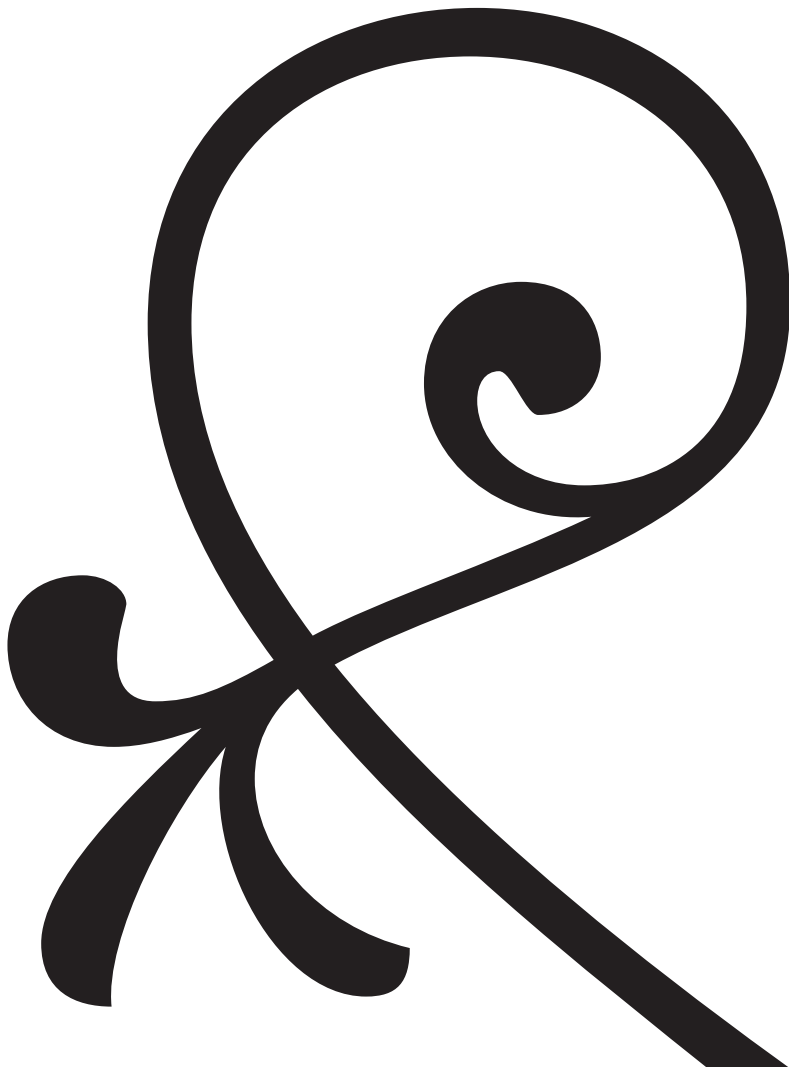




STENCIL-GOTHIC

A DIGITAL REVIVAL OF THE FIRST KNOWN STENCIL TYPEFACE
DESIGNED BY JOHN WEST OF BROOKLYN, NEW YORK IN 1885.
DIGITIZED BY JOHANNES LANG UND ELLMER STEFAN IN 2014.





CHICAGO WATER WORKS 32

MERCHANTS

HANDSOME SATYRS

LATEST

STYLES

FINELY ATTIRED HOBGOBLINS

RETROGRADE

54 SOUTH PARK HOTEL

ALL COMPLETE WITH FIGURES.



Stencil-Gothic — designed and registered at the US-patent office in 1885 by John West of Brooklyn, New York — is the first known typeface that incorporates the stylistic feature of interrupted strokes in order to evoke the impression of stencil lettering.

The translation of a structural essentiality from one reproduction method into another is a fascinating semiotic stunt. Within the realms of typography the gaps of the stencil letter lose all their functional imperative — bare of its technical necessity they turn into pure patina. Skeuomorphisms like that are omnipresent in the field of typography, where the appropriative embodiment of aesthetic aspects is inherent practice from its very origin — if not by definition.

In addition to the implementation of the stencil breaks into lead type the *inventor* of Stencil-Gothic seasoned its glyphs with “fey, budding tendrils that sprout from the letters [...]”.* This coup totally subverts the technical limitations found in stencilling and leads to a design of vast conceptual complexity — a typeface flourishing with attractive contradictions and all the sparkle of Victorian eclecticism.

* Eric Kindel «A tradition with breaks»
in Eye magazine No. 86, vol. 22, 2013 — and at
[www.eyemagazine.com/feature/article/
a-tradition-with-breaks](http://www.eyemagazine.com/feature/article/a-tradition-with-breaks)

DIGITAL REVIVAL

Fascinated by the odd stylistic mixture found in its lettershapes Johannes Lang and Ellmer Stefan set out to digitize Stencil-Gothic in spring 2014.

In order to emphasize the polystylistic nature of the design the main strokes of the letters were deliberately drawn crude and orthogonal in contrast to the encapsulated flourishes, which were given a more soft and dynamic curve treatment. The differences in detailing found in the ornamentation of the three optical sizes made it necessary to balance between adaptation and interpretation as well as decide whether residues from letterpress printing shall be integrated or omitted.

The digital version remains caps-only — yet its character set was extended for contemporary needs and covers the most common languages using the latin alphabet.

COLOPHON

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EULA

www.stencil-gothic.com/eula.html

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MOMORDIQUE ÉLASTIQUE

DICHOTOMOUS

GRÜNER VEITLINER

KRIEG &

FRIEDEN

JARDINES COLGANTES DE B.

JAHRGANG 1982

EXTRAVAGANT ORTHODOXY

