National College Of Art And Design
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# "Emigre" magazine and the role of the Apple Macintosh in it's evolution

by
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Not since the invention of letterpress has an invention revolutionised printing like the Apple Macintosh. Since it's unveiling in 1984 the graphic design community have made it their main creative tool. They realised that for the first time since the early days of printing they were empowered with total control of all aspects of the design process. It's user-friendly interface and visual approach gradually tempted even the most conservative graphic designer into joining the growing ranks of it's users. However, it was a small group or forward thinking designers which nurtured interest in the Macintosh in those early days. For this Thesis I have decided to focus on Rudy Vanderlans and Zuzana Licko and their creation "Emigre". For the first ten years of it's growth the magazine featured radical work inspired by the Apple Macintosh, and as the machine developed so too did the style of "Emigre".

For this Thesis I shall be tracing the evolution of "Emigre", and how it was linked to the development of the Apple Macintosh. Chapter one traces the history of both Vanderlans and Licko, and how their reaction against their design educations led them to found "Emigre". I will be analysing examples of their early work in "Emigre" before the Macintosh was ever available, and in doing so demonstrate that even before the computer was used they were forming their design philosophy.

Chapter two describes the impact of the arrival of the Apple Macintosh on a sceptical graphic design community, and how Vanderlans and Licko were amazed by the potential of this machine for enhancing "Emigre".

I will be analysing how the limitations as well as the freedom of the Macintosh effected "Emigre", and in particular the creation of typeface's by Zuzana Licko. Vanderlans also utilised the power of this new tool, and I will show that "Emigre" now began to find a direction and a new visual vocabulary emerged which was not grounded is established trends. At this time the Macintosh was totally new, and the work which resulted didn't have to follow any tradition. I will show that at the time the computer was a crude beast, and despite the fact that purists considered it substandard these low resolution beginnings would evolve as the machine did.

Chapter three traces the maturing of the Macintosh into the sophisticated graphics tool it always threatened to become. New technologies such as PostScript, more memory, and faster processors meant that it now equalled traditional methods of printing in terms of the quality of it's output. Resolution independent typeface's forced Licko to reconsider her early "Emigre", and I will look in detail at how she updated her fonts for a new generation of Macintoshes. This progress gave Vanderlans even more choice for "Emigre", and the design philosophy he pursued was given new materials to work with. I will also show how he questioned the conventions of magazine design and how he stressed the importance of linking layout and typography to content. Vanderlans wanted to enhance the content through design instead of merely displaying the information in a cold and detached way. Again I will be using examples that show this thinking in action.

Chapter four brings "Emigre" right up to date, and explores some of the reactions of the graphic design world to the magazine. I will be

showing how "Emigre" has been forced to reconsider it's approach. For Vanderlans and Licko much of the excitement of working within the constraints of a limited tool is now lost. The Apple Macintosh is now almost fully developed, and designing "Emigre" now does not entail working within the narrow parameters of a new machine. The Macintosh now has a visual vocabulary of it's own, and for this reason "Emigre" evolved into an intellectual rather than visual experience. Again I will be showing how the magazine changed by examples, and how Licko's typeface's spawned a new generation of typographers who work totally on the Macintosh. The impact of "Emigre" on mainstream graphic design will also be explored, and how what was considered outrageous in the pages of "Emigre" has now become the accepted norm for many design solutions. Overall the Macintosh and "Emigre" have had an incredible influence on contemporary graphic design.

CHAPTER ONE    BACKGROUND AND THE PRE-MACINTOSH "EMIGRE"

When Rudy Vanderlans and Zuzana Licko conceived of "Emigre" they were tired of the ideologies they were taught under. Rudy Vanderlans was born in The Hague in Holland in 1955. He attended the Royal Academy of Fine Art there from 1974 to 1979 and received a diploma in graphic design. The Academy's approach was to teach under the functionalist philosophy of the Swiss or international style. This was a modernist tradition for which clarity and legibility were all important, with a strict adherence to grid-structures and age-old rules rules of typography. In Holland the importance of good design could be seen in all facets of society, from road signs to stamps to telephone directories. It was a tradition which began sixty years earlier with the Bauhaus and De Stijl movements, and an approach still being used by design agencys throughout Holland. As a student Vanderlans was highly influenced by this functionalist philosophy, but what also caught his interest were more expressive graphic designers such as Milton Glaser and Herb Lubalin. The work of Herb Lubalin, who used illustration as a primary means of communication, also turned type into illustration. This was type without any functionalist pre-conceptions, and it was the enthusiasm and dynamic qualities of Lubalin's and Glaser's work which inspired Vanderlans to look beyond  the limitations of his education. As Vanderlans says, he admired the respect Glaser's work earned;

*"Milton Glaser inspired me tremendously. It looked Like*

*he was a pure illustrator who taught himself how to be*

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*a graphic designer as well. I had been taught design*

*functions around typography, whereas Milton Glaser's*

*work was based around illustration. It was very expressive.*

*And he could make that type of design function perfectly*

*within society. People were excited about it and had fun*

*with it and enjoyed it. And it was functioning at many*

*levels. His posters were up in art museums. It was art,*

*and it was also graphic design. And that touched something*

*way deep inside me and I thought, jeez, if that is possible*

*then alot is possible."* (Print, June 1992, Pg 51)

Prior to graduation, Vanderlans had to work as an apprentice, and his first job was a three month apprenticeship at Total Design in Amsterdam. It was a deep insight for him into the "Form follows function" and "Less is more" philosophies being implemented on a day to day basis, and at this time he accepted those rules without question. However, after three years working in various design studios in Holland he became disillusioned with this approach to graphic design. He mainly worked on corporate design and corporate identities, which turned graphic design into an excerise in organisation. His vision of design was to be more expressive and individualistic. One of the studios he worked for, Vorm Vijf, worked to a less rigid interpretation of the modernist philosophy, however ultimately his experiences working in Holland left him unhappy. He decided to travel around America where, between 1981 and 1983, he studied photography at the University of California at Berkeley. It was here that he met his future

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wife and co-founder of "Emigre", Zuzana Licko.

Zuzana Licko was born in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, in 1961 and at the age of seven she and her family emigrated to America. From an early age she had a deep involvement with computers, mainly due to the fact that her father was a biomatematician at the University of California at San Francisco. In 1983 she decided to major in Visual Arts at Berkerley. Here she was allowed the freedom to explore different directions in Design, however it was the calligraphy class which had a profound effect on her. As with Vanderlans' experience of the functionalist philosophy of swiss design, it was the idea of having to stick to a strict set of rules handed down through generations which annoyed Licko. This attitude towards traditionalism contributed greatly to her development as a typeface designer there-after. Conventional typeface design was based on the calligraphic form, but this was a tradition she rejected, and it was this attitude towards traditionalism which shaped her approach to design. As she states herself;

> "I've never been attracted to calligraphy. With calligraphy there was such a set way of doing things that unless you could technically out-do the next guy it became just a matter of production, how many hours could you spend doing this? That to me was more therapeutic than creative."
> (Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993, Pg 11)

As with Vanderlans she rejected the ideology she was taught under, and the design of "Emigre" would soon result.

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Figure 1 :A pre-mac illustration for the San Francisco Chronicle by Rudy Vanderlans

After meeting Zuzana Licko Vanderlans began three years working for the "San Francisco Chronicle" as designer and illustrator.(See Figure 1) He was engaged in both editorial and spot illustration as well as designing the front covers of sunday magazine inserts. At first Vanderlans tried to change the newspapers by persuading the editors that the paper should be "properly" designed. They replied;

> *"Look kid, 750,000 people read this every day and*
> *none of them complain, so don't fix what ain't broken."*
> (Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 12)

However, this became a major learning experience for Vanderlans, mainly because of the spontaneous nature of designing for a daily newspaper. As Vanderlans himself says;

> *"When working on a design project in Holland, everything*
> *always took months to finish, but at the Chronicle,everyday*
> *I'd work on two or three projects that I'd have to finish*
> *that same day."*
> (Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 12)

Because the newspaper was run by editors, the design was subservient to the contents, and their main philosophy for design was common sense. This left little room for the sophisticated functionalist ideals of typography Vanderlans had been taught, and while this was at first a frustrating experi-

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Figure 2: Cover of "Hard Werken" magazine

ence for Vanderlans he soon learned to appreciate the consideration for content that the newspaper had.

Around this time Vanderlans was also becoming influenced by a number of short-lived but highly experimental magazines. The most notable of these, "Hard Werken", was published between 1979 and 1982 (See Figure 2). It was a forum for the ideas of the Rotterdam design after which it was named, and featured avant-garde poetry, fiction, and articles about art, music and film. The "Hard Werken" group had broke with the tradition of the functionalist swiss style, and this was echoed in their publication. As a group they state;

> *"We are not concerned with functionality or legibility,*
> *but rather with the whole picture; even if that picture*
> *is illegible at times."*

They arranged photographs, illustrations and typewriter text in seemingly random collages and layouts over a large page format. As I will demonstrate the early issues of "Emigre" show strong similarities with the style and content of "Hard Werken", although Vanderlans still seemed bound by some functionalist ideals compared with the anarchy of "Hard Werken"'s page spread.

While "Hard Werken" and magazines in the same vain ignited a desire in Vanderlans to produce his own magazine, it was when he met two compatriots in 1983 that his desire became a reality. Along with artist Marc Susan and screenwriter Menno Meyjes; two fellow Dutchman living and

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working in San Francisco; all three decided to produce a magazine. Their initial idea was to produce a magazine devoted to Dutch immigrants living in America, however their idea soon evolved into a platform for unpublished and expressive design from all around the world. Exactly one year later this idea spawned "Emigre 1" in 1984, which was entirely financed by Rudy Vanderlans himself. Only five hundred copies were printed, and it featured a diverse collection of artist's work who all three admired ranging from architects to designers. Because there was no budget to commission work, pieces were chosen from what was at hand. The only real connection between all the work was the experience of being exposed to a different culture and how this influenced an artist's work. Hence the title "Emigre". This philosophy can be seen in this excerpt from a letter to potential advertisers;

> *"The focus of Emigre is on the unique perspective of*
> *contemporary poets, writers, journalists, graphic*
> *designers, photographers, architects, and artists who*
> *live or have lived outside their native countries. ........*
> *......... The true "emigre" seek adventuresome, romantic,*
> *and human experiences; their lives convey the feelings*
> *shared by the artist in us all."*
> (Excerpt from letter to potential advertisers)

Given the limited printing facilities at his disposal, Vanderlans knew if he tried to reproduce photographs and illustrations faithfully they would fall short in terms of quality; so he instead opted for a "low tech" feel

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Figure 3: Cover of "Emigre 2"

to the magazine. If we examine the cover of "Emigre 2" we are presented with three main elements (See Figure 3). The title, "Emigre" is printed in a condensed typeface which echoes the dimensions of the magazine itself. The mid-strokes of both letters "E" are turned upward and the vertical stroke broken at this point. This serves two main functions. It provides a visual symmetry to the title and creates tension in what otherwise would be a rather static typeface. This is of paramount importance for something that is the name of a publication which aspires to be innovative and forward-looking. The turned up mid-strokes also echo the accents which should be over the first and last "E" if the word was used in it's original context. By removing this accent and printing it in all upper case we are presented with a well considered title which forms a strong rectangle. The subtitle, "The magazine that ignores boundaries", gives us a clue and an initial insight into the philosophy the magazine will pursue. It is written in a similar condensed typeface to the title, although the dimensions of the magazine, 425mm by 285mm, allows for huge variations in point size, and therefore the subtitle is tiny in comparison with the title. This greatly adds to the impact of both pieces of text. Having the headline and subtitle reversed out of a black box also adds huge dynamism, as does placing this box at an angle and bleeding it off the page. We immediately know this no ordinary magazine with strict grid-structures and columns.

The main graphic on the cover is a huge enlargement of an airmail stamp featuring a plane and the number two layered on top. This image is rendered in red and black on a subdued brown background. The reference to travel links with the title and the brown background echoes the look of

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POETRY
BY MARC HUBAN

Con Amore

Ode to you
The boulevard-stroller
Bluebeard of the sea
Strutting along
Spotless sands
From tea-room
To tea-room
From Dame Blanche
To Grand Parfait

Con Amore

Ode aan jou
De boulevardier
Blauwbaard van de zee
Flanerend langs
Smetteloze stranden
Van theehuis naar theehuis
Van Dame Blanche
Naar Bombe Glacée

(Dutch)  (English)

(Dutch)  (English)

Figure 4: Double page spread from "Emigre 1".

an large envelope. The subdued colours also set the atmosphere for the magazine, this is not going to be a glossy, colour publication. Details of the features within are printed in a long , centred column using a condensed typeface and small point size. As with the title, the column is placed at an angle which gives the whole cover an organic feel. That is not to say it has a random quality, rather the qualities of the individual elements dictated how they should be positioned rather than an adherence to a strict grid structure. This is a cover which entices you to look further into the magazine.

In this page spread from "Emigre 1", we see a selection of poetry by Marc Susan, one of the founders of the magazine (See Figure 4) . This was expertly laid out by Vanderlans using found imagery supplied by the poet himself. It is a perfect early insight into Vanderlans' approach to layout for "Emigre" which he summed up in the phrase; "*My only grid was going to be the four crop marks*". Also, since there was no type-setting budget, type-written text was used and either enlarged or reduced in a photocopier to provide visual interest with what is essentially dull typewriter text. He deliberately does not use a strict grid here, but instead lets his intuition and sense of space on the page dictate where the various elements are placed. He refers to this philosophy as organic grids". To quote Vanderlans;

> "*I've started to develop an approach I refer to as organic grids. Think about it: why would you want to set up a grid? It comes from a time when everybody were doing things by hand. When you work on magazines or books , there's a repetitive element. You saved alot of time*

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*and alot of decision making if you just designed a grid*

*and pre-printed it in light blue on boards."*

(Designers On Mac,1992, Pg39)

The grid structure approach disregarded the content of the magazine or book. It was Vanderlans' intention to allow the content to decide how a page should be laid out; and subsequent issues what typeface's should be used. Thus in this page spread the organic layout adds an almost intimate feel to the content. Vanderlans uses torn paper and a photograph and places them at angles to the text, making the layout expressive and dynamic. The torn paper and the dotted line running through the centre of the spread provide a sense of movement, further enhanced by the arrow placed in a semi-circle at the end of the dotted line. These two elements also break up what is essentially a huge area of white paper, although the fact they are placed at angles means that this does not become a strict, regimented division of the -page spread. On the left-hand page the title "Poetry" is written in a bold serif typeface and in uppercase, and each letter looks as if it was placed by hand. Torn paper and a line of dots are placed above the title, creating a visual link to the main lines running horizontally and vertically across the spread. A thin column of text about the poet is placed and ranged left under the title "Poet", lining up with the letters "O" and "T". Also placed under "Poetry" is a small photo of the Marc Susan, again placed at an angle. The fact it is placed at an opposing angle to the other photograph has the effect of leading the eye into the next page, on which is printed a poem, written in both english and dutch. Both paragraphs are again written in typewriter text

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Figure 5: Double page spread from "Emigre 1".

which has been greatly enlarged. This provides a nice contrast with the passage on the opposing page. The manner in which the text has broken up by being enlarged is also a nice effect, further enhancing the gritty "Hands- on" feel to the spread.

This "Hand-on " feel can be further seen in this page spread from "Emigre 1" (See Figure 5). Given the restraints of the printing he had at his disposal Vanderlans decided that there was no point in trying to reproduce these photographs faithfully. Instead he decided to tear up these photos and pieces of contact sheets and create an interesting composition. The result continues the organic and personal feel running through this issue, and indeed enhances the "Emigre" idea by making it appear as if it was a scrapbook put together by a traveller en route. Here he overlaps elements and uses negative space intuitively to create a spread which quite simply works. Text is kept to a minimum and written in a small point size which doesn't interfere with the photographic elements. All of the other layouts in "Emigre 1" used the same approach, creating expressive layouts which always avoided a traditional grid structure. However, the development of "Emigre" was still in it's infancy, and soon a curious beige computer called the Apple Macintosh was about to change the graphic design world.

CHAPTER TWO    "EMIGRE" AND THE FIRST LOW RESOLUTION MACINTOSH

In 1984, as the second issue of "Emigre" was being published, the Apple
Macintosh computer was being released to a sceptical graphic design world.
Inevitably a magazine was published to promote interest in this ground-
breaking machine with it's user-friendly interface. Called "MacWorld", the
editors were anxious to promote the creative possibilities of the machine,
and offered designers and illustrators lessons in how to operate the
machine. Many, including Vanderlans, were impressed by the Mac's capabili-
ties and ease of use. It' iconic approach and use of familiar tools such as
pencil, eraser and paintbrush provoked a strong desire in Vanderlans to
explore the machine further. The "Undo" function also tempted the designer
into endless experimentation, reassured by the fact that he or she could
return to the original piece. Zuzana Licko was also very impressed by the
typographic possibilities of the machine, and two weeks after receiving a
trial run from "MacWorld" magazine they decided to purchase their first
Macintosh. As Vanderlans states himself, their were few designers at the
time who took the machine to heart;

> "*The minute Zuzana and I sat behind the Mac, we knew*
> *this machine was made for us. For about a year, I became*
> *pre-occupied with computer illustrations. And these*
> *Macintosh illustrations were in demand! This was entirely*
> *a new market and there were only a few illustrators*
> *who actually enjoyed working on the Mac.*"

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(Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 26)

Traditional typographers considered the crude pixelated typeface's of the early Macintosh to be a step backwards, and they argued that until this machine matured it could not replace the quality of type-set text. The purists among illustrators also felt that the machine was too harsh and crude, and many felt uncomfortable using the mouse which was detached from what appeared on screen. However, forward looking designers such as Vanderlans, Licko, and others such as April Greiman embraced the possibilities as well as the limitations of this new machine. They saw this computer as an opportunity to develop customised typeface's with the scope for expression and personalisation. Because it was such a new medium designers were now faced with re-considering the rule they were taught under, because the restrictions those rules enforced were now lifted. Although the early typeface's were crude and bitmapped, it now became a challenge to design fonts which combine delicate repetition of elements with distinction of the various characters. Given a pencil and a piece of paper a traditional typographer almost has the easier task in achieving this. However, on the Mac the same typographer must successfully balance these requirements given only a handful of pixels per character. I will demonstrate Zuzana Licko's success in this area later in the chapter.

Being tremendously excited by this new machine Vanderlans began illustrating regularly for "MacWorld" and "MacWeek", yet another new publication dedicated to the computer. He primarily used a program called "MacPaint". This program set the trend for all the programs to follow by pro-

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viding the user with a "window" into which is placed a virtual page on which one would work. A selection of tools were provided and indicated by clear, concise icons on the side of the page. These allow the user to select a paintbrush or pencil or various shapes which will be drawn instantly when the mouse's "cursor" is clicked on a part of the page. The view could also be enlarged or reduced for detailed work. This amazingly user-friendly environment was ground-breaking at the time, and the formula has continued almost unchanged to the present day. A list of subjects was placed on top of the screen in a clear "Menu Bar", with each subject being clickable. This would result in a submenu appearing which offers yet more options. Depending on the program these could a list of fonts, the option of saving your work or creating a new "blank page". Jim Heid, in the "Ten Years On" issue of "MacWorld" in february 1994, had this to say about the initial reaction of the more adventurous typographers on the release of the Mac;

> "*A key component of publishing is typography, and people with graphic design experience felt their skin tingle the first time they saw menus named Font, Style and Size. Not only did the Mac provide typographic variety, it's screen rendered those fonts much as they would appear when printed.*"
> (MacWorld,Feb.1994, Pg.20)

If we examine one of Vanderlans' early illustrations for "MacWorld" magazine we see that he simply considered the Mac to be just

Figure 6: Illustration for "MacWorld" by Rudy Vanderlans

another tool and as such he combined it with traditional media (See Figure 6) . This dates from 1986 and Vanderlans visually depicts the conflict within designers at the time about whether to use traditional or digital mediums to provide design solutions. In this case he used illustrations generated in "MacPaint" with photography, and then pasted up these elements in the traditional manner. A bold, condensed question mark links two coloured boxes in the centre of the illustration. The lower box consists of a greatly section of a Mac screen display, complete with cursor and "Pencil" icon. Vanderlans used the "MacPaint" program to create this close-up, and it is the pixelated quality of the program which is ideal for this purpose. In the top section of the box we are presented with a photograph of a simple pencil and brush. The traditional medium versus the brave new world of digital design. It is a stark contrast, aided by the fact that the upper box is tinted green and the lower box is tinted red. Indeed both boxes, with their thick black outlines, gain the appearance and dimensions of a window, possibly a visual pun on the new "windows" of the Macintosh environment. The image is completed with a toned down background consisting of a close-up from a typical Macintosh screen. It is interesting that he depicts a conflict at all, given that he considers the Mac to be just another tool and as such will not take away from traditional methods of graphic design.

What the Mac has done is empower the designer with the ability to control all aspects of the design process right until the piece goes to print. While the purists argued that the early low resolution Macintoshes were crude and unsophisticated, what they failed to realise is that this look represented a time and a feeling which would pass. That is not to say that

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# Emperor

# OAKLAND

# Emigre

Figure 7: "Emperor", "Oakland", and "Emigre"

they would become invalid, the reason low resolution type and illustration looked the way it did was because of the limitations of the technology. Demands from designers meant that inevitably the quality would improve, and the low resolution "look" would come to represent a piece of history. The following quote demonstrates Vanderlans' enthusiasm for this new medium, as he states himself;

> "*It was especially exciting to sit behind this machine
> right at the beginning when nobody had really explored
> it yet. There were no visual standards and no existing
> language to copy or be inspired by. And it was during
> this first year that we developed most of our vocabulary
> and ideas about what we wanted to design. For instance,
> Zuzana's early postscript typeface's are derived from the
> low resolution typeface's she had created for screen
> display and dot-matrix printing.*"
> (Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 23)

From the moment Zuzana Licko turned on her Apple Macintosh she was designing typeface's. The early Mac was a crude beast, and output was by means of a low resolution dot- matrix printer. Despite this Licko was hooked, and if we examine the early typeface's "Emperor", "Oakland" and "Emigre" the first thing that makes an impact is the sheer contrast between the fonts  (See Figure 7). Zuzana had come across a public domain program called "FontEditor" which was a revelation compared to traditional typeset-

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ting. In minutes low resolution typeface's could be created and used straight away. Licko revelled in the restrictive qualities of the early Macintosh. The fact that the typographer had only a limited number of pixels to create each character meant that it became more challenging to produce a valid typeface. This served as a focus because so many distracting choices were eliminated. For a typeface to work it must have recurring forms which provide a unity and overall feel to the font. This must be carefully balanced with providing distinction between each character, so that no two letterforms are too similar. Given the restrictions of "bit-map" type these criteria represented a huge challenge. Of course the ease of use of this new technology has it's dangers. Prior to the Mac typeface design was a specialised field, but now everyone who has a Mac could think they were instant designers. This was the main fear of the traditional graphic designer when the Mac was first released. They feared a kind of visual pollution that would denigrate their importance. However, while everyone who has a Macintosh can produce graphics that does not make them graphic designers. The invalidity of this kind of work is clear to see, but the Macintosh in the hands of a trained graphic designer becomes a liberating tool, increasing the potential for personalisation and expression.

Zuzana Licko's bit-mapped typeface's "Emperor","Oakland" and "Emigre" provided Vanderlans with a much needed alternative to the typewritten text of "Emigre 1". Since Licko had rejected her calligraphy education she had little knowledge of the traditions of type design, and she turned this into a liberating advantage. She based her designs on the simple repetitious from which the low resolution characters formed, and as a result most of

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# Emperor Fifteen

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlM
mNnOoPpQqRrXxTtUuVvWw
XxYyZz(1234567890)

Figure 8: "Emperor 15"

Figure 9: "O" from Emperor 8 and "O" from Emperor 15

## OAKLAND SIX:

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 1234567890

## Oakland Eight: AaBbCcDd&

EeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUu vvWwXxYyZz (1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0)

## Oakland Ten: AaBbCcDdEeFfGgH

hIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuV vWwXxYyZz1234567890

## Oakland Fifteen:

AaBbCcDdEeF ʄ G ɡ HhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSs

TtUuVvWwXxYyZz/ * 1234567890

Figure 10: "Oakland" family of typefaces

her early fonts had modular elements within them which could be repeated from letterform to letterform (See FIgure 8). Thus if we examine the typeface "Emperor" we see that one of the main challenges she faced was reducing and enlarging the point sizes and still keeping the letterform faithful to the typeface.

To achieve this she maintained a ratio of one horizontal pixel to two vertical pixels but instead she varied the cap height of each character. Thus the "O" from "Emperor 8" is very different to the equivalent from "Emperor 15" yet the integrity of the typeface remains true (See Figure 9). A traditional typographer would not have such problems, and his or her typeface would remain unchanged no matter what size it was reproduced. The numbers of each size of "Emperor" represent not point size but the number of vertical pixels per character. The coarse resolution of the early Mac meant that "Emperor 8" is the smallest possible size the font could be reproduced and still look like part of the "Emperor" family.

Zuzana faced similar problems in producing the "Oakland" typeface; however given the restraints she produced a typeface which is very different to "Emperor" (See Figure 10). She chose to use a two pixel stem to two pixel cap height ratio to create a chunky yet strangely elegant typeface. Given this ratio "Oakland" could be outputed as small as only six pixels high and still maintain integrity. It is yet another example of the computer forcing the designer to reconsider rules which were previously taken for granted. The speed and ease of use the Macintosh offers means that multiple options can be reviewed in minutes, and in many ways it has brought a sense of excitement back to design which had long since been suppressed by mod-

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ernist ideals. For Vanderlans and "Emigre" Zuzana's new typeface's became a refreshing alternative to typewritten text without the need for a costly type-setter. As Vanderlans says, the look and feel of "Emigre" started to come into focus;

> *"In terms of design, our direction became more focused*
> *when we started using the Macintosh. Besides the fact*
> *that the Macintosh made publishing our magazine*
> *affordable, it also made our typesetting bills almost*
> *negligible while, simultaneous;y, we gained tremendous*
> *control over the output of type."*
>
> (Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 23)

"Emigre 2" became the first issue to use Licko's bit-mapped fonts, providing an effective mechanical counterpoint to Vanderlans' "Organic" grid structure. To overcome the coarse resolution outputed by the dot-matrix printer, Vanderlans would print the type as large as possible using a fresh ribbon. The resulting galleys of type were reduced in a stat camera, making the low resolution less evident. The layouts were then pasted down in the traditional manner. The personal and intimate feel of "Emigre 1" could now be carried yet further by designing specifically for individual articles. Typeface's could now be designed to suit the content of particular articles. This goes totally against the traditional notion of magazine design, which demands legibility and neutral, unintrusive grid structures. However, much of the graphic design community considered these bit-mapped fonts to be

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ugly and a regression from the elegant forms of traditional type. Many argued that computer generated fonts should only be applied to subject matter relating to computers. They fail to realise that it is merely another medium which is at hand as opposed to type-set text. In the purist's opinion these fonts were designed to read from a computer monitor and not the printed page, and seen on a page they appear unfamiliar and ugly. Zuzana Licko with her use of bit-mapped fonts wished to stress that what appears alien is merely new, and that any typeface must be assimilated over a period of time. The example of the gothic typeface makes her point clear. It was the main letterform people used to communicate in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and literate people took it as second nature to be instantly legible. Now, if someone is presented with a column of gothic text they have great difficulty reading it, not because it is inherently illegible but because they are not used to it. Similarly, when fonts such as baskerville and even helvetica appeared, people needed time to become accustomed. As Licko states;

> *"Coarse resolution manifestations are the essence of the digital medium, But we have yet to assimilate these images into our visual vocabulary. This is truly a unique opportunity for designers to create a new visual language without borrowing from of conforming to traditionally appropriate ideas."*
> (Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 40)

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The new fonts appearing on the Macintosh are no different to those which have come before, and as we will see the contemporary fonts which originated from these low resolution beginnings have become the accepted norm.

CHAPTER THREE  THE POST-SCRIPT MACINTOSH AND "EMIGRE" EVOLVES

Armed with Zuzana Licko's bit-mapped typeface's Rudy Vanderlans began to mould "Emigre" to his liking. However, by the time "Emigre 4" was published, and Vanderlans was using bit-mapped fonts throughout, responses from the graphic design world were mixed. Some considered it self indulgent and hard to read. The purists among designers said that the reason rules of typography and layout are there is because they work. and to deliberately turn ones back on these rules makes the end result invalid. This opinion seemingly offers no scope for personal expression and experimentation, out of which new and innovative ideas can emerge. It is true that the only people that have a problem reading "Emigre" are graphic designers who are victims of the pre-conceived notions of their education.. However, others were impressed by the skillful use of computer-generated type and the incredible rate at which "Emigre" changed; not only from issue to issue, but from page to page. The exposure of much ignored artists and designers who are on the perifery of their craft was also praised. However, despite the mixed reaction to the magazine, each issue sold more than the previous one, and this was the spur which made Vanderlans continue. The two original founders with Vanderlans, Menno Meyjes and Marc Susan, had moved on to work in their respective fields. Vanderlans and Licko were now left in total control of "Emigre".

Interest in Licko's new bit-mapped fonts made them decide to let these typeface's become available on disk. From 1985 onwards the "Emigre" type foundry began marketing the new and innovative fonts used in

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"Emigre". Again this revolution in the sale of typeface's would not be possible without the Macintosh, because fonts could now be distributed as easily as copying disk after disk. The Macintosh was now almost fully adopted by the graphic design community, and soon a new technology called PostScript would make the Macintosh the sophisticated tool it always threatened to be.

Created by the software company Adobe in 1985, PostScript technology represented a quantum leap in the way fonts and shapes were rendered on the Macintosh. Instead of each character in a typeface being formed by a collection of pixels, a formula now existed to actually draw the outline of each character smoothly. This could be also applied to illustration programs, and Adobe Illustrator emerged to take advantage of this. From now on, of a designer wanted a circle on a page, The Macintosh would not simply produce a rough circular shape from large pixels, it would actually draw a circle from a matamatical formula. The end result is totally smooth. This technology now meant that technically bit-mapped fonts were obsolete. Who would want to use "Oakland" or "Emperor" when all the other traditional typeface's could now be faithfully rendered on the Macintosh? Zuzana Licko argued that the design of these bit-mapped fonts were still valid. These fonts were a direct result of the nature of the digital medium, and that given time they would become part of the visual vocabulary of graphic design like any other typeface's. However, she knew that this new technology had to be exploited, and she set about updating those early bit-mapped for the PostScript era. She gained her inspiration from an early program which gave bit-mapped fonts a smooth appearance by printing them twice as large and "filling in" or interpolating pixels. This can be seen in the example here. The

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Figure 11: "n" from Emperor 15 and "n" from Modula

Figure 12 A: "n" from Emperor 15 and "n" from Triplex serif light

"N" from "Emperor 15", an early bit-mapped font, when using smooth printing provided by the program, the character is enlarged and intermediary pixels form more clear diagonals and round shapes (See Figure 11). This option of smooth printing changed the original 72dpi (dots per inch) resolution of the bit-mapped font into 300dpi bit-maps. This gave the illusion of high resolution. The resulting letterform is still open to alot of interpretation given the resolution independent qualities of PostScript, and Zuzana Licko developed three totally distinctive typeface's from the original "Emperor". "Modula" is probably the most direct geometric interpretation of the smooth printed version of "Emperor". In the example of the lower case "n" here the top becomes fully rounded and the diagonal arm at the top of the "n" is cropped, producing right-angles which echo the base of the letterform. The whole effect is that of a tubular form, yet it is still so similar to the original bit-mapped form that it proves the form was valid; even produced with a handful of pixels. "Triplex", on the other hand, became more of an intuitive and free interpretation of "Emperor". The letterform of the lower case "n" in Triplex serif light show a looser and more traditional approach compared to "Modula". The curve at the top of the character is deliberately inclined to the right and as it meets the left ascender the thickness narrows (See Figure 12A) . This gives the whole character a more calligraphic feel. Similarly the diagonal arm at the top of the left ascender is curved, giving the letterform an elegant shape. It is fascinating that "Triplex" does not look like it was computer-generated despite it's bit-mapped, low resolution origins.

Despite this PostScript technology being a major advance in desktop publishing, memory and storage were still a problem. The design of

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# Matrix Regular
# AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkL
# lMmNnOoPpQqRrXxTtUuV
# vWwXxYyZz(1234567890)

**Figure 12 B: The "Matrix" typeface**

"Matrix" took this into consideration. In 1986 the top of the range laser printer had less than one megabyte of processing memory, meaning that the more complex the letterform the longer it would take to print. For example curved elements such as serifs on classical typeface's would take longer to print than straight edges on sans serif fonts. Thus when Zuzana Licko designed "Matrix" she was considering the limitations of this new technology, as she had done with bit-mapped fonts on the early Macintosh (See Figure 12 B). To quote Licko;

> *"My aim was to explore two things. First of all, I like to*
> *experiment with what the computer can do with things.*
> *that are not possible with other technologies. I like to*
> *design typeface's that work well with the computer, both*
> *for pragmatic and stylistic reasons. Sometimes it has*
> *to look well on screen, like Emperor 8, but then some*
> *typeface's look geometric or coarse for stylistic reasons.*
> *"Matrix" could just as well had more traditional*
> *looking serifs, but for stylistic reasons, for making it*
> *look new, I use a shape that the computer is good*
> *at generating."*
> (Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 42)

She wanted to produce an elegant serif typeface which was economical for typesetting as well as reproduction. Creating serifs while keeping the demands on the technology low was a challenge, but she overcame this by

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Figure 13 Matrix serif and the economic use of points

using forty five degree angles, which are the smoothest and easiest to pro-
duce diagonals for digital printers (See Figure 13). As can be seen here the
serifs need less points of reference to be calculated compared with a square
serif. The character forms themselves are based on classical proportions and
simple ratios, but Licko managed to produce a very original typeface. It
questions the pre-conceived notion that serif typeface's are elegant and tra-
ditional and that sans serif typeface's are modern and harsh. This is a serif
typeface which is both modern and threatening . It's angular serifs and cut-
offs create a sense of danger which flys in the face of traditional ideas of
serif typeface's. This is another example of Zuzana Licko creating  a typeface
from geometric forms which looks as if it originated from hand drawn meth-
ods. It fascinates Licko that a typeface like "Matrix" is more likely to be
accepted than something like "Emperor" because of that typeface's bit-
mapped appearance. As she says low resolution existed for centuries existed
for centuries before the Macintosh;

> "*The aversion to coarse resolution is all the more*
> *surprising since the digital image has been common*
> *throughout visual history. Inlaid stone mosaics, stained*
> *glass windows, embroidery, and weaving designs are*
> *just a few of the commonly accepted methods that*
> *utilise the digital concept of combining pre-determined*
> *units as distinct elements to form a coherent image.*"
> (Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 36)

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Figure 14: Front cover "Emigre 11"

In many ways it is a pity that the Apple Macintosh developed so quickly, because otherwise the bit-mapped fonts of the early "Emigre" would have been given time to become part of our visual vocabulary. The current Macintosh is used by the majority of designers to imitate traditional media. This is a pitfall that Zuzana Licko and Rudy Vanderlans had managed to avoid until now in the pages of "Emigre". This was largely due to the "organic" grids and typeface's which had there origin in bit-mapped forms. I will now explore how this PostScript technology was exploited in one issue of "Emigre", and how Vanderlans' free-form grid structure evolved.

"Emigre", by the time issue eleven was published, had been well and truly established as a ground-breaking  magazine in terms of style and content. It had evolved from a straight forward platform for graphic design to a forum for debate and discussion on all aspects of the design process. "Emigre ii" was devoted entirely entirely to designer's opinions on the Apple Macintosh (See Figure 14). For this issue Vanderlans not only wanted to experiment with the conventions of type design, typography and magazine layout. He wanted to question the actual way in which a magazine is put together. In his own words his point is clear;

> *"You can't just change magazine design by finding yet another way to use a pull-quote, or to insert an extra drop cap. You're going to change it by writing different. By setting up the structure of your articles differently. We don't believe you always need a headline, subheading, intro, pull-quotes, side bars, etc."*

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(Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 77)

For "Emigre 11" Vanderlans put these words into action, and for the various interviews featured he assigned each one a typeface. Instead of having each interview one after the other he ran them concurrently from page to page, varying column width, point size and grid structure. At first it seems like a garbled mess but it soon becomes a perfect example of Vanderlans' philosophy of layout and typography enhancing content. It soon generates a feeling of excitement and urgency, as if these designers are sitting in the room with you and all speaking at once about the power and versatility of the Apple Macintosh. This is totally deliberate, as Vanderlans says;

*"I have been intrigued with the idea of how to re-create the actual atmosphere or mood of the conversation.....*

*.......Before I start the layout of an interview, I have spent hours transcribing the tape, listening to the nuances of the conversation, the excitement in someone's voice, etc."*

(Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 61)

To add yet another element to the issue various designers were asked to design "Keep on Reading" pages which were scattered throughout the magazine. The idea was to keep the momentum of the reader up, and encourage him or her to continue.

In this double page spread we see a fine example of Vanderlans

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to watch. I think it is the same thing with design. Now that you have many more options, I think you will begin to fine-tune your own sensibility. So in a sense, maybe it helps you be more discriminating and specific in your own aesthetic.

Emigre: How do you feel about the possibility of designers controlling all the various disciplines, such as typesetting, separations, illustration, writing, etc., which have always been handled by specialists? Do designers have time to get involved in all these things?

Jeffery: I don't know. It's the kind of question that will be answered differently by every designer you ask. It's just one of those things that has to be sorted out. We are in a new era now and each designer has to figure out for himself or herself how to do this. For example, if you get your copy from your client and it's on disk, you will basically be doing the typesetter's job. You will have to do things like c\*ack the spelling and grammar, which maybe a lot of designers are not so good at. But as I said, it depends on each individual designer and the kind of work he or she is doing. Now, with the computer, you're frequently asked to act as an editor. To me that's very interesting, because that is what design is about: it's about information. So it doesn't bother me to have more editorial say in what's going on. Often the designer is brought in too late and the client will say, "Here it is, now put a finish on it." Whereas now, with this tool, it is more likely that you will substantially edit the text, which puts you further back into the conceptual realm of the project and not just the finishing of it.

Emigre: Do you think the Macintosh will contribute to a new design language?

Jeffery: Yes, and I think it has to be.

Emigre: Why does it have to?

Jeffery: So many designers are marginalizing the importance of the computer as some sort of stylistic or formalistic production tool, when in fact it's more important than that. To me the most important aspect of the computer is not just that it's for producing information, but that it's also about the processing and consumption of information. It is impacting the areas of how information is used. And as that changes, the way we think about design and how we actually design things of course will change. Emigre: Could you be more specific as to how the use and consumption of in-

Emigre: When I first saw some of your typographic work, I thought it was produced on the Macintosh. It was so intricate, with so many type variations and type sizes within a single text block. This is fairly easy to do on a Macintosh and quite complex and expensive on a conventional typesetting system. Now that you do have a Macintosh, do you expect your designs to change?

Rick: Not really, because most of my designs are previsualized in my head.

Emigre: But now it's easy to look at options quickly. There are more choices possible. This won't influence your decisions, and subsequently, the design?

Rick: The way I do it now, without the computer, I have every face and size available to me. Before I start the process of producing a piece, I decide which faces to use and xerox samples of them and put them in front of me. Then, I take it a step further, because I want some parameters to work within. Most people who see my work think that it's done without much control. But actually, it's all very controlled. I know in advance what sizes I will use. So I set up the recipe and I just pick from it in different sequences. I know in my head what an "M" or "N" space looks like. And I know when I add one or two points how that will make it look. I previsualize leading. I have a good ability to imagine or visualize what the thing will look like. And then it's just a matter of writing it out for the typesetter, and I produce pretty tight sketches. When I need to write in twelve point, my hand writes close to twelve point. And with the Mac, instead of writing it all out for the typesetter, I'll be typing it out.

Emigre: So your method of working won't change by using a Mac?

Rick: No, I don't think so, except for the ability to make revisions, and to move type around more freely. I would like to eliminate the cutting part. I did actually make corrections sometimes by cutting the type, even though it was minimal. Most of the time, it comes back from the typesetter exactly as imagined. It is always staggering to me to see people work with scissors pushing type around. For me it's just the opposite. The design is already drawn and the typesetter just renders it.

Emigre: How do you justify your typesetting bills to the client?

Rick: No client has ever questioned them. The typesetting bill for the "Holly Fabric" book was $4,500. Now that's staggering!

Emigre: Yes, that's quite high.

Rick: Yes, considering that it's only eight pages of roughly five lines per page.

Emigre: Isn't that a little out of proportion, a little unrealistic maybe?

Rick: Well, there were fifty-two font changes, and every time I made a different font assignment, it cost $50.

Emigre: How did the client feel about this?

Rick: They didn't flinch in this case. I haven't had anybody scream yet -- knock on wood. I think somebody will before too long, because I'm becoming a little more flamboyant. Expressive is a better word. Hopefully, the Macintosh will help cut cost.

Emigre: What are you going to do now that you will be cutting your typesetting bills to one twentieth of your earlier typesetting bills? With the Macintosh, you will spend $5 on LaserWriter printouts and maybe another $50 on Linotronic output. How do you explain that your typesetting bill is $35 instead of $4,500 dollars?

**April Greiman, Los Angeles, 10/20/88**

Emigre: Do you design differently now that you work on a computer? April: This would be very hard to articulate. I think that I design completely differently since I've become Mac-fluent. Everything at one point or another goes through the CORE of my Mac. We're able to bring in 35 mm slides, scan them into the Quantel graphic paintbox, bring in a Mac image or a digitized image, bring in live video, then put all these things together. This provides a whole new texture. And for sure, the most profound part of this is the Macintosh influence. Emigre: You used to combine imagery from various sources before. April: Yes, but the "textures" are different now. Emigre: What "textures"? April: I'm talking about real texture. On the one hand, you can go for a very seamless image with high-end equipment (like the graphic paintbox.) What's a shame about that is that when you see the final results, you don't realize that it's created on a computer -- it looks like straight airbrushed photography! What's great about the paintbox is that it's totally in communication with the printing process, and you have complete control over color separations, etc., On the graphic paintbox, you can se-

Rick: Well, the actual cost on type itself will be reduced, but the time of sitting in front of the screen, inputting it, manipulating it, etc., will take longer. So there is a trade-off. They'll get it as an additional design fee.

Emigre: But isn't it easier to account for production cost and typesetting than it is for design? Most clients seldom question the cost of material things, such as type and paste-up boards, but design is too subjective.

Rick: Well, I haven't really encountered that, that's new to me. And that's maybe because we are really cheap. There's nobody driving a big black BMW in our office. Yes! The nature of our clients keeps things lean and mean. And when they spend $4,500, it's our responsibility to give them something that is unique and of equivalent value.

Emigre: We're sort of drifting away from my game plan here, but you touched upon an important subject. During your lecture at CCAC, you talked about the subject of originality and uniqueness. I don't hear too many designers discuss this topic, and I'm very much intrigued by this because there's a real lack of originality in graphic design. And not just designers being original in comparison to other designers but also within their own work.

Rick: Exactly. And that was the point I was trying to make during my lecture. As I see it, it's on two levels. First of all, the solution to the project that you are working on should be honest to its intent; i.e., the client's message and/or objective, and should therefore be original. Unless the parameters are exactly the same, it can't look just like a Michael Vanderbyl piece. And secondly, within yourself, if you treat your daily activity as a designer in the same way that artists treat their work, you will discover that the design process is an art and you do find yourself working through your own problems and concerns, the ones that you adopt and establish for yourself. Whether it is the relationship between the letterforms and the message, or whether it is your exploration of a personal vocabulary of color and form, or all of the above simultaneously. You do find yourself and your work evolving while working through these things. And the people in your office, if they're plugged into the same thing, find themselves exploring similar problems. What usually happens is that the result of those explorations is original. It's the artist process versus the "borrower's" or "product-oriented" process of which we do see too much, unfortunately.

Emigre: In your designs you use a very distinct way of treating text. You emphasize punctuation, use a lot of underlining, change typefaces often, it's a very visual interpretation of text. It's very recognizable and actually already copied by other designers. Do you fear that you might get caught repeating yourself and start designing with a formula?

Rick: I'm afraid of a couple of things. First of all, I'm afraid that clients will come here expecting a certain type of design, and be disappointed when I've moved beyond it into something else. This seems to have happened with Neville Brody, who has admitted to be "laying low." What I don't want to happen is that this work, this attitude towards my personal experiment, is perceived as the product. And I hope that as people take the experiment into other directions they don't look at me and say, "Oh, he's just stuck in doing it the same old way." I am going to pursue the experiment personally, wherever it takes me. I may move at a different pace than everybody else, and I hope I won't get forced into doing it differently than I've been doing it so far. Secondly, I would like to see that if others adopt the typographic devices, they also adopt the intense concern for the devices' relationship to the content. Otherwise, it is just decoration.

Emigre: Will the Mac play a role in this experimentation?

Rick: Sure it will. Just as my wife will play a role in it. You know, all the influences will. I just hope that we don't all get into this leap-frog mode, looking for the new and next, while failing to first come to terms with what it was. We have to seek the Mac out slowly and see what it has to offer. We are all so fad-conscious. It happens in fashion, you see it on TV, where series get canned after three episodes. That attitude is in our culture, unfortunately.

Tonight I'm going to a lecture, where Michael Beirut from Massimo Vignelli's office is speaking. And I know he is not going to look quite as hip as everybody expects Vignelli to look. And I hope people are not going to say, "Fuck him, he's not doing anything hip!", when in fact Vignelli is committed to his own vocabulary. Massimo's office really explores an evolving international vision. So, I hope that people won't say to me or anybody who is making some really sincere explorations that they're eh...nothing.

Emigre: Let's get back to the Macintosh. There are designers that fear the Macin-

formation is changing?

Jeffery: The differences between writing and drawing are much smaller, and looking and reading are becoming the same thing. In the past as you sat down to write a letter, you wouldn't think about how the letter looked. You just used whatever typeface was on the typewriter, and there was a certain format you wrote your letters in and read letters in. Now, you sit down behind a Macintosh and you have to make all these decisions: what typeface to use, what point size, what margins, etc. Now you are thinking about how it looks, and what that means.

Emigre: How about the Macintosh's inherent look, low resolution? Will this be part of its contribution to a new design language?

Jeffery: I think it will be a part of it. Yes. If any of it will only disappear in its most obvious manifestations. To me the really interesting thing about the low resolution look, bitmapping or digitization, is that it's a kind of visual embodiment of the concept of what it is to make information digital. All information, whether it is text or image, is broken down into parts that are then equally transformed and transmitted over phone lines or whatever. To me the bitmapping and digital look formally embodies that principal, the principal of information in digital form.

Emigre: Do you think that low resolution can be used in the context of its own technology?

Jeffery: No I don't think so. But right now, it is really helpful and important in making that bridge, and helping people understand that writing and drawing, and image and text, are becoming the same medium, and are coming through the

lect an area by making a stencil, and indicate this area to be 100% white and remove all other colors. When you get back your digital piece of film, you'll see that where it is white, the film is completely clear. That's great if you want really tight control. But the problem with the graphic paintbox is that it makes things too seamless. So I, in a way, like to use the video paintbox from Quantel, because that still has that fabric or texture of video. But the nice thing about the graphic paintbox is that you can import all these different kinds of images and you can retain that high quality seamlessness (like eight by ten photographs that have been laser-

Figure 15: Double page spread "Emigre 11"

implementing multiple grids, type sizes, type weights and effective use of negative space (See Figure 15). Because the issue printed the interviews simultaneously, we see here extracts from three interviews. The spread is bordered by a segment of an interview with Jeffery Keedy printed in "Matrix Bold" and in a narrow column. It is interesting that such a heavy typeface is used and yet legibility is sustained. The narrow column is also very effective, giving the impression that Keedy was excited and talked quickly during the interview. In the interview with April Greiman a font reminisant of early bit-mapped fonts is used and key words are printed larger and in bold. Emphasis is the result, and Vanderlans skillfully portrays Greiman as very thoughtful and self confident concerning her opinions. For the interview with Rick Valicenti understatement is the decision for Vanderlans, possibly because the other two interviews are designed with such boldness. This interview nicely balances the page spread and avoids it becoming so loud that it would be off-putting. As with all his page spreads this one began spontaneously, and Vanderlans let the content dictate how the grid structure would form. The program he uses, "Ready, Steady, Go!", provides features and commands which allow for alignment and symmetry. While more sophis-ticated programs were in existence, Vanderlans chose to use this one because it was limited. This carried on the feeling he had when he bought his first Macintosh;

> *"The Macintosh at the beginning was so limiting and the*
> *parameters within which you had to work so narrow*
> *that you had to be incredibly creative to do something*

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*decent...........I have designed "Emigre" with a program*

*called Ready, Steady Go! and I think I am the only*

*designer in the world who still uses it. I am using a*

*very old version, that doesn't even let you rotate type.*

*I do that because I feel more comfortable working*

*within strict parameters."   (Eye,July 1992, Pg. 15)*

In working within strict parameters Vanderlans avoids the pitfalls
of the Macintosh which arises when there are too many options. This can
lead to the designer endlessly experimenting with variations on his or her
idea without achieving anything. The graphic designer can spend hours tin-
kering and fine tuning and finding clever tricks in a complex program with-
out a single design problem being solved. When Vanderlans says; "Sometimes
it is better not having the option of changing your headline into the shape of
a fish", he effectively states the absurd solutions which can arise by becom-
ing a slave to the technology. This is a mistake "Emigre" has never made.
However, in the last chapter when I bring "Emigre" up to date we shall see
that the influence of the Macintosh has become more considered, and used
more in restraint.

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CHAPTER FOUR THE LEGACY OF "EMIGRE" AND IT'S USE OF THE MACINTOSH

In the first ten years of "Emigre" the graphic design world underwent an incredible revolution. The Apple Macintosh propelled this revolution, once again restoring complete control over the design process to the hands of the graphic designer. This has brought a sense of excitement back into graphics which had long since disappeared with the days of letterpress. Ever since Vanderlans declared, "My only grid was going to be the four crop marks", "Emigre" became a free-form exploration of the cutting edge of graphic design. All aspects of the design process were debated, and through the use of Licko's typeface's and Vanderlan's layouts the Apple Macintosh became regarded as the tool for creative and innovative design. However, by the end of 1994 "Emigre" found itself at something of a crossroads. The Macintosh is no longer the limited and crude tool it began life as. "Emigre" always worked best when it was pushing the constraints of this emerging technology. From bit-mapped fonts and pixelated illustrations to PostScript technology and high resolution image processing the Apple Macintosh is now capable of mimicking almost any existing printed medium. The purists claim that no other tool in the history of graphic design has produced so much bad design. It is true that it made many people think that if they bought a Macintosh they were instantly graphic designers, and in fact Apple encouraged this notion to sell more machines. However, in my opinion this has only increased the importance of designers in the eyes of "mere mortals". "Emigre" became a forum for innovation on this machine, yet the purists who were still bound by the shackles of Swiss modernism considered it

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visual pollution. In a debate with typographer Ed Benguait, the traditionalist Massimo Vignelli had this to say about "Emigre";

> "*(Emigre) is a national calamity. It's not a freedom of culture, it's an aberration of culture. One should not confuse freedom with lack of responsibility, and that is the problem. They show no responsibility. It's just freaking out, in a sense. The kind of expansion of the mind that they're doing is totally uncultural............ Emigre is scooping in the trash can, where everything has already been discovered and is out of use and has no purpose anymore.*" (Print, July 1994, Pg 138)

Vignelli is a conservative and looks for traditions of clear typography and grid structure. I find it incredible that he says everything in "Emigre" has already been discovered when the Macintosh didn't even exist before 1984 How could the myriad of typeface's featured in "Emigre" have existed without this machine? While some may look as if they created using traditional methods, they still have their origins in this machine's coarse, low resolution beginnings. Vanderlans was deeply offended by Vignelli's comments. As a student he was one of Vanderlans' heroes, and Vignelli's signage for the New York subway was considered a milestone in design. The fact is that Vignelli and those of the old vanguard feel threatened by what "Emigre" is doing, as if it will lead to a degradation of quality in graphic design. They fail to realise that their old style will always be valid, but there is room in the

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graphic design world for artistic expression and innovation as well. Of course there are instances when legibility and clarity are of paramount importance. Road signs being the most obvious example. Magazines such as "Emigre" don't have to be designed within the same parameters. There has to be room for artistic expression.

However, now that we are in the mid-nineties the look and feel of "Emigre" is no longer the "Shock of the new " that it once was. The speed at which what is considered avant-garde and progressive becomes the mainstream has increased exponentially. The "Emigre" look can now be seen in a filtered down and neatly packaged format on the high streets and daily publications. Many designers grab Zuzana Licko's typeface's and use them irresponsibly in a desperate attempt to appeal to youth culture and give their a cutting edge feel. Both Vanderlans and Licko are well aware of the impact their magazine has had. The "Emigre" type foundry sells thousands of copies of their typeface's every year. So, with this in mind, the style and content of "Emigre" took a shift at the beginning of 1995. Previous to this the content had been slowly changing into a reflective look at what had been achieved in "Emigre". In the "Post-Mac" nineties world Vanderlans toned down the design and layout of the magazine, and instead concentrated on the content and delivering it in a readable form. The magazine had developed it's own visual vocabulary, and it could now either repeat itself by continually trying to produce new ideas or decide that it had a tradition of it's own. In the most recent issues I will now show that in many ways Vanderlans has re-discovered some of the qualities of his modernist background which he had previously rejected with such vigour.

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Emigre

No. 32

price $7.95

Figure 16: Cover of "Emigre 32"

## In and Around

for others and towards speaking with and to others.[14] The factors that would allow others to speak for themselves deal with access to the means of representation that is ultimately a function of power. The debates around multiculturalism can be seen as a struggle for control over the means of representation. As Craig Owens states, it is representation itself that takes away the ability to speak for oneself. However, the traffic in representations will not end since it is fundamental to the operation of our society. So, while increased instances of represented others (tokenism) inject some presence into the picture, they do little to explain the previous exclusions.

Fundamental change is unlikely to occur through the pages of multinational corporate advertising no matter how many others are depicted. After all, have you 'Come a Long Way, Baby'? Fundamental change is much more likely to come at a broader social level through a multitude of changes from any number of sectors and inevitably it will be reflected in the construction of various representations, made by graphic designers and other cultural producers and ultimately incorporated in the constitution of identities. After all, corporate advertising campaigns and token representations (spot the black, the Asian, the woman in the scene) do not create diversity but merely reflect it.

The work of socially engaged activists, artists and designers tries to undermine the stereotype in innumerable ways; through disruptive strategies such as appropriation, subversion and inversion, as well as the destabilizing tactics of deconstructive, textual readings and demystifying widely held views.[15] True inclusiveness, as a result of empowerment or agency, includes access to both the means of producing cultural representations and to the modes of their distribution in society.[16] In this way, the voices of others will be heard only when those others have access to the larger public sphere.

While graphic designers may claim an independent status, like that of neutral observers, we find that their role is a central one in the system of representations. As producers and consumers of various cultural artifacts, understood as both tangible goods, such as books and magazines, as well as the more intangible products, such as ephemeral messages and images, graphic designers find themselves both in and around culture.[17]

The Beginning

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Undoubtedly, designers are discovering that issues of cultural diversity and social responsibility can be found in their own back yards. As I wrote this, the premiere issue of Sphere has arrived at my door, a publication by the World Studio Foundation. The stated intent of the Foundation is threefold: to "re-seminate information about social projects in the global creative community" and to "encourage projects that empower individuals and communities to participate in the shaping of their environment." While their intentions are laudable I am left with an uneasy feeling. Perhaps it's cynicism, maybe it's the Cal arts-like design that makes me suspicious, or maybe it's the $50 subscription price. See the brief report on World Studio, I.D. Magazine, November 1993, p. 26.

[15] It is easier to see the work produced by artists as instances of "others speaking for themselves" and in the process enabling another voice to be heard. I think of Carrie Mae Weems, and African American woman, whose photographic series "Ain't Jokin" with titles such as "Black Woman with Chicken" or "What are the three things you can't give a black person?" or of the Native American artist Jimmie Durham's work, both of whom undermine the prevalent stereotypes produced by and for dominant culture. It is harder to see this activity in the realm of graphic design proper, much of which is produced by and for dominant cultural interests.

[16] (SEE IMAGE ON LEFT) Anonymously designed flyer produced on a photocopier and distributed in New York City schools.

[17] So what is the answer? The problems are multifaceted and much larger than design, which means we need a variety of responses on a variety of levels. It helps to remember that we are both designers and citizens. In this way, you can be part of a solution even if you are not designing for it. It also helps to remember that graphic design is about messages, and that our solutions are merely contributions to a larger effort.

There must be greater cultural diversity in the people who design, including an analysis of why these people are not there now. We need greater critical awareness that the teaching and practice of design occur in larger social frameworks, governed by rules of racism, patriarchy, heterosexism, etc., particularly for those individuals who may not experience it themselves. We need a greater range of methods and options for practicing graphic design that begins to step outside of a reactionary response to problems with its outmoded, pyramidal (top down) structure and towards a more inclusive, responsive position found in activities like, for example, collaboration and co-authorship.

Much to the disappointment of many, these issues will not disappear with dismissals of "political correctness" since they reflect a fundamental social change that has been underway for quite some time, no matter how slow it seems in coming for the rest of us. Quite simply, design has no choice but to get used to it.

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### Introduction to A

If it is written in no language it is written in no body

- DOMINIQUE FOURCADE -
( From Phe )

A is everything. A is all. A is the all beginning.
Here, A has become the body. A is breathing.
Look, A is alive, and A cries out,
    "I am Aism!"
A lives in the lung of language.
The lung's intellect released onto A,
    A's own language, its alphabet redefined.
Simplification: a loss of letters in flourish.
Leave now from letters says the A breathing.
    leave all breath previously requested in primitive cultures,
    all letters unworthy of the lung of A.
Go C, go F, go H, go J, go N, go Q, go U, V, W, X, Y, and Z.
All ancients be gone,
    be born unto the dust of your own frivolous tongue flapping.
Live the document of A, the breathing body of A,
    given here as said of the ruins.
O single page dug up breathing this:
    "A corresponds to the first symbol in
    the Phoenician alphabet, where
    it represented not a vowel, but a breathing."
These words alive,
    these Goudy words,
        dug from the depth of a lung beat.
The Goudy-father of Aism.

• • •

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### Typography of A

• • •

Writing knows nothing of the present.
The first word breaks with the past in order to face,
    virgin, the demanding future.

- EDMOND JABÈS -
( From The Book of Margins )

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Figure 17: Double page spread "Emigre 32"

Comparing "Emigre 32" with earlier issues the first thing that is striking about it is that it has a solid grid structure which doesn't change throughout the magazine (See Figure 16). For "Emigre" this is shocking, and perhaps this makes it a good thing. However, Vanderlans is again considering the content and designing the magazine accordingly. This was one of the first issues to take a reflective look at just how radical the past achievements of "Emigre" really were. It contains lengthy and in-depth articles on issues such as the role of graphic design in the public domain to the effects of design on culture. Vanderlans knows that these issues require a long attention span, and in "Emigre"'s previous format many readers might have given up frustrated by typographic meanderings. With this in mind he opts for a simple two column grid structure. He uses line rules to split the box about one sixth from the top and provides lines which lead the eye from the headline to the text below (See Figure 17). Many headlines are printed in a gothic typeface, perhaps echoing this return to traditional values. Apart from this no new typeface's appear, compared to a time when Zuzana Licko invented typeface's for each issue, and even for each article. Vanderlans now chooses from a wide back catalogue of fonts. "Matrix", "Template", "Triplex" all feature, however alot of the visual achievements of the first ten years has been lost. It is now a more sober publication whose origins in the Apple Macintosh have become invisible. This issue could have been printed in the traditional manner and looked no different. However, Vanderlans skillful use of typesize and layout to generate atmosphere and mood still remains. Perhaps because the Apple Macintosh now has no limits means that Vanderlans must set up his own in order to be creative. When asked if the

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Figure 18: Cover of "Emigre 33"

era of rapid discovery and excitement on the Macintosh is now over he had this to say;

> *"Yes, to a degree. I think it was quite liberating those*
> *first two years. Liberating or challenging, mostly*
> *because the Macintosh at the beginning was so limiting*
> *and the parameters within you worked so narrow that*
> *you had to be incredibly creative to do something*
> *decent. What was also interesting was that no one had*
> *worked in that medium, so that you had to create*
> *your own vocabulary"*.   (Eye, July 1992, Pg 15)

The vocabulary him and Zuzana Licko created has now become tradition for "Emigre".

In "Emigre 33" the transformation of the magazine into a platform for discussion rather than radical design was complete with a major change (See Figure 18). The format was changed and shrunk from 425mm by 285mm to 280mm by 210mm. This radical new format was as much dictated by practicality as design criteria. The disadvantage of an over-sized publication, being clumsy to read and awkward to carry and photocopy, made Vanderlans decide to change. The nature of the new content, which demands more attention from the reader, meant that the magazine had to be easier to read. "Emigre" has become an intellectual rather than visual feast, but this has not diminished it's importance in the graphic design world. The trend of the grid structure generated by lines is repeated in this issue, providing an effective

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reading environment. Discussions on post-modernism and cultures of design are all provided with text on the right hand side and reproductions of examples on the left. Despite sticking to a rigid grid the low-tech feel of "Emigre" remains, a testimony to Vanderlans' opinions on glossy colour magazines which are poorly designed;

> "*I am often disgusted with the level of waste in graphic*
> *design. So much money is spent on printing of*
> *materials the world could do without.*"
> (Print,June 1992, Pg 53)

The price of "Emigre" hasn't changed since issue ten, a tribute to Vanderlans' commitment to keeping quality high and price low. Again, Vanderlans dives into the Emigre archives for typeface's and decides on "Matrix" throughout in various weights and sizes. While the quality of writing has improved in many ways, I Still feel that Vanderlans has neglected the need for the magazine to be visually as well as intellectually stimulating. It is still essentially a magazine for professional graphic designers, not scholars of design theory. However, despite it's far more subdued visual impact the character and philosophy of Rudy Vanderlans remains.

The typeface's of Zuzana Licko and those she inspired to use the Apple Macintosh have left a lasting impression on the graphic design landscape. In many ways the Macintosh, as it evolved into a sophisticated machine, led Licko to return to more traditional avenues, but from a very different perspective. "Journal", a typeface she designed in 1991, directly

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Journal Text:

AaBbCcDdEeFfGggHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUu
VvWwXxYyZz(1234567890)

Journal Ultra:

AaBbCcDdEeFfGggHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRr
SsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz(1234567890)

Journal Italic:

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvW
wXxYyZz(1234567890)

Figure 19: The "Journal" typeface

Remedy

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgH
hIiJjKkLlMmNnOo
PpQqRrXxTtUuVvW
WXxYyZz(1234567890)

Figure 20: The "Remedy" typeface

wanted to capture the ragged quality of early letterpress print. She noticed that medium resolution laser printers outputed text which had a randomness not dissimilar to early letterpress (See Figure 19). This randomness had long since been lost when typographers set about cleaning up these traditional letterpress fonts with the introduction of photo-typesetting. Many of the qualities of the letterpress was lost in the name of progress. "Journal",(See figure 18), is a reproduction of the letterpress look itself. The irregularities of letterpress are simulated by deliberately forming jagged edges within the clinical environment of the Apple Macintosh, and a program called "Fontographer". The result is a more organic font which contrasts with the usual cold feel of computer-generated text.

This trend was continued by some of the many submissions by designers to "Emigre". The "Remedy" family of typeface's designed by Frank Heine looks as if it were painted with a set of old brushes.(See Figure 20) This font proves that the Apple Macintosh is now totally capable of mimicking traditional medium, but of course within it's digital realm. This empowers the designer to achieve endless possibilities. The "Remedy" typeface has a manic and lively quality, and with it's twirls and dots it has proved to be one of the popular fonts from the "Emigre" stable to hit the mainstream. It is probably the ultimate example of an individual typeface, a font more akin to personal handwriting than calligraphy. While the purists consider this to be the "Irresponsibility" which Vignelli speaks of, I feel it is an example in graphic design of artistic expression. While there is a thousand reasons to follow the rules of typography there are a thousand reasons to break them given the right circumstances.

[36]

# Template gothic
## AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIi
## JjKkLlMmNnOoPpQq
## RrXxTtUuVvWwXxYyZz
## (1234567890)

Figure 21: The "Template" typeface

Another of the "Emigre" fonts to affect the mainstream is "Template".(See figure 21) Designed by Barry Deck, this typeface deliberately challenges traditions of typography by basing it's form on the letterforms which result from an old-fashioned stencils. Ascenders reduce in width towards their base as if to recreate a marker stuck in one the grooves of these stencils, and the result is a typeface that is strangely elegant despite the crude concept behind it. Compared to "Remedy" it does look as if it were created on a Macintosh, although it's subtle curves are as far away from early bit-mapped fonts as "Remedy" is.

The impact of these fonts show that "Emigre"'s place in mainstream culture is firmly established. The stylistic attributes of "Emigre" were once outrageous and shocking, now they can be seen on every second album cover or advertisement aimed at the youth market. Aspiring designers being educated in the macintosh environment are guaranteed to feature some "Emigre" fonts in their portfolios. Where once it was considered deviant and subversive, the "Emigre" look is now criticised as being too commonplace. With this in mind it was a good decision by Vanderlans to tone down "Emigre" and transform it into an intellectual and reflective publication. The legacy of the first ten years of the magazine is intact, and Vanderlans can now carry on questioning just how radical their exploration of the Apple Macintosh was. Rudy Vanderlans' enthusiasm for "Emigre" has never diminished;

*"I can still get excited over people who are doing things*
*very differently from how I do them, because I'm very*

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*interested in why they're doing it differently. And as*

*long as I find those people for whom design is still*

*this wide open area, I'll continue to publish."*

(Emigre:Graphic Design in the digital realm,1993 Pg 90)

The visual vocabulary of "Emigre" has now become part of the history of the Apple Macintosh, but the debates about contemporary graphic design are continuous, and for this reason "Emigre" still has an important role to play.

CONCLUSION

So, in conclusion, I hope I have effectively demonstrated how "Emigre" was moulded and shaped as Vanderlans and Licko explored an evolving Apple Macintosh. From it's inception as "The Magazine that ignores boundaries", "Emigre" was innovative and exciting, and the enthusiasm Vanderlans and Licko had for the Macintosh was echoed in every issue. As the computer developed with new technologies "Emigre" began a new visual vocabulary that influences every designer that uses a Macintosh today. Even "Emigre" itself has begun to tap into the tradition it helped to create, and the latest issues focus on intellectual discussions on what they achieved in the first ten years of the Apple Macintosh. From the coarse resolution of bit-mapped fonts to smooth PostScript technology Licko's fonts showed the validity of this new digital medium for typeface design, and time has proved her point that every font needs time to become part of the visual landscape. Typeface's she designed which were at first considered ugly can now be seen in every second advertisement, and the general public totally accept them. With this acceptance in mind "Emigre" has left it's ground-breaking days to the annals of history, to a time when they adopted a crude computer and continually pushed it's limits as those limits were extended. Those days are now over, and although new and interesting continues to emerge as a result of the Macintosh, designers today are not pushing the parameters of a limited tool. Those days are now gone, and I feel the history of graphic design will refer to "Emigre" as the ultimate example of the brilliant and innovative work which the early years of the Macintosh spawned.

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