



**TYPOGRAPHY**

**AND THE**

**NUMEROUS VENTURES**

**OF HERBERT BAYER**

**NATHANIEL BUECHLER**

# Typography and the Numerous Ventures of Herbert Bayer

Nathaniel Buechler

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 1234567890  
 .,: ‘ “ [!?]

Architype Bayer-type - full alphabet



Herbert Bayer mastered an encompassing cross-disciplinary background. [Figure 1]

## Herbert Bayer Also a Typographer

Herbert Bayer designed Architype Bayer-type based on an enthusiastic approach that focused upon creating a multiple disciplinary syntheses of ideas. Bayer sought to create a simplified semiotic typeface that unified clear communication.

Furthermore, the Bauhaus foundational thought-process complemented the geometric qualities and characteristics of Universal, a previous experimental typeface of Bayer that later was implemented in Bauhaus publications.

Herbert Bayer acted on his instincts and followed his passion with Architype Bayer-type, his last major typographic achievement before fleeing to the United States as a response to the Nazi rise to power.

As a summary of Herbert Bayer’s life, many of his achievements occurred outside the realm of European influences, although Bayer was inspired by Bauhaus studies.

During his youth, Bayer developed a long-lasting foundation in the arts [Figure 1]. Born in Salzburg in 1900, the Austrian Youth Movement defined his creative potential as one who worked towards a world of balance, fairness, and unification between social and natural forces.<sup>1</sup>

Before moving to New York in 1937, Bayer developed the craft of not only a typographer, but also as a designer specializing in printing and advertising as a director of the Bauhaus from 1925 until 1928. Bayer’s experiences as a director of *Vouge* and an editor of *Die neue Linie* after 1928 depicted his prominence in German design.<sup>2</sup>

In his life, Herbert Bayer encompassed Surrealist approaches to expression as he was influenced by Kandinsky, and the inclusion of Bayer’s work in the Nazi degenerate art exhibit increased his reputation in artistic channels.<sup>3</sup> But, Herbert Bayer accomplished more than typography and design in his lifetime before he died in 1985.

Herbert Bayer grew from roots of participation in Jan Tschichold’s projects, such as *Elementare Typographie* [Figure 2], and acquisition of basic principles as a Bauhaus student [Figure 3]. Yet later in his career as an artist, Bayer participated in exhibits at the New York Museum of Modern Art; one of which, “The Airways to Peace” with the centerpiece Bayer’s Globe [Figure 4], led him on a course of multidisciplinary integration.

After a variety of experiences, Herbert Bayer realized a five-year long project to unify visual communication with humanity and its surroundings. Bayer lead a small design team and completed *Geo-graphic Atlas* in 1953 after moving to Aspen, Colorado.<sup>4</sup> His experiences were quite fulfilling to the extent of that of a polymath.

1. Peder Anker, “Graphic Language: Herbert Bayer’s Environmental Design,” *Environmental History* 12, no. 2 (April 1, 2007): 254–279, doi:10.2307/25473066.

2. Ibid.

3. Grace Glueck, “Herbert Bayer, 85, a Designer and Artist of Bauhaus School,” *New York Times*, October 1, 1985, sec. Style, <http://search.proquest.com/hnpnewyorktimes/docview/111296804/abstract?accountid=14577>.

4. Anker, “Graphic Language.”



His earlier studies of typography assisted the semiotic manner of communication in his atlas, and simple symbols effectively embodied meaning in a particular way that set the precedent for environmental design, economic understanding, and a vast multitude of other disciplines.

In fact, Herbert Bayer interacted both directly and indirectly with other prominent figures in the world ranging from photographers, entrepreneurs, and system thinkers, such as photographer Ansel Adams, industrialist Walter P. Paepcke, and architect Richard Buckminster Fuller, respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps Herbert Bayer formed a multidisciplinary perspective due to his passion for creating a better applied harmonious integration between social and natural lens of life; however, the interactions Bayer had with the people throughout his tenure as an artist, architect, designer, and cartographer must have contributed to the accomplishments in his lifetime.

The surrealist undertones and meanings Kandinsky taught to Bayer as a student of the Bauhaus impacted Bayer,<sup>6</sup> and his newfound life in Aspen, Colorado as a designer for Paepcke funded the creative endeavors and innovations Bayer wanted to pursue.<sup>7</sup> His contributions to the communities had fully gained Herbert Bayer the ability to create masterworks. And, his renown and prestige make him more than a typographer.

Additionally, the ability to gain fame as a designer and typographer aided Herbert Bayer in his movement towards achieving his integrative vision in both the United States and Germany.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, Bayer supplemented his drawbacks by the network of connections he developed in the later part of his career throughout the United States. He would find that the ability to effectively communicate and form lasting relationships was key to his success.



Herbert Bayer participated in many Bauhaus publications.

[Figure 2]

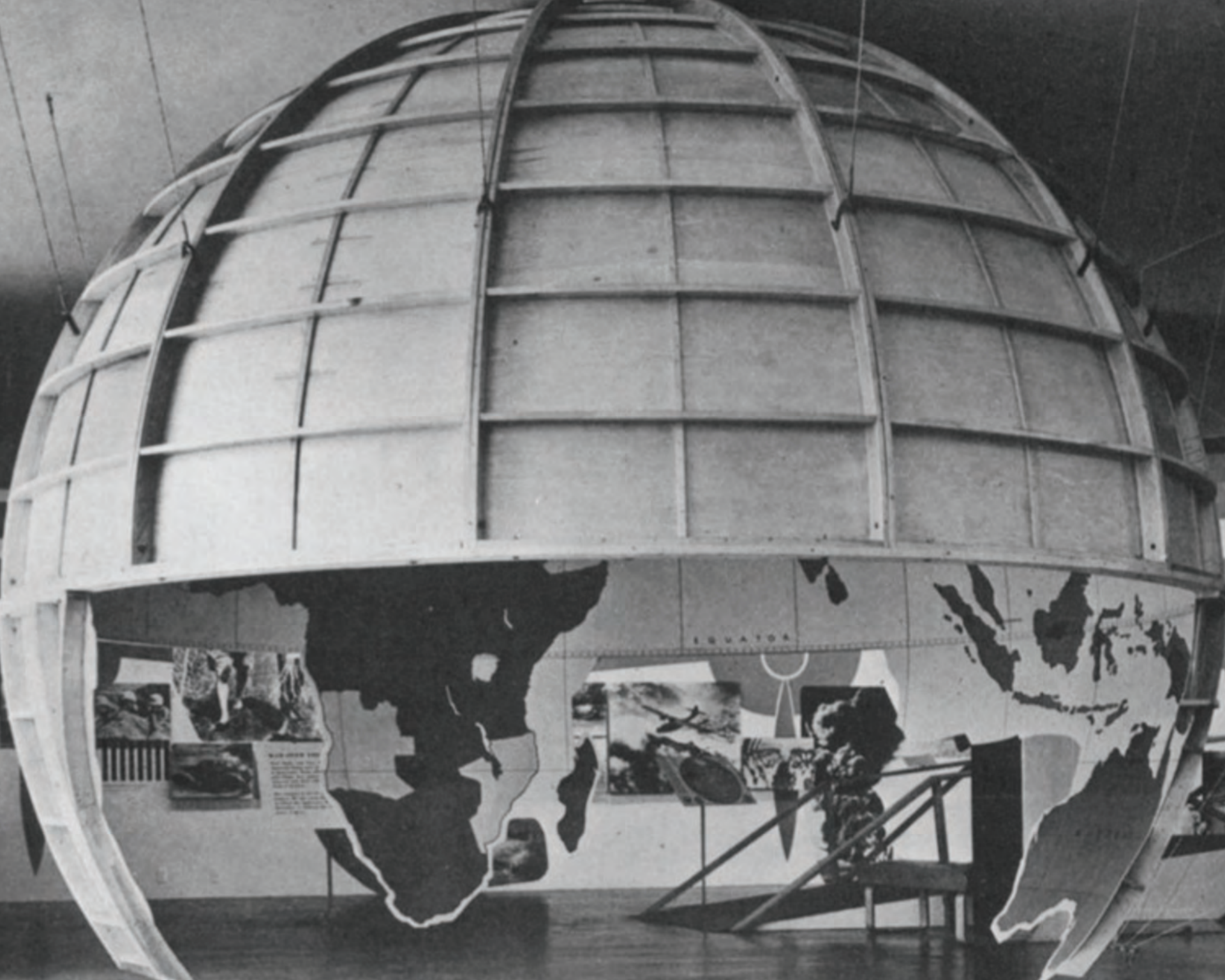


Herbert Bayer developed his foundation at the Bauhaus.

[Figure 3]

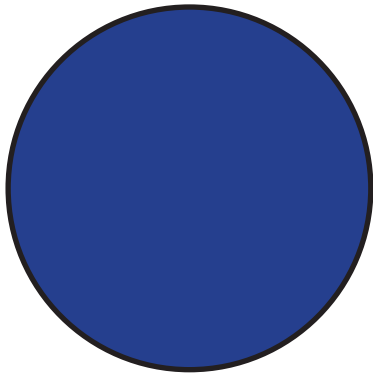
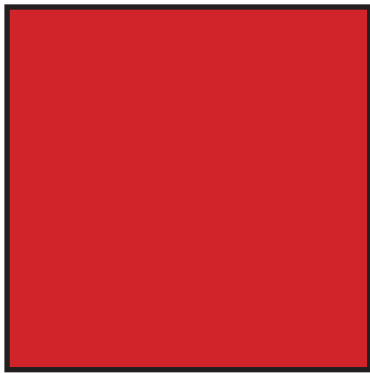
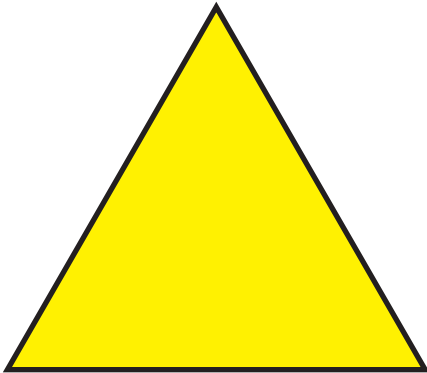
“The Airways to Peace” exhibit with the centerpiece of Bayer’s Globe.

[Figure 4]



5. Anker, “Graphic Language.”
6. “Photographic Works of Herbert Bayer,” MoMA no. 5 (January 1, 1978): 2, doi:10.2307/4380728.
7. Anker, “Graphic Language.”
8. Glueck, “Herbert Bayer, 85, a Designer and Artist of Bauhaus School.”





Kandinsky preformed an experiment relating shape and color. He found the triangle, rectangle, and the circle each equated to yellow, red, and blue, respectively. Herbert Bayer may have been inspired the mentorship of Kandinsky in creating his typefaces.

Category			Category		
No.	Name	Description	No.	Name	Description
I	Humanist	Typefaces in which the cross stroke of the lower case x is oblique; the top of the curves is inclined to the left; there is no great contrast between thin and thick strokes; the serifs are bracketed; the ascenders of the ascenders in the lower case are oblique. NOTE: This was formerly known as "Venetian", having been derived from the 15th century humanist writers with a varying stroke thickness to attain an an extremely bold hand size.	VI	Literate	Typefaces without serifs. NOTE: Formerly called "Non-serif".
II	Garalde	Typefaces in which the axis of the curves is inclined to the left; there is generally a greater contrast in the relative thickness of the strokes than in Humanist designs; the serifs are bracketed; the bar of the lower case e is horizontal; the ascenders of the ascenders in the lower case are oblique. NOTE: These are types in the Alpine and Garalde tradition and were formerly called "Old Face" and "Old Style".	a	Grotesque	Uppercase typefaces with 19th century origins. There is some contrast in thickness of strokes. They have squariness of curve, and curving down at ends. The R usually has a curled leg and the G is squared. The ends of the curved strokes are usually horizontal.
III	Transitional	Typefaces in which the axis of the curves is vertical or inclined slightly to the left; the serifs are bracketed, and those of the ascenders in the lower case are oblique. NOTE: This typeface is influenced by the letterforms of the 18th century engraver. It may be regarded as a transition from Garalde to Didone, and comprises some characteristics of each.	b	Neo-grotesque	Uppercase typefaces derived from the grotesque. They have low stroke contrast and are more regular in design. The jaws are more open than in the long grotesques and the g is often open-tailed. The ends of the curved strokes are usually oblique.
IV	Didone	Typefaces having an abrupt contrast between thin and thick strokes; the axis of the curves is vertical; the serifs of the ascenders of the lower case are horizontal; there are often no brackets in the serifs. NOTE: These are typefaces as developed by Didot and Bodoni. Formerly called "Modern".	c	Geometric	Uppercase typefaces constructed on simple geometric shapes, circle or rectangle. Usually monoline, and often with single-story a.
V	Slab-serif	Typefaces with heavy, square-ended serifs, with or without brackets.	d	Humanist	Uppercase typefaces based on the proportions of uncursional Roman capitals and Humanist or Garalde lower-case, rather than on early grotesques. They have some stroke contrast, with two-story a and f.
		Examples: Verdana, Century, Asterberry			Examples: Elit, Weston, Univers, Helvetica
		Examples: Bembo, Garamond, Caslon, Venetian			Examples: Futura, Erbar, Futurstyle
		Examples: Engraver, Baskerville, Bodoni, Caladonia, Columbia			Examples: Optima, Gill Sans, Pascal
		Examples: Bodoni, Corsini, Modern Extended	VII	Glyphic	Typefaces which are classified rather than calligraphic in form.
			VIII	Script	Typefaces that imitate cursive writing.
			IX	Graphic	Typefaces whose characters suggest that they have been drawn rather than written.
		Examples: Rockwell, Clarendon, Papyrus			Examples: Libra, Carteron, Old English (Monotype)

British Standards Classification of Type<sup>9</sup>

# Architype Bayer-type Typeface Description

Producing sounds in a simplified and concise manner indicates that audiences will receive clear understanding of both meaning and message. A visual representation of the sounds that glyphs depict is possible with simply a lowercase typeface. Herbert Bayer thought about the minimal approach to communicating, and discovered Architype Bayer-type as a solution. During the early 1930's, Bayer's studies at the Bauhaus led to a font family which challenged norms in German culture, especially since the German ß character does not exist; it also effectively utilized a clear and sophisticated solution to visual communicating.

The axis of Bayer-type is exactly vertical, and the thin modern Didone-serif additions accent the clever aesthetic associated with clarity. Additionally, a certain

symmetry is standard throughout each of the lowercase glyphs; the association of spurs, legs, hooks, and other terminals does not deviate from the vertical uniformity. Understandably, the large x-height is a central unifying characteristic of Bayer's typeface due, in part, to the reality of each glyph fundamentally resembling the height of the letter **x**. In contrast, important and crucial differences between letterforms persist, especially in the approach Bayer displayed with double-storey glyphs. Most notably, the letter **g** is minimized and reduced; although this shape is disputably the most complex, it lends to the meaning behind simplicity of an integrated type. As an ultimate result, the reductionist and simplification of Bayer-type benefit concise meaning and the overall unity that Herbert Bayer contrived in this typeface lend to a formidable and flexible communication device.

To a greater extent, the curvilinear quality of the letterforms breaks traditional norms in typographical design since most glyphs resemble a rounded form; however, Herbert Bayer shows an innate ability to unify instead of divide Bayer-type. And, the decision-making process is intentional due to the repetitive quality of the overall typeface. Hypothetically, one could divide the standard 26-letter alphabet into smaller groups in an attempt to find the key similarities between letterforms.

One grouping continuously follows a repetition of the counter. The bowl for each of the following glyphs is static, and likewise, unchanging with regard to minor variations: **a, c, e, o, u, m, n**. This group potentially precede two sub-groups due to the repetition with particular attentiveness to the letterforms **u, m**, and **n** in sub-group one and **a, c, e**, and **o** in sub-group two. The second grouping shares the strong vertical stem: **h, f, i, j, l, t, y**. And, the letterforms of **h** and **y** are precisely 180 degree rotations of each other. The third grouping represents the only diagonal contours: **v, w, x, z**.

9. Baines and Hastam, *Type and Typography*. 51

a c e o

u m n

v w x z

The 26-letter alphabet can be divided in a variety of methods. This method seperates it into six particular groups based on the defining characteristics of typography. In fact, Herbert Bayer limited the variance of stroke weight, shape, and form of each glyph. In other words, each glyph resembles each glyph in the entire alphabet.

While the letter z might not have the perpendicular qualities that the other three glyphs carry, the matching of the meanline and baseline of those forms are exact. In a fourth grouping, the vertical reflective features are plausibly also horizontal reflective qualities based on the viewer’s perspective: vertically, ***b*** and ***d*** or ***p*** and ***q***; horizontally ***b*** and ***p*** or ***d*** and ***q***. Finally, the last group is a small group of least common denominator glyphs: ***g***, ***k***, ***r***, ***s***. Due to the characteristics that the four letterforms share with respective parts of the entire typeface, nuanced features of the each glyph resembles the leg, tail, shoulder, or any other appendage of the entire alphabet.

b d p q

g k r s

h f i j l t y

Because the letterforms are often so closely related to that of another, a person that suffers from dyslexia plausibly may confuse the glyphs with one another; the messages that use this typeface would have limits. But, Architype Bayer-type is effective in communicating with most groups.

Herbert Bayer lived in an era heavily influenced by the *Art Deco* movement, and as a result, Architype Bayer-type integrates within that era. The curvilinear characteristics, in addition to the predominate differences between the thick and thin strokes of the glyphs, exemplify the early 20th century. Strong vertical stress along the design axis and the lack of bracketed serifs represent the identifying attributes of similar typefaces, such as *Bodoni*, *Corvinus*, and *Modern Extended*.

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

The 26-letter alphabet which Herbert Bayer designed using the typeface Architype Bayer-type.

Therefore, Bayer-type most closely matches the category of a Moderns-Didone typeface.<sup>10</sup> While the classification of this font does not closely correspond with the initial classification system that Maximilien Vox created in 1955, Bayer-type is better categorized in the adaptations that were made since then by the British Standard 2961. From one of Vox’ initial systems, as shown in the appendix of images Classification List One through Classification List Five, to the more modern context of identifying font categories, the progression of font classification depicts that Herbert Bayer’s typeface more closely resembles more modern fonts. In the future, the likelihood of designers and typographers utilizing Architype Bayer-type may increase due to the other similarities it could have if the trend of categorized fonts continues.

<sup>10</sup> Baines and Hastam, *Type and Typography*. 51





Bauhaus ideals represent similarities to Herbert Bayer's designs. [Figure 5]

## Challenges of forming Bayer-type

Based on the fundamental principles of the Bauhaus, Herbert Bayer established that Architype Bayer-type would also become a typeface that was requisite on the notion of form following function. In this sense, Bayer not only competed with the inherent challenges of building a typeface. Building a typeface that was uniquely different from Universal, one of Herbert Bayer's earlier typefaces, was also a demand that Bayer placed on himself. As a result, the qualities and characteristics of Bayer-type resemble an entirely different font and historically resemble that of other typefaces than Universal. In his work at Dessau while creating Universal, Herbert Bayer fashioned geometric shapes in the forms of letters intended to free the human perception, thus making writing more clear. This notion furthered the idea of clarity by abandoning the

concept of uppercase letters; in this way the experience of communicating through words fundamentally changed.<sup>11</sup> Yet unlike other typefaces he designed, Herbert Bayer realized his typeface has an exemplary representation of Bauhaus ideals [Figure 5], and therefore Universal was utilized in Bauhaus publications; not all Bauhaus publications [Figure 7] included his typeface, even ones where his participation is apparent [Figure 6].<sup>12</sup>

Although Architype Bayer-type was never actually used to the extent of Bayer's other typeface, Universal, Architype Bayer-type continued the natural logical progression of typography. At the time, Herbert Bayer had already become knowledgeable of the social norms he was challenging by creating a single typeface without an uppercase version of letterforms.

"While Bayer intended Universal to stand alone as an international typeface, conservative Germans argued that its basis in roman, as opposed to blackletter, type represented a snub to German tradition..."<sup>13</sup> and a logical assumption of his mindset is that Herbert Bayer felt comfortable challenging the German tradition due to his passion for efficiency.<sup>14</sup>

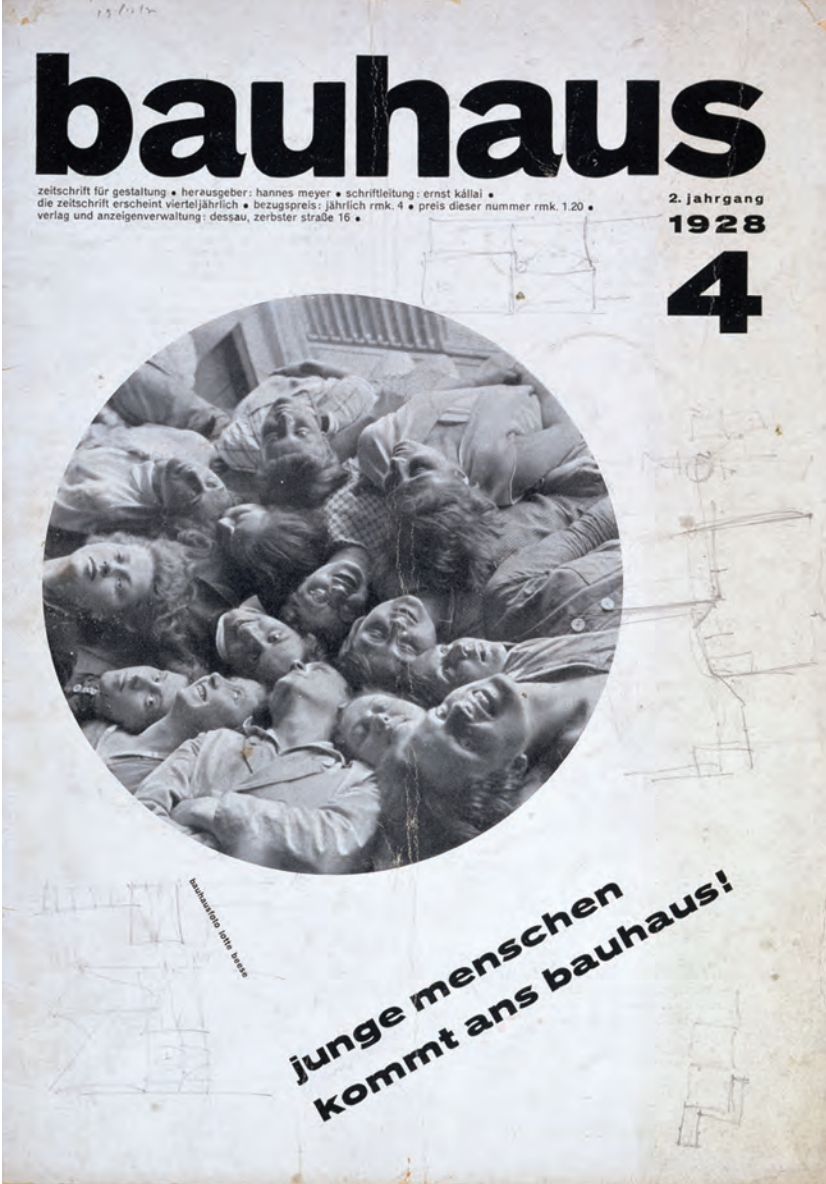
German nouns could not be written in their traditional uppercase, unlike English where it is common for nouns to vary between uppercase and lowercase.

Herbert Bayer continued his pursuit of typefaces which utilized strictly lowercase letters. The creation of Architype Bayer-type most likely alienated conservative German politicians and other elites in the same manner that Universal created a sense of anxiety;<sup>15</sup> the ability to pursue, for both the Bauhaus and Herbert Bayer, a course that expanded the boundaries of typography and design whilst appeasing traditionalists seemed unlikely. But, the achievement of Bayer in overcoming this challenge is immediately clear due to the geometric visual depiction of information in his atlas [Figure 8 and Figure 9].<sup>16</sup>

11. Anker, "Graphic Language."
12. Herbert Bayer, Bauhaus, Magazine, 1928, Bauhaus-Archiv.
13. Stephen Eskilson, Graphic Design: A New History, Second (New Haven, Connecticut: Laurence King Publishing, 2012).
14. Ibid.
15. Eskilson, Graphic Design: A New History.
16. Anker, "Graphic Language."

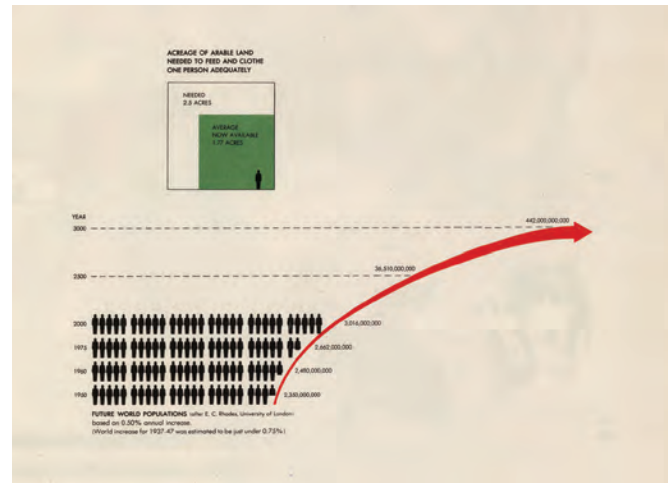


Bayer designed the cover of the Bauhaus Magazine. [Figure 6]



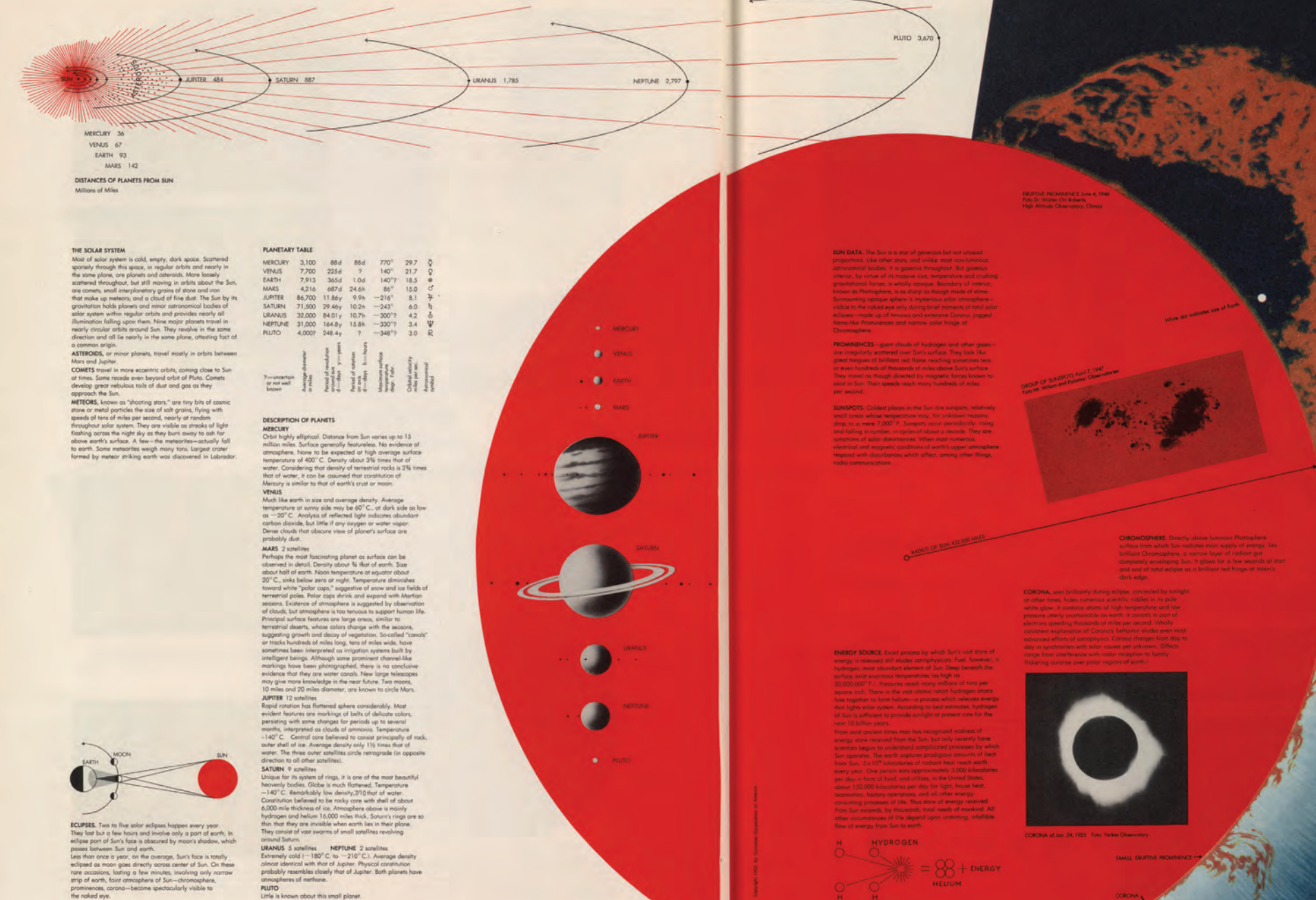
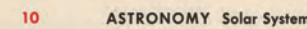
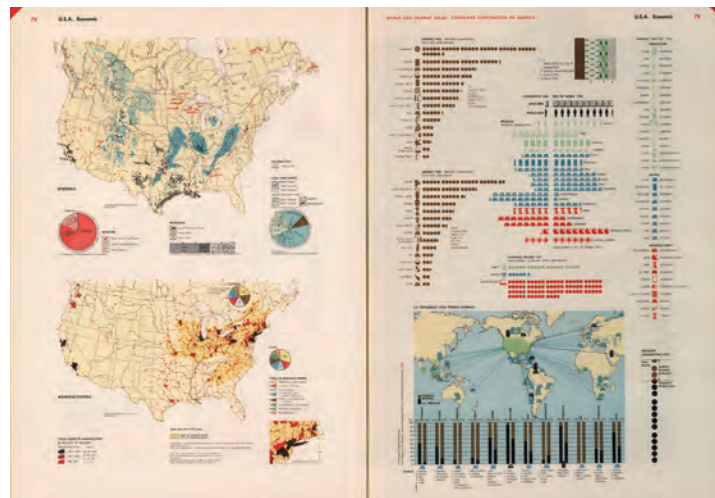
A Bauhaus magazine that does not clearly use the Universal typeface. [Figure 7]





## Unification Between Man and Nature

While the greatest challenges that Herbert Bayer faced as a typographer may have actually been unrelated to his technical ability, instead being more relevant to his role as a public figure, skillfulness in his discipline as a designer and artist are also important factors of consideration. Bayer with insight applied his knowledge of nature and humans, discovering the connection between the two. Architype Bayer-type utilizes the geometric and organic forms to emphasize the relationship that man and the universe could have with one another [Figure 10 and Figure 11]. The minimalism of Bayer-type embody unifying characteristics that truly depict the connection between form and function; Herbert Bayer is unique in so far as emphasizing the synergistic qualities that letterforms have in creating feeling, mood, and understanding of message and meaning.







Firmin Didot created a typeface before Herbert Bayer. [Figure 12]

## Technological Shifts of Typography

In making the typeface, Herbert Bayer was limited by the lack of technology that was to come later during the information revolution, but he did have advantages over he predecessors. Unlike Firmin Didot who created his typeface<sup>17</sup> [Figure 12] in 1784,<sup>18</sup> Herbert Bayer was able to fully utilize the technology of two industrial revolutions that had occurred. And, while Europe was still recovering from World War One, the Bauhaus had an extensive set of resources which provided Bayer intellectual, artistic, and tangible support he needed to accomplish the successful construction of a typeface.

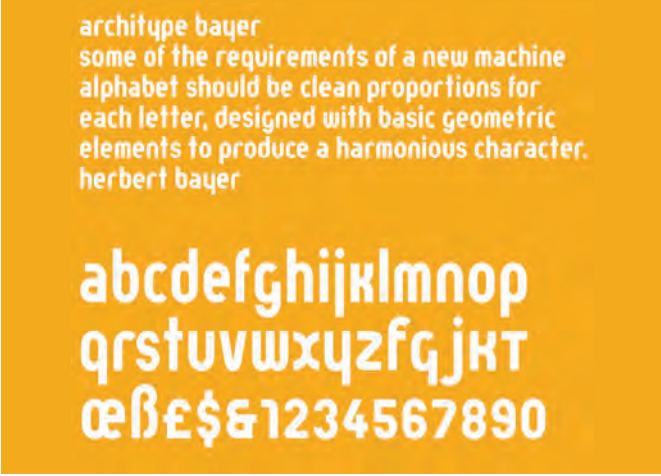
Didot redefined type, specifically rejecting the process of calligraphy.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, Herbert Bayer implemented the same technique of thick and thin strokes



Fraktur is a traditional German font. [Figure 15]

in Architype Bayer-type. Interestingly, Bayer-type deviated from the more modern typeface of Universal. Apparently, Bayer rejects his earlier typeface for the goals of harmony, but technology is unlikely to be the primary cause of this deviation. In the early 20th century, many of the typefaces that typographers utilized could be set with a printing press; the only limitation was the ability or action of creating a movable typeface.

Herbert Bayer did not use Architype Bayer-type as printable typeface, mainly because Universal was predominately used by the Bauhaus;<sup>20</sup> by the time Bayer-type was completed in the late 1920's, Herbert Bayer was beginning to transition to a different role out of the Bauhaus.<sup>21</sup> Herbert Bayer was becoming less of a typographer and



The Foundry's rendition of Bayer Universal. [Figure 13]

more of a multivalued designer. Creating other works for the Bauhaus,<sup>22</sup> Herbert Bayer was not limited by technology, but rather other passions directed the time and energy he focused on his type projects.<sup>23</sup>

Yet, Herbert Bayer may not have suspected that other typographers would later reproduce the work that he created in his tenure at the Bauhaus. David Quay and Freda Sack of The Foundry replicated the typefaces of many Bauhaus artists in 2012.<sup>24</sup> Their renditions of Herbert Bayer's typefaces, Universal [Figure 13] and Architype Bayer-type [Figure 14], are only two of the many typefaces that The Foundry recreated. The technological efficiency of computers, and additionally of information technology, rivals the advantages of Herbert Bayer in relation



The Fondray's rendition of Architype Bayer-type. [Figure 14]

to Firmin Didot. It is a plausible suggestion that Herbert Bayer may have continued his work as a typographer if he had lived in an era with more technology; however, Herbert Bayer had a variety of interests and passions and typography was simply one of his many skills.<sup>25</sup> The ability to convey meaning in a globalized world also means that the typefaces of Herbert Bayer are not limited by printed technology, but rather digitized technology more than adequately transmits the meaning associated with Bayer-type across the globe. Understandably, the cultural and political limitations that Herbert faced as well do not exist because many spoken and written languages do not exhibit the same characteristics as German such as with traditional Fraktur [Figure 15]. The technological restraints that burdened Bayer-type and Herbert Bayer now do not appear to be present.

22. Bayer, Bauhaus.

23. Anker, "Graphic Language."

24. "Architype Universal, OpenType, Level 1, Bayer | Foundry Types," accessed March 13, 2013, <http://www.foundrytypes.co.uk/the-foundry-typefaces/architype-collections/params/architype-universal/opentype/level-1/bayer>.

25. Anker, "Graphic Language."





The Bauhuas continues to change and modernize. [Figure 16]

# Changing Type over Time

In many instances, type alters to adapt to the cultures and institutions of time. Many typefaces undergo a series of transformations, and the overall characteristics are modified. Although, while Herbert Bayer may never have been able to plan for a future of computing, Architype Bayer-type later was digitized and reproduced – available to use by anyone with internet access.<sup>26</sup>

The Foundry, inspired from the work of Bayer, reproduces many Bauhaus artists’ typefaces. Additionally, the rendition of their duplications represent the agelessness of type. Separately, future investigation of the typographic side of Herbert Bayer might investigate a modern context of typography [Figure 16] with regard to the communication technology of the internet.<sup>27</sup>

This book will find concluding remarks in the relationship Herbert Bayer had with history, and the development of letters. In many instances, Herbert Bayer dedicated himself to creating design that fundamentally aligned with the ideals of the Bauhaus. Through logical progression, the basic foundation for creating Architype Bayer-type must had been a concern to Bayer, and he had to constantly reorient with the brand of the Bauhaus [Figure 18].

Simplicity and other ideas of the Bauhaus created more potential for the future of all art.<sup>28</sup> And in doing so, artists may not have automatically known the best method of applying the potential the Bauhaus artists created. Additionally, the Bauhaus likely had its lifespan cut short due to the rise of fascism – and thereby its concluding contributions.

Specifically to Herbert Bayer, the specific progress in art he brought to mainstream culture also impacted society’s understanding of the unique tools of his art. The conservatives political elite in Germany did not automatically realize the benefits of changing norms.<sup>29</sup> In any case, a variety of unintended problems now exist for designers and artists who wish to use typography. In setting a typeface with Architype Bayer-type in a passage, the lowercase alphabet likely does not appeal to every designer. Additionally, certain limitations are inherently associated with a typeface of high contrast between thick and thin strokes. Therefore, finding common usage of Architype Bayer-type is challenging. Yet, the glyphs provide intricate shapes that potentially provide other designers a creative starting point.

Many designers have the opportunity to adapt Architype Bayer-type in their own unique understanding of the 1930’s. Nick Curtis,<sup>30</sup> for example, modified the typeface to suit his own design needs [Figure 17]. Furthermore, other type designers may find in the future that Herbert Bayer provided a fundamental starting point.

26. “Home of Foundry Types | Foundry Types,” accessed April 8, 2013, <http://www.foundrytypes.co.uk/home>.  
27. “Need ID or Suggestions Fast, Please! | Typophile,” accessed April 8, 2013, <http://www.typophile.com/node/54141>.  
28. Anker, “Graphic Language.”  
29. Eskilson, Graphic Design: A New History.  
30. “Debonair Inline NF - Webfont & Desktop Font « MyFonts,” accessed April 8, 2013, <http://www.myfonts.com/fonts/nicksfonts/debonair-inline-nf/>.



Modern usages of Architype Bayer-type type may become more commonplace.

[Figure 17]

Conclusively, the overall impact that the Bauhaus and Herbert Bayer made in society could actually still be in the development process. Society has only begun to experience major changes from the 20th century; and realistically, less than 80 years has passed since the Bauhaus originally disbanded.

Future analysis into the Herbert Bayer and Architype Bayer-type may find that the metaphorical reaction started with his typography has only begun. The catalyst Bayer created in the early 20th century possibly spawned a network of other interactions. Clearly, artists and designers have not rejected the work of Bayer. Society could still be processing its own full comprehension of Herbert Bayer.



A print of Architype Bayer-type on wood.

[Figure 18]

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