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Pre-reflection

I was first introduced to programming in high school. One teacher, in particular, had decided to turn our 10th-grade art class into an HTML and CSS crash course. While not a lot had clicked back then, that was the beginning of my career in web development which ultimately led me to becoming a Graphic and Web Designer 5 years later. Flash forward to my experience currently, I would say that I'm pretty proficient in HTML and CSS and I recently took a summer training course in PHP and WordPress Parent Theme Creation funded by my work. While PHP is not as complex as Javascript, I like to think of PHP as the joining language between HTML and Javascript, with its use of complex functions, variables and HTML tags.

I've only done a few online classes related to Javascript in Game Design and it was quite some time ago. I feel that it's as obvious to me as it was to my high school teacher that there is a very thin line between programming and the creative lens, one that I tend to cross quite often. Even though my current programming/creative lens only goes as far as website creation, the possibilities are endless. The amount of freedom you can gain from learning to use programming as a form of creative expression is infinite. It can be combined with various mediums, used in interactive installations and even mixed media artworks. The implementation of programming on its own allows one to explore any world that can be thought up by the programmer, whether that be a silly game, a world-changing art installation or simply an interactive website. There's not much that can't be done.

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On a personal level, an example of creative programming that I find inspiring is the online game Agar.io¹. It's a simple online multiplayer game where players use their cursor to move their avatar, a simple circle across the screen. The goal of this game is to eat as many circles (including other players) as possible to grow into the biggest circle on the map. This simple but addicting game



interface has had a grasp on teenagers since it came out, making it an English teacher's nightmare. I think it's a purely genius idea with programming that doesn't seem too complex or over complicated (at least I don't believe it is). I think it's impressive to be able to program such a simple game that at the same time can be so addictive.

Due to my web background I of course have an appreciation for a nicely designed and executed website. The act of mixing interactivity and on-scroll events can create a smooth and interesting experience for the user. Victoire's Douys² portfolio website by Patrick Heng³ is a perfect example. I particularly love that Heng played with the use of semi-static gifs and Javascript to create an interactive image that the viewer can manipulate and interact with using their mouse. They used on-scroll events that trigger portfolio elements and typeface animations that are very inspiring. It keeps the viewer interested and wanting to see more. This is the kind of website I'd

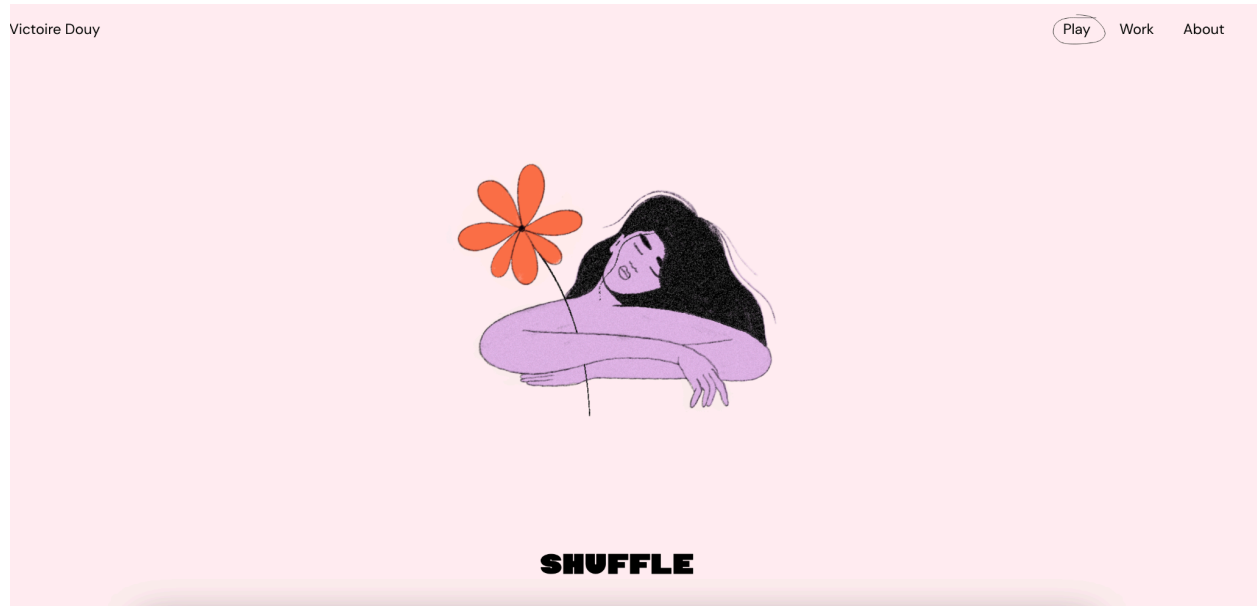
¹Agar.io, accessed September 15, 2024, <https://www.agar.io/>.

²"Victoire Douy - Designer / Illustrator," Victoire Douy - Designer / Illustrator, accessed September 15, 2024, <https://victoiredouy.com/>.

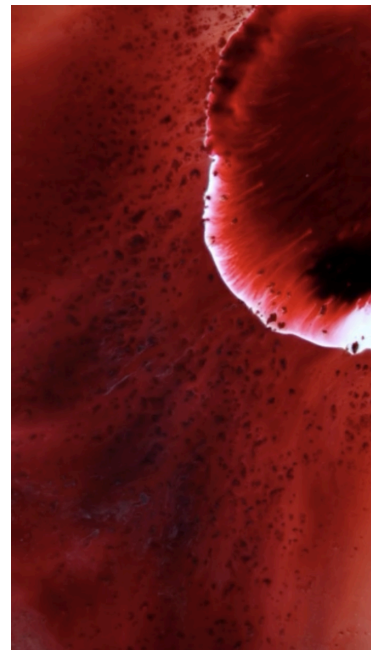
³Patrick Heng, "Patrick Heng - Creative Developer Portfolio," Patrick Heng - Creative Developer Portfolio, accessed September 15, 2024, <https://patrickheng.com/>.

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love to be able to create in the future.



Another programming artwork that I find inspiring is the Live Art/ Born to Live NFT collection by Kim Weber⁴. In these NFTs, Weber uses her blood to create a time-dependent/interactive digital art installation. These artworks and the visuals change as time goes on, slowly getting darker. While I'm not entirely sure how this could be programmed it is such an inspiration to see someone combining the most analog and real part of them, their blood, with programming to create a timeless art piece. I'm drawn to these instances of programming that combine mixed mediums to create a unique idea. It doesn't have to be the most complex programming but the idea can make it spectacular.



⁴ Kim Weber, "NFT Art," kimroseart, accessed September 15, 2024, <https://www.kimroseart.com/nft-art>.

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As for my dream programming project, I can't say I have a completely solidified idea in mind. I love to play with multiple different mediums, from web, print to fibre and soft surfaces. That being said I feel the most drawn to the interactive capabilities of programming. I feel that for a dream project, I'd like to explore this interactivity outside of the realm of mouse and keyboard, by combining the use of people and objects or even textiles to interact with an interface I've created. One idea I could see myself creating is a website that allows the user to interact with the website using their voice and even a webcam to scroll or trigger events. This could even include some sort of external device that's unusual to see alongside a computer. A kind of silly-out-there example of this could be mini crocheted granny squares that replace the keyboard and each one is programmed to trigger a different function in a game. While some of my ideas are a bit out there I'm excited to further my knowledge of what's possible with programming and excited to learn how I can integrate it into my practice.

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Citations

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