

CART360
Etude One: Stranger Things
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Links:

Class Website: anieshadesigns.com/cart360
Github: <https://github.com/Aniesha08/cart360>

PART ONE: DISCOVER MEANINGFUL OBJECTS

1. APPLE EAR PHONES

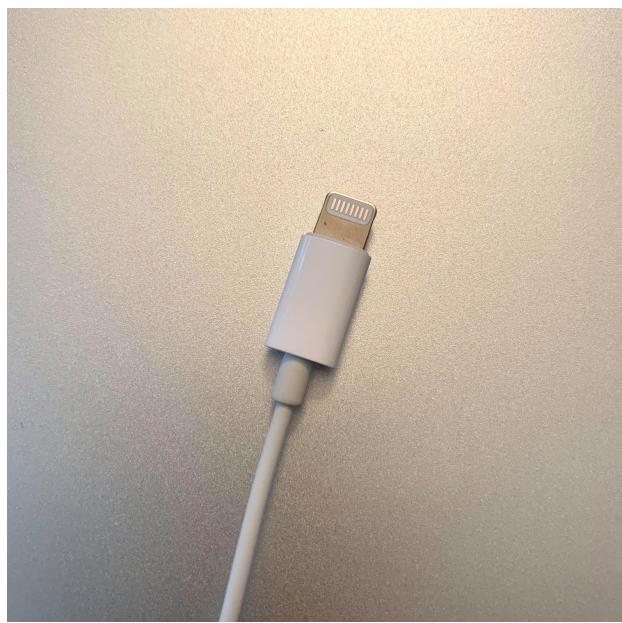
The earphones are grey-ish white and it has 3 buttons, one microphone and a connector to connect to your device. The buttons permit you to increase/decrease volume and the middle button is to attend calls. The microphone enables you to answer phone calls without the need to have your phone at hand. My Apple earphones are meaningful to me as I enjoy listening to music. When I think of earphones, I immediately make an association with music.

Its affordance to insert it into the ear creates a blockage that separates the surrounding soundscape from the sound coming from the earphones. I very much enjoy the personal zone that the earphones is able to create between reality and the world inside my head as the sounds stimulate my senses.

My earphones have been more than an object. It has become my company when I'm sad, when I am happy, when I'm stressed, when I'm angry, when I'm taking public transport and so on. If music is my escape, my earphones are my "bubble". Listening to music, while sitting on the window-seat of the train and watching the landscape shift in a quick motion is a really beautiful and poetic experience.

Unlike speakers, earphones create a sense of privacy. In terms of social interactions, others will hesitate to talk to you if you are wearing your earphones. That is because the earphones act like a locked door that needs permission to enter for it to be "opened" (removed from the ear).

On the other hand, when you share your earphones with someone, it creates a sense of acceptance to permit someone to enter into your little world of soundscapes and that creates a different experience, a more intimate one. I remember during my college days, my friend and I would take the bus together and I would share my earphones with her as we watch our favourite youtuber's videos on the way home. We would save our music and videos that we wanted to share with each other just so that we can listen and watch together on the bus ride home.



2. THE PHOTO ALBUM

A photo album is not only my favourite object but also, viewing photo albums and sharing the experience of viewing a photo album are my favourite hobbies. I enjoy the sensory and emotional affordances that the photo album gives me.

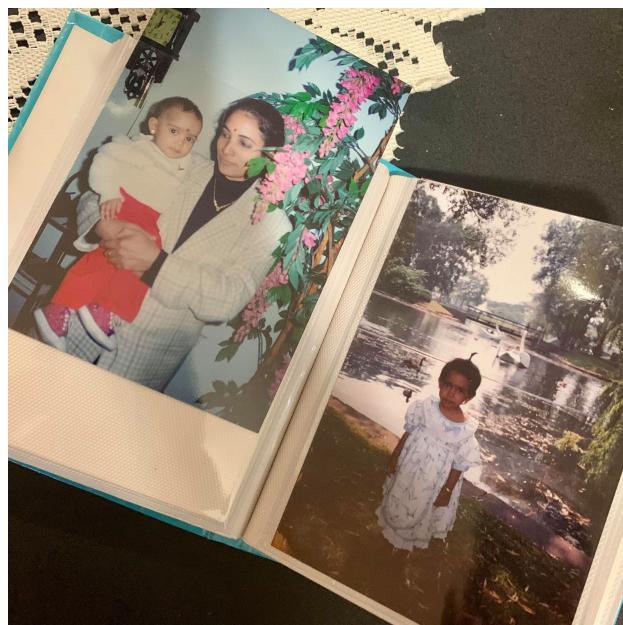
To me, the action of flipping through the photo album makes me feel as though I am travelling from one memory to another, in between different emotions, places and years. When I look through my parent's photos (before I was born) from old photo albums, it fascinates me to think that they have known me all their lives, but I don't know the version of them that I see in the photographs. For example, I don't know the teenage version of my mother. On the other hand, when I look at my childhood photo albums, it gives a sense of nostalgia as I recall each memory and I sometimes feel a sense of yearning to physically return back to those moments.

As its physically shaped like a storybook with many pages, the way of viewing and experiencing is similar to a storybook too. As you flip through the album, you can smell the photographs. Depending on how old the photograph is and the type of paper it was printed on, the smell varies. Just like the pages of the storybook, each photo in the album tells a story that can be read. Unlike the storybook, the photos from the photo album can be taken out, felt and even reorganized in the album. The reorganization can change the story of the photo album. I believe that the photo album creates a link between the photographs in the album. Even if there are random photos, the mind will try to make connections between the photographs as you flip from one to another and create a story.

Today, there is no need to develop photos as the photo album has come into our devices and converted into digital folders in our phones, tablets and computers. As the photo album took its digital photo album avatar, I personally feel that the photo album lost its sentimental value. For example, sharing a photo album on Facebook, will give you likes and comments in return. The experience gained from sharing a photo album online can never be as valuable as sharing a photo album in person. The action of sharing a photo album, to me, is something very personal, intimate and nostalgic. The digital photo album can be sent to anyone and anywhere but the physical photo albums are something personal and private as we do not bring them everywhere we go. It is shared in our homes, with family, friends and guests. If it is shared with family or guests, it is something that is not accessible to them as it would be if they went to your Facebook profile to see your photo albums. As the accessibility of the photo album becomes limited, the moments of sharing the album become more precious. Sitting together in the living room, as you share your photo album with your family and friends, you engage in a storytelling experience in an intimate setting. As the storytelling emerges from the photo album, while it is being shared with others, that itself creates a memorable event.



Most of my parent's photo albums were binder-like photo albums like the one above. Inside, the pages had a plastic film layer that we had to peel in order to place the images on the semi-sticky paper. Once we've placed the images, we then spread the plastic film over the page again. Due to the page's semi-sticky nature, we can peel and unpeel the film any time and replace the images. I really like these types of albums as we can arrange the images in any way we like in term of layout. The images can be straight or diagonal. We can place two images in one page and for in another. These kinds of albums give a scrapbook feel.



On the other hand, my childhood photos were placed in spiral albums that were from Uniprix or Jean Coutu as my parents used to develop my photos there. Unlike my parents' albums, we had to insert the images inside the film to place them and only one photo can be placed in each page.

3. SPICE JAR CONVERTED TO MEMORY JAR

My last object is a small spice jar. In terms of specifications, the glass jar is circular in shape and has a red lid for tight closure. The lid has a small circular window that provides the top view of the contents in the jar. It's compact and its diameter is around the size of my palm.

This jar has become a meaningful object to me due to the sand that I stored inside the jar. In 2012, I visited Sri Lanka, our homeland, with my family after 10 years. It took us 10 years to visit our homeland as the country has been committing genocide against us Tamils and it was dangerous for us to go. It was a very difficult period of time as we did not get to see our extended family during all those years. During my stay there, I had wished to go on a Jaffna tour (one of the places that have been severely destroyed).

! TRIGGER WARNING !

There, I saw many families living in extreme poverty and in bomb shelled homes. Some people didn't have arms, some didn't have legs...Many children were left to be orphans, were extremely malnourished and were nude.

! End of TRIGGER WARNING !

The entire experience broke my heart as I witnessed the struggles my people went through. I listened to the stories of many families as they told me how they suffered to survive the genocide. Prior to departing Jaffna, with tear-filled eyes, I grabbed a handful of sand (which included some debris and tiny rocks too) and put it inside a plastic bag as I didn't have anything else to put it in at the time. The urge to do so at that moment was because I did not know if I would ever be able to come back to my homeland as the situation there was extremely uncertain. I brought this plastic bag back home to Canada.

A few days later, when my mom was cleaning the kitchen closet, I came across this little spice jar. The physical affordances of the spice jar made me feel as though it would be perfect as a memory jar. Once I placed the sand inside the spice jar, it became an object that contains so much emotional value for me. The jar's enclosing nature affords the sense of preservation and its glass texture, to me, symbolizes the fragility of this sensitive subject.

For me, the jar encapsulates the memory of my encounter with the families from the war-torn village & loads of emotions. The sand tells the story of the pain and struggles of Tamils as they fought for our rights, our land and to receive equal rights as the Sinhalese. To me, the sand (a piece of our land) contains (symbolically) the tears, blood and sweat of my people.

Every time I look at it, I remember how much I miss my homeland and most importantly, I am reminded of how fortunate I am to be living here in Canada and the struggles of my immigrant parents as they are separated from their family for over 30+ years due to the situations back home.



PART TWO: Design

I would like to select my third object, my memory jar, to transform it into an interactive object by adding additional features to it while keeping its form. As I mentioned in my object description, the closure of the jar creates a sense of encapsulation and when you put something that is meaningful to you inside it, it preserves a treasurable memory that tells a story. Of course, you can open the jar to touch and feel the contents inside, but by placing it inside the jar, you provide safety for it as it is something precious and should not be left freely. We are all travelers in this journey of life. Just within a year, we have set foot in many places but if we recall, there are only very few places that we have visited that has touched our heart. We miss those places and long to return to them. I would like this memory jar to be transformed into a device that is able to encapsulate as much as possible from a memorable place. When you miss a place, you can simply use this device to access back to that moment in time when you were at that place by seeing the contents you chose to preserve from that place through the jar, listening to the soundscape from that place and viewing images from the visit. This device is suitable for travelers and especially more meaningful for immigrants who leave their home country.

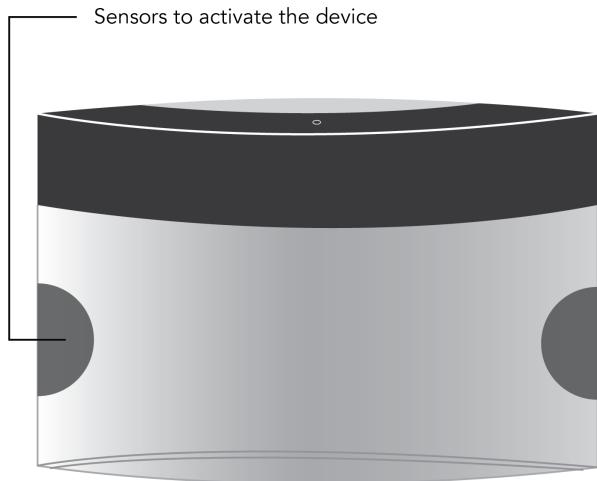
Features:

- Jar: to place contents
 - Sensors: for gesture detection
 - Built-in LED light under the lid to shed light on the contents
 - Bluetooth connection
-  Sound Library: to play the recorded sounds
-  Sound Recorder
-  Repeat Button: enables you to listen to the recorded sounds as ambient music
-  Photo Viewer: transfer photos of the place from your phone to the device using Bluetooth

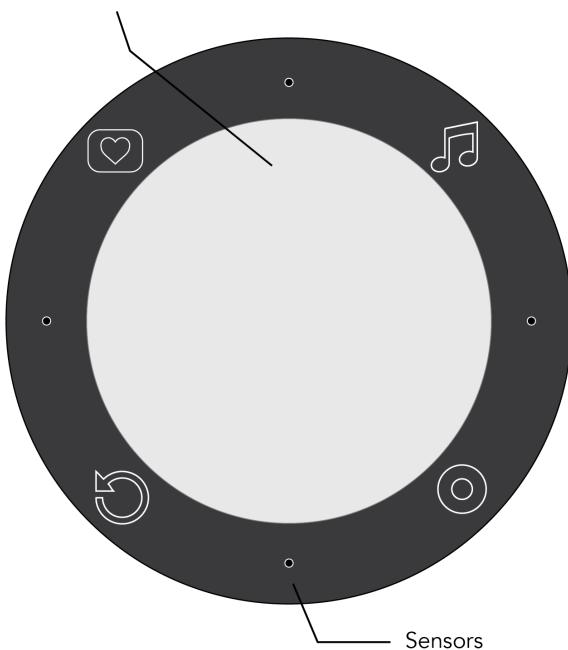
Gestures:

- Cup both hands around the jar for 5 seconds, with the warmth of your hands, the sensor will turn on the device. This gesture is like giving the jar a hug, just like how we would hug someone when we visit them after a long time.
- Tap on the lid once to leave the recorded sounds on repeat
- Tap on the lid twice to turn the lights ON/OFF
Keep your hands around an inch over the lid
- Press the Photo Viewer button then swipe your hands right or left through images
- Press the Sound Library button then move hands in circular motion clockwise or counter-clockwise to play the sounds

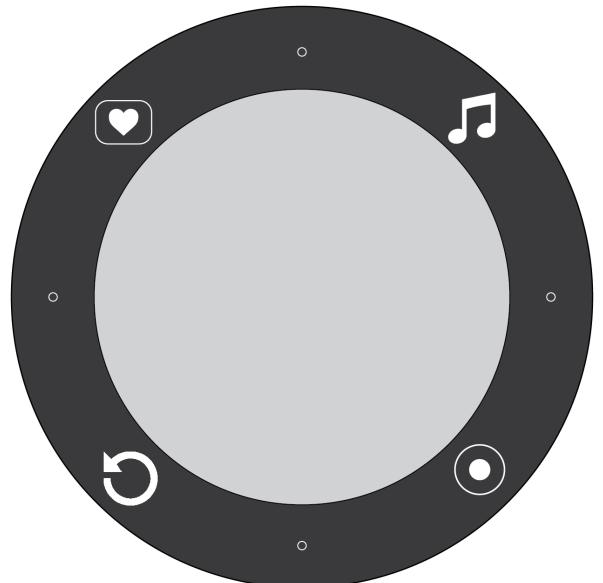
TURNING ON THE DEVICE

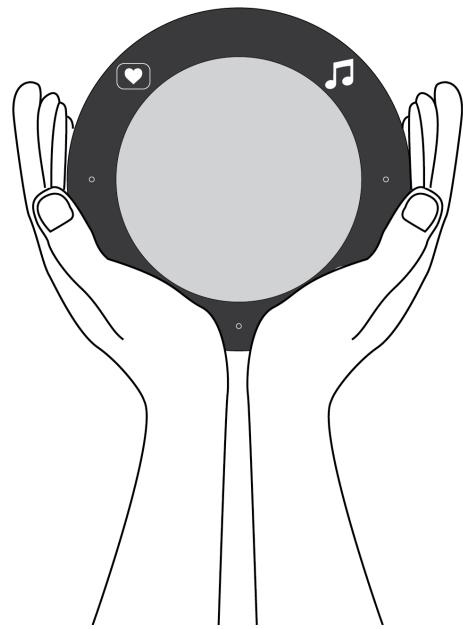
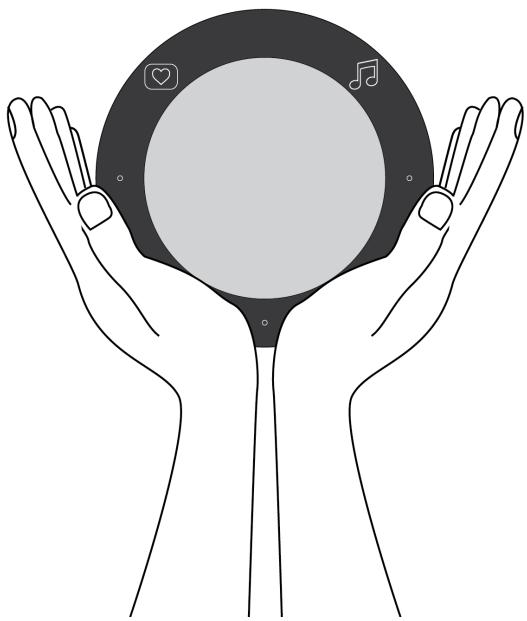


Semi-transparent screen that permits you to view images as well as through the screen to see the contents.



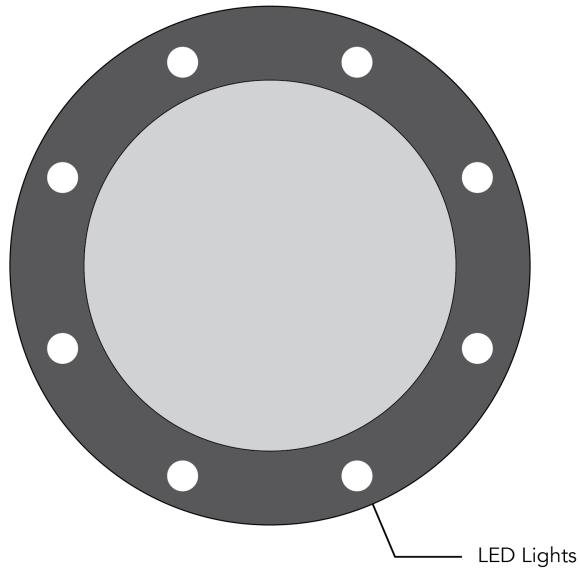
The icons light turns on when the device is turned on.





TURNING ON THE LIGHTS

UNDER THE LID



DOUBLE TAP



LIGHTS TURNED ON

