# Typography In Film

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by **Lonna Robinson**
May 11, 2000

**Special Thanks to:**

Dale Johnson
Wayne Roosa
Heinz Klinkon

and my Family

For their instruction, support, and encouragement.

*May 11, 2000*

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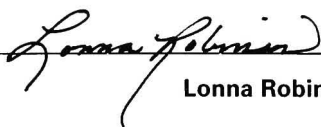**School of Design**     Associate Professor, Graphic Design

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*Lonna Robinson*          *May 11, 2000*
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The film title sequence represents a marriage of my two interests—film and graphic design.

**Kyle Cooper**
Graphic Designer

Graphics International
*Imaginary Forces*  Nov 1997

**Table of Contents**
Typography In Film

**Appendices**

### Definition

Typography In Film was the examination of the existing and potential roles of typography in motion picture films.

### Title Design

Understanding typography used in the film industry begins with knowledge of title design. Title design is the creation and development of a title for an onscreen application. This thesis was limited to the examination of title design in the motion picture film venue. In addition to the title of the film, title design may involve the formulation of the opening and closing credits. The remaining typography in film stems from title design, this includes title cards, chapters and divisions, explanatory text, title sequences, subtitles, and captions.

Title design has been the main focus of this thesis because of how typography has been used in film in the past and how it has evolved until the present time. Great progress has been made in the film industry regarding title sequences and the use of typography in them. Title design is the new topic in graphic design and film. Movies such as **Seven** and **The Island of Dr. Moreau** demonstrate that typography is not about listing information for reading, but to create visual experiences which could rival that of any film. The next step for typography in film is to become typography as image. This entails typography making the leap from a supportive role to that of a lead in a film.

### Typography As Image

Typography as image is yet another category of typography in film. Typography as image involves type as the key visual element in film. This brings typography beyond title design. It evolves from being a separate yet essential element of film to being film. The use of imagery in film has often been challenged by avant garde and independent artists; however, the application of typography as visual subject matter or the focal point of the camera has not been greatly explored. It might be further developed through a solely typographic application, a combination of typography and sound, an integration of typography and imagery, or typography originating in found objects. As people are becoming adept at quickly grasping more complex or subtle messages as a result of the internet, multi-media marketing, and typographically complex television spots, it is imminent that this aspect of typography should appear on a larger screen in film.

**A Matter of Fact**

Preliminary research began simultaneously with the search for a rich and beneficial thesis topic. Web sites and books were explored to determine if the topic was worth pursuing. From the point that the thesis topic was selected, contact was established with Kari Horowicz, Archivist at the RIT Wallace Library. Enthusiastically, she advised how to commence the research process and where to look for material. Individual meetings with Kari were held every week, for three weeks. Databases were scoured for title design sequences, kinectic typography, and designer's names. The largest and most beneficial information appeared in the periodicals. Magazines and journals provided information about title designers, the industry, specific examples of well designed typography in film, the relationship between director and title designer, and so on. For the most part, title design and kinectic typography seem to still be developing areas that have not been fully discovered– or at least written about as of yet.

After the majority of the library search was accomplished, it was time to change methods. The remaining research was to analyze title design sequences to see how typography in film worked. A diagram was created to determine all the different possible ways to approach this new section of research (see Appendix B, page 23).

The next step was to simplify the investigation. The most basic explanation of the thesis was that it was about film and typography. Typography does not exist in isolation in multimedia formats. It is created with the consideration of other significant film elements such as time, sound, etc. The fact that typography has a relationship with these other elements makes typography all that more important because it needs to exist in this complex structure as if it had always been so. Simplifying the problem in this manner lead to analyzing title sequences through the examination of typography and its relationships (see Appendix D, page 33). The film elements that were examined were motion, color, plot, image, sound, time, and mood.

Knowing what to look for in the title sequences, it still remained a problem as to which title sequences to consider. This was determined by the information available. As designer's names were uncovered in the investigation, often there would be mention of one or two of their better works. This was the approach: the movies were determined by the title designer who worked on the title sequence for that particular film. The title designers were selected because of the prominence of their design work. Designers such as Saul Bass, Pablo Ferro, Kyle Cooper, and others are known for their innovative title sequences in the design and film fields. All the designers selected (see Appendix A, page 21-22) were repeatedly discussed in important design and film journals for assertively transforming the role of title sequences. As the saying goes– only learn from the best.

### A Need For Structure

Midway into the process of gathering information, it became apparent that some structure was needed to organize and to establish sense out of the various data that was being uncovered. After many discarded attempts to assimilate a coherent structure, there ended up being several diagrams as one overall structure did not satisfy all the needed components. A diagram was developed to show the different aspects of title design (thesis poster), another was created for different methods that could have been used to analyze title sequences (title design diagram), and yet another to demonstrate the typographic relationships within a title sequence (research poster).

### Thesis Poster

Throughout the process of research, diagrams were continually being redesigned to show the overall structure of how typography had developed over time in the film industry. Just before the Thesis Exhibition, a diagram was created that accurately portrayed the evolution of type in film. It also structured the typography in a hierarchical form to convey the importance of the type's role (see Appendix D, page 32). The thesis and research posters that were used in the Thesis Exhibition from March 13-29, 2000, were the final results of a search to organize and explain the information that was being discovered (See Appendix D, pages 32-33).

### Title Design Diagram

After researching as much as could be accomplished through existing reference material, the next step was to analyze title sequences from the actual film. A diagram was developed to clarify the various approaches that could be taken towards this research (see Appendix B, page 23). This portrayed the methods which could be taken, but still did not help to narrow down or distinguish the best route. Approaching the films by title designers and their title sequences was determined as the best approach by the amount of information available. Which designers and sequences to study were determined by periodicals; those mentioned as being innovators and outstanding designers made up the list (see Appendix A, pages 21-22).

### Research Poster

The title sequences were examined by the typography and its relationship with motion, color, plot, image, sound, time, and mood. Three examples of this information in diagram form was used in the thesis exhibition to explain to viewers the research and process involved in this thesis (see Appendix D, page 33). The movies chosen were **Vertigo**, **The Untouchables**, and **Seven** because the use of typography in these films were new and different from anything that had been seen before. The typographic components were organized on a table with specific examples and details from the movies also listed. This structure organized the information so it was easy to see the important elements of each film sequence.

**Concept**

When the application for this thesis was being envisaged, one consideration was that the format had to capture the magical quality that film holds for people and also be able to reflect film characteristics. Among the many facinating elements of motion picture film, a simple, technical characteristic seems to have a considerable effect on people. This characteristic is the film format which demands an elongated, enormous screen that can be viewed by large masses. People are inexplicably drawn to big screens; there is a facination with losing one's self in an encompassing, absorbing environment which is able to capture image, sound, movement, and time.

Another factor that needed to be taken into account was how to properly represent the various aspects of film that work in conjunction with the typography that appears in film. The typography in a film does not exist by itself; it has a relationship with motion, color, plot, image, sound, time, and mood. Many of these elements are difficult to accurately portray in printed matter outside the realm of multimedia. It made the most sense to have an application that would convey these relationships in their truest form. So the decision was made for an onscreen application rather than a printed format.

The content of the thesis *Typography In Film* was the most important contribution towards the final selection of the application. The fact that film title sequences were the main source for research was the strongest reason for the short movie application. This format best conveyed the subject matter and seemed a natural medium to inform and educate people about design and typography in film. This way, a large number of people could be communicated with at once about the subject of title design and typography. Considering the thesis topic, a short film clip on the aspects of typography in film seemed appropriate.

In conclusion, the reasoning behind the final decision for the application format was the concept of appealing to the masses, reflecting film characteristics, involving the viewer, properly representing the considerations that go into film sequences (i.e. sound, time, etc.), and reflecting the research of this thesis.

**Thesis Interaction**

Intermediate evaluation of the thesis process consisted of meetings with my thesis advisor, committee meetings, and a presentation for the first year graduate graphic design students.

**Thesis Advisor**

Once a week I met with my appointed thesis advisor, R. Roger Remington, to discuss the progress of the project. This involved discussion over the direction of the thesis, organization of research, the display for the exhibition, critique of the application, etc. The weekly meetings were to show what was finished, what was being worked on, and what need to be done. Professor Remington provided immediate feedback on the project and direction on the next course of action.

**Committee Meetings**

The next component of intermediate evaluation, committee meetings were held peri-odically as needed over winter and spring quarters, to provide advice, criticism, and direction for the MFA candidate. The committee members who graciously agreed to provide their time and expertise were R. Roger Remington, Peter Byrne, and Heinz Klinkon, all of whom were a part of the Graphic Design Department at RIT. Peter Byrne was asked to be a member of the committee because of his experience and knowledge of time-based media. Heinz Klinkon was asked because of his knowledge and instruction in typography.

Each time, the committee meetings began with an update on the current state of the thesis and ideas for future progress. The committee members then asked ques-tions and provided their ideas and advice. R. Roger Remington provided direction on tasks to be accomplished and deadlines. He was extremely insightful on both the details and the overall picture from research to the final application. Peter Byrne helped with approach tactics for the application. He suggested key words and a sto-ryboard to narrow down the purpose and style of the application and to provide over all unity in the finished product (see Appendix C, page 24; Appendix F, pages 44-51). Heinz Klinkon assisted in the creative thinking department by asking questions and *what ifs*, which led to further exploration of the exhibition posters and application. The committee meetings were valuable as they provided a mentoring situation with professionals in the area which was being studied.

**Presentation**

During winter quarter, a presentation night was held for the Graduate Graphic Design students. This occassion was an opportunity for the first year students to learn about thesis projects and the thesis process which they would be experiencing in a year. For approximately twenty minutes, each second year student had a chance to explain his or her thesis work to the Graduate Graphic Design students, design faculty, and committee members who attended. The presentations involved explanations on choosing topics, conducting research, and formulating the application. Then the floor was open for questions. Many students vocally expressed interest in title design and the industry. Questions were asked about research tactics, specific title sequences, optic houses, title design firms, and title designers. The reaction to the presentation was positive.

**Content**

The application created for the Thesis Exhibition Opening was a short film clip enti-
tled *Typography In Film* which possessed an introductory title sequence and a film
body based entirely on research. The purpose of the simulated film was to inform
viewers about typography in film. This was done through the content and design.

The film simulation opened with a title sequence. Besides introducing the title, this
section set the stage for following information. The title sequence demonstrated
how title sequences are being utilized and its importance to the film.

The second segment provided a thesis explanation and clarification of the various
aspects of typography in film, concentrating on title design. The function of this sec-
tion was to provide viewers with a basic concept of title design, a new perspective
of the opening title sequence, and to prepare them for the following section of quotes.

Finally, the last section contained four or five quotes by title designers. These quotes
were selected so that the audience would have a better understanding of the designers'
perspectives of their field and how the designers relate to their work. The utilization
of other people's perspectives in the film was essential. A person is able to learn
only so much from a single point of view. By diversifying the voices, the audience
was better informed.

**Design**

The simulated movie in its entirety lasts approximately 2 minutes— the opening title sequence being about 25 seconds, the thesis explanation about 25 seconds, and the quotes around 60 seconds. The music was selected and edited before any typography was created. The selections for the audio tracks were taken from the Original Motion Picture Soundtrack **The Crow**, *Burn* by *The Cure*; the Original Motion Picture Soundtrack **Pulp Fiction**, *Misirlou* by *Dick Dale & His Del-Tones*; and the Original Motion Picture Soundtrack **Go**, *Fire Up The Shoesaw* by *Lionrock*.

After the music was decided upon, the typography was added to the movie, based on the sounds and pace of the music (see Appendix C, page 25). As certain sounds occurred, the typography reflected the sound by a certain movement. This might either be motion to the right, the left, up, or down; or the in and out of screen depth. A consideration was how many typographic variables to use and which ones. This could be size, weight, alignment, typefamily, color, and so on. In multi-media there are so many options that simplicity is essential for a unified film. Thus, the variables in the application was generally limited to size, position, opacity, and clarity.

The simulated film was created on Adobe After Effects 4.0 with the soundtracks being imported from Sound Edit 16. The film was then saved as a projector so that the clip could be played on any platform. In the exhibition, rather than utilizing a monitor, the application was played on a computer and projected onto a white screen so that the viewers would experience more of the feeling of being in a theater with a larger screen (see Appendix D, Page 31).

### Future Audience Interaction

The application, a simulated film clip, was created with the intention that it be used to inform and educate the public and thus the film industry about typography—its role, application, and potential in film, and graphic design's involvement in this area of communication. With these purposes in mind, a few possibilities for further utilization of the application become apparent.

### Museum Exhibit

To begin, the simulated film could be applied as an informational clip in an exhibit or other such learning center. A specific example is the George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film. This historic house has been expanded to display the evolution of photography and its equipment. Besides extensive exhibits concerning George Eastman's life, Kodak, cameras, and still photography, they also have an extensive collection of motion picture film in their archives. An exhibit could be arranged utilizing the thesis film simulation accompanied by a selection of title sequences from the archive. An exhibit on motion picture film would complete their coverage on film.

### Theater Preview

Also at the George Eastman House, is the Dryden Theater which shows films of archival value. If the thesis film was played before the beginning of the featured movie, it would reach an audience who is waiting to be entertained. What better way to utilize that time than to educate the viewers? It would make them more aware of the title sequence they are about to see, which would reinforce the ideas in the film. Reaching audiences with this information is important to the education and appreciation of design in film.

### Course Aid

This application could also be implimented in a film, graphic design, or multimedia course. It would provide a different way for film students to see the benefits of well designed typography in film and moreover the importance of designers in film. In the same sense, graphic designers may come to realize what an extensive influence they can have on mass audiences. The more designers who come into the title design field and have an impact on film, the more the masses will come to expect and desire good design.

### Evaluation Feedback

To determine the strengths and weaknesses of the application, evaluation forms were developed and utilized. The evaluation forms were concise and easy to fill out to encourage participation. The participants were asked to answer four questions, rating their understanding of the movie by circling from one (not at all) to five (crystal clear). The evaluations were first implemented at the Thesis Exhibition Opening (see Appendix E, pages 34-36).

The results of the evaluations filled out by the general public and the feedback from committee members (see Appendix E, page 37) are summarized below.

### Strengths

One of the strengths of the film was that people were really drawn to the multi-media format. That was demonstrated at the Thesis Exhibition Opening. People crowded into the small enclosed area to see what was happening on a screen. Once they were in the room watching the film, they were captivated by the movement of the type and its ebbing on the screen and then off again.

Another strength of the film was that people appeared to grasp the role and application of typography in film. According to the evaluations, overall, they had a better understanding of how typography can and is being used to enrich a motion picture.

### Weaknesses

Among the weaknesses of the piece, the actual presentation of the film would be much improved if the format size could be enlarged to fill the film screen. The result would be that the viewer would not be confused by typography half-appearing in the middle of the screen, although it is entering from the film's outside edges. The format was not as large as it was originally intended to be. This was due to the memory constraints of the computer and also for resolution reasons.

Another weakness of the film was the music selection. While many of the younger viewers were drawn to the movie because they recognized the music from popular movies they had seen, it was also a drawback because they had preconcieved associations with it. The music selections were also a weakness because older people may not have understood why that particular music had been chosen.

### Revisions Based on Evaluations

Based on the evaluations taken and the committee members' feedback, changes were addressed, and a second film simulation was designed.

To begin, the music selections were reconsidered. The music was changed to tracks that were still hip and popular for the younger viewer whom were the target audience. In addition, they were more in tune with the movement and motion of the typography's function. The opening selection by *The Cure* was shortened and reused. The new music included *Rendez-vous* by *Basement Jaxx, Porcelain* by *Moby*, and *Runaway* by *Julia's Star.* These audio tracks better fit the mood of the film and had a slower tempo which was more appropriate.

A storyboard was developed to coordinate and restructure the typographic movement in the film for greater unity (Appendix F, pages 44-51). More expanding and contracting movement for the titles and subtitles were utilized. Each section had it's own separate feeling while remaining consistant to the overall mood and look of the film.

Finally, the content was reevaluated to make the information clearer for education purposes (see Appendix F, pages 38-43). The first section largely remained the same. The middle section, the explanation, needed to be more accessible. This second section now has more definitions which are on the screen for a longer time for the viewers to read. More quotes were added to the third section and divided into four subgroupings to express a specific concept: ponderings, role, designers, and craft. More time was also given to this section for reading purposes. Overall, the content is much stronger and more easily understood than it had been previously.

### Evaluation of Thesis Process

Overall, the thesis process was a positive experience. The process of developing a topic, conducting research, and implementing the information gleaned was beneficial as a designer. It provided the opportunity for exploration of a topic that is becoming an important aspect in the field of Graphic Design.

### Thesis Topic

The topic of *Typography In Film* was very stimulating and mind opening—learning about designers working in film— how work; things they have to take into consideration when designing; what they have control over and what they do not; how they work with directors. It was exciting to work on an area of design that is really growing creatively and becoming more recognized.

### Research

The research was challenging, but definitely rewarding. In classical art academies, students always began their training by studying the masters. Learning by example, studying the problems and the artist's solutions, is an education in itself. The masters in the field of title design are able to communicate through their design to both a movie audience and future graphic designers. Analyzing the title sequences in movies was instructional because of the eventual understanding and appreciation of how designers are able to summarized a movie and expressed its essence by working with typography in relation to sound, time, motion, etc. One designer who has definately been hailed as a master is Saul Bass. His skill at combining sound, image, and typography in movies such as **Vertigo** and **Psycho** was amazing to watch and study.

### Presentation

An integral part of the thesis process was the opportunity for presentation. Continuously throughout this experience, the thesis concept, process, and application were presented to peers, advisors, and general audiences. The presentations took the form of formal presentations, a thesis exhibition, committee meetings, and even personal conversations. Having to explain the thesis and answer questions was extremely helpful to the evolution of this thesis and an instructional experience.

### Application

The application process was a benefical learning experience. The simulated film clip, became more effective after revisions were made from the evaluations. The final film fulfilled its goal by showing typography's application and potential in film (title sequence), graphic design's involvement in film (quote section), and by educating the public about typography in film (explanatory section).

**Captions**

Typography used for the visual translation of dialogue for the hearing impaired.

**Chapters and divisions**

Title screen used to separate events in a movie. Often used for the film genre of novel adaptation.

**Explanatory text**

Typography which provides information central to the movie's storyline.

**Film**

Film refers to motion picture film footage.

**Image**

A visual representation of an idea, physical object, or description.

**Onscreen typography**

Typography designed specifically to be viewed on a digital format such as a monitor, television, or projection screen.

**Subtitles**

Typography used for the translation of dialogue into another language.

**Title card**

Typography used on a static screen to display a credit and possibly a design element.

**Title design**

The creation and development of a title for an onscreen application, such as motion picture film. In addition to the title of a film, title design may involve the formulation of the opening and closing credits.

**Title sequence**

Type in motion. Typography may be displayed over a screen in motion, or moving type may be used on a screen which is either static or in motion.

**Typography**

The consideration and application of type in a formal composition.

**Typography as image**

Typography that is a visual representation. In order for typography to become an image, its role must go beyond literary communication to include aesthetic communication as well.

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Hall, Peter. *Lofty Titles.* U&lc 22 (Winter1995): 22-25.

Kaye, Joyce Rutter. *Saul Bass's Moving Icons.* U&lc 23 (Winter 1996): 22-23.

Hall, Peter. *Lofty Titles.* U&lc 22 (Winter1995): 22-25.

Kaye, Joyce Rutter. *Saul Bass's Moving Icons.* U&lc 23 (Winter 1996): 22-23.

### Variety

Collins, Keith. Variety 11 (29 April 1996): 128.

**Videos**

*Bass on Titles*

*The Reedy Memorial Teleconference: Business, Design & Communications*

**Websites**

**Internet Movie Database**
us.imdb.com

**Imaginary Forces**
www.imaginaryforces.com

**Konehead**
www.konehead.com

**Kinectic Design Group**
www.cmu.edu/cfa/design/kdg/kt/kt_issues

**TypeAwards**
hamp.hampshire.edu/~jwgF92/TypeAwards

**Title Designers and Films**

This list contains the names of title designers, title design firms, and select movie sequences which they were involved with. These title sequences were examined for their typographic relationships.

**Richard Avedon**

Funny Face

**Saul Bass**

Carmen Jones
The Man with the Golden Arm
Anatomy of a Murder
Psycho
West Side Story
Walk on the Wild Side
Nine Hours To Rama

**Saul and Elaine Bass**

Goodfellas
Cape Fear
The Age of Innocence

**Maurice Binder**

Dr No
Thunderball

**Kyle Cooper**

Mission Impossible
The Island of Dr. Moreau
101 Dalmations
True Lies
Seven
Twister
The Fan
Zebrahead
Donnie Brasco

**Robert Dawson**

Kiss of the Spider Woman

**Pablo Ferro**

Dr Strangelove
A Clockwork Orange
Hope Floats

**Title Designers and Films** continued

**Stephen Frankfurt**

To Kill a Mockingbird

**Juan Gatti**

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown

**Daniel Kleinman**

Goldeneye
Tomorrow Never Dies

**M&Co.**

Sticky Fingers

**Bruce Mau and Christopher Pommer**

The Red Violin

**Timothy Quay and Stephen Quay**

Institute Benjamenta

**R/Greenberg Associates**

Alien
She-Devil
Blue Steel
Superman
Altered States
The World According To Garp
Body Double
The Untouchables
New York Stories
Dirty Dancing

**Saxon/Ross**

Tin Men

**Title Design Diagram**

This diagram was developed to clarify the various approaches that could be taken to analyze title sequences in a film.
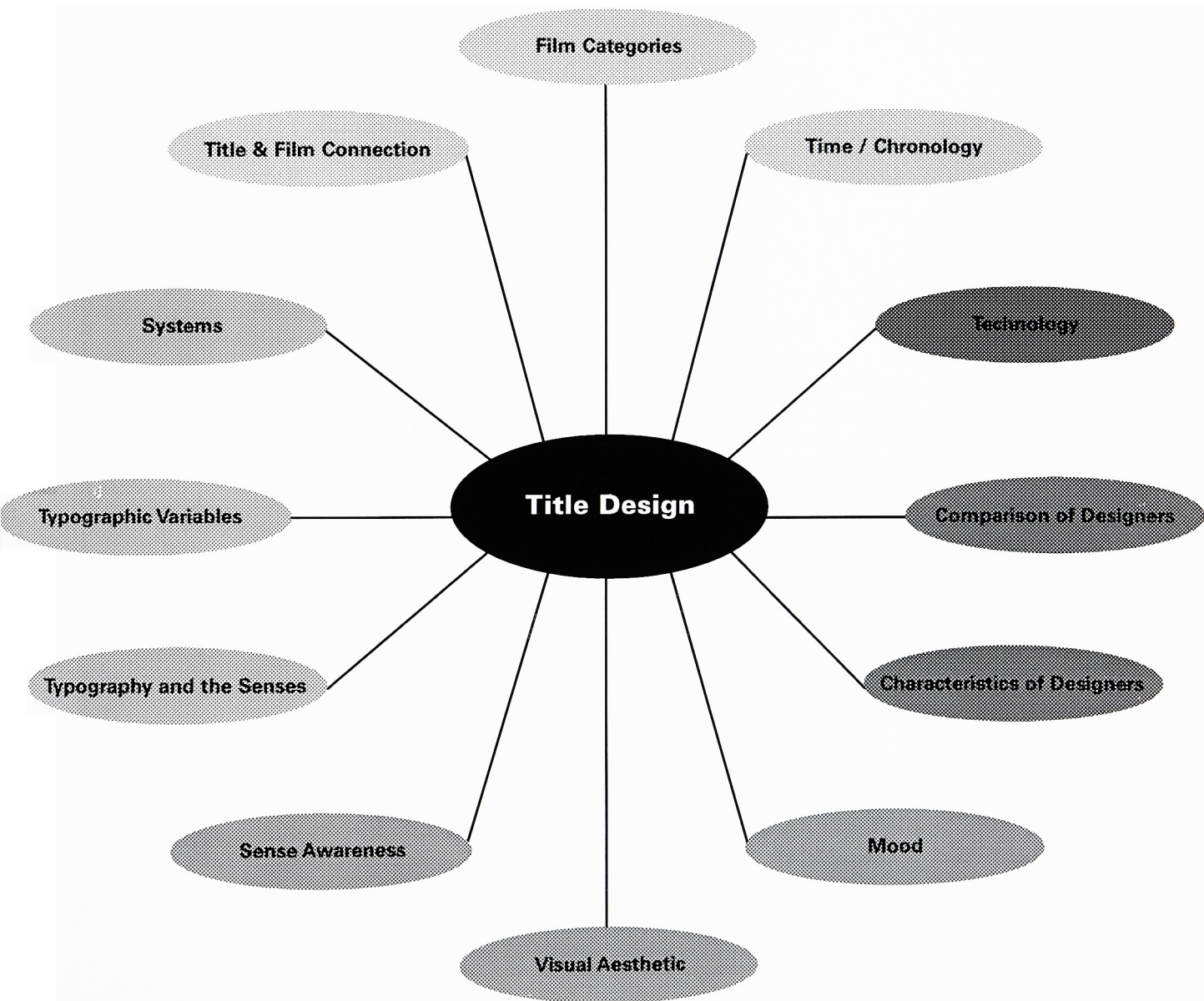
**Key Words**

Through brainstorming, key words were developed which symbolized the direction and style that were being sought in the final application– a simulated movie.

Enlightening

Inspiring

Unexpected

Unpredictable

Interactive (Conversation)

Layered

Dynamic

Lingering

**Simulated Sequence, First Movie** - Part 1 Opening Title Sequence
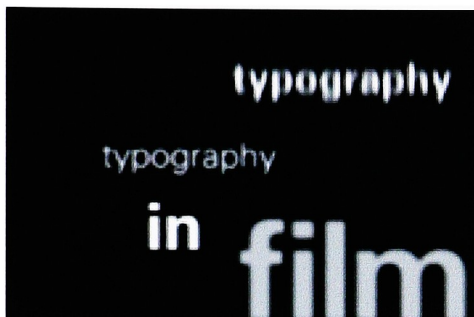


**Upper Left Frames**
title floating in
mulitiple layers of type
eerie music (*Burn* by *The Cure*)
fast pace
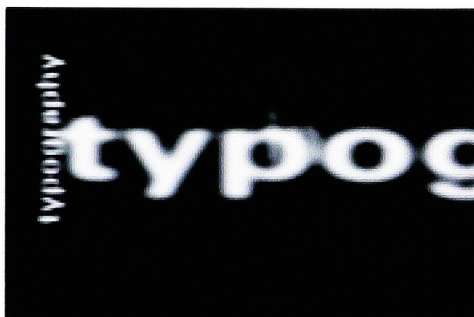
**Bottom Frame**
word typography zooming out
small typography rapidly appearing (repeats)
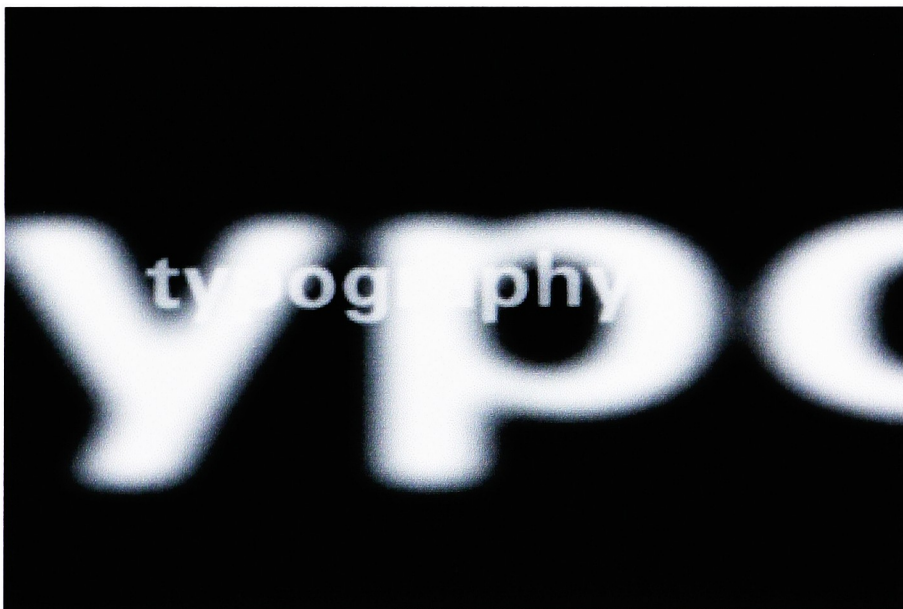
**Simulated Sequence, First Movie** - Part 1 continued
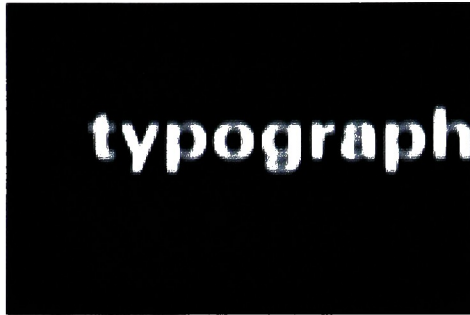




**Left Frame**
typography in vertical blur



**Left Frame**
showing typographic relationships:
mood, sound, etc.
mood bounding up center (yo-yo style)
sound zooming into space
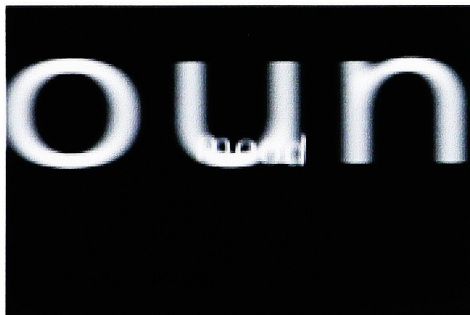


**Bottom Left Frame**
sound zooming into focus
mood vertical blur– out
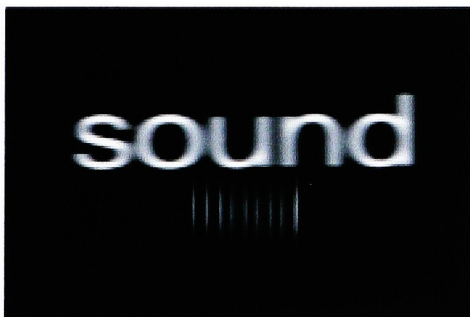
**Simulated Sequence, First Movie -** Part 2 Thesis Explanation
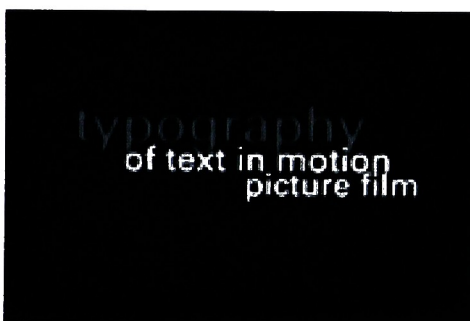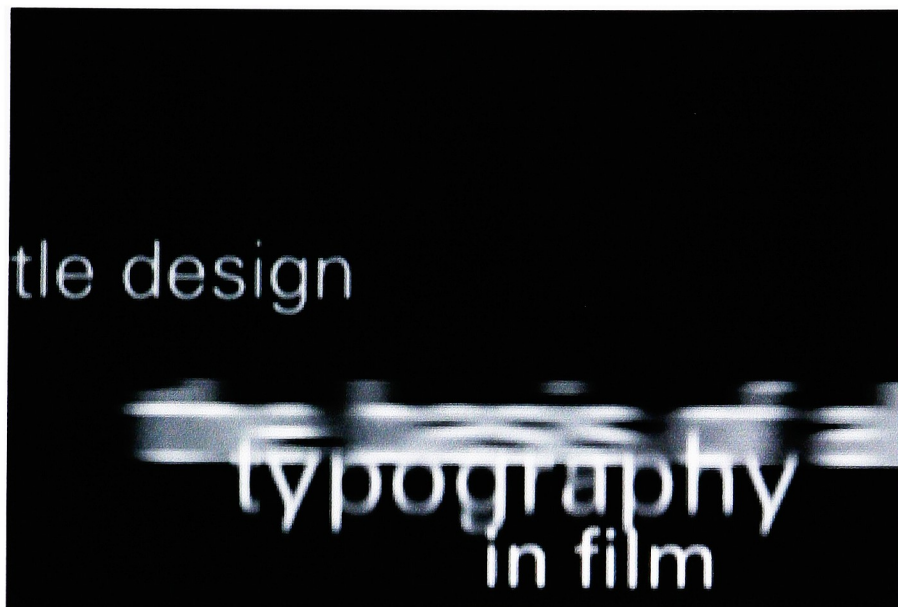




**Above and Left Frames**
explanation:
title design basis of all text in film
words are floating in– blur
music from **Pulp Fiction Soundtrack**
(*Misirlou* by *Dick Dale and His Del-Tones*)
retro guitar sound
fast, frantic pace

**Simulated Sequence, First Movie** - Part 2 continued



**Top Left Frame**

the components of title design:

chapters and divisions, explanatory text,
subtitles, and captions

spread out from behind title design
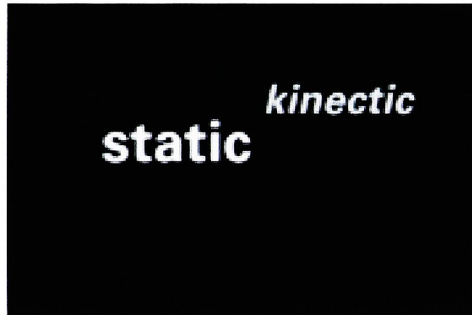


**Left Frame**

important aspects of title design:

static and kinectic type

static appears

kinectic moves in from right



**Left Bottom Frame**

the internet changed our communication:

ie the way we interact with typography

main text appears

business, education, etc. appear by floating in
to the frame/ shift in opacity

**Simulated Sequence, First Movie** - Part 3 Quotes



**Top Left Frame**

title design blurring in/out, bouncing around
music from the **Go** Soundtrack
*Fire Up The Shoesaw (LP Version)* by *Lionrock*
fun, energetic, electronic sampling
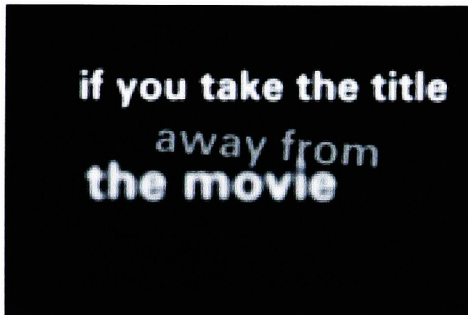


**Left and Bottom Frames**

title design quotes begin- zooming in/ blurs
in the order a viewer would read them
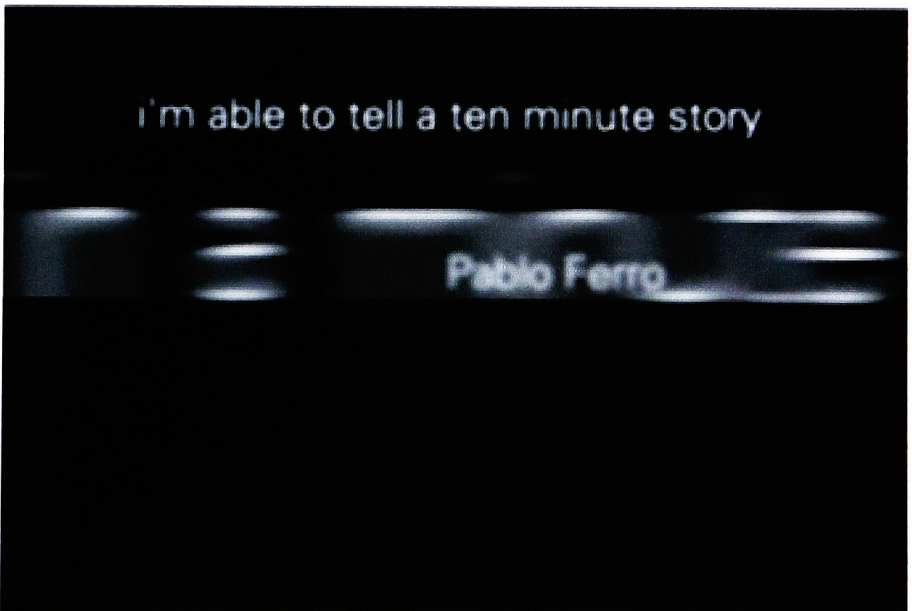
**Simulated Sequence, First Movie** - Part 3 Quotes
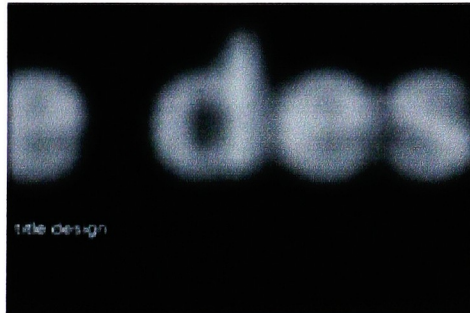


**Left Frame**

title design quotes begin- zooming in/ blurs
multiple layers of words to emphasize point
order of text appearance based on reading
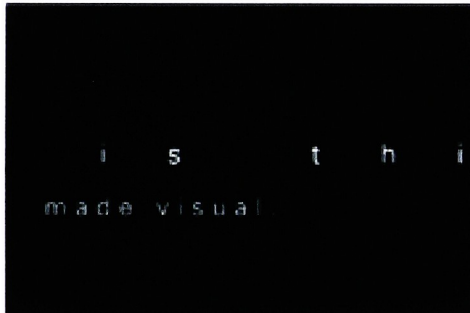


**Left Frame**

change in tracking between letters
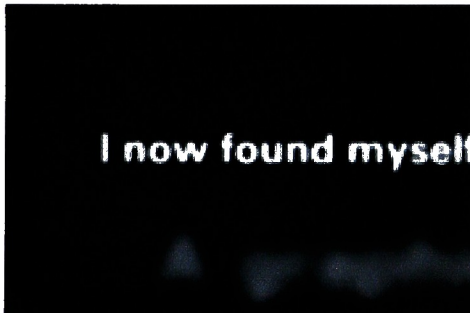


**Left Frame**

floating and blurring text
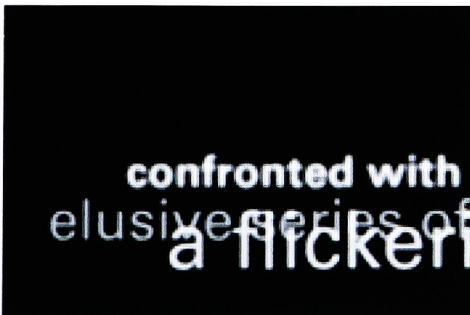


**Left Frame**
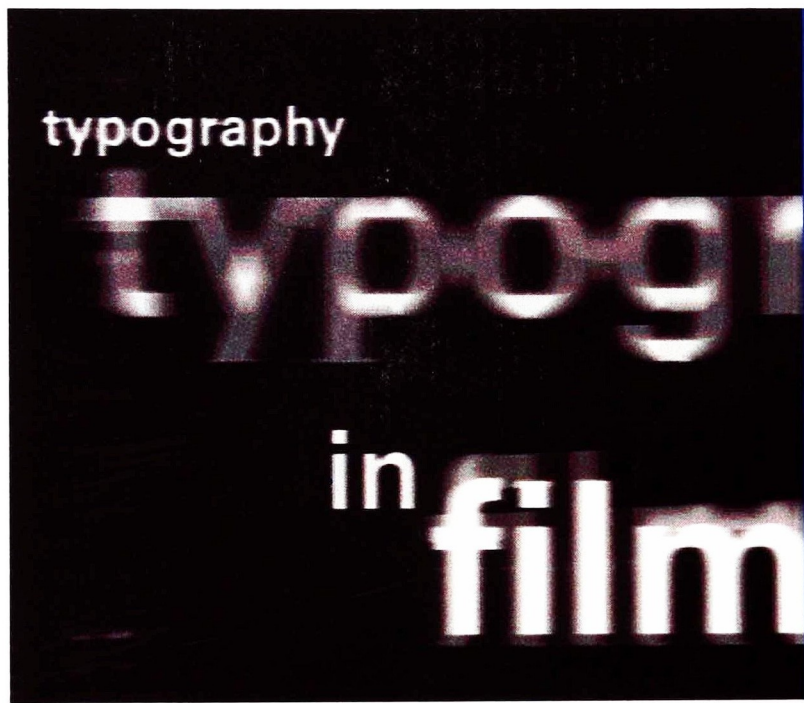
overlapping to show complexity

**Exhibition Design**



These photographs show how the Thesis Exhibition was designed. A podium held
a book of title design sequences which were analysed for typographic relationships.
Behind the stand, the wall displayed a thesis poster and research poster that explain-
ed the thesis. The viewer could enter a small room to see the simulated application.
The ceiling of the room was covered with a dark cloth to subdue the surrounding
light. A computer cart projected the movie onto a white screen. The movie was
looped to play continuously.

**Thesis Poster**



typography

typogr

in film

**Lonna Robinson**

*Typography In Film* explores how typography is utilized in the motion picture industry and what role it will play in the future of film.

Title Design is the creation and development of a title for an onscreen application, such as motion picture film. In addition to the title of a film, title design may involve the formulation of the opening and closing credits.

**silent film**

**sound film**

**title card**

**title sequence**

static screen
each screen displays a credit and possibly a design element

kinetic typography
screen may display typography from a live motion sequence

**chapters and divisions**
often used for novels made into movies
used to separate events in a movie

**subtitles**
typography used for translation of dialogue into another language

**explanatory text**
provide information central to storyline

**captions**
typography used for visual translation of dialogue for hearing impaired

**Evaluation Form**

**Evaluation**
typography in film

1. **Do you understand what the thesis is about?**

   (not at all) 1    2    3    4    5 (crystal clear)

2. **After watching the movie, do you have a better understanding of the use of typography in film?**

   (not at all) 1    2    3    4    5 (crystal clear)

3. **After watching the movie, do you have a better understanding of title design?**

   (not at all) 1    2    3    4    5 (crystal clear)

4. **Do you feel that the movie appropriately addresses the thesis topic?**

   (not at all) 1    2    3    4    5 (crystal clear)

   comments welcome on back

Evalution forms developed for the Thesis Exhibition.

**Evaluation Samples**

> **Evaluation**
> typography in film
>
> **1. Do you understand what the thesis is about?**
>
> (not at all) ①  2   3   4   5  (crystal clear)
>
> **2. After watching the movie, do you have a better understanding of the use of typography in film?**
>
> (not at all)  1   ②   3   4   5  (crystal clear)
>
> **3. After watching the movie, do you have a better understanding of title design?**
>
> (not at all)  1   ②   3   4   5  (crystal clear)
>
> **4. Do you feel that the movie appropriately addresses the thesis topic?**
>
> (not at all)  1   2   ③   4   5  (crystal clear)
>
> comments welcome on back

> **Evaluation**
> typography in film
>
> **1. Do you understand what the thesis is about?**
>
> (not at all)  1   2   ③   4   5  (crystal clear)
>
> **2. After watching the movie, do you have a better understanding of the use of typography in film?**
>
> (not at all)  1   2   ③   4   5  (crystal clear)
>
> **3. After watching the movie, do you have a better understanding of title design?**
>
> (not at all)  1   ②   3   4   5  (crystal clear)
>
> **4. Do you feel that the movie appropriately addresses the thesis topic?**
>
> (not at all)  1   2   3   ④   5  (crystal clear)
>
> comments welcome on back

**Evaluation Samples**

I think that I've got what you
want to tell, but it seemed that
the movie ended in the middle. I expected
the actual "solution" to your presentation
of "problem" ... and the movie finished.
Was all the flowing animation of typo itself
your suggestion as one possible solution of
well-designed title? I hope I understood
correctly. After all, it was quite simple,
neat, & nice. Thanx. ☺

gorgeous presentation —
very engaging
and well designed

### Film Revision Analysis

A summarization of changes to be made to the first simulated movie. These revisions were based on feedback from committee members and from evalution forms filled out during the Thesis Exhibition.

Music

20 yrs. recognized most soundtrack clips
perhaps make the music more subtle
take out speaking
experiment with tempo and sound effects

Movement

speed up timing of motion
layer more-overlap/ use of space
placement- consistent horizontals and continuity of movement
smoother/ less jumpy
aligned consistently (centered)
expanding/ contracting motion- out/in

Content

reduce emphasis on typography and title design when not
-title sequence or division break
interruptor needed between sections and voices (quotes)
add more quotes
readability-placement, size, length of time, clarity
emphasize important points!!
incorporate film characteristics into movie

**Simulated Content, Second Movie**

A MFA Graphic Design Production

**Part 1 Opening Title Sequence**

Typography in film (title)

(typographic relationships)

mood
sound
image
motion
color
plot
time

**Simulated Content, Second Movie**

Typography in film - Illuminated (transition)

**Part 2 Thesis Explanation**

Typography in film:
The role of text in motion picture film: past, present, future.

Title design:
The creation and development of a title for an onscreen application (film).
It may involve the design of opening and closing credits.

(Breakdown)
chapters and divisions
explanatory text
subtitles
captions

static/kinectic

Typography as image:
When the role of typography becomes an essential key element in a film.
It takes over the role of the image.
The future of typography is in type as image.

word/image

**Simulated Content, Second Movie**

Voices - title designers, authors, directors (transition)

**Part 3 Quotes**

(Ponderings)

I always had a notion that film title credits were a portion of the film that was under utilized, a time when people went to the bathroom, chatted, or ate popcorn.
**Saul Bass - designer**

As a kid, I was very aware of titles that grabbed your attention and actually functioned as icons for whatever movie or television show they set up.
**Robert Greenberg -  designer** (Print)

Movie title design used to be very specialized– a few people who had a vision.
**Jacob Trollbeck - designer** (How)

(Role)

Film titles perform many functions. Titles can create a feeling of sophistication, a sense of expectation. The title can show some back story , or it can repackage a film for a different market. **Kyle Cooper - designer** (How)

If you take the title sequence away from the movie, it becomes a different movie.
**David Cronberg - director** (Sight and Sound)

It's all subliminal but it's obviously real, as opening titles can make or break a film's test results. **Robert Greenberg - designer** (Print)

**Simulated Content, Second Movie**

**Part 3 Quotes**

(Designers)

It's a logical progression to move into film. **Kyle Cooper - designer** (How)

He [Saul Bass] was the first to tell stories with film titles. **Jacob Trollbeck - designer** (How)

You wrote a book- all of 360 pages. Then you boil it down to a 130- page script. They [Saul and Elaine Bass] have it down to three minutes flat. Their opening is simply brilliant. **Nick Pileggi - author** (Sight and Sound)

Timing is really the key. **Rodney Sheldon Fehsenfeld - designer** (How)

I'm able to tell a ten minute story in a minute. **Pablo Ferro - designer**

You have to speak to the right people and the idea has to be strong.
**Jason Kedgely - designer**

**Simulated Content, Second Movie**

**Part 3 Quotes**

(Craft)

There are some films for which the proper expression is minimalist and for others it needs to bemore layered and complex. **Saul Bass - designer** (Sight and Sound)

you're still trying to solve a design problem, but the parameters are slightly different. you're choreographing movement, movement with type. **Kyle Cooper - designer** (How)

there's a vocabulary of sequence and story and sound. **Kyle Cooper - designer** (How)

A graphic and industrial designer, I now found myself confronted with a flickering, moving elusive series of images that somehow had to add up. **Saul Bass - designer**

Design is thinking made visual. **Saul Bass - designer** (Conclusion)

**Simulated Content, Second Movie**

**Credits**

Designed by Lonna Robinson

Rochester Institute of Technology

Audio sampled from:
the Original Motion Picture Soundtrack **The Crow** *Burn* by *The Cure*
*Rendez-vous* by *Basement Jaxx*
**Moby Play**, *Porcelain* by *Moby*
Julia's Star, *Runaway* by *Julia's Star*

**Storyboard, Second Movie** - Pre–Title Sequence
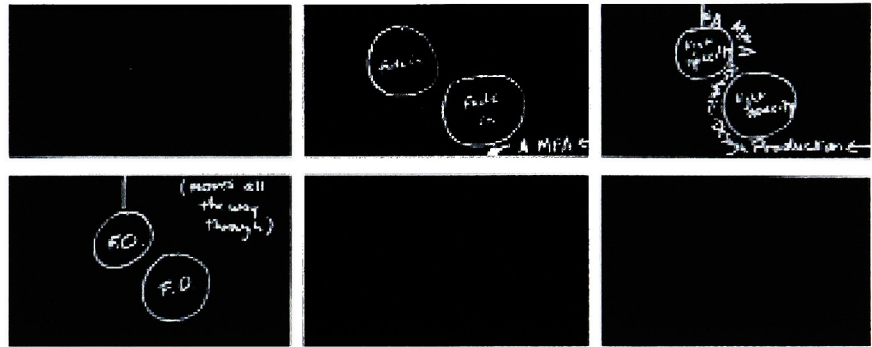


Prior to title sequence
spinning film reels
text comes right to left, and through the reels, disappearing at the top of first reel

**Storyboard, Second Movie** - Part 1 Opening Title Sequence



key music, text appears



*typography* zooms out



smaller, clearer text over



still zooming



smaller text again



still zooming



smaller text again



vertical blur



clears up



vertical blur



zooms out, new text



*in film* zooms out



*mood* flys up center





continues, *sound* zooming in



vertical blur

**Storyboard, Second Movie** - Part 1 continued



*image* backwards

tracking tightens

switches

*motion* appears over *a*

moves off to left

*color* tracking

*plot* behind, low opacity

zooming in

*time* blinks behind

title zooms in

blur out

**Storyboard, Second Movie** - Part 2  Thesis Explanation

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Typography | typography | typography in film |
| key second music sampling | zooms in | zooms in |
| typography in film | ILLUMINATED typography in film (fade) (blurry) | typography in film |
| | illuminated behind | definition from right |
| the role of typography in motion picture film | | title design |
| | | title design appears |
| Title Design | Title Design | Title Design |
| | explanation line by line | off again |
| title Design | itleDesig | Caption Chapters subtitles |
| zooms out | vertical blur | aspects of title design |
| | Static Kinectic | |
| blurs out | static appears, kinectic from right | move off |

**Storyboard, Second Movie** - Part 2 Thesis Explanation



text morphs

definition line by line

zooms out

word appears

*word* and *image* combine to make *typography*

**Storyboard, Second Movie** - Part 3 Quotes



key new music sampling



zoom in



*title designers* over



*directors* over



*authors* over



fades off







quotes come in (numbered)

**Storyboard, Second Movie** - Part 3 continued



final quote tracks off to right

**Storyboard, Second Movie** - End Credits



key final music sampling

*designed by* ... zoom out
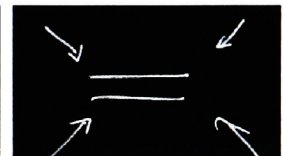
zoom in

RIT appears
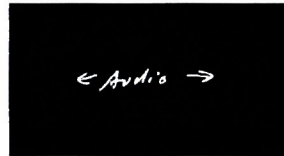
*audio sampled from* zooms out
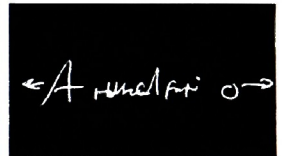
tracking
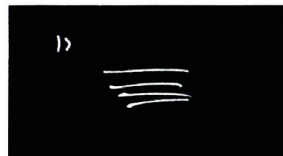
music roles up from bottom
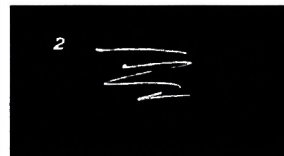
**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie** - Pre–Title Sequence
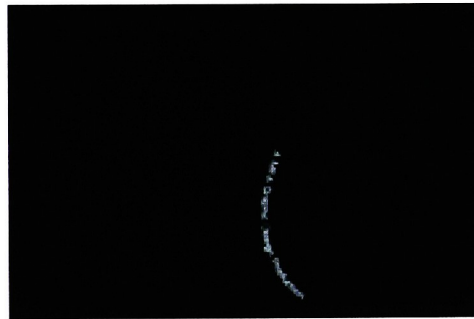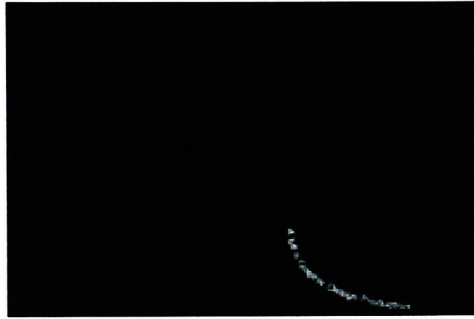


**Top, Middle, and Bottom Frames**
typography follows backward *S letterform*
symbolizing film reels

**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie** - Part 1 Opening Title Sequence
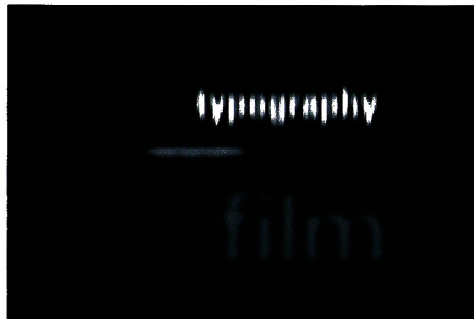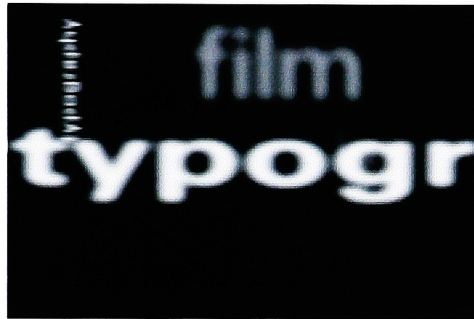




**Top, Middle, and Bottom Frames**
exploration of title *Typography In Film*
blurs an d floating text
key music - *Burn* by *The Cure*
fast paced, mystical

**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie** - Part 1 continued
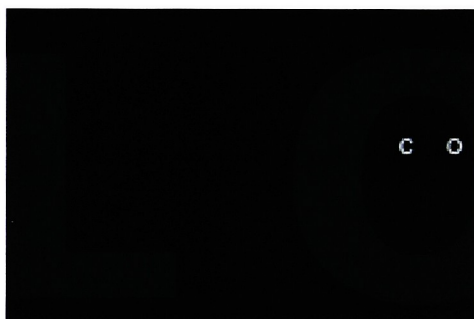




**Left and Bottom Frames**
typographic relationships

**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie** - Part 2 Thesis Explanation
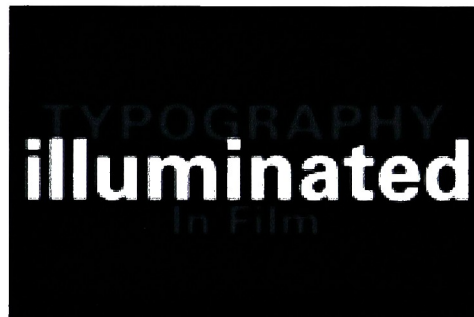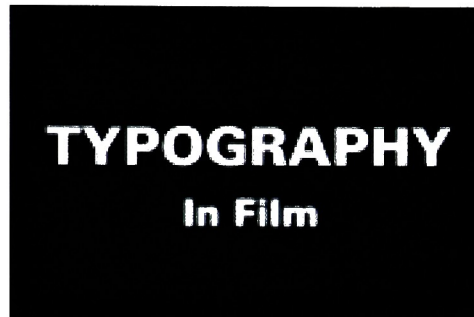


**Above and Left Frames**
section chapter title
blurs and opacity manipulated
key music - *Rendez-vous* by *Basement Jaxx*
*slower pace, techno/electronic*
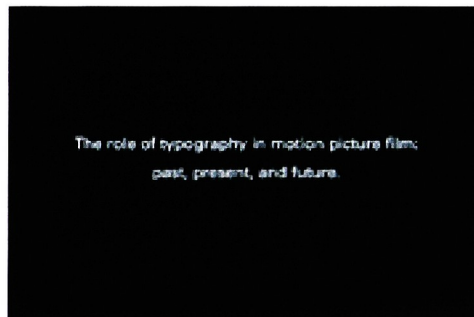
**Bottom Frame**
explanation of what is to follow

**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie** - Part 2 continued
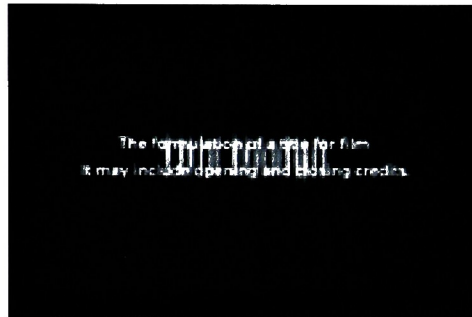


**Top Left Frame**

title design definitions

movement - in and out



**Left and Bottom Frames**

presentation of title design sections

movement - in and out

**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie** - Part 3 Quotes



**Above and Left Frames**
section chapter title
key music - *Porcelain* by *Moby*
smooth, distinctly slower pace
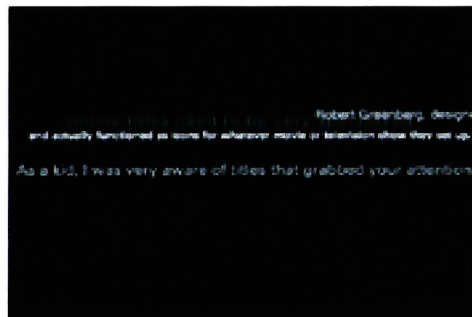


**Bottom Frame**
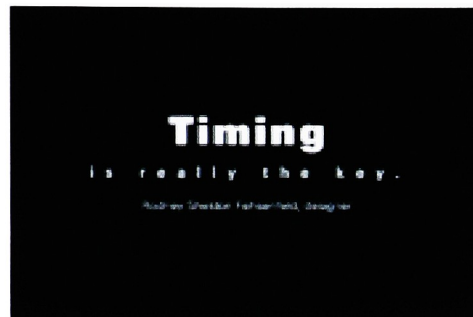quotes begin
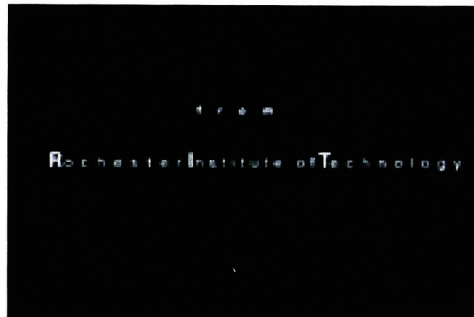floating text
bottom to top reading prominant

**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie** - Part 3 continued
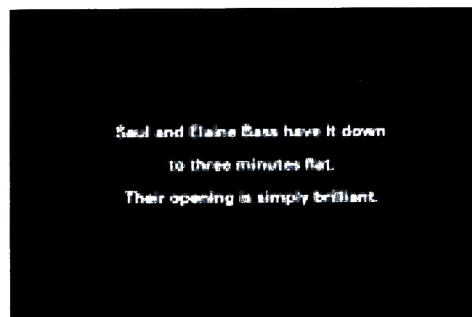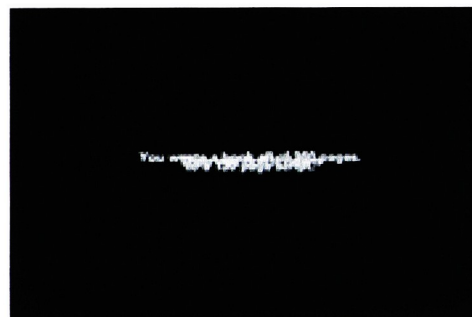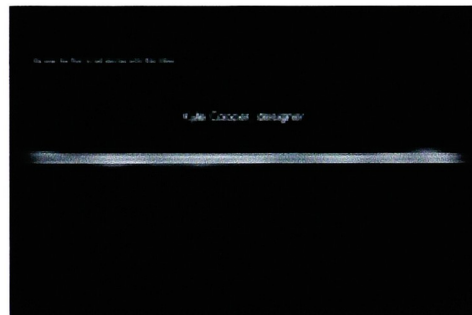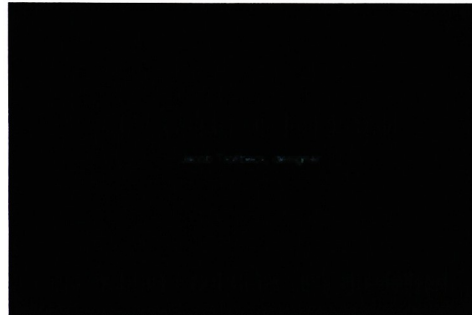
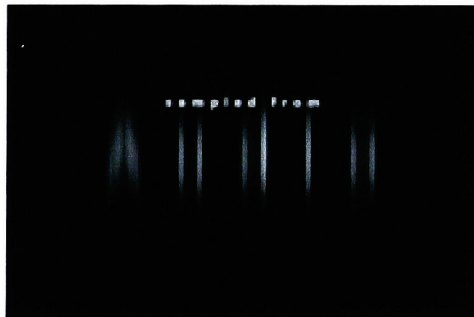**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie -** Part 3 continued
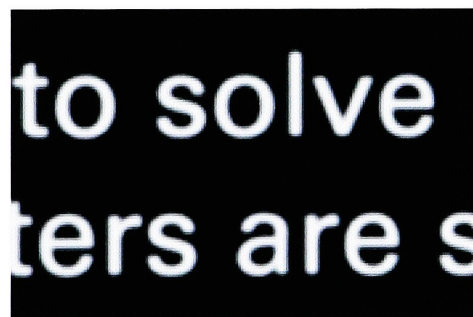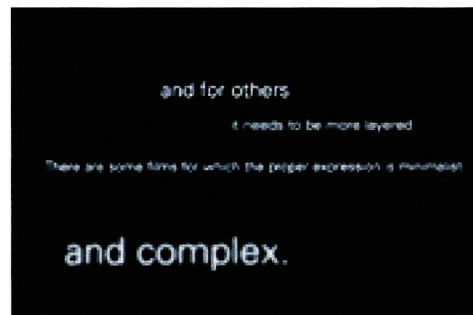
**Simulated Sequence, Second Movie -** Credits





**Above and Left Frames**
designed by
educational facility - RIT
key music - *Runaway* by *Julia's Star*
soft, airy
tracking and size relationships



**Left and Bottom Frames**
music selections utilized in simulated film