

Software

Masterful font juggling

By Tamis Nordling

MasterJuggler, version 1.90. \$69.95 (list price), Macintosh only. Alsoft, Inc., (713) 353-4090.

EVERYONE HAS AT LEAST ONE dirty little secret—something we're embarrassed to admit to friends and colleagues. I used to have one. Unlike all my cool desktop-publishing buddies, I didn't use MasterJuggler to manage my fonts. I did admit it publicly once, and was met with a chorus of surprised, almost admonishing responses: "But it's so user-friendly!" "But the new version is great!" "But we swear by it!"

I had always managed my fonts either by refraining from installing too many at once, or by using Symantec's Suitcase. Suitcase and MasterJuggler are the leading font-management utilities on the Macintosh, and each has its own partisans. One feature that has given Suitcase an edge is its support of font sets: it lets you group your fonts into sets—for instance, a set of fonts for each project or client—so you can open and close fonts in groups. But the latest version of MasterJuggler, version 1.90, also offers this functionality. That sold me. About a month ago, I gave in to peer pressure and to my own curiosity, and purchased MasterJuggler. So far, I've been delighted. The interface is extremely user-friendly, and the feature set is robust.

MasterJuggler comes with a variety of utilities, features, and public-domain resources, but the centerpiece of the product

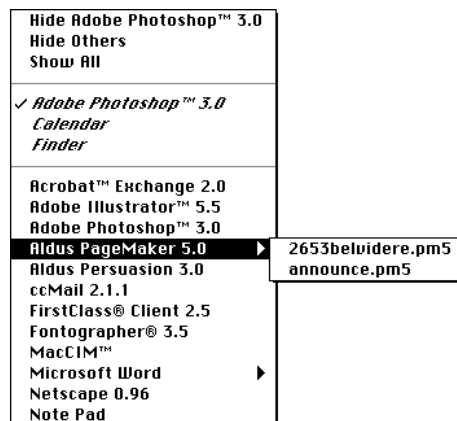
is the MasterJuggler Extension, which manages fonts, sounds, and function keys. The latest version of the MasterJuggler Extension offers some important new features—it's fully compatible with System 7.5 and QuickDraw GX; it lets you open as many suitcases as the System software permits (348); and it allows you to use suitcases from local as well as network drives. And, of course, you can create font sets. In MasterJuggler, the font sets act as group aliases to your font files. Because they're implemented this way, MasterJuggler's font sets offer some impressive flexibility—you can create font sets that include other font sets, and the font sets maintain their functionality even if you have to reinstall your System software.

The font-management features are implemented simply and elegantly, and the documentation is reasonably clear. Nevertheless, the manual focuses heavily on TrueType issues and doesn't supply much detail about PostScript-font management. So here's a tip if you use enough PostScript fonts that you need a font-management utility: if you're using ATM (Adobe Type Manager), you don't need any more than one size of each bitmap screen font. I always keep the smallest size and trash the rest, which saves lots of hard-drive space.

Since using MasterJuggler to manage my fonts, I've only experienced one technical problem. Possibly due to some conflict with MasterJuggler, Microsoft Word 6.0 takes an exceptionally long time to launch when I load a lot of PostScript fonts through MasterJuggler. (With 142 PostScript fonts loading through MasterJuggler, Word 6.0 takes about 3½ minutes to launch on my Quadra 800 with 8MB of RAM, instead of 1½ seconds when the

fonts were loading through the "Fonts" folder.) Microsoft Word 6.0 does have a known problem involving long launch times when many PostScript fonts are installed, but it's unclear why loading those fonts through MasterJuggler exacerbates the problem on my system.

Despite my own extensive troubleshooting and the capable efforts of the MasterJuggler technical support

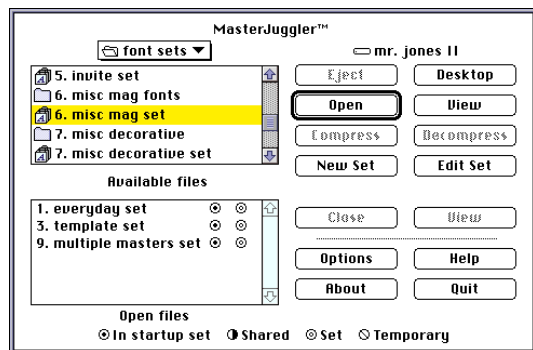


group, I wasn't able to find the cause or a fix. For now, I'm assuming the problem is related to whatever causes Word to launch slowly with many installed PostScript fonts, and I'm hoping that the 6.0a update of Word will provide a fix. In the meantime, I'm simply working with smaller sets of fonts. Fortunately, MasterJuggler makes loading and unloading those sets easy.

In addition to its font-juggling features, MasterJuggler offers some clever application-management utilities: the "Application list" and the "Application pop-up menu." Both are customizable lists of applications that have two sections: one for currently open applications, and one for other applications (you can also have them list specific documents for those applications).

You can open the Application list at any time by pressing a hot-key combination you define—then, you simply use the mouse, press arrow keys, or type the first character(s) of the application you want, and press Return to switch to or launch that application. The Application pop-up menu is similar, but it opens when you click the mouse on the desktop while holding down a customizable hot-key combination. When you switch to another application from these lists, you can either open it without hiding your current application or you can have it automatically hide the application from which you're switching, which significantly cuts down on screen clutter.

MasterJuggler—especially the latest version—is a handy product. If you spend lots of time sorting, loading, and unloading large numbers of fonts, you should definitely consider MasterJuggler (unless, of course, your little secret is that you like juggling all those fonts yourself). ▀



From MasterJuggler's main dialog box (above), you can create, edit, open, and close font sets quickly and easily. To view the contents of a set, select it and click "View."

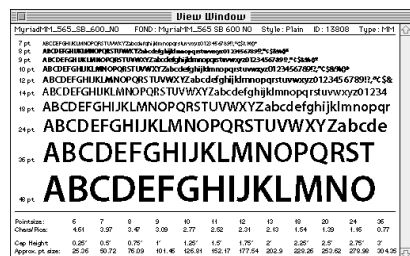
Software

Show your letters

By James Larkin

TypeBook 4.0 (Macintosh) and **FontShow 6.0** (Windows). \$49.95 each. Rascal Software, (805) 255-6823.

SOMETIMES LITTLE UTILITIES MAKE A BIG difference. If you have a lot of fonts on your system (as many of us do nowadays), you may be a candidate for a type cataloging utility—a program that you use to create sample pages of your fonts. This way you can easily print samples that show what your typefaces look like at various sizes, what characters the font includes, and sample paragraphs that show the appearance of the font when used for text.



TypeBook 4.0 and FontShow 6.0, a pair of type cataloging and inventory utilities for the Macintosh and Windows, respectively, make it easy to generate type catalogs and specimen sheets of your fonts, and they may even teach you a few things about type. Both utilities have a history as well-respected shareware or freeware, and now they're distributed commercially by Rascal Software.

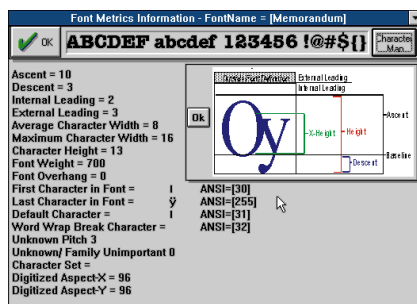
Although distributed by the same company, the products were developed by different people and are not mirror images of one another by any means. Of the two, TypeBook (the Macintosh program) is the easier to use. You have your choice of six customizable sample pages, and you can view any character and any sample page on your screen—one of the few enhancements from the shareware version. You can also print keyboard maps for any font, which is handy for keeping track of special characters. If you need to print hundreds of sample pages at once, your co-workers will appreciate that TypeBook sends each sample as a separate page, rather than printing all the pages as a single job.

(Their print jobs can sneak in between your pages, rather than waiting until you've printed your entire run.)

The commercial version of the product allows you to add your own headers and footers, including graphics, to catalog pages. This could be useful, especially if you're creating a lot of catalogs to keep together in a binder or if you're making a commercial catalog, although for casual use it's not a very important capability. TypeBook 4.0's online help is exhaustive—you'll learn more about fonts than you ever wanted to.

For casual or serious use, the commercial version of TypeBook, while not much different from its shareware predecessor, is what you want if you need a nice screen preview. If you can do without screen preview and don't need to customize sample pages, however, the freeware version 3.26 (available on any major online service) will do the job equally well. (You can customize pages in the freeware version if you pay a registration fee of \$22 or \$45, depending on the level of customization.)

FontShow, by comparison, is less flexible and is clunkier to use than TypeBook. It offers a choice of five sample pages, and you can view characters and ANSI code tables for any font. The program even provides information on font metrics, for the real type junkies out there. One "gee whiz" feature is the ability to establish DDE (Dynamic Data Exchange) links so you can insert type samples into any application that can paste in DDE objects, but it struck me as more of a "gee, why?" capability; I also had trouble making it work consistently. Online help is useful but pretty basic.



The company promises an updated version of FontShow (7.0) in the spring, perhaps by the time you read this, that smooths out the user interface. Most interestingly, the new version will also let you view and print fonts that aren't in-

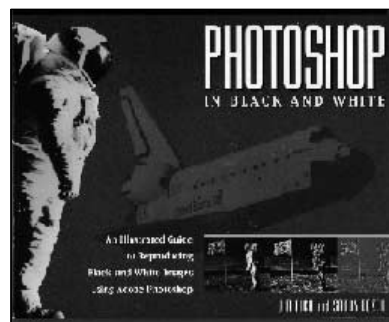
stalled on your system, such as those on a CD-ROM font library. The new version will also print multiple sample pages in a page-independent way, just like TypeBook, and will handle damaged or non-standard TrueType fonts better.

FontShow 6.0 could use a little smoothing out—I'd wait for version 7.0. ▀

Books

Black and white and read all over

By J. Scott Campbell



Photoshop in Black and White, by Jim Rich and Sandy Bozek. Berkeley, Calif.: Peachpit Press, 1994. 44 pages. \$18.00. (800) 283-9444. ISBN 1-56609-117-9.

BACK IN THE OLD DAYS, THOSE OF US WHO switched from traditional paste-up to desktop were stunned. I remember making tests on the new Lino 100 comparing camera-generated halftones to those made on a primitive HP scanner. PageMaker gave us access to a simple curve controlling the gray levels of the image. With a little finesse, our desktop versions had bested the camera, often by a factor of two, showing better values and more detail in every aspect of the image.

What had happened? The TIFF format for grayscale images, plus simple software tools, provided access to the values for individual grays of the photo. We could push and pull parts of the image to emphasize its strengths and hide (or fix) its weaknesses. A little later a new, more powerful image tool appeared when Adobe introduced Photoshop . . . and as the tools grew, an industry blossomed.

Which brings us to Jim Rich and Sandy Bozek's excellent book, *Photoshop in Black and White*. First self-published by the au-

thors and then picked up by the indispensable Peachpit Press, this slender but jam-packed volume assumes no previous knowledge of image reproduction or of Photoshop. It covers, clearly and concisely, material that would take months—or longer—to learn by trial and error. *Photoshop in Black in White* shows how to understand and use the essential Photoshop tools and settings for perfect image analysis and grayscale manipulation.

This book doesn't contain any information about retouching, designing, or special effects. It doesn't get into color at all. It is about getting the clearest, best-looking black-and-white image for printing. In a world where most computer books are encyclopedic tomes covering everything you could ever want to know about a subject, it's a relief to find one this focused. Even if you work in color, this book is a great education in the essential capabilities of Photoshop.

For instance, there is an elaborate explanation of the "Histogram" and "Levels" dialog boxes. These intricately related dialog boxes are very difficult to understand (some would say almost impossible), yet they're crucial for understanding and controlling your final output. Rich and Bozek provide simple examples so you will learn to anticipate how and why your images fall short of perfect. Then they give you the knowledge you need to quickly straighten them out.

There is also an excellent section on working with the midtones of an image. Along with sharpening problems, poor midtones probably account for 90 percent of the typical problems you see in printed grayscale images. By using the authors' simple "multi-point method" of controlling the "Curves" dialog box, you should be able to fix just about anything. This explanation on pages 22 and 23 alone is worth the price of the book.

There are chapters with common-sense ways to eliminate moirés from scans, an exhaustive glossary of terms for the layman, instructions for resampling data, procedures for scanning, and hundreds of tips. In fact, I have only one gripe about this book, and it really isn't about the book at all. It looks as though the designers who did the cover didn't read the book—the grayscale images on the cover are awful. Fortunately, it's what's inside that counts. ■



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