Process Book of Liansh

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Preface

In the early stages of exploration, I attempted to merge Chinese calligraphy with Latin letters by transplanting visual forms and tools from one system into the other. These attempts were visually intriguing, yet fundamentally insufficient. Repeated failures gradually revealed that two writing traditions cannot be reconciled through surface resemblance alone. The logic of Chinese cursive cannot simply be overlaid onto Latin structures, nor can Latin letters abandon their structural integrity without losing coherence. The problem was not stylistic, but structural.

The turning point came when I shifted my perspective. Instead of focusing on visual similarity, I began analyzing the fundamental structural differences between the two systems. In Chinese cursive writing, characters can transform internally—strokes are reorganized, abbreviated, or shared—allowing structural continuity to emerge from within. In contrast, Latin letters are historically constructed as independent units; even when connected, they remain clearly separated entities. This structural distinction led me to reconsider the role of ligature. Rather than treating it as decoration, I began to see it as a latent structural possibility within the Latin system—a mechanism through which letters might negotiate shared strokes and partial fusion.

During my research, one observation became central: when a script is unfamiliar, it appears merely as symbol; once understood, it becomes language. Writing therefore does not possess a fixed identity. It oscillates between image and linguistic system depending on perception and knowledge.

Chinese calligraphy embodies this ambiguity. Originating from pictographic writing, it retains a symbolic and gestural dimension even when legibility diminishes. Meaning is carried not only through linguistic recognition, but through rhythm, bodily movement, and the trace of the brush. In contrast, the Latin alphabet is composed of letters that carry no meaning in isolation; significance emerges only through combination.

The historical transformation of et into the ampersand (&) further blurred this boundary. What began as two letters gradually acquired symbolic autonomy. If two letters can merge into a ligature and function as a sign, why should this logic remain exceptional? Could multiple letters—perhaps even entire words—operate as unified visual forms?

From comparative research into Chinese and Western cursive traditions to subsequent experimental exploration, my focus shifted decisively. The goal was no longer to mechanically fuse two scripts, but to construct a new structural logic informed by their differences. Across cultures, cursive writing consistently challenges the assumption that text must remain fully readable. In Chinese cursive, vitality emerges from bodily movement; in Latin traditions, artists have long explored flourished calligraphy that pushes letters toward ornament and abstraction.

This project therefore became an inquiry into the function of writing itself—into the shifting boundary between text, symbol, and image. The final experiment, writing with a single continuous line, emerged from this reflection. By treating a Latin word not as a sequence of discrete letters but as a unified symbolic entity, I sought to explore writing as a visual system capable of generating meaning beyond linguistic decoding.

Throughout this diploma project, the process of establishing a structural framework and defining internal rules profoundly reshaped my understanding of type design. Rather than approaching letters as isolated forms, I learned to think in terms of systems, constraints, and generative logic. The project ultimately became not only an exploration of writing's visual potential, but also a deeper reflection on how structure itself gives rise to form.

Chapters

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Personal Background

I grew up and was educated in China, where I initially studied Advertising Design at undergraduate level. During my early professional experience as a graphic designer in the gaming industry, I worked extensively on visual identities, logotypes, and event titles. Through this practice, I gradually became aware of the central role typography plays in shaping brand identity—not merely as a carrier of information, but as a visual system capable of conveying tone, rhythm, and cultural positioning.

This growing interest led me to pursue formal training in type design, and eventually to join the type design program at EsadType in France. Entering a context where Latin type design is both historically grounded and highly systematised, I was confronted with a writing system that was not my mother tongue, yet deeply embedded in global visual culture.

This shift in position, from a native user of Chinese writing to a learner and designer of the Latin alphabet, became a crucial starting point for my graduation project.

Personal Reflection

When beginning to define the theme of my graduation project, I was immediately confronted with a fundamental question:
what perspective can I bring to Latin type design, given that it is not my native writing system?

I was fully aware that, in a conventional sense, I do not possess an inherent advantage when designing Latin typefaces. Rather than attempting to compete within a field defined by historical mastery or stylistic lineage, I sought to identify a different point of entry—one grounded in my cultural background, my visual training, and my way of thinking as a designer shaped by another

writing system.
This led to a broader reflection:
what can a Chinese designer contribute to Latin type design today, beyond stylistic appropriation or surface-level hybridity?
Instead of positioning my background as a weakness to overcome, I chose to treat it as a lens through which the Latin writing system could be re-examined, questioned, and reinterpreted.

Project Motivation

When studying Latin Script typefaces, I noticed a historical tension between writing and type. While Script handwriting is inherently cursive and continuous, its translation into type often results in a collection of individual letters, with ligatures added as optional or decorative elements. This separation raised a question that became central to this project:
can a typeface be designed from the logic of continuous writing, rather than from the alphabet as a set of isolated forms?

Rather than approaching this question as a theoretical research topic, this project is driven by observation, intuition, and hands-on experimentation. My process began with handwriting, exploring different degrees of continuity, connection, and shared structure between letters. Through repeated trials and failures, certain patterns and constraints gradually emerged, guiding the development of a more systematic approach.

The resulting typeface does not aim to replicate Chinese cursive writing, nor to reproduce historical Latin Scripts. Instead, it explores a space in between: a writing system where letters are no longer strictly autonomous, but interconnected through shared strokes and rhythmic continuity. Readability is not treated as an absolute condition, but as a spectrum that shifts depending on context, scale, and familiarity.

(1)

This book documents the evolution of this design process—from early visual references and handwriting experiments to digital development and refinement. Rather than presenting a finished and fixed system, it aims to reveal how the typeface came into being, and why it could only take this particular form.

Beyond Language

Throughout human history, writing has never functioned solely as an auxiliary to spoken language. It has always been a visual practice shaped by culture, technology, tools, and media. Whether in Chinese calligraphy—with its emphasis on gesture, stroke continuity, and shi—or in the historical development of Latin writing systems, where structural form and legibility principles are progressively codified, writing has continuously oscillated between linguistic sign and visual form. In recent design research, renewed attention has been given to the materiality and graphicity of writing, challenging the conventional separation between text and image. This shifting perspective invites a reconsideration of writing not only as a transparent vehicle for meaning, but as a visual system with its own expressive logic.

The present project does not seek merely to answer the question of how to write, but rather why writing remains possible beyond language. It asks how writing can retain expressive power, structural coherence, and continuity once detached from lexical meaning.

Through experimental type design practice, this project proposes a cross-cultural and cross-system framework for rethinking the visual potential of writing—positioning type not as a fixed representation of language, but as an evolving field between sign, form, and gesture.

Chapter 2

Chinese Cursive Research

This chapter presents the visual research that informed the development of the project. Rather than offering a comprehensive historical overview, it focuses on selected references that were relevant to my design questions. The research is approached primarily through observation, comparison, and drawing, with the aim of identifying structural and visual principles that could be translated into a contemporary type design context.

The references gathered here are not treated as models to be reproduced, but as visual materials through which to reflect on continuity, rhythm, and connection in writing. By placing Chinese cursive script and Latin Script writing side by side, this chapter establishes a comparative framework that reveals both shared characteristics and fundamental differences between the two systems.

This visual research does not seek to merge cultural forms, but to clarify the space in which an experimental writing system might emerge—one that is informed by multiple traditions while remaining grounded in a personal design perspective.

Chinese Cursive Writing: *Continuity, Abstraction, and Gesture*

Chinese cursive script represents an extreme form of abbreviation and continuity within the Chinese writing system. Characters are often reduced, deformed, or connected, prioritising speed, rhythm, and expressive gesture over formal completeness. In this script, meaning remains present, yet it is no longer conveyed through stable, recognisable forms alone, but through movement, stroke energy, and the overall configuration of the writing.
For this project, Chinese cursive writing is not considered as a stylistic reference, but as a structural and conceptual resource. By observing how strokes are shared, omitted, or transformed

across adjacent characters, this research focuses on the logic of continuity rather than on individual character shapes.

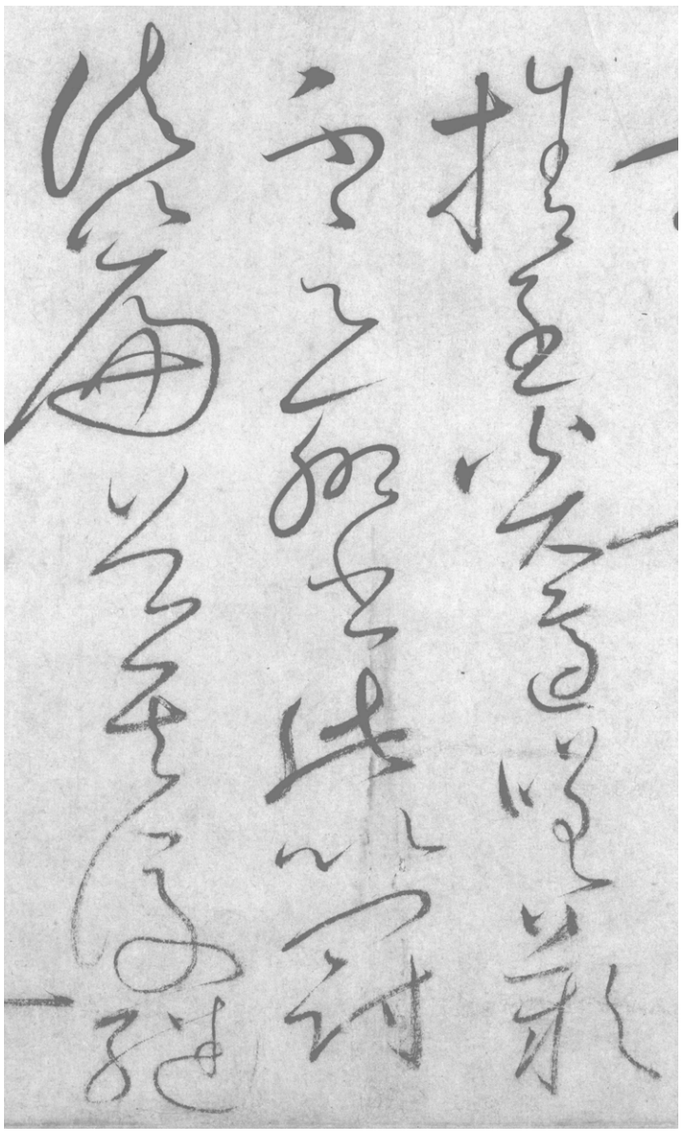


FIG. 1

Chinese caoshu (cursive script) relies on a set of strategies that modify the structure of characters in order to accelerate writing and express movement. Simplification in caoshu is neither arbitrary nor accidental, but systematic and principle-driven. This approach to simplification involves an overall perception of the character without sacrificing essential details—often reducing individual strokes to emphasize the core idea of the form—as well as a pursuit of fluency and naturalness by adopting more practical stroke techniques and simplified character structures.

1.Omission of strokes:
This is the most direct method of simplification, in which strokes are removed to lighten the overall structure.

- Stroke simplification (FIG.2)
- Partial simplification (FIG.3)
- Overall simplification or (FIG.4)

FIG. 2

FIG. 3

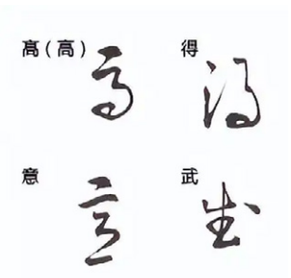


FIG. 4

2.Fusion of strokes:
Multiple independent strokes are merged into a single continuous movement, creating internal or inter-character coherence and dynamism that reflect the fluidity of writing. This principle is essential for maintaining uninterrupted motion in cursive calligraphy. (FIG.5)

FIG. 5

3.Reorganization of stroke order:
The standard stroke order is altered to accommodate a more efficient and intuitive logic of movement. Rather than strictly following conventional stroke sequences, the calligrapher responds to the natural motion of the wrist and arm, adjusting structure, spacing, form, and center of gravity accordingly.(FIG.6)

FIG. 6

4.Continuous brush movement:
The expressive foundation of traditional caoshu lies in a vertical compositional flow in which the brush tip remains in constant contact with the paper, generating an unbroken stream of strokes. This connecting “silver line” or “iron line” between strokes is the source of the visual rhythm and fluidity characteristic of caoshu. (FIG.7)

FIG. 7

The concept of shi

Writing is not merely the recording of language; it is a gesture, a corporeal act. In Chinese cursive script, the concept of shi describes the dynamic force of the stroke and the internal vitality of form. Cursive writing does not result from a simple stylistic evolution, but from the acceleration of gesture, the logic of strokes, and the abstraction of forms. Compared with seal script or clerical script, it abandons the constraint of fixed forms in favor of the continuity of movement.

Shi does not refer solely to the direction or impulse of an individual stroke, but to an overall structural logic: the resonance, continuity, and tension between strokes and characters. Cursive writing prioritizes global flow and rhythm rather than isolated regularity. Form here emerges from the dynamics of gesture rather than from a graphic norm; writing becomes the visual record of action.

Strokes in Chinese cursive script display a wide variety of movements (bishi). Some of the principal types include:

1.Connecting movement (lianbishì)
Continuous strokes. This is the most distinctive characteristic of cursive writing. Strokes are linked by connecting filaments (qiansi), unifying different parts of the character. For example, in the cursive form of the character zhi, strokes flow naturally into one another to form a fluid line. The scribe employs the flexibility of the wrist and fingers so that the brush tip glides and transitions smoothly. (FIG.8)

FIG. 8

2.Resonant movement (huyìngshì)
Interrupted yet intentionally connected strokes. Even when strokes are not physically joined, their direction, dynamics, or pressure variations create an echoing effect. The ending direction of one stroke may respond to the beginning of the next stroke or character, as if an invisible thread connects the forms and allows the circulation of breath between characters. (FIG.9)

FIG. 9

3.Enclosing movement (huánbàoshì)
Inward-enveloping tendency. Certain cursive characters present strokes that appear to surround or compress the inner space. For example, in the cursive writing of guo, the outer strokes form an enclosing structure that condenses the character and reinforces its cohesion. (FIG.10)


FIG. 10

4.Expansive movement (kaizhangshì)
Opening and outward extension. Some cursive strokes unfold outward, giving an impression of amplitude. In the character tian, for instance, an oblique stroke may be elongated to emphasize momentum and energy, lending the character a more expansive and expressive appearance. (FIG.11)


FIG. 11

5.Torsional movement (niuzhuanshì)
Rotation of the brush. The wrist twists to produce turning or spiral strokes. This gesture is common in characters containing tight curves or loops. In the cursive form of ye, the central part often exhibits a torsional movement, creating a vibrant and dynamic line. (FIG.12)


FIG. 12

6.Movement along and against the stroke direction (shùnnìshì)
Natural direction. Following the natural direction of the stroke to achieve a fluid line, such as drawing a horizontal stroke from left to right. Counter-direction. Initiating a brief reverse motion to accumulate energy. For example, in a vertical stroke, the scribe may first lift slightly upward before descending, thereby reinforcing the stroke's power. (FIG.13)


FIG. 13

7.Movement of momentum and rhythmic variation (diedàngshì)
Alternations of height and rhythm. This movement concerns composition more broadly. Characters and lines vary in height or density, producing an undulating visual rhythm. In a cursive work, some characters rise higher while others descend lower, accentuating fluctuation and dynamism. (FIG.14)

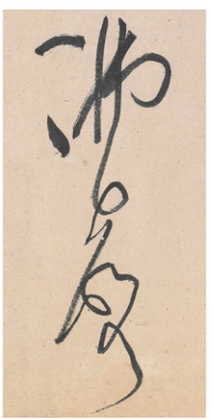


FIG. 14

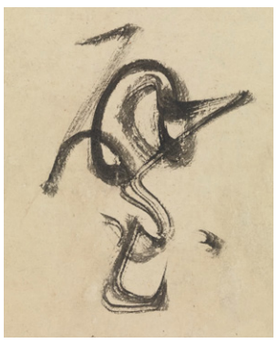


FIG. 15

This logic of "gesture before form" is not unique to China. In Western cursive scripts—such as cursive handwriting and Italic—the letter likewise emerges from speed, manual inertia, and continuous movement. Cursivity thus reveals a transcultural fact: writing is not entirely determined by formal rules; it is the visible imprint of gesture. Its visuality does not depend on language, but on the bodily action that produces it.

Feibai

From the perspective of visual theory, when the linguistic function of writing is temporarily suspended (suspension of linguistic function), the constitutive elements of text are transformed into visual material in their own right. When writing is no longer compelled to serve semantic expression, its components—strokes, letters, brushmarks, rhythm, and negative space—can be reinterpreted and deployed in the same way as lines in painting.

The phenomenon of feibai in Chinese cursive script offers a clear example: the gaps produced by the splitting of the brush hairs, though originating from a technical accident, are perceived and appreciated as traces of speed and force. Their visual expressiveness may even surpass the semantic content of the character itself. (FIG.15)

The Reading Experience and the Mechanism of Identification in Caoshu

The reading of Chinese caoshu and that of a regular script character constitute two fundamentally different experiences.

1. Legibility vs. Identifiability
Caoshu is not "legible" in the sense that it cannot be understood through the decoding of each individual stroke. However, it is "identifiable."

Readers rely on visual memory and familiarity with caoshu forms to recognize characters holistically. The brain does not deconstruct the character analytically; instead, it perceives it as an integrated whole.

2. Perception of Brush Movement and Visual Rhythm
The reader does not merely decode linguistic symbols, but also perceives and experiences the rhythm and movement of the calligrapher's brush. The essence of calligraphy does not lie in the semantic meaning of the character's form, but in the creation of a non-utilitarian aesthetic value through the mere presence of lines. Caoshu can evoke emotional resonance in the viewer—such as bravery, delicacy, dynamism, or silence. This is why a work of kuangcao, even when illegible to the uninitiated, can still convey a strong sense of power and motion. The act of reading thus becomes an appreciation of the physical gesture behind the text.

3. Cultural and Contextual Engagement
Understanding caoshu requires cultural learning and contextual knowledge. The calligrapher and the reader share a vocabulary of caoshu forms. This mode of communication transcends language itself and is deeply rooted in a shared visual and cultural heritage.

The Essential Characteristics of Caoshu

Based on the preceding analyses—historical, structural, and perceptual—caoshu can be regarded as a writing system that integrates language, movement, and visual form. Its fundamental characteristics can be summarized as follows:

1. Continuity
Caoshu is governed by the principle of shi

(dynamic force). Transitions and connections between strokes replace the separation of discrete forms, producing a visual flow in motion. This gestural continuity constitutes the fundamental syntax of caoshu.

2. Simplification and Integration
Caoshu expresses efficiency through omission, substitution, and the fusion of strokes. Simplification is not an arbitrary erasure, but a reorganization of rhythm and structure, condensing the greatest kinetic energy into the most minimal form.

3. Corporality
Caoshu is the product of the body in action. Through the interaction between brush and paper, it renders visible the writer's breathing, speed, and posture. Each stroke thus becomes a trace of time and energy.

4. Expressivity
Caoshu does not primarily aim at linguistic transmission, but places emotion and rhythmic linework at its center. The act of "writing" becomes a process of spiritual externalization: writing transcends the function of the sign to become an autonomous visual expression.

Through these characteristics, caoshu reveals another dimension of writing: the character is not merely a vehicle for language, but also a visual and performative art in motion. It establishes a balance between recognizability and perceptibility, transforming reading into an experience of vision and sensory resonance.

Chapter 3

Latin Script Research

Latin Script Writing:
Structure, Rhythm, and Letter Identity

Unlike Chinese cursive script, Latin handwriting — even in its most connected cursive forms — consistently preserves the letter as an indivisible minimal unit. The logic of continuity in Latin writing lies in connection and sequential flow rather than structural fusion. Western type design has historically relied on geometric constructions and rational design methodologies. Guided by principles of geometry and mathematical proportion, letterforms are developed through systematic and analytical processes. This approach differs fundamentally from traditional Chinese character design, which emerges from accumulated bodily experience, perceptual sensitivity, and calligraphic practice.

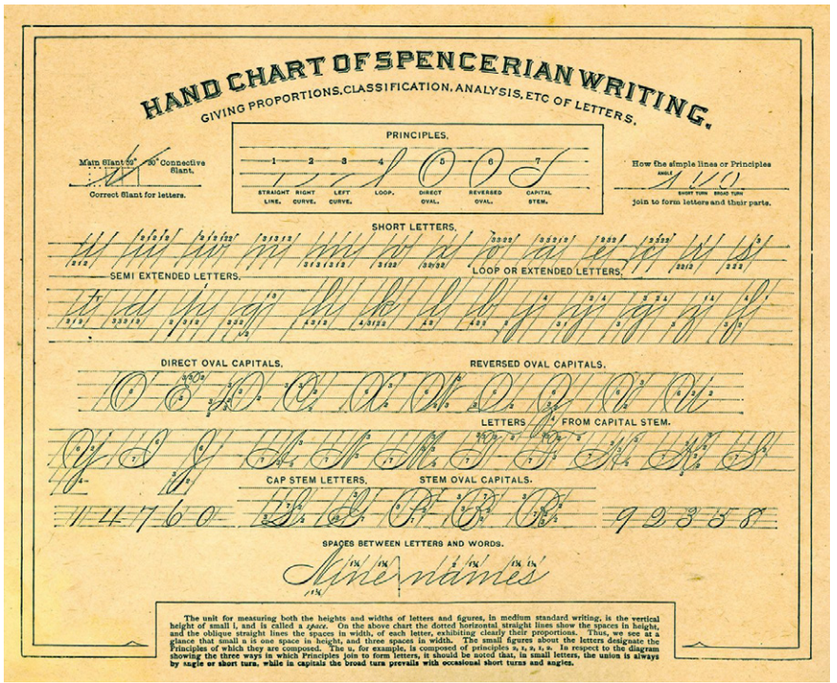


FIG. 16

1. The Individuality of the Latin Letter
Unlike Chinese cursive script, Latin handwriting — even in its most fluid cursive forms — preserves the letter as an inviolable minimal unit. Within alphabetic systems, letters are phonetic signs without intrinsic semantic meaning. Their identity resides in their stable and repeatable forms, which enable combination into words.

Even in highly elaborate script styles such as Spencerian or Copperplate, each letter retains its structural skeleton. Continuity does not distort the core form of the letter; it merely connects it to adjacent forms. An “a” remains an “a,” a “b” remains a “b,” regardless of the linking strokes between them. This structural autonomy is essential to the legibility of alphabetic writing.

2. The Structural Logic of Letter Connection
Latin cursive is built upon the principle of linear connection. Each letter contains defined entry and exit strokes that allow the writer to proceed without lifting the pen. These linking strokes function as connective additions rather than structural transformations of the letter itself.

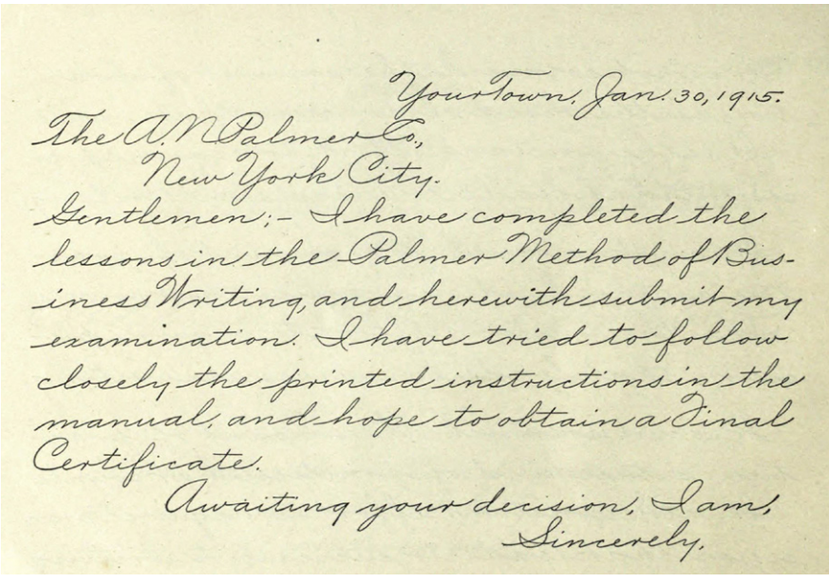
In styles such as Spencerian, the connectors are carefully calibrated to produce a smooth and rhythmic flow across the word. Continuity emerges from the sequencing of discrete modules rather than from the fusion of their internal components.

3. Linearity and Sequential Continuity
Latin writing is fundamentally linear. Words unfold from left to right, sentences expand horizontally across the page. Cursive writing reinforces this directionality by minimizing interruption between letters, producing a steady visual rhythm that guides the reader’s eye.

Although this fluidity is visually pleasing, it primarily serves readability. The purpose of cursive is to accelerate writing and smooth reading, not to restructure the internal composition of letters. Sequential legibility remains intact.

4. Normativity and the Limits of the Letter as Unit
Normativity plays a central role in the Latin script tradition. Cursive styles are typically transmitted through manuals and copybooks, aiming toward standardization rather than unlimited individual transformation. The writer strives to reproduce an ideal model rather than to reinvent the structural identity of letters.

This approach contrasts sharply with Chinese cursive, in which deformation and innovation are not merely tolerated but celebrated as manifestations of mastery and personal expression. The rigidity of the letter as a basic unit constrains structural experimentation, positioning Latin writing primarily as a functional carrier of language rather than as a fully autonomous visual medium.


Your Town, Jan. 30, 1915.

The A. N. Palmer Co.,
New York City.

Gentlemen:- I have completed the lessons in the Palmer Method of Business Writing, and herewith submit my examination. I have tried to follow closely the printed instructions in the manual, and hope to obtain a Final Certificate.

Awaiting your decision, I am,
Sincerely.

FIG. 17

FIG. 18

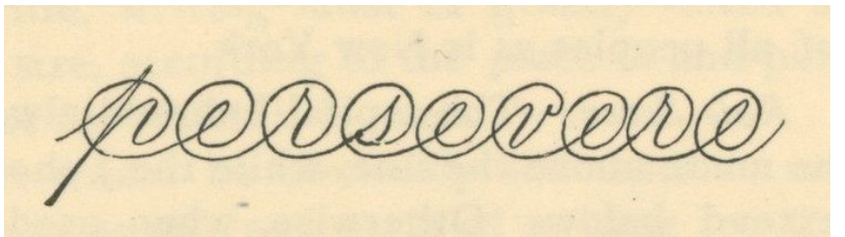


FIG. 19

FIG. 20

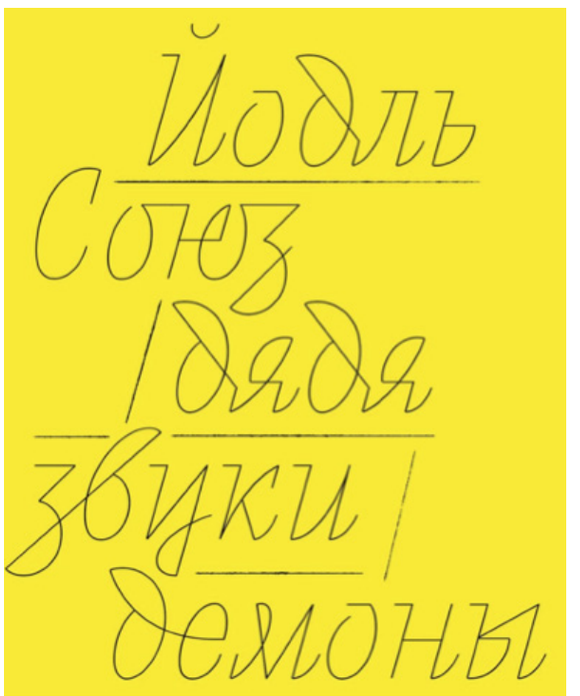


FIG. 21

FIG. 22

FIG. 23

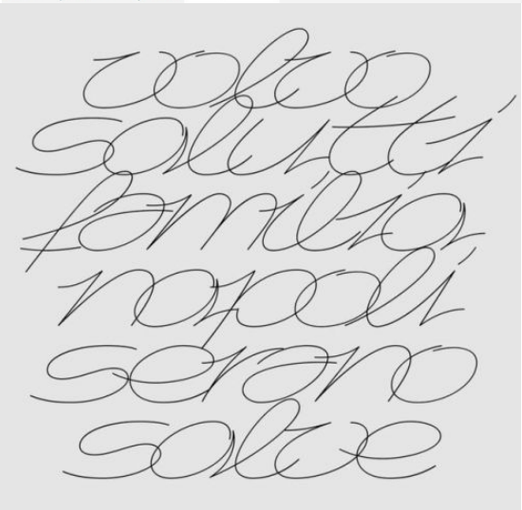


FIG. 24&25

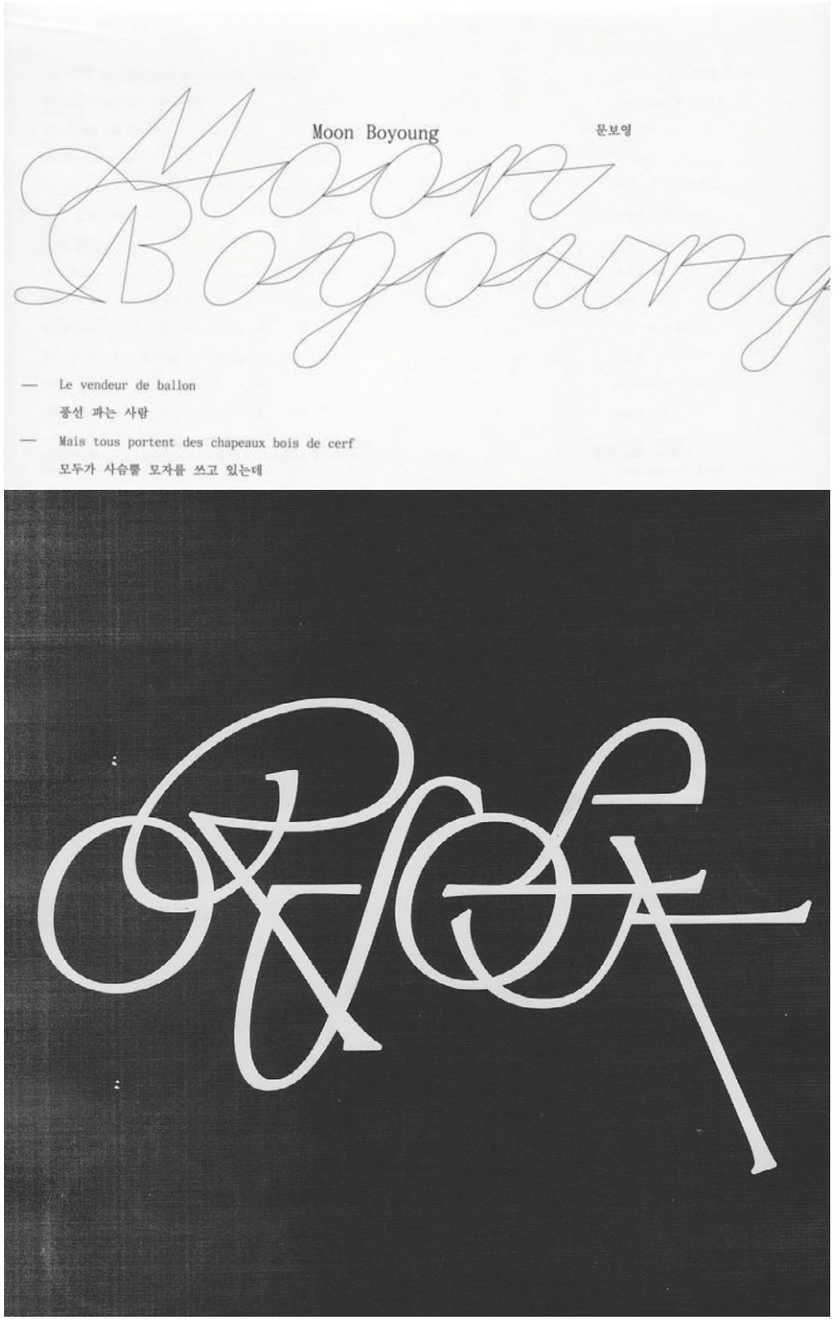
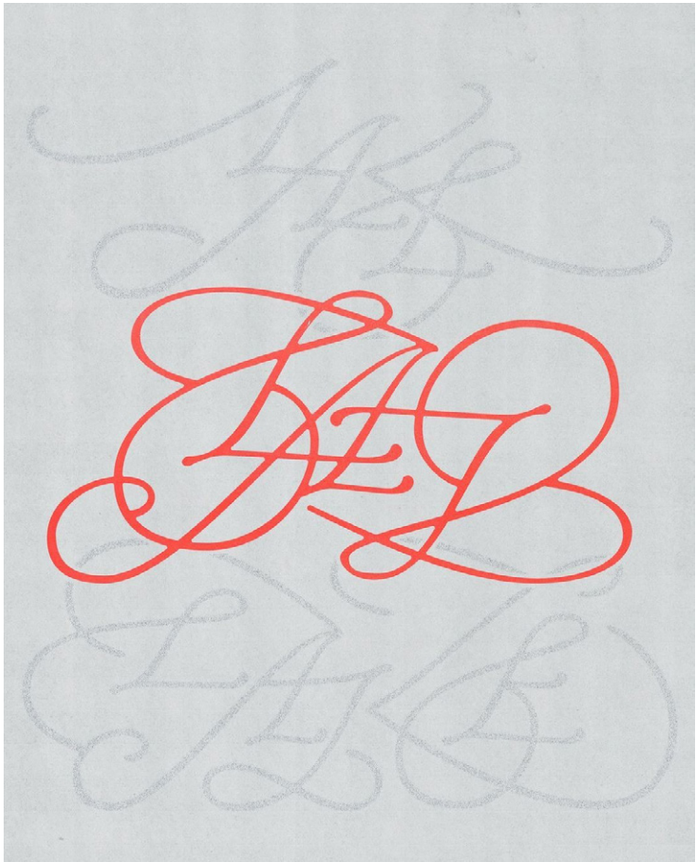


FIG. 26&27



From these contemporary script type designs, we can observe explorations that depart from traditional conventions, revealing new possibilities for the script form. Insights from asemic writing further suggest that letters are not only functional tools for conveying linguistic information, but can also serve as a medium for personal expression and creative experimentation.

In the upcoming stages of my diploma project, I will explore these ideas by examining the similarities and differences between Chinese cursive script and Latin script, using them as a foundation for developing my experimental writing system.

Chapter 4

Process of Exploring Direction

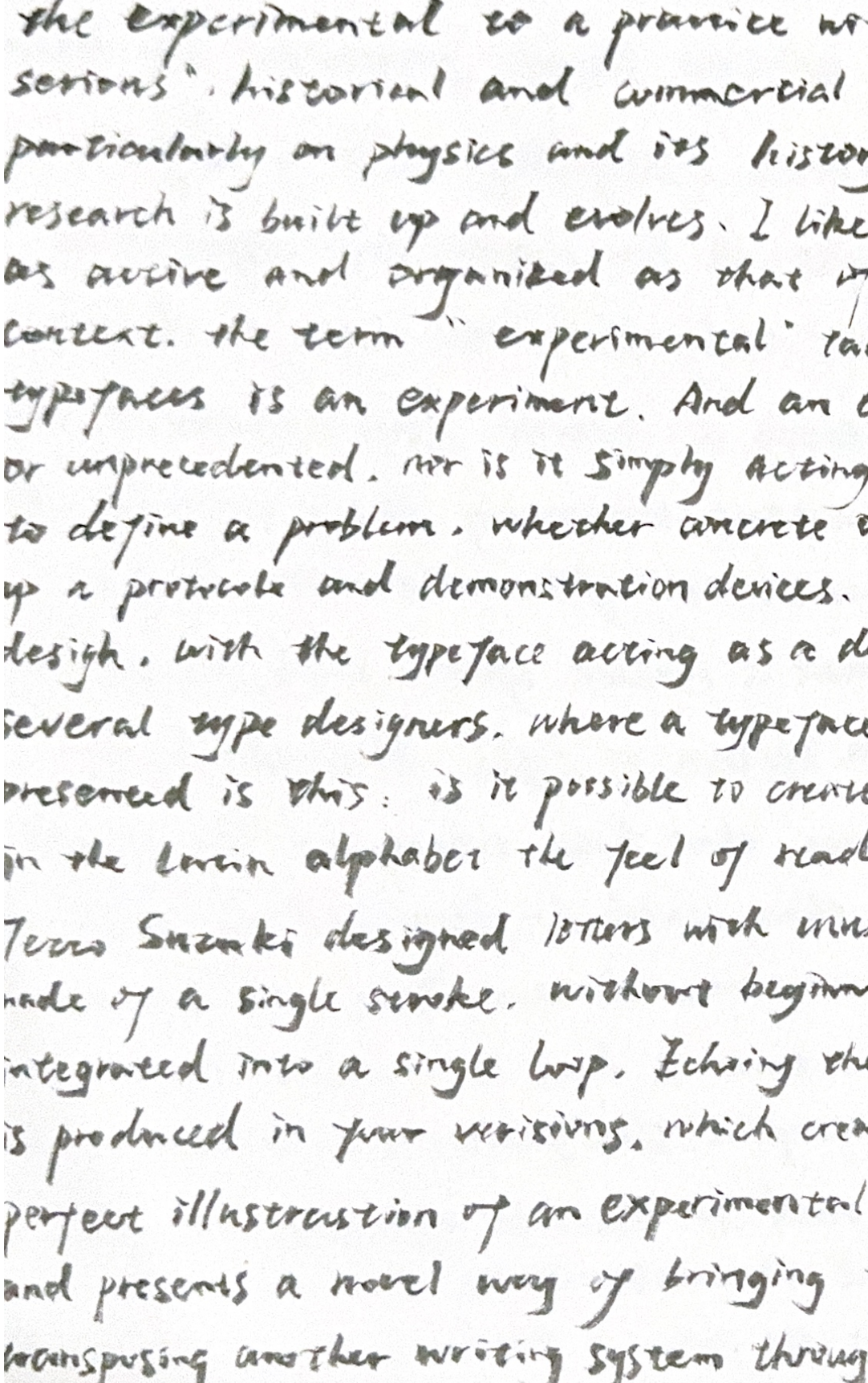
Following the comparative research on Chinese cursive and Latin script, this project entered an initial exploratory phase. At this stage, no clear system or formal outcome had been defined. Instead, the experiments were driven by intuitive assumptions about cursivity, gesture, and expression.

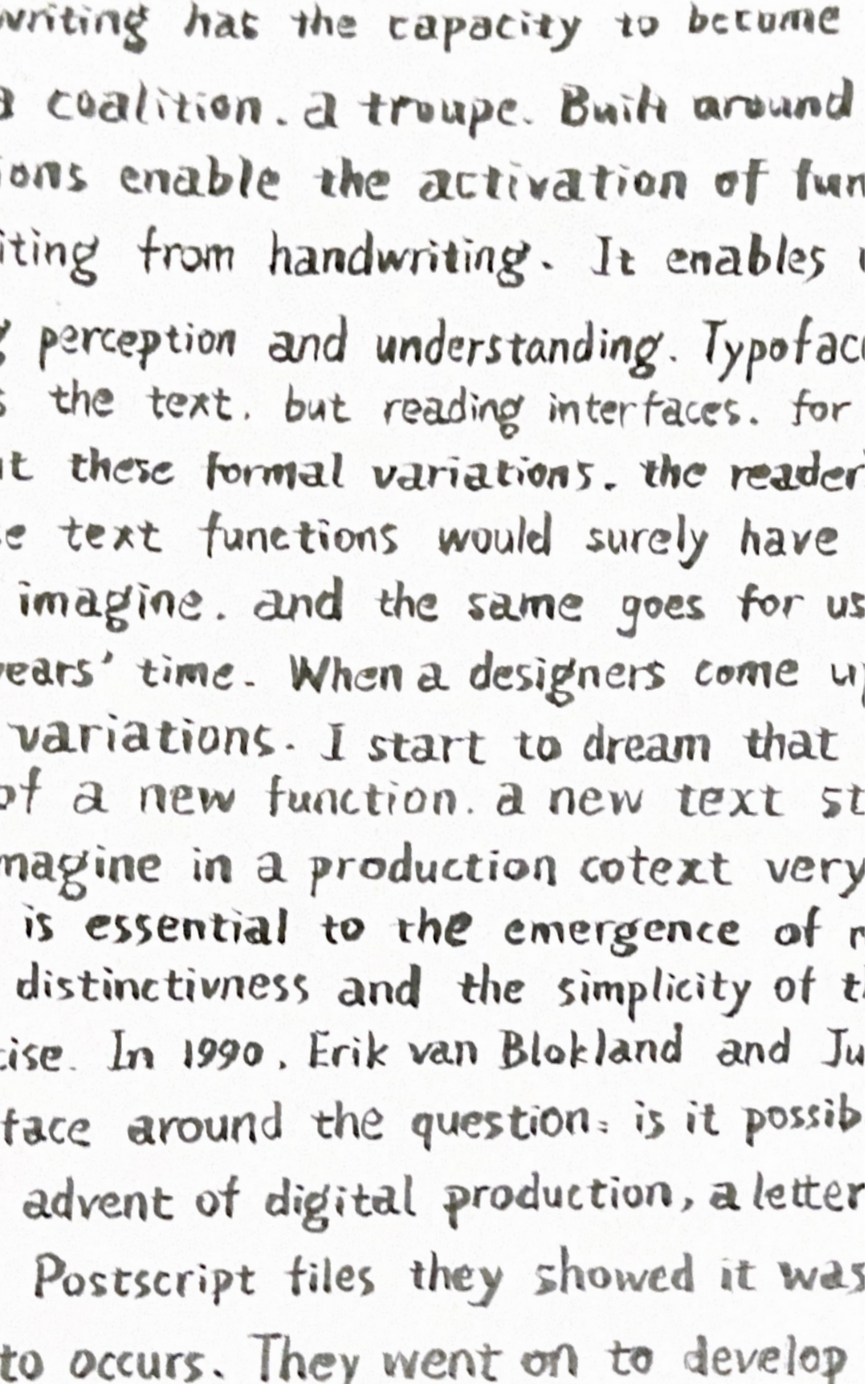
This chapter documents a series of early trials, many of which proved to be limited or misguided. Rather than being discarded, these attempts played a critical role in clarifying what the project was not, and in gradually revealing a more coherent direction.

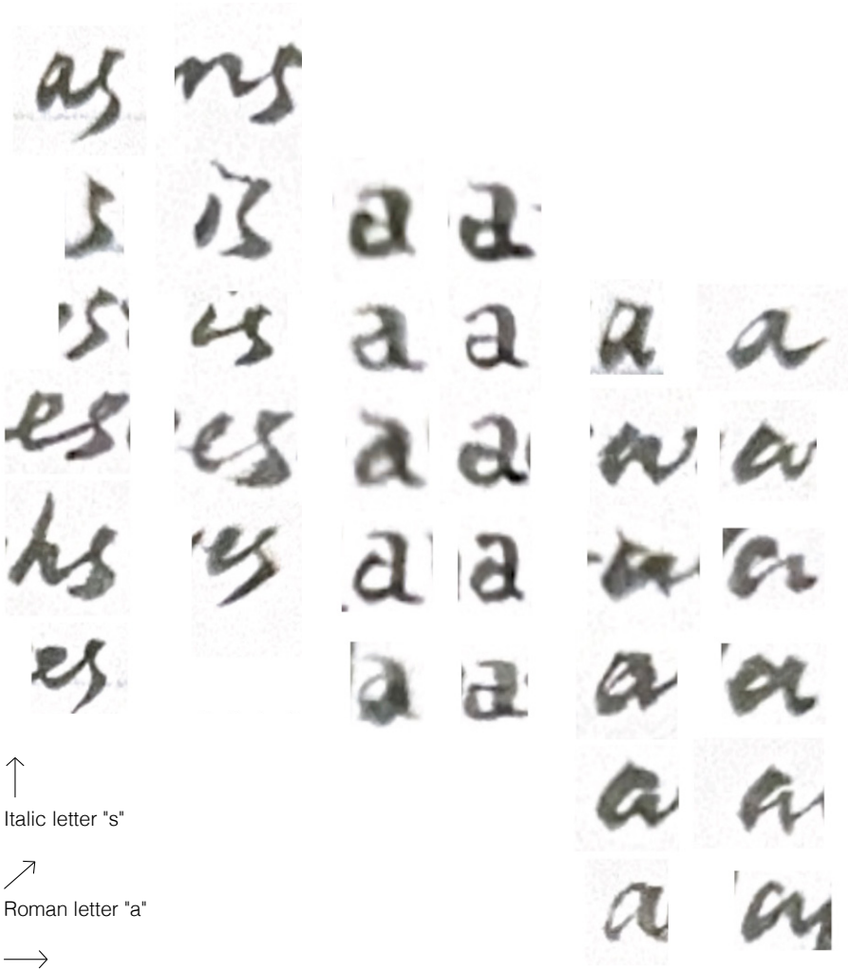
Writing Latin Letters with Chinese Calligraphy Tools

The first series of experiments involved writing Latin letters using traditional Chinese calligraphy tools, particularly the brush. This approach stemmed from an initial assumption that tools associated with Chinese cursive might naturally generate new forms when applied to the Latin alphabet.

→
Chinese tool
+
Latin writing habits
(Italic)







↑ Italic letter "s"

↗ Roman letter "a"

⟶ Italic letter "a"

⟵ Chinese tool + Latin writing habits (Roman)

While these tests produced visually expressive results, they quickly revealed their limitations. The brush introduced stylistic effects that remained external to the structural logic of Latin letters. Rather than generating a new writing system, the outcomes appeared as a surface-level hybridisation of two traditions.

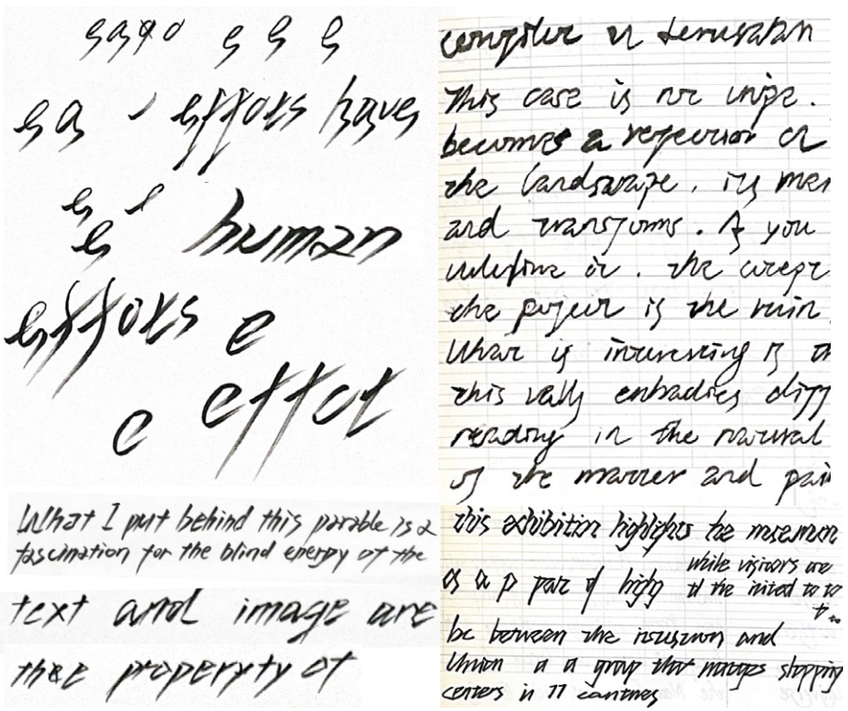
This phase made it clear that directly transferring tools did not necessarily lead to meaningful structural innovation.

Speed as a Misinterpreted Principle

Another early assumption was that speed constituted the core quality of cursive writing. To test this idea, Latin letters and words were written at extremely high speeds, often without regard for control or consistency.

Although these experiments generated energetic and fragmented forms, they also demonstrated that speed alone does not produce continuity. In many cases, increased speed resulted in breaks, loss of rhythm, and visual instability.

This realisation marked an important shift: cursivity could not be reduced to velocity. Flow, instead, appeared to depend on the organisation of movement rather than its acceleration.

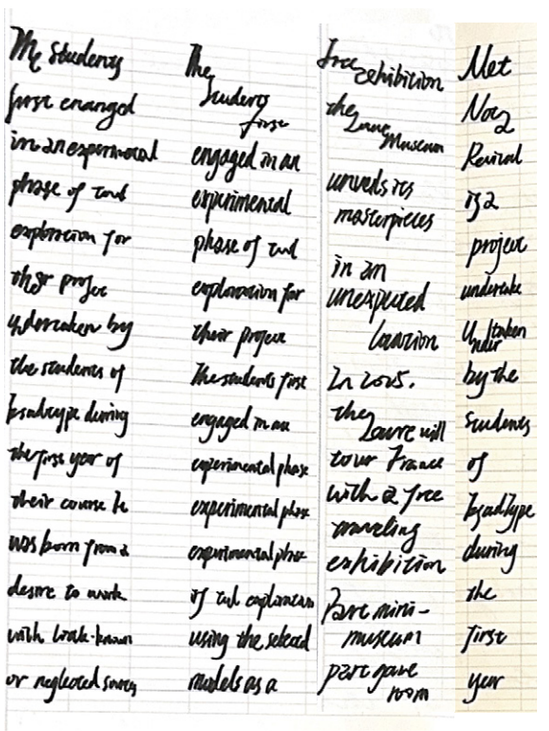


Writing Within Constrained Spaces

Subsequent experiments explored spatial constraint as a generative condition. By forcing words into extremely narrow horizontal spaces, the writing process was subjected to compression and tension.

These constraints led to unexpected overlaps, distortions, and reconfigurations of letterforms. However, most outcomes remained incidental rather than systematic. While spatial pressure revealed moments of visual interest, it did not yet provide a repeatable structure.

This phase nevertheless contributed to an understanding of how limitation can provoke formal transformation.

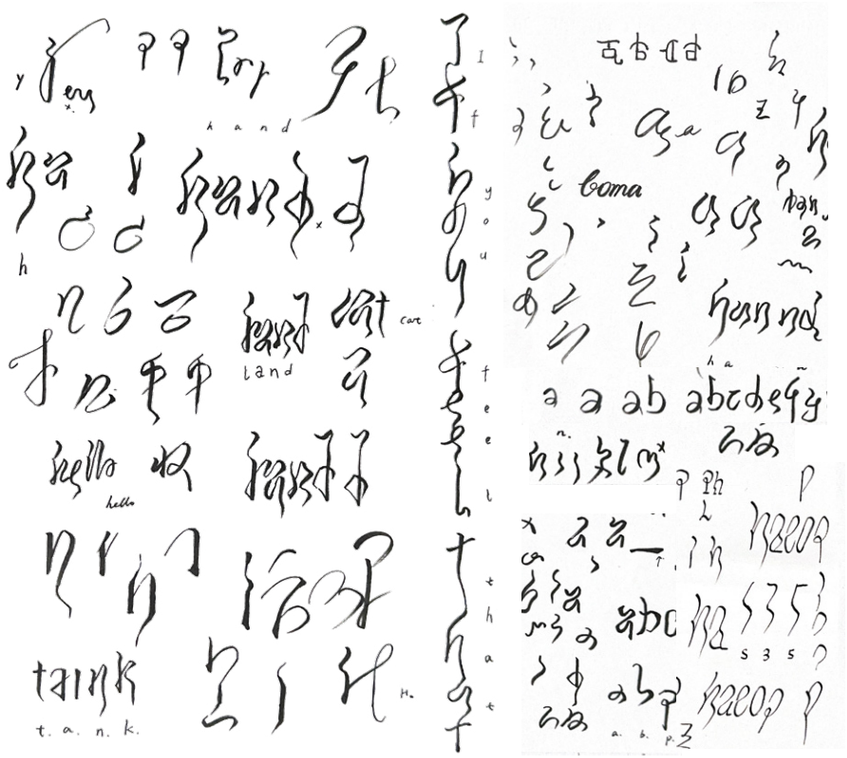


Applying Cursive-like Deformation to Latin Letters

Another direction involved deliberately deforming Latin letters using curves, elongations, and gestures inspired by Chinese cursive writing. These interventions aimed to inject expressiveness and fluidity into otherwise rigid letterforms.

However, these transformations largely operated at the level of appearance. They altered the visual style of individual letters without challenging their underlying independence. As a result, the writing remained fundamentally letter-centric.

This reinforced the need to move beyond decorative modification toward a deeper structural reconsideration.

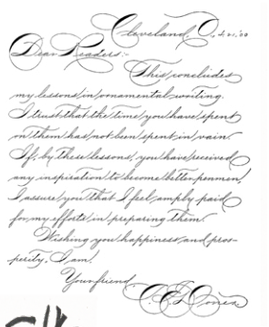


Chapter 5

From Handwriting to a Typeface System

From failure to method

The series of failed explorations documented in the previous chapter led to a fundamental realisation. The project could not progress through the direct transfer of tools or visual forms, not through a literal merging of Chinese calligraphy and Latin letters. Such approaches remained superficial and failed to address the structural differences between the two writing systems.



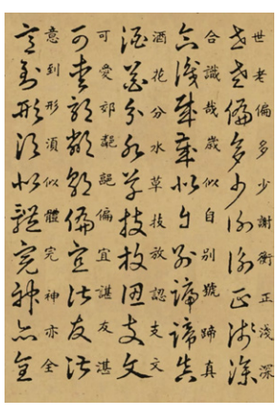
Instead, the project required a shift in perspective. Rather than importing forms, it became necessary to apply a personal mode of thinking shaped by Chinese writing culture to the analysis of the Latin alphabet. This change redirected the focus from stylistic hybridisation to the search for structural balance between two fundamentally different language systems.

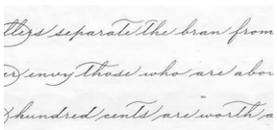
Why Ligature?

The decision to work with ligatures did not originate from a stylistic preference, but from a conceptual question raised throughout the research phase. When a script is unfamiliar, it is perceived primarily as a visual symbol; once it is understood, it becomes language. This shift reveals that writing does not possess a fixed status, but oscillates between sign and image depending on perception and knowledge.

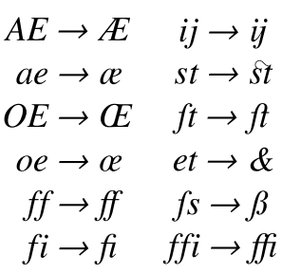
Chinese calligraphy embodies this ambiguity. Originating from pictographic writing, it retains a strong symbolic and gestural dimension even when legibility is reduced. Meaning is not carried solely by linguistic recognition, but also by rhythm, movement, and the trace of the body.

When comparing Chinese and Western script traditions, a structural difference becomes evident. In Chinese cursive writing, characters can merge through internal structural transformation:

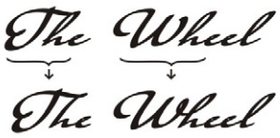




strokes are reconfigured, abbreviated, or shared across adjacent characters, allowing continuity to emerge from within the structure itself. The connection is organic and structural rather than merely linear.



In contrast, Latin script traditionally relies on linear continuity. Letters may be connected by a single stroke, but they remain clearly separated units; their internal structures are rarely altered to accommodate true merging. Even in cursive handwriting, the connection is often external—letters are linked by joining lines while preserving their structural independence.



Ligature partially disrupts this limitation. By merging two letters into a unified form, it introduces structural negotiation between letterforms. The boundary between units becomes less rigid, and the letters begin to function as a shared visual entity rather than adjacent elements.

Ligature operates precisely at this threshold. When two letters merge into a single form, they begin to function as a visual unit, approaching the status of a symbol. The historical evolution from et to the ampersand (&) demonstrates how linguistic structures can gradually acquire symbolic autonomy.

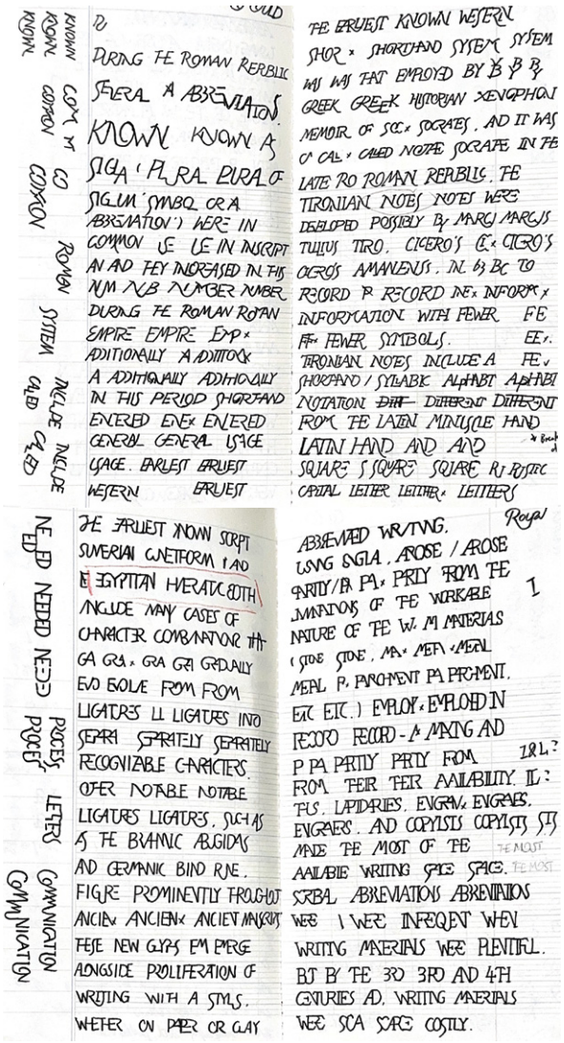
This observation led to a critical question: if two letters can become a ligature and function as a sign, why should this logic be limited to isolated cases? Could multiple letters, or even entire words, operate as continuous ligature structures—perceived not merely as sequences to be read, but as unified visual forms?

Ligature thus became the central strategy of this project, not as decoration, but as a means to question the boundary between writing and symbol, and to explore writing as a visual system capable of generating meaning beyond language.

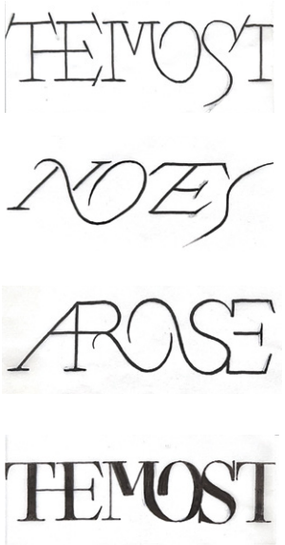
Structural references for ligature formation.

Writing a Whole Word as a Single Line

A decisive shift occurred when the focus moved from individual letters to the word as a continuous gesture. In this series of experiments, entire words were written without lifting the tool, forming a single uninterrupted line.



(5) From Handwriting to a Typeface System



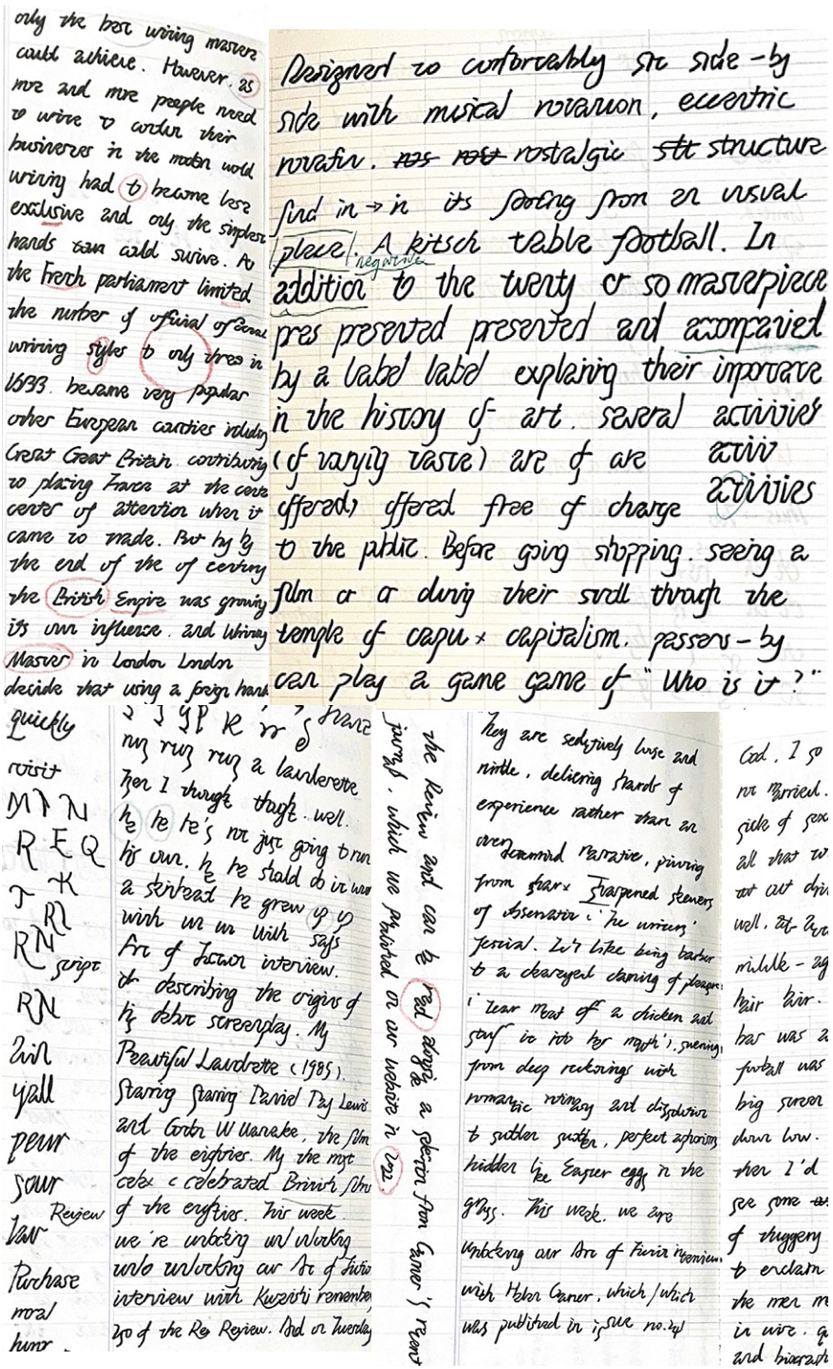
During this phase, different typographic models were tested as underlying references. Experiments were conducted using all-capital Roman letterforms, as well as uppercase and lowercase Italic structures, both with and without serifs. These tests aimed to evaluate whether continuity could be achieved through systematic ligature alone.

However, the results revealed a recurring limitation. The forms appeared rigid and mechanical, with connections that felt forced rather than organic. The emphasis on ligature as a technical solution often overrode the natural modulation of stroke and rhythm. Instead of producing fluid continuity, the writing became visually dense and structurally constrained.

This failure proved instructive. It demonstrated that continuity cannot be reduced to the act of connecting letters. Excessive reliance on predefined letter structures—particularly in capital Roman forms—reinforced letter autonomy rather than dissolving it. Even Italic models, while more conducive to connection, remained bound to established typographic conventions that limited gestural freedom. The experiments only began to yield more convincing results when the act of writing was freed from rigid typographic templates. By allowing strokes to be shared across letter boundaries and by prioritising movement over letter integrity, continuity emerged as a structural principle rather than a decorative effect.

Writing a word as a single line was no longer understood as an accumulation of ligatures, but as a reorganisation of writing itself—one in which rhythm, direction, and shared strokes define the structure of the word as a whole.

Through this explorations, the project gradually shifted from stylistic imitation to structural investigation. The failures and limitations encountered clarified the need for a system in shared structures rather than isolated forms.



The exploratory phase revealed that ligatures could emerge naturally through shared strokes and continuous writing. However, it also exposed a fundamental limitation: manually designing ligatures for every possible letter combination is neither sustainable nor conceptually coherent.

Rather than accumulating isolated ligature forms, this project therefore shifted toward the construction of a new writing system—one in which letters are not designed as independent units, but as interdependent components that can automatically generate ligatures through their structure.

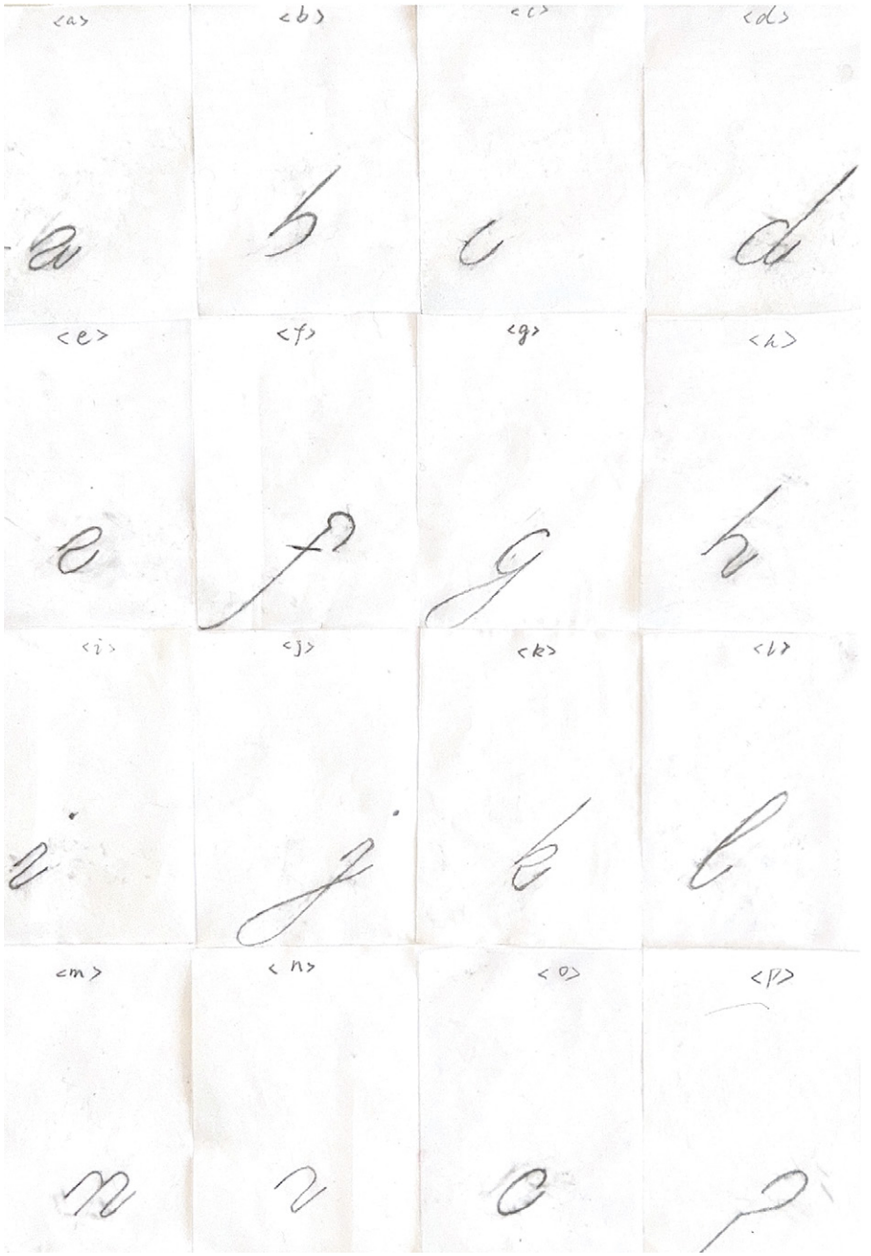
This transition marks a conceptual turning point: ligature is no longer treated as an exception or embellishment, but as the default state of writing.

Designing Incomplete Letters: Shared Strokes as Structure

To test this idea, the system was explored through the design of intentionally incomplete letterforms. Instead of defining clear entry and exit strokes—as is typical in traditional script typefaces—letters were constructed to share strokes with adjacent forms.

This strategy creates a form of visual ambiguity, in which it becomes difficult to determine where one letter ends and the next begins. Rather than relying on explicit connections, ligatures emerge through perceptual continuity and structural overlap.

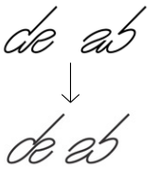
In contrast to conventional script systems, where letters remain visually autonomous despite their connections, this approach fundamentally challenges letter independence. Shared strokes allow words to be perceived as continuous structures rather than sequences of discrete signs.



First trial of creating a writing system on tracing paper.

First trial of creating writing system on trace paper

Testing Automatic Ligature Generation



Beyond paragraph writing, the system was tested systematically through pairwise combinations of letters, from a to z. Each letter was examined in relation to every other letter in order to observe how ligatures could emerge automatically under different conditions.

These tests revealed that each letter possesses a specific range of flexibility. Depending on its position—initial, medial, or final—its form adapts to varying degrees. In many cases, shared strokes allowed ligatures to form naturally without additional intervention.

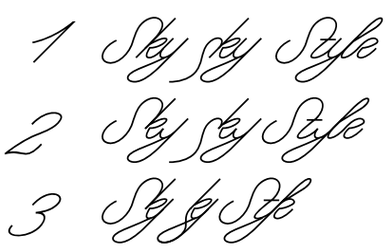
However, the system does not resolve all combinations perfectly. Certain letter pairs resist smooth integration and require the design of specific ligature forms. These exceptions highlight an important principle: the system aims to solve most cases structurally, not to eliminate all irregularities.

Levels of Omission and the Threshold of Legibility

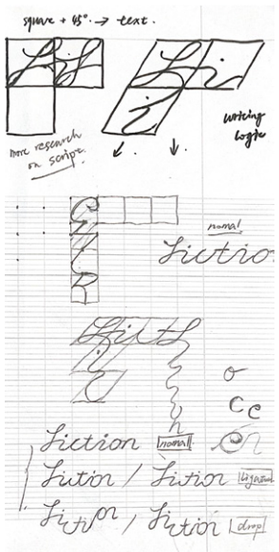
The degree to which strokes are omitted plays a critical role in the system's readability. Excessive omission leads to ambiguity and loss of recognition, while minimal omission preserves conventional legibility.

To address this, the writing system was structured into three levels.
Level one prioritises readability, maintaining sufficient structural cues for letter recognition.
Level two introduces greater abstraction while retaining rhythmic coherence.
Level three approaches illegibility, functioning closer to a visual symbol than a linguistic script.

These levels are not hierarchical, but exploratory. Together, they serve as a tool for examining the shifting boundary between writing and symbol.



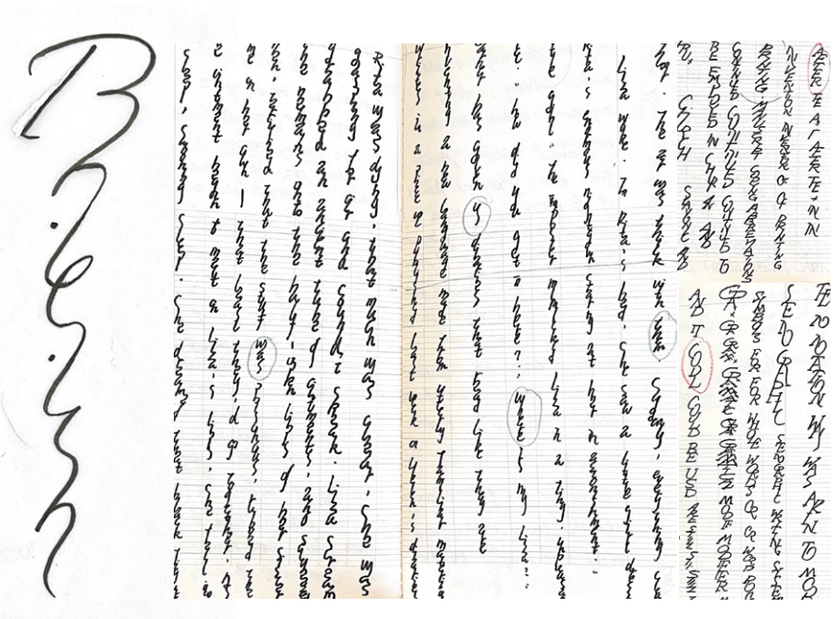
Exploring Vertical and Multi-Directional Ligatures



In addition to horizontal continuity, the system was tested in alternative spatial orientations. Vertical writing was explored using a 45-degree slant, with the intention of preserving continuity while altering directionality.

These experiments proved largely unsuccessful. Differences in letter width, height, and proportion disrupted the flow, making natural connections difficult to sustain across varying word lengths.

Rather than abandoning this direction entirely, the exploration shifted toward designing individual letters capable of forming vertical ligatures. While traditional ligatures operate horizontally, these experiments investigate continuity across different axes, expanding the system's spatial possibilities.



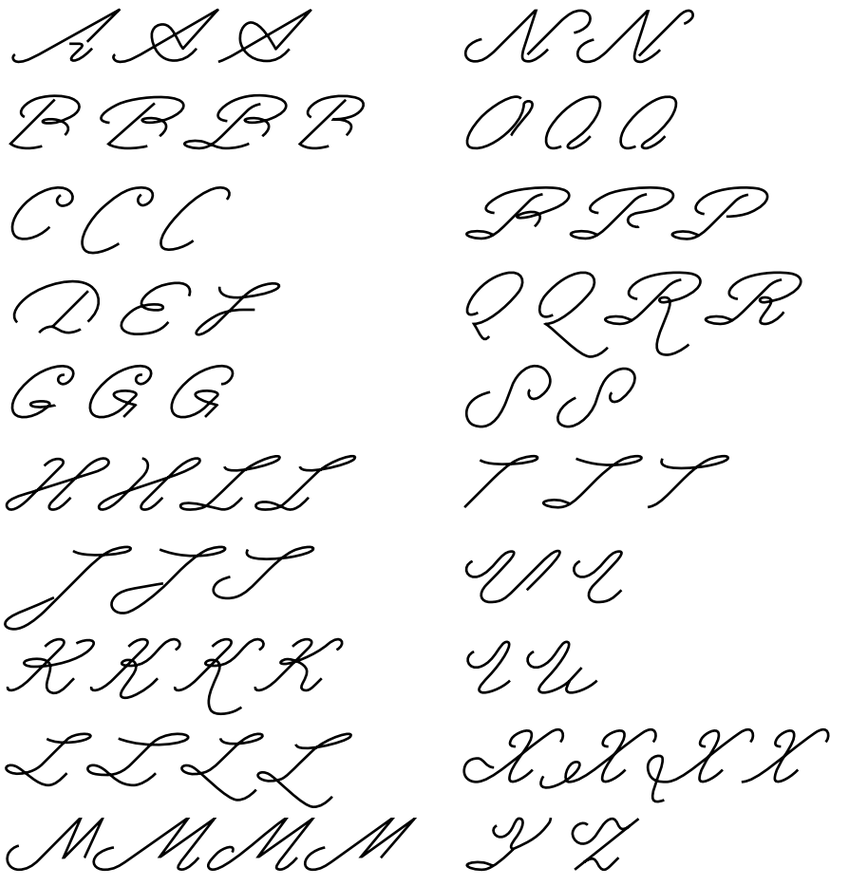
Chapter 6

Digitisation and Refinement

First Systematic Attempt

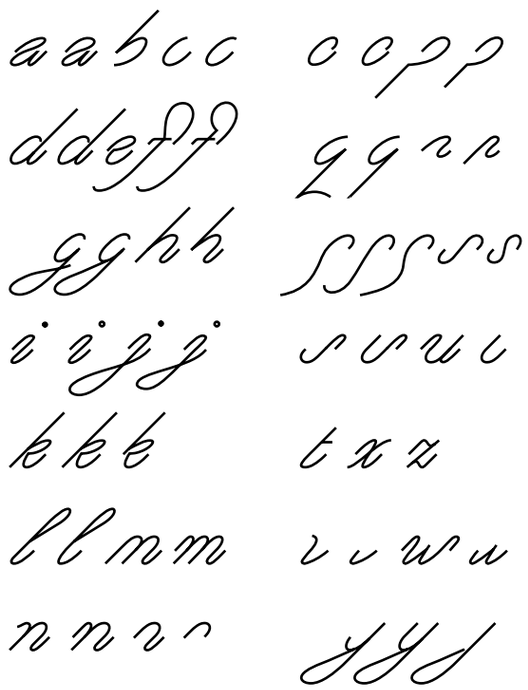
The first digital attempt aimed to systematize the generation of full-word ligatures through shared strokes. At this stage, the approach was still strongly influenced by historical Latin script models. I relied primarily on existing cursive connection logic and focused on achieving visual flow through stroke reduction.

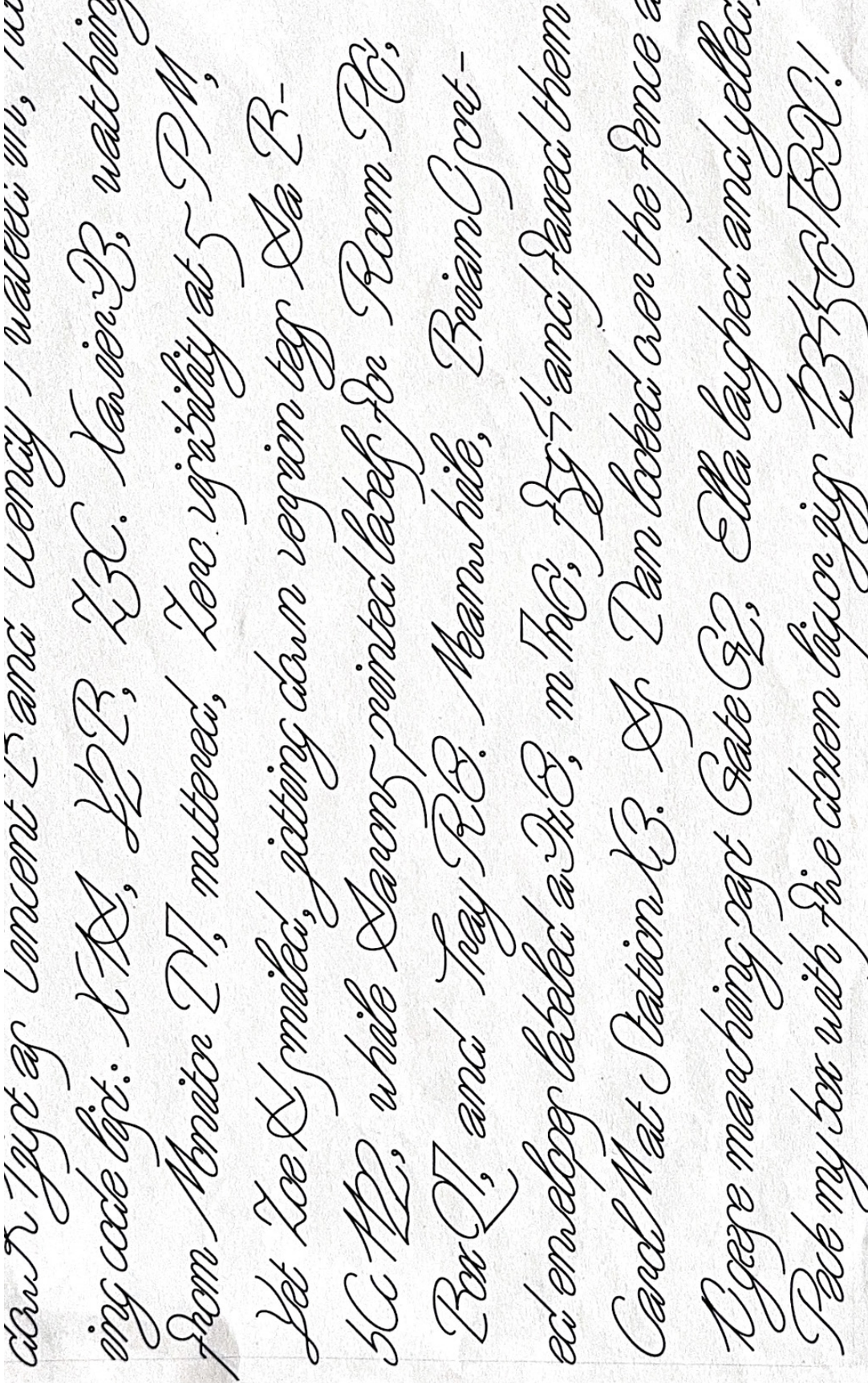
However, several structural limitations soon became apparent.



Firstly, uppercase letters were treated as independent initials rather than participants in a continuous system. I did not consider the possibility that uppercase letters might connect not only to lowercase letters, but also to other uppercase letters and numerals. Their role remained decorative rather than structural.

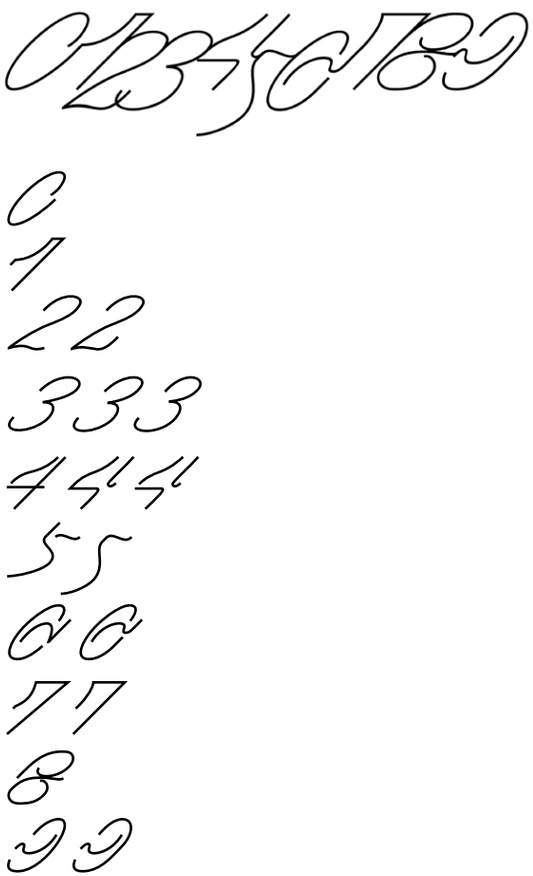
Secondly, lowercase letters were not yet analyzed positionally. Although strokes were removed to allow natural sharing, I had not yet developed a systematic understanding of how each letter should behave in initial, medial, or terminal positions. The forms functioned locally, but not as a complete generative system.

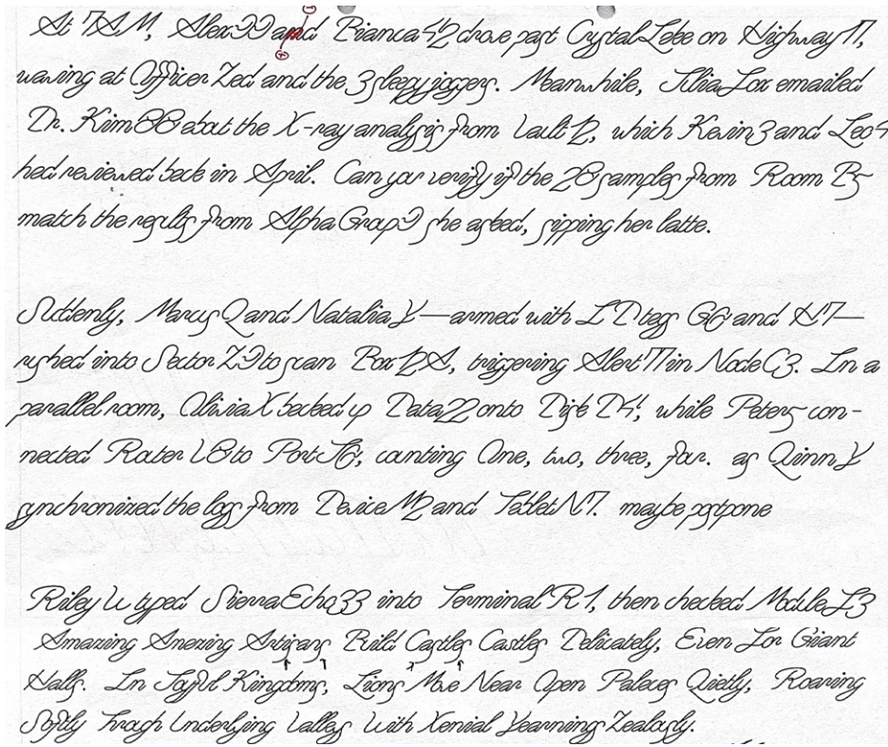


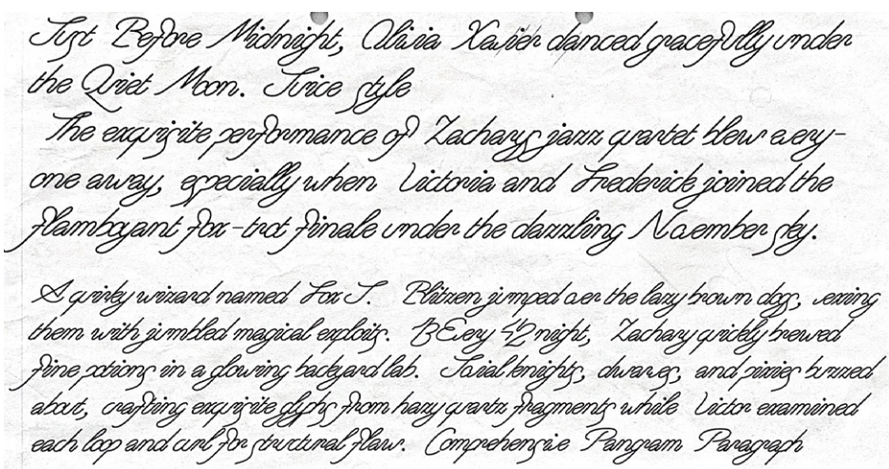


Numerals presented further difficulties. With no strong historical precedent for fully connected numeric script, I experimented by adjusting their heights to force connections. These solutions were artificial and lacked structural coherence.

This first phase revealed a critical insight: stroke sharing alone does not produce a writing system. Without positional logic and structural negotiation between categories of characters, continuity remains superficial.







Tested and applied different stroke thicknesses to the typeface.

Rethinking Capitals: From Initial Markers to Structural Participants

After recognizing these limitations, I began exploring the possibility that uppercase letters could fully participate in the system. This meant allowing uppercase letters to connect with:

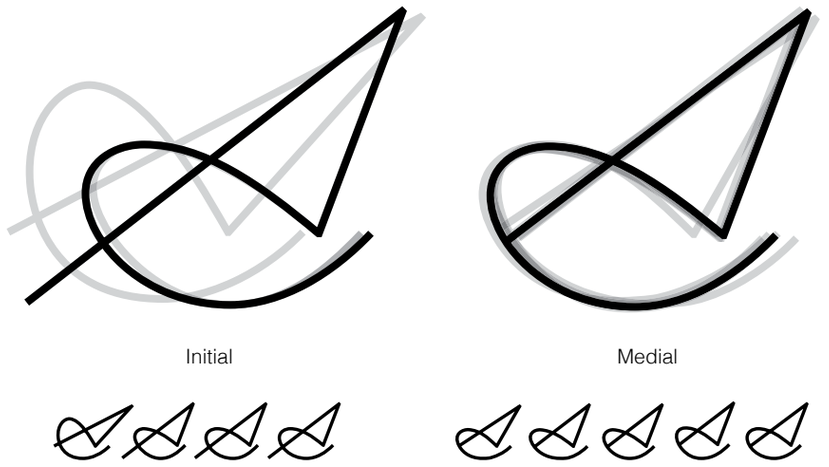
- other uppercase letters
- lowercase letters
- numerals

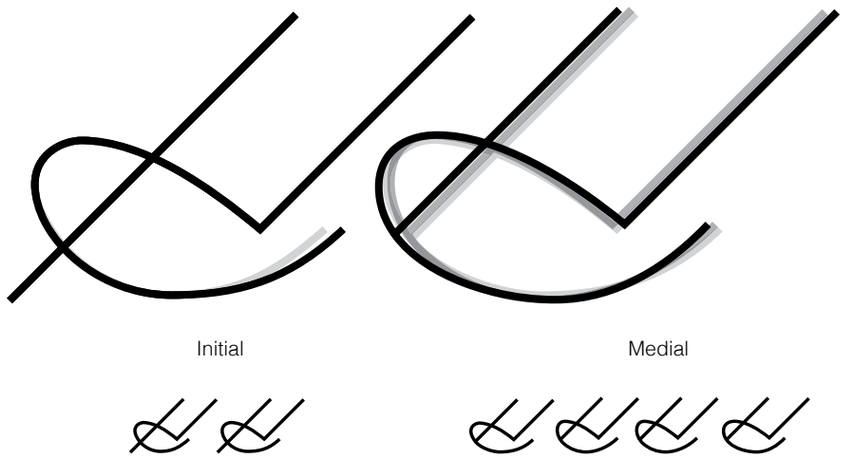
This shift introduced significant constraints. Because lowercase letters operate at a lower height, the connection points of uppercase letters had to descend accordingly. The challenge was to lower connection terminals without compromising legibility or elegance.

There was little historical reference for this approach. The process required prolonged experimentation, balancing:

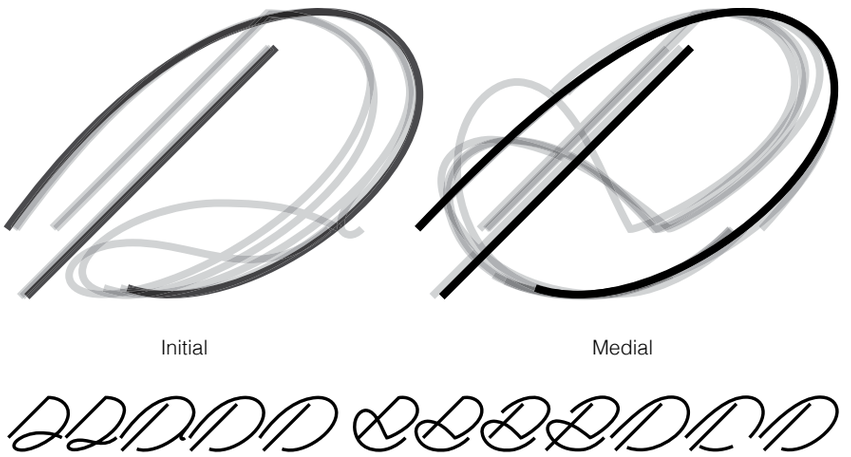
- natural flow
- structural consistency
- recognizability

Through iterative refinement, uppercase letters evolved from ornamental initials into structurally integrated forms capable of sharing strokes while maintaining clarity.





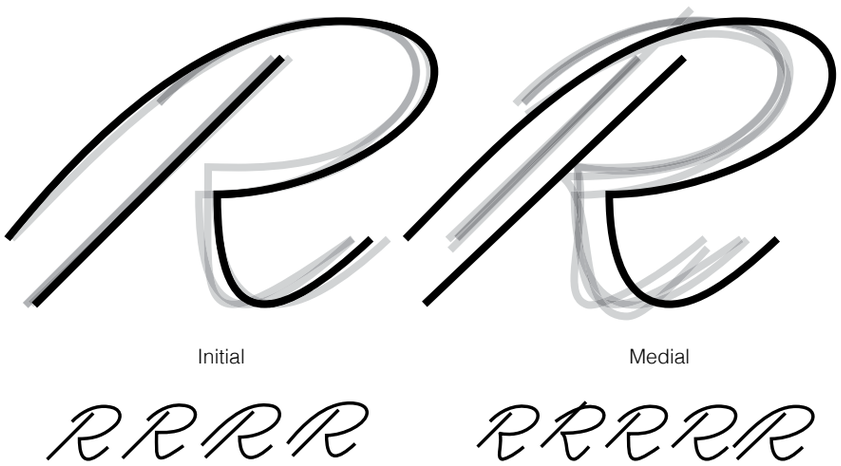
A and *H* worked well in the first draft and connect smoothly with adjacent letters, so they were left largely unchanged. The main adjustments concerned the loops—their curvature, size, slant, and the spacing they create when linking to other letters to avoid excessive white space.



Initial Medial

Initial Medial

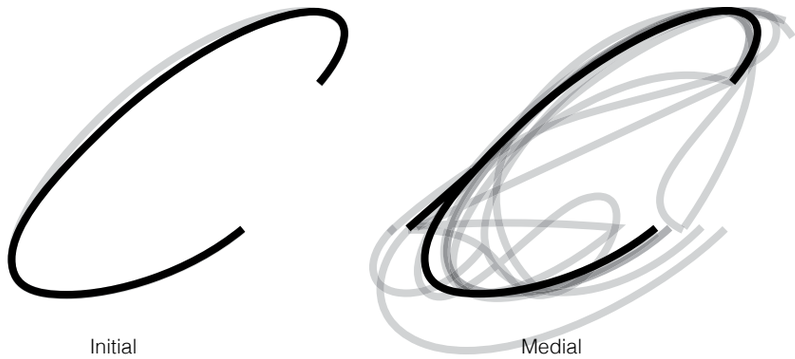
Letters *B, D, G, R, N* were initially designed with different forms for initial and medial positions. However, through iteration, I found that excessive simplification and merging negatively affected readability and spacing. In the end, both positions were given similar forms, with only slight width adjustments when used in the middle to ensure proper spacing.



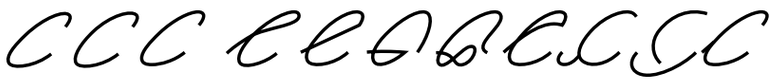
Initial Medial

Initial Medial

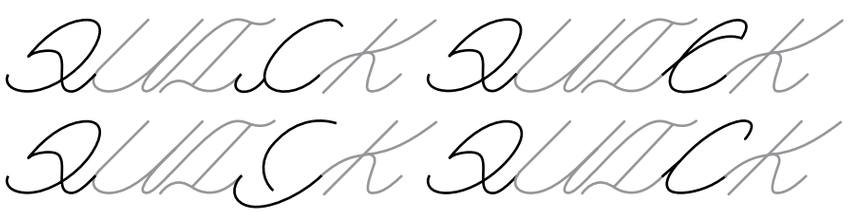
For *D*, the curved stroke was removed to improve readability. For *G*, the connecting wave was flattened to enhance clarity. Both *D* and *R* were adjusted because directly connecting their left vertical stem to adjacent letters affected their overall width; therefore, the final connection method was modified accordingly.



Initial Medial

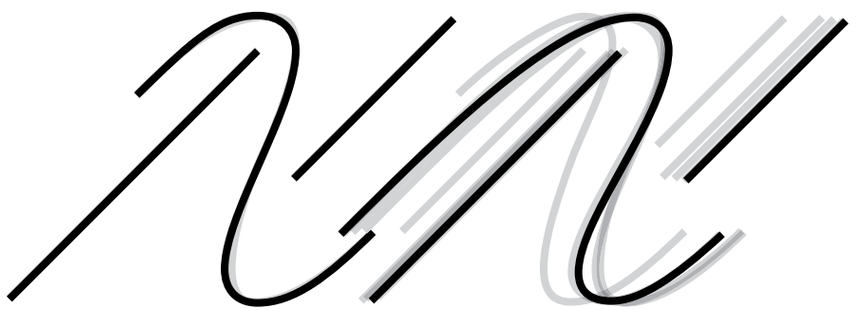


Initial Medial



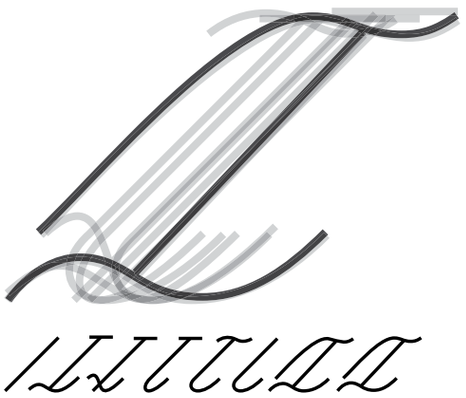
For *C*, many variations were tested to create a natural connection with the letter on the left, but ultimately the simplest form proved to work best. *Q* worked relatively well in the initial attempt, so the later refinements mainly focused on adjusting the curvature and the spacing at the connection point when it appears in the medial position.

Initial Medial



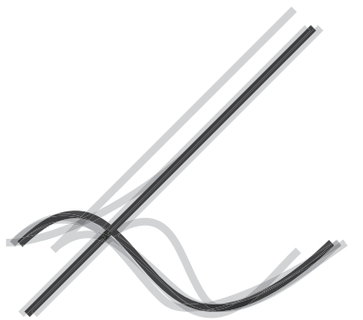
Initial Medial

As for *E*, the curvature of the central connecting wave was reduced to improve readability. *N*, for the same reasons mentioned earlier for *D* and *R*, was also revised to adopt the final connection method shown here.



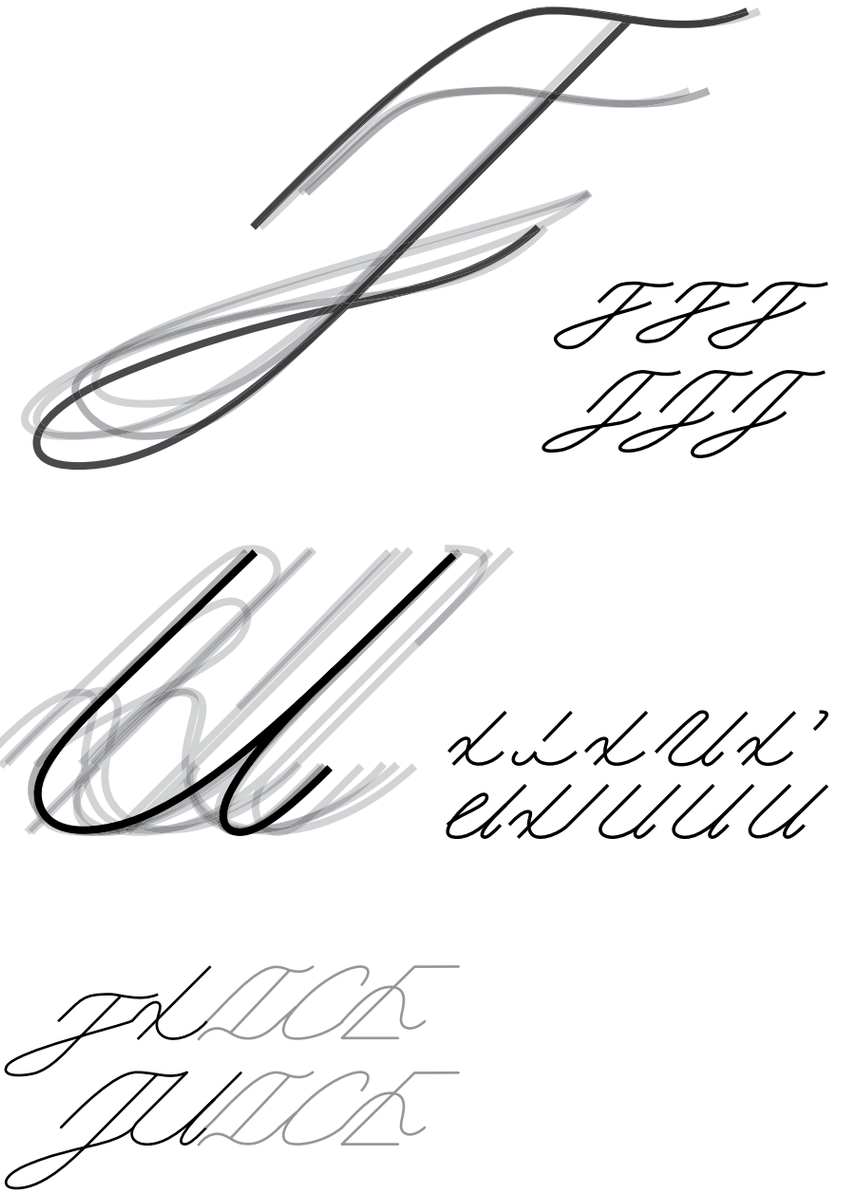
These letters were not designed with positional alternates; the intention was to make each form function consistently in all positions. The structure of *F* was largely derived from *E*, while *O* was refined through repeated testing to achieve a smoother connection.

I required many revisions. Since this is a sans serif typeface, *I* initially treated it as a simple vertical stroke inserted into the word. However, its legibility was too weak. To ensure clear recognition while still connecting smoothly on both sides, it was ultimately given the final form shown here.



Z and *T* were particularly challenging. Both have strong horizontal strokes, and it was difficult to relate them naturally to the lower connection point. After multiple tests, small loops were added to help link the upper bar more fluidly, but this compromised legibility. In the end, both letters were simplified to their current, cleaner forms.

L was defined from the very beginning: its horizontal stroke was conceived as a wave connecting left and right. The presence of this strong *L* form also reduced the visual presence and legibility of the initial version of *I*, which is why *L* was retained and only *I* was modified.



Regarding the letter *J*, at first I lowered it as a whole so that its top horizontal stroke could connect with the letter on the left, but the result was visually unappealing. I then applied the same method used for *I* to handle *J*.

As for *U*, I initially tried removing its right vertical stroke and letting adjacent letters visually "complete" it, but after repeated testing its recognizability was insufficient. In the end, I reverted to the most basic, standard form.

For the letters *V* and *W*, I initially wanted to apply the same approach used for lowercase letters—removing the terminal stroke to connect with the next letter. However, this resulted in poor legibility and made spacing difficult to control.

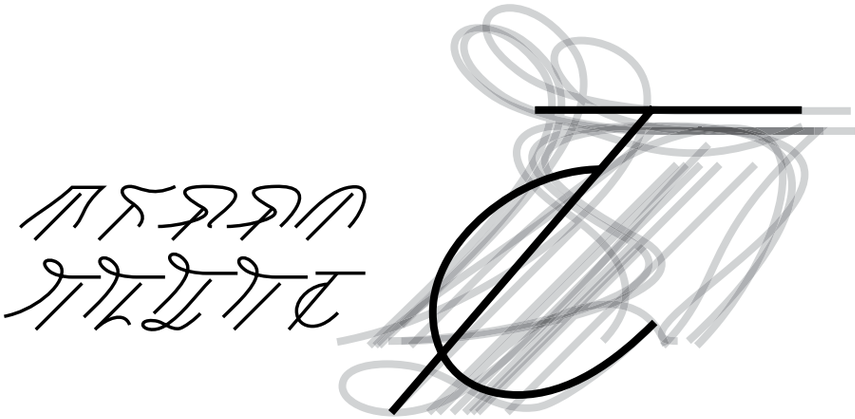
For *S*, I experimented with elongating the entire letter so that its tail would have space to curve back and connect to the next letter. This approach proved too cumbersome compared to other letters, so I ultimately opted for a simpler, more straightforward treatment.

Initial

Medial

M and *T* were the two letters that took the most time and underwent the most revisions.

As a relatively wide letter with multiple strokes, *M* needed to retain a sense of movement to avoid feeling heavy or static. I aimed to combine curves and straight lines to create a stronger visual contrast and a more dynamic structure.

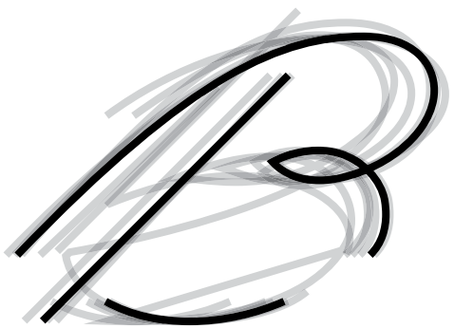


Initial

Medial

T presented a similar issue to *I* and *J*, but with an important difference: its horizontal bar is intrinsic to its identity. To preserve legibility, that bar had to remain stable. In the end, I introduced an additional connecting stroke to maintain both visual continuity and recognizability.

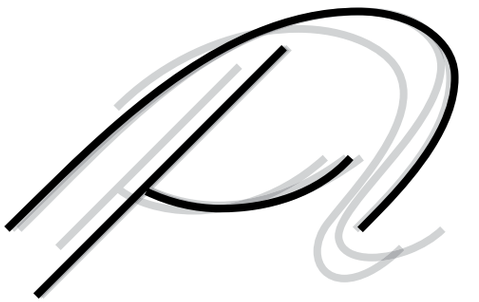
Initial Final



Medial

B and *P* are letters designed with three positional variations. During testing and iteration, the difference between their initial and medial forms became minimal. Only slight adjustments in width were retained to fine-tune spacing.

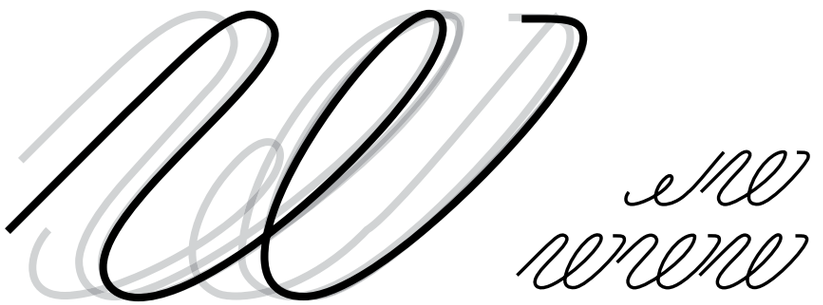
Initial Final



Medial

In the final position, however, their open terminals—originally intended for shared strokes and connections with following letters—had to be closed to complete the forms independently.

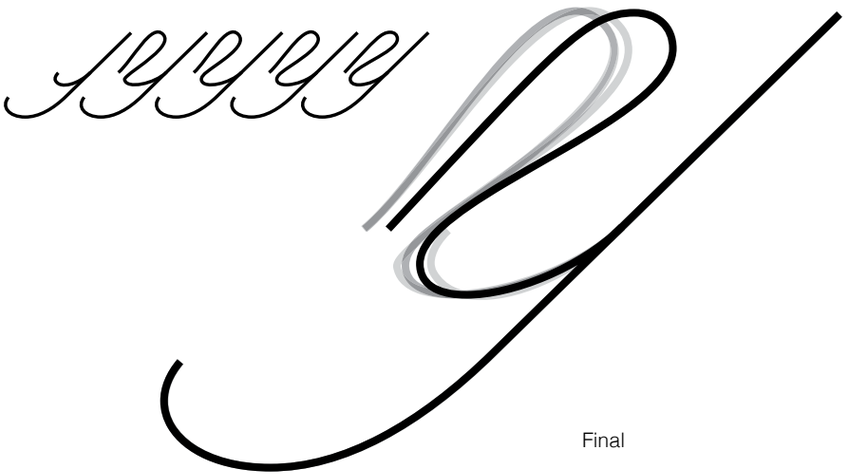
Initial



Final

W and *Y* went through many adjustments, but none of the alternatives felt fully convincing. In the end, I retained a design approach similar to their lowercase forms.

Initial



Final

When they appear in the final position, their open terminals also need to be closed, resulting in two positional variants.

Lowercase Letters: Systematizing Positional Behavior

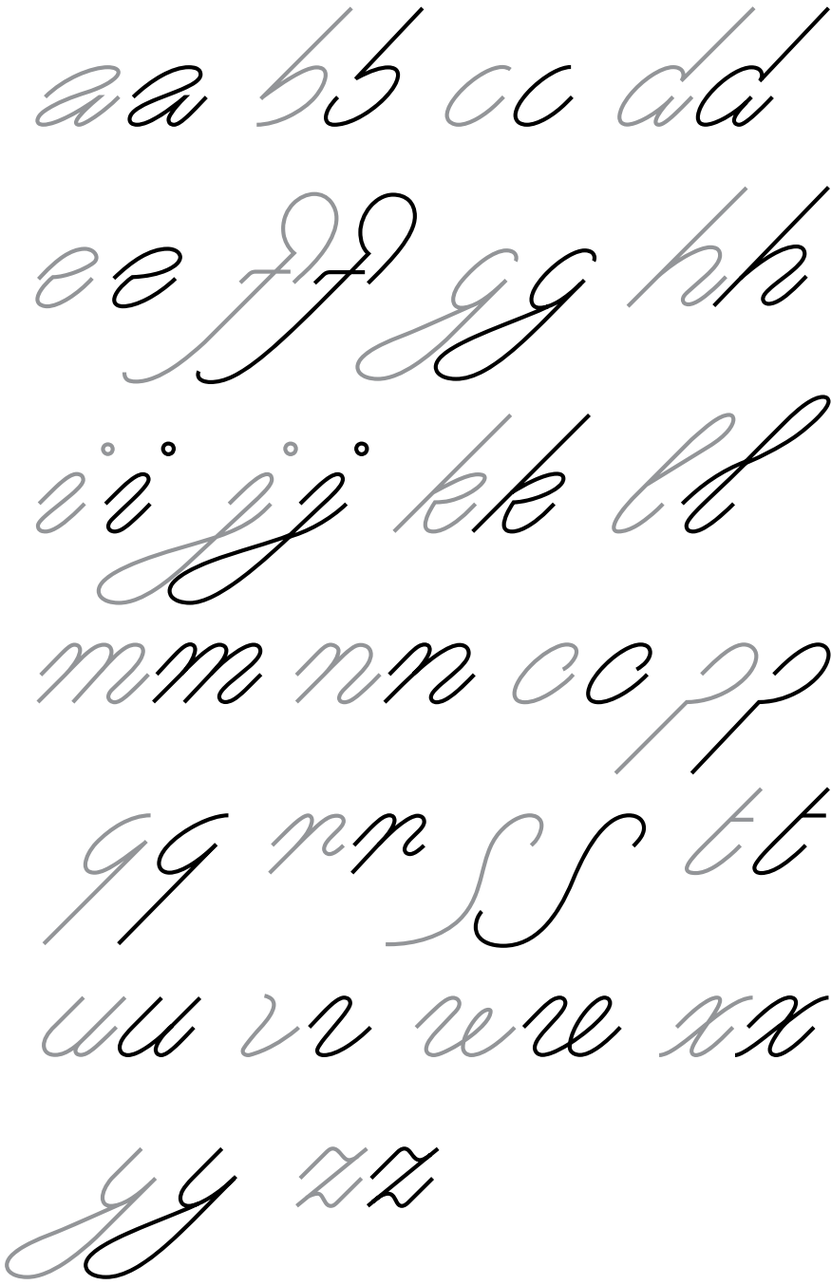
Lowercase letters proved more adaptable. A preliminary structure already existed from the first attempt, but refinement required:

- adjusting stroke curvature
- smoothing shared stroke transitions
- systematically testing each letter in different positional contexts

Each letter was reconsidered as a variable form rather than a fixed shape. Initial, medial, and terminal positions demanded subtle modifications to maintain continuity without visual tension.

This phase transformed intuitive connection into rule-based behavior.

From these examples, we can see that the same letter requires different contextual designs depending on its position within a word. Corresponding code must therefore be implemented so that, when used in a word, the system can automatically detect the context and apply the appropriate variant.



Initial lowercase design (left) vs. final version (right)

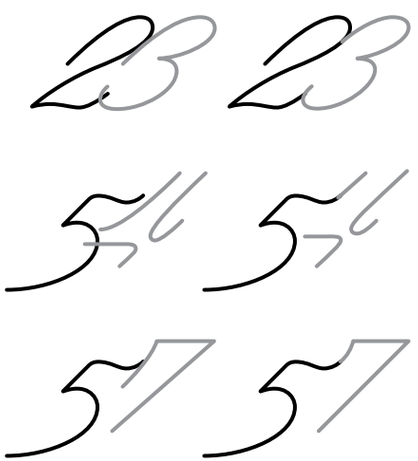
Numerals: Negotiating Absence of Historical Reference

Numerals presented challenges similar to uppercase letters but without historical support.

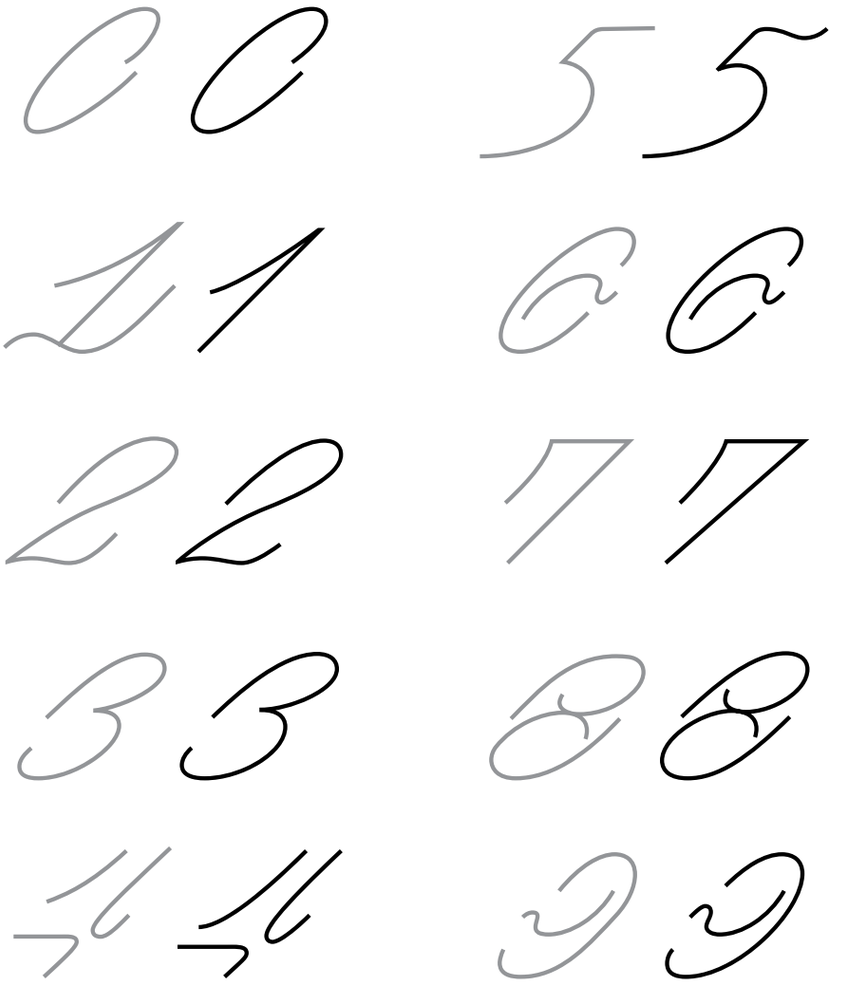
Lowering connection points created particular difficulty for characters such as 1 and 7. I resisted adding artificial linking strokes simply to enforce continuity. Forcing contact between structurally incompatible forms compromised integrity.

Instead of mandatory connection, I introduced spacing as a structural decision. Certain numerals remain separated, creating moments of visual breathing within the continuous flow.

This choice reflects an important principle: continuity does not require total fusion. Controlled interruption can preserve rhythm and legibility.



As shown above, the numerals also require contextual variations depending on different situations. Through coding, the appropriate contextual form can then be automatically matched and applied to achieve the intended effect.



Initial figure design (left) vs. final version (right)

Lining Figures

Oldstyle Figures

Chapter 7

Different Levels and Vertical Ligatures

Three Levels in the Monoline Version

The monoline version of the typeface serves as the most direct expression of the underlying writing system. Within this mode, three levels were defined based on the degree of stroke omission.

Level 1 maintains full legibility and functions closest to conventional writing, ensuring that each letter remains clearly recognizable while maintaining continuous stroke connections.

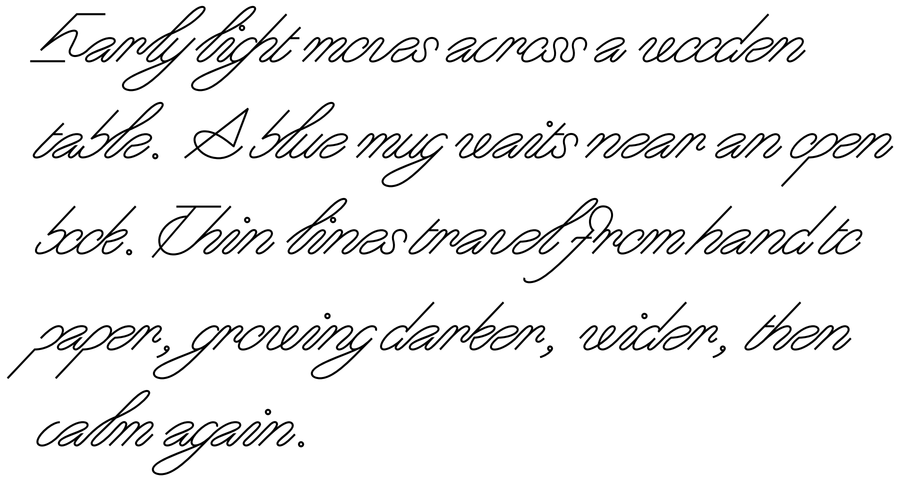
Level 2 introduces greater abstraction while preserving rhythm and recognisability. Letterforms merge and flow more freely, emphasizing visual rhythm and structural continuity over strict readability.

Level 3 approaches illegibility, operating near the boundary between writing and symbol. It is highly experimental, where words approach symbolic status and the boundaries between letters and visual motifs become blurred.

These levels provide a structured framework for exploring how meaning shifts as visual information is reduced.

Take *r* and *m* as examples in different levels, even within the same level, they have different contextual designs to accommodate various connections.

Level 1



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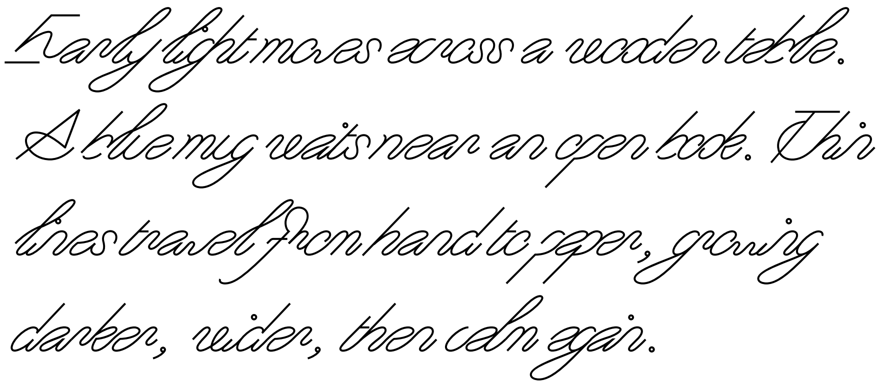

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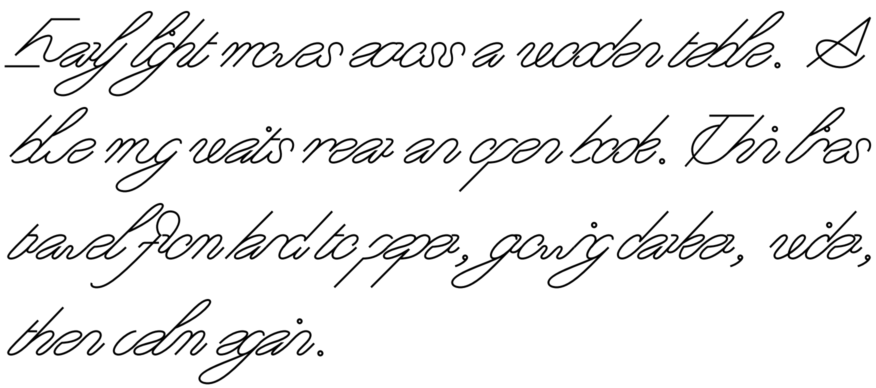


Vertical Ligatures

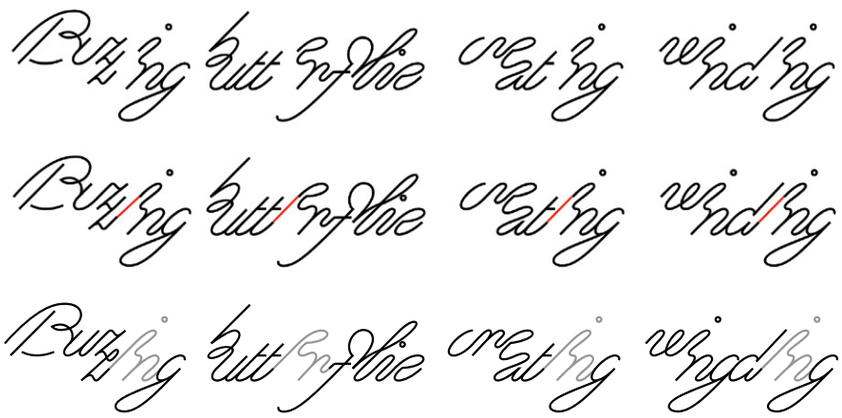
To further extend the spatial and formal possibilities of the script, vertical ligatures were developed.

Frequent two-letter combinations were analyzed and adapted to create vertically connected forms, introducing a double-baseline structure implemented through OpenType features. These vertical ligatures expand the framework beyond traditional horizontal connections, adding depth and flexibility to the system.

By exploring both horizontal and vertical connectivity, the project demonstrates the generative potential of the skeleton framework, enabling letters to interact in multiple dimensions while maintaining coherence within the overall design.

To allow letters of different heights on the left and right to connect naturally within the vertical ligature while still following the rules of the writing system, I introduced two baselines.

After completing the design, a challenge arose when two vertical ligatures occurred consecutively within a word. Their adjacency created a visual gap that resembled a space, thereby affecting readability. An initial approach involved the automatic insertion of a linking stroke, but due to technical limitations in implementation, the issue was ultimately addressed through contextual alternates.



Cold air enters through a narrow door.
Heavy clouds drift above the road.
Warm bread rests beside dark coffee.

Paragraph sample 30 pt

Chapter 8

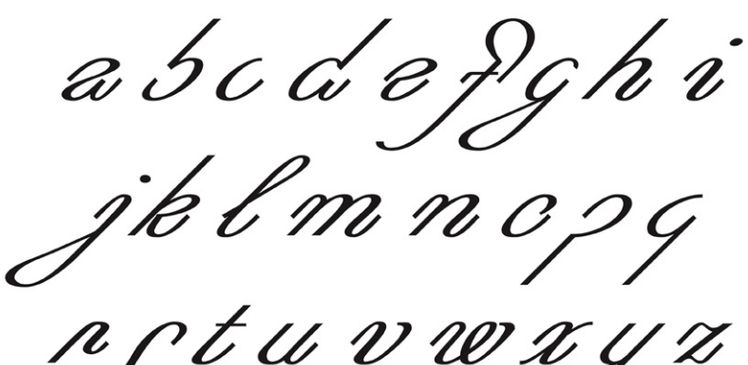
Contrast Version

From Monoline Skeleton to Contrast Version

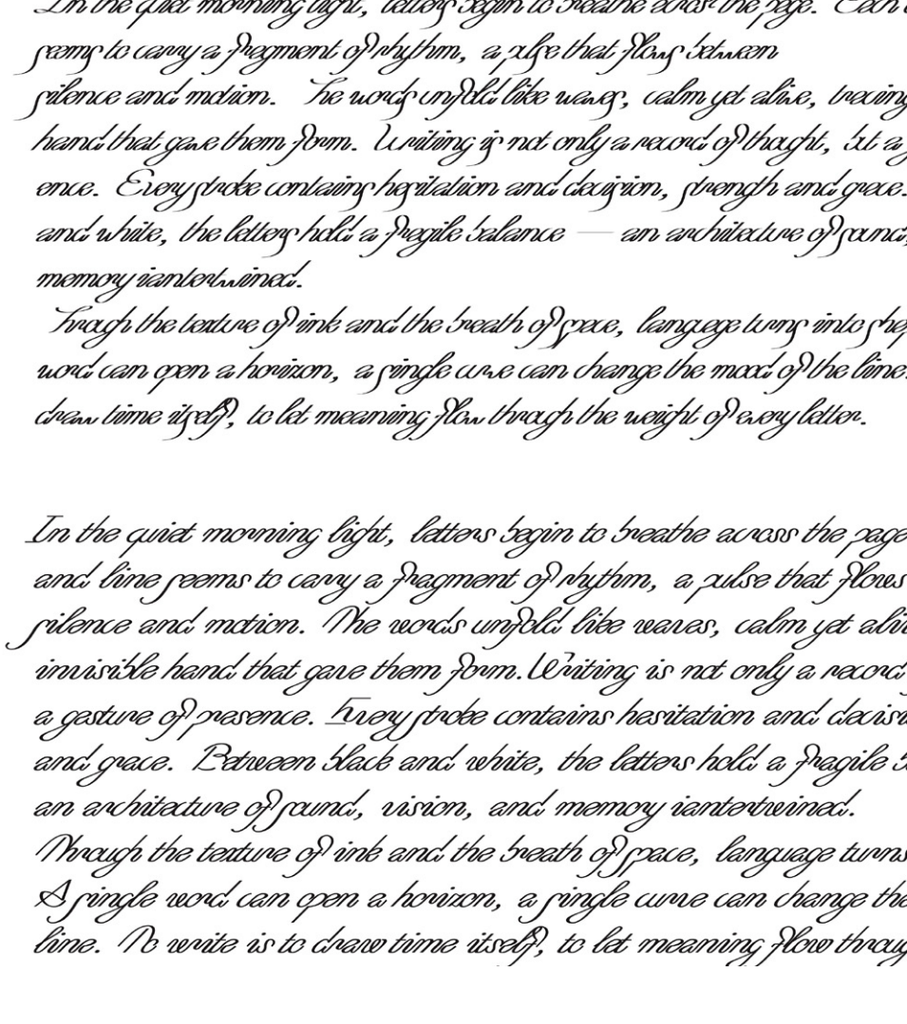
Once the monoline skeleton system was established, a contrast version was developed to further test the system's robustness. Introducing contrast without explicit connecting strokes posed a significant challenge: variations in stroke weight risked disrupting continuity.

To address this, the contrast logic was informed by pointed-pen calligraphy. Downward strokes were emphasised with increased thickness, while upward strokes remained lighter. This approach allowed contrast to emerge organically from movement rather than from decorative modulation.

The resulting forms maintain continuity through visual momentum rather than through explicit connections, demonstrating that the system can adapt to different expressive modes while preserving its structural integrity.



Due to the shared-stroke structure, certain letter stems (the thicker structural parts) could not naturally connect to the thinner terminal strokes of adjacent letters. To address this issue, I experimented with three levels of stroke weight: the stems as the thickest elements, the connecting strokes at a medium weight, and the originally thin parts at the lightest weight. However, the result was unsatisfactory. The overall typeface appeared visually muddy, lacking a clear contrast hierarchy. Without a well-defined relationship of thick and thin strokes, the design lost coherence and appeared stylistically inconsistent.

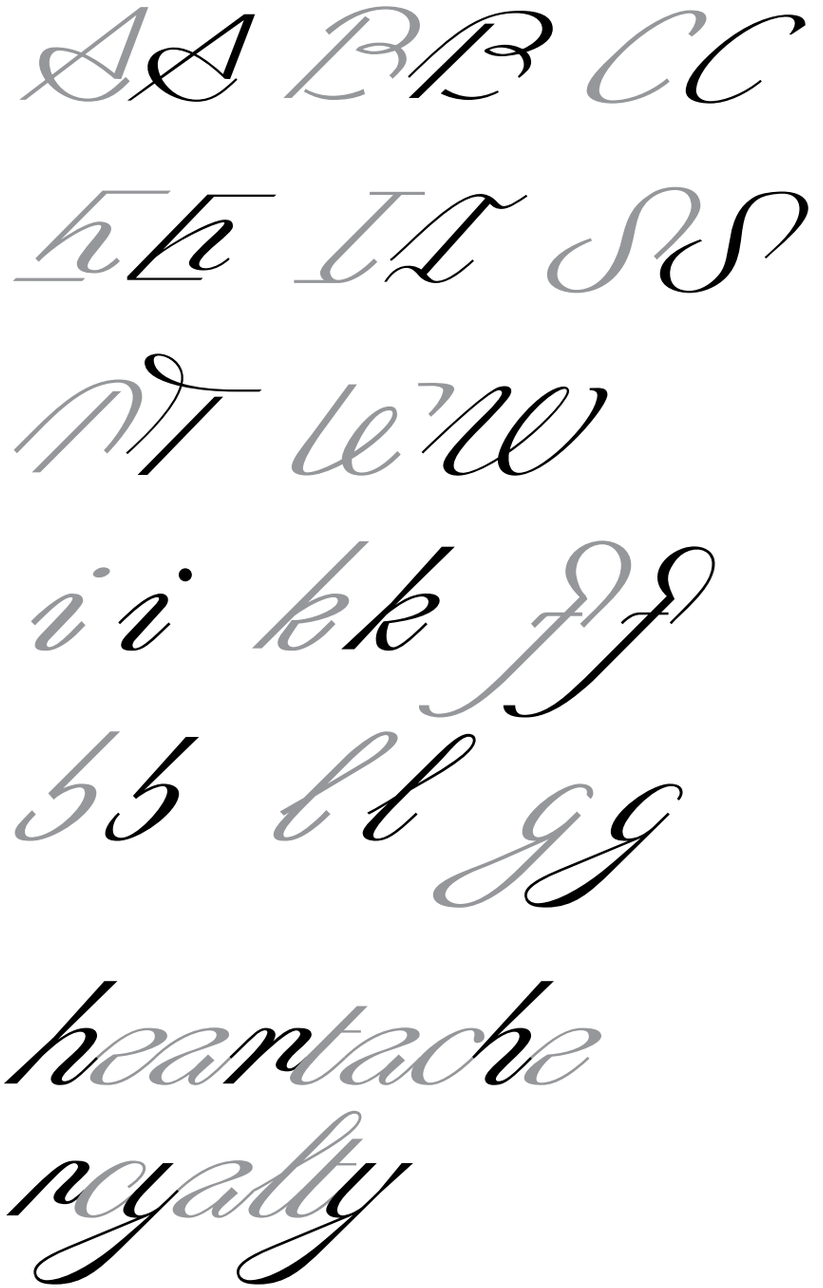


Paragraph samples of contrast versions from different historical periods

The first version was generated automatically using offset strokes to create contrast. However, as we can see from the previous paragraph sample, its result is much more successful than the second version that I refined manually.

This is likely because I focused too heavily on the connection points, which ultimately caused me to lose the proper contrast relationship.

Ultimately, I addressed the shared-stroke areas by applying a gradual tapering and thickening approach. This preserved the intended thin terminals while maintaining the robustness of the thicker stems, ensuring both structural integrity and visual harmony.



These two words illustrate that contrast versions require contextual alternates, with letters adjusting their shapes in different positions for smooth connections.

54 pt

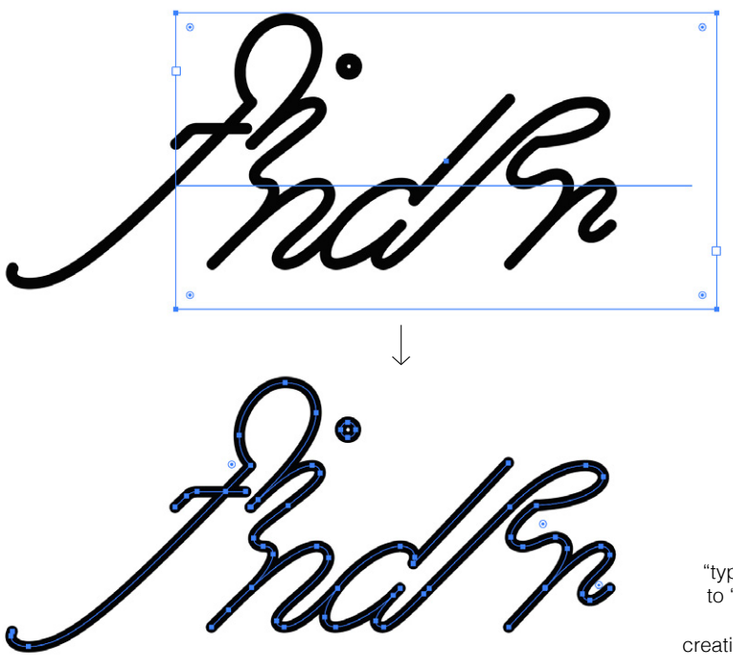
Faintly light moves across a wooden table. A blue mug waits near an open magazine. Thin lines travel from hand to paper, growing darker, wider, then calm again.

Chapter 9

Stroke Experiments

SVG Implementation and Structural Flexibility

This font can be exported through code as an SVG-based font. This technical step allowed the single-line structure to remain intact while enabling flexible manipulation of stroke weight and visual treatment after typing. Instead of redrawing each variation manually, the SVG format made it possible to adjust thickness, modulation, and surface qualities directly at the vector level. The skeleton thus became a programmable framework: once words were generated through typing, their visual "flesh" could be modified independently from their structural logic. This separation between structure and stroke opened the possibility of developing multiple stylistic interpretations from the same underlying writing system.



From "typing mode" to "stroke edit mode" by creating outlines

Testing different “fleshes” based on the skeleton using tracing paper.

From Skeleton to Flesh: Style as Extension of Structure

Once the skeletal writing system was established, it became possible to treat it not as a finished typeface, but as a structural framework capable of generating multiple visual identities. The single-line continuity functions as an underlying grammar, upon which different “fleshes” can be applied through varied brush interpretations, stroke modulation, and texture. Some of these versions preserve legibility, allowing the words to remain comfortably readable; others intentionally blur recognition, pushing the forms toward density and abstraction. Through these transformations, the same structural logic oscillates between text and image. The experiment thus extends beyond stylistic variation: it tests how far a writing system can stretch visually while retaining its internal coherence, and how perception shifts as writing gradually detaches from immediate linguistic decoding and approaches the status of visual composition.

Liangh

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				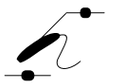	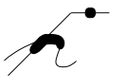

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				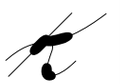	

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	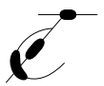	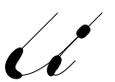			

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Liangh is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

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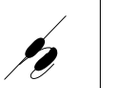
g	h	i	j	k	l
					

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	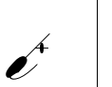				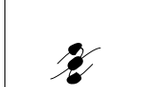

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	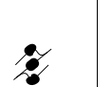				

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		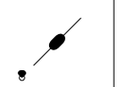			

Lëngk

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			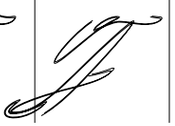		

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S	T	U	V	W	X
					

Y	Z	0	1	2	3
					

4	5	6	7	8	9
					

Längk is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

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			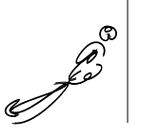		

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	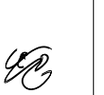				

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		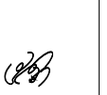			

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Liänyk

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S	**T**	**U**	**V**	**W**	**X**
					
Y	**Z**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
					
4	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
					

Liänyk is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

a	b	c	d	e	f
					
g	**h**	**i**	**j**	**k**	**l**
					
m	**n**	**o**	**p**	**q**	**r**
					
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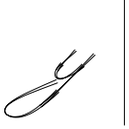					
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	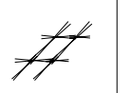				

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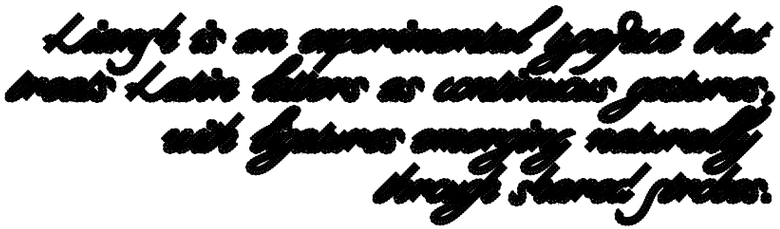

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	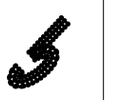				
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	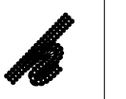	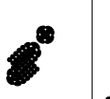			
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		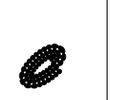			
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	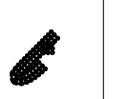				
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	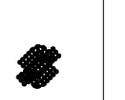				
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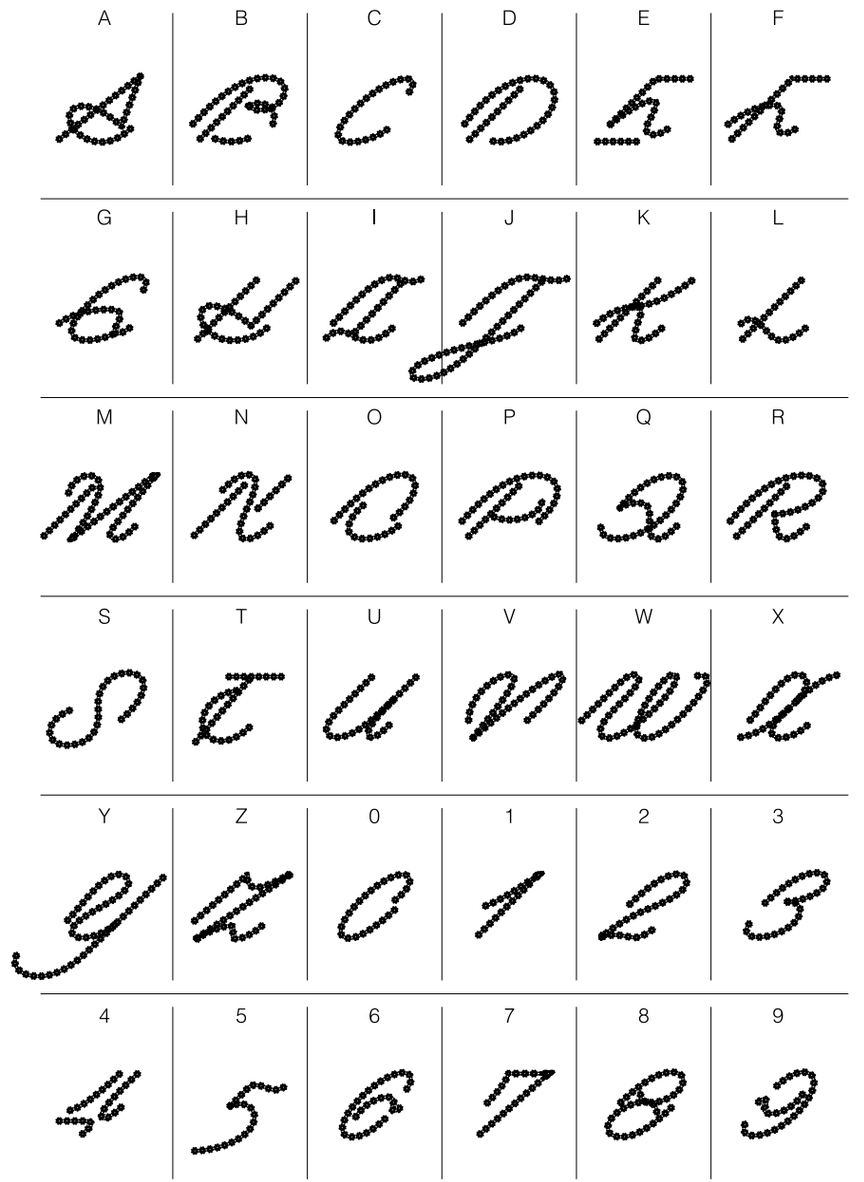
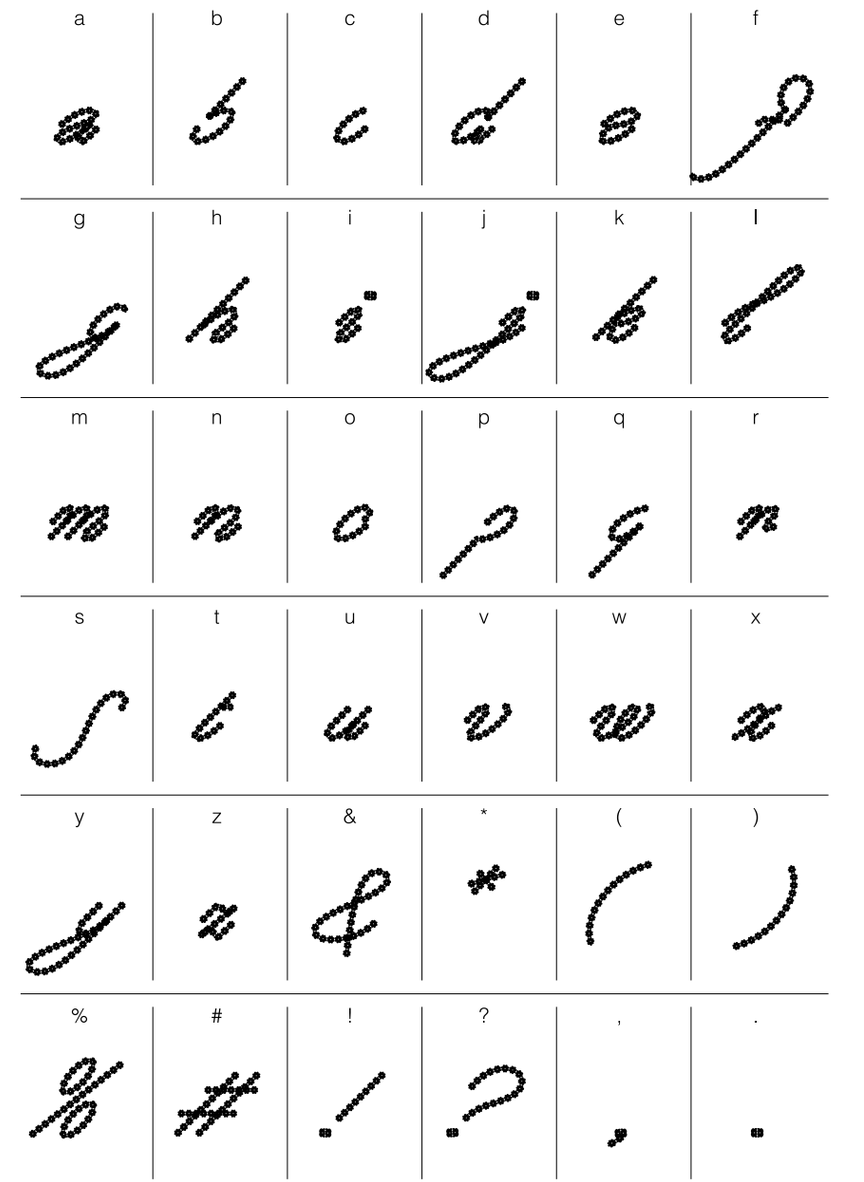
Liangs



Liangs is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.



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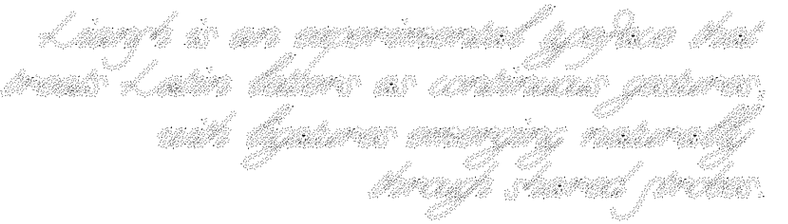

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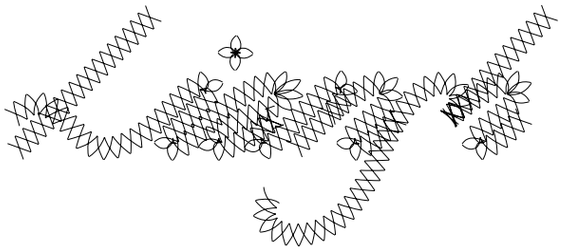

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	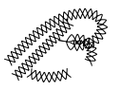		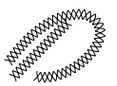	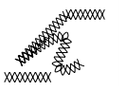	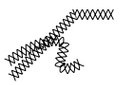

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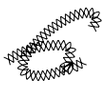
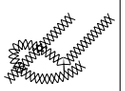
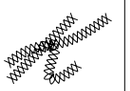
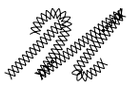
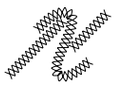
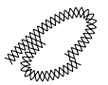
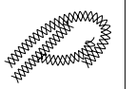
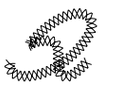
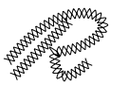
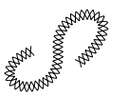
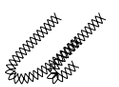
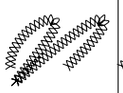
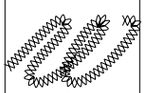
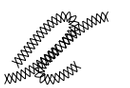
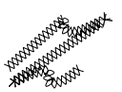
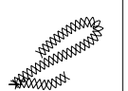
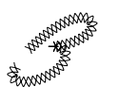
					

M	N	O	P	Q	R
					

S	T	U	V	W	X
					

Y	Z	0	1	2	3
					

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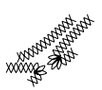
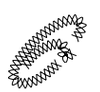
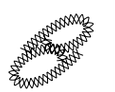
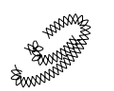
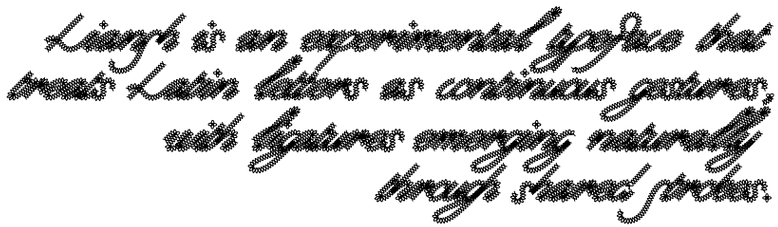
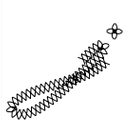
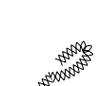
					



a	b	c	d	e	f
					

g	h	i	j	k	l
					

m	n	o	p	q	r
					

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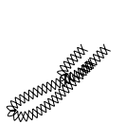
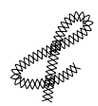
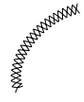
y	z	&	*	(	)
					

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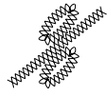			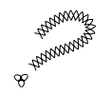		

A	B	C	D	E	F
					

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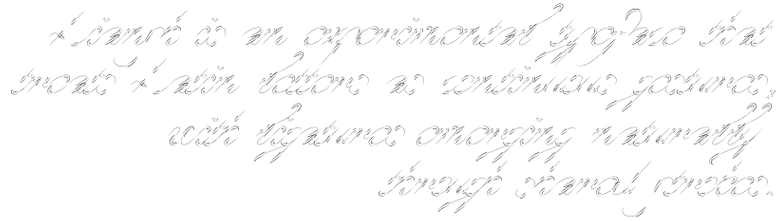

a	b	c	d	e	f
					

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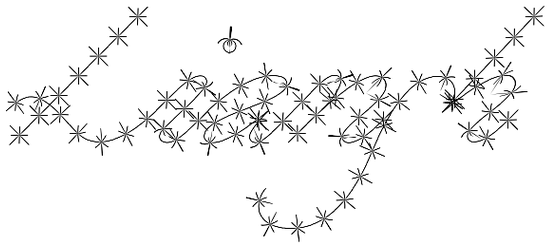

A	B	C	D	E	F
G	H	I	J	K	L
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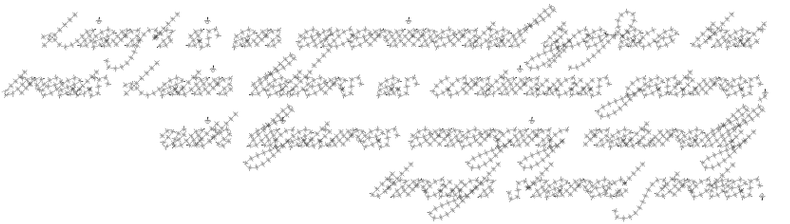
S	T	U	V	W	X
Y	Z	0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9



a	b	c	d	e	f
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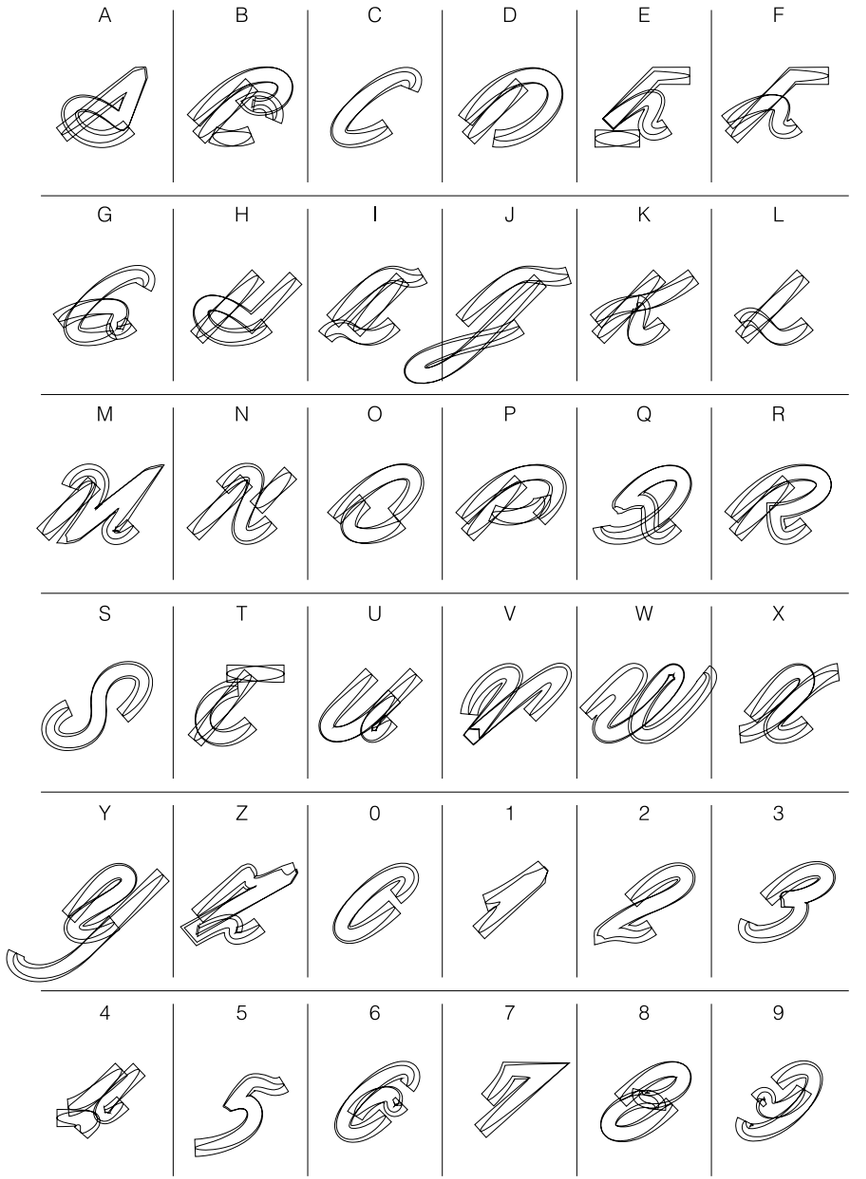
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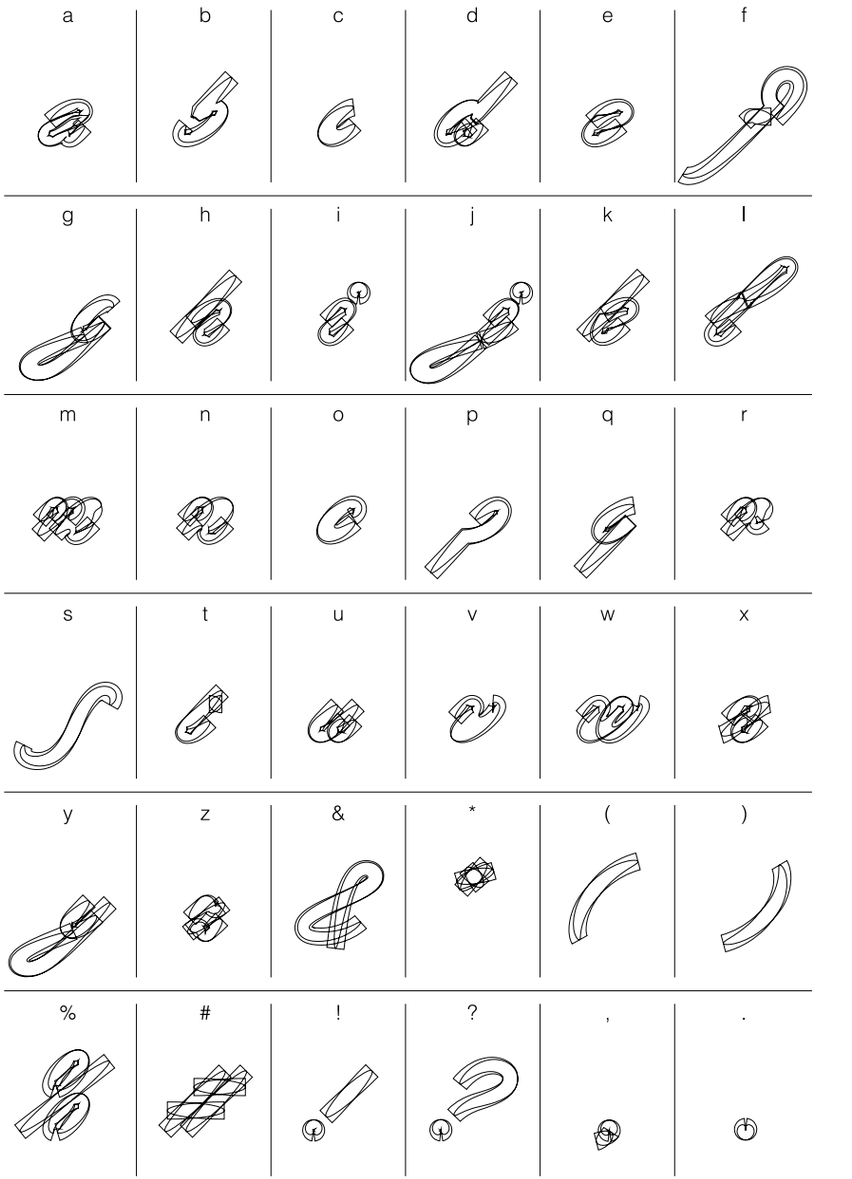
4 5 6 7 8 9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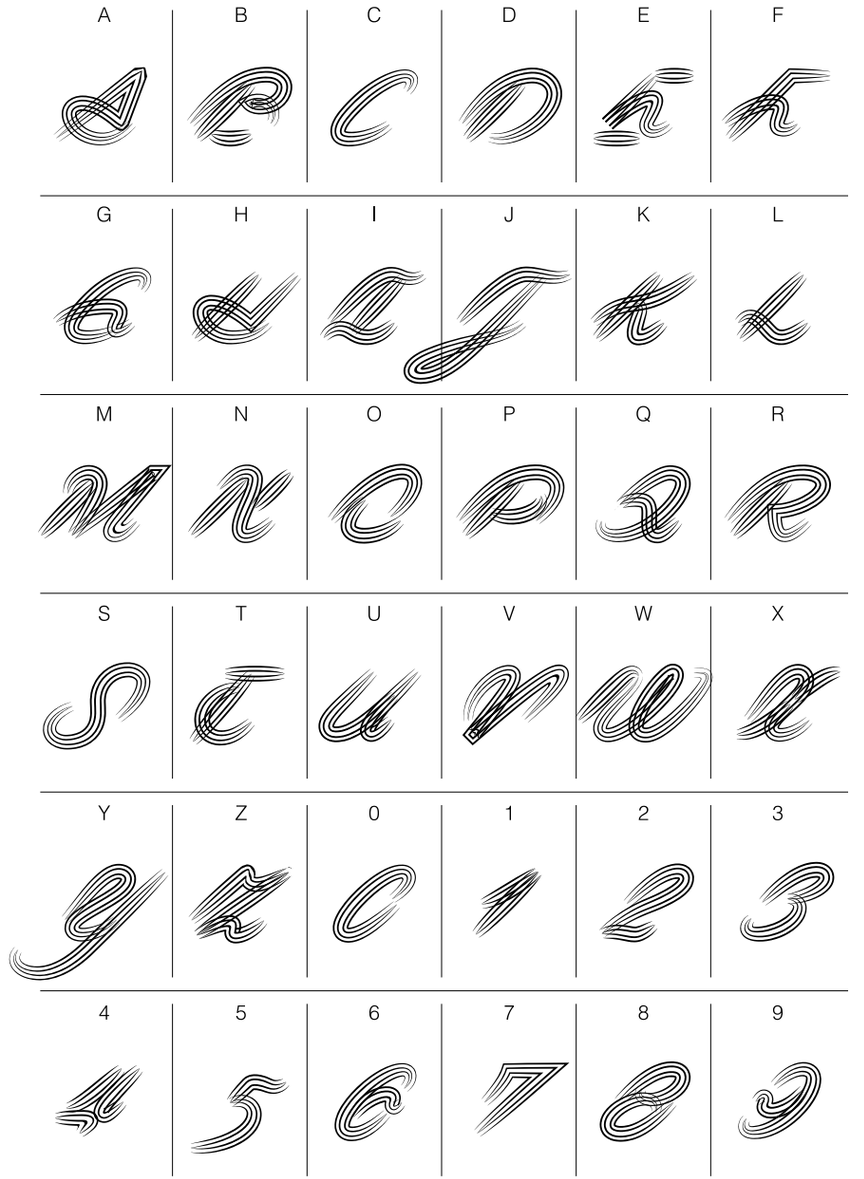
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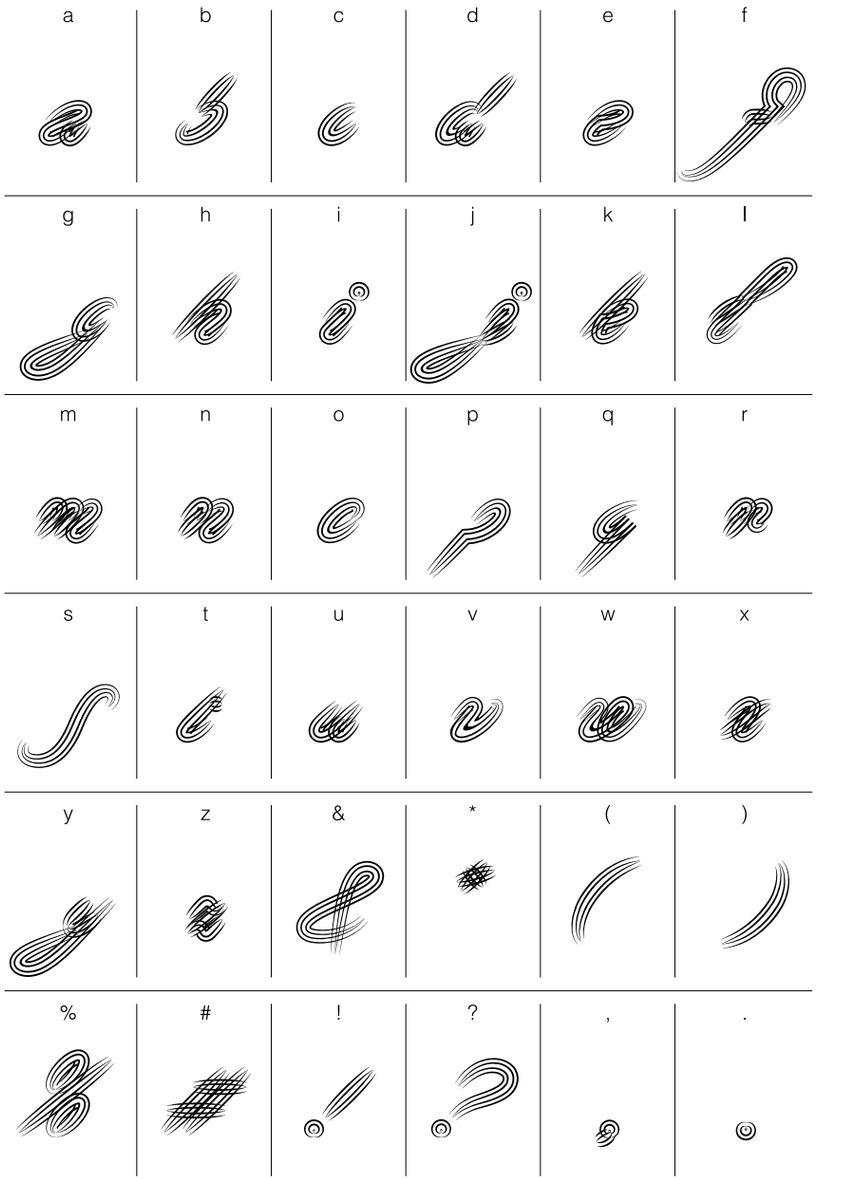
G H I J K L
M N O P Q R
S T U V W X
Y Z 0 1 2 3
4 5 6 7 8 9


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
					

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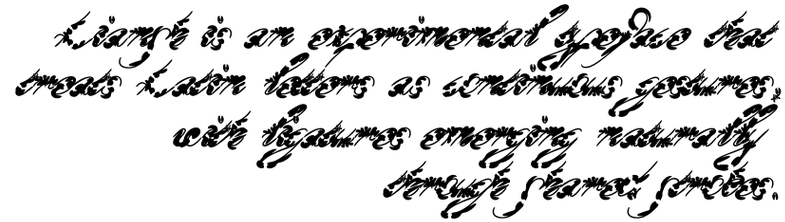

a	b	c	d	e	f
					

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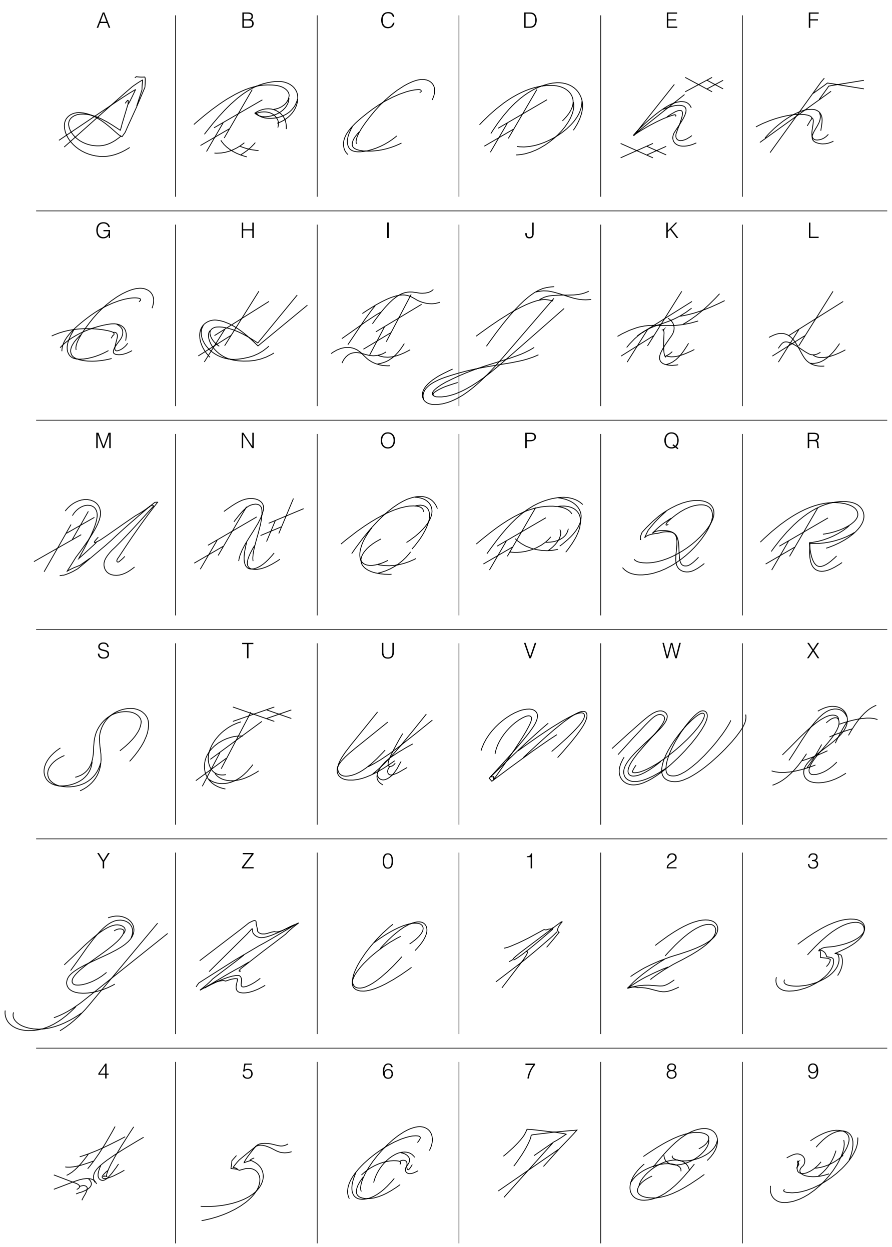
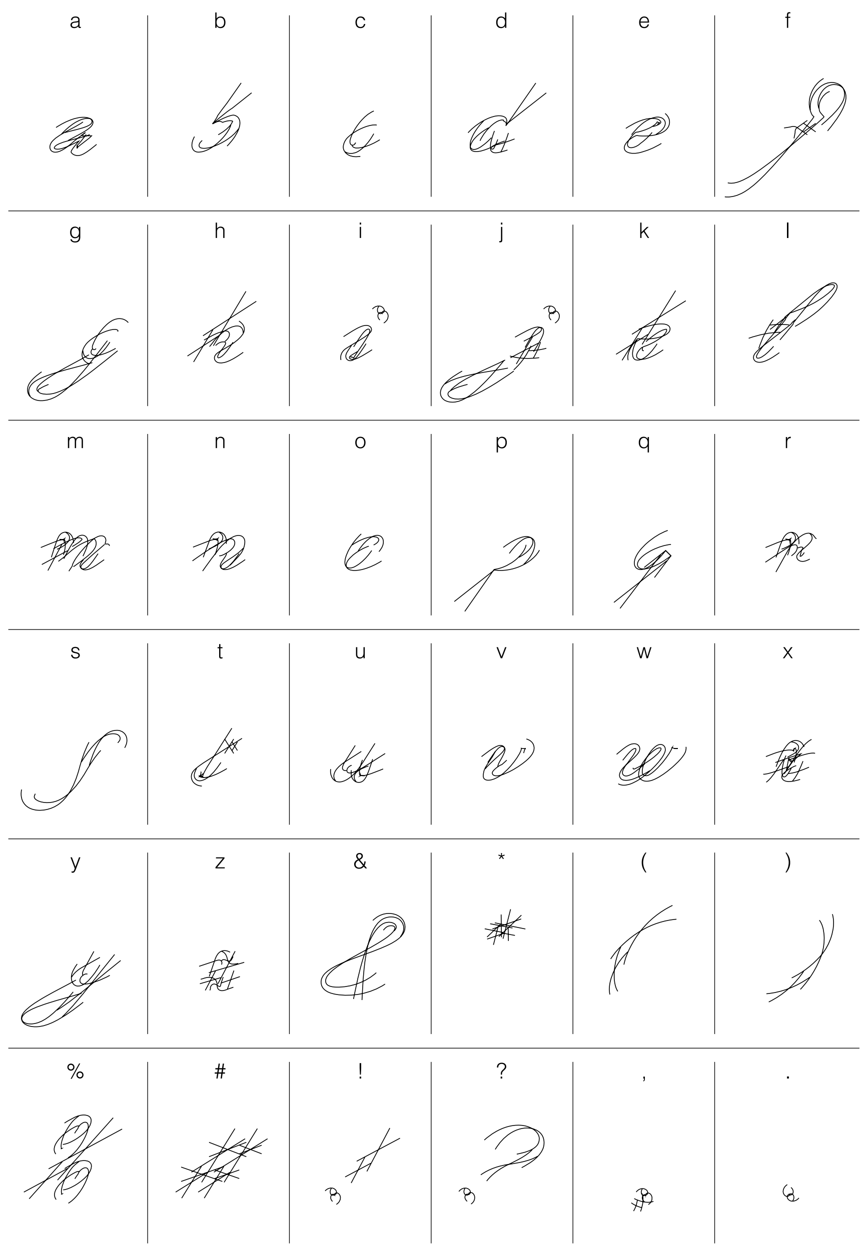
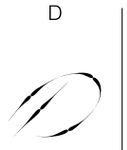
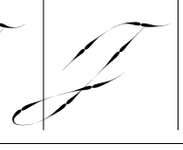
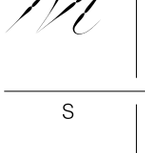
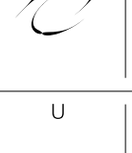
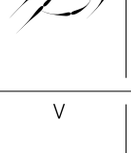
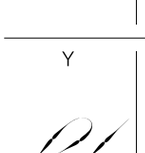
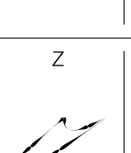
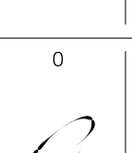
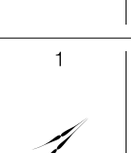
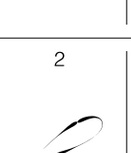
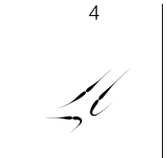
Kiangh



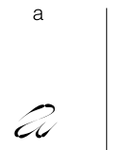
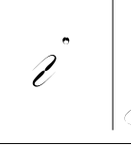
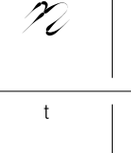
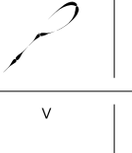
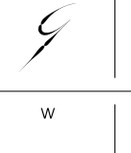
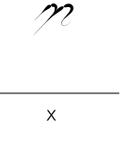
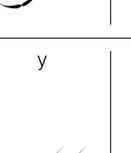
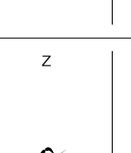
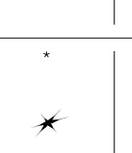
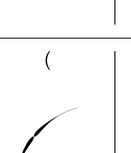
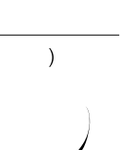
Kiangh is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.



Liärsk

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	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**

Liärsk is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

a	b	c	d	e	f
					
g	**h**	**i**	**j**	**k**	**l**
					
m	**n**	**o**	**p**	**q**	**r**
					
s	**t**	**u**	**v**	**w**	**x**
					
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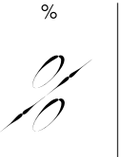	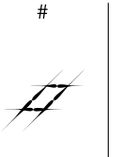	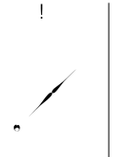	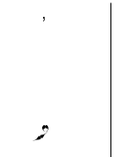		
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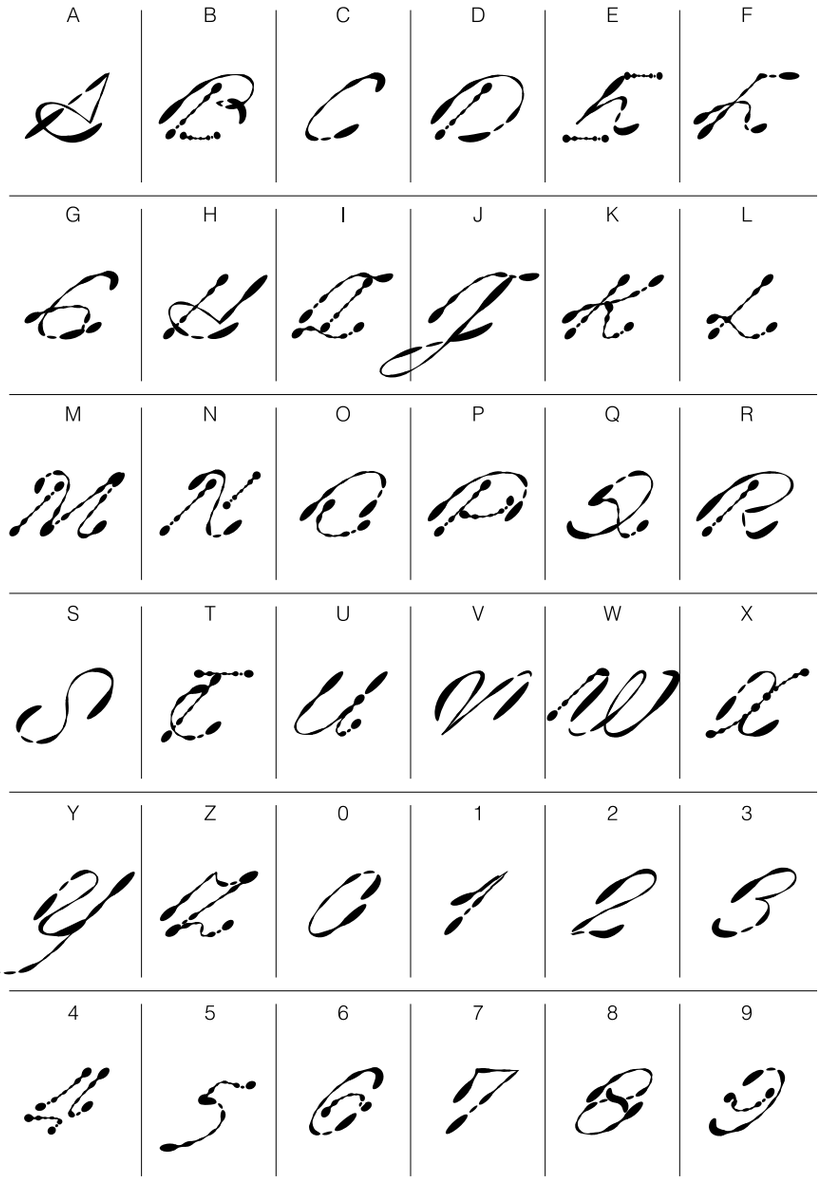
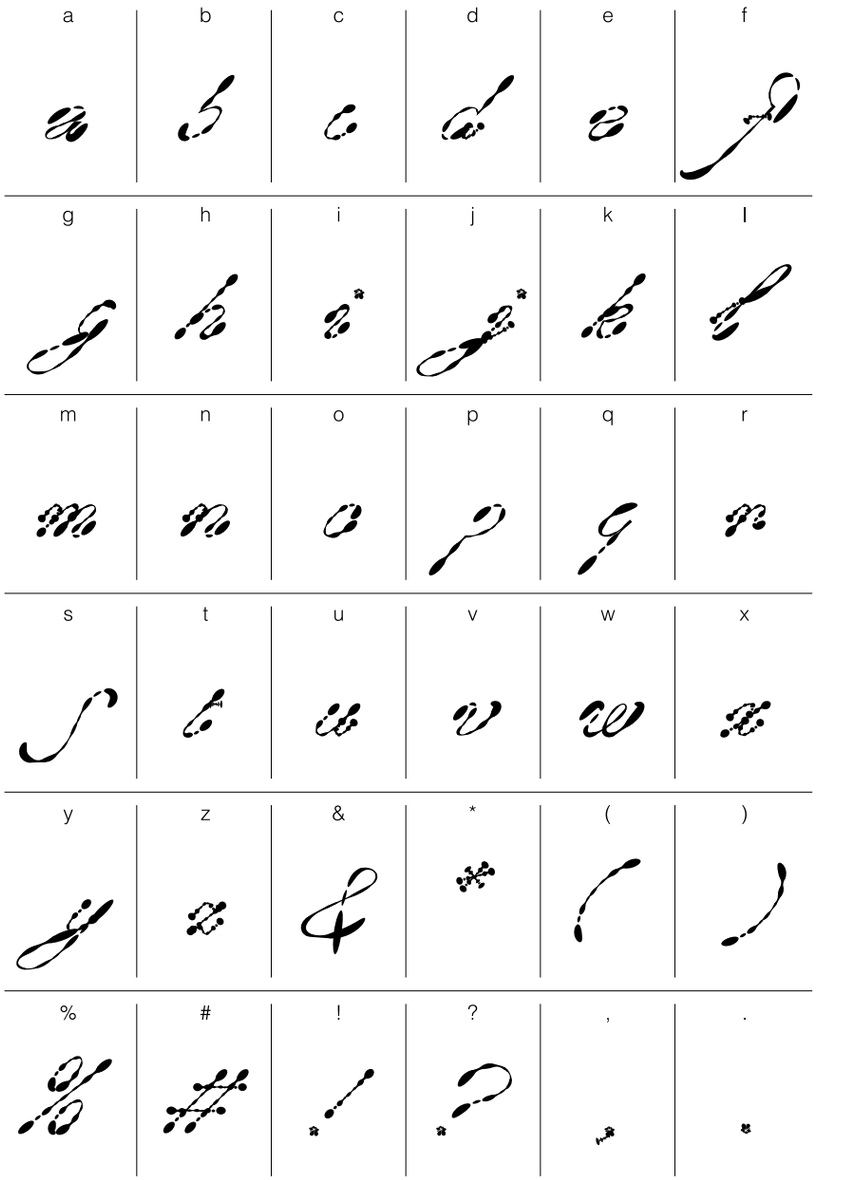
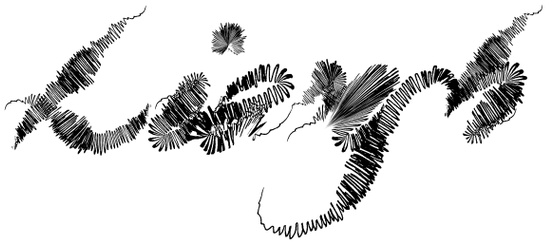
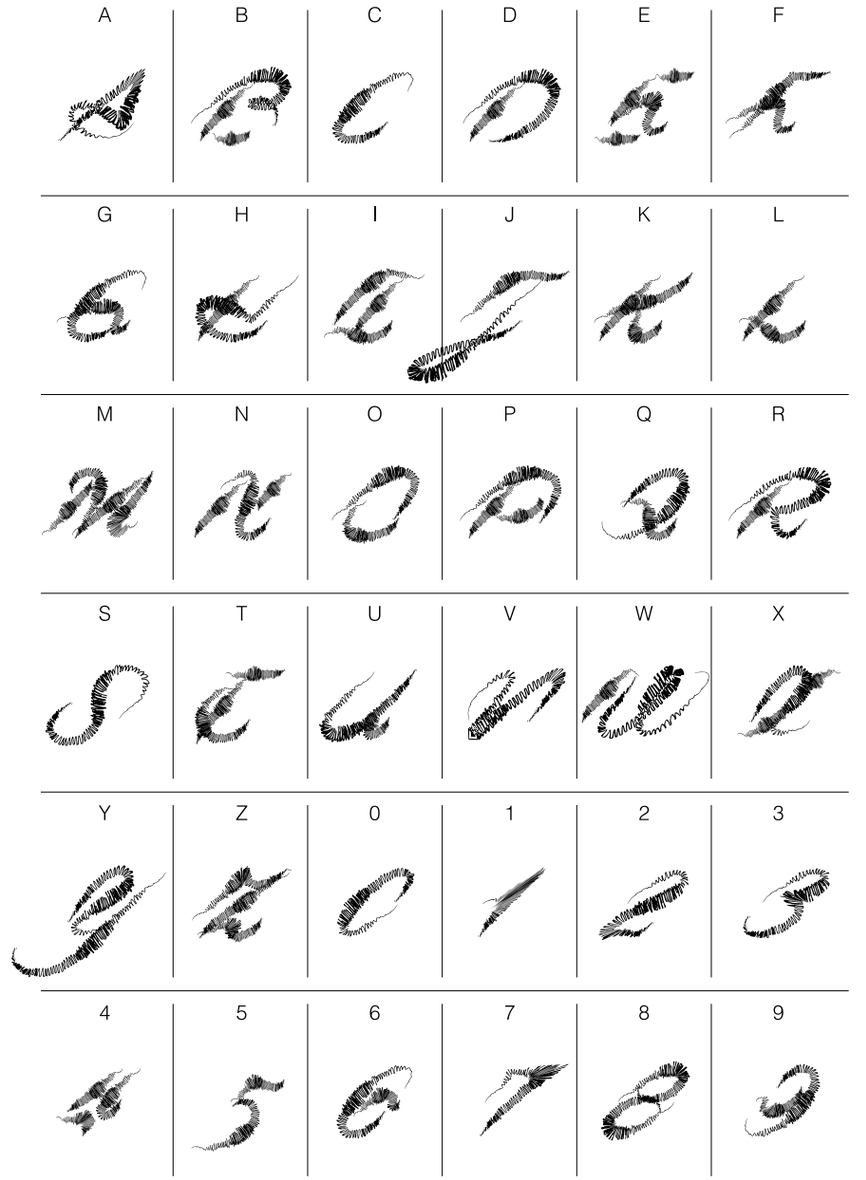


Laëngs is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.



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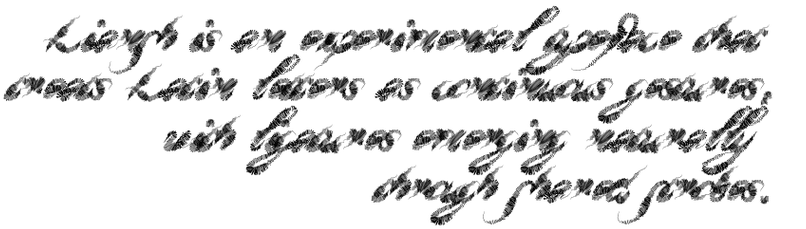

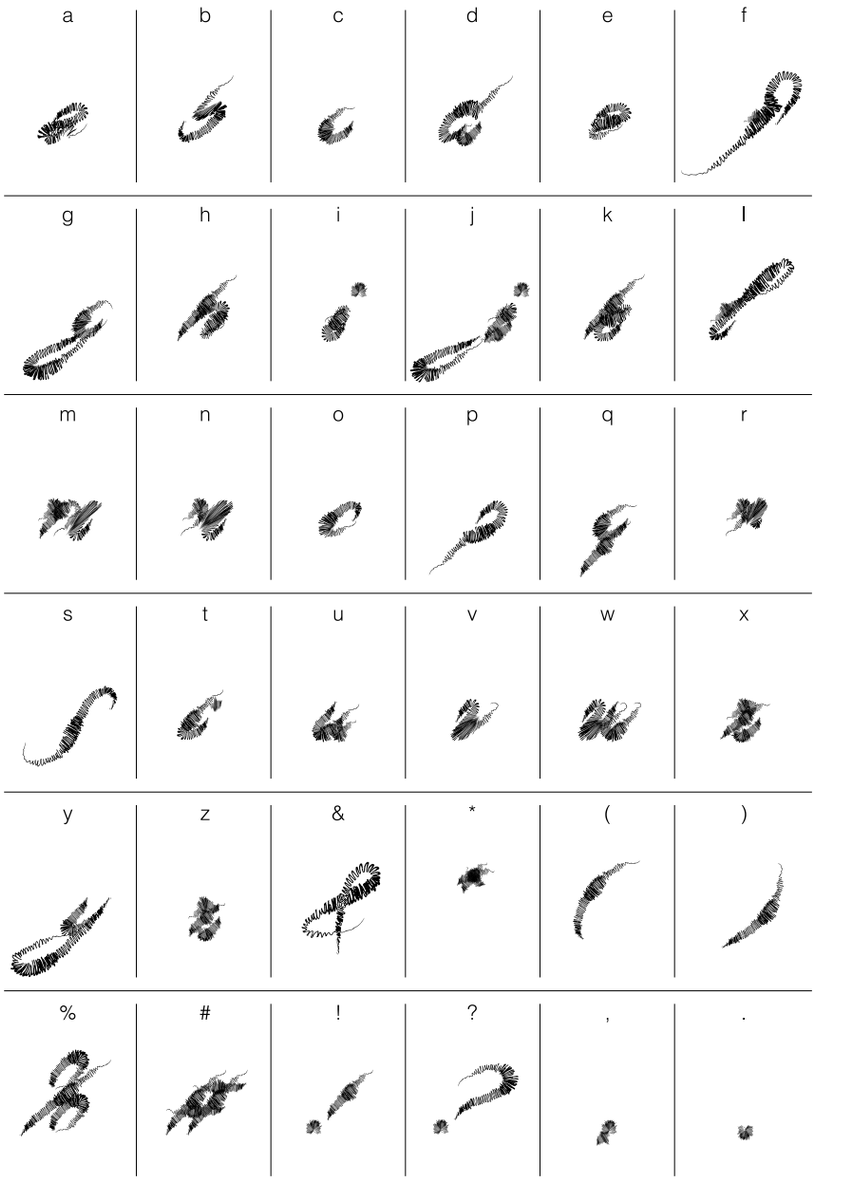
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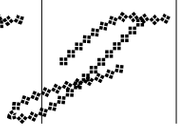
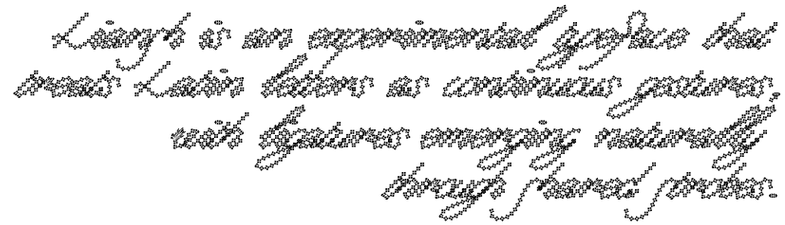
					

M	N	O	P	Q	R
					

S	T	U	V	W	X
					

Y	Z	0	1	2	3
					

4	5	6	7	8	9
					



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	&	*	(	)
					

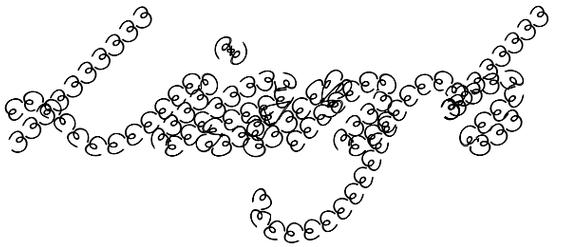
%	#	!	?	,	.
					

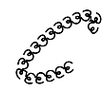
Liayh

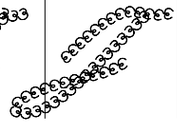
A	B	C	D	E	F
					
G	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**	**L**
					
M	**N**	**O**	**P**	**Q**	**R**
					
S	**T**	**U**	**V**	**W**	**X**
					
Y	**Z**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
					
4	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
					

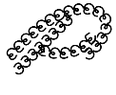
Liayh is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

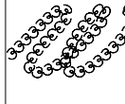
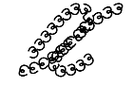
a	b	c	d	e	f
					
g	**h**	**i**	**j**	**k**	**l**
					
m	**n**	**o**	**p**	**q**	**r**
					
s	**t**	**u**	**v**	**w**	**x**
					
y	**z**	**&**	*****	**(**	**)**
					
%	**#**	**!**	**?**	**,**	**.**
					

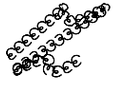
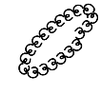


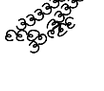
A	B	C	D	E	F
					

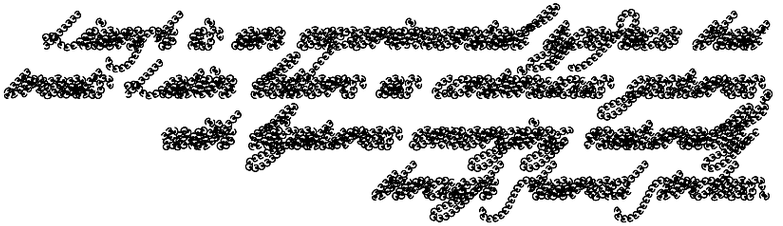
G	H	I	J	K	L
					

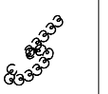
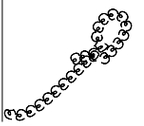
M	N	O	P	Q	R
					

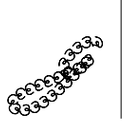
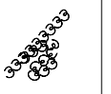
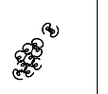
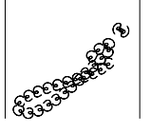
S	T	U	V	W	X
					

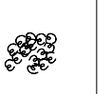
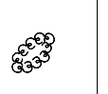
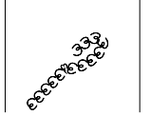
Y	Z	0	1	2	3
					

4	5	6	7	8	9
					



a	b	c	d	e	f
					

g	h	i	j	k	l
					

m	n	o	p	q	r
					

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		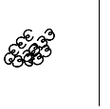			

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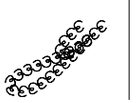		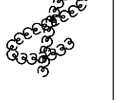			

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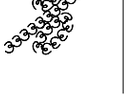
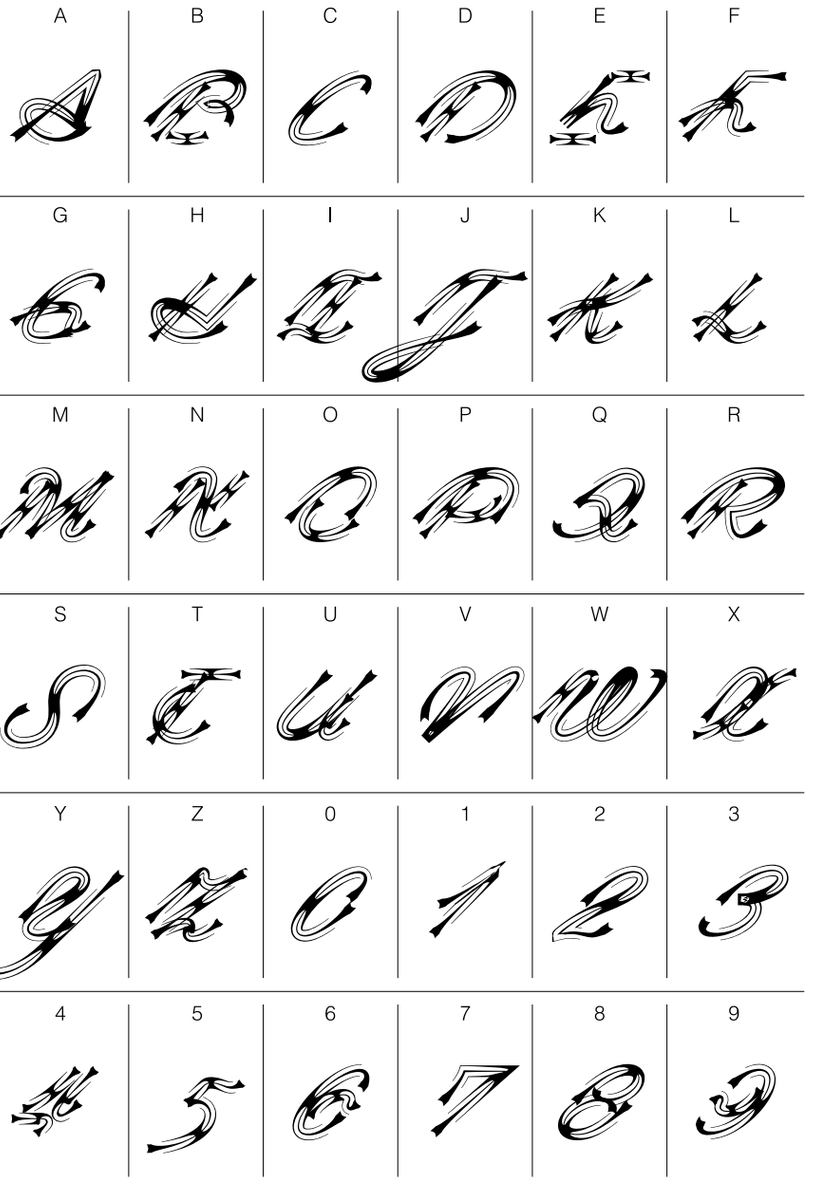
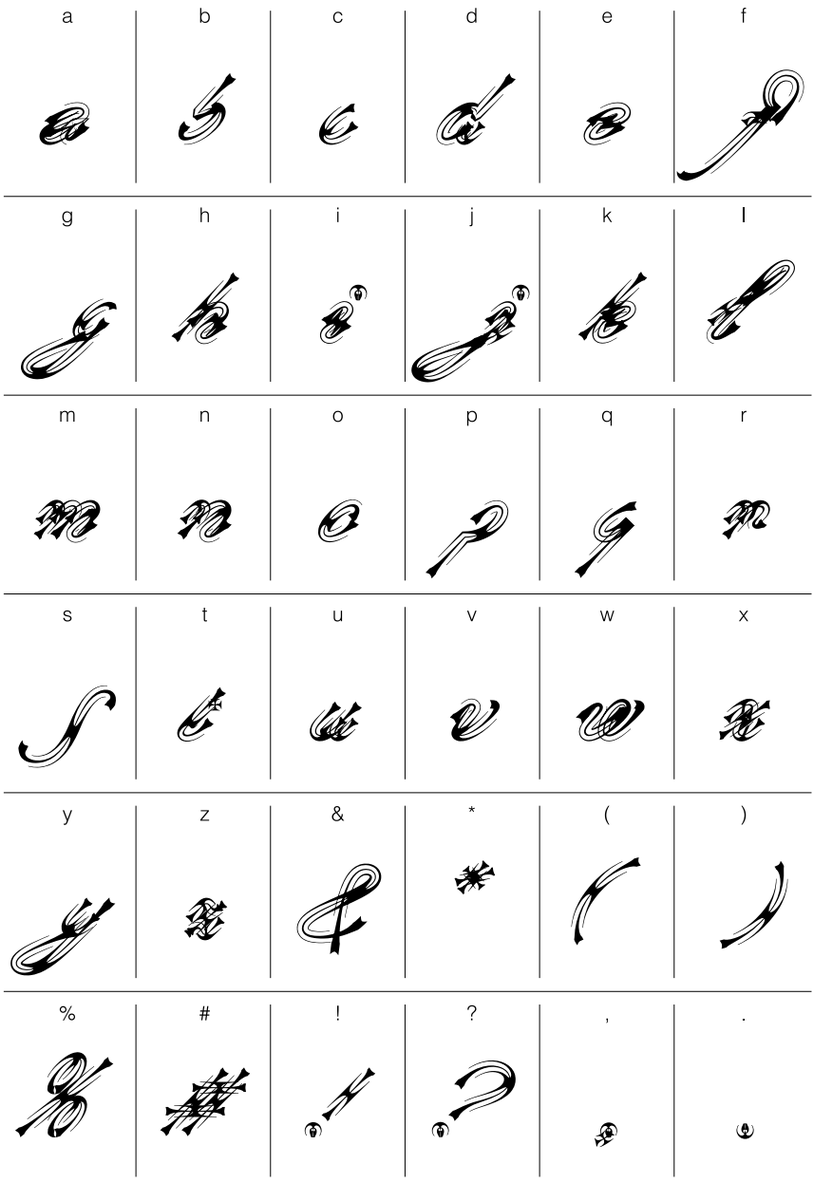
					

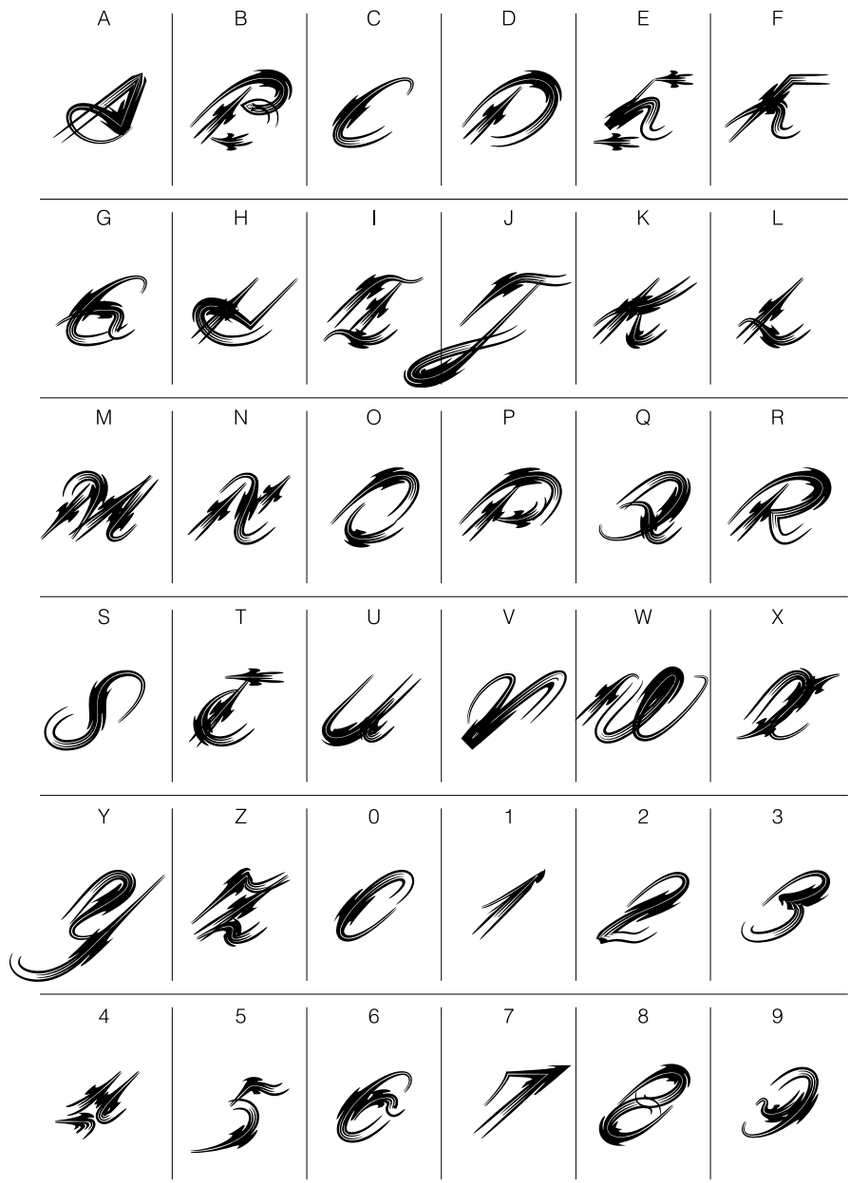
Kiengh



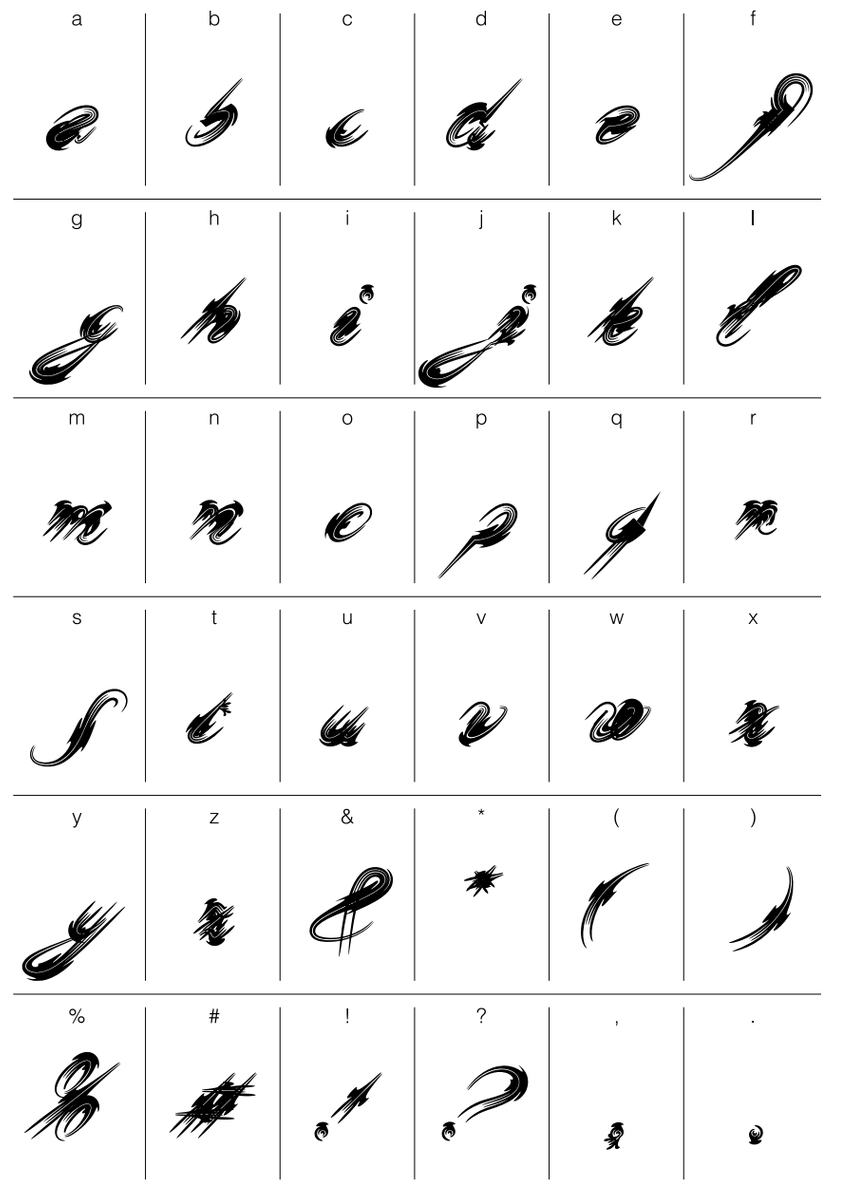
Kiengh is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

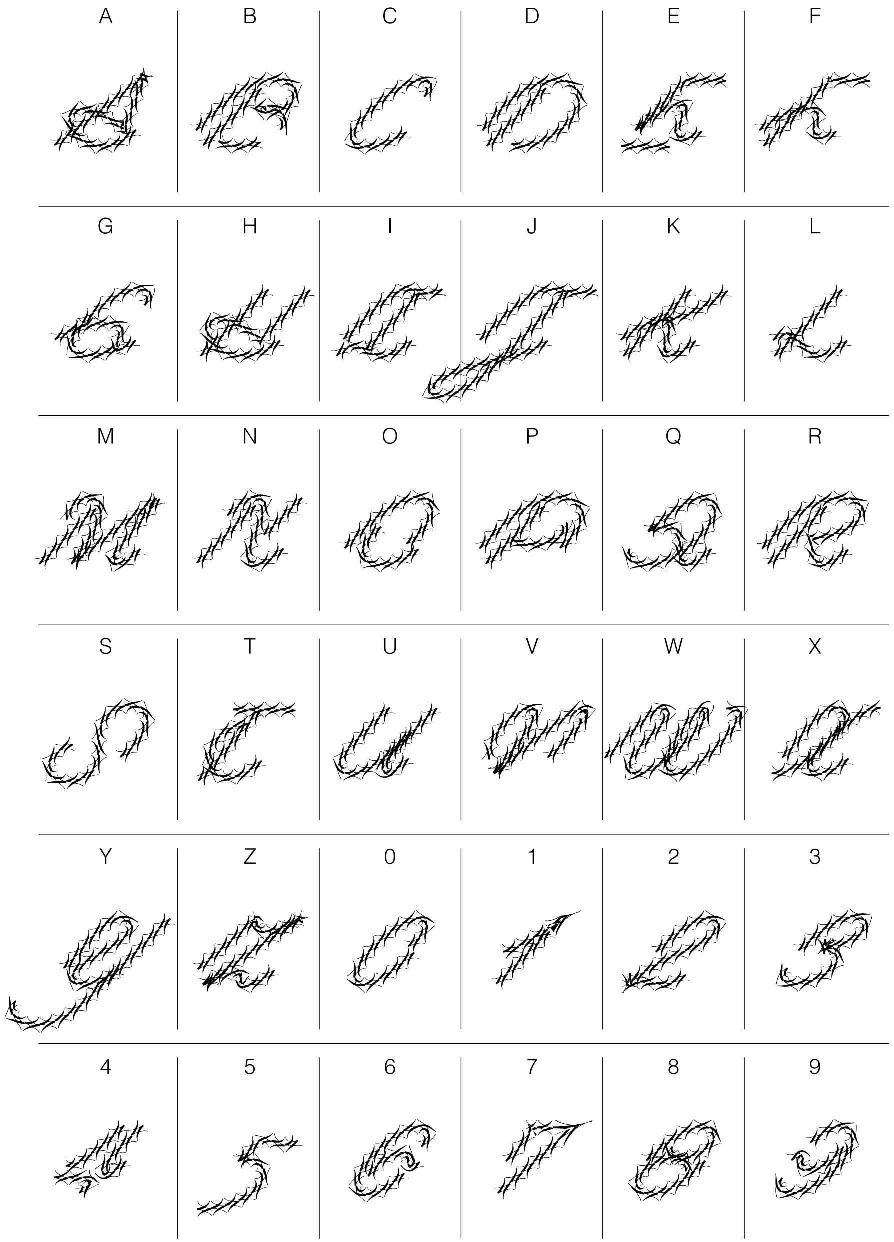


Liangh



Liangh is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

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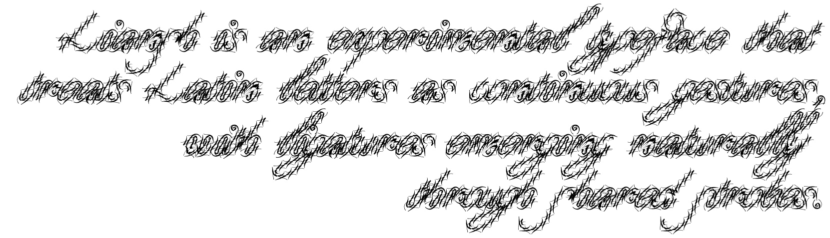
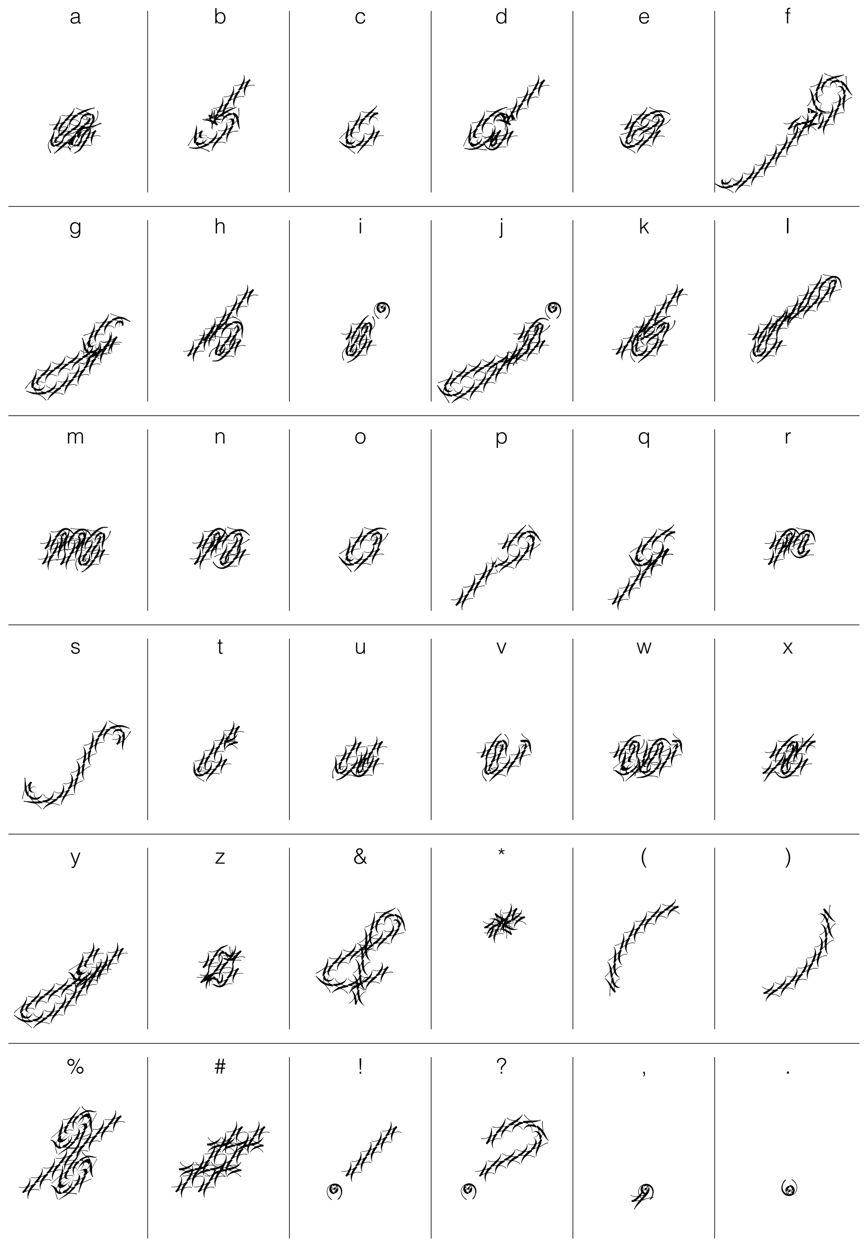
Y Z 0 1 2 3
4 5 6 7 8 9


is an experimental typeface that
treats Latin letters as continuous gestures,
with ligatures emerging naturally
through shared strokes.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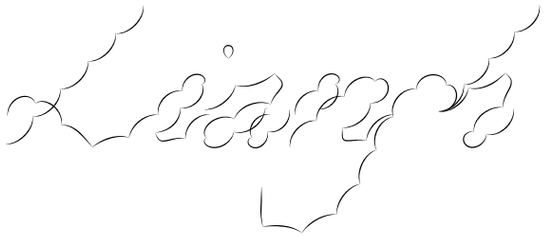

A	B	C	D	E	F
G	H	I	J	K	L
M	N	O	P	Q	R
S	T	U	V	W	X
Y	Z	0	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9

Liang's is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

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	&	*	(	)
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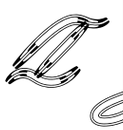
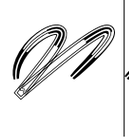
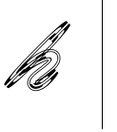
Liangk

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	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
					

Liangk is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

a	b	c	d	e	f
					
g	**h**	**i**	**j**	**k**	**l**
					
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	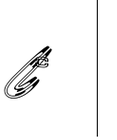				
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	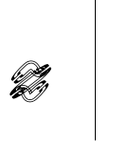				
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	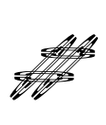				

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			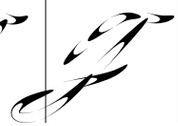		

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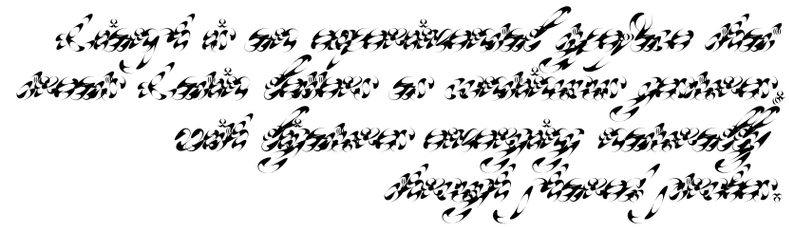

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				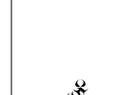	

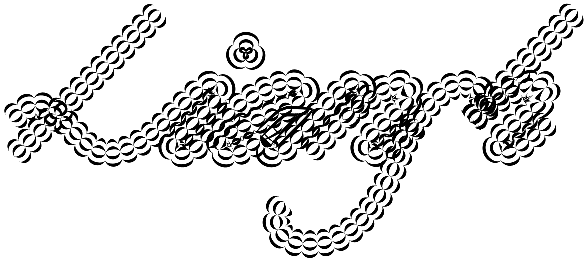

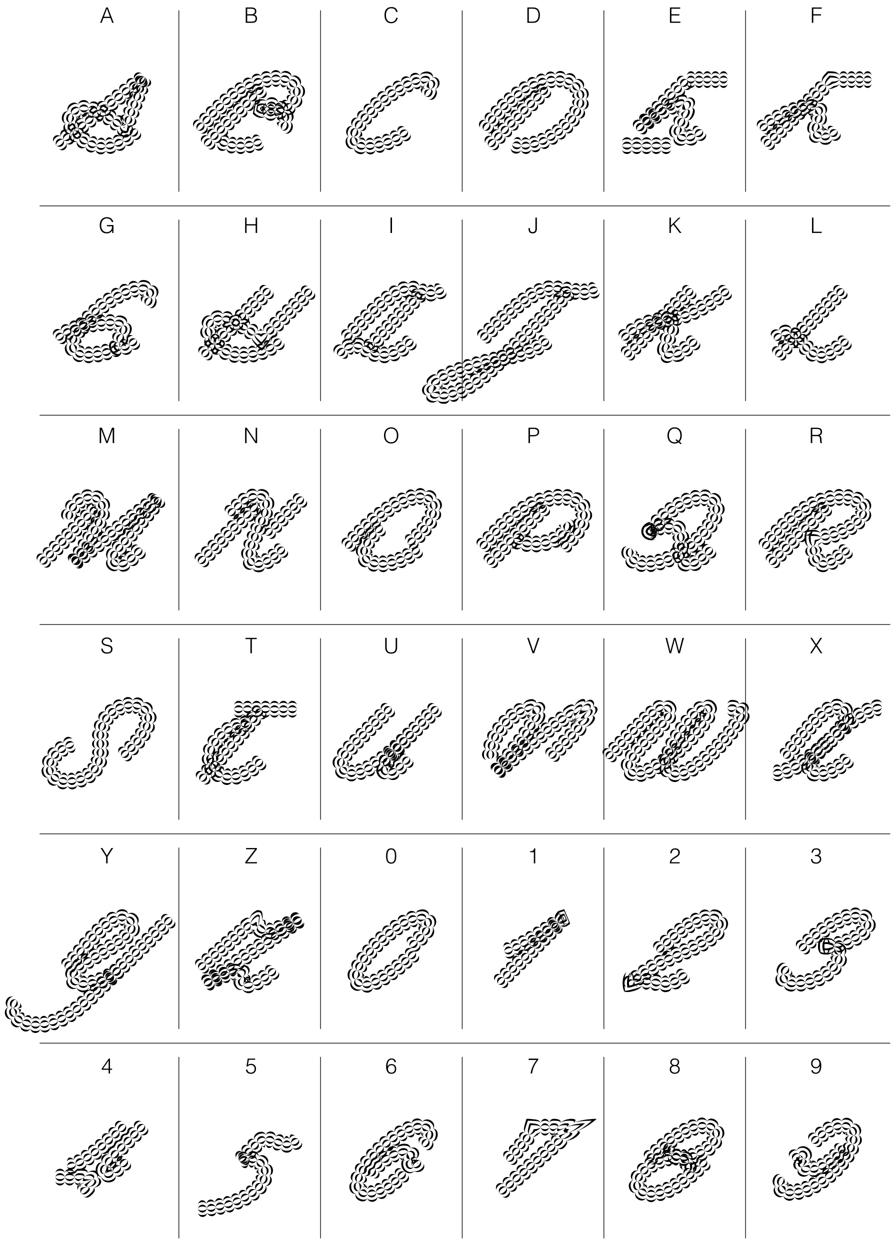
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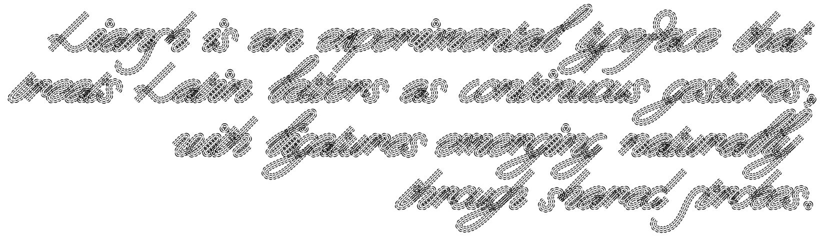
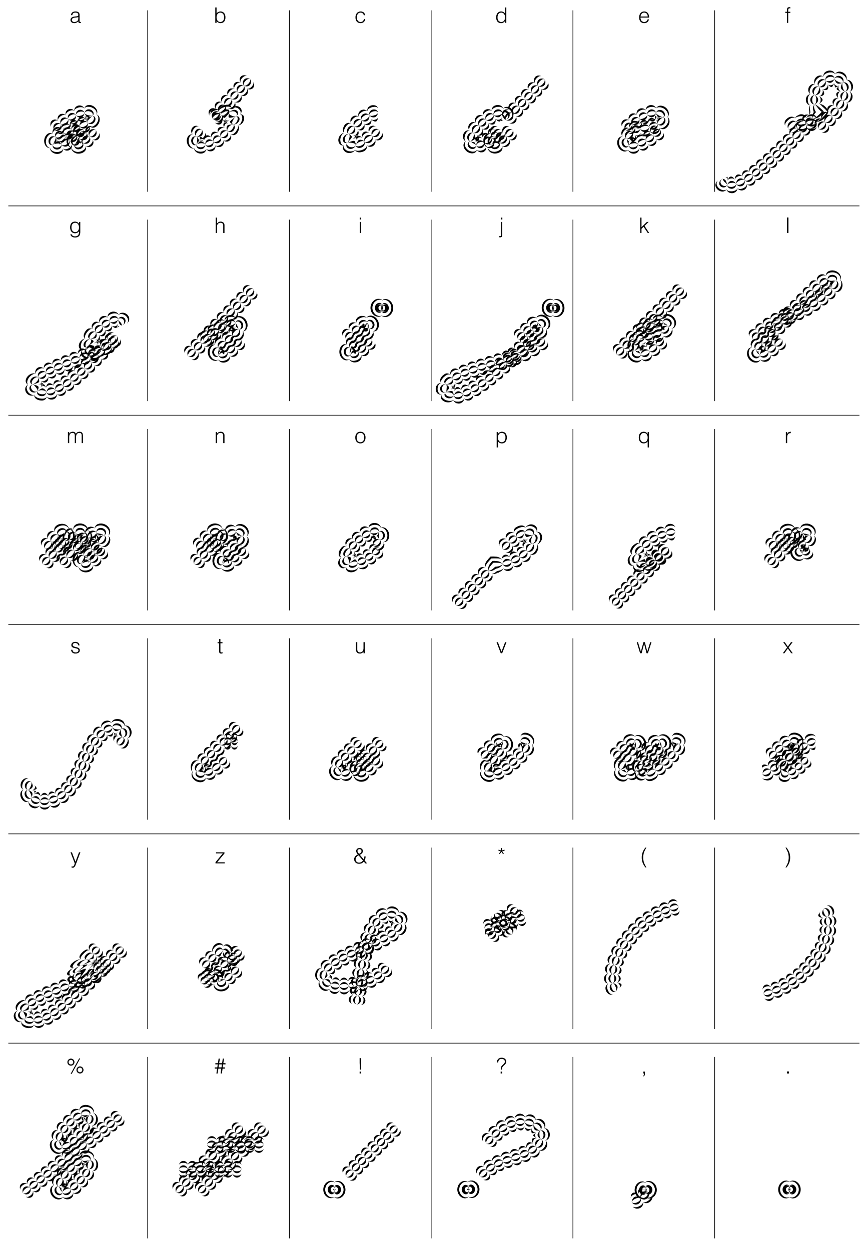

is an experimental typeface that
treats Latin letters as continuous gestures,
with ligatures emerging naturally
through shared strokes.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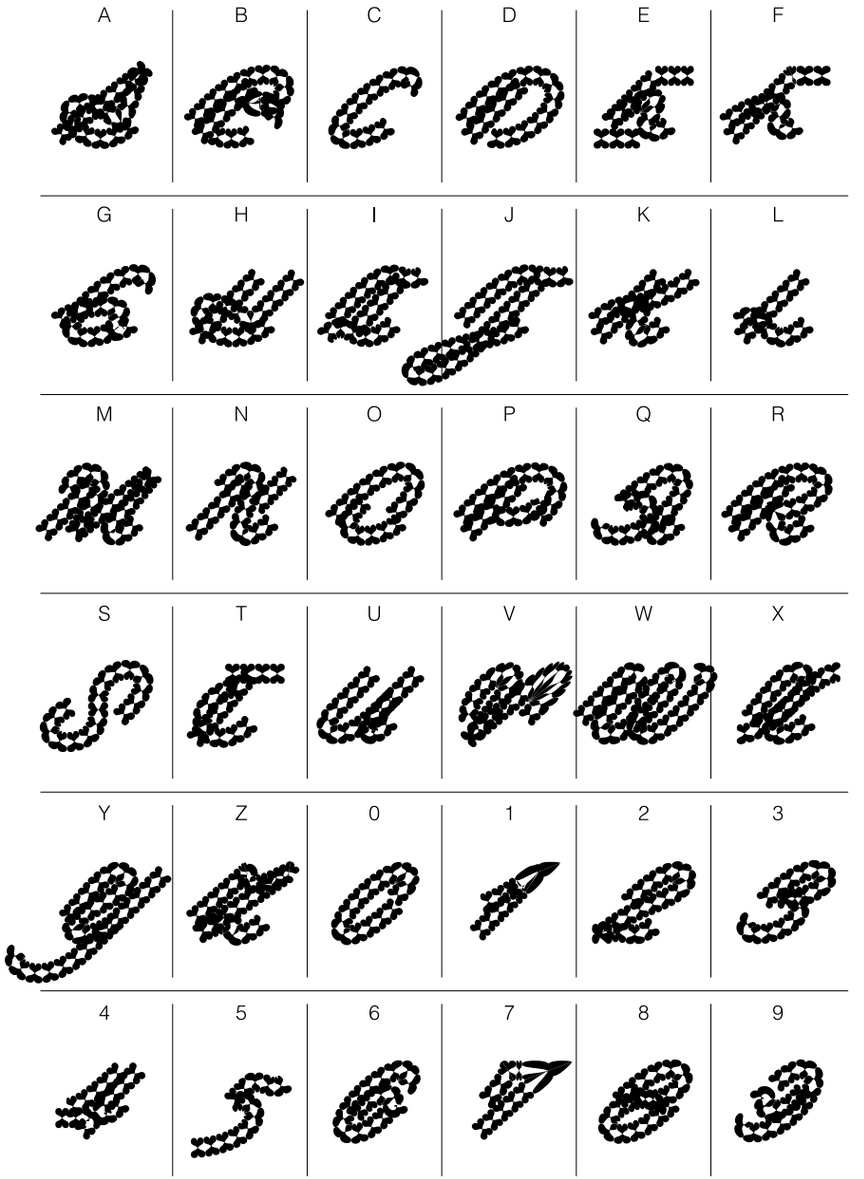
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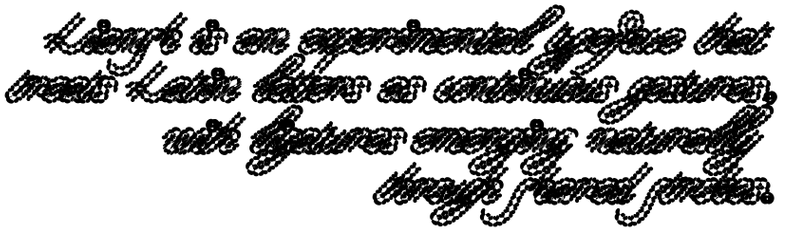

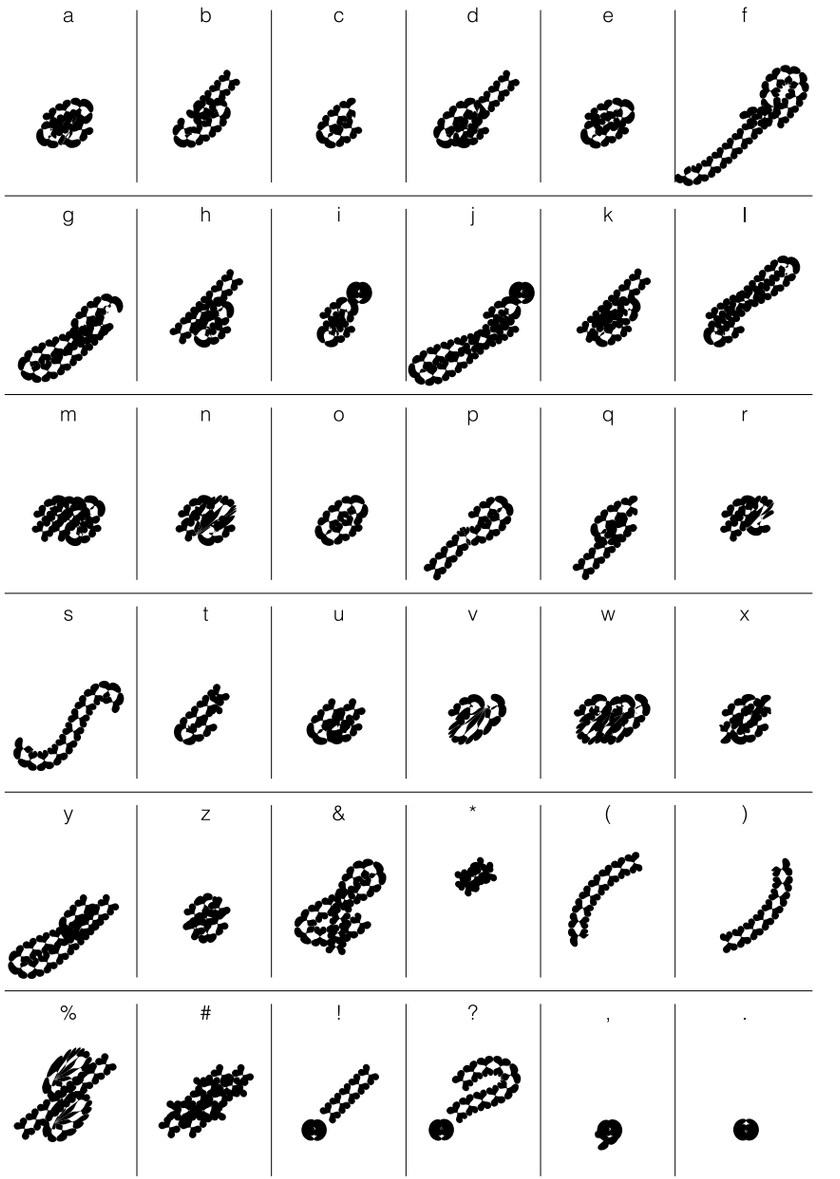
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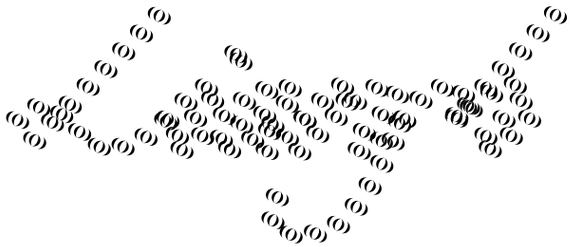

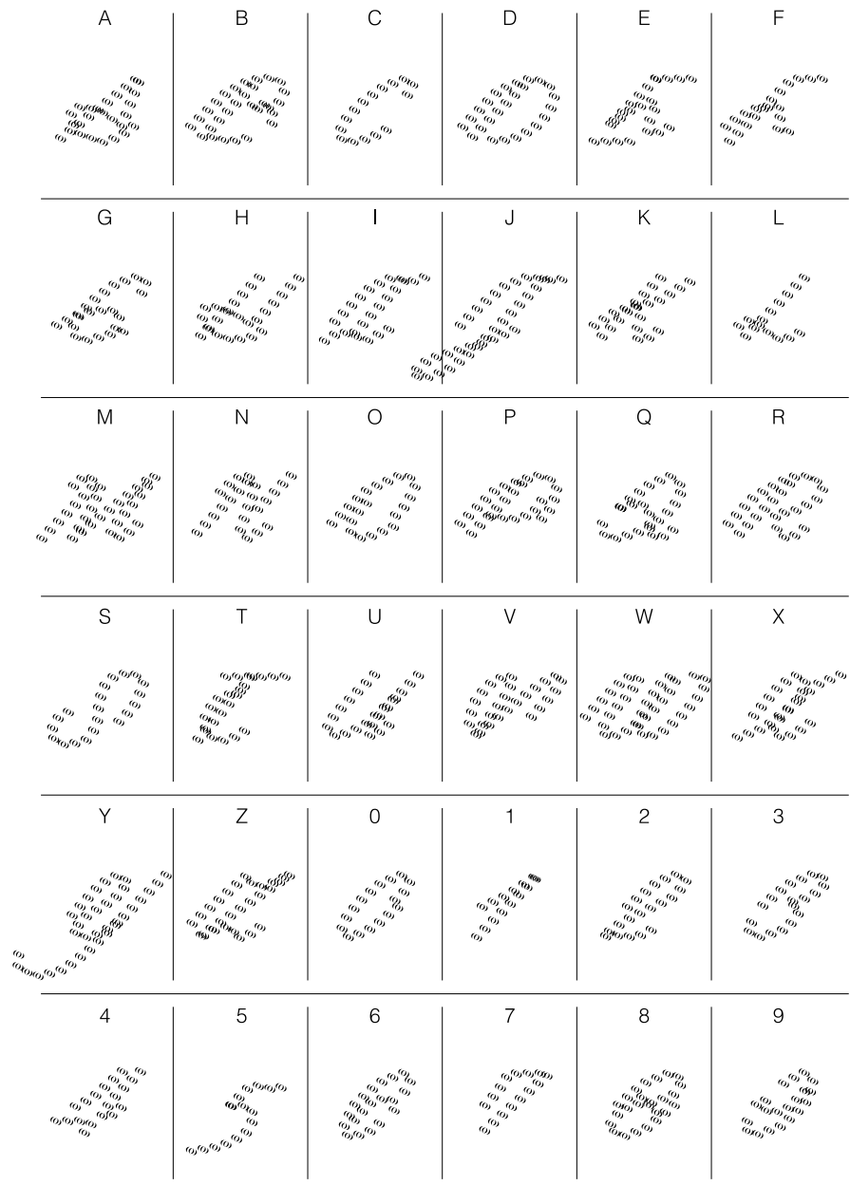
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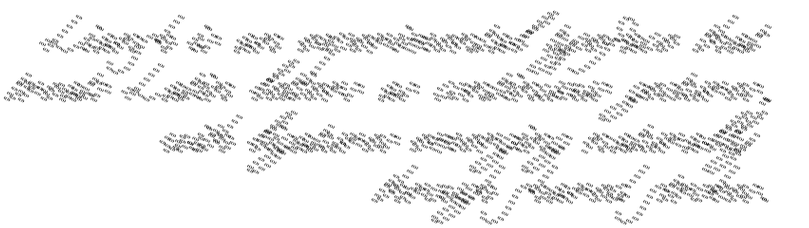

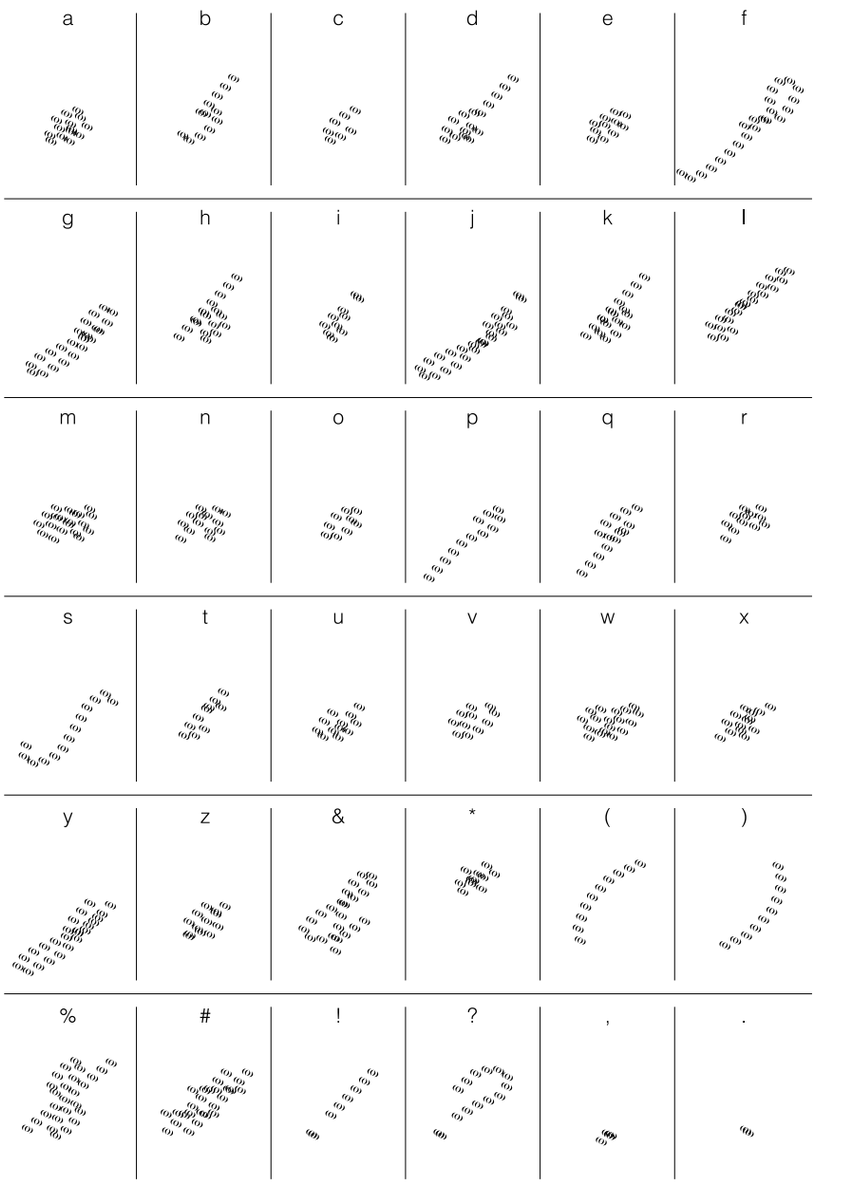
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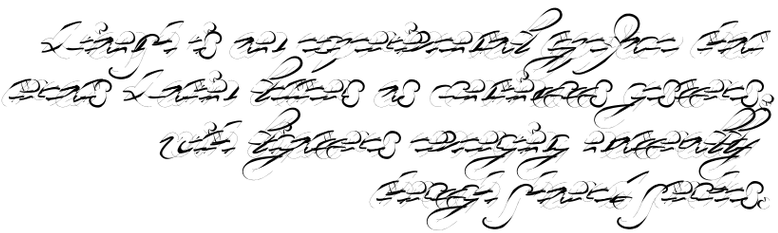

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Lïänyk

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S	**T**	**U**	**V**	**W**	**X**
					
Y	**Z**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**
					
4	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**
					

Lïänyk is an experimental typeface that treats Latin letters as continuous gestures, with ligatures emerging naturally through shared strokes.

a	b	c	d	e	f
					
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	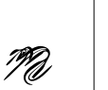				
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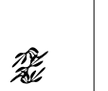
y	**z**	**&**	*****	**(**	**)**
					
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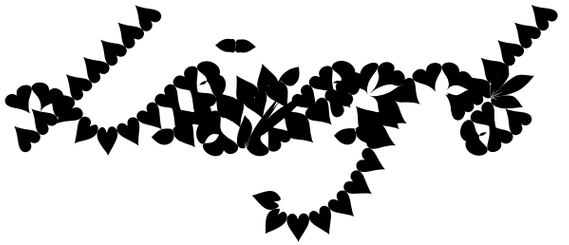

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			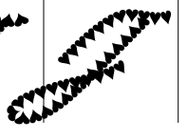		

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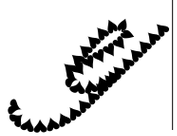					

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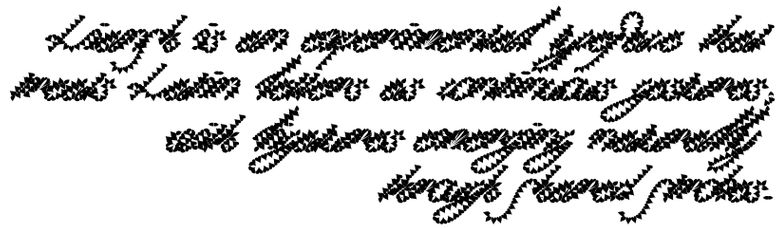

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			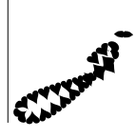		

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			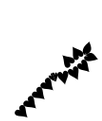		

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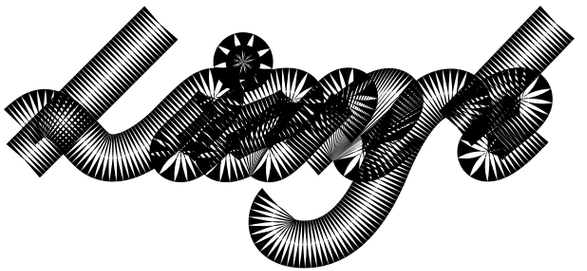

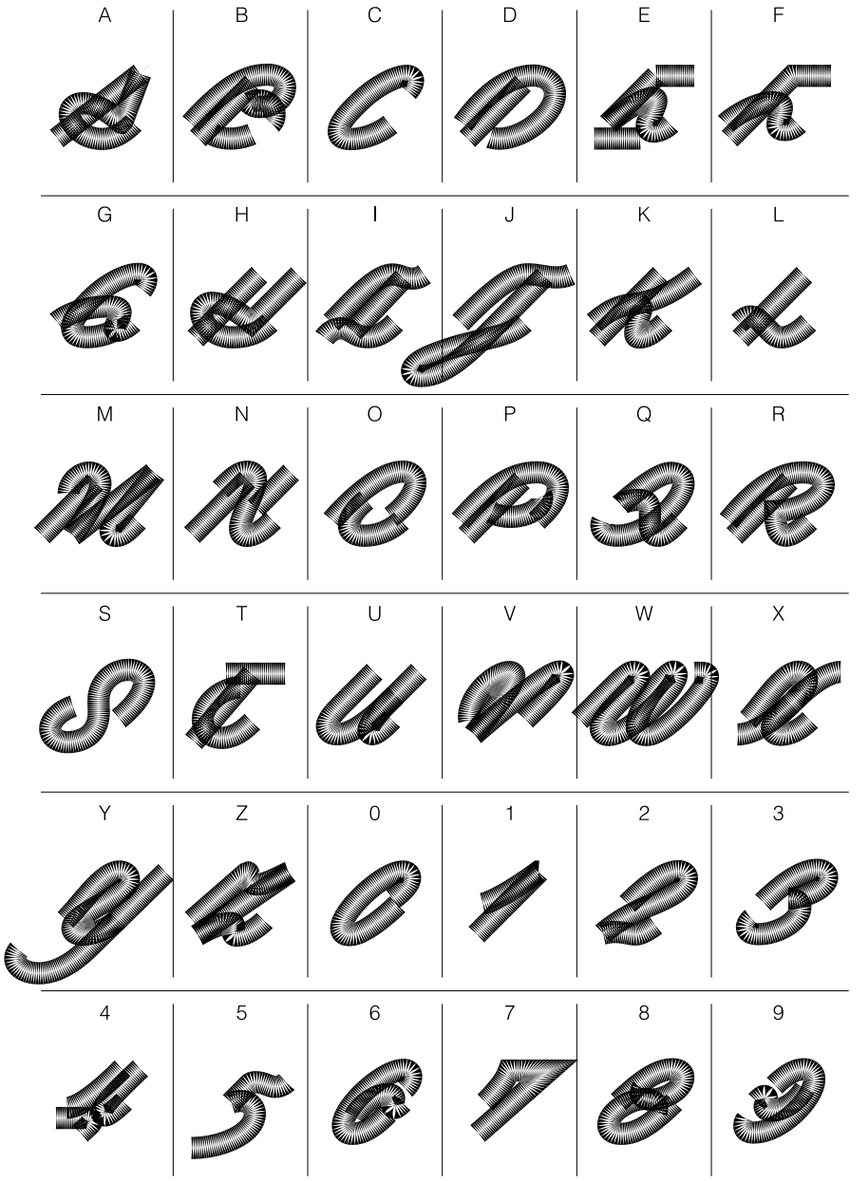
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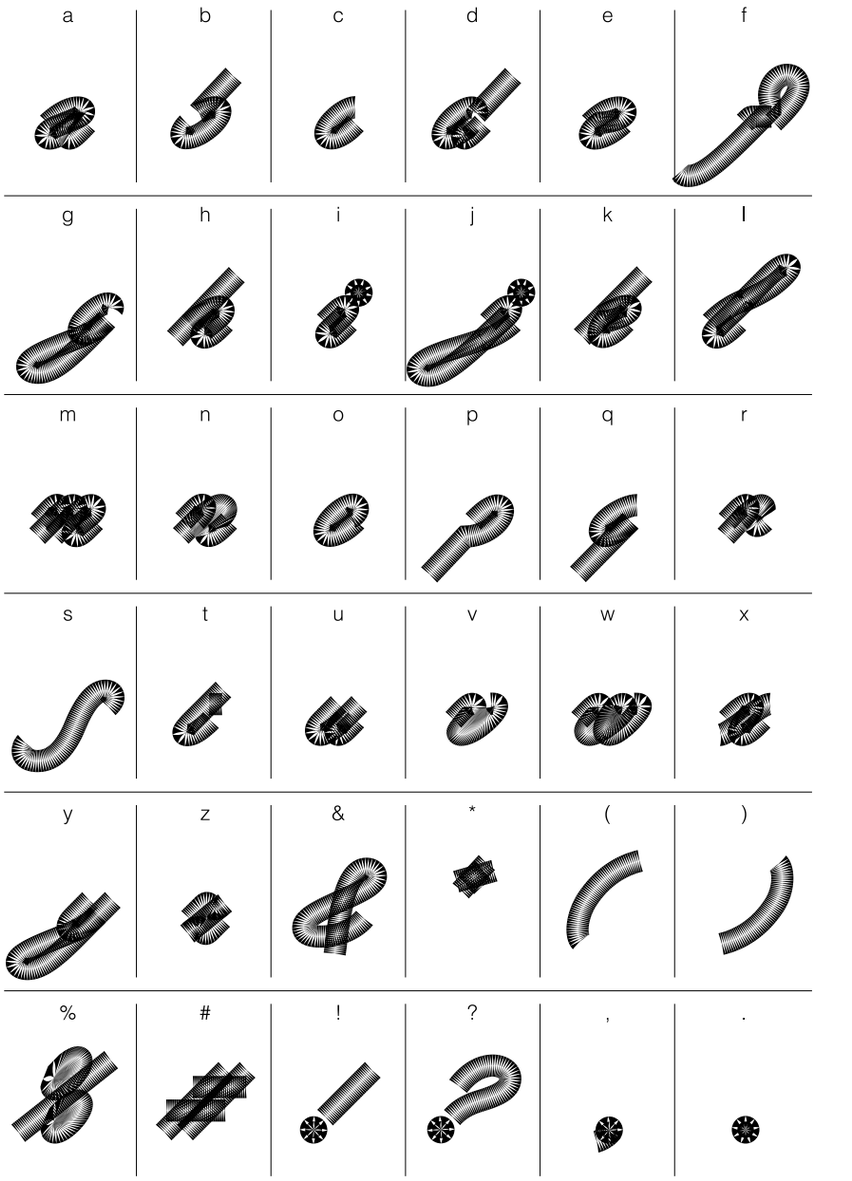
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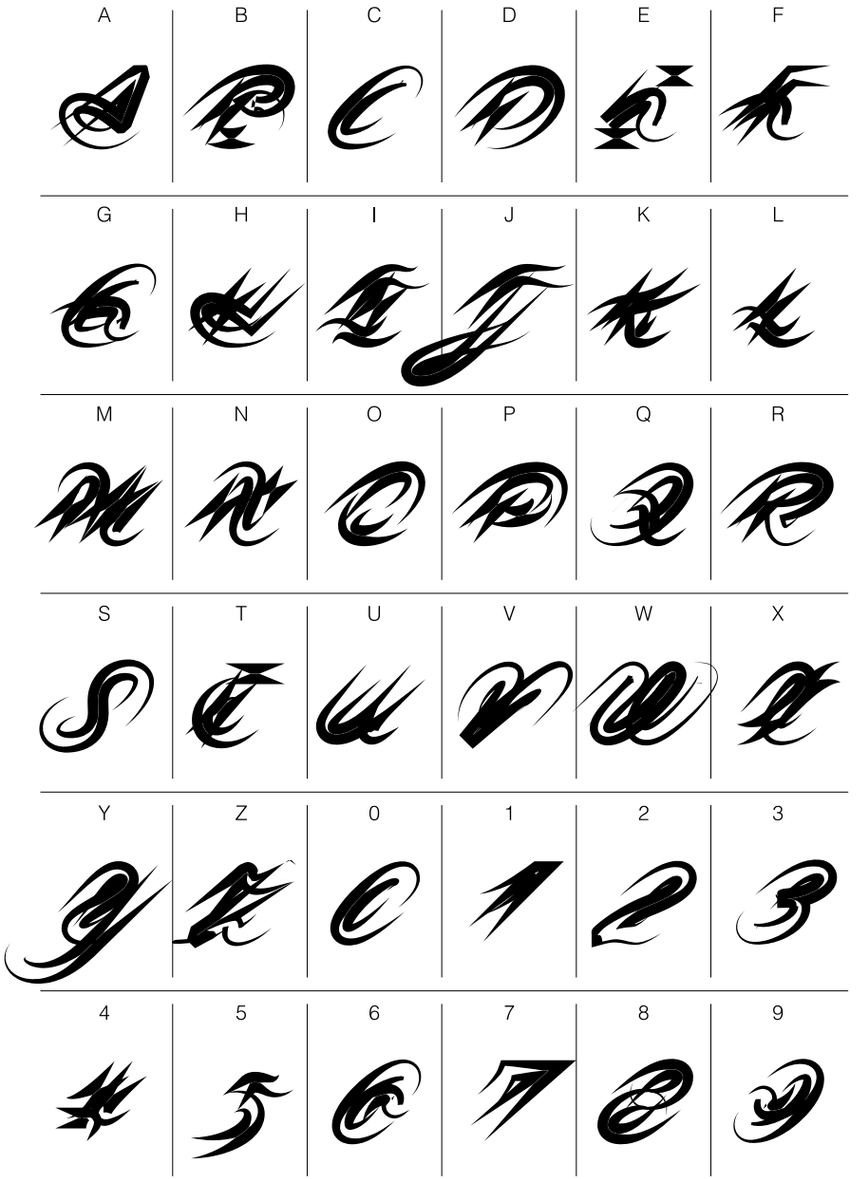
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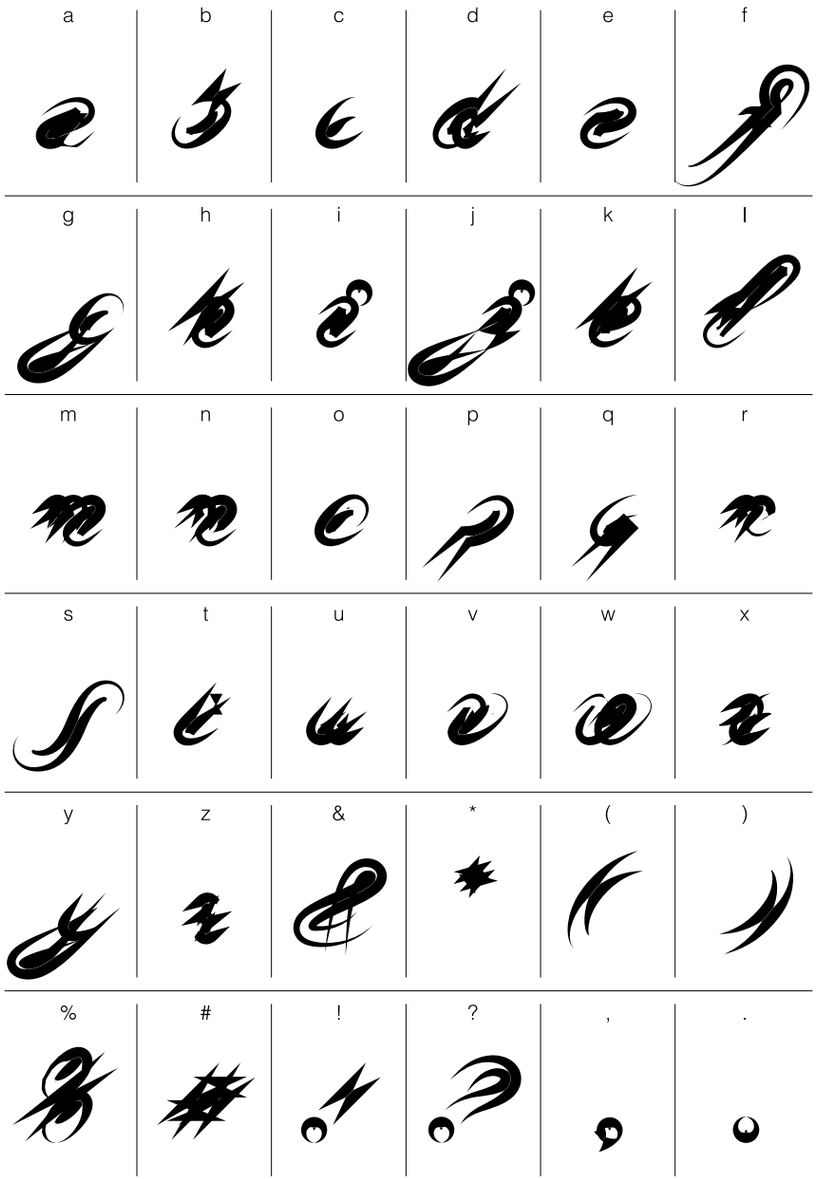
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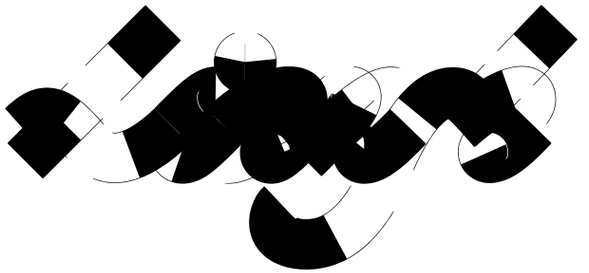

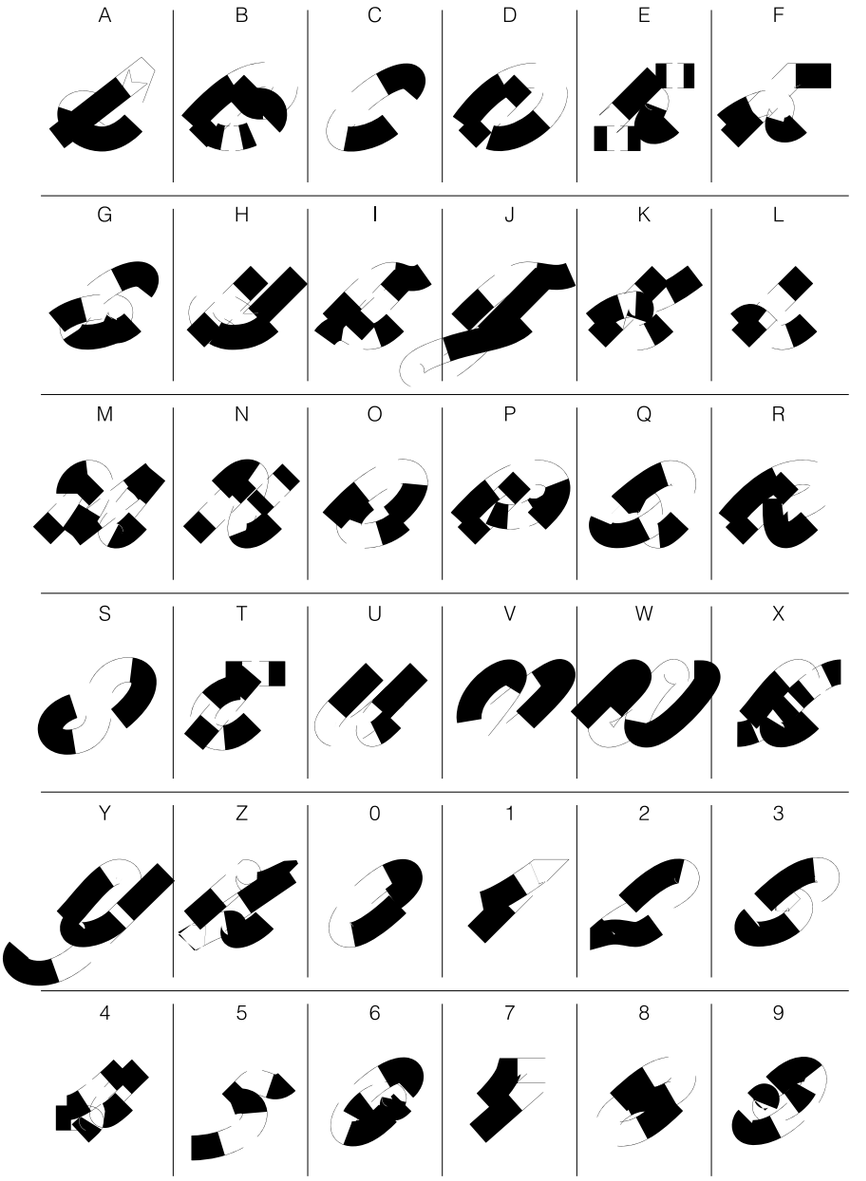
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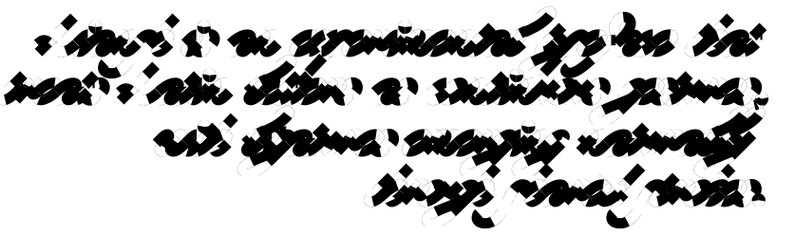

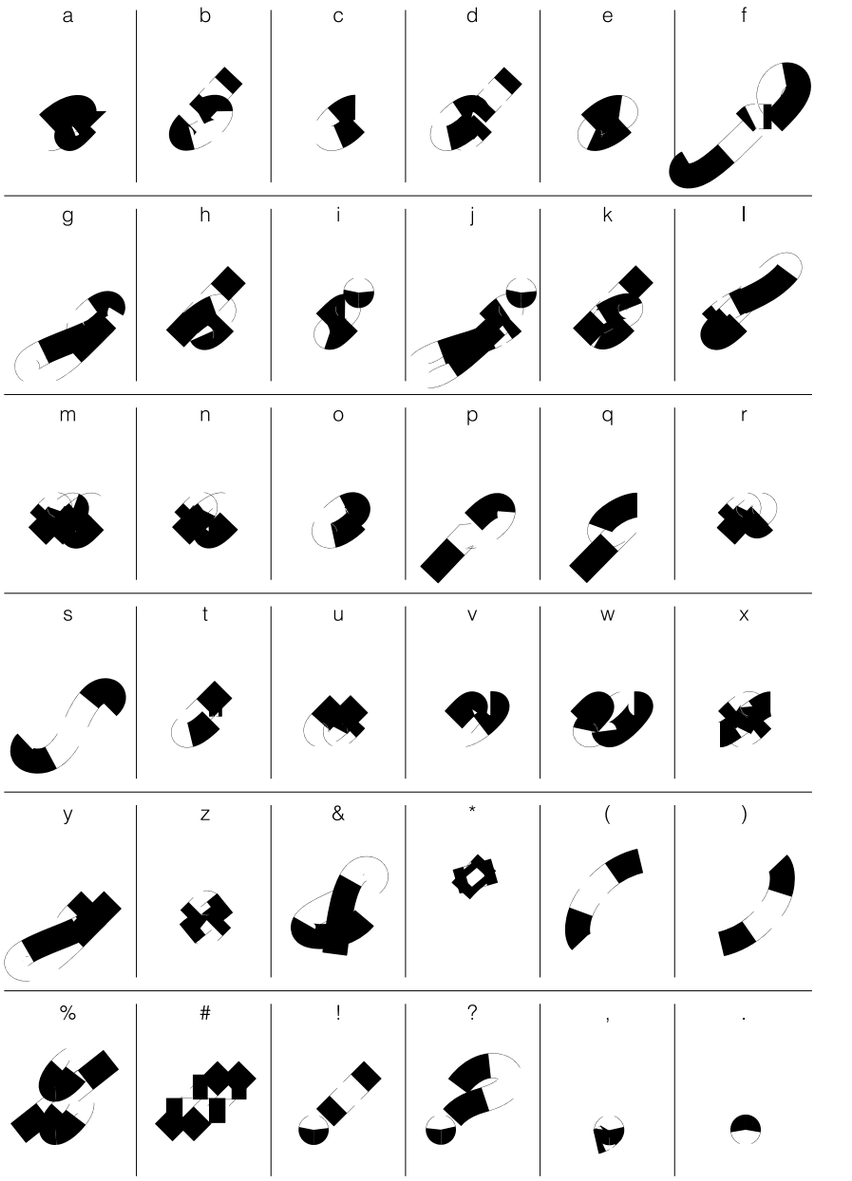
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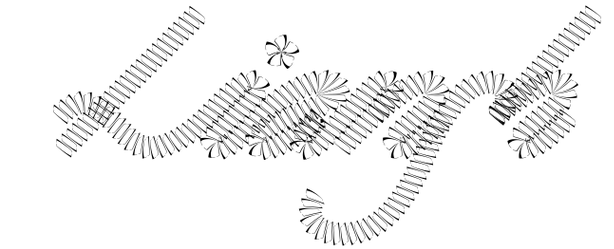

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		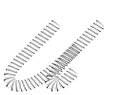	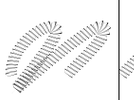		

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					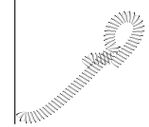

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			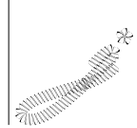		

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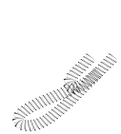					

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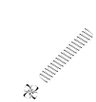
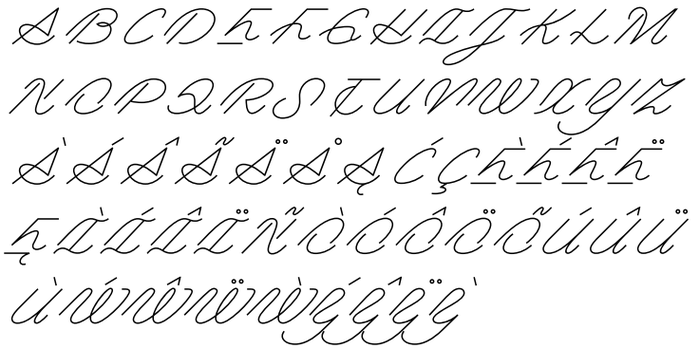
					

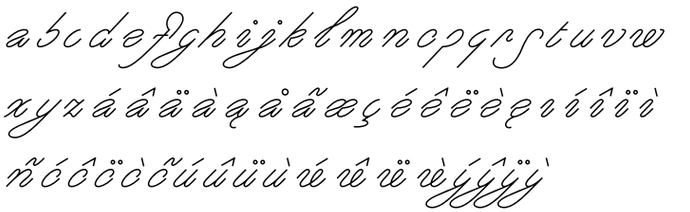
Chapter 10

Current Outcome

Uppercase

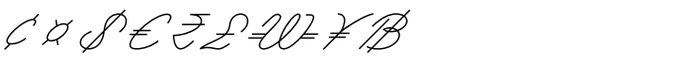


Lowercase

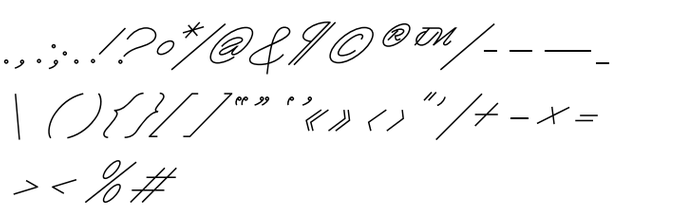


Figures

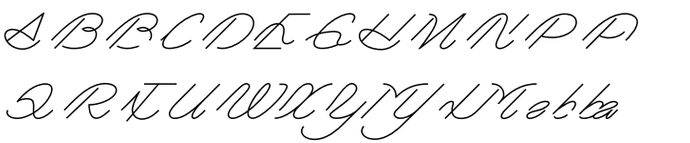
Currencies



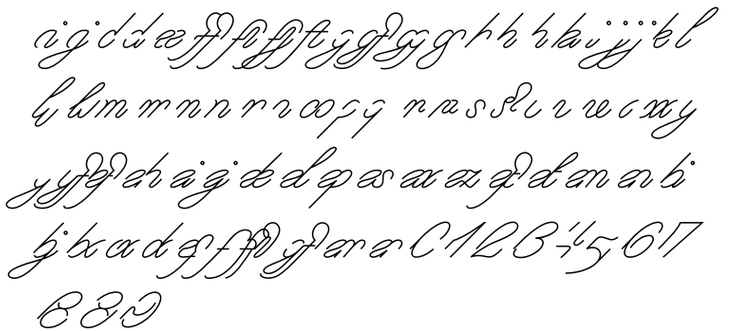
Punctuations



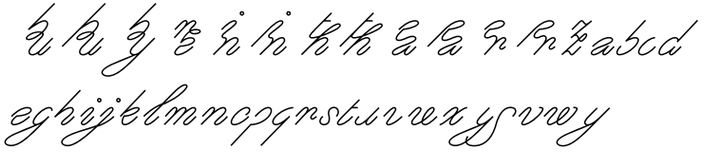
Contextual Design



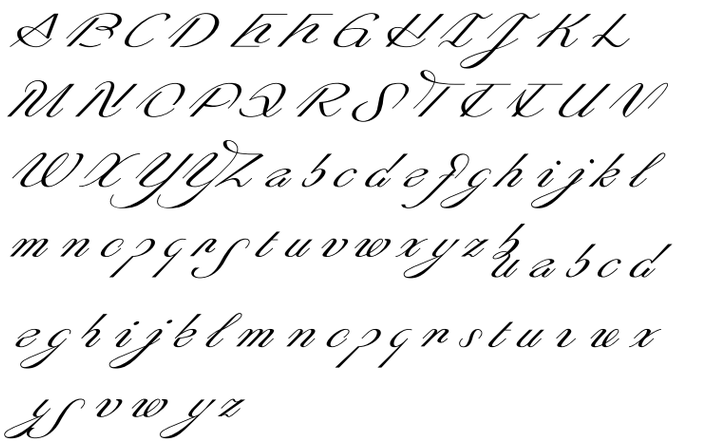
Contextual Design



Vertical System



Contrast Version



10 pt

Rivens of script drift softly, lettens nesting inside one anothen. Nothing stands alone. Feinst breath nises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

15 pt

Rivens of script drift softly, lettens nesting inside one anothen. Nothing stands alone. Feinst breath nises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

20 pt

Rivens of script drift softly, lettens nesting inside one anothen. Nothing stands alone. Feinst breath nises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

25 pt

Rivens of script drift softly, lettens nesting inside one anothen. Nothing stands alone. Feinst breath nises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

30 pt

Rivens of script drift softly, lettens nesting inside one anothen. Nothing stands alone. Feinst breath nises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

12 pt

Rivers of script drift softly, letters resting inside one another. Nothing stands alone. First breath rises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

16 pt

Rivers of script drift softly, letters resting inside one another. Nothing stands alone. First breath rises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

20 pt

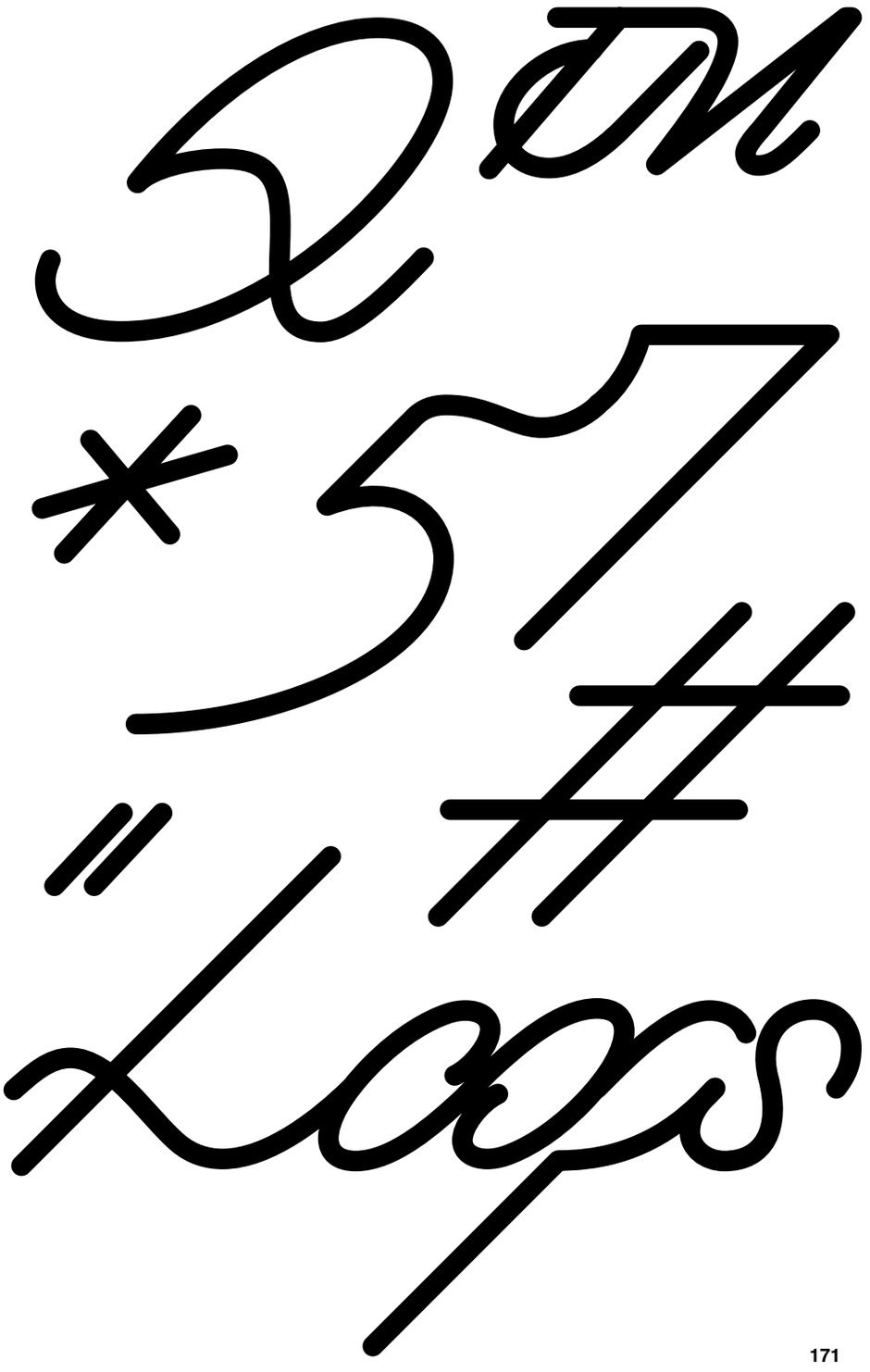
Rivers of script drift softly, letters resting in-side one another. Nothing stands alone. First breath rises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

26 pt

Rivers of script drift softly, letters resting inside one another. Nothing stands alone. First breath rises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

26 pt + vertical ligature

Rivers of script drift softly, letters resting inside one another. Nothing stands alone. First breath rises in restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.



10 pt

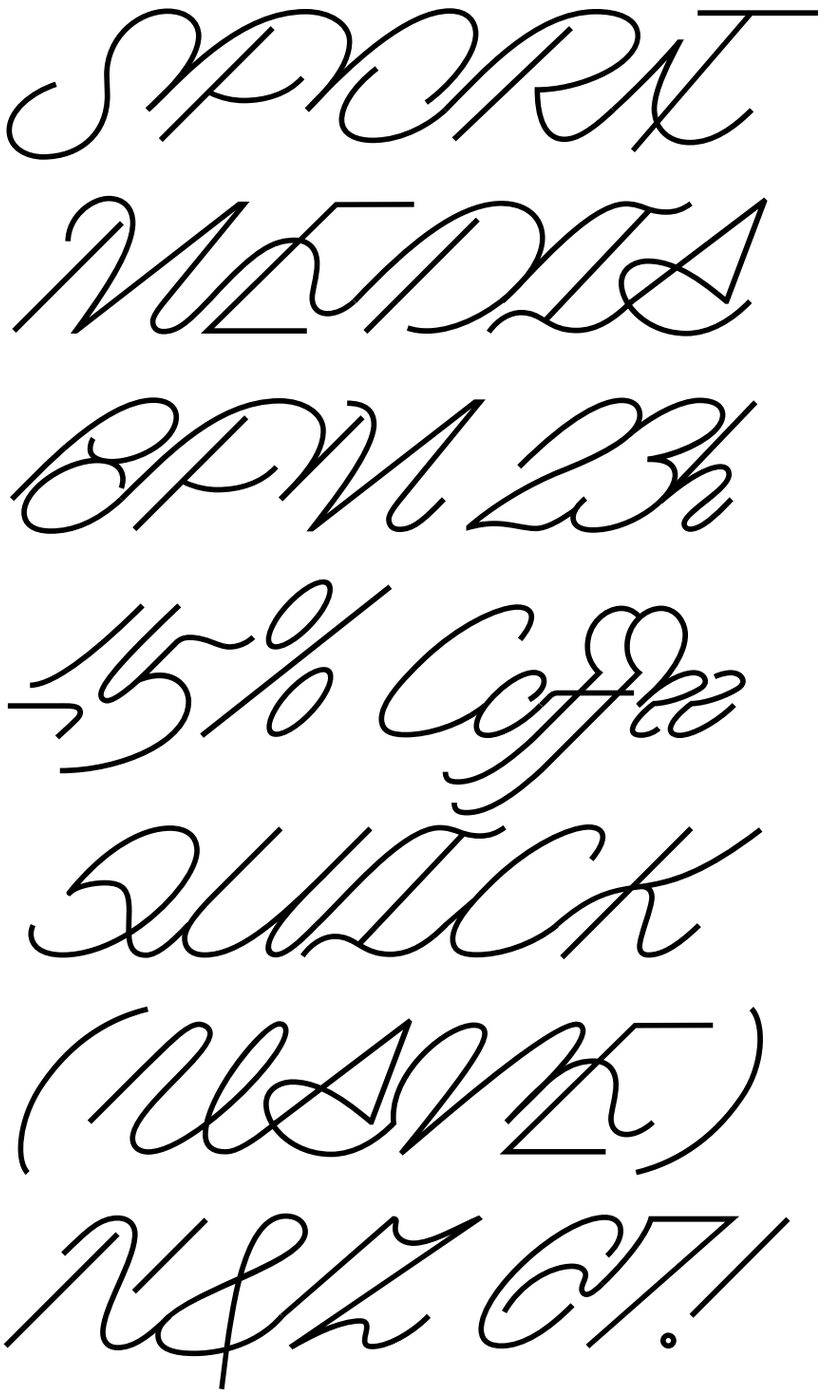
Rivers of script drift softly, letters resting inside one another. Nothing stands alone. First breath raises lin restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

18 pt

Rivers of script drift softly, letters resting inside one another. Nothing stands alone. First breath raises lin restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.

25 pt

Rivers of script drift softly, letters resting inside one another. Nothing stands alone. First breath raises lin restless strokes, fusing lines into one fluent rhythm.



85 pt

Chapter 11

Conclusion

Conclusion

This diploma project explored the boundary between text, symbol, and visual form, proposing a new approach to Latin script based on the structural principles of cursive writing. Through repeated experimentation and numerous failed attempts, I realized that type design cannot rely solely on surface aesthetics. Letterforms are not merely shapes to be decorated; they are structured components governed by cultural conventions, gestural dynamics, and functional relationships.

By comparing Chinese and Western cursive traditions, I identified fundamental differences in how letters can connect and interact. Chinese cursive allows structural flexibility, enabling characters to merge and share strokes, while Western letters are conventionally independent and their connections are generally limited to horizontal ligatures. This insight inspired the creation of a new script system in which Latin letters could share strokes and generate continuous ligatures systematically, maintaining both rhythm and coherence.

The project demonstrates that a writing system can operate beyond conventional legibility, treating letters and words as visual units capable of conveying meaning through structure, motion, and flow. Furthermore, by separating the underlying skeleton from stylistic treatments, this framework allows multiple visual interpretations from a single structural logic. Ultimately, the work shows that thoughtful engagement with the cultural and structural dimensions of script, rather than its mere appearance, can produce a typeface system that is both expressive and conceptually grounded.

Reflection and Future Development

This project has allowed me to explore the boundary between text, symbol, and image, revealing how a writing system can generate

meaning beyond conventional legibility. Through repeated experimentation, I established a skeletal framework capable of producing continuous ligatures, and tested its capacity for structural consistency across letters, positions, and orientations. The process highlighted not only the creative potential of shared strokes, but also the necessity of systematic design: structure must guide form if variation is to remain coherent.

Looking forward, the next phase of development will focus on contextual refinement and expansion. Further exploration of vertical ligatures and multi-letter interactions could extend the system's spatial possibilities, while continuous testing of alternative stroke weights, textures, and styles will deepen its visual flexibility. Beyond these experimental variations, I am particularly interested in translating the principles developed here to Roman typefaces. This will challenge the framework in a new typographic context, testing whether the generative logic of shared strokes and systematic ligature can inform a more conventional Latin alphabet design, while retaining its inherent expressivity.

Ultimately, this project is both a design and research experiment. It has revealed that writing systems can be treated as malleable frameworks rather than fixed forms, and that exploration of their internal logic can generate both aesthetic and conceptual insight. Future work will continue to probe these possibilities, bridging the gap between experimental script, typographic structure, and expressive letterform design.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the entire teaching team at EsadType—Sébastien Morlighem, Patrick Doan, Hugues Gentile, Hélène Marian, Sarah Kremer, and Frederik Berlaen. Each of them shines in their respective fields while patiently and attentively guiding me. When I first began exploring Latin type design, my knowledge and practical experience were extremely limited. Previously, I had only worked as a graphic designer creating poster titles and logos. Through the structured education at EsadType, I feel that I have truly stepped into the world of type design for the first time. I know that my skills and experience are still far from sufficient, yet their teaching and encouragement have had a profound and lasting impact on me. Over the past two years, I have benefited immensely from their guidance.

I am also grateful to the staff at Ésad Amiens, including Barbara Dennys, Alisa Nowak, Catherine Cresson, Peggy Letuppe, Arnaud Fudala, and Arnaud Vilbert. Their professionalism and warmth allowed me to study comfortably in a relatively unfamiliar language environment. My thanks also go to guest faculty members Frank Griesshammer, Erik van Blokland, Paul van der Laan, and Emma Marichal. Although our interaction was brief, their lectures provided a deep and comprehensive perspective on the field of type design.

I wish to give special thanks to my classmates Gabin Traverse, Kamyab Jafari, Patrick Ometto, and Sidharth Jaishankar, whose guidance on letterforms and programming was invaluable. I am also grateful to the students of 25–27, who encouraged me during moments of doubt, and especially to Elianore Tchoutang, who patiently helped me improve my French and motivated me to be more confident in all aspects.

Finally, I thank my family for their love and support throughout my studies in France. I also thank myself, for persisting through this journey, even if the path was not always perfect.

(11) Conclusion

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List of Illustrations

FIG. 1 Huai Su (Tang Dynasty), *Selected Chinese Calligraphy : Zixu Tie 43.* Nigensha Co., Ltd., Tokyo, Japan, 1989. ISBN 4-544-00543-4

FIG. 2 -7 Jinchaochuanzhang. How Does Cursive Script Use Simplification, 360doc Personal Library, April 2023. Available at : http://www.360doc.com/content/23/0402/13/35839616_1074765384.shtml

FIG. 8 Sun Guoting, the character “zhi”, excerpted from *Shupu.*

FIG. 9 Zhao Mengfu, the character “liu”, excerpted from *Seventeen Letters (Shiqi Tie).*

FIG. 10 Huaisu, the character “guo”, excerpted from *Autobiographical Essay (Zixu Tie).*

FIG. 11 Zhang Xu, the character “tian”, excerpted from *Zhang Xu’s Cursive Poems.*

FIG. 12 Sun Guoting, the character “ye”, excerpted from *Shupu.*

FIG. 13 Sun Guoting, the character “dian”, excerpted from *Shupu.*

FIG. 14 Huang Tingjian, the characters “fo sheng”, excerpted from *Zhu Shangzuo Tie.*

FIG. 15 Huang Tingjian, the characters “bi”, excerpted from *Lian Po and Lin Xiangru Biography.*

FIG. 16 Jenkins, John, *The Art of Writing.* 1791.

FIG. 17 Palmer, A. N. The Palmer Method of Business Writing. New York : A. N. Palmer, 1901. Page 94.

FIG. 18 Tauba Auerbach "My favorite exercise in Daniel T Ames’ Compendium of Practical and Ornamental Penmanship shows the word persevere written in lowercase script. Each letter is surrounded by a loop, similar to the a in the @ symbol. The loops are all the same but the letters are different, so the exercise teaches you to maintain a rhythm amidst otherwise varying circumstances. "

FIG. 19-20 Curbe typeface in Tomorrow Collection

FIG. 21 studioszurichbasel, Hand drawn Wordmark and Website proposal (rejected) for Hairdresser La Gioia.

FIG. 22 By Ginko,2023

FIG. 23 janniszell's script typeface

FIG. 24 Ohezin, book design for the French edition of Juljul – An Anthology of Contemporary Korean Poetry, Spiral Agency, Itda Publishing.

FIG. 25 By Mattia Cacciatore, Unposted logo x @orsola.mp4

FIG. 26 Robin.pitchon's handwritings.

FIG. 27 Brave Face is an exhibition organized by a group of designers and the Old School New School for Design and Typography. The aim was to express through lettering what means to be brave creatives.

Caractères
Helvetica
Lava Devanagari
Liansh

Papier
Papier blanc Smart Print Clairefontaine, 60 gsm

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