This past semester in the Digital Humanities lab, I worked on building a digital photo archive for the *C’était Paris en 1970* photography competition and utilized both machine learning and traditional archiving methodologies to draw analyses from the archive. At the beginning stages of the project, I brainstormed with labmates on the types of analysis that we wanted to perform on the archive. That brainstorming process made me rethink the ways in which humans perceive artwork and how that differs from how a computer looks at artwork—as a bunch of pixels. One of the biggest lessons I took from this past semester was understanding how fundamentally computers function and “think” along with how we can think computationally (in order to mimic and further understand how computers behave).

At the beginning of the semester, I set some personal goals that I wanted to achieve and improve on.

I wanted to improve my skills as an effective programmer and communicator. I wanted to be able to explain my code along with any issues that I run into in an understandable manner. I also hoped to be able to further strengthen my skills in web development tools. I also wanted to be able to work in both the front end and back end because I enjoy getting a full grasp of a project. Although I fell short on some of these goals, I was glad to be able to make progress on my goals. Particularly I appreciated the chance I got to work on both the front end and back end along with overall improving my skills as a programmer and communicator.

Beyond the technical skills I gained, such as developing a critical eye for analyzing artwork (more specifically photography) and learning machine learning/computer vision techniques, I was able to feed my interest and appreciation for Parisian culture, photography, and history. This past semester has been an eye-opening experience in terms of personal growth in and out of the DH lab. Despite the virtual nature of the semester, I am grateful for the experience that I had and it was heartwarming being able to see the lab’s hard work come to fruition in the end.