

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

Intro

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

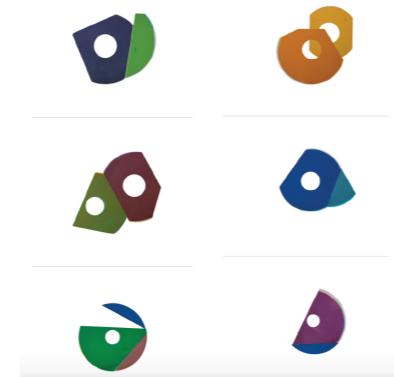
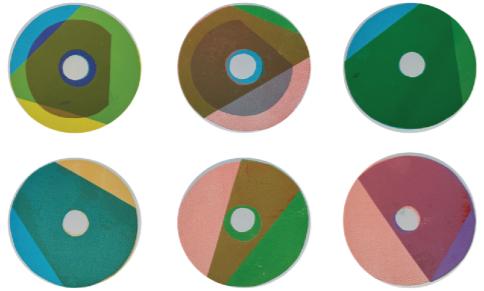
How can structure and intuition coexist? What does it mean to create design systems that are personal yet procedural? What happens when randomness becomes a tool in itself?

Exploration of procedural systems

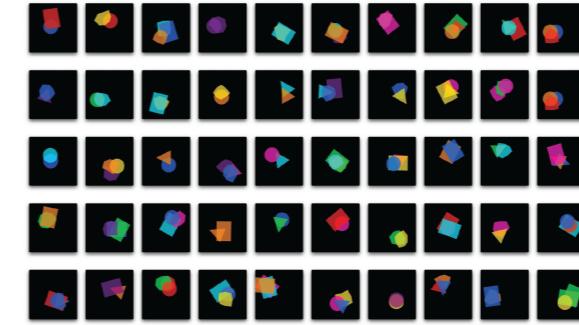
- 1) Silk screen forms iterations inspired by Karl Martens' monoprints
- 2) P5js random shape generator
- 3) Typefaces from p5js coding

manual exploration of chance & composition → systematic randomness of p5js

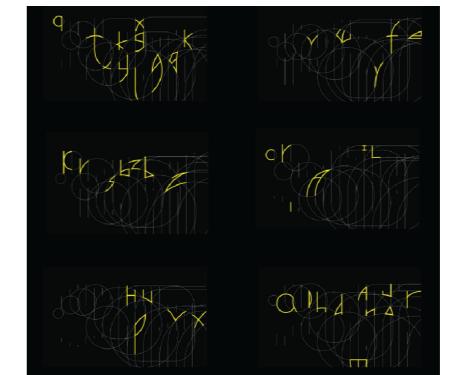
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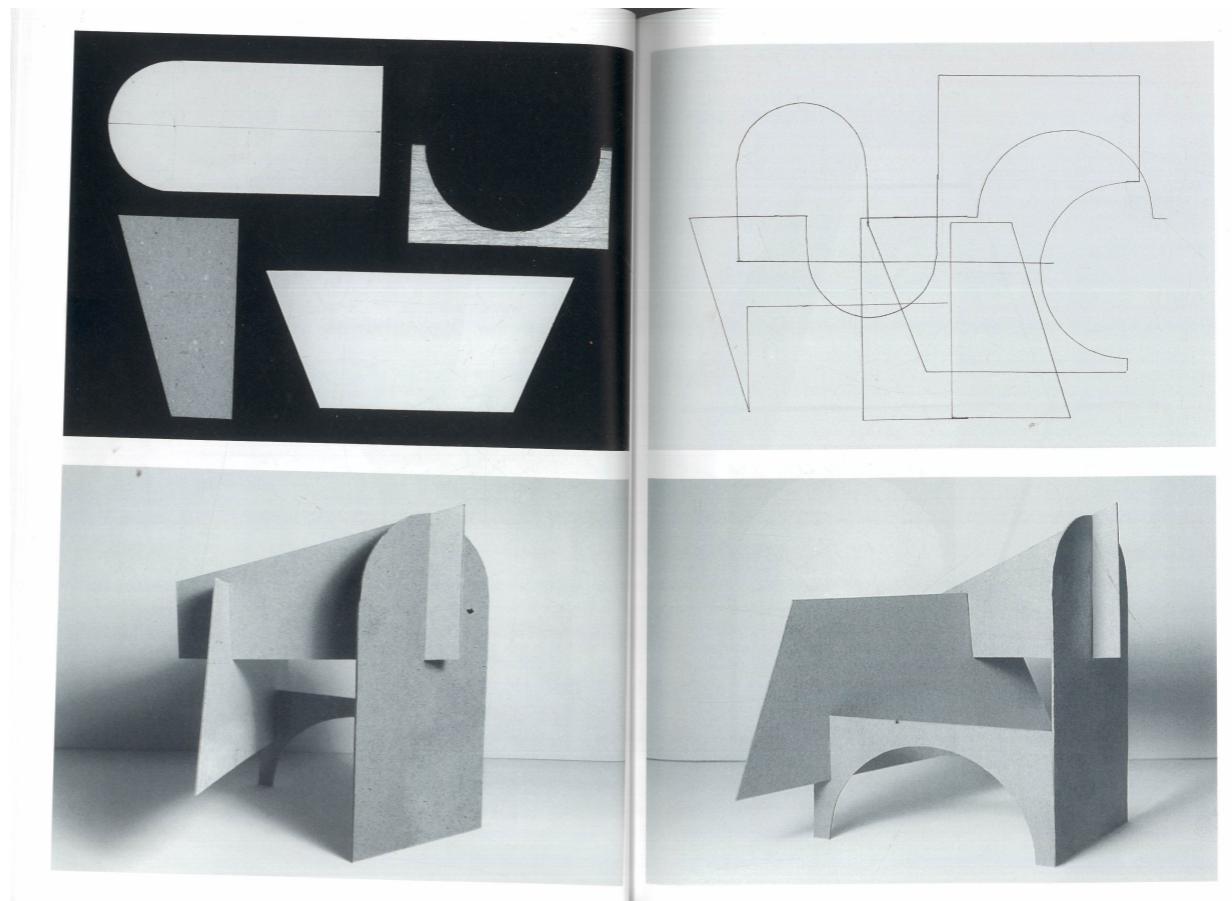
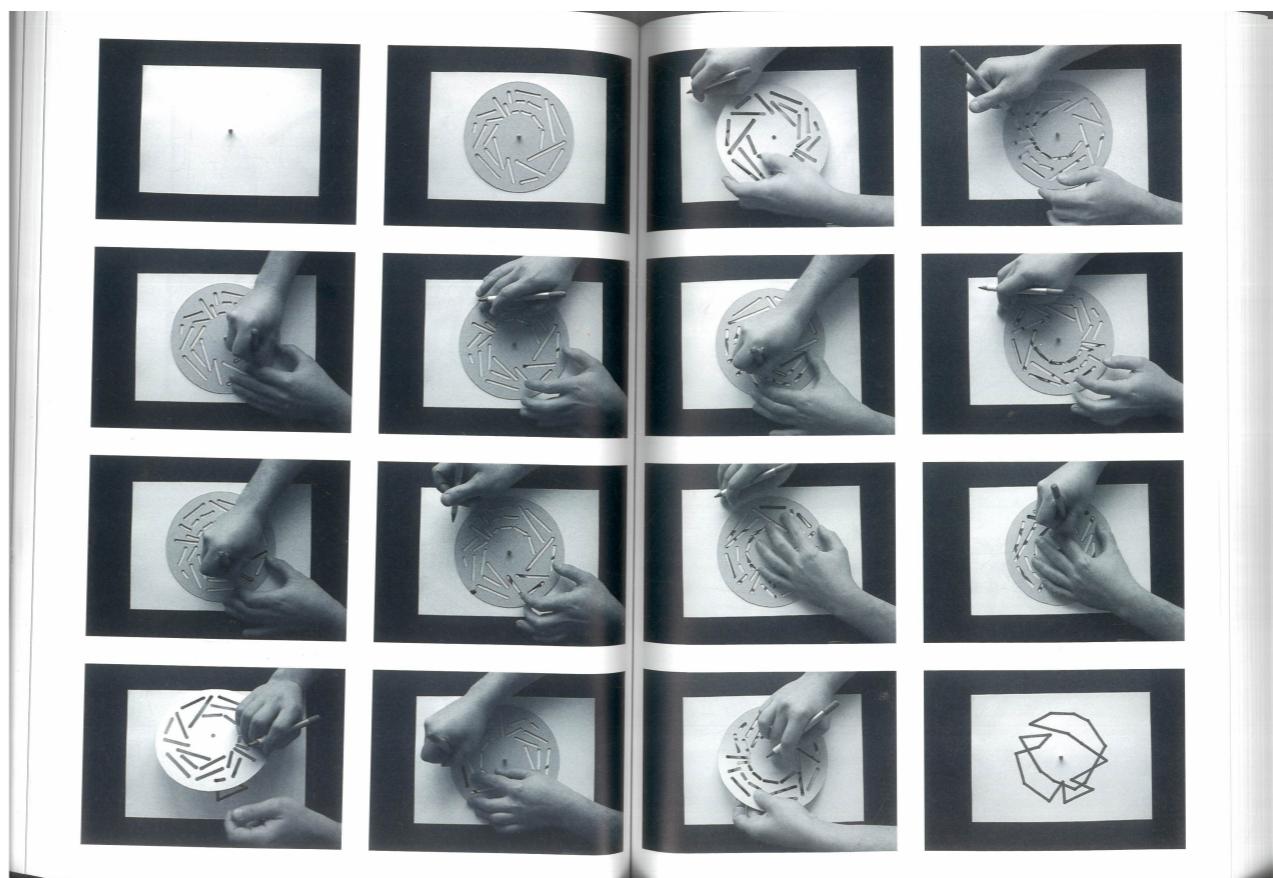
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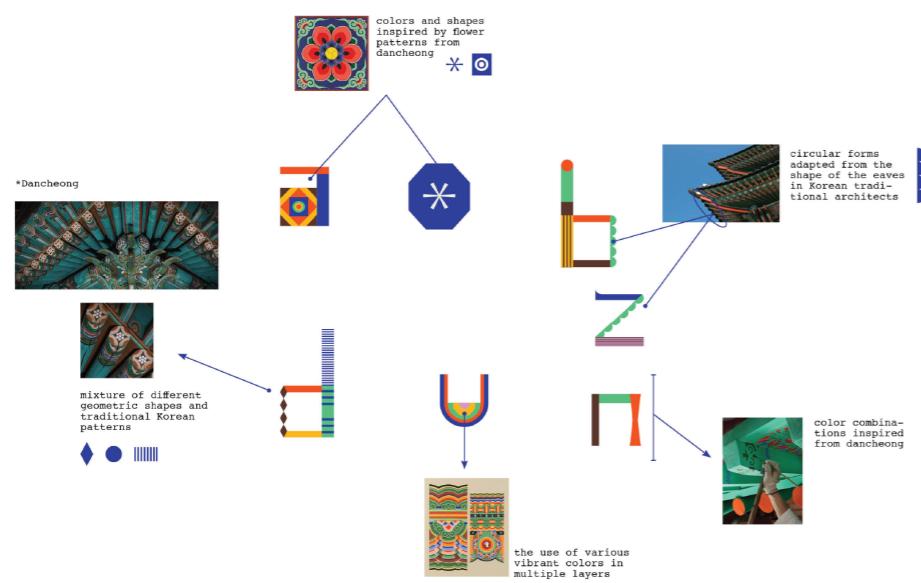


Karl Nawrot



Evolved to Dancheong typeface system

Specific, culturally grounded architectural patterns translated into modular forms



Formed Letters

A decorative alphabet set where each letter is uniquely styled with various colors, patterns, and textures. The letters are arranged in two rows: the top row contains 'a', 'b', 'c', 'd', 'e', 'f', 'g', 'h', 'i', 'j', 'k', 'l', 'm', 'n', 'p', and an asterisk (*); the bottom row contains 'P', 'q', 'r', 's', 't', 'u', 'v', 'w', 'x', 'y', and 'z'. The designs include geometric shapes like circles, squares, and triangles, as well as more organic patterns like stripes and dots. The colors used are a variety of primary and secondary colors.

The color

Modular Par



System / Structure

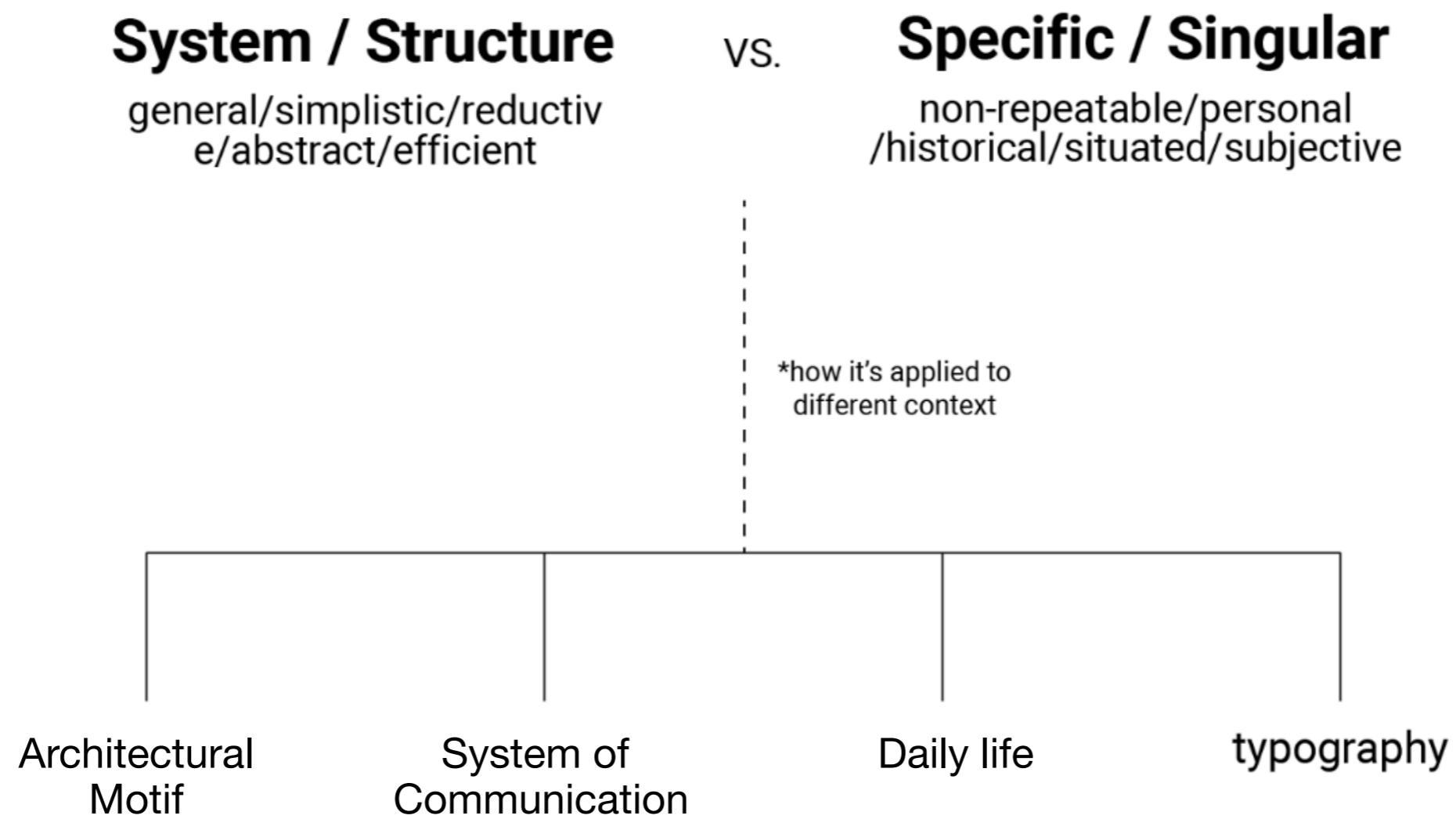
general/simplistic/reductive/abstract/efficient

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 |

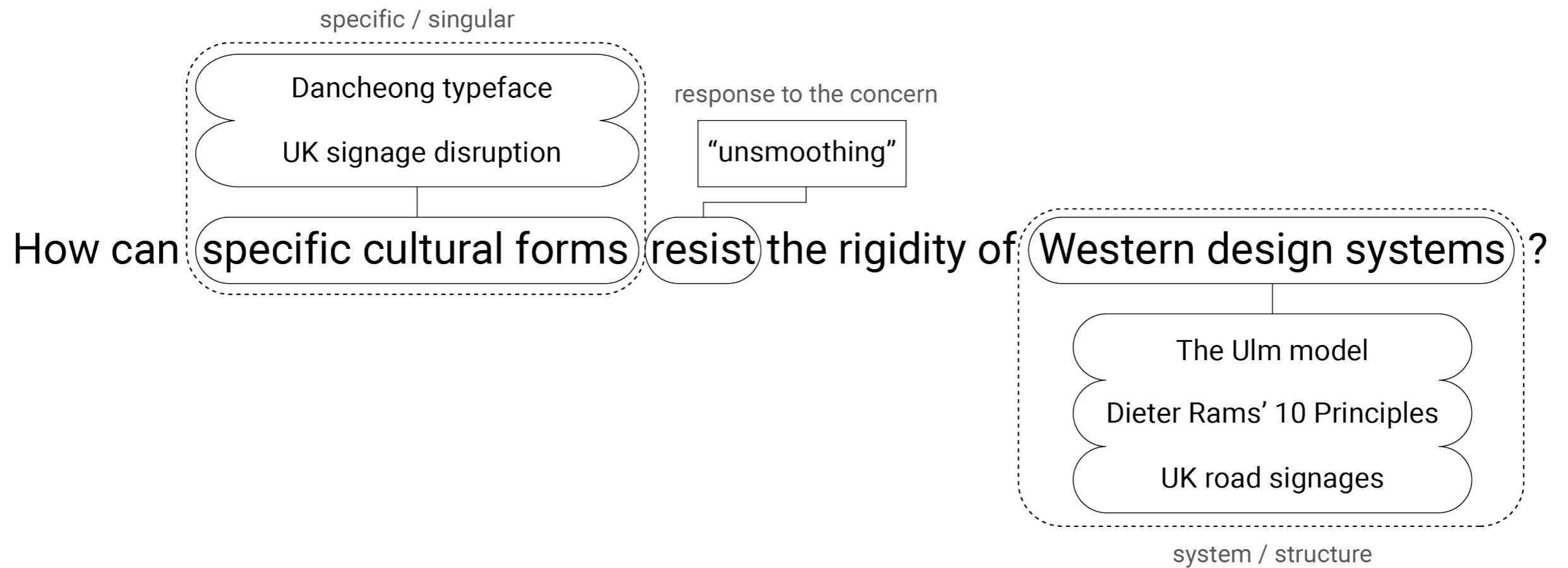
→ *Smoothing* keeps systems legible and efficient, but it also erases the politics and decisions that make them

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:



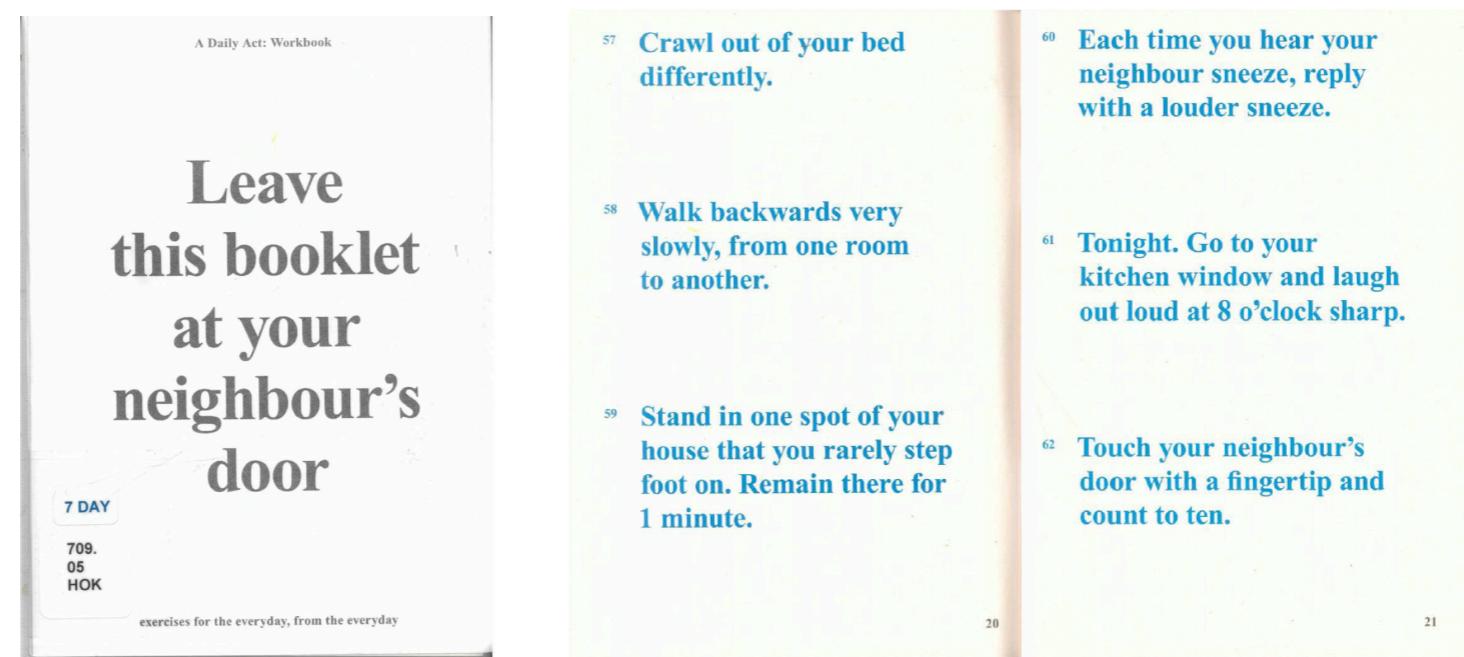
“Unsmoothing”

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”

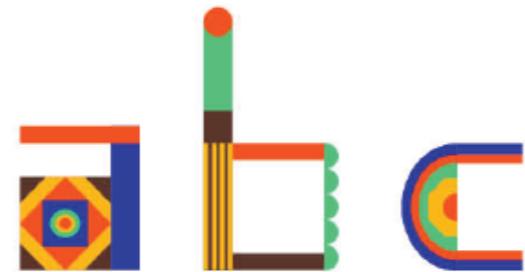
Reference:
A Daily Act: Workbook by Atelier Hoko

Reintroduces friction and discomfort into the polished flow of daily routines



“Unsmoothing” applied to architectural motifs

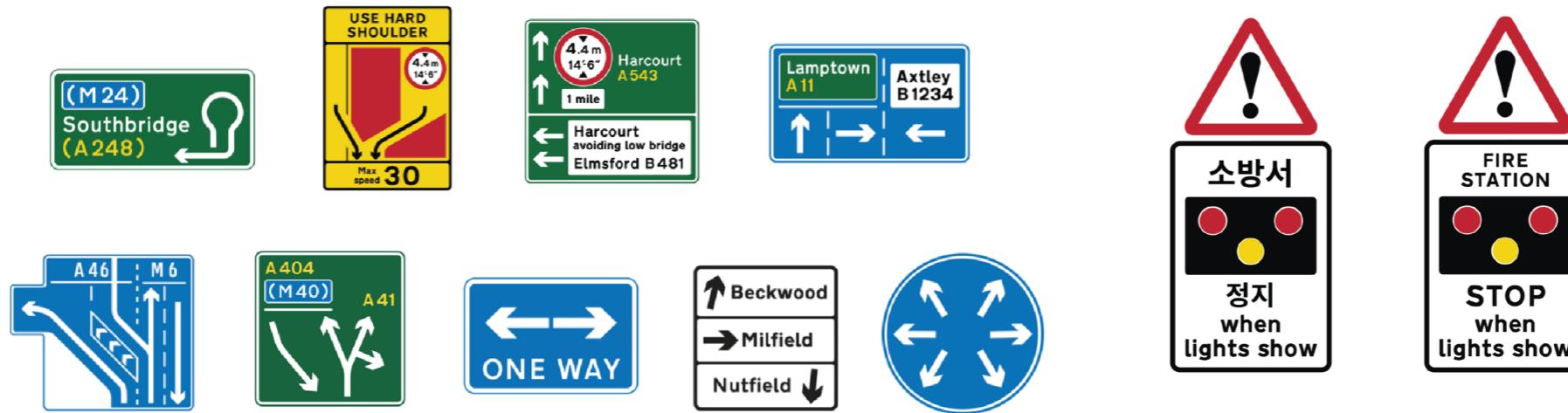
Dancheong typeface system itself became a form of resistance against generic typography

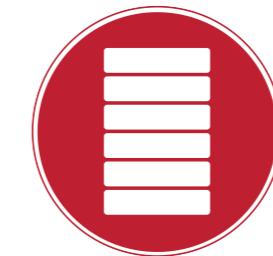
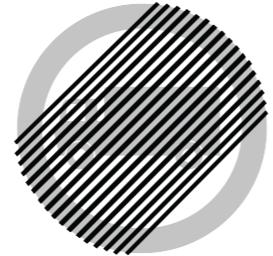


a b c

“Unsmoothing” applied to System of Communication

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



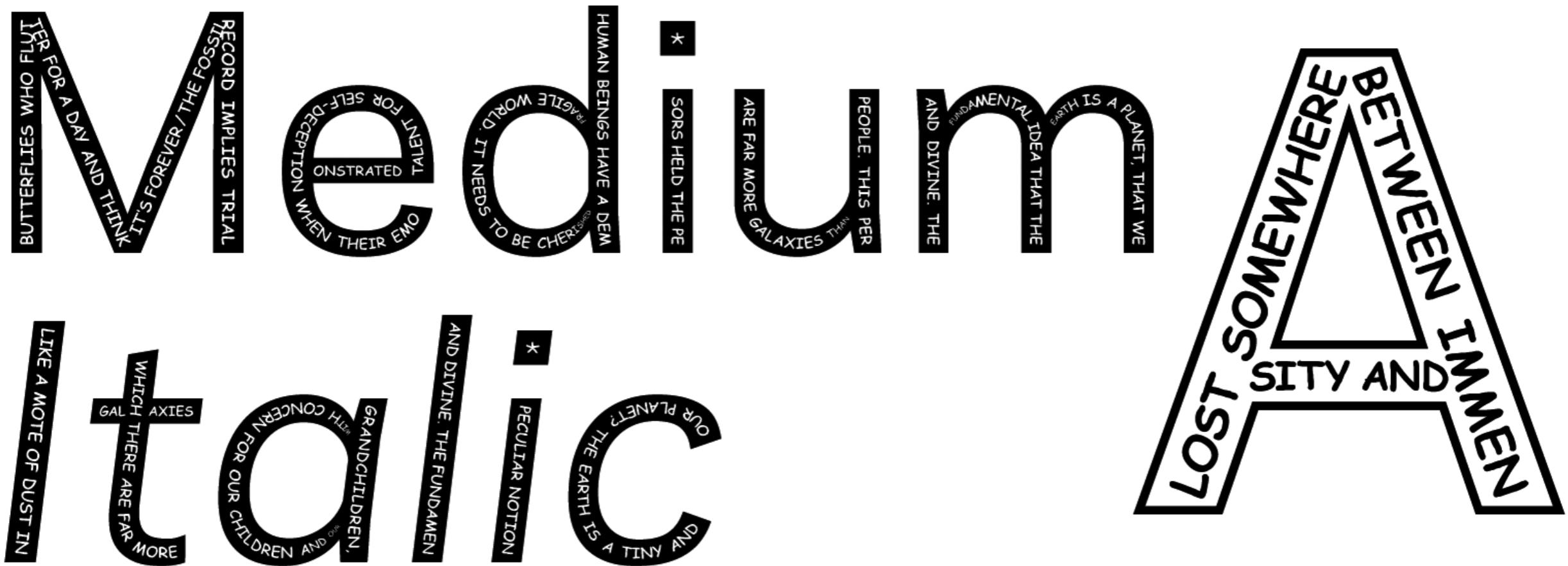


→ By deliberately introducing “malfunction”, the abstract authority of the universal system collapses and reveals its fragility and inherent cultural bias

“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.



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



Indonesian Quiz

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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