

## POST REFLECTION

When I first entered this program, my understanding of programming was extremely limited. Aside from a brief micro-program with Santo in Fall 2024, I had little exposure to concepts like variables, functions, or conditional logic. In the first few classes, it became very clear how unfamiliar I was with the language and structure of programming. I remember feeling intimidated by the pace of the lessons and unsure if I would be able to follow the logic of even simple examples. Because of this, I made a conscious effort to participate fully in class, complete every demo, and practice consistently. The tutorials provided by Pippin also became an essential part of my growth. Watching them before class gave me a chance to understand the material in a slower, clearer way, so when we covered it in lecture, I had at least a foundation to stand on.

At the start of the semester, I was really nervous, not only about the workload, but about whether I had the “right kind of mind” for programming. What I quickly learned, however, was that programming is less about innate talent and more about process: breaking ideas down into steps, testing them piece by piece, and not giving up when bugs appear. Following along in class changed the work from something abstract into something tangible. Over time, the biggest change I noticed was how much faster I became at turning an idea into working code. Early in the semester, even making a small shape move across the screen required constant checking, confusion, and trial and error. Now, I can plan out an animation or interaction, sketch the logic in my head, and immediately begin writing the functions I need. Another major shift is my ability to read and understand code written by others. At the beginning, someone else’s script felt like a foreign language; now, I can identify the structure, understand the purpose of each variable, and

interpret what loops, if-statements, or arrays are doing. I can see where a function is being called, predict what a block of logic will produce, and even rewrite or reorganize it in a cleaner way.

Before this class, I could never imagine being able to “diagnose” someone else’s code now I can recognize when syntax is incorrect, when a variable isn’t in scope, or when a loop would make a process more efficient. Being able to analyze and troubleshoot existing p5.js sketches is something I genuinely didn’t think I’d achieve this quickly.

As my knowledge grew, I realized how naturally programming connects with my design background. Coming from three years of graphic design, I am used to working with hierarchy, composition, constraints, and systems, skills that translate surprisingly well into coding. Creative coding feels like an extension of design thinking, but with motion, interaction, and logic added into the mix. With p5.js, I can create dynamic layouts, responsive compositions, and generative visuals that go beyond static graphics. Programming has opened a new dimension of creativity for me. I can now build systems that behave differently depending on user input, randomness, or underlying rules. My design experience gives me a strong sense of visual structure, while my new programming skills allow me to bring those ideas to life in ways that are interactive and surprising.

The two practices design and creative coding, mesh more seamlessly than I expected. I can use variables to control color schemes, arrays to organize elements, and loops to generate patterns or motion. Even something as simple as understanding coordinate systems or frame updates through the “draw” function gives me tools to create motion graphics and experimental digital pieces. This course has also given me a sense of confidence. I now know that I can study a piece

of interactive art or a playful website and understand, at least broadly, how it was made. That shift from curiosity to comprehension, is one of the most meaningful changes I've experienced.

Looking toward the future, I feel much closer to owning the title of “creative coder.” When I compare where I started to where I am now, the progress feels huge. In just a few months, I’ve gone from barely understanding syntax to building full interactive sketches, debugging my own projects, and imagining larger pieces I want to create. It’s exciting to think about what another year or even two could look like, especially as I continue to blend computation with design.

One of the biggest differences now is that I no longer feel intimidated when looking at advanced examples online. When I see a website with complex animations or interactive behaviors, I can identify the components: event listeners, arrays driving movement, randomization, or conditionals states. Instead of asking, “How was this made?” I now ask, “Which tools did they use to make it?” That change in mindset shows me how much closer I am to stepping confidently into the role of someone who codes creatively.

My understanding of creative code has also changed in terms of technique. I can now recognize poorly structured scripts, missing brackets, functions placed in the wrong scope, repeated lines that could be optimized with loops, hard-coded values that should be variables, or disorganized draw logic. I’m able to offer suggestions when something isn’t working, whether it’s a syntax error or a conceptual misunderstanding. Being surrounded by classmates with different skill levels has also shown me what is possible and where I can grow next. Seeing others experiment with object-oriented programming, complex animations, or sound interactions gives me a sense of the many directions I can take. In the future, I’m looking forward to continuing to develop my

understanding of JavaScript beyond p5.js. Especially integrating creative coding into web design, interactive interfaces, and multimedia installations. I want to learn how to make work that responds more deeply to user interaction and how to build experiences that feel playful, experimental, and visually intentional. Most importantly, I now feel that creative coding is not separate from my practice as a designer, it's becoming a core part of how I think, make, and imagine creative works. Using these new skills and knowledge I have acquired makes for an exciting future in the program. Thank you for an amazing semester Sabine, you and Kamyar did a wonderful job guiding us through a new and complex programming language. I am really looking forward to my growth in this field and I will definitely be seeking your guidance, as I expand and learn more around creative code.