

Explore vintage and contemporary typefaces with this stylish and information-rich collection of cards.

Type Deck

54 Iconic Typefaces

Curated and crafted by Steven Heller and Rick Landers

Illustrated throughout

Box: 17.4 x 11.2 x 5.6 cm

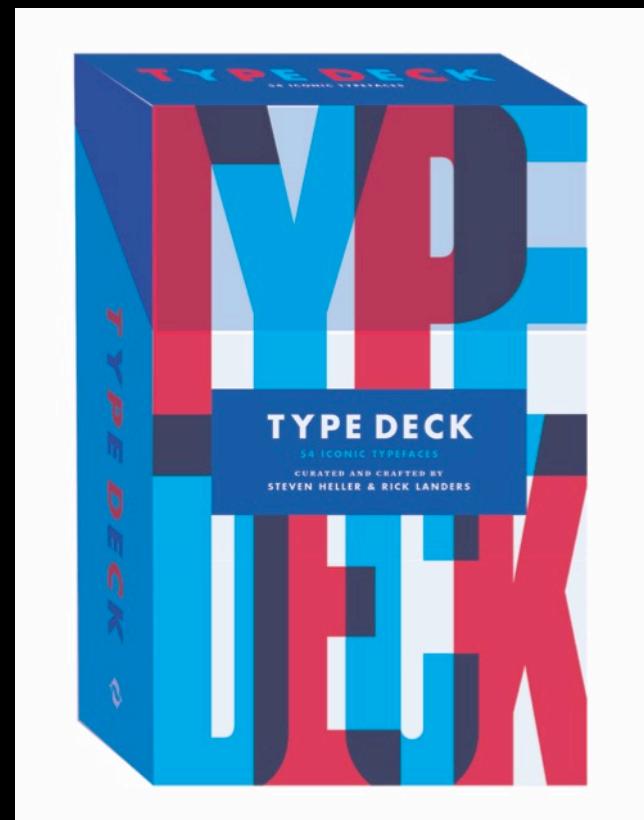
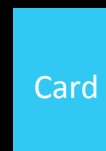
Cards: 15.5 x 10.0 cm

ISBN 978 0 500 420799

Boxed - 55 cards

£14.95

September 2017



Key Sales Points

- Each of the 54 cards features a hand-drawn character, and fascinating insight into its historical context, design and purpose
- Fifty-four cards are divided into six categories:
 - Victorian, Arts & Crafts / Art Nouveau
 - Black Letter
 - Modern, Eclectic
 - Post Modern
- Includes six tabs for arranging and indexing type families

FRONT



BACK

Speedball

It is not an official style of black letter, but the Speedball pen nib system developed by sign letterer Ross F. George has enabled letterers to achieve effective spiky letters for a century. The 'Black Text' below, from one of its many demonstration books, shows the fluidity that can be achieved. Since 1915, when the C. Howard Hunt Pen Company of Camden, New Jersey, began commercializing George's patented nibs, dozens of lettering textbooks went through many stylistic iterations over the years, but offered—more or less—the same fundamental instruction. Tried and true techniques were used for making standard and custom black letters. 'Choosing the style and size pens best suited to the construction of letters you are going to make simplifies your work and minimizes time and effort,' stated its advertising. What's more, 'Clean pens do clean work', and 'speed will come later when strokes are mastered'. Even today, there is nothing like a Speedball pen nib for ease of making fluid, swirly and blocky letters. Beats being prisoner of a mouse or stylus too.



Speedball textbook, Ross F. George, 1957

FRONT



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Schwabacher Moderne



Volksbühne poster campaign, LSD Design, 2013

Black letter emerged in other European nations, but in Germany its application and legacy lasted longer than anywhere else. Among the four principal styles of black letter, Textura, Fraktur, Rotunda and Schwabacher, the latter was the predominant typeface in Germany from about 1470 until about 1530, when it was replaced by Fraktur, but it appeared with various stylistic mannerisms into the 20th century. Moderne Fette Schwabacher is one of these early 20th-century varieties, where the common Gothic spikes gave way to curves. It was considered to be a complement or an alternative to other contemporary 20th-century faces, and is now part of today's modernized black-letter stew.

A B C D E F G H I J K L
M N O P Q R S T U V
1 2 3 · W X Y Z · 6 7 8
4 5 · Cook · Bach · 9 0

Moderne Fette Schwabacher, type specimen, Otto Weisert, 1905

FRONT

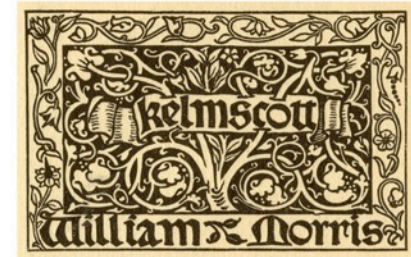


BACK

Arts and Crafts



The books and typefaces of the Arts and Crafts movement—the English forerunner of Art Nouveau—were created by William Morris starting in 1891. He based his ethos on a return to pre-industrial production methods, because he believed that with the advent of mass manufacture printing had reached a low point. Morris called his mission a ‘typographical adventure’, and it started in his home at Kelmscott Manor. This is where he launched the Kelmscott Press, executing his own designs and recruiting many key illustrators and printers of the day to produce work adhering to the overall Arts and Crafts aesthetic. The press published Morris’s own writings as well as texts of personal significance. In just seven years, the press made fifty-three different titles, the most famous being *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* (1896), known as the Kelmscott Chaucer. His own typefaces were key to his design, including Golden (1890), Troy (1892) and Chaucer type (1893). Morris wrote: ‘If I were asked to say what is at once the most important production of Art and the thing most to be longed for, I should answer, A beautiful House; and if I were further asked to name the production next in importance and the thing next to be longed for, I should answer, A beautiful Book. To enjoy good houses and good books in self-respect and decent comfort, seems to me to be the pleasurable end towards which all societies of human beings ought now to struggle.’

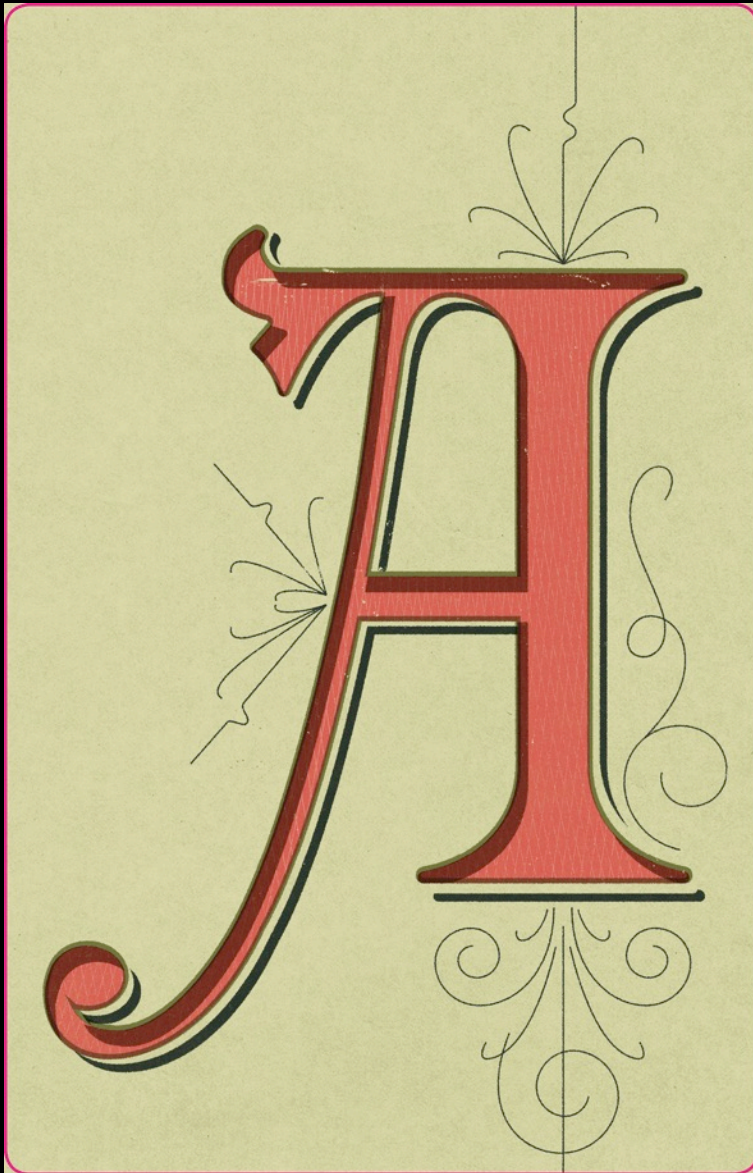


Kelmscott bookplate, William Morris, 1891



The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, William Morris, 1896

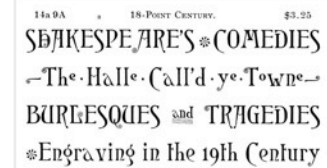
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Hybrids

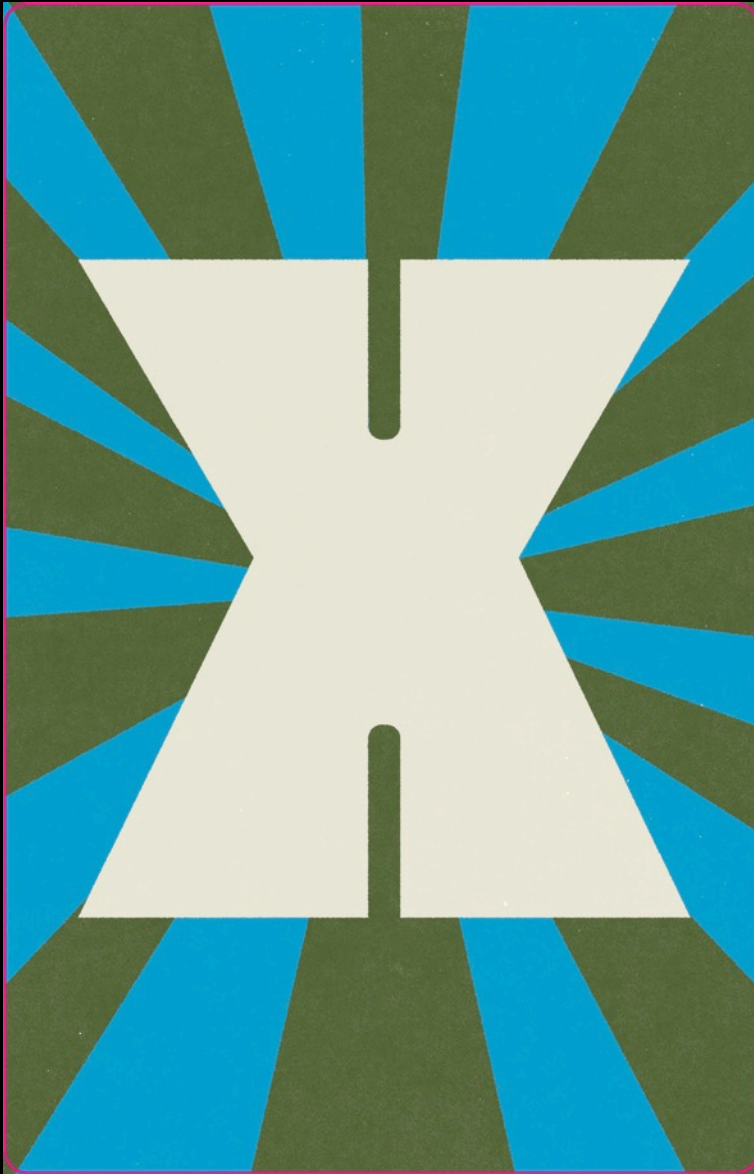
During this period, lettering and typefaces were developed for both custom clients and general use. Although the Art Nouveau style is clearly defined, the DIY sensibility of the time enabled letterers to use the mix-and-match method of creating alphabets. They used the dominant contemporary styles but dug deeply into the past for architectural inscriptions and ornamentation that could be revived and recycled. Scripts and Gothics with inlines, outlines, shadows and radiants were common, with curves and swashes galore. Eccentric Art Nouveau hybrids may have reigned but did not entirely dominate the style of letters.



5a 3A * 40-POINT TEMPLAR. \$5.00

MEDITATES
Bronze Medals

FRONT



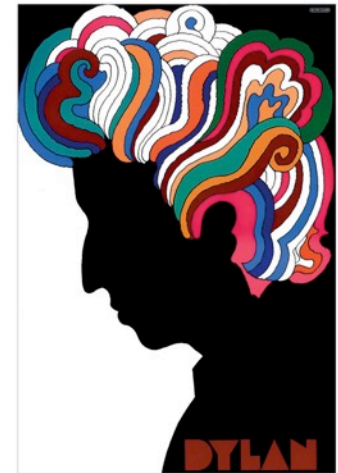
BACK

Baby Teeth



American graphic designer Milton Glaser called the typeface he developed for his 1966 Bob Dylan poster 'Baby Teeth'. The stair-step—so called because of the setbacks in the E—was an emblematic face during that period, but the alphabet actually derives from a Futurist typeface used in advertising and propaganda in Fascist Italy during the 1920s and 30s. It was sometimes labeled 'Futurist'

or 'Futuristic' in type catalogues at the time, suggesting both speed and the mechanistic aspects of modernity. It was eventually exported to other countries: Glaser apparently first saw it used on Art Moderne printed materials in Mexico. But when he adapted it to spell out 'Dylan' on the poster he designed for CBS Records, Baby Teeth took on a new life in the psychedelic era. It would have stayed in that period had not so many contemporary designers revived it in various forms. And, of course, the emblematic Dylan poster has been reproduced millions of times.



Dylan poster, Milton Glaser, 1966



Baby Teeth specimen, Milton Glaser, 1968

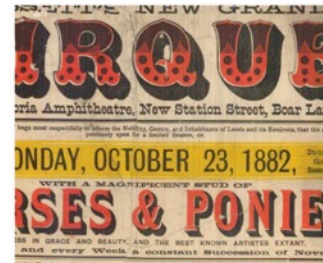
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Circus Type

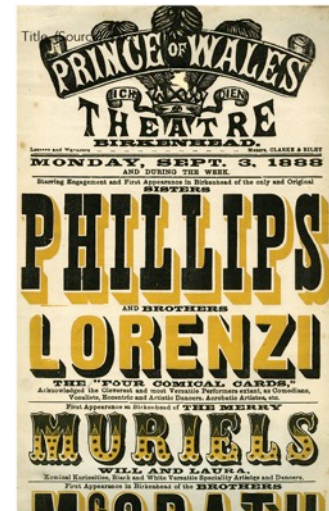
Chromatic wood types were made to print in two or more colours and designed to attract the eye in an age before electricity. They were first produced for the George Nesbitt foundry and reproduced in the *Fourth Specimen of Machinery Cut Wood Type*. William H. Page's *Specimens of Chromatic Wood Type, Borders, Etc.* (1874) is the zenith of the craft. The black-and-white version of the Doric Ornamented type called Zebra-wood on the front side of this card was first shown in Wells & Webb's 1854 *Specimens of Wood Type*; the chromatic version was shown in Page's 1868 *The Chicago Specimen*, the periodical of the Chicago Type Foundry. The type is the epitome of circus poster lettering, although other display uses were doubtless found. Hundreds of ornamentally complex faces were current during the 19th century, used for theatre and carnival posters and all manner of entertainments and events.



Fossett's New Grand Circus, 1882



Wells & Webb's Specimens of Wood Type, 1854



Prince of Wales Theatre poster, 1888

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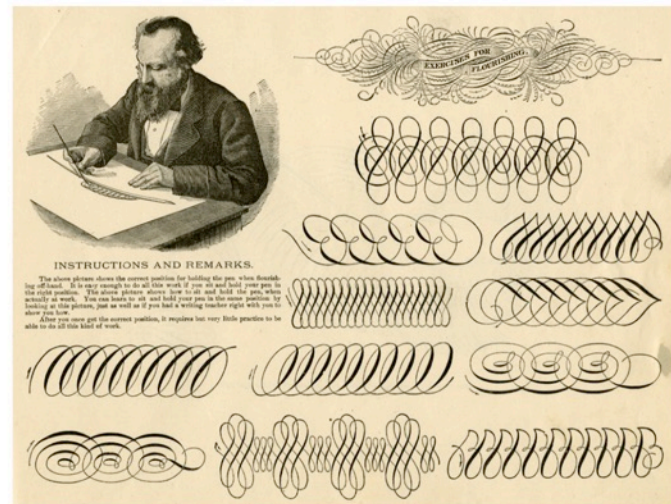
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Social Script



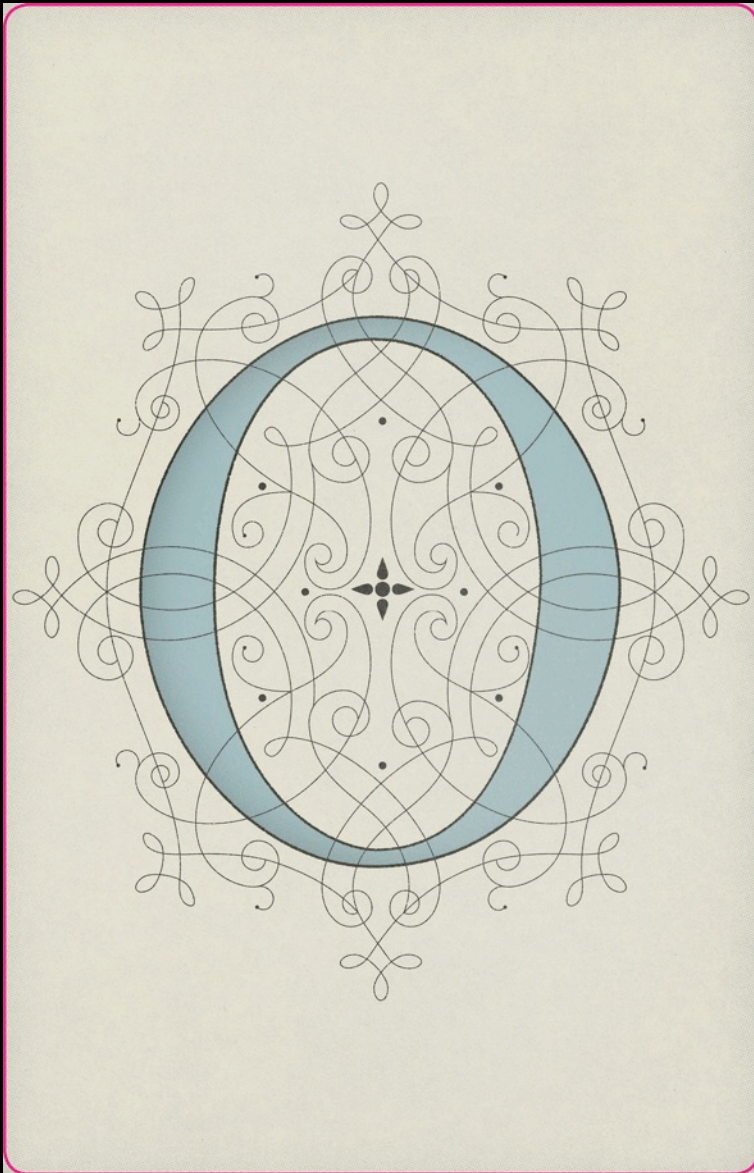
Scrapbook, c.1900 (private collection)

Before the invention of the typewriter and its ubiquitous adoption as a business machine, hand-lettered script was the means for industry to attend to all its official communications. The Spencerian script, the Palmer method and other standardized writing styles inspired numerous textbooks and correspondence school handbooks for proper use. They also became the foundation for various typefaces. The faces had such names as Wedding Plate Script, Cursive Script, Engravers Script, Bank Script, Master Script, French Script, Stationers Semiscript and Myrtle Script; there were countless others.



Calligraphic copy books, c.1890, Concordia Publishing House (private collection)

FRONT



BACK

Ornamented Initial



Manuel de Peintures, A. Morel & Cie, 1874



Soap label, designer unknown, c.1800s

Ornamented initials, like the subtly decorated roman letter on this card, are not unique to the Victorian era. Initials date back to medieval illuminated manuscripts, where hand-drawn letters were decorated with symbolic, narrative and fantastical imagery. An unofficial term for describing this kind of hand-drawn or engraved letter design is 'doodad'. Although not a professional term, the Victorian doodad was essential for the designer to provide a starting point in text. Initial caps do the trick, but an ornamented capital injects a modicum of elegance and evokes in the reader the perception and anticipation of something substantial. Austrian Modernist architect Adolf Loos is often quoted for an attack on late 19th-century design in which he proclaimed that 'ornament is a sin'. In truth, however, ornamentation in graphic design is no more or less sinful than purity. More important is what kind of ornament is used and how it is applied.



Penguin Drop Caps series, Jessica Hische, 2012

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