

# Conquer Variable Web Typography

# Oliver Schöndorfer Designer



glyphe



zeichenschatz







A smartphone displays the ColiCheck website. The top navigation bar includes the ColiCheck logo (a stylized horse head), "COLICHECK", and three menu items: "Features", "About", and "Support". A prominent orange button on the right reads "Jetzt vorbestellen". Below the navigation is a large photograph of a woman with long hair petting a white horse. In the bottom right corner of the photo area, there is a dark callout box containing the text "Schlafen Sie gut. ColiCheck **wacht** über Ihr Pferd." and an orange button labeled "Informieren & absichern".





Hochzeit Taufe Feier Abschied Repertoire Über uns Buchen



## Musik zur Hochzeit

REICH MIR DIE HAND, MEIN LEBEN ...

Nun ist er also da, der große Moment, einander das Ja-Wort zu geben. Die Liebe strömt warm durchs Herz, die Hände zittern, der Brautvater sucht verstohlen nach dem Taschentuch. Durch den





# MJOM CARDS

BUY



Play Web Trumps and battle

## Snapchat vs. Skype

Web Trumps by MJOM Cards is the nerdy top trumps card game you've been waiting for! Featuring **32 uniquely designed** cards of web and app companies, it's the perfect gift for your techy web friends or your geeky self.

# MJOM CARDS

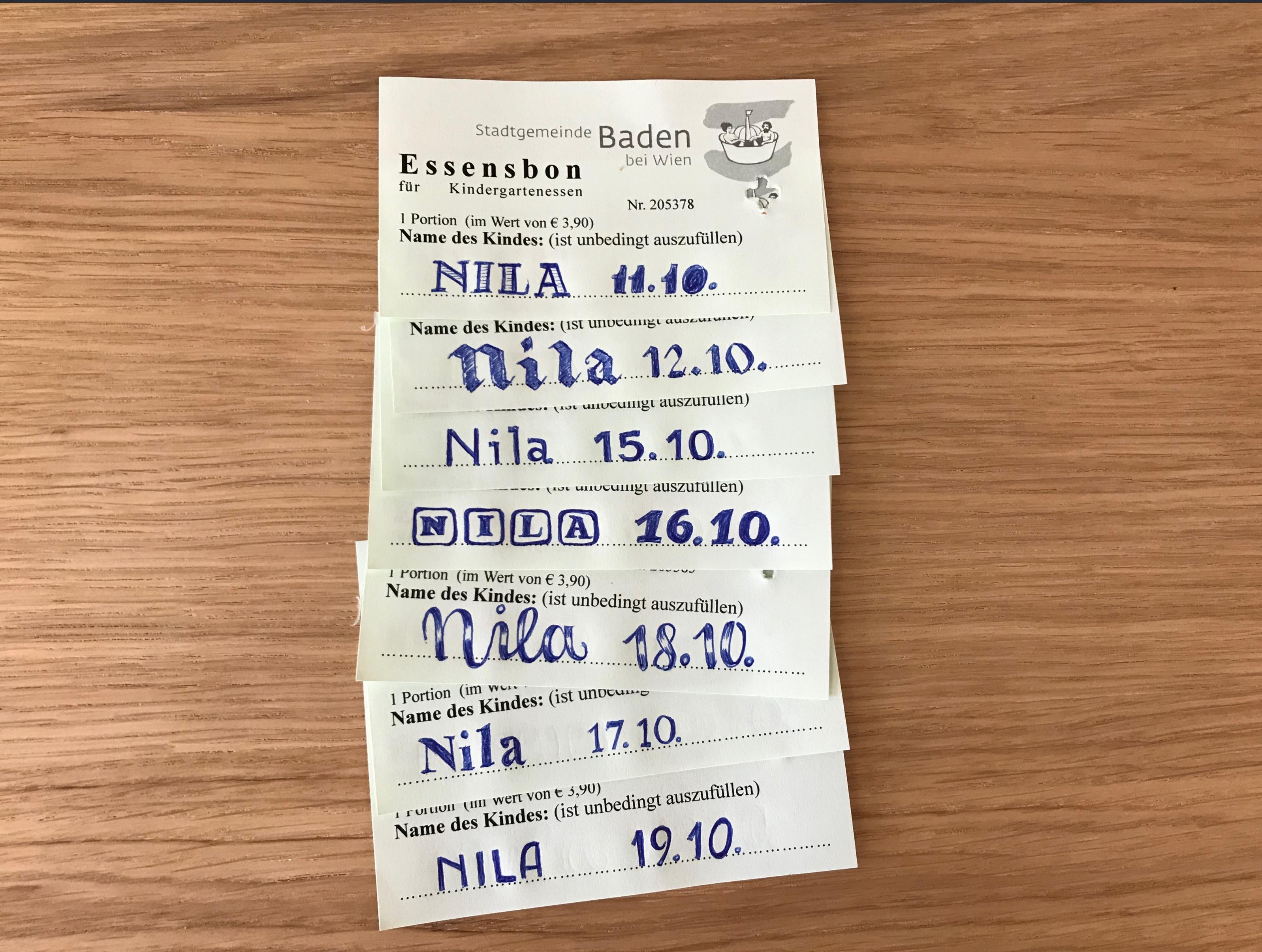
BUY



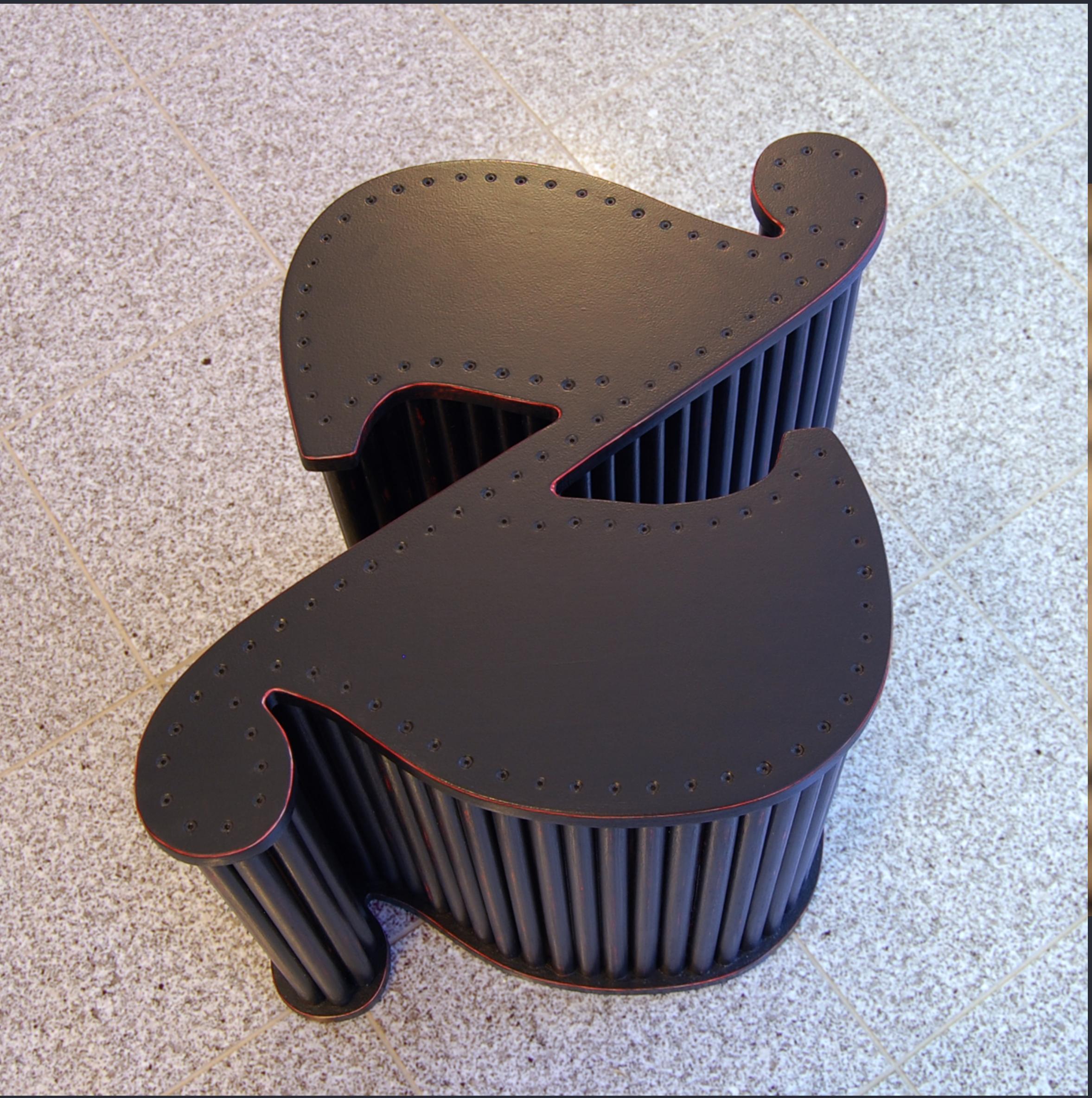
Play Web Trumps and battle  
Netflix  
vs.  
Amazon

Web Trumps by MJOM Cards is the nerdy top trumps card game you've been waiting for! Featuring **32 uniquely designed** cards of web and app companies, it's the perfect gift for your

 glyphe







 glyphe

IT'S TIME FOR  
**variable web**  
TYPOGRAPHY

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BY OLIVER SCHÖNDORFER

---

Variable fonts will shape the future of web typography as they offer plenty of possibilities for fine graded control over the display of type on screens. And that all at a relatively low file size. Time to say goodbye to endless debates about the number of font files you have

This page uses the typeface [Output Sans Variable](#) by David Jonathan Ross. It's a variable font that can be adjusted on two axes to change its *weight* and its *obliqueness*. So I only have to load **one single font file** of 57 KB to create the 18 different styles you can see on this site. It opens up new possibilities for designing with text on the web with a great number of typographic expressions for an incredibly small font file. So clearly, variable fonts are the new hot thing for every type nerd

# Are so many different styles really necessary?

Let's take a step back and ask ourselves **why do we need different font styles at all?** Typography gives words meaning through design, which means good typography can support the content, bad (or inappropriate) typography weakens it. Different styles of the same typeface make sense when they are unique enough to **stand out**.

Concurrent they should be familiar enough by using the same design language. Compared to the regular weight, bold text emphasizes the meaning of something. It has to have a certain contrast to stand out, otherwise, it won't do its job. Maybe semi-bold would not be different enough. The same goes with italic. Semi-Italic (or semi slanted – true italics are another topic on their own) do not make much sense for long reading text.

“Typography gives words meaning through design.”

But this guidelines mainly apply to body text or typography for long reading texts. Having a variety of weights might be beneficial for certain kinds of content, like page titles, headings or blockquotes, as you can see on this page. In that cases the typography can be **more expressive** and finely nuanced because the text usually is not that

**18**

**font files**

**632**

**for web fonts only**

**1**

**font file**

**56 KB**

**overall size**

# How to get started with variable fonts

1. What are variable fonts?
2. Using variable fonts on the web
3. Good times
4. Hard times
5. Getting started

# What are variable fonts?

Aa

**Light**

Aa

**Regular**

Aa

**Medium**

Aa

**Bold**

Aa

**X-Bold**

Aa

Light

Aa

Regular

Aa

Medium

Aa

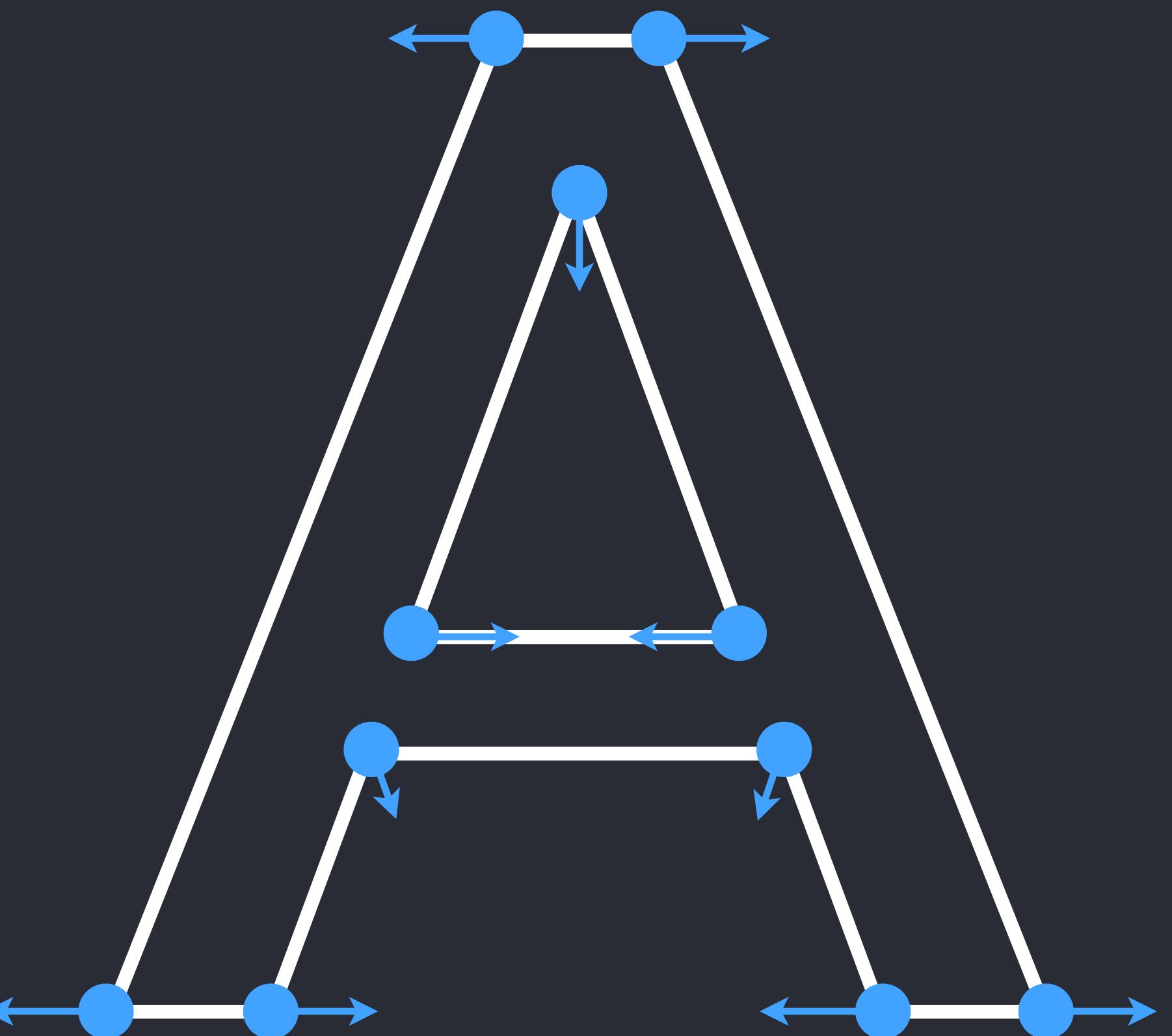
Bold

Aa

X-Bold

Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa

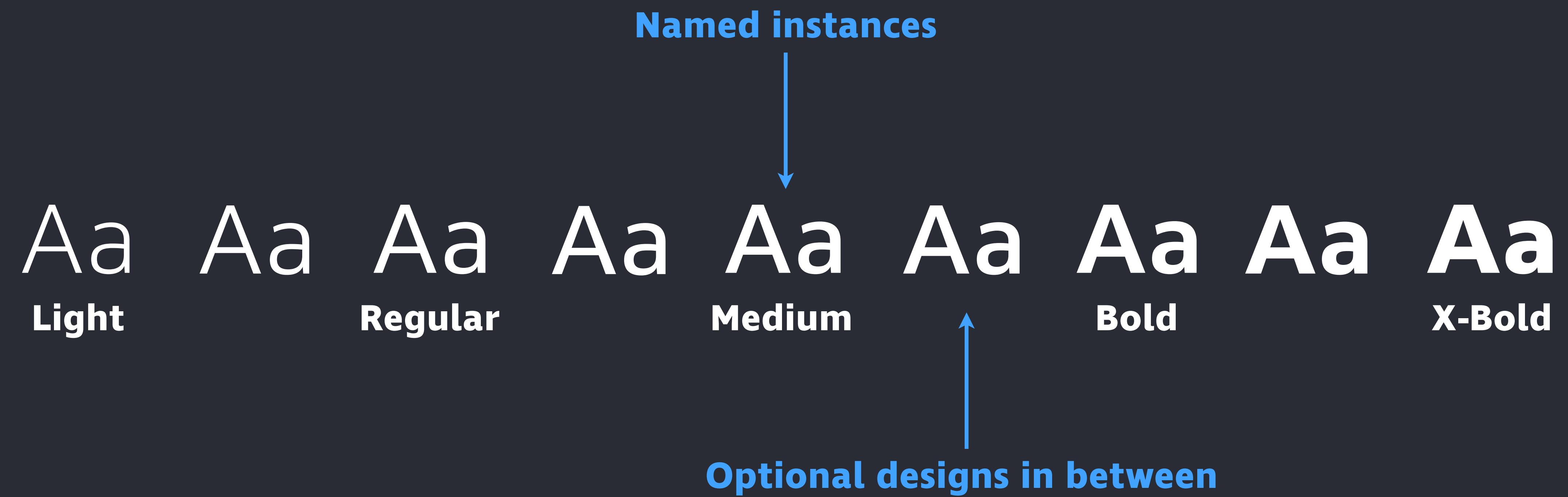
**Variable font file**





Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa

←———— **Interpolation** —————→



Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa

← **weight axis** →



Aa  
Aa  
Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa  
Aa  
Aa



# *Using variable fonts*

## on the web

# 84 %

Global support



Safari 11



Chrome 62



Edge 17



Firefox 62

# 95 %

Mobile support  
in Austria



iOS Safari 11



Chrome 67  
for Android

# Variable Fonts (beta)



A simple resource for finding and trying variable fonts

## Angus Variable

Weight: 0 1000

A rounded sans that maintains consistent widths regardless of changes in weight.

Design: Elliott Amblard  
Publisher: Black[Foundry]  
Characters: Latin  
Licensing: Paid/commercial  
Info/fonts: [black-foundry.com](http://black-foundry.com)

Angus Variable

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghi  
jklmnopqrstuvwxyz 0123456789

Angus Variable Italic

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ abcdefghi  
jklmnopqrstuvwxyz 0123456789

## Eckmannpsych Variable

Optical Size: 0 1000

A psychedelic interpretation of Otto Eckman's [Eckmann-Schrift](#), available with discounted pricing as a work-in-progress design. It comes with a bonus [DrawBot](#) script for making variable animations.

Design: James T. Edmondson  
Publisher: OH no Type Co.  
Characters: Latin  
Licensing: Paid/commercial  
Info/fonts: [futurefonts.xyz](http://futurefonts.xyz)

EBCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQ  
RSTUVWXYZ  
0123456789

**Discover new variable fonts**  
try them out,  
see where to get them

```
@font-face {  
    font-family: 'Venn';  
    src: url('Venn.woff2') format('woff2-variations'),  
         url('Venn.woff2') format('woff2');  
}
```

**Will become the standard**



**Fallback for older browser versions**



[Introduction](#)[MY SPECIMENS](#)[Old Default](#)[SPECIMENS](#) [FounderType YouHei](#) [Gnomon](#) [Venn](#)[文鼎晶熙黑](#)[晶熙ゴシック体](#)[Amstelvar](#)[Avenir Next](#)[Bitcount](#)[Buffalo Gal](#)[Compressa](#)[Decovar](#)[DIN 2014](#)[Dunbar](#)[Fit](#)[Gingham](#)

# Axis-Praxis is a website for playing with OpenType Variable Fonts

Discover 30+ variable fonts. Experiment with the right panel on this default layout, or choose a type column. Every textbox is fully editable: change font spacing as well as the variation sliders. And type your



*Font makers can try out their own designs. Just drag any variable TTF to the current textbox gets set to that font, and its axes show up right away in the Font Variation section.*

*The Font Variation controls adapt according to the variation axes inside each font, one slider*

TEXTBOX

Textbox

Font

Font size

## FONT VARIATIONS

Instance

Width

Weight

Optical Size

1. Select font or drop font file

2. See available axes and ranges



**registered axes**

**wght**

**wdth**

**ital**

**slnt**

**opsz**

# Weight Axis

Source Serif Variable by Adobe



# Weight Axis

font-weight: 327;

font-variation-settings: "wght" 327;

`font-weight: 327;`

**High-level property**

will become standard with CSS 4 Font Module

`font-variation-settings: "wght" 327;`

**Low-level property**

supported by all participating browsers now

# Width Axis

Venn by Dalton Maag

 glyphé

# Width Axis

font-stretch: 78%;

font-variation-settings: "wdth" 78;

# INTERMISSION

STRETCH

STRETCH  
FABRIC

TISSU

# Don't stretch me

transform: scaleX(1.25);

**don't stretch me**

transform: scaleX(1.25);

# Don't stretch me

font-stretch: 125%;

# Don't stretch me

font-stretch: 125%;

# **Don't stretch me**

transform: scaleX(1.25);

# **Don't stretch me**

font-stretch: 125%;

# Italic Axis

# *Italic Axis*

font-style: italic;

font-variation-settings: "ital" 1;

# Slant Axis

Output Sans by David Jonathan Ross



# *Slant Axis*

font-style: oblique 8deg;

font-variation-settings: "slnt" 8;

# Optical Sizing Axis

Aa Aa Aa Aa

**Low contrast  
for small sizes**

Aa Aa Aa Aa

**12px**

**High contrast  
for large sizes**

Aa Aa Aa Aa

**72px**

Aa Aa Aa Aa

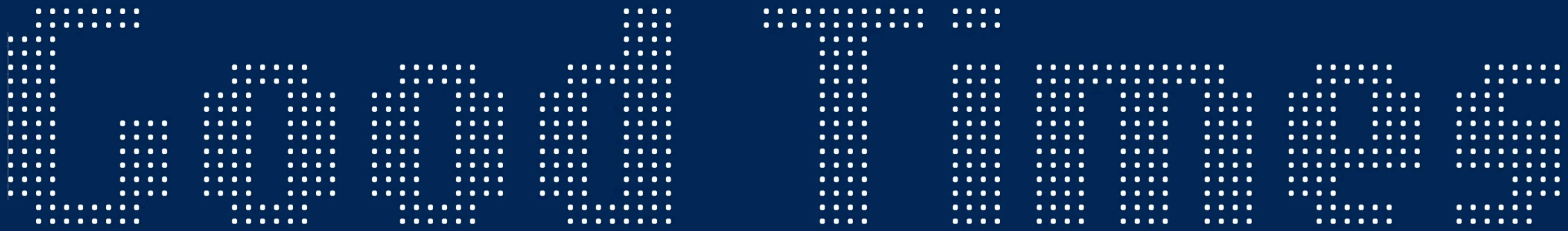
font-optical-sizing: auto;

font-variation-settings: "opsz" 72;

# CUSTOM AXIS

CUSTOMAXIS

font-variation-settings: "TRMC" 1000,  
"SKLA" 400,  
"SKLB" 800, ...



ANZEIGE

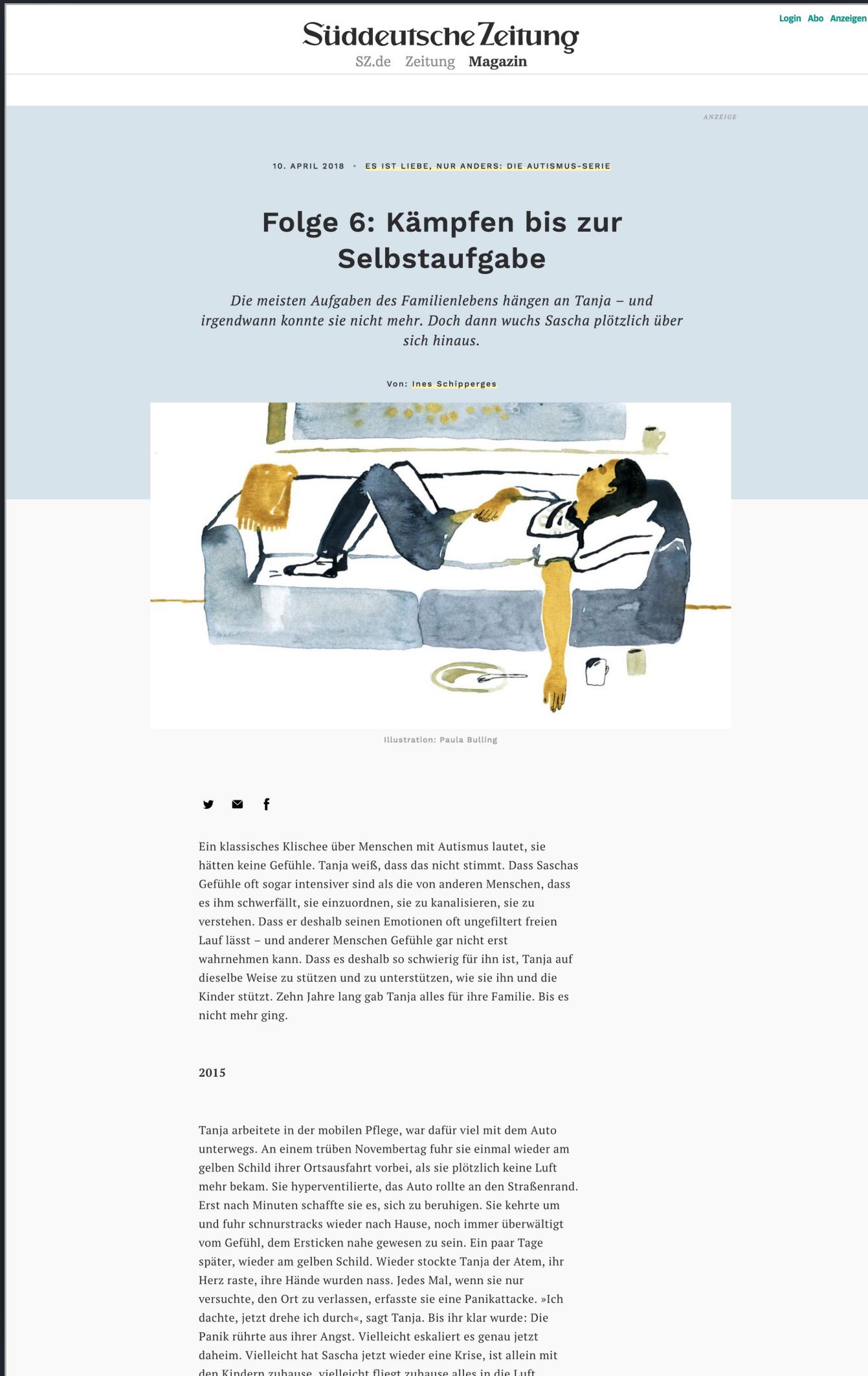
10. APRIL 2018 • ES IST LIEBE, NUR ANDERS: DIE AUTISMUS-SERIE

## Folge 6: Kämpfen bis zur Selbstaufgabe

*Die meisten Aufgaben des Familienlebens hängen an Tanja – und irgendwann konnte sie nicht mehr. Doch dann wuchs Sascha plötzlich über sich hinaus.*

Von: Ines Schipperges





**23 KB** PT Serif Regular

**23 KB** PT Serif Bold

**24 KB** PT Serif Italic

**36 KB** Work Sans Regular

**39 KB** Work Sans Medium

**39 KB** Work Sans SemiBold

**52 KB** Work Sans Bold

**166 KB**

Süddeutsche Zeitung  
SZ.de Zeitung Magazin

ANZEIGE

10. APRIL 2018 • ES IST LIEBE, NUR ANDERS: DIE AUTISMUS-SERIE

**Folge 6: Kämpfen bis zur Selbstaufgabe**

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Von: Ines Schipperges



Illustration: Paula Bulling

Ein klassisches Klischee über Menschen mit Autismus lautet, sie hätten keine Gefühle. Tanja weiß, dass das nicht stimmt. Dass Saschas Gefühle oft sogar intensiver sind als die von anderen Menschen, dass es ihm schwerfällt, sie einzuordnen, sie zu kanalisieren, sie zu verstehen. Dass er deshalb seinen Emotionen oft ungefiltert freien Lauf lässt – und anderer Menschen Gefühle gar nicht erst wahrnehmen kann. Dass es deshalb so schwierig für ihn ist, Tanja auf dieselbe Weise zu stützen und zu unterstützen, wie sie ihn und die Kinder stützt. Zehn Jahre lang gab Tanja alles für ihre Familie. Bis es nicht mehr ging.

2015

Tanja arbeitete in der mobilen Pflege, war dafür viel mit dem Auto unterwegs. An einem trüben Novembertag fuhr sie einmal wieder am gelben Schild ihrer Ortsausfahrt vorbei, als sie plötzlich keine Luft mehr bekam. Sie hyperventilierte, das Auto rollte an den Straßenrand. Erst nach Minuten schaffte sie es, sich zu beruhigen. Sie kehrte um und fuhr schurstracks wieder nach Hause, noch immer überwältigt vom Gefühl, dem Ersticken nahe gewesen zu sein. Ein paar Tage später, wieder am gelben Schild. Wieder stockte Tanja der Atem, ihr Herz raste, ihre Hände wurden nass. Jedes Mal, wenn sie nur versuchte, den Ort zu verlassen, erfassste sie eine Panikattacke. »Ich dachte, jetzt drehe ich durch«, sagt Tanja. Bis ihr klar wurde: Die Panik rührte aus ihrer Angst. Vielleicht eskaliert es genau jetzt daheim. Vielleicht hat Sascha jetzt wieder eine Krise, ist allein mit den Kindern zuhause, vielleicht fliegt zuhause alles in die Luft.

Work Sans Regular

Work Sans Medium

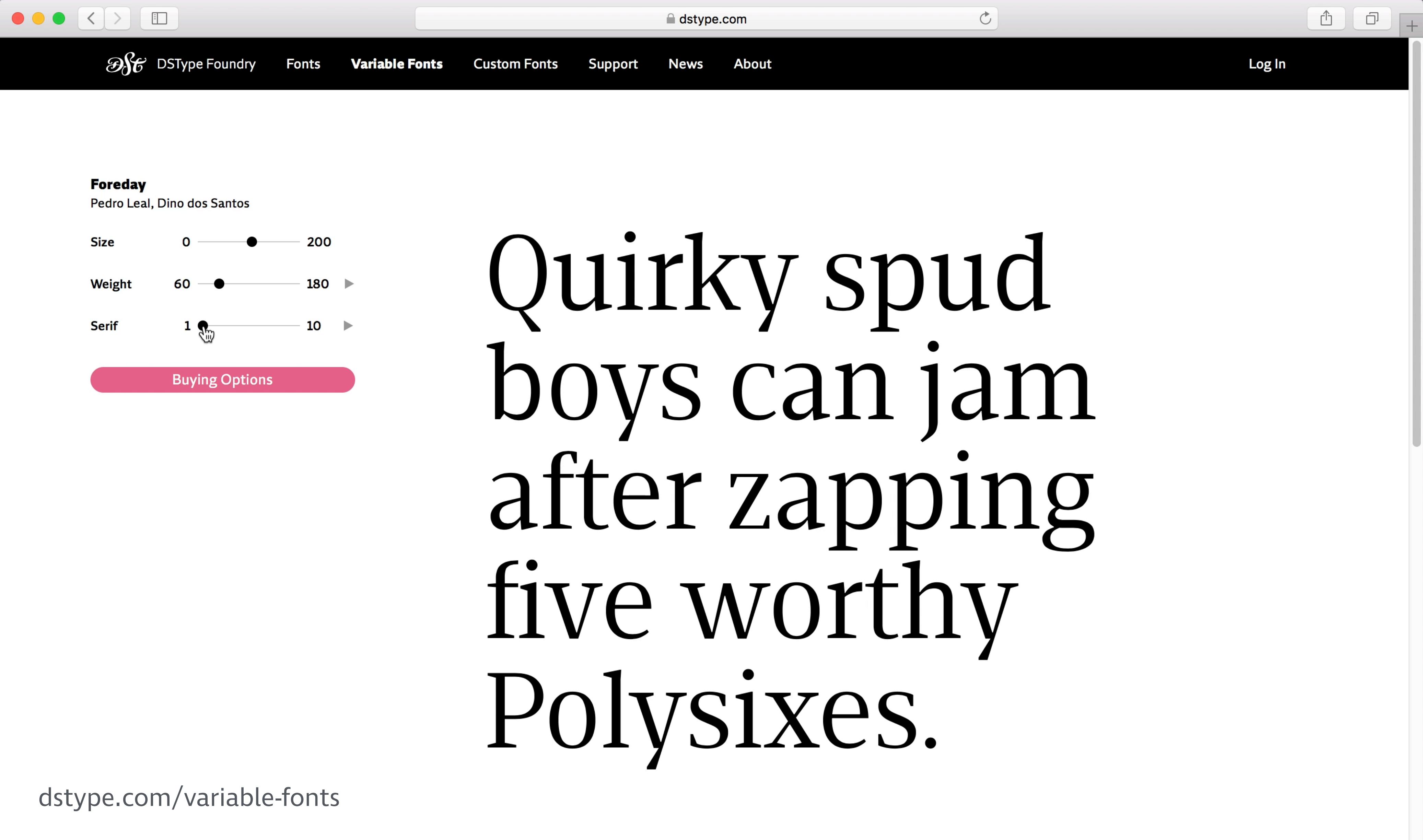
Work Sans SemiBold

Work Sans Bold

Work Sans Variabel?

166 KB

~80 KB

A screenshot of a web browser window displaying the DType Foundry website at [dstype.com](https://dstype.com). The browser has a dark mode interface. The main content area shows a large sample of the 'Foreday' font in black serif letters, with the text:  
Quirky spud  
boys can jam  
after zapping  
five worthy  
Polysixes.  
To the left of the text, there is a sidebar with font preview controls:

- Size: A slider from 0 to 200, currently set to 100.
- Weight: A slider from 60 to 180, currently set to 100.
- Serif: A slider from 1 to 10, currently set to 1. The number '1' is highlighted with a pink circle and a hand cursor icon.

A pink button labeled 'Buying Options' is located below these controls.

[dstype.com/variable-fonts](https://dstype.com/variable-fonts)

DSTYPE FOUNDRY

DType Foundry Fonts Variable Fonts Custom Fonts Support News About Log In

**Foreday**  
Pedro Leal, Dino dos Santos

Size 0 — 200

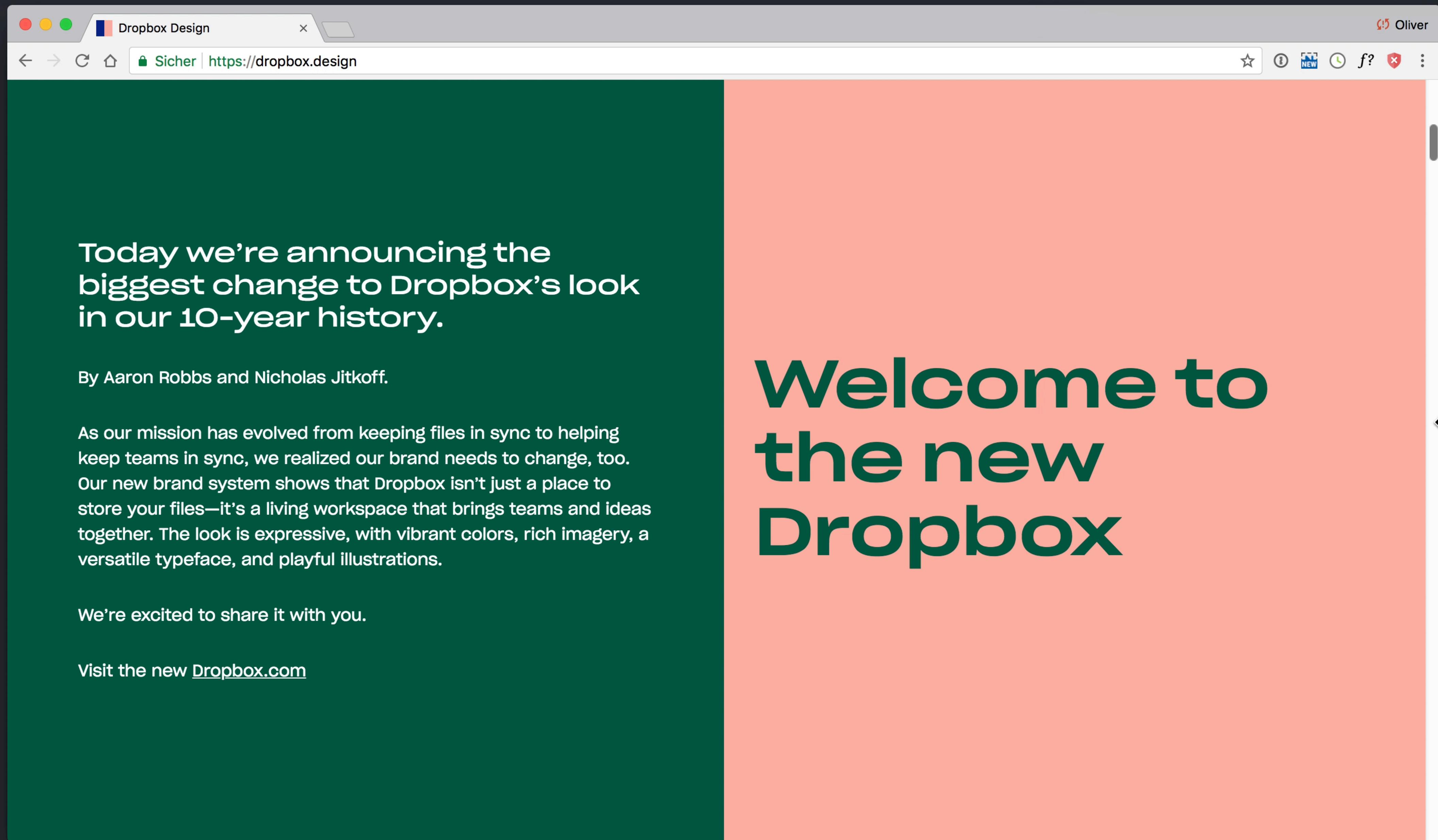
Weight 60 — 100 ▶

Serif 1 — 10 ▶

Buying Options

Quirky spud  
boys can jam  
after zapping  
five worthy  
Polysixes.

[dstype.com/variable-fonts](http://dstype.com/variable-fonts)

A screenshot of a web browser window titled "Dropbox Design". The address bar shows "Sicher | https://dropbox.design". The page content is split into two main sections. The left section has a dark green background and contains the following text:

**Today we're announcing the biggest change to Dropbox's look in our 10-year history.**

By Aaron Robbs and Nicholas Jitkoff.

As our mission has evolved from keeping files in sync to helping keep teams in sync, we realized our brand needs to change, too. Our new brand system shows that Dropbox isn't just a place to store your files—it's a living workspace that brings teams and ideas together. The look is expressive, with vibrant colors, rich imagery, a versatile typeface, and playful illustrations.

We're excited to share it with you.

Visit the new [Dropbox.com](#)

The right section has a light orange background and features large, bold, dark green text:

**Welcome to  
the new  
Dropbox**

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Dropbox Design". The address bar indicates a secure connection to "https://dropbox.design". The main content area is split into two vertical sections. The left section has a dark teal background and contains the following text:

**Today we're announcing the biggest change to Dropbox's look in our 10-year history.**

By Aaron Robbs and Nicholas Jitkoff.

As our mission has evolved from keeping files in sync to helping keep teams in sync, we realized our brand needs to change, too. Our new brand system shows that Dropbox isn't just a place to store your files—it's a living workspace that brings teams and ideas together. The look is expressive, with vibrant colors, rich imagery, a versatile typeface, and playful illustrations.

We're excited to share it with

# Welcome to the new Dropbox

Variable Fonts Demo | Microsoft Edge Oliver

← → C ⌘ ⌘ Sicher https://developer.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-edge/testdrive/demos/variable-fonts/ ☆ ⓘ NEW ⏲ f? ✎ :

Contents ▾

# WEB TYPOGRAPHY

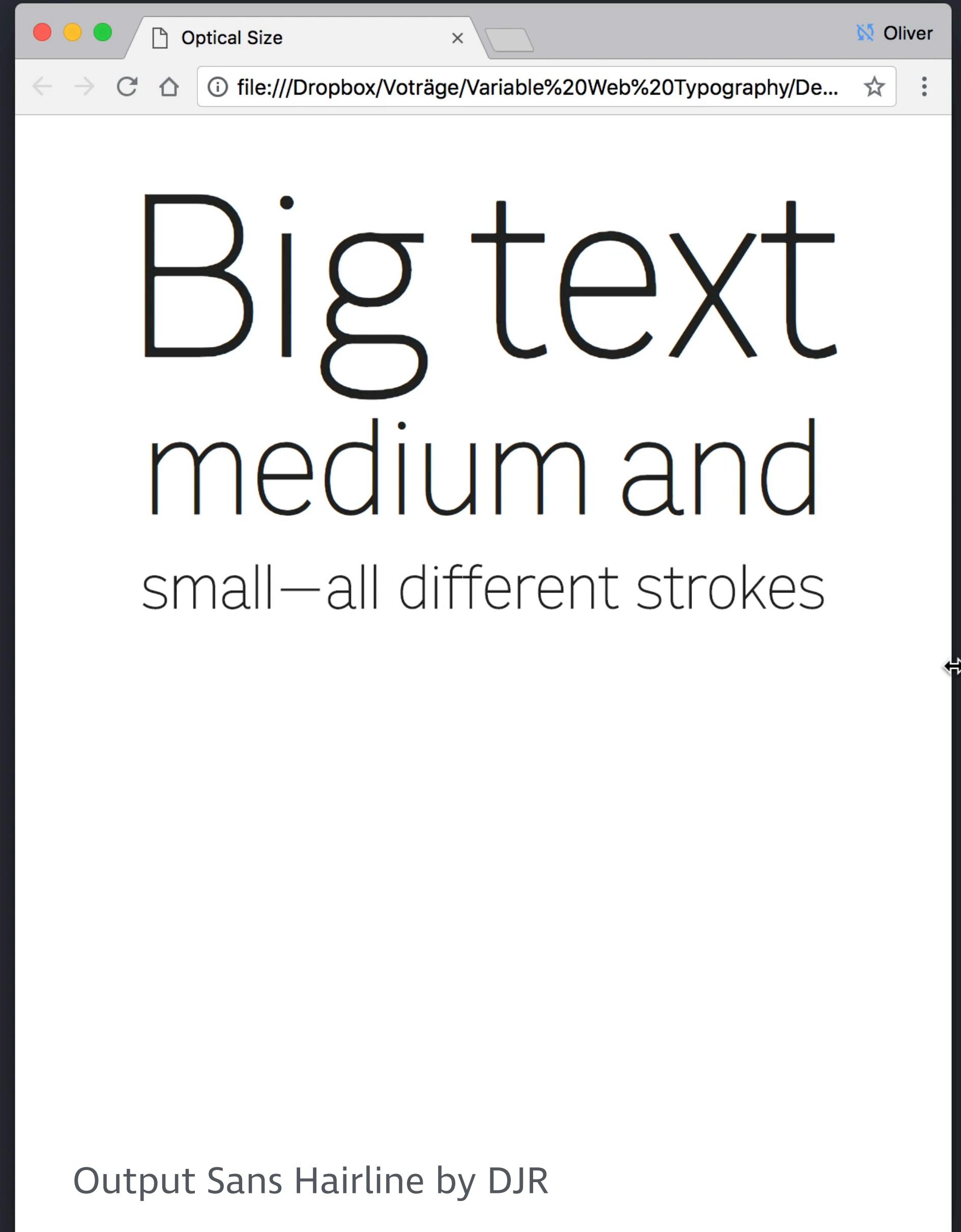
## A brief history

Rich typography has for years been the envy of many web designers, who long for the typographic variety, texture, and precision available in print media.

The first huge stride in typographic detail on the web was the introduction of web fonts, which allowed designers and developers to use many other fonts besides the handful generally available on user's operating systems.

Why were web fonts so exciting for designers? Jason Pamental put it eloquently, "typography is communication" but currently the web is "all system, no soul." Web fonts teased the opportunity of bringing that "soul" to the web. Unfortunately for web fonts, to provide this soul, it comes at an Pause animations



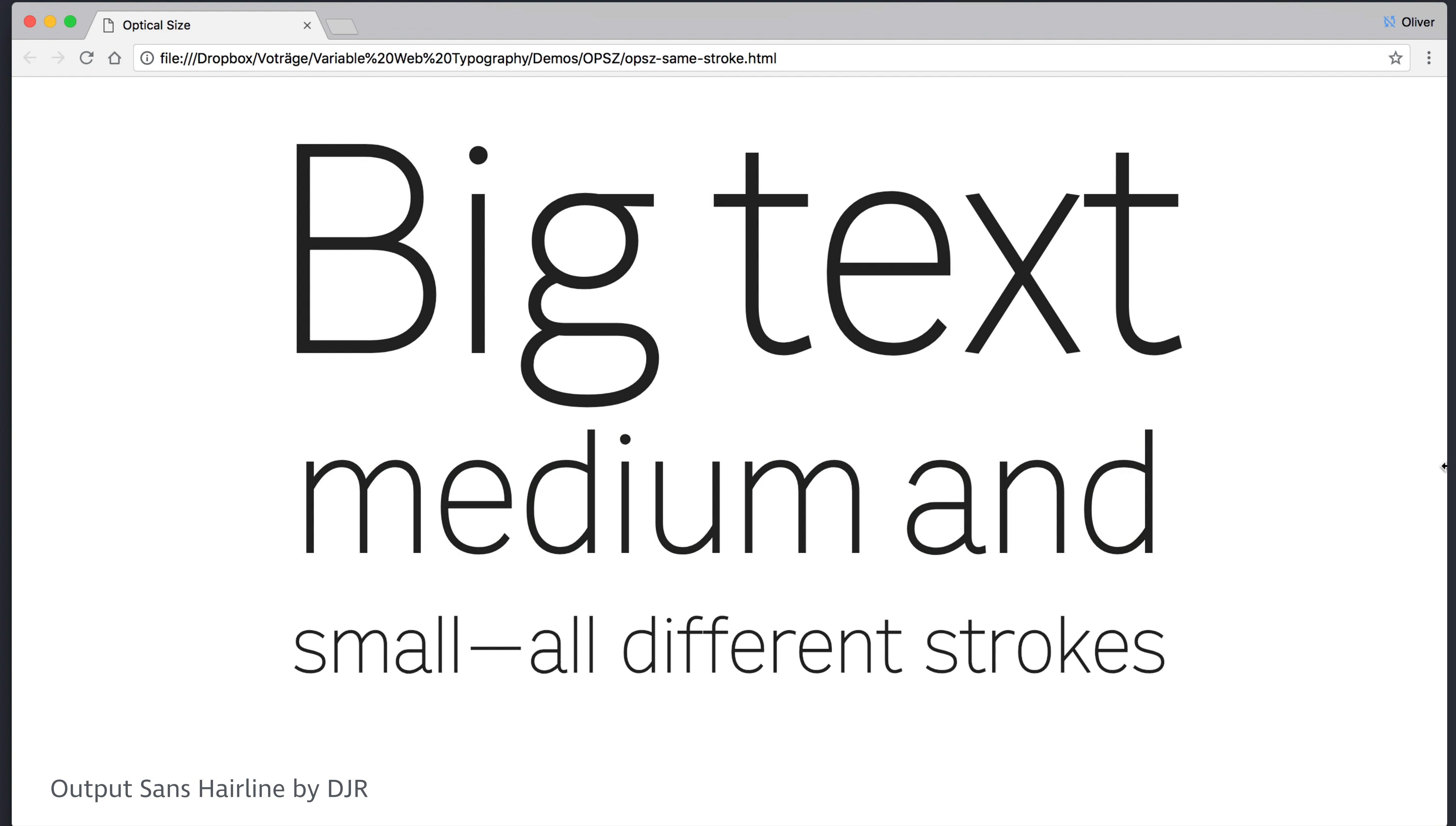


Chrome

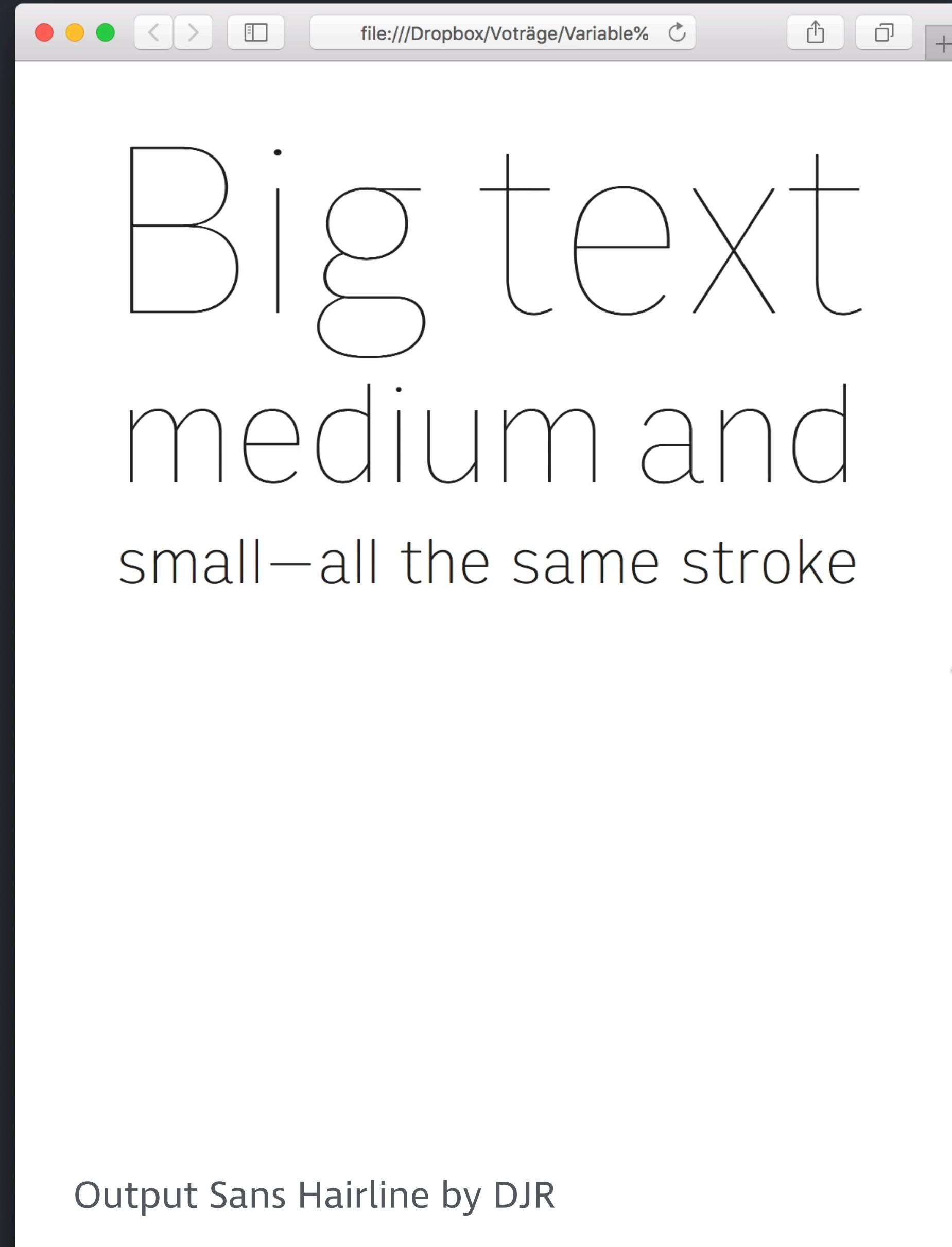
```
h1 { font-size: 20vmax; }
```

```
h2 { font-size: 11vmax; }
```

```
h3 { font-size: 5vmax; }
```

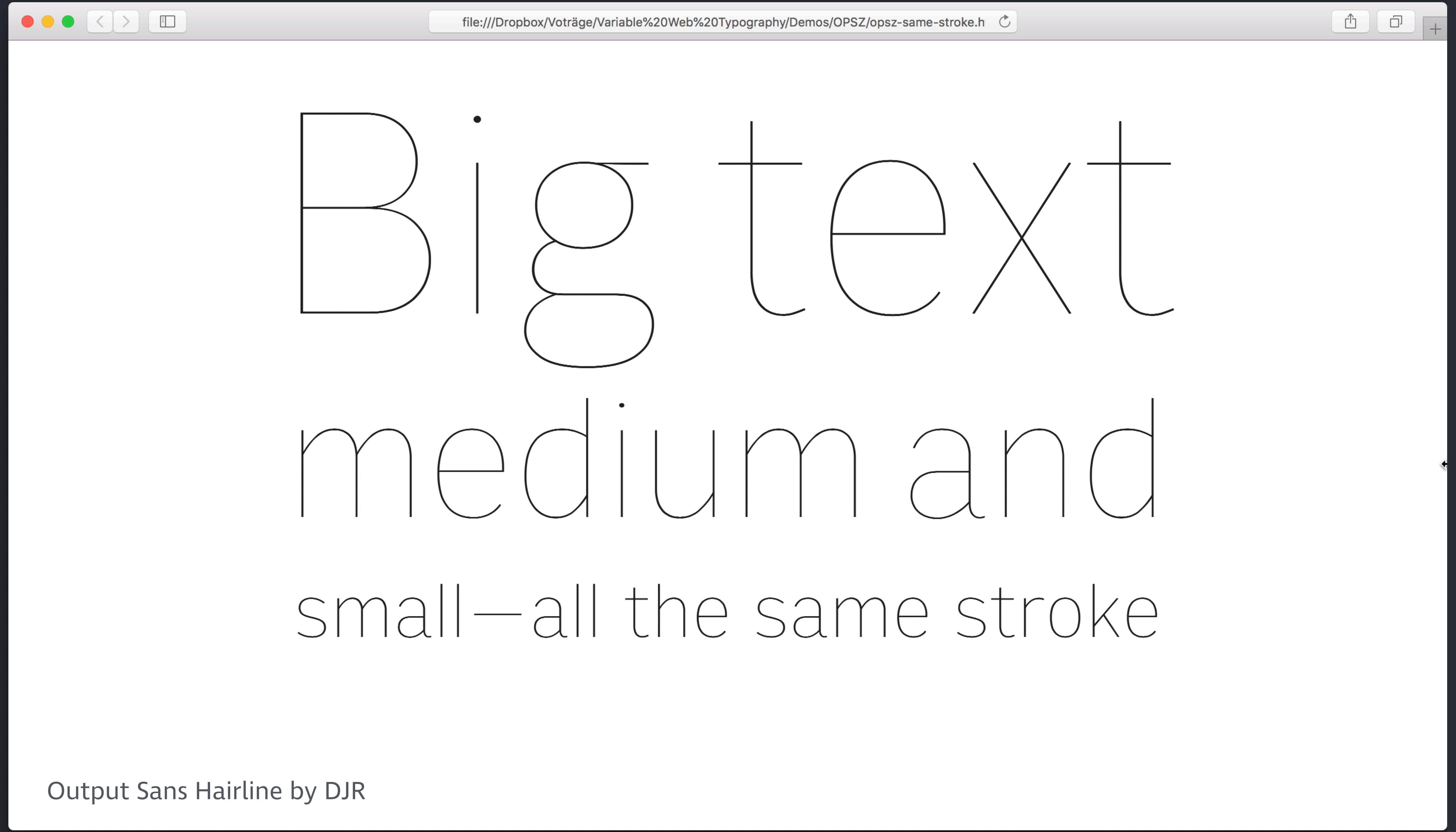


Output Sans Hairline by DJR



Safari

font-optical-sizing: auto;  
supported by default



Output Sans Hairline by DJR

Kontrapunkt

In close collaboration with Nippon Design Center of Japan, we designed a sound sensitive typeface for Chinese audio tech company Goertek. Based on surrounding sounds, it changes appearance by vibrating in different frequencies and wave types.

The dynamic typeface is created for use on digital signage and wayfinding throughout Goertek's groundbreaking R&D hub in Qingdao, China.

VARIABLE TYPEFACE

VOLUME: 0%

# GOERTEK

SOUND EFFECTS



Kontrapunkt

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VARIABLE TYPEFACE

VOLUME: 44%



SOUND EFFECTS

► MUSIC

► SOUND

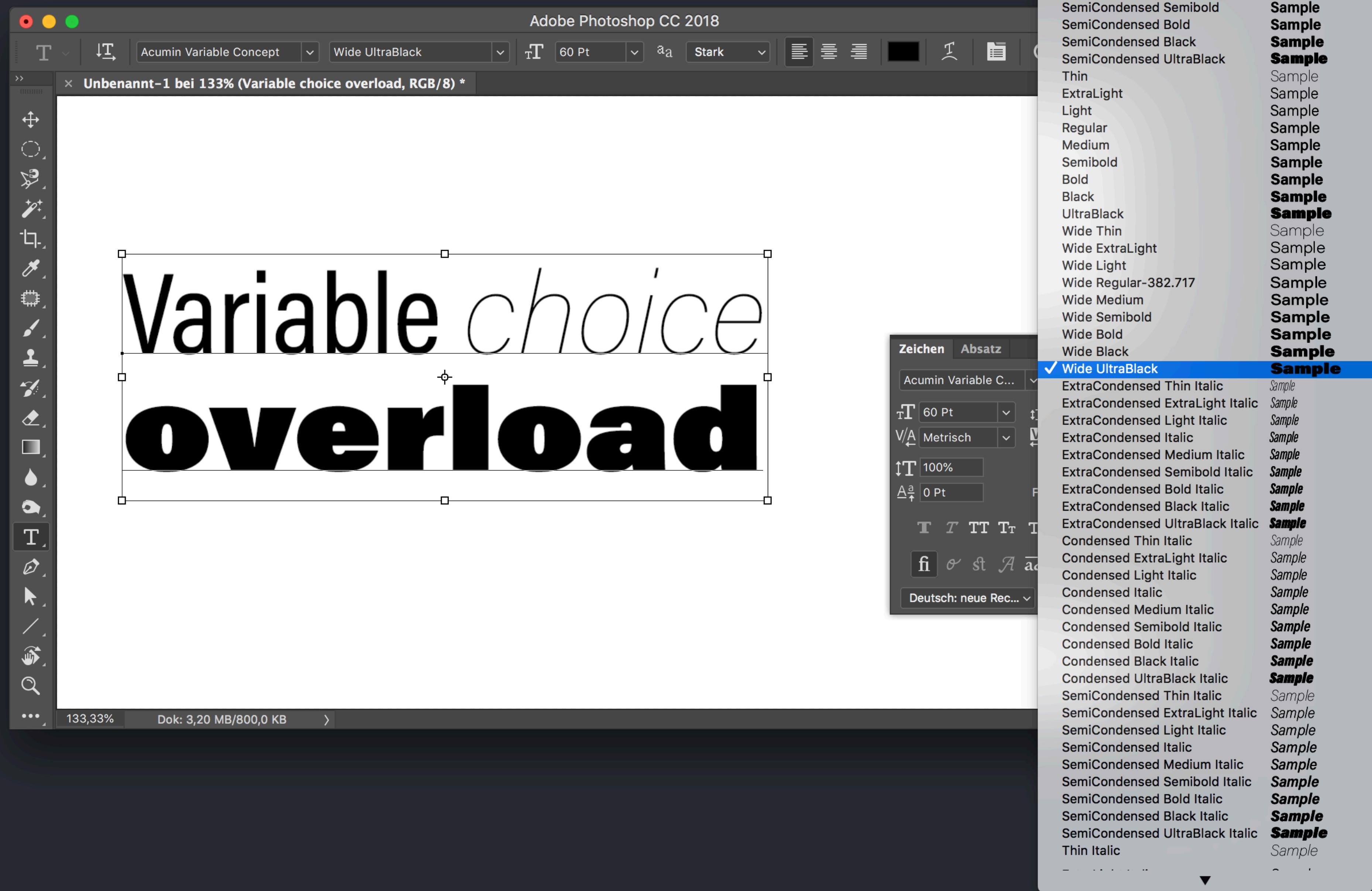
○ MICROPHONE



Hard times

A screenshot of a web browser displaying the **AXISPRAXIS** website at <https://www.axis-praxis.org/specimens/amstelvar>. The page features a large, bold title "Amstelvar" in a red font. Below it, a red box contains the text: "The OpenType Font Variations format includes a broad range of standard variables: weights from heavy to light, widths from wide to narrow, optical sizes from small to large, contrast, serif slope, and a few others which are currently on the drawing board. This demo variation font includes a Weight axis that lightens without change horizontally or vertically, to the white space, and darkens the same way, without decreasing the white space, just changing the black, and the widths of the glyphs." To the right of the text box is a sidebar titled "TEXTBOX" containing settings for "Font" (AmstelvarAlpha Default), "Font size", "Line-height", and "Alignment". Below this is a section titled "FONT VARIATIONS" with numerous sliders for "Weight", "Width", "Optical Size", and various "x" and "y" variations like "x opaque", "x transparent", and "y transparent". The sidebar also includes "CSS", "New textbox", and "Delete textbox" buttons.

**Overchoice**  
Many options  
make it harder  
and require  
much more  
knowledge



**90 named instances**  
for Acumin Variable in Photoshop

## Static Fonts



## Variable Font



—

**90 KB**

—

**110 KB**

## Static Fonts



**Regular**  
30 KB



**Italic**  
30 KB



**Bold**  
30 KB

## Variable Font



**Roman**  
110 KB



**Italic**  
110 KB



**90 KB**



**220 KB**

## Single font



€ 30–60

## Font family



€ 300–700

## Single font



€ 30–60

## Variable font



€ ?

## Font family



€ 300–700

README.md

## MutatorSans

MUTATOR  
**MUTATOR**  
MUTATOR  
**MUTATOR**

This project consists of [UFO](#) source font data for a small 2 dimensional [designspace](#).

- Weight and width axes, 2 intermediates.
- Intended for testing all sorts of [variable](#) and [mutator math](#) and making it not look entirely stupid.
- Contains components.
- Cubic outlines.
- Working minimal Variable Font, however without STAT table, or complete charerset
- I may or may not add to the charerset.

### Building in RoboFont

- [Install the Patch RoboFont extension](#)

[github.com/LettError/mutatorSans](https://github.com/LettError/mutatorSans)

Open Source

 glyphe

The screenshot shows a product page for the 'Foreday Superfamily' font on Fontstand. The main visual is a large, bold, black serif letter 'Aa'. Below it, smaller text reads 'Foreday Superfamily', '50 styles', and 'DSType'. To the right of the letter are several rows of sample text demonstrating the font's variety: 'Variable AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', 'Variable Italic AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', 'Serif Light AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', 'Serif Light Italic AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', 'Serif Book AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', 'Serif Book Italic AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', 'Serif Medium AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', 'Serif Medium Italic AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', 'Serif Bold AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp', and 'Serif Bold Italic AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPp'. On the left, there are buttons for 'Try' (green) and 'Rent' (blue), with pricing information: 'Free/ 1 hour Desktop' and 'Single Style €3/month Complete €57.50/month Desktop & Web (excl. VAT)'. A descriptive paragraph at the bottom explains the font's design philosophy and its adaptability to digital environments.

Hosting and  
Renting

TYPE+TECH®

SHOP

## Buy 12 styles Get variable fonts

Black[Foundry] strives to stay on top of the latest advancements in font technology.

To help you get acquainted with the groundbreaking new font format, we offer you the Vesterbro variable fonts for free when you buy the full family.

# Vesterbro



Drag slider to see how variable fonts work

FREE TRIAL

## Buying options

### CHOOSE LICENCE

- Desktop Up to 3 users
- Webfont
- App

### VESTERBRO FULL FAMILY

- 12 fonts + 2 Variables -20% 344€

### VESTERBRO ROMANS

- 6 weights + Variable -20% 172€

### VESTERBRO ITALICS

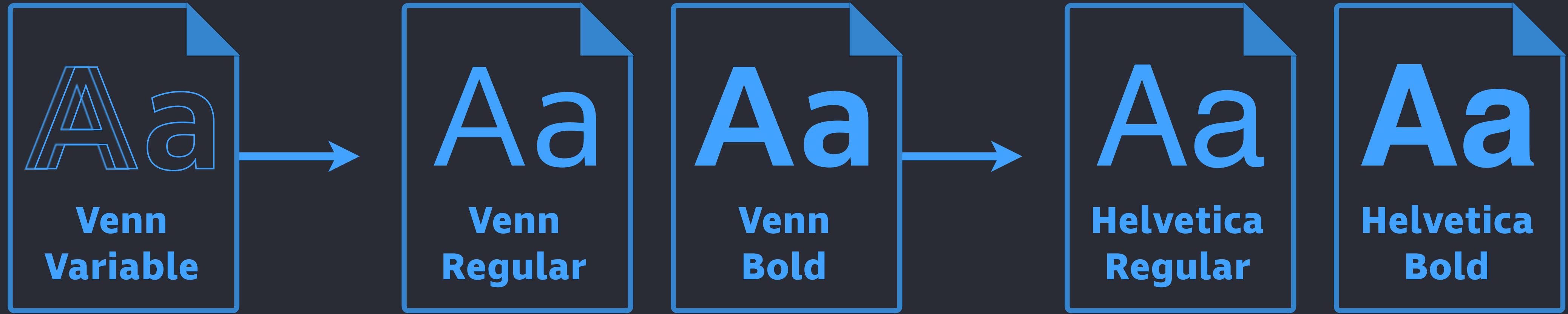
- 6 weights + Variable -20% 172€

### INDIVIDUAL WEIGHTS

- Vesterbro-Light 35€
- Vesterbro-LightItalic 35€
- Vesterbro-Regular 35€
- Vesterbro-Italic 35€

Retail  
Add on

GET STARTED!



**Variable  
Web Font  
First Choice**

**Static  
Web Fonts  
1st Fallback**

**Default  
System Fonts  
Fallback**

The Variable Font is displayed.  
Switch to fallback fonts

## A Variable Font implemented with fallback fonts

Resize the browser window and see how the typeface on this page changes. On narrow screens the text is condensed to fit more words into one line, on bigger screens the body text gets wider. The heading is always at least slightly condensed to make a more compact appearance. This is done by only using **one single font file**.

How does it work? This page is set in the beautiful typeface Venn by Dalton Maag. It's a variable font that can fluidly change its weight and width. If the browser does not support variable fonts, the **fallback web fonts** of Venn will be shown in Regular and Bold and there will be no condensed text. Toggle between the variable font and the fallback fonts to see the differences.

If you want to find out more about this read my article [Implementing a variable font with fallback web fonts](#). It will give you step by step instructions and explain all the details.

## Variable fonts with fallback web fonts

cdpn.io/XxZzYV

glyphe

The screenshot shows a browser window with the URL <https://codepen.io/glyphe/pens/XxZzYV>. The page title is "Using a variable font with fall...". It features a red button at the top left with the text "The **fallback fonts** are shown. Switch to variable font". Below this, a large heading reads "A Variable Font implemented with fallback fonts". A descriptive text follows, mentioning Venn by Dalton Maag as a variable font that changes weight and width, and how it falls back to Regular and Bold if not supported. A note at the bottom encourages reading an article on implementing variable fonts with fallbacks.

The **fallback fonts** are shown.  
Switch to variable font

## A Variable Font implemented with fallback fonts

Resize the browser window and see how the typeface on this page changes. On narrow screens the text is condensed to fit more words into one line, on bigger screens the body text gets wider. The heading is always at least slightly condensed to make a more compact appearance. This is done by only using **one single font file**.

How does it work? This page is set in the beautiful typeface Venn by Dalton Maag. It's a variable font that can fluidly change its weight and width. If the browser does not support variable fonts, the **fallback web fonts** of Venn will be shown in Regular and Bold and there will be no condensed text. Toggle between the variable font and the fallback fonts to see the differences.

If you want to find out more about this read my article [Implementing a variable font with fallback web fonts](#). It will give you step by step instructions and explain all the details.

cdpn.io/XxZzYV

Variable fonts  
with fallback  
web fonts



**Not supporting browsers will ignore this**

```
h1 {  
  font-size: 2.5rem;  
  font-variation-settings: "wdth" 75;  
}
```



```
h1 {  
  font-size: 2.5rem;  
  font-variation-settings: "wdth" 75;  
}
```

```
@supports (font-variation-settings: normal) {  
  h1 {  
    font-size: 4rem; ← Only when variable fonts work  
  }  
}
```

The screenshot shows a web page titled "Variable Web Typography - Den" with the URL <https://zeichenschatz.net/demos/vf/variable-web-typo/>. The page features a large, bold, purple "variable" text. Below it, the text "IT'S TIME FOR variable web TYPOGRAPHY" is displayed. A section below reads "BY OLIVER SCHÖNDORFER". On the right, there is an orange button labeled "Deactivate variable fonts". The bottom half of the image shows the Firefox DevTools Inspect Element interface. The element being inspected is a  with the class "title\_variable-web\_variable" and the style attribute "font-variation-settings: 'wght' 645, 'slnt' 8;". The DevTools panel shows the "Schrifarten" (Font) tab, which displays the font family "Output Sans VF" and its regular weight "Output Sans Regular". It also shows the "Instanz" (Instance) panel with sliders for "Size" (128 px), "Line height" (0,9), "Weight" (660), and "Slant" (8). The "Family" panel lists "Output Sans VF" and "Output Sans Regular" along with a link to the font's URL: <https://zeichenschatz.net/demos/vf/font...>.

Firefox 63  
DevTools



# Summing up

- **One font file** with many possible styles
- **Fine graded influence** for better typography – when you know what you're doing
- **Improvements by default** with optical-sizing
- **Performance gain** under certain conditions
- **Use web fonts** as first fallback option

# Resources

- **How to start with variable fonts on the web** by me: [bit.ly/2NgHQId](https://bit.ly/2NgHQId)
- **Use a variable font with fallback web fonts** by me: [bit.ly/2Dk22qY](https://bit.ly/2Dk22qY)
- **For new releases** v-fonts.com & [twitter.com/variablefonts](https://twitter.com/variablefonts)
- **Testing variable fonts** axis-praxis.org & [play.typedetail.com](https://play.typedetail.com)
- **List of available variable Fonts** by Indra Kupferschmid: [bit.ly/2MC8QV9](https://bit.ly/2MC8QV9)
- **Getting started with variable fonts** by Richard Rutter: [bit.ly/2BwVViT](https://bit.ly/2BwVViT)
- **Use variable fonts in the real world** by Richard Rutter: [bit.ly/2FLvtRc](https://bit.ly/2FLvtRc)
- **TYPO Labs 2018** various talks: [typotalks.com/labs](https://typotalks.com/labs)

IT'S TIME FOR  
**variable web**  
TYPOGRAPHY

BY OLIVER SCHÖNDORFER

Variable fonts will shape the future of web typography as they offer plenty of possibilities for fine graded control over the display of type on screens. And that all at a relatively low file size. Time to say goodbye to endless debates about the number of font files you have

This page uses the typeface [Output Sans Variable](#) by David Jonathan Ross. It's a variable font that can be adjusted on two axes to change its *weight* and its *obliqueness*. So I only have to load **one single font file** of 57 KB to create the 18 different styles you can see on this site. It opens up new possibilities for designing with text on the web with a great number of typographic expressions for an incredibly file. So clearly, variable fonts are the new hot thing for every type nerd

[Deactivate variable fonts](#)

A screenshot of a web browser window displaying a blog post. The title 'It's time for variable web typography' is prominently featured in a large, dark blue serif font. Below the title, the author is listed as 'BY OLIVER SCHÖNDORFER'. The main text discusses the benefits of variable fonts, mentioning their ability to shape the future of web typography due to fine graded control over display on screens, all while maintaining a low file size. It also notes the creation of 18 different styles from a single 57 KB font file. A red button at the bottom right encourages users to 'Activate variable fonts'. The browser interface includes standard controls like back, forward, and search, along with a lock icon and the URL 'zeichenschatz.net'.

**It's time for variable web typography**

BY OLIVER SCHÖNDORFER

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Activate variable fonts

A quick introduction to variable fonts

18 font styles out of one font file at 57 KB only

One simple explanation I picked up during my research is, that variable fonts are **one font file that behaves like many**. Traditionally for every single font weight or style, e.g. *italic*, **bold** or *light expanded* you need to load a corresponding font file. With one OpenType variable font file, you can generate multiple individual font styles and that at a very granular level.

↑ Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa  
Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa  
Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa

Deactivate variable fonts

glyph

zeichenschatz.net

# 18 font styles out of one font file at 57 KB only

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font axis

Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa

Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa

Aa Aa Aa Aa Aa

Activate variable fonts

# Be more variable

**Oliver Schöndorfer** [zeichenschatz.net](http://zeichenschatz.net)



glyphe



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