

Zain Islam-Hashmi

49-806 Responsive Mobile Environments

Investigation I – Prosthetic Documentation

Speculative Proposal/Conceptual Design:

The driving idea behind my design was to start visualizing auditory memories in an accessible way for people, but to simultaneously start a conversation/critique of society's obsession with memory capture. In my opinion, it is almost crazy how some people want to record every single second of their lives and have access to it, whereas some people only choose to save a few memories here and there. So I decided to create the Sound Clip as a way to start show/reflect how much one depends on memory saving. I wanted to create an object with an ability of unlimited expansion, as well as one that could be used by everyone now, 50 years from now, and would be so deeply ingrained in people's lives where it would start to show over time how much of a crutch such an idea is to people.

Prototype:

To create this object, I went through numerous brainstorming phases and sketches. Sketches can be seen in the References/Photo section of this report. A big tool was my documentation of the sounds I heard in a day; I was not able to do the entire day as it became too much to physically log but the list can be found in the References/Photo section of this report. For the presentation, I made an easy diagram on Illustrator to show the workings of the device. For the physical prototype, I laser engraved symbols onto Acrylic and then cut out the squares. I then spray painted the icons on the squares in black first, then proceeded to paint the rest of the squares. I then backed all the squares with some black board and attached adhesive magnet strips to the blackboard to make the sample Sound Clips. I think used other magnetic strips on Foamcore and covered that in paper to create the surfaces to stick the Clips onto.

Precedents:

I was very much inspired by the work of Laurie Frick, and how she started to represent data and memories in a visually appealing and easy to understand way for people. Especially how they fit into people's lives such as on the walls of her installations. This abstraction of data into art was a huge driver behind what I wanted to be one possible outcome of my device. I was also inspired by the preliminary research/discoveries we made; in my research, the study of sound as a way of remembering memories and the relation to emotion memories were very important. The work of one PhD student and using technology to physically show how people are feeling was very interesting, especially the changing colors and patterns depending on mood; this started to inform my design around the idea of wearing your memories and feelings on your sleeve/being able to physically see/perceive them. The AffectAura project also helped me to start thinking of the impact sound could have on emotional memory, and how

in all things I do I aim to make people feel something new through different experiences (in this case sound).

Process:

I started broadly by thinking of vague ideas to start off from and where I wanted to end/what I envisioned. This then led to a first round of 2 ideas, one dealing with capturing sound memory and the other color-coding memories for display. During a critique though, my visions of the project started to change. Questions raised included how memories were played back, does it capture ambient/sounds of the home, is this wall-sized vs. a totem, how to make the form more compelling and representative of the information it was capturing, how active/engaging/requiring is it, how does it integrate into a life, what are its implications now and in the future, and most importantly how does it ask and push questions of technology and memories role in society. This last question is what drove me to push the project towards being a critique of society and the ways in which we think/capture/preserve memory. I then worked towards the goal of an object that could easily start to take over people's lives/spaces if they became obsessed, and worked down from there to new ways of capturing and displaying memory in the home (replacing pictures), and ultimately the Sound Clip.

Open Questions and Challenges:

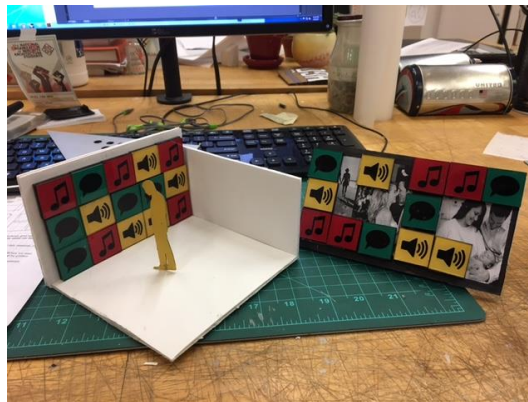
There are a lot of questions and directions that can go off from this design proposition. For one, the point brought up about remembering computer memory/sound is very interesting, and is one that should be taken into consideration especially with how much such technology is integrated into our lives. One point for further development is the resolution to which this is used in the future, where I feel that I went in wanting to create for future years but ended up creating something maybe more geared towards the now. Questions to be considered though include figuring out who's and which recordings are worth saving, what sounds do people actually hold dear, and most importantly in my opinion, why fight the human nature of forgetting?

Reflection:

My eyes very much opened while doing this project to how much of an impact memory really has in society and people's lives currently (being in school and especially studio can start to cut you off from the trends/happenings of the world and people). People's opinions and insights were especially intriguing, because I didn't think perceptions of memory could vary that drastically. Looking back on the project, I definitely did not push this as conceptually and "crazy-ly" as I think I wanted to. I very much want to challenge people and memory, so hopefully I can do so in the remainder of the class. I also wish I had done more technical things (circuitry, 3D printing, etc.) to jog my memory of those skills, but those are all things I can practice and learn about more late on.

Attribution and References:

- <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2015/dec/03/tech-halo-show-world-your-mood>
- <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/research/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/paper799.pdf>



1/26/15
RULE

o What's really gonna affect us? (what)
 o We have clues behind us for to determine who we will be
 o Direction of the pattern of human behavior and of place
 o anything you do look [abstract]
 o we feed off patterns, it's embedded in us
 o near data abstracted into art

o BS & information
 o 666 goes up
 o take back your data - learn into art

o how much do you really want to know?

What problems do we have?
 - Photos - GPS/Printer - sketchbooks - notebooks
 - how do you already remind yourself of things?

Personal / External
 - Goals + Function
 - your own clarity of thought

o Many to the senses → small memory
 o Cherished moments → enhancing the home + memory
 o Daniela Petrelli
 o Supporting (Beyond Capture)
 o Deborah Archibald - digital pen + tech

an objective
 the home
 how you make it
 how you use it
 how it's important
 how is it important
 how is it important
 how is it important

Form color
 better copy for
 objects
 yellow
 blue
 cold
 cold
 cold

a wall of color
 a wall of color
 a wall of color
 a wall of color

ambient sounds of the home?
 sounds of the home?
 sounds of the home?

how long play it
 how long play it
 how long play it

do you need the
 do you need the
 do you need the

Robert to God
 Robert to God
 Robert to God

