

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

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Date: November 30, 2020

This semester has been the most challenging yet -but not unexpected. During the past few years of my time at Concordia I have been in a fairly comfortable place (academically) as I have been studying a topic that has been the centre of my life for decades (music). During this time, I have been dabbling in programming to facilitate some more expansive and imaginative iterations of my sound work without much discipline or organization to this particular aspect of my work. I was equally apprehensive and excited about starting a more regular and focused programming practice this year; excited for the challenge and new skills, apprehensive because I knew that I would have a difficult time with distanced education as I thrive off the university environment and community. Luckily, the challenges were eased by the support from my professors and classmates along with the small successes littered amongst the frustrations.

The biggest thing that I have learned from my new practice is attention to detail and patience; two things that fuelled many tears and few joys in the beginning of the semester. But it is in this patience that I learned how to approach large projects with more planning and cohesivity than I would usually initiate many of my interdisciplinary projects – an important tactic when juggling a variety of intersecting but contrasting themes and technologies. I am so happy I stuck with the work because I feel like my practice entered a new realm because of this overarching result along with this amazing skill that allows me to initiate pretty much any creative concept my unhinged imagination may muster – which is truly the best thing (in my opinion) about sticking out the struggles of learning to program.

I still find object-orientated programming difficult to grasp, but I know that with a bit more practice over the next semester I will be able to sort the chaos that I see when I handle this device. On the other hand, I am happy to report that I am starting to feel some joy when troubleshooting, which was not something that I could say a month ago! I can actually `console.log` in the appropriate places and use this information to fix and manipulate my code. I am most proud of the first project that I did – the Great White Squirrel Caper of 2020 – mainly because it was my first large, cohesive coding project and although there were many mistakes and issues, I felt a lot of excitement and had a lot of fun creating and employing my vision and concepts while working with and trading ideas with my new classmates, TAs and professor.

The future of my programming practice is to continue integrating these new skills and concepts into the presentation, dissemination and performance of my multidisciplinary practice of A/V interactive art while perusing small projects on a regular basis to further improve my programming skills in the context of interactivity. Overall programming has taught me how to know my limitations and happily work within them instead of burdening myself and my work by taking on too much at one time; while I may have been able to do this with other projects, troubleshooting in programming just does not afford enough space to just 'make things work' – I would just hit a wall and the creative flow would stall as well.

As the semester winds down, I am exhausted but happy I fought through the tears to complete my projects as best as I could. I hope to have more time to fine-tune many of the projects to include in larger art pieces and portfolio items in the future.