

the story of

# changeling

## NEO

UNICASE DESIGN

Aabb  
EEGG

ALTERNATE CHARACTERS

Yyy  
FFGsil  
PPRR  
QQrr  
kkxx

SLANTED ALTERNATES

VAWAYM  
VAWAYM  
VANAYM

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  
QqRST  
UvWwX  
YyZz123  
45678  
90 ? ! ; \$

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

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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.









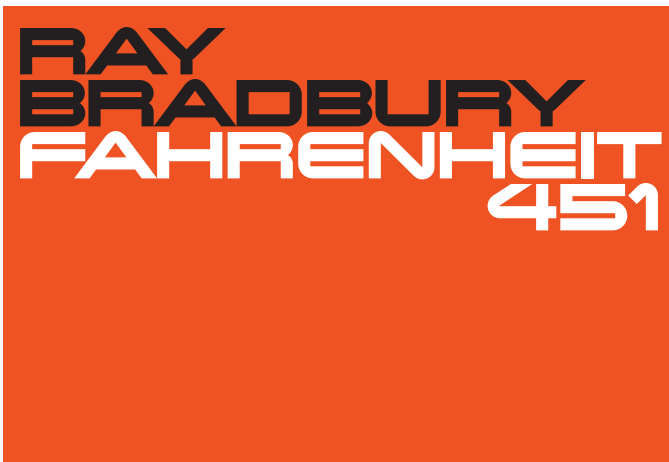


changing neo usage examples

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the lathe of heaven



TECHNOSYNTH

