

Another reason that typefaces become popular is because the printers and operating systems, or because they are like what some new quality that makes them fit the market.

# typefaces become given away

To generalize about whether designers know enough of movable type there have been both good and bad fanatical about the tiniest detail of a piece of type and the computer and the type designer have done all the

Many Running young under hand



What doesn't work well in design; shaving the

became popular in the early 19th century. Eureka, and Fedra and descenders, screen and print.

Univers laser Bodoni reason other, and different

I have always liked having a very explicit descenders. Fedra

It probably depends also on the time. I see Thesis Sans used a lot in the 1970s. Groot. It came out at the right time, a corporate identities. Helvetica is as popular

With a good piece of typography all the type is perfectly kerned, the copy is easy to read

### THE TYPE PANEL

If you want to understand typography, it's best to start with the recognized leaders in the field. Digit gathered together award-winning type designers from around the world – and here's a bit about the people who contributed to the feature.

**JEREMY TANKARD**  
[www.typography.net](http://www.typography.net), [info@typography.net](mailto:info@typography.net)  
Award-winning type designer with a worldwide reputation for unique designs. Creator of type designs such as Bliss, Alchemy, Shaker, and Aspect.

**NICK HAYES**  
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Identikal was founded by identical twins, Adam and Nick Hayes, and has created bespoke type for the likes of Sony, *Maxim* magazine, and faces such as 22nd Closed.

**BRUNO MAAG**  
[www.typocircle.co.uk](http://www.typocircle.co.uk), [www.daltonmaag.com](http://www.daltonmaag.com)  
Bruno is the president of The Typographic Circle, and at Dalton Maag has created logos and faces for Ministry Of Sound, the RAC, BMW, BT, Tesco, and Mini.

**PETER BILAK**  
[www.typotheque.com](http://www.typotheque.com), [www.peterbilak.com](http://www.peterbilak.com)  
Founder of Typotheque, Peter has designed several fonts for Fontshop, and is a regular in *ID*, *How*, and *Graphics International*. He also teaches at The Royal Academy in The Hague.

**MARTIN FEWELL**  
[www.martinfewell.com](http://www.martinfewell.com)  
Prolific graphic and type designer, for clients such as Nike, Orange, and album covers. Has created fonts including Mechwar, Sushi, Airbreak, and Memory.

**TIMOTHY DONALDSON**  
[www.timothydonaldson.com](http://www.timothydonaldson.com)  
World famous type designer, encouraged by Hermann Zapf, who has created faces for ITC, Adobe, and Fontshop. Created the award-winning faces Rimbaud and Amadeo.

**ALAN MEEKS**  
[www.alanmeeks.com](http://www.alanmeeks.com)  
Alan has worked in design and typography for over 25 years, and has created custom fonts for the likes of Cathy Pacific, John Lewis, and Somerfield. Created faces such as Astoria and Fairway.



## DO DESIGNERS CARE ENOUGH ABOUT TYPE?

**Jeremy Tankard:** There has been a surge of knowledge in type and typography over recent years. A lot of it is superficial. I can mention fonts to people and they understand what I do. It's no secret that computers have fuelled this. We all know how to select a font from the menu and style it in CAPS, *italic*, and bold – yet, we may not all know the difference between feet and inch marks and quote marks. I know its one of the typographer's favourite moans but it still goes on! Sometimes you can measure the value of a type – such as readability, but this is also hugely at the mercy of use – colour, <sup>size</sup>, position, and understanding how to handle type. Each typeface requires a different understanding. But there is another level, far more exact and detailed, when a designer slowly becomes a typographer. This is more to do with getting inside the typeface and understanding how it sets, how all its letters react together, how best to control the hyphenation and justification, how to get the best out of the type and make it work for you. They are only tools, they can't perform miracles – sometimes just selecting a type isn't enough. Know your type.

**Nick Hayes:** Designers are well aware of the values of typography, the only problem is that a lot of them believe that they can design typefaces too! The majority of designers that I know are well educated in the background of typography. I really think there is a problem, though, with the downgrading of type design today. This is due to the freeware fonts that are given away – this really pollutes hard-working type designers who spend years designing a typeface, rather than days. I think designers should be aware of the amount of time it takes to design a typeface.

**Bruno Maag:** Many designers are quite ignorant when it comes to type. Running the danger of sounding like an old fogey, I think the younger generation of designers do suffer a lack of understanding about type. This has a lot to do with only a handful of colleges teaching type and typography at all. In some, type only gets half a day's worth in a three-year course. And, of course, colourful graphics or fabulous animations are far more sexy than plain old type. I believe many designers would not be able to spot the difference between a Times New Roman and a Garamond, or Akzidenz Grotesk and Helvetica. It's that bad.

## Typography is often not considered by more illustration-based designers

MARTIN FEWELL / SYNTHESIS-REGULAR

**Peter Bilak:** Type design is a highly specialized discipline. A few dozen type designers create and deliver fonts as semi-products to a more numerous group of people who use them. You don't need a deep knowledge of type design in order to use fonts, it really depends how you use type. However, designers who make books, printed matter or even Web pages should have some knowledge of typography, as it affects the readability of the material they work with.

**Martin Fewell:** Depends what kind of designer you are really. Some university courses are typography'-based – teaching students about the use of grids, kerning, leading and study typography in detail. With designers that are more illustration-based, typography is often a non-considered.

**Timothy Donaldson:** Some of them do, some of them don't. In my experience the ones that do are the ones that usually produce the best work. This is because they possess the attention to detail that is required for good typography and they naturally allow that to flow into the rest of their work. 'Design from the word up,' as Mr Spiekermann would say.

**Alan Meeks:** To generalize about whether designers know enough or care enough about type is very unwise, ever since the invention of movable type there have been both good and bad designers. I have come across many designers who, like myself, are fanatical about the tiniest detail of a piece of type, and there are others who see typography as a piece of typing where the computer and the type designer have done all the work and, as long as they can use one of the computer's start-up faces they need do no more than just type it out. Naturally time and budget constraints can often lead to unconsidered design, but that's true of any commercial artform.

# We thrive on individuality; diversity makes our lives interesting and moves us forward

AGFA FONTS / FELBRIDGE EXTRA BOLD

## WHAT SHOULD DESIGNERS THINK ABOUT WHEN CHOOSING AND USING TYPE?

**Jeremy Tankard:** Selecting a type is governed by many aspects. You may be told to use a certain type and so have to make the best of it. Sometimes you are rushed. If a corporate identity, consider the operating system and applications being used, what language support is needed. If an editorial job, will you need SMALL CAPS, fractions, superior letters, symbols? Will you need a variety of weights? A business card means do you want lining or non-lining figures for the phone number? Where does the @ symbol sit in an email address?

In choosing a typeface, the world's your oyster. We thrive on individuality; diversity makes our lives interesting and provokes us in many ways to move forward.

To get it right, you need to look and question every detail. More often than not this work is grounded on good foundations. Typesetting used to be carried out by highly skilled individuals. The fine details of typography is a vast area of minute details. Typographers take a great pride in attaining high levels of work. Don't let the computer make the decisions for you!

**Nick Hayes:** When choosing a typeface, you must really research your brief and its character. Typefaces are visual sounds and, by using the right style, you can speak to your audience in the right tone. There is no point using Helvetica for a Heavy Metal band, as it simply doesn't work. I think some designers get their typography wrong simply by following others. They tend to forget who their market is and follow the crowd. The real award-winning work comes from the designers who set the trends, as well as answering their client's brief correctly. The real key to choosing the right typeface is individuality.

**Bruno Maag:** Mostly, it's common sense. Keep character spacing loose as it aids legibility at smaller sizes and will help you deal with many kerning issues. Keep your type sizes reasonable – 9 to 11 point is an ideal reading size, and add a little leading. Don't go too light when setting body copy, or when going really small. And when choosing the type, don't just go for the usual suspects. There are many high-quality typefaces that have not been over used yet.

**Peter Bilak:** I am not going to give you tips on how to make award-winning work, as typography is a fairly modest discipline. There are a multitude of fonts designed with various intentions or purposes. You can see that Verdana was designed for the screen, and some of its details are rather clumsy when using in print in larger sizes. Other fonts like Times work better in print because they were made for it, and suffer on screen. To get most of them, it's good to know a bit about the fonts you use, and ask a few questions: for which medium was the font designed, is it working well with the language I use? Is it intended for small sizes or display use?

**Martin Fewell:** The typefaces used need to reflect the brand you're working on. Mistakes designers make include not giving the typography enough space on a page, line lengths that are too long and hard to read, putting type over a detailed image so the words become illegible, using a headline typeface for body copy, and using all caps in large blocks of type.

**Timothy Donaldson:** Suitability, morality, and space. Is it appropriate to the job? Is it a well-made typeface? Has it been paid for? Am I just choosing it for fashion reasons? Am I just using it because it's on my system? Have I paid the right amount of attention to the spaces around the type (spacing, kerning, leading, margins); if the spaces are wrong it doesn't matter what typeface it is, the whole thing will look bad.

**Alan Meeks:** The criteria for choosing a typeface are many and varied. You need to consider the mood, target audience, size of eventual usage, and the amount of words to be used. Often designers may get it wrong by taking the above too literally; if it's a young audience, it doesn't have to be grunge; if it's an older audience, it doesn't have to be classical. My main concern about bad typography is being over-reliant on the computer to solve typographical problems; having the software to distort type in the right hands is a bonus – in the wrong hands, a disaster. To produce inspired work, my advice would be to distort the type as little as possible. For headline and sub-headline always space by hand (font spacing and kerning can never work exactly to your liking on every character combination at every size). Look at the spaces, not just the type. Look at it upside down, in a mirror and reversed out, ever add colour or shadow or outline until the basic type looks correct in black-&-white. □



IDENTIKAL / DIREKT NORMAL

The real award-winning work comes from designers who set trends

NICK HAYES / 22ND OPEN REGULAR

# A typographic piece must have order and structure. All great typographers are good at this

AGFA FONTS / NEO TECH BLACK

## WHAT MAKES A GREAT PIECE OF TYPOGRAPHY?

**Nick Hayes:** Good uses of typography will have three major points: First, hierarchy. Typography is a journey and your viewer must be taken on one. All journeys have a start and end point to them and your hierarchy should really bring this home, your viewers must be engaged. A typographic piece must have order and structure. All the great typographers of today are very good at this.

Second, the use of typefaces. On any given project, the use of a typeface is very important. Careful selection of a typeface family can make or break your work. A maximum of two typefaces that reflect each others' characters, as well as two weights of each font family is all you really need. By restricting yourself you will progress yourself as a typographer.

Finally, balance and co-ordination. A typographic piece must be easy on the eye. A viewer can be distracted if they feel uneasy about the balance. Balance and co-ordination are important to the way your hierarchy is read, without them your piece will fall apart.

**Bruno Maag:** This is the question that always crops up at the D&AD judging in the Typography section. I think it's twofold; one is the creative idea and the other, probably more important, is the craftsmanship. Again, good typography can be achieved by following some basic rules. As far as type is concerned, the letter shapes need to be harmonious to each other, and well proportioned. A text typeface is to be read, not to be seen. Setting the type with appropriately generous leading and spacing will aid legibility. Using proper quotation marks and the correct dashes all contribute to successful typography.

**Peter Bilak:** Good typography always reflects on its contents.

**Timothy Donaldson:** The essential ingredients for good type design: using a grid, and knowing when to forsake it. Thinking about the spaces between the shapes as well as the shapes themselves. Maintaining a clear idea of the purpose of the design. What is the cultural standpoint of the design? Awareness of the media that the design will be working with: screen, paper (and what kind), printing process, and size. An awareness of the way that letterforms have developed is highly desirable. Less essential, but still useful, is knowledge of how letterforms were made with older writing technologies, such as pens and brushes.

What doesn't work well is using software to merge two good designs to make a third; the results never equal the sum of their parts. Another problem area is lazy modification of an existing design; shaving the serifs off Times or sticking some serifs onto Gill will not give good results, it will look like you've drawn a moustache on your auntie.

As far as choosing an appropriate typeface goes, don't use a typeface that was designed mainly for screen use (Chicago, Verdana, Lucida) for print (or at least, think really hard about it); conversely (although less problematic) don't use a typeface that was designed for printing a fine art catalogue on your Web site. There are, of course, some stunning exceptions to the rules here: two of our finest text faces were designed for signs: Frutiger (big airport) and Gill (small bookshop).

**Martin Fewell:** With a good piece of typography all the type is perfectly kerned, the copy is easy to read. The general composition is good and everything is on the same grid. Though I like to see something original on the page too, some typography that shows a bit of flare.

**Alan Meeks:** What makes good typography today is what has always made good typography – balance and proportion. If each character is sympathetically balanced with the one next to it then each word is balanced with the one next to, then each line and so on. The letters and words should become patterns on the page and the more attractive and balanced the patterns the more likely people are to read it. A page of type is a massive number of small artwork details arranged in harmony to produce a beautiful piece of typography. I am convinced that people recognize good typography but do not know why. Given two samples – one good one bad – they would be hard pushed to distinguish between the two, but subliminally would recognize the difference without knowing why and always prefer the good.

**Jeremy Tankard:** Harmony of use, consideration in use. How the piece is printed, on what paper, film or video, and the colour are all considerations. If printing reversed out text, don't use a thin type. There are many elements that contribute to a good piece of type. The designer has to rely on the skills that makes them a good designer; how to handle elements in a given space, how to create interest and tension, balance, and rhythm. Sadly, many corporate design guidelines ignore basic design principles in the effort to control the brand image. □

ASSEMBLER  
Assembler

MARTIN FEWELL / ASSEMBLER BOLD

## WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF CLASSIC TYPEFACES?

**Jeremy Tankard:** Constant use makes a typeface a classic. Sometimes a type will appear at the right time and fill a requirement. Getting a type on a computer operating system may help – look at Helvetica and Times. It's been said that a type may never reach the popularity of Helvetica or Times. They are ubiquitous around the world. Naming a type will help. As with any brand, a good name works wonders. Marketing is vital. Keeping the typeface up-to-date with technology. Listening to users and expanding the type to meet their needs. Keeping one step ahead. There is a lot of work behind a typeface to get it to the user.

**Nick Hayes:** Classic typefaces that work are samples of the full alphabet characters at their most legible and visual form. Sans Serif typefaces like this tend to stand the test of time the best. The real classics for me are: Franklin Gothic and Univers (before Helvetica). These two typeface families represent each letterform of the alphabet in the most legible and simple way, making them easy on the eye.

**Bruno Maag:** Univers, Helvetica, Akzidenz Grotesk, Frutiger, Gill Sans, Times New Roman, Garamond, Caslon, Sabon, Baskerville, Bodoni, and Walbaum. More contemporary examples are Minion, Myriad, Avenir, Thesis, Compatil, and Swift. The reason they are timeless is because they follow basic principles of legibility. The characters are proportioned to each other, and are neither too narrow nor too wide. They do not follow fashionable trends or try to be different for difference sake. They do their job, and do it well.

**Peter Bilak:** It's good to emphasize that the fonts are semi-products, and only get their function when they are used. So the user (typographer) effects how we perceive them. For example: there is nothing fascist about the broken script (German Schwabacher for instance), it is the connotation that it acquired in the short time while it was used by the Nazi regime. So, it's the user that gives fonts character. But there is a number of fonts which survived changes of technology: fonts created by Plantin (Times is based on it), Didot, Fournier, Jannon, and Baskerville – they keep inspiring contemporary designers to create new types.

**Timothy Donaldson:** To me, the terms 'classic' or 'timeless' mean that they have stood the test of time due to their

usefulness and enduring beauty, rather like a Levi's trucker jacket or a green Pentel rollerball, so I would nominate typefaces like Gill Sans, Bembo, Univers, and Franklin Gothic. These typefaces all work well in the modern era, even though some of them were made 80-100 years ago; the letters that Bembo are modelled on are more than 500 years old.

Another reason that typefaces become popular is because they are given away with laser printers and operating systems, or because they are like what we know already but have some new quality that makes them fit the zeitgeist. Marketing plays a part too. Geography is important; I would hesitantly suggest that Gill Sans is more popular in the British Isles than North America. This is partly the reason behind the success of Jeremy Tankard's beautiful Bliss: it looks English.

**Alan Meeks:** Classic typefaces today are probably the same classic typefaces that have been used for the last hundred years – Times, Gill, Garamond, Goudy, and Helvetica are still used today more than any modern designs. This is probably due to the fact that they were drawn with painstaking care by master craftsmen. One only has to look at the work of Eric Gill, his skills as a sculptor and illustrator are legendary, as he applied the same skills and enthusiasm to his letterforms each of his characters becomes a work of art in itself. More recent designers such as Adrian Frutiger and Hermann Zapf have applied the same care over every detail of every character. It's sometimes hard to appreciate old designers' skills because their typefaces have been necessarily digitized (not always sympathetically) and many of the quirks and subtleties, particularly on Roman faces such as Garamond and Bembo have been lost.

Following the  
80s style,  
perhaps the  
90s will come  
back into  
fashion

MARTIN FEWELL / TURBO BOLD

## WHY SHOULD YOU GET YOUR OWN TYPE CUT?

**Jeremy Tankard:** If you are lucky enough to be able to commission a type designer to create a typeface for a specific use, this can be a highly rewarding thing. The type designer should ask the right questions in order to design the type. As a commissioning designer, you can tailor the workings of the type to suit your job's specific needs. If the type is for a corporate identity, it could be a huge asset. But please avoid the too often seen, chopped-off-serif-type or slightly-modified-sans-type. These are poor routes to follow and result in nothing more than a waste of money. The Dutch type designer, Fred Smeijers has written a small book called *Type Now*, and would-be commissioning designers and type designers should read this.

The relationship should be good. If it's strained, then one needs to go; either sack the agency or the type designer. There's no room for dilettantes.

More often than not, a commissioned typeface will stretch the type designer to work in new areas. Or at least it should – there's no point re-designing Helvetica. I have been asked a few times to quote on 're-drawing' existing types. This is usually done to avoid licence costs. Deadly dull work that I wouldn't want to do. Anyway, just because you commission a type design doesn't mean you have the ownership, copyright, intellectual property rights to it. More often than not all you've commissioned is the type designer's time do the job.

**Nick Hayes:** Bespoke type design offers clients the opportunity to have their own unique typeface. Our clients will usually have an idea in mind, which will be passed onto us. We then draw up a regular weight version of what the client has requested from scratch and return to them with these ideas. We will then discuss any changes to the first draft. We then tweak the letterforms until they are right. Once the regular weight is signed off we add weights, italics, and any other forms to the family, leaving the client with their own licensed typeface that can only be used by themselves for their product as they wish. This service is obviously more expensive than buying a regular typeface from a distributor, so it tends to be large companies that take on this service.

# It can take an awfully long time to produce something that doesn't look like much

AGFA FONTS / NEO TECH BLACK

**Bruno Maag:** A typeface can be created to cover a particular design need. If a display font is required the type designer can be more creative, as legibility is not as important an issue, but expression is sought. In corporate communications, from letters to annual reports, the client will be more conservative, as the typeface has a different function. It needs to be read by a broad readership and it has to represent the values of the company. Besides that, a custom font will ensure that languages are covered and that technical functions such as hinting (on screen display quality) are in place. And lastly, in a large organization, a bespoke typeface most likely makes financial and organizational sense, too.

**Peter Bilak:** In general, type designers create either custom fonts for specific needs or make more speculative fonts that are distributed by type foundries. Although there are many advantages of custom types, there are not many designers who make a living purely on commissioned type. The reason is that type development is rather time-consuming, and costly. There are plenty of designers who submit their fonts to different type foundries, but unless very lucky, they can't cover even their phone bills.

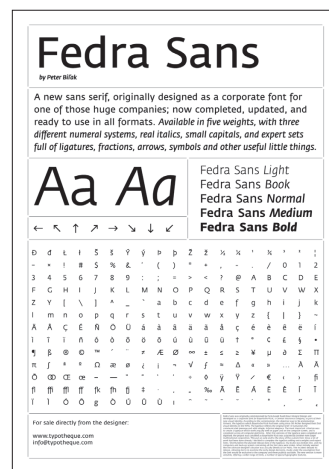
**Timothy Donaldson:** In some cases, it's possible to fine-tune a typeface to fit a particular application. It offers the designer a chance to completely control the project rather than reaching for the same old thing you usually use, which, coincidentally, is the same one being used by thousands of other solutions. Should you commission a bespoke typeface, you are contributing to the universal inventory of the development of letterforms, and perpetuating this vital craft.

The ideal client/designer relationship is one where the design is discussed from the project's start rather than being brought in as an afterthought or to jazz-up a flaccid project. Type design is an activity that greatly benefits from sensitive and educated clients as it can take an awfully long time to produce something that doesn't look like much.

**Alan Meeks:** Bespoke typefaces for corporate identities or ad campaigns are one of the most effective ways of creating a consistent identity. As type is the principle form of communication in any

identity, it stands to reason that a corporate alphabet should form the foundation of the creative approach. It's the one element that is likely to be present in all applications. It is also an excellent way to link the company logo to any body text and headings. The particular typeface design used can be based on an already existing design or adapted to evolve an established identity.

From a practical point of view, a typeface derived from one source makes for an easy and controllable system of making sure no designer or supplier deviates from the corporate system. For example, a company that decides to use Helvetica as their text style would have difficulty in making sure that every one used the same version, same cut, and same spacing, depending on where the face was sourced. The main advantage, though, is that your company's literature will be different to everybody else.



IdentikalSans bold  
IdentikalSans light  
IdentikalSans regular  
IdentikalSans stencil

IDENTIKAL SANS

## NAME TWO FACES THAT YOU LOVE

**Nick Hayes:** Franklin Gothic, which was designed by Morris F Benton at the turn of the century and has inspired many type designers around the globe, even today. It has formed the basis of many sans serif typefaces through time, and can still look fresh and unique in the modern world. Revalo Modern is another. We use Revalo Modern in the majority of our work. We designed it to have a longer line length, so it can be used well for magazine headlines and body copy. It has a rounded edge to its characters, so it compliments some of the illustration styles we use and adds life to our typographic work.

**Bruno Maag:** Tricky, I have quite a few favourites: from our own collection I think it is InterFace. It's a sans hybrid (Grotesk and Humanist) that reads very well at small sizes and on the screen thanks to its good hinting. It's a versatile typeface family that will sit quite comfortably with a serif typeface. I do have a soft spot for Adobe's Caslon. Personally, I think it's the nicest cut around.

**Peter Bilak:** I have always liked Dutch types, but now I am glad to see interesting examples from other places as well. Font Bureau has a couple of very nice new additions in their libraries: I particularly liked Prensa by Cyrus Highsmith, a text font intended for newspaper setting, but having a very expressive characters rooted in the early century models. I also like some of the types made in Latin America today. My own fonts? I only made two complete type families: Eureka, and Fedra, the former is a humanist text type with long ascenders and descenders. Fedra

is my more recent type, and it is optimized for both screen and print, ideal for visual identities.

**Martin Fewell:** Assembler, the last font I did. Aeos, by Jim Marcus (my favourite typeface designer) is a fantastic typeface that was ahead of its time.

**Timothy Donaldson:** This is a very difficult one to answer, I have a few strong favourites and they are all different: Franklin Gothic, Univers, Bembo, and Gill Sans. I think I have to take a desert island disc mentality and force myself to choose one, probably Gill Sans. Of my own work, I'm quite fond of the last typeface I made, Vespucci. It's a fat grotesque for a modern age; it won a silver award in the last Morisawa competition and I'm planning to make it available as a Typothesis font later this year. I'm quite pleased with Postino that I designed for Adobe in 1997.

**Alan Meeks:** I have picked two faces from the world at large: the first is Goudy Old Style Italic – each character is a work of art in itself and amazingly they all work together in kind of casual harmony. There are plenty of eccentricities in the face, but they never detract from the overall look. When I use Goudy, I never think “I wish I could just change one character”. The other face is Frutiger – pure, clean type that seems to work at any size or any spacing. From my own collection – Copacabana Light. Not right for every job and not good at all sizes, but like its inspiration Goudy Old Style, each character has a style of its own but still sits happily with all of the others. □

# I think the creative use of typography will come from the streets

NICK HAYES / IDENTIKAL SANS

## HOW WILL TYPE DEVELOP IN THE FUTURE?

**Jeremy Tankard:** We are in the stage of constant technological development. Currently we are in the midst of quite a focused one – Mac users are moving to OS X. Behind the scenes, we are using Unicode more and, for type, OpenType is advancing. We should see type designers exploring the power of OpenType. Hopefully, software developers such as Quark will realize that it must adopt Unicode and OpenType if it wants its users to continue using its applications. I find it amazing that QuarkXPress, as a tool used by typographers doesn't yet support the advancements in type design.

I installed the trial of Macromedia FreeHand the other day and was amazed that this didn't support Unicode, more so as Macromedia produce applications heavily used for Internet design and development, and you would think that they would adopt this international encoding system as soon as possible.

Hot styles? The Holy Grail! If we could predict this we would all be rich. It seems to make sense that things progress in waves of perhaps ten years or so. It would be nice if serif types made a come back in corporate design, we seem to be in a rut of 'the simple sans', and everyone's re-inventing the same letter. Time to move on.

**Nick Hayes:** I think the creative use of typography will come from the streets. Urban artists are beginning to realize the power of type on the computer and will transfer all of their typographic ideas onto machines, rather than walls. I think the rise of urban music from the street to the charts really signifies this. Graffiti artists are really typographers, and I think they will give a fresh and new approach to type design, which is always welcome. This is where the roots of Identikal are.

**Bruno Maag:** Unless colleges start training the students in type and typography, we will see more of the grid persuasion. Simple character shapes, square angles, or dot matrix style fonts. Again, not very challenging. And, of course, Helvetica will never, ever die. At present we can observe a surge of slab serif type being used, particularly the classic ones such as Clarendon and Rockwell. About time too, I think. This is great type, full of expression and catches attention. In general, I think that the years of the austere sans serifs are over. More and more, serif fonts are being used again.

**Peter Bilak:** I have no idea! I am more concerned with reflecting on today's needs than predicting the future ones. I think it's beyond any designer; trends emerge from seemingly arbitrary criteria. On one hand, we see proliferation of functional types for longer text, on the other there is a trend driven by marketing to differentiate everything from everything else, which generates a lot of wild typography.

**Martin Fewell:** Tough to predict, but maybe serif fonts are due to become popular again. Or, following the 1980s style, the 90s coming back into fashion, with designers using Emigre and Fuse fonts on everything.

**Timothy Donaldson:** I have no idea what styles will be 'hot', just like I don't know exactly what trousers will be popular in five years time. Whatever the editors of the graphics press choose to focus on and feature will enjoy a take-up by a number of individuals. There will probably be a backlash against much of the post-modern type design produced in the nineties (mea culpa) and a swing towards more formal structured type.

There may also, hopefully, be a reactive shift away from overly geometric type designs towards stuff that is humane yet practical. I hope to be able to contribute to this through the agency of my own foundry, which will debut in autumn 2004, [typothesis.com](http://typothesis.com). I would like to see letterforms developing independently of their carolingian skeleton, however, I think this is highly unlikely given the fixed nature of type. I will, however, still be wearing similar (not the same) trousers, and setting Gill Sans.

**Alan Meeks:** My worry about the immediate future of type design is that so much design now has to be compatible with the Web. It's practically impossible for independent designers to create good faces that work well on the Web because for a face to work correctly each size of type should be bitmapped independently. This is expensive, massively time-consuming, and mind-blowingly boring. One typeface that has been specifically designed for use on the Web is Verdana and, while its not the most attractive face in the world, it does work well. For the time being technology is hampering creativity, but hopefully not for long.

## AND THE MOST OVERUSED TYPE TODAY?

**Jeremy Tankard:** I don't really have a concern about overuse, but I do get bored by the way types are often used. If the job is a creative one it deserves good handling of its type, this usually isn't the case. A good job is often let down by the poor choice of typeface and then the non-sensitive handling of it.

**Nick Hayes:** The most overused typeface today will have to be Helvetica. It has always been available on most PCs and Macs as a system font, so I think it has become tried and trusted. The variety of weights and styles has really helped it to be the number one font in the world. I don't think there is a designer out there that has never used it! The most under-rated fonts I know are street inspired typefaces. We have a font called Panic that we designed back in 1996. It has inspired many other typeface designs.

**Bruno Maag:** Helvetica – everyone uses it. I think it's because designers can't be bothered looking for an alternative. But it may have practical reasons. Everyone else in the industry has it, so sending your documents to the printers is not a problem. Frankly, I am getting bored with it. And personally, I prefer Univers. I think Avenir is a typeface that deserves more credit. And if it were for me, I would re-introduce Blackletter type.

**Peter Bilak:** It probably depends also on the country. Here in the Netherlands, I see Thesis Sans used a lot, a numerous family of fonts by Lucas de Groot. It came out at the right time, and became synonymous with corporate identities. Helvetica is as popular as ever, with all its variations, and interpretation. A font that is hard to see is Storm's Sebastian – a lovely baroque, Roman face, very expressive and modern in character. But I've only seen it in type specimens.

**Martin Fewell:** Helvetica is the most overused because it's highly legible, elegant, clean, and easy to work with. It gives balance to work. It's neutral, almost having no style but can be used for almost any design job. Duty, designed in 2003 by Lee Fasciani, is a new font, not really underrated but hopefully it'll become popular.

**Timothy Donaldson:** I see Comic Sans more than I would like to, and I'm not particularly fond of it. I appreciate the qualities of Verdana as a font for screen use, but I get a bit upset when I keep seeing it in print. I am beginning to tire of the Interstate/Din hegemony. I'm even starting to tire of stencil typefaces already. Two designs that deserve to enjoy much wider use are Christopher Burkes' sans-serif, Pragma, and Bram De Does versatile and joyful Trinité.

**Alan Meeks:** Although I quite liked Rotis, it has become massively overused, and seemed to be the typographical solution to every problem. The irony was that everyone used it in an attempt to be original. Its popularity has waned over the last few years, I'm pleased to say. Every designer has their favourite face, you use it a few times and get used to it and it seems to be the one you always go back to when others don't work. Mine is Frutiger; while it's certainly not underrated or unpopular, I can't understand why everybody doesn't use it for everything.

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Hot styles? The Holy Grail! If we could predict this we would all be rich. It seems to make sense that things progress in waves of perhaps ten years or so. It would be nice if serif types made a come back in corporate design, we seem to be in a rut

FreeHand the other day and was amazed that this didn't support Unicode, more so as Macromedia produce applications heavily used for Internet design and development, and you would think that they would adopt this international encoding system as soon as possible.

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