

Concepts of Time Across Cultures

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Concept / Designer's Statement

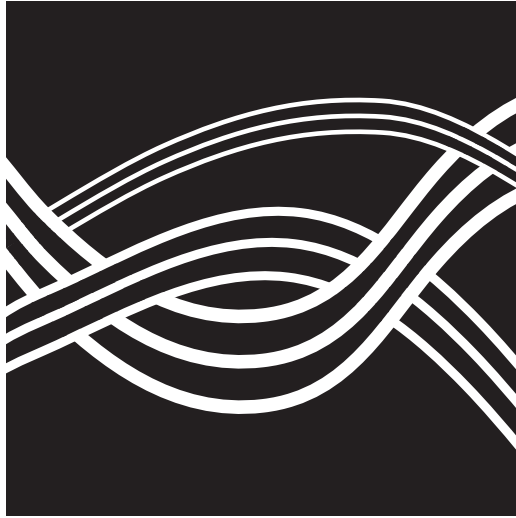
I chose to illustrate concepts of time across cultures simply because learning about cultures is one of my passions.

At first, I hadn't even considered the idea that people from different cultures view time differently. I thought we all viewed time the same. The more I researched, however, the more I found that contrasting concepts of time have often been the root of miscommunication in meetings between peoples from different cultures.

I wanted to learn as much as I could about these cultural differences. I spent many hours researching, identifying major distinctions in concepts of time, and figuring out how to communicate these ideas effectively to others.

My hope is that each person who views these icons will take away a broadened cultural perspective that exists beyond their viewing experience.

ZAMANI (PAST)



SASA (PRESENT)

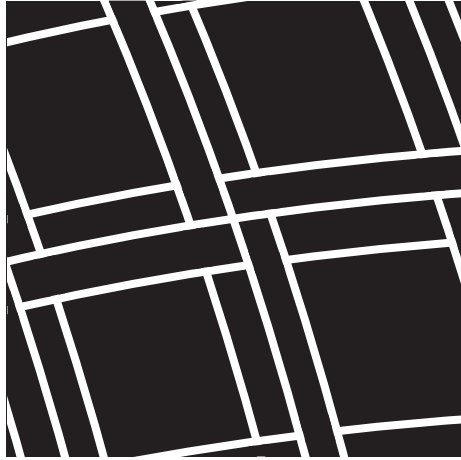




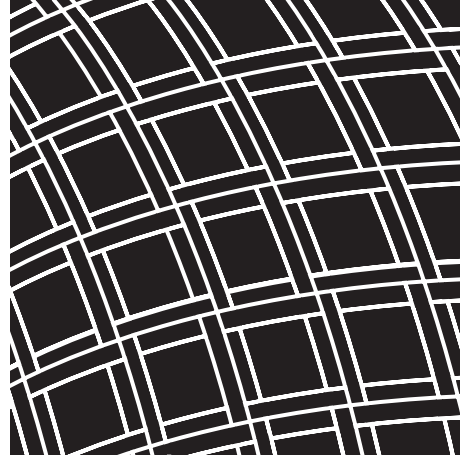
SASA (PRESENT)



ZAMANI (PAST)

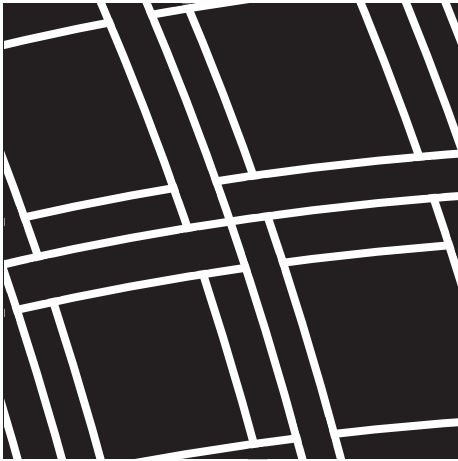


SASA



ZAMANI

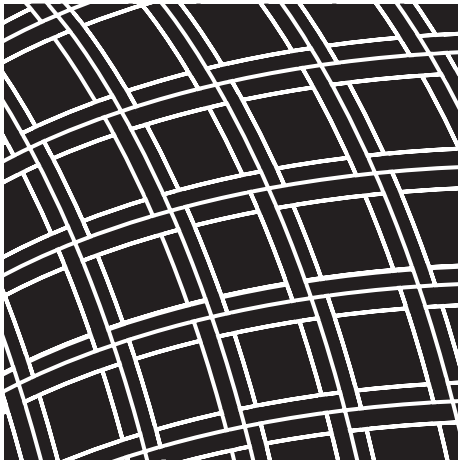
African Concept of Time (Sasa)



The sasa period loosely corresponds to the present. It is the period in which people are conscious of their existence. Sasa has a sense of immediacy, nearness, and “now-ness.” There is an emphasis on social interaction, community life, and using the opportunities each day brings. Sasa is created by recognizing opportunities in nature and community and acting upon them.

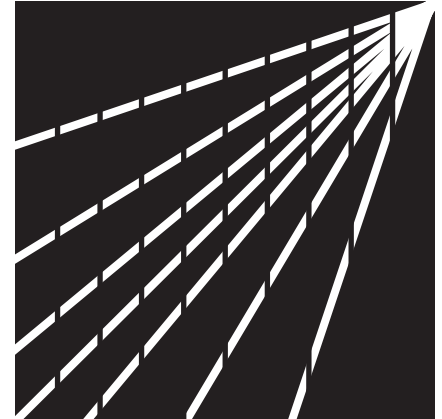
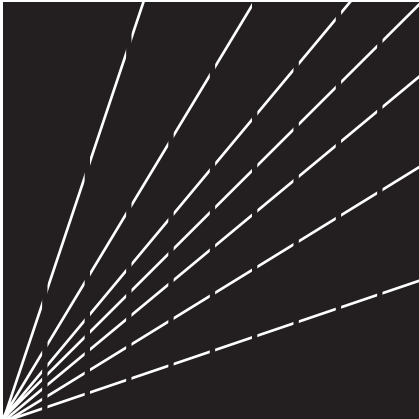
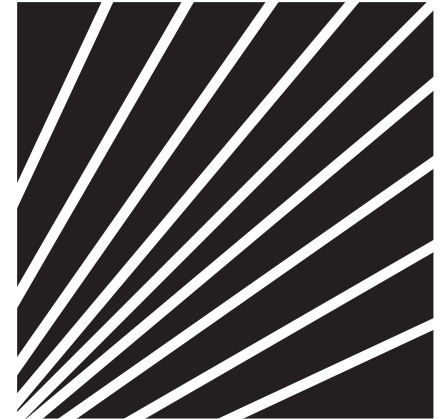
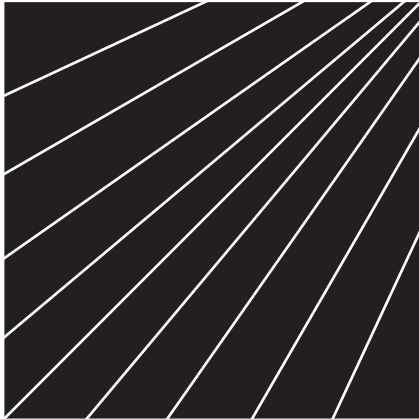
Within the sasa period, there is a past, a present, and an immediate future. Events occurring within the sasa period are either about to occur, in the process of realization, or recently experienced. Unlike clock time, sasa corresponds to the human, the natural eb and flow of life.

African Concept of Time (Zamani)

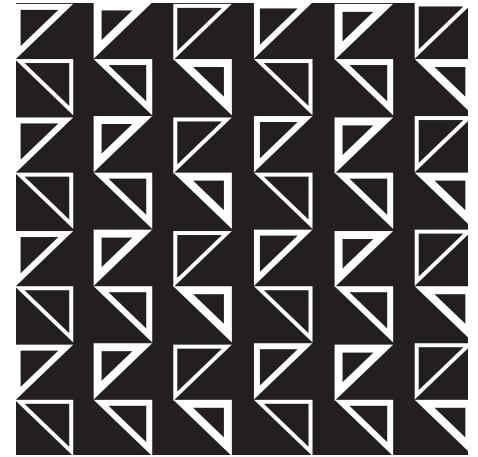
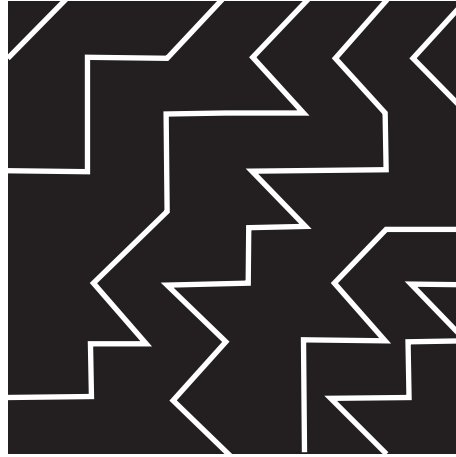
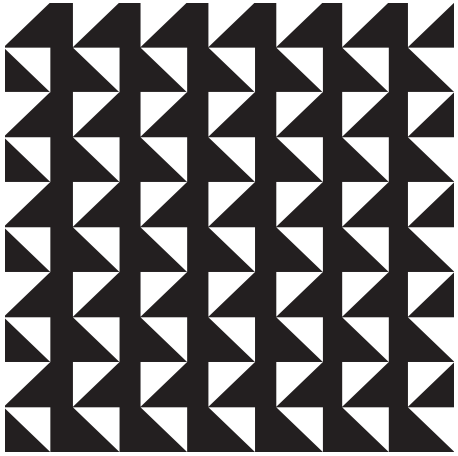


The zamani is best represented as “a history to rest upon comfortably.” Zamani gives a sense of foundation to the Sasa period. It makes sense of and binds together all created things.

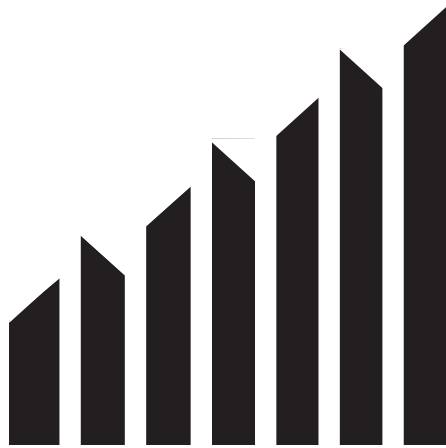
Like sasa, zamani has its own past, present, and future, which are comprised of memories of marriages, war, birth, draught, journeys, etc. A person lives on, even after physical death, through memories. One is only thought of as dead after he/she is no longer remembered, which could be several generations later.

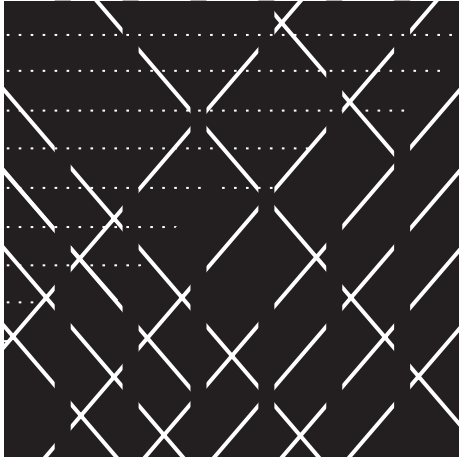


PAST

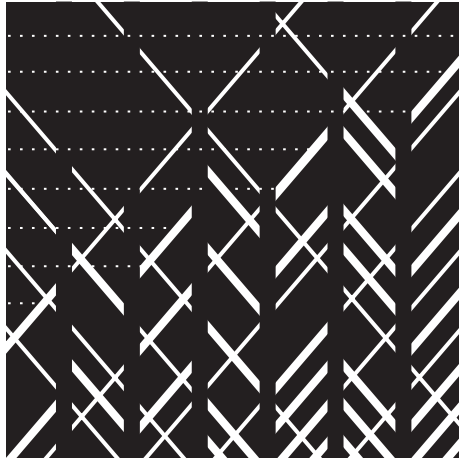


FUTURE

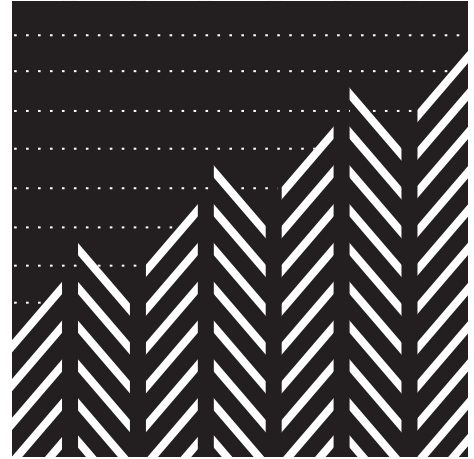




PAST

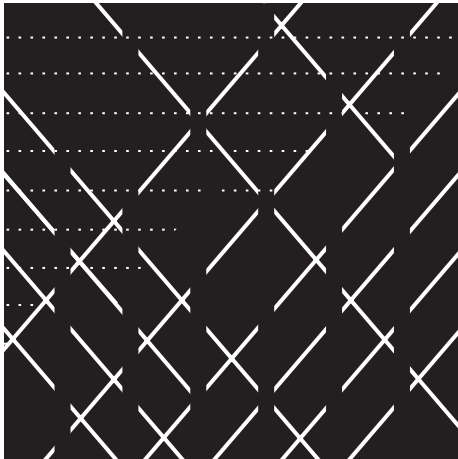


PRESENT



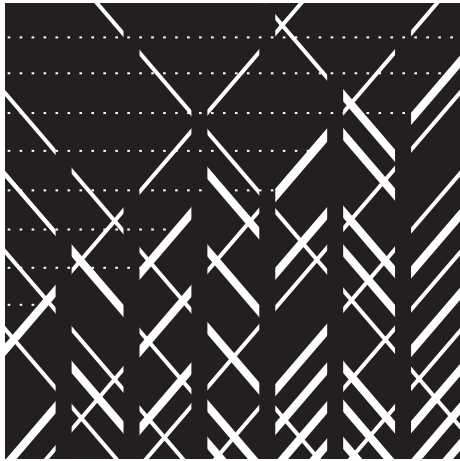
FUTURE

Western Concept of Time (Past)



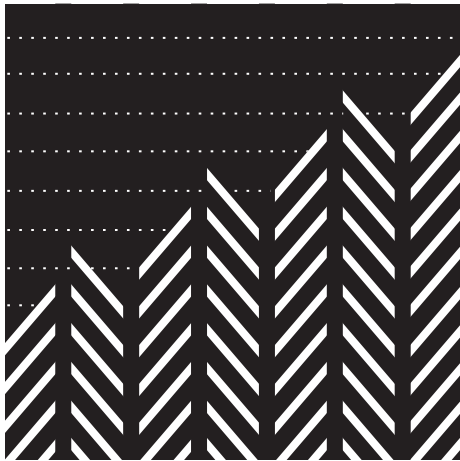
Past is context. One's past experiences combine to formulate the base of his/her being. Past events are reflected upon to guide future choices.

Western Concept of Time (Present)



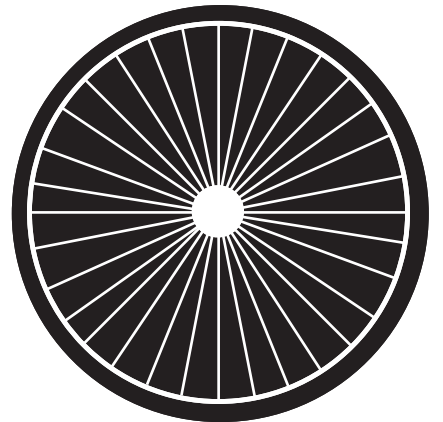
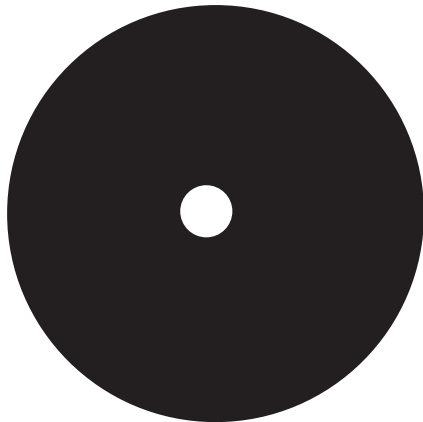
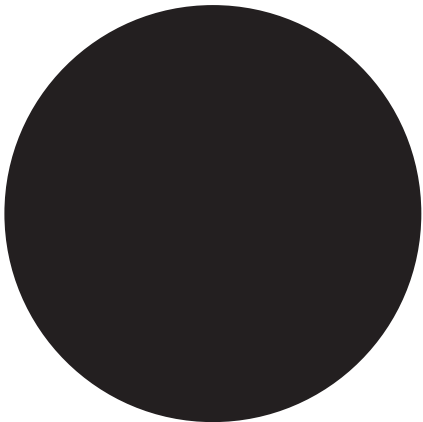
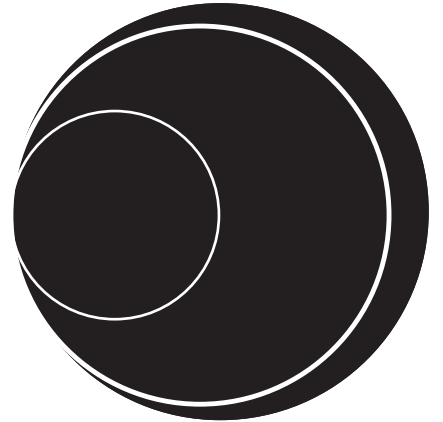
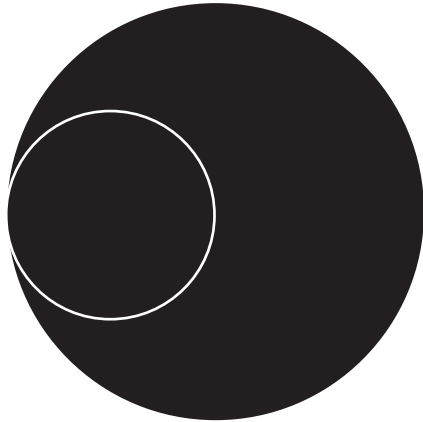
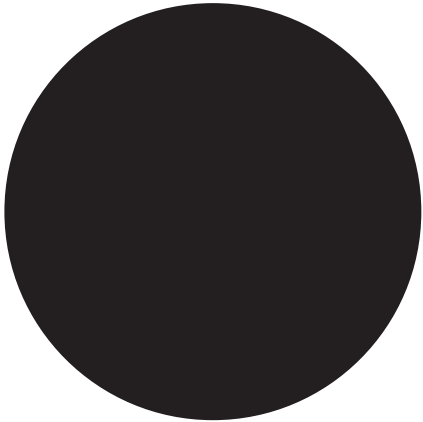
Present is guided by clock time. Humans conform to time. Past and future merge in the present. Idle time may feel like too much time whereas stress may create an illusion of too little time.

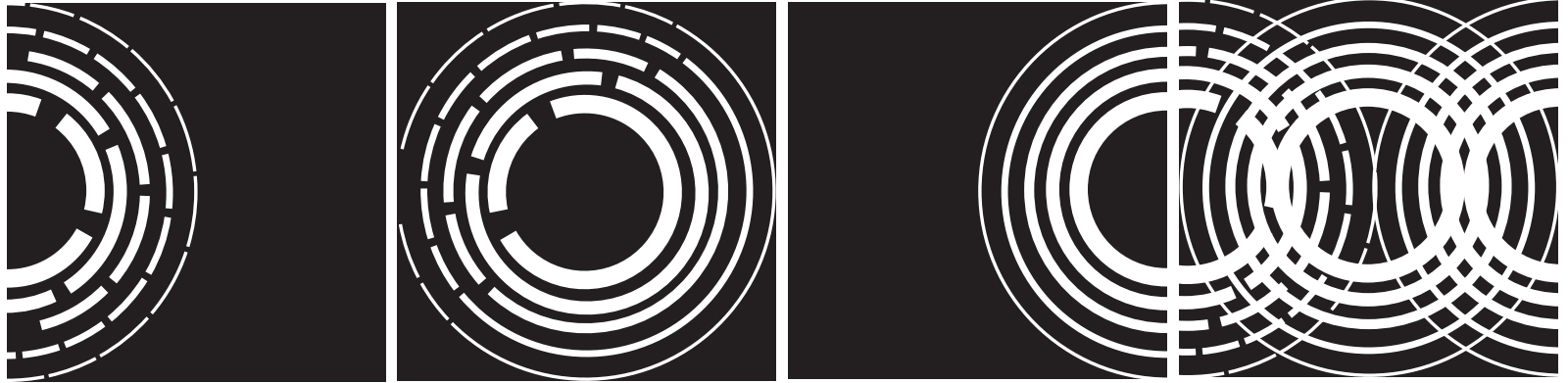
Western Concept of Time (Future)

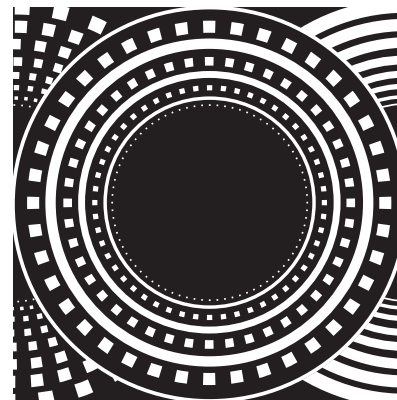
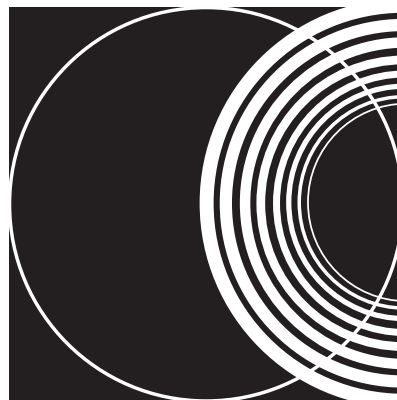
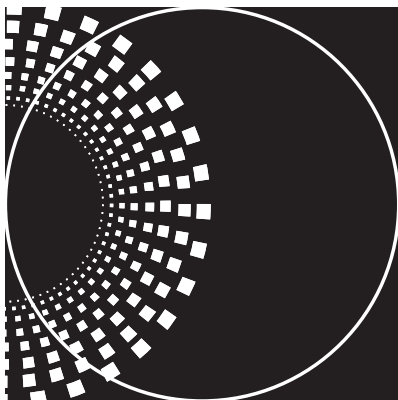


Future is the heaviest of all Western time periods because it is where Western thought most often resides. A Westerner is willing to put in more sweat now in order to build a brighter, more enjoyable future for himself and his family. Outlined for the Westerner is a stairway to success that he may climb if he so chooses.

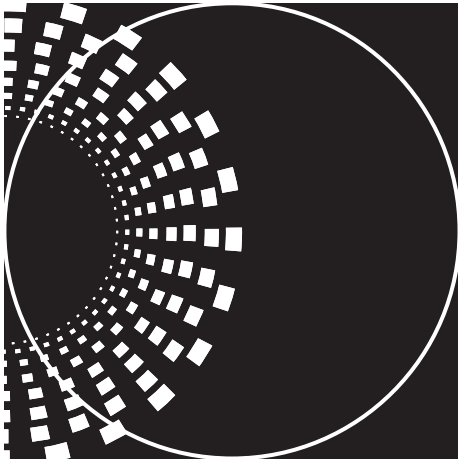








Eastern Concept of Time (Part I)



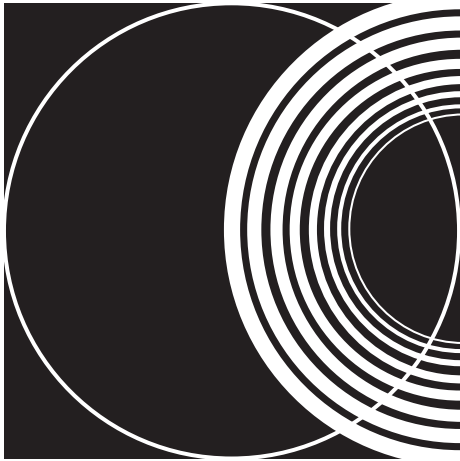
Past, present, and future can be described as “ceased,” “not-lingering,” and “not yet coming.” The past has already perished, the future is yet to come, and the present does not stay.

Eastern Concept of Time (Part II)



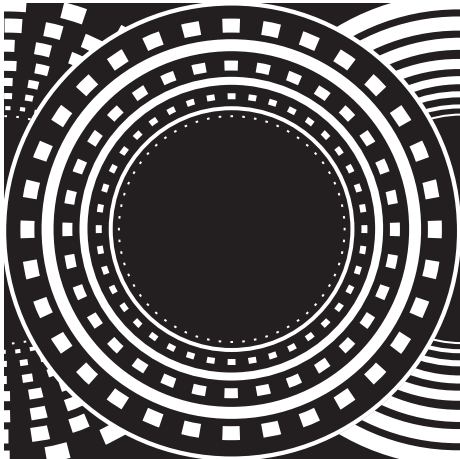
The mind cannot be located in any of these three times. To search for the mind in any of these times would be futile because it does not exist there.

Eastern Concept of Time (Part III)



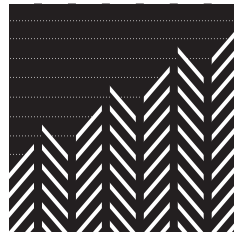
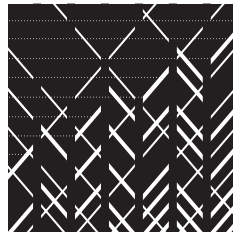
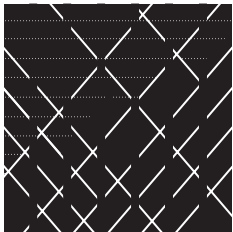
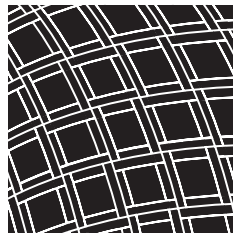
One can find the mind by ceasing to seek it, for this state is ever-present and can be experienced by emptying oneself of expectations and desires.

Eastern Concept of Time (Part IV)

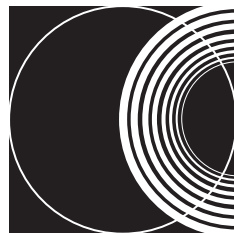
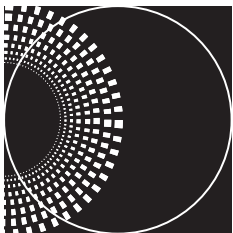


This state of being is called timeless time. It lives in the mind, but also extends to the entire realm of existence. This is the highest form of reality.

Visual Language



I primarily used line and point as my visual communication language. Each icon is primarily white on black—white messages contained within a black square (mimicking space.)



Typeface

The typeface I envision using is a sans-serif, specifically Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk. A sans-serif would facilitate the message of my icons due to its modern and universal feel. The Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk type family also has many different styles and weights which will be helpful in keeping the viewer visually stimulated, yet still serving a harmonious look and feel.

Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk

Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk

Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk

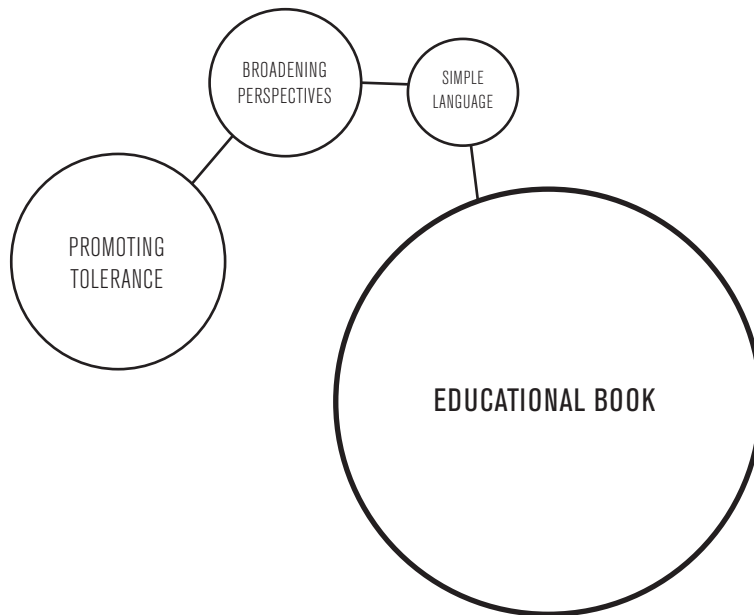
Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk

Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk

Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk

Berthold Akzidenz Grotesk

Application



The application I envision for my icons is to write a short book about time across cultures. With this book, I plan to use simple and straight-forward language so that the messages will sound clear across a diverse audience. Through examining time differences across cultures in an unbiased manner, I hope this book will provide opportunities for the audience to learn, broaden cultural perspectives, and adopt a tolerance towards all of earth's inhabitants.