Type 2: Structure

**Assignment 1
Typographic Structures:
Record Cover**

Summary

Using only type (unless other-
wise specified), we will design a
record cover, which will include
a front, and a back.

We will start with using a single
typeface, size, and weight. Each
week, we will introduce other
new elements, such as scale,
weight, and graphic forms to add
variety to our compositions.

Our goal is to create both cre-
ative and legible typographic
solutions.

Here's a breakdown of how this
will progress:

☐ Week 2 (next week)
One size, one weight

☐ Week 3
One size, two weights

☐ Week 4
Two sizes, one weight

☐ Week 5
Any size, any weight, italics,
with rules

☐ Week 6
Any size, any weight, italics,
using reversed out type/blocks

☐ Week 7
Add color and images
to existing designs

☐ Week 8
Experimental (b/w)

Assignment

Content

You will pick an existing album
to design. The content should
include:

☐ Band/Artist Name
☐ Album Name
☐ Between 6 to 9 tracks, includ-
ing their track number, track
title, and track times.
☐ Record Label
☐ Year

Example Content

Omar Souleyman

Highway to Hassake—
Folk and Pop Sounds of Syria

1. Leh Jani (3:14)
2. Jani (4:12)
3. Dabke 2001 (3:42)
4. Atabat (8:09)
5. Arabic Dabke (3:20)
6. Alkhatiba Zaffouha (5:43)
7. Jalsat Atabat (6:28)
8. Alshikani (3:34)

Warp Records
2009

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Ground Rules

Only use the typeface Univers (which Dante will provide). You will be limited to Univers 55 (roman) and Univers 65 (bold) weights.

You will also be limited to these type sizes:

8pt
12pt
16pt
24pt
36pt
and 72pt type.

You can use any kind of alignment: right, left, centered, and justified.

You can use UPPERCASE, lowercase, or Mixed Case for your compositions.

You are limited to only one other angle to set type on in any given composition.

Unless otherwise specified, you can only use black type on a white background.

Do Not:

Do not change your content it in any way. Don't leave anything out, and make sure everything is spelled correctly.

Do not stretch, warp, or distort the type, or set type on a path.

Do not overlap or crash type into each other.

Assignment

Format

Each design should be laid out in InDesign.

Each design should be composed within a 7" square (with no outline or stroke) on an 8.5 ×x 11" sheet, with a grey tint (30% black) around the design area.

Critique

Each week you must produce at least 15 designs following the specified limitation:

☐ 5 front compositions, which only uses the artist/band name and the title of the album.

☐ 10 back compositions which will use the complete set of content.

Please bring tape, pins, or magnets so we can hang your compositions on the wall. Present your work neatly and logically.

As a class we will discuss what you've made, how it's working, your thought process, and identify ways to adjust or emphasize your ideas to make them typographically stronger. Be prepared to talk through your ideas.

Final Deliverable

After Week 8, you will choose your five best designs from each week, to produce a book containing 40 designs.

The book size should be 8.5 × 11". You will also design a table of contents and divider pages for each section of the book.

Suggestions for working

Break it up—
Designing 15 compositions is a lot to do the day before class. Instead, split it up over the week: you can do three compositions a every day for an hour or so (that's about 20 minutes per composition). Use the remaining two days to make any final refinements before class.

Listen to music—
This first assignment is all about designing an album cover, so music can be a source of inspiration. See if you can visually represent the tempo, volume, rhythm or style of the music in your compositions.

Print it out—
As you work on your compositions, print them out and hang it on the wall. It always helps to see what you've made and to have some time to understand and perhaps improve upon it.

Keep it clear—
While you explore the range of compositions you can create, keep legibility and clarity in mind. Are you still able to recognize different sections of the content in your composition?

Change the order—
Think about different ways you can read a piece of text. Can you start with the track names instead of the artist or band name? Can you emphasize different parts of the text to create interesting typographic moments?

Bring everything in—
Show all your work, even if you're unsure about it. Anything we make is a "work in progress," and talking about what you're trying to do and figuring out a way to achieve that as a class benefits our group discussion.

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Suggestions on how to start

Use these prompts if you're feeling stuck or unsure of how to move forward. Combine any of these suggestions to create more kinds of compositions.

Make a composition that's...

☐ ...square.

☐ ...tall and narrow.

☐ ...short and wide.

☐ ...very compact and dense.

☐ ...very loose and airy.

☐ ...very close to the top.

☐ ...very close to the bottom.

☐ ...very close to the left.

☐ ...very close to the right.

☐ ...only runs along the edges, nothing in the middle part of the square.

Make a composition that moves your eye...

☐ ...diagonally across the square.

☐ ...along a curve or arc.

☐ ...in an L-shape.

☐ ...in a zig-zag shape.

☐ ...in a full circle (or square).

Design a composition like...

☐ ...a spreadsheet of data.

☐ ...a dinner table.

☐ ...a page in the phone book.

☐ ...a stack of blocks.

☐ ...a poem.

☐ ...a map.

Assignment

Listen to the music and...

☐ ...notice the tempo (or speed). Is it fast, or is it slow? Make a composition that represents the rhythm/pace of the track.

☐ ...notice the main melody or sample. Make a composition that reflects this, showing high and low notes.

☐ ... that has both these rhythm and melody parts.

☐ ...notice the different instruments being played. Make a composition that reflects two instruments being played.

☐ ...notice parts that are quiet and loud. Make a composition that reflects the range of volumes.

☐ ...choose two different tracks. Make a composition that reflects both in some way.