

# Monotype

PRESS RELEASE, 06 December 2016

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## Movable Type – Monotype Sets Up in Shoreditch

New East London HQ tells the company's story through design

**Monotype**, a leader in empowering expression and engagement through type, technology and expertise, has just opened the doors of a brand new UK headquarters in London's centre of tech and creativity: **Shoreditch**.



*Photography by Edward Sumner*

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After months of meticulous interiors work by **Ben Adams Architects (BAA)**, with the collaboration of **SEA Design**, the new **Monotype** building is finished, and it's an architectural love-letter to the art of typography.

Built to accommodate **Monotype**'s growing team, to offer scope for future expansion, and to be adaptable enough to facilitate the collaborative culture of the company, the new office design is informed by Monotype's history at the forefront of global type design and its vision for the future of design, branding and technology. As creative director **James Fooks-Bale** puts it: "The glyph is always the hero."

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"Everything we do here attempts to tell a part of our story. Balancing the past 100 years of type with where it's going over the coming years informed our approach to the environment design. We let the type stand in the foreground, celebrating its details, its silhouette, its ink trap, its subtlety. We also tried to hide details in places for the curious. Wherever possible, our other brand ingredients have been kept to a minimum, expressing the simplicity of type and material – such as the wooden corridor laser-etched with several hundred Ms."

- James Fooks-Bale, Creative Director, Monotype

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*Photography by Edward Sumner*

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The newly built 330sqm space is traversed with a tunnel of birch plywood that seems to have been carved through a single block of wood. Its walls, floor and ceiling are laser-etched with 1,500 of Monotype's 'M' monogram, set in 750 typefaces from the company's archive that have made their mark on the world. One of its most recent – the all-language typeface **Noto**, created for **Google** – is honoured with two glass walls edging the central space that look down into the building's atrium, adorned with 986 glyphs from the 100 Noto scripts, ranging from modern Arabic to ancient Egyptian hieroglyphs. Thanks to the glass above the atrium, sunlight is streamed down into the central area creating a mesmerising play of light and shade onto the space below.

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*Photography by Edward Sumner*

"Monotype needed an agile and inspiring workplace for now, and for its future needs. Our scheme provides designed-in scope for expansion and picks up inspiring cues from their amazing archive of typefaces."

- **Ben Adams**, Director of Ben Adams Architects



*Photography by Edward Sumner*

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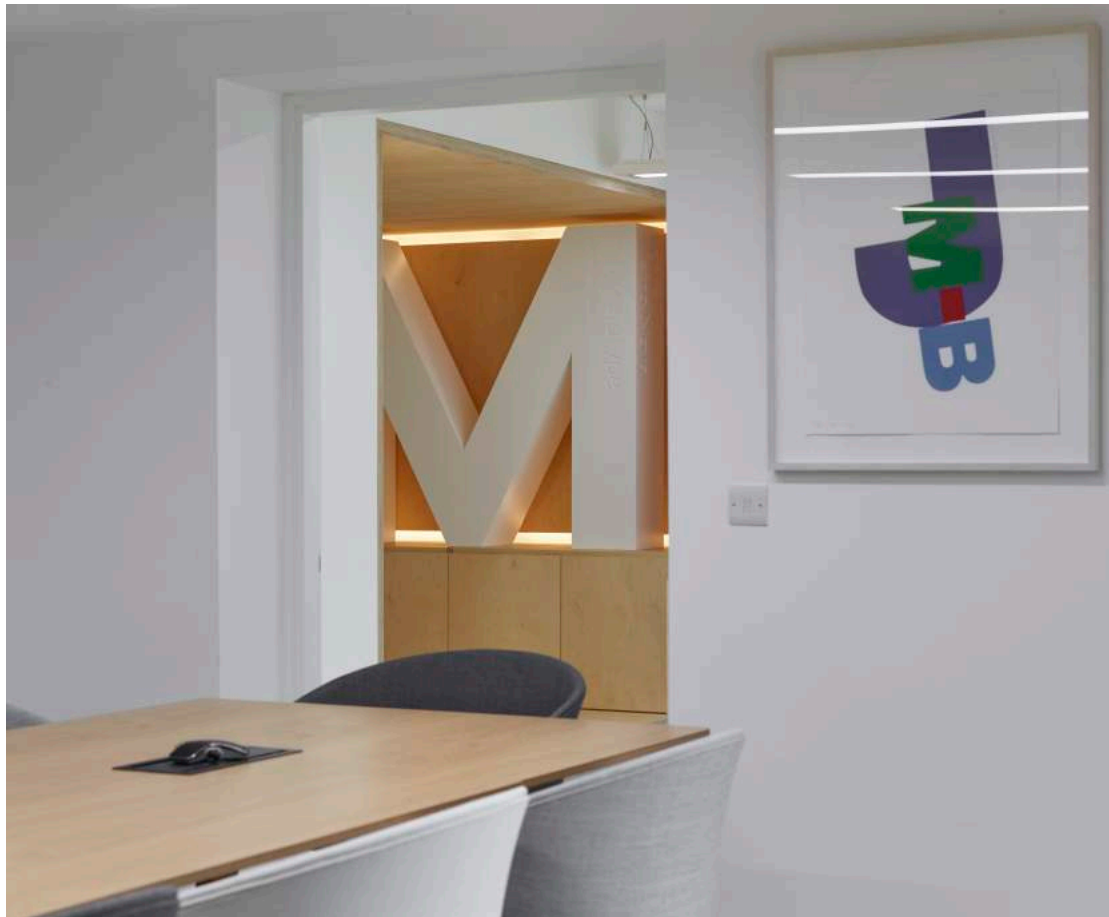
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Around the office, elements that appear innocuous at first glance are often much more than they seem – small, subtle details that the untrained eye might miss, but which reward those who look again with charming references to the typographic world. Laser-cut directly into the doors, the handles of storage units are shaped to represent a single bracket glyph. These too are set in varying typefaces, including **Laurentian™**, **Soho™**, **Quire Sans™** and **Linotype Gianotten™**.

The glass walls of meeting rooms and phone booths are flecked with similar type treats, including lines of 474 full stops, each set in a different font, and calls to the historic greats of type design are featured in the names of each meeting room: Warde, Morison, Dreyfus, Tracy and Lanston.

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*Photography by Edward Sumner*

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In keeping with this 'let the type do the taking' approach, the interior palette is a sleek neutral blend of pale timber furniture from **Wellworking**, soothing greys and contemporary pendant lighting. One feature wall includes shelving cut specifically to fit Monotype archive boxes.

To maximise the possibilities for collaborative working and team expansion, the space is designed to be as versatile and adaptable as possible. A dynamic wall of bespoke plywood joinery divides the main

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space into distinct zones for collaboration, display and quiet, focused solo work, while a simple change in layout can introduce 32 new workstations, as well as additional meeting space. “We needed a flexible working environment,” says Fooks-Bale, “A scalable space to allow for a growth in head-count and, more importantly, a space for different working environments: open-plan in places, but with defined quiet space and areas to spread out and collaborate.”

The Monotype team moved into their new headquarters in October, returning the company’s UK arm to the heartland of London’s creative community and putting them within easy reach of the hundreds of design studios, commercial clients, agencies and institutions they work with.

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## Notes for Editors

### About Monotype

Monotype is a leader in empowering expression and engagement through a combination of type, technology and expertise. Headquartered in Woburn, Massachusetts, Monotype provides customers worldwide with typeface solutions for a broad range of creative applications and consumer devices. The company’s libraries and e-commerce sites are home to many of the most widely used typefaces – including the Helvetica®, Frutiger® and Univers® families – as well as the next generation of type designs.

Follow Monotype on Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

[monotype.com](http://monotype.com)

### About Ben Adams Architects

Established in 2010 Ben Adams Architects has developed a reputation for elegant, contextual architecture balancing function with ingenuity, and rationale with delight.

The practice is particularly skilled in working with complex sites and existing hybrid buildings. By identifying strengths and weaknesses hidden by redundant space or earlier interventions, BAA helps unlock potential through design. Social spaces, rationalised circulation and urban connectivity all add experiential and commercial value.

Ben Adams Architects' built portfolio, across a range of sectors includes offices, cultural projects, residential homes and buildings. The practice designed the strikingly modern design showroom on Northampton Road in the Clerkenwell conservation area. New works include projects for Derwent London, London Square, Great Portland Estates and Angelo Gordon along with a new home for the Jewish Museum in Camden and Albert House, an experimental co-working space for The Office Group in the heart of Tech City.

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The practice's work is underpinned by extensive research and development. From the properties and appropriateness of materials to evolving urban typologies, research roots the practice in a wider context, and helps to inform its criteria for successful architecture.

@BenAdamsArch  
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Laurentian is a trademark of Monotype Imaging Inc. and may be registered in certain jurisdictions. Soho is a trademark of Monotype Imaging Inc. registered in the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office and may be registered in certain other jurisdictions. Quire Sans is a trademark of Monotype Imaging Inc. and may be registered in certain other jurisdictions. Linotype Gianotten is a trademark of Monotype GmbH and may be registered in certain jurisdictions.

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