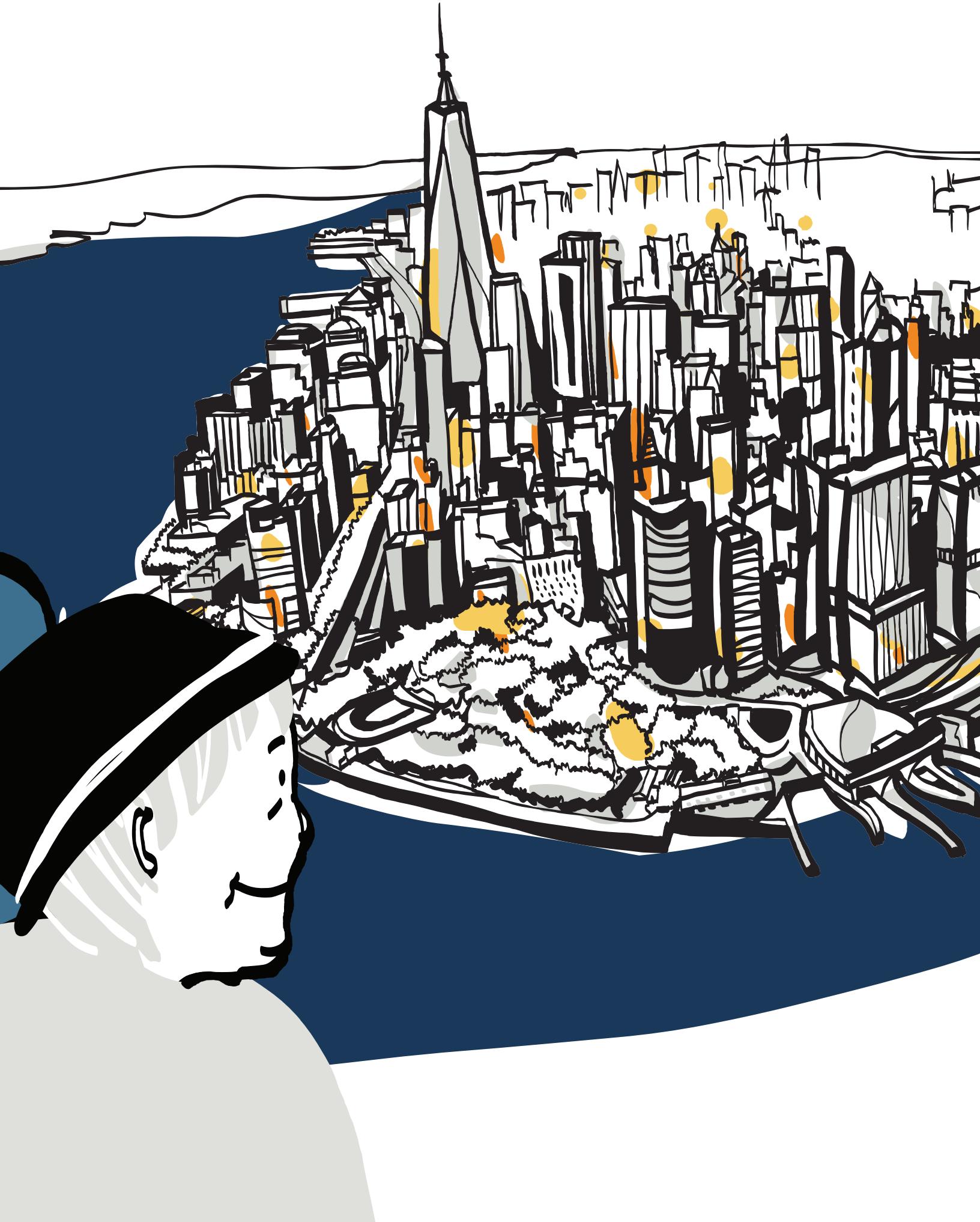


# あいうえお Onomatopoeia Oncation

Japanese onomatopoeia visualization





## Background

I started planning my thesis in November 2019, when I had no idea what would be happening in the coming year. After New York was shut down because of the COVID-19 pandemic, I really struggled with working on my project since one of my main themes is depicting the lively people and vigorous power of NYC. I asked myself the meaning of illustrating dancing people on the subway and crazy energy in Times Square while news kept telling me the enormous numbers of deaths and showing photos of empty cities every day. Now, it's been almost a month after the lockdown started, and nobody really knows yet how long this crisis will last and what will come after this. However, I could say, New York will not be the same as before and after this event. Although I have not found answers for anything so far, I am determined to move on and I would like to share with viewers an optimistic touch of New York City, which I always love, through my creations.

Yuki Collins

April 19, 2020



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## About the Project

### Project

Onomatopoeic expressions (the formation of a word from a sound associated with what is named) are widespread in Japan; however, in some cultures, such as the US, the use of these expressions is often perceived as immature. My project is visualizing Japanese onomatopoeic words as a narrative tool by using illustration and typography and introducing different cultural perspectives on interpretation and the language of sounds and feelings by using Japanese onomatopoeia.

### Story

The protagonist in my animation is my mother, who is in her 70s and living in a small town in the countryside of Japan. Although my mother has never come to New York, I have often been imagining how she would react if she saw people and things in NYC that she has never encountered in her life. So, this is my imagination of my mother's adventure from JFK to Harlem, where I live. Since she doesn't speak English, she feels and expresses sounds and things using Japanese onomatopoeia, which I think could be a universal narrative communication tool.

### Japanese Onomatopoeia

People in Japan from children to adults often use onomatopoeia words in our everyday lives intuitively. The big difference about onomatopoeia between English and Japanese is that while onomatopoeia in English reflects the "sounds" of things, onomatopoeia in Japanese conveys ambiguous phenomena such as feeling and atmosphere.

Giongo

represents actual sound and noise.

Gitaigo

do not resemble sounds but refers to feeling, action, motion, state, or form.

あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

わ  
wa

キーン

キーン

## Kiin

Sound of an airplane

Giongo: sound of objects

Doki Doki

ドキドキ

2 Doki Doki  
Excited

Gitaigo: feeling

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

3 **Iso Iso**  
Happy and lighthearted

*Gitaigo: action*

perapera  
perapera  
perapera  
perapera  
perapera  
perapera  
perapera  
perapera  
perapera  
perapera

ペラ  
ペラ  
ペラ  
ペラ  
ペラ  
ペラ  
ペラ  
ペラ  
ペラ  
ペラ

4 Pera Pera  
Fluently speaking a foreign language

Giongo: human sounds

あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

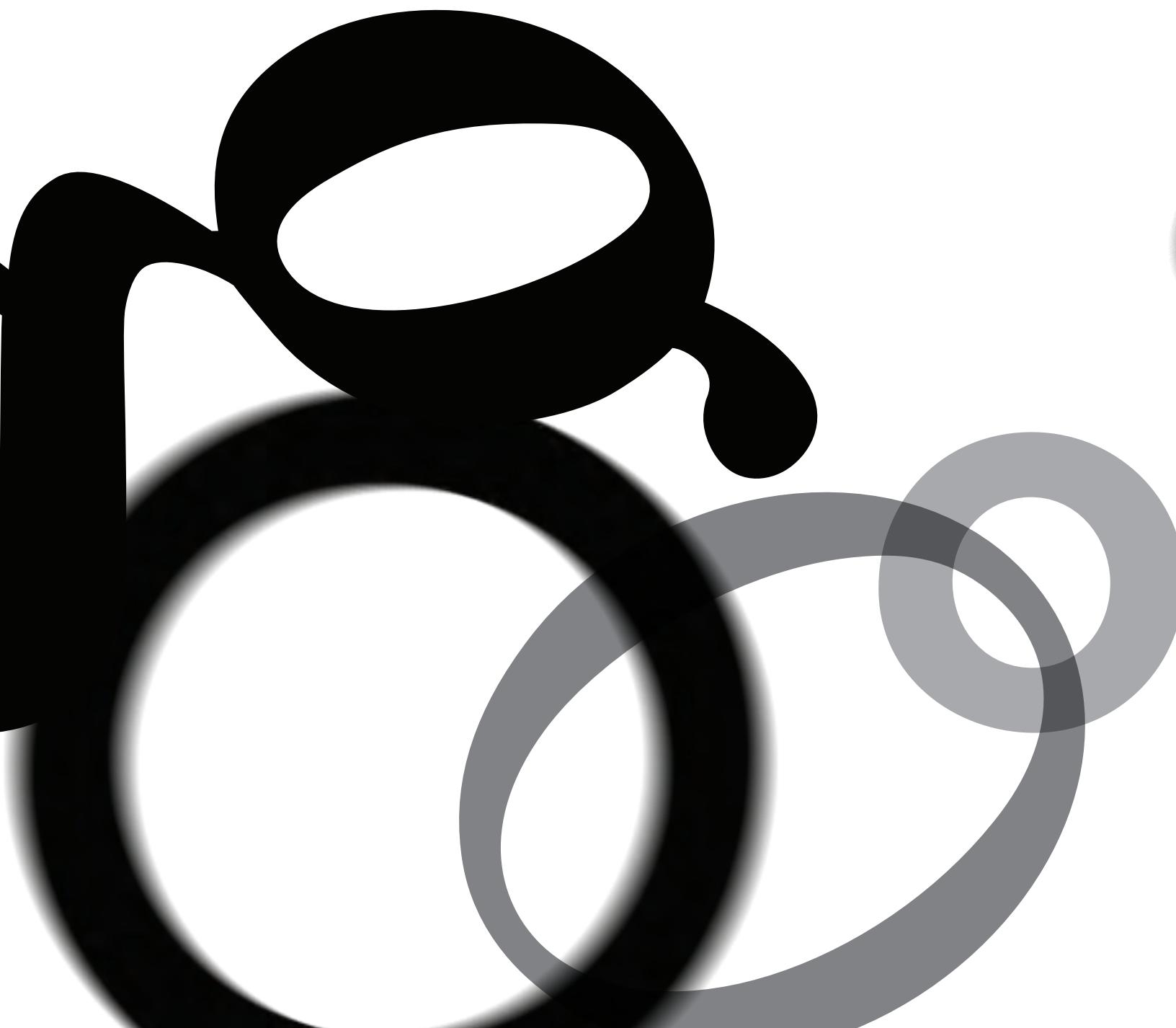
わ  
wa

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa5 Gooo  
Gust of wind

Giongo: nature sounds

おう

ぐ



おそるおそる

おそるおそる

おそる

おそる

おそる

おそる

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

6 Osoru Osoru  
Fearfully

Gitaigo: feeling

Tsuun

つーん

7 Tsuun  
Unfriendly

Gitaigo: state

a  
a

ka  
ka

sa  
sa

ta  
ta

na  
na

ha  
ha

ma  
ma

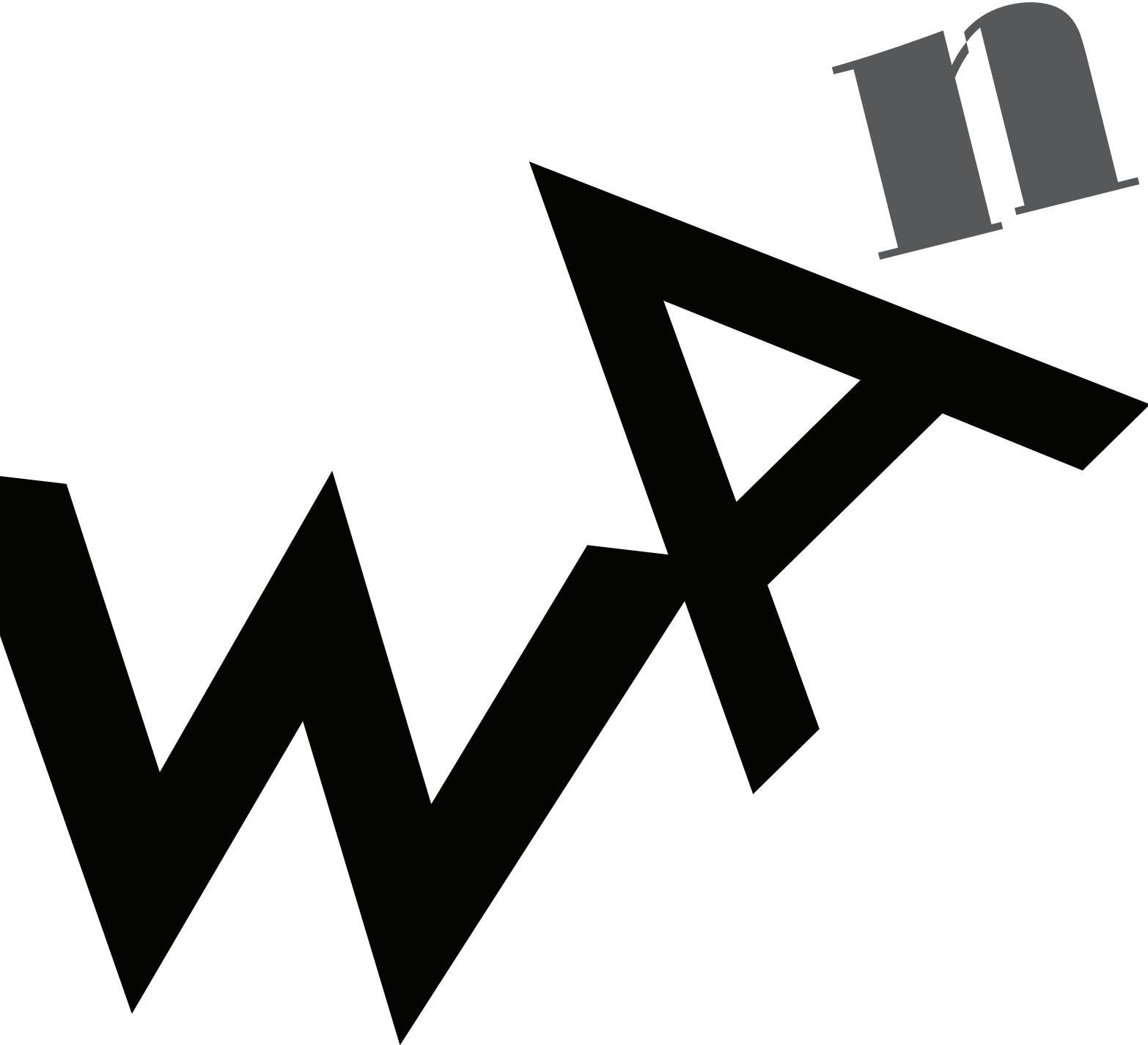
ya  
ya

ra  
ra

wa  
wa

N U U  
N U U  
N U U  
N U U

ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ୟାନୀ



○ Wan

Dog barking

Giongo: animal sounds



あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

わ  
wa

uro  
cho  
ro  
cho  
ro  
cho

ウロ チョロ  
うろ ちろ

10 Uro Choro  
Wanders around

Gitaigo: action

あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

わ  
wa

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

11 Een Een  
Cry

Giongo: human sounds

een  
een

え～ん  
え～ん

gatA<sub>n</sub>  
gatA<sub>n</sub>  
gatA<sub>n</sub>  
gatA<sub>n</sub>  
gatA<sub>n</sub>  
gatA<sub>n</sub>  
gatA<sub>n</sub>

to<sub>n</sub>  
to<sub>n</sub>  
to<sub>n</sub>  
to<sub>n</sub>  
to<sub>n</sub>  
to<sub>n</sub>  
to<sub>n</sub>

ガターン  
ゴトーン

12 Gatan Goton  
Sound of train

Giongo: sound of objects

mecha kucha

13 Mecha Kucha

Mess

Gitaigo: state

滅茶苦茶

あ  
aか  
ka

14 Taji Taji  
Confused

Gitaigo: feeling

さ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

t a j i t a j i

タ ジ タ ジ

# YUKKURI

15 Yukkuri  
Slow down

*Gitaigo: motion*

ゆっ  
く

く

り

あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

わ  
wa

Yattoko Dokkoi

16 Yattoko Dokkoi  
Barely

Gitaigo: feeling

やつこい



## 17 Moku Moku

Volume of smoke

*Gitaigo: form of objects*

あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

わ  
wa

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

RA  
N  
RAN

らんらん

19 Ran Ran

Twinkling

Gitaigo: state

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

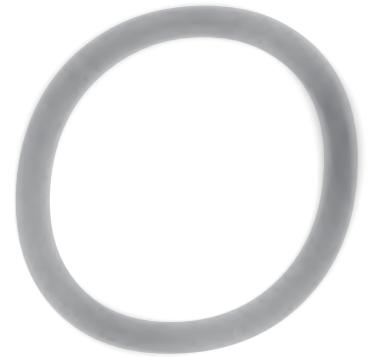
20 Guu  
Growl

*Giongo: human sounds*





H

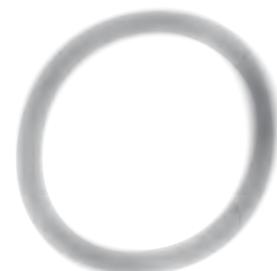


a

K

k

H



a

ホ

力

ホ

力

22 Hoka Hoka  
Steaming and looks tasty

Gitaigo: state

mug  
mug

23 Mugu Mugu

Chewing

Gitaigo: action

むぐ  
むぐ

a  
a

ka  
ka

sa  
sa

ta  
ta

na  
na

ha  
ha

ma  
ma

ya  
ya

ra  
ra

wa  
wa

**f**  
*fu fu fu* ...

**ふ**  
*ふ ふ ふ ふ*

24 **Fu fu fu**  
Chuckle

*Giongo: human sounds*

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

# 25 Run run

Happy mood

## Happy mood

Gitaigo: feeling

A decorative graphic composed of two sets of stylized letters. The top set features a large, bold black 'z' on the left and a smaller grey 'h' on the right, both with flowing, cursive-like strokes. The bottom set is similar, with a larger black 'z' on the left and a smaller grey 'h' on the right, also in a flowing, cursive style. The letters are arranged vertically, with the second set slightly offset to the right of the first.

# 26 Renmen Continuous

## Continuous

## Gitaigo: state

連綿

hi  
hiin

27 Hiiin  
Horse sound

Giongo: animal sounds

ヒーん



is his name, and he is the author of the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. He is also known as the "wise man of God".

し  
し  
ん

# 28 Shin shin Snow falling

Gitaigo: motion

m a t t a r i m a ri ta ri na ha ma ya

m a t t a r i m a ri ta ri na ha ma ya

**29 Mattari**  
Relaxed

Gitaigo: feeling

niKO

niKO

ニコニコ

30 Niko niko  
Smile  
*Gitaigo: action*

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

gERA  
Gera

31 Gera gera

Laugh loudly

*Giongo: human sounds*

ゲラ  
ゲラ

a  
a

ka  
ka

sa  
sa

ta  
ta

na  
na

ha  
ha

ma  
ma

ya  
ya

ra  
ra

wa  
wa

tere  
tsuku  
tere  
tsuku

32 Tere Tsuku  
Instrumental music

*Giongo: sound of objects*

て  
つ  
く

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa



33 Rou rou  
Beautiful melodious sound

Giongo: human sounds

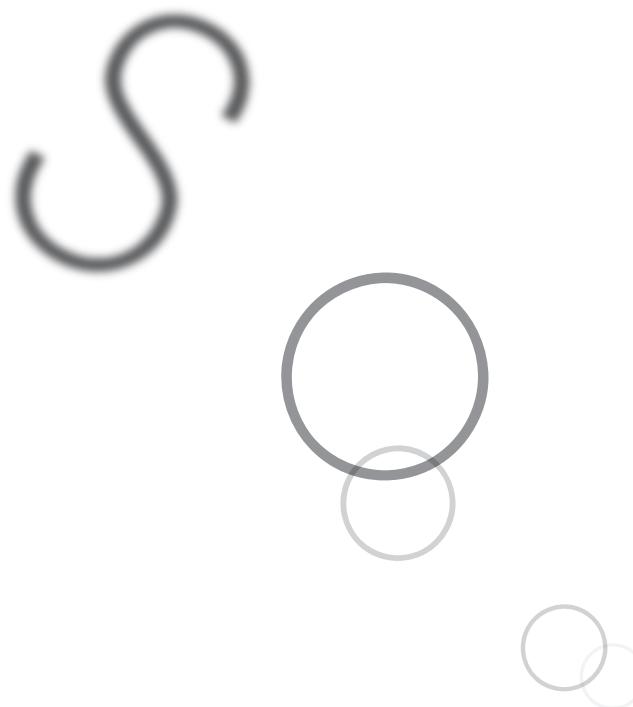
P P P P P  
 a a a a a  
 c c c c c  
 h h h i i  
 i i i i i  
 n n n n n

パチ パチ パチ  
 パチ パチ パチ

34 Pachi Pachi  
 Clapping

Giongo: human sounds

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa



35 **Soo**

Gently/quietly

*Gitaigo: motion*

a  
a

ka  
ka

sa  
sa

ta  
ta

na  
na

ha  
ha

ma  
ma

ya  
ya

ra  
ra

wa  
wa

そ わ つ

り  
れ  
れ

し  
し  
し

36 Yore  
Wrinkled

Gitaigo: form of objects

あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

わ  
wa

The image features a circular pattern of the Japanese onomatopoeia 'rin' and 'riin'. The words are repeated in a radial pattern, creating a sense of motion and sound. The text is rendered in different styles, including black and grey, and in various sizes, all pointing towards the center of the circle. In the bottom right quadrant, there is a white rectangular box containing the number '37' and the text 'Riin rin' followed by 'Phone call'. Below this box, another smaller box contains the text 'Giongo: sound of objects'.

# あらえ Onomatopoeia Visualization

1



戦々  
恐々  
心々

38 **Sensen Kyokyo**  
Intense fear/worry

Gitaigo: feeling

no  
ho  
h  
o  
on

の  
ほ  
ほーん

39 Nohohoon  
Easy-going

Gitaigo: state

a

ka

sa

ta

na

ha

ma

ya

ra

wa

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

*yuki*

ズキ

40 Zuki zuki

Pain caused by stress

Gitaigo: feeling

なでなで

nade

なでなで

47 Nade nade  
Gently petting

Gitaigo: action

あ  
aか  
kaさ  
saた  
taな  
naは  
haま  
maや  
yaら  
raわ  
wa

myaa

42 Myaa  
Cat meowing

Giongo: animal sounds

あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

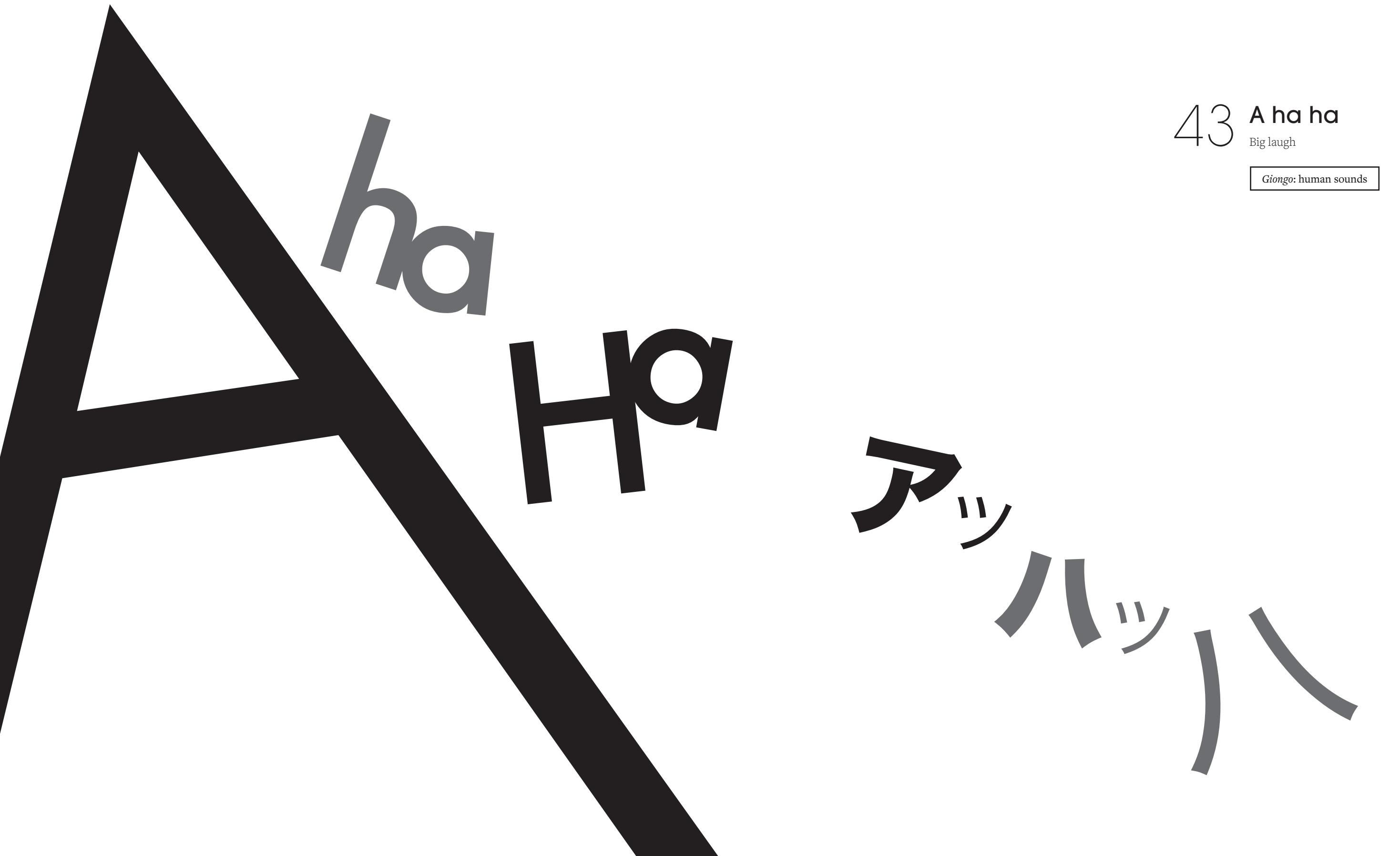
は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

わ  
wa



43 A ha ha  
Big laugh

Giongo: human sounds

あ  
a

か  
ka

さ  
sa

た  
ta

な  
na

は  
ha

ま  
ma

や  
ya

ら  
ra

わ  
wa

CHon CHon

## 44 Chan chan

Sound of "the end" in a comical way

*Gitaigo: condition*

チャン  
タナシ

# Illustrations JFK Airport

Finish: Harlem

Central Park  
Times Square  
Midtown

Start: JFK Airport



# Illustrations

Midtown



Times Square

## Illustrations

Central Park



Harlem



## Acknowledgments

I would like to express my special thanks to my mother for her open mindedness and giving me the creative inspiration.

## About the Author

For more information, please visit [yukicollins.com](http://yukicollins.com)

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