



Markus Kutter  
**Schiff nach Europa**

Book design: Karl Gerstner

German, 218 pages, 16 x 24 cm  
clothbound with a dust-jacket  
printed on both sides  
Euro (D) 39.–, Euro (A) 40.–, CHF 39.–  
ISBN 978-3-03863-000-5

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## Reprint of a cult book

Markus Kutter's novel *Schiff nach Europa* – “visually organised” by Karl Gerstner – “assumes an early experimental position that will become generally established in book design only several years later”, wrote François Rappo. By dint of its typography matching the text, it can be seen as a milestone in Swiss book design and was awarded the Most Beautiful Swiss Book prize in 1957.

The “synthetic novel” plot (a passage from New York to Europe on the Andrea Doria, later to sink) consists of different types of text – narrative, drama, conversation and monologue. Even while writing, Markus Kutter envisaged the text having to be staged by means of the appropriate typography. Karl Gerstner described this task as a “personal experiment” and a “special treat”.

Looking at the book, you can sense the gratification at having realised “integral typography”, and it communicates itself to the reader.

The book has been out of print for years and is much sought-after by collectors. The reprint gives many readers the opportunity to finally hold this cult book in their own hands for the first time. The reprint is true to the original, a dust-jacket printed on both sides features both the original cover and the updated version with a commentary by Felix Wiedler.



**Felix Wiedler** studied German Studies and History of Art, wrote about information technology topics as a journalist and editor, and about art and graphic design as a book author. He blogs about his collection of modern 20th-century book design at [wiedler.ch/felix/books](http://wiedler.ch/felix/books). Lives with his family in Winterthur, in a house full of books, guitars and songs.

## A novel as a homage to Akzidenz-Grotesk

One can sometimes rather lose track of the characters and their stories in Kutter's novel, with its montage-style mix of different forms of text. The focus is all the more on the book's secret protagonist, who – literally! – takes centre stage even on the cover: it's name is Berthold Akzidenz-Grotesk. Now large, now smaller, now bold, now semi-bold, in a constantly changing grid layout, now upright, now sideways, but always strictly asymmetric down to the page numbers. [...]

*Schiff nach Europa* is actually a typographical novel that is above all about Akzidenz-Grotesk. (Monotype Grotesk plays a walk-on part as running text.)

From the preface by Felix Wiedler