IN-
FI-
-NI

IN FINI

Specimen of a typeface
created by Sandrine Nugue.
A public commission
by the ⓒ Centre national
des arts plastiques.

Within the framework of "Graphisme en France 2014" the Centre national des arts plastiques (CNAP) established a public commission for a typeface that would be available to everyone via free downloading.

As well as encouraging the creation of a new typeface, this public commission was meant to provide an opportunity to raise the general awareness of the importance of the craft of designing fonts. Although the public is in daily contact with the most diverse typographical specimens, many people are unaware of the existence of this craft and of the skills and knowledge required to practice it.

The font "Infini" conceived by Sandrine Nugue, firmly establishes itself among contemporary designs. It is derived from a style of Roman letters carved in stone, adapted into various typographic styles – roman, italic, bold. These relationships encourage a dialogue with the history of typography – the essay of Sébastien Morlighem clearly presents its milestones. Infini offers a creative and playful mix of words, pictograms, and ligatures.

The studies, sketches, notes and digital files that Sandrine Nugue made in the course of her work will become part of the collections of the Centre national des arts plastiques. This open competition testifies to the interest that the institution takes in the design of contemporary typefaces and puts Infini permanently and inalienably within the history of typographic design.

Yves Robert,
Director of the Centre
national des arts plastiques

To Open the Infinite

The history of mankind begins with the act of reading: reading a planet, a landscape, the oceans that surround the land, the sky crossed by the flight of birds, and dotted with constellations made visible by the night. Deciphering the world involves relying on an ongoing reading of it, a reading that precedes thought, language, decoration, writing. We have "read" since the awakening of consciousness, spoken for more than two million years, drawn for more than 40000, and we have been writing for more than 5000. The relationships that these practices permanently weave together are as unlimited as the time and the space, over which they unfold and over which they spread, are not.
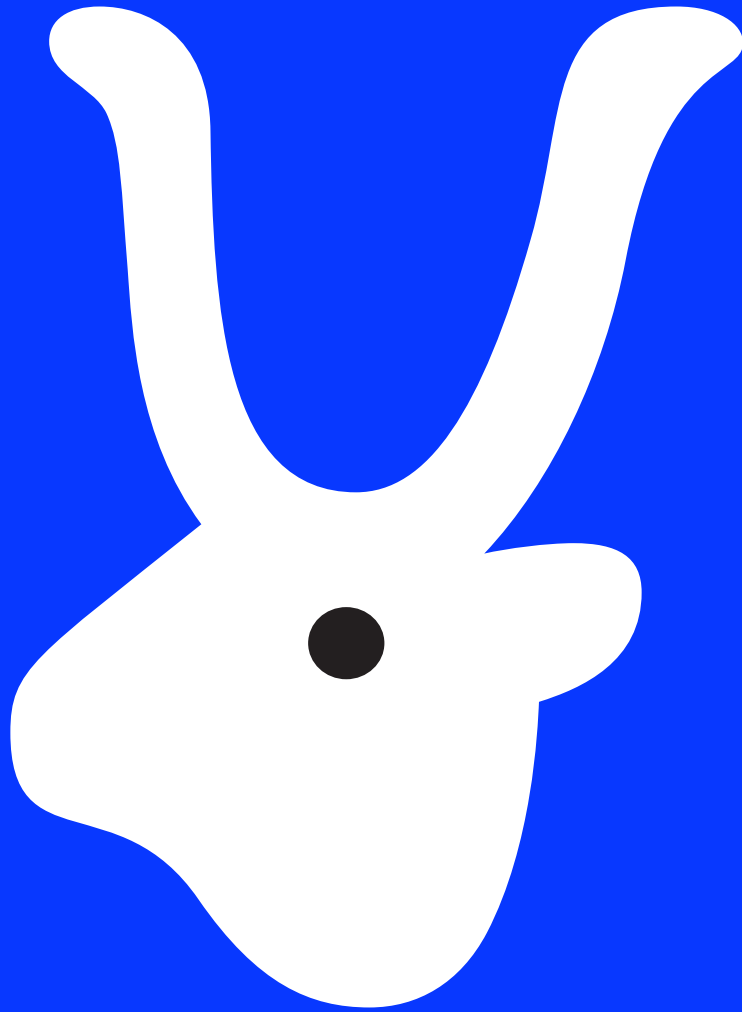
Abstract motifs engraved in limestone, wild animals painted on cavewalls, a dance of the hands captured through the medium of wet pigment: the oldest images continually engage us and their youthfulness never stops amazing us. They set the scene for an origin without origin, for a place without place, for a here, for a now that always escapes us. That's why we never stop recreating this scene, each one for himself, for herself, day after day, indefatigably adding to the account of the pursuit of meaning through drawing.

And drawing is nothing without the surface that it occupies, that provides the medium for its appearance. All graphic design – the fruit of drawing – needs to be supported and circumscribed in order to exist. We could not see anything that we can see without something that we do not see, that appears to be unseen, an absence, a blank, an interval that separates the signs, that determines the way they are arranged, that organizes their rhythms. Arranged, the images of things free themselves, little by little, from the real, establishing, in the words of Stéphane Mallarmé " ce pli de sombre dentelle, qui retient l'infini, tissé par mille" ("this fold of dark lace that contains the infinite, woven of a thousand threads"): writing, writing systems that represents, that makes manifest, that affects language, languages, politics, religions, commerce, litterature, poetry; that floods the public space, that appears on coins, on papyrus scrolls, on parchment codexes, in diaries, in love letters…

Then comes typography – it opens a dialogue between the forms of writing and the writing of forms – solid, regular forms that are moveable and interchangeable. What writing loses in vitality, it gains in ubiquity when it becomes typography, depositing ink on paper, or projecting clouds of pixels on a screen. But typography is not only writing that has been caught and domesticated. It is also a means of exploration and excavation that can bring back an image, an image of things within it.

What allows you to see and to read the typeface that you have before your eyes, to borrow a phrase from Pascal Quignard, is "that there is a learning that never recognizes it is knowing – and that is infinite." The infinity of thought, of language, of writing, of typography, of meaning – gushing infinitely.

14/17 pt*
roman

*The first number indicates the body and the second the line spacing.

PHOENICIA   EGYPT   SINAI   GREECE   ROME

From Pictogram to Writing

It is in the region of Sumer, in southern Mesopotamia, that the images of things – a palm tree, a vase, a star – simplified figures, markings on tablets fashioned from the clay on the banks of the Tigris, become pictograms. They represent a named thing, a word, an idea (logogram), then the sound of the name of something, then a sound itself, a syllable (phonogram). Then the pictogram metamorphoses into an ideogram, throws off its relation to a real thing, transforms into an abstraction, an element of the first manifestation of writing, cuneiform.

In Egypt, in China, other writing system appear ; in the Near-East, Phoenecian writing emerges and spreads throughout the Mediterranean basin. The head of the Phoenician bull leads to the Hebrew aleph, and then to the letter A ; the alphabet succeeds in transcending the images of things and achieves the status of the voice, of language, law, stories, of transactions it will record, arrange, archive.

THE EMERGENCE OF CAPITAL LETTERS

THE FIRST GREEK ALPHABET DERIVES FROM PHOENICIAN WRITING, AROUND THE NINTH CENTURY BEFORE JESUS CHRIST.

The entire Phoenician alphabet is made up of consonants only, but certain Phoenician letters acquired a new phonetic value in order to transcribe Greek vowels: aleph, for example, became alpha. Several written forms of these archaic capital letters coexist, varying from city to city. The way that they were written and read was equally variable: in spirals or in the boustrophedon manner, imitating the way oxen plow a field – one line going from right to left and the next from left to right.

In the fourth century, Athenian democracy unites the provinces under one rule and establishes an overall style of writing: the shape of the twenty-four capital letters of the Ionian alphabet is stabilized: carved on stone tablets placed in a public space for all to see – the gods as well as the people – they now can be read from left to right, in alignment, marching in a row. At about just the same time, another style of writing on stone, originating in Greece, passing through Etruria, enters its maturity: the Roman capital.

Here's where Infini gets its foundation, inspired particularly by a model popular between the third and first centuries before our era. Rather than drawing upon late imperial Roman capitals, so often reinterpreted, Infini risks taking as its starting point the revival of a forgotten and unappreciated form. Nevertheless, as the type and graphic designer, Roger Excoffon, has said, "it's absolutely not a question of going back to a source (it isn't possible) but to make a lucid summation of available data."

In this regard, this model can serve as a point of departure, the first marker on a journey punctuated by encounters, reunions, surprises, a survey of the Roman alphabet; a new beginning, as each new typographic design strives – or ought to strive – to be. Infini is the dream, the story, the sum of it.

THE INCISE CAPITAL

THE WORK OF HOLLOWING OUT THE SURFACE THAT THE HAMMER AND CHISEL ACCOMPLISH, SCULPTING THE HARDNESS OF MARBLE, OF LIMESTONE, OR OF GRANITE IS COMPLETELY REFLECTED IN THE AESTHETIC BIAS GOVERNING INFINI, WHICH RENDERS HOMAGE TO THE APPEARANCE OF THE UNEQUAL PROPORTIONS OF THE INCISED LETTERS, TO THE CONCAVE FORMS, DEVOID OF SERIFS, WHICH WERE EMBLEMATIC OF THE STYLE THAT CHARACTERIZED THE MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS OF IMPERIAL ROME.

THIS ABSENCE OF SERIFS IS COM-PENSATED BY FLARING ENDS, WHICH ANCHOR THE LETTERS AND GIVE THEM SOLIDITY. IF THIS FIRMLY BOLD SIL-HOUETTE SEEMS TO APPER TO HAVE BEEN HEWN WITH AN AX, THE INCISION ONLY ADDS TO ITS CHARM, BRINGING OUT THE FONT'S SENSUOUSNESS, DECISIVE IN THE ROMANCE OF THE ROMAN CAPITAL.

HOMONYM

HOMONYM

PARAGRAPH

PARAGRAPH

POSTERITY

POSTERITY

THE EVOLUTION OF THE ROMAN CAPITAL DURING THE FIRST CENTURIES OF CHRISTIANITY IS MARKED BY THE APPEARANCE OF LIGATURES, THE CONJUNCTION OF TWO, THREE, OR FOUR LETTERS TIED TOGETHER OR ATTACHED TO EACH OTHER. THEY SERVE TO MEET THE NEED FOR CARVING LONGER INSCRIPTIONS IN A GIVEN SPACE WHILE MAINTAINING A CONSISTENT BALANCE FOR EACH LINE, SOMETIMES TO THE DETRIMENT OF LEGIBILITY, WHEN THEIR USE IS WIDESPREAD: THEN THE TEXT IS TRANSFORMED INTO A SOPHISTICATED VISUAL NETWORK, TO THE GREAT DELIGHT OF PALEOGRAPHERS SEEKING TO DECIPHER IT. MIGRATING FROM STONE TO PARCHMENT, THE LIGATURES TAKE MANY SHAPES, ACCORDING TO THE STYLE OF WRITING, AND PROLIFERATE, GREATLY INCREASING THE NUMBER OF THEM AVAILABLE TO TYPOGRAPHY. SOME, PASSED ON TO POSTERITY, WORK DISCREETLY NOW WITHIN GROUPS OF DIGITAL TYPEFACES WHILE OTHERS ASSERT A PRIMORDIAL LEITMOTIV.

THE SERIES OF LIGATURES THAT ARE INCLUDED IN INFINI, HONORING THEIR DEBT TO THE LAPIDARY TRADITION, WHILE PAYING IT OFF PLAYFULLY, MAKE IT POSSIBLE TO MAXIMIZE THE GRAPHIC AUTHORITY OF A NAME, OF A TITLE, OF A LOGO, OR OF THE RHYTHMS OF HEADINGS AND PARAGRAPHS WITHIN THE MOST DIVERSE PAGE LAYOUTS. THIS SERIES CONSTITUTES A SAMPLING IDEALLY SUITED TO EXTENSION UNTIL ALL POSSIBLE COMBINATIONS ARE EXHAUSTED; FOR THAT, INFINITY IS NECESSARY.

From Writing to Typography

The decline of Roman civilization, along with the rise of Christian power, and of books, is accompanied by the arrival of new forms of writing: some using only capital letters endure ; others die out, others emerge, others evolve. Among them, Carolingian minuscule (or Caroline) a round script, regular and exceptionally readable, is chosen and developed at the end of the eighth century by the theologian Alcuin, advisor to the future emperor, Charlemagne, for use in the *scriptoria* in monasteries. Its dominance slowly erodes, to the benefit of gothic script, which succeeds it throughout Europe.

In this context, where the manuscript copy of texts is always preeminent, where paper becomes the principal medium for writing, the invention of xylography – hand printing texts and images that have been engraved on wood blocks – inaugurates the first phase of the development of printing, at the end of the fourteenth century. Several dozen years later, it is followed by a second, more crucial development, when a German craftsman from Mainz, Johannes Gensfleisch, called Gutenberg, builds the first mechanical press and "invents" typography. Contrary to a firmly held belief, the printing press did not first appear in the west but in China, in the eleventh century.

What is typography ? It can be defined as an aesthetic and technological organisation for realizing the creation, production, and printing of mechanized forms. These mechanized forms are the result of writing and of the letters designed to reproduce the writing. In a certain sense, it is possible to say that printing was rediscovered by Gutenberg by going through the following steps : first, one hollows out the end of a steel rod in order to make the reverse form of a letter, a number, or a punctuation mark in it. This rod – the punch – then with a dry blow hits and penetrates a rectangular copper block – the matrix –, which receives the imprint of the stamp in the hollow, right side up. The matrix is placed in a mold inside of which an alloy of molten lead, tin, and antimony is mixed with a special spoon, then immediately ejected. This is the template or type, a perfect replica of the punch, which it is able to reproduce in abundance.

Gutenberg adapts Textura, a style of gothic writing employed primarily in book manuscripts, for cutting and casting the type with which he composes the text of the first book printed in Europe, the Bible, in large folio format (the "Forty-two line Bible"), printed between 1452 and 1455 in partnership with his financial backer Johann Fust and the copyist Peter Schöffer. The rest is history, literature, typography...

1 — punch

2 — matrix
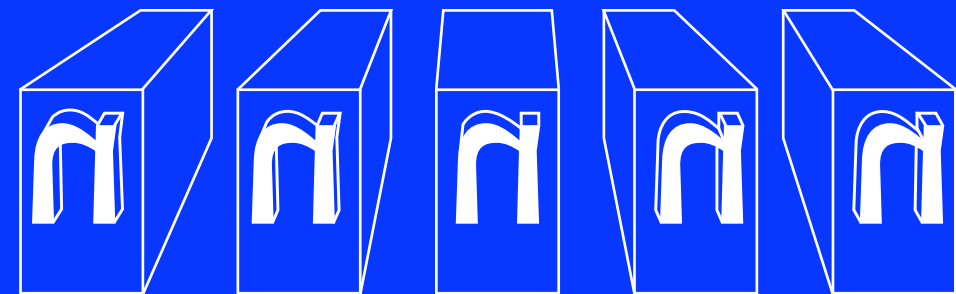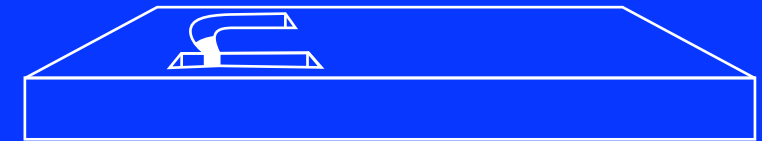
3 — moveable type, infinitely reproduceable

Roman, so familiar to a reader's eyes, was developed by several generations of Italian and French humanists. The remarkable circumstances of the Renaissance spark the rediscovery of numerous ancient Latin texts whose diffusion had been insured during the Middle Ages by monk copyists. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, scholars such as Poggio Bracciolini, chancellor of the Republic of Florence, adapt the Carolingian minuscule script of the manuscripts that they recopy, annotate, and edit. By customizing it, by favoring its use rather than the gothic scripts that are then dominant, the humanists thus establish a genre with a brilliant future : the *Lettera Antica Formata*.

In 1464, two German printers, Arnold Pannartz and Konrad Sweynheim, establish the first Italian printing office in the Abbey of St. Scholastica, near Rome. The Latin classics that they print are composed with a type clearly inspired by the *Lettera Antica Formata* but with a rough, irregular appearance derived from the Gothic. In Venice, several years later, other printers attempt to overcome this hybrid form ; Nicolas Jenson, a Frenchman, cuts a type of surprising quality and aesthetic maturity, giving birth to Roman typeface. It would, however, remain a little-used font in books until the end of the century, when a decisive push is given by the Venetian publisher, Alde Manuce with the aid of Francesco Griffo, a punchcutter. Their new types liberate themselves from the authority of written manuscripts, establishing themselves as the gold standard of humanist typography.

Towards the beginning of the fifteenth century, Roman spreads to most of the print shops of Europe, particularly in France where the humanists encourage its development, with the support of punchcutters like Claude Garamont and Robert Granjon, and consolidate its dominance in publishing, assuring, thereby, its hegemony as a typeface. It would be necessary to wait for the second half of the eighteenth

century for a redesign to happen that would bring Roman into its modern incarnation, thanks to the typefaces of John Baskerville, Firmin Didot, and Giambattista Bodoni. The early nineteenth century is maked by a sudden surge in the creation of new typefaces designed in response to the rapid growth of communication, such as advertising posters. As part of this revolutionary ferment, the sans-serif is going to assert itself as a genre of its own, firmly entrenched in the international repertoire of typographies.

The history of typography is often synonymous with the history of Roman, with its durability as well as its constant regeneration. The Roman can be both original and offers a testimony to its heritage, functional or dramatically decorative; it is a major challenge for each designer endeavoring to create the proper contrasts between the broad and the narrow dimensions of a typeface, its modulations, its horizontal and vertical proportions, its serifs, its spacing...

Stamped into Infini's design is a memory made up of many facets. One facet, the oldest, is the capital letter of Roman stone engraving, with its subtle inflections, subject to the power of light. Another, more recent, one is the humanist miniscule script, standardized by typography. A third, from the twentieth century, is the resurgence of incised typefaces, once again rendered contemporary, printed, engraved, drawn, painted.

With regard to Infini Roman's lowercase characters, it was essential to give them the formal qualities appropriate to the capital letters upon which incised work was based, while enhancing their readability thanks to their ample size and to open counterforms (the blank spaces inside the letters).

HAVZN

Diagonals
shapes

njdzefy

OM

Different
proportions

EJB

N

6385

Round
forms

CDg

2ÇS2&

Sharp
terminations

Ergasffj

BŒ982

Weight borne
by the upper
section

hębgaš

?¢£Ωfŧ

BPRK

Open
junctions

The Italic, an indispensible ally

Another form of writing takes hold during the Renaissance. It is thought that the scholar Niccolò Niccoli, a friend of Poggio Bracciolini, is one of the first to develop cursive Lettera Antica Corsiva, *copying the manuscripts in his own library. Narrower than the straight and firm humanist writing, cursive Lettera Antica has a nervous look, running as the pen moves across the paper, in an almost uninterrupted flow, with a flexible tilt, welcoming to ligatures and initials. It will, little by little, impose itself in the Italian peninsula in the course of the fifteenth century.*

Alde Manuce, assisted by his punchcutter Francesco Griffo, decides to adapt this writing genre, inspired by several models, and creates a tailor-made typeface for a new collection of classical Latin "portables" published in small format. He sells them cheaply, thus making them affordable to less than affluent readers, particularly students. The first volume, in 1501, is a collection of the works of the Latin poet Virgil, composed entirely in the type that would later be called Italic. The slant and disposition of its letters is irregular, as if the original driving pulse in the act of writing were to be preserved in the silhouette of the typeface printed on paper.

Italic quickly spreads throughout Europe, its formal qualities are recognized and give rise to variations, which are especially driven by French punchcutters, who are going to strengthen its resemblance to Roman. At the same time, it is going to acquire a function that has defined Italic ever since : highlighting certain parts of a title page or a paragraph of text, becoming, thus, the first real means of indicating typographic differentiation. Although some books, like collections of poetry, continue to be printed in Italic, it definitively acquires its status as an essential adjunct to Roman at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Aldin Italic is rivaled and then supplanted during the eighteenth century by new designs, such as the modern Italics of Pierre-Simon Fournier or designs by Baskerville and Didot, where the contrast between the thick and thin strokes of letters is radically increased. Whatever the underlying style, Italic is challenged at the beginning of the twentieth century when some designers substitute a version of slanted Roman for it with the aim of reinforcing a formal complementarity. In fact, a great number of the sans-serif designs – Helvetica or Univers, to cite only the most familiar – offer an oblique Roman in place of Italic.

So, cursive or oblique? Infini Italic slices the Gordian knot and leans resolutely to the latter, while lightly borrowing several features from the former. In addition, it pays special homage to a singular predecessor: Joanna, created by the Englishman Eric Gill in 1931. His training as a sculptor and stone carver particularly marks the design of his typefaces. Like Joanna, the dimensions of Infini Italic are narrow, its slope, only slight; its contrasts, restrained. It takes its place beside Infini Roman as an ideal counterpoint, in the musical sense, respecting the division of parts that have been followed for centuries, but, it still shows its own independent identity, able to be used by itself to set an ordinary text in type.

italic
(aldin variety)

Infini
italic

oblique
(roman inclined)

roman

italic

roman (white)
italic (blue)

Reduction of width and consequently of weight (the thickness of a glyph), in order to obtain a similar black.

roman

italic

njluhßp

vkpTH

Obliques

ngosQ

Weight borne
by the upper
section

$£&&€

Sharp
terminations

---

roman

1

italic

nzuyfvBA

nzuyfvBA

roman

2

italic

ebsgc

ebsgc

roman

3

italic

a

a

The harmony between
roman and italic typefaces:

1 the design of Italic resembles roman slanted;

2 the design of Italic is close to roman but
its spirit is more suitable to calligraphy;

3 the design of Italic is far from roman;
it is more like calligraphy.

These small modifications suffice to affect
italics because they modify the gray tone.

The Bold, a modern visual force

In London at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when England is at the forefront of the industrial revolution, *bold* or *fat-face* type bursts forth. The rapid growth of information and advertising leads to the proliferation of posters and other printed matter in daily life, in professional jargon, in "jobbing work": tickets, prospectuses, programs, lottery tickets, bills, forms, notices, calling cards… **Bold type distinguishes itself from regular typefaces by its augmentation of the visual mass: its silhouette becomes thicker, its counterforms (the spaces within letters), consequently, diminish. The intention is to attract and to fuel public attention; literally, as well as figuratively, to make a strong impression.**

By the end of the Napoleonic Wars, in 1815, European foundries are importing bold faces from across the channel, or, in turn, adapting them – their size and proportions growing in amplitude. This practice is often not met favorably by such printers as Georges-Adrien Crapelet, who considers bold faces to be a "ridiculous innovation that tends to spoil the art of typography." Despite these protests, the street becomes a theater where bold typefaces are shown, passing from one hand to another, driven by trade and transactions, ending by dominating newspapers and books. Newspaper headlines recount the news with an emphasis and an expressivity until then unseen: this modern visual force that bold is, from then on, is an integral and essential part of typography.

However, this force that promises a surprising future, can also be turned to use in every day reading. In the 1820s, English foundries begin to market small-size bold typefaces, whose use progressively reorganizes many aspects of typography: headlines, subheads, dictionary entries… Each word, each phrase set in a type stronger than the rest of the text becomes a marker, establishes a parallel universe set within the fuller, more complex paragraphs, thus inviting a reading that is *a priori* more superficial than the whole piece, but that offers a clear overview of it. School books, mail-order catalogues, railroad timetables, public notices, all are enhanced by bold typefaces, especially because their aesthetic quality and their

uniformity are consistency being improved.

Today, it is unusual that a family of type faces does not have at least several varieties of bold: semi-bold, bold, black… On the contrary, it may even be comprised of other, lighter, even hairline faces. **Faces can flaunt their portliness or strip themselves to their last thread, going from one extreme to the other: everything depends on what effect is desired.**

Infini Bold is definitely a rough echo of Infini Roman: the typeface gains in robustness while preserving the family resemblance. **Thus, Infini Bold easily fulfills its task as a guide within a textual landscape, invites coloring words with a tinge of exuberance, of impulsivity; and when it is used for a large body of text, it does not hesitate to suggest a blaring alarm or a herd of elephants in the bushes, if need be.**

light   Infini roman   Infini bold   black

roman (blue)
bold (white)

From roman to bold:
Increase Bold (the thickness of the letter) and, consequently, the width (the span of the letter)

roman
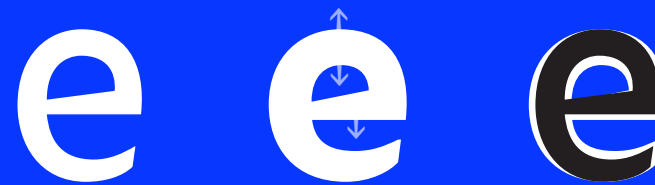
bold

bold (white)
roman (blue)

roman

bold

roman (blue) + bold (white)

Increase in the weight of the upper part, compensated for by lowering the horizontal line in order to accentuate the counterform

roman

bold

bold (white) + roman (black)

Increase in the width and the height in order to keep the balance of the bold and the interior space of the arobase

Diagonals shapes

Weight borne by the upper section

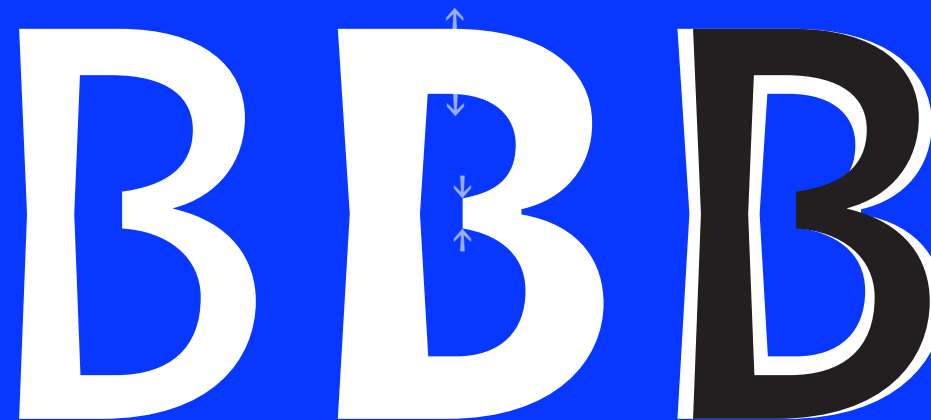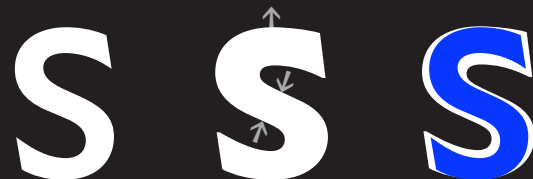Increase in the weight of the upper part and thinning out of the central upstroke

roman

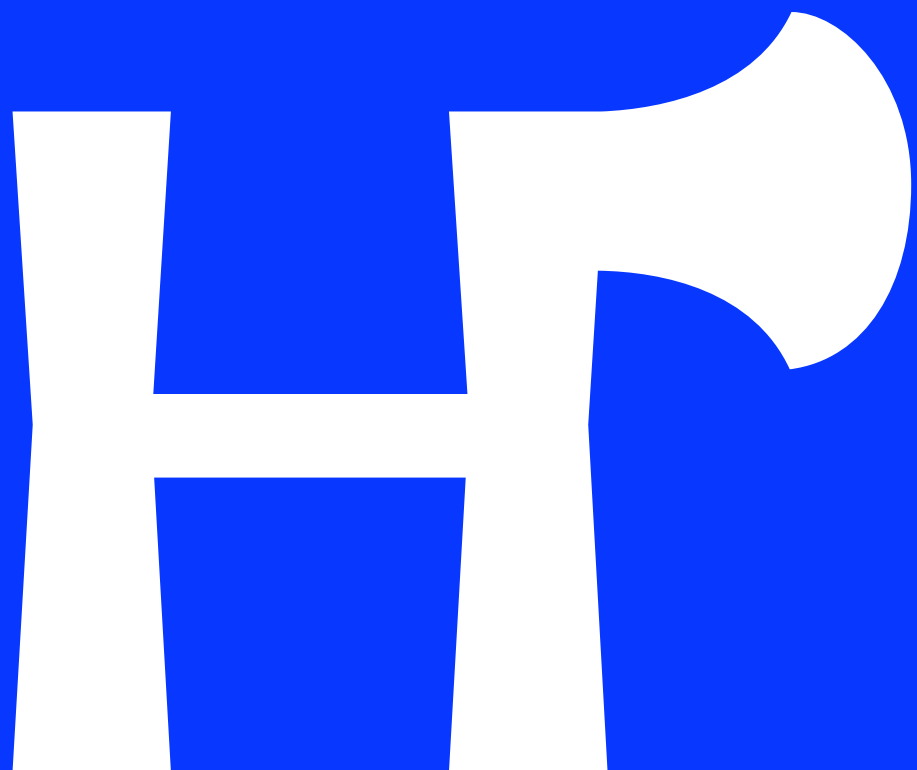bold

bold (white) + roman (blue)

Increase in the weight (the thickness of the letter) and the contrast. The central connection preserves the quality of the Roman design.

roman

bold

bold (white) + roman (black)

RETURN TO THE PICTOGRAM

ROMAN, ITALIC, BOLD... INFINI HAS STILL MORE IN ITS BAG OF TRICKS. IT COMPRISES A SERIES OF TWENTY-SIX "LETTERIMAGES" REPEATING THE TWENTY-SIX LETTERS OF THE ROMAN ALPHABET; SOME OF THEM HAVE BEEN SCATTERED HERE AND THERE THROUGHOUT THE PAGES OF THIS ESSAY. EACH CAPITAL LETTER NOW BECOMES A PICTOGRAM WHOSE MEANING, WHOSE GRAPHICS ENCIRCLE IT, OVERHELM IT, EXCEED IT: NATURAL PHENOMENA, AN ANIMAL, AN EVERYDAY OBJECT, MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION, A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT... TWENTY-SIX ATTEMPTS AMONG MANY TO GRANT AN ABSTRACT DESIGN THE FREEDOM TO BECOME AN IMAGE OF A THING.

*These pictograms
are related to
french words.

Designing typefaces in the Digital Era

In 2015, global typography constitutes a digital ecosystem with a "typodiversity" rich in variety and extraordinary qualities as never before. This profusion has by all evidence been unleashed by the spread of desktop publishing (DTP), and then accelerated by the appearance of the Internet. It has never been so easy to design, to produce, to sell, or to give away fonts to be used as traditional supports for communication, or for objects, for reading devices, for contemporary writers using laptops, smartphones, e-readers, tablets… Actually, the question asks itself: of what use are new fonts in times of great abundance?

Each designer who undertakes a new creation – a glass, a chair, a boat – is part tight rope walker and part surveyor, hovering over the delicate timeline that separates styles of the past from those yet to be, turning his or her gaze away from one direction – activating, welcoming what is about to emerge from the other. All history, especially the history of typography, is an inexhaustible reserve of potentiality: it is possible to revisit or to reinvent the classics, familiarity with which has appreciably deepened during the past decades (Garamont, Caslon, Didot, Bodoni…); to rediscover, redeploy, revive typefaces that had fleeting success, or none, whatever their aesthetic or functional value; to combine, to splice together the sometimes divergent influences, continuously to present new and amazing hybrids. *This is what Infini does, proving that it is still possible to awaken and mobilize a power that is receding, the present suspended in each letter, in each hand-made manuscript, whether derived from carvings in stone or from typefaces.*

If it is still possible to conceive of and to design typefaces with traditional tools, this process is no longer a simple matter of ink and paper but also of electricity, of light, of bytes. Another, vertical, component has been added to the horizontal work table: the screen. The challenge, from now on, is to master a digital apparatus made up of software, applications, and programs, to use Bézier curves *(named for the mechanical engineer, Pierre Bézier, 1910-1999, who first used computers to design automobile parts),* to locate trouble spots, to define contours, to arrange pixels;

to write, to modify, to improve computer languages, scripts, algorithms; to create outline fonts in diverse formats, OpenType being actually the most widespread because of, among other reasons, its capacity to host a great number of symbols.

From now on, a single person can take charge of a group of complementary tasks or collaborate with professionals responsible for putting the finishing touches on the font. Whatever the *modus operandi,* he or she needs to have, in addition, a good understanding of the expectations of future users – graphic designers, artistic directors, readers – anticipating the great number of situations in which his or her creation will be able to be utilized, in order to optimize its readability, its flexibility, its adaptability.

Thus a typeface conceived for magazine captions can be astonishingly out of place when it is blown up and used for headlines, which, leaping off the page, give rise to thoughts, responses, conjectures… The development of Infini stretched over a period of eight months, from its first outline, through the gradual refining of its shapes, to its completion. Although Sandrine Nugue has designed each glyph (some in a number of versions, before being satisfied) she conferred the job of integrating them and making sure their design works with the font on two other type designers. Laurent Bourcellier worked on their kerning – the ajustment of the space separating glyphs in all their combinations. Each font of Infini being in OpenType format, Mathieu Réguer carefully made sure that it would work on several platforms (Macintosh, Windows) and that the repertoire of fonts of more than 700 glyphs – *lowercase (or minuscules), capitals, numerals, punctuation marks, diacritic markings, mathematical signs, ligatures, pictograms* – would work with suppleness and precision. He also adapted Infini to WOFF (the Web Open Font Format), thereby making it possible to set it up on Internet sites.

Infini is intended to be shareware, thanks to the initiative by the ⓒⓝⓟ, permitting its free download. This exceptional act is driven, above all, by the desire to raise public awareness of the contemporary design of typefaces and to salute a profession in full resurgence. New foundries have appeared over the last

years in France, and a new generation of designers has established itself, all persuing their passion, and being sustained by the purchase of licenses to use their fonts.

Now that Infini is about to make its debut on the typographic stage, let us imagine what its future developments will be. One may envision additional fonts, some lighter, some bolder, some narrower, some wider, as well as alphabets close to the Roman alphabet, like Greek and Cyrilic. And who knows what other alphabets, non-Roman ones – Hebrew, Tifinagh, alphasyllabic Thai – would look like if they adopted the incised aesthetic model that characterizes Infini!

Finally, Infini opens a field of primary exploration for a design influenced by the letters of an ancient language, falsely derided as worn out, revivifying it, giving it back a surprising modernity; as if each sentence, each way of phrasing, each letter were aspiring to make another song for the concert of typography.

Sébastien Morlighem,
teacher and researcher
in the history of typography,
*École supérieure d'art et
de design* in Amiens

ROMAN GLYPHSET:

— **superior lowercase**
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

— **superiors + inferiors figures**
0123456789 0123456789

— **symbols**
§ ¶ © ® ℗ ™ ª º №

— **uppercase**
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

— **accented uppercase**
À Á Â Ã Ä Ā Ă Å Å Ą Æ Ǽ Ć Ĉ Č Ç
Ď Đ È É Ê Ě Ë Ē Ė Ę Ĝ Ğ Ġ Ĥ Ħ Ì Í
Î Ï Ĩ Ī Ĭ İ IJ Ĵ Ķ Ĺ Ľ Ŀ Ł Ń Ń Ñ Ņ Ò Ó
Ô Õ Ö Ō Ŏ Ő Ø Ǿ Œ Ŕ Ř Ŗ SS Ś Ŝ Š
Ş Š Ť Ţ Ŧ Ù Ú Û Ũ Ü Ū Ŭ Ů Ű Ų Ŵ
Ẃ Ŵ Ẅ Ỳ Ý Ŷ Ÿ Ź Ž Ż Ə Ŋ Đ Þ

— **lowercase**
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

— **accented lowercase**
à á â ã ä ā ă å å ą æ ǽ ć ĉ č ç ď đ è é ê
ě ë ē ė ę ĝ ğ ġ ĥ ħ ì í î ï ĩ ī ĭ i į ı ĵ ķ
ĺ ľ ŀ ł ń ń ñ ņ ò ó ô õ ö ō ŏ ő ø ǿ œ ŕ ř ŗ
ś ŝ š ş š ß ť ţ ŧ ù ú û ũ ü ū ŭ ů ű ų ŵ ẃ ŵ
ẅ ỳ ý ŷ ÿ ź ž ż ə ŋ ð þ

— **small caps**
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

— **accented small caps**
À Á Â Ã Ä Ā Ă Å Å Ą Æ Ǽ Ć Ĉ Č Ç Ď Đ
È É Ê Ë Ē Ě Ė Ę Ĝ Ğ Ġ Ĥ Ħ Ì Í Î Ï Ĩ Ī Ĭ İ IJ
Ĵ Ķ Ĺ Ľ Ŀ Ł Ń Ń Ñ Ņ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö Ō Ŏ Ő Ø
Ǿ Œ Ŕ Ř Ŗ ß Ś Ŝ Š Ş Ť Ţ Ŧ Ù Ú Û Ũ Ü Ū
Ŭ Ů Ű Ų Ŵ Ẃ Ŵ Ẅ Ỳ Ý Ŷ Ÿ Ź Ž Ż Ə Ŋ Đ Þ

— **standard punctuation**
, ; : . … - - ! i ? ¿ ' ' " " , „ ' " ‹ › « »
/ \ | ¦ – _ — • · ( ) [ ] { } * † ‡ @ &

— **punctuation caps**
¡ ¿ ‹ › « » " - — · ( ) [ ] { } @

— **punctuation, small caps**
( ) [ ] { } @ &

— **arrows**
← → ↑ ↓ ↖ ↗ ↙ ↘ ‹ › ∧ ∨

— **lowercase ligatures**
ff fi ffi fj ffj fl ffl ſ

— **uppercase ligatures**
Æ AN AT AR ASE AU AV Œ Đ DU ĘV
ĘLF EN ENT ER ESE ETE EU GN HOMS iLLF
·ON ·SME LA LE LLGA LL MAX· ME NE NN
NT Θ· ON OU PALÉO PARA PH POT Q ŒE
ŒE SS TE TH TON TR TT TR TUŒE TY UN VR

— **figures et monetary**
• **proportional oldstyle**
(default figures)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 # € $ ¢ £ ƒ ¥

• **proportional lining**
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 # € $ ¢ £ ƒ ¥

• **tabular oldstyle**
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 # € $ ¢ £ ƒ ¥

• **tabular lining**
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 # € $ ¢ £ ƒ ¥

— **mathematical symbols**
+ − ± × ÷ = ≠ ~ ≈ ^ < > ≤ ≥ ¬ ¤ ∞ ◊ ∆
Ω ∂ ∫ √ ∑ ∏ π µ º ℓ ℮ /

— **fractions**
¼ ½ ¾ % ‰

ITALIC GLYPHSET:

— **superior lowercase**
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

— **superiors + inferiors figures**
0123456789 0123456789

— **symbols**
§ ¶ © ® ℗ ™ ª º №

— **uppercase**
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

— **accented uppercase**
À Á Â Ã Ä Ā Ă Å Å Ą Æ Ǽ Ć Ĉ Č Ç Ď
Đ È É Ê Ě Ë Ē Ė Ę Ĝ Ğ Ġ Ĥ Ħ Ì Í Î Ï Ĩ Ī Ĭ
İ IJ Ĵ Ķ Ĺ Ľ Ŀ Ł Ń Ń Ñ Ņ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö
Ō Ŏ Ő Ø Ǿ Œ Ŕ Ř Ŗ SS Ś Ŝ Š Ş Ť Ţ Ţ
Ŧ Ù Ú Û Ũ Ü Ū Ŭ Ů Ű Ų Ŵ Ẃ Ŵ Ẅ Ỳ Ý
Ŷ Ÿ Ź Ž Ż Ə Ŋ Đ Þ

— **lowercase**
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

— **accented lowercase**
à á â ã ä ā ă å å ą œ ǽ ć ĉ č ç ď đ è é ê ě ë
ē ě ė ę ĝ ğ ġ ĥ ħ ì í î ï ĩ ī ĭ i į ı ij ĵ ķ ĺ ľ ŀ ł
ń ň ñ ņ ò ó ô õ ö ō ŏ ő ø ǿ œ ŕ ř ŗ ś ŝ š ş ß
ť ţ ŧ ù ú û ũ ü ū ŭ ů ű ų ŵ ẃ ŵ ẅ ỳ ý ŷ ÿ ź ž
ż ə ŋ ð þ

— **small caps**
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

— **accented small caps**
À Á Â Ã Ä Ā Ă Å Å Ą Æ Ǽ Ć Ĉ Č Ç Ď Đ È É
Ê Ë Ē Ě Ė Ę Ĝ Ğ Ġ Ĥ Ħ Ì Í Î Ï Ĩ Ī Ĭ İ IJ Ĵ Ķ Ĺ
Ľ Ļ Ŀ Ł Ń Ń Ñ Ņ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö Ō Ŏ Ő Ø Ǿ Œ Ŕ
Ř Ŗ ß Ś Ŝ Š Ş Ť Ţ Ŧ Ù Ú Û Ũ Ü Ū Ŭ Ů Ű Ų
Ŵ Ẃ Ŵ Ẅ Ỳ Ý Ŷ Ÿ Ź Ž Ż Ə Ŋ Đ Þ

— **standard punctuation**
, ; : . … - - ! i ? ¿ ' ' " " , „ ' " ‹ › « »
/ \ | ¦ – _ — • · ( ) [ ] { } * † ‡ @ &

— **punctuation caps**
¡ ¿ ‹ › « » - — · ( ) [ ] { } @

— **punctuation, small caps**
( ) [ ] { } @ &

— **arrows**
← → ↑ ↓ ↖ ↗ ↙ ↘ ‹ › ∧ ∨

— **lowercase ligatures**
ff fi ffi fj ffj fl ffl ſ

— **figures et monetary**
• **proportional oldstyle**
(default figures)
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 # € $ ¢ £ ƒ ¥

• **proportional lining**
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 # € $ ¢ £ ƒ ¥

• **tabular oldstyle**
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 # € $ ¢ £ ƒ ¥

• **tabular lining**
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 # € $ ¢ £ ƒ ¥

— **mathematical symbols**
+ − ± × ÷ = ≠ ~ ≈ ^ < > ≤ ≥ ¬ ¤ ∞ ◊ ∆
Ω ∂ ∫ √ ∑ ∏ π µ º ℓ ℮ /

— **fractions**
¼ ½ ¾ % ‰

SUPPORTED LANGAGES:

AFRIKAANS, ALBANIAN, ASU, BASQUE, BEMBA, BENA, BOSNIAN, CATALAN, CHIGA, CONGO SWAHILI, CORNISH, CROATIAN, CZECH, DANISH, DUTCH, EMBU, ENGLISH, ESPERATO, ESTONIAN, FAROESE, FILIPINO, FINNISH, FRENCH, GALICIAN, GANDA, GERMAN, GUSII, HUNGARIAN, ICELANDIC, INDONESIAN, IRISH, ITALIAN, JOLA-FONYI, KABUVERDIANU, KALENJIN, KAMBA, KIKUYU, KINYARWANDA, LATVIAN, LITHUANIAN, LUO, LUYIA, MACHAME, MAKHUWA-MEETTO, MAKONDE, MALAGASY, MALAY, MALTESE, MANX, MAORI, MERU, MORISYEN, NORTH NDBELE, NORWEGIAN BOKMÅL, NORWEGIAN NYNORSK, NYANKOLE, OROMO, POLISH, PORTUGUESE, ROMANIAN, ROMANSH, ROMBO, RUNDI, RWA, SAMBURU, SANGO, SANGU, SENA, SHAMBALA, SHONA, SLOVAK, SLOVENIAN, SOGA, SOMALI, SPANISH, SWAHILI, SWEDISH, SWISS GERMAN, TAITA, TESO, TURKISH, VUNJO, WELSH, ZULU.

IN FINI

Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

Ministère
Culture
Communication

GF
ÉVÉNEMENT
GRAPHISME
EN
FRANCE
CNAP.GRAPHISMEENFRANCE.FR

cnap

Specimen of the Infini,
a typeface created
by Sandrine Nugue.
A public commission
by the ⊛ Centre national
des arts plastiques.