

*The Elements of Calligraphic Style, Second Edition*  
*Robert Brinkman*

Historical  
Synopsis

abppfoe  
 abppfoe

aperture: the opening in letters such as a, c, e, s

RENAISSANCE (15th & 16th centuries): modulated stroke; humanist [oblique] axis; crisp, pen-formed terminals; large aperture; italic equal to and independent of roman.

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These charts show first and foremost the axis of the stroke, which is the axis of the pen that makes the letter. It is often very different from the axis of the lettershape itself. A pen that points northwest can make an upright letter or a letter that slopes to the northeast.

BAROQUE (17th century): modulated stroke; variable axis; modelled serifs and terminals; moderate aperture; italic subsidiary to roman and closely linked with it. A secondary vertical axis often develops in Baroque letters – but the primary axis of the penstroke is normally oblique.

*Smith & Mackay - 1992*

Historical  
Synopsis

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NEOCLASSICAL (18th century): modulated stroke; rationalist [vertical] axis; refined, adnate serifs; lachrymal terminals; moderate aperture; italic fully subjugated to roman.

adnate: flowing into the stems;  
 lachrymal: tear-drop shaped

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ROMANTIC (18th & 19th centuries): high contrast; intensified rationalist axis; abrupt, thin serifs; round terminals; small aperture; fully subjugated italic. In Neoclassical and Romantic letters alike, the primary axis is usually vertical and the secondary axis oblique.

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REALIST (19th & early 20th centuries): unmodulated stroke; implied vertical axis; small aperture; serifs absent or abrupt and of equal weight with main strokes; italic absent or replaced by sloped roman.

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GEOMETRIC MODERNIST (20th century): unmodulated stroke; bowls often circular (no axis); moderate aperture; serifs absent or of equal weight with main strokes; italic absent or replaced by sloped roman. The modelling, however, is often much more subtle than it first appears.

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LYRICAL MODERNIST (20th century): rediscovery of Renaissance form: modulated stroke; humanist axis; pen-formed serifs and terminals; large aperture; italic partially liberated from roman.

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POSTMODERNIST (late 20th century): frequent parody of Neoclassical and Romantic form: rationalist axis; sharply modelled serifs and terminals; moderate aperture; italic subjugated to roman. (There are many kinds of Postmodernist letter. This is one example.)

fine text faces based on Jenson's single roman font and wanted to embellish it with bold, you might consider using Jenson's kind of bold. The only dark faces he cut were blackletters.

## eleve elephant; fool filibuster; wj phytogenic

Bruce Rogers's Centaur (here 16 pt) with Karlgeorg Hoefler's San Marco (12 pt). Centaur is based on the roman that Nicolas Jenson cut at Venice in 1469. San Marco is based on the rotundas he cut there in the 1470s.

6.5.4 *Choose titling and display faces that reinforce the structure of the text face.*

Titling faces, display faces and scripts can be chosen on much the same principles as bold faces. Incestuous similarity is rarely a necessity, but empathy and compatibility usually are. A geometrically constructed, high-contrast face such as Bauer Bodoni, beautiful though it may be, has marginal promise as a titling face for a text set in Garamond or Bembo, whose contrast is low and whose structure is fundamentally calligraphic. (Bodoni mixes far more happily with Baskerville – of which it is not a contradiction but rather an exaggeration.)

6.5.5 *Pair serifed and unserifed faces on the basis of their inner structure.*

When the basic text is set in a serifed face, a related sanserif is frequently useful for other elements, such as tables, captions or notes. In complicated texts, such as dictionary entries, it may also be necessary to mix unserifed and serifed fonts on the same line. If you've chosen a family that includes a matched sanserif, your problems may be solved. But many successful marriages between serifed and unserifed faces from different families are waiting to be made.

## Frutiger Méridien Univers

Suppose your main text is set in Méridien – a serifed roman and italic designed by Adrian Frutiger. It would be reasonable to look first of all among Frutiger's other creations for a related sanserif. Frutiger is a prolific designer of types, both serifed and unserifed, so there are several from which to choose. Univers is

105

his most widely used sanserif. But another of his unserifed faces – the one to which he gave his own name – is structurally much closer to Méridien and works handsomely as a companion.

Hans Eduard Meier's Syntax is a sanserif much different in structure from either Frutiger or Univers. It is based on serifed Renaissance forms like those of Garamond. It works well with such faces as Stempel or Adobe Garamond, or with Sabon, another descendant of Garamond, designed by Meier's contemporary and countryman, Jan Tschichold.

If your choice falls on a more geometric sanserif, such as Futura, a Renaissance roman will hardly suffice as a serifed companion. Many romans based on the work of Bodoni, however, breathe much the same spirit as Futura. They aspire not to calligraphic motion but to geometric purity.

## Gabocse escobaG Gabocse escobaG Gabocse escobaG

Syntax and Minion, above; Futura and Berthold Bodoni, center; Helvetica and Haas Clarendon, below.

### 6.6 MIXING ALPHABETS

6.6.1 *Choose non-Latin faces as carefully as Latin ones.*

Mixing Latin letters with Hebrew or Arabic is, in principle, scarcely different from mixing roman with blackletter or serif with sans. Different though they look, and even though they read in different directions, all these alphabets spring from the same source, and all are written with similar tools. Many structural similarities underlie the obvious differences. A book involving more than one alphabet therefore poses some of the same questions posed by a bilingual or polylingual book set entirely in Latin letters. The typographer must decide in each case – after studying the text – whether to emphasize or minimize the differences. In general, the more closely different alphabets are mixed, the more important it becomes that they should be

106

The  
Multicultural  
Page

Choosing  
and  
Combining  
Type