

# In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure-dome decree:  
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran through caverns  
measureless to man down to a sunless sea. So twice five  
miles of fertile ground with walls and towers were girdled round:  
and there were gardens bright with sinuous rills, where blossomed many  
an incense-bearing tree; and forests ancient as the hills, enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

## 41 Type Design

### A new font for tiny sizes

■ "Agate is a standard unit of typographical measurement found primarily in newspaper publishing, approximately equal to 5.5 points or 1.81 millimetres or 1/14 inch. The very small type used for statistical data in the sports and stock sections of a newspaper is agate type. 'Agate' can refer to either the height of a line of type or a font that is 5.5 points. It is considered the smallest point size that can be printed on newsprint, then read legibly." (Source: Wikipedia)

Melia was designed for use at such small sizes. Its condensed proportions and large x-height help aid readability at sizes below 10pt. It is therefore ideal for text set in narrow columns, such as in newspapers and magazines. This text

is set in 5.5/7pt, with the title in 17/21pt.

Melia is characterised by its soft, friendly feel, rounded terminals, and open counters which don't clog at small sizes. Unlike other agate fonts, Melia lacks pronounced ink traps, allowing the typographer to use it equally well at headline sizes without unintended side-effects. In fact it performs excellently between 18 and 40pt.

As Melia was an evolution of my font Mint, certain idiosyncrasies have been transposed onto Melia, including the subtly tapered stems on characters such as the capital E and Z and the open counter of the lowercase g. Such features are not noticeable at small sizes, but add interest at display sizes.

There are plans to draw a bold and an italic to accompany Melia, but I need to tidy up the roman cut first: fresh eyes would be most welcome to make constructive criticism.

## Melia

### CHARACTERS

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