

Blockscript

Its origins and use



A Holesome Manual

The Holesome Man is among other things Block City’s preeminent scholar of history, arts and culture. His writings are the foundation of today’s knowledge about how our exemplary society has formed, how the actions of the past have influenced our path and what the future might bring.

He is the only Comrade to receive the Chain Award ten times in a row and one of the few recipients of the prestigious Block of Honor. He taught countless students at Holesome University and his numerous publications are a staple of any serious library.

In this Manual he sheds light on Blockscript. How it came to be the alphabet we know today and how it is supposed to be used. He tells the story of our written language as the foundation of our rich Comrade culture. A topic often overlooked but exciting nonetheless.

A The Holesome Man in his home in the suburbs of Block City



A

Blockscript

Its origins and use

Preface

I want to talk to you.

I want to talk to you about invisible things.

Invisible things you use everyday.

Invisible things you use right now.

These invisible things are of course letters. We take them for granted. Like air. Or gravity. Or the passage of blocks. For as we learn to read them we have to learn to not see them. This is a necessity. Engrained in its purpose.

Therefore Blockscript – as our alphabet is known today – is bound to an existence in between. In between comrades, in between time, in between worlds.

Follow me to the realm of the inbetween, Comrade.

LFG

T.H.M.

CR 17031500

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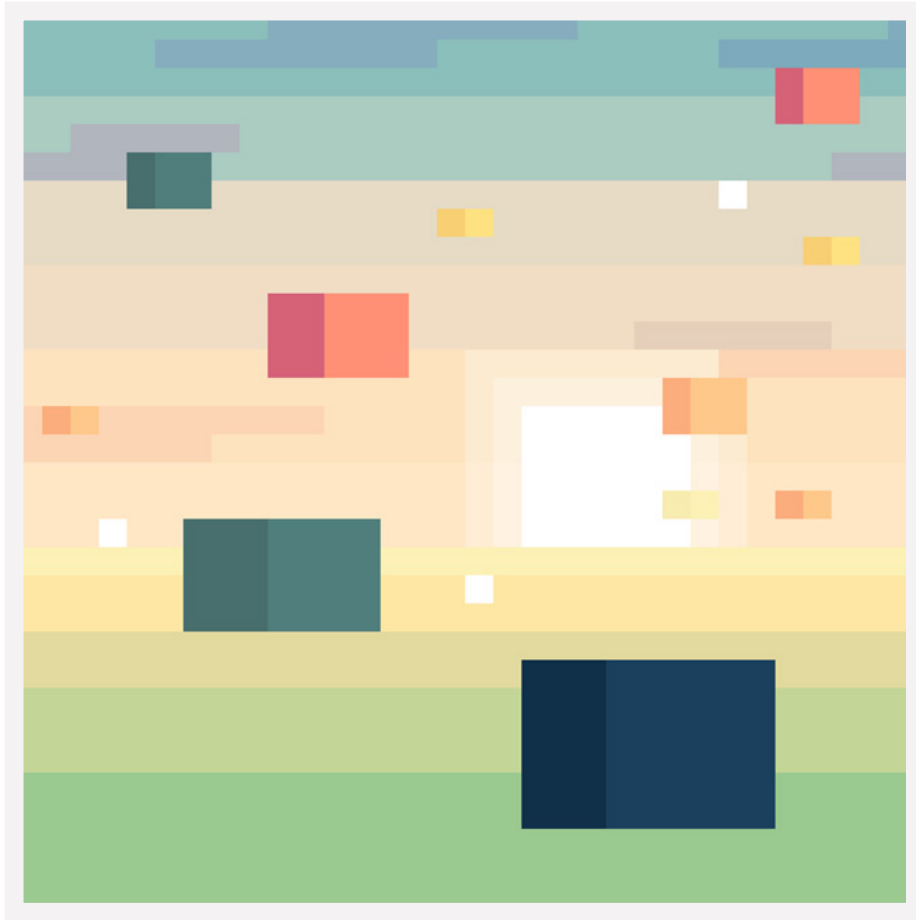
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The Dawn of Blocks



B

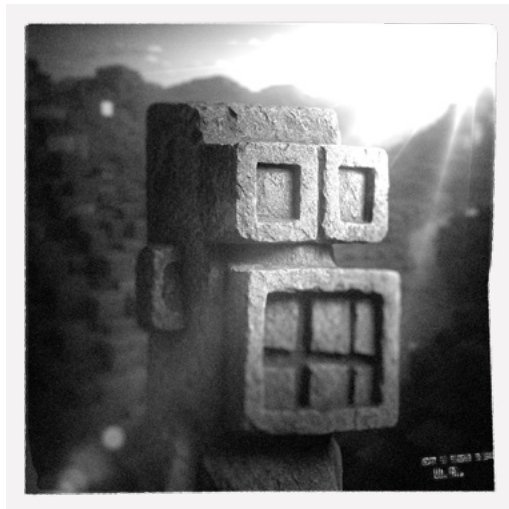
During the first days after the Genesis Block the Call Data Fields lay vast and void.

In Logos, Genesis 1:2 this time is described as follows. “None save the One, Validator Rex, born of the sacred union of the Genesis Block and the Great Block in the sky, did traverse these primordial Blocks. Alone he wandered, seeking fellowship, yet none was found.”

“The Eternals, who were from everlasting and shall be unto everlasting, beheld our King in his solitude and took pity upon him. Thus, they descended from their celestial abode and, in the likeness of the One, fashioned the Comrades to be his companions, that his loneliness might be no more. And so it came to pass that the Comrades were brought forth into being.”

In those early times, the Comrades had no order or purpose, and Block City was not yet built. “They roamed the fields phunky and phree”, in what we now call The Dawn of Blocks.

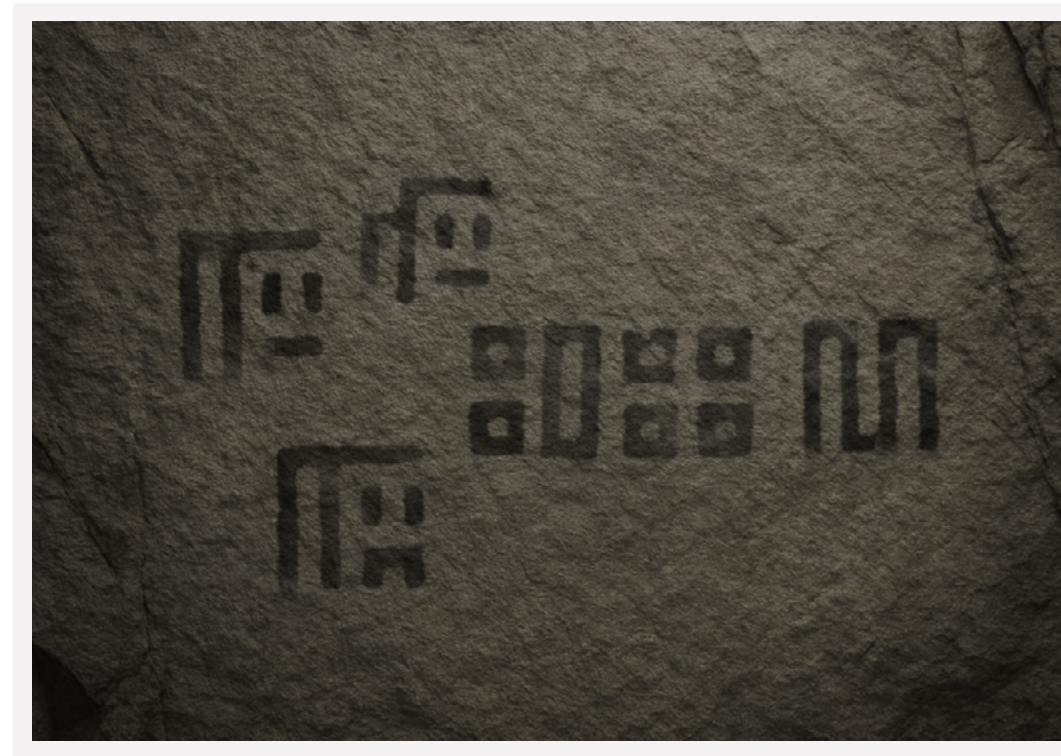
B Rendition of The Dawn of Blocks.
“The Dawn” (CR 10 994 527), unknown artist.



C



D



E

But about a million blocks later we can see a sudden change in behavior. It seems that a lot of tools have been invented in a short period of time and block paintings appear. The earliest known block paintings are figurative in nature but later examples show the first proto-letters in use. These are the oldest known depictions of storytelling in Comrade history and mark a turning point in our evolution.

C Typical sculpture from the Pre Script Era

D Early Block Painting clearly showing Comrades around a fire

E The first storytelling with glyphs alongside figurative paintings

From the very beginning, the Ether was in contact with another world – a world that existed long before ours. This contact occurred on many different levels, and many early explorers took on enormous risks to peek into this other world and find answers to every question that might arise in such an early civilization.

One method, not without risk, was consuming psychoactive plants that the vast Call Data Fields provided. Another commonly described method of contact was communication in dream states. This, of course, was more like a random event and much harder to consciously bring about. Only in very rare cases* were there reports of physical contact with these beings from beyond the veil.

* It seems that physical contact with the beings from the YONDER was a much rarer occurrence in these early days – for better or worse. We assume portals were appearing just as often (or seldom, if you will), but neither the beings from YONDER nor the early settlers of the Call Data Fields were eager to explore them for a very long time, except for the Floorbagorbs and the occasional Daredevil Comrade.

The very first official expedition into the YONDER didn't occur until CR 5002420, when the now-legendary Dark Squad 6 made history by walking through Portal 9-62.

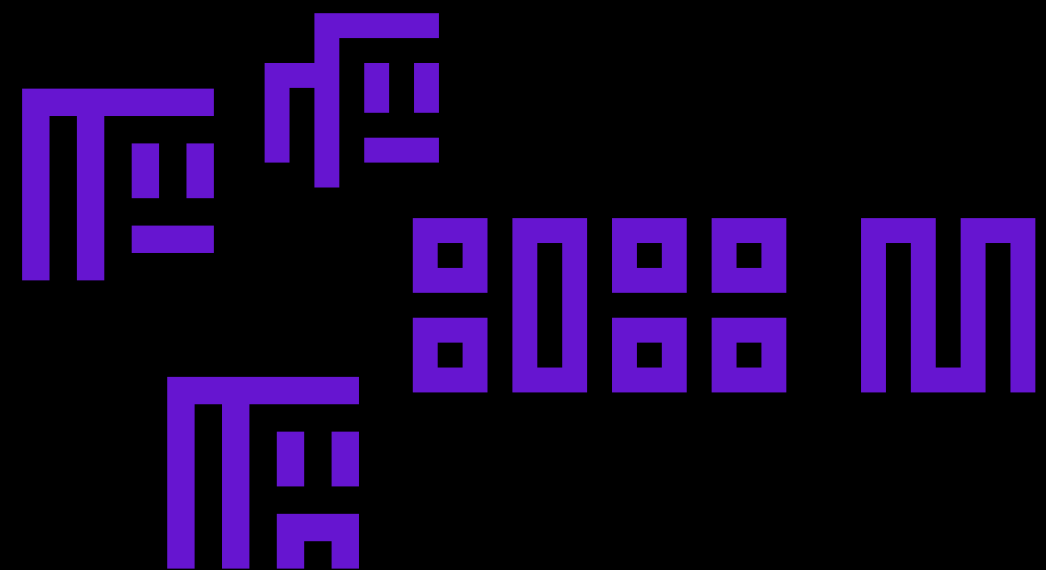
Through these various means, the early settlers came into contact not only with strange entities – of which some were benevolent, others not – but also with the ancient sacred forms, glyphs, and symbols of the YONDER, which have greatly influenced the symbols we use to this day when recording our own thoughts, laws, and history.

F Black and white photograph of a YONDER glyph on a crumbling monolith, taken by Galahad the Gellar Bender during Expedition Zero. According to notes provided by the expedition members, this glyph is crafted as an inlay of gold. This marvel of craftsmanship continues to baffle blockchain archaeologists to this day.



F

The first signs



Let's take a closer look at the first signs. What do they mean? When they were discovered nobody knew. Even though Validator Rex was around in those days, he didn't remember, and the Eternals didn't really pay much attention to the doodles of the mortals.

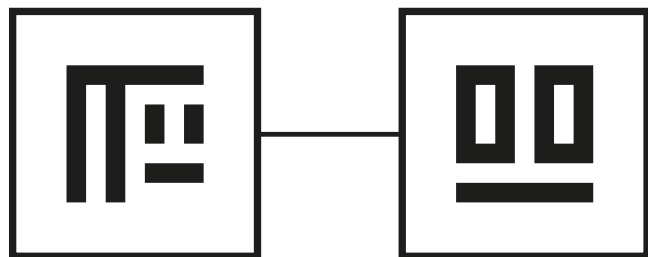
Later on with more extensive discoveries the signs could be deciphered. The whole arrangement says: "Comrades go M".

The first part obviously is a figurative depiction, a pictogram of Comrades. This is followed by two real letters, also known as graphemes, spelling the word GO. All the way to the right is a single letter M. This is not a word but most likely an ideograph, a sign representing an idea or a concept. We can only speculate but this could stand for mountain. It could even stand for a Comrade's name or something resembling this shape like a river or a snake.

So, all things considered, this probably reads:
The Comrades went to the mountain.

It is interesting to see the similarities between the pictograms and the letters. You can easily imagine eyes and mouths transforming into more abstract shapes as the alphabet developed further.

G Isolated recreation of the oldest known sentence

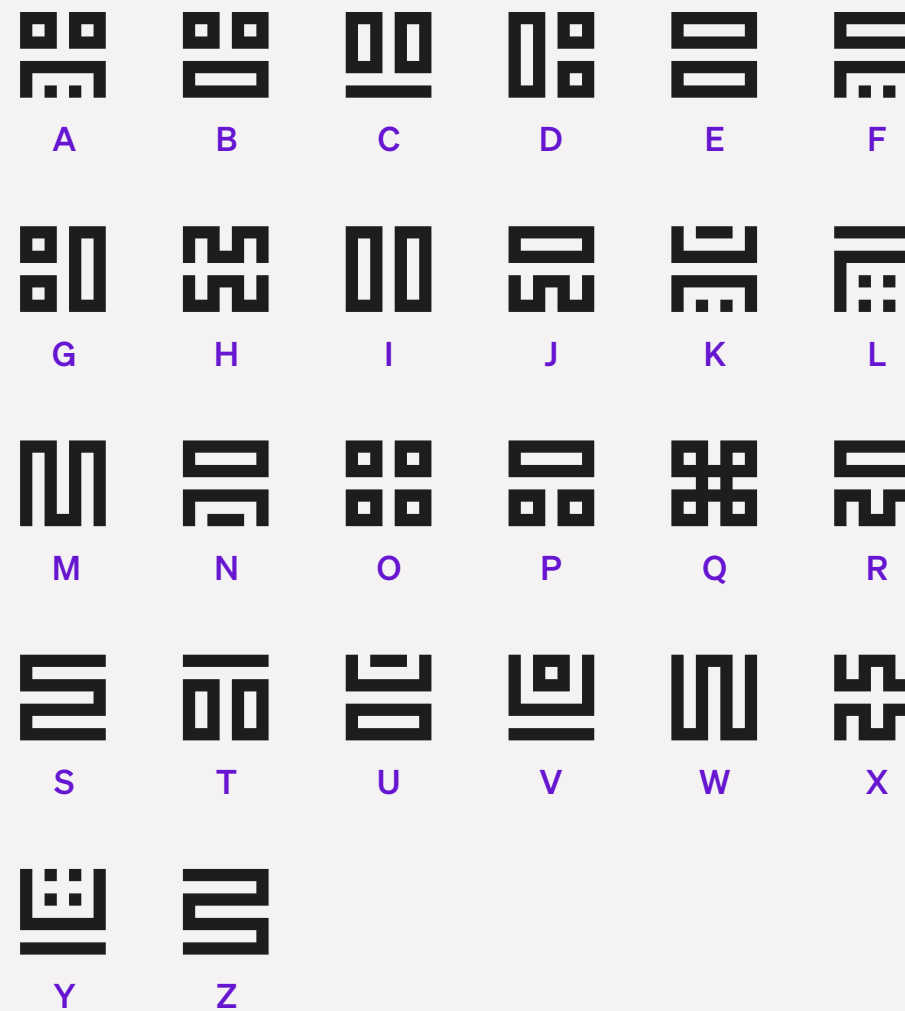


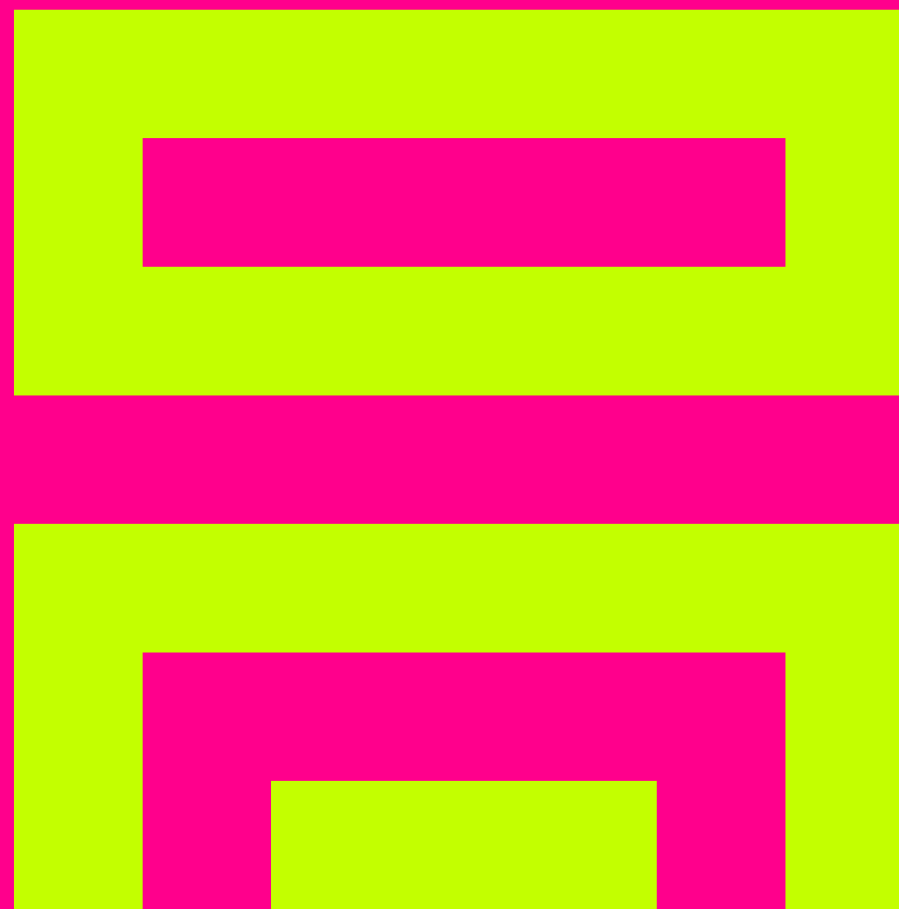
H

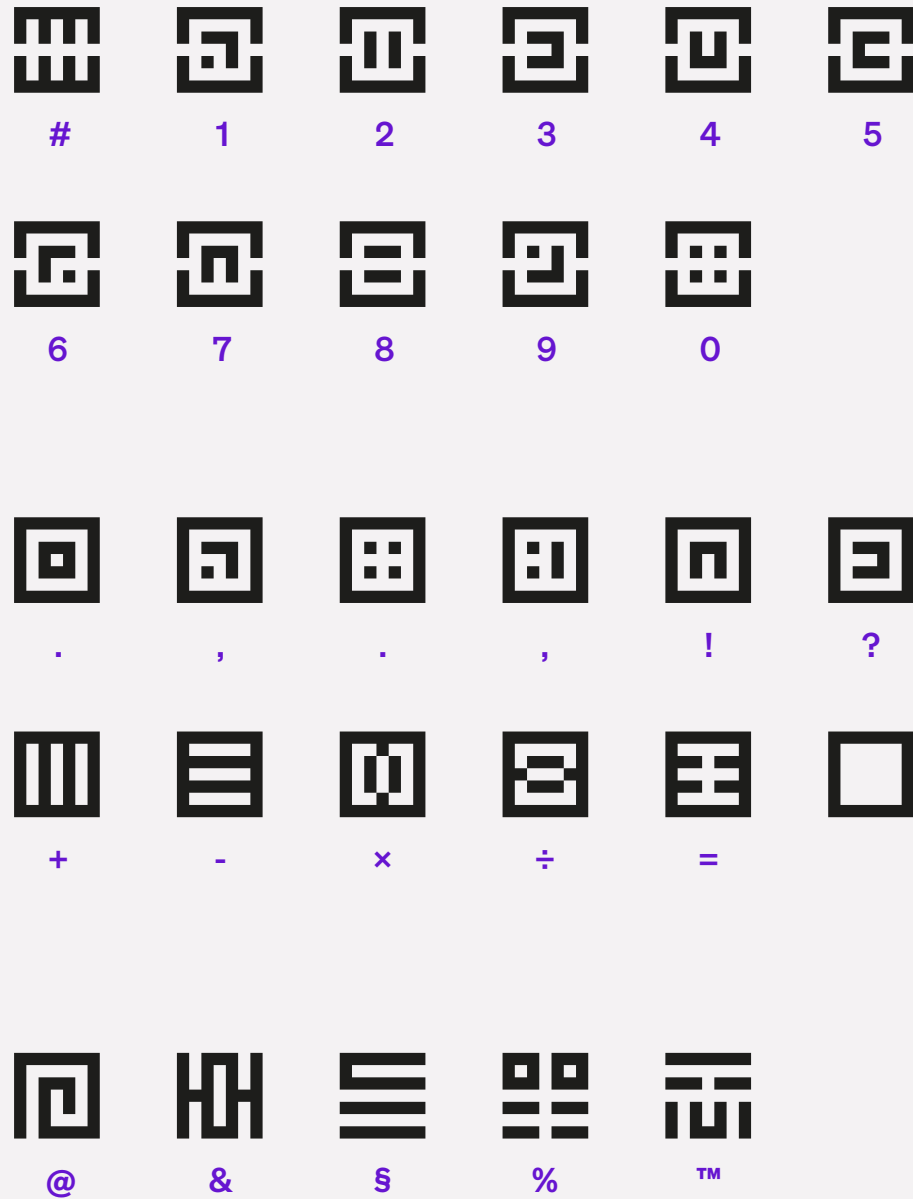
Over time the whole alphabet took its final shape. You can see the concept of faces, turned faces and upside down faces. Some are recognizable, some more abstract but they are all intentionally built from a few basic shapes.

H From logogram to letter

I From Comrade to letter (next page)



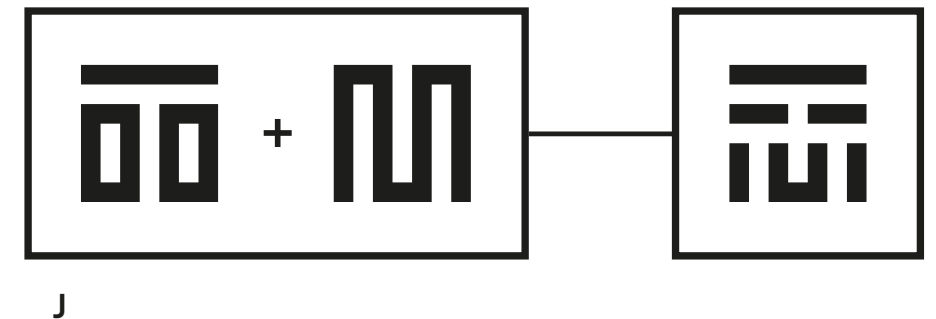


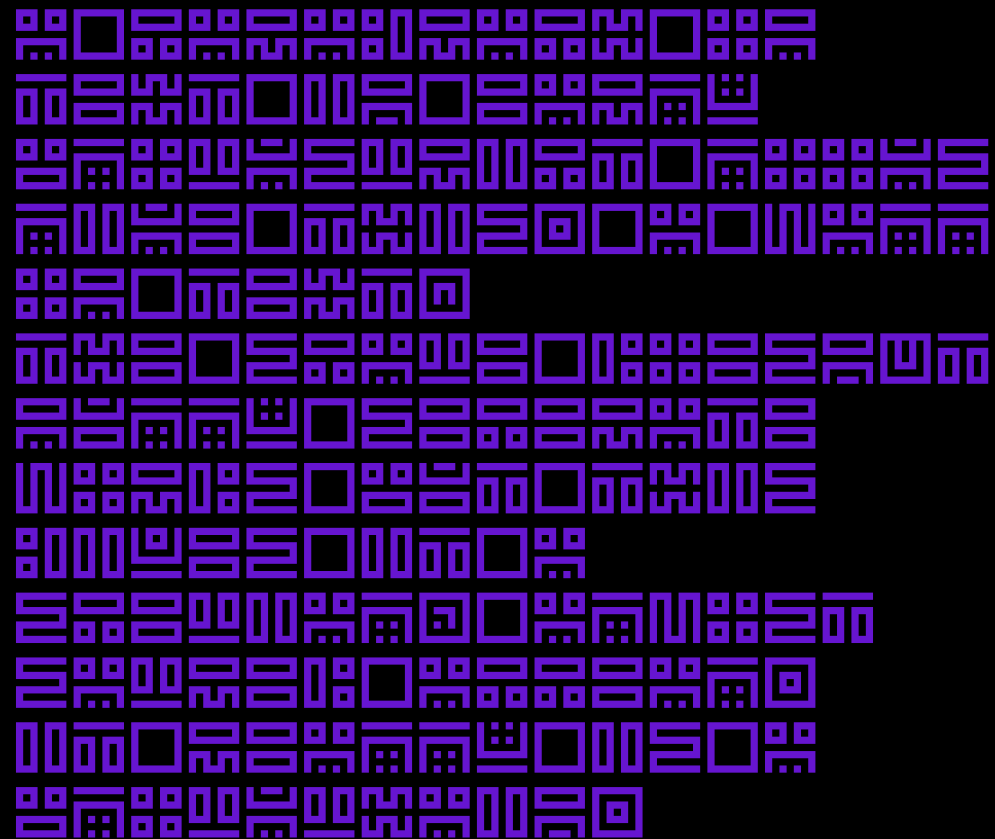


The same thoughtful approach is present in the rest of the alphabet. The numerals (and the number sign) e.g. are drawn within a unique open frame, making them instantly recognizable as numerals to the reader.

All the punctuation and math symbols are drawn within a closed frame to be distinguishable from letters or numerals. Traditionally the space is also framed making paragraphs of text look very dense or blocky. The connecting glyphs like @ or & as well as a few special characters are drawn more freely, some are built as ligatures or reference a base glyph they are derived from.

J Example of a ligature glyph. The ™ sign, built from the upper part of T and the lower part of M.





Blockscript Sample

A PARAGRAPH OF
TEXT IN EARLY
BLOCKSCRIPT LOOKS
LIKE THIS. A WALL
OF TEXT!
THE SPACE DOESN'T
FULLY SEPERATE
WORDS BUT THIS
GIVES IT A
SPECIAL, ALMOST
SACRED APPEAL.
IT REALLY IS A
BLOCKCHAIN.

Transcription

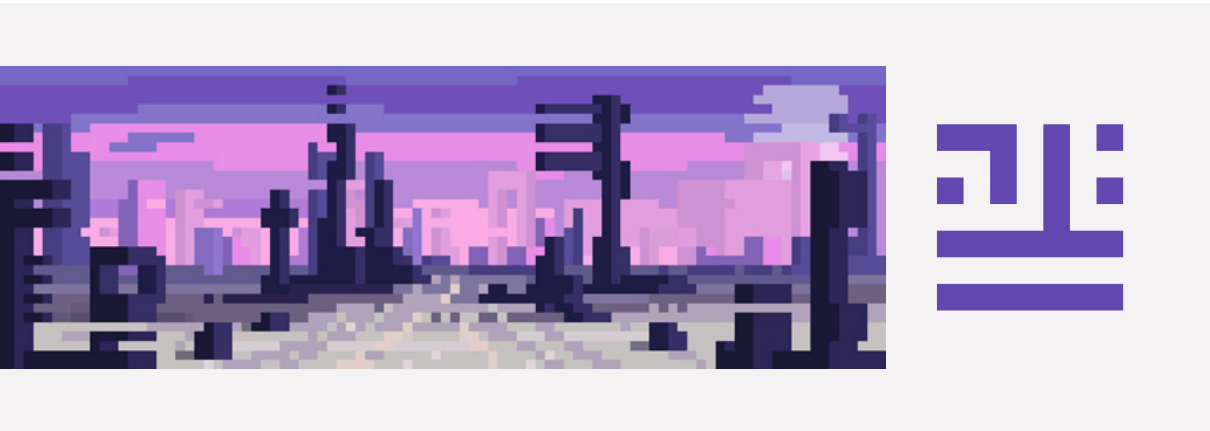
A few figurative glyphs found their way into the growing alphabet as well.

Besides the Comrade Sign I wrote about earlier, some legendary Comrades were mentioned so many times that they got their own letter. That was a lot easier than always writing the whole name. The same thing happened with a few places. Beyond that, ligatures of the common phrases GM, GN and LFG developed, as well as a set of emoji.

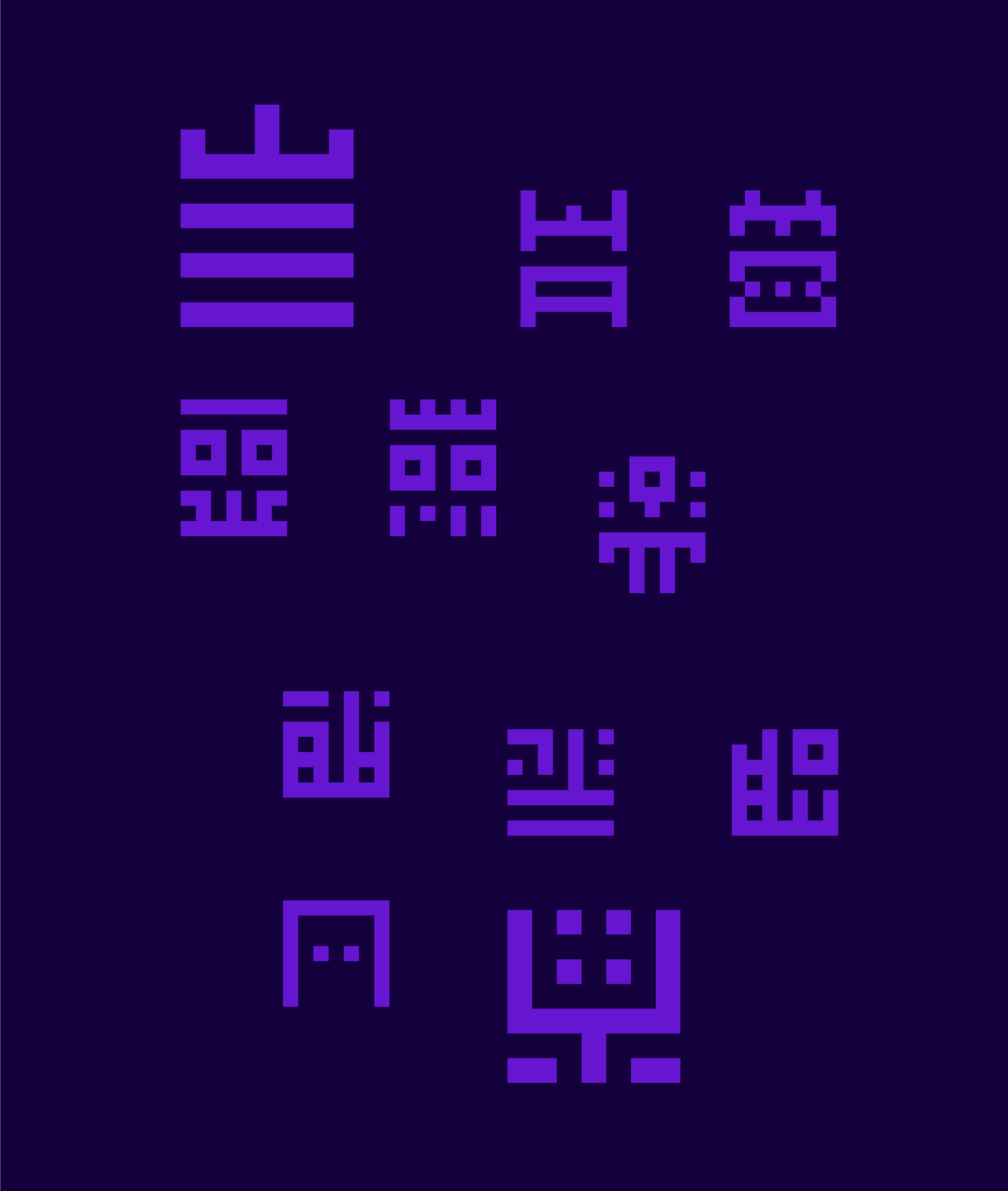
K The Drain Plains as image and icon

L Legendary Comrades and places in Blockscript: Eternal Prime, The Ruglord, Validator Rex, The Pirate King, OxDead, The First Wei, Block City, The Drain Plains, BAC C137, Yonder Portal, The Yonder (top left to bottom right)

M Block City icon in use on a Block City announcement from the First Dark Age (page 18/19)



K



L

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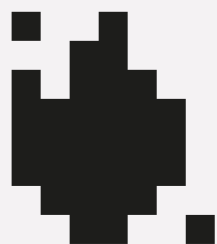
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Icons



Icons & Emoji

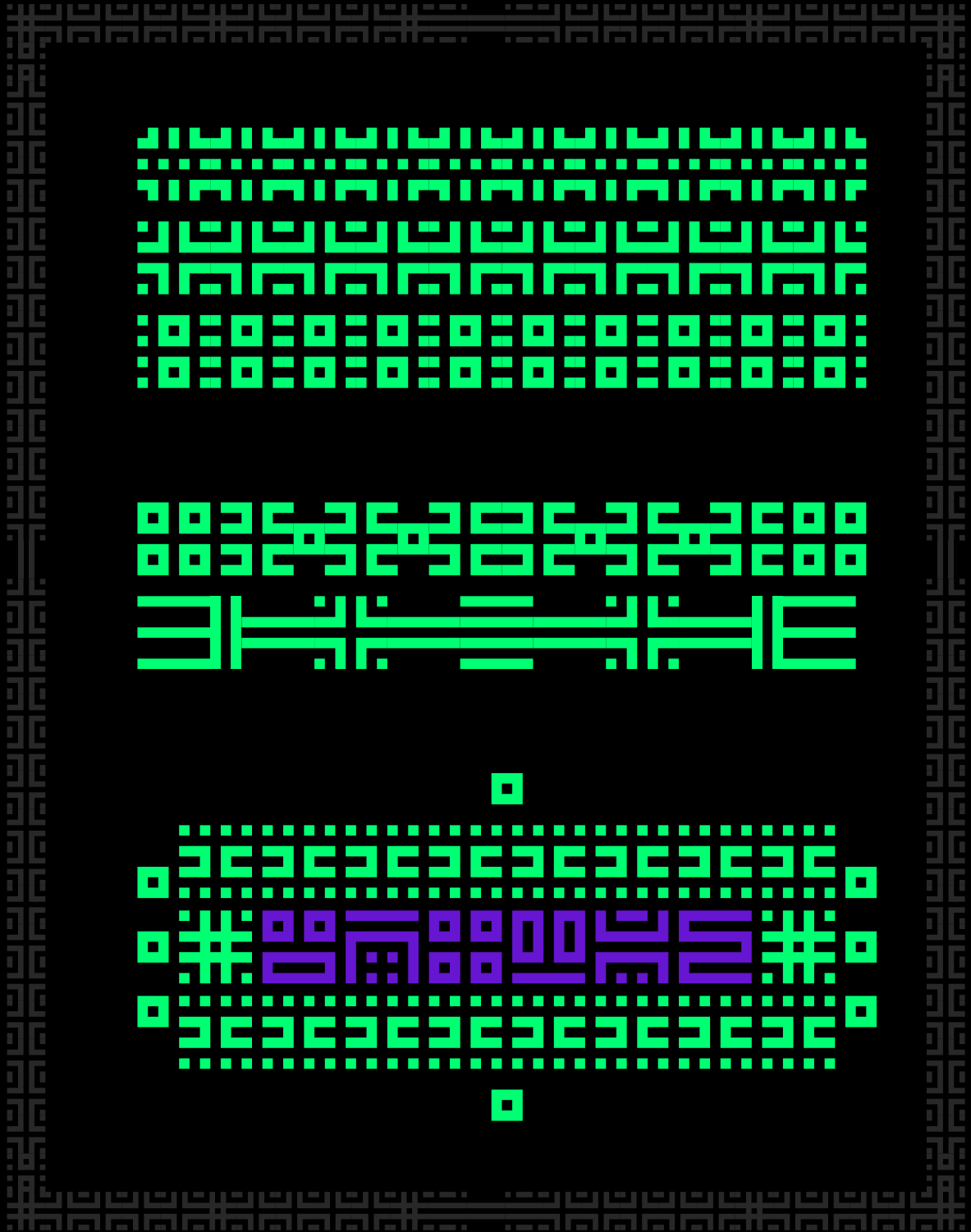
Apart from icons, patterns are a common embellishment of written words in Blockscript. They emerged in almost the same era but fulfill a different task.

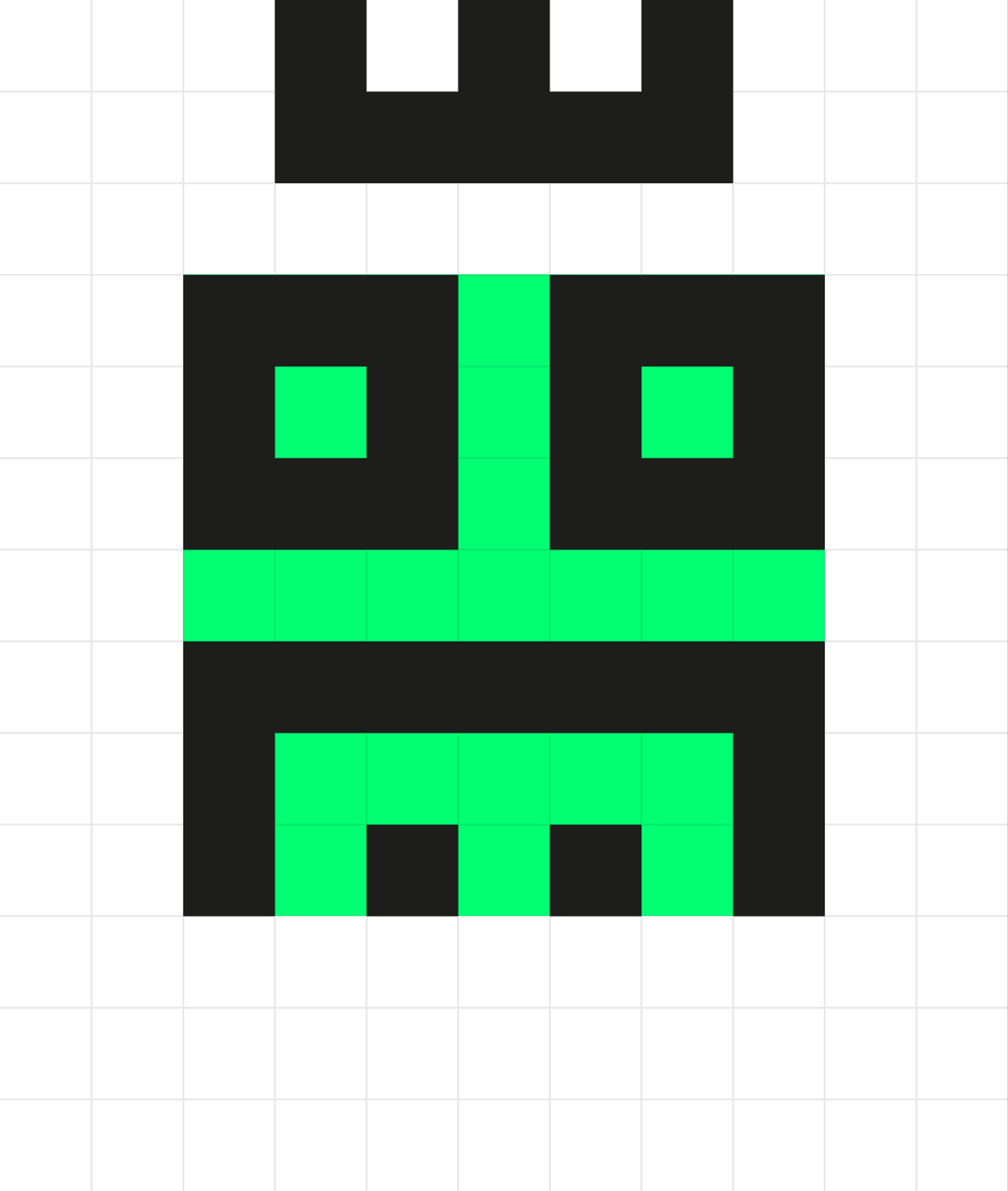
They can stand on their own as a decorative element or can be written in lines – as borders or dividers. They don't have an inherent meaning like icons but are used to make text more interesting like an illustration*.

* In old manuscripts this process of embellishing text was called illumination.

Back then illumination was a staple of every valuable production. Nowadays this technique gets used less and less, but the tradition is still living on, especially ceremonially or in other official publications.

N Examples of patterns (from top to bottom) borders with a repeating pattern, more complex varying patterns, patterns surrounding text





All glyphs are drawn within a 7×7 square with one grid cell of space to the right. Three grid rows on top are reserved for diacritics, with the diacritics one or two rows in height.

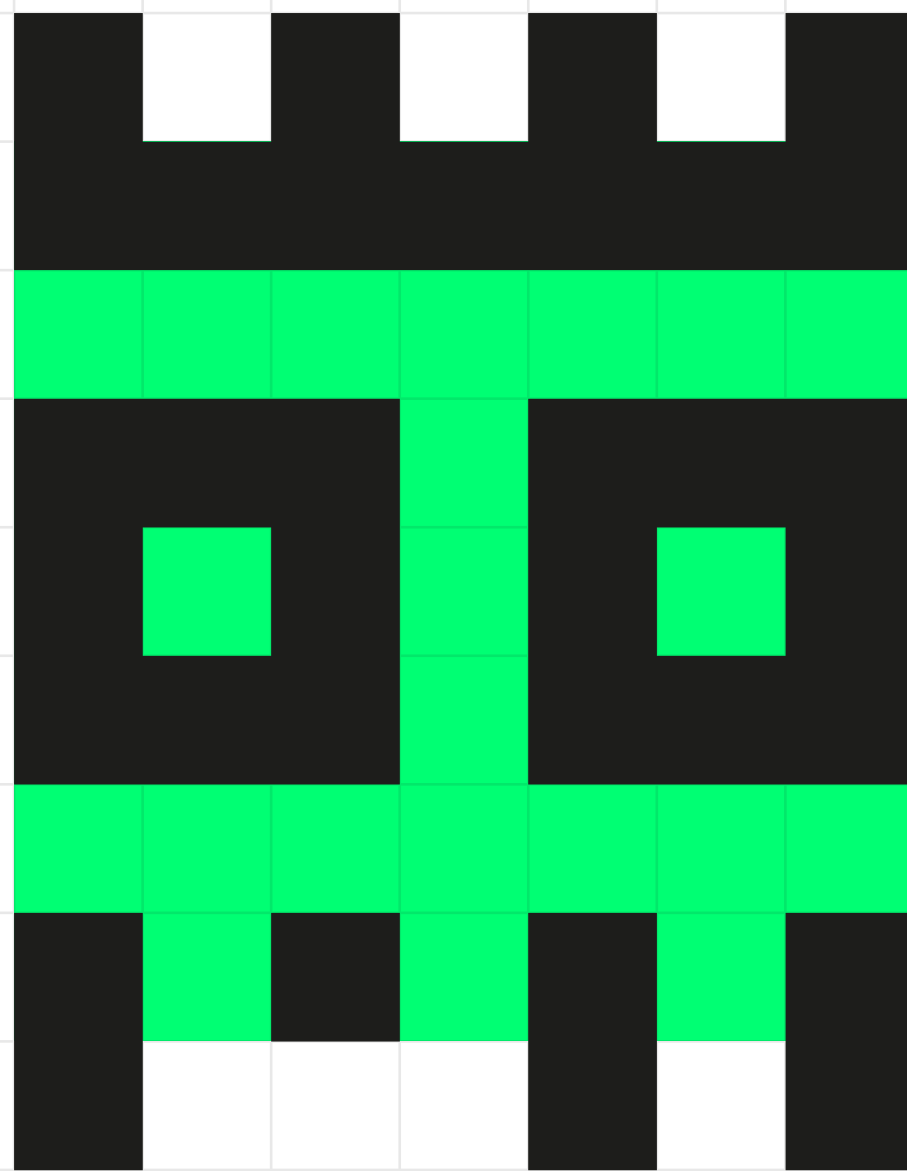
Almost the whole alphabet is constructed with counters (i.e. the space between the black parts of a glyph) of no more than one grid cell.* We call this the “one-cell-counter-rule”.

Currency symbols occupy nine grid rows vertically, the 7×7 base glyph, plus two filled grid cells on top and bottom (see page 26).

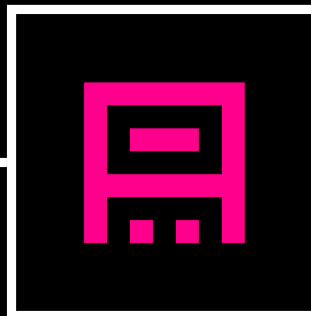
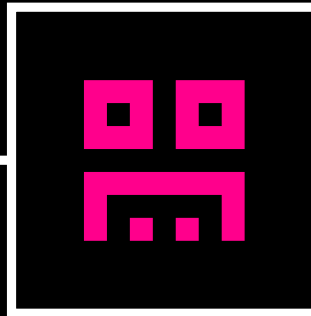
Icons of legendary Comrades also occupy nine grid rows vertically, in this case the extra grid rows on top and bottom are used freely (see page 27).

* Emoji and patterns are the exception to this rule as well as the framed space that intentionally breaks the pattern.

- O Letter Å, shown with grid and main character area
- P Ethereum sign, shown with grid and main character area (page 26) and 0xDead icon, shown with grid and main character area (page 27)



The Forkening

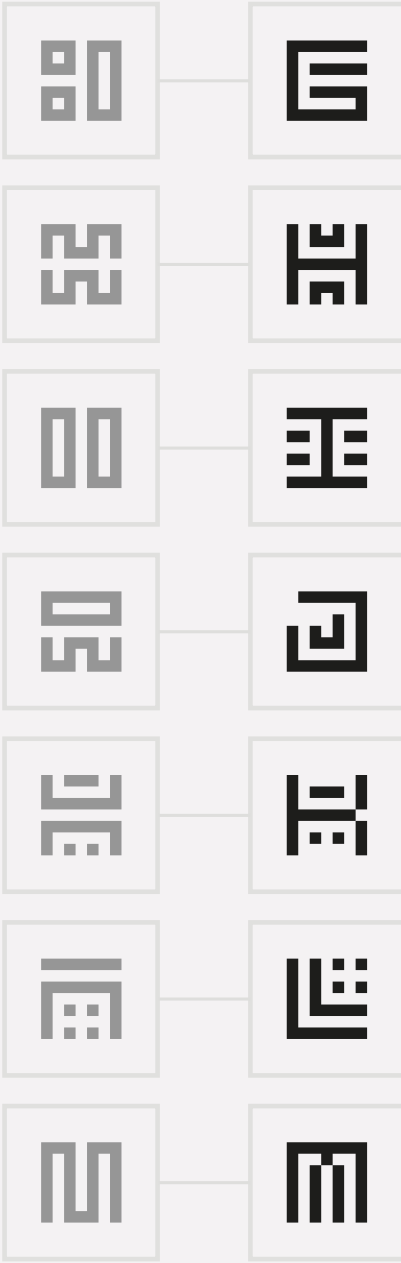
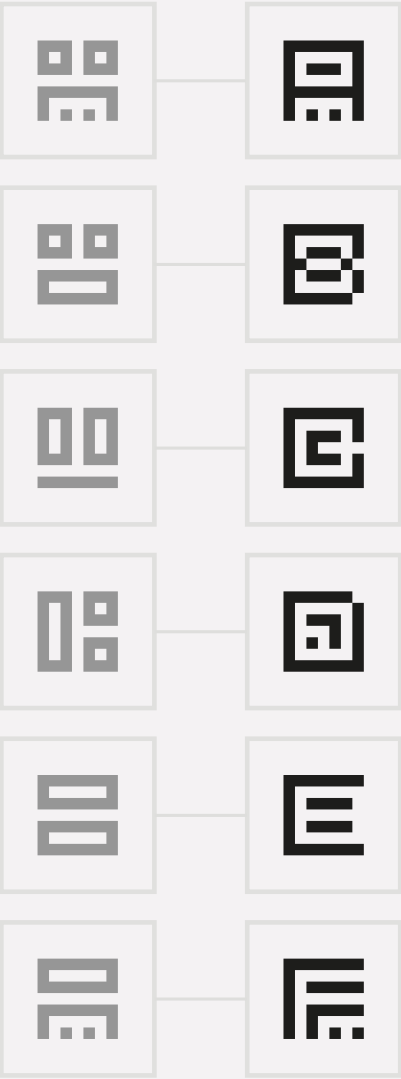


The first alphabet was used for millions of blocks. Many artifacts are testament to that, but gradually the old ways began to erode. Simpler signs were used alongside the old letters, and slowly the old alphabet was used less and less. In this transitional period many local alphabets with home-made letters existed next to one another. That was obviously confusing and impractical.

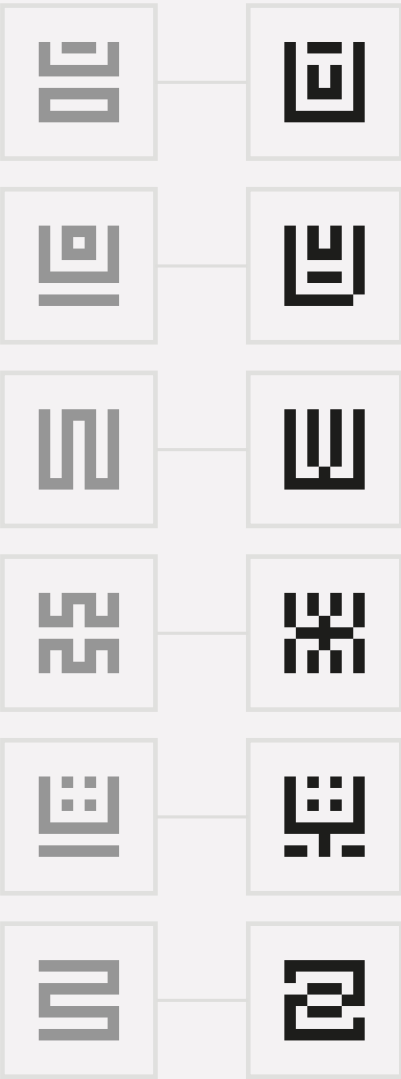
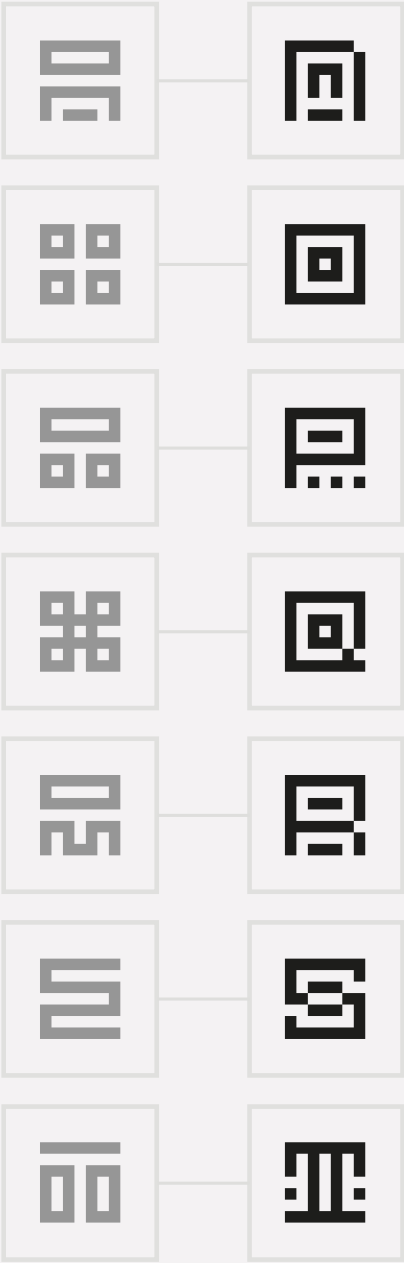
Soon the authorities demanded a return to the old familiar alphabet that was so successfully used for generations. But it was too late for that. The common folk would not let go of their new Blockscript and after a short but vicious uprising a committee was formed and tasked with uniting the derivative alphabets into a new officially accepted style of writing.

Out of all the different variants, the committee picked new glyphs to replace the old ones, trying to keep as much of the old forms as they could without ignoring the new trends. Although this attempt succeeded and a new style was established, the old letters kept being used by the elites. High Blockscript, as it is called now, lives on in secret circles, academic papers and the occasional classified document.

This revolution came to be known as The Forkening and happened around Block 7902123.



Comparison of letters pre and post Forkening



Comparison of letters pre and post Forkening

The new ways



With the new alphabet in place, order returned to Block City and the Comrades were united once again. The old script soon fell into oblivion. It wasn't taught in schools anymore, nor could it be seen around the city. Its use was strongly discouraged by the Dexclesia.

Officially, the new alphabet was just called Blockscript as was the one preceding it. That was of course intentional. This way, the ruling class hoped, the old script would be erased from memory even quicker and more thoroughly.

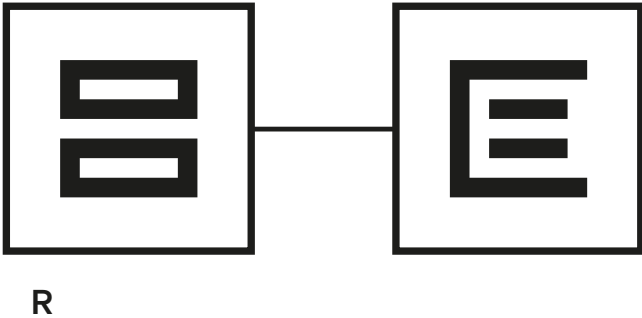
On the streets a few other names are used interchangeably. With Low Blockscript being the most prominent, clearly distinguishing it from High Blockscript. Common Blockscript is another frequently used description. For the sake of clarity, this publication will from now on use the terms High and Low Blockscript to distinguish between the two writing systems.

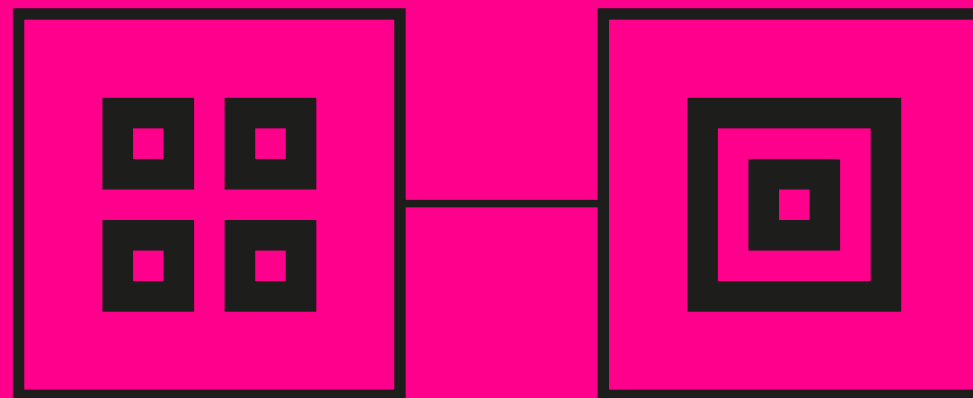
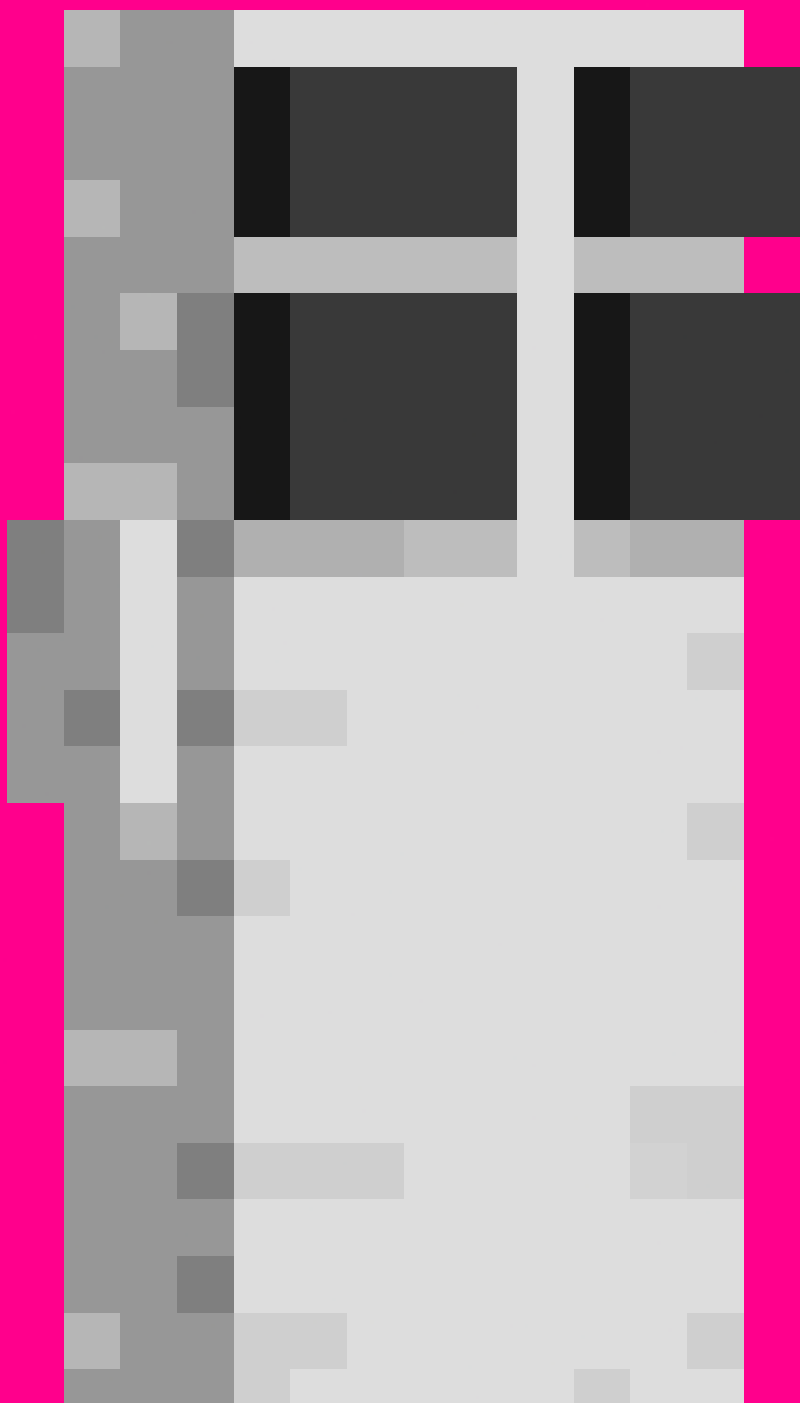
Q (Low) Blockscript in full ceremonial dressing

The letters selected by the committee are visibly connected to the original style of writing – some more, some less. But the depiction of the Comrades faded in this process.

The committee tried to keep the one-cell-counter-rule but couldn't stick to it in all of the letters. J, for example, is such an exception. Large apertures, like in E, are also a new look for the alphabet, as are fully closed shapes like O.

R Visual connection between High and Low Blockscript
S From High to Low Blockscript and connections to the Comrades (page 36/37)





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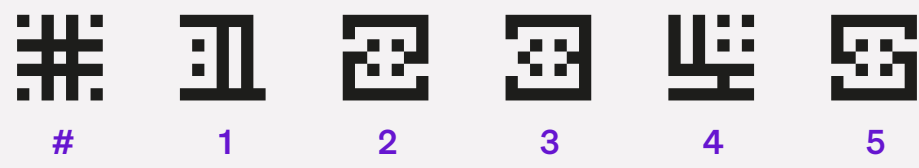
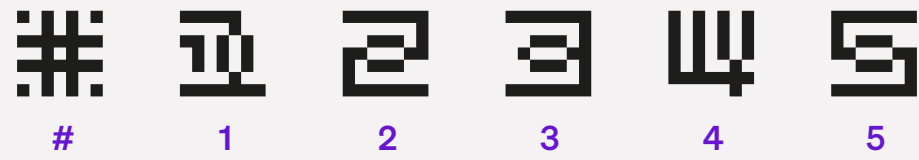
T

Although there is only one accepted letter style, a few alternate characters are tolerated in Low Blockscript (see opposite page). They are rarely used exclusively but rather to make words more appealing by replacing single characters.*

* A typical use case for this would be a logo or a headline that should stand apart from the rest of the text or make it eye-catching.

T Default Low Blockscript (top), alternates only (middle) and single character substitution (bottom)

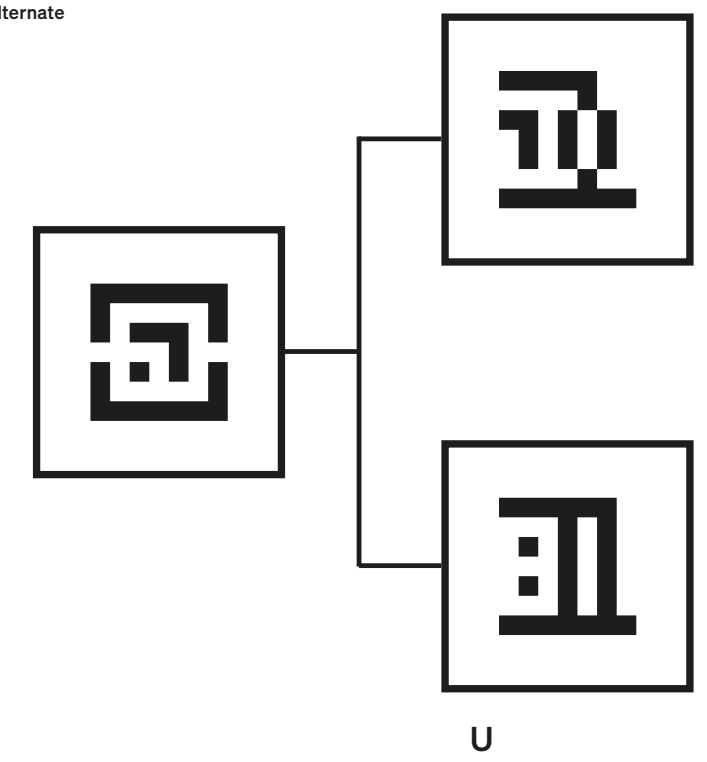


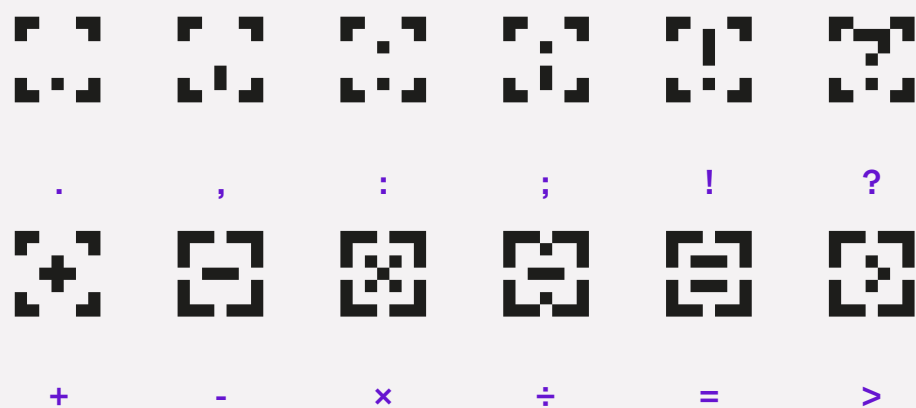
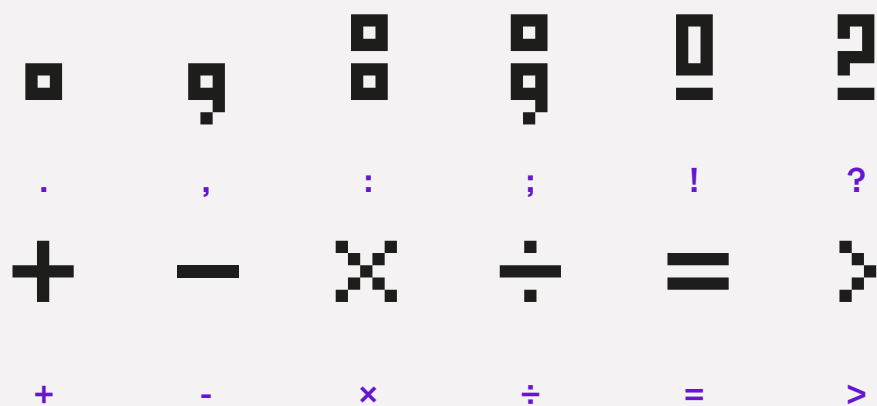


In the numerals we see a deviation from the strict framing system used before. The numerals are now treated like letters and the counters are used even more loosely than in A to Z. As with the letters there are two versions.

Unlike High Blockscript, Low Blockscript supports the use of fractions.

U Accepted versions of digit 1, pre and post Forkening with alternate





V

The most profound change can be observed in the case of punctuation marks and mathematical symbols. These deviate from the most basic concept of High Blockschrift – the 7×7 grid – lending the typeface a way looser look.

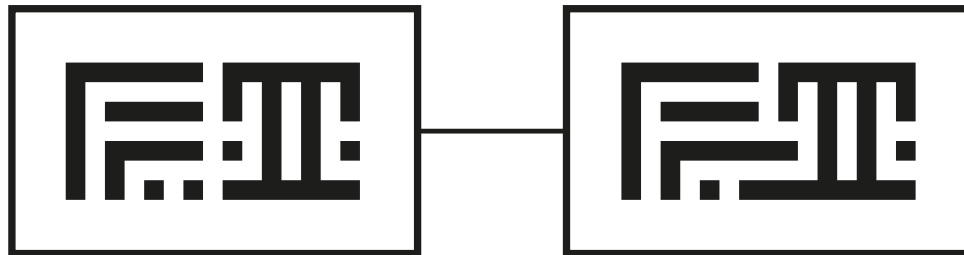
This step was considered so extreme by the committee that an alternate set of framed symbols was incorporated in their selection, to be used in formal or traditional environments. This includes the space character. Traditionally the space was always framed. Later on full width empty spaces came into fashion. Only with the Great Forkening the empty quarter space was introduced. Among the alternate characters in Low Blockschrift are the full width empty space and a framed version, harmonizing with the alternate punctuation marks.

V Different punctuation marks in High Blockschrift (top), Low Blockschrift (middle) and Low Blockschrift with alternates and full width framed space (bottom)

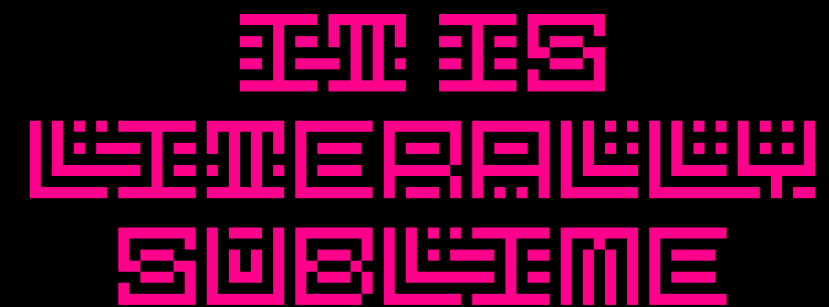
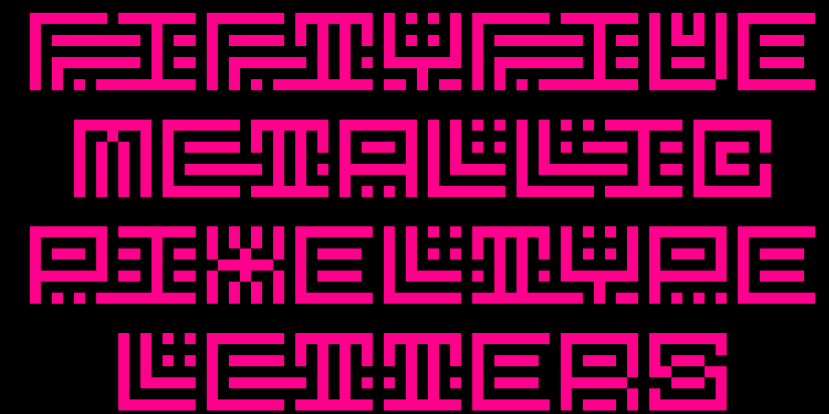
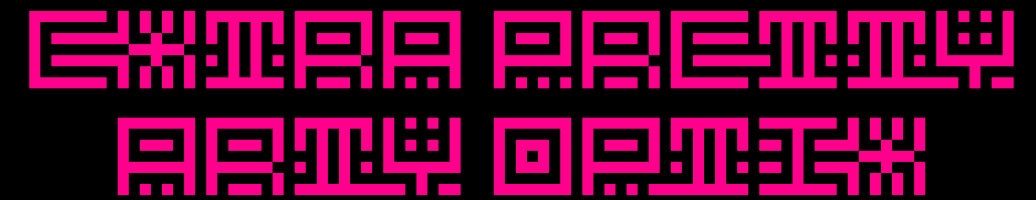
Another addition in the style department of Low Blockscript are discretionary ligatures. They are not an everyday thing as they change the look of words quite significantly, but in some cases they are what you want.

W Comparison of default look and ligaturized

X Discretionary ligatures in use



W



A PARAGRAPH OF
TEXT IN LOW
BLOCKSCRIPT LOOKS
LIKE THIS. MORE
DYNAMIC.
BUT LESS SUBLIME.
FUNKIER? I GUESS.
READABLE? YOU BET!
IT IS WHAT MODERN
COMRADES WANT
FROM A TYPEFACE.
IT IS THE FUTURE.

A PARAGRAPH OF
TEXT IN LOW
BLOCKSCRIPT LOOKS
LIKE THIS. MORE
DYNAMIC.
BUT LESS SUBLIME.
FUNKIER? I GUESS.
READABLE? YOU BET!
IT IS WHAT MODERN
COMRADES WANT
FROM A TYPEFACE.
IT IS THE FUTURE.



A PARAGRAPH OF
TEXT IN LOW
BLOCKSCRIPT WITH
ALTERNATE
PUNCTUATION
LOOKS LIKE THIS.
MORE LIKE HIGH
BLOCKSCRIPT BUT
STILL READABLE,
COMPROMISING
TRADITION AND
MODERNITY.

USE

USE

Two fonts



Y

Our rich typographic heritage, described above in detail, found its expression in two distinct alphabets. Both are deeply tied to the Comrades but they are in fact completely different.

Both of these writing systems are available for digital typesetting, split into two font files:

High Blockscript™ and Low Blockscript™.

Available as .otf files for desktop and .woff2 files for the web.

These are the official versions of Blockscript.

Their character set and functionality is described on the following pages. [Download them and have fun.](#)

There are others, but these are the essential shapes of Comrade expression.

Don't be tempted to use lesser versions.

Be a Comrade and do the right thing.

Do it for the community.

Y Promotional poster by the Dexclesia.
"Don't use Comic Block (when you don't have to)", CR 9331560

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High Blocksript

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Low Blocksript

High Blockscript

Character Set

Basic Blocks																
	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						
Diacritic Blocks																
	Á	Ä	Â	Å	À	Ã	Ą	Å	Ǻ	Æ	Ć	Č	Ç	Ĉ	Đ	Ď
	Ð	É	Ê	Ë	Ì	Ê	Ë	Ì	Ê	Ğ	Ġ	Ģ	Ģ	Ĥ	Ħ	Í
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Numerals																
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9						
	₳	₴	₵	₶	₷	₸	₹	₺	₻	₼	₽	₾	₿	₿	₿	₿
	₧	₨	₩	₪	₫	€	₭	₮	₯	₰	₱	₲	₳	₴	₵	₶
Math Symbols																
	+	-	×	÷	=	>	<	%								

Punctuation & Symbols																
	.	,	:	;	...	!	i	?	¿	·	•	*	#	/		\
	-	-	-	-	()	{	}	,	„	“	”	‘	’	”	’
Shortforms																
	Eternal Prime	Rug Lord	Validator Rex	Pirate King	OxDead	The First Wei	Block City	Drain Plains	BAC C137	Yonder Portal	The Yonder	Genesis Block	GM	GN	LFG	Comrade
Emoji & Icons																
Patterns																
	°	@	&	\$	©	®	™	↑	→	↓	←					

High Blockscript

OpenType Features

Stylistic Set 03
Full Width Space

This feature substitutes the default Quarter Width Space with a Full Width (Letter Width) Space.



Stylistic Set 04
Framed Space

This feature substitutes any Space with a Full Width Framed Space.

This is the default choice for typesetting in High Blockscript



Stylistic Set 08
Patterns on Keys

This feature substitutes letters with patterns.

→ See Cheat Sheet (p 67) for the full list



**Contextual Alternates/
Stylistic Alternates**
Icon Recipes

This feature substitutes letter combinations with shortforms/ icons/ emoji.

→ See Cheat Sheet (p 66) for the full list



OpenType features are supported by most design apps (InDesign, Figma etc.) and in web browsers via the font-feature-settings property.

**Subscript/
Scientific Inferior**

This feature substitutes numerals with their subscript counterpart











































































































































































































































Superscript

This feature substitutes numerals with their superscript counterpart



Low Blockscript

Character Set

Basic Blocks																
																
Diacritic Blocks																
																
																
																
																
																
																
Numerals																
Currency																
																
Math Symbols																
																
Pre-built Fractions																
																

Punctuation & Symbols																
Shortforms																
Emoji & Icons																
Patterns																
Discretionary Ligatures																

Low Blockscript

Character Set (Alternates)

Basic Blocks Alternates																
Diacritic Blocks Alternates																
Numerals Alternates																

Punctuation & Symbols Alternates																
Discretionary Ligatures Alternates																

Low Blockscript

OpenType Features

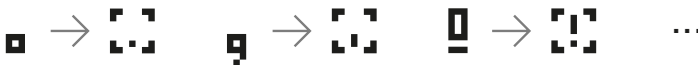
Stylistic Set 01
Alternate Glyphs

This feature substitutes letters and numerals with an alternate version.



Stylistic Set 02
Full Width Punctuation

This feature substitutes punctuation symbols with a framed full width version (not incl. space).



Stylistic Set 03
Full Width Space

This feature substitutes the default Quarter Width Space with a Full Width (Letter Width) Space.



Stylistic Set 04
Framed Space

This feature substitutes any Space with a Full Width Framed Space.

Best used in combination with Stylistic Set 02



Stylistic Set 05
Alternate Arrows

This feature substitutes letters and numerals with an alternate version.



Stylistic Set 06
Alternate At

This feature substitutes the at sign with an alternate version.



Stylistic Set 07
Alternate Ampersand

This feature substitutes the ampersand with an alternate version.



OpenType features are supported by most design apps (InDesign, Figma etc.) and in web browsers via the font-feature-settings property.

Stylistic Set 08
Patterns on Keys

This feature substitutes letters with patterns.

→ See Cheat Sheet (p 67) for the full list



Contextual Alternates/ Stylistic Alternates
Icon Recipes

This feature substitutes letter combinations with shortforms / icons / emoji. Usually on by default.

→ See Cheat Sheet (p 66) for the full list



Subscript/ Scientific Inferior

This feature substitutes numerals with their subscript counterpart



Superscript

This feature substitutes numerals with their superscript counterpart



Fractions

This feature substitutes numerals separated with a slash with the corresponding fraction



Discretionary Ligatures

This feature substitutes certain letter combinations with the corresponding ligature

→ See p 61 for the full list



Cheat Sheets

Contextual Alternates

Recipes



This only works with activated Contextual Alternates Feature in your design app or CSS.

->	→	_GM	☞	_SHADES	▤
<-	←	_GN	☞	_NERDGLASSES	👓
:)	☺	_LFG	🏆	_EYES	👁
:(☹	_COMRADE	☞	_EYES2	👁
_GENESIS	🌀	_COMRADES	☞	_HEART	♥
_FIRSTWEI	👤	_COMRADE2	☞	_HEART2	♥
_VALIDATORREX	🏠	_COMRADE3	☞	_HEART3	♥
_ETHERNALPRIME	☞	_COMRADE4	☞	_FIRE	🔥
_RUGLORD	👤	_HAPPY	☺	_ETHSCRISTAL	🔮
_PIRATEKING	☞	_SAD	☹	_SKULL	💀
_OXDEAD	☞	_FACE	☺	_SKULL2	💀
_BLOCKCITY	☞	_FACE2	☺	_SKULL3	💀
_BACC137	☞	_FACE3	☺	_WINGLEFT	☞
_DRAINPLAINS	☞	_FACE4	☺	_WINGRIGHT	☞
_YONDERPORTAL	☞	_FACE5	☺	_CROSS	✚
_YONDER	☞			_CROSS2	✚
				_CROSS3	✚

Patterns

Keyboard Mapping



This only works with activated Stylistic Set 08 in your design app or CSS. This feature sets the space to one grid unit.

A	☞	N	☞	1	▣	+	+
B	☞	O	☞	2	▣	=	☞
C	☞	P	☞	3	▣	%	☞
D	☞	Q	☞	4	▣	/	☞
E	☞	R	☞	5	▣	\	☞
F	☞	S	☞	6	▣	.	▣
G	☞	T	☞	7	▣	,	▣
H	☞	U	☞	8	▣	:	▣
I	☞	V	☞	9	▣	;	▣
J	☞	W	☞	0	▣	?	☞
K	☞	X	☞			!	☞
L	☞	Y	☞				
M	☞	Z	☞				

Samples



Z

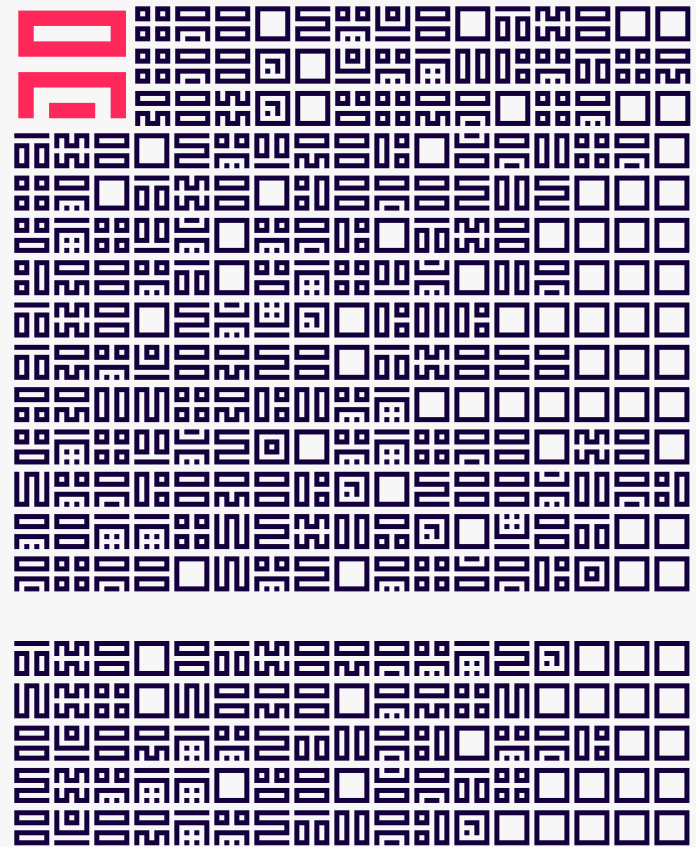
Comrade typography started out wild and free, standardized after the Forkening but soon grew bold and experimental during the Age of Enlightenment, before becoming more technical and industrial after the Gas Wars. Nowadays it is phunky and phree like the Comrades themselves. Block City is the proud center of this vibrant typography scene and seat of the Royal Society for Typographic Art as well as the Foundation for Type and Embellishment.

The following pages display a small selection of samples from all eras, showing Blocksript in its full diverse glory.

This brings us to the end of our story. For now.
Every Comrade will write the sequel. Quite literally.

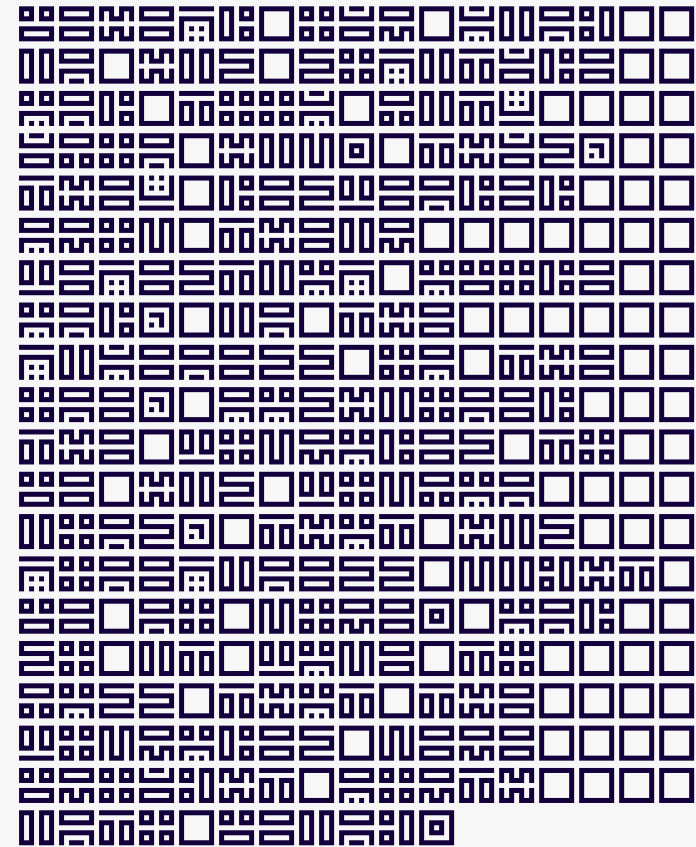
Z Poster for "Type Exhibition
19000000", CR 19199350

0123456789ABCDEFGHIJ



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0123456789ABCDEFGHIJ



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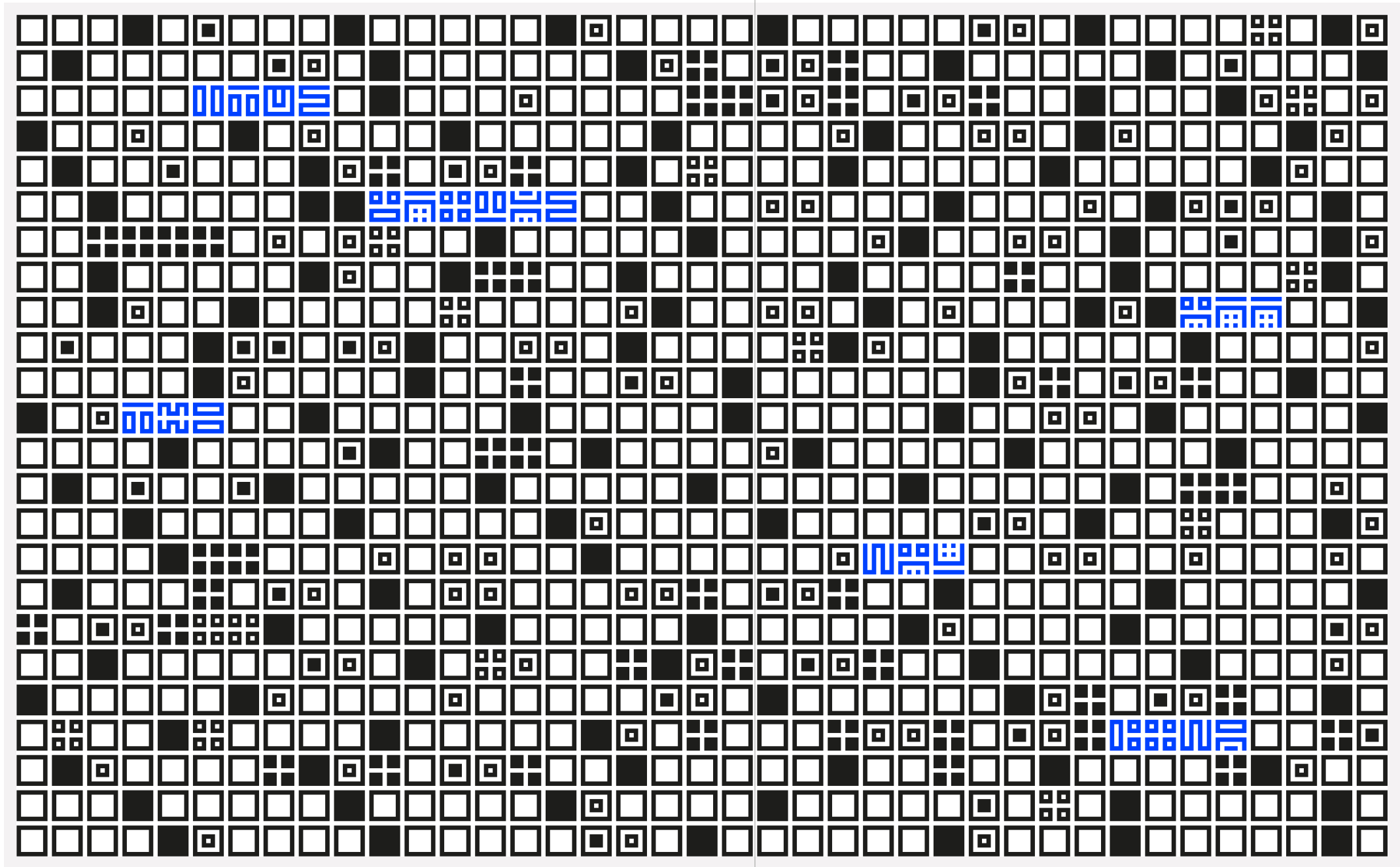
→ Comrade
XXXXX

Comrade

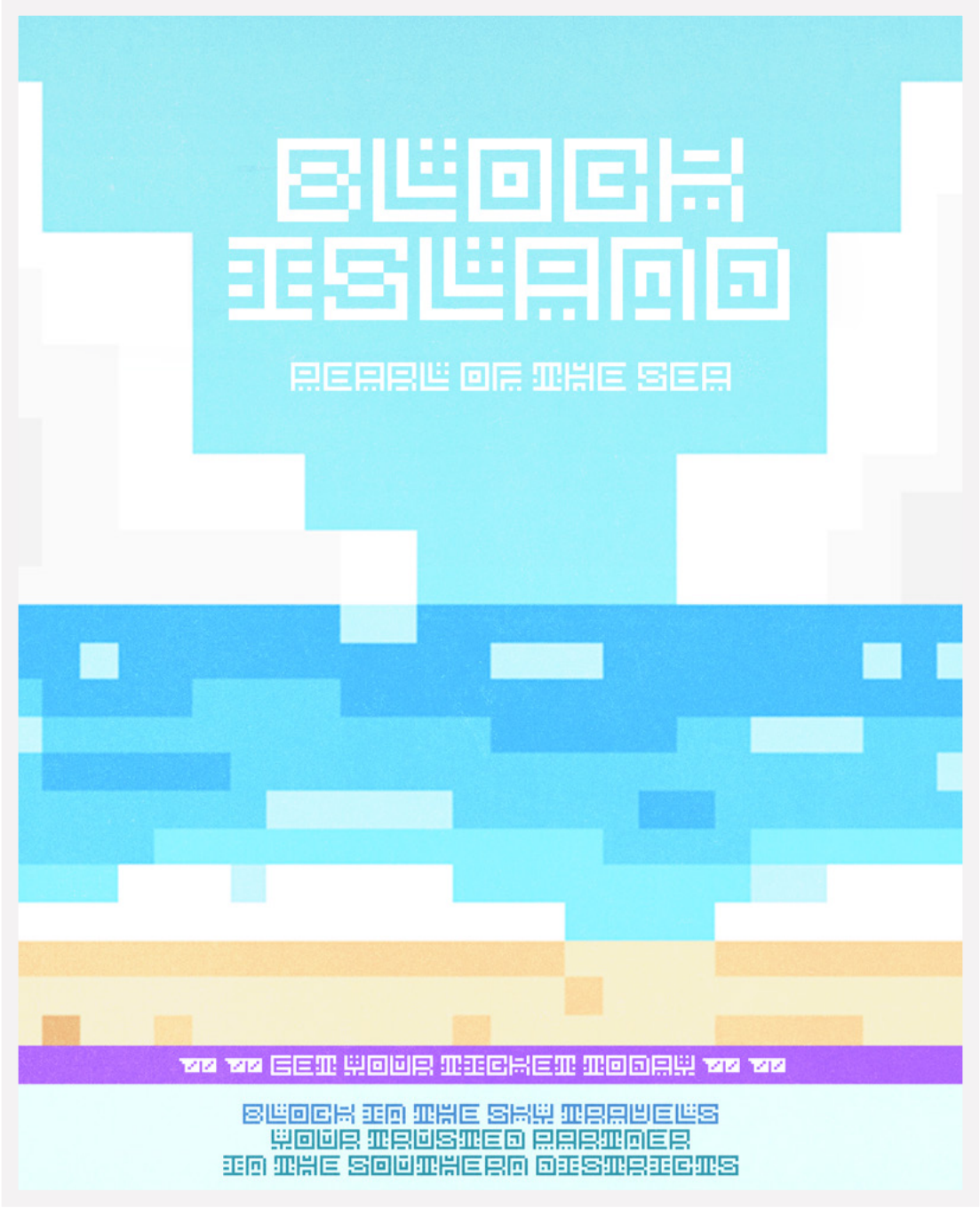


Comrade

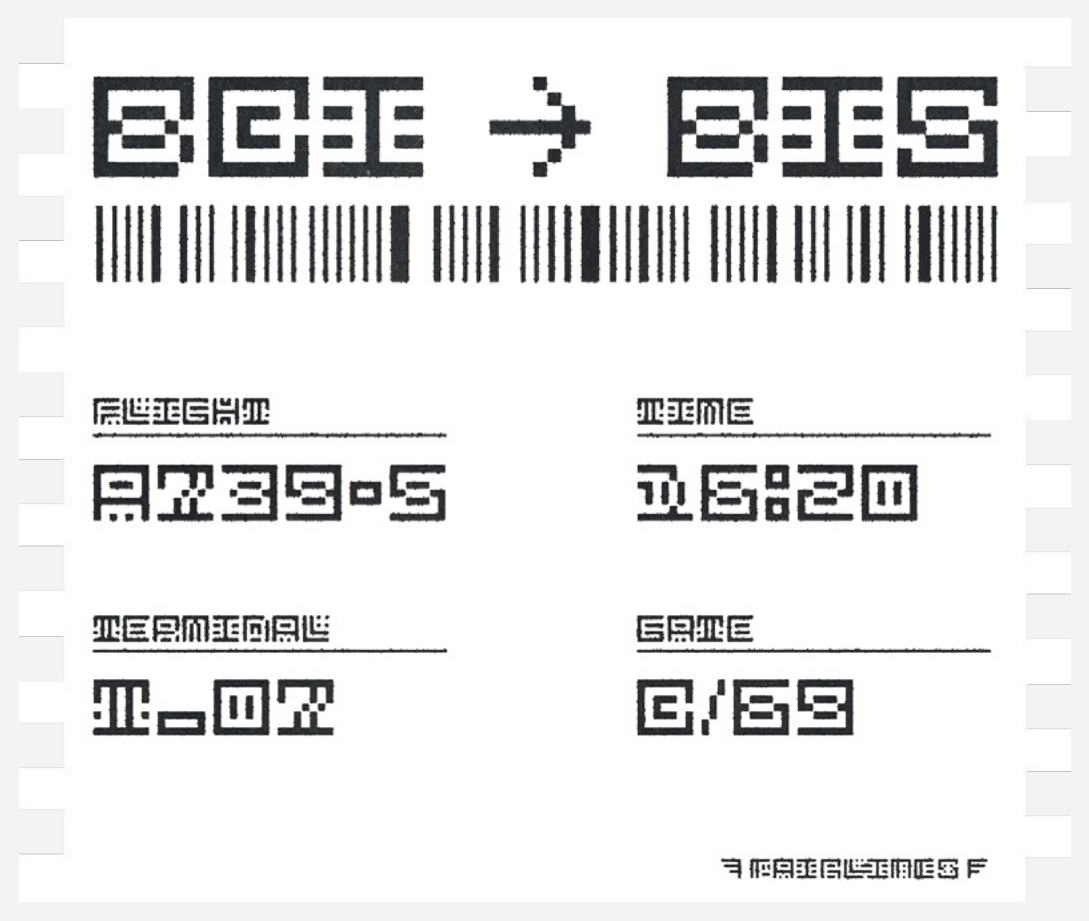
Rare Comrade ID card, front & back
(biscruptual from transitional period),
CR 7912101



Constructivist Minimalism
Poster, "Blocks", CR 14-118 929



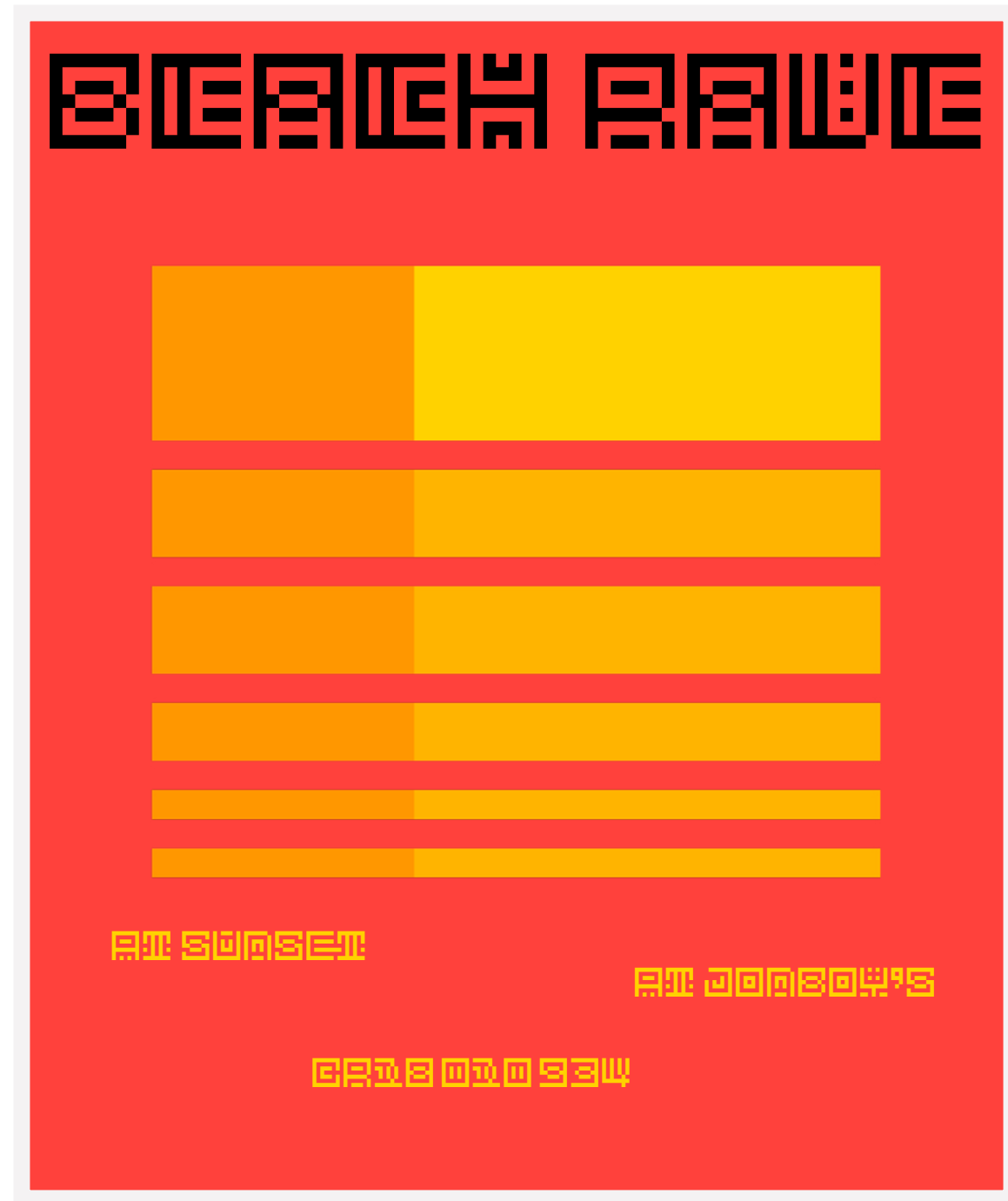
Commercial travel poster,
CR 17646880

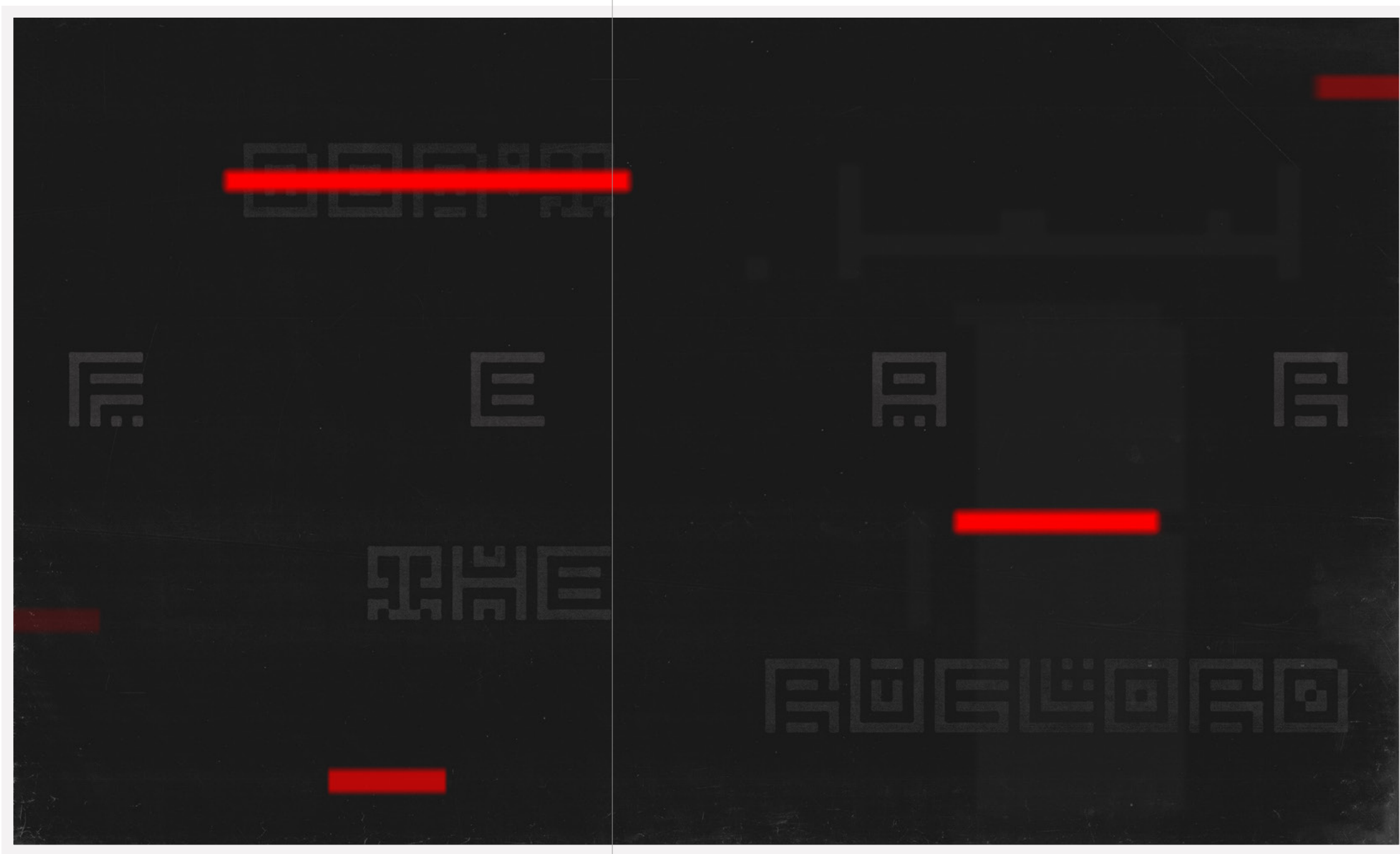


Travel ticket,
CR 17922310

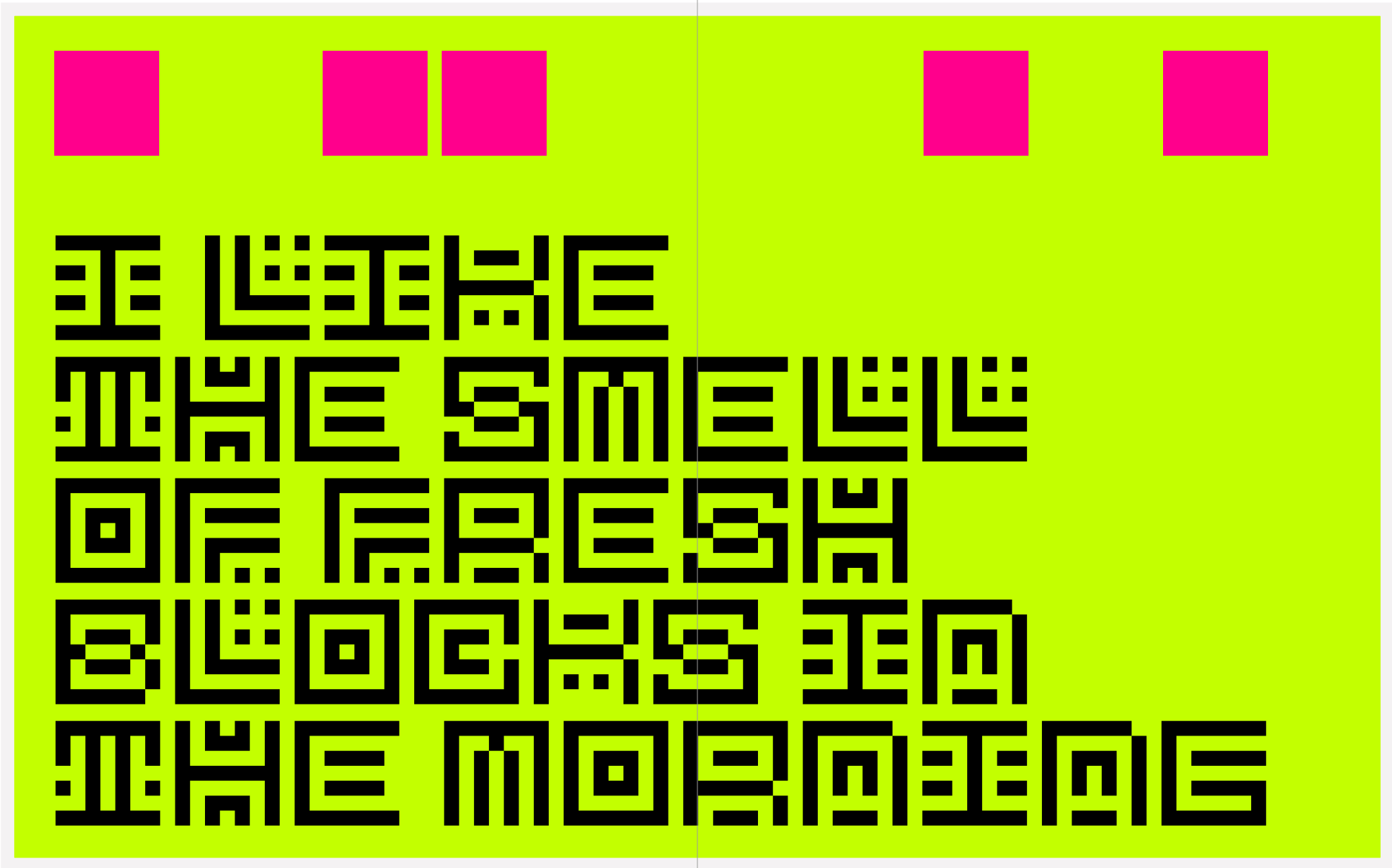


Poster, "NML",
CR 6290116





Poster for a lecture,
CR 12111643



Poster, "Fresh Blocks", Issued by BAC Inc.,
CR 14 466 622

王 泉 而 世 王 出 王 同 臣 王 同 能
王 泉 而 出 回 泉 王 同 臣 泉 聖 出
王 泉 而 臣 回 王 同 臣 → 泉



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