picture the
dark cave
of the skull

OPACITY ENGRAVING
Edited and designed by Karl Nawrot
with a text written by James Langdon.
Set in NOVA (24, 36 and 80 pt) and printed
in an edition of 350 copies by Tallinna
Raamatutrükikoda (TRT) on Munken
Lynx, MA Gloss and Amber Graphic.
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Nawrot and Olivier Lebrun. © 2025
Karl Nawrot and Phantom Avantgarde.
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These drawings were made in February 2023, in the process of designing the typeface NOVA for James Langdon's project Neurovague: a website which generates abstract images for neuroscientists to use in presentations of their research. The selection of 77 drawings is presented in the order in

which they were produced. The title,

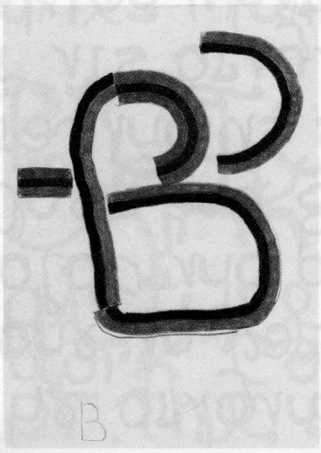
OPACITY ENGRAVING,

comes from the first Neuro-vague composition typeset in NOVA (reproduced here).

(1) PICTURE DARK CAVE picture the dark cave of the skull

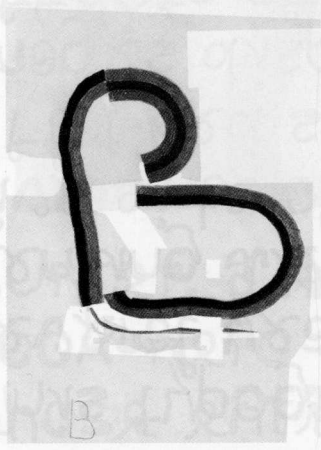
The original drawings were done in various shades of grey colouring pencil on sheets of 60gsm and 80gsm A4 paper. Each drawing is shown here at 50% of its original size, in black ink on white paper, and some have been slightly retouched to compensate for constraints in the printing process.

To produce the typeface, each drawing was scanned and then reworked using image-editing software — see, for example, the letter B, here and below. Once its form had been finalised, each drawing was saved at three different



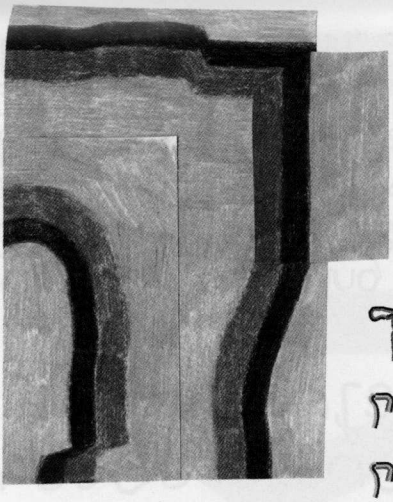
(2)

resolutions: 256 pixels high, 512 pixels high, and 1028 pixels high. These three image files were then used to define each glyph in font editing software, allowing for the typeface to be used at different sizes.



(3)

This typographic project began several years ago, while experimenting with placing the reflective side of a Compact Disc on a flat-bed scanner. The resulting images displayed spontaneous effects of light: reflecting, refracting, creating iridescence and distortion which recalled the experience of seeing move-



(4)

ment reflected in a highly-polished sculptural form. These experiments resurfaced memories of the Silver Surfer, a melancholic comic-book hero with cosmic powers, whose entire body is made

of a silvery-metallic material. He can rearrange matter to create illusions, shape objects, or reconstruct any material at a molecular level.

(1) Opacity Engraving by James Langdon, PDF file, 3508 × 2480 px, 2023. (2) Coloured pencil drawing on paper, 21 × 29.7 cm, 2023. (3) Digital collage for the letter B, tif file, 2551 × 3579 px, 2023. (4) Coloured pencil drawing on paper, collage, 10 × 13 cm, 2023.

