Fortune Reader - Julia and Olivia Axiuk

Link to Julia and Olivia's Project 2 on Github:
https://github.com/olivax28/CART351/tree/main/Projects/project02

For Project II, Julia and Olivia developed a wonderful website that accepts a user's name and birth year and, in response, generates one of three pre-defined fortunes. This relatively straightforward idea has the potential for some genuinely rewarding experiences, especially when coupled with the feature of seeing other people's fortunes alongside the user's. I can definitely envision a site where groups of friends excitedly compare each other's fortunes, perhaps even allowing them to comment and share their thoughts.

What I think could take this project to the next level is to take a user's username into account when generating a fortune. Right now, the application runs into the limitation of a majority of users having the same 5-year range for birth years (which, by extension, generates the same fortunes). Taking a username into account for fortune generation, such as adding up the numerical value of each alphabetic character, would help make the fortunes feel more tailored to each user. Obviously, this would only work if the application were filled with even more fortunes, which is something Julia and Olivia expressed they would love to work on.

In terms of what's already implemented, there's a lot to appreciate. The handcrafted fortunes are very entertaining to read through, and the hand-drawn aesthetic of the website is extremely endearing. Julia and Olivia said that they would like to do more with the CSS, but it is still visually very nice as it stands now. The purple and gold color combination, mixed with soft gradients, adds to the effective graphic design. The entire page feels like a singular vision, where each element complements the other perfectly.

Triangle Fractals - Owen Hill

Link to Owen's Github Class Repository: https://github.com/Ow-Hill/CART351-SKELETON

Definitely the most psychedelic undertaking I've seen, Owen's recursively-designed triangle fractal display is a fascinating idea for Project II. As it is now, users are able to interact with a two-dimensional triangle-formed structure, built using P5, where they can split each triangle into smaller and smaller triangles. The two display modes are color and static, where the triangles appear as solid rainbow colors or rapidly switching colors, respectively. While the base of the project is really entrancing, Owen's plan to build out from here is extremely promising.

The simplest development to implement is allowing users to save and display their triangles to other users, using a JSON file. But to go even further, Owen wants to allow users to continue zooming in on specific sections of the triangle, effectively creating an illusion of infinite recursion. Additionally, his idea to accompany musical cords with each triangle "tree" would utilize both sight and sound, something not explored in many of the other projects I've seen.

As I mentioned, this project has a lot of potential. Being able to alter the triangles to form different shapes, or incorporating a multiplayer element to interact with a similar triangle tree, etc. are all potential thought-provoking directions to take this project, and I am very excited to see what Owen does with it.

Well of (Mis)Fortune - Eamon Foley

Link to Eamon's website: https://eamon1000000.github.io/CART351_WEBSITE/#

Although visually minimalist, Eamon's website for Project II is surprisingly complex. Prompted with an ominous-looking well in a sea of white, users can choose between two options: writing a fortune or misfortune, or choosing one from the well. The functionality of the former option is very interesting. Divided into two modes, users can switch between which type of fortune to write, then write their response within a predefined sentence structure. While I was initially unsure of this decision, I came to realize the significance of guiding a user's response and also creating a distinctive component to the website.

Where this website really shines is the latter feature, where a user can pick a fortune from the well. Designing this so that a user has a 10 percent chance of getting a negative fortune adds an excellent layer of intrigue. In a world where gacha, loot boxes, and other gambling-adjacent games are popular, that element of chance can fuel replayability. This is amplified by the fact that these fortunes are user-generated, so the result is always unique. In a way, I feel like this feature could be heightened by adding a *timeout* element, where users have to wait a short period of time before receiving another fortune. Adding this may make each fortune feel more special, given that users can no longer spam that feature. Furthermore, a *timeout* would work well to handle the existing feature in the program, which erases each fortune after being chosen.

All in all, the design of the website is fantastic. The unnerving image of an isolated well goes hand in hand with the ambiguous text to create a surreal atmosphere, which only makes it all the more compelling.