

Exfultat; telis
Qualis ubi in h
Frigida sub ter

PUBLII VIRGILII
MARONIS
BUCOLICA,
GEORGICA,

E T

AE NE I S.

BIRMINGHAMIAE:

Typis JOHANNIS BASKERVILLE.

MDCCLVII.

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GRAPHICS WORLD

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public to view his well-preserved remains after the coffin was dug up around 1826.

Why visit Baines with my head full of Baskerville, and even get to the stage of mentioning them both in the same sentence? Simply because Baines, as well as sharing Baskerville's love of letters and being a leading light in the Baskerville fan club, is currently producing a limited edition letterpress book entitled *Stone UTTERS (one stutters)*. The text is a collection of quotations from a number of authors on Baskerville, and the title derives from a misreading of "stone cutters" in *YAK*, a collection of individual printed sheets which piece together to form one large image, designed with Andy Altmann and David Ellis in March 1987.

Baines couldn't want for a more discerning typographic guru. John Baskerville of Birmingham was an astonisher and innovator who devoted himself to raising the standards of English printing. He spent seven years perfecting his type and experimenting with printing techniques, the manufacture of a new blacker ink and the use of smooth wove paper. Only then did he produce his first book, a quarto *Works of Virgil*, in 1757. This, he claimed, "went forth to astonish all the librarians of Europe"

Baskerville was also an accomplished typographer. He understood that although type is a medium which allows writers to communicate with readers, on a different, more human level, type creates visual interest. Baskerville's typography operated on both levels: his type worked *and* looked good.

In the preface to his edition of *Paradise Lost* (1758) Baskerville said, "Amongst the several mechanic Arts that have engaged my attention, there is no one which I have pursued with so much steadiness and pleasure as that of *Letter-Founding*. Having been an early admirer of the beauty of Letters, I became insensibly desirous of contributing to the perfection of them." Baskerville's passion about type and letterforms far exceeded that of most other contemporary printers and typefounders. He actually made his living as a japanner (decorating all manner of household objects under layers of glossy varnish), but he was also a "writing master", and for some time offered a gravestone cutting service, all of which provided the financial support necessary for his painstaking printing experiments.

It is fitting that his name should now be most closely associated with a type design which, since the Monotype revival of 1923, has been

① Baskerville's type from his *Works of Virgil*, 1757. His type was based on the style of the 18th-century writing masters and thus differed from the old-face designs which had dominated since the late 15th century. The 18th-century masters held the pen more vertically to the paper so the angle of stress is nearly vertical.

111 P. VIRGILII AENEIDOS. LIB. I.

Per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum
 Tendimus in Latium; sedes ubi fata quietas
 210 Ostendunt: illic fas regna refurgere Trojae.
 Durate, et vosmet rebus fervate secundis.
 Talia voce refert: curisque ingentibus aeger,
 Spem vultu simulat: premit altum corde dolorem.
 Illi se praedae accingunt, dapibusque futuris:
 215 Tergora diripiunt costis, et viscera nudant.
 Pars in frustra secant, verubusque tremantia figunt:
 Litore athena locant alii, flammisque ministrant.
 Tum victu revocant vires: fusi que per herbam,
 Implentur veteris Bacchi, pinguisque ferinae.
 220 Postquam exerta fames epulis, mensaeque remotae,
 Amissos longo focios sermone requirunt:
 Spemque metumque inter dubii; seu vivere credant,
 Sive extrema pati, nec jam exaudire vocatos.
 Praecipue pius Aeneas, nunc acri Orontei,
 225 Nunc Amyci casum gemit, et crudelia secum
 Fata Lyci, fortemque Gyan, fortemque Cloanthum.
 Et jam finis erat: quum Iuppiter aethere summo
 Despicens mare velivolam, terraeque jacentes,
 Liorea que, et latos populos; sic vertice caeli
 230 Confluit, et Libyae defixit lumina regnis.
 Atque illum tales jaclantem pectore curas,
 Tristior, et lacrymis oculos suffusa nitentes,
 Alloquitur Venus: O, qui res hominumque Deumque
 Aeternis regis imperiis, et fulmine terras:
 235 Quid meus Aeneas in te committere tantum,
 Quid Troes potuere? quibus tot funera passis,
 Cunctus ob Italiam terrarum clauditur orbis?
 Certe hinc Romanos olim, volventibus annis,

Hinc

P. VIRGILII AENEIDOS LIB. I. 112

Hinc fore duces, revocato a fanguine Teucris,
 240 Qui mare, qui terras omni ditioe tenerent,
 Pollicitus: quae te, Genitor, sententia vertit?
 Hoc equidem occasum Trojae, tristisque ruinas
 Solabar, fati contraria fata rependens.
 Nunc eadem fortuna viros tot casibus actos
 245 Insequitur. quem das finem, Rex magne, laborum?
 Antenor potuit, mediis elapsus Achivis,
 Illyricos penetrare sinus, atque intima tutus
 Regna Liburnorum, et fontem superare Timavi:
 Unde per ora novem vasto cum murmure montis
 250 It mare proruptum, et pelago premit arva sonanti.
 Hic tamen ille urbem Patavi, sedesque locavit
 Teucrorum, et genti nomen dedit, armaque fixit
 Troia: nunc placida compositus pace quiescit.
 Nos, tua progenies, caeli quibus annuis arcem,
 255 Navibus (infandum) amissis, unius ob iram
 Prodimur, atque Italiam longe disjungimur oris.
 Hic pietatis honos? sic nos in sceptris reponis?
 Olli subridens hominum fator atque Deorum,
 Vultu quo caelum tempestateque ferenat,
 260 Ofcula libavit natæ: dehinc talia fatat.
 Parce metu Cytherea: manent immota tuorum
 Fata tibi: cernes urbem et promissa Lavini
 Mœnia; sublimemque feres ad sidera caeli
 Magnanimum Aeneam: neque me sententia vertit.
 265 Hic tibi (labor enim, quando haec te cura remordet:
 Longius et volvens fatorum arcana movebo)
 Bellum ingens geret Italia, populosque feroces
 Contundet; moreque viris et mœnia ponet:
 Tertia dum Latio regnantem viderit aetas,

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270 Ter-

② Title page and double page spread from Baskerville's *Works of Virgil*, 1757. The title page displays Baskerville's typographic virtuosity. The type sizes and space (both horizontal and vertical) distinguish the components according to their importance and create a balanced composition. The two carefully chosen words in italic eliminate the need for any additional ornaments, their visual difference contributing to the overall harmony. Throughout the book, type size, line length and interline space are carefully chosen, the page design marred only by the close proximity and size of the running headlines and slightly wide word spacing (this copy 289 × 227 mm).

extremely popular for the setting of books, and is said to have been Monotype's third most successful type. (The range of "Baskervilles" produced is, like that of most revivals, varied to say the least: see page 36.)

Baskerville based his type on an existing written style: that which had been taught by English writing masters since the beginning of the 18th century. The 18th-century writing masters held the pen vertically to the paper, shifting the angle of stress to nearly vertical. Baskerville's types reflected this and also seem to have been influenced by copperplate and stone engraved forms. His new ink, paper, presswork and hot pressing (ironing out the impression and giving the printed sheets an overall sheen) were all designed to retain and enhance the qualities of his new type.

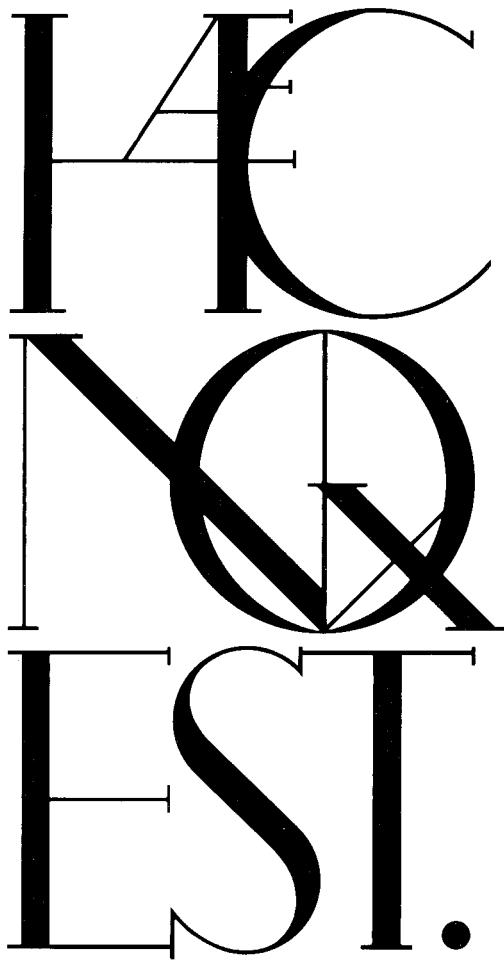
Baskerville's products were highly praised in Europe, especially in France, where the printer and typesetter Simon Pierre Fournier described them as "the finest thing yet seen of their kind". English readers, however, gave his work a mixed reception. They criticised his type, his paper and the "glossy" appearance of his pages.

Baskerville's typographic approach was one of utmost simplicity. His books were generally not

illustrated, depending almost solely upon type and space to convey meaning *and* to create visual interest upon the page. What is more, there is only one example of his use of a colour other than black. Even his use of typographic ornaments was limited. His ability to manipulate type, combined with his unceasing devotion to improving the quality of English printing *and* type design, put him into the highest ranks of the applied art of typographic design.

Phil Baines is a contemporary typo-freak, and he also exploits type's potential as a medium for communication and visual expression. However, his work so far has tended to keep these two themes distinct. His most publicised work, and by far the majority of his output so far, explores some of the possibilities offered by type as an artist's medium.

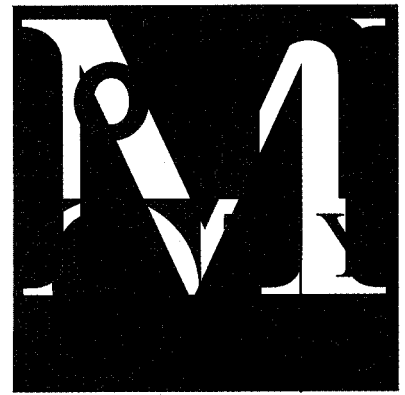
Baines was born in Kendal, and his early education (a Catholic boarding school near Wigan, and Ushaw Senior Seminary in Durham) was geared towards his eventually entering the priesthood. However, after three of the intended six years at Ushaw he decided that he wanted to pursue a career in the applied arts. From foundation course at Carlisle he moved to London for three years at St Martin's School of Art followed by two years postgraduate study at



This is the night. (**hæc nox est**), when the pillar of fire destroyed the darkness of sin. This is the night, (**hæc nox est**), when Christians everywhere, washed clean of sin & freed from all defilement, are restored to peace & grow together in holiness. This is the night, (**hæc nox est**), when Jesus Christ broke the chains of death and rose triumphant from the grave.

MOST BLESSED OF ALL NIGHTS. (**O VERE BEATA NOX**), CHOSEN BY GOD TO SEE CHRIST RISING FROM THE DEAD.

Designed & printed by Phil Baines at the Royal College of Art, Easter 1987.



Since leaving college Baines has undertaken design work (Monotype, the Crafts Council and Scout Federation, for example) and the success of this work has enabled him to continue to develop his expressive themes.

Baines has an interest in inscriptions (his hoard of rubbings hang in ranks down the narrow hall of his flat). His RCA dissertation resulted in a piece entitled *Ins/cri/pti/ons*, which brings together a selection of texts by epigraphers and typographers. These texts are juxtaposed and interwoven into one large broadsheet. The most immediately noticeable feature is his adoption of an early manuscript convention of breaking words wherever they coincide with the end of a predetermined measure. (This stylistic feature predominates in almost all his work, including his posters for Monotype and the cover of the November/December 1988 issue of *Graphics World*).

Stone UTTERS extends the inscriptional theme, the obvious connection being Baskerville's typographic assimilation of influences from written and engraved forms. Phil Baines's use of type in this book is essentially to create visual interest. His continued exploitation of the forced line break, type size variation and interwoven lines of text dictate the layout of his pages. Type is used to create interesting shapes on the page; the message is less important than the pattern.

Baines has a view that these semi-arbitrary arrangements have the effect of changing the meaning of the text by creating ambiguities where authors collide or flow into one another. Viewers therefore arrive at their own interpretation. However, it seems to me that as soon as one does look for meaning (a natural reaction when faced with a load of words) all one's attention is devoted to tracing the routes. Meaning is hidden.

In his pattern making Baines has made great strides and I'm sure, like Baskerville, he's also made many friends *and* enemies. But he's still confused about *art* and *design for use*. He himself feels that he is taking graphics as close to art as it can get. If Phil Baines succeeds in combining visual interest with communication of meaning we should indeed expect to be astonished.

① Paschal candle designed, set and printed by Phil Baines, 1987. Set in one size of Monotype Gill Sans, to one measure, the restrictions Baines sets himself result in one of his most unambiguous statements. You don't need to hunt around for meaning here.

② Season's greetings from Monotype: their 1988 Christmas card, designed by Phil Baines.

the Royal College of Art. He graduated from there in July 1987.

As he opened the door of his basement flat I was immediately surprised by Baines's physical presence. It's so easy to conjure up an image of the well built pressman type: biceps developed by the routine pulling at the handle of an old Albion press. Baines is quite the opposite: a small, unassuming character with an immediate hint of devotional obsession. This, I think, is significant. Baines has a faith in his work which, had he continued to train as a priest, would have had a rather different public manifestation.

Baines became an "admirer of letters" after his first letterpress experiments at St Martin's. His subsequent paschal candles (printed on glaciene paper) and postcards were handset and printed by him on a hand proofing press at St Martin's and later at the Royal College.