

Meet the cast:

A B C D
E F G H I J K
L M N O P
Q R S T U V
W X Y Z

Now see the movie:

Helvetica

A documentary film by Gary Hustwit

A Swiss Dot production,
in association with Veer
swiss dots 
Helvetica

Featuring:
Michael Brandt
Neville Brody
Matthew Carter
Lars Müller
Wim Crouwel
Experimental Jetset
Tobias Frere-Jones
Peter Hoeller

Lars Müller
Norm
Matthew Carter
Michael C. Place
Peter Pichler
Wim Crouwel
Stefan Sagmeister
Leslie Savan
Paula Scher
Mentefix Schrifz

Director of Photography:
Luke Geissbühler
Production and Directed by:
Gary Hustwit
Additional Photography:
Colin Brown
Sound Mixer:
Andy Kris

Additional Editing:
Laura Weinberg
Sound Recording:
Mike Parker
Music:
The Album Leaf
Battles
Caribou
Cloud Underground
Quartet
El Ten Eleven
Four Tet
Kim Kashou

Associate Producers:
Andrew Deskin
John Goldsmith
Gary Hustwit
Michelle Hustwit
Jakob Tröltzsch
Antoine Wilson
Chris Lewinson Wilson

CONTENT BRIEF

AN EXPLORATION INTO TYPOGRAPHY, GRAPHIC DESIGN, AND GLOBAL VISUAL CULTURE. |
DIRECTOR GARY HUSTWIT. | STARS MANFRED SCHULZ MASSIMO VIGNELLI RICK POYNOR |
DOCUMENTARY | 1 HOUR 20 MINUTES | RELEASED IN 2007 TO COINCIDE WITH THE 50TH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE TYPEFACE'S INTRODUCTION IN 1957 | CONSIDERED FIRST IN
DIRECTOR'S DESIGN TRILOGY OF MOVIES

HELVETICA QUICK FACTS

CREATED IN 1957 BY EDUARD HOFFMAN (DIRECTOR OF TYPE FOUNDRY)
& MAX MIEDINGER (SALESMAN X GRAPHIC DESIGNER) IN SWITZERLAND

THE ORIGINAL NAME? NEUE HAAS GROTESK,
RENAMED TO DO BETTER IN THE USA MARKETS

“HELVETIA” IS THE LATIN NAME FOR SWITZERLAND, THE
“C” WAS ADDED TO MAKE IT SEEM MORE UNIVERSAL

ARIAL IS A CLONE OF SORTS OF HELVETICA

Helvetica Lig

ABCDEFGHIJKLM NOPQRSTUVWXYZ 12
THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPED OVER

Helvetica Lig

ABCDEFGHIJKLM NOPQRSTUVWXYZ 12
THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPED OVER

Helvetica

ABCDEFGHIJKLM NOPQRSTUVWXYZ 12
THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPED OVER

Helvetica Ital

ABCDEFGHIJKLM NOPQRSTUVWXYZ 12
THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPED OVER

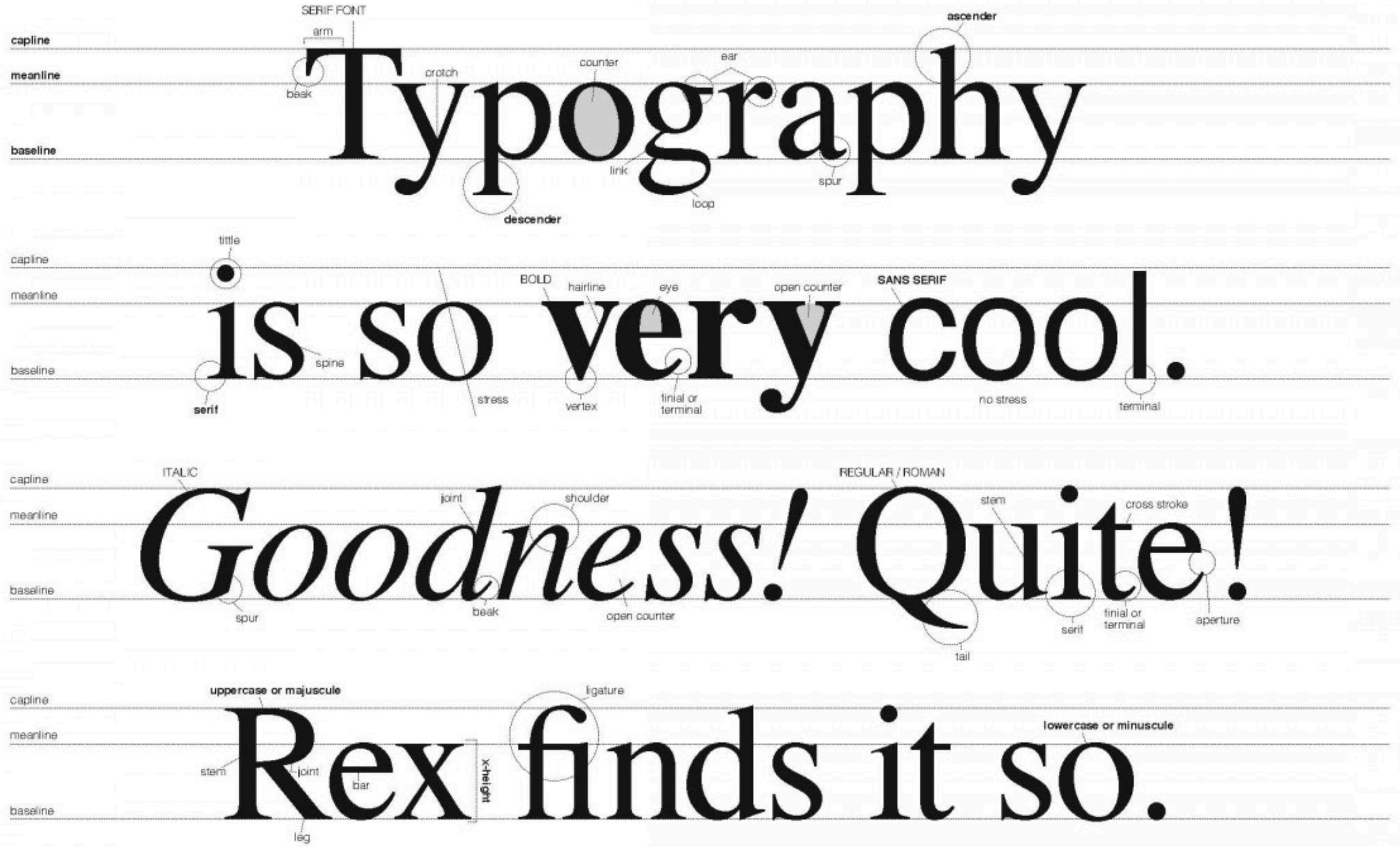
Helvetica Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLM NOPQRSTUVWXYZ 12
THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPED OVER

Helvetica Bold

ABCDEFGHIJKLM NOPQRSTUVWXYZ 12
THE QUICK BROWN FOX JUMPED OVER

Typographical Anatomy



**TYPEFACE =
HELVETICA**

AKA FONT-FAMILY IN CSS

**FONT =
HELVETICA BOLD**

**TYPEFACE
GIVES MOOD,
ATMOSPHERE,
VIBES**

“THIS ONE IS MORE A
BIRTHDAY PARTY ON A
BOAT VS QUIET DAY IN THE
HIGH CEILING LIBRARY”

DESIGN NOTES

FOR HELVETICA



REALLY FOCUSED ON RELATIONSHIP OF
NEGATIVE SPACE, LIKE LOWERCASE "A"

CLEAN-CUT TERMINALS LIKE ON "S", TIGHT
SPACING BETWEEN LETTERS, TALL "X" HEIGHT

LETTERS INDIVIDUAL ENOUGH SO INTERESTING,
SIMILAR ENOUGH SO PATTERNS

CREATED IN A TIME
WHEN STEEL WAS USED,
~1 LETTER A DAY CUT

TYPOGRAPHERS WOULD START USUALLY WITH
LOWERCASE "H" (WOULD INFORM "N", "M", "U")
THEN DO "O" FOR A ROUND LETTER, "P" FOR A
LETTER WITH A DESCENDER

THICK, THIN, CONTRAST
IS IT SERIF? SANS SERIF?
ASCENDER HEIGHT

19
57

CONTEXT

**IS IT LEGIBLE?
IS IT RATIONAL?
IS IT VERSITLE?
IS IT NEUTRAL?**



SWISS DESIGN MOVEMENT
FOCUSED ON GRID DESIGN
INCREASED VISUAL ORDER

**"CREATING ORDER IS TYPOGRAPHY" -
WIM CROUWEL
= THE VIEW OF MODERNISM**

**THE MEANING IS
NOT IN THE TYPE
FACE, IT IS IN
THE CONTENT**



stedelijk van abbemuseum eindhoven

dagelijks geopend
van 10-17 uur
zon- en feestdagen
van 13-17 uur
dinsdag- en
donderdagavond
van 20-22 uur

hiroshima

panelen van iri maruki en toshiko akamatsu

30 maart tot
15 april 1957

ADVERTISING MAGIC MODERNIZING WAND

"HOW ABOUT HELVETICA?"

BECAME USED A LOT TO "CLEAN UP" DESIGNS AT THE TIME



1953 COKE AD, TAKEN FROM THE MARCH 2ND 1953 LIFE MAGAZINE

1960S COKE AD, SERIES RAN ALSO IN LIFE MAGAZINE



target

3M



AmericanAirlines



Nestl 

cvs



SAAB



Lufthansa



JCPenney



OLYMPUS

WHERE
IS HELVETICA?

EVERYWHERE

Jeep



Tupperware

FENDI



FedEx



Oral-B

American
Apparel

THE
NORTH
FACE

Scotch

Crate&Barrel

"IT IS GRAVITY - TIMELESS &
EVERWHERE"

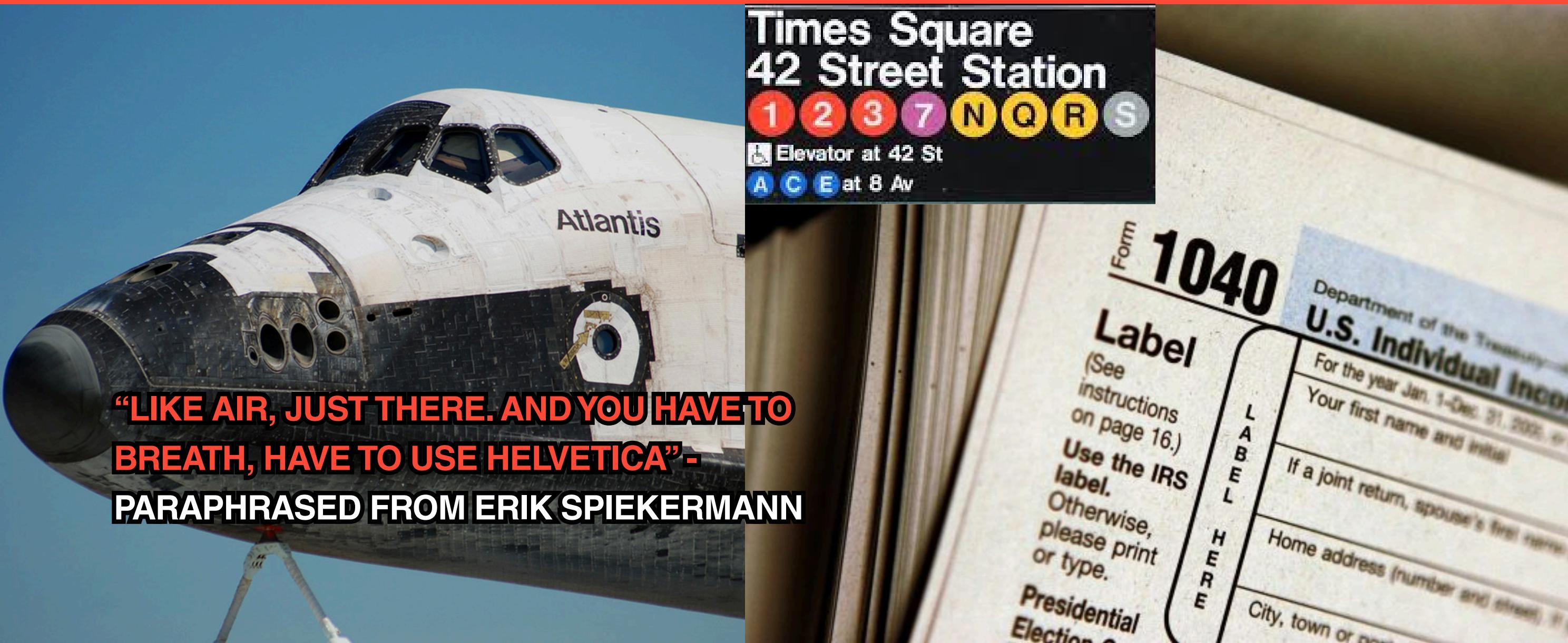
"IT IS THE PERFUME
OF THE CITY - YOU
DON'T NOTICE BUT
WOULD MISS IT"

WHY IS IT STILL EVERWHERE?

HUMANIZES,
FAMILIAR,
NEUTRAL,
SAFE,
WELL-
ROUNDED

50+ YEARS LATER

A DEFAULT THAT IS
ACCESSIBLE & ACCOUNTABLE,
“THE BEIGE WALL”



Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	2/3 cup (55g)
<hr/>	
Amount per serving	
Calories	230
<hr/>	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
<hr/>	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 240mg	6%
<hr/>	
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

(For educational purposes only. These labels do not meet the labeling requirements described in 21 CFR 101.9.)

LAW OF DIMINISHING RETURNS?

IS IT TOO PREDICABLE
NOW THAT IT IS DULL?

SHIFTED FROM IDEALISM
TO ROUTINE?

CHALLENGE TO MAKE IT
SPEAK IN DIFFERENT WAYS

HOW ABOUT IN

POST MODERN?



STILL AN EASY WIN

IF YOU ARE NOT A
DESIGNER, USE
HELVETICA BOLD IN
ONE SIZE ON A FLYER,
IT LOOKS GOOD”

WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT NOW?

IS THERE MORE WISH
FOR VITALITY IN FONTS?



MASSIMO
VIGNELLI

A SPECTRUM OF VIEWPOINTS

DAVID
CARSON

"I USE 4 FONTS, AND ONE IS HELVETICA"

"SHOULDN'T BE AWARE OF THE TYPEFACE AT ALL
BUT SHOULD BE AFFECTED BY IT SUBCONSCIOUSLY
LIKE HOW CASTING DIRECTOR INFLUENCES A MOVIE
WITH THEIR CHOICES"

"A FONT SHOULD HAVE RHYTHM
AND CONTRAST"

"DON'T CONFUSE LEGIBILITY WITH
COMMUNICATION. FINE LINE BETWEEN SIMPLE,
CLEAN, POWERFUL & SIMPLE, CLEAN BORING"

"DOES 'CAFFEINATED' IN HELVETICA
REALLLY SAY CAFFEINATED?"

