Ma

RED

S3919530

AN INTRODUCTION TO 'MA'

Ma is the idea/concept which is a part of everything in life. It's known as a space in time, visuals, and sounds. A space between moments. Its often known to influence the individual's growth, as space and room in experiences allow progress and finding deeper purpose and meaning in the absence of excess.

The concept of *ma* is visible in a country like Japan, which named the concept themselves. It's present in their culture from architecture, and aesthetic values all the way to their daily lives. It is present within the respectful pause of a bow or the vast space for creating memories in a tea rooms.

S3919530

WHY 'MA'

Pick apart a student's brain

Choosing the concept of '*Ma*' is personal for me as I grew up in the Philippines, a south-east Asian country, where the quieter, subtler moments are cherished. This is commonly seen in Filipino *Telenovelas* and movies, particularly in religious and romantic genres, where silence is said to speak louder than words; where the moments in between make up the entire experience.

Ma, in the reflections of a Filipino, design student, is simply **not** just the empty spaces between forms, but it is what makes up, blends, harmonizes, and compliments the object or forms of focus with the non-form. A pause not for the sake of pausing, but a pause for reflection and growth. **RED** picks apart the concept of Ma and manifests its concept to a visual interpretation of its values.

S3919530

WHY 'MA'

As much as I wanted to explore the other three concepts, *Ma* hit home today just as it did when I was younger in the Philippines. From as young as I could remember, I fell in love with media and animation from Japan, and I never completely understood why until this concept of *Ma* was introduced to me. The reason why I've always preferred animation and live-action from Japan is because of the moments between bigger gestures, the slow-burn romance between characters, the effort of showcasing clouds moving with the breeze, a time of slowing down and observing, soaking up the moments around you.

The way movies like *My Neighbour Totoro (1988)* and *Wolf Children (2012)* shine during the smaller, *ma* scenes showcase that there is a peaceful, comforting joy in watching a mother brush the hair of her daughter in silence or listening to the howling of the wolves with the wind by the Japanese countryside. These moments make me pause and reflect on the feelings they give me. They encourage me to find more authentic meaning and purpose in the quieter, "emptier" moments, which aren't empty at all, but rather, create space in my mind for more purposeful thoughts.

S3919530

WHY 'MA'

In the case of such moments in said movies, I gained a deeper appreciation for the slower things in life that are often overlooked and taken for granted.

Because I grew up with Japanese medium that show plenty of *ma* moments, I further reflected upon how it has impacted my relationships with myself and others today. I find that my relationships with others are stronger when we can share moments of comfortable silence, without feeling the demand to fill this space with noise. I find that I'm comfortable, or even prefer, the mundane and slow moments in my own company such as being present with my family of fish (in my aquariums) at home or drawing landscapes.

RED aims to focus on and explore the idea of the spaces between moments as not so much as a gap, but more the bigger part of a whole which you can actively partake in. To evoke the same emotions I grew up with that highlight the values and principles of *ma*. To shape and create how you perceive *ma* as your own.

S3919530

Notes from class

(Pt. 2) "Emptiness" & Minimalism "Ma" leaving space to appreciate

void/gap → neg. connotation (western)

changing definition of emptiness to fill void w/ anticipation
↳ Ma (Japanese word for negative space)

space not as included in reg. design
Ma - deliberate empty space ⟩ design element!

I am empty space...

門
日
閒

これは門です。
門はすがいですか。

Western Culture wants too much!

the space & emptiness between gives it meaning.

Leave space for people to grow.

Respect space and let it be part of your work.

Sense of a break, room to live and breathe and soak

The more that's taken away, the more the focus is on one thing

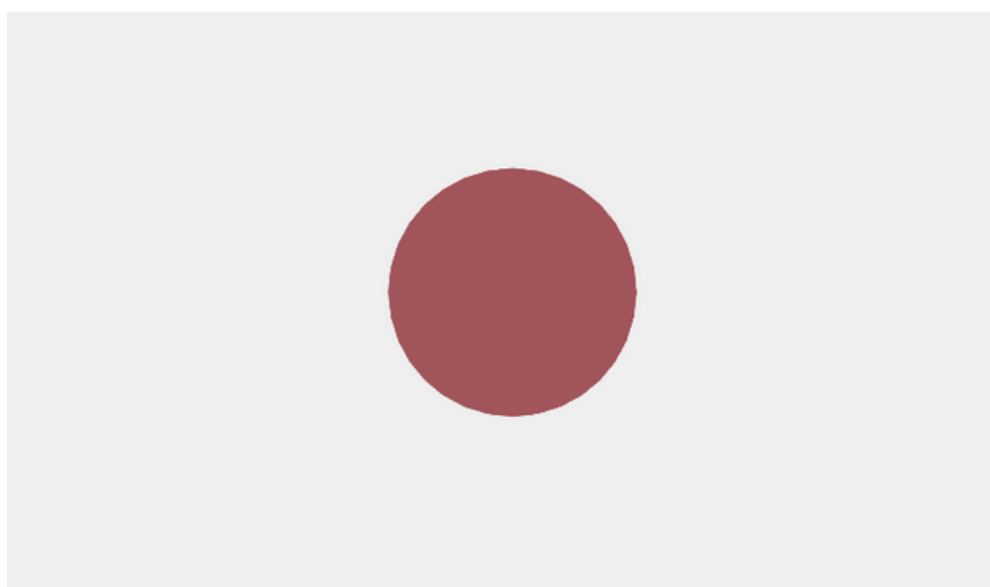To listen is to appreciate.
↳ see silence / space

Kat after arms

Ben after leg day

Adrian after BOULDERING

EXPLORING 'MA'

Ma written in kanji 門日 can be broken down to further understand the essence of what it is.

門 = door
日 = sun
} 門日 Ma

These two characters depict a door through the crevice of where the sun peeps in.

Where there is space, there is light, creativity & room to grow.

Ikebana by Donna Canning

"Nature offers a (window) - to understanding ourselves, one another, our world and beyond." - Donna Canning

Window is a tool for Ma. By accessing a 'window' to create space (Ma), it allows the individual to reflect and obtain a deeper understanding.

Perhaps, this space is allowing the individual to fill with meaning and purpose, rather than a demand to fill, or a quick reaction. The space enables individuals to slow down.

SPACE (MA) brings out the essence of the focused object. In **RED**, the colour is the focus of the art piece. But, upon further inspection from the individual, the focus is more so the relationship between the OBJECT and the SPACE.

I aim to give the viewers a chance to choose how they shape their space by means of doing so with purpose, gratification and a sense of wholeness.

RED's design pays homage to the 'Hinomaru', the Japan flag. It's symbolism of the rising sun shows a direct link to values of Ma; space for light (the red circle), and the kanji character in '日' in Ma which translates to the sun.
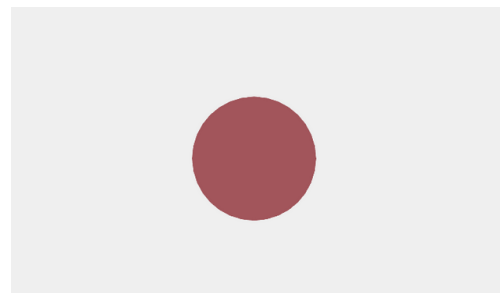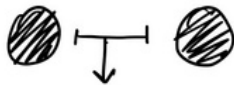
PROJECT APPROACH
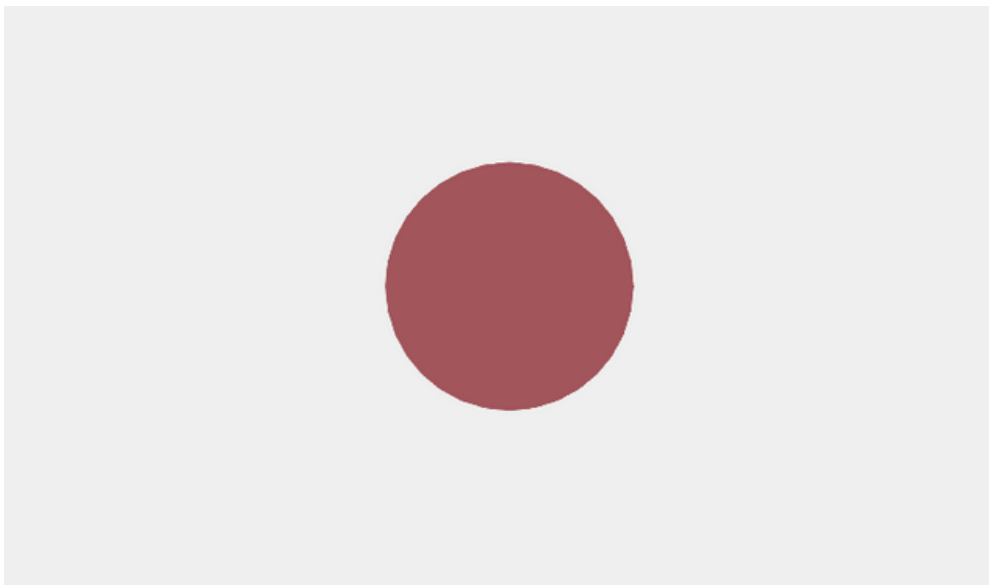
MA - SPACE, or pause in time, interval or emptiness

ma → not negative space, it's a build up of things in between.

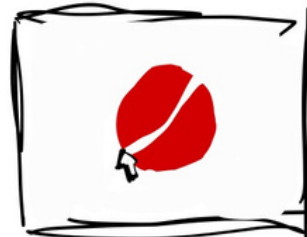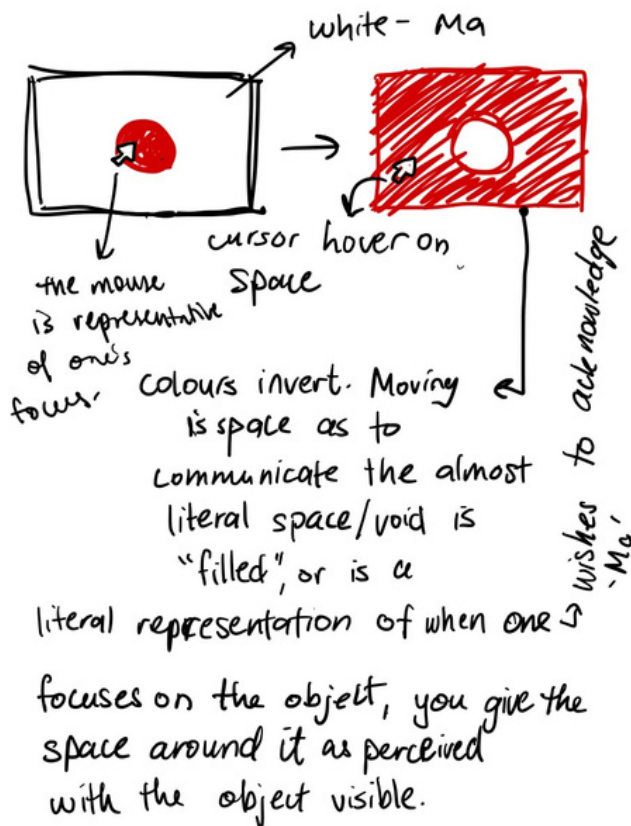Negative space is PART of the idea, or rather, THE VERY experience.

How can I communicate this meaning of ma?

Space as colours? build up to changing colours?

drawing optional to encourage the viewer to interact however they wish.

CONCEPT in VISUALS

Initial Response

white - Ma

cursor hover on Space

the mouse is representative of one's focus.

Colours invert. Moving is space as to communicate the almost literal space/void is "filled", or is a literal representation of when one

wishes to acknowledge 'Ma'

focuses on the object, you give the space around it as perceived with the object visible.

Click & Drag
Disappearing White line creates eloquent gestures which visually represent making space.

Manipulating space as your own.

Red = colour of focus. Represents the object that occupies a space.

White = often associated with space. Seen in UI design eg. Instagram Facebook

the manipulation of 'white' allows the user to explore ways of blending & harmonising space (often left out of design) to a focus object (which is represented by the colour red), therefore reversing which space as the new focus, or part of the whole experience.
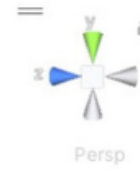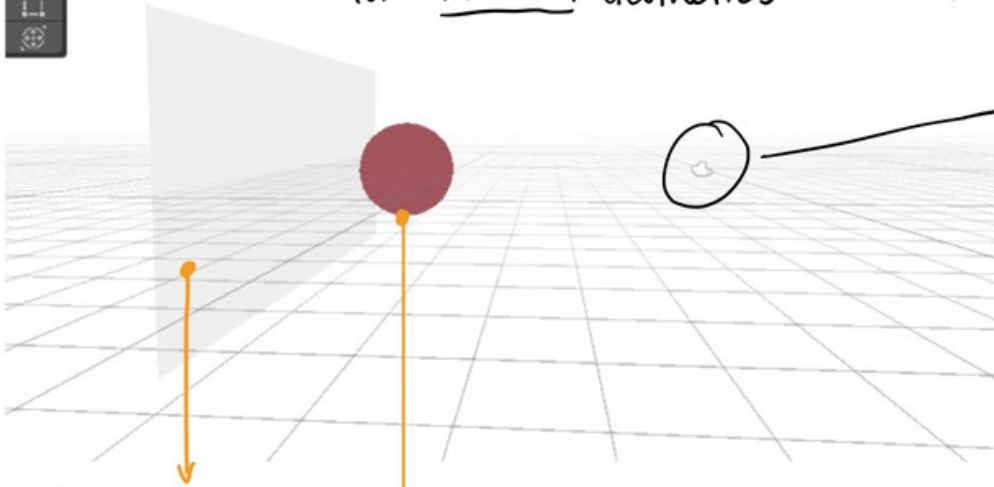
TECHNICAL APPROACH
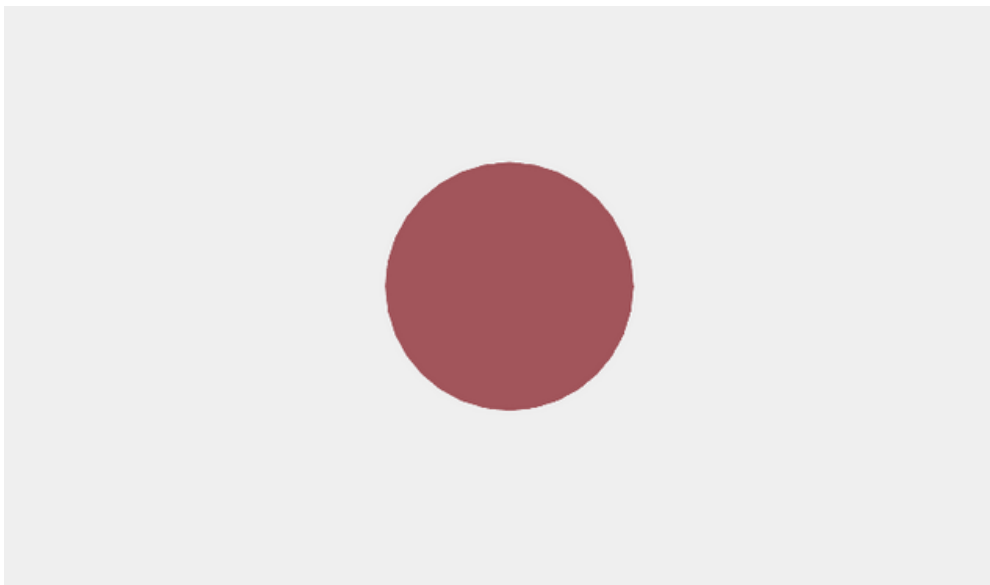
UNITY

✳ Removed default skybox &
directional light to push
for **Minimal** aesthetics
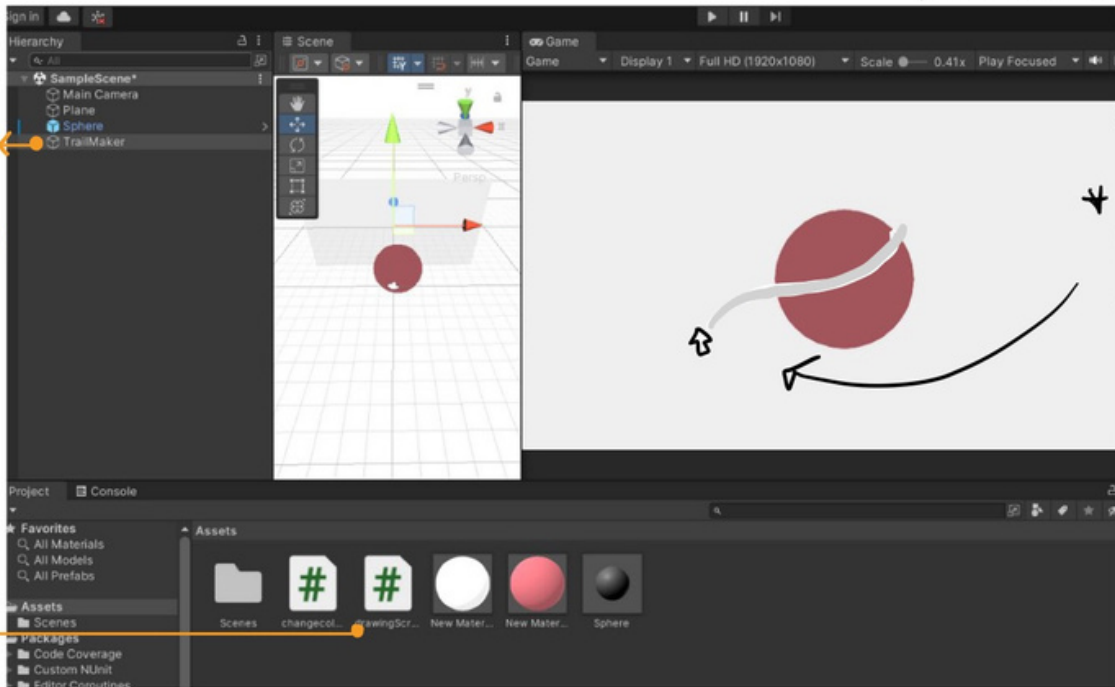
Built upon
a 3D
space

Camera set
orthographic to
set
Screen
focus without
skewing

added changing
colour script

emulating 2D space
with 3D environment

Utilized the
drawing
tutorial
from Week
one

✳ Not seen here
but there is
the draw tool
which
matches the
background
colour to
"make" and
"manipulate"
space to
players own liking

*decided to not include audio as it adds to the
idea of *ma* in time, visual and sound

SCRIPTS

Changes materials when mouse hovers over Game Object

Applied → to sphere and plane

```
C: > Users > makat > University > 2 > DMS 3 > Assignment One Minimalism Ma > Assets > Scripts > changecolor.cs
1   using System.Collections;
2   using System.Collections.Generic;
3   using UnityEngine;
4
5   public class changecolor : MonoBehaviour
6   {
7       public Color startColor;
8       public Color mouseOverColor;
9       bool mouseOver = false;
10
11      void OnMouseEnter() {
12          mouseOver = true;
13          GetComponent<Renderer>().material.SetColor("_Color", mouseOverColor);
14      }
15
16      void OnMouseExit() {
17
18          mouseOver = false;
19          GetComponent<Renderer>().material.SetColor("_Color", startColor);
20      }
21  }
22
```

Script from Week 1 applied to cursor

```
C: > Users > makat > University > 2 > DMS 3 > Assignment One Minimalism Ma > Assets > drawingScript.cs
1   using System.Collections;
2   using System.Collections.Generic;
3   using UnityEngine;
4   public class drawingScript : MonoBehaviour
5   {
6       Camera mainCam;
7       Vector3 pos;
8
9       void Start()
10      {
11          Cursor.visible = false;
12          mainCam = Camera.main;
13          pos = new Vector3(0f, 0f, 0f);
14      }
15      void Update()
16      {
17          pos = Input.mousePosition;
18          pos.z = 10;
19          transform.position = mainCam.ScreenToWorldPoint(pos);
20          if(Input.GetMouseButton(0))
21          {
22              gameObject.GetComponent<TrailRenderer>().enabled = true;
23          }
24          else
25          {
26              gameObject.GetComponent<TrailRenderer>().Clear();
27          }
28      }
29  }
```

S3919530

REFERENCES

2015. Change Color on Mouse Over in Unity3D. [video] Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHeem-mywDk&ab_channel=Katus> [Accessed 3 August 2022].

The Concept of "Ma" in Japanese Life and Culture. 2011. [video] Japan. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VI0xgxCOf8E&ab_channel=CarnegieHall> [Accessed 3 August 2022].

Unique Japan. n.d. Ma « Unique Japan. [online] Available at: <https://new.uniquejapan.com/ikebana/ma/#:~:text=The%20Japanese%20concept%20of%20Ma,is%20restricted%2C%20we%20cannot%20grow.> [Accessed 3 August 2022].