Hosted Project on Github: https://mollyvierhile.github.io/

Github link to Assignment 8 Code: https://github.com/mollyvierhile/mollyvierhile.github.io

Part I

My website is an informational tool that teaches users about Star Photography, better known as Astrophotography. This is a subset of photography that many people find intriguing, however, it possesses a fairly steep learning curve (mainly due to terminology) and can be tricky to execute. Moreover, individuals not only need to understand their camera, but they have to plan according to moon cycles and light pollution, making astrophotography a fickle endeavor.

I created a step-by-step guide for novice photographers. I begin by providing foundational knowledge, introducing them to the anatomy of a DSLR or mirrorless camera. Next, I teach users about the specific settings necessary for astrophotography (aperture, focus, ISO, and exposure). The next section focuses on ensuring optimal sky conditions due to moon phases, visibility, and amount of light pollution. It contains an interactive map to help users plan the best places to see stars. A section about the constellations follows, with explanations behind their nomenclature. Finally, the site describes processing photos in Lightroom and Photoshop to make them aesthetically pleasing for viewers.

My website is interesting and engaging due to a plethora of animations and possible interactions. I liberally implemented the hover feature, describing parts of a camera on hover, and displaying constellations with descriptors on hover. Stars connect to form constellations in an animation on the constellation page. The post-processing section has a toggle that shows examples of before/after photos to foster a mental model within users about what post-processing entails. I also integrated a dark sky map into the light pollution component of the site, allowing users to explore and brainstorm possible places for star photography.

My target audience is novice or amateur photographers who want to learn more about astrophotography.

Part II

Possible interactions:
- Animation using Javascript Library: There is an interesting/fun Javascript interaction on the top menu that transports the user to another page. On the Star Photography home screen, click on any of the menu items (Camera, Stars, or Post-Processing) to see how it works.
- Animation using CSS Hover: Hover over different parts of the camera on the Camera page to see explanations of the camera's parts and functionality.

- Embedded light pollution map using an iFrame: Check out the fascinating light pollution map by scrolling to the Light Pollution page. I found it super interesting – particularly how much less light pollution the western half of the United States has than the East Coast!
- Animations using SVG files, HTML, and CSS: The constellations on the Stars page connect on hover! Go to the "Stars" page and hover above any of the titles of the stars (Big Dipper, Pegasus, etc.) to see how it works.
- Before/After Animations using TwentyTwenty JS library: Scroll or click to go to the Post-Processing page. Using your mouse, click and drag the arrows transposing the photos with stars and the tent! You'll be able to see a cool before/after effect.

Part III

I used both a Javascript Library (Bootstrap), animation libraries/tools, and vanilla CSS animations. For the sake of this writeup, I will discuss one of the animation tools that I used.

i. Vivus Instant Animation Tool (https://maxwellito.github.io/vivus/) a lightweight Javascript Library and SVG animator.
ii. I chose to use this tool to create my constellation animations because it seemed easy and straightforward. I researched various tools and plugins on CodePen, and Vivus turned out to be the most fruitful endeavor.
iii. Vivus allows users to upload SVG files and create custom animations that are outputted with HTML code with the defined animation principles. This made it incredibly simple and lightweight to create the animations I wanted.
iv. Having constellations connect on hover adds a fun, engaging component to a site that could potentially be bland or boring. I wanted to ensure that I kept the subject matter lighthearted and interesting. Vivus helped me accomplish that.

Part IV

My homework 7 mockups were vague and needed more content. I researched my topic more thoroughly, and was able to describe as much as I wanted to, replacing filler Lorem Ipsum text with real content. In addition, I decided to get rid of the dot navigation on the side because I preferred my Bootstrap template's navigation. Essentially, I made my website much better than my Homework 7 mockups.

Part V

I found it challenging trying to create my own personalized site within the constraints of a Bootstrap template. The Grayscale Bootstrap template that I used often had predefined CSS/HTML elements that were difficult to locate or understand. Once I got the hang of it, I understood how to override the bootstrap template, though.