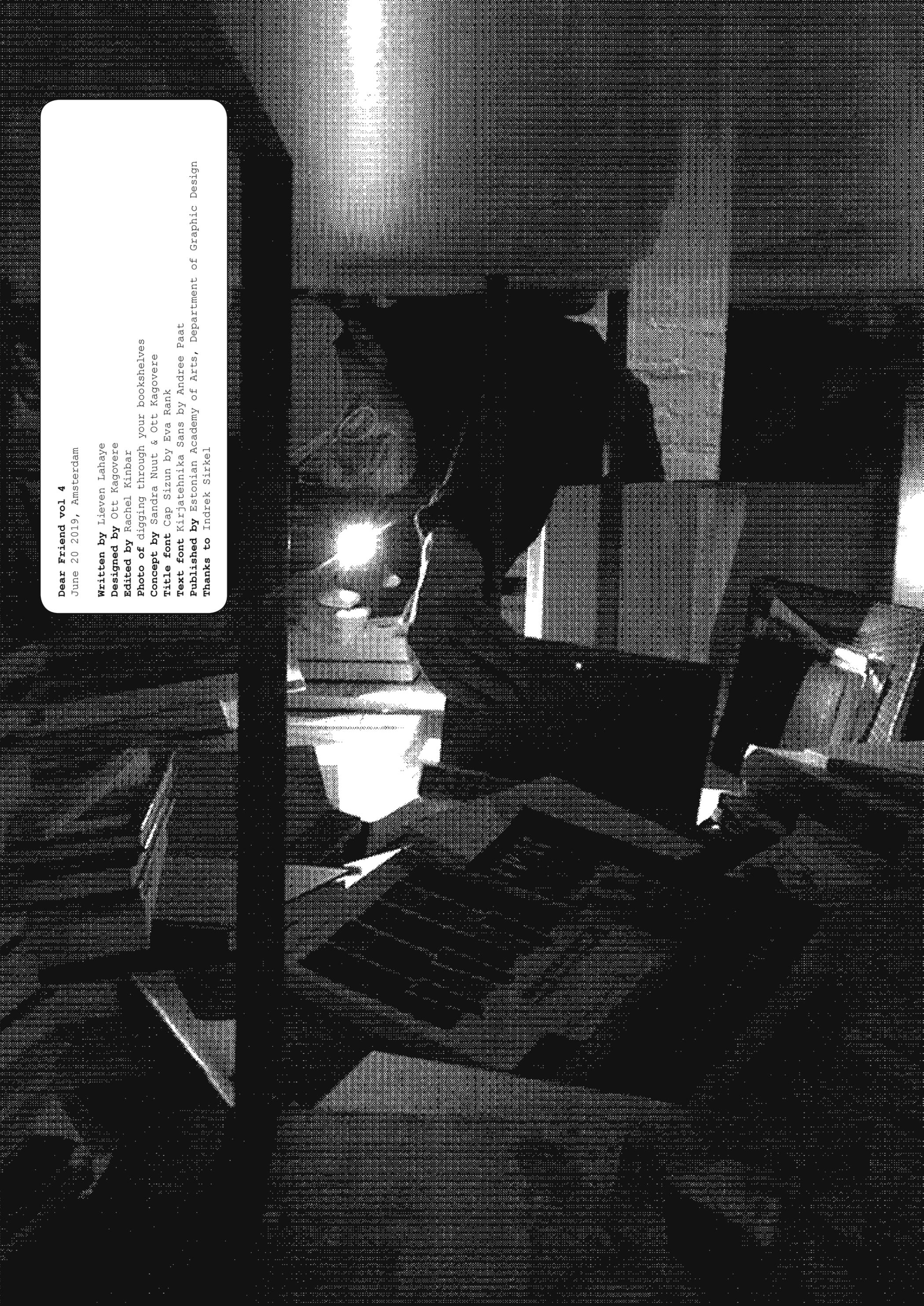
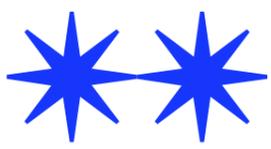


Dear Friend vol 4
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DEAR FRIEND,

I've been thinking about you lately because the Notre Dame was on fire. "It was horrible to watch the massive fire at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. Perhaps flying water tankers could be used to put it out. Must act quickly!" Did you read that? It's what Trump tweeted while the fire was raging. Advice offered, on the level of "make it bold", "make it bigger", or "do a performance".

I had to think of a note I have saved on my phone, from the time we were talking at a bar one night last December, during a book-buying trip to Berlin. The note reads: "Trump Tower: What's the hot stuff? Case study houses taschen → This is not hot! It's just heavy."

Most of the notes I have saved on my phone are unintelligible, like that. "At the oibrary i dream of oulling weeds", "what's left bricoleur", "Beefheart bush recording kid is eric drew feldman", and "It says so in the title!!!!" They're notes I take after I have just heard or read this or that. I write them down so I won't forget – though sometimes they're so abstract that I forget what they mean.

Back to that note, *your* note. "Trump Tower: What's the hot stuff? Case study houses taschen → This is not hot! It's just heavy." We were pretty drunk that night (though I think maybe you weren't?). From what I remember, you told me a story about working at a bookshop (maybe it was The Strand?) and Trump Tower would routinely call the architecture department, asking to send over some new architecture books, "the hot stuff". I don't remember at all what books they did like, but from your note, I can tell they didn't care for the Taschen edition of the *Case Study Houses* book. I guess this came up while we were talking about *S,M,L,XL*? Ever since I wrote that text about every copy of *S,M,L,XL* I've ever seen, people routinely send me that photo of *S,M,L,XL* on Trump's desk in Trump Tower. (BTW, his copy is also a Taschen edition – the type on the spine is orange.)

There was a fire at Trump Tower. Last October. "Fire at Trump Tower is out. Very confined (well built building). Firemen (and women) did a great job. THANK YOU!" The highest rated response is by Cheri Jacobus: "Someone died." It's true, Todd Brassner died. His New York Times obituary reads: "Todd Brassner, who died in a fire at Trump Tower on Saturday, loved fast cars, electric guitars, expensive watches and making long, erudite pronouncements about art and art history. He was an art dealer with health problems and a 2015 bankruptcy that listed his apartment as the location of more than \$3 million worth of artwork and other collectibles, including a 1975 portrait of Mr. Brassner painted by Andy Warhol." Todd Brassner's Facebook profile is still online. His profile picture features the aforementioned Andy Warhol painting.

I've been looking at that picture again. Of Trump at his desk in Trump Tower. I can recognize *S,M,L,XL* and *Delirious New York*. I think someone told me the one on top is a Philip Johnson book? Do you know? Can you tell? I don't know what the one on the bottom is. Looks big. There are also some

ring binders. When the architect Todd Reisz tweeted that picture, Twitter user Jordan replied: "a source says the books came from Herbert Muschamp." In 1999, the New York Times architecture critic Herbert Muschamp wrote a piece about Trump-as-builder, *Trump, His Gilded Taste, and Me*. At some point in the story, Trump, Johnson, and Muschamp meet at MoMa to have their portrait taken in front of Andy Warhol's *Gold Marilyn Monroe*. "There's a large sculpture in the middle of the room, a brass floor piece by Donald Judd. Evidently Mr. Trump mistakes it for a coffee table, for he uses it as one, tossing his overcoat and some binders full of pictures on top of it as we walk over to the painting."

"In late 1946 I and four other soldiers went by bus from Fort McClellan, Alabama, to Los Angeles, where we inveigled a ride from the Army Air Force to San Francisco in order to be shipped to Korea to pester the world. This was the first time that I saw the Southwest, unfortunately according to the days and nights of the bus. Since everyone knows that nothing is accidental and that everything is fully planned, it's not surprising that I sent a telegram saying: DEAR MOM VAN HORN TEXAS. 1260 POPULATION. NICE TOWN BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY MOUNTAINS – LOVE DON 1946 DEC 17 PM 5 45." [from: Donald Judd's 'Marfa, Texas' essay]

I visited Marfa once, though I didn't know who Donald Judd was at the time. Before going, I remember reading that the town was an artist's community and thinking "yeah right". Now, I'm curious to go back. I'd like to see his bookshelves. When we visited the Donald Judd house in New York, the guide told us that the books on his New York bookshelf were the last ones he ever bought. They would've been shipped off to Marfa and added to the library over there, if he hadn't passed away. Even this haphazard collection made a lot of sense.

You know, I think I also never really cared for that *Case Study Houses* book – or the entire Case Study Houses project, for that matter. The book itself is a terrible, gigantic coffee table book. I'm surprised Trump Tower wasn't interested. My favorite Case Study Houses are the ones that are now listed as "Remodeled beyond recognition".

How are the bookshelves in your shop holding up? I just remembered that I promised you I'd build a lamp for them, but maybe all you need are some flashlights that customers can use? I'm including a picture of my colleague digging through the bookshelves, using the flashlight on his phone. Maybe it's better to get some flashlights. In which case, I'd be happy to make some hooks to hang them on.

