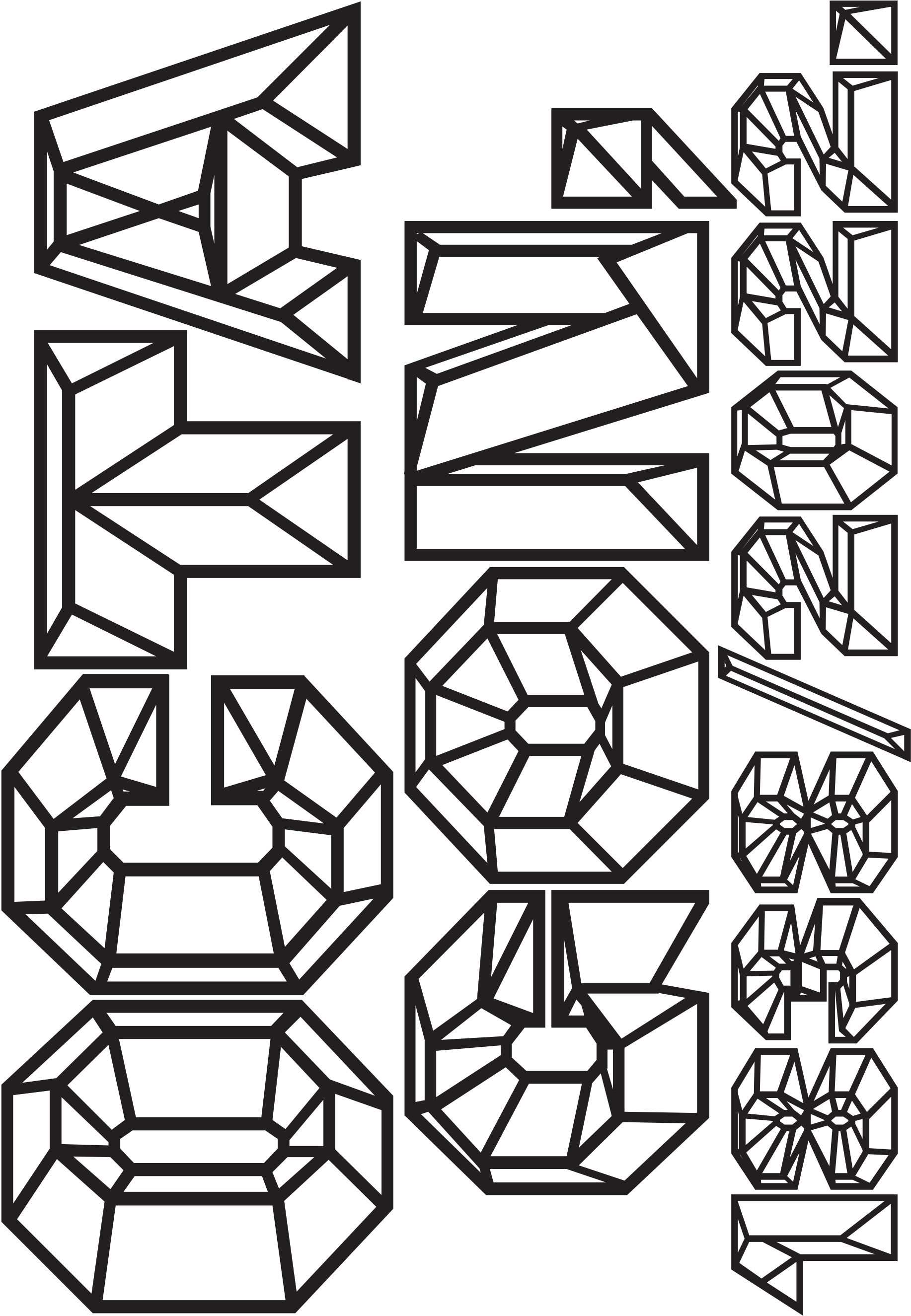
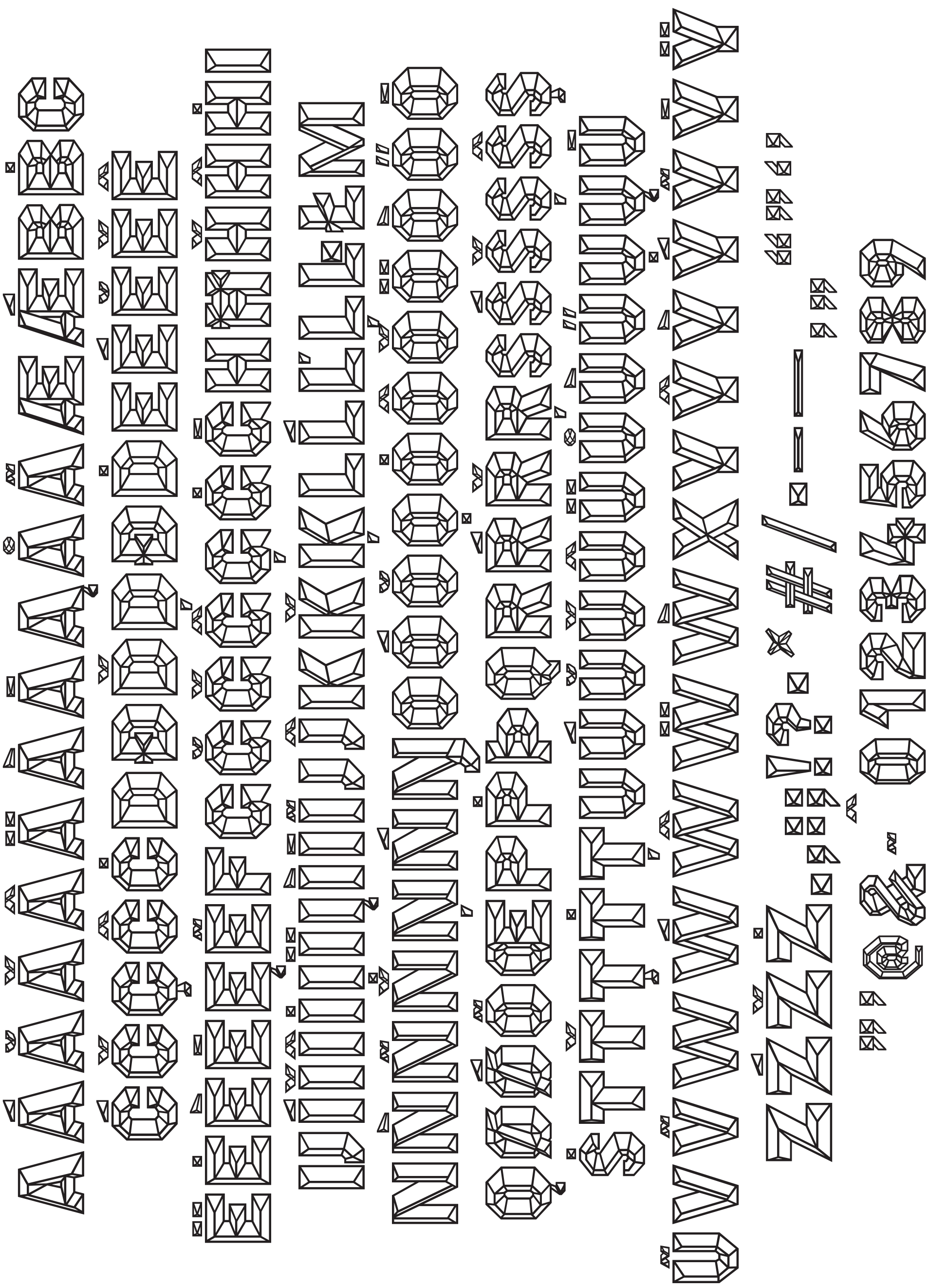
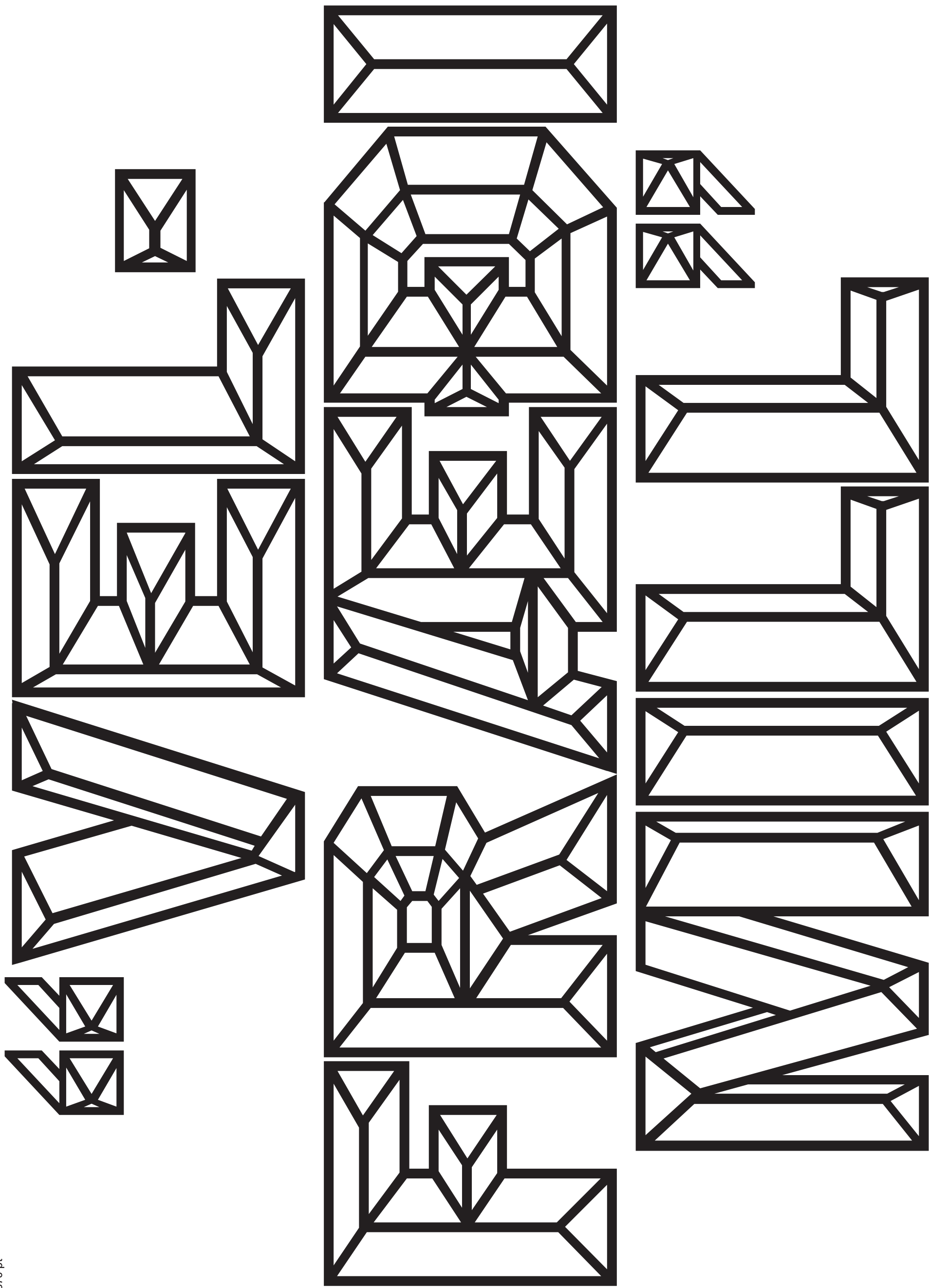
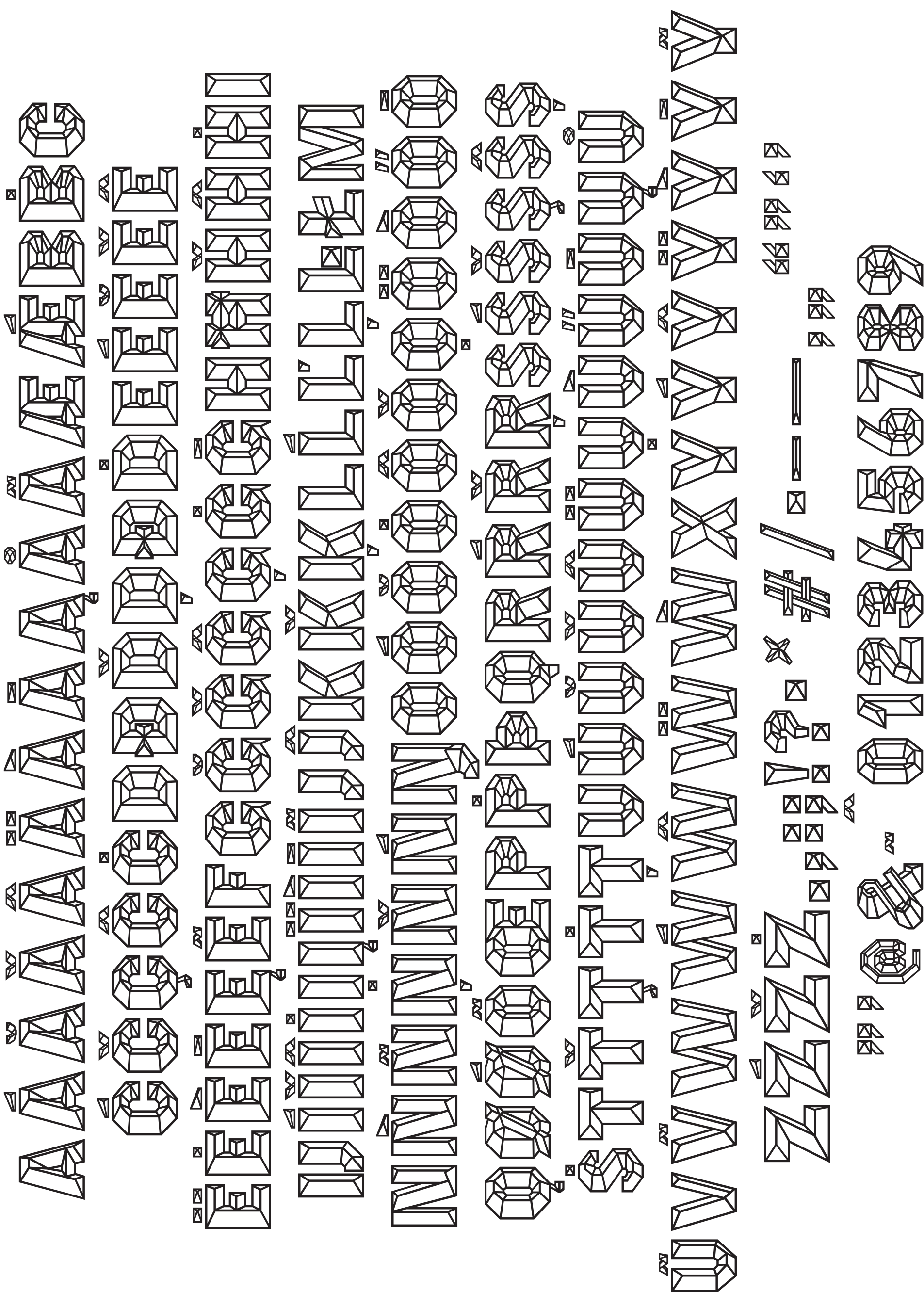


This is *Octagon Variable*. Originally shown 1838 in *First Premium Wood Types*, *Cut By Machinery*,. it was reimaged as a variable font and collaboratively redrawn with students at the Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften in Hamburg in 2022 as part of a first year type design introduction class under the guidance of Prof. Pierre Pané-Farré and Simon Thieffes. The participating students were: Alexander Royter, Emma Schmalisch, Felix Willnauer, Friederike Temme, Greta Wachholz, Jason Tsiakas, Julia Baskal, Julia Schmidt, Kaja Wetzel, Kateryna Shelevytska, Lara Tamminga, Nina Vierke Liyani, Sania Salem, Sarah-Ann Röhlen, Sofiya Slyusarenko, Stina Scholz, Vanessa Schneider, Zoe Rygus. *Octagon Variable* is published and licensed under the SIL Open Font License Version 1.1. and comes in a normal, plus horizontally and vertically rotated styles. See, try and download them online at <https://haw-type-design.github.io/octagon-variable/> and share your fonts in use with us!

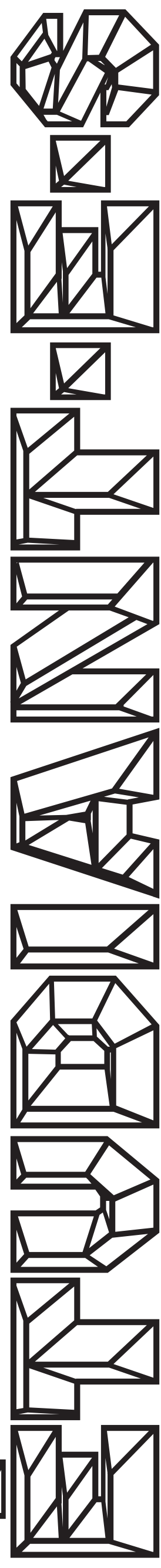
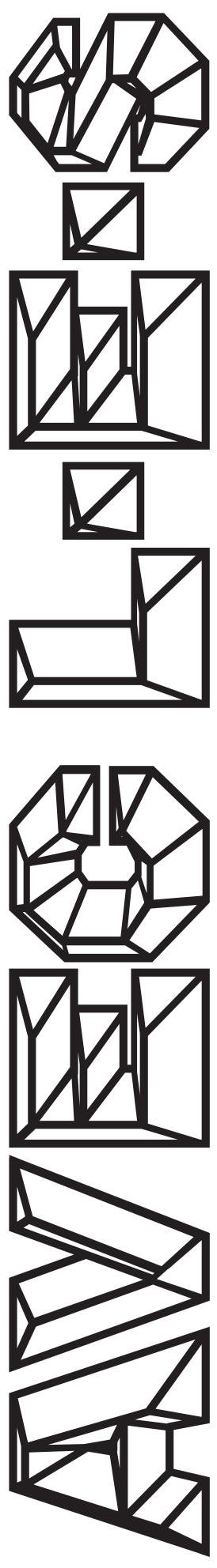
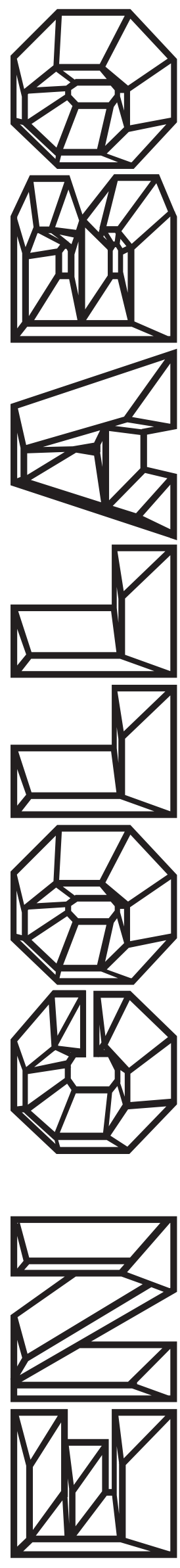
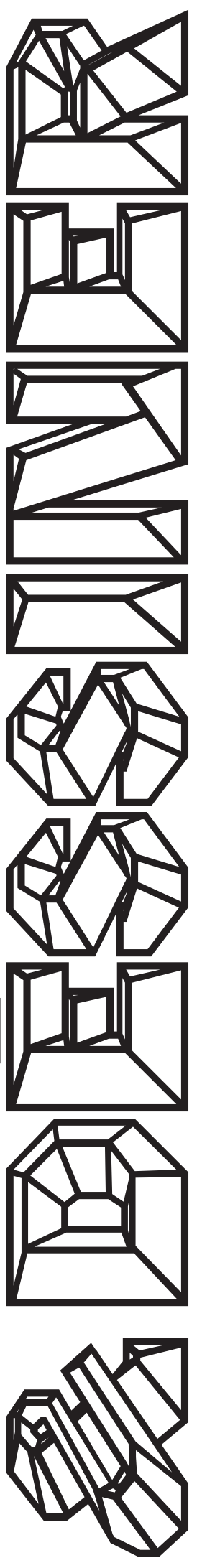
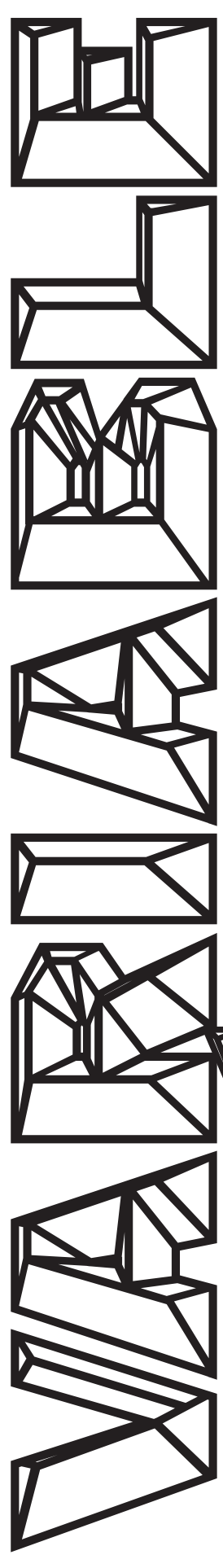
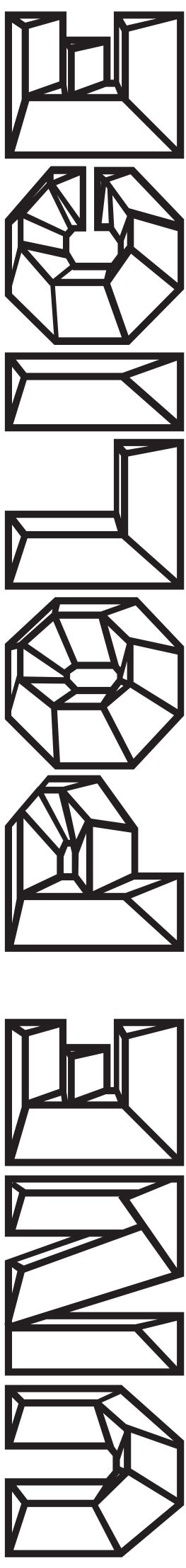


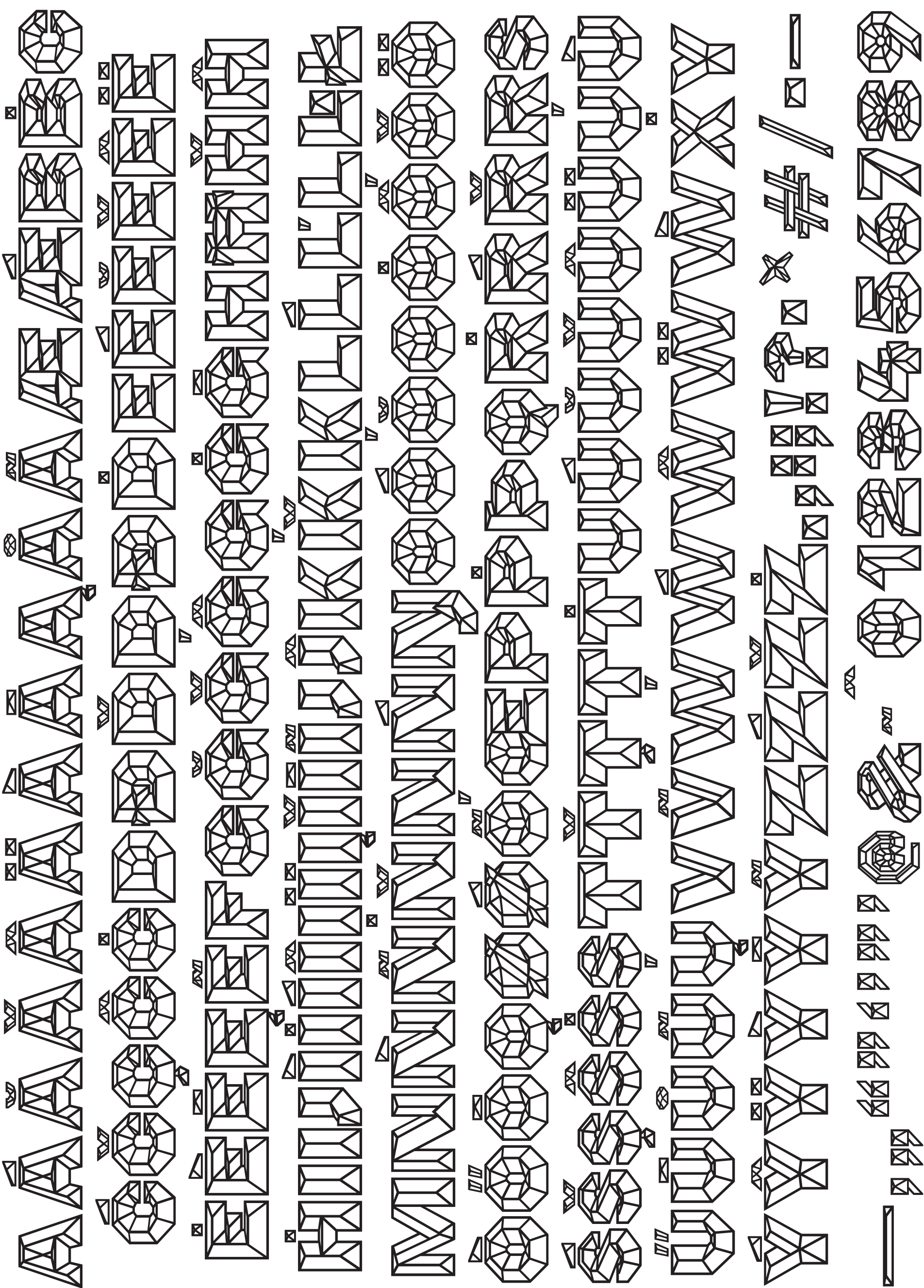






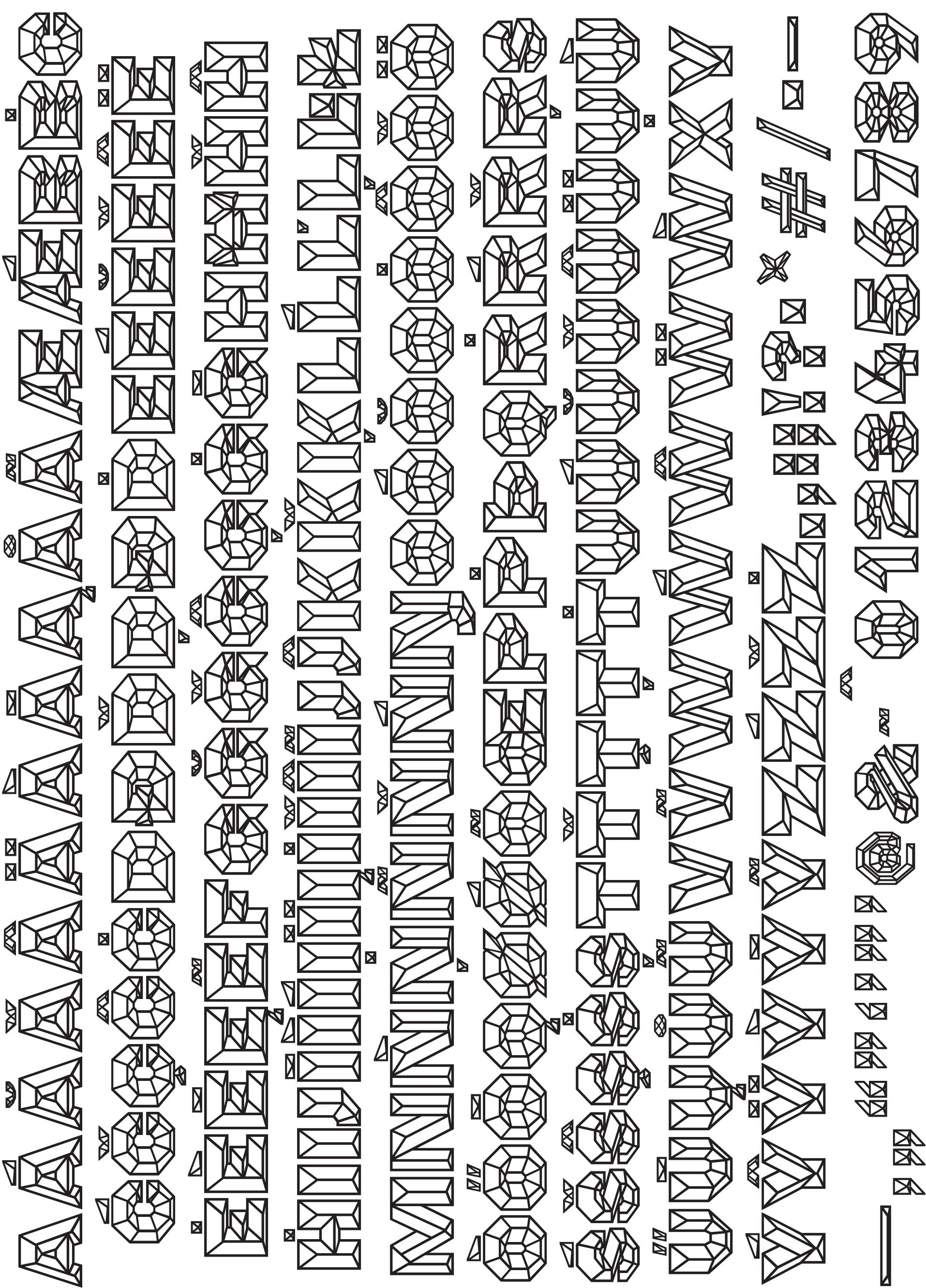






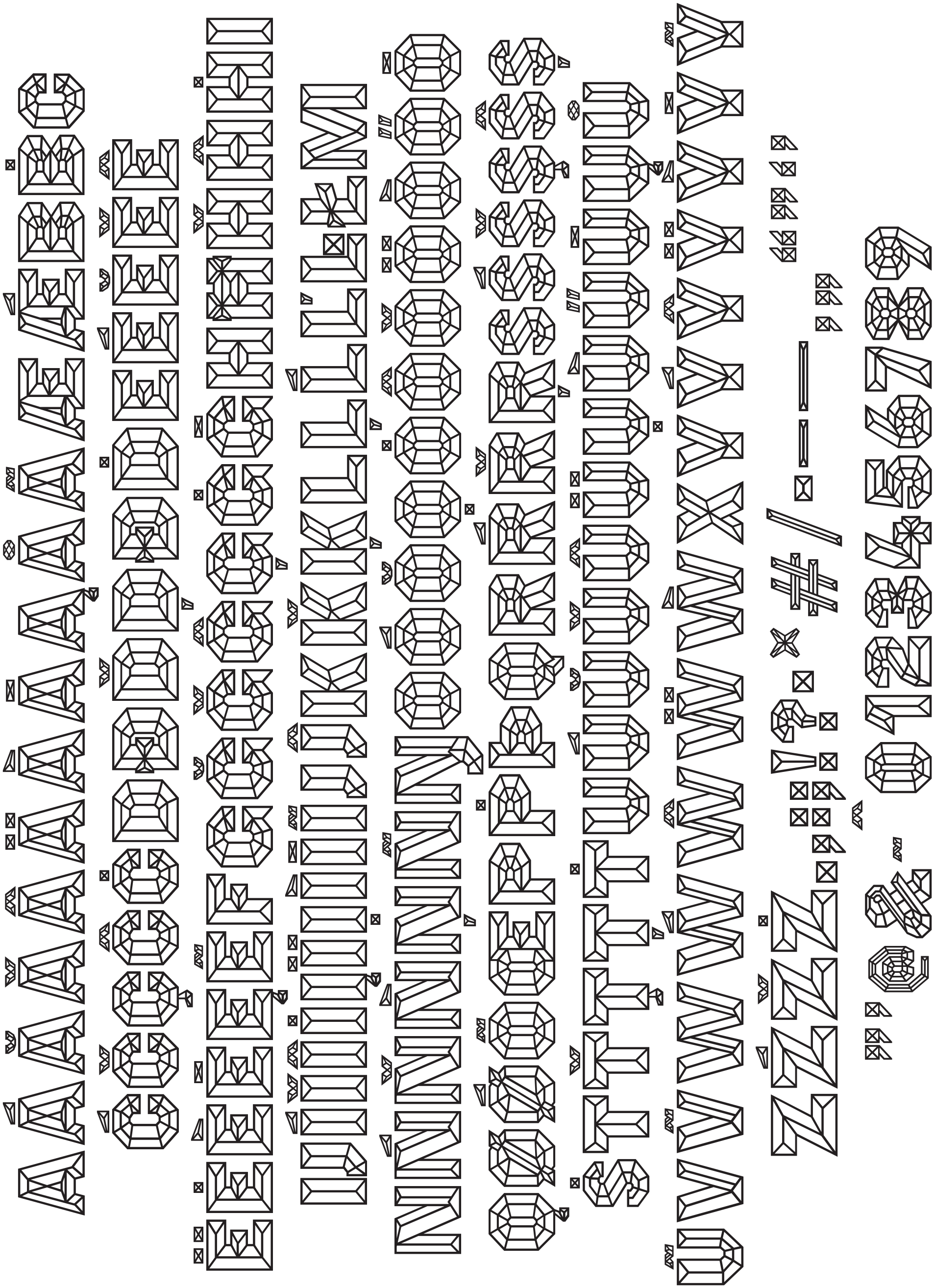


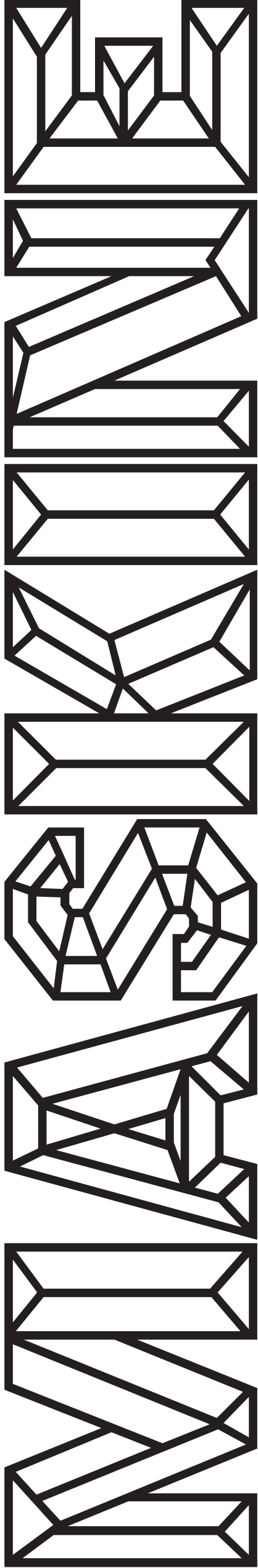
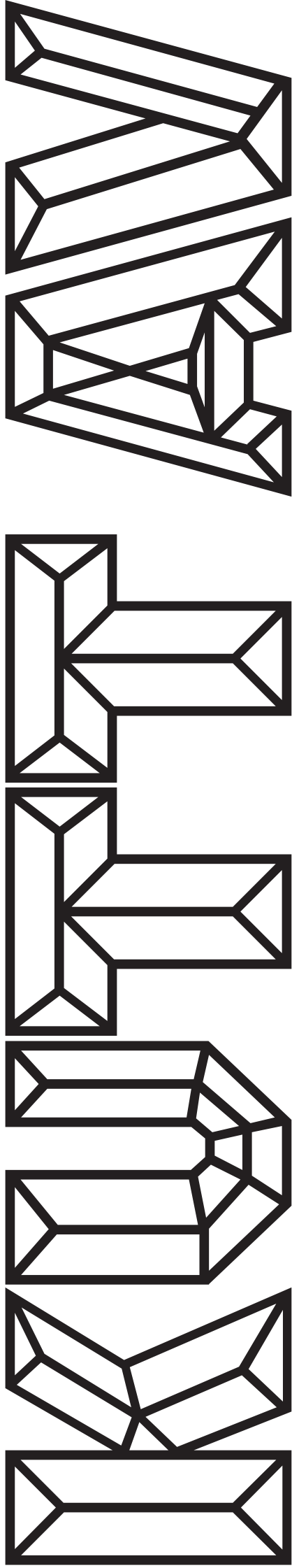
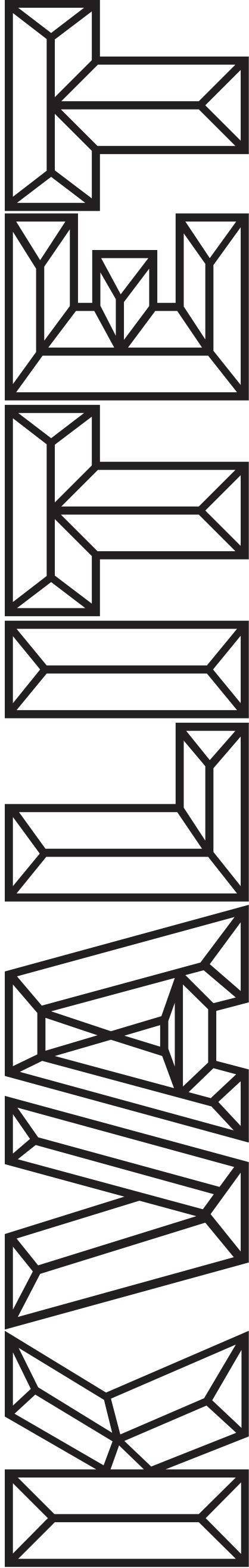
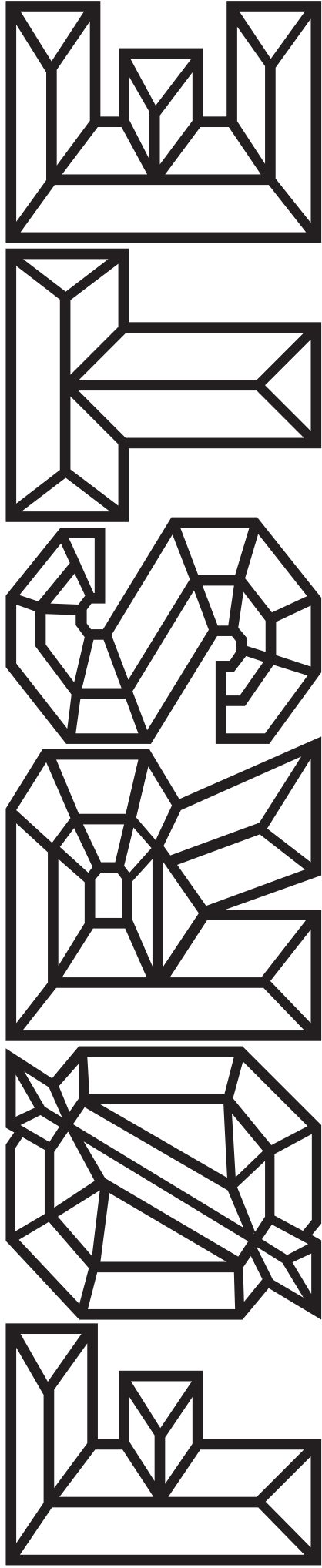








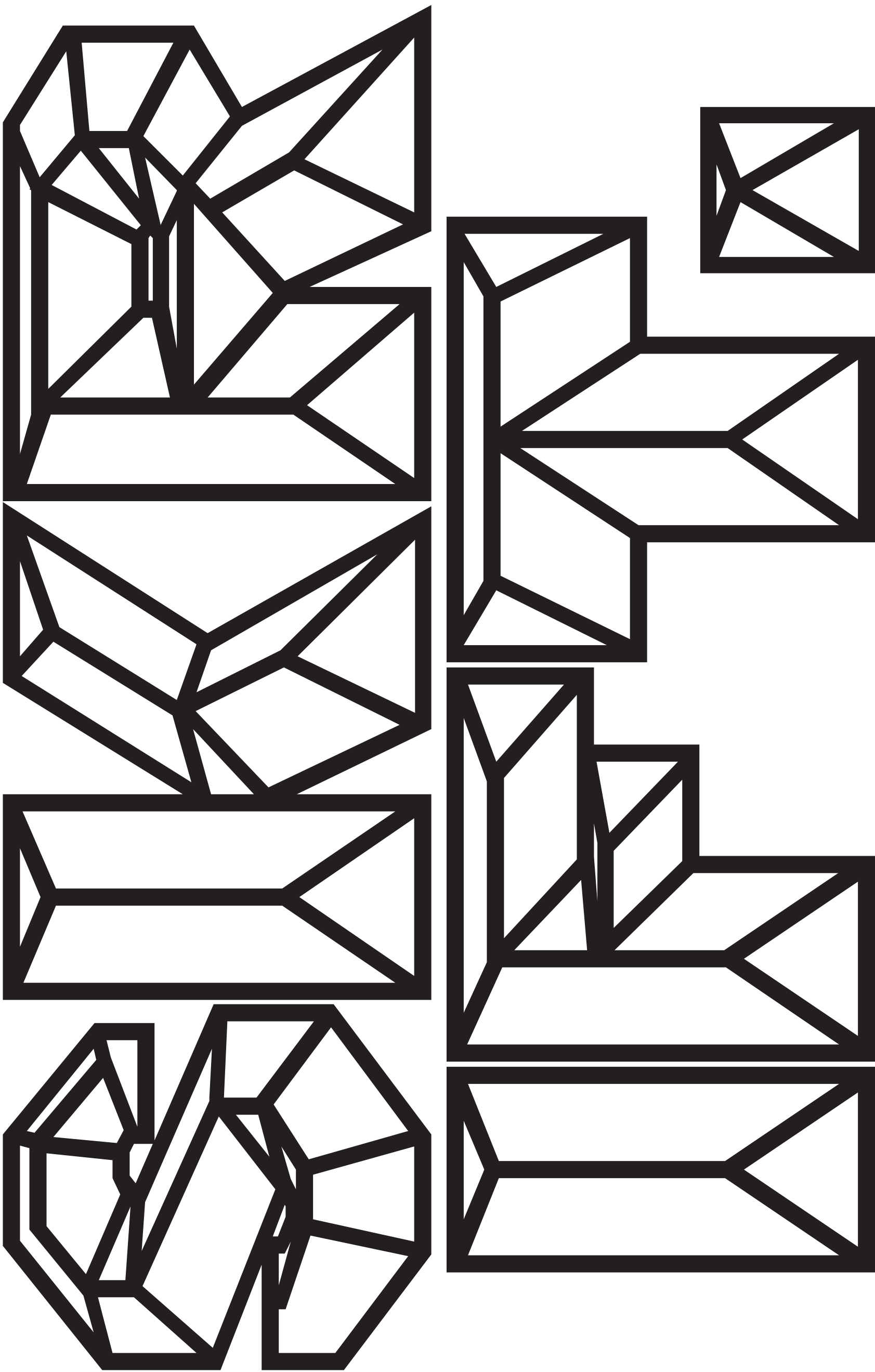












COLOPHON: This specimen is published by Prof. Pierre Pané-Farré as part of the release of the variable font "Octagon Variable", an educational type design project developed together with Simon Thieles at the design department of the Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften Hamburg, Finkenau 35, 22081 Hamburg. IMAGES: [1] *Historic American Buildings Survey, Old View, South and West Sides*. (undated) – Krider Gun Shop, 133–135 Walnut Street, Philadelphia County, PA. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540 US. [2] *First Premium Wood Types, Cut by Machinery* (1838); Book Arts Collection, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University Library. [3] *Recueil d'alphabets: dédié aux artistes* (1870). [4] *Close-ups from hand drawn letterforms on lithographic posters* (1840s–1860s). [5] *HO. The Hollywood sign* (2017), slworking2, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/slworking/32104495224>. [6] *Octagon* (2008), Nick Sherman, <https://www.flickr.com/photos/nicksherman/3011929939>. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: We are particularly grateful to David Shields & Nick Sherman, who provided photographic imagery of the original specimen and the surviving wood type of *Octagon*.







Optical illusions were a very present theme within the typographical landscape of the nineteenth century. The three-dimensional letter becomes omnipresent in print but also in public signage. There, three-dimensional letterforms were made from materials like metal, bricks or clay [1]. *Octagon*, a contrasted sans serif from 1838 [2], has possibly its source in the replication of such dimensional store fronts. It is an early skeuomorph. Unremittingly, three-dimensional letters explored multiple forms and started to cast shadows in all imaginable directions and move within the third dimension [3]. Rob Roy Kelly believed this design to have originated in France. Maybe, as such geometric letterforms survived on some lithographic posters from the 1840s to the 1860s in France [4]. But don't underestimate the role of manufacturing methods. Straight lines can be easier to manufacture. Just think of the *Hollywood* signage [5]! Today, the original *Octagon* wood blocks of a full uppercase set (no figures or lowercase seem to have existed) in 8-line are part of the RRK collection in Austin, Texas [6]. In class, we re-imagined the design and pushed the already present spatial illusions further collaboratively [7, 8]: *Octacon Variable*.

