Type from A-Z

THE TEN BEST COMPANIES RATED BY GRAPHIC DESIGN EXPERTS

VEER / EMIGRE / HOEFLER TYPE FOUNDRY / MISPRINTED TYPE

ADOBE / FONTBUREAU / FOUNTAIN / FONTHAUS / FONTSHOP / P22

by Sheila Cannon & Mala Desai

01

Veer

Giggle Script DF

Feel Script

BRASSERIE REGULAR

DF CHARGER

WITH THE ONSET OF the digital age, the internet has become an extremely powerful resource for designers. Finding fonts is convenient and websites have valuable information to offer young designers, but it is a matter of finding the right one. That is why we created a top ten list to guide students and young designers through the intricate web of type online.

★ ★ ★ ★
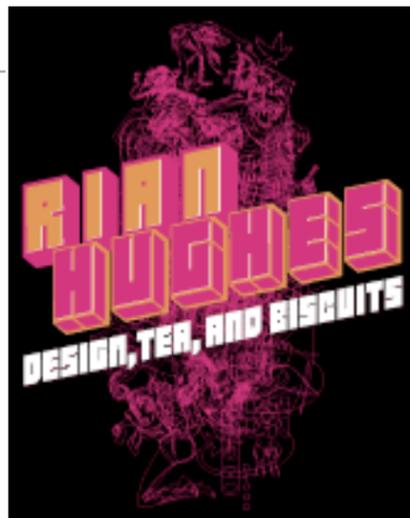
www.veer.com

Veer is all about seeing things in a new light, hinting at potential, inventing contexts and creating concepts. Ultimately, Veer's goal as a company is to enhance creativity by helping designers break out of the grid, the list, the rulebook...to show designers how to filter out the obvious and mundane...and to assist designers in doing their best creative work possible.

The Veer website provides visual elements for use in professional creative work, such as graphic design, motion design, advertising and filmmaking. Products include stock photography, illustration, typefaces, and unique merchandise.

One of the most unique aspects of Veer's website is that it allows designers to search other type foundry collections such as P22, Adobe, Font Bureau, and Fountain. By acknowledging that there are other type resources out there, Veer's honesty and openness from the get-go automatically builds a rapport with its customers. Just one reason why students can trust Veer as a credible type source.

With Veer's "Flont" technology, designers can test thousands of fonts (not just the few available in the drop-down menu) and essentially "try before they buy." After all, it is easier to choose the right typeface when you can see it in your own words. Flont is available on all the type product pages within the site. Veer also has a section dedicated to professional type designers and their work, typeface(s), related events, etc. This is a great way for students to gain exposure to up and coming type designers.

Another aspect of Veer that makes it a valuable site is the fact that it has its own exclusive typefaces (and they are labeled accordingly). If students are looking for typefaces they can't find anywhere else, and they want to stay ahead of industry trends, Veer is an excellent initial resource to consult. Most of the new typefaces on the site come with a paragraph description detailing type characteristics from tracking to ligatures to swashes to strokes and everything in between. Designers can also click further to see all newly released typefaces for the current month.

Last but not least, Veer takes on custom type requests, allows designers to search type by style and on discs, and has a "What's Hot?" category displaying various fonts. Type experts at Veer can research customer requests and reply via a "lightbox" on the site within one business day (or often just a few hours)!

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

http://fontshop.com

FontShop allows designers to buy fonts from numerous other companies (a necessary part of staying in the font business these days) yet also carries its own exclusive fonts. With over 40,000 fonts to choose from, designers will always find what they're looking for.

The collection of fonts includes those from leading type designers such as Neville Brody, Tobias Frere-Jones, Carol Twombly and many others. Of the numerous high quality fonts offered on the site, some of the best are those that have been created specifically for FontShop itself within its type foundry FontFont.

Searching for a font is done by category, designer or foundry. This is very helpful, along with the option to read customer reviews for each font. Background information on the designer and his/her font is also available.

FontShop has some unique features that sets it apart from other sites. The Type Navigator allows designers to find a font they have in mind through a system of identifying the style, size, etc. A FontShop expert is on call at no charge to help designers find the best font or conduct research on multiple font choices.

The educational portion of the Fontshop website is especially interesting (especially for students), and of course, the fabulous yellow font guide speaks for itself. The best part of the guide is the way it is broken up into different helpful sections - Typographic, Ironic, Handwritten, Amorphous, Historic, Pi+Symbols, and Web fonts. These sections make it easy for designers to look at FontShop exclusive typefaces in an organized and logical way.

Even though the FontShop website is informative, it is not very intuitive and can be difficult to navigate, especially for a designer who is learning about type for the first time.

For example, the website should clearly explain that all FontShop exclusives are preceded with the letters ff.

Din

Meta

Eddie

Blur

It's Big.
It's Yellow.
It's Back.

TAKE A TOUR ▶

FontBook

FontBook

FSI FontShop International
Digital Typeface Compendium

★ ★ ★ ★ ✦

www.adobe.com

Adobe is a major portal website that designers should be familiar with because of its wide variety of relevant products and services. Fonts are an important part of Adobe's business and therefore a sizeable chunk of the Adobe website is devoted to that. The site has approximately 2,200 typefaces, many of which have been designed by leading type designers specifically for Adobe.

The way Adobe's site is designed is reflective of their identity - the information presented is not overwhelming yet designers have access to a large selection o f quality fonts. The site has been developed in a way that makes it easy for the customer to find any font simply by searching based on keyword or alphabetically. It is also possible to search categorically based on style, use, theme, classification or type designer. This latter method of searching could come in quite handy for a student who needs specific fonts for a class project.

The site is also helpful for students because of its category breakdowns. For example, if a young designer was searching for a font based on style, Adobe provides further options such as contrast, handtooled, handwritten, etc. This type o f advanced search capability is rare to find on type websites. Being able to search for a font based on use or theme is also a great solution for students who may be unclear about which font would go best with a particular design.

An additional benefit to Adobe's website is the wonderful pool of type designers who have contributed to type design and Adobe in particular. This would be an obvious way for young designers to familiarize themselves with important type designers such as Carol Twombly and Robert Slimbach, who designed/revived several of the most widely used typefaces. Some of these typefaces include Caslon, Garamond, Jenson, and Myriad.

And finally, the site offers a section on type topics that gives a glossary of type terms. Designers can download type specimens from this section of the site and use as a guide in their work. There is also a list of type tips, which includes basic directions on how to set type (another useful element for a student or young designer).

It cannot be denied that Adobe has an excellent website, however, there are some drawbacks. If designers did not know the url (www.adobe.com/type) before entering the site, it would be quite an arduous process to find it through the main navigation. And though the design of the site is clean and simple, it lacks style and excitement, which gives it a serious tone that may not appeal to students or young designers. There is also a strong emphaiss on technology within the site, and while that is clearly important to Adobe as a company and it is explained well on the site, it many not be something a student or young designer is interested in.

Overall, the Adobe website offers a comprehensive selection of typefaces for every purpose. Superior technology and attention to aesthetic detail distinguish the Adobe Type Library.

Jenson
Myriad
Garamond
Caslon

typography

★ ★ ★ ★ ✦

www.typography.com

Type designers Jonathan Hoefler and Tobias Frere-Jones created www.typography.com to house their various fonts. They have created many typefaces for various clients, but there are roughly 27 offered on the website. The unique fonts offered are divided into fourteen easy-to-use categories. Each category lists all weights of the typeface being viewed, along with suggestions of other typefaces that could work equally well. The site also provides a description of the typeface in each weight, which includes size, width, voice, etc.

A stand-out feature of this site is a section called Test Drive. Designers can input text of their choice and see it come alive in any font they choose! Browse Collections is another valuable aspect of the site. It allows the customer to view fonts by style, proportion, size and application - all useful categories for both students and professionals.

One last feature that should be mentioned is the way the site recommends typefaces in pairs. For instance, if the customer chooses a particular font, the site will suggest a complimentary typeface that would work well with it in any context. This is very handy for those not comfortable with pairing typefaces.

Overall, Hoefler Frere-Jones boasts an impressive client list that includes many big names in advertising and design. As helpful as this website is for students and young designers, it may be more practical for professionals who have been in the industry for a while. Nevertheless, this is an important site that should be bookmarked as a resource for well known type designers and unique fonts.

HOEFLER & FRERE-JONES
WWW.TYPOGRAPHY.COM
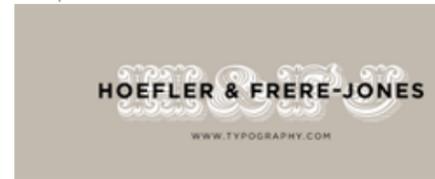
Didot
Gotham
Hoefler Text
Knockout

★ ★ ★ ★ ✦

www.fontbureau.com

Font Bureau was created by noted designer Roger Black and typographer David Berlow in 1989, rapidly growing since then. The Font Bureau website contains over 1,000 typefaces yet the look and feel of the site is dated. Another irritating element is the fact that the fonts are only broken down into six categories when there are so many. Plus, the titles of the six categories are not descriptive enough - serif, sans serif, slab serif, script, wacky and symbol. Having to arrow through each font before reaching the one desired is just too time consuming.

All of this being said, the site is a very good resource if only for the fact that it showcases each font in every style with all characters. It also provides background information on the typefaces, which is obviously helpful to any student, young designer or profesional.

One unique aspect to the Font Bureau site is the custom search, where designers can search for fonts by publication (newspaper, magazine or both), by usage (text or display), and by type of font (sans serif or serif).

Font Bureau has created typefaces for some of the nation's leading publications, including The New York Times and Newsweek.

THE FONT BUREAU, INC.

Interstate
Avalon
Sloop
Agenda

★ ★ ★ ★

www.fonthaus.com

FontHaus is a massive web portal - the fourth largest digital font resource in the world. The website offers 70,000 fonts designed by type foundries, design shops, freelancers, etc. Due to enormous amounts of content, the site is somewhat generic in appearance. However, the aesthetics can be pushed aside given the fact that the site is easy to navigate and accessible to anyone for use. Furthermore, searching for fonts is a piece of cake on this website. Having search options such as alphabetically, by supplier, by font family, by classification, by style/weight, etc and having 67 classifications for the fonts goes a very long way. This is also one of the few websites that allows users to change the point size of a letter when they are looking at text in different fonts.

FontHaus is very generous with giving out information. On the site, customers will find a list of the top 50 bestsellers - this helps communicate the fonts other designers are using. Also, there is a top ten list for the type foundries found on the site. X-Height, FontHaus' online magazine, pours out useful information about fonts, type designers, and technology written by industry experts.
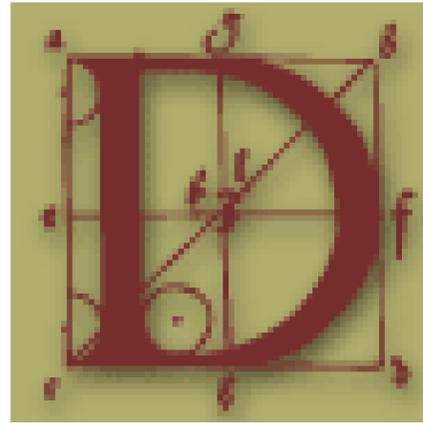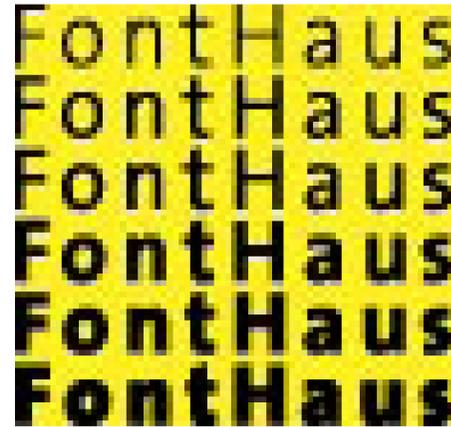
Heatwave

Novella

Amethyst

Caslon Antique

Emigre FONTS

A

★ ★ ★ ⌐
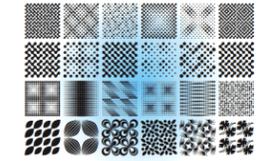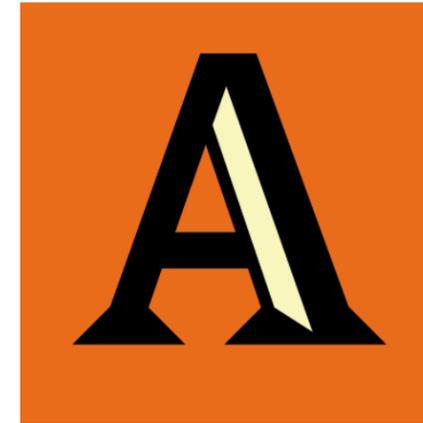
www.emigre.com

Emigre is a website created by Zuzana Licko and Rudy Vander Lans based on their graphic design publication that focused on type while still in circulation. Although the printed version of Emigre is no longer produced, the website continues to thrive as sole provider of Emigre fonts, books, posters, etc.

The Emigre website creates a welcoming and aesthetically stylish first impression...surely something that would be attrative to students or young designers. Compared to other type websites, Emigre's font selection is rather limited, but what they do offer is high quality and innovative. Students or young designers should be cautioned that Emigre fonts must be used wisely due to their "funky" nature. In general, "funky" fonts do not work well as body copy.

Emigre fonts are split into three main categories - text fonts, display fonts, picture fonts - and are then broken down into smaller categories. It is because of this that the categories are simple to understand and subsequently the fonts are easier to find. However, students or young designers who are not familiar with all type styles may find this site slightly frustrating.

The typefaces sold on the Emigre website have been created by 24 passionate type designers. The site gives a detailed description of their backgrounds and inspirations. As an added bonus, the site has a section called Typetease where the customer can input some text and see their words show up in different typefaces.

EMIGRE NO

Another night of ALTERNATE *Tranquility* **and turmoil.** But morning came, by and by. IT WAS ANOTHER **GLAD AWAKENING** to fresh breezes, *vast expanses* OF LEVEL GREENSWARD.

BRIGHT SUNLIGHT, **an impressive** solitude UTTERLY WITHOUT **VISIBLE** *human beings or* human habitations, **and an atmosphere** OF SUCH AMAZING *magnifying* PROPERTIES

Mrs. Eaves

Filosofia

democratica

Solex

ENTER

www.misprintedtype.com

Misprinted Type is a website created by Brazilian graphic designer Eduardo Recife, essentially a place where he can showcase his art and type design. Recife's website offers 24 stylish fonts that are quite "hip," "fun," and "trendy." Most of the typefaces would serve as display fonts because of their elaborate makeup and many of them are free, which is extremely helpful for a student or young designer who is just getting started and can't afford to buy expensive fonts. A small selection of Recife's fonts do cost money and can be piurchased on www.myfonts.com. In general, the site could be improved if each font was broken down into categories. As it stands right now, the customer is forced to click on each font in order to see what it looks like.

★★★★

www.p22.com

The P22 type foundry is dedicated to creating art-inspired typefaces through the revival of historic forms, presenting them in a contemporary and relevant manner. The P22 collection embodies art periods, natural science curiosities, and human history - providing a constant source of typographic inspiration.

P22 is renowned for its work with museums and foundations to ensure the development of accurate historical typefaces that are fully relevant for today's computer user. In addition to its in-house font design, P22 now licenses several new type designs from around the world. And of course, no type foundry is complete without its own record label and plenty of merchandise!

The P22 website holds a strong emphasis on fine art. What is described above makes P22 fonts very dependable - students and young designers can have peace of mind knowing that an incredible amount of research goes into the creation of each P22 typeface produced.

The site also contains fonts from other type foundries such as IHOF, Lanston, etc. An easy five-category search allows customers to search based on art style, time period, type style and text only. Within the type style category, there are sub groups such as handwritten, serif, sans serif, etc. If a designer was in a rush, this probably wouldn't be the best site to use...mainly because the font cannot actually be seen until the customer opens the character set, which makes it pretty difficult to compare multiple fonts with each other. Also, the description of each font borders on being too brief...a little elaboration could go a long way in this case.

Overall, P22 is a decent website that offers high quality, dependable fonts.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Fountain is an independent one-man type foundry, owned and operated by Peter Bruhn. The company was formed in 1993 and is physically located in the heart of Malmö, a beautiful cityport in southwestern Sweden known as the Scandinavian Ibiza. Bruhn's intention was to make a large amount of fonts that people might enjoy looking at even in their spare time.

Bruhn's present-day aim is to provide students, young designers and professionals with modern, well-crafted fonts guaranteed to meet the most strenuous requirements of aesthetics, legibility and originality. And for those customers who are in need of a unique and different visual identity, Fountain's website offers custom typeface design in addition to the improvement and adaptation of existing typefaces. In the news section, there are descriptions of new release fonts as well as upcoming typefaces.

Fountaineer, an interesting section on the site, is devoted to the Fountain community. Soon enough, customers will also be able to enjoy type design tips. Lastly, Fountain does accept type submissions, which is the perfect way for students and young designers to jump straight into the deep end of type. As a side note, Fountain has a hilarious website credits page!

FOUNTAIN NEWS
Alphabet Makers of Sweden

Fontain™

Fountain

Grotesque 49
Playing jazz vibe
checks quickly
excistes my wife
Quantumfysica
Quantumfysica

Sadness

Super

Gas

Girl

a a a

ceo ceo

a a

FOUNTAINEER

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