GRANSHAN Statement on our attitude

GRANSHAN fosters a global typographic community valuing cultural diversity and mutual respect. Veronika Burian and Toshi Omagari will now manage the Cyrillic Script Group. GRANSHAN stands for respect and solidarity.

9 February 2024

Dear GRANSHAN Community!

We see our organisation and all our activities as paths to a stronger, connected global typographic community. We believe that the richness of our roots and locations create bridges amongst cultures, and advance understanding. At the time of our 12th Type Design Competition we formulated a statement that described how we expect all members of our community to behave towards each other, and emphasised our position with regard to current events. **Last year we published the GRANSHAN Self Commitment Statement,** **(https://www.granshan.com/13th-granshan-type-design-competition-2023-2024/compliance)** which all jury members and entrants to the GRANSHAN competition, as well as all those actively involved in GRANSHAN, must sign without exception. The statement declares that "In all our activities, our red lines are clear: **we cannot provide a platform for anyone who speaks out in favor of any form of war of aggression, terrorism, any kind of discrimination and harassment**. We stand for a world order founded on international law and mutual understanding and cooperation."

"At the same time, we are aware of the wide range of conflict situations and injustices of all kinds worldwide; as a globally active project, we are regularly confronted with them. We are mindful of the challenge and the pitfalls of judging things from the outside. Amongst the founders and supporters of the GRANSHAN Foundation there are many people with strong views in these areas. We respect these, and – as long as this respect and openness is mutual – **we are happy to expose ourselves to this diversity of opinions and rise to the challenge of mutual understanding**."

However, **one of our recent social media posts** about the 13th GRANSHAN Type Design Competition, which is currently underway, **attracted a lot of commentary, some of it defamatory**. The post announced the Script Chair of the Cyrillic Script Group, which has been led very successfully and with recognition of its work for many years by Alexei Vanyashin. The commentary questioned this constructive and voluntary cooperation, with criticism that we consider unfounded, irrelevant, in bad faith, and with no appreciation of the voluntary process of the Competition. It is clear to us that most of the commentators have no connection with GRANSHAN or the competition at all, and are attracted to the fact that Alexei Vanyashin is Russian. **This ad hominem attack is below any acceptable level of discussion or debate**, and is not worth

unpicking individually. (We are reasonably confident that some of the comments are from bots.) We do not link to these, or engage: we will not respond to shrill provocation, unfounded accusations, or insults.

It is our duty to protect those who are committed to GRANSHAN. Together with Alexei Vanyashin, we have agreed to retire the role of Script Chair for the Cyrillic Script Group in the 13th GRANSHAN Type Design Competition. Of course we will continue to work with Alexei, but for now not in this prominent role. The two Competition Chairpersons, Veronika Burian and Toshi Omagari, will take over the management of the Cyrillic Script Group for this competition.

GRANSHAN lives the diversity not only of scripts, but also of the world's cultures. This is not always an easy path – but our future lies in togetherness, respect and solidarity.

Boris Kochan
President GRANSHAN Foundation
on behalf of the entire GRANSHAN team

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