

Exercises in style by Raymond Queneau, 1998

By altering tone, structure, logic, and form, Queneau(1998) rewrote the same story into 99 different versions. Queneau's(1998) experiments didn't involve replacing the source material itself, but rather editing the same story differently. For me, this approach is an inspiration for a methodology of "iteration." What truly matters is how the rules are set and how they continuously produce new results.

The setting of rules and the experiments are directly related to my project. In my experiments, I also chose to limit the input, extracting a single frame from a video and using the footstep positions and grid relationships within that frame as the foundational information. By maintaining the uniqueness of the input, I continuously changed the algorithm rules to generate different visual results. This process shifted my project from "processing images" to "generating images through a system," thus transforming the mask from a tool into a result produced by different algorithms.

Therefore, Queneau's(1998) experiments with stories helped me primarily not at the level of visual style, but rather by providing a clear working structure: fix the input, change the rules; control the variables, compare the results.

Conditional design workbook by Luna Maurer, 2013

The most important help this book provided to my projects wasn't offering a specific visual style, but rather a mindset and practical methodological case study for shifting design from "creating results" to "setting conditions**". The methods of iterating aren't about directly drawing a final image, but rather about varying the positional relationship between footsteps and the grid in the video according to rules, allowing the mask to appear as the calculated result. The Conditional Design Workbook (Maurer, 2013) made me realize more clearly that the designer's role isn't to control every final form, but rather to first build a working system and then observe the differences, deviations, and unexpected events that arise.

For me, this directly clarified and reinforced my current direction: continue making small rule-based changes around the same set of inputs single frame, footsteps, grid, rather than arbitrarily pursuing visual results. The resulting 100 iterations don't focus on 100 independent graphics, but on how a conditional system continuously generates different results. This reference also helped me understand my projects as a kind of rule-based authorship: I'm not designing diagrams, but the conditions under which diagrams appear.

Analog Algorithm: Source-related Grid Systems by Christoph Grünberger, 2022

What was most helpful about this book to my project wasn't just its discussion of grids and rules, but its constant emphasis that visual form shouldn't be arbitrarily generated, but rather associated with a source. The book offers a method for finding analytical forms with non-

arbitrary sources; it categorizes grid systems into four source types: form-based, character-based, object-based, and image-based.

This was thematically important to my project because my work itself deals with traces, sources, remnants, and translations: I don't generate graphics out of thin air, but rather start from single frames in video, footstep placements, and grid relationships, making the image evidence left by a certain action. Therefore, this reference helped me understand my project as discussing not just form generation, but how the body, even after leaving the frame, can still be seen as traces, boundaries, and distortions. It made me realize that my grid is not just a tool for organizing the image, but also a translation of "actions that have occurred" into readable visual remnants.

every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Prison Type Gasholder, every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Spherical Type Gasholder, every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Gable Sided House by Idris Khan, 2004

Idris Khan's work *every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Prison Type Gasholder, every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Spherical Type Gasholder, every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Gable Sided House* (Khan, 2004) provided four more specific directions for my project. First, he inspired me to think about how to compress repetitive, sequential actions into a single image, rather than reproducing the actions themselves in sequence. This led me to use compression. Second, he made me realize that the importance of the original material doesn't necessarily lie in how much readable content it retains, but in how it is transformed into a visual trace, density, and residue. This led me to use accumulation. Third, his work reminded me that a single frame can also carry time; when multiple moments are compressed into the same image, familiar actions become strange, creating an unstable viewing experience. This is the final elimination, removing readability to highlight the structure of the work.

These directions have been very inspiring for my current project, which generates the resulting image from the footsteps and grid relationships in single frames of video.

Schotter by Georg Nees, 1968

Georg Nees, one of the pioneers who first publicly exhibited computer art, transformed design into a procedural and exploratory approach. The article explains Nees's approach as a heuristic system in which the computer is allowed to make decisions within set conditions (Simon, 2018). He didn't provide a single result, but rather set a set of executable rules, constraints, and localized judgments, allowing the system to generate the outcome within those boundaries.

His work *Schotter* (Nees, 1968), by establishing very clear fundamental rules and adding randomness, transforms the image from order to disorder. Georg's project provided methodological constraints for my design, allowing the input image to undergo computation

within a defined system—rather than the final result—by setting the underlying logic of the work rather than its final outcome—to produce a result that wasn't anticipated beforehand.

The debate: the legendary contest of two giants of graphic design by Wim Crouwel, 2015

This book prompted me to ask myself a series of questions, reminding me whether my system was feigning neutrality or actively expressing a stance.

Beyond designing the system, I redefined and reorganized body movements, grids, masks, boundaries, and visibility. While questioning the power determining image visibility through computation, I also assigned attributes to grid steps and rules within the image. Translating steps in different ways determined how the system and the viewer would interpret body movements. This book made me reflect on why I designed the system and translated steps in a particular way—was I objectively disrupting the instability of the image or deliberately creating conflict? Through experimentation, I gradually shifted my perspective on masks, moving from simply using them as a tool to change their instrumental properties to exploring the visibility of the image.

Labanotation Fundamental by Dance Notation Bureau n.d.

Labanotation is a movement notation system developed by Rudolf von Laban. It is mainly used for recording and archiving dance. Labanotation helps me understand different ways and methods of recording the body more fully. Compared with my previous approach, which only recorded the relationship between footsteps, Labanotation focuses on recording the movement of the individual body. By dividing human movement into three planes, and classifying it according to direction, body part, spatial level, and time duration, it can clearly reconstruct the movement of a dance.

Labanotation is a very systematic and professional recording method. However, it takes time to learn it properly, so in this project I cannot fully understand or use the whole system. At the same time, I have also realised that if I simply use Labanotation, or if my project becomes only a record of body movement, the audience may not be able to fully understand what I want to express.

Body Archive by Susanne Franco and Gaia Clotilde Chernetich n.d.

This article is quite short, but it played an important role in my shift from researching body recording systems to studying the relationship between space and the social discipline of the body. Franco and Chernetich describe archives as “dynamic places, rather than static” and argue that the “body is an archive and choreography is a dynamic system of transmission and transformation”

(Franco and Chernetich, n.d.). This helped me realise that, outside dance, movements in everyday life can also record and pass on information about society, culture, and context.

As the starting point of this change in my research direction, the article encouraged me to think about how human movement can carry information, and how recording these movements can help preserve and communicate this information to the audience.

The Hidden Dimension by Edward T. Hall 1966

In *The Hidden Dimension*, Edward T. Hall introduced the concept of proxemics, which means how people use, perceive, and keep spatial distance. He argues that space is not simply a background, but a system that can influence people's behaviour and ways of communication.

The Hidden Dimension helped me realise that human body movements are not completely decided by individuals. For example, in a library, people may naturally move more quietly. In a gallery, people may walk more slowly and speak in a lower voice. Therefore, Hall's theory helps me understand more clearly how space can influence bodily posture and behaviour in an invisible way.

However, this book also challenges my previous, more direct way of observing. Hall emphasises that spatial relationships are cultural, and different cultures and different spaces may have different understandings of distance, posture, and behaviour. Therefore, I cannot make a general conclusion by only observing one single space. Instead, I need to compare different types of spaces, and even consider whether the same body movement may have different meanings in different cultural contexts.

Techniques of the Body by Marcel Mauss 1973

Compared with *The Hidden Dimension*, *Techniques of the Body* explains more directly why body movements are socially trained. Mauss argues that actions such as walking, running, swimming and resting may seem natural, but they are also shaped by different societies and cultures. He calls these actions "techniques of the body" (Mauss, 1973). This helped me realise that body movement is not neutral. It can carry traces of education, habit, culture and social rules.

This article helped me move from simply recording body movements to asking why these movements are formed. For example, the way people stand, walk or wait in public space may come from long-term imitation and social training. While Hall focuses more on how spatial distance influences behaviour, Mauss focuses on how social rules enter the body and become

everyday habits (Hall, 1966; Mauss, 1973). Therefore, this text helped me understand body movement as something that records and transmits social and cultural information.

Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space by Brian O'Doherty 1999

The most important help of this book is that it introduces the idea of the white cube. This means the common space of modern galleries, with white walls, a closed structure, a clean surface and often no windows. By placing artworks in this seemingly neutral space, the artworks are separated from everyday life and social context. They are also given a more pure and authoritative way of being viewed. O'Doherty argues that the gallery space is not just a background, but an ideological space that can influence the meaning of artworks and the way audiences view them (O'Doherty, 1999).

This book helped me realise that space is not only a place that contains bodies and objects. Space can also control people's behaviour. In galleries, audiences often walk more slowly, lower their voices, keep distance and view artworks in a quiet and restrained way. These behaviours are not only personal choices, but are shaped by the atmosphere of the white cube. Therefore, this book helped me use the white cube as a specific example to think about how space can influence body posture and viewing behaviour through invisible rules.

However, this book also challenged my understanding of space. Although the white cube looks empty, neutral and clean, it actually contains strong rules and power relations. Therefore, in my project, I started to think about how the traces of bodily discipline can still remain in the image after the space is visually removed.

Photo Opportunities by Corinne Vionnet 2005

Corinne Vionnet's Photo Opportunities is a photographic project that started in 2005. She collects a large number of tourist photographs taken at the same famous landmarks and layers them together to create blurred and semi-transparent images. The biggest help of this project is that it made me realise how collective ways of seeing tourist sites can be shaped and repeated.

This project helped me understand that layering is not only a visual effect, but also a research method. Through the overlapping of repeated images, individual differences become weaker, while shared viewpoints, composition habits and collective memory become more visible.

At the same time, the overlapping of images can also blur the presence of people and increase the presence of architecture. Therefore, I tried to use this method to enlarge the presence of people and the traces of their movements within space. However, how to use layering to highlight traces

of body movement is still a challenge for me. If I use the same method directly, the human body may continue to become blurred, which would go against the direction of my research.

every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Prison Type Gasholder, every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Spherical Type Gasholder, every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Gable Sided House by Idris Khan, 2004

Idris Khan's every... Bernd & Hilla Becher... series is a reworking of Bernd and Hilla Becher's photographic archive of industrial buildings. The Bechers photographed modern industrial structures such as water towers, coal bunkers, gas holders, factories and houses over a long period of time. They often presented similar buildings together in a typological way, showing the small but systematic differences between them. In this series, Khan overlays and compresses photographs of the same type of building taken by the Bechers into one single image. The main method of the work is layering and compression, turning a whole typological collection into one visual image.

This series makes the image no longer just a record of a single object, but a record of a way of seeing. By layering all the buildings of the same type together, the specific identity of each building becomes blurred and begins to disappear.

This also challenges my understanding of graphic design. In the past, I thought the purpose of visual communication was to make information clearer, more readable and easier to separate. However, Khan's work makes me realise that visual communication does not always need to be about making things clear. It can also use blur, overlap and compression to reveal a deeper structure and trace. It does not simply explain or divide information, but makes the process of visual accumulation visible.

This is very important for my own project. My project is also researching the relationship between repeated actions, space and the body. In spaces such as libraries, galleries and stations, people often develop similar body postures because of the rules and atmosphere of the space. If I only photograph one single action, the viewer may only see an individual behaviour. But if I overlay many similar actions together, the viewer may start to see how space shapes collective patterns of the body. Khan's work helps me understand that layering is not only a decorative visual effect, but also a research method.

However, Khan's method also creates a problem for my project. When the layering becomes too strong, individual differences may be weakened or even swallowed. Khan's work is very suitable for dealing with space, because space is relatively stable, has clear outlines, and does not easily change its form. After being layered, it can create a strong sense of structure. But if I directly use this method on human body movements, the body may become only a blurred shadow, and the information of the movement may disappear instead.

This is also the key conflict in my current project. I want to use layering to show the invisible influence of space on the body, but I do not want the traces of body movement to be swallowed by the space or by the visual effect. Therefore, I cannot simply copy Khan's method. I need to adjust it for my own project.

Overall, the most valuable part of Idris Khan's work for me is not its visual effect, but the way it transforms archive and typology into a visual form. It helps me understand that graphic design is not only about designing a clear final result, but can also be about designing a way of seeing and representing a process.

Marcel Mauss, Techniques of the Body

Marcel Mauss's *Techniques of the Body* is very important for my project because it directly changed my understanding of "body movement". In this text, Mauss argues that "techniques of the body" do not mean mechanical technology. Instead, he understands the body as a tool, and focuses on the ways people use their bodies in daily life. He suggests that actions such as walking, standing, sitting, sleeping, swimming, running, working and marching may look like natural body behaviours, but they are actually shaped by society, culture, education and habit (Mauss, 1973). The body is not completely free or natural, and human movement is not only decided by the individual. Many body postures and ways of behaving are slowly learned through imitation, training and repetition during the process of growing up.

The key idea in this article is that the body is the first and most natural tool of human beings, but this tool is also trained by society. Mauss uses many specific examples to show that body movement is not neutral. It carries traces of culture, class, gender, age and social systems (Mauss, 1973). This makes the body not only a biological object, but also a social and cultural material.

In terms of the form of the text, *Techniques of the Body* is not a purely theoretical or abstract article. Its writing strongly depends on examples and observations. Mauss explains how the body is shaped by society through observing specific body behaviours in everyday life. By analysing ordinary actions such as walking, sitting and sleeping, he turns these movements into social materials that can be studied.

This way of writing directly helps me because it encourages me to observe people's daily behaviours. For example, I can look at whether people have shared habits of movement in libraries, stations and galleries. Mauss makes me realise that body movement itself can also be seen as an information system. The body's posture, distance, direction, speed and repetition can all communicate certain social relationships and spatial rules.

Mauss's argument allows me to understand body movement as a kind of "technique" shaped by both society and space. This helps me observe how space controls or guides people's body movements. At the same time, Mauss's article also reminds me that body movement cannot be simply understood as a universal sign. The same action may have different meanings in different

cultures and social relationships. For example, lowering the head may suggest reading, but it may also suggest waiting, obedience, tiredness, or avoiding communication. Therefore, in my project, I cannot directly translate one movement into one fixed meaning. Instead, I need to focus on the relationship between movement and space.

The most useful part of Techniques of the Body is that it helps me stop seeing body movement as natural, personal or accidental behaviour. Instead, I now understand it as the result of long-term social and spatial training. It helps me shift the focus of my project from “what the body is doing” to “how the body is shaped by space and society”. This also gives my project a clearer direction: I can observe, record and translate repeated body movements in different spaces, and use graphic design to make these hidden spatial rules visible.

Crouwel, W. (2015) *The debate: The legendary contest of two giants of graphic design*. New York: Monacelli Press.

Dance Notation Bureau (n.d.) 'Labanotation Fundamentals'. Available at: <https://www.dancenotation.org/labanotation-fundamentals/> (Accessed: 18 May 2026).

Franco, S. and Chernetich, G.C. (n.d.) 'Body Archive', *Dancing Museums Glossary*. Edited by A. Mikou. Available at: <https://www.dancingmuseums.com/artefacts/body-archive/> (Accessed: 18 May 2026).

Grünberger, C. (2022) *Analog Algorithm: Source-related Grid Systems*. Translated by T. Li. Guangzhou: Lingnan Fine Arts Publishing House.

Hall, E.T. (1966) *The hidden dimension*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Khan, I. (2004) every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Prison Type Gasholder, every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Spherical Type Gasholder, every... Bernd & Hilla Becher Gable Sided House [Photograph]. Art Gallery of New South Wales. Available at: <https://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/9.2005.a-c/> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

Mauss, M. (1973) 'Techniques of the body', *Economy and Society*, 2(1), pp. 70–88. doi: 10.1080/03085147300000003.

Maurer, L. (2013) *Conditional Design Workbook*. Amsterdam: Valiz.

Nees, G. (1968) Schotter [computer-generated graphic]. Discussed in Simon, S. (2018) 'Art from Code: A Response to Georg Nees', *A Story is Not a Tree*, 9 November. Available at: <https://astoryisnotatree.net/?p=10230> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

O'Doherty, B. (1999) *Inside the white cube: The ideology of the gallery space*. Expanded edn. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Queneau, R. (1998) *Exercises in Style*. London: John Calder.

Simon, S. (2018) 'Art from Code: A Response to Georg Nees', *A Story is Not a Tree*, 9 November. Available at: <https://astoryisnotatree.net/?p=10230> (Accessed: 29 April 2026).

Vionnet, C. (2005–ongoing) *Photo Opportunities* [photographic series]. Available at: <https://corinnevionnet.com/Photo-Opportunities> (Accessed: 18 May 2026).