Alejandra Marquez   Professor
Trofimova
April 6, 2020   COMD 1112

Helvetica Movie

The typeface, Helvetica, is most commonly used everywhere; you can see it in advertisements, posters, billboards, subway trains and more. Helvetica belongs to the " Five Font Families" under Sans Serif, along with Old Style (Garamond), Transitional (Baskerville), Modern (Bodoni) and Egyptian/ Slab Serif (Century). The reason why helvetica became so popular and commonly used everywhere is because it's a sans serif font and the typeface is neutral. Modernism is the power to create, improve and reshape the environment through experimentation.

There were a lot of individuals who showed up and said something meaningful and gave good history or spoke their feelings towards, helvetica. The first individual who appeared first in the film is Massimo Vignelli, he said " In a sense it's like music, it's not the notes. It's the space between the notes that makes the music". The second individual who showed up after Vignelli is Wim Crouwel who said, " I'm always interested in clarity, it should be clear, it should be readable, it should be straightforward". After Crouwel, Matthew Carter was interviewed. Carter stated, " It's very hard for a designer to look at these characters and say ' How will I improve them?' and ' How can they be different' ". I can agree with Carter because sometimes I would make a quick sketch or drawing which I would end up loving half of the time but then having second thoughts about them like Carter mentioned.

Helvetica was created in 1960 in Switzerland. The original name for helvetica was ' Die Neue Haas Grotesk' and one of the founders of helvetica, Edward Hoffman, chose the name. The story behind Helvetica is that Hoffman wanted to 'clean up' (as Hoffman's son stated in the film) the typeface, Akzidenz Grotesk. Hoffman wanted to make the typeface more neat and appealing to the viewer's eyes. After helvetica was created it was time for a name to be chosen to name the typeface, the first suggestion was that it was going to be named after the country, Switzerland but Hoffman wondered why name it after the country. That's when he suggested the typeface to be named helvetica and that's how helvetica got its name.

The documentary helped me form the importance of using type as a visual voice in design because as a lady stated, " Helvetica is smooth". In this case, it means that because helvetica gives off the smoothness of its type to the point where you read something in helvetica, you don't read it in an angry tone or a confused tone no instead you read it calmly.

For me that's how this documentary is helping me using type as a visual voice when I'm creating projects or writing essays. Based on the typeface you use, you're setting up different tones so when you read it, you're like "Oh, let me use an angry voice because the type seen here is seen as an angry typeface" you're not going to use a calm tone when the typeface is seen as an angry tone.

Lars Müller means when he said, "Helvetica is the perfume of the city" by helvetica being available all over the world for many different type designers, designers, publications and artists to use in their work. Helvetica is a very well known typeface among designers compared to everyone else in the world, everyone can say " Well, it's just a font", while designers say something more like " It's not just a typeface, it's calm, it's soothing, it capture the viewer's eyes". A lot of people don't pay much attention to the different typefaces shown around their surroundings but to a designer they see it and feel the emotion that is coming out of the piece of work or art.