

01 TYPOGRAPHY & MOTION

NEW
UGLY

Today everything all lives under certain rules. In terms of design, there are also many principles such as colors, typography, grids, etc. That makes me think why only designs that follow rules can be good design? What is good design? Are there any deliberately ugly designs for certain purposes? That's where this project is born from.

There are many presences of ugliness in our surrounding designs. So I decided to explore the so-called ugly design in various forms and challenge the systems of design rules and structures. This process also challenges me since it's against my aesthetic standards but it exactly makes this project interesting. During the querying process, I dig into this obnoxious language to access the role of ugliness and try to combine it with other forms in my own ways.



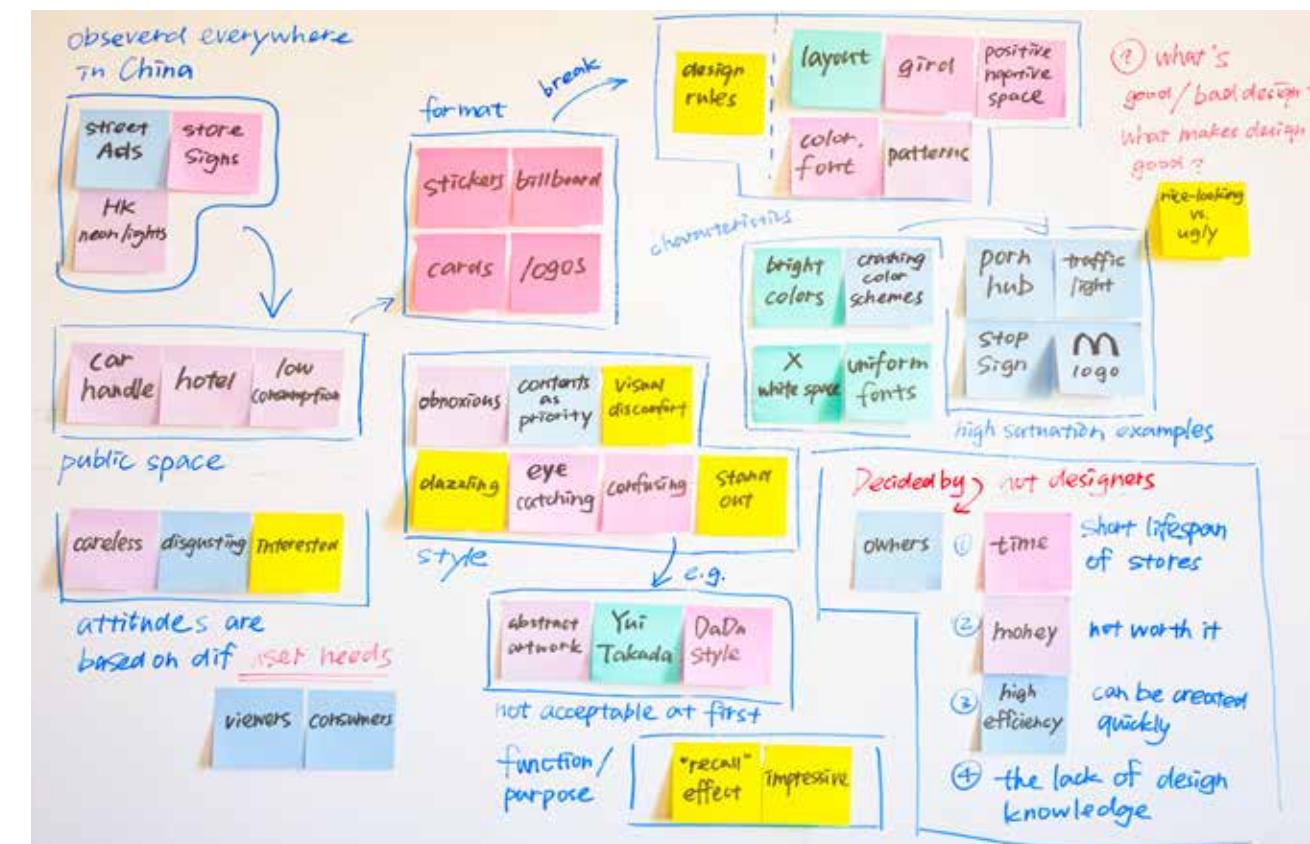
RESEARCH

Inspiration

Ugly small advertisements/flypostings can be observed everywhere in China. They are considered as bad design and scars of cities because they are illegally posted or scrawled in public places and large in number. That makes me wonder why these ads are so "ugly" but still prevalent?



Exploring the Reasons



- It's decided by **shop owners**, not designers
- Aesthetic is not valued by both **viewers** and **owners**

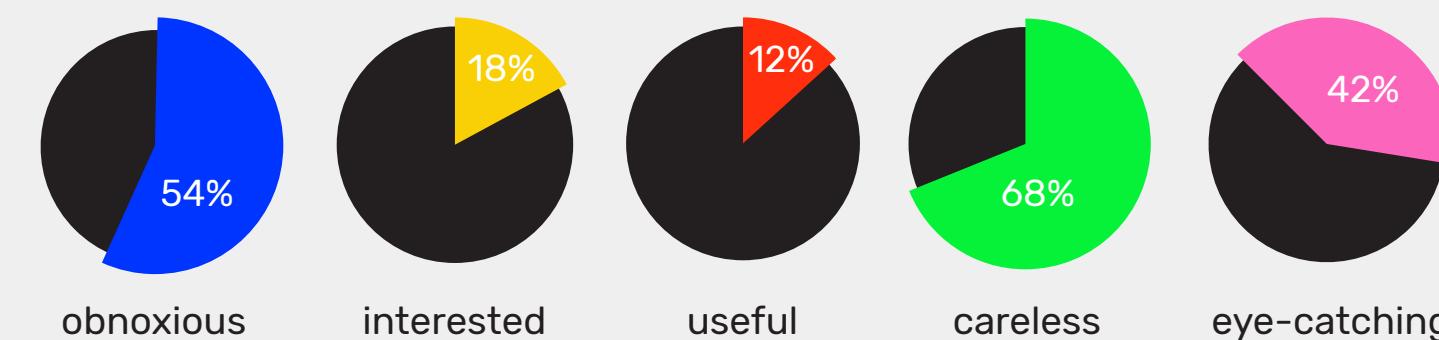
Conclusion

Their careless attitudes towards the design quality lead to the situation that this "ugly" design is everywhere in China. However, people always criticize it as bad design but never explores them. Raising the question **why can only visually pleasing design be good design? Should we call them ugly just because they break the design rules?** So I'm going to dig into the recognized "bad" design and access the roles of ugliness and beauty in various forms.

Questionnaire

Viewers

How do you feel about them?



Where did you see them?



What are they about?

unlock service	restaurants/stores	household service
child trafficking	prostitution service	loan service
certification service		illegal

Owners

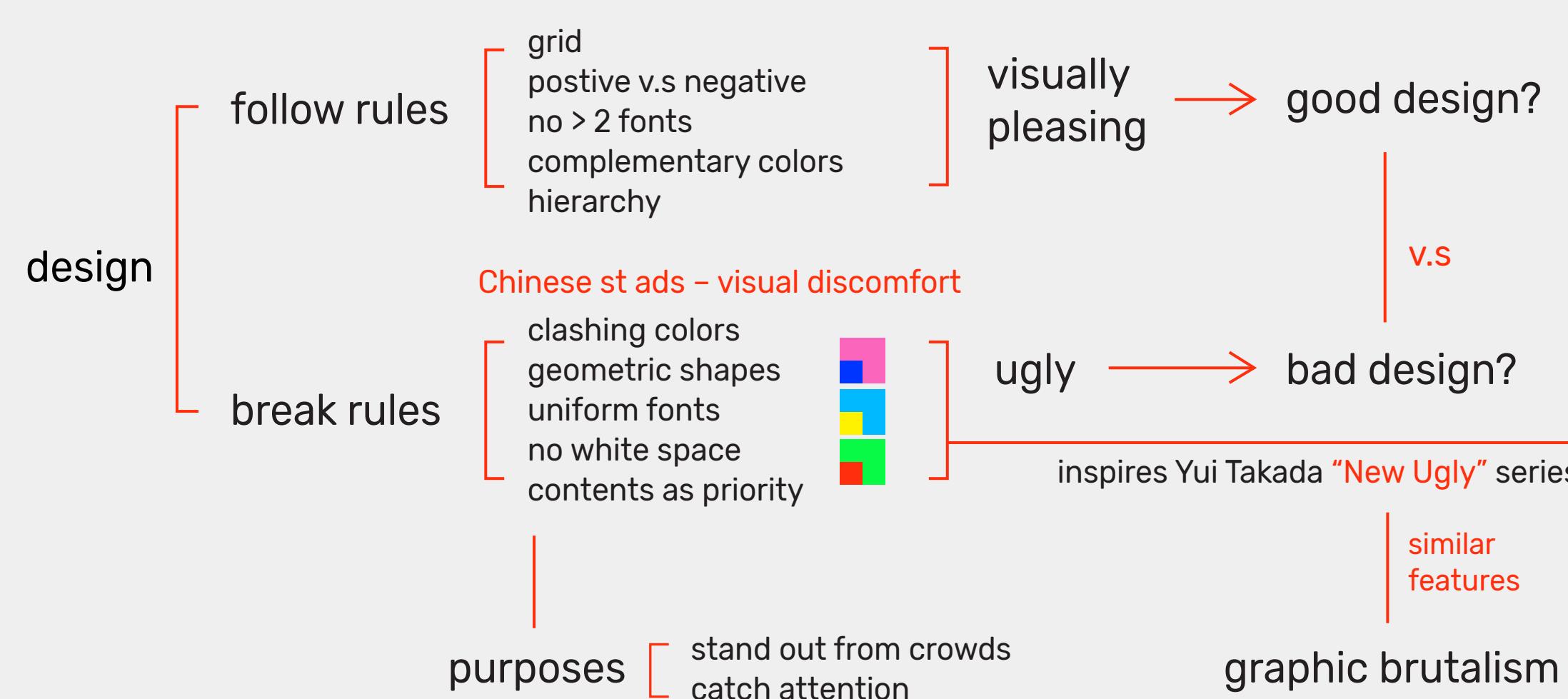
Why do you prefer this design?

- 1 **Budget-friendly**
Small individual shop owners cannot afford high-quality designs
- 2 **Profitable**
Some shops have short lifespans & products are in low-quality
- 3 **High-efficient**
It can be mass-produced quickly and doesn't need much design expertise
- 4 **Visually-stimulating**
Owners lack design knowledge and don't have brand awareness
- 5 **Unregulated**
Illegal info is not allowed to be posted in the formal billboards but less regulated on small ads

Mindmap

Why can only visually pleasing design be good design?

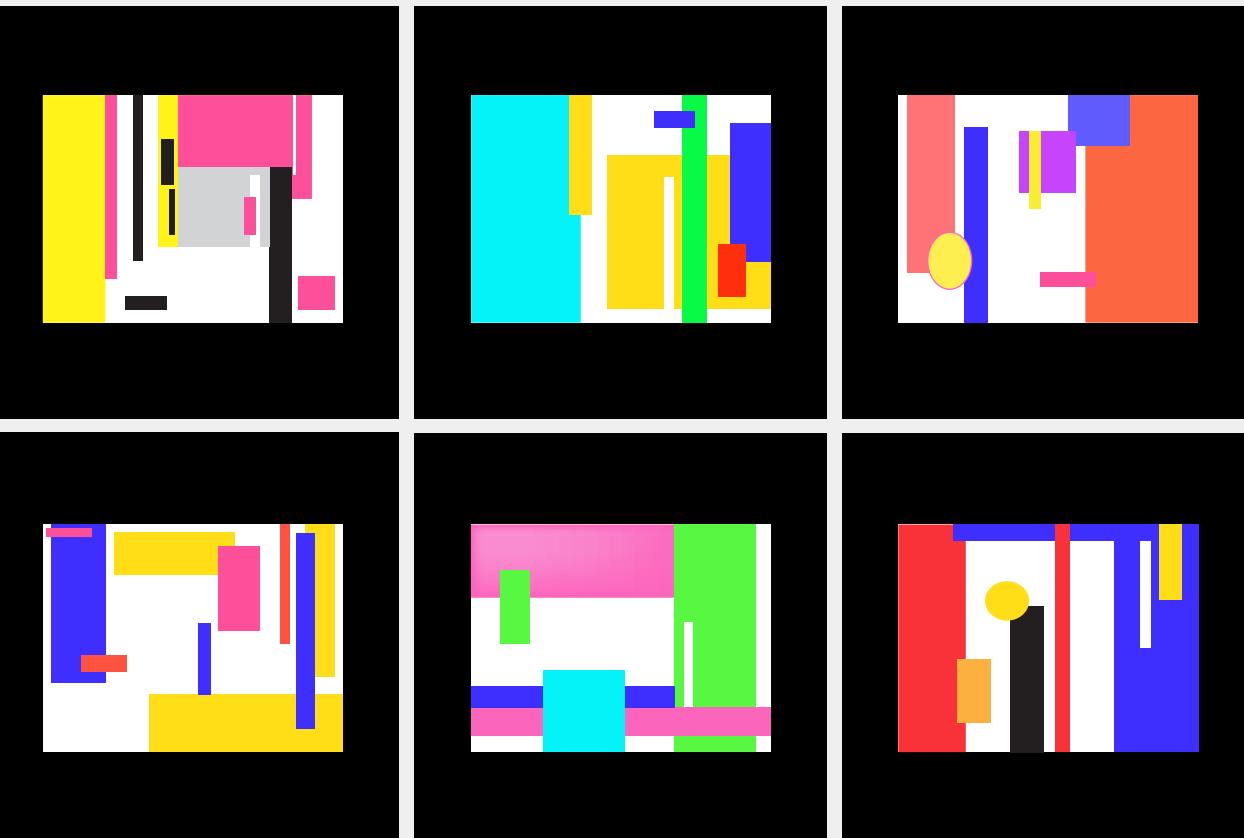
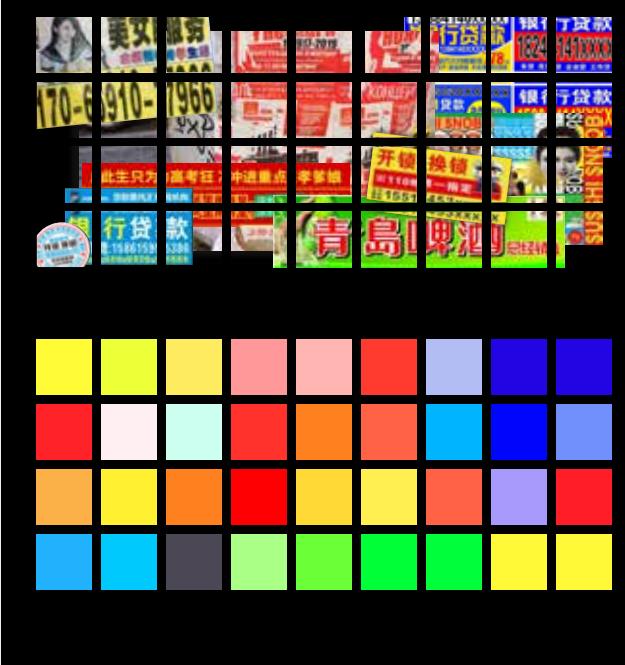
Why is ugly design necessarily the bad design?



DESIGN PROCESS

Stage 1: Color Collage of Ugly Ads

I remove the text to find corresponding colors and rearrange color patches to see if they would look good without text.

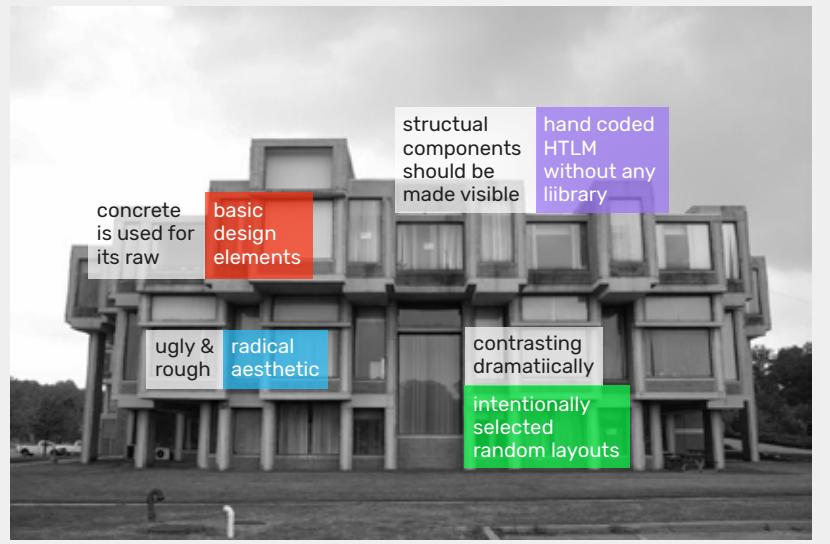


However, influenced by Yui Takada, this style is too similar to his "new ugly" series. So I explore the "ugliness" of graphic brutalism style (a rising ugly web design trend) in the next stage.

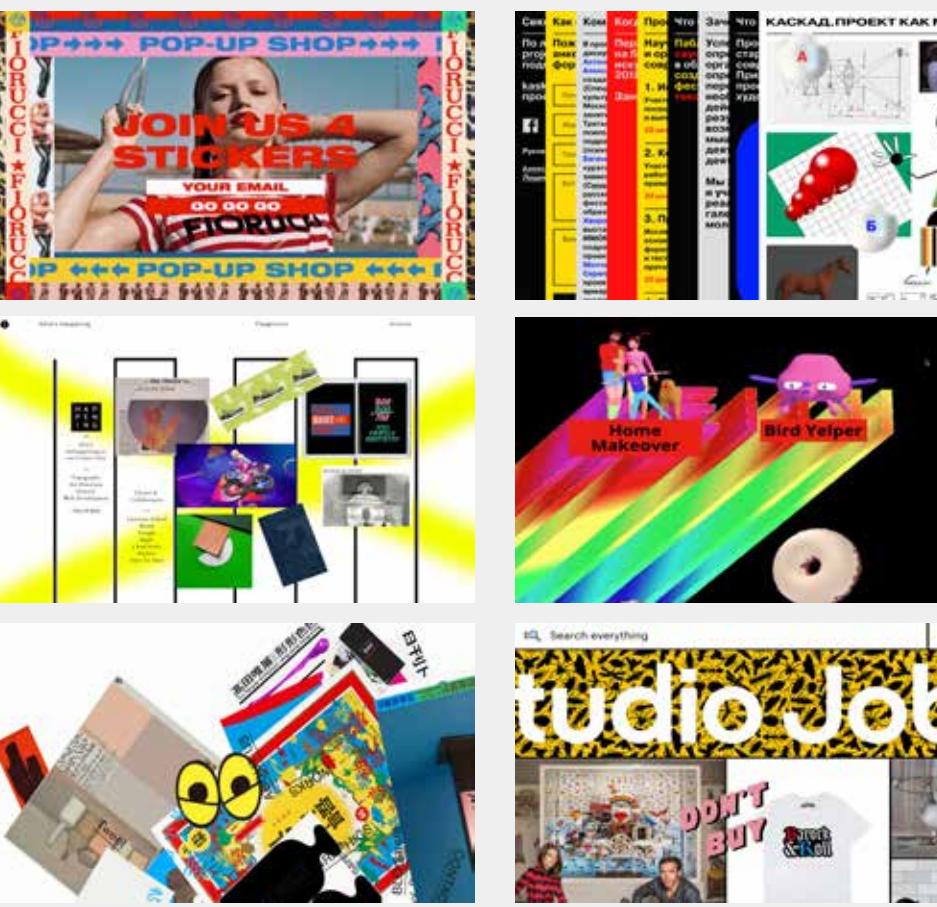
Stage 2: Graphic Brutalism



Graphic brutalism is inspired by the 1950s brutalist architectures, which are characterized by their heavy and 'ruthless' appearance.



Brutalism in digital design is in a raw, haphazard, or unadorned style, which echoes the features in architectures. Both of them shake designers out of our comfort zones.



Stage 3: Experiments with Brutalist Elements

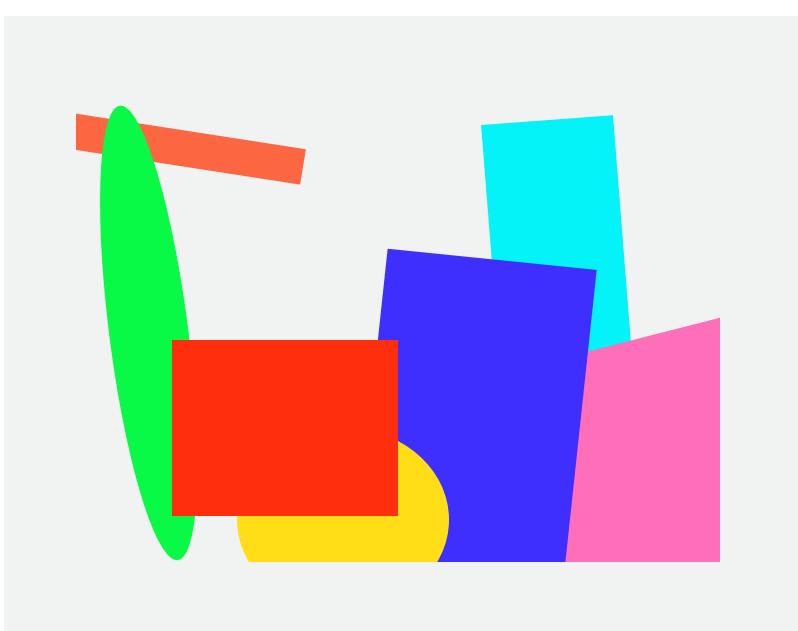
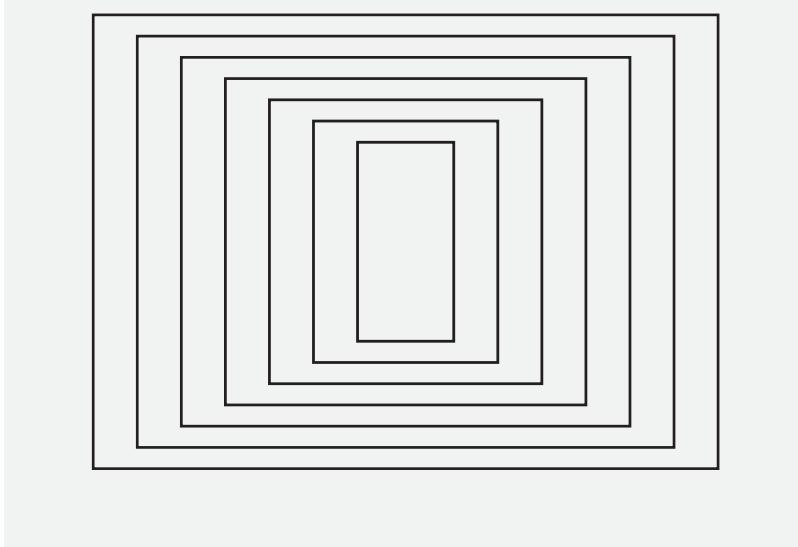
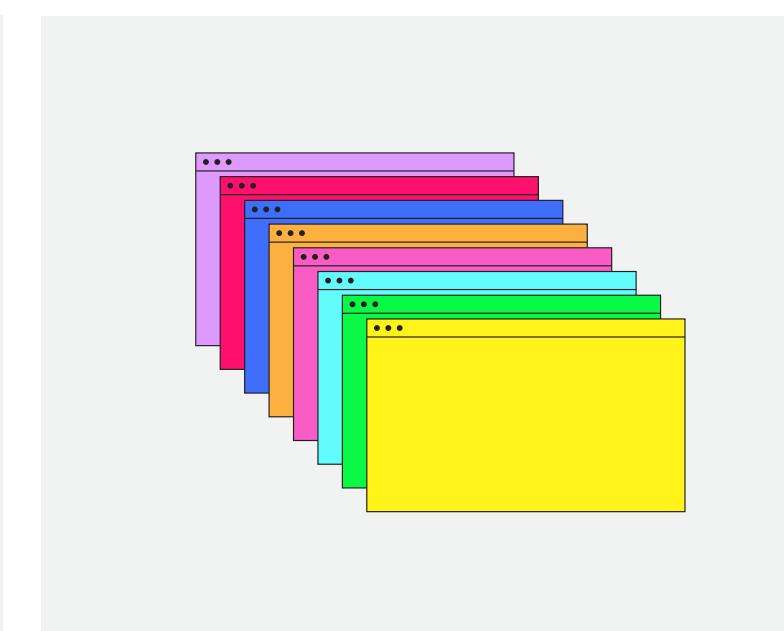
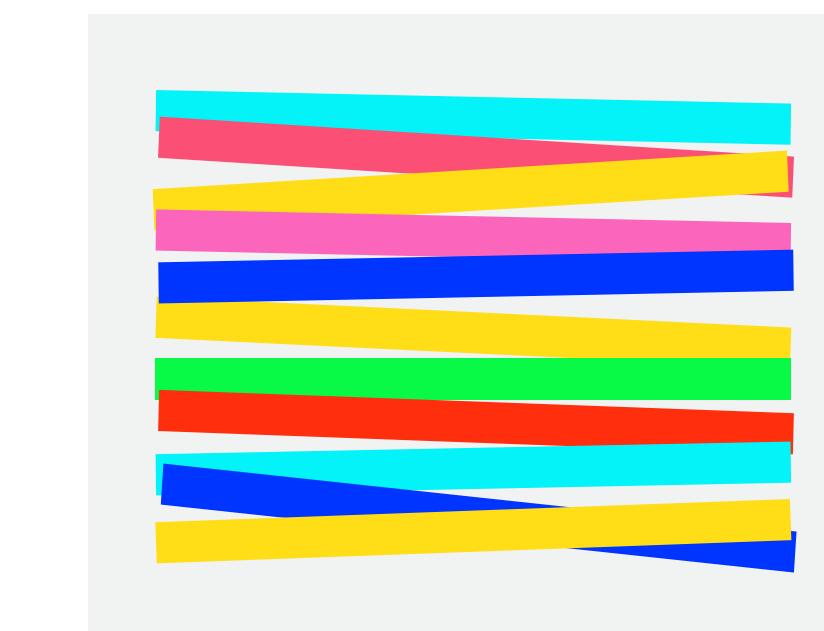
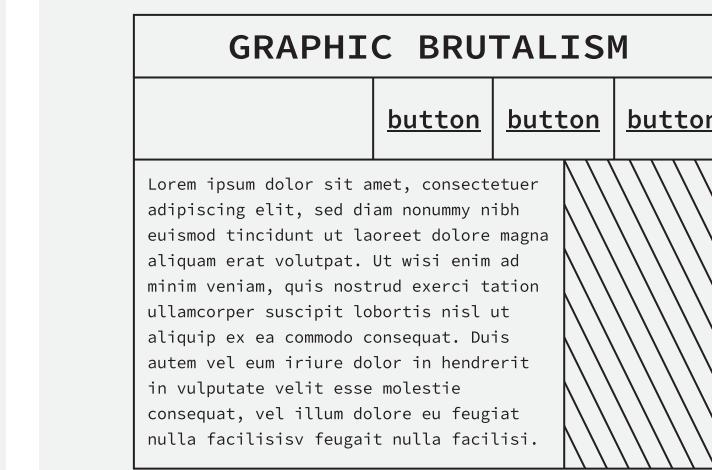
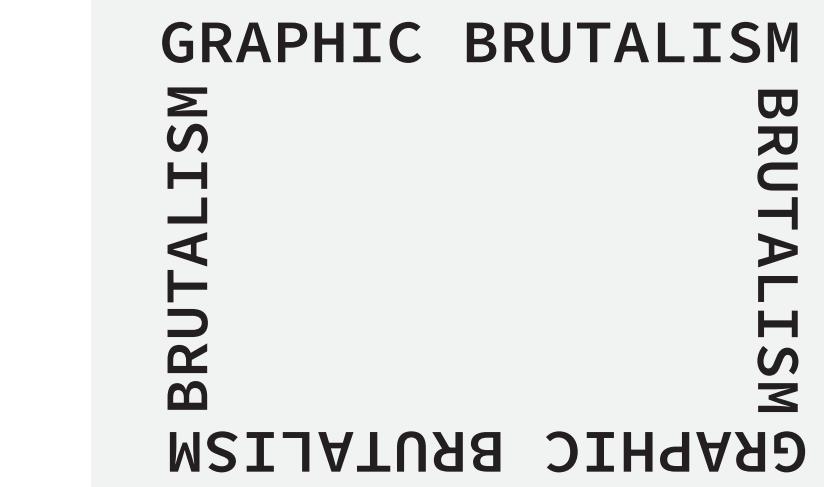
The rise of graphic brutalism is because it gives designers creative freedom which they don't normally get. There're no rules to follow and designers are free to experiment with forms, contents, and anything. By rejects rationalism and functionality, brutalist elements can be defined as

freestyle ugly hover effects user-unfriendly



- HTML Style
- Garish Color Schemes
- Odd/System fonts
- Weirdly-placed/overlapping elements
- Pop Culture Elements
- Broken hierarchy/grids

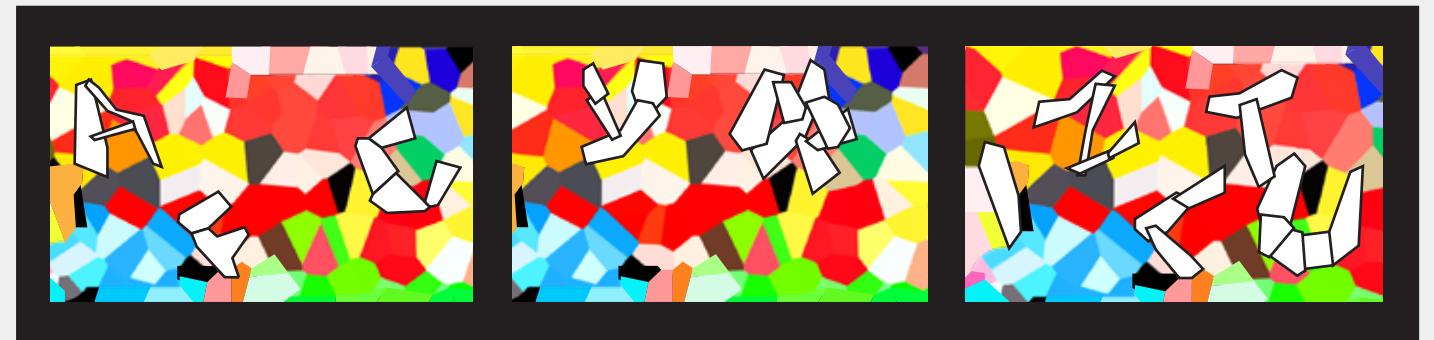
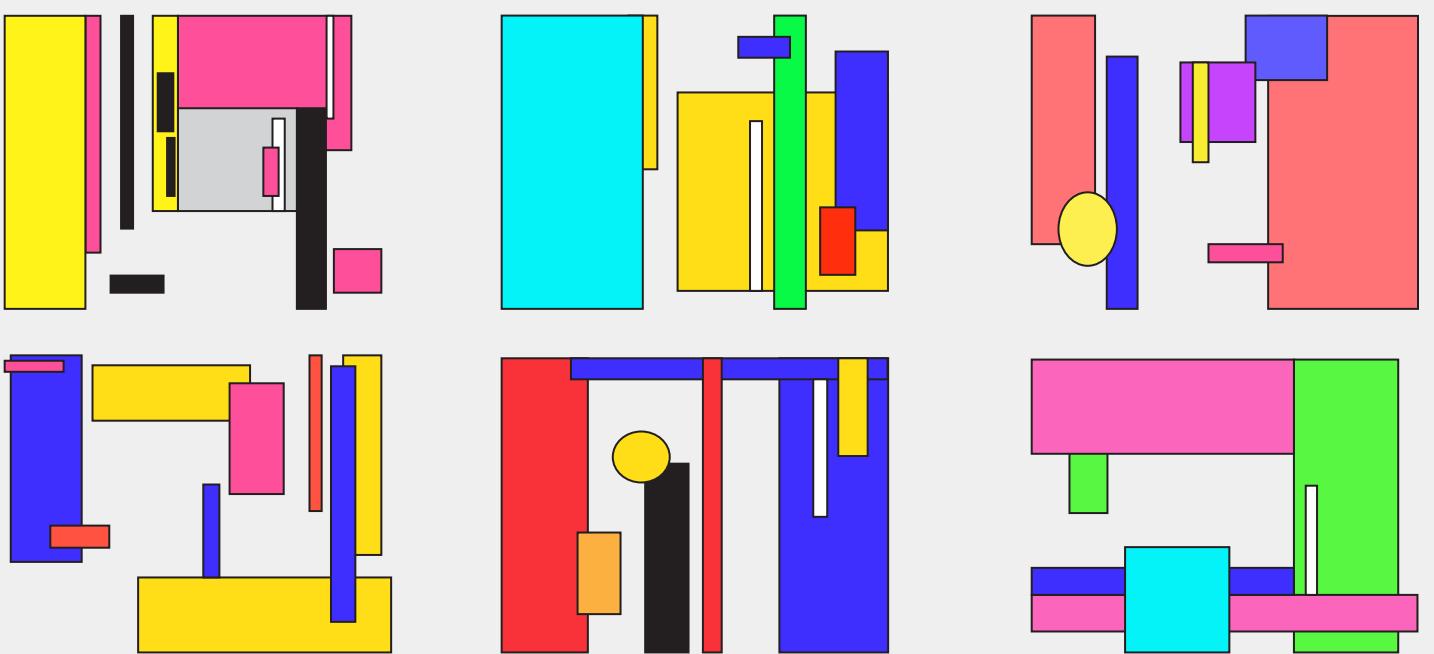
STAND OUT



SERIES 1: LETTER DESIGN

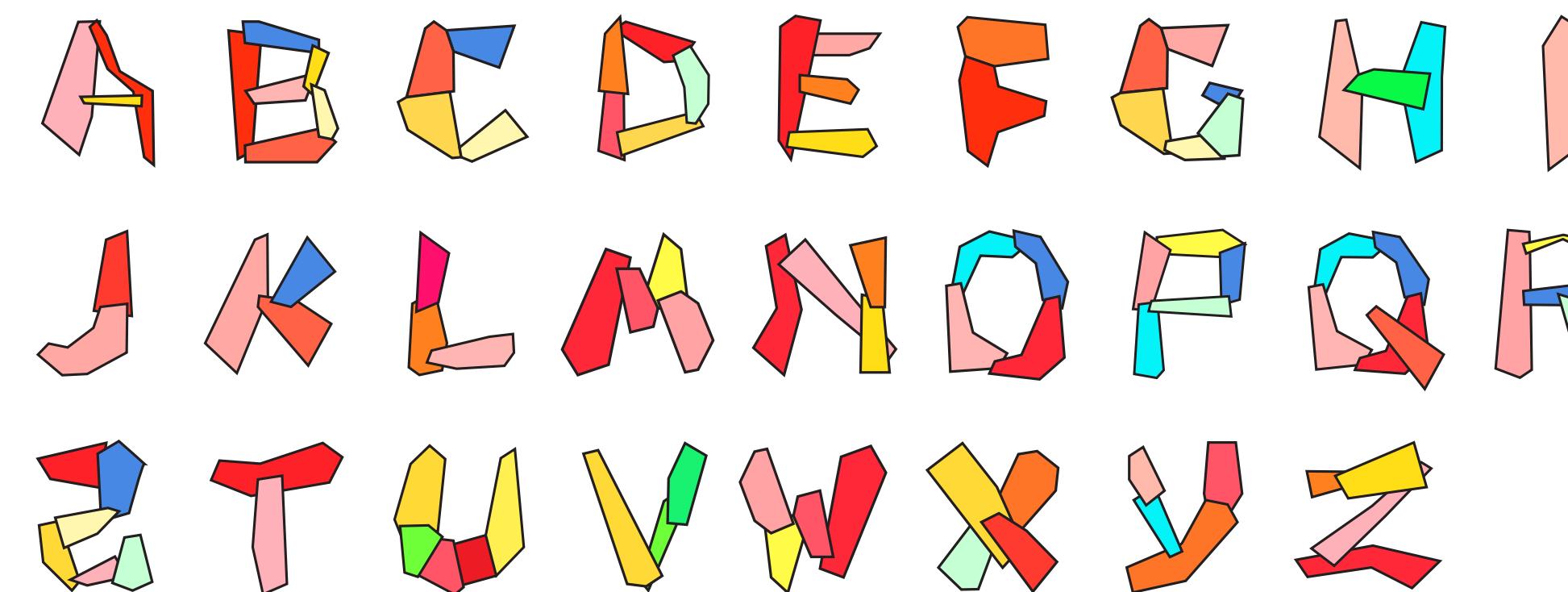
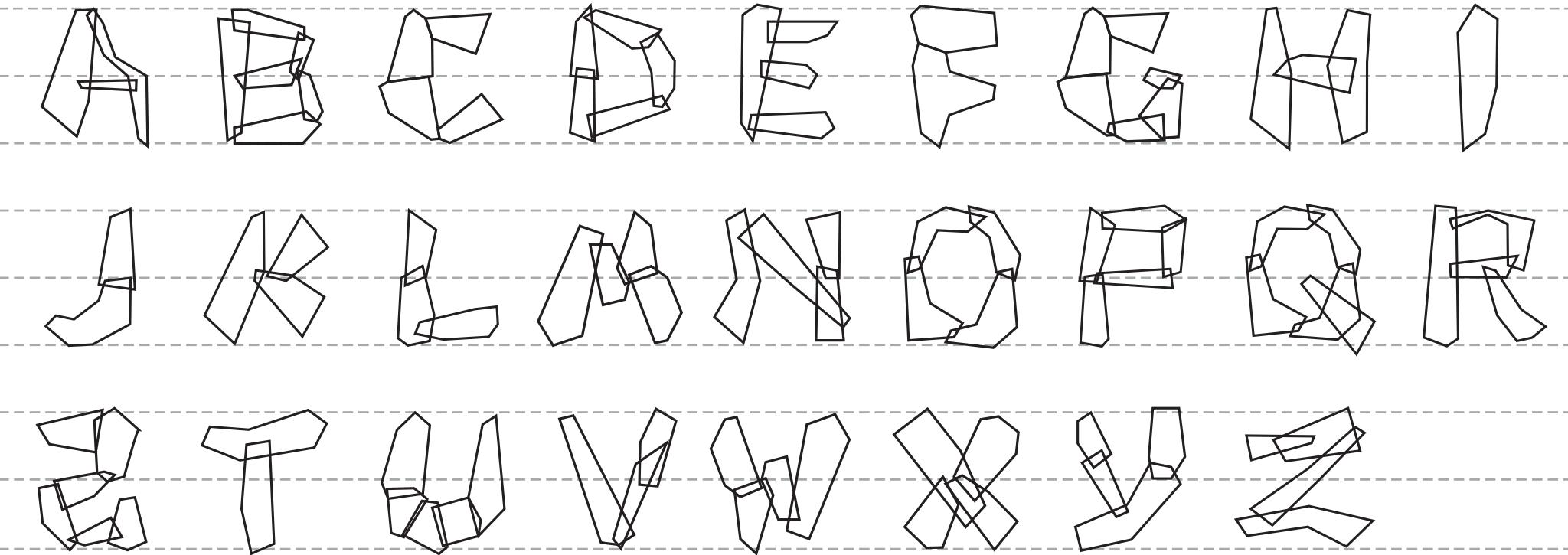
Concept

To get out of the traditional perfect geometrics, I twist color collages and integrate into a big one with less white space. Its geometric shapes and bright colors are also the primary characteristics of graphic brutalism. So I use these features to create a new font family to echo the new ugly style.

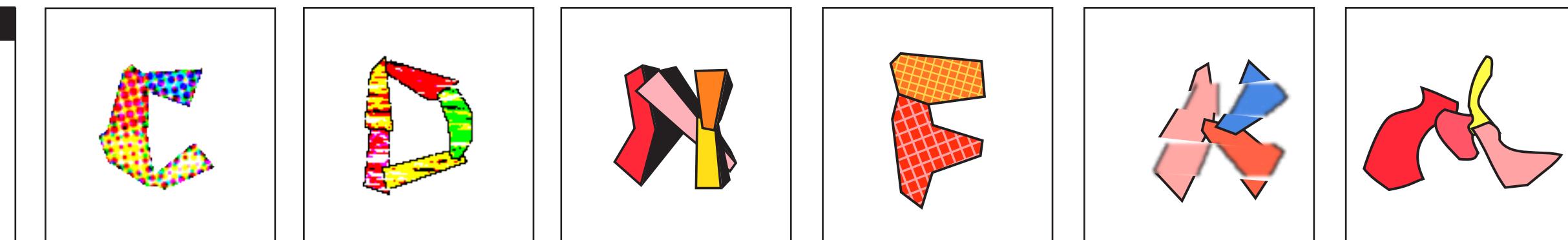
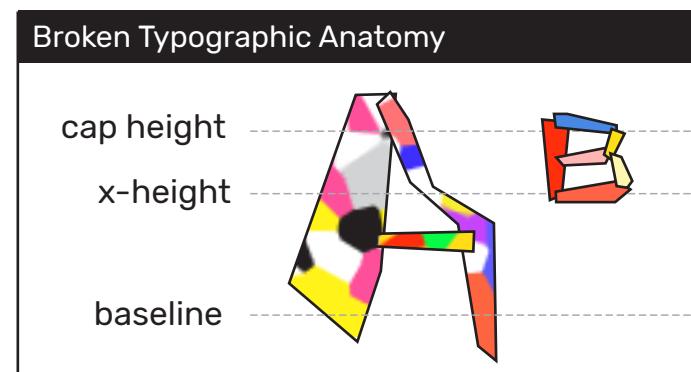


Experiments

Traditional Letter Design

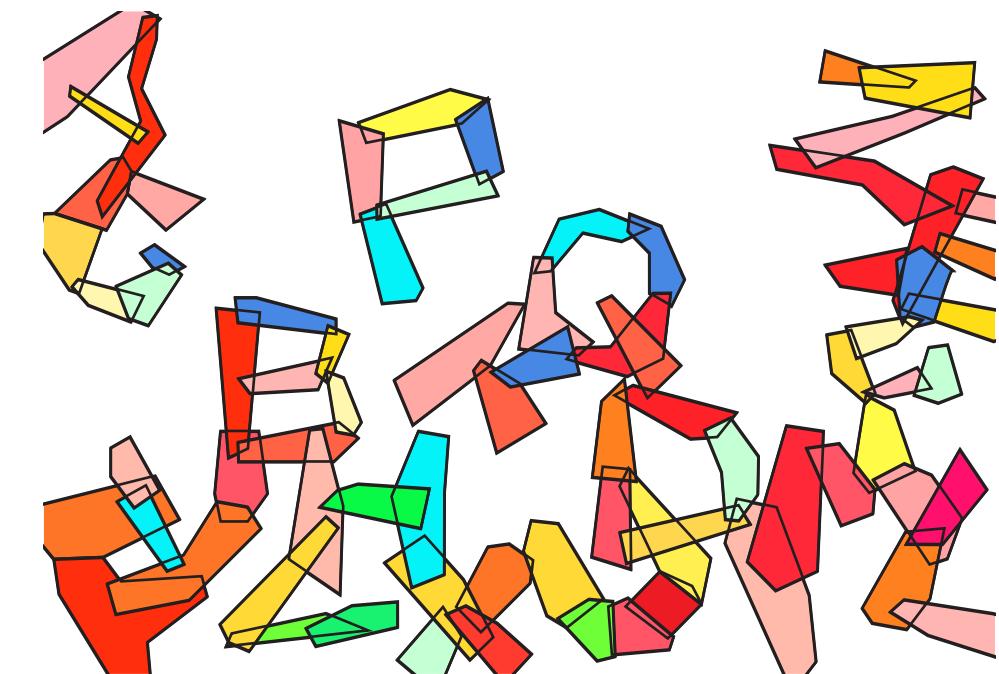


Experiments with Pop Culture Elements

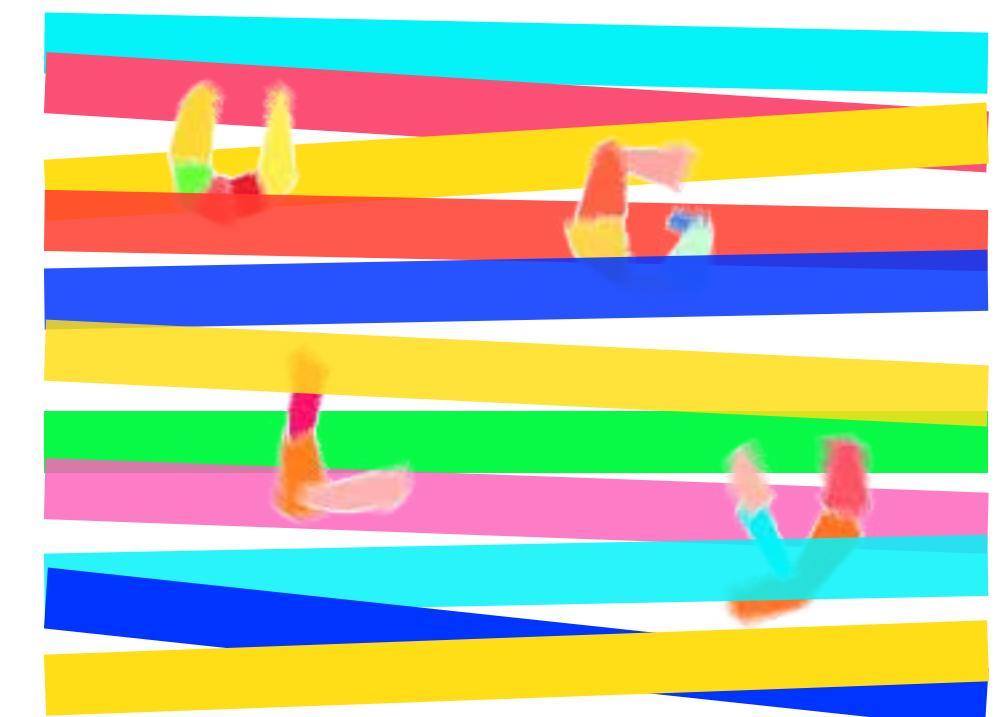


Experiments with Graphic Brutalism

Chaotic layouts



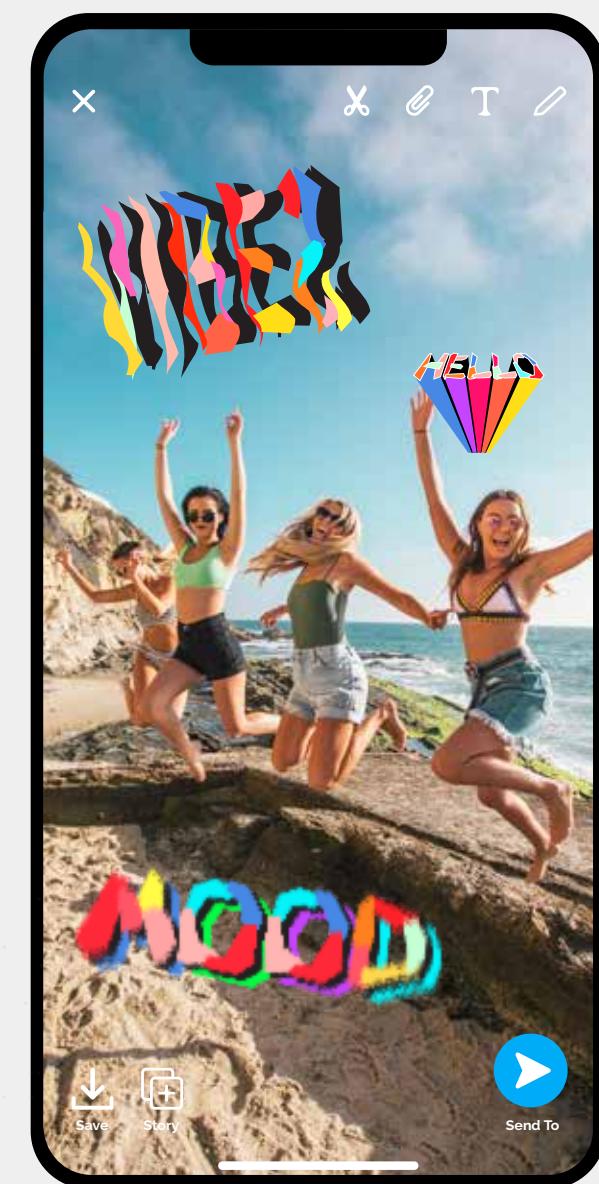
Garish Visual Effects



SERIES 1: TYPOGRAPHIC DESIGN

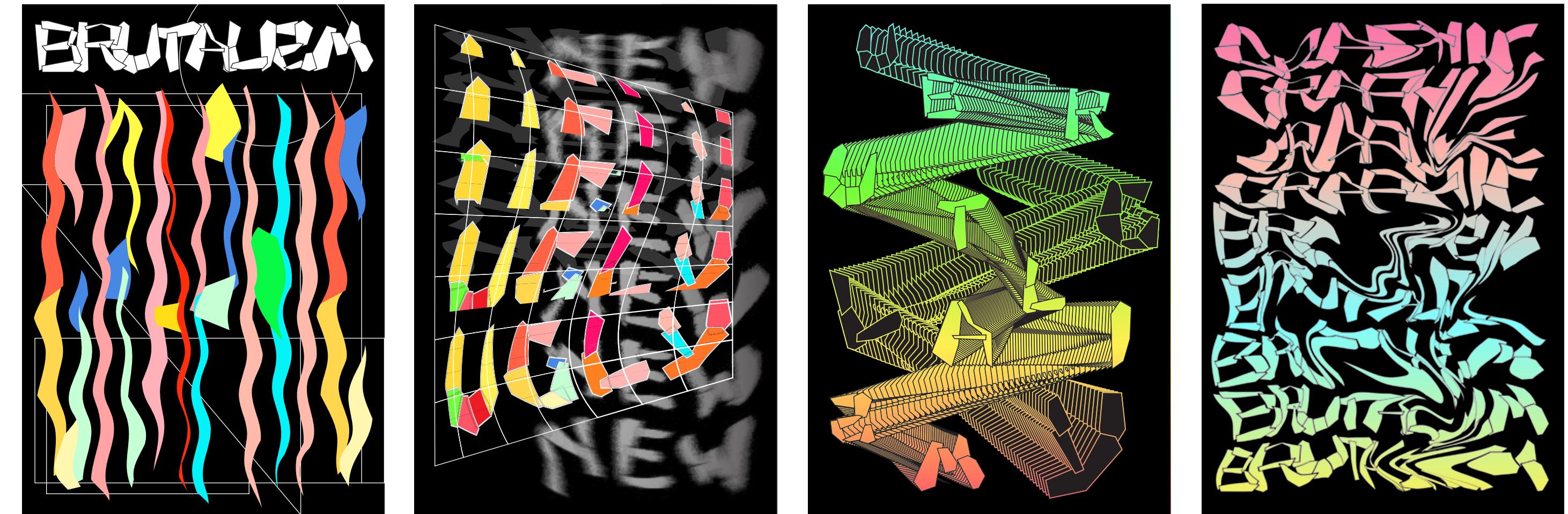
Letter Stickers

Since the new style is mostly known to designers, people are not familiar with it and would misunderstand it as a "bad" design. So, based on the font family I created and the corresponding color scheme, I design a series of stickers in Snapchat that is one of the popular apps to make people better know this style.



Typographic Poster

I also use the font family to create typographic posters, which break out the traditional poster layout and typesetting. I focus more on the concept of **distortion** and **irregularity** to walk out the comfort zone of typographic posters and get out the restriction of grid, space, hierarchy, etc.



"Imperfect Beauty"



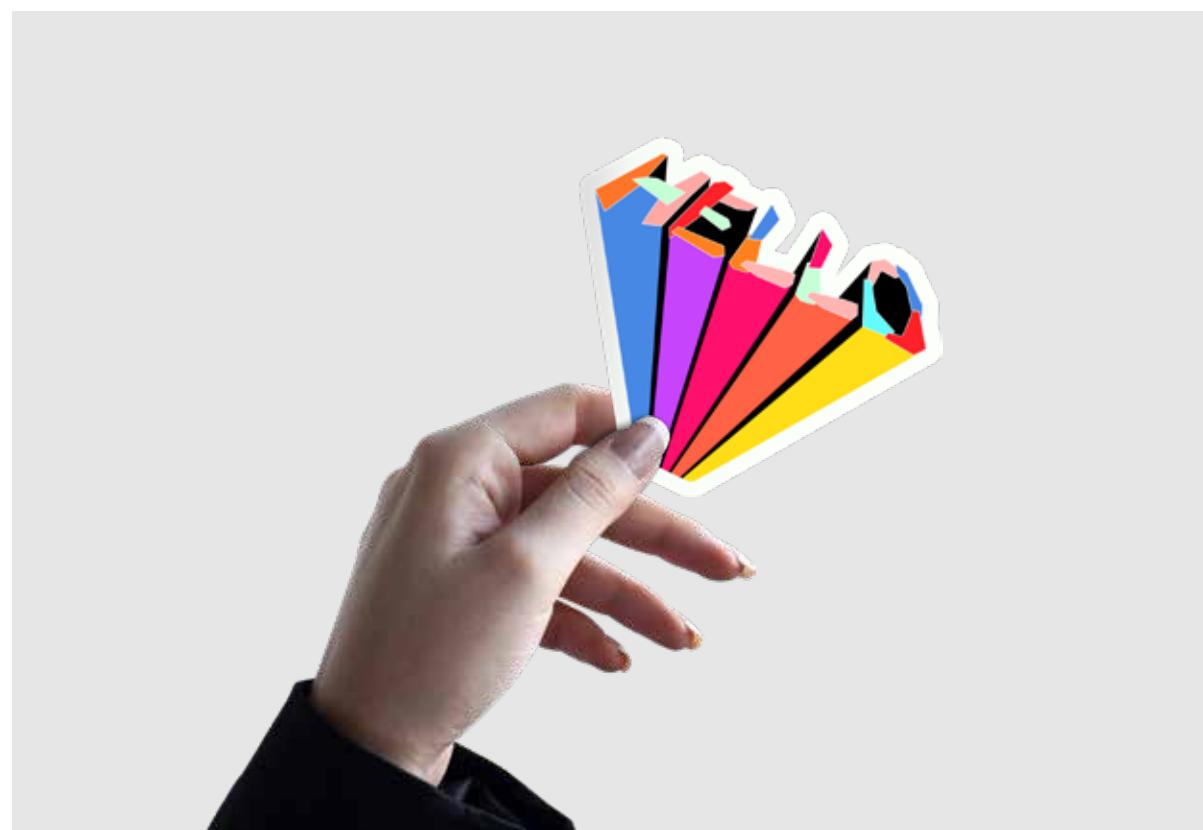
1

2

3

I make the posters ripped to make them feel more like street ads design. Also, street ads are seen as **city scars**. Inspired by this concept, I put the ripped pieces onto paintings as the **scars of paintings** to access the role of ugliness in other forms. While street ads are always recognized as "ugliness" and famous paintings are recognized as "beauty," I want to combine them to see how it looks like in terms of the concept of **imperfect beauty**.

SERIES 1: OUTCOMES



The poster design also resonates with the style of wall torn advertisements/stickers and graffiti on the wall.



SERIES 2: MOTION DESIGN

While the first series focuses more on the ideology, this series will look into some typical "ugly" existing designs, like the Chinese flyposting I mentioned. They are always damaged and in low-pixel. I redesign them with the elements I derived from broken-rule styles.

Stage I

Inspiration: new ugly style



geometric shapes

clashing colors

text as priority

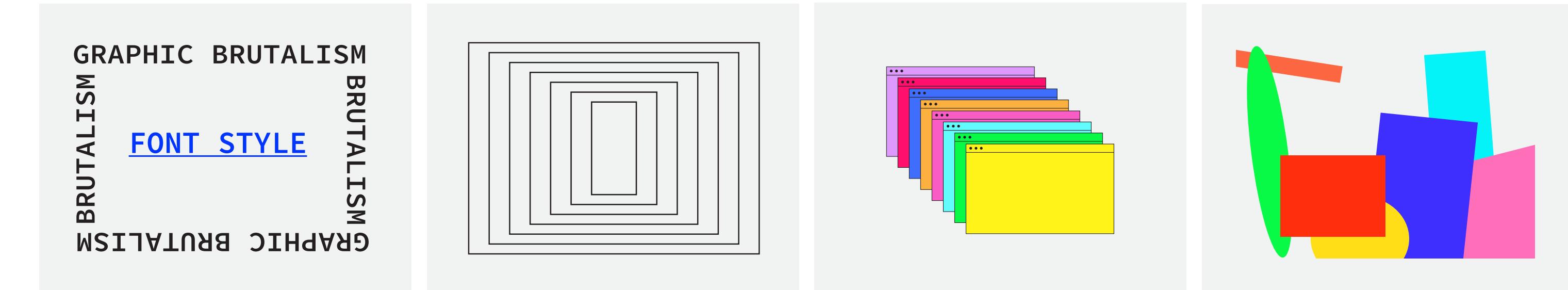
Outcome



Stage II

Then I make them combine with other forms - UI (brutalist web design) and motions.

Inspiration: brutalist web elements



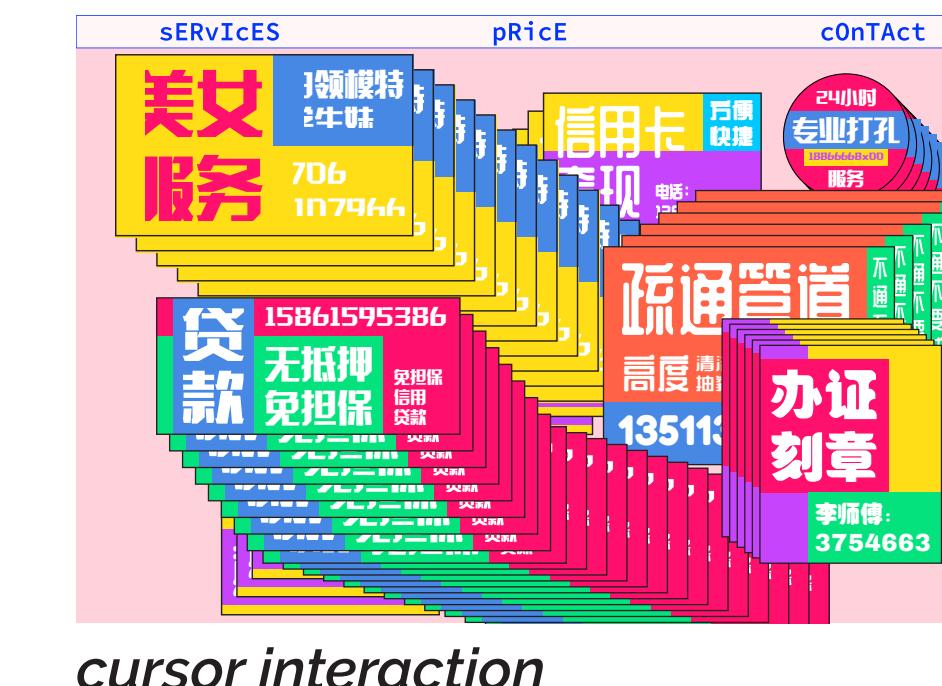
Outcome: motion graphics



cursor interaction

hidden and hover interaction

background pattern animation & click interaction



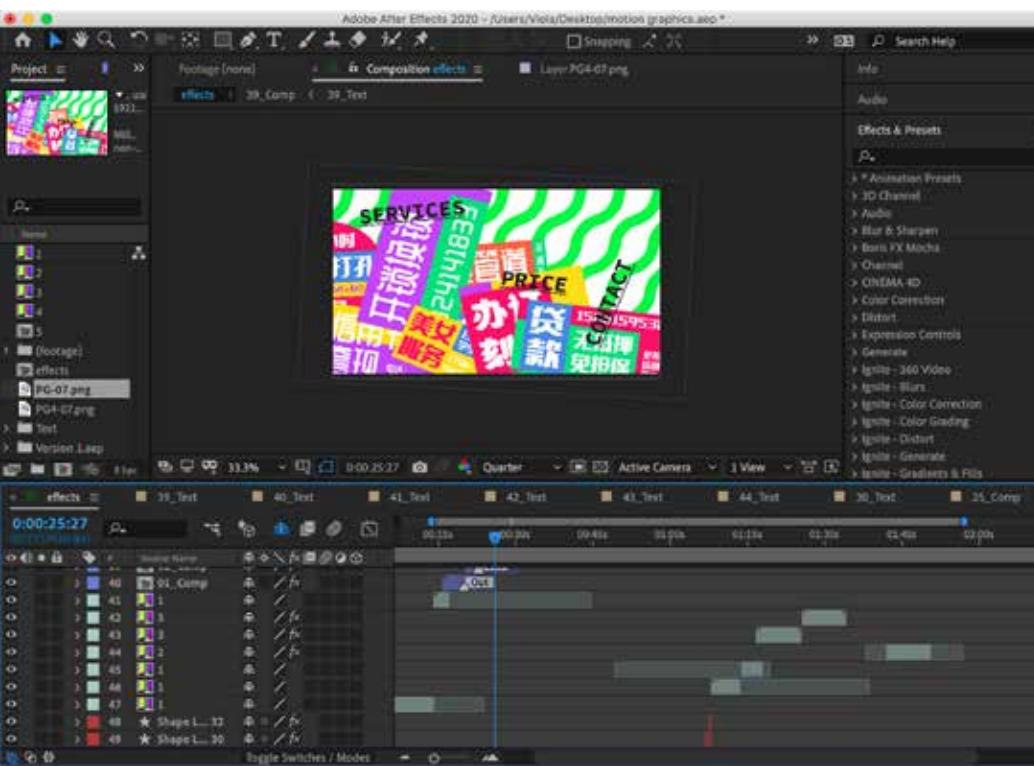
cursor interaction



scrolling animation

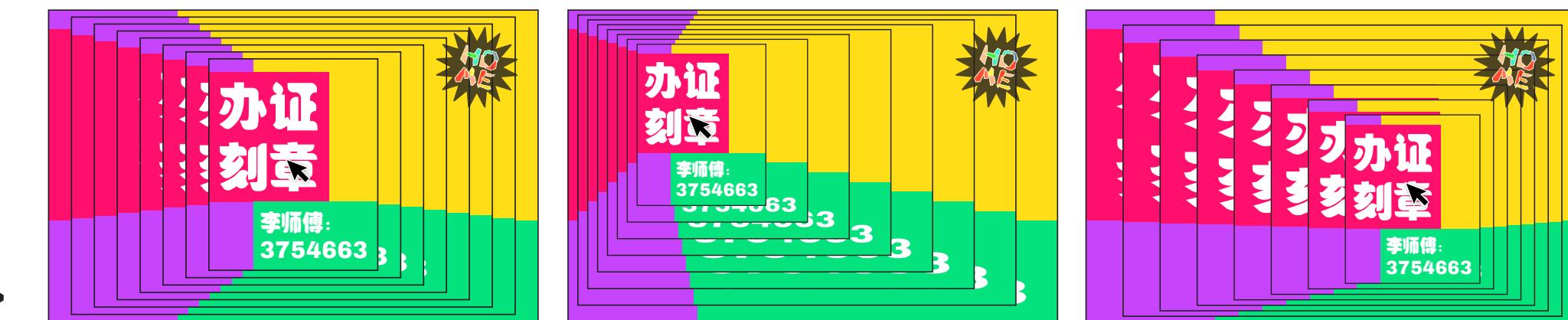
SERIES 2: MOTION DESIGN

Process



Animation

Since PDF cannot play the animation, I use **stop motion** instead to exhibit the changes.



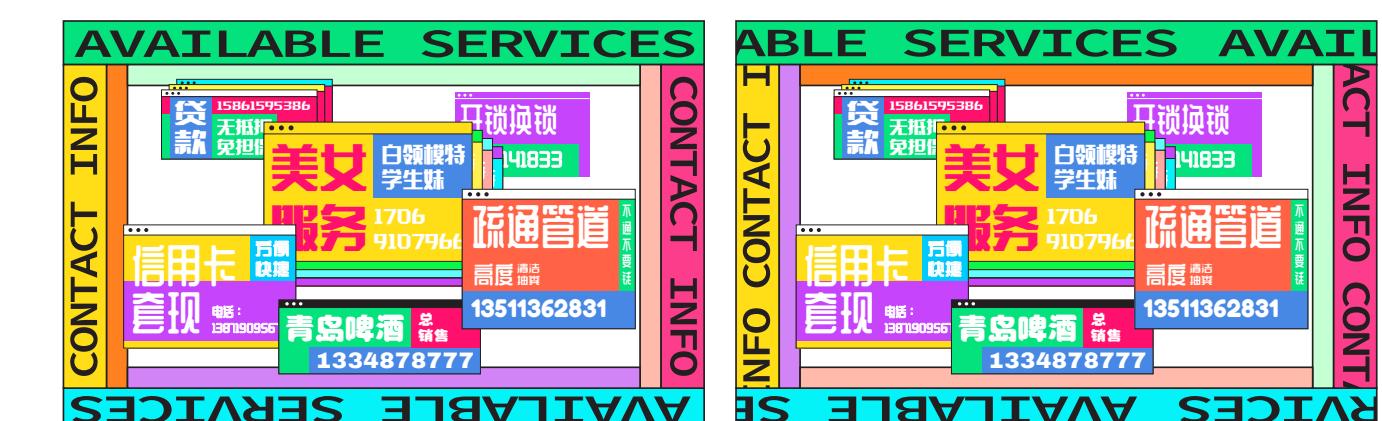
cursor
interaction:
shapes
move
with the
mouse



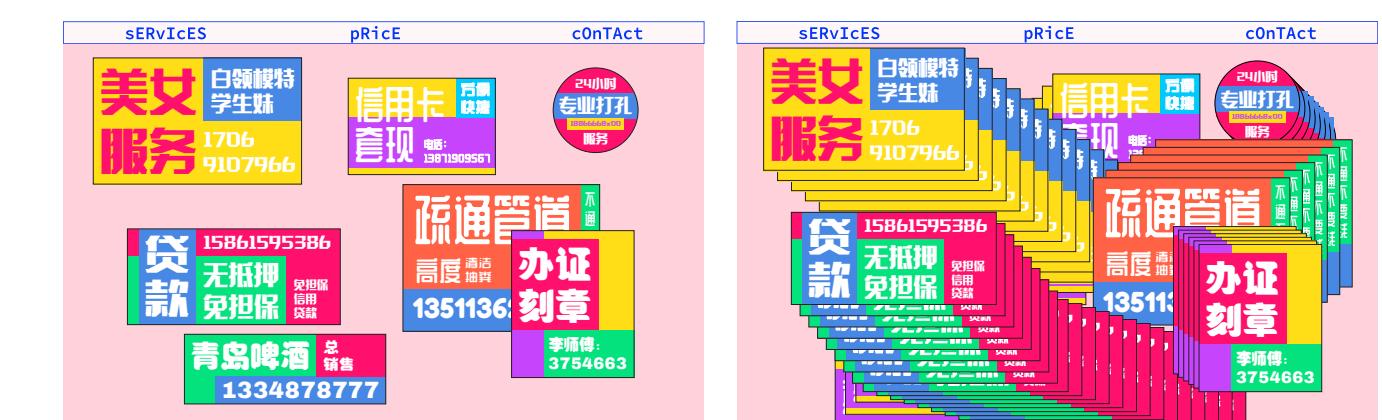
bg patterns
and layouts
change with
each click



hidden
and hover
interaction:
images appear
when hovering



scrolling animation:
text banners scroll
automatically



cursor animation:
images move with the
mouse and leave
behind a trail of images