**Week 1**

History Revealed

Interpreting typographic vernacular

**Brief 1 Complex Simplicity**

Complex Simplicity is the first assignment in the History and Futures module, which will run for four consecutive weeks. This initiative considers how to tell a story relating to a specific aspect of practice and cultural or global difference, with initial research projects being selected to support your personal interests.

The Complex Simplicity brief is split into two subsections, each lasting for two weeks, that question the role graphic design plays in society. For the first section you will document typography in your local area and utilise your research to create unique letterforms that define a sense of place. In the second outcome you will analyse the effectiveness of data visualisation, which will help you create an appropriate piece of visual communication that reflects a personal viewpoint about science, culture or environment.

*“I provided an overview of the first module and I now want to introduce the first project brief, which is called Complex Simplicity. This initiative is broken down into four consecutive one week challenges that ask you to consider how to tell a story relating to a specific aspect of your practice, research, culture or global difference, that you have selected to reflect your personal interests. In the first week’s challenge, History Revealed, we want you to explore the rich visual history of typography through its links with the language, identity and literature, and specifically how type could define, communicate and signpost the infrastructure of a place.”*

**Weekly learning objectives**

By the end of this week you should be able to:

1. Discover and analyse a selection of typefaces you think appraise the social, political and historical context of your location.
2. Research a broad selection of typefaces in your area using appropriate research methodologies, such as photography, sketchbook entries and notes about location.
3. Analyse the typography collected from your area to evaluate your research findings into varying type classification, styles and identity.
4. Define and distil your selection of type observations to an edit of five contemporary and historical examples you think best inform your investigation into the identity of your location.
5. Deliver a short-written analysis to contextualise and communicate your research into the impact typography has on your location, so it is clearly understood by a non-specialist audience.

The workshop challenge this week requires you to explore your local area – please plan ahead so you can complete it on time. You will also be using this work in Week 2.

This week we want you to analyse how typography and letterforms define a sense of place. Record examples that are beyond street level and explore areas that are away from the main high street – you may even discover a piece of history or identity that were previously unaware.

We encourage you to post regularly on the Ideas Wall, explore the materials (and beyond) and experiment as much as possible. Be open and keep your ideas flowing – do not worry too much about outcomes in the period of investigation.

Meanwhile, keep a record of your observations, findings and thoughts using a variety of methods and media – this will help you collate your works at the end, and write a richer, more critical entry in your research journal.

**Lecture Introduction**

Impact typography has had on a location

Stuart Tolley – Transmission

“Typography is ubiquitous”

Fonts are clothes

Jonathan Hoefler and Tobias Frere-Jones

Typefaces are tools to solve problems

Detectable voice – undetectable?

Tungsten / whitney / requiem / Gotham / Champion / Didot / Leviathan / Numbers

Paula Scher

Record Covers

Boston Album

Jazz Albums

Evoke the response you want

Visual Language

Bring the funk - Type that talked to you

Texture – Eddie Opara

Attracted to it whether you hate it or like it

Visualising Data

Julia Vakser and Deroy Peraza

Infographics

Typography out of the way

Science meets design

Universal Type

**Type Design History**

Johannes guttenburg

Industrial revolution – population shift

Stencilling type

Street signs Venice

London and Paris before branding signwriters

**Matt Cohen**

**Ghost Signs**

Johnson Sans – Underground

Updated by Monotype

Johnson Posters

Harry Beck Underground Map

Una Mark

Helvetica

Subways New York Manual

Omnipresent and unnoticed

Nadine Chahine, the type director at MonoType, who describes the London Underground signage system as “like having someone with you, holding your hand.”