



Typeface

Collaborative

Book

Process Book – Rockwell

by Tatiana Titov
March 2021

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The Project



escription of the Project

The goal of this project was to create a collaborative book that presents important typefaces in history. Each student was randomly assigned to research a typeface and create a section of 16 pages in the book about it. Also, each student had to design their own cover, inside covers, table of contents and back cover for the collaborative book. The final book has 294 pages and 18 contributors.

I was assigned to work on the Rockwell typeface. To create my section, I was inspired by the historical context of its creation and its geometric shapes. In fact, Rockwell was created in 1934 and its design is inspired by modernism. I decided to explore the geometry of this typeface and design a signature that uses principles of modernism.



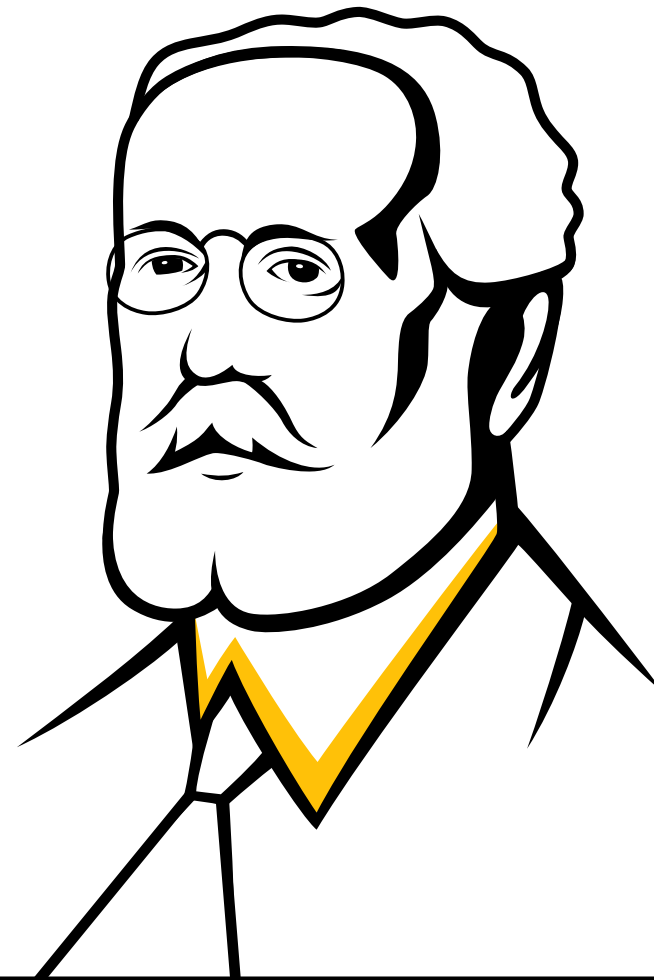
Final Design - The Signature



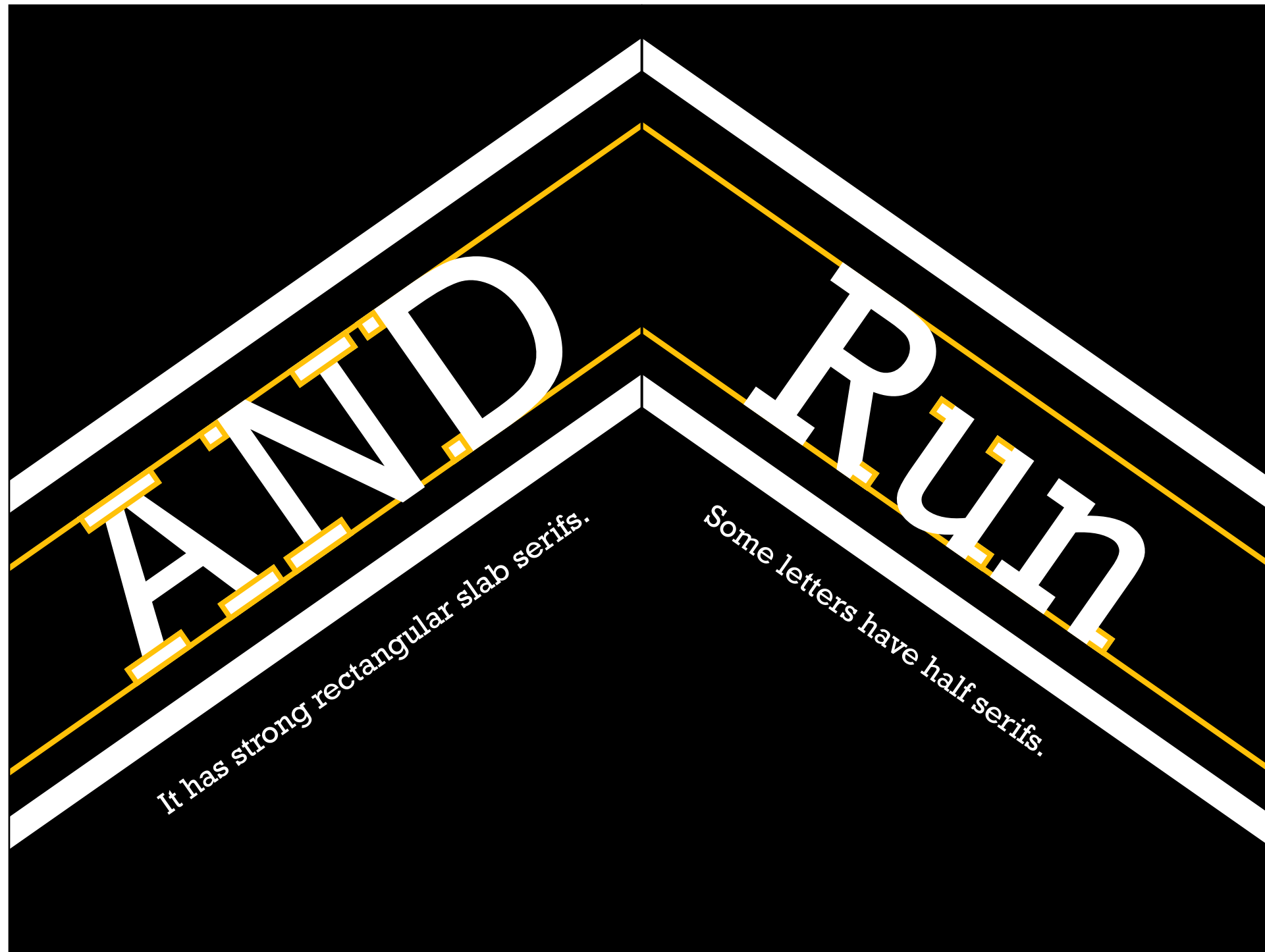


Rockwell was created during the revival of slab serifs during the Second Industrial Revolution. This revival happened after the beginning of modernism in design where sans serifs were popular. In the 1930s, inspired by modernism, the trend of new geometric slab serifs arrived.

This typeface follows this trend. Its design is based on the Litho Antique typeface. Rockwell was created by the American designer Frank Hinman Pierpont in 1934 at Monotype Corporation, a company led by him that specializes in type design.



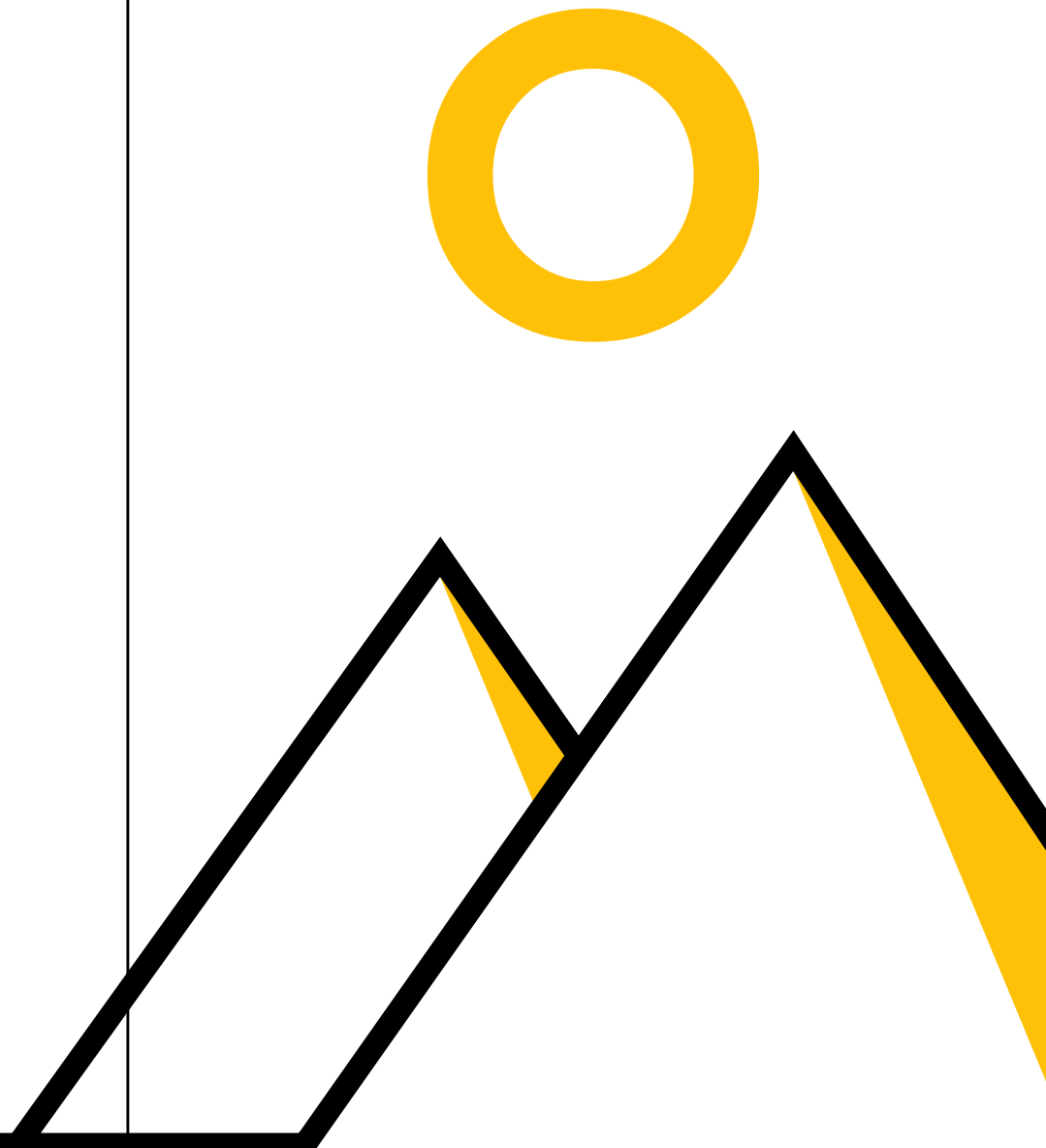
1934

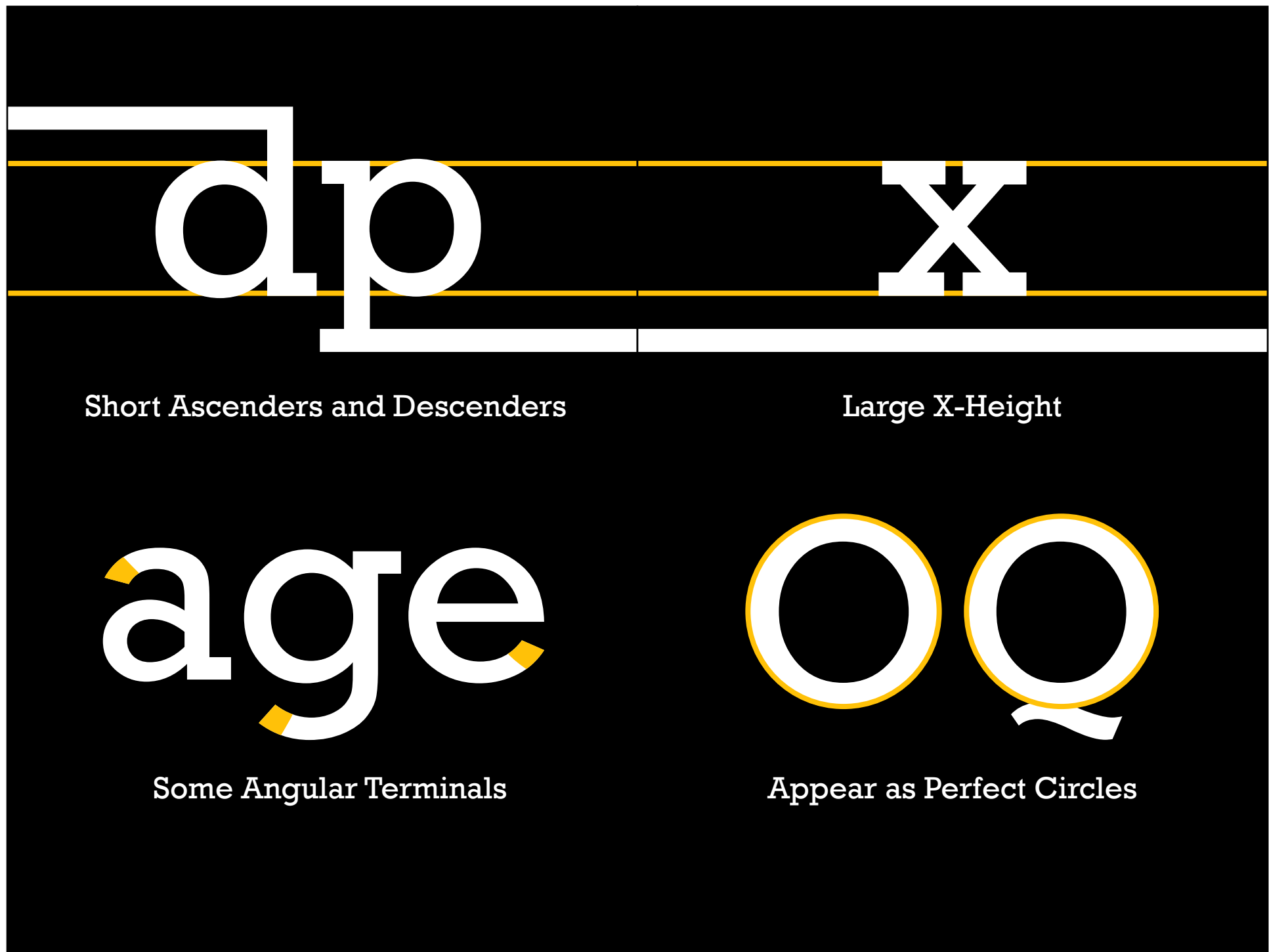


Slab Serifs

They emerged after Napoleon's Egyptian campaign from 1798 to 1801. Napoleon went to Egypt in hopes of expanding his empire, but it ended up being a failure. However, it started a fascination with Egyptian culture in Europe.

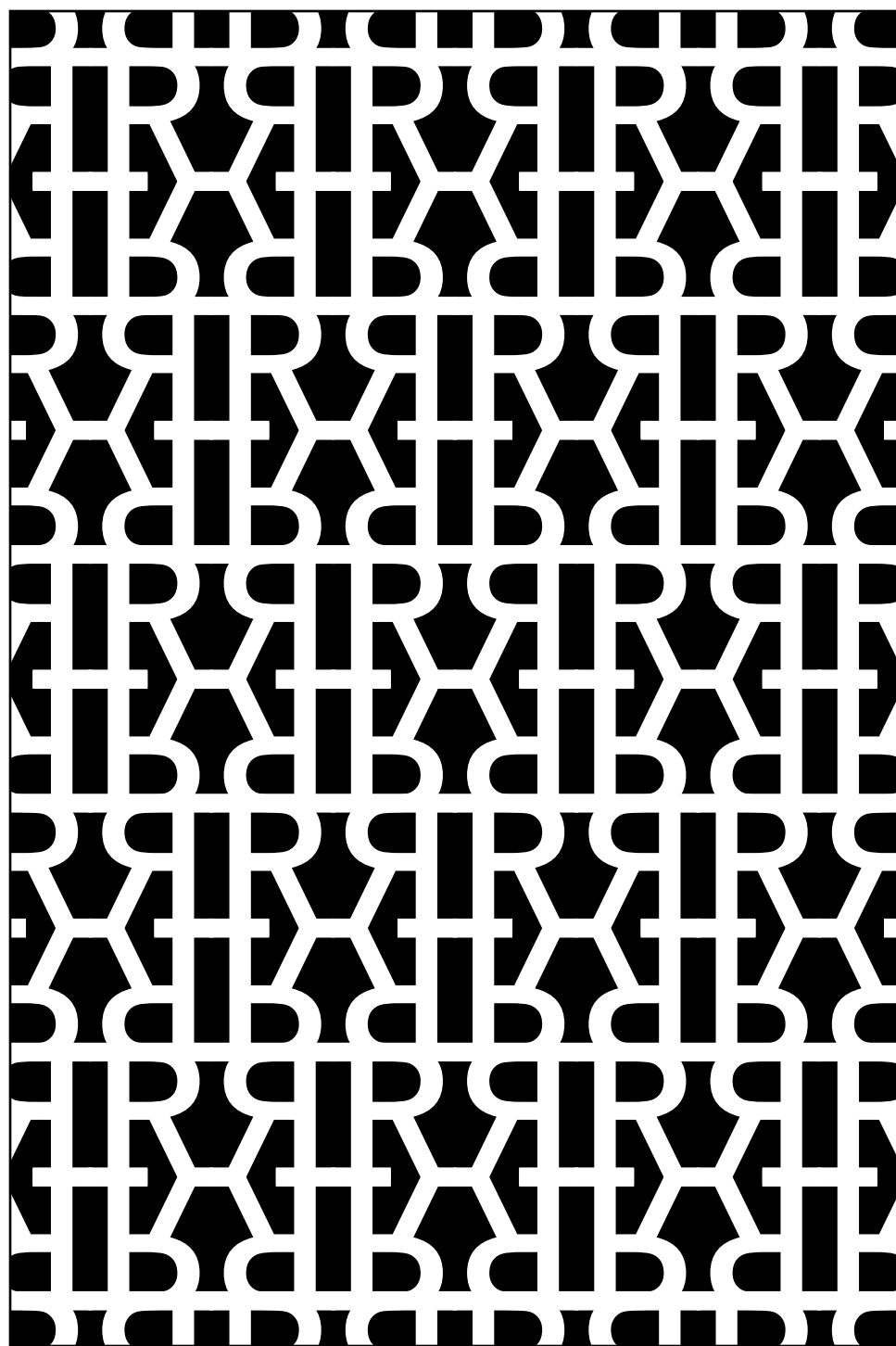
Slab serifs arrived in the beginning of the 19th century during the First Industrial Revolution. During this time, the use of typography became mechanised and new ways of communication appeared. Therefore, competition started in the world of design and new typefaces were created. Slab serifs were called *Egyptian* typefaces, although they had no connection with Egypt in their style.







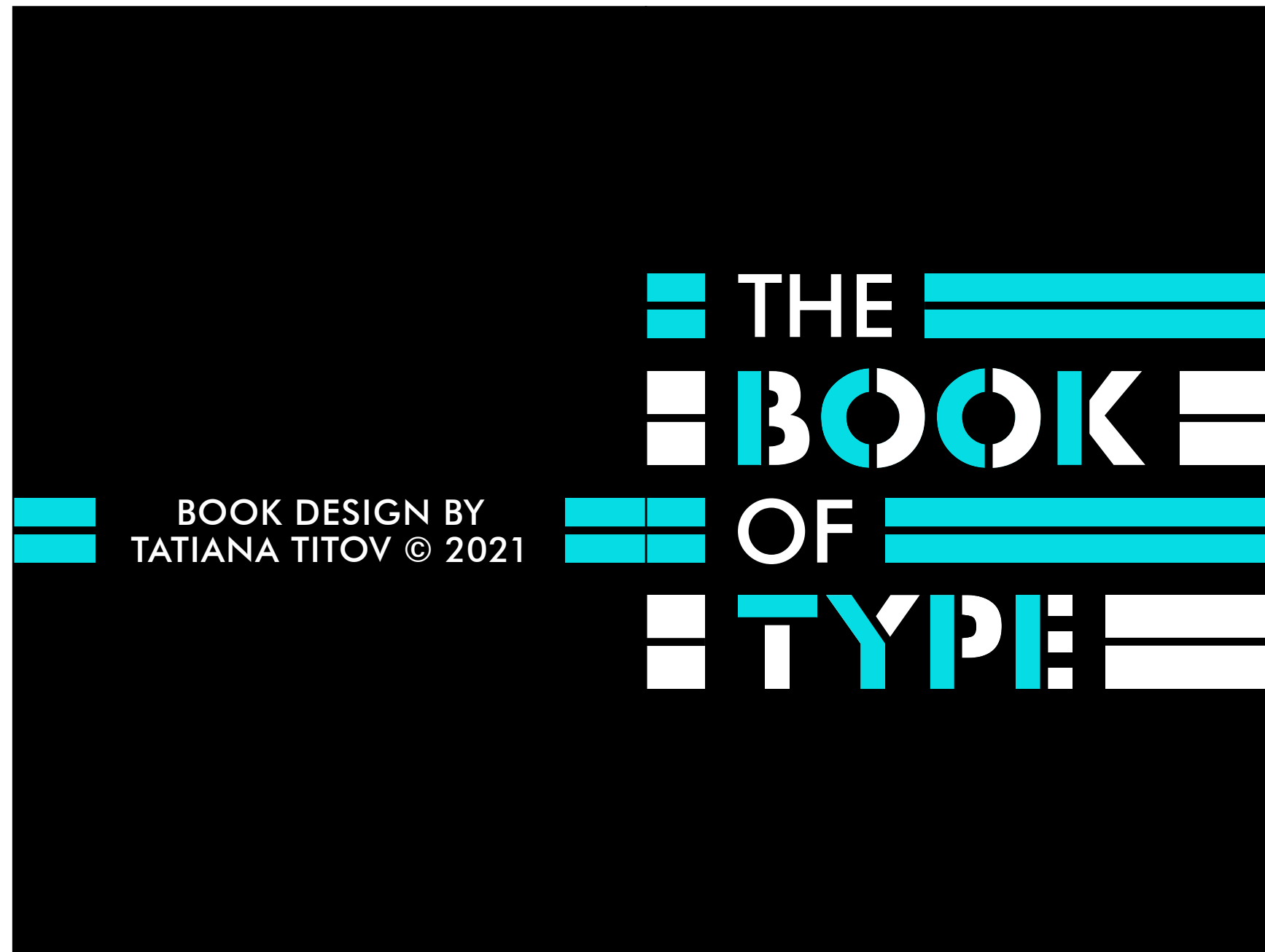




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Final Design - The Book

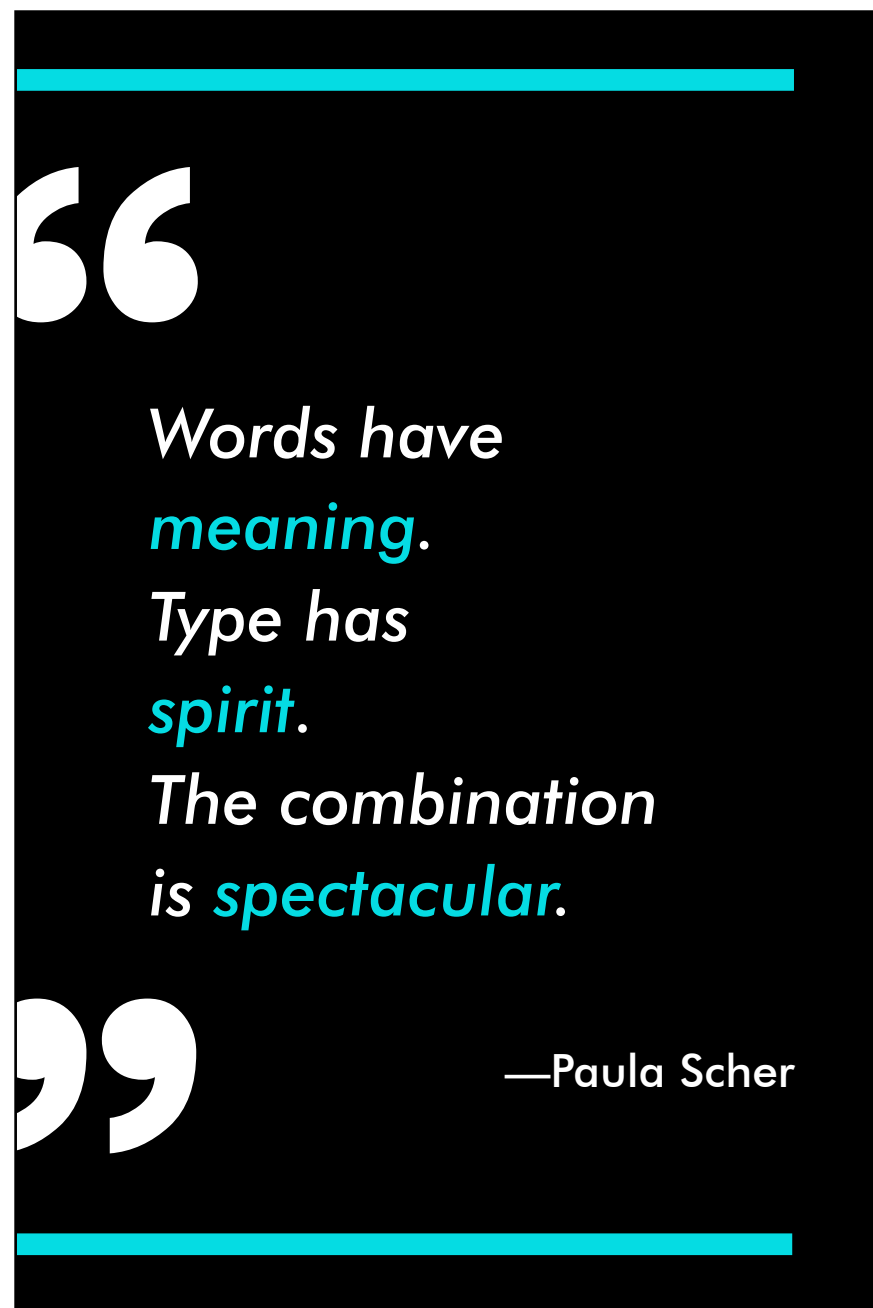
Back and Front Covers



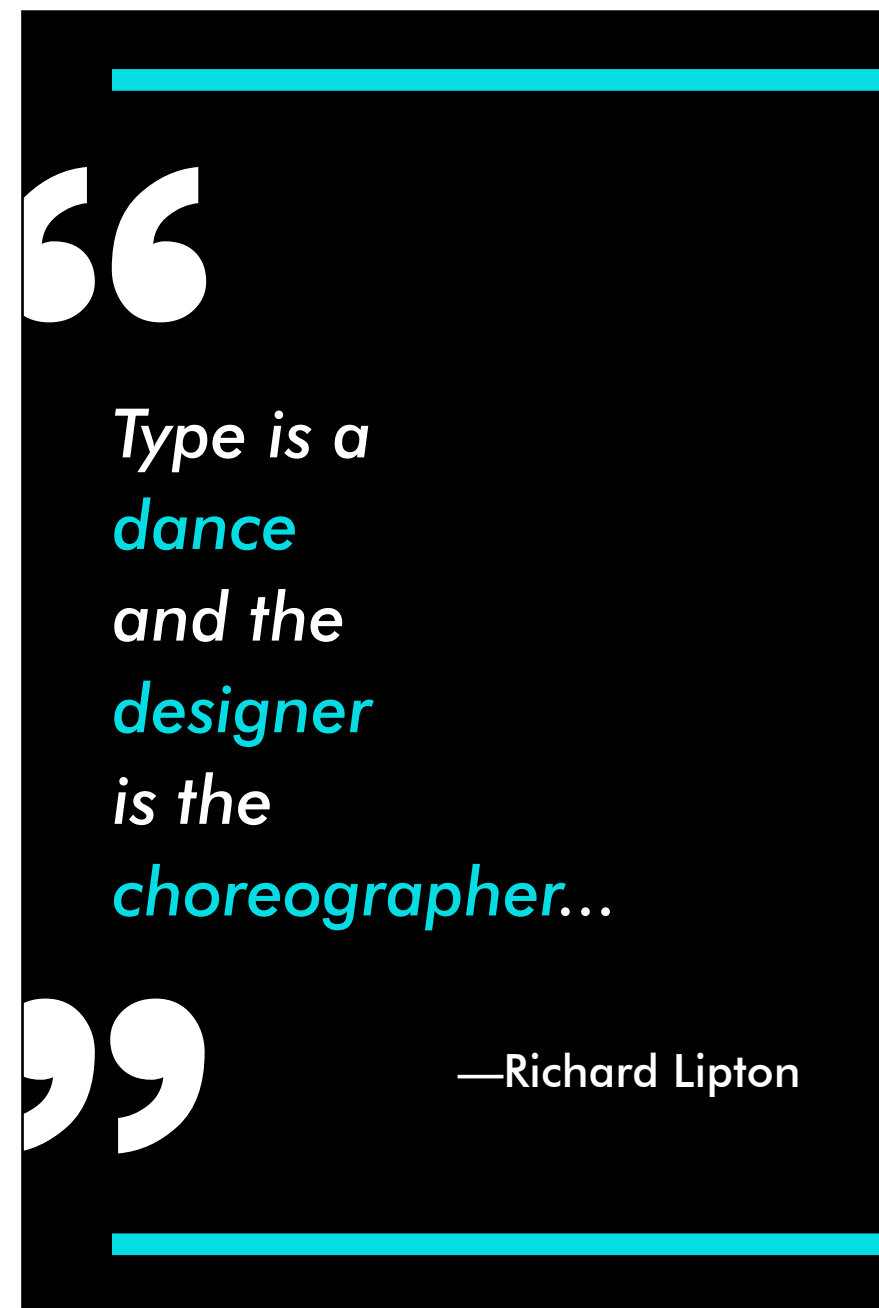
Description and Table of Contents

PARTICIPANTS	
<p>This project is a collaboration between students in the Design program at Concordia University. Each student researched a typeface that was randomly assigned to them. Individual presentations of research were created and brought together in this book.</p>	Blackletter — J. Arthur Ramonda
	Clarendon — Ainaz Nejat
	Akzidenz Grotesk — Max Thomas
	Cooper Black — Sasha Rouzier
	Futura — Anastasia Statsenko
	Times — Aseel El Hariri
	Rockwell — Tatiana Titov
	Optima — Kazem Hashemi
	Helvetica — Shannon Marcoux
	Ocr-A — Andrea Gamboa Araiza
	Chicago — Thalia Carrasco Ospina
	FF Meta — Paloma Rojas-Linares
	Comic Sans — Antoine Léger
	Myriad Pro — Delphine Mignot
	Mrs. Eaves — Kevin Barone
	Verdana — Ethan Irwin
	Gotham — Ankiné Apardian
	Open-Dyslexic — Elisabeth Bureau

Page Before the Signatures



Page After the Signatures



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Fact Sheet

I started the project by creating a fact sheet. There, general information about Rockwell and its characters are presented.

Rockwell

The Designer

Frank Hinman Pierpont

Short Biography

Frank Hinman Pierpont was an engineer and a type designer from the United States. In 1894, he moved to Berlin. In 1899, he moved to England and became the manager of the Monotype Corporation, a company that specializes in type design. He was born in 1860 and he died in 1937.

Design Characteristics

It is a geometric slab serif with a large x-height. It has thick serifs and short ascenders and descenders. It can be used in texts, but it is mainly used for display.

History

Its base is the Litho Antique typeface. In 1934, it was used by the Monotype Corporation, lead by Frank Hinman Pierpont, to be redesigned as Rockwell.

Context

Slab serifs were created in the early 19th century during the Napoleonic era. Rockwell was created during the second development of slab serifs. It was during the Second Industrial Revolution.

Similar Typefaces

Memphis, Karnak and Geometric Slabserif 703.

Sources

Cullen, Kristin. *Design Elements, Typography Fundamentals: A Graphic Style Manual for Understanding How Typography Affects Design*. Beverly, Rockport Publishers, 2012.

Cunningham, Jonathan. "Rockwell." *Meaningfultype.com*, 2013, www.meaningfultype.com/rockwell.html. Accessed 1 Feb. 2021.

Fox, Maddie. "Rockwell: A Typographic Book." *Issuu*, 12 Dec. 2019, issuu.com/umich759/docs/final_reader_pages. Accessed 1 Feb. 2021.

"Rockwell®." *Fonts.com*, www.fonts.com/font/monotype/rockwell/story. Accessed 1 Feb. 2021.

Romano, Frank J. "Napoleon and the Courier Font." *CreativePro Network*, 4 Aug. 2008, creativepro.com/napoleon-and-courier-font/. Accessed 1 Feb. 2021.

Strizver, Ilene. *Type Rules!: The Designer's Guide to Professional Typography, Third Edition*. Hoboken, Wiley, 2010.

Tam, Keith. "The 'Revival' of Slab-Serif Typefaces in the Twentieth Century." *TypeCulture*, 2003, typeculture.com/academic-resource/articles-essays/the-revival-of-slab-serif-typefaces-in-the-twentieth-century/. Accessed 1 Feb. 2021.

Tselentis, Jason, et al. *Typography, Referenced: A Comprehensive Visual Guide to the Language, History, and Practice of Typography*. Beverly, Rockport Publishers, 2012.

ABCDEFGHIJKLM

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abcdefghijklmn

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opqrstuvwxyz

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Visual Influences

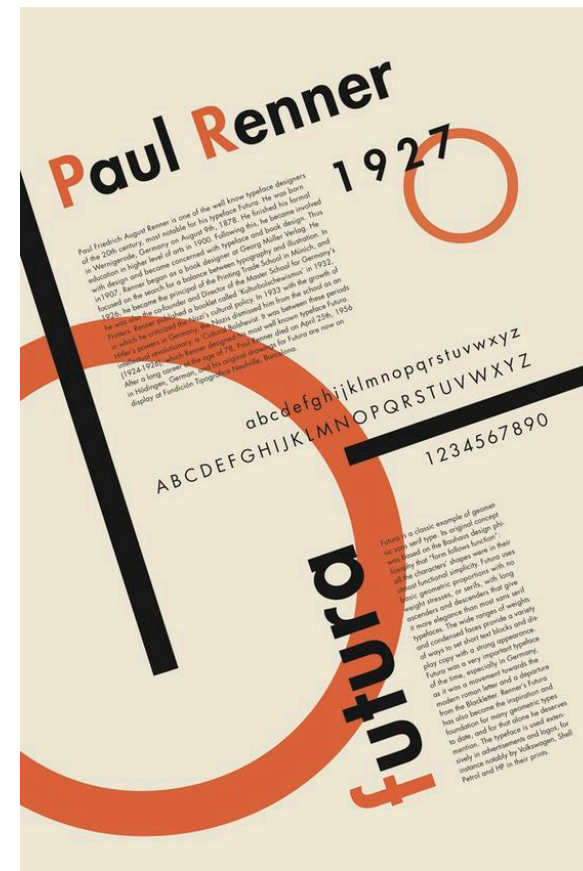
For inspiration, I was mainly looking at examples of modernism, Bauhaus and other geometric designs, since Rockwell was created when these elements were popular in design and they complete the style of the typeface well.



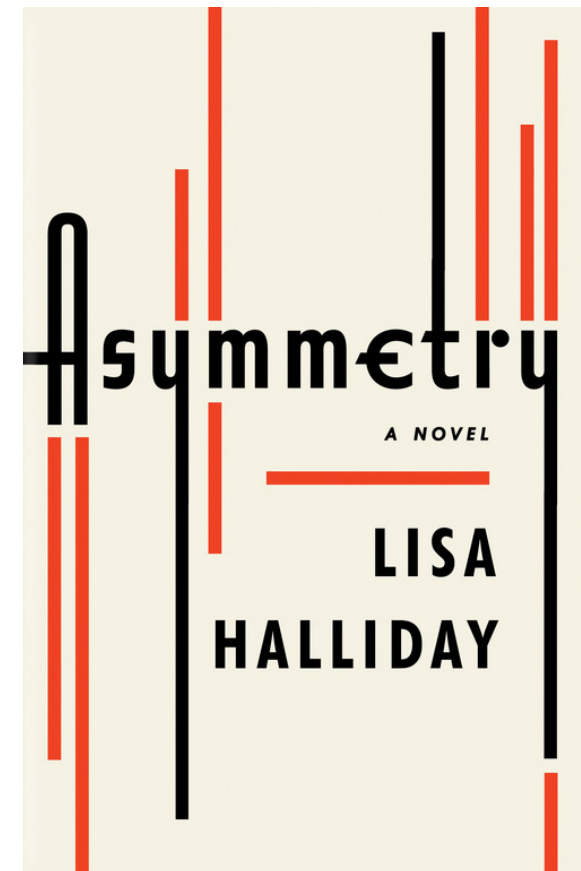
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Source

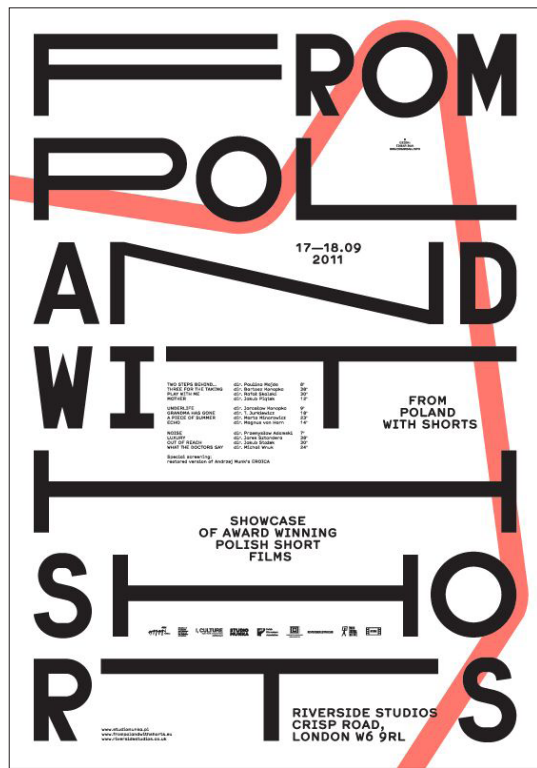


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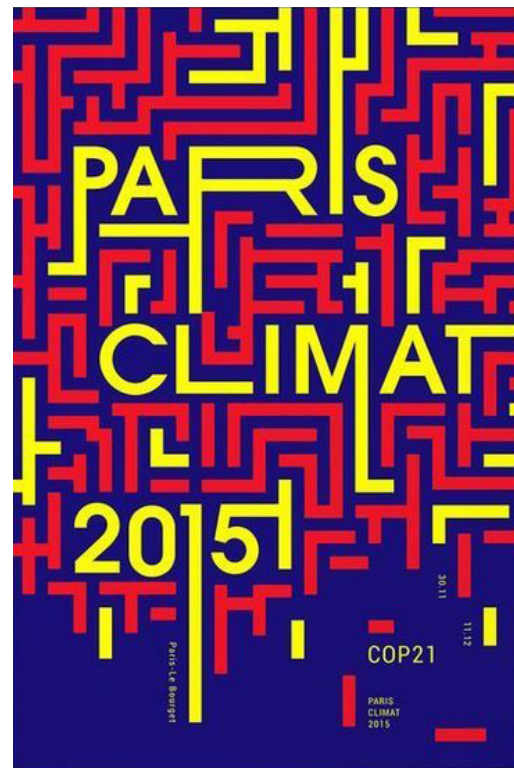


Source

I have looked at designs (mostly posters) that use diagonal grids and/or continuous lines.



Source



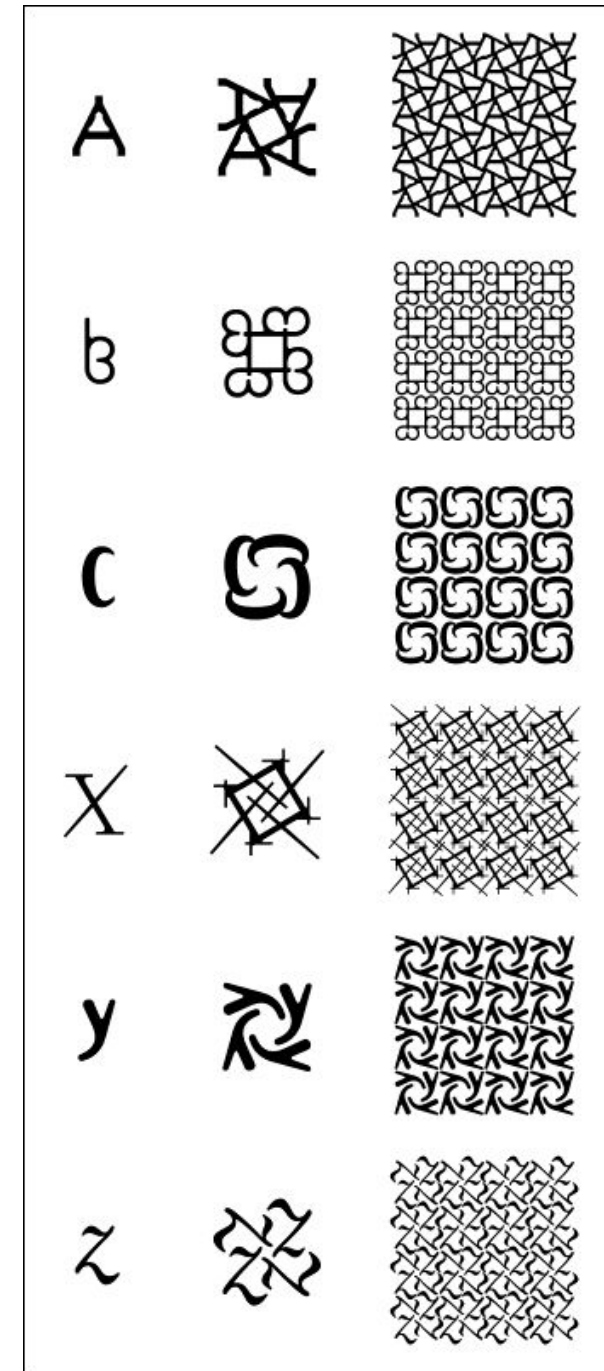
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I looked for ways to explore the characters of typeface.

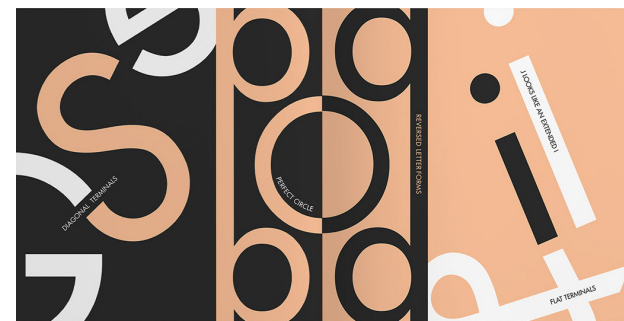
I looked at book designs and other inspirational projects for the book cover.



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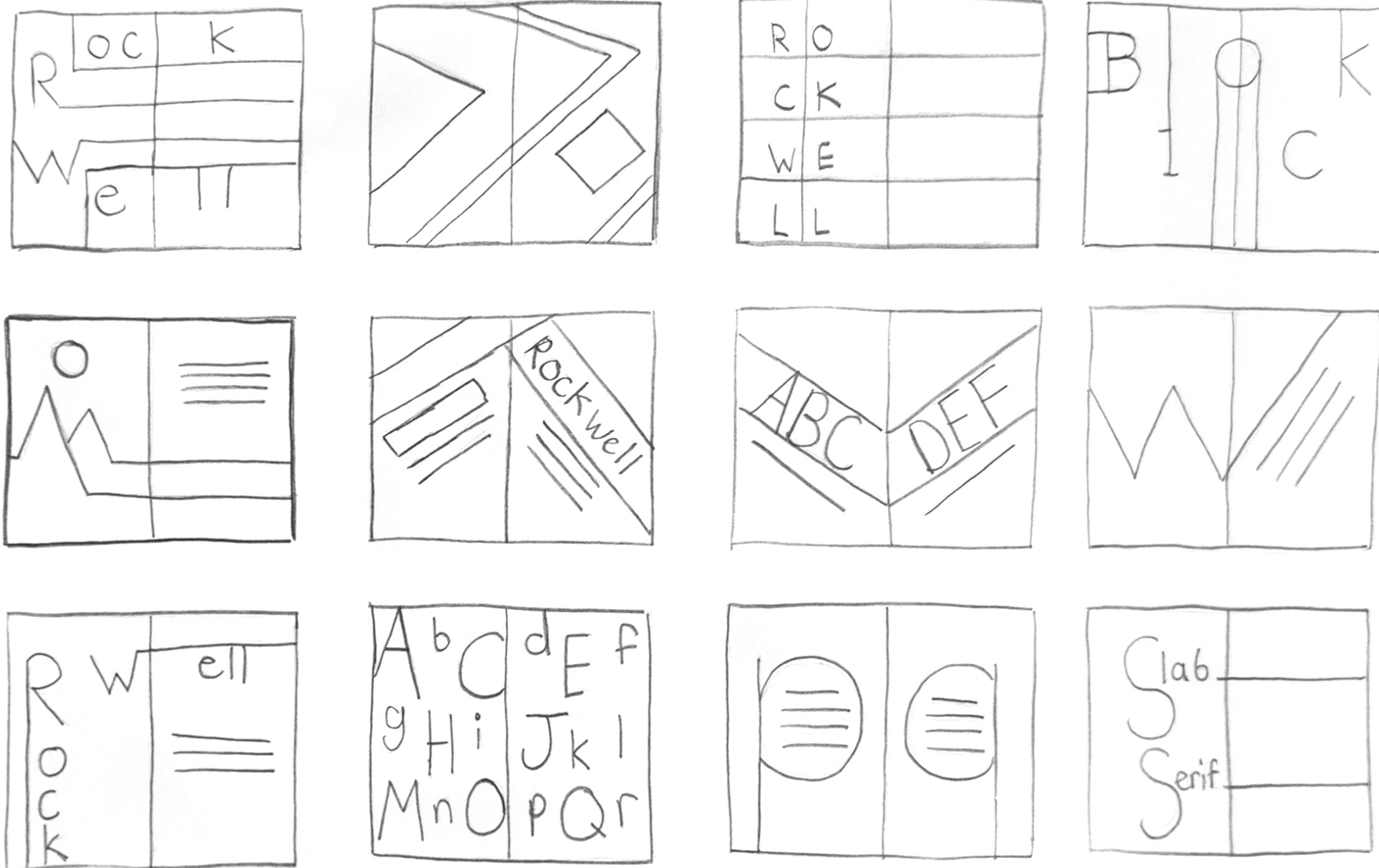


Source

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Initial Ideas

I started by sketching out some ideas for possible designs of the spreads.
I explored the size of the letters, diagonal grids and continuous lines.



Based on the sketches, I created two concepts with three spreads each. In the first one, I focused on creating continuous lines with a classic black and white colour scheme with yellow.



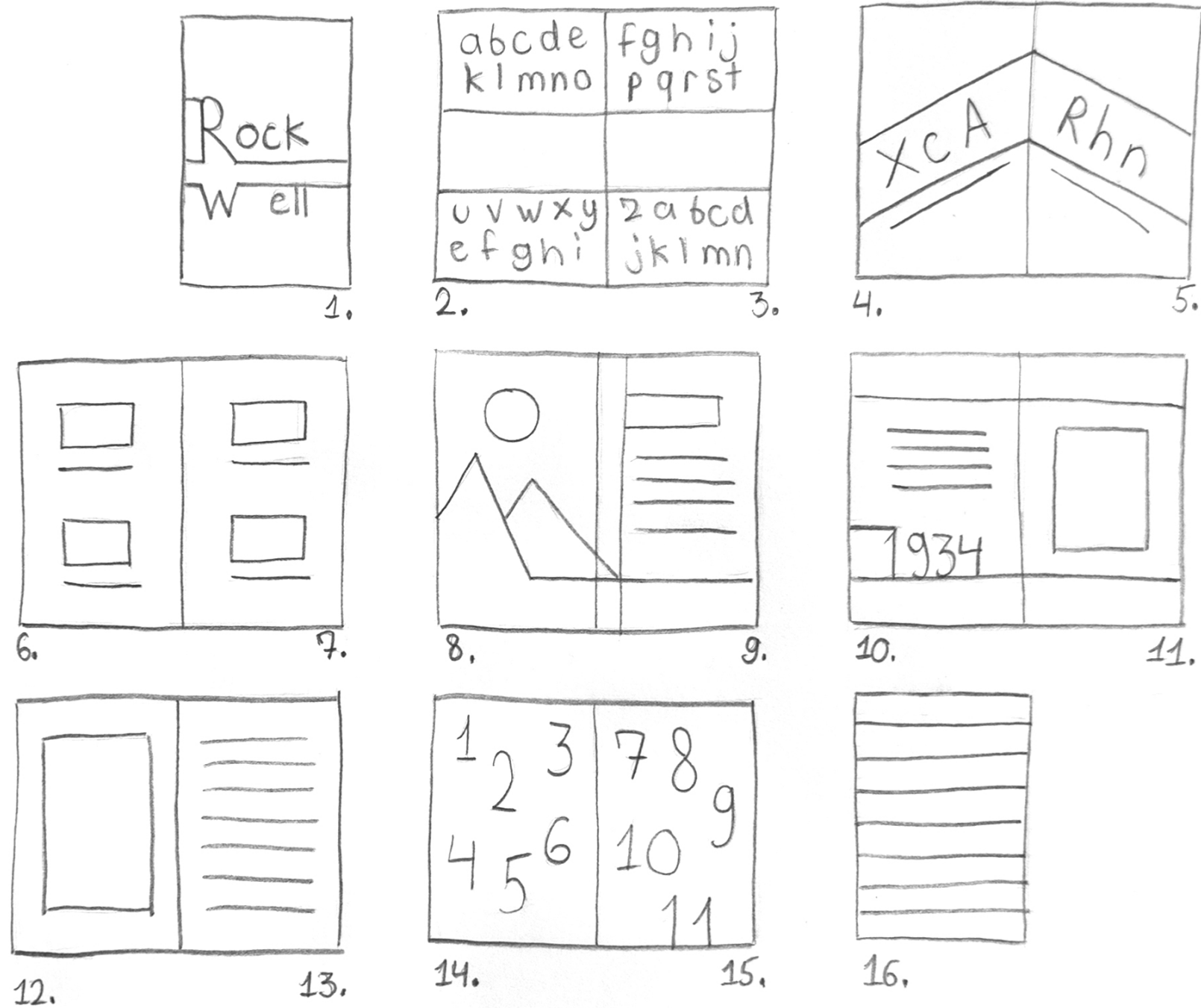
In the second concept, I focused on exploring diagonal grids and I decided to have a coloured background. In the end, I chose to work on the first concept for the book, but I reused some elements of the second concept.



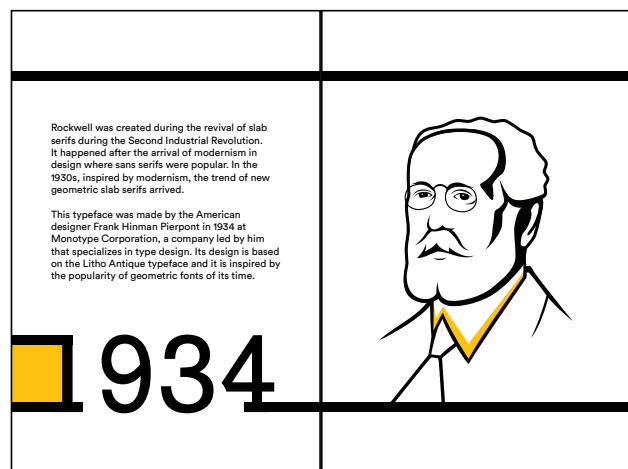
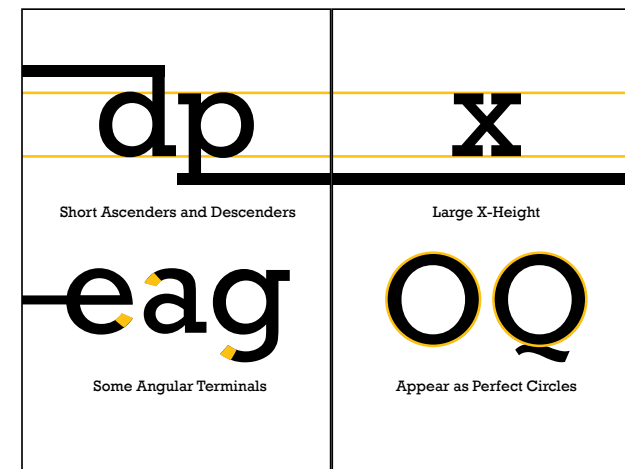
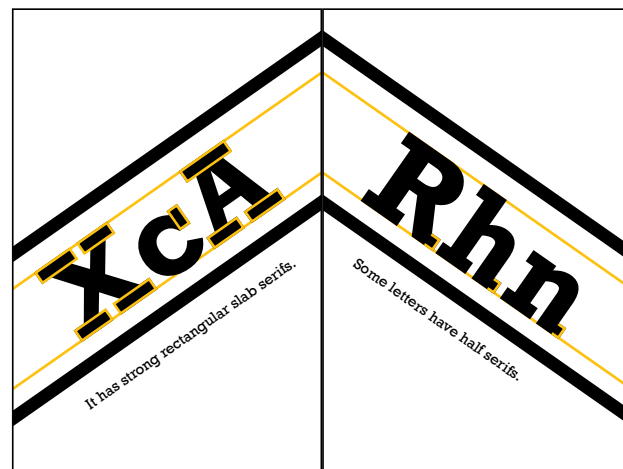
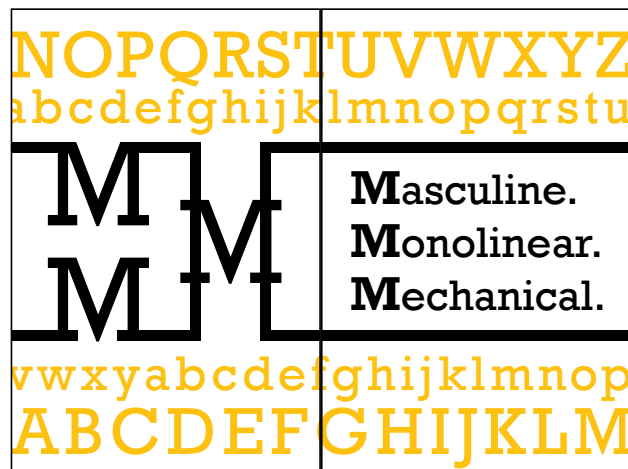
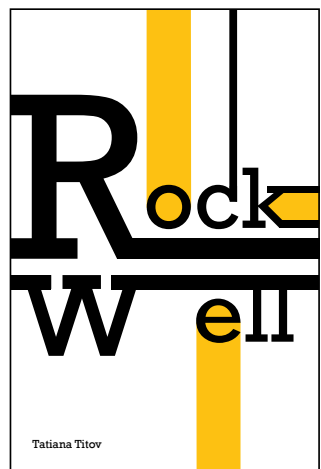


Concept Development

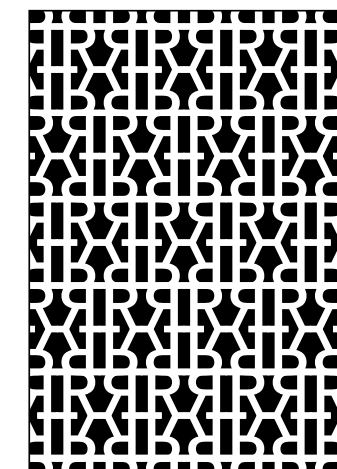
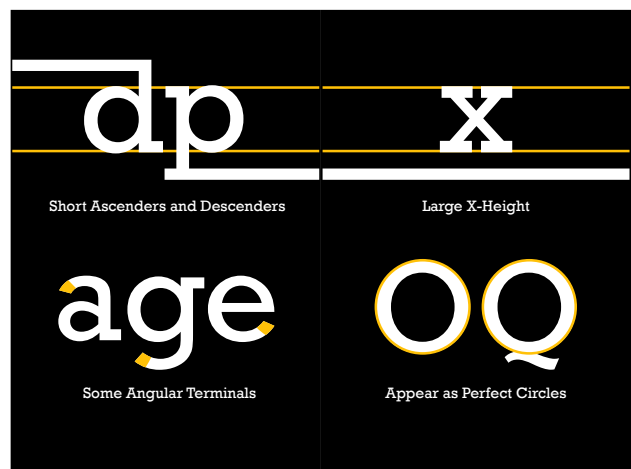
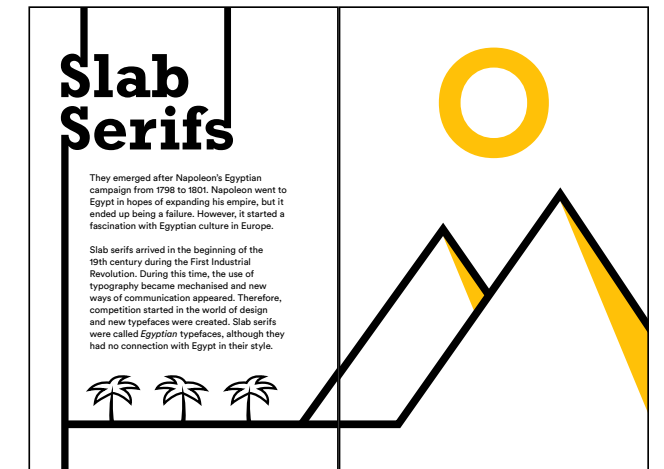
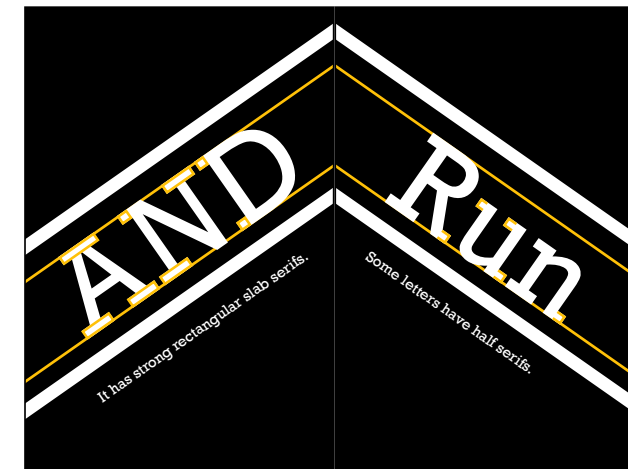
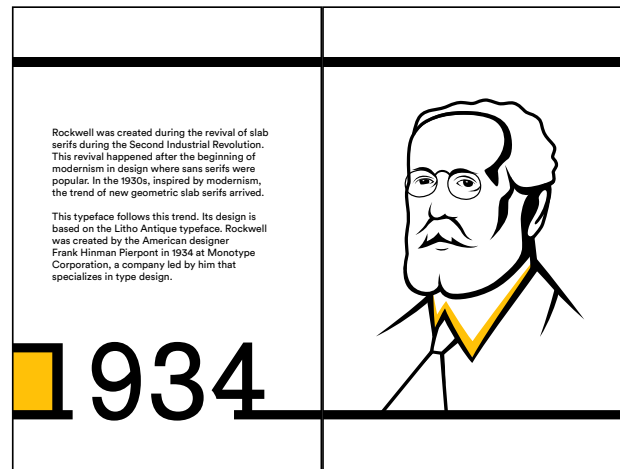
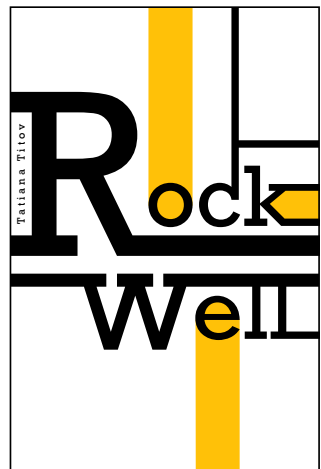
At first, I wanted to present the typeface in the following way: its characteristics at the beginning and its history at the end. I created sketches to visualise this idea:



However, after refining my concept, I wanted to add more diversity between pages. To do this, I decided that some pages would have a black background. Some spreads worked better in black than others, which forced me to change the order of my spreads.



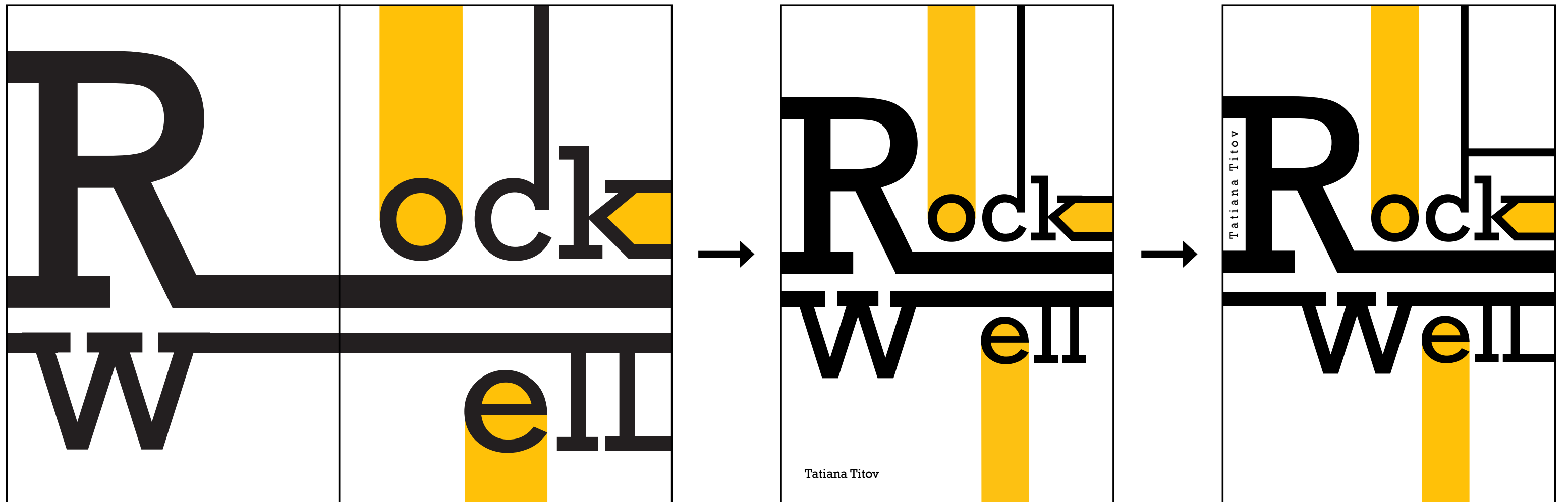
In the end, the spreads alternate between black and white backgrounds. The black spreads show the characteristics of the characters of the typeface and the white spreads present information about its creation and its use.



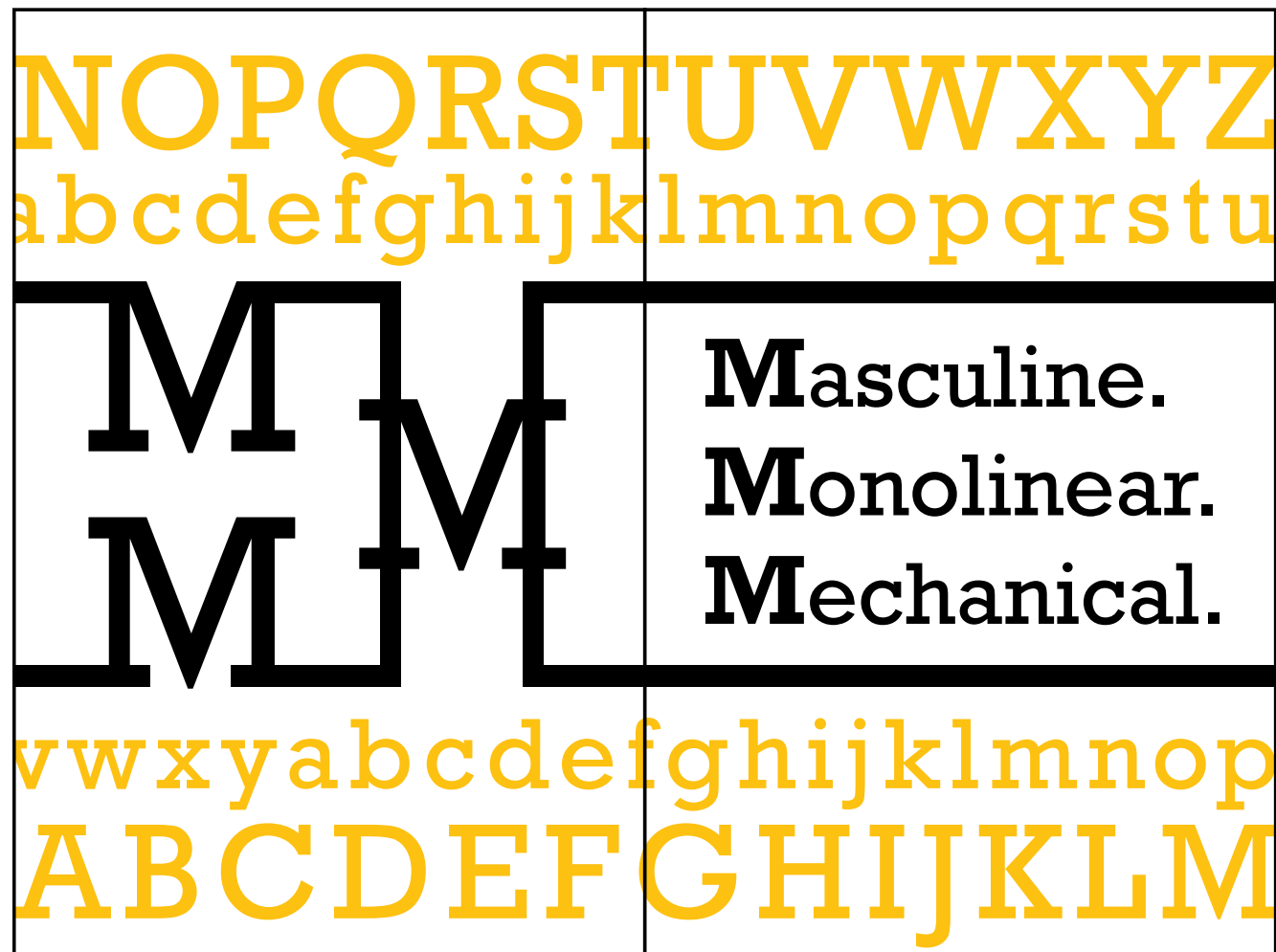


Development of the Pages

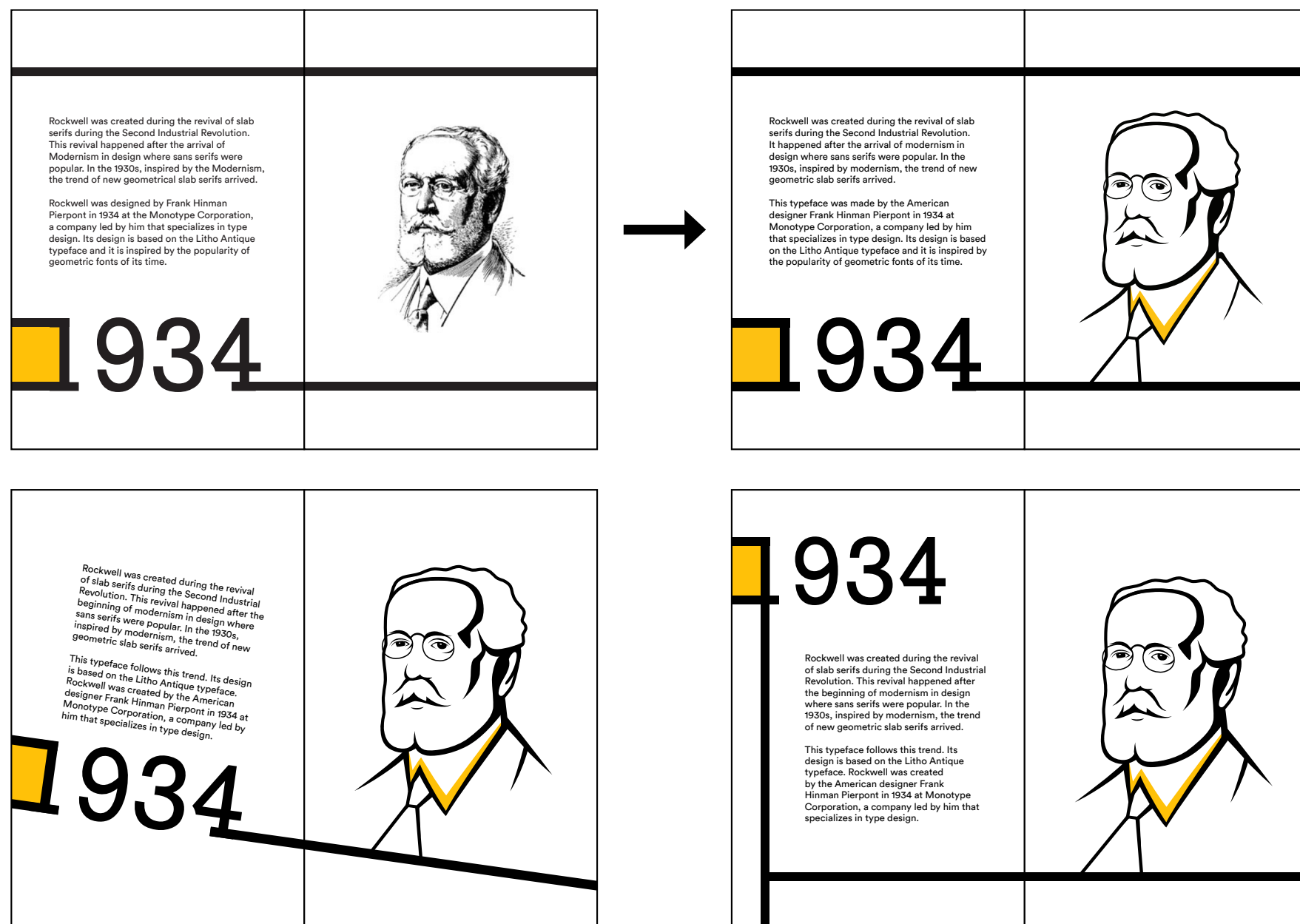
I started by having the cover as a spread in my proposal document. Then, I transformed it into a single page. In the final design, I added lines to it that continue on the next spread. It was the first spread I designed, and I decided to play with the slab serifs of Rockwell to create continuous lines with the letters.



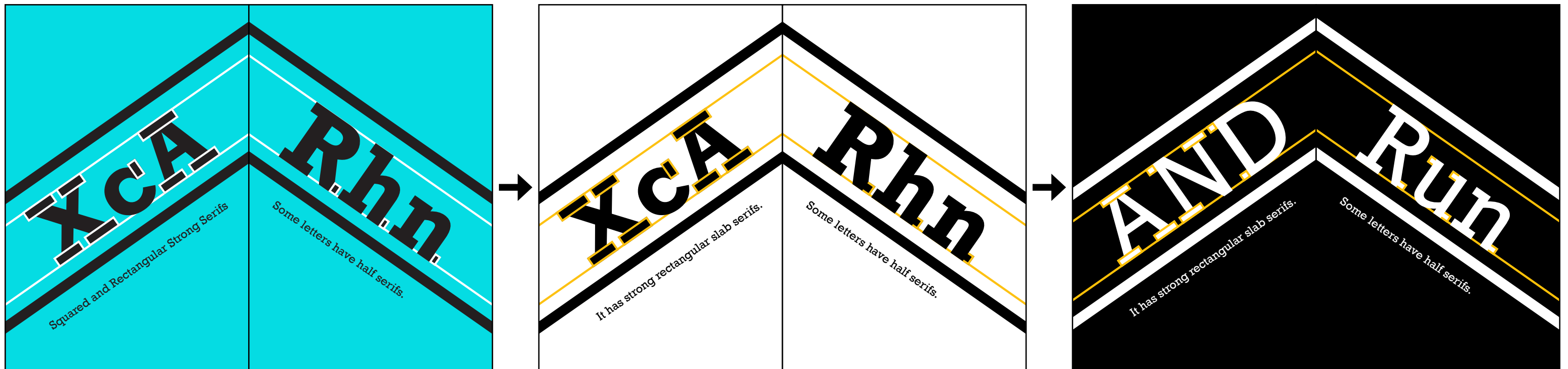
In this spread, I wanted to show the alphabet while also expressing the characteristics of the typeface.



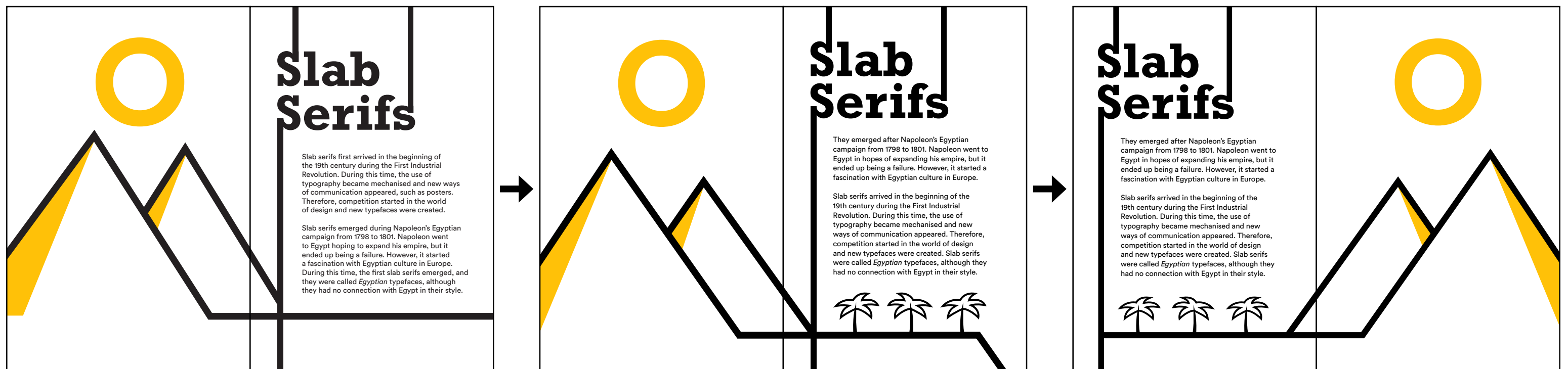
I decided to create a vector illustration of Frank Hinman Pierpont, the creator of Rockwell. Between my proposal and my final version of the signature, I tried different layouts for the history of the typeface, but I ended up choosing the one that resembles the proposal the most.



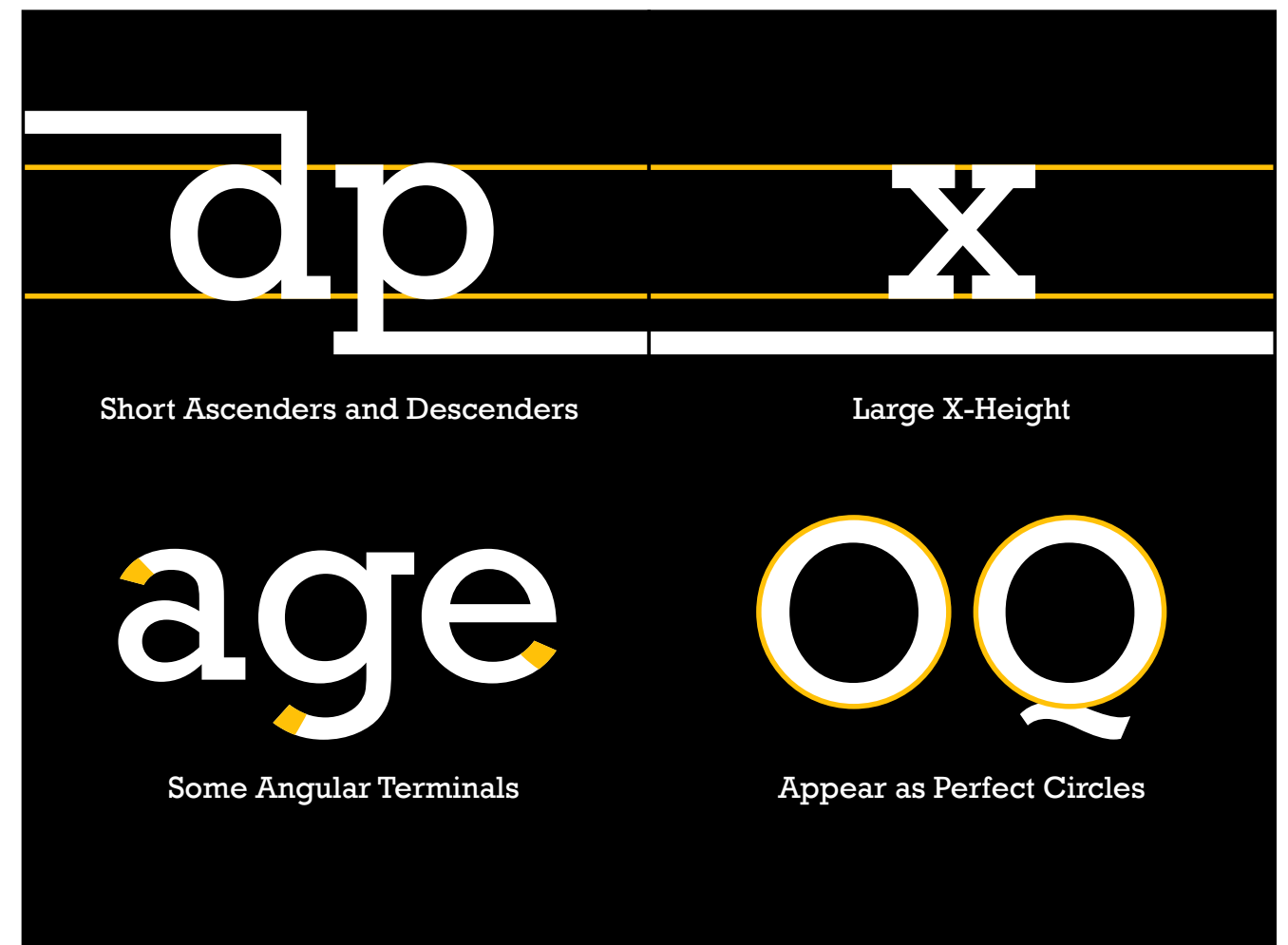
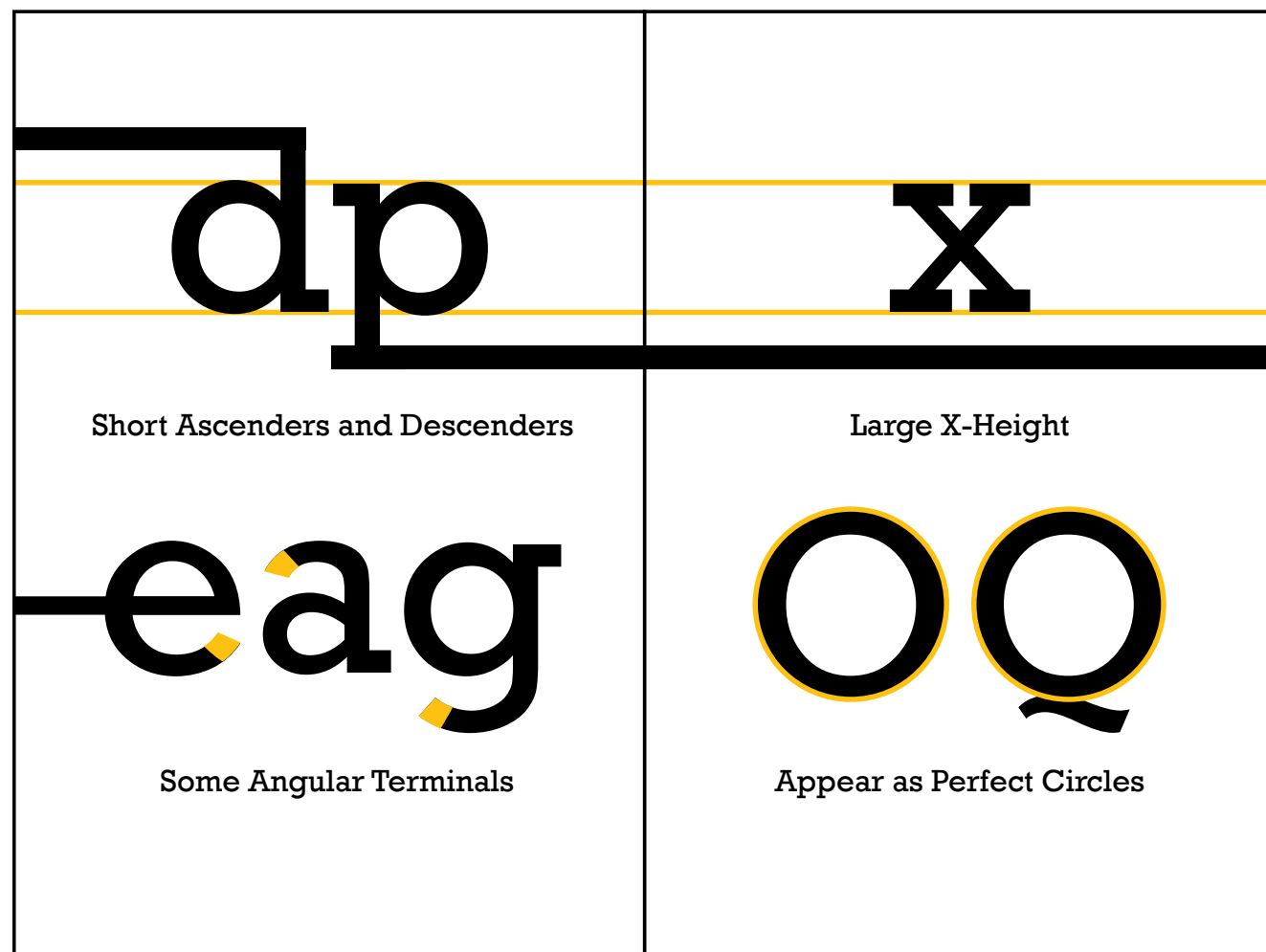
The spread where I present the slab serifs of Rockwell is reused from the second concept of my project proposal. For the final version of this spread, I changed its background to black and I transformed the letters into real words.



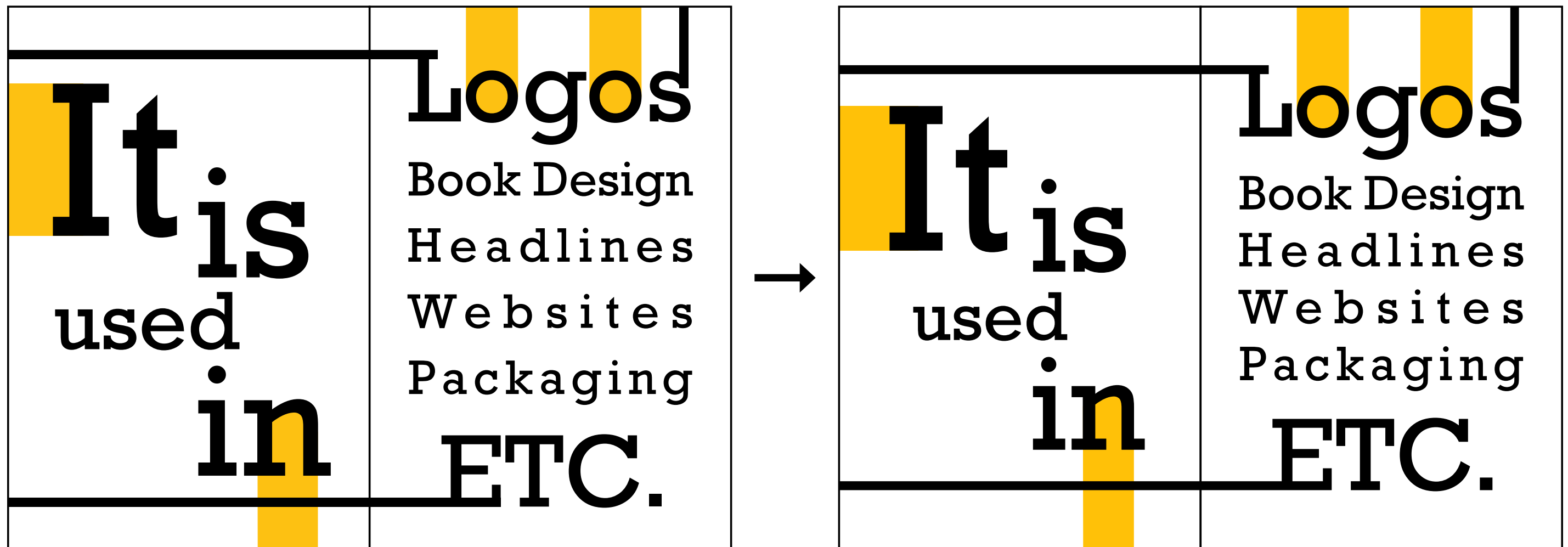
The spread about the history of slab serifs was in the proposal in the first place. During the development the project, I decided to add illustrations of palm trees to remind the illustration of Frank Hinman Pierpont. I created the sun with the letter O of Rockwell. In the final design, to avoid having five lines connecting in one place, I swapped the left page with the right page.



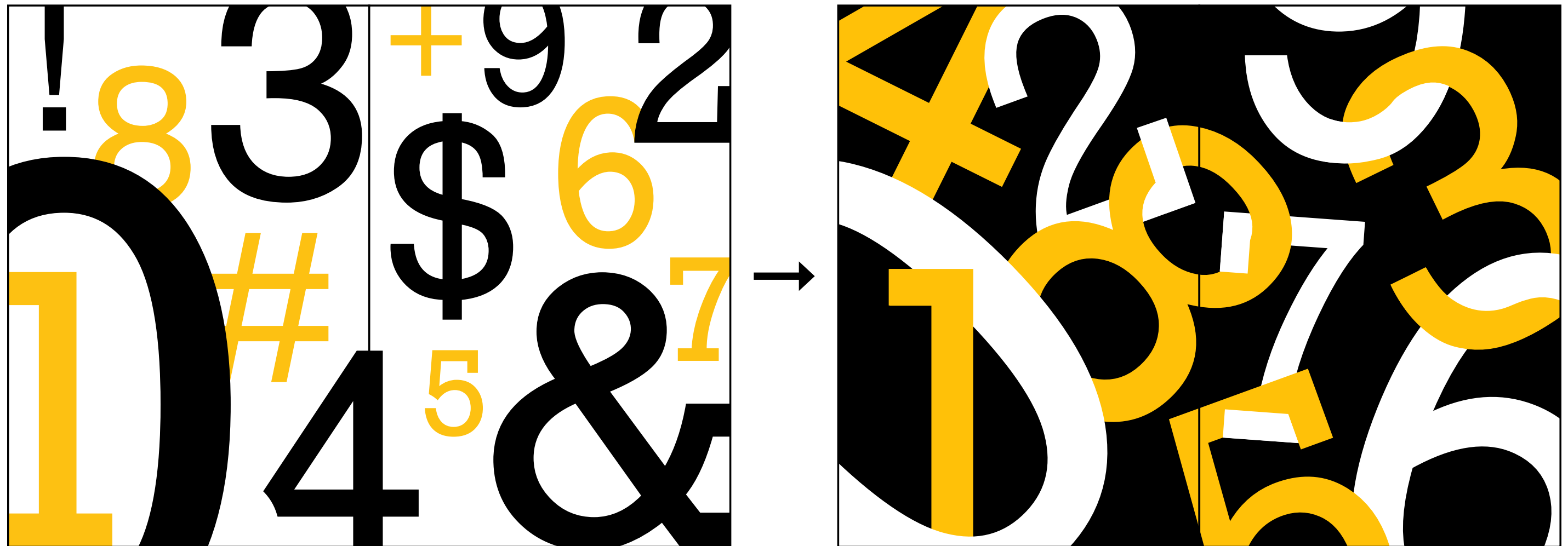
In the pages that show the specific characteristics of Rockwell, I decided to change their background to black and I transformed the letters “eag” into a real word.



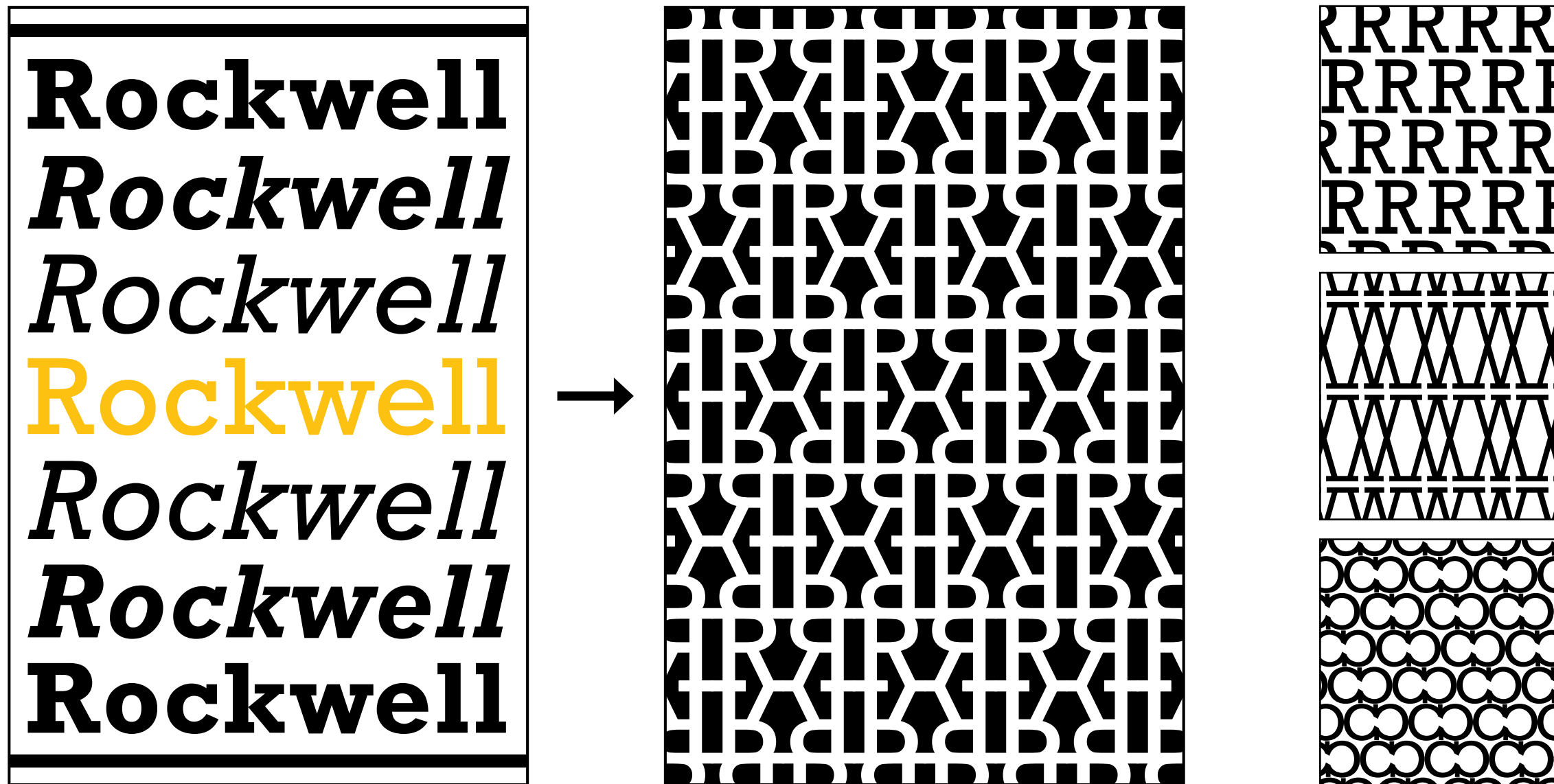
This spread is the one that has changed the least. In the final signature, I slightly moved a few lines to make them more consistent with the previous spread.



In the beginning, the last spread had numbers and special characters that were static. I decided to make these pages more dynamic by intertwining and rotating the numbers.



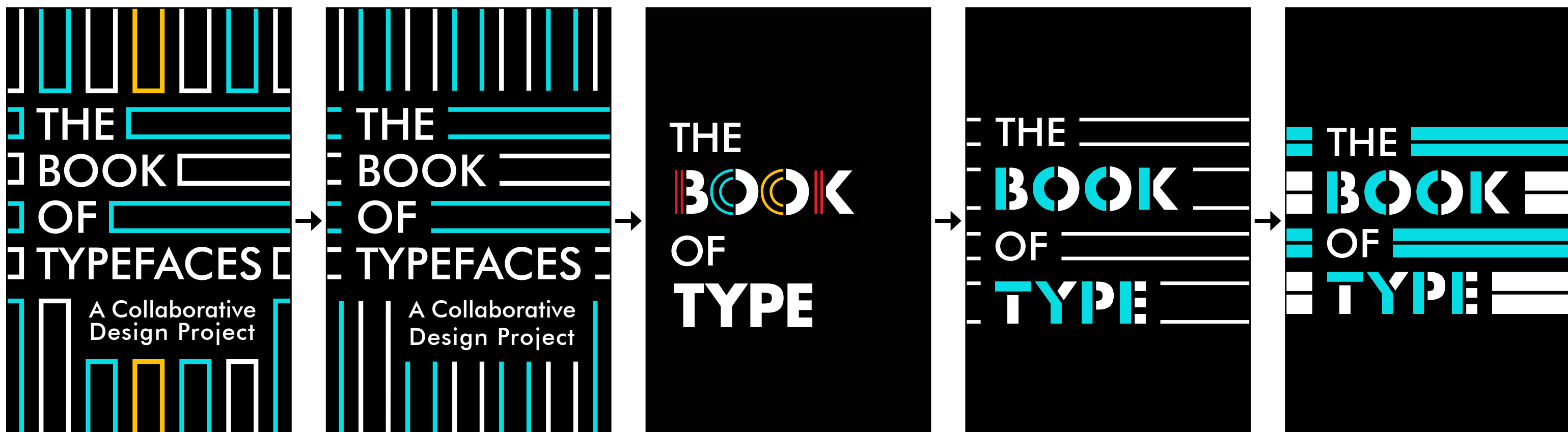
At first, the last page of the signature showed the various versions of Rockwell. However, I decided to explore how letters can be made into patterns, so I ended up creating a pattern with the letter *R*.





Development of the Book

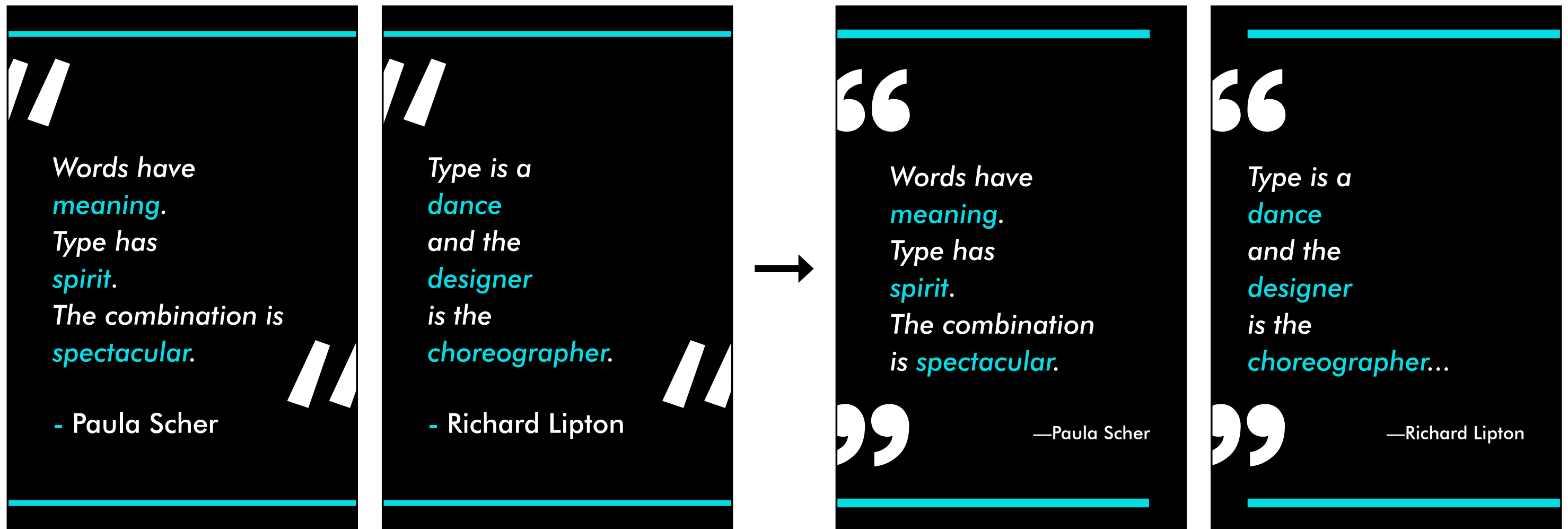
For the cover of the book, I wanted to keep the look of continuous lines that I already had in the Rockwell signature. However, after I created the first covers, the large number of lines made them look heavy, so I started exploring another idea for the cover where I use geometric shapes. I used the blue colour from the second concept of my project proposal.



The spread on the left was created based on the early designs of the book cover. I made a few changes to it so that it has lines similar to the ones in the final version of the cover.



The pages around the signatures have quotes about typography.



As the project progressed, the back cover became simpler.



A thick yellow vertical bar runs along the left edge of the page.

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