

Typeface TERMINOLOGY

- 1** ABECEDARIUM—*an alphabet book, (A is for apple, B is for Bear...)*
- ACCENT**—a mark which indicates a specific sound value, stress, or pitch—*résumé* and *résumé* are two different words.
- ALPHABET**—*set of characters used to write language(s), esp. in order.* ref. *F. W. Goudy, THE ALPHABET AND ELEMENTS OF LETTERING.*
- 2** APEX—uppermost point of two intersecting diagonals.
- 3** ARCH—upper curved section.
- 4** ARM—*extending stroke which does not enclose a counter.*
- 5** ASCENDER—that part of a lowercase character which extends above the x-height.
- 6** AXIS—the angle at which a character is stressed.
- BALL**—terminal so shaped.
- 7** BASELINE—on which glyphs rest.
- COLOPHON**—ancient Ionian city.
- BEAK**—*single-sided serif, esp. one which extends as if to enclose an area.*
- BOOK**—paper bound in a codex. ref. Adrian Wilson's *The Design of Books.*
- COPPERPLATE**—*eighteenth century calligraphic style done with a pointed pen, with pressure used to modulate strokes and create variations in width. Named for the engraving method used to reproduce the writing manuals which popularized it.* ref. Eleanor Winter's *MASTERING COPPERPLATE CALLIGRAPHY: A Step-by-Step Manual.*
- 9** COUNTER—white space enclosed within a letter form.
- COUNTERPUNCH**—*carved steel bar used to create counters in punches.* ref. *Fred Smeijers, COUNTERPUNCH: making type in the 16th century, designing typefaces now.*
- 10** DESCENDER—*stroke which descends below the baseline.*
- 11** DIAGONAL—*stroke inclined obliquely from the axis of the typeface.*
- 12** DIPHTHONG—ligature which forms a discrete vowel sound, e.g. *æ*, or *æ*.
- 13** EAR—upper right serif of *g*.
- EM**—relative horizontal measure usually equal to the height of the type being used.
- EM-DASH**—a full stop dash which is more-or-less one em long.
- EN**—one-half of an em.
- EN-DASH**—figure used to indicate duration or a range.
- ETAOIN SHRDLU**—a mistake.
- FONT**—one style and size of a particular typeface design.
- FORE-EDGE**—outside edge or margin of a book page; i.e. the edge opposite the spine.

1 *Immortal phœnix, bird of fire,*
7 *bend your wing to my desire;*
8 *Kindle flame to quench my thirst*
19 *'neath vaulted jail of Azrael's pyre.*

- FORM**—*style or shape something takes.* ref. *Jan Tschichold's THE FORM OF THE BOOK: Essays on the Morality of Good Design.*
- FRACTION**—a numerical representation of the quotient of two numbers. Either case/stacking, or with the numerator superscripted and the denominator subscripted and the two separated by a solidus or fraction bar.
- GLYPH**—a particular character (i.e. letter, number or punctuation mark) in a particular style.
- 14** HAIRLINE—thin stroke.
- ILLUMINATED**—*a letter gilded with a precious metal, e.g. silver or gold.* *A good manual on/ overview of them is THE ILLUMINATED ALPHABET written by Patricia Seligman, with calligraphy by Timothy Noad.*
- 15** LEG—*diagonal stroke projecting down from the center of a letter.*
- LETTER**—symbol representing a sound of speech. ref. Oscar Ogg's *The 26 Letters.*
- LETTERING**—*creation of letters by drawing.* ref. *Michael Harvey's CREATIVE LETTERING TODAY (republication of several different texts including Calligraphy in the Graphic Arts as well as the classic, Carving Letters in Stone and Wood, with new information on digital design and typography, with hand-drawn screen shots).*
- 16** LIGATURE—two or more letters joined together, either of necessity, *fi*, or for stylistic effect. cf. diphthong.
- LOOP**—stroke enclosing a counter.
- MATRIX**—metal mold for casting type created by a strike from a punch.
- MEAN LINE**—parallel line halfway between the baseline and cap height. cf. x-height.
- 22** LINING FIGURES—*numerals reaching to cap height from the baseline.* *Relic of Victorian jobbing printing. cf. old-style figure.*
- LINK**—stroke which connects two different parts of a letter, also, connection of text blocks.
- OLD-STYLE FIGURES**—lowercase numerals with ascenders (68) and descenders (34579).
- OVERHANG**—*amount by which rounded and pointed forms extend beyond their normal line of measure so as to align optically.*
- 20** SERIF—*small finishing stroke at the end or beginning of a letter stroke.* ref. *Fr. Edward M. Catich's THE ORIGIN OF THE SERIF.*
- SPACING**—*amount of separation betwixt two things.* ref. *Geoffrey Dowding's Finer Points in the Spacing and Arrangement of Type.*
- SPINE/SPLINE**—main stroke which forms the structure of a letter.
- SPUR**—see beak.
- 21** STEM—a straight (more or less) main stroke.
- STRESS**—the thick-thin contrast and angle a typeface is set at.
- 22** TAIL—finishing stroke at or below the baseline.
- TERMINAL**—finish to a stroke.
- TYPOGRAPHY**—the art or craft of setting type to enhance the text.
- WRITING**—creation of letterforms with individual pen strokes, as opposed to drawing with built-up strokes. ref. *Edward Johnston's Writing, Illuminating and Lettering.*
- 19** X-HEIGHT—the height of a lowercase *x*. cf. mean line.

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