

*Unsmoothing the System:  
Designing for Specific Forms and Experiences*

## Intro

*(Initial line of enquiries at the beginning of Unit 2)*

How can structure and intuition coexist? What does it mean to create design systems that are personal yet procedural? What happens when randomness becomes a tool in itself?

## Exploration of procedural systems

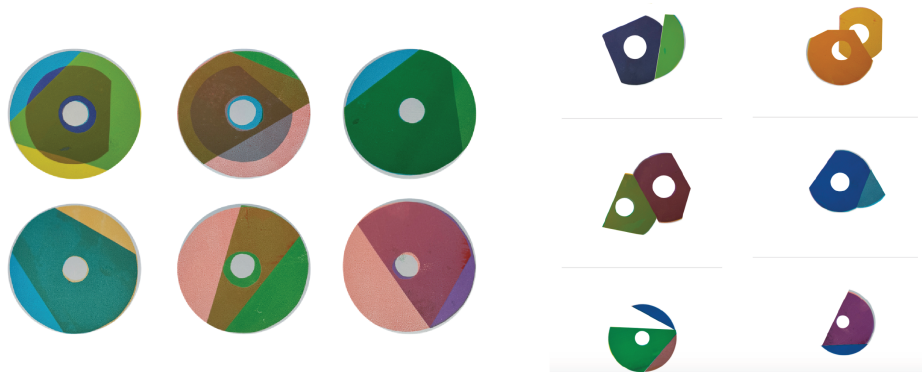
1) Silk screen forms iterations inspired by Karl Martens' monoprints

2) P5js random shape generator

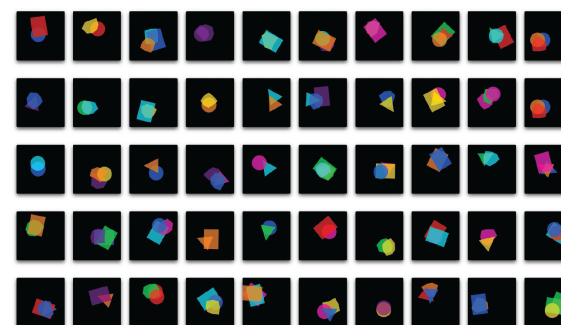
3) Typefaces from p5js coding

*manual exploration of chance & composition → systematic randomness of p5js*

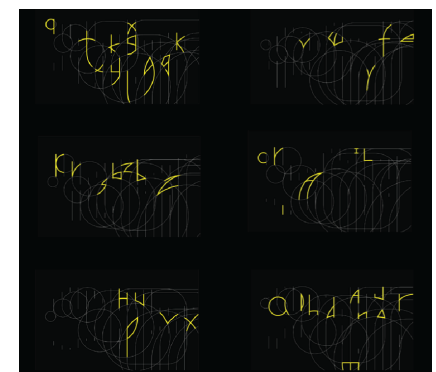
1)



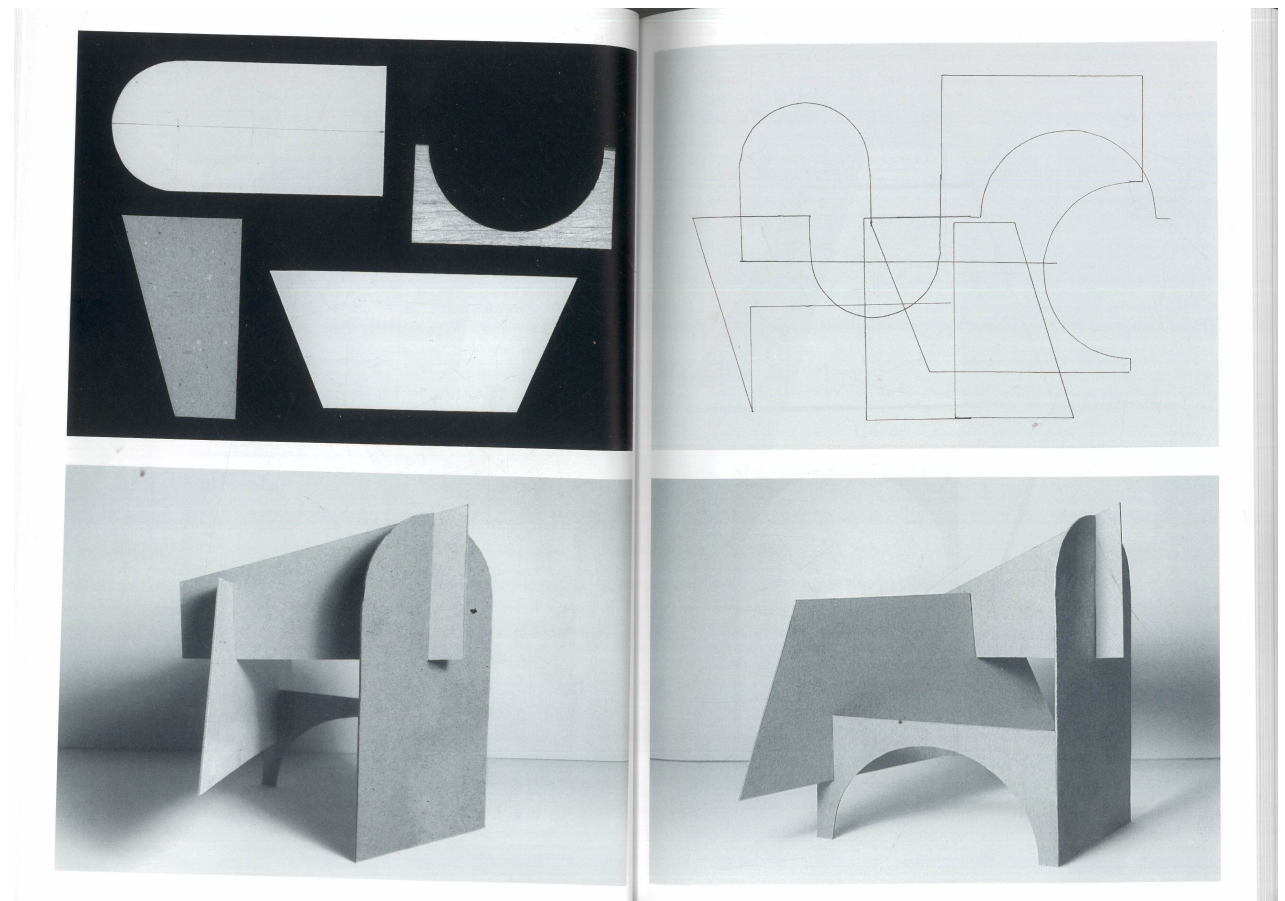
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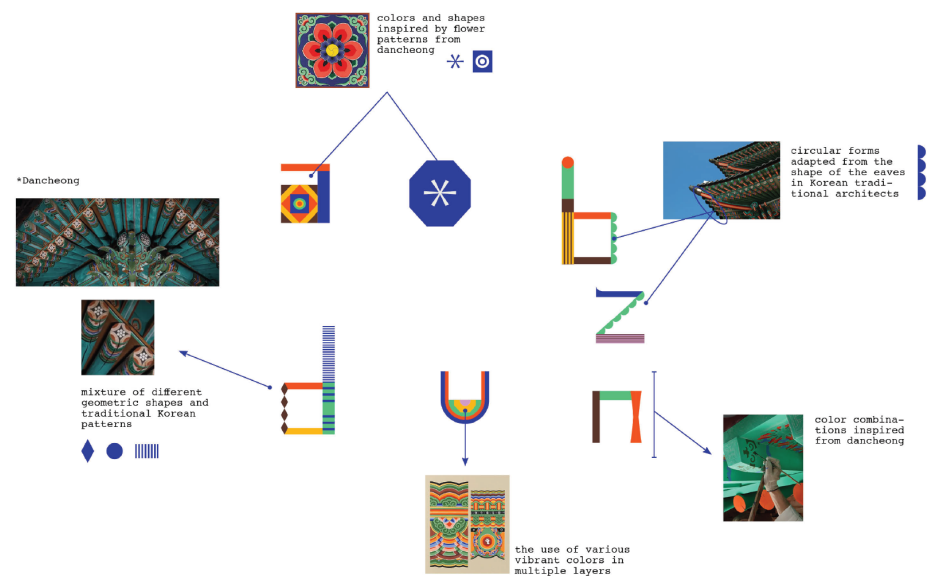


# Karl Nawrot



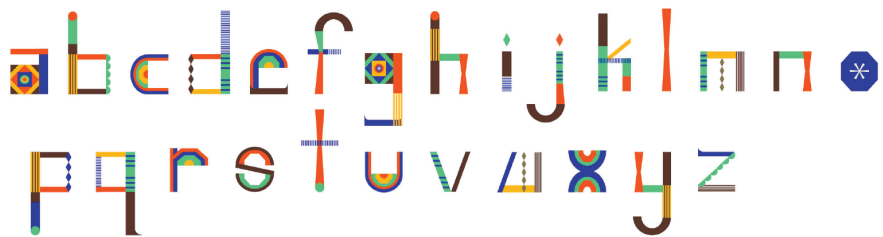


Evolved to Dancheong  
typeface system



Specific, culturally grounded architectural  
patterns translated into modular forms

Formed Letters:



The colors:



Modular Parts:



## **System / Structure**

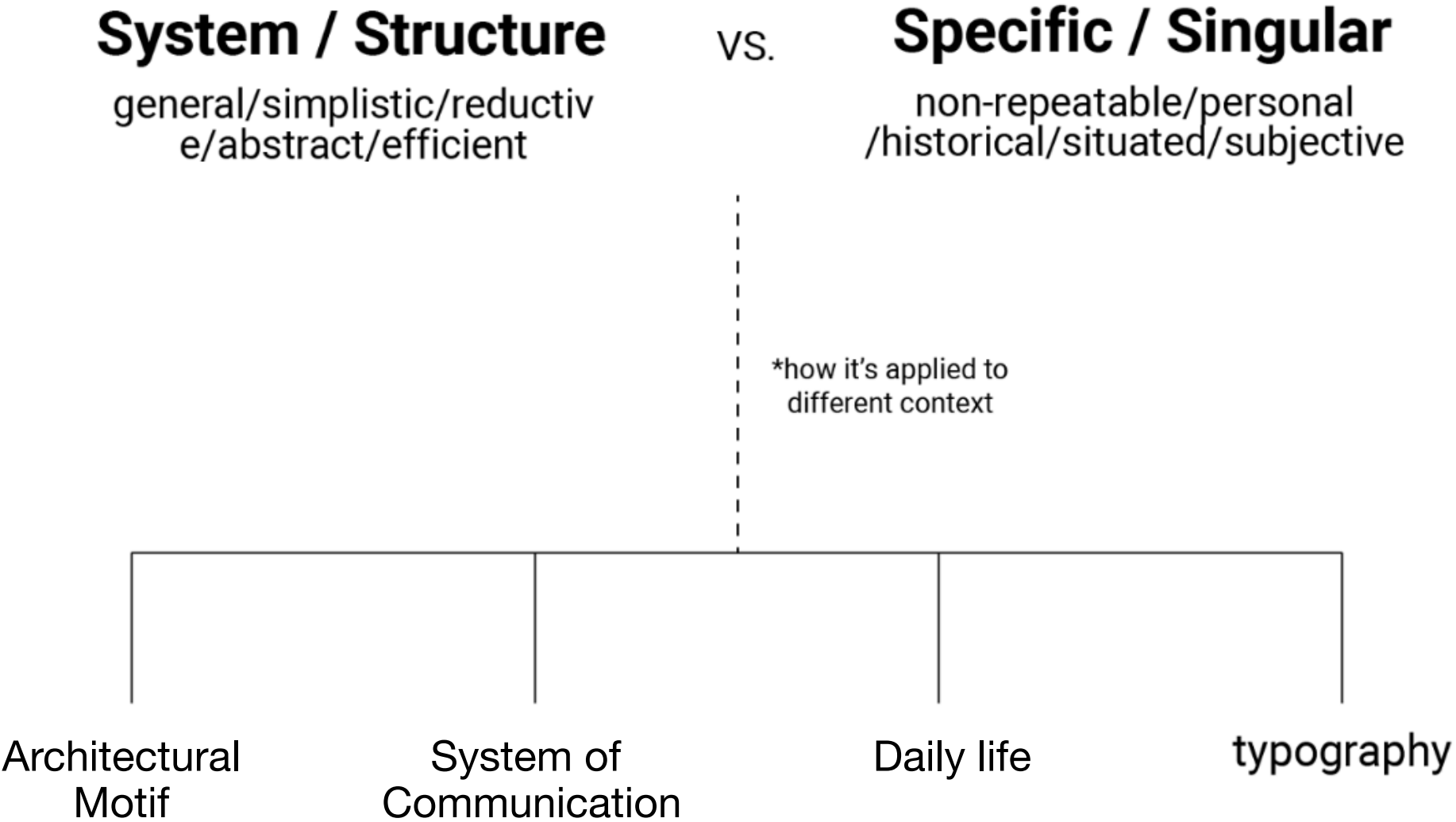
general/simplistic/reductive/abstract/efficient

vs.

## **Specific / Singular**

non-repeatable/personal/historical/situated/subjective

→ This process established the foundational interest of the enquiry, revealing a fundamental tension: the conflict between the specific, singular, and culturally-rich form (like Dancheong) and the generalized, abstract, and rigid systems



## Analysis of the origins of Design Systems

*(Understanding from macro level first)*

## Ulm school of Design

### Dieter Rams' 10 Principles of Good Design

*clarity, efficiency, and universality, achieved through the  
reductive "smoothing" of all non-essential elements*

Raises a critical question  
central to this enquiry:

What gets lost in this process of  
standardization (smoothing)?

*When all specificity, cultural nuance, and individual  
experience are erased in favour of a universal average,  
does this pursuit of "good design" risk sacrificing creativity  
and meaning for mere efficiency?*



In graphic design, smoothing operates at several levels:

Level	What gets Smoothed	Why?
Aesthetic	Roughness, inconsistency, texture	To achieve harmony, “good taste”
Systemic	Complexity, local variation	To enable standardization and scalability
Behavioural	Confusion, hesitation	To make user experience “frictionless”
Cultural	Diversity, uncertainty, conflict	To maintain universal accessibility or neutrality

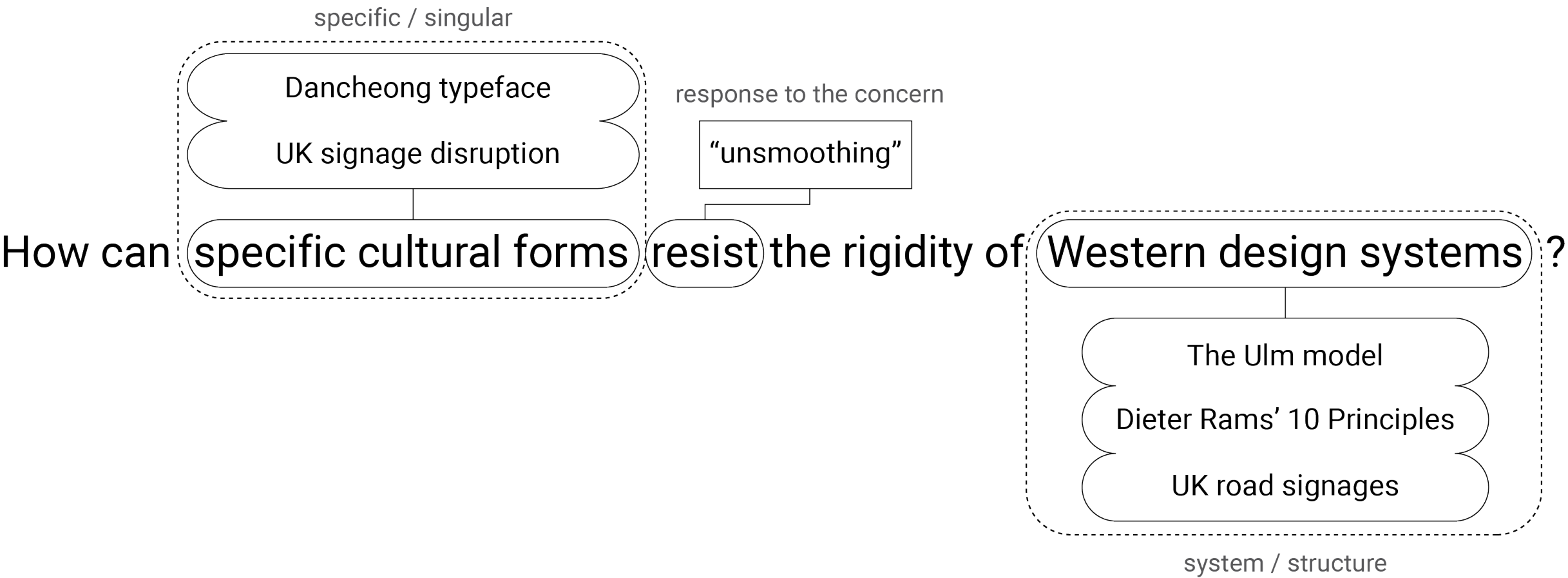
→ *Smoothing* keeps systems legible and efficient, but it also erases the politics and decisions that make them

Smoothing happens  
in daily life as well:

Situation	How “smoothing” appears	What gets lost
Social behaviour	We hide awkwardness or emotions	Authenticity, spontaneity
Home & objects	We tidy, align, remove friction	Texture, imperfection, individuality
Digital life	Algorithms filter feeds, autocorrect typos, and optimise experience	Random discovery, contradiction, surprise
Communication	We summarize, simplify, standardize language	Nuance, ambiguity, local meaning

→ *Smoothing* is how systems maintain comfort and predictability but also how they erase the irregularities that make experience human

→ The new line of enquiry forms a direct response to this concern:



## “Unsmoothing”

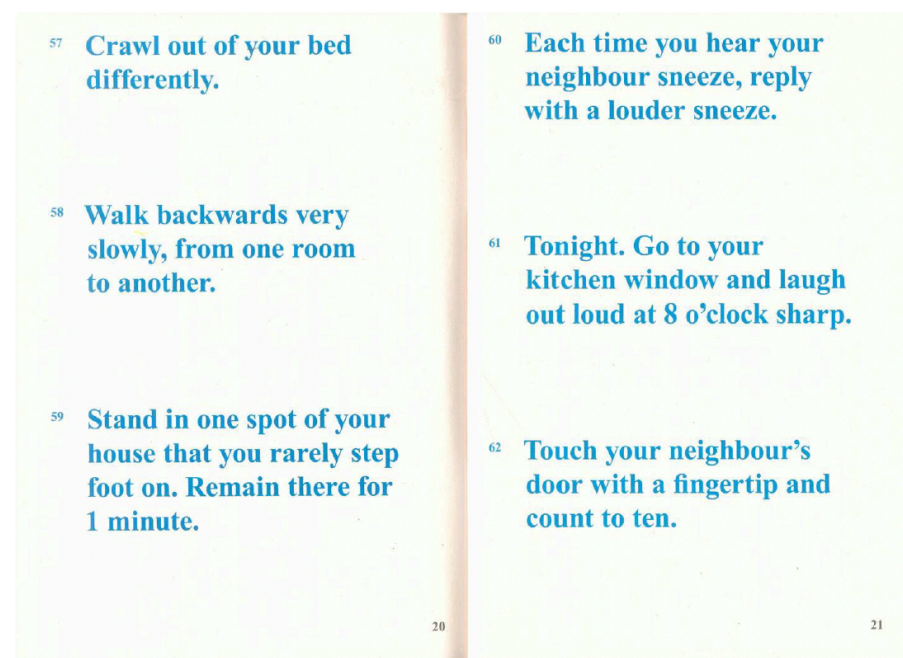
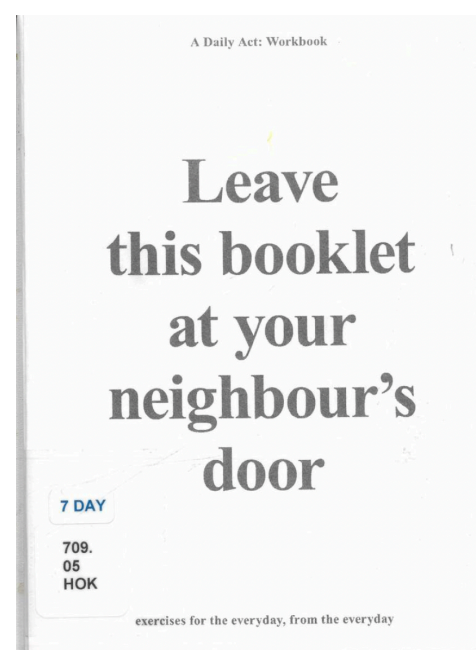
The process of using "friction," "malfunction," and "visual pollution" as critical tools to deliberately re-introduce the specific, singular context that was erased by standardization

## “Unsmoothing”

Reference:

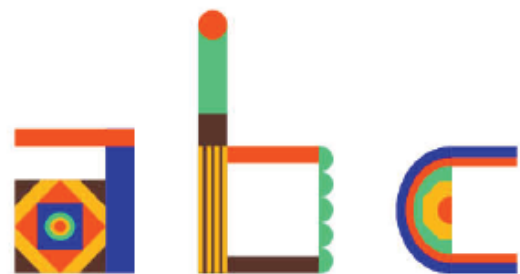
*A Daily Act: Workbook* by Atelier Hoko

*Reintroduces friction and discomfort into the polished flow of daily routines*





“Unsmoothing” applied to  
architectural motifs

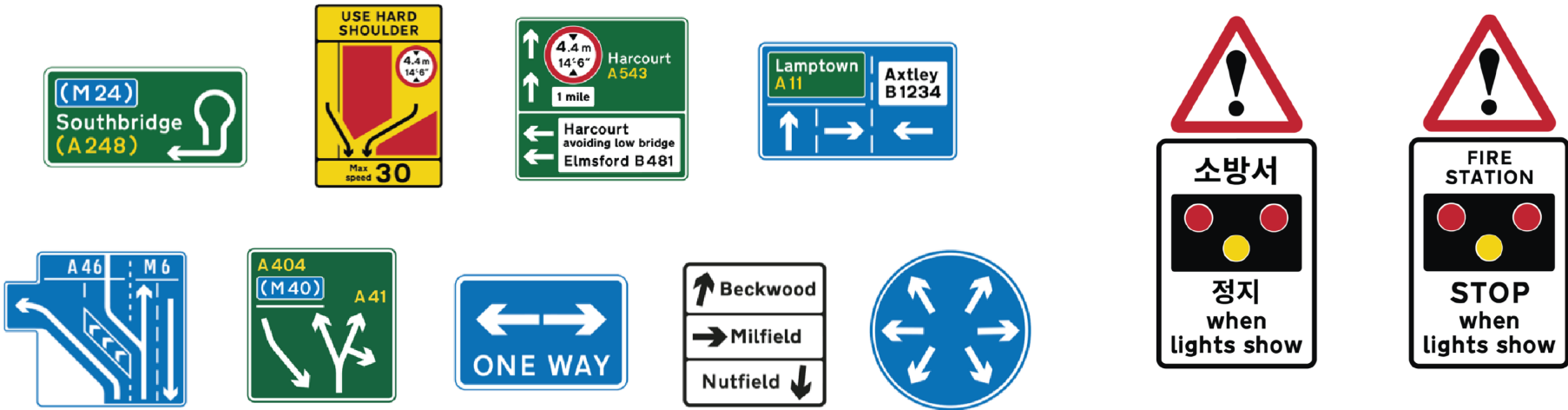


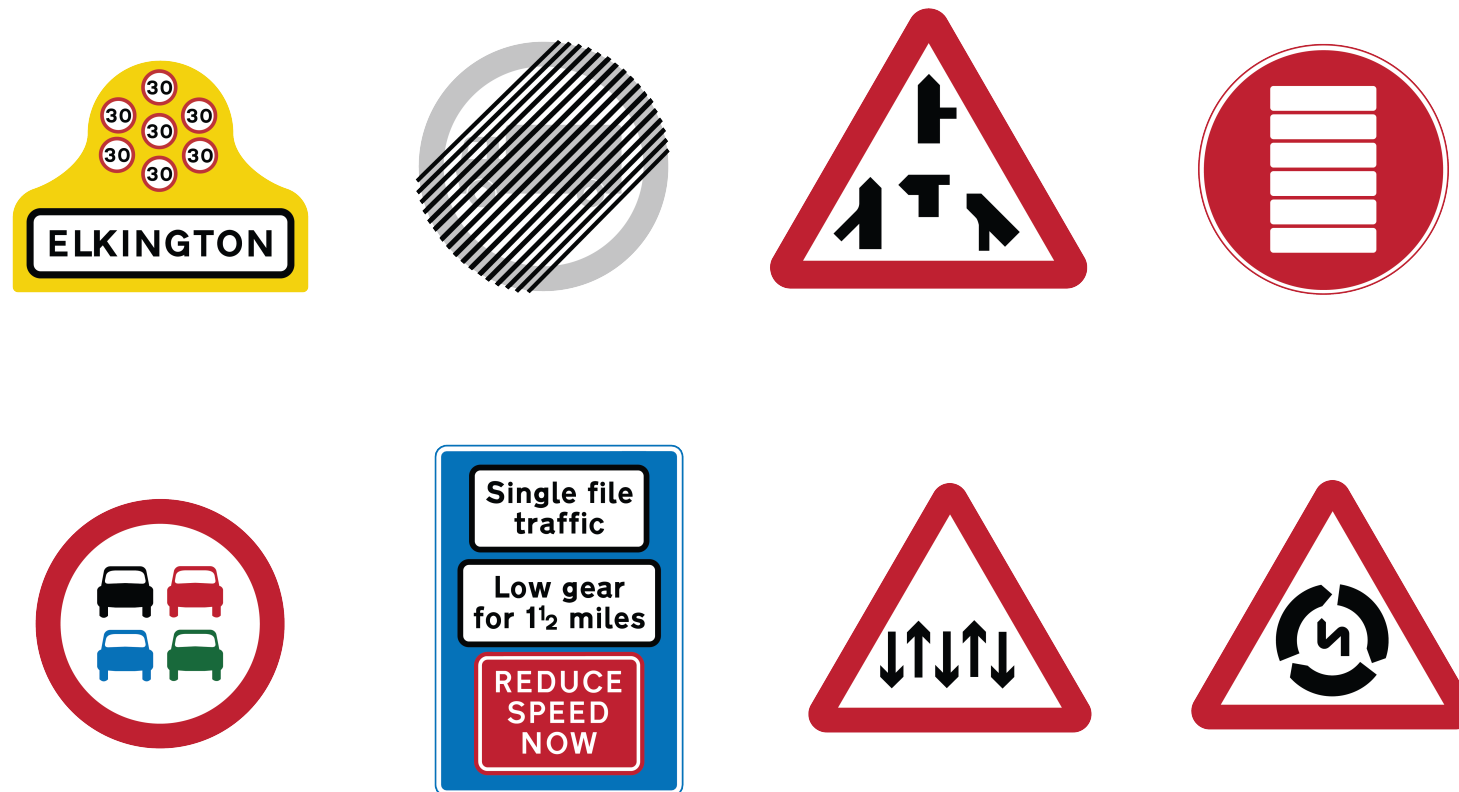
Dancheong typeface system itself became a  
form of resistance against generic typography

a b c

“Unsmoothing” applied to  
System of Communication

Disrupting theUK road signage demonstrates  
this method's critical necessity, as it  
challenges the assumption that such universal  
systems are inherently neutral or superior





→ By deliberately introducing “malfunction”, the abstract authority of the universal system collapses and reveals its fragility and inherent cultural bias

“Unsmoothing” applied to  
Typography

## Galaxie Ecosmic by Sulki & Min

A conceptual typeface that modifies the standard font Galaxie Polaris into an "eco-font" by punching ink-saving holes in the letterforms. The critical intervention is that these holes are not neutral shapes, but are formed from excerpts of Carl Sagan's Cosmos set in Comic Sans, the "ultimate trashy font." This project creates a deliberate "malfunction," ironically embedding a noble, kitschy text using a "low-culture" font to disrupt the neutrality of a "high-design" system.

Medium  
Italic A



## Personal Type

This project reclaims "specific, singular reality" as material for generating typographic forms that intentionally disrupt universal systems like standard fonts. It functions as a system that requires this "cultural data" to function, deliberately creating an unstable, "unsmooth" result that shifts the viewer from passive consumption to a critical awareness of the standardized systems we take for granted.

'선별되지 않은 진짜 데이터' (나의 일상 텍스트)를 가지고 '나'라는 존재의 시각 언어(타이포그래피)를 만드는 것입니다.

Personal text/info that represents someone, owned by oneself, encounter everyday:

- Notes
- Lyrics of the favorite song
- Receipts
- Message conversations
- Frequently used emoji
- Emails
- Mother tongue language



individualized

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## Synthesis & Further Projection

All exploration has a recurring focus for individualized experience, not generalized templates for ease



The new position projects the research toward a practice/system that prioritizes the reclamation of specific, singular reality over the abstract authority of standardization