

→ re/discover **Shaker**
for the new decade

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Time

Zaman

Amser

Footnote 33

January 2020

The Shaker typeface

In this issue we're focusing on our Shaker typeface and highlighting its design and details. Shaker was first introduced in 2000 and expanded and republished in 2004. This expansion not only included an ExtraBold weight, but more importantly increased its usefulness through the addition of wider language support, small capitals, figure sets, superiors and various typographic niceties.

Light & Light Italic

Regular & Italic

Bold & Bold Italic

ExtraBold & ExtraBold Italic

Heavy & Heavy Italic

The five weights of Shaker

Condensed e
Regular e
Wide e

The three width families of Shaker

SMALL CAPITALS

Correctly sized and weighted small capital letters

Małżeńską
Žņaudzējčūsku
Lærerhåndbøger

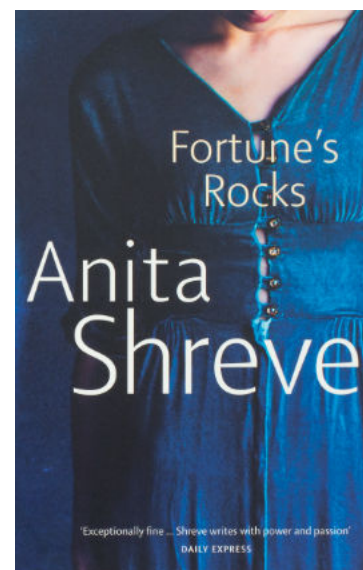
Support for a wide range of languages

123 123 123 123 ¹²³ _{1/23}

Non-lining and lining figures (both proportional and tabular) as well as reduced sizes for notation and fractions

[@type] [@TYPE] [@TYPE]

Typographic niceties such as correctly aligning and size specific sorts



Cover design

Many of the uses that Shaker has been put to over the years embody the typographic illusions originally desired by its creation. From the perfect calmness of word shape seen on book covers to the lively and captivating rhythm of continuous text setting.

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H O

Vertical stems are visually heavier than horizontal stems, this gives the word shape and text setting a more lively appearance

Shja

Soft flowing curves

A E f c k r b

Tapered diagonals, cut stems and broken curves

A E f c k r b

Italic maintains a lively rhythm through a variety of vertical and diagonal terminals



Exhibition catalogue

The details

From the start Shaker was designed to enrich and enliven text setting; to create a fresh and eye-catching image, and not to passively sit back. This was achieved through the careful crafting of its many details. A visible weight difference between the vertical and horizontal stems gives shape to a word and a more lively appearance to the setting of continuous text. The proportions and soft curves maintain a clean simplicity across the whole family and together impart a calmness.

Several features run through the typeface which bind the individual characters together making them a single family unit. These details of construction add vitality, they include tapered and open terminal strokes, flared diagonals, cuts and broken curves. These are continued in Shaker's italic style and are further enhanced by the use of angled terminals to its vertical stems.

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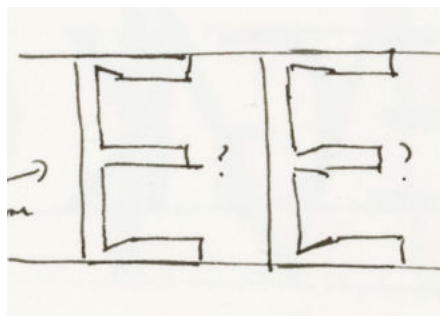


Painting out the serifs on Enigma's uppercase

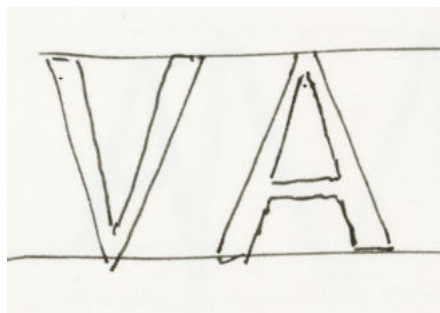
A closer look at the development

Thoughts about a sans serif derived from the concept of our Enigma type, began as Enigma was completing its production. These initial ideas were explored further as work started fully on Shaker.

The obvious starting point was to white out Enigma's serifs. This rough and ready approach was done on printed pages and quickly showed where not to go with the design. It became obvious that Shaker could only glance at Enigma and not be too closely tied to it. Ideas were also developed in a sketchbook; an approach I still rely on today.

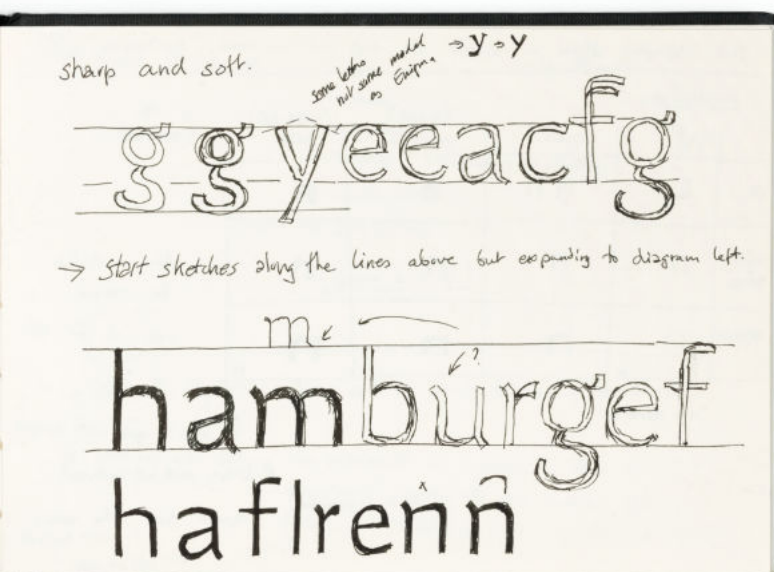


Various stem details of the uppercase

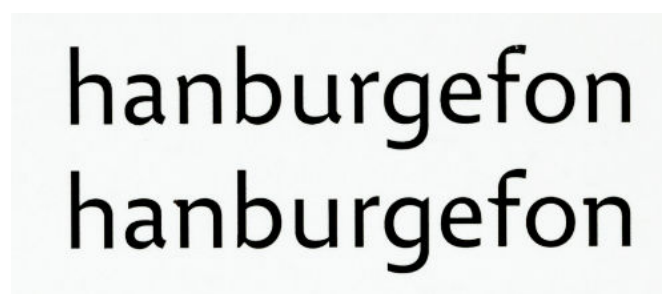


Whiting out and inking over Enigma lowercase

Even though sans serifs are deceptively simple compared to serif types, there's a lot of complexity running through them that requires consideration in order to make everything coherent. The initial digital stages are always disappointing but necessary and lead the way to many rounds of correction, development and fine-tuning.



The rough vagueness of sketching suggests a general direction and feel and not a final shape. This keeps the ideas more raw and free from the distraction of the clinical computer line.



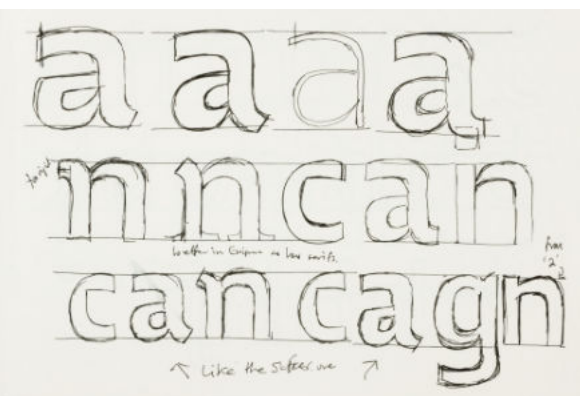
Considering different features for n, u, r



Reducing the weight at junctions, two-bowled g and crossbar of e

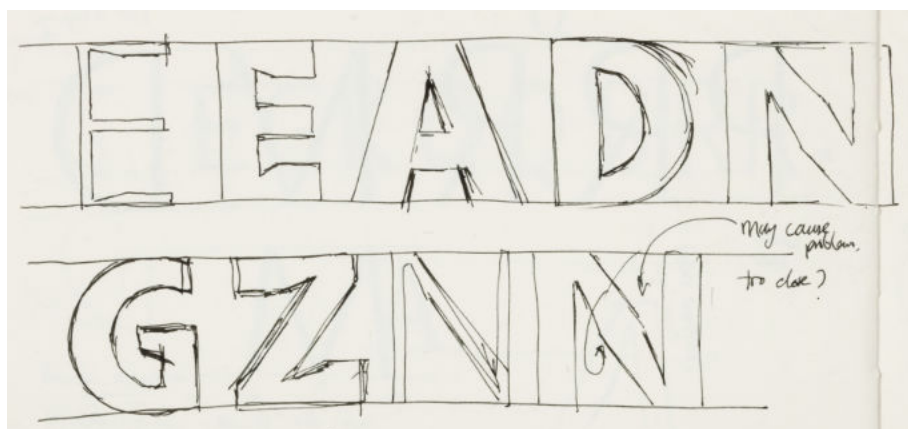
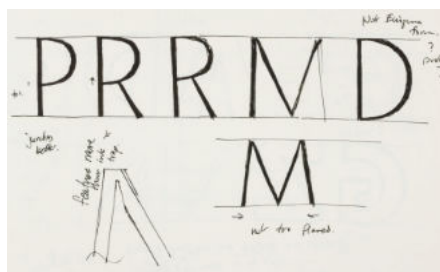
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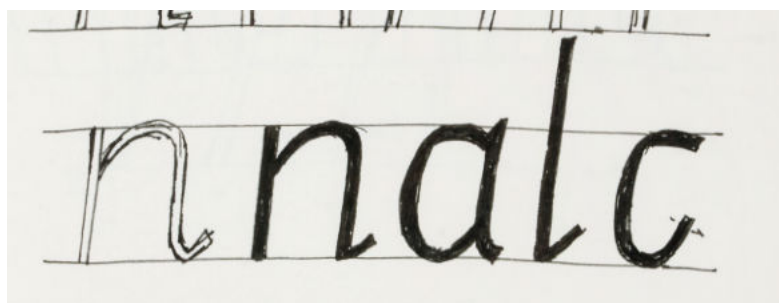
Simplifying the shapes of a and n

By removing the serifs from Enigma many characters became unbalanced with the result that too much attention was drawn to various features. The rotunda-style stroke on the m, n, r, u now created an unsettled rhythm to text. Interestingly though, this feature did work on the d and p. Perhaps an optical benefit of the ascender and descender helping to balance the shape? The two-bowled g of Enigma proved too fussy for Shaker and was replaced by a simpler design. The same was true of the angled bowl of the a which was given a soft flowing curve.

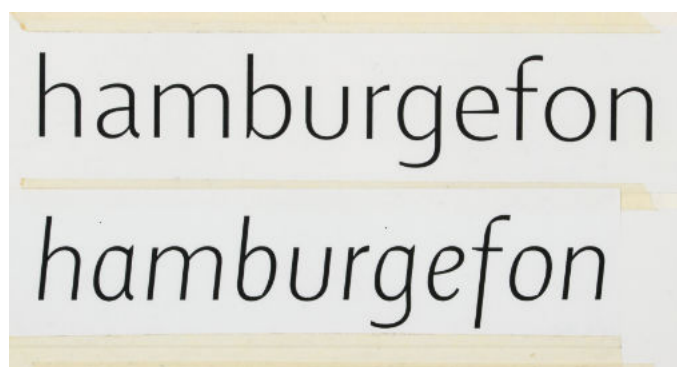


Tapered stems and cuts in the uppercase letters

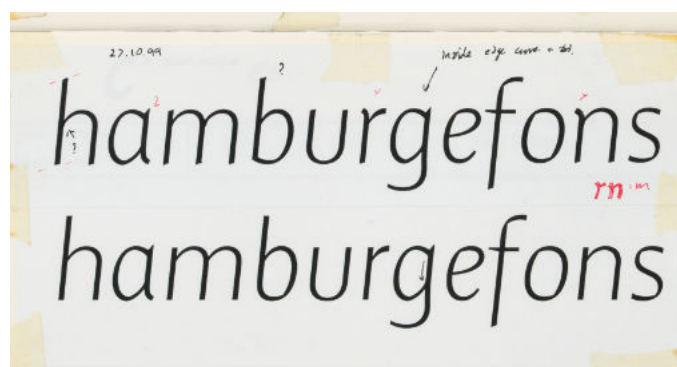
Another effect of removing the serifs was to make many uppercase letters appear mundane. Cuts to several stems were incorporated to balance the visual patterning across the alphabets. Diagonal stems in both upper and lowercase also gained a tapered appearance.



Early italic ideas feature an exit stroke to several letters such as n and l



Development of Shaker Italic in comparison to the Roman style



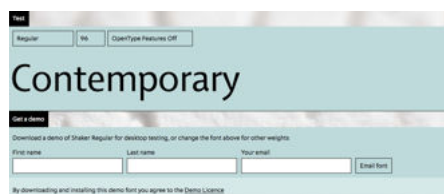
The top word shows angled stroke terminals, the lower word shows simplified r and n

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Discover more

There are many resources available online for you to discover more about the typeface and its weights and widths.



Test the fonts

All the fonts can be viewed and tested through the website. There's also the ability to download each font with our Demo Licence allowing you to test them locally in your applications.

Specific information

The Font Info PDF gives an overview of the detailing of the typeface; its widths, weights, features and abilities.

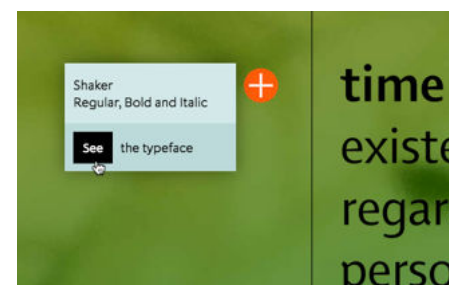
Design notes

The Shaker design notes at StudioType.com focus on its origins and commonality with Enigma as well as some of the challenges of designing a sans serif.



Explore Shaker

At the end of 2019 we opened the Gallery as a fresh and different way to show our fonts. Continuing with this approach we've built a dedicated Explorer page for Shaker. Through the Explorer you can glide over the typeface; its shapes, words and symbols, then click **+** to discover more. Explorer is best experienced through a desktop, laptop or larger mobile screen. A link to it can be found on the Shaker page under Further information.



Click to discover more

Glide over the typeface in the Explorer