

A Typographic Report



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The publication chosen for typographic analysis was *Country Living Gardener*, a magazine specializing in gardens, decorating, cooking, travel and conservation. The magazine uses various typefaces for titles, body text, captions and headings and has neatly set type. At first glance it appeared that only three typefaces were used, but further inspection proved that a fourth was included. Identifying the fourth font was the most difficult as it was very similar to other fonts yet had certain characters with vast differences.

The sans serif title

The first and easiest font to identify was that used for the title. The typeface used is Helvetica Light set at approximately 40 points. Helvetica, originally the Haas Neue Grotesk, was created by Max Miedinger in 1957 and is sold by Agfa-Monotype and Linotype. It is a very simple, unornamented font associated with Swiss typography in the 1950s and 1960s. Varying weights, condensed and extended versions of Helvetica were later added for use on the Linotype machine. However, due to Linotype's restrictions on licenses, many illegal copies of Helvetica have been made.

The elegant body text

At a glance, the serif typeface used for the body text seems like some form of Garamond. However, the upper-case R is a definite clue that it is a different font. In this case, the font used is Bembo set at approximately 9 points. Emphasized words, such as the scientific names of plants, are displayed in Bembo Italic. Occasional ligatures are used to connect f with i and f with l. The article is ended with a leaf-like pi character, which could be any number of fonts and may be a character from an extended set of Bembo.

Bembo was designed by the Venetian scholar and printer, Aldus Manutius, in the late 1400s and is now sold by Agfa-Monotype and Linotype. Manutius is best known for publishing various literary and philosophical works in Greek and Latin as well as printing for the Vatican in Rome.

The solid captions

The very simple sans serif typeface used for captions is Univers Bold set at approximately 7 points. It is a very solid typeface and easy to read and does not distract the reader.

This simple typeface was designed by Swiss graphic designer Adrian Frutiger also during the time Max Miedinger designed Helvetica. When adapting metal type to the use of light beams, Frutiger developed his ideas for Univers when working with the sans serif "Grotesk" style. This font is also sold by Agfa-Monotype and Linotype.

The mind-boggling subtitle and headings

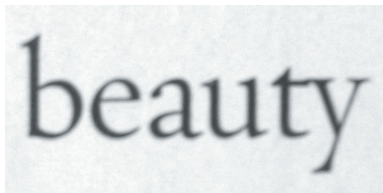
Determining this font proved to be the most difficult as it took some time to realize that it was actually different than the body text and was not a common font. After many hours of research, it was determined that the font used is Requiem set at approximately 16 points. The defining characteristics of the characters are the crossover of the bowl on the stem of the lower-case p, the slightly triangular lower serif on the lower-case y, and the absolutely beautiful numbers. The

Bembo's capital R with its long swash.

Bembo's ligatures for f, i and l.

ABCDEFGHI
 JKLMNOPQR
 STUVWXYZ
 ABCDEFGHIJKK
 LMNNOPQRR
 STTUVWXYZZ
 abcdefghijklm
 nopqrstuvwxyz
 1234567890
 (!;?&&) {\$£¥ƒ€¢}
 [€\$†#*@KNQRTY]
 ÆÆŒœfiſffiffllctstß
 ÅÇÉÑÌÒÛÿäçèñìòûÿ

Requiem character map. Note the oldstyle numerals and alternate characters for small caps.



An example of a scanned image that could be used with OCR technology to identify a font.

number 5, in particular, is very calligraphic with somewhat of a serif at the top of the number. The numbers are oldstyle numerals which drop down below the baseline, offering a drop cap effect.

Requiem was designed by the young Jonathan Hoefler. It is held and sold by Hoefler & Frere-Jones in New York. Born in 1970, Hoefler is well-known for his award winning typeface designs for such magazines as Rolling Stones, Harper's Bazaar, The New York Times Magazine, Sports Illustrated, and Esquire. His font, Hoefler Text, has been added as a part of the Macintosh operating system. His designs are internationally exhibited and he prides himself on designing typefaces which include aesthetics and classic type characteristics.

The details

All text, whether body text, captions or headings appear to be set normally. Body text leading is set at 10.5 points with 9-point text. The line length is 16 picas, 11 points. Column gutters are approximately 1 pica, 2 points in width. In this particular article there are no indentations at the beginning of paragraphs as each subhead has only one paragraph. The first paragraph of the article is enhanced with a drop cap S and small caps with increased tracking.

The research

Much of the research was performed online using sites that could help identify fonts. Some sites offered questionnaires regarding various letters in the typeface. By process of elimination, the site would create a list of possible fonts. Unfortunately, a majority of the most common and classic typefaces were not in the site's font library, thus finding the correct font was impossible using that site.

The best results were found on www.myfonts.com. They have a special section entitled "What The Font?!" where anyone can upload images of text to find the correct font. The site uses an amazing technology combination of optical character recognition (OCR) and color correction. The system analyzes the characters scanned and creates guesses as to the letters. The user can delete or keep the results and then let the site do a search for the font. By evaluating the outline of the text the site brings up a selection of fonts which could fit the uploaded sample. The only problem is uploading a sample of adequate quality. For quality results, the sample should be a decent resolution (within the uploading limits), have high contrast between the text sample and its background, have defining characters, and not have characters that run together. Some fonts which contain letters such as a lower-case k where the vertex does not meet the stem are problematic for the OCR analysis. If the analysis does not bring back an appropriate font, the user may create an account and post the sample on the WTF Guru Forum. Users with an account may post comments and suggestions or answers on the samples. This is how I identified Requiem. Within seven minutes of posting the sample, a random user posted that someone else had the same font issues as I and they directed me to that post along with the correct font. It is amazing how many people are so enamored with fonts and could spend their time identifying them for others.

References

- www.identifont.com
- www.linotype.com
- www.myfonts.com
- www.typography.com