

MCN // 2024

MCN
PHOTO
REPORTER



MADDISON
NIELSEN

■ Maddison Nielsen

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■ Maddison Nielsen

TEAM:

LISA VETA ↗

SOFIA NILSSON ↗

MYSELF

CASE STUDY: SIMPLE SIGN



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PROBLEM

Melrose & Fairfax is a trendy shopping district in Los Angeles with millions of visitors flocking to shop at its unique locations from all over the world. However, parking in the area is extremely limited: there are no large parking garages restricting visitors to street parking only, which is highly regulated due to the residential areas that surround it. This difficulty in parking leads to thousands of parking tickets and unhappy visitors year after year.

SOLUTION

During interviews with visitors and workers in the area, we discovered that one of the main issues with parking is confusion about signage. simpleSIGN is parking signage for a new era. Its technology allows visitors in the area to understand parking rules at a glance, and its assistant website provides even more flexibility in interpreting parking rules, including a language translator, a legend of the signage, assistance in finding additional parking, and a timer to avoid those pesky 2-hour time limits.

||||||| RESEARCH

OBSERVATION

Many signs are illegible from being defaced, have unclear rules with posted signs that may be contradictory, or an overwhelming amount of signage that seems too difficult to interpret.



INTERVIEWS

"I've been working here for years, some people on the block have worked here for even longer, and we still don't understand all the parking rules."

-MONAI, BARISTA

||||||| PROCESS

○ SKETCHING

Experimenting with symbolism and color, and trying to decipher what were the most universal ways to communicate “Yes, you can park here!”



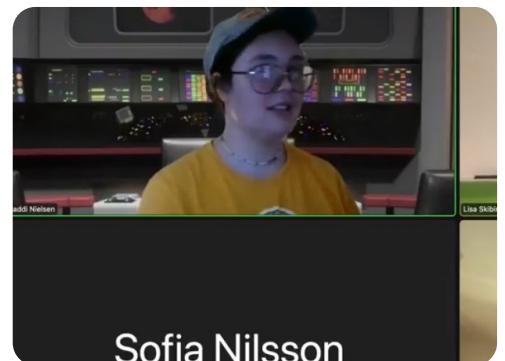
○ PROTOTYPING

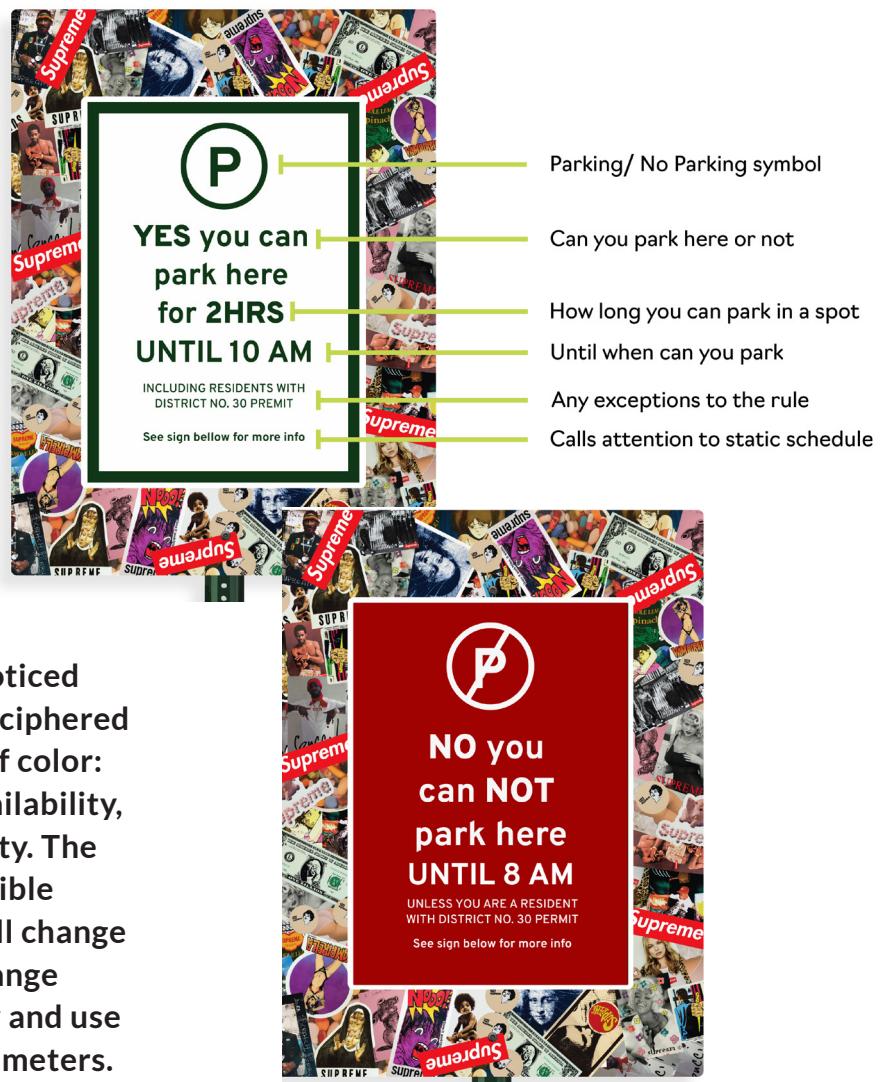
A cardboard version of a digital sign that would change throughout the day, as well as a static schedule sign that we could test and see which one users preferred.



○ USER TESTING

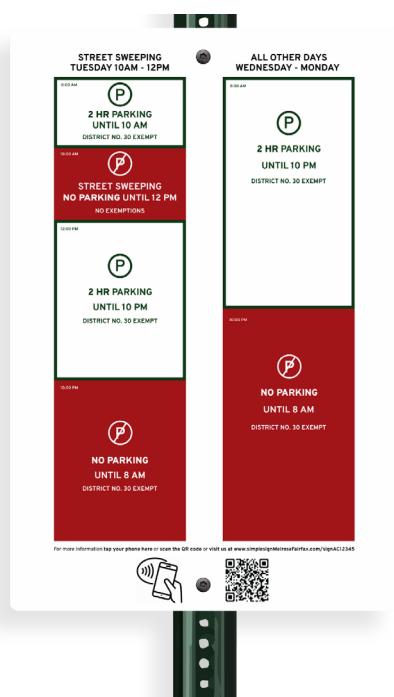
The mixed reception & eagerness for both ideas left us conflicted. So we decided... why not have both?





DIGITAL SIGN

The digital sign is made to be noticed easily from a moving car and deciphered in a single glance with the use of color: white and green for parking availability, and red for parking unavailability. The language is also as clear as possible pertaining to when the rules will change and who is exempt. It would change accordingly throughout the day and use solar energy; similar to parking meters.



STATIC SIGN

Posted beneath the digital sign at eye-level would be the static schedule. Almost all of the users we tested were enthusiastic about this sign and its use of visuals instead of text to convey when parking would be available throughout the day. It also allows for a visitor to plan their parking ahead if they see a full schedule for the day quickly and easily. It would also advertise and offer quick navigation to the simpleSIGN website!



WEBSITE

One of the most important things to us was making sure that simpleSIGN could be universally understood without language barriers. Our first idea for the website was making sure everything could be easily changed into multiple languages, allowing for

easy navigation. We would also offer a parking guide that could tell you if the street you're on is currently suitable for parking, and if it isn't, could allow you to see the nearest available parking and navigate to it through your phone's map application.

[LINK TO PROTOTYPE~](#)

■ Maddison Nielsen



TEAM:
KRIS BUMFORD ↗
ANNA LARIONOVA ↗
MYSELF

CASE STUDY: THE BFF

PROBLEM

The luggage tag has had the same design for hundreds of years, so how do we update it? Furthermore, how can we create additional use cases so that it doesn't just sit in the closet most of the time? If an item is unique and well made, consumers will hold onto it for longer, and potentially share it with family/turn it into an heirloom.

SOLUTION

To create a set of luggage straps that can be used on luggage or shared between two people/bags using recycled PET and upcycled billboard. For the digital companion, each bag is linked to its own unique digital album, allowing people to add photos and collect stamps during their travels tying into a brand's travel offerings.

|||||| IDEATION

Our initial product ideation sketches were broad as we experimented with form factor, branding choices, and a variety of use cases. We quickly shied away from the traditional luggage tag, opting for more creative solutions that had potential for additional functionality beyond luggage identification. Our mentor Jamila was drawn to similar items that she felt promoted circularity and re-use: the “bracelet” design was something she was interested in as an item that could be worn “off luggage.” This concept, “off luggage,” was what primarily inspired our final idea.



|||||| MATERIAL RESEARCH

We went through many of the sample items and swatches at the Macher offices, and it was during one of these sessions we began to nail down final material ideas. One of the main problems with luggage tags in their current form is the clear window made of non-recyclable plastic, so we were immediately drawn to a recycled PET mesh as

a replacement. A material we all were intrigued by was upcycled billboards. We were inspired by competing products and the idea that we would be saving something that was typically sent right to the landfill. The lightness and flexibility of the product while still being very durable was also highly valued.



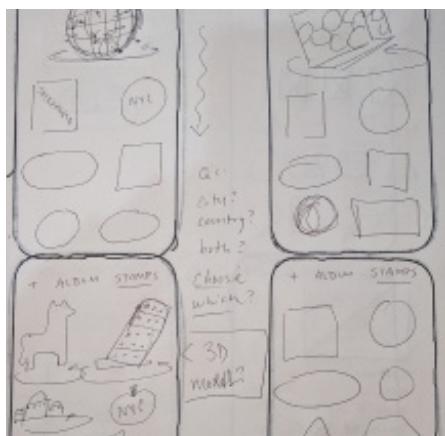
/// PROTOTYPING: DIGITAL + PHYSICAL



PHYSICAL



BLENDER



DIGITAL IDEATION

We used the prototyping stage to further experiment with materials and form factors for the BFF. Though we were already leaning towards the billboard material, the exercise of making the BFF out of the washable paper and faux leather helped rule those options out. We were encouraged by our Product Design professor to try different shapes, but in the end we stuck to the traditional rectangle, not only because it fit common items most comfortably, but also because it would waste less material during the manufacturing process than an oblong or circular shape.



final prototype by
Anna Larionova

PHYSICAL PRODUCT: THE BFF

Ultimately, the bag came in at about 7.5" wide and 4.25" tall, and it would expand to a width of about 1", to fit a chunky phone case or wallet. The billboard is easy to work with and the pre-printed advertisements may offer the opportunity for interesting designs by collaging different colors or prints. If the intention is to print a custom design on the bag, the flip-side may be used as it's typically solid white or black. During our research into costs we found that with an approximate order of 400,000 BFF strap sets, the manufacturing and shipping cost per product would only be around \$1.50, even with mostly sustainable materials! Considering our original budget was \$5.00, this impressed many of our stakeholders.



DIGITAL PRODUCT: BFF PHOTO ALBUM

- We imagined the BFF album would be accessible through an app or, preferably, a simple website that would be shareable across platforms.
- Users' data would be kept secured via a URL only accessible by tapping the NFC chip on the bag and creating

a passcode for that bag's album. Users would be able to collect stamps and rewards, and take photos to share to the album, using unique stickers to share across social media. Any content a user shared on the album could be retroactively changed or deleted via the same secure URL and passcode created during setup.

[LINK TO PROTOTYPE~](#)

■ Maddison Nielsen

GRAPHIC DESIGN

IS MY PASSION

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-
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-
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-

Ever since I discovered the magical combination of HTML and Photoshop when I was 8 years old surfing Angelfire & Livejournal, my life has not been the same.

*fictional soda branding
photoshop,
illustrator*





**fictional secondhand
store brochure
photoshop,
inDesign**

“freedom”

banned-from-amazon.com

“ethics”

banned-from-amazon.com

I am an extremely passionate person, and I love letting my passions fuel my designs. Whether it's my interest in vintage fashion inspiring me to create a fictional store brochure, or my interest in Japanese mascots sparking a fun soda brand idea, I bring what I love and all the knowledge that love carries into what I do.

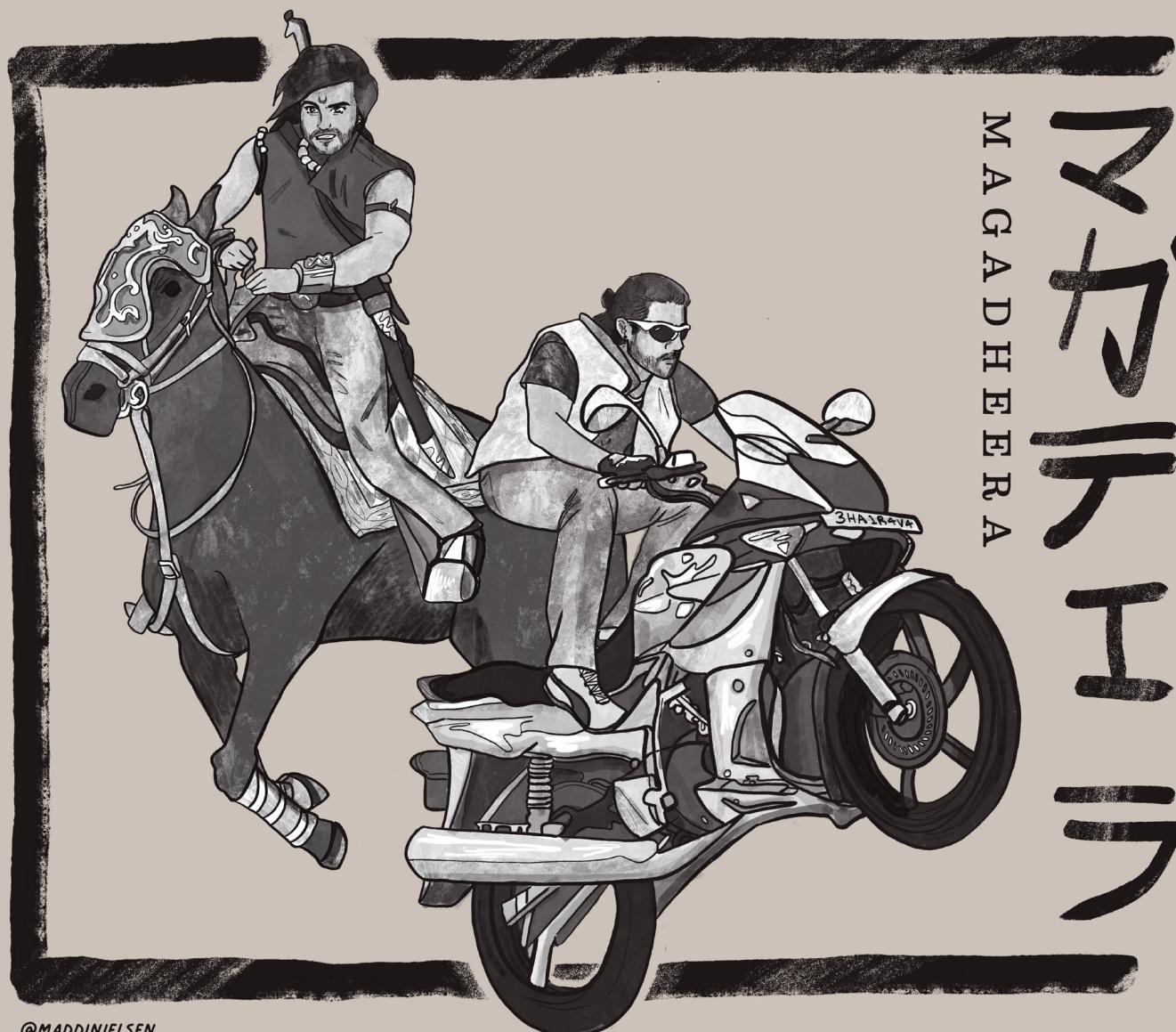
But it's not just the fun stuff -- I also have a vested interest in history and politics as well, and think deeply about how these things play into my designs. In this fictional billboard campaign for a union drive at Amazon, I was inspired by news that broke about words Amazon had banned from use on their inter-company messaging app.

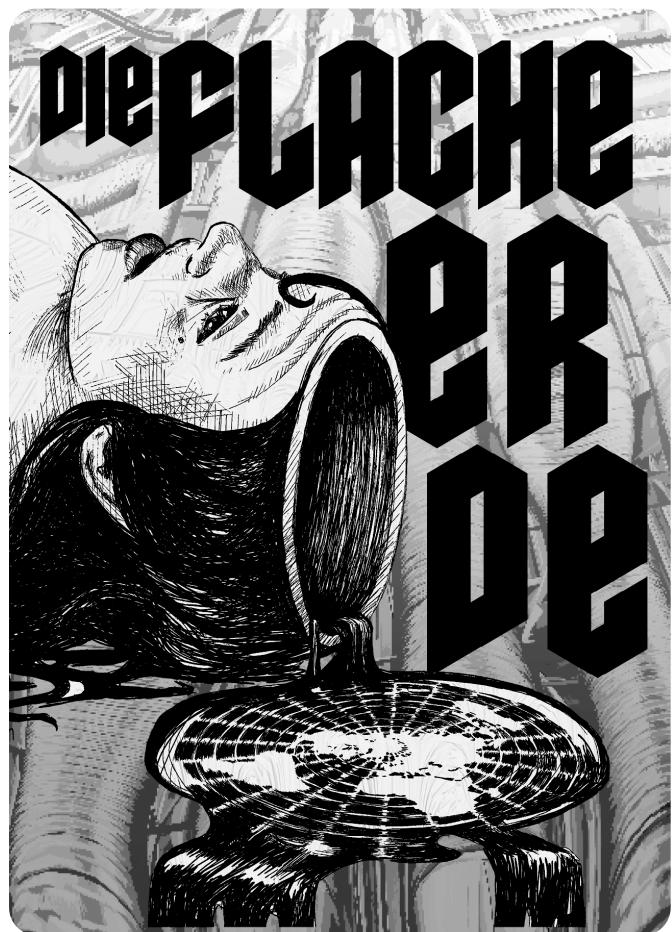


■ Maddison Nielsen

ILLU- STRATION

DOODLING IN MARGINS
SINCE 1994





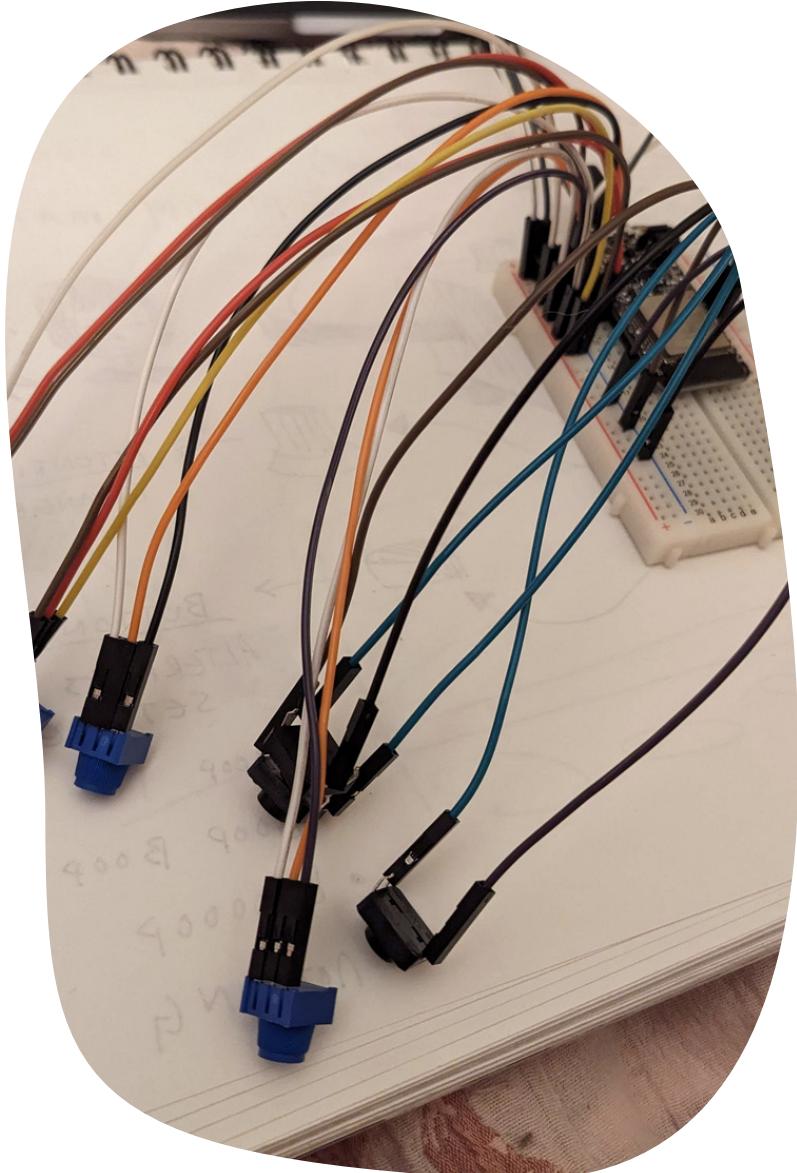
I love to draw and on rare occasions am even paid to do so. Mainly, I love drawing weird & expressive characters, and if I can find some way to incorporate an illustration into a design, I will. "Die Flache Erde" was a poster commission for a modern dance piece of the same name performed in Germany. "Sentimental Lady: Deconstructed" is another poster commission for a regular comedy show at the renowned UCB theater here in Los Angeles.

TECH- NOLOGY

KEEPING UP WITH THE TIMES

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O

And thinking
positively about
trying new
things, even if
a line of code
confounds me
for hours.



```
    serial.print("Pot 1: ");
    serial.println(pot1Val);
    Serial.print("Pot 2: ");
    Serial.println(pot2Val);
    Serial.print("Pot 3: ");
    Serial.println(pot3Val);
    Serial.print("Wave Pot: ");
    Serial.println(waveVal);

    //button changes between 4 states based on how many times it is pressed

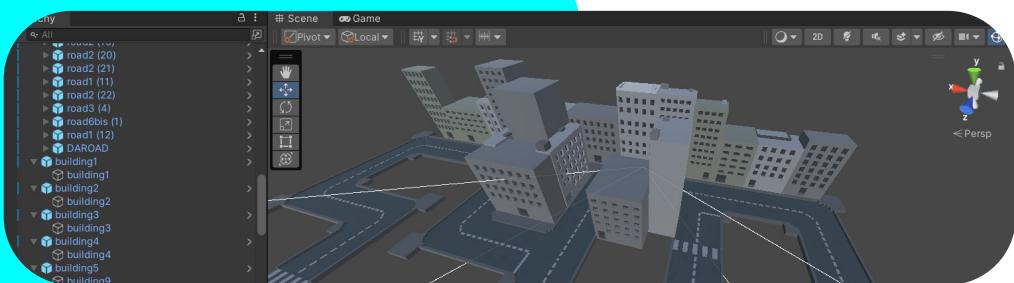
    for (int i = 0; i < numberButtons; i++) {
        buttonStates[i] = digitalRead(buttonPins[i]);

        if (buttonStates[i] == LOW && lastButtonStates[i] == HIGH) {
            // Button is pressed
            currentStates[i] = (currentStates[i] + 1) % numberStates;
        }
        else if (buttonStates[i] == HIGH && lastButtonStates[i] == LOW) {
            // Button has been released
            currentStates[i] = 0;
        }
        else {
            currentStates[i] = buttonStates[i];
        }

        lastButtonStates[i] = buttonStates[i];
    }
```

*DIY synthesizer,
arduino
processing*

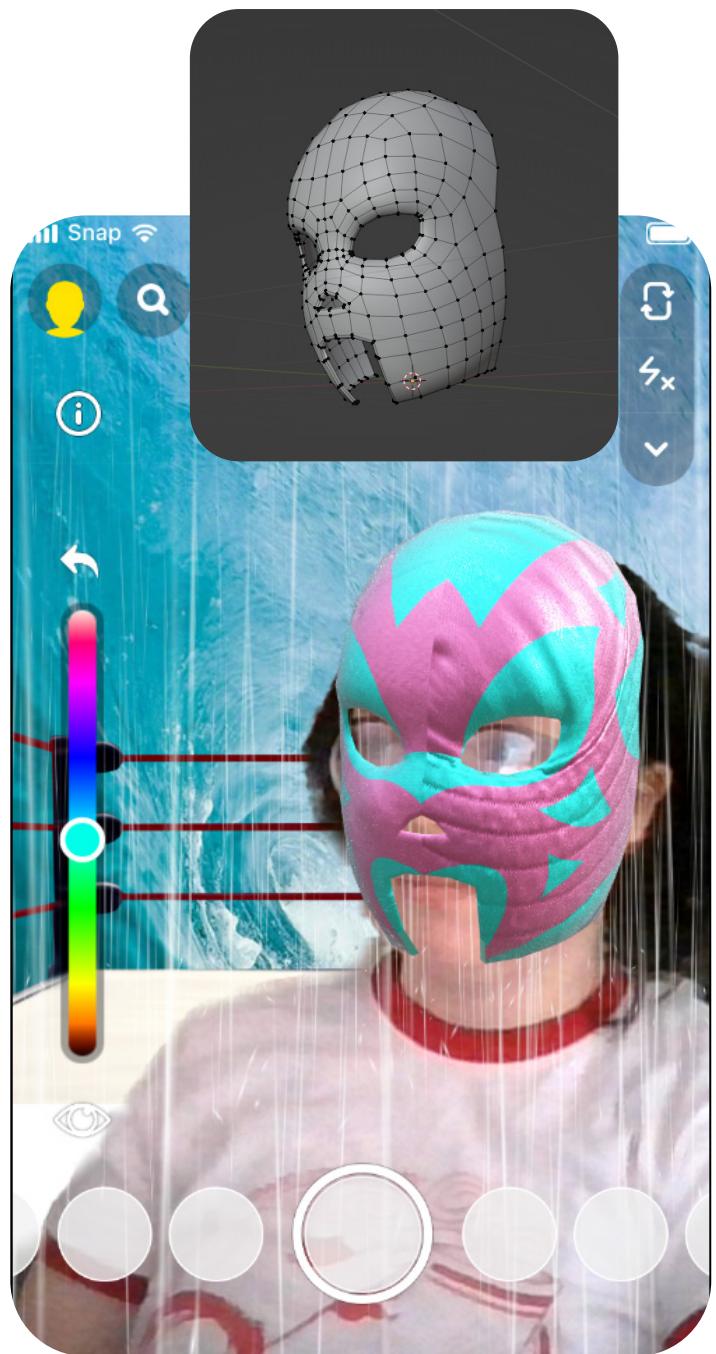
[LINK TO VIDEO~](#)



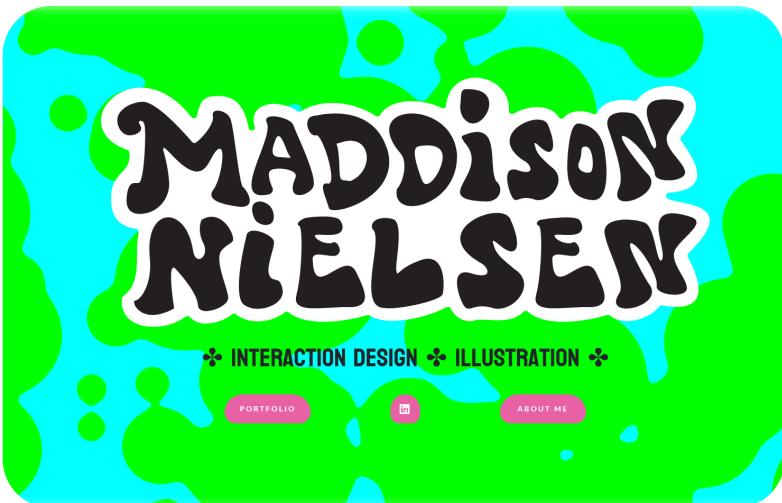
level design / maze experiment in unity



*snapchat AR lens,
blender,
photoshop,
premiere,
illustrator,
lens studio*



It's important in this ever-changing world to keep up with new technologies, and to be able to learn quickly. In the IXD program we have been challenged to learn different coding languages and technological mechanisms very quickly; I can write credibly in javascript, python, processing & arduino. I've also broken into developer softwares like Unity and Snap Lens Studio for creating 3D and AR experiments, and blender for creating assets. When faced with a new system, my strategy is to dive headfirst, since I always know I'll come out breathing on the other side.

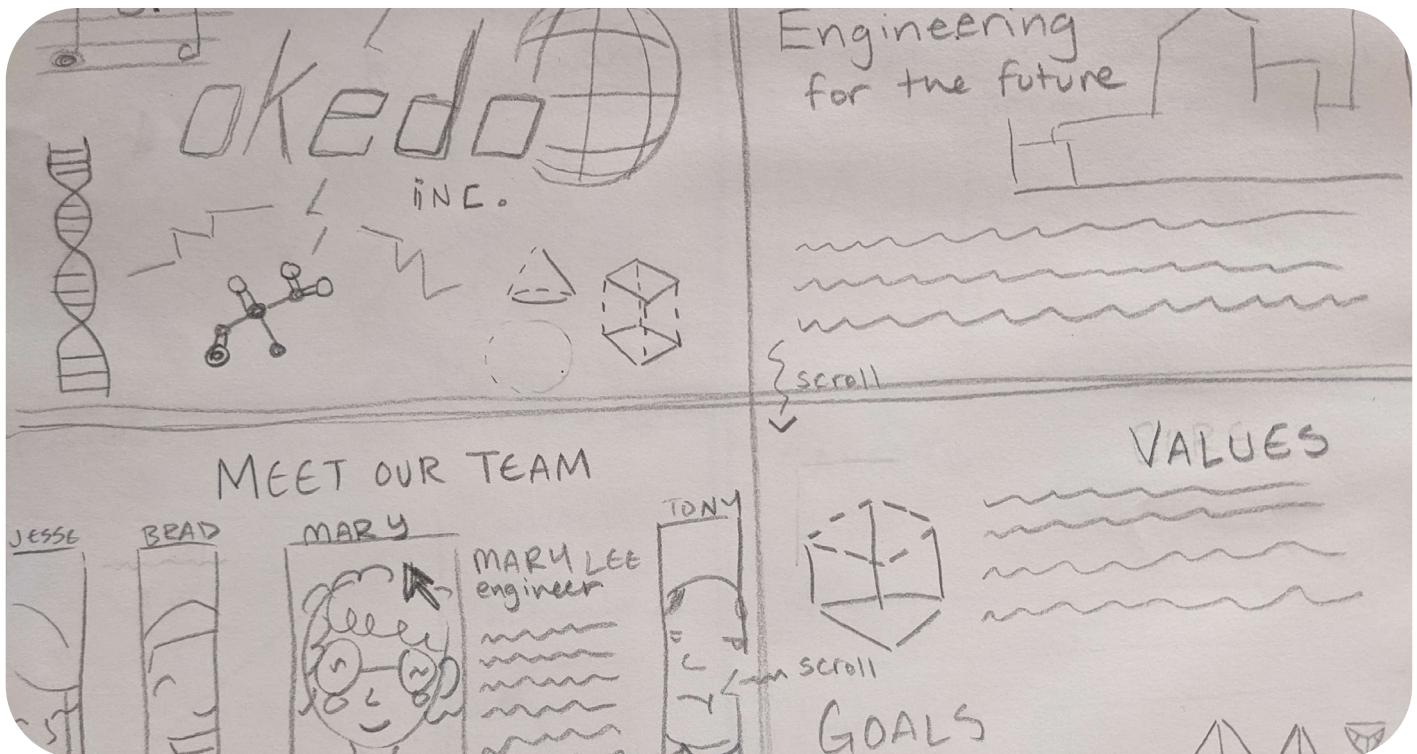


*portfolio website,
html,
css,
javascript*

[LINK TO WEBSITE~](#)



Something I especially enjoy in the world of UI / UX is web design. I'm somewhat of a figma wizard, but more than that, I like getting into the nitty-gritty of front-end development with javascript to create fun and memorable experiences. Sketching, once again, is always a factor in my designs.



SKETCH BOOKS

WELCOME TO MY BRAIN

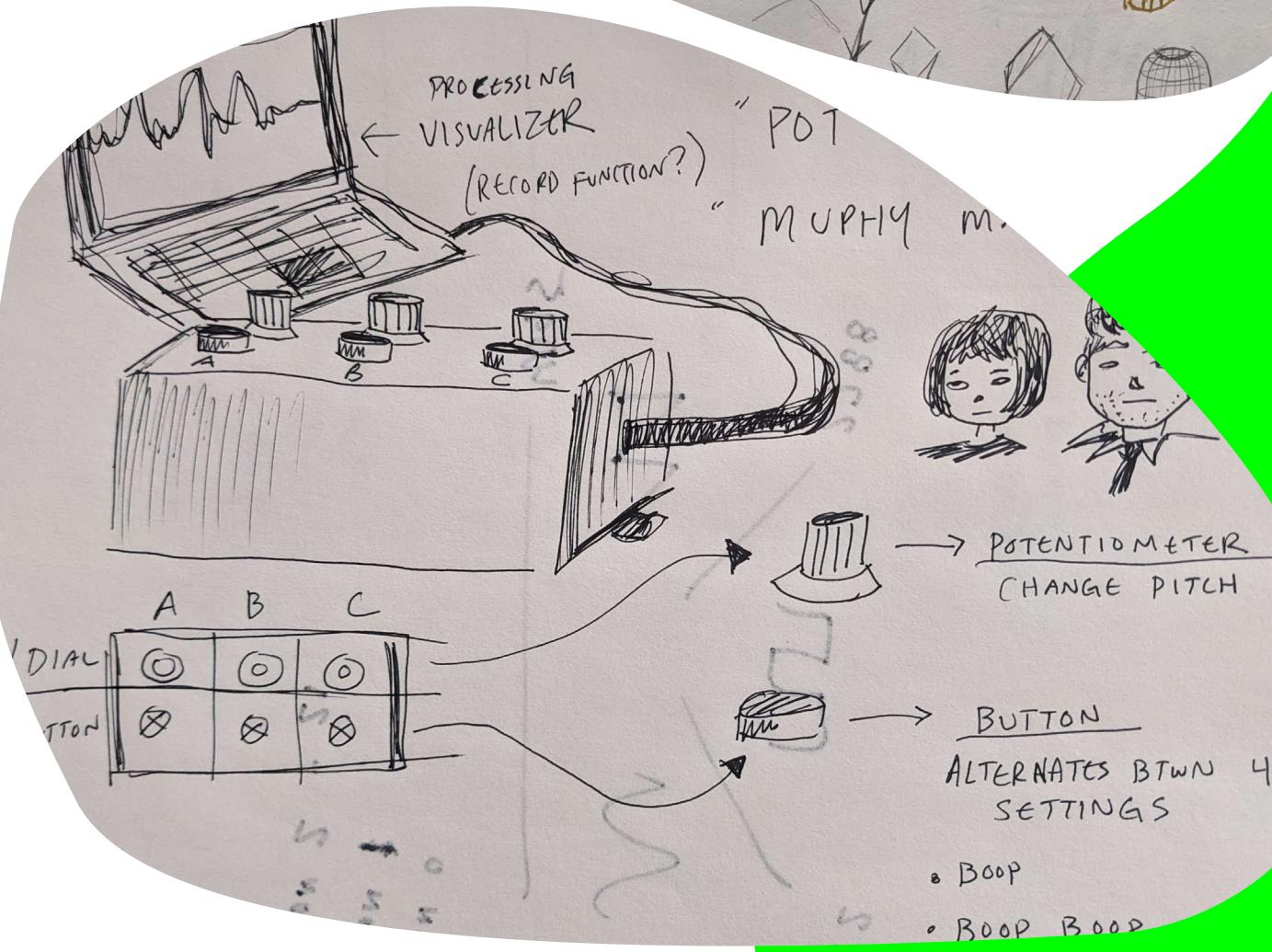
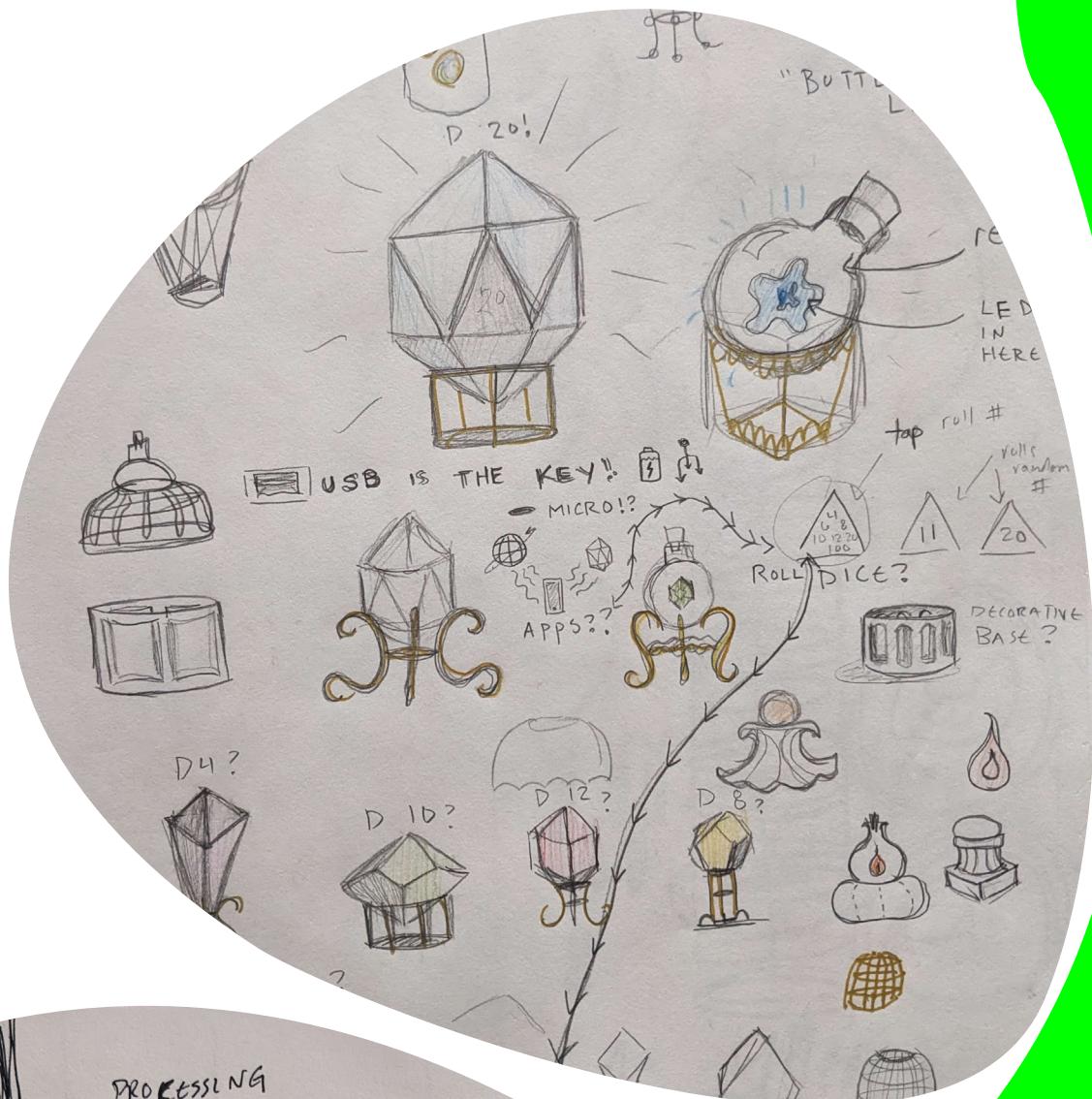
No matter where I am, trust that I have my sketchbook on me. I am an extremely visual thinker, and having that piece of paper always handy to storyboard or iterate upon an idea is key to my process, and key to helping me communicate ideas to others. I also like to doodle in meetings, etc, because having my hands active actually helps me to be a better listener. Sometimes the little doodles I make end up generating grander ideas, or I can recycle for later use!



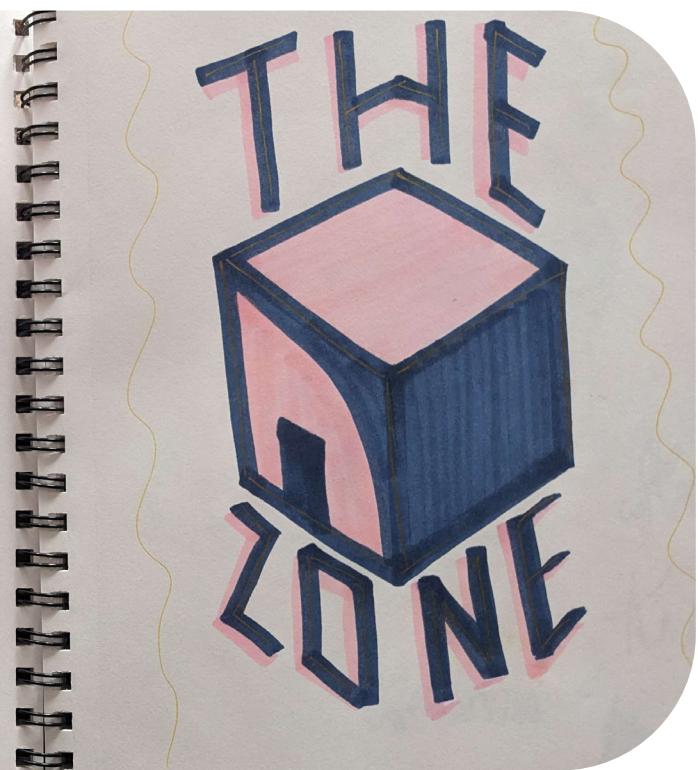
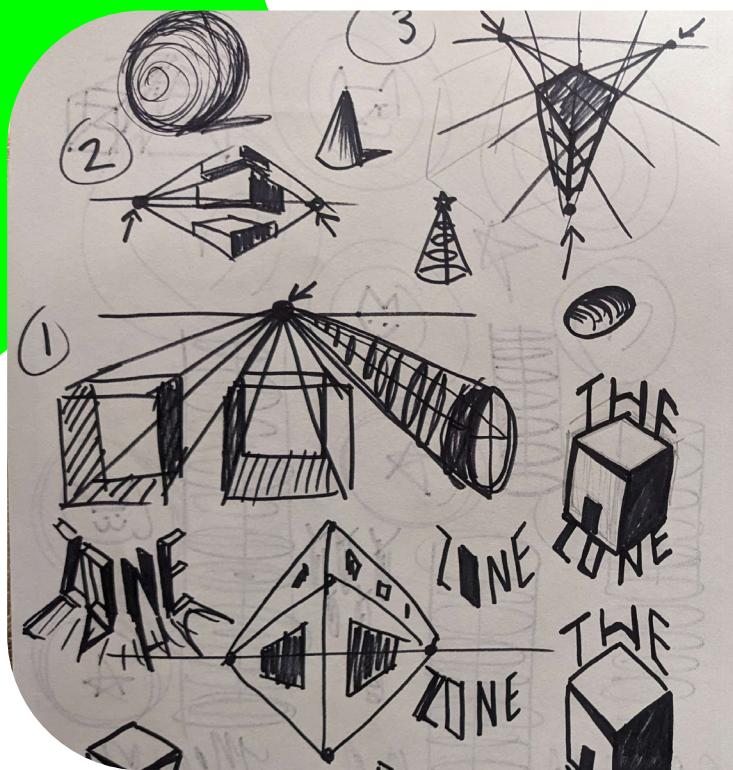
FORM FACTOR

■ Maddison Nielsen

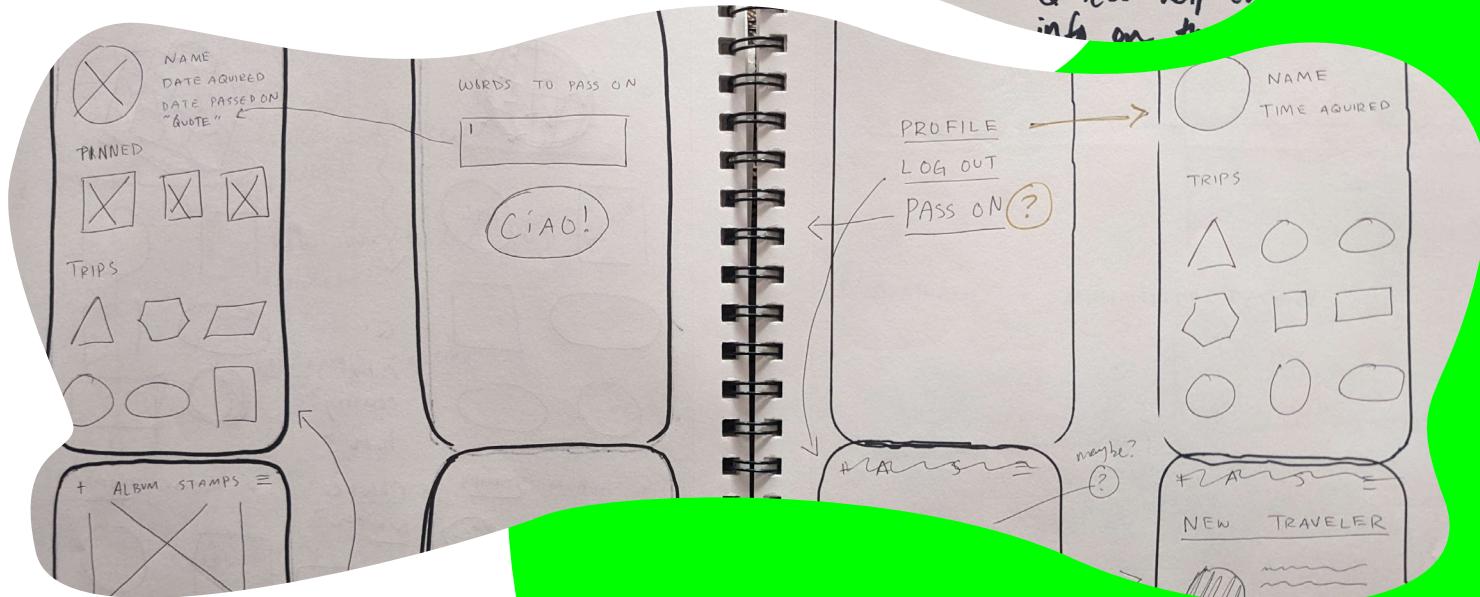
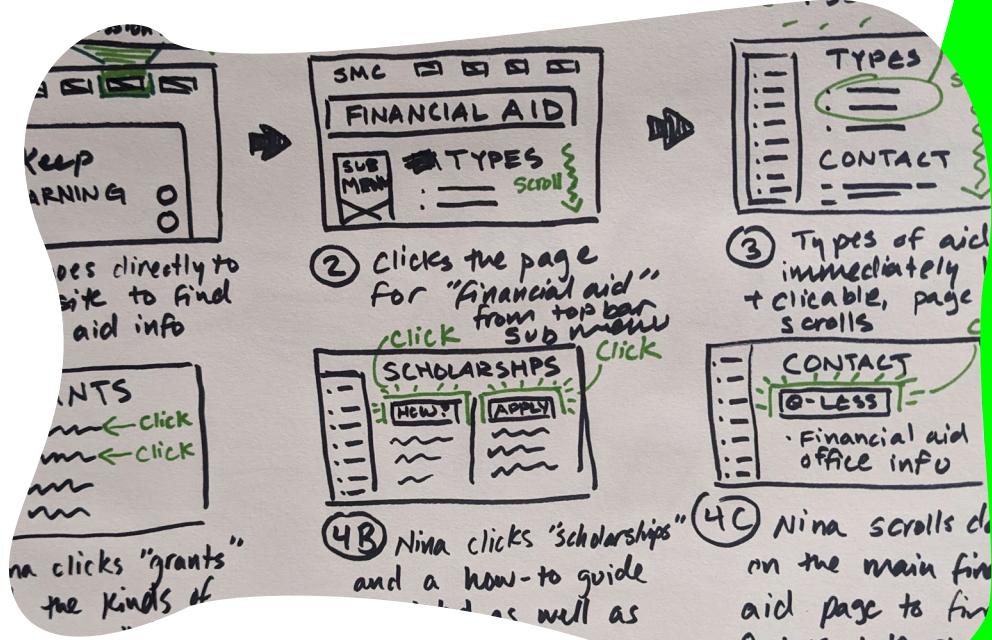
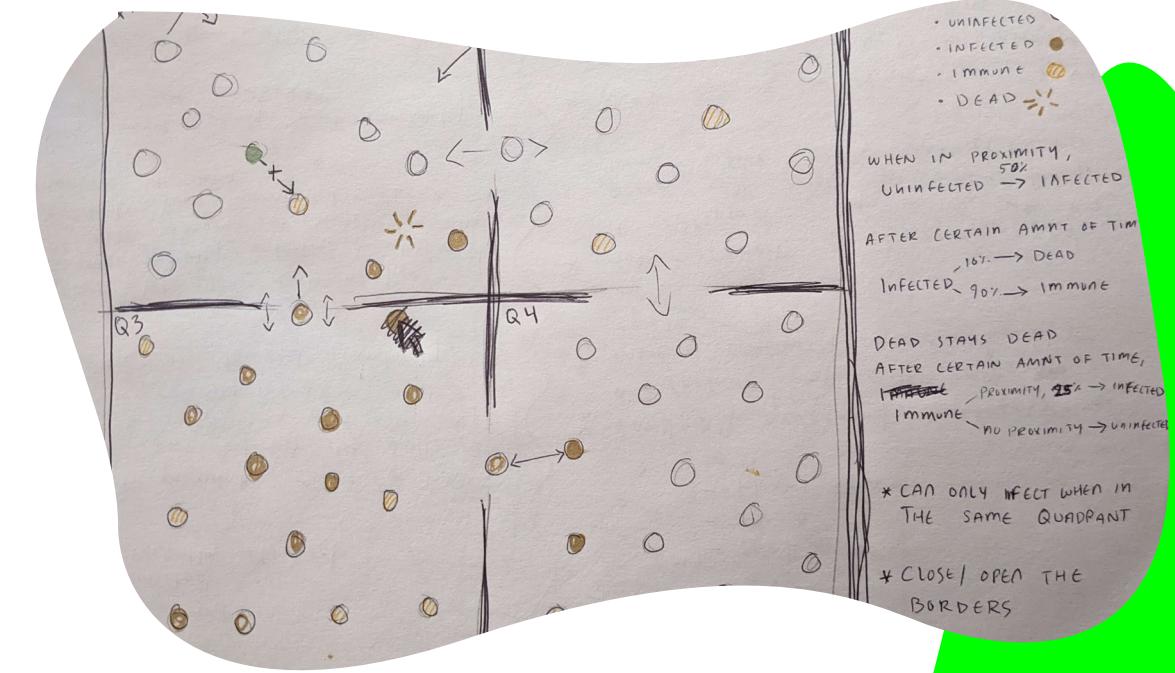
Sketchbooks



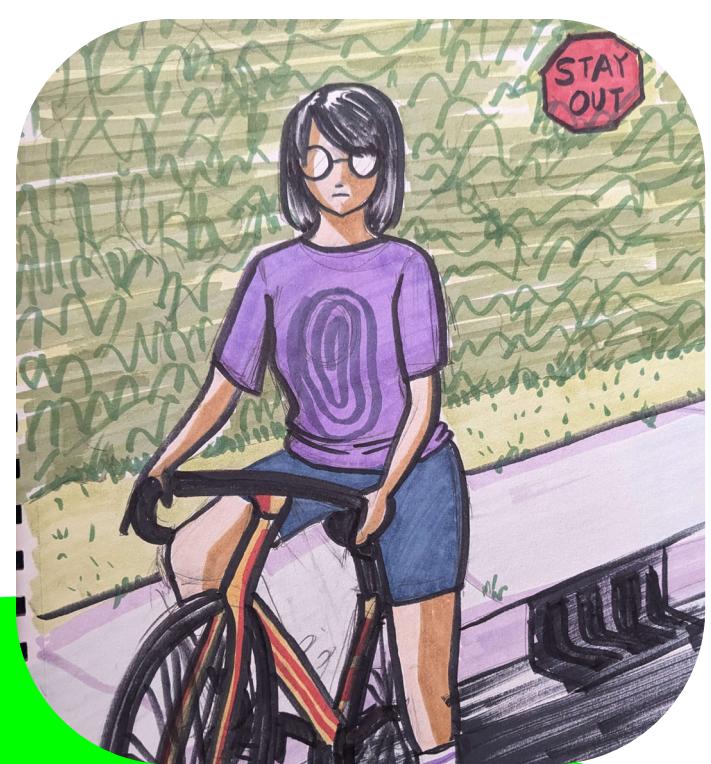
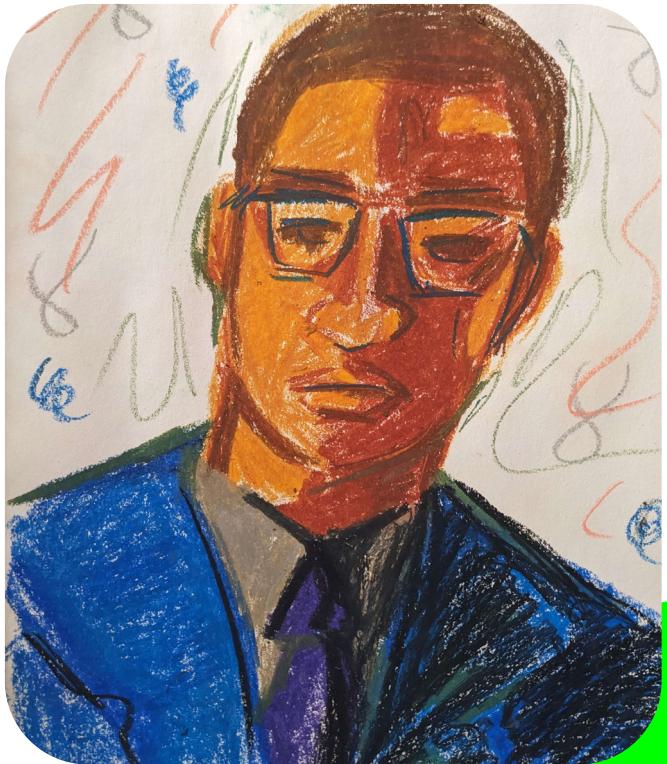
ICONOGRAPHY



WIREFRAMING



ILLUSTRATION



My current solo project was my senior capstone that I am continuing to produce. I am independently developing a point-and-click adventure game, with the intention of completing all the artwork & programming myself, using Photoshop and Unity! It's a love letter to the art & design of the 1960s, following an all-girl band on their road to stardom titled....

Ventura Girls



VENTURA GIRLS, a groovy blend of late 60's counterculture, girl power, rock & roll, and the strange vibrations of Hollywood, where every choice you make and every note you miss shapes your quest for fame. Will you play the Hollywood Bowl, or just some North Hollywood dive?

