Arabic calligraphy and typography conference
The dichotomy of globalization versus local traditions has taken hold of discourse in all fields of human activity—from design, to art, to commerce, to social studies. As designers, we are at a crossroad, faced with the challenge to balance these opposing notions in order to create designs that are truly relevant and representative of our contemporary societies. Typography, by virtue of its ubiquitous nature, can be the ultimate solution to this end. Typography and printing have had major influences on human development; they stand as testimony to the benefits of cultural exchange, and they play an essential role in visually representing a culture’s identity. Through the ages, Eastern and Western cultures have often interacted; shared ideas, knowledge and technological inventions. In fact, we have constantly shaped technological progress, which in turn is perpetually reshaping and influencing our societies.

Modern communication media have empowered many people around the globe. The rapid and efficient exchange of ideas and products at low cost and high speed has created a fluid global society. With the spread of the Internet computer network, textual information has regained its front row importance, and the boundaries of type representation have widened. The manipulation of type and our constant interaction with textual information have become commonplace. Typography today is everywhere and a minimum level of literacy brings us in contact with it wherever we turn. We are constantly bombarded with text in the form of advertising messages, instructional information, or entertainment. People read more than ever before though not strictly books or printed publications. They use their computers to send letters, and they use their mobile phones to write brief messages instead of calling. They read on TV screens messages of all kinds. The Internet is crowded with ‘chat rooms and forums’ where people make friends and carry on a social life using mostly text as a medium of communication. Typography today is no longer ‘for intellectuals by intellectuals’, but rather ‘for all by all’. Typographic communication has become the ultimate representation of our modern world.

Arabic typography, the ultimate embodiment of the Arab-Islamic cultural identity

"Typeface design is not only “the craft par excellence”, but also much more than that. Letterforms are the conscious and creative endeavor of their designers. They portray..."
on one hand an individual’s artistic vision, and on the other hand the spiritual, social and economic aspects of that individual’s society at a particular time in history. Since the early ages of printing, type has been the most effective ambassador of world civilizations. Although the affluent Arab nations have taken an active part in today’s progressive global culture, their script is still under-developed for proper representation in today’s digital media and communication channels.

Arabic calligraphy has seen developments of remarkable beauty at the height of the Arab empire’s power and expansion, examples of which can be seen to this day in countries that were once under Arab rule. Nonetheless, Arabic calligraphy has also shrivelled and stagnated with the decline and disintegration of the last Islamic Ottoman Empire. Many attempts have been made to modernize the Arabic script and some cultures, like modern Turkey, have abandoned it totally. For the past hundred years, some of the most distinguished as well as the lesser known Muslim calligraphers have been dedicated to refining their craft. However, they have distanced themselves from the realities of the contemporary Arab visual culture, and their work has become confined to art exhibitions rather than applied design. This may be due to the fact that the art of calligraphy and the craft of typography have become two separate and independent professional fields, each with its own conventions and applications. In the Arab world this separation is dramatically expressed through semi-hostile fronts and demarcation lines. Some designers claim that there should be no looking back at all, and go as far as considering the calligraphic heritage a representation of dated and repressive ideals. I believe that it is important to learn from the past, and to use the calligraphy as a structural model and a source of inspiration, in order to reinterpret the Arabic letterforms in ways that are familiar to readers. Nonetheless, it is also quite essential for the Arab culture’s development to move forward creatively engaged with creating new styles and new designs. The design of contemporary fonts should strike a balance between aesthetic judgment, social concerns, and practical constraints (such as how the type may be used and in which context). It is therefore essential to design digital Arabic fonts that meet all the diverse aspects of the present visual communication needs, and to keep the Arab culture and its script healthy and alive.

Arabic typography today is the ultimate embodiment of the Arab-Islamic world’s cultural identity. It should be created, subverted and freely manipulated from within the culture. The responsibility of shaping Arabic typography is a cultural endeavor that needs to be undertaken by

the very same people that use the script and need it the most. Type design in the Arab world has been slow in comparison to other fast growing commercial developments. The state of Arabic fonts is lamentable; there is a shortage of easily available Arabic fonts that can meet the diverse design needs of contemporary communication media. There is perplexingly very few legible Arabic screen fonts for on-line reading and TV motion graphics, mobile phones, and other digital devices. Moreover, there are hardly any Arabic fonts that are visually compatible with Latin fonts in a world where dual-script typography is the norm. This has had a negative effect on the development of the field of graphic design and new media in the Arab world. On the whole, the number of talented graphic designers in the Middle East is increasing rapidly. Yet the fonts which Arab designers need for creating contemporary-looking design lack sophistication and diversity. The market is ripe for new design developments and professional advancement in the field of Arabic typeface design. In addition, innovation has become crucial for asserting the modernity of today’s Arab cultures, and for portraying them positively as vital members of our global society.

The global impact on modern design developments

Against this bleak picture, there is a glimmer of a new dawn. The developing Arab states are undergoing major cultural and demographic changes. Located on the edge between Western and Eastern cultural models, they are in the process of reshaping their identities to suit their contemporary and cosmopolitan societies. Their media are responding to these changes at spectacular speed in order to compensate for the lack of a smooth evolution of typographic and design conventions. This atmosphere has set the stage for an adventurous attitude to type creation, type manipulation and experimentation with multilingual visual communication. In this past decade, many design programs have mushroomed around the Middle East, graduating a generation of talented graphic designers. This new generation is striving to shape its visual culture in a way that best represents their modern identity. These young designers are embracing Western ideologies, appropriating them and subverting them to their own ends and needs. They are defining their cultural identities by marrying East and West, Old and New, in search for the most honest and inspiring representation of their true social, political and professional realities. Their creative design endeavors are spreading, creating a refreshing change, and making a distinctive mark. The acceptance of their work is slowly growing and influencing the general public’s design sensibilities. There is definitely
a new understanding of the power of design in the Arab World, and modern typographic design trends are taking shape and being encouraged not only in schools but also in society at large. Arab type designers are breaking new ground with largely experimental typefaces: they question conventional calligraphic styles, reinterpreting them by taking advantage of the available technological possibilities and limitations, and often move beyond the rules of pen-drawn letterforms. Their design solutions range from traditional, to modern, to typefaces inspired by global popular culture. Often injecting wit and humor into the process, Arab type designers are challenging prescribed notions of Arabic typography and infusing fresh blood into what has been for a long time a highly conventional art form.

**Kitabat, the first major Arabic calligraphy and typography conference in the region**

What is needed in the Arab design world is a dialogue between the East where the letterforms are created and the West where the technologies for creating and displaying the letterforms are produced. To this end the ‘Kitabat, Arabic Calligraphy and Typography Conference’ was conceived. The name Kitabat (writings in Arabic) was chosen to imply the various topics of this conference; writing as in beautiful calligraphic writing, writing as in typed texts and typography, and writings as in printed or broadcast texts and ideas about all aspects of culture that manifest themselves in our direct physical environment.

The Kitabat conference has brought together calligraphers, type designers, software developers, and graphic designers from the Arab world, to discuss issues of Arabic typography that influence their professional practices. The topics up for discussion range from historical overviews of Arabic calligraphy and printing types, to typeface design and technology, to contemporary graphic design and design education in the Middle East. The scholars and practitioners whose work will be presented during the Kitabat conference are seeking their own interpretation of their visual culture and are consciously defining the image of their complex identity.
**Wednesday, 5 April 2006**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Track 1 (Auditorium)</th>
<th>Exhibits (Admin. Bldg. &amp; Bldg. A)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10:00</td>
<td>Registration &amp; pickup of conference material</td>
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| 10:30                | Ugur Derman Topkaya:  
The Impact of Drawing on Ottoman Calligraphic Tradition |
| 11:00                | Mohammed Zakeri:  
Calligraphy and Its Role in the Spread of Islamic Culture |
| 11:30                | Coffee break |
| 12:00                | Geoffroy Roger:  
The Development of Handwriting in the Early Modern Period |
| 13:00                | Lunch break |
| 14:00                | Gerard Vander Elst:  
The Historical Influence of Writing on the Leaf Script |
| 15:00                | Bruno Steinert:  
The Formation of the Style of the 'Garten' |
| 15:30                | Coffee break |
| 16:00                | Johannes Bergenhoven:  
Decoding Unicode: The Open Source Database |
| 16:30                | Abdi Alkoc:  
Bringing Calligraphy to the Planet: Calligrapher's Role in the Printing Revolution and Beyond |
| 17:00                | Kartal Hanouz:  
Nostalgia Through Open Type |
| 18:30                | Linotype Award Night (by reservation only) |

**Thursday, 6 April 2006**

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Track1 (Auditorium)</th>
<th>Track2 (Bldg E room E109)</th>
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<tr>
<td>9:20</td>
<td>Taghlil Hassan (Tur) Middlesex Polytechnic, London, UK</td>
<td>Technology Forum</td>
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<td>New Horizons for Arabic Calligraphy and Design. Expanding the horizons in Arabic</td>
<td>Tea: Coffee and Fresh Start</td>
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<td>Calligraphy.</td>
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<td>斑斓 Hammoumi (Lebanon)</td>
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<td>Developing a Multilingual Type Design: Iraqi Font Family, Challenges and Results</td>
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<td>10:45</td>
<td>Fawwaz Rahhal (Lebanon)</td>
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<td>Multilingual Digital Design Solutions</td>
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<td>11:20</td>
<td>Coffee break</td>
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<td>11:45</td>
<td>Nicole Smith &amp; Sicher (The Netherlands)</td>
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<td>Typographic Handmaking: Creating Arabic Calligraphy: An Artist's Journey on Paper</td>
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<td>12:20</td>
<td>Linda Vanschoubrook (Netherlands)</td>
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<td>Arabic and Arabic Calligraphy: Arabic Art and Calligraphy: The Arab's Journey on</td>
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<td>13:25</td>
<td>Hassan Saikal (Gaza, Palestine)</td>
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<td>Expanding Horizons on Arabic Typography: The Birth of Typography at the End of Calligraphy</td>
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<td>15:00</td>
<td>Nazanin Chavma (Iran, Tehran)</td>
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<td>The Arabic Script: New Horizons in Type Design.</td>
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<td>16:00</td>
<td>Raouf Abdallah (Lebanon, Beirut)</td>
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<td>The Birth of Typography in Calligraphy: Expanding the Horizons in Arabic Calligraphy</td>
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<td>16:50</td>
<td>Ubaida Safadi (Jordan, Amman)</td>
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<td>Typographic Handmaking: Creating Arabic Calligraphy: An Artist's Journey on Paper</td>
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<td>17:30</td>
<td>Tarek Assi (Lebanon, Beirut)</td>
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<td>Arabic-Calligraphy and Visual Identities: Expanding the Horizons in Arabic Calligraphy</td>
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<td>20:00</td>
<td>Gala Dinner</td>
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**Speakers List**

- **Dr. Nathalie Bahaadini**, Honorary Speaker
- **Prof. Louai Khatib**, Jordan
- **Dr. Salih Al-Mahmoud**, Jordan
- **Dr. Geoffroy Bade**, London
- **Mohammed al-Balad, Al-Madenah**
- **Dr. George El-Khatib**, Lebanon
- **Dr. Sabah Obeid**, Lebanon
- **Dr. Nadia Fakhry**, Lebanon
- **Dr. Tarek Assi**, Lebanon
- **Dr. Omayra El-Khatib**, Lebanon
- **Dr. Raouf Abdallah**, Lebanon
- **Dr. Ubaida Safadi**, Jordan
- **Dr. Nazanin Chavma**, Iran
- **Dr. Hassan Saikal**, Gaza, Palestine
- **Dr. Taghlil Hassan**, London
- **Dr. Nicole Smith & Sicher**, Netherlands

**Workshop Leaders**

- **Adnan Bilek**, Turkey
- **Ismail Pansuri**, Afghanistan
- **Salih Al-Mahmoud**, Jordan
- **Dr. George El-Khatib**, Lebanon
- **Dr. Tarek Assi**, Lebanon
- **Dr. Ubaida Safadi**, Jordan
- **Dr. Nazanin Chavma**, Iran
Dr. Nabil F. Safwat

Dr. Safwat received his PhD from the University of London in 1985 with his thesis: The Art of Manuscript. He is known for his work in Islamic Art, particularly in the field of Calligraphy. His research and publications have been widely recognized.

Keynote Address:
Word as Insight: Visual Understanding in the Contemporary Culture

Language is the essence of what it is that makes us human. In both Arabic calligraphy and typography, the dynamic advance towards readability, visual consistency, and page design, illustrate the constantly changing communication needs in the Arab world. In the religious and the secular domains, from the early centuries of its formation, calligraphy has taken a place of honour in the aesthetic tradition of the Arab-Islamic world. The appreciation of calligraphy required a trained eye and sensitivity to the rich cultural background - linguistic, religious and historical - from which it springs. Equally, it required not only discipline of developing technical skills, but also the engagement of the calligrapher’s moral force and personality.

Today the intertwined roles of the fine art of calligraphy and the forceful digital media may appear irrevocably. The simple, yet highly revered pens of the calligrapher and the machine of the typographer, both have a “technical” flavour, carrying in their tenor suggestions of “professional” artistic processes. The challenging task is finding the intermediate ground situated closer to the world of everyday, and ultimately, the aim is the enrichment and renewal of the medium of writing by which they are animated.
The Impact of Printing on Ottoman Calligraphic Tradition

Professor Ugur Dermancın's lecture will trace the appearance and development of printing technology in Ottoman Turkey and the major contributors to it among the calligraphers of the time. Printing didn't reach the Ottoman lands until the year 1728. The main idea followed at the time was that "beautiful writing is legible writing." The aesthetic qualities of scripts such as naskh and ta'liq, which reached their ultimate beauty in the 18th and 19th centuries, were practically missing. The first successful printing in Ottoman Turkey was achieved by the work of the great calligrapher Kadıasker Mustafa Efendi Efe (1801–1876). It made it possible to see clearly all the beautiful qualities of the naskh script. But it was not until the late 19th century that printing, and the technique of lithography, reached maturation in Turkey.

This illustrated lecture will also discuss the work of the master of the naskh script, Hassan Riza Efendi (1849–1920), who was a leading calligrapher in this respect, and who's famous printed Qur'an opened up new ideas and visual possibilities to the art of printing in Turkey.

Prof. Ugur Dermancın
Professor M. Ugur Dermancın's name is synonymous with calligraphy and marking. Though he majored in pharmacy as a profession, he has rather spent most of his 21 years of life on calligraphy and book arts. More than anyone in his generation, Ugur Dermancın is responsible for the survival of the art of the book in Turkey, and for the recent resurgence in their appreciation. He is a student of Necmeddin Oyaş (1883–1976) but has also benefited from Maayid Ayat (1891–1961), Halim Ösoğulları (1898–1964), and Süleyman Avcılar (1899–1986). Since 1962, he has written more than 300 articles, conference proceedings, and encyclopedia entries, in addition to his 13 books on the subject. He is currently teaching at both Marmara and Mimar Sinan Universities in Istanbul.

Calligraphy to Print: Style, Legibility, and Literacy in Arabic Script

Any approach to modern Arabic typography should begin with an understanding of the historical development of the early Quranic and non-Quranic scripts—including why the various scripts developed, the aesthetic principles of each, ways to recognize them, and why most early scripts fell into disuse. Two scripts—Suh and Nesih—survived and developed at the hands of seminal masters such as Husn Rowsebi and Yaqut al-Mustasimi, with contributions from the Mamluks. Beginning with the reforms of the great Ottoman calligrapher Sheikh Hamdullah of Amasya, these scripts saw some 500 years of continued evolution, reaching their present form at the hands of such trend-setting artists as Hafiz Osman, Mustafa Rökm, Kılıçaslan Mustafa Izzet, and later masters of the 20th century. Arising during this period was the school of Turkish Talika, developed by Mehmed Yesari and his son Mustafa Izzet, who produced works of great power and beauty in regular and jeli Talika.

The chain of transmission from calligrapher to student has followed a traditional one-on-one teaching method, using specific tools and materials to produce a manuscript or finished artwork. Academic study of Arabic-script calligraphy commonly concentrates on this historical progression, seldom applying critical aesthetic principles such as style and composition. For purposes of modern typography, however, such principles are paramount. Ignoring them gives rise to problems of legibility, learning from and building on calligraphy's flair, however, can add grace and rigor to the printed page.

Mohamed Zakaria
Mohamed Zakaria was born in Ventura, California, USA, in 1942, and grew up in the greater Los Angeles area. He began his study of calligraphy in 1961 and took lessons from Egyptian artist and broadcaster A.S. Ali Naja from 1964 to 1966 in Morocco and England, concentrating on the six styles of Baghdad. He returned to Los Angeles, where, from 1966 to 1977, he was the protégé of the great art and antiques dealer Oscar Meyer. In 1984, Zakaria began his studies in the classic calligraphic styles and techniques with Husein Gökçe and Ali Alperdinc in Istanbul under the auspices of the Islamic Center for Islamic History, Art, and Culture. He received the green diploma for the Sulus and Nesih scripts from Mr. Çelebi in 1989 and for the Talika script in 1997 from Dr. Alperdinc. Zakaria has studied the original sources, in Arabic, Ottoman, and Turkish, on the history and techniques of calligraphy, including its development in the Ottoman period and the lives of the great calligraphers. He has held numerous exhibitions of his work in the USA and abroad and has given many lectures and demonstrations. He is represented by the Masterworks Fine Arts Institute in San Francisco.
The travails of Euro-Arabic calligraphy, logography and typography in the early modern period

Although the Arabic script appears in printed documents in Egypt as early as the 10th century CE, these were designed as amulets rather than for reading, and the production of books was not attempted. Arabic typography and printed book publishing were born in 16th-century Europe, and developed there over the next three centuries, before being reintroduced to the Arab world. This birth and early development, however, were by no means painless. The creation of the first Arabic type-faces was very much a matter of trial and error, and it took nearly a century to produce one which came anywhere near to calligraphic standards. Although Arabic manuscripts were in some cases used as sources for the letter shapes copied by punch-cutter, these were not really familiar with how the script was written. This, combined with the technical and financial difficulties of creating sorts for all the different letter forms and ligatures, meant that the results were often unsatisfactory. Some of the best typographers, notably Gramion, Savary de Brières (or the typographer who worked for him), Caslon and a few others achieved acceptable results. But most of the type-faces used by European presses until the 19th century were remarkably inelegant.

Meanwhile, when types were not available, as was the case before the first foundry was created in 1514, and at many times and in many places later, other expedients were used. Sometimes whole words were cut on woodblocks and set within pages; often very crudely. At other times engraving, on wood or metal, was used to create passages of text in the Arabic script, or decorative and illustrative material incorporating it. The latter technique occasionally allowed some approximation to calligraphy, particularly in the nasta’liq script.

This paper seeks to trace some of these strands in the history of the use of Arabic script in European printing up to the 19th century, and to consider whether the effect they may have had on the subsequent development of Arabic type styles.

Dr. Geoffrey Roper

Dr. Geoffrey Roper is a bibliographical consultant. He is considered by many to be the foremost bibliographer for Islam and the Middle East, and has received in 2005 the Partington Award in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the field of Middle Eastern librarianship. Dr. Roper was head of the Islamic Bibliography Unit at Cambridge University Library, 1982-2003, and editor of Index Islamicus and of the World Survey of Islamic Manuscripts. He has written and lectured on the history of printing and publishing in the Muslim world, and curated an exhibition at the Gutenberg Museum, He is currently an Associate Editor of the forthcoming Oxford Companion to the Book.

Where do we start?

With the invention of moveable type, some western printers and orientalists began cutting the first Arabic printing types. These early printing types often lacked refinement due to the lack of familiarity of the western printers with the aesthetic and structural rules of the Arabic script. Furthermore, the conservative Ottoman clergy objected to printing under the pretext that printing Arabic would devalue the holy language of God and the magnificent calligraphic manuscripts. This resulted in forcing the early printers to create printing types that closely matched, in form and structure, the existing calligraphic examples. Large type cases were developed with characters that could recreate every possible letter combination. Though this was satisfactory to the clergy, the script came under another attack with people claiming that Arabic is inappropriate for printing with movable type because of the varied shapes of its letters. Several conferences and debates around this subject took place but did not yield any convincing results. These arguments believe could not hold ground in the face of the fact that the Arabic script’s flexibility can provide endless possibilities and approaches. Still, these arguments did become the base for the simplification of the Arabic letterforms. The size of the type cases and the number of required characters was reduced, simplifying and speeding up the typesetting and typesetting process.

Though typesetting methods for the Arabic script have gone through the various technological advancements, the actual design of the script was hardly changed and adapted to the contemporary means of communication. The Arabic script remained unchanged throughout and even underwent a slow deterioration. In my opinion, one of the main reasons for this deterioration is a general lack of a deep understanding of the structural skeletal forms of the script which can provide endless possibilities for further reinterpretation of the Arabic letterforms. Generally the classical Naqsh style is taken as the model for designing Arabic typefaces. Is Naqsh the correct style to start with? Or is it better to start from the skeletal and structural aspect of the Arabic letters? These are the questions that this paper will raise and try to answer.
The continual influence of writing on the Latin script.

The influence of writing on the Latin script will be traced, from the beginning of movable type up to the present day. It is possible to distinguish 'organic type design' from 'synthetic type design'. The first is based directly on writing, the second indirectly, or tries to dispose of the traces of writing instruments. There are few designs wherein the consequences of writing have been completely eliminated. In the majority of type designs for the Latin script, traces of pens are clearly visible. In this talk I will explain why this is so. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, metal type had already been relatively far removed from writing, but in the following centuries punch cutters and type designers never lost sight of the roots of the letterforms they have been handling, and at times went straight back to writing for inspiration or renewal.

Gerard Unger

Gerard Unger was born in Arnhem, The Netherlands, in 1942. He is a graphic designer, type designer, typographer and typographic consultant. He studied at Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam, and became a freelance designer in 1972. He now teaches at the Academie, and at the Department of Typography and Graphic Communication at the University of Reading, England. His numerous typeface designs include the highly regarded newspaper typefaces Swift and Calibre, and Capitolo designed for the city of Rome during the Catholic jubilee of 2000. He has received many awards for his work, including the 1991 Maurice Fischelde prize for his overall contribution to type design.

In the Garden of Type

The role of a font publishing company as the mediator between font designers and font users; with consideration to current legal aspects and the conditions of the End User License Agreement.
1. Basics - About font botany, flora and fauna of type and fonts
2. Flowing, cultivation and raising
3. Threats
4. Protection
5. Merchandising
6. Healthy enjoyment

Bruno Steinert

Bruno Steinert was born in 1945 in Germany. After an apprenticeship as a compositor, he worked in Switzerland, pioneered phototypesetting and earned the grade of Master in the typesetting craft. He joined Linotype in 1973 as a trainer for photocomposition systems. Later, he became manager of European marketing, Linotype’s International Trading and showroom facility, the departments for technical documentation, on-line communications and systems consultation, as well as the worldwide product planning and marketing of publishing systems. He developed the initial strategies for Mac-based products such as color systems and the LinPress newspaper system. In 1997, Bruno Steinert established a separate company, Linotype Library GmbH, a fully owned subsidiary of Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG. Since then, he is the managing director of Linotype.
Decoding Unicode - The Open Science Database

Closely following the DNA, the ASCII-Code ranks among the most successful codes on this planet. Now, Unicode is taking its place. With this encoding system, millions of typographic lay persons have access to a huge character repertoire right on their keyboard: Latin, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew, Thai, Chinese, etc. - every script, more than 90,000 characters, are represented in Unicode. Now is the right time to gather and explain the history, the various meanings and correct typographic use of each Unicode character. Who "invented" the full stop? When did the infinity sign come into being? What’s an Ogonek? The advent of Unicode and OpenType is a technical revolution. Even more so, however, it marks a cultural one. In an 18-month project in the department of Design at the University of Applied Sciences in Mainz, Germany, we are collecting images, texts and information about each and every Unicode character. In April 2005, the project went online and since has more than 700 visitors a day.

In his lecture, Prof. Bergerhausen will give a short introduction to code history and will present the project.

Prof. Johannes Bergerhausen
Born 1965 in Borna, Germany. Professor Johannes Bergerhausen studied Visual Communication at the University of Applied Sciences in Düsseldorf. From 1993 to 2000, he lived and worked in Paris. First he collaborated with thefounders of Graphis, Gréard Paris (Glen) and Pierre Bertrand, then he founded his own office. In 1998 he was awarded a grant from the French Centre National des Arts Plastiques for a typographic research project on the ASCII Code. He returned to Germany in 2000 and, since 2002, is Professor of Typography at the University of Applied Sciences in Mainz. Lectures in Athens, Beirut, Berlin, Frankfurt, London, Paris, Prague, Rotterdam, San Francisco, Vienna. Since 2004, he is working on the decodeunicode.org project, which went online in April 2005. The project is supported by the Germany Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

Bringing Typography to the Masses - Diwan's role in the publishing revolution and beyond

The paper will focus on Diwan’s role in bringing Arabic typography to the personal computer. Back in 1982, if one wanted to publish an Arabic book or a pamphlet, your options were pretty limited. If you did not have much money you would have to hand type set page after page on an Arabic typewriter. If you could afford a bit more you would go to a typesetting company and have the whole book retyped into a proprietary system. If you wanted to publish an international daily newspaper, forget it, unless you had the million pounds a year it cost to fax newspaper sized pages around the world. It was out of this need to publish books cheaply that Diwan was born in 1982. From its birth Diwan continued at the forefront of the publishing revolution.

The story begins with simple word processing and the problems of getting Arabic to print on devices that only supported English. Getting Arabic to draw on a computer screen was one thing, but putting Arabic on paper was another problem that required innovative solutions. Next, the talk will address the first Arabic desktop publishing application and how that revolutionized the newspaper industry. We will concentrate on how Diwan worked on making Arabic fonts accessible using a WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) interface and the benefits that this brought to newspaper publishing. The paper culminates in describing the way that Diwan brought the tradition of Arabic calligraphy to the computer. How we created calligraphic styles like Mekhlik, Thuluth and Farsee on the computer and how correct Qur'anic calligraphy was defined. I will conclude with a brief talk about where the computer typography technology currently stands and where I think it will go in the future.

Abdi Aljawfi
Abdi Aljawfi has been working in the field of multilingual computing for the past 20 years. He started with writing bilingual software for one of the first implementations of Arabic on a personal computer and has continued into the fields of word processing, desktop publishing, and text rendering on small devices. Aljawfi’s largest project was rewriting a high-end DTP application first to handle both Arabic and English and later to work with all international languages. Aljawfi is the Technical Director and lead engineer of Diwan Software Limited.
Nastaliq through OpenType

Noori Nastaliq is a calligraphic Arabic-script typeface originally devised for use on a Monotype image-setter in the 1970s. Once this proprietary equipment became obsolete, Noori Nastaliq could not be readily implemented for many years with their current technology of digital fonts. With the advent and maturation of OpenType technology, Noori Nastaliq is once again alive. In spite of the many graphic complexities of Nastaliq style such as its oblique alignment to the baseline and its midline cursive connections, OpenType proved sufficient for the task, yielding results that far surpassed the capabilities of the original product.

Nastaliq is a complex calligraphic style used primarily as a display style in many countries, but as the preferred everyday text style in Pakistan. It has always been a challenge to duplicate the calligraphic intricacies of Nastaliq through mechanized type. The advent of photo- and digital typesetting made it possible to consider a fresh implementation. In the 1970s, Monotype commissioned Pakistani calligrapher Mizra Jamil to create a large collection of Urdu words in Nastaliq style for use on a computer-controlled image-setter. The resulting typeface was called Noori Nastaliq, and is used to this day by the Jang Newspaper in Pakistan. In the early systems, as long as the typed text matched one of the stored word patterns, the imagesetter was capable of producing authentic-looking Nastaliq text. Whenever there was no match, a calligrapher would have to make repairs manually. Such an approach can no longer be contemplated today.

Through the 1990s, Noori Nastaliq could only be supported within the confines of specialized proprietary word processors since the then-available technology for digital fonts did not offer the necessary capabilities. In its current OpenType implementation, Noori Nastaliq style is produced through a judicious use of ligature-based techniques along with contextually controlled forms. The use of contextually based glyph shapes guarantees full coverage for any potential sequence of characters in many different languages.

Kamal Mansour
An early multilingual educator in Cairo, served to stimulate Kamal's interest in languages, alphabets, and typographies. His studies have spanned Computer Sciences, Linguistics, and Product Design. Before joining Monotype in 1998 as Manager of Non-Latin Products, Kamal had worked in various areas of software development for over 15 years, developing fonts and keyboards for minority languages. At Monotype, his responsibilities include developing the library of non-Latin scripts, investigating potential products, in-house consulting, and assisting customers with font specifications. Most recently, his work has focused on OpenType implementations for various scripts and languages. As a result of Kamal's involvement in Unicode-related activities, he has spent a great deal of time exploring the use of Arabic script for non-Semitic languages such as Persian and Urdu.

New Horizon for Arabic Calligraphy and Type Design (Cultivating the education in Arabic calligraphy)

By the end of the 3rd century AH (9th century AD), the so-called (Al-Hatt Al-mansub), the proportioned writing emerged for the copying of Arabic manuscripts in Islamic Iraq. This development paved the way to the (Naskh) to become the writing script for secular and religious works. Again, Naskh lent itself to become the dominant model for design of Arabic typefaces after the first efforts to print in Arabic dating back to the 15th century AD. From this date up to the second half of the 20th century marked by the introduction of computer in the technology of typesetting, Arabic printing underwent a difficult and slow path of development. The image of the Arabic printing is still characterized by the past limitations in the making of fonts which result in poor designs compared to the accustomed natural and rich environment of Arabic penmanship.

The arrival of digital typography with its substantial advantages – such as speed, versatility, and low cost – has brought a revolution in the field of type design and typesetting from which Arabic has benefited a lot. Now at the beginning of the 3rd millennium, the introduction of OpenType – which is a new font format – has provided more than 60000 glyphs compared to only 256 characters offered by the previous formats such as postscript and TrueType. This is considered an outstanding advance in the technology of typesetting, opening hopes for bridging the gaps between Arabic calligraphy and type design. Hence, it is essential to teach both subjects in parallel together with the technology of font making.

Taghleb Hassan
Taghleb Hassan (1954, Sudan). Calligrapher, graphic designer - London, UK and UAE since 1974. Studied fine art at Khartoum College of Arts and Design (KCAD) in 1973-1977. In 1977 to 1981, he was appointed teaching assistant of calligraphy and drawing. He received an MA in Graphic Design from Central School of Art and Design (in London) in December 1983. He completed two courses in computer typesetting at (Linotype), Cheltenham, UK, in 1986. His interests include corporate design, font design, exhibitions, teaching and research. He created his first display font (Hassan) in 1984, produced at Dry Transfer by Letraset, UK. He received nine major international awards in Arabic calligraphy and many other recognitions from Sudan, UK, Turkey, and UAE. He is currently the executive editor of Noor Arabiyah, a quarterly magazine of Arabic calligraphy published in Dubai.
Developing a multi-lingual type design...
Insan font family, challenges and results

Since I started the graduate program at the Academy of Art University I recognized the importance of good typography in creating effective design. The first typography project I did at the Academy was a narrative book called “Type War” about the war between the sans serif font (Helvetica) and the serif font (Garamond). This project opened my eyes to one of the world’s most famous typefaces, “Helvetica”. I started seeing Helvetica everywhere: in the street, library, hospital, stations, buses, signage, internet, TV, cinema, and magazines from all over the worlds. I think Helvetica creates an international style that unites people from different cultures and regions. Helvetica was a very important element in creating an international graphic design language since its inception in 1957. The major reason for the impact of Helvetica on the world comes from the simplicity of this typeface, and the wide variation of its weights. I wondered why we don’t have such a strong typeface with such wide use in Arabic. In this project I wanted to unite the Arabic and English language by using the elements of Typography to create one typographical language. Accordingly, I decided to create the Arabic version of Helvetica. This presentation will discuss the design process and considerations behind this project.

Rasim Hamrouni
Rasim Hamrouni was born in Jordan in 1973. Raised in a family of artists he learned Arabic calligraphy as a child. He holds degrees in graphic design from Jordan and an MFA from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, USA. He has lectured and led workshops on Arabic calligraphy. His work includes corporate identities, packaging, interactive design, typography and typeface design. He has worked with well known typographers and graphic designers such as Huda Smiti, Hani Ali Faris, Jenna Anderson, April Greiman and Michael Sainato. He also led workshops on Arabic typography for many institutions and universities, including San Francisco University High School. In 2005, he established his independent Insan Type Foundry.

Multilingual digital design solutions

The growing demand for multilingual advertising has generated an increased necessity of Arabic type in the Middle East, Africa and even the western world. This increase in usage has revealed numerous issues with Arabic type (Arabic, Urdu & Farsi) in terms of availability, practical usage in print, online and screen media. The diverse methods of utilizing Arabic type and Arabic character sets across various platforms and media has set off the quest for finding resources (human & technical) in order to shatter the status quo and uncover further streamlined methods that would accommodate the Arabic script. The majority of software used by the advertising world is created with western character sets and left-to-right reading, writing, and word wrapping technologies in mind. Compatibility with Arabic is still limited. This has a direct influence on all aspects of a multilingual design process from conceptualization to implementation.

Fawzi Rahal will present the current available solutions and processes. These solutions are generally complex when dealing with multinational clients with demanding tight deadlines and strict budget and deadline restrictions. Nokia Mobile Phones will be presented as a case study for discussing these issues of daily and long-term type requirements for their digital products and communication.

Fawzi Rahal
Fawzi Rahal was born in Lebanon in 1980. He graduated with a BFA in Graphic Design from the American University in Dubai. He has worked for the past six years at Leo Burnett, McCann Erickson, and Grey Worldwide respectively. He specializes in multilingual interactive design, focusing on Arabic type solutions for clients such as Nokia Mobile Phones. He is Chief Interactive Designer/Architect at CD/Grey Worldwide in Dubai.