STANFORD CS147: ASSIGNMENT 2

POVs, HMWs, & Experience Prototypes

Traverse

Katherine W., Michelle B., Samuel T., Saniya M.

Team Members

Katherine W.

M.S. COMPUTER SCIENCE (HCI)
B.S. SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS (HAI)

Michelle B.

B.S. SYMBOLIC SYSTEMS
(DMAR)

Samuel T.

B.S. COMPUTER SCIENCE (AI)

Saniya M.

B.A. ECONOMICS
M.S. COMPUTER SCIENCE (HCI)

Agenda

Needfinding
Domain, Interviews, Maps

POVs
POVs, HMWs

Solutions
Solutions, Experience Prototypes

Next Steps
Final Solution, Ethics

Needfinding

Problem Domain

Refined Problem Domain

Artistic and creative expression

Sharing and reflecting on art experiences within smaller communities

Needfinding

First Week of Interviews

Jennie

FREQUENT MUSEUM GO-ER

Andi

TEACHER @ FABRIC STORE

Mary

MUSEUM VISTOR COORDINATOR

Grace

CURATORIAL CATALOGUING FELLOW, LEGION OF HONOR

Sky

GALLERY ASSISTANT + ARTIST

Needfinding

Second Week of Interviews

Mila

CASUAL WRITER

Daisy

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

Jay

PROFESSOR IN FINE ARTS

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Mila

Mila

CASUAL WRITER

SAY

- Felt like she "had to" write when she was younger to get her thoughts out
- Doesn't want to share her writing with the whole world, but those she can trust
- Fun to create/get feedback/ encourage others: "getting that community can make or break"
- Creating art can be lonely
- Biggest hobby is consuming media: loves film, film history, podcasts, and reading - on letterboxd
- Tech/AI is glorified and takes away people's creative ability (i.e. making people dumber)
- Tech is too integrated with the power structures it's embedded in
- Averse to social media because the algorithm impedes people's attention spans: many artists feel similarly and avoid social media
- Mostly looks for events on social media, uses it less so to find community
- "I need to hear from other people"
- Mentioned that being around other creators brings inspiration
- It's harder to find community in SF than in Chicago and NYC
- Two close friends committed suicide, writing helped them respond to this
- Likes relatedwords.io: find word relationships like cherry → maraschino, red
- Hard to keep up with creative writing post-grad: it's just 'writing into the void'
- Finds inspiration for writing from life -- and CS inhibits that
- UChicago had a small CS department; there, everyone had other interests, but it's not the same in SF
- "If my parents didn't support [my writing chinese poetry], I probably would've stopped"
- "Art comes from community"
- On writing: it's "easier when you have someone to write towards"
- Her writing "kept coming back to grief"
- Finds writing inspiration from objects -- it's difficult to write directly about raw emotions
- "There's two wolves inside me, and CS wins"
- "Work hardens me in a way that I don't really like"
- Interdisicplinary writing/tech feels unnatural to combine
- Doesn't write for validation, but noted that there's nothing like sending to friends and getting encouragement
- Doesn't make any effort to join a writing studio here besides the writing rgoup
- Enjoys museums on her own, at her own pace; going with people distracts from art
- Writes about objects because "they reflect back me"
- Needs a writing group to hold her "accountable"
- Has to really nurture + give attention to writing in order to do it
- Doesn't view herself as artistic
- work not "compatible" with writing despite good work-life balance
- Likes "nerdy" content on substack, less oriented on the writing
- Doesn't consider Letterboxd as social media: only 3 people follow her and she uses it to "keep track for myself"
- Loves going to museums, espcially back in Chicago
- Cited Agony of the Arrows by Anne Carson, where the author talked about objects and desire
- Felt more urgency to write before taking antipressants
- No active goals set for writing right now
- Didn't consider self STEM at all going into college, considered majoring in art history
- Career stuff interrupts her creative writing headspace

THINK

- AI's (and tech in general) ethical concerns actively harm society -- but they are also a necessary component in my life to make a living.
- Wants to find (more?) community, but doesn't have an immediate avenue as to how.
- Creative writing is a way to put her emotions out there on a page -- not in a shallow, quick way, but to mull over them and reflect (even if indirectly).
- People in tech should have other interests and hobbies
- AI creative writing is "forcing it", making the works uninteresting
- Substack has too much visibility for me to post
- She has the ability to write more, she just doesn't have the motivation
- SWE isn't good for her as a writer, but necessary to make a living
- Community makes art meaningful
- Trust is paramount in forming meaningful connections with others -- and she doesn't feel enough of it
- Writing 'recreationally' isn't enough to make her feel like an artist
- Also doesn't consider herself a 'real writer' because she doesn't publish or do it for work

DO

- Doesn't post on substack, but reads on there
- Reads critical theory, literary criticism, fiction
- There's not a lot of planning with their writing process
- Started coding for classes during the pandemic but still kept writing
- CS major and creative writing minor at UChicago, graduated last year
- Born in Beijing, then moved to Texas → Chicago → Bay
- Has been writing poems for as long as she can remember
- Has lots of artist friends on social media from algorithm
- Found SF book club on a substack by chance
- Goes to the Roxie (independent indie theater in the Mission), often alone
- Writes longhand on paper before typing on MS Word -- but doesn't use AI or any other digital tools for writing
- Bartends at local dive bar every saturday (club waziema)
- Has been published in 1-2 journals from a friend
- Initially was very closed off physically and hesitant/shy
- Participated in an online RPG groupchat on QQ at a young age, where everyone was assigned a role and took turns creating a story
- Go to random film showings at indie theater at UChicago
- Participated in an Asian film club in Chicago
- Currently in a writing group
- Took a poetry class years ago, still in touch and exchanges feedback
- Has done interdisciplinary writing with tech
- Got both embarassed and excited when talking about the RPG game
- Wrote chinese poetry and showed her parents at a young age, and got feedback and encouragement
- Used to post poems on HS on Instagram
- Keeps journals going way back, will go back to look up notes from college - but they're easy to forget
- Takes notes for dense readings like critical theory
- Uses Obsidian for work to catalog stuff from job, but for personal prefers pen+paper bc it's more intimate

FEEL

- Unmotivated to write
- Feels an intrinsic urge to share works with others
- Regret, for not doing more writing
- Supported from her community, through vulnerability and encouragement
- Fears being openly vulnerable with her writing
- Cares about intellectual drive and exploration
- Conflicted about being reliant on a job in tech and working so close to AI
- Surprised that most people in tech in the Bay *only* do tech
- Loves being able to world build and be creative with other people
- Feels that writing is deeply personal, and sharing feels extremely vulnerable
- Validated and affirmed when community reads her vulnerable/ personal pieces

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Mila

Mila

CASUAL WRITER

Creating art can be lonely

Katherine Wang

Averse to social media because the algorithm impedes people's attention spans: many artists feel similarly and avoid social media

Katherine Wang

Substack has too much visibility for me to post

Katherine Wang

Initially was very closed off physically and hesitant/shy

Katherine Wang

Feels that writing is deeply personal (and so sharing feels extremely vulnerable)

Katherine Wang

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Mila

Mila

CASUAL WRITER

Insights

1. Wants to **share art** with a community, but **hesitant** about being too open and **sharing with “everyone”**

2. **Tech/AI** is a double-edged sword: **averse** to it for its **ethical concerns**, but relies on it for a job

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Daisy

Daisy

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

SAY

- "Out for my dad's birthday and we ordered these desserts that were like these mousses and they were very colorful, very beautiful and i was like i wanted to paint that and i took a picture of that"" — Katherine Wang
- "Parasocial on ig" — Katherine Wang
- "AI is not good for artists, it's not good for the environment [...] I can't support it stealing artists' work and going unfiltered" — Sam Tong
- On painting personal objects: it "reminds me of my relationships and celebrating life" — Katherine Wang
- On colorful paintings: "make it fun and engaging and more personal to me" — Katherine Wang
- "As an English and art major, i'm taking these classes to learn how to create things, i don't want a computer to do things. it just takes away the whole point of doing the work" — Sam Tong
- IG prompts: gives "so many options of what to make" — Katherine Wang
- Still life paintings are classical and have been done: "A bowl of fruit has been done before, but this tells more of a story" — Katherine Wang
- Likes to make cute / cuddly digital art — Katherine Wang
- "It is hard to be remember that someone made this and put it out there when you are just scrolling" — Michelle
- "The fact that a robot is taking your art is kinda insult to injury" — Sam Tong
- "Ebbs and flows of creativity" — Sam Tong
- Tries to paint personal objects from her life to make still life more interesting — Katherine Wang
- Likes to make still life paintings with bright, cheerful colors — Katherine Wang
- "Drawing from other's peoples drawings helps about principles of design, like what works and doesn't work" — Michelle
- Being inspired by another painting shows you appreciate sometimes work enough to recreate it — Michelle
- "Addictiveness of wanting to get likes and wanting to get follows" can lead to burnout — Sam Tong
- 500 followers on Instagram, started freshman year, mix of friends/family and other artists — Katherine Wang
- Studied art and English at W&M — Katherine Wang

THINK

- Online platforms (IG) are a game: you play by the rules, and you benefit from it. — Sam Tong
- Sees the world's beauty and wants to amplify that through art — Sam Tong
- Likely doesn't realize that image search (on native phone app) is AI — Katherine Wang
- Instagram is the most accessible platform, to reach both family and friends, and strangers — Michelle
- Finds comfort and comradery in online art communities — Sam Tong
- I have found my own niche and style in my community — Sam Tong
- Recreating art is a form of appreciation — Michelle
- I am an artist — Sam Tong
- While online platforms (IG) are largely beneficial, it is at times tiring, pressuring, and conducive to burnout. — Sam Tong
- My personal art is spontaneous; I go with the flow — Sam Tong
- It is hard to create and maintain deep, meaningful connections online — Michelle

DO

- Blocks AI artists online — Michelle
- Loved painting from a young age — Sam Tong
- Creates art that is connected to her personal relationships (i.e paints gifts from her boyfriend) — Michelle
- Likes to do prompts on Instagram (i.e draw "specific painting" in your style) — Michelle
- When asked about how personal background/ identity/interests informed her work, she seemed a little uncomfortable/ unsure how to answer — Katherine Wang
- Posts unfinished work on IG to be able to get content out daily — Katherine Wang
- Art inspired by media, movies, books, — Michelle
- Promotes her art online and runs a digital store — Katherine Wang
- Currently participating in Inktober (IG challenge, draw and post something every day for a month) — Katherine Wang
- Takes photos of things she sees in the world that she might want to draw later, will search it up via text search in app to find later; very spontaneous — Katherine Wang
- Sold paintings to her college — Katherine Wang
- On IG, promotes her print-on-demand shop and participate in challenges — Katherine Wang
- Current IG challenge: draw an animal for every letter of the alphabet — Katherine Wang
- Does art challenges with her real-life friend, like swapping paintings — Michelle

FEEL

- Pressured to push out content on IG — Sam Tong
- Inspired by things around her, takes photos and looks back later — Saniya
- Feels the most inspired when she is supported and collaborating with other artisits — Michelle
- Feels very strongly against (repulsed?) by generative AI — Sam Tong
- Desires stronger purpose with art; doesn't want to make art just to make it — Michelle
- Joy from other people interacting with my Instagram feed — Michelle
- Strongly values people (friends and families) and relationships — Sam Tong
- Has an all-lor-nothing emotional mindset when it comes to art creation — Michelle
- It "scratches her brain" to engage in creative arts in novel/ spontaneous ways — Sam Tong
- Feels big (specifically, positive, wonderous, inspired) emotions — Sam Tong

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Daisy

Daisy

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

"The fact that a robot is taking your art is kinda insult to injury"

Sam Tong

My personal art is spontaneous; I go with the flow

Sam Tong

Blocks AI artists online

Michelle

It "scratches her brain" to engage in creative arts in novel/ spontaneous ways

Sam Tong

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Daisy

Daisy

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

Insights

1. **Relies on Instagram** and feels positively about it, but often feels **burnt out** when trying to **gain a following**

2. Feels **negatively** about **generative AI,** but has **affinity for AI image search**, the Instagram algorithm, etc. Doesn’t seem to consider the latter category as AI

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Jay

Jay

PROFESSOR IN FINE ARTS

SAY

- Always wanted to find another source of income beyond art — Saniya
- Values balanced education — Saniya
- Expressive model is when you create what you feel, like the canvas is your diary -- but this is not what he does — Michelle
- Wishes he waited longer to do art as professional pursuit — Saniya
- Art is useless in aesthetic philosophy, but important in its value judgement — Saniya
- Brought up how technology + art future and solutions should incorporate "détournement." The word literally translates to hijacking and rerouting: the way phones are used should be "misused" and subverted in a more reflective way of art/tech (rather than getting rid of phone use entirely) — Saniya
- "Art is not about greasing the wheels, it's about putting sand in the gears" -- efficiency and solving problems is not the goal of art, that's the goal of tech. "Art is useless, inefficient" — Saniya
- "Being isolated is not a model of artist that works for me. it works for some ppl, but not me" — Saniya
- Addressed the role of physical v digital tools, noting there's an opportunity to make interesting work — Saniya
- "How to use screen-based time in a self-conscious or reflective way?" — Saniya
- Communities in the future will be built around new ways that art is made, and art that's built around technology — Saniya
- "I make work to be in conversation with other people, either explicitly in that they would say something about my work or implicitly in response to my work" — Saniya
- Interest in physical art in objects stems from using old materials + hands again as answer to industrial revolution. Now, there is renewed emphasis on hand made stuff in response to screen-based time — Saniya
- Social media creates feedback loops of dopamine + disappointment; it takes away from own thoughts — Saniya
- Not looking for very much in reactions to his art; people give occasionally give pleasantries but not much discourse — Saniya
- Sees an opportunity to use "new distribution networks to reach new audiences" — Saniya
- When in a museum, you need to ask: "what is this object, how did it get here, and why do I look at it?" — Saniya
- "People I have conversations with... I want them to see what I'm doing" — Saniya
- Experiences "compounding effects" and benefits of networking since his wife is an art historian — Saniya
- Grew up with strong art-value system, but not necessarily a good or bad thing, is what it is — Saniya
- Jenny Holzer truisms on BYT billboards an example of how things distinguished (using advertising space in new, interesting way) — Saniya
- Museums should be more oriented towards local art scene — Saniya
- "Can't buy friends, [you] have to be there for each other" — Saniya
- Wishes his phone would project for ease / efficiency of his creative process — Saniya
- Writing about artists early in your career builds connections — Michelle
- Institutes benefitting artists who are doing things that are already known (instead of doing new things) doesn't move contemporary art forward — Saniya
- A lot of people drop out of the art world (i.e. after 10, 15 years); likens it to professional sports — Michelle
- Better to write about good things because easy to write about the "90 things that are bad" — Saniya
- Conversations in art history have continuity — Saniya
- "Institutions [non-profit] have failed us in their catering to market trends instead of critical trends" — Saniya
- Artists start with broader network and then narrow down ("swelling than contracting") — Saniya
- "Being an artist is a moving target" — Saniya
- Feels very conscientious about what they're doing relative to their medium and to art history — Saniya
- Now has "more intense relationships with fewer people" while about socializing more when younger — Saniya
- "Choosing to do something creative is sometimes a political statement" — Saniya
- Modern art in its time is always bad in its present time period (regardless of what era we look at) — Saniya
- Had good, supportive art history mentors — Michelle
- Mentioned that art needs better institutions: in particular, non-profit art sectors are now becoming more similar to for-profit — Saniya
- "Ask for forgiveness, not permission" in reference to creating when young as artist — Saniya
- Mentioned he never uploads personal photos to the cloud because he doesnt want tech companies to have access to and mine his data/photos — Sam Tong
- Says art and creative pursuits was valued in family — Saniya

THINK

- Lack of feedback is unmotivating — Saniya
- Labeled himself as artist only after art school completion, but thinks current students should call themselves artists — Saniya
- Art should primarily be created with the intent to engage or contribute to a discourse — Saniya
- Painting / art is very privileged pursuit — Saniya
- Finds it meaningful when ppl write abt his work — Saniya
- You have to understand what came before to create something new — Saniya
- Art as a passion is more noble and desirable than art as means to making money — Saniya
- His interests lie in art discourse and conversation, in historical context — Saniya
- He would be interested to see digitalized art experiences on a phone instead of having to go to museum — Saniya
- Curators (e.g. museums) should build and engage with other young artists, instead of trying to get 'permission' from more established artists — Saniya
- Wishes he did other work besides art when young so that he could pursue art when older on a more stable financial foundation — Saniya
- It's not necessary to grow up with a strong art community or support system to be an artist — Saniya
- What art looks like and what artists say about their art, is not the most important -- how art operates in bigger story is what's the most important — Saniya
- It's easy to criticize, but harder to uplift — Michelle
- In order to create freely, he must not rely on art as an income — Michelle

DO

- Paints, teaches theory/practice of art, and chair of graduate fine arts program — Saniya
- Had to work harder and juggle multiple responsibilities in order to create when younger — Saniya
- Wrote art criticisms when he was young by going to recommended galleries chosen by an editor / journal — Saniya
- Sends book(s) about his own work to other people — Saniya
- Has long-standing relationships with people at similar stages/ experiences; they've talked 1x a week 1hr/week for 20+ years — Saniya
- Took art history classes at local university in high school — Saniya
- Is highly research driven — Michelle
- Intentionally doesn't upload photos to cloud — Saniya
- Occasionally uses Photoshop — Saniya
- Doesn't use social media, since he's guarded about "self-preservation" — Saniya
- Did a PHD, in part so could be paid while creating art — Saniya
- Faced art criticsm when he was young — Saniya
- Has done a lot of writing about his own art work — Michelle
- Experiences a positive feedback loop: what he makes informs what he sees, what he sees informs what he makes — Saniya
- Pursued art history on the side so he had financial stability — Saniya
- Tried to be first person to write about artists to establish identity and voice as artist in professional world — Saniya
- Makes art based on photographs he takes with his phone — Michelle
- Keeps in touch with international community through world exhibitions; refers to it as traveling network — Michelle
- Looks at old historical art w sustained interest for hundred of years — Saniya
- Creation juggles between conversations that are hundreds of years old + creating something novel — Saniya
- Journals mostly on pencil + paper (journals in pockets), rarely uses notes app — Saniya
- Moved to California for a teaching job — Saniya

FEEL

- Compelled to uplift other artists and focus on the best in their works — Michelle
- Distrusting of big tech in his personal life, but curious about the possibilities with art/tech — Sam Tong
- Satisfied -- and grateful -- to be in the esteemed and successful position he's in right now — Sam Tong
- Values personal autonomy and freedom when it comes to creating — Saniya
- Assured (has conviction) in the art process and philosophy he follows — Saniya
- Passionate about what art "should" be in society — Sam Tong
- Not much feeling when creating art -- very logical and pragmatic — Katherine Wang
- Averse to the idea of creating purely for the gaze or benefit of others — Sam Tong
- Somewhat regretful of the paths he took to be financially stable — Sam Tong
- Affinity towards long-term friendships and human relationships, especially in art communties — Sam Tong
- Resoundingly set in his ways and beliefs — Sam Tong

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Jay

Jay

PROFESSOR IN FINE ARTS

Wishes he waited longer to do art as professional pursuit

Saniya

Art is useless in aesthetic philosophy, but important in its value judgement

Saniya

In order to create freely, he must not rely on art as an income

Michelle

Has long-standing relationships with people at similar stages/ experiences; they've talked 1x a week 1hr/week for 20+ years

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Somewhat regretful of the paths he took to be financially stable

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Sam Tong

Needfinding

Empathy Map: Jay

Jay

PROFESSOR IN FINE ARTS

Insights

1. **Doesn’t believe in art’s aesthetic value**; instead, cares deeply about the **contexts and discussions** surrounding art pieces

2. Doesn’t just espouse the importance of community -- proactively **takes the time** to grow and maintain a smaller **network of professionals**

POVs

POVs

We decided to focused on...

Jennie

FREQUENT MUSEUM GO-ER

Andi

TEACHER @ FABRIC STORE

Mary

MUSEUM VISTOR COORDINATOR

Grace

CURATORIAL CATALOGUING FELLOW, LEGION OF HONOR

Sky

GALLERY ASSISTANT

Mila

CASUAL WRITER

Daisy

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

Jay

PROFESSOR IN FINE ARTS

POVs

Mila

Mila

CASUAL WRITER

We met...

Mila, a full-time software engineer and long-time creative writer who recently moved from Chicago to San Francisco.

We were surprised to realize...

that even though Mila **creates art to connect** with her creative community, she's **selective** about who she shares her writing and art experiences with and has avoided finding other creatives in SF since moving here.

We wondered if that means...

that Michelle seeks **deeper, trusting connections** over just visibility and exposure due to the **vulnerable** and personal nature of her writing, and the tech culture of SF has prevented her from feeling confident in finding these relationships.

It would be game-changing to...

make processes for **sharing art experiences** feel safe, genuine, and accessible for Mila to find more immediate motivation and fulfillment from her community.

POVs

Mila

Mila

CASUAL WRITER

How Might We ....

- create intimate creative spaces?
- people feel more safe about sharing their art without being put in a vulnerable state?
- help creatives like Mila find trust and emotional fulfillment in unfamiliar creative spaces, rather than just exposure?

POVs

Daisy

Daisy

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

We met...

Daisy, an independent artist and recent college grad who shares and sells her art **online**.

We were surprised to realize...

that even though Daisy relies on Instagram to share her work and connect with other artists for **inspiration** and **platform**, she mostly engages on Instagram with in-person friends, struggles to put in the extra work to build **new digital connections**, and experiences **burnout** from posting daily.

We wondered if that means...

that for Daisy, trying to get visibility via the Instagram algorithm actually hinders the more **personal connections** that motivate her and sustain her creative growth.

It would be game-changing to...

if creative social engagement felt like reciprocal and **authentic exchange** rather than being performative and draining.

POVs

Daisy

Daisy

INDEPENDENT ARTIST

How might we ....

- encourage people to share art daily without being trapped by algorithms?
- connect artists who want to be mentored, and ones who want to act as mentors?
- redesign digital spaces to inspire wonder and emotional fulfillment through the discovery of human art and the natural world?

POVs

Jay

Jay

PROFESSOR IN FINE ARTS

We met...

Jay, a successful artist, art critic, and professor who has valued being in art circles all his life.

We were surprised to realize...

that despite his success, Jay regrets pursuing art professionally early on and feels that it **forced him to create for recognition and market appeal** rather than **authentic creative exploration** and the **productive dialogue** at the heart of art.

We wondered if that means...

that for Jay, creating for the market **detracts from conversation** around art, which unlocks the true value.

It would be game-changing to...

make the context and **conversations** around art more **accessible** to **inspire curiosity** and personal **engagement**.

POVs

Jay

Jay

PROFESSOR IN FINE ARTS

How might we ....

- change how art is presented (like at museums)?
- encourage dialogue and conversations among people and spark new connections?
- make exploring art contexts and ecosystems more childlike, like solving a puzzle?

POVs

Top HMWs

How might we help creatives find **trust** and emotional fulfillment in **unfamiliar creative spaces**, rather than just exposure? (*Mila)*

How might we make exploring art contexts and ecosystems more **childlike**, like solving a **puzzle**? (*Daisy)*

How might we redesign digital spaces to inspire **wonder** and emotional fulfillment through the **discovery** of human art and the **natural world**? (*Jay)*

Solutions

Solutions

Top HMWs

How might we help creatives find **trust** and emotional fulfillment in **unfamiliar creative spaces**, rather than just exposure?

How might we make exploring art contexts and ecosystems more **childlike**, like solving a **puzzle**?

How might we redesign digital spaces to inspire **wonder** and emotional fulfillment through the **discovery** of human art and the **natural world**?

Solutions

Experience Prototype 1

Solution

Take a photo of artwork, add reflection, and see what others thought about the same piece; location-based map

Assumption

People would take the time to log their experiences with art that they consume and interact with

Experience Prototype Design

Cantor Arts Center (Gates of Hell): Glass jar that prompts “Share your thoughts on the Gates of Hell”, pens, and sticky notes

- Engagement measured: Observed how many people looked at The Gates of Hell vs. shared a sticky note

Solutions

Experience Prototype 1: Participants

Target Demographic

Art enthusiasts / consumers (range of ‘casual’ enthusiasts to professional artists)

Participants in prototype

Visitors of Cantor Arts Center @ Gates of Hell exhibit → museum visitors are at minimum some extent of an art consumer or enthusiast, whether casual all the way to professional

Left out communities

People without access to art resources to consume, understand, or participate in art

Solutions

Experience Prototype 1: Results

What Worked + Didn't Work?

✅ Participants shared insightful reflections
❌ Participants weren't able to engage with people's reflections'; participants can't look back at own notes

New Learnings

- **30 minute observation:** 25 people came to exhibit, 12 people read the message box, 10 people took pictures of exhibit, 1 person took a picture of message box, 2 people wrote a note
- **4 hours**: 7 people wrote reflections / notes
- Visitors stopped + looked for long periods of time at The Gates of Hell, and many took photos of exhibit
  - People have ways of logging + looking back at art

Assumption Validated?

✅ **Validated:** Individuals took photos of exhibit and were willing to submit reflections to a new, unknown jar when provided with reflection materials

Solutions

Top HMWs

How might we help creatives find **trust** and emotional fulfillment in **unfamiliar creative spaces**, rather than just exposure?

How might we make exploring art contexts and ecosystems more **childlike**, like solving a **puzzle**?

How might we redesign digital spaces to inspire **wonder** and emotional fulfillment through the **discovery** of human art and the **natural world**?

Solutions

Experience Prototype 2

Solution

Grouping art together in personal ways that can be shared and commented on by others

Assumption

People are motivated enough to draw connections between art

Experience Prototype Design

Print out 16 pieces of visual art and prompt participants to group them.

- Engagement measured with time spent, observation, and post-activity reflections

Solutions

Experience Prototype 2: Participants

Target Demographic

Casual creators or art enthusiasts

Participants in prototype

Individuals who consider themselves creatives, but not ‘artists’

- P1: musician, singer, consumes music- related art + indigenous art
- P2: draws, consumes literature and music frequently

Left out communities

Individuals with very little to no background in art knowledge, and who have no existing connections to art pieces

Solutions

Experience Prototype 2: Results

What Worked + Didn't Work?

✅ Thoughtful, personal reflections with verbalized emotions; enjoyment of activity + discussing choices made

❌ Only made connections because prompted to do so; preferably more prototype testing

New Learnings

Participant 1

- Spent 1m:11s; gave detailed explanations for groupings with personal connections, developed names for groupings with strong further desires to share with others,

Participant 2

- Spent 0m:49s; wouldn't make connections outside of activity; interested in connections of other artists'

Both made connections to other forms of media (music, movies)

Assumption Validated?

❓ **Somewhat validated:** Participants enjoyed and engaged in the activity; reflective conversations throughout; P2 reported to have no interest in making connections between art unprompted

Solutions

Top HMWs

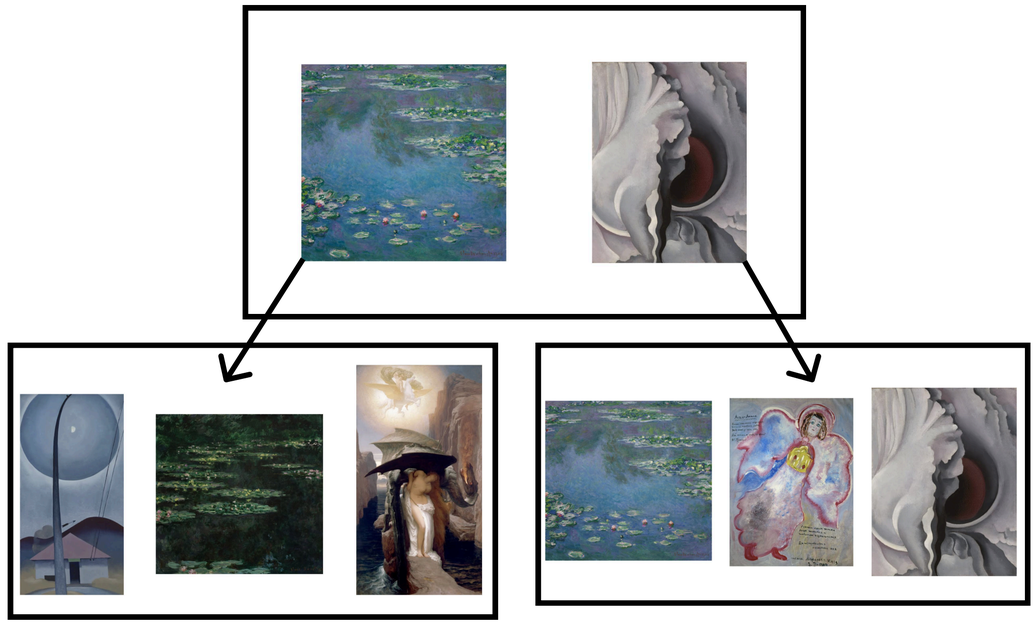
How might we help creatives find **trust** and emotional fulfillment in **unfamiliar creative spaces**, rather than just exposure?

How might we make exploring art contexts and ecosystems more **childlike**, like solving a **puzzle**?

How might we redesign digital spaces to inspire **wonder** and emotional fulfillment through the **discovery** of human art and the **natural world**?

Solutions

Experience Prototype 3



Solution

Art database indexed by AI; placed on large graphs that users can traverse through to find connected artwork

Assumption

People would explore similar art and how the pieces are related in an open-ended way without a target goal (curiosity!)

Experience Prototype Design

Selects image from a display, reveals more options based on selection, and repeat

- Condition A: Tested without goal
- Condition B: Tested with goal of favorite image for room.
- Engagement measured with time spent, observation, and post-activity reflections

Solutions

Experience Prototype 3: Participants

Target Demographic

Casual creators or art enthusiasts

Participants in prototype

Individuals who consider themselves creatives, but not ‘artists’

- P1: advanced musician, go to museums, consumes women + nature-based paintings, music
- P2: weaver, ceramicist

Left out communities

Individuals with very little to no background in art knowledge, communities with less known or widely-accessible art

Solutions

Experience Prototype 3: Results

What Worked + Didn't Work?

- ✅ Strong engagement and focus; strong desire to keep exploring after activity
- ❌ Spent less time on Condition B because the same set of images provided right after Condition A; preferably more prototype testing

New Learnings

Participant 1

- Condition A → 8m:03s (14 traversals), Condition B → 0m:46s (2 traversals)
- Preferred Condition B

Participant 2

- Condition A → 5m:20s (26 traversals), Condition B → 1m:12s (10 traversals)
- Preferred Condition A

Both compared to a game; enjoyed exploring; wished there were more images to explore

Assumption Validated?

- ✅ **Mostly validated:** Engaged (emotionally, time-wise), despite getting repeats. However, one participant preferred a specific, while the other preferred no goal.

Next Steps

Next Steps

Final Solution?

Solution 1: Take a photo of artwork, add reflection, and see what others thought about the same piece; location-based map

Solution 2: Grouping art together in personal ways that can be shared and commented on by others

Solution 3: Art database indexed by AI; placed on large graphs that users can traverse through to find connected artwork

Next Steps

Final Solution?

Solution 1: Take a photo of artwork, add reflection, and see what others thought about the same piece; location-based map

→ **Assumption validated:** Strong engagement + willingness to log art experiences via existing and new methods

Solution 2: Grouping art together in personal ways that can be shared and commented on by others

→ Solutions 2 + 3 had very similar target demographics and participant groups, and are difficult co-existing solutions.

Solution 3: Art database indexed by AI; placed on large graphs that users can traverse through to find connected artwork

→ **Solution 3 validated assumptions more than Solution 2**: significantly more engagement and increased desire to explore more. However, still want goal-oriented exploration...

Next Steps

Final Solution + Ethical Implications

Art database on platform that is indexed by AI and placed on various large graphs that users can traverse to find similar connected artwork defined by some metrics, while users can track and save the artwork they explore via reflections + commentary with others.

- **Target Demographic:** Anywhere from casual consumers or art enthusiasts to professional ‘artists’
- **Communities excluded:** Individuals with very little to no background in art knowledge, communities with less known or widely-accessible art or art forms
- **Ethics:** Implication of deciding how we will populate art database or allow for database to be populated by users

Next Steps

What’s next?

1. Based on new solution, research the existing products in the problem space
2. Brainstorming stakeholders and ethical implications of solution
3. Defining user tasks
4. Developing a concept video

Questions?

Appendix

Appendix

Interview Questions

Background

- Tell us about your background as an artist: What kinds of art do you create? Do you also like to consume art, and what kinds or forms?
  - Why do you create?
- How do your personal interests, background, or identity inform your work? Is there a specific work you could give an example of?

Search and Databases

- Where do you look or search for inspiration? Do you use digital tools or platforms?
  - How do you ‘track’ your inspiration and reflect/remember it?
  - What makes IG/TT/Etsy/etc conducive for this?

Community

- How do you connect with other artists or creators? Can you tell me about an interaction with another creative or a creative community that was meaningful?
  - Is this digital? Online? Where do you find these connections?
    - What makes IG/TT/Etsy/etc conducive for this?
  - Why do you share your work or like to see the work of others? Why?
- Can you tell me about a memorable experience sharing your work online or interacting with others’ work online?
  - Why do you post your art on social media?
  - More follow up questions to probe this further, e.g.: Why is connecting with other artists important to you?
  - Distribution/selling: How do you market your work and find an audience online to get commissions or sell products? (find a more natural way to tie it in)

Appendix

Interview Artifacts

Daisy’s painting of objects meaningful to her

Jay’s (Jordan’s) Creative Process

Appendix

Mila’s HMWs Brainstorm

1. HMW allow people to post online in non-stressful ways?
2. HMW help Michelle find more continuity between the tech/art sides of her?
3. HMW create intimate creative spaces?
4. HMW create belonging for artists – true belonging that doesn’t feel shallow?
5. HMW allows artists to give and receive feedback?
6. HMW spark less shallow digital relationships?
7. HMW create an (online) community that simulates friends and family (organic community)?
8. HMW make art creation sustainable financially, emotionally, and physically?
9. HMW connect people to resources to create?
10. HMW make creators trust the people that consume their art?
11. HMW builds communities for collaboration, not exposure?
12. HMW create long-term, long-lasting community?
13. HMW foster local communities of artists that feel particularly intimate and connected?
14. HMW help people feel more safe about sharing their art without being put in a vulnerable state?
15. HMW help artists find new meaningful interpersonal one-on-one connections with other artists?
16. HMW make art communities a "release" from the stress of everyday life (particularly, work and people's day jobs)?
17. HMW connect artists and creatives who are complete strangers but have similar interests?
18. HMW build online platforms that support IRL connections?
19. HMW put Michelle out of her comfort zone and challenge her creative process?
20. HMW help Michelle challenge her assumptions about art in SF?

Appendix

Daisy’s HMWs Brainstorm

1. HMW build a creative sharing process that inspires, not drains?
2. HMW avoid burn out with artists?
3. HMW encourage people to share art daily without being trapped by algorithms?
4. HMW turn sharing art online from an obligation to something positive?
5. HMW connect artists with each other in a way that feels organic and not contrived/forceful?
6. HMW create opportunities for digital artists to build trusting relationships, rather basing relationships on likes and comments?
7. HMW frame AI tools in a way that assists artists’ work and discovery?
8. HMW connect artists who want to be mentored, and ones who want to act as mentors?
9. HMW help people share their personal stories about their art?
10. HMW we make online art connections more genuine, similar to in-person interactions, and less performative?
11. HMW use AI to allow artists to be inspired not by AI art, but by the discovery of human art and the natural world already out there?
12. HMW decouple the art community’s networking with sharing and publicizing art online?
13. HMW make visibility not the goal?
14. HMW gamify engagement with other artists?
15. HMW help artists discover different microcommunities?
16. HMW make creative inspiration online feel as personal as in-person connections?

Appendix

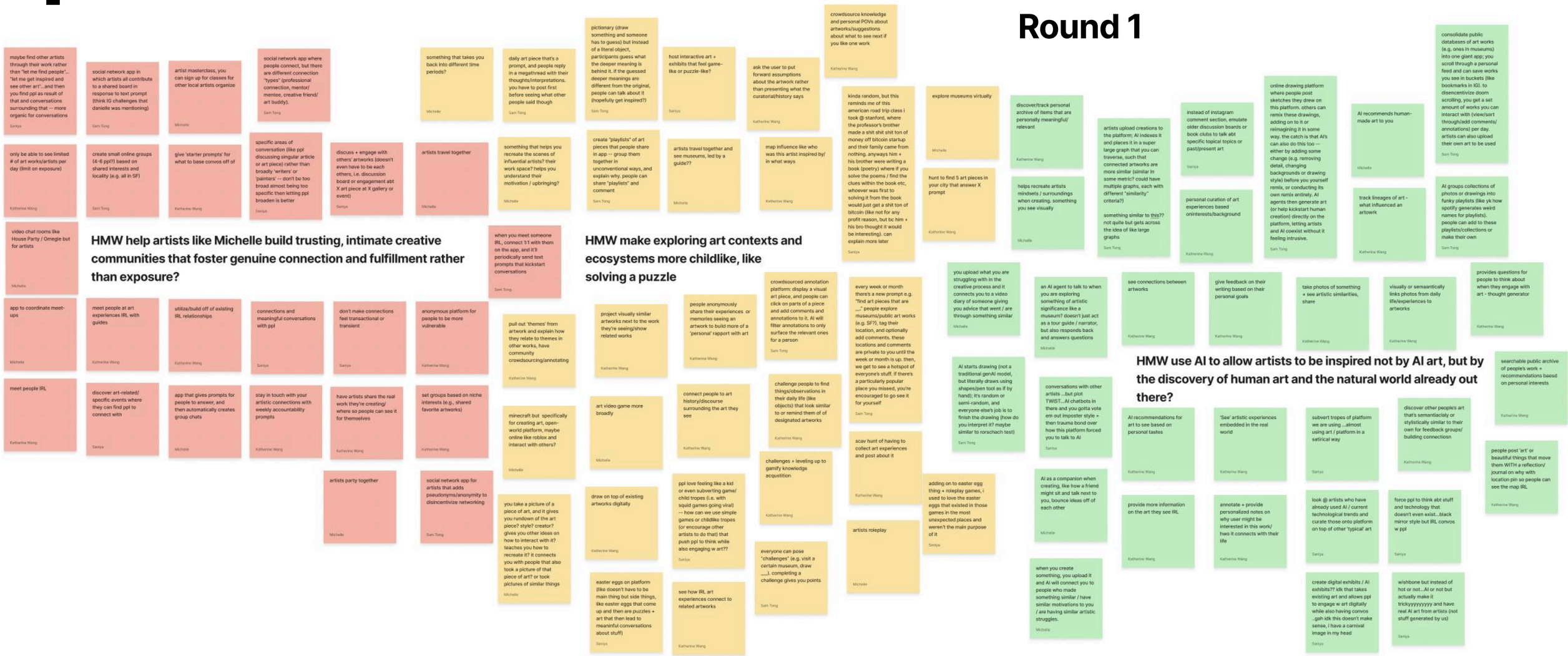
Jay's HMWs Brainstorm

1. HMW bridge the knowledge gap for laypeople?
2. HMW immerse people in artistic ecosystems?
3. HMW use the digitization of present-day to be a way to directly consume art (in contrast to digitization connection people to art they can go + consume)?
4. HMW change how art is presented (like at museums)?
5. HMW gamify art education?
6. HMW encourage people to make art together?
7. HMW make exploring art ecosystems like solving a puzzle?
8. HMW get people interested in the contexts surrounding art to begin with?
9. HMW encourage dialogue and conversations among people, especially new connections?
10. HMW shift the status quo from art as financial stability to art as conversational dialogue?
11. HMW make discussions of art contexts and ecosystems more child-like (in exploration)?
12. HMW encourage artists to create for meaning, not profit
13. HMW support failing art?

Appendix

Solution Brainstorm

Round 1



Appendix

Solution Brainstorm Continued

Round 2

Round 3

Final

Curate Playlists

create "playlists" of art pieces that people share in app -- group them together in unconventional ways, and explain why. people can share "playlists" and comment

Assumptions

- ~~people know enough art~~
- **people can and *are motivated enough* to draw connections between art - ie will MAKE (not just look) - people are MAKING**
- ~~people want to share their art reflections/ similarities with others~~
- ~~people want to track or log their personal art thoughts/reflections~~

Katherine Wang

Prototype:

- **Print out 12 pieces of visual art and prompt someone to group them and name their groups**
- **measure time spent, ask abt engagement**

Michelle

Map Similarities

artists upload creations to the platform; AI indexes it and places it in a super large graph that you can traverse, such that connected artworks are more similar (similar in some metric? could have multiple graphs, each with different "similarity" criteria?)

something similar to this?? not quite but gets across the idea of like large graphs

Assumptions

- people would explore/ traverse similar art and how the pieces are related in an **open-ended way without a target goal - CURIOSITY**

Katherine Wang

Prototype:

- Choose your own adventure - see if people explore other pages

Michelle

Reflection + Collection IRL

Track the artwork you see by adding photos and commentary/reflection with a location-based map to track personal experiences and see that of others (with suggested events)

Assumptions

- ~~Location based ? what if no art~~
- ~~There is enough art ?~~
- People would **take the time** to digitally log their experience with art
- ~~People want to read the reflections of others~~

Katherine Wang

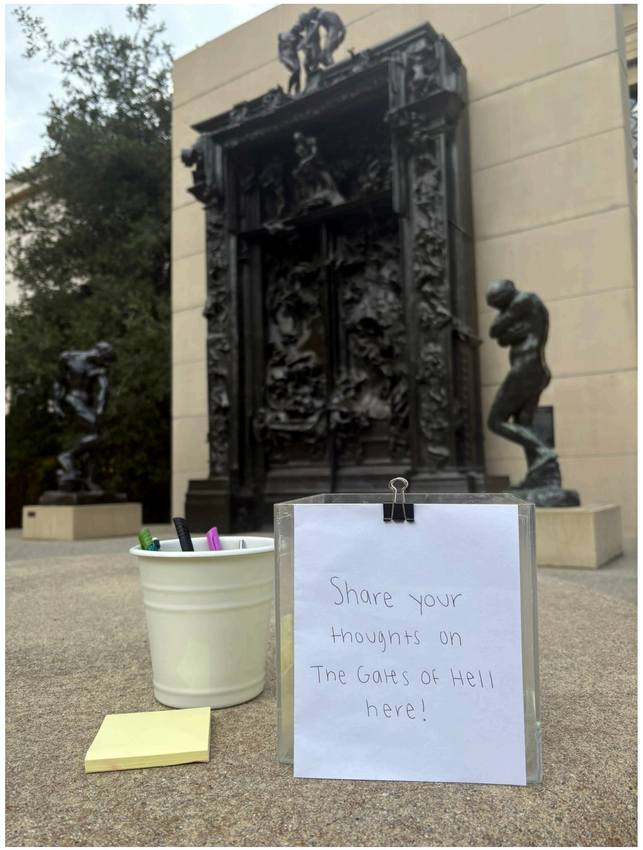
Prototype:

- Gates of hell -- glass jar and sticky notes "what are your thoughts"?

Michelle

Appendix

Experience Prototype 1 Artifacts



Reminder to
Follow a
righteous path
from within,
different for everybody
or else

Overwhelm.
Complejidad del
mundo interior
Compasión
Miedo
Esperanza.

Wonderful

9th Oct '25
Something
Really
Special
Reminding
Awakening
the History

지하
입문
감상하다

AS A FRESHMAN I HEARD PROF ELSEN'S LECTURE ON THE GATES. THAT NIGHT I CAME TO SEE IT FOR MYSELF A FEW YEARS AGO I WROTE AND RECORDED AN ALBUM CALLED "THE BEATRICE SUITE" ABOUT THE SCULPTURE & THE DIVINE COMEDY. YOU CAN LISTEN TO IT ON APPLE MUSIC AND BANDCAMP. THANK YOU FOR THE INVITATION TO SHARE THIS W/ YOU.
PERRY

It is interesting that there is only humans, no evil 'creatures', demons, or other hell-like beings.

Appendix

Experience Prototype 2 Artifacts

P1

P2

Appendix

Experience Prototype 3 Artifacts

EP3 key

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1L → 2
1R → 3

2L → 6
2M → 7
2R → 4

3L → 11
3M → 5
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4L → 2
4M → 5
4R → 3

5L → 9
5M → 4
5R → 6

6L → 11
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6R → 10

7L → 3
7M → 8
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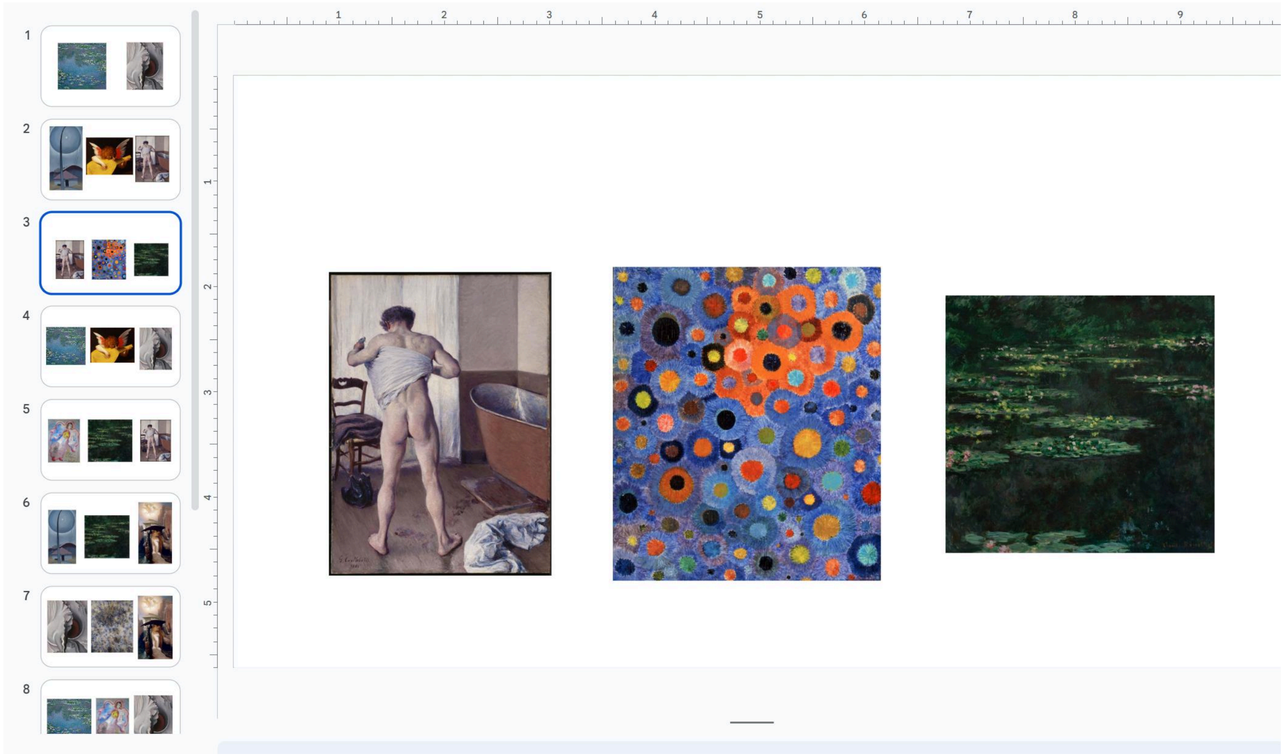
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11M → 3
11R → 2