Footnote 35

July 2020

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→ re/discover **Trilogy Sans** In this issue we're focusing on the Trilogy Sans typeface (part of the Trilogy collection) for the new decade

One of three

Trilogy Sans is part of the much larger Trilogy collection. Published in 2009 it's an integrated family of three contrasting type styles; a Sans, an Egyptian and a Fatface. Used together, the different typefaces play with the idea that visual interest is created through combining different styles.

Weights and widths

Individually Trilogy Sans explores the 'designer cool' aesthetic of the grotesque style of types that grew and developed to become the backbone of graphic design. A style of type which is celebrated for being systematic, neutral, functional and to some degree invisible. Conscious of the benefit as well as the detriment that these assets can have, it was always intended that the shapes of Trilogy Sans would find their own voice. To achieve this, the neutral appearance is lifted through subtle detailing and the addition of alternate characters. It's a big family comprising of five widths each with eight weights and two styles, giving a total of 80 fonts making it highly versatile.

Perfectly capable of setting text beautifully; its range of weights and widths offer a wide scope of choice for many aspects of typographic design. From setting headlines and continuous text to finer aspects such as map detailing and tabular information; Trilogy Sans excels with its typographic variety.

Sans **Egyptian** *Fatface*

Trilogy Sans, Trilogy Egyptian, Trilogy Fatface

The weights and widths of Trilogy Sans – from Thin to Heavy and Compressed to Expanded

Map detailing

Tabular information

Typographic variety

Reconstructed in Trilogy Sans

These examples are reconstructed from 20th century originals. Through their considered use of a single type style, asymmetric design, use of rule and handling of space; they reflect a specific aesthetic which is consistent with the thinking behind Trilogy Sans.

olga + hans fischli

katharina

* 25. VII. 1935
olga susanna

klink hirslanden zürich
+ meilen

Trilogy Sans Medium
(after Jan Tschichold, 1935)

September | October | November 91

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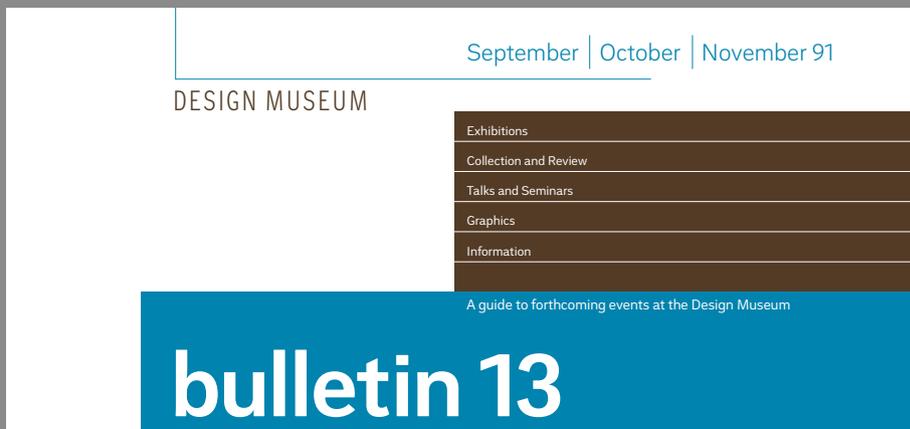
Trilogy Sans Light, Regular, Bold and Compressed Light
(after Cartlidge Levene, 1991)

Emil Ruder

Lehrer und Typograph

Antonio Hernandez
Typographie als ordnende Kunst

Schriften des Gewerbemuseums Basel
Nr. 10

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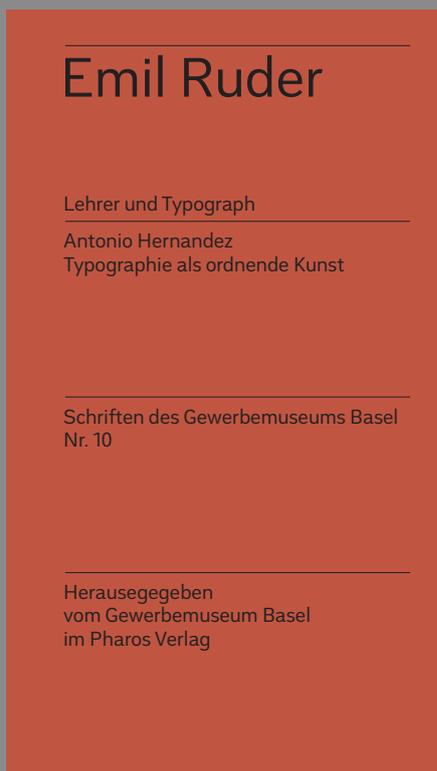
Trilogy Sans Regular
(after Emil Ruder, 1965-71)

DAS **BAUHAUS**

IN DESSAU

WEBEREI

TISCHLEREI

DRUCKEREI

WANDMALEREI

METALLWERKSTATT

VERTRIEB: BAUHAUS G. M. B. H. ● DESSAU

Trilogy Sans Light, Regular and Wide ExtraBold
(after Joost Schmidt, c.1925)

Footnote 35

July 2020

Typographic palette

Beyond the choice of five widths, Trilogy Sans also sports an extensive character set. One of its many strengths is the inclusion of several alternate letter shapes that allow an instant change to the typographic image. Continuing this, it is logical that the wide language support also includes the alternate designs as accented characters .

Advanced typographic detailing is easily achieved through the use of specially designed small capitals, extensive number sets and the considered alignment and sizing of sorts.

The examples shown here are all made using the Thin weight from the five widths.

Compressed
Condensed
Regular
Wide
Expanded

The five widths of Trilogy Sans

1 aglqu ƒ

1 aglqu ƒ

Alternate letter designs for several characters *(Trilogy Sans Compressed Thin)*

ÅåÇçÉéĠġĦħŌōÞþŲųŽž

Support for a wide range of languages *(Trilogy Sans Wide Thin)*

Small Capitals

Correctly sized and weighted small capital letters *(Trilogy Sans Expanded Thin)*

107 318 471 834 509 8 5⁄6

Lining and non-lining numbers (both proportional and tabular), small capital and reduced sizes for notation and fractions *(Trilogy Sans Thin)*

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

Typographic niceties such as correctly aligning and size specific sorts *(Trilogy Sans Condensed Thin)*

Details of character

Even though a sans type style would seemingly have less scope for visual difference than a serif might, there are continually ways to bring new expression to their simplistic structure. Shown here are some of the detailing hidden within Trilogy Sans which contributes to its character; sometimes obviously, sometimes subtly.

Individual proportion

Opportunity to play with specific shapes and proportions gives a typeface its voice. For example the short middle arms to E and F help assert its own look.

Static structure

The vertical axis to the typeface helps to impart a calm static feel.

Features

Some letters have elements that can be enhanced or given a special treatment. For example the slab foot of the lower case a is interpreted in the ear of the g.

Repeated shapes

The strong repetition of shapes strengthens the systematic rhythm across a word shape.

Rectangular dots

Rectangular dots are used for letter elements and punctuation. These maintain the static structure and harmonise with the solidity of the typeface.

Optical weight relationship

The stroke weight of a character is carefully increased across the family of widths. This is done to achieve an optical balance between the same font weight from each of the different typeface families.

Subtle detail

The small chamfer added at corners helps to alleviate a sometimes sharp impression, at the same time it creates a slightly soft image which again balances with Trilogy's calm structure and rhythm.

Short middle arm to E and F

Vertical axis creates a calm type image

The slab foot of the a is reflected in the ear of the g

Systematic letter shapes

Rectangular dots and punctuation

Stroke weight increases as the character width increases
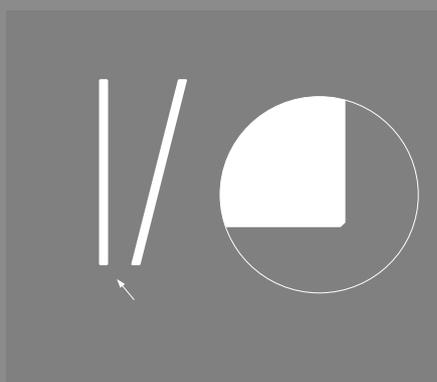
Chamfer detail is constant across all widths and weights

Early stages in the design of Trilogy Sans
The beginnings of a typeface are amongst the most exciting and equally frustrating stages of the design process. From small ideas and observations, initial doodles are gathered to give an overview of what the type style could potentially become. These sketchbook images show very raw and simplistic skeletons, the purpose of which is to gain a broad impression of structure.

As various ideas develop and possible features defined; stylistic details of the type began to emerge. Before digitisation work started several drawings were made on tracing paper which are a great way to review ideas in a raw and unpolished state. The drawings can be rearranged to make different letter combinations and easily viewed from various angles, all of which help to judge the embryonic design. At some point though eagerness kicks in and digital work starts. The notes and drawings then become reference material to guide the work as the typeface develops and expands.
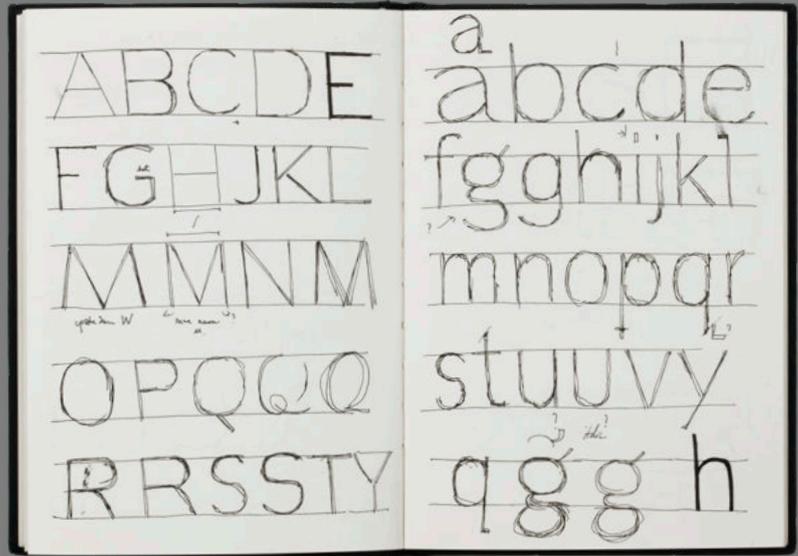
Simplistic overview of the core structure *(early June 2006)*

Feature, shape and proportion notes *(early June 2006)*

Pre-digital drawings made on tracing paper

Footnote 35

July 2020

Explore Trilogy Sans and discover more
There are many resources available online where you can find out about the typeface, its families and weights.

Through the Explorer you can glide over the typeface and click on any of the ⊕ icons to discover more. Explorer is best experienced through a desktop, laptop or tablet. A link to it can be found on the Trilogy Sans page under More information.

Try the fonts
All the fonts can be viewed and tested through the website. You can also download each font with our Demo Licence allowing you to try them locally in your applications.

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

Design notes
The inspirations behind the Trilogy project are discussed at StudioType.com together with insights into the Egyptian and Fatface styles as well as Trilogy Sans.

Trilogy specimen
Unfortunately there are no longer any printed copies of the specimen left, but a PDF version is available for download from the various Trilogy pages at typography.net.
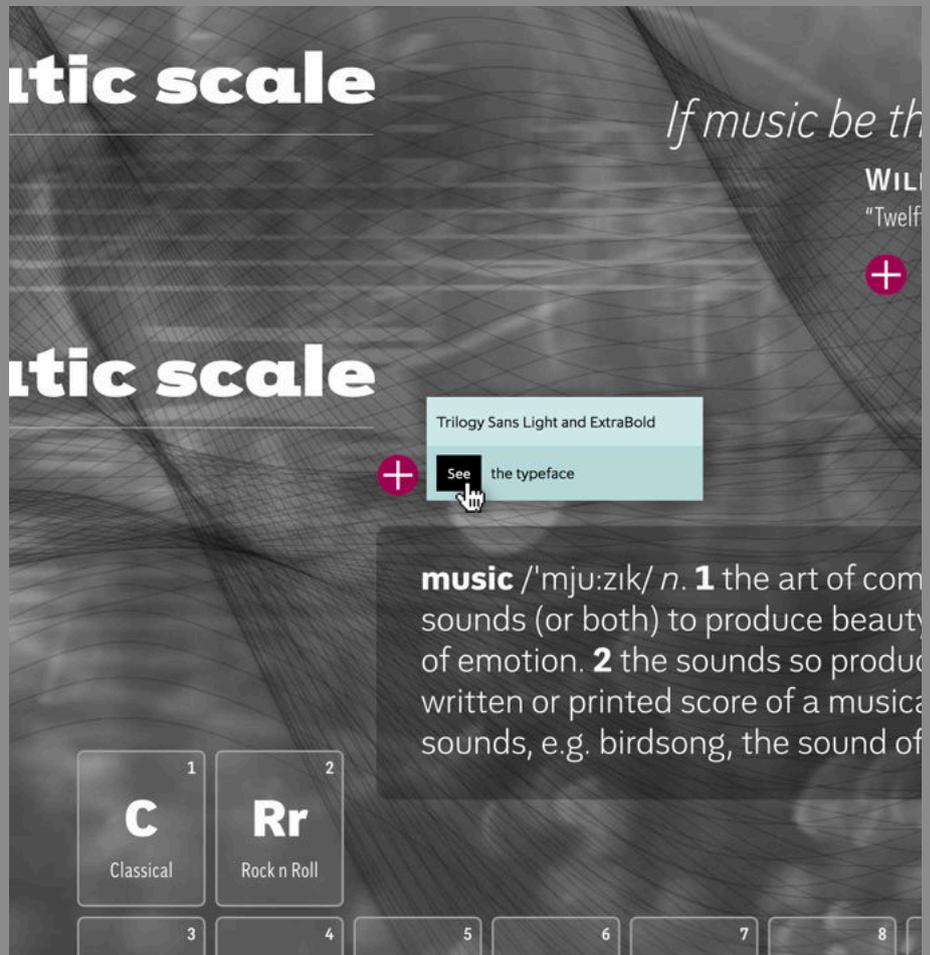
The Trilogy Sans Explorer lets you glide over the typeface and focus on its details
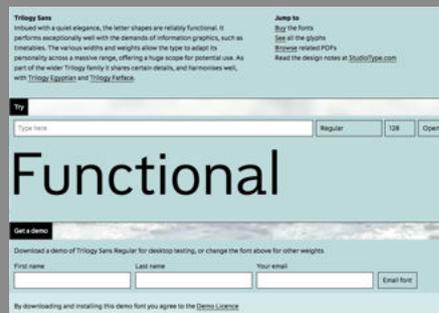
Try the fonts

Font Info PDF
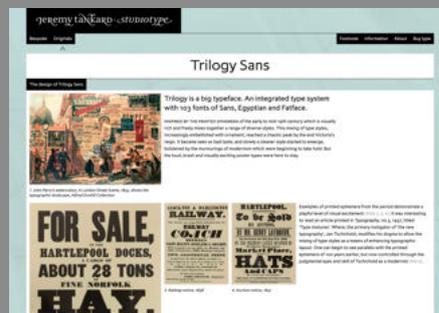
StudioType.com

Trilogy specimen