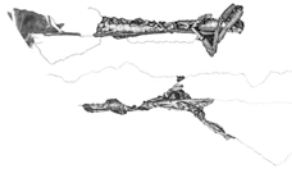
Note on Typography

James Langdon



Good and elegant typography spreads itself over pages evenly. Our computerized typesetting tools are optimized to achieve the effect of a uniform tone by automating, as much as possible, the micro-typographic interrelations of spacing, proportion, and fit. In doing so, however, these tools reproduce a rather arcane image of text as a discreet graphic object. Historically, text and image have passed through technological eras which have conjoined them, and others which have separated them. In *The Book of Kells*, probably produced around the year 800, text and image are intricately and artfully combined, while on Gutenberg's printed pages from 1450, text and image are the products of entirely separate technical processes. For the last 500 years, text and image have continued to flip-flop in this way, because to entwine them will always require more graphic labor than to treat them as separate.



The typesetting of the pages in this volume disregards some of the niceties of conventional typography. Its setting is at once justified and unjustified. It allows words to clump, conventionally unsightly "rivers" of unprinted space to form, and generally lets text take on an uneven presence, improvising its formal relations with images on each page. In concert with this approach, the images here emphasize their typographic qualities: escaping their rectangular frames, sending out branching lines, abstracting and exaggerating contrast and texture.