Creative Computation 1

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Cart 253 B

Post-Reflection Essay

Before this course, I had no basic understanding of JavaScript, and as a result, I had little confidence in using it creatively. After embarking on the Cart 253 course, my experience with programming was limited and were the basic functions rather than creative learning and using different mechanics. At the beginning, even understanding how variables worked or why a missing bracket or capital letter broke everything felt overwhelming, so I struggled to imagine how any of this would ever meet in my values of my perspective on art. My programming knowledge was framed in a context of creating shapes such as making ellipse and adding colors on top of it. While I could follow tutorials and modify small scripts, however, I struggled to see how codes could be implemented in my medium of artistic expression. Concepts like p5.js and generative designs in shape forms felt abstract, and my boldness in manipulating them for aesthetic purposes was low.

Although, over the duration of this course, my understanding of programming has transformed dramatically. I would say one of my most significant changes is my growing confidence with maneuvering technical logic with creative intention. I have learned to control color, movements, and shapes by using for-loops, if-statements, and simple logic math. For example, manipulating for-loop to draw multiple elements on the canvas helped me to add dynamic effects to compliment with my artistic and humorous expressions. Also, conditional statements helped me to create reactive elements in projects, with each actions the user has done, it gives my work a sense of interactivity and humour. For instance, in my Variation Jam project, I created a “Horsefly Feast” mode, where the frog does not just move towards the flies, but it react emotionally to the gameplay of the user. The horsefly becomes the mouse pointer, when it eats a fly, I used conditionals to make

the frog shake with increasing anger and gradually turn bright red. Coding this game mode felt like a breakthrough because I wasn't just coding mechanics, I was coding a characters personality, the frog's behavior through timing, logic and visual transformation. This course has taught me that experimentation and play are just as important inside as they are in other art practice too. At the start of the journey of learning JavaScript, the progress I have done is something I could not imagine doing.

To continue, JavaScript has deepened my relationship between programming and creative and artistic practice. Before the course, I often approached my art making by sketching ideas on paper or in Photoshop and then attempting to reproduce them digitally. Now, programming lets me think in terms of behaviours, logic, and if-else sequences. Instead of having a rigid plan, I can set up conditions where rough draft evolves gradually, conducted by the guidelines and codework I integrated. For example, I can program my mouse pointer triggering a conditional that triggers another event, like a domino effect, in which is an often occurrence in my projects. This journey made me realize that coding is less about executing a fixed plan but more about designing something that can evolve or even misbehave in ways that spark innovative ideas. For example, in my Mod Jam game, I realized that my game was too easy and not dynamic, I later added a green screen video of a retired Youtuber and now a successful artist, Joji, running in pace and saying profanity in a humorous context. With that, this made me realize the endless possibilities I can bring my game to be more engaging yet humorous at the same time. The endless possibilities I have learned results being able to explore the interaction between randomness and control, chaos, and order, in ways that feel perfectly fitted to Computation Arts.

Moving forward, I am eager to claim the role as a creative programmer, although, that does mean that I will be going thru an ongoing journey of wins and fails. My understanding of programming has developed from the basic knowledge mechanics of writing code to the expressive and abstract possibilities that coding has enabled in me. Although, I want to push further into animation, interaction, and domino effects, especially also learning how to structure larger projects so I can build more energetic and polished experience.

This new field has helped me open to new perspective and experiment; this journey has me excited about the future projects and skills I will be learning and improve my clarity in my codes. Learning how to code has given me the abilities to quickly prototype artistic ideas in ways I could not before, instantly giving me ideas, test concepts, and make choices with more clarity. I anticipate that these skills will validate me to produce richer, more immersive, more visually aesthetically pleasing and more experimental projects.

In conclusion, this course has reshaped my relationship with programming. My perspective on programming started from seeing codes as a set of mechanical complicated procedure to a unique creative language capable of showing expression and interactivity. This course has given me confidence in using technical tools like p5.js, conditionals, loops and functions in ways that serve artistic and humorous intentions. Also, coding now feels like a tool that lets me express my humour, emotions, and interactivity in ways I never expected. I also learned to view challenges as opportunities for creative growth, go beyond the limits of my current skills and adding them in my projects. As I continue this journey, I look forward to deepening my knowledge and engagement with interactive experiences and computational experiments. Programming has shaped the way I think, make, and explore creatively in the computational art.