“Searching for New Landscapes” ventures beyond familiar environments to explore new territories in graphic design. By changing our environment and patterns, looking at things anew with a fresh perspective, and transforming the tools we use, we can spark new insights and catalyze evolution for growth.

This study proposes getting away from known environments and breaking existing habits by responding instinctively and rapidly to unexpected prompts. The collected works and writing underpin the importance of thinking flexibly with a lighthearted “why not?” attitude and looking at things beyond existing definitions.

These methodologies are further applied to the action of teaching, to create spaces that empower students to push beyond the traditional boundaries of their discipline. As a present continuous, “Searching for New Landscapes” keeps seeking ways to discover new horizons.
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My story begins two years ago. Before coming to grad school, I worked as an in-house UX designer in Korea. As it was a large company, we had our own design guidelines and systems that we were required to follow. The pre-designed guidelines led us to achieve quality, stable, and reliable outcomes without much effort in a short amount of time. That made everything easy, compared to struggling to develop a new idea every day. While the former method ensured fine and stable results that few would complain about, the latter is challenging, uncertain, and demands a greater investment of time and effort, often provoking many people to anger. Therefore we pursued the former.

To my surprise, however, despite the comfortable and stable working environment, many talented designers chose to depart from their jobs. Following a set track afforded us convenience but deprived us of the most exciting part of designing, which is “the joy of creating.” As creators, we naturally enjoy sparking fresh insights and exploring new landscapes in design. But by designing within the confines of these systems, we gradually lost our desire to pursue creativity and gave up risk-taking. Personally, I also felt my enthusiasm and passion waning. I was ashamed of myself. Could I really call myself a designer? For a long time, I introduced myself as an office worker instead.

As the same familiar landscapes continued to surround me, I couldn’t imagine what lay beyond. I yearned for new landscapes, so I crossed the sea from Korea to pursue my MFA. While the change in physical environments certainly had a significant impact on my inspiration and growth as a designer, it was the “Prompts” that truly stimulated me the most to travel outside of my familiar territory.

What sets prompts apart from design guidelines is their refusal to set out a predetermined path. Instead, prompts propel us toward uncharted territories, devoid of familiar routes, where we are compelled to forge our own paths, spontaneously.
In the short term, prompts pushed me to follow my instincts and helped me create the unexpected, while in the long run, prompts led me to delve deeply into ideas, fostering exploration and contemplation. Both following my instincts and delving deeply into ideas takes me off my predetermined track. As external stimuli, prompts incite transformation that is hard to come by in a stable and predictable environment.

The constant use of prompts during my coursework also played a pivotal role in cultivating my unique methodology: defamiliarization and re-imagination. When these prompts pushed me to the unknown, I found myself perceiving things anew, beyond their existing definitions. I have used this methodology for my practice in grad school and the projects in response to the prompts given to me. Defamiliarization and re-imagination transforms general everyday objects into something completely new, imbuing them with new meaning, narratives, and significance. For example, I see Google Maps as the equivalent of the Earth we live on. If I see Google Maps just as a navigation app, not much narrative will come out of it. As Google Maps becomes Earth, additional possibilities open up, and in this way, the redefinition ignites the potential to embark upon multiple new projects. The projects in the chapter “Travel” were created based on this re-imagination.

The methodologies above were further extended into my teaching methodologies for “Tools Upside Down,” a 2023 Wintersession course, developed and taught collaboratively with Digital+Media MFA Dowon Yoo. “Tools Upside Down” was created with a strong focus on cultivating a creative environment to serves as a catalyst for inspiration, encouraging students to venture outside of their comfort zones.

Previously, what hindered my colleagues and I from exploring new landscapes was the lack of necessary stimuli for inspiration, our diminished enthusiasm, and a fear of taking risks. So for “Tools Upside Down,” we tried everything in reverse: sparking insights through a series of workshops, shaping a joyful class, and emphasizing failure as a valuable learning opportunity. Further, these pedagogical approaches were the answers to my previous question: how can we ensure talented designers remain passionate about pushing their boundaries?

On their own, implementing such actions may not be sufficient to affect substantial change, as many individuals have become accustomed to the prevailing culture and practices. Furthermore, directors or leaders who introduce new changes run the risk of facing termination if the outcomes do not meet expectations. However, the influx of new graduates entering the industry every year ensures the field will be changed. They are not sole directors or leaders but a group of people who have the power to change the culture. When a passionate group of individuals willing to take risks and challenge the status quo make up the majority, they will transform the overall environment and change the culture of their industries.

Throughout my two years of study, with the insights from classes, teachers, and the work of my cohort, I’ve learned how to search for new landscapes. My thesis is an ongoing action that will persist beyond my time in grad school. As a continuous action, “Searching for New Landscapes” keeps heading toward new horizons for a future beyond the clouds and creativity without confinement.
Likewise, people ask, what does this symbol mean ∅?

The letter “∅” is sometimes used in mathematics as a replacement for the symbol “0.” Unicode character U+2205, referring to the empty set as established by Bourbaki, and sometimes in linguistics as a replacement for the same symbol used to represent a zero.

Additionally, how do you write 0 instead of ∅? Use a font in which the number 0 has a diagonal line through it.

The standard way of telling a letter 0 from a number 0 in handwriting is to put a slash through the number.

∅||0.0.0tf
Last year, I crossed the sea to expand my horizons and came to RISD. The projects I did after coming to RISD had me pursue working between multiple media. What were the results of the landscapes drawn at the intersections?

They are classified into two categories:

The first category focuses on the "towards" passing through the intersection. They become a part of the landscape while passing through the borders.

The "towards" represent concept work across different media. One of the examples in this category is "Doi Doi Doi!".

"Doi Doi Doi!" includes different forms of dots. It was developed through a series of simple practices. The first practice was conducted using a circular template. I sprayed on the template and traced an uppercase alphabet. I took photos of the alphabet with my iPhone while walking in and out of the phone. I found that the arrangement and the transitional movement of the fuse in the app were visually satisfying. I then made my own compositions from this idea.
Walking along the beach in Rhode Island, I look back to the scene where I came here from my home country. I always wanted to broaden my horizons. Our perspectives and interpretations are altered when we get stuck in the same routine. I lived my entire life in the coffin, we only look at ourselves at the end of the coffin.

Easily7 looks up from coming up with innovative thoughts. By traveling to new worlds, we gain the inspiration that allows us to draw new landscapes. Being a designer, the landscape is new visuals, new forms, and new ways of thinking.
Cameras are one of the most common image-making tools.

*From the expression "And On And On"*  

When users take selfie videos, the videos are generated into animated GIFs and shown on a webpage.
BIOS — 2020 was a year of confusion. Since the pandemic, jobs and values that I once believed would last forever have disappeared rapidly. Feeling lost, I started to become doubtful about the idea of “eternity.” These thoughts drew me to the book “The Body,” which I came across at the library one day by chance. A body is something eternal, at least to its owner. Even if everything turns becomes digital, one’s body accompanies its owner. Expecting to find something meaningful, I decided to study about bodies. I picked several insightful headings from “The Body” and used each of them as starting points for my own research. As I wanted to leave my writing open to interpretation, I included Orpheus’s story in the margins of the left-most pages. Orpheus’s story is also related to each heading and provides a narrative of my research.

The title of my book “BIOS” indicates the biographies of Orpheus and myself, the author, but initially the title was named after the first call number (B105) of “The Body,” which is where everything began. Although “BIOS” is currently only 16 pages, I will continue my research. I hope that “BIOS” will be a stepping stone for my future work.

1 BIOS
2-3 Material Things in Their Relation to Aesthetic Body
4-5 The Flesh Becomes Word
6-7 Situating the Body
8-9 The Constitution of Psychic Reality Through the Body
10-11 Introduction of Being and Time
12-13 See and Sight

14-15 The Zero-Point of Orientation
16 B105

“The Body” — table of contents

1 — Orpheus and Eurydice
2 — Research and findings
3 — Headings from “The Body”
Prompts

2022  A Journey of Dots
2022  And On And On
2021  Waves
2022  Infinite Figures
Hildequinst von Mythenmetz is a young dinosaur studying the art of writing. As an inhabitant of Lindworm Castle, he has grown up being taught all of the important lessons to become a writer: basic reading and writing, advanced vocabulary, poetry recitation, Zamonian literature, and the craft of authorship.

What’s next for Mythenmetz? His authorial godfather leaves Mythenmetz a will before he passes away:

Go traveling!
Roam the Zamonian countryside!
Expand your horizons!
Get to know the world!
If you don’t give up, you’ll reach perfection.

This particular quote has always resonated with me. It articulates how we can transform ourselves and grow outside of our known environment. To be a graphic designer, we learn basic design knowledge and skills in college, and after graduation, apply the knowledge in our work to hone our skills. If we want more than just to sharpen our skills, we need to travel beyond the path we’ve followed up until now.

In the story, Mythenmetz decides to leave his home and embark on a journey to Bookholm, the grand city of literature. Everything he encounters in Bookholm is new and exhilarating, just like my first impression of grad school. Mythenmetz dreams of a bright future in the city, with all of the invaluable resources to become a writer.

Could this be why his godfather urged him to travel? Certainly, the incredible resources that Mythenmetz finds will have a profound effect on him. But unfortunately, before he is able to fully enjoy the city’s wonders, Mythenmetz falls into Bookholm’s underground labyrinth.

Trapped in the underground maze, he faces many unexpected challenges: the path he follows suddenly collapses, monsters appear, and a roller coaster takes him even deeper into the depths.
of the underground. These underground traps are parallel to the “prompts” I’ve experienced during my time in grad school. Like traps, prompts present new challenges, offering ways to break out of a comfort zone.

thrown into a new environment, we may panic with no map to navigate the unfamiliar area. Inevitably, we are forced to build our own path. Mythenmetz escapes the underground in his own way and grows as an author. Before entering the labyrinth, although he knew a lot about writing, he was not an author because he had never written on his own.

Inventing our own uniqueness is torturing. We don’t see any reason to turn our backs on the beautifully paved road in front of us and create our own where we don’t know what we’ll find. In the underground labyrinth, however, there is no way to move forward without making our own. Prompts kick us out of our comfort zone and help us to grow as an author.

Digging through the ground in the underground labyrinth often results in more failures than successes. However, what is more important, as Mythenmetz’s godfather says, “Go traveling!” to the place we’ve never imagined before. His last words give us courage: if you don’t give up, you’ll eventually reach perfection.
“A Journey of Dots” is a collection of small projects related to dots. Although each project in this collection was created for a different prompt, they influenced each other as they were created one after another.

Short-term projects play a role in taking us away from careful and delicate decisions. By following our instincts, we find ourselves more adventurous than when we are committed to long-term projects.

The resulting outcomes created by chance and improvisation have a sense of freedom and irregularity. Quick small assignments give us room to enjoy designing as play.
The first prompt began with creating a typeface using an object. I spray painted a circular template to create letters made up of a collection of dots.

To document this work, I took photos of the letters with my iPhone. The photos I took appeared in the iPhone Photo app. Although I didn’t plan the layout of the letters, their arrangement was quite satisfying.

While zooming in and out of the photos, I captured screenshots and made my own compositions with the screenshot images.
The second prompt was creating a variable typeface. I applied a small, distorting lens over the Photo app and hovered it across the screen to fragment the typeface. The letters shown through the glass were pixelated and distorted from the original typeface and made variations.

To apply this aesthetic, I rewrote the script I created during the Wintersession called “Ready Action.” By applying the script to the first result, I was able to generate several typefaces with different rough outlines.

“Ready Action” is a script that converts images or videos into animated illustrations. It allows users to get animated gifs or png sequences from the original source.

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1 “Ready Action” is a script that converts images or videos into animated illustrations.
“Ready Action” was also applied to “Tube Type,” a typeface made of tubes. The script broke down the line-shaped typeface into small particles.

a “Tube Type” — typeface created by bending a tube

b Results after applying the “Ready Action” script to the “Tube Type”

c I tried modifying the “Ready Action” script to create rougher shapes.
For the next prompt, “Zig Not Zag,” I came up with the idea of “walking on a street in a single direction.” The pixelated letters created by a small glass in the previous work reminded me of the meme of the pixelated cat reflected through glass. Therefore, I decided to use a cat as the actor for this prompt.

I applied “Ready Action” to a cat video I downloaded from YouTube and created a small crawling creature. While searching for the street where the cat would walk, I realized that my MacBook touch bar looked like a road, so I put the pixelated cat on the touch bar to create a motion poster.

a Original cat video (source video)

b “Ready Action” — running the script opens Photoshop and converts the cat video into a sequence of pixelated images and a pixelated video.

c The crawling cat generated by the “Ready Action” script.

d Pixelated cat animated on the touchbar

e “Touchbar cat” as shown in “Ocean Front Walk,” p. 36, 37
And On
And On, 2022
The prompt, "And On And On," immediately reminded me of the never-ending, painful office jobs of my past. With no reason not to do so, I replicated the process of office work in designing a motion poster. I drew the title “And On And On” on Google Sheets and printed the sheets out with my office printer.

Each edge of the sheets was glued together to make a single longer sheet, and I put that long sheet into my printer.

After that, I opened a blank page on my laptop and hit the print button. While the printer spat out the sheet, I quickly joined the two remaining edges to make a loop.

As the printer does not recognize the end of the loop, it continuously prints. As a result, the title “And On And On” automatically goes through the printer over and over, resonating with the pain of the office.
Following the prompt of analyzing a book from special collections at the Providence Public Library to create a new art piece, I chose a book that only had lithographs and roses on every single page. To extract meaningful data from the book, I took a closer look at it and realized that the full-color combination on the first page was created by overlapping each color shown on the remaining pages. I extracted the two keywords, “combination” and “separation,” and pushed my thoughts further.

Waves, 2021

Left — an old camera that I disassembled and recreated for the project
The rose book shows the process of image-making. In the past, lithography was the primary image-making tool. To produce a new piece based on this book, I thought about what today’s most common image-making tools are.

Offset printing is certainly more commonly used than lithography, but in the digital age, the paper industry is in decline, and I thought we should consider the most common image-making tools nowadays. The answer was a camera that produces a new image with just one press of the shutter. Cameras offer a quicker and cheaper solution to image-making.

I applied the keywords “combination” and “separation” to construct a new camera. Just like in lithography, where we make different colored plates and apply various inks to each plate, this camera can separate RGB color plates from the photographs and apply a new color to each plate, and generate dotted images.

The generated images are automatically uploaded to my Dropbox, where anyone can download them by scanning the Dropbox QR code.

Construction process — I disassembled an old camera and put a Raspberry Pi with a camera lens and screen inside.

Right — opening the lid on the back of the camera reveals the screen.
As the keywords “combination” and “separation” reminded me of “fragmented memories,” I made a video of an older person looking out at the ocean and recalling memories from their youth using the generated images and videos.

To show the video, I mapped three different projects of red, green, and blue lights. The lights from the projectors were overlaid on top of one another to generate a full-color combination.⁴

Selected sequences from the video

Each color of light overlaps with the others to create a full-color combination.

a Multiple single-color projectors are used to create a complete image

b The video overlapped by the multiple projectors

c Right — scattered dots in the video
Infinite Figures, 2022
On a quiet day, I was strolling through a gallery at the RISD Museum. As I moved through one of the rooms, I realized I was the only visitor in the room filled with portraits. Hung on large curving walls and confined in their frames, the museum’s portraits silently gazed at me. I realized that the moment I leave the museum, they will again endure a period of silence, waiting for the next visitor.

Museum portraits have little chance to travel outside of the confines of a museum gallery. Due to their exorbitant price, strict security, and rarity, portraits are objectified as invaluable and lose the right to travel freely.

This project began with a prompt to create a new piece that evolved from a previous body of work. I developed the idea that one of the most common image-making tools nowadays is a camera, which was the core idea of my previous work, “Waves.”

The museum’s portraits are destined to never physically venture out of the museum. However, the moment the portraits are photographed by their visitors, a magical transformation occurs: they acquire the ability to travel around the world. When the portraits are transferred onto smartphone screens, depending on the light, angle, and exposure, countless portraits are cloned as new figures.

Although the flesh of a portrait is too heavy to traverse networks because they are constructed from oil, acrylics, or other materials, their corporeal cells transform into pixels when they are photographed. These tiny picture elements can pass through a smartphone lens, enabling the cells to float around the internet.

Left — “Head of Christ or a Saint” one of the converted museum portraits
In this project, old portraits at the RISD Museum are regenerated into digital images with my iPhone camera.

Based on the microscopic images I observed from the material used in each portrait, I created a set of pixel modules for each type of materiality present in the Museum’s collection of portraits to generate digital DNA for the reproduced image.

When I photograph a museum portrait and its accompanying caption with my iPhone, the camera detects the photograph and the materials written in the caption. A digital copy of the portrait is automatically uploaded to my laptop, and depending on the material that makes up the cells of the portrait, different pixel modules are applied. The generated image is shown on my laptop screen and posted to my Instagram account automatically.

Smartphone cameras nowadays play the role of one of the most common image-making tools. While artists spent plenty of time and effort drawing portraits to capture appearances in the past, now anyone can create infinite figures with just one touch of the shutter.

Even if the source portrait is the same, the resulting digital portrait is distinct because light and angles change slightly in each shot. In short, there are as many possible permutations as there are moments in the day.
The left side of the screen where the portrait is created has elevator buttons made of radio button UI. When visitors press the button to go down, they encounter the digital RISD museum basement, which is a 3D space filled with a collection of digital portraits.

a “Infinite Figures” displayed on multiple screens
b 3D space filled with a collection of digital portraits
c “Portrait of Auguste Vestris,” 1793 — one of the source portraits I used to generate a digital portrait
d Right — 3D space filled with a collection of digital portraits
I further developed this idea into an additional side project. In this project, when you take a selfie video, the captured video is converted into a short 5-frame GIF and displayed on my laptop.

The resulting generated images are transferred to mirrored paper using heat transfer vinyl, creating a digital-to-physical transformation.

When I take a video of myself, the captured video is converted into a short 5-frame GIF and displayed on my laptop.

b “Head of Ian”  
Nov. 29, 2022 at 6:12 pm

c “Head of Clement”  
Dec. 5, 2022 at 5:59 pm

d “Head of Zoe”  
Dec. 28, 2022 at 2:32 pm

Right — “Head of Halim” transferred to mirror paper
Travel

2022  Frozen Island
2023  Frozen Island. Live
2022  Portal
2022  Dancing in the Moonlight
“Jangma” is a word for the Korean monsoon season. As the season is very hot and humid, I used to have a recurring nightmare whenever Jangma came around. Covered by unpleasant moisture, I kept sinking into the water. When I reached the bottom, my body got stuck and I couldn’t move or run away — I was lying in a coffin.

In a coffin, one’s viewpoint is limited to the singular, so we only see the lid of the coffin. This limitation traps our possibilities and prevents us from exploring new opportunities. I have met many friends who are tired of repetitive and monotonous work in the field of design. Working as an in-house UX designer, I found myself feeling the same way. Following all the rules and regulations, design guidelines and standards, the opportunities to exercise imagination and take risks are diminished. The strict environment pushes us to settle for the present and stay in the coffin. In this way, our passion and dreams are buried in the ground, and we fall into eternal sleep.

As I began to think about how to break out of the coffin and how to avoid that path for myself, I started to consider three principles that could inform my practice: flexibility, defamiliarization, and reinterpretation.

One of the places I feel like these apply are in Marc-Antoine Fardin’s paper, “On the Rheology of Cats.” Fardin, a physicist at the French National Center for Scientific Research (CNRS), mathematically confirmed that cats are liquid. The logical structure in his paper is as flexible as a liquid. He argues that the official definition of a liquid is a material that takes the shape of its container. As cats fit this definition, cats are liquid.

“On the Rheology of Cats” digs into this loophole in human understanding. Although the definition of a word (e.g. a liquid is a material that takes the shape of its container) is already open to many interpretations. For “liquid,” human perceptions tend to equate liquid with water and leave the concept in its conventional box.

Fardin took his cat out of the coffin by
turning his cat into a liquid. The way we see the world is governed by the general ideas that humans have crafted over time. The definition of a thing is not a single fixed truth but one of the inventions created by humans. Since there is plenty of room to interpret things in different ways, your own interpretation has an equal value to the truth.

I see Google Maps as the equivalent of the earth we live on. By redefining it, additional possibilities open up for the next step of ideas.

Above the earth, there is always the moon which shines down on it. “Dancing in the Moonlight” depicts a landscape in which the dark earth is colored by the light of the moon.

When you drop the Google Maps avatar onto the place you want to go, you can dance to music there. After you dance, your dancing leaves a yellow figure on the map. If more people share their dancing, the initially dark earth will become far brighter with their individual moonlight figures.

This project strives for digital defiance of physical restrictions. As a result of the pandemic and the war in Ukraine, many countries worldwide have been under travel restrictions. The title, “Dancing in the Moonlight,” was named after the song of the same name. Sherman Kelly, the songwriter, wrote this while recovering from a severe injury after being attacked by a gang. Through the song “Dancing in the Moonlight,” he envisioned an alternate reality of a peaceful and joyful celebration of life. From my own project of the same name, I pursue the same goal.

The title of this essay was taken from one spot on Google Maps — Ocean Front Walk, where I found the running Seaweedman. I admire the Seaweedman who escapes from the coffin and sprints under the sunlight by the sea. In his running, I feel the expansiveness of infinite freedom.

I have always wanted to cross the sea full of unknowns.

Walking along the beach, I dream of being the Seaweedman to reach a new landscape that I have never seen.
For example, when the top area of the blurred wormhole in the image is clicked, a Google Maps visitor travels in time from 2019 to 2017.

I liked staring at the edge of the water. The stretched horizontal line of the sea suggested infinite possibilities, driving me to imagine what lay beyond. Curious about the world beyond the horizon, I yearned to cross the water and I dreamed about reaching places I’d never been. Then, just as my dream seemed about to come true and the world beyond the horizon seemed within grasp, the pandemic occurred. I lost my confidence. Would I ever cross the sea? Whenever the question arose, I went into Google Maps and walked around the place I planned to live. For me, Google Maps was hope. It was proof that the places I desired to reach genuinely existed.

During the pandemic, digital and real-world experiences became one. The debate over which was more authentic was no longer important. Individuals we meet on Zoom are real people, not just a collection of pixels. Likewise, Street View on Google Maps is founded upon reality. It is a real representation of landscapes we may have once chanced upon. Though we experience Google Maps only via screens, it is alive with the ceaselessly substituted copies of our present.

While traversing virtual streets, I stumbled into many strange scenes. As Google Maps does not back up the earth every second, the collected data — captures of different times and locations — is sloppily stitched together, making a new ragged landscape. The roughly glued patches are wormholes connecting disparate geographic points in time.¹
As I explored, I randomly dropped my Google Maps avatar onto the map and began collecting weird footage even as I continued to document wormholes. Perhaps the strangest scene I found was the watermarks on the sky in Street View, which reminded me of the sky in the 1998 film, *The Truman Show*. In the movie, there is a scene where a stage light falls from the sky. The action implies that Seahaven Island, the main character’s hometown, exists under a dome, an all-encircling layer that keeps the island separated from the outside. The sky above Seahaven Island is an artificial expanse. Beyond this “sky,” people observe the island from above via screens and monitoring equipment.

Google Maps also has its own layer and observers. When we drop an avatar onto the map, it plummets through its bounding layer and penetrates the watermarked sky, ultimately landing in Street View. While the avatar walks around, we users look down on the Street from outside the map through the sky, viewing through the screens of our monitors or smartphones.

The similarities between Google Maps and *The Truman Show* inspired me to create “Frozen Island,” an archive of frozen moments. Selected captured moments are marked on the map, and viewers are invited to explore the island by dropping their Google Maps avatars onto the map.

As an interactive installation, “Frozen Island” appears on a TV screen as an homage to *The Truman Show*. Users manipulate a joystick to explore the island’s topography, referencing how audience members in *The Truman Show* flip through TV channels using remotes.
Afterward, “Frozen Island” was published as an actual website. The site incorporates the Eye View as a framing element, symbolizing both the Earth and a portal, as well as the distinctive iris shot often seen in *The Truman Show*. The Eye View frame can be turned off within the street view to provide a wider and more immersive street view experience.
Welcome to Frozen Island. This website archives intriguing moments frozen in time by Google Maps. Click on the yellow circles to view the moments, and zoom in on the circles to drop your Google Maps avatar onto the place. You will encounter plenty of strange and beautiful moments around the world.
Welcome to Frozen Island. This website archives intriguing moments frozen in time by Google Maps. Click on the yellow circles to view the moments, and zoom in on the circles to drop your Google Maps avatar onto the place. You will encounter plenty of strange and beautiful moments around the world.
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Frozen Island.
Live, 2023
This publication translates “Frozen Island” into a physical form: print media. As a gift from “Frozen Island,” a set of perforated, lick-and-stick stamps are presented at the beginning.

The oval circles used throughout “Frozen Island. Live” are indicative of the Earth, the viewing eyes of users, and the idea of a portal. Each stamp that makes up the book’s cover is a mini-portal that takes you to surprising moments on Google Maps. By tagging the stamp with your phone, you can travel to strange and beautiful places in the world.

The title of this book, “Frozen Island. Live,” is named after Frozen Island’s website address — frozenisland.live

Left — book | 5.3 × 4 in
lick-and-stick stamps on the cover

Each stamp is a mini-portal with an NFC tag. People can visit the intriguing moment on Google Maps by tagging it with their phones.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Image Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sep 2014</td>
<td>Kurnie Lake</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug 2012</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr 2014</td>
<td></td>
<td>![Image]</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The front cover of this book is a gift from Frozen Island. Through each stamp, a mini portal with an NFC tag, you can visit on intriguing moment on Google Maps by tapping it with your phone. Tear the portal off, keep it around you, and travel to the site whenever you want.

(You might not immediately get a notification from scanning the tag. Make sure your phone touches the stamp and continues moving your phone slowly around the stamp until the interaction triggers the NFC antenna.)

How to use the stamp portals

1. Check if your phone is NFC enabled.
2. Tear the stamp off the cover.
3. Lick the back of the stamp and stick it.
4. Tap the top center of your iPhone to the stamp.
5. A notification will appear on your screen.
6. Tap the notification to visit Street View.
7. Android
4. In the “Search Settings” box, type “NFC” to find the setting and turn it on.
5. The NFC antenna can be positioned on the top, middle, or bottom of the phone model.
6. Tap the NFC antenna to the stamp.
7. A notification will appear on your screen.
8. Tap the notification to visit Street View.
I liked staring at the edge of the water. The stretched horizontal line of the sea suggested infinite possibilities, driving me to imagine what lay beyond. Curious about the world beyond the horizon, I yearned to cross the water and I dreamed about reaching places I’d never been. Then, just as my dream seemed about to come true and the world beyond the horizon seemed within grasp, the pandemic occurred. I lost my confidence. Would I ever cross the sea? Whenever the question arose, I went into Google Maps and walked around the place I planned to live. For me, Google Maps was hope. It was proof that the places I desired to reach genuinely existed.

During the pandemic, digital and real-world experiences became one. The debate over which was more authentic was no longer important. Individuals we meet on Zoom are real people, not just a collection of pixels. Likewise, Street View on Google Maps is founded upon reality. It is a real representation of landscapes we may have once longed upon.

Though we experience Google Maps only via screens, it is alive with the ceaselessly substituted copies of our present.

As I explored, I randomly dropped my Google Maps avatar onto the map and began collecting weird footage even as I continued to document wormholes. Perhaps the strangest scene I found was the wormhole in the sky in Street View, which reminded me of the sky in the 1999 film, The Truman Show. In the movie, there is a scene where a stage light falls from the sky. The action implies that Seashaven Island, the main character’s home, exists under a dome, an all-encompassing layer that keeps the island separated from the outside. The sky above Seashaven Island is an artificial expanse. Beyond this “sky,” people observe the island from above via screens and monitoring equipment.

Google Maps also has its own layer and observers. When we drop an avatar onto the map, it plummets through its bounding layer and penetrates the watermarked sky, ultimately landing in Street View. While the avatar walks around, we users look down on the Street from outside the map through the sky, viewing through the screens of our monitors or smartphones.
“Portal” opens the door from your home to the world. Now you can go anywhere by simply saying the name of the place you desire to travel to, which can vary from your hometown that you haven’t visited in a while or a bucket list travel destination.

This piece was born out of the struggle to travel during the global pandemic. I couldn’t visit my hometown in Korea due to travel restrictions, so I created this piece as an outlet for freedom. You can traverse virtual streets in the portal as well, using your iPhone as a joystick.

Technically, “Portal” is not a real portal that can physically transport you to another city, but this piece does not articulate the truth. This is a doorway to the new world and a piece about pursuing freedom under restrictions. By distorting and tweaking reality, the portal generates magical feelings and makes our lives more exhilarating and enjoyable.

1 This project used voice recognition.
2 The portal was made using a web programming language and then projected on the wall.

Left — portal on the wall

a “Portal” on the wall: closed

b “Portal” on the wall: open
By saying the name of a place you want to go, Google Maps's Search Bar pops up, and the place in the portal automatically changes to the place you want to go.

- Traversing virtual streets in the portal

- Right — by saying the name of the place you want to go to, the Google Maps's Search Bar pops up. “Portal” will then automatically change the place displayed accordingly.
Giza Pyramid Complex, Al Haram, Egypt
Dancing in the Moonlight, 2023
I see Google Maps as the equivalent of the Earth we live on. Above the Earth, there is always the moon which shines down on it. “Dancing in the Moonlight” depicts a landscape in which the dark Earth is colored by the light of the moon.

I personally don’t like being in a closed space because that space represents the restriction of freedom. I assume that I’m not the only one who feels this way. This project was created in an effort to reclaim mobility and to recover a sense of community under the travel restriction during the pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

Although the project was created during the time of travel restrictions, these restrictions do not only mean physical restrictions. The confinement can manifest in various forms, such as personal challenges, work-related pressures, or strained relationships. Whatever they are, the project seeks to empower individuals to find enjoyment and positivity in their current circumstances, offering a digital defiance against limitations.

The title, “Dancing in the Moonlight,” was named after the song of the same name. Sherman Kelly, the songwriter, wrote this while recovering from a severe injury after being attacked by a gang. Through the song “Dancing in the Moonlight,” he envisioned an alternate reality of a peaceful and joyful celebration of life. From my own project of the same name, I pursue the same goal.
When users drop the Google Maps avatar onto the place they want to go, they can dance at that location to music while traversing virtual streets on Google Maps. Anyone can record and share their dance moves as well as dance together with other people.
The avatars created by participants are shown on Google Maps in yellow as figures of moonlight. The more participants join this project, the brighter the initially dark Google Maps interface will become as their individual moonlight avatars light up.

People can also dance together with their friends.

The more participants join this project, the brighter the initially dark Google Maps interface will become as their individual moonlight avatars light up.
“Tools Upside Down” was a Wintersession course offered in January 2023 that aimed to discover new possibilities of tools through their unconventional utilization. Serving as an extension of my thesis, the class placed a strong emphasis on pushing boundaries and venturing outside one’s comfort zone to embark upon exploratory endeavors. As an interdisciplinary course, “Tools Upside Down” was developed and taught collaboratively with Dowon Yoo, a Digital+Media MFA.

To leverage the nature of the Winter session, which typically consists of 2 to 3 classes per week, we created five small workshops to make the most of the time immediately after each lecture. These workshops were designed to facilitate the completion of daily assignments during the workshop session. This approach pushed students to react immediately with not much time to think and led them to follow their instincts and find the unexpected.

The purpose of these small workshops was to encourage students to step outside of their habits and explore new territory. We emphasized that it was okay to fail during the workshops and allowed students not to follow the designated prompts if they did not resonate with them.

On the other hand, the final project demanded sustained development throughout the course. With more time available compared to the small workshops, the focus was on diving deeply into their ideas. By providing a combination of short workshops and a longer-term final project, the course aimed to strike a balance between rapid experimentation and in-depth exploration.

During the course of the class, students consistently presented remarkable results that exceeded the anticipated outcomes set for each session. Their achievements served as a source of inspiration and motivation for the instructors as well. As a member of the class, I also could have the opportunity to gain new insights, ideas, and inspiration.
In terms of the development of the class, we had the advantage of co-teaching, which allowed us to complement each other’s fields of expertise and fill in each other’s gaps. As the class progressed, if there were areas that required modification or improvement, we documented the ideas on Google Docs and discussed them during the feedback time for the next day’s class.

In addition to revising the class slightly every day, we aimed to make the entire learning experience enjoyable by incorporating upside-down tools as class materials. One of these class tools was a class website I created. My goal was to build a website that incorporates the basic functions of a class website with the core values we pursue, which are exploration, joy, inspiration, collaboration, and belonging.

I made the website as an open canvas so that anyone can type anything they want to express. During the class, it was used as a chat room, drawing tool, sign-up sheet, Q&A, and a space to complain about being hungry! Further, this website encourages visitors to connect with students and their work. When visitors click on the names floating on the website, they can visit students’ Instagram pages.

Here are some considerations I kept in mind while designing the website:

1. To be utilized as a shortcut to consolidate class materials that are scattered in Google Drives and Are.na.
2. To make the website a collaborative space where all members can contribute and participate in its development.
3. To break away from the conventional structure of class websites.
4. To connect students with each other even outside of class so that they can motivate one another.
5. To encourage visitors to connect with students and their work.
6. To make the site open and transparent.

---

chatroom!!!!
Helloooooooooooooo
hi!

this is free real estate

Bing

Chilling

Why is everyone on this page hungry?!!!
: hungry
: Ban......

Hello all!
yay

I’m so hungry...
same

What is yall’s mbti?
Kinda curious
- ENFP
- Infj
- INFP
- ENTJ
- INFP
- ENFJ
- INFJ
- INTJ

---

I hate Monday I HATE MONDAY I HATE MONDAY
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTERVIEW</th>
<th>2023 Feb 11</th>
<th>Interview with Min Guhong Manufacturing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2023 Apr 23</td>
<td>Interview with Yehwan Song</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MIN GUHONG MANUFACTURING

Min Guhong Manufacturing, established by Min Guhong in 2015, is a one-person company that is parasitic on the design studio and publisher Workroom. The company focuses on promoting Min Guhong Mfg itself in various forms and markets the by-products of its process for sale.
Thank you for your response to the interview. I cannot escape from my addiction to the products made by Min Gughong Mtg, probably because I read Rainbow Sherbert (Archive Spring · Workroom Specter, 2019). Fortunately, the main addictive material of this work is not marijuana but maybe the writing. How did you want to make Min Gughong Manufacturing look, and how did you write such writing?

I thought it would be desirable if there was a somewhat dry but curved part in my writing. I hoped Min Gughong Manufacturing could be read as if it had existed since the past. We sometimes discover a person who is not well-known due to some reasons, though we sometimes intentionally hide our dependence on someone, I wanted to reveal Min Gughong Manufacturing’s love and respect for Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industry. Because, in many aspects, the company is a great example. I wanted to say that something like an agency of Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries was held, so I hope to have you as non-executive independent directors of the company. I also selected to output the text array by using JavaScript, rather than using e-mail, after the style of Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries.

Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries primarily applied Adobe Flash to its works, but when I wrote a letter to them, Adobe Flash disappeared from the industry. I needed the lower version of Explorer and Adobe Flash plug-in to appreciate their work soundly. Today, Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries’ works are posted as films, not as codes, on Vimeo. Though the mixing of sentences and music still remains, I think there are large differences between codes-based works and films regarding technology and context. I also wanted to ask how they feel about it. I have not yet received any reply, but it’s fortunate in a sense because I can continue to write letters to them.

The “Dear Messrs. Jang Yeonghye Heavy Industry” is especially well-known. What was the reason for first creating and sending it?

I created the writing in a way that I liked and at which I was good. I focused on how it would be read rather than how it would be shown.

We naturally resemble someone who we like and even love. Although we sometimes intentionally hide our dependence on someone, I wanted to reveal Min Gughong Manufacturing’s love and respect for Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industry. Because, in many aspects, the company is a great example. I wanted to say that something like an agency of Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries was held, so I hope to have you as non-executive independent directors of the company. I also selected to output the text array by using JavaScript, rather than using e-mail, after the style of Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries.

I have held the New Order as a ‘general education course for modern people’ since 2019, and I first met Juyeong Kim there. I am happy to see that the members of the class organize something and participate in activities, which fills my heart with pride and makes me encourage them.

I was not able to participate in New Order, but I really enjoyed reading the introduction to computer languages in the book New Order (Mediabus, 2019). I could easily understand the technical contents, and simultaneously, I felt the writing looked like a coding language itself or a prose poem. Do you teach coding to the trainees of New Order in a similar way?

It is interesting that parodies and homages are created by referencing to the original objects. They can be recognized as a kind of meme. They are another style of love, aren’t they? Meanwhile, parodies can be created because the source code is very straightforward. I intended to allow others to steal the code and change its content, to try something new, and Juyeong Kim utilized this in a smart way.

I studied creative writing and linguistics while at university. In a fiction writing class, my professor told me that his motivation for writing fiction was that he “just wanted to be good at lying.” He added that “in order to do so, one needs to let fiction coexist with reality.” Looking back, I seem to have been a rather good student. – in the “FAQ”

I, however, cannot suddenly shut up my company, right?

In particular, <a> tag, which produces hyperlinks which allows access to many documents. In other words, the <a> tag is the essence of the web, playing a key role in facilitating connections or hyperlinks. The <a> tag is the destination by moving to the next status due to the <a> tag.

While I was unable to participate in New Order, I really enjoyed reading the introduction to computer languages in the book New Order (Mediabus, 2019). I could easily understand the technical contents, and simultaneously, I felt the writing looked like a coding language itself or a prose poem. Do you teach coding to the trainees of New Order in a similar way?

In New Order, we talk about how to deal with computer languages from the perspective of writing; more specifically, from the perspective of ‘practical and conceptual writing.’ Computer languages are created by letters and a blinking cursor rather than by a tool or icon in graphic design software. In other words, creating websites by learning computer languages, including HTML, CSS, and JavaScript, is similar to writing poems or novels by learning unfamiliar foreign languages. This would not be a nonsense story, if we think about the beginning of the web. The web was invented to allow researchers to efficiently share papers. It thus began as prints. I think that websites are evolved books.

I did not arrange all of the HTML and CSS tags in the book, but I imagined some possible stories hidden in them. In particular, <a> tag, which produces hyperlinks and makes the web truly "web," means "anchor." This is based on facts, but it’s also derived from my own thinking and reasoning.
As I read through “FAQ,” I thought <a> tags in “FAQ” really act like “anchors.” In way that eyes stopped at the <a> tags, and by clicking on hyperlinks and opening new windows, I can explore new websites. The questions and answers continued to the next like a book, and the parts where anchors exist seemed to perform the website’s essential function. Did you design the current scene of “FAQ” from the beginning? I wonder what process the website has undergone.

About 80% of them are taken from actual interviews, but the rest is me asking myself. I sometimes cannot distinguish which ones are real interviews as they are mixed with fabricated ones. There are some fields where it’s possible to control all factors and make them perfect and clean, but websites may cause headaches if we desire to pursue such states. I think it is better to make a moderately messy choice.

You also created a game to introduce your company. I’m sure this is a question you’ve heard a lot, but why did you create an adventure game, “Welcome to Min Guhong Manufacturing”?

You mentioned that “For Your Information,” the video inserted into the ending scene, was created by Laurel Schwulst. How did you and Laurel become best friends?

Some of commentaries on the game are as follows:

“Not that extremely fun but… what is this really?”

[Myeonghwan Choi, Journalist of Monthly DESIGNS]

The official website (https://old.minguhongmf.com) of Min Guhong Manufacturing which was first created in 2016 has only one menu, a link to “About the Company.” When someone clicked on it, they could just access a PDF file on the AVP Lab. It was a single HTML file with no CSS. I operated the website for about a year with the motto, “Although the technology is simple, my mind is far-reaching,” but I was asked to respond to many interviews just about it.

The number of interviews was increased, so I must add an additional menu to the official website. The websites for large companies have “About” and “FAQ” sessions, so I decided to make such a session and put the interviews to which I have responded into it.

I didn’t think too much about what it would look like because the concept of collecting questions and answers and organizing them into an “FAQ” was important. I also believed that large volumes would give such a sense. The number of Q&A exceeded about 200.

I wonder how people around you responded to “Welcome to Min Guhong Manufacturing” after you distributed it, though they might already know well that you have created such a thing.

M Their opinions were very different. Most of them who have played it said it was fun, while others complained that it is too long, and some said they have never even tried it. To be honest, I’m not carefully listening to feedback.

Do you like story-selection-based games?

M As a kid, I was very fascinated by adventure games. I initially planned to intrepidly create a 3D game. I even applied for the course about creating games. I imagined the games I liked, such as a series of “Portal” or “The Stanley Parable,” but I realized that I had so many things to do by closely examining such games. I considered a little bit simpler game, and a game method emerged from my memory. Of course, the working process was never simple.

It looked like 3D, and the perspective changed.

M It is fortunate that it seemed so. To create images appearing in the game, I used Live Home 3D, a program for interior design similar to SketchUp.

The websites back then were really weird. Something about them was so weird that they made me look at them often. While J. R. Carpenter advocated the Handmade Web in 2015, current websites are more like applications. This is a major reason why technologies around JavaScript, such as Single Page Applications (SPAs), are becoming more popular than HTML and CSS. Making a plan for or designing websites is also focused on it.

M We exchanged e-mails for a while and then first met each other as I entered School for Poetic Computation(SFPC). In the summer of 2016, we met at the literature corner in the local bookstore in Manhattan, McNally Jackson. I had conversations with her, walking around neighborhoods from Manhattan to Brooklyn and vice versa.

We had similar tastes and thoughts on the web. Laurel also played with a computer as a kid. I can’t forget the taste of organic watermelon juice I had in Chinatown when I first met her.

The web I first experienced in the mid-1990s gave me a different feeling compared to the current one. This is a major reason of wonder, novelty, and excitement I felt in experiencing it still may remain somewhere in my mind. Such a feeling may be expressed as ‘a loose fit with a large blank?’ The impression that captured my mind naturally permeated into my work.

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I felt the game might come out while you enjoyed creating it, having a lot of fun. Many items in the company are mentioned. Is there anything you hadn’t included?

M I had a wish to create a game with the theme of Min Guhong Manufacturing. I used Python for the game.

I felt the game might come out while you enjoyed creating it, having a lot of fun. Many items in the company are mentioned. Is there anything you hadn’t included?

M I was so immersed that I couldn’t see its end, to the degree that I desired to do only this work forever. At some point, I thought I should finish my work, so I might ignore such desire. At first, there were even more stages, but most people suggested that this level was good. So I finished it based on the beta testing results.

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The websites developed and operated by individuals have disappeared, while the use of social media seems to be very active. Given the popularity of image-sharing-based Instagram and Twitter's word limit, long-breath text consumption seems less popular than ever. Your work centers around texts. Wasn't that a disappointment to you?

M: I do not think about the subversion of the current flow. I don’t even think it’s possible. It’s very large and powerful. If today’s websites went back to being handmade, it wouldn’t be fun either. Nevertheless, handmade websites still exist, and not a few people talk about them. It’s like another flow or stream. I believe that it would be possible to talk about these areas if they are interesting.

If you’re tired or frustrated with social media-centric online communication, you’re in for a “new order.” I assume that people who get tired of or are reluctant to use social media-centered online communication visit the New Order.

How do you build a community? I’ve been working on it alone, but after a while, I realized that I might have done a better job with a group of people.

M: I believe that it is better to build communities naturally. New Order seems to be a kind of community, but it is not though there’s a specific “New Order” group. But I tend to encourage them to make a study group because a group activity is good for people who are beginning to code. When I look back on myself, I think my style is working alone. Though some parts can be achieved through cooperation or partnership, there are definitely things that we have to do ourselves.

Have you experienced difficulties in working alone? It could be code, ideas, or something else, and I’m curious how you deal with such difficulties.

M: I sometimes think that coworkers would help me in such a situation. I may solicit their advice on difficulties, but usually, those situations only happen when I do client work in the AG Lab because Min Guhong Manufacturing jobs are just a matter of following my heart.

In the AG Lab, we work together, but we still do most of our work individually. Usually, we work on our own projects and check in on each other’s progress. Although there are some cases in which clients’ requests cannot be easily treated, I tend to deal with them alone as I’ve set up my system this way anyway. I work with a number of people through the AG Lab, but I manage and am responsible for Min Guhong Manufacturing by myself.

If you’re tired or frustrated with social media-centric online communication, you’re in for a “new order.” I assume that people who get tired of or are reluctant to use social media-centered online communication visit the New Order.

We’re almost at the end of our interview time. Is there anything you wish I had asked during the interview that I didn’t?

M: Well, I have no idea. Even if we have things not covered, taking a second look at “FAQ” would be great?

What’s the most recent Min Guhong Manufacturing product you’ve wanted to promote?

M: Whenever I’m asked similar questions, I usually reply that it’s Min Guhong Manufacturing itself because, above all, we can have this meaningful conversation, due to and thanks to Min Guhong Manufacturing.

I think that was a very Min Guhong Manufacturing-like answer.

M: I’m happy and satisfied that it’s a platform optimized only for me, Min Guhong.
Web artist and designer Yehwan Song designs and develops experimental and innovative websites as well as interactive graphics. She suggests a new direction of digital design, overturning the conventional ideas of web design through a variety of experiments that cross the border between virtual screens and physical spaces.

After finishing this interview, fortunately, I was able to participate in Yehwan Song’s workshop held as a public lecture for the class “Grad From 2” at RISD. Students connected to the website prepared for the workshop through their own smartphones, uploading photographs in real time and collaborating to build a single identical website.

The master website where the students’ images are uploaded is split into mask forms, each shown on each student’s mobile screen. When you swipe or scroll on one of those screens you can see the other devices’ screens also move. During the workshop, students were able to create a new 3D form by placing devices freely, and all the participants enjoyed the process of producing a collective outcome.
I started to create websites when I was a child. In a similar field to the Web are physical computing and physical interaction, which naturally stimulated my interest.

For websites, I make it for clients’ projects; for physical computing, it is leading to my personal works and exhibitions. The ideas for both fields have things that complement each other, so I’m intentionally trying to work on both in parallel.

On a personal work, I’m trying to spend as little time as possible so as to move on to creating another work. When I get stuck on something, I try to work it out for about three days. If it doesn’t work, I move on to the next project.

What do you focus on in each part?

Y My main approach to physical interaction is to take it as a performance.¹ Using a device in a different way from its conventional use is itself, a performance. For a website, I focus on how to show its storyline.²

Existing websites are rooted in UX design with user convenience taken as a priority in many cases. I do not focus on user convenience but rather on the content itself.

I’m deeply impressed by your saying “take it as a performance.” Motion graphics seems to stand out as a main design feature in your overall work. Rather than a sub-element added to a still image, the motion itself felt like a main axis. So, I thought your emphasis on performance might be connected to this.

Y I started working on animation and video earlier than on web design. In the field of graphic design, my background is closer to motion graphics than to editorial design. I was sitting up all night, as I always did when rendering motion graphics, and I suddenly felt that “this is so bad.” Since then, I have focused on web design. (Laughter)

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Existing websites are rooted in UX design with user convenience taken as a priority in many cases. I do not focus on user convenience but rather on the content itself.

Motion graphics applications set the invisible space outside the artboard so that designers need to consider the space outside, which seems to have been reflected in your website design. The Views³ exhibited at the Seoul Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism in 2021, by my assessment, extended the insight about the space outside-the-screen beyond the web browser. The way you wove space with structure looked so cool, and you included many structural and architectural elements, so that I’m wondering if you also have a lot of interest in physical architecture.

Y Yes, I like architecture. Besides, I have liked mathematics and science since my childhood, and I once seriously prepared to study them more deeply. I liked geometry and its constructions to the point of reveling in drawing squares only with an unmarked ruler and a compass. When designing a website, I tend to try not to be influenced by other existing websites, so I’m more interested in external factors like architecture. When participating in a biennale or exhibition, I need to consider how to connect the exhibition theme with my work. The theme of SBAU 2021 became the moment for me to extend my ideas.

1. This is based around the category “Anti-Friendly.”
2. This is based around the category “Narrative Architecture.”

a “Art&Code 8,” 2022
website | artcode8.com

b “Aquarium,” 2020
2 ipads, webcam

³ “The Views” is a website showing the five virtual characters’ views to the exhibition space including two main sections. Based on the content structure (five views and two main sections), the website constructs a content-based virtual exhibition building on the web space. People can see the exhibition from the perspectives rarely experienced in the actual exhibition space, and can explore the structure through the virtual building.
I am critically minded about the Western-centric culture dominant on the Web, so I considered how to change it. Naturally, I came to work in a way that twists existing things. I think the Web is not as free and democratic as we generally think. Coding is a language consisting only of English, and its community revolves around the West, although there are other alternatives. In fact, the preference for the West seems not a technical matter, but rather a matter of established convention and structural domination, as shown by even Koreans preferring to code in the dominant language of English, despite Korean language options. I started working with the intention of breaking this convention, and also conducted relevant research at a Swiss residency program. I remember the School for Poetic Computation (SFPC) in New York, where I had previously worked as an intern with almost no acquaintances. However, the school introduced me to my first friends in the US friends. Before entering SFPC, I attended a Dutch summer school called “Open Set,” where the Internet artist Olia Lialina served as a tutor. Probably then I learned how it’s possible to work on websites this imaginatively. These two schools I remember the most, and besides, I remember I got around here and there collecting experiences one by one, feeling that “I don’t know what I can do in future, but by getting around, I could possibly find something.”

Besides the Swiss residency, I know you have stayed at various places. Where did you have the most fun?

I wanted to do experimental works, and was a fan of Moniker Studio, Metahaven, and the designer E Roon Kang. Since it was hard to come across such designs in Korea, I made up my mind to seek out them by myself overseas. Looking at the web arts in the Netherlands, Berlin, and New York, I dreamt of working together with those artists in the same space. Sometimes I blindly visited and tried to contact them. I think those who constantly desire to travel new experiences are dissatisfied with their present environment. I’ve worked on coding since my early years, which was not viewed so favorably from others in Korea. Such things constituted a formative experience. Overseas, I had very different experiences from those in Korea. Extending the links between parts I had previously been unaware of, I was also able to broaden my view. When you were working at E Roon Kang’s studio, what kind of things did you learn?

I was about 20 years old back then, having almost no ability of coding but just liking E Roon Kang’s works so much that I visited him blindly. What he thought about me, as I look back on it now, seemed like this: “What you need to learn in New York at your age is not about working itself, but about seeing a new culture and environment.” So, he sent me around to many places like graduation exhibitions or bookstores. I am still very thankful to him for such things. If you ask me what I did at the studio, I don’t have much to say, but at the time I first visited New York, I was able to look around for how people live. The reason why I first visited New York was “I also want to be an able coder who creates cool websites,” but when returning to Korea, I felt that New York was such an interesting city. Since then, I have visited the city time and time again.
Was there any time you felt things were not working well? When I worked alone, I often found myself unable to finish either coding or design properly while doing both together.

Such things still happen to me as well. (Laughter) Out of the ten ideas for personal works in physical computing, eight or nine often do not work well. When this happens, I stop working on it for a while. By saving it and working on another project, I happen to receive a new idea and proceed again with the previously unsolved work. For a client’s project, I can’t stop it and move on to another, so I seem to keep working on it even though it’s stressful. Otherwise, there are times I find another method and fashion persuasive words so as to change the proposal accordingly. Even starting at a big-picture level, we probably couldn’t avoid adjustments in the actual process of coding.

Generative artists are really-fast coders, and my friends who have focused on design are now really-good designers. Seeing how they are, I sometimes wonder why I’m living this way. That said, as I keep working, I feel my abilities improve bit by bit in both coding and design after all. That is what I believe, and I am doing so with the idea, in the end, I can get it. Plus, as I continue working, I somehow run into those who are in a similar line of work.

Apart from your personal work, how do you proceed with clients’ projects?

Y In the beginning, my suggestions tend to be so radical and experimental. Through negotiations with the client, the plan develops and settles in a more realistic direction. In these days when ChatGPT can stand in for us as a coder, I think I should design experimentally to survive. (Laughter) The term of a project is usually three months or could be extended to four months or so. The three-month term is the best fit to make a clean finish for conceiving, developing, and delivering an idea.

Y Such things still happen to me as well. (Laughter) Out of the ten ideas for personal works in physical computing, eight or nine often do not work well. When this happens, I stop working on it for a while. By saving it and working on another project, I happen to receive a new idea and proceed again with the previously unsolved work. For a client’s project, I can’t stop it and move on to another, so I seem to keep working on it even though it’s stressful. Otherwise, there are times I find another method and fashion persuasive words so as to change the proposal accordingly. Even starting at a big-picture level, we probably couldn’t avoid adjustments in the actual process of coding.

Generative artists are really-fast coders, and my friends who have focused on design are now really-good designers. Seeing how they are, I sometimes wonder why I’m living this way. That said, as I keep working, I feel my abilities improve bit by bit in both coding and design after all. That is what I believe, and I am doing so with the idea, in the end, I can get it. Plus, as I continue working, I somehow run into those who are in a similar line of work.

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Adventurous
willing to take risks
and try new methods

Author
one that originates
or creates something

Coffin
a box in which the body
of a dead person is buried

Confine
something enclosed
by a set of boundaries

Defamiliarize
to make something seem
unfamiliar, strange, or
disconcerting in order to
reinterpret or subvert it

Evolution
any process of formation
or growth

Exploration
the action of traveling in or
through an unfamiliar area
in order to learn about it

Flexible Thinking
the ability to cognitively
conceptualize something
in a new or different way

Freedom
the condition or right of being
able or allowed to do, say,
or think whatever you want
to without being controlled
or limited

Growth
the process of evolving
or developing

Imagination
the ability to form pictures
or ideas in the mind

Improvisation
acting or going about some-
thing without planning ahead

Instinct
the way people naturally react
or behave without having to
think or learn about it

Invent
to produce a useful device
or process for the first time
through the use of the
imagination or of ingenious
thinking and experimentation

Landscape
all the visible features of
an area, often considered in
terms of their aesthetic appeal

Metaphor
an imaginative way of
describing something through
a comparison that highlights
a similarity

Methodology
a system of methods and
principles for doing something

Portal
a doorway, gate, or entrance
to the world

Prompt
Something to get you started,
to move to action: incite

Reinterpretation
the action of understanding
something in a new or
different light

Subvert
to challenge somebody's ideas
or expectations and make them
consider the opposite

Tool
an object that can extend
an individual's ability to modify
features or help them accom-
plish a particular task

Transform
to change the appearance
or character of something
or someone completely,
especially so that that thing
or person is improved

Travelling
the activity of moving or
journeying from one place
to another, especially to
places far from home

Uniqueness
the quality of being one's own

Venture
to risk going somewhere
or doing something


Your World of Text, Andrew Badr, https://github.com/reverie/yourworldoftext

This thesis would not have been possible without your support. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude.

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Rhode Island School of Design

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