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Reflective Essay

CART 263

Coming into this class, my knowledge of programming was admittedly limited. I frequently found myself revisiting and researching topics that were previously covered in CART 253. Although not everything had slipped my mind, basic concepts had indeed stuck. Despite this, I faced several challenges with the structure of this course, which was more demanding than anticipated. Before this class, nothing kept me consistently engaged with coding; as a result, when I started working on projects, I often realized there were elements I had forgotten. I appreciated the exercises provided in CART 253 because they allowed me to practice regularly. While I acknowledge that I could code independently to improve my skills, balancing this practice with work and other commitments proved to be a challenge. In addition, I found that the overall structure of the class did not quite suit my learning style, though the YouTube tutorials offered were clear and informative, making complex topics easy to understand.

However, the course had its benefits, notably its approach, which was more akin to a studio class than a traditional classroom setting. Unfortunately, our class section was not very participative, making it difficult to maintain momentum and effectively engage in tutorials together.

In terms of content, the course introduced several fascinating elements, particularly the integration of AI engines into our projects. I was pleasantly surprised by how straightforward it was to incorporate these tools, which opened up new possibilities for future projects. However, learning to use the Phaser 3 engine was a significant challenge. As a fan of video games, I was excited about this part of the course, but I quickly realized that designing games was far more complicated than I had anticipated. With a background in graphic design and visual art, I found it challenging to think about game mechanics and the planning involved in game creation.

Despite these challenges, I was able to push my boundaries and experiment with generative art, which resonated with me. This experience has shown me that even though I often find myself searching online for additional resources or asking for help from friends in similar fields, especially when dealing with mathematical concepts I'm not familiar with, I am growing in my ability to integrate complex ideas into my projects. For example, in my final project, I wanted to use Perlin Noise in a way that interacted with my hand movements captured through a camera. This required understanding vector calculations and considering the hand placement and calculations using the radius of each point around the movement of my hand to ensure the Flow Field would adapt seamlessly around it.

This reliance on external resources has led me to reflect on where most of my learning takes place: is it in the structured environment of classroom learning, or through independent exploration and online research? Regardless, the skills and knowledge I have gained through this course have significantly expanded my creative process, opening up new options for applying these techniques in web design, visual projects, and beyond. The course has illustrated the immense potential for creativity through the use of JavaScript and various programming engines, and how these can be applied innovatively across different artistic disciplines.

Looking to the future, I am excited to explore how generative art can be extended into the physical world. I am curious about ways to create art pieces that react to viewers or bring generative art to life in tangible forms. How can we push the boundaries between the digital and the physical, blending coding with real-world elements to create interactive and dynamic art experiences? This question encapsulates the direction I am eager to pursue, leveraging my programming abilities to forge new paths in the integration of technology and art.