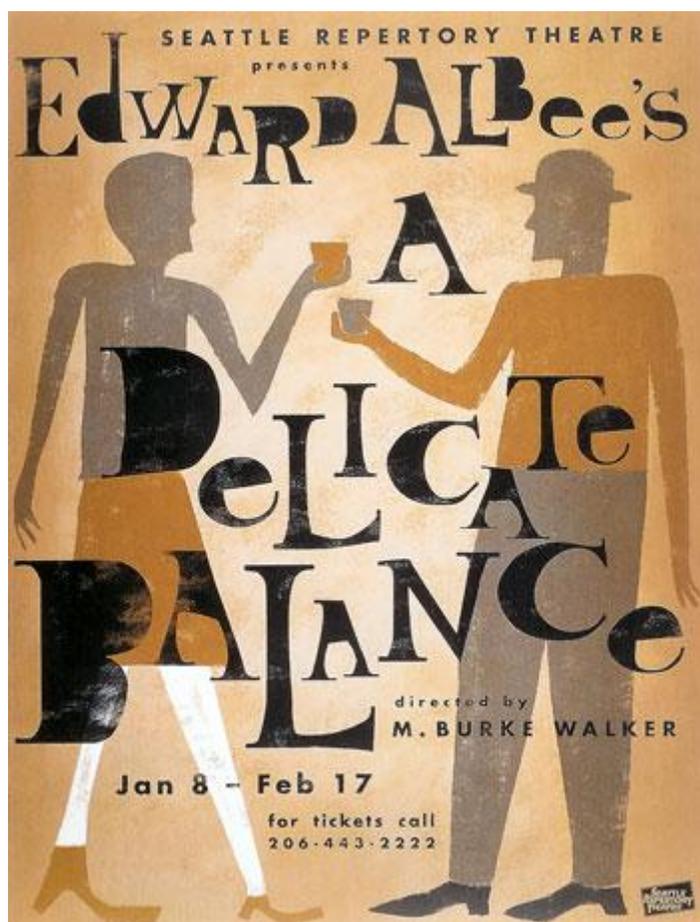


TYPOGRAPHY



1Figure 1: A Delicate Balance Poster • Dennis Clouse • Cyclone Design

serif font. This contrast of fonts allows each of the type choices to occupy its own space within the design. In other words, the contrasting of the two font styles in a design is often key to making to making the type compatible.

Source: *Design Basics for Creative Results* by Bryan L. Peterson

Anatomy

Typography is a subtle craft, in which the smallest mistake can appear as a glaring error even to the untrained eye. Unlike the spoken word, which quickly passes and is forgotten, printed type has the potential to survive for hundreds of years.

The adoption of good habits and a healthy respect for type characters and fonts is a good starting point for anyone wishing to practice graphic design.

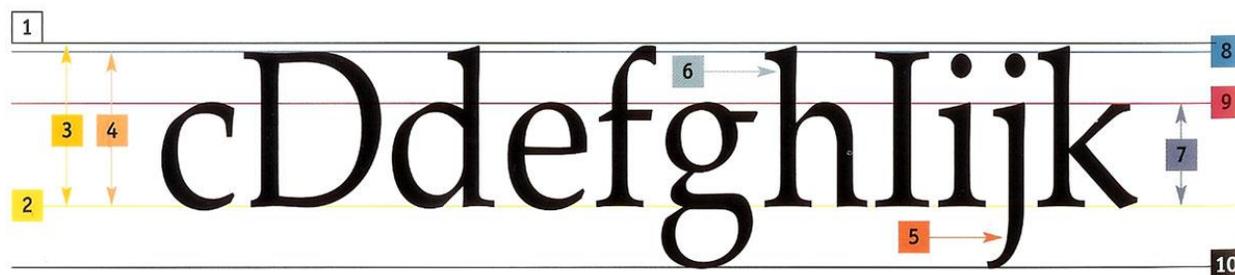
In order to discuss typography, it helps to understand the anatomy of letter forms.

Introduction

The type treatment on this theater poster makes it memorable. This piece is working on so many levels - it has great color, balance and texture - but the hand-lettered type really provides the spark. In the design process there was likely a decision about whether or not to use a standard font or hand lettering. What makes this use of type so successful is that it is a combination of both. The hand lettering is based on an actual font but modified to be appropriate to the design.

The designer made two other good decisions. One was to allow the texture of the illustration to seep through the type. Notice how beautiful the *B* in the word *balance* is. The other was to fill in some of the letters in the headline, thus adding in even more interest to the design.

While the headline font is based on a serif font, the smaller text is based on a sans



Basics

- 2** The **base line** is the imaginary line on which all characters rest. Descenders hang below the base line.
- 9** The **mean line** is the imaginary line which determines the height of lowercase letters. Ascenders rise above the mean line.
- 7** The **x-height** is the distance between the flat top and bottom of a lower case letter which has no ascender or descender, such as x. It is the distance between the base line and the mean line. The curved tops and bottoms of the p, o, and g extend beyond these lines so that they appear visually to fit the x-height.

Ascenders

- 6** The **ascender** is the stroke of a letter which rises above the mean line, as in the letters d, f and k.
- 1** The **ascender line** is the imaginary line which determines the height of ascenders.
- 3** The **ascender height** is the x-height plus the height of the ascending stroke. It is the distance between the base line and the ascender line.

Descenders

- 5** The **descender** is the stroke of a letter which dips below the base line, as in the letters g and j.
- 10** The **descender line** is the imaginary line which defines the bottom reach of descenders.

Capital Letters

- 8** The **cap line** is the imaginary line which determines the height of capital letters.
- 4** The **cap height** is the height of capital letters. It is the distance between the base line and the cap line.

Source: *Graphic Design Foundation Course* by Curtis Tappenden, Luke Jefford and Stells Farris

Type Families

All licensed, commercial fonts are available in a number of styles and weights:

- **roman** (sometimes known as **plain** or **book**),
- **italic** (sometimes called **oblique**),
- **bold** and
- **bold italic**.

For flexible working, it's best to choose a broad type family rather than use many different fonts.

SANS-SERIF FONTS

The sans-serif font Futura below has a vast type family. It contains many intermediary *weights* such as *light*, *book*, *medium*, *bold*, and *extra bold*. It also contains several *condensed* versions for more slender type.

Futura Light
Futura Light Oblique
 Futura Book
Futura Book Oblique
 Futura Medium
Futura Medium Oblique
Futura Heavy
Futura Heavy Oblique
Futura Bold
Futura Bold Oblique
Futura ExtraBold
Futura ExtraBold Oblique
 Futura Condensed Light
Futura Condensed Light Oblique
 Futura Condensed
Futura Condensed Oblique
Futura Condensed Bold
Futura Condensed Bold Oblique
Futura Condensed Extra Bold
Futura Condensed Extra Bold Oblique

SERIF FONTS

The serif font below, New Bodoni DT, also has many weight variants.

New Bodoni DT Book
New Bodoni DT Book Italic
 New Bodoni DT Regular
 NEW BODONI DT SC OSF REGULAR
New Bodoni DT Italic
 NEW BODONI DT SC OSF TALIC
 New Bodoni DT Bold
 NEW BODONI DT SC OSF BOLD
New Bodoni DT Bold Italic
 NEW BODONI DT SC OSF BOLD ITALIC
 New Bodoni DT Extra Bold
New Bodoni DT Extra Bold Italic
 New Bodoni DT Black
New Bodoni DT Black Italic

Antique Fonts

Antique fonts have a long history and can be used to evoke a period feel.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyZ

Decorative Fonts

Decorative fonts include highly decorated and really eccentric fonts, often with very specific uses and rarely appropriate for more than three words at a time.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyZ
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNQRST

Script Fonts

Script fonts, which resemble handwriting, can be subdivided into traditional scripts that look as though they were produced by a quill pen and those that mimic modern styles of handwriting.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyZ

Symbol Fonts

Symbol fonts are composed of graphic icons to provide embellishments to text. These are sometimes created to complement a specific font.



Non-Commercial Fonts

A problem with non-commercial fonts, such as those decorative fonts that have free usage or are Internet downloads, is that they often have only one weight and are therefore of limited use.

Another problem is that font sizes may not be standardized. For example, a 12 point version of a display font may be much smaller than 12 points for traditional fonts.

backlash

A retro font.

Font name: Backlash

Platform: PC

Type: Free

[More info](#)

COMPUTERAMOK

A retro computer font by Jakob Fischer.

Font name: ComputerAmok

Platform: PC / Mac

Type: Free

[More info](#)

Gotham Nights

A tall, sleek looking font with a bit of a retro feel.

Font name: Gotham Nights

Platform: PC

Type: Free

[More info](#)

HOLIDAY HARDCORE

A retro font made up of lines and boomerangs.

Font name: Holiday Hardcore

Platform: PC / Mac

Type: Free

[More info](#)

Husky Stash

A stylish retro font dedicated to the TV series Starsky & Hutch.

Font name: Husky Stash

Platform: PC

Type: Free

[More info](#)

HYPMOTIZIN

A hypnotizing retro font. It includes upper and lower case letters and numbers.

Font name: Hypmotizin

Platform: PC / Mac

Type: Free

[More info](#)

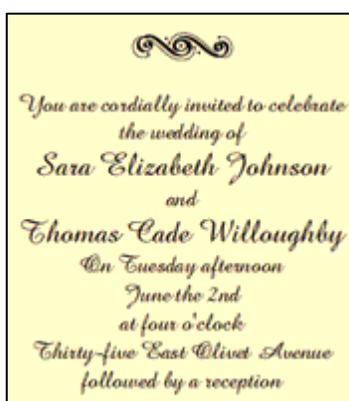
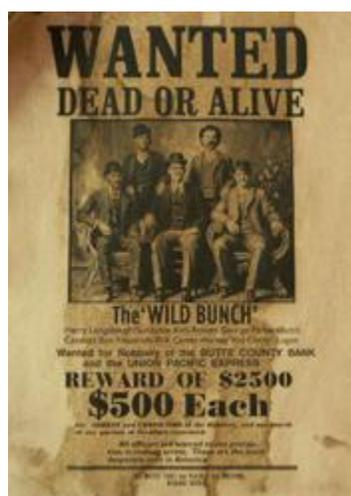
Type Families

All licensed, commercial fonts are available in a number of styles and weights:

Choosing a Font

Letterforms are more than simply characters to be read. Additional information arises out of the associations that are attached to various styles of type.

For example, you can easily see the difference in the character of the typefaces used in a Wild West "wanted" poster and those used for a traditional wedding invitation. Successful designing with type is all about making the most of those associations to make your visual point.



Source: *Graphic Design Foundation Course* by Curtis Tappenden, Luke Jefford and Stells Farris

Finding Meaning

The first thing that you do when you receive copy (text) for a design job is to read it for sense. Whether it is a 20,000-word book or a single word logo, ask yourself "what does this actually mean?" If you can't answer this question yourself, how can you hope to convey the meaning successfully to others?

The typographic treatment sets the overall mood of a piece: clean, traditional choices for straight information delivery may suit a corporate report. On the other hand, more funky stylized fonts might work better for a poster promoting modern dance.

The huge range of typefaces available on the market is almost overwhelming. You can make a bit of sense of this by remembering the broad categories mentioned earlier. They are typically separated according to function, as many type foundries do as a matter of course.

Source: *Graphic Design Foundation Course* by Curtis Tappenden, Luke Jefford and Stells Farris

Creating a Mood

Let's look first at a single character of type to understand the power type can give your design. When set in various faces, even a single letter - such as a lowercase *a* - can evoke different feelings, depending on the design of the typeface.



When the letterform is flowing and curvaceous, the feeling conveyed is softer than the feeling communicated when the letterform is angular and hard-edged. A whimsical letterform will convey a lighthearted mood; one that is elegant will communicate sophistication.

As another example, choose two words with contrasting or even opposite meanings, such as peace and war. After seeing each of these words in the various typefaces, which face do you think is most appropriate to the meaning of each word?



Source: *Design Basics for Creative Results* by Bryan L. Peterson

Further Understanding Mood and Meaning

The content of the material and the purpose of the design are the main factors in deciding your choice of font.

In information design clarity is essential, and it is telling that sans serif fonts, with their simple structures, are used for road signs. Sans serif is also ideal when type has to be a small size, as in some diagrams and maps.

Univers
Fujiyama



Which font you choose can be influenced by the subject matter; in such cases a knowledge of the origins of the font can help in coming to a decision. For example, Caslon and Baskerville are classical English, Garamond is French, Goudy is American, Bodoni is Italian, and so on.

Caslon
Baskerville
Garamond
Goudy Old Style
Bodoni

You do not have to rely on the classical fonts; contemporary serif fonts such as Minion and Swift are ideal for modern material.

Minion
Swift

An effective mixture: below, a serif font for the word "Relaxing" and a contemporary sans serif for the word "snazzy" nicely reflects the shift in moods.



Budding designers need to develop a strong sense of how the different fonts create emotional, psychological, and historical resonances within the reader.

THIS IS A PUBLIC INFORMATION ANNOUNCEMENT - GILLSANS
The Class and Sophistication of Shelly Allegro
ROLL UP! ROLL UP! - ZEBRAWOOD
THE GO-FASTER STRIPES OF SLIPSTREAM
The Swordsman like Strokes of Avalon
THE HIGH SCHOOL JOCK OF FONTS - PRINCETOWN
The Ye olde Traditions of Blackletter
 The Timeless Elegance of AGaramond
Bold, brash and very curvaceous - BauerBodni Blk BT
COME AND HAVE A GO IF YOU THINK YOU'RE HARD ENOUGH! - MACHINE BT
CHUNKY AND VERY RETRO - DECORATEDOGS BT
SHOCK Of the new! - BubbledOTICScOarsePOSitive
THE GOOD, THE BAD, AND THE UGLY - MESQUITE
 CLASS IN A GLASS - CHARLEMAGNE
the informal handwritten style of - Aimee
Beware wet paint! - KidTYPEPaint
 The Simplicity of Helvetica
 Feeling a little uptight tonight are we dear? - Birch
 Knock knock? Who's there? - Comic Sans MS
 clear, gentle, and level-headed - Avant Garde
[Click on image for a larger version.](#)

Source: *Graphic Design School* by David Dabner

Quick Tips: What to Consider when Using Type

- What font will best communicate the feeling of your message? Does your font harmonize with or detract from your message?
- Will two or more different fonts be more effective in displaying the concept than one? Consider using a serif face with a sans serif face, for example.
- What type size will best convey the idea of the design? Is the size appropriate for the audience? Does it complement the other elements?
- Is the type properly placed in the format to have the most impact on the reader? Are the shapes of the body copy pleasing or are they unattractive?
- Is the font one that needs to hold up well over a period of time (a classic), or is a more current, trendy font a better choice?

Source: *Design Basics for Creative Results* by Bryan L. Peterson

To Buy or Not to Buy, and a Legal Consideration

Adobe products such as Photoshop and Illustrator come preconfigured with many fonts for free, so long as you don't copy them to another computer.

Others you can obtain online for free or for a price. Fonts for sale usually cost around \$20-30 for a set of roman, italic, bold and bold italic. Complete families like those for Futura and Bodoni can cost hundreds of dollars. The price includes a license to use the font.

Be careful "borrowing" commercial fonts from friends! If you use a particular font in a printed piece and you don't own the license for it, you may be violating copyright laws and could get into legal trouble.

Fonts are a type of software. Using a commercial font for which you do not own a license is called "typeface piracy".

Typographers are artists who put a lot of time and effort into creating fonts. It is their right to determine whether they will share their copyrighted work freely with others, or will require a purchased license.

Be sure you are on the right side of the law.

To Buy or Not to Buy, and a Legal Consideration

Styling & Formatting

Good typography, especially within body copy, often passes unnoticed as the information leaps from the page quickly and cleanly. However, this does not mean that your efforts are wasted; the reader's ease of reading demonstrates that you have done your job well.

Conversely, bad typography is memorable and intrusive. You will over time develop your own typographic preferences, but your choices need to be founded on a clear understanding of underlying principles.

Type Size

Body copy forms the main bulk of any text. Its primary function is to deliver information, so *legibility* is the most crucial consideration. A point (pt) is the usual measurement for type and is equal to 1/72 of an inch. Type that is smaller than 7pt is difficult to read and type that is smaller than 3pt is utterly illegible. The size range for body copy in a book or magazine article should be between 8pt and 14pt. In general, 9pt and 10pt are the most practical choices.

Serif or Sans Serif?

A serif font is easier to read over long passages (blocks of text) than a sans serif font. It is therefore often chosen for designs incorporating high quantities of body copy, such as novels and newspapers.

However, a sans serif font is frequently perceived as being more modern.

Body copy should always be set in upper- and lower-case because the irregular shapes are rich with cues that improve legibility. Upper case (capital) letters are uniform in height and lack diversity of form, which impairs reading. upper-case text also consumes about a third more space than the equivalent in lower-case.

BODY COPY SHOULD ALWAYS BE SET IN UPPER- AND LOWER-CASE BECAUSE THE IRREGULAR SHAPES ARE RICH WITH CUES THAT IMPROVE LEGIBILITY.

Body copy should always be set in upper- and lower-case because the irregular shapes are rich with cues that improve legibility.

Leading

Leading is the vertical space separating baselines in text and is traditionally measured in points. The term is derived from the days of setting type in hot metal, when strips of lead were used to add space between lines.

Where leading is set to the same point size of the copy, it is referred to as "set solid." Although text set solid is often entirely legible, large blocks of copy set solid are tiring to read. Where possible, you should add at least 2 points of leading to your body copy. For example, for 9pt type choose 11pt leading. Leading of more than this amount is often aesthetically pleasing if your design can accommodate it.

Text as Image

Typographic illustration - or shaping text - is essentially lighthearted and fun. It turns straight typography into graphic configurations with a degree of legibility, informing and entertaining the reader in an emotive way, as well as relieving the formality of conventional text.



Christmas Tree. Two typographic interpretations of Christmas tree shapes, one seemingly random and one carefully controlled. Each captures the festive spirit in its individual way.

Experiment with both symmetrical and asymmetrical text arrangements to give a variety of different meanings. Although you should be primarily concerned with legibility, you can, through careful selection of justified, centered, ranged-left, or ranged-right setting styles, hint at the mood and echo the content of the text.



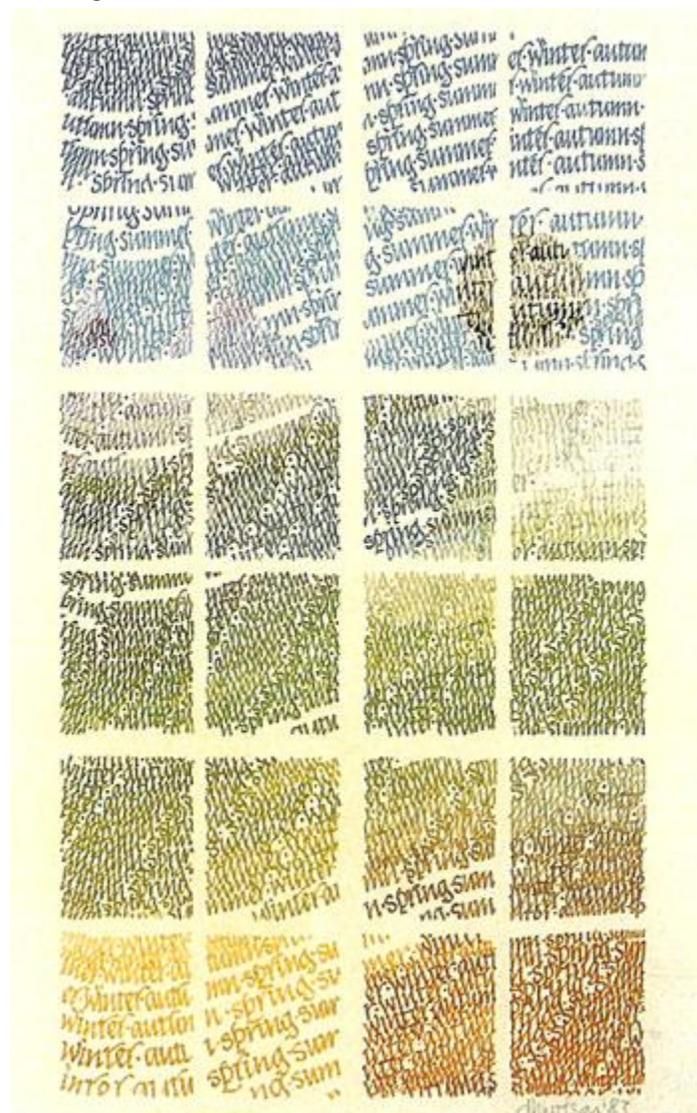
T. In this design by TotalDesign, the architectural character and size of the "T" is underlined in the arrangement of the main body of text. A dynamic contrast in the curving line of text adds movement and depth.

You can set text into regular shapes such as squares, triangles, diamonds, and circles, or format more irregular (organic) shapes. The text need not cover the entire surface, for words, or letters, or numbers can be used in a linear fashion - bending and curving to describe the contours of a particular form.



Hand-Drawn Letters. This charming design demonstrates the flexibility of hand-drawn letters when used for shaped text.

Text can be shaped or wrapped around images; it can define spaces or provide silhouettes. It can form an image itself.



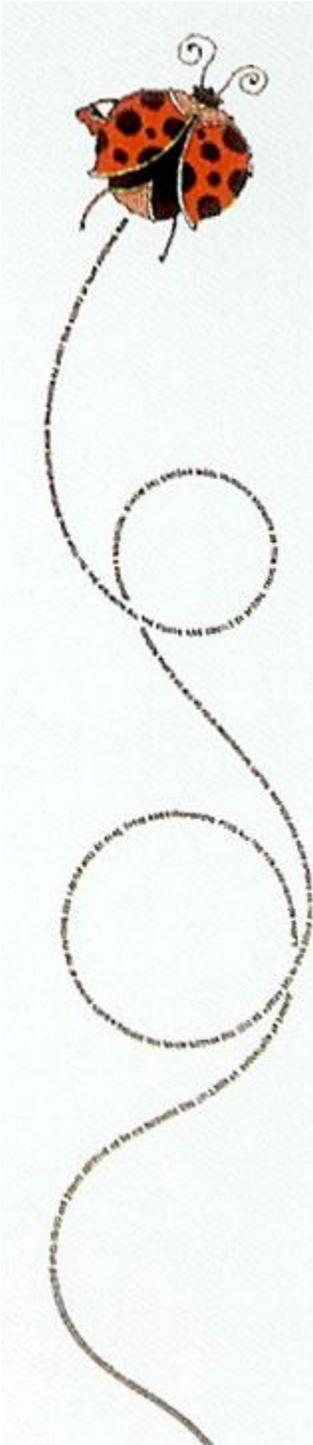
Seasonal Moods. Diana Wilson captures the moods of spring, summer, fall, and winter in window-like areas of drawn text through color, rhythm and texture.

Controlled changes in font weight within the main text area will create subtle secondary typographic shapes or images. For a more daring approach, shape the text into representational objects associated with the meaning of the words—thereby pulling together text, design, and image into a direct and decorative expression of content. This eye-catching technique requires an inventive touch, and a sense of humor.



The dense texture of printed letters in this typographic illustration by Armando Testa visually parallels the feather pattern of the chicken.

To be used effectively, our Latin alphabet, composed basically of straight lines, circles, and part circles, has to be resourcefully manipulated. Calligraphic scripts such as Arabic, which are flowing and organic, lend themselves much more readily to such graphic decorative techniques.



A single line of text **traces the flight path of a ladybug in a decoratively informative way. Single lines can be designed into shapes equally as well as areas of text, depending on the degree of legibility required.**

The decorative nature of shaped text transforms reading into a visual experience. Advertising uses this technique to give slogans or short pieces of text an embellished form with the visual impact to convey a message. Logotype designs also make use of this device. Text might be composed into the

<http://www.nhsdesigns.com/graphic/typography>

shapes of shoes, wine glasses, bottles, heads, complete bodies, animals, birds, fish, trees, or whole town landscapes. Usually, the particular form in which text is shaped stems from the content. Written portraits created through the texture and tone of words - where virtual photographic likenesses of the subject, human, or animal, can be achieved through an inordinate amount of dexterity and skill - are feats of decorative typography. digitized portraits or pictures, however, can be far less arduously created on a computer that allows you to experiment freely with typographic shading by changing the weight of relevant parts of the text. Typographic illustrations generated on a computer tend to have a curious, tapestry-like decorative quality to them. Handwritten ones retain the individuality of the designer's lettering with its more subtle texture.



Convincing typographic portraits can be generated by digitized phototypesetting systems. Facial features can be effectively described by making subtle changes in weight, style and size.

Source: *Graphic Design School* by David Dabner