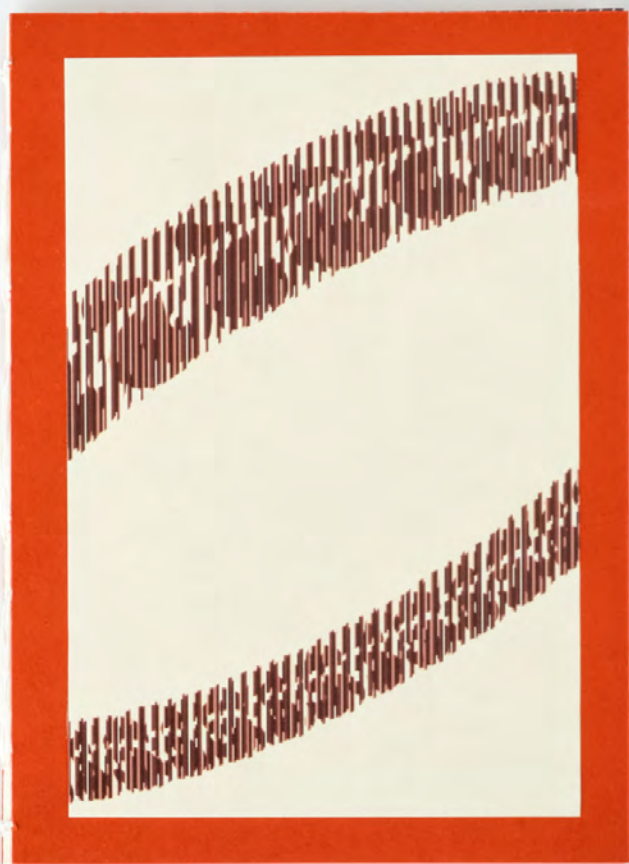
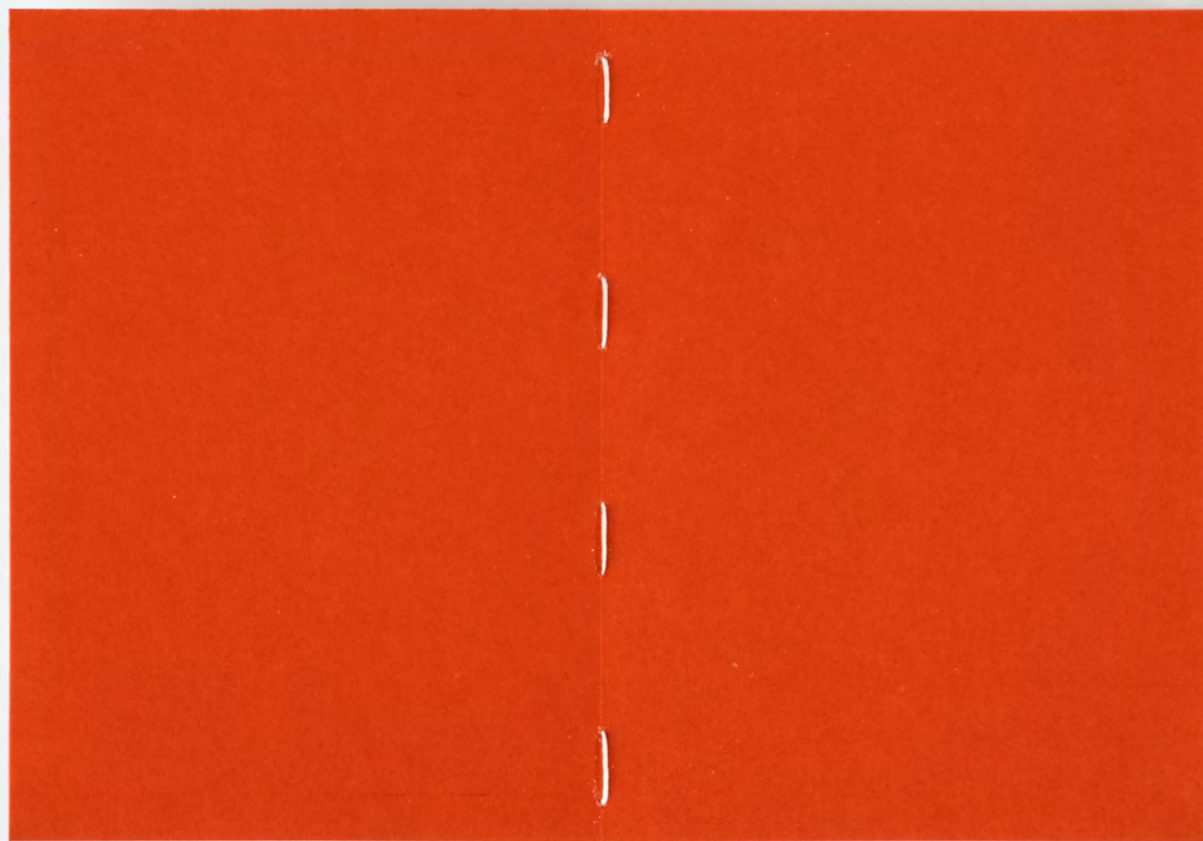








This book, thank God,  
turned out to be less  
poetic and pretty than  
I had imagined, but most  
importantly, it turned  
out to exist.

Corita Kent in *Learning by Heart*, p. 24, adapted.

MIP PROJECT

SCAD

KISD / S25

OTAF

How a  
**good!**  
**creative**  
**process**

looks like?



good!  
creative  
process

Immaculate Heart  
College Art Department  
by Fred Swartz, ca. 1955.



# instructions

- Decide to work.
- Choose one simple task.
- Define a limitation.
- Get a bit obsessed with it.
- Have fun exploring it.
- Practice discipline.
- Get comfortable with the process.
- Change the instructions if needed.

# task

- Make the letter A.

This project is all about starting. So please join us! Take any writing pen or pencil and draw an A in this page.

instructions

After drawing it, try it again, but draw the A upside down (without turning this book).

a

#### ♦ ABOUT THE PROJECT

36 Days of Type is an online community-driven project where hundreds—if not thousands—of designers come together to create and share letterforms. Each day for 36 consecutive days, participants design and post a new character, covering the entire alphabet (A–Z) plus the numbers 0–9. The project began in 2014 as a personal initiative by graphic designers seeking a creative challenge, but the project grew, and to this day, every year around April, Instagram gets full of contributions.

As the time went by, the challenge became a portfolio project, with the best people in the field posting their projects. For designers that are in the beginning of their journey, participating in this environment takes courage. For years, I desired to participate in it, but never felt ready. I believe this is a very common feeling in our field, even though, writing this today feels silly. But my fear was real for many years.

Years went by and I ended up never participating in 36 Days of Type. This MIP is the final product of a long journey of trying to confront my fear of starting new projects. It's a fear I've carried since my bachelor's degree, from my very first designs. I sat with it, worked through it, and finally, here we are. It took time.

That path was rough, and I struggled with a lot of difficult emotions. The idea that shaped this project was born from those feelings.

The first time I thought of making **a thousand letters A's**, I was very mad. Mad, upset, frustrated, and, most of all, angry with myself. After a long period of self-reflection, I realized that the problem was me. I was the one rejecting my own creative efforts, I was the main voice of disapproval holding me back.

Insufficient. Not talented enough. Not disciplined, creative, or passionate enough. Looking back, it's crazy to realize how harsh we can be on ourselves. In the middle of this turmoil of thoughts, I remembered 36 Days of Type—and the fact that I had never done it.

**It was on this day the idea came to me: a room filled with A's. A is the first letter of the alphabet, but it is only the first letter of the alphabet.**

An inconclusive alphabet—one that reflected someone struggling too much to move forward.

The idea of a room covered in a thousand A's, like a scream of pain, emerged during a period when I was deeply immersed in Marina Abramović's work. Her persistence, her dedication, and the obsessive repetition in her performances left a strong impression on me. But what struck me most was how her art constantly pushes the limits of pain. It resonated.

Maybe I, too, needed to reach that level of discipline and endurance. Maybe I needed to make a thousand A's.

Funny enough, in the same moment I had the idea, I also knew I wouldn't go through with it. Even in my darkest moments, those thoughts never lasted long. The idea of a process that required me to dive deep into my frustration sounded unbearable.

Weeks later, I had my first encounter with Conita Kent's ideas. On a random day, I pressed play on a new design podcast.

As the episode started, Theresa Bendinati, a Brazilian designer, began to speak:

**“The idea that the act of creating is linked to suffering has always intrigued me. According to popular belief, being melancholic, sad, depressed, and unhappy is, I don't know, **good for the artist**. In the end, it's a kind of cosmic compensation: you suffer, but it will be worth it. There is a portrait of the Mexican artist Frida Kahlo, called The Broken Column, that, for a long time, was the visual summary of the creative process to me.”**

She continues to introduce someone who also valued discipline and repetition but nurtured these activities with love. It was while listening to someone talk about Corita that the idea of making A's made sense again. And now, here we are.

This is a collective project focused on having fun with graphic design. The idea is to work, and the only rule is to keep working. The instructions may change only to make the act of working more enjoyable. This isn't about making a thousand A's, but rather just a few of them with curiosity.

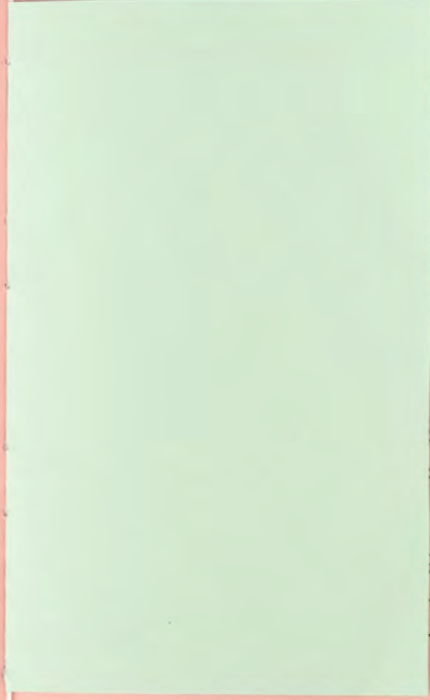


**In this project we created A's, using a simple limitation as an opportunity to try new things.**

# WORKSHOP DAY

This section of the book documents a workshop held at the Köln International School of Design on November 26, 2024, marking the official start of the MIP: 36 Days of **AAA**.

Deeply inspired by Corita Kent's exercises from Learning by Heart, the workshop was designed not only to provide participating students with a deeper understanding of the project but also to introduce them to Corita's approach to teaching and her creative process.



# THE EXERCISES

# WORKSHOP DAY

18



# THE EXERCISES

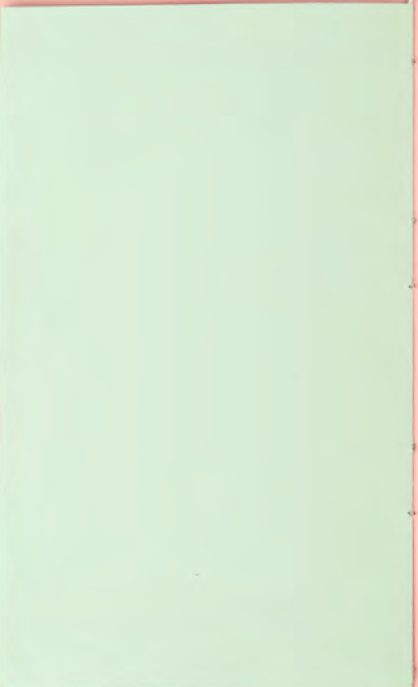
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# THE EXERCISES

19

The exercises of the Workshop are not a Copy and Paste of Cortá's exercises. Rather they are my interpretation of them after reading and doing some on my own.

While doing the original exercises, I kept reflecting on how looking through the shadows of my room could make my designs better. I continue to think about this, especially as designers close to me (both physically and in my online bubbles) try to return to older methods of production as a response to the AI era. Without having all the answers, I decided to connect the care and attention required on her style of exercises to the care and attention required to shapes in the making of type and letters. The first half of the workshop was meant to make us attentive to shape. The second half—not documented here—was to show how this knowledge connects to the drawing of a letter.



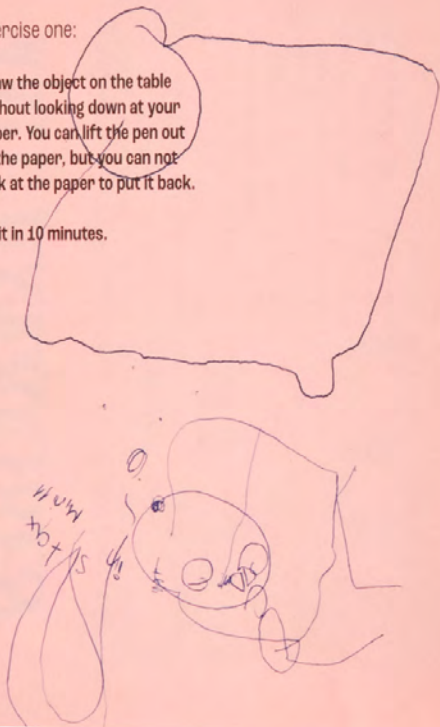
# WORKSHOP DAY

18

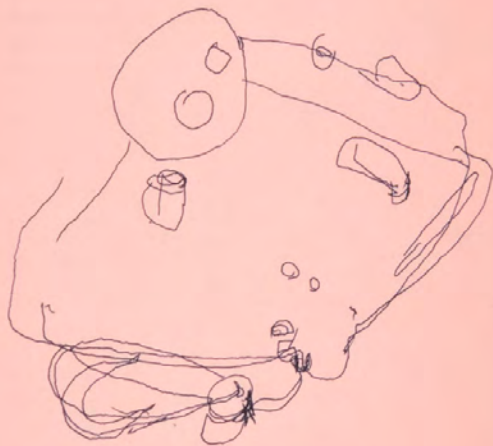
Exercise one:

Draw the object on the table without looking down at your paper. You can lift the pen out of the paper, but you can not look at the paper to put it back.

Do it in 10 minutes.



*The participants struggled to use the 10 minutes.  
Most finished the drawing very fast and did it  
more than 1 drawing.*

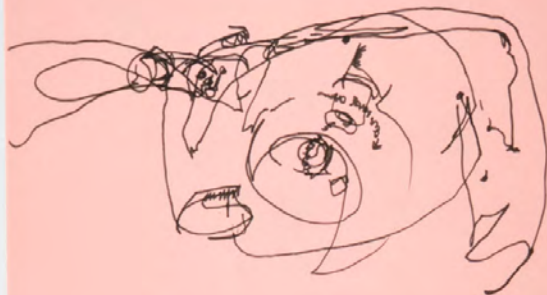


*I reinforce the instructions.  
We tried again.*



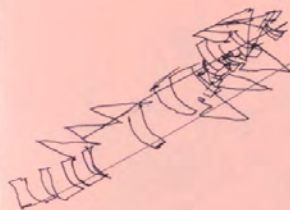
**"Make the drawing using the 10 minutes.  
Use the time to really observe."**





### Exercise two:

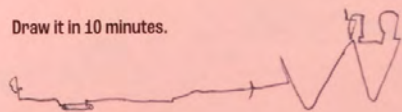
The object changed. Draw only a small section of the object. Do it without looking down at your paper. You can lift the pen out of the paper, but you can not look at the paper to put it back.

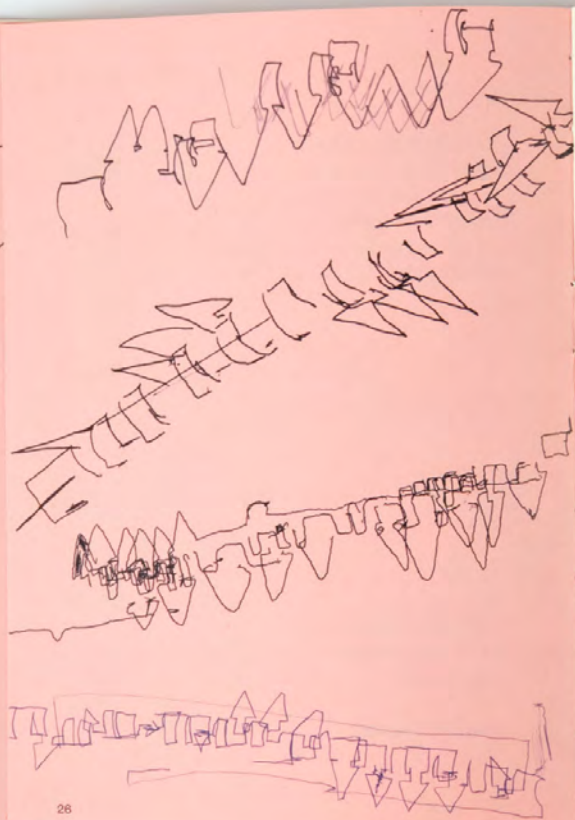


### Beware:

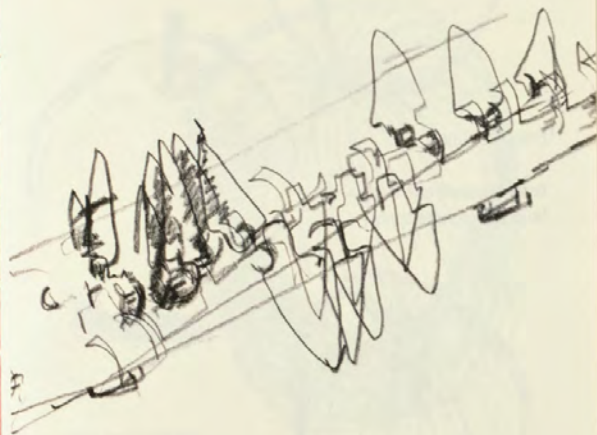
The object has shapes that repeat. But from your perspective are they really the same?

Draw it in 10 minutes.





*People managed to slow it  
down. We had more than  
1 drawing again.*





Exercise three:

Draw the apple on the table.  
No previous rules apply.



Second Round:

Five apples are added to the table  
while the participants have their  
eyes closed. Do they know which  
apple did they draw?



New instructions:

Draw the same apple, focus on  
what makes it different from  
the other apples on the table.







*I asked them if they were drawing from observation,  
or if they were adding details from their imagination,  
making the drawing closer to what they believed  
should a drawing of an apple be.*



*All drawings from the second  
round are richer in details.*





End of First Block of Exercises



## Why talk about Corita today?

During my months at KISD, the process of this MIP, and conversations on topics for my master's thesis, AI has been constantly in my mind. Which is not at all a surprise or hard to imagine, as I believe is in every designer's mind and conversation circles right now.

It bothers me, as it bothers many. While not completely ignoring the movement, and not jumping noncritically on the trend, I have been trying to find other ways to understand this moment.

I firmly believe the reason I discovered Corita in the first place has to do with AI. I came into contact with her work through a fairly new Podcast in Brazil, done by designers, for designers, about design. The podcast is called Lombada (Spine – of a book, in Portuguese) and it is a sub product of the Design Book Club, a publishing house that translates relevant design books to Brazilian Portuguese. Given its relevancy and the Internet presence of its creators, with highlight to Theresa Berdinatti, already known in the field for many years, the podcast + publishing house has the power to shape conversation in some big design bubbles in Brazil.

That is how I heard about her, and how I keep hearing about her for many months. They are the reason why I bought the book and how this MIP came to be. But I started questioning myself, on why

were she and her book selected? Of course she is relevant, as are, I imagine, many more. **So, what does it mean for us to be talking about her in the current times?**

As I read through Corita's exercises, doing some of them, planning some others, I kept always thinking: what is the goal of this exercise?

Some of them are clearly about practice. Her most famous exercise, The View Finder, consists in cutting a square in a piece of hand paper and framing what you see out there. The reason for the exercise feels quite obvious: getting better eyes for visuals, training the ability for framing, creating a sharp eye. But she is also famous for telling her students to draw an object 100 times. Of course the reason is practice. Easy to explain, but hard to propose as an actual exercise. At least, for me.

I did not have the courage to propose some of her exercises in this project. In fact, doing the exercises written here, which I proposed in the workshop, for example asking people to focus for 10 minutes, already felt like a big step. And the anxiety created by the exercise was clear and tangible: 15 minutes looked eternal.

I kept asking myself, is her reappearance in the design community a wish for more experimentation time? Is that what we wish for? Do we even know how to explore or use this extra time we desire? As every year goes by I discovered that getting good at design is a matter of sharp vision and resilience to keep working. And I truly believe her exercises teach both.

Some of them feel poetic and artistic, a bit harder to explain the why or to propose without fear of feeling like a useless exercise. But each time I go back to them, they make more sense: as making

a book with random things found during the week makes you more alert to gather references and be open to new ideas.

I feel we don't talk enough about the process of getting better at design—at least not in the spaces I've been part of. It's a topic often taken for granted. Everyone agrees that repetition leads to improvement, but rarely do we speak about how frustrating that repetition can be, or how nonlinear and frustrating the path of personal growth often feels. Improvement requires time. And in the age of AI, who is willing to wait to get better? Who is willing to repeat a drawing 100 times, if 1000 are license-free online and infinite possibilities are just a few key prompts away?

We often look to the designers who can afford to explore—artists and those freelancers that found their unique style (sometimes being better paid because of that personal touch). But they don't represent the majority of our profession. Most designers navigate strict deadlines and the always famous budget problem. So where exactly is the line that determines when it's "okay" to use AI? Is it drawn by time constraints, by money, or by something else entirely?

I don't think this is an impossible question to answer, as we already answered several times before, with technologies like the computer or even Photoshop. But as the gap created by the advance in technology grows wider, so does the uncertainty on the answer.

I believe this is where the great dissonance of being a graphic designer today lies: understanding ourselves between automation, the wish for good work-life balance, the desire for a fulfilling creative process and what is possible under neoliberalism work circumstances.

Improvement requires time,

*and in the age of  
AI, who is willing to  
wait to get better?*

---

**Who is willing to repeat a  
drawing 100 times, if 1000 are  
license free on the internet,  
and infinite possibilities are just  
a few key prompts away?**

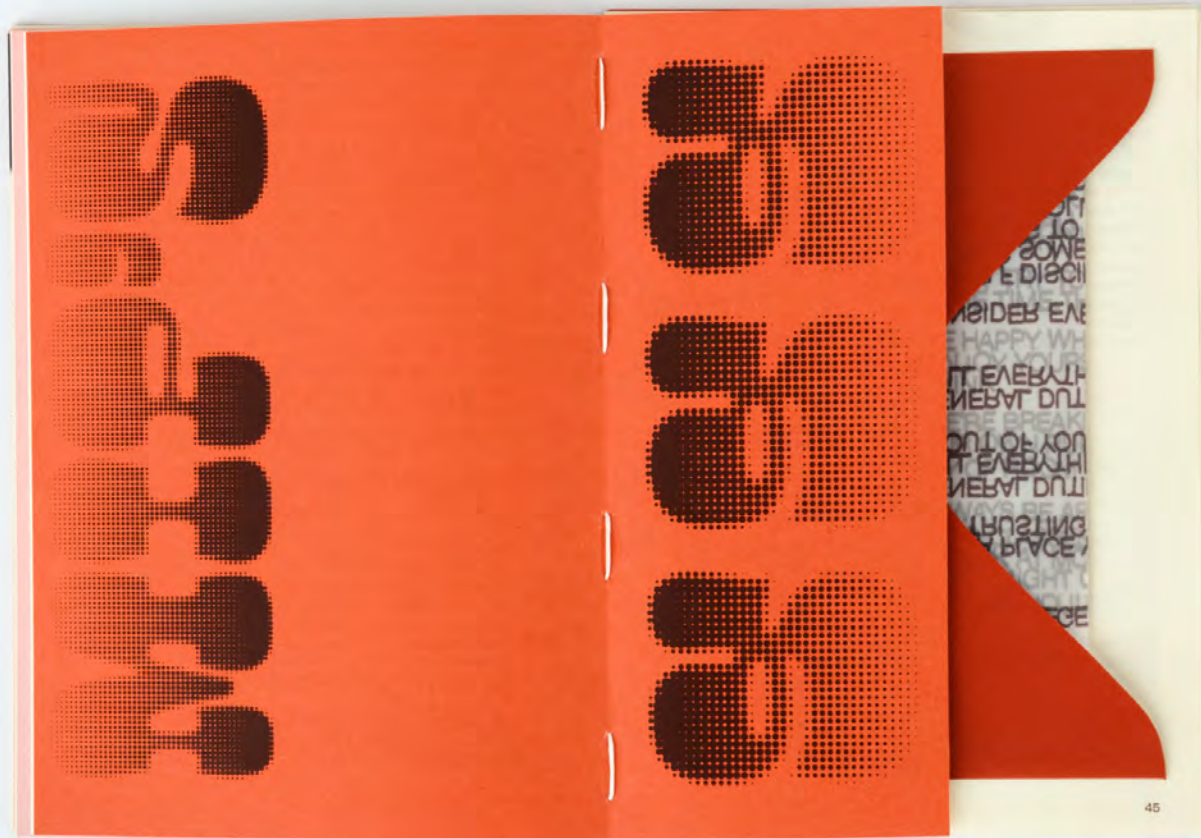
At the same time, to get to know Conita exercises simultaneously to AI taking over our conversations felt also as an invitation to rethink which exercises still make sense to propose for the formation of a good graphic designer. I, for example, did not draw anything 100 times. Should I? The yes or no depend, of course. As we all know that this exercise will, in fact, indisputably improve the ability to draw, the real question is who can afford this cost benefit situation. The distance between the yes and no create a bigger differentiation between the education that aims for the ability to explore and respond to open questions to the education of quick and practical answers for the high speed everyday commercial design.

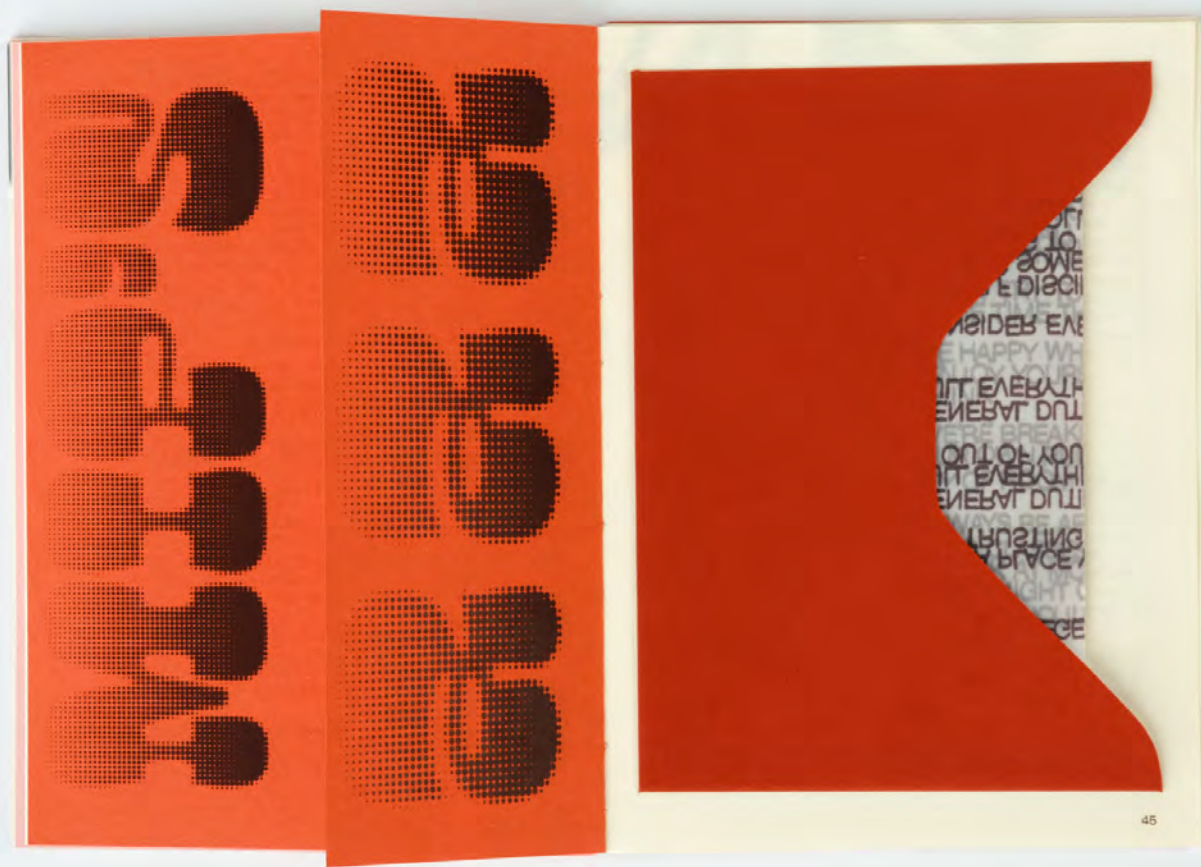
I see interesting trends surfacing in response to this new tension. As designers get agitated not only by the rapid advances of AI but also by their enthusiastic reception among the mainstream public, bosses, and professors—some of them try to force the other way around, by embracing old ways of creating, without the digital help.

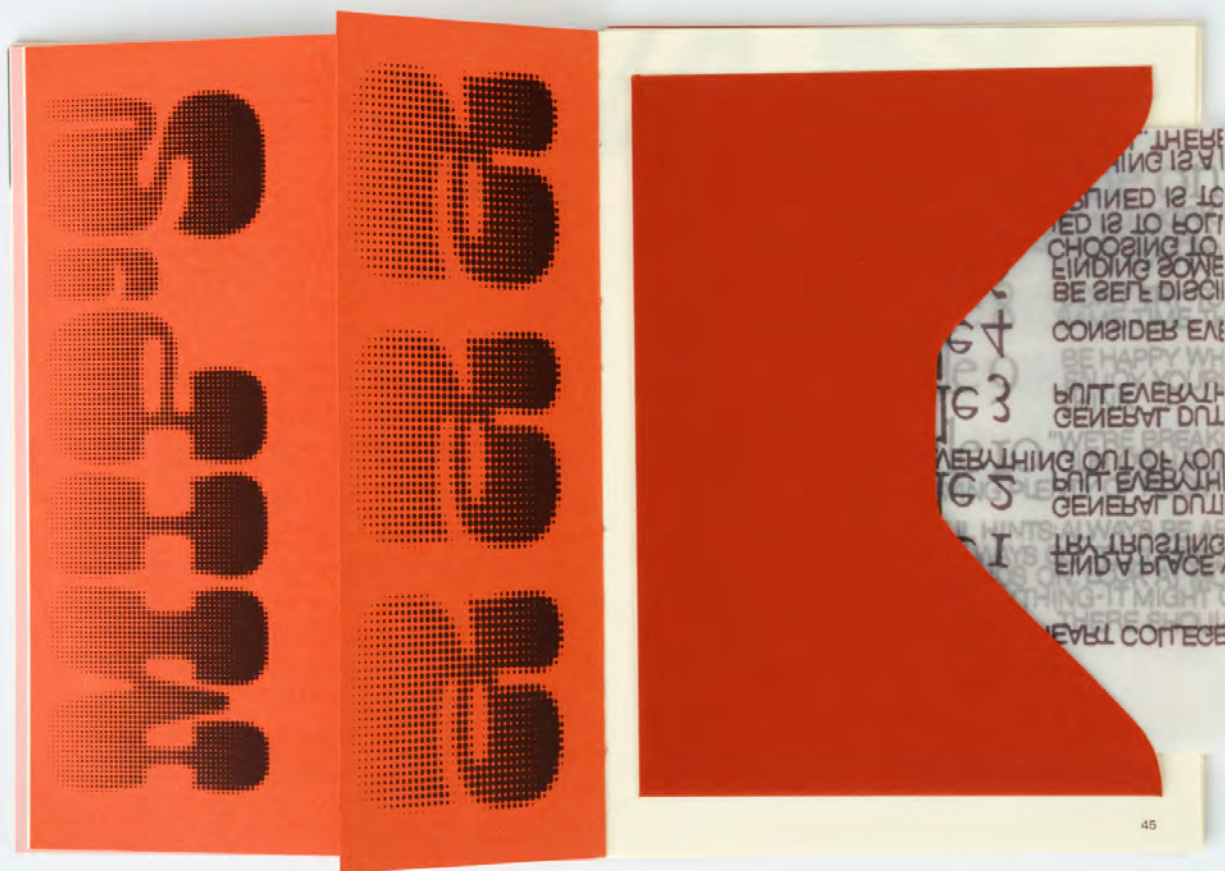
And here, the question repeats itself: how much automation can we resist before the digression stops making sense? As I write this text, knowing I'll later edit it with the help of ChatGPT (for lack of resources to pay for Grammarly), I keep trying to answer a lot of these questions. This MIP, above all, is one more trial to elaborate on ideas that I wish people would talk more about. **As I keep creating, I keep reminding myself that, as opposed to AI, I'm capable of doing so much more than the average of everything I've ever done before.**

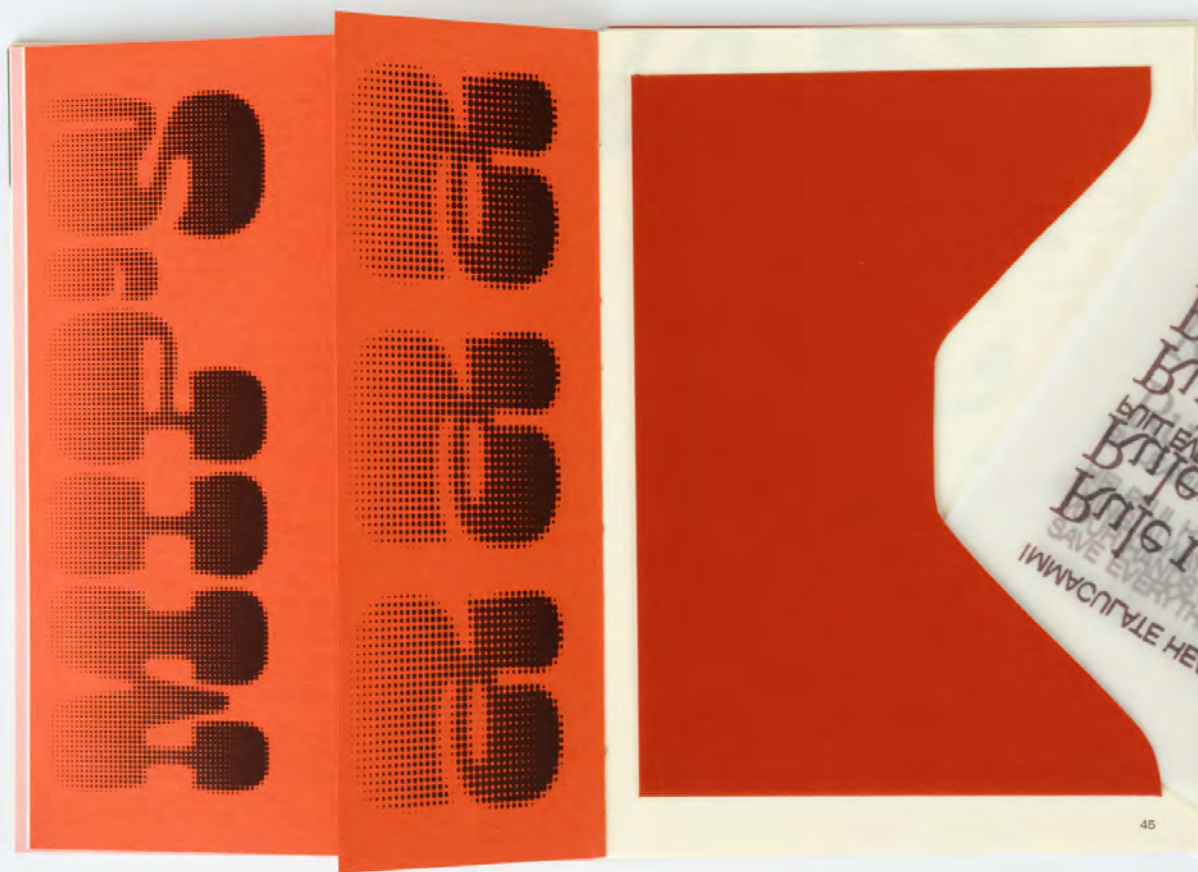
**This book does not contain any AI generated images, that was my own personal rule.**

*The next texts are written  
by the participants, about  
their own projects*









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IMMACULATE HEART COLLEGE ART DEPARTMENT

Rule 1 FIND A PLACE YOU TRUST AND THEN TRY TRUSTING IT FOR A WHILE.

Rule 2 GENERAL DUTIES OF A STUDENT:  
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR TEACHER'S  
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR FELLOW STUDENTS.

Rule 3 GENERAL DUTIES OF A TEACHER:  
PULL EVERYTHING OUT OF YOUR STUDENTS.

Rule 4 CONSIDER EVERYTHING AN EXPERIMENT.

Rule 5 BE SELF DISCIPLINED. THIS MEANS FINDING SOMEONE WISE OR SMART AND CHOOSING TO FOLLOW THEM.

Rule 6 TO BE DISCIPLINED IS TO FOLLOW IN A GOOD WAY.  
TO BE SELF DISCIPLINED IS TO FOLLOW IN A BETTER WAY.

Rule 7 NOTHING IS A MISTAKE. THERE'S NO WIN AND NO FAIL. THERE'S ONLY MAKE.

Rule 8 The only rule is work.  
IF YOU WORK IT WILL LEAD TO SOMETHING.

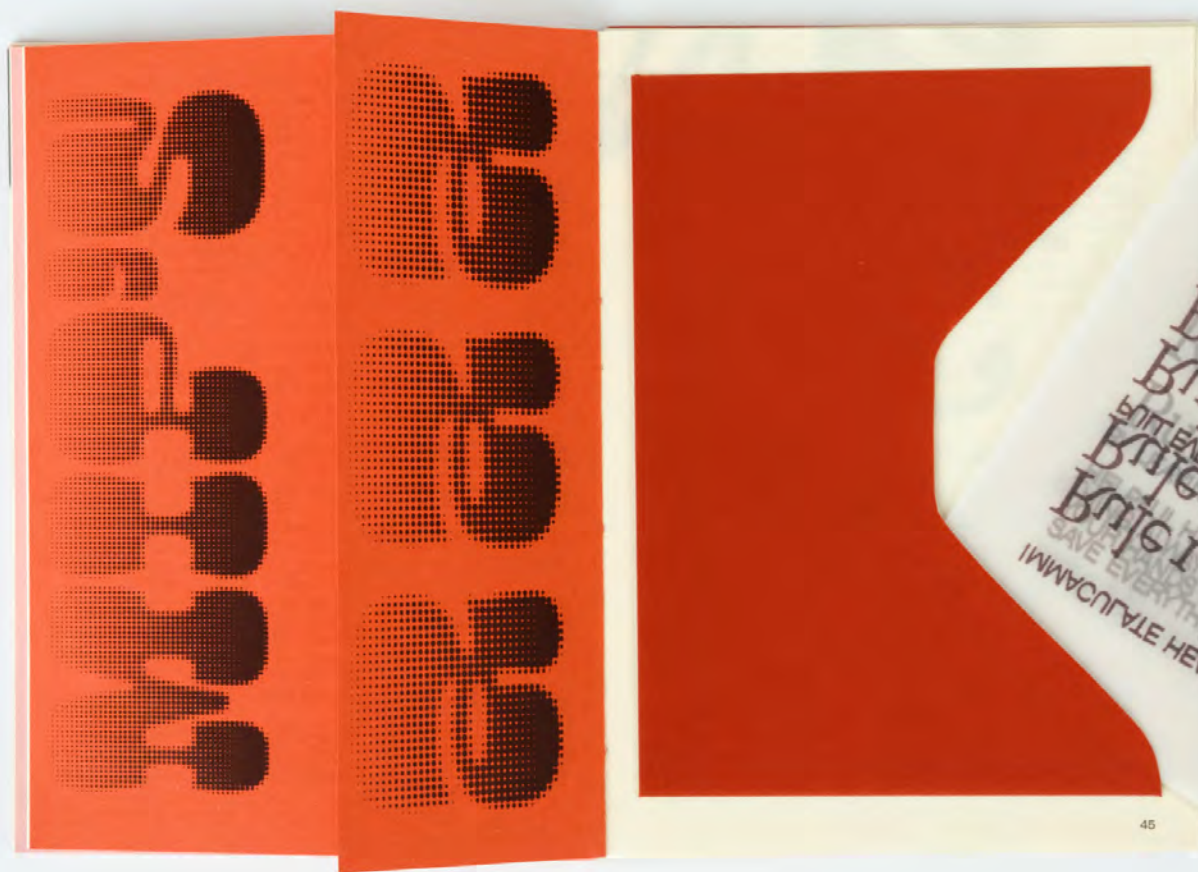
Rule 9 IT'S THE PEOPLE WHO DO ALL OF THE WORK ALL THE TIME WHO EVENTUALLY CATCH ON TO THINGS.

Rule 10 DONT TRY TO CREATE AND ANALYSE AT THE SAME TIME. THEY'RE DIFFERENT PROCESSES.

BE HAPPY WHENEVER YOU CAN MANAGE IT. ENJOY YOURSELF. IT'S LIGHTER THAN YOU THINK.

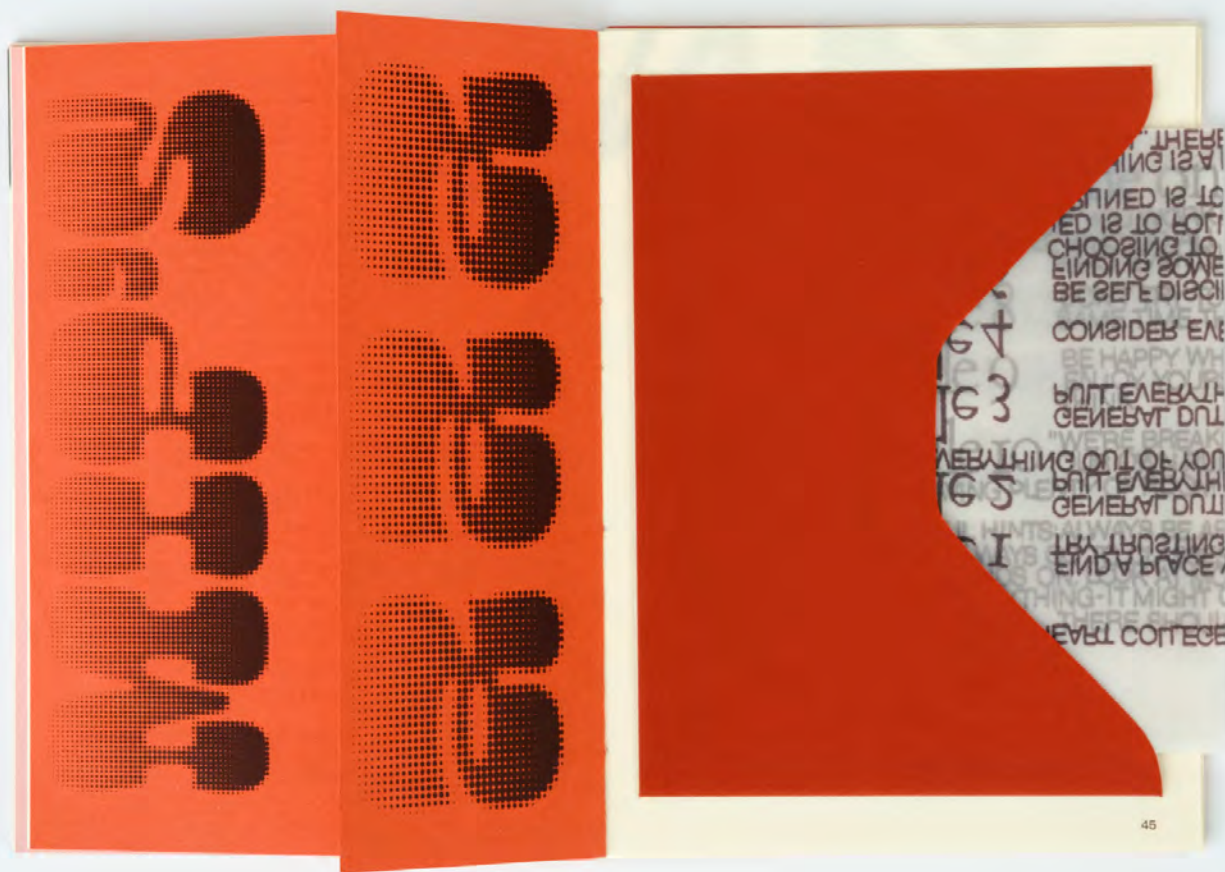
"WE'RE BREAKING ALL OF THE RULES. EVEN OUR OWN RULES. AND HOW DO WE DO THAT? BY LEAVING PLENTY OF ROOM FOR X QUANTITIES." JOHN CAGE

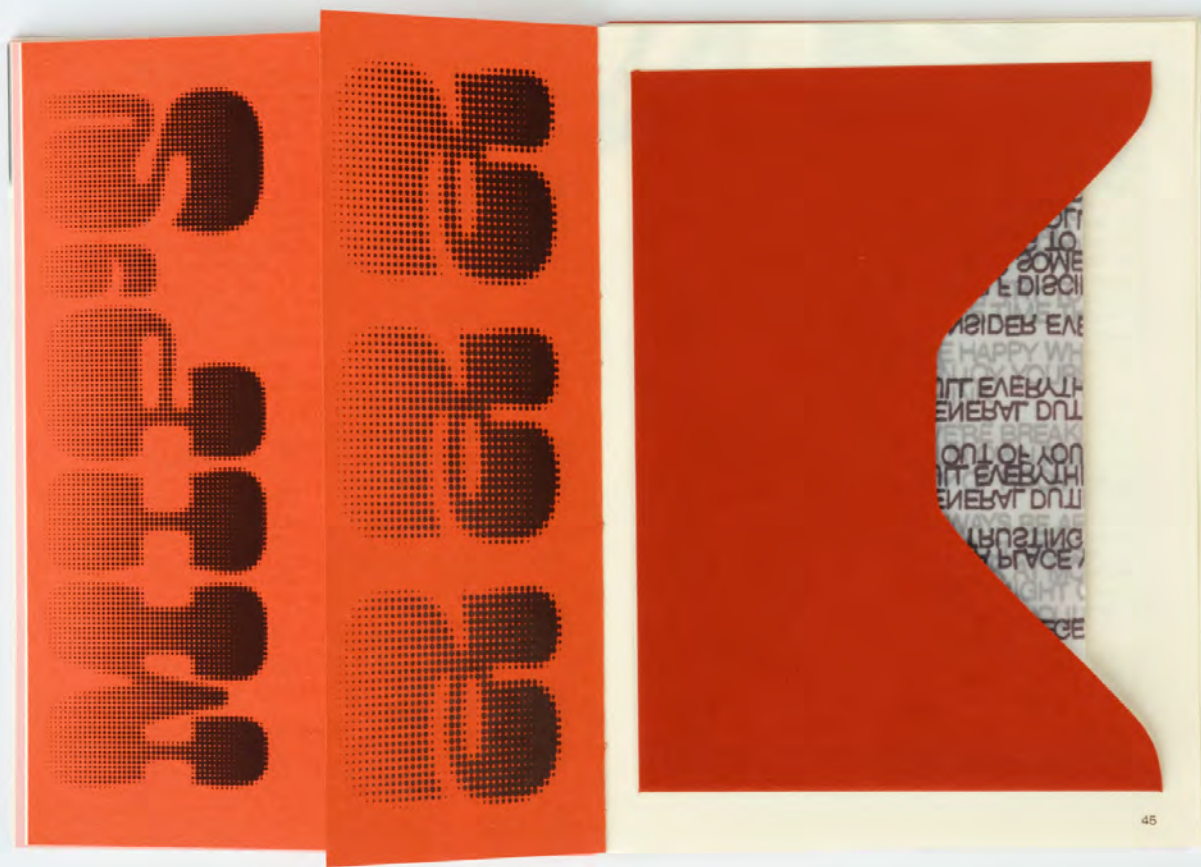
HELPFUL HINTS: ALWAYS BE AROUND. COME OR GO TO EVERYTHING. ALWAYS GO TO CLASSES READ ANYTHING YOU CAN GET YOUR HANDS ON. LOOK AT MOVIES CAREFULLY. OFTEN SAVE EVERYTHING-IT MIGHT COME IN HANDY. OFTEN THERE SHOULD BE NO...



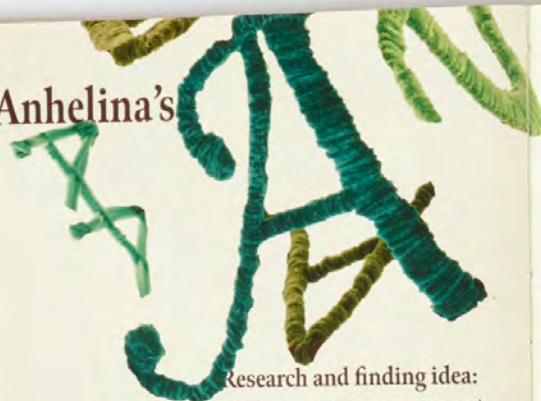
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## Anhelina's



### Research and finding idea:

Since I am a creative person and I love to draw, I started making a lot of sketches of the letter A from the very beginning. I was inspired by my crafts from grape branches that I made during our first lesson. Of course, I couldn't draw every day, but I still tried to devote more time to working on developing the A forms.

After many sketches on the iPad, an interesting idea came to me: to create an A from origami. I started looking for a lot of videos and origami diagrams to study this process. But after repeated attempts to make an origami, unfortunately, nothing worked out for me. AAAAAAAAAAAAAA It turned out to be much more

difficult than I thought, and in the process I realized that this was absolutely not my thing. But I didn't give up and started looking for new ideas.

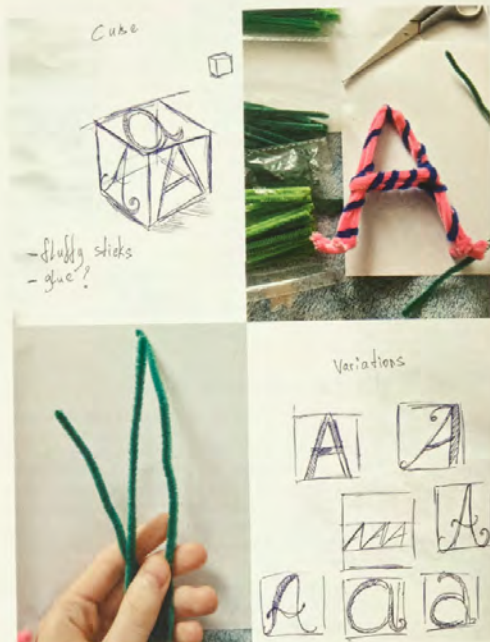
One of the sketches that I made was a fluffy letter A. I was inspired by my cat's fur. And Camila gave me a great idea: **fluffy sticks**. I had never used fluffy sticks before, so I was interested in trying to use them. I really enjoyed the process. The sticks are very soft, fluffy, bend well, do not break and hold tightly when tied. For a warm-up, I tried to make a very small letter A (about 13 by 13 cm), and the result was quite good. Then I started looking for an idea again, but this time for the shape of the fluffy sticks and suddenly saw a Rubik's cube in the reels video on YouTube. I thought, what if I make a cube and make different A shapes on each side? Without wasting time, I started developing.

### Development and result:

I decided to challenge myself and use only one material: fluffy sticks. Having bought more multicolored sticks, I started making cubo shapes. The colors that I used: army green, light green, dark green, deep coffee. Each side is approximately: 23 x 23 cm. The cube itself turned out to be very flexible and soft. Each side is individual in its own way. To find different shapes of A, I used the Internet and my sketches.

It took a lot of time to make the whole cube and AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA I am extremely pleased with the result, especially considering that I have never used fluffy sticks.

After completing the cube, I thought about how it could be used. Maybe a game? I took a piece of paper and began to come up with rules ideas for it.



The only rule is to work

## "Do the Same Shape"

### Rules:

Take a bunch of fluffy sticks.

- Throw the cube and wait until it falls down.
- Try to replicate with fluffy sticks the same form of A you got at the top side.

- Vote within the participants who managed to do the most similar looking A to the original.
- The most voted person is the winner.

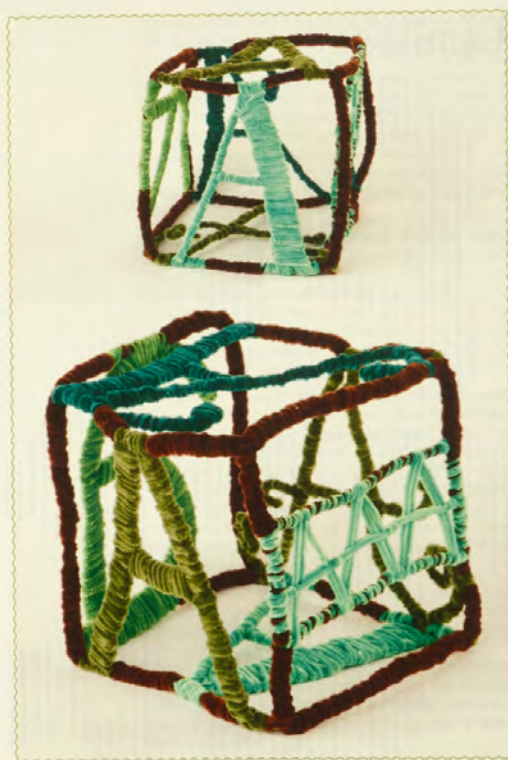
## Draw your A

### Rules:

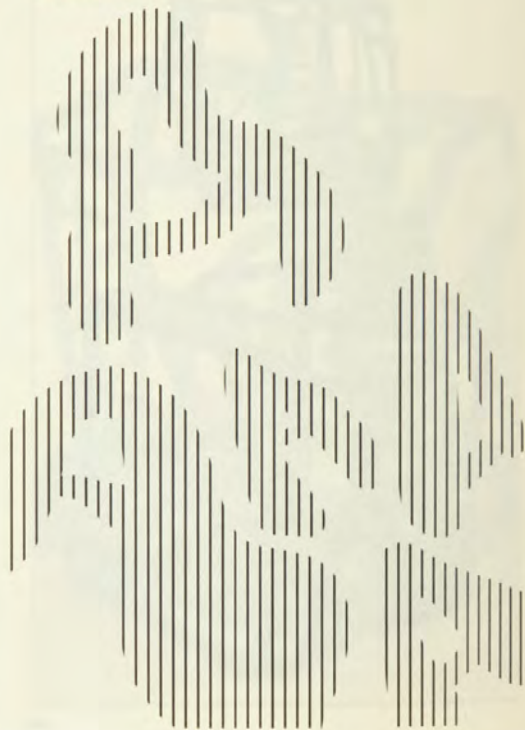
- Take one flat paper and pen.
- Throw the cube and wait until it falls down.
- Draw the form of A you got at the top side.
- Do the same steps with your team in turn until someone got 3 of the same forms of A's.
- First member with 3 drawings of the same A's is the winner!

I have test the first game and it was really fun to play together with group of people. There can also be many more rules and game possibilities connected to cube. And a lot and a lot and a lot of funny and interesting rules you can think about.

The freedom of thinking and creating  
is a key for fun process making.



## Camila's

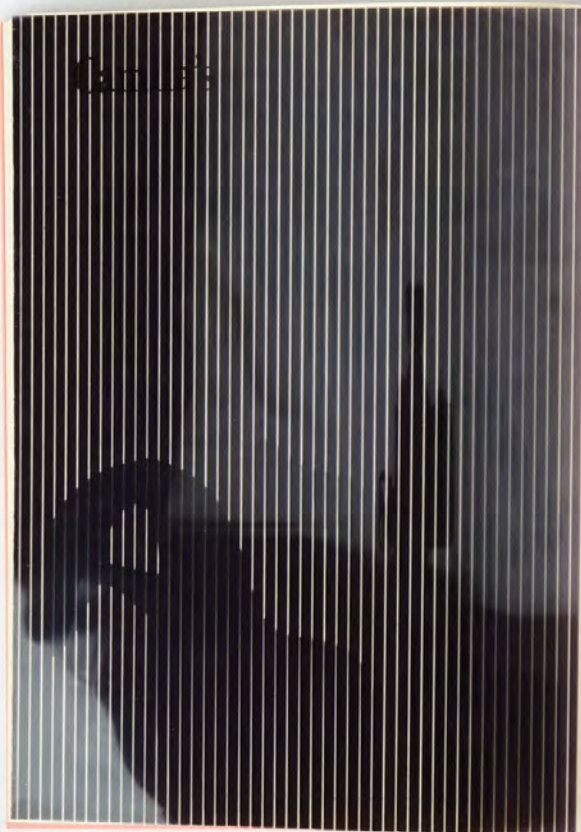


This is the last text I'm adding to the book. You're still going to find "Final Thoughts" at the end chapter, but I guess the name didn't quite live up to its promise. But now, at the end stage, I can say: producing this book was an amazing and surprising experience. Since everything else in the project took so much time and effort, producing my A became a more straightforward process, with some experimentations, but without room for too much obsessiveness and repetition.

I'm glad the idea was good and that it works. I tried something new. Making the animation happen on paper felt a bit magic. I love how such a simple, old trick-effect still brings joy and surprise to anyone who interacts with it. I will definitely use it in future works. Hence this different kind of repetition: trying something, releasing it into the world, and later realizing it's worth revisiting.

I did a lot of tasks in this project more than once. The workshop was done two and a half times: I tried half of it with my boyfriend, then the whole thing with only one of the participants, and then once again with the other three (the officialfinalfinal.pdf version). In each of the trials, I improved the explanations and exercises. I would say the second half of the last trial, not documented here, had some very interesting moments, but it can still be built better.

For example, during the second half of the workshop, I wanted to bring the exercises closer to type studies: making a bridge between drawing with attention to observing shapes in type design. **I showed a piece of paper with a persian phrase on it. None of the participants knew the Arabic alphabet, so the only way to write the sentence was by copying the shapes exactly, as if they were a drawing.**

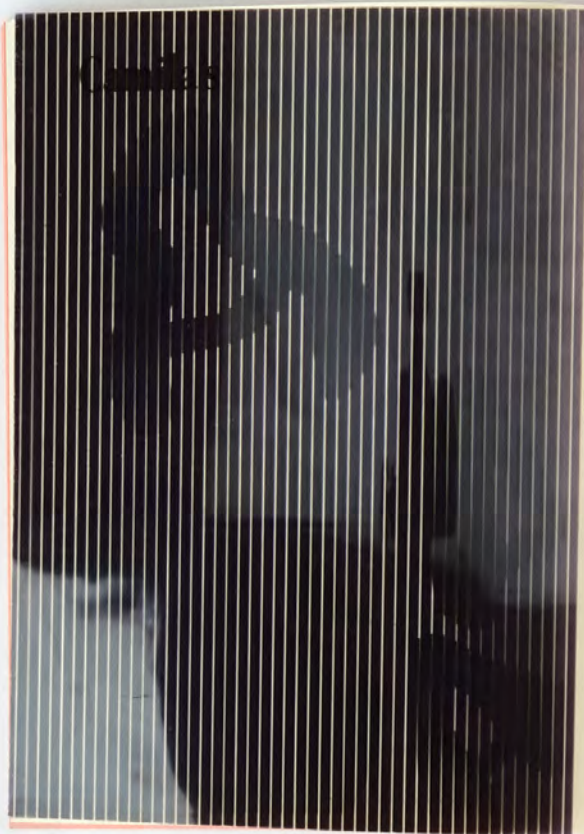


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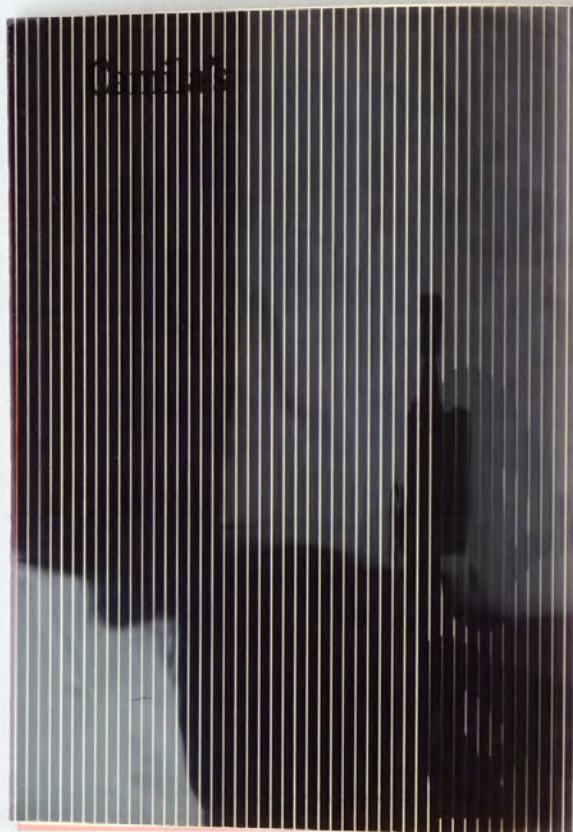


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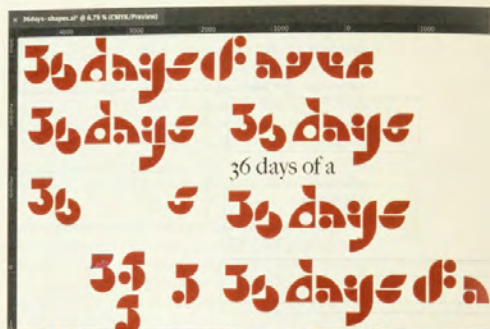


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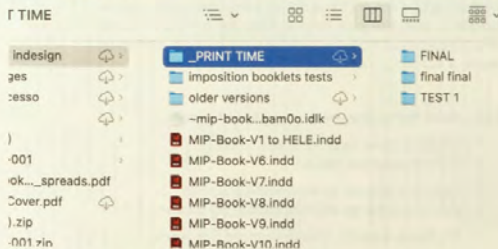
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If you work,



it'll lead to something

After that, I showed a piece of paper with a sentence written by me, in english. The task was the same: rewrite the sentence. I was caught by surprise when all of the participants started copying my handwriting, taking a lot more time to draw my letters than simply rewriting a sentence they could understand.

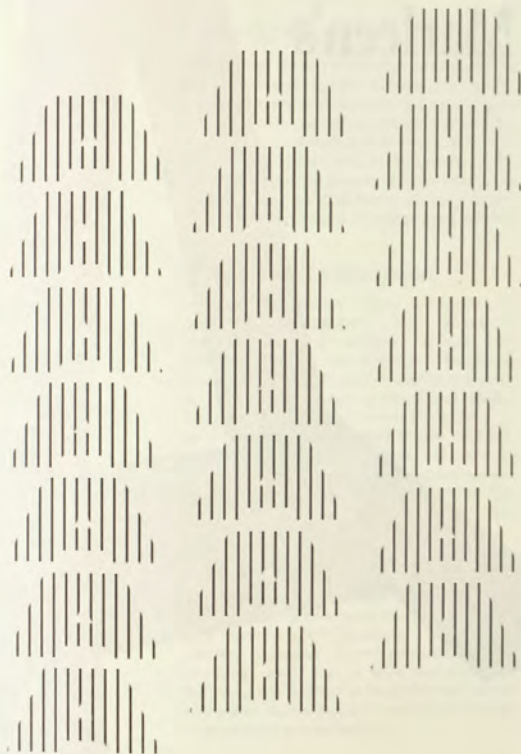
For me, it was a very interesting moment, as all the previous exercises seemed to have had a direct impact on this simple task: where just rewriting a sentence became a far more intensive and focused exercise, even without specific instructions for that level of attention. I would like to explore this phenomenon into future workshops. At the time, the unexpected result caught me by surprise, but now I'm curious to see what we can do with it, knowing this could be one of the outcomes.

The main topic I kept circling back to was the way I described and reflected on this experiment. In many ways, explaining it became a way to justify and better understand why I was putting so much effort into it. Looking back now, I feel genuinely proud of the results.

What makes me happiest is how the whole work (including the work of the other participants) became tangible, and not just online files. All of the results are objects that require interaction: a chair, cards, a cube, a curtain, and a magic illusion.

**For future iterations, here is my list of notes:**

- \* Discover how to print more crisply on transparent paper.
- \* Having a printer to test with (one that you're in charge of) makes testing easier.
- \* Try book sleeves, this time it did not work.
- \* Make the workshop again. See the results.



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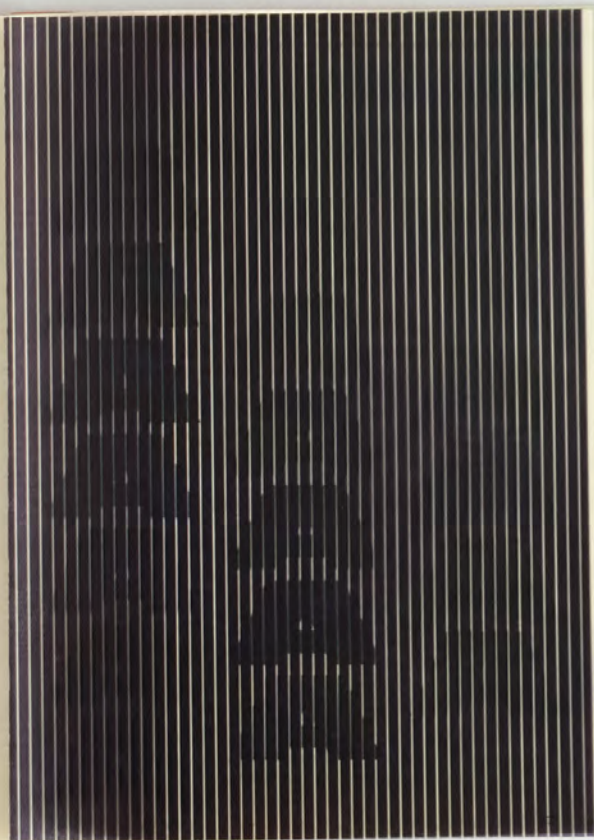
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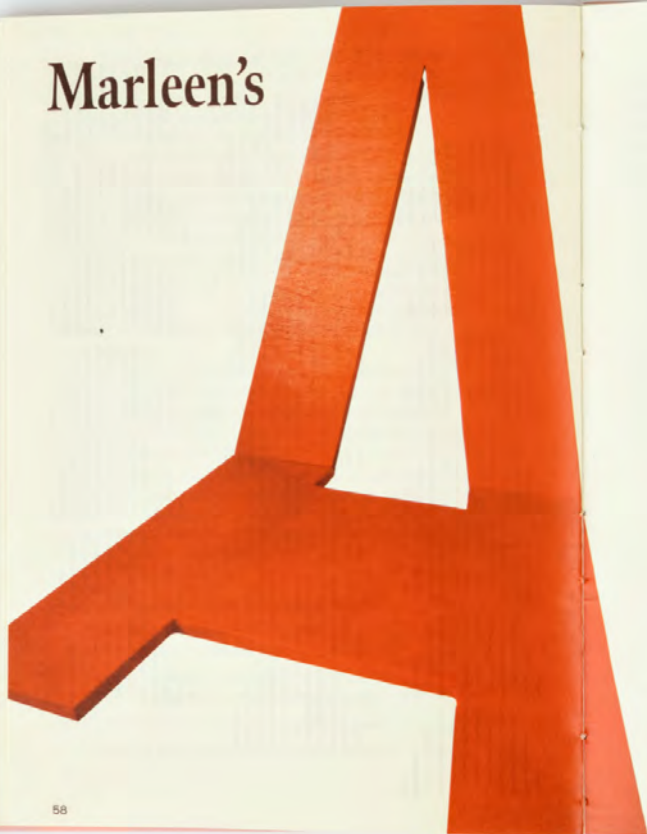
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# Marleen's



## 1. The "A" Shape:

The capital letter "A" is the starting point for the chair's design, symbolizing both a foundation and a constraint. Its sharp angles and symmetrical shape reflect the tension students experience between creativity and the structured demands of design education. The 'A' is a rigid yet powerful form, reflecting the balancing act that every design student must perform: freedom within the confines of their craft.

## 2. Abramović's Obsession:

Marina Abramović's work is based on endurance, repetition, and obsessive commitment. The A-Chair reflects this intensity, using its angular design to provoke discomfort and challenge the user to confront their own physical and mental limitations. The chair forces the sitter into an active, perhaps uncomfortable posture, confronting them with the frustrations of their own creative processes—much like Abramović's performances invite the audience to experience discomfort in the pursuit of transcendence.

## 3. Corita Kent's Teaching Methods:

Corita Kent's methods are known for their experiential, active approach to learning. She encouraged pushing boundaries, valuing process over perfection, and creating work that is alive and evolving. Similarly, the A-Chair is designed not just as a physical object, but as a medium for active engagement and reflection.

## Design Aesthetic:

The aesthetic of the A-Chair is bold and minimalist, emphasizing sharp geometric lines and contrasting materials. The chair's form, although structurally simple, becomes a strong visual presence. The use of contrasting colors and materials—red wood for the seat and pink steel for the legs—creates an emotional tension between warmth and rigidity, comfort and discomfort.

## Physical Characteristics:

### *Seat - Red-Coloured Wood:*

The seat and back of the A-Chair are made from rich blackboard wood, chosen for its emotional warmth and visual contrast to the sharp steel. The red wood evokes a sense of intensity and passion, reflecting the inner struggles and fervor that often accompany creative work. The seat is narrow, forcing the sitter into a more active form of rest, embodying the tension between the need for rest and the discomfort of creation. The sitter can choose to place their legs between the legs of the A or on top of it.

### *Legs - Pink-Coloured Steel:*

The chair's legs are made of rose-coloured steel, chosen to provide a visual counterpoint to the deep red of the seat. The pink colour provides a soft, almost delicate contrast to the otherwise rigid form of the chair, symbolizing the fragility of the creative process and the emotional vulnerability that often accompanies artistic endeavors.

### *Backrest:*

The backrest is sharply angled, mirroring the peak of the 'A', creating an active, confrontational posture for the user. It is deliberately uncomfortable, forcing the user to either adapt or embrace the discomfort. The design is intentional—there is no room for passive relaxation, only reflection and engagement. This feature reflects the push and pull between the need to release frustration and the drive to continue creating despite discomfort.



Consider everything  
an experiment

## User Experience:

The A-Chair is meant to be experienced, not just used. Sitting in it is a reflective process—every angle, every feature is designed to provoke thought and emotion. The user is encouraged to zone out while being physically reminded of the frustrations, pressures, and challenges of being a design student today. The red-coloured seat, while visually warm, is narrow and rigid, offering little in the way of comfort. The rose-coloured steel legs, recycled from an old balcony stool, introduce a softness that contrasts with the sharp lines, symbolizing the fragile yet resilient nature of creative work. Every aspect of the chair's design speaks to the personal struggle between the joy of creation and the anxiety that often accompanies it.

The chair does not allow for idle relaxation. Instead, it challenges the user to engage with their own physicality, to confront their discomfort, and ultimately to become aware of the mental and emotional processes that fuel the act of creation.

## Final Thoughts:

The 'A-Chair' is not just a functional object, but a conceptual space—a piece that embodies the restlessness, frustration, and emotional intensity of being a design student. Inspired by Marina Abramović's obsession with endurance and Corita Kent's belief in process over perfection, this chair invites the user to reflect on the challenges of their craft while engaging in a physical dialogue with the object itself. The balance between the angular wooden seat and delicate pink steel legs becomes a metaphor for the emotional and creative balance that every student must seek—often through discomfort, frustration, and perseverance.

This chair is a tribute to the complex relationship between the student and their work—one that constantly demands effort, introspection, and resilience.



## Nele's



In our first meeting of the project, Camila introduced us to Corita Kent. Among other things, she showed us the rules she had drawn up for working at Immaculate Heart College. This introduction inspired me to take a closer look at Corita Kent. She worked a lot with screen printing because she saw prints as a democratic form of art.

**'I'm a printmaker... a very democratic form, since it enables me to produce a quantity of original art for those who cannot afford to purchase high-priced art.'**

(Ault J., *Come Alive! The Spinted Art of Sister Corita*, 2006, p. 18)

This quote inspired me to approach the project's task of designing something from the letter A using a printing technique. As I am interested in lino printing and wanted to try out its possibilities, I decided to choose it as the medium for this task. The aspect of quickly producing original art made sense to me. I also wanted to portray this in my work. So I decided that my work should contain many small prints.

**'Rule 1: Find a place you trust and then try trusting it for a while.'**

So I looked for a place that I trusted. My starting point was the print project and the exploration of the letter a. I found this place by repeatedly printing the letter a in different shapes and on different papers in different colors. I wanted to get to know the interplay between the printing technique, the color of the print and the color of the paper. But first I had to make a design for the letter a. I decided on the small letter a because I noticed the different spellings of the letter in handwriting and I liked the curves. I constructed my a from a circle and orientated myself on geometric shapes.



**Enjoy yourself**

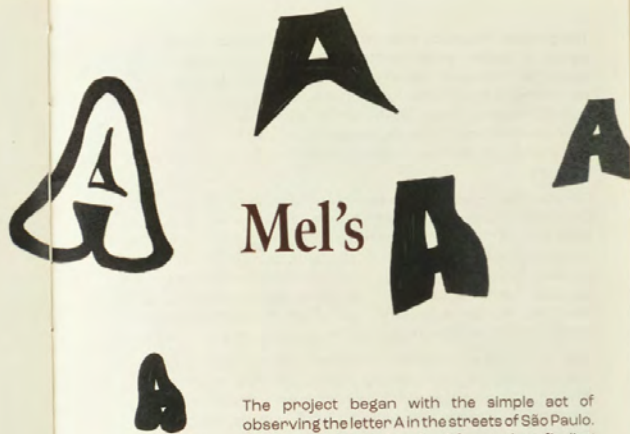
I combined the clear circular shape of the belly with serifs, as the serifs cling to the curves in my eye.

After I had designed the a, I transferred the shape onto a linoleum printing plate. While carving the plate, I noticed the **two shapes that were created**. One was the shape of the a as I had designed it, and the other was the negative shape that resulted from the carving. So I made two plates, the positive and the negative mould. I decided to use bright, vibrant colors for the paper and three printing inks. I printed with silver, copper and magenta. I chose these colors because I wanted to use colors for printing that I didn't have as paper. I cut the papers square, as the letter is constructed from a geometric shape and I wanted to fill the paper as much as possible. So I printed in every color on every paper, Negative and positive shape. **I found my place and trusted it for quite a while.**

The chosen printing process means that all the prints differ from one another. Sometimes the print is stronger, sometimes weaker, sometimes the print is almost invisible. So now I had 48 square prints with an a, but I wanted them to be seen as a single work, so I joined them together to form one large picture. I connected them with eyelet rings so that they could hang together in a flexible way. Because even if they give the impression of a large overall picture, they are all individual small experiments that are put together to form something big.

The many a's are an exploration of a printing process and the interplay of color and form. But they can also be seen as a **long scream, a big 'aaaaa'** out into the world.





The project began with the simple act of observing the letter A in the streets of São Paulo. Walking through the city, I focused on finding different expressions of the letter — graffiti, signage, informal marks — and studying how each A carried its own nuances, distortions, and energy.

After collecting these visual references, I moved to the next phase: translating them by hand. On paper, I explored the forms, trying to capture what made each A unique. During this manual process, I noticed that small imperfections or exaggerations would often lead to the creation of new interpretations. It was from this observation — the way each A could mutate when drawn — that the idea for a classification system emerged. I decided to document and organize these transformations using collectible cards.

The process began by sketching the initial layout of the cards on paper, experimenting with how information could be displayed visually and how each A could be framed as an individual "character." From there, I transitioned to Adobe Illustrator to refine the designs. I explored different layouts, tested color combinations, and worked on defining a clear system for both sides of the card.

For the back design, I created a pattern based on elements from my A studies — abstracting forms from the letter to build a visual texture. The color palette chosen was a light cream paired with a vivid red, creating a strong contrast. Several fonts were tested, but I ultimately selected Mencken for its combination of elegance and readability, which suited the visual language of the project while remaining legible on a small 10cm by 6.3cm format.

This final card size was chosen after some tests, as it balanced well between feeling collectible and allowing enough space for clear information. It was larger than standard card sizes (usually around 5.7cm by 8.9cm), making the content easier to read while maintaining the physicality of collectible cards.

Once the digital designs were finalized, I printed the cards, carefully cut and assembled them.

Each card presents the classification of four different A's. The system includes **four main criteria**:

\* *Fidelity to the original reference*: rated from 1 to 5, represented by circles — the more circles, the closer to the original.

\* *Challenge of reproduction*: rated from 1 to 5, represented by the number of A's — more A's meaning higher difficulty, symbolizing a stronger "scream".



# Nothing is a mistake

\**Emotion evoked during the process:* described with a single word like "Frustrated," "Curious," or "Relieved", and a small text.

\**Mutation:* the new A was created through the drawing process.

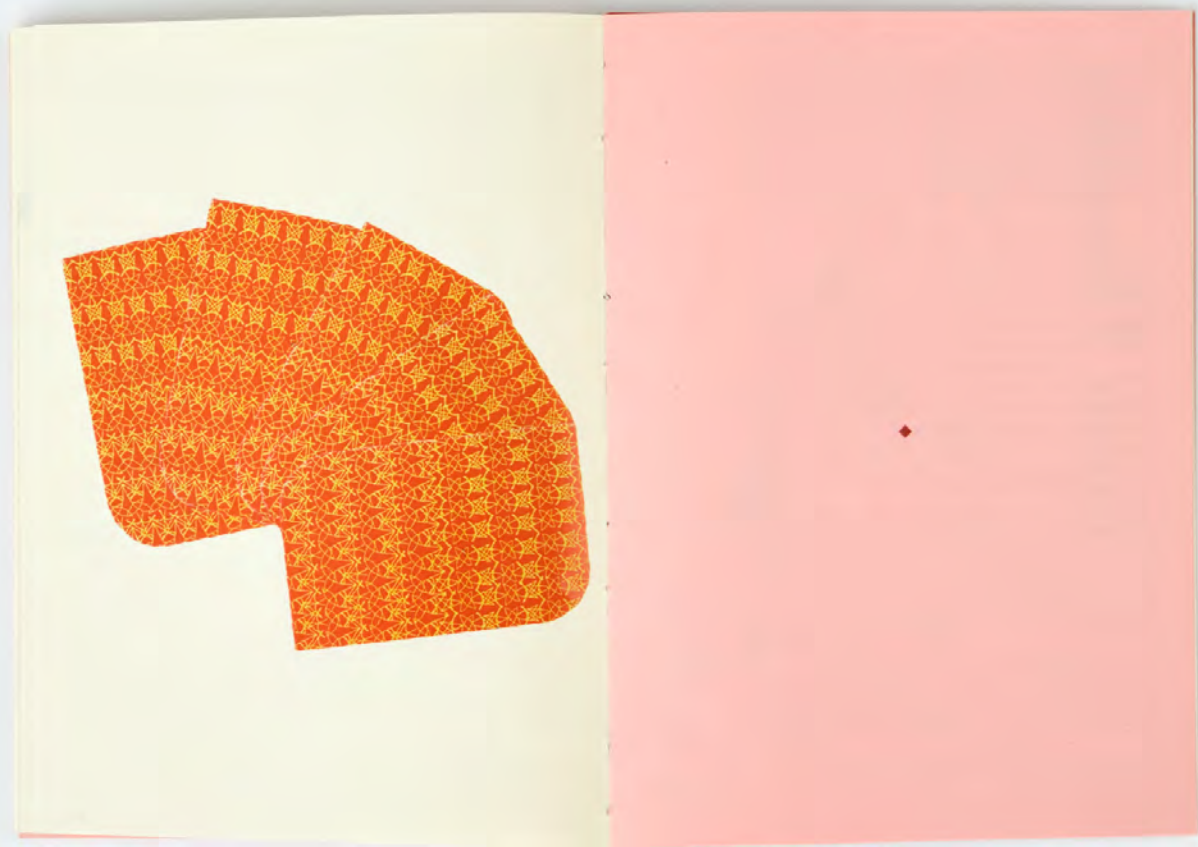
In essence, the cards not only classify the letters but also document the emotional and creative shifts that happened while working with them.

## About the Project:

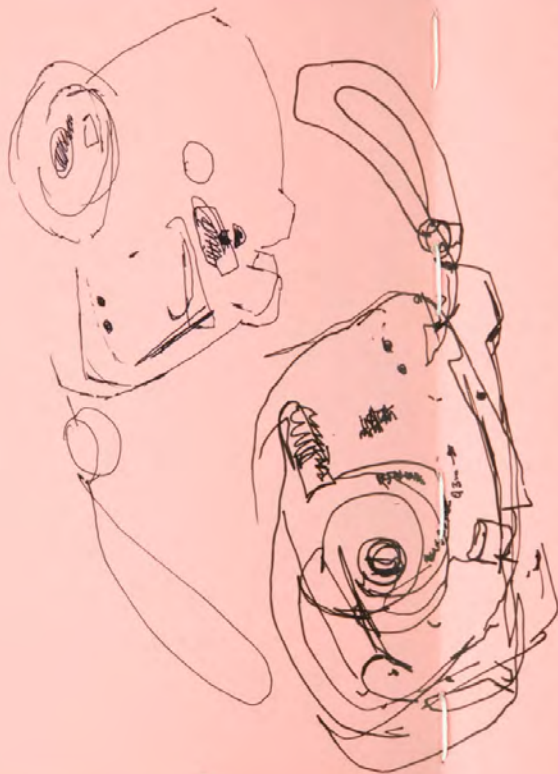
Overall, the project turned out to be both highly engaging and challenging. Analyzing each A separately allowed me to notice subtleties that would normally pass unnoticed. Building the cards and learning to use Illustrator deeply expanded the scope of the project, as it demanded attention to design principles like color harmony, print quality, typography, and usability at small scales.

This project ended up being a powerful reminder of the importance of process, how ideas evolve, how technical challenges shape the final product, and showing how close observation, experimentation, and iteration are essential steps in design practice.





# Final Thoughts



This MIP is a work in progress, as I took it as an opportunity to begin shaping my thoughts around **creative processes**. It was a pleasure to watch the designers who joined me in this work, and to see others embracing my questions and proposed paths of discovery. I hope I can continue to suggest, guide, learn, and exchange in many opportunities to come. This book took me a long time to make, and I'm genuinely happy for all the time I gave to it.

As part of my reflections on the importance of a fruitful and meaningful creative process, I invited each participant (Marleen, Nele, Anhelina, and Mel) to track the time they spent on the project. I suggested using TogglTrack, a website/app designed for tracking your work-related activities. While I made it clear that I would never ask for their data, I also shared that tracking your work-time could be beneficial in many ways.

In times when our ability to focus can feel fragile, timing your attention can bring surprising awareness: to the moments you distract yourself, take intentional pauses, or how little time you actually spent on that layout you're not happy with. And it can also show you how many hours you're capable of dedicating to a single task in one day.

This tool felt particularly relevant around exercises that, whether explicitly or not, demanded focused attention. I tracked my own work too. Between meetings, reading sessions, writing, practicing the workshop instructions, layouting, and printing this book, I can say not only that I was committed to this process—but I can also give a number. Also I can assure you: every single tracked minute was one of full attention.

In the AI era—where instant results come at the press of a few buttons—every hour spent here was fully part of my creative process, reminding me of the value of my time, attention, and process. This was also an exercise, and every hour was meaningful.

— hours, to be precise, so thank you for reading.

There  
should be

**new rules**  
**next week**

•

KISD | WS 2024

Camila Lustosa

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Marleen Scholten  
Mel Mattos  
Nele Stollenwerk

**Supervisor**  
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Beatriz Simões, Hilal Bozkurt and Aryan Maleki for the exchange throughout the process and proofreading. Hele Carmona for the inspiration to write.



