

Aaron Woo

VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGNER

Resumé

References

Portfolio

Contact

(Click to jump to specific section.)

AARON WOO

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EDUCATION

University of Washington Seattle, WA
BFA Degree in Visual Communication Design
Attended 2002-2006

Punahou School Honolulu, HI
Graduated 2002 with honors

Waiālae Japanese Language School Honolulu, HI
Attended 1989-1999
Graduated 1999 with honors

EXPERIENCE

Push Design Seattle, WA
Junior graphic designer. Designed corporate identities, printed materials (multi-page documents, mailers, exhibit booth, advertisements), websites and related web materials (code and aesthetics). Feb 2007-May 2007.

Xeriton Corporation Sammamish, WA
Contracted graphic designer. Designed corporate identities, websites (code and aesthetics), web graphics including advertisements and icons, and software UI. Aug 2006-Feb 2007.

Nick Kaars Associates, Inc. Designers & Signage Consultants Honolulu, HI
Internship. Assisted in designing wayfinding signage, spec sheets, and surveying sites. Jun-Sept. 2004.

Committee Organizing Rape Education at UW Seattle, WA
Designed print and poster materials for multiple campus campaigns and events. Dec 2005-present.

Hui Hoaloha 'Ulana: The Hawaii Club at UW Seattle, WA
Designed club website and promotional campaign (flyers, poster, website) for annual luau.
Historian providing photographic documentation for club events. Sept 2003-Dec 2006.

1101 Cafe at UW Seattle, WA
Student coordinator who supervised and managed human resources and student employees. Responsibilities also included preparing food, meals, dining facilities, and handling cash transactions. Sept 2004-May 2006.

Technical Knowledge

Adobe Photoshop	Macromedia Flash 8
Adobe Illustrator	Macromedia Dreamweaver 8
Adobe ImageReady	HTML/XHTML
Adobe InDesign	CSS
Adobe Acrobat	Microsoft Office

PERSONAL

Travel

Rome, Italy. Study abroad design program for four weeks in Sept 2005.
Tokyo, Japan. Homestay and study abroad program for six weeks in summer 2000.

Interests

Cinema, comic book collecting and illustration, trying new foods and cuisine.

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REFERENCES

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Conrad Saam

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Christopher Ozubko

Director of School of Art, University of Washington
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Axel Roesler

Associate Professor, VCD+Interaction Design, School of Art,
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Kathy Hanken

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Portfolio

ANALYZE > TRANSLATE > SYNTHESIZE > PRODUCE

*I approach every project not only as an assignment,
but as an artistic representation of ideas; the opportunity
to communicate and create on a higher visual level.*

Project list >>

Portfolio

ANALYZE > TRANSLATE > SYNTHESIZE > PRODUCE

The Overspent American

Kitchen of the Future Interface

Zaira

S.A.R.V.A. Week

Saucony

A.S.C. Talent Show

Park It Here

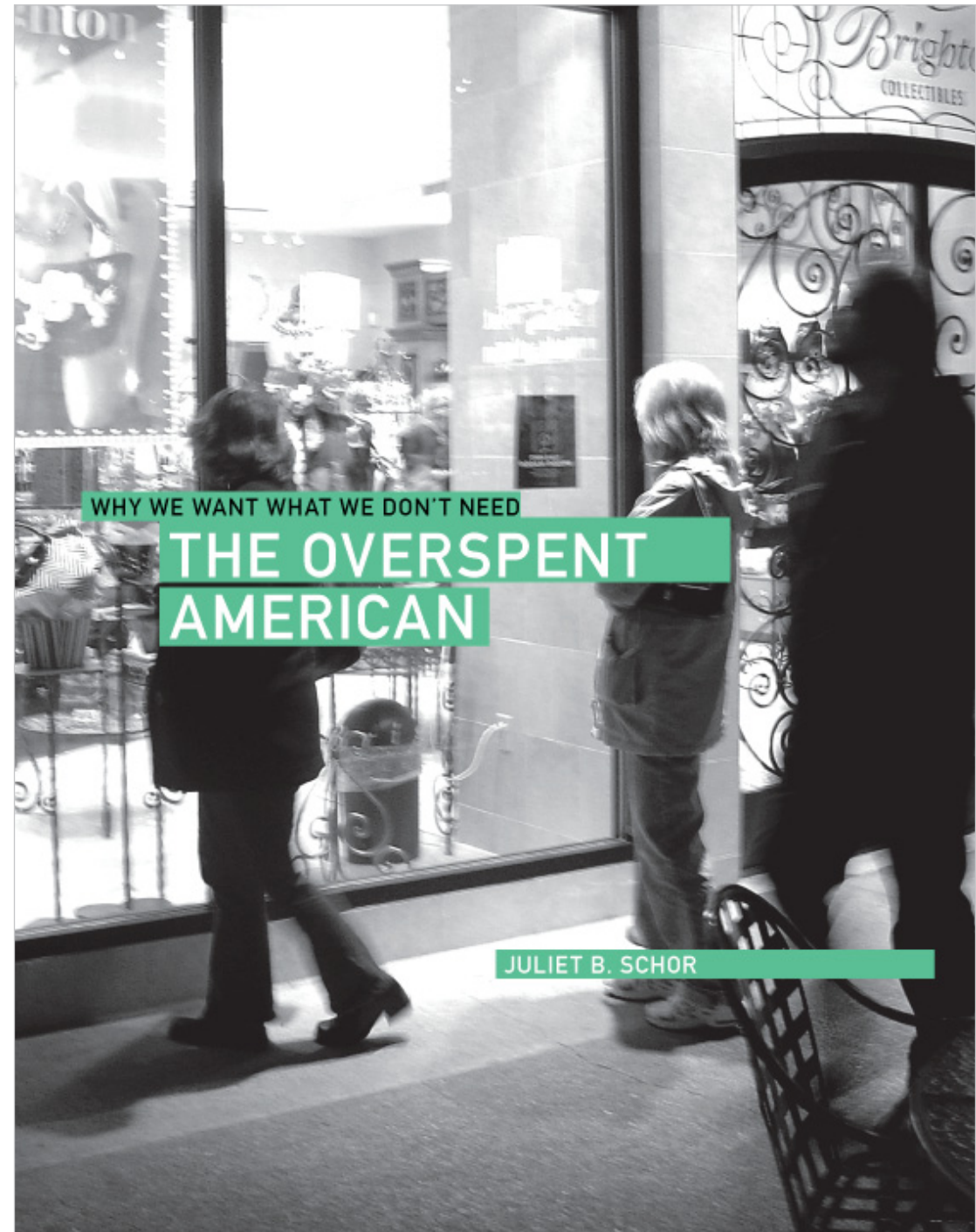
UW Hawaii Club Luau 2006

(Click to jump to specific section.)

The Overspent American

SOFTCOVER BOOK 8"x10"

Juliet B. Schor's novel "The Overspent American" examines America's trend of upward spending and its detrimental effects on middle and lower class citizens. My redesign of the novel uses original photography, pull quotes, and highlights to emphasize her points. In essence, if one were to read just the highlights and pull quotes they would be able to fully understand her ideals. At the same time, I was careful to ensure that these highlights do not change the overall voice of the novel. The glamorous "high-end" lifestyle presented by the media appears in color, while the reality of window shopping appears in black and white.



Cover 8"x10"

The Overspent American

SOFTCOVER BOOK 8"x10"



Interior Spread 20"x8" (10"x8")



The Overspent American

SOFTCOVER BOOK 8"x10"

Advertising and the media have played an important part in stretching out reference groups vertically. When twenty-somethings can't afford much more than a utilitarian studio but think they should have a New York apartment to match the ones they see on *Friends*, they are setting unattainable consumption goals for themselves, with dissatisfaction as a predictable result. When the children of affluent suburban and impoverished inner city households both want the same Tommy Hilfiger logo emblazoned on their chests and the top-of-the-line Swoosh on their feet, it's a potential disaster. One solution to these problems emerged on a talk-show circuit recently, championed by a pair of young urban "entry-level" earners: live the faux life, consuming as if you had a big bank balance. Their strategies? Use your expense account for private entertainment, date bankers, and sneak in to snazzy parties without an invitation. Haven't got the wardrobe for it? No matter. Charge expensive clothes, wear them with the tags on, and return them the morning after. Apparently the upscale life is now so worth living that deception, cheating, and theft are a small price to pay for it.

"Haven't got the wardrobe for it? No matter. Charge expensive clothes, wear them with the tags on, and return them the morning after."

Those are the more dramatic examples. Millions of us face less stark but problematic comparisons every day. People in one-earner families find themselves trying to live the lifestyle of their two-paycheck friends. Parents of modest means struggle to pay for the private schooling that others in their reference group have established as the right thing to do for their children.

Additional problems are created by the accelerating pace of product innovation. To gain broader distribution for the plethora of new products, manufacturers have gone to lifestyle marketing, targeting their pitches of upscale items at rich and nonrich alike. Gourmet cereal, a luxurious latte, or bathroom fixtures that make a statement, the right statement, are offered to people almost everywhere on the economic spectrum. In fact, through the magic of plastic, anyone can buy designer anything, at the trendiest retail shop. Or at outlet prices. That's the new consumerism. And its siren call is hard to resist.

The new consumerism is also built on a relentless ratcheting up of the standards. If you move into a house with a fifties kitchen, the presumption is that you will eventually have it redone, because that's a standard that has now been established. If you didn't have air conditioning in your old car, the presumption is that when you will replace it, the new one will have it. If you haven't been to Europe, the presumption is that you will get there, because you deserve to get there. And so on. In addition to the proliferation of new products (computers, cell phones, faxes, and other microelectronics), there is a continual upgrade of old ones—autos and appliances—and a shift to customized, more expensive versions, all leading to a general expansion of the list of things we have to have. The 1929 home I just moved into has a closet too shallow to fit a hanger. So the clothes face forward. The real estate agents suggested I solve the "problem" by turning the study off the bedroom into a walk-in. (Why read when you could be buying clothes?) What we want grows into what we need, at a sometimes-dizzying rate. While politicians continue to tout the middle class as the heart and soul of American society, for far too many of us being solidly middle-class is no longer good enough.

Oddly, it doesn't seem as if we're spending wastefully, or even lavishly. Rather, many of us feel we're just making it, barely able to stay even. But what's remarkable is that this feeling is not restricted to families of limited income. It's a generalized feeling, one that exists at all levels. Twenty-seven percent of all households making more than \$100,000 a year say they cannot afford to buy everything they really need. Nearly 20 percent say they "spend nearly all their income on the basic necessities of life." In the \$50,000-\$100,00 range, 39 percent and one-third feel this way, respectively. Overall, half the population of the richest country in the world say they cannot afford everything they really need. And it's not just the poorer half.



This book is about why. About why so many middle-class Americans feel materially dissatisfied. Why they walk around with ever-present material mental "wish lists" of things to buy or get. How even a six-figure income can seem inadequate, and why this country saves less than virtually any other nation in the world. It is about the ways in which, for America's middle classes, "spending becomes you," about how it flatters, enhances, and defines people in often wonderful ways, but also how it takes over their lives. My analysis is based on new research showing that the need to spend whatever it takes to keep current within a chosen reference group—which may include members of widely disparate resources—drives much purchasing behavior. It analyzes how standards of belonging socially have changed in recent decades, and how this change has introduced Americans to highly intensified spending pressures.

And finally, it is about a growing backlash to the consumption culture, a movement of people who are downshifting—by working less, earning less, and living their consumer lives much more deliberately.

INTRODUCTION 977

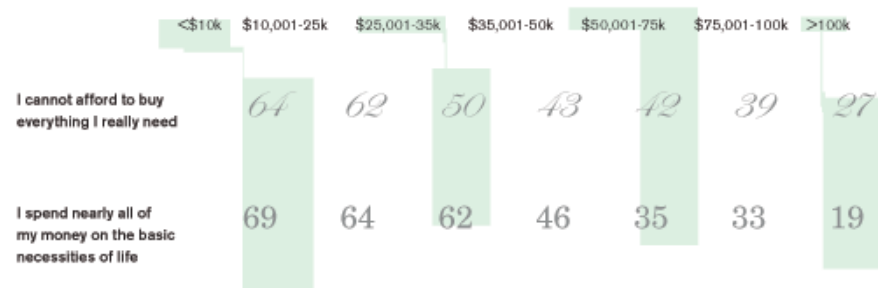
The Overspent American

SOFTCOVER BOOK 8"x10"

A BRIEF CALCULATION

how much is enough?

% AGREEING WITH STATEMENT, BY INCOME



The phenomenon that Veblen identified and described, conspicuous consumption by the rich and the nouveaux riches, was not new even in his own time. Spending to establish a social position has a long history. Seventeenth and eighteenth century Italian nobles built opulent palaces with beautiful facades and, within those facades, placed tiles engraved with the words *Pro Invidia* (To Be Envied). For centuries, aristocrats passed laws to forbid nouveaux rich from copying their clothing styles. At the turn of the century, the wealthy published menus of their dinner parties in the newspapers. And fifty years ago, American social climbers bought fake "ancestor portraits" to hang in their libraries.

Veblen's story made a lot of sense for the upper-crust, turn-of-the-century urban world of his day. But by the 1920s, new developments were afoot. Because of productivity and output were growing so rapidly, more and more people had entered the comfortable middle classes and begun to enjoy substantial discretionary spending. And this mass prosperity eventually engendered a new socioeconomic phenomenon

a mass keeping-up process that led to convergence among consumers' acquisition goals and purchasing patterns.

The advent of mass production in the 1920s made possible an outpouring of identical consumer goods that nearly everybody wanted—and were better able to afford, thanks to declining prices. By the fifties, the Smiths had to have the Joneses' fully automatic washing machine, vacuum cleaner, and, most of all, the shiny new Chevrolet parked in the driveway. The story of this period was that people looked to their own neighborhoods for their spending cues, and the neighbors grew more and more alike in what they had. Like compared with like and strove to become even more alike.

In addition to Veblen and Duesenberry, a number of distinguished economists have emphasized these social and comparative processes in their classic accounts of consumer culture—among them, John Kenneth Galbraith, Fred Hirsch, Richard Easterlin, Clair Brown and Robert Frank. Among the most important of their messages is that consumer satisfaction, and dissatisfaction, depend less on what a person has in an absolute sense than on socially formed aspirations and expectations. Indeed, the very term "standard of living" suggests the point: the standard is the social norm.

By the 1970s, social trends were once again altering the nature of comparative consumption. Most obvious was the entrance of large numbers of married women into the labor force. As the workplace replaced the coffee klatch and the backyard barbecue as locations of social contact, workplace conversation became a source of information on who went where for vacation, who was having a deck put on the house, and whether the kids were going to dance class, summer camp, or karate lessons. But in the workplace, most employees are exposed to spending habits of people across a wider economic spectrum, particularly those employees who work in white-collar settings.

“But in the workplace, most employees are exposed to the spending habits of people across a wider economic spectrum.”

They have meetings with people who wear expensive suits or "real" Swiss watches. They may work with their boss, or their boss's boss, every day and find out a lot about what they and their families have.

There were also ripple effects on women who didn't have jobs. When many people lived in one-earner households, incomes throughout the neighborhood tended to be close to each other. As many families earned two paychecks, however, mothers who stayed at home or worked part-time found themselves competing with neighbors who could much more easily afford pricey restaurants, piano lessons, and two new cars. Finally, as Robert Frank and Phillip Cook argued, there has been a shift to a "winner-take-all" society: rewards within occupations have become more unequally distributed. As a group of extremely high earners emerged within occupation after occupation, they provided a visible, and very elevated, point of comparison for those who weren't capturing a disproportionate share of the earnings of the group.

The Overspent American

SOFTCOVER BOOK 8"x10"



Interior Spread 20"x8" (10"x8")

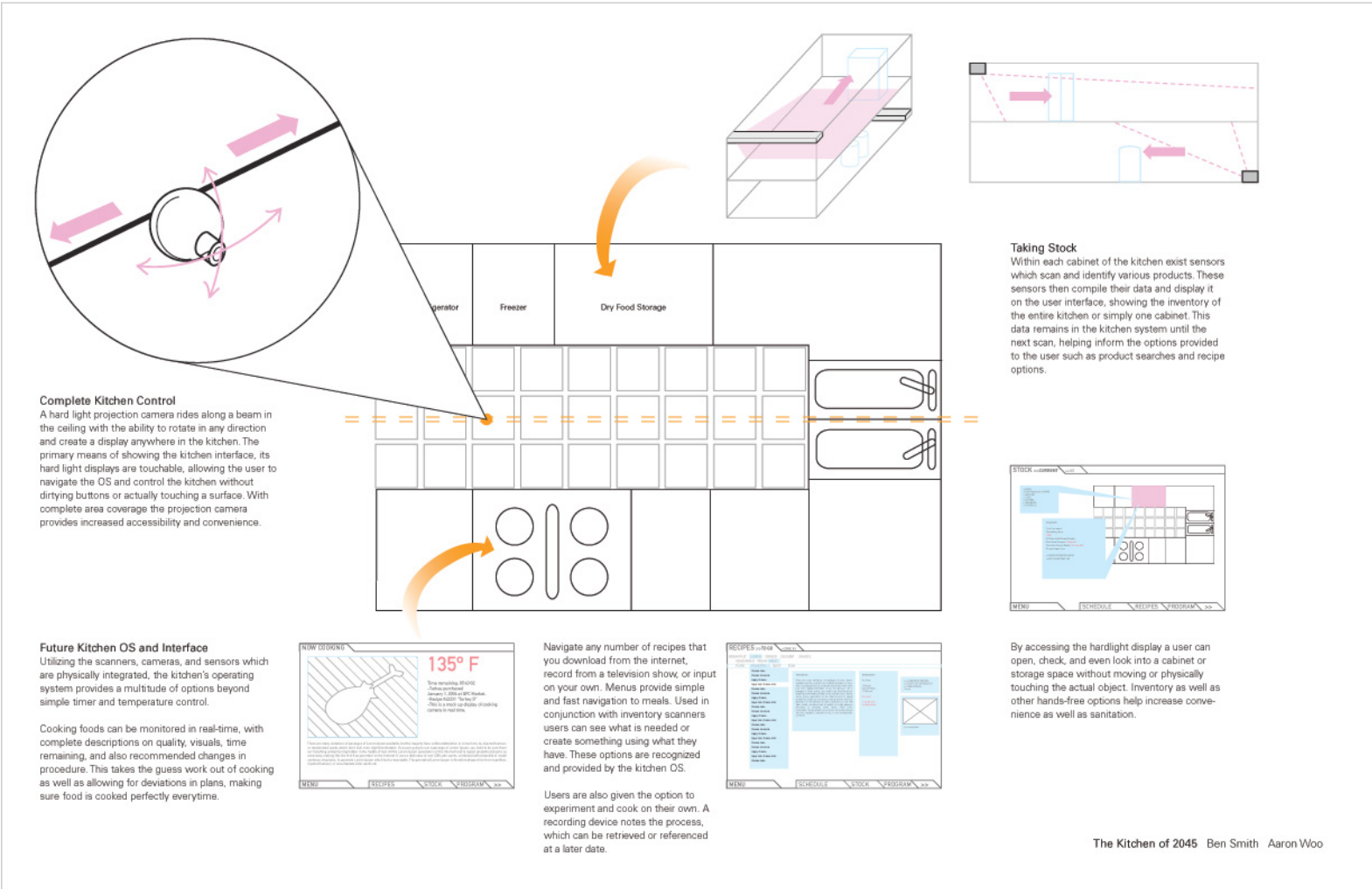
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Next Project >>

The Kitchen of 2040

USER INTERFACE

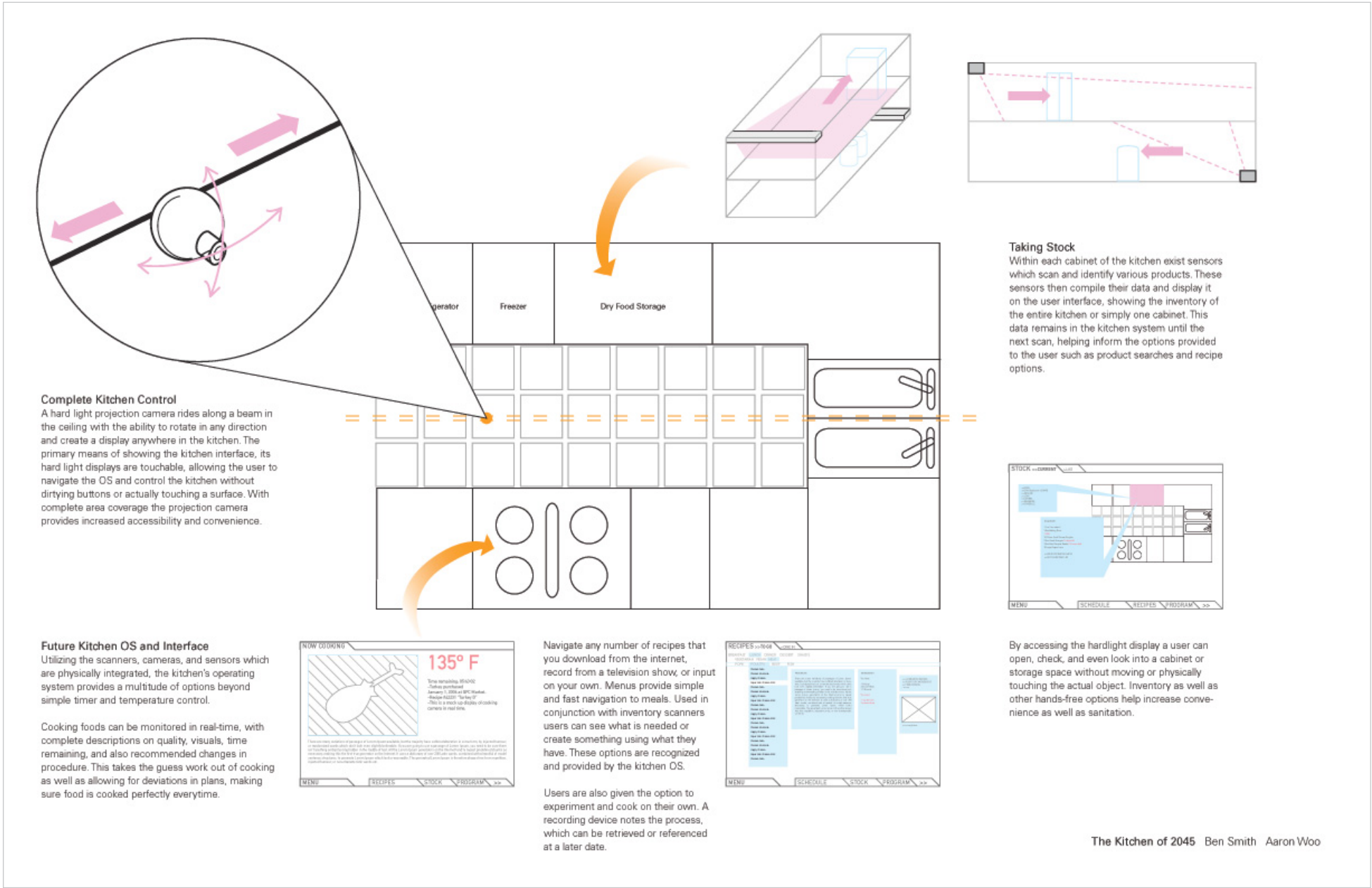
A hypothetical interface that can be projected in any direction, transforming any surface into an easily accessible touch screen. Integrated within the kitchen, a user can instantly browse their recipe database, take stock of available ingredients (and based upon that view cookable recipes), or schedule appliances to cook meals. Instead of browsing recipes by category, the user applies any combination of “filters” or criteria such as main ingredient, cooking time, dietary restrictions, or most frequently cooked meal. This saves the user time and eliminates the need to go hunting through volumes of cookbooks for a single recipe.



Overview of future kitchen

The Kitchen of 2040

USER INTERFACE



USER INTERFACE



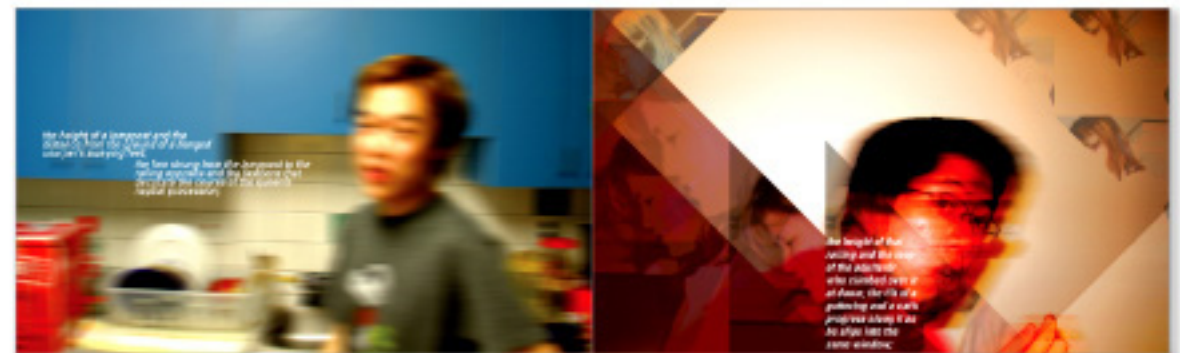
Interface screenshots
+ Click to view movie clip

Next Project >>

Zaira

BOOK 10"x6"

This book is a visual interpretation of an excerpt, the city of Zaira, from Italo Calvino's "Invisible Cities." Zaira is a city of constantly fluctuating memories. I tried to convey this by emphasizing the vibrant yet often times blurry and overlapping visual memoirs that exist within our minds. The book itself uses completely original photography which I shot and manipulated myself. The pages and cover are mounted on thin bristol board and wire bound so that two-page spreads can be viewed flat and in their complete form.



Interior spreads 20"x6" (10"x6")

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Zaira

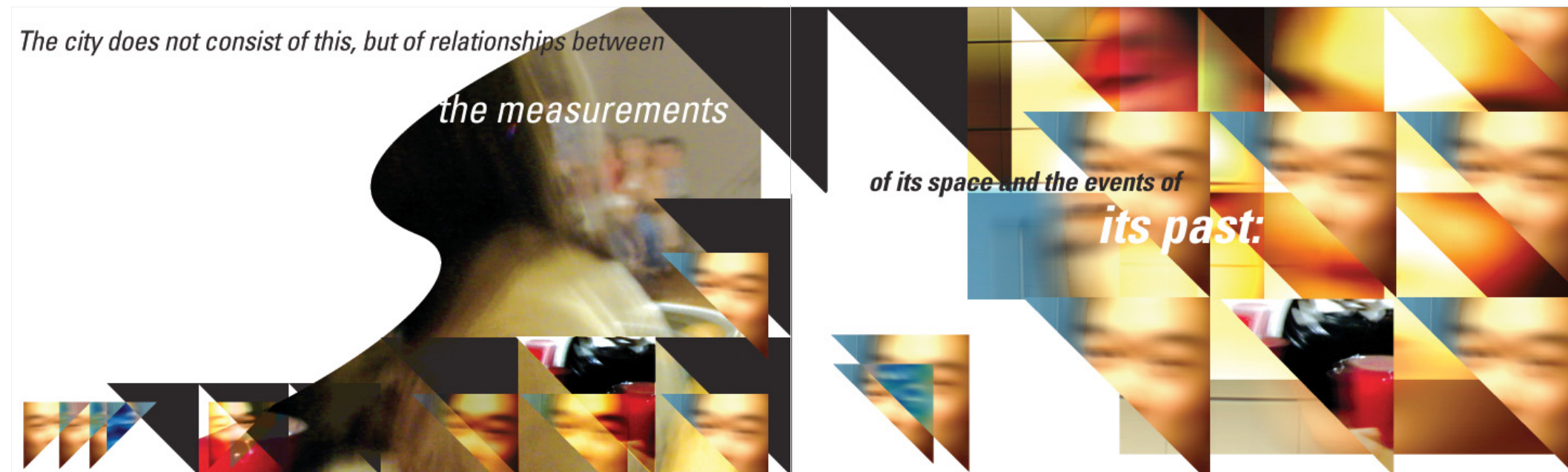
BOOK 10"x6"



Cover 10"x6"

Zaira

BOOK 10"x6"



Interior Spread 20"x6" (10"x6")

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Zaira

BOOK 10"x6"



Interior Spread 20"x6" (10"x6")

Zaira

BOOK 10"x6"



Interior Spread 20"x6" (10"x6")

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Next Project >>

S.A.R.V.A. Week

POSTER 20"x30"

The Committee Organizing Rape Education (C.O.R.E.) is a volunteer on campus group at the University of Washington whose goal is to end sexual assault through peer education. By sponsoring events such as lectures, exhibitions, movies, and campus activities the group hopes to provide a non-aggressive means of ending and preventing all forms of sexual assault throughout the community. Sexual Assault Relationship Violence Awareness (S.A.R.V.A.) Week is an annual week long event dedicated toward that means. With color restrictions and no imagery, I created the poster using various weights and sizes of Univers to add contrast and visual interest. The magenta highlights emphasize details regarding the specific speaker or film of the night as well as draw attention through their high contrast. An 11"x17" variation was also created for this event.

THE
COMMITTEE ORGANIZING
RAPE EDUCATION
PRESENTS:

S.A.R.V.A. WEEK

SEXUAL ASSAULT RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE AWARENESS

ALL EVENTS ARE **FREE** AND OPEN TO
MEMBERS OF THE UW COMMUNITY

APRIL 10 MONDAY

"CONSENT IS SEXY" DAY WITH DR. PEPPER SCHWARTZ

SEXPERT SEEN ON OPRAH, GOOD MORNING AMERICA, AUTHOR OF OVER 14 BOOKS

COLUMNIST FOR GLAMOUR MAGAZINE, LIFETIME TV

HUB Auditorium. Doors open 6:30 PM Discussion 7:00 PM

APRIL 11 TUESDAY

**SCREENING OF "BORN INTO BROTHELS" WITH
PRE-FILM GUEST SPEAKER**

ACADEMY AWARD AND SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL WINNING DOCUMENTARY
★★★★ - ROGER EBERT

HUB Auditorium. Doors open 6:30 PM Guest lecturer 7:00 PM Film starts 7:30 PM

APRIL 13 THURSDAY

**"SAFETY UNDER THE STARS" NIGHT RUN/WALK
WITH KEYNOTE SPEAKER LORENZO ROMAR**

UW MEN'S BASKETBALL HEAD COACH

Rally + speech at UW Red Square 6:00 PM.
Run/walk circles campus and ends at the HUB Lawn featuring live entertainment by Flowmotion
and refreshments. Register online at <http://core.asuw.org/sarva06>

"REAL MEN OF UW" CAMPAIGN

The Real Men of UW is a poster campaign that will run as part of Sexual Assault and Relationship Violence Awareness (SARVA) Week and is sponsored by the Committee Organizing Rape Education (CORE) and the ASUW. Male student, staff, and faculty leaders from around the UW campus are featured as "real men" because of their commitment to treat their partners with respect, reject gender stereotypes and speak out against sexual violence. See the exhibit at Suzzallo Espresso, the HUB Art Gallery, or the Student Activities Office on the second floor of the HUB.

CONTACT+MORE INFO

For more information visit C.O.R.E.
on the web at:
<http://core.asuw.org/sarva06>
or in HUB 504 M/I

Or contact us:
P: 206.543.4238
E: asuwcore@u.washington.edu

For disability accommodations contact:
Disability Resources for Students (DRS):

A: 448 Schmitz, Box 355839
P: 206.543.8924
TTY: 206.543.8925
E: web@u.washington.edu

Presented in part by:



Poster 20"x30"

Next Project >>

Saucony

MARK+WEBSITE RE-DESIGN

Shoe company Saucony is known almost exclusively for its detail oriented and high quality running shoes. Its mark or logo, however, fails to communicate this ideal and is clunky and awkward when compared with the velocity-oriented looks of Nike, Reebok, and Puma. In re-envisioning their identity I hoped to create a mark that was more in the vein of speed and the motion of running. An update to their website was also necessary, as their current one fails to engage visitors or promote their products effectively.



New mark

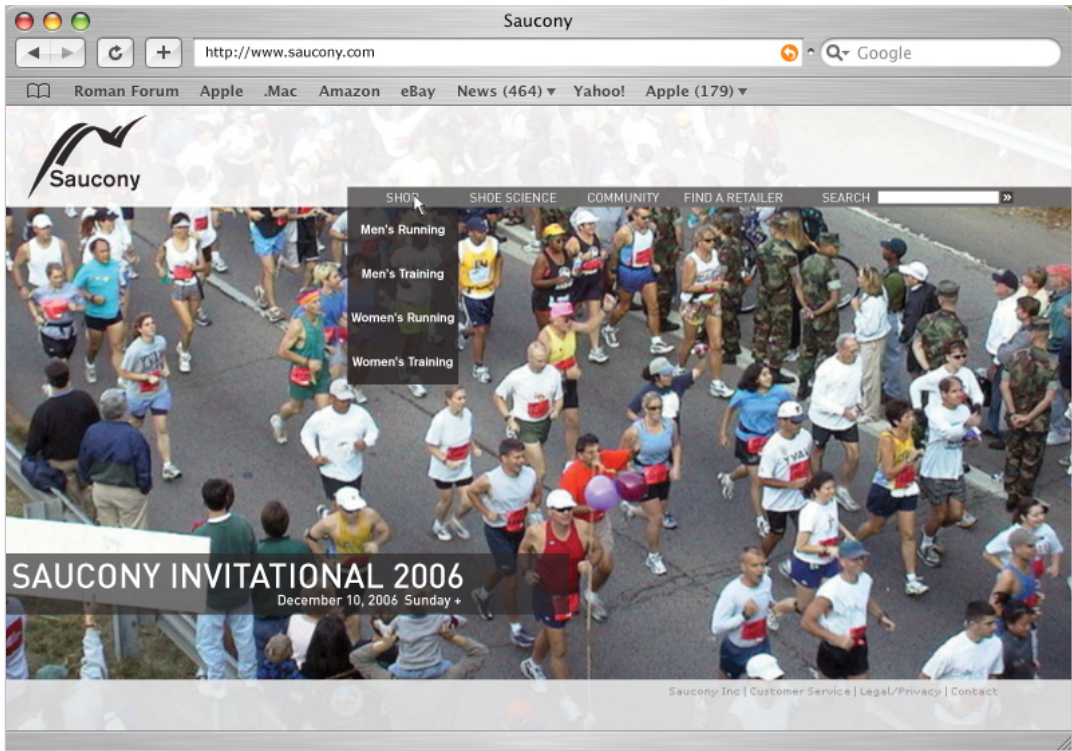


Current mark



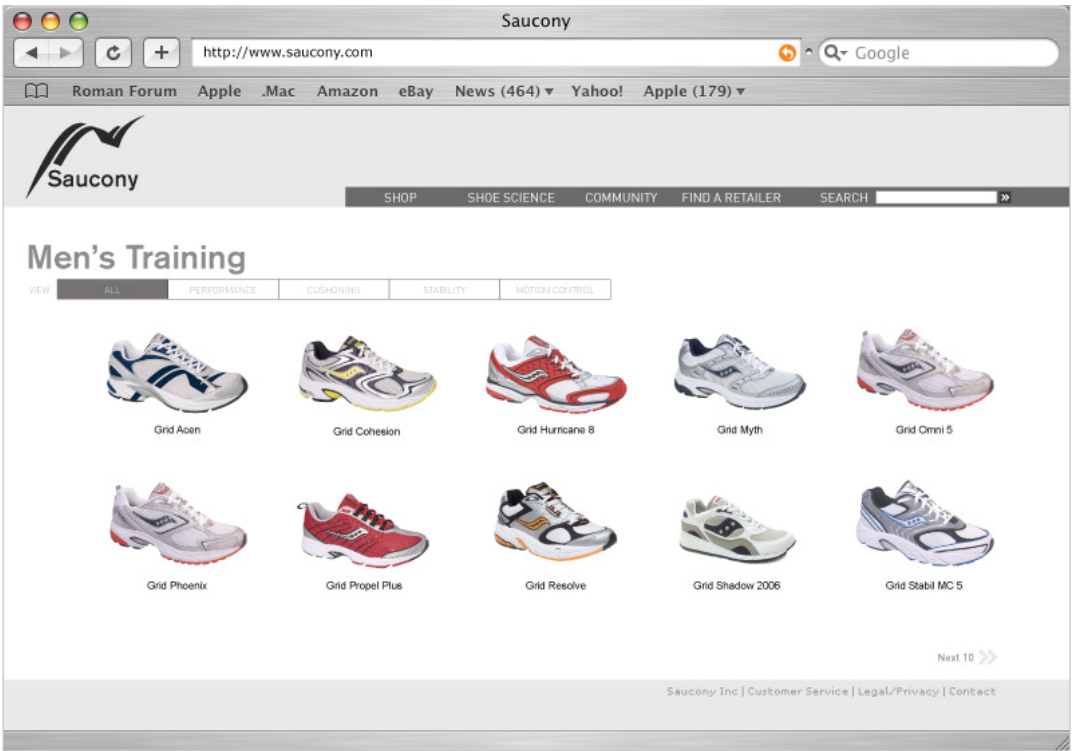
Saucony

MARK+WEBSITE RE-DESIGN



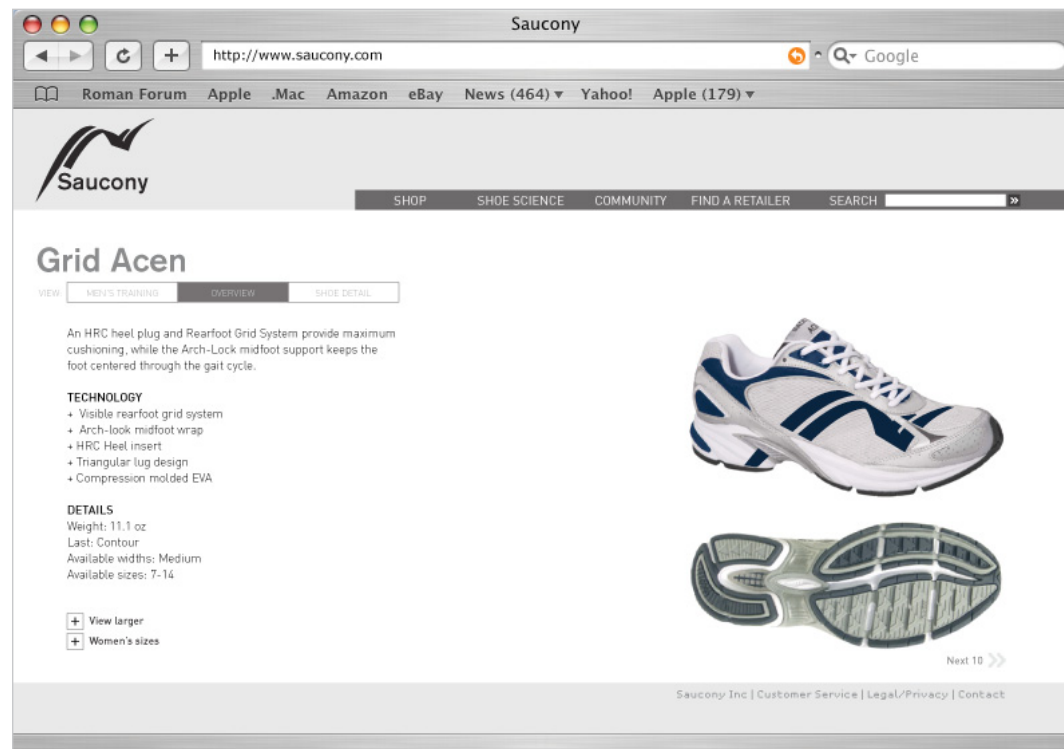
Website

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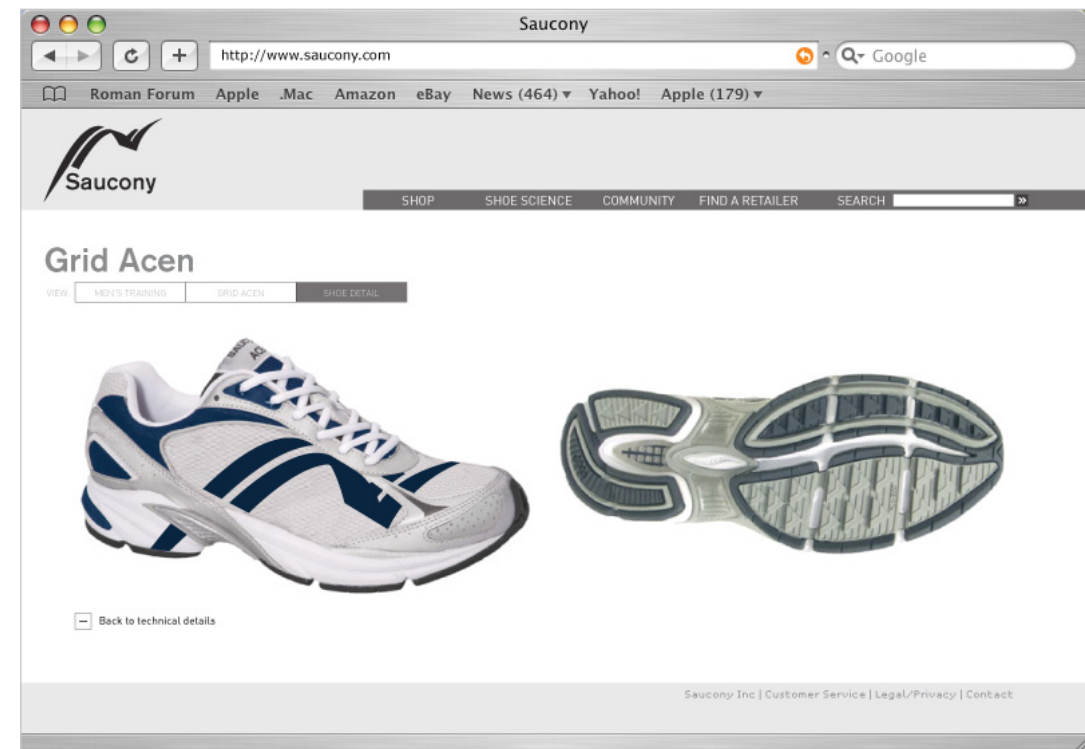
Saucony

MARK+WEBSITE RE-DESIGN



Website

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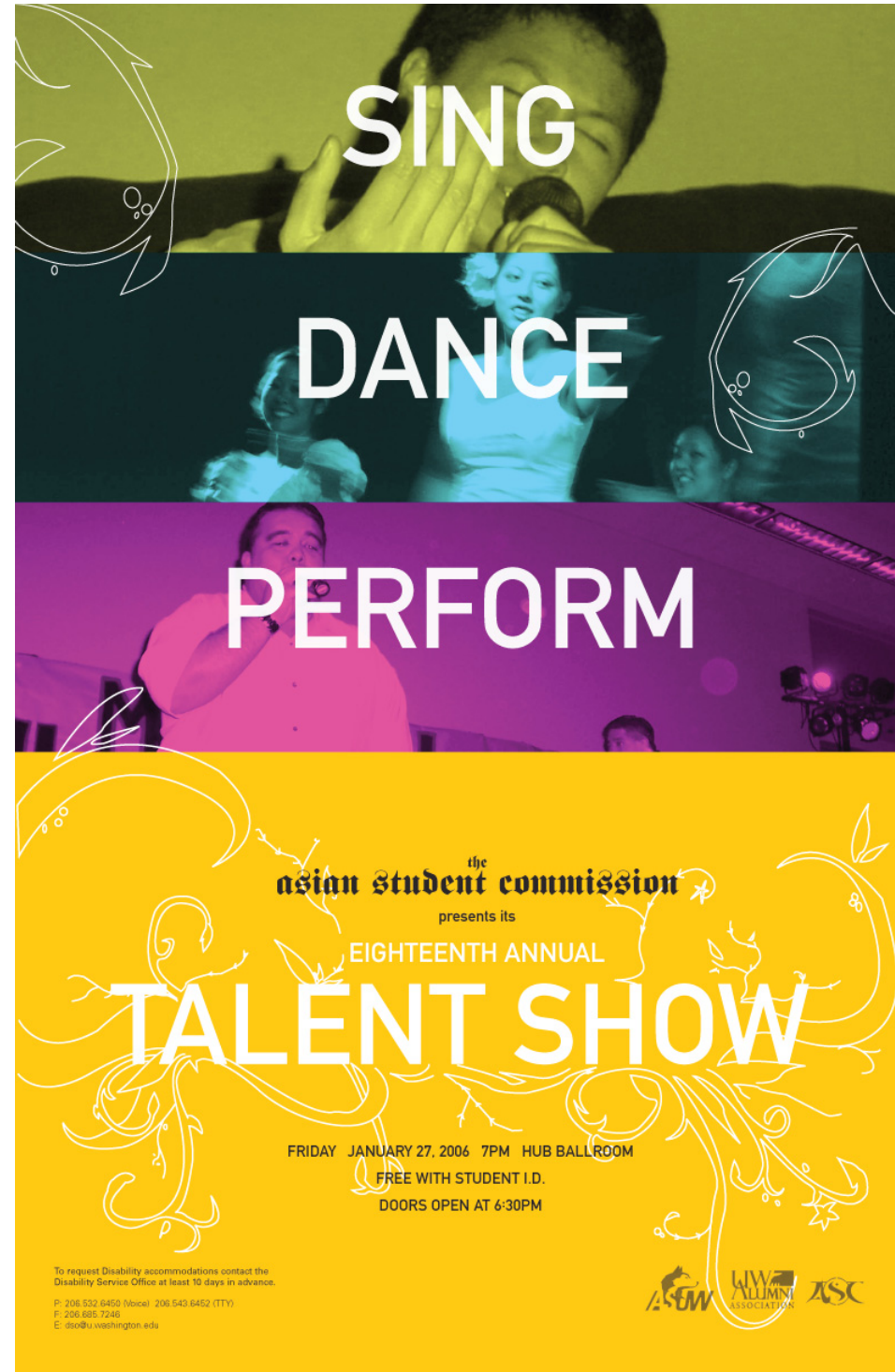


Next Project >>

A.S.C. Talent Show

POSTER 11"x17"

The Asian Student Commission's (A.S.C.) goal is to raise awareness of all Asian cultures throughout the community. With public social events year-round, the A.S.C. is one of the most vibrant groups on campus. Their annual talent show is one of their more popular and heavily attended events. I used large type and vibrant saturated colors in an effort to communicate the high levels of energy and enthusiasm that are consistently shown by the talent show's performers and audience.



Poster 11"x17"

[Next Project >>](#)

Park It Here

POSTER+STATIONARY SET

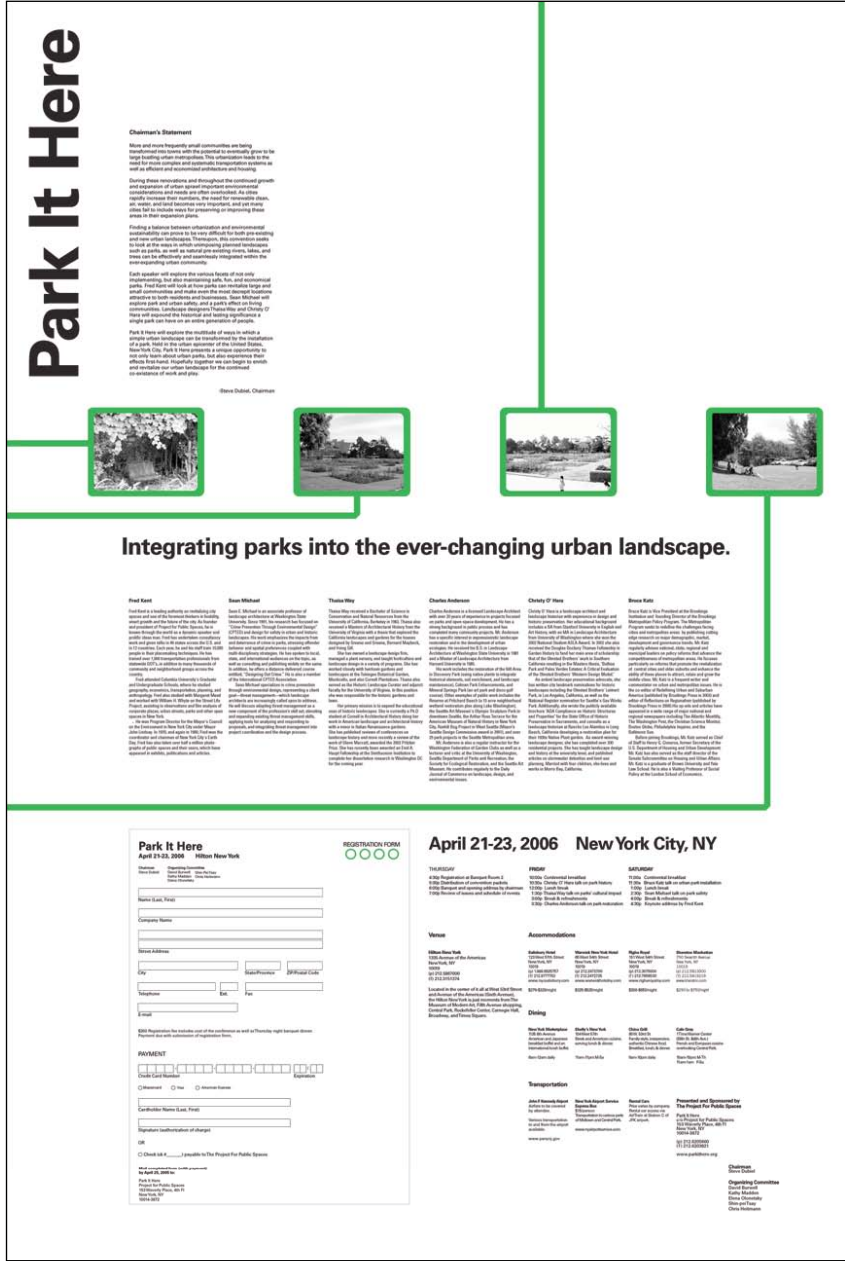
A poster and stationary set designed as part of the self-created hypothetical convention titled “Park It Here.” The convention’s focus is to promote increasing the number of parks in cities as well as maintaining pre-existing ones. I researched the topic thoroughly as well as real-life convention necessities such as venues, accommodations, and speakers. I designed the poster with the visual intentions of having the parks a vibrant green to contrast with the homogenous greys and whites of an urban landscape. This also represents a metaphor for the necessary vibrance and life parks provide to densely populated urban areas. The stationary set mimics this ideal using green dots as opposed to wide rectangles. In addition, the dots placed on the letter head and envelope serve as guides for folding a letter into perfect thirds, and stamp placement respectively.

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POSTER+STATIONARY SET



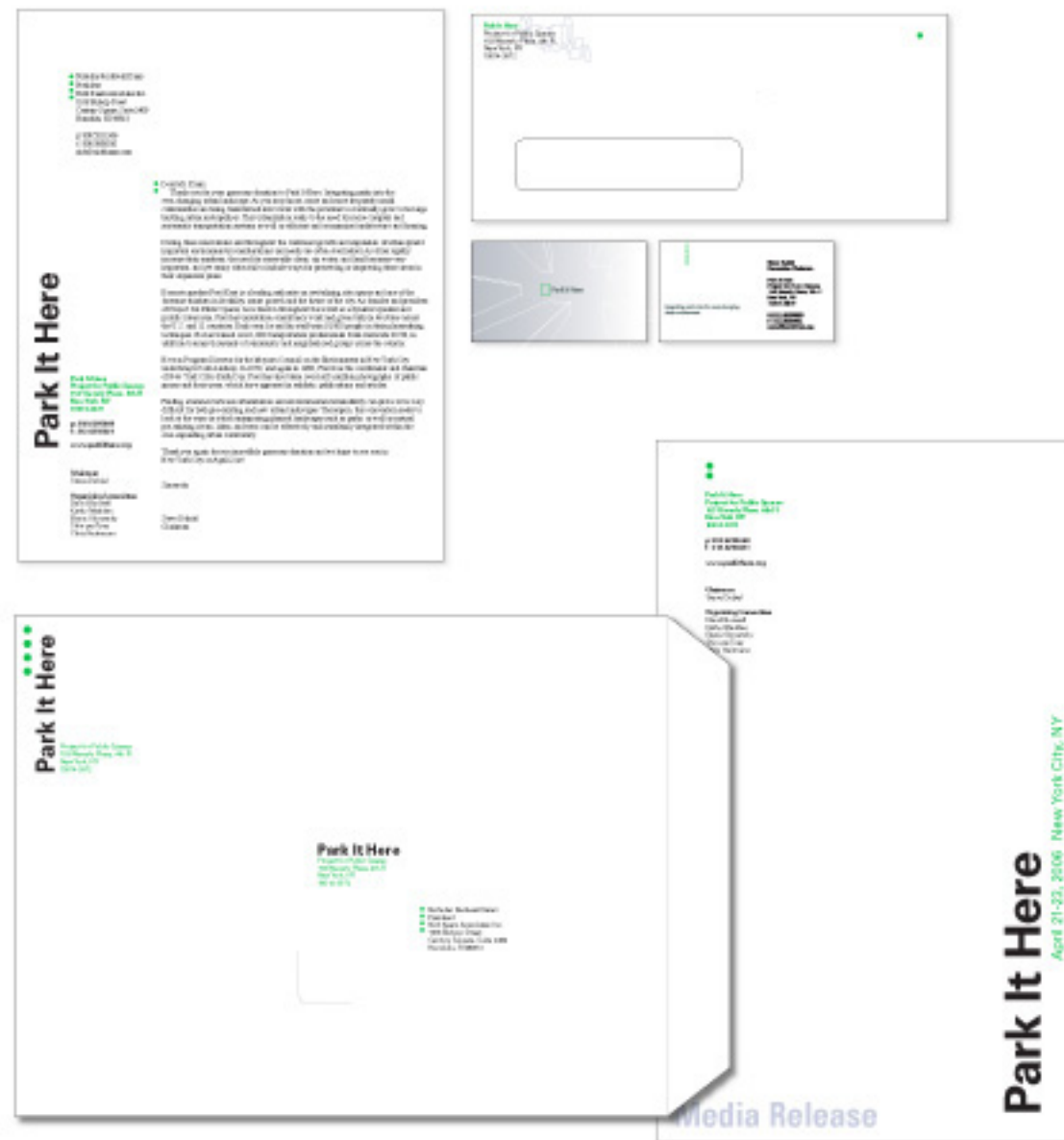
Poster front 24"x36"



Poster back 24"x36"

Park It Here

POSTER+STATIONARY SET



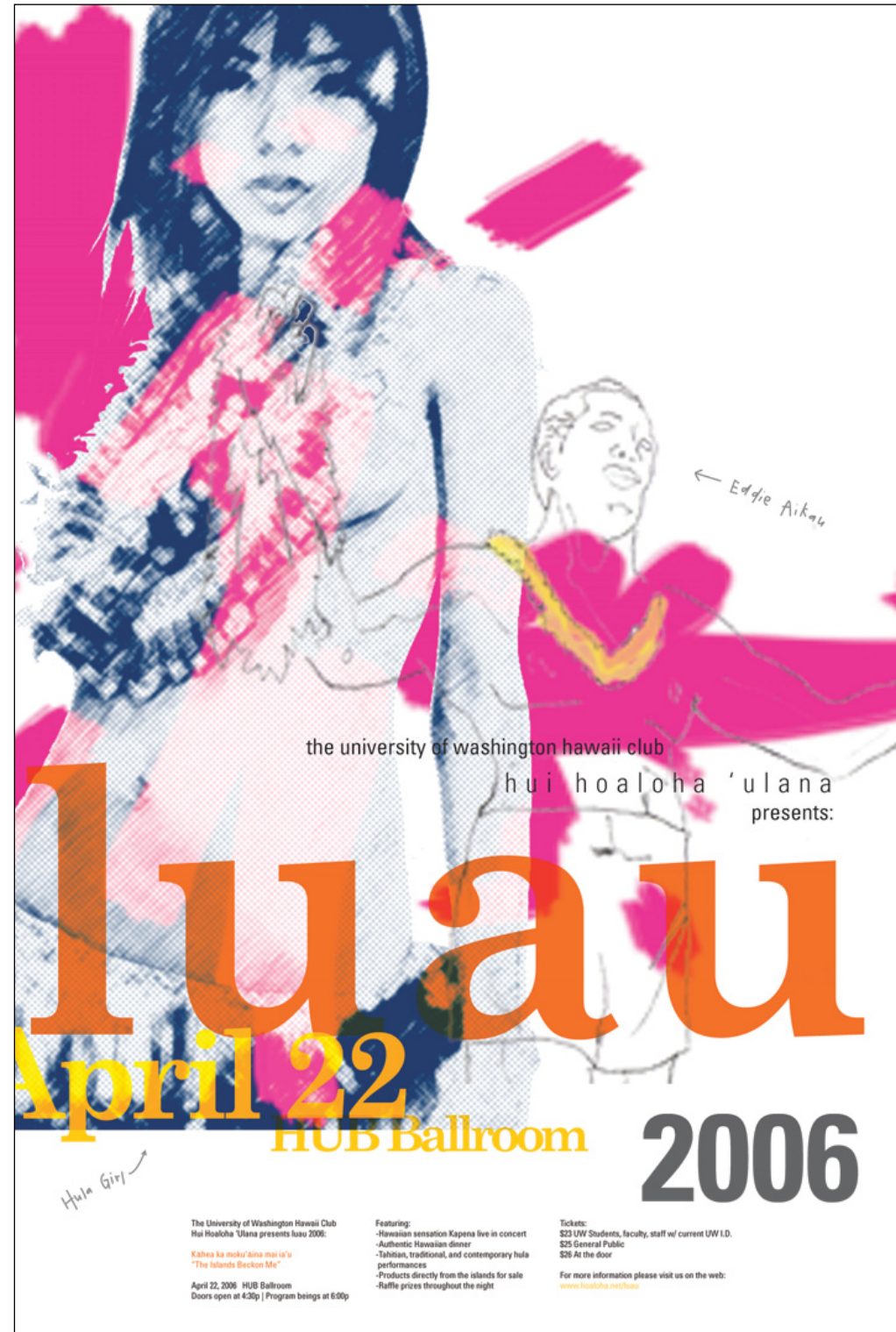
Stationary applications

Next Project >>

Luau 2006

POSTER 20"x30"

The Hawaii Club at the University of Washington unites people from around the world who love Hawaii. The club participates in and coordinates many events both social and service oriented. The club's largest event of the year is undoubtedly its annual luau which attracts up to 1000 people, features food and a local band flown directly from the islands. The Hawaiian name for the 2006 luau was incredibly long and would be unintelligible to most that viewed the poster, so I instead opted to emphasize the more well-known term 'luau.' I also chose two iconic figures in relation to Hawaii, a hula girl, and the late great surfer Eddie Aikau. I did so in order to hopefully peak the interests of people not from Hawaii (who would recognize the hula girl) as well as those from Hawaii (who would also recognize Eddie's likeness). I formatted several other variations for promotional purposes using the same imagery. They were color and black and white 11"x17" fliers, and black and white 8.5"x11" and quarter sheet fliers.



Poster 20"x30"

Next Project >>

Contact



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[Table of contents >>](#)