

The Classification *of* Type

“It must be admitted that the classification of printing types is a controversial subject and one upon which little amicable agreement may be expected.”

ALEXANDER LAWSON

CLASSIFICATION: *Historical Movements*

Renaissance Roman Letter

AaBbCc

BEMBO: MONOTOYPE

Renaissance Italic Letter

AaBbCc

BEMBO ITALIC: MONOTOYPE

The Mannerist Letter

AaBbCc

POETICA: ROBERT SLIMBACH

The Baroque Letter

AaBbCc

ADOBE CASLON: CAROL TWOMBLY

Geometric Modernism

AaBbCc

BODONI: GIAMBATTISTA BODONI

The Neoclassical Letter

AaBbCc

BASKERVILLE: JOHN BASKERVILLE

The Romantic Letter

AaBbCc

DIDOT: ADRIAN FRUTIGER

The Realist Letter

AaBbCc

AKZIDENZ GROTESK: BERTHOLD

Geometric Modernism

AaBbCc

FUTURA: PAUL RENNER

Lyrical Modernism

AaBbCc

PALATINO: HERMANN ZAPF

Postmodern

AaBbCc

ESPRIT: JOVICA VELJOVIC

Postmodern Geometric

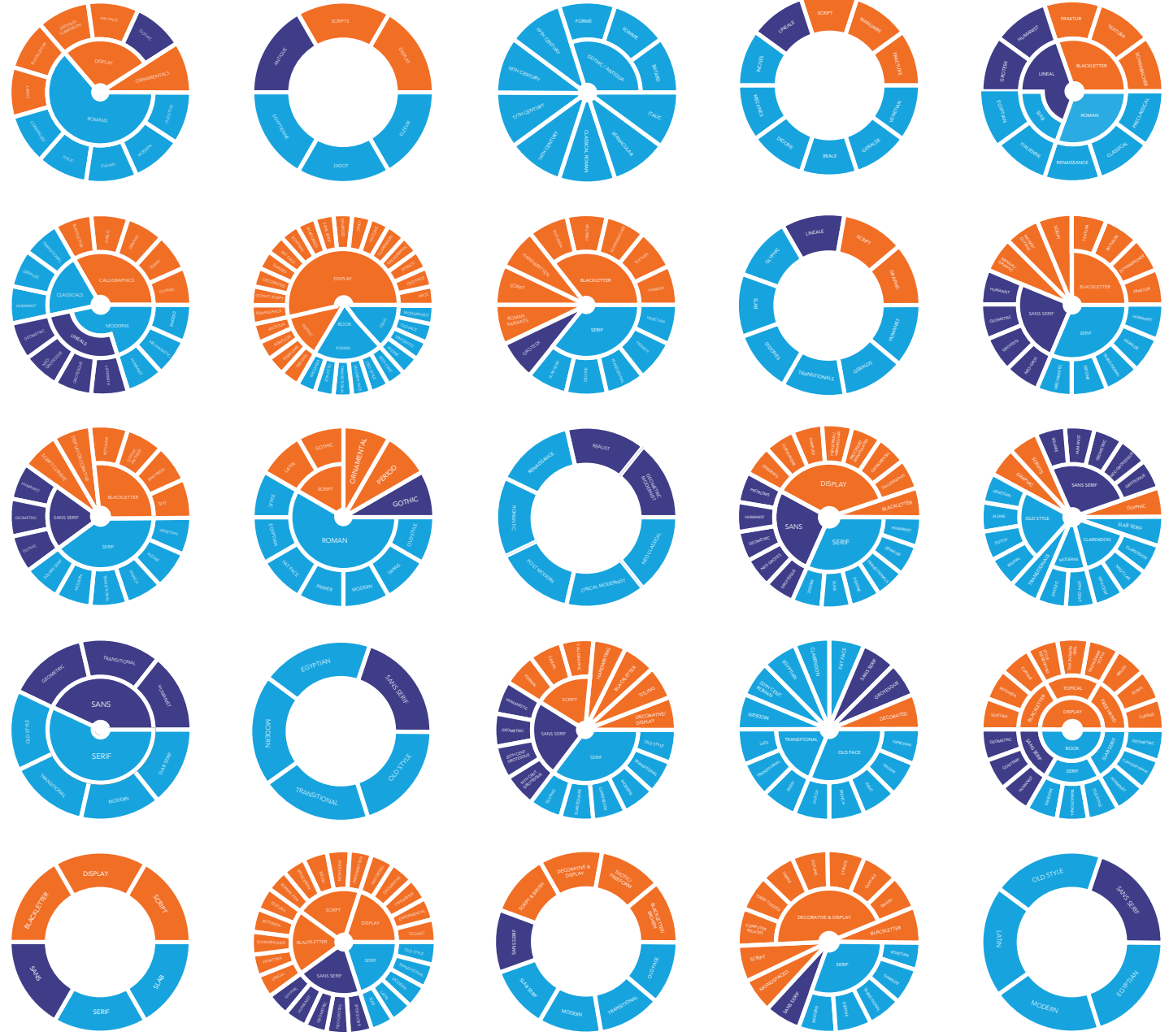
AaBbCc

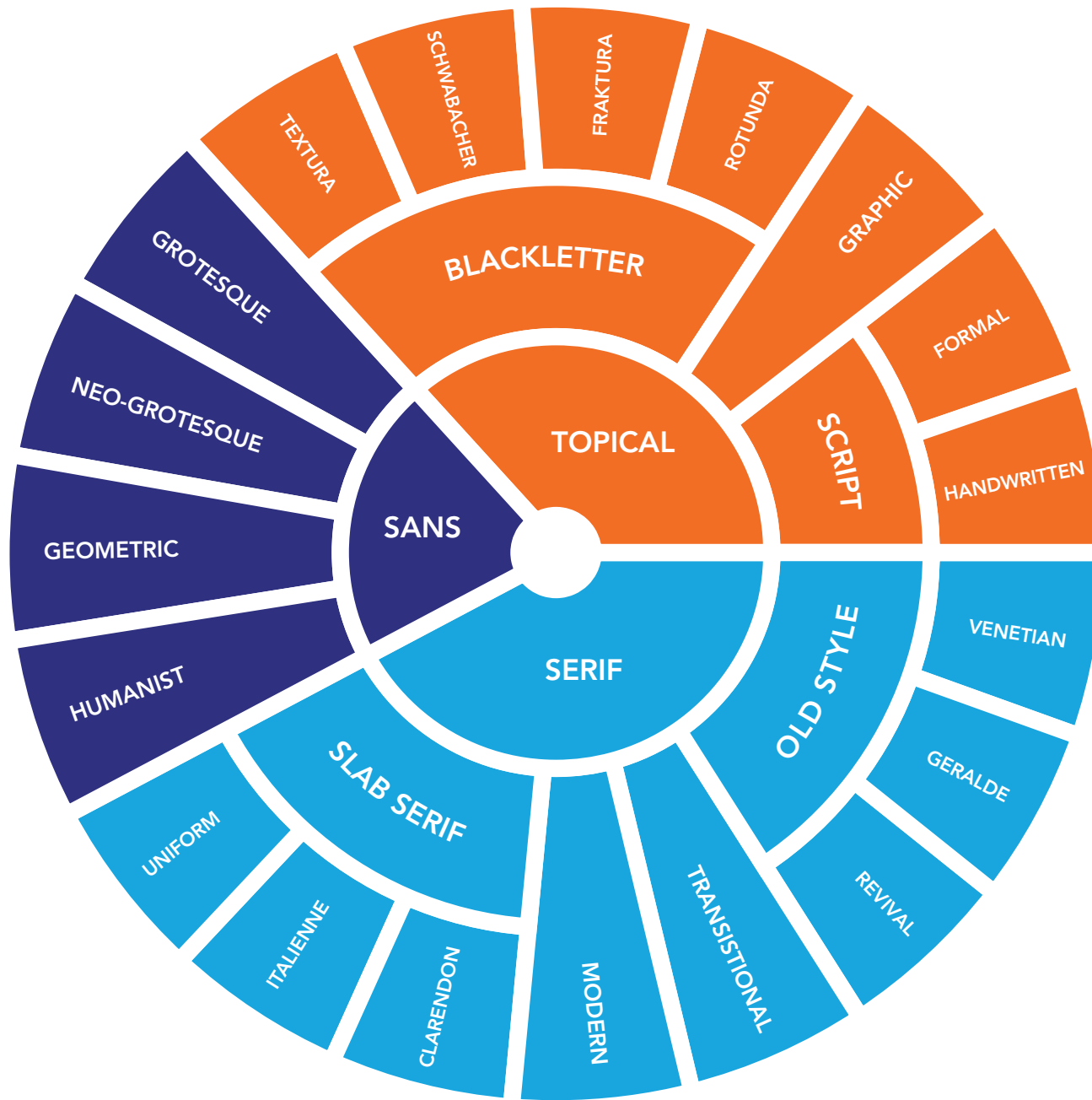
OFFICINA: ZUZANA LICKO

25 SYSTEMS FOR CLASSIFYING TYPOGRAPHY:

a Study in Naming Frequency

TAYLOR CHILDERS
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THE RESULT: 25 Systems for Classifying Typography:
a Study in Naming Frequency

The three areas distribute typographic forms over nineteen final classes. This model respects the full range of naming conventions without chasing Topicals down into subcategories that are too granular, while respecting the necessary sub-categories in other groups. It is felt that a very high level of specificity is achieved with this model without becoming overtly caught-up-up in unnecessary jargon.



For the purposes of ART120

CLASSIFICATION: *Physical Attributes*



SERIF

Old Style
Transitional
Modern
Glyphic
Slab



SANS SERIF

Grotesque
Neo-Grotesque
Humanist
Geometric



SCRIPT

Formal
Casual



DISPLAY

WATCH A VIDEO >

CLASSIFICATION: *Serif Typefaces*The letters 'abc' are rendered in a classic Old Style serif font. The 'a' has a prominent diagonal stress, and the 'b' and 'c' also exhibit this characteristic slant. The serifs are bracketed, and the overall appearance is elegant and historical.

OLD STYLE

Old Style typefaces feature a strong, diagonal stress with moderate contrast in the stroke weight. The serifs are bracketed and the top of the ascender is often angled.

The letters 'abc' are shown in a Transitional serif font. The diagonal stress is less pronounced than in Old Style, and the serifs are sharper and more vertical. The contrast between thick and thin strokes is more moderate.

TRANSITIONAL

Transitional typefaces have sharper serifs and a more vertical axis than old style typefaces. There is moderate contrast in the weight of the stroke and bracketed serifs.

The letters 'abc' are presented in a Modern serif font. The diagonal stress is almost entirely gone, replaced by a clean, vertical axis. The serifs are extremely thin and unbracketed, creating a high-contrast, minimalist look.

MODERN

Modern typefaces have the strongest contrast between thick and thin lines. The serifs are hairline thin and unbracketed.

The letters 'abc' are shown in a Glyphic serif font. The characters have a heavy, blocky appearance, reminiscent of stone or metal carvings. The serifs are triangular and the strokes are tapered.

GLYPHIC

Inspired by characters carved into stone or metal, these typefaces have triangular serifs and the strokes are commonly tapered.

The letters 'abc' are rendered in a Slab Serif font. The serifs are thick, rectangular, and blocky. There is very little contrast in the stroke weight, giving it a heavy, industrial feel.

SLAB SERIF

These typefaces feature heavy, often rectangular serifs with little to no bracketing. There is little contrast in the weight of the stroke and usually have a tall x-height.

CLASSIFICATION: *Sans Serif Typefaces*

GROTESQUE

Introduced in the 19th century, these are the first sans serif typefaces and inherited many of the traits of their serif predecessors. There is slight variation in the width of the strokes.



NEO-GROTESQUE

The 1950's introduced these typefaces with minimal stroke variation, a wide proportion, and a tall x-height. They are often comprised of a large family of varying weights and widths.



HUMANIST

These typefaces rely on organic stroke that references hand-written manuscripts and the proportions of the roman letterforms. They often have an italic rather than an oblique.



GEOMETRIC

As the name implies, these typefaces are mechanically drawn using geometric shapes as their underlying structure. There is a uniformity amongst the letterforms.

CLASSIFICATION: *Script Typefaces*

The image shows the lowercase letters 'abc' in a formal script typeface. The letters are a vibrant orange-red color and are highly stylized with elegant, sweeping curves and thin, delicate strokes. The 'a' and 'c' have long, flowing tails that connect to the next character, creating a continuous, graceful line.

FORMAL

Derived from formal calligraphic writing styles, these scripts often have strokes that connect one character to the next.

The image shows the lowercase letters 'abc' in a casual script typeface. The letters are a bright orange color and have a more relaxed, hand-drawn appearance. The strokes are thicker and more irregular, with visible brush-like textures and some fraying at the ends. The 'a' and 'c' have shorter, more abrupt tails compared to the formal version.

CASUAL

Also mimicking hand-writing, these typefaces suggest informality. Sometimes quickly drawn, other times suggesting the use of a brush.

CLASSIFICATION: *Miscellaneous Typefaces*



BLACKLETTER

Based on early manuscript writing of Western Europe, elaborate strokes with high contrast of thick and thin identify these typefaces.



DISPLAY

These typefaces are intended for use at large sizes and often embody a strong character. Not to be used to set body copy.



MONOSPACE

Reminiscent of typewriters, each letterform is assigned the same width.



Italic & Oblique

ITALIC & OBLIQUE

Italic

ITALIC

Italics are comprised of entirely different letterforms than their non-italic counterparts and embody a calligraphic character.

Oblique

OBLIQUE

Oblique typefaces are structurally similar to their non-oblique versions. The letters slant but are otherwise very similar.

