketches as 150 dpi tiffs, grayscale. Place sketches into Illustrator and trace letters with pen tool. Once all letters are traced, scale all letters to 2" cap height. Output letters and check for errors - correct and refine any imbalanced letter forms. Space letters/words visually on an 18x20 inch area when working with your classmates.

Part 5

Design poster.

Final Format

18x20 inch poster, incorporating all the letters/numerals of your typeface, the typeface name, your classmates' names, and a pangram (e.g. The quick brown fox...)

Evaluation Criteria

Letterform construction:

- + Letterform balance
- + Letterform symmetry
- + Positive/negative relationships
- + Graceful curves
- + Uniqueness of forms

Unity/Variety within the alphabet system:

- + Coordinating vertical thicknesses
- + Coordinating horizontal thicknesses
- + Uniform width of letters (equal levels of contraction/expansion)
- + Even black density across text

Board construction:

- + Even letter/word spacing
- + Clean mounting and trimming