

NOT MY TYPE, TYPEFACES ON DISPLAY



DEPS Artist Profile

June 10 – August 6, 2021

Glass Curtain Gallery - Columbia College Chicago

1104 S Wabash Ave, 1st Floor, Chicago, IL 60605

Gallery Hours: Monday–Friday, 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

Capacity of gallery is 10 visitors, and masks are required.

NOT MY TYPE, TYPEFACES ON DISPLAY

Can we define our times through a typeface?

How do we choose the perfect vessel to communicate an idea?

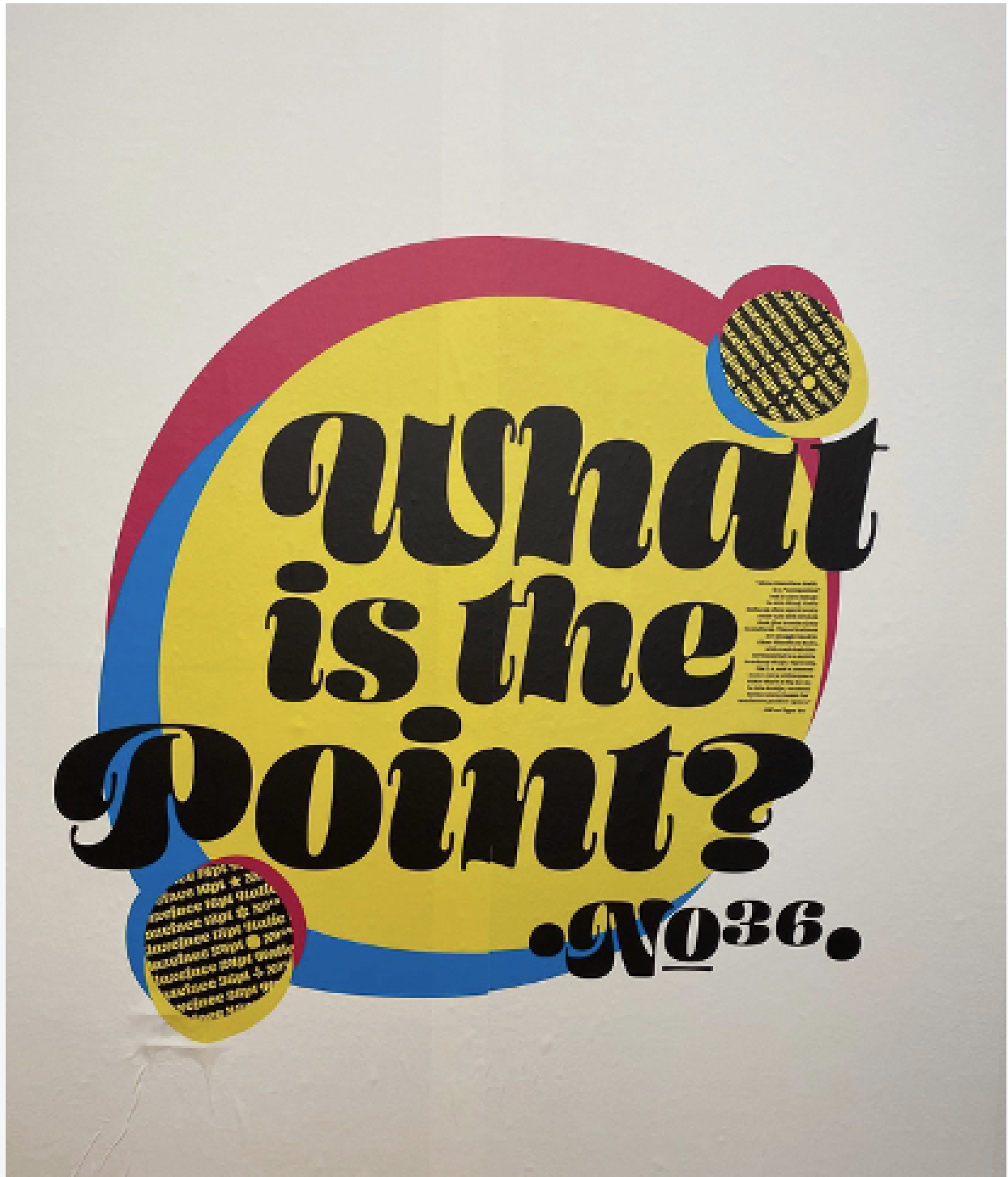
Can a typeface design bring awareness to societal injustices?

With the multitude of new type foundries and bespoke typefaces cropping up all over Instagram and design blogs, it seemed like the timing was right to ask Graphic design majors taking their first typography to choose any typeface or type designer to feature as an installation for a gallery exhibition. The result is a diverse collection of new and old, decorative and functional, revivals and remixes.

Participating artists

Kalia Allen
Elsa Brydalski
Gwenyth Bechtel
Bri Elliott
Michelle Lee
Jon Lovisetto
Omar Ojeda
Jasmine Olayan
Dakota Portell
Genesis Rios
Marco Rodriguez
Rosie Ruiz
Rachel Turner
Joseph Trezek
Roger Vazquez

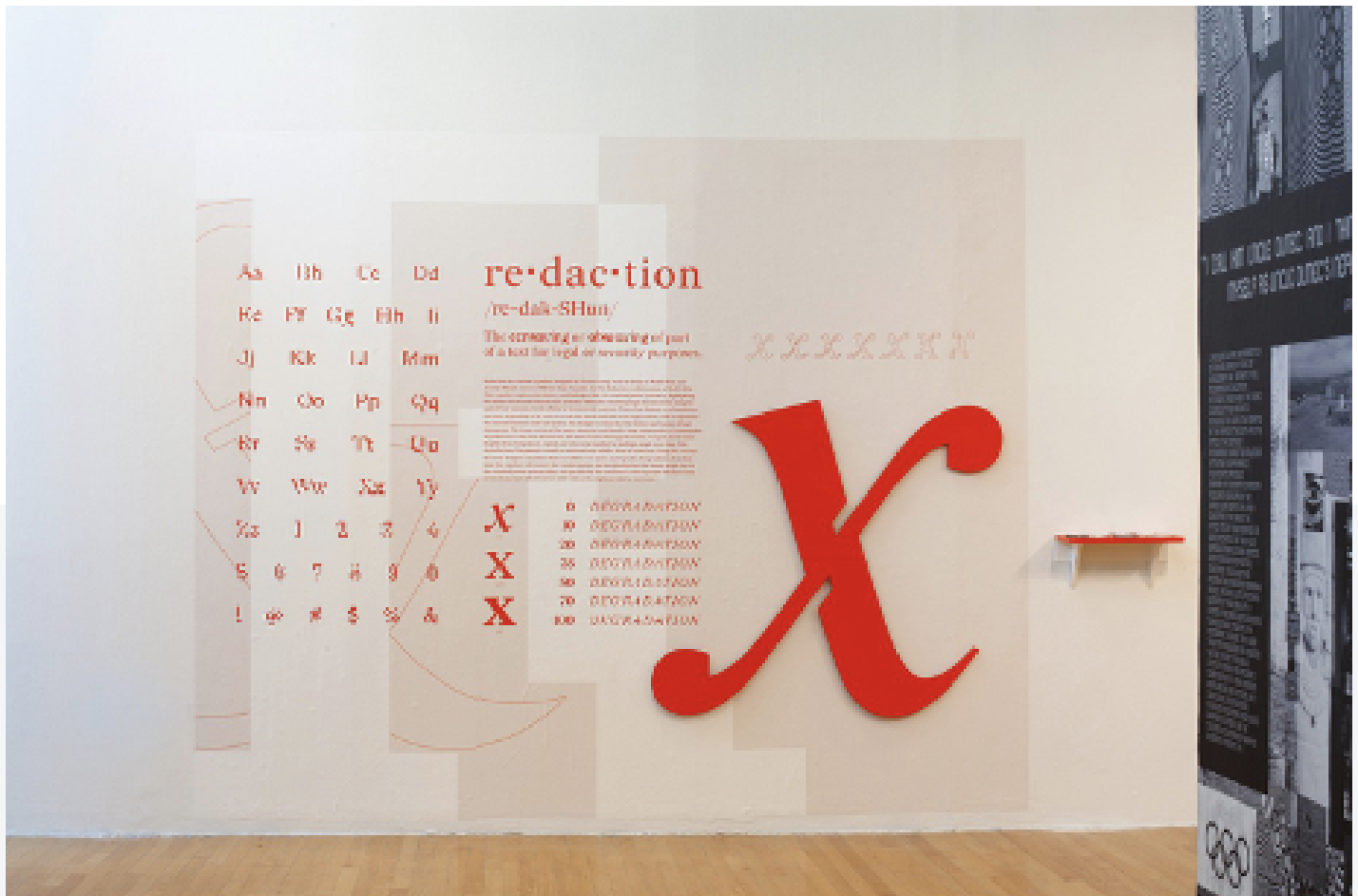
Curated by Sarah Faust, Associate Professor of Instruction, Design with assistance from Bri Elliott and the support of the Design Department



Dakota Portell
To Exist in Print, 2021
Photo Tex



Michelle Lee
Rhyme and Mimicry by Chloe Scheffe, 2021
plywood and Photo Tex



Bri Elliott
Redaction, 2021
 laser cut plywood, Photo Tex



Genesis Rios
Keep it Casual, 2021
vinyl, laser cut acrylic

Goodbye
Helvetica,
Welcome
Degular

Omar Ojeda
Degular, 2021 (detail)
Photo Tex



Not My Type, Typefaces on Display installation view

YA NO MÁS ESPAÑA CIVIL WAR AL FRONT!

nationalists республиканский nationalists республиканс
ublicans националист gerublicans националист republic

muerte al fascismo! смерть фашизму!
muerte al fascismo! смерть фашизму!
muerte al fascismo! смерть фашизму!

Stand For Your Beliefs.

Based in Moscow, CSTM fonts is an independent digital type design and development studio that was established by Erik Rubtsov and Tony Ostrovskiy in early 2014.

Navigo and Pilar are the two typefaces designed. Pilar was inspired by posters created during the Spanish Civil War. Navigo was created for Moscow City District's housing and management system.

Typefaces of CSTM

NAVIGO PILAR
NAVIGO Pilar
NAVIGO PILAR
NAVIGO PILAR
NAVIGO PILAR
NAVIGO PILAR
NAVIGO PILAR



DE ABRIL 1939 A POINTLESS WAR Madrid, Spain

Joseph Trezek
Strength in Type, 2021
Photo Tex



Jasmine Olayan
Right to Left, 2021
 Photo Tex



Not My Type, Typefaces on Display installation view



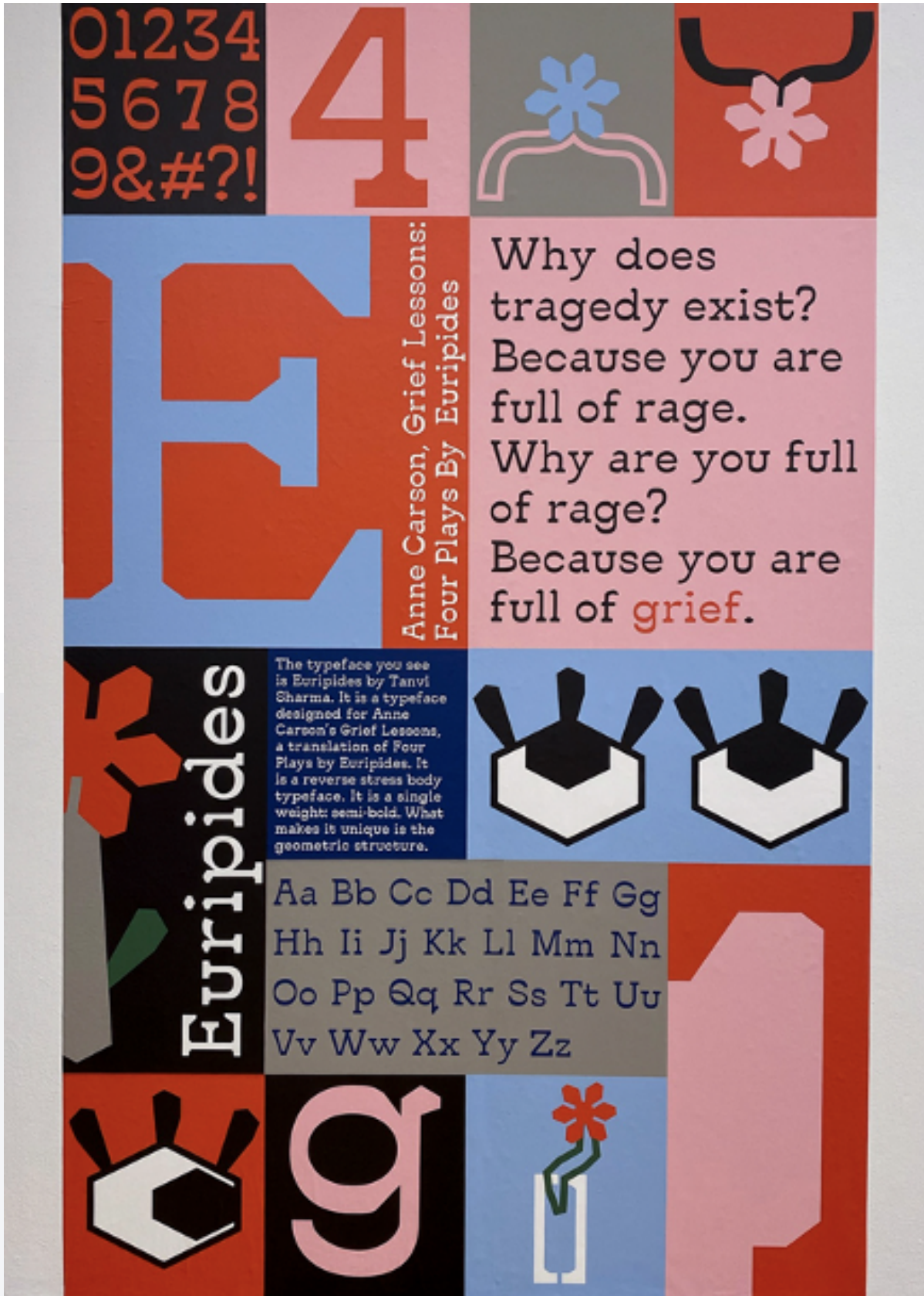
Kalia Allen
Futura: Timelessly Perfect, 2021 (detail)
Photo Tex, laser cut Masonite



Kalia Allen
Futura: Timelessly Perfect, 2021 (detail)
Photo Tex, laser cut Masonite



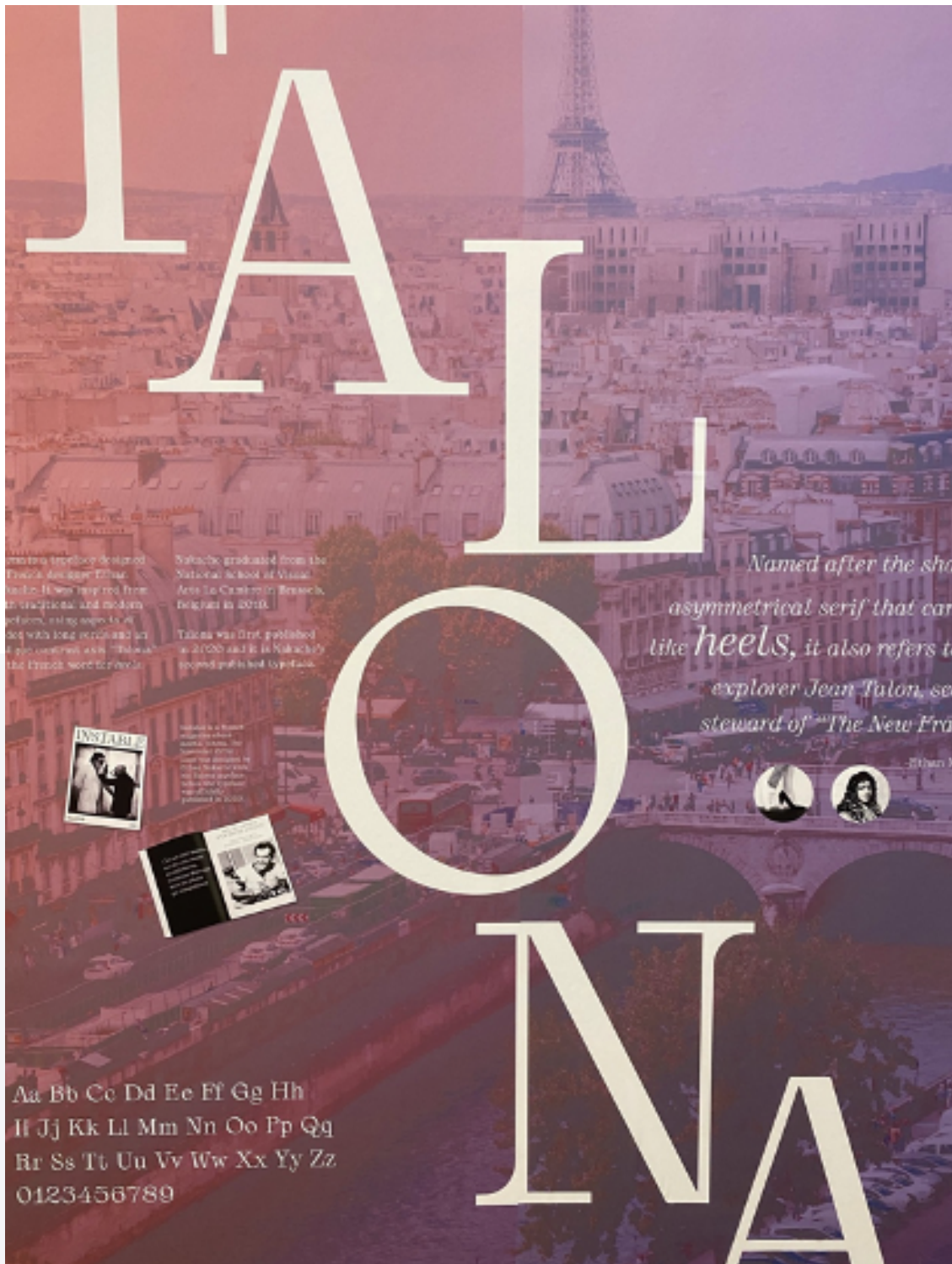
Not My Type, Typefaces on Display installation view



Gwenyth Bechtel
Euripides, 2021
Photo Tex



Genesis Rios
Keep it Casual, 2021 (column)
vinyl, laser cut acrylic



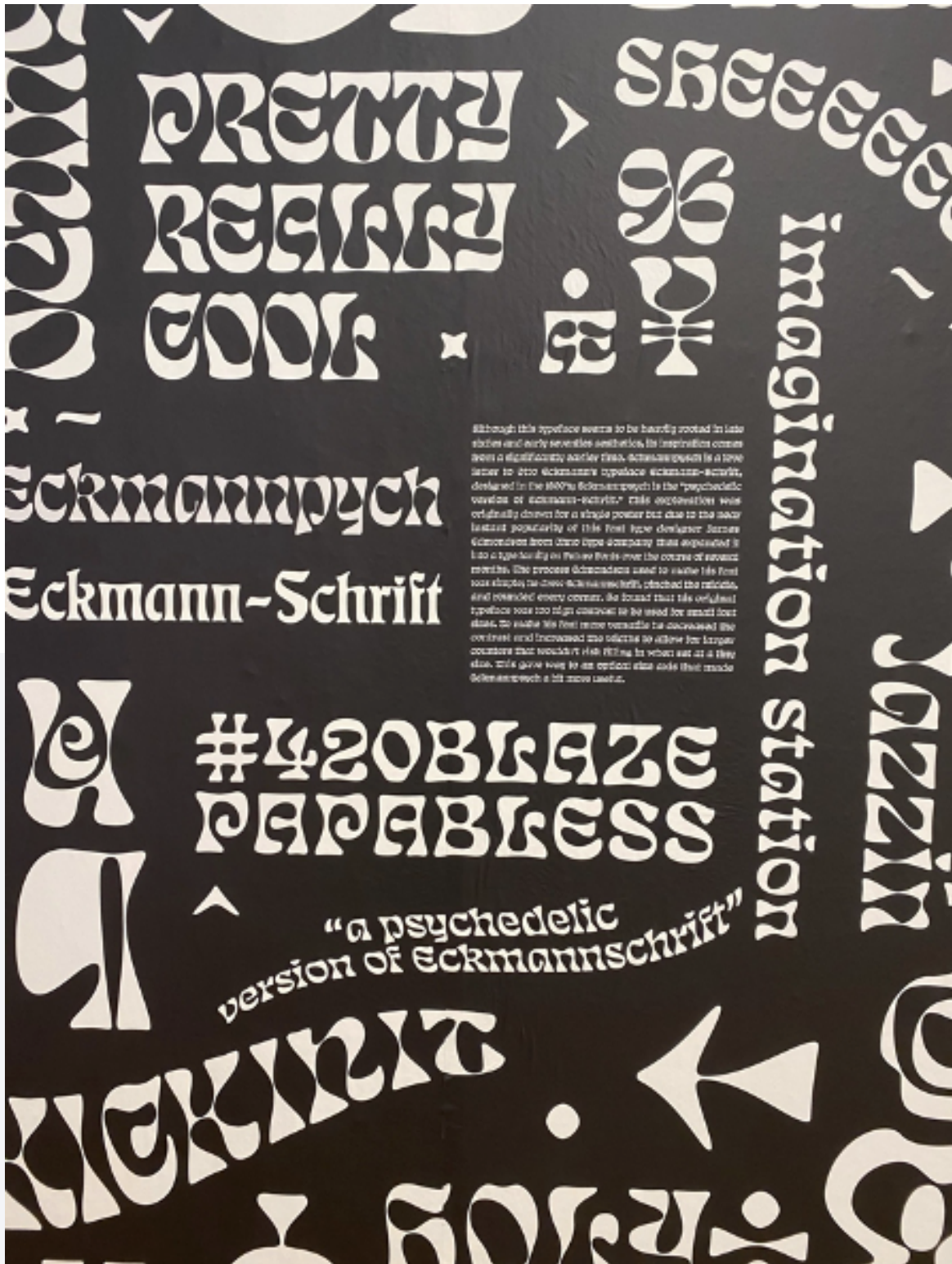
Rachel Turner
 Talona, 2021
 Photo Text



Talona installation view



Not My Type, Typefaces on Display installation view



Although this typeface seems to be hardly rooted in late sixties and early seventies aesthetics, its inspiration comes from a significantly earlier time. Eckmannpsych is a love letter to Otto Eckmann's typeface Eckmannschrift, designed in the 1930s. Eckmannschrift is the "psychedelic version of Eckmannschrift." This experiment was originally done for a single poster but due to the near instant popularity of this font type designer Jozsef Csizserey from the type company that expanded it into a type family in 2010. He lives over the course of several months. The process Eckmannschrift used to create the font was simple: he drew Eckmannschrift, checked the metrics, and rounded every corner. He found that his original typeface was too tight to use for small font sizes. To make his font more versatile he decreased the contrast and increased the x-height to allow for larger counters that wouldn't fill with ink. In what was at a 100% size, this gave rise to an optical size case that made Eckmannschrift a bit more usable.

Marco Rodriguez
 Eckmannpsych, 2021
 Photo Tex



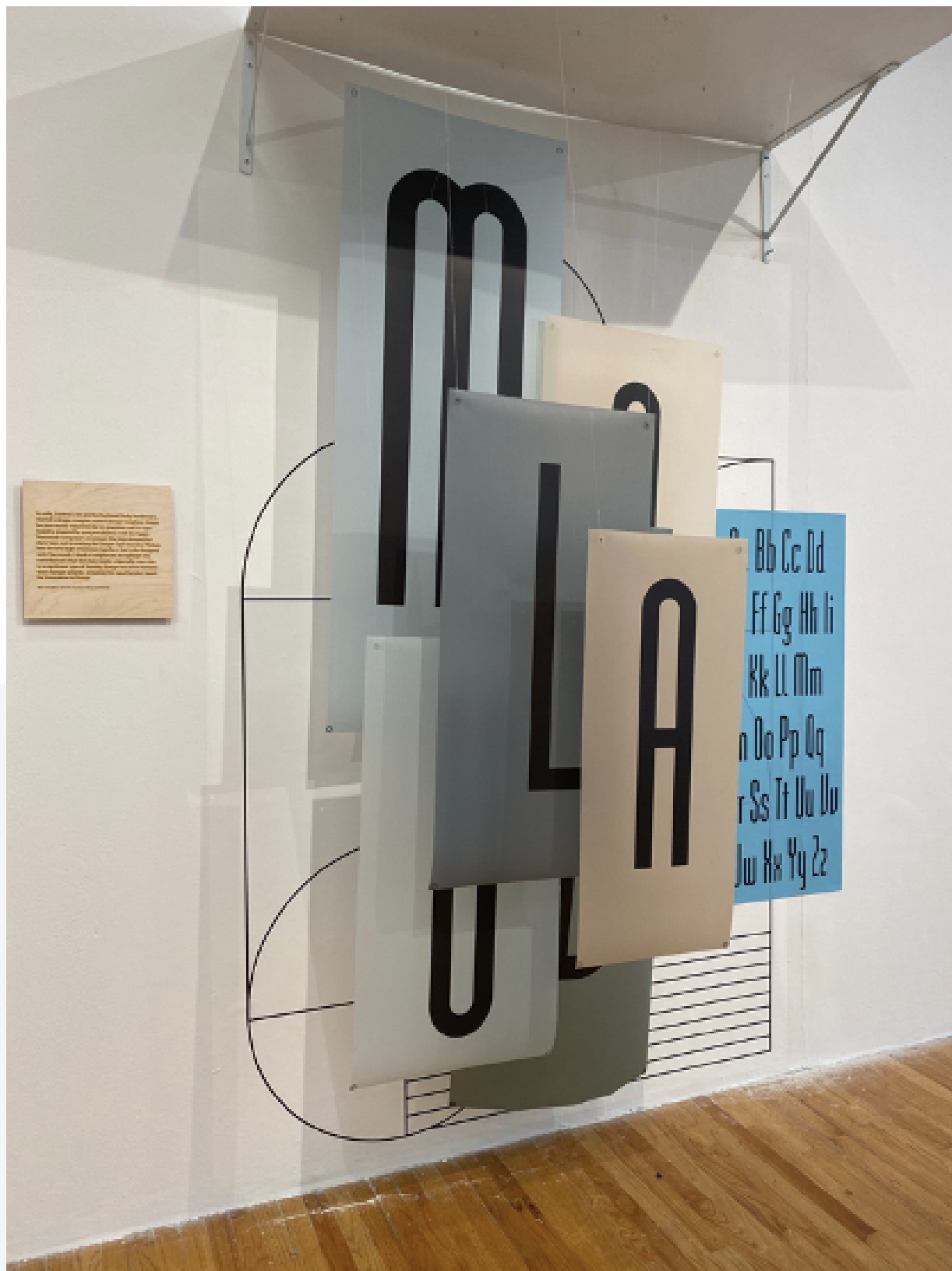
Not My Type, Typefaces on Display installation view



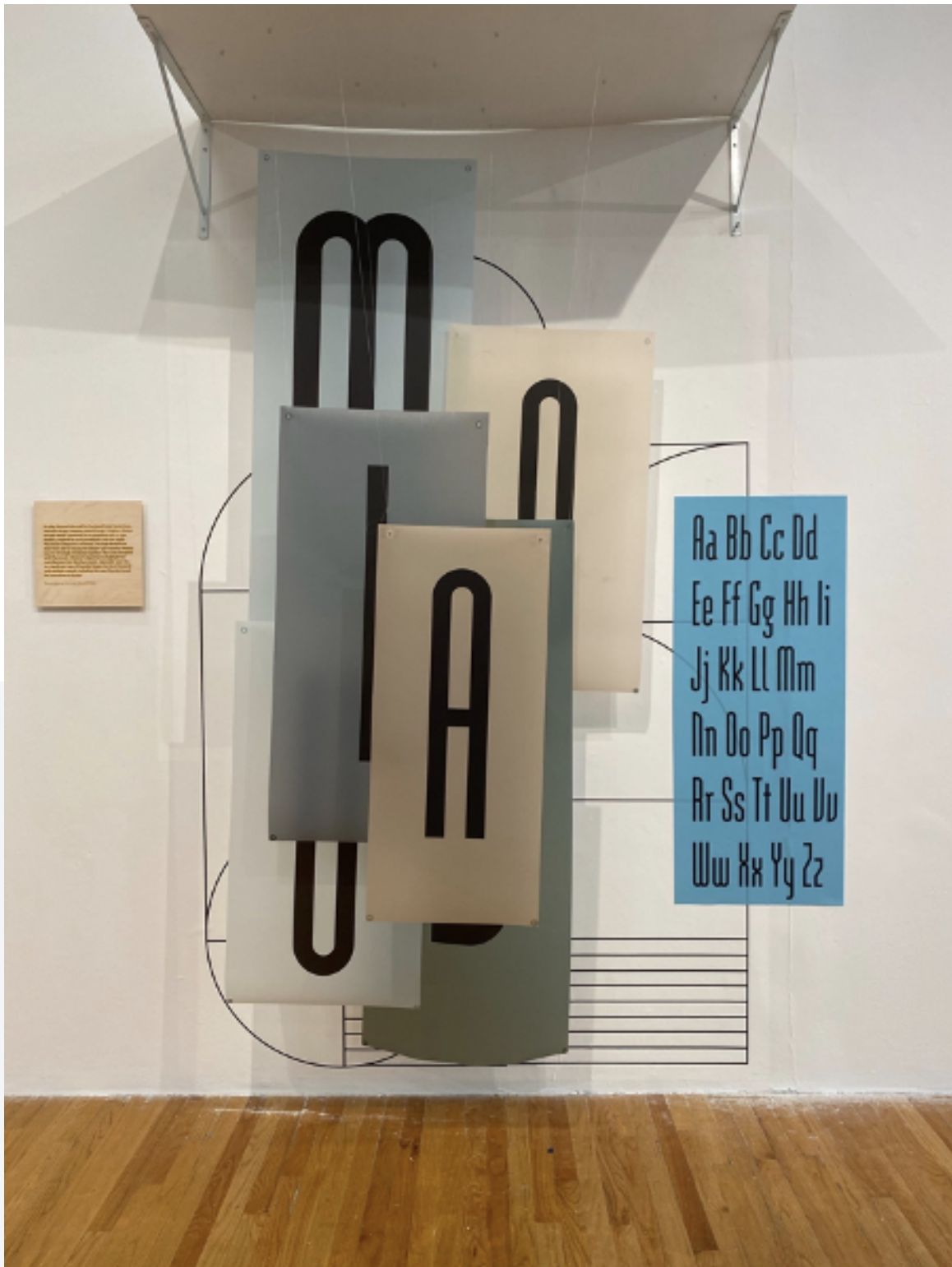
Roger Vazquez
Mexico 68 (detail), 2021
Photo Tex, cardboard



Not My Type, Typefaces on Display installation view



Rosie Ruiz
Modula, 2021
frosted paper banners, plywood plaques, engraved letters



Rosie Ruiz
Modula, 2021
frosted paper banners, plywood plaques, engraved letters



Rosie Ruiz
Modula, 2021 (detail)
frosted paper banners, plywood plaques, engraved letters



LA
DIDOT

Elsa Brylaski
La Didot, 2020
digital video still



Ginto

...is an exuberant geometric-humanist typeface that delights in tension, especially its own tension between circular and rectangular forms. London-based graphic designer Seb McLauchlan developed the font while researching sans-serif typefaces from the twentieth century, focusing on the shift from strict Modernist "purity" to the more baroque, animated styles that emerged during the phototypesetting period of the '50s and '60s. These two historic impulses have been remixed to create a dynamic and charismatic set of forms.

Ginto Thin
Ginto Thin Italic
Ginto Light
Ginto Light Italic
Ginto Regular
Ginto Regular Italic
Ginto Medium
Ginto Medium Italic
Ginto Bold
Ginto Bold Italic
Ginto Black
Ginto Black Italic

Jon Lovisetto
Ginto, 2021
digital video still

Interview with Curator Sarah Faust

Conducted by Kaylee Fowler

Kaylee Fowler: What inspired you to put this exhibition together, and why did you want to showcase typeface in an exhibition setting?

Sarah Faust: For typography class, I've been thinking of how to diversify the ways in which students observe type: context, space, and medium. Throughout the semester, they compile "type diaries" where they seek out type in different contexts, such as packaging, fashion, signage, and each time they are asked to trace the letterforms, an exercise that brings their awareness to the nuances of strokes, weights, and overall feel. It occurred to me that significantly enlarging the type would give them an opportunity to work with it in yet another way. I thought the exercise of designing a large-scale wall installation could potentially open them up to innovative ways to display and contextualize type, its history, and stylistic origins. I was considering both the act of designing and making the pieces, as well as the act of viewing the pieces, and how they would be experienced physically in the gallery. We talked a lot about how one would approach a design of this scale and context, from a distance to close up, and from front to back. Often when designing for print or screen, student designers may limit themselves in approaching the layout design only from top to bottom and left to right. This assignment got them thinking about graphics to the scale of the human figure, how that relates to our frame of vision and our bodies. After this experience, my hope is that they may approach page layout and designing for web and mobile with a fresh perspective.

KF: Have you ever done a project like this with typeface or graphic design before? What were some unique challenges and rewards that came from exploring typeface in this way?

SF: I had participated in many exhibitions as an artist, but I had never curated a show, and this is something I have wanted to do for some time, so it feels satisfying to finally achieve this, and to do it with my students has been rewarding. To get started, we looked at different sources: Black typeface designers, typography blogs like *AIGA Eye on Design*, *Type Tuesday*, online foundries other than Adobe fonts, and Instagram. Licensing was a consideration. We tend to use a lot of fonts on Adobe Fonts because we have a license through Columbia. Once the students began looking elsewhere, they had to consider licensing fees. Typefaces that were expensive to buy and where they couldn't get a trial, discounted, or free version were prohibitive.

The students had neither a background in large scale graphics nor installations and only a fundamental background in typography from this class. Not going to school in person for three semesters due to the pandemic, they were unfamiliar with some of the processes and capabilities of our facilities. They had to trust me when I described to them what we could print on, how they could cut letters from wood and acrylic on the laser cutter, how they could print banners, cut wooden spacers, etc. Some of them described feeling completely blind to the second half of their project, like they had no idea what to expect, so trusting in me and in our facility and staff was critical. As their teacher, and also curator, this put a lot of responsibility on me to ensure that what I told them we could do, we actually did carry through and made happen. But this was alleviated by a few students who stepped up and helped others. Michelle Lee was willing and able to troubleshoot materials and construction. Genesis Rios volunteered to assist others with trimming and installation. For those involved, I believe it felt great to be supported by one another.

The rewards have been great. I realized my intention of curating a meaningful, but delightfully and experiential show, the students all followed through despite the above-mentioned obstacles, and I am pleased to have instilled in these designers a love for typography through this experience.

KF: How does typeface affect the way we read and perceive the message being conveyed, in your opinion?

SF: I believe typefaces seep into our subconscious. Type has a very subtle yet emotional effect on us. Graphic designers need to be equipped with the knowledge and experience not only to choose appropriate typefaces for a given design, but also must have the ability to craft the type, with the adjustment of spacing and alignments to allow the type to speak to us in the intended way.

KF: What are some things the students involved in this exhibition brought to the table that you didn't anticipate? Did their participation and input change your own perspective on typeface or the impact of this exhibition?

SF: I've been inspired again and again at the depth of their understanding, research and ability to communicate this to their audience. Early on, we talked about finding typefaces with an interesting back story and I asked the students to come up with designs that accommodated the telling of that story in a visual way. Many of the designers came up with innovative solutions that builds context around their subjects. Their ability to bring their subjects to life in their designs is phenomenal. I was relieved that none of them gave up or settled for inferior outcomes. They all kept working at it and spent the extra time to make things work. This dedication demonstrated for me that being in the exhibition and part of the group was important to them. It made me realize that these types of experiences are an important part of the learning process. I believe for them and for me, we came away realizing that type can be expressive and fun. It's

really a different experience being enveloped in the type in a space as compared to seeing it in a book or on the screen. My perspective changed as I have observed how visitors respond to the exhibition. It made me see that type has an appeal to people outside of the art and design realms.

KF: Are there any historical or contextual elements referenced in this exhibition that viewers might find particularly insightful to know about when coming into or revisiting the exhibition?

SF: Roger Vazquez' installation highlights Lance Wyman's type design and graphic system for the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City. The display tells the story of how Wyman took inspiration from designs from Pre-Columbian Mexico as well as Op Art to develop the typography and a modular system encompassing iconography, pattern, and color for *Mexico 68*. Vazquez used the column to talk about the student protest that occurred days before the inauguration of the Olympic games, which was suppressed when the Mexican Armed Forces opened fire, killing somewhere between 300 and 400 people. One column is a dedication to those students. The panel is black and features an image produced after the massacre, a white dove being stabbed by a bayonet. And at the very bottom, as if a tombstone, the type is set in the Mexico 68 font and reads "NUNCA MAS 2 DE OCTUBRE 1968 (Never Again, October 2, 1968)." Vazquez said, "I believe Mexico is facing dualities constantly, and I wanted to present the tragedy and the celebration as one, but without cancelling their separate messages." Bri Elliott's *Redaction* features a custom designed typeface by Forest Young and Jeremy Mickel, commissioned for the Redaction project at MOMA PS1 in 2019. The Redaction project seeks to highlight the abuses in the criminal justice system. Through research of legal documents, Young and Mickel found a spectrum of redaction and also degradation as a result of multiple copying and faxing. They chose to use Times New Roman as the foundation but made Redaction a unique and

bespoke typeface with various manipulations. They incorporated negative shapes in the letterforms as well as an incremental degradation of the characters resulting in a set of 3 styles with 7 grades of degradation each. "By providing a range of grades from subtly analog to nearly illegible, the typeface nods to the transformation and marginalization that many people face in the criminal justice system today, and specifically, the role and responsibility of the author of text to be conscious of legibility as a signature of power." (Young and Mickel) Genesis Rios' *_Keep It Casual*, focuses on how single stroke hand-lettered signage came to be, in particular the style that has been developed and is seen throughout local Chicagoland grocery stores, with bright colors and Gothic style sans serifs. In Rios' research, she found that single stroke lettering follows a strict set of rules and characteristics to achieve the intended look of the human touch. The revivalist typefaces of CSTM, the Moscow-based foundry, are interesting in that Trezek includes inspiration for the typefaces: Spanish Civil War propaganda posters. Another revival typeface is Echmannpsyche, a 21st century typeface designed after a 19th century Art Nouveau typeface, Eckmannschrift. Jasmine Olayaan's installation focuses on the typefaces of a Lebanese typeface designer, Pascal Zoghbi, who designs both Latin and Arabic font sets. It's intriguing to see the Arabic letters next to their English translations.

KF: What is the relevance of typeface to our lives right now, and what do you hope viewers will take away from this exhibition?

SF: I believe the general public is much more aware of typography's styles and typefaces than they were when I was studying graphic design. I believe this is because of use in social media and in pop culture. It seems like graphic designers and typeface designers are a more known than before. I hope visitors to the exhibition come away having learned more about typography. One important fact to know about typefaces is that the vast majority of them are made using prior models, thus creating hybrids, remixes, and revivals, and the designers in the show have injected this aspect into many of their pieces. I hope that viewers experience the fun factor of the exhibition. The massive scale of many of the letterforms and the splashes of color dancing across the walls contribute to this feel. The exhibition is more toward the experiential than fine art pieces on display. This is something I had envisioned from the beginning, and I am pleased that it came through.

Interview with students Bri Elliott, Roger Vazquez, Michelle Lee, and Kalia Allen

Conducted by Sarah Faust

Sarah Faust: Why did you choose the type/typeface or type designer for the project?

Kalia Allen: I choose Futura because I was amazed that a typeface that was made in the 1920's is still very important and innovative today in the 21st century. When I was doing research, I found that it is very popular in pop culture in such examples as films, fine art, and high-end clothing brands like Nike and Supreme to name a few.

Bri Elliott: In the preceding semester I did research on Black type designers because, like many fields, people of color aren't given proper representation or the prominence in the design industry that white designers are. In my search I found quite a few Black type designers, as well as Black-owned foundries that I loved, and among them all was Forest Young, an esteemed designer and the head of Wolff Olins. While looking at his work I discovered his participation in MoMA's PS1. I was immediately impressed by how effectively he, creative director, and Jeremy Mickel, type designer, portrayed Titus Kaphar and Reginald Dwayne Betts's vision through type by designing Redaction. Everything about the typeface made sense and I was elated to begin my design process using such a beautiful and relevant typeface.

Roger Vazquez: Mexico 68 is one of the best known and liked designs in and outside of the graphic design community. Originally, I had only considered the aesthetics and the history of the Olympics. I did not know anything about the designer, Lance Wyman, and eventually found out he is responsible for a lot of the contemporary Mexican graphic design. In Mexico, the expression "hasta en la sopa" (even on the soup) is used colloquially when

something is so relevant that their presence is constant, and that is quite literally the case of Lance Wyman and his involvement in the graphic work of many Mexican entities, since the 1960's including Mexico City's Metro system, The Hotel Camino Real, and the Mexican pasta brand LA MODERNA. Rediscovering Mexico through his work became a nostalgic personal joy.

Michelle Lee: I was originally going to feature type designer, Matthew Carter, and create an interactive exhibit with the many typefaces he created over his long career. However, I changed the feature to Chloe Scheffe after I came across an interview she did for Typographics on YouTube. In this interview, she went in depth on her creative process and the details behind her customize graphics. I was intrigued by all her past designs, but I was drawn to her perspective on type in her visual designs. She is not a type designer, but she is a designer, who transforms the type to be a delicate and intricate form within the graphic design.

Sarah Faust: What are some of the visual attributes you could describe and/or symbolic, historical, or cultural references?

Kalia Allen: Since the typeface was made in the early 20th century, I thought a timeline would be best to showcase the most important events and incidents that involved Futura. I used basic shapes like circles, triangles and rectangles as a tribute to the Bauhaus movement that influenced the designer Paul Renner to make the typeface.

Michelle Lee: I chose the New York Times Health Issue because the lines and shapes of the unique letterforms were influenced by animals and their body parts. It's simple, yet chic and modern. By themselves, it can be recognized as a letterform or as a graphic. The letterform can stand on the spread without any additional decorative flare or color. I admire this because it's very hard to create a simple design yet have it be so striking, and I could see all the ideation and iteration that went into creating these graphics. I greatly appreciate her unique perspective and approach to design.

Roger Vazquez: In an interview, Lance Wyman mentioned seeing the paintings of Bridget Riley prior to traveling to Mexico and taking inspiration from her work. The elements of line, pattern and repetition found in Op art are very compatible with the aesthetics in Mexico 68, and could be suggestive of psychedelic themes of the Raramuri culture from northern Mexico. Wyman visited the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City, where the largest collection of pre-Columbian artifacts is concentrated. The Iconography and aesthetics of pre-Columbian cultures were an influence on Wyman's designs.

Sarah Faust: How did you come up with the title?

Kalia Allen: There is a quote by the designer, Paul Renner: "The truly modern is what we hold today to be timelessly perfect." So for the title, I went with *Futura: Timelessly Perfect*, which in a sense describes the typeface's longevity.

Roger Vazquez: It is titled *Mexico 68* as is, because if it's not broken don't fix it. The subtitle is "The tlacuilo from Jersey" Tlacuilo are priest-like figures in Mexica society, who were assigned the role of recording information in a graphic manner, very similar to present day graphic designers.

Michelle Lee: The title, *Rhyme and Mimicry* by *Chloe Scheffe*, is a credit to the designer, Chloe Scheffe. Rhyme and Mimicry was a phrase

Scheffe said during the interview. The designer said how she wanted to listen to what the image was doing, but also wanting to have a double read on the letterforms. I was intrigued by her observation in how you can see type in image and image in type. This message comes across all her visual designs in this special issue's spreads.

Sarah Faust: How does your piece relate to the current issues surrounding social justice?

Bri Elliot: Given the political and societal climate, it seemed appropriate to introduce another conversation centered around human rights by featuring work designed by people of color. The designers of Redaction researched the history and nature of legal documents and found a large commonality of typographic degradation across most documents. The typeface itself was designed to explore the unconstitutional cash bail system as well as the history and failings of the US criminal justice system by highlighting the abuse of state and federal court systems, while also emulating legal documents by using the typical font associated with official or bureaucratic contexts, Times New Roman, as a foundation and then degrading it to something nearly illegible in 7 steps.

Sarah Faust: Describe your process...what did you choose to highlight and how did you do this? Tell us about materials and how you designed it/made it.

Roger Vazquez: Days before the inauguration of the Olympic games, student protests were suppressed lethally by the Mexican government. I believe Mexico is facing dualities constantly, and I wanted to present the tragedy and the celebration as one, but without cancelling their separate messages. Estelas are monoliths that were made to inform. In Mexico 68, booths, and other structures similarly to Estelas were incorporated into the branding system. I wanted to highlight that in my design and was given the opportunity to do so by using the four narrow tall surfaces of one of the gallery columns.

The installation on the wall shows all the fun and colorful aesthetics and graphic aspects of the Olympics while the column across the wall display has a macabre tone as it recounts the student protest and massacre. I felt that one story could not be told without the other, and by separating the two designs, it's made clear that Lance Wyman had no involvement as a graphic designer. That is, it's important to expose and redeem the unintentional involvement of Lance Wyman as a designer.

Bri Elliot: I wanted to emphasize the illegibility of the most extremely degraded type within *Redaction*. I displayed almost all of the glyphs redacted on a large scale, and then I incorporated the heavily degraded type into the definition of the word redaction. Another element I highlighted was the step-by-step process of degradation. I focused on only one letter to bring the attention to the slight changes from one step to the next.

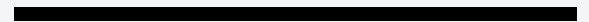
Sarah Faust: How did participating in this during the pandemic effect your process or perspective?

Michelle Lee: Trying to build and collaborate during a pandemic was interesting. It had its ups and downs, but it was a positive experience overall. We meet frequently through Zoom Meetings, along with our fellow designers. Together, we collaborated and gave each other feedback on our designs and shared our progress. We did our best to encourage and motivate each other. And it was also great to drive into the city and meet up with everyone during the days of installation. This exhibit is an experience that I will always remember with fondness.

Sarah Faust: Did it turn out as you expected? What was surprising or unexpected?

Roger Vazquez: The whole process was new to me and revealing, I believe I was able to control the "unexpected", but there was a lot of unexpected circumstances. In my case, I did not know the actual material or equipment and its limitations or capabilities. The potential relocation or cancellation of the event due to the pandemic were also of similar concern.

Michelle Lee: The exhibit turned out better than I expected. I think the background and the wall look amazing. One notable change that I love is the design of the wall had changed because I used different material than I had proposed in my original blueprint. I wanted to use thicker beams of wood but my father suggested that we use something thinner so you can see more of the background. I argued against this with my father because I was concerned over the durability of the wall's structure. My father added extra blocks of wood as enforcements, but it also added a decorative layer to the wall. I am very proud of what my father and I created. I am very pleased in how my piece turned out.



DEPS ARTIST PROFILE SERIES



The DEPS Artist Profile Series, presented by Columbia College Chicago's Department of Exhibitions, Performance, and Student Spaces (DEPS), is a virtual publication on select artists involved with the DEPS Galleries and the Columbia College Chicago community. Our goal with this series is to connect artist and viewer on a deeper level, and to highlight the amazing works and thoughts of our featured artists through interviews, artist biographies, and catalogs of work. Art has always been a way to connect with others, no matter where one may physically be. We hope by presenting the creativity and insights of the people involved in the DEPS Artist Profile Series that viewers may have one more way to stay in touch with and support the arts community.

The DEPS Artist Profile Series is managed by Fine Arts major and DEPS Exhibitions Assistant Kaylee Fowler. This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

Learn more at colum.edu/deps/glass-curtain-gallery/exhibitions/not-my-type,-typefaces-on-display.

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Glass Curtain Gallery: 1104 S Wabash Ave, First Floor, Chicago, IL 60605 Hours: Monday-Friday: 9am-5pm

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