Ignorance

The new script

typeface

from

Michael Parson

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Introduction

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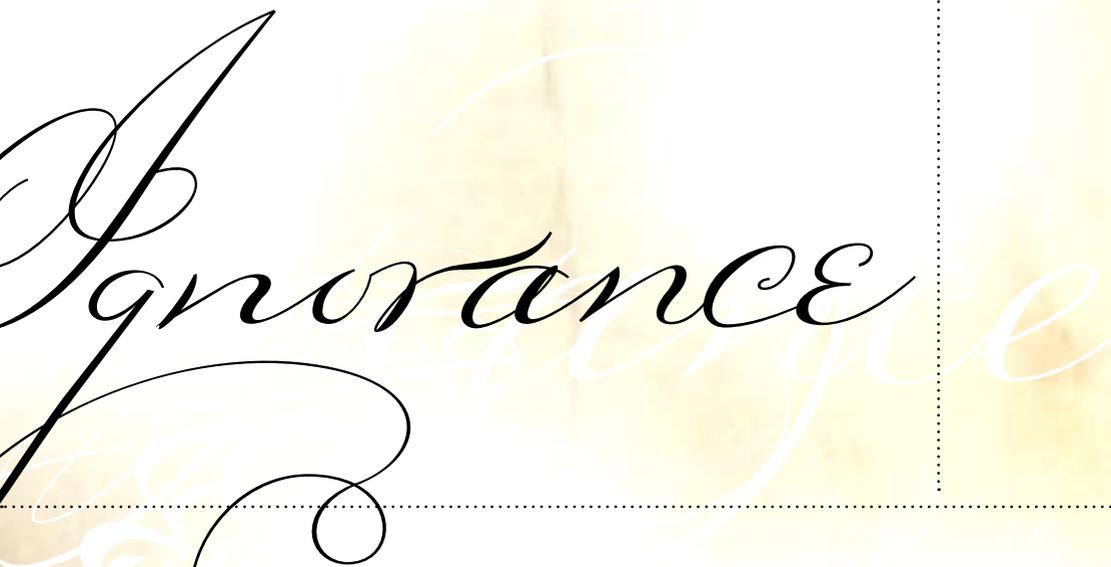
Ignorance

The first ideas for the Ignorance typeface came as I browsed a series of manuscript letters, ranging from victorian love letters to war reports; I was espacially intrigued by the generous and exaggerated forms they where written in.

But one letter, of which I had managed to collect a few samples, particularly grabbed my eye, an american political letter. After a series of sketches and months of trial and error, I felt that I had made a significant step in completing a real typeface design and was starting to search for a definitive typeface name. Wanting to avoid any romantic or historical connotations, I started to look at the actual text of what I was working with as base material, the Know Nothing letter. Maybe due to a general lack of knowledge, maybe down to my european upbringing, I knew nothing about this movement that had formed the ideas written in this letter, and was quite surprised by what I learned. In a 19th century prelude to the Tea Party movement that is filling contemporary american airwaves, a group of conservative americans banded together to create this Know Nothing party in the 1850's. Ultra nationalistic and strongly anti catholic, this party focused on turning back the new waves of immigrants in much the same way as certain political parties aim towards today.

I was at first taken back by this research, to the point of abandoning the whole project due to the fact that I cannot find any point to agree with in their political views; but

my reasoning got the better of me. I have often felt that lack of knowledge is a root of many biggoteries, fear of difference is a major obstacle for a greated understanding of each other. So I reasoned that my only way forward was to openly acknowledge the source of my inspiration but also use the typeface as my own personal answer to their statement, they did indeed know nothing, so Ignorance was choosen as a final name.
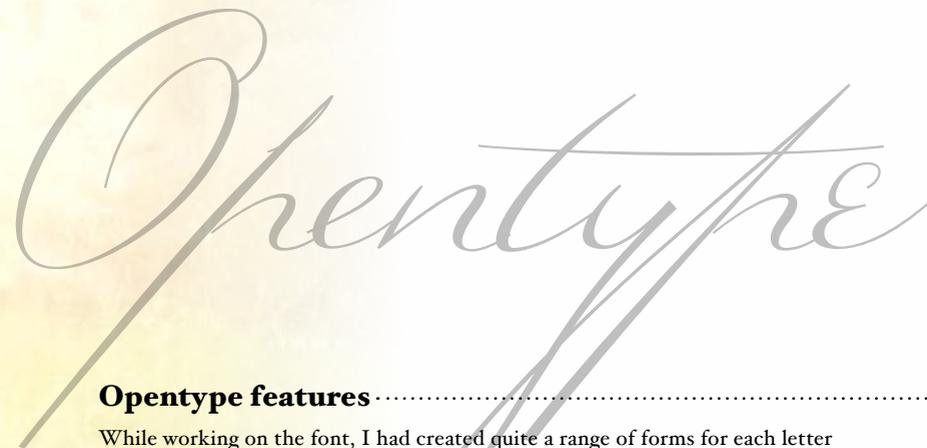
Opentype features

While working on the font, I had created quite a range of forms for each letter in the idea that I would simply use Opentype substitutions to find the best letter combinations, it was a start but far from my solution. The original version of the font, contained 3 glyphs for each letter, a regular, alternate and swash. My thinking was that for the best solutions, the designer could simply activate all the features and the various glyphs would provide the best solution.

Despite providing a good compromise for a large range of letter combinations, I noticed that a few combination either added further stroke complications or then did not provide, what in my eyes, was the better solution. So from only a handful of initial forms, I ended up working on more than 200 different ligatures to try cover a large range of possible letter combinations but also to add more variation in letters that where repeated often. By combining both the alternates and ligatures, the basic, standard letter forms went from being a pleasing but regular script, to a more lively and humanistic typeface, but then came the swash forms.

What struck me with my Swash letters, that where purposely drawn with more liberty than the standard forms, was how the Swash glyphs took to much focus away from the other letters, things seemed a bit unbalanced. Being still hooked on my ligature research for that feature, I decided that a good solution could be to expand the ligatures to include swash forms, and therefore ended up with over 300 swash ligatures! This last addition was the correct solution, meaning that with the one regular typeface, a designer could compose 3 variants of his text, for example using the ligatures and alternates in text and keeping the swash for the titles or larger sizes. A last little detail that I noticed in the letter and is quite a common feature in a few

written notes, was the use of superscript letters to mark common abbreviations, the 1st or 2nd. I started with a small number of glyphs but being in a french speaking city and in a country where 3 languages are used, I started to question why not equally add the letters required for german, french or italian. The german question was quickly resolved since they only use a period mark but adding the extensions for french and italian quickly proved useful in my first applications using the font, in a french text!

Design Choices

The resulting typeface design is a flowing, heavily inclined manuscript style, aimed principaly for use in shorter text. By playing with the standard or Opentype features, a designer can either design text layouts or experiment at finding the best visual solutions for each word in a shorter context. With it's strange inspiration, Ignorance aims to be a contempory solution for any communication that aims to be delicate, humanistic and decorative, it is an invitation to play with the features and work your own best layouts.

Character set

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Roman

BASIC ROMAN
LETTERFORMS

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
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

ACCENTS

Á Â Ã Ä Å À Æ È É Ê Ë
Ì Í Î Ï Ñ Ò Ó Ô Õ Ù Ú Û Ü Ç Ø Œ
Š Ÿ Ž á â ã ä å à è é ê ë ì í î ï ñ ò ó ô õ ù
ú û ü ç ø œ š ý ÿ ž ` ´ ^ ¨ ~ ˚ ¸

STANDARD NUMERALS

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

PUNCTUATION

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* ° . , ; : … • · ‹ ‹ « » › › ( ) ( ) { } / _ &
& * † ‡ © ®

MONETARY SYMBOLS

£ ¢ $ ¥ €

Opentype
features

Ignorance typeface
Opentype features
by Michael Parson

BASIC ALTERNATE
LETTERFORMS

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 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

ALTERNATE LIGATURES

ls rin the

ALTERNATE PUNCTUATION

& ! ? / / | ( ) { } [ ]

ALTERNATE NUMERALS

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

TITLING LIGATURES

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st th

LIGATURES

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Ner Ney Nothin Oh Org Os Ps Roy Th The
Me Un Us We Wedd Wh Ye Yi Yo You Yr

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can ces ch chool cieties ck com cry cs ct days de des
did difficult do ds ee el ell elle em empt empty end
ent enter entim ep er ere es ess est eux even ex ext fe
ffl ffl fill fit fli floor for fr from fs ft ge gg gh gs he hi
hitt his hs ie if ignorance il ill in inf ing int intr is
late le les letter lic life lit little ll lly ls lt lu luen lux
luxury me mi mm ms native nn nothing now ns ob
of off offi ok on one ont oo op or orm os out ow pi pl
pourquoi pp pre pro gs qu ral re red ren rin rinciples rs
ry see si sion soun ss st street sy tat tate te test th the
them then ther they ti til tility time tion tit tl to
tomorrow ton try ts tt un us vo vol vos votr vs we wh
when where whole ws www xe ye yn ys zza

NUMERAL
LIGATURES

01 00 000 19 11 21 23 30 31 33 37 37 30 18 11
17 61 66 69 88 87 90

TITLING

SWASH

lles

TITLING 12th

TITLING 12ème

TITLING 12o

BASIC SWASH LETTERFORMS

A 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
a a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s s t t u
v w x y z

Lovely letters

SWASH LIGATURES

Af After Ah Al Are Az Asia
At Au Au Award Awards Be Caf
Car Cela Celebr Ch Ch D Dear Diploma Di
Eff El End Et Eu Eux Ex Excl Execut Fh Fi
Fl Fr Good Gran Happy Holiday Hommage
House Ignorance In Invitation Itt Je Ki Kin
Know La Lady Les Life Lis Love Mas Me
Meilleurs Mer Merry Mi My Nath Nature New
Night Nous Par Pe Ph Pr Ques Res Roy
Rue Salut Selec Sh Since Spe St Suite
Th Thank The Til Ty Un Une Viol We
Welcome Wh Wish Zo

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every ex expre ex était été être faire feel ff fi fig fil fill
fit fl font foo for fou fr free fresh from fun gene ght gr
graph gs gy has he here hom home ice if ignorance
ih il ill ing is iss it its ix je kg kin km la lé ly lucky
many mes mini mm my next no none not ns obs of
offi ol on ont or os oss part peut pizza ps que rer rre
rs sa salut salutations sans selection sens sera sere ses
simple sing son st ss styl sur sweet tele ter text th th
thank the the then there they thing this till tim tion
tit tl to tout try tz ttt typ typography ure ury us ux
oay well with wr written you ys

happiness

O22

STANDARD

Happy

STANDARD

Happy

LIGATURES

Happy

Florence is

STANDARD *She*

LIGATURES *She*

SWASH *She*

Text examples

Ignorance typeface
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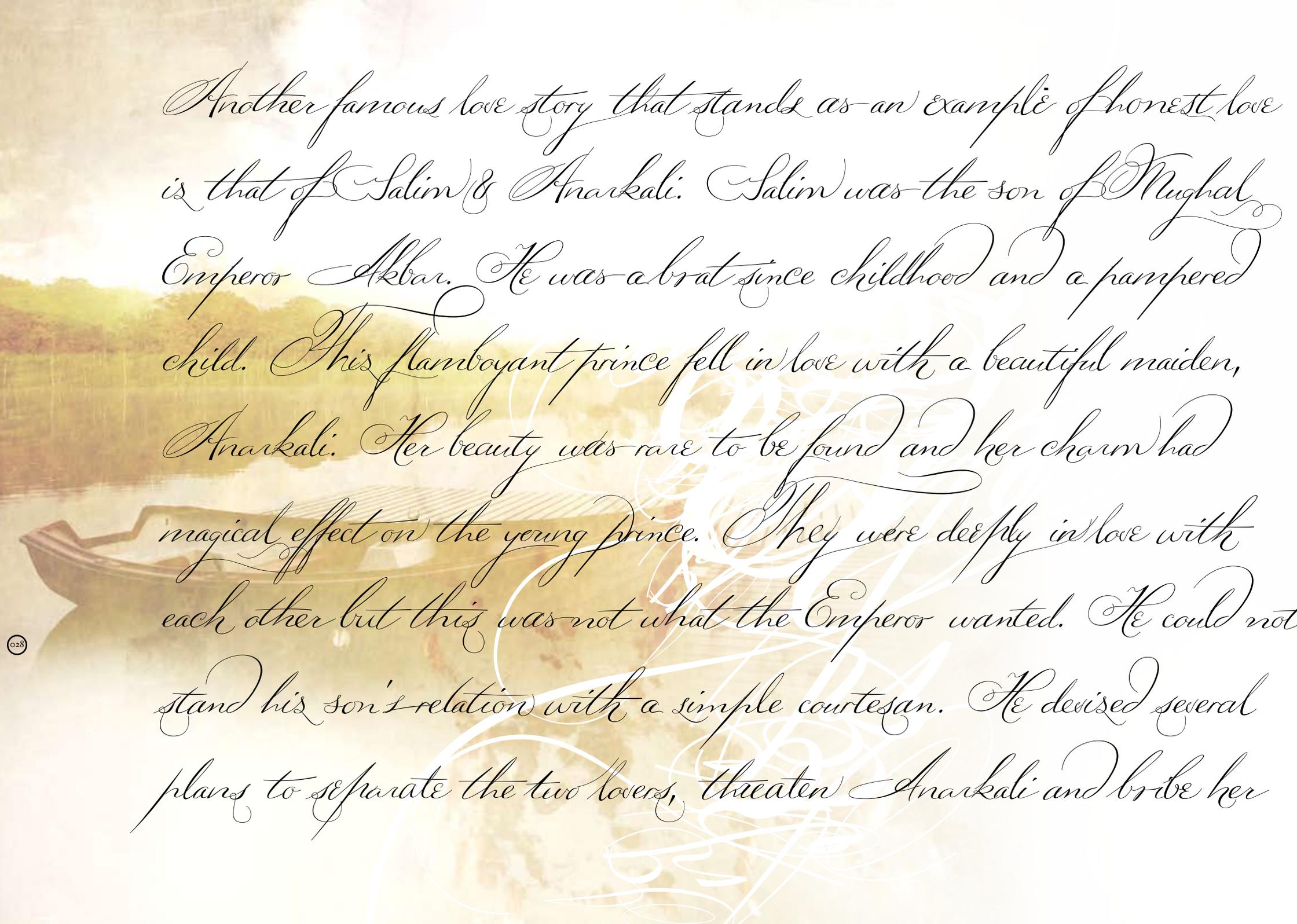
Another famous love story that stands as an example of honest love is that of Salim & Anarkali. Salim was the son of Mughal Emperor Akbar. He was a brat since childhood and a pampered child. This flamboyant prince fell in love with a beautiful maiden, Anarkali. Her beauty was rare to be found and her charm had magical effect on the young prince. They were deeply in love with each other but this was not what the Emperor wanted. He could not stand his son's relation with a simple courtesan. He devised several plans to separate the two lovers, threaten Anarkali and bribe her

Even though you are far away right now, I know that you are close to me in other ways. Each time we think of each we cut through the distance. Each time we write and read letters, we are hugging each other with words. Each time I your voice on the phone, I can see your smile. Each time I need motivation, I draw it from you. We are blessed and by this distance between us. We are forced to enjoy the fine parts of our relationship that others with the priveledge of near fail to notice. All the while we can anticipate and imagine a future with nothing keeping us apart. This time of ant

Even though you are far away right now, I know that you are close to me in other ways. Each time we think of eac other, we cut through the distance. Each time we write and read letters, we are hugging each other with words. Eac time I hear your voice on the phone, I can see your smile. Each time I need motivation, I draw it from you We are blessed and cursed by this distance between us. We are forced to enjoy the fine parts of our relationship that di with the priveledge of nearness fail to notice. All the while we can anticipate and imagine a future with nothing

Even though you are far away right now, I know that you are close to me in other ways. Each time we think of eac other, we cut through the distance. Each time we write and read letters, we are hugging each other with words. Each I hear your voice on the phone, I can see your smile. Each time I need motivation, I draw it from you. We are blessed and cursed by this distance between us. We are forced to enjoy the fine parts of our relationship that others wi priveledge of nearness fail to notice. All the while we can anticipate and imagine a future with nothing keeping us ap

Another famous and true legendary love story is that of Pyramus and Thisbe of Babylonia. The story belongs to 331 BC.

Pyramus and Thisbe were the most handsome couple in Babylonia. They were childhood friends and lovers. Just like other [lover]s, they too wished to get married and stay with each other but [th]eir parents would not agree to it. After repeated denials they [dec]ided to flee and get married. They were to meet at the nearby [fie]lds. Thisbe was the first to reach the fields. On reaching, she [spot]ted a lion with a bloody mouth near the spring. She was scared [and] ran away. By mistake she dropped her veil, which was picked [u]p by the lion in his bloody jaws. Pyramus reached the field at [th]at moment and saw the lion carrying Thisbe's veil in his bloody [jaw]s. He thought that she was dead and killed himself with the [s]word he was carrying. Thisbe reached the spot only to find the

typogama

Quam Typeface
by Michael Parson
1 weight
Display

Specimen Layout: Michael Parson
Text & visuals: Michael Parson
Font used: Ignorance
Longer text & notes set in Hoefler text.