



A selection of IO fake music album covers to illustrate the use of Semilla font and some of the glyph palette possibilities.

Photography by Stéphane Giner









About Semilla

I spend a lot of time following two obsessions: packaging and hand lettering. Alongside a few other minor obsessions, those two have been my major ones for so many years now, I've finally reached the point where I can actually claim them as "obsessions" without getting a dramatic reaction from the little voice in the back of my head.

When you spend so much time researching and studying a subject, you become very focused, directionally and objectively. But of course some of the research material you run into turns out to be tangential to whatever your focus happens to be at the time, so you absorb what you can from it, then shelf it — like the celebrity bobblehead that amused you for a while, but is now an almost invisible ornament eating dust and feathers somewhere in your environment.

And just like the bobblehead may fall off the shelf one day to remind you of its existence, some of my lettering research material unveiled itself in my head one day for no particular reason.

Hand lettering is now mostly perceived as an American art. Someone with my historical knowledge about lettering may be snooty enough to go as far as pointing out the British origins of almost everything American, including lettering — but for the most part, the contemporary perspective associates great lettering with America. The same perspective also associates blackletter, gothics and sans serifs with Germany.

So you can imagine my simultaneous surprise and impatience when, in my research for one of my American lettering-based fonts, I ran into a German lettering book from 1953, by an artist called Bentele. It was no use for me because it didn't propel my focus at that particular time, but a few months ago I was marveling at what we take for



granted — the sky is blue, blackletter is German, lettering is American — and found myself flipping through the pages of that book again.

The lettering in that book is upbeat and casual sign making stuff, but it has a slightly strange and youthful experimentation at its heart. I suppose I find it strange because it deviates a lot from the American stuff I'm used to working with for so long now. To make a long story short, what's inside that German book served as the semilla, which is Spanish for seed, for the typeface you see all over these pages.

With Semilla, my normal routine went out the window. My life for a while was all Bezier all the time. No special analog or digital brushes or pens were used in drawing these forms. They're the product of a true Bezier process, all starting with a point creating a curve to another point, which draws a curve to another point, and so on. It's a very time-consuming process, but at the end I am satisfied that it can get to pretty much the same results easier and more traditional methods accomplish.

And as usual with my fonts, the OpenType is plenty and a lot of fun. Experimenting with substitution and automation is still a great pleasure for me. It is the OpenType that always saves me from the seemingly endless work hours every type designer must inevitably have to face at one point in his career.

The artful photos used in this booklet are by French photographer and designer Stéphane Giner. He is very deserving of your patronage, so please keep an eye out for his marvelous work.

I hope you like Semilla and enjoy using it. I have a feeling that it marks a transition to a more curious and flexible period in my career, but only time will tell.

Of the fashionist Semilla







Sweet Tragedy Unique Victory Waltz-Xoxo Zoe.







The advantages of the OpenType*



Character Paragraph OpenType

Figure: Default Figure

Position: Default Position

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*You can access to them using the OpenType palette in any Adobe Creative Suite application or Quark Xpress 7.0 or 8.0 normal

end

calt

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salt

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end-

salt + calt

end;

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Ale Paul

Alejandro Paul was a packaging designer until the economic crash of Argentina in 2001. Since then he's been designing retail typefaces, mostly with packaging in mind. Some of his fonts have become popular staples of contemporary design. Another fonts: http://www.sudtipos.com

Stéphane Giner

French photographer (and graphic designer)

After years of packshots, he decided to try a first experience in art photography. The work on his first series, "life's bazaar", has started. Samples available here: http://www.flickr.com/photos/stephaneginer/He's looking for Exhibits.

