

# FUTURA

A Type Specimen Explored by Keira Wight

# HISTORY

DATE **1927**

DESIGNER **Paul Renner**

LOCATION **Germany**

POPULAR USE **Ikea, Volkswagon,  
Louis Vitton, Costco,**

*Stanley Kubrik's 2001: A Space Odyssey, Wes Anderson's The Royal Tenenbaums, and the historical plaque on the Apollo 11 lunar module "Eagle."*

In 1927, Paul Renner designed a geometrically-based sans serif font for the Bauer Type Foundry of Frankfurt, Germany. This sans serif was made in response to the geometric typeface released in 1922 by Jakob Erbar of the Bauhaus school of design. Renner believed he could design a better sans serif typeface.

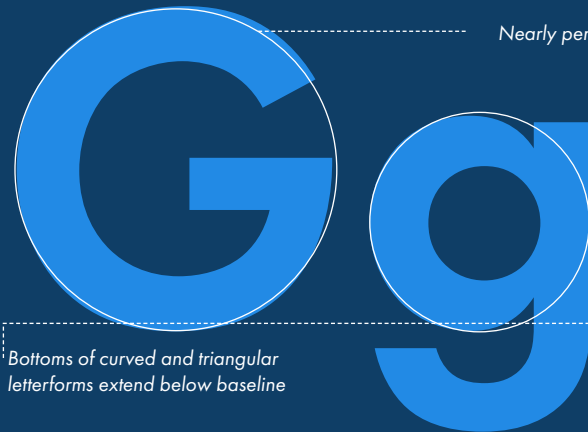
Although Renner's designs were heavily adjusted by the Bauer Type Foundry, the philosophies of his designs (which reflected many ideologies of the Bauhaus school) remained. The resulting typeface was strongly geometric, with near-perfect circles, triangles and squares as its foundation. Characters featured mostly-even strokes. This simple, yet powerful typeface achieved global notoriety for three reasons:

1. The Bauer Type Foundry, based in Germany, established an office in New York to build business in the American markets. The economic prosperity that occurred after World War I bolstered the type business.
2. Futura's simplicity inspired many rip-off versions and imitations, which further spread the font's reach and unintentionally marketed the original typeface.
3. Futura's simplicity was easy to use for clear communication. Thus, Futura was the primary typeface for widespread and important use such as wartime communications throughout WWII and the sign for the Apollo 11 mission to the moon.

light A B C D  
 book E F G H  
 medium I J K L M  
 demi N O P Q  
 heavy R S T U V  
 extra bold W X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l m  
 n o p q r s t u v w x y z

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Nearly perfect circular forms

Bottoms of curved and triangular letterforms extend below baseline



Ascenders rise above cap height

Nearly-perfect square forms



Isoscoles triangle based forms

# BEWARE;

for I am FEARLESS,  
and therefore  
POWERFUL.

— Mary Shelley

**“Travel changes you.**  
As you move through this life  
and this world you change things  
slightly, you leave marks behind,  
however small. And in return,  
life - and travel - leaves marks  
on you. Most of the time, those  
marks - on your body or on  
your heart - are beautiful.  
Often, though, they hurt.”

— Anthony Bourdain

Be

**INDEPENDENT**

and be a  
**LADY.**

—Ruth Bader Ginsberg,  
U.S. Supreme  
Court Justice

**kafkaesque**

adjective

Kaf·ka·esque | \ käf-kə -'esk

: of, relating to, or suggestive of Franz Kafka or his writings especially : having a nightmarishly complex, bizarre, or illogical quality

ONLY GATSBY, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction—Gatsby who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn. If personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away. This responsiveness had nothing to do with that flabby impres-

sionability which is dignified under the name of the “creative temperament”—it was an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person, and which it is not likely I shall ever find again. No—Gatsby turned out alright at the end; it is what preyed upon Gatsby, what foul dust floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and short-winded elations of men.

“That is the part of the beauty of all literature. You discover that your longings are universal longings, that you’re not lonely and isolated from anyone.

**You belong.**

— F. Scott Fitzgerald

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