

# Danlan type by Adriaan Goddijn

*(and a salacious gnome)*

The marketing mechanism of a Dutch Ebay version notified me that an article linked to a person with my surname had come up for sale. Usually that means an old book about the workings of electronic organs in the sixties by one Goddijn or history books about Catholic sociology by another Goddijn (both unrelated) but now another, more obscure Goddijn popped up as the maker of a slightly scandalous and weird colour pencil work depicting a garden gnome and his concubine.

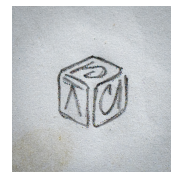
It's an art piece of cylindrical anamorphosis, meaning that the perspective of the image has been distorted to disguise an erotic image while enabling someone with a cylindrical mirror to recreate the 'hidden picture.'

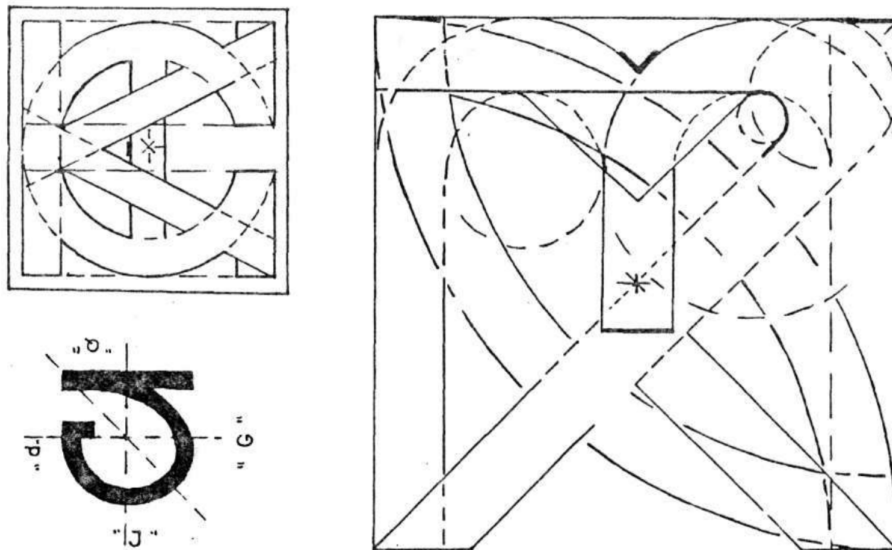




To me, it seems a waste of valuable time and resources to create a rather silly gnome image which needs a special tool to see it. Nevertheless, Adriaan Goddijn (1925–2008), a painter and typesetter who studied in The Hague and taught at the Copenhagen university, had fun doing it since he was fascinated by the chance reflection, in a reflective tin can, of a tobacco pouch.

I went on and purchased the drawing, not for the image but to have a close look at the way the artist signed it, namely with his initials in a font he had created himself over the course of twenty years, in which every character of the alphabet is depicted using just seven glyphs. He named it DANLAN because he worked on it in the country of Denmark and the Dutch province of Friesland.






As a young man, he gold tooled the leather spines of books in his father's book-binder's workshop and when he did his own book binding later in life he missed having the vast collection of handle letters he had had at his disposal at his father's place. He wanted to engrave his own letters but decided to limit the number of glyphs to save time. He never got around to actually engrave but he did design a font which needs an absolute minimum of glyphs, inspired by the Roman Capitalis Quadrata (upper caps) but simplified. Six of his glyphs can depict four characters each and the seventh can depict two, depending on how they are turned, left, right, upside down. Each glyph has the same width and height, fitting in a square so any side of the square can be the bottom line.





It takes a little bit of practice but the characters are just familiar enough to our eyes to be able to quickly recognize the words:

EADIND SHIS NUN ARE  
INSTRUCED SO A NEW  
SHOE 'WAGE' 'DANCE' 'DANCE'  
BAND ON THE ANCIENT  
SHOE ON THE 'DANCE'  
COUNCIL' WHICH HAS ITS  
KINDS IN HIS OWN. SHE  
26 WAGES ARE DESIGNED  
ON SEVEN WORKS ON.

EACH MOUTH GIVING  
SHOES BY SUNKING IN  
SO ONE ON THE WORK 'D'  
(BWM). THE BASIC WORK  
IS CONSTRUCTED IN  
SUCH REACTION SO ITS  
SOUTH BOW. THAT A  
DEVELOP HARMONY BE-  
TWEEN BOW & WAGE SO  
WAGE IS USTAINED.

THESE HIKMKS VWZ: ARE  
SIMILAR. DANCE 'DANCE' 'DANCE'  
DANCE 'DANCE' 'DANCE' 'DANCE'  
AND A ARE DANCE 'DANCE'.  
THESE READING SHIS  
SCRIPTS NUN ARE WAMIS-  
IT WITH A MODERN YES-  
SEK ON THE MUSE. *THE*

[bron o.a. Arthesis, mededelingenblad van de Stichting Art et Mathesis, Jaargang 5, nummer 2, april 1991]

Frans Goddijn