Graphic Symbolism

Project 2

Project Title   Impossible Letters

Schedule   1/25 Review Impossible Letters Project
1/27 Impossible Letters 10 Sketches Due
2/1 Impossible Letters Progress Review *(and discuss reading)*
2/3 Impossible Letters 3 Finals Due

Project Description   I thought this was **Graphic Symbolism**? Why are we drawing *"Impossible Letters?"* Well we need to realize that letters **ARE** symbols, they are symbols used to portray sounds created in human speech. These sounds are known as *phonemes. "In a language or dialect, a phoneme (from the Greek: phonema, "a sound uttered") is the smallest segmental unit of sound employed to form meaningful contrasts between utterances."* (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phoneme). So the letter A is a symbol for the sound our voices make when saying A.

Now what if I told you that the original A was actually an egyptian hieroglyph of a bull? It was adopted later by the Phoenician's and dipicted like this: ∀. Later the Greeks would adopt it and reverse it to look like this: A. Some other good examples are the & sign. This is actually the evolution of the word et. In Latin et means "and" that is why etcetera (which in Latin would be et cetera, meaning "and so on.") There are also other language that use symbols in place of phonemes such as German which will use ß (it isn't a B) this symbol is called an esset and it actually used to represent "ss" in the middle of some words (never at the beginning or end).

Letters are symbols and that is why for this project you are going to create new letters for sounds that as of right now don't exist. Or they can be evolutions of letter conjunctions we use already but haven't been created yet. Remember they must be a usable letter like the ß or & and not just something funky you came up with like when Prince changed his name for a while. An no pictograms or hieroglyphics, we are making letters here.

Project Goals   Initial sketches must be done by hand either pen or pencil on paper. (Yes all of your assignments will start this way, trust me it helps). You will need to do 10 **Well Rendered** (this means no doodles this time) sketches for 10 different impossible letters, try your best to make them for different phonemes or meanings.

Out of your 10 you will refine 3 to a resolved digital finish. Your letters can be serif or sans serif but when finished must feel like they belong in a type family. Let's just say that if you choose a sans serif then your Impossible Letters will look like they belong with Helvetica, and we will go with Garamond for serif.

Each of your final letters will be on their own 8.5" x 11" printed sheet. A large version in the upper half of the page and a smaller version on the lower half of the page. The prints are Black and White only. (If you want to print them out at school be my guest, I'm all about you saving money for later projects). No need to mount these to boards but I will need your name and Student ID # written on the back of each sheet and a CD burned with PDFs of each sheet (please put your name and Student ID # on the CD as well.)