

Steven Heller and Louise Fili present a compilation of sixty years of stencil type and reveal why the primitive style still reigns.

# Stencil Type

Steven Heller and Louise Fili

Illustrated throughout

24.5 x 17.2cm

352pp

ISBN 978 0 500291900

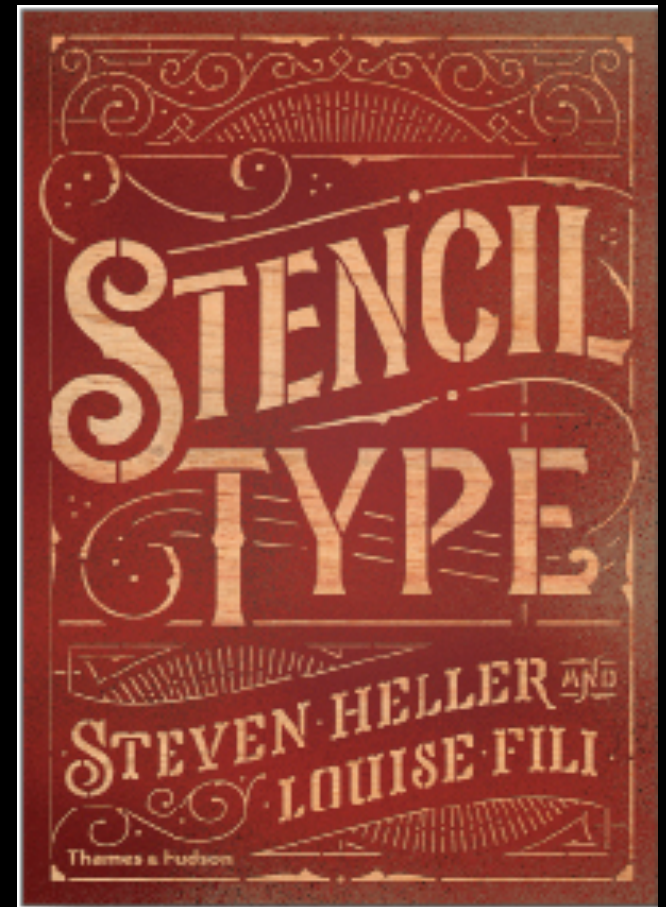
Paperback

£19.95

July 2017

A4

Book



## Key Sales Points

- New in paperback, a dense design resource of typography's most enduring, popular and widely used form, selected by graphic design's leading historians
- Stencil Type is the only history of the typeform – most books devoted to stencil type take the form of kits (with templates) or how-to manuals
- Includes hundreds of iconic and popular examples, chosen from the late 19th century to the 20th, provide endless inspiration for type
- Drawn from the authors' personal collections and worldwide travels, examples represent a highly curated choice based on decades of art-direction experience

## AMERICAN

**S**TENCILLED LETTERS ARE THE MOST POPULIST TYPOGRAPHIC STYLE in the United States. They were, and continue to be, used prodigiously by professionals and amateurs alike to identify products and goods, make public pronouncements and indicate danger. Stencil letterforms are also closely associated with the US military, as well as the police and fire departments. Other applications of distinctly American stencil styles are evident on everything from bales to boxes, fences to hoardings ('Post No Bills'), signs to banners.

In America, stencilled words and phrases are so commonplace that they are both instantly recognizable and invisible. Before the computer made typesetting accessible, children learned their ABCs partly by making words from stencils for school projects. The templates they used were Steno Lettering kits, created by Ruth Libauer Hormats and Robert Libauer. In the 1940s, their stencil letter-drawing system for students, teachers and do-it-yourselfers sold briskly. Steno, a functionally primitive lettering tool, offered many fashionable type styles, the epitome of modern, though not always the quintessence of beauty.

There was a kind of inchoate beauty in earlier nineteenth- and twentieth-century stencil apparatus – paperboard and metal masks – and the letters they produced. Most early stencils were made to be one colour, but ornamental typography of the nineteenth century spawned the production of elaborate two-colour stencil masks. Stencils were also inexpensive interior design tools. In Cleveland, Ohio, the Sherwin-Williams paint company promoted stencilled patterns for the home and office (pp. 34–5), and kits with stylish motifs encouraged personal touches from the home craftsman.

Modern typographers, such as Paul Rand, were as keen on stencil type as the more classically minded W. A. Dwiggins, who designed dozens of stencil variations. Imports from Europe, including Paul Renner's Futura Black, symbolized the Machine Age. The type's angular letters, with their precisely carved channels dividing portions of each letterform, gave the face its contemporary character. These channels were not simply respites for the eye, they also made typeset words even more memorable.





DINEZ EN PLEIN AIR CHEZ  
**DIROUANT**  
AU BOIS DE BOULOGNE  
PAVILLON ROYAL

ORCHESTRE M. DE SWETSCHIN

OFFICIEL



DE LA  
MOTORE  
DE LA  
MODE



ALTO

VERGINE



MARCA MARCA



TORO

TIGRE



WITH CARE

**Orange,  
CRUSH**

**CARBONATED BEVERAGE**



Steven Heller and Louise Fili present a compilation of sixty years of stencil type and reveal why the primitive style still reigns.

# Stencil Type

Steven Heller and Louise Fili

Illustrated throughout

24.5 x 17.2cm

352pp

ISBN 978 0 500291900

Paperback

£19.95

July 2017

A4

Book

