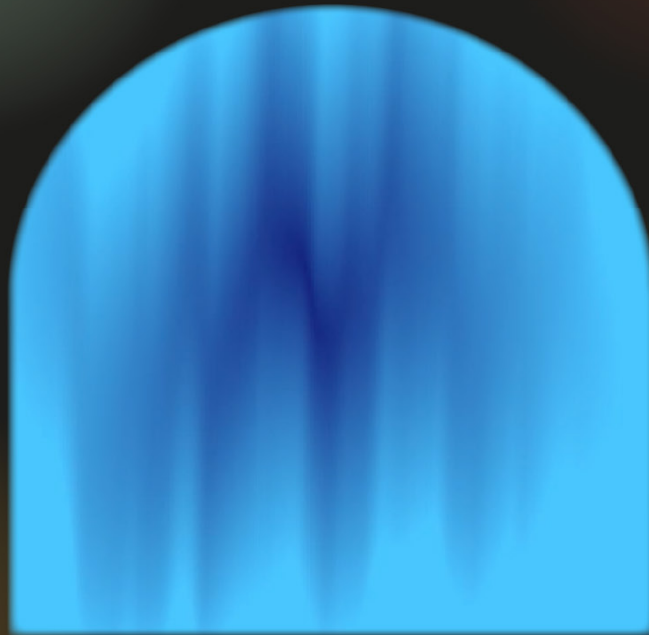


The Journey to

Light & Serenity

By Weidi(VICK) Qi



MFA-DESIGN 2024

Mindful Serenity Pod
by Weidi(VICK) Qi

A Project
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty of
California College of the Arts

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Fine Arts in Design

Chair of CCA MFA in Design Jon Sueda

Thesis Advisor Brett MacFadden

Thesis Writing Advisor Randy Nakamura

May 10th 2024

Acknowledgements

I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis professors, Brett MacFadden and Randy Nakamura, for their insightful feedback, persistent support, and invaluable guidance through conducting research, crafting, and writing this thesis. Their professionalism, encouragement, and patience have been the foundation in creating this work.

I sincerely appreciate my program chair members, Jon Sueda and Sara Dean, for their valuable insights, constructive criticism, and proficient advice, which effectively enhanced the result and quality of this thesis.

I am also deeply grateful to California College of the Arts for providing the necessary resources, facilities, and opportunities that were crucial in completing this thesis. Special thanks to the staff at MFA-Design for their administrative assistance and technical support.

Finally, I thank all my friends, family, and colleagues who have supported me emotionally and intellectually during this challenging yet rewarding endeavor.

Thank you all for being part of this design journey and for your invaluable contributions.

Weidi Qi

Table Of Content

- 01 Introduction about me**
- 02 The starting point and exploration of my thesis direction**
- 03 Researching on the shoulders of giants**
- 04 The ideation and design of Mindful Serenity Pod**
- 05 My take and summary of Mindful Serenity Pod**

Chapter One

Introduction about me



Hello. My name is Weidi(Vick) Qi. This is my thesis book about the journey of my graduation thesis—the Stress Relief Pod. To start this chapter, I would like to introduce you to my academic background at CCA briefly. I started my undergraduate degree at CCA in 2018 as a human-computer interaction program student with a minor in computer practice. During my undergraduate years, I mainly studied user experience and user interface design for various applications and websites and created prototypes or interactions to demonstrate my concept. Those experiences mostly have rules and guidance to follow, such as the Gustov principle - a design philosophy that prioritizes simplicity, clarity, and delight in user experiences, aiming to create intuitive and enjoyable interactions, heuristic evaluation - a usability inspection method where evaluators systematically assess an interface based on a set of predefined heuristics or usability principles to identify usability problems and suggest improvements, and usability study. Those aspects taught me how user experience design is different from fine art creation because the designer must think of users' perspectives within the design. This mindset has influenced the creation of my works, so whenever I start designing, I follow the user experience design processes, which are creating empathy with the target users or audience by conducting interviews and creating personas to find out what current situation made them struggle or troubles them; then defining the problems as problem statements from those struggles from the users to understand what needs to be prioritized as the cause; after that, it is ideating the solutions with storyboards and user journey maps to make sure the solution concept would be successful in implementing and solving users' problem. Lastly, I would transform those ideations and illustrations by creating wireframes and conducting usability testing for several rounds to ensure no usability issues within the design. I would make them into prototypes for the final

demonstration. All of these design patterns have taught me many things as a designer mindset to have the user center design principle, which I find this process is also helpful for many other design work creations.

During the middle of my undergraduate years, there had been a tough time since COVID started. Most classes had turned online, meaning fewer contacts and exploration for my design projects. I soon realized this aspect and found out the limitations of my design. It is because solely focusing on the user-centered design principles is not enough for a satisfactory result, and during the design process, there are always some other aspects and details that rely on other design angles, like the usage of the color, the font, and the format. During my internship in my senior year, I found out that these diversified design aspects matter because they make the design unique and special compared to existing works, which creates the potential for design advantages. Soon following my graduation from my undergraduate year in 2022, I decided to apply to the MFA design program to enhance my design skills in those other diversified design areas and start to develop into my thesis topic. By the time of the fall semester of 2023, I began exploring my thesis direction. In the first thesis class, we were asked to develop a basic thesis topic in one week, like a micro thesis topic, to summarise our thesis focus area. Since it is a post covid era and I have previously learned about how the COVID period affected people's emotions and stress, I also created an interactive web project, "Zen Garden," for web to print class project, so I decided to move forward with this direction in stress relief for my thesis.



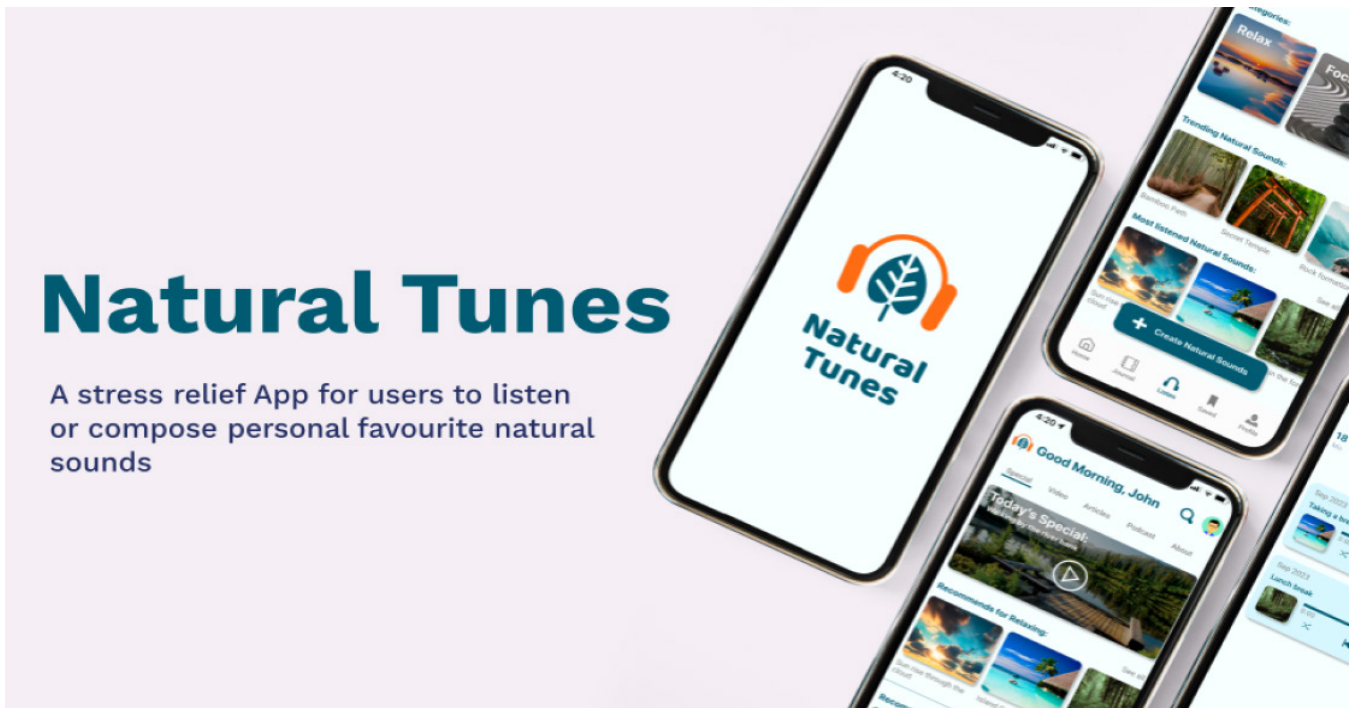
Chapter Two

**The starting point and exploration of
my thesis direction**



By the time of the fall semester of 2023, I began exploring my thesis direction. In the first thesis class, we were asked to develop a basic thesis topic in one week, like a micro thesis topic, to summarise our thesis focus area. Since it is a post covid era and I have previously learned about how the COVID period affected people's emotions and stress, I also created an interactive web project, "Zen Garden," for web to print class project, so I decided to move forward with this direction in stress relief for my thesis.

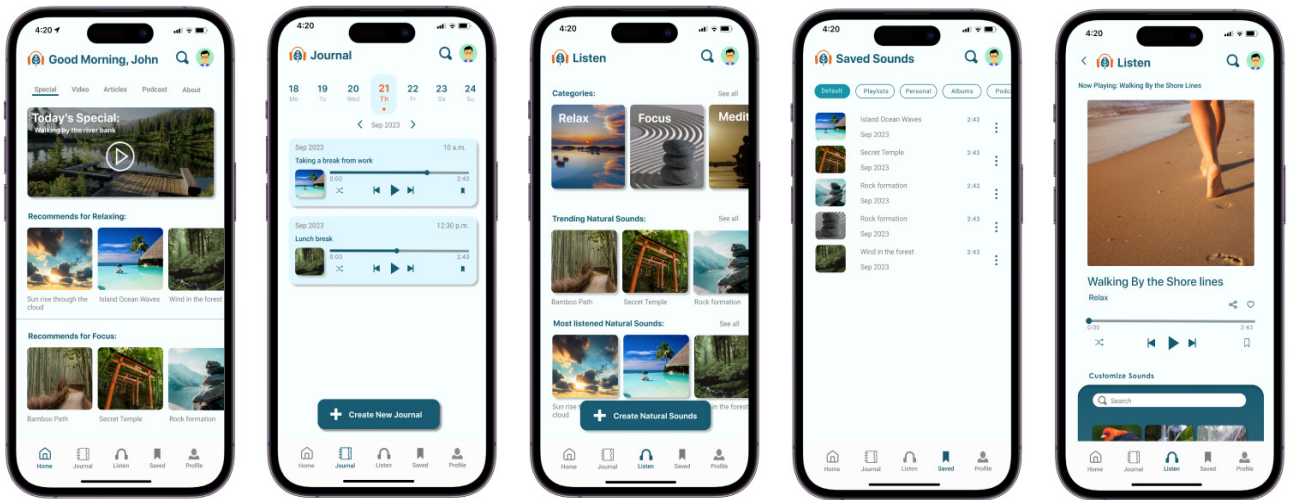
Project 1 Micro Thesis: Natural Tunes App



The initial project for my thesis exploration involves the creation of an app that enables users to compose their own personalized natural sound music for stress relief, which users can listen to and compose various natural sounds within their preference to reach a state of relaxation. In this application, there are also pre-composed natural sounds that users can select directly, and they can modify the natural sound in the process if they are not satisfied with the sound, like adding a layer of different natural sounds, such as bird noise, raindrops, wind chime, or ocean waves. With the complete modification of the natural soundtrack, users can save them in their archives for future use, making it convenient

to revisit their ideal natural sound music.

This micro thesis project has provided valuable insights that taught me not every problem is meant to be solved by apps or software; sometimes, it would be better for designers to jump out of their boundaries and look into other alternative mediums for stress relief approaches. This feedback has guided my focus away from conventional, commercialized app user experience design. On the other hand, I discovered that people tend to have personal preferences regarding stress relief methods; some might prefer other mediums like



meditation, sport, or resting, and some would prefer other natural elements like lights, views, taste, or sensory touch. These elements are all considerations to implement and consider in my thesis research path and would not be limited in the range of stress relief performance. So, the professor suggested I should get out of my comfort zone, which is the app or web-based design, instead. I could try more methods to perform this perspective as exploration progresses toward stress relief.

Project 2: Peaceful Serenity

The second project I did was a small fountain called Peaceful Serenity. This is because, from the start of the second project, we have a theme or topic that our professors will give us to explore. This project is especially around water, which is a perfect match for me when considering stress relief. Water could be a common and interesting element for people to de-stress, such as the water sounds and forms; they all have a peaceful and tranquil quality. So I did several sketches to think about the form of the water and how I could present it in a stress relief direction, and the most satisfying result was to create a water fountain that could present the form and

sound at the same time for the audience to experience the nature element of the project in stress relief. When I ideated the concept and sketched some drafts for the idea during the class, the feedback let me think more about the material and how people could interact with the piece to be distinct from the rest of the existing fountain because there are a lot of the fountains perform the same function to let people de-stress. So, I looked into the theme of nature from my stress relief direction and came up with the idea of choosing bamboo as my main focus and the material for the fountain since bamboo is an organic material that fits perfectly with a stress relief theme called



Zen. stress relief direction, and the most satisfying result was to create a water fountain that could present the form and sound at the same time for the audience to experience the nature element of the project in stress relief. When I ideated the concept and sketched some drafts for the idea during the class, the feedback let me think more about the material and how people could interact with the piece to be distinct from the rest of the existing fountain because there are a lot of the fountains perform the same function to let people de-stress. So, I looked into the theme of nature from my stress relief direction and came up with the idea of choosing bamboo as my main focus and the material for the fountain since bamboo is an organic material that fits perfectly with a stress relief theme called Zen.

Besides considering the material, I also looked into the interaction between the fountain and the audience. Since people normally have different preferences and tastes in stress relief, it is better to come up with a solution that enables them to customize their experience. As a result, I decided to make the fountain modifiable, including different kinds of pebble stones, animals, and small Zen-themed objects within the fountain so people can decorate themselves to fit their tastes. To make the fountain



generate water flowing sound, I built three platforms at different heights and connected the highest level with a water pump to keep it flowing with water, so when water drops from the highest level to the lowest level, during the process, it will create small waterfalls that create those sounds of flowing water, so when people hearing those sounds it will promote a sense of peacefulness and serenity. By the end, I had combined all of the ideas to make the fountain, and it received positive feedback on how they felt stress relief within this project.

Project 3: Wind Chime Tree (Park side project)

The third micro thesis project is unique compared to the previous work. We were introduced to going to the nearest community park close to our campus and thinking about how to connect the park's experience to our micro thesis project. The park we picked for our class is Mission Creek Park, located near the waterside and within 10 minutes' distance. The park is chill and peaceful since it is hard to find green areas in the highly populated urban surroundings, so it is a perfect spot for people to relax or retreat from their fast-paced working life. Many people lie on the lawn and walk their dogs. Even during the middle of the day, I saw workers working in the nearby office buildings taking their lunch breaks and eating lunch on the park benches.

For the next several days, I walked around the park and tried to seek inspiration for this thesis project. I suddenly noticed that since the park is close to the waterfront and alongside the San Francisco Bay, there is always some gentle wind blowing throughout the park all day. This discovery aroused my interest, and I think, what if I use the wind as an element for stress relief? The wind in the park is a unique element different from the plant and the water that has been so common to explore in the stress relief design, and the wind was just a perfect angle to

explore. So, I devised some sketches for the design and ideated a large-scale park installation similar to those architecture or sculpture designs. After a few rounds of brainstorming and group critique sessions, I designed a wind chime tree that harnesses the natural wind as a medium for stress relief. The concept involves placing the wind chime tree at the park's center so that the tree produces soothing wind chime sounds whenever the wind passes. These sounds are distributed to every park corner through pipes underneath the tree. This innovative design aims to enhance the park's overall calming ambiance and give visitors a natural stress-relief experience. The final prototype of the wind chime tree scale is smaller to fit the concept, and we presented the work inside the park as well, which makes the design seem more realistic to be implemented in real life.



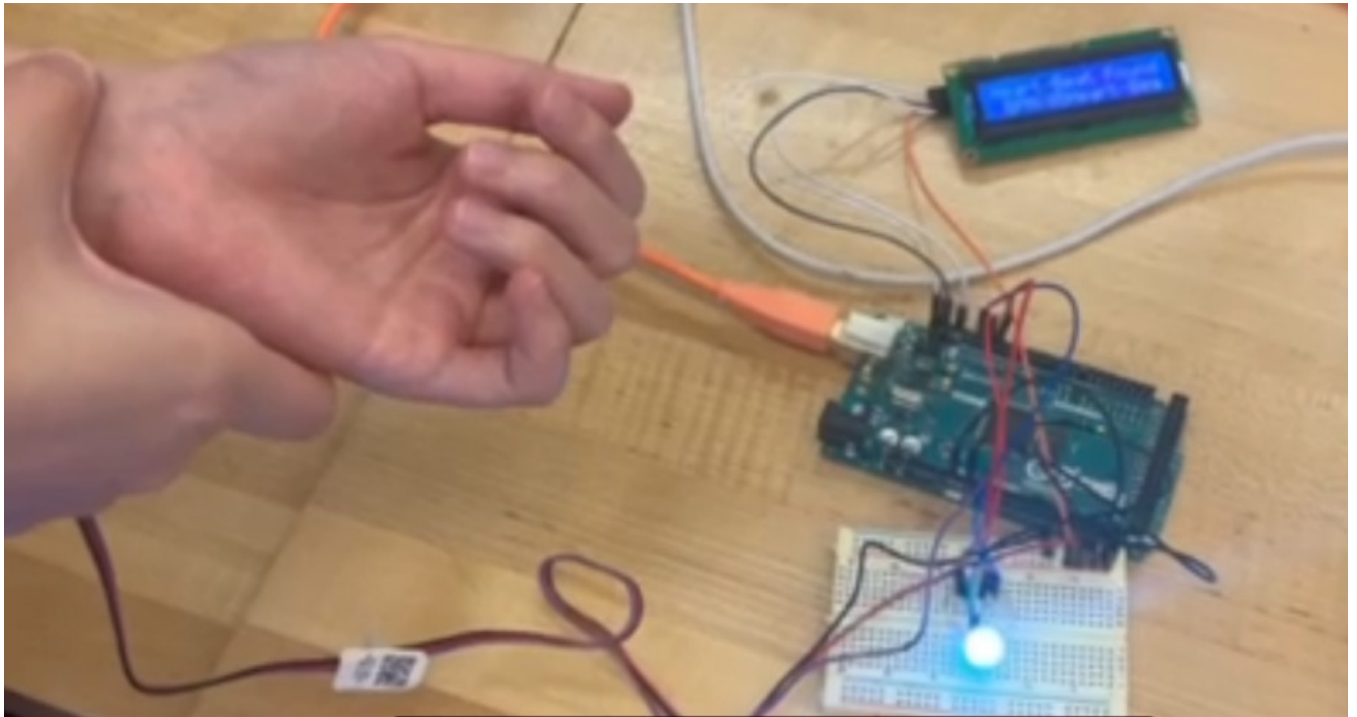
Project 4: Ambient Heart Beat Lamp

In the fourth project, called The Shoulder of Giants, we did a round of research based on our thesis direction and current thesis exploration. Since my thesis is evolving with stress relief with different natural elements such as sounds, water, and wind, I decided to move on to the most common element in our daily lives – the light. This inspiration mostly came from the research I did on James Turrell's works and other art installations that use light as a medium to achieve the goal of relaxation. This research was conducted during the exploration phase of the project, and one of my elective class conceptual objects revolved around James Turrell's art style and his works. I was fascinated by Turrell's use of natural or ambient light as his medium to create his artwork. Some famous pieces like Skyspace and Three Gems are so calm and

peaceful to watch and keep people noticing something so familiar and trivia in our surrounding environment that still can significantly influence people's emotions and mindfulness. So, I decided to create something similar to Turrell's concept of using ambient light to achieve the goal of stress relief.

The design concept is straightforward based on the given timeframes. I was thinking of creating a lamp that can detect people's stress levels and emit ambient light accordingly to let people know their stress levels. Hence, the first thing I did was to source some electronic sensors in the hybrid lab that can detect people's stress levels., luckily there is a device called the heartbeat sensor that can monitor people's heart rate similar to those hospital





devices, so I tested it and experimented the sensor with Arduino to understand its coding. Then, I searched for an RGB light that could change colors based on the signal it received, and I modified and connected the RGB light with the heart rate sensor to let the light change its color based on the heart rate reading. The higher heart rate would emit extensive colors like red, the moderate heart rate would be decreased to yellow, and the slow heart rate would represent a blue color. I ran several tests with my classmates and professors and found out that people's heart rates would be different based on their body sizes and other physical measurements, so it would be inaccurate for only one heartbeat indicator; the best thing I could do was to set it into a heart rate range to change the color. Therefore, I researched some statistics and made the light change based on the heart rate ranges to make the result more precise than the only indicator.

Chapter Three

Researching on the shoulders of giants



While exploring my thesis direction in stress relief, one of the essential processes is for me to research the artists and the artworks that have been purpose or intention in designing art installations in stress relief. Researching those artists and artworks can provide some unique insights and inspiration for me to think about what I could develop in my thesis topic and what I could avoid designing something already done, especially with the design topic that utilized ambient lights and sounds. In addition, I collected those artists' artworks and shared them with my peers and professors to learn about their feedback on my thesis topic. It was inspiring to see their angles on the research and how I could utilize those artist approaches and concepts within my thesis design.

I documented my research of those artworks with my interpretation and categorized them into different themes;

Water Theme:

- “The Rain Room” by Random International
- “Wave: Light + Water + Sound” by Studio Roosegaarde
- “The Pool” by Jen Lewin
- “Submergence” by Squidsoup

Natural elements:

- “CLOUD” by Caitlind r.c. Brown & Wayne Garrett
- “1.8” by Janet Echelman
- “Forest of Light” by Sou Fujimoto and Cos

Light and Perception:

- “Assemblance” by Umbrellium beckons
- “Light Barrier” by Kimchi and Chips
- “Murmuration” by Squidsoup
- “Light Leaks” by Kyle McDonald and Jonas Jongejan
- “Our Colour Reflection” by Liz West

Water Theme - “The Rain Room” by Random International



The first work I chose is “The Rain Room” by random international. It is an environmental art installation that uses technology to provide an immersive feeling for the audience to experience a surreal rainy environment. The setting is in a dark room with one directional light that focuses on the rainfall, which provides sensory deprivation to the audience and lets them focus on the environment. There is one particular interaction that this installation allows audiences to walk into the rainfall without getting wet, and it is because the roof of the installation has a sensory device that can control the rainfall when people walk beneath it and leave a shell-like space to prevent the audience getting wet. Beyond that, the rainfall also creates an ambient sound that exactly feels the same as the sound people hear on an ordinary rainy day, which could provide a soothing and stress-relieving experience when people walk and listen during the process.

allows the audience to walk around in the rain without standing in the distance to watch the rain. This interaction is a remarkable design aspect that conveys a more personal and realistic message to the audience.

For my take on this design, the interaction between the audience and environment is an essential part of this design to work perfectly. As an environmental art installation, the audience must have a personalization encounter, such as a free space to explore in the rain without worrying about getting wet so people can concentrate on the sounds and rain drops. The rain room



Water Theme -

“Wave: Light + Water + Sound” by Studio Roosegaarde

The work “Wave: Light + Water + Sound” by Studio Roosegaarde is a sizeable environmental art installation composed of LED lights and sounds to mimic the relation of natural water waves and sounds. It creates a harmonious feeling for the audience when they walk through the installation, and the LED light constantly changes to form a dynamic and responsive space based on the audience’s movements. With different numbers of audiences walking around the space, there also would be a chain effect for the installation to create the visual impact of water waves and sounds, which enhance the immersive experience of the water wave.





In my takes on this work, the usage of LED projecting design in a vase area is impressive to create an immersive natural scene, especially the devices that support the detection of people's movement in the area can bring a sense of randomness for the visual appearance. Beyond that, the usage of sounds also bring another level of the sensory experience of the installation, so the audience would feel the installation in a dynamic way for this natural scene which elevated and merge the boundary between technology and the natural environment.



Water Theme - “The Pool” by Jen Lewin



In the work “The Pool” by Jen Lewin, the artist creates an interactive surface for the audience to step on for the visual and ripple effect. The surface is composed of many light panels that allow people to step on them. They respond to the movements of the audience and generate a series of lights and colors that ripple through the surface, which provide an immersive and wonderful experience within the environment.

In my personal experience with the art piece, the memory setting for the participants walking on the panel to trigger the effect of the light serves as a collaborative effort for the interaction. The audiences become the artists who create their paintings, so they have a high engagement and freedom like a live public canvas. That brings a playful, shared experience between the participants and the observers who watch the art piece from a distance, so this aspect of the design could be utilized in my future thesis design as a shared experience of interactive art.

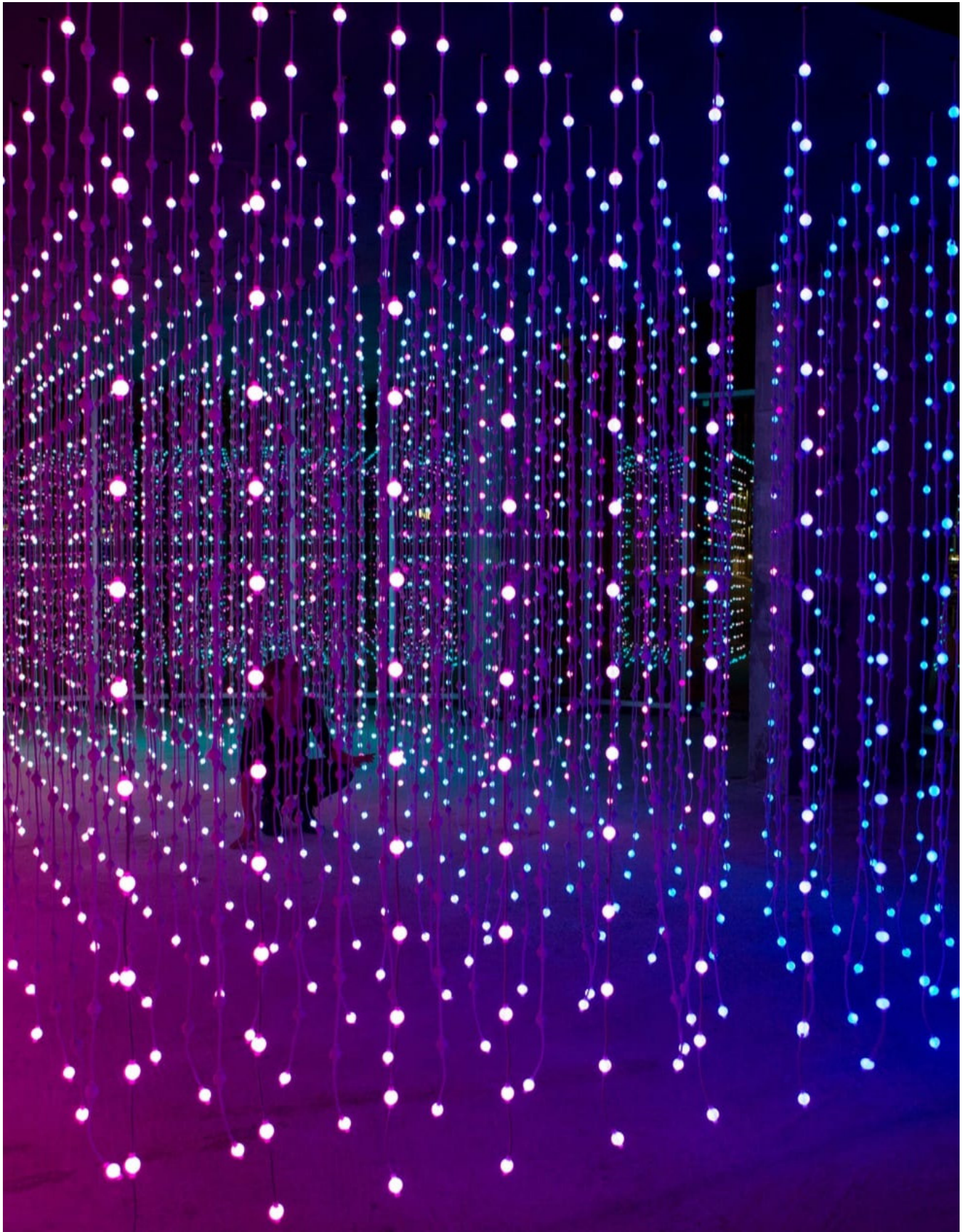


Water Theme - “Submergence” by Squidsoup



The work “Submergence” by Squidsoup is an indoor installation consisting of a series of hanging lights as a space of intricate web. The installation has physical and sensory perspectives when audiences walk through the area. The physical aspect is the web of hanging lights since people can touch and interact with the light bulbs, and the sensory aspect is the light colors and patterns based on the audience's movement, which interplay the physical space into a dynamic, constantly changing environment without a clear borderline between the reality and temporary space.

From my perspective on the work, the responsive nature of installations connects the audience and the work. Compared to other outdoor installations, the installation would have an eternity boundary since it could be a significant disadvantage for the audience to be submerged within the artwork. However, “Submergence” utilizes a web of hanging light bulbs with ever-changing patterns, which enhances the lumination effect in a confined space and invents a surreal journey for its audience to forget the boundary of reality. With the interaction and changing pattern of light bulbs, each trip could be various for the audience so they would have their unique personal immersive experience with the art piece each time they enter the space.



Natural Element - “CLOUD” by Caitlind r.c. Brown & Wayne



In the work “Cloud” By Caitlind r.c. Brown and Wayne Garrett is a physical art installation composed of thousands of light bulbs in a cloud-shaped tree. Each light bulb connects with a dedicated pull string, which allows the audience to drag and interact with its illumination. Within a crowd of people dragging the string, the cloud forms different patterns based on the location where the people drag the strings and creates a different illuminated pattern for people to view at a distance, creating a harmonious feeling when the light pattern changes on the tree.

In my perspective towards the works, I feel that utilizing light bulbs as collective inaction devices is a specialty for this design, especially since it involves everyone participating in the interaction of the lumination from the tree, which is random without any predication or regulation pattern. The audience can form a collaborative force with the design so everyone is connected when they interact with each other, especially the visitor who views the tree from a distance could also enjoy the collective interaction as the result of the interaction.

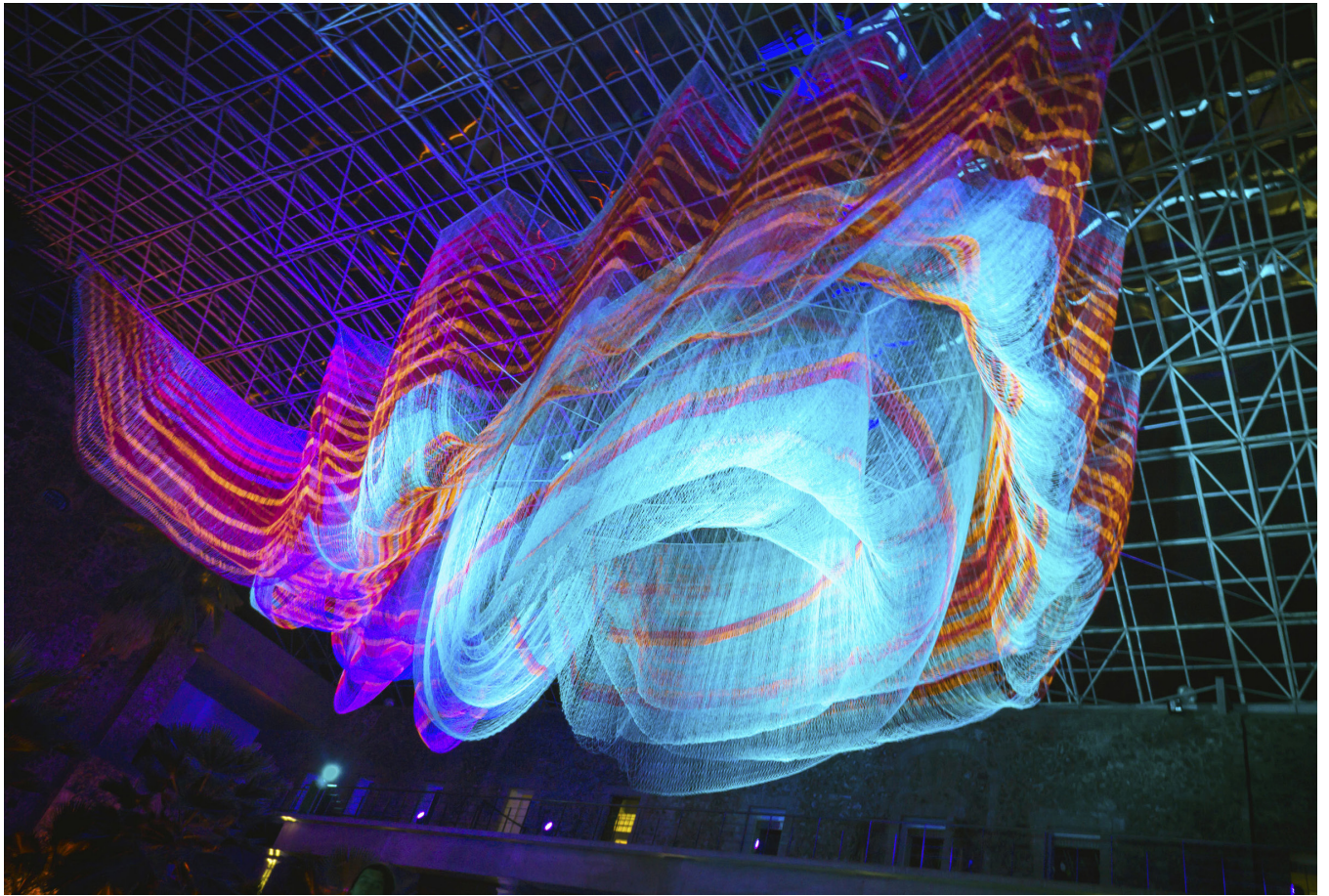


Natural Element - “1.8” by Janet EchelmanGarrett

In the artwork “1.8” by Janet Echelman, she utilized a large fishing net to make it into a large space art installation incorporating light and color. The art structure floats over the audience’s heads, with its random waving textures and constantly changing spectacle, creating uncertainty and intensity. The 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami inspired the work itself, and this struggle in the artwork is reflected in the natural catastrophe’s impact on people’s lives.

From my feeling toward the art piece, “1.8” is a unique sculpture that emphasizes the chaos and destruction of natural disasters into a symbolizing art beauty. The position of the sculpture above the audience’s head provides a dominating strength, the constantly changing spectacles representing the randomness of nature’s power. The work conveys many messages within the structure’s shapes and forms, which is the core concept supporting the piece to deliver its resilience message about humanity and nature’s force to the viewer.





Natural Element - “Forest of Light” by Sou Fujimoto and Cos



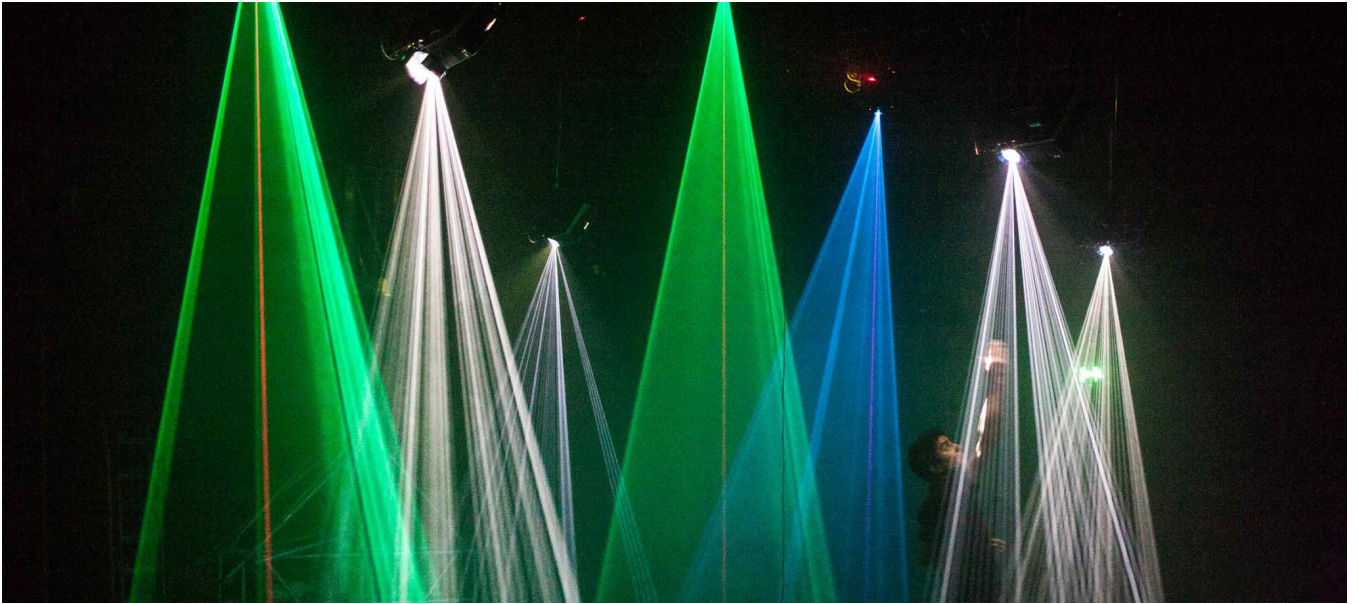
In the artwork “1.8” by Janet Echelman, she utilized a large fishing net to make it into a large space art installation incorporating light and color. The art structure floats over the audience’s heads, with its random waving textures and constantly changing spectacle, creating uncertainty and intensity. The 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami inspired the work itself, and this struggle in the artwork is reflected in the natural catastrophe’s impact on people’s lives.

From my feeling toward the art piece, “1.8” is a unique sculpture that emphasizes the chaos and destruction of natural disasters into a symbolizing art beauty. The position of the sculpture above the audience’s head provides a dominating strength, the constantly changing spectacles representing the randomness of nature’s power. The work conveys many messages within the structure’s shapes and forms, which is the core concept supporting the piece to deliver its resilience message about humanity and nature’s force to the viewer.



Light and Perception - “Assemblance” by Umbrellium beckons





In the installation “Assemblance” by Umbrellium beckons, the artist utilized laser beams as installation devices in the space, emitting different colors of light beams around the audience based on their presence. The installation’s reaction provides the visitor with a visual and auditory interplay, allowing the audience to create their own realm of the artwork as a part of the installation setting.

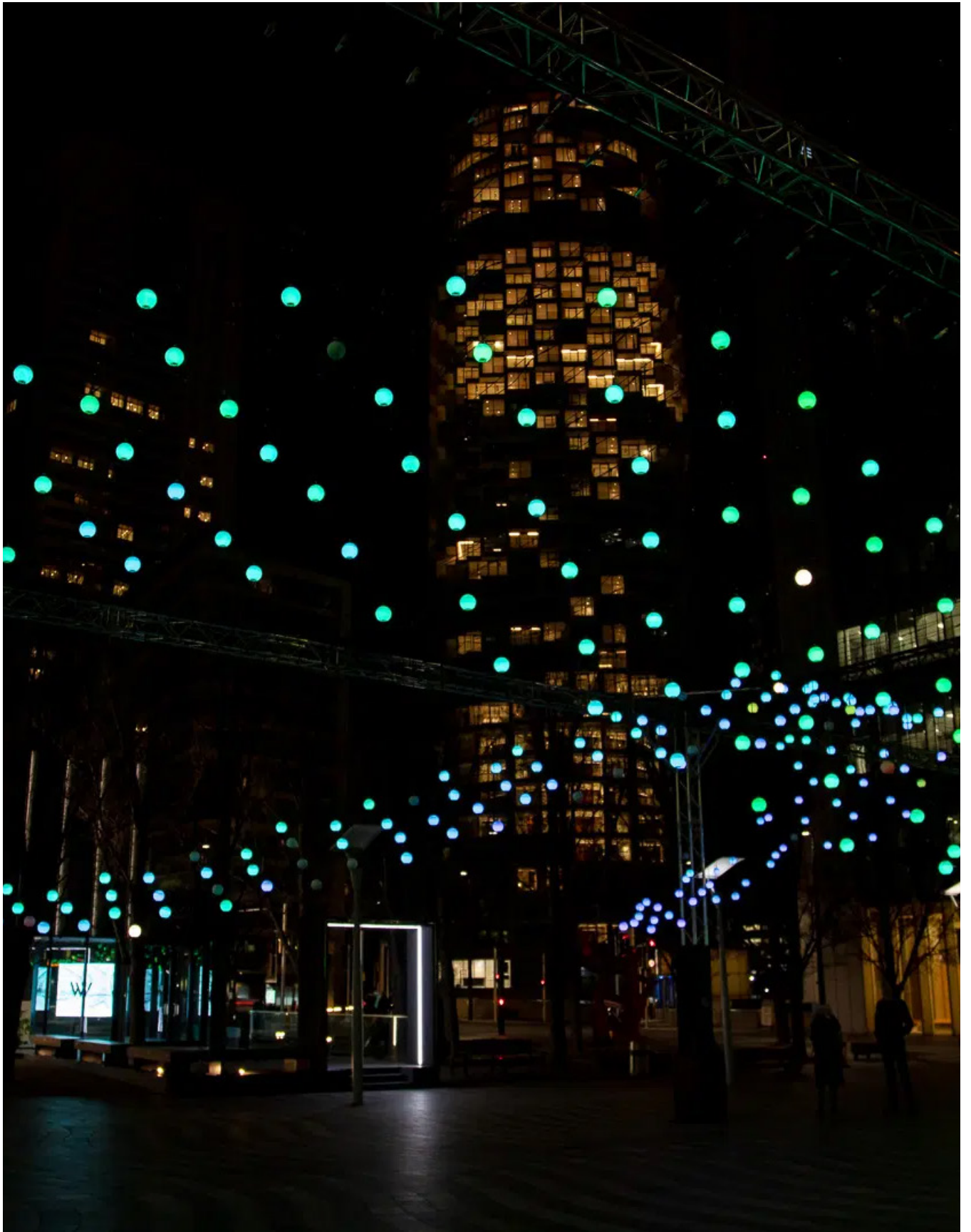
From my perspective of the installation, I feel like the usage of laser beam devices has a huge potential in creating a dynamic and immersive environment because the light could be various based on people’s location in a dark background setting. Lasers in a dark climate could be used as an ambient light source for people to observe and focus. With the constant changing of the laser light source, the digital feeling could create a balance for people to forget about reality and transform into a digital realm contemporary of visual art.

Light and Perception - “Murmuration” by Squidsoup

In the work “Murmuration” by Squidsoup, the author utilized a series of LED light bulbs and hung them from the top to form a wave pattern or structure. Each light bulb is like an illuminated orb floating in the air, and it responds to the audience’s movement and interaction with its color and pattern, which becomes a dynamic and immersive atmosphere for the visitor.

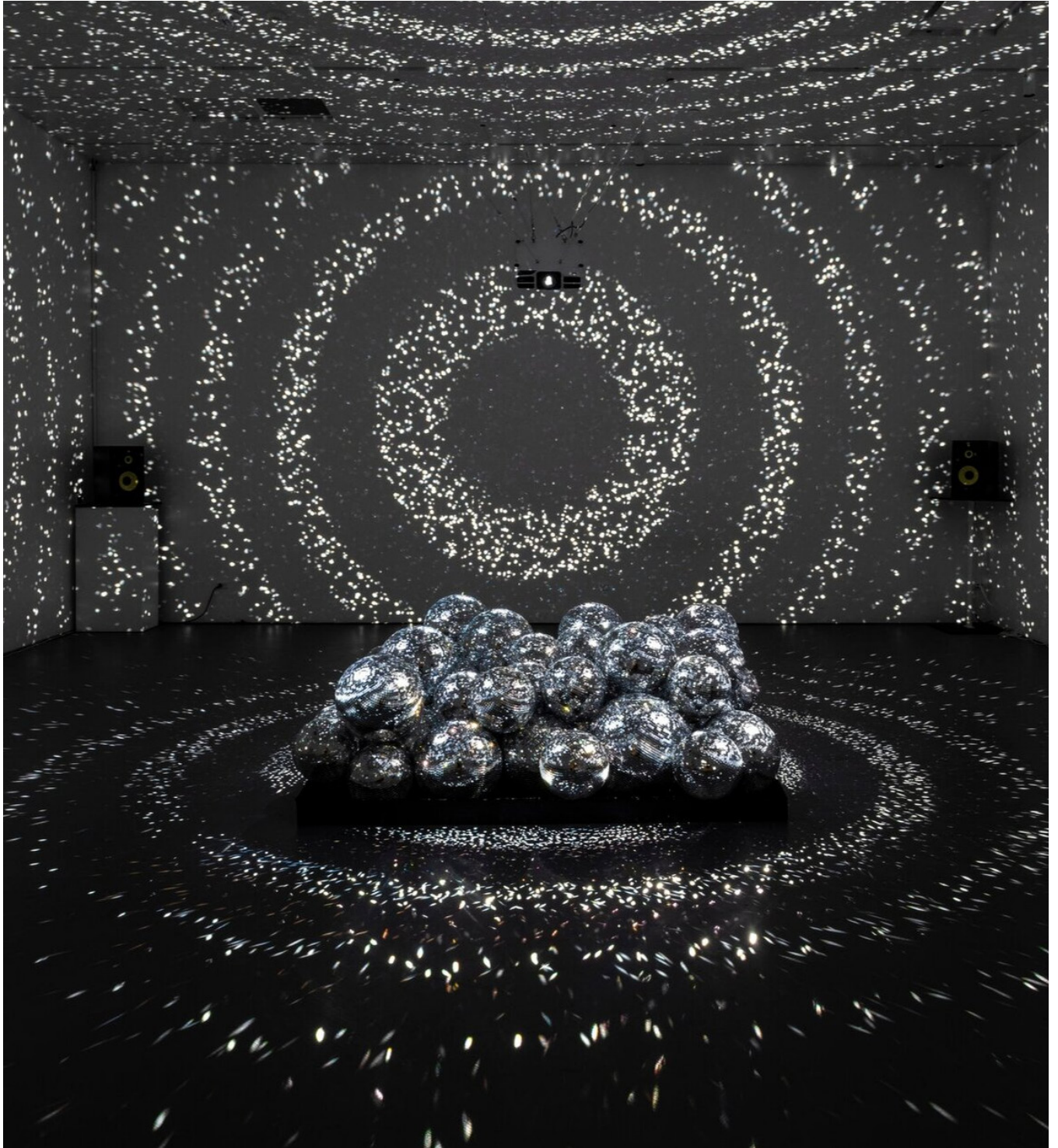
From my take on this artwork, the positioning of the LED light orbs plays a huge role in this installation. Since there have been many LED light installations that have similar settings based on the concept of changing and being being responsive to the audience, this installation is compatible with the environment that places the work. One of the locations of the installation is set in an open space between two building, and the pattern of the light bulbs are like a wave floating through the building. On the other location, it is an indoor space where the light is positioned like a stair walking upward, which makes the pattern more distinct and unusual to perform its responsive performance to the audience. The versatility of this installation could have more potential in utilization within different architectural settings, and that can achieve some amazing results for the observer to notice some light and shadow effects between the installation and the building structure that it is located within.





Light and Perception

- “Light Leaks” by Kyle McDonald and Jonas Jongejan





The work “Light Leaks” by Kyle McDonald and Jonas Jongejan is an indoor installation that features a bunch of glossy spinning disco light balls that can reflect various light patterns on the wall to create one of those illusion effects for the audience. The work does not simply use light to reflect on the disco balls and give the audience one of those old-time disco vibes. Instead, the artists looked into the projector’s volumetric position of every pixel and then used software to predict the reflected pixel position to modify them. Therefore, when the audience sees the performance, the scatter pixel reacts to the surrounding audience with different colored and timed lighting sequences with a mesmerizing effect.

From my take on the work, reinventing existing lighting tools with modification is impressive in redefining its light effect. Especially for disco balls, most people know that light decoration promotes the environment for the atmosphere with random uncontrollable light patterns. Now, since the artist knows how to use software to predict and modify the lighting pixel, the disco balls are turned into editable projecting devices, which makes the environment more dynamic with its surrounding audience. People can feel the different experience from those disco light balls with a meditative state, without too much hype like a disco fair, so repurposing the disco ball is a smart strategy to make the art installation immersive and customizable for its light effect.

Light and Perception - “Murmuration” by Squidsoup

“Our Colour Reflection” by Liz West is an art installation structure in a cathedral space with many colored mirror panels to reflect the light. When the audience enters the installation space, a radiant hue light pattern will disburse, creating an immersive effect as a dynamic and vibrant palette. The audience can feel the color patterns interchange, like a light journey that elevates the spiritual feeling in the cathedral.

From my perspective of the art installation, the placement of the color mirror panels in the cathedral is similar to the concept of the Cologne cathedral windows. Since cologne cathedral windows can filter the natural light into different color patterns on the wall, the colored mirror panels also have the same effect due to their characteristic of transmitting natural light into different colors. So, the artist captured this spectrum from the architectural element into his recreation to transcend conventional space into artistic expression, and this aspect is something I can take on for my future design consideration.



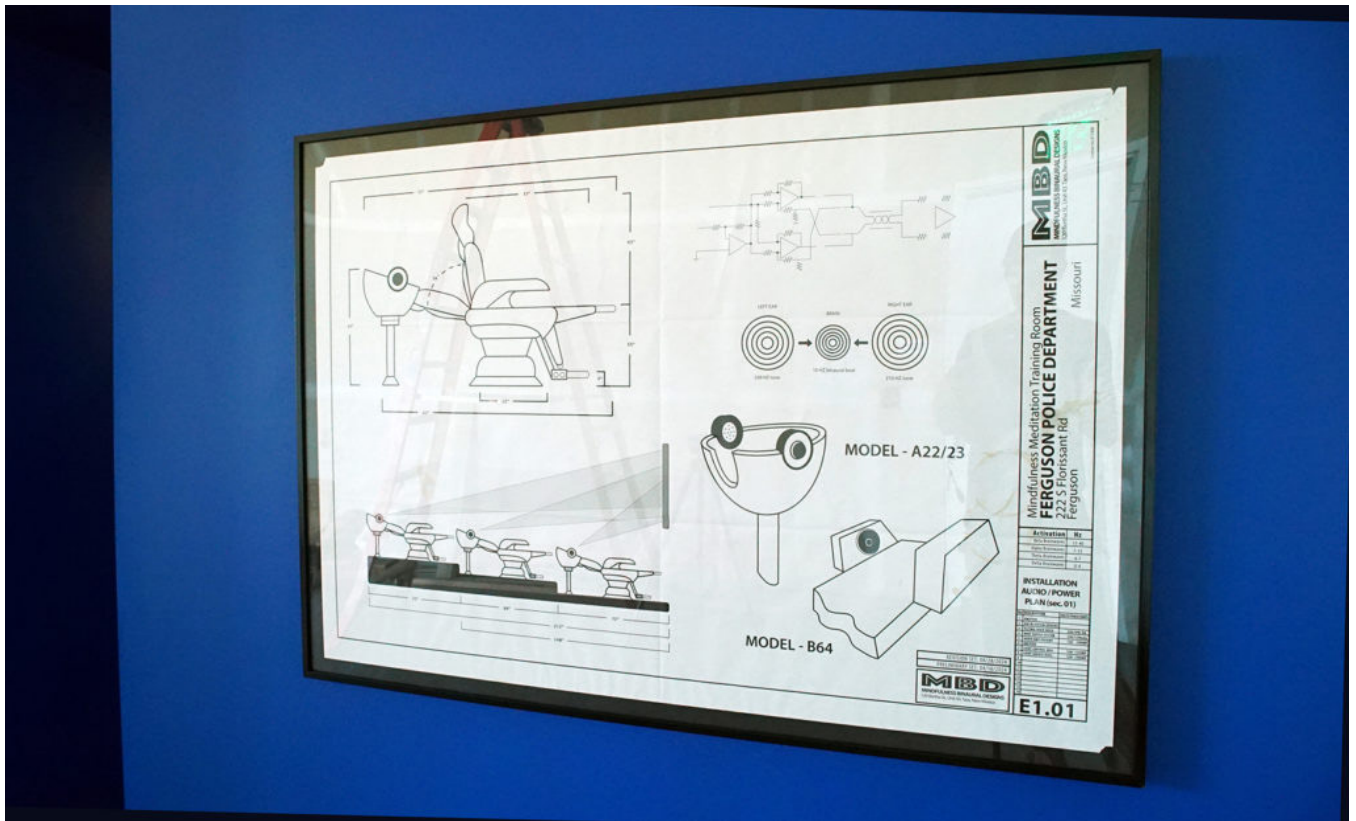


Besides that, some of the art installations I discovered were closely aligned with my concept direction because of their form and function aspects, and some of those art installations were suggested by either my professors or peers during the group discussions.

Police Mindfulness Meditation Project, 2012

– present by Packard Jennings





The police mindfulness meditation project is researching and developing a guided mindfulness meditation specifically made for police and a special reclined chair that houses speakers to play hypnotic binaural audio and guided meditation. These tools were developed from the hypothesis that a significant percentage (not all) of abuse and killing of our citizens by police is caused by poor decision-making in tense policing situations due to stress, PTSD, and anxiety. These symptoms can be treated and reduced through mindfulness meditation. This project is similar to the alignment of my stress relief direction because it utilized ambient light and space to treat police officers who regularly experience high-stress working environments, which is suitable for the functional purpose of the installation.

Sensory Deprivation Tank



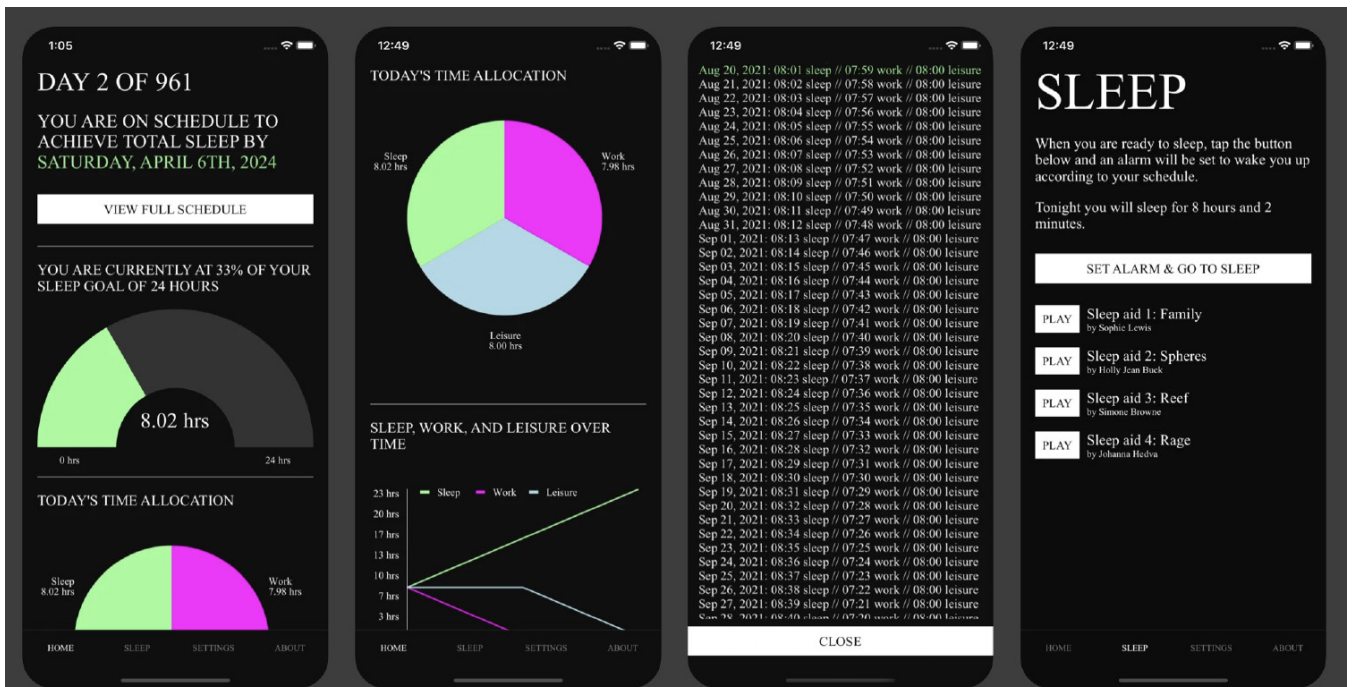


The design of a sensory deprivation tank is a unique method of achieving sensory deprivation. A sensory deprivation tank, or an isolation tank or float tank, is designed to be filled with a buoyant solution, often a mixture of water and Epsom salt, that allows a person to float effortlessly. The tank is soundproof and lightproof, creating an environment where sensory input is significantly reduced, which provides an ideal isolated environment for people to forget about themselves and the source environment, such as the noise, the light, and the space in which they feel stressed daily.

Perfect Sleep By Tega Brain



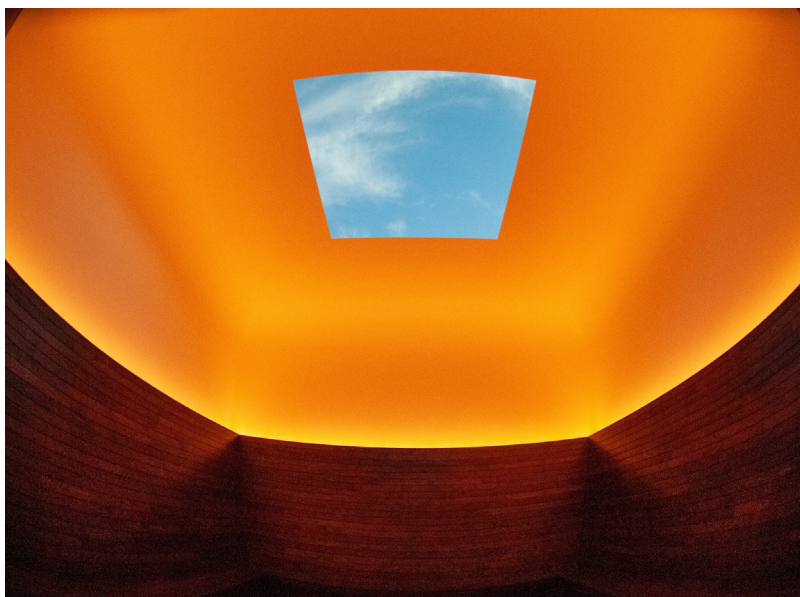
“Perfect Sleep” by Tega Brain is an art installation that explores the intersection of technology and sleep. The project involves a custom-designed bed that adjusts its position based on real-time data gathered from various sources, such as local weather conditions, stock market fluctuations, and news. This interactive piece challenges traditional notions of sleep and highlights the impact of external factors on our nightly rest. Tega Brain’s work prompts contemplation about the increasing integration of technology into our personal lives and raises questions about how the broader world might influence our sleep patterns.



Skywell By James Turrel

Most importantly, the work that influenced me the most was James Turrel's artwork and installation, among others. In James Turrel's design, he usually incorporates natural light as a medium for the audience to look at his work as one of the famous James Turrel artworks – "LightScape." It is a series of light art installations that uses light and color to create immersive, otherworldly experiences. These installations often involve specially designed spaces manipulating natural and artificial light to play with the viewer's perception.

When the audiences stare at the light Skype, most of them are attracted by the high contrast of the ambient light with the dark background, which creates an effect similar to sensory deprivation and makes them forget about their surroundings and the ambient or natural light that is gradually changing during the time, it creates the illusion of different patterns for the audience to interpret simultaneously like a meditational session, which provides a stress relief effect to isolated themselves from their sources of the stress.





Chapter Four

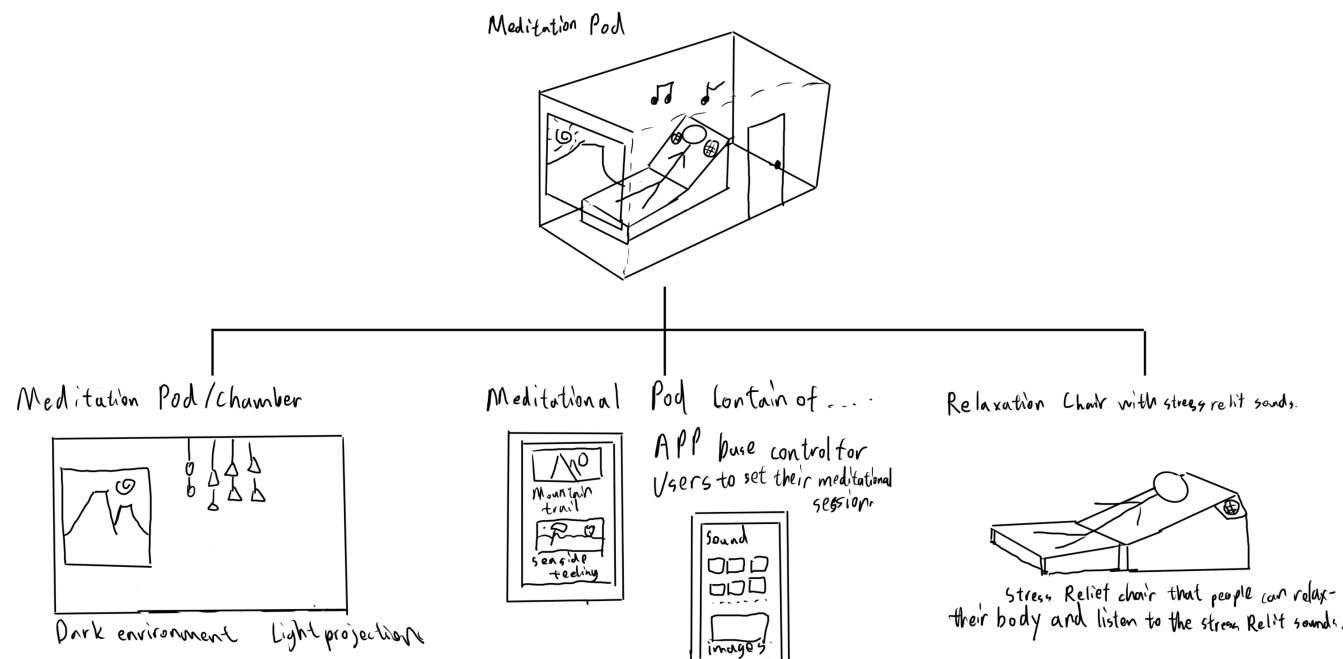
The ideation and design of Serenity Pod



After reviewing all the other artists' artworks and their design concepts using ambient light for a stress-relief effect, I concluded my thesis direction for its iteration based on the findings. The first element I could incorporate in my stress relief thesis design is isolation. It aims to create an isolated space for the users or audience for an immersive experience to help them forget about their current surroundings and eliminate any stress source they would feel through their existing environment.

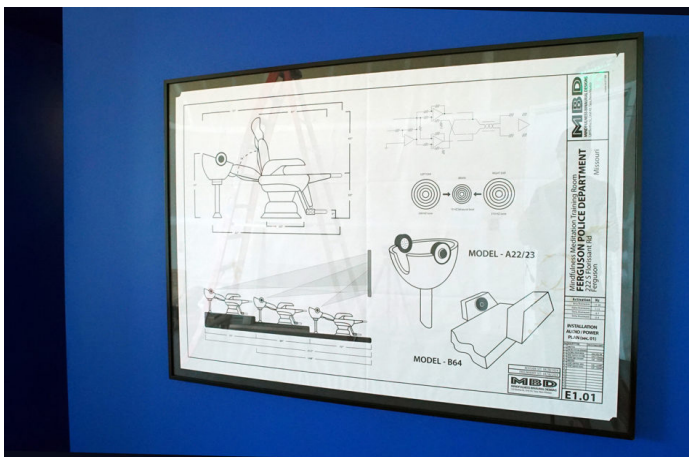
The second element ideal for the concept is the light with some natural scenes. The ambient light would be the background behind the natural scenes presented by a digital screen positioned in the center in front of the ambient light, so people would pay attention to the scenes without thinking about their current surroundings, which feels like an instant travel or road trip to change their place. There would be an app portal that would control the screen. Users can select their pod settings for their preference and convenience. It could help them to relax and take a break.

The third element would be the chair they sit on, an inclined chair that helps the user lie in there to relax. In the chair, there would be a pair of audio speakers that could play the sounds from those natural scenes videos that play on the screen. So, users could listen to those natural sounds when they lie on the inclined chair, and it could promote an immersive experience for the users to de-stress themselves from these combined experiences. This sketch illustrates how the three elements could be used together:



The first step for the meditational pod is its structure and space because it is the foundation for me to experiment with the light and sound effects. Above all, with a proper isolation space, it is possible to see the full impact and influence for people to de-stress from the ambient light and natural scenes. At the beginning of the final thesis semester, I looked into various forms that might be perfect to fit the structure of the pod. Many concepts are from my previously researched artworks, such as the police meditational project, Perfect Sleep, and Skywells. All of them have a common setting where people lie in a confined space with an inclined chair for the de-stress effects.

Meanwhile, I also looked into other material that might have the same distress experience for people. Some forms of distress could be provided by the material lying on the ground in massive quantities, such as a vase of plastic balls filled with a large pool size, and people could dive into it to feel its soft plastic balls. Some iconic presentive art installations are “The Color Factory” in San Francisco and “The Beach” by Snarkitecture. Both of them have the elements of plastic balls that people can play with, and they can also feel distressed during the same time of the touch sensory and the vibrant color theme of the installation.





"The Color Factory" in San Francisco:

An interactive art exhibit that explores the impact of color on emotions. Visitors move through rooms filled with vibrant installations, engaging all the senses.



"The Beach" by Snarkitecture:

A popular installation featuring an indoor beach filled with millions of recyclable plastic balls. It provides a playful and stress-relieving environment.



"Infinity Mirrored Room" by Yayoi Kusama:

Yayoi Kusama's immersive mirror rooms, such as "Infinity Mirrored Room - The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away," offer a mesmerizing experience with the repetition of lights and reflections.

In the work Infinity Mirrored Room, the artist creates an illusion of a kaleidoscope-style space with more reflection and light installation. This direction also closely resembles the concept of isolation space within the stress relief pod.

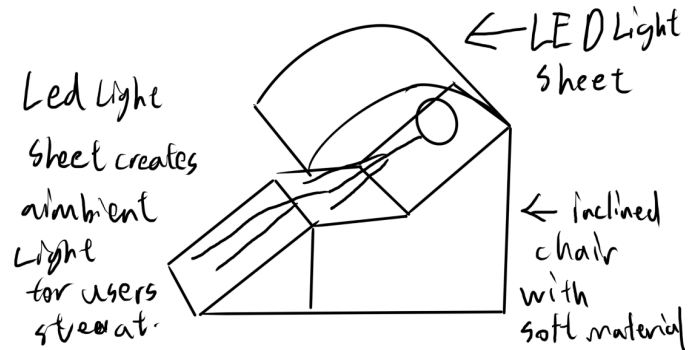


“Infinity Mirrored Room” by Yayoi Kusama:

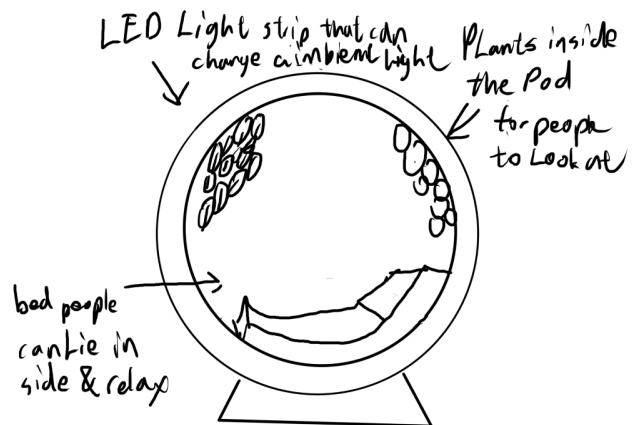
A hospital garden designed with therapeutic elements, including water features, art installations, and greenery, to promote healing and reduce stress for patients

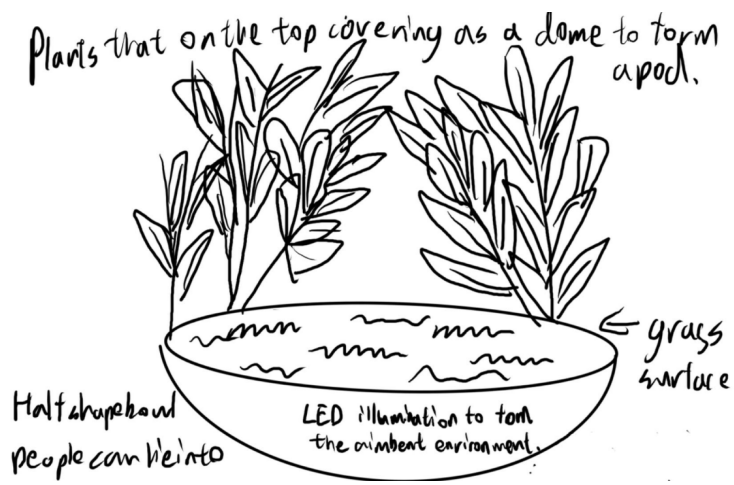
In The Healing Garden, the artist utilized a public space in an urban area to distinguish itself from the surrounding environment. He used natural elements like plants, flowers, and garden structures to create a harmonious, peaceful atmosphere. It strongly contrasts with the urban space and lets its audience retreat to themselves when they look at it from a distance. This concept could also help me think about using the natural elements within my pod and making the audience forget about the artificial aspects surrounding them.

After researching the existing artworks from various sources regarding the pod interior and structure elements, I came to a conclusion and iterated three examples of sketch concepts based on different elements I discovered from those sources, such as the submerging experience, the soft material, and nature elements. The first sketch comprises the LED light sheet that forms a cover on the top of an inclined chair with soft material. The audience can sit on the chair to directly watch the ambient light performance, like a minimalistic design for the pod to help people de-stress.



The second iteration sketch creates a circular-shaped chair, which combines a chair design within its structure with plants that can hang above the chair to promote a sense of natural element for helping people de-stress. The chair also cooperates with an integrated ambient light, so the whole chair glows so that people can see it as an ambient light performance to de-stress.





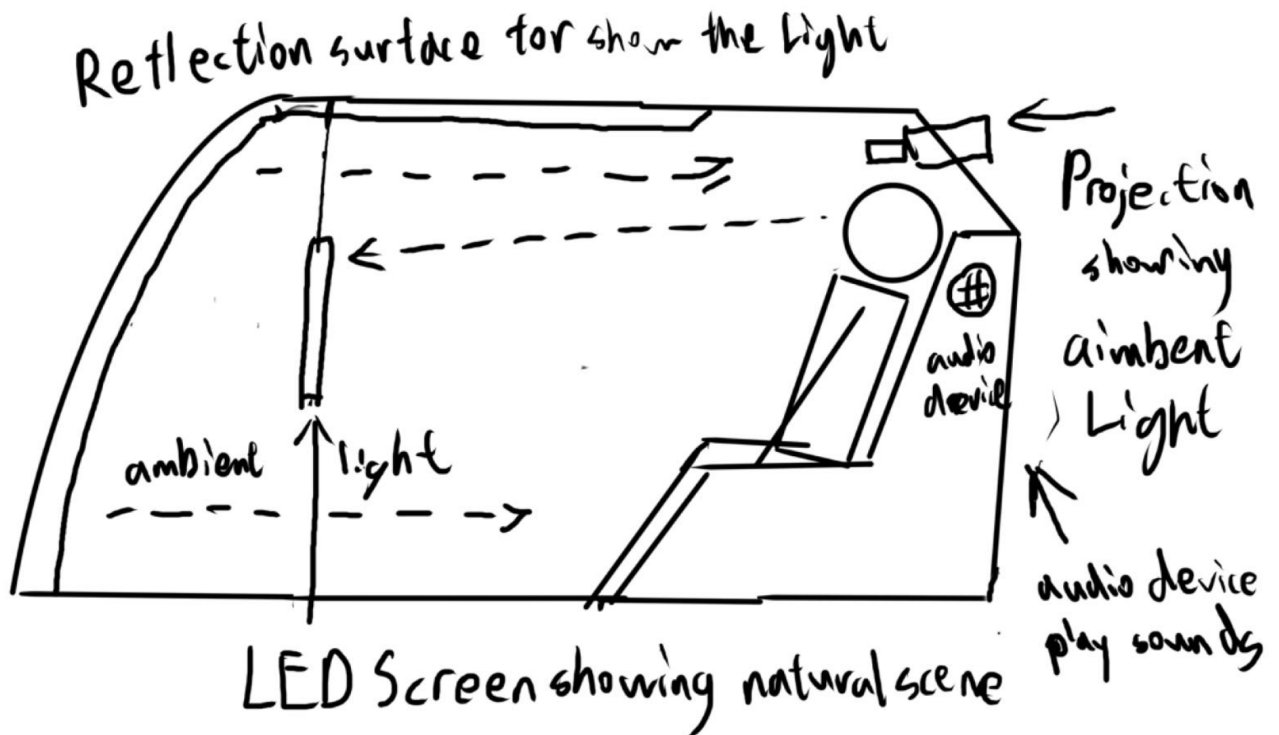
After researching the existing artworks from various sources regarding the pod interior and structure elements. I came to the conclusion and iterated three examples of sketch concepts based on different elements I discovered from those sources, such as the submerging experience, the soft material, and nature elements. The first sketch comprises the led light sheet that forms a cover on the top of an inclined chair with soft material. The audience can sit on the chair to directly watch the ambient light performance, like a minimalistic design for the pod to help people de-stress.

During the iteration, I also looked into some potential material that might be helpful for utilization in the pod, so I collected the materials information based on my sketched iteration for future consideration.



The materials are mostly combined with organic and natural scenes, such as cotton, grass, or soft fabric, so when people lay on those soft materials, they would feel relaxed and comfortable during the experience.

The second iteration of the Pod



After a few rounds of consulting and critique sessions with my peers and professors, the feedback is that the first iteration approach seems more practical and ideal to develop, which is the chair covered with an LED light sheet for people to watch the ambient light performance;

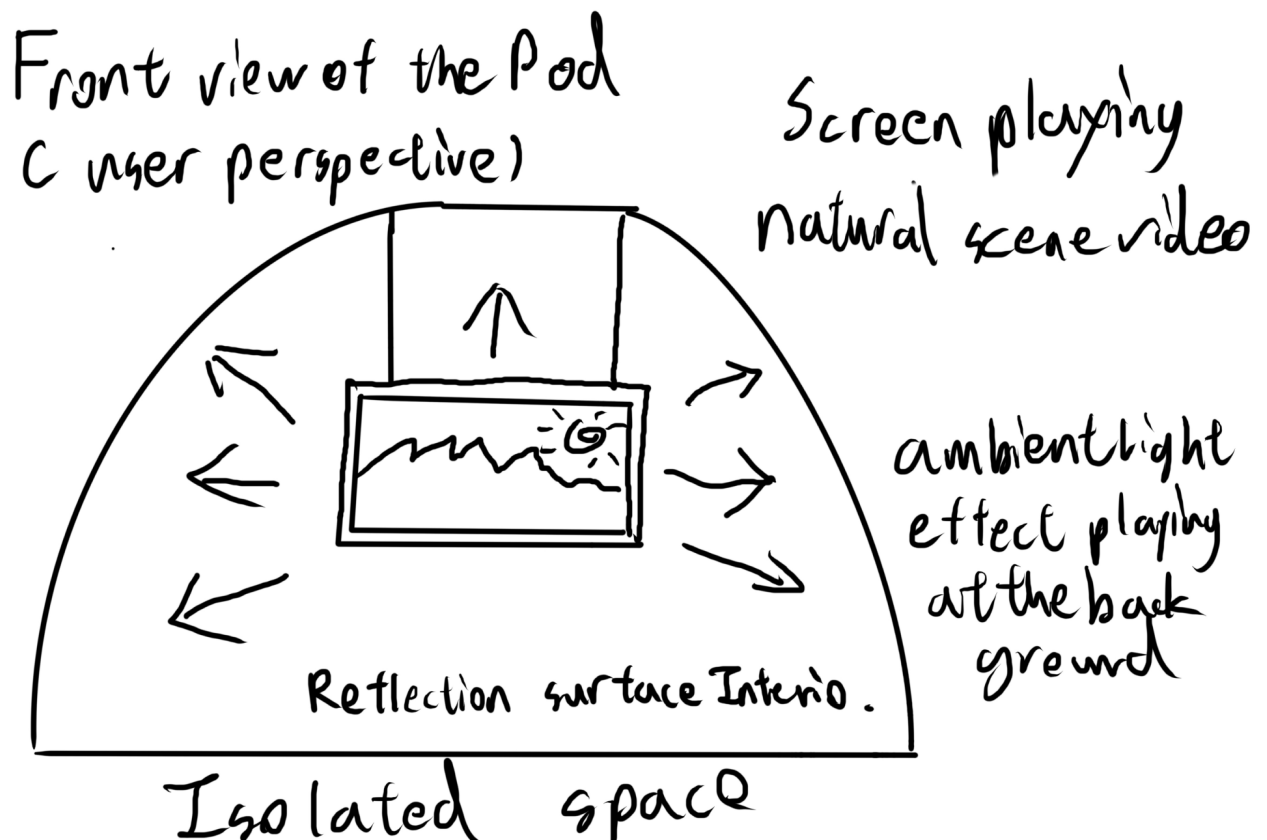
However, it lacks the concept of isolation, so I went back to the original idea of the confined space to iterate the pod's design.

From my perspective of the installation, I feel like the usage of laser beam devices has a huge potential in creating a dynamic and immersive environment because the light could be various based on people's location in a dark background setting. Lasers in a dark climate could be used as an ambient light source for people to observe and focus. With the constant changing of the laser light source, the digital feeling could create a balance for people to forget about reality and transform into a digital realm contemporary of visual art.

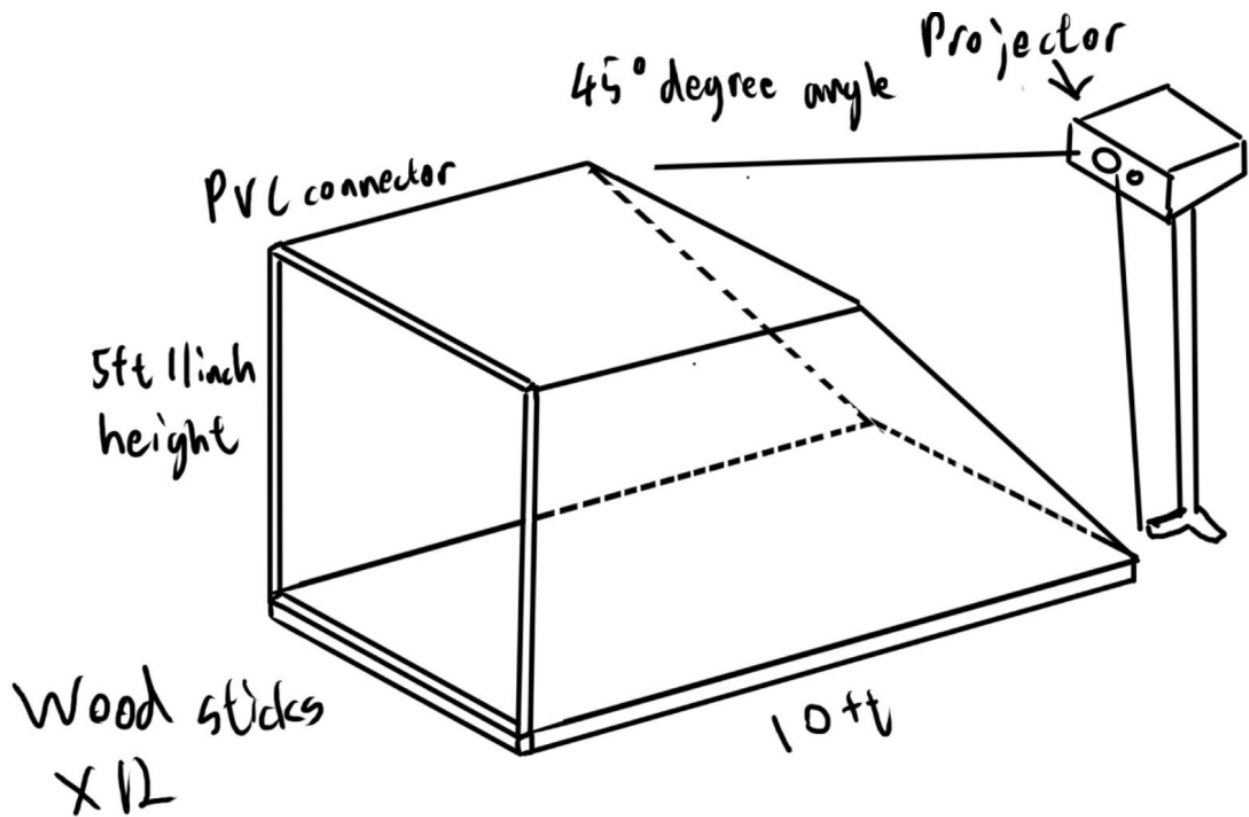
This time, I was illustrating the pod's appearance and considering the digital devices' functionalities and installation. For example, a digital screen will be installed in front of the people, and ambient light will be projected in the background from a projector above the audience's head. The screen would play some natural scene video corresponding to the ambient light in the background while the video is playing. Then, the audience will hear the natural scene music coming from the speaker of the chair to provide a total immersion experience inside of the isolated space.

After illustrating the full functionality and installation of the pod, I consulted with my professors and peers to seek their insights and opinions. They responded that since the pod has many functionalities for the audience to experience, how to narrow it down for me to define which method would be perfect and ideal for stress relief, especially since many elements could separate into an individual topic to explore so it would be the best to focus on the core aspect first, which is how the ambient light and scene would change people's mood and emotion from a high-stress level.

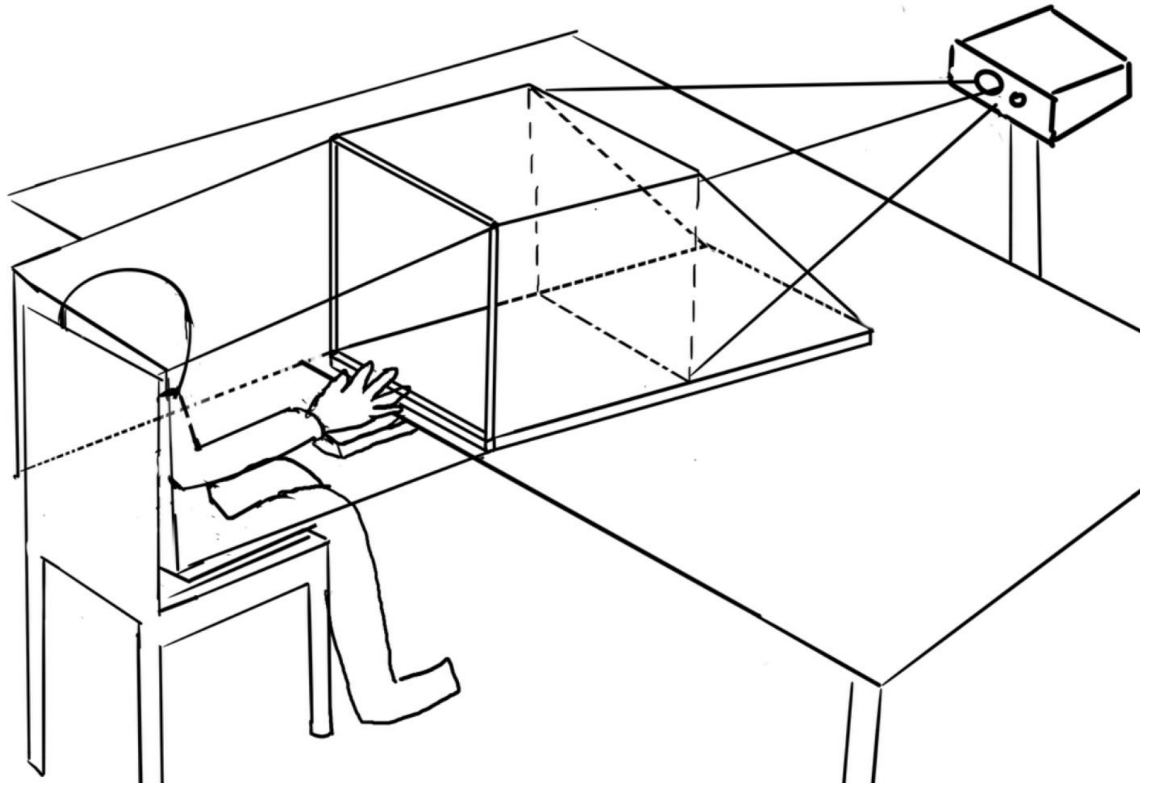
With the aim of understanding how ambient light and natural scenes projected within an isolated space could effectively de-stress, I embarked on creating a prototype version of the pod. This endeavor holds immense potential to revolutionize stress relief methods. The prototype would serve as a tangible tool to instantly guide the audience in experiencing the pod's functionalities, thereby inspiring further exploration and refinement.



The second iteration of the Pod



The third iteration of the pod is a prototype version like a tabletop kaleidoscope; it was redesigned to a smaller size so it would be more compact and more accessible for the user to interact with. This version of the pod was ideal for testing how the ambient light effect would work on people's stress levels. It is narrowed down to focus on performing the ambient light projection in an isolated environment instead of other elements so it would be easier to observe people's reactions and help them understand. A projector position would be behind the pod, and the ambient light video would be projected onto the double-sided projector screen. Within the pod, there would also be a heart rate monitor positioned in front of the audience; the audience can put their palms on top of the sensor so the monitor would send out the signal to the projector to project different types of ambient light base on the audience's heart rates, so if the audience has a high-stress level, the ambient light would be the most calming one, and gradually changing its performance when the audience stress level decreases, similar to a therapy session.



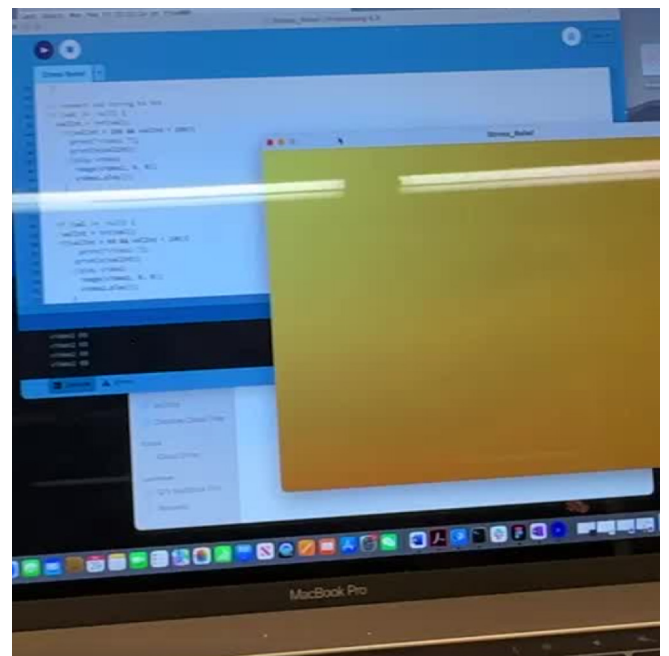
Another consideration was the material of the two-sided projector screen. The original idea was Tyvek since it is a common and reliable material, and I was thinking of using it as the whole tent material to build it on. However, after I tested Tyvek with the projector to project different colored lights, there was poor light transparency when distributing the ambient light on both sides of the screen. Finding the right light transparency is crucial to experimenting with the full effect of ambient light performance; I looked on the internet and found a plastic sheet that is generally used for Halloween display decoration, and when I use it the light transparency rate is perfect when the environment is dark. Then, I used that material within the table-top version of the pod for the building process.







Another important experiment of the pod was its interaction capability. To make the light projection work with the audience's heart rate reading to project ambient light accordingly, I used Arduino with the heart rate sensor to connect to the laptop. I used processing to transform the heart rate reading into a signal that can tell the computer when to project which type of ambient light sequence. For example, when the heart rate reading is high, which indicates the audience might be at a high-stress level, the projector would transfer into a deep stress relief ambient light session for the audience to take the most influential ambient light experience session. The projection would gradually change into brighter and more positive-colored light according to the reading of the heart rate. When the audience's heart rate is fully stable, the projector would play its ambient light sequence in a loop without any interchange.

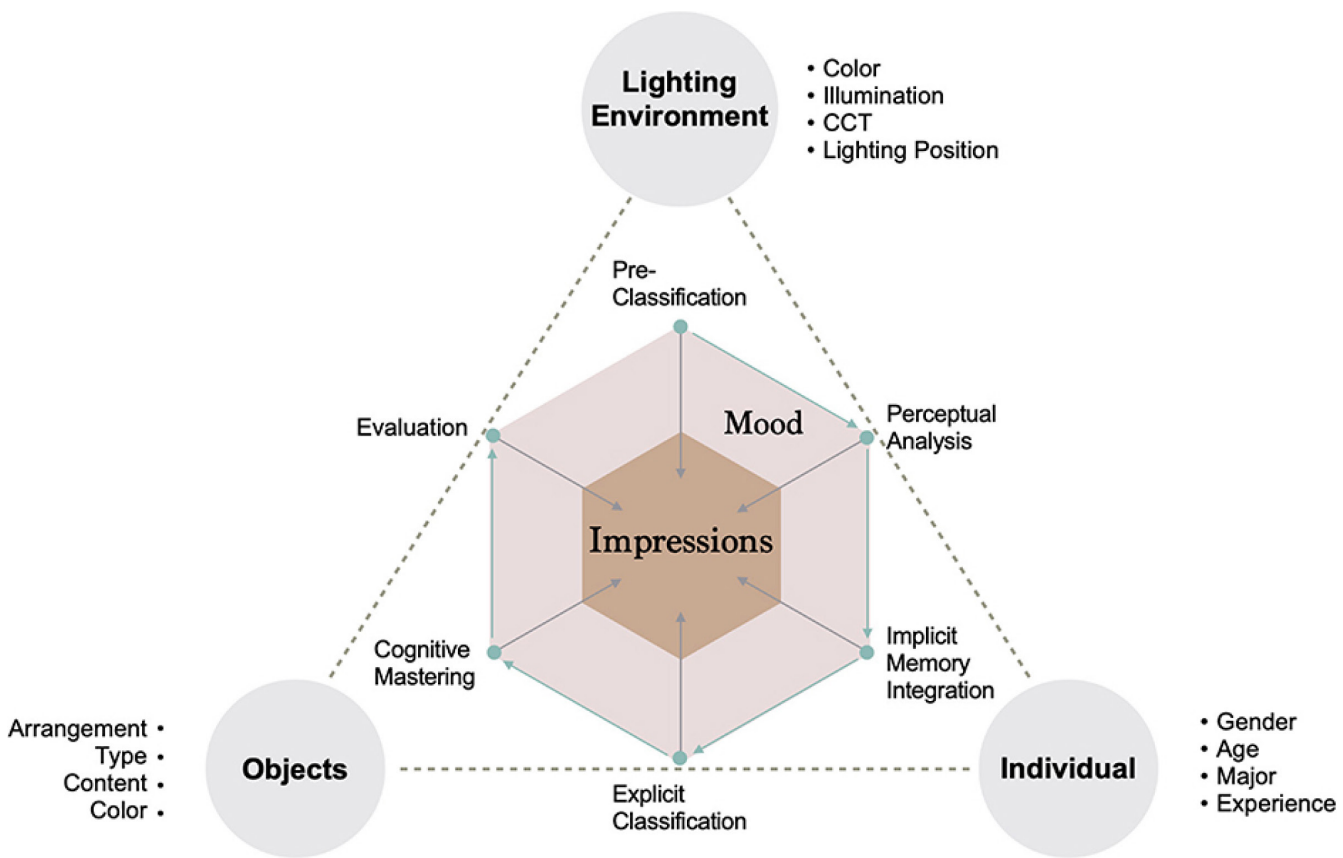


The research of ambient light effect on stress level

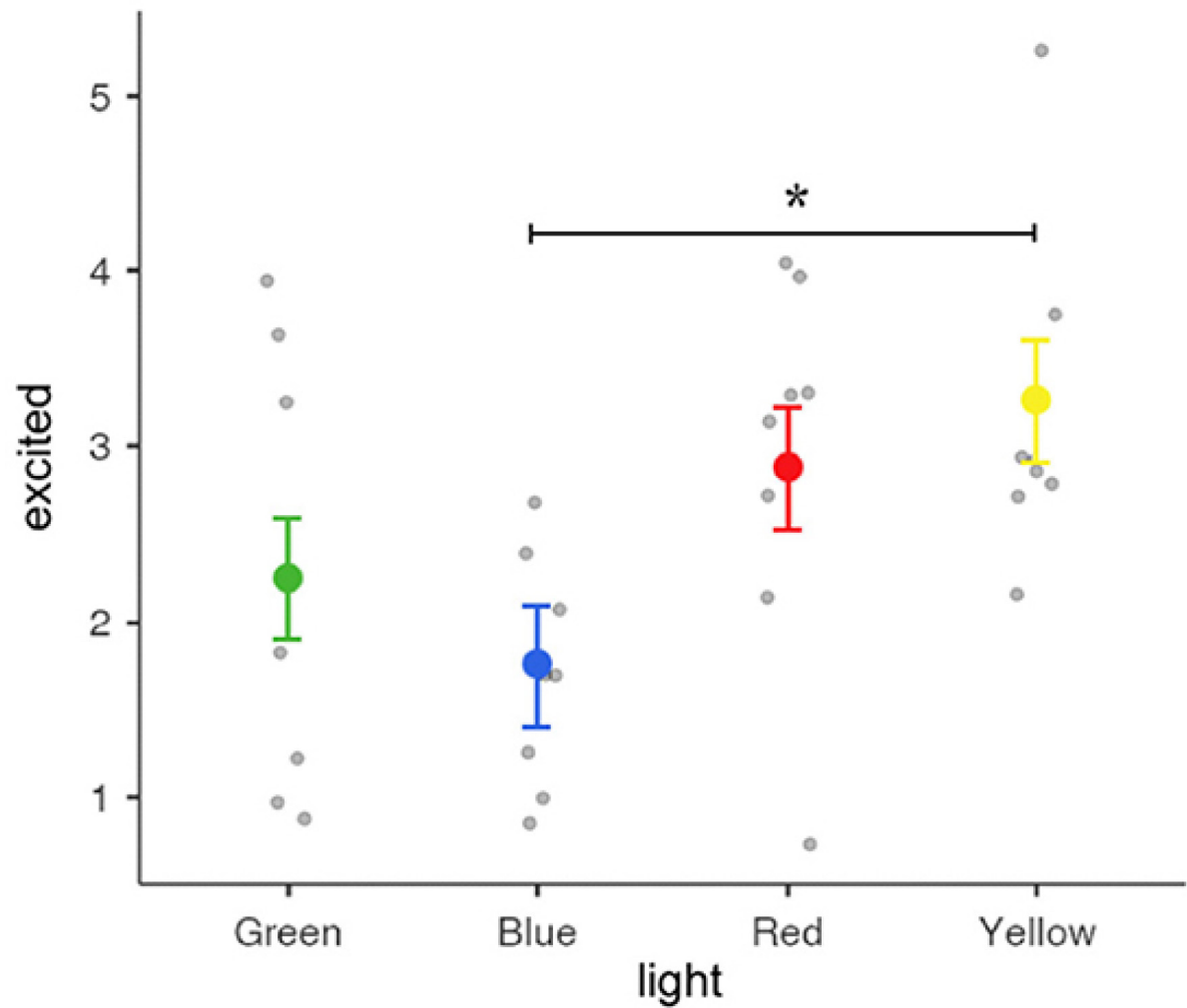
During the making and researching process of the pod, I realized that it is essential to define how ambient light color would affect people’s stress levels, especially for making the pod effective in delivering its stress relief purpose to the audience. To understand the reasons behind the effect of ambient light color on people’s psychological perspectives, I looked into some academic scientific papers for reference in my ambient light projection design,

A conceptual model of light experiment

Among the wealth of research papers I explored, one particularly stood out- “Effects of colored lights on an Individual’s Affective Impressions in the Observation Process” by Bernardo Hernández from Frontiers in Psychology. This paper, a beacon of credibility, delves into how various colored ambient lights can influence moods and emotions. The researchers conducted meticulous experiments, involving diverse volunteer participants, to test their hypotheses in a conceptualized model of the light experiment. Their approach, targeting different light conditions across age groups, aimed to identify patterns or theories that could support their hypothesis.



In the result of this experiment, its research data, and conclusions highlight a significant result: blue and green colors exhibit a calming influence. In contrast, yellow and red colors are associated with excitement and positively impact people's emotions.



Colored lights affected excited feeling of mood.
[F(3,21)=4.74, p=0.011]

Beyond the primary findings, the research also identifies that different ambient colored lights possess a strong sensation and positive effect on individuals, such as yellow and red, which brings people a brighter and more upbeat feeling. Blue and green give people a more soothing and peaceful sensation, similar to a calming effect to ease stress. This offers potential considerations for incorporating different moods within the stress relief pod.

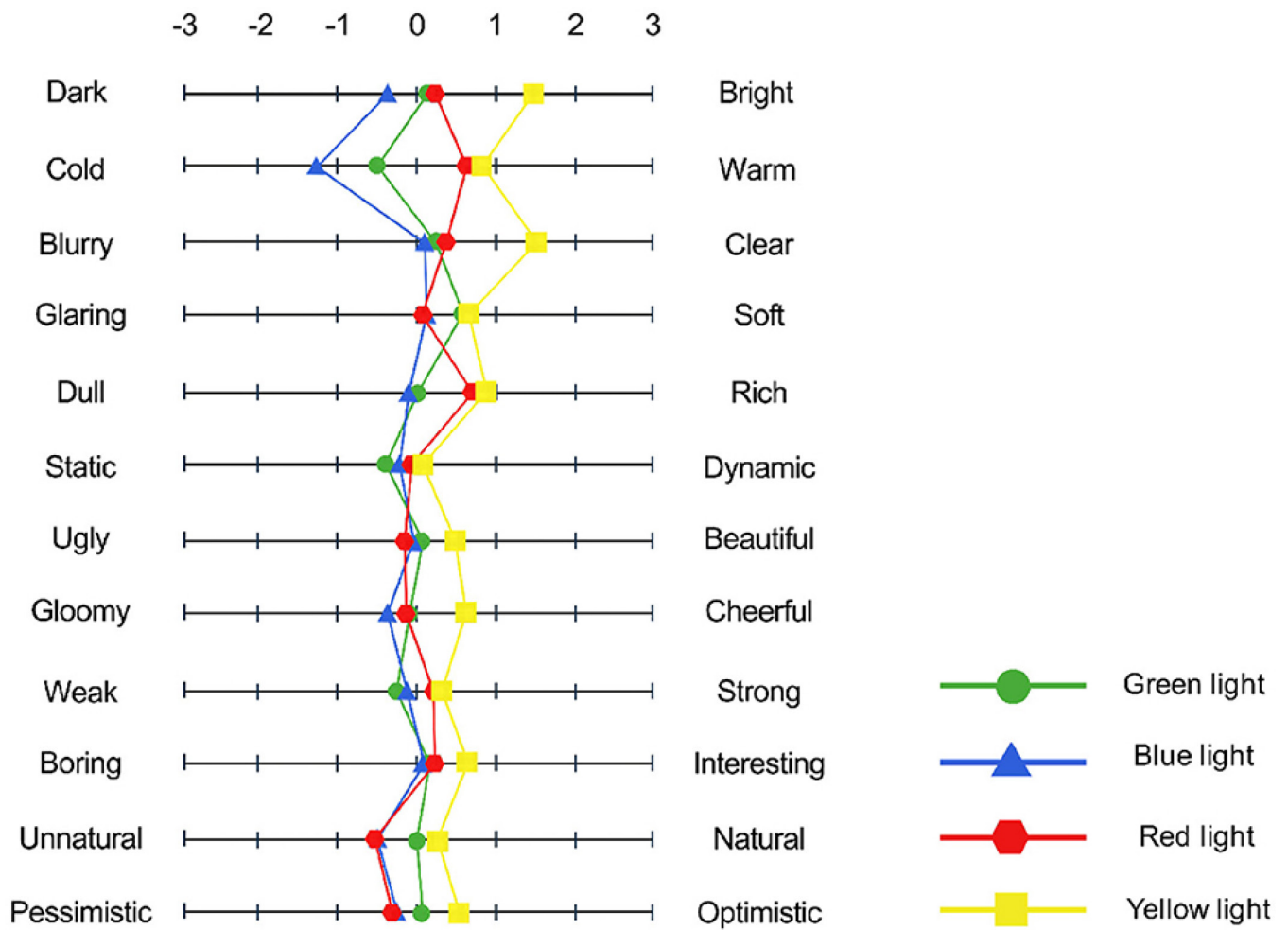


Figure 8

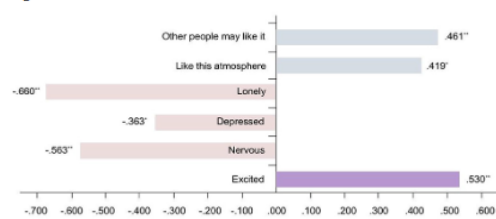


Figure 8. Spearman correlation coefficients between the boring-interesting impression and mood.

Discussion

The results show that proper colored light can play a positive role in regulating individuals' mood. The four colors of light produce significant differences in the excited mood, of which yellow and blue light exhibit differences. As noted in previous studies, blue light has a calming effect on people (Viola et al., 2008). Therefore, regarding the design intent of a space atmosphere, blue light can be distinguished from daily used light (yellow light).

The bright impression induced by yellow light is different from the other three colors of light; all scores of impressions are positive results. This is probably because people prefer the color yellow, which is close to natural light, and yellow light is the most comfortable of the four lights for processing visual information (Wan et al., 2012). Different colors of light illuminate the pictures, and impressions of cold and warm are the most obvious. There is no difference between red and yellow lights; both can produce a warm feeling and bring out a warm atmosphere. Green and blue tend to be cold, especially blue light.

It can be seen from the factor analysis that the main factor "sensory" is a significant part of the emotional state, followed by "preferences" and "sharing." These factors are closely related to visitors' interest in visual objects. Therefore, in the practice of

Based on the research conclusion, I created two versions of ambient color light projection videos using different color schemes for the experiment. The colors within the videos were sampled from the natural scenes I picked to incorporate within the ambient light projection. For example, I sampled deep, dark blue ambient colors from a winter night's natural senses and bright orange colors from a sun-rising scene along shorelines. I added some gradient-changing effects in the background of the natural scenes video.

The dark blue ambient color projection video with the embedded night scene



The bright orange ambient color projection video with the embedded sun-rising scene



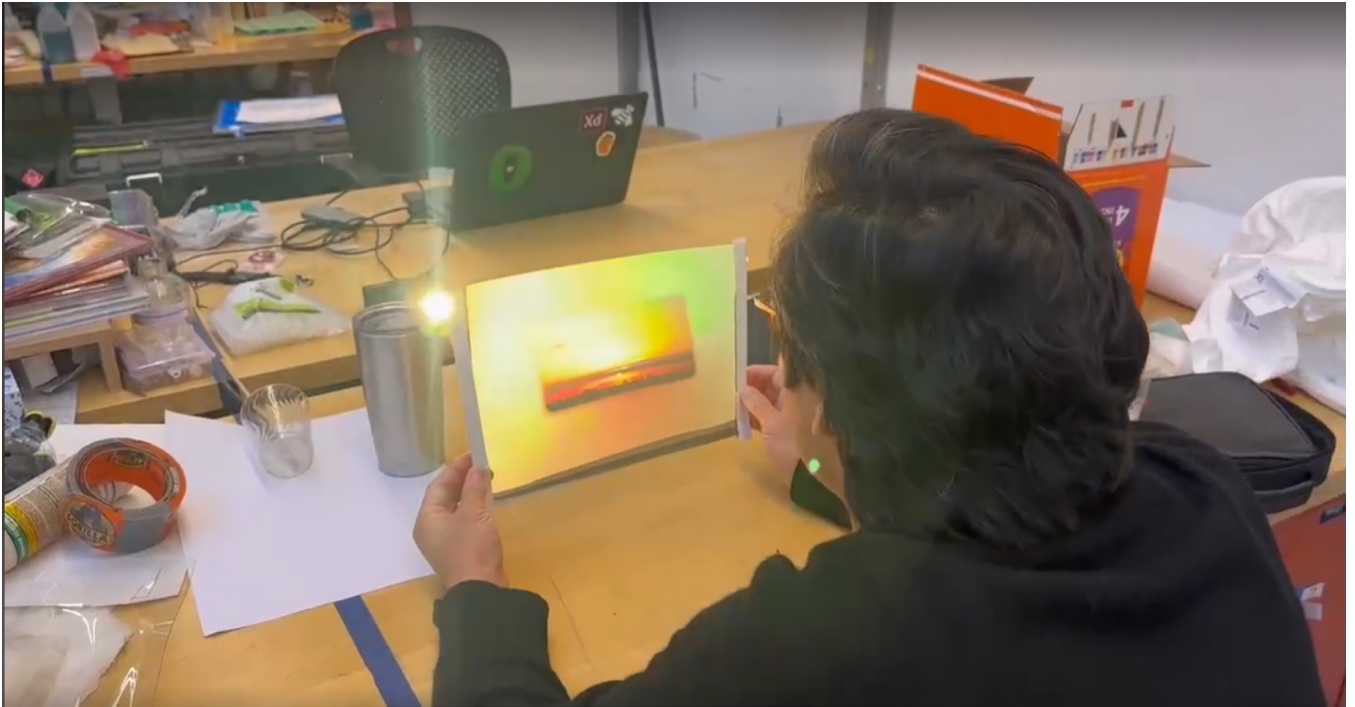
The original background ambient light projection (Dark Blue)



The original background ambient light projection (Bright Orange)



After creating these variations of the ambient light projection videos, I tested them with my thesis professors and peers to see their reactions and feedback. I also tried them on different types of the previous materials I researched, such as Tyvek and some transparent plastic sheets that can project lights and images on both sides, to see which materials best display the visual effect of ambient light patterns and movements.



After a few rounds of testing and experimenting, I found that although the ambient light pattern works with the natural scenes from which I sampled the colors, it works better to demonstrate the ambient light colors without embedding the natural scenes video in the center of the projection. It is because the natural scenes videos feel too distracted from the ambient light background, mainly because it gives people too much artificial feeling instead of an ambient light performance similar to those installations and James Turrell's works, which opens up people's imagination and their perception to focus on the ambient light effects.



Going back to redesigning for the purpose

After the mid-term review session with peers and professors who saw my work for the first time, they provided a lot of feedback and encouraged me to rethink the purpose of my thesis. I presented the thesis first to discuss my previous findings and research collection, such as where I found the inspiration from those famous art installations and James Turrell's work and why I utilized the colored ambient light effect to de-stress people within a confined space. I also installed the prototype of my tabletop version of the stress relief pod for them to experience and interact with. Although the ambient light effect and patterns seemed right, most of my reviewers did not feel it could work as a distressed product because people have different perceptions and de-stress. They thought in the current stage of the design. It still could not solve the core problem of using ambient light to help distressed people. It is because, as a successful product, it will require much more research in scientific methods and the field of psychology, and that was exactly what I was lacking. Beyond that, they encouraged me to go back to my original concept of designing an isolated space and giving different types of people more space and rooms to fit in so it might meet more expectations toward various kinds of people's expectations in de-stress or relaxation methods without setting limitations and boundaries for people to de-stress.

Another way of thinking is to redefine my thesis direction. Instead of designing the stress relief pod into a perfect product that can specifically solve the solution to everyday stress people encounter, it would be more balanced and reasonable to create it into an art installation that guides people into a meaningful stress relief experience or concept, especially a fully functional stress relief product required detailed scientific and physical data to prove whether the design would function appropriately, which was not coordinated in my current stage of design.

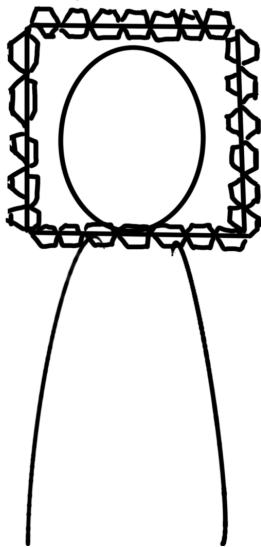
As a result, I decided to go back to my original design concept, which was to create an isolated space with other stress-relief considerations to expand the boundaries of the stress-relief experience. I also was going to think about how to make the design more artistic without taking a product-solution approach. There were some minor suggestions came from the reviewer that practically aroused my interest, and that was to create a minimum approach for the isolated space concept to work, so I drew two different sketches to document these ideas of the pods,



The first concept I explored was the 'minimum approach' of the isolated space. This design concept involved using sound-absorbing forms to create a helmet-like structure that individuals could wear on their heads for an isolating experience. The sound-absorbing form would serve as an effective barrier, blocking out the sounds and light from the individual's surroundings, creating a moment of silence within the helmet. This concept was inspired by an art installation mentioned during the mid-term thesis review, the portable TV helmet by Walter Pichler, 1967. Like my 'minimum approach' concept, this innovative design offered a unique and immersive experience, blurring the boundaries between personal space and the external environment.

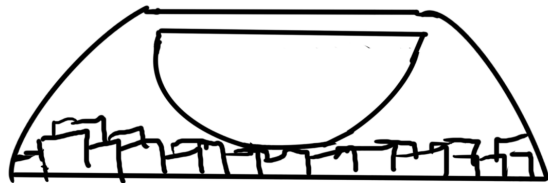
Thesis review feedbacks:

Idea 1:



Helmet
with
Isolation
form

Idea 2:



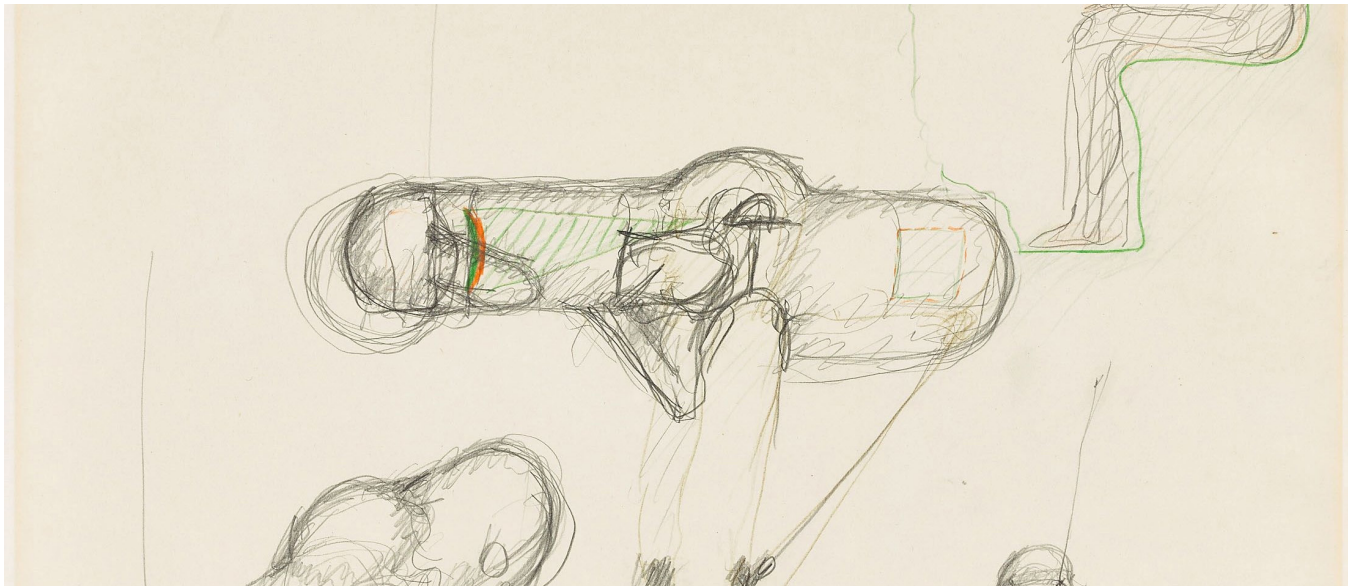
Tent with form that
people can laying in there

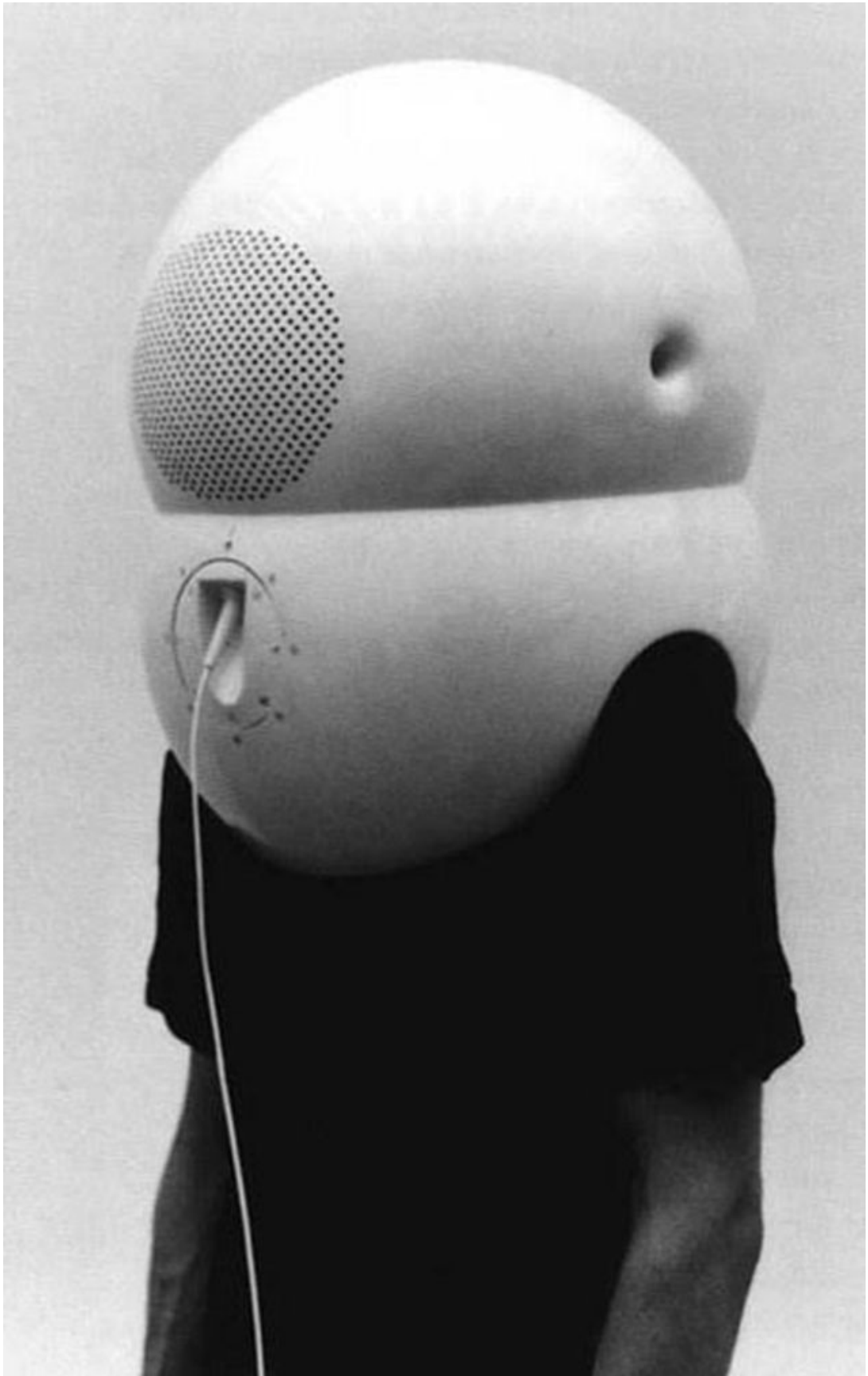
TV Helmet by Walter Pichler, 1967



The TV Helmet, a visionary creation conceptualized by Walter Pichler in 1967, is a significant inspiration for my design. This avant-garde artifact, a symbol of technological innovation and artistic prowess, embodies the spirit of an era marked by rapid technological progress. With its sleek and futuristic design, Pichler's helmet offers an immersive experience that merges personal space with the captivating allure of television. Its practical functionality challenges traditional notions of human-machine interaction, making it a pioneering artifact of its time. The TV Helmet is a testament to Pichler's ingenuity and inspires contemporary designers, including myself, to explore the intersection between isolated space and people's cognition.

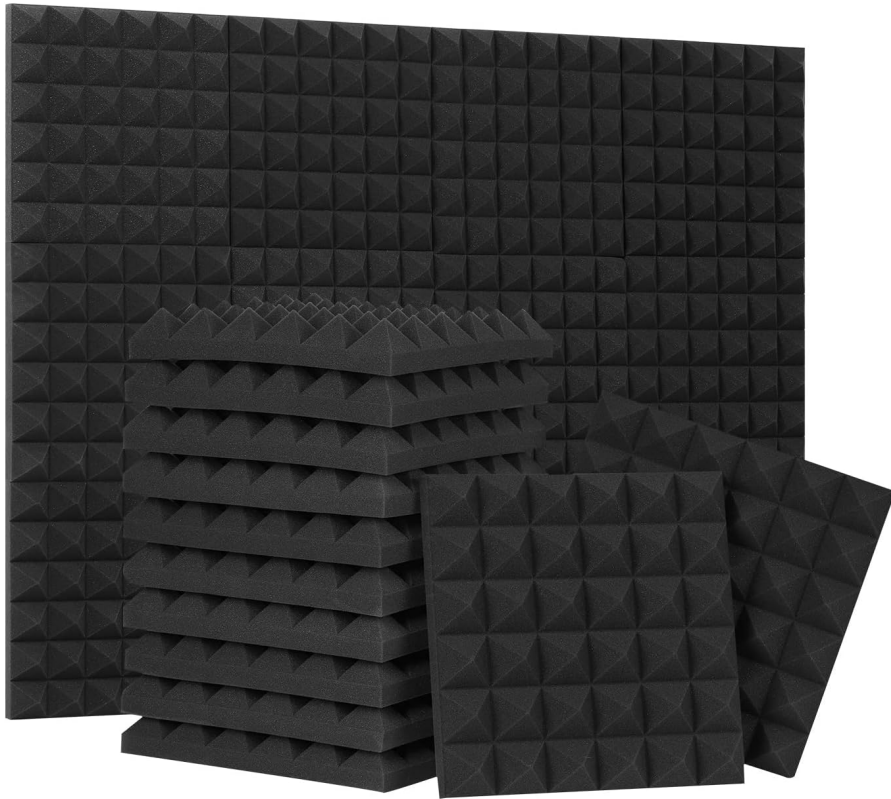
Another Walter Pichler's work that inspired me was the Portable Living Room (1967), which revolutionized traditional notions of domesticity and spatial design. The design challenges the static natural convention of living spaces, offering a dynamic and adaptable environment that can be mobilized and customized according to the users' needs and desires. His innovative approach to modular architecture in groundbreaking space design not only reflects the spirit of experimental and innovation of the 1960s but also predicted contemporary trends in flexible and sustainable living space. By pushing the boundaries between indoors and outdoors spaces. It opens up a new potential for connection with nature and community, while its sleek and minimalist design speaks to the enduring appeal of modernist aesthetics.





The second idea was to return to my original concept: creating an isolated space to hold one person within the pod so people can act freely and more comfortably to experience the ambient light performance. I specifically promoted some of the foundational functionalities of the pod and reduced its size to make it more compact for installation, which would be perfect for the pod's mobility.

After the ideas were iterated from the midterm review feedback, my progress was going back to the design of the structure of the pod. Since I needed an isolated space to test whether it would help to reduce stress, I looked into some materials that could reduce distractions, such as sounds or noise from the surrounding environment. There was a form of material called acoustic panels, which is ideal for reducing noise and sounds. So, I ordered them from Amazon and designed a small helmet made by this form for my minimum approach in testing.



The design of my isolation helmet was to create a box that packs these acoustic forms on both sides of its layer to maximize sound reduction. The black box would have tremendous light isolation performance and it successfully creates a sense of isolation for users.

Testing the isolation helmet



After making the helmet with those sound-reduction forms, I tested it with some of my participants, and they thought the helmet with the sound-reducing form on the layers worked as a barrel between them and the surrounding environment; it did its purpose of letting people calm down within a silent and dark space.

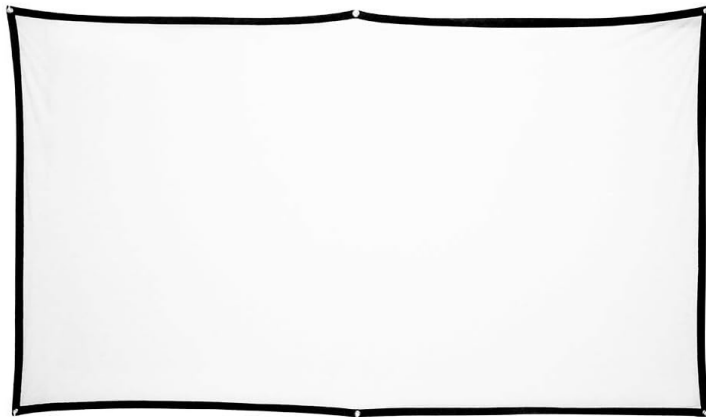
It requires more comfort so people would not feel cumbersome while wearing the helmet for a long period; this means that isolation purpose could be used as one of the elements of the stress relief method, and this minimum approach just proves this as a fact. The only thing I needed to dig into more was the comforting experience since it also played a massive role in helping people de-stress. To meet the goal of both a comforting and isolated experience, I chose the final and the original concept version of my pod design, which is a whole isolation space that can fit a person to sit or lie down for maximum comfort. I researched how to achieve the goal of getting a space like that. The best and most reliable solution for that was to search for some form of a tent because constructing a space like that was not the focus of my thesis direction, especially since my focus is more on the performance of ambient light in an isolated space. Therefore, I looked into some existing tent designs and discovered that a one-bed tent fits perfectly with the iteration I sketched. It has no patterns or colors on the exterior, which fits perfectly for the similar concept of environment-isolated purposes.



I also looked into the projection sheet I attended to use with the tent for the ambient light performance since the original projection sheet I used was made of plastic. Hence, it has some sort of reflection and glossy on the surface, which was a poor visual effect for projecting the colored ambient light. Besides that, it also had many folded marks that looked like grids, which I needed help removing for non-distractible visual appeal. When people sit close to the projecting filming sheet, the negative visual impact would be more severe and hard to ignore.



So, I tested it with various materials such as paper, Tyvek sheet, and transparent plastic sheet. The best materials I found on the internet are projection sheets with flat surfaces and non-reflective material. I found out that there was a material called projector fabric with the same double-sided projection ability. At the same time, it would be flat without any reflection on the surface.



With all the materials and components ready to be assembled, I assembled them all together for the general testing of the isolation and ambient light projection effect. The result was that those materials worked perfectly together and delivered what I was looking for: the isolation space and ambient light performance that allows people to view them calmly.

Testing the tent with paper for ambient light projection





The interior of the pod with ambient light projection



The development and editing of ambient light projection:

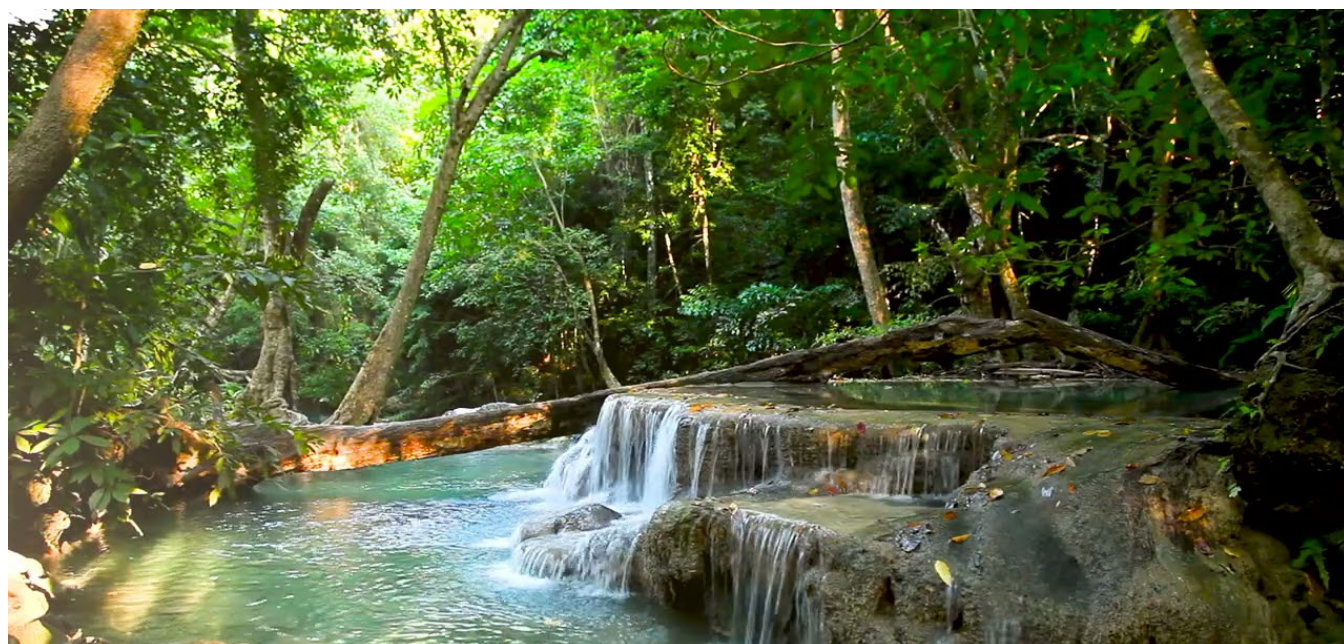
While all the pod components and projection materials were determined and ready to be tested, I also considered designing the ambient light projection. I abandoned the concept of making the pod interactive based on people's heart rate readings or other body indications from the Arduino sensor, firstly because the Arduino sensor reading was not accurate enough to send out the correct reading. Secondly, each person has a different body type, so there is more evaluation or standard for the pod to define whether it can solve the stress status. Therefore, to make the ambient light projection a more relaxing experience with more natural metaphors infused, I made a sequenced session, followed by different color patterns indicating each de-stress stage.

There would be four stages of the ambient light color for the whole session, and each stage represent one season of the color sampled from a correlated natural scene. It starts from the most calming and peaceful color, which is dark blue color, and gradually changes into a brighter color followed by green, orange, and yellow to represent a more positive mood as well as the other natural scenes.

The dark blue ambient light projection is the first stage of the ambient light performance, representing the night scenes and winter as the first season in the projection.



The green ambient light performance indicates that the second season is spring and is sampled from natural scenes like forests with waterfalls and rivers flowing through.



The third season is summer, which is the color of bright yellow and orange, sampled from the natural scene of the sun rising with sea shorelines.



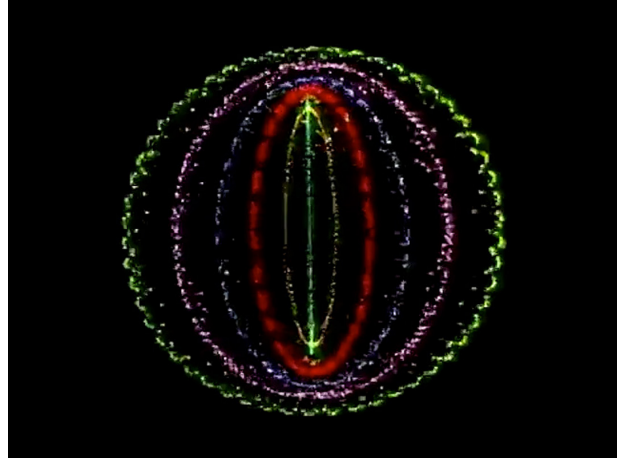
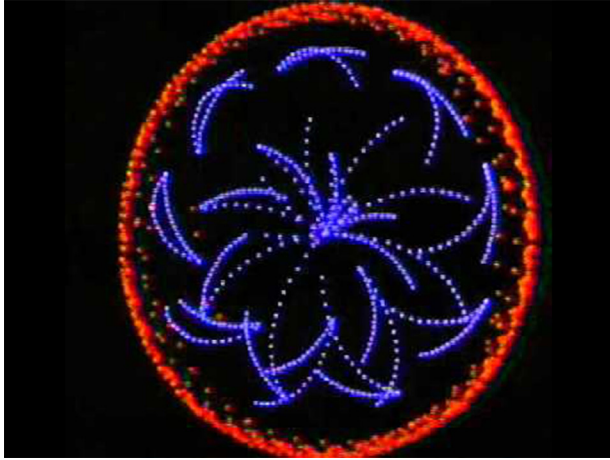
The final ambient light season is autumn; it combines all the color sets from previous seasons because it is sampled from the colorful autumn trees and plant leaves inspired by the autumn rainy setting.



With each season setting in place, I also integrated correlated natural sounds of each sense embedded with the ambient light color projection, so it would provide the audience a fully immersive experience to going through the ambient light performance to feel about the four different seasons interchanging each other. The audio is provided by a headset for the audience to wear inside the pod so environmental sounds cannot penetrate into the tent, which could cause distractions.

With the full ambient light stage settings ready, I tested it with some participants, and they suggested that it would be better to correlate with more light patterns and sequence; one of the examples is the John Whitney-Permutations (1966),

John Whitney-Permutations (1966)



In the film “Permutations,” John Whitney established a pioneering work in computer-generated imagery art by utilizing a combination of mathematical sequences. He created an appealing visual performance of geometric forms and dynamic transitions. With the experimentation of early computer technology in the 1960s, the performance delivered a vivified dance of color and shapes. This film not only demonstrates the technological mastery of Whitney but also has a predictable impact on the future digital tools for artistic expression.

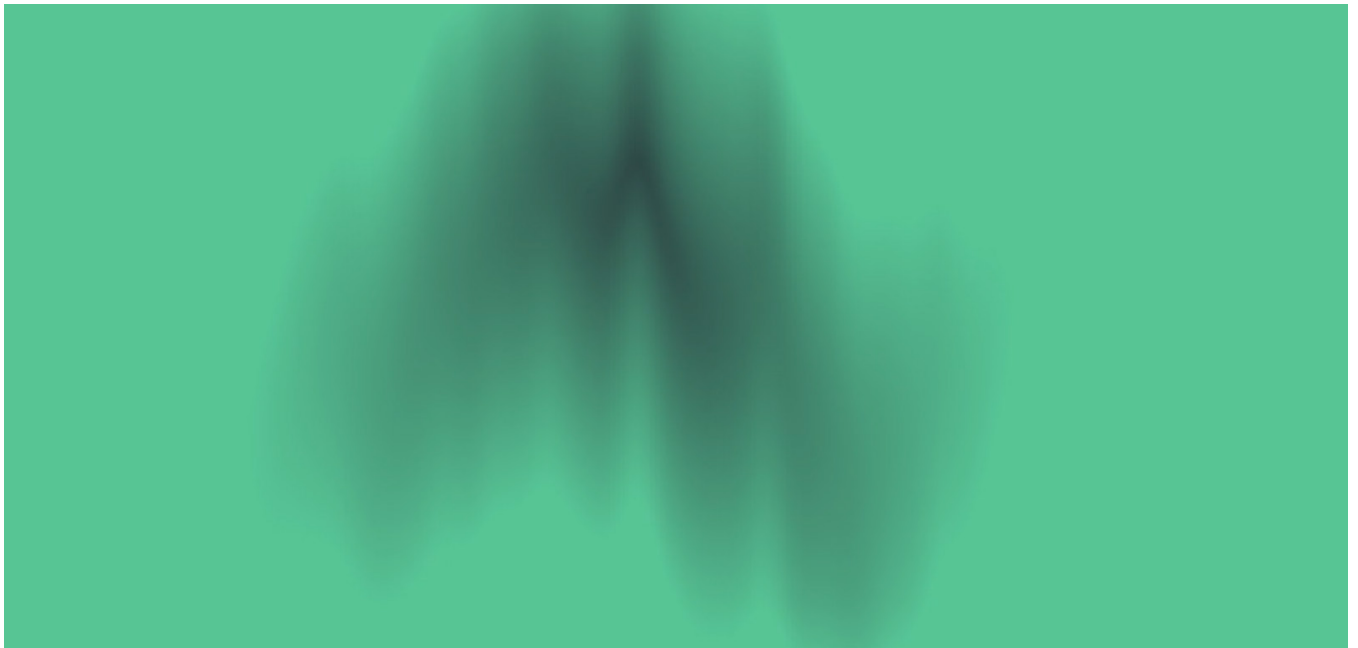
From my take on my projection of ambient light, I decided to infuse John Whitney’s technique in representing patterns and sequences within the ambient light projection since previously I only used one kind of the pattern, which is the three points gradient change, so I looked into some effect creation tool in premier and tested some of the effect to fit the most of the calming aspect of the pod’s four seasons colored ambient light. The first version is the aurora light, a sequence that imitates the column-shaped light pattern on the screen to flow during the time spent.

The Aurora Lights



Then, I also tried to make the patterns to be more distinct. Since people need to notice the light pattern from the projection sheet, it would be better for the pattern to be more dynamic, and the visual effect would become more notable during the process. So I tried some other patterns that could fit in with the aurora light column, and I eventually landed the radio pattern for another pattern of the ambient light sequence.

The Radio Waves





After I finished the pattern of radio waves, I tested them all together. I discovered that what if I infused them all together with a random sequence so it would have a more unpredictable visual effect along with the ambient color change during the process, which is a similar concept to John Whitney's computer-generated graphical art. So, I used the original color gradient into random sequences and patterned them for each season. Now, all the ambient light color patterns look more intuitive and attractive for people to stare at over a long period.

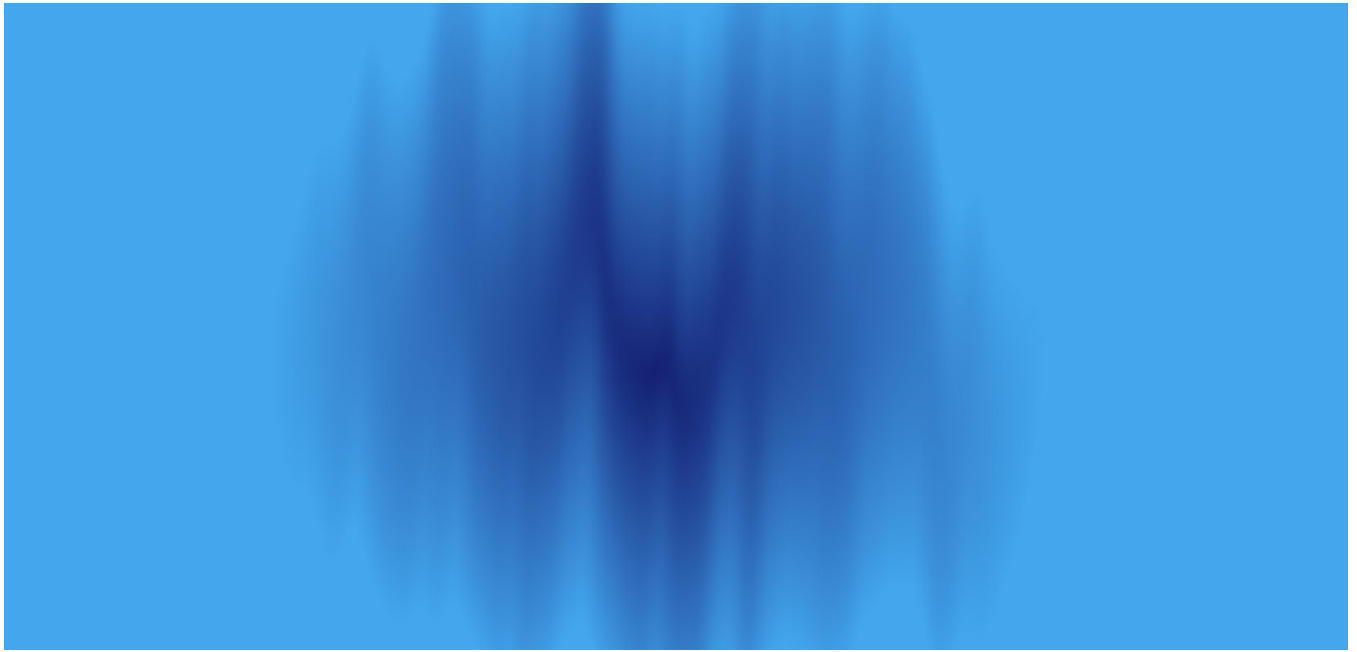
The starting color patterns of winter ambient light projections (Dark Blue)



Gradual transformation to the aurora light patterns (Dark Blue)



Gradual transformation to the radio waves(Dark Blue)



With the transformation of the ambient light pattern set in place, some other participants also felt the original ambient light performance took too long to go through the four different stages of the seasons. Therefore, I re-edited the length from one hour to 18 minutes for one video loop, and each season of the ambient light color pattern would be around 6 mins with the same amount of graphic pattern interchanges as the final version of the ambient light projection.

After all ambient light projections were set and the tent ready to be installed, I combined all the pieces and conducted several more rounds of testing. People can both feel and understand the effect of the stress-relief meaning behind these ambient light performances now, and the only slight improvement they need is to feel more comfortable within the tent so they would not feel fatigued if they watch for a longer period, people can also come in and out during the middle of the performance for convenience similar to the art exhibition in the museum.

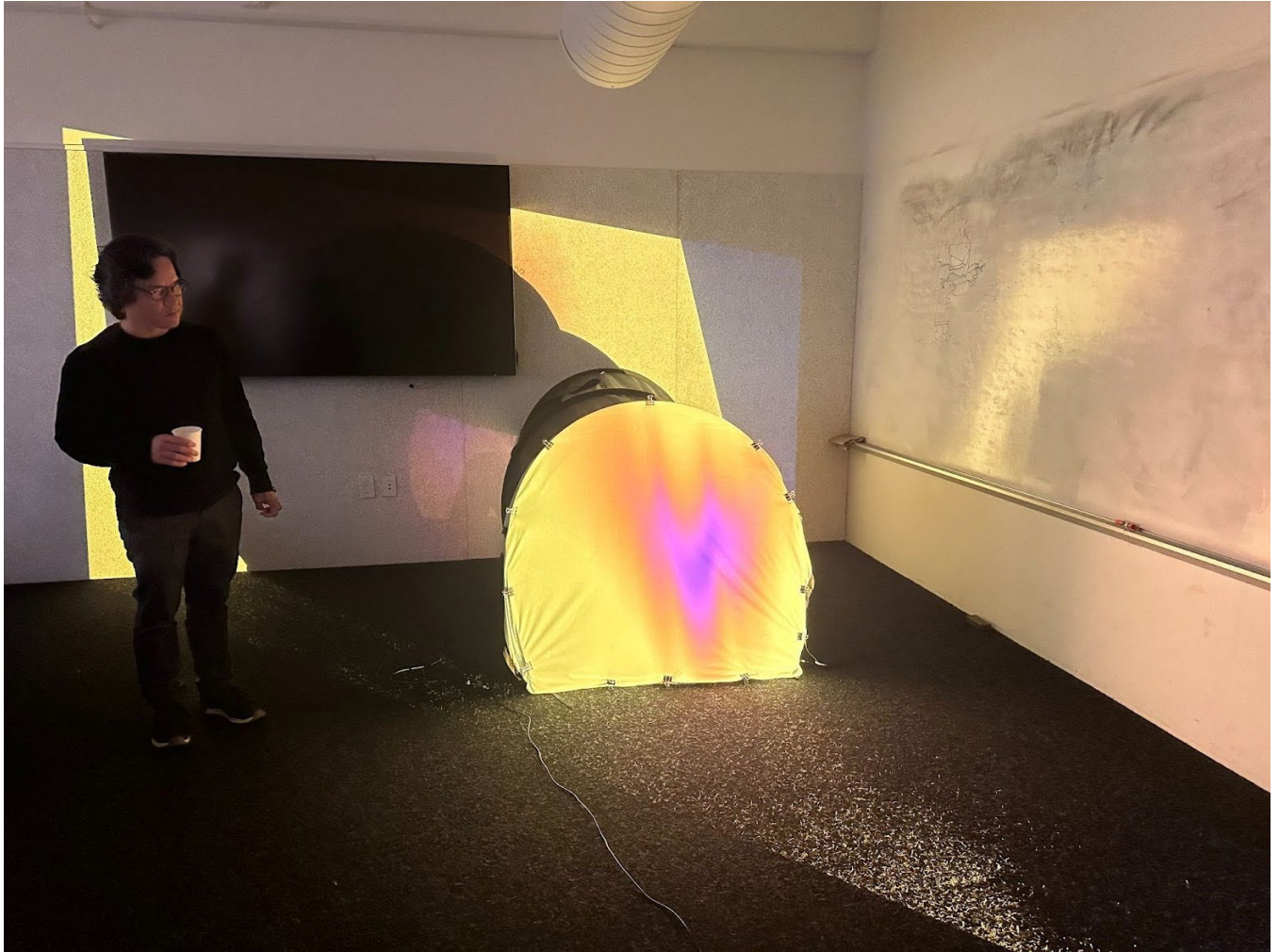
Final review and detail adjustments for the final exhibition

By the time before the final review, the completed version of the mindful serenity pod is ready for its functionalities and performance.





In the final review session, the feedback I received was that although the pod had delivered my design concept and stress-relief meaning, there were still some areas I could improve further for the final exhibition, such as the projection frame of the pod could be integrated inside of the pod instead of using binder clips to attach them directly, the bottom layer of the pod could also consider using some back support to improve the audience visual angle when they are laying inside of the pod so that their head can stay upward and directly look at the projection screen.



Another consideration of improvement was to give some visual guidance to the audience; therefore, before they step inside the pod, they would understand where the entrance to get in, and the visual guidance could be the same metaphor as the ambient light concept from the natural scenes, which could apply on the same concept to the exterior of the tent. So I decided to use some tree leaves as a cover layer on the tent's exterior, with an artificial grass mat at the entrance so people could take off their shoes and step on the grass as the pre-stress relief state. They get into the pod to start their journey of the ambient light performance. With these visual hints installed, people would no longer appreciate not only this pod within to feel the ambient light performance but also the exterior to feel the natural theme.

A black pop-up tent, identified as a 'Mindful Serenity Pod', is the central focus. It is heavily decorated with green ivy leaves and vines that drape over its top and sides. The tent is set up on a large, rectangular mat of bright green artificial grass. To the right of the tent, a black sign stands upright, featuring the text 'MINDFUL SERENITY POD' in blue and white, along with smaller text and a logo. The background is a dark blue curtain, and the floor is a light-colored, worn concrete.





MINDFUL SERENITY POD

Lay down in it & Relax

Introducing the Mindful Serenity Pod, a tranquil escape from the chaos of modern life, transporting you into a realm of serene bliss. Inspired by James Turrell's work, this intimate sanctuary cocoons visitors in soft materials, shielding them from external stimuli. Ambient light projections mimic natural landscapes, shifting from twilight blues to sunrise warmth, inducing profound calmness. Immersive sounds harmonize with the space, guiding a sensory journey through the four seasons. Stress melts away as guests embark on a transformative voyage of self-discovery and rejuvenation, embracing every moment as a symphony of serenity. Step inside, leave the world behind and be carried away on a journey to profound tranquility.

Created by WOODWARD
@woodwardco.co.uk

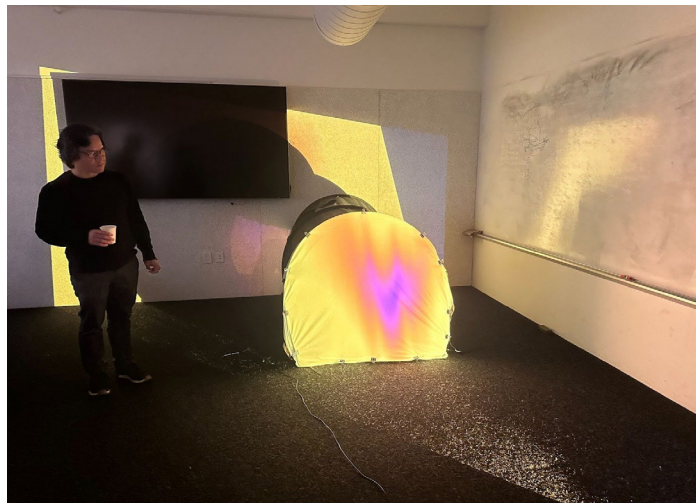






Chapter Five

My take and the summary of Mindful Serenity Pod



From my experience designing the mindful serenity pod, I've learned that the design process is a continuous loop, constantly returning to the original concept during exploration and experimentation. Initially, my goal was only to create a fully functional product capable of alleviating people's stress.

It's intriguing to identify the complexities of the design process, especially when aiming to create a product with a specific purpose for stress relief. Diving into the intricacies of crafting the pod structure, contemplating ambient light elements, and refining the concept can always have some turbulence and unexpected turns.

Despite my dedication and pursuit of perfection based on my perception, I discovered that following my intuition wasn't sufficient to address the core issue of creating a stress-relieving pod. Designing a functional product requires robust scientific evidence or data to support its efficacy. Moreover, a one-size-fits-all approach does not cater to everyone's expectations for effective stress relief.

This realization prompted me to transition from a purely product-oriented design mindset to one that incorporates elements of art installation. I aimed to convey the message of stress relief while delivering a tangible effect to the audience. The Mindful Serenity pod allowed me to step out of my comfort zone and communicate with my audience using my unique design language. I sought to express my intention for people to de-stress in today's high-pressure environment.

This design experience has taught me how to articulate my language and translate it into an artistic experience that resonates with everyone rather than relying on a language that may be challenging for others to interpret. Moving forward, I aspire to integrate this design concept into my future work, challenging myself to explore new ideas and provide designs that are both satisfying and comprehensible, infused with my message, which is to help and resonate with my audience and remind them of changing space into an isolated nature experience for de-stress.

Bibliographies

Random International. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://www.random-international.com/rain-room-2012>.

gp copy & print paper 8.5 x 11 says:, Pablo Brown Says:, Kahht Says:, Roanna says:, and Jellyfishwish Says: "Cloud." Caitlind r.c. Brown & Wayne Garrett, November 9, 2023. <https://incandescentcloud.com/aboutcloud/>.

"The Pool." Jen Lewin Studio. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://www.jenlewinstudio.com/portfolio/the-pool/>.

"Janet Echelman's 1.8 Renwick." Smithsonian American Art Museum. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://americanart.si.edu/exhibitions/echelman>.

"Studio Roosegaarde." Waterlicht. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://www.studioroosegaarde.net/project/waterlicht>.

"Submergence." squidsouporg. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://www.squidsoup.org/portfolio/submergence-2/>.

Gintoff, Vladimir. "Sou Fujimoto Installs a 'Forest of Light' for Cos at 2016 Salone Del Mobile." ArchDaily, April 13, 2016. <https://www.archdaily.com/785460/sou-fujimoto-installs-a-forest-of-light-for-cos-at-2016-salone-del-mobile>.

Assemblance. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://umbrellium.co.uk/projects/assemblance/>.

"Light Barrier." Kimchi and Chips. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://www.kimchiandchips.com/works/lightbarrier/>.

"Murmuration (2019)." squidsouporg. Accessed December 8, 2023. <https://www.squidsoup.org/portfolio/murmuration/>.

Staugaitis, Laura. "Light Leaks: A Shimmering Room Filled with Fifty Disco Balls and Hundreds of Reflected Points of Light." Colossal, April 12, 2018. <https://www.thisiscolossal.com/2018/04/light-leaks-by-kyle-mcdonald-and-jonas-jongejan/>.

West, Liz. "Our Colour Reflection - A-N the Artists Information Company." a, July 10, 2016. <https://www.a-n.co.uk/events/our-colour-reflection/>.

Packard. (2023, November 4). Packard Jennings. <https://packardjennings.com/2020/02/19/police-mindfulness-meditation/>
Brain, S. L. & T. (n.d.). Perfect sleep. Perfect Sleep. <https://perfectsleep.labr.io/>

Skyspace - James Turrell at the University of Texas Austin. Skyspace | University of Texas - James Turrell. (n.d.). <https://turrell.utexas.edu/>

Xie, X., Cai, J., Fang, H., Tang, X., & Yamanaka, T. (2022, November 7). Effects of colored lights on an individual's affective impressions in the observation process. *Frontiers*. <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.938636/full>

Dmitry. (2021, June 12). Walter Pichler's futuristic visions from the '60s. Design You Trust - Design Daily Since 2007. <https://designyoutrust.com/2021/06/walter-pichlers-futuristic-visions-from-the-60s/>

Digital Harmony: The life of John Whitney, Computer Animation Pioneer. (n.d.). <https://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.5/2.5pages/2.5moritzwhitney.html>



Lay down in it & Relax

Introducing the Mindful Serenity Pod, a tranquil escape from the chaos of modern life, transporting you into a realm of serene bliss. Inspired by James Turrell's work, this intimate sanctuary cocoons visitors in soft materials, shielding them from external stimuli. Ambient light projections mimic natural landscapes, shifting from twilight blues to sunrise warmth, inducing profound calmness. Immersive sounds harmonize with the visuals, guiding a sensory journey through the four seasons. Stress melts away as guests embark on a transformative voyage of self-discovery and rejuvenation, embracing every moment as a symphony of serenity. Step inside, leave the world behind, and be carried away on a journey to profound tranquility.

