The Eternal Letter addresses at length the subject of the Trajan letter, its imitators, and its sometimes wayward progeny. It is written by a team of accomplished experts and superbly illustrated. Every spread is a delight and a revelation.

—SEBASTIAN CARTIER, author, Twentieth Century Type Designers

This remarkable volume is the most comprehensive, most thoughtful, and most entertaining examination of a single set of letters I’ve ever read. The very notion of a 2,000-year-old set of letters will be used to advertise a blockbuster at your local multiplex next weekend is that of a single set of letters I’ve ever heard. This volume sets the standard for all books that will ever be written on the topic. What an amazing resource! So much research, so much knowledge, and I’m going to use it. It will be on the top of my desk from now on. I had to read The Eternal Letter forty years ago, I might have been too scared to begin trying to design type.

—PAUL SHAW, founder, Typotheque

TWO MILLENIA OF THE CLASSICAL ROMAN CAPITAL

EDITED BY PAUL SHAW

The fiftieth anniversary of Helvetica, the most famous of all sans serif typefaces, was celebrated with an excitement unusual in the staid world of typography and calligraphy, and it is the release of the first mono-verse edition starting a TypeFace. Yet Helvetica’s fifty-year revelation pales in comparison with the 2,000th anniversary of Trajan’s Column and its famous inscription—the monumental illustrations of the classical Roman capital letter. For, despite the modern ascendancy of the sans serif and typefaces, most notably Times Roman, still dominate printed matter and retain a strong presence in screen-based communication. The Eternal Letter offers a lavish illustrated examination of the enduring influence of, and many variations on, the classical Roman capital letter.

The Eternal Letter offers a series of essays—by some of the most highly regarded practitioners in the field of typography, lettering, and stone carving—on the design and history of these typefaces. Their essays offer a series of essays on the enduring influence of, and many variations on, the classical Roman capital letter. The essays cover such topics as the real origins of the classical Roman capital letter, its development and astonishing popularity; type and letter design; the influence of Trajan and the Times Roman; and the work of famous typographers and craftsmen. The essays cover such topics as the real origins of the classical Roman capital letter, its development and astonishing popularity; type and letter design; the influence of Trajan and the Times Roman; and the work of famous typographers and craftsmen. The essays offer a series of essays on the enduring influence of, and many variations on, the classical Roman capital letter.