

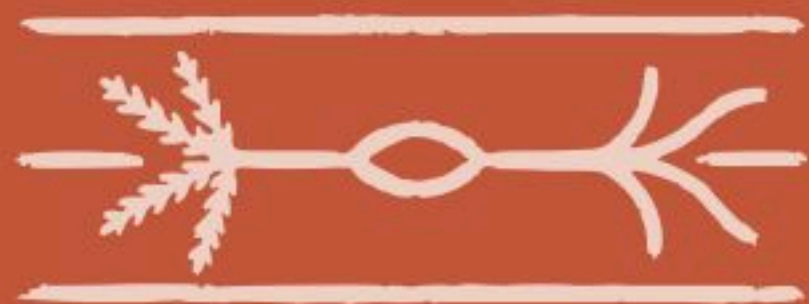


Brand Guidelines

Brand identity manual for
towhatend, a question kept open

Contents

01	Foundation	03
02	The Mark	08
03	Colour	19
04	Typography	24
05	Correspondence	29
06	Applications	37



Foundation

THE NAME · STATEMENT · POSITIONING · PRINCIPLES

01

To what end?

The question you arrive at when the noise stops.
Not what happened, not how it was told, but why
any of it was worth doing.

Written form

Always one word, always lowercase including
at the start of a sentence and in titles.

Spoken form

Three words when spoken aloud. The gap between
the two is intentional.

towhatend

to what end



A day begins a story.

Every morning is a blank page, and every page carries the weight of what it will become.
We write not for applause, but for the quiet hope that what is written today may still matter tomorrow.

Every story begins with a day. Every ending begins with a question.



What we are

towhatend is not a publisher of answers. It is a place where the question is kept open, and where writing is treated as thinking rather than output.

A question, not an answer

Nothing here resolves. The work is the asking, and the reader is left holding it.

Doubt is the material

Uncertainty is not a phase to get through. It is the condition the writing lives in.

Rooted, not decorative

The mark is nsibidi used as language, not ornament, and always credited.

Four principles

How the brand behaves when no one is checking.

01

Ask, don't declare

Copy leans on questions and understatement. The brand does not tell the reader what to conclude.

02

Leave the room quiet

Generous margins, small type, few elements.

03

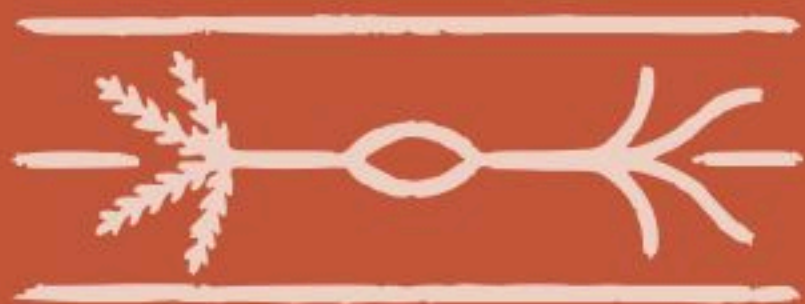
Mark, then get out of the way

It authenticates; it does not perform.

04

Everything is dated

A thought belongs to the day that produced it. Dating it admits it might not hold tomorrow.



The Mark

ORIGIN · FORMATION · SYSTEM · CONSTRUCTION · MISUSE

02

Nsibidi

The mark is composed from two nsibidi symbols, an indigenous system of graphic writing from south-eastern Nigeria, used for centuries to record ideas, agreements and journeys.

Not ornament

Nsibidi is a writing system. Using it obliges us to use it correctly and to credit it plainly wherever the mark is explained.

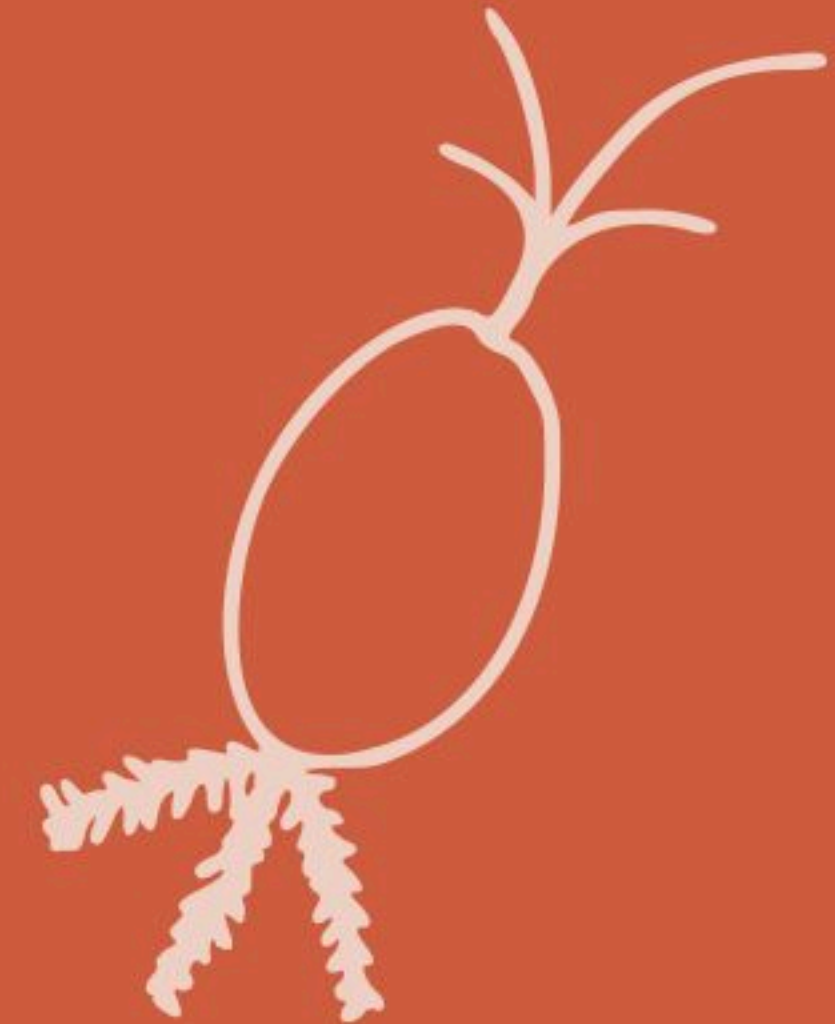
"The towhatend mark is composed from nsibidi, a writing system of the Ejagham, Efik, Ibibio and Igbo peoples of south-eastern Nigeria."

THE MARK



Voyage

Four strokes, two long, two short between them. A journey: movement between two points.



Eleven

A closed loop with branching above and a fern below. Denotes the number eleven.

Drawn first

The mark was found on paper long before it was a vector. Dozens of nsibidi studies, then the two symbols that held.

Why it matters

The irregularity in the final artwork is not a texture effect. It is the hand that drew it, kept on purpose.



Sketch studies

Symbol exploration, seal legends, signature trials and wax tests, worked out by hand before anything was drawn on screen. The question came first. The mark was only ever an attempt to hold it still.

How the mark is made

Eleven is rotated into the horizontal and set inside voyage. A journey, numbered.

Never redrawn

Always reproduced from the master vector artwork.
Never traced freehand.

01

Voyage



02

Eleven



03

Result



The three-line mark

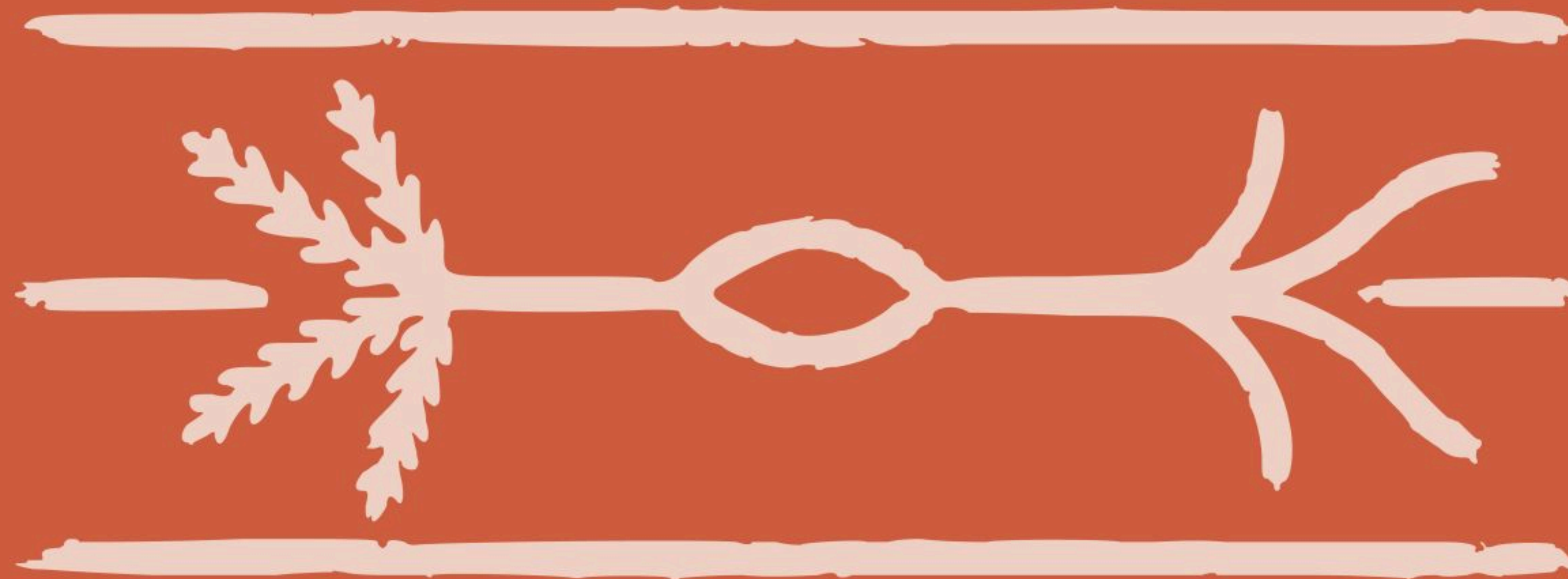
The master mark. It leads everywhere unless space or context requires the stamp or the compact icon.

Aspect ratio

8 : 3 · never altered.

Default colour

Cotton on Deep Black. Deep Black on Cotton in print.



twe-mark-primary

Four marks, one voice

Never create a new lockup. If a placement is not covered here, use the primary mark with clearspace.



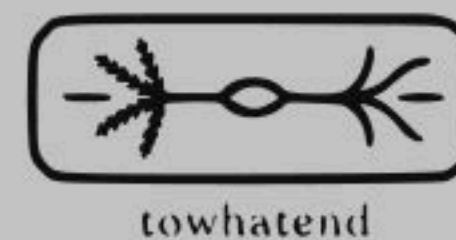
Primary

Covers, letterheads, editorial



Stamp

Stamps, embosses, wax, spines



Lockup

First contact: letterhead, covers



Icon

Avatars, favicons, app icon

Geometry

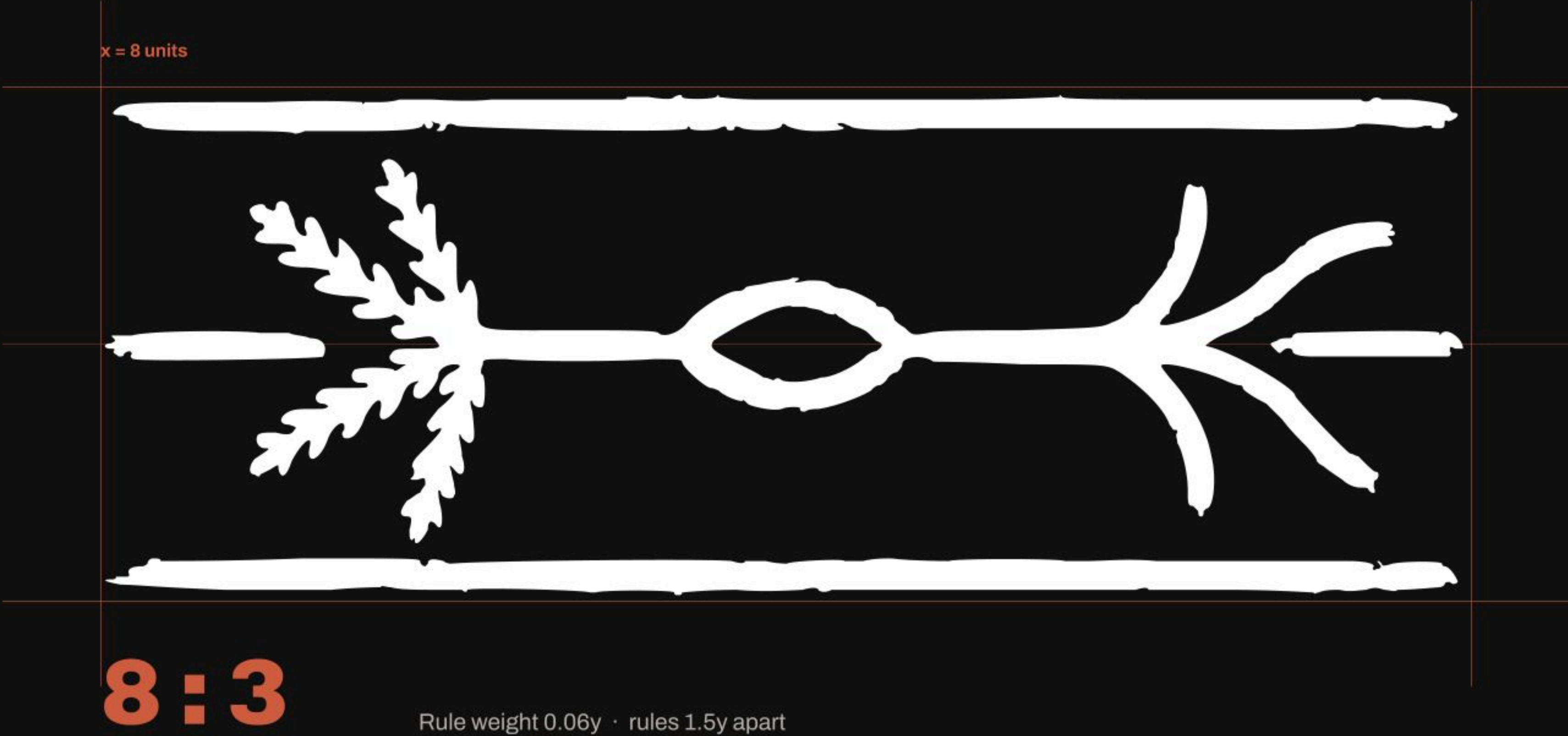
The mark is a drawn object with deliberate irregularity. Do not smooth it, redraw it on a strict grid, or convert it to a geometric construction.

Overall ratio

8 : 3 · the bounding box of the primary mark.

Centre line

y / 2 · shaft, loop and arrow all sit on it.

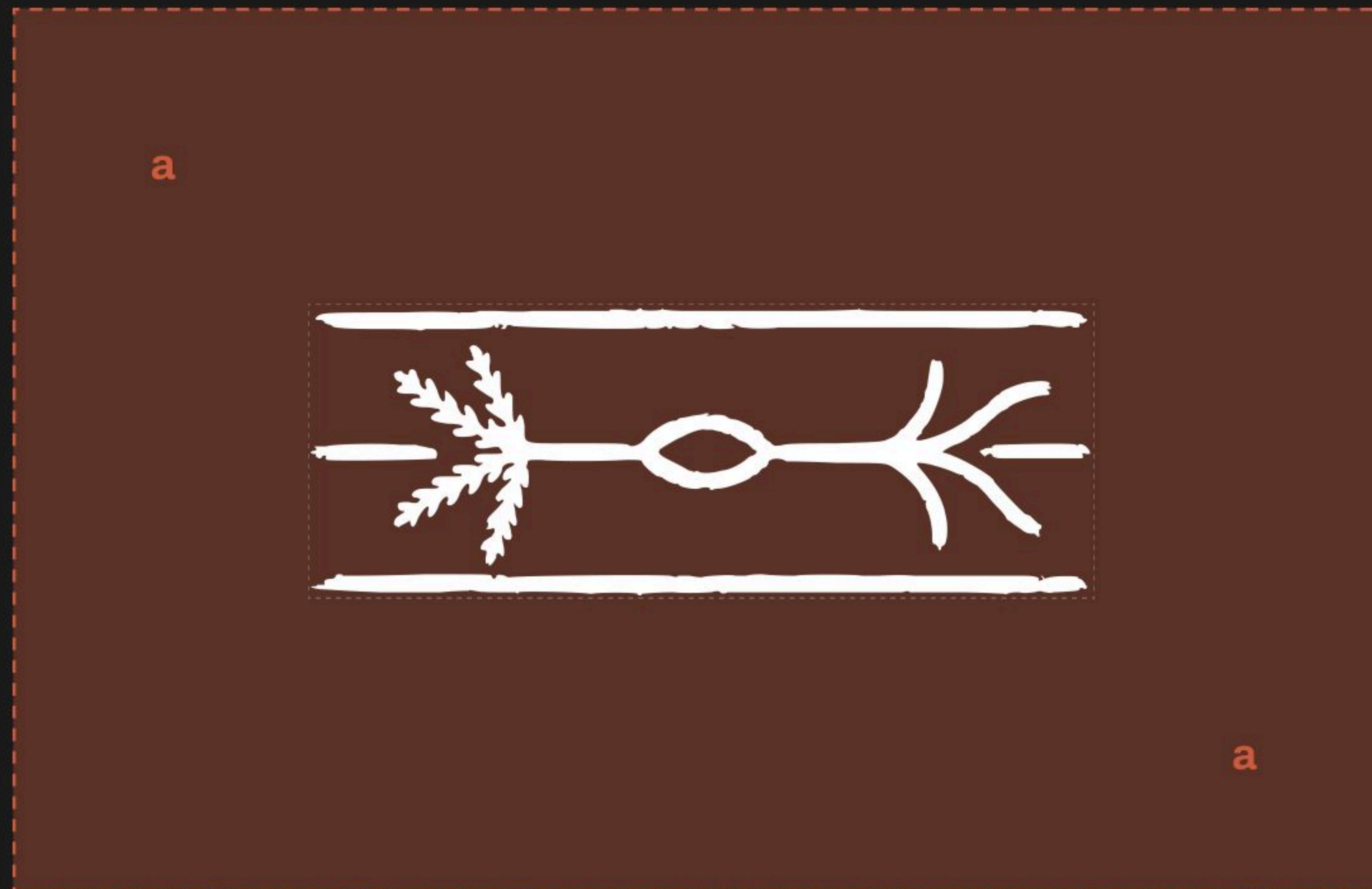


Give it room

No text, image, rule or page edge may enter this zone. On covers and letterheads allow considerably more than the minimum.

a = the height of the mark

Measured from the busy edge of a photograph, not the frame.



How small it may go

Below the primary minimum, switch to the icon rather than scaling further. The fern detail closes up and the mark stops reading as nsibidi.



Primary

32 mm

print

120 px

screen



Stamp

18 mm

print

72 px

screen



Lockup

24 mm

print

96 px

screen



Icon

8 mm

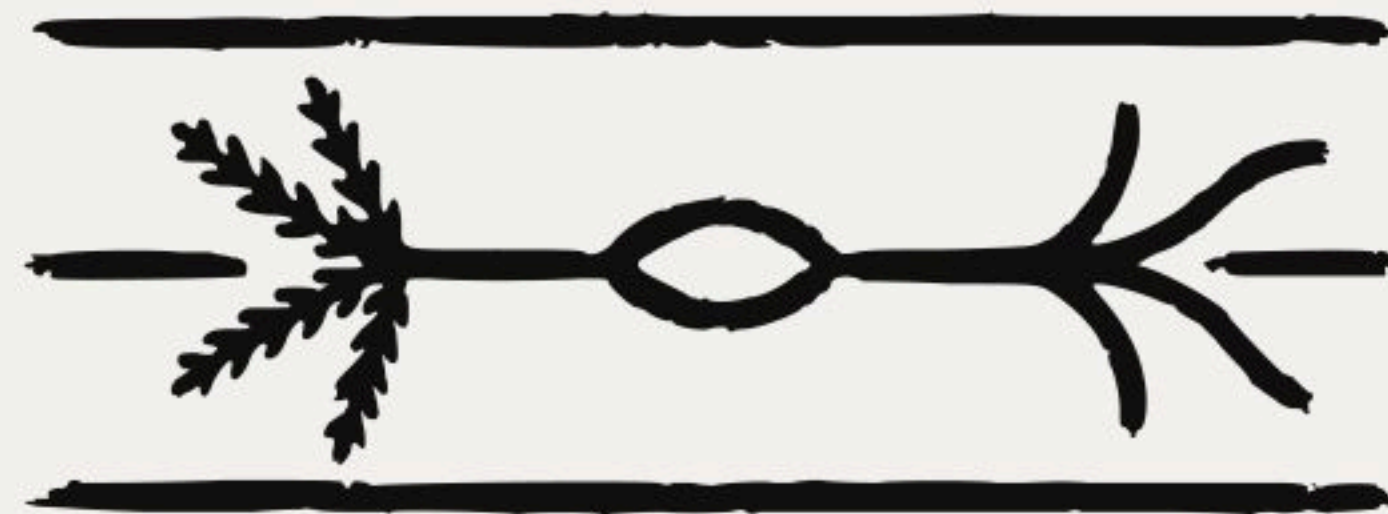
print

32 px

screen

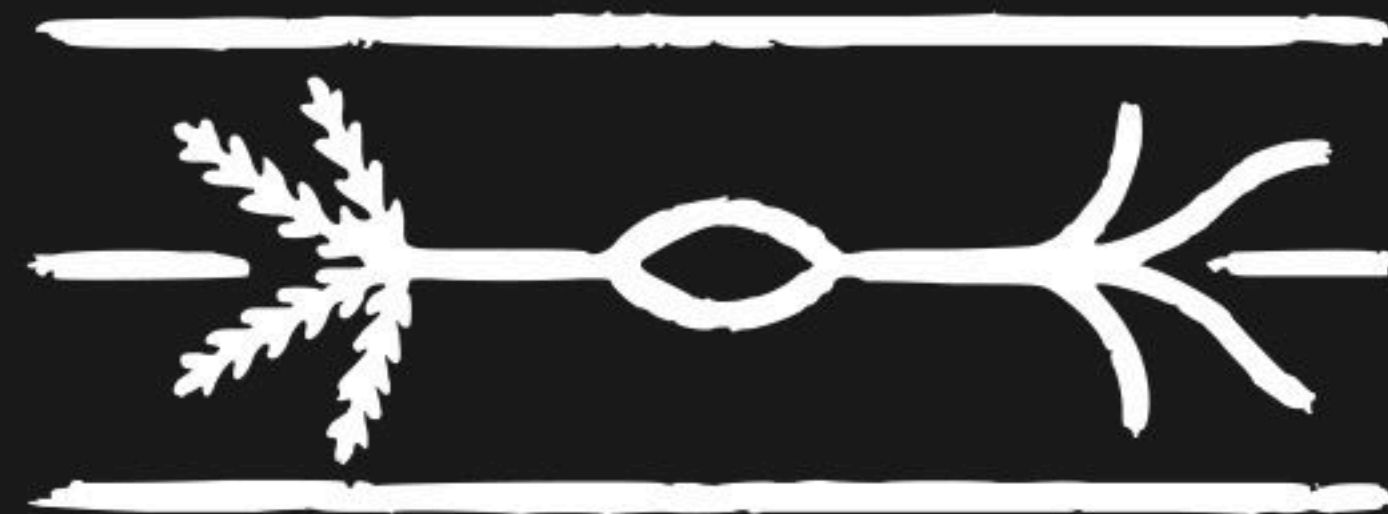
Where it may sit

The mark is monochrome in every case. Never two colours, never a gradient, never a colour lifted from a photograph.



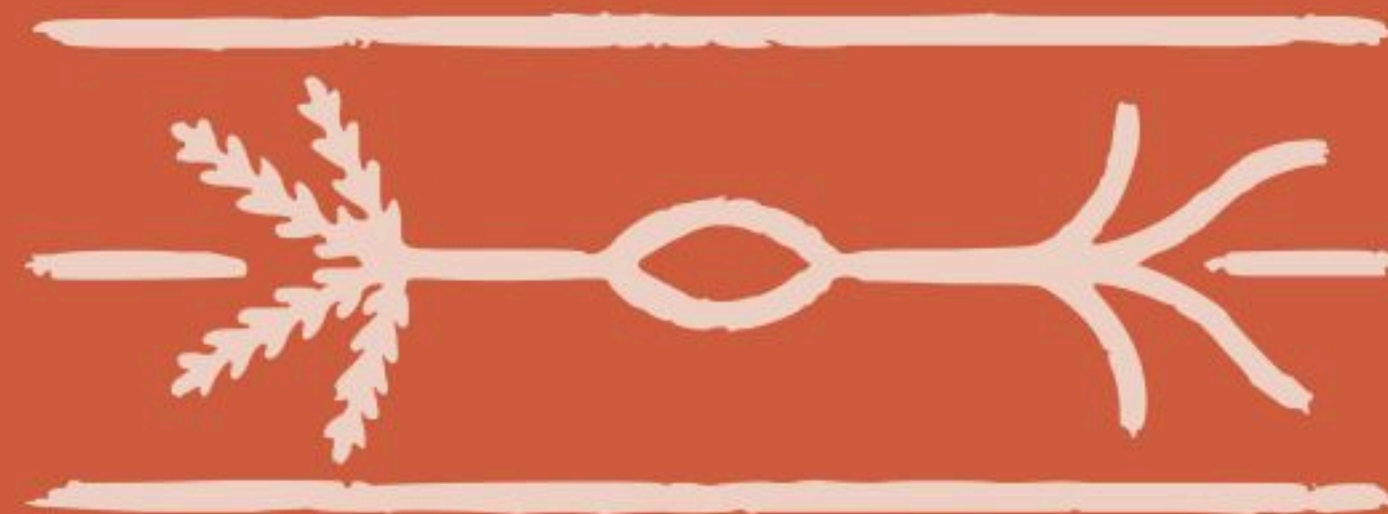
Deep Black on Cotton

Primary



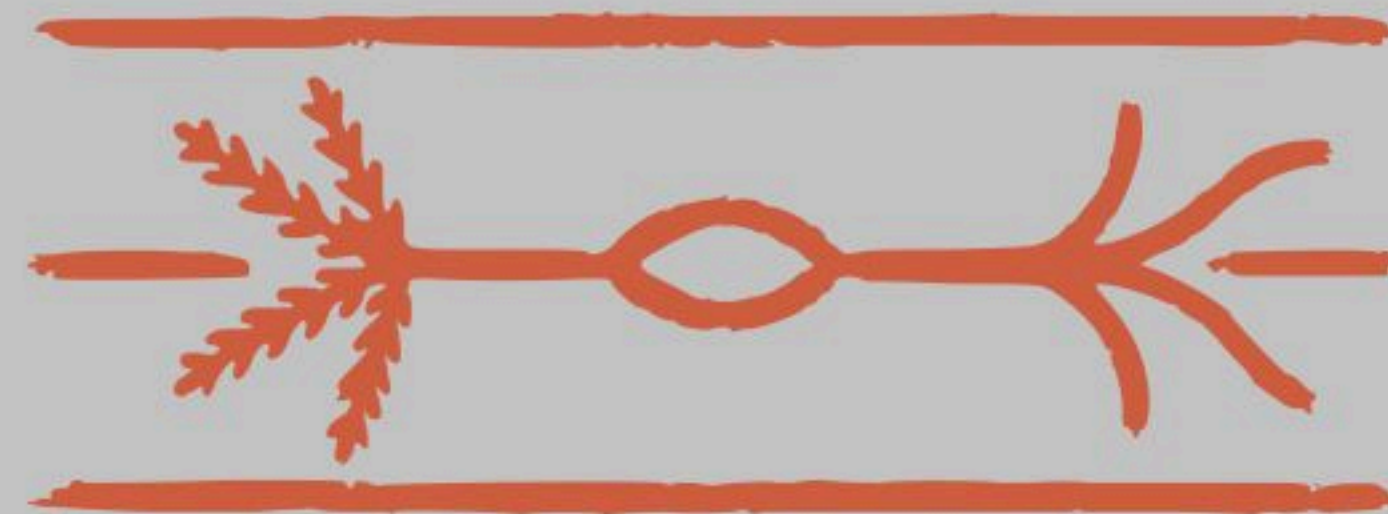
Cotton on Deep Black

Reversed



Tint on Terracotta

Brand ground



Terracotta on Silver

Accent only

Never do this

When in doubt, place the master artwork at the size you need and stop there.



Stretch or condense



Rotate



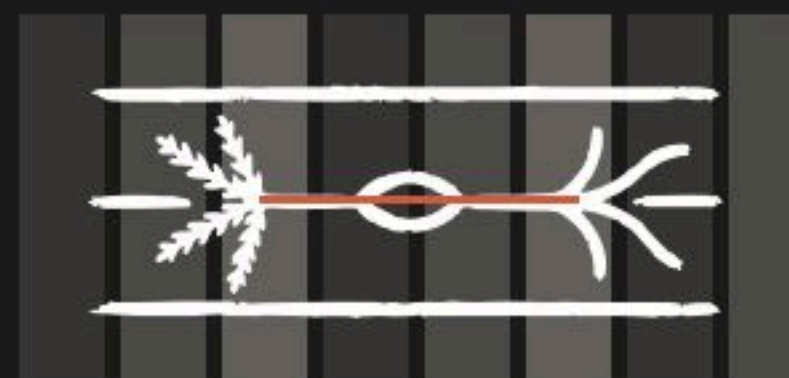
Add a shadow



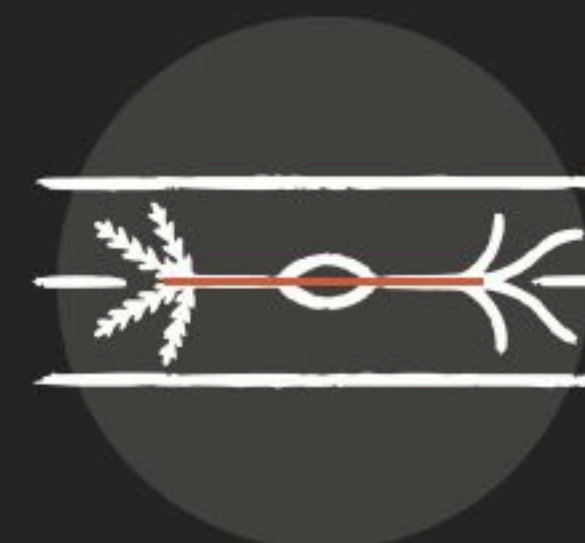
Recolour off-palette



Outline the strokes



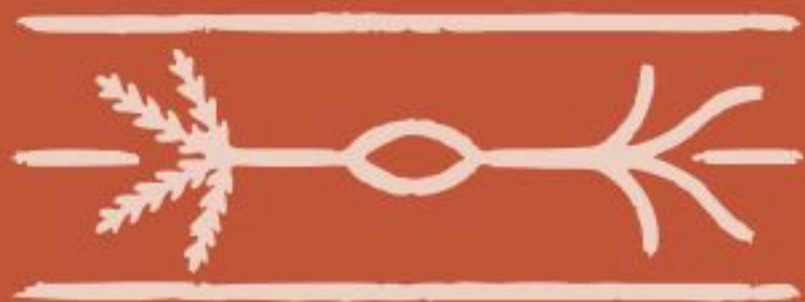
Sit it on a busy image



Enclose in a new shape



Redraw the strokes



Colour

BURNT TERRACOTTA · NEUTRALS · RATIOS · CONTRAST

03

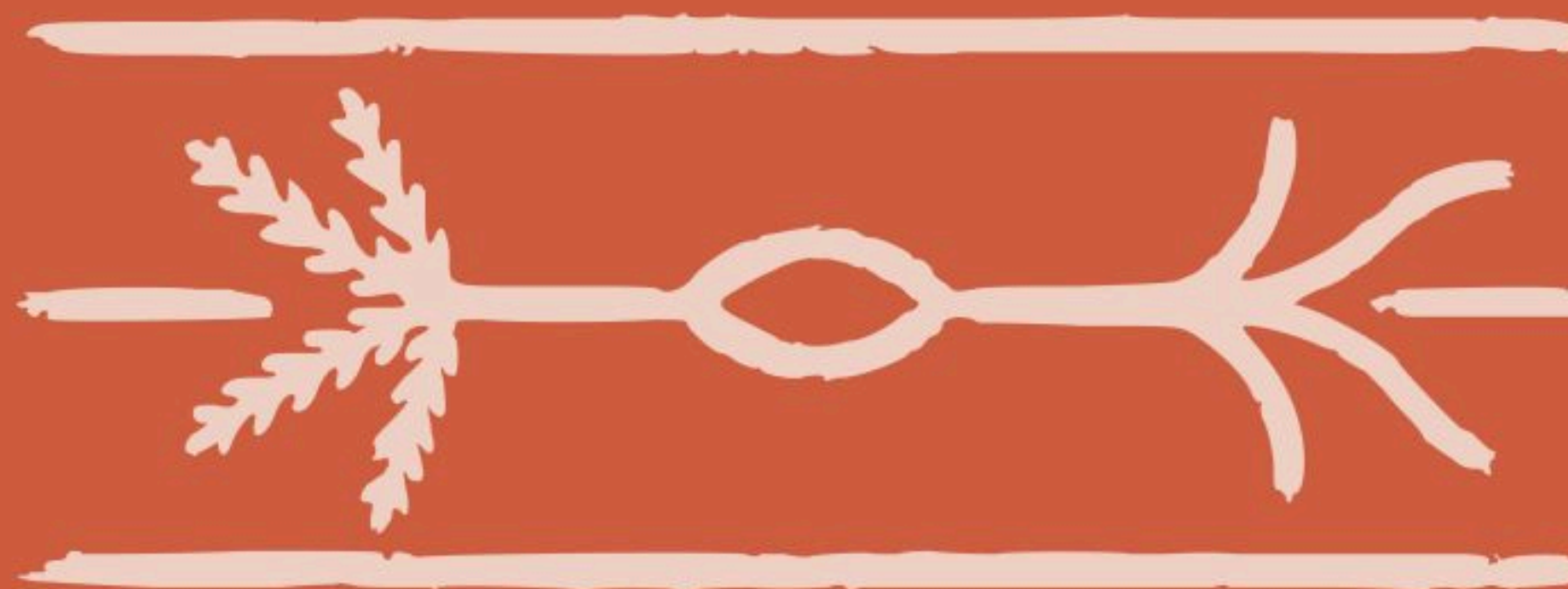
Burnt Terracotta

The single brand colour. Sampled directly from original artwork. "I See Null"

Deep and Tint

Deep for wax and pressed impressions. Tint only for the mark reversed out of terracotta.

#D05D40



Terracotta Deep

#A34328

Terracotta Tint

#F0D2C7

RGB

208 · 93 · 64

CMYK

0 · 55 · 69 · 18

HSB

13° · 69% · 82%

PANTONE

7599 C

The neutrals

Deep Black carries the identity. Cotton is the paper. Everything else is support.

Deep Black

#111111

Cotton

#F5F2EF

Archive Grey

#8C8781

Silver

#C3C3C3

Soft Black

#1F1D1B

How much of each

Terracotta is an accent, not a field, with two exceptions: covers and physical goods, where it may run full-bleed.

Deep Black leads

Black is the ground of the identity. Cotton is the paper it is printed on.

52%

Deep Black

26%

Cotton

16%

Burnt Terracotta

6%

Silver

**A day begins
a story.**

Cotton ground

**A day begins
a story.**

Deep Black ground

**A day begins
a story.**

Terracotta ground

Legible combinations

Terracotta never carries body copy on Cotton.
Where a paragraph must be terracotta, reverse it: Tint on a Terracotta ground at 24pt or larger.

A day begins a story

Deep Black on Cotton

17.9 : 1 · AAA

A day begins a story

White on Deep Black

18.9 : 1 · AAA

A day begins a story

Cotton on Terracotta

3.9 : 1 · AA Large

A day begins a story

Terracotta Tint on Terracotta

2.4 : 1 · Display only

A day begins a story

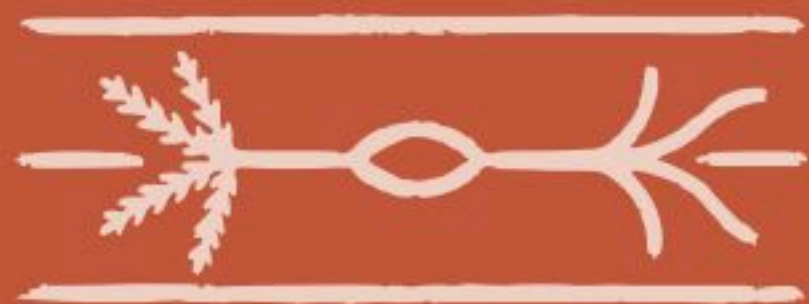
Burnt Terracotta on Cotton

3.6 : 1 · AA Large

A day begins a story

Archive Grey on Cotton

3.0 : 1 · AA Large



Typography

PRIMARY · SECONDARY · SCALE · RULES

04

Archivo

The system typeface. It carries every heading, label, number and interface. Bold and Semibold do the work; Regular carries body copy.

Why a grotesque

It is plain. It gets out of the way of the writing, which is the point of the imprint.

Aa

Archivo

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

0123456789 &.,,:;! ? ·

Regular

Archivo Regular

Medium

Archivo Medium

SemiBold

Archivo SemiBold

Bold

Archivo Bold

Black

Archivo Black

Recoleta

Reserved for the written word itself, letters,
published work, correspondence and editions.
Never for interface, labels or this document.

Licensing

Recoleta is commercial. Where it cannot be
licensed, substitute a serif, never a lookalike sans.

A day begins a story.

SET IN RECOLETA · DISPLAY SERIF

Archivo

System · headings · labels · numbers · UI

Recoleta

The writing · letters · editions · postcards

Scale

Contrast is the system: very large or very small, with little in between. Mid-sized type flattens the page.

Display

150 / 145

A day begins a story

Title

96 / 96

A day begins a story

Heading

34 / 40

A day begins a story

Body

16 / 27

A day begins a story

Label

13 / 18

A day begins a story

Setting the word

The wordmark is always one word, always lowercase, always letterspaced. Never bold, never italic, never broken across lines.

towhatend

Alignment

Flush left, ragged right. Never justified.

Measure

45–70 characters. Never wider.

Hyphenation

Off. Adjust the measure instead.

Emphasis

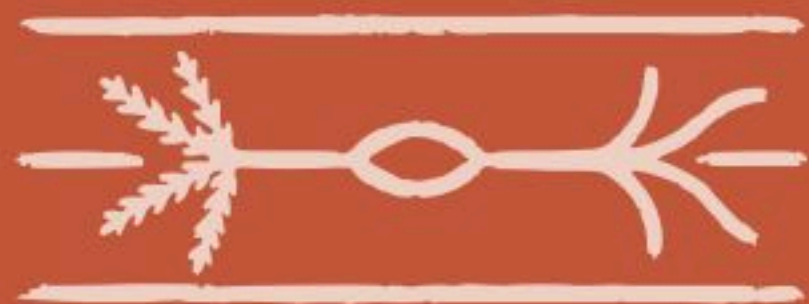
Weight, not italic. Never underline.

Capitals

Always tracked, minimum 120/1000 em.

Numerals

Lining, tabular in tables.



Correspondence

LETTERHEAD · SEALS · NUMBERING · PAPER

05

The letter

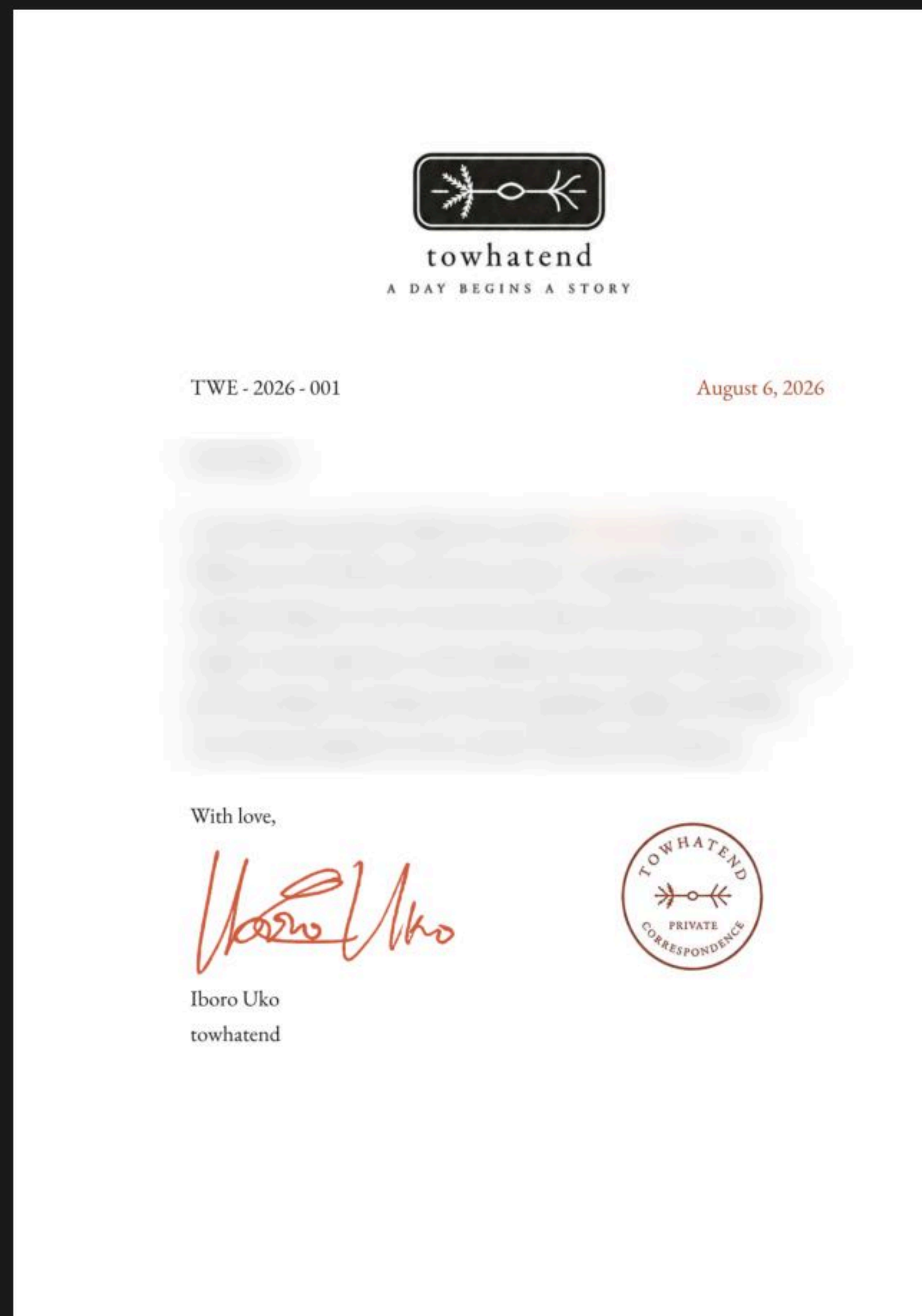
A4 cotton, 120–150 gsm. Two inks only: Deep Black and Terracotta Deep. No address, no registration number.

Reference, top left

Every letter opens with its own number, set opposite the date. The sheet identifies itself before it speaks.

Seal, foot right

Private Correspondence, 22 mm, never centred.



Stock

120–150 gsm cotton

Format

A4 · 210 × 297 mm

Reference

TWE-2026-001, flush left

Date

Terracotta Deep, flush right

Signature

Terracotta Deep, vector

Seal

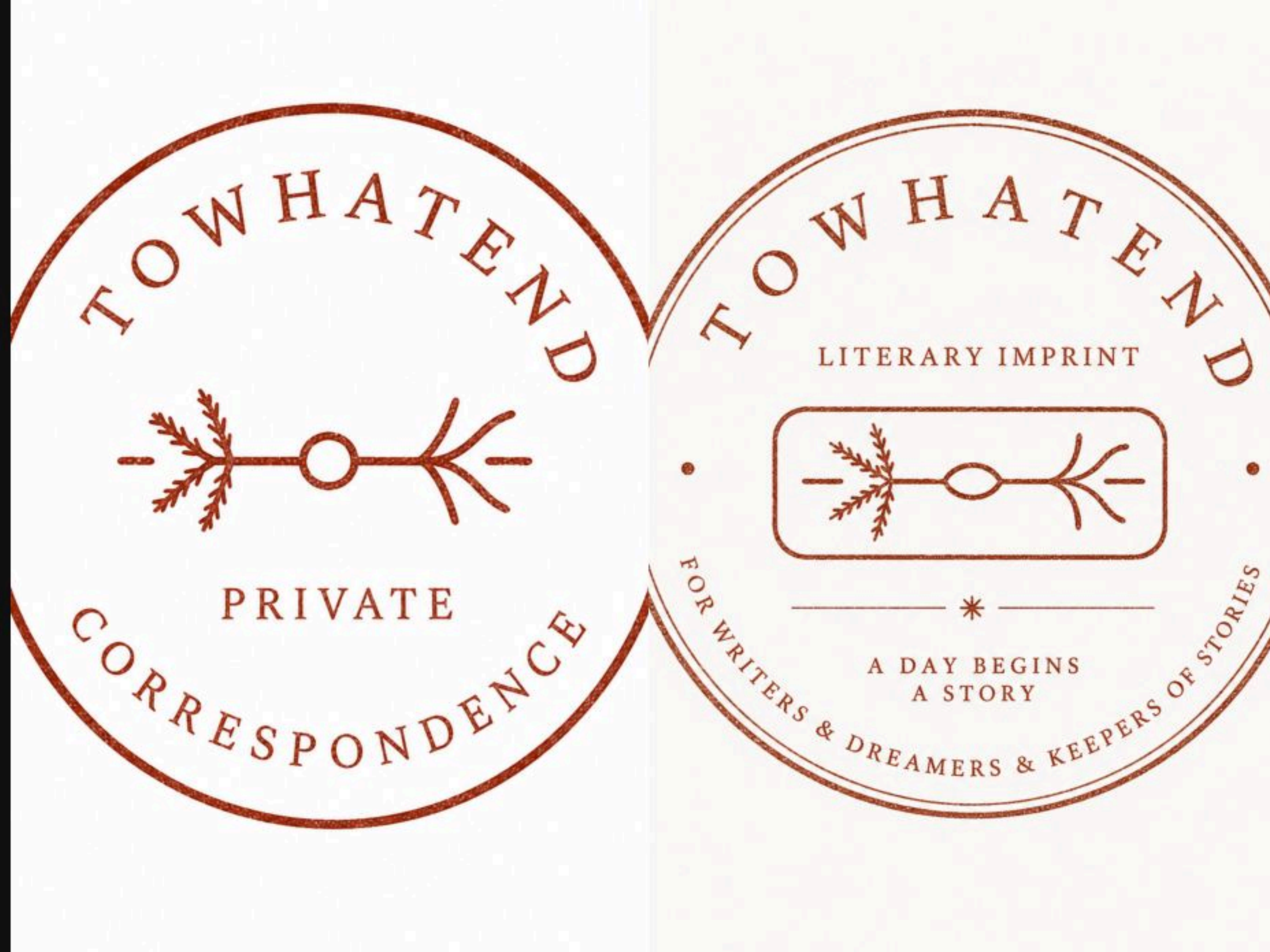
22 mm, foot right

Stamps and seals

Always monochrome, always circular, wordmark above and seal type below. Never invent a new legend.

Two legends

Private Correspondence for letters. Literary Imprint for published work.



Private Correspondence

Letters, notes, enclosures

Literary Imprint

Published work, colophons, spines

Blind emboss

No ink. Covers, folders, boxes

Everything is dated

Every letter, postcard and edition carries a number and a date. Not to archive it, but to admit it belongs to a particular day and might not hold on another.

One prefix

TWE. Never TW, never mixed. The series that follows says what the object is.

Letters

TWE-2026-001

Sequential by year, resets in January

Postcards

TWE-PC-001

Sequential, never resets

Archive

TWE / A / 0026

Stored originals, never resets

Editions

TWE-026

Published work, three digits

TOWHATEND

LETTER No.

TWE-2026-001

14 AUG 2026

A postcard carries two numbers, its own letter number and the card number in the oval. Keep them in step.

The hand

Reproduce from the master vector, never a scan. Deep Black, or Terracotta Deep on presentation plates.

Minimum width

26 mm. Below that, set the name in type instead.



Never tilt

Never scale non-proportionally. Never add a shadow, outline or texture.

Never a scan

The photographed original is not the artwork. Only the traced vector is.

Despatch

C5 or DL, the same cotton stock as the letter. No return address, no printed matter. Sealed with terracotta wax over the flap.

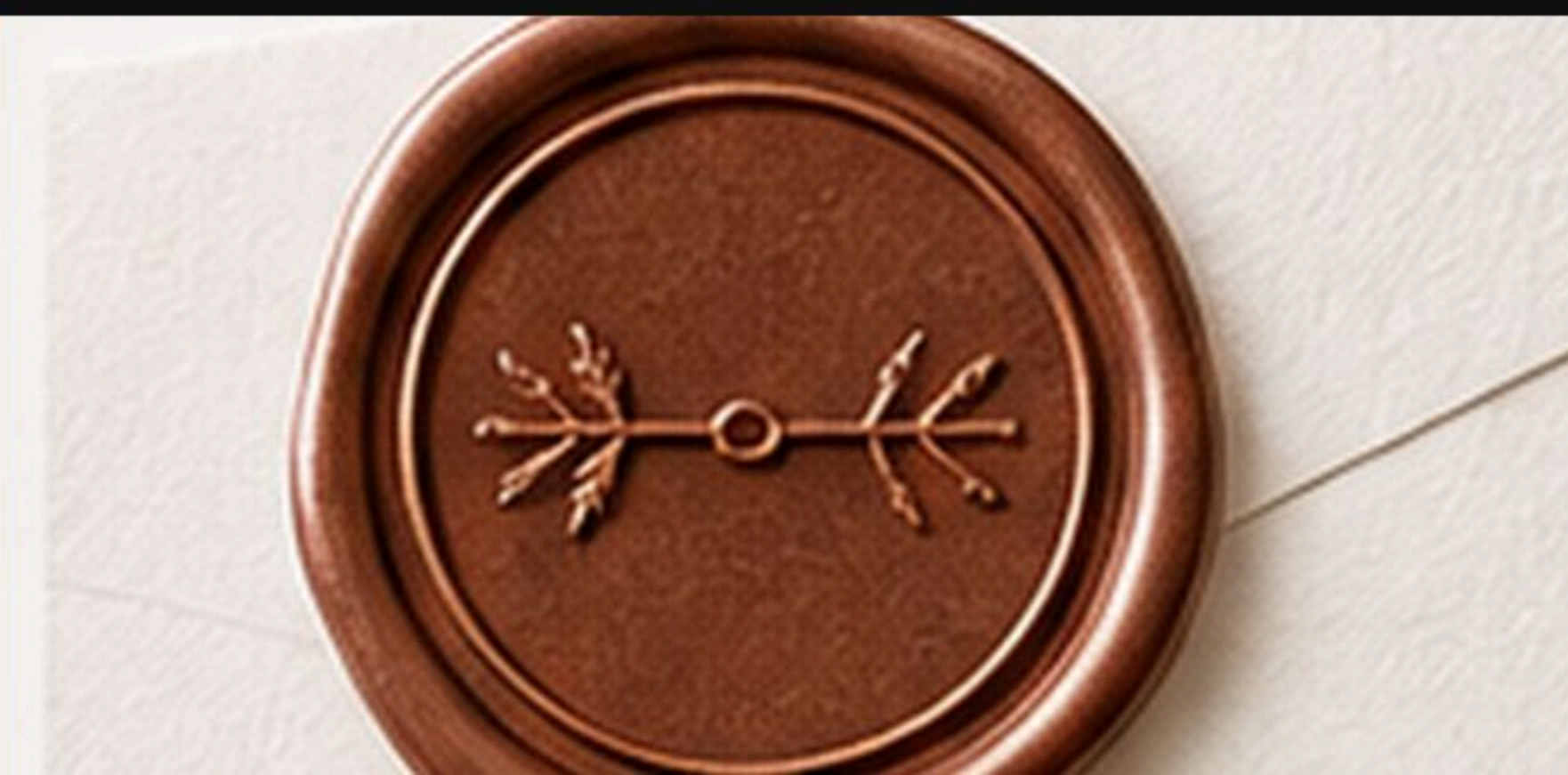
Nothing on the outside

The envelope says who it is from and nothing else. What it is for is inside.



Wax seal

Terracotta Deep, 30 mm die, primary mark only. First editions, subscriber letters, archive despatch.



Materials

Finishes are chosen for touch, not shine. No foil, no spot UV, no lamination.

Never specify

Gloss laminate · metallic foil · spot UV · fluorescent inks · coated bright white.



Blind emboss · no ink at all

Deep Black ink

Matte, never gloss. All text, the mark and rules.

Terracotta ink

Pantone 7599 C. Dates, seals, numbering and wax only.

Cotton paper

120–150 gsm, uncoated, natural white with visible tooth.

The system in use

TWE-2026-001, the first letter, and TWE-PC-001, the first postcard. Both built from the templates without altering them.

The illustration is not the card

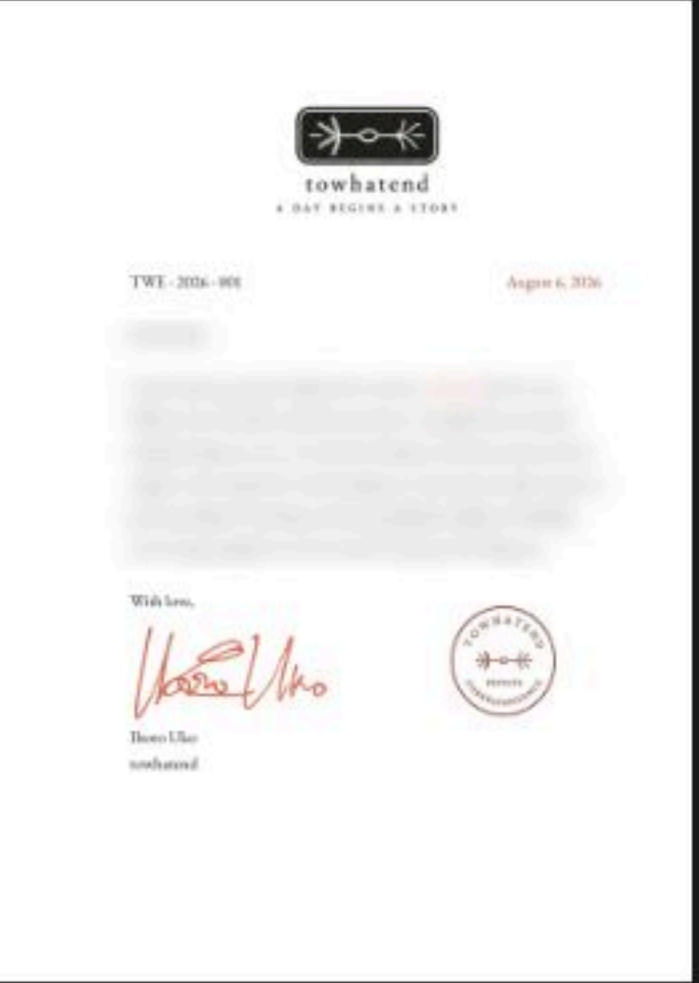
Every card carries a different drawing, made for the person it is going to. The template holds everything else fixed.



TWE-PC-001 · card TWE-026

Postcard

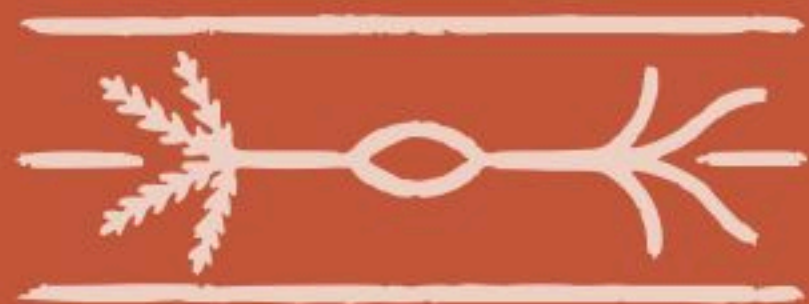
Headline set by hand, message in Recoleta, fields dashed. Everything except the drawing and the copy is fixed by the template.



TWE-2026-001

Letter

A4 cotton, folded once into C5.
Reference top left, date opposite, seal at the foot.



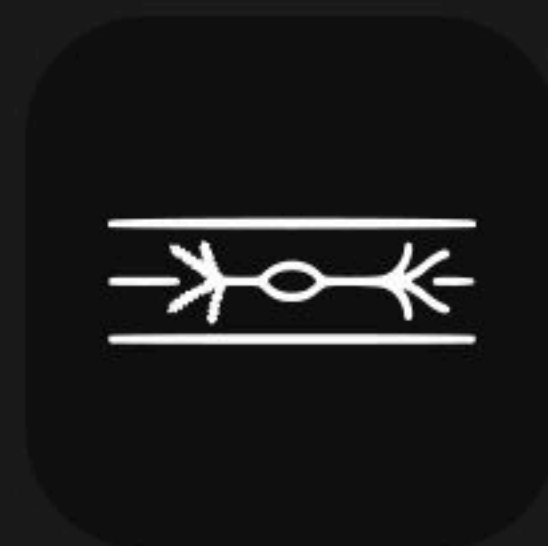
Applications

DIGITAL · EDITORIAL · MERCHANDISE · IMAGERY

06

On screen

The mark is never animated and never a loading spinner. One terracotta element per view, usually the primary action.



App icon · 4 grounds

Icon only below 120 px. Never the primary mark at small sizes.



WRITING

ARCHIVE

ABOUT

A day begins a story.

Every morning is a blank page.

READ

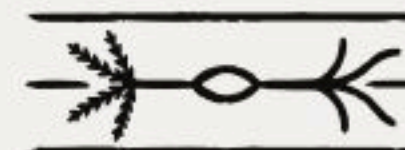
Posting a page

One idea per post. Never more than two lines of display type. A post should look like a page from something, not an advertisement for it.

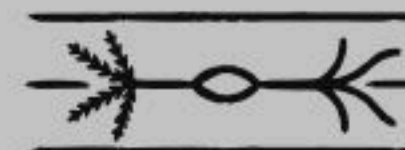
A day begins a story.



To what end?



Keep showing up.



Made things

Objects carry the mark alone. No strapline, no URL, no year. One mark, one impression, nothing else.

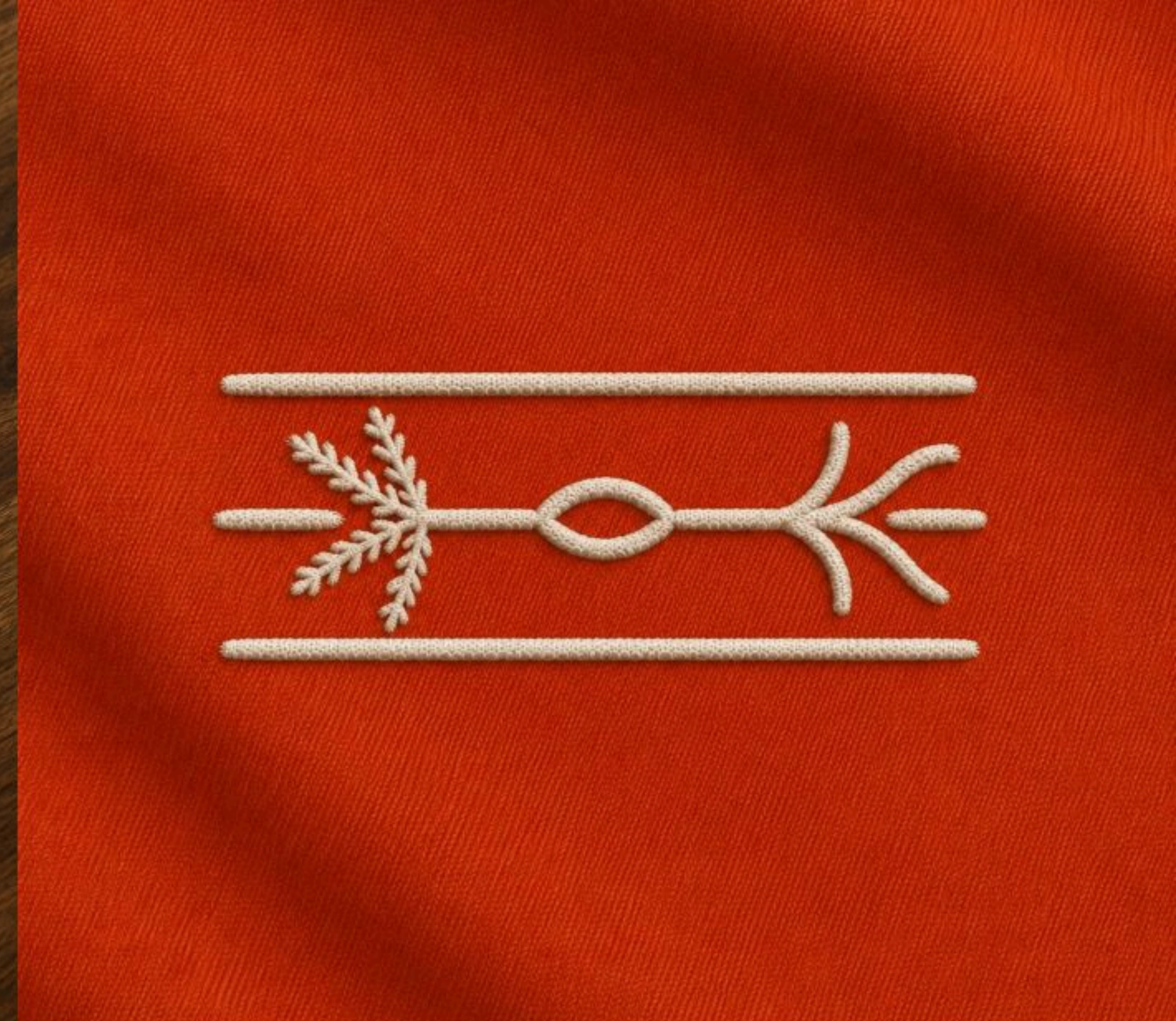
One impression

If a surface can take the mark once, it does not take it twice.



Branded wood

Branding iron, stamp mark, 45 mm. Storage boxes, shelf editions, archive crates.



Embroidery

Cream thread on terracotta cloth. Satin stitch, mark only, 60 mm wide. The three rules are stitched at a constant weight, with no tapering.

Image language

Original artwork, not photography. Hand-drawn, flatly coloured, on a terracotta, cotton or black ground.

Never

Stock photography · posed models · gradients · glow · 3-D renders.

APPLICATIONS

PLACE ARTWORK

Terracotta

Cotton

Deep Black

Three grounds only. Never white. Never a colour lifted from the artwork itself.

To what end?

These guidelines are a living record. Amendments are dated and numbered like everything else. Where this document is silent, choose the quieter option.

