Printing in Relation to Graphic Art

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Prefatory Note

It is not the ~~porpuse~~ purpose of this book to try to establish a claim for printing that it is an art. It is hoped that it may show that the principles of art may be applied to printing, and that such application may lead to *improvement* in some **essentials** of printing.

Thanks are due to several experts in printing who have read the proofs, and have given wise and acceptable counsel.

I desire to acknowledge that aid has been freely sought from books upon art, and that in some instances forms of expression have been adopted from them. No originality is claimed for the allusions to art, nor for art terms and formulas employed.

— September, 1903, XXth century.

Introduction

The text below is an extract of *Printing in Relation to Graphic Art*, an essay by George French, ublished by The Imperial Press in Cleveland, 1903. It has been used by Julie Blanc, Julien Taquet and Fred Chasen in an early Paged.js demo.

Because it is difficult to perfectly transfer a thought from one mind to another it is essential that the principal medium through which such transference is accomplished may be as perfect as it is possible to make it **[1]** .

It is not wholly by means of the literal significance of certain forms of words that ideas are given currency, whether the words are spoken or printed. In speaking it is easy to convey an impression opposed to the literal meaning of the words employed, by the tone, the expression, the emphasis. It is so also with printed matter. The thought or idea to be communicated acquires or loses force, directness, clearness, lucidity, beauty, in proportion to the fitness of the typography employed as a medium.

It is not primarily a question of beauty of form that is essential in printing, but of the appropriateness of form. Beauty for itself alone is, in printing, but an accessory quality, to be considered as an aid to the force and clarity of the substance of the printed matter.

An object of art illustrating forms and expressions of beauty subtly suggests esthetic or sensuous emotions, which play upon the differing consciousnesses of beholders as their capacities and natures enable them to appreciate it. The impulse received from the art object is individually interpreted and appropriated, and its value to the individual is determined by each recipient, in accord with his nature, training, and capacity. **[a]**

↑ Old Heidelberg Offset Printing Machine

The motive of a piece of printing is driven into the consciousness of the reader with brutal directness, and it is one of the offices of the typographer to mitigate the severity of the message or to give an added grace to its welcome.

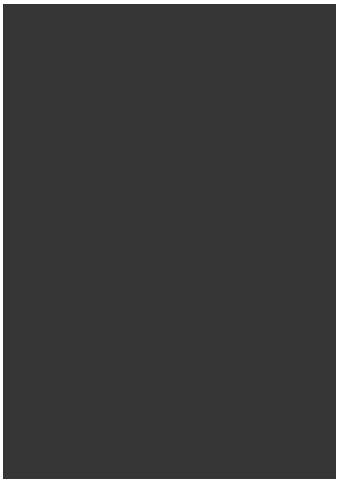
The book has become such a force as had not been dreamed of a generation ago. The magical increase in the circulation of books, by sale and through libraries, is one of the modern marvels. It is inevitable that the gentle and elevating influence of good literature will be greater and broader in proportion to the increase of the reading habit, for despite the great amount of triviality in literature the proportion of good is larger than ever before, and the trivial has not as large a proportion of absolute badness. The critical are prone to underrate the influence of what they esteem trivial literature upon the lives of the people who

[1] This text is extracted from an essay by George French, Printing in Relation to Graphic Art, Cleveland, The Imperial Press, 1903.

read little else. It is certain that there is some good in it, and that it affects the lives of those who read it. Even the most lawless of the bandits of the sanguinary novels has a knightly strain in his character, and his high crimes and misdemeanors are tempered with a certain imperative code of homely morality and chivalry. The spectacular crimes are recognized by the majority of readers as the stage setting for the tale—the tabasco sauce for the literary pabulum. They are not considered to be essential traits of admirable character. The cure for the distemper it is supposed to excite resides in the sensational literature of the day; it is as likely to lead to better things, it may be, as it is likely to deprave.

The cultivating power of any book is enhanced if it is itself an object of art. If it is made in accord with the principles of art, as they are applicable to printing and binding, it will have a certain refining influence, independent of its literary tendency. **[b]**

[b]



↑ Gutenberg bible Old Testament Epistle of St Jerome

If we are to subscribe to the best definition of esthetics, we are bound to recognize in the physical character of the books that are read by masses of people a powerful element for artistic education, and one lending itself to the educational propaganda with ready acquiescence and inviting eagerness. propaganda with ready acquiescence and inviting eagerness. propaganda with ready acquiescence and inviting eagerness.

The business and the mechanics of printing have attained a high degree of perfection. The attention bestowed upon the machinery of business, the perfection of systems and methods, has brought commercial and mechanical processes to a degree of perfection and finish that leaves slight prospect of further improvement, more illuminating systems, or more exact methods. The business of printing is conducted in a manner undreamt of by the men who were most consequential a generation ago. Only a few years have passed since the methods that now control in the counting-rooms of the larger printshops were unknown. Now all is system; knowledge, by the grace of formulas and figures.

A like condition prevails in the work rooms: in the composing-room and the pressroom. The processes incident to printing have been improved, in a mechanical way, until little is left for hope to feed upon. The trade of the printer has been broken into specialized units. The « all 'round » printer is no more. In his place there is the hand compositor, the « ad » compositor, the job compositor, the machine operator, the make-up man, the pressman, the press feeder, etc., each a proficient specialist but neither one a printer. To further mechanicalize the working printers, the planning of the work has been largely taken into the counting-room, or is done in detail at the foreman's desk. So every influence has been at work to limit the versatility and kill the originality of the man at the case. The compensatory reflection is the probability that the assembly of results accomplished by expert units may be a whole of a higher grade of excellence.

The process of specialized improvement has been carried through all the mechanical departments, and has had its way with every machine and implement, revolutionizing them and their manipulation also. The time is ripe for a new motive of improvement and advance to become operative. The mechanical evolution may well stay its course. It has far outstripped the artistic and the intellectual motives. It is quite time to return to them and bring them up to the point reached by the mechanics of the craft, if it be found not possible to put them as far in advance as their relative importance seems to demand.

↑ End of an Era as Murray State Retires Heidelberg Press
→ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6mav7bPLXK0

It is not difficult to conclude that certain principles of art have been influential in printing since the craft was inaugurated by Gutenberg and Fust and their contemporaries, but it appears that the relation between printing and the graphic arts has not yet been fully and consciously acknowledged. Some of the older rules and principles of printing are in perfect harmony with the principles and rules of art, and undoubtedly had their origin in the same necessity for harmony that lies in human nature and that was the seed of art principles.

Printing touches life upon so many of its facets, and is such a constant constituent of it, that it requires no special plea to raise it to the plane of one of the absolute forces of culture and one of the most important elements of progress. This postulate admitted, and the plea for the fuller recognition of the control of art principles in printing needs to be pressed only to the point of full recognition, and it requires no stretch of indulgent imagination to find printing successfully asserting a claim to be recognized as an art. It is manifest that printing is not an art in the sense that painting is an art. Painting has no utilitarian side. It is, with it, art or nothing. Printing is 99–100ths utilitarian. It is essentially a craft. If there is a possibility latent in it of development of true art through refinement and reform in its processes, and the application of art principles, to the end that the possibility of the production of occasional pieces that can demonstrate a claim to be art be admitted, it is all that can be hoped. This is claiming for printing only that which is conceded to the other crafts. There is no claim put forward for silversmiths that their work is all artistic; the chief part of it is very manifestly craftsmanship, yet examples that are true art constantly appear. The same is true of wood carving, of repoussé work in metals, and of many crafts. It may be true of printing, and will be when printers themselves become qualified to view their craftsmanship from the point of view of the artist, and feel for it that devotion which is always the recognizable controlling motive of artists in other graphic arts, and in those crafts that verge upon the graphic arts.

Art in Printing

There is this vital difference between other objects of art and printing: That our association with them is purely voluntary, and that printing forces itself upon us at all times and in every relation of life. It is impossible for a person of intelligence to

remove himself from the influence of printing. It confronts him at every turn, and in every relation of life it plays an important and insistent part.

Such examples of art as a painting or a piece of statuary exert a certain influence upon a restricted number of persons; and it is at all times optional with all persons whether they submit themselves to the influence of such art objects **[2]** . We are able to evade the influence of other forms of art, but we are not able to ward off printing. To it we must submit. It is constantly before our eyes; it is forever exerting its power upon our consciousness. It is quite possible **[3]** that we may not at present be able to refer any quality of mind, or any degree of cultivation, directly to printing, in any form it may have been presented to us; but it is easily conceivable that printing has a certain influence upon our esthetic life which has been so constant and so habitual as to have escaped definite recognition.

If we engage our minds in some attempt to realize the quality and extent of pleasure and profit derivable from the constant influence of printing that conforms to artistic principles, we may perceive that it may be a most powerful and effectual agency for culture. It is understood that it is the gentle but constant influence that moulds our habits and lives the more readily and lastingly. If therefore it is possible for us to conceive that the printed page of a book may illustrate and enforce several of the more elemental and important principles underlying graphic art, we may thereby realize that printing may readily be employed in the character of a very powerful art educator, if because of certain inalienable limitations it must be denied full recognition as a member of the sisterhood of arts.

The book page may be regarded as the protoplasm of all printing.

- If we examine the relation of principles of art to the book page
- we will be able to appreciate the exact importance of those principles in the composition of any other form of printing,
- and to so apply them as to secure results most nearly relating printing to graphic art.

It is the chief characteristic of this uncertain dogma of art in printing that its limitations and variations defy the conventional forms of expression, and almost require a new vocabulary of art terms. It assuredly requires a new and a different comprehension of the terms of art, and a distinctly varied comprehension of the word art itself. It has ever been a stumbling block to printers that the word art as applied to their craft must be given a more limited significance than is given it in its usual acceptance. If we can come at some intelligible appreciation of what we mean by art in printing the way will be opened for the application of that motive to the work of the presses.

If we recognize at once the fact that we do not mean exactly what a painter means when we use the word art with reference to printing, we will have taken the vital step toward a comprehensible employment of the term, as well as qualified ourselves for an understanding of the results we desire to achieve.

It is essential that we do not fall into the error of supposing that scientific accuracy is art. It is destructive of art, and the temptation to put too much stress upon exactitude is a mistake the printer must guard himself from with the most sedulous care. It is agreeable to recognize the touch of the artist, in printing as in other arts, and scientific accuracy is certain to obliterate individuality.

1. It is not the cold, lifeless abstraction, the shining exemplar of all the precepts and rules of art, that we love and desire, but the human note

[2] Notes are automatically numbered. No need to worry on keeping their order.
[3] Just keep in mind that `<br>` can be good fellows to control columns breaks.

speaking through the principles and rules. If the artist is not the dominant note, and the rules submerged by the personality, there is no value in the object of art.
2. The picture is interesting because the artist expresses through it his appreciation, his interpretation, of a beautiful thought or a lovely thing.
3. This is what puts the most faithful photographs outside of the pale of art, and compels the idealization of the performance of the camera before it can be considered to be artistic.
4. The photograph is not, usually, true to our view of life. If it is indeed true to life it represents a view of life that is quite strange to us, and often distasteful. We are not familiar with the uncouth animal the photograph shows us the horse in action to be, and we will not accept that caricature as the real horse.

The horse that is real to us is the animal we see with our eyes, and the horse in art must be the animal we see plus the artist's logical idealization. The facts are the same with regard to nearly all of the work of the camera, and with regard to other attempts at scientific accuracy in art. It is foreign to our experience, and does violence to our ideals. We actually see no such automatons as photography shows us men in action are, and we can never accept such disillusionment. If it is attempted in the name of art we will turn upon art and throw it out of our lives.

↑ Letterpress printing. the kindly romance nature has made a necessary adjunct to our powers of vision

It is the irredeemable fault of some processes employed in printing that they are too scientifically accurate. This is the legitimate argument against the halftone plate as contrasted with the line engraving or the reproductions of pen-and-ink work, etc. The halftone is too accurate. It brings us face to face with the stark reality, and brushes away all the kindly romance nature has made a necessary adjunct to our powers of vision. Attempts to restore this quality to halftones with the graver are only partially successful, as the defect is too deep seated, too radically fundamental. Some other processes, other than reproductive processes, employed in printing are exposed to this danger of too much scientific accuracy, producing results that have no warmth, no sympathy, no human power. Printing is peculiarly the victim of this cold formality of sentiment, and must be considered as upon that plane. But this fact makes the obligation to be alive to every opportunity to mitigate its severity the more pressing upon every printer who dreams of his work as of an art, and the closer the sympathy between the printer and the culture of art the more warmth and humanity he will be able to infuse into his work.

Some of the principles of art have a fundamental relation to printing, while some have an influence upon it so illusive as to defy definition, and compel us to look upon the connection as something no more substantial than feeling. Indeed, the whole matter of the application of art principles to printing may not unfairly be considered to be one of feeling; involving the saturation of the printer with the rules and tenets of art and the adding thereto of a fine discrimination tempered by a resolute philistinism, and then the play of his cultivated individuality upon the typography.

> *Principles and rules of art for the printer's guidance must be more mobile than can be permitted for the guidance of the painter, the draughtsman, the engraver, or the sculptor, because the medium for the expression of the printer's conception is so nearly immobile. It is the reverse of the general conception: The rule must adapt itself to the medium and to the circumstances, at least so far as the measure of its observance is concerned, if not in some emergencies where its principle is also at stake. It is conceivable in printing that emergencies may occur making it imperative to ignore the primary rules of composition, of proportion, of balance, or of perspective; it may be necessary to even do violence to principles relating to color or to tone. Such emergencies must be exceedingly rare, but that we are forced to regard them as possible emphasizes the subtle difference between art and art in printing. There can be no good art if the principles of art are violated in execution; there may be good printing if the principles of art are occasionally modified or even ignored.*

The motive of printing is not primarily an art motive. It is a utilitarian motive. In printing therefore art is to be invoked for guidance only so far as it will lend itself to the expression of the motive. It is never, in printing, « art for art's sake »; it is ever art for printing's sake. We do not print to illustrate art, nor to produce objects of art. We print to spread intelligence—to make knowledge available to all who will read. A painted picture, if of a high order of art, is meant to appeal to a sentiment but slightly connected with the « story » of the picture. The appreciative observer of a good painting gives little thought to the « story, » to the literary motive, but is absorbed in seeking for the artistic motive, in order that he may yield himself to the charm of the work of art; he seeks « art for art's sake. »

In printing it is the « story » that is told; it is the literary motive that must be considered, first and most anxiously. Nothing may interfere—not even art. The shaft of the « story » must go, swift and true, straight into the comprehension of the reader. This is the constant anxiety of the printer. The literary motive must not be encumbered. It must be freed from the mechanics of the printed page absolutely. This is the printer's problem. He must not seek to attract to his mechanics. It is the essence of his art that he liberate ideas and send them forth with no ruffled pinions, no evident signs of the pent-house page from which they wing their way.

The printer's work

The printer's work and the painter's art exactly reverse their processes, as their motives are opposed; but they must both work with the same tools, measurably. Everything with the painter is plastic, except his art. Everything is immobile with the printer, except his art; and of that he hopes to employ only so much as will gild the prosaic commercialism of the motive he must express. The chief principles and tenets of art are all applicable to the craft of printing, in some degree. Drawing, composition, harmony, balance, proportion, perspective, color, tone, light-and-shade, values, etc., are qualities of graphic art that apply to printing with varying force, according to the exigencies of each particular case in hand, and particularly according to the comprehension and cultivation of the printer. It is always possible to explain the beauty and power of any piece of printing by reference to the same principles that are responsible for the excellencies of other works of graphic art. It is therefore logical to assume that those principles which explain the excellencies of printing are responsible for them.

It is evident that the value of these art qualities in printing must depend upon the care and intelligence exercised in their application. They are refinements upon the usual and primary practices of printing, and unless they can be employed with full sympathy and knowledge, as well as with the artistic spirit and comprehension, they will appeal to the printer in vain.

The question with the printer is: Is it worth while to give my work all the beauty and distinction and power possible? If it is decided that it is profitable to execute work as worthily as it is possible to execute it, the printer will not be satisfied if he does not devote himself to a study of this phase of his craft, and a study of sufficient breadth and thoroughness to give him a reliable basis of knowledge and the resultant self-confidence. Having proceeded thus far he will not fail to apply all these art tenets to the full extent of his knowledge and their adaptability.

Pictorial Composition

While too much science is often deadly to art, the true basis of pictorial composition is rigidly scientific, and all of the principles governing it are of use and importance to the printer, especially in planning displayed work and in title pages.

Composition is that quality which gives a picture coherence, « the mortar of the wall. » It was not esteemed of importance by the old masters, and many of their works do not show that they knew or cared for that which distinguishes a picture from a map, a group photograph, or a scientific diagram. It is the absence of composition, balance, unity, that makes ordinary photographs something other than true works of art. It is not primarily truth of representation that is necessary in a work of art, but truth of idealization; and that quality is beyond the conscious

reach of the camera's lens. It is a redeeming and a justifying element added by the imagination of the artist. There may be a picture, by a photographer or by a painter, having all the requisite component parts to make it a work of art; there may be, for example, a woman, an axe, a road, a mountain, trees; but these thrown together upon a canvas do not make a work of art unless they are properly composed, even if they are arranged in an order satisfying to the realist, and each faultlessly executed. It is not the same thing to paint and to make pictures; to print and to execute artistic printing.

Rules of composition

The application of the rules of composition to pieces of printing made up in a whole or in part of « display » types is obviously essential to their beauty. It is the touch of beauty given to science that produces art. In printing the matter of securing balance and unity is at once more simple and more difficult than in painting. The component parts to be dealt with are more rigid and restricted, but are purely conventional and precise.

The painter's conception

The painter's conception is given balance and unity through the original drawing and color-scheme corrected and perfected by constant scrutiny and by tests and continual alterations. The printed piece must be balanced by a wise choice and skilful arrangement of the types, and a careful distribution of white space and black ink, or color. The actual center of a canvas is the center of attraction in a picture perfectly balanced. This does not mean that an equal amount of paint must be spread upon every quarter of the canvas, nor that objects of equal visual importance in themselves must be equally distributed over it. A tiny dot of distinctive paint, placed a certain distance from the center of the canvas, may perfectly balance an object ten times its size which is placed relatively nearer the center. Balance in printing must not be understood to mean that there must be an equal distribution of weight over all quarters of the piece, but that there must be a compensatory distribution of weight.

In his lucid and interesting book upon « Pictorial Composition » Mr. H. R. Poore gives a series of « postulates » which embody his ideas upon the subject, and are expressed in terms intelligible to the non-artistic as well as to those whose familiarity with art enables them to grasp more technical phrases. To the printer it is only necessary to suggest that he interpret « units » as meaning features in his work and he will be able to appreciate that these art rules may not infrequently stand him in good stead, especially when he is perplexed with some piece of work that he is having difficulty in making « look right. » Those of Mr. Poore's « postulates » that appear to apply easily to printing, and may be more profitably studied and heeded by printers and others interested in typography, are here given:

All pictures are a collection of units.
Every unit has a given value.
The value of a unit depends on its attraction; of its character, of its size, of its placement.
A unit near the edge has more attraction than at the center.
Every part of the picture space has some attraction.
Space having no detail may possess attraction by gradation and by suggestion.
A unit of attraction in an otherwise empty space has more weight through isolation than the same when placed with other units.
A unit in the foreground has less weight than one in the distance.

Two or more associated units may be reckoned as one and their united center is the point on which they balance with others.

In the application of the rules of composition to graphic art it is possible to minutely subdivide the topic and refer to specific examples and explicit rules for practice. The selection of the particular kind of balance to be sought depends upon the placement of the important item or subject, which is in itself chiefly important in the scheme of balance as giving the keynote, furnishing the starting point. There is the balance of equal measures, which is a picture or piece of printing which may be cut into four equal parts, by horizontal and vertical lines drawn through its center, with each part showing equal weight; the balance of isolated measures, where the chief item is placed away from the center and has one or more isolated spots to compensate, skilfully placed; the horizontal balance; the vertical balance; the formal balance; the balance by opposition of light and dark measures; balance by gradation; balance of isolation, and other varieties of balance more technical and more especially adapted to the painter's uses. Each of these variants of the basic rules of composition may be of special value to the printer, if he studies the subject sufficiently to gain a clear comprehension of how each applies in printing.

This is one of the art subjects that the practical printer may deem of too slight consequence to merit his careful attention. But if it is desired to produce printing of power—power to pleasurably attract the eye of those persons who possess either an instinctive or a cultivated taste for art—it is essential that the work adhere closely to the rules governing pictorial composition. The eye is a relentless judge. Here, as in all printing, the esthetic motive is identical with the business consideration. There is a double motive for the best printing, the esthetic and the business motive, and it is impossible to separate them, or consider either apart from the other. It is unnecessary to attempt to evade the force and meaning of the new appreciation of the basis of good printing, as it leads so surely to financial as well as esthetic betterment, and should be congenial to the tastes of every printer who has advanced in his craft beyond the standards of the wood-sawyer.

Type Composition

The composition of type is the first task an apprentice is required to undertake when he goes to « learn the trade, » and his ideas regarding its importance rarely rise above the level of the drudgery of his early days at the case. But little of the effort to improve the quality of printing has as yet extended back to this primary proceeding, the setting of the type, yet in this fundamental operation lies the possibility for very great improvement and distinction, and for lamentable failure.

Progress in typography has been slower, and it has reached a less advanced position, than have other branches of the printing craft. Presswork for example has become so nearly perfect as to leave little room for the exercise of the critic's art; and the choice and manipulation of paper leaves little hope for radical advance. Type is set as it was set one, two, three generations ago, for the most part. A few printers have given this subject special study, and are executing book pages that are the wonder and despair of the craft. Their distinction has been rather easily won. It is quite possible to detect the source of it, and not difficult to draw the same results from the same fount.

It has become a habit to accept the composed page of type as the foundation upon which to erect a fine piece of printing. The real foundation lies somewhat further back. There can scarcely be distinction in a printed piece unless its source is in the successive steps of progress that antedate the

composition of the type. The final artistic result must be clearly conceived in the mind of the printer before he drops one type into the stick. His scheme must be fully developed, and it must be consistent in all its details.

The type for a piece of printing should be selected to give adequate expression to the literary motive, to properly emphasize the subject matter, with the view to the production of a handsome and worthy piece of printing. To secure this latter quality in printing is the primary object of the typesetter, and therein lies the proof of his skill and of his taste. Whether the type selected is the best possible for a given piece of work may be a debatable question, but however it succeeds or fails in this particular, the printer may manipulate it in such a manner as will result in a consistent and artistic example of typography. He may use the sizes which should be in conjunction; he may avoid the common anachronism of lower-case and capital-letter lines in the same piece; he may place his white space so that it will not only be agreeably proportioned to the black or other color of the print but so that it will be as important an element of strength as the ink-covered surface; he may adjust the margins.

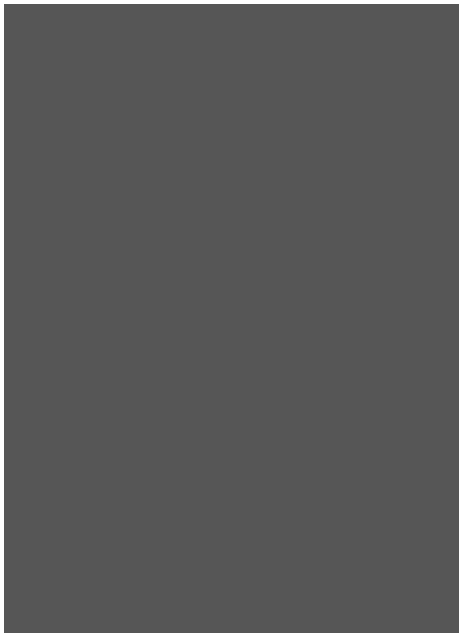
↑ Movable type on a composing stick on a type case

These points are all vital, but none of them more so than the use of lower-case and capital-letter lines in conjunction. The capital letters of the ordinary font of type do not lend themselves gracefully to the making of complete words. They are not designed for such work. The lower-case letters are designed to stand together, but it is impossible to combine many capital letters without making noticeable gaps and breaks and some awkward connections. But the objection to capital-letter lines in conjunction with lower-case lines does not rest chiefly upon this point. There are fonts of type from which capital-letter lines scarcely subject to the criticism suggested may be set. The objection is not urged against capital-letter lines in a prohibitive sense, but because their intrusion in a company of lower-case lines destroys harmony. A like deplorable effect is produced by the use of inharmonious series of type for the same piece of typography. The war of styles of type is as destructive to artistic effect as the poorest execution can be. In the old days the apprentice was taught to alternate lower-case and capital-letter lines in job printing, and avoid using two lines of the same series in conjunction.

No one of the small refinements which are now being applied to composition has worked so radical an improvement as the newer ideas relative to spacing, and the perception that the spacing between words, the leading between lines, and the degree of blackness of the face of the letter, must have a balanced relation. This has operated to abolish the conventional em quadrat after the period, and to produce a page of type-matter which lends itself readily to securing tone and optical comfort.

The activity and the fecundity of the type founders in producing new type faces has operated, in the first instance, to furnish new excuse for discord. Then a reaction began, and the liberality of the founders in making complete lines and elaborate series of type faces is suggesting uniformity in scheme and supplying material for consistent execution. The elaborate specimen books are scarcely a temptation to restraint however, nor do they tempt to classicism. The more recent product of the foundries is much more creditable, and it appears that the designing of type has been taken in hand by artists of capacity, who are actuated by motives worthy of their ambitions and guided by historical research that is true in aim if not always profound.

[c]



↑ *Better done than perfect* by Erik Spiekermann

In this vitally fundamental matter we have made little real progress. The disciples of better things are not honored with a following. They are regarded with mild interest by a few of the more progressive ones, with distinct disapproval by the many conservatives **[c]**, and with utter indifference by the mass. Yet they will win. That there is impending a considerable reform in the composition of type is certain, and the reform will consist in the general adoption of the refinements now practiced by a few: In a closer study of the matter of spacing and leading, with a view to bringing the tone of the page up to near the artistic requirements; in a better balance between body type and chapter and page headings; in a better, more consistent and uniform management of the folio; in order that those features may be actually the guiding and subsidiary features in typography that they assuredly are in the literary scheme of the book.

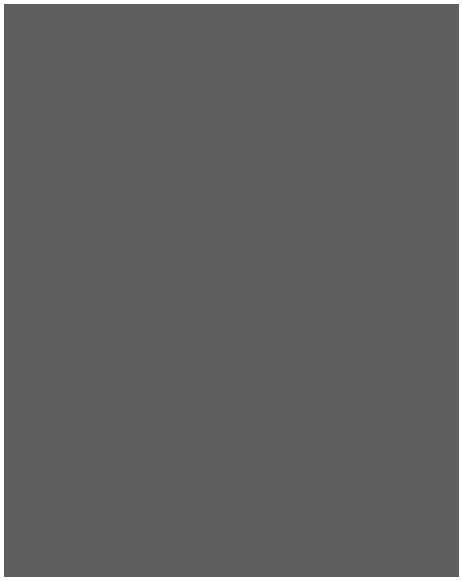
The time is coming when a book page will be planned to harmonize with and express the literary motive; to promote ease and pleasure in reading; and to satisfy the innate sense of artistic harmony which is felt and appreciated by the cultivated reader, even if, as must often be the fact, he is quite unconscious of the existence of such a demand.

Conclusion

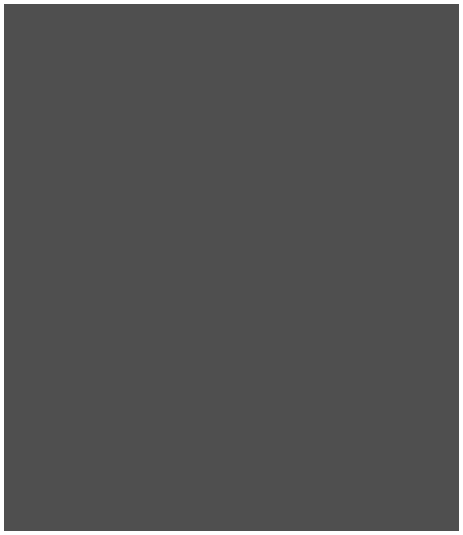
It is upon a basis somewhat like this that books should be planned: Make one page that meets the requirements of art and of the literary motive, and base the book upon it. Such is not the general custom. It is more the fashion to fix the size of the book and accommodate the page to the arbitrary scheme, forcing the type and the format to adequate proportions. There are books that are artistically ruined by the use of type of an inharmonious face, or that may be one size too small or too large; there are many books that are, typographically, abortions, because of neglect to conform to certain very simple tenets of art, when they might as easily have been exemplars of artistic motives and a comfort and delight to each cultivated reader.

It is doubtless because these neglected essentials are so simple and so easily incorporated that it is so difficult to obtain recognition and currency for them. But we may rejoice that books are beginning to receive some of this kind of attention, even in the big printing factories, where books are made very much as barrels of flour are turned out of the great northwestern mills, or as bags of grain are discharged from the modern reapers marching in clattering procession over the horizon-wide wheat townships.

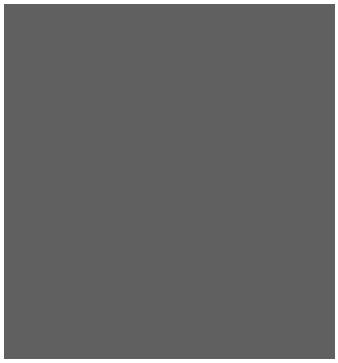
The text above is an extract of *Printing in Relation to Graphic Art*, an essay by George French, ublished by The Imperial Press in Cleveland, 1903. It has been used by Julie Blanc, Julien Taquet and Fred Chasen in an early Paged.js demo.



↑ *Such a caption*, 2003, page 19



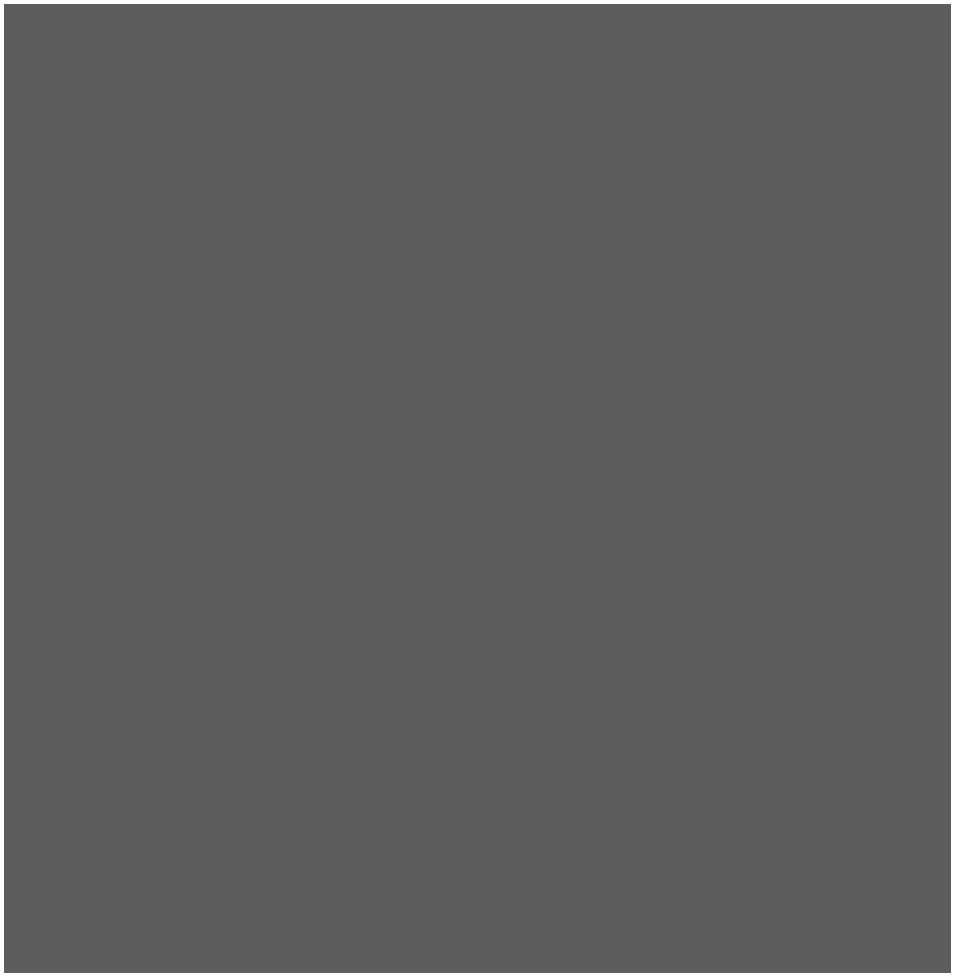
↑ *Die neue typographie*, Jan Tschichold, 1928, couverture

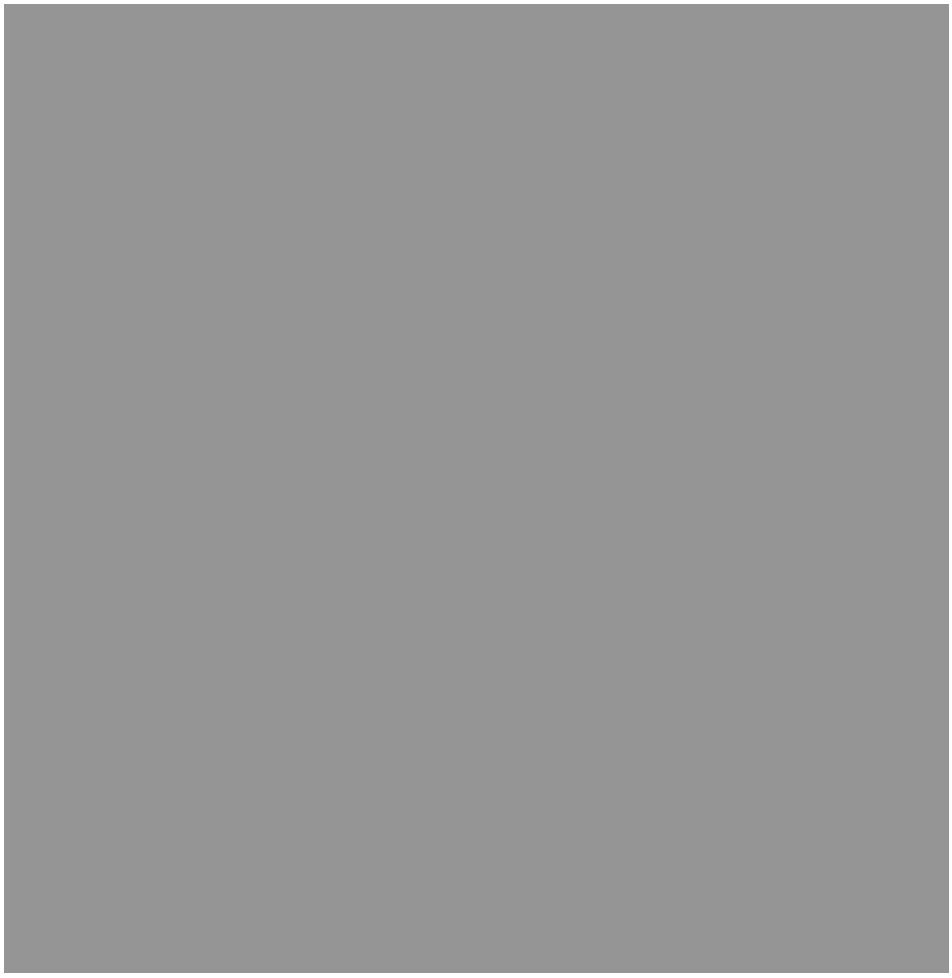


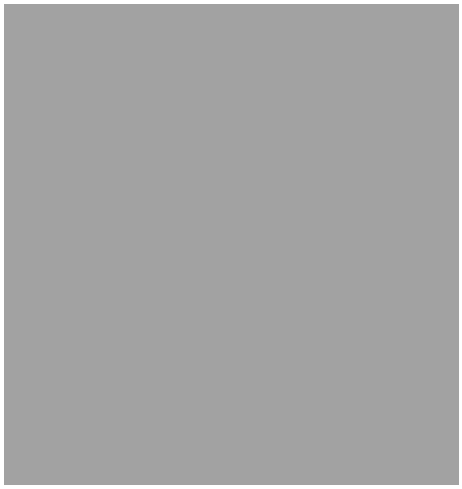
↑ *Le monde comme projet*, Otl Eicher, 1992, couverture

↑ *L'art du designer*, Paul Rand, 2021, couverture

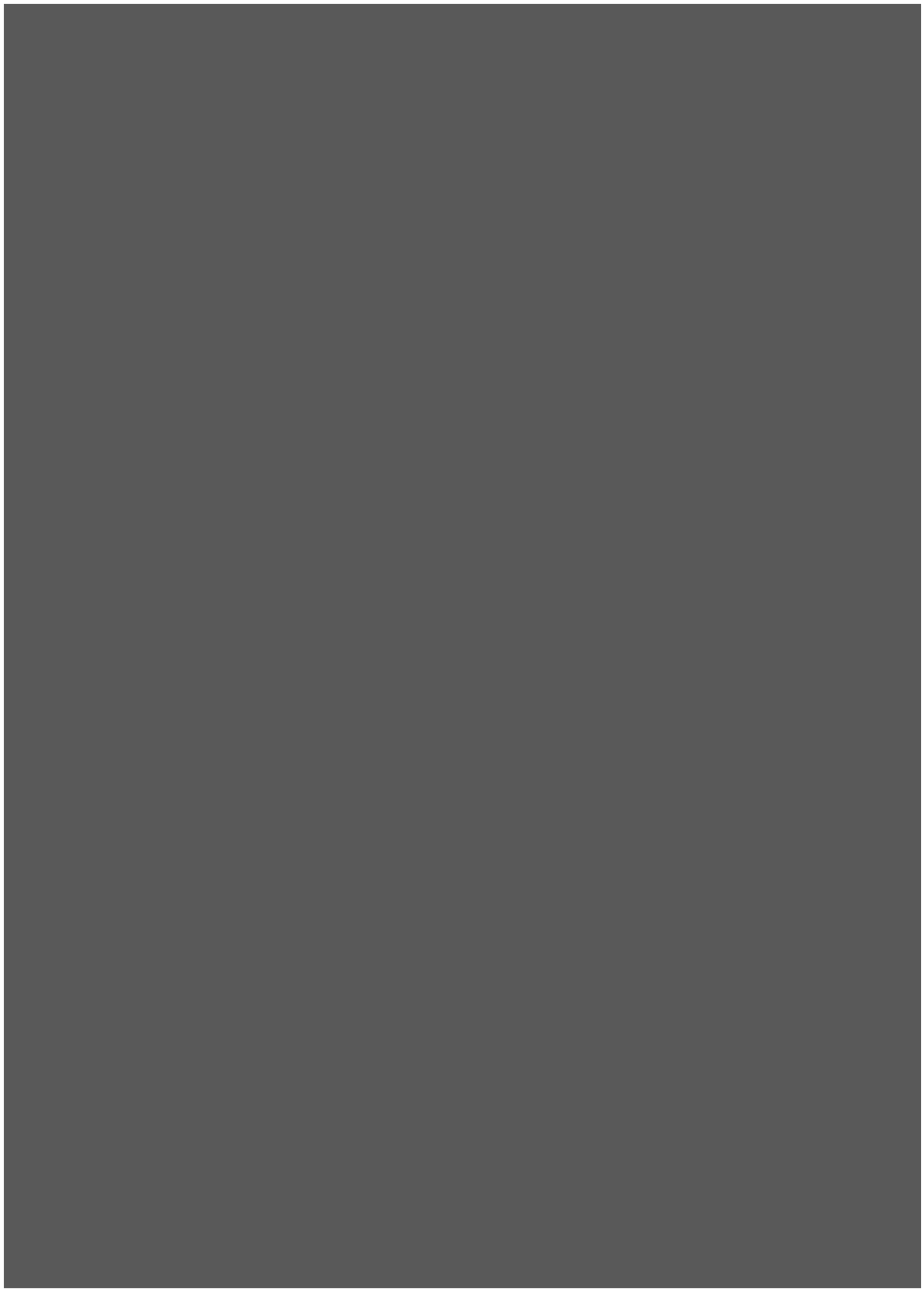
↑ *Un design de livre systématique ?*, Jost Hochuli, John Morgan, 2020, pages



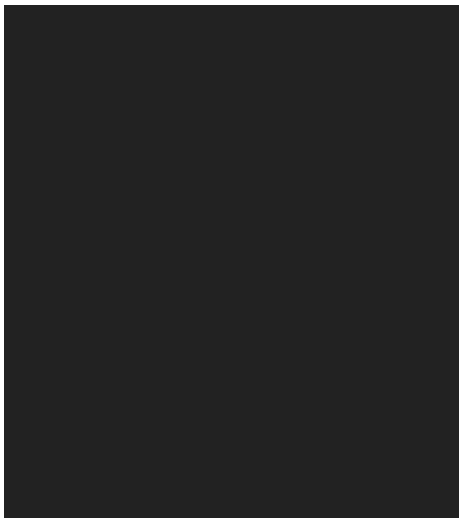




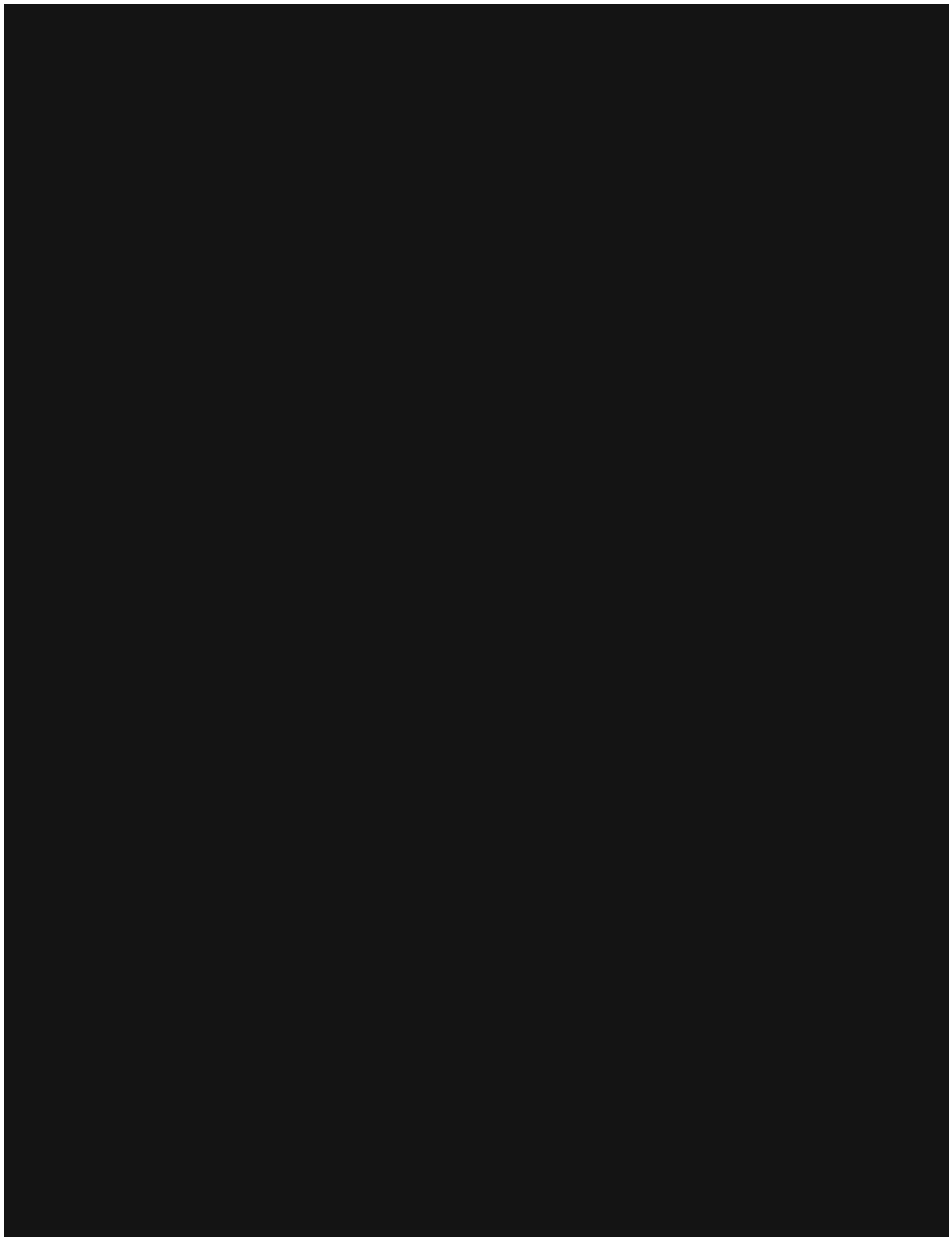
↑ *Technique & design graphique*, 2020, Bruno Bachimont, pages



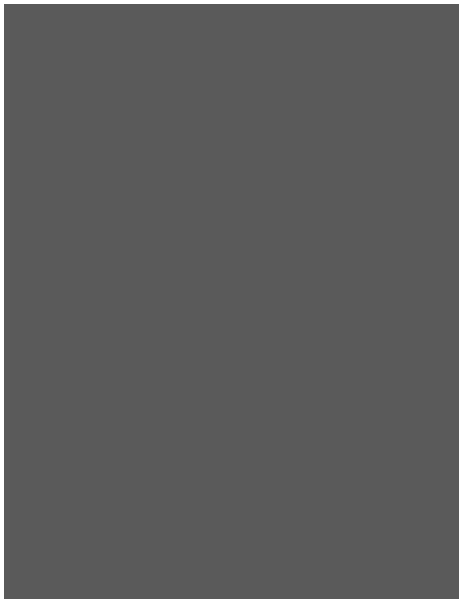
↑ *Pour une esthétique de l'émancipation*, 2017, Isabelle Alfonsi, page

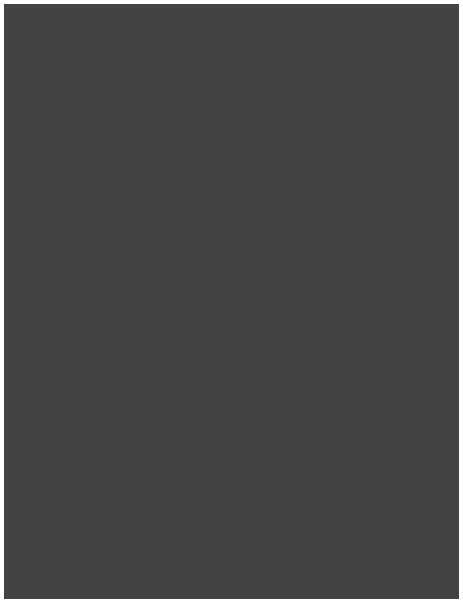


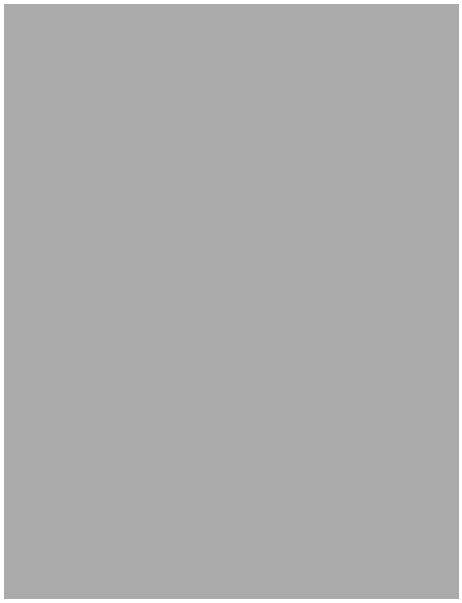
↑ *.txt 3*, Lise Brosseau, Justine Chevalier, Vincent Duché, Antoine Gelgon, Alice Jauneau, Ivan Murit, 2018, pages



↑ *Jeu de construction*, 2020, Paul Cox, pages







Entretien avec Raphaël Bastide paru dans Back Office #1.

Les productions des étudiants en design ne sont que trop rarement publiées en ligne par les écoles. Comment présenter ce type de travaux à un public extérieur, tout en renforçant la dynamique propre au cours ? Conçue pour l'atelier de créations typographiques de Benjamin Gomez à l'École européenne supérieure d'art de Bretagne, site de Rennes, la plateforme Monoïde propose des pistes oscillant entre archivage, communication et répertoire de formes. Raphaël Bastide présente ce projet créé lors d'un workshop en 2014.

Back Office **Pouvez-vous présenter Monoïde ?**

Raphaël Bastide Monoïde est une plateforme de documentation typographique. Trois journées de travail ont permis aux étudiants d'imaginer l'identité visuelle, la structure et l'interface du site Web. J'ai pris en charge le développement technique (hébergé sur le serveur Web de l'école) pendant et après le workshop. Ce projet reflète l'ouverture de l'école sur le logiciel libre et le travail collaboratif tout en permettant aux étudiants de réfléchir à la restitution et à l'archivage de leurs travaux.

BO **Comment l'interface est-elle conçue ? ?**

RB La page d'accueil de Monoïde présente les dernières productions typographiques des étudiants, chacune accompagnée d'un court texte d'intention et d'une image d'aperçu apparaissant au survol du bloc. Chaque projet comprend des carrousels d'images et des textes de description (formatés en syntaxe Markdown afin de faciliter la mise à jour du site). Les formats d'image adaptés sont le SVG (affichage d'images vectorielles dans le navigateur Web) ainsi que le GIF (format permettant des animations simples et facilement partageables). Les étapes de développement du caractère sont visibles et accessibles directement depuis un menu latéral généré automatiquement à partir des blocs de texte. Un champ d'envoi permet au rédacteur d'ajouter une archive compressée contenant les fichiers sources des caractères typographiques, ainsi que des croquis, images, numérisations, etc.

BO **Comment fonctionne cette plateforme ?**

RB La base technique de Monoïde s'appuie sur Ofont, un gestionnaire « maison » dérivé du CMS open source Processwire. J'ai créé Ofont afin de classer et partager des polices libres de droits avec mes collaborateurs, clients, étudiants, etc. Ce programme vise à corriger les lourdeurs techniques et limitations des annuaires de caractères disponibles 6 en proposant une structure légère et simple à mettre en œuvre. Il permet de constituer une taxonomie personnelle en dépassant les imprécisions des systèmes de classification typographique conventionnels (Vox-ATypI, etc.) souvent trop figés au regard de la création contemporaine. J'ai d'ailleurs mis en évidence ces problèmes lors de mon intervention au Libre Graphics Meeting de 2013, à l'occasion duquel j'avais proposé la rédaction du standard « Unified Font Repository », qui visait à normaliser l'architecture des fichiers d'une police de caractère en proposant une fiche d'identité au format texte brut rassemblant l'ensemble de ses métadonnées. La plateforme réalisée à l'ÉESAB Rennes est un fork d'Ofont adapté aux besoins du cours.

BO **En quoi la documentation peut-elle participer d'une démarche pédagogique ?**

RB De façon générale, la documentation a pour tâche de restituer des expériences en énonçant les intentions, étapes de conception, outils, méthodologies et

références convoquées. Il est rare de trouver des protocoles de documentation et d'archivage fonctionnels et adaptés aux productions typographiques des étudiants en écoles d'art. Monoïde répond au constat fait par Benjamin Gomez que de nombreux projets d'étudiants, d'une année à l'autre, abordent des problématiques similaires et aboutissent parfois à des résultats très proches. Avec cette plateforme, un étudiant à la possibilité de se saisir d'un caractère laissé en chantier, d'en poursuivre le développement ou de l'emmener dans une direction de travail différente. L'ambition est de parvenir à des résultats à la fois plus variés, plus précis, dont les enjeux se nourrissent mutuellement, tout en engageant un dialogue potentiel entre années. Cette dynamique de déploiement « à partir de » permet également de sensibiliser les étudiants aux méthodologies de travail contributives, spécifiques au logiciel libre, mises en œuvre dans des sites Web comme GitHub.

Letterpress printing
Letterpress printing is a technique of relief printing. Using a printing press, the process allows many copies to be produced by repeated direct impression of an inked, raised surface against sheets or a continuous roll of paper. A worker composes and locks movable type into the « bed » or « chase » of a press, inks it, and presses paper against it to transfer the ink from the type, which creates an impression on the paper.

Movable type
Movable type (US English; moveable type in British English) is the system and technology of printing and typography that uses movable components to reproduce the elements of a document (usually individual alphanumeric characters or punctuation marks) usually on the medium of paper.

Typography
Typography is the art and technique of arranging type to make written language legible, readable and appealing when displayed. The arrangement of type involves selecting typefaces, point sizes, line lengths, line-spacing (leading), and letter-spacing (tracking), as well as adjusting the space between pairs of letters (kerning). The term typography is also applied to the style, arrangement, and appearance of the letters, numbers, and symbols created by the process. Type design is a closely related craft, sometimes considered part of typography; most typographers do not design typefaces, and some type designers do not consider themselves typographers. Typography also may be used as an ornamental and decorative device, unrelated to the communication of information.

Type design
Type design is the art and process of designing typefaces. This involves drawing each letterform using a consistent style.

Stroke
The shape of designed letterforms and other characters are defined by strokes arranged in specific combinations. This shaping and construction has a basis in the gestural movements of handwriting. The visual qualities of a given stroke are derived from factors surrounding its formation: the kind of tool used, the angle at which the tool is dragged across a surface, and the degree of pressure applied from beginning to end. The stroke is the positive form that establishes a character’s archetypal shape

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Sitographie

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Remerciements

Thanks folks.