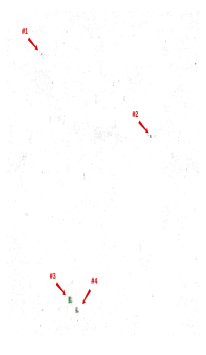
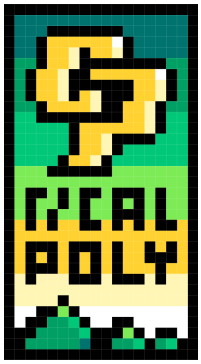
# The r/CalPoly's 2022 r/place Canvas Conquest: Avoiding Conflict and Establishing Connections



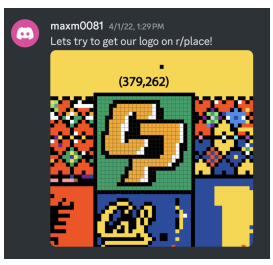
1. r/CalPoly locations on r/place

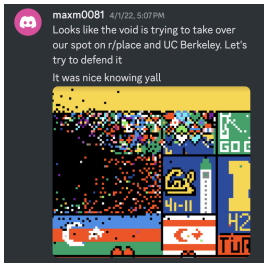



2. final r/CalPoly logo

**Identifying r/CalPoly activity:** As a participant of the r/CalPoly subreddit's activity on r/place I was able to utilize queries in addition to discord messages from the coordination of Cal Poly students to confirm the location of r/CalPoly's conquest on the r/place canvas. Being aware of the coordinates of the last two areas that Cal Poly occupied on r/place I was able to query for users that placed a pixel inside either of the logos and also placed at least 10 of the specific colors pixels found in the final logo(2). Using those users I was able to query for the specific pixels placed by those users and visualize the most common pixels placed at those coordinates and identify 4 spots corresponding to the coordination of pixels in the "Cal Poly Friendos" Discord.

**Location #1:** The original location was near a couple of other college logos that a single user pointed out in our discord. As you can see from the time stamps(3) our potential idea didn't work out as we had little people backing our efforts as it was the first day, but this did help incite greater efforts and generate interest for our future locations for our logo on the r/place canvas.



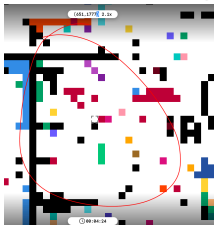




3. First r/place discord messages in Cal Poly Discord

**Location #2:** Seeing that there were already college logos nearby and the Ireland flag already had green in it, the discord thought this was the perfect opportunity to establish our logo there(4) with Ireland's permission via their discord. In this case we were able to get their permission and build in that area, but we weren't there for long as after being there for 7 hours(timing found through the slider feature on r/place 2022 canvas page).

4. r/CalPoly presence in Ireland flag

**Location #3:** Shortly after our location inside Ireland's flag was placed over, the final expansion of the canvas occurred, giving us lots of room to work with. We chose an area(5) inside the new canvas with no border lines around it which happened to be next to the developing Pusheen community. Realizing we had more space than previous areas, we decided to expand our logo(6) downward to include the r/CalPoly and the San Luis Obispo mountains. Utilizing queries to check how this area changed over time showed me how Cal Poly expanded their logo and how other groups contributed to it. We had avoided big conflicts by being peaceful and communicative with groups, however, there was one r/place group that did not ally or communicate with any groups: the xqc community. On his streams, he chose areas on a whim that he thought would fit whatever we wanted



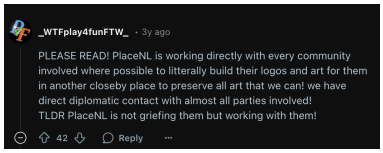
5. r/Cal Poly initial placement

6. Pre "HUH" emote

7. Peak "HUH" displacement

8. Post "HUH" emote

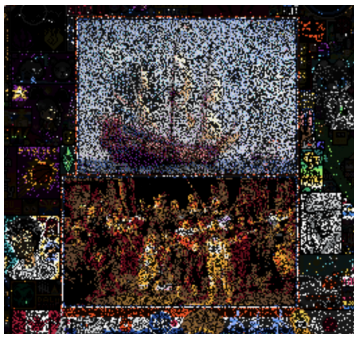
with 100k viewers backing his efforts. Unfortunately, our location was in direct line of fire when he wanted to build the “HUH” twitch emote over our area and many other communities. I queried for the timestamp that best showed the destruction, which can be seen here(7). The one good thing about xqc’s community destruction is that they don’t really maintain their art after placing it so within a couple hours we were able to rebuild and expand our logo to the right to include a scuffed musty the mustang(8). This was made possible by communicating with the Pusheen community to ask them to move their artwork up 5 pixels so we could have more space.



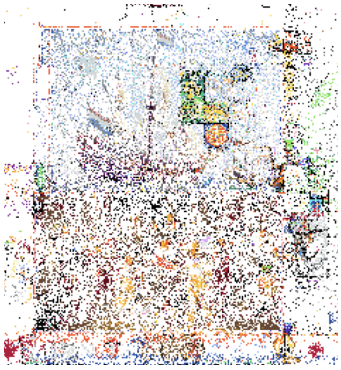

9. Dutch redditor contacting impacted communities

**Location #4 and bots usage**: On April 4th, 2022, the last day of r/place, we Cal Poly students awoke to our artwork alongside the many other communities alongside us being wiped out and replaced with a painting of a Dutch ship(10). However, after looking into the community behind this massive artwork, we discovered it was r/PlaceNL who happened to have a Reddit post(9) explaining that they were trying to help relocate communities they displaced with their massive new artwork piece. Additionally, they had been known to use bots as well as they created this massive artwork within a span of around 2 hours which would be very difficult to coordinate alongside real people. They were not the only groups using bots, as inside our discord there had been r/place bots shared by students that were being used, however, ours were no match for the Netherlands. Luckily, since they were willing to help relocate us they simply asked for the pixels and sizing of our logo and they just attached it to the middle right side of their two large painting images. A Reddit post by user “Empty-Aspect-8962” posted an image(11) of the r/place canvas that flags suspicious users as identified by users in which “At least 25 pixels placed, in addition to 75% of pixels are placed within 6 minutes of each other or 20% of pixels are placed within 5 seconds of a pixel changing from one color to another.” In this bot-flagged image, almost all of the pixels of the two large Netherlands artworks are flagged alongside the communities, including Cal Poly, around them that were assisted in being relocated by them as well. Further looking into our Netherlands truce I decided to query for any user that placed at least one of the colors used in the r/CalPoly logo in either of the last spots. I then got all the pixels placed by these users and visualized the most common pixels placed at those locations(12). Comparing these two images reveals that they share not only suspicious flagged pixels but also pixels contributed by users who used the colors of the r/CalPoly logo. This confirms our alliance with the Netherlands and that we were both using bots.

10. Two large Dutch paintings plus final r/CalPoly location



11. Flagged “suspicious” pixel placements



12. Cal Poly user network

**Summary:** Despite its relatively small size, r/CalPoly tactically navigated the chaos of r/place by securing unoccupied canvas regions and forging truces with neighboring communities. This strategic approach coupled with some bot usage made the school logo easier to defend and ultimately secured a spot on the final canvas

**Comparing pyspark query to duckdb query:** The syntax and setup of a pyspark query was definately different than my duckdb query in the sense that I had to set my config in the python file in order to avoid the massive almost incomprehensible error message that I got the first time I tried to run pyspark. Additionally, it had to read in the parquet file which definitely contributed to the almost 8x time it took for a mirrored duckdb query to run with pyspark. The time difference in the queries was 11 seconds for duckdb compared to 88 seconds for pyspark. After learning the syntax for pyspark, the equivalent query turned out pretty readable which for my query involved filtering the data to before a specific timeframe on the r/place canvas and selecting each pixel's latest coordinate in order to capture a specific time of the r/place canvas for analysis purposes. Overall, it was not too bad, but I wouldn’t choose to use it over duckdb due to the 8x runtime speed as that would make doing more complex queries much more time-consuming when debugging.