# FF DIN Round

## digital block letters

A brochure about the history of round sans serif typefaces and the development of FF DIN Round.

by Albert-Jan Pool

D.R.P

**Preface**

soft family
technical ◊ hand soap
«human sportswear»
disco ! daily
basic + household appliances
● female oil ●
friendly ≈ pudding
→ medicine ! budget ←
ff din round

Is there any type designer who would be better qualified to construct a rounded DIN than Albert-Jan Pool? It's safe to say no. There are three reasons for it.

First of all, FF DIN is "his typeface". For almost 20 years, Pool has dedicated himself to the history of German standard lettering with scientific ambitions, and in 1995 he created the FF DIN basic weights. To this day, he has been combing through museums, archives, and studios to learn everything about this category of typefaces.Today, even the German Institute for Standardization (DIN) in Berlin relies on his expertise.

Secondly, Pool is a perfectionist. He realized long ago that his internationally popular FF DIN would be incomplete without a rounded version. That it has taken so long was due to his own quality requirements. More than 5 years Pool worked on DIN Round again and again dismissing countless intermediate stages. With the active support of FSI FontShop International he eventually managed to complete the family.

Finally, Albert-Jan Pool originates from a type talent hotbed as it no longer exists today. He grew up with the Ikarus type design and production software, developed by Hamburg-based physicist Dr. Peter Karow in 1975 and introduced at ATypI in Warsaw for the first time. In the eighties, practically all typefaces from foundries such as Linotype, Berthold, ITC, or Monotype were vectorized using the precise Ikarus software.

In his book "Digital Formats of Typefaces" published in 1987, Peter Karow revealed one of the last secrets of perfect roundings in letters digitized with Ikarus: the transitions from curves, named clothoids in the technical terminology. Besides that, as Ikarus allows defining modules, it made it easy to construct letters. And just these two approaches – precision and modularity – enabled Albert-Jan Pool to create the best possible DIN round version, the FF DIN Round family.

Ivo Gabrowitsch

# history

The oldest round sans serif letters that i've found are shown in a manual for 'architects, lithographers, sign makers and others'. The manual is dated 1871–72. No complete alphabet is shown; the author demonstrates that the execution of a round sans serif is mainly a draughtsman's trick. It can simply be achieved by replacing the stroke ends of an 'Egyptian Lapidary Letter' with half circles. All letters in the manual are constructed by using lines, arcs, and ellipses which are drawn on simple grids.
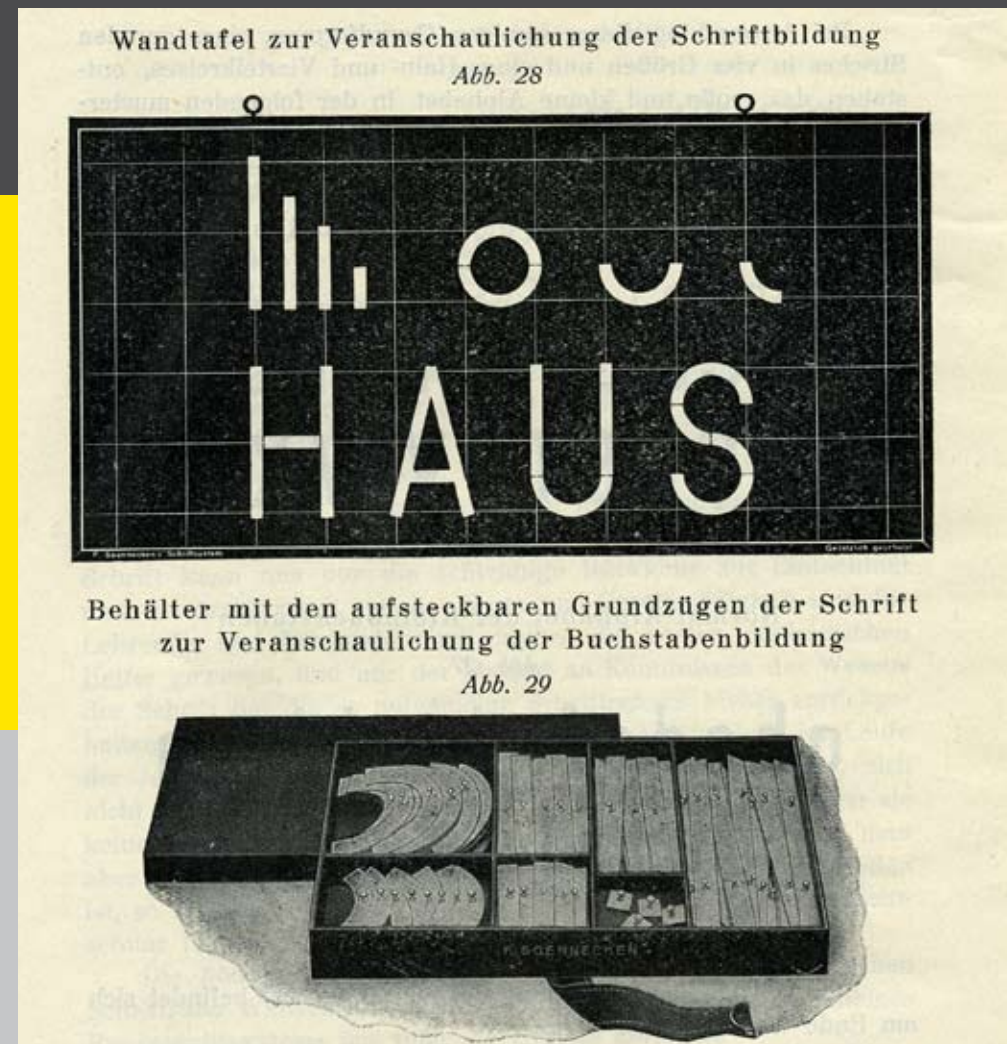


MUENCHEN
HOMBURG
RICHMOND
HOHENHEIM

C. Ed. Fetzer, gez.                    Verlag v. W. Nitzschke, Stuttgart.

**Round Sans Serif by C. E. Fetzer, 1871–1872**

BLOCK LETTERS



Wall chart with Soennecken's lettering system from 1887



Soennecken's lettering system for primary schools from 1913

Only a few years later, a similar method for constructing letters is published. This time however, it is a writing method for primary schools by Friedrich Soennecken. He was inspired by the work of the pedagogue Fröbel, who worked with construction sets based on elementary (i.e. basic) shapes such as spheres, cubes, and pyramids. As a logical consequence he had developed a type system that made use of lines and arcs. Children would first create letters by assembling them from a set of straight and circular metal parts. The main difference between both construction methods is that in Fetzer system the outlines match the grid, while in Soennecken's system the centreline of the elements have to match the grid.

After becoming familiar with the letterforms, the children would start to write them. Using a round tipped pen, block letters are drawn on a grid. Soenneckens idea behind the method is that both the elementary forms and the pens make it easier for children to learn how to write. Contrary to the then popular pointed-nib style of that time, the round-tipped pen does not stick in the paper when too much pressure  is applied in the upstrokes. The round tipped pen is being sold under various trademarks. Soennecken: Plattenfeder (round-tipped pen); Brause: Ornamentfeder (ornamental pen); Heintze & Blanckertz: Redisfeder. It usually is available in several widths. This enables the user to write the same alphabet at different sizes, thereby maintaining the ratio between the stroke width and the size of the letters.

Until his death in 1919 Soennecken fights to replace the teaching of the Deutsche Kurrent (a black letter-like script) with his method. In 1913 he tries to establish his script system with 'Soennecken's Fröbel Gift'. It contains a set of elements that can be used to compose letterforms according to his type system. The Froebel Gift is advertised as a game for children in their Kindergarten years, so they would already be able to play with simple block letters before teachers at primary schools would have had a chance to make them familiar with the rather complex German Kurrent ...
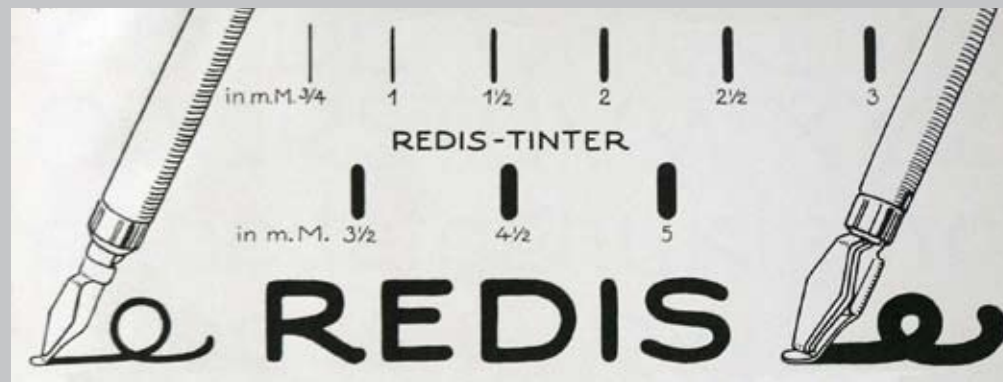
Strokes of even width with rounded endings are typical for the round tipped pen.

Sample from Soennecken's writing method for primary schools from 1878.



Printed sheet (partly reconstructed) that was used on the cover of Soennecken's Fröbel Gift in 1913 and in 1919.

**CONDENSED ROUND GROTESQUE**

Of course the typefounders too have their round sans serifs. The Leipzig foundry Julius Klinkhardt shows its Schmale Runde Grotesk (Condensed Round Sans Serif) from 1885 in the specimen book shown here. A bolder weight has also been available as wood type. Looking at the outer curves at the junctions in z, it looks as if this typeface has been drawn as a Sans Serif first. If this typeface would have been designed as a true round sans serif, the draughts-man would would probably have drawn the diagonal somewhat steeper, in oder to avoid the straight line between the curves.





Type specimen book from the Klinkhardt foundry in Leipzig (1906)
©Andreas Seidel
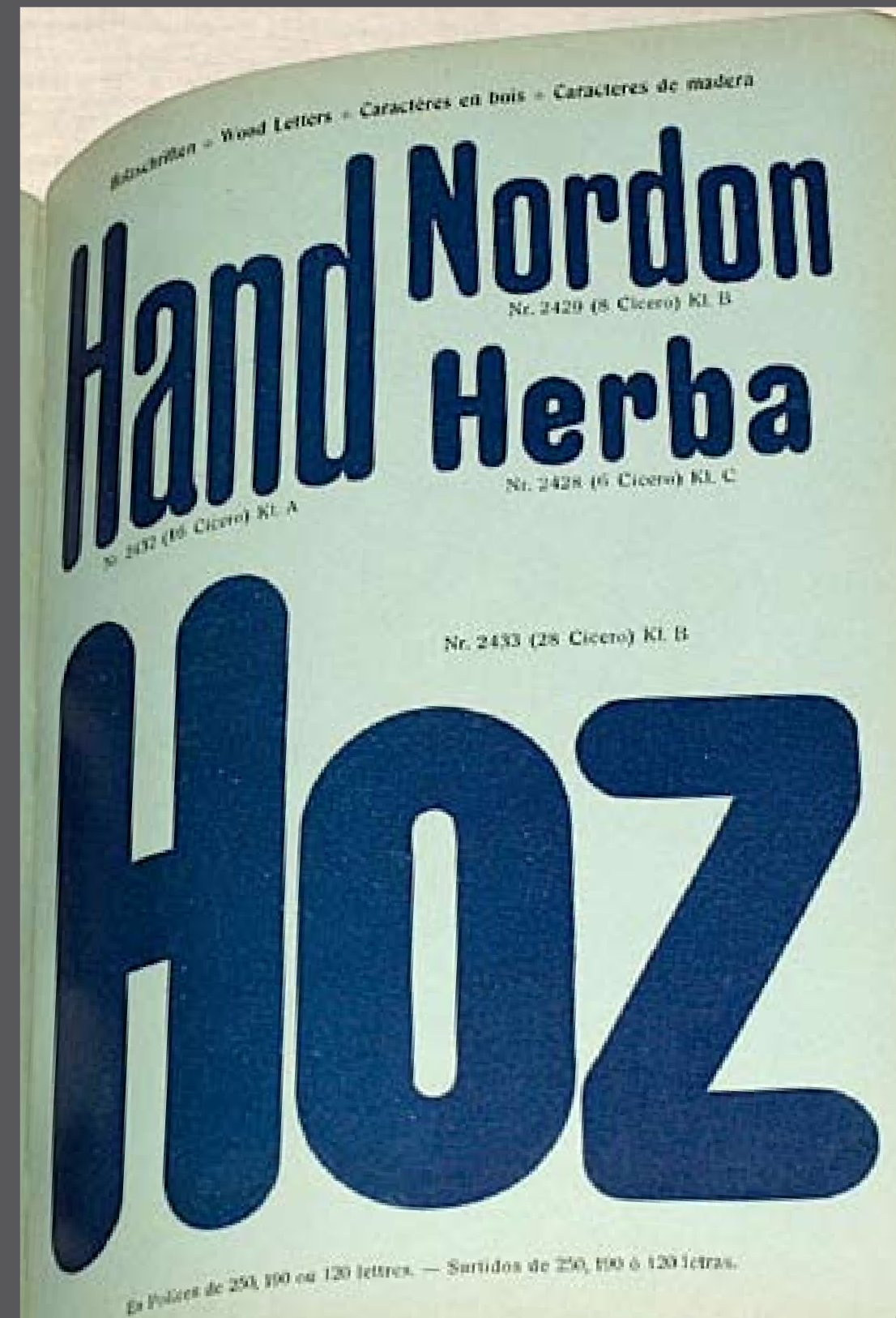
RAILWAYS

By 1897 the Prussian Railways issue a master drawing in which the lettering on train coaches is defined. Direction sign posts (Munich – Berlin for example) now have to be drawn using a condensed round sans serif typeface. The construction is based on a simple grid. An 'o' can be drawn on a 3 × 7 matrix. The drawing also shows lettering (über Wiesau-Hof) that has been drawn on a (truncated) 3 × 4 grid. Unfortunately, there are no master drawings showing complete alphabets. In 1905 the Prussian Railways issue a new master drawing. From now on a condensed sans serif is defined as the standard typeface that is to be used for all lettering (also see DIN Engschrift).



**Excerpt from a master drawing of the Royal Prussian Railways from 1897.**

The use of sans serif lettering by the railway companies marks the beginning of a new trend in public lettering. Sign posts are no longer seen as work of art, but as functional information carriers. Assuming that any flourishing is in the way when fast acquisition of information is necessary, the general preference starts to shift from black letter to sans serif typefaces. In the case of master drawings for industrial production a similar change can be observed. Subsequently, the prefererred lettering style on the drawings shifts from the calligraphic German Kurrent towards simple block letters like those developed by Soennecken.

In the first years of the 20th century, Georg Bahr – a teacher at a technical school in Berlin-Charlottenburg – picks up the idea of a lettering system making use of elementary shapes and develops a new device. It is a lettering ruler with a set of stencils, for drawing characters with a technical drawing pen. The draughtsman composes the letters by picking the different strokes making up the character shapes. The method is somewhat tedious, but the ruler is short and economical. By 1909 Bahr patents his lettering device. In 1910, he sells the patent to two of his personal friends: Paul Filler and Oscar Fiebig. The next year Filler and Fiebig establish a company in which the patent makes up 50% of the initial capital. The new company Filler & Fiebig now produces and markets the new 'Bahrsche Normograph'. Later on, rulers with complete alphabets called 'Standardgraph' are developed as well. These rulers become so successful that in 1967 the company renames itself to Standardgraph Filler & Fiebig GmbH. To this very day a wide range of stencils are being produced. Many of these provide stencils for drawing technical parts and objects developed according to the DIN standards.

**The Bahrsche Normograph, a lettering stencil from 1909**

DIN STANDARDS

One of the starting points for systematic standardization of industrial products is the standardization of its basic elements. Standardized elements then have to be based on standardized dimensions and ratios. Seen from this rational point of view, it might appear logical that the systematic approach of people like Soennecken and Bahr could be taken as the starting point for designing a standard typeface, or even a standard type family. In Germany, the 'Normenaus-schuß der Deutschen Industrie' (Standardization Comittee of the German Industry) is installed in 1916. Although the Committee for Drawings soon recognizes the need for standardizing the lettering on drawings, they apparently do not feel it necessary to systematically approach the design of their letterforms. In 1919 they issue DIN 16, the first standard typeface that was to be used on drawings. It resembles a handwritten block script rather than a geometrically oriented design.

By 1926 the members of the Standardization Committee of the Graphic Industry proposes that all printing offices should be able to equip themselves with one standardized printing type, preferably of a sans serif design. At the same time, a Committee of Type is founded. Headed by Siemens engineer Ludwig Goller, the committee proposes in 1927 to build up a harmonized set of typefaces for printing, engraving, and lettering. This set of typefaces is issued as DIN 1451.



Top: DIN 16 from 1919 (outdated)
Bottom: DIN 1451 for hand lettering, draft from 1927

# standardized lettering

Whereas in the case of printing types the committee can pick from a wide range of available type families, the palette of typefaces for hand lettering and stencils is smaller. For the condensed version, the standard typeface of the Deutsche Reichsbahn is chosen. Its forms have already been defined by the Prussian Railways in 1905. Because this typeface is drawn on a coarse grid, it is easy to render. Many copybooks for draughtsmen and sign painters from that period display similar types of alphabets. The sample from an old Filler & Fiebig catalogue shows that they also provided a Normograph lettering stencil with which very similar letterforms can be drawn using a technical drawing pen.

The committee also plans to provide a standard for normal and wide lettering. The 1927 draft shows a first attempt. It seems that the committee has not been able to present a proposal showing a solution for a set of complete alphabets at that time. Normally, a standard committee harmonizes specifications for products rather than developing them. In this case, Filler & Fiebig probably had been the only company which could provide a constructed alphabet fulfilling the demands as outlined in the 1927 draft. Also, a Filler & Fiebig catalogue from around 1934 proves the ongoing engagement of the company in the field of lettering stencils according to the DIN standards.

The regular Normograph alphabet is not only easy to construct, it is also based on a matrix that matches the one used for the Reichsbahn typeface. In the Reichsbahn typeface characters such as a, b, e, g, n, o, and p are 5 units high and 3 units wide. In the proposed Mittelschrift these characters have the same height of 5 units and are all exactly 1 unit wider.
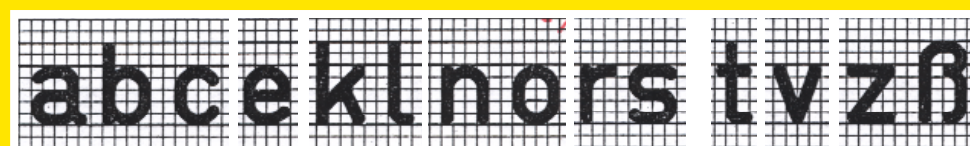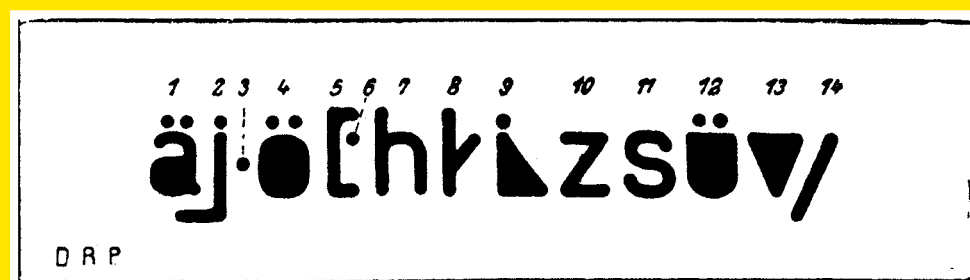
**Deutsche Reichsbahn standard typeface**



**DIN Engschrift (preliminary version of 1931).**



**Sample executed with a Normograph lettering ruler from Filler & Fiebig**



**lettering stencil 'Bahrsche Normograph' from 1909**



**DIN 1451 'Mittelschrift' for hand lettering, preliminary version from 1931**



**DIN 17 for lettering stencils and engraving from 1938**



Next to its work on DIN 1451, the Committee of Type also attempts to synchronize DIN 16 with DIN 1451. DIN 16 is being redrawn on a geometrical basis and gets an upright counterpart, which is named DIN 17. A comparative analysis shows many similarities in construction and proportions between DIN 1451, DIN 17 and Georg Bahr's type system for the Normograph. The examples of Fetzer and Klinkhardt which are presented here, show that round typefaces have often been derived from existing sans serif typefaces. The new DIN 1451 for hand lettering and stencils is a different case. Both originate in the same basic idea. Although 'written proof' has not yet emerged, my current hypothesis is that both DIN 17 and DIN Mittelschrift origin in Georg Bahr's elementary type system.

e    l    e    m

e    n    t    a

r    y    t    y

p    e    d    e

s    i    g    n

The work on DIN 1451 takes a long time. The economical crisis of 1929 forces the German industry to minimize its engagement in the process of standardization. The conservative movement, which fulminates in the seizure of power by the Nazis in 1933, clearly prefers 'national typefaces' like the Fraktur and the new sober versions of Textura of that time. Although there was no official Nazi-policy that dictated the exclusive use of the so-called broken scripts, establishing a norm which defines sans serifs typefaces as a standard was probably not thought of as being 'politicaly correct'. Despite of the actual preference for broken scripts, DIN 1451 was issued in 1936 and became the official standard typeface to be used on motorway signage, car license plates, traffic signs as well as public sign posts including those for street names and wayfinding systems in bomb shelters. With the release of DIN 1451 (1936), DIN 17 (1938) and the new version of DIN 16 (1934), the idea of having one model of letters that can be used for various lettering techniques, including engraving, is used for crea-ting a practical industrial solution. It had taken more than fifty years since Fetzer and Soennecken had outlined their ideas. In the meantime, Georg Bahr's lettering system for the Normograph had become 25 years old. Their systematic and geometric approach towards the design of letters had now become reality within the industrial production of lettering as well as for the tools and the typefaces that came with them.

Lettering rulers were a common technical device in the drawing rooms until the early eighties. By 1976, the company Standardgraph estimated that Rotring, Standardgraph, Staedtler, Faber-Castell and others would sell over 500,000 DIN lettering rulers a year. Unfortunately, DIN 16 and 17 had been superseded by Isonorm somewhat later, but technical drawing machines using pens have become almost obsolete anyway. New technologies such as automated foil-cutting, ink-jet, and laser printers make it possible to use a growing number of 'electronic fonts' for technical lettering. DIN 16 and 17 as well as Isonorm gradually disappeared, but type with round stroke endings enjoys a newfound popularity.

Lettering rulers from the 1980s.

# technical and design

# search and replace?

The main goal in the design of FF DIN Round was to draw the typeface in such a way that it would match the overall image of FF DIN as closely as possible. On the left one you can see that simply substituting the square stroke ends with arcs would lead to unacceptable results. This would make the rounded stroke ends take up less volume; and have them appear shorter. This causes the top-left stroke of the 'a' to look too short. The 's' gives the impression to tilt to the left, and the 'e' seems top-heavy. The round strokes of the 'c' cannot enclose its counter anymore, which makes the letter appear more open and more con-densed. Another problem occurs at the bottom right of the 'a': the spur looks too short. As with all rounded parts, rounded stroke ends must overshoot the baseline. This simulation clearly demon-strates that simply replacing the stroke ends by arcs (part of a circle which is mathematically perfect) using a 'Search and Replace' algorithm could never have worked.

## asec

FF DIN Black

fitted-in arcs                    FF DIN Round Black

## asec asec

baseline

too short     tilts to the left     top heavy

## asec asec

overshoot too small          too open          FF DIN Round Black

**Left:** In this simulation, rounded stroke ends have been created by inser-ting arcs through 'Search and Replace'. As a result the rounded stroke ends all appear shorter than those in FF DIN Black.

**Right:** In FF DIN Round the rounded stroke ends have been specifically designed to match the overall image of FF DIN.

SMOOTH TRANSITIONS

CLOTHOIDS
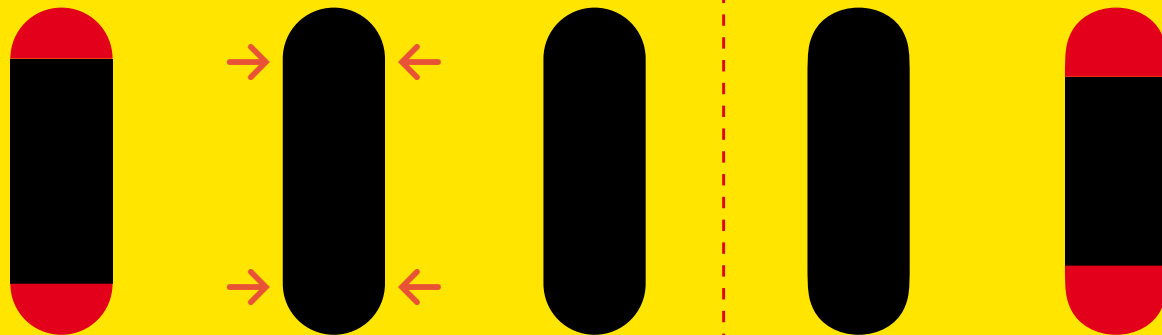


**Rounded stroke ends built from arcs. The bumps at the transitions (→) seem to push the contour outwards, making the straight line between them appear wavy.**
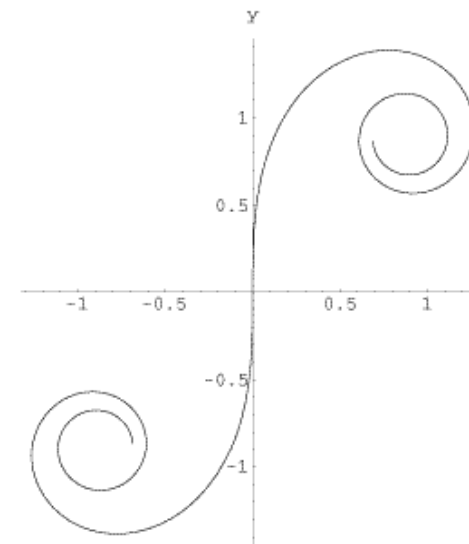
**FF DIN Round with smooth transitions.**



**Clothoids: Algorithms that generate curves which smooth transition into straight lines.**
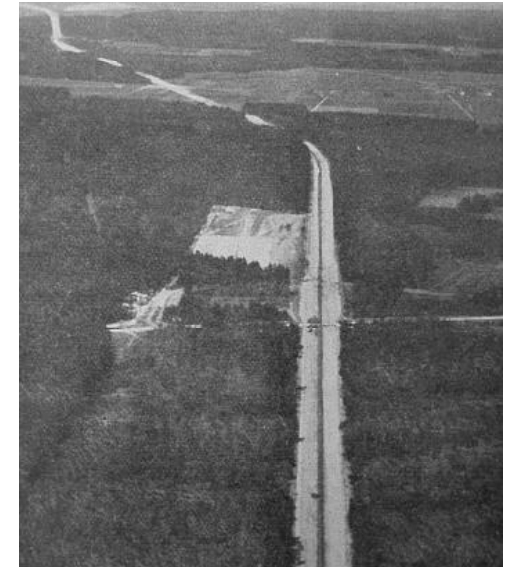


**1930s: Motorway trajectory executed with lines and arcs**

How can one design rounded stroke ends that look really good? Simply attaching arcs results in bumpy transitions between straight lines and arcs. The arrows in the middle illustration mark the spots where straight lines transition into arcs.

This is a well-known problem, one that Paul Renner already pointed out in his book 'The Art of Typography' in 1939. 'When an arc drawn with a compass transitions into a tangent, from a strictly geometrical point of view there is no corner at the transition. The eye however perceives an anomaly, as the transition seems to display a disturbing bump. The eye expects a gradual transition from the straight line into the arc … this is why the … transition from the arc into the straight line appears to have corners. Furthermore the eye perceives a slightly curved line between two arcs although the line itself is straight.'

In FF DIN Round all transitions have been smoothened.

A mathematical solution for generating smooth transitions from curves into straight lines had already been developed by Alfred Cornu (1841–1902). In the 1970s, Peter Karow tried to automate the process of rounding typefaces by implementing such formulas. Ikarus, his software for digitizing and editing typefaces has maintained its position as a market leader until the 1990s. Unfortunately, a solution for rounding typefaces in an optically correct way was never achieved. And graphic software such as Illustrator, or type design software such as FontLab only offer the possibility of doing 'round corners' with arcs. As a consequence the round parts of FF DIN Round had to be rendered manually.

PROTO-
TYPES

flat intersections on acute angles

FF DIN Round Black
Prototype

# EMNZ 1247

rounded intersections on acute angles

FF DIN Round Black

# EMNZ 1247

**First prototype of FF DIN Round (top) and final version (bottom). The prototype was not perfect yet. The straight lines at the junctions of diagonals and vertical or horizontal strokes such as in M, N, Z and 1 should refer to FF DIN, to avoid the typeface from becoming too playful.**

Before FF DIN Round was given its final shape, several prototypes were developed. The initial version was designed by Christoph Dunst according to my instructions. During his graphic design education he interned at my studio. I asked him to keep the differences between FF DIN and FF DIN Round as little as possible. Consequently many round parts were designed individually for each character.
The first problem to be solved were the diagonals found in the characters A, V, W, and so on. The basic round parts designed for the horizontal and vertical stroke ends of T could not simply be rotated at any given angle. The coarse grid of the PostScript Type1 font technology (1000 units to the em quad) forced us to edit numerous rounding errors upon each rotation. Also, the curves and their smooth transitions took twice as many points as we would have needed when using arcs. As these points were very close to each other in the light weights, this made it hard to create curves with an acceptable quality.

With the advent of OpenType technology the technical necessity to draw type at 1000 x 1000 units became obsolete. By doubling the resolution, the curves of FF DIN Round could now be drawn and rotated in an acceptable way. I developed a second prototype in which I removed the questionable straight lines in the corners of M, Z, and so on.
Again, Christoph Dunst assisted me, this time as a freelancer. This version was used on one single occasion – the 'Type Dialogue' symposium in 2007, an event organized by the 'ultrazinnober' group of students from Prof. Klaus Detjen's typography course at the Muthesius Academy of Art in Kiel.

**Second prototype of FF DIN Round. Kerning had not been completed yet at this stage. This phenomenon usually manifests itself in rare character pairs that somehow always show up in very visible locations in the layout.**

von den wörtern und ihr
zum paradigma der mod

1.

**KLAUS DETJEN** Über Schrift und Ty
litäten in Betracht ziehen, einmal sin
che, von deren Inhalt, Stilistik und R
geleistet werden müssen. Wir haben
ein Zeichen sichtbar macht und gleich
ist nicht die Sprache, sondern es füh

Symmetry axis          - - -

Position of the anchor →
points on the curves

**Ideal round stroke ending. The anchor points on the curve have been positioned symmetrically. There are no anchor points on the x- and y-extremes.**

**Round stroke ending with so-called curve extreme points. These are the anchor points at ← and ↑ on the x- and y-extremes respectively.**
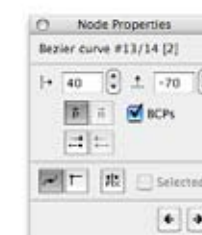
**The distance from the anchor point to the Bézier handle measures 40 units in x-direction and 70 units in y-direction. The Bézier lever and handle can only perform as a tangent if the x-y distance between the points is a multiple of 4:7.**

The higher resolution made my work somewhat easier. The curves could now be rotated without loss of quality, if not for such things like curve extreme points. Up till then both True Type and Type 1 hinting technologies relied heavily on their presence. Perfect rendering of typefaces on screen could only be achieved on curves incorporating these extreme points. From a type designer's point of view, the shape of a rounded stroke end on the left does not need any anchor points on its curve extremes. If you ask me it is rather the opposite: perfect symmetry can only be achieved if the anchor points can be positioned in symmetrical relation to the central axis of the stroke. With the introduction of grey-scale rendering of typefaces on screen, the hinting technology used in older font formats seemed to have become outdated as well. After all,

both TrueType and Type1 hinting technology were created in times when screen display was black and white only. Display typefaces would especially benefit from grey-scale technology, as it virtually doubles the resolution of a computer screen. Having seen the results, some type designers abandoned extreme points and hinting from their typefaces. Encouraged by this, I created a new prototype with perfectly symmetrical diagonal strokes. No extreme points, no hinting. Unfortunately tests executed by FSI FontShop International did not provide the expected results. We concluded that for the sake of high quality screen rendering, we still needed extreme points and hinting. The editing of all diagonal stroke endings needed to be done all over again.

By then the decision had been made that FF DIN Round should be available as a Pro Version at its initial release. This meant that a complete Cyrillic character set had to be designed. Although some Cyrillic characters can be derived from the Latin set, the number of rounded stroke endings would have doubled. It quickly became clear that the design process should be as systematic as possible. I decided to try to keep the number of different stroke endings as little as possible. The following insight formed the basis for this – using Bézier curves (like in PostScript and OpenType technology) a curve transitioning into a straight line can only be smooth (i.e. appear tangential) if the handle of the Bézier curve exactly aligns with the anchor points at both ends of the straight line. As a result diagonals can no longer be expressed by an angle, but need to be defined by a ratio (the relation between x- and y-coordinates) instead. In mathematics, angles based on this principle are called rational angles.

RATIONAL ANGLES

As the next step I measured the angles of all the diagonals found in the characters of the typeface. Many of them were already close to a rational angle, because the DIN typefaces were originally drawn on a coarse grid as shown above. Once you have seen the grid, you also understand the proportions of some of the characters, such as the narrow X. Most diagonals could be 'rationalised' without conceding on the character of the typeface. I could have gone even further in reducing this number, but as a result a significant number of characters of FF DIN Round would have been clearly different from FF DIN.

FF DIN's character is defined by the following characteristics – on the one hand it is rigid and technical, on the other it should look as 'normal' as possible. For FF DIN Round as well this balance had to be maintained.

Right:
The individual angles of the diagonals have been standardized using a small number of so-called 'rational angles'. This subtle way of standardising the diagonals enhances the technical aspect of the type design without distracting from its character.
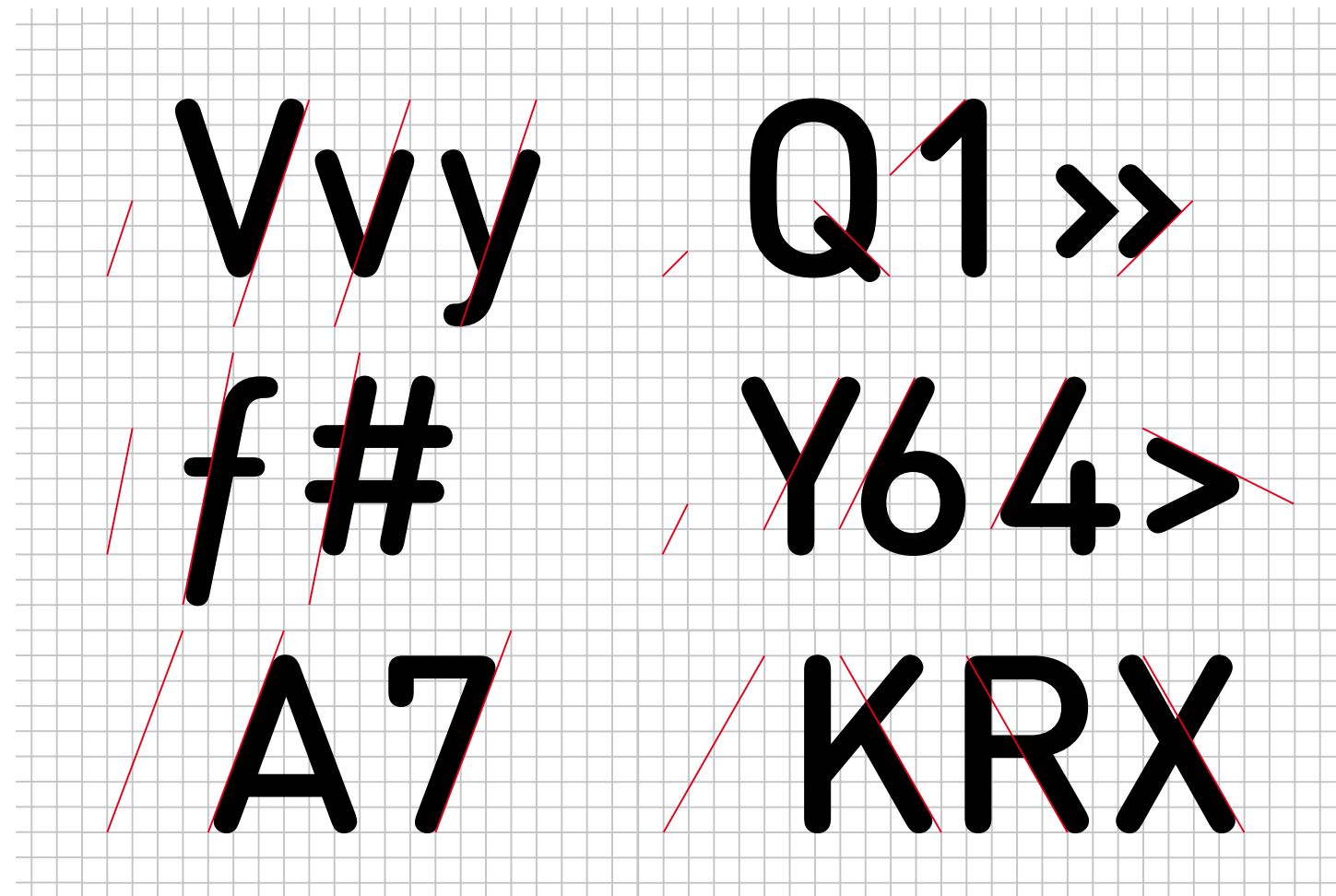
Ratio: 1:3  angle: 18,43°  V v y / , „ "
Ratio: 1:5  angle: 11.31°  ƒ #
Ratio: 3:8  angle: 20,56°  A 7

Ratio: 1:1  angle: 45,00°  Q 1 » « ‹ › × ¤ ˆ → ↑ ↗
Ratio: 1:2  angle: 26,57°  Y Æ 4 6 9 7 % ≥ ≤ < > ^ ◊ ∑
Ratio: 4:7  angle: 29,74°  K R X

HKRXEZV,""
nbkxz-+/vy
lftj461××»ø*

Although FF DIN Round does not have any serifs, within the design process the stroke endings were approached in a similar way. After rationalising the angles, I analysed all the stroke widths. Wherever possible they were adjusted to a smaller set of standardized measures. All this was done to keep the number of different rounded stroke endings as small as possible. Because I wanted to keep things short I named the rounded stroke endings 'round pieces', after the Hamburgian expression for 'bun' or 'roll'. In the meantime FontFont's Inka Strotmann had started to assist me with the project. We optimised the round pieces and interpolated them for the intermediate weights. After that, Inka practically rebuilt all the characters from light to black according to the specifications of their angles and stroke widths. With the patience of a saint she corrected numerous rounding errors in the intermediate weights and took it upon herself to detect and adjust even the smallest deviations.

Technical perfection should not result in tediousness though, so we introduced some pointed corners in FF DIN Round's guillemets and arrows.

Some of the 'round pieces' of FF DIN Round Black. In spite of all the rationalisation and standardization, over 50 different components had to be designed for each weight.

# interpolation

**FF DIN Round Light**
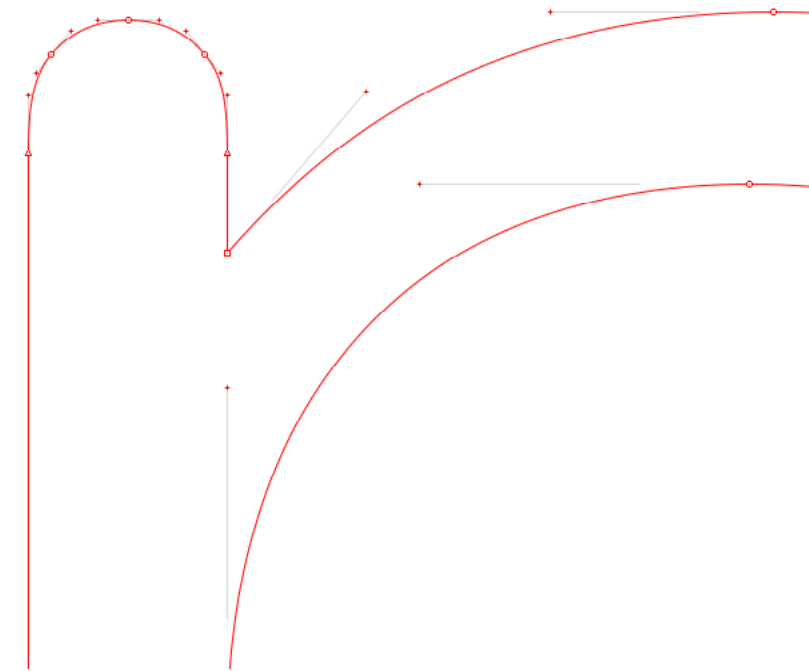
**FF DIN Round Black**
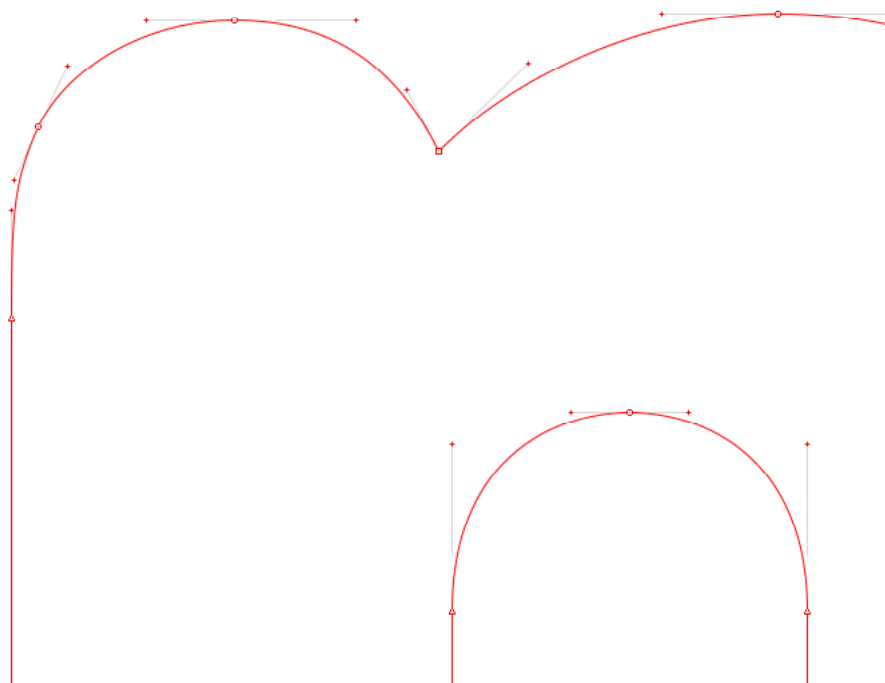
Graphic designers like to work with type families that have many weights. In order to ensure that such a range of weights remains consistent, a type designer usually starts the production of a new typeface family by drawing a light and a black weight at both extremes of the weight axis. The intermediate weights are subsequently created by interpolation. Quite often the outlines of the characters in the intermediate weights have to be adjusted. Many rounding errors have to be corrected. One of the prerequisites for flawless interpolation is that in both extremes the number of points and the design characteristics of the shapes are identical. In the case of FF DIN Round it seemed preferable that the weights would match those of FF DIN. Comparing the 'n' in the light and the black weight reveals that the top parts of the vertical strokes have been designed correctly, yet upon closer examination we notice that they have a different number of points. Also the shapes have been designed separately – the black weight simply does not allow for a straight element on the top right side of the vertical stroke. For the intermediate weights we had to choose between one way or the other though … I could have 'solved' the problem by abandoning the idea of doing an accompanying round weight to FF DIN Black, but in that case FF DIN Round would really have missed something.

# TAPERED DIAGO-NALS

vwyAXY

FF DIN Round Light

vwyAXY

FF DIN Light

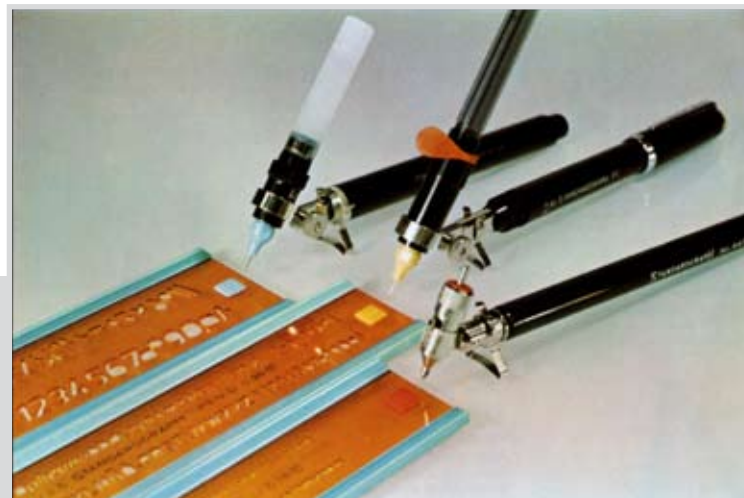**vwyAXY**

FF DIN Round Black

**vwyAXY**

FF DIN Black

**The German standard typefaces could be written with linear strokes. The diagonal strokes of FF DIN have been slightly tapered. For FF DIN Round stroke widths were kept almost linear in order to preserve the character of the written form.**

Characters appear darker at the spots where two strokes meet. In order to compensate for this optical effect, the diagonals such as in A and X have been tapered slightly. In the case of FF DIN I had a sound rationale for not doing this.

→ FF DIN Round strongly reminds of the German standard typefaces. Originally they had been developed for lettering on technical drawings. These could be written with a technical drawing pen; its linear stroke width being a distinctive feature.

→ The use of rational angles practically forbids the subtle differences of the angles needed for tapering the diagonal strokes.

→ It should be possible to interpolate the 'round pieces' without having to edit too extensively. Diagonal strokes should have identical angles from Light to Black to enable this.

In bolder weights, characters with diagonal strokes are normally designed a bit wider. This is clearly exemplified by FF DIN's X and Y. In order to strengthen the rigid character of the typeface, I decided to go without such subtleties in FF DIN Round.



**Bahrscher Normograph from 1909**



**Lettering stencils (1970s)**

CYRILLIC ALTERNATES

ф жкяv аф жкяv

FF DIN Bold

FF DIN Round Bold

Свободомыслящий информатика каждый язык съезд благодушие ящерица. Єva ov cѵнодъ мѵро.

ф жкяv аф жкяv

FF DIN Bold – Cyrillic Alternates

FF DIN Round Bold – Cyrillic Alternates

Свободомыслящий информатика каждый язык съезд благодушие ящерица. Єva ov cѵнодъ мѵро.

The users of FF DIN Pro's Cyrillic characters are being offered several alternates. For ›ж‹ (Zhe), ›к‹ (Ka), ›я‹ (Ya) and ›ѵ‹ (Izhitsa) a rather curly version is offered as an alternate to the standard characters which have a plain and technical appearance. The alternate forms of FF DIN Round have been designed differently. The combination of rounded stroke ends with curved strokes would have been too playful. Especially in the bolder weights of FF DIN Round, the straight diagonals of the alternate characters ensure that FF DIN Round stays sober. Also, the horizontal stroke ends rather refer to the traditional form, which stays closer to the expectations of most readers.

# a new
# superfamily

FF DIN Round Light

FF DIN Light

FF DIN Round Regular

FF DIN Regular

FF DIN Round Medium

FF DIN Medium

FF DIN Round Bold

FF DIN Bold

FF DIN Round Black

FF DIN Black

Best foot foreward

Organ door

You can't go home again

Building steam with a grain of salt

The number song

Six days

**Giving up the ghost**

**Midnight in a perfect world**

**What does your soul look like**

**Monosylabik**

**FF DIN & FF DIN Round Family Overview**

handgloves

handgloves

handgloves

handgloves

handgloves

handgloves

**handgloves**

**handgloves**

**handgloves**

**handgloves**

With the release of FF DIN Round, FF DIN finally has its rounded companion. Fetzer, Soennecken and Goller would have been delighted – their dream has gone digital. DIN's simplicity and industrial straightforwardness can now be combined with rather soft and emotional aspects without having to rely on other typefaces. Although using several different typefaces within a design project enriches the typographic

palette, it is also more complex and thus time-consuming to maintain a harmonious overall image. Multi-style typeface families such as FF DIN Round and FF DIN can be very helpful, providing graphic solutions that are both flexible and feasible.

Larger design projects in which different elements need to be clearly distinguished visually will definitely benefit from this. Think of product logos, slo-

gans and other striking elements such as product features, price tags and special offers in advertising work and shop design. All of them must call attention and communicate their uniqueness, and eventually they also have to be recognized as players from the same team. With FF DIN Round 'hard selling' may become easier to integrate within corporate design projects.

Silver So

La chanson du para

40 Day Drea

Sur les murs de ma chan

Les yeux de l'oise

Norway

Waiting for the 7.18

**Turbo Dreams**

**Way Out**

Leave me alone

Stars

10 Mile Stereo

**Rollercoaster Ride**

! " # $ % & ' ( ) * + , - . / 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 : ; < = > ?

@ 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 [ \ ] ^ _ ` 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 { | } ~ ¡ ¢ £ ¤

¥ ¦ § ¨ © ª « ¬ - ® ¯ ° ± ² ³ ´ µ ¶ · ¸ ¹ º » ¼ ½ ¾ ¿ À Á Â Ã Ä Å Æ

Ç È É Ê Ë Ì Í Î Ï Ð Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ö × Ø Ù Ú Û Ü Ý Þ ß à á â ã ä å æ ç è

é ê ë ì í î ï ð ñ ò ó ô õ ö ÷ ø ù ú û ü ý þ ÿ Ā ā Ă ă Ą ą Ć ć Ĉ ĉ Ċ

ċ Č č Ď ď Đ đ Ē ē Ĕ ĕ Ė ė Ę ę Ě ě Ĝ ĝ Ğ ğ Ġ ġ Ģ ģ Ĥ ĥ Ħ ħ Ĩ ĩ Ī ī Ĭ

ĭ Į į İ ı IJ ij Ĵ ĵ Ķ ķ ĸ Ĺ ĺ Ļ ļ Ľ ľ Ŀ ŀ Ł ł Ń ń Ņ ņ Ň ň ŉ Ŋ ŋ Ō ō Ŏ

ŏ Ő ő Œ œ Ŕ ŕ Ŗ ŗ Ř ř Ś ś Ŝ ŝ Ş ş Š š Ţ ţ Ť ť Ŧ ŧ Ũ ũ Ū ū Ŭ ŭ Ů ů Ű

ű Ų ų Ŵ ŵ Ŷ ŷ Ÿ Ź ź Ż ż Ž ž ſ ẟ ƒ Ƶ ƶ DŽ Dž dž LJ Lj lj NJ Nj nj DZ Dz dz Ǻ ǻ Ǽ

ǽ Ǿ ǿ Ș ș Ț ț ȷ ə ‘ ’ ‛ ‚ ‟ ˜ ˝ Δ Ω μ π È Ë Ђ Ѓ Є S І Ї Ј Љ

Њ Ћ Ќ Ѝ Ў Џ А Б В Г Д Е Ж З И Й К Л М Н О П Р С Т У Ф Х Ц Ч Ш Щ Ы

Ь Э Ю Я а б в г д е ж з и й к л м н о п р с т у ф х ц ч ш щ ъ ы ь э

ю я è ё ђ ѓ є ѕ і ї ј љ њ ћ ќ ѝ ў џ Ѣ ѣ Ѳ ѳ Ѵ ѵ Ѓ ѓ Ғ ғ Җ җ Қ қ Ҝ ҝ

Ң ң ү Ұ ұ Ҳ ҳ Ч ч Ҷ ҷ һ һ І Ә ә Ӣ ӣ Ө ө Ӯ ӯ Ӯ ӯ Ẁ ẁ Ẃ ẃ Ẅ ẅ Ẍ ẍ Ỳ ỳ

‒ — ― ‘ ’ ‚ " " „ † ‡ • … ‰ ‹ › ⁄ 0 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

8 9 € ₴ № ™ Ω ⅐ ⅑ ⅒ ⅓ ⅔ ⅕ ⅖ ⅗ ⅘ ⅙ ⅚ ⅛ ⅜ ⅝ ⅞ ⅓ ↉ ← ↑ → ↓ ↖ ↗ ↘ ↙ ∂ Δ

∏ ∑ − ∙ √ ∞ ∫ ≈ ≠ ≤ ≥ · ◊ fi fl i Ŀ 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

9 - ¡ « - · » ¿ – — ― • ‹ › @ ɑ ‚ Ç à á â ã ä å æ ç ā ã Ą ą Ę ę Ğ

ġ ļ į Ķ ķ Ļ ļ Ņ ņ Ŗ ŗ Ş ş Ţ ţ Ų ų å æ Ș ș Ț ț . Ѓ Ж К Я а ж к ф я ѓ

V v Җ җ Қ қ Ҝ ҝ

Albert-Jan Pool was born in 1960 in Amsterdam. He studied at the Royal Academy of Arts in The Hague. Initiated by professor Gerrit Noordzij the Academy had become an incubator of type design. Albert-Jan was one of the co-founders of Letters], a group of young Dutch type designers. Many of its members (Frank Blokland, Erik and Petr van Blokland, Jelle Bosma, Luc(as) de Groot, Bart de Haas, Henk van Leyden, Peter-Matthias Noordzij, Marie-Cécile Noordzij-Pulles, Just van Rossum and Peter Verheul) have become well-known type designers. After his study he left for Germany. From 1987 to 1991 he was Type Director at Scangraphic in Wedel, near Hamburg. From 1991 to 1994 he was Manager of Type Design and Production at URW in Hamburg. During this time he completed his type families URW Imperial, URW Linear and URW Mauritius. By January 1995 he started his own studio Dutch Design in Hamburg. FF DIN and FF OCR-F were among his first projects. He had been teaching type design at the Muthesius Hochschule in Kiel from 1995 to 1998, as well as typography at the Hamburg Academy for Marketing and Media. Together with type consultant Stefan Rögener of AdFinder GmbH and copywriter Ursula Packhäuser he wrote and designed a both useful and provocative book on the effects of type on brand image en-titled "Branding with Type", which has been published by Adobe Press. Dutch Design finally merged into FarbTon Konzept + Design. The new company was co-founded 1999 with Jörn Iken, and Klaus-Peter-Staudinger, as well as with Birgit Hartmann who is also the mother of their daughter Pia-Elina (born 1999). For customers of FarbTon he created several corporate typefaces such as Jet Set Sans together with Syndicate Brand & Corporate for Jet/Conoco in 1997, C&A InfoType together with Factor Design for C&A in 1998, DTL HEIN GAS for HEIN GAS Hamburger Gaswerke in 1999 and Regenbogen Bold for Regenbogen, a political party in Germany in 2001. Pool is currently working on several new series in order to extend the family of FF DIN.

Albert-Jan Pool at the Tag der Schrift in Zürich, Switzerland  © Florian Hardwig

# imprint
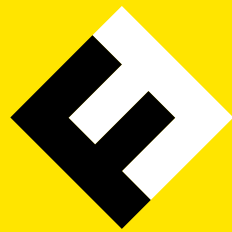
FontFont – Innovative digital typefaces by designers for designers. For 20 years.

FontFont® and FF DIN® are trademarks of FSI FontShop International GmbH.

Design: FSI FontShop International GmbH (Sascha Timplan)
Text: Albert-Jan Pool
Editing: Yves Peters, Ugla Marekowa, Ivo Gabrowitsch
© July 2010 FSI FontShop International GmbH. All rights reserved.