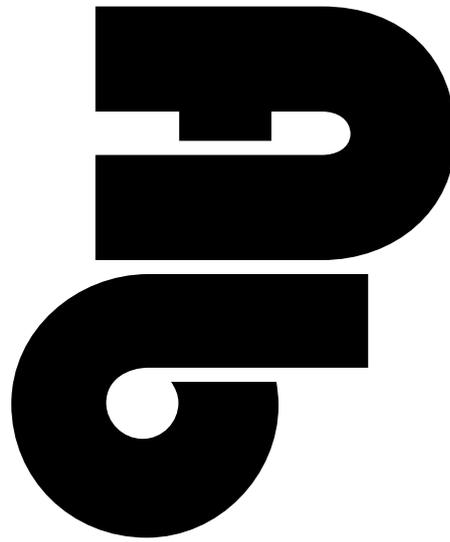


Adventures in blippo
by Brian Heffernan

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Broadstone Studios,
Hendron Building,
36–40 Upper Dominic Street,
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Adventures in blippo

An exercise in formal composition, **Adventures in blippo** is the result of designer Brian Heffernan's long-standing fascination with the modernist-derived typeface Blippo Black.

Consisting of 10 one-colour A1 screen prints, each an edition of just five, the series of works foregrounds, through its use of type as formal elements for the creation of nonlinguistic visual schemes, the significance of letterforms beyond their role as carriers of discursive meaning.

Created in 1969 by Robert Trogman and Joe Taylor, Blippo Black revisits Herbert Bayer's 1925 ultra-functional Bauhaus-commissioned typeface Universal, giving the resolutely geometric forms a slightly softer, less rational, more (albeit subtly) adorned appearance in their redrawing.

It is this tension – between form for communicative function and the notion of a typeface's pleasurable consumption as a collection of decorative forms in their own right – that Brian has taken as his point of departure in creating **Adventures in blippo**.

Dislocated from their primary function as linguistic signifiers, certain letters are taken by Brian from the Blippo Black alphabet and, through a limited number of artistic devices, elaborated into intriguing, minimalist visual compositions.

The titles of each of the works in the series (for example, 'I X 40 + U X 13 + L X 2') serve, however, to reinscribe in the viewer's mind the original purpose of the individual shapes found within the compositions, thereby acknowledging, and taking pleasure in, their multiple meaning.

A further tension is identifiable in Brian's work, in terms of his process. Intention is called into question, for while the compositions are on the one hand the result of four years of almost obsessive consideration and iterative reworking, the designer also states that he has 'allowed the letterforms to dictate their own compositions, in an attempt to express the true nature of the typeface'.

Biographical note

Brian Heffernan is a Dublin-based graphic designer, who has worked in the industry for ten years. Originally from Cork, Brian graduated from Athlone Institute of Technology with a National Diploma in Design in 2000, before going on to complete a BDes in Interactive Media at Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology. He is currently designer at Red Dog Design Consultants.