PUI HW8

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Section A

**Part 1: Website description**

My website is geared towards educating those who are interested in art history – specifically, Impressionism – about Claude Monet, one of the most prolific and representative artists leading the movement. The website serves as the brief introduction that opens the door to a period in time where artists grew more sensitive to the connections between human and nature, providing a timeline in the artists’ development as accompanied by represented pieces of work from different stages of his career. Besides information about Monet, the site also offers a short bios with external links to many of Monet’s contemporaries, hinting at their mutual influence and a larger context of the art movement.

By allowing user’s interaction (e.g. hover to animate the paintings, click to expand information) and using smooth animation as well as gentle background music (composed by Debussy, who is famous for Impressionist music), the site invites users to an immersive sensual experience of learning.

**Part 2: Interactions + how to reproduce them**

* Click music player to pause/resume background music
  + The music player is located in the top left corner and is put on auto play; I think the background music adds one more layer to the learning experience, but user may choose to turn it off, should they find it distracting
* Click to expand/collapse the information cards and visit external links to learn about Monet’s contemporaries
  + Upon hover, the text in yellow changes color and prompts the users to click on them – by clicking on those artist’s names, user can view a short bio of each of the artists
  + User can then click on “View More” which will redirect to Wikipedia pages
* Scroll to view Monet’s stories and works at different career stages
  + User can scroll to view the career and representative works produced by Monet – user may need to wait for a few seconds for the site to fully load
* Hover on images to experience subtle animation
  + User can hover on the image near “early years” to simulate the movement of waves
* Use cursor to create ripples, which add to the immersive experience
  + Towards the end of the page, user can use cursor to click and hover over the painting of water lilies – one of Monet’s most representative set of works.

**Part 3: External tools**

1. skrollr.js
   * Skrollr is helpful in creating smooth animation corresponding to the scroll position. Since my website follows a timeline, I used it to add vertical animation to introduce the content in chronological order.
2. jQuery ripples.js plugin
   * The plugin generates ripple effects and recognizes the cursor gesture; I include it in the water lilies painting to invite the user to interact with it and invest a bit more time in one of Monet’s best-known works. It adds interactivity as well as a sense of serenity.
3. CSS animations
   * Animation helps with more natural interactions and can add delight to the user experience. I used it for most of the text content and some of the images to create a seamless experience and introduce sequence of events where appropriate.
4. I’ve also tried out morpher.js, velocity,js, jQuery morphing plugin; jQuery drawsvg plugin. The reasons I did not include them are mostly because 1) the effects can be achieved by other tools that I was already using, 2) the library has not been well maintained and there’re bugs to be fixed or 3) the sacrifice in website performance outruns the addition in delight of user experience.

**Part 4 Iteration on HW7**

With animation (CSS and JavaScript), I was able to add more interactivity to HW7. I generated the dots that hold a sample of the paintings that Monet produced after Camille (his first wife) passed away – the beam of dots also represents idea of the shear amount of work. I chose to leave out the timeline as I feel that the information has been clearly divided into sections with their leading titles.

**Part 5 Challenges**

Understanding the logic of JavaScript and individually coming up with blocks of code has been challenging; it has been where I spent most of my time in this project.

The fact that I do not yet have a great command of GitHub also presented some difficulties (e.g. GitHub Pages seems to not understand French, and I spent an hour or so trying to figure out why my images won’t show up when they displayed correctly on my local host; GitHub GUI does not provide obvious way to remove a file from commit history and I failed to do the base commit; I linked to skrollr HTML file thinking it was the wrong code and spent a whole night trying to figure out why I couldn’t get the library to work, etc.)