



SpaceMatic™

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# Star in stripes

Making its magazine debut, new font PrismaSet spells out all that's exciting about Wallpaper's Design Directory

To complement our Design Directory's rich store of architecture and interiors, this issue marks the magazine debut of PrismaSet, a new font from Lineto. The Swiss-based foundry has long been at the forefront of contemporary typography. Founded in 1993 by Cornel Windlin and Stephan Müller, the foundry has had an online presence since 1998 and is now one of the internet's most highly regarded typeface repositories. Windlin, Müller and partner Jürg Lehni keep their fonts fresh in the fast-moving digital world, bringing together a host of other contemporary designers.

PrismaSet began life as a research project by designer James Goggin. Goggin, who set up his studio, Practise, in 1999 following graduation from the Royal College of Art in London, is now design director at Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Art. Starting with Prisma, a classic display font by Rudolf Koch, Goggin and his collaborators have created a bespoke typeface for many applications. Koch (1876-1934) was one of the most celebrated typographers of the early

20th century. A devout and serious designer who spent nearly three decades as in-house designer at the Klingspor foundry, Koch incorporated traditional calligraphy and historical production methods as well as bold abstraction and hand-cut letterforms into his work. In 1931, he designed Prisma, using multiple lines to create a bold display typeface that was equally at home on a shopfront, a poster or as signage.

'It was a typeface I was aware of for many years, having first seen it in old 1970s Letraset catalogues,' says Goggin, who notes that the font - still remarkably modern-looking - was widely used throughout the latter half of the last century. Goggin began to work on an update, collaborating with Laurenz Brunner, to translate Koch's multi-lined forms, in the first instance, into a solid, filled version. 'It led to a pleasantly odd set of characters, some geometric and some with their own off-kilter shapes,' says Goggin, noting how the hybridisation of the original made the font appear even more out of

time. 'It looked like a mix of deco, signage gothic and German geometric,' he adds.

Windlin and fellow designer Alex Rich encouraged the digitisation of the original Koch font and its modern evolution, so that PrismaSet grew out of Prisma. Koch's original was caps only, so Goggin and his colleagues, including Rich, Rafael Koch (a descendant of Rudolf) and Mauro Paolozzi, ably supported by Windlin and Müller, set about creating a full character set in a variety of multi-lined versions. To extrapolate Koch's intentions, they researched two of his other fonts, Kabel and Zeppelin. Goggin, who refers to himself as a 'graphic designer with an interest in type design, rather than an actual type designer', says he is informed by vernacular designs and engineering templates. PrismaSet emerged from hours of scanning and vectorising, studying every element of Koch's fonts. The result can be seen here in these pages: PrismaSet, a classic brought back into contemporary life. \* [www.practise.co.uk](http://www.practise.co.uk); [www.lineto.com](http://www.lineto.com)