Scala

Designer Martin Majoor
1990 & 1993 & 1996

Type Specimen Book
Designed by Jessica Paquette

"TYPEFACES are to the WRITTEN WORD what different DIALECTS are to DIFFERENT, LANGUAGES."

— Steven Heller

Scala • 1990

Scala was designed by Dutch type designer Martin Majoor in 1990, specifically for the concert hall Vredenburg in Utrecht. It is named after the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. The word "Scala" means "a whole range", which Martin Majoor believes is fitting due to its many different styles – serif, sans serif, decorative, light, black, etc. Scala was inspired by the vertically-stressed typefaces designed by French typographer Pierre Simon Fournier, as well as the humanist model of the first printing types.

When Scala was first released in 1991, there were only four styles available for use —regular, italic, bold and small caps. Today, there are currently 28 different styles. Scala and Scala Sans are related typefaces, in the sense that Scala Sans is merely Scala without the serifs and adjusted contrast. The skeletons of the two fonts are identical.
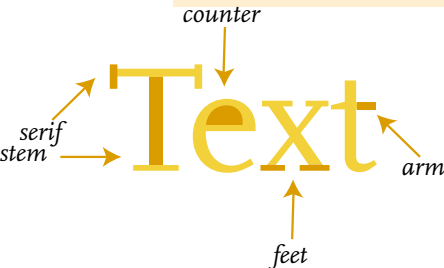
The skeletons of Scala and Scala Sans

The five boxing wizards jump quickly.
The five boxing wizards jump quickly.
The five boxing wizards jump quickly.
The five boxing wizards jump quickly.
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0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

1993 • Scala Sans

Scala Sans is a variation of the Scala typeface without serifs and a lower contrast. It is indirectly based on the vertically stressed model because the typeface was directly based off of Scala. This is much different from other modern sans serif designs, which are usually based on the 18th century classical designs. Their basic forms are considered more "closed" while the elements in Scala Sans are "open", improving legibility.

Scala Sans helps to combat the issue of natural spacing of characters, as in most sans serif type spaces, the spaces are much too narrow. Each weight of Scala Sans was created with adjusted natural spacing to be used for both display and text. The italic of Scala Sans is also a true italic, not a sloped roman character like most sans serif typefaces, due to it being based off of a serif font.

aa ee ff kk nn pp rr vv
aa ee ff kk nn pp rr vv

Scala Sans italic (top) vs. Syntax italic (bottom)

"The ultimate INSPIRATION is the DEADLINE."

— Nolan Bushnell

SCALA JEWEL ◊ 1996

Scala Jewel is a decorative, all capital typeface created in the year 1996. It was designed to be used in combination with Scala. There are four different styles of Scala Jewel – Crystal, Diamond, Pearl, and Saphyr. Each of the basic forms were derived from the capital letters in Scala Bold. Diamond and Saphyr were Majoor's original designes, with Crystal being based off of Remy Peignot's Cristal (1955), and Pearl based off Richard Austin's Fry's Ornamented (1796).

All information courtesy of martinmajoor.com

counter

Text

serif
stem

arm

feet