Title: TYPE Portrait

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Abstract

1. Abstract

Typography is regarded as a form of art to make written language expressive. TYPE Portrait is a series of generative typography as self-portrait photographs by the designer. It portrays her sense of invisibility as a woman of color and as an academic stranger in professional areas of American society. The designer started taking her generative selfie in 2015 to raise awareness of Asian female faculty being isolated and marginalized in predominantly white institutions of US campuses. The computational processes expand the concepts of traditional self-portraits to generative selfies delivering specific thoughts or feelings. Based on the type choices, different emotions and moods can visually be provided through generative selfies. TYPE Portrait uses diverse typefaces to convey feelings and thoughts in the generative selfie. It shows possibilities to use each typeface's personality to be expressive and visually appealing through generative typography.

Keywords: typography, visual expression, selfie, generative photography, self-portrait, generative art

Introduction

A selfie is a photograph typically taken of oneself with a smartphone or webcam and shared through social media. Today, over 1 million selfies are taken every day. Selfies are not always as spontaneous as they seem. A selfie is a form of art. It can be a purposeful communication tool. TYPE Portrait is an extension of Selfie + CODE, a generative selfie collection by the designer. Computational processes expand the concepts of traditional self-portraits to computational visual languages conveying specific thoughts or feelings. She designer started taking generative selfies in 2015 to raise awareness of Asian female faculty isolated in a predominantly white institution. These generative selfies capture psychological moments to express individual identities devalued by a homogeneous institution in the US. These were shared by social media. Using social media networks like Facebook as a virtual support system, the artist was enabled to persist and survive in a regionally isolated and exclusive community. It has eventually brought her psychological reconciliation and healing to succeed in dealing with difficulties. The project extended to include the medium of typography, with the title TYPE Portrait. Each typeface has a visual personality. TYPE Portrait is visual research using diverse typefaces to embed visual expressions and emotions into generative selfies.

Background

The population of Asian female faculty members is small but growing in higher education in the United States. In the United this group may struggle to navigate between two exclusive communities: Asian and American. Asian cultures predominately conceive being a professor as a male position. It is a socially privileged and highly respected position in patriarchal Asian cultures. Asian female faculty occasionally encounter circumstances less inclusive and invisibly exclusive in Asian communities. The emerging population of Asian female faculty members may threaten the well-established patriarchal hierarchy controlled and led by men in these Asian communities. Asian communities predominately pressure Asian women to perform the traditional roles of mothers and homemakers. Asian female faculty bonded with these cultures are inevitably destined to be isolated and marginalized by their ethnic groups to avoid criticism toward their nontraditional roles. Additionally, Asian female faculty members suffer from stereotypes, including being perceived as uncomplaining to authority, when working for predominately white institutions. The classroom may be a minefield of student resistance and negative attitudes (Nguyen, 2016). According to the paper, "Women of Color Faculty at the University of Michigan: Recruitment, Retention, and Campus Climate," women faculty of color might be the most marginalized faculty on US campuses. Challenges include isolation, high attrition, student evaluations, peer perception, more service responsibilities (Cox, 2008).

SELFIE + CODE

Generative selfies taken by the designer since 2015 have formed a collection called Selfie + CODE. This project has captured psychological moments to express individual identities devalued and deconstructed by homogeneous institutions and ethnocentric groups in the US [Fig. 1].



Figure 1: Selfie + CODE I

The visual style of the project was inspired by two art movements from the 19th-century. The first is Impressionism that involves capturing a moment, such as Claude Monet's Sunrise. The second is Expressionism that expresses inner troubles and feelings of anxiety, such as Edward Munch's The Scream [Fig. 2].

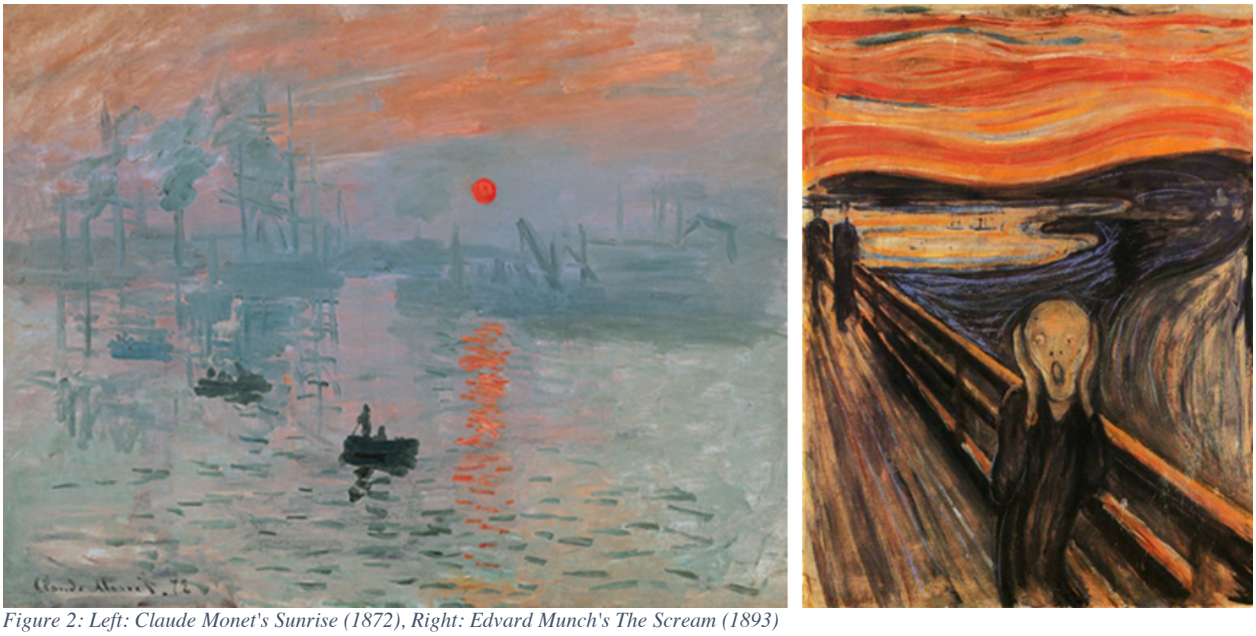


Figure 2: Left: Claude Monet's Sunrise (1872), Right: Edvard Munch's The Scream (1893)

This project references Mirror Library by Daniel Shiffman in Processing. Mirror Library transforms each pixel from a real-time video source into a rectangle on brightness levels captured by an internal web camera. Each shape is changed into a line to draw the moments reflecting the visual theme, being ignored, brushed off, refused, as an Asian female faculty on US campuses. Further, several custom variables, functions, and color palettes are added to express the visual theme [Fig. 3].



Figure 3: Initial sketches by the Being Ignored 1.0

The selfie series was taken in the author's office space in a regionally isolated predominantly white institution to represent the creation of a space for Asian female faculty on US campuses. The office light was intentionally controlled to be darker to express the moments being brushed off and rejected on US campuses. An internal web camera captured the author's self-portrait photographs using the computer algorithm, Being Ignored 1.0, and eliminated facial expressions to convey the sense of being treated as less valued, unremarkable, and unworthy of attention. The photographs were taken at different angles and with different light levels repeatedly and sequentially. The process was similar to professional photos being taken in a photo studio [Fig. 4].

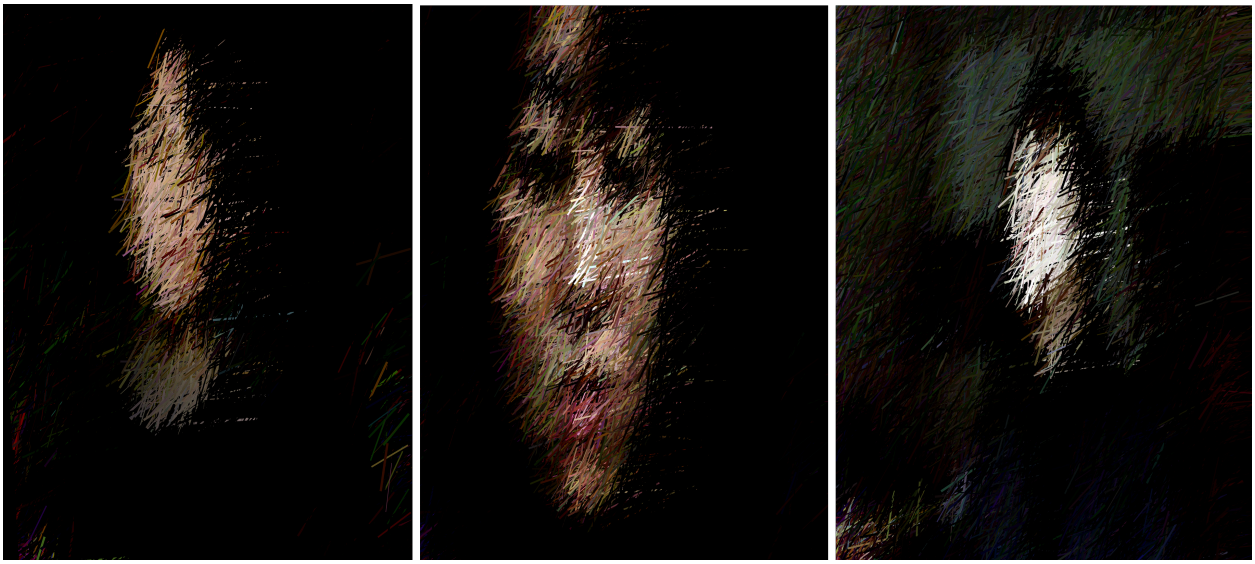


Figure 4: Selfie + CODE II, Final Outputs

TYPE Portrait

Typography is an art form where the text is expressive and highly visual. Selfie-taking is self-expression to convey a mood or share a story through social media. Common facial expressions use a wide range of emotions through a selfie. Each typeface has a personality reflecting specific visual atmospheres and moods. The entire alphabet set from A to Z is applied to Selfie + CODE to transform each line into each letter using text() and string () function in Mirror Library in Processing. Additionally, essential visual elements such as circles and lines are added to enhance the typography composition. This visual research uses typefaces embedded within selfies given that facial expressions are used to convey feelings and thoughts. The designer chose to integrate the following typefaces with selfies to investigate how the two could come together to be expressive and visual.



Figure 5: Left: Initial Selfie, Right: Generative selfie with the Helvetica typeface using an English alphabet from A to Z.

The following typefaces chose to embed themselves into selfies to investigate how selfies integrate with typefaces to be expressive and visual.

Helvetica
Helvetica is a modern, intelligent, and stylish typeface designed by Max Miedinger in 1957. It is among the most widely used sans-serif typefaces [Fig. 5].

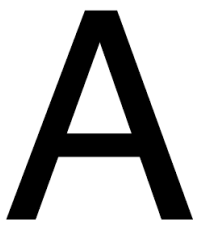




Figure 6: Left: Helvetica A, Right: Generative selfie with the Helvetica typeface

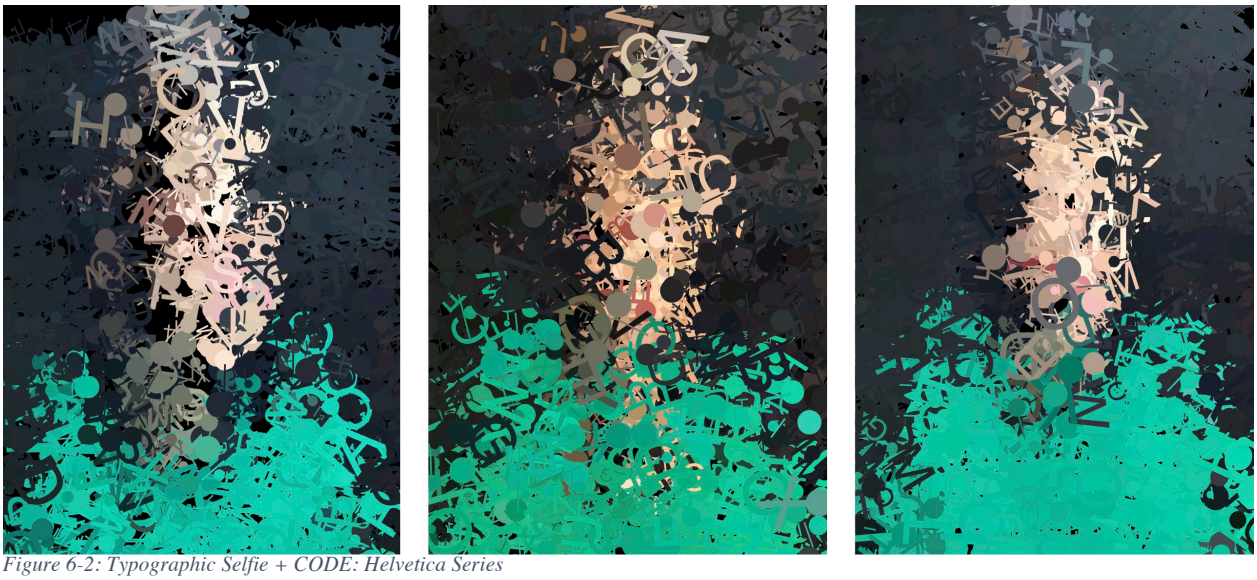


Figure 6-2: Typographic Selfie + CODE: Helvetica Series

Times New Roman
Times New Roman is an intellectual, confident, academic, and professional typeface designed by Stanley Morison Victor Lardent in 1931. The British newspaper, The Times, commissioned it. This typeface is one of the most popular and influential typefaces in history [Fig. 7].



Figure 7: Times A, Right: Generative selfie with the Times typeface Left

Futura
Futura is a modern, practical, comfortable, and capable sans-serif typeface designed by Paul Renner in 1927 (Hyndman, 2016) [Fig. 8].



Figure 8: Left: Futura A, Right: Generative selfie with the Futura typeface

Didot
Didot is a sophisticated, polished, and professional typeface developed from 1784–1811 by the Didot family [Fig. 9].



Figure 9: Left: Didot A, Right: Generative selfie with the Didot typeface

BaskerVille
Baskerville is a traditional, credible, and neutral typeface designed by John Baskerville in the 1750s. It remains prevalent in publication designs [3] [Fig 10].



Figure 10: Left: Baskerville A, Right: Generative selfie with the Baskerville typeface

Zapfino
Zapfino is a calligraphic typeface designed for the Linotype machine by typeface designer Hermann Zapf in 1998.



Figure 11: Left: Zapfino A, Right: Generative selfie with the Zapfino typeface

Asmelina Harley
Asmelina Harley is an elegant calligraphy script typeface. Arif Dwi designed this typeface at the Kotak Kuning Studio in 2019 [Fig. 12].



Figure 12 *Left: Asmelina Harley A, Right: Generative Selfie with the typeface, Asmelina Harley*

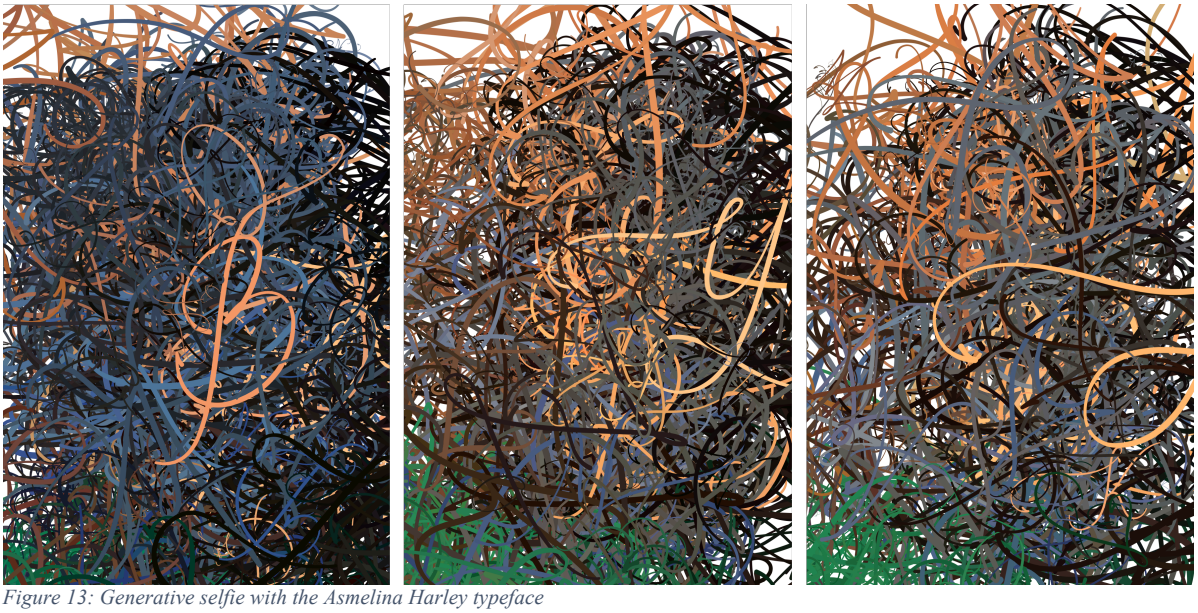


Figure 13: Generative selfie with the Asmelina Harley typeface

Korean Typeface: Nanum Meyongjo and Naum Gothic
These use two Korean typefaces, Namun Gothic is similar to the san-serif typeface, and Namun Meyongjo is similar to Serif typeface. Sandoll Communication and Fontrix designed these typefaces in South Korea [Fig 14].



Figure 14: Left: Generative selfie with the Namun Meyongjo typeface, Right: Generative selfie with the Namun Gothic typeface

5.9 Hangul Alphabet

The Hangul Alphabet employs an intercultural typography method. It uses a custom English typeface, Hangul, inspired by Korean vowels and constants, to construct an English alphabet set from A to Z, designed by Taekyoem Lee. The Hangul typeface is legible for English readers but not legible and readable in Korean since it is an English typeface, not a Korean typeface.



Figure 15: Left: Hangul Alphabet by Taekyoem Lee, Right: Generative selfie with the Hangul Alphabet typeface



Figure 16: Generative selfies with the Hangul Alphabet typeface

Conclusion

This research shows how to use the typefaces and generative selfies to convey feelings and thoughts. It is extended typographic practices and applications. The study demonstrates how traditional typography principles and procedures, including typeface choice and arrangement and visual expression, would be applicable and workable to generative selfies made with creative coding. It shows possibilities to use each typeface's personality to be expressive and visually appealing in generative design and art. Future research will involve more diverse non-western typefaces and experimental custom typefaces, and generative selfies. The designer will provide future workshop opportunities for art and design communities to increase this project's visibility and enhance professional participation.

References:

1. Nguyen, CF, 2016, Asian American Women Faculty: Stereotypes and Triumphs, University of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA, pp. 129 - 136.
2. Cox, A, 2008, Women of Color Faculty at the University of Michigan: Recruitment, Retention, and Campus Climate, University of Michigan, MI, pp. 2
3. Hyndman, S. (2016) Why Fonts Matter. GINGKO Press, CA, pp.80-81

Peer-Reviewed International and National Presentations

2021 "TYPE+CODE Series," Design and the Environment Session, C.A.A. (College Art Association Conference), N.Y.C., NY
2020 “Typographic Selfie + CODE,” ATyfI (Association Typographique Internationale), Paris, France
2020 "Typographic Selfie + CODE," Valencia Design Education Forum, Valencia, Spain
2020 "Selfie + CODE," UDA Webinar, United Designs Alliance, Seoul, South Korea
2020 "Typographic Selfie + CODE I to IV," DEL (Digitally Engaged Learning) Conference, Parsons, N.Y.C., NY
2020 "Social Homelessness on U.S. Campuses," SIGGRAPH Diversity and Inclusion Summit, Washington DC, U.S.A.
2020 "TYPE + CODE VI & V," SEGD (Society of Experiential Graphic Design), Portland, Oregon, U.S.A.
2020 "Typographic Selfie + CODE," CICA New Media Art Conference, CICA Museum, Kimpo, South Korea
2019 "Social Homelessness on U.S. Campuses," IEEE GEM (Games Entertainment & Media), Yale University, New Haven,
2018 "Social Homelessness on U.S. campuses," Design Incubation Colloquium 5.1, DePaul University, Chicago, IL

Solo exhibitions

2021 "TYPE PORTRAIT," Brooks Steven Gallery, Milwaukee Art Institute of Art & Design, Milwaukee, WI
2020 "Typographic Selfie + CODE," CICA New Media Art Conference, CICA Museum, Kimpo, South Korea

Invited Artist Talks

2021 Artist Talk, "TYPE PORTRAIT," Brooks Steven Gallery, Milwaukee Art Institute of Art & Design, Milwaukee, WI
2021 Guest Artist Talk, Workshop, Senior Portfolio Review and Juror for Student Annual Competition, Graphic Design Program, School of Art, Illinois State University, Normal, IL

Peer-Reviewed Artist Talks
2020 "Social Homelessness on U.S. Campuses," ISEA (International Symposium on Electronic Art), Montreal, CA
2016 "Being Ignored," ISEA (International Symposium on Electronic Arts), Hong Kong, China

Peer-Reviewed Research Papers
2020 "Typographic Selfie + CODE," E.V.A. (International Electronic Visualisation & the Arts conferences), London, England
2019 "Social Homelessness on U.S. Campuses," IEEE GEM (Games Entertainment & Media), Yale University, New Haven, CT
2019 "Social Homelessness on U.S. Campuses," ARTECH 2019: Digital Media Art Ecosystems, Braga, Portugal

Peer-Reviewed International and National Exhibitions

2021 "*Typographic Selfie + CODE: Helvetica III"*, International Juried Exhibition, "Glitch", International Digital Media and Art's Conference, Winona State University, Winona, MN
2019 "Social Homelessness on U.S. Campuses," ARTECH 2019: Digital Media Art Ecosystems, Braga, Portugal
2017 "Being Ignored," Media Arts Nexus, NTU, Singapore
2017 "Being Ignored," Web3D 2017 Conference, Brisbane, Australia
2017 "Self Generative Ver 3.0," Digitalia," National Juried Exhibition for Digital Art, Barret Art Center, Poughkeepsie, New York
2016 "Self Generative Portrait Ver 2.2," International Digital Media and Arts' Annual Conference, Winona State University, Winona, MN
2016 "Code/Switch," Women Made Gallery, Chicago, IL

Publications
2021 "Typographic Selfie + CODE: Times New Roman," UDA Annual 2020", United Designs Alliance, Seoul, South Korea
2020 "Typographic Selfie + CODE," Into the Clouds: New Media Art 2021, CICA Press, Kimpo, South Korea