

New fiction by Jonathan Safran Foer, who won the Guardian First Book Award this week

About the Typefaces Not Used in This Edition

ELENA, 10 POINT: This typeface — conceived of by independent typographer Leopold Shunt, as the moon set on the final night of his wife's life — disintegrates over time. The more a word is used, the more it crumbles and fades — the harder it becomes to see. By the end of this book, utilitarian words like *the*, *a* and *was* would have been lost on the white page. Henry's recurrent joys and tortures — *bathwater*, *collarbone*, *vulnerability*, *pillowcase*, *bridge* — would have been ruins, unintentional monuments to bathwater, collarbone, vulnerability, pillowcase and bridge. And when the life of the book dwindled to a single page, as it now does, when you held your palm against the inside of the back cover, as if it were her damp forehead, as if you could will it to persevere past its end, *God* would have been nearly illegible, and *I* completely invisible. Had Elena been used, Henry's last words would have read:



Jonathan Safran Foer

how hard the key is pressed. Air-conditioning blows its story over the keys, as does the breath of a bird on the sill, as does the moonlight whose infinitesimally small exertion also tells a tale. Even when there is nothing applying pressure to the keys, a text is still being generated — an invisible transcript of the world without witnesses. And if one were to hammer the keyboard with infinite force, an infinitely large nonsense word would be produced.

If this book had been typeset in Tactil, Henry's various *I love yous* could have been distinguished between narcissistic love ("I love you"), love of love rather than love of another ("I LOVE you"), and traditional, romantic love ("I love YOU"). We could have learned where Henry's heart leaned when on the unsafe wooden bridge he confessed himself to Sophy. And we could have learned if it is true that one can love only one thing at a time, making I love you definitionally impossible.

Tactil was not used because preliminary calculations suggested that the author was striving — intentionally or not — to recreate the physical world. That is, *tree* was typed with the force to make the word as large as a tree. *Pear*, *cumulus* and *Band-Aid* typed to make the words to the

scale of a pear, a cloud and a Band-Aid. To print the book in this way would have required bringing another world into existence, a twin world composed entirely of words. We finally would have known the sizes of those abstract ideas whose immeasurability makes us, time and time again, lose our bearings. How does existentialism compare to a tree? Orgasm to a pear? A good conversation to a cumulus cloud? The mending of a gnarled heart to a Band-Aid?

But even if logistics had permitted, this typeface still would have been rejected, because as a quantitative, rather than qualitative, measure, it could have been quite misleading. That is, Henry's love for Sophy may have been the size that it was because of hate, sympathy, jealousy, neediness or, however unlikely, love. We would never have known, only that there was much of it, which is to know very little.







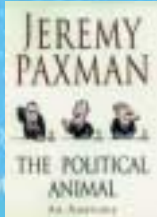
TRANS-1, 10 POINT: This typeface refreshes itself continuously on the screen, words being replaced by their synonyms. *Now autumn begins* exists only for long enough to bring *present fall commences* into existence, which instantly disappears to make room for *gift descend embarks*, which dies

so that *talent alight boards ship* can live. TRANS-1's creator, IS Bely (1972-), said that he hoped the typeface would illuminate the richness of language, the interconnectedness, the nuance of the web. But instead, TRANS-1 reveals language's poverty, its inadequate approximations, how a web is made of holes, how the river of words flows always away from us.

TRANS-2, 10 POINT: This typeface also refreshes continuously, but unlike TRANS-1, words are replaced by their antonyms. *Now autumn begins* exists only for long enough to bring *later spring ceases* into existence, which instantly disappears to make room for *presently dry riverbed persists*, which dies so that *never flowing water perishes* can live. It was Bely's intention, with TRANS-2, to illuminate the poverty of language, its inadequate approximations, how a web is made of holes. But instead, we see the string connecting those holes, and caught in the net is the shadow of meaning. This typeface frequently freezes in place, fixed on words that cannot be refreshed. What, after all, is the opposite of God? The meaning is liberated from the words by the typeface's inability to translate them. These nonexistent antonyms are the reflections of the words we are looking

TACTIL, VARIABLE POINT: "A text should reveal the heart's emotional condition, as an EKG readout reveals its physical one." This idea was the inspiration for Basque typographer Clara Sevillo to create Tactil, a good example of the early interface types. The size of a letter corresponds to

PHOTOGRAPH: LISA CARPENTER

							
£26.00 £20.00	£14.99 £13.99	£20.00 £16.00	£14.99 £13.99	£7.99 £5.99	£18.99 £14.99	£9.99 £7.99	£20.00 £17.00

BOOKS etc.
Thousands of gift ideas. Each one unique.

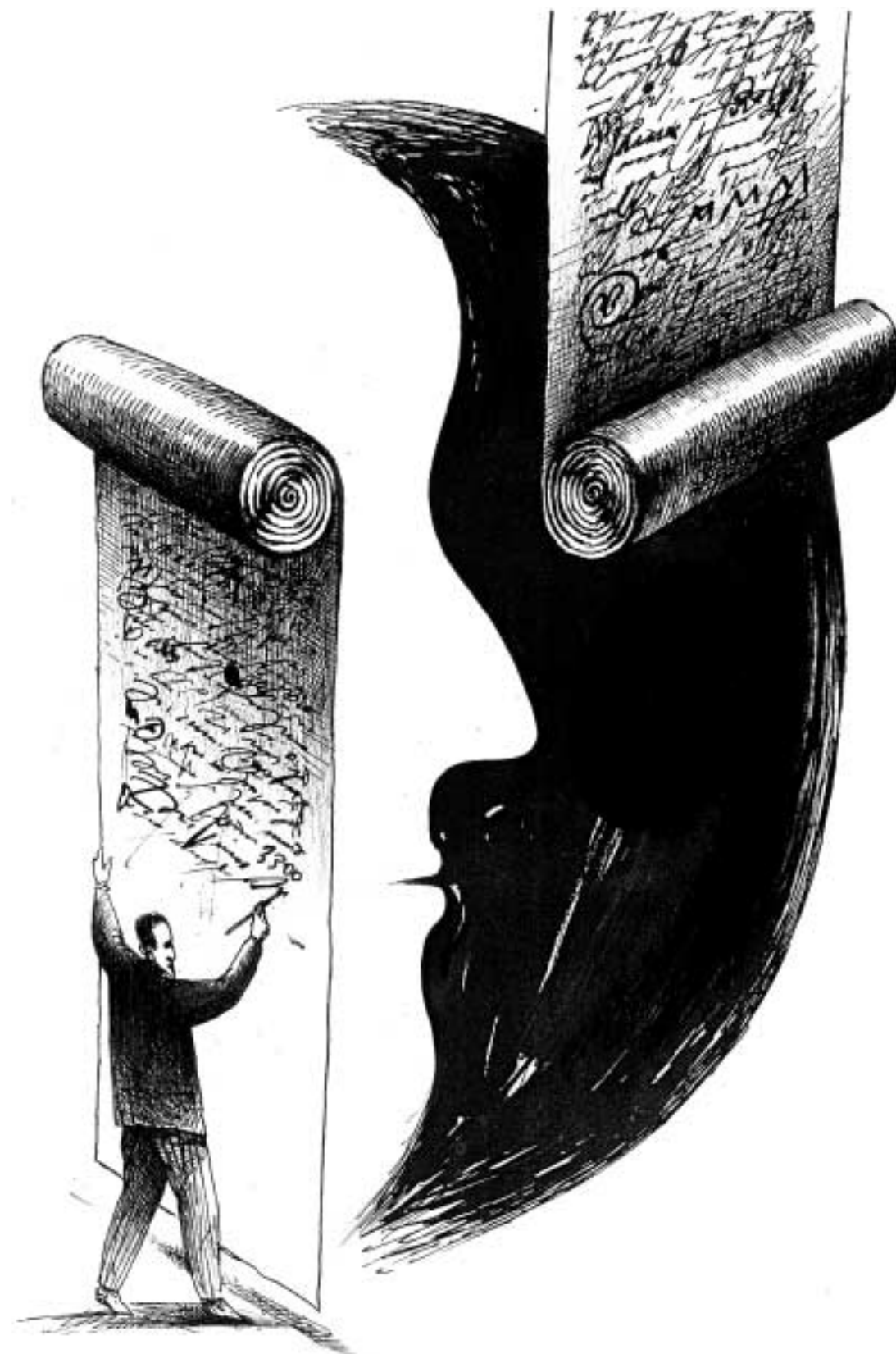
For store locations see www.booksetc.co.uk

for, the non-approximations, like watching a solar eclipse in a puddle. The antonym of God's non-existent antonym is closer to God than *God* will ever be. Which, then, brings us closer to what we want to communicate: saying what we intend, or trying to say the opposite?

TRANS-3, 10 POINT: This typeface also refreshes continuously, but unlike Trans-1 and -2, words are replaced by themselves. *Now autumn begins* exists for only long enough to bring *now autumn begins* into existence, which instantly disappears to make room for *now autumn begins* which dies so that *now autumn begins* can live. A word, like a person, exists for exactly one moment in time. After that moment, only the letters — cells — are shared. What *autumn* meant when uttered by Stephen Wren in Cincinnati at 10:32:34 on April 14, 2000, was quite different from what it meant one second later when he said it again, and was entirely unlike what it meant one hundred years before, or one thousand years before, or at the same moment, when cried by a palsied school-girl in Wales. This typeface tries to keep pace with language, to change as the world changes, but like chasing the long black cape of a fleeing dream, it will never catch up. *Now autumn begins* will never mean what it does, but what it did.

AVIARY, VARIABLE POINT: One of the more unorthodox typefaces of the end of the twentieth century, Avairy relies on the migration of birds. The typesetter, who is preferably an ornithologist, tattoos each word onto the underside of a different bird's wing, according to its place in the flock. (The first word of this book, *Elena*, would have been tattooed onto the wing of the natural leader. The last word, *free*, onto the wing of the bird who carries the rear.) Alexander Dubovich, Avairy's creator, said his inspiration was a copy of *Anna Karenina* that fell from the shelf and landed spread, text-down, on the floor.

Among many other reasons, this typeface was not used because the order of birds in a flock shifts regularly. The natural leader never remains the leader, and the bird in the rear always moves forward. Also, Avairy is only coherent when the birds are in flight. When perched in trees, or collecting the thrown scraps from some kind park goer, or sleeping on the sills of high apartment windows, the birds are in disarray, and so would be the book. It



could exist only in flight, only between places, only as a way to get from here to there. Or there to here.

ICELAND, 22:13:36. APRIL 11, 2006, VARIABLE POINT: There are 237, 983 words in this book. The same number of people were alive in Iceland at 22:13:36, April 11, 2006. The designer of this typeface, Bjorn Jaagern, devised to give each person a word to memorise, according to age. (The youngest citizen would be given *Elena*, the oldest *free*.) In an annual festival, the people of Iceland would line up, youngest to oldest, and recite the story of Henry's tragic love and loss, from beginning to end. As citizens died, their roles in the recitation would be given to the youngest Icelander without a word, although the reading would still proceed from youngest to oldest. It was the hope of the citizens of Iceland that the book would cycle smoothly: from order to disorder, and back to order again. That is, *Let our fathers and mothers die before their children, the old before the young*.

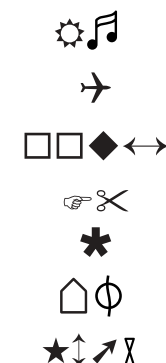
Iceland, 22:13:36, April 11, 2006, was not used because life is full of early death,

and fathers and mothers sometimes outlive their children. The editor's concern was not that the book would become a salad of meaning, but that hearing it once a year would be too painful a reminder that we are twigs alighted on a fence, that each of us is capable of experiencing not only Henry's great love, but also his loss. Should a child recite a word from the middle — from the scene in which Henry's brother stuffs up the cracks with wet towels, and loses his lashes in the oven — we would know that he or she replaced someone who died in middle-age, too soon, before making it to the end of the story.

REAL TIME, REAL WORLD, TO SCALE: This typeface began organically, with the popularisation of e-mail. Such symbols as :) came to stand for those things that words couldn't quite get at. Over time, every idea had a corresponding symbol, not unlike the drawings from the dark caves of early man. These symbols approximated what a word described better than a word ever could. (A picture of a flower is closer to the flower it describes than *flower* is.)

Here, for example, is how the final con-

versation between Henry and his brother would have read in such symbols:



And here is the scene on the unsafe wooden bridge, when Henry confesses himself to Sophy:



The evolution continued. The typographical symbol for flower (☼) became a sketch of a flower, then an oil painting of a flower, then a photograph of a flower, then a sculpted flower, then a video of a flower, and is, now, a real-time real-world flower. Henry exists: he blinks, he inhales, he tells his older brother, *I love you more now than I did before*, he stammers, he sways, he begs, *Sophy, believe in me, always*.

This typeface was not used because of the fear that it would be popularised, that all books would be printed in real-time real-world, making it impossible to know whether we were living as autonomous beings, or characters in a story. When you read these words, for example, you would have to wonder whether you were the real-time real-world incarnation of someone in a story who was reading these words. You would wonder if you were not the you that you thought you were, if you were about to finish this book only because you were written to do so, because you had to.

Or perhaps, you think, it's otherwise. You approach this final sentence because you are you, your own you, living a life of your own creation. If you are a character, then you are the author. If you are a slave to your own weaknesses, then you are unconstrained. Perhaps you are completely free.

Jonathan Safran Foer's novel *Everything Is Illuminated*, which won the Guardian First Book Award, is published by Hamish Hamilton, price £14.99. To order a copy for £12.99 plus p&p call Guardian book service on 0870 066 7979.

ILLUSTRATION:
ZYGUMUNT JANUSZEWSKI

Skyrim Special Edition. Mods. User Interface. Font Overhaul - Natural Typefaces for Skyrim -- FONTS. Font Overhaul - Natural Typefaces for Skyrim -- FONTS. Endorsements. 3,305.Â Installation Just use your favorite mod manager or drag and drop contents of the archive directly into your Skyrim data folder. Fully supports NMM install. Changelog V1.3 - Fixed text being cut off or rescaled in the UI. Adjusting spacing between lines of text in all fonts. Enhanced immersion. V1.2 - Added support for French, Italian, German, and Spanish. Accentuated immersive properties. V1.1 - Fixed bug with base game where the vanilla font was used when "Handwritten Bold" was applied to any book text, regardless of bindings in fontconfig.txt. Improved immersion. V1.0 - Initial Rel I still love how the Guardian used to look before their 2005 redesign, using Miller, very industrial, bold and tightly spaced Helvetica, and surprising amounts of white space for a newspaper. Jonathan Safran Foer's 2002 parody of pretentious font writing is still, perhaps appropriately, one of the few pieces of the way it used to look hanging around as a pdf. It's still linked from an odd corner of the Guardian's website that I'm not sure is supposed to still exist. The heading is the display optical.Â The Guardian's banner used to be an attention-grabbing contrast of Garamond and Helvetica, created by David Hillman in 1988. The Garamond I've seen called ITC Garamond, and while close the 'T' isn't quite the same "custom redraw to match Helvetica's x-height? Implicit in Fred Smeijers's best known typefaces, Quadraat and Renard, and explicit in his 1996 book Counterpunch, are arguments for a more rigorous, craft-centered approach to type design. Building on his research into the methods of sixteenth century punchcutters, Smeijers has not only advocated forgotten practices, but has shown with his type designs how these ideas, when applied, can yield impressive results.Â Renard, which was first used to set the text of Smeijers's book and has more recently been offered for sale, is a masterful revival of a late-1500s type that was one of the earliest of the so-called "Dutch taste" romans. Renard "One" roman enlarged from 10½ pt, scanned from a 1997 broadside specimen.