

THE FUTURE OF TYPE DESIGN

When we think about contemporary type designers there is a tendency to forget that we are now into the third decade of the digital revolution and that the once-young pioneers of the genre—Robert Slimbach, Zuzana Licko, Jonathan Hoefler, Jean-François Porchez, Tobias Frere-Jones, Martin Majoor, et al.—are now mature, well-established figures with thriving (we hope) businesses and a raft of fonts under their belts. So, who will shape the future of type design? Here are four accomplished young designers whose typefaces could become an enduring part of the typographic repertoire. Their names may be lesser known—especially in the U.S.—but their work is already widespread and we expect much more to come.

PAUL SHAW Kai Bernau & Nikola Djurek

Both **Kai Bernau** (b. 1978, Germany) and **Nikola Djurek** (b. 1976, Croatia) studied type design at the famed Koninklijke Academie van Beeldende Kunsten (KABK) in The Hague. A year after graduating from the Type and Media master course in 2004, Djurek established Typonine, a design studio and font foundry. He has designed fonts not only for Typonine (most notably Marlene, Tempera Biblio, and Typonine Stencil) but for OurType (Amalia) and Typotheque he worked with Peter Bil'ak on Fedra Serif Display (2007), Greta Display (2007), Greta Grande Narrow (2008) and other fonts. On his own he designed Brioni (2008), BrioniText (2008) and Brioni Sans (2010), his most mature designs to date.

Bernau attended KABK as both an undergraduate and a graduate. In 2006 he set up Atelier Carvalho Bernau with his wife Susana Carvalho. Bernau is best known for the fonts he has done for B&PTypefoundry (Neutral BP), House Industries (Neutraface Slab) and Commercial Type (Lyon). Neutral, his undergraduate thesis project, inspired by an exploration of supposedly "neutral" typefaces such as Helvetica and Univers, was a well-chronicled attempt to achieve an impartial typeface. Lyon (2005-2010), also begun as a student project, is his best design so far, a typeface that looks like an instant classic.

Djurek likes designing typefaces that hover between established classifications. Marlene, released in 2008, is neither an Egyptian nor a humanist slab serif. Similarly, Brioni occupies a space between an oldstyle and a slab serif. It has a combination of slab serifs and, at the top of lowercase stems, thick, slightly angled serifs. The combination is reminiscent of dis-

play sizes of Caslon or, given its low stroke contrast, WA. Dwiggin's Hingham. Brioni is decidedly on the narrow side with a tall x-height, in keeping with the centuries-old gout hollandois, though the capitals are shorter than the ascenders, a humanist trait. The forms are generally oldstyle which provides some personality to the font, while remaining quiet. It is sturdy—even the light weight is substantial—yet economical. Brioni's italic has more calligraphic flow than similar designs, most notably in the thinner branching strokes on a et al and the thickly swooping tail of y (shades of Photinal).

Brioni Sans is more than a direct translation of Brioni. Some characters (the italic *f* and *y*) are different in form. But it does retain the same heavier than normal weights as the serif version. Brioni Sans is a pleasant design, though not as distinct as its namesake.

Bernau also does book design and the evolution of Lyon from student project to full family over the course of five years reflects lessons learned working with text type. "Designing type, you not only develop a keen eye for rhythm, harmony, and contrast (which then you can easily transfer to other design tasks), but also a very deep understanding of how to use type." Bernau told *Wallpaper*.

A comparison between the early Lyon and the commercially released version is instructive. The typeface is based on the work of Robert Granjon, the celebrated 16th century French punchcutter, and thus the first version had an italic replete with ligatures, including an odd double p. The final design has none of that. In fact, Lyon is notable for the paucity of its alternate characters in this age of OpenType excess. The roman has only seven while



the italic has seven plus 12 swash caps—and neither have any extraneous ligatures.

Although they are both based on the work of Granjon, Lyon is very different from ITC Galliard by Matthew Carter. Whereas Galliard is sparkling in the roman and aggressive in the italic, Lyon is quieter in the roman and warmly lively in the italic. This is partly because the designers worked from different types by Granjon, from different stages of his career—Carter from the 1570 *Gros-parangon* roman and the 1571 *Gros-parangon* italic in Granjon's late (baroque) phase, Bernau from an unspecified roman and the 1564 *Gros-canon* italic in Granjon's middle phase. Lyon has already proven itself successful—it was debuted in the pages of *The New York Times Magazine* in 2009 and used in the recent Roger Excoffon and Jose Mendoza y Almeida monographs. The quietness of its roman is perfect for those who follow the Crystal Goblet model of typography, while its italic provides a sprinkling of pizzazz.

Lyon and Brioni are both of an enduring quality and we hope the same is true of their creators, Bernau and Djurek.

STEPHEN COLES

Tomáš Brousil & Alexandra Korolkova

The names **Tomáš Brousil** (b. 1975, Slovakia) and **Alexandra Korolkova** (b. 1984, Russia) are nearly unknown to Western audiences increasingly influenced by their work.

Brousil studied at the Prague Academy of Fine Arts under Frantisek Storm, the man who led Czech type design into the digital era. Brousil says he owes nearly everything to his teacher, from the technicalities of glyph structure to font production, but the two designer's styles differ greatly. While Storm's work is full of personality and idiosyncratic flavor, Brousil has mastered the craft of more reserved and utilitarian type families that respond to contemporary needs and trends.

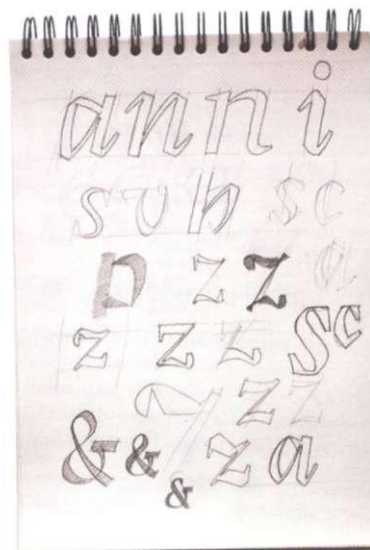
Brousil's impressive rate of production could be credited to his time at the Prague Academy where students were pushed to produce up to four typefaces per year. Since 2003 he has released 15 typefaces under his Suitcase Type Foundry label. They make frequent appearances in high profile magazines, corporate design, and TV networks. In 2009 Brousil's fonts got another popularity boost when they appeared on Typekit, making Suitcase one of the first foundries to offer fonts for web use.

Just last month, Suitcase proved again to be on the industry's cutting edge when it re-

leased the first comprehensive typeface catalog for the iPad. With its well-considered samples, slick navigation, and useful "Combine" feature, the Type Specimen app is a gorgeous showcase of the Suitcase library and a testament to the possibilities of combining touch interactivity with typography.

Korolkova also learned from a nationally celebrated master, Russia's Alexander Tarbeev at the Moscow State University of Printing Arts. And, like Brousil, her professional development was swift. Within two years of studying at the University she was awarded at theTypeArt'05 competition for Cyrillic typeface design. By 2009, at the age of 25, Korolkova had taught type design and calligraphy at several Moscow schools, published the educational primer "Live Typography," released two large font families for text (Leksa and Leksa Sans), racked up two more awards for her typefaces, and joined ParaType as chief of their type design department.

All this led to her most ambitious effort to date: "Public Types of the Russian Federation," a humanitarian effort to provide most of the country's minority languages with a digital type solution. Even with the help of Olga Umpeleva and Vladimir Yefimov, the PT fonts are the ultimate evidence of Korolkova's in-



credible efficiency. It began in 2009 with PT Sans, a comprehensive type family of 32 styles, including three widths and caption variants. Each font has extended Latin and Cyrillic character sets, totaling 1400 glyphs a piece. The six-style PT Serif was released later in 2010. Despite the breakneck pace of production, the typefaces don't appear rushed. The contemporary lettershapes are well drawn and balanced, with a versatility that supports uses ranging from book text to wayfinding. Free versions of the fonts are available at paratype.com/public. The fonts were specifically designed to perform well on screen, too. After joining Google's Web Fonts service, PTSans has become incredibly popular online, with nearly 50 million impressions per month.

Thanks to her background, Korolkova feels comfortable drawing both Cyrillic and Latin letters. "Being a native reader of non-Latin, I have to think about two scripts, while type designers from Latin-based languages usually consider just one," she says, preferring to make type with both scripts at once: "I design original typefaces, not localizations, because it's more difficult to get a good pattern of Cyrillic when the designer of a Latin typeface wasn't considering another script." Korolkova's current project is Circe, a geometric sans with a huge set of swashes and alternates, most of which were requested by customers through ParaType's blog. It's an unprecedented kind of design by committee and a demanding way to make a typeface, but if anyone can handle the task Korolkova can.

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Opposite: A sketch by Nikola Djurek.
This page: top right: a sketch by Tomas Brousil; above: Lyon by Kai Bernau; right: PT sans sketch by Alexandra Korolkova.

