

# Human, Data, Power

## Strategy and specification

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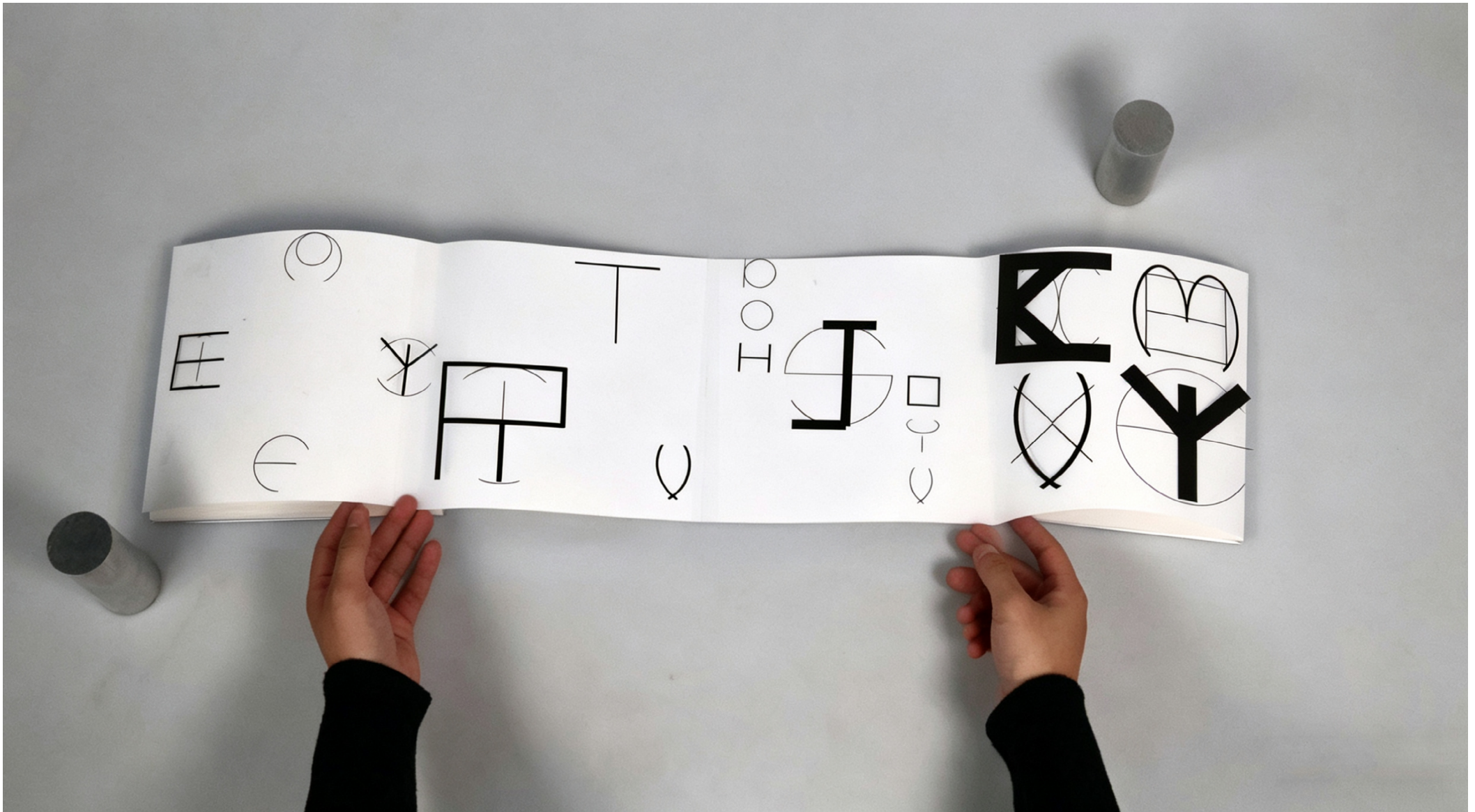
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# Introduction



This project is a response to the "Power" theme in the briefing. It will use a multi-media, interdisciplinary approach and critical design practices in graphic design as its design foundation.

"Human, Data, Power" is a direct response to the ISTD power briefing, exploring the contested power dynamics between humans and data through a multi-media typographic intervention. This collection responds to the question of who holds power over whom—humans or data—and includes a booklet, aluminum cylindrical fittings for observing a mirrored world, and a set of randomized modular graphic experiments using a nine-square grid. The collection aims to critically and reflectively encourage a re-examination of the complex relationship between humans and data in contemporary society. This collection responds to and simulates the complexity of the human-data relationship in three ways and through multiple media.

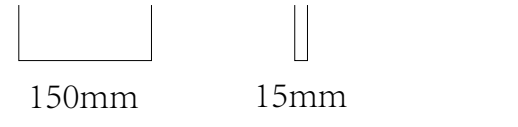
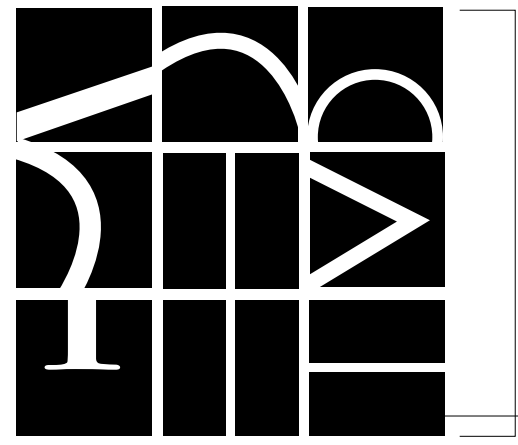
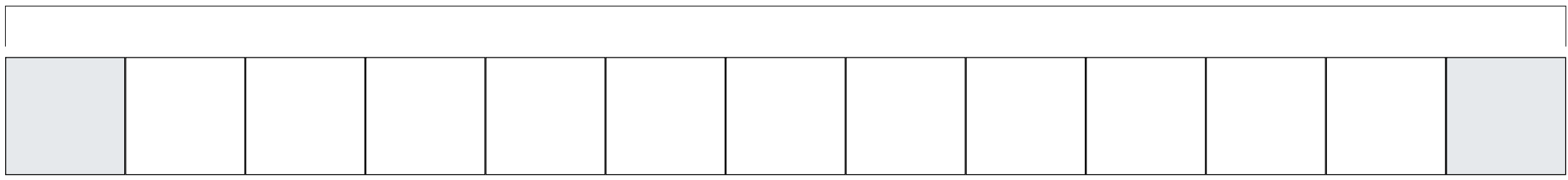
The inspiration for "Human, Data, Power" comes from philosophy. After exploring the simulacra in *\*The Matrix\**, Baudrillard's concepts of simulacra and simulation, Camus' existentialism, Marshall Foucault's concept of punitive power, and Machiavelli's *\*The Prince\**, this project will explore how data power is manifested in modern society and how the relationship between data and human power has changed. Several questions arose from the outset: How to apply Baudrillard and Marshall Foucault's theories on power? How to represent the complexities of data power and human power through graphic design? What are the use cases for this collection? How to make this research narrative? How to express this theme using other media? How to concretize several vast philosophical theories into one or two perspectives to ensure the project's direction, etc.

Therefore, the target audience for this project is young design professionals and philosophy enthusiasts who are concerned with issues related to the digital society and have a basic understanding of critical design.

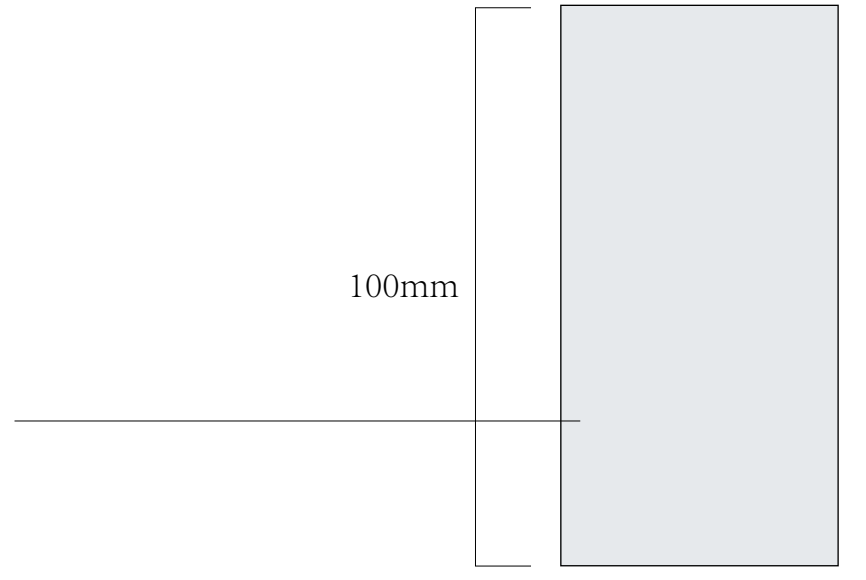
The project is divided into three parts. The core is to narrate the relationship between people and data through designing separate sets of typographic symbols for individuals and data, a modular grid experiment, and a solid aluminum cylinder that interacts with the printed font. First, the font design was derived from the modular grid experiment. I found that silver or aluminum can largely represent the relationship between people and data—fragility, invisibility, rationality, mass production, etc. Then, I extracted elements from several famous font designs to see if random combinations could reflect this relationship. Later, while researching everyday objects, I was surprised to find a coincidence in how rounded and square elements are represented in relation to people and data. Finally, I combined these two approaches to develop the "Human and Data" font. In the second part, after completing the font, I used Foucault's theory to create a brochure that uses typography to represent the process of interaction between people and data, metaphorically blurring the boundaries between their possessive power and the real and virtual. Since the two fonts are merely representative symbols of people and data, I designed only uppercase letters for both fonts, making the symbolism of people and data more direct. In the third part, I will materialize Baudrillard's theory, which is the theory of simulacra and simulation, using aluminum to create a new space next to the font through metal. This new space represents the simulacra of data, and the book represents reality. As the audience holds the aluminum and slides it on the paper, the reflection inside the metal also slides, symbolizing a surreal, simulated world. How can people escape this disciplined data simulacra?

# Format specification

2730mm



Aluminum



45mm

Paper type: 200gsm Ivory cartridge paper

Sheet size: 1200mm x 500mm(Custom Large Format)

Colour: Warm Ivory/Off white(Non-fluorescent)

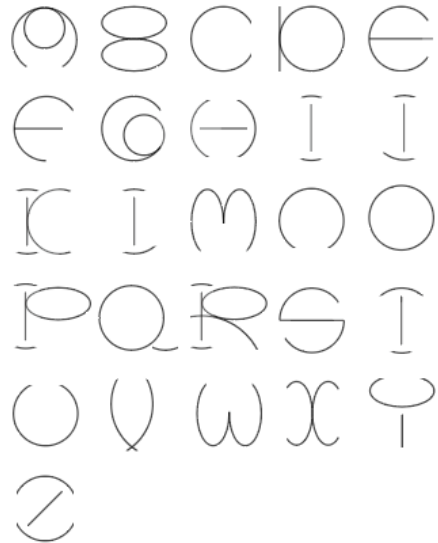
Quantity: 4 sheets

Tolerance: GSM  $\pm$  3% Dimension  $\pm$  5mm

Printing Methods: Sliver screen printing, Screen printing

Binding Method: Hand Made Concertina Paper From

Other Media: Aluminum



Individual



Data

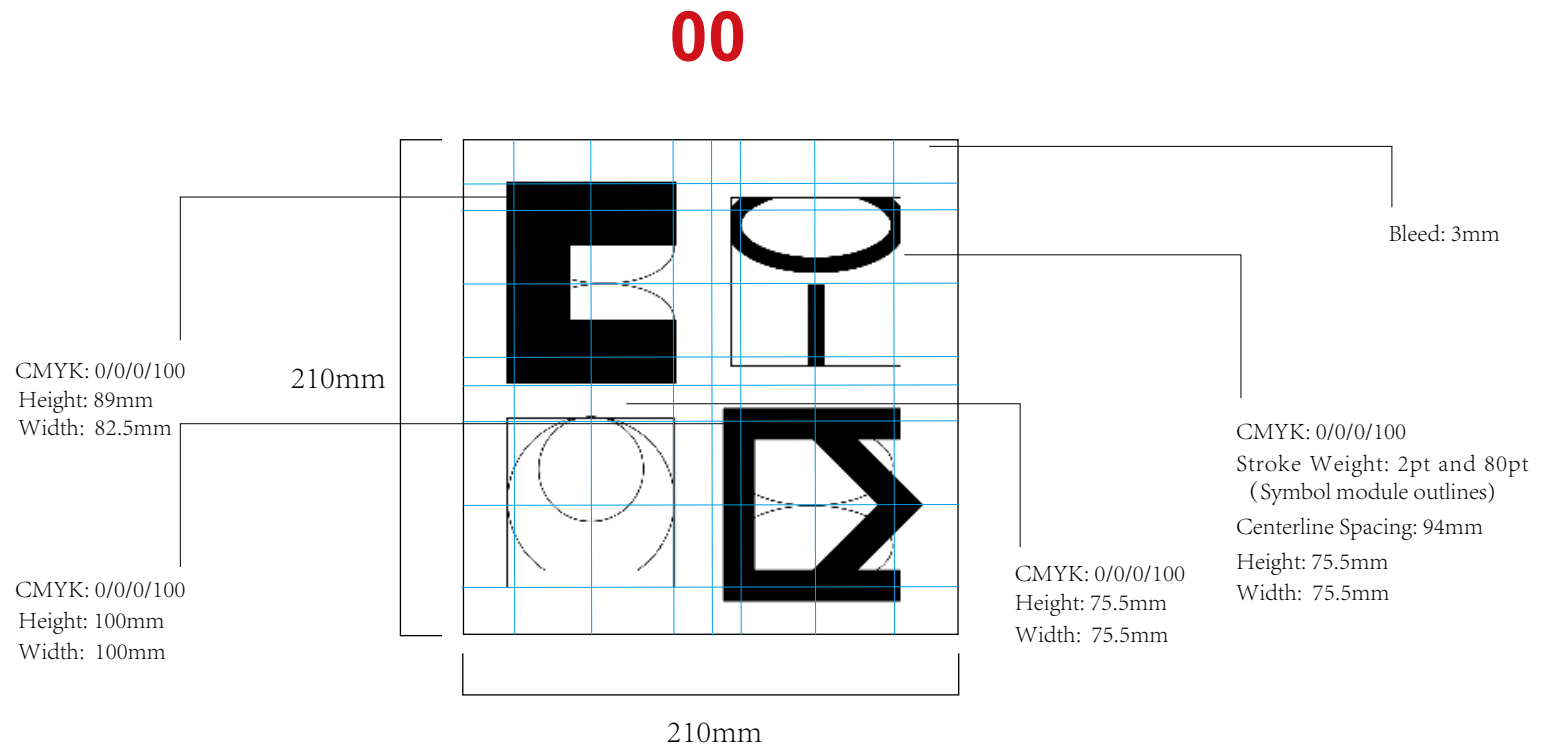
The overall layout and structure are inspired by the scroll form in Chinese painting, a way of viewing that unfolds gradually and coherently. The entire booklet is like a storyline, narrating how the two symbols of people and data influence and ultimately merge. It is mainly divided into three parts: the first part places individuals in the symbolic space of the booklet, arranged randomly and organically; the second part sees the intervention of data symbols, which begin to surround, compress, and discipline the individual symbols; the third part sees the two symbols begin to merge, overlap, and become part of each other, creating new graphics, and finally attempting to provoke the viewer to reflect: are humans still important in this new graphic?

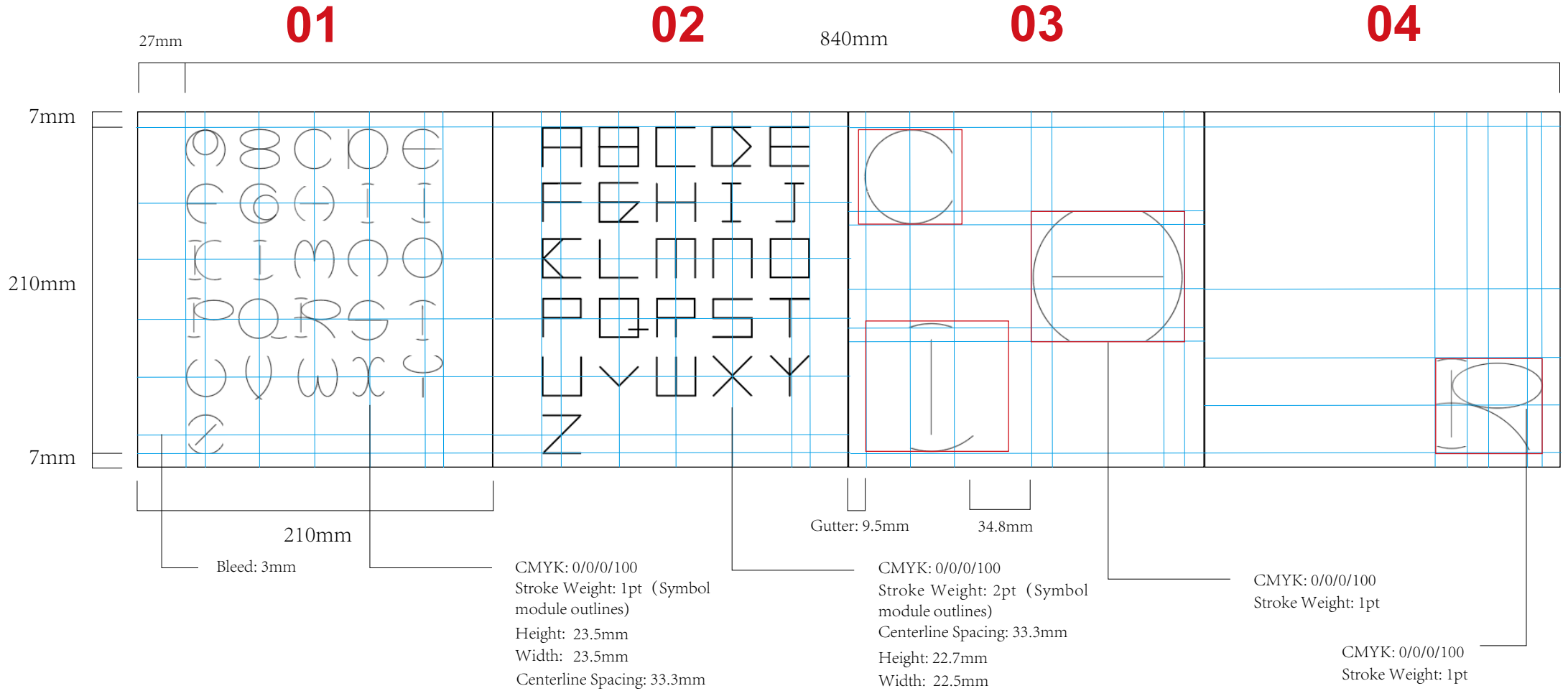
In this project, fonts will be used as images rather than just words. Therefore, after researching people and data, two fonts/symbols were chosen to represent people and data within the project.

# Grid context 1

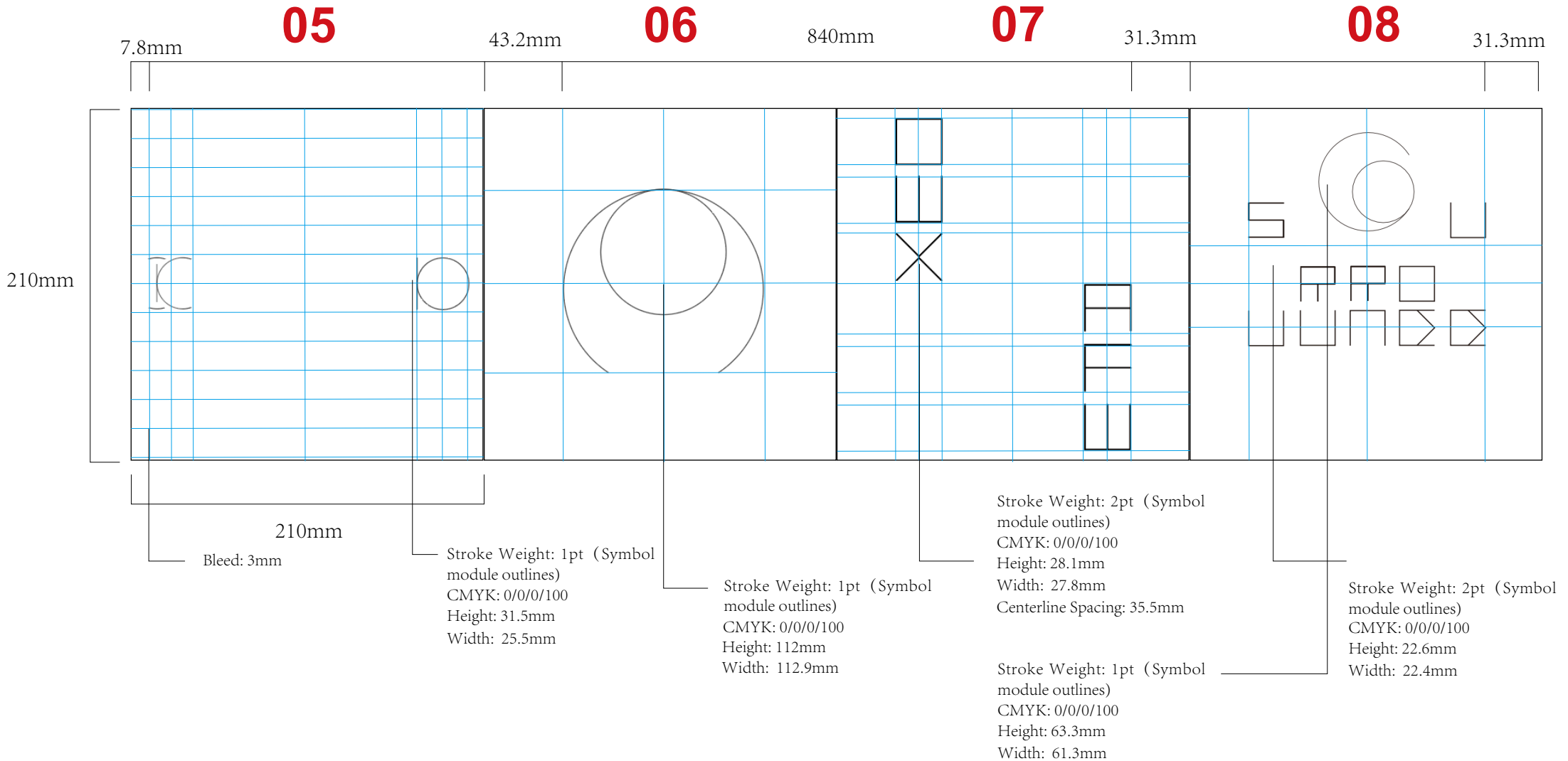
This grid system employs a Hierarchical Grid System and Modular Grid Variation approach. Each page in the book follows its own grid rules, rather than using a single, unified grid system. This is because the theme of power I wanted to express required the use of different sizes, densities, and intersections of typographic symbols for visual storytelling, necessitating the development of each page as an independent unit. However, the overall page module dimensions remain the same: length and height are 210mm, with a 3mm bleed and CMYK 0/0/0/100 black, maintaining visual consistency while allowing for grid adjustments based on content. This hierarchical design echoes the project's theme: a gradual shift from rationality to change and expressive language, transforming reflection on typographic symbols into guidance.

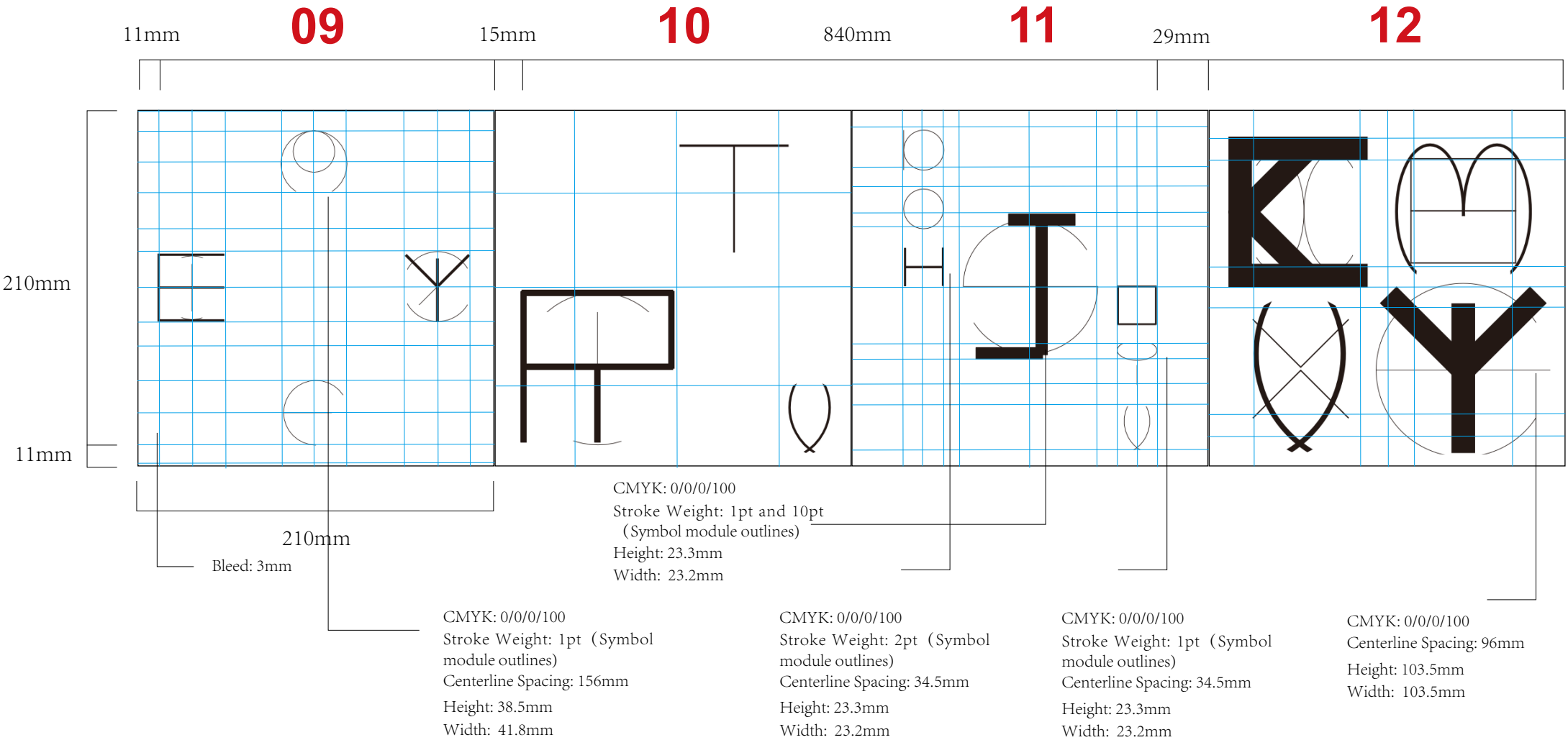
This grid system unfolds based on keywords such as rules, rationality, and intersection. Therefore, I want the audience to experience a sense of both oppression and order, like flipping through an objective, rational, and abstract storyline about the relationship between people and data. During use, the audience should follow the unfolding of the scroll, moving their gaze from left to right, and observing the changes in these symbols in the reflected world through the aluminum cylinder.

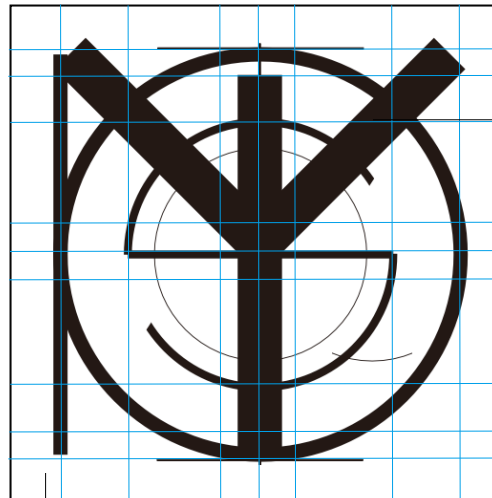




# Grid context 3



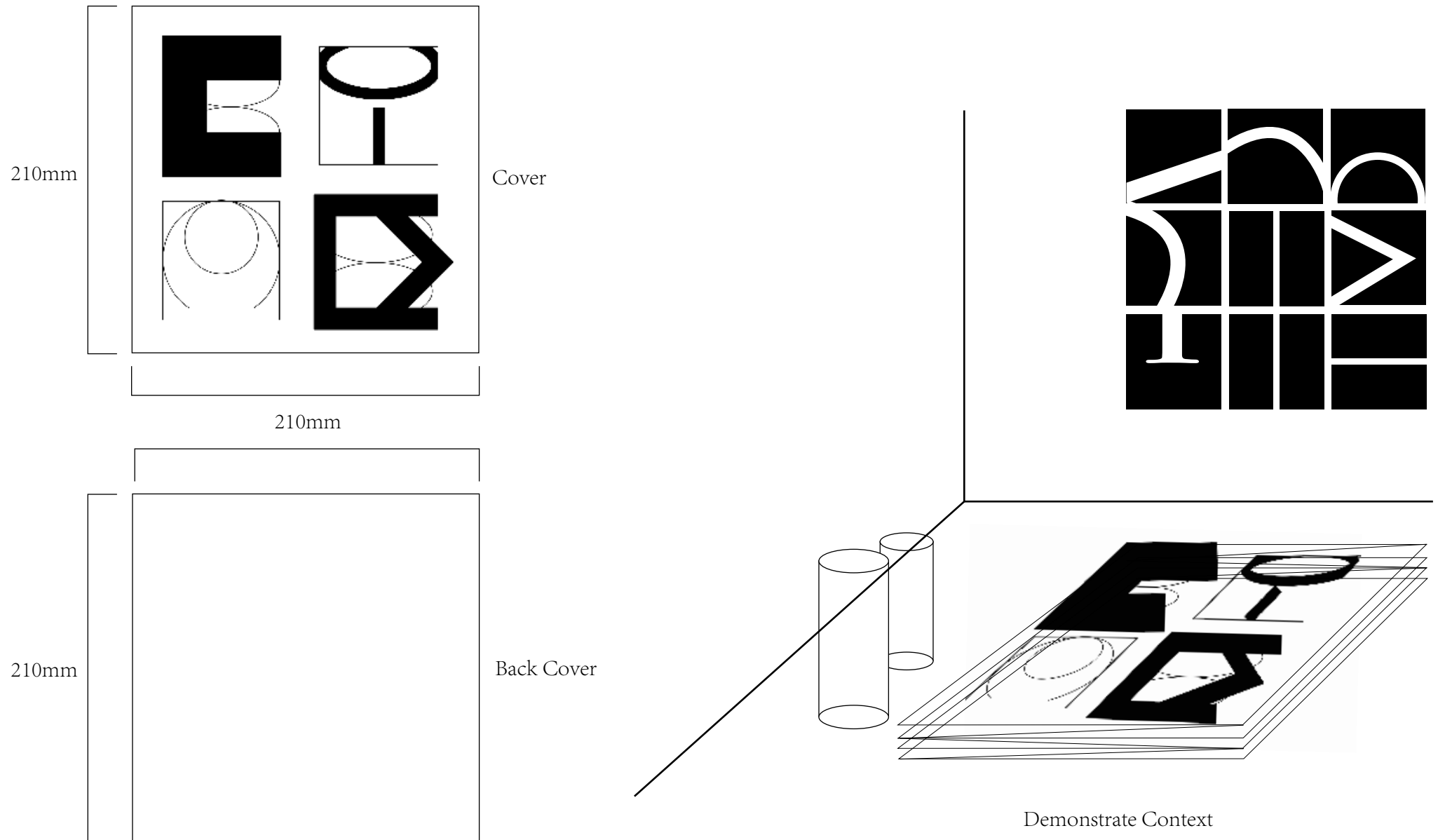


**13**

210mm

Bleed: 3mm

CMYK: 0/0/0/100  
Stroke Weight: 45pt, 2pt, 10pt  
(Symbol module outlines)  
Height: 166.5mm  
Width: 163mm



# Implementation

