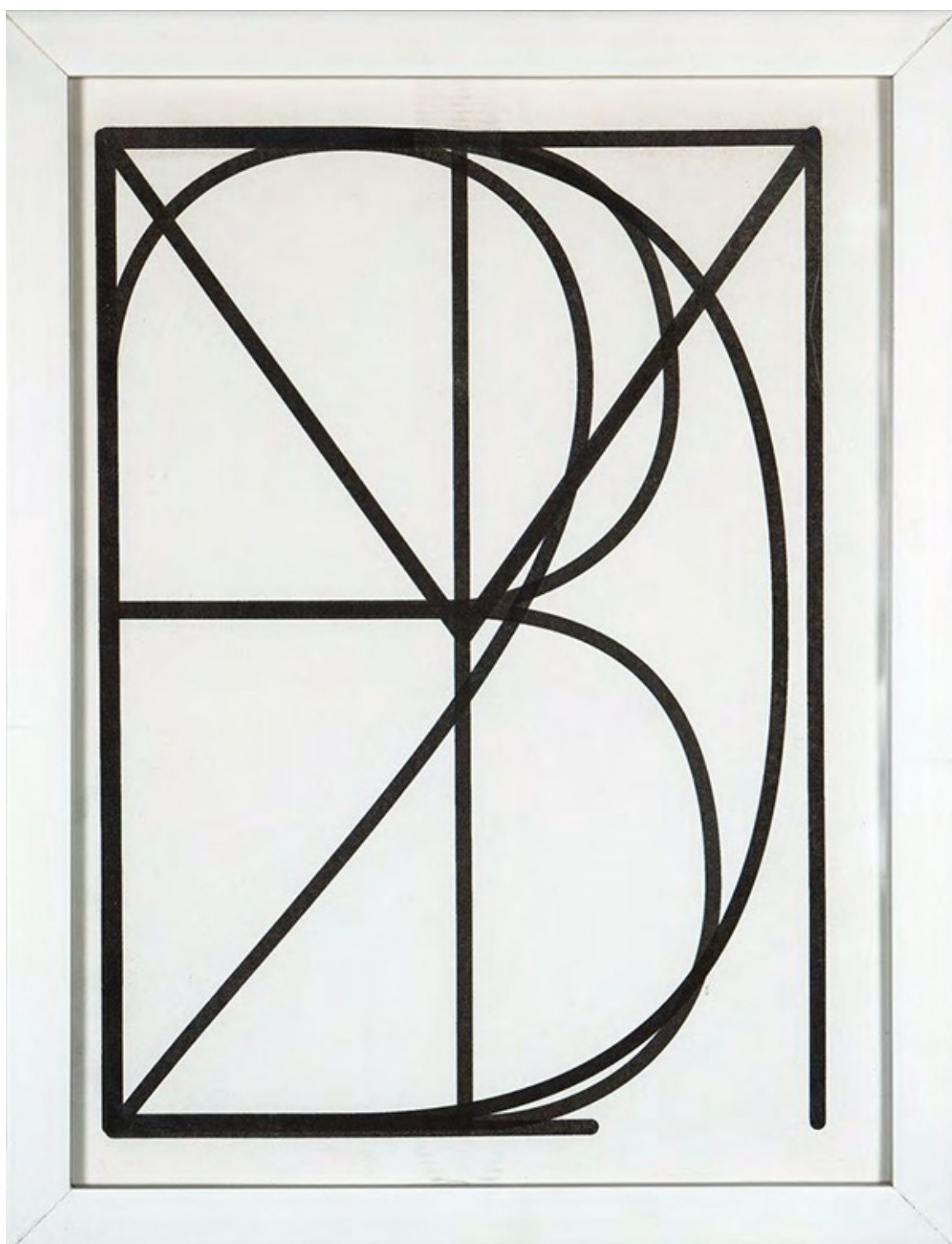


79 - META - THE - DIFFERENCE - BETWEEN -  
THE - TWO - FONT COMPOSITE GLYPH



## 79 - META - THE - DIFFERENCE - BETWEEN - THE - TWO - FONT COMPOSITE GLYPH

Donald Knuth began his Josiah Gibbs lecture “Mathematical typography” with an apology of sorts, saying: “I will be speaking today about work in progress, instead of completed research, this was not my original intention when I chose the subject of this lecture, but the fact is I couldn't get my computer programs working in time.” And he continues, “Fortunately it is just as well that I don't have a finished product to describe to you today, because research in mathematics is generally much more interesting while you're doing it than after it's all done.”

Meta-The-Difference-Between-The-Two-Font has a similarly incomplete character. As a set of simple letterforms and a collection of meta-design parameters, MTDBT2F will create unending numbers of different fonts from now onwards, always only moving forward and compiling a collection of surface effects onto its essential skeleton to produce a growing family of “hollow” fonts whose forms have more in common with handwriting than they do with hot metal counterpunches (not to mention modern digital fonts). The clumsy result, with its chewy name Meta-The-Difference-Between-The-Two-Font, arrives before the effect that is applied to it, returning to a moment before fonts, just before Gutenberg's first black-letter Gothic types attempted to match the scribe's penmanship. At this point, to computer-automate the production of handwritten calligraphy, and to more or less ignore 400 years of typographic tradition, is essentially absurd.

It seemed like a good idea at the time.

—“A Note on the Type,” Dexter Sinister, Bulletins of The Serving Library #1, 2011

Dexter Sinister,  
Meta-The-Difference-Between-The-Two-  
Font compostie glyph, 2011,  
Risograph print, 33 x 25.3 cm