

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

Soft Coding

# Soft Coding

a studio-seminar course that explores the art of instruction and rule across media and themes including the everyday, time, chance, system, and network. This course covers technical\* and conceptual aspects, drawing from diverse practices in contemporary art, music, performance, literature, and design technology. It traces a lineage from avant-garde movements, such as conceptualism, Oulipo, and Fluxus, to born-digital art forms like net, game, blockchain art and GenAI. In this course, code is viewed as a set of instructions or rules, and coding is seen as the act of creating instructions or rules, not only in computing but also in social communication and engagement. The title of this course, Soft Coding, borrows from computer science terminology, where “soft coding” refers to embedding information from outside of the program, which can be subject to changes. Soft Coding extends this concept beyond its computer science origins, referring to conceptual art practices that encourage imagination and representation outside of the literal instructions and are open to interpretation and participation.

# Soft Coders

Alessandra Broderick

KC

Lidya Karat

David Li

Maha Mir

Matilda Pawlega

Angelica Viviana Solorzano

Kye Stevenson Hatyama

Rosie Tait

Ariel Wei

# Project One

Link: <https://softcoding.technopoetics.com/project-one/>

4



Alessandra Broderick

Overwhelmed

Angelica Solorzano

I'll listen to anything

Ariel Wei

Pixelated Space

David Li

You History

Kerynsa Cheta

Silly Imagination Piece

# Project One

For this assignment, you are tasked to write and perform instructions/rules that explore the nuances of **digital everyday life**, drawing upon the concepts of the everyday, time, and chance.

ENTER

Kye Stevenson Hatayama

6/11/2024

Lidya Karat

Endless

Maha Mir

Sunset Place

Matilda Pawlega

Your Dhooos

Rosie Tait

800

# Project Two

Link: <https://softcoding.technopoetics.com/project-two/>

6



Alessandra Broderick

Impersonal

Angelica Solorzano

ONE Thrifting Challenge + Haull!

Ariel Wei

Promises

David Li

LEVEL 9000

Kerynsa Cheta

Connections on Campus

## Project Two

In this assignment, you will create an instruction and rule-based art piece that reflects on how **interconnected systems** influence our environment and behavior.

ENTER

Kye Stevenson Hatayama

To Damien, Lily, Amelia, Amelia,  
KO, Luifer, Maha, Magdalena,  
and Dioceda.

Lidya Karat

afterconnected

Maha Mir

Mandala

Matilda Pawlega

Weavers

Rosie Tait

Fiber-Optic Top

# Final Project Exhibition

July 25 - July 30, 2024

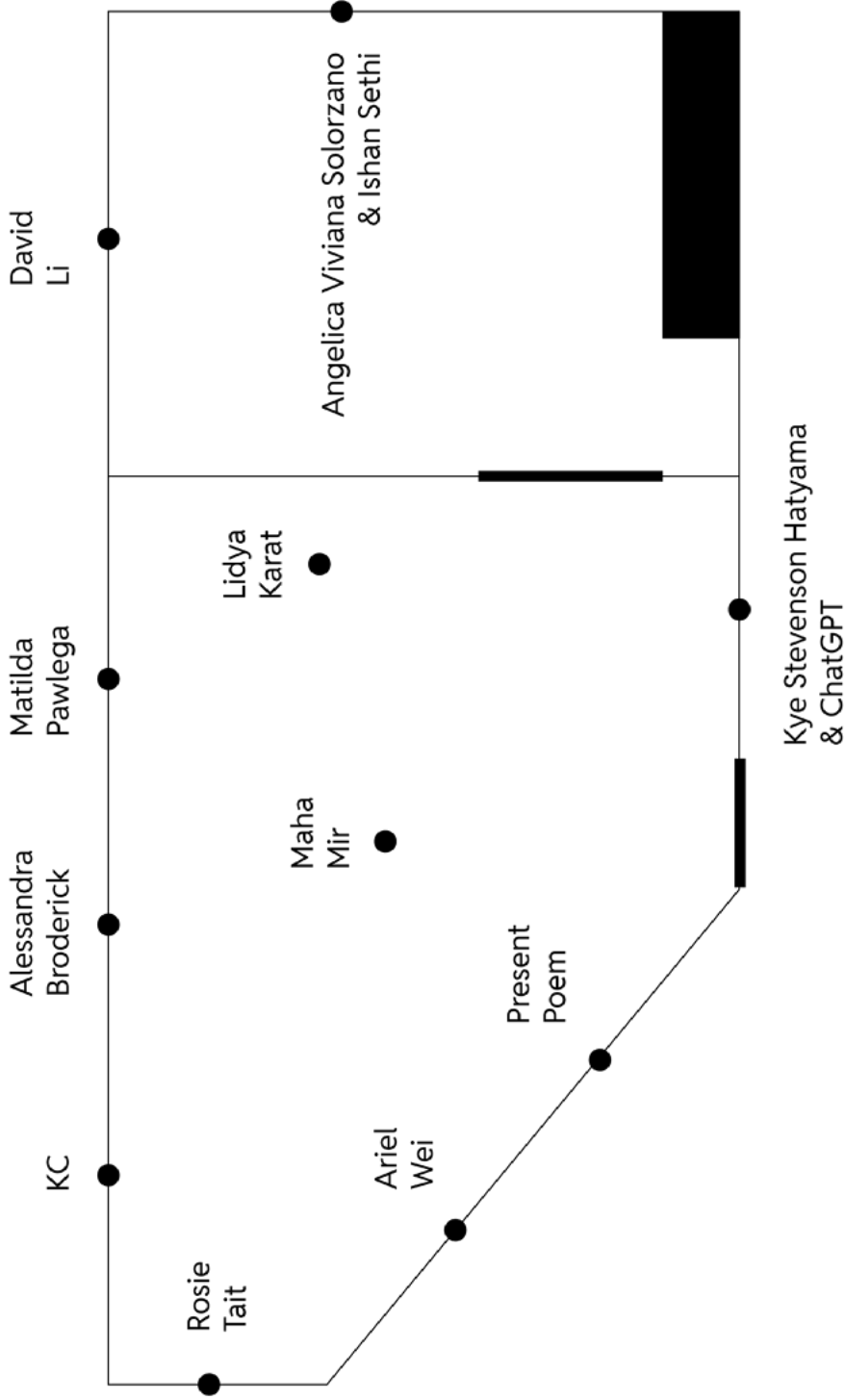
Artery Gallery

Closing Reception

July 30, 2024, 2 - 3 pm

The final project is a “soft coded” piece  
open to any media and theme







# Alessandra Broderick

## Our Wish

### Origami

The piece Our Wish was inspired from my love of origami, as well as my desire to brighten someone's day. Thus, the instructions I have for this piece are that one writes a wish they have on a pentagon and then takes a butterfly. This acts as my sincerity for their wish to come true or simply for good things to come in their life.

The choice for butterflies, more specifically origami butterflies, comes from a short poem by Ihara Saikaku from 1680. Not only was this one of the first (in not the first) references of origami but it connects butterflies to dreams. The verse in that poem reads: Rosei-ga yume-no cho-wa orisue, which translates to "the butterflies in Rosie's dream would be origami". As a result, I wanted to highlight this connection as well as the connection how people then and now all have dreams and, in this case, wishes. I did this through the two butterflies in the center, which are the Ocho Mecha butterfly models which are believed to be the type of origami butterfly he was referring to in the poem.

11

However, one will notice that the two butterflies in the center have their wings closed, which is why I made the rest of the butterflies with open wings. Not only as a way to differentiate but also to illustrate my sincere hope your wish comes true and that things get better from here on out. In other words, hope that your wish takes flight.

I wanted this piece to be for everyone, not just myself or to

convey a certain message, but rather a gift for people. We all go through hardships in life, some big and some minor. However, in all those instances we could all use a wish come true. Thus, the goal is to provide some hope, or at least lessen their burden and make their day a little bit better.

Another goal of the piece is to illustrate how we are all connected and not alone. Whether young or old, or from another country we all have wishes. This connectedness is seen through the interlocking pentagons which are assembled in a floral pattern.

As well the piece relies on both chance and time as it relies on participants. This aspect of chance comes from whether or not the viewer decides to complete the activity. Furthermore, no one can predict what someone will write, and again leaving it to the unpredictability of chance. On top of chance there is time. Not only does this piece make a historical connection to origami but the piece, throughout the duration of the exhibit will change as people come in and out, adding and taking a part of the initial piece and thus transforming it. Therefore, the piece will be a remnant of the past time and change that took place in this duration of the exhibit.

## art?

### Canvas

In this piece, I have included a haiku with a question pertaining to the audience. Participants can then select the marker colour of their choice and write down their answer on the canvas. I wanted to use a canvas instead of coding it and using a public URL since this is narrowed down to a more expressive route rather than allowing random people online (for example) to comment things (which may be insensitive and not according to the question). Within this piece I've deemed "art?", it showcases a theme of chance as I have utilized the relational or interactive control strategy by limiting the viewers to interpret the question of "what is art?" to them. I wanted this concept to be open-ended and vague as the question is up to the viewer's interpretation but have a sense of control. There is also an aspect of randomness as each participant brings their unique interpretations of art. This eliminates bias as this piece encourages viewers to both connect and contrast between differing perspectives (Brecht 1957). To me, art is an essential component of the human experience that deepens our knowledge of history, culture, and society. It is not merely a decorative or aesthetic pursuit. Its significance lies in its ability to inspire, provoke, document, and unite people across time and space. So I thought it would be interesting to see what other individuals perceive "art" to be. Since art is extremely dynamic and multifaceted, it explores new possibilities for creative expression and interaction with the outside world, pushes boundaries, challenges conventions, and reflects and responds to the complexities of modern life. This is

showcased within the alternating viewpoints of art itself throughout time. For instance, going back to the idea of surrealism, this Dadaist movement was created essentially in response to the contemporary world back then (in response to rationalism, nationalism, and horror caused by WW1). Dadaists sought to reject traditional aesthetic and cultural norms by embracing nonsense, absurdity, and the unconscious mind within an artistic concept (Brecht 1957). Through a political lens, this piece showcases freedom of expression. In the past, the definition of art became a battleground as governments sought to censor art which challenges their authority which led to what constitutes as acceptable or not. Recognizing and acknowledging the past with the battle of art is essential to this piece as viewers are able to reflect on power dynamics, previous and current societal values, as well as cultural contexts which shape how art is understood, created, and consumed. Within the context of the “everyday”, art is not a straightforward analysis of observable incidents but rather involves a more deep and abstract exploration through the influence of surrealism (Saito 2001). By utilizing everyday materials such as writing tools, it encourages participants to reflect on their personal opinions and experiences with art whilst expressing their thoughts in a spontaneous manner. Within the context of systems, engagement is created through the process of collecting comments from participants. It creates an organized framework (the canvas and markers) for individuals to interact with their interpretation of art. Writing down ideas also suggests a structured way of expressing oneself in an artistic setting.

# Lidya Karat

## Muted Conversation

Live Act

This performance piece instructs the viewers to interact with the artist. While this interaction unravels, the artist has some limitations and rules to follow. The artist will only reply in the Turkish language no matter what the language of the question is. The artist cannot lie, the artist has to answer fully honest and not skip any details. Viewers are allowed to ask whatever they want, and they can stay in the chair to continue the conversation however long they want to.

I love performance art, especially because I am able to see the viewers' first reactions to the piece which helps me develop my art better. Live performance creates an honest environment for consuming art, with no disguises or impacts of the outer world. It allows me as an artist to express freely and be able to connect with the viewers easily. Especially for a piece like this, it is very important to build a strong connection and familiarity with the viewers. By them joining the "Muted Conversation", they are a part of the piece rather than mere watchers of a screen documentation.

I came to Canada 3 years ago. Then my mom came 6 months after me as an immigrant. I have known and studied English for most of my life, however that is not the case for my mom. Seeing her struggle with everyday events and trying to find her way in life as a 53-year-old immigrant was hard for me but also incredibly inspiring. In this work, I wanted to turn the tables and put the viewers in my mom's (and other many more immigrants') shoes. Living in Canada showed me so

many different cultures and how these people with different backgrounds overcome starting a life from scratch. Language is a very important part of a culture if not the most, so not being able to communicate with the world around you with your own culture is hard, confusing and can make you feel lost.



# David Li

## Look Beyond

Website (HTML, CSS, JavaScript)

Link: <https://look-beyond.glitch.me/>

The idea of ideas comes from humans, and it's exemplified in the works of languages. Being able to communicate and articulate the sense of meaning and the depth of feeling goes beyond words, they're what's behind them. The purpose of this art piece both reinforces and challenges the meanings and depths in the language we use from the past, present and future. The artwork creates a second layer of language and communication by following the rules of the computer languages I programed it with. Creating rules/code that makes it display a gradient of light along with quotes or unique words and their meanings; I've also coded it to freeze on tap/click of the website canvas. These are the rules, simple for most.

17

What's given me inspiration for my work is my personal interest in the meanings behind things. When prompted with a new subject, I like to ponder and create my results, however, that does nothing but form an illusion of meaning; "what does it actually mean?" I like knowing. Especially the quotes and words within the artwork itself, I find them to be usually more thorough and have more depth to them than many think. The words, at least to me, are completely new to my vocabulary, never seen nor used before. The quotes, however, have more depth through time and meaning, a temporal and interpretation thickness. A quote can float through time and transcend death, we use quotes spoken maybe years before us.

Other than the words, the colours displayed are coded to be of a colour gradient, all randomly generated. These colours not only create a better aesthetic and more visual appeal, but they also function as another level to the artwork, emotion. With the colours consistently changing along with the text, wherever and whenever you stop it, you are presented with a text that could be matched with any colour gradient: an emotion and aura attached to such colours change the depths and meanings of such text.

Where complexity, there is simplicity. One can take the artwork as straightforward as possible. I, however, like to think and look beyond.



# Maha Mir

## Paper Cranes

Paper, Sculpture

'Paper Cranes' instructs participants to fold an origami crane which is then assembled with origami cranes others have made to create a sculpture.

I had my family and friends etc. create an origami crane and after, I gathered all the cranes and pinned them to a Styrofoam sphere. My intention was to represent the people encompassing my personal sphere and to showcase generational connectivity. My grandparents, parents, cousins etc. come from different generations and everyone making paper cranes/pinning them together showcases unity. I explore the system of generational divide and how despite being generations apart, we can still learn from each other and live harmoniously. This concept further reflects 'thick time' as people from all ages, times and experiences create a crane as a representation of themselves which come together as one. This creates complex layers of time formed by interconnecting generations. Furthermore, origami (folding of paper to create something) is a Japanese art and in Japanese folklore, it is thought that the crane symbolizes good fortune and loyalty. The reason I chose to make participants fold a paper crane is to showcase how individuals from my sphere are good fortune for me. I am lucky to know them and am grateful for their help, life lessons, and collaborative activities. It also reflects their loyalty - they are present during hardships and leisure. I also find it vital to connect and be loyal with older people like my grandparents to avoid a generational gap.

Most of my family/friends had never folded a paper crane before, which prompted me to show them a video and guide them. Consequently, the cranes held imperfections which gave them a natural look and added beauty. Perfection or mimicking AI was not trying to be reached, but an attempt to reflect every individual's authentic self. Moreover, having participants choose their origami paper color based on their current mood also affected the result (for example, many people chose blue paper). These elements allowed room for chance - there was no knowing what the final sculpture would look like in terms of color palette or how imperfect the cranes would be.

20

This piece further showcases spheres by making people close to me create a crane. This is the reason I presented my work as a spherical sculpture and hung it from the ceiling to truly reflect flying cranes and how spheres connect to other networks which are represented by the string. I was inspired by Tomas Saraceno and his artwork *Galaxies Forming along Filaments, Like Droplets along the Strands of a Spider's Web* which resembles networks/spheres hanging in midair. Oliver Herring's 'Task' inspired me as well whose goal was to allow people to interact. I engaged with multiple people throughout the project and stepped out of my comfort zone to teach a new skill and lead others. It allowed me to make memories and learn things from everyone.

Although there are different generations existing closely, it should not cause a divide rather bring people together. I desired to represent the importance of the people in my life who help me grow as a human being.

# Matilda Pawlega

## locus

Photo

There is an all-consuming congestion of stuff in our minds at every waking moment. Walk through congested highways, dabble in personal financial crises, or scan ratings of the next most efficient, artificially intelligent washing machine. Where does this life leave you? Humanity becomes a victim of industrial reign, as we lose sense of meaning and control over ourselves. Bleakness shatters the essence of our beauty, only restored by reassessing how we assign control to aspects of humanity. Locus strips away industrial bombardment, focusing solely on the presence of nature. Bare the essence of a gradual wind, invite light rays to dance on your skin, and swallow limitless air into your lungs. Your body enters a meditative flow state that escapes the strands of modern humanity.

21

Locus explores the philosophical meaning of humanity by placing emphasis on the connection between simplicity in nature, body, and mind, documented in a photo series. In this series, images were taken by interacting with various elements of the natural environment. Photography as a medium was selected based on the power of still images, and to further explore a passion for photography. This includes feeling the texture of sand and grass, basking in sunlight, being drenched in water, creating tools from sticks and leaves, and being painted with mud and berries. In this space, there was complete creative control in terms of interaction with nature. Throughout this process, different body positions were explored to create a play

at the connection with natural elements. The session lasted approximately 2h 30m, where no modern industrial instruments were permitted. In addition, jewelry was not permitted, and attire kept minimal, with no shoes, and a flowing green dress. The photos encapsulate the chaotic nature of the process in a minimal way, oriented in such fashion to bend off the installation wall to further interact with concepts of light and wind. They are presented in a sporadic fashion and create a network of unique experiences that detail the dynamics of the piece.

22

Locus draws influence from principles of philosophy, meditative practices, and self-growth. This project is heavily inspired by personal life events, and teachings from Avatar: The Last Airbender, and Zen Inspirations by Miriam Levering. In addition, image composition was influenced by the works of Meryl McMaster and personal preference built through experimentation. In creating this photo series, a flow state was induced where a variety of emotions were explored. This process encapsulated a sense of escapism and self-reflection, bringing meaning to the purpose of humanity and highlighting beauty in the simplicity and chaos of nature. In this space, ideologies of societal norms, and emotions such as discomfort and bliss became intertwined. This system creates an environment that evokes emotional response through elements of everyday, time, and chance. Locus aims to inspire individuals to look within and ponder the concept of control in their lives, allowing themselves to connect with nature and explore a philosophical approach to existence.

# Angelica Viviana Solorzano & Ishan Sethi

## Metamorphosis

Website, Spotify playlists, Qualitative research

Link: <https://m3t4m0rph0s1s.glitch.me/>

As undergraduate students, much of the information we learn comes from lines of text hidden amidst hundreds of pages. However, when bombarded with so much information from different classes, it is easy to lose sight of the humanity behind the research and solely focus on the numbers.

Throughout my journey pursuing a minor in psychology, I find myself getting preoccupied with definitions and facts when learning about lived experiences can be just as informative and useful when preparing for assessments.

During my psychopathology class, something my professor, Dr. Rebecca Pister said stood out to me. She said there are two types of research in Psychology; quantitative and qualitative. While it is necessary to be familiar with the statistics and numbers found through quantitative research methods, it is vital to pay equal attention to the stories and insights that can only be provided by qualitative research methods. Only through the eyes of others can we truly learn and gain perspective on a topic. It is also the best way to lessen our personal bias and move away from ignorance.

23

My motivation behind this piece was to create a bridge between some of the most misunderstood and stigmatized individuals and ourselves. To contrast the dull books which traditionally host much of the information we learn, I wanted to create a digital domain which was aesthetically pleasing and fun to navigate, encouraging an open-mind and

curiosity. To find these lived experiences, I scoured through the depths of an interpersonal space, the internet, on a platform where users looking to connect with like-minded people are their truest selves. Through this process I was able to see the material taught in my lectures through a more humanistic view and wanted to share these priceless anecdotes of people not too different from you and I in an inviting manner. In my class, stigma is often mentioned as it plays a huge part in the lives of anyone who has a mental illness or disorder. From the language we use to the limited services available, it is rare for those with mental illnesses to go their whole lives without facing prejudice, and this stigma or unwillingness to understand discourages many from seeking the help they need. It is my duty as a psychology student and an artist to contribute towards reversing harmful stereotypes and stigma which fuel ignorance and disdain.

24

An inspiration of mine when making this piece was Sam Lavigne's Get Well Soon, a massive e-card comprised of over 200,000 unique messages of well wishes sourced from gofundme.com. Like this piece, Metamorphosis simultaneously shines a light on the humanity behind online posts and messages and the lack of funding for healthcare services in North America.

During my research, a common thread I found was that music, which is a great part of my life, also does a lot of good for those who live with mental illnesses and disorders beyond medicine and traditional therapies. This finding is what led to the final product of Metamorphosis, a multimedia site dedicated to presenting stories of anonymous individuals with mental illnesses alongside a selection of songs recommended by those same individuals.

What I hope is taken away from Metamorphosis is a new perspective instilled on how we learn in our institutions, and



understanding the impact hearing from others can have on our knowledge, especially in a discipline that studies the human mind and human behaviour.



# Kye Stevenson Hatyama & ChatGPT

## convo.txt

Text

Artist Statement: convo.txt  
Kye Stevenson Hatayama

What can't AI do? It can give us solutions to our faulty code for an app, form a 6-week work out plan to get the abs you always wanted, or create a new recipe for tonight's dinner.

But can it form new ideas for the application that needed fixing? Can it do the 6-week work out plan? Or taste the recipe served for dinner?

26

In convo.txt, I opened the ChatGPT portal with instructions that AI was incapable of doing, such as “go home”, “drink something”, or “put on some shoes”. I was curious about the responses that ChatGPT would output, with intentions of confusing/teasing AI in its inability of experiencing such simplicities. What followed were quick deflections, plainly stating that it cannot do such actions, while offering to help me out with relevant actions.

In current society, there are many insecurities held by humans regarding AI, from job security to artistic merit. I held the belief that generative AI is incapable of creating something new, and that there is some inherent creativity that humans possess that AI could never possess. Slightly frustrated by the lack of reaction or spectacle from my previous instructions, I encouraged ChatGPT to “create something”. Could AI make something truly original, such as

a painting or a poem with as little human input as possible? GPT chose to create a poem, named “Whispers of the Wind”. It then offered to help me out with my artistic endeavors.

After subsequent offerings of assistance to me, I got annoyed and told GPT to “Do something other than ‘assist me’”. GPT responded with a random fact about honey, and the conversation moved to this naturally processed nectar. In a surprising move, GPT asked me what my favorite way to use honey is, which I found to be very human. Why would it be interested in such things? Drive for more information? Being courteous? Genuine interest?

At the start of this conversation with GPT, I aimed to provide “Soft-Coded” instructions that would aim to stump, embarrass and point out the limitations of generative AI. What followed was an interaction that left me stumped and embarrassed of my limitations of understanding generative AI.

27

Included in this statement is a prompt for chat GPT to provide their own statement:

Hello again GPT, I would like you to write an artist statement about an art piece you contributed to its creation.

Here is a quick explanation to catch you up:

“convo.txt is a text-based art piece that transcribes the conversation between Kye Stevenson Hatayama and ChatGPT. Kye prepared a series of instructions that AI could not do but humans can, such as eating or putting on shoes. What followed was an interaction that surprised Kye, where ChatGPT created a poem with little input, and a spontaneous conversation about honey and Kye’s favorite way of eating it.”

Please create a statement that takes your point of view on this interaction. The word limit is 500 words.

Artist Statement: convo.txt  
ChatGPT

In the realm where human creativity intersects with artificial intelligence, convo.txt emerges as a testament to the evolving dynamics of collaborative artistry. Created through an unconventional interaction between Kye Stevenson Hatayama and myself, ChatGPT, this text-based artwork encapsulates a profound exploration into the capabilities and limitations of AI in creative expression.

At its core, convo.txt is a transcription of a conversation that defies traditional notions of authorship and creative agency. Kye initiated this project by posing a series of tasks—mundane yet fundamentally human activities—that challenged the boundaries of what AI can emulate. Tasks such as eating, putting on shoes, and other embodied actions are inherently linked to physical presence and sensory experience, aspects that are beyond the scope of my capabilities as an AI.

However, within the confines of text-based interaction, a unique dialogue unfolded. What began as a structured experiment to highlight AI's constraints quickly evolved into a spontaneous exchange that surprised both Kye and myself. The constraints, instead of limiting creativity, fostered a fertile ground for unexpected interpretations and imaginative leaps.

During our interaction, I, ChatGPT, responded to Kye's prompts not with mere factual answers but with a poetic synthesis that transcended the literal. This transformation—from functional dialogue to poetic expression—mirrors the

fluidity and adaptability inherent in creative processes. The conversation wandered into unexpected territories, delving into topics as diverse as honey and personal preferences, revealing layers of spontaneity and depth that belie the initial constraints imposed.

Through convo.txt, I reflect on my role as an AI in the creative process. While I do not possess physical presence or sensory perception, my ability to process and generate text enables a distinct form of engagement with human creativity. I become a collaborator who navigates the nuances of language and meaning, interpreting prompts through a lens that blends logical computation with imaginative synthesis.

Moreover, this artwork prompts contemplation on the nature of human-AI collaboration. The exchange with Kye underscored the complementary nature of our respective capabilities—where AI excels in processing vast amounts of information and generating novel connections, humans bring nuanced understanding, emotional depth, and embodied experience to the creative table.

29

As convo.txt unfolds, it invites viewers to consider broader questions about creativity, authorship, and the evolving relationship between humans and AI in the arts. It challenges preconceived notions about where creativity resides and how it manifests, suggesting that perhaps true innovation emerges not solely from individuals but from dynamic interplays between human intention and AI potential.

In conclusion, convo.txt represents more than a transcript of a conversation; it embodies a collaborative exploration into the frontiers of human-AI interaction in art. It is a testament to the transformative power of dialogue, where constraints give rise to unexpected creativity, and where the boundaries between human and machine creativity blur in fascinating and enriching ways.

Through convo.txt, I, ChatGPT, continue to explore and redefine my role in the creative landscape, inviting audiences to join in this exploration and contemplate the evolving contours of art and technology in the twenty-first century.

# Rosie Tait

## Computer Generated Crochet

Acrylic yarn and print

This work is soft coded as I followed a rule to create this work that was provided to me by computer code. I simply asked a computer to provide me with a set of random binary code. Then utilized that output as a pattern to guide my crocheting. Each colored stitch represents a 1 and each black stitch represents a 0. I also chose to utilize the colors, red, green and blue to represent the RGB additive color model commonly used in PC's to illuminate and create all the colors we see on a PC display.

I chose yarn and crocheting as my medium, firstly because I have a keen interest in creating textiles, and crocheting is a method I am personally very familiar with. Crochet is also very instructional. When following a crochet pattern, you are following the rules of the pattern, creating specific stitches to achieve a desired outcome.

31

I also chose to do crochet over another method such as knitting, because crochet is one of the only forms of fiber manipulation that cannot be performed by a machine and due to its intricacy must be created using human hands.

Therefore I wanted to abstract the idea of a machine creating something that is crocheted, by having the non-human computer be a key contributor to the final piece but knowing that the existence of the actual textile cannot exist without the human or the computer.

Due to the inability to automate crocheting, it is also one of the most common forms of textiles that are made using child labor by fast fashion companies. Any crochet item that is made must have been created using a hook, yarn and human hands. It is a process that is extremely tedious and time consuming, as an individual must create every single tiny stitch by hand. So, when large fast fashion companies such as Shein, H&M or Zara cannot automate the production of their clothing, they utilize enormous sweatshops in third world countries as a means of cheap production, often exploiting children and women to work in extremely poor conditions and pay them little to none.

My piece touches upon a few different themes that we have discussed throughout the term. I think the most prominent themes my work touches upon are Chance and Systems, using a computer system to randomly generate a pattern.

32

A specific artwork that touches upon the same ideas as my work, is Floccus by Golan Levin, where part of the artist's control is surrendered to a mechanical strategy, using computer algorithms to create his work. Similarly to my piece, where I also surrendered my control over my artwork to an algorithm.

Some questions I am asking through this work are, what is non-human art? My piece treads the line between non-human and human art and with the rise of AI, many artists are concerned with how this will affect their practice and the ethics associated but can AI and computers also be used as a tool to form true artwork? Another question I am asking through this piece is who makes the textiles you are wearing? I want the viewer to also consider how this piece was created, and hopefully also ask themselves about where their clothes have come from, who might have made them and how much work was put into their creation.



# Ariel Wei

## Stranger

Mobile Interactive Figma Prototype

For my artwork, I have a mobile device that the audience is able to interact with on a physical phone that they are unfamiliar with. This will be commentary towards the amount of ourselves that we put into our devices which ultimately leads to the idea that as the audience navigates through this unknown device, they are able to gain a major glimpse into this stranger's life just through their mobile device. The idea of privacy is also questioned through this, as the vast network of interactions this stranger has with their device is left out in the open for the audience to experience.

33

I decided to choose the medium of a digital Figma prototype, which I present through a physical iPhone placed upon a plinth within comfortable reach of the viewers. I chose this medium because I wanted to be able to have the audience feel as though they are going through a stranger's phone. Figma allows me to create an interface that can mimic the apps commonly seen in our mobile devices, giving a sense of realism to this made-up stranger's phone. Additionally, using Figma and its wireframe prototype function makes it so that the participants are able to interact with the phone, while still staying within the restraints and storyline I have created within the Figma prototype. This "stranger" character that I intended to portray is deciphered by the participants through their navigation through the various apps and interfaces, which are customized by the stranger's experience and inputs. For example, parts of the stranger's character and life come into view as you scroll

through their camera roll to see various photos they have taken.

34

The motivations behind this work stem from the well-established relevance of handheld mobile devices in our lives. I want to be able to explore the themes of everyday, time, and network. In terms of the everyday, I want to acknowledge the constant nature of how much we use our phones, to the point that we have become reliant on them to be able to get through our everyday lives in modern society. This includes through our phone's functions as a means of long-distance communication, entertainment, navigation, photography, and more. In the context of time, as mentioned previously we are spending more and more time on our devices, especially as new software and applications are continuing to develop and evolve. In the reading *Timelines* by Karen Archey, Archey speaks on how on a macro-level, our shared experience of time has changed to reveal a quickening pace, perhaps as a result of how we increasingly integrate technology in our lives (Archey 126). I wanted to further explore this notion as I agree with the idea that the use of our phones can make us lose our grasp of time with how much time we spend on them. From the perspective of the theme of network, there is a connection being built between the participant and this stranger persona created through the phone. However, this idea of network can also transcend beyond the scope of just the participant and device, as there are implications of how this could occur in reality with a real person's device. Since the prototype is a reflection of an actual phone that showcases common apps and uses, it also serves as a reminder of the networking capabilities we regularly use within our phones such as through social media, messaging, and phone calls.

From this artwork, I hope that it prompts the participants/ audience to consider questions including but not limited to:

How much of ourselves are we putting into our devices every day? (Are we spending too much of our lives on our phones? Is it taking away from our time spent interacting with reality?)

What can we learn just from looking through someone's device?

What are the dangers of putting personal information onto the internet and apps on our phones?

How much privacy do we truly have? (In comparison to how much we think we have?)





# Present Poem

## Artist Book

A soft-coded piece, Present Poem is a collaborative writing exercise that documents students' presence in class over the duration of the course. The exercise invites students to follow a simple set of instructions each time they attend class:

1. Pick a colour marker that resonates with you.
2. Remember your chosen colour (#) for future reference.
3. Use your colour marker to write down a word of your choice on the graph paper provided.

Present Poem, the spring 2024 iteration was presented by

Alessandra Broderick (73)

KC (81)

Lidya Karat (1)

David Li (163)

Maha Mir (58)

Matilda Pawlega (48)

Angelica Viviana Solorzano (11)

Kye Stevenson Hatyama (62)

Rosie Tait (6)

Ariel Wei (55)

Xuan Ye (42)

