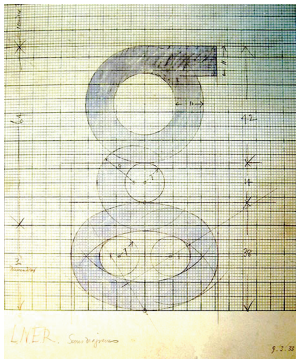
Method

Method for Analysis
proposals for new designs out of analysis

Applying the evolution model as a method, it should be possible to find spots of spontaneous unintentional evolution, processes that either stopped evolutionarily comparing to other similar processes, or processes with an unbalance among the cultural, functional and technological components. As a creative exercise, we're going to apply the method in three segments of three areas of design and come up with new design concepts that either could already have been created, or should really be on the ruling of designers.

Communication design
typeface design

The development of Computer Graphics softwares started a new era in the communication design, eliminating barely any technical limit for art directors and designers. That phenomenon represented a democratization of all creative steps of communication design. Photographing, illustrating, painting, layout composing, filming, post producing and editing which till mid 1990's were slow, expensive and complicated processes, became accessible to anybody that had a computer, a digital camera and a video



original grid construction of the lower case of Gill Sans' g

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camera. There was just one creative area that remained frozen in time since after the first informatics technological leap. This is a case of technological slow adaptation to cultural and functional components' mutations.

The typeface design is currently in the middle of one of those technological delays, being probably the only non democratized area of design. The design is still centralized in big companies' hands, the processes are still semi-manual, almost artisanal and, although free license typeface design softwares are available online, their functioning is as analogical and poorly automated as it was in the end of the 1990's. The drawing method is even older, done today digitally as it was done manually in the 1950's.

The idea itself of having a short list of "system fonts" that are safe for online design is a technological retrocession. Other than that, in the best scenario, or rather, design of printed materials where the designer has the freedom to choose any font available in his computer, the categorization of fonts in graphic softwares is alphabetical, not displayed by style, function, family variations, etc. A Graphic designer commonly scrolls down from Arial to Zurich passing by hundreds of fonts till he finds the most appropriated font.

The latest innovation in font design, the clumsy "alternate fonts" are not a real evolution, they're more like a new way to make font designers to design manually more fonts for eventual ligatures, discretional ligatures, title swash characters etc, increasing the number of glyphs (characters) but still not giving any decision freedom to designers.

However, the aspect of computer based activities that revolutionized the world is the possibility to repeat steps, copy and apply a change from one master to all elements that share that same pattern. And in font design, there is no such a thing.

Fonts, like clichés, considering the stage of today's computational state of art, by now should already be a design as customizable as any other, either in boldness, inclination, horizontal / vertical proportion, Serif etc.

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Considerations

It is technologically possible to load along with a site file the font that is being used on it. It is poorly productive that designers are constrained to choose among a list of fonts categorized by name the best option for a layout.
It would be easier to do just one serif and expect the software to apply the serif into all the letters, considering that the one of the good things computers are really better than men at is repeating the same action over and over.
Why designers acquired the capacity to design and manage almost every step of creative process (illustration, photography, video, edition, special effects, etc) except for font design?

The conclusion

Serifs are identical in most letters of the same typeface, the horizontal / vertical proportion, the round parts, the strait lines, the ascendance could be designed once and applied to all fonts, specifying minor corrections.
Regular html sites could carry along the files of fonts used in its layout, so every time a website is opened, the embedded fonts would appear just like they did the designer's computer. The idea of having font models instead of font families would increase the freedom of designers and multiply the

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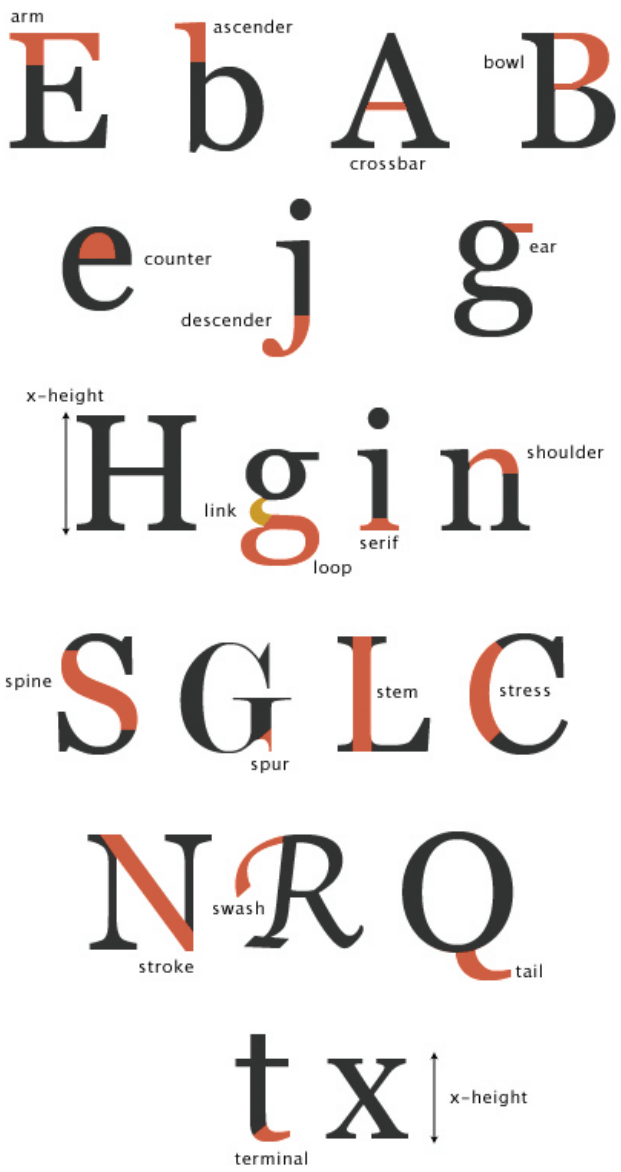

font editable elements applied in every glyph

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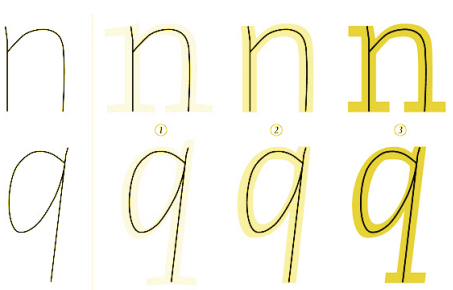
potential of graphic communication. If a good, functional and well designed font could be adjusted to have a smaller serif for a specific job, with a higher disproportion between height and width, there should be the possibility.
The creation of font frames "skeletons" with default settings applied, possible to be shared, downloaded, and edited. The creation possibilities would be endless, from weight, proportion, condensation, inclination, serif size and shape, etc.
There could be an internet database of good font designs, just like the current Kuler, online social network for color combinations and schemes.

font skeleton



width variation

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Product design
single seat car

The relative independency among the three components in design's evolution, sometimes, not to say often, present absolutely antievolutionary developments. A good example is the evolution of the automobile.
Since the first functional automobiles, cars became gradually less expensive and more secure. The big cities adapted to its existence with broad highways, parking spots everywhere, buildings and houses with garages, often three or four spots for every apartment. Today a city is an automotive environment, more friendly to cars than to pedestrians. In the other hand, the increase in the number of cars in circulation gradually limited the maximum speed of cars in urbanized areas. Finally, the occasions in which cars travel with more than 2 passengers are always more frequent.
The sum of these factors would naturally drive the average automobile to became gradually more urban, smaller, less potent and proportionally less expensive, once it became a personal artifact.
However, the current evolutionary tendency is diametrically different. Except for most European rich and ancient cities with narrow streets and efficient public transportation, there is a gradual tendency for automobiles to become larger, more roomy and more adapted to rough, bumpy terrains, or rather SUVs. The status aspect of the car choice seems to perform a anti functional service. Automobiles are not acquired or even designed based on current functional exigencies, but instead for a heritage of the social and psychological function that date back to their early times. They represent socially their owners as wealthy fathers and husbands, or promising bachelors. The reasons for that historical role are related to the exorbitant price of the first vehicles and the fact that rarely a family would have more than one car in the beginning of the twentieth century. The environment changed, but the cultural genetic of the automobile remained unaltered.

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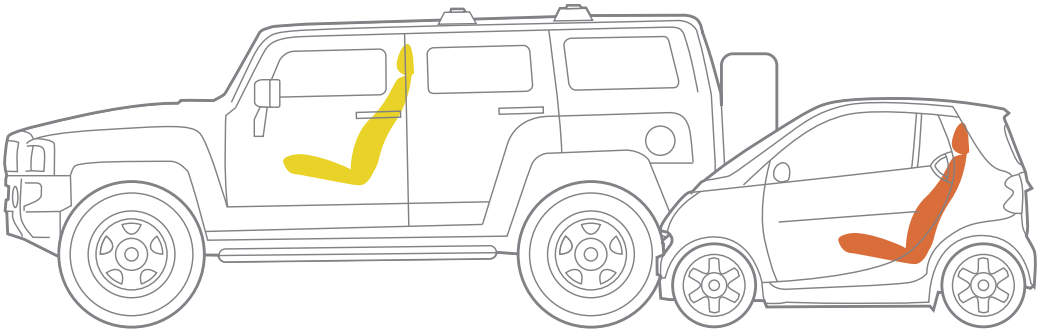
Consideration

Cars are predominantly used by individuals, and yet almost every car's capacity is 4 passengers. Cities are increasingly overcrowded, and the strongest automobile trend are oversized SUVs? Most SUVs are equipped with 4X4 traction, fifth tire, prominent fenders, potent engine and high floor, characteristics for off-road environments, but are almost exclusively driven in urbanized asphalted roads. When car acquires the complete auto drive function and can drive itself everywhere, how are cars going to be?



GM Hummer and Mercedes Benz Smart fortwo

Proposal

There is a technological telos on automotive functioning that started with the development of the GPS systems and tend to the complete autonomy of the car. That means that sooner or later, automobiles will be completely self guided.
The functional trend would signify that, once vehicles become accident proof, the mono-block will gradually become lighter and smaller, cars would be ultimately personal objects, slightly heavier than an adult. Having a personal automobile would be as fundamental as having a mobile phone today. All

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those mutations would and probably will occur, but the time gap between the technological and practical possibilities and the actual thrive of the individual vehicles will probably be as long as the disappearance of the SUVs in the current context.

Peugeot Capsule, concept car - Alp Germane

Lumeneo Smera 2008 - SNCF

2 vehicles with opposite expressive languages and similar overall proportions

Method

Informatics design – graphic programming platform

The recent informatics revolution changed the modus operandi of practically all métiers. There happened the already mentioned convergence, a phenomenon that drove all working methods to a computer based system. Although, paradoxically, the bottleneck of informatization is the capacity to reproduce itself. Seems like every programming must be written from scratch, as if no technical or technological advance human kind achieved is enough for men to start programming in a graphic interface instead of in a text editor.
The precariousness of computer programming is so serenely accepted that it even became a cultural trait. Since there is no benefit on writing code in a new text editor, programmers may use, and in fact some of them do use relic text editors from the 70's.
The benefits of having a graphic interface go from displaying all programming possibilities and alternatives to the programmer to allowing any person with no technical training to program softwares. The absence of such a method represents a gap between the state of art of computer programming and the digital possibilities, applied in many other areas. This is one of those blind spots of evolutionary thinking, to evolve the method, and not just the product.

Considerations:

As programming becomes easy, intuitive and friendly, more people would start to program.
It appears to be a resistance from the programmers to democratize coding.
If most of the programming is not building from the ground, but instead, applying commands pre-designed by other programmers, why are those commands not graphic?

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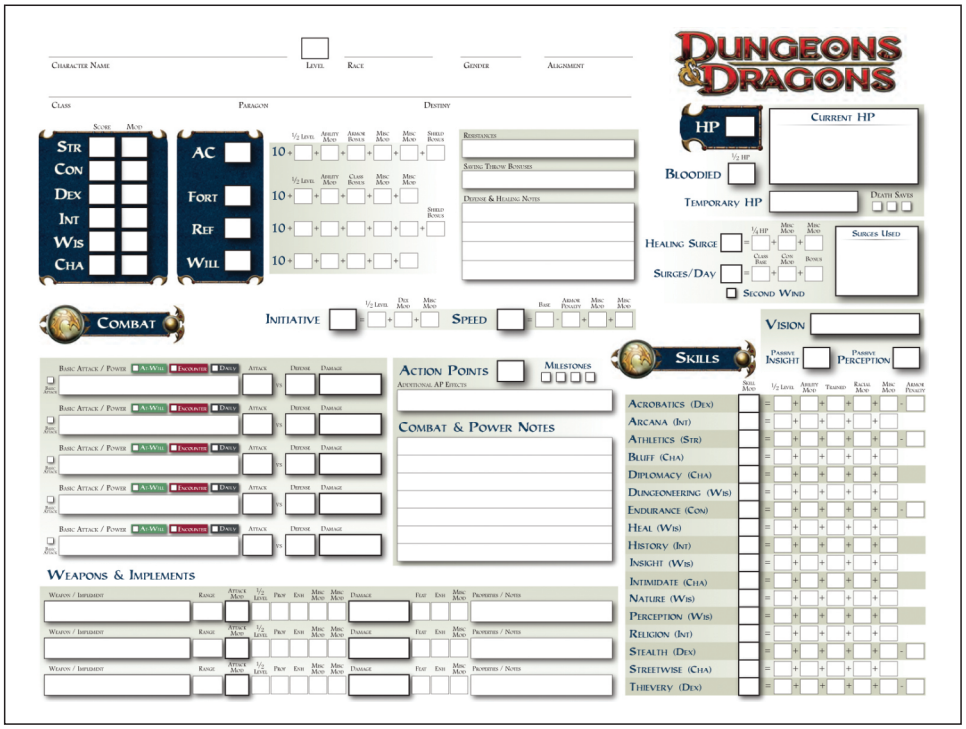
the conclusion

If there were a set of rules, so fundamental that anyone could understand, and all the possibilities were available one click away from the programmer, anyone could build softwares. In RPG (Role Playing Game) the rule structure allows a character to perform any imaginable action, the same principle could be applied to software programming, a hierarchical structure of systems, functions, actions, actors and parameters graphically organized would make code understandable at a first glimpse, easy to organize and mistyping proof.



Dungeons & Dragons' character sheet. A set of informations that represent most variables of an individual and allow the emulation of every possible action