



09.05.2019 & 11.05.2019

# THE FACIT MODEL

**Globalism, Localism & Identity**

**Our Polite Society**

May 2019 will see the launch of *The FACIT Model*: a book-, exhibition-, and type design project by Amsterdam & Stockholm based graphic design studio Our Polite Society.

*The FACIT Model* is the result of a 4-year-long study of the printed ephemera produced by the legendary Swedish typewriter and office machine manufacturer FACIT AB throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s. The project was initiated by Our Polite Society in 2015 as a visual research at the FACIT AB archive in Åtvidaberg/Sweden, and will be concluded in spring/summer 2019 with the release of a book, a series of typefaces, and an exhibition.

On 9 May 2019 at 8pm, the book *The FACIT Model*, published by Spector Books/Leipzig, will be released at San Serriffe in Amsterdam. In addition to a comprehensive selection of archive material, the book contains a number of commissioned essays by Mark Owens (US), Gabriel .A. Maher (AU/NL), Isabel Mager (DE/NL), and Paul Gangloff (FR/NL), as well as a series of drawings by Samuel Nyholm, aka SANY (SE).

A series of typewriter typeface revivals, which were developed by Our Polite Society as part of their research, will be released on 9 May 2019 on Our Polite Society Type ([www.ourpolitesocietytype.net](http://www.ourpolitesocietytype.net)).

On 11 May 2019 at 5pm, the exhibition *The FACIT Model* will open at Fanfare in Amsterdam. The exhibition will be on view from 11–27 May 2019. On July 1, the second instalment of the

exhibition will open at the FACIT Museum in Åtvidaberg (Sweden).

### **Project dates**

What: Book release *The FACIT Model* When: Thursday 9 May, 8pm Where: San Serriffe, Sint Annenstraat 30, 1012 HE Amsterdam, <https://www.san-serriffe.com>

What: Typeface release When: Thursday 9 May Where: Our Polite Society Type, <http://www.ourpolitesocietytype.net>

Typefaces: OPS Favorite, OPS Cubic, OPS Placard, OPS Facitype

What: Opening of the exhibition *The FACIT Model* (part 1) When: Saturday 11 May, 5pm (opening talk at 6pm) Where: Fanfare, Da Costakade 154, 1053 XC Amsterdam, <http://fanfarefanfare.nl/>

What: Opening of the exhibition *The FACIT Model* (part 2) When: Monday 1 July, time t.b.c. Where: FACIT Museum, Åtvidaberg/Sweden

### **The FACIT Model Globalism, Localism & Identity**

“FACIT (FACIT AB) was an industrial corporation and manufacturer of office products including furniture. It was based in Åtvidaberg, Sweden, and founded in 1922 as AB Åtvidabergs Industrier. FACIT AB, a manufacturer of mechanical calculators, was incorporated into the corporation the same year. In 1932, the first ten-digit calculator was manufactured by Åtvidaberg Industries, it was named FACIT and became a great success.” (Wikipedia)

In Sweden, much has been written about the rise and fall of FACIT, one of the world’s biggest office machine companies that disappeared into obscurity almost overnight because of missed technological developments and fierce competition. *The FACIT Model* approaches this story from a design perspective through the abundance of printed matter that is still preserved in the company archive. Modernist vision manifests itself in the formal qualities of the company’s printed output, but also in their belief in a ‘total design’ which included tools, working environments, and social structures.

Our Polite Society approached the FACIT AB archive as a visual source, studied type specimens to make new digital interpretations of alphabets used in FACIT machines, spoke to former FACIT employees to learn more about their ideas and intentions, and commissioned a number of contributions to deal with topics that they found significant in relation to the material. Mark Owens looks at FACIT in the broader context of modernism and corporate culture; Gabriel .A. Maher & Isabel Mager deconstruct the gendered depiction of the secretary in FACIT catalogues; Paul Gangloff writes about the production of words with typewriter technology.

The 1950s?–1970s were the heyday of corporate design- and office-culture – years in which

many of today's codes and forms of working & living were conceived and defined. *The FACIT Model* gives testimony to the history of a company which grew from a small family business into a global manufacturer of calculators, typewriters, and office furniture. At the core of the relationship between the company and the community is the ethos of 'good design'. For decades, the company and its vision indeed dominated and shaped the (social) life in the small municipality of Åtvidaberg. *The FACIT Model* documents this intertwining of modernism, corporate culture, and society. By lifting the printed ephemera from the alleged objectivity of the archive, the material is reactivated – both to testify to its past and to reflect on lingering questions of localism, globalism, and identity.

## **Our Polite Society**

Our Polite Society is a studio for graphic design, type design and typographic research based in Amsterdam and Stockholm. It was founded in 2008 by Jens Schildt (SE) and Matthias Kreutzer (D) after their studies at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie (Amsterdam) and the Jan van Eyck Academy (Maastricht).

Our Polite Society's production comprises formats such as books, magazines, posters, exhibitions, signage systems, record sleeves, screens, and typefaces. Among others, Our Polite Society have produced works for Bauhaus Dessau, the University of Stockholm, the Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam, the New Institute Rotterdam, Malmö Konstmuseum, and Internationale Bauausstellung (IBA). Their self-initiated work investigates how typographic form reflects social phenomena, and how it relates to ideology and the distribution of knowledge. Since 2017 they are publishing typefaces under the imprint Our Polite Society Type.

Their work has been exhibited internationally, notably at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the International Poster & Graphic Design Festival Chaumont, the Tallinn Art Hall, and the State University New York; it has been endowed by the Creative Industries Fund NL, was twice awarded with the Best Dutch Book Designs, and is part of the collection of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

Our Polite Society are currently teaching at the Konstfack University (Stockholm), the Gerrit Rietveld Academie (Amsterdam) and the Royal Academy of Art (The Hague); they have lectured in Amsterdam, Stockholm, Leipzig, Ghent, Brussels, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Prishtina, Sofia, and Montréal, among others.

Our Polite Society: [www.ourpolitesociety.net](http://www.ourpolitesociety.net)

Our Polite Society Type: [www.ourpolitesocietytype.net](http://www.ourpolitesocietytype.net)

Our Polite Society Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/our\\_polite\\_society](https://www.instagram.com/our_polite_society)

Our Polite Society Facebook: <https://nl-nl.facebook.com/ourpolitesociety>

## **Book info**

Title: The FACIT Model

Subtitle: Globalism, Localism & Identity

Designers: Our Polite Society

Authors: Mark Owens, Gabriel .A. Maher, Isabel Mager, Paul Gangloff, Our Polite Society

Editors: Our Polite Society

Publisher: Spector Books

Release date: 9 May 2019

Volume: 248 pages

Format: 21 x 29,7 cm

Language: English

Production: Offset

ISBN: 978-3-95905-286-3

Retail price: € 32

Available through [www.spectorbooks.com](http://www.spectorbooks.com)

### **Typeface info**

Name of the typefaces: OPS Favorite, OPS Cubic, OPS Placard, OPS Facitype

Type foundry: Our Polite Society Type, [www.ourpolitesocietytype.net](http://www.ourpolitesocietytype.net)

Designers: Our Polite Society

Release date: 9 May 2019

File formats: Open Type, Post Script

Test version available through: [info@ourpolitesocietytype.net](mailto:info@ourpolitesocietytype.net)

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AFK – Amsterdams Fonds voor de Kunst

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Brukskultur Åtvidaberg

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