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Preflective Essay

Prior to last semester, I had no computer programming experience. I knew little in regards to the creative abilities of coding however, found myself intrigued by the possibilities that the coding universe offered. Quickly becoming fascinated by the idea that coding could provide a universe that I could exist in and create to my desire, I decided to discover this realm for myself, which is still all so new to me. Despite describing myself as someone who appeals to visual aesthetics, I've always found myself inspired by mediums within my work that would incorporate a level of interactivity such as works of art that invite the viewer to be more than a viewer but a participant, and ultimately a part of the work itself. While last semester I enjoyed the introduction to object-oriented programming as it was relatively easy to grasp I, however, found myself struggling with finding new ways to incorporate random elements for more abstract programs like some of the coding-based installation work that inspired me the most. Looking towards my future relationship with creative coding, I would like to be able to learn, utilize, adapt, and incorporate more tools and extensions that would provide me with the ability to not only further foster my creativity within my coding practice but also accomplish large scale projects that reflect my creative vision.

Installation works like those featured at ARTECHOUSE have been a source of inspiration along my creative coding journey. Witnessing experimental programs that react to various sounds, images, and other methods of interactivity ultimately changed my perspective on the possibilities of coding. I find myself intrigued by programs that utilize the spaces outside of the computer, that are incorporated into our communities and that emphasize the relationship between person and computer. Such as the performance works of Algorave programmers; live coders that create sounds alongside visuals in real-time as audience members can witness the artists' process in the background. With spontaneity and improvisation, new sounds or visuals can emerge from the program that the artist may not have expected. While various systems are used depending on preference, style, or expertise, providing much versatility and autonomy for the programmer-performer within the realm of art and technology, this type of coding leads me to be curious regarding the use of generative systems in coding and what integrating that in my practice might look like. Similarly to how Algrorave-coders wield the ability to create something new instantaneously, I find myself fascinated by the system's ability to organize data to envision new media.

My limited understanding of generative systems as a means for AI and machine learning has piqued my interest when inspecting the material within this course. As in a previous class, we were tasked with researching ethics and biases that artificial intelligence has been known to breach. This prompted my desire to understand why such systems are being implemented to enforce unjust systemic issues within our society and how these systems work in order to be utilized for more progressive, ethical, as well as creative means. Although learning about AI and machine learning poses its

complexities and intimidations, the knowledge I hope to acquire in regards to how algorithms and data structures operate presents long-standing relevancy within any coding practice when acknowledging the rise of AI in society.

Despite my examples of inspiration that describe my attraction to more three-dimensional uses of programming, I'm equally interested in the two-dimensional spaces created through online spaces. Whether that be through websites or apps, I'm drawn to the UX and UI design elements within coding. However, being a beginner to coding and only having taken the precursor to this course, I have noted the need to familiarize myself with HTML and CSS languages, what document object models are and how they work, and to moreover utilize the resources provided. Doing so, I anticipate understanding the creative prospects and limitations of this skill while gaining insight on both cultivating an individualized presence online and potential career opportunities.

Regardless of my creative or non-creative incentives for learning programming, from last semester's introduction, I have quickly realized my enjoyment in creative programming. I'm enthusiastic about the new tools and skills that I will be exploring this semester to create opportunities for my creative vision to materialize and to furthermore familiarize myself with programming large-scale projects and experiments. Although the material is intimidating and I foresee it posing its challenges, I find a sense of motivation and inspiration from my anticipation for what projects might I accomplish this semester.