Guide to the Über Goober Games R'lyehian Alphabet / Font

Background

The goal was to design an alphabet that matched H.P. Lovecraft's description of the ancient language. To do that it needed

1. To hang down from "horizontal word lines"
2. To be hieroglyphic in nature
3. Not be like Naacal (i.e. ancient Mayan)
4. Not be like the hieroglyphics of Easter Island (Rongorongo)

The next most obvious hieroglyphics after that would be Egyptian, so putting all that together translated to something that combined a Devanagari style with symbols that could have eventually led to the Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Basic Alphabet

This is a set of letters for Lower Case versions of each letter. If you want your writings to be basic writing only, keep everything Lower Case.

"Altered" Alphabet

     This is a set of letters for Upper Case versions of each letter. The idea is that the language and concepts of the language are non-Euclidean and non-linear, so there is nothing stopping someone writing it to change directions, or change the orientation of the letters. Long story short, these are either backwards, at right angles, or upside-down, and in some cases tweaked so they seem fairly different from the basic alphabet. Using capital letters gives variety to the writing, but also makes it harder to read.

A B C D E F G

H I J K L M N

O P Q R S T U

V W X Y Z
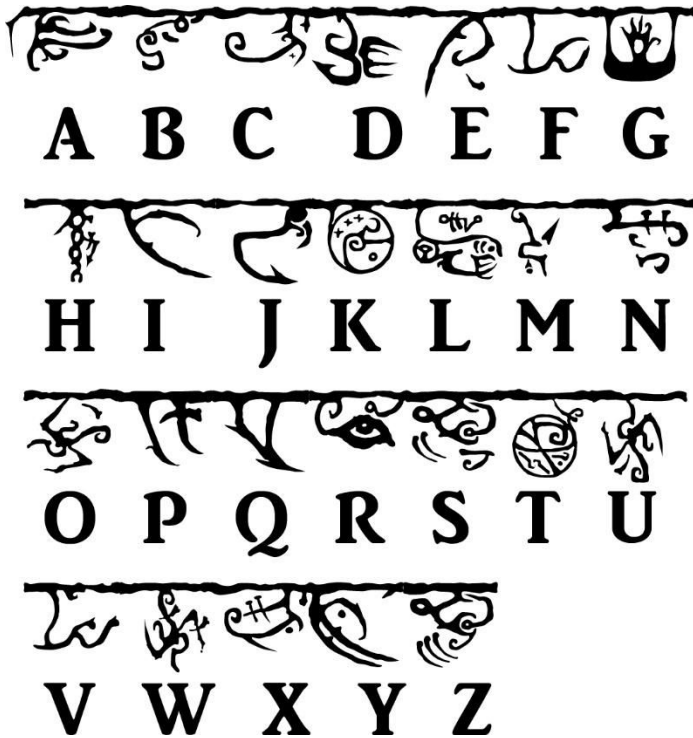
Plurals and Apostrophes

     Whenever a letter appears twice in a row, the font will erase the second one and add two spikes to the top of the first one. Adding an apostrophe (i.e. a glottal stop) will draw a line down the right side of the letter and slightly underneath. A variation of this is the quotation mark, which will draw the line down the right side.
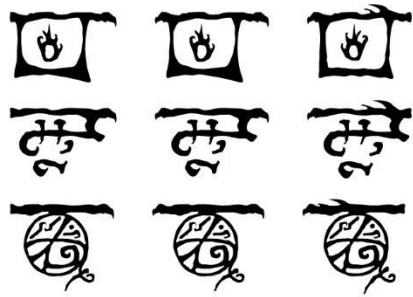
ANY + ANY = PLURAL

GLOTTAL + ANY
STOP (')

Ligatures

Certain letter combinations form smaller root words which have their own symbols. Some software allows ligatures, some (most notably Office) usually doesn't. If you are using software that allows it, then when you type out the letter combinations in lower case, the font will group them into the new symbol for you. The "TH" combination is not its own word, but is a different symbol for that sound.
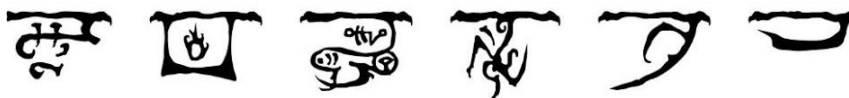
M+ G= **MG** (Opposite of)

R'+ L+ U+ HH =**R'LUHH** (secrets)

O+ T+ H= **OTH** (born of / native of)

N+ Y+ T+ H= **NYTH** (servant of)

N+ G + L+ U+ I = **NGLUI** (threshold / door)

T + H = **TH**

Numbers

No great innovation here, each number 1-9 is represented by a like number of hanging tentacles, with "0" represented by a stylized ominous gate.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Great Old Ones

Rather than spelling out the name of every Great Old One, each one has their own symbol. When the symbol appears alone, it appears vertically. These are represented by the special characters ¡ ¢ £ ¤ ¥ ¦ § ¨ ©.

However, to use them in the font, where they will be "hanging" and horizontal, they are represented, in order by the symbols: ! @ # $ % ^ & * (i.e., numbers 1-8 if you hold down the shift key).

AZATHOTH

YOG-SOTHOTH

SHUB-NIGGUROTH

NYARLATHOTEP

NUG AND YEB

TSATHOGGUA

CTHULHU

HASTUR

Heads and Tails

Since each letter is part of a line above it, there are several keys to add "flairs" to the ends of those lines. They are ( ) { } [ ] : ; , . < > / ? \ | (basically parenthesis and all those symbols on the right of the keyboard except the apostrophe and quotation mark).

Non-Letter Additions

There are four additional symbols that writers of the language will add to the alphabet that have no bearing on the pronunciation of the words or their meanings. They are represented by - _ + and = on the keyboard. The symbols are

1. The eye of Yog-Sothoth. Adding extra eyes to hieroglyphics was a way to ask for Yog-Sothoth's blessing in those writings and activities around them.
2. A small tentacle (or tentacle with an eye at the end). Similar, but something that developed as a way to honor Tsathoggua or Cthulhu.
3. The three dots. These represent Aazthoth, Yog-Sothoth, and Shub-Nigguroth together
4. The nail of Nyarlathotep. A less definitive sign used by writers to give minor emphasis to letters.
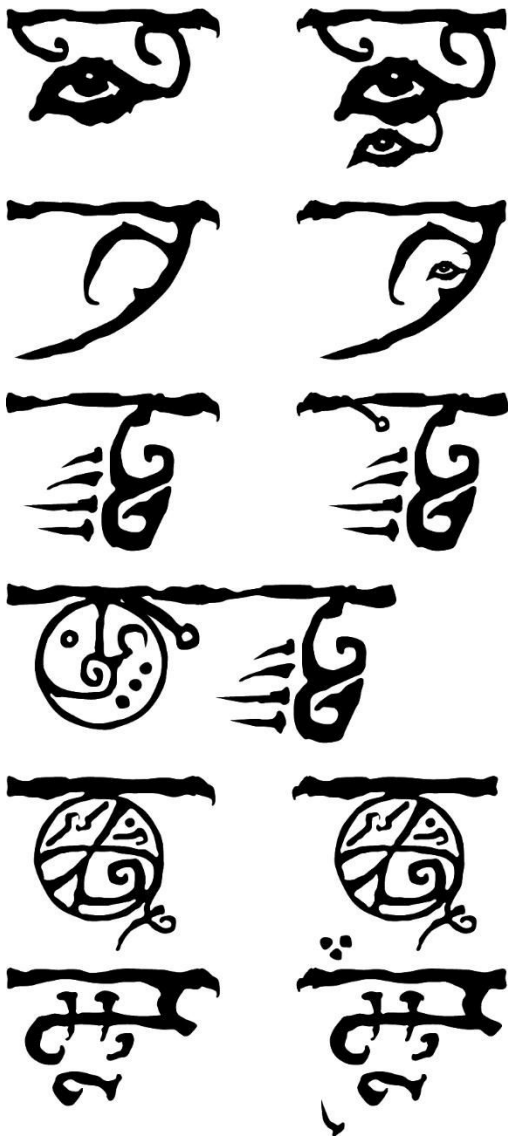
In the first example, with the character for "r", the eye works as the same font size. When used with the character for "i" it works better at about half the font size as the original letter. The small tentacle adds a little to the character for "d" and when the font is increased, it actually moves to the character that comes before it, as in the example with the character for "k" coming before "d."

Sample Words

R'LUHHOR
(SECRETS INCARNATE)
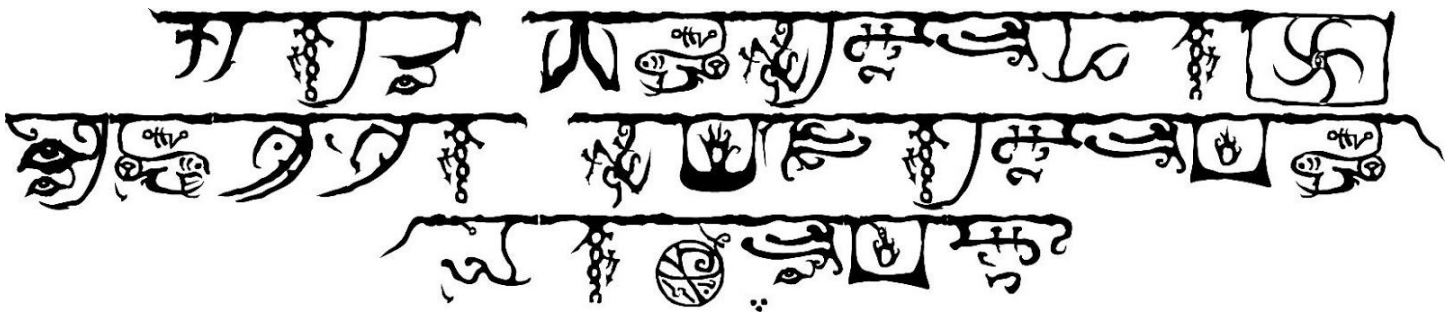(GREAT OLD ONES)

R'LUHHNYTH
(SERVANT OF SECRETS)
(WIZARD PRIEST)

SHOGGOTH
(BORN OF THE PITS)

And the most famous phrase

Translated

PH'NGLUI   **MGLW'NAFH**

CTHULHU   **R'LYEH**