

Opposite, Laura Meseguer points out mosaic designs made by Lluis Brú i Salelles in 1925 on the exterior of Farmacia Laboratorio. The Barcelona pharmacy closed in 1987 and is now a plant shop. See pp.62-77. Photograph by Francesco Brembati.

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Rebalancing the design canon

Elizabeth Resnick looks at the practitioners and educators intent on revising our understanding of women's roles in design history.

Experiments in destabilisation

A CalArts book celebrates decades of purposeful graphic weirdness.

Critique by Rick Poynor

Reputations: Thomas Huot-Marchand

'It is not a question of revisiting a typographic style, but of questioning the means of creating typefaces, of establishing a new formal logic by pushing certain parameters to their maximum.' Interview by Véronique Marrier

The Nebiolo legacy

Though Italy's most renowned type foundry closed its doors more than four decades ago, its influence endures. By the Nebiolo History Project

Global type tour

'Typographics 21' was a tensession, online journey that covered type and lettering from around the world - but with the explicit exclusion of Europe and North America. By Montserrat Miranda Ayejes, Stephen Banham, Anoushka Khandwala, Indra Kupferschmid, Gerry Leonidas, Saki Mafundikwa, Ferdinand P. Ulrich and Elena Veguillas

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In the right hands

The work of Barcelona type designer Laura Meseguer is a beguiling alchemy of handlettering and digital craft. Profile by Jan Middendorp

starting to acknowledge.

made late in the age of metal.

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The name's Caroff. Joe Caroff

Thilo von Debschitz profiles a man who designed some of the best known movie identities of the past six decades.

Design for a better world

Indian design duo November balances commercial practice with a commitment to social change. By John L. Walters

told, whether from far away or close to home. JLW

Last September, Eye held an online Type Tuesday to preview

this special issue, featuring Thomas Huot-Marchand (France), Laura Meseguer (Spain) and November (India). During the event, US type expert Tal Leming entered the chat to pose a question: did all the splendid work on display demonstrate that we are in 'a new golden age of type design in which ... anything is creatively and technically possible?" As you will see in these pages, there are so many possibilities for contemporary designers and typographers, that some are inclined to look back wistfully at an age when constraints and obstacles were seen as essential to unlocking creativity. The type designs of the Italian Nebiolo foundry demonstrate this, in a way, with spectacularly functional and beautiful type families

'Typographics 21' imposed a decisive 'constraint' by excluding North America and most of Europe from its ten-session conference. The format encouraged individuals from the rest of the world to introduce their type, letters and writing systems to a professional audience that wished to engage with design beyond the western traditions in which many of us have been taught. Sure, it was just a few dozen designers over twenty or so hours, but this online conference, smartly organised by New York's Cooper Union

with simultaneous translations, was an inspiring initiative

Joe Caroff made some of the past century's most resonant typographic icons, yet his name is hardly known - evidence that there are still many more graphic design stories to be

with an ambition to open up our type and design scenes

in all the new scripts, glyphs and languages we are just

to less familiar traditions, new narratives and future

possibilities. Maybe the next 'golden age of type' lies

Uncoated

• 'Tokyo 1964: Designing Tomorrow'

· Gotico-Antiqua, Proto-Roman. Hybrid: 15th century types between gothic and roman

- · A History of Arab Graphic Design
- Design in Crisis
- E. McKnight Kauffer: The Artist in Advertising
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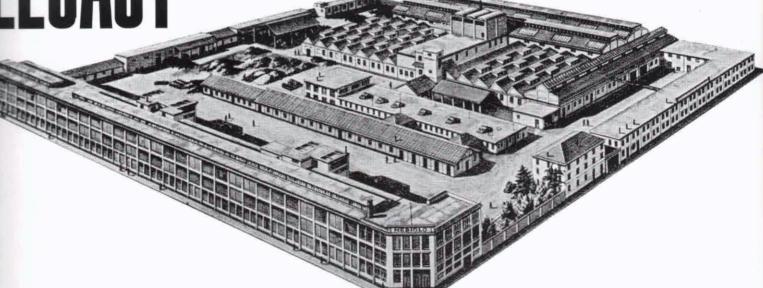
A Mid-century Modern Master

- The Design of Race
- Signwriting Tips, Tricks and Inspiration
- XX: A Novel, Graphic

IHE MEDICAL STATES OF THE STAT

Opposite. Specimen for Recta, 1963. When Aldo Novarese followed Alessandro Butti as artistic director of Nebiolo in 1952, he inherited Butti's working drawings for Recta, a yet unpublished neo-grotesque sans serif, which demonstrates Butti's ability to anticipate market trends. Recta was released, with many later additions by Novarese, as a response to the success of Helvetica and Univers.

Below. View of the Nebiolo factory in Via Bologna, Turin, ca. 1928, taken from a Nebiolo specimen book of the early 1950s. The type foundry, along with the administrative offices, was located in the building in the foreground. Other buildings were occupied by the cast iron foundry. Nebiolo's business included the manufacture of printing presses and casting parts for industrial machinery.



Though Italy's most renowned type foundry closed its doors more than four decades ago, its influence endures. By the Nebiolo History Project

The Nebiolo History Project is a research team set up by Marta Bernstein, James Clough, Alessandro Colizzi, Riccardo De Franceschi, Massimo Gonzato and Riccardo Olocco to investigate the archival and oral history of Italy's most renowned type foundry.

An international conference took place in Turin on 16-17 September 2021, whose proceedings are due to be published in 2022. An illustrated monograph is planned for the future.

una grande famiglia di caratteri lineari della Società Nebiolo Torino



Below. Fluidum, 1937. A highly distinctive design by Alessandro Butti, this formal script typeface is rather distant from any handwritten models. Its name evokes the flowing quality of the ductus in letters such as 'm'.

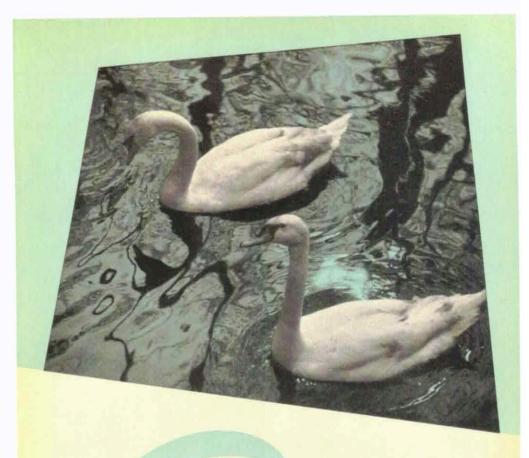
Images courtesy Tipoteca Italiana Fondazione.

Huidum

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Above, Giulio Da Milano's Neon (1933-34) is typical of the geometric sans serif designs that flourished in the 1930s. Only a few of Its letters display oblique strokes, as most of these are replaced with straight stems connected by arches; some letters follow a lowercase construction and all the central bars are rather low to the baseline.

Besides such details, which nod to Art
Deco, Neon strikes a different note.
Each type size has a different width—the smaller the size, the wider the letter. It proved very popular in Italian advertising. Alessandro Colizzi's Neon NbI (CAST Foundry) is a digital redesign of Da Milano's original.



«Cigno»

La lineare eleganza e la perfetta adattabilità a qualsiasi altro carattere,

tanno della serie Cigno lo scritto ideale

per lo stampato moderno

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Carattere negativo su fondo ampliabile

Etrusco classico di forme perfette

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Nuove possibilità nella composizione



Left. Razionale (1935). Designed by Giulio Da Milano, this is one of the most complex of all the Modernist modular metal typefaces. In addition to the negative letterforms designed for assembly as rectangles atop a multi-line background texture, it also came with the basic negative and positive modules for the composition of both letters and numbers. The units were divided into four groups (or parts), based on a dense grid.

Above. Specimen for the typeface Cigno, 1954. This rather formal script type, with few striking similarities to earlier or contemporary typefaces, appears to have been inspired by the use of a flat brush rotated suddenly to generate contrast variation. 'Cigno' is Italian for swan.

Below. Photo of the Nebiolo type design office, ca. 1936 **An unidentified** draftsman is seated at the desk with his back to the camera, and at his left three assistants are working; in the middle we recognise a young Aldo Novarese. On the assistants table, drawings for Resolut and Neon can be discerned; on the wall, there are drawings and printed specimens for Razionale, Veltro. Resolut, Neon, Paganini, Semplicità, Landi and Fluidum. Image taken from a Nebiolo specimen book of 1939.

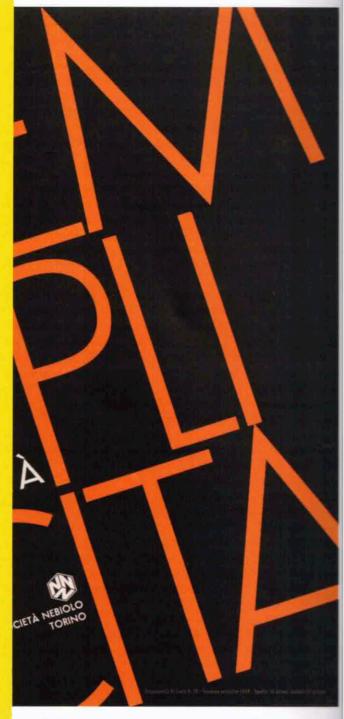
Nebiolo of Turin was Italy's greatest type foundry on both a national and an international level for most of the twentieth century until its closure in 1978. Exactly 100 years earlier in 1878, Giovanni Nebiolo founded the company that took his name when he bought the small type foundry established by Giacomo Narizzano in 1852. By the turn of the century, Nebiolo expanded as a printing press manufacturer. Its 1908 merger with the Urania company of Milan enabled Nebiolo to dominate the Italian market for printing machinery and type for handsetting until the end of commercial letterpress in the 1970s. Nebiolo was then known for the quality and variety of its printing machines; today the company is best remembered for its contributions to type design.

Humanist roman types in the so-called 'Elzevir' style, similar to those of Deberny & Peignot of Paris, were cast at Nebiolo as far back as the 1880s. By the turn of the century, its catalogue was mostly made up of Art Nouveau display typefaces - cast from matrices probably acquired from German and French foundries - as well as fleurons, borders, ornaments and vignettes. An early revival of a fifteenth-century Venetian type, called Inkunabula, was produced in 1911. The moving spirit responsible for this revival of Renaissance type was the printer / scholar Raffaello Bertieri, who later collaborated with Nebiolo on the production of two other revivals, Ruano and Sinibaldi.

Making metal type exclusively for handsetting meant progressive exclusion from the newspaper, book and magazine industries, which started using typesetting machinery early in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, Nebiolo was able to compete successfully in the international and domestic markets for advertising and other types used by jobbing printers.

At about the same time as the release of Paul Renner's Futura, Nebiolo came up with





Left. Stop (1970), originally designed for hot metal and in one case only, became internationally popular for the creation of 'instant logos' after it was added to the Letraset catalogue in 1973. The typeface has acquired further popularity as a digital form a variety of foundries.

Above. Semplicità (ca. 1928), seen in a specimen dated 1959. belongs to the school of rationalist types of the 1920s. Its uppercase represents a geometric synthesis of Roman capitals. but it has Art Deco elements such as the low horizontal bar on the 'A'. It was successful for many years in advertising and publishing.

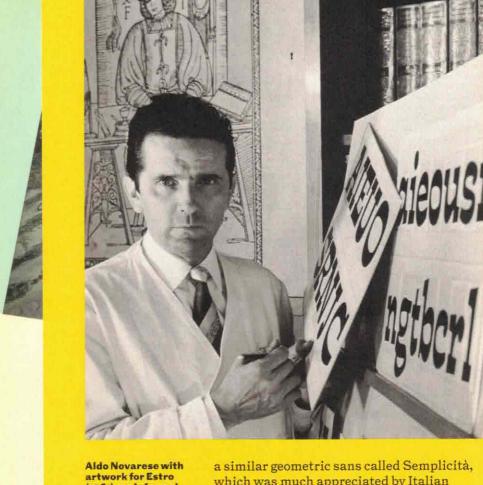
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luidum

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(1961), an informal, spirited, reversecontrast face, which was to become a staple of popular Italian graphics in the following decades. Opposite. Pages from a Nebiolo specimen book, 1950s. Above. Quirinus (1949). One of Alessandro Butti's most striking typefaces, it is also one of several contemporary interpretations of the 'modern' neoclassical theme. Below. Egizio (1955-58), a bracketed slab serif design by Novarese.

a similar geometric sans called Semplicità, which was much appreciated by Italian printers; Bertieri himself used it for Il Risorgimento Grafico. Later, in 1933, an in-house design studio, Studio Artistico, was officially opened and entrusted to Giulio Da Milano (1895-1991), who created two interesting and unusual rationalist sans serifs: Razionale and Neon.

Alessandro Butti (1893-1959) became director three years later and opened up a particularly fruitful period for type design at Nebiolo, with a team of draftsmen that included the young Aldo Novarese (1920-95). Under Butti's direction Nebiolo released many original typefaces – including Quirinus, Fluidum, Hastile, Athenaeum, Augustea and Microgramma – that gradually went on to rid Nebiolo's catalogue of the older imported typefaces while 'shaping the history of Italian twentieth-century print', as printer / publisher Enrico Tallone aptly suggests.

Following an ill-advised adventure into the production of textile looms and other mechanical equipment, in 1951-52 the company ran into financial difficulties and had to reorganise and return to its core business of printing machinery and foundry type. The ensuing reduction of the workforce meant that, in 1952, Butti was made redundant and replaced by Novarese as the foundry's artistic director.



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Images courtesy Tipoteca Italiana Fondazione.

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The quantity and variety of typefaces designed by Novarese is remarkable. Some of them, such as Nova Augustea and the internationally successful Eurostile, built on Butti's heritage. With the assistance of his team (which included Piero De Macchi and Umberto Fenocchio), Novarese cemented Nebiolo's reputation for distinctive display typefaces. One of the last typefaces released by Nebiolo was the extraordinary Stop (1970), a mix of heavy upper and lowercase letters, simplified to the bare essentials necessary for recognition, which became internationally popular for the creation of 'instant' logos.

By the mid-1960s Nebiolo's catalogue seemed to have little appeal to the emerging professionals working in advertising. Under growing pressure, Nebiolo set up a team of prominent figures from Milan's design scene to sit beside Novarese. Pino Tovaglia, Franco Grignani, Giancarlo Iliprandi, Bruno Munari and others agreed to consult pro bono, and over a decade devised two original typefaces, Forma (1968) and Dattilo (1972). An uneasy relationship with the designers contributed to Novarese's retirement in 1972, after which he pursued a freelance career that gave him some international recognition.

Part of Nebiolo's catalogue went on to be adapted to dry transfer technology by Letraset, Mecanorma and the Italian company Reber R41. While a few typefaces were also released as Linotype matrices, no investments nor strategic alliances were made to embrace phototypesetting - a delay that would prove critical to the foundry's slow decline and inevitable demise in 1978.

The Nebiolo company remained active in the printing presses business until it closed down in the late 1990s. Over the past two decades there have been digital revivals of varying quality. Historical research has been piecemeal due to the dispersal of the company's archives, but critical assessment of the Turin type foundry will one day provide a valuable addition to typographic history.

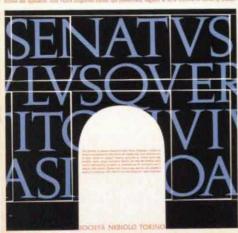
helated response to the Swiss neo-grotesque trend. Designed collectively by a team of Milanese designers and Novarese, it was initially released in 1968 in three basic cuts, in metal only. Over the years, the type family grew to become one of the largest and most flexible available in Italy. David Jonathan Ross released a digital revival in 2016.

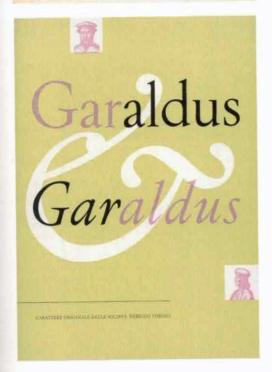
Dattilo, overseen by the same committee, was released in 1972 as a slab serif companion to Forma, compared to which Dattilo looks more appealing as a titling face and for advertising. Below. Dattilo: original Nebiolo founder's metal type for hand composition, courtesy Tipoteca Italiana Fondazione.



nova Augustea

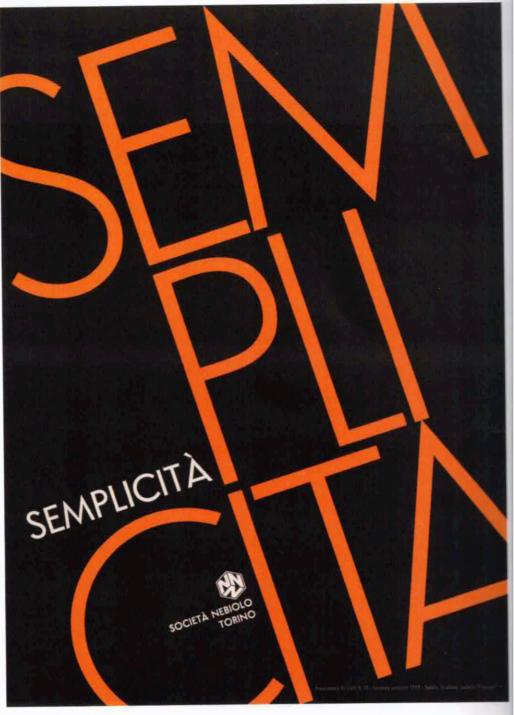
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Above. In 1957,
Nobiolo released
Novarese's roman
face Caraldus.
The specimen
cover includes
tiny portraits of
Claude Caramont
(aka Caramond, top)
and Aldus Manutius,
whose names were
combined to make
'Caraldus',

Top. Nova Augustea, 1964. This typeface is usually said to have been re-issued following Novarese's addition of lowercase to Butti's Augustea, a highly original typeface based on Roman inscriptional capitals and issued as a capitals-only series in 1949. However, the lowercase of Augustea was created by Butti and drafted by Ennio Lavagno before they both left Nebiolo. According to Lavagno, 'Butti did not want to release the lowercase for fear of offending the majesty of the Roman lapidary' [the original inscriptions].





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Left.Cover of specimen for Microgramma (1952), designed by Alessandro Butti.





Eurostile une synthèse de l'évolution de notre temps

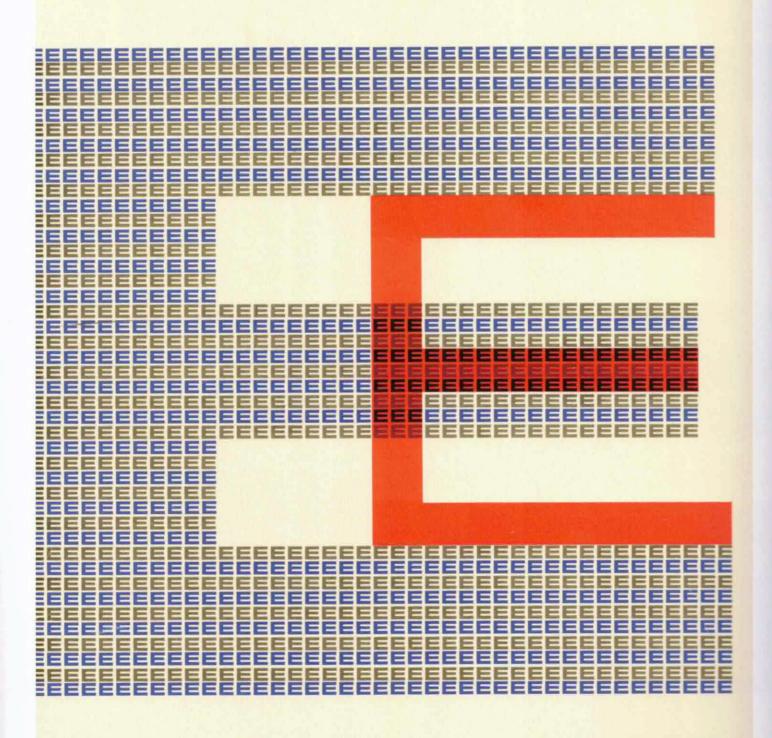
Left and opposite. Nebiolo specimens for Eurostile, 1962-68. Novarese designed Eurostile by adding lowercase to Butti's square-shaped Microgramma (1952) in a way that showed great commercial acuity. He retouched the internal and external curves of Microgramma by slightly increasing their roundness and sharpening the angles between stems and diagonals. Novarese often compared Eurostile, a 'quadrate' typeface, to the industrial design – architecture, train windows, TV screens - of the 1950s and 60s. This flat, weighty strength, with its distinctive 'O', has made Eurostile Bold Extended the most popular of the family.

It was later made available for rub-down lettering (Letraset and Mecanorma), and for photosetting and digital versions (Linotype), In 2007, Akira Kobayashi developed the family with Eurostile Next, which extended Eurostile's original two weights into a progressive series of five weights from ultra light to extra bold, each in extended, regular and condensed versions. In 2016, Monotype's Terrance Weinzierl further opened up the Eurostile Next family to make 50 styles. Eurostile is available from several other digital foundries, including URW. Eurostile's uses range from 2001: A Space Odyssey via Halston (Netflix) to the masthead revived by Pentagram for Sight and Sound magazine, 2021.



Eurostile

sintesi espressiva del nostro tempo





Front cover typefaces Top: Album Sans and Minuscule 2, (Thomas Huot-Marchand) and Stop (Aldo Novarese). Middler Qandus Latin (Laura Meseguer) and a Tamil character from November's logo for theatre group Kattiyakkari. **Bottom:** Caraje (Thomas Huot-Marchand) and Sisters (Laura Meseguer).

Opposite. Illustration by Jochen Gerner from Thomas Huot-Marchand's designs for the season at Les 2 Scènes in Besançon, France, 2019.

Back covers Microgramma metal type designed by Alessandro Butti, 1952. View of the Nebiolo foundry in Turin, ca. 1928. Spread from Kris Sowersby: The Art of Letters, 2021.

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