the story of changeling NEO

UNICASE DESIGN

AaBb
EeGg

ALTERNATE CHARACTERS

YyyY
FFGgIL
PPRR
QQrr
KKXX

SLANTED ALTERNATES

VAWAYM
VAWAYM
VAWAYM

ARBITRARY FRACTIONS

33/100

BECOMES

33/100

IN 1991, I WAS COMMISSIONED TO DIGITIZE a face called "China" for a client. It was a wide, geometric sans serif with a futuristic, high-tech feel, originally designed for VGC by M. Mitchell and released in 1975. Probably the most famous use of China (with a modified "A" and "R") is for the title logo of the Terminator movie series. It was an interesting typeface, but had a limited character set (caps and a few alternates) and only one weight. I also felt that it had some design problems in the proportions of certain letters.

CHINA
AaBCD
EeFGH
IJKLLM
MNOPP
QRRST
UVWWX
YY2123
45678
907!:;$

I included my digitization of VGC China in my online portfolio in 2000 and was surprised by the interest it generated. At the time, there was only one commercially available digitization. But, it was poorly done and even included some "ringer" characters, which indicated the source was a pirated film font, not the original VGC version.

In 2003, I released my own interpretation, which I called Changeling. I redesigned many of the characters for more even type color. I also added lowercase-style variants to nearly all the uppercase forms, for endless "unicase" combinations, alternate forward- and back-slanting characters for A, M, V, and W, and a more complete character set. I spaced it to emulate the "tight, but not touching" style of spacing popular in the '70s. Finally, I created four new styles—Light, Regular, Stencil, and Inline.

Changeling Neo (2008) builds on this with even more alternate characters (including a few from VGC China I had previously left out), extensive language support, and lots of improvements in fit and finish. Changeling Neo is available exclusively in the OpenType format. Alternate characters are accessed using OpenType Stylistic Alternates and Stylistic Sets features. Standard characters that were "hijacked" in Changeling (to make room for alternate characters) have been reinstated. Changeling Neo also includes support for fractions, superscript and subscript, as well as tabular figures. —MARK SIMONSON

TABULAR FIGURES

12345
67890

VS.

12345
67890

FIVE STYLES

light
regular
bold
stencil
inline

•

Changeling Neo was designed by Mark Simonson in 2008. Changeling was designed by Mark Simonson in 2003. VGC China was designed by M. Mitchell in 1975.

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changeling neo light

mix
eon
visa
trek
valium
2376.14
earth·2
spandex
terminator
energy drink
“do androids dream
of electric sheep?”
stranger in a strange land

CHARACTER SET

LATIN CAPITALS

ABCDEFGHIJKKLMMMNOPP
QRRSTUVVWWWWXXYYZG

LATIN LOWERCASE

abcdefffghiijkkllmnopqrrst
uvvvwwwwxxyyyz

fi fl

FLOATING ACCENTS

PROPORTIONAL & TABULAR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

SUPERSCRIPT & INFERIOR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

FRACTIONS

½ ¼ ¾ ⁄ 1234567890/1234567890

CURRENCY & FIGURE-RELATED CHARACTERS

$¢£ƒ€¥¤#%‰

DASHES, DELIMITERS, QUOTES & PUNCTUATION

MATHEMATICAL OPERATORS & MISCELLANEOUS

LANGUAGES SUPPORTED

English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Basque, German, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Finnish, Icelandic, Czech, Polish, Hungarian, Croatian, Esperanto, Maltese, Turkish, Romanian, and Albanian.

OPENTYPE FEATURES SUPPORTED

Standard Ligatures, Stylistic Alternates, Stylistic Sets (14), Class-Based Kerning, Proportional Lining Figures, Tabular Lining Figures, Fractions, Superscript, Subscript and Scientific Inferior.

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changeling neo regular

MIX
EON
VISA
trek
VALIUM
2376.14
EARTH•2
SPANDEX
TERMINATOR
energy drink
"do androids dream
of electric sheep?"
STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

CHARACTER SET

LATIN CAPITALS

ABCDEFGHIJKKLMMMNOPP
QQRRSTUVVVWWWWXXYYZZ
ÁÀÂÄÃÅĀĂĄ ÁÀÂÄÃÅĀĂĄ ÁÀ
ÂÄÃÅĀĂĄ ÁÀÂÄÃÅĀĂĄ ÁÀÂÄ
ÃÅĀĂĄ ÁÀÂÄÃÅĀĂĄ ÆǼÆǼ
ÇĆČĈĊĎĐÉÈÊËĒĔĘĚĞĢĜĠĞ
ĜĠĤĦÍÌÎÏĨĪĮĴĶĶŁĹĻĽĿÑŃŅŇÓÒÔ
ÕØŌŎŐŒŔŖŘŔŖŘŠŚŞŜȘŤŢŦ
ÚÙÛ ÜŨŪŮŰŲŬŴẀẂẄŴẀẂ
ẄŴẀẂẄÝỲŶŸŽŹŻÐÞÞ

LATIN LOWERCASE

abcdeffghiijkkllmnopqrrst
uvvvwwwwxxyyyyz áàâä
ãåāăąæǽæǽçćčĉċďđéè
êëēĕęěŋğģĝġħĥíìîïĩīįĵķĸĺļľŀłľ
ñńņňŉóòôöõøōŏőœŕŗř
ŕŗřšśşŝșßţťúùûüũūůűųŭũ
ŵẁẃẅŵẁẃẅŵẁẃẅŵ
ŵẁẃẅýỳŷÿýỳŷÿýỳŷÿžźżðþ
fi fl

FLOATING ACCENTS

ˆ ˇ ˜ ¨ ˘ ˙ ˚ ¯ ˝

PROPORTIONAL & TABULAR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

SUPERSCRIPT & INFERIOR FIGURES

^{1234567890} $_{1234567890}$

FRACTIONS

½ ¼ ¾ ⁄ ^{1234567890}/$_{1234567890}$

CURRENCY & FIGURE-RELATED CHARACTERS

$¢£₣€¥¤#%‰

DASHES, DELIMITERS, QUOTES & PUNCTUATION

_‐–—()[]{}/\ ''""‚„‹›«».,:;…!?¡¿·

MATHEMATICAL OPERATORS & MISCELLANEOUS

+−×÷=≈≠±<>≤≥¬|¦^~◊√∫µ∂∑∏
ΠΩΔ®©™•@*†‡§¶ °

LANGUAGES SUPPORTED

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changeling neo bold

MIX
EON
VISA
trek
VALIUM
2376.14
EARTH•2
SPANDEX
TERMINATOR
energy drink
“do androids dream of electric sheep?”
STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

CHARACTER SET

LATIN CAPITALS

LATIN LOWERCASE

FLOATING ACCENTS

PROPORTIONAL & TABULAR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

SUPERSCRIPT & INFERIOR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

FRACTIONS

½ ¼ ¾ / 1234567890/1234567890

CURRENCY & FIGURE-RELATED CHARACTERS

DASHES, DELIMITERS, QUOTES & PUNCTUATION

MATHEMATICAL OPERATORS & MISCELLANEOUS

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changeling neo stencil

MIX
EON
VISA
trek
VALIUM
2376.14
EARTH•2
SPANDEX
TERMINATOR
energy drink
“do androids dream
of electric sheep?”
STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

CHARACTER SET

LATIN CAPITALS

ABCDEFGHIJKKLMMMNOPP
QQRRSTUVVVWWWXXYYZ&

LATIN LOWERCASE

abcdeffghiijkkllmnopqrrst
uvvvwwwxxyyyyz

FLOATING ACCENTS

PROPORTIONAL & TABULAR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

SUPERSCRIPT & INFERIOR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

FRACTIONS

½ ¼ ¾ / 1234567890/1234567890

CURRENCY & FIGURE-RELATED CHARACTERS

DASHES, DELIMITERS, QUOTES & PUNCTUATION

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changeling neo inline

mix
eon
VISA
trek
valium
2376.14
earth•2
SPANDEX
TERMINATOR
energy drink
“do androids dream of electric sheep?”
STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND

CHARACTER SET

LATIN CAPITALS

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

LATIN LOWERCASE

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

fi fl

FLOATING ACCENTS

PROPORTIONAL & TABULAR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

SUPERSCRIPT & INFERIOR FIGURES

1234567890 1234567890

FRACTIONS

½ ¼ ¾ / 1234567890/1234567890

CURRENCY & FIGURE-RELATED CHARACTERS

$¢£€ƒ¥¤#%‰

DASHES, DELIMITERS, QUOTES & PUNCTUATION

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changeling neo usage examples

DISCOTHEQUE
DISCOTHEQUE
DISCOTHEQUE

the lathe of heaven

RAY
BRADBURY
FAHRENHEIT
451

A.I.

TECHNOSYNTH

HAL9000

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