

The Debian Fonts Task force

Overview and impact on the wider open font community

Nicolas Spalinger

SIL International volunteer – scripts.sil.org

Open Font Library - openfontlibrary.org

Debian pkg-fonts team – pkg-fonts.alioth.org

Ubuntu Fonts team - launchpad.net/people/fonts

FOSDEM

Brussels, Belgium, 9th of February 2009

pkg-fonts.alioth.debian.org



pkg-fonts team - Debian Fonts Task Force

[Alioth FAQ](#) - [AliothPackagingProject](#) - [Fonts wiki page](#) - [SVN repository](#) - [svnbuildstat](#) - [Team Mailing-list](#) - [Bugs Mailing-list](#)

Debian Fonts Task Force

Welcome to the website of the pkg-fonts team.

Current [detailed review of all the fonts in the Debian archive](#) with previews, metadata and validation reports.

The aim of this Debian team is to:

- maintain open fonts
- maintain related software forming the toolkit to do open font design
- review existing fonts in the archive for redundancy, description accuracy, licensing compliance
- be in touch with the type design community to encourage them to use FLOSS licenses for their creation
- test and tweak the interaction of fonts with other parts of the OS especially in the area of i18n (Unicode coverage, style coherence per language, smart features, etc)
- create the appropriate metapackages

The team is open to everyone who would like to help.

We will work together with projects related to open/libre fonts like [OpenFontLibrary.org](#) the [unifont.org/fontguide](#), the [Ubuntu fonts team](#), the [Fedora font SIG](#), the [TextLayout Summit](#) and the [LibreGraphicsMeeting](#) communities. We will help define a [freedesktop.org common open font set](#)

Font-related links

[fontforge](#)
[spiro](#)
[inkscape](#)
[Font::TTF](#)
[Font::Freetype](#)
[Gwaterfall](#)
[xgridfit](#)
[ttx/fonttools](#)
[FRET](#)
[Font::TTF \(make_gdl, make_volt\)](#)
[Graphite](#)
[fontmatrix](#)
[gnome-specimen](#)
[fontpython](#)
[freetype](#)
[fontconfig](#)
[gucharmap](#)
[guci](#)
[Hinting-viewer](#)
[fontly.com](#)

Brought to you by members of the Debian [Pkg-fonts team](#) : free the glyphs!

Team activities

- hosted on Alioth (created by Christian Perrier: various people joined along the way)
- loose structure / various levels of involvement
- over 100 open fonts: quite a few in the pipeline
- now close to 1000 changesets in the repo
- many packages team-maintained
- meetup at Debconf BoF in Edimburgh

Team activities

- upstream advocacy
- archive-wide reviews
- packaging
- metapackages

pkg-fonts.alioth.debian.org

Debian font review

By the *[Debian Font task force](#)*

Snapshot: sid on i386 / 2009.02.08 00:00

The whole Debian archive is regularly analysed and a detailed font review is produced:

A page is created for each package containing fonts with image specimens (only covering Latin Unicode blocks for now sorry!), font metadata including smart font features, Unicode coverage by blocks.

You can also look at a [very big page](#) with specimens for each font. Or a simpler [text summary](#).

[Package report for adonthell-data](#)

[Package report for afterstep](#)

[Package report for ampache](#)

[Package report for balazarbrothers](#)

[Package report for blobandconquer-data](#)

[Package report for briquolo-data](#)

[Package report for context](#)

[Package report for crimson](#)

[Package report for denemo](#)

[Package report for e16-data](#)

[Package report for egroupware-projectmanager](#)

[Package report for enlightenment-data](#)

[Package report for enlightenment-theme-bluesteel](#)

[Package report for enlightenment-theme-brushedmetal](#)

[Package report for enlightenment-theme-ganymede](#)

[Package report for enlightenment-theme-shinymetal](#)

[Package report for extremetuxracer-data](#)

[Package report for feh](#)

[Package report for flumotion](#)

[Package report for freecol](#)

[Package report for freevial](#)

[Package report for freevo-data](#)

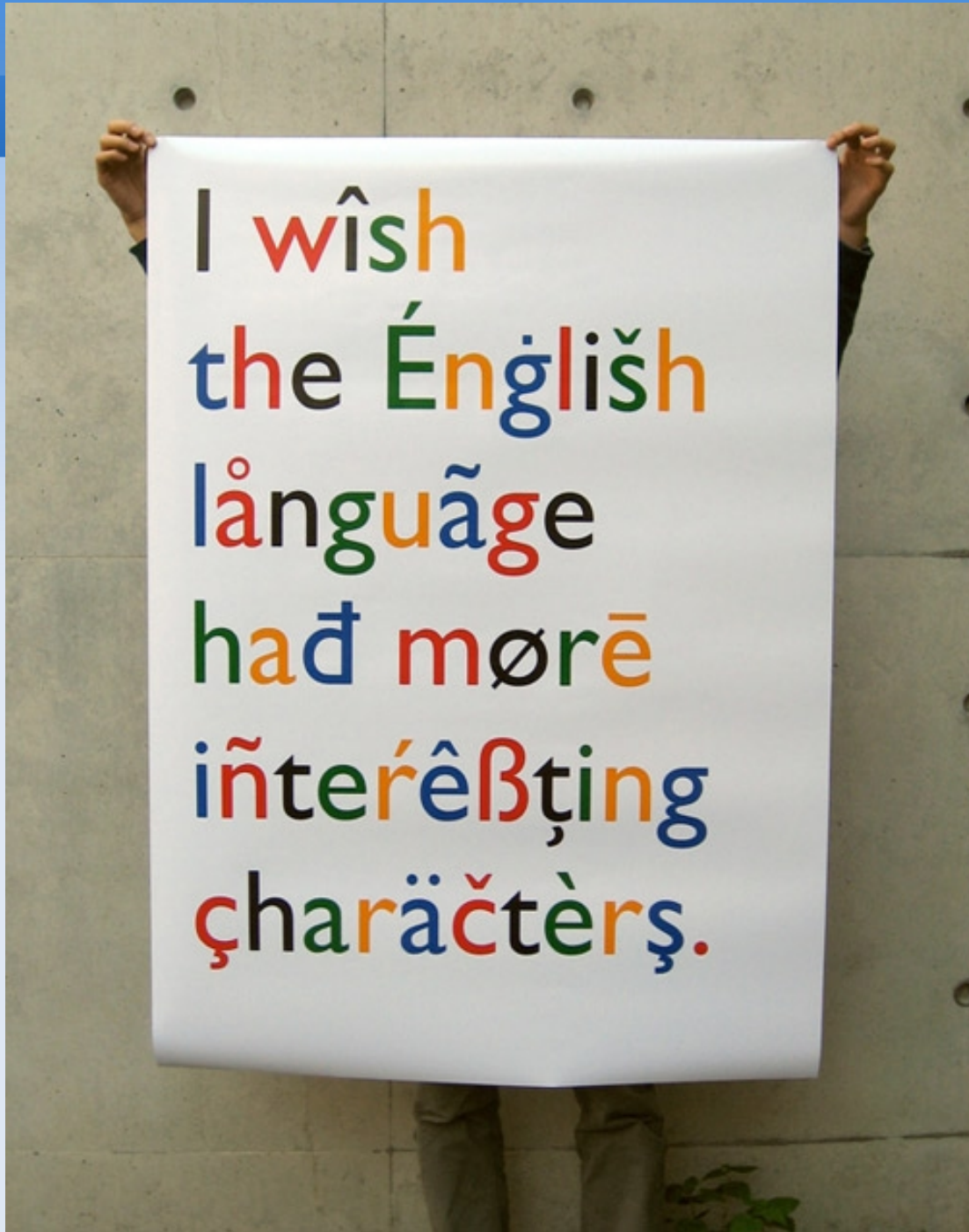
[Package report for gforge-plugins-extra](#)

[Package report for glob2-data](#)

[Package report for gnuhg-data](#)

[Package report for gretl-common](#)

[Package report for hannah-data](#)

A person is holding a white sign against a grey wall. The sign contains a message in English with various characters from other languages inserted into the words. The text is: "I wish the English language had more interesting characters."

I wish
the English
language
had more
interesting
characters.

Taking a step back

- why should we care?
- what if letters on a computer were just shapes with no meaning?
- many languages not using the Latin script
- letters are like the interface to knowledge
- they must exist in your language otherwise you're stuck

Why is font freedom important?

- fonts also contain bugs
- you need to be able to fix and extend them
- removing limits to expression and creativity, for both users and designers
- enabling progress in i18n, supporting more languages in Debian
- improving world literacy & A2K
- enabling education efforts

5 key challenges

- availability
- completeness
- complexity
- quality
- accessibility

Not easy to get right



Yummy *and* available?



Impact?

- for Debian and derivatives
- big impact for the wider FLOSS communities and society at large
- A2K, better access to education, greater creativity and means of expressions for artists and content producers
- free speech is much harder when you depend on restricted tools

Our goals

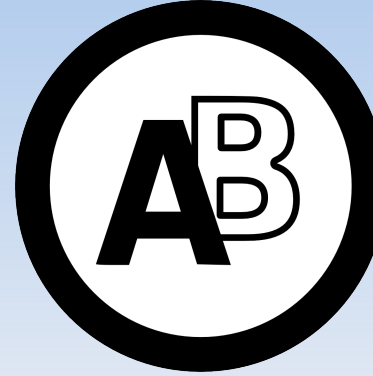
- new language packs
- extend the language communities enjoying Debian
- reproduce success stories like Dhzongka Linux : a good open font enables the rest
- locales, keyboard, localization, d-i supported languages
- work well with the rest of the rendering stack especially for language with complex scripts needs

Widely adopted solution: OFL



The Open Font License

How does it work?



Permits

Reproduction

Distribution

Embedding

Derivative Works

Requires

Attribution

Notice

ShareAlike

Derivative Renaming

Bundling When Selling

Unicode Font Guide For Free/Libre Open Source Operating Systems

Intro-
ductionPan-
Unicode
Fonts

Africa



America



Europe

Middle
East

East Asia



South Asia



S.E. Asia

Scientific,
Scholarly,
Artistic

Introduction

This is a selective guide to [Unicode](#)-based fonts and script projects that are ideal for free/libre/open source (FLOSS) operating systems like GNU/Linux and FreeBSD. As a general policy, I include here only fonts that:

- Contain Unicode CMAPs for mapping Unicode values to glyphs.
- Can be downloaded and used legally for free.

Preference is given to high-quality vector fonts that have been released under SIL International's [Open Font License \(OFL\)](#), the Free Software Foundation's [GNU General Public License \(GPL\)](#), and similarly open licenses. I also include other important Unicode fonts, including a few notable shareware fonts where the authors request payment of a fee after an initial free evaluation. Although this document focuses on vector fonts that work well on free operating systems, these fonts will also work well on Unicode-capable Windows operating systems (Windows 2000 and XP) and on Apple OSX.

Please note that other, more extensive online font guides do exist. In particular Alan Wood's [Unicode](#)

Latest News

- **2007.03.23.** Unifont.org's Font Guide now has an [RSS Feed](#) so you can keep up with all of the latest news in the FLOSS font world!
- **2007.02.28.** Dugan Chen has kindly updated the download shell script (see [A new tool for the impatient on this page](#)) so that it works properly on modern *nix distributions like **Ubuntu**. Thanks, Dugan!
- **2007.02.27.** **Ekushey.org** Bengali font site has been updated. See the **South Asia** section.
- **2007.02.26.** **SIL** has announced completion of the [Open Font License v. 1.1](#).
- **2007.01.08.** Samuel Thibault has released a Tagbanwa font under a Creative Commons license. See [Philippine Scripts](#) in the **Southeast Asia** section for details.
- **2006.12.18.** The **Parabaik Unicode Project** has just released **Parabaik Sans** Myanmar Unicode font under the OFL and GPL licenses. The project has also released a keyboard layout. See the **Southeast Asia** section for details.
- **2006.11.24.** Greek Font Society and Vangelis Makridakis' Greek fonts added. See the **Europe** section.
- **2006.09.20.** **Uyghur Computer Science Association (UKI)** fonts added in the **East Asia** section.
- **2006.09.15.** **Libertine Open Font** version 2.1.9 is now available under both the OFL and GPL licenses.

Different types of fonts

Conakry: Designers & script engineers - UNESCO

Ecolier: Individual focused on education

GFS revivals: Foundry reviving historical fonts

Linex fonts: Designers - Extramadura government

Aboriginal fonts: Language communities enabler

Inconsolata: monospace

Silkscreen: pixel fonts

Asana math: advanced Maths

Marvosym: symbols

Fifth Leg: logo lettering font

Liberation / Droid: Commissioned from Ascender

Team members

Home

My Page

Project Tree

Code Snippets

Project Openings

Font packaging for Debian

Summary

Lists

Collaborative packaging team for open fonts and related software. With regular review of fonts in the archive.

- Development Status: [5 - Production/Stable](#)
- Environment: [X11 Applications](#)
- Intended Audience: [Developers](#), [End Users/Desktop](#), [Other Audience](#)
- Operating System: [OS Independent](#)
- Topic: [Packaging](#), [Desktop Environment](#), [Printing](#)

Registered: 2006-03-04 13:01

Developer Info

Project Admins:

[Christian Perrier](#)
[Nicolas Spalinger](#)

Developers:

[Alan Baghumian](#)
[Andreas Barth](#)
[Andrew Starr-Bochicchio](#)
[Arne Goetje](#)
[Aurelien Jarno](#)
[Benjamin Hill](#)
[Daniel Glassey](#)
[Davide Viti](#)
[Erich Schubert](#)
[Eugeniy Meshcheryakov](#)
[Fabian Greffrath](#)
[Faidon Liambotis](#)
[Hideki Yamane](#)
[Holger Levsen](#)
[Joel Salomon](#)
[Josh Triplett](#)
[José L. Redrejo Rodríguez](#)
[Kai Hendry](#)
[Kartik Mistry](#)
[Kęstutis Biliūnas](#)
[Lior Kaplan](#)
[Luca Bruno](#)
[Martin Hosken](#)
[Mauro Lizaar](#)
[Michael Vogt](#)
[Miriam Ruiz](#)
[Mohammad Derakhshani](#)
[Mohammed Adhène Trojette](#)
[Neskie Manuel](#)
[Norbert Preining](#)
[Ognyan Kulev](#)
[Paul Wise](#)
[Pema Geyleg](#)
[Peter Cernak](#)
[Soputtra San](#)
[Soumyadip Modak](#)

Kudos

Christian Perrier: initial driver, mentoring

Miriam Ruiz: review script

Paul Wise: advocacy, mentoring, review script

Daniel Glassey: mentoring, sponsoring

Lior Kaplan: Hebrew fonts

Faidon Liambotis: GFS fonts

Hideki-san : Japanese fonts

Davide Viti : DejaVu

Holger Levsen : Liberation, sponsoring

...

Others
too!

Growing membership

Arne Goetze: great work on CJK fonts and across the Ubuntu language packs

Neskie Manuel with Canadian Aboriginal fonts

various people joining from the Ubuntu side (!)

big interest in i18n in this derivative

mirror team in Ubuntu

What about my Debian box?

- practical tips for fonts on **your** Debian box
- inconsolata font on your terminal (debaday)
- gnome-specimen
- fontmatrix
- fontpython
- fontconfig UI underway

The open font design toolkit

- apt-get install open-font-design-toolkit
- making it easier to contribute to open font projects
- branching a font
- new fontforge developments (spiro, cairo, pango)
- libfontforge
- python scripting
- OFLB integration

Fontforge

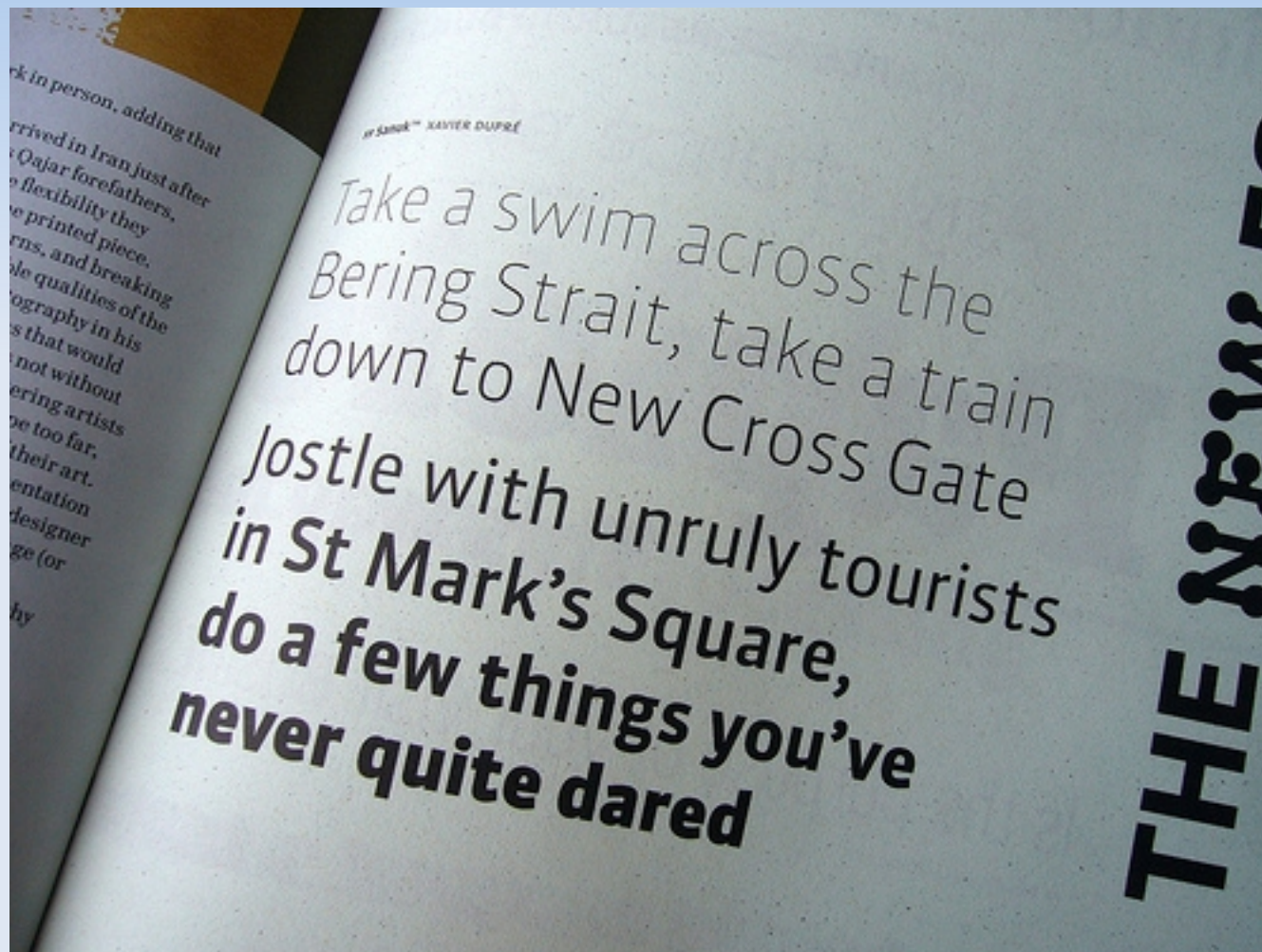
The screenshot displays the FontForge interface with several windows open:

- Main Window:** Shows the glyph 'd' at position 97 in the 'Meera LATIN SMALL LETTER D' font. The glyph is defined by a series of red control points and black curves. A bounding box of 811 is indicated.
- Character Map:** A grid showing the font's character set. The letter 'd' is highlighted in the row containing 'd e f g h i j k l m'.
- Kerning Metrics:** A window titled 'Kerning Metrics For Meera' showing the word 'adhesion' with kerning adjustments. Below it is a table of kerning values:

Name:	a	d	h	e	s	l	o	n											
Width:	817	811	729	813	729	243	813	733											
Bearing:	102	125	123	119	113	121	119	123											
lBearing:	-21	0	-2	-6	-6	-1	2	0											

- Print Dialog:** A 'Print' dialog box is open, showing a preview of the glyph 'd' with a bounding box of 129. It includes options for font size (12), DPI (93), and a text area containing a paragraph of text for proofreading.

Ways you can help



Ways you can help

- use open fonts
- advocate an open model to designers: make them aware of the advantages
- join the team
- contribute to the toolkit
- play with font design tools too
- release your playware, host a branch
- educate others about font subtleties
- use the foo-open-font-source VCS template as a reference with upstreams

Ways you can help

- use the font review to reduce duplication, find restrictive fonts who have slipped in
- check and fix metadata accuracy
- continue educating users and designers about licensing and DSFG-compliant fonts
- bundle them in your apps when it makes sense
- help extend i18n coverage building on new writing systems
- contribute to the wiki pipeline entry

Wider open font community

- cross-distro collaboration
- fontconfig snippets sharing
- OFLB wiki
- planet.open-fonts.org
- Fedora's work and ideas (!)
- the unifont.org resources
- Go for OFL campaign common campaign

Fedora font SIG

category discussion view source history

WIKI

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SEARCH

TOOLBOX

- [What links here](#)
- [Related changes](#)

Category:Fonts SIG

(Redirected from [SIGs/Fonts](#))



The Fonts SIG could have been named the Text or Typography SIG. While fonts are a large part of what we do, our actual scope is larger.

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- [packager corner](#)
- [QA corner](#)
- [creator corner](#)

Contributing roles in the Fonts SIG



Contributing roles

This is only suggestions for contributing roles. Only your imagination sets the limits.



[OS Developer](#)



[Designer](#)



[Translator](#)

About us

The **Fonts Special Interest Group** is an informal group of Fedora Linux contributors. It is dedicated to improving [fonts](#) availability and text rendering/layouting in the distribution and its other Linux derivatives:

The future...

- DVCS? considering storing tarballs not just packaging
- nicer mapping between fonts and language packs
- better mime-type integration of fonts and extended font sources formats in the desktop
- helping maintain defoma and helping us find a good replacement

The future...

- updating the policy to take into account modern font needs
- appropriate lintian checks
- finally getting the lettering of the Debian font logo to use something else than a restricted font!
- A core freedesktop.org open font set?

The Go for OFL campaign

unifont.org >> Go for OFL!

Go for OFL!

The Open Font License (OFL) is a new FLOSS community license created by SIL International. It has been specifically designed for licensing fonts. unifont.org has joined with FreeDesktop.org, SIL International, The Gnome Foundation, KDE e.V., the Linux Foundation, and the Free Software Foundation to promote and popularize use of the OFL all over the world. We hope that you will add momentum to this campaign by joining us to help promote use of the OFL as the preferred Free/Libre Open Source Software (FLOSS) license for fonts.

The OFL is recognized by the [Free Software Foundation \(FSF\)](http://Free Software Foundation (FSF)). It adheres to the values and [guidelines of the FSF](#), the [Debian Free Software Guidelines](#), as well as the [Open Source Definition](#).

The OFL provides a legal framework and infrastructure for worldwide development, sharing, and improvement of fonts in a collaborative manner. The OFL protects the rights of font authors while permitting font authors to release their work under a common license that allows the fonts to be bundled, modified, and redistributed. It encourages shared value. It is not limited to any specific computing platform or environment. And it can be used by organisations and individuals alike.

In order to learn more about how the OFL can benefit font authors and font users, please visit the following resources:

- [SIL's Open Font License Page](#)
- [SIL's OFL FAQ](#)
- [OFL Text](#)
- [OFL Campaign Letter Template \(ODT format\)](#)
- [OFL Campaign Letter Template \(PDF format\)](#)



Go for OFL! News

2006.11.04 -- Go for OFL! page made public.

2006.10.07 -- Presentation on the Go for OFL! campaign at Gnome Live! 2006 in Boston.

2006.08.01 -- Go for OFL! Find out about the new campaign to promote SIL's Open Font License as the preferred FLOSS license for fonts.

The future...

- OFLB launch (web fonts)
- open fonts on platforms for which Debian has influence/has been ported
- fonts for embedded/mobile platforms: Maemo/Android/OpenMoko
- DDTP descriptions of font packages and related font design/management software
- collaborative design workshops: OSP

TAG: OPEN FONTS

Logo Galore

January 10th, 2009 · Tags: [Design Samples](#) · [Font](#) · [Inkscape](#) · [Open Fonts](#) · [Printing + Publishing](#) · [Type](#) · [2 Comments](#)

Lots of work going on the OSP Studio.
Here are few of our recent production:

=====

Logo for
Le Vecteur
Cultural space in Charleroi city

Button version:

This logo that can be adapted in multiform patterns:

===== [...]

Linux Limousine

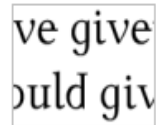
January 5th, 2009 · Tags: [Font](#) · [Fontforge](#) · [Open Fonts](#) · [Release](#) · [Type](#) · [1 Comment](#)

We're currently working on a poster for the support committees for the nine people accused of "criminal association for the purposes of terrorist activity". They were arrested the 11th of november 2008, in France, and 2 of them are still in jail.

They and others are the victims of a witch-hunt in which the word [...]

Libertinage

November 2nd, 2008 · Tags: [Fontforge](#) · [Open Fonts](#) · [Type](#) · [1 Comment](#)



The Libertinage font set we developed for FLOSS+Art book is available on the Open Font Library for several days.

We built Libertinage by copying and pasting parts of Linux Libertine glyphs or simply by all-turning glyphs.

There are 27 variations, one for each latin letter in the

alphabet + the 'Full' version, containing all modifications.

Un petit goût [...]

LATEST COMMENTS

Logo Galore / [Femke, Harrison](#)

Potrace --alphamax 1.334 (or the limit between artificial and natural) / [Roland](#)

Palais Châlet / [Renee Turner](#)

OSP wishes you a happy new year / [nitrofurano](#)

Open DIN: Das Ist Norm / [paula, nitrofurano, Elle, ignacio](#)

RANDOM WORKS

What we're doing and what we've done.

500 (printed!)

July 5th, 2008



500 unique books installed in Worm, Rotterdam.
Giant pixel image by Gordo Savicic and

[Danja Vassiliev](#).

More images:

<http://ospublish.constantvzw.org/image/?level=album&id=23>

Tags: [Printing + Publishing](#) · [Scripting](#)

[\[More works →\]](#)

RANDOM CONVERSATIONS

RANDOM SNAPSHOT



TAGS

[Batik](#) [Command Line](#) [Constant Verlag](#) [Cooking](#) [Culture of work](#) [Design Samples](#) [Digital drawing](#) [Digitalisation](#) [DIN Font](#) [Fontforge](#) [gimp](#) [Handmade](#) [History](#) [how-to](#) [Inkscape](#) [In the pipeline](#) [LaTeX](#) [LGM 2007](#) [LGM 2008](#) [Licenses](#) [London Music](#) [Open Fonts](#) [Piracy](#) [Presentations](#) [Printing + Publishing](#) [Print Party](#) [Python](#) [Radio](#) [Reading list](#) [Recipe](#) [Release](#) [Retrospective](#) [Reading](#) [Scribus](#) [Scripting](#) [sK1](#) [Standards](#) [+ Formats](#) [SVG](#) [Thoughts](#) [+ ideas](#) [Tools](#) [Type](#) [Usability](#) [links](#) [Watch this thread](#) [Workshops](#) [+ teaching](#)

COLLEAGUES, NEIGHBOURS

OSP: W Droge

Typeface in the making: W Droge



With a group of 20 courageous participants and the help of open type activists Dave Crossland, Alexandre Prokoudine and Nicolas Spalinger we are using Inkscape, Gimp and FontForge to produce a typeface in a day. We have named it **W Droge** (On Our Way, En Route in Polish) and it should be available for download ~~by the end of the day~~ tomorrow!

Workshop description: <http://ospublish.constantvzw.org/?p=454>

Posted by OSP on Wednesday, May 7th, 2008 in: [LGM 2008](#), [Open Fonts](#). You can [Comment](#), or [trackback](#) from your own site.

OpenFontLibrary.fontly.org

[Log in](#) | [Register](#)

Open Font Library



Get
Download Typefaces

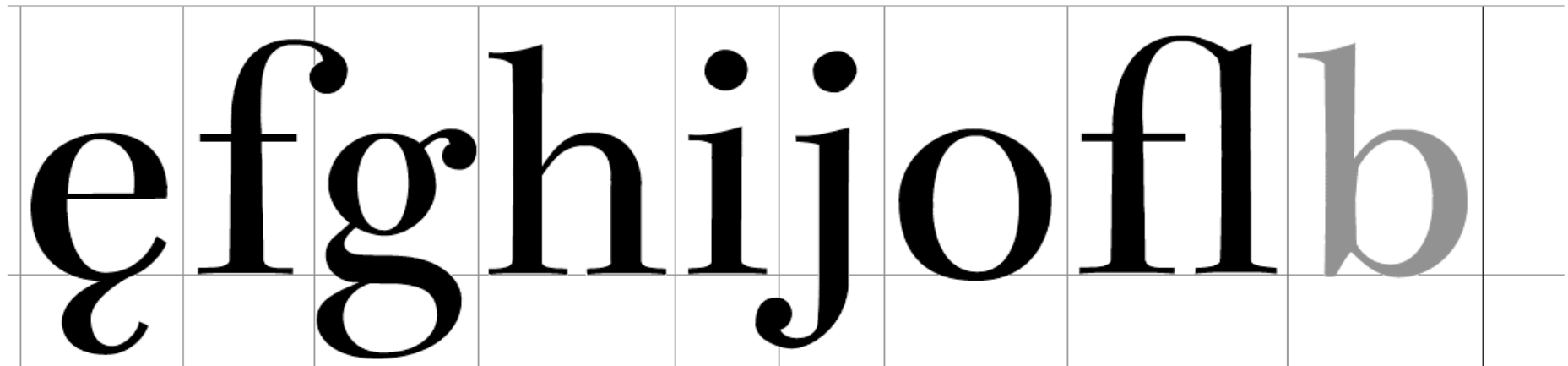


Share
Upload Typefaces



Remix
Branch & Merge Typefaces

Typefaces we can all share



Find fine fonts

The Open Font Library hosts the cream of non-proprietary typeface designs. [See what we have...](#)

Share your typefaces

Individuals share their work here and benefit from collaborative contributions. [You can, too...](#)

Learn how to make fonts

Become a better type designer with input from our global community. [Join the discussion...](#)

Start using @font-face

Link in to Web Fonts! We host font files that you can directly link to from your sites. [Find out how...](#)

Questions?

Thank you for your attention!

pkg-fonts.alioth.debian.org

openfontlibrary.org

scripts.sil.org

launchpad.net/people/fonts

Illustration credits: stewf from flickr - Michael Ciancio - Typolade

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