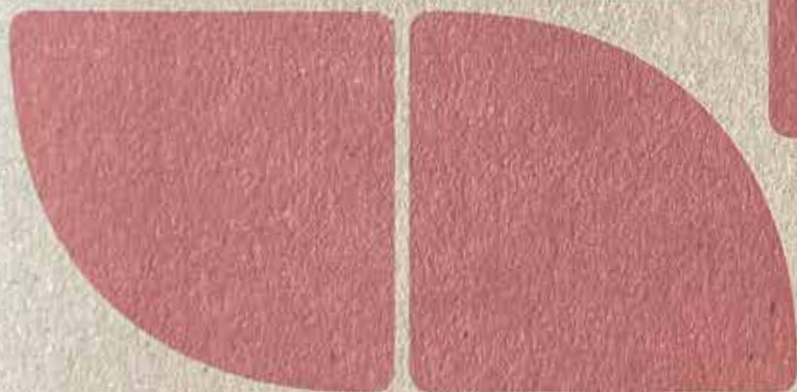


MANICULE
SPECIMEN





MANICULE SPECIMEN

Most of you will be familiar with the pointing hand that was often used on posters and advertising materials in the 19th century in combination with display faces. Today, it has a nostalgic, old-fashioned association. This pointing hand, the subject of this publication, has a lengthy and layered history, in various phases. It was used by readers as early as the 12th century – well before the invention of printing with movable type in Europe – to manually annotate manuscripts in the margin. It is therefore originally a sign of readers, not writers. Within a few decades after Gutenberg began to print with movable type, the first hands were already cast in a fixed form in lead and printed (Milan, 1479). This marked a new phase in the existence of this sign. The hand thus first belonged to palaeography, and only a few centuries later to typography. From then on, printed and hand-drawn manicules existed side by side in printed, read books. There are certainly differences between hand-drawn and printed manicules. Hand-drawn examples are always informal and have an endless variety of appearances, each reflecting the personality of the reader. Printed manicules are authoritative and austere and belong to the author.

First, a remark on the term *manicule*. In English there are more than ten terms. Among them: *hand*, *hand director*, *pointing hand*, *pointing finger*, *pointer*, *digit*, *mutton fist*, *bishop's fist*, *index*, *indicator*, and the most common – *manicule*. Manicule is derived from the Latin *maniculum*, which means 'little hand'.

Most of you are also familiar with printed type specimens. In a printed type specimen, the hand is an outsider, belonging to a separate category. In a traditional, extensive type specimen, all kinds of fonts are first presented. To get an impression of a typeface, short texts are displayed, sometimes in combination with numbers, punctuation, and currency symbols. At the end of this type specimen – after hundreds of fonts have been shown – comes the category 'Other', consisting of brass rules, dashes, flourishes, borders, curly braces, initials, vignettes, ornaments, and various signs including hands. The design of all printing material in the category 'Other' does not belong specifically to one particular typeface, but this material can be combined with any font. The design of the manicule therefore stands alone and is not linked to any particular font. This typographic pointing hand has again reached a new phase: a general illustration.



SAUNA REGULAR

MOLLY SCRIPT

The typographic hand does not have a single appearance either. Unicode distinguishes 25 different types of hands (different directions, different sides of the hand, black or white, etc.). Since the emergence of the emoji, many more types of hands have become available in modern communication: thumbs up, applause, a handshake. The pointing hands presented here are not the only hands that have been added to these fonts, often a font family is provided with several hands (diverse directions and other hand gestures). These various hands are frequently present in our lives. However, there remains one predominant form. Typographic hands are made both left and right pointing, but because *it is usually used to draw attention to a subsequent text, the right pointing hand is more common than the left pointing hand. In Europe, after all, we read from left to right. Sometimes the hand has a sleeve, cuff, or collar. In other cases, every piece of clothing is missing.*

Times have changed for both the type specimen and the manicule. Type specimens no longer appear as voluminous books; on the contrary, the designer is presented with a fleeting impression of a type family online. The manicule is no longer an outsider in the 'Other' category, but has become a full-fledged part of the typeface. Another new phase in the development of the hand, shown in this publication.

In this latest development, the manicule is somewhat comparable to the euro sign, which underwent a



FAKIR BLACK

similar transition at a much faster pace. The euro sign was introduced in 1997 not as a letter, but as a logo. It had to appear the same under all circumstances. Regardless of the typeface in which it was used, the euro sign always had to have the exact same shape. Additionally, (according to the guidelines) it should always be presented in yellow on a blue background. Such short-sightedness has rarely been shown. Anyone can see that any currency sign, such as \$ or £, is always designed in the same style

ZEITUNG REGULAR

as A-z and 0-9. The euro sign is no exception. Fortunately, at the turn of this millennium, all type designers worldwide discarded this ridiculous guideline and designed a euro sign to match the rest of the typeface. The euro sign is not a symbol or logo that should be classified in the 'Other' category in a type specimen, it should simply be part of the font itself and should be approached in the same terms of design as a letter or a number.

The manicule deserves the same redemption as the euro sign, to be considered not as a logo or illustration, but as a sign. Since fonts nowadays can contain many characters (more than 65,000), it is no problem to support many languages with a font, and add other symbols – such as arrows and hands – to each font. The manicules presented here are all designed in line with the typeface to which they belong.





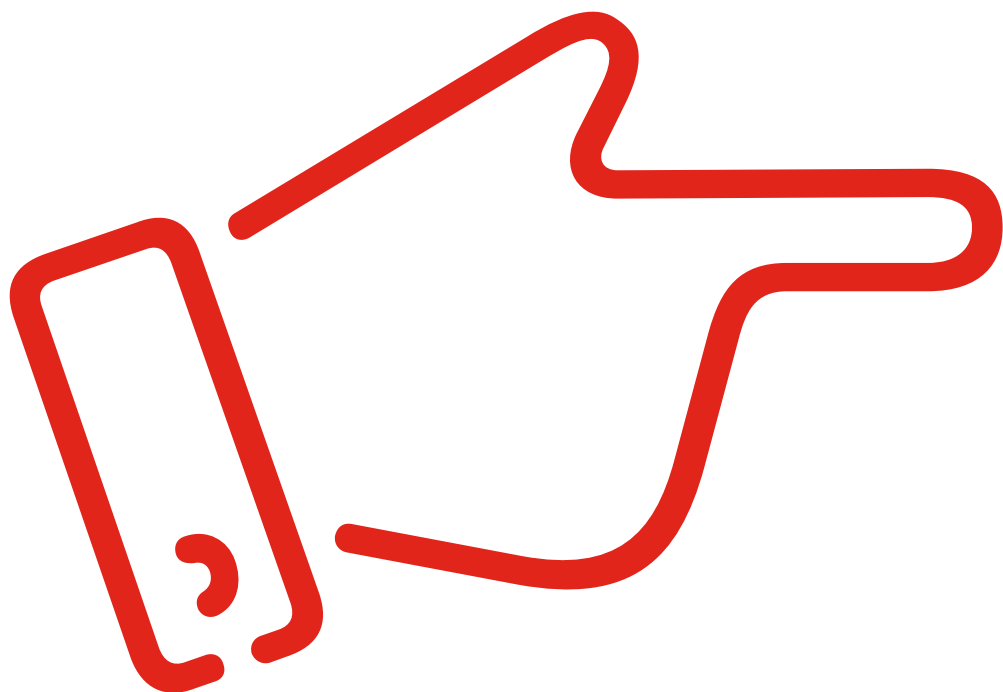
LIZA TEXT

Each typeface has a matching hand. This has consequences. For example, there is less detail in the form compared to

a century ago, because characters can always be enlarged and reduced. In the 19th century, the hand was mainly used for advertising, and was engraved on a large format, which allowed for greater detail. The hands shown here contain less detail, similar to the hands cast in lead in the 15th and 16th

TRIPPER BLACK





PLAKATO NEON

centuries. Another consequence (logically) is less contrast between text and hand. This publication is therefore not a type specimen, but rather a manicule specimen, in which each manicule is presented in combination with the typeface to which it belongs.

PLAKATO PAPER

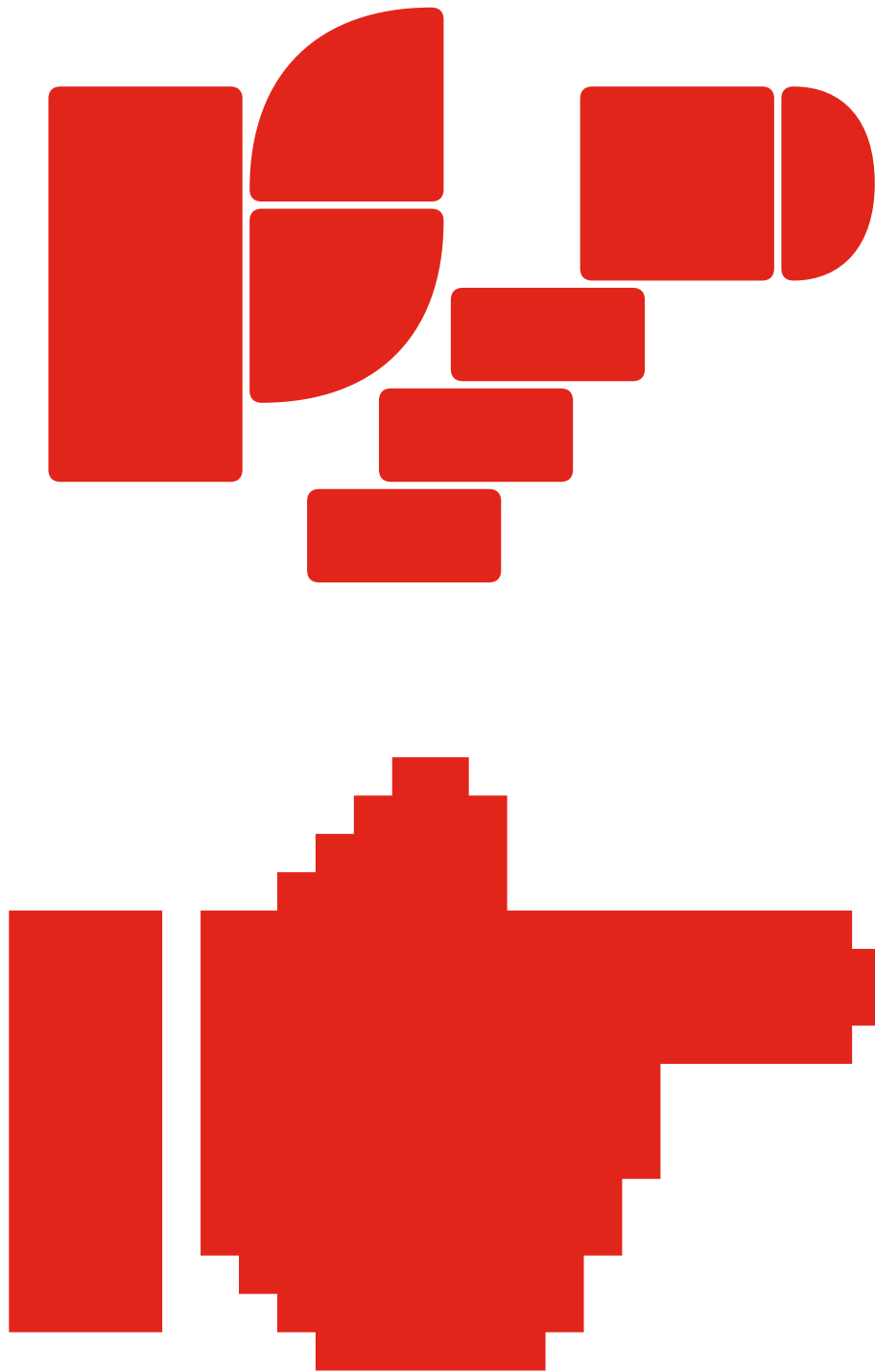
**THE HAND HAS
MEANWHILE
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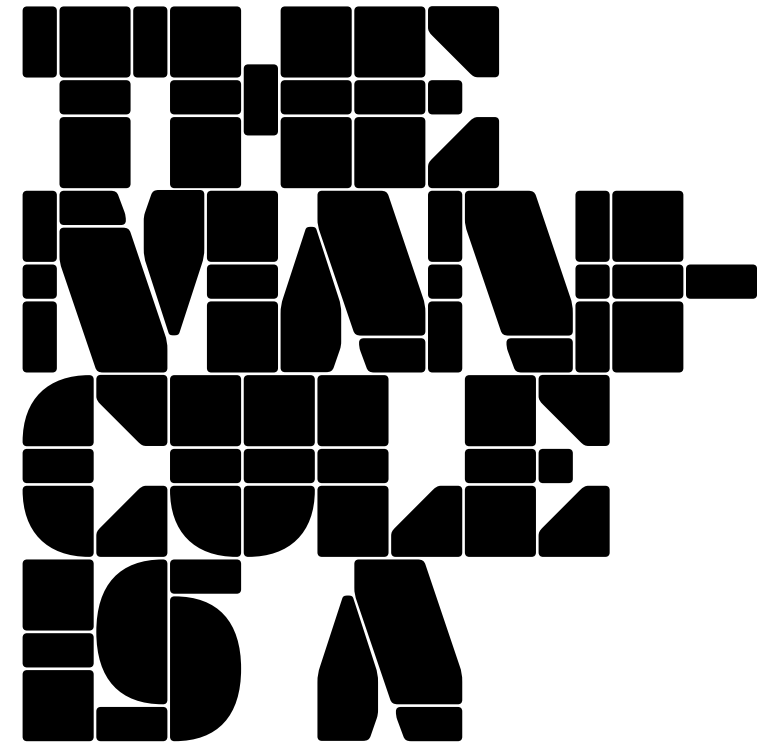
PLAKATO

ZEITUNG EXTRABOLD

a life in the vaults of contemporary typefaces. Because fonts are more and more extensive today than they were 30 years ago, it is also more difficult for type foundries to communicate exactly what is contained in a certain font. Which languages are supported? Which OpenType features are built-in, and what do they do? Are there additional characters and symbols, like arrows or emojis? Are there static and dynamic versions? Is there a colour version? And so on. For this reason, it can do no harm in a small publication like this one to dwell on one small aspect of a type family that is often snowed under in today's letter violence.



PLAKATO BUILD



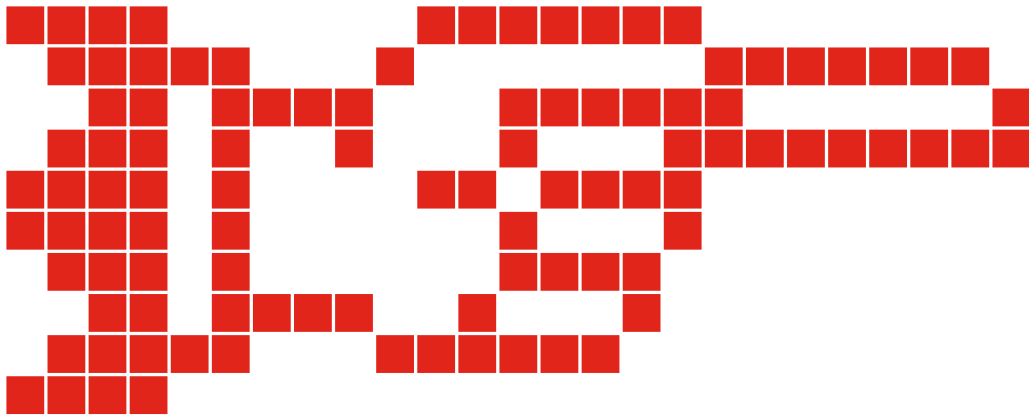
PLAKATO GAME

gesture, a hand gesture that stands in the midst of text. In that sense, it is a precursor to the now so popular emoji. Who doesn't send an occasional text message ending with 🖐 or 🖐? This proves that it's natural to combine hand gestures and letters in writing. However, the disadvantage of emoji is that the form is always determined by the software environment, the user cannot choose her own specific shape - just like with a font.

The manicule is a gesture and also a sign. The typographic

hand has become a curiosity, and doomed to vintage applications outside of print. Because the hand has experienced a renaissance online since the popularisation of emoji, there is hope that the typographic hand will be used more often both online and in print. However, there is a small caveat. Despite all the changes the hand has undergone, this brief overview makes it clear that some aspects have unfortunately remained unchanged. The hand is almost always male, and mainly points to the right.

*A perfect
summary of the
past centuries.
Time for a new
direction.*



COLOPHON

This Copper Monday print (a Dutch printing tradition) appeared on January 10, 2022 and is brought to you by:

Zetterij Chang Chi Lan-Ying
Offsetdrukkerij Jan de Jong
Uitgeverij De Buitenkant
Underware (Sami Kortemäki, Akiem Helmling & Bas Jacobs)

In 2005, De Nederlandsche Bank (DNB) organised an exhibition of all euro signs designed by Underware, to draw attention to the fact that the euro sign is not a logo but a currency sign. Its design should be in line with the rest of the typeface. This publication is a modest successor to that exhibition, in which all euro signs were shown one by one. Some manicules designed by Underware are shown here in combination with the typeface they belong to. The worldwide predilection for the manicule is occasionally shown in a small exhibition or in some fleeting attention on social media. Only rarely, however, is the hand the subject of a somewhat more extensive publication. Charles Hasler's *A Show of Hands* (Typographica 8, 1953) and *Printer's Fists* by Piet Schreuders (TYP, #C November 1987) are exceptions. Enthusiasts who want to know more about the origins of the manicule can, for instance, read the chapter 'Towards a History of the Manicule' in *Used Books, Marking Readers in Renaissance England*, written by William H. Sherman (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008). In addition, 'The Manicule', the ninth chapter in *Shady Characters: The Secret Life of Punctuation, Symbols, and Other Typographical Marks* by Keith Houston (W.W. Norton & Company, 2013) is highly recommended for those wanting to learn more.

Text & design Underware

Editor Tara Karpinski

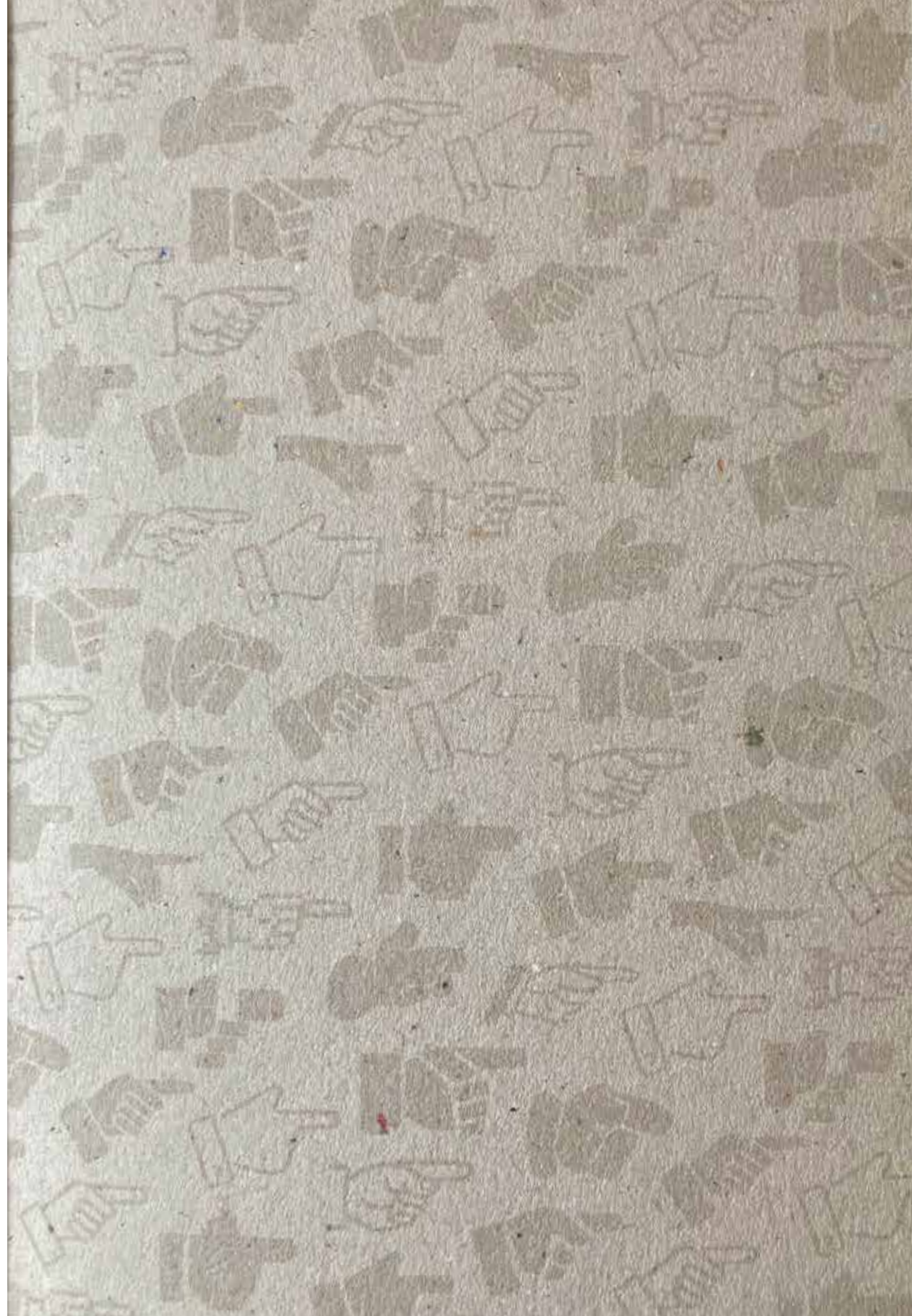
Typefaces Underware.nl (Den Haag/Helsinki/Amsterdam)

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Binding After Press Group, Diemen

Print run 800



*Under
ware*

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