

RISD GD MFA 2017

SCRIPTING ALLOGRAPHS

JUNE SHIN

Scripting

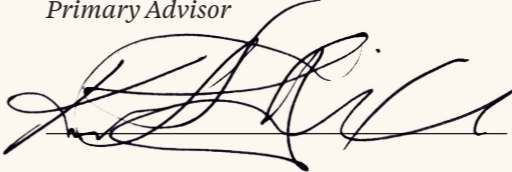
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SCRIPTING ALLOGRAPHS

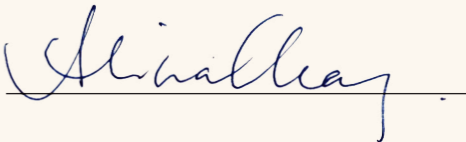
A thesis by **JUNE SHIN** presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree Master of Fine Arts in Graphic Design in the Department of Graphic Design of the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island, 2017.

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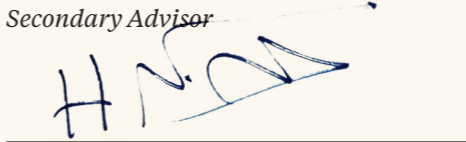
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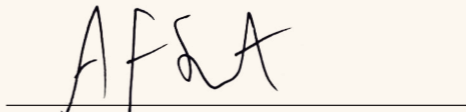
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SCRIPTING ALLOGRAPHS

SCRIPTING ALLOGRAPHS

For my family

ABSTRACT

*Scripting Allographs** examines typographic principles and their pervasive impact on ways of seeing and making through design. This body of work demonstrates the many faces of typography and type design and the way they inform allographic thinking. It employs type as the primary tool and medium for scripting possibilities, embracing their differences, idiosyncrasies, and imperfections. Beginning with a focus on close observation of small details and ending with an approach that invites and celebrates variability, this thesis offers a glimpse into a design practice from the lens of a typographer, type designer, and educator.

* **SCRIPTING** The term "script" has more than one meaning: handwriting, calligraphy, a writing system, a predefined sequence of events such as a musical score or a screenplay, or a programming language as in computing. Its verb form, *to script*, then, can mean to write a text, draw a letterform, or devise a plan that determines a course of action.

ALLOGRAPHS An allograph, a linguistics term, is every possible manifestation of a letter: A, a, *A*, *a*, **A**, *ℒ*, and all hand-written or hand-lettered forms. By foregrounding subtle differences found among variants of a single idea, this term points to the notion of infinite possibility. How many different ways can you write or draw something? The potential is exhilarating.

NOTE TO THE READER

A thesis book is a catalog of work, a time capsule, and a deposit of research you leave behind. This book follows the structure of a hypothetical curriculum for a design school. I am both instructor and student in this course, which comprises various elements.* Lectures and projects live side by side, and the briefs serve to draw you, the reader, into my process and thoughts.

This is my best attempt at recounting my experiences and sharing my honest reflections that, hopefully, show the beginning of my teaching and learning pedagogies. A tremendous amount of learning—technical, intellectual, and personal—took place during my time here, and presenting this document in a way that not only reveals but also embodies in its very format how it happened seemed fitting. There are different ways to learn, and I believe they are all valid and valuable. For me, the classroom setting has been the primary site for learning—for 20 years.

At RISD, I moved fluidly between being a student, a designer, and a teacher, and this book is also an expression of how these different roles and various kinds of endeavors have shaped me and my practice.

Now, you are entering my classroom as you turn this page.

* **LECTURES** are essays introducing the underlying research and relevant ideas that inspired and influenced my thinking.

BRIEFS outline the questions I was asking and the parameters I set up for myself, while contextualizing and clarifying the intentions behind the projects.

PROJECTS are the work I made, presented through project descriptions, documentation & process images, sketches, and captions.

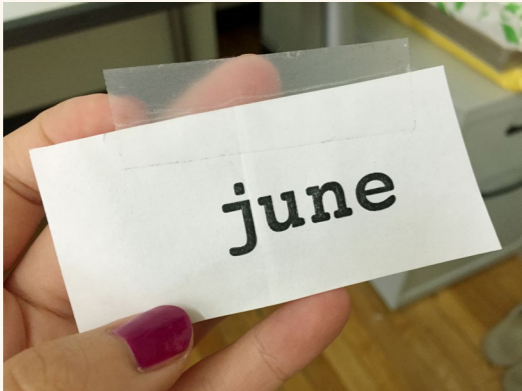
GUESTS are interviews I conducted with experts in their respective fields as another form of research.

CATALOG OF TANGENTS are an index of rejected proposals, failed attempts, discarded ideas, and relevant tangents that informed, and sometimes directly caused, other projects in the body of this book.

Welcome!
I'm June,
your
instructor.

Are you
ready?

SYLLABUS



COURSE

Scripting Allographs
Department of Graphic Design
Rhode Island School of Design

INSTRUCTOR

June Shin
jshin06@risd.edu
Office hours by appointment

MEETINGS

Locations will vary:
CIT Building, Design Center, Fleet
Library, Providence Public Library,
College Building, etc.

Recommended hours:
24 hours, 7 days a week
including federal holidays

INTRODUCTION

People now take me for a native English speaker, but I was once an ESL student. When my mother and I landed in Los Angeles on March 26, 2003, I could barely say hello in English. My mom became a lingual genius and a hero to me because she could order for us at a fast food restaurant: “Hamburger, two. Cola, one,” she would say, with one hand pointing at the menu and the other making counting gestures. From memorizing vocabulary—their multiple meanings, spelling, and pronunciation—and understanding grammar, to picking up the exceptions and colloquialisms, learning a foreign language is always a challenge that takes time. But it can also be a transformative experience. For me, English was one such language. Typography was another.

When I first arrived at RISD in the fall of 2014, I was greeted by a printed name tag spelling out the four letters of my name—**june**—taped to my desk in the graduate studio. It was set in Courier Bold. My immediate reaction? *I really don't like that.* I did not know Courier. My almost religious use of Helvetica, Futura, and Gill Sans should give you an idea of how typographically undernourished I was at the time. In my own nascent design world, I made a good designer because I knew never to use Comic Sans. (I was in on the secret, right?) Despite my typographic illiteracy, however, I did notice something strange about the type on this name tag: There was a huge gap between the “j” and the “u.” The “j” looked lonely, standing off to the side by itself, while the other three letters seemed to be getting along pretty well. I was raised to take matters into my own hands when I see a problem, so I got to work: I cut the “j” out and glued it back on, closer to the “u.” (See the image on the opposite page.) I did not realize that I was kerning¹; this word had not entered my vocabulary yet. Over the course of my time here at RISD, I am happy and grateful to be able to say I have grown into an able typographer (I know what kerning is, and how to do it well, too) and developed an extraordinary love for letterforms.

Simply put, *Scripting Allographs* is a course designed to express and transmit this love. While it is certainly typographically minded, this class is neither an introduction to typography nor a typeface design course; it is meant to demonstrate how design principles influence ways of seeing and making and how design practice and everyday life inform each other.² Think of it as an elective class in which you get to

¹ In typography, kerning refers to the adjusting of the spacing between characters to achieve a visually pleasing result.

² ...the two basic aspects of art studies in which teaching can offer help are seeing and formulating: in other words observation and articulation. I repeat: observation—the basis of vision, and articulation—the condition of formulation.
JOSEPH ALBERS

explore your interests, guided and challenged by instructions as well as constraints. There will be lectures, but keep in mind that this is a studio class; meaning it is necessarily based on practice—you will learn by doing. For each unit, you will be asked to complete a number of projects in response to a brief, each with different points of focus. I will provide feedback along the way.

Coming to RISD changed my life. My hope is that, by the end of our time together, you, too, will have experienced some of the same enthusiasm, rigor, joy, *and* pain (it is a necessary part of any meaningful growth) that I myself experienced while learning, designing, and teaching.

OBJECTIVES

Knowledge of art and design history and conventions
 Ability to organize and present information coherently
 Understanding of visual hierarchy
 Sharp eye for detail
 Sensitivity to the structural and spatial aspects of type as they relate to readability, aesthetics, and semantics
 Good craftsmanship

EXPECTATIONS

Do yourself a favor and always try to do the best work you can.
 Remember that your process is just as important as the deliverables. Make sure to keep a record of your process.
 Back up your work frequently.
 Check your email daily.
 Bring your commitment, positive attitude, enthusiasm, and an open mind to every class meeting.

ATTENDANCE

Show up to every class and be on time. Late arrivals and early departures will be noted and affect your self-image negatively. You are allowed one excused absence. In case of illness and other emergencies, it will be your responsibility to catch up.

EVALUATION

Attendance/participation: punctuality, active participation in critiques and discussions, general attentiveness & curiosity
 Design process: exploration of varied ideas, thoughtful concept development, and not one but multiple iterations
 Body of work: overall quality of final* work
 Craftsmanship and presentation: level of care in the final outcome and clarity of communication

MATERIALS

Laptop with the following: Adobe InDesign Illustrator Photoshop Acrobat AfterEffects Premiere Pro Audition Keynote QuickTime Player GitHub Robofont SketchUp Sublime Text OpenFrameworks Xcode Skype	Brushes of various sizes Letterpress ink Sketchbooks Acetate Vellum Tracing paper Bookbinding thread Wax Needle Jade glue Binder's board Museum board Bone folder Studio Tac Plexiglass Wood Spraypaint Sanding paper Fabric Magnifying glass Drill DSLR camera Tripod Audio recorder iPad Pro Apple Pencil Fortune cookie maker Flour Eggs Sugar Vanilla extract Others (TBA)
Access to copier, scanner, printer, plotter, & projector	
Various writing tools Various types of paper Various types of tape X-acto knife X-acto blades (bottomless supply) Cutting mat Ruler (please, no plastic) Loupe Noise-canceling headphones Copic wide markers Sumi ink Acrylic paint	

*Remember that "final" just means it is the last time we will review the work in class. You may always return to any of the assignments and make further improvements in the future.

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1

LOOKING CLOSER

LECTURE 1



Typography is to writing what tone is to spoken words; as “secondary signifiers, they are quietly working behind the scenes, subconsciously

affecting our reading of the primary meaning.”¹

Given how much importance and authority written words command in comparison to spoken ones, the form they take is seldom given careful consideration. In his essay “Fuck Content,” designer Michael Rock dismisses the false dichotomy that perpetuates the “form-follows-function” model, stating that for designers, “...our *What*

is a *How*.”² Especially in this digital age where the potential of typographic impact is greater than ever, it is puzzling to see so few people involved in the teaching, learning, and creation of type.

I imagine a type designer as someone who relishes, not endures, almost Proustian meditative obsessiveness and sensibility. Similar to the way

¹ Michael Worthington, “Type for the Twins: A Review of the TCDC Proposals,” *Metro Letters: A Typeface for the Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: Design Institute, University of Minnesota, 2003), p.177.

² Michael Rock, “Fuck Content,” *Multiple Signatures: On Designers, Authors, Readers and Users* (New York: Rizzoli International, 2013), p.95.

On this page: A loupe.

Proust ruminates on the process of falling asleep for 30 pages, a type designer may spend a week or two working on a single letter or working out the kerning structure. Design educator Mitch Goldstein believes that, “Understanding kerning is to understand visual design, in that small nuanced details make the gestalt of a project better or worse.”³ For a type designer, caring about the smallest of details—about where each anchor point is placed, nudging it by one or two units, only to move it back—is

³ Mitch Goldstein, “The Trouble with Kerning,” *Medium*, May 24, 2015. <https://medium.com/@mgoldst/the-trouble-with-kerning-577e5e6dc010>.

not just accepted but expected. However, in the flood of countless fonts available to us today, many fail to realize there is a designer or a team of designers behind each typeface. Even for

graphic designers whose arsenal includes knowledge and skills in typography, type design is a particularly specialized field whose inner workings are mysterious and whose craft is easily overlooked.

Do you know what Baskerville’s lowercase “g” looks like? Take a look. In typography education, going from micro to macro is a common approach that can be illuminating. Zooming in, students discover that Baskerville’s “g” loop does not close, or that they actually really hate Centaur’s lowercase “j” (I know I do), and they start to care and form opinions about letterforms. But do these small details matter? When

⁴ Quote from James Victore’s lecture given at Virginia Commonwealth University on April 4, 2011.

acclaimed graphic designer James Victore said “Typography is graphic design’s secret club,”⁴ he hinted at the esoteric nature of typography

jargons and design principles that go right over a layperson’s head. And it is true. Most people are completely oblivious to the concerns that keep designers up at night. With my membership in this “secret club” came the desire to share with the world what I care about deeply. How could I make my work and my approach accessible to others? Looking around to find a suitable metaphor, my eye goes to the loupe.

This loupe is always here on my studio desk. A round magnifying device about an inch and a half in diameter, it is helpful for inspecting the

⁵ In type design, a proof is a printed piece of typography that shows the typeface in use, outside of the context of the font-making software and other digital environments.

minute details that escape the naked eye. When I am working on a typeface, I print out a lot of proofs⁵ to examine it at scale. Proofs put the characters to numerous practical and aesthetic

Tone

Times New Roman
100pt

Tone

Times New Roman
100pt, kerned

Baskerville MT Regular

Centaur MT Regular

I have a visceral allergic reaction to this terminal.

tests: How do the letters look next to and between others letters? How do they behave in words, lines of text, and paragraphs? Does any letter run into another due to insufficient spacing? Not only is the loupe a very useful tool, but it is also a perfect metaphor for something I consider to be the foundation of my practice: looking closer. Sometimes, you do need to sweat the small stuff.

BRIEF 1

**The details are not the details.
They make the design.¹**

CHARLES EAMES

**There is no magic in magic.
It's all in the details.**

WALT DISNEY

>>> **Produce work where small details
can make a huge difference.
Use your observational skills to
locate or create instances where
every pixel, every word space,
every person matters.**

¹ CHARLES AND RAY EAMES, AN EAMES
ANTHOLOGY, EDITED BY DANIEL OSTROFF
(NEW HAVEN: YALE UNIV. PRESS, 2015).

**Please
pay close
attention
or you'll
miss the
point.**

PROJECT

Stop-motion animation
00:45

Details Matter

This stop-motion video highlights and celebrates the immense labor and care that designers dedicate to their work. Using over 400 wooden cubes ($\frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2} \times \frac{1}{2}$ in.), I playfully yet resolutely assert that details matter, a message that is both literally spelled out in the end and reflected in its labor-intensive production method.

Right One of the early explorations in analog pixel lettering, made with wooden cubes. This one was too restrained and did not provide enough of a visual payoff.

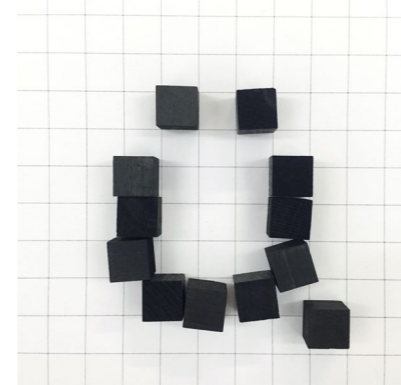




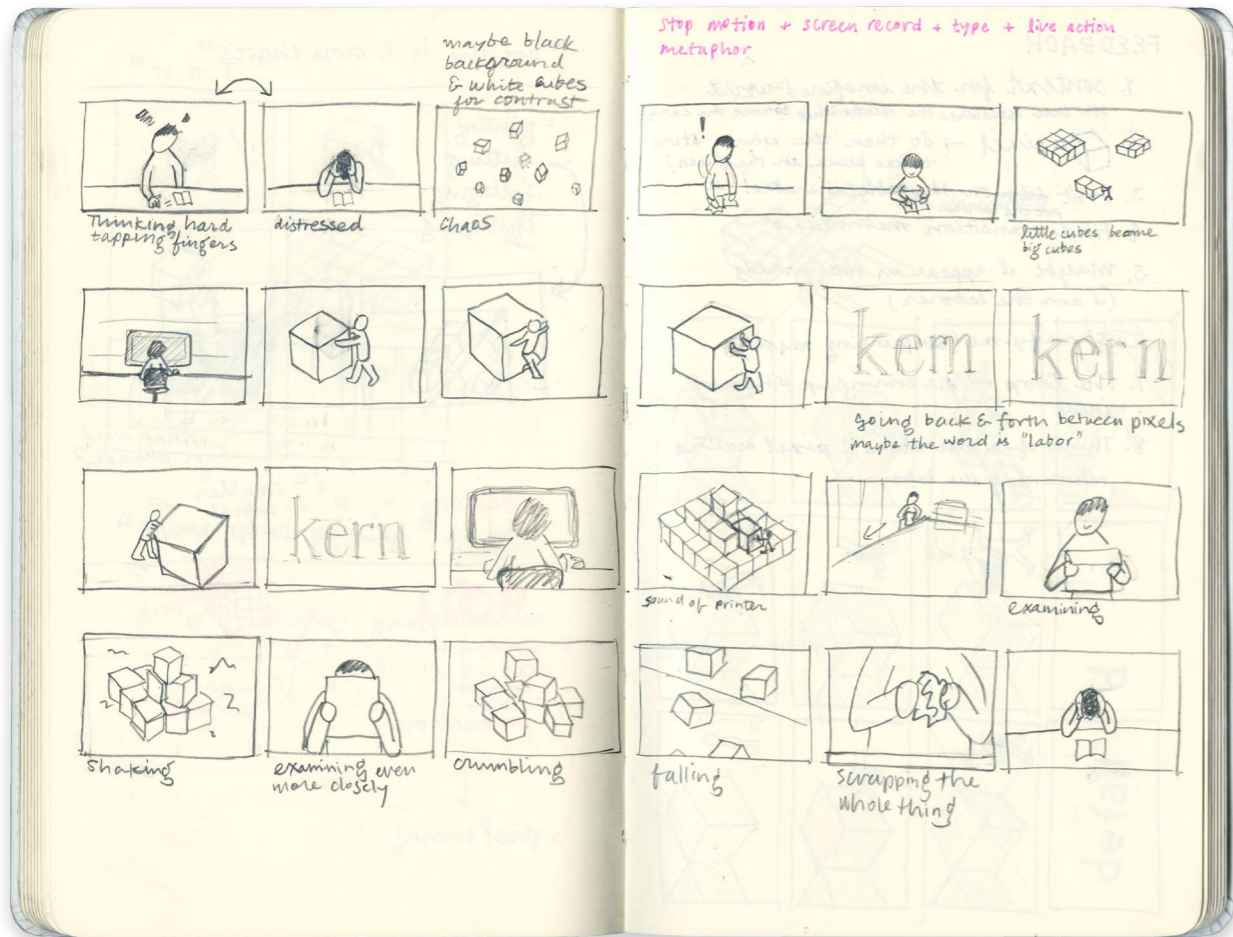
Left A process shot of staining the 400 cubes with black ink.



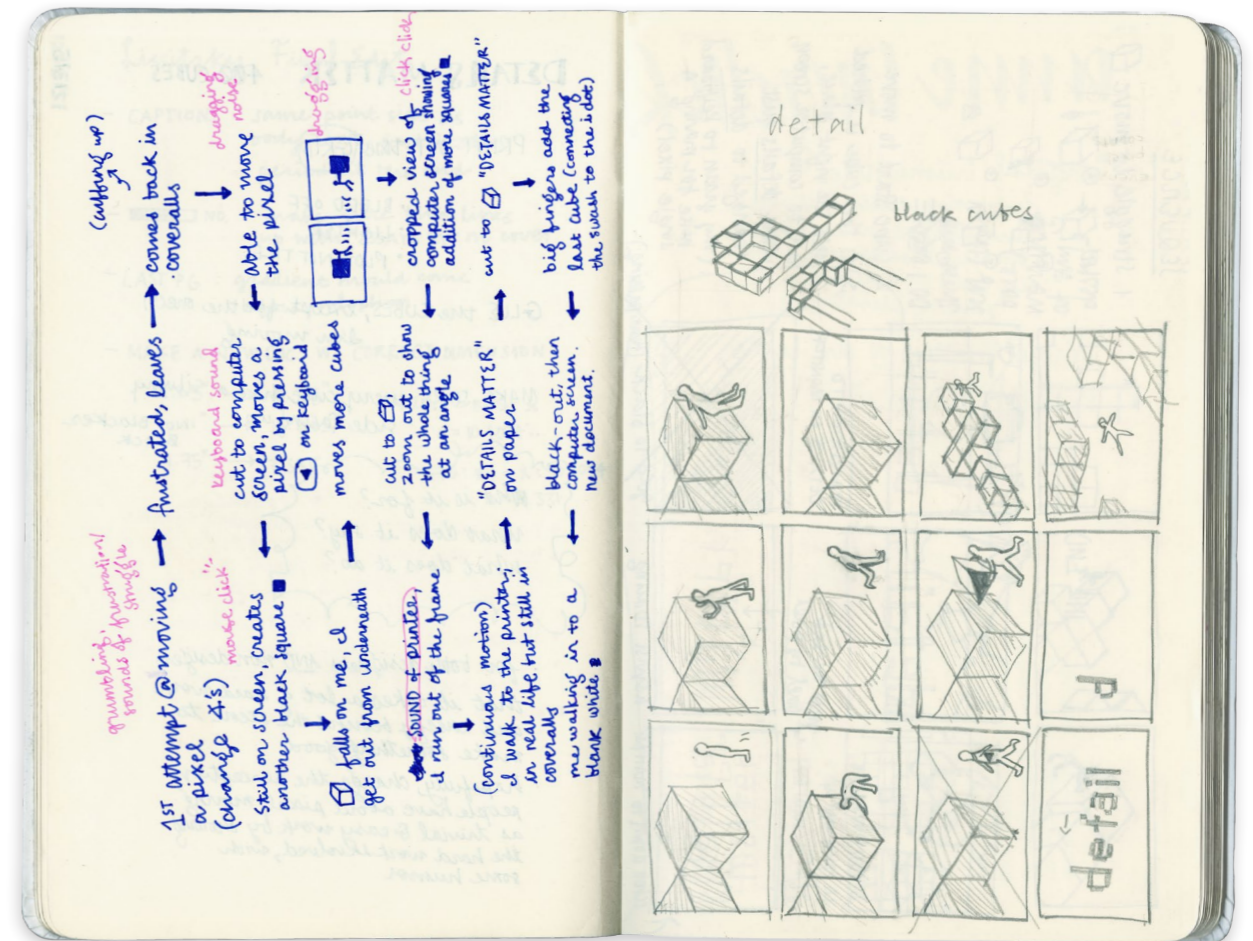
Above Some cut-out mini-me's for an earlier sketch. It involved pretend-posing against a blank studio wall, some quizzical looks, and hours spent on silhouetting the figure in Photoshop.



Left A smiley by Cem Eskinazi. Or, a portrait of Boyang Xia with his characteristic beauty mark.

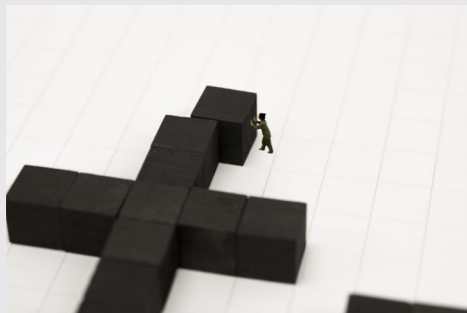
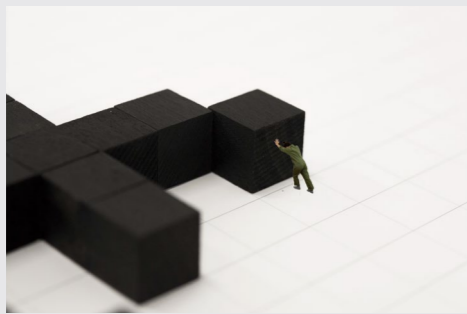


Above Storyboard for an earlier sketch in which pushing cubes around represented kerning.

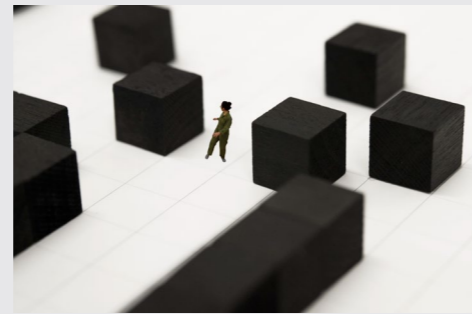
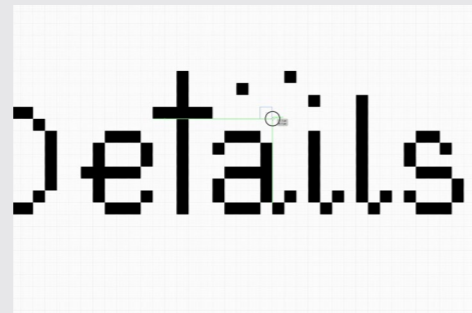
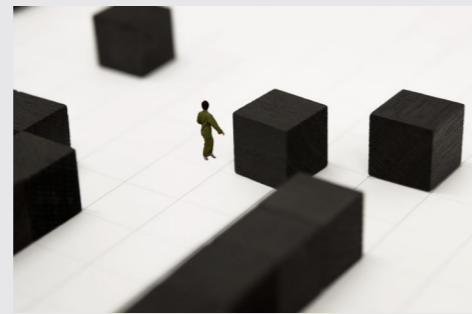
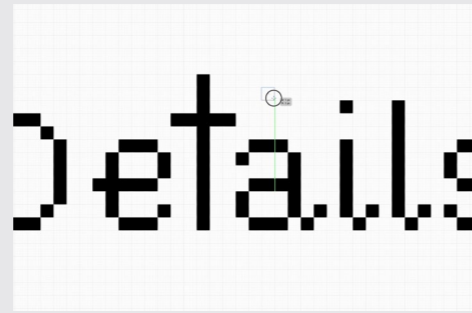


Stop-motion animations require detailed planning and storyboarding prior to filming. You have to know every frame you need for smooth transitions between scenes and a clear flow of ideas.

1



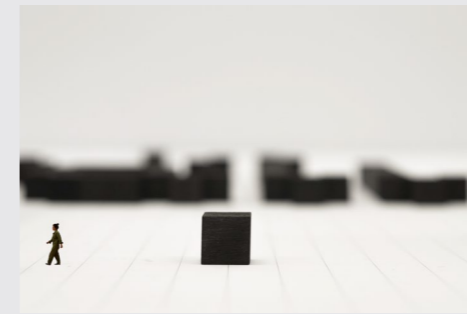
2



(surprised)

(surprised, again)

3



(printing sounds)

4

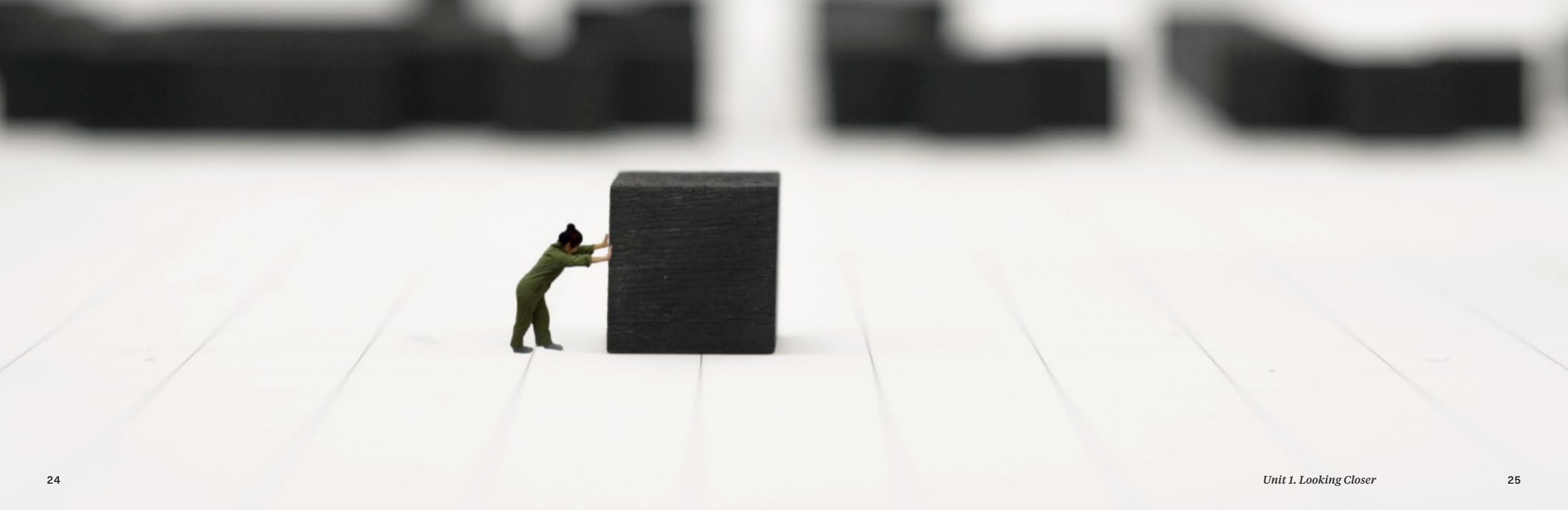


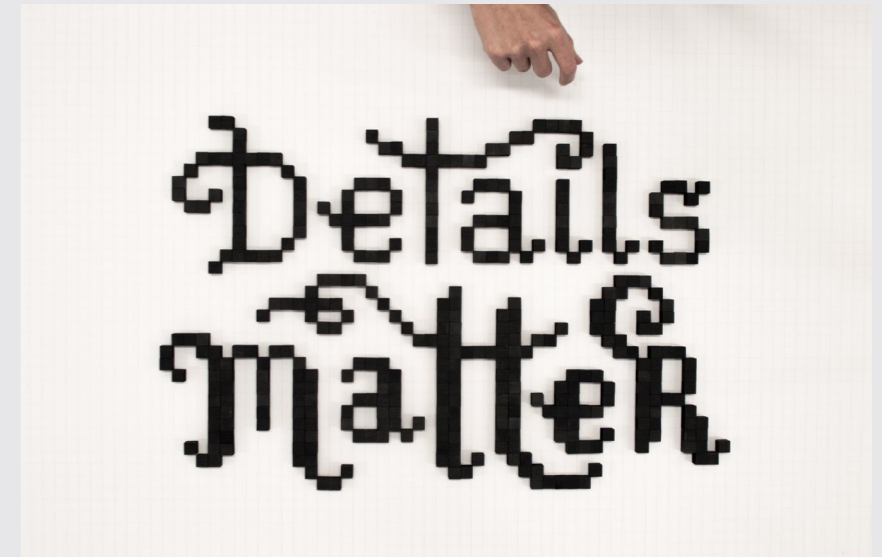
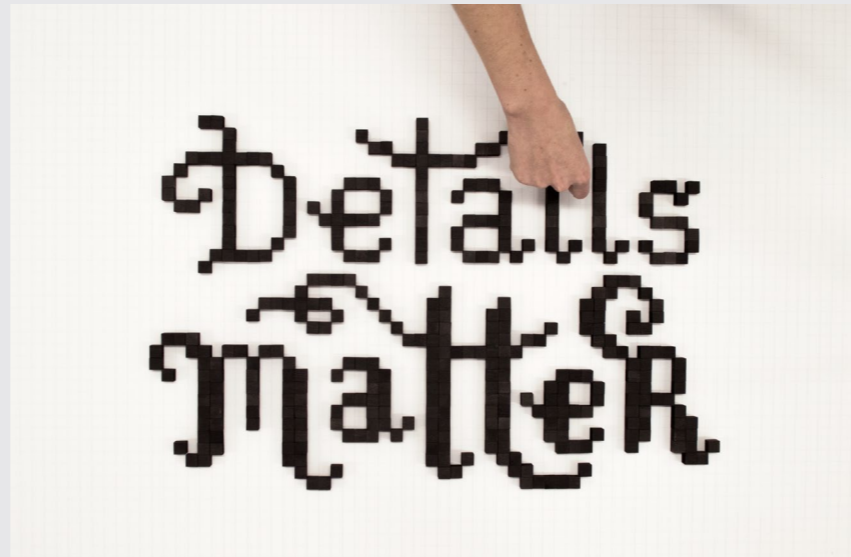
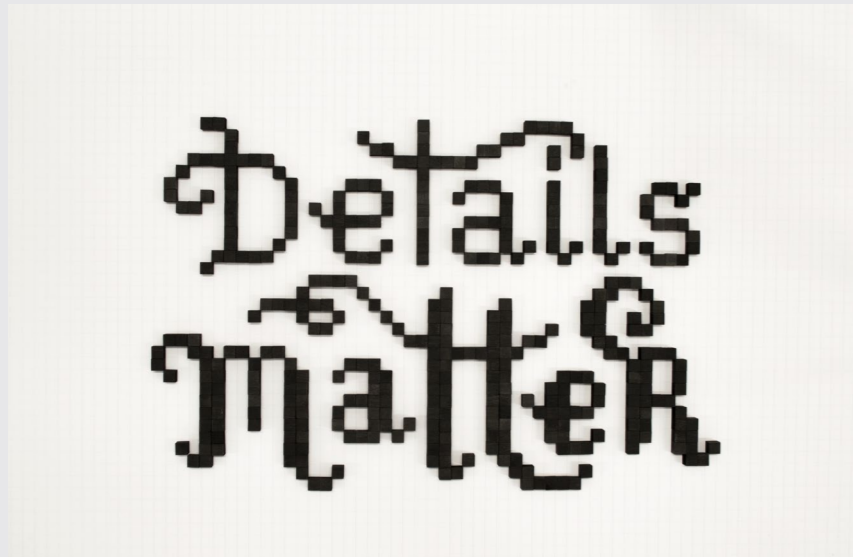
1 Mini-me in magical coveralls pushes a cube with all of her might to move it by one unit, and the "f" changes to a "t," spelling out "Details."

2 Every time the mouse cursor draws a square in the digital space, a cube suddenly appears in Mini-me's physical space.

3 Mini-me keeps working to move more cubes around. Then she hears printing sound and leaves to see what's happening.

4 Mini-me is no longer mini. She picks up from the printer a piece of paper with the fruit of her labor printed on it.





A hand appears to add the last touch:
a cube that connects swash to the i-dot
because details matter.

Details
matter

PROJECT

Posters
18 × 34 1/2 in.
18 × 26 in.

Anagram Posters

Anagram is a word formed by rearranging the letters of another. Created as an immediate reaction to the current political climate in the U.S., these posters use no more than the letters already in the words to say something different than their original meanings while augmenting them.



Right An installation shot of the posters in the exhibition *To Whom It May Concern: 2017 RISD MFA Graphic Design Biennial*. Sol Koffler Gallery in Providence, RI.

**NO WALL
N OWALL
NOWALL
NOWALL
NOWAL L
NOWA LL
NOW ALL**

**RESIST
ERESIS
TERESI
STERES
ISTERE
SISTER**

PROJECT

Bookmarks 8 × 2 in. each
Installation 60 × 38 in.

If You Build A Wall

This series of bookmarks carry the stories of undocumented immigrants. Taking refuge inside books until discovered, these bookmarks wait to be found and read. With Donald Trump officially sworn in as the President of the United States, already affecting the lives of the immigrants in the most inimical ways, the immigrants' eyes seem to carry even more weight than before.

Right Bookmark, nested inside a book, is being discovered by a reader.





I came to the United States as a child. My dad is a resident alien but could never fix my situation. Since I have been here I've formed a family of my own. I don't know anything about Mexico because I was raised here and I find myself scared to be deported to a place that I do not know.

Gonzalo, South Bay, Florida

myimmigrantstory.com



I came in the US 1988 at 12 and now today at 37. I'm still dealing with being an immigrant after being married with four kids. I have had lawyers take my money and scam me over and over. My recent lawyer was indicted for scam. I lost my job five weeks ago because my lawyer was arrested and he kept all my documents to return to work. I have done all I can the legal way to obtain a green card but I feel like the system has failed me.

Denise

myimmigrantstory.com



I came to the U.S. When I was 1 year old along with my 2 older brothers and my mom. My dad was working in the U.S. at the time so he never really had the chance to see me when I was born. My parents have had to go through so much just for us. I admire them so much. They came to America seeking a future. I never went hungry. We came here with a tourist visa. I am 17 years old now and I want to travel the world but sadly I can't. There are so many risk factors that come with being an immigrant but my parents always managed to cope with them.

Maria, New Jersey

myimmigrantstory.com

This spread Front & back sides of the bookmarks.

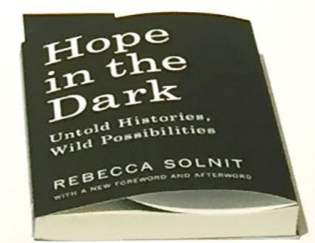
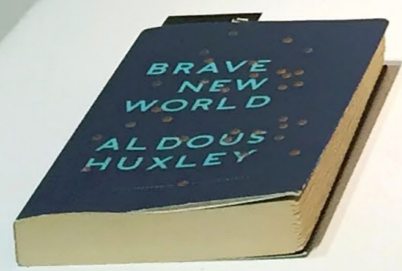
Next spread An installation shot from the Biennial exhibition. The setup included a printed brick wall and bookmarks hiding in four books.

THE CALL

What contact the U.S. When the call goes

g the United States should with your senator contacted with your or any 2

The audio instructions your senator. You can your senator, then report your other senator and



PROJECT

Typeface
Regular, Italic, Bold

Nightingale

Nightingale is a text face with elegant, timeless qualities that facilitate comfortable reading. It was designed in the spirit of Alan Lightman's novel, *Einstein's Dreams*, a meditation on time. In its last chapter, the protagonist dreams about a world in which nightingales are a metaphor for time. In this world, time freezes every time a nightingale is caught.

Right A phrase from the last vignette in *Einstein's Dreams*, set in *Nightingale* (ligatures are highlighted in red).

Time **f**lutters and
fidgets and hops
with these birds.
Trap one of these
NIGHTINGALES
beneath a bell jar
and time stops.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
OPQRSTUVWXYZfi fl
abcdefghijklmnopqr
stuvwxyz0123456789
(). , ; : “ ” ‘ ’ ? ! & @ # ~ + - - - []

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMN
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Opposite Nightingale Regular (top)
Nightingale Bold (bottom)

Above Nightingale Italic

Left Early pencil sketches, with
marks made by Fred Smeijers

EINSTEIN
wonderful dreams
nightingale, caught
FATE
moment now frozen
MARKTGASSE
multiple truths
THEORIES



PROJECT

Typeface
Display, Display Italic
Text, Text Italic

Ithaka*

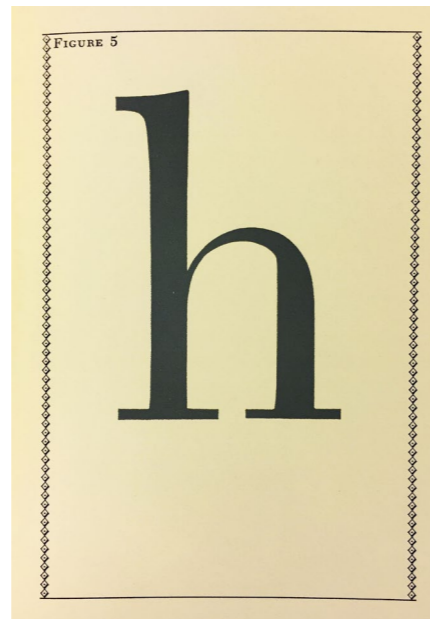
Over the last year, I visited the Updike Collection in the Providence Public Library frequently, for general inspiration, to research specific areas of interest, and to find answers to the questions I was asking while designing *Ithaka* such as: what are the defining characteristics of certain classifications in type? How do those features affect the look and feel of a typeface? How do they affect its legibility? When a typeface goes from roman to italic or from roman to display, what is the appropriate degree of transformation, stylistic or otherwise? How much can I deviate from the conventions while making sure that the typeface still functions as intended?

* This writing comes from the short essay I wrote as a part of the submission for the Updike Prize.



I began my research by studying Scotch typefaces. While looking closely at the *Specimen of Modern Printing Types* (1833) by Wilson & Sons, I noticed that the two-line English face had traditional bracketed serifs whereas the serifs in the two-line pica version were unbracketed. I found other instances of variation in Vincent Figgins' specimens (bracketed uppercase serifs and unbracketed lowercase ones) and William Addison Dwiggins' Caledonia. Intrigued by this variety within the same type families, I set out to draw a typeface of my own with attributes spanning multiple typographic classifications. While its origin is in Scotch faces—I consulted Linotype's Ionic No.5, the Century series, and Matthew Carter's Miller often—*Ithaka* is not a revival and it does not belong to a single classification. It also borrows from modern faces like Bodoni and Didot (i.e. vertical stress and the non-calligraphic "8"). *Ithaka* lost much of its Scotchness over time, but not inadvertently. What remained are roundness and warmth, as found in the early text faces of Wilson & Sons and Figgins.

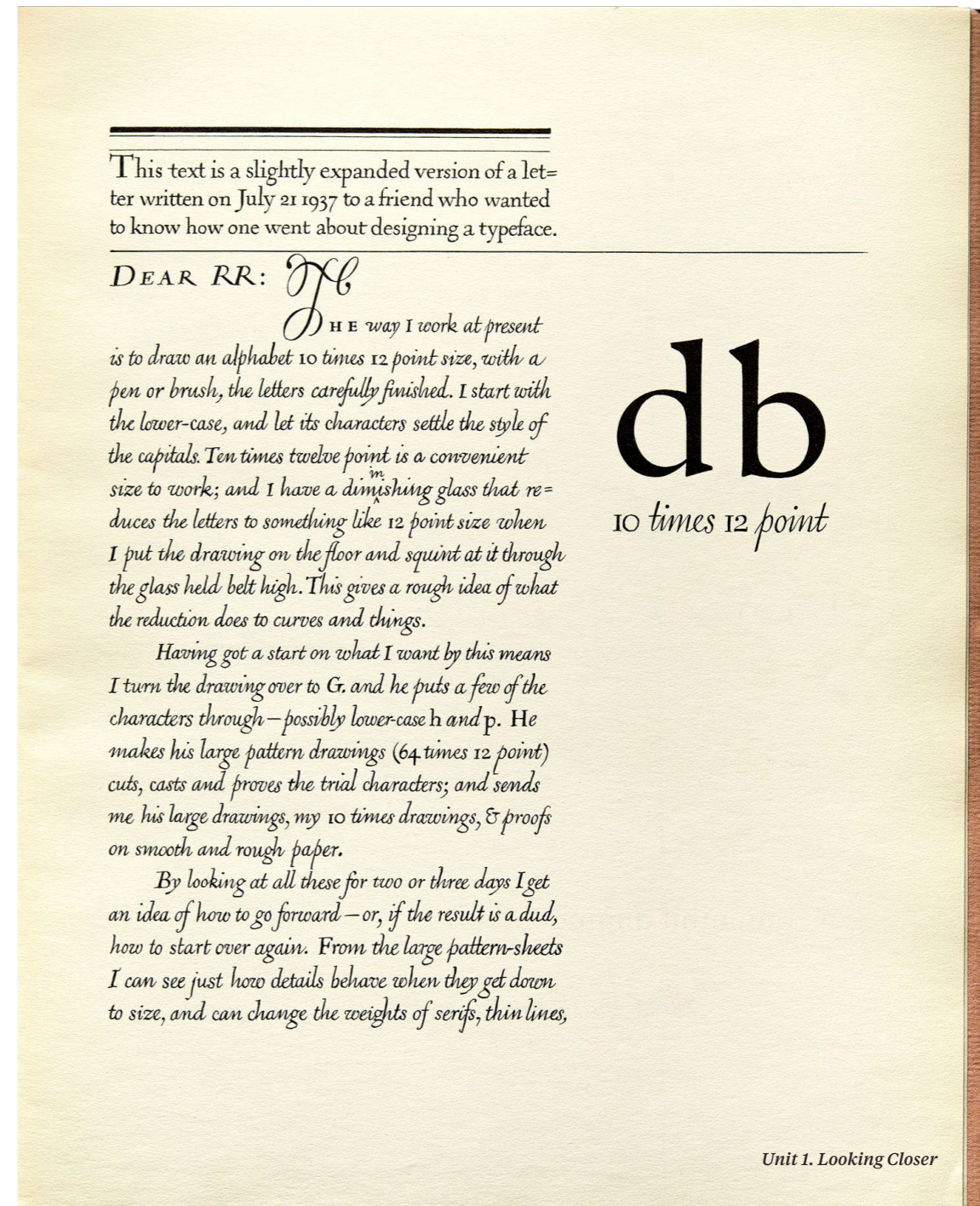
Dwiggins's writing and work have had a great influence on me. Enlarged reproductions of Caledonia's letterforms were especially helpful because they allowed me to see these letters' fascinating shape contrast, which is imperceptible at small point sizes. For instance, in Caledonia's lowercase "h," the inner curve takes a quick turn while the outer curve makes a slow, gradual one. *Ithaka*, too, exhibits a subtle tension between white and black shapes, creating an energetic, dynamic rhythm when put into strings of letters to form words and sentences.



Above A large reproduction of the letter "h" from *Caledonia* (1939) written by W. A. Dwiggins and published by Mergenthaler Linotype Company. Photographed at the Special Collections in the Providence Public Library.

Opposite Dwiggins' letter where he explains his type design methods. Image from the Letterform Archive.

Ithaka is available in Text, Text Italic, Display, and Display Italic. The text faces were designed with a 6-point master, which explains its very generous spacing, wideness, and sturdy serifs. The display faces, on the other hand, are more tightly spaced. Meant for bigger point sizes, they flaunt sharper, crisper features and quite a lot of personality.



This text is a slightly expanded version of a letter written on July 21 1937 to a friend who wanted to know how one went about designing a typeface.

DEAR RR: *JD*

THE way I work at present is to draw an alphabet 10 times 12 point size, with a pen or brush, the letters carefully finished. I start with the lower-case, and let its characters settle the style of the capitals. Ten times twelve point is a convenient size to work; and I have a diminishing glass that reduces the letters to something like 12 point size when I put the drawing on the floor and squint at it through the glass held belt high. This gives a rough idea of what the reduction does to curves and things.

Having got a start on what I want by this means I turn the drawing over to G. and he puts a few of the characters through—possibly lower-case h and p. He makes his large pattern drawings (64 times 12 point) cuts, casts and proves the trial characters; and sends me his large drawings, my 10 times drawings, & proofs on smooth and rough paper.

By looking at all these for two or three days I get an idea of how to go forward—or, if the result is a dud, how to start over again. From the large pattern-sheets I can see just how details behave when they get down to size, and can change the weights of serifs, thin lines,

db
10 times 12 point

04.22.16 PPL SPECIAL COL.

WILSON & SONS (1783)

- interesting how some ends appear rounded due to printing issues
- beautiful &

Q Q ital.

- curious nomenclature

ie SIX LINES PICA
 FRENCH CANON
 GREAT PRIMER ROMAN
 LONG
 DOUBLE PICA
 BOURGEOIS ROMAN
 BREVIER ROMAN
 TWO LINE PEARL

DWIGGINS INTRO TO CALEDONIA mentions designer's increasing obsession w/ precision and says, "why couldn't you go back to the feeling about printing types that inspired the Wilson punch-cutter..."

t

FLAT TOP on t

NON PAREIL?

SPECIMEN OF MODERN PRINTING TYPES (1833), WILSON & SONS

- TWO LINE ENGLISH: BRACKETED SERIFS (BUT THEN TWO LINE PICA SOME ARE NOT!)

K vs K

2 LINE ENG

2 LINE PICA

L vs L

- curiously diff ball terminals

J J J

SPECIMENS OF BOOK, NEWSPAPER, AND FANCY TYPES (1880) MILLER & RICHARD

- IN 1880, THEY MADE REVERSE CONTRAST FONTS?! O-O AND PUNKY DISPLAY FACES...

M O G ENGLISH FRENCH ANTIQUE

G - SHARP - ROUND

- FRAMES, BORDERS, & VIGNETTES
- COULD I DO SOMETHING WITH THESE? THEY'VE BEEN IGNORED

WILLIAM MARTIN

Look at Bulmer's Martin (c.1790)

COULD I RANDOMISE WHETHER A STROKE GETS A BRACKETED SERIF, SHARP END, ROUNDED ONE, ETC.?

Relationship btwn Scotch Roman & modern faces like Bodoni

unusual ligatures for specific uses or market in mind could be fun

Modern faces (away from Caslon tradition of Europe) as political/patriotic in the founding years of the U.S. VS. Modern faces appropriated by the fashion world

(1936) EARLY AMERICAN TYPE SPECIMENS IN FACSIMILE

HOW/WHY DID @ EXIST IN THE 19TH C. WHEN THE COMPUTER HADN'T BEEN INVENTED YET?

SPECIMENS OF BOOK AND MAGAZINE FONTS (1863) MILLER & RICHARD

05.27.16 PPL DIJON DOUVILLIER

CG

P655.244 DT37 1837

R

"FILLETS" & "VIGNETTES" & "TAROTS"

T

P655.244 D5573 1828

44

OMG SO CUTE!!

H. DIDOT, LE GRAND ET CIE, PARIS

4

"VIGNETTES POUR CADRES"

g

← FIRMIN DIDOT, PARIS: 1828 & 1836

g

← P DIDOT, L'AINÉ

P655.244 D557 1819

f c

P655.24 D99c

CALEDONIA (DWIGGINS) "one was not trying for a revival, one wanted something modern and individual"

nm n n

LOOK UP CALEDONIA, SCOTLAND

CALEDONIA = WILSON'S SCOTCH + BULMER'S MARTIN

if I make a Scotch Roman, should I name it after a neighboring town next to Caledonia? (5)

UNBRACKETED FLAT BOTTOM SERIFS (MODERN) BUT TOP SERIFS RETAIN CALLIGRAPHIC QUALITIES

BUT IN SMALL SIZES THEY APPEAR TO BE BRACKETED ANYWAY...

P655.244 W746 1843

p d

WILSON & SONS

* CRAZY BORDERS, FRAMES, VIGNETTES *

tt LIGATURE tt

CHARS ROUND, BIG COUNTERS, CLOSED, FRIENDLY, HIGH CONTRAST

05.28.16

C C C C

□ ○ △ □

nnn

CYRUS:

- start with the textface
- 8pt resolution
- em space, 5/2 instead of 1000
- look at really small type with Caledonia

l e

find all caps specimen & Print

Wider wider C higher middle bar make still wider rounder? see top serif on LC h

A B C D E F G H I

J K L M N O P R thicker more weight to top

S T U V W X Y Z serif too big same as the thin of N

check with H flatter gets too thin also try: ga

aa k l m n o p q less weight ga ga

r s t u v w x y z darker than others longer serif awkward gets too thin y

gear: start at the same spot but curl up OR start lower g

fl fl

ligature

keep tails & regular weight serifs for display? with tighter spacing?

I Q U E R A I st 1/2 20

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 1/2

0 [] . , : ; & ! ? / # 9 1/2

\$ % + = - _ fl

2 0 *

071316

Opposite Proofs for uppercase (top) and lowercase (bottom), with my own corrections and comments.

Above Proof for figures and some special characters, marked up by Cyrus Highsmith.

Right A big stack of proofs I printed out while designing Ithaka. There is no such thing as too many proofs in type design.



ABCDEFGH
IJKLMNOP
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ&
abcdefghij
klmnopqrs
tuvwxyzfifl
0123456789
?!:;, _ *'“”
\$¢%[{(@)}]#
àáâäãćĉčýÿ
èéêëòóôõø
ùúûüñîíîî

Ithaka Text

*ABCDEFGH
IJKLMNOP
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ&
abcdefghij
klmnopqrs
tuvwxyzfifl
0123456789
?!:;, _ *'“”
\$¢%[{(@)}]#
àáâäãćĉčýÿ
èéêëòóôõø
ùúûüñîíîî*

Ithaka Text Italic

ABCDEFGH
IJKLMNOP
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ&
abcdefghij
klmnopqrs
tuvwxyzfifl
0123456789
?!:;, _ *'“”
\$¢%[{(@)}]#
àáâäãćĉčýÿ
èéêëòóôõø
ùúûüñîíîî

Ithaka Display

*ABCDEFGH
IJKLMNOP
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ&
abcdefghij
klmnopqrs
tuvwxyzfifl
0123456789
?!:;, _ *'“”
\$¢%[{(@)}]#
àáâäãćĉčýÿ
èéêëòóôõø
ùúûüñîíîî*

Ithaka Display Italic

IN THE DEPTH OF 50pt

WINTER 106pt

I finally learned 66pt

that within me 74pt

THERE LAY AN 62pt

invincible 111pt

SUMMER 100pt

ALBERT CAMUS, "SUMMERS IN ALGIERS" 21pt

This specimen shows off Ithaca Display and Display Italic in various point sizes.

FACING HISTORY

The French novelist and philosopher Albert Camus was a terrifically good-looking guy whom women fell for—the Don Draper of existentialism. This may seem a trivial thing to harp on, except that it is almost always the first thing that comes up when people who knew Camus talk about what he was like. When Elizabeth Hawes, whose lovely 2009 book *Camus: A Romance* is essentially the rueful story of her own college-girl crush on his image, asked survivors of the Partisan Review crowd, who met Camus on his one trip to New York, in 1946, what he was like, they said that he reminded them of Bogart. “All I can tell you is that Camus was the most attractive man I have ever met,” William Phillips, the journal’s editor, said, while the thorny Lionel Abel not only compared him to Bogart but kept telling Hawes that Camus’s central trait was his “elegance.”

The skepticism of his native readers isn’t just snobbish, though. Read today, Camus is perhaps more memorable as a great journalist—as a diarist and editorialist—than as a novelist and philosopher. He wrote beautifully, even when he thought conventionally, and the sober lucidity of his writing is, in a sense, the true timbre of the thought. Olivier Todd, the author of the standard biography in French, suggests that Camus might have benefitted by knowing more about his anti-totalitarian Anglo-American contemporaries, Popper and Orwell among them. Yet in truth the big question Camus asked was never the Anglo-American liberal one: How can we make the world a little bit better tomorrow? It was the grander French one: Why not kill yourself tonight? That the answers come to much the same thing in the end—easy does it; tomorrow may be a bit better than today; and, after all, you have to have a little faith in people—doesn’t diminish the glamour that clings to the man who turned the question over and looked at it, elegantly, upside down.

In America, Camus is, first of all, French; in France he remains, most of all, Algerian—a Franco-Algerian, what was later called a *pied noir* , a black foot, meaning the European colonial class who had gone to Algeria and made a home there. A dense cover of clichés tends to cloud that condition: just as the writer from Mississippi is supposed to be in touch with a swampy mysterious identity, a usable past, that no Northern boy could emulate, the “Mediterranean” man is assumed in France to be in touch with a deep littoral history. Camus had that kind of mystique: he was supposed to be somehow once more “primitive”—he was a strong swimmer and

Camus was a first-rate philosophy student, and the French meritocratic system had purchase even in the distant province. He quickly advanced at the local university, writing a thesis on Plotinus and St. Augustine when he was in his early twenties. After a flirtation with Communism, he left for the mainland, with the manuscript of a novel in his suitcase and the ambition to be a journalist in his heart. He worked briefly for the newspaper *Paris-Soir*, and then returned to North Africa, where he finished two books. By 1943, he was back in France, to join the staff of the clandestine Resistance newspaper *Combat*, and publish those books: the novel *The Stranger* and a book of philosophical essays *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Part of the paralyzing narcotic of the Occupation was that writing could still go on; it was in the Germans’ interest to allow the publication of books that seemed remote enough not to be subversive.

What Camus wanted wasn’t new: just liberty, equality, and fraternity. But he found a new way to say it. Tone was what mattered. He discovered a way of speaking on the page that was unlike either the violent rhetorical clichés of Communism or the ponderous abstractions of the Catholic right. He struck a tone not of Voltairean Parisian rancor but of melancholic loft. Camus sounds serious, but he also sounds sad—he added the authority of sadness to the activity of political writing. He wrote with dignity, at a moment when restoring dignity to public language was necessary, and he slowed public language at a time when history was moving too fast. At the *Liberation*, he wrote:

Now that we have won the means to express ourselves, our responsibility to ourselves and to the country is paramount. The task for each of us is to think carefully about what he wants to say and gradually to shape the spirit of his paper; it is to write care fully without ever losing sight of the urgent need to restore to the country its authoritative voice. If we see to it that that voice remains one of vigor, rather than hatred, of proud objectivity and not rhetoric, of humanity rather than mediocrity, then much will be saved from ruin.

Responsibility, care, gradualness, humanity—even at a time of jubilation, these are the typical words of Camus, and they were not the usual words of French political rhetoric. The enemy was not this side or that one; it was the abstraction of rhetoric itself. Intoxication and joy were the last things that Camus thought freedom should bring. His watch-

Display 37pt

APRIL 9, 2012 ISSUE Text 6pt

Sartre’s move toward Marxism, and toward the French Communist Party, oddly mimicked that of the French philosopher Blaise Pascal’s 17th century “wager” in favor of Christianity: the faith might be true, so why not embrace it, since you lose nothing by the embrace, and get at least the chance of all the goodies the faith promises? In Sartre’s case, if the “social ideal” never arrived, at least you had tried, and if it did you might get a place in the pantheon of proletariat heroes. This reasoning may seem a little shabby and self-interested, but to those within Pascal’s tradition it seemed brave and audacious. (Camus called Pascal “the greatest of all, yesterday and today.”) Faith in the Party, which Sartre never joined but to which he gave his purposefully blind allegiance, so closely

In English, this can come across as merely sonorous. In France, the real meaning was barbed and apparent: only a moral idiot would give his allegiance to the Communist Party in the name of the coming revolution. Camus spotted the catch in Sartre’s account of fellow-travelling as a leap of faith. The only practical way to unlock the next guy’s chains, on Sartre’s premise, is to kill the guy next to that guy first, since he’s the one chaining him up; kill all the jailers and everyone will be free. This sounds great, Camus saw, until you’ve killed all the jailers and all you have is other jailers. There is no difference between dying in a Soviet camp and dying in a Nazi camp. We should be neither executioners nor victims; it is madness to sacrifice human lives today in the pursuit of a utopian future.

Abjuring abstraction and extremism, Camus found a way to write about politics that was sober, lofty, and a little sad.

Display Italic 18/24

mirrored faith in the Church that it borrowed some of the Church’s residual aura of moral purpose. It wasn’t that Sartre didn’t notice the Soviet camps. He did. He just thought that you could look past them, as a good Catholic doesn’t pretend not to see the Hell on earth that the Church often has made but still thinks you can see the Heaven beyond that it points to.

Camus moved toward a break with Sartre, and Sartre’s magazine, *Les Temps Modernes*, in 1951, after the publication of his *L’Homme Révolté*, called in English, a little misleadingly, *The Rebel*. The fault line between the two men was simple, if the fault-finding was complex. Sartre was a straight-out fellow-traveller with the P.C.F., the Parti Communiste Français, and Camus was not. Sartre was outraged on behalf of the Party by such episodes as the “affair of the carrier pigeons,” in which the Party Secretary was found with pigeons in his car and was accused by the police of using them, like a good revolutionary, to coordinate illegal demonstrations. (It turned out that, like a good Frenchman, he was merely planning a squab casserole.) In *The Rebel*, Camus writes (in Philip Mairet’s translation):

He who dedicates himself to the duration of his life, to the house he builds, to the dignity of mankind, dedicates himself to the earth and reaps from it the harvest that sows its seed and sustains the world again and again.

Text 6/9

Text 8/11

Text 7/10

The thesis consolidated my research on the intersection between human behavior and materiality.



This, in turn, kickstarted a career of teaching and practice that integrates this focus.



Above *Ithaka* Text Italic at work in the exhibit *Formative & Persisting*, curated by Anne West and Elizabeth Leeper (GD MFA '17) in September 2016. Because the text weight was not intended for such a big point size, additional spacing adjustments were required.



Right The First Prize trophy for the Updike Prize (top) was, to my delight, a functioning composing stick for metal type. Following the tradition of using the winning entry for the next year's brochure, I typeset the brochure (bottom) in *Ithaka*.



The Updike Collection on the History of Printing is one of the country's finest typographical resources. Founded in 1937 in honor of Daniel Berkeley Updike, the collection today includes thousands of books, artifacts and items of ephemera documenting the history of printing, especially typography. The collection is particularly rich in type specimen books and broadsides, ranging from the sixteenth century to the twentieth. As originally intended, the collection is open to all, especially those looking to become better printers or designers.



The annual Updike Prize rewards undergraduate and graduate type designers whose work has been influenced by materials in the Updike Collection at the Providence Public Library. Whether students choose to revive a historic typeface or to create a new typeface inspired by an earlier design, applications will be judged on the quality of the specimens, the quality of the typeface submitted and how creatively and thoughtfully it interprets a historical model.

Rules

Applications must conduct at least one on-site visit to use materials in the Updike Collection within 18 months of the application deadline, and they must be awarded in an undergraduate or graduate program during the time of their visit. Only one typeface family may be submitted per year, per entrant; re-submissions, especially of typefaces that have been further refined, are encouraged.

Submission Guidelines

- Applications will include:
1. This entry form also available online at the competition website
 2. A type specimen with a representative character set, submitted as a PDF and designed to be printed at either 11x17 or 8.5x11"
 3. A 250-500 word essay describing the typeface as well as the designer's use of the Updike Collection and the role it played in the development of the typeface.

Deadline

Applications must be received by 5:00pm, September 15th, 2017. Applications may be submitted by email or mail.

email to: jup@provlb.org
 mail to: Special Collections, Updike Prize
 Providence Public Library
 150 Empire Street
 Providence, RI, 02903

How to Enter

1. Visit the Updike Collection
Visit provlb.org/special-collections for more information about visiting. You'll find a wealth of information to inspire your design.
2. Design a typeface
You might decide to revive a long-forgotten typeface. Or you could create something completely new that borrows details from a typeface from the past.
3. Write a (very short) essay
Describe how your new typeface came to be and in particular how it was influenced by models from the past. Submit your essay with a type specimen sample of your typeface.

Prize

Winners will receive a \$500 prize and gift certificates from our sponsor, Paperworks. The names of finalists will be recorded on the Library website, and they will also have the opportunity to display their work at our annual exhibition and lecture in October. Copies of their type specimens will be added to the Updike Collection.

The UPDIKE PRIZE



for STUDENT TYPE DESIGN

Entry Form

Name

Address

Email

Phone

University or College

Typeface (or Typeface Family) Name

Historical Typeface Influenced?

Date(s) of Updike Collection Visit

*Applications are encouraged to provide citations to photographs of materials they used so that they may be more easily identified by visitors.

For More Information

To learn more about the prize, the Updike Collection, and how to use the collection, visit: www.provlb.org/special-collections

For answers to specific questions, you can contact Jordan Coffin at jcoff@provlb.org or 401.455.8021.

You can also find full prize information, as well as examples of type specimens, at: www.provlb.org/updikeprize

Celebration

We'll celebrate the competition's finalists at a special event at the Library, timed to coincide with an exhibition of typographic materials from the Updike Collection and the specimens produced by the finalists.

For more information about the event (including the guest lecturer for the evening), follow us on Twitter (@TheSpecimenist) or join our email list (<http://typeletter.com/ProvlbSpecial>).

This brochure uses *Ithaka*, a typeface family designed by June Shin, winner of the 2016 Updike Prize.

Special Thanks to our sponsor, Paperworks.

PAPERWORKS

**Don't rush
things. Do
the work.**

**You get out
what you
put in.**

Matthew Carter

APRIL 19, 2017

I thought I would say a couple words about my thesis, just to give you a sense of where I am coming from.

Yes, yes. By the way, June, I really love these things you sent me. The *Timeface* booklet is lovely. I should buy a copy. It's really beautiful. And I like *Ithaca* very much. I love that sort of Cheltenham/Ionic/Century style. It seems very British in a way. Is the name a reference to Ithaca, New York?

Yes, actually, it is! Cornell University, which is in Ithaca, New York, is my alma mater. I just spell it with a **k** for my typeface because the **k** is one of the most distinct characters in it. I thought I should show it off.

I think Ithaca can be spelled both ways. In Greek, there isn't a distinction between the **c** and the **k**, so you can use whichever one you like.

When I was drawing *Ithaca*, I actually looked a lot at Miller. I don't know if you can tell.

Oh, I'm not sure. But you've done some sensible things that are a little bit different in the text than the display face—the tails are different and so on—and that makes a lot of sense, I think. Very sensible.

Thank you. I started out by looking at Scotch faces. Last year, Paul Shaw gave a lecture on W.A. Dwiggin's at the Providence Public Library (PPL), and he spoke about Dwiggin's fondness for Scotch Roman typefaces. I did not even know what Scotch Roman meant, so I did some research. I studied a lot of old specimens in the PPL's Special Collections, which is an amazing resource. And of course, Cyrus was there to guide me through the entire design process.

Good, good. Excellent. So tell me more about your thesis.

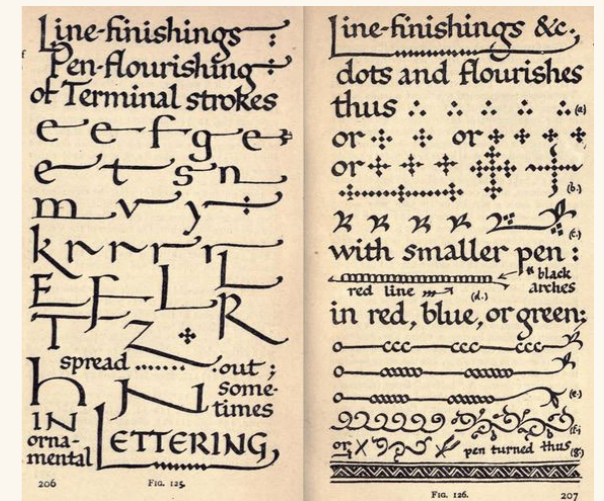
Sure. My work is not all type design work, but it's very type-centric, or typographically minded, I would say. My thesis touches on

how type design and its principles are also pertinent outside of type design. I observe the world and comment, through graphic design, on the things I see, through the lens of a type designer and typographer. I use the loupe as a metaphor for my approach, because, for me, it always starts with looking very closely at something. The loupe, this little thing I keep on my desk, that we use to proof type at small point sizes.

There is a loupe on my desk, right in front of me, so I know what you mean. [laughs]

Amazing! [laughs] I want to ask you for a piece of memory. When I first got to RISD three years ago, I didn't know much about typography, but I remember so well this name tag with **june** set in Courier. And I was bothered by the spacing. I cut the **j** out to move it closer to the **u**. I didn't know what I was doing is called "kerning." [laughs] You have had a long career in type design, and I think you started out fairly early, at a very young age, right? Do you have an early memory of type you can share?

Yes, it is very early in my case, because my dad was a typographer and a historian of type. So I sort of grew up with it. I mean, he didn't encourage me in particular, but you know, the books were around the house, and I met a lot of typographic figures and so on when I was still a schoolboy. When I was at school, there was a big revival in England of italic handwriting. There was a movement to improve handwriting at schools. My school participated in this, and I got turned on by my italic handwriting. The only problem was—it's still a problem—I don't really have a very good motor coordination. Although I could see in my mind's eye the beautiful letters I wanted to make with a pen, I had very little success in actually making them because I couldn't really get the fist to go where I wanted it to go. So this, in the end, was a source of frustration. I had Edward Johnston's great manual, *Writing & Illuminating & Lettering*, and I had beautiful examples to follow, but I couldn't make the gestures with a pen or with



a brush to do it. So what I discovered was that I could make letters the hard way. I could draw an outline in pencil, then fill it in, and so on. It's a very laborious way. The result was the same. I discovered that it's possible to make letters like that. You know, you don't have to be an accomplished calligrapher in order to make letters. So at a fairly tender age, I started drawing letters in the way I described out of frustration with not being able to write them. I had to painstakingly draw them. I didn't realize this at the time, but I think that was my way into type design. If I had been a calligrapher, I might have gone off in an entirely different direction, I suppose, but I was not. So I had to fall back on the nearest thing I could devise, which was making, drawing, revising, and then inking them in. But I don't remember any one particular thing like your name tag. Because, unlike you—you said until few years ago, you didn't think about type—I knew about type by osmosis from a very early age. I didn't take a professional interest in it until much later, but it was around. It was at the house. And like I said, I met typographers, I knew their work, my dad had lots of good books and so on, which I was interested in, in a vague way. So my introduction was really through a line of least resistance, just because this stuff was around me as I was growing up.

Image: A spread with line finishings, dots and flourishes from *Writing & Illuminating, & Lettering* (1917) by Edward Johnston.

It's fascinating that your love of type grew out of frustration with calligraphy. That's great to hear, actually. I am experiencing a little bit of that right now.

There have been a great many type designers who started as calligraphers; it's a very obvious path. And I'm not anti-calligraphy in any way, but it's happened to me more than once when I was visiting schools—this didn't happen at RISD, but some art schools where I was visiting—a student would tell me that he or she was really interested in type design but then was told by the faculty that unless they were good at calligraphy they could not design type. And I was scandalized by that. I could name off good many contemporary type designers who are better than I am with a pen, you know. So it's not a barrier to entry at all. I mean, if a student is good at calligraphy, wonderful. But it was very disappointing for me to hear there are still people who think that calligraphy is a prerequisite of type design. It's not. It's very good if you have the talent, but if not, it's not a bar to type design. If, like me, you can't make the pen go where you want it to go... [laughs]

Yes, it's all vector drawings now. I don't know if you noticed this from the images I sent you, but I actually used a quote from you in my *Timeface* booklet: "Type is not a group of beautiful letters but a beautiful group of letters." I love this idea of type as a system rather than individual letters. I assume every well-designed typeface demonstrates this principle, but I am curious as to whether you have a particularly strong case in point?

Well, first of all, I am not sure that I actually said that. I don't think I originated the idea. I've seen it attributed to me before now. In fact, a number of people have asked me about it. I don't think I originated it, but anyway, it's a useful expression because it does make apparent—in a soundbite kind of way—an important aspect of type design, which is that it's an aggregation of a whole lot of things—letters, spacing, the most obvious among

them. Sometimes a student would bring me a piece of 8.5 × 11 in. paper with a single letter on it, like an **h**, and they'd say to me,

"Is this a good **h**?"
"I have no idea."

And they'd look at me like, "Hey, you're supposed to be teaching the class." And I'd say,

"It's only a good **h** as it relates to other letters. Come back with **h**, **o**, **p**, and then we'll talk."



I think that's a difficult thing for people to learn about type design initially, but once they get it, it's hugely important because then they do begin to think systematically. "Hello, I've got an **h**, that gives me useful DNA for **m** and **n** and **u**. If I have a **p**, then I've got information about the **b** and the **d** and the **q**," and so on. They understand the progressive way of organizing the letters. It's easy to get seduced by letters as you're working on them. I think what you have to keep in mind is that that's not the end product. I think type designers always have to be concerned not to get seduced by individual letterforms. When you're learning about typography, it's very useful to know that the lowercase **g** in Baskerville has a gap in it, or some fancy **Q**, but those are the last letters the type designer concerns himself with. They don't have any information that's relative to other letters. And it's one of the things I go back to for a long time in this business.

Image: Matthew Carter in his studio.

Everyone says that the coming of the personal computer made a huge difference for type design, that it democratized it, and so on. That is sort of true, but the thing that really made the difference was not the computer but the laser printer. The computer's only there to send the little dots to the laser printer as far as I'm concerned. Whenever the first type designer—it probably wasn't me—with the early version of Fontographer sent a little string of letters, **hohoho** or something, to the laser printer and printed it out, that was the first time in the history of typography where a type designer could see the work at actual size and in actual time. You used to have to make smoke prints with punches, which was very laborious. In my Linotype days, if you got the factory to cut some trial matrices, that competed with production work. Same thing with photo composition fonts. They were very willing and helpful to me, but sometimes I would have to wait weeks before I got a trial font on the Linotype. When I say this to students, they look at me as though I'm mad. But actually, that was absolutely revolutionary; that sense of "Oh, my gosh, I've got an **h** and an **o** and here they are in sequence." I can immediately see whether the size is right, the space is right, and all the stuff, you know. Type designers are now spoiled in that way; you really can consider type as a group of letters at a very early stage. And I think that's a huge advantage to people who are doing that nowadays, compared to the very laborious and time-consuming process that used to exist.

It's laborious now, so I can't imagine how much more so it must have been in the past. The instant feedback—proofing, being able to go back on the computer, move something a couple units and print it out again to see if that made any difference—that's huge.

The part of the process that really makes the most difference between a typeface being okay and a typeface being really good is what happens between the moment when you first think you're finished and when it's actually finished, because it's long, laborious business, just as you say.

You're looking at a proof, something isn't quite right. You change something, it makes it worse, you know. Then you change something else, and it makes it a little better, and so on. I was talking to Robert Bringhurst—I saw him for dinner a couple days after the wonderful lecture he gave—and we were talking about this story about the author Flaubert. Somebody asked him one day,

"Did you have a good day at work?"

"Yes, a very good day."

"What did you do?"

"Well, in the morning, I changed a comma to a semicolon, and in the afternoon, I changed it back."

"That was a good day?"

"Yeah, absolutely."

That is a day's work. And Bringhurst said, "Yes, I've had many Flaubert days like that." And I think type designers have them, too, you know. You change something, you realize it was a mistake, and you change it back again. It's very detailed work. It requires a lot of perseverance, a lot of patience. But it really makes a huge difference to the eventual quality of a typeface. The amount of time you can bear to put into it at that stage has a great effect.

I totally agree with you. Do you have any hobbies or something you do occasionally for fun, outside of type design?

You know, I'm not a great hobbyist. I don't play golf, I don't do anything like that. I'm not really sure what to say about that. I get asked about it sometimes. I walk. I like walking. I always carry a camera, and I take photographs. Sometimes they are typographically related things, if I see a shop face that I like or inscriptions...

So you carry a camera to document interesting typographic things you notice outside?

No, anything. I'm capable of photographing a flower, or a plate of food, or a friend, or anything. It's like keeping a journal, particularly when I travel—just to remind me of the experiences and

things I've seen, but once in a while, yes, I do see something typographic or inscriptional or something I rather like. I love going to museums, galleries, and so on; I like input of some kind. Sometimes I am asked if I have a routine that I go through that causes me to have some good idea for a typeface. [laughs] I wish I did. I don't. It's a sort of random business, completely, for me. So no, I can't really point to a hobby.

I'll tell you a little anecdote about this colleague of mine, Adrian Frutiger. When I was in Paris, I got to hear that he had a student in his class who was very good, a very promising type design student. I never really met him. I knew his name at the time, but I've forgotten now. And Adrian told me one day that the student invited Adrian and his wife to go to a church service on Sunday. They thought they'd do this. When I saw Adrian the following week, I said to him,

"Did you go to the service?"

"Yes, it was very interesting, but I realized that the student will never become a type designer."

"What? I hear he's very talented."

"Oh, he is. But when I saw him on Sunday, I realized that his religion is the most important thing in his life."

So that's interesting. Adrian is a very good judge of character. I don't know what happened to this young man, but he never became a type designer. That tells you something about Adrian's attitude to his work. If you're secretly a violin player, and you really like that more than type design, then you're probably not going to be a type designer. [laughs]

Yeah, I think type design in particular is something that you go into only if you are completely head over heels in love with it.

Yes, I think that is true. You are a good example of someone who's benefitted from very good teaching, but I still think that historically and at the present time, most type designers are essentially self-taught. You're very lucky to have

Cyrus to point you in ways, and there are many classes now, you know. You can go to the Hague, you can go to Reading, you can go to Cooper to learn type design, but in the end, I think that most type designers are really self-motivated. And you've got to have some sort of hunger for it, in a strange way. Or the fascination with the complexities of type design. It's not everyone, not every designer, who has that sort of temperament. A lot of what we do with design would drive many graphic designers barking mad because it requires perseverance, devotion—whatever you call it—over a very long period of time. Many designers don't have that feat. It's rather a special case.

I want to talk about something a bit specific. It was my first time going to the Boston Public Library that evening of the Brinhurst lecture—where I also met you for the first time—and approaching the building from Copley Plaza, I noticed the weird—what do you call them?—friezes or entablature...

Yes, the panels of lettering.

Yes! I went around the whole building because the letters and the ligatures were so weird and so interesting. I had never seen such things before. They looked crowded, squeezed in there. I wondered, "who carved these?" Because I thought—I mean, the ligatures are really innovative, but maybe they could've hired a more skillful stone-carver?

When I, like you, saw those for the first time when I moved to Boston in the early 80s, I was absolutely fascinated by them because of the ingenuity that somebody used when they were laying out these inscriptions. They've got to fit names into columns. They've got to carve into granite, for God's sake. That's fine if the name is nice and short, but what happens with the long names that don't fit? So they used all sorts of nesting of letters and ligatures and so on, very much in a Renaissance or Classical style, to do that. The building was designed by a very

well-known American architect Charles Follen McKim, and the façade, including the lettering panels, was copied from a library in Paris made about fifty years before, called the Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève. And this idea of putting the names on the outside of the building whose work is on the other side of the wall—these are the great minds whose books are in the library—that's an interesting idea. I photographed pretty much all of them. I've got a whole talk about this. It's too long to get into now, but I do know where the style of lettering came from that somebody employed by McKim used. It's quite a detective story.

I really loved them and I, too, photographed every panel. I think we are similar in that we don't have particular hobbies but enjoy going on walks and observing things. And I think that when you have something you really love, because it's all-consuming, it can be difficult to separate work from "life."



One of my interests is variations. There is this word, "allograph," which is a key word in my thesis. Are you familiar with this term?

No. Tell me what it is.

An allograph is every possible variant of a letter. For example, an uppercase A, a lowercase a, an italic a, and any hand-drawn a is all

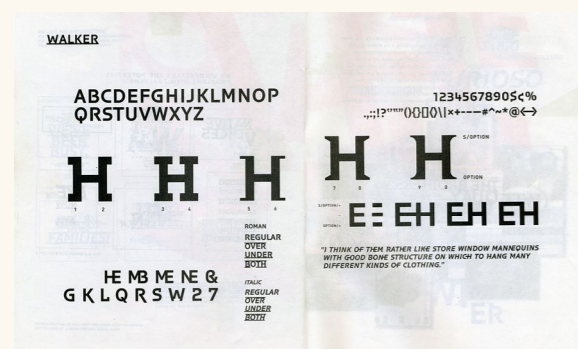
Image: A photograph I took of the stone-carved lettering on the façade of the Boston Public Library.

an allograph of the letter a. And allographic art is something that is based on a script of some sort—a score for music or a notation for dance—where every time the work is executed, you get a different result. So it has an iterative, performative aspect to it. Do you see any connection between this idea and type design?

Well, people have tried generating different forms of letters, sometimes on a random basis, sometimes on a programmatic basis. I'm sure you're familiar with the variations technology. It's all just beginning now. People say it works. I'm betting it doesn't work yet, but it presumably will soon. Making infinite interpolations is a very current idea. Like a lot of things, it seems to me to have more relevance, or potential, in the non-Latin world. A lot of people disagree with me about this, but in my opinion, the Latin alphabet changed from being a scribal alphabet to a printed alphabet very early on, before 1500. That has never happened in most of the non-Latin systems—certainly not in Arabic, Hebrew, the Indian scripts, and so on. I don't know about Hangul, but certainly in Chinese and Japanese. The idea of freeing letterforms up in a way—accepting more variant forms of them—is very current. In Japan, where I go a lot, Japanese designers are beginning to feel that they are sort of stuck with the Kanji, the Chinese forms. But the Kana are uniquely Japanese. Historically, they have been very constrained because they had to submit to Western technologies to reproduce them. But that's no longer really true, with OpenType and variations and all this other stuff. They can configure whether they ought to be reexamining the forms of Kana now that the constraints have come off. It's very similar to what's been going on in the Arab world and stirring up a lot of different opinions about this. It's a paradoxical thing that the current technology will give someone like Tom Milo an opportunity to do Arabic, which is quite sublime. It's never been like that in type before. It cascades down the page, every sort of contextual substitution of whole words as necessary, and so on. It's

fantastic. And a lot of people think that this is retrograde, [arguing that] we shouldn't be going back to 13th-century standards of calligraphy to do our typography. Speaking as a parochial Latin typographer, I don't see a huge opportunity for allographic work, but I can well imagine that it exists in the non-Latin world to a much greater and much more important extent.

The alphabet itself is a kind of constraint that every type designer has to work with, isn't it? There's this limited set of characters that have to look certain ways to be recognizable. I am Korean, so I'm also thinking about Hangul—how each glyph changes in scale or even form depending on which quadrant it occupies or what other glyph or glyphs it's adjacent to. So I think that within seemingly rigid constraints, possibilities still exist, even with the Latin alphabet; isn't that why we see all these new typefaces come out? There are subtle variations that happen from typeface to typeface within certain limits of legibility. I think your Walker typeface is actually a good example?



Yeah, it is, in a way.

Just by adding some snap-on serif options, you opened up so many opportunities to experiment using a single typeface. The number of combinations that can happen with just a handful of add-ons is infinite, which is an appealing idea for me. I guess that is one way I was thinking about the potential of type design as an allographic art.

O I 2 3 4

I have a kind of random question I have always wanted to ask you. Big Caslon is one of my favorite typefaces of all time, but its mono-weight, round figure zero has always puzzled me. It's very different from all the other letters in this high-contrast typeface, so I wondered where that came from.

Well, it didn't start with Caslon. It has an older history. I can only suppose it was originally done to distinguish zero from an o. It's still useful for that purpose. It surprises people now to have that circular zero, but I think at one time, it was accepted. That was the natural form of zero. I think it was really for that reason, for disambiguating the form; one is a letter, and one is a numeral. As far as I know, that's how it started.

So you were following a historical reference.

Yes, absolutely. I didn't make that up. You only have to look at Bodoni's figures. In his figures, zero has a thickness but only on one side of it.

You're right! So the reason was to prevent confusion. I'm happy to have that mystery solved. Lastly, are you a perfectionist? And how do you define failure?

Am I a perfectionist? I suppose. As I was saying earlier, you do have to try to get something right. It's very difficult, but I think you have to try to do it. Somebody—I can't remember which poet it was—once said: "A poem is never finished; it's only abandoned." I think that there is a temptation with a typeface to abandon it. Generally speaking, the more work you could put into it, the better. Many times I started a project and

Images: WALKER, a custom typeface Carter designed for Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, in 1995 (left) and Big Caslon figures (right). Note the circular zero.

thought it was promising at a certain point, but for some reason it didn't gel, you know, and I did not find in it what I was looking for, so I'd put it aside. Sometimes I've gone back to those things after a pause—sometimes a long pause—and I've taken them up again, and it's gone better. I seldom have things that are rejected by a client; that's not the problem. It's me who rejects them. [laughs] But I think you don't have to suppose that every idea you start is going to be a huge success, you know. You have to be realistic and modest about that sort of thing. Not all of what you do turns out the way you want it to be.

I guess failure is just a temporary state or a name you assign to it. A failure does not have to end in being a failure.

Yes, you are right. Very early on, when I was working, somebody said to me: "Never throw away a mistake because it might be better than what you intended." [laughs] And I think there is something in that. Something did not turn out right the first time, so maybe you go back to it. Maybe it changes very considerably. Maybe there's a germ of something there that you can reuse. That has certainly happened to me before.

Great. Thank you so much, Matthew.

I just have one last thought. Early in our conversation, you said something about the relevance of type design, or the relevance of what you have to do when you're designing type to other things, and it reminded me of a conversation I had with a French type designer Excoffon, a wonderful type designer of Mistral and other script faces. And he was also a poster artist and a painter. He told me one day that type design was the best thing that he did to train him to do the other things he did. What he was saying was what he learned in the discipline of type design was enormously helpful to him when it came to painting, where there are no constraints. I mean, you have a canvas and a lot of colors. Do whatever you like. Or a poster; you may not

Image: Mistral, typeface by Roger Excoffon, released in 1953.

completely freehand, but you've got a lot more latitude. So I thought that was really interesting. He was a wonderful type designer who did many other things, as well, but he attributed a lot to type design because he thought it was such good training, such a good discipline.

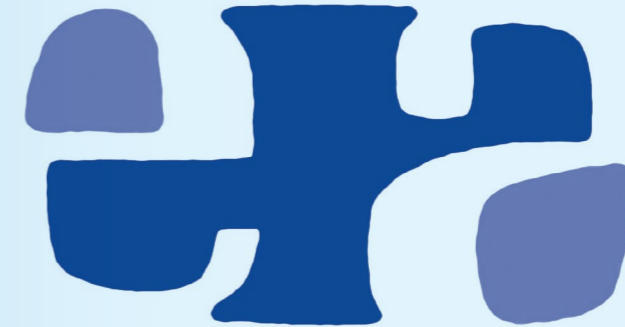
Mistral by Excoffon

That is so great to hear. I feel the same way; I think I am a better graphic designer and typographer now because I have designed type. Matthew, this has been an incredible hour talking with you. Thank you for your time.

Matthew Carter is a British type designer and co-founder of Carter & Cone. His career, spanning over 60 years, bridged every technological development in type design, from the now obsolete technique of metal punch-cutting to photo-composition to today's digital type design. He originated many of the world's most famous typefaces, including Big Caslon, Miller, Tahoma, Verdana, and Georgia. Recognized as the most important type designer working today, he received the AIGA medal in 1995 and was named a MacArthur Fellow in 2010.

2

THE LITTLE STREET



Learning to see is the first step to becoming a good artist. John Berger, an art critic and writer, believed that “To draw is to look, examining the structure of appearances. A drawing of a tree shows, not a tree, but a tree-being-looked-at.”¹ In type design, there is a specific way of seeing that can be beneficial when working with letters, which are essentially 2-dimensional

¹ John Berger, *Selected Essays* (London: Bloomsbury, 2001), p.422.

² In typography, counter is the enclosed white shape within a letterform, as in the “a” and the “e.” Sidebearing refers to the white space on either side of the character, built into its glyph space.

flat shapes. Cyrus Highsmith, an award-winning type designer and my mentor, emphasizes “a simultaneous awareness of both white and black shapes.” When white shapes—counters as well as side bearings²—are considered at all, it is often as a blank canvas on top of which black strokes sit. In a typeset word, however, the spaces around each letter

travel with it, interacting with the spaces around other letters. The interrelationships between these spaces and the resulting shapes are critical to the aesthetic, legibility, and readability of a typeface. Treating these overlooked areas as active and integral parts of the letterform rather than

On this page: the cover image of *Inside Paragraphs: Typographic Fundamentals* (2012) by Cyrus Highsmith.

3 *White space is to be regarded as an active element, not a passive background.*
JAN TSCHICHOLD

When I put my pen to a blank sheet, black isn't added but rather the white sheet is deprived of light. Thus I also grasped that the empty spaces are the most important aspect of a typeface. ADRIAN FRUTIGER

a passive substrate is at the core of Cyrus' design philosophy, as it was for other typographic giants such as Jan Tschichold and Adrian Frutiger.³

While type design is still a small field whose practitioners are few and dispersed, its principles are applicable to the world outside of typography. For instance, Cyrus attributes his bowling aptitude to his ability to turn his depth perception on and off. Once the depth perception has been turned off, it is as though the pins are right in front of him, which makes it easier to bowl a strike. I do not profess to possess the same talent—I just squint my eyes a lot—but learning the fundamentals of type design from Cyrus has helped me see things not in the Euclidean space but as flat shapes. When the distinction between foreground and background is blurred, a reversal of visual hierarchy, and consequently of value, is possible. The details previously neglected begin to surface, to be seen and reconsidered.

Imagine you are walking down the street. With each step you take, an incalculable amount of information enters your field of vision every second. How much of it do you actually see and how are you deciding, if at all, what to process? What are you leaving out? Perhaps there is room for re-examination in the everyday object, spaces, and events that are so familiar that they have become a mere backdrop in your life.

The quotidian has always been a subject of interest in visual art. Ancient Egyptians decorated the tombs of their beloved with agrarian scenes.

In *The Natural History* (78 AD), Pliny the Elder describes a Hellenistic

painter's paintings of "low things," such as a barber's shop and eatables.⁴ And in the 17th century, Dutch and Flemish artists were prolific still life and genre painters.⁵ My favorite among them is Johannes Vermeer. His remarkable painting, "The Little Street," has occupied

my desktop for a long time as my wallpaper image. I love everything about this painting, from the title and the general atmosphere to the various

4 Pliny the Elder, "Book XXXV. An Account of Paintings And Colours." *The Natural History* (London: Wernerian Club, 1847).

5 Genre painting is a style of painting that portrays the ordinary, often situated in domestic settings.



Johannes Vermeer
The Little Street, c. 1657–58
Oil on canvas. Rijksmuseum.

domestic activities depicted and the intricate detail of the ironwork on the windows. Technical mastery aside, what is extraordinary about these Dutch artists is that they portrayed ordinary life at a time in which grand religious themes and historic events still dominated Western art.

6 Alpers, Svetlana. *The Art of Describing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p.91.

I, too, find inspiration from my own little streets. I am delighted and moved by the chance encounters I have with seemingly prosaic

objects and occurrences. In a world that favors speed and quantity over thoughtfulness and depth, it is easy to ignore the things that speak in soft, quiet voices. Looking through my mental loupe, I observe my surroundings without prejudice, putting forward their quirks and imperfections as causes for celebration. Once you collapse the conventional hierarchy of attention and start to really see, the world is “a feast for the attentive eye.”⁶

BRIEF 2

To make or invent something new is to change not only one's surroundings but to change oneself and the way one perceives: it is to change reality a little.¹

JOHN CHRIS JONES

Beauty is not underfoot
wherever we take the trouble to look.²

JOHN CAGE

>>> Observe your surroundings with a “simultaneous awareness of both shapes.” Notice what you pay attention to and what you ignore. Rediscover what has been right under your feet, in front of you, above you, and around you. Use your mental loupe to see the familiar in a new light.

1 JOHN CHRIS JONES, *DESIGN METHODS* (NEW YORK: JOHN WILEY & SONS, 1970).

2 JOHN CAGE, *SILENCE* (MID-DLETOWN: WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1961).

**Feel free
to leave
the class-
room and
work
outside.**

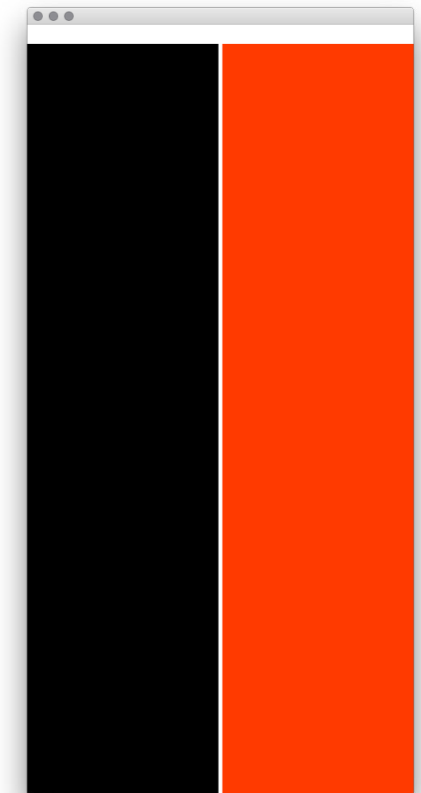
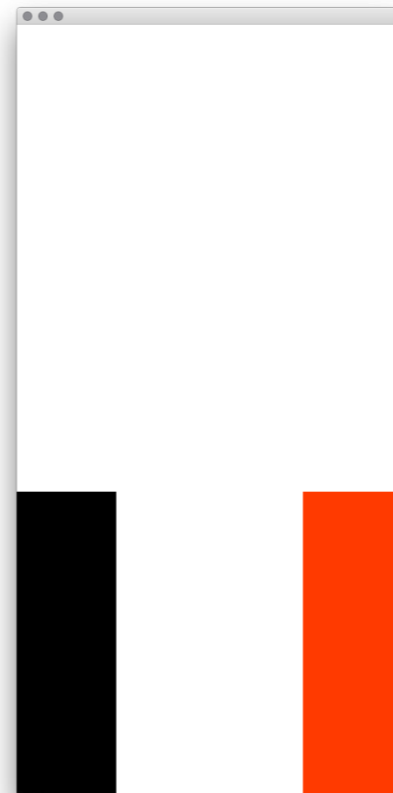
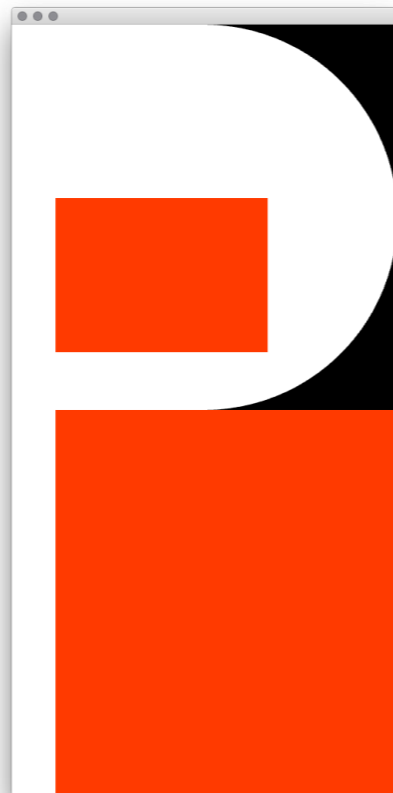
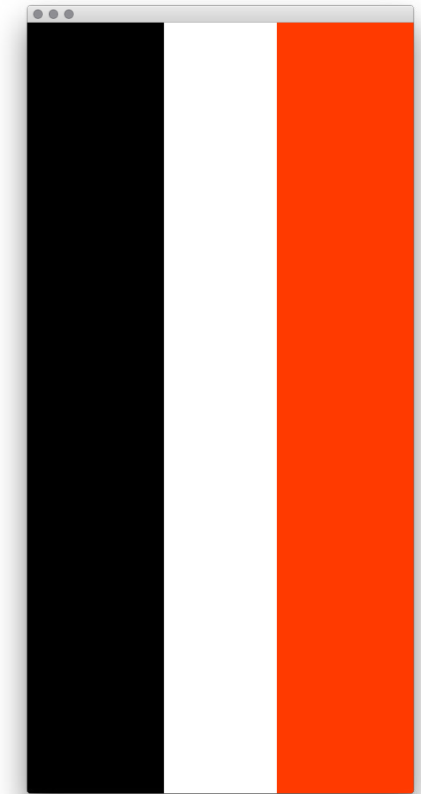
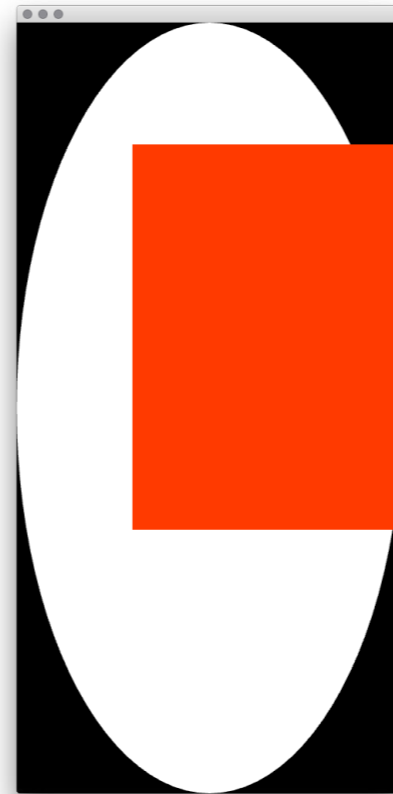
PROJECT

Programming experiment
500 × 1000 px

SCRIPT

The spaces inside and around a letter are seen as negative space rather than solid forms. During a weekend workshop with artist Zach Lieberman, I wrote a script for each letter in the word “SCRIPT” to bring the overlooked spaces to the foreground and turn them into active elements that had presence. The red shapes change and move with the position of the mouse cursor. Every movement of the cursor creates a new variant of the letter.

Right Just one of the theoretically infinite versions of each letter. The last three are different forms of the “T” that are possible.



```

void ofApp::draw(){
    if (whichLetter == 0){
        //S
        ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
        ofDrawEllipse(250, 500, 500, 1000);

        float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 200, 300);
        float y = ofClamp(mouseY, 50, 225);
        float w = 350;
        float h = 350;
        ofSetColor(255,50,0);

        ofDrawRectangle(x, y, w, h);
        ofDrawRectangle(x-w-25, y+h+25, w, h);
    } else if (whichLetter == 1){
        //C
        ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
        ofDrawEllipse(250, 500, 500, 1000);

        float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 150, 325);
        float y = ofClamp(mouseY, 50, 450);
        float w = 350;
        float h = 500;
        ofSetColor(255,50,0);

        ofDrawRectangle(x, y, w, h);
    } else if (whichLetter == 2){
        //R
        ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
        ofDrawCircle(250, 250, 250);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, 500, 500, 500);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, 250, 500);

        float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 250);
        float y = ofClamp(mouseY, 500, 1000);

        ofSetColor(255,50,0);
        ofDrawTriangle(x, 500, 500, 500, 500, 1000);

        float a = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 75);
        float b = ofClamp(mouseY, 25, 275);
        ofDrawRectangle(a, b, 275, 200);
    }

    else if (whichLetter == 3){
        //I
        ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, 500, 1000);

        float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 475);
        float y = 1000;

        ofSetColor(255,50,0);
        if (x > 252.5) {
            ofSetColor(255,50,0);
            ofDrawRectangle(x, 0, ofGetWidth(), y);
            ofSetColor(0);
            ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, ofGetWidth()-x, y);
        } else {
            ofSetColor(0);
            ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, x, ofGetHeight());
            ofSetColor(255,50,0);
            ofDrawRectangle(ofGetWidth()-x, 0, x, y);
        }

        ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
        ofDrawRectangle(247.5, 0, 5, 1000);
    }

    else if (whichLetter == 4){
        //P
        ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
        ofDrawCircle(250, 250, 250);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, 500, 500, 500);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, 250, 500);

        float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 250);
        float y = ofClamp(mouseY, 500, 1000);

        ofSetColor(255,50,0);
        ofDrawRectangle(x, 500, 475, 500);

        ofSetColor(255,50,0);
    }
}

```

```

//R
ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
ofDrawCircle(250, 250, 250);
ofDrawRectangle(0, 500, 500, 500);
ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, 250, 500);

float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 250);
float y = ofClamp(mouseY, 500, 1000);

ofSetColor(255,50,0);
ofDrawTriangle(x, 500, 500, 500, 500, 1000);

float a = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 75);
float b = ofClamp(mouseY, 25, 275);
ofDrawRectangle(a, b, 275, 200);
}

else if (whichLetter == 3){
    //I
    ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
    ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, 500, 1000);

    float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 475);
    float y = 1000;

    ofSetColor(255,50,0);
    if (x > 252.5) {
        ofSetColor(255,50,0);
        ofDrawRectangle(x, 0, ofGetWidth(), y);
        ofSetColor(0);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, ofGetWidth()-x, y);
    } else {
        ofSetColor(0);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, x, ofGetHeight());
        ofSetColor(255,50,0);
        ofDrawRectangle(ofGetWidth()-x, 0, x, y);
    }

    ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
    ofDrawRectangle(247.5, 0, 5, 1000);
}

else if (whichLetter == 4){
    //P
    ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
    ofDrawCircle(250, 250, 250);
    ofDrawRectangle(0, 500, 500, 500);
    ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, 250, 500);

    float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 250);
    float y = ofClamp(mouseY, 500, 1000);

    ofSetColor(255,50,0);
    ofDrawRectangle(x, 500, 475, 500);

    ofSetColor(255,50,0);
    float a = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 75);
    float b = ofClamp(mouseY, 25, 275);
    ofDrawRectangle(a, b, 275, 200);
}

else if (whichLetter == 5){
    //T
    ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
    ofDrawRectangle(0, 0, 500, 1000);

    float x = ofClamp(mouseX, 25, 475);
    float y = ofClamp(mouseY, 25, 925);

    if (mouseX > 250) {
        ofSetColor(255,50,0);
        ofDrawRectangle(x, y, ofGetWidth()-x, ofGetHeight()-y);
        ofSetColor(0);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, y, ofGetWidth()-x, ofGetHeight()-y);
    } else {
        ofSetColor(0);
        ofDrawRectangle(0, y, x, ofGetHeight());
        ofSetColor(255,50,0);
        ofDrawRectangle(ofGetWidth()-x, y, x, ofGetHeight()-y);
    }

    ofSetColor(255, 255, 255);
    ofDrawRectangle(247.5, 0, 5, 1000);
}
}
}

```

Right The code behind the work, in Xcode. It put restrictions on the possible positions of the red boxes ("ofClamp") so that the topology of each letter was never broken.

PROJECT

Video 02:24

A.M./P.M.

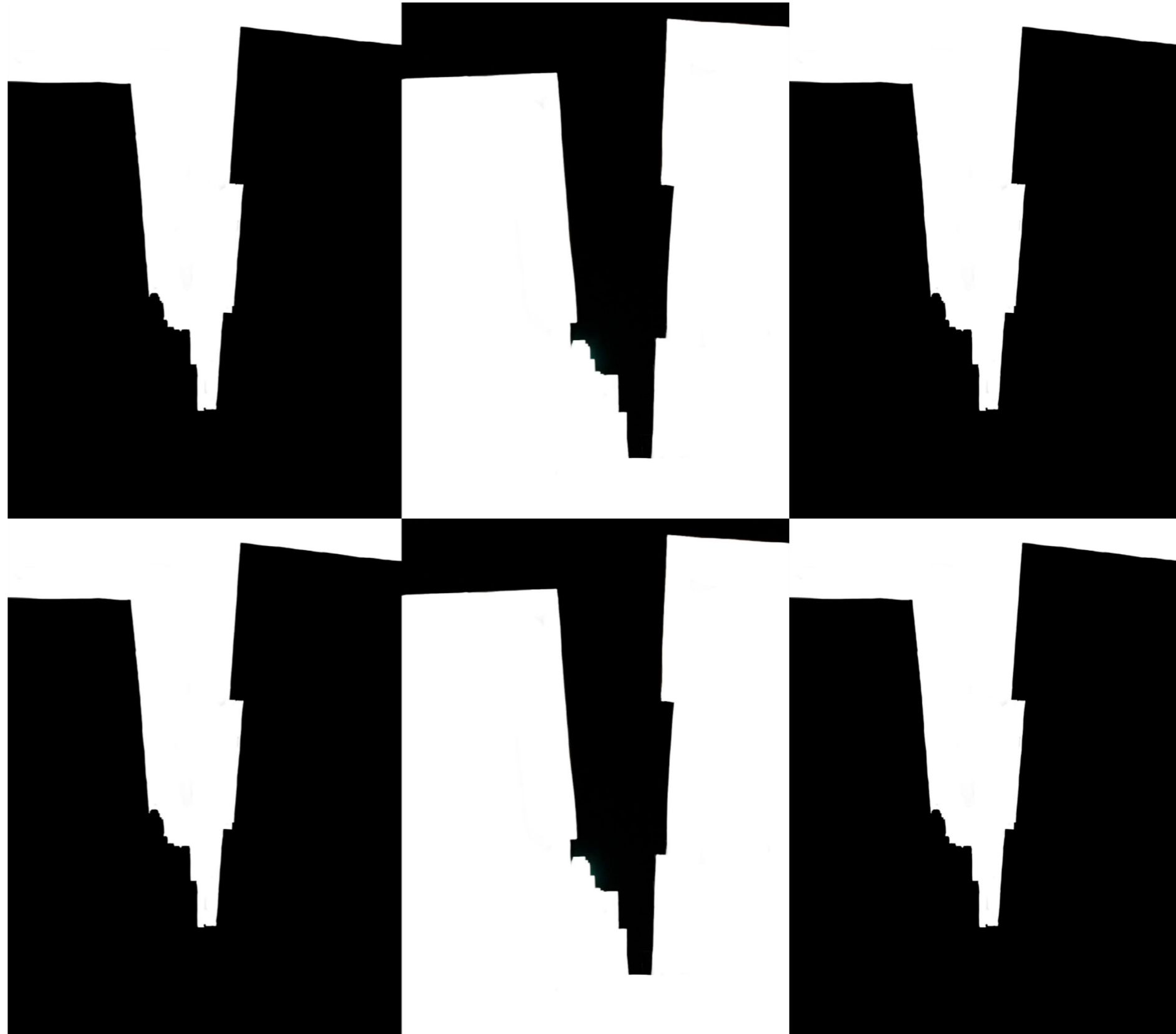
In response to Julia Born's workshop prompt to document the same hour twice, one time in the AM and another time in the PM, I draw a parallel between the relationship between day and night and that of form and counterform.

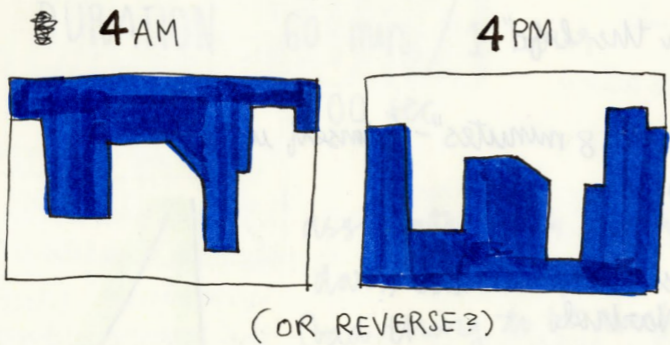
This split-screen video juxtaposes form and counterform, using the photographs I took of five different locations in Downtown Providence at 4PM and again at 4AM:

- Left* photo taken between 4–5PM, counterform (sky) is colored in.
Right photo taken between 4–5AM, form (non-sky) is colored in.

Right Form and counterform juxtaposition, repeated.

Next Spread Stills from the video showing the process of the form and counterform being colored in.



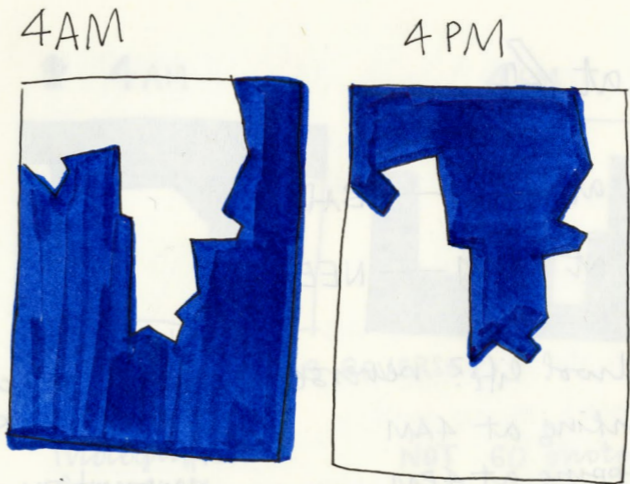
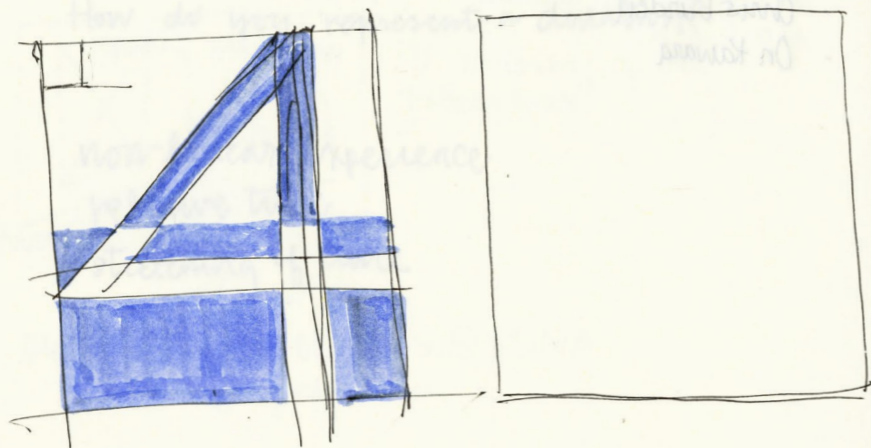


Photographs.
Same spots

light & dark
contrast

figure & ground

NOT 60 photos (1/min.)
Time felt not measured.
or imposed organization
or order



juxtapositions — sets
Same place (composition), diff. times

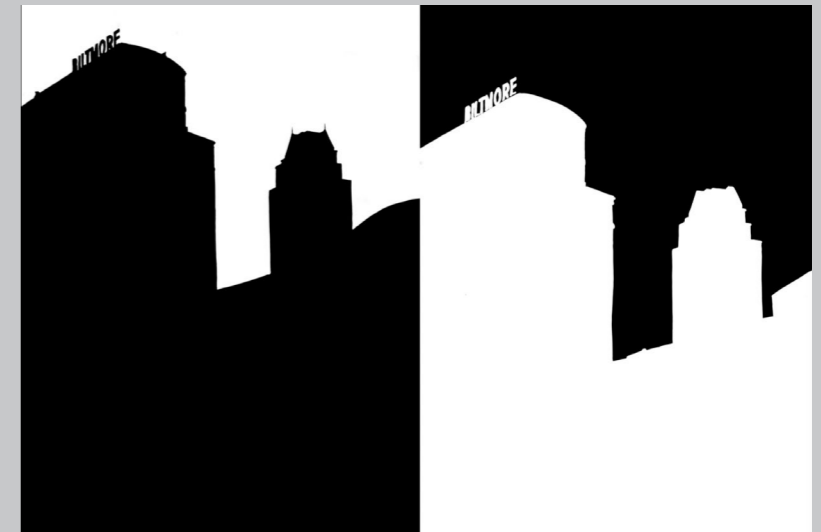
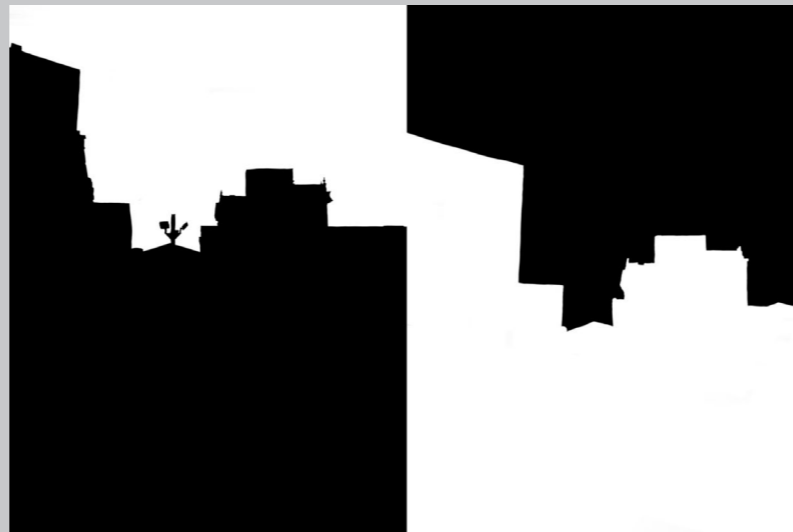
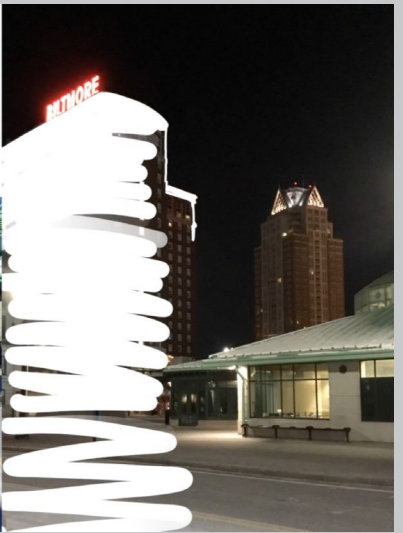
~~2 walks?~~ 1 route
timed photography?
1 photo per minute? → 60 pairs
too many?

4-5 photos
fill in buildings
with lighter blue
on spot (~15 min?)

10-15 min "painting"

4AM vs. 4PM photo
difference makes clear
it's from 2 diff times of
day?





PROJECT

Zip file
Posters 18 × 27 in.
Book 6 × 9 in.
Audios, USB drives

DigSafe.zip

Utility workers' marks are colorful spray-painted letters and symbols commonly found in urban environments, so ubiquitous that they often recede into the background. Available from ZipFoundry.com,* *DigSafe.zip* brings attention to these marks. The title comes from Dig Safe System, Inc., a clearinghouse that notifies utility companies of planned excavations to ensure no underground utility line is disrupted.

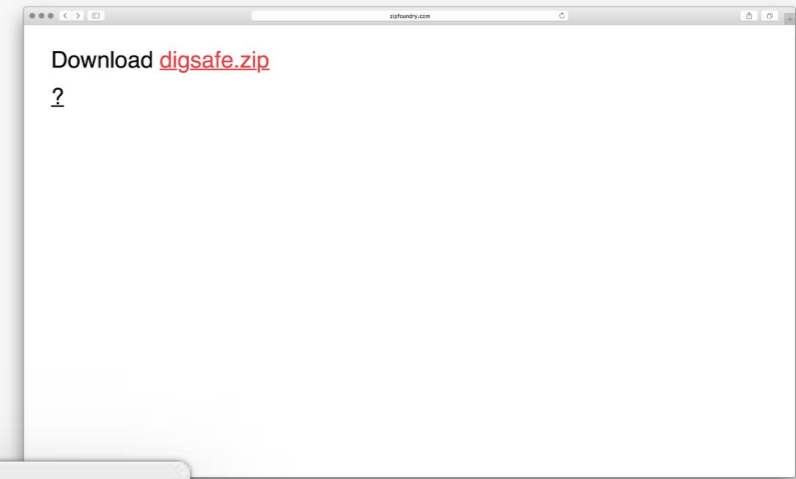
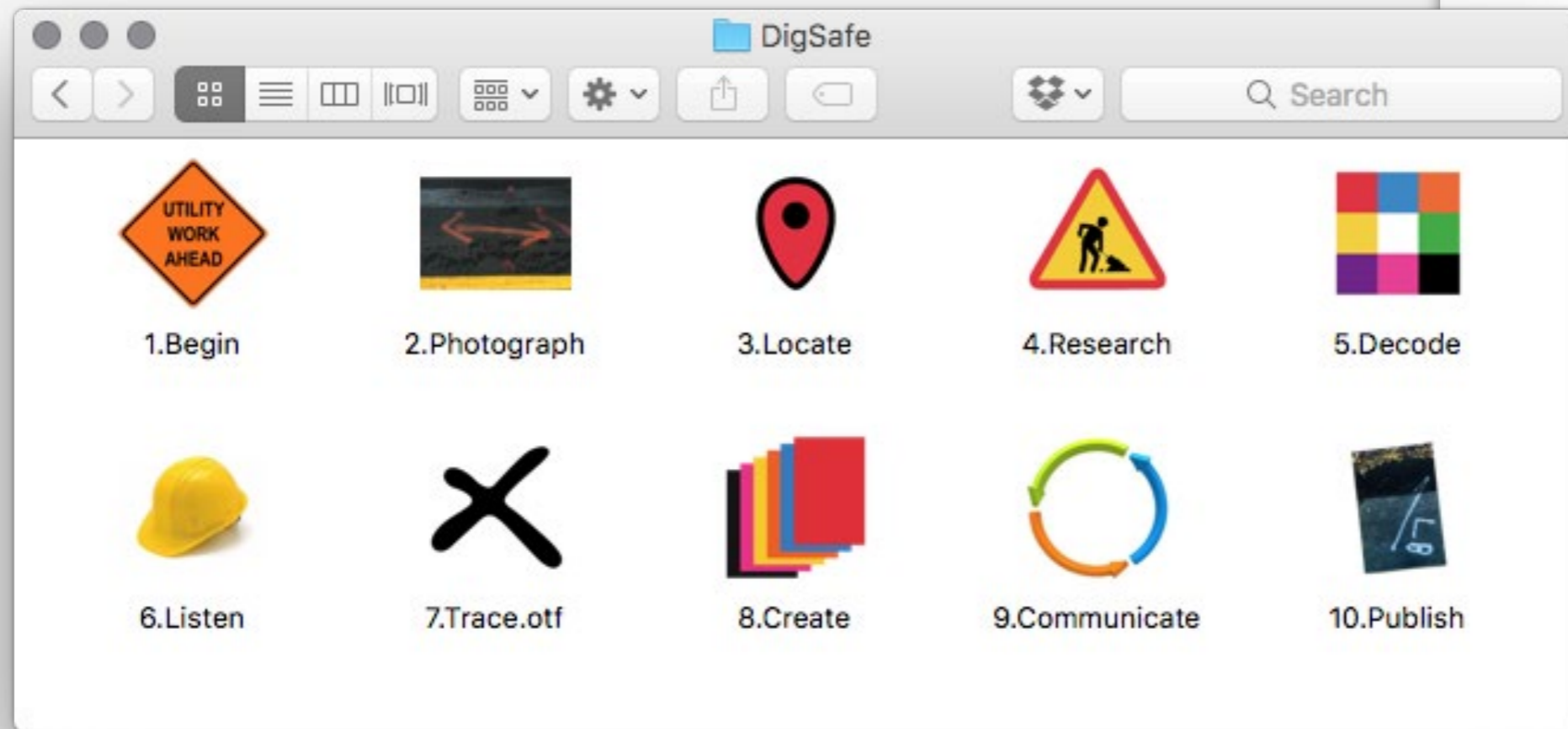
Once downloaded and decompressed, *DigSafe.zip* offers ten files in various formats: a text file, a GIF, a font file, a Google Maps link, a few PDFs, a folder of JPEGs, and two audio recordings. Ranging from a group of photographs and a recording of ambient sound collected around construction sites, to a font made from digitizing the marks, each item provides

* Zip Foundry is an online publishing platform I established in Paul Soulellis' Experimental Publishing Studio to disseminate stories in the form of zip files, considering them packaged raw meat that the readers may cook and consume however they want.



Right Every file offered in the zip file shown on a desktop screen, which acts as a reading space. The user is invited to open any or all files, in whatever sequence and arrangement.

additional context. By sharing ten perspectives rather than a single narrative, *DigSafe.zip* invites the reader to uncover the stories behind the banal subject in any sequence or combination.



Right ZipFoundry.com.
Left The zip file, decompressed.
I created or selected the icons.

HOW
ACCU
ARE
IT'S
GUID
TO F

THE
ORANGE
WILL COST
YOU EVERY
THING
YOU EVER
OWNED.

THE RED
MARKS WILL
KILL YOU.
OH, YEAH.
NO
KIDDING.

THE BLUE,
T JUST
MAKES
MESS.

Posters using the typeface made from digitizing the utility marks and quotes from my conversation with a utility worker.

Right My booth setup at the Experimental Publishing Studio Book Fair, which took place in GD Commons, Design Center.

Below Promotional take-away cards prepared for the book fair.

Bottom USB drives with the zip file on them as another method of distribution. The book contains photos of the utility marks and excerpts from an interview with a utility worker.



Spreads from the *Digsafe* book, showing pairings of excerpts from an interview with a utility worker with an image of the marks. When juxtaposed with an image, the quotes from a casual conversation gain more poignancy.



...it's like crossing a street.

Do you feel tremendous pressure?

No, no.

No? Because you're highly skilled?

No, it's like crossing a street.
At some point, you pay attention to what you do.
I know where all the stuff is,
just by looking at that kind of stuff,
you know what I mean?

Do people lose lives?

Absolutely. Oh, absolutely.
It happens. It happens.

If you make a mistake and you hit it,
you're not gonna survive.
It only takes one tenth of one amp to kill you.



It happens.

Everything else freezes,
so you need to be at least 5 ft. down.
The water mains have to be at least 5 ft. down,
the sewer lines, typically at 5 ft.
And then they'll go 10 ft., 20 ft.,—

You mean literally freeze because it's cold.

Yeah, the water mains will freeze.
Communication doesn't freeze.

What?

Communication does not freeze.



Communication does not freeze.

.PDF .EXE .PPT .EPS .MP3 .DOC
 .OTF .TXT
 .JPEG .INDD
 .GIF .HTML
 .MOV .UFO .CSS

for Thesis studio

use as boilerplate?
 What comes w/
 commercially available font?
 waterfall
 Font Bureau specimen style

Street name as folder name (location-based)
 OR neighborhoods

The idea of a living font - how does it behave?

NON-LINEARITY

ONE TYPEFACE
 MANY WEIGHTS
 OR DIFF FONT
 PUT OUT REGULARLY

GITHUB
 MY OWN SITE
 TROLL THREAD

script that opens windows
 publishing space (the desktop)

open simultaneously?
 an option of a curated experience.

TYPESCAPES
 typographic landscapes
 LABOR

EPS

Util. workers signs marks
 spraypaint, color-coded, ephemeral, purely utilitarian (not meant to give an aesthetic exp.)
 for what is hidden underground

putting it back in to the environment?
 OR make stencils w/ font & spraypaint but not in the streets in a gallery setting



Does it come off as corrective?
 NOT ephemeral; an attempt to preserve
 what if I went out & had the workers do it?

Turn into a series of stencils
 Vernacular Speculars
 Fletcher or Brown gallery

besidethefont.com
 zipfoundry.com?

MY OWN PUBLISHING STUDIO?
 TYPE FOUNDRY? ZIP foundry

WHAT ELSE CAN AN OTF FILE BE OTHER THAN A FONT?

POEMS
 IMAGE MAKING (glyph=shape?)
 PRINTS
 SPECIMENS

dependencies (including other files to read everything in the folder)
 open format
 hybridity flexibility
 experimentation
 new definitions
 more interconnectivity between among files

NOT PRODUCTS TO SELL - JUST a set of instructions that can make the designs (OR FREE PDFs?)
 zip file w/ html + javascript files

BLURB economy magazine: matte cover, can print on backside of cover

Foundry.zip.com zipfoundry.com
 foundry.zip ? .zip

This is a work that had many moving parts and many different ideas. At some point, I was interested in a "living font," one that updates regularly and possibly even dies, or expires.

PROJECT

Accordion book
5½ × 10 in.

Crits

This book is an attempt to say something by saying nothing. The walls, photographed in the graduate studio, hold the history of the countless pin-up crits that have taken place there. By isolating the walls and re-presenting them in the book form, this quiet book asks that we pause and consider what we take for granted on a daily basis.

Right A pin-up wall in the graduate studio, CIT building, RISD.





The book's proportion reflects the wall's (one page = one wall panel). The holes reproduced are life-size.

PROJECT

Book
12½ × 10 in.

Looking(Seeing)*

Look (v.) to direct your eyes in a particular direction

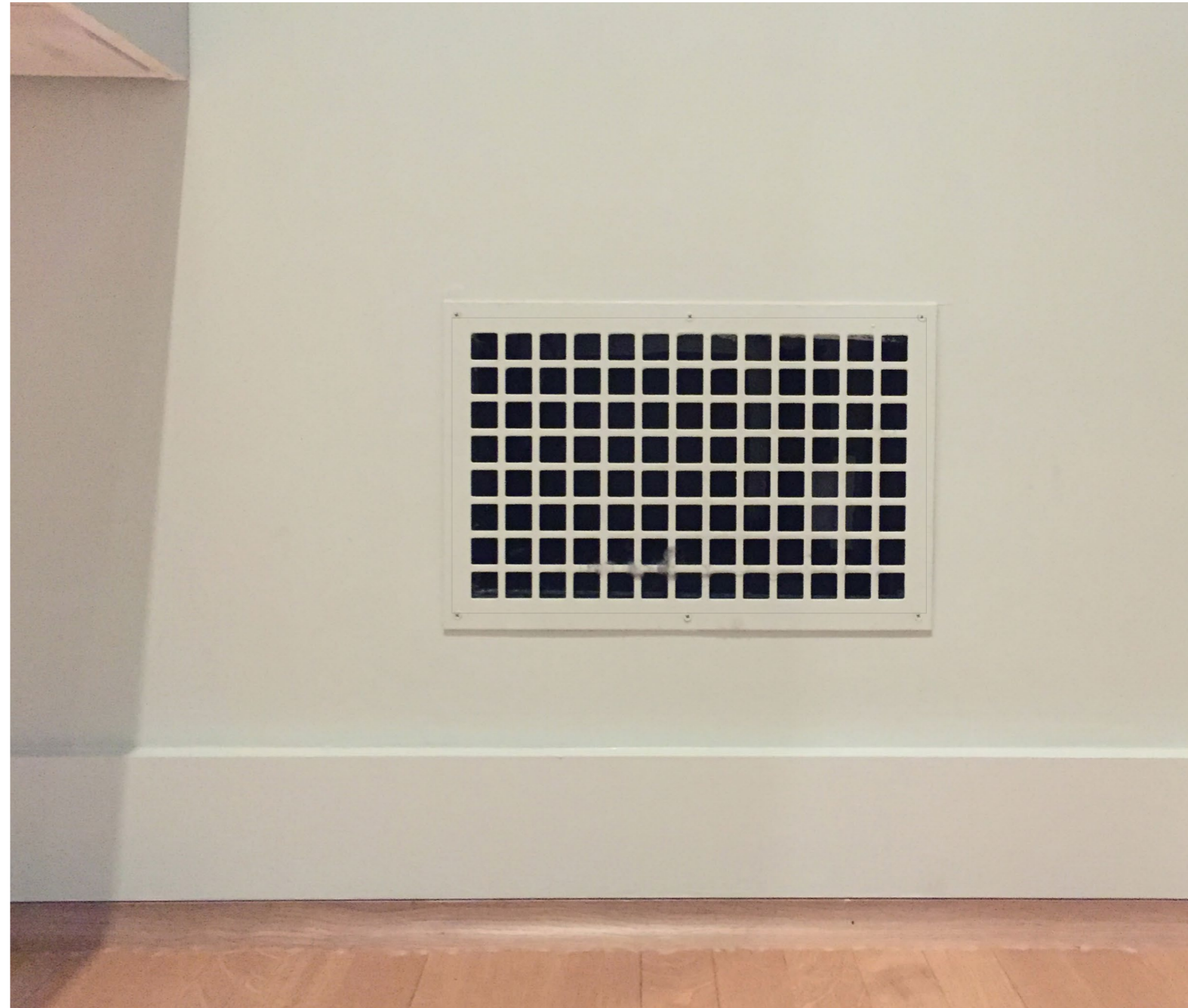
**See (v.) to notice or become aware of something
or someone using your eyes**

A museum is a setting in which our desire to see is at its most heightened state. But are you actually seeing or merely looking at what is presented to you as being worthy of your attention? Looking is not quite the same as seeing.

The dictionary definitions suggest that seeing is a more active mode of visual perception than looking. To see is to understand. It involves more than your eyes casually looking in certain directions or at certain objects; seeing engages your mind, as well as your eyes.

* This writing is an edited version of an article I published earlier about this work on RISD Museum's online publication platform, *Manual*. The original article is available at: risdmuseum.org/manual/447_looking_seeing.

CUT OUT BY HAND



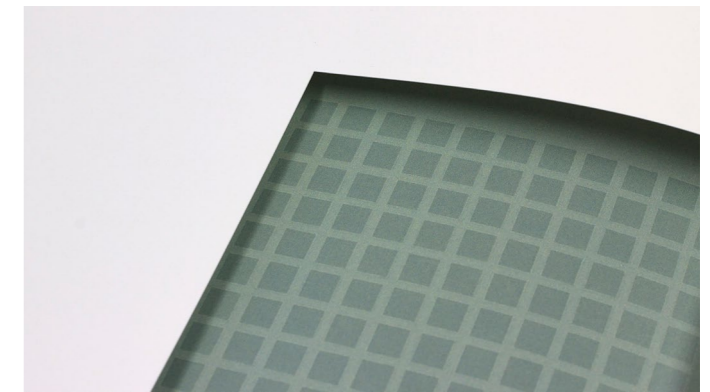
Like many artists and designers, I often turn to art museums for inspirations. I believe one of the most distinguishing and beneficial features of creatives is their ability to see, including seeing past the obvious. This profoundly affects how one experiences an object, a space, or a person. The shape of a shadow cast by a fire hydrant at a particular angle at a particular time—or the fire hydrant itself—can sometimes move you more than a magnificent sculpture by Rodin just a few feet away.

Looking(Seeing) at first glance invites the reader in with an expectation of “high art.” This book features the ventilation grilles found on the walls and floors of the RISD Museum and juxtaposes them alongside fine art. The grilles, framed to resemble artworks, are presented as such before they are revealed in their original contexts—next to a chair, by the white baseboard molding just above the floor, and so on.

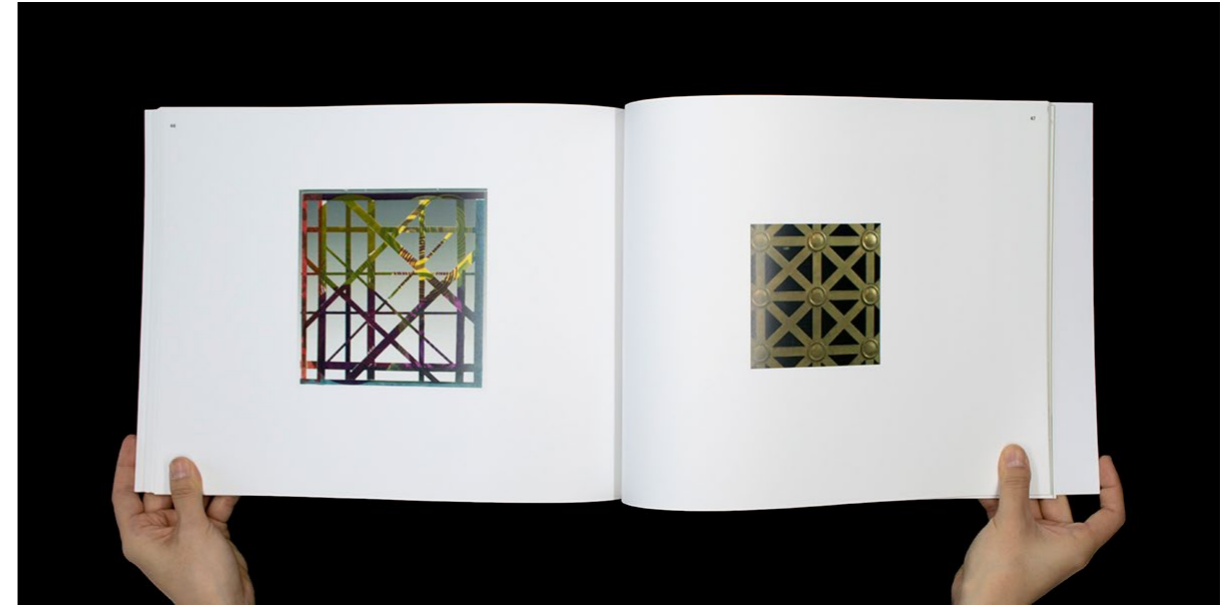
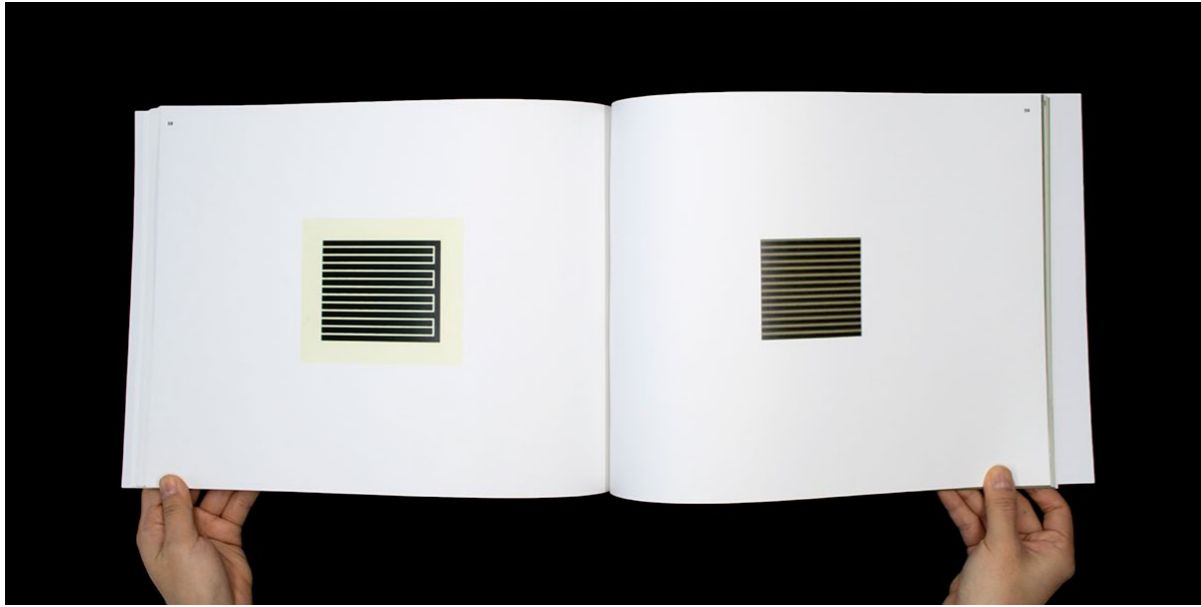
This book represents a subversion of the conventional ways of seeing and aesthetic propositions and encourages a perceptual shift. It is when you abandon your preconceived ideas that you open yourself up to surprising encounters. Beauty can be found everywhere, even in the most mundane of objects, if only you can see them.



Left The book borrows the language of a pristine, elegant museum catalog.

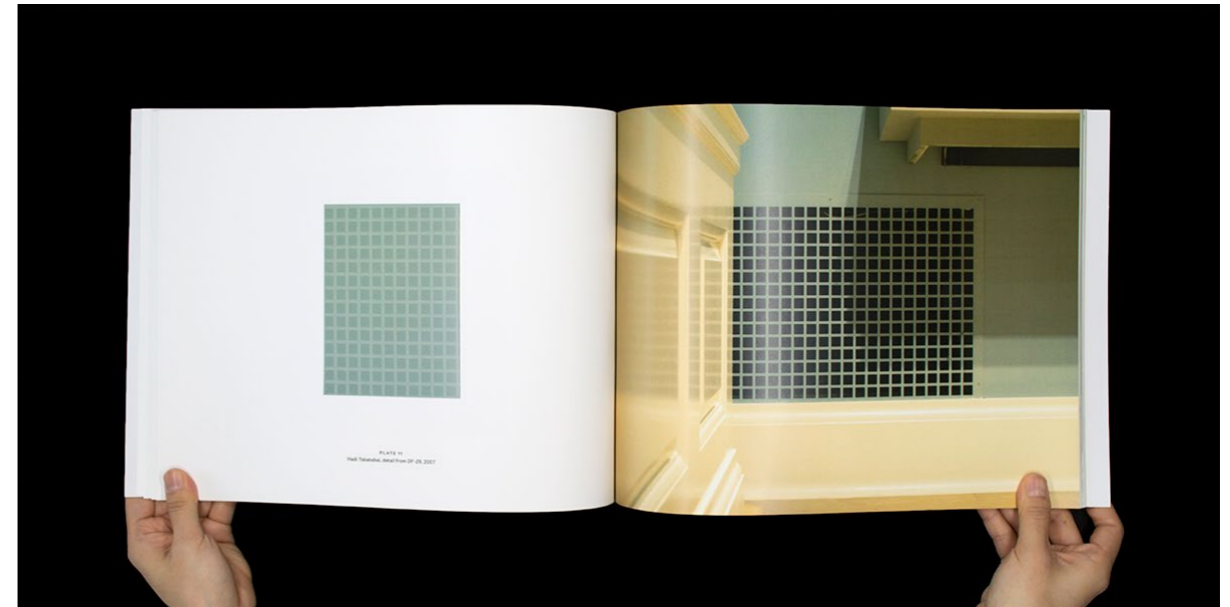
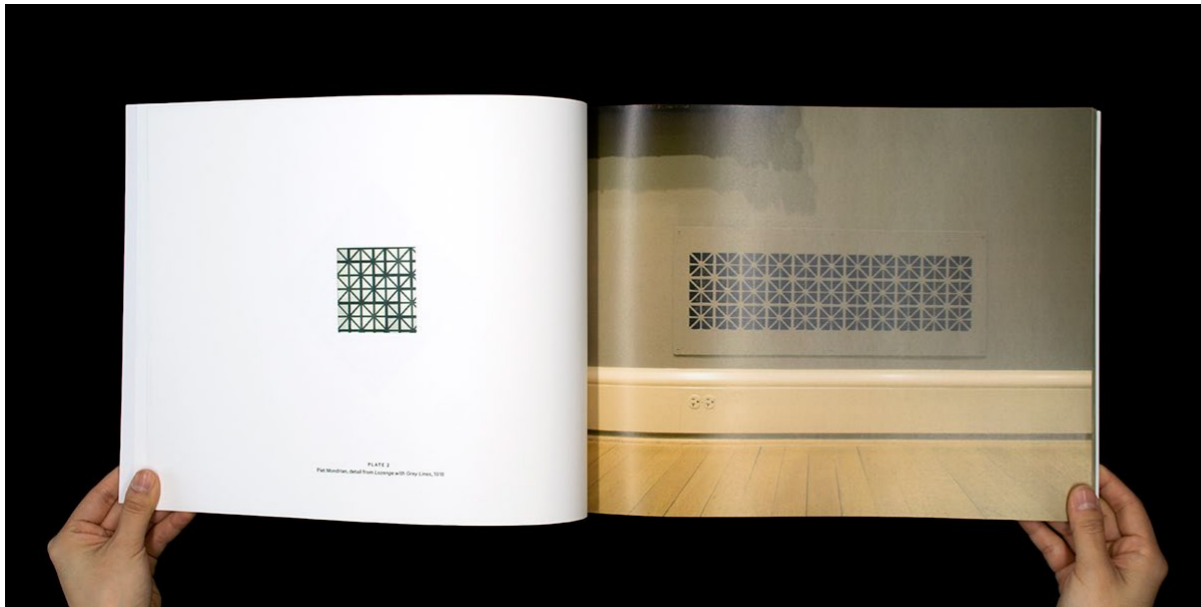
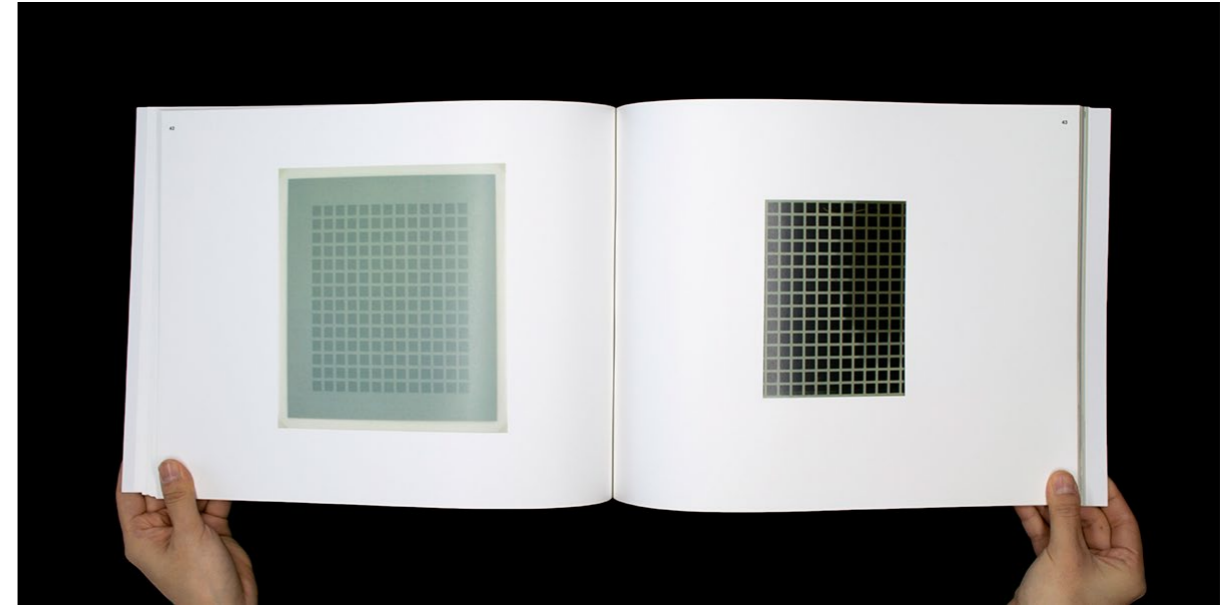
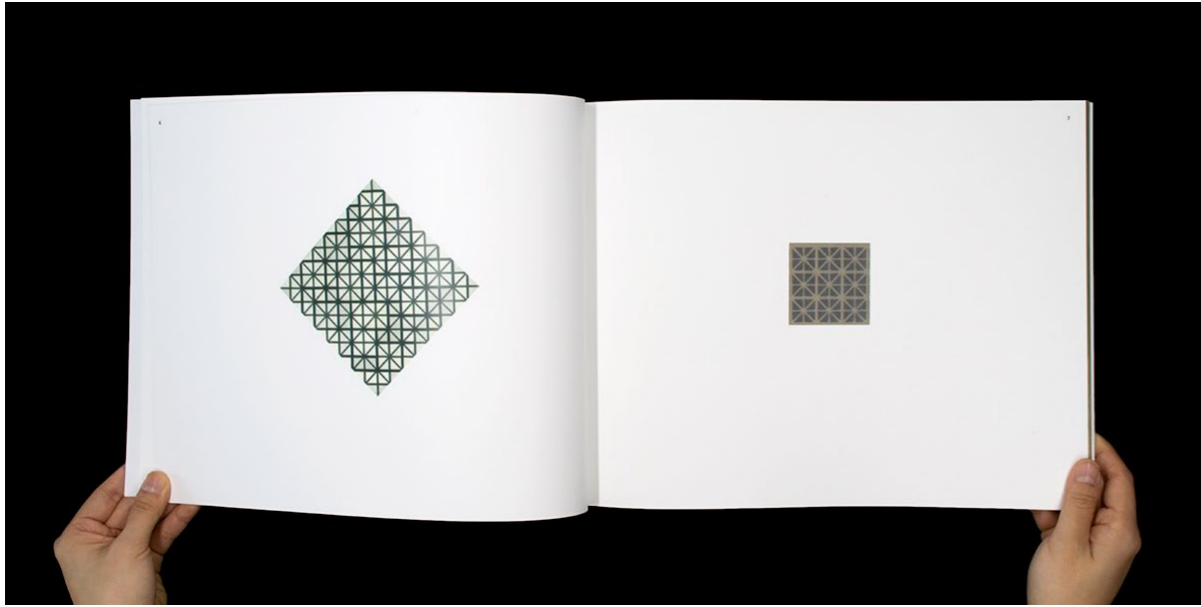


Opposite Details from the book (middle, bottom).



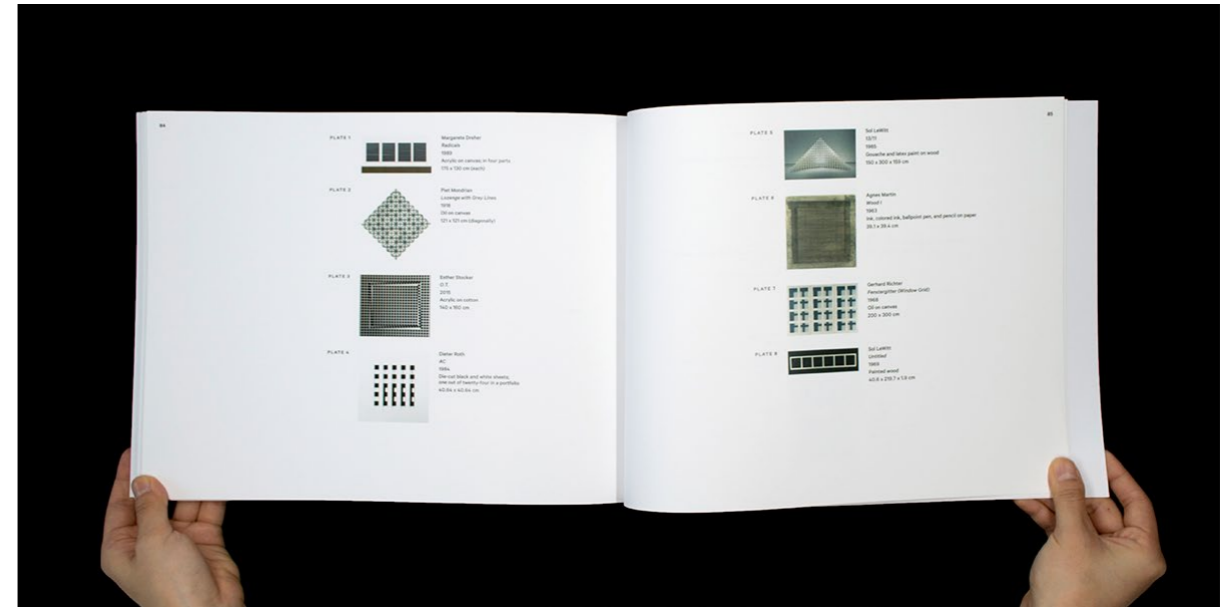
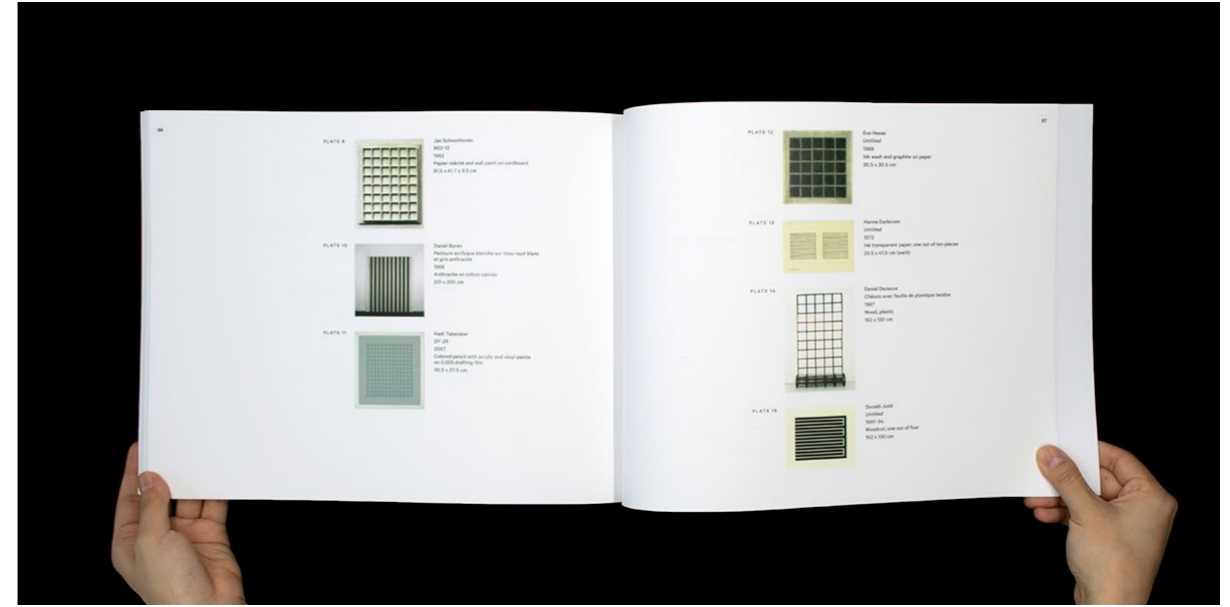
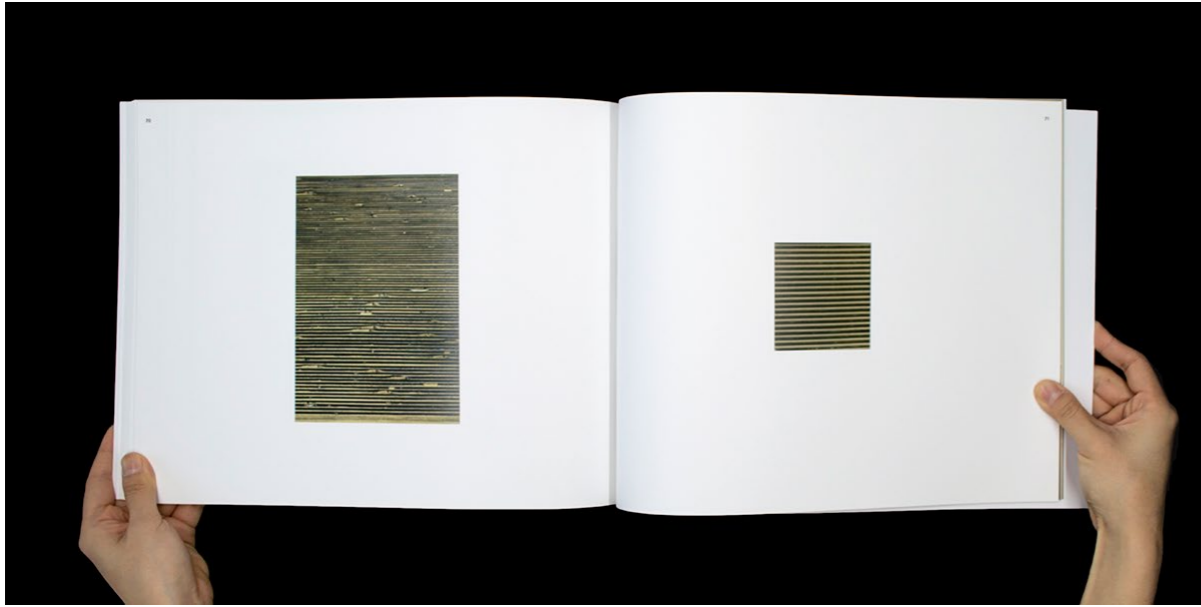
Donald Judd
Untitled, 1991–94
 Woodcut; one out of four
 162 × 130 cm

Alan Shields
Rat, 1974
 Silkscreen with dye
 and flocking on lattice
 43½ × 42½ cm



Piet Mondrian
Lozenge with Grey Lines, 1918
 Oil on canvas
 121 × 121 cm (diagonally)

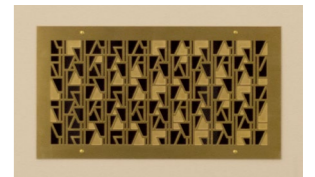
Hadi Tabatabai
DF-29, 2007
 Colored pencil with acrylic and
 vinyl paints on 0.005 drafting film
 30½ × 28 cm



Andreas Gursky
Beelitz, 2007
 C-print
 307 x 219 cm

Above Index of all artworks reproduced in the book.

Right The last work shown in this book was *Ventilation Grills (for a house in the woods)* (2010) by Martin Boyce. As it was both a ventilation grate I found and photographed in the RISD museum and an artwork in its own right, it was juxtaposed with itself.



Full Definition of SHADOW

- 1 : partial darkness or obscurity within a part of space from which rays from a source of light are cut off by an interposed opaque body
- 2 : a reflected image
- 3 : shelter from danger or observation
- 4 a : an imperfect and faint representation
b : an imitation of something : COPY
- 5 : the dark figure cast upon a surface by a body intercepting the rays from a source of light
- 6 : PHANTOM
- 7 plural : DARK 1a
- 8 : a shaded or darker portion of a picture
- 9 : an attenuated form or a vestigial remnant
- 10 a : an inseparable companion or follower
b : one (as a spy or detective) that shadows
- 11 : a small degree or portion : TRACE
- 12 : a source of gloom or unhappiness
- 13 a : an area near an object : VICINITY
b : pervasive and dominant influence
- 14 : a state of ignominy or obscurity

— shad·ow·less | \ˈshɑ-dō-ləs, -də-ləs | adjective
— shad·ow·like | \-lɪk | adjective

Something else I pay a lot of attention to are shadows. Roaming the RISD Museum galleries, ventilation grilles and shadows were what I found myself photographing.

TEXT:

- INTRO by me (touching on paying attention to details, on overlooked things that usually exist, go unnoticed) SEEING
- importance of ventilation in museums
- Interview Phil (security, safety, facilities manager) or other museum personnel TRANSCRIPT?

"THE SHADOW ONLY" Nancy Forcione JSTOR

Gauguin: "the shadow only" = "original point of departure, the strangeness of which you have calculated" p491

"shadow's new autonomy" p491

VENTILATION GRILLES, RISD MUSEUM



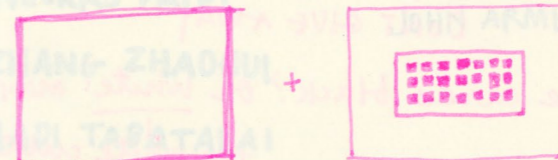
VISUAL:

- variations in ① size ④ color
② shape ⑤ style
③ location ⑥ context

CONCEPTUAL:

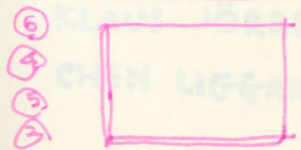
- always (almost) present in galleries but rarely noticed
- important, functionally (preservation) *
ventilation - temperature
- humidity
- microbacteria & pathogens

Pairing w/ similar art/object (i.e. with the MacKintosh chair or Mondrian, etc.)

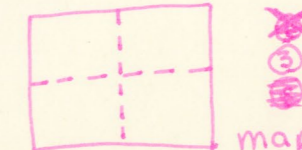


cardstock board of the same color as the gallery wall

acetate or vellum with grille pattern printed black



catalog



map

3

ALLOGRAPHIC FACES



ALLOGRAPH

In his essay “Beyond Typography,” graphic designer Michael Rock compares the alphabet to “a prison in which the caged artist feels at liberty,” borrowing the metaphor art historian Rosalind Krauss used back in 1986

¹ Michael Rock, “Beyond Typography,” 1994. <http://2x4.org/ideas/42/beyond-typography>.

² Michael D. Coe and Mark van Stone, *Reading the Maya Glyphs* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2001).

to describe the grid in modern art.¹ Although the alphabet is a given, there are countless ways in which a single letter can be visualized. Every person has her own handwriting or lettering style, and every time, even if drawn by the same person, the same letter inevitably looks different. (Is your

signature ever the same?) In Ancient Maya, glyphs were never even standardized; rather, the scribes were encouraged to use their imagination to render them, resulting in many different versions of the same characters.²

When the type designer draws letters, she indeed imprisons herself in the alphabet, yet she does so willingly and happily. There is perhaps no other field in which reviving older precedents is more accepted and prevalent

On this page: different forms of the “R” from *An Essay on Typography* by Eric Gill (London: Lund Humphries, 2016).

than in type design. Even among revivals of the same typeface (for example, Garamond), variations exist, and people have preferences as to which Garamond they prefer.

Pioneering Dutch type designers, Erik van Blokland and Just van Rossum, collectively known as LettError, experimented with variability in type by integrating programming with type design. In their startling parametric font Beowulf, the more a certain letter was used, the more its form degenerated. They took this “planned randomness”³ concept further with

TWIN, a typeface proposal for the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul, a mutable typeface that would respond to the conditions of the city, like the temperature and the congestion, at specific times of day. And variable type, one of the

latest developments in type design today, is also an attempt to generate more variants within a typeface by means of interpolation.

The specifics of the software and browser support, as well as the user interface of this technology have yet to be determined. While we wait, we can find solace in the fact that many typefaces offer alternative forms built into the character set. A typeface typically contains hundreds, if not thousands, of glyphs, and some of these glyphs are different versions of the same letters. These alternates are there to accommodate different uses or to provide more stylistic options and design flexibility. For instance, Miller Text, designed by Matthew Carter, comes with two different “R”s, one with a straight leg and another with a curly tail.

In linguistics, the term “allograph” is used to describe such variance. Stemming from the Greek for “other writing,” allograph is defined as every possible variant of a grapheme or a letter; for any letter, its uppercase, lowercase, and italic forms, as well as all of its handwritten forms, can be considered that letter’s allographs. Art historian and critic James Elkins defines allography as “the sum total of changes that can be made to letters without affecting their alphabetic identities.”⁴ Type designers are, then, avid practitioners of allography.

³ Deborah Littlejohn. Interview with Erik van Blokland and Just van Rossum. *Metro Letters: A Typeface for the Twin Cities* (Minneapolis: Design Institute, University of Minnesota, 2003).

⁴ James Elkins, *The Domain of Images* (Ithaca, Cornell University Press: 1999).

Sol LeWitt, *Wall Drawing #260* (1975), installed at the:

I. San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, 1975.

II. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 2008.

III. Centre Pompidou-Metz, Metz, France, 2012.



I.



II.



III.

ALLOGRAPHIC ART

In *Languages of Art* (1976) by philosopher Nelson Goodman, allographic art—as opposed to autographic art—is described as one that enables “instantiations of the work.”⁵ Goodman points to disciplines like music

⁵ Nelson Goodman, *Languages of Art: An Approach to a Theory of Symbols* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1976).

and dance as the epitomes of such art. Sol LeWitt’s instructions for wall drawings in the 1960s function like scores for music in that every time they are executed, the results are different, based on the draftsman’s skills and interpretations of the instructions, as well as the site of the work’s realization. French writer Raymond Queneau also plays the same music many times when, in his *Exercises in Style* (1947), he tells and retells the same scenario *ad nauseam*, but each time approach-

IV. Take a newspaper.

Take some scissors.

Choose from this paper an article the length you want to make your poem.

Cut out the article.

Next carefully cut out each of the words that make up this article and put them all in a bag.

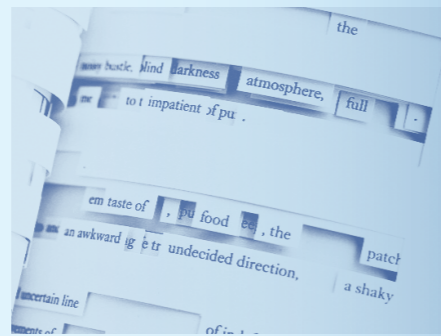
Shake gently.

Next take out each cutting one after the other.

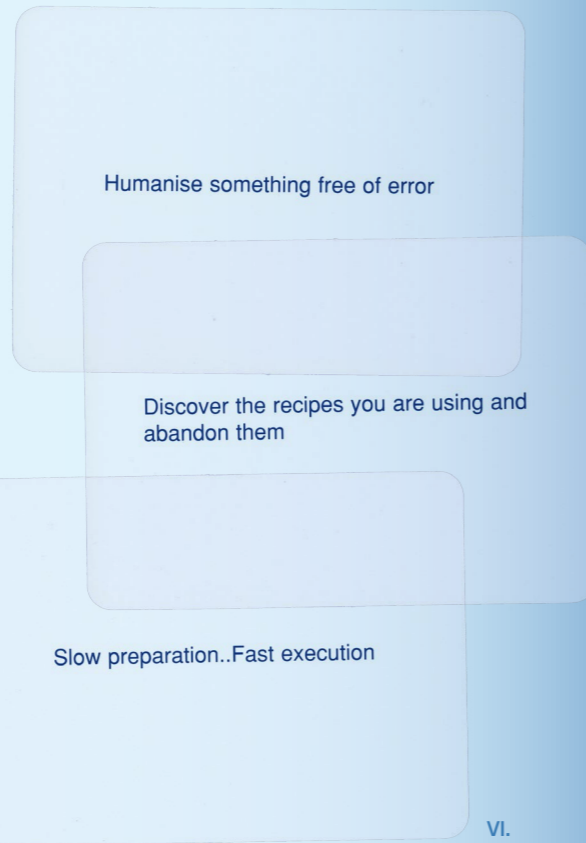
Copy conscientiously in the order in which they left the bag.

The poem will resemble you.

And there you are—
an infinitely original author
of charming sensibility,
even though unappreciated
by the vulgar herd.



V.



VI.

IV. Tristan Tzara, *To Make a Dadaist Poem*, 1920.

V. A detail from *Tree of Codes* (2010) by Jonathan Safran Foer.

VI. Cards from the fifth edition of *Oblique Strategies* (2001), property of Llewellyn Hensley (GD MFA '17).

ing it in a different style (i.e. anagram, sonnet, and onomatopoeia). It is a book of literary allographs. The reader is delighted by the drastically different experience each version offers and made aware of the malleability and infinite possibility of language. Jorge Luis Borges also builds

a universe of infinite possibility in his short story *The Library of Babel* (1941), not iteratively like Queneau, but conceptually. He conceives of a universe made up of a colossal library containing

all possible 410-page books that can be made from 25 glyphs—22 letters, the period, the comma, and the word space. Most books in this library are nonsensical jumbles of letters, a source of unresolvable distress among its inhabitants. Its lonely librarian laments:

*A blasphemous sect suggested that the searches should cease and that all men should juggle letters and symbols until they constructed, by an improbable gift of chance, these canonical books.*⁶

CUT-UPS

William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin may belong to this “blasphemous sect.” They blithely played jugglers of letters and symbols in the 1960s. Inspired by the Dadaists of the 1920s, Burroughs and Gysin popularized the cut-up method, an aleatory literary technique in which a text is literally cut up and reassembled to create a new text. By unhinging words from its original context and creating unexpected combinations and juxtapositions, Burroughs and Gysin allowed new narratives to emerge.

Clearly, many disciplines could benefit from such an “an agent of simultaneous integration and disintegration...[that] imposes another path on

the eyes and on thought.”⁷ It is not surprising that this technique was adopted by and adapted to various mediums, including music, painting, photography, and film.

The spirit of cut-up persists, as evidenced by the unfaltering popularity of remix music. My favorite example is a literary one: *Tree of Codes* (2010) by Jonathan Safran Foer. In this book, Foer reproduced Bruno Schulz’s book *The Street of Crocodiles* (1934), with parts of the original text cut out. Each time the book is experienced or a page is turned, many surprising, disparate stories appear, with the help of the reader’s imagination.

⁶ Jorge Luis Borges, Donald A. Yates, James East Irby, and André Maurois. *Labyrinths: Selected Stories & Other Writings*. (London: Penguin, 2000).

⁷ William S. Burroughs and Brion Gysin, *The Third Mind* (New York: Viking Press, 1978).

CHANCE

Brian Eno and Peter Schmidt are another creative pair who gave chance a chance. Their collaborative project *Oblique Strategies* is a deck of 2.8 × 3.5 in. cards first published in 1975 to help artists and musicians overcome creative blocks by (ironically) imposing constraints. Meant to stimulate lateral thinking,⁸ these cards provide prompts that encourage

⁸ According to Dr. Edward de Bono who originated the term, lateral thinking is a method that “involves disrupting an apparent thinking sequence and arriving at the solution from another angle.” <http://www.debonothinkingsystems.com/tools/lateral.htm>.

⁹ There are many websites and PDFs, but the ones I used were: the Chrome extension called the Oblique Strategies Tab and www.oblicard.com.

breaking out of the dull cycles of thinking in which creatives often find themselves. You, the frustrated stagnant artist, may pull out a card at random and find yourself catapulted into action. The card tells you what to do, although not exactly. They draw the parameters within which the work must be made, thus liberating you from the dreadful feeling of complete creative freedom equivalent to the anguish one feels at being given a blank sheet of paper. Today, *Oblique Strategies* has become a rare and expensive collector’s item, but luckily, you can find online sites and apps available for anyone to access.⁹

In a recent lecture, typographer and poet Robert Bringhurst declared, “Writing is never adequate for the language, and language is never adequate

¹⁰ From Robert Bringhurst’s lecture on the work of Hermann Zapf, for the Society of Printers 43rd Annual W.A. Dwiggins Lecture held at the Boston Public Library, which I attended on April 11, 2017.

for the world.... An addiction to order is an addiction to simple solutions.”¹⁰ While it is our job as designers to create order, Bringhurst reminds us that there will always be elements that defy it. If that is true, it may be worth flipping over an *Oblique Strategies* card, picking up a pair of scissors, and start cutting things up. A new kind of order may come into view.

BRIEF 3

What is any writing but a cut-up? Somebody has to program the machine; somebody has to do the cutting up. Remember that I first made selections. Out of hundreds of possible sentences that I might have used, I chose one.¹

WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS

Chance in the arts provides a means for escaping the biases engrained in our personality by our culture and personal past history, that is, it is a means of attaining greater generality.²

GEORGE BRECHT

>>> Devise a system that tells more than one story. Approach your subject from multiple angles. You may choose to visually enact the idea of variations or use methods that introduce variables as a means of generating a variety of outcomes. Can chance assist this pluralistic approach?

¹ WILLIAM S. BURROUGHS AND BRION GYSIN, *THE THIRD MIND* (NEW YORK: THE VIKING PRESS, 1978).

² GEORGE BRECHT, *CHANCE-IMAGERY* (NEW YORK: SOMETHING ELSE PRESS, 1966).

**Questions,
anyone?
No?**

**I must be
doing a
great job.**

PROJECT

Lettering studies
Variable dimensions

A/alloglyphs

This series of lettering enacts the definition of alloglyph visually by showing various possible forms for a single letter: "A/a". It is the first letter in the alphabet, suggesting a new beginning every time I draw an "A/a." Additionally, its lowercase form embodies the whole typology of traits that a letter can exhibit: the "a" has a straight stem, a curve, a bowl, a counter (enclosed white shape) as well as an open white shape, and potentially a tail and a ball terminal. With so many parts and combinations to consider, the "a" is the Latin alphabet's richest character and my favorite.

Each "A/a" in this series is a typographic response to a prompt from *Oblique Strategies* (discussed on p.130 of this book), done in various methods and mediums: acrylic marker and pen on paper, paper collage, coding, vector drawings, and iPad lettering using Procreate (app) and Apple Pencil.

emphasize the flaws

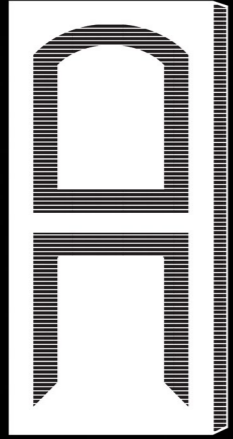




faced with a choice, do both (given by dieter roth)



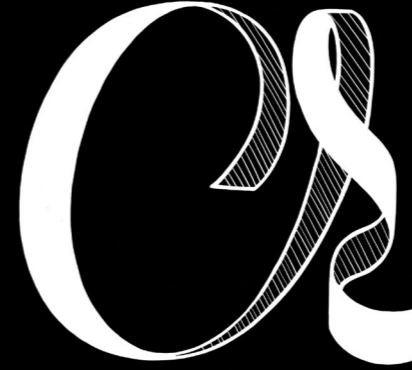
take a break



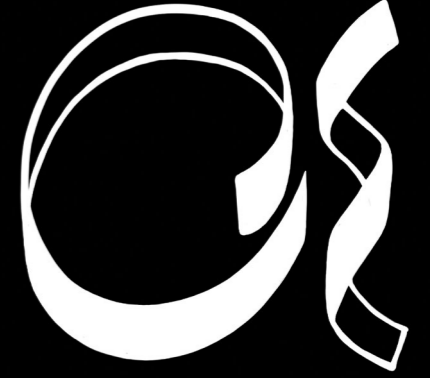
go outside. shut the door



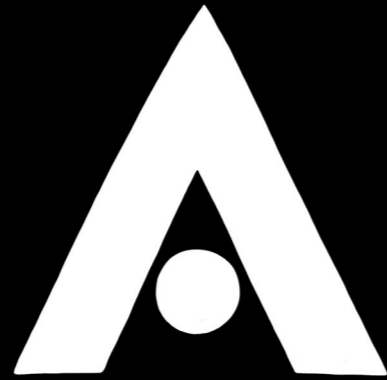
tape your mouth



twist the spine



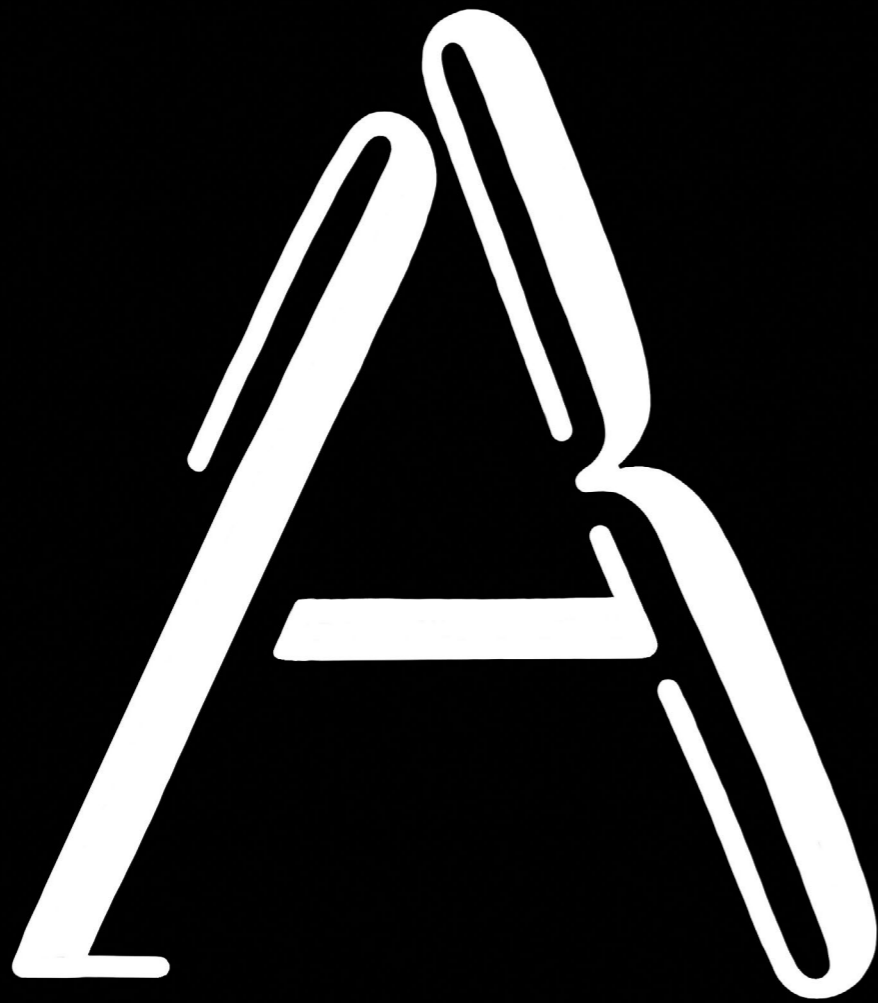
do we need holes?



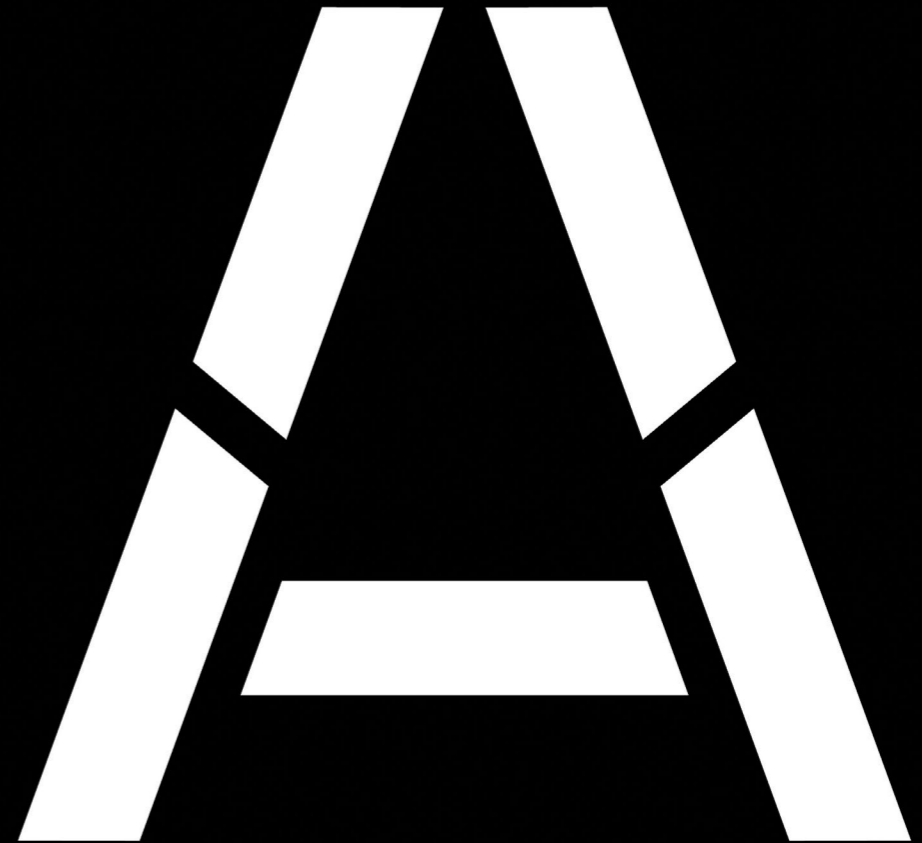
where is the edge?



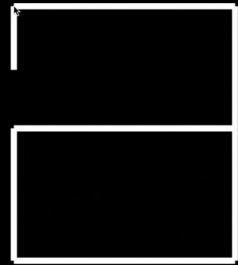
work at a different speed



look at the order in which you do things



lowest common denominator



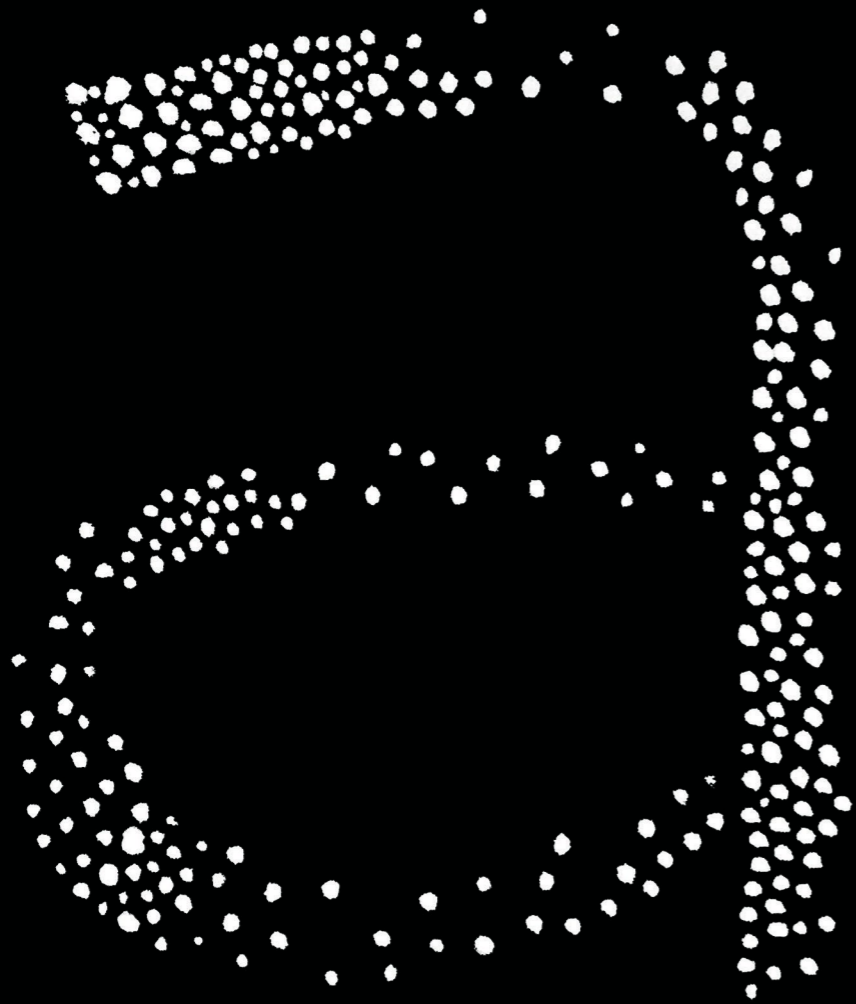
(organic) machinery



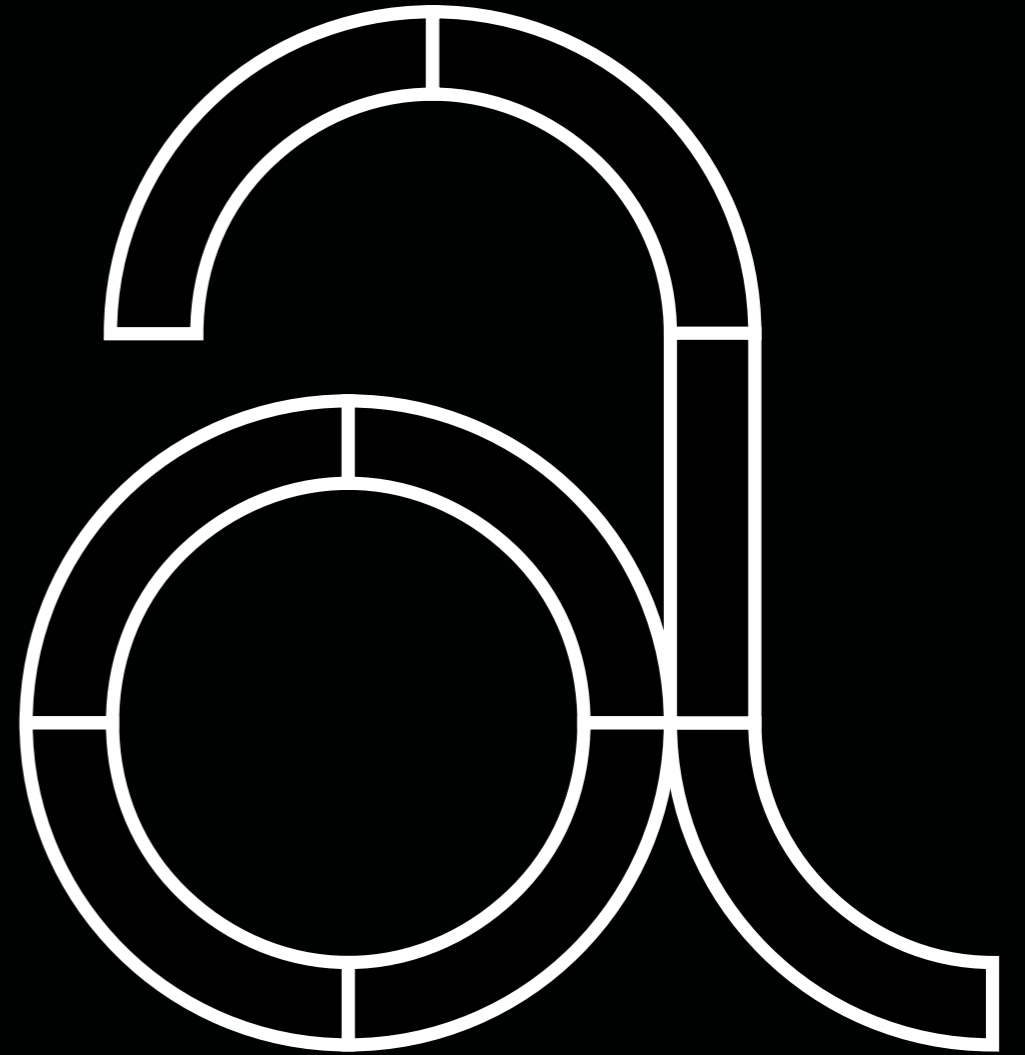
courage!



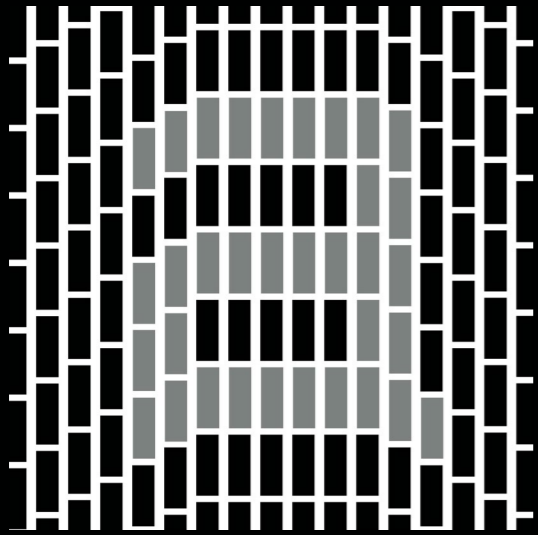
what else could you have done?



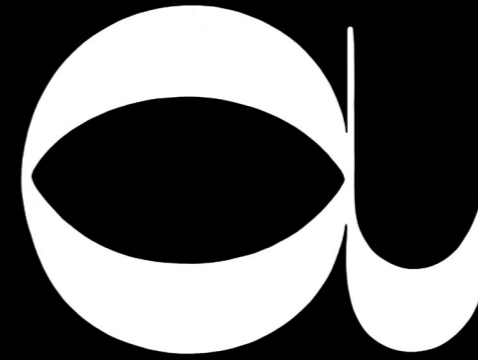
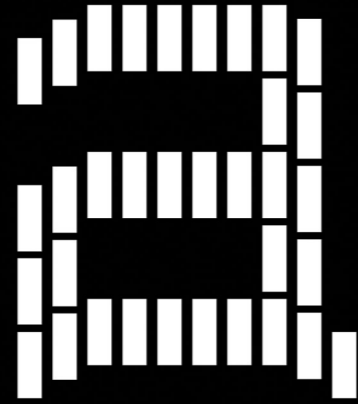
you can only make one dot at a time



emphasize repetitions



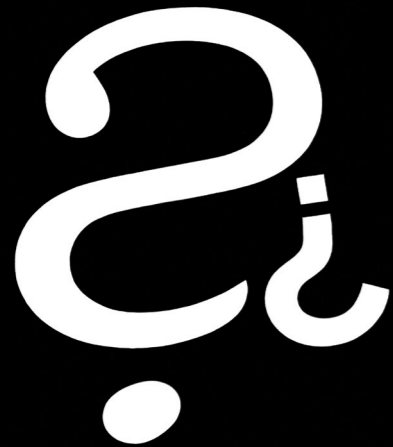
repetition is a form of change



discard an axiom



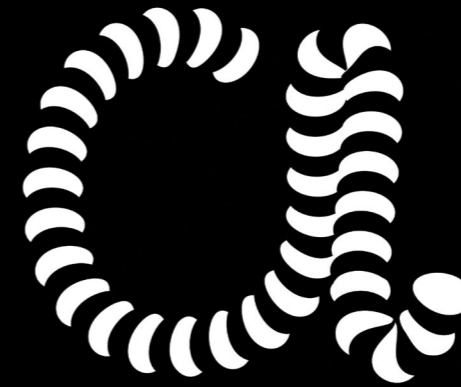
what wouldn't you do?



voice your suspicions



consult other sources*
-promising
-unpromising



imagine the music as a
moving chain or caterpillar



how would someone
else do it?

* Drawing by Cyrus Highsmith



abandon normal instruments



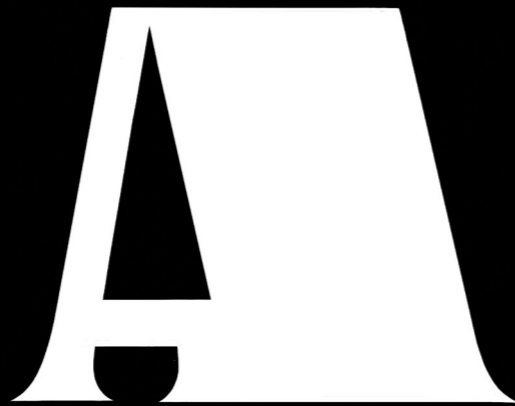
the inconsistency principle



accretion



use an old idea



what to increase?
what to reduce?

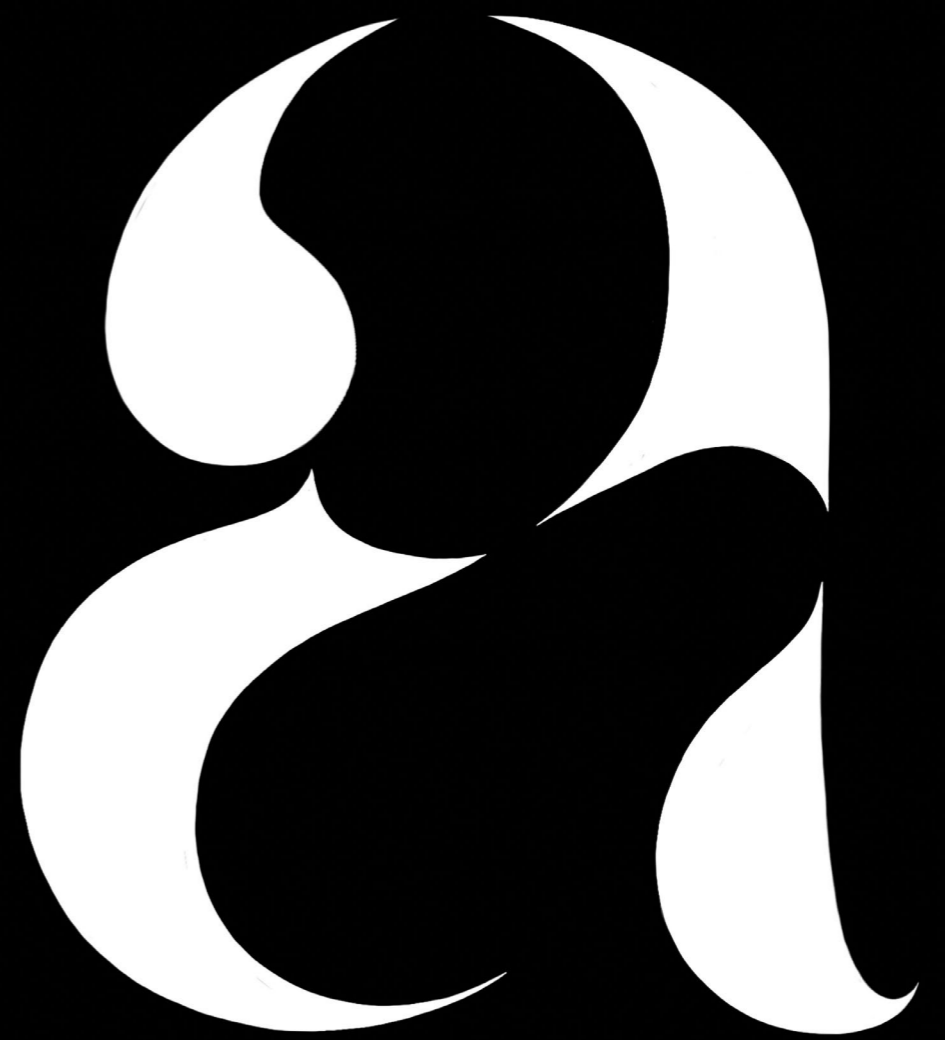


question the heroic





imagine the music as a series of disconnected events

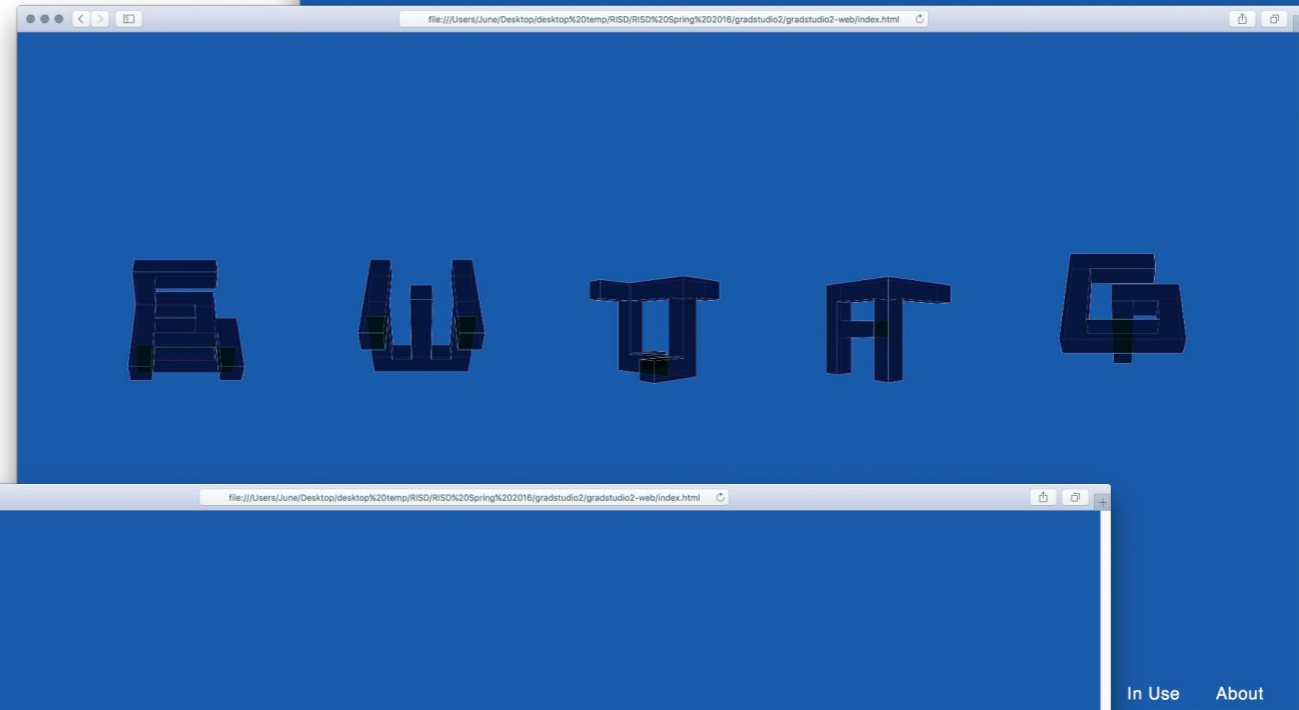
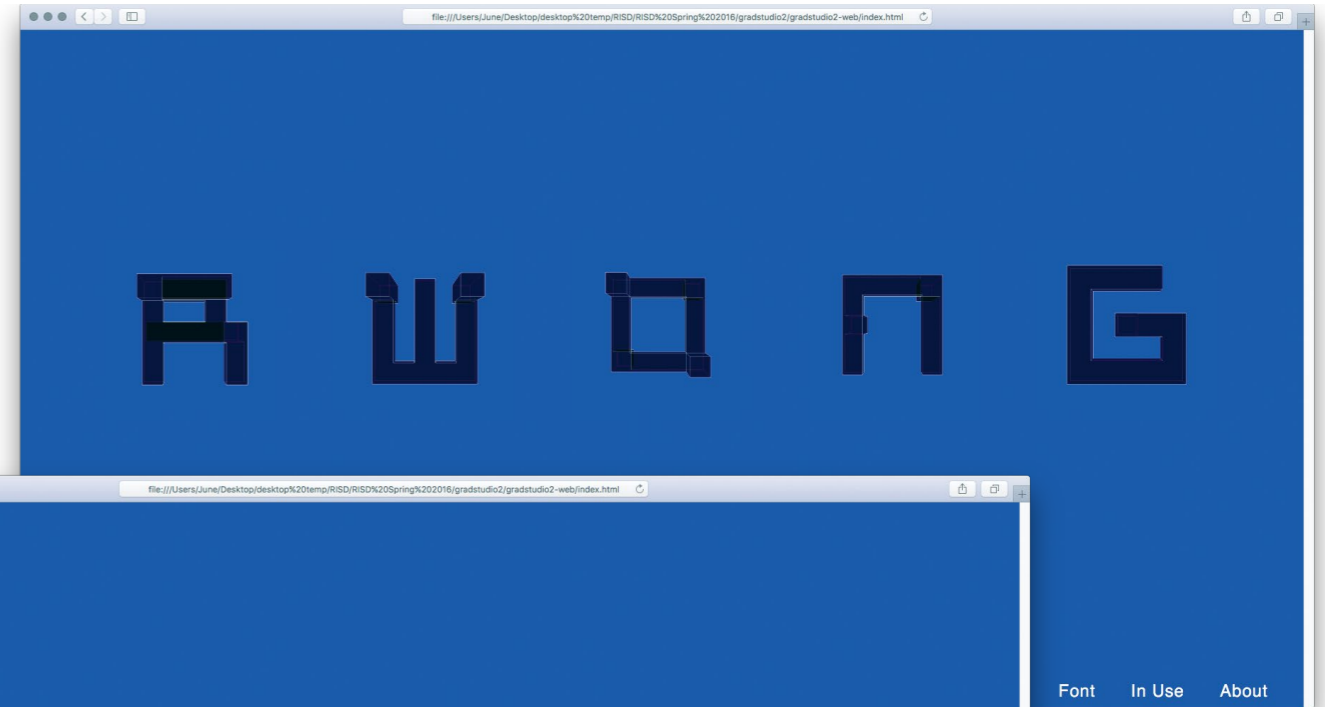


make it more sensual

PROJECT

Experimental typeface
Specimen website
Wood type 2½ × 2½ in.

Right Home page of the specimen website for this typeface spells out both parts of the name of the typeface, with each letter rotating to reveal its two states.

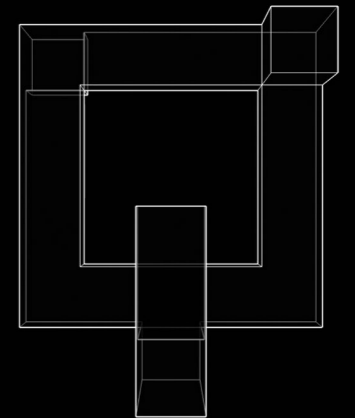
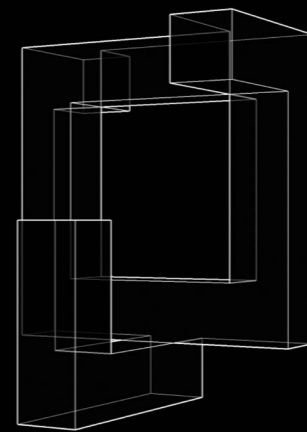
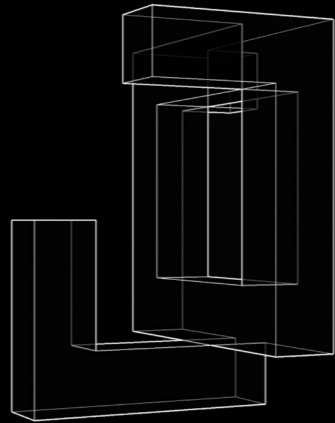
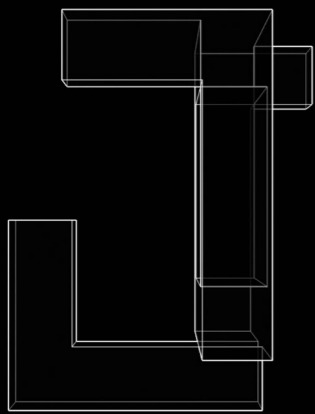
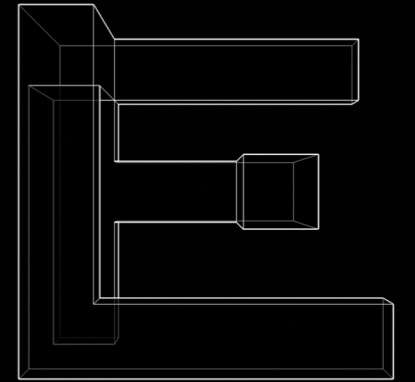
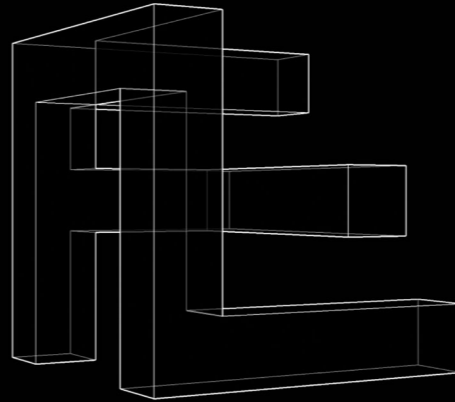
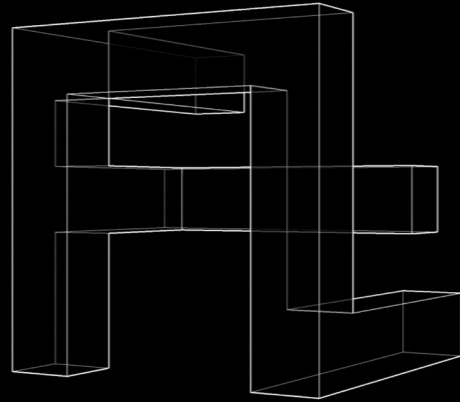
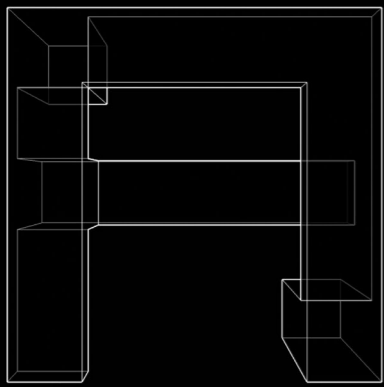


RWONG(SHIFT)

RWONG(SHIFT) is an experimental typeface available as physical pieces of wood type as well as a digital font. Its glyphs are hybrids made up of two letters that become legible only from certain viewpoints.

With the digital font, the user can switch between the two letters by changing case (uppercase to lowercase and vice versa), or pressing down the shift key while typing. This font allows the user to construct cryptic messages that can be deciphered only by those who have the font installed.

The wood type requires that the user literally shift positions in space to read the message the wooden pieces carry. Just like in life, things appear different from different perspectives.



This Spread Sketchup models for A/E (top row) and J/Q (bottom row).

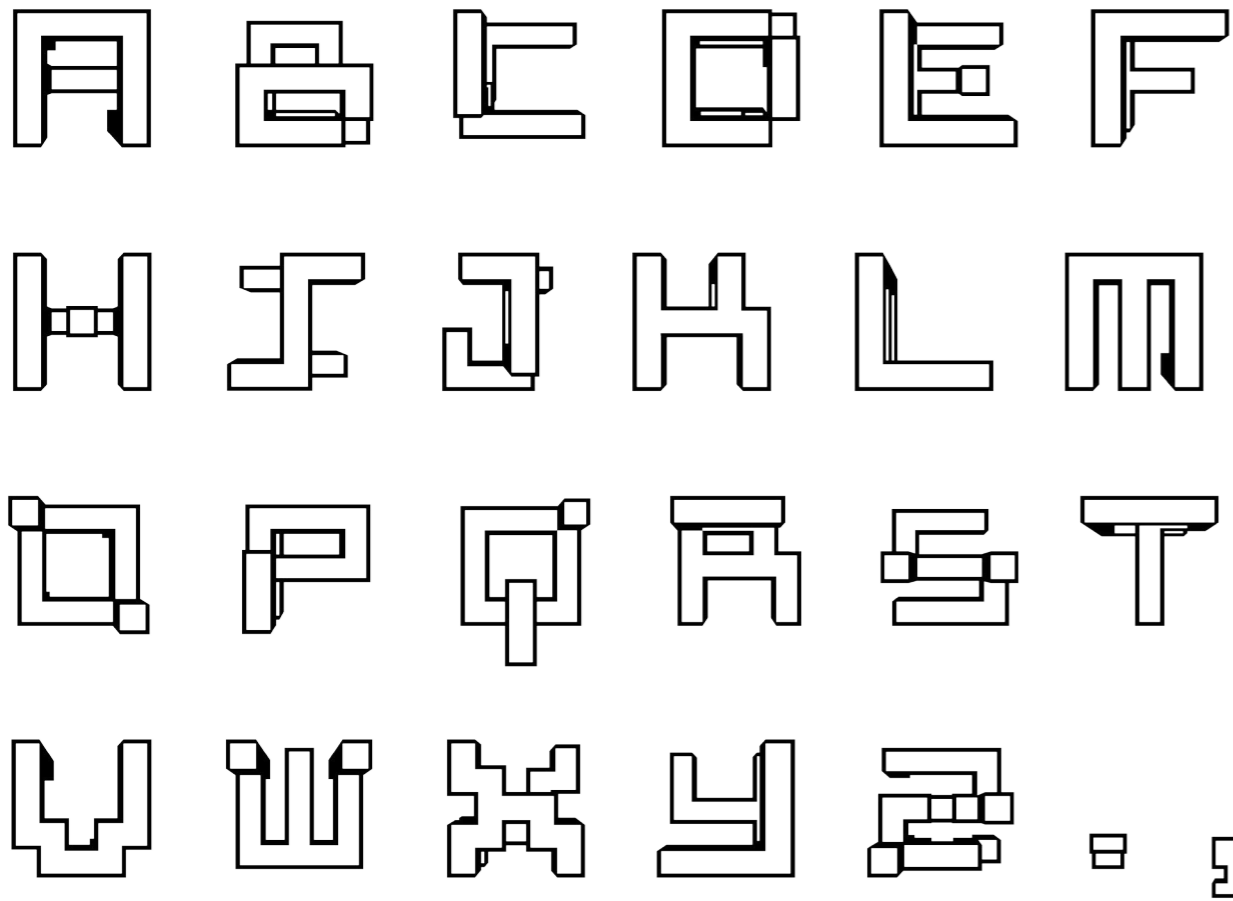
ALCASHU
MEFTYETA
QAR E WJGA,
QG LEPAAR
FJ RAFFAA
YFGOM UJY
QAWJLA E
LALAOAS IN
GWA RAWAG
WMYO.

Messages delivered in this two-faced typeface can only be deciphered by those who have the font installed.

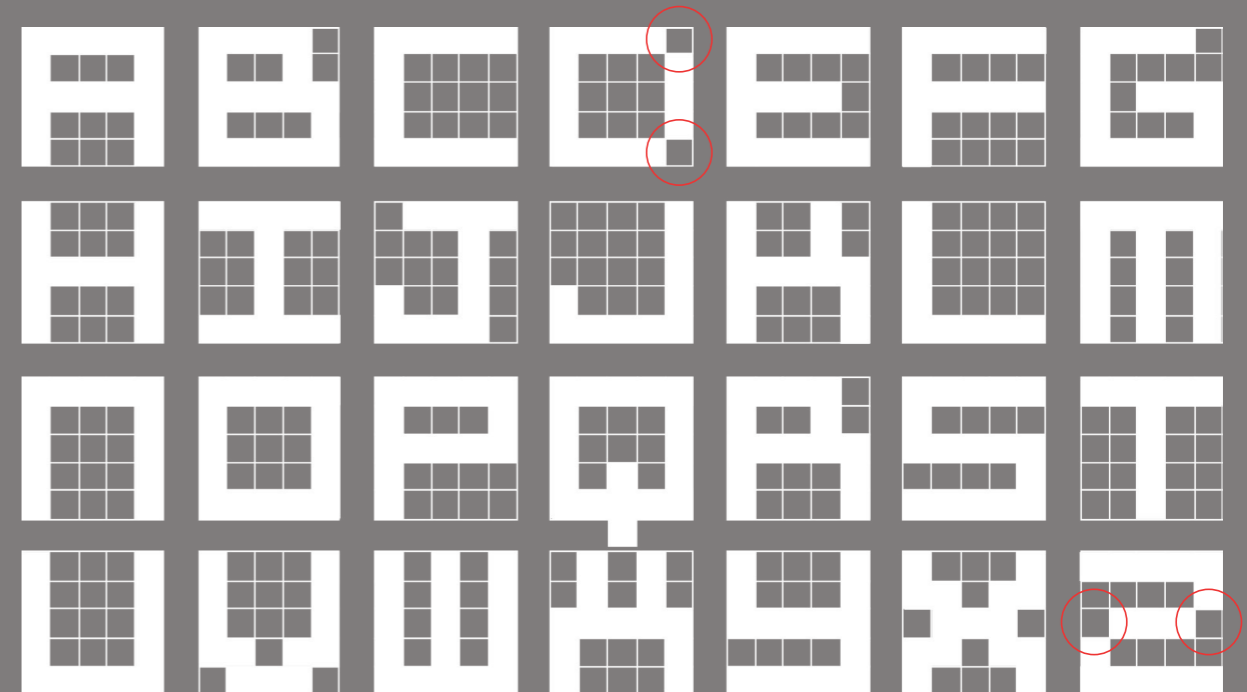
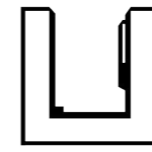
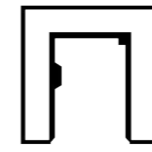
Above A seemingly nonsensical text, set in all caps in *RWONG(SHIFT)*.

EVERY
LANGUAGE
IS A CODE,
IT MAKES
NO SENSE
UNTIL YOU
BECOME A
MEMBER OF
THE SECRET
CLUB.

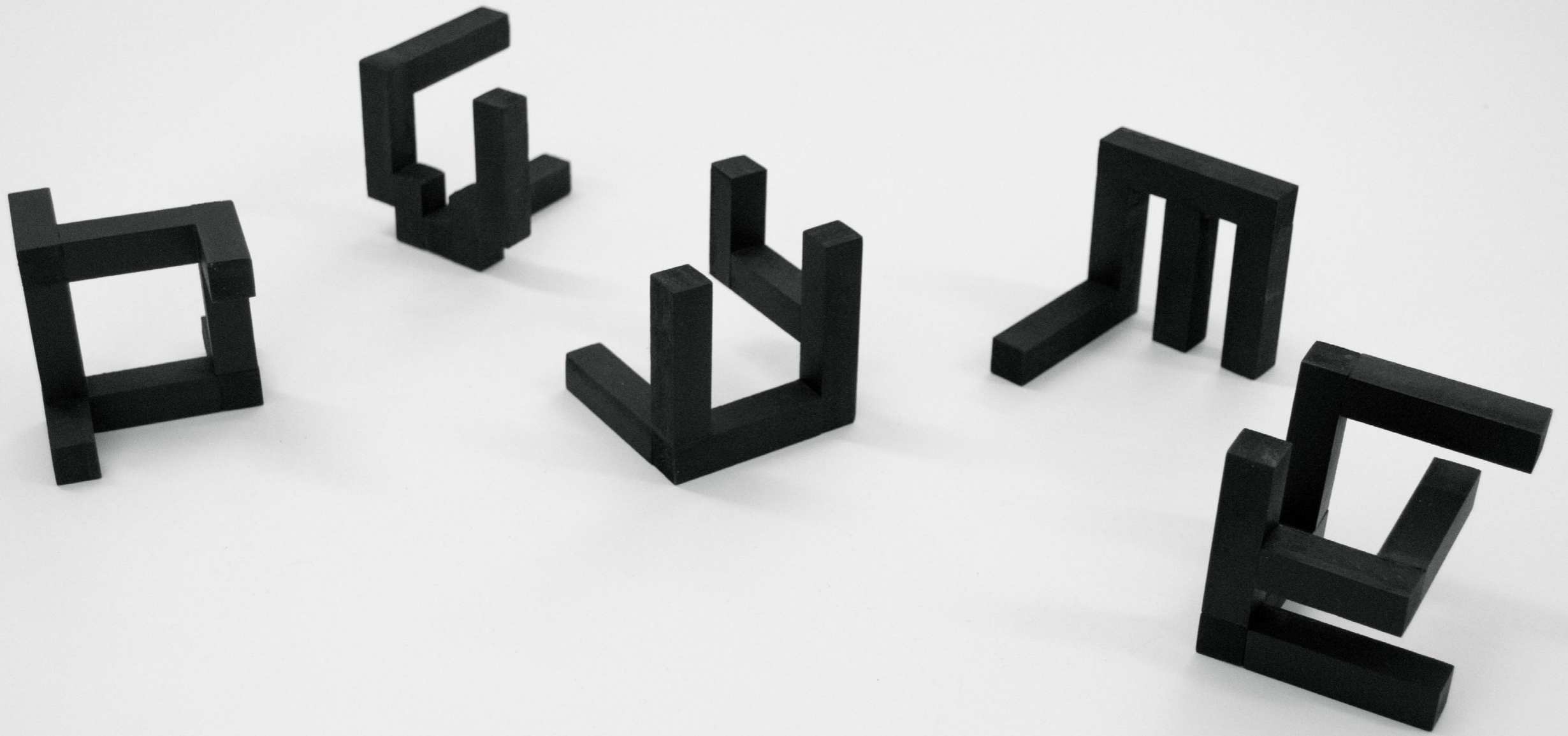
Above Take the same text and make it all lowercase and a legible message appears.



The whole character set offered in this typeface.



The initial digital sketch was a study in pixel type. Some letters had to be modified later on in order to adapt to the 3D structure. For instance, the D and the Z were changed because there could not be any gap or jump between strokes (circled).



This spread The wood type. From the left:
I/O, C/V, U/Y, L/M, and A/E.

03.30.16 STUDIO 2

PAIRINGS

AE YU IO (VOWELS)

BC DZ FH (CONSONANTS)

JQ KR LS

MV NP TG

WX

AE YU IO

HYBRID HYBRID
FUDKOB U DOR

HOW TO PAIR?
- sound (ak, bv, mn, etc.)
- form (mw, fh, ti, etc.)

KP

A B C C C D D
F E E F F G G H
I J J J J K K
L M M M M N N
O O P Q Q R R
S T U U V W
X X X Y Y Y
Z Z

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

V U Y I

HP QT DR CU

HYBRIDITY (TWO LETTERFORMS)
→ DOUBLE MEANING
SHIFT IN PERSPECTIVE

RoboFont
Scarlett
Jessica
Bonhoe

HYBRID HUBRIS

04.03.16

AE IO YU → AWONG ← SHIFT
BQ CV DB WAONG HYBRID AUDHOB

EM GT HW SW TR FN JUNE
HP LS XZ LM OB QYFA

SA HW P

ML NF

1. TYPEFACE
2. SPECIMEN WEBSITE
3. PHYSICAL OBJECTS
4. POSTER

WEB: motion

ANIMATION (GIF OR MP4?)
ON HOVER USING JQUERY

MY MESSAGE IS REVEALED ON HOVER OR LET THE USER TYPE WHATEVER

POSSIBLE USES:
• SECRET CODE POSTER
• COOL DISPLAY TYPE at VARIOUS X's, not just two
• WEB FONT?

3D STORE:
• 2-3 MORE STICKS
• GIVE
• SANDPAPER

ⓐ FONT ⓑ IN USE
ⓒ TRY IT OUT ⓓ ABOUT/CONTACT

ⓔ TAKE INPUT & DESIGN LOAD ⓕ CUSTOM LETTERS AVAILABLE AT REQUEST

WOW
OH
NO
HIGH
FALL
FALL

EXPERIMENT! weeee

PROJECT

Exhibition identity

INTER| MISSION

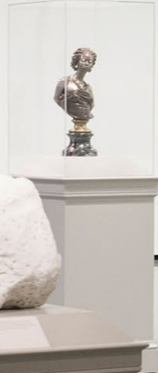
While the RISD Museum is going through a series of renovations, the artworks from the museum's Grand Gallery are exhibited in a temporary storage-style show, appropriately called *Intermission*. A rare insertion of the museum's permanent collection into a space that usually holds special exhibitions, the square brackets in the exhibition's identity reflects the concept of the show—a *temporary pause in a performance; a break from business as usual**—and communicates the idea of things shifting and being in flux. Depending on the perspective of the viewer, the sculptural works fit nicely in the brackets or spill out of them.

* http://risdmuseum.org/art_design/exhibitions/201_intermission

Right Flanking the entrance of the gallery were the brackets, double-framing the framed works of art.



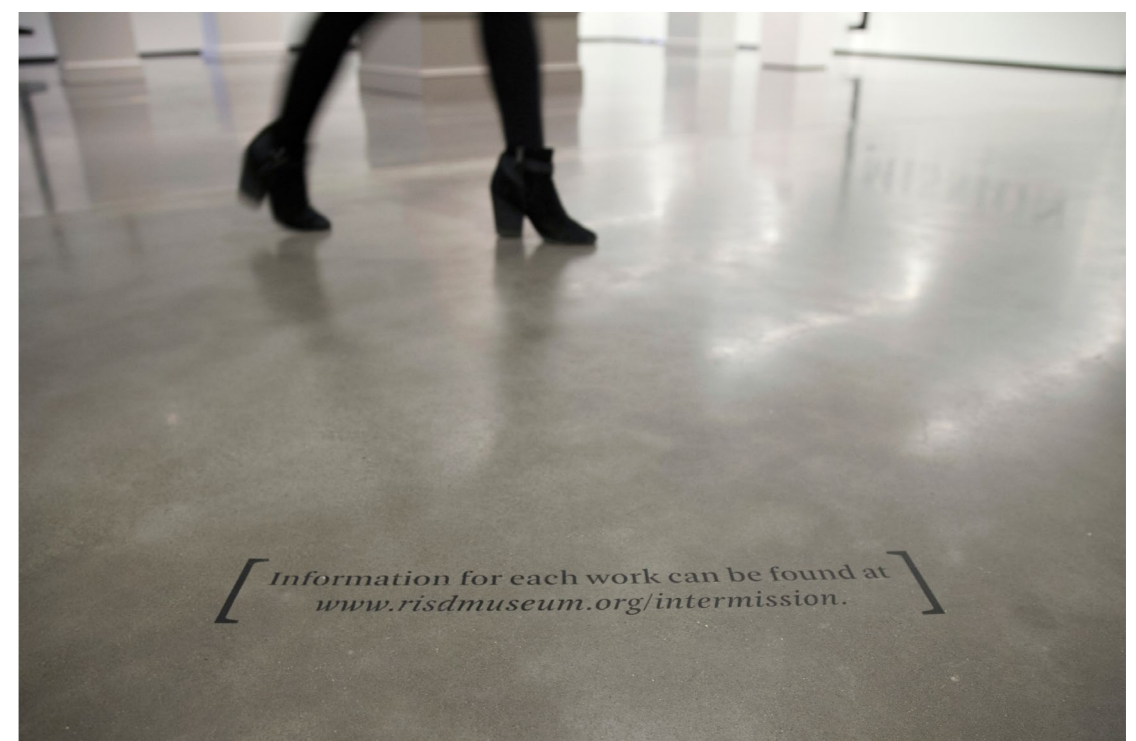
INTER



MISSION



When you get off the elevator, you walk into this vantage point, getting the complete view of all the sculptures nicely fitting between the brackets.



Top From most angles, the sculptural works spill out of the brackets, provoking curiosity.

Bottom A view of the title wall. All documentation photographs by Brendan Campbell, graphic designer at the RISD Museum.

Top A view inside the gallery.

Bottom Standing here, the visitors would see the view on the previous spread.

**Maybe try
something
else?**

**It's good
to mix
things up.**

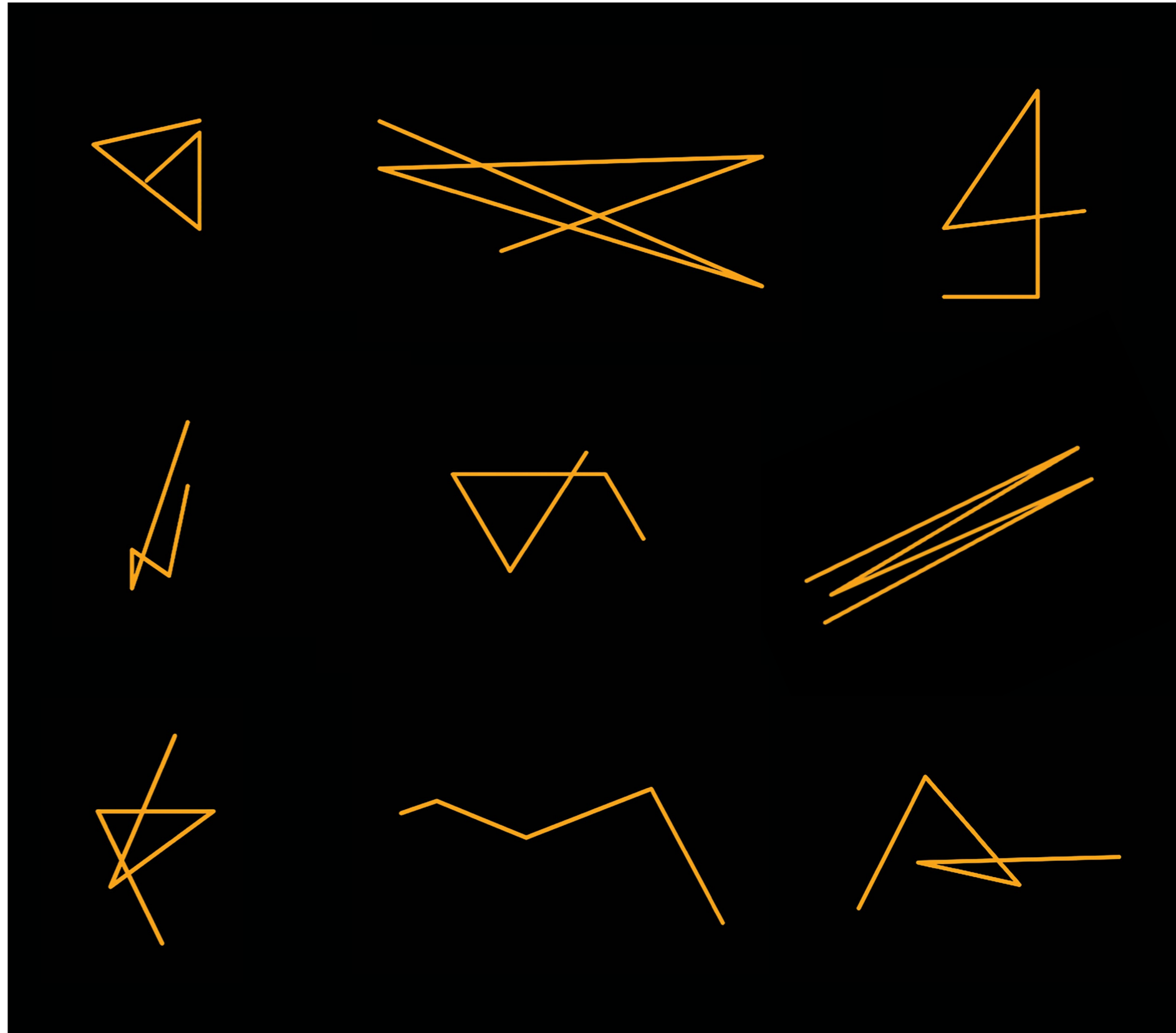
PROJECT

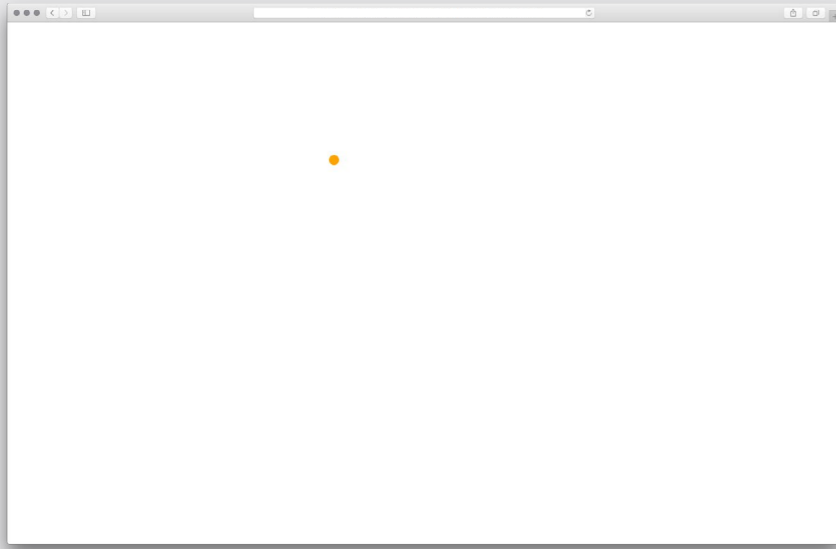
Website

Remixable Cities

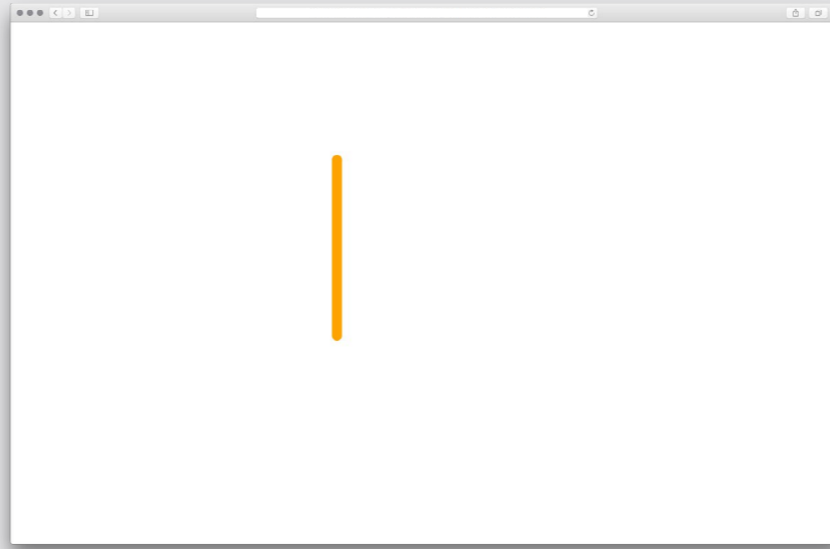
Inspired by the dreamy cities described in *Invisible Cities* (1972) by Italo Calvino, this website allows users to create their own cities by remixing lines of text from the novel. However, the resulting cities are not carefully designed ones. Instead, the user draws on the website's blank landing page, and with a little help from chance, certain texts are pulled and arranged in a single paragraph that describes this newly imagined city. Disparate parts come together to form a new whole.

Right Sample shapes made from connecting five mouse clicks.

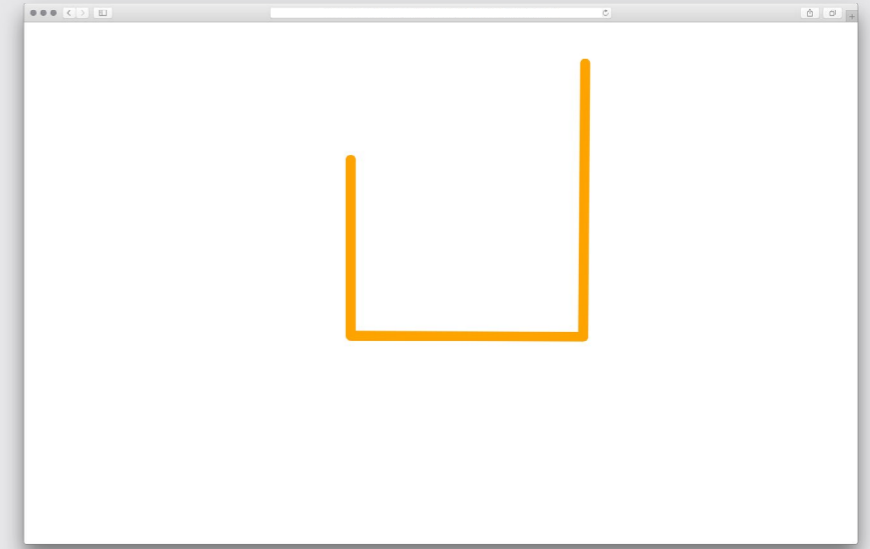




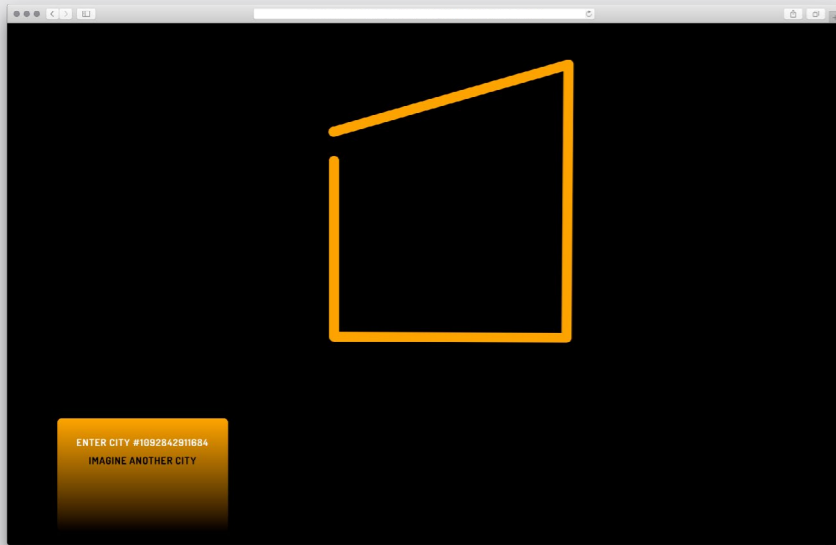
On a blank landing page, you start drawing by clicking.



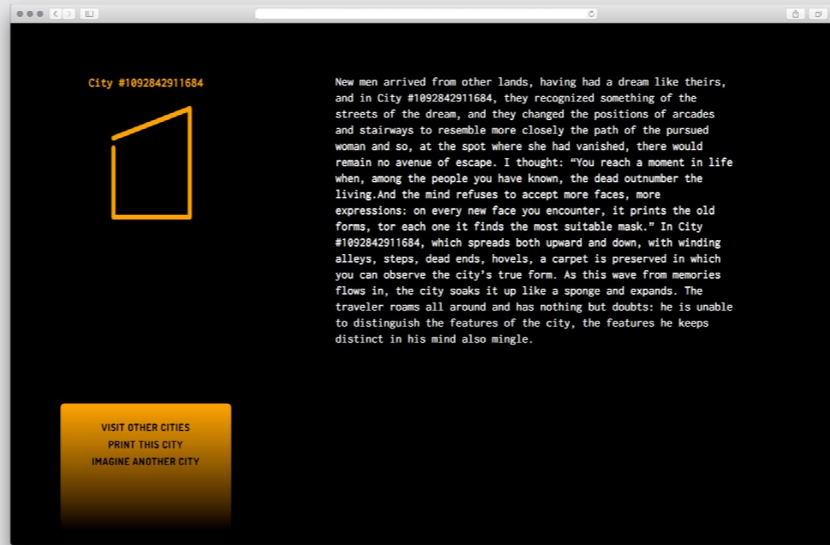
A line is drawn to connect the dots.



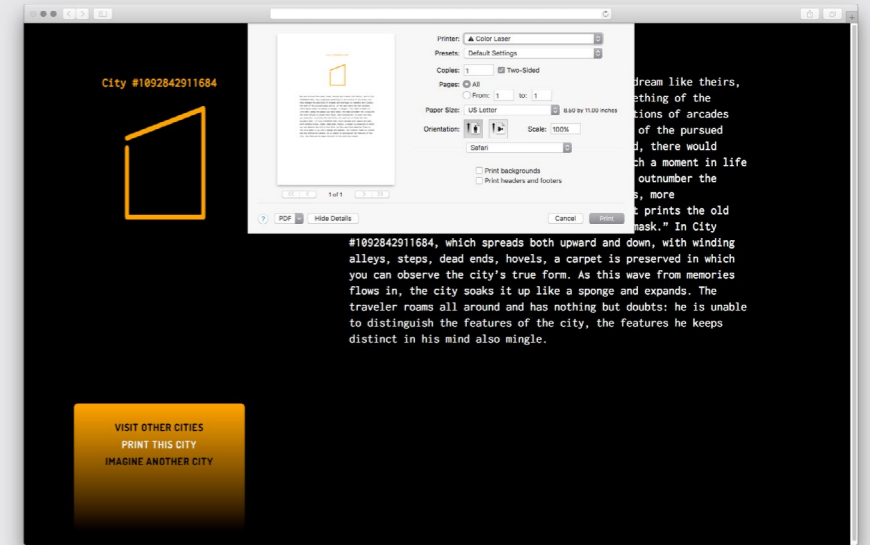
You are free to click anywhere within the web browser.



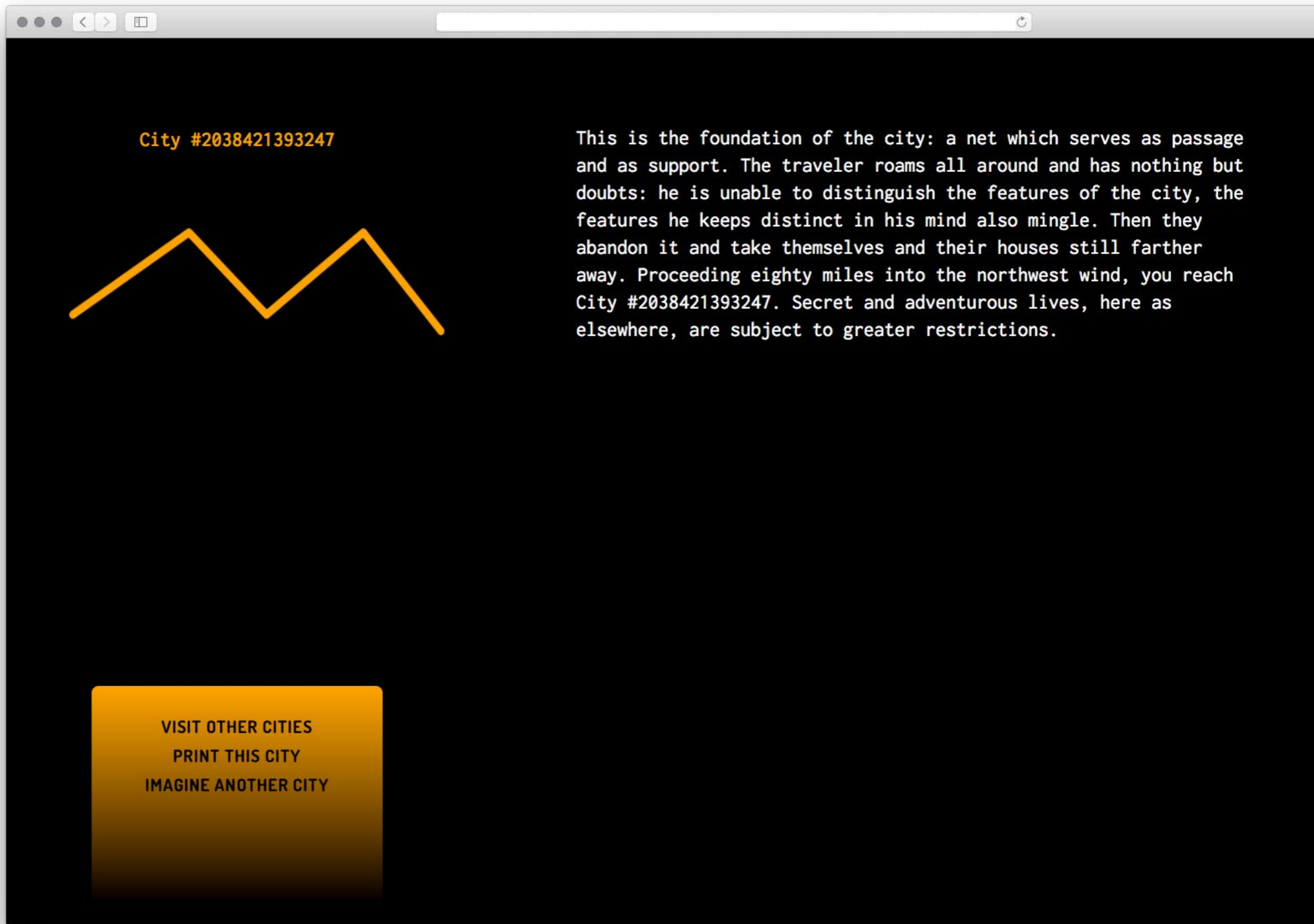
Once five dots have been connected, a city is created and you are presented with two options: enter the city you just created or start over.



You can read about this newly created city. The resulting text is an assemblage, with each sentence pulled from a different chapter of Calvino's original book, selected based on where you have clicked. The city name (i.e. City #1092842911684) is generated by stringing together the coordinates of your clicks.



You can print out both your city's description and its visual representation.



City #2038421393247



This is the foundation of the city: a net which serves as passage and as support. The traveler roams all around and has nothing but doubts: he is unable to distinguish the features of the city, the features he keeps distinct in his mind also mingle. Then they abandon it and take themselves and their houses still farther away. Proceeding eighty miles into the northwest wind, you reach City #2038421393247. Secret and adventurous lives, here as elsewhere, are subject to greater restrictions.

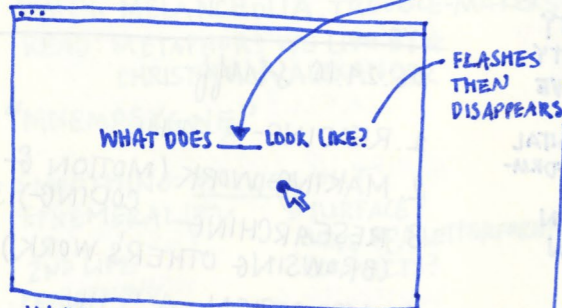
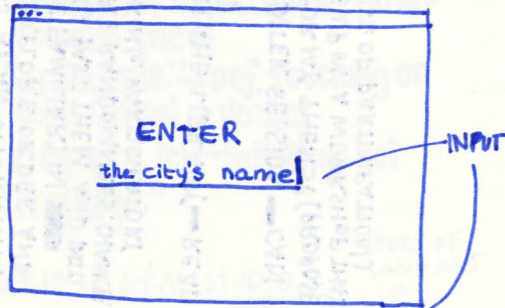
VISIT OTHER CITIES
PRINT THIS CITY
IMAGINE ANOTHER CITY

Because Calvino consistently uses a dreamy language in describing all of his imaginary cities in *Invisible Cities* and these narratives all sound absurd already, reshuffling lines from the vignettes of different cities resulted in stories that often made sense and always retained the same beautifully surreal, atmospheric quality.

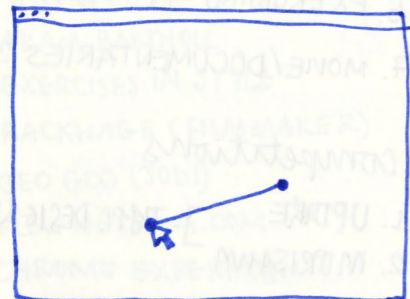
04.13.16 GDFLWEB

IDEAS:

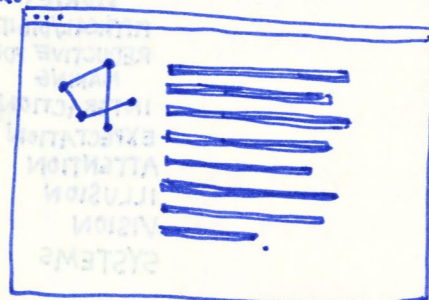
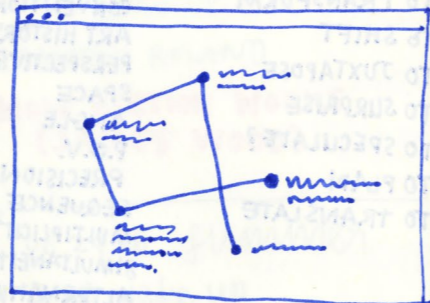
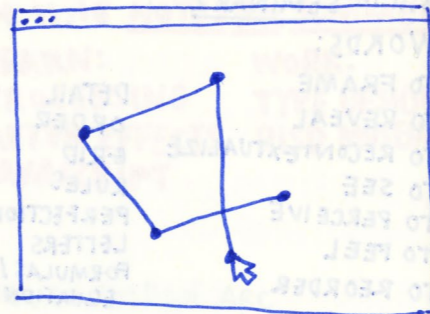
REMIKING
RANDOMNESS/CHANCE
INTERNAL LOGIC



INVISIBLE CIRCLES REVEALED ON HOVER. COLOR RANDOM OR BASED ON CURSOR LOCATION (COORDINATES)



DOT STAYS IF CLICKED, LINES ARE DRAWN BETWEEN CLICKED DOTS (UP TO 5?)



DISPLAY: NONE & CALL IT UP IN JQUERY

QUESTION MARK ALL OF THE DOTS = DIV'S?
 HOVER IN JQUERY
 HOW TO ASSIGN SPECIFIC COLORS TO THE DOTS (DO I GIVE A CLASS TO EVERY DOT?)
 HOW TO OUTPUT SPECIFIC TEXTS BASED ON WHAT HAS BEEN CLICKED
 ARE THE DOTS DIV'S OR PAPER JS DOTS?

CLASS FOR EVERY TEXT?

IDEAS:

OULIPO
CONSTRAINTS + CHANCE
CATEGORIZE EVERY WORD
AND ALLOW SUBSTITUTION

- ① NOUN ⊕ ADV.
- ② VERB ⊕ PAST PARTICIPLE
- ③ ADJ. ⊕ PREP.

LEAVE THE PRONOUNS IN PLACE
~ FICTION VENDING MACHINES

PREDETERMINED SET OF 55 COLORS
OR GENERATED BASED ON USER
INPUT OR MOVEMENT

STEPS?

1. FIND OUT # OF SENTENCES IN THE WHOLE BOOK
2. MAKE THE SAME # OF DOTS AS THE SENTENCES
3. ASSIGN DIFF COLORS TO DIFF. CHAPTERS
4. ASSIGN COLORS TO TEXT

04.20.16

<canvas>

lineTo() + stroke()

```
function onMouseDown(event) {
  click? set
```

event.point = position of the mouse

04.14.16 GDFLWEB

TRANSLATION
SOLAR SYSTEM BOOK @ MOMA
"SWEATHEARTS" BOOK (MINDY SEU)
"IN DEFENSE OF THE POOR IMAGE"
CV DAZZLE
ANTI-SELFIE MASK (MONIKER)
DRONSTAGRAM
JOOST GROOTENS (DATA VIS. BOOKS)

FEEDBACK: TOTAL 55 CHAPTERS
EACH CHAPTER HAS ITS OWN COLOR
CITY NAMES (NOT EVERY DOT)

PAPER JS (LIBRARY)

NAMING THE CITY AFTERWARDS

GENERATED BASED ON MOST USED LETTERS?

COLOR GRADIENT—NOT IN THE ENCLOSED SHAPE BUT IN THE LINES THEMSELVES



BOOK OR EXHIBITION AS AN ADDITIONAL OUTPUT POSTERS?

HOW WOULD THE PRINT-READY FILE LOOK? HOW WOULD IT BE DIFFERENT FROM THE WEB FORM?

FORM (DOTS & LINES) ARE THESE THE BEST OPTIONS?

"PUSH ~~WIND~~ A T"
HUDSON MOHAWK

MAYBE THERE'S NO LIMIT TO THE # OF CLICKS (OR DOTS)

FIRST 2 SENTENCES FROM EVERY CH.

HSL COLOR MODE? FOR DOT COLORS

LOCK-IN GRID (B/C CONFIGURATION)
SHAPE FOR EACH POSSIBLE CITY SHOULD BE THE SAME.

PROJECT

Projection kit
4 × 3¼ in.

Flaw Magnifier

As a designer, my natural inclination is to always try to make things perfect, but the truth is, nothing can be. What happens to those projects and experiments that do not make the cut? Is there a place for them other than the trash can or hidden folders?

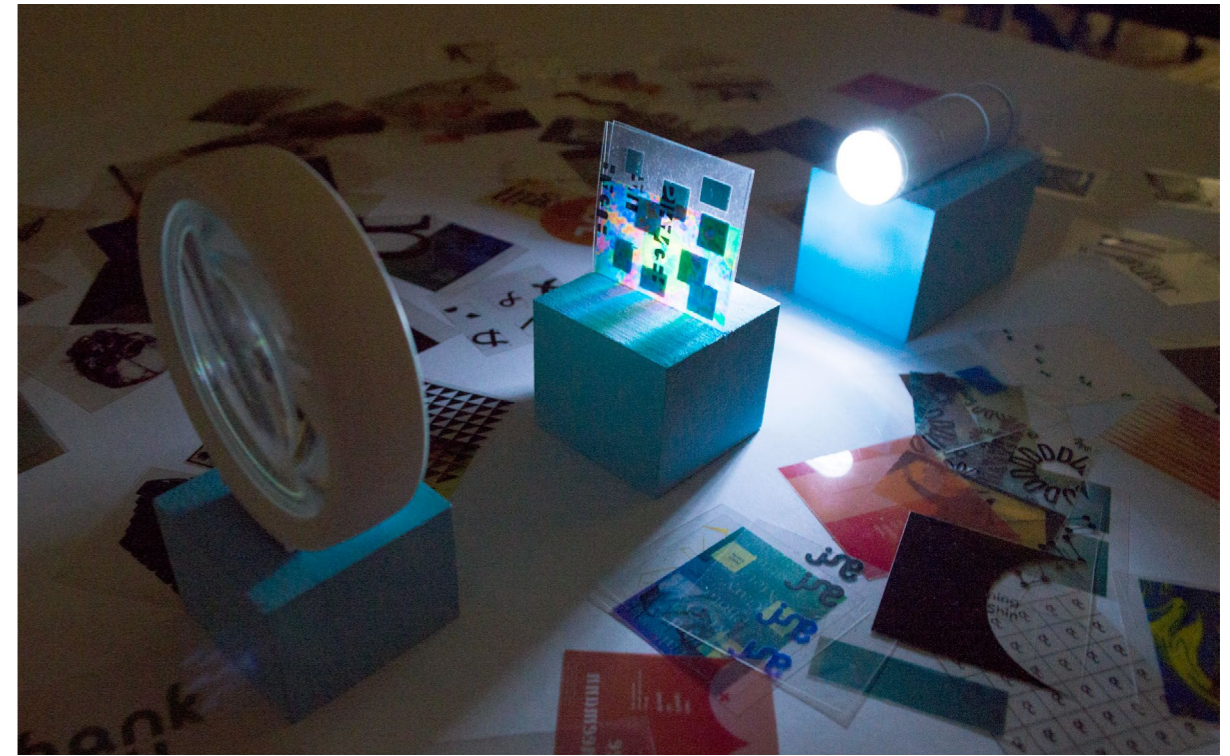
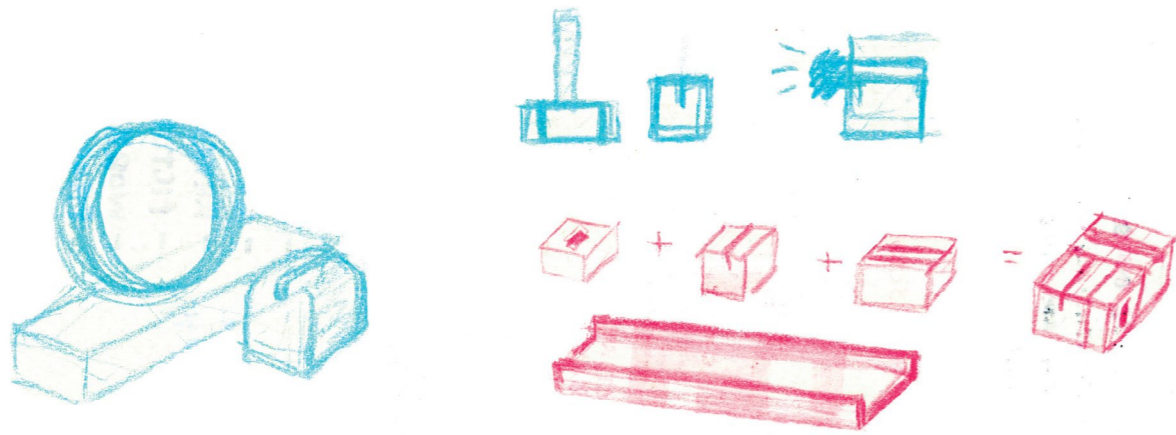
Flaw Magnifier is a home-made projector kit consisting of a magnifying glass, a flashlight, wooden blocks on which they sit, and 2×2 in. transparency slides. By making the slides out of my own work I had considered to be failures and carefully tucked away to never show again, I attempt to come to terms with my past as well as my fallibility; my mistakes are offered up as raw materials for generating new form.

Re-mixed, magnified, and projected, these pieces of “failures” are seen in a new light. New narratives are inferred, imagined, and rewritten through the participation of others. In this experience, nothing is a failure.





This spread The *Flaw Magnifier* kit, with prepared transparency slides made from pieces of my past work that I considered to have been "failures."

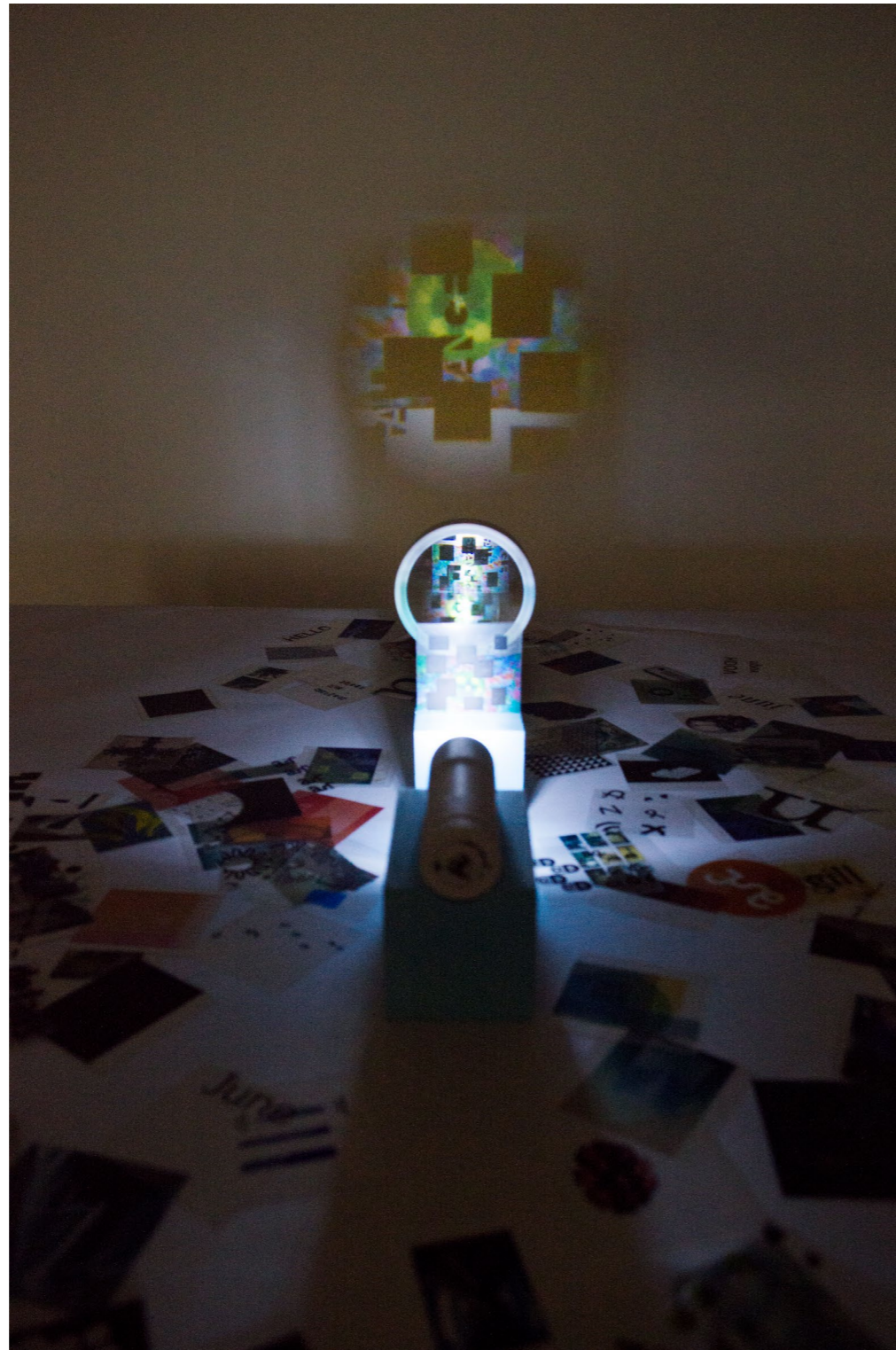


Opposite Figuring out how the parts might fit together through sketching (top).

Angela Lorenzo (GD MFA '18) is choosing slides to combine and project (bottom).

Above The *Flaw Magnifier* kit set up, with the slides in place and the flashlight turned on.

Projected images resulting from putting together three different slides (left) and two slides (right).



**I think we
all need
a break.**

**10 minutes
is enough,
right?**

Luna Maurer

APRIL 18, 2017

I want to start off the conversation by asking you about your username, because you use “Polyluna” across social media platforms, and it was also the name of your studio prior to Studio Moniker.

Luna is obviously my name. Poly used to be a project, but this is maybe twenty years ago. I had a product line that I called poly-something, like poly-web, different poly-things. It was a really old project, and I just got stuck with it.

I didn't know that it came from a particular project in the past. My guess was that you chose it because “poly-” is a prefix meaning “many, much.” So for the kind of work you make, I thought it made perfect sense.

That's funny you would think about it that way.

While designers usually like to work with a lot of control, you tend to create open, generative systems. The conditions you

design may appear to be simple, but they require careful planning in terms of pacing and sequence, form, and even the wording of the instructions or the manner in which they are delivered. There is a lot of control in that. I'm curious about how you see the relationship between control and chance.

It's maybe a love-hate relationship with control. A control freak may be an exaggeration, but I like to have a lot of control. And I'm very much attracted to it. That's why it's also a theme. To get rid of control, therefore, is becoming a topic that is interesting to me. It's basically a shift in control, from controlling the thing itself to controlling the parameters—the framework, as you described it. Being really precise—and wording being really precise—and the frame you build. And the fascination is to have no control over the outcome in the end. So it's a back and forth; letting go of control while actually wanting to control. It's an interplay between the two. It's very fascinating.

Yes, one of the reasons I wanted to talk with you was that your workshop last spring was pivotal for my thesis. I'm still a meticulous designer, but in a different way than before. It's more liberating than limiting.

Yeah, that makes sense. I think control is a big topic for a lot of people. Also chance. And how much chance you allow. But actually, I'm not interested in chance at all.

Really?



Yeah, I think chance is a wrong word because what we do is really not so much that something happens by chance but because people are unpredictable and can think of behaviors that you could not plan out, and that is what makes it interesting, not chance. Chance is something more like an algorithm of a machine. I think there is a difference between something being unpredictable and chance, or randomness.

I see. Speaking of machines, I want to hear your thoughts on Sol LeWitt. He said:

“When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes the machine that makes the art.”

If you were in a conversation with him, what would you say in response? Do you think your work aligns with his belief? For me, the manifestation of his idea is just as important as the idea itself because that's what we ultimately see and experience. This prompts me

to ask how you might weigh the process and the outcome in terms of significance. Do they have a 50/50 relationship?

To answer the question about Sol LeWitt, my work is very different from what he describes. Of course, there's the same idea behind it, that you have basically a plan for what you do, but as you say, the person who executes it, his role is essential in our case. For him, not so much. For him, it could be anybody. It wouldn't make any difference. For us, you would completely behave differently from me, or your friend. Or maybe not completely but a little bit differently within the realms of possibility. And these little differences are what's interesting to us. To see this manifold of different versions from the same instructions. So that way, we emphasize these differences among people.

And the second question: first, I thought what you were asking was, when we design a framework, we come up with ideas, with conditions, with tools that people can use, and there is authorship in this, right? We basically set it all up. Depending on the freedom we give people, they can have more or less influence on the outcome. So I thought you were asking: what is the relationship between the executors, the people being the authors and letting their voices heard, and the authorship in our role as the designers of the environment or the framework. Sometimes there's only very little freedom for the executors, and that may be less satisfying for them, but it's also fun because you don't have to think so much. You just have to solve a tiny part on the bottom, and if you have a lot of people, you can still create something interesting together.

But then I realized you asked something else, about how important are the results compared to the process. That answer is: the process is the most important thing. What you experience while you act. If you are a part in a video clip, or if you place a sticker on the floor, if you make a drawing and you see it appearing in a film, or if you drop leaflets like in the project that we're doing now—you have to drop leaflets about

Google Maps from the air—this is actually the most important thing, the process of joining and participating. And then if you cover earth with sheets or a museum floor that has a certain pattern, yeah, that's nice. It's nice to have. But I think the experience comes first, being a part in it. Ideally you see already while participating what you're participating in, so it's intertwined.

So the experience is more important than the physical final outcome, or the aesthetic that results from the making.

Yeah, although, while participating you already have an aesthetic. You have already very rewarding and satisfying visual feedback. Because you need that. Otherwise, you don't know what to do, and you don't have any incentive to contribute or participate if you don't see, "Wow, this is really cool, what I can do here." So, when a project is finished, what is left is more of documentation. The visual effect of a project is important, if it is something visual.

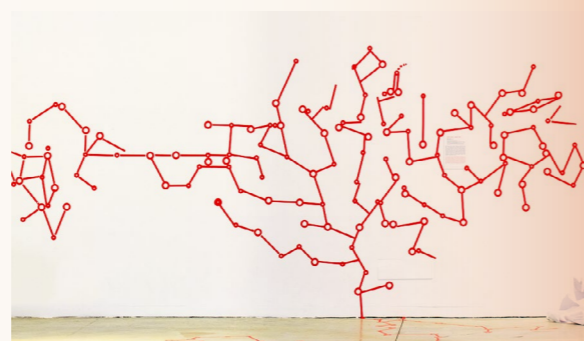
Do the tools or the medium you offer for the participants to use affect the visuals produced in the end?

Totally.

So then there is, again, the question of how much control you have as a designer.

How do you design the tools? How stimulating are they? Do they trigger something? Do they define a shape or not? What can you do with it?

Yes. So in your *Fungus* series, the formal aspects of the stickers you provided influenced the patterns and shapes that the participants ended up making with them. Similarly, in our workshop last year, the particular aesthetic of the outcome of my group's project was a result of the participants working with our choice of medium: ink and brush.



During this workshop, you used the word "Peoplescript." Can you talk a bit about this?

Peoplescript means we use humans acting as machines but having human capacities—being able to think, being able to move in certain ways that machines can't under similar instructions.

Right. Earlier, you spoke about your interest in subtle differences. I think what is at the core of Peoplescript might be a fondness for idiosyncrasies and highlighting them, since we all bring in our own backgrounds and experiences. Now I'm wondering, how do you account for this unpredictability in using humans? Let's talk about the crowd-sourced music video you recently worked on. You know people love to draw penises whenever given a chance. Do you edit those out? How do you ensure the success of your projects? Or do you care?

Okay, two things. One is about editorial control. And before, you were talking about Peoplescript. Maybe it's nice to mention also that this [music video] was also a Peoplescript because we made them use this algorithm, this tool. In the project we did at RISD, there was also a performative element, using the whole body. What does that do to our profession, as a graphic designer originally, to bring it to some other level? Or what other elements can be introduced, also...new imagery, new experiences? So that's interesting to play with.

Image: Studio Moniker's *Red Fungus*, a crowdsourced sticker installation at Centro de Art y Creación Industrial, Gijón, 2010.

Yes. As designers we are often at the user end. We sit in front of our computers and use these digital tools, typefaces, and software. Peoplescript flips that on its head and does something really different. It turns us into toolmakers, in a way.

Exactly. And of course it was interesting to see what qualities you can use. We were talking about this with different groups at RISD. What qualities that people have can you play with? You know, backgrounds, and I don't know what. And to bring those to the foreground.

And the other question you posed about editing out the dirt. It depends a little bit on the project, but sometimes we have an editorial environment in which we do select good ones and delete problematic contributions. So that does exist. We just launched a project, an online tool for children. You could type something, crumple up the paper, and the crumpled paper ball would drop. Some things were terrible, about divorced parents. There was an editorial board that said, "Okay, this we cannot put online." So there is sometimes an editorial decision in between. Sometimes it's not necessary because we want to have all the dirt in it, because the project is designed in such a way that anything you do is valuable. So even penises are fine. It depends. You get penises if you have blank paper. If you don't know what to draw, you draw penises. But these constructions that we do, like "Take a selfie" or "You have to make something," are often designed in certain ways such that we do like, in fact, the hacks that people come up with.

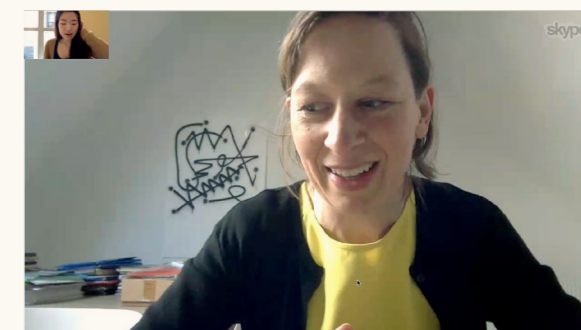
And it probably depends a lot on context, right? Like where the work will be displayed, who the audience is, and so on.

Sure.

Does your design philosophy affect your everyday life, outside of your work? Do you see or maybe even plan an interplay between work and life?

That is a very nice question, actually. My life has changed over the years because now I have a family, a kid. Sometimes I'm really happy to step out of my work and be busy with something completely different. Before I had a family, I was only in my work life, basically, in the evenings and whatever. I didn't have a balance so much. Even if I play with my daughter, drawing, it's very strange because she draws very abstract drawings. And she loves drawing games. I draw a dot, she makes a circle around it. So basically we are making a conditional design workshop game without any intention. It happens somehow. And she loves numbers. It's very funny that I really see that the drawings she makes are basically conditional design workshop drawings.

That's amazing!



Yeah, it's very fun. It's somehow so internalized, you know. The way I say, "Hey, come sit down. You make this, I make this." Then it is already a kind of rule-based drawing game. Another anecdote is, I dance. I do a lot of contemporary dance. And my dance teacher, she's fantastic. I learn a lot from dance. It's more about purity. How do I describe it? In dance, it's not about poses, that you have to make this shape and this shape—dancing shapes—but there's a logic coming from your center that goes over certain part of your body, and your arm is basically only a result of the original movement that comes from somewhere else. So making fixed shapes is really the worst you can do to dance.

When you dance, do you have a score, like in music, for choreography?

No, there's always music, but it's experimental music, sounds, and classical music. All different kinds. Not really pop songs in that contemporary dance class, but there's always music. And improvisations. Anyway, I thought there were a lot of that parallels to our work, about the purity and about not making shapes but just focusing on the essence and letting the rest evolve from it. So it's funny. It's just a small example I mention, but a lot of these things she says I sort of link together like this. So that's really nice.

And variations, I think, might also be something that links your work to dance. You get all these variations from the same...

Yeah, exactly. Absolutely. So another dancer is completely making something else with the same vocabulary, you could say. Yeah.

Multiple interpretations of the same piece.



Yeah.

Great. I also want to ask you about teaching. Do you still teach?

No. I'm not teaching at the moment because it is too time-intensive for me right now. I do give workshops. I'm going to be in the States again in July, at Otis in LA.

In these workshops and when you used to teach, do you think about your work when you write the assignments you give your students? Isn't an assignment brief a kind of instruction? Do you see giving project briefs as another type of conditional design?

I don't, but it's true you could see it that way.

With the students being the participants?

Yeah, but I try not to be too close. When I used to teach, I gave every half a year a new assignment, and I didn't at all give conditional design assignments to my students. The assignments need to be interesting to me, too, to explore together with the students. It is a bit different than a workshop. In a workshop, you have a certain amount of time, and you want to have nice results with everybody. It's an energy thing. If you teach, it's like, every week a student makes a little step over the course of half a year, for example. So I focus mostly on not thinking about fixed images but thinking in processes. It's like "What can you make? Design a machine or something that produces something." Or projects related to social media, Facebook, or your online presence. Or sometimes Arduino and more technical stuff. So yeah, that was the focus, not so much what we do in our studio.

For me, it was interesting to think about the idea of writing briefs for generating certain results but then seeing the differences in the outcomes the students produce in response to the same brief.

It wasn't like that. I understand you could see it that way. What you are right about is that depending on the brief, the project becomes great or shit. [laughs] Sometimes it's really like that. We did a couple of times, "Make a poster machine. Design a machine that produces posters." And it was always really nice because everybody did a big stack of very visual things; they came up with cool machine ideas. They had to think about principles more than the design of a poster. It's a helpful assignment.

Do you have an example where things turned to shit?

No, not really. But maybe making a stationery design. I never gave such an assignment but I can imagine I could not be interested in that, you know.

My last question for you is: how do you define failure?



Ah. I mean, there are different ways, you know. If you do a participatory project and anything the participants do is good, then there is no failure. You cannot do it right or wrong. So there, failure doesn't exist. But you could say, if you make a project in which you really need a big number of people in order to make it work, and nobody shows up, then you didn't see very well. Then basically the framework wasn't really designed well, or the project was not placed in the right way, in the right environment, in the right moment. And that, I think, is quite important when you make something participatory in order for it to work. Right now, we're working on this campaign for Mozilla, and we really hope that this will attract loads of people. We don't know. And if it doesn't, then yeah, you could say it's a failure because it's really based on having massive participation. Not massive, but certain traction. The kind of judgment that determines a good or a bad poster doesn't really play a role in our work.

I think there's a line of thinking where there are absolutely no failures at all and another where failures exist but they are accepted.

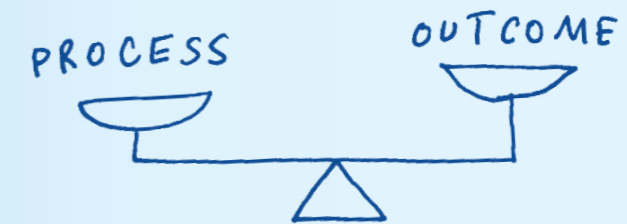
If you make a participatory project and nobody participates, then it's failed. But participation itself is always valuable. I don't know. In your distinction, what I say doesn't really fit, but it depends really on failure in what context. It is strange, I am not interested in this so much. I mean you could say that failure is the opposite of success. [laughs] For us, success is rather important in the sense that we need people in order for something to work. Otherwise, it is unsuccessful. But there is no, let's say, no visual failure, really—you know, like it doesn't look good, or it doesn't look right, or it's not pretty enough. That doesn't really makes sense. Unless you didn't design the rules right. [laughs]

Thank you so much, Luna. That was perfect.

Luna Maurer is a German-born designer and co-founder of Moniker, a multidisciplinary design studio based in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Together with Edo Paulus, Jonathan Puckey, and Roel Wouters, she co-authored the "Conditional Design Manifesto" and the *Conditional Design Workbook* (2013), which outlines their design method based on rules and public participation.

4

PROCESS AS CONDITION



Back in 2015, type designer Erik Spiekermann lamented on Twitter over the use of his typeface in Donald Trump's presidential campaign: **MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN!** it shouted in FF Meta.¹ Peter Bilak has also written about the unlicensed hijacking of Fedra, one of his most beloved typefaces, by the terrorist organization Epanastatikos Agonas.² While these are possibly a type designer's worst nightmares, there is nothing that can be done at this point. After months or years of hard work, when type designers publish the fruit of their labor, they release with it their control over its use. They have to let go.

¹ Erik Spiekermann (@espiekermann) "OMG! Trump campaign uses my FF Meta on their poster! Only for the subline, but still embarrassing..." September 3, 2015, 3:09 PM. Tweet.

² Peter Bilak, "Conceptual Type?" *Typotheque*, February 24, 2011. https://www.typotheque.com/articles/conceptual_type.

Fortunately, every cloud has a silver lining; this relinquishing of control can lead to exciting results. Matthew Carter has expressed his joy upon seeing the innovative ways in which his typefaces are employed. WALKER, a custom typeface he designed for the Walker Art Center

On this page: A drawing from my sketchbook, 2016.

3 Andrew Blauvelt, "Matthew Carter," *Bits & Pieces Put Together to Present a Semblance of a Whole: Walker Art Center Collections* (New York: D.A.P./Distributed Art Publishers, 2005).

in any combination as desired.³ Although Carter originated the idea, he could not have foreseen all the ways in which it would be used and continue to be re-imagined. As he had hoped, Walker's in-house designers proceeded to indulge in dynamic typographic play, applying and removing the snap-on serifs as they saw fit. A typeface like WALKER can bring about a combinatorial explosion: the number of combinations that can arise grows exponentially with each additional element in the set.

Replace numbers with humans, and an even bigger explosion results. As we have seen earlier, Sol LeWitt's allographic work is expansive in its potential because its visual manifestation depends largely on the choice and interpretation of the person who renders it; the human factor is

4 Sol LeWitt, "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," *Artforum*, Vol.5, No.10, 1967.

pivotal to the perception and appreciation of his work. His statement "The idea becomes a machine that makes the art"⁴ became the

resounding maxim of Conceptual Art, but one could challenge it by asking: Is it not the draftsman who becomes a machine that makes the art? I believe it is a matter of emphasis.

A group of Dutch designers—Luna Maurer, Edo Paulus, Jonathan Puckey, and Roel Wouters—openly places emphasis on the people who engage

5 Luna Maurer, Edo Paulus, Jonathan Puckey, and Roel Wouters. *Conditional Design Workbook* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2013). Excerpt.

with their work. Under the name "conditional design," they advocate a new approach to design that prioritizes process over outcome. They assert in their manifesto⁵:

*The process is the product.
The most important aspects of a process are time, relationship and change.
The process produces formations rather than forms.
We search for unexpected but correlative, emergent patterns.
Even though a process has the appearance of objectivity, we realize the fact that it stems from subjective intentions.*

They assert in their manifesto⁵:

in 1995, is a good example. Imbued with the multidisciplinary spirit of the institution itself, WALKER offered six optional snap-on serifs, which could be added to the base sans-serif,

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO
PQRSTUVWXYZ&
1234567890

H H H H H

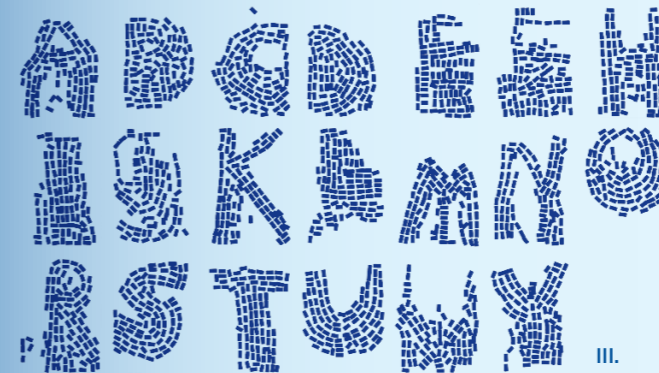
E E EH EH EH

WALKER
WALKER-ITALIC

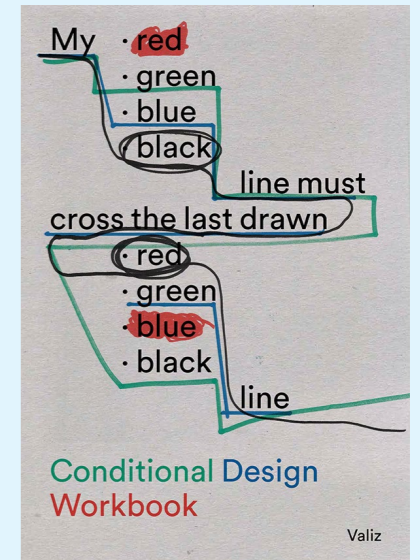
WALKER-UNDER
WALKER-BOTH
WALKER-OVER



I.



III.



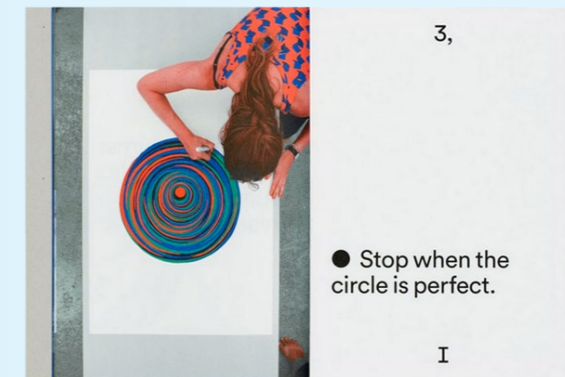
IV.

I. Matthew Carter's specimen sheet for WALKER that shows various serif options, 1995.

II. WALKER in use in Walker Art Center's monthly event calendars, 1995–1996.

III. Collaborative type workshop led by Luna Maurer at Vågan Primary and Secondary School in Svolveær for the Lofoten International Art Festival 2013.

IV–V. *Conditional Design Workbook* (2013) by Studio Moniker and Edo Paulus, designed by Julia Born and published by Valiz.



V.

Logic is our tool.

Logic is our method for accentuating the ungraspable.

A clear and logical setting emphasizes that which does not seem to fit within it.

We use logic to design the conditions through which the process can take place.

Design conditions using intelligible rules.

Avoid arbitrary randomness.

Difference should have a reason.

Use rules as constraints.

Constraints sharpen the perspective on the process and stimulate play within the limitations.

Peoplescript is a conditional design method that brings people into the equation. It asks that they act in response to a prepared script or instructions, transforming the participants into machines for making. Unlike LeWitt, for whom the execution of the idea was only “a perfunctory affair,” conditional design necessitates the enactment of the idea; conditional design operations are complete only upon realization. Since

they rely heavily on the synergic effects that occur when a multitude of inputs are brought together, people play a significant role; they are a necessity. Luna Maurer affirms that in conditional design, the individual experiences of their audience-participants outweigh anything else in terms of importance, and the people—who they are, how they think and behave—actually matter within the directive

logic of the process.⁶ Separately considered, each response or instance may seem incidental. When seen as a part contributing to a whole, the subtle and drastic differences among the particular inputs, which are also often the outputs, become visible and meaningful. In the particular lies the universal.⁷

Because humans naturally make for unreliable tools, participation-based work invites unexpected, “imperfect” results. In choosing to design open systems based on a set of rules rather than finite products, Peoplescript leaves room for surprising encounters. It shows us that with embracing uncertainty comes an opportunity to witness and revel in wonderfully particular, sometimes peculiar, outcomes.

⁶ The full interview with Luna Maurer can be found on pp. 194–199 of this book.

⁷ On a related note, in 1921, James Joyce responded to Arthur Power’s weariness toward nationality in this way: *...I always write about Dublin, because if I can get to the heart of Dublin I can get to the heart of all the cities of the world. In the particular is contained the universal.* Arthur Power, *From the Old Waterford House* (Waterford: Carthage Press, 1940).

BRIEF 4

All the best ideas come out of the process; they come out of the work itself.¹

CHUCK CLOSE

Stop thinking about art works as objects, and start thinking about them as triggers for experiences.²

ROY ASCOTT

Everything is an experiment.³

TIBOR KALMAN

>>> In this last unit, write a script for a performance without worrying about having a polished, crafted object in the end. Re-evaluate the level of attention you assign to your process. Document thoroughly.

¹ CHUCK CLOSE, *CHUCK CLOSE* (NEW YORK, THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART: 2002).

² BRIAN ENO, *A YEAR WITH SWOLLEN APPENDICES: BRIAN ENO’S DIARY* (LONDON, FABER & FABER: 1996).

³ AN APHORISM BY TIBOR KALMAN FROM *TIBOR IN ORBIT* (2000), ORGANIZED BY MARIA KALMAN, CREATIVE TIME, AND THE NEW MUSEUM, NY.

**If you
know how
it will end,**

**where is
the fun
in that?**

PROJECT

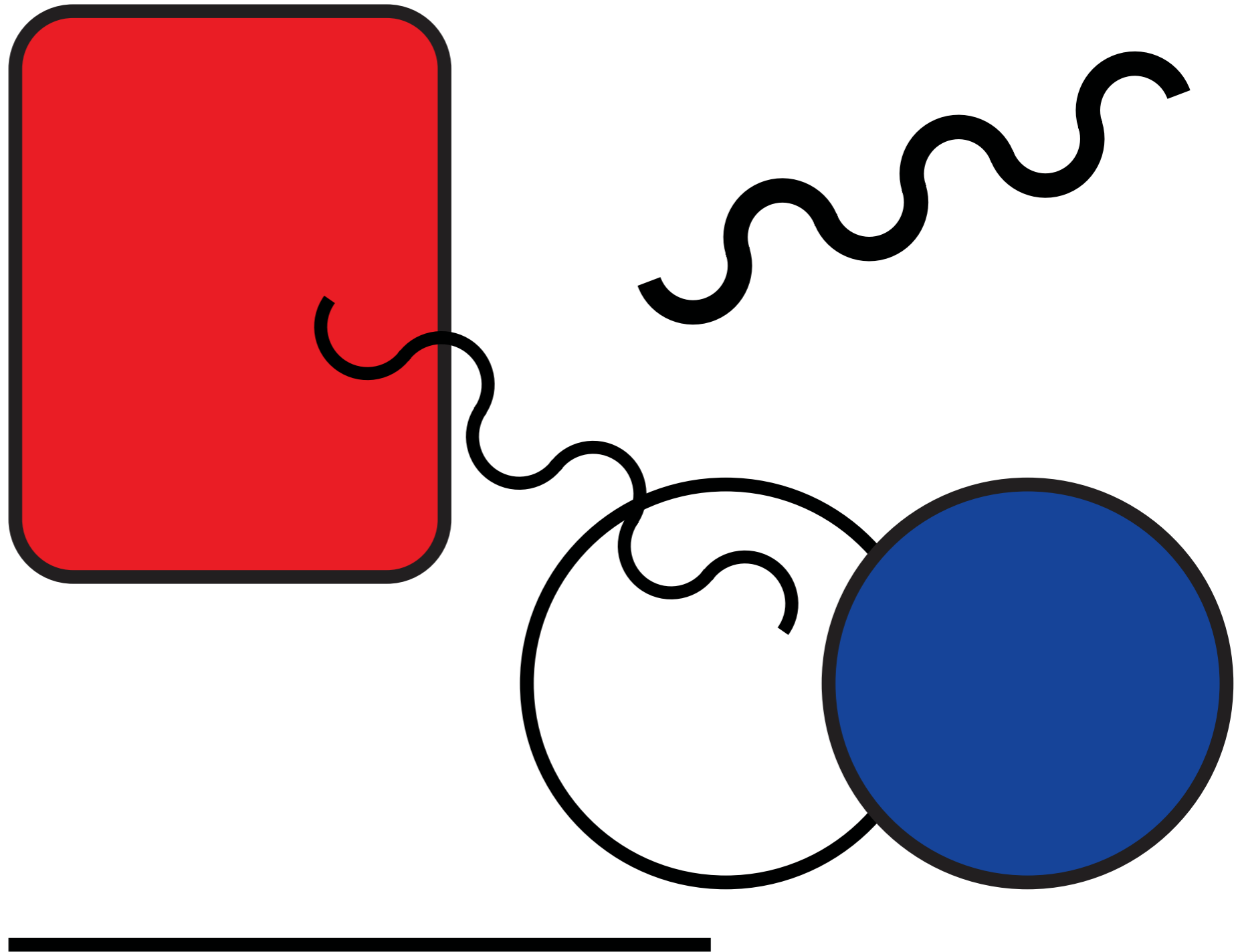
Workshop
Video 02:15

Illustrator 101

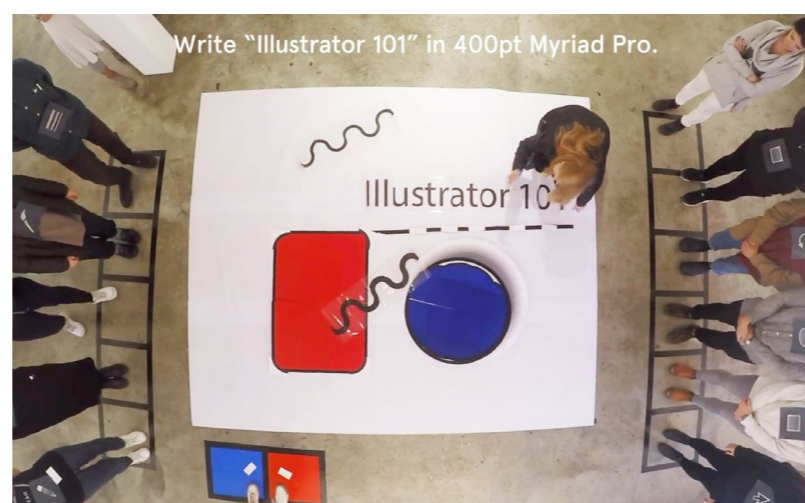
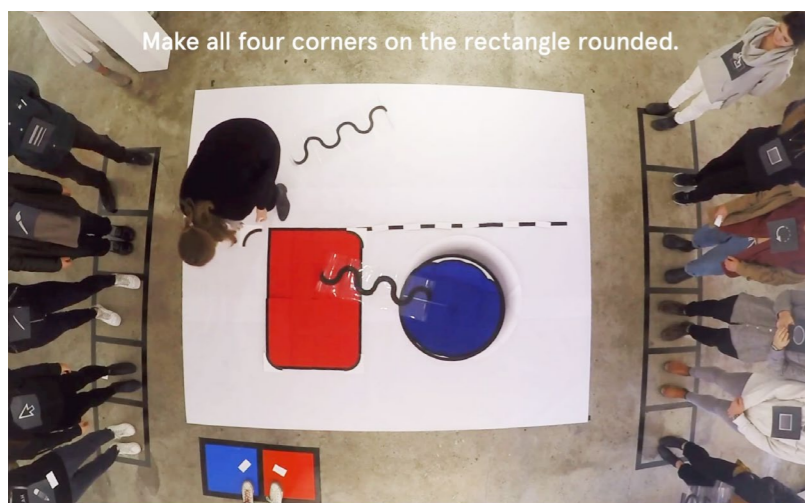
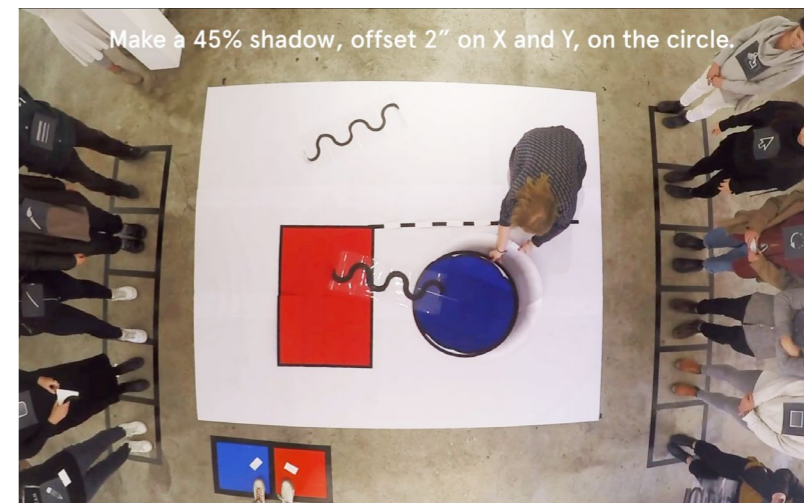
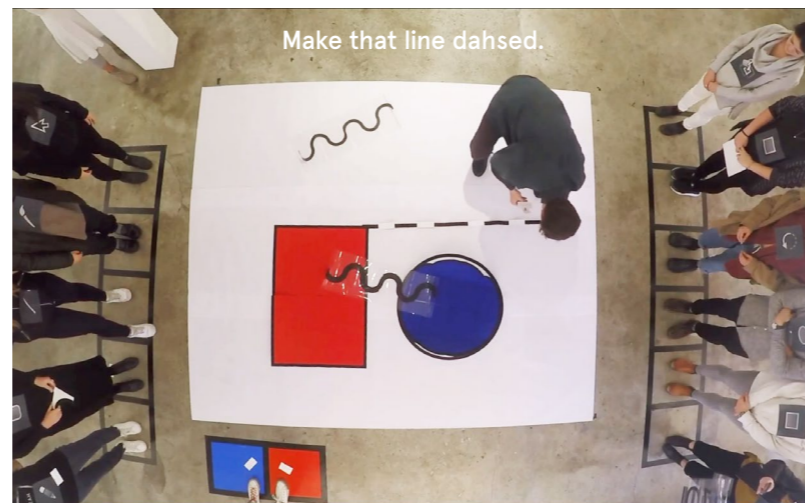
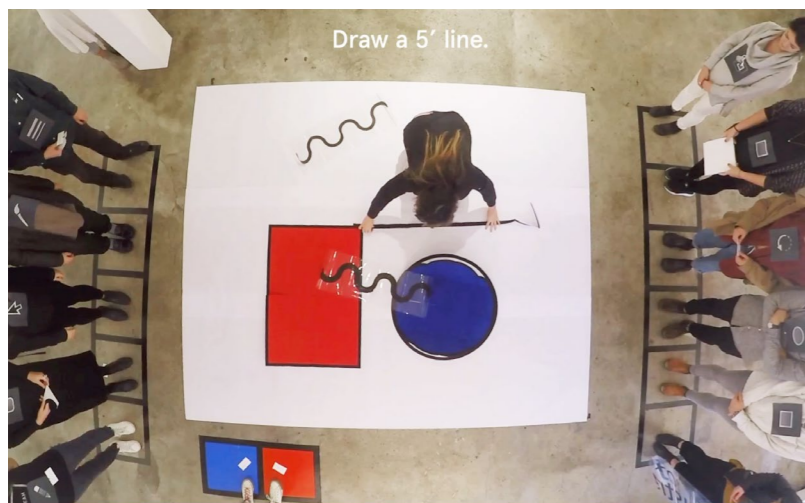
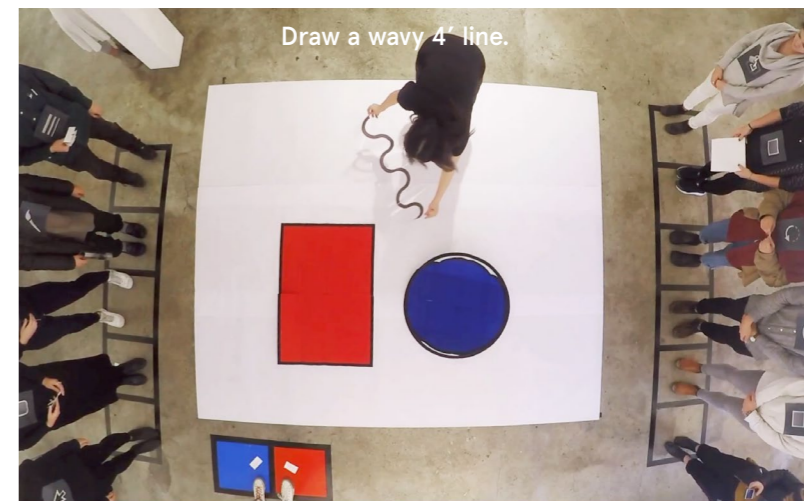
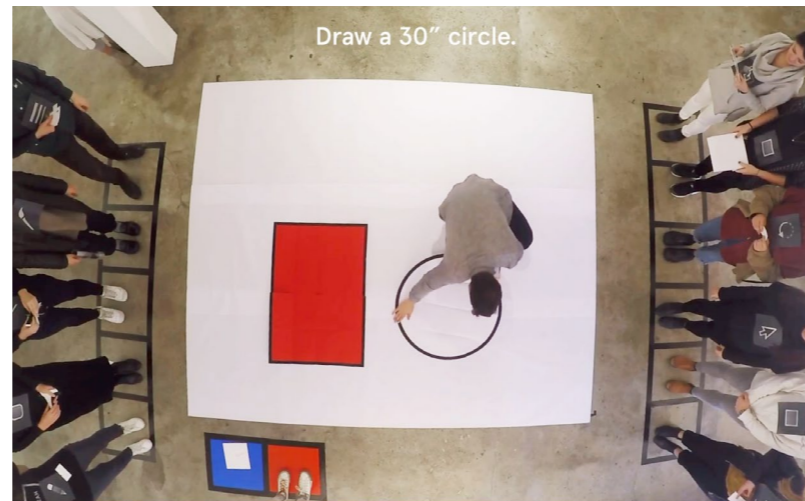
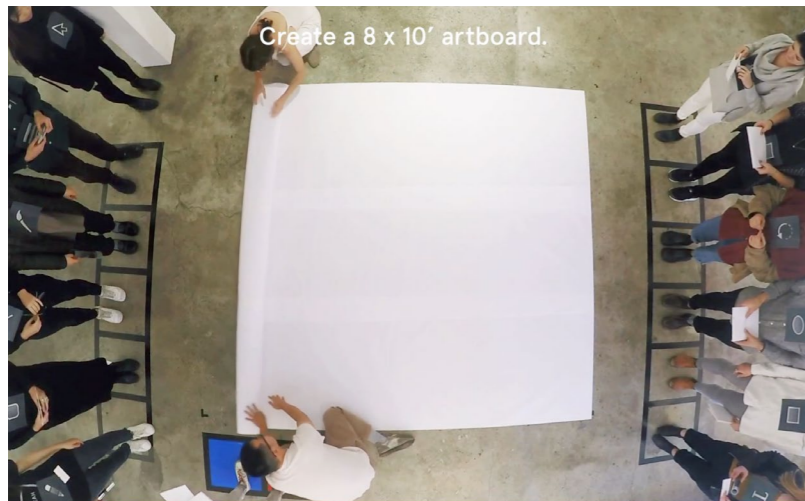
Illustrator 101 defamiliarizes one of the most familiar graphic design tools: Adobe Illustrator. Bringing the digital software into the physical world, we* asked humans to perform the tasks that digital tools can achieve instantly. By creating a scripted experience in which the computer program was humanized and the humans mechanized, my collaborators* and I made the labor involved in design more palpable, while offering humor and tactile delight.

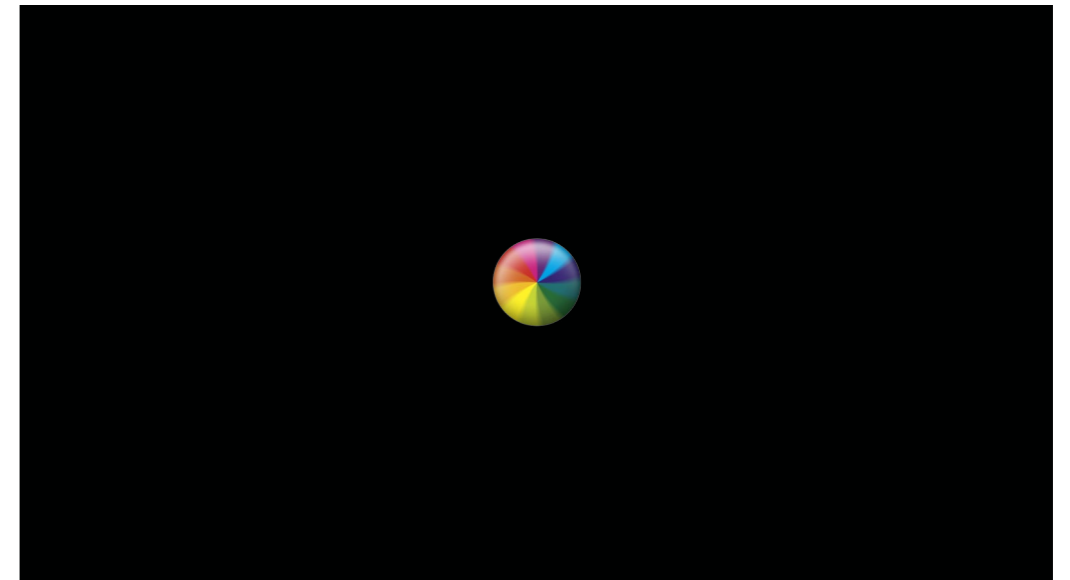
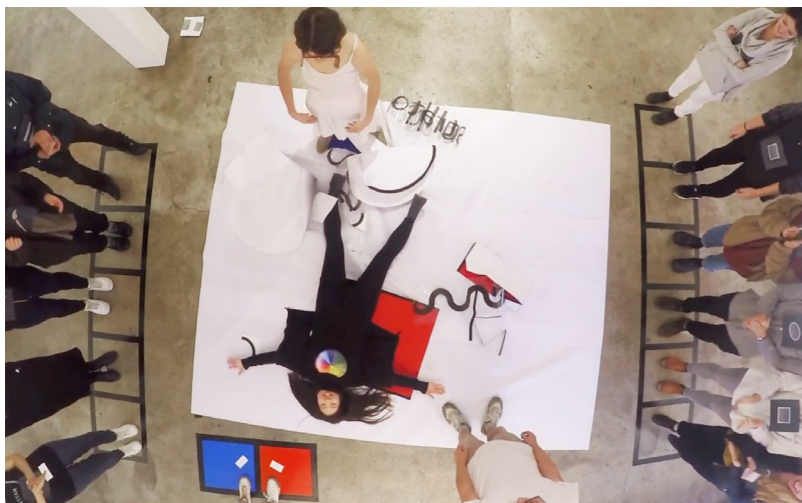
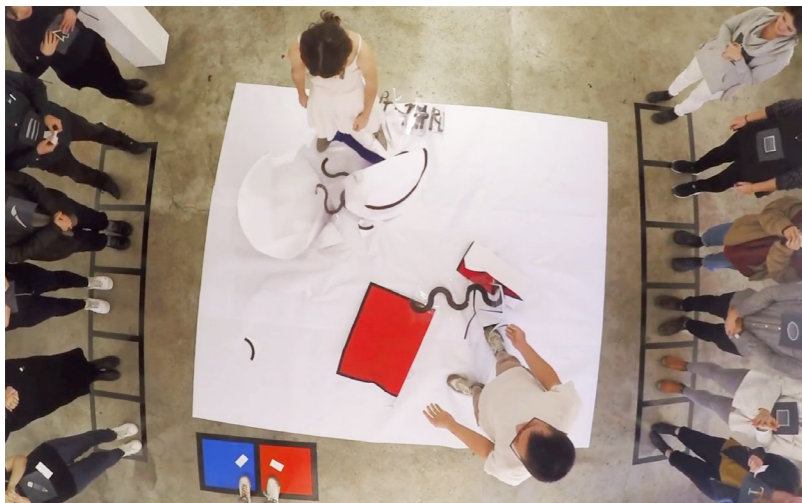
Right Prepared Illustrator shapes.

Next Spread Still from the video documentation with aerial view of the participants performing their tasks according to the prerecorded instructions. I was the cursor.



* Boyang Xia (GD MFA '17) and
Lauren Traugott-Campbell (GD MFA '18).





Opposite I was also the spinning wheel of death that terminated the operation (bottom).

Above Everyone in Keetra Dixon's Experiential Design class who participated in the workshop (top).

PROJECT

Workshop
Video 01:30

A Beautiful Script

During a weekend workshop with Luna Maurer of Moniker, my collaborators* and I used people as machines for making. But the human aspects were not diminished. On the contrary, we depended on the diverse lingual backgrounds of our participants.

We created audio files for initial instructions in English and each of the the words of the phrase we wrote—*We come from different places and speak different languages. We make a beautiful script*—recorded in one of the seven different languages spoken by our 17 participants.

The result was a group of lingually and visually textured posters with many different scripts coexisting on the same pages.

* Desmond Pang (GD MFA '16) and Hyein Jung (GD MFA '16)

Right A detail of the results created by the participants.



Language = KEY

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help All changes saved in Drive

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
1	Actors	English	Korean	Chinese	Japanese	French	Arabic	Turkish	Graphic Designer			Materials	Outcome	Possible Titles			
2	Hyein											Color tape	some shape	Translation Machine			
3	June											Color paper	()	Physical Dialogue			
4	Bo-Won											Rope?		Designed Translations			
5	Bonhae											Ink		Live Translator			
6	Wooksang													Influence of Translation			
7	Chae													Lost in Translation			
8	Desmond													Monkey See Monkey Do			
9	Jessica													Found in Translation			
10	Lisa																
11	Cem																
12	Sarah R																
13	Lulu																
14	Lynn																
15	James W																
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22																	
23	English	WE	COME	FROM	DIFFERENT	PLACES	AND	SPEAK	DIFFERENT	LANGUAGES		WE	MAKE	A	BEAUTIFUL	MESS	
24	Korean	우리	오다	부터	다른	장소들	그리고	말하다	다른	언어들		우리	만들다		아름다운	엉망진창	
25	Chinese	我们	从 or 来自		不同	地方	和	说	不同	语言	句号	我们	制造	一个	美丽	杂乱	
26	Japanese	私達		から	別	場所	と	話す	別	言語	終止符	私達	作る	一つ	美しい	混乱	
27	French	Nous	viens	de	différent	des endroits	et	parler	différent	Langues		Nous	faire	une	beau	désordre	
28	Turkish	biz	gelen		farklı	yerler	ve	konusuruz	farklı	dil	nokta	biz	yapmak	bir	güzel	dağınıklık (or karışıklık)	
29	Arabic	نحن	تأتي من		مختلف	الأماكن	و	تحدث	مختلف	لغة		نحن	صنع	واحد	جميلة	تعيب	
30		nahn	tati min		mmukhtalif	al'amakin	w	tahduth	mmukhtalif	lugha		nahn	sune	wahid	jamila	taebith	
31																	
32																	
33		1	2		3	4	5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13	
34		WE	COME	FROM	DIFFERENT	PLACES	AND	SPEAK	DIFFERENT	LANGUAGES		WE	MAKE	A	BEAUTIFUL	MESS	
35																	
36	Round 1	WE	COME	FROM	不同	場所	그리고	SPEAK	différent	言語		نحن	MAKE	une	아름다운	dağınıklık (or karışıklık)	
37	Round 2	Nous	来	自	DIFFERENT	장소들	AND	parler	別	LANGUAGES		Biz	作る	하나의	BEAUTIFUL	엉망진창	
38	Round 3	우리는	viens	de	다른	PLACES	和	話す	DIFFERENT	언어들		We	製造	A	جميلة	MESS	
39																	

- 0-0 INTRO INSTRUCTIONS.mp3
- 0-1Bell.mp3
- 1-1 WE (Eng).mp3
- 1-2 COME FROM (Eng).mp3
- 1-3 DIFFERENT (Chinese).mp3
- 1-4 PLACES (Jap).mp3
- 1-5 AND (Korean).mp3
- 1-6 SPEAK (Eng).mp3
- 1-7 DIFFERENT (French).mp3
- 1-8 LANGUAGES (Jap).mp3
- 1-9 WE (Arabic).mp3
- 1-10 MAKE (Eng).mp3
- 1-11 UNE (French).mp3
- 1-12 BEAUTIFUL (Korean).mp3
- 1-13 SCRIPT (Turkish).mp3
- 2-1 WE (French)_01.mp3
- 2-1 WE (French).mp3
- 2-2 COME FROM (Chinese).mp3
- 2-3 DIFFERENT (Eng).mp3
- 2-4 PLACES (Korean).mp3
- 2-5 AND (Eng).mp3
- 2-6 SPEAK (French).mp3
- 2-7 DIFFERENT (Jap).mp3
- 2-8 LANGUAGES (Eng).mp3
- 2-9 WE (Turkish).mp3
- 2-10 MAKE (Jap).mp3
- 2-10 MAKE (Jap)_01.mp3
- 2-11 ONE (Korean).mp3
- 2-12 BEAUTIFUL (Eng).mp3
- 2-13 SCRIPT (Korean).mp3
- 3-1 WE (Korean).mp3
- 3-2 COME FROM (French).mp3
- 3-3 DIFFERENT (Korean).mp3
- 3-4 PLACES (Eng).mp3
- 3-5 AND (Chinese).mp3
- 3-6 SPEAK (Jap).mp3
- 3-7 DIFFERENT (Eng).mp3
- 3-8 LANGUAGES (Korean).mp3
- 3-9 WE (Eng).mp3
- 3-10 MAKE (Chinese).mp3
- 3-11 ONE (Eng).mp3
- 3-12 BEAUTIFUL (Arabic).mp3
- 3-13 SCRIPT (Eng).mp3

Above My team used Google Sheets to map and plan things out. We started by making a list of all languages spoken by the people who we knew would be our participants so we could

write a script specific to this particular audience. Then, after listening to each word in our phrase in all of these languages, we chose the most obvious combinations or the clearest

ones in terms of pronunciation. We also made sure that each word in the phrase was heard in English at least once over the course of three rounds.

Right All of the audio recordings we prepared for the workshop and played in the sequence as shown here. The bell sound was played after each word.

1 We | come from | different | places | and | speak | different | languages

English

English

Chinese

Japanese

Korean

English

French

Japanese

We | make | one | beautiful | script

Arabic

English

French

Korean

Turkish

2 We | come from | different | places | and | speak | different | languages

French

Chinese

English

Korean

English

French

Japanese

English

We | make | one | beautiful | script

Turkish

Japanese

Korean

English

Korean

3 We | come from | different | places | and | speak | different | languages

Korean

French

Korean

English

Chinese

Japanese

English

Korean

We | make | one | beautiful | script

English

Chinese

English

Arabic

English

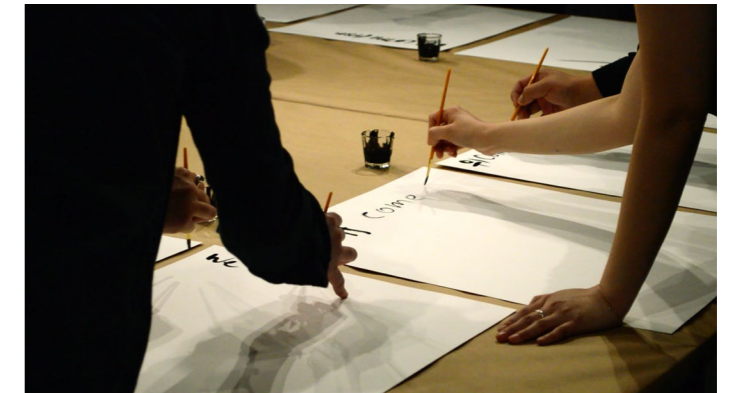
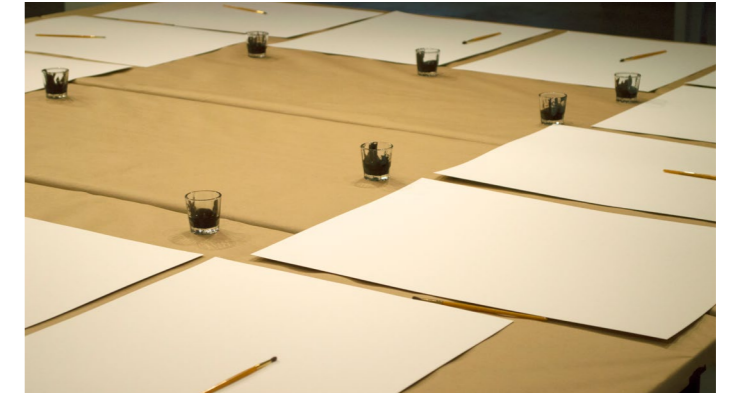
The same phrase was repeated three times but it never sounded the same. Each round, every word was heard in a different language than before.



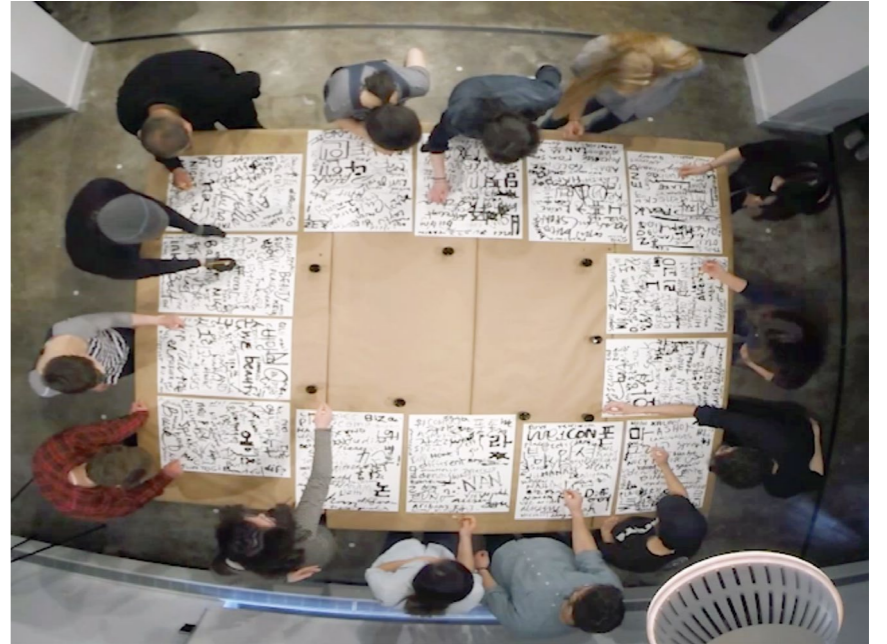
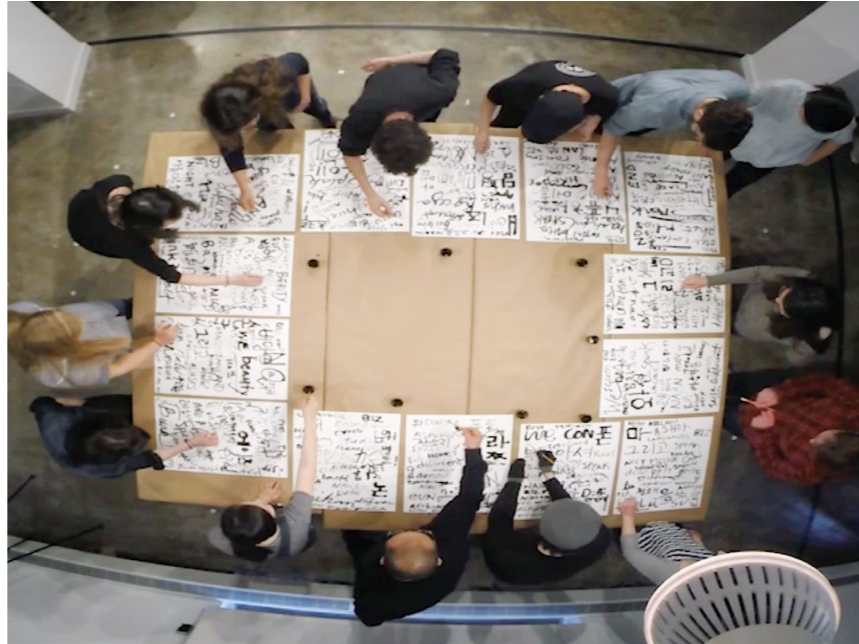
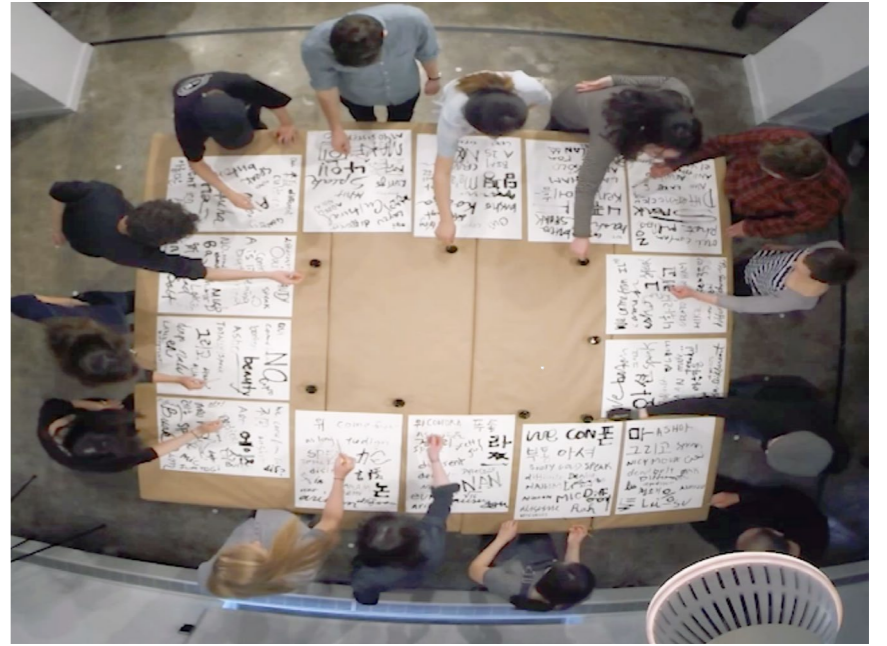
Above At the beep, the participants moved counter-clockwise.

Initial instructions in English:

- 1) Listen to the audio and write down what you hear.
- 2) Start at the top left corner.
- 3) At the beep, move onto your right.



Right Different scripts in many languages and styles accumulated over time. In the end, every poster had contributions from everyone in the workshop, resulting in 14 collaborative posters.



A BEAUTIFUL SCRIPT



PROJECT

12 x 18 in. plexiglass
Workshop
Installation

HOME

The desire to go home...is a desire to be whole, to know where you are, to be the point of intersection of all the lines drawn through all the stars, to be the constellation-maker and the center of the world, that center called love. To awaken from sleep, to rest from awakening, to tame the animal, to let the soul go wild, to shelter in darkness and blaze with light, to cease to speak and be perfectly understood. —Rebecca Solnit

As an immigrant growing up in the United States, I have always been a foreigner in this country. I grew up feeling displaced, mismatched, and always somewhat out of place. The word “home” for me does not point to a certain geographic location or a group of familiar objects and buildings. Rather, it is a feeling of belonging, of comfort. Over time I have come to find this feeling in the work—in the act of making—and the community whose members come together through this very activity.

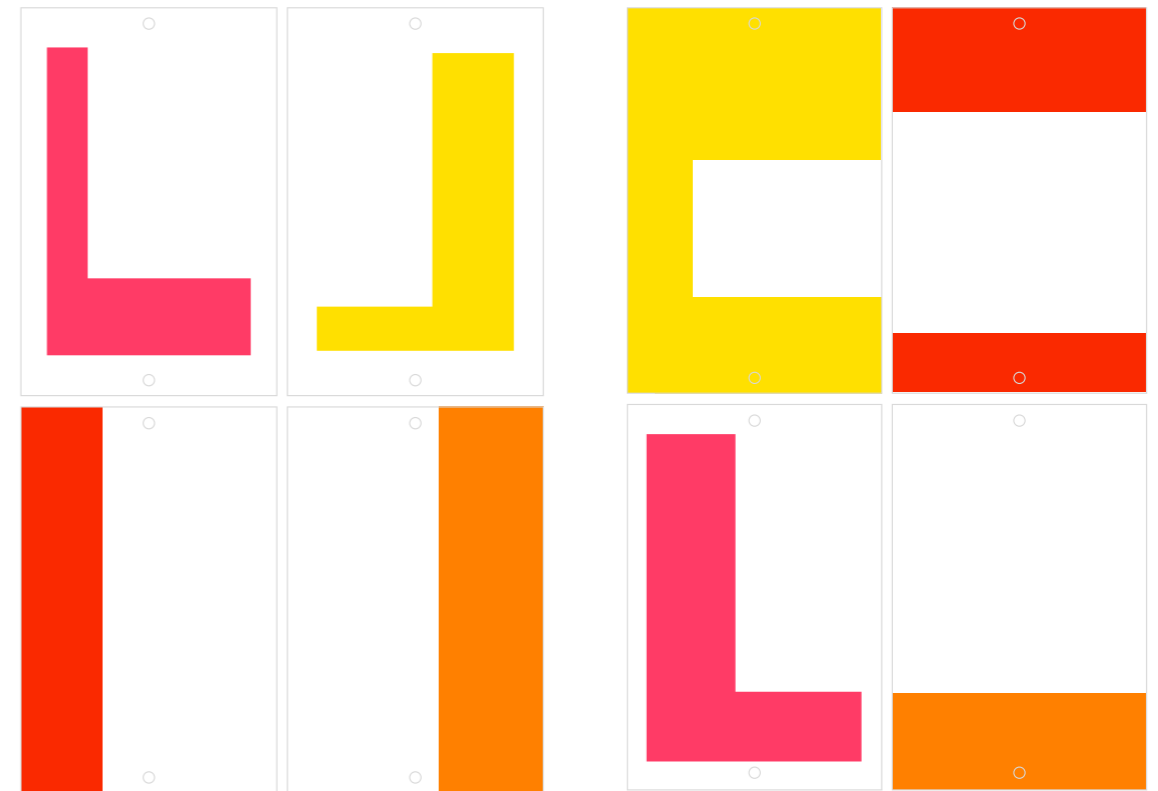
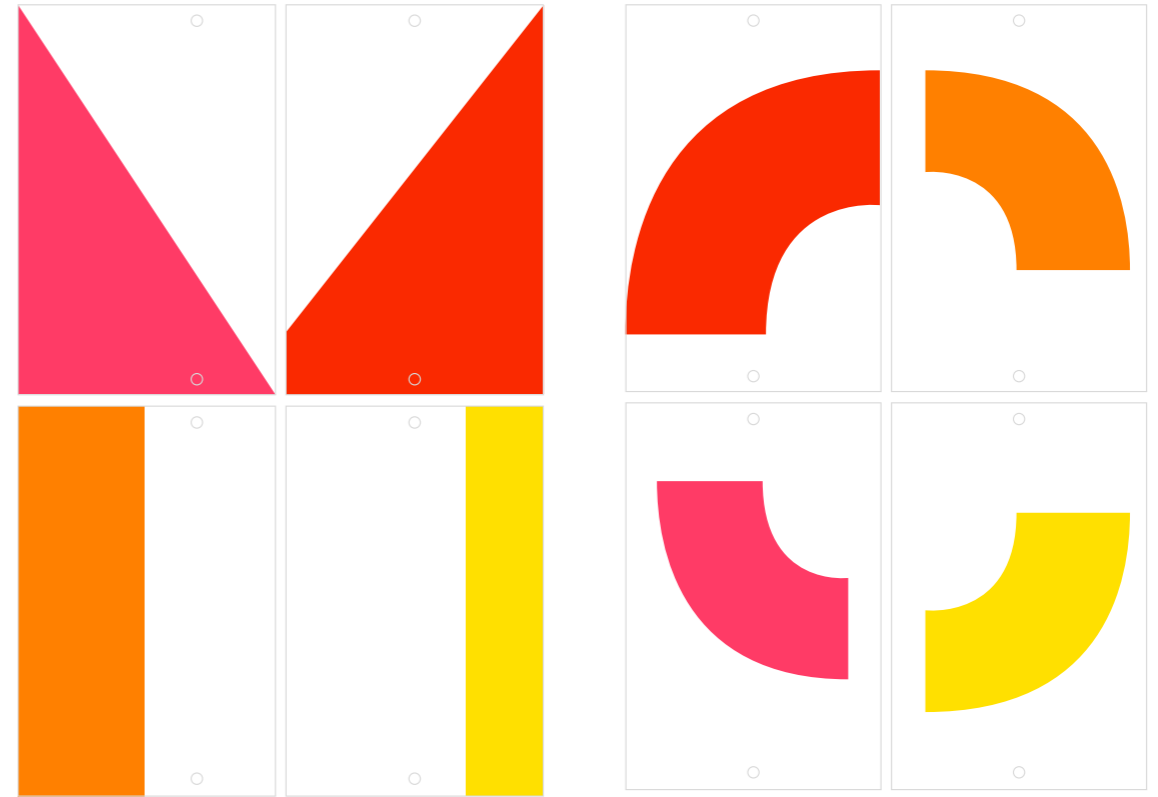
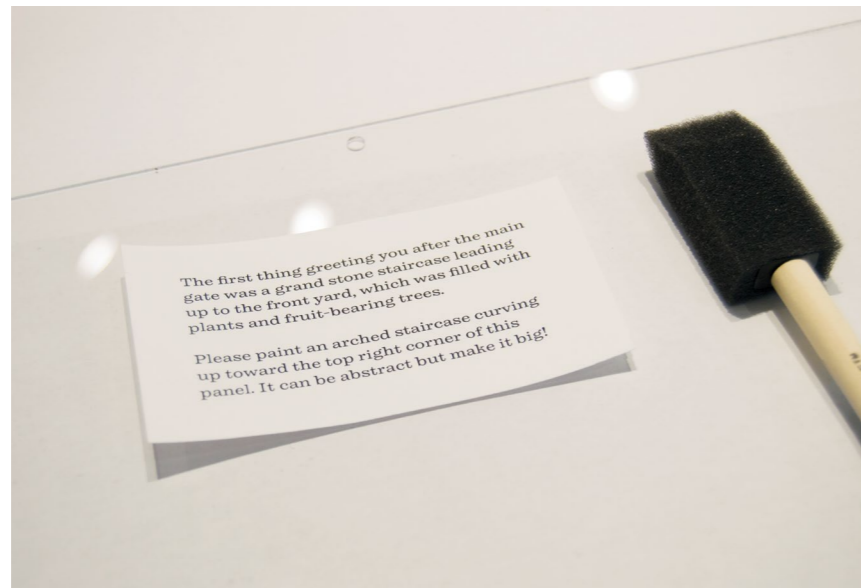
Right The initial setup, with the supplies and the paper slips that had pieces of my memory and instructions on them.



By sharing the memory I have of my childhood home in the form of prompts, I asked the participants to paint. Taking these building blocks they have created for me, I arranged them on the spot, gradually revealing the word "HOME." The unpredictability of the outcome in a workshop like this and the sense of vulnerability one feels upon sharing personal stories are closely linked to how I think about the concept of home; I never know what form my home will take because I depend on my community to shape it. The warmth and support we gift each other through making is what home has come to mean for me.

Opposite Illustrator mock-up of how I imagined the results of this workshop might look.

Below One of the memories I shared was about the arched stone staircase from my childhood home.







**Let's try
to wrap up
soon.**

**It's okay if
you're not
finished.**

PROJECT

Projection 70 × 85 in.
Video

Project Hope

In this performance piece, I fold paper stars. The process and outcome are filmed by a camera and projected live onto the graduate studio's floor-to-ceiling window that faces out onto Johnson & Wales University's quad and Weybosset Street. This projected performance is my way of making a wish and, at the same time, of hinting at what happens in this building: making—lots of making.

This project was carried out over two nights. On the first night, I sat down and folded stars, live, until they filled up the window space completely, from bottom to top. On the second night, I went outside to observe and interact with my audience as the video recording of my performance from the previous night was playing on the window.

Star is a powerful and familiar metaphor for hope, excellence, and patriotism in many cultures, and this project is interesting in its potential to elicit different interpretations depending on context.

Right The performance as seen from inside the graduate studio in CIT, with camera and projector set up.





Left The projection as seen from Weybosset Street. The graduate studio is on the 5th floor of the building.

Below Passersby stopping to watch the stars being folded. One of the responses: "I bet she's going to make a flag!"





A view of the projection from Gaebe Commons, Johnson & Wales University.

PROJECT

Experimental typeface
Video 02:30
Book 6½ × 10 in.

Timeface

Timeface is an infographic typeface that visualizes the time investment and logic involved in type design. With the memory of my design process for my latest typeface, *Ithaka* (2016),* still fresh in my mind and the numerous UFO (Unified Font Object) files still on my hard drive, I created a parametric typeface drawn according to a formula: the amount of time I spent on designing a character for *Ithaka* determined the weight of its *Timeface* counterpart; the more time it took, the fatter the character.

Timeface also offers a glimpse into the mechanics of type design, touching on such topics as the “control characters”—the first few characters with which type designers start a typeface—and inheritance of form that occurs when a glyph or a part of a glyph is re-used to form another.

* See pp.46–61 for *Ithaka*.



ABCDEFGFG
HIJKLMN
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ&*
abcdefghi
jklmnopq
rstuvwxyz
0123456789
@\$-.,!?)}]

ITHAKA
original typeface/basis for Timeface

ABCDEFGFG
HIJKLMN
OPQRSTU
VWXYZ&*
abcdefghi
jklmnopq
rstuvwxyz
0123456789
@\$-.,!?)}]

TIMEFACE
inforgraphic-typeface for ithaka

ACCUMULATION of time is invisible in type design; the user only sees the end product. Timeface gives form to this invisible labor of the type designer.

In Ithaka, the 'n' went through numerous revisions before reaching its final form. The record of this process was used to determine the weight of Timeface's 'n.'

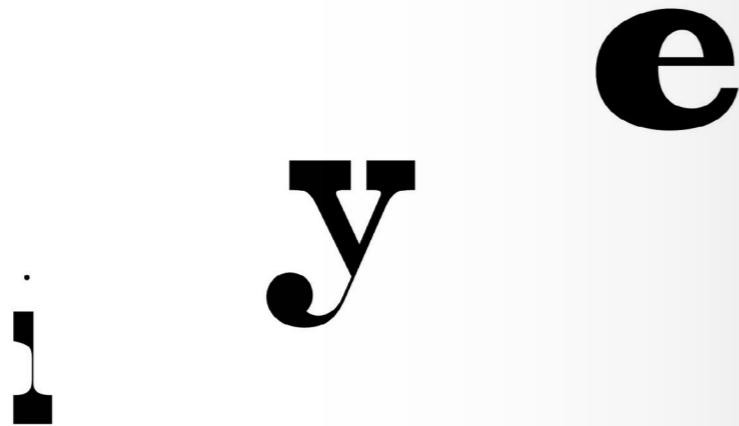


ITHAKA

TIMEFACE



The more time i spent on certain stroke or glyph of Ithaka, the fatter its Timeface counterpart became. Over time, black shapes engulfed white shapes.



0

i

The 'i' is probably the quickest character to draw because its stem can be copied and pasted from the 'n.' The only thing to worry about here is the size and placement of the i-dot, or tittle.

y

The 'v' is re-purposed and tweaked to form the main body of the 'y.' More time is spent fiddling with the ball terminal.

e

The round body of the 'e' comes from the 'c,' but the eye of the 'e' is an important white shape and takes time to finalize.

r

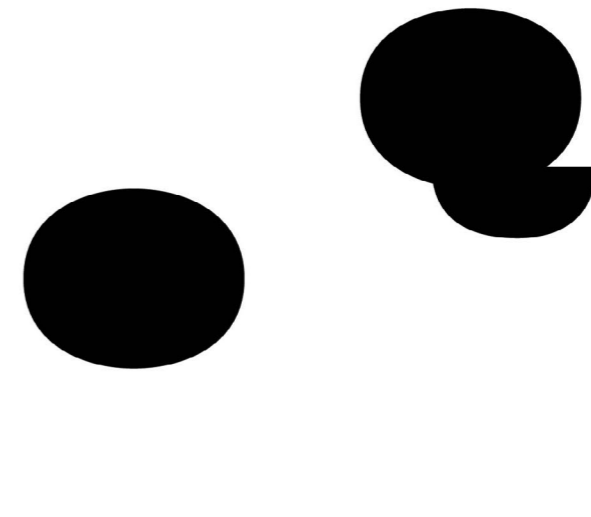
Ball terminals are never easy to draw and deciding how far it extends out from the stem is also tricky because it has to maintain a good proportion while ensuring there will not be big spacing problems.

o

It is easy to assume the 'O' is simple because it looks like a circle. However, it is one of those characters that demand careful consideration because its traits will affect the shapes of other glyphs.

q

While the 'Q' inherits the main round body from the 'O,' the tail can take many iterations to get right. In Ithaka, I wanted a decorative tail with a splash of personality, which meant a lot of tweaking.



TIME SPENT DRAWING

Q O S X G C K R B Y A D

Z P U W V M H N J E F T L I

m g p h n u s a o r

q d b x k c e w y v z t f j l i

LOWERCASE LETTERS generally take more time than the caps. When I began drawing the caps for Ithaka, I had most of Ithaka's DNA figured out because I had already drawn all the lowercase letters.

UPPERCASE LETTERS are less unique than the lowercase ones and have more straight parts, which means there are fewer details to worry about. Timeface's uppercase set is overall lighter than the lowercase for this reason.

**TYPE IS
A BEAUTIFUL
GROUP OF
LETTERS,
NOT**

**A GROUP OF
BEAUTIFUL
LETTERS.**

MATTHEW CARTER



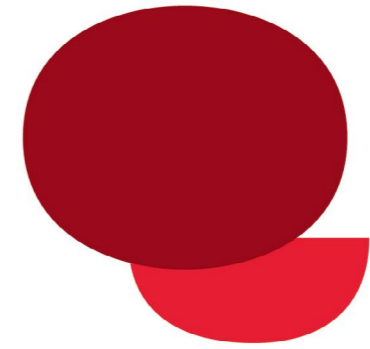
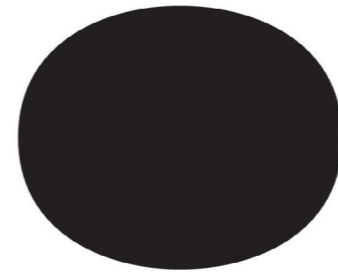


x2



INHERITANCE of traits happens all the time in type design. Because type design is a systematic art, certain forms are used and repurposed repeatedly across the character set. They are copied and pasted, and then often rotated, flipped, and/or tweaked accordingly.



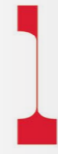
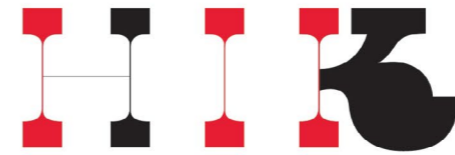
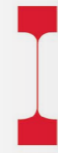
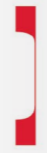


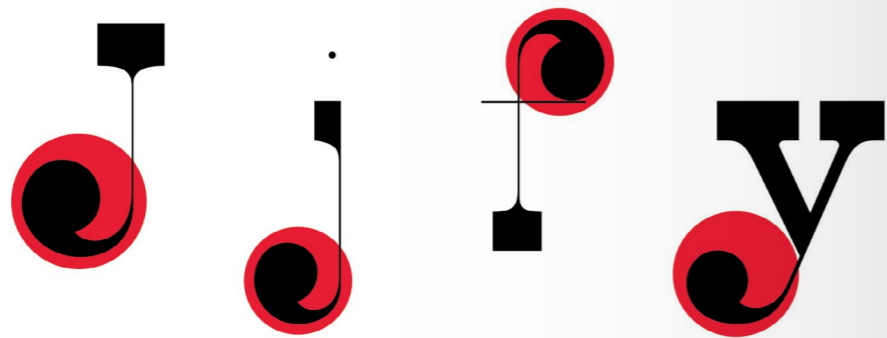
Timeface characters retain the weight, or blackness, of the inherited stroke that is being re-used as the starting point for another character. No previous labor is lost in the transformation.



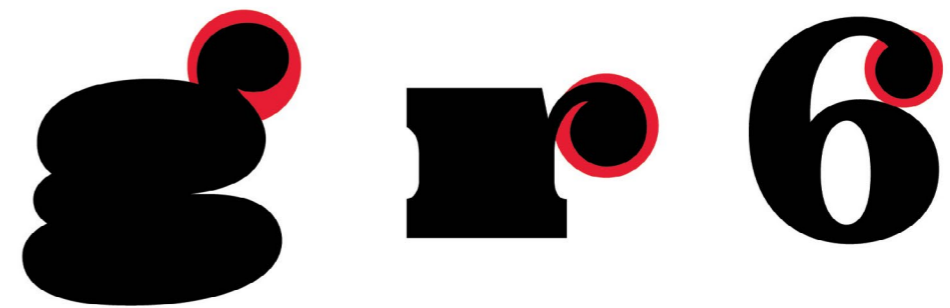
SERIFS are not always exactly the same on all characters, but they do need to be consistent. They are copied & pasted, and then sometimes modified slightly.

As the shape of the serif is a huge part of what forms a typeface's personality, arriving at the serif that feels right is essential and takes a lot of effort, the reason Timeface letters have fat serifs.

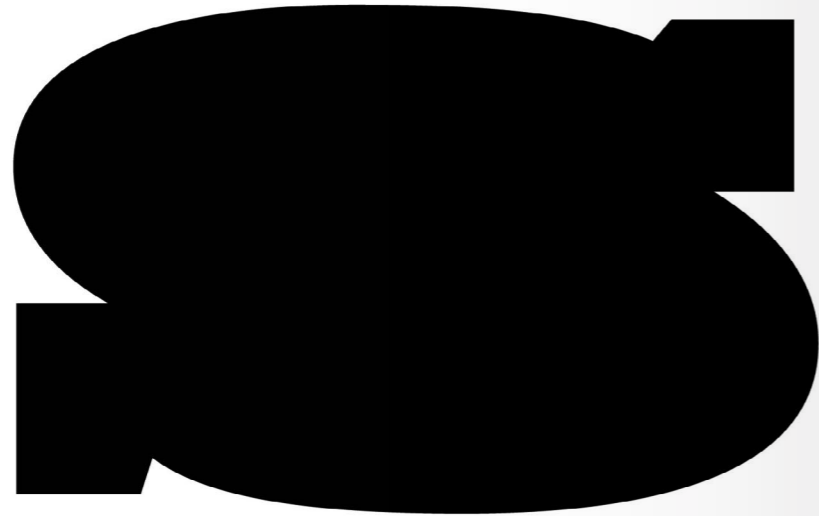




BALL TERMINALS are difficult, period.



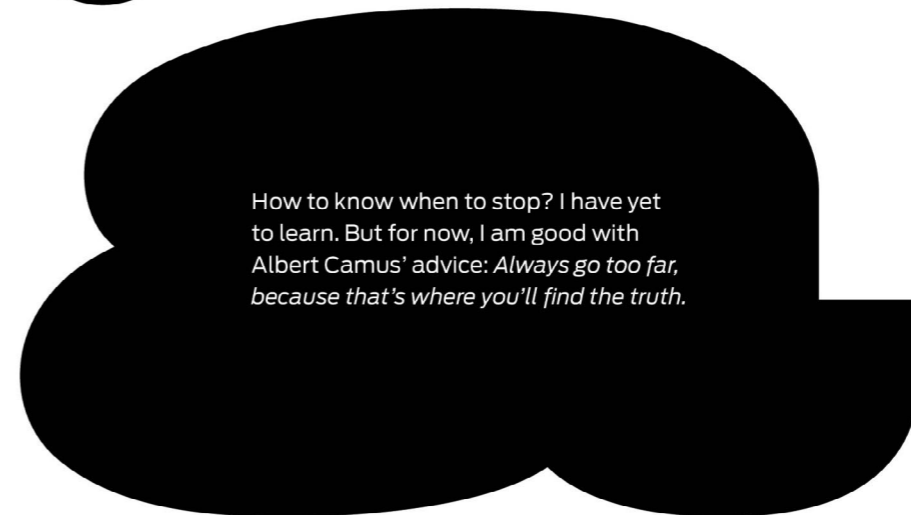
They are not just snap-on perfect circles. Type design is not only about the black shapes. How a stroke transitions into a ball or teardrop terminal—sharp turn, gradual tapering or thickening, etc.—and the resulting white shapes are equally important. This is why ball terminals can take a long time and the reason they are big and prominent in Timeface.



LEGIBILITY of a Timeface character has a negative correlation with the time investment that went into its lthaka counterpart—ironic! But think about it. Overthinking/overdoing does often backfire, getting us farther away from the desired results, doesn't it?



For the Timeface glyphs, more labor means bigger black shape. The glyphs that required a lot of attention and refinement increased so much in weight and width that they lost articulation, ending up as big black blobs with no counters and small apertures. (These were often control characters and other round characters. Man, those curves.)



How to know when to stop? I have yet to learn. But for now, I am good with Albert Camus' advice: *Always go too far, because that's where you'll find the truth.*

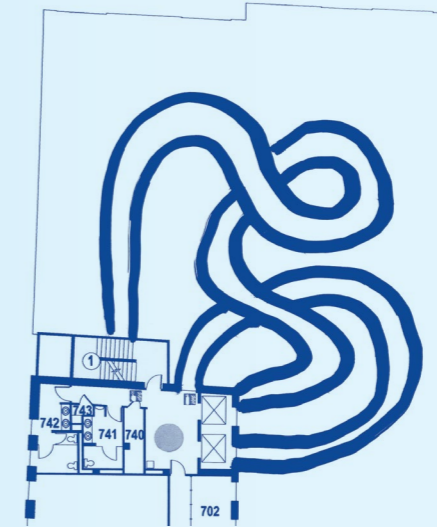
**Wow, you
did a lot
of work.**

**So what do
you want
to do next?**

5

THE EVACUATION PLAN

FINAL LECTURE



Can you believe we have arrived at our final meeting? At times, this class felt limited by time, yet at other moments, like a long New England winter.

Coming to RISD, I was arrogant; I believed that perfectionism made me a good designer. I was always that person who had to organize, plan, categorize, straighten, and line things up. I still am, most of the time. But a lot changed in the past three years. The best thing about graduate school is the time and freedom it buys you to look inward and listen in on the conversations that happen between yourself and, well, your other selves. In

¹ Philip Glass, *Words Without Music: A Memoir* (New York: Liveright, 2016).

his autobiography, musician Philip Glass wrote: “the performer must be listening to what he is playing.”¹ Observation, the basis of my approach

to design, is crucial in gaining a level of criticality needed for a self-aware design process. The designer must see *how* as well as *what* she is making. I have been a witness to the dialogs (debates? tirades?) I have with myself. I closely observed my thinking and ruthlessly reassessed my process.

On this page: The Emergency Evacuation Plan sign on the 7th floor of Design Center, RISD.



Seminar II instructor Laura Forde gave me this post-it note toward the end of Spring 2016. It is still pinned to my wall today.

Once aware of my habitual inclination toward black-and-white reasoning, I made it a point in my final year to break out of it. Almost as a form of self-help, I created as much mess as I could—literally and metaphorically—cutting things up, remixing them, leaving things up to chance, and forcing myself to lean on others. Used to being fiercely independent, I was scared and uncomfortable. These were extremely personal times for me. A classmate once told me that thesis did not need to be existential. But thesis, for me, was not just about the projects; I had to make some big changes in the way I worked, and that would involve more profound transformations in attitude, in myself as a person.

The harshest critic in me demanded to know: Was I a type designer or a graphic designer? Was I a proponent of precision or of organic charm? Was I for concept or for form? Over time, I came to realize these are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they constantly feed and inform each other. I am a better graphic designer now because I am also a type designer. I can be a helpful teacher because I am a dedicated student. In the end, I did not give myself a complete metamorphosis. Just like in my work—taking things apart and reshuffling them to generate new narratives and forms—it was a matter of rearranging, not purging, what was already in me, and shifting focus as needed.

Taking out, once more, my old name tag that I “fixed” three years ago, my trained eye now sees that I kerned too tightly. Trying again, I would add a hairline space. Or, maybe I won’t kern—Courier is a mono-spaced typeface, after all. Or, does it even need to be Courier? I could just use another typeface and make a whole new name tag. Or, should I draw my own type? Wait, *do I even need a name tag?* In the process of asking questions and dismantling assumptions, my either/or world blurs and the innumerable shades of gray that lie between black and white come into sight. Doug Scott always said that gray is a designer’s secret weapon. It makes perfect sense to me now.

On the 7th floor of the Design Center, where many of my classes were held, there is a small sign by the elevators that reads “Emergency Evacuation Plan.” What catches my eyes every time is the twisting black lines

drawn directly on it. It is a long, winding path—a detour—but an attractive one. It also feels very much like my experience here. The graduate thesis was a kind of emergency evacuation plan I devised to escape from my flawed self. But take a closer look at this drawing on the sign. It does not give you a way out; it turns and bends, ultimately returning to the same interior. I set out to change myself and ended up changing the way I perceive, understand, and accept myself. I have come back around.

2 Anne Lamott, *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life* (New York: Anchor, 1995), p.28.

Writer Anne Lamott points out that in reaching for perfection, “you try desperately not to leave too much mess to clean up. But clutter and mess show us that life is being lived. Clutter is wonderfully fertile ground.”² Looking at my studio desk where huge piles of books and heaps of papers and post-it notes have taken over, I cringe a little, but somehow, it feels just right.

FINAL BRIEF

Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one has learned in school.

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Learning never exhausts the mind.

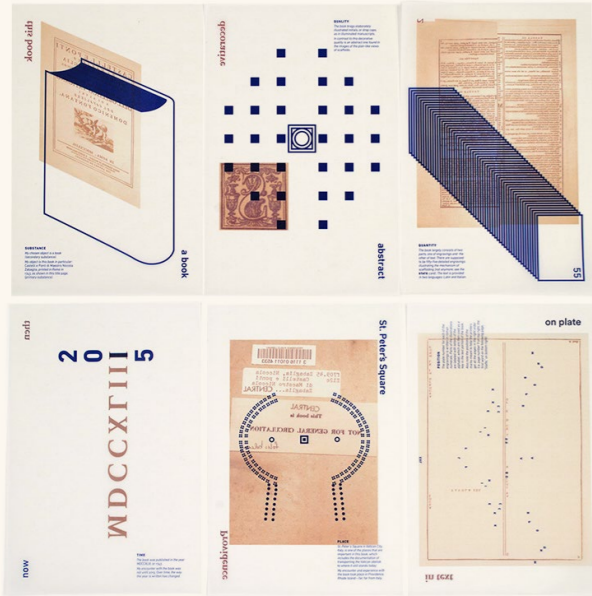
LEONARDO DA VINCI

>>> It is when you are a student that you are most brimming with energy, boundless curiosity, and the courage to make the work you love. But you need not be in school to be a student. Your last task is a simple, yet the most important one of all: Remain a student for the rest of your life. And don't forget about joy.

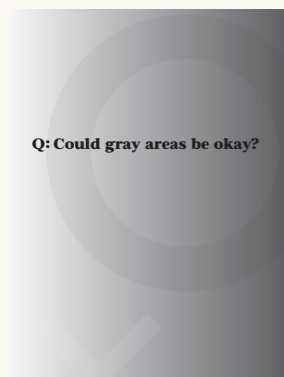
**Class
dismissed.**

CATALOG OF TANGENTS

There is always meaningful work happening behind the scenes. The Catalog of Tangents is an index of past work, with varying relevance to my thesis ideas, that are not highlighted but I still find important to be included in this book.



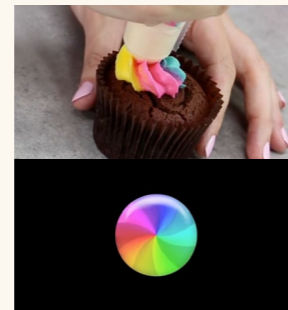
▼ **Atlas, 2015.** After completing a series of tasks, we individually designed book spreads that organized and presented the documentation of these tasks, ultimately to be collected and made into a collaborative book. This is a prescient work in which imperfections and gray areas surfaced for the first time as my interests.



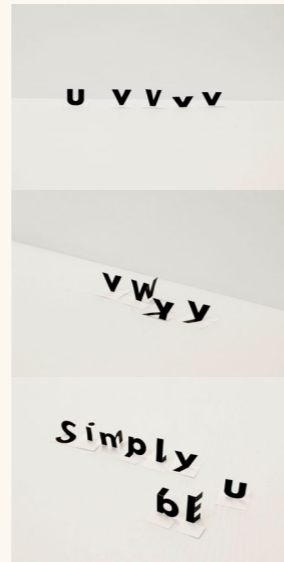
▲ **Aristotle's Categories, 2015.** In *The Organon*, Aristotle came up with ten categories in which every object of human apprehension could be placed. The ten categories are: substance, quality, quantity, time, place, relation, position, state, action, and affection. Consisting of ten translucent double-sided plates, this project breaks down an object from the Providence Public Library's Special Collections—my object was *Castelli, E Ponti di Maestro Niccola Zabaglia... (1743)*, a treatise on elaborate scaffoldings that were developed for the Fabric of St. Peter—in terms of Aristotle's ten categories. The crimson tone images are from the source object and the navy graphics are my visual analyses of the object in Aristotle's terms.

► **Simply bE u, 2015.**

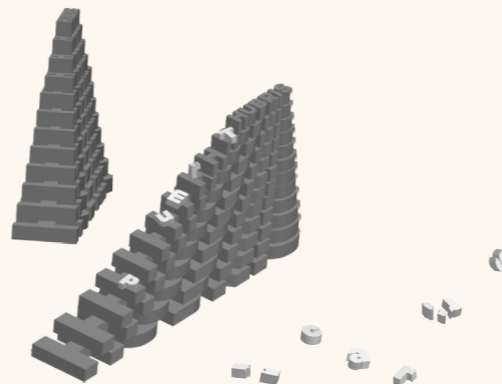
Responding to a prompt to use five consecutive letters in the alphabet to tell a story, this stop-motion animation turns letters into characters. The plot: four v's shun the u because it is not a v. But the camera changes angle and it is revealed that three of the four v's were actually the w, the x, and the y in disguise. The u convinces the y to stop pretending to be another letter and come join a party of different letters. Together, they are: **Simply bE u.**



▲ **Spinning Wheel of Death, 2015.** This short video begins with a footage of someone putting a rainbow-colored icing on a cupcake. It starts rotating and transitions into the spinning wheel of death. Instructor Andrew Sloat watched in silence, looked at me and said, "What's going on, June?" Tears started to roll down my face uncontrollably. And then, somehow we, as a class, had an honest and productive conversation about crits and ended on a fantastic note. This event is lovingly referred to as the "cupcake incident" by those who were present.



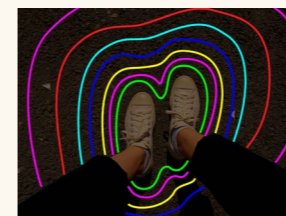
▼ **HUBRIS, 2016.** A Greek mythology enthusiast, I made a proposal for an installation that would give form to the idea of hubris: a tower (a nod to the Tower of Babel) built with letters made out of concrete and the letters in "Icarus" fallen and broken into pieces. This was never realized.



► **Japanese Apologies, 2016.**

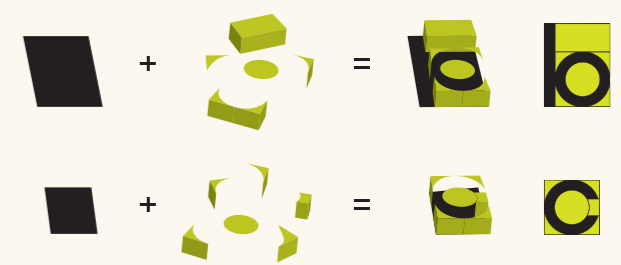
In December 2015, Korea and Japan reached an agreement regarding "comfort women," a euphemism for the military sex slaves exploited by the Imperial Japanese Army before and during WWII. In this "final and irreversible" deal, as Japan's Prime Minister Abe emphasized, Korea consented to never criticize Japan again in exchange for an "apology" that shamefully came with strings attached. This project mocks the Abe administration with tongue-in-cheek "sorry" cards that express grief yet avoid taking responsibility. The receivers of this "apology" are absurdly bound to a ludicrous agreement to be mute about the injustice done to them.

▲ **SFZ, 2016.** Surveillance Free Zone (SFZ) is a proposal for a graphic intervention that highlights unsurveilled blind spots within a city's network. These blind spots exhibit a sensor activated light display that responds to movement within these unmonitored zones, delineating and visualizing these them. SFZ creates a transitory network that interrupts the city's infrastructure. (In collaboration with Sarah Recht, GD MFA '16, during a workshop led by Michael Rock of 2x4.)



▼ **Military Sex Slaves, 2016.**

This project consists of a set of two books, one big and tome-like, one slim. The big black book pictured here with the title "Military Sex Slaves of Imperial Japan Before and During WWII," had 1,000 pages with 200 woman pictograms on each page, adding up to 200,000 women, which is the estimated number of victims of this atrocious war crime. The white book, titled "Military Sex Slaves of Imperial Japan Before and During WWII *According to Japan*," had nothing inside its cover, reflecting the revisionist tactic the Abe administration is employing to erase their wrongdoings from history.



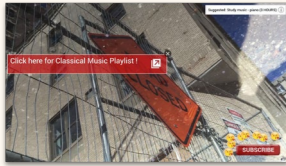
► **Impossible Brushes, 2016.**

This is a proof of concept for a set of analog brushes inspired by the brushes found in Adobe Illustrator. During a workshop with Keetra Dixon, I attempted to make a physical mark-making tool that would reproduce the look of digitally created work and failed. I decided to channel this frustration and make a set of impossible tools as a metaphor for the futility of such an attempt.

▼ **Counterform Blocks, 2016.**

I wanted to make a set of wooden blocks that reverses the usual form/counterform, foreground/background relationship by literally giving solid form to the white shapes in letters. It would have given me joy to have this made, but I abandoned the project on the basis that it was too obvious; I could see from start to finish how this set would look and work, and I felt that there was nothing new to discover and learn by doing it. Perhaps a future passion project?



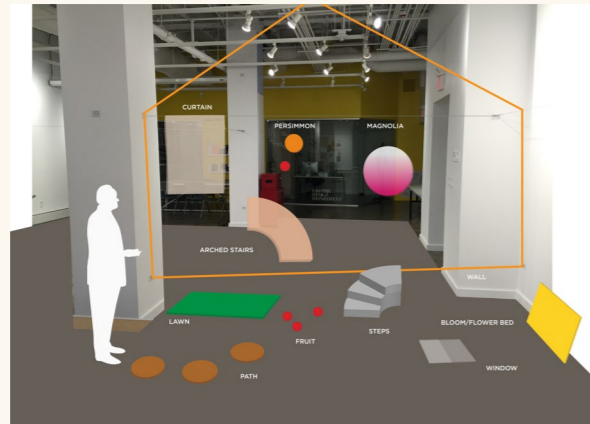


▲ **That Weird Providence Video. 2016.** This video, created in a workshop with Vinca Kruk of Metahaven, required first taking random video footages, not knowing the end goal, to use as raw materials later. Visual overlays—in this case, the emojis and the tropes of YouTube—were used to change and subvert the narrative implied by the original footages.



▲ **Okay Cookies. 2016.** This project brings attention to the absurdity of our ritualized greeting, “how are you,” and of the way we answer this question out of habit and etiquette, often without meaning it. As an attempt to create opportunities for slightly longer, potentially meaningful conversations, instead of just “fine,” I put custom fortunes inside homemade fortune cookies. These “fortunes”—with generic, socially accepted answers like “I’m fine,” “I’m good,” and “I’m okay” on the front and linking words like “because,” “although,” and “but” on the backside—acted as conversation extenders, encouraging people to elaborate on why or why not they were feeling fine, or what would make their day better.

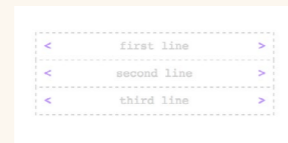
▼ **HOME. 2016.** The initial plan for the HOME project was different than what it became. Earlier, I was interested in how abstract form allows viewers to project their own personality, and experiences onto it. My plan was to invite participants to interact with a group of prefabricated objects whose forms originated from but did not representationally depict the things I remember from my childhood home, like magnolia tree, arched staircase, etc. However, this idea, while visually attractive, felt arbitrary and did not achieve what was at the core of my intention: to involve others in the actual making of the work. This version would have resulted in only limited, superficial interaction. See page 228 to see my solution.



▼ **The Arcades. 2016.** Every time you visit this website, it selects and sequences images at random. The text on the far right is pulled, also at random, from an array of past and current advertisements for the Arcade (the first indoor mall of the U.S. built in 1828) and changes every 12 seconds. Strange, serendipitous juxtapositions occur, allowing unique stories to form instead of giving straight-forward information or historical facts about the venue. The second and third floors of the Arcade were turned into apartments in 2013, and I lived on the third floor of this building during my time at RISD.



▼ **Haiku Remixer. 2016.** This is a website with a simple interface that allows the user to remix lines from different haikus to generate their own.



▲ **Vanitas Emoji Frieze. 2017.** In this Dorner Prize proposal, which was not selected and never realized, emoji fruits, plants, and hourglass occupy the entablature of the RISD Museum’s Benefit Street entrance façade, referencing old traditions in art history; in old art, fresh produce and hourglasses were painted to evoke ephemerality and remind the beholder of death. *Emoji Frieze* is an ornamental frieze suitable for our time. It overlays emojis—one of the most popular languages of our time—on top of classical architecture, resulting in a tension between old and new. By inserting the familiar into an unexpected context, I wanted surprise and delight.

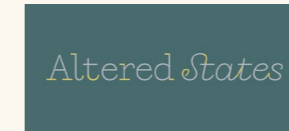


▲ **Mirror Emoji. 2017.** Made in an open research class with Rob Giampietro, this is a proposal for an addition of the mirror emoji to the current emoji set. The mirror has a long history and is rich in its metaphorical potential.

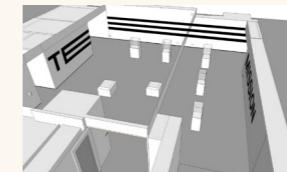


▲ **Stereotype. 2017.** That the terms “stereotype” and “cliché” (they mean the same thing in printing) come from the printing industry is a little known fact. A stereotype refers to a metal plate made from a papier-mâché mold of locked-up images and type, used to speed up the printing process. I proposed to make my own stereotype with stereotypical remarks and questions Asians and Asian Americans receive. It proved to be an overwhelming task to actually execute in the given time frame and available resources.

▼ **Altered States. 2017.** This is an exhibit identity for “Altered States,” an upcoming show of prints and drawings at the RISD Museum. Its title treatment encapsulates the idea of altered states typographically, with two different states: one without the serifs and ligatures, and another with them.



▼ **INTEEEERMISSION. 2017.** This is my original concept for the exhibit identity of *Intermission*. In this design, the horizontally elongated “E” spans three walls, making the intermission-ness felt. However, the amount of vinyl it required needed a bigger budget, so in the end, I had to come up with something that was cheaper to produce. See page 168 for the final design for this show.



▲ **Digestible. 2017.** During a workshop with Keira Alexandra, I reimagined the way people consume the news. *Digestible* pulls up a news article at random, sometimes suggesting an interesting read from a section unfamiliar to the reader (for me, that would be the Sports section). It also helps the reader actually read by providing digestible amounts of information at a time and allowing only three saves for future reading so the reader has to read one of the three saved article before he/she can save another.

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I have seen your work.
I have seen your work change.
I have seen your work grow.
I have seen your work.

Now it's there, where you put it,
Now it extends itself unto us.
Now we have grown to see it.

Thankyou for your
request.

Thankyou for Sol's

Sincerely

SoA Hesse

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