

# CHAPTER 7

## DESIGN ETUDE

### • PART 1: FAMILIAR STRANGERS

OVER THE NEXT 72 HOURS, MAKE A **LIST** OF PEOPLE YOU MIGHT CALL **FAMILIAR STRANGERS** IN YOUR EVERYDAY LIFE. TAKE NOTE OF THESE PEOPLE, THE TIME, PLACE, AND CONTEXTS IN WHICH YOU FIND THEM. SEPARATE THE "REAL-LIFE" ONES FROM THE "VIRTUAL" ONLINE FAMILIAR STRANGERS (TWO LISTS?). SPECULATE, IMAGINE, INVENT REASONS WHY THEY HAVE THIS TACIT RELATIONSHIP RELATIVE TO YOU. WORK? COMMON INTEREST? SLEEP SCHEDULE? OR... WHAT?

### • PART 2: IMAGINE & SKETCH

DESIGN A TECHNOLOGY-MEDIATED **SOCIAL EXPERIENCE**: AN INSTRUMENT, TOY, GAME, OR ACTIVITY, SPECIFICALLY FOR A GROUP OF FAMILIAR STRANGERS ON YOUR LIST. WHAT ROLES AND RULES MAKE UP THAT EXPERIENCE? WHAT IS THE SHARED ACTIVITY? FOR **EXAMPLE...**

IMA GONNA TAKE A PICTURE OF THIS WEIRD TREE WE JUST PASSED AND **MIX** IT INTO THIS SOUNDTRACK!

**NO IDEA** WHO I AM JAMMING WITH, BUT THEY ARE ON THIS TRAIN!

WHOA THAT'S A COOL **SOUNDTRACK** FOR THIS COMMUTE...

**SOUL TRAIN!**

A **MOBILE PHONE-BASED COLLABORATIVE MUSIC GAME** FOR DAILY MASS TRANSIT COMMUTERS (E.G., **CALTRAIN COMMUTERS** BETWEEN **SAN JOSE** AND **SAN FRANCISCO**).

THE APP WOULD SEARCH FOR OTHER USERS BY LOCATION, AND **ANYONE** WITHIN X METERS CAN AUTOMATICALLY **JOIN** THE APP. THE EXPERIENCE BEGINS AS THE TRAIN **MOVES**: FAMILIAR STRANGERS WOULD ALL **MOVE** WHILE **STAYING** RELATIVELY CLOSE TO ONE ANOTHER (BECAUSE THEY ARE ON THE SAME TRAIN). USERS OPERATE A COLLABORATIVE AUDIOVISUAL **SEQUENCER** TO GENERATE BEATS AND CAN ALSO TAKE **PHOTOS** OF THEIR **SURROUNDINGS** (BUILDINGS AND LANDMARKS THEY PASS) TO BE SEMI-AUTOMATICALLY ADDED TO THE APP'S AUDIOVISUAL MIXER, AND PERHAPS EVEN **SONIFIED** AS SONIC MATERIAL FOR THE SEQUENCER. EACH SONG BEGINS WHEN THE TRAIN LEAVES A STATION AND ENDS AT THE NEXT STOP. THE APP **DOES NOT** REQUIRE USERS TO **EVER** MEET ONE ANOTHER, BUT IT IS DESIGNED TO INDUCE A SENSE OF **CAMARADERIE** AND **LOCALIZED SIGNIFICANCE** FOR THE FAMILIAR STRANGERS THAT SHARE THE HOUR-LONG TRAIN RIDE TO WORK. IT OPERATES AS A **PARTICIPATORY DRUM CIRCLE** AND **AUDIOVISUAL SOUNDTRACK** FOR THE TRIP. COOL RESULTS CAN BE **SAVED** AND REPLAYED TO YOUR CO-WORKERS WHEN YOU GET THERE! MORE SOPHISTICATED WORKS, BONUSES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS CAN BE EARNED BY REPEATED PLAY FROM THE SAME PEOPLE!