

# 10 Remarkable Shadow Type & Lettering Designs

By: [Natalie Boyd](#) | November 2, 2015

The creative and strategic application of shadows and three-dimensional features to type and lettering has been in practice for centuries. In the past, letters with relief and shadow have been used on signage, posters, packaging, movie titles and publications, allowing lettering to jump off a flat surface for an eye-catching look. Shadowed type still appears in print and signage today, but it can also be found across the web—sometimes applied gracefully, other times less so.



*Shadow type in film titles from Shadow Type by Steven Heller & Louise Fili*

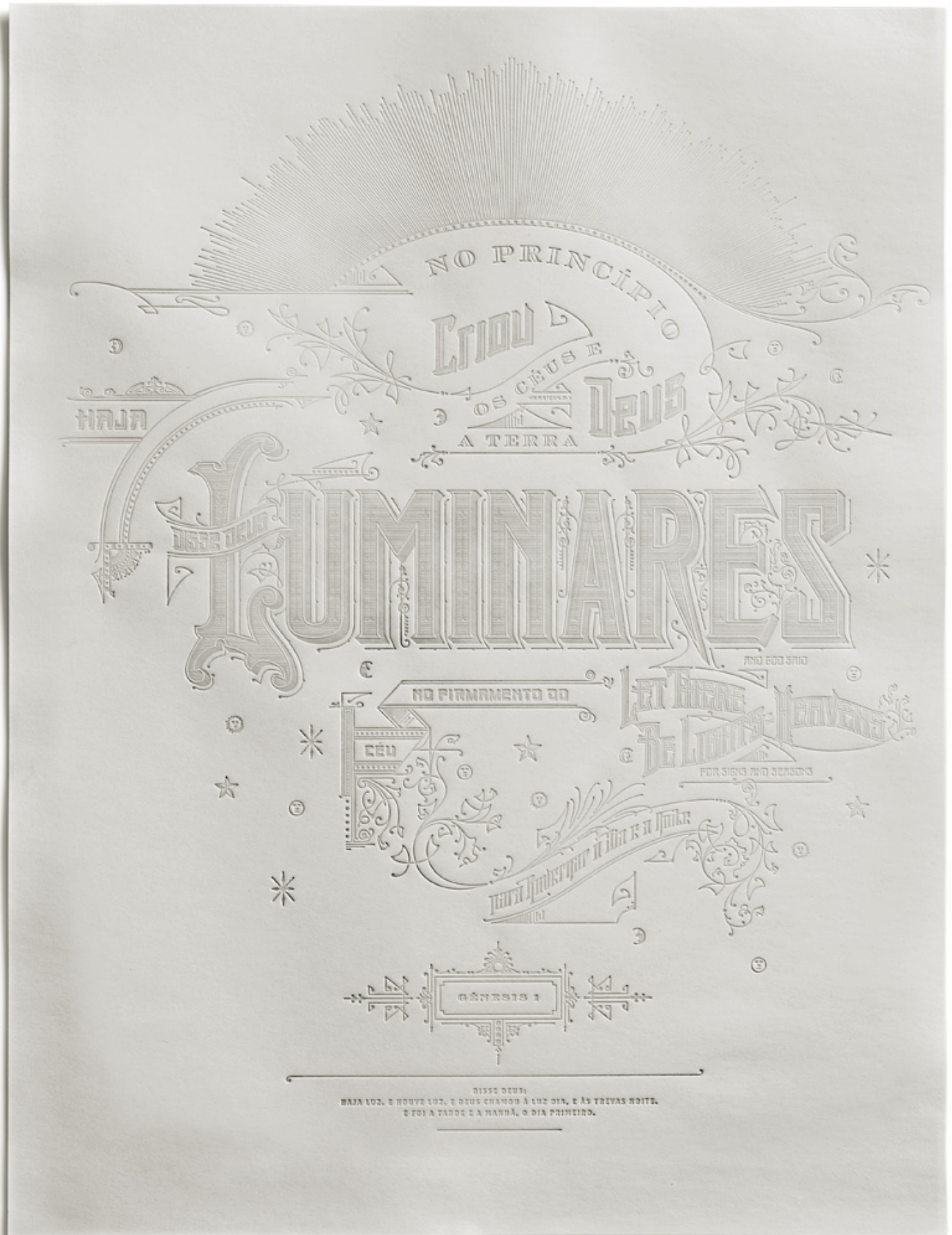
Shadow type doesn't refer exclusively to drop shadows—even though they are a frequent component. The term can also refer to the application of either weighty or slight strokes and outline to letters, or to any use of relief and shadow in typography. Even as flat design reigns, there's still a place for three-dimensional type in the graphic design marketplace, as the designers below demonstrate in these exceptional examples of shadowed type.

## **Shadow Type Designs: From Classic & Ornate to Clean & Contemporary**

### **Luminares**

by Kevin Cantrell

This magnificent creation was featured on [HOW](#) two years ago. It's a breathtaking work and an exemplary of shadow type:









See the expert commentary below about Luminares, excerpted from [HOW](#).

**Dr. Shelley Gruendler:** *Wow! He uses letterforms and bifurcated serifs and borders and corners and size differentiation and shadows — you name it, he utilizes it! He did his research and tweaked it so that it feels modern and up to date.*

**Tiffany Wardle deSousa:** *This style is meant to be visually stimulating. You are supposed to get lost in the minutiae and the details. In many ways it is the polar opposite of the International Style.*

**Dr. Shelley Gruendler:** *It seems to have depth to it, those drop shadows really bring visual interest. (I can't believe that I'm actually liking a drop-shadow! It takes me back to my commercial art classes in the mid-1980s.)*

Read more about Luminares [here](#).

## Precious Metals

by [Studio Muti](#)

*“We created a series of typographic illustrations inspired by the rich minerals mined on our planet. With custom lettering and iconography we touched on some of the history and wealth that these precious metals have created.” — Studio Muti*









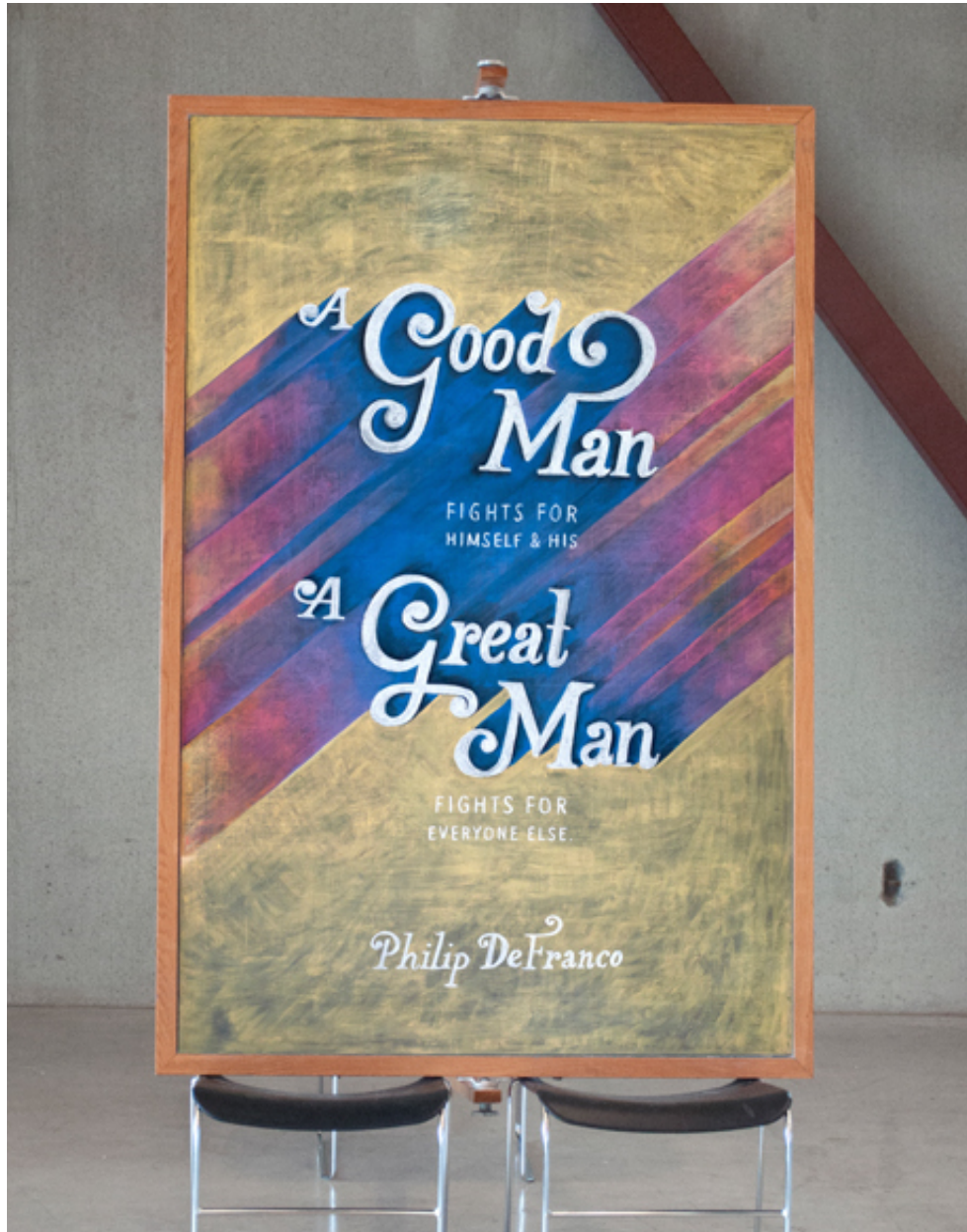


## Hand Lettered Chalk Art

by [Dangerdust](#)







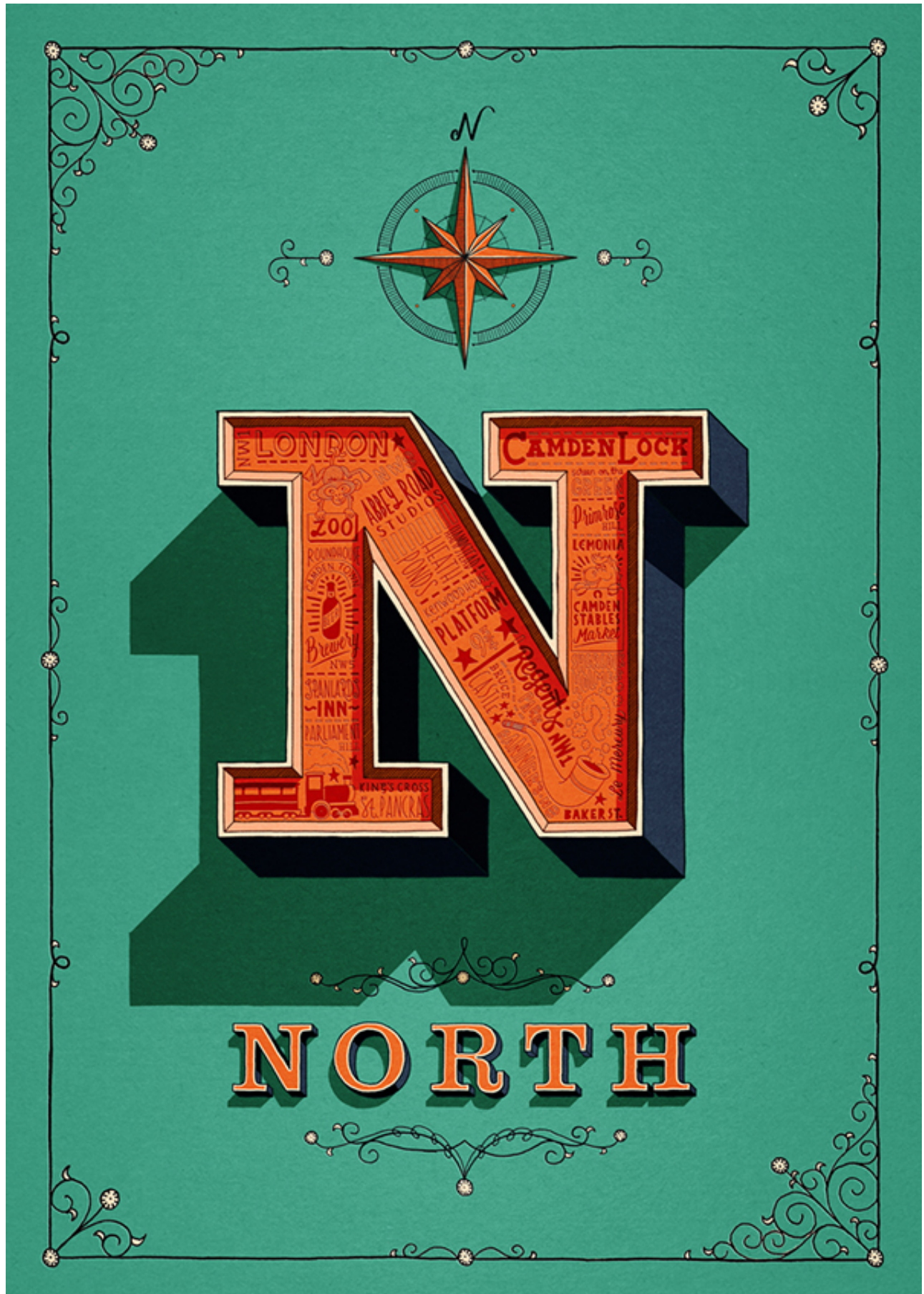
*Dangerdust earned a win in last year's Typography & Lettering Awards.*

## **Great Little Place**

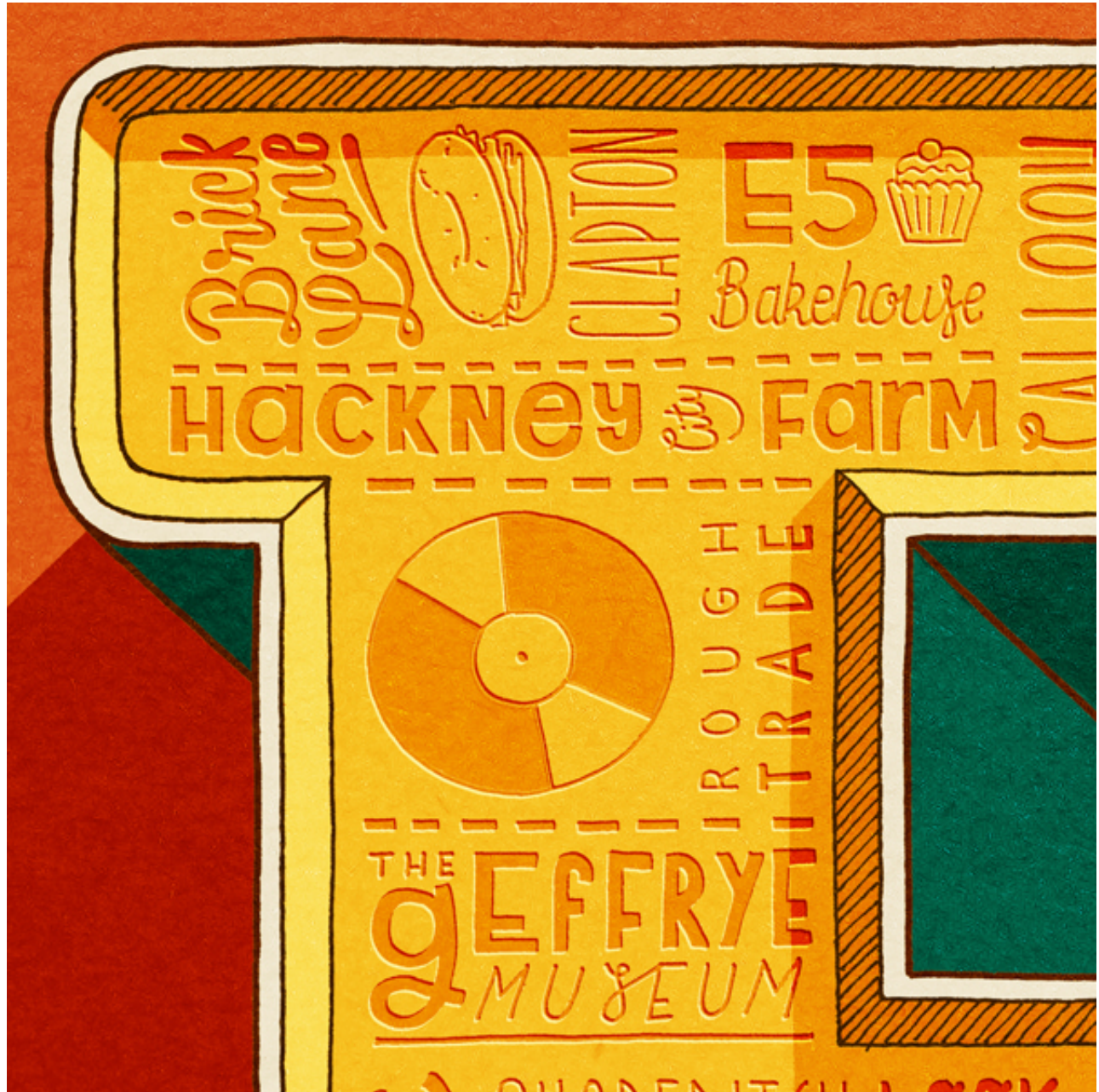
by Tobias Hall

This work includes gorgeous shadowed lettering with great detail and vibrant colors.

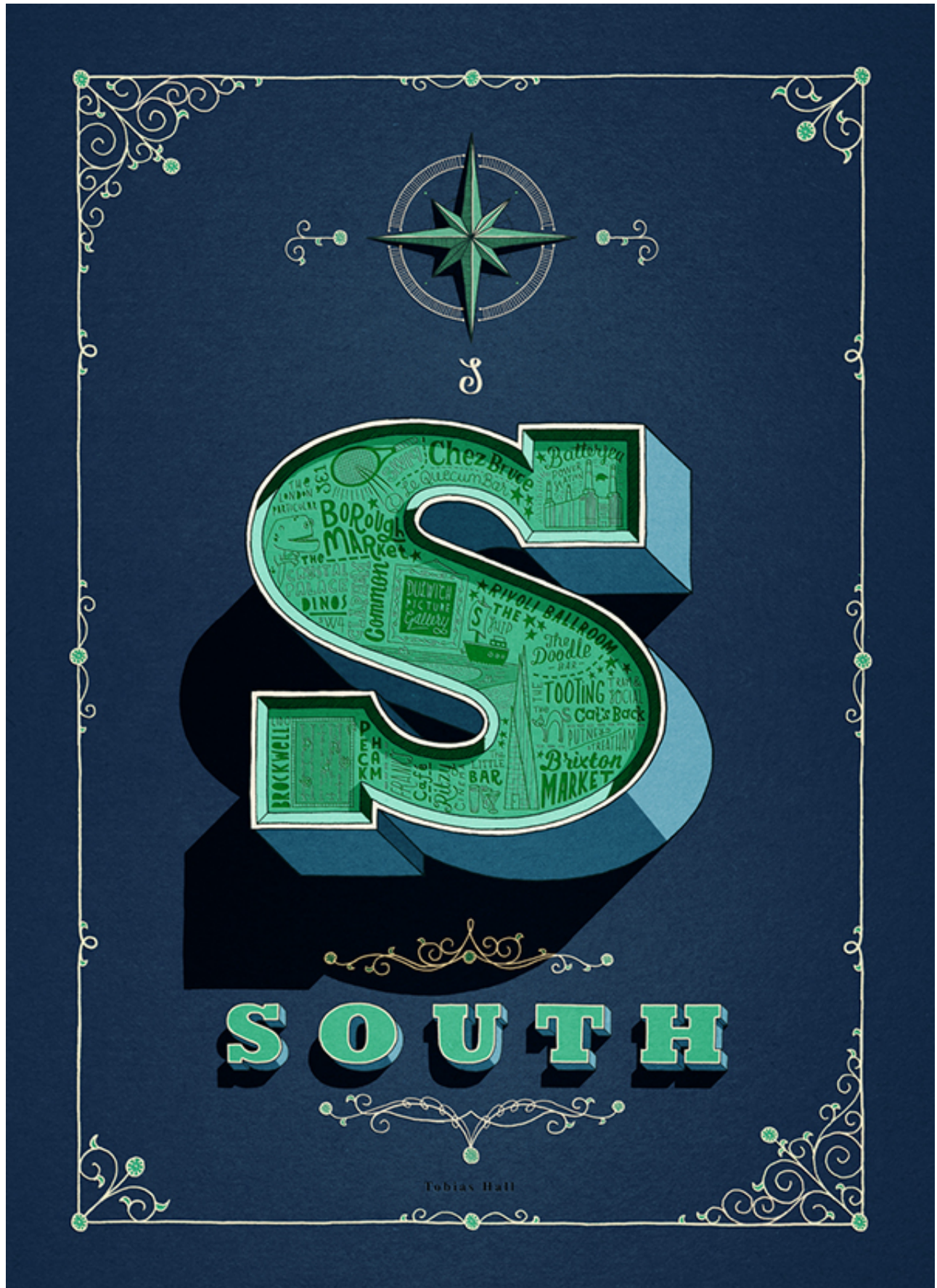








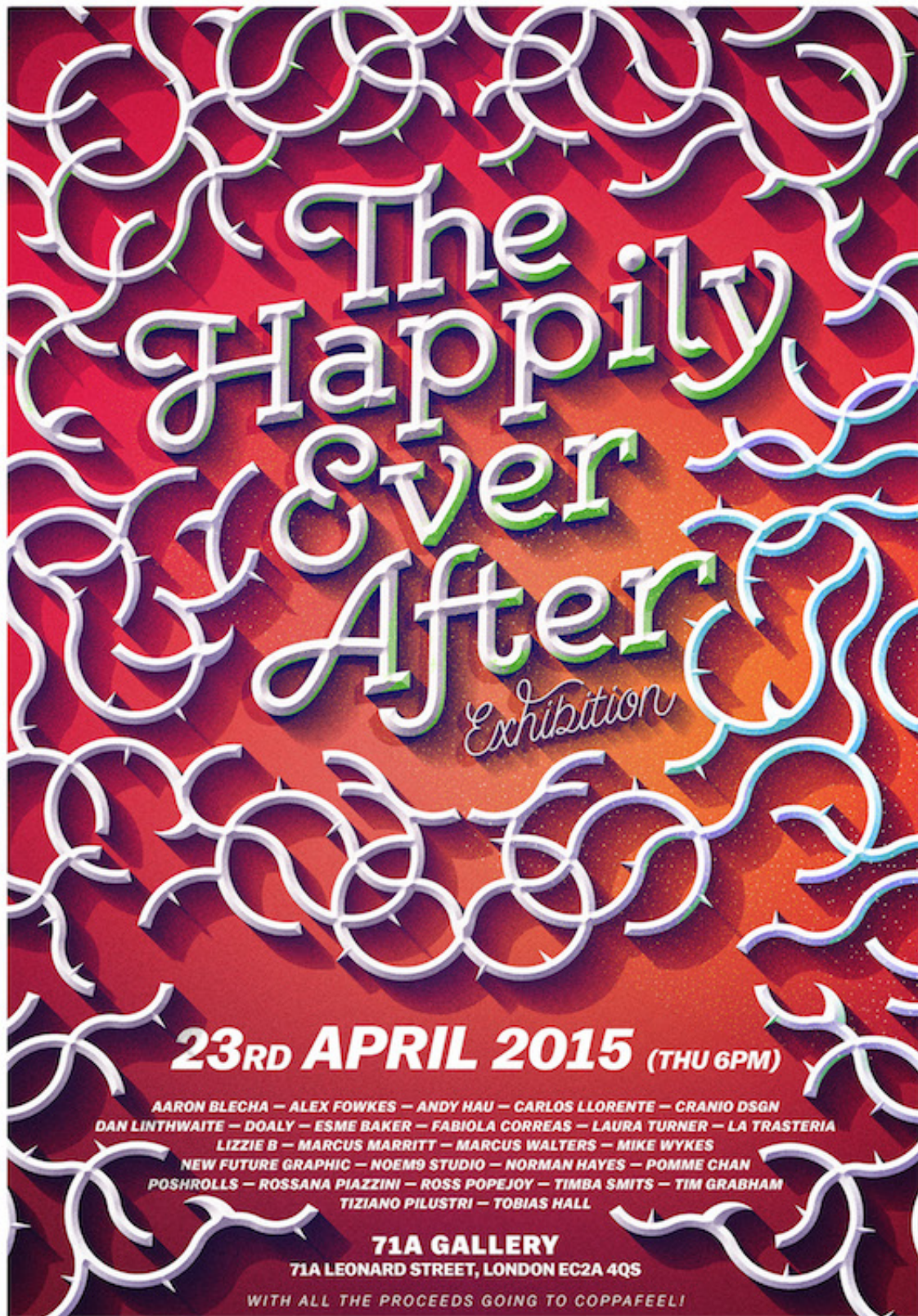




# **The Happily Ever After Exhibition poster**

by [Noem9 Studio](#) & [Happy Ending Agency](#)





## 3D Lettering Examples (Digital Art)



by [Jacob Eisinger](#)



*“POW” background illustration in collaboration with [Andy Gellenberg/WEAREKIDZ](#)*





*“Welcome to the Jungle” collaboration with [Pedro Oyarbide](#) done at [I LOVE DUST](#)*

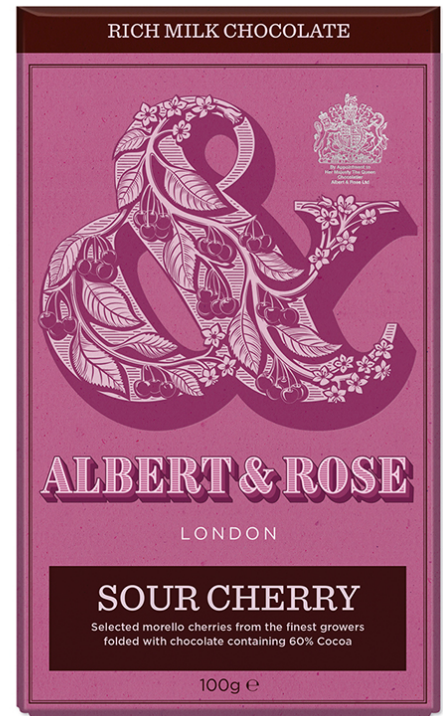
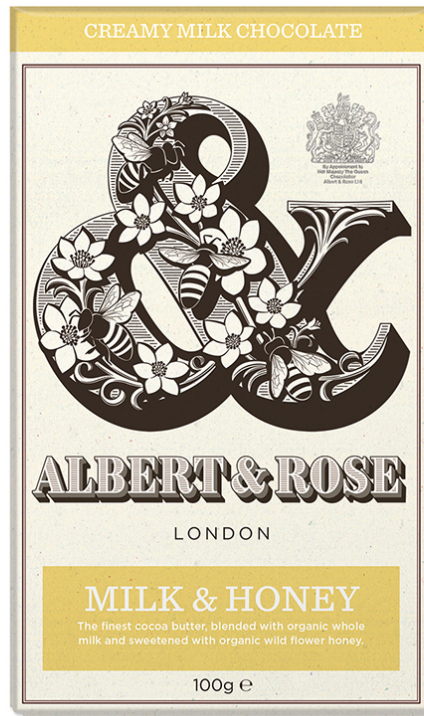
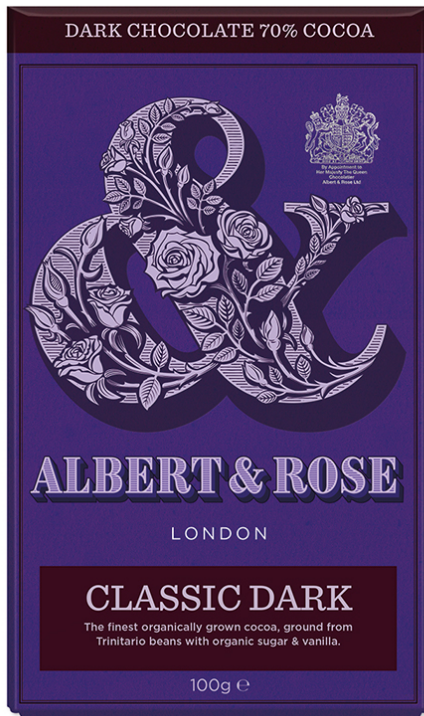
## **Chocolate Ampersands**

by [Jamie Clarke](#)

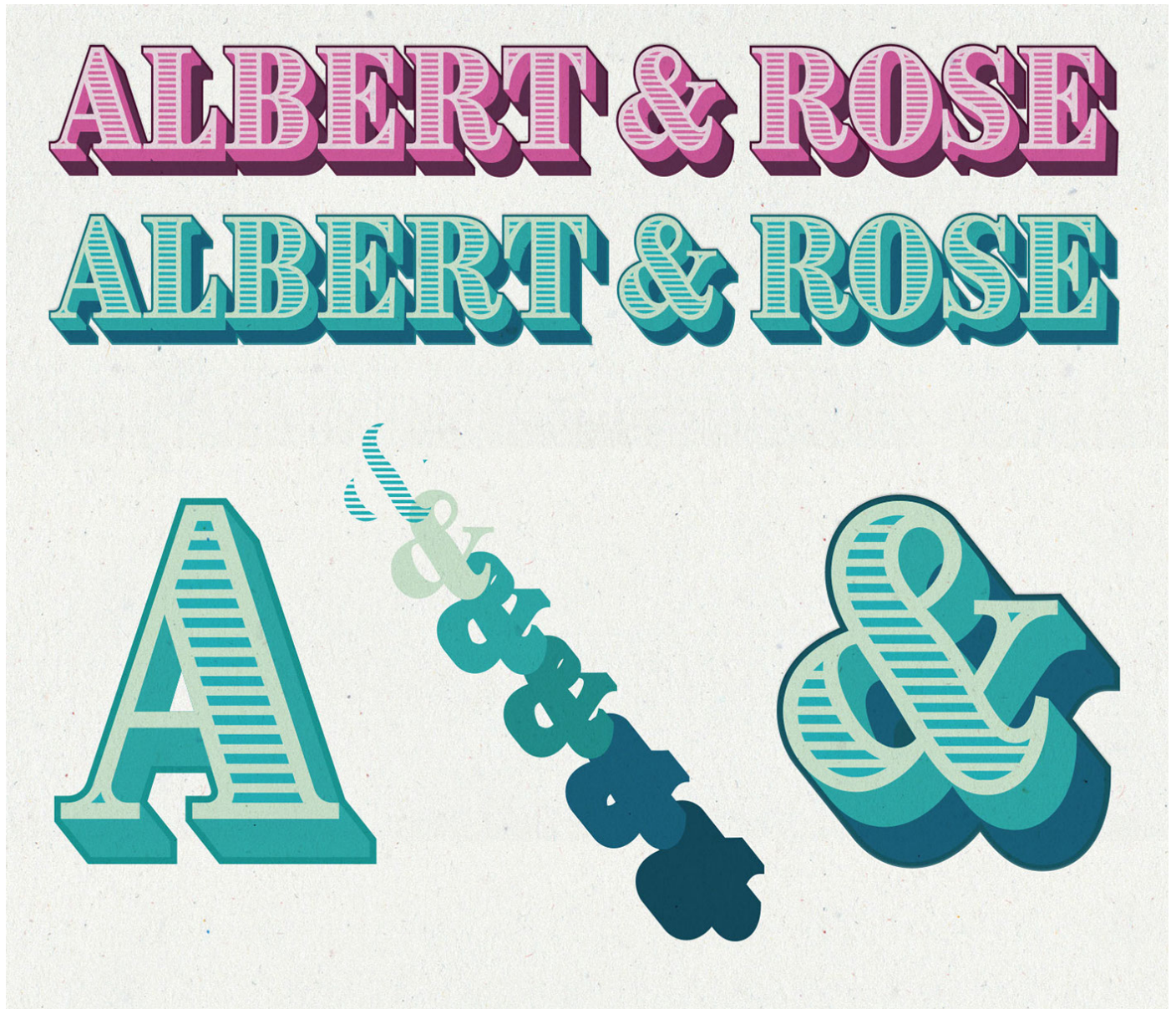
*“I’m a total chocaholic, so this packaging design seems a fitting tribute to my addiction. This self-initiated project was inspired by my research into*



*the Pouchée wood alphabets. The illustrated ampersands matched with flecked, textured paper aim to evoke an early Victorian packaging feel.”*  
— Jamie Clarke







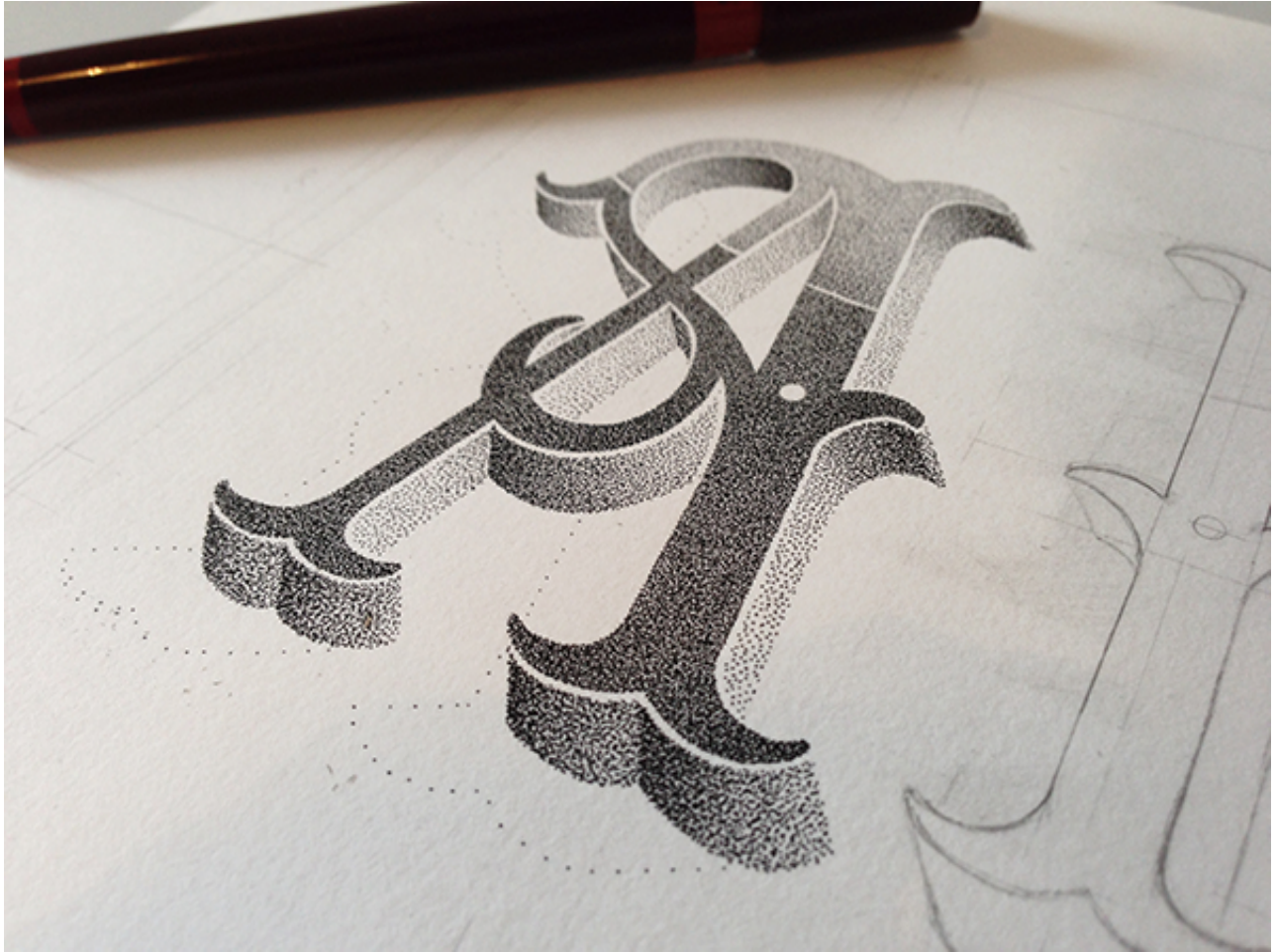
## AIR – Hand lettering

by [Xavier Casalta](#)

Another beautiful shadow hand-lettering.









## Macula, the impossible typeface

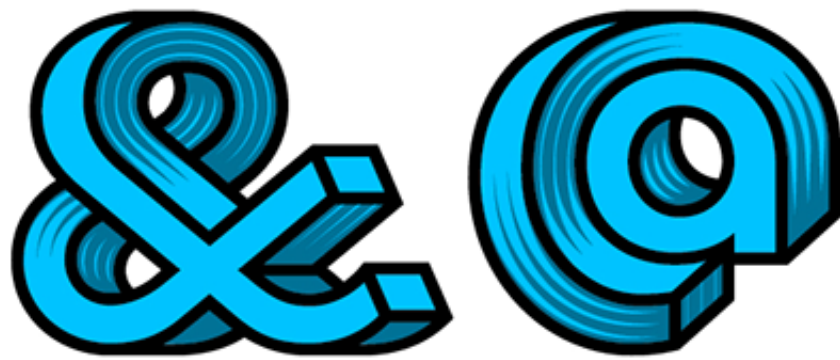
by [Baron von Fonhausen](#)

This typeface is available [here](#):

**MACULA**  
THIS IS QUITE  
IMPOSSIBLE,  
FROM LEFT TO RIGHT



↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓ ↓  
LØÖK  
LÉFF AND  
ŘIČHT



Alternate characters

HAMBURGERFONT  
H△MBURCSRF◇NT

Four styles





Vintage examples from *Shadow Type*:







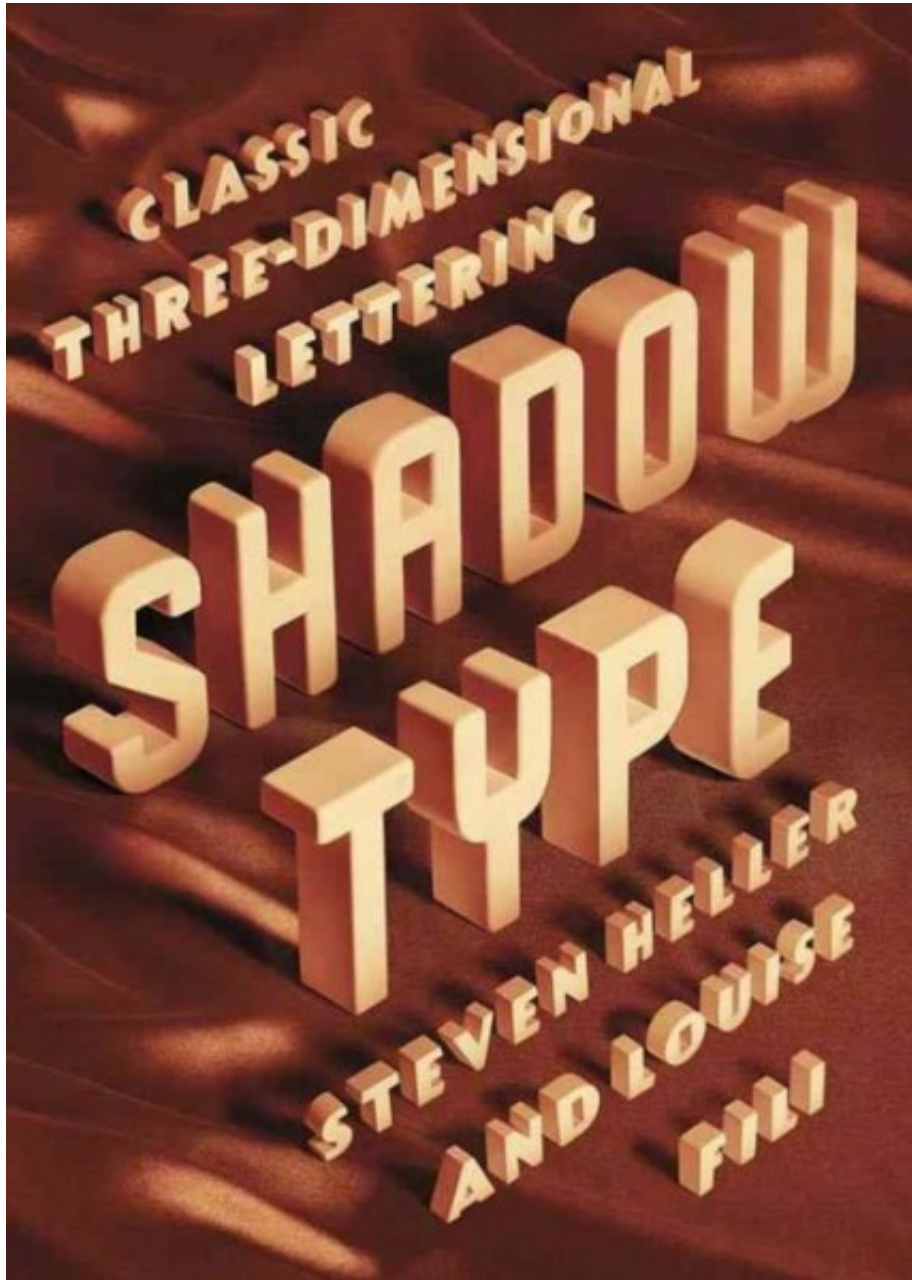






There's plenty more to be discovered on the web. If you're looking for inspiration, that's a great place to start. Or you can take advantage of Heller and Fili's in-depth investigation into the lovely vintage shadow type that they collected for their book, [\*Shadow Type\*](#).





With this book, enjoy more than 300 typography examples of dimensional lettering incorporating elements of relief and shadow from Europe and the United States. The examples come from a variety of sources, from type-specimen books and billboards, to shop signs and posters, all of which were created between the nineteenth and mid-twentieth century. Here's an inspiring promo of the book and what you may expect to find within its pages: