FACE À FACE: RAISING AWARENESS OF CONTEMPORARY FRENCH

TYPOGRAPHIC DESIGN AMONGST THE INTERNATIONAL

DESIGN COMMUNITY

by

William Frank, B.S.

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Council of
Texas State University in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts
with a Major in Communication Design
May 2016

Committee Members:

Maia Wright, Chair

Claudia Röschmann

Alessandro Segalini

FAIR USE AND AUTHOR'S PERMISSION STATEMENT

Fair Use

Duplication Permission

DEDICATION

For my sister, Michelle Rankin, who has been a constant source of inspiration throughout my life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

I

INTRODUCTION

Background.

France is known for many things—art, fashion, food, wine—but typographic design is not usually one of them. Graphic design in France is largely underappreciated by the international graphic design community and has been considered a second-tier discipline in the arts, both within and outside of France.[1] Despite the fact that graphic design has been a long established practice in France, awareness of the high quality work coming from the country has long been lacking.[2] The importance of typographic design in France was especially evident in 1640 when the Imprimerie Royale, the royal printing office, was first established. When speaking of the book *De Imitatione Christi,* the first book to be printed by the Imprimerie Royale, H. George Fletcher says, "It suits the grandeur that is France."[3] That is to say it is representative of France. Another notable

---

[1] Laetitia Wolff, "A Nation of 'Hommes de Lettres,' High and Low," in *The Story of Graphic Design in France,* by Michel Wlassikoff (Corte Madera: Gingko Press, Inc, 2005).

[2] Michel Wlassikoff, "The Paradoxes of Graphic Design and the difficulties of Establishing its History," in *The Story of Graphic Design in France,* (Corte Madera: Gingko Press, Inc, 2005), 8.

[3] David W. Dunlap, "Types with Plenty of Character," *The New York Times,* last modified December 23, 2011, http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/24/arts/design/printing-for-kingdom-empire-republic-review.html?_r=3&ref=arts.

case of the importance of typographic design in France is when the French king Louis XIV commissioned a new typeface, called Romain du Roi, to be designed specifically for use in the Imprimerie Royale. It was considered a capital offense if this typeface was used anywhere else.[4] France continued to play a major role in the history of typographic design until the twentieth century when typographic designers became a rarity in the country.[5] This downfall of typographic design in France is a major reason why it is so little known outside of the country.

Objective.

With France's rich history in typographic design and in the arts, it is an anomaly that there is an under-appreciation—both, within and outside of France. To quote Philippe Apeloig, a prominent French typeface designer and typographer, "…typography is an enormous cultural realm that is far too little known in France."[6] The goal of this project is to educate and introduce the international design community to the great typographic designers in France and their work currently being produced in an effort to promote them. This will be accomplished by creating a video series consisting of multiple episodes, each episode centered on a particular city or area of France. With a special

---

[4] 8. Philip B. Meggs and Alston Purvis, "An Epoch of Typographic Genius," in *Meggs' History of Graphic Design,* (Hoboken: Wiley & Sons, 2006), 117.

[5] Alice Savoie, introduction of "French Type Foundries in the Twentieth Century: Causes and Consequences of Their Demise" (master's dissertation, University of Reading, 2007)

[6] Philippe Apeloig, *Au Coeur du Mot (Inside the Word),* by Philippe Apeloig and Michel Rozenberg (Baden: Lars Müller Publishers, 2001), 74.

focus on different cities and areas of France, each episode will capture the essence of these specific regions and will educate the viewers on the regional differences in typographic design. The series, named *Face à Face: Conversations with Typographic Designers of France,* will introduce a select group of typographic designers from each city through filmed interviews. The episodes will be released once every six months, to allow time for production and to build up a level of excitement and value by the audience. They will be accessible online through both a dedicated website and a YouTube channel. The intent in making this a web-based resource is that the content is able to reach a wide audience instantaneously as well as to have the ability to collect feedback from the viewers and through web analytics. Effective use of the information provided by the viewer feedback and web analytics, such as the number of video views or suggestions from the viewers, will ensure that my goal of raising awareness of contemporary French typographic design amongst the international design community will be met.

Questions.

When conducting the interviews with French typographic designers, a series of questions will be asked in which their responses will provide information on their backgrounds, their personal history with typographic design, their past projects, and projects they are currently working on. In addition to these, two more important questions will be asked:

1. *How would you describe the current state of typographic design in France?*

   By giving the viewers a sense of the current state of typographic design in France, it sets a foundation for those who have limited or no knowledge of the topic.

2. *Is it important for you to expose your nationality or French influence in your work?*

   In an essay in the book *An A – Z of Type Designers,* the French typeface designer Jean-François Porchez states, "Nationality does not apply easily to type and culture…"[7] He goes further to say, "Nowadays, type designers do use local cultural roots to build new typefaces but, at the same time, they are also much influenced by each other via their immediate exchange of ideas through the global network."[8] The designers' responses to this question add an interesting dynamic as they all have varying opinions on this matter.

Literature Review and Comparative Audit.

The genesis of this thesis project began after reading the book *Lettres Type: The State of Bespoke Typeface Design in France Today,* which showcases thirty-seven contemporary typefaces from French designers. The criteria for the designers and typefaces featured in the exhibition and the book are that the typefaces must come from a

---

[7] Jean-François Porchez, "Nationality and Type Design," in *An A – Z of Type Designers,* by Neil Macmillan (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 23.

[8] Ibid, 26 – 27.

commission and the designer must be French, francophone, or a resident of France.[9] This

book immediately piqued my interest, not because I was familiar with the work but just

the opposite. I was not aware of any contemporary French type designers at the time, but

was aware of the large role France has played in the history of typeface design. This is

the book that influenced me to research the topic further.

Further research led me to discover the book *The Story of Graphic Design in

France* written in 2007 by Michel Wlassikoff, renowned historian of French graphic

design and typography. This book presents a thorough history along with many visual

examples of French graphic design starting from the 1500s until 2005. It includes work

from designers who are native to France and who have made France their home. *The

Story of Graphic Design in France* was written in response to the lack of recognition of

French graphic design both inside and outside of France.[10]

The publication *Graphisme en France,* with the mission to create a graphic design

culture in France,[11] was introduced in 1994. It is a multi-page, yearly calendar of events

related to graphic design, which continues to be published to this day. It has since

---

[9] Jean-Baptiste Levée, *Lettres Type: The State of Bespoke Typeface Design in France

Today,* (Paris: Ypsilon Éditeur, 2012), 6 – 7.

[10] Michel Wlassikoff, "The Paradoxes of Graphic Design and the difficulties of

Establishing its History," in *The Story of Graphic Design in France,* (Corte Madera:

Gingko Press, Inc, 2005), 9.

[11] Michel Wlassikoff, "Two Decades of Graphic Design in France," *Graphisme en

France* (2014): 13.

expanded to include full articles written by design professionals, and as of 2014 it is released in both French and English.

Many other sources of information range from French publications, such as *Back Cover* and *Étapes,* graphic design history books, books on typography, and books from French designers. A thorough review of all of these resources has provided an understanding of the history of typographic design as well as information on contemporary designers in France.

Despite these publications, there remains a lack of awareness of contemporary French typographic design. Some of these materials are not easily accessible outside of France, and unless there is already an interest in the topic, they are hard to come by. In an off-camera discussion with the typographic designer, Alice Savoie, she stated that this is partially due to language barriers and the fact that some of these materials are not released in English. For these reasons, this project will be in English and will remain web-based. By making this a web-based project, content is easily added, updated, and accessed, which is a difficult task with printed materials. A related model to compare my thesis to would be the website *I Love Typography. I Love Typography* is an online blog started by John Boardley who states, "This site aims to make the subject more accessible, to bring the study of typography to the masses, if you will."[12] John Boardley himself writes some of the blog posts, but others are also invited to contribute. Our goals are similar in that we both want to reach a large audience, but our approaches differ in two

---

[12] John Boardley, "What's It All About?" *I Love Typography,* posted August 7, 2007, http://ilovetypography.com/about/.

ways— I am focusing on typographic design from a specific culture and video will be the

main content.

II

DESIGN METHOD

My approach to this project includes research methods as described in Hugh Dubberly's model of the creative process. This process is a repeated loop of three main steps: observe > reflect > make.[13] It is not necessary to start with a particular step in this process, only that the feedback from the previous step is reflected in the following step. Dubberly states, "The creative process is not just iterative; it's also recursive. It plays out 'in the large' and 'in the small'—in defining the broadest goals and concepts and refining the smallest details."[14] This statement is why I decided to follow this particular process; it is effective in all stages of a project, from early concept generation to completing the final touches. This process not only helped guide me through the project up to this point, but also will continue to guide me as future episodes of the video series are released; it is particularly useful for ongoing projects. The following are the steps that have guided me while using this process:

Observe 01: The creative process started when I purchased the book *Lettres Type: The State of Bespoke Typeface Design in France Today.* The book showcases contemporary French typeface designers and typefaces they designed as commissioned work. Being familiar with the role France played throughout the history of typeface

---

[13] See Appendix A, Hugh Dubberly's Model of the Creative Process.

[14] Dubberly, Hugh. "A Model of the Creative Process," *Dubberly Design Office,* posted March 20, 2009, http://www.dubberly.com/concept-maps/creative-process.html.

design, I was intrigued by this book because I was very unfamiliar with contemporary designers in France. This observation led to further review of the current literature available on the subject of French typographic design through various mediums, such as books, publications, web resources, and a dissertation. At this point I decided that this was a valid topic for a thesis.

Reflect 01: Having reviewed literature on the subject, I began to ask myself questions: What is the issue at hand? Who is the target audience? Is there an interest in the subject? How can I create an interest in the subject for the international design community? What is the easiest way to reach a wide audience?

By answering these questions, I came up with the hypothesis that making a web-based resource, that profiles French typographic designers through the use of a series of videos would be an effective platform to build awareness of French typographic design for the United States and the international design community.

Make 01: Production of the first video began. This required setting up appointments with typographic designers and traveling to France in order to interview them in person. Also included in this step was the additional content gathering of vernacular French typography.

Observe 02: Upon returning from France, I began analyzing the recorded footage. Reviewing video interviews and documentary style videos produced by others allowed me to take notes of the editing techniques. Reviewing authentic French films and music gave me insight into how to produce a video that gives a sense of being French in nature.

Reflect 02: A decision was made on the best way to edit the footage into an informative video that will reach and appeal to a wide audience while maintaining all of the original goals. This is also when the decision was made that each episode will be centered on a specific city in France.

Make 02: The beta version of the first episode was edited. This also included the creation of the opening titles. The video was premiered during the opening of the MFA thesis exhibition at the University Galleries. This was accompanied by a printed survey[15] to be filled out by the attendants after viewing the video. After the premiere in the gallery, the video was released online for an international group of designers to review and submit feedback through an online survey using Google Docs.[16] As described in the book *Universal Methods of Design,* surveys are a common method of collecting a lot of data in a short time in which the results can be analyzed statistically.[17] For a project such as this, using surveys to collect information is useful because I can reach many people in a short timeframe, which leads to faster production.

Observe 03: Feedback was collected from both the survey at the gallery premiere and the online survey, which assessed the general knowledge and interest in the topic both before and after viewing the first episode.

---

[15] See appendix B, Video Premiere Survey and Results.

[16] See appendix C, Online Video Survey and Results.

[17] Bella Martin and Bruce Hanington, "Surveys," in *Universal Methods of Design: 100 Ways to Research Complex Problems, Develop Innovative Ideas, and Design Effective Solutions,* (Beverly: Rockport Publishers, 2012), 386.

Reflect 03: The feedback and suggestions were reviewed from the survey in the gallery[18] as well as the online survey.[19] This information will be applied to a re-edited version of the video.

Make 03: The video, which will be re-edited based on the survey results, will be completed and released publicly on YouTube. This will include the name change of the series. The original title was *Type Connections: Typographic Design in France.* Based on the feedback received, it has changed to *Face à Face: Conversations with Typographic Designers of France* in order to better reflect the content of the video.

Observe 04: Research will begin on other cities in France that are home to typographic designers. These designers and their work will be reviewed.

Reflect 04: A decision will be made on the next city in which to film the next episode. Typographic designers currently residing in the chosen city will be contacted to see if any are willing to be interviewed.

Make 04: I will travel to the chosen city in France and begin production of the next episode.

These beginning steps will be repeated for the future episodes being released. The only difference will be that the future episodes will not premiere in a gallery setting, but will be released online to an international group of designers. Feedback will continue to be collected through the use of surveys. This creative process will continue for further project development and future research with the following steps:

---

[18] See appendix B, Video Premiere Survey and Results.

[19] See appendix C, Online Video Survey and Results.

Observe 05: Websites that promote graphic designers and their work will be reviewed.

Reflect 05: I will analyze these websites and and take notes of what should and should not be included in the website I create.

Make 05: The website in which the video series will be embedded. This allows for the videos to continue to be hosted on YouTube, but have a dedicated website that can be easily found on the web. YouTube was chosen over other video hosting websites because it allows video to be viewed at a very high quality of sixty frames-per-second and also provides analytics so that statistics on the video, such as the number of times the video was watched or which countries it was watched from, can be viewed. Access to the videos will be easier for a broader audience because all of the video content can be found in one location. The website will be released to a group of designers for review.

Observe 06: Feedback will be collected from those who review the website through the use of an online survey using Google Docs.

Reflect 06: Feedback and suggestions collected from the online survey will be reviewed. These will be applied to a redesigned version of the website.

Make 06: The redesigned website will be completed and released live on a dedicated web address.

Observe 07: Using analytics through YouTube[20] and the dedicated website, observations will be made of the areas around the world that are providing the most views.

---

[20] See appendix D, YouTube Analytics.

Reflect 07: Using this data, I will determine if the target audience is being reached. If the target audience is not being reached, I will determine what changes need to be made in order to reach them. If the target audience is being reached, I will determine how to continue expanding.

Make 07: The final, necessary changes will be made in order to reach the target audience and to continue growing.

Where the benefits of this process are truly seen is when I review the feedback obtained through surveys. The same survey was given in two separate environments after viewers had a chance to view the first video of the series; one was in a gallery setting with a printed survey,[21] the second was an online survey to be completed after viewing the video on YouTube.[22] The surveys both produced favorable results, indicating that the previous steps I have taken throughout this process have been accurate. With these results, I know that there is adequate interest in the topic to justify the continued production of videos as part of the series.

The repetitive process of observing > reflecting > and making in Hugh Dubberly's model of the creative process has guided my work and has proven to be an effective method in doing so. It allows me to constantly reflect on the steps I take, ensuring that the most effective decisions are made. This process will continue to benefit me as I try to reach my goal of producing a series of videos that educate the international design community on the typographic work being created by French designers.

---

[21] See appendix B, Video Premiere Survey and Results.

[22] See appendix C, Online Video Survey and Results.

III

THE VIDEO SERIES

Overview.

   Goals. The video series, titled *Face à Face: Conversations with Typographic Designers of France,* will be a series of episodes, each one set in a different city in France. They will feature interviews with local typographic designers, with the main goal of building awareness of French typographic design amongst the international design community, in order to change the viewpoint that France is lacking in the production of quality typographic design.

   Each episode will focus on a diverse group of typographic designers—diverse in the sense that each designer has something unique to offer. For example, one interview may be with a recent graduate and the next could be with a designer who has been in the field for a long time, or one might be with a typeface designer and the next could be with a typographer who designs with typefaces that already exist.

Production.

   Equipment Used. When choosing the equipment to use, it had to meet the three following specifications:

   1. It must be affordable.

   2. It must be light and compact enough to travel with.

   3. It must be capable of producing high quality video.

After reviewing the many choices available I decided on the Sony A6000 digital camera. This is an inexpensive, lightweight, entry-level camera that is capable of producing high quality sixty frame-per-second video at an aspect ratio of 1920x1080. This camera combined with a Sigma thirty-millimeter prime lens produced video with terrific results. Sound was recorded with a compact Sony shotgun microphone attached to the camera.

I later added an iPhone 6S+ as a second camera for alternative angles. This version of the iPhone films at the same frame rate and aspect ratio as the Sony A6000, albeit with some differences; some quality is lost in low-light situations and the lens does not provide as good of a depth of field.

To keep the shots steady I used a combination of tripods and a monopod. Footage for the first video was recorded using an Oben monopod and Joby Gorillapod, which is a flexible tripod ideal for lightweight recording devices. I later added an Oben tripod which is capable of standing at taller heights than the Joby Gorillapod. The Joby Gorillapod is ideal for use with the iPhone 6S+ while the Oben tripod was used in combination with the Sony A6000 camera.

All of this equipment meets and exceeds the requirements listed above. Traveling with the equipment was hassle free and it all fit inside of a backpack, making carrying everything from location to location simple without weighing me down. In addition, the equipment was quick and simple to set up, making the recording of both b-roll footage[23] and the interviews an easy process while only taking up a small portion of the designers' time. This combination of equipment produced results that I am more than happy with.

---

[23] B-roll is footage that accompanies the main shot. In the case of this video, I use b-roll to show various shots of the city, the designers' studios, and their work.

Locations. Many of the typographic designers in France are located in the major metropolitan areas of the country. Each of the episodes in this series will focus on designers of a specific city in France. In order to add to the authenticity of this video series, it is important to film each episode on location in France, preferably in each designer's office or studio, where they feel most comfortable and have access to visuals of their work. At this point of *Face à Face,* I have conducted interviews with typographic designers in Paris and Lyon. Potential locations for future episodes include, but are not limited to, Marseille, Toulouse, Nice, Nantes, Strasbourg, Montpellier, Bordeaux and Lille. This list would cover the ten largest cities in France, which would allow viewers to see the differences and similarities in typographic design from location to location.

The Interviews. The typographic designers I reached out to in both Paris and Lyon were very receptive and happy to participate. They invited me to meet them in their studios, places of work, or at public lectures. When interviewing, my goal was to keep the interviews as comfortable and unintimidating as possible. This was often achieved by starting off the meeting with a casual conversation in order to get to know each other while they would give me a tour of their studio or work area.

Another goal while interviewing was to take up as little of their time as possible. They are all working professionals and their time is valuable. Each of the interviews ranged from thirty minutes to one hour. Because the main goal of this entire project is to introduce the international design community to French typographic designers, the questions I asked were introductory in nature. I would start each interview by having them introduce themselves and their studios, discuss their background in typographic design, discuss projects they are currently working on, and talk about the current state of

typographic design in France. These basic questions would naturally bring up other topics, which add something unique to each interview.

Post-Production.

    Editing the Video. Editing of the first video involved a thorough review of all recorded footage and was a lengthy process due to the amount of footage recorded. Using Adobe Premiere Pro CC, I separated the footage into categories depending on the person interviewed or if it was b-roll footage. I then viewed all of the footage, in some cases multiple times, while carefully listening to what the interviewees are saying. Next, I removed parts of the interview that were irrelevant to the topic at hand, which is to give an introduction of typographic designers in France. After doing this process for each interviewee, I then began to piece together the footage in a way that makes sense chronologically. I had two ways to go about completing this step: either keep all of the interviews separate from each other, or mix them up but pieced together so that what they are discussing still makes sense. I decided to go with the latter, which adds more dynamic to the video. Once I had the interviews edited together, I began to add in the b-roll footage where it made sense, such as when the interviewee mentions a part of the city or a specific piece of work.

    Title Sequence and Opening Scene. As mentioned earlier, one of the goals for the video series is to capture the essence of France with the footage that is filmed. This is accomplished in the opening title sequence and montage.[24] The films of Jean-Luc Godard from the 1960s inspired the title sequence. To quote Laura Forde from her presentation at

---

[24] See appendix E, Screenshots from the First Episode.

the 2010 School of Visual Arts D-Crit Conference, "…Godard is an autodidact whose obsession with graphic language influenced his own creative expression resulting in a body of work of early films that have come to represent France in the 1960s."[25] The fact that his films have come to represent France is the reason I have decided to follow his stylistic cues. He often uses a pacing that is matched to either sound or music. In addition, many of his films tend to use large, colored lettering. A good example of these characteristics can be seen in the title sequence of his film *Made in U.S.A.* The title graphics and opening of my video series follow these three traits of Jean-Luc Godard film titles in order to create an opening sequence that is representative of France. The typeface used for the titling is *Infini,* which was designed by the French typographic designer, Sandrine Nugue. The titling and video clips are also matched to fit the beat of a jazzy song. The opening scenes will vary from episode to episode while maintaining the same look and feel. This will be accomplished by using video clips of imagery unique to the location in which each particular episode is filmed. This will add a bit of uniqueness to every episode and keep them from all feeling the same.

Episode One. The first episode of the series was filmed in Paris, France, the largest city of the country. Paris is the location of many iconic typographic signs, such as the Art Nouveau styled metro signs.[26] To quote Louise Fili, "French scripts are the

---

[25] Laura Forde, "Laura Forde, 'Jean-Luc Godard's Critical Appropriation of Graphic Design in the 1960s' (2010 D-Crit Conference)," filmed April 30, 2010. Vimeo video, 12:44. Posted May 7, 2010. https://vimeo.com/11555631.

[26] See appendix E, Screenshots from the First Episode.

embodiment of elegance, an essential typographic statement for all things Parisian."[27] The city is home to many graphic designers and studios, therefore it was not difficult to find a small group of typographic designers who were willing to be interviewed. This episode takes the viewer on a thirty-minute journey through the busy city of Paris with footage of vernacular French typography and recognizable sites. It focuses specifically on three typeface designers who are all at different points in their careers, which adds diversity to the group. The three people interviewed for this episode are Jean-François Porchez, Émilie Rigaud, and Alice Savoie.

Jean-François Porchez's interview was conducted at his studio *Typofonderie,* located in the suburb of Clamart. Nearby, in the suburb of Malakoff, I met with and interviewed Émilie Rigaud at her studio *A is for Apple.* In the north of Paris is the University of Paris 8. This is where I interviewed Alice Savoie, who runs her own typefoundry called *Frenchtype.* She is not from Paris, but was traveling to the university to conduct a guest lecture. All three interviewees speak about their work and give great insight into the current state of typographic design in France. This will set the pace of

Episode Two (In Progress). I have already traveled to the city to collect the footage I need, and production of the second episode will begin soon. This episode will take the viewer to Lyon, France where they will be introduced to the studios of *Prototypo, Graphéine,* and to the Musée de l'Imprimerie et de la Communication Graphique (the Museum of Printing and Graphic Communication). At these locations I

---

[27] Louise Fili, *Graphique de la Rue: The Signs of Paris* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2015), 30.

interviewed a range of typographic designers with varying backgrounds. This episode will be released six months after the public launch of the website and first episode.

    Future Episodes. As mentioned earlier, I would like to produce an episode of *Face à Face: Conversations with Typographic Designers of France* from each of the top ten largest cities in France. A realistic timeframe for the release of the episodes is two per year. This allows for the time required to research which city and typographic designers will be included in the episode, travel and film the video content, edit the video, release a beta version to collect feedback, re-edit the video, and release the finalized episode publicly. Future episodes may also be produced by revisiting cities I have already been to, with the goal of introducing even more designers from the area. This project can also expand beyond France to include francophone nations, such as Switzerland, Canada, and Belgium.

Identity.

    The identity for *Face à Face* was inspired by the classic French films of the 1960s as well as current trends in French graphic design. The main output of this project is video, therefore the identity was driven by the idea that it will be animated. There are instances, though, where the identity must be static, such as in print. The goal for this identity was to convey a sense of motion when it is in its static form, but still allow for a large quantity of possibilities when animated. This is accomplished by the all capital and spaced out lettering as well as the broken words

FAC
  E À
    FAC E

Figure 1: *Face à Face* identity

In order to further create a sense of motion, multiple versions of the identity were created allowing for the possibility to use varying versions of it in different situations.

FAC   FAC E   FAC
  E À   À   E À
    FAC   FAC   FAC
     E   E   E

        F ACE
FAC   À
  E À   FAC
    FAC E   E

Figure 2: Multiple identity options

As can be seen above, this dynamic system allows for a great number of possibilities that can vary from situation to situation. The typeface used will vary in each episode, but will always feature a typeface designed by a French designer. In the case of the identity shown above, which is used in the first episode of the series, the typeface is *Infini* designed by Sandrine Nugue based in Paris, France.

Following the public release of the first episode of *Face à Face,* a website will be released so that all episodes can be found in one location. The website continues to

follow the same identity system as above. It retains its dynamic characteristics by changing to one of the many possible options every time the website is visited or refreshed, again giving it a sense of motion in a static situation. The simple color palette of the website was inspired by the simplicity of the title screens from French films of the 1960s. In addition to containing each episode from the series, it will feature a blog. This allows the option to have any interested designer write blog posts about French typographic design for the website, which further promotes French typographic designers internationally. Through the website, a community will be built by allowing the viewers to comment on the blog posts and videos. The website offers advertisement opportunities, which can assist in providing funding for the production of future episodes.

FACE
À
FACE
E

EPISODES
LOCATIONS
BLOG
ABOUT
CONTACT

Search

ABOUT

Advertisement 1

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, ius fabellas pericula ne, eu per integre epicurei intellegebat. Mutat dicam vel ea, ex vel putant vidisse. Cum accusata antiopam ex. Albucius officiis mea no.

Nulla verear bonorum et nec. Nostrud sententiae an usu, sit id eirmod ponderum. Novum urbanitas at est. Nisl singulis consectetuer quo in, cetero disputando ad sea, cu ignota vidisse indoctum qui. No malorum impedit cum, zril vocibus vituperatoribus ea qui, mazim congue scripserit ea has.

Advertisement 2

Mea nostro expetenda ne, has ex tempor delicata. Quod torquatos adipiscing eu eos. Usu ea semper tibique. Te cum veri menandri perpetua, legere aeterno omittam at mel. Mei ne minim graeco, ne sit mazim numquam perfecto, ullum reprehendunt in qui. Ad alienum persequeris per.

Eu sint docendi pri, ut vero aliquip torquatos nam, ius cibo utinam euripidis in. Sea no volumus conceptam. Eum aliquip senserit philosophia te, facer sententiae assueverit ut nec. Mundi aliquam sed te, epicuri fierent id sed. No his saepe nusquam, et omnes reprehendunt quo. At eos nostrud indoctum, eum id zril nonumes laboramus.

Advertisement 3

FACE
E À
FAC E
© 2016 Face à Face

Episode
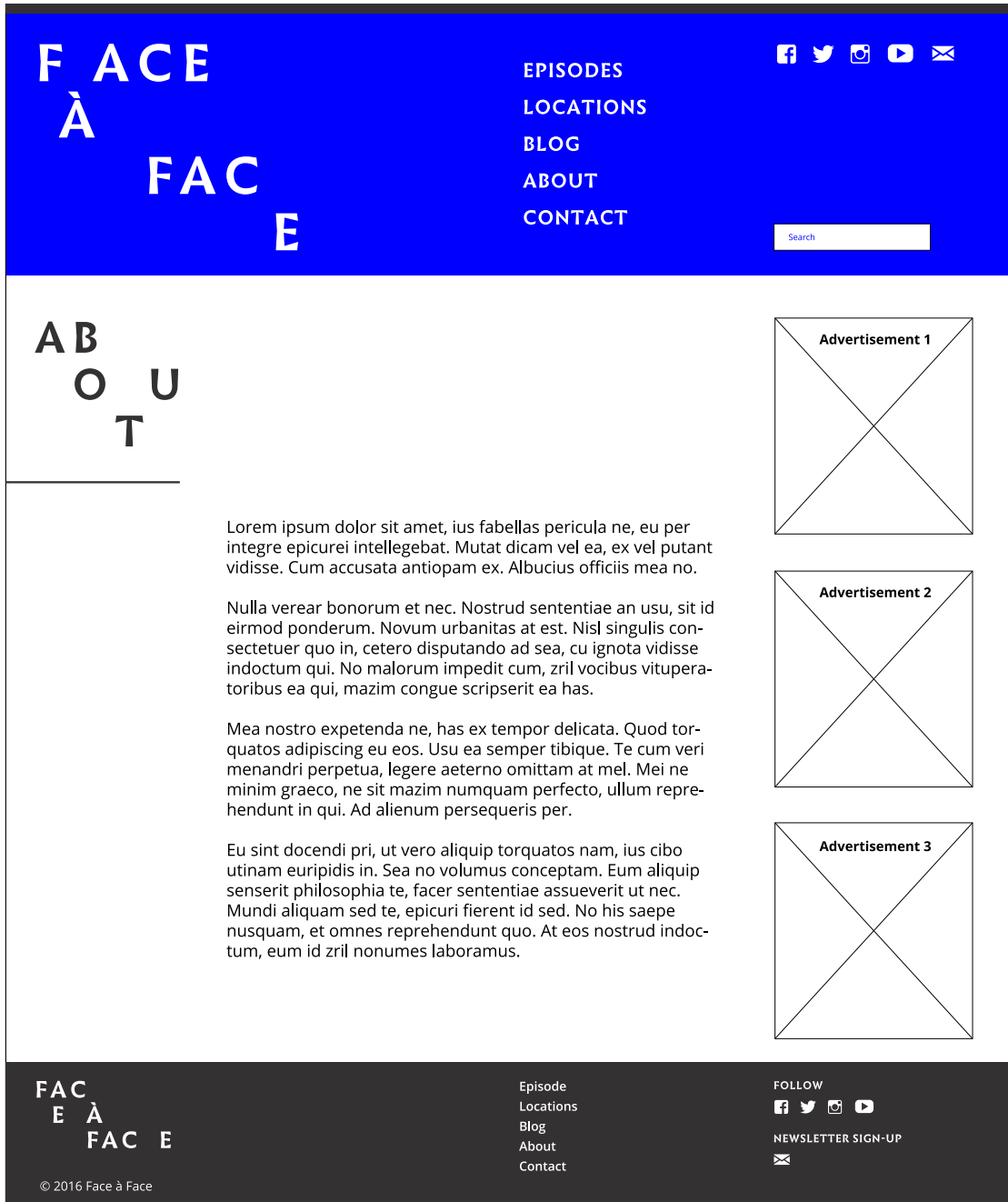Locations
Blog
About
Contact

FOLLOW

NEWSLETTER SIGN-UP

Figure 3: Website wireframe

IV

OUTCOMES

Initial Expectations.

Given my research prior to producing the first video of the series, I expected that most people would have little knowledge or interest in French typographic design prior to viewing the first video of the series. The goal of this project was to change this by educating the international design community on the many talented French typographic designers and their work through the use of video.

Results.

Measurable results were provided by a short survey completed after viewing the first video of the series. It asked four questions plus had an area to fill in any additional comments. The questions asked are as follows:

1. Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?

2. What was your level of interest in French typographic design prior to viewing the video?

3. What was your level of interest in French typographic design after viewing the video?

4. Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their work?

The answers to these questions provided the results needed in order to know if there is enough of an interest for future production of this series.

The survey was conducted in two different environments. The first was a printed form of the survey to be filled out after viewing the video in a gallery setting. This survey had a total of seventeen responses, with the majority of the results being favorable; fifteen people did not have any prior knowledge to French typographic design, the level of interest in French typographic design increased for fifteen viewers, and another fifteen people say they would be interested in seeing this expand into more videos. Some of the additional comments remark on the difficulty of being able to hear the video being shown in a gallery setting.[28]

The second time, the survey was conducted online after sharing the video's YouTube link with classmates and a group of international industry professionals chosen by my thesis committee member, Alessandro Segalini. This survey was hosted on Google Docs and received nine responses, the majority of which were favorable. Four out of nine respondents had limited knowledge of contemporary French typographic design prior to viewing the video, and did not have much of an interest in the topic. Results from the survey show that after viewing the video, their level of interest of the topic increased. One noticeable difference from the previous survey, however, is that there was an increase in those who had prior knowledge of French typographic designers—56% of the respondents to the online survey had prior knowledge of French Typographic design compared to 12% of the respondents to the first survey. This is most likely due to the fact that the video was opened up to an international group. Other than that, the level of

---

[28] See appendix B, Video Premiere Survey and Results.

interest in the topic increased for six viewers and eight of them are interested in seeing

the production of more videos. Other comments remark on how they enjoyed the

diversity of the speakers but wish there were more visuals of their work.[29]

Results are also measured using the analytics function already built into YouTube.

Using analytics is an excellent method to see if you are reaching your target audience. It

displays information such as which countries are viewing the video, the length of time

each country has spent viewing the video, the average length of time viewing the video,

whether the video was watched on YouTube or an external site, and if the video has been

shared and embedded anywhere else on the world wide web.[30] At this point, the YouTube

video is listed privately and has been shared with a limited audience of invited focus

group members. When this video is released publicly, the YouTube analytics will be a

useful gauge of the size of the viewership and level of audience interest.

Applying Feedback from Results.

There were many informative suggestions left in the comments section of both of

the surveys. The suggestions ranged from tips on filming, editing, and what they would

like to see included in this and future videos. Taking all of the feedback into

consideration, a re-edited version of the video will be released. This will include revising

some of the scene changes, adding more visuals of work from the interviewees, and

adding voiceovers when showing their work. When the video is released publicly, I will

---

[29] See appendix C, Online Video Survey and Results.

[30] See appendix D, YouTube Analytics.

be able to review and analyze the analytics of the video, which will allow me to see if I am reaching the correct demographic.

Future Expectations.

This project will lead to the production of more videos as well as an increase in the number of viewers and the amount of interest. With the content being easily accessible through online sources, it has the capability to reach a wide audience in a short amount of time. This also opens up communication between author and followers or interested community, as they will be able to leave comments about the video on either the YouTube page or the website I make for linking the videos. Subtitles will eventually be added to the videos in order to make it accessible to those who are hearing impaired and to help clarify potential misunderstandings due to the language barrier. My ultimate goal of introducing the international design community to French typographic designers will hopefully benefit the French typographic designers by giving them recognition outside of their communities. This has the potential to increase their number of clients and work. Designers from all over the world could benefit by providing a new source of inspiration. In addition, there exists an educational value to this project. The video series can be shared either in a classroom setting or as a homework assignment, educating a young generation of students on a topic that is little known, which further adds to the success of this project.

V

CONCLUSIONS

Future Research and Development.

This project will continue to develop in both the immediate future and throughout the coming years. The next step for this project is to apply the feedback I received to the first episode of the series and release it publicly on YouTube. Immediately following that, I will begin production of the website that will have the video series embedded. The website will aid in the promotion of French typographic design by inviting any interested designer to write blog posts about French typographic design. Production of the website will continue to follow Hugh Dubberly's model of the creative process.

Once the website is completed, it will be launched publicly and will include the first episode embedded within. Following this, post-production of the second episode of the series will begin. Content for the second video has already been recorded, therefore the next step is a thorough review of the footage then the release of a beta version of the second episode to a small group of designers, much like the steps taken for the first episode. Again, feedback will be collected through a survey and applied before being released publicly. All of the episodes will continue to be hosted on YouTube then published on the dedicated website. This allows the continued monitoring of YouTube analytics and feedback to ensure that I continue to reach the target audience. Over the years, the plan is to continue producing episodes following this same format. As time goes on, the objective is for the video series to gain a following, giving French typographic design the exposure it deserves.

Steps will be taken to ensure that *Face à Face: Conversations with Typographic Designers of France* gains a following and traffic to the website is increased. First and foremost, will be through branding efforts established for *Face à Face*. A consistent look and feel across the video series, the website, and all printed materials ties together the separate entities and ensures the integrity of the brand. Promotion of the video series and website is another way to market to a growing audience. I will reach out to graphic design publications and websites to see if they are interested in publishing a review of the video series. I will publish an article promoting this project on a popular graphic design website, such as the *Design Observer,* which often publishes articles written by guest writers. Another potential source of promotion is the Alliance Française. Alliance Française is an organization with locations in 135 countries. Their mission is to encourage and develop knowledge of the French language and French and francophone cultures, and to foster cultural, intellectual, and artistic exchanges between the United States, France, and French-speaking countries.[31] They have a series of cultural programs used to promote France in many categories, such as history and the arts, in which they accept proposals. I will propose a screenings of *Face à Face: Conversations with Typographic Designers of France.*

The intent of this project is to reach as many viewers as possible. For this reason, there are no plans for financial gain, although it has the potential to receive funding through sponsors. The typographic designers I have met with and the companies they are associated with had much interest in seeing this project develop. I will contact these

---

[31] "About Us," *Alliance Française d'Austin,* accessed April 07, 2016, http://www.afaustin.org/about-us/.

companies, which include Prototypo, Typofonderie, Frenchtype, Graphéine, A is for Apple, Nonpareille, and the Musée de l'Imprimerie et de la Communication Graphique, as well as the organization Alliance Française, and inquire if they are interested in providing a corporate sponsorship. In return for their sponsorship, they would be able to place an advertisement on the website, which will further promote typographic design in France. In addition to the potential for sponsorships, funding can be raised through using the many online fundraising websites available, such as Kickstarter, Go Fund Me, and Indie Gogo. The funding would be used to cover the cost associated with the production of the videos, with the main expense being travel. The funding can also be used for distribution of the video series and to cover submission fees for film festivals, such as Sundance Film Festival and South by Southwest Film.

Expansion.

Once France has been thoroughly covered by *Face à Face: Conversations with Typographic Designers of France,* the video series has the potential to expand to francophone nations where France is a major influence on their culture. This can include areas of Switzerland, Canada, Belgium, Luxembourg, and many areas in Africa.

This project also has the potential to expand beyond the production of videos. One of the companies I met with during the filming of the second episode in Lyon, Prototypo, reached out to me about two weeks after our meeting. They mentioned how they enjoyed how I am promoting the work of French typographic designers and that they would like to have me as a guest writer for their blog. This allows me to continue producing videos

then writing a transcript of the interviews I film. This will aid in giving more exposure to the designers as well as promoting my own videos and website.

Improving the Project.

  Production. While everyone I met with spoke English, in some cases there was a slight language barrier. It was not enough to cause much of a disruption while filming, but it will help to improve on my French speaking skills to help when these situations arise.

  Post-Production. The video series will continue to improve in terms of production quality. I have received excellent tips for both filming and editing techniques that I will apply to the current episode and future videos. As time goes on this will become more natural. Feedback from viewers and colleagues will continue to help the development of the series. Thoroughly examining how similar documentaries and interview-styled videos are produced and advertised will also be an added benefit.

Conclusion.

  Results from the surveys show that many people outside of France have little to no knowledge of the typographic work being created in France, and for this reason they do not have much interest in the subject. In most cases, though, their viewpoints have changed after viewing the first episode of the series and the majority of the test subjects are interested in seeing a continuation of the series. This indicates that there exists an audience for the subject and therefore a main objective has been met. Further production of this video series will continue to give exposure to the typographic designers in France

while educating the international design community. The French typographic designers I interviewed and their willingness to participate in the production of this video series are also an indicator of the success of this project. All were excited to share their stories and history regarding typographic design. Based on these results I am confident that this series will continue to gain an audience.

As the series continues, my own skills will continue to improve. This will lead to better, higher quality video production. There also exists an opportunity for *Face à Face: Conversations with Typographic Designers of France* to grow through sponsorships and reviews, giving it more recognition and, therefore, increasing the number of viewers. Further growth can continue by expanding beyond France and into francophone nations where France's influence on culture can be seen.

The use of a consistent identity system ties together all elements of this project and through the use of its dynamic, ever-changing characteristics, it is able to bring in a sense of motion in its static form—an important quality with the main product being video. Every episode and every visit to the website will be unique, yet still feel that they are part of the same brand. The website will build a community by allowing the viewers to comment on the videos and blog posts. This creates a platform for international discourse about French typographic design. The website will feed back into the video production because the viewers can suggest typographic designers, topics, or regions to be included in future episodes. The videos will be a catalyst for viewer engagement on the website, generating renewed conversation, which has been lacking in recent decades, on the subject of French typographic design.

APPENDIX SECTION

HUGH DUBBERLY'S MODEL OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS

VIDEO PREMIERE SURVEY AND RESULTS

Type
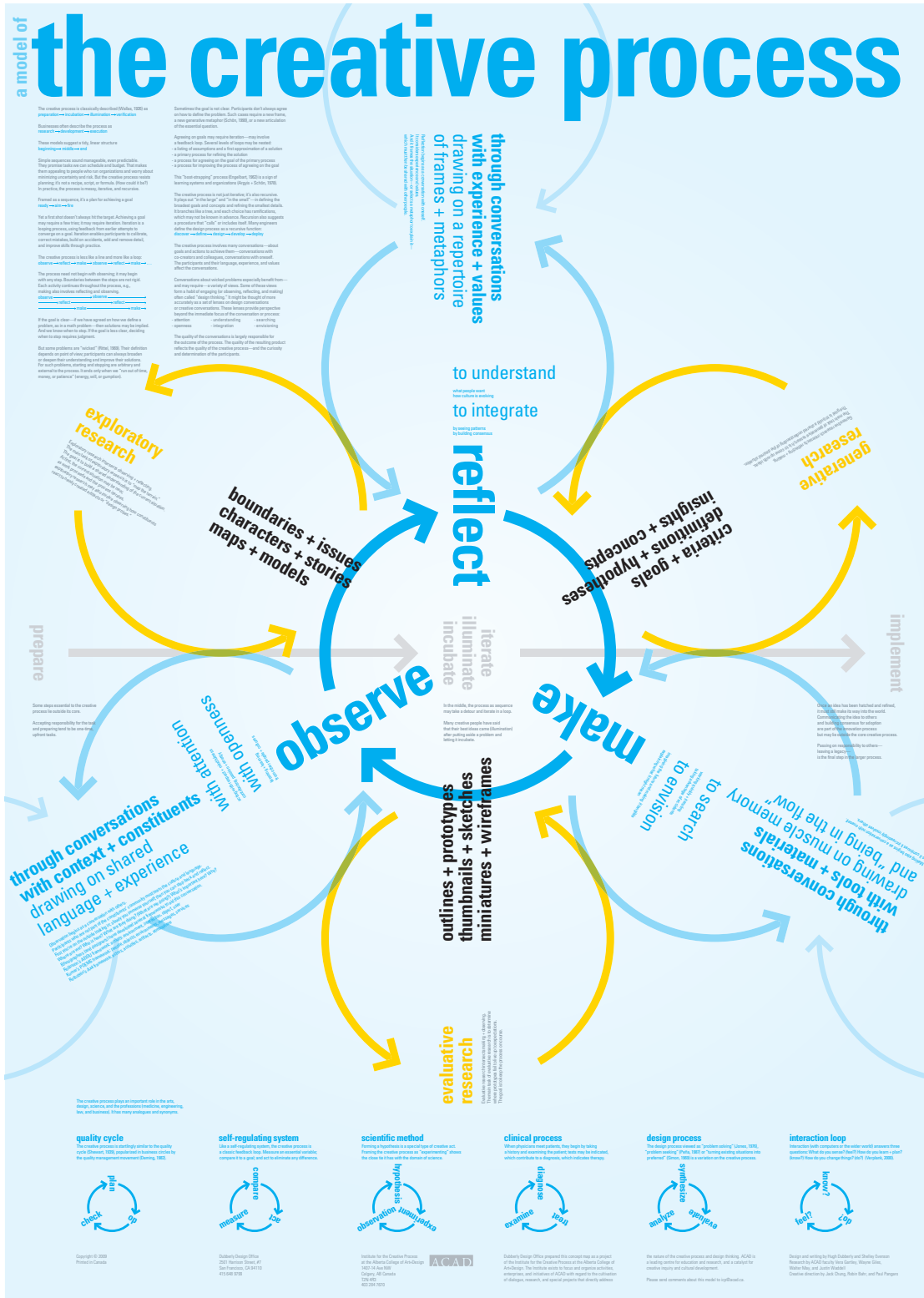# Connections

Typographic Design in France

Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?

Yes   No

What was your level of interest in French typographic design **prior** to viewing the video?

1   2   3   4   5
None   High

What is your level of interest in French typographic design **after** viewing the video?

1   2   3   4   5
None   High

Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their works?

Yes   No

Please add any additional comments below.

The printed survey filled out after viewing the first episode at the premiere of the video.

Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design after viewing the video?	Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their works?	Please add any additional comments below.
No	2	3	Yes	Great work :)
No	1	3	No	
No	1	3	Yes	
No	3	4	Yes	Love the scenes of type across the city – like to see more
No	2	5	Yes	Nice job on video.
No	1	4	Yes	
No	1	4	Yes	
No	1	3	Yes	<3
No	5	5	Yes	I enjoyed it! It was very interesting and different from the norm.
No	2	3	Yes	Maybe add subtitles? Difficult to hear/understand.
No	2	4	Yes	
No	3	5	Yes	
No	1	5	Yes	Difficult to hear in a crowded room, would like to hear in a different environment. Could the video include more visuals of the typographic work?

Video premiere survey results.

Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design after viewing the video?	Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their works?	Please add any additional comments below.
Yes	3.5	4	Yes	Please share this somewhere we can see it online.
Yes	2	4	Yes	
No	2	2	No	
No				

Video premiere survey results, *continued.*

ONLINE VIDEO SURVEY AND RESULTS

Type Connections

Typographic Design in France

Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?

☐ Yes

☐ No

What was your level of interest in French typographic design PRIOR to viewing the video?

      1 2 3 4 5

None ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ High

What is your level of interest in French typographic design AFTER viewing the video?

      1 2 3 4 5

None ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ High

Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their works?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Please add any additional comments below.

Submit

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

Powered by

Google Forms

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Report Abuse - Terms of Service - Additional Terms

The Google Docs survey filled out after viewing the first episode on YouTube.

Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design after viewing the video?	Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their works?	Please add any additional comments below.
No	3	4	Yes	I would love to see more characteristics of French typography or how it is different from other languages. Just my thought :)
No	2	4	Yes	It's a great initiative to take the French typographic design to another level. The interviews are very inspiring and informative
No	2	4	Yes	Overall pacing was pretty good, maybe shorten each clip in the opening montage to shorten intro length. Make sure cuts to each designer feel natural and transition in a meaningful way. Nice way to multitask on your honeymoon ;p

Online video survey results.

Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design after viewing the video?	Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their works?	Please add any additional comments below.
No	2	4	Yes	Would like to see more visuals/examples of French type - especially by the featured designers. Overlay voiceovers with images/video to showcase what the speakers are talking about
Yes	3	4	Yes	Really liked the fact that three different backgrounds and point-of-view were mixed together. The diversity of the interviewees is a big plus as well!
Yes	4	4	Yes	although it is quiet nice, sometimes 60 fps video can be distracting, especially during interviews.

Online video survey results, *continued.*

Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design after viewing the video?	Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their works?	Please add any additional comments below.
Yes	3	3		The problem is that the video was so tedious to watch. You would learn from watching the brilliant French cinematographers since the 1960s. This video taught me nothing; didn't cause interest in the subject; showed almost no typographic work; was poorly edited; lost focus. You need to show the passion of type design. You spoke with good people but did not get inside of them so that they could reveal what type design meant to them. I felt like this was just a videocam sitting in a place with little thought. This was like a TV news reporter at the site of an event just attempting to report in a stream of consciousness.

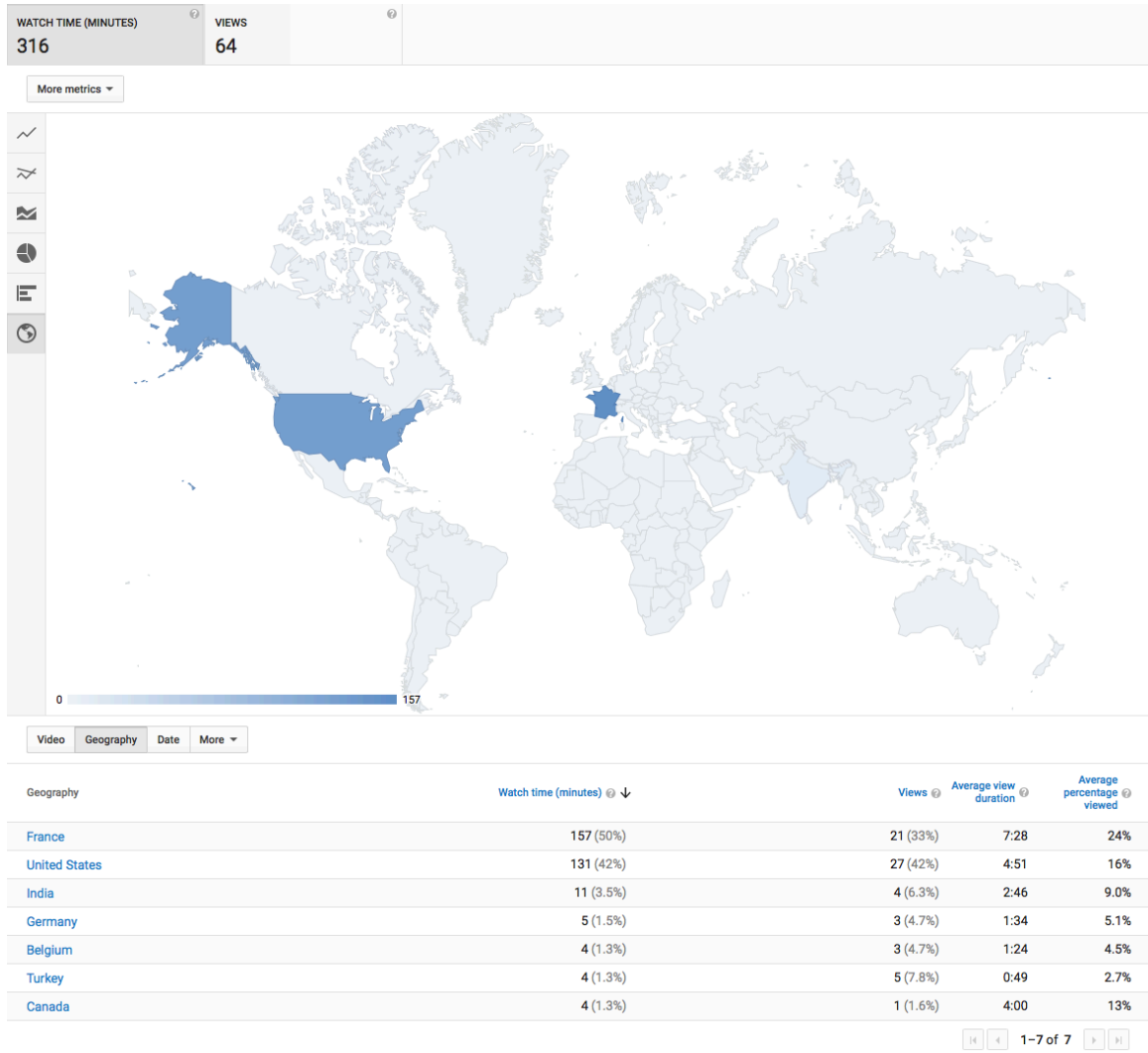Online video survey results, *continued.*

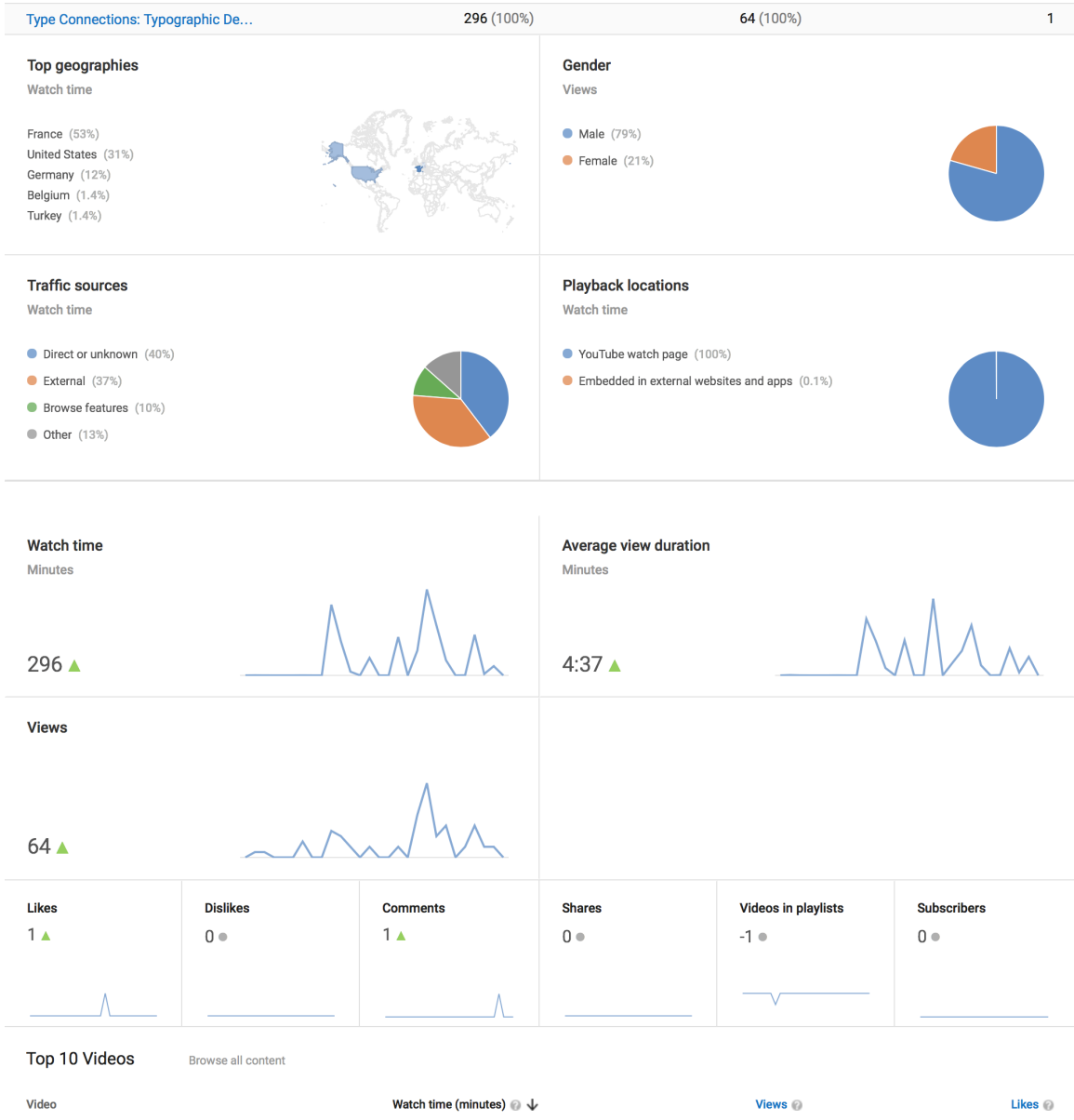| Did you have any knowledge of French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design prior to viewing the video?	What was your level of interest in French typographic design after viewing the video?	Would you be interested in a series of videos showcasing French typographic designers, studios, and their works?	Please add any additional comments below.
Yes	4	4	Yes	I am thinking probably "typographic design" should read "typeface design" if the focus is not quite on French people using (French) fonts.
Yes	4	5	Yes	

Online video survey results, *continued.*

YOUTUBE ANALYTICS

WATCH TIME (MINUTES)	VIEWS
316	64

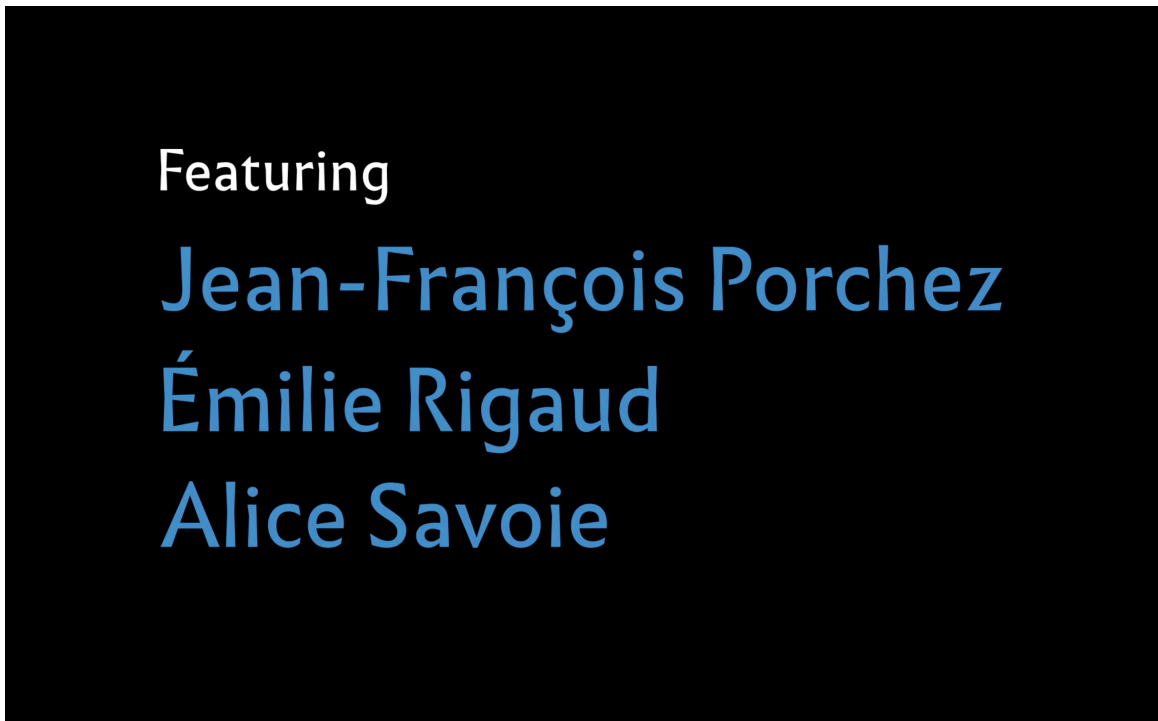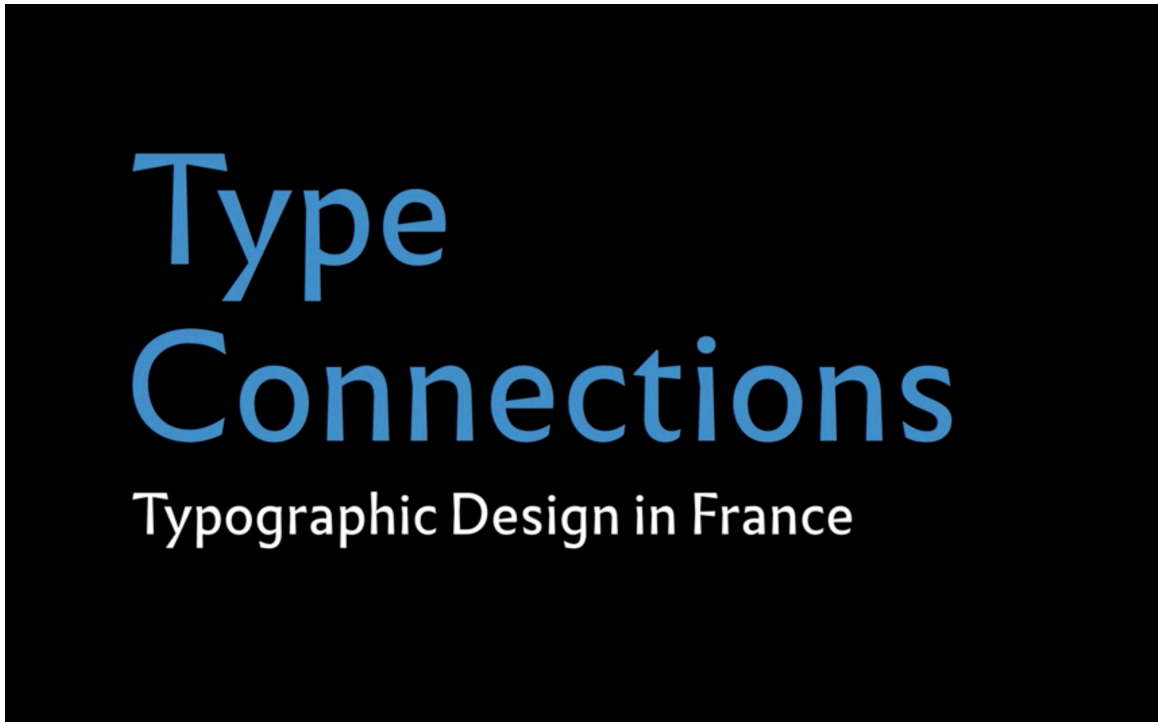| Geography	Watch time (minutes) ⬇	Views	Average view duration	Average percentage viewed
France	157 (50%)	21 (33%)	7:28	24%
United States	131 (42%)	27 (42%)	4:51	16%
India	11 (3.5%)	4 (6.3%)	2:46	9.0%
Germany	5 (1.5%)	3 (4.7%)	1:34	5.1%
Belgium	4 (1.3%)	3 (4.7%)	1:24	4.5%
Turkey	4 (1.3%)	5 (7.8%)	0:49	2.7%
Canada	4 (1.3%)	1 (1.6%)	4:00	13%

1–7 of 7

Analytics on YouTube can be used to gather information on the video, such as the number of views, the total time spent watching the video, which countries the video was viewed from, average view duration, and gender of the viewers.

| Type Connections: Typographic De… | 296 (100%) | 64 (100%) | 1 |

Top geographies
Watch time

France (53%)
United States (31%)
Germany (12%)
Belgium (1.4%)
Turkey (1.4%)

Gender
Views

● Male (79%)
● Female (21%)

Traffic sources
Watch time

● Direct or unknown (40%)
● External (37%)
● Browse features (10%)
● Other (13%)

Playback locations
Watch time

● YouTube watch page (100%)
● Embedded in external websites and apps (0.1%)

Watch time
Minutes

296 ▲

Average view duration
Minutes

4:37 ▲

Views

64 ▲

Likes	Dislikes	Comments	Shares	Videos in playlists	Subscribers
1 ▲	0 ●	1 ▲	0 ●	-1 ●	0 ●

Top 10 Videos   Browse all content

Video	Watch time (minutes) ↓	Views	Likes

44

SCREENSHOTS FROM THE FIRST EPISODE

Original title graphics from the opening scene. The title has since been changed.

Video clips from the opening scene.

Video clips from the opening scene.

Video clips from the opening scene.

Scene introducing the typeface designer Jean-François Porchez at his studio

Typofonderie.

An example of one of Jean-François Porchez's typefaces in use.

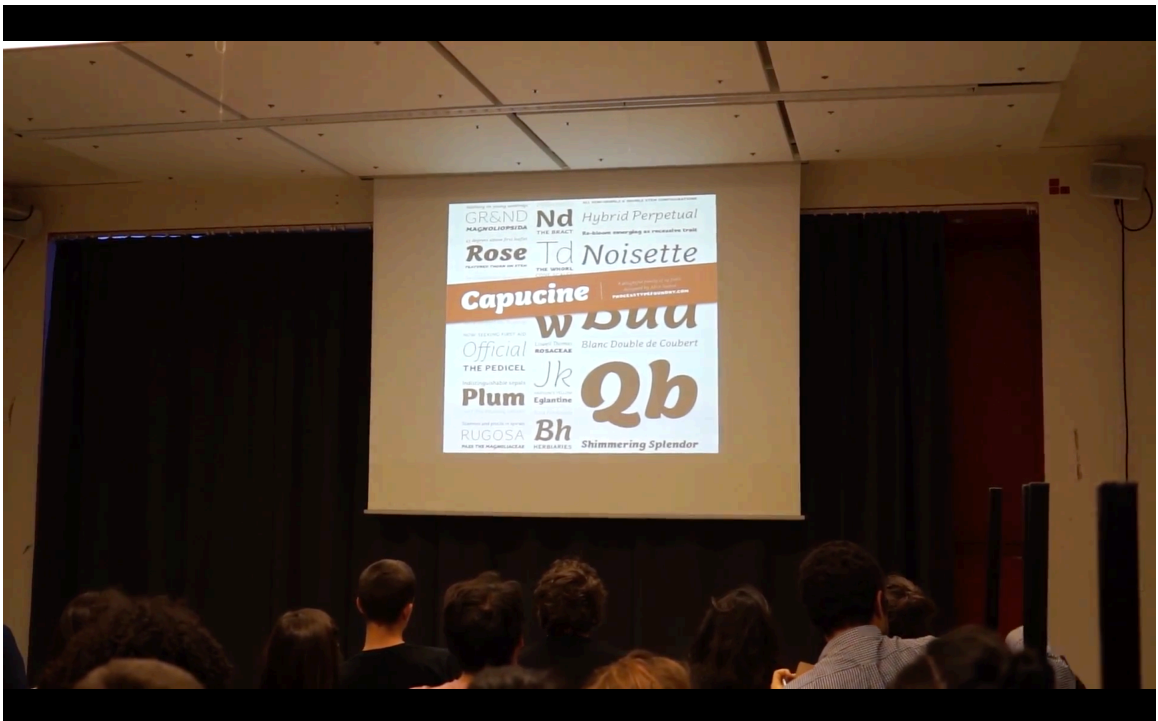Scene introducing the typeface designer Émilie Rigaud at her studio A is for Apple.

Examples of book designs from Émilie Rigaud.

Scene introducing the typeface designer Alice Savoie at the University of Paris 8.

Scene from a lecture where Alice Savoie was discussing her typeface Capucine.

LINK TO *FACE À FACE: CONVERSATIONS WITH TYPOGRAPHIC*

DESIGNERS OF FRANCE, EPISODE 01

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H6nKg_Spo-A

REFERENCES

"10 x 10: Vive la Campagne! 10 Questions and 100 Answers from 10 Designers and
Studios (not from Paris!)." *Slanted* 25 (2015): 156 – 173.

"10 x 10: Love Paris, 10 Questions and 100 Answers from 10 Designers and Studios
(from Paris!)." *Slanted* 25 (2015): 174 – 192.

"About Us." *Alliance Française d'Austin*. Accessed April 07, 2016.
http://www.afaustin.org/about-us/.

Apeloig, Philippe and Rozenberg, Michel. *Au Coeur du Mot (Inside the Word).* Baden:
Lars Müller Publishers, 2001.

Boardley, John. "What's It All About?" *I Love Typography.* Posted August 7, 2007.
http://ilovetypography.com/about/.

Darricau, Stéphane. "The Ex Factor." *Étapes* 26 (2011): 129 – 133.

Dickerman, Leah. *Dada: Zurich, Berlin, Hannover, Cologne, New York, Paris.* Landover:
National Gallery of Art Publishing Office, 2005.

Dubberly, Hugh. "A Model of the Creative Process." *Dubberly Design Office.* Posted
March 20, 2009. http://www.dubberly.com/concept-maps/creative-process.html.

Dunlap, David W. "Types with Plenty of Character." *The New York Times.* Last modified
December 23, 2011. http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/24/arts/design/printing-
for-kingdom-empire-republic-review.html?_r=4&ref=arts.

Fili, Louise. *Graphique de la Rue: The Signs of Paris.* New York: Princeton Architectural
Press, 2015.

Forde, Laura. "Laura Forde, 'Jean-Luc Godard's Critical Appropriation of Graphic
     Design in the 1960s' (2010 D-Crit Conference)." Filmed April 30, 2010. Vimeo
     video, 12:44. Posted May 7, 2010. https://vimeo.com/11555631.

Friedl, Friedrich, Ott, Nicolaus, and Stein, Bernard. *Typography: An Encyclopedic Survey
     of Type Design and Techniques Throughout History.* New York: Black Dog &
     Leventhal Publishers, Inc., 1998.

Levée, Jean-Baptiste. *Lettres Type: The State of Bespoke Typeface Design in France
     Today.* Paris: Ypsilon Éditeur, 2012.

Macmillan, Neil. *An A – Z of Type Designers.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Martin, Bella and Hanington, Bruce. *Universal Methods of Design: 100 Ways to
     Research Complex Problems, Develop Innovative Ideas, and Design Effective
     Solutions.* Beverly: Rockport Publishers, 2012.

Meggs, Philip B., and Purvis, Alston. *Meggs' History of Graphic Design.* Hoboken:
     Wiley & Sons, 2006.

Savoie, Alice. "French Type Foundries in the Twentieth Century: Causes and
     Consequences of Their Demise." Master's dissertation, University of Reading,
     2007.

Wlassikoff, Michel. *The Story of Graphic Design in France.* Corte Madera: Gingko
     Press, Inc., 2005.

Wlassikoff, Michel. "Two Decades of Graphic Design in France." *Graphisme en France,*
     (2014): 11 – 25.