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Each human being has their perception of the world, which is defined by what surrounds them. Therefore, their sense of curiosity and wonder is going to differ and be influenced by their subject of interest, but two negatives can sometimes become positive. In this specific situation, if we open ourself to the world and discussion, we can be more aware of how an object can affect us and others. This sharing opportunity gives us the possibility to understand how common artifacts can be meaningful for others. In this way, we let the opportunity to our mind to see day to day object differently. Like cabinets of curiosities, we all have a collection of typical items that we consider as wonders. A ukulele, a silver ring, and a red leather notebook can be seen as unpleasing, but in my eyes, they represent are a collection of wonders.

The rings

First, a circle on a piece of paper does not represent much more than a circle, but when it is around a finger, the simple shape takes a whole other signification. Once you decide to wear a ring on any of your fingers, people start to see you a little differently. Even though most people that cross your path in the streets don't give attention to it, there is a reason behind every ring. When you look at its definition, a ring is a metal band made out of silver or gold or any other type of metal. But behind this jewelry is often hidden a particular signification. That is a family heirloom or a simple addition to your outfit; a ring often becomes part of ourself. If forgotten or not on our finger, we feel naked without it. In this state of mind, this simple object becomes meaningful and can sometimes create curiosity from others. When telling the story behind it, people get amazed by the origin of the band and see a new side of you.

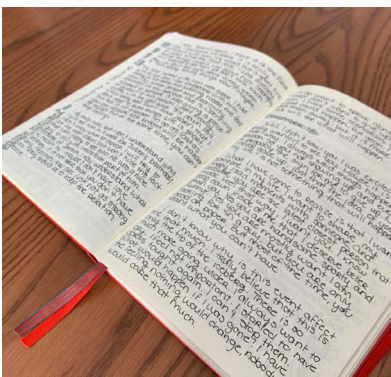
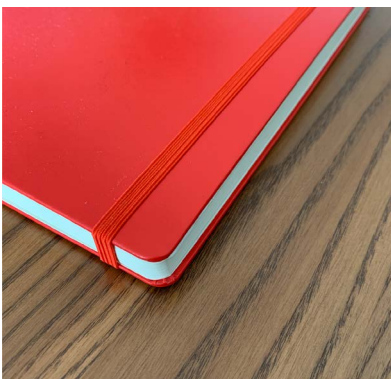
I used to never wear any necklaces or rings before, until the day I saw the dark shiny stone on my friend's finger. I noticed it before, but never took the time to ask her where she got it. The squared black stone trap in the silver band belonged to her grandmother, whom she passed away when she was younger. The object that was only an accessory in my eye became a symbol of love and respect. Since that day, I knew I wanted a family heirloom of my own. On my 18th birthday, I received a pair of ring from my mother. It started as a simple gift but then gained much more sentimental value. The first band is twisted and feel just like a rope when passing your finger on



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it. The second one has a beautiful clear blue aquamarine stone sitting on the silver band. Every time I lay my eyes on these two rings I think of my mother and her unconditional love. The first one symbolizes the strength of our relationship. The second represent her love for me even if we are far apart. They are not expensive, money-wise, but the sentimental value they have for me has no price.

The notebook



Second, with the omnipresence of technology, writing down the simplest note or thought is not a reflex anymore. Always running, we lie to ourself and think we will remember it. Just like memories, we think that we will remember each detail. Memory can be separate into two phenomena: external storage and encoding. The first one consist of remembering on what or where you put your note. The second one is where it becomes more interesting which your brain analyzes the information². This way, we retain the information of the notes and not only where we put it. Carrying a journal with us seems like a silly thing to do when in fact could be more helpful than we think. Nowadays, living is sprinting: school, study, work, sleep, and start all over again the next morning. When going around Concordia's campus and in coffee shops, I spotted a few students with a journal and a pen. They did not look stressed or in a panic mode compare to the other students on their laptop. Most of them were looking around and looked like they were thinking. Not thinking about what they are going to do next, but thinking about specific thoughts.

I realized at that moment that I wanted to reflect on my ideas, bad or good. I bought this little bullet journal with a red leather cover. At first, I was considering this object has a place to doodle or write down interesting information I would find walking in the streets. With time, this little red book became my way to escape my mind. Sometimes, it gets full of stress, and this item was my way out of this state. By writing down what I was thinking or feeling, I was able to explore my ideas. Just like mentioned before, writing down helped me to remember that I was in this state earlier this month. I could just turn the page and go back to this moment and try to figure out why I am still at the same place in my head. From the outside, it looks like a place where I take notes for my classes.

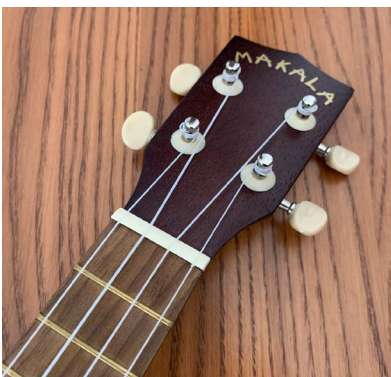
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From the inside, this is my key to explore my ideas on a deeper level. Just like a garden, my ideas flourish into my next creation.

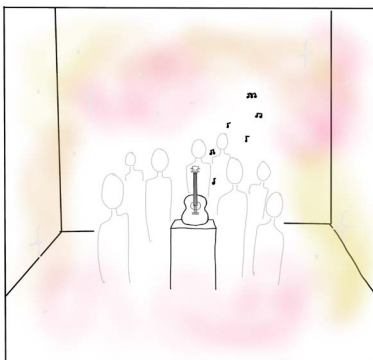
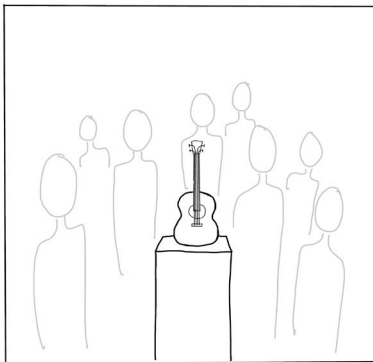
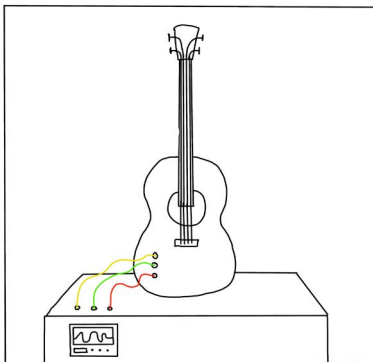
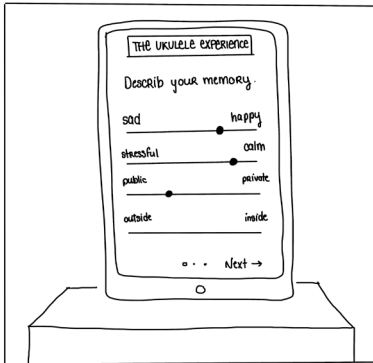
The ukulele

Third, the simple wooden musical instrument is a wonder just by looking at his history. Part of the Hawaiian culture, the name ukulele can be translated in English as jumping flea. This instrument is originally from Portugal. After four months at sea, Joao Fernandes, a Portuguese immigrant, was so overjoyed to reach the land that he started to play¹. The local population thought that his fingers pinching the cords looked like jumping flea. Before having n ukulele of my own, I was already intrigued by it. Just the name was fascinating for me, and just like a song, the name was resonating in my ear. After learning the origin of the name, I was, even more, amazed by the object. Even without playing it, this article is telling us a story about Portuguese culture. Furthermore, I believe that this object can gather people. By earring the gentle sound of each note, we get transported into another state of mind. The musicality of the instrument bring joy and put a smile in the face of the audience. People stop what they are doing to listen and take a little piece of happiness with them. The four main cords individually do not do much, but putting them together brings up memories, a sense of serenity, and most importantly, beatitude.

This instrument is fascinating in its history and its gathering power, but for me, it becomes more personal. My ukulele allows me to escape time and the madness surrounding me. I sit on my balcony and slowly starts to pinch the cords. One notes after the other, I play a gentle melody that goes on and on. For beginners, most of the songs come to life with the same four notes which give me the chance to distract my mind off school and work with a different simple song. A ukulele offers me the chance to get away from social media, my computer, and take time for myself. By traveling in a different place in the world and staying in a hostel during the last few years, I started to saw many travelers with a ukulele. It was intriguing and was wondering why people were captivated by this miniature guitar. Later on, I understood the feeling by owning my own. This Hawaiian artifact is wonder because it can tell a story by its name, but also every time a note is played.



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Out of my three artifacts, I would say that the ukulele as the more potential to grow into something else. Already, it is an instrument that most people can play and has the power to bring people into a certain state of nostalgia. With this in mind, I think we could push this aspect further. Powered by Ai, people could think about a specific memory of their own and answer a questionnaire about it. Who was with you, who are they to you, were you happy or sad, etc. Once they are done, their answer would create a melody representing the emotions related to this memory. Another version of this artifact could be a musical instrument has a storyteller. People could create their song based on the four notes. Once the song is created, a projection mapping would appear on the wall surrounding the audience representing the musical creation with colors and patterns. It would be an abstract representation to let the audience create their own story in their head. A third outcome could be that during a gathering, the ukulele would analyze the conversations going on during the night. Then, the instrument would create a song representing the evening. If people laughed a lot, it would be more upbeat, or if people were serious, it would be more calm and serene. In these three scenarios, the potentials outcomes of the musical instrument would be related to memory and bring this concept to the next step. Those ideas would put a visual memory into an audio memory. The three proposition would be interactive in a way that the object cannot fulfill its purpose without outside input. Every result would be different because people will use it with a different approach. The users will understand with the time that they are part of the object due to their memory. Those ukulele inventions would bring to life our mind. The reminiscence will not only be remembered by one sense but by many, and this way make the souvenir stronger.

Storyboard

1. The first frame is the questionnaire the user needs to fill up to give information to the ukulele about his memory.
2. Once it is finish, the ukulele on another stand receive the information and analyse it.
3. The audience gather around the ukulele, and once there is enough people around it, the song is generated.
4. The ukulele starts to play the song and display different colors and images on the walls to create the atmosphere of the memory.

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References

1. Ukulele history

<http://www.get-tuned.com/history-of-the-ukulele.php>

2. Memory phases

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/markmurphy/2018/04/15/neuroscience-explains-why-you-need-to-write-down-your-goals-if-you-actually-want-to-achieve-them/#7270a9077905>