

## Design like golf: wang

What are the minimal elements needed within the interface presentation in order to effectively communicate context and potential action(s), and how should those elements be placed in order to conserve the greatest amount of user energy to realize place and to focus effort? Perhaps this concentrated and protracted question haunts every blank sheet of paper, digital artboard, or open html editor- if it doesn't, I encourage the designer or developer in the moment to attempt to embrace this banshee of inspiration and follow its undulating flow down a concentrated hallway of effort and closure on the task at hand. If we approach our design workflows like golf, where every play counts and reward awaits for those who work to minimize their approach to the finish, then we are forced to place a tremendous amount of effort into the thinking process of our designs so that the actual employment of stroke produces maximal effect and our failures at least place us near enough our intended goal that we can recover quickly and without too much difficulty.

Iteration and mistake are inevitable- they are a positive part of the exercise that stimulates growth and learning, but they do not disqualify us from the tournament; we can remain in play for as long as we desire and the course is endless. Greatness is realized by the user and by ourselves when things appear easy to comprehend and to act on- this is the 'naturalness' of the interface that makes it feel easy to create and to interact with. The interface looks 'easy to do.' We can recognize this sensation in other contexts such as painting, music, woodworking, cooking, teaching, equation solving, and leadership. Examples in the painting context are early portraiture works of John Singer Sargent where a shadow cast by a nose is a simple blocked-in stroke of paint held together by surrounding form shadows and by the light it fends from its role to protect a secret held by the sitter. Such intention of purpose, laid down with the energy of storytelling, will exude greatness to any user, observer, or creator. Though Sargent would tend to the bravado in his growth, his mastery of placement of pigment and conjure of potential energy in his subjects only grew more obvious.

Bliss, in the Roland Barthes vocable sense of the term, takes form within the interface of humans and technology as we minimize our visible work in the 'final deliverable.' We are already presenting our work on some of the finest materials ever crafted and utilizing some of the most excellent tools ever available- with these massive difficulties overcome, it becomes easier to realize the course and path to our goals by focusing only on the shot; what strength is needed to move our position and what general location we wish to land before the next attempt is taken.

Growth in the tournament is mutual for the user, the creator, and the creative observer.

See you at the 19th hole.