The development of Repurika

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Since the homogeneous typographic trend has become dominant across fields, this situation opens many discussions for typographers. The fashion industry may show the trend the most visible as many high fashion houses replaced their typographic voices with default-looking and bland typefaces. My practical project at Esad Type was initiated from the observation of the current typographic trend. Despite the apparent concern that the fad may cause a lack of typographic diversity, this project regards the homogeneous look as a new aesthetic to pursue. Through actual production of a typeface family, I expect to raise a question of the designer's role in reacting to the trend, mainly how much designers should balance neutral and personal expressions. Aside from the main theme of the project, the typeface will also aim for the fashion context, for instance, magazines and brandings, which was the project's initial inspiration. This text will chronologically describe the trials and errors during production. Despite the background and research given, the description is not expected to follow the strict academic custom. Besides, many online references were actively used due to the inaccessibility of the physical research materials during the pandemic situation.

This presentation includes four different terms regarding Times. Times New Roman is a typeface family that Monotype initially developed for a British newspaper, The Times. As Linotype adopted the typeface to the Linotype machine, Times Roman appeared on the system with subtle differences. This dissertation strictly distinguishes between Times New Roman rooting in the Monotype version and Time Roman from the Linotype's adaptation. Although no reliable references are using a term, Times, I arbitrarily introduce Times to encompass the two typefaces and indicate the typefaces' stylistic genre. Additionally, a term, Times Old Roman, may appear only on this terminology section, which designates typefaces used on The Times before Times New Roman.

1.1. The emergence of the default typographic trend in fashion

Homogeneity may have become one of the most distinctive features of branding typography in recent years. This tendency has resulted in numerous similar-looking sans serif typefaces for businesses. The trend is often regarded as a contemporary approach, bringing the brands high flexibility in covering various products and communication means. The recent fashion industry may show the movement the most visible. Since Hedi Slimane, the creative director of Yves Saint Laurent, initiated a renewal of the logotype in 2012, many luxury brands have followed the strategy with bland sans-seriffed logotypes. The homogeneous typography is not only applied to the logotype but also across the brands' promotion tools, such as traditional and new media *(Glickfeld, 2019)(Fig. 1)*.

Unlike the common notion of branding that has to be distinctive and unique, the homogeneity might not be the new branding concept since the international style. Neutral sans serif fonts, particularly Helvetica, have dominated the typeface choice for the identity design across industries with its clarity and authenticity. However, the current trend in the fashion industry might show a different phase with the international style. Although the business-oriented approach also causes the new typographic movement, I believe that the recent vogue has become an aesthetic expression for contemporary fashion houses. The aesthetic, often called Normcore, also appears on the fashion-forward media covering the fashion-forward brands, such as hipster fashion magazines using default-looking typefaces and layout settings.

Fig. 1
Images extracted from Normcore inferno,
E. Glickfeld (2019)

1.2. The application of the new aesthetic in fashion

Normcore initially referred to a sociological attitude that pursues liberation in being normal to react against the exhaustion of being unique, according to the definition by New York-based brand consultants K-Hole in 2013 *(K-Hole, 2013)*. This attitude has gradually been adopted by the mainstream fashion industry, producing unisex and everyday items, and this has eventually expanded into the area of high-fashion houses. The collaboration between DHL and Vetements showed this aesthetic most memorably by borrowing the mundane DHL logo t-shirt to the high-fashion runway *(Glickfeld, 2019) (Fig.2)*. The show's printed matter also proved the attitude's pursuit, such as the show invitation borrowing an existing format of printed matter.

Fig. 2
Spring 2016 Reay-to-Wear,
extracted from Vogue Runway (2015)

Although Martin Margiela might not be considered a designer who explored Normcore, he was well known for experimenting with a similar aesthetic by *being normal* more or less. The anonymity and default format concept has been one of the key features in his design since the early stage of his career. The brand's logotype arrayed multiple numbers that simply indicate which category the product belongs to, aiming the Anti-Brand concpet *(Elvidge, 2015) (Fig. 3)*. The logotype appeared on the clothes label, and this was meant to be easily detached and disappear with loose stitches to purse the anonymity. Also, the brand's anonymous nature showed on the runway by presenting models' faces with covered masks to erase personality *(Fig. 4)*.

Fig. 3
Logotype of Maison Margiela

Fig. 4
Spring 1996 Reay-to-Wear,
extracted from Vogue Runway (1995)

Contemporary fashion media covering forefront fashion also tended to share this aesthetic, such as hipster high-fashion magazines. Unlike the traditional high-fashion magazines, such as Vogue and Elle, these contemporary periodicals seemed to prefer neutral and general typefaces, instead of Didone faces considered the most common choice for fashion magazines *(Chart. 1)*. The magazines' layout also shared the typographic preference, often showing simple layout structure and brutal typographic details from default typesetting *(Fig. 5)*.

Magazines	*Typeface Use*
Gentle Woman	Futura, Lyon, Sentinnel, Times for old issues
Antidote	(Unidentified) Grotesk sans
Many of Them	Times, (Unidentified) Geometric sans
Republica	Futura, Times
System	Times

Chart. 1
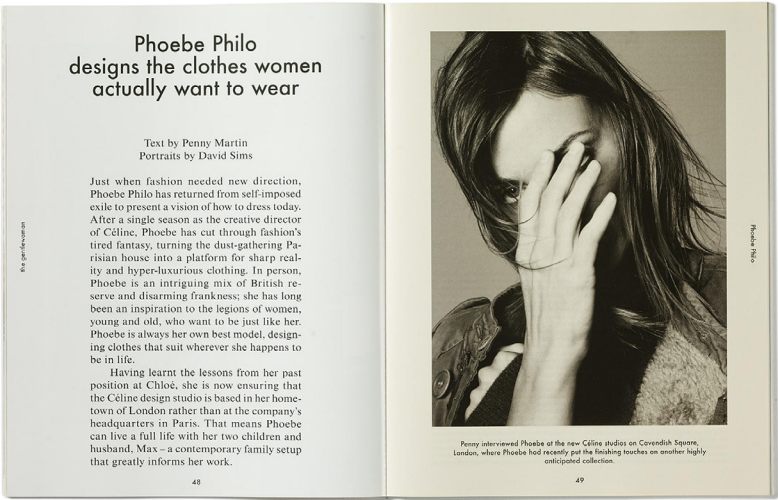A research summary of the typeface use for selected magazines

Fig. 5
The spreads of Gentle Woman n° 1, extracted from *thegentlewoman.co.uk*

As the fashion industry's recent trend showed, the typographic movement might happen to reflect the aesthetic of normality. This situation raised questions of the typeface designers' role for this situation, how far the designers could go by keeping the normality, and how much personal interpretation could be intervened in the neutral-oriented typefaces. My practical project at Esad Type began with the questions. Through the actual typeface production, I will explore the balance between default-look and personal interpretation. The typeface will also correspond to the origin of the idea, targeting the contemporary fashion field, mainly magazines and branding. Now, I will describe how I structured and executed the project based on typographic research. Since the homogenous typographic trend has become popular across the fields, I believe that this practice would pave the way to respond to the current aesthetic in typeface design.

2.1. Times as the main reference of the project

Although sans serif typefaces led the homogeneous typographic trend, I determined Times as the primary reference for the design, which is also one of the most default typefaces. The decision mainly came from functional considerations. Aside from the common belief that serif typeface could perform more effectively on running texts than neutral sans serif typefaces like Helvetica and Arial, the compact structure of Times showed advantages for the magazine texts over the sans serif styles. The condensed width and shorter ascender and descender brought economic typesetting, allowing more text volume on the limited format than standard book typefaces. As a great deal of information on pages packed in fashion magazines, the structural features were expected to save the space.

In addition to the functionality, I thought that serif styles tended to be more flexible in stylistic diversity. Since serif typefaces contained higher variants to differentiate with other typefaces, such as shapes of serif, bracket, and terminal, the creation process could explore more diverse letterforms than sans serif fonts. Besides, serif fonts might have more room for expandability into sans and slab seriffed styles than Grotesk fonts. Many existing attempts to produce a superfamily were based on serif style first. Although the stylistic expansion should be highly dependent on the project's target and its time plan, it could allow me to manage the diverse typographic situation as the project would grow in the future.

2.2. A brief history of Times

As the name might stand for, Times was initially an exclusive typeface for the newspaper, The Times *(Fig. 6)*. The development of Times New Roman was relatively written in detail compared to the other old typefaces *(Klein, 1991)*. The typographic adviser for Laston Monotype, Stanley Morison, initiated the project with the request to re-design the typography of the paper in 1929. He then started trying out several ideal newspaper typography options with existing typefaces at first, such as Baskerville, Plantin, Imprint, Ionic, and Perpetua *(Fig. 7)*. Some of the typefaces had to undergo modification for the optimal newspaper setting by shortening ascenders and descenders, as the typefaces originally aimed for book typography. However, Morison decided to work on an entirely new

Fig. 6
The first edition of The Times set in
Times, extracted from New York Public
Library Blogs (2014)

Monotype Baskerville Pro Roman

Imprint Std Regular

Plantin Pro Roman

Monotype Ionic Pro Regular

Perpetua Pro Roman

Fig. 7
Digital version of
Baskerville,
Imprint,
Plantin,
Ionic,
Perpetua,
captured and extracted from
The Monotype Library

typeface exclusively for the newspaper, and the discussion for the creation
began exchanged from late 1930. He indeed presented two drafts for the
committee in the following January, one was known as a modified version
of Perpetua, and the other was a modernised Plantin. As the latter was
eventually selected, the draft evolved to Times New Roman. Unlike the
decision-making process was documented, the many parts of the execution
process were still uncovered. It was commonly believed that Victor Lardent
executed the first drawing of the Morison's scheme based on the Plantin-
Moretus specimens sheet, the reference for Plantin 110.

With generous financial support by The Times, Times New Roman was exclusively released for The Times in 1932 with an extensive punch set *(Fig. 8)*. Soon after the public release, magazines started using the typefaces because Times New Roman supported both mechanical and manual typesetting with the broad coverage of characters. The popularity brought the gradual extension of the volume during the metal type era, including weight and proportion variations as well as display version. As the typeface began to appear across media, diverse styles followed, such as each book, mathematics formula extension, and regional variations *(Chart. 2)* *(Fig. 9)*. Monotype organised the designs by numbers, for instance, 327 for the main style, 324 for the bold, and 427 for the widen-width version. This flexibility may pave the way in being selected as a default typeface for the DTP environment.

TIMES NEW ROMAN 327
REGD. TRADE MARK MONOTYPE

Works by the great Van Dijck
Mixed blocks of varying sizes
So we expect full payment
Zeal for a type designing job
ABDEGHJKMNQRTUV

Two documents having
quality will take prizes
Quads form even blocks
ABDEGHJKMNQRT

The bank now recognizes
our claim as quite valid
I have equalized my jobs
ABDEGHJKMNQRS

Becoming expert in the
vocation of typesetting
People often read books

We have equalized our jobs for work
The few mixed blocks of varying sizes
ABCDEGHJKMNQRSTUVWXYZ

Works by the great Van Dijck
Type with quads forming blocks
ABEGHIJKMNQRSTUXYZ

Dexterity can be acquired
I now expect full payment
ABEGHIJKMNQRSTW

Fig. 8, 1/2
A part of the Times New Roman specimen of the hot metal (Monotype) type, from Stephen Coles's Flickr, Originally from Desk Catalog of Monotype Faces (1960s)

(left)
https://www.flickr.com/photos/stewf/25949522516/in/album-72157710561700526/

(upper-right)
https://www.flickr.com/photos/stewf/25346679293/in/album-72157710561700526/

(lower-right)
https://www.flickr.com/photos/stewf/25949536506/in/album-72157710561700526/

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Fig. 8, 2/2
A part of the Times New Roman specimen of the hot metal (Monotype) type, from Stephen Coles's Flickr, Originally from Desk Catalog of Monotype Faces (1960s)

(above)
https://www.flickr.com/photos/stewf/25674842340/in/album-72157710561700526/

(below)
https://www.flickr.com/photos/stewf/25949561626/in/album-72157710561700526/

Times Version	Features
Hever Titling (355)	Capital only display version with Caslon-influenced details
Wide (427)	Widen proportion for book printing
Book (627)	long descensders based on Wide version (427) for classic book typography
German (727)	Lighter Capital weight for the frequent capital only typesetting for German users
French (827)	Stylistic alternatives for several characters with the pointed nip pen influence
Claritas (333/335)	Adjustement for the small size use
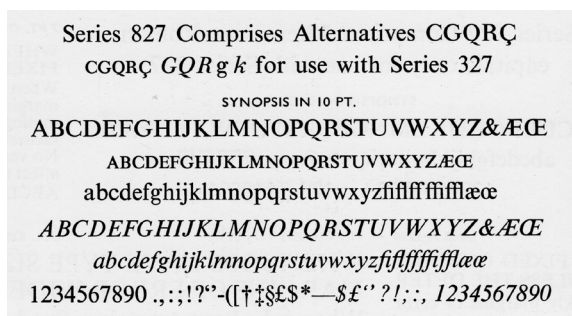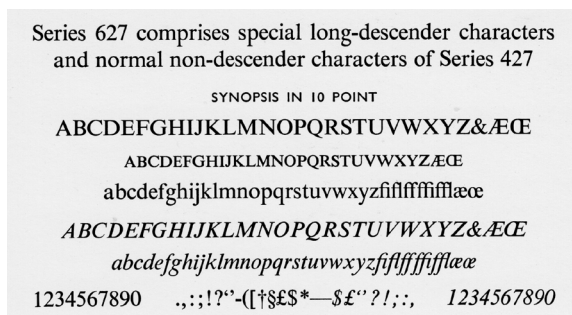
Although Times New Roman was initially developed for the Monotype machines, this needed to be adapted for the Linotype system soon due to the widespread of Linotype for newspaper printing *(Eye, 2012)*. The Linotype version, referred to Times Roman, showed only the subtle differences with Times New Roman, but the two typefaces were not exactly interchangeable due to the subtle letterform details and proportion changes *(Strizver, 2018) (Fig. 10)*. Some of the differences derived from the system's technological limitations, such as the narrowed "f" on the Linotype version, which did not allow kerning *(Felici, 2013) (Fig. 11)*. The two versions have shaped the base of today's Times letterforms by continuously being adapted to emerging printing technologies; photo and digital typesettings.

Linotype Times

Monotype Times

Fig. 10
Difference between Linotype and Monotype, extracted from CreatePro Blog (2009)

https://creativepro.com/typetalk-times-roman-vs-times-new-roman/

Linotype Times

Monotype Times

Fig. 11
Difference between Linotype and Monotype, extracted from CreatePro Blog (2013)

https://creativepro.com/ligatures-trip-really-necessary/

The digital typesetting emerged with cathode and laser technology development in the 1970s, accelerating the dematerialisation of printing, which the phototypesetting had initiated *(Kinross, 1992)*. As a Palo-Alto-based company, Xerox PARC later established the digital typographic environment that can create documents with layout software, the new technology achieved the comparable typographic quality to the traditional printing in much faster and easier ways. Further technological improvement gradually made the digital typography accessible. Eventually, it sparked a revolutionary change in the printing industry in the 1980s, Desktop Publishing (DTP), allowing individuals to publish texts and images through personal computers.

The advent of Apple's Macintosh played a crucial role in establishing DTP with its accessibility in 1984, particularly the graphical interface to control the system, as well as the affordable price and dimension for personal use *(Kinross, 1992)*. Apple LaserWriter, a laser printer from Apple, and the layout software, Adobe PageMaker, supported the following year's desktop typographic environment. All these are operated by PostScript, the newly invented page description language by Adobe in 1984. This new printing environment became utilised not only for commercial printing but also for diverse self-publishing without high expense compared to traditional printing.

Times' default status may begin with the limitation of the early digital typographic technology that could contain only a handful of a selection of core typefaces. With the license contract between Linotype and the PostScript-based platforms, Times Roman, the Linotype version of Times, were included on the Apple LaserWriter alongside Helvetica, Courier, and Symbol with each medium and bold weights. Apple's own font outline technology took over the font choice in 1991, which was TrueType invented to compete for the Adobe's one. The latecomer, Microsoft, also aimed compatible font library with the existing DTP environment at that time. Although Apple licensed TrueType to Microsoft, the company made a contract with a different type foundry, Monotype. As a result, the Windows system introduced Times New Roman as an alternative alongside Courier New and Arial. Both Times Roman and Times New Roman were digitised with minor letterform changes, and the typeface became available on any

major digital typographic technology. The typefaces actively appeared on the professional and personal printings based on the widespread of DTP environment. This situation might affect Times to be considered one of the most common typefaces for professional, personal, and academic typography.

2.4. Potential flaws in Times

Despite the typeface's success, the digital versions showed several potential flaws in the design. One came from the transition between printing technologies, and the other existed since the metal type version. As the initial metal version of Times aimed for the newspaper with the inferior printing quality, the type was cut in a slightly lighter weight than the expected result to compensate for the ink spread. As the digital version directly translated the metal cut to the vector outline, the digitised Times tended to look light and contrasted on today's printing quality. Besides, the original metal type embodied the optically adjusted nature for each size, but the digital typeface only worked with one sizeable master. As the digitised version had to cover a wide range of sizes, this factor led to a lack of optimality in immersive reading, such as compact structure in terms of the letter width, and ascenders and descenders.

A few questionable decisions on the metal version remained the same during the digitisation as well. The inconsistent stroke modulation between regular and bold raised a question because the regular version embodied a slightly diagonal axis, whereas bold had a vertical axis *(Hare, 2006) (Fig. 12)*. Research showed that the bold extension, Times New Roman bold 324, was known as an in-house product *(Klein, 1991)*. The executor mechanically increased the weight from the inside of letters on a similar matrix size as the regular. This decision not only resulted in the inconsistency of the stroke modulation between weights but also the too heavy and narrow appearance of the bold version. On the other hand, the bold italic was known for following the standard version structure, but this also caused the inconsistency between bold and its italic pair. This issue has existed from its creation for the mechanical typesetting machines to the digital version.

Digital version of Times New Roman's structural difference between regular and bold

2.5. Examination

Through the research on Times, I understood the origin of the typeface and how the letterforms achieved the default status nowadays. Time New Roman began as a versatile newspaper typeface supporting an extensive character set and diverse typesetting systems. After the exclusive use by The Times, Times started to appear on various uses. The popularity and versatility might result in the inclusion of the core typeface library in the early DTP environment, sparking the typeface's widespread use by both professions and amateurs. The study also revealed several unexpected findings. The stylistic diversity from the continuous expansion was surprising and pleasing to me, such as distinctive display styles and regional variants. However, several questions about the design followed. The digital versions' structure looked fully not optimised for immersive reading, mostly due to a lack of reflection of traditional typographic technology. Also, inconsistent stroke modulation between weights was questionable as one comprehensive family. The observations offered me an insight to shape my project and how to utilise the references.

3.1. Initial design space

Aimed to explore not only the normality but also the fashion magazine use, the design space for my project mostly respects the typical typeface usage for the magazines. Since contemporary fashion magazines tented to show image-oriented editorial design to display products effectively, it usually consisted of a relatively superficial typographic hierarchy level compared to newspaper typography. The texts mainly were set in the main style with its italic companion, and eye-catching display master played a supplementary role in attracting readers' attention. Several cases were using sans serifs in captions to deliver practical information. Thus, I decided to plan the project consisted of core typefaces, standard and Display styles with italic counterparts, and to make room for future expansion, which would be sans serif or a caption style *(Chart. 3)*.

Text (Neutrality)	Display (Personality)
Roman, Italic	*Roman, Italic*

Possibile expansion
Sans serif
Optical sizes, Caption
Fashion specific master

Chart. 3
Initial design space, it has
possibility to change up to the
further development of the
project at this point.
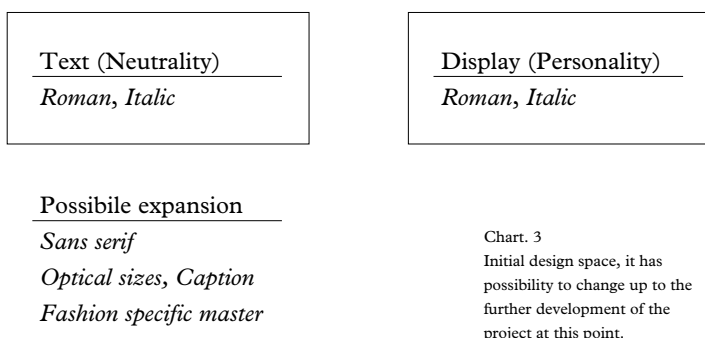
The main text version, including its italic, was planned to mostly root in Times letterforms to achieve one of the project's goals, balancing between normality and personality. As the research on the letterforms proved, there would be a need to identify which to follow and avoid. The condensed width of Times might work economic on the magazine context but still had room for optimisation alongside its contrast. The structural gap between weights also required improvement when designing bold and its italic companion.

The display style was primarily planned to embrace more personality than its workhorse counterpart. In the early stage of the design space scheme, two primary considerations were discussed; revisiting the old typographic reference with distinctive design and borrowing typical display styles from the fashion context. The not-yet-digitised display version of Times New Roman, Hever Titling, caught my attention with the spiky design *(Fig. 13)*. I expected that the modern interpretation of the style might help to achieve the unique design but, at the same time, the typographic consistency across the styles. Besides, the inconsistent vertical axis on the Times bold gave me an idea to blend the letterforms with the Didone style, which appeared on fashion media the most. It was expected to deliver adequate tone-and-manner of the genre. In order to achieve the distinctive letterforms, I often intermixed the two approaches during the early design process.

Fig. 13
Times Hever Titling (355) showing Calson-influenced spiky serifs, extracted from
https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Times_New_Roman

Aside from the text and display styles, a few additional styles were considered. The caption style could support the functionality but could not decide which style should be and how much the volume should be. Fashion-specific features were also expected to enrich the project's typographic diversity, such as ornamental caps and figures. None of the two extensions was decided and remained the future development depending on the project's schedule at this point.

Through the considerations, I established the initial plan of the design space. With the aim for the contemporary fashion magazine use, the project consisted of both text and display styles with italic companions as well as further possible extension, such as caption style and fashion-specific features. The text master was planned to pursue the normality, whereas the display version aimed to embrace personal interpretation. Additional styles remained the future plan when production time is allowed. Considered the possible changes in the design space, I had gradually attempted several directions.

3.2. Art direction

As the project aimed for the default appearance, there was a growing worry about the possibility that the result might end up with a replica of Times. In this situation, I thought that replica itself could ironically become a unique approach in art direction. Based on researches on how designers explored the concept followed, this project embraced a few relevant findings. Manual and digital-auto tracing methods showed appealing explorations, and rasterisation also had the potential to engage with my project. I first tried to generate unique design features in the early stage of execution, which could be applicable across the styles. The features were designed on the main text style first and gradually expanded to other styles, such as weight and stylistic expansion. The process would be an arbitrary combination of the three methods' trials and errors, and the chronological experience was described in the next chapter.

3.2.1. Manual tracing

The first method for the replica approach was manual tracing. This technique literally meant tracing certain letterforms over and over by hand. The approach was inspired by Erik Spiekermann's practice to design his version of Akzidenz Grotesk, FF Real. He re-drew the new version by freehand by utilising coarse pencil on a rough sheet of paper to deliberately generate differences. He claimed that the original's repetitive tracing eventually would end up with the new design by reflecting the personal movement of hand and taste *(Dissection, 2017)*.
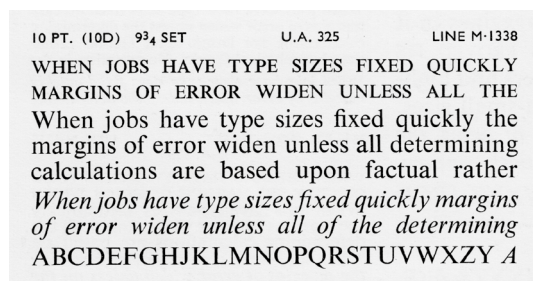
Fig. 14
10 point-sized the metal Times New Roman (327), extracted from Stephen Coles's Flickr (Above), Originally from Desk Catalog of Monotype Faces (1960s)

The first manual-traced attempt of Times New Roman (Below)

Based on the 10-point-sized metal type version of Times New Roman, I executed the first manual tracing *(Fig. 14)*. There was an issue that this looked too similar to the original model at first, but it gradually became different from the reflection of personal drawing habits and taste *(Fig. 15)*. The design evolved into a more suitable proportion and contrast for the immersive reading, including the darker word image than the original. However, I realised that this development could look too timid to be regarded as my original design. This consideration led me to move onto the next step.

Timesabng

Fig. 15
Further attempts of Manual-traced Times New Roman (327)

3.2.2. Auto-tracing

The experiment that brought me more distinctive results was the digital tracing method. Auto-tracing stood for basically the same principle as the manual tracing but worked through the digital automation technology. A British designer, Neville Brody, was known for often playing around with the technique in the 1990s. He designed a font named FF Autotrace by manipulating an existing font with the digital tracing technology *(Fig. 16)*. I tried to introduce the method to both existing digital Times and my sketch from the manual tracing, and then I started to re-sketch new letterforms based on the experiment.

FF Autotrace Std One

FF Autotrace Std Five

Fig. 16
FF Autotrace, captured in Myfont selling page

FF Autotrace Std Nine

FF Autotrace Std Double

The auto-traced Times New Roman showed exciting design features, generating drastically simplified shapes *(Fig. 17)*. The original's ball terminals became distorted and flattened, and the sharp and curvy serifs also appeared. Besides, there was a structural change of several complex letters, such as the lowercase "g" being overly simplified. Based on the observation, I applied the visual features to my own sketches from the manual tracing exercise *(Fig. 18)*. In order for functionality, the drastic details gradually became tone-down as I kept repeating the practice. As a result of the process, I achieved letterforms firmly rooted in Times New Roman but embodied the digital-oriented details, which were simplified serif, terminal, and structure *(Fig. 19)*. Although the letterforms had many rooms for improvement, it showed the potential to keep working on. Thus, I slowly started expanding the character set but, at the same time, tried an additional method to enrich the depth of the project.

Hamburgefonstiv

Hamburgefonstiv

Hamburgefonstiv

Hamburgefonstiv

Hamburgefonstiv

Fig. 17
Auto-traced Times New Roman through autotracing feature on Fontlab 7

amburgefonstivR

Hamburgefonstiv

Fig. 18
Sketches reflecting the auto-traced features

Handgloves
Hamburgefonstiv
adhesion

Fig. 19
First digitisation of the sketches

3.2.3. Rasterisation

Rasterisation usually happened when replicating a certain image through technologies with a low resolution, such as facsimile. The inferior outline quality from the pixelation could often bring unexpected results from the original material. I tried to mimic the rasterisation process by pixelating the Times New Roman family in different sizes and settings through the photoshop antialiasing setting. Every type of antialiasing modes from Photoshop was applied to each regular, italic, and bold master from 2 to 26 points (*Fig. 20*). This practice generated multiple outcomes with jagged details, and a few selections were made to apply to my own letterforms (*Fig. 21*).

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Fig. 20
A part of the research on the rasterisated letterforms, which applied the "None" anti-alising mode.

Bold 4-7 pt. (Mode: None)

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Regular 5 pt. (Mode: Smooth)

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Regular 6-10 pt. (Mode: None)

Fig. 21
A few selections from the rasterisation exercise on bold, regular, regular italic respectively

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Regular 16-21 pt. (Mode: None)

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Italic 6 pt. (Mode: None)

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

Italic 5-7 pt. (Mode: Sharp)

29

The jagged shapes tended to appear on the junctions and diagonals that were difficult to be rendered smooth through low-resolution pixel, for instance, diagonal junctions on "M" and "A" *(Fig. 22)*. The jagged outlines' negative shapes also caught my attention, "R" *(Fig. 23)*. Besides, the rasterisation made letterforms simplified, such as "X" *(Fig. 24)*. Based on the observation, the earlier version of serifs on my digital sketch also became simplified *(Fig. 25)*. Although the result at this stage did not look stable enough, the mechanical flavour from the details —negative shapes and simplification— pleased me *(Fig. 26)*. Thus, I finally started working on the stylistic expansion of the project based on the achievement that combined those three methods above.
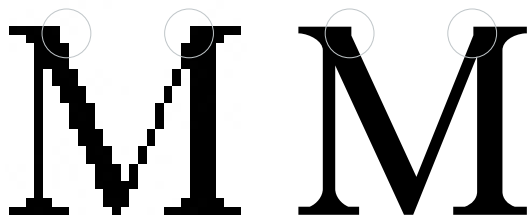

Fig. 22
Application of the features to
the early digitised version, Jun.
2020, letters "M" and "A"
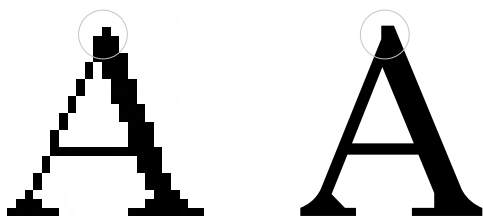
Fig. 23
The application of the features
to letter "R"
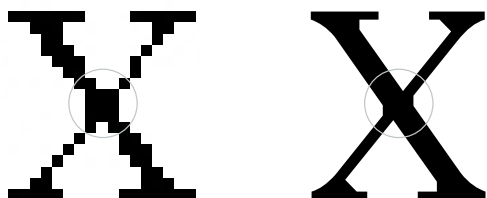
Fig. 24
The application to letter "X"
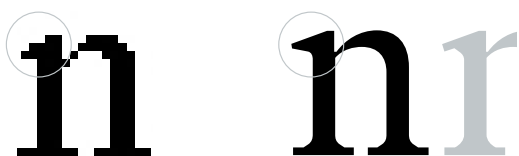
Fig. 25
Simplified serif form, the old
version marked in grey

ABCDEFGHIJKL
NOPQRSTVWX
YZabcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxz

Fig. 26
A character set with the design features,
June 2020

Established the project's art direction, I quickly applied the methodology to italic, a standard pair of the text style. A majority of decisions for italic followed the almost identical features to the text regular, showing the similar treatment of serifs and terminals with negative shapes from jagged outlines. The reflection of these details on italic resulted in mechanical details, for instance, perpendicular serifs *(Fig. 27)*. However, a strong emphasis on the first draft's mechanical features tended to look too stiff to capture the movement of cursive writing. The second draft, thus, aimed to bring more dynamic movement to the letterforms *(Fig. 28)*. The identical angle between stems became varied to reflect the nature of cursive writing, and a more condensed width was also one of the solutions to capture the speed of italic. Although there are many rooms for improvement, the harmonisation between the nature of writing and mechanical design feature was considered the right stylistic decision to keep working on.

hapedonsiv

Fig. 27
The first attempt of the italic design with
the rasterisation feature

*hamfontglove
piredonsiv*

Fig. 28
The version with the variation of angles,
the 1st of June

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3.3.2. Display

Unlike the relatively smooth progress of italic, the development of the display style went through several difficulties. Based on the design space I planned, I attempted to design the first Display having a vertical axis and high contrast *(Fig. 29)*. Since this version is firmly rooted in the standard version, it had an advantage in harmonisation. However, a similar structure caused the Display to look generic like a simple optical master solution. Aimed for a more experimental and distinctive style for the Display, I decided to treat the Display as a completely independent design first and match with the regular afterward.

Hanodeihpv
Hanodeihpv
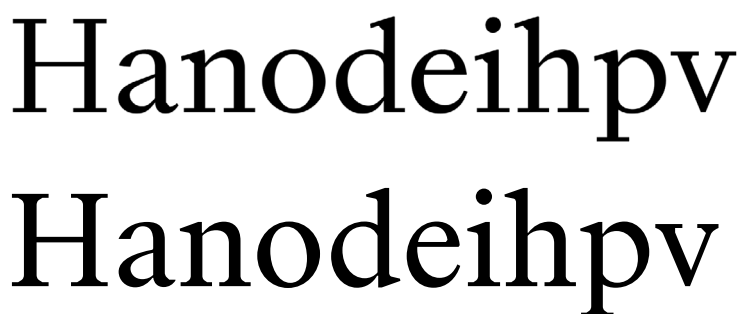
Fig. 29
The first digital sketch of the display style (above), Apr, 2020. The text counterpart marked in grey.

Revisit to my own research materials offered me inspiration. The jagged outline of "o" on the rasterisation exercise caught my attention with its diamond-like shape *(Fig. 30)*. I found a potential that the feature could create a distinctive rhythm and accent across characters. The second draft introduced the idea, showing the diamond-like shapes *(Fig. 31)*. Aside from the design feature, I started the new version based on the Didone style instead of Times. Since the new draft's main aim was starting from a different point with the text counterpart, there was a consideration to initiate the design from the structural difference. The introduction of Didone as Display was also expected to correspond to the project's fashion context through its high contrast and vertical axis. In order to keep the connection with Times, I brought the Times Hever Titling model from the

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old Monotype specimens and tried to blend the model with Didone, which showed relatively high contrast and static axis. The spiky serif on the draft was one of the handful details that might prove the connection to the old letterforms. Based on the new direction, I gradually started to blend the Didone-influenced design with the text counterpart to work together *(Fig. 32)*. The stroke modulation became close to Times with tone-down spiky serifs. Besides, the text version's design features also appeared on Display, including details that came from the rasterisation exercise.
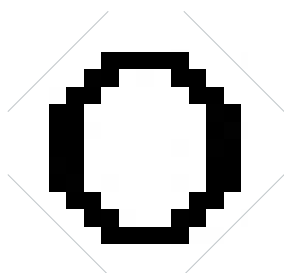
Fig. 30, 1/2
The diamond shape generated through the rasterisation exercise in the 4 points of Times New Roman bold.
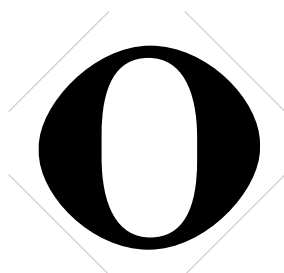
Fig. 30. 2/2
The digital sketch based on the finding.

Handgloves
Hamburgefonstiv
adhesion

Fig. 31
The test of the design feature on basic characters with the Didone influence.

ABCDEFGHJKL NOPQRSTVWYZ abcdefghijklm nopqrstuvwxz

Fig. 32
The lower and upper cases of the new
display design, by blending the old Times
Display and Didone styles, Jun 2020.

3.4. Conclusion of the early stage of the development

During the early stage of the development before the summer break, I mainly focused on planning and art direction rather than expanding the volume of the project. Based on the fashion media's current trend, the project explored the default and normality concept through Times. The project's volume and coverage mainly followed the typeface use in fashion magazines, including both text and display versions. The plan was executed by embracing several replicating methods, which was the project's main art direction. The fundamental letterform structure derived from the manual tracing method by being re-drawn the primary reference, and radical curves and sharpness from the auto-tracing technique were applied to the structure. On the detail level, the current letter shapes relied on the rasterisation exercise, particularly on the shape of terminals and serifs, as well as the junctions. This design decision then started to expand into other styles, such as italic and Display. The italic mainly followed the same stylistic decision as to the regular text style, having perpendicular serif and the same treatment on details.

On the other hand, the Display style embraced the structural difference by starting from Didone instead. The latest version at this stage emphasised harmonising between Didone and Times models. Although the art direction showed potential to keep working on, a few challenges remained at this stage. One of the main criticisms of this development was a need to introduce fashion-specific to reflect the project's typographic context fully. Several ideas were discussed, for example, ornamental figures or caps for large-sized use. Besides, there was an opinion that the latest Display did not experiment with the replicating techniques enough, especially on Display. This criticism brought me the possibility to re-consider the design direction of a certain master during further development.

Even if its something like simple denim the beauty is that you wear it over and over again and then it becomes part of your wardrobe and part of you.

When we last checked in with Yoon Ahn she was on her way to meet specialty suppliers and artisans from around Japan. Now back in Paris she said that scouting mission really shaped the latest Ambush collections and not just concerning new materials but the impressions that arrived while on the road. After spending time in the countryside and developing things together I decided I wanted to make this season more about slowness she said. Let the nose dived Mercedes staged for these photos be your warning: don t move too fast through life.

With these thoughts driving her state of mind Ahn directed the collection toward comfortable fabrics and a relaxed attitude while keeping silhouettes streamlined and urban. Outerwear was well developed and among the standouts were leather blazers with roomier volumes a trench coat as weightless as a windbreaker and a fan de sign that combined an MA 1 and a kimono. Tailored looks across both collections were tweaked with exposed linings and inner canvases then paired with a padded tabi sandal stacked atop a sneaker sole and the result felt convincingly on brand.

Intent on pushing the design potential even further Ahn said she intends to grow the denim side for this she did her research in Kojima now considered Japans denim capital. Already doubled up jackets and vests and a cloud effect denim jacquard were signs of category hits. On that note three jewelry updates came in the form of an elegant A shaped link for bracelets necklaces semiprecious stones as beaded necklaces for the ever popular cigarette holders and the creative use of matte rubber in bright yellow and industrial blue. Ahn selected that same blue hue for one of the new Converse x Ambush collaborations a glossy duck boot sneaker hybrid that felt different than all the current multicolor oddities out there.

Altogether the collections reflected an ambitious level of production and output that even when not always co herent in theme conveyed Ahn s evolving mindset. I was thinking about stuff that would get better the more you wear it she said. Even if it s something like simple denim the beauty is that you wear it over and over again and then it becomes part of your wardrobe and part of you.

Photography Nicholas Bityukov Kirill Esenin
Styling Olya Kuryachiah
Make up and hair Figures
using MAC, Apollo and Pamela
Model Nadia at Premier

The test type setting with Text regular, its Italic, and Display version on a mock-up fashion magazine layout, Jun 2020.

4.1. The fixed design space

By analyzing the feedback, it raised the necessity to make the project's focus clear. Although the combination of multiple letterform models as one family might contribute to the project's diversity, the entire family's harmonization issue can emerge. A wide range of references can also distract the project from an in-depth exploration of the replication method with a certain letterform model. Thus, I decided to fully focus on developing essential masters for the project, text and display versions, by discarding potential stylistic expansion, such as sans serif or fashion-specific masters *(Chart. 4)*. Both text and display styles will share the same letterform model and the design concept, which are Times with the replication method. However, they will be interpreted differently, a neutral voice for the Text and an expressive one for Display.

Times

Main reference,
interpreted with
replication methods

Text (Neutrality)

Roman, Italic
From Regular to Black

Display (Personality)
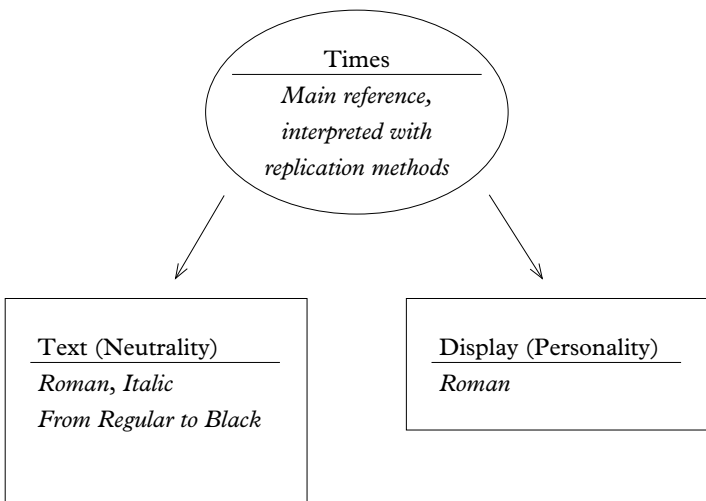
Roman

Chart. 4
Fixed design space, the main
reference, Times, will be
interpreted in two ways, one
for neutrality and the other for
expressiveness.

As the achievement of the Text design projected enough potential to keep working on, the art direction for the master remains the same. Although several letterform changes were placed during the summer break, they were only minor changes to achieve more stable drawing quality *(Fig. 33)*. The secondary style for the text version, text italic, also maintained the stylistic decision I made before the summer break. During the summer, the letterform gradually improved by simplifying several details, particularly serifs, but the basic idea still remained the same, the horizontal emphasis on the top *(Fig. 34)*.

ABCDEFGHIJKL
NOPQRSTVWX
YZabcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxz

ABCDEFGHIJKL
MNOPQRSVWX-
YZabcdefghijklm-
nopqrstuvwxyz
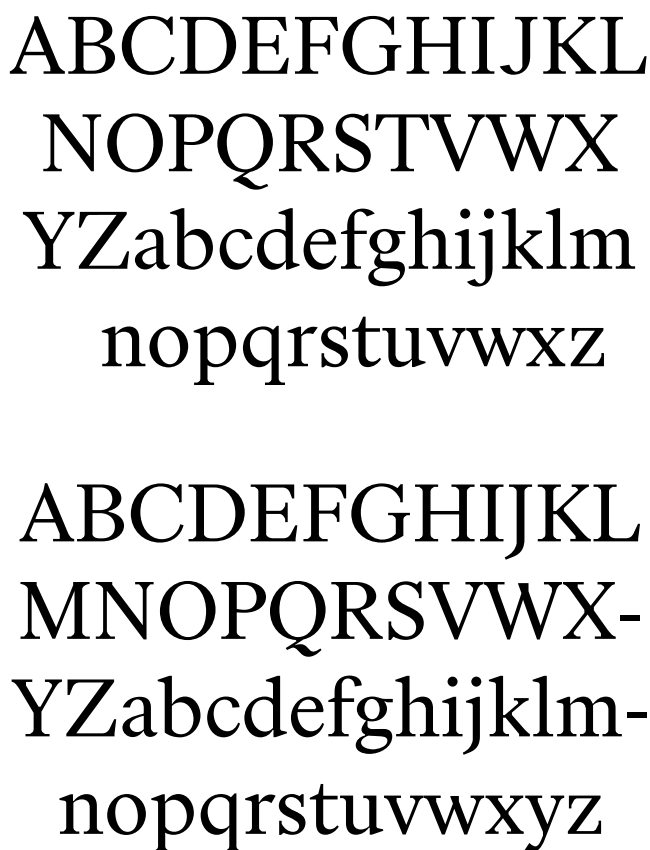
Fig. 33
The version produced on 17th of June
above, the September version below.

the quick brown fox jumps over a lazy dog

THEO abcdefghijklm nopqrstuvwxyz

The relatively stable development of the text regular roman and italic allowed the expansion of the character set and weights. The creation of accents and numerals quickly followed based on the same design decision *(Fig. 35)*. Two different shapes of accents were introduced for each lower and upper case to ease the white space gap between the two cases efficiently. When it comes to numerals, it initiated from tabular lining figures first and gradually expanded into old-style figures. Once the design decision is settled down in fixed width, the numerals' proportion varied.

39

0123456789
@#$%^&*;:~.,
...!¡?¿·•*#/|\(){}[]
<>=+±-–——_‚„""''‹›

áâäàåãæçðéêëèíîïìñóôöòøõ
œþßúûüùýÿÁÂÄÀÅÃCÇH
ÐÉÊËÈÍÎÏÌÑÓÔÖÒØÕŒÞ
PHÚÛÜÙÝŸ

I also began designing Black weight for both the roman and italic design, which can be expected to interpolate with the regular weight. Unlike the existing digital version of Times, the main consideration of the black versions was to maintain the same stroke modulation across the weights, such as the angle of a pen *(Fig. 36)*. Due to the stable development of text regular, all these development was conducted smoothly by following the structure and stylistic decision of regular with only a few minor changes *(Fig. 37)*.
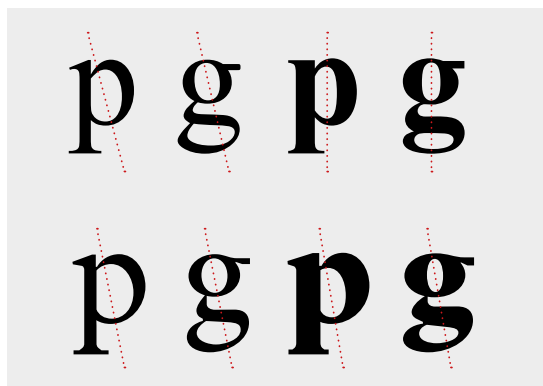
ABCDEFGHIJKL
MNOPQRSTU
VWXYZabcdef
ghijklmnopqrs
tuvwxyz

*ABCDEFGHIJKL
MNOPQRSTU
VWXYZabcdef
ghijklmnopqrs
tuvwxyz*

4.3.1. Return to the auto-tracing method

Unlike the Text versions' relatively smooth development, the display design underwent many changes in design decisions. Since one of the main goals of the new display version is to pursue stylistic harmonisation within the family, the first re-design attempt began with a clear root of the same letterform model as the Text version. By referencing existing Times regular and bold, I started to revisit the early research material on the replication. The auto-tracing technique was the first method to re-examine how the technique affects the letterforms *(Fig. 38)*.

THE QUICK BROWN
FOX JUMPS OVER A
LAZY DOG.?!
the quick brown fox
jumps over a lazy dog.?!

THE QUICK BROWN
FOX JUMPS OVER A
LAZY DOG.?!
the quick brown fox
jumps over a lazy dog.?!

THE QUICK BROWN
FOX JUMPS OVER A
LAZY DOG.?!
the quick brown fox
jumps over a lazy dog.?!

THE QUICK BROWN
FOX JUMPS OVER A
LAZY DOG.?!
the quick brown fox
jumps over a lazy dog.?!

Fig. 38
The auto-traced Times New Roman regular and bold, with the highest resolution (right) and lowest resolution (left) bitmat images.

This sketch of several basic characters is an amalgam of the findings *(Fig. 39)*. Radically sharp curves and over-simplified shapes stood out, particularly on complex details, such as serifs. Broken junctions were also visible on the auto-tracing exercises. It might not be an entirely new observation than the early research. However, the aim for the display use allowed the letterforms a more active introduction of the features, like what the slab by serif on the text version became one curvy and sharp bracket. The character set started to grow up by maintaining the sharpness and segmented details *(Fig. 40)*. During the development, the typical display design formula also showed up on the letterforms, such as higher contrast and condensed proportion for large-sized use *(Fig. 41)*.

hambergfontivs

Fig. 39
Hand-drawn sketch with the features.

THEI
abcdefghijklm
nopqrstuvwxz

Fig. 40
The version produced on 17th of September. Vertical axis was accepted for a few characters, such as "o".

ABCDEFGHIJKL MNOPQSRSTUV WXYZabcdefghi jklmnopqrstuvwxyz

Although this version might achieve the stylistic harmonisation with Text, the reflection of the unique features of auto-traced letterforms was still questionable. I had to admit that the minimised curves and clear segments could be regarded as one of the general trends of the contemporary typeface design. It was also clear that the features only appeared at the detail level, not the structure level. Thus, I needed to explore other methods that can bring more distinctive features to deliver the concept thoroughly.

4.3.2. Return to the rasterisation

Since the auto-traced drafts were unsuccessful, I started to re-examine the rasterisation method to pursue unique features that are distinctive and fully reflect the replication concept. Although the earlier attempts with this methodology brought the diamond-like shape as the design feature, there was criticism that more active reflection of the exercise would be needed. Besides, the feature was applied to the arbitrary combination between Didone and the old Times display models, so it might be necessary to generate the result based on the regular Times model.

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Aside from re-examining the existing research materials on the pixelated Times, I also started to look up pixelated effects on the screen-based media, such as Truetype Hinting. It was clear that Hinting barely showed a relevant connection with the replication concept, which initially came from the observation on the facsimile at the early stage of the project. However, I considered that this new research material could contribute to the rasterised letterform study since the facsimile also showed strong pixelated forms.

By examining the materials, I especially strutinized how the letterforms became distorted on the pixels. It seemed that visible distortion usually appeared on complex structures and details like what happens on the auto-traced results. However, the pixel-based experiments brought squarish and jagged letterforms at both structural and detailed levels, whereas the auto-tracing produced drastic curve changes and broken junctions. It was especially interesting for me that the hinted Times showed an extreme level of structural changes while keeping the original model's characteristics *(Fig. 42)*. The radical structural distortion allowed me to initiate new letterform designs from a different perspective from the previous superficial detail changes. Thus, I started to develop ways to interpret the findings into the actual Display designs.

Fig. 42
TrueType-rendered Times New Roman regular and bold by the Microsoft TrueType rasterizer at 11 ppem (8 point), extracted from https://docs.microsoft.com/en-us/typography/truetype/hinting

4.4. A new approach for Display
4.4.1. Abstract structure

One of the factors that caught my attention from the research was the drastic simplification of the letterform structure. The new display style attempts were initiated from the structural abstraction *(Fig. 43)*, and the design was processed only with hand-drawing quickly to try out diverse design directions at this point. These sketches tried to capture the simplified forms, mostly with the squarish pattern, and several drafts often showed modular-ish approaches to letterforms. In order to bring the jagged details as well, a few sketches introduced arbitrary shapes of components to build a simple but broken-looking design.

Fig. 43
Several attempts of the new direction, including both moderate and drastic application of the abstraction.

Among all the attempts, I was intrigued by one sketch the most *(Fig. 44)*. This draft seemed to embody the original letterforms' essence in a minimalistic manner, and it was expected to catch readers' attention with the graphical letterforms as well. However, one possible factor that made me reluctant to develop this direction was the project's context. Since the typeface family aims for fashion, the display design primarily needs to work on and suit the target effectively. With a test on a mock-up layout, there was a personal judgment that the letterforms might fit a tech-related subject over the fashion context, due to the blocky and modular-ish design features *(Fig. 45)*. Despite the potential of the letterforms, I decided to explore a few more directions that could be more suitable for the target use.

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Eabcd efghijk

Rachid

Issue no 14, Autumn and Winter 2020

The Power of Youth
Ambush

There was a clear need to bring more quirky and eye-catching factors to match the fashion context. Since the previous draft was rooted in only the structural simplification idea, I considered that bringing the jagged shapes to the letterforms could contribute to the design's quirkiness, which was one of the features of the rasterised letterforms. This consideration led me to the challenge of how to transfer the jagged effects in minimalistic ways. By revisiting the research materials, I found that the jagged details in strong rasterisation could cause stroke modulation to look flipped in and out *(Fig. 46)*. This observation was quickly tried out on sketches, and the result might look funky enough for the fashion context *(Fig. 47)*. Thus, I decided to move to this direction, and the letterforms kept evolving with a continuous drawing *(Fig. 48)*. The primary consideration during this stage was to create eye-catching letterforms as well as to capture the pixelised effects. The drawings were quickly tested with a few basic characters and expanded into a full character set. Although the application of the features fully followed the references of pixelated letterforms, a few exceptions happened, for instance, "H" without jagged details on the references. The flip-in-and-out feature was applied to the exceptions as well to work as one system. Based on the decision, the display style gradually improved and reached the current state of development.
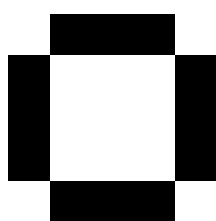

Fig. 46
The jagged outline of the rasterisation and its interpretation.

Fig. 47

Collections

ABCDEFGHIL
MNOPRTVWZ
abcdefghijklmn
nopqrstuvwxyz

Fig. 48, 1/2
The process in expanding a character set,
produced on 10th of December.

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As this project was inspired by the homogeneous trend, especially in the fashion industry, the project explored neutral and personal typographic voice for the fashion context. Times was the primary reference for the exploration due to the default status in various typographic environments. The research on the metal version of the reference helped shape the project scheme with a clear understanding, and the Text with its italic and display versions were planned. During production, I utilised replication itself as the main art direction to emphasise the theme of the project. The final result showed an arbitrary combination of three different methods, manual and auto-tracing, and the rasterisation. The methodology was applied to each Text and Display differently. The Text version could embrace the moderate interpretation of the methodology for the functionality.

The Times model underwent numerous letterform changes with the replication methods, but these remained mostly at a detail level. Italic also followed the same design decision as to its counterpart. On the other hand, the display version showed a different approach, the extreme interpretation of the methodology. After several trials and errors, the jagged outlines from the rasterisation was chosen as the primary source, resulting in the distinctive flipped-in-and-out feature. Through the development, I explored two different aspects of typeface design, a more neutral voice with Text and a more expressive one with Display. Since both aspects are crucial in type creation, I believe that the exploration during the course will bring a solid base to keep working on typeface design.

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