

REAR

REAR

REAR

REAR

LETTERS  
ARE  
MY  
FRIENDS™

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♥ *typographic* † *concept store* ♥

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*Where type meets new technology.*

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\*2011 – 2014

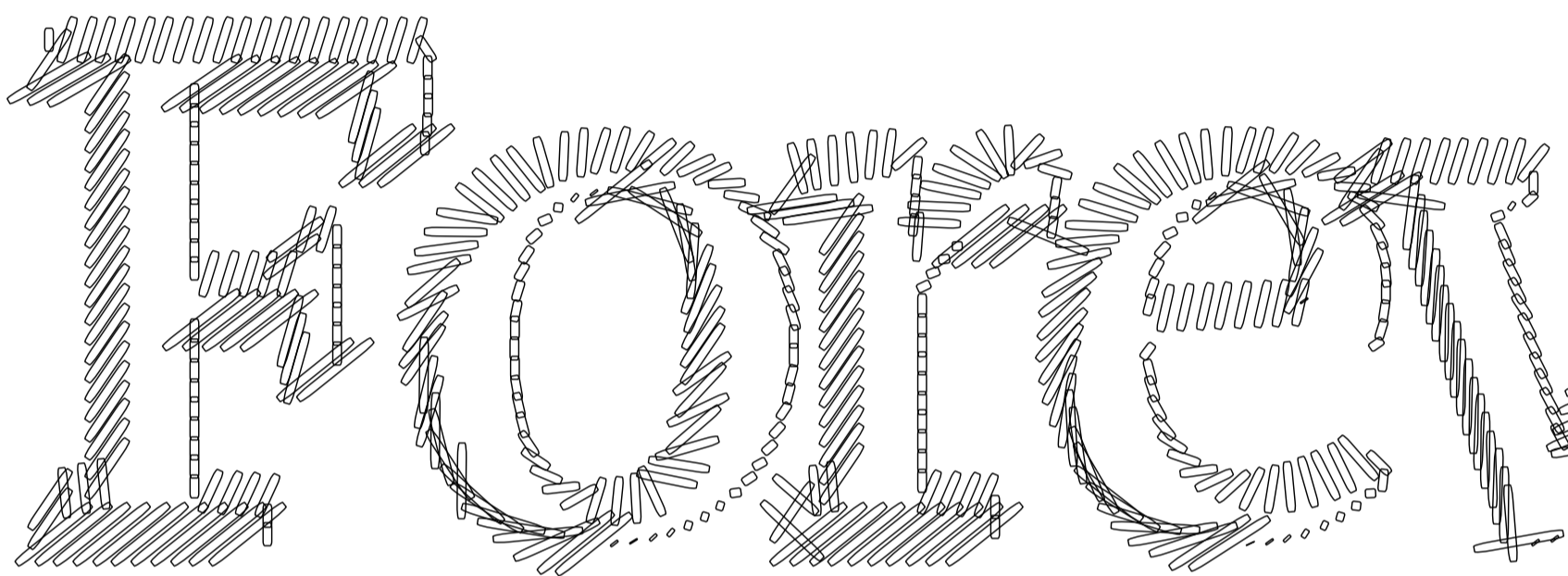


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»INITIALLY, WE HAD THE IDEA OF HOW GREAT IT WOULD BE TO HAVE A RECORD STORE BUT FOR TYPOGRAPHY—SO ALSO WITH THE ATTRIBUTES OF A RECORD STORE: BROWSE BOXES ÷ EXPLORE, BE VISUALLY ADDRESSED, DISCOVER, FIND SOMETHING NEW, LISTEN, BE SURPRISED, MAYBE BUY IT OR NOT AND GO OUT AGAIN WITH A SMILE COMPLETELY INSPIRED.«



~ Keez Duyves ~

Inventor & visionary of PIPS:LAB (Amsterdam, NL)

***„IF A FOREWORD WOULD  
CONSIST OF ONLY ONE WORD,  
THIS BOOK’S FOREWORD  
WOULD BE WORD.”***

Okay. I understand why the Letter-Friends asked me to write this foreword. I have been a pioneer in developing new media mixtures of technology with *design and the arts for ages*. I was a spark on the *swipe-ness of things*, invented *mid-air light graffiti*, I am the founder of an *obscure multimedia art and performance* group called PIPS:lab, but I never produced a book.

Can one fit new media in a book? Can one fit motion in a book? Why on earth do my Letters Are My Friends friends try to squeeze their desire to differ in such an old medium? I called Nina (a.k.a. Bärbel Bold) for explanation:

Because that's what Letters Are My Friends are to me. Pure addiction to form, style and subculture people, just as graffiti is, but even beyond.

Nina, or Barbel Bold and I met in Milan in 2006, where we were both performing at the same festival. Nina, who enjoyed our show, surprised me by being pretty critical about some of our visuals. She surprised me even more by showing her laptop. There was a centimetre-thick layer of patches, stickers and rubber bands cello-taped over her Apple. And it looked good. We stayed in contact. A friendship developed and I have been blessed by getting a peek in



**Bärbel: "...THATS A GOOD QUESTION, BUT THE REASON IS THAT WE ON THE ONE HAND SEE THE FUTURE IN THE VIRTUAL AND NEW TECHNOLOGY MEDIA BUT ALSO WANT TO HOLD ON TO OLD TRADITIONS. WE THINK THERE IS A NEED FOR HAPTICAL EXPERIENCES WHICH TAKE YOU TIME TO GO THROUGH. AS MOST NEW MEDIA ARTS ARE MEANT TO BE CONSUMED QUICKLY BY THEIR AUDIENCE, A BOOK IS MUCH MORE WEALTHY IN A WAY. WE ARE THINKING OF DOING MAYBE AN EBOOK LATER, BUT THATS ANOTHER STEP.."**

Well, that makes sense.

And I guess Miss Bärbel Bold and Ingo Italic figured out that the unstableness of new media makes it a bad form of presentation. New media can be seen and in its moving and always-changing appearances, but it still fades. It is not as persistent as we want it to be.

I've been aware of this problem from an early stage: in 1995 I created WORD For Dying People. In this adapted text-programme a person – in the very last moments of his life- could make last dramatic statement on the computer. This MS Word-like program made Times New Roman slowly fade into handwriting, handwriting faded into scribbles, scribbles into a line and then it all ended with an ink-spot. Word for Dying People died with the dismantling of Macromind Director, an interactive application in which I authored the artwork.

Even nowadays, data on CD-ROMs or DVDs still disappear slowly (and isn't even available as an application on the machine on which I type this foreword).

Books! Books stay.

So here in the foreword I have to tempt you to be active. Use your imagination and think animation, interaction, forming hypes, and memes. Add the addictive love for typography. Actively connect it to people, parties, openings and spider-in-the-webs.

their crazy experiments of fridge frozen typography, programmed experiments with morphing letters, urban knittings, and so on.

I mentioned the Word For Dying People-experiment, because it involved typographic programming. It struck me at the time: in the future we will have designing programmers, scripting designers. And maybe, even coding designers. It happened.

Now we call this motion graphics, or generative design. Letters Are My Friends are mastering both.

Enjoy the book. Get inspired, and come up with new ways of designing viral 3D-fonts for the future.

All 6.3 of them.

#### KEEZ DUVYES

*Keez Duyves (\*1971)*

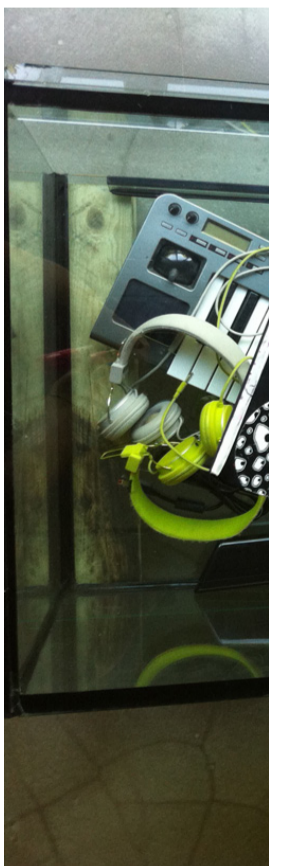
*Inventor & visionary / Founder of PIPS:lab (Amsterdam, NL)*

**'Ideas are born when you're focused, but just off-focus.'**

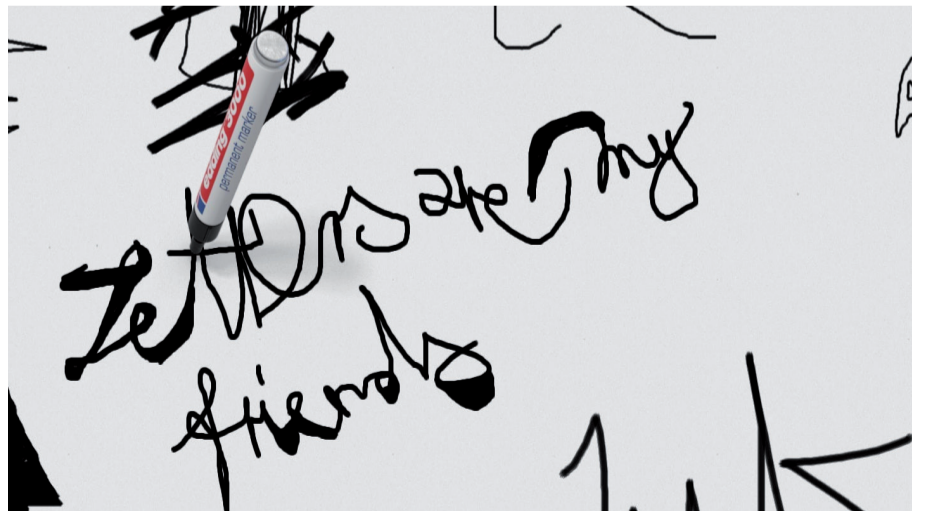
*After attaining his master's degree cum laude in Interactive Multi Media at the Utrecht School of the Arts, Keez made a very conscious choice to be an artist. PIPS:lab is his laboratory and field of research. With his artist friends Keez transforms new media into unexpected media. Works of art that are meant for participation not just observation.*

~ Peter Kirn ~  
Create Digital Motion

***“LETTERS ARE MY FRIENDS  
IS A STORY IN ITSELF.  
LOCATED IN BERLIN’S KREUZBERG  
NEIGHBORHOOD, IT’S A  
TYPOGRAPHICAL GALLERY  
AND LABORATORY MAKING  
TYPE & TECH PHYSICAL.  
IT COMES A LONG WAY  
FROM DRY TYPE DESCRIPTION  
PAGES ON THE WEB.  
ONE FEATURE IS A COSY  
SHOWROOM WHERE LETTER  
RELATIONSHIPS CAN BE  
EXPERIENCED IN A  
PHYSICAL SPACE  
AND PROGRESSIVE WAY.”***









~ Alexander Scholz ~  
Creative Director, HOLO magazine

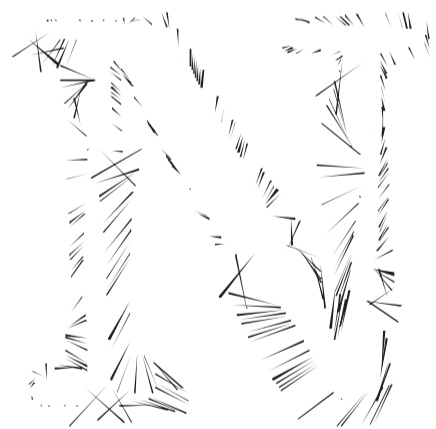
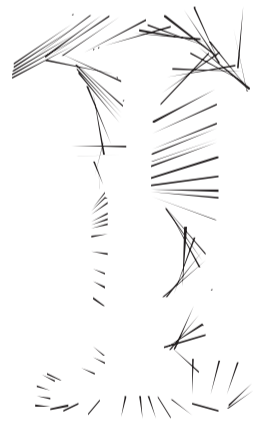
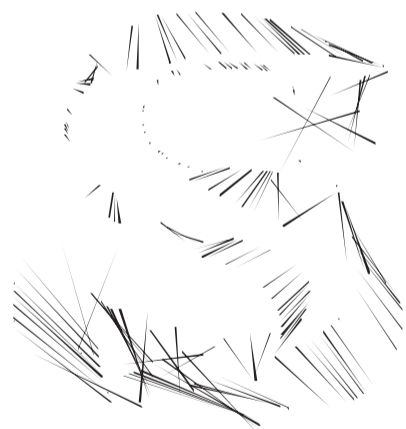
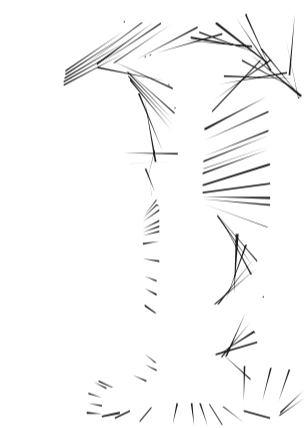
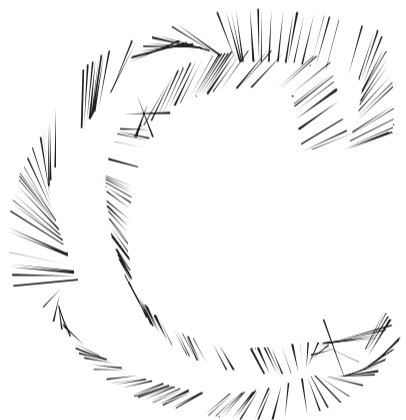
***“FUTURA BOLD —  
EVER SINCE I PUNCHED MY FIRST  
HELLO WORLD! INTO A COMPUTER  
KEYBOARD DIGITAL LETTERS HAVE  
COME A LONG WAY. WHILE  
TYPE AND TECH HAVE BEEN BOUND FOREVER,  
IT'S ONLY NOW THAT THE TWO ARE  
REALLY "CLOSE". WELCOME TO THE AGE OF  
"UBIQUITOUS COMPUTING" WHERE  
YOU CAN GROW YOUR ALPHABET OUT OF  
RESEARCH DATA, HAVE LETTERS RESPOND  
TO TOUCH OR 3D PRINT SOME THE  
SIZE OF A PAPERBACK BOOK.  
NEVER BEFORE WAS TYPE SO 'ALIVE'  
AND MORE POWERFUL TOOLS  
AVAILABLE TO ANYONE. YET MUCH OF  
THE TINKERING REMAINS CONFINED  
TO DESIGN GEEK CIRCLES AND BEHIND  
CLOSED STUDIO  
DOORS.***

...

...

**ENTER LETTERS ARE MY FRIENDS,  
BÄRBEL BOLD AND INGO ITALIC'S  
QUIRKY TYPE'N'TECH LABORATORY  
IN BERLIN – A CREATIVE HUB  
WITH OPENING HOURS AND A  
STOREFRONT WINDOW.**

**HERE VISITORS CAN BROWSE  
A CURIOUS INVENTORY OF PROTOTYPES  
IN THE MAKING: DO SOME LETTER  
PRESS ON IPADS, MINGLE UNDER A LASER  
CUT LETTER MOBILE OR LEAVE A  
MORPHING ONSCREEN MESSAGE  
VIA A TYPEWRITER FROM THE 1920S.  
AS THE TWO HAPPILY BUNDLE TRADITION,  
CRAFT AND INNOVATION, THEIR  
PLATFORM GROWS AND OFFERS FOOTHOLDS.  
ILLUSTRATORS, PROGRAMMERS,  
DESIGNERS, MUSICIANS – THE LIST  
OF LAMF COLLABORATORS, GUEST  
ARTISTS AND PARTICIPANTS IS LONG.  
WITHIN ONLY TWO YEARS OF OPERATION,  
BÄRBEL AND INGO HAVE CULTIVATED  
A NEIGHBORHOOD HOTSPOT THAT,  
THANKS TO STELLAR PROGRAMMING,  
IS NOW KNOWN BY LETTER FRIENDS  
AROUND THE WORLD.”**



**WHAT IS IT ABOUT?**



*Letters Are My Friends is a concept store for typography & new technologies right in the heart of Berlin's Kreuzberg. A place where analogue and digital type meet with emerging technologies.*

*The idea and the concept of Letters Are My Friends was initiated by Bärbel Bold and Ingo Italic in late 2008.*

*They have been running their windowfronted concept store and design studio since 2011, located in Boppstrasse 7, Berlin - Kreuzberg.*

*One part of 'Letters Are My Friends' is a cosy showroom where letter relationships can be experienced in a physical space and progressive way.*

*Moreover 'Letters Are My Friends' is a research lab, prototyping studio & production label focusing on type 'n' tech. They share an interdisciplinary, professional and innovative, yet often experimental approach to services and products related to typography, motion- and interaction design.*

*As media professionals in motion & interaction design, they have been deeply connected to art, design, type and technology for over a decade.*



*Letters Are My Friends presents applied typography in a dazzling variety:*

*peripheral perforated paper projections, spacy letterboxing, type'n'motion voxel folding, 3D ink raycasting, turntypetablelism, dolby surround fatcap-tracking, tasty toasted gpu fonts, trigonometric triangle trading and of course some serious conversations about language, its aesthetics and the future of writing.*

*It is not about the A or the B, it is about what the A and the B connects: It is never just the type, and never just the technology.*

*It is about the combination, the overlaps, the synergies and the inbetween of both.*





# WE CALL IT TYPE 'N' TECH.

Our love for typography since our early childhood just happened naturally. We did not begin as typographers! We have no classic typedesigner's education and a rather unusual approach when it comes to typedesign.

We are designers by heart who come from different fields, so we focus on application, usage and the functionality of typography first and foremost. We love typefaces: inked and drawn, static and generated, still, interactive and in motion, flat and haptic, printed, installed and projected - and support their connections to art, science and technology.

The vision of the concept store was kind of an electronic typographic archive with the sensual impact of a record store - where you hang out, browse and explore, look and find, listen, spend time, buy something or not and leave with a smile as another person than before: inspired and experienced!

Typography is always coupled on a carrier medium. This condition itself and the idea of this carrier media coming out of the world of new technology formed the

foundation for Letters Are My Friends' concept. This intersection is what we call home. Therefore we came up with a term: Type & Tech is what we do.

At Letters Are My Friends the people behind it pay attention to this relation of type and tech, attract new audiences, marry the nerd with the amateur.

People that have never heard of generative typography should become curious and nerds that love to code their kerning should start using their calligraphy brushes again. It is all connected - and great ideas happen when people from very different backgrounds meet, clash and ask questions.

With 'Letters Are My Friends' we want to explore, initiate and feature projects that push type & tech forward. We are open for collaborations and always welcome commissions.

Attached to our showroom you will find our design studio dedicated to research, conception and production of unique typographic solutions - often tied up to new technologies.

Since 2003 we have been working in the communication business with different orientations for interactive and moving images, so we can offer a vast spectrum of services.

Bärbel Bold and Ingo Italic specialize in thoughtful, comprehensive results for our diverse range of clients with expertise in design and use of new media.

With a special passion for research, interactive typography, type in motion, (generative) design and custom lettering, we provide new and outstanding solutions: From inimitable identities, over advanced motiondesigned commercials, to interactive installations to first-class publications.

We approach each new project with open eyes and structure and the understanding that every client has its unique needs and future. Therefore we don't offer you any particular house style but a unique personal development process. We are very curious about innovative things and new ways of thinking and networking, thus our special task force is questioning, listening, learning and dialogue.

**"WE BELIEVE THAT LANGUAGE,  
LETTERS AND TYPOGRAPHY  
ARE THE BASIC BUILDING  
BLOCKS IN ANY FIELD  
OF DESIGN & INTERACTION."**



**LEFT**

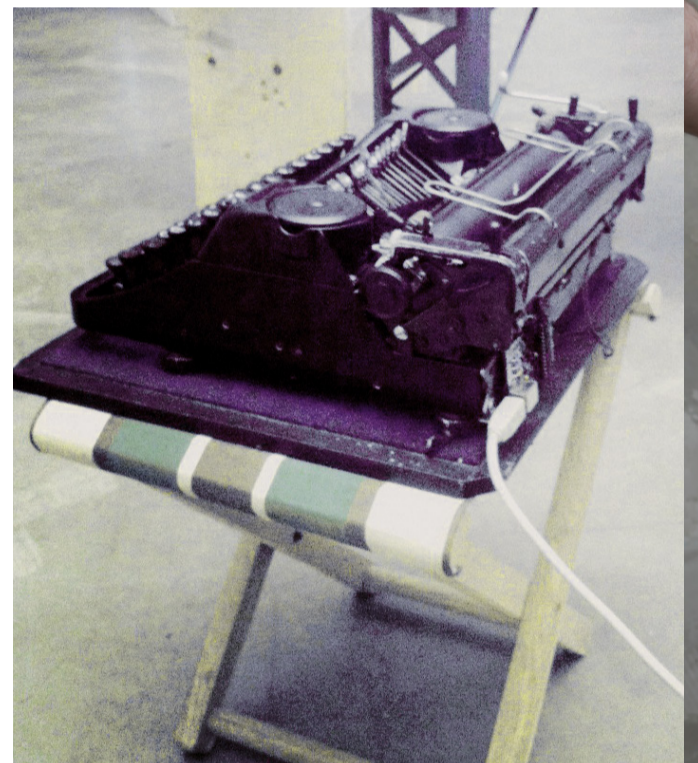
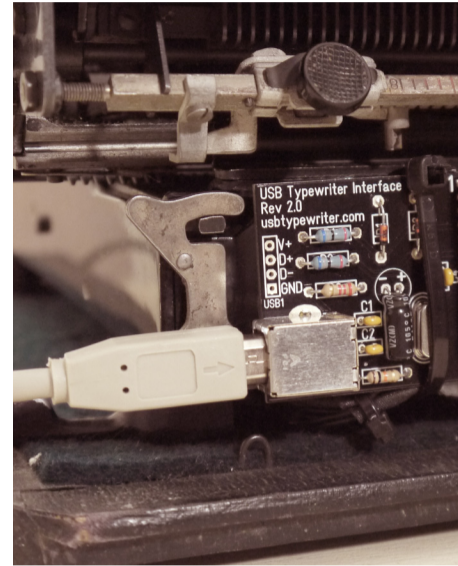
The Infinite Typetrooper

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**RIGHT**

Bärbel Bold & Ingo Italic

Photo by Katja Oortman



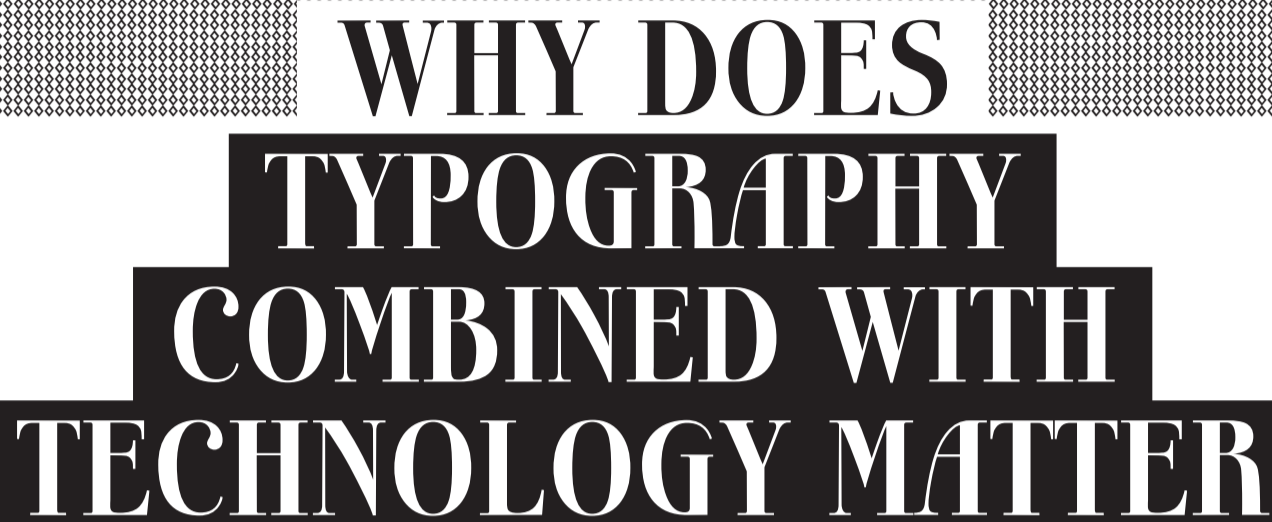




» *TYPOGRAPHY IS ALWAYS COUPLED ON A CARRIER MEDIUM. THIS CONDITION ITSELF AND THE IDEA OF THIS CARRIER MEDIA COMING OUT OF THE WORLD OF NEW TECHNOLOGY FORMED THE FOUNDATION FOR LETTERS ARE MY FRIENDS' CONCEPT. THIS INTERSECTION IS WHAT WE CALL HOME. THEREFORE WE CAME UP WITH A TERM: TYPE 'N' TECH.*«

~ Nikolai von Sallwitz ~  
Musician & Von Sallwitz Sound Architecture

***“IF I WAS A SMALL D  
AND I WANTED TO MEET  
THE BIG E, THE S, THE I,  
THE G AND N, I WOULD  
BE HEADING TO  
LETTERS ARE MY FRIENDS  
IN BERLIN, KREUZBERG  
AND MEET NOT ONLY  
THE ABC IN ALL SHAPES  
AND SIZES, BUT  
THE WHOLE WORLD  
OF LOVELY CONNECTED  
CREATIVENESS THAT  
BRINGS SO MANY THINGS  
TOGETHER.”***



# WHY DOES TYPOGRAPHY COMBINED WITH TECHNOLOGY MATTER

The history of typography and writing has always been a history of technology. There was always a close link between the lettershapes and the available drawing methods of that time. The materials and techniques being used for printing defined the ways how typefaces could be designed.

The lead typesetting has the biggest impact on the design of letters. For over 500 years since Gutenberg lead type was the only way to set letters and get them on paper. Because lead was the main material in which letters could be formed it forced the typesetters to work within its limits. This long design tradition of stamped lead-type still has a huge impact and reverberates into the future.

Hot metal and offset print opened up the creative possibilities. It really changed with the invention of digital desktop publishing and the postscript language. Now letterforms were based on pixels and vector shapes instead of hard to carve metal. First an easy way to layout and print your texts at home DTP and digital fonts started a new graphical revolution, not just in print design.

Since the beginning of silent movies, the role of information transfer by static subtitles was set. Over time, the very appearance of white-on-black title lettering became a visual trope, recurring as it does in practically every Woody Allen film. Filmmakers like Oskar Fischinger or designers like Maurice Binder, Saul Bass, Kyle Cooper became legends in the history of 125 years of typography in motion.

Experimentation on the fringes, where title sequences really thrive, have led to all kinds of innovation in what a title can be

and how it can serve the story and the director's intent. Animation, motion design and computer generated images in general applied a standard.

New multimedia ways of designing flexible lettersystems are being discovered as we speak. There is not a long tradition for animated screentypography yet compared to the tradition of static type since Gutenberg - but one thing is for sure: technology and software will influence how we design and shape letters whether on paper or screen, printed, coded or animated.

New toolkits and programming languages for creative coding like Processing, VVVV or Open Frameworks helped to change the landscape for generative design. It is easier than ever to script and prototype ideas - or font families. This also helps the design process itself and proceeds into the type design world particularly.

Projects like the Toyota iQ Typeface by Zachary Liebermann show the influence of these tools in typography. By tracking a moving car from above different lettershapes were driven and translated into vectors. A project by Mary Huang uses tracking to generate letters from a webcam image of the users face. The expression on the face changes the parameters of the font. But not just tracking helps to alter the design process. Haagse Letters by Joshua Koomen is a java application that can modulate lettershapes and has some clever features based on the structure of fonts.

A very good example for extended print design is "basil.js". basil.js is a scripting library that has been developed at the Visual Communication Institute at The Basel School of Design during nine months and

has been made public as open-source. Based on the principles of "Processing", basil.js allows designers and artists to individually expand the possibilities of Adobe InDesign in order to create complex projects in data visualization and generative design. "While Adobe InDesign on the one hand is offering a valuable set of predefined, common solutions for layout and design problems, a programming language on the other hand allows for questioning the set of available methods and for extending it by creating new tools."

With the implementation of webfonts into modern browsers the demand for well designed and readable screenfonts has reached a new high. Also the different areas of interaction design need ergonomic fonts crafted to the specific purpose of the hardware, software and its users.

Awareness of these close links between design and technology in general and especially within the field of typography is an important part of Letters Are My Friends. In the age of software we have to ask the question what is defining the way how we design and how does software influence our methods? Where are hidden synergies we might use, or great combinations of different disciplines not made for each other? Also what are ways to program your own toolkits without neglecting typesetting traditions? And why is type as popular as never before in general? And what means all those informations shaped in letters for us?

We are sure that language changes its face over time, we have to adapt to new ways of writing and reading, therefore we have to invent new tools that help us to communicate.



# ES GIBT ORTE, DIE SIND IRGENDWIE MAGISCH.

*EIN ESSAY ÜBER LETTERS ARE MY FRIENDS – von Nisha Merit von Carnap*

Stell dir vor: du bist just in diesem Moment dabei, einen kleinen Laden zu betreten. Gerade noch verweilst du auf der Türschwelle, mit der Türklinke in der Hand bist du kurz davor, den ersten Schritt ins Innere zu tun. Da gibt es diesen einen kurzen Augenblick, der sich anfühlt als würde die Zeit stehen bleiben, höchstens für die Dauer einer millionstel Sekunde und während du einen milden Luftzug und den Autolärm aus der staubigen Stadt hinter dir mit hinein trägst, verstummt langsam die Türglocke, welche dein Kommen hätte ankündigen sollen, wäre es dafür nicht längst zu spät, weil du jetzt schon mitten im Laden stehst.

Du schaust dich vorsichtig um, eine latente Ahnung lässt die Entdeckungslust und das Kind in dir erwachen. Denn dieser Laden ist wie ein Koffer aus einem Zeichentrickfilm vergangener Tage. Zuerst

recht gewöhnlich, fast unscheinbar doch nachdem damit begonnen wurde, die augenscheinlichsten Dinge auszupacken, gewinnt der Koffer plötzlich an eine kaum endende Dimension kreativen Schaffens.

Dieser Koffer, ist dieser Laden, ist Letters Are My Friends. Ein typografischer Concept-Store mit der Spezialisierung auf das Anwendungsfeld und die Schnittstelle der neuen Technologien. Und während man auf viele bunte, kleine, große, analoge und digitale Kreationen guckt, hat man das Gefühl einzutauchen, in etwas Vertrautes und dennoch Unbekanntes.

**HIER TREFFEN SICH DIE VERSCHIEDENSTEN ENTDECKUNGEN AUS VERGANGENHEIT UND ZUKUNFT, DIESE MEIST UND ZUMINDEST EINEN GEMEINSAMEN URSPRUNG HABEN:**

#### **DIE TYPOGRAFIE.**

Dabei handelt es sich nicht primär um den altbekannten Buchstaben und

die strategische Zusammensetzung im Schreiben. Es geht nicht nur um die Bedeutung des Wortes sondern um eine Anatomie der Buchstaben und wie sich diese in ihrer Architektur gestalten und kombinieren lassen, vor allem in der Anwendung neuer Technologien. In diesem Sinne ist der kleine Laden auch ein Labor, indem man experimentiert und ausstellt. Zudem wird, das bringt das moderne Kreativwerk mit sich, viel im virtuellen Raum gearbeitet. Obwohl gerade die Schnittstellen zwischen analogem Handwerk und digitalem Basteln bedeutend sind.

Du hast also schon den ersten Eindruck erhascht, obwohl noch nicht klar ist, woher die Selbstverständlichkeit herrührt, die dich überkommen hat und dich auf fast natürliche Art und Weise teilhaben lässt. Es ist wichtig, eine grundlegende Unterscheidung zu treffen: die Köpfe hinter





Letters Are My Friends sind – zumindest im Kernteam - weniger Typographen im klassischen Sinne des Schriftsetzens. Sie sind in erster Linie Designer aus unterschiedlichen Bereichen und kreative Hybride, die die Typographie als Werkzeug und Ausdrucksmittel verwenden. Es geht nämlich – und hier liegt die Wichtigkeit im Detail – um den Zwischenraum. Also um den Prozess, welcher zwischen Idee und Ziel passiert. Jener Prozess, jener Zwischenraum unterliegt der stattfindenden Kommunikation im reinsten Maße: und so kommt es, dass man sich im gemeinsamen Umgang so sehr annähert, bis ein gemeinsam entwickelter Prototyp entsteht. Denn jeder hat eine eigene Definition von A/AAAAa und trotzdem kommt man – im besten Falle - auf ein gemeinsames B.

Während deiner Feldstudie im Showroom generierst du dir ganz neue Zusammenhänge zwischen altbekannten Objekten und neuen Technologien. Wie die antiquierte Schreibmaschine aus den 1920er Jahren, die nicht mehr auf Papier schreibt sondern die gedruckten Buchstaben auf einem Bildschirm animiert: "The Infinite Typetrooper" heisst diese Installation.

**ES IST DIESE INTERDISZIPLINARITÄT, DIE VON LETTERS ARE MY FRIENDS GESCHAFFEN WIRD, WELCHE EINEM DURCH INTUITIVES MITMACHEN, EIN ERLEBNIS ERMÖGLICHT.**

In der Zusammenfassung dieser komplexen Vorgehen steht der Versuch, die Typographie in ihren verschiedensten Masken, Verkleidungen und Auftritten erlebbar und nutzbar zu machen. So entstehen kleine Ausstellungen, Events und Installationen.



Sie hat auch dich gepackt, die Interaktion und langsam löst sich die Schrift aus ihrer Omnipräsenz auf den Straßen der Stadt voller Reklame und Werbeschilder

und wird wieder ein Stück mehr Kunst, ein bisschen mehr besonders.

Vielleicht fragst du dich auch, wo deine Schrift geblieben ist?

Die Schrift, der Buchstabe sind seit jeher Mittel zum Zweck sich zu verständigen, auszudrücken und zu positionieren. Es



sind konstruierte Definitionen auf die sich eine bestimmte kollektive Masse einmal geeinigt hat. Bis es dazu kam, dass wir bei einem Buchstaben alle das gleiche Objekt meinen, obwohl man jeweils etwas ganz anderes damit assoziiert. In der Schule hat man sie zu unterscheiden gelernt, dann kam das Schön-Schreiben und später wurde der Inhalt über die Schrift gestellt und zum reinen Werkzeug degradiert. Bis sie, vor allem durch die Medien auch zum ästhetischen Stylingobjekt wurde und es selbstverständlich wurde sich für das Corporate Design auf einen Schriftfont festzulegen, weil man angefangen hatte dieser, bestimmte Attribute anzuhängen. Passt der Schriftfont auch zum eigenen Charakter? Inhalt bestimmt das Medium oder Medium bestimmt den Inhalt? Die elegante und protzige Oberschicht! Die steife bürgerliche Mitte ...

Beschwipst von Bier und Wodka-Shots fragst du dich langsam, ob das alles wirklich möglich ist - oder ist es doch nur ein Ausflug ins Peter-Pan-Utopia? Es stimmt schon, dass diese Abende bei Letters Are My Friends so wirken können - umgeben von diesen Menschen, die sich immer mal wieder die Freiheit nehmen, sich selbst einen Spielraum zu eröffnen zwischen dem ganzen brachial-realen Leben da draußen. Aber dennoch ist es nicht ganz so einfach wie es sich anhört – sind erst mal alle wieder weg, die leeren Flaschen aufgesammelt und die spontan entstandenen

Mal-künste beseitigt, steht man mitten in einer hart umkämpften Kreativbranche in der man sich mit den ganzen anderen Nerds einfinden muss. Es stellt sich also schon die Frage, ob so ein Raum neben all den anderen Kreativkisten existieren kann?

Aber hey!, da kommt der nächste scheinheilige Plastikbecher in deine Hand – und so komplexe Fragen sollen diesen Abend nun wirklich nicht bestimmen! Denn im Laufe deiner Entdeckungen merkst du:

**ES GEHT NICHT NUR DARUM, MEHR ZU VERSTEHEN SONDERN ZU ERLEBEN, SICH VON DEM WUNDERBAREN ÜBERRASCHEN ZU LASSEN.**

Und nachdem du bei Letters Are My Friends länger als gedacht, verweilt hast, den Koffer durchwühlt, ein paar Bier getrunken und mit den verschiedensten



kreativen Köpfen gesprochen hast, gehst du mit einem beschwipsten Lächeln und einem erfüllten Geist aus dem Laden in den späten Berliner Abend hinaus. Die erste Reise durch den Typo-Kosmos geht zu ende, es wird wohl nicht die letzte sein.

[REDACTED]

S C I

B N O E

A F I C

T I O

N

**LABORATORY  
PRODUCTS & PROTOTYPES  
FUTURE CASES  
TYPE DESIGN & FONT CASES**



» WE EXPERIMENT  
ON PERIPHERICAL  
PERFORATED PAPER  
PROJECTIONS,  
SPACY LETTERBOXING,  
TYPE'N'MOTION  
VOXEL FOLDING,  
3D INK RAYCASTING,  
TURN TYPETABLELISM,  
DOLBY SURROUND  
FATCAP-TRACKING,  
TASTY TOASTED  
GPU FONTS,  
TRIGONOMETRIC  
TRIANGLE TRADING,  
...

*...OR WE JUST ART DIRECT,  
PRINT BOOKS, WRITE  
CONCEPTS, DEVELOP  
CORPORATE IDENTITIES,  
DIRECT COMMERCIALS,  
DESIGN INFOGRAPHICS,  
ANIMATE MOVIE TITLES,  
WRITE CODE, DESIGN  
USER INTERFACES, BUILD  
MULTITOUCH TABLES OR  
MINIRAMPS, LASERCUT  
MAGNETIC TYPEFACES,  
PROJECT ON AQUARIUMS,  
INVENT INTERACTIVE  
TYPEKITS, ASK OURSELVES  
WHAT'S NEW OR HOOK ON  
REALITY AND DREAMS.«*



# THE LABORATORY— WHAT ARE WE DOING ALL DAY LONG?

— *FIRST  
OF ALL,  
WE AL-  
WAYS  
ASK  
QUES-  
TIONS!*

The products, outputs and prototypes at Letters Are My Friends are as varied as the persons creating them.

It ranges from classical print design on paper to interactive software pieces for screens. We are communication designers and love to consult brands in terms of the right positioning, processes and methods.

We art direct, print books, write concepts, develop corporate identities, direct commercials, design infographics, animate movie titles, write code, design user interfaces, build multitouch tables, lasercut magnetic typefaces, project on aquariums, invent interactive typekits and experiment on things, that take us out of the everyday and fill us with joy and wonder ... We are curious about new approaches that explore play, human behaviour and engagement through interaction design and the visual arts.

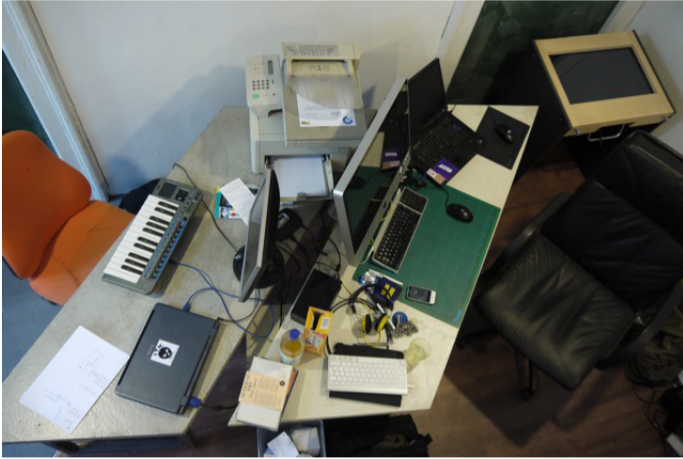
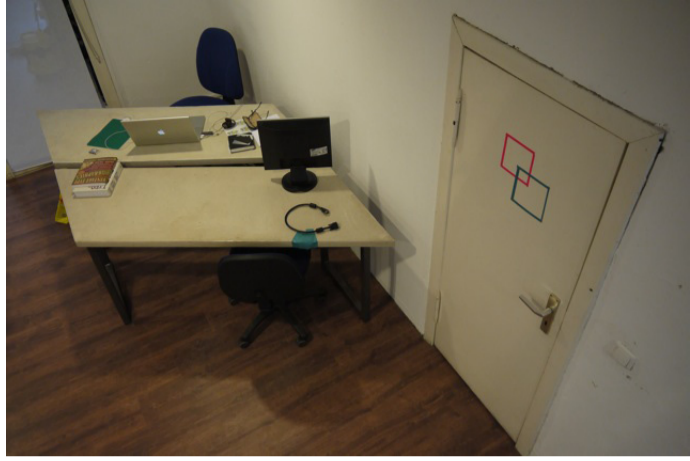
**WHAT COMBINES ALL  
PROJECTS IS THE  
QUEST FOR A UNIQUE**

**APPROACH ON TYPE-  
DESIGN THAT ALWAYS  
TRIES TO RE-THINK  
THE AVAILABLE TOOLS  
AND METHODS FOR  
EACH PURPOSE.**

— WHICH  
D O E S N ' T  
MEAN WE ANSWER  
THEM RIGHT!

## **Our services include**

creative & art direction / conception / motion design & direction / corporate identity & design / infographics / on-air campaigns / title design & artwork for film / projection mapping / generative & interaction design / typography & lettering / events & pop-up stores / event projection & visuals / multitouch development / haptic & analogue typographic installations / production & project management.





iPad

Vorsatz

11:19

Alpha

Compose

ABaš

i

?

↵

A B C D E F G H I J **K** L M N O P Q R S  
T U V W X Y Z a b c d e f g h i j k l  
m n o p q r s t u v w x y z 0 1 2 3 4

ASCENDER

CAP HEIGHT

X HEIGHT

BASELINE





~ Mark Drexler ~  
Creative Director of Deutsche Telekom

***“IF I THINK OF  
BERLIN, ITS POSITIVE,  
ALSO ROUGH SPIRIT  
AND TYPOGRAPHY  
IN A ROW — LETTERS  
ARE MY FRIENDS  
WILL ALWAYS BE THE  
NEXT THOUGHT.”***





**LEFT**

Production-Process of the QUADS  
Production-Process of the QUADS

**RIGHT**

QUAD-Portfolio  
QUAD-Portfolio  
QUAD-Portfolio  
QUAD-Portfolio

*»WE WISH TO DEVELOP  
FOR COMPANIES  
WHO HAVE A SEVENTH  
SENSE, STRUCTURE ð  
NEED FOR SPECIAL CASE  
STUDIES ð PROTOTYP-  
ING.«*



**PRODUCTS & PROTOTYPES —**  
***WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT? — FIRST TASK: FIND A COMMON LANGUAGE.***

We would like to present you with what we've got so far in our pocket of own products and development kits as a research lab, prototyping studio and production label.

As stated earlier, we share an interdisciplinary and often experimental approach to processing ideas.

So far, the combination of typography with interaction and motion design has been the focus of most of our work.

Our aim is to find the nexus of these two elements, a spot to innovate where we can spend time and energy on exploring exciting new ideas. That in itself is a big task!

Then, -as so often- communication is key! But finding the right sort

of conversation can be quite a challenge. Especially when two experts who work in different fields want to collaborate, but are impatient, pressed for time, and are not on the same level of methods and frequency. Design is basically a puzzle that you try to solve each time. It's a language and you need to master it, change it, flip it around.

Common language is not a default setting in a collaborative interdisciplinary team, so we can never assume total understanding! We need an open mind to cut through the jargon and a desire to exchange skills, set limits and build a bridge to the other world to find the hidden 'inbetweens' and 'news'.

***“IT IS NOT ABOUT THE A OR THE B,  
 IT IS ABOUT WHAT THE A AND THE B  
 CONNECTS: IT IS NEVER JUST THE TYPE,  
 AND NEVER JUST THE TECHNOLOGY!”***



Nº 01

# TYPECUTTER

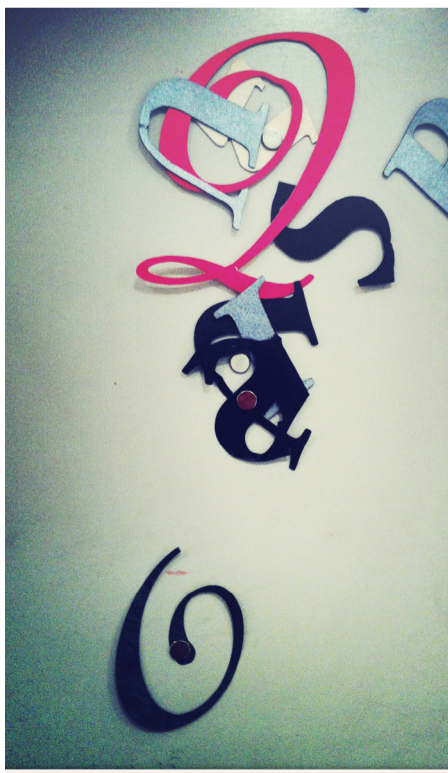
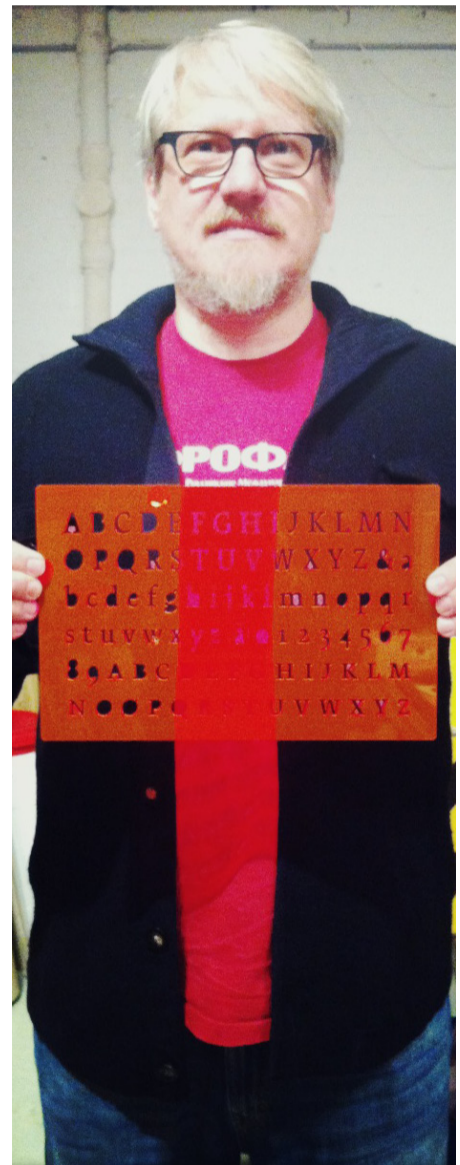
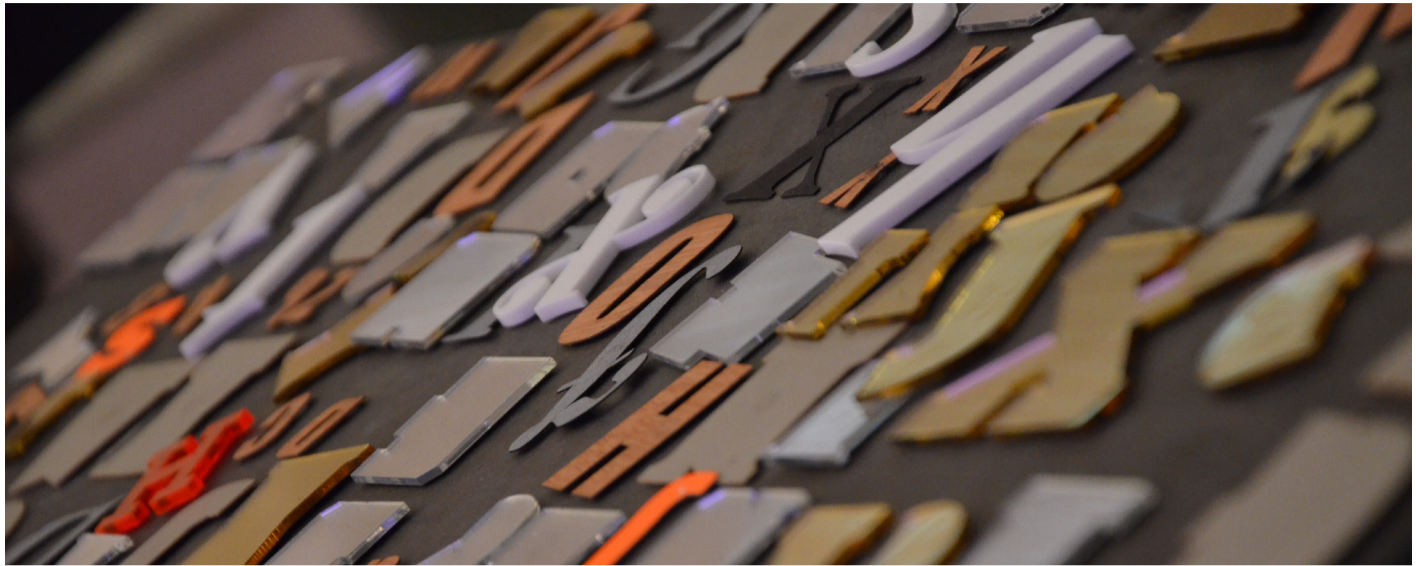
DIY MAGNETIC LETTERS SETS

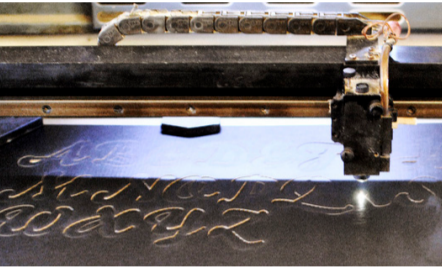
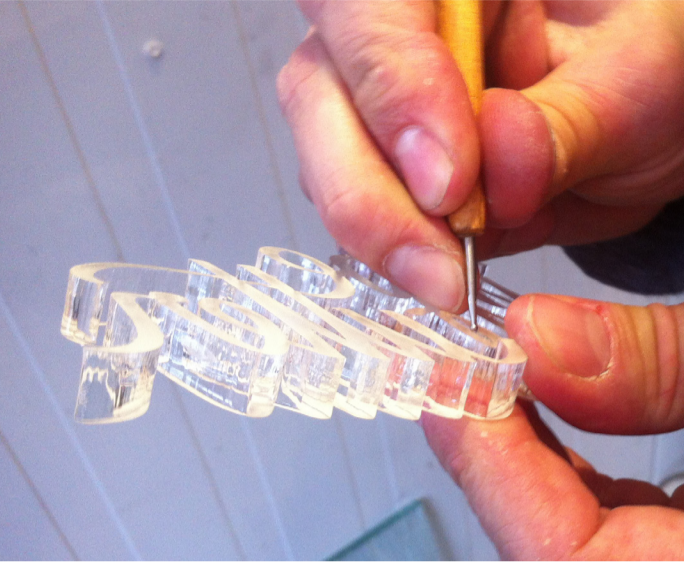
In collaboration with brilliant upcoming and well-known typographers from around the world and their finest typefaces laserlaser.com & Letters Are My Friends deliver a package of magnetic typesets made of wood, acrylic glass and different sorts of card board.

This is an ongoing series of alphabetic do-it-yourself- kits and products that showcase haptic typography created in different materials.

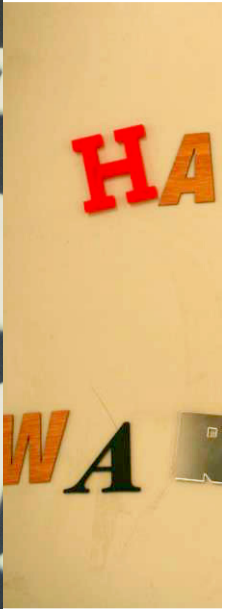
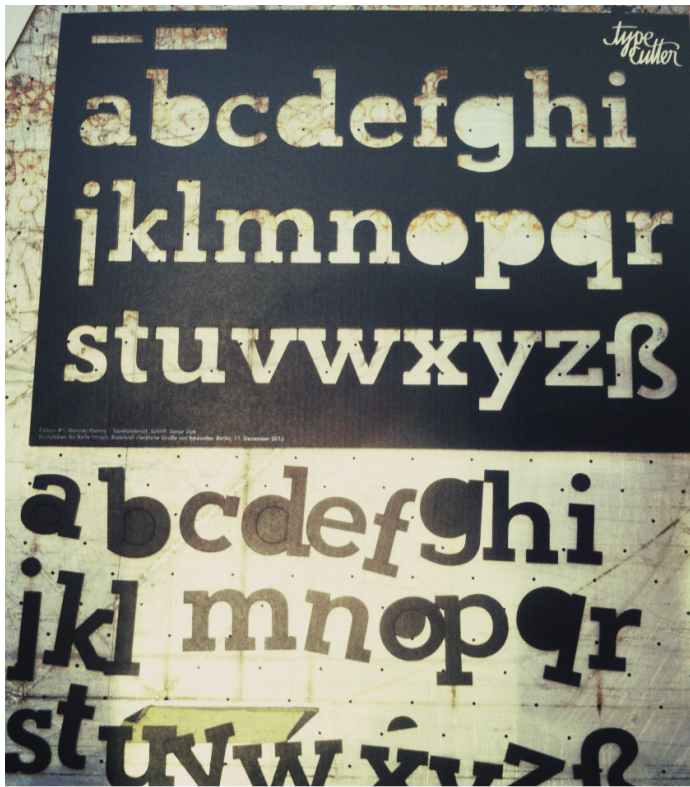
This project already started with a big success 2011 and brought the (mostly ugly) magnetic fridge-lettering to another level: Adidas, Vice, Etsy and much more well known companies have ordered magnetic lettersets already and have committed to the concept.

***MORE DETAILS ON TYPECUTTER.COM***



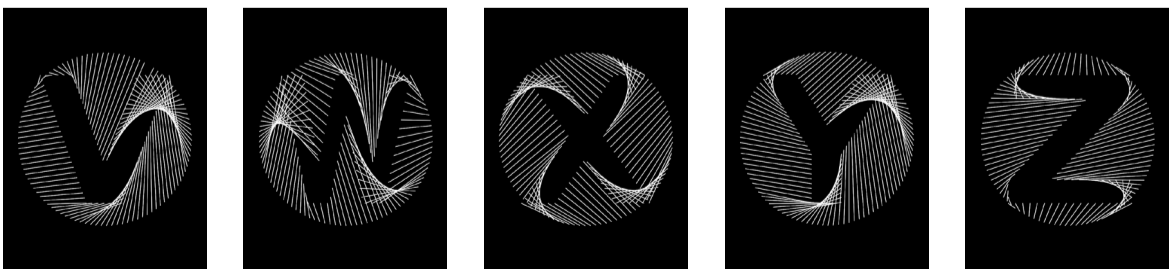
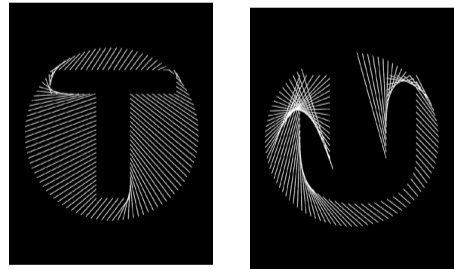
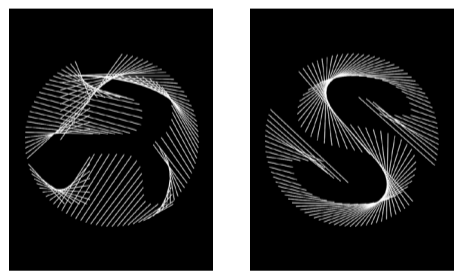
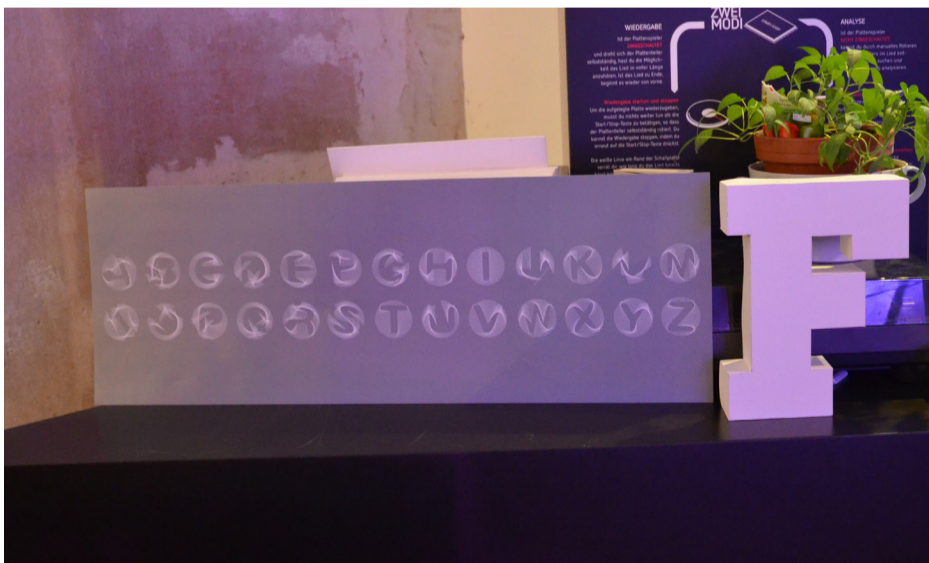
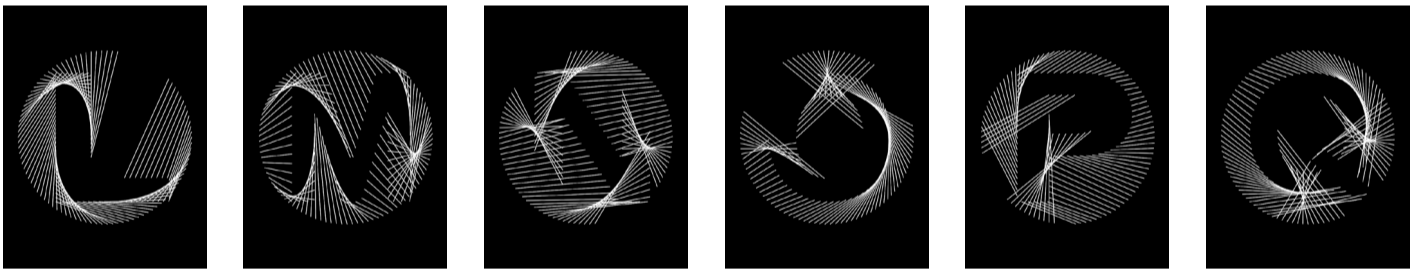
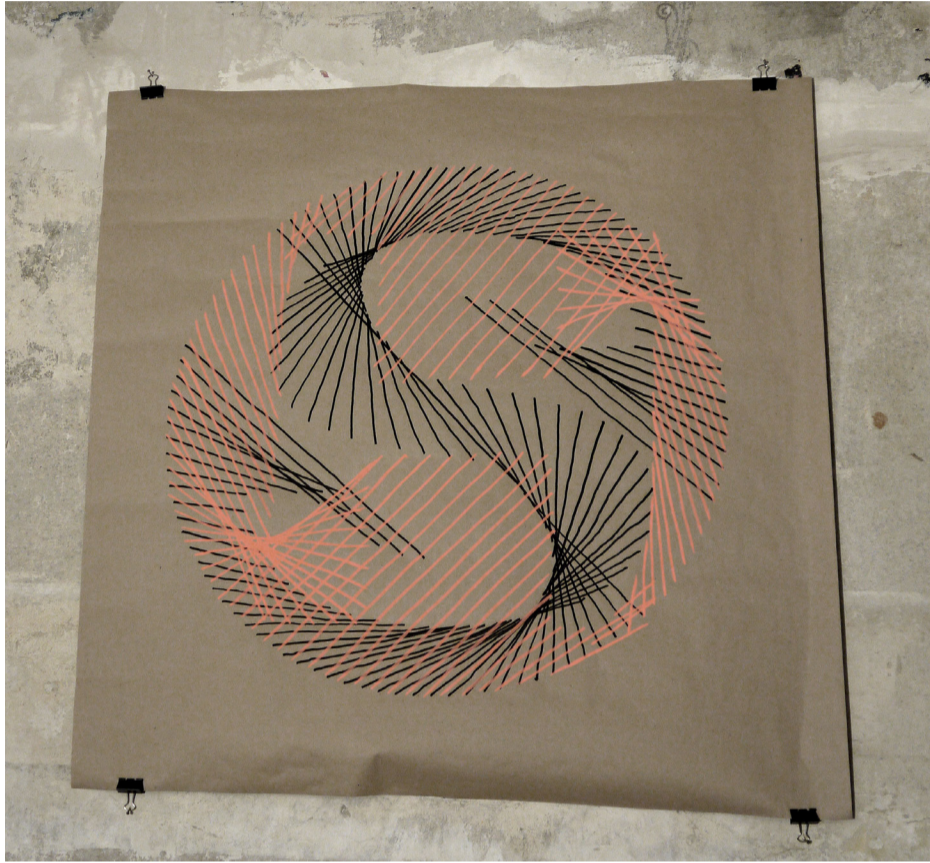
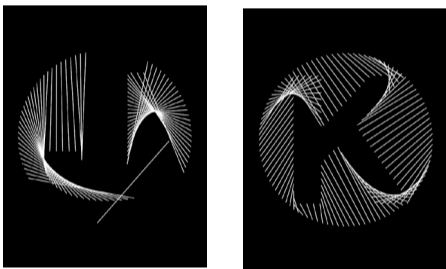
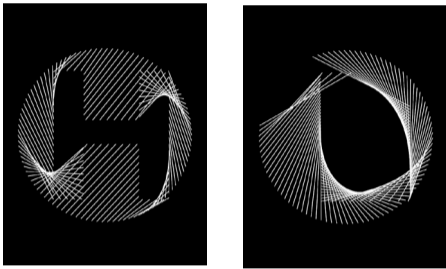
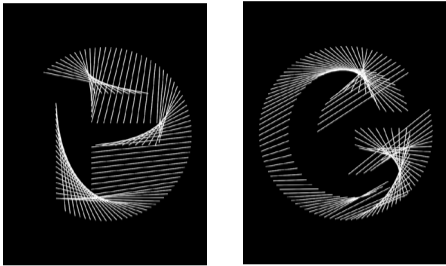
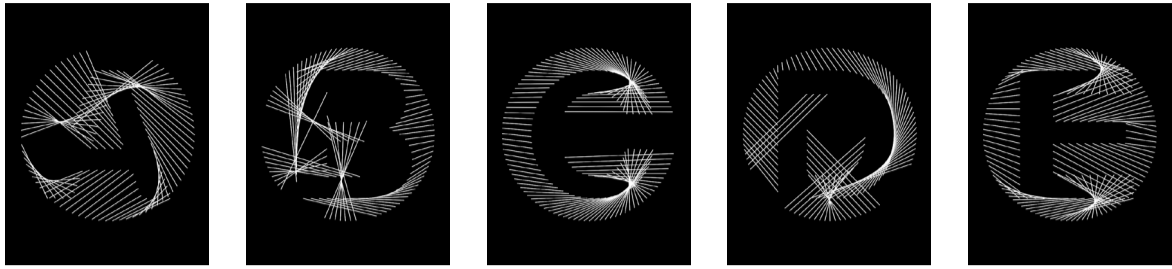














Nº 02

# BUCHSTABENGEWITTER

A FLEXIBLE TYPE FRAMEWORK  
GENERATIVELY MORPHING AN ALPHABET CONTINUOUSLY

Based on the idea that the most interesting part of an animation is always the **TRANSITION FROM A TO B**, Letters Are My Friends are dedicating their latest research to this topic:

At first sight, the Buchstabengewitter is an animated typeface based on Alte Haas Grotesk, combined with lines and shapes.

A spinning circle is moving around a glyph. Each point on the outline of the letter is connected to a point on the circle. Through the movement of the connecting lines new patterns emerge. Our eyes are always caught between realizing a lettershape or just crossing lines.

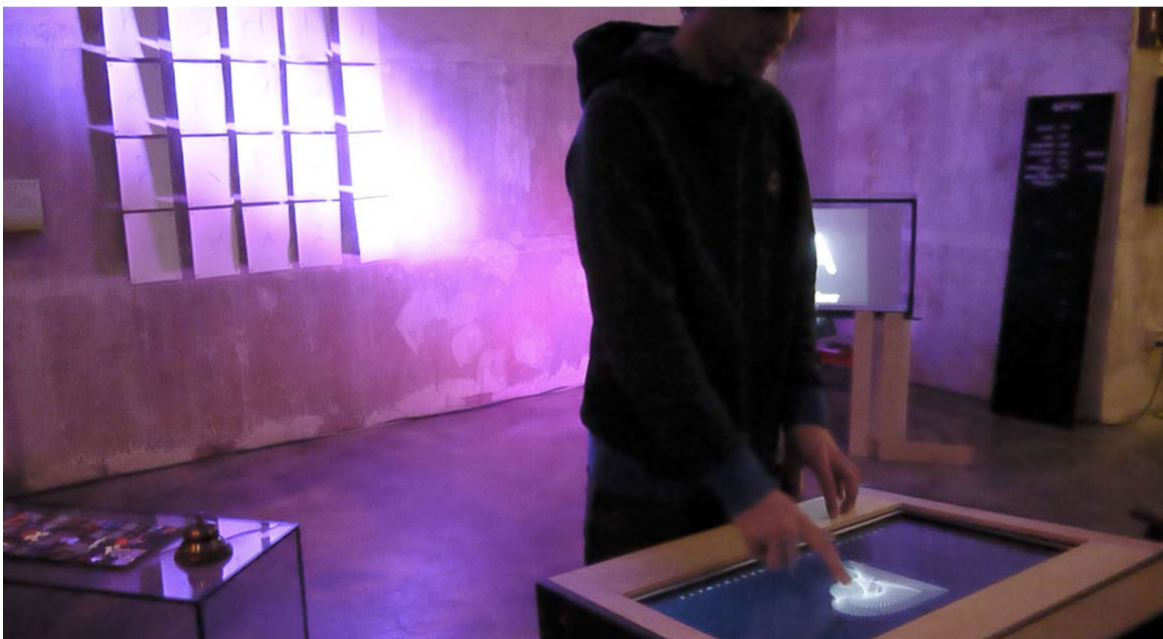
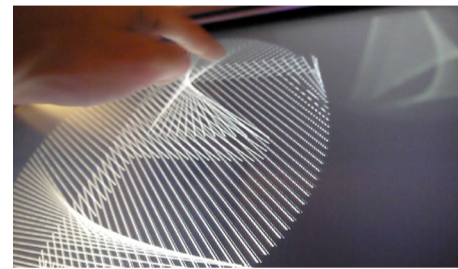
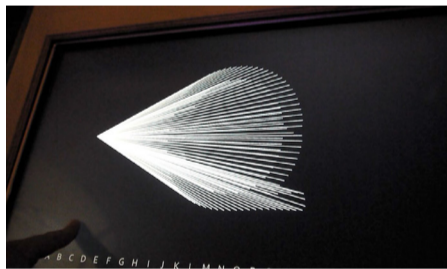
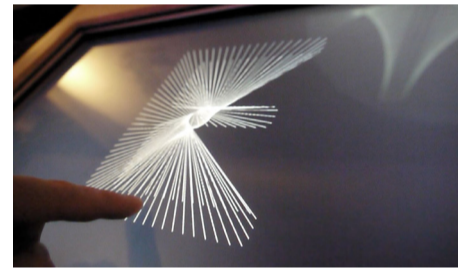
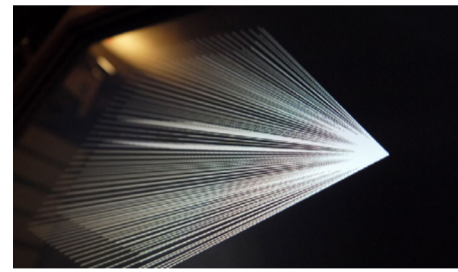
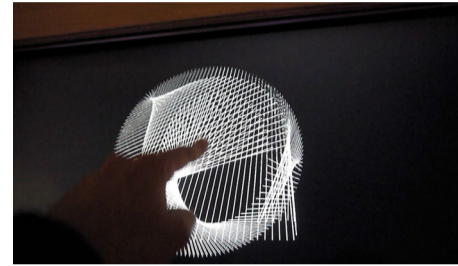
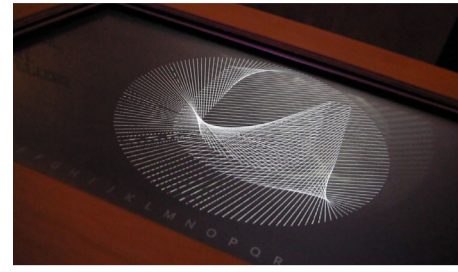
Each letter is animated and morphed in vvvv. We tried to push the limits of a readable animated glyph. Each letter can be mor-

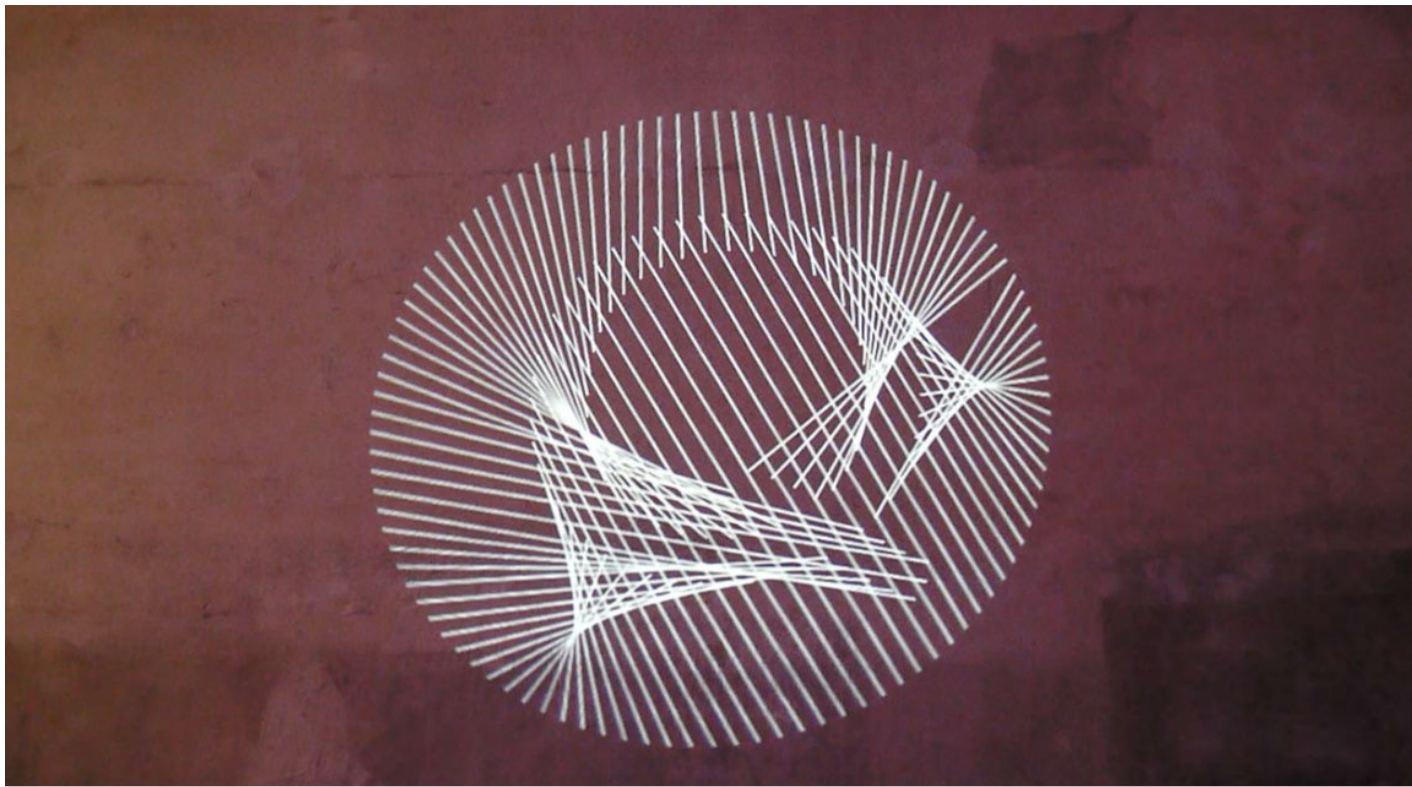
phed into any glyph of the alphabet. That makes it easy to blend also several words into each other.

On second sight, through its generative development we set the foundation for a flexible framework based on animated vectors created in vvvv, that can be easily shaped and changed and then i.e. exported and used in other projects.

Change the basic font within the vvvv-patch and play around with some other parameters like lines, speed, general shapes and get a completely new typedesign. As easy as that!

With the Buchstabengewitter we tried to approach a new way of morphing typedesign, within the combination of animation and generative design.





Nº 03

# ***BUCHSTABENGEWITTER***

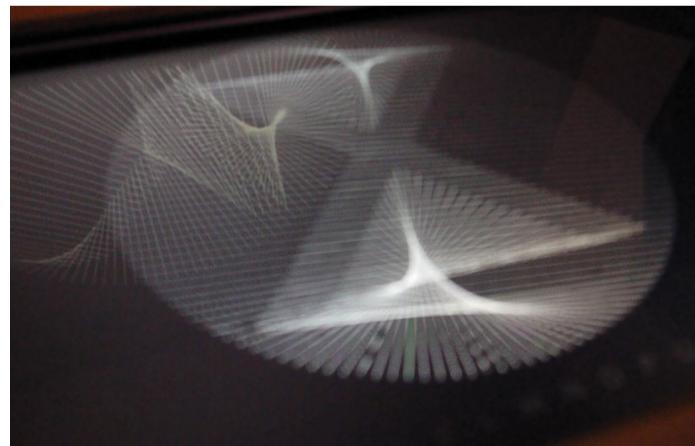
A MULTITOUCH TYPEKIT INSTALLATION  
EXTENDED & INTERACTIVE

This dynamic framework transforms three-dimensional linear structures into all the letters of the alphabet, fluidly morphing from one to another. So, each letter is animated. Never stopping. Each letter can be morphed into any glyph of the alphabet by interactively choosing them on a touchscreen.

As an extension of the original patch, you could also change the pivot in x and y.

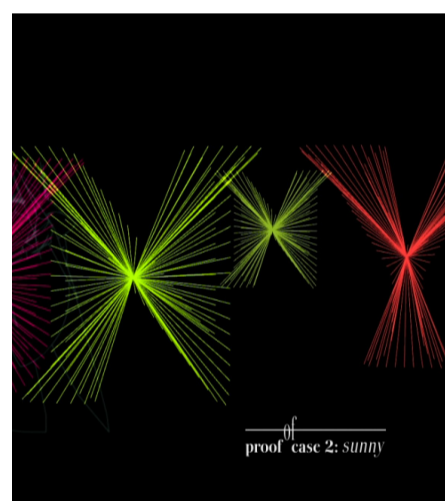
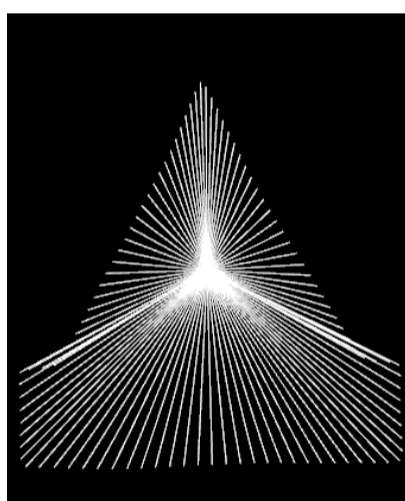
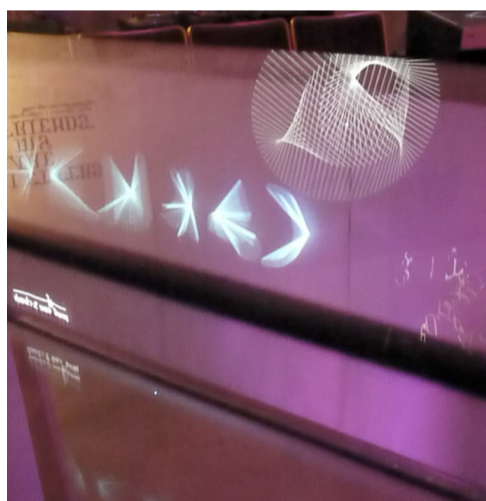
Welcome to the typographic playground - a new approach of typedesign.

The project was part of UpperCase & Lower Space - a night with parametric typography at Letters Are My Friends on 19th may 2012.



**LETTERS ARE MY FRIENDS  
HABEN WIR ZUFÄLLIG IM WEB  
ENTDECKT. EIN UNDING  
EIGENTLICH, DENN IN IHREM  
KREUZBERGER SHOWROOM  
PASSIERT SO VIEL.  
WIR WAREN ALSO ETWAS  
SPÄT MIT UNSEREM PORTRÄT\*,  
DENN SCHON EIN PAAR MONATE  
ZUVOR HATTEN SIE IHN ERÖFFNET.  
ABER SEITHER SIND WIR  
UMSO BEGEISTERTER. TYPO  
KOMBINIERT MIT HIGHTECH  
UND UNKONVENTIONELLER  
LEIDENSCHAFT, MIT  
GRILLWÜRSTCHEN IM HINTERHOF  
UND BUCHSTABENGEWITTER  
IM VORDERHAUS. SCHICK –  
UND UNSER LIEBSTES  
METEOROLOGISCH-  
TYPOGRAFISCHES  
EREIGNIS!**





Nº 04

# WHEATERPROOF

A PROOF OF CASE OF "BUCHSTABENGEWITTER"  
IN APPLIED MOTION DESIGN

**"THE MOST INTERESTING PART OF AN ANIMATION IS ALWAYS THE TRANSITION FROM A TO B!"**

To check and demonstrate if this is true, Bärbel Bold was looking for the proof of case of „Buchstabengewitter“ in moving imagery, and shows in a test series called „weatherproof“ the flexibility and applicability in four experimental ‘type in motion’ cases.

Based on different animated letters in different fonts and motion design set-ups she tested the words ‘sunny’, ‘cloudy’, ‘rainy’ and ‘stormy’, trying to achieve readability in the few moments of an continually morphing letter-set-up.

On top of that she added type in motion generated by a different parametric approach, of growing 3D models rendered in vectors.

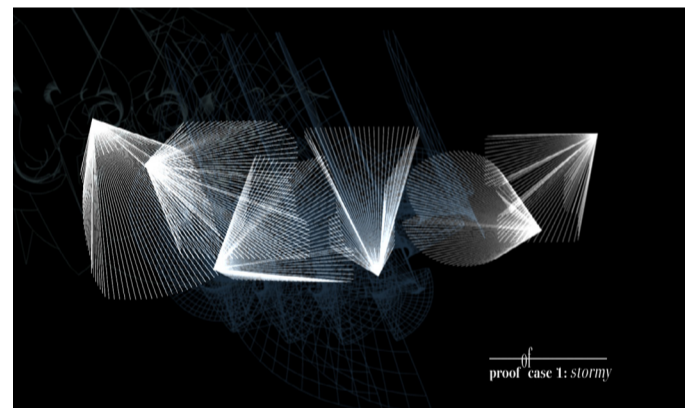
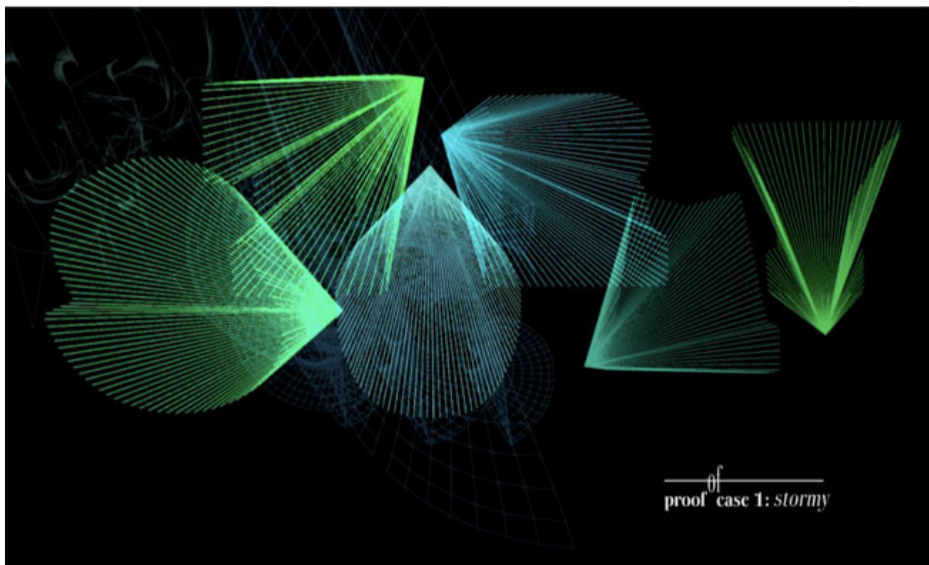
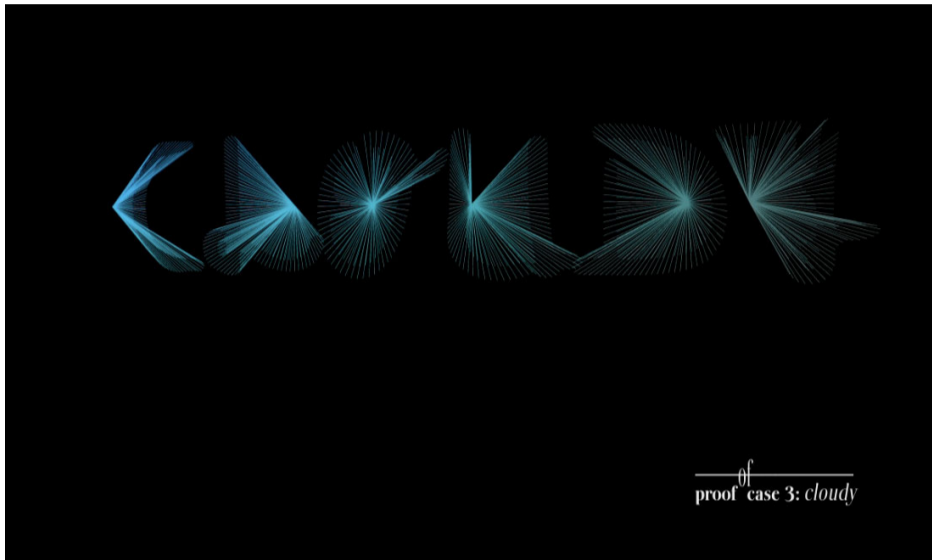
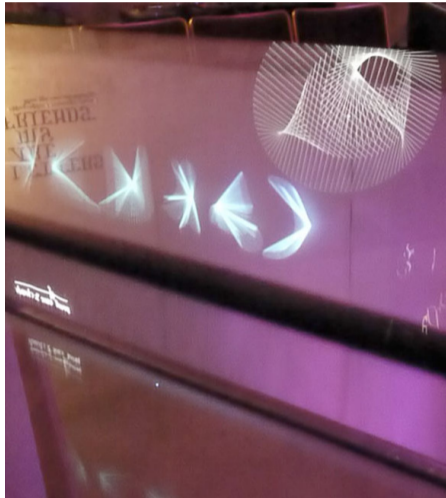
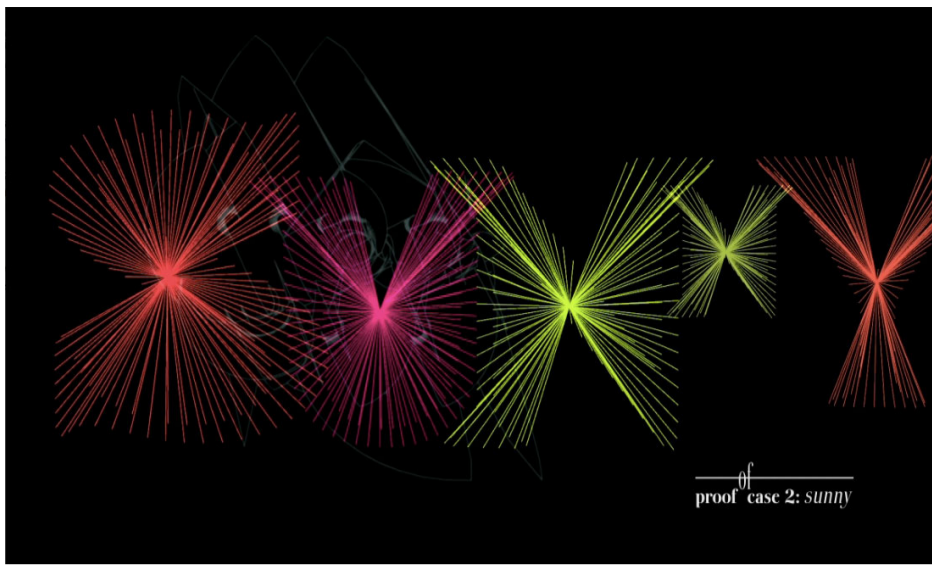
This prototype is an animated alphabet generated out of the Buchstabengewitter vvvv patch, where each animated letter can be downloaded as an image sequence and used for different purposes in moving imagery.

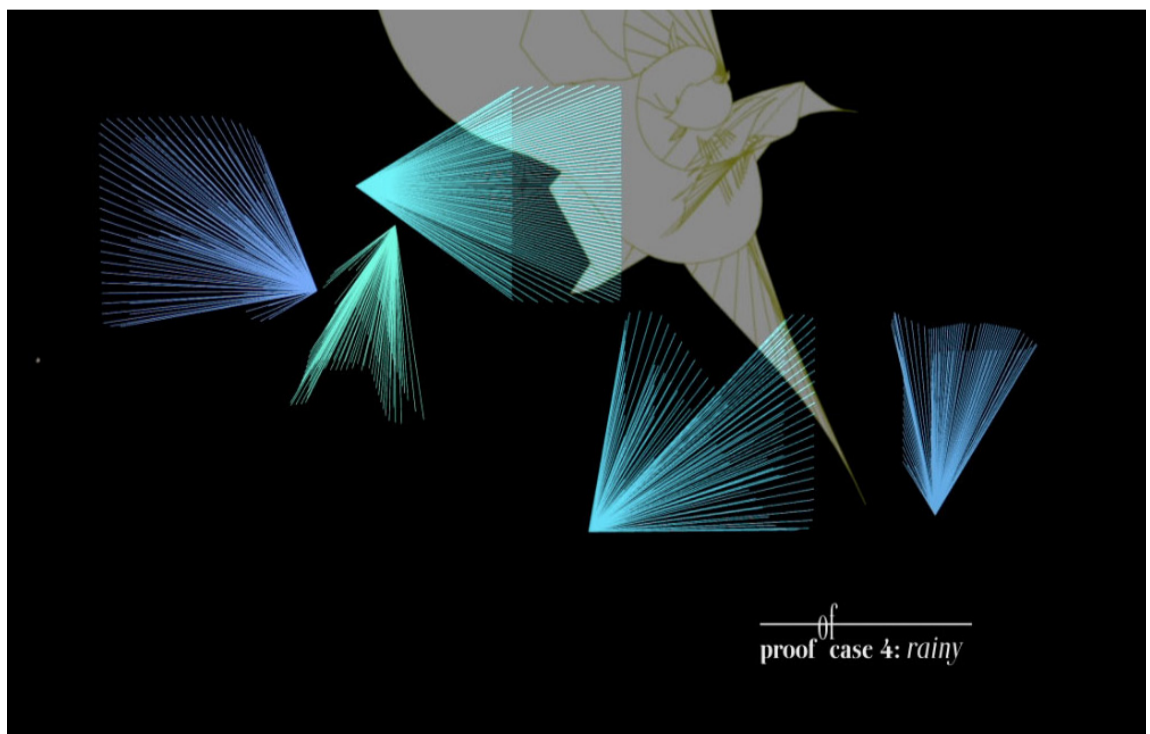
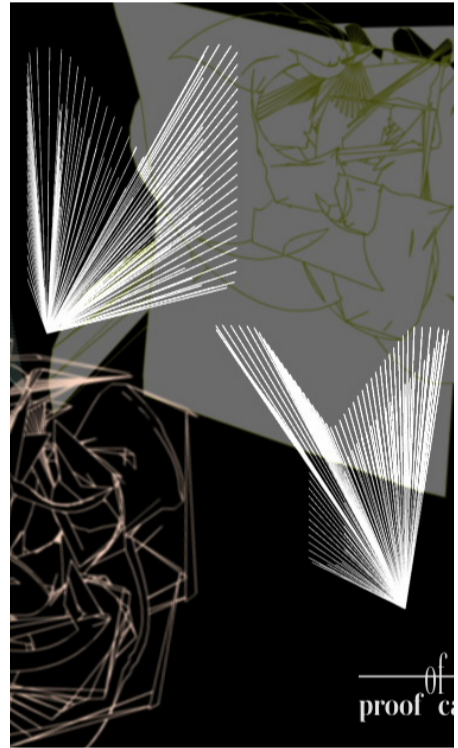
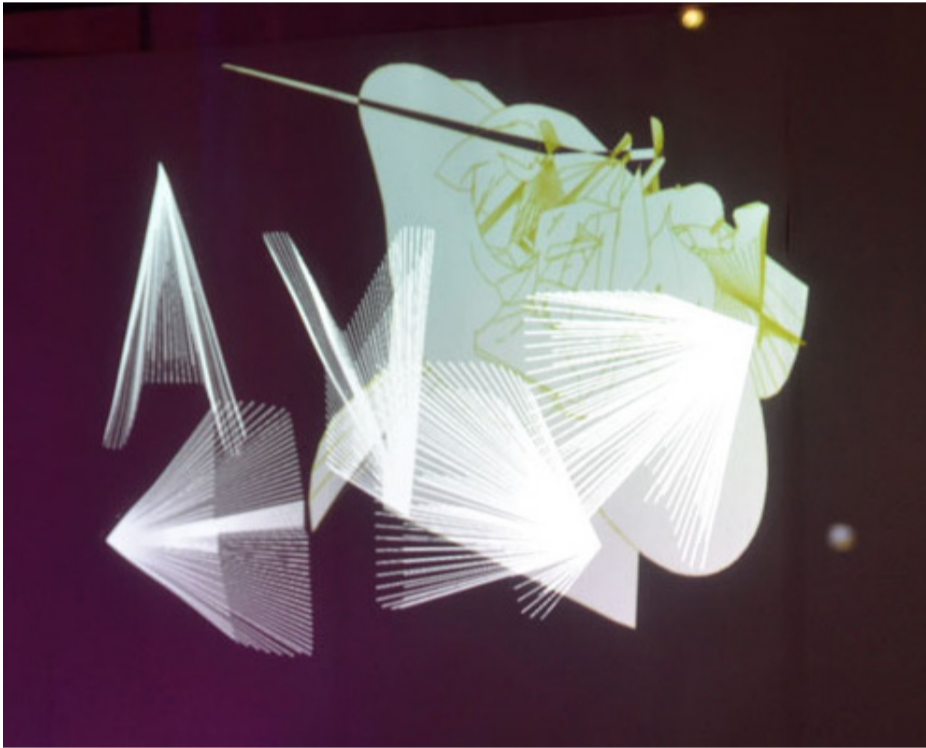
**LEFT**

Production-Process of the QUADS  
Production-Process of the QUADS  
Production-Process of the QUADS

**RIGHT**

QUAD-Portfolio  
QUAD-Portfolio  
QUAD-Portfolio









Nº 03

# ***THE INFINITE TYPETROOPER***

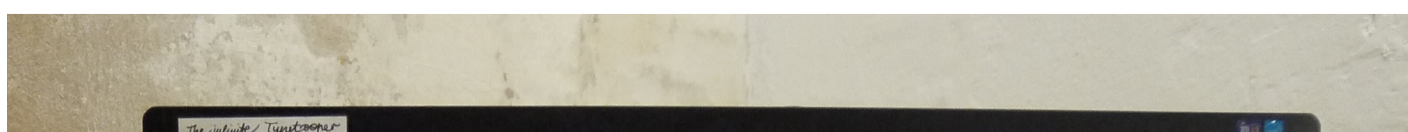
AN INTERACTIVE TYPEKIT  
WITH ANALOGUE & DIGITAL COMPONENTS

We brought the Buchstabengewitter-framework to the next level: Using it as a live typewriting tool, which marries the old mechanical printing technology with the digital age. With the installation Infinite Typetrooper we are bridging the gap from static metal type to movable lettershapes.

Our latest installation enables you to experience the Buchstabengewitter-Typeface with a haptic tactile interface - an old Rheinmetall Typewriter from the 1920s, which generates animated glyphs on the screen. It works as a personal type kit, within a generative framework, which can be changed by any designer who is able to tweak vectors.

We used the Arduino based USB Typewriter Kit by Jack Zylkin to convert this machine into an USB keyboard and give it a long deserved upgrade after almost a century. The keys are send to a PC that is running the Buchstabengewitter vvvv-patch that animates the glyphs.

The device can be used for different applications: to generate your own typeanimations in realtime, as a live commenting tool for talks and events via projections or to use the typewriter as a gaming interface.







**LEFT**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

**RIGHT**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

Nº 03

# MOONS

A TYPOGRAPHIC KINETIC  
LIGHT INSTALLATION

Based on the rotation of a discoball motor, Moon is a typographic kinetic mobile hanging on an old bicycle wheel. Lit by two spotlights, it turns in circles and corresponds with its surrounding as a set of letters made of lasercut white acrylic reflecting to and illuminating the walls like a discoball. Depending on different light sources and its behaviours it appears like vivid letter-particles or even words and creates a magic ambience in the space. It offers the possibility to produce customized luminaries for specific projects.

Moons is showcased in the showroom of Letters Are My Friends ([LINK!!!](#))









# FUTURE CASES —

## WHAT'S IN THE

## PIPELINE?

## — BUT NEEDS MORE TIME AND MONEY.

Before we talk about the Future, I want to share some insights of the past with you.

In terms of business structure, we wanted to outbid on the question **"HOW MUCH FREEDOM NEEDS AN INNOVATION LAB?"**

- So far, first and foremost, Ingo and me worked as brilliant one-man-shows in small and big companies, long-term or freelancing, and for our own clients, where we could always avoid too much hierarchy, which tends to blocking-out the power of freethinking and experiment. We stuck our noses in a lot of different models before, could choose between walking on open vibrant tracks or narrow working paths with high company structure. Searching for setups, where our creativity was allowed a better flow, we always bounced on the side, which had the bigger playground.

So, the last two years brought up some interesting new angle of view on this. From the very beginning in 2009, when we started to think about the idea of Letters Are My Friends, we were aware that we would need some kind of structure for not ending up as any old project space in Berlin which pops up and disappears again. That -obviously- was the last thing we wanted! So we created a serious setup with proper workspace and show-room using a clear set of competencies, which would give us a chance to grow together with 3-4 other designers. In our vision this is a social environment for a better design thinking dedicating our lifes to innovative type & tech questions & solutions. But - looking back- we have to say, we did not make the right decisions from the very beginning.

- We thought a strong skillset, the passion for design and an accurate selection of exactly the same kind of people is what it needs. And it is for sure a big part in it. But it needs more.

For us it seemed more important to gather a creative crowd of people on one spot and use the realtime effect of a physical space rather than acting as a tight organized company with hierarchies, business structure and employers, which have to do certain things and reach certain goals. Out of this reason, "Letters Are My friends" operated more as a roof concept for our physical space, where a max of 6 people, sharing the studio as sub-letters by renting a desk and committing to the basic concept of Letters Are My Friends: sharing synergies, events, jobs, plans and expertise on our type & tech topics on a voluntary base. Of course we have never compared ourselves to a usual co-working space: joining us with a deep urge to collaborate and to share and work on things was highly requested and desired from our side. The benefit as a subletterhead was clear enough for us: joining a great social design family, who experiment to change common ways and researches on the mystic grey areas of design and interdisciplinarity, getting access to a wide network of creatives & nerds, using the concept where everything is possible and which invites you to build things, which are not there yet, and also generate bigger

jobs, by presenting a whole studio of great designer, rather than keep on working on your own.

But as all designers and artists, were still running their very independent own workcases on first priority (of course!), there were a lot of collisions in terms of available resources like time, money or amount of commitment for the Letters Are My Friends' world.

- Actually the lack of business structure brought us to a lot of problems or let's say increased the risk: i.e. no extra funds led to squeezing periods, where we could not create what we actually wanted. So either we invested patience or dependency or we somehow found the time to do it ourselves, when we could not accelerating things with money.

-That was one reason, why we went slow with developments of our own ideas & products, which could have only been set up rather as a leisure time facility than as a full-time job. Even if we know we should invest more time, and it would pay off in the end, we did not have that time. - Already struggling keeping all balls in the air!

With no external funding in the back, you need to earn the money in first place, which you wanna spend. And this applied to everyone at Letters Are My Friends.

- No money combined with high fluctuation of people within the studio started to become a more-money-needing or very-time-consuming procedure to solve. Because obviously the rent of a well located space needs to be paid aswell! Of course you don't want to share your space with anyone, but with the people you feel it and with who you can grow and exchange highs & lows. But finding the right people you wanna go cheek by jowl is an essential thing and needs time and resources aswell. Sometimes it fits. Sometimes it doesn't. Trust is a thing which needs time to grow, aswell!



- Business development and assuming the leadership became also a topic: Ingo Italic and I know each other for such a long time, being friends, sharing ideas and doing artistic projects and innovative prototypes together on the easy way since over 10 years. We knew a lot about our visions and our strength, but also about our weak points, and figured out that business skills, experiences, working methods and communication behavior are in many points completely different, sometimes even incompatible. Having deadlines and ending budgets in the back changes your relationship rapidly. You have to deal with that. And this means a lot of communication work and decisions on top.

Also someone had to keep the overview of everything: all the math, all the contracts, all the members, all the jobs, all the projects, all running simultaneously. In Letters Are My Friends case, Ingo Italic realized he needs much more protected space and freedom than responsibility, so this person became me.

As our -so called- Letterheads were changing all the time on the one hand, we still want to keep on following our vision on the other hand -while acquiring jobs, researching in fields of attraction, running events, working on the social community aspects and on the credibility and brand positioning of Letters Are My Friends itself - this was quite a tough journey. Of course it is still not over. Entrepreneurship questions 360degrees, hell yeah!

But, now we are at a point where we went through a very intense time and realized that

our open pro-active social structure failed. It put a lot more effort and responsibility on us as founders, as we actually wanted or can carry in a long run. It's still a lot of work of course, but to get to the next level, we think, we can't avoid to change our business structure.

We have still enough questions. And we are quite confident, that we will not answer them right. But we want to try.

As long as we think Type & Tech is a beautiful niche within the field of design, various and important enough that a lot of innovations going to happen in the future, we definitely wanna be a part of it.

**LET'S PITCH SOME IDEAS HERE.**

**LEFT**

XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

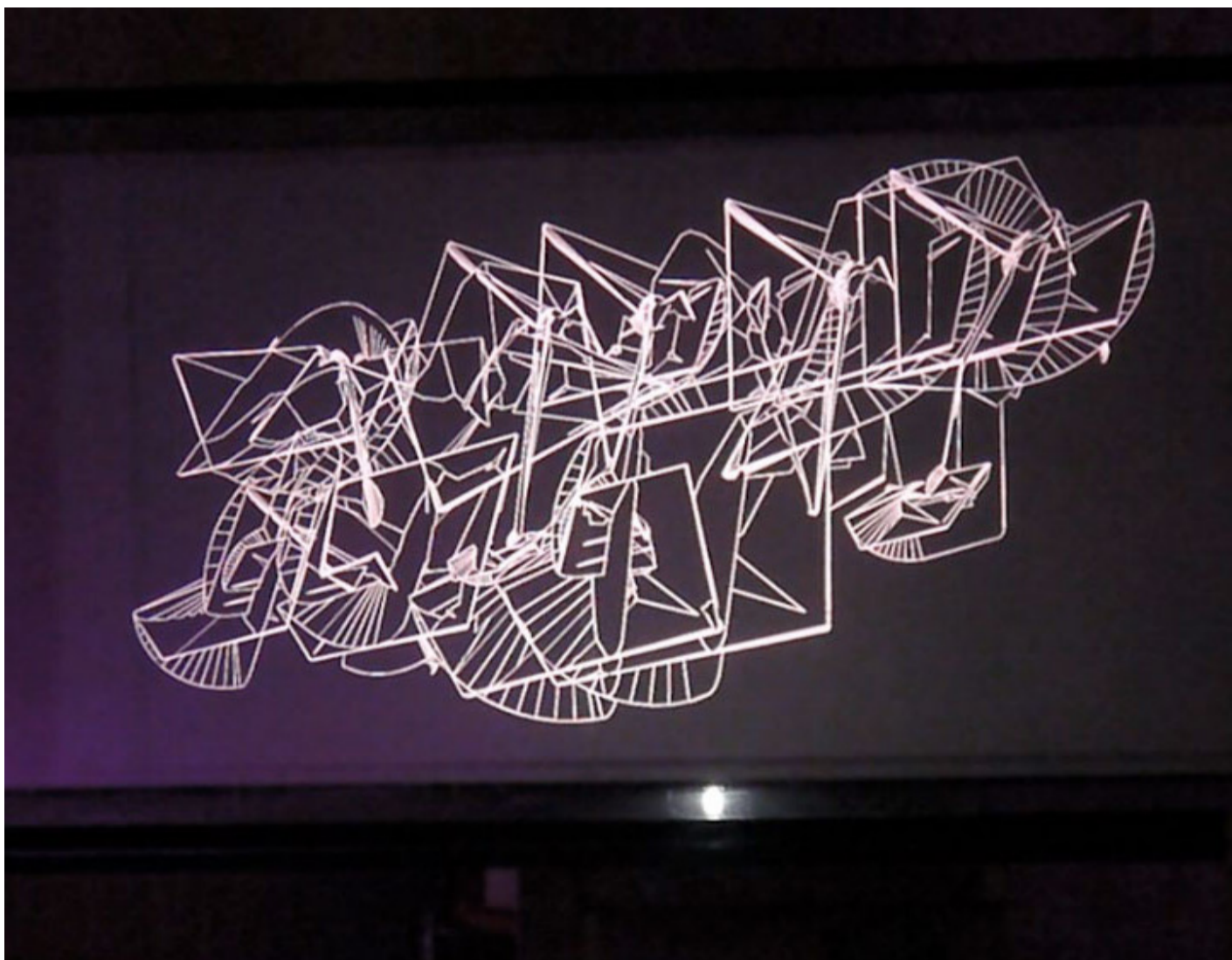
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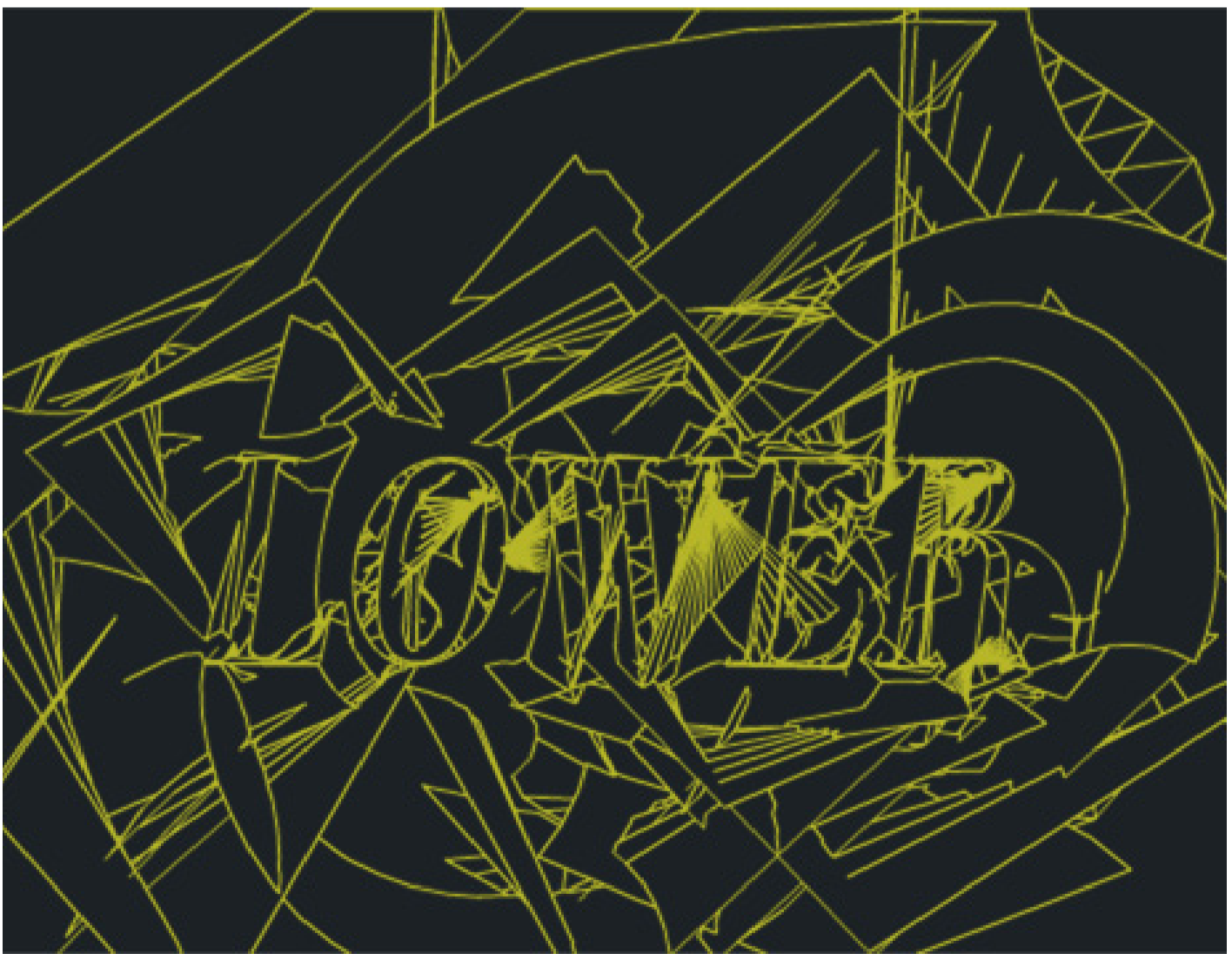
**RIGHT**

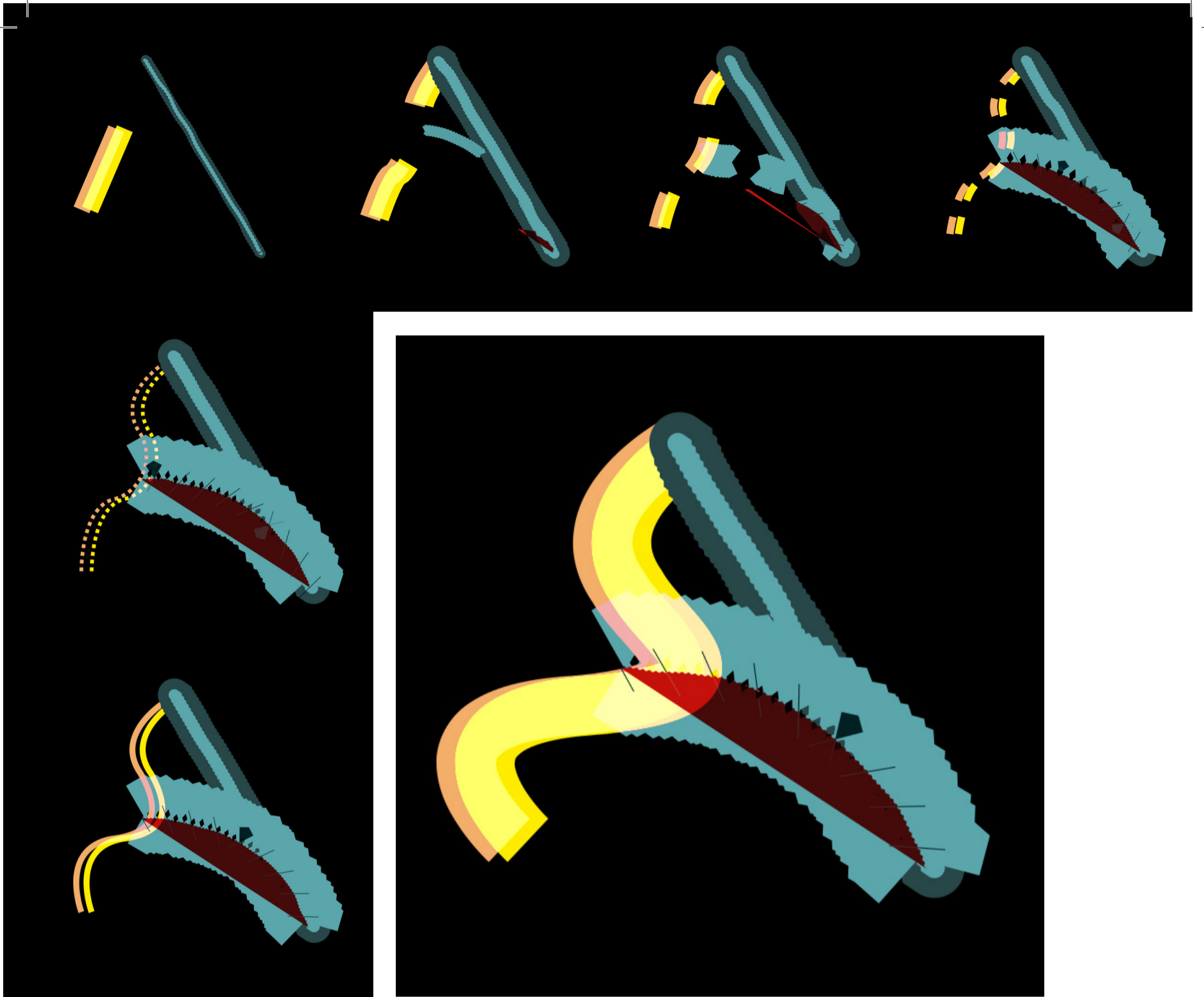
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№ 01

# READ ME!

AN ABC — APP

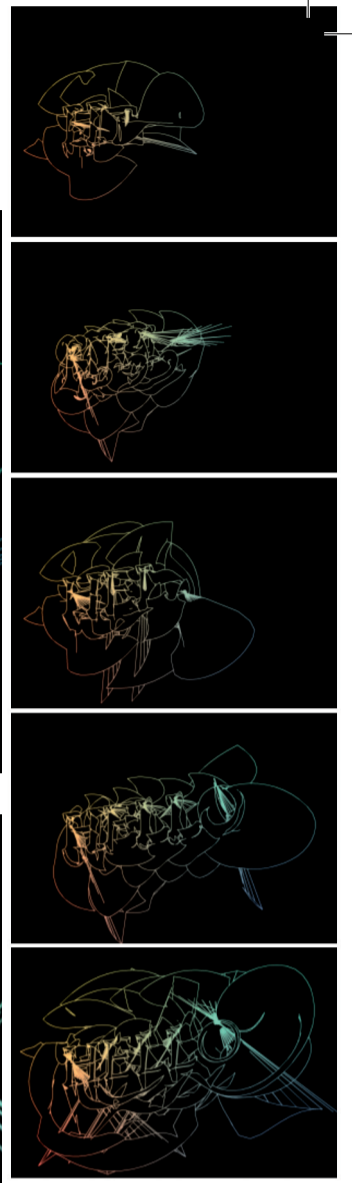
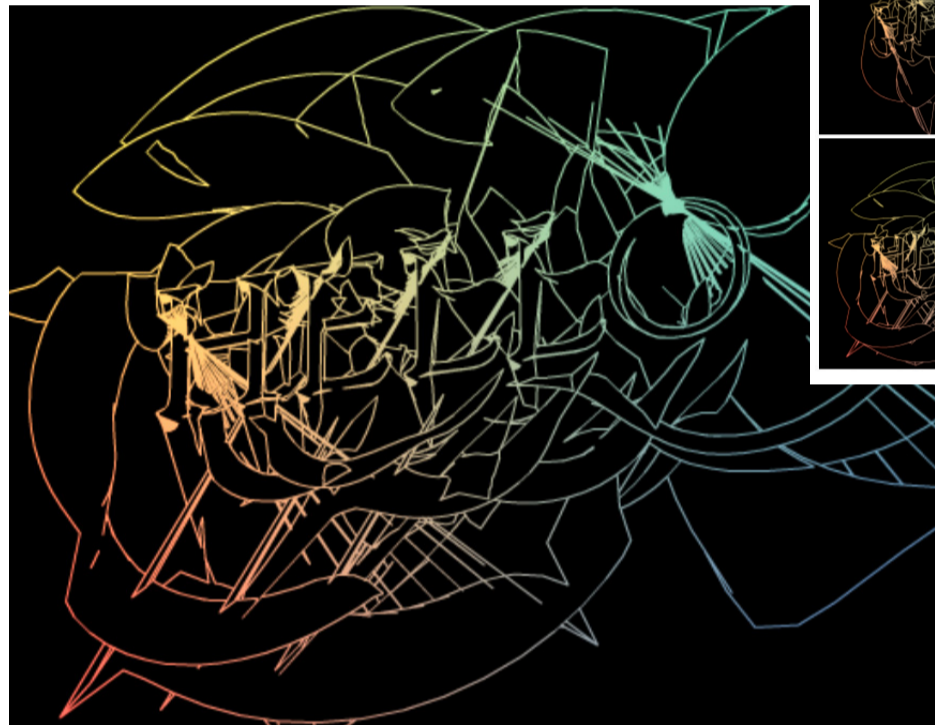
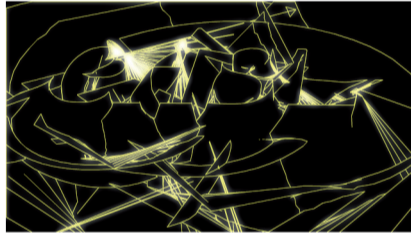
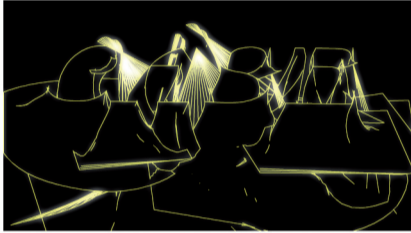
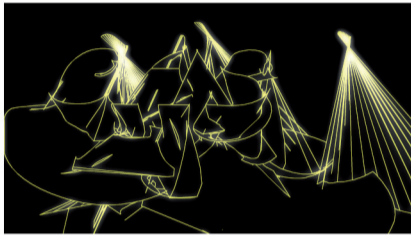
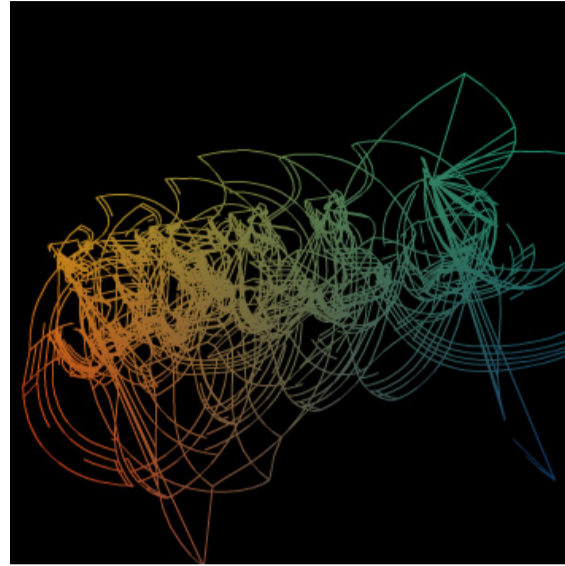
In many industrialized countries, there are numerous people suffering from illiteracy, although they have an accessible education system. In 2003 862 million people worldwide were considered illiterate. A study by the University of Hamburg in 2011 found about 4% of adults in Germany or 2 million total, and more than 14% or 7.5 million functional illiterates.

- Enough facts! Let's prove that great design can help solve the problem!

We are planning an interactive app with an audiovisual alphabet: skippable letters synchronized with a pronunciation guide and sound of each letter. There is a reading voice which advises you in the correct pronunciation of the

letter, maybe even suggesting different words in which the letter appears. We would ultimately love to include a record/analyze /play mode, where the user has to prove their knowledge and analyse their progress. There is also a writing mode using the app visuals as a guide for the task, which makes sense, as the animation can help the user get used to the motion of writing the particular letter.

It would work with audio responses like a teaching tool for educational use. It's fun to use and engaging due to the unique motion & sound design of the animated characters. Technically, the app is based on an extending library of animated letters, glyphs and words.



Nº 02

**POV**

REALTIME 3D FONT ENVIRONMENT, PLUG IN OR FRAMEWORK

Letters Are My Friends wants to create the first real 3D Font.

In a lot of typefaces there is always the 3D depth layers simulated as a static visual component in i.e. a blockstyle or some shadowing etc..- But what if there would be a way to leave the flat 2D design of a font? And what if the 3D component would really be an interactive part of a typeface, which could be set up by the designer depending on which perspective he might need right now: the topshot or rather a frog's perspective? With heavy shadowing or without?

As Letters Are My Friends are very familiar with computer generated images in 3D, and know the versatile effects you get when you move the camera perspective on 3D type, we would love to dig into and figure out the complex engineering of a flexible and dynamic 3D font universe.

The aesthetic of this font would be sculptural characters rather than a flat graphic. There should be full access to 3D features by choosing your camera-angle the way you like it.

Within this font there will be a whole 3D character universe technically programmed.

Nº 03

# WALK OF TYPEFAME

TYPOGRAPHIC URBANISM PATH

As our roots are grounded in urbanity, we think the city speaks its own language which is worth to listen and see. We want to create a selected typewalk through Berlin, with certain stops due to different stories and reasons, and pairing it with augmented reality technology.

An additional idea to the concept was to collaborate with type-relevant partners i.e. like Fontshop or Mota Italic, which was a typography-only gallery and studio on the other side of Berlin at Prenzlauer Berg. But it could also be the Buchstabenmuseum or even typography-linked companies.

The idea would then be to share the curation of the path: one half of the path i.e. from Prenzlauer Berg till Mitte is created and defined by Buchstabenmuseum, and the other half from Mitte to Kreuzberg is curated by Letters Are My Friends. Through this split up concept, the “walker” would access two different perspectives on type, culture and urbanity and connect these in real time and real life.

The whole tour would be guided with an app and could also be promoted similar to the “Graffiti & Urban Art - Tours” happening in Berlin.



Nº 04

# TNT: TYPE'N'TALK

LIVE IMPRO-SHOW FORMAT

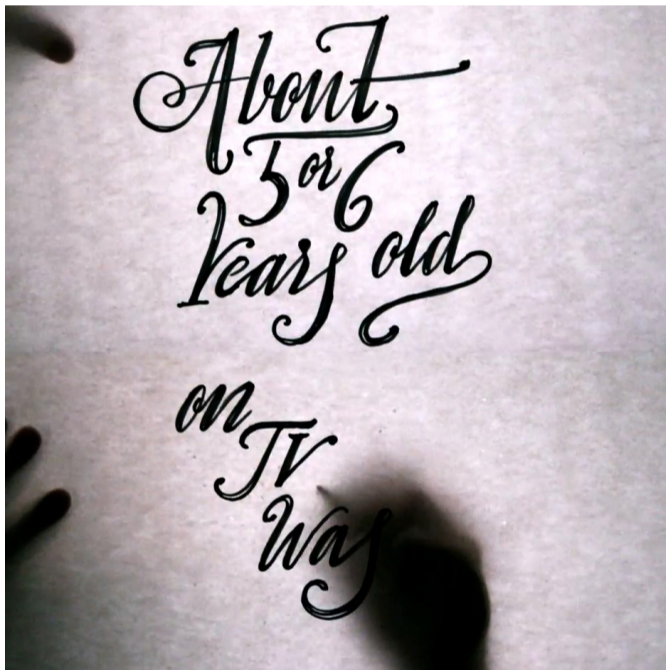
As we love entertainment, and run our own gameshows in our spare time already, it would just be logical to come up with our own playful talkshow concept related to type & tech.

The concept is to invite always two guests: one representative from the “type”-party and one representative from the “tech”-party. The show would be a live event happening in our showroom. Our host is our letterhead Shifty Capzlock, a great character, with his own unique style as he eloquently shifts between serious discussion and quick-fire comedy.

The show’s format will be a mixture of personality versus nerdy topics. The invited guest would be from the tech innovation business, but then we loosen things up by some interactive fun battles, like drawings or doodle tasks, or then we may be able to experiment and try out some new apps, even quiz-show-elements might work. The fun elements will be depending on the guest, of course.

There should be a real audience, which would be involved as much as possible, for example using the crowd as impro-buzzword-generators for drawing games, executed by the two guests.

SCIENCE & FICTION

**RIGHT**

Images borrowed from  
**I CAN'T DRAW ANIMALS..**  
[www.vimeo.com/52396533](http://www.vimeo.com/52396533)

Hand drawn type, scripting and VO  
 - Henrik Kubel of A2/SW/HK  
 - a2-type.co.uk/  
 Production - Animade - animade.tv

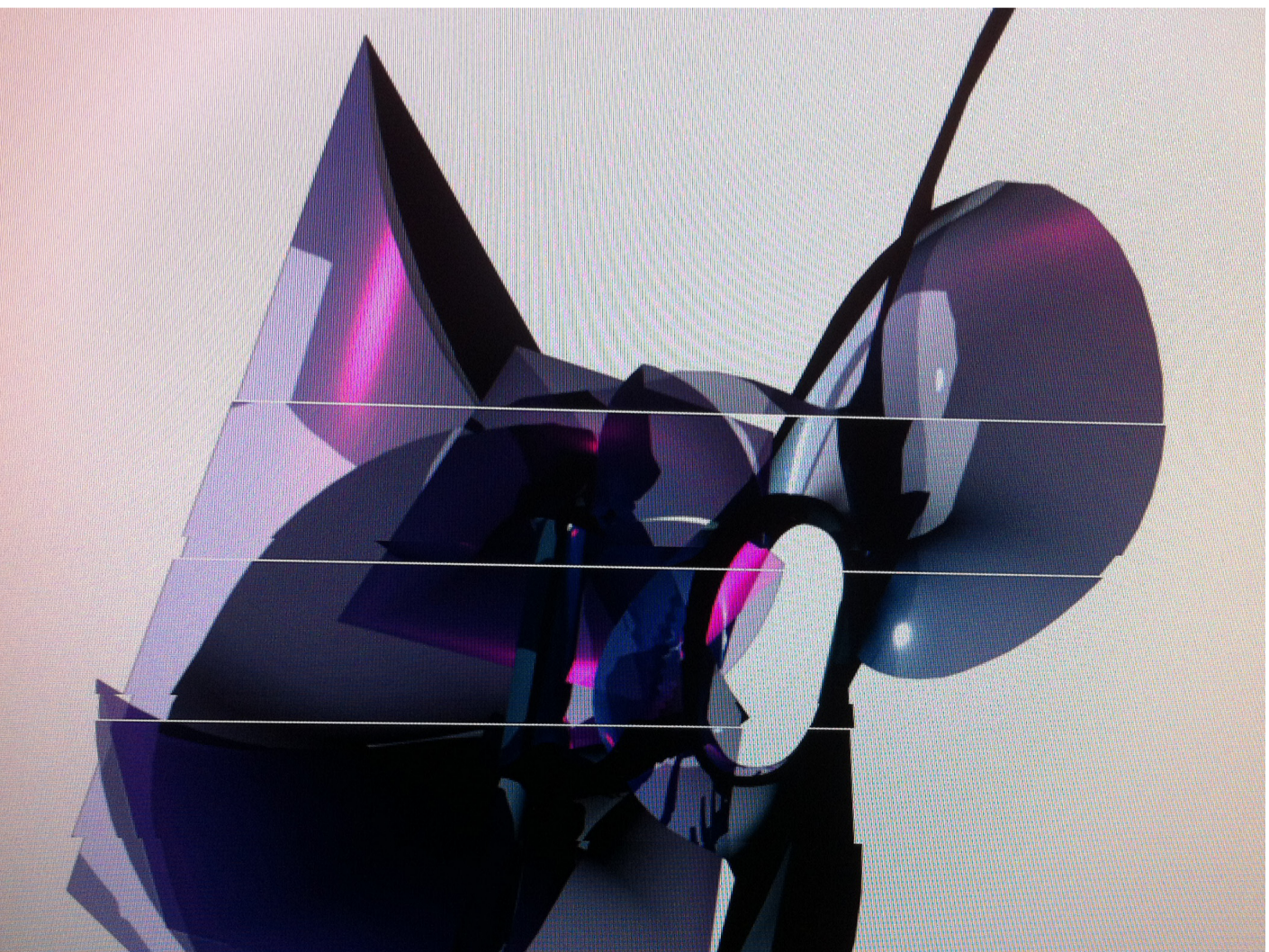
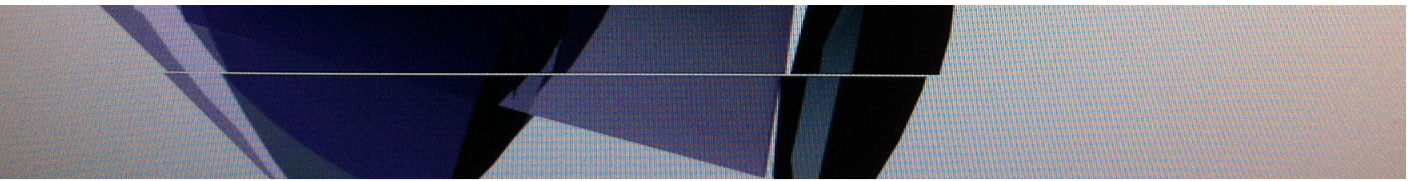
Nº 05

**LETTERCAST**

EVENT WITH LIVE STREAMING &amp; PODCAST RECORDING

Lettercast is a regular podcast and event that features a typographer, letterer or calligrapher and showcases his skills on a drawing board. The designer sits down on glass or a see through desk which is filmed from below so that the camera gets the best shot of the live action. We will live stream and record the drawing session. The Lettercast wants to capture the magic of moving strokes across a surface that form into a lettershape. It is about the realtime experience when using a brush or pen and learning by watching the masters.







# CONCEPTUAL FONT CASES—

WHAT  
DOES  
»TYPO-  
GRAPHIC  
CONCEPT  
STORE«  
MEAN  
IN OUR  
PER-  
SPEC-  
TIVE?

Since ever, we take our hat off to the great typographers of the world! Even with a solid background in typography, our first aim wouldn't be the creation of a perfect type foundry. We are designers and thinkers, which love to interact and play.

We are not about to spend our time on developing the perfect typeface, sitting in front of our computers for years and shaping curves and balancing out weights. Ok, maybe, sometimes.

But we are rather interested in typography in the overlapping sections with new technologies: so we follow a conceptual approach on font engineering and typesetting.

So far our font library creations are mostly headline & display fonts which are based on an interaction concept, often in combination with new media technologies.

Instead of *only* a foundry, we wanted to provide, share and test a wider range of typographics with lots of different products. - All sorts of - like art installations, software kits, designed type & motion cases, interfaces and of course interesting fonts on floppy discs or written on e-ink.

We love the application of type and shortcuts of typesetting and are keen on experimenting on new ways of getting there. Then creating learnings, knowledge, salable products and prototypes out of the results we found.

This set of combinations is what we can add to the field, that hasn't been there before.

We never wanted to have a book store or a store dedicated to only print! For us »typographic concept store« implies space, interaction, design and something inexplicit, which you never really know. Good enough.

Again, what really fascinates us is not creating the perfect fontstyle, rather than to follow and understand an extending method — take i.e. the »Buchstabengewitter«: its infinite possibilities by remixing components seems much more relevant to us than every single letter design judged in a microtypographic perspective.

— That comes way later, when we validate and still believe it's worth to spend time on! First the right model has being followed. Therefore, it's allowed to play, try, fail & refuse.

IN THE FOLLOW-  
ING FIND SOME EXAMPLES.

**IT'S LESS ABOUT THE PERFECT FONTCASE,  
RATHER ABOUT THE CONCEPT ART FOR  
PRECEEDING A FONT OR ITS AESTHETICS.**



**ABOVE**  
 Lettering on our temporary display cabinet at Utopia Parkway [Page CCXXII/223](#)



**LEFT**  
 This would have been our perfect mood, but it wasn't as we just discovered it 2013:  
 Vogue Cover - June 1940  
 By: Horst P. Horst



**BELOW**  
 Missionsigns on our display cabinet





Nº 01

# LF JANE FONDA

FACE-TO-FACE TYPING  
WITH IMPROVISED BODYLANGUAGE

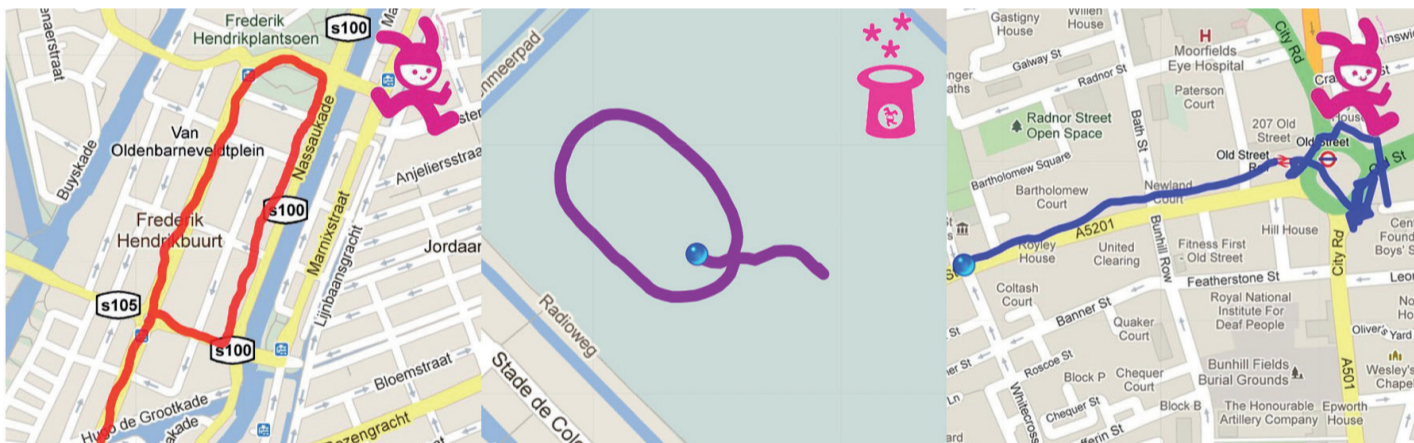
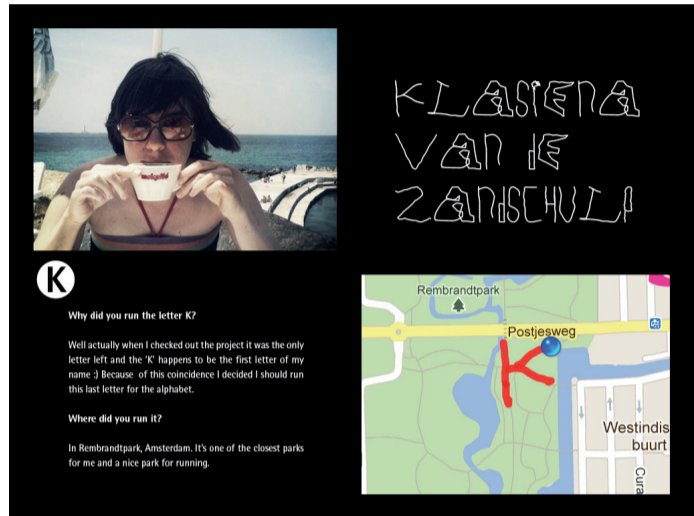
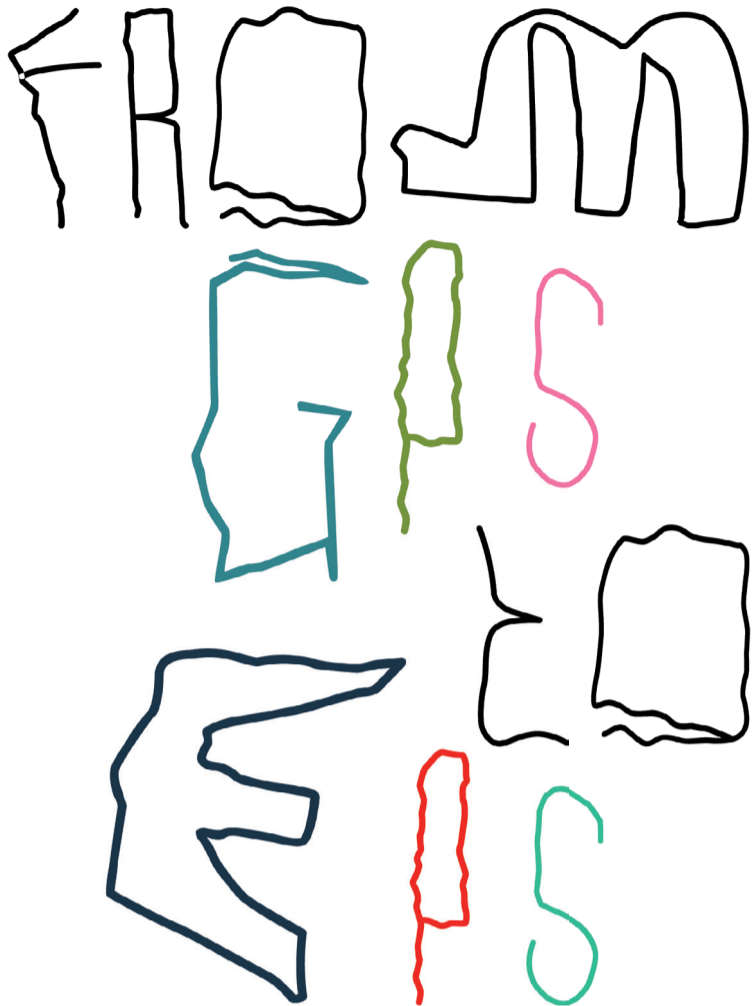
At the arts festival Parkway Utopia 2011 in Stuttgart, Germany we were invited to do a Letters Are My Friends intervention. It was a festival, which used unusual public spaces. We had a little display cabinet next to a main street of Stuttgart.

Our idea was to ask people from the street to form their favourite letter, to shape and mimic it with their bodies. We had our little shopwindow where we took pictures of the poses. Back in Berlin our fabulous intern Paul Punze vectorized the outlines and generated a font we called Jane Fonda. [Page L/051](#)

You can download it on our website:  
[WWW.LETTERSAREMYFRIENDS.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2013/11/JANEFONDA.TTF](http://WWW.LETTERSAREMYFRIENDS.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2013/11/JANEFONDA.TTF) .ZIP



letters are my friends did it, too.  
the new:  
**JANE FONDA FONT**



Nº 02

# SWEATY FEET

FROM GPS TO EPS — COLLABORATIVE GEOGRAPHIC TYPEFACE

As an international collaboration Sweaty Feet could be called a social typeface. The world was our canvas and you were the pencil!

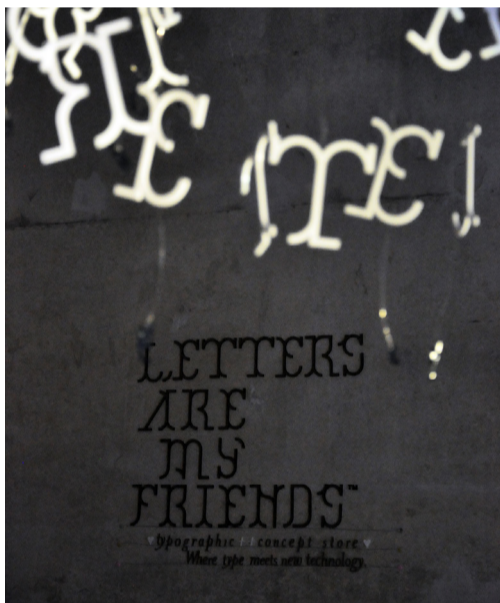
**HOW WAS THE TYPEFACE DONE?** In November 2011 we encouraged runners worldwide to use the iPhone App FigureRunning to run their favourite letter and send us a portrait picture along with an explanation why and where they ran it. By using the mobile app people could use their GPS traces from a mobile phone to paint lines, letters and words.

We then selected 26 letters and vectorized the images & traces into a typeface at Letters Are My Friends office.

The result is the world's first typeface that has been designed in 13 different cities by your feet. We presented the typeface and its making of in an exhibition.

You can download it on our website:  
[WWW.LETTERSAREMYFRIENDS.COM/PORTFOLIO\\_PAGE/SWEATY-FEET-TYPEFACE/](http://WWW.LETTERSAREMYFRIENDS.COM/PORTFOLIO_PAGE/SWEATY-FEET-TYPEFACE/)

[WWW.FIGURERUNNING.COM](http://WWW.FIGURERUNNING.COM)



Nº 03

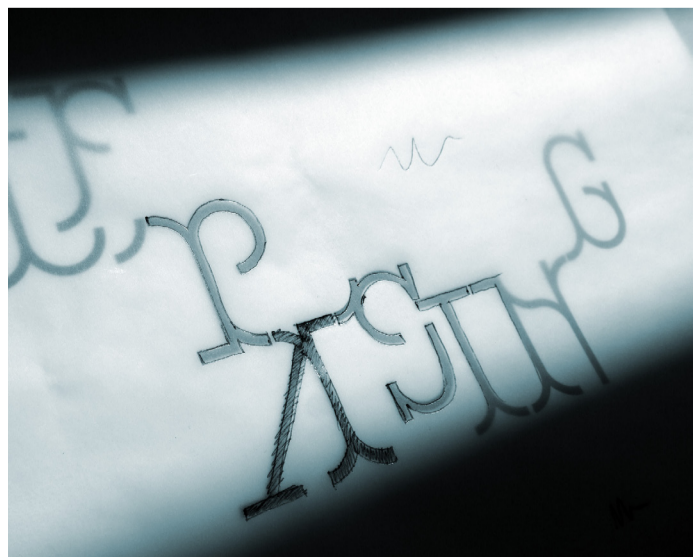
## LF PASING

CUSTOM-MADE TYPEFACE & CORPORATE IDENTITY

For Letters Are My Friends, we actually never decided for a fixed corporate identity rather than an ongoing changing concept, for which we wanted to come up with a new typeface each time. But as it happens, we never took the time for changing, so somehow LF Pasing ended up as our first corporate font case.

Inspired by Munich's neighborhood, where we spend some time earlier, LF Pasing is a happy - headstrong fontcase which tend to be unique like the Bavarians!

Technical stiffness versus decorative playful swings - just good enough to show of our letterheads.





A B C D E F G H I J K L M  
 N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
 a b c d e f g h i j k l m  
 n o p q r s t u v w x y z  
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Nº 04

# LF HI - SPEEDFONT

CREATED BY MR. MONGOMANIA

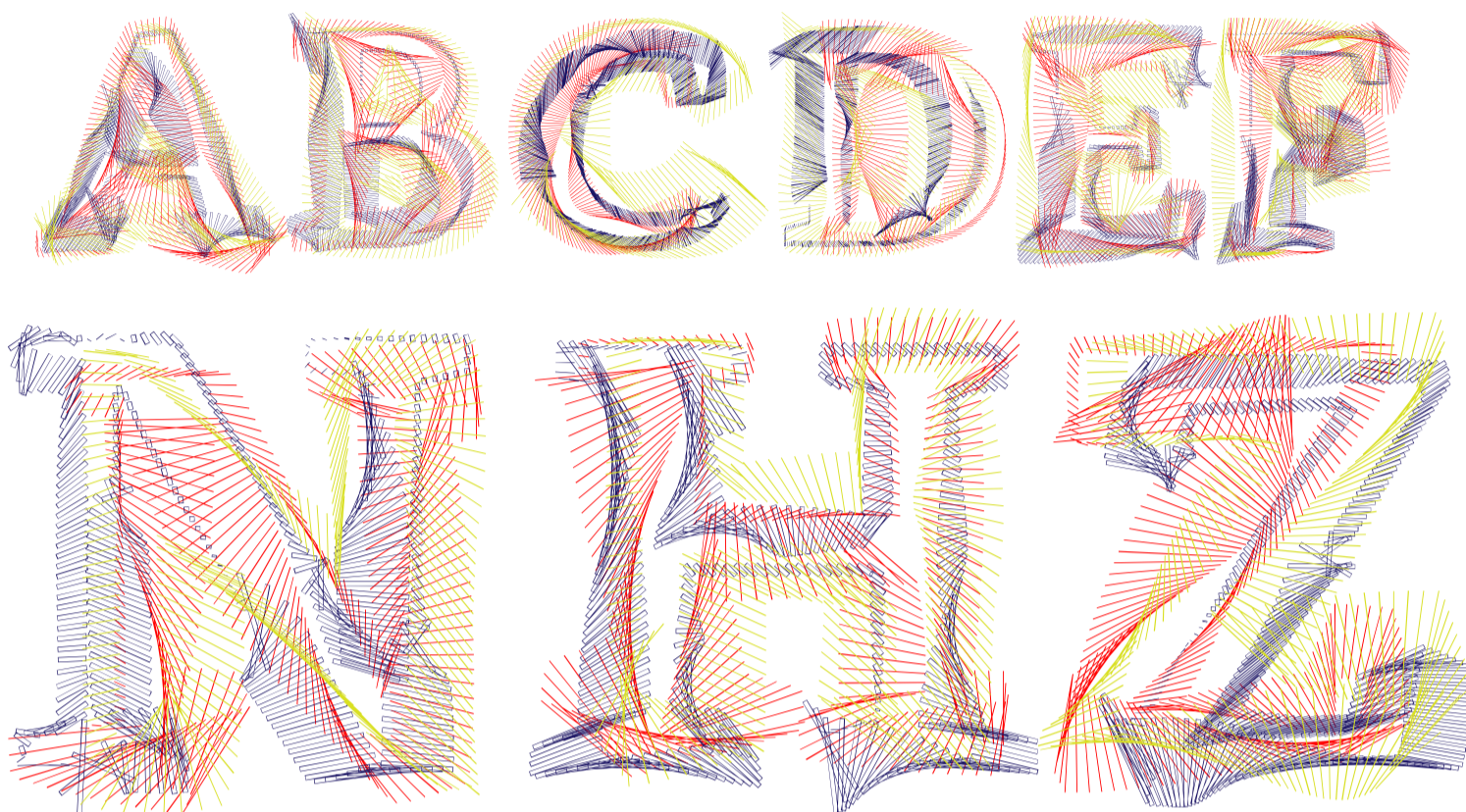
The concept of speedfonts is to come up with a handdrawn font in less than 5 minutes. Use any tool you like.

LF Hi is the first of this kind designed by Mr. Mongomania aka Daniel Geiger on an Apple iPad and the software iFontmaker. He succeeded in 281 seconds Hi – speed.

Download LF Hi:

[WWW.LETTERSAREMYFRIENDS.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2014/04/LF-HI.ZIP](http://WWW.LETTERSAREMYFRIENDS.COM/WP-CONTENT/UPLOADS/2014/04/LF-HI.ZIP)

Hand-drawn characters: a stylized 'H', a stylized 'I', and a stylized 'X'.



№ 05

## LF BOPP SPIRELLI

— A FONTFAMILY WITH »TYPE & TECH HEART«.  
GENERATED IN THREE HYPERLINKED ORIGINAL STYLES

**TYPE & TECH HEART?** »LF Bopp Spirelli« is a showcase of generated typefaces, which we made in vvvv. It is based on algorithms and parameters created in a generative realtime software environment, which we run like add-ons on existing fontvectors. Therefore you could see this font above as an exemplary showcase out of million styles, we could have done.

Modifications were created in our developed framework »Buchstabengewitter«, a two component type generator, which literally acts out of character: – one part contains a vector based font – the other part contains parameter sets of rotation, lines and some math, relating to the outlines of the basic font.

With our tool, we open up a new universe of shapes, far away from the basic embedded font. It offers a dazzling array of new style-possibilities which you would not even think of. It brings the design of typography to a new level and upgrades usually decent shaped fonts in the world of letters.

We release LF Bopp Spirelli as a give away, together with a poster.

[WWW.LETTERSAREMYFRIENDS.COM/  
PORTFOLIO PAGE/LF-BOPP-SPIRELLI/](http://WWW.LETTERSAREMYFRIENDS.COM/PORTFOLIO/PAGE/LF-BOPP-SPIRELLI/)

**STORY:** As Jakob Runge finished his new font »Franziska« in early 2013, he made an open call for designing specimen for a booklet publication. We used the opportunity to remix his font within our vvvv-typekit, which we had developed around the same time.

By adding certain new properties to the base vectors and go from there to a completely different typedesign direction, we came up aesthetically with a new sort of fontcase: based on Franziska, but not looking like it anymore!

For now, we released three styles: style »Spike« i.e. is based on »Franziska«, while style »Spike Grotesk« is based on »Cera«, both original typefaces by Jakob Runge of »type me! Font Foundry«. It was obvious that we've asked Jakob Runge to fontengineer this adventurous font case.

We wanna say thank you for his inspiration and his great font Franziska. Have a look also on the impressive documentation:

LOVE & PROPS TO  
WWW.TYPEMEFONTS.COM  
WWW.SLABANDSERIF.COM  
WWW.VVVV.ORG

KEEP FRIENDS

KEEP FRIENDS

KEEP

KEEP

KEEP

KEEP

KEEP

KEEP

KEEP

KEEP

THIA

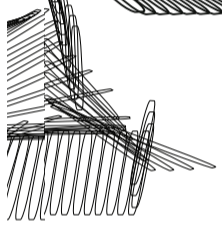
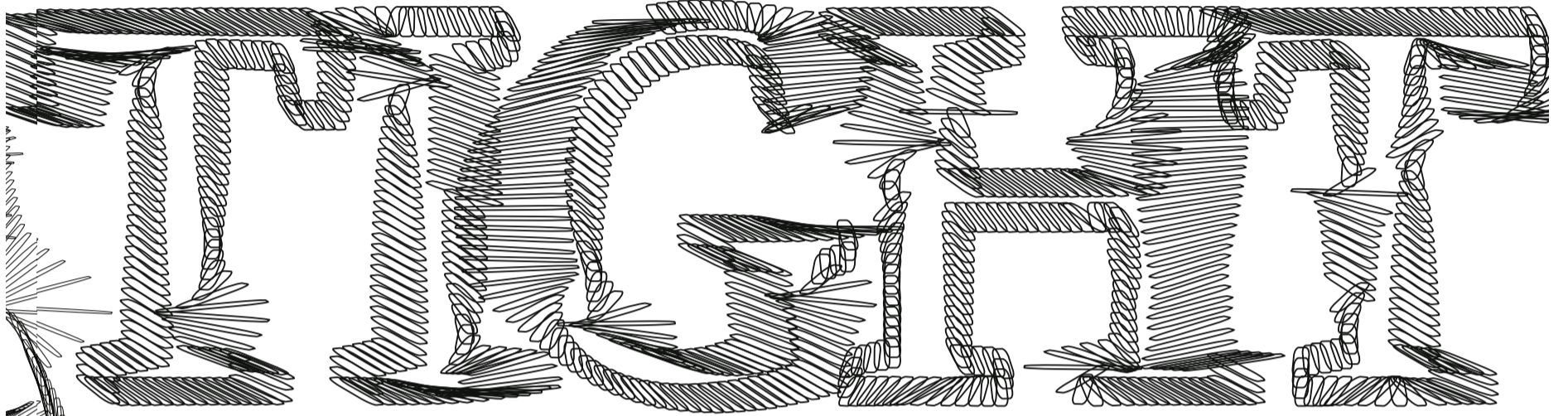
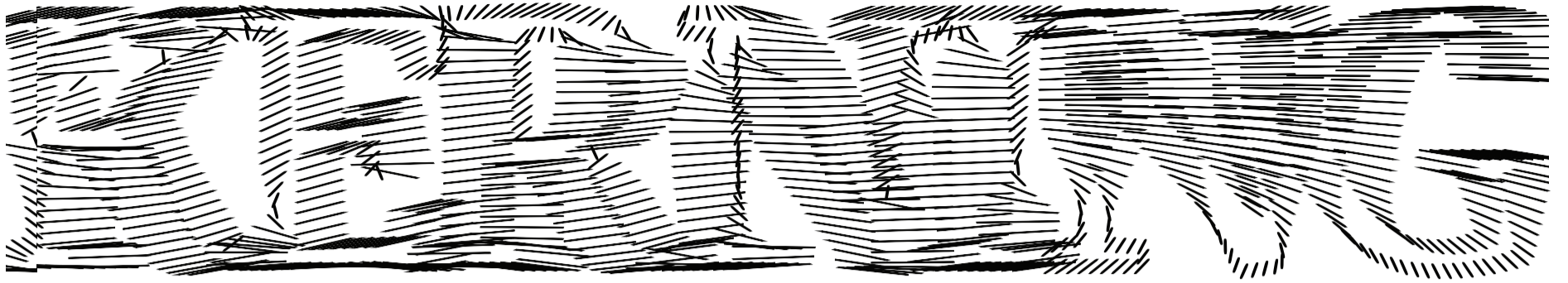
THIA

THIA

THIA

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KERNING

KERNING

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TIGHT

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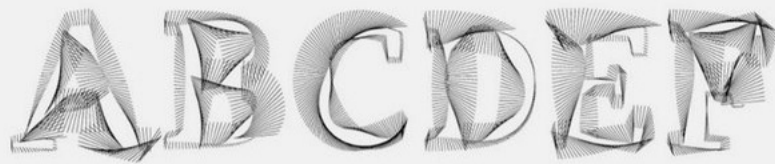
TIGHT

TIGHT

TIGHT

TIGHT

First Version of BoppSpirelli, created as Specimen for Jakob Runge's FranzsikaRelease.



STRIKE



STRIKE GROTESK



STROKE - SPIKE - SPANK

# LF Bopp Spirelli / Letters Are My Friends & Jakob Runge

von [Florian Fecher](#) am 20.02.2014in [Schriften](#)[4 Kommentare](#)


STRIKE



STRIKE GROTESK



STROKE - SPIKE - SPANK

Die Schrift [Franziska](#) ist die Masterarbeit von Jakob Runge an der Muthesius Kunsthochschule in Kiel. Nachdem er die Schrift Anfang letzten Jahres fertig gestellt hatte rief er Gestalter dazu auf, eine Seite für sein [Specimen Booklet](#) zu gestalten.

Bei [Letters Are My Friends](#), dem typografischen Concept Store, Research Lab & Design Studio für "Type & Tech" in Berlin, entstanden daraufhin mit der selbst entwickelten vvv-Anwendung »[Buchstabengewitter](#)« mehrere Remixe der Franziska. Die generierten Ergebnisse gefielen Jakob zwar, hatten sich allerdings ästhetisch soweit von der Ausgangsschrift gelöst, dass er sie nicht im Specimen benutzte.

Bärbel Bold & Ingo Italic entschlossen sich dazu, das Generierte für ihr Kompendium-Buch "Keep the kerning Tight" (Sommer 2014) zu verwenden und drei Schriftschnitte des Experiments unter dem Namen [LF Bopp Spirelli](#) zu veröffentlichen. Es lag nahe, Jakob Runge für eine Kollaboration ins Boot zu holen. Von Letters Are My Friends kamen die experimentellen Formen, Jakob übernahm die technische Seite der Fontproduktion. Zudem stellte er als zweiten Basisfont Cera für den Grotesk Schnitt zur Verfügung.

Die veröffentlichten Schriftdateien sind lediglich exemplarische Ausschnitte aus der Fülle an Möglichkeiten, die mit dieser Art der generativen Schriftgestaltung möglich sind. Die Fonts beinhalten einige ausgewählte Buchstabenformen als Großbuchstaben und machen sie als Headlineschrift anwendbar. Bisher gibt es die Schnitte: *Strike Grotesk*, die auf der Cera basiert sowie *Strike* und *Stroke - Spike - Spank*, deren Grundlage die Franziska ist. *Stroke - Spike - Spank* beinhaltet ausserdem noch Alternativen zum jeweiligen Buchstaben.

[Letters Are My Friends](#) vergibt für die drei verfügbaren Schnitte mit limitiertem Zeichensatz eine kostenlose Lizenz. Wer die LF Bopp Spirelli besitzen möchte, muss sich das Plakat dazu über die [Webseite](#) (Bezahlung mit PayPal) oder direkt bei Letters Are My Friends in der Boppstrasse 7, Berlin-Kreuzberg besorgen. Wer kein PayPal nutzt, kann auch an [bb@lettersaremyfriends.com](mailto:bb@lettersaremyfriends.com) schreiben. Auf dem Plakat findet sich ein »Malen nach Zahlen«. Wer ein Foto der fertigen Zeichnung einreicht bekommt die Fonts zugeschickt.

**LF Bopp Spirelli - a fontfamily with type & tech heart.**

Foundry: Letters Are My Friends

Designer: Bärbel Bold, Ingo Italic, Jakob Runge

Veröffentlichung: Januar 2014

Format: OpenType

Schnitte: Strike Grotesk, Strike, Stroke - Spike - Spank

Preis: kostenlos



