

typetogether

Process and development of Literata

About TypeTogether

TypeTogether, independent foundry

Veronika Burian and José Scaglione met at the University of Reading whilst completing their MAs in Type Design, launching the independent type foundry TypeTogether (TT for short) in 2006. TT developed out of the desire to publish high quality typefaces and work on new type projects together (hence the name). The foundry provides common grounds for intense cooperation with other type designers, creating an interesting and diverse platform.

TypeTogether's main interest is finding innovative and stylish solutions to old problems for the professional market of text typefaces, with a focus on editorial use. This is where the greatest challenges are faced: creating typefaces that perform well in continuous reading, that also have a high degree of personality.

The aesthetic and functional efficiency of TT's fonts are accompanied by excellence in technical performance. This is achieved using the latest font software, creating cross-platform OpenType fonts with extended character sets including: broader language support and all kinds of typographic refinements, such as small caps, ligatures and multiple numeral sets. In addition to TypeTogether's high quality library of retail fonts, TT also provides custom modifications and specially tailored typefaces; these can serve as vital elements of a company's visual identity, by communicating a unique feel. Custom typeface projects are developed from solid foundations, based on the client's brief, targeted research and the open dialogue between all parties.

A big advantage of being a small and specialized company is that this allows for closer, and more direct, collaboration with clients; this is often necessary to accomplish their goals, and respond quickly to their needs. The quality of TypeTogether's work has already been recognized in several international competitions, including TDC and ED-Awards.

The founding partners

Veronika Burian studied Industrial Design in Munich and worked in that capacity in Vienna and Milan over a few years. Discovering her true passion for type, she graduated with distinction from the MA in Typeface Design in Reading, UK, in 2003 and worked as type designer at DaltonMaag in London for a few years. After staying for some time in Boulder, USA, and her hometown Prague she is now living and working in Spain. Veronika is co-founder of the independent type foundry TypeTogether, publishing award-winning typefaces and collaborating on tailored typefaces for a variety of clients. She also continues to give lectures and workshops at international conferences and universities.

José Scaglione is a graphic and a typeface designer and co-founder of the independent type foundry TypeTogether, where he has published several award-winning type families. He teaches typography at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, and is frequently invited to lecture about typography and to lead workshops of typeface design at international conferences and academic institutions. José co-authored the book "Cómo crear tipografías. Del boceto a la pantalla", and collaborated with Jorge de Buen Unna on his book "Introducción al estudio de la tipografía". In 2013 José was appointed as President of the Association Typographique Internationale. In 2012 he was the chairman of the Letter.2 type design competition and conference.

March 1, 2014. Creative brief

Objectives

- Provide an outstanding reading experience with a typeface especially designed for continuous reading for eBooks on high resolution devices of different screen sizes.
- Establish a distinct visual identity for Play Books from other e-readers or eBook apps.
- Should be a compliment to Roboto.

Target Audiences

- People who read eBooks on mobile devices such as smartphones or tablets.
- They read mostly fiction, business & finance, and history & biography.
- They often change devices, reading on phones during the day when they are more mobile and have short moments of time (smaller screens, more frequent, short duration, daytime) and switching to tablets when they have more time (bigger screens, long duration, evening).

The brief received from Google outlined a series of objectives as well as some important information. The project presented its full level of difficulty right from the beginning.

Google needed a book typeface family that would work well in continuous and intensive reading conditions, and at the same time maintain its performance in very different kinds of devices ranging from electronic ink to a whole range of LED screens and rendering technologies.

April 1, 2014. Brief interpretation

1 Exaggerated features

(serif, tail, terminals, etc.) Each feature should look convincing and recognizable at small sizes and low resolutions. Achieve personality at small sizes.

2 Enlarged apertures

Large clearances between letter features, avoid dot gain or better said “pixel gain”.

3 Low contrast

Avoid thin strokes, specially in curves and slanted strokes. Reduce contrast gracefully to improve rendering in low resolution.

4 Wider forms

Page size limitations from the print world are less relevant with type on screen. For small type sizes, wider and more open letterforms with ample letter spacing are easier to read.

5 Generous x-heights

Large x-heights, the ascenders and —specially— descenders should be kept short, allowing the most important parts of the letters to occupy as much of the body size as possible without causing crashes from neighbouring lines of type.

A list of specifications was drafted in order to understand what the boundaries of the design would be. This means that given the constraints of font rendering technologies in different devices, the creative design work would be conceived within these technical limitations.

April 1, 2014. Wish list as a result of brief analysis

- Tall x-height
- Georgia to be used as benchmark? Try some features from Nimrod?
- Low contrast
- Bulky features
- Spaced out to accomplish better appearance on screens
- Cap-height lower than ascender, better integration into text, look better in all caps setting in titles
- Open connections and counters
- Favour horizontal and vertical strokes, where the square grid finds less obstacles.
- Caecilia and Droid Serif look too even and mechanic, some variation in letter width is necessary. More book proportions. Texture should feel more interesting.

Based on the interpretation of the original brief and the resulting technical specifications we created a wish list that would be used to start sketching shapes. At this stage we started reviewing other fonts that were currently used for eBooks, and identifying the key problems that appeared in book setting.

April 21, 2014. First sketches

4 oan discarded

6 oan

1 oan

3 oan

2 oan

5 oan discarded

old style

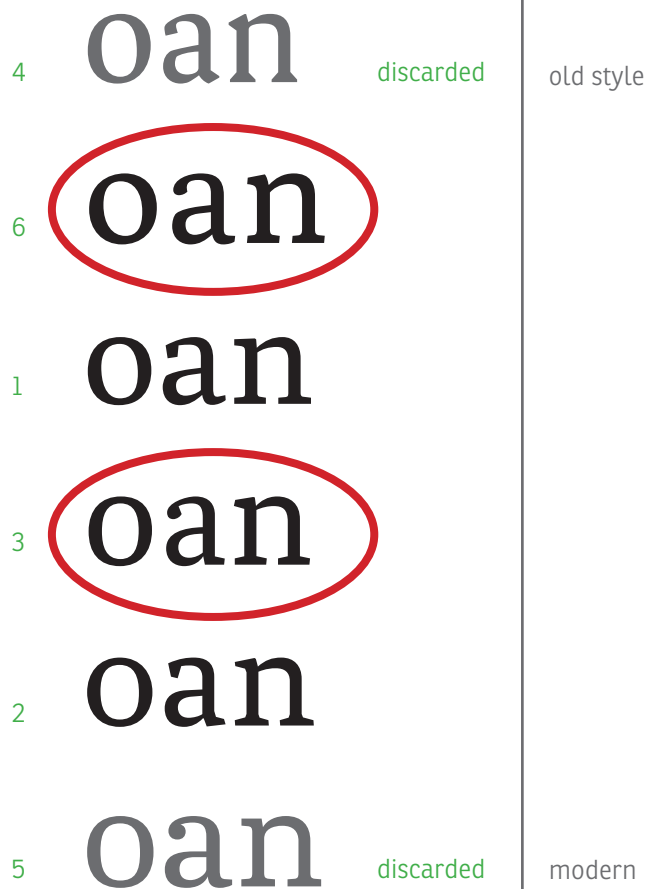
We started drawing 6 different designs, only eight letters in each of them. We arranged the designs in a scale ranging from organic (old style) to mechanic (modern), and discarded two of the designs, the most extreme ones, before presenting the series to Google.

modern

Width of letters varies more. Slanted stress, darker color, triangular but shorter serifs. These features favour legibility and reduce fatigue over extended reading but are less advisable for screen rendering.

Rather homogenized proportions, especially noticeable in upper cases, more tendency to hybridisation, less typographic color, more mechanic appearance. Tendency to render better in low resolution devices but less advisable for books.

April 21, 2014. First sketches



Feedback from the Google team pointed out desirable features from Versions 3 and 6, which led to two important conclusions:

1. The ideal typeface would have a more interesting texture than other fonts being used in eBooks or other fonts developed for screen use. This texture should be achieved by means of a slanted stress, and a less mechanic approach to horizontal proportions of characters.
2. The chosen styles and discussion around them led us to believe that we should strive for a hybrid, a Scotch Roman combined with some old style features.

May 14, 2014. Definition of proportions and style

Beta A videospa

Beta B videospa

Beta C videospa

Georgia videospa

Roboto videospa

Droid Sans videospa

Caecilia videospa

Based on the feedback of the original sketches we presented three options with variations of some features that play a key role in terms of recognisability: serif shape, terminals, outstrokes.

May 22, 2014. Definition of typeface DNA

C original

videospa

C 3

videospa

C 3 with alternate s

videospa

C 4

videospa

C 5

videospa

This was the final stage of defining the DNA of the typeface, which we also call conceptual stage. The serifs in 's', terminal of 'a', and the treatment of connections between stems and shoulders were changed to reflect an old style approach to the design. Hence reinforcing the hybrid nature of the letter shapes.

June 6, 2014. Italic options

Italic 1 *videospan*

Italic 2 *videospan*

Italic 3 *videospan*

Plabook dev. *videospan*

Three options were presented for the secondary italic style. Two of them were based on a more classic and derivative approach. The other option, an upright italic, is an attempt on how to address the inherent limitations of the pixel square grid, creating italic shapes and style without slanting.

This less common approach to designing an italic would also add high branding value to the font, making it more unique, recognizable and easy to remember.

June 6, 2014. Identification and personality details

Q Q Q Q
K K

A few selected characters undertook a particularly intensive search for a more flourished solution. In typography for extensive continuous reading it is important to take into consideration an important factor which affects legibility: reader's fatigue. Letters that have very idiosyncratic or unusual features, even if these features are beautiful, may become a hindrance when they are multiplied hundreds of times in a page, and therefore inducing reader's fatigue.

With this in mind, the previously mentioned flourishes were not to appear in characters that are bound to have high repetition rates in book setting, such as lower case letters. On the other hand, letters of lower frequency such as 'Q', 'R', 'K' or '&', as well as many of the italic letter shapes were able to be subjected to a broader and more creative design exploration process.

July 15, 2014. Bold weight

bold A **videospa**n

bold B **videospa**n

bold C **videospa**n

Plabook dev. videospa

Italic videospa

By this stage most of the basic characters of the Regular style were almost finalised. We started searching for the appropriate weight for the Bold. It was decided to aim for a rather heavy colour that would stand out from the page more noticeably and that could also serve for titling purposes if necessary.

July 15, 2014. Italic design stage, final comments

ABCDEF *G*HIJKLM
NOP *Q*RSTUVWXYZ
abcde *f*ghijklmn
op *q*rstuv *w*xyz

maybe something closer to the upright

too much

Review, not working right next to other glyphs

out-stroke is too short

can be mistaken for a 'v'

try other solutions, he does not like the feel of v w and probably y

Given the unusual solution of the upright italic, there were several feedback sessions and tests on the actual Google device needed to nail down concrete letter shapes, before moving ahead with the rest of the character set.

September 9, 2014. Cyrillic and Greek

ΑΒΓΔΕΖΗΘΙΚΛΜΝΞ
ΟΠΡΣΤΥΦΧΨΩΪΫΣΡΦ
άέήίϋαβγδεζηθικλμνξοπρς
στυφχψωϊϋούώρςfʒzʒ

АБВГДЕЖЗИЙКЛМНОПР
СТУФХЦЧШЩЪЫЬЭЮЯ
абвгдежзийклмнопрсту
фцчшщъыьэюяёђѓєѕіїј
љњћќѵџѣ

Once the Latin alphabet was completed Irene Vlachou started with the basic shapes of Greek and Vera Evstafieva with the Cyrillic. These alphabets would also be subjected to external revisions by experts for Greek and Cyrillic during the advanced stages of development.

September 9, 2014. Bold italic style

! " # \$ % & ' * , - . / 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 m n o p q r s t u v w x y z () [] {
} ` | \ ¡ ¢ £ ¤ ¥ ¦ § ¨ © « ¬ ® ¯ ° ± ² ³ ´
µ ¶ · ¸ ¹ º » ¼ ½ ¾ ¿ À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ Ç È É
Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ ß à á â ã
ä å æ ç è é ê ë ì í î ï ð ñ ò ó ô õ ö ÷ ø ù
ú û ü ý ÿ

The basic shapes of the fourth style, the bold italic, were approved. From this point onwards most of the work will be related to the production of composite and derivative shapes, and to post-production processes such as kerning and hinting. It will take another three months before entering the final testing stage which will lead to the release of **Literata** in April 2015.

Regular

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

{ [(« * & ¶ † , : @ † § ? ! »)] }

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

{ [(« * & ¶ † , : @ † § ? ! »)] }

Bold

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

{ [(« * & ¶ † , : @ † § ? ! »)] }

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN

OPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmn

opqrstuvwxyz

{[(«*&¶†,:@†§?!»)]}

А Б В Г Г Д Ъ Ѓ Е Ё Є Ж З С И Й І І
Ј К Л Љ М Н Њ О П Р С Т Ћ Ќ У
Ў Ф Х Ц Ч Џ Ш Щ Ъ Ы Ь Э Ю Я

а б в г г д ъ ѓ е ё є ж з с и й і і
ј к л љ м н њ о п р с т ћ ќ у
ў ф х ц ч џ ш щ ѡ ѣ ѥ э ю я

А Б В Г Г Д Ъ Г Е Ё Ё Є Ж З С И Й І І
Ј К Л Љ М Н Њ О П Р С Т Ћ Ќ У
Ў Ф Х Ц Ч Џ Ш Щ Ъ Ы Ь Э Ю Я

а б в г г д ъ г е ё ё є ж з с и й і і
ј к л љ м н њ о п р с т ћ ќ у
ў ф х ц ч џ ш щ ѡ ы ь э ю я

Regular Greek

Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν

Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω

α β γ δ ε ζ η θ ι κ λ μ ν ξ

ο π ρ σ ς τ υ φ χ ψ ω

ΑΒΓΔΕΖΗΘΙΚΛΜΝ

ΞΟΠΡΣΤΥΦΧΨΩ

αβγδεζηθικλμνξ

οπρσςτυφχψω

1234567890

1234567890

1234567890

$\frac{1}{2}$ $\frac{1}{4}$ $\frac{3}{4}$ $\frac{2}{3}$ $\frac{1}{3}$ $\frac{7}{8}$

H₂O y³⁵ ^aIndex

Ulysses

by James Joyce

I

Stately, plump Buck Mulligan came from the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed. A yellow dressinggown, ungirdled, was sustained gently behind him on the mild morning air. He held the bowl aloft and intoned:

—Introibo ad altare Dei.

Halted, he peered down the dark winding stairs and called out coarsely:

—Come up, Kinch! Come up, you fearful jesuit!

Solemnly he came forward and mounted the round gunrest. He faced about and blessed gravely thrice the tower, the surrounding land and the awaking mountains.

CHAPTER III

Not all that Mrs. Bennet, however, with the assistance of her five daughters, could ask on the subject, was sufficient to draw from her husband any satisfactory description of Mr. Bingley. They attacked him in various ways; with barefaced questions, ingenious suppositions, and distant surmises; but he eluded the skill of them all; and they were at last obliged to accept the second-hand intelligence of their neighbour, Lady Lucas. Her report was highly favourable. Sir William had been delighted with him. He was quite young, wonderfully handsome, extremely agreeable, and, to crown the whole, he meant to be at the next assembly with a large party. Nothing

One Click

Alguien como yo

To Kill A Mockingbird

Modern English Translation

Cincuenta sombras más oscuras

The Secret Agent: a Simple Tale

замечательный
ΑΛΛΟΚΟΤΟΣ
λεμόνι κ καρύδα
ты мой герой!
δημιουργήματα

Rag

12.3%

Zas!

Set

Kmo

76b

KQqG