

CO - CREATE YOUR STORY

The Portraits of Life

JU YOUNG YI



CO – CREATE YOUR STORY

The Portraits of Life

JU YOUNG YI

Imprint

Title: The Portraits of Life

Author: Ju Young Yi

Matriculation No .: 209750

Date: June 2020

Webpage: <http://www.portrait-life.com/>

© Zurich University of the Arts,

Department Design, Interaction Design

Mentors: Prof. Dr. Karmen Franinovic, Luke Franzke

Typeface: Ogg Italic, Poppins font family.

PART 1

The Main Thesis

Abstract	8
I. Project Introduction	..... 10
II. Background & Motivation	..... 16
III. Related Literature Reviews	..... 32
VI. Methodology Analysis	..... 44
V. Field Research	..... 70
VI. Experiments	..... 78
VII. Platform Development	..... 108
VIII. Evaluation and Conclusion	..... 116
IX. Appendix	..... 128

PART 2

The Outcome Gallery

I. The collection of scripts	..... 146
II. The collection of songs	..... 204
III. References	..... 224

PART 1. THE MAIN THESIS

This part presents the ideation and process of combining the theory and practice, alongside with field research and experiments. This is followed by the learnings, reflection, the next steps of this project as well as the bibliography.

I. *Abstract*

‘The portraits of Life’ started with this question: ‘How could artists and designers help people to reflect on themselves positively?’. The project uses the combination of various methodologies of art and design to find the answer.

Following that, the main experiments of this novel journey are focused on co-creation with the participants. While being blindfolded in an in-depth interview session, a participant open up one’s story and provide the resources to the conductor to make the prototypes (‘the digital gifts’).

Making gifts consist of the following process: Writing as well as re-enacting the scripts out of the interview session, creating live-painting, composing background music, and packing them together in a 5-6 minute video that can showcase the wholistic life of a participant. The additional part of the gift is writing lyrics, creating and singing a song for specific values and dimensions that the participant has shown.

These prototypes are varied for each of the participants, and help them to revisit the moments and values of their lives. Alongside the multiple layers of background research, the project shares the learnings which are gained from the co-creation sessions with more than a dozen participants. As one

of the main findings, it presents the importance of authenticity, trust, and ownership of autobiographical storytelling in the mediation process. Methodology-wise, it shows that live-painting, narration, and music can create a rhythm in the perception of revisiting one’s life. The next step of this project would be considering the versatility of ‘gift-creation’ process, regarding the creative roles of the potential future conductors.

***Note:**

1. The references for this paper are designed to be integrated with the main text. This is to increase their visibility that helps to understand the context of the paper. (All of the references are accessible again in the bibliography section.
2. The references for this paper are designed to be integrated with the main text. This is to increase their visibility that helps to understand the context of the paper. (All of the references are accessible again in the bibliography section.)

I. *Project Introduction*

*“Welcome to the journey of
reflecting yourself.”*

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

1. Personal motivation
2. Project hypothesis
3. Project methodology
4. The dreams of contribution
5. The journey this paper brings you to

1. Personal motivation

As an international student who has been living in Zurich for more than three years, I could observe how important it is to be mentally healthy to survive in a foreign country. Thankfully, there were many people who helped me to open up and to feel positive about my life. With their help, I was able to stay strong and be positive about myself. When I opened up about my stories to the others, I could see that many people who helped me were also struggling with how they feel about their lives. We never had an opportunity to talk about it before, so we didn't know each other's struggles. It made me ask myself if I could find a way to reflect ourselves more positively, while sharing the stories of our lives. I wanted to deliver the notion of connectivity and understanding in an art and design process. That led me to be a conductor of this co-creation journey called 'The Portraits of Life', and to interact with each of my participants while opening up the deep stories that we never tried before.

2. Project hypothesis

To be courageous about taking the responsibility of looking into other's lives, I had this big hypothesis: 'Artists and designers can provide novel methods of helping people to reflect positively about themselves.' My main question was how to integrate my own artistic expression with the design methods I learned in ZHdK, regarding this hypothesis. Therefore, this

is how I positioned myself: 'I am not a therapist who gives guidance to people, neither a painter who got inspired by other people's stories to develop my own work. However, I'm an interaction designer who believes in the power of the artistic experience and in the design methods such as in-depth interview and co-creation.'

3. Project methodology

'The Portraits of life' consists of many mini-projects. For each one, the outcomes are a video (and a painting) that features the participant's life, alongside a song composed by the conductor. In the in-depth interview session, participants wear blindfolds and talk about very personal parts of their current status(values), memories, and future dreams. The interview questions are semi-structured and based on the research of psychological aspects (Logotherapy, Psychoanalysis, and CBT). The interview is voice-recorded and later used as the base of creating the script, narration, digital art(painting), and the background music of the 5-6 minutes long video, as well as the song. These final results were sent to the participants by email with the metaphor of 'gift'. After that, the conductor and participant have a feedback session about the experience and discuss contributing the outcomes to the online-platform of this project.

4. The dreams of contribution

While being a conductor of ‘The Portraits of Life’, I could imagine this project would bring the notion of interaction further with multiple aspects;

- The interaction between the past memories, present values, and future dreams of a person (for each participant).
- The interaction between different people (the conductor, participants, and third-parties who get influenced by the project).
- The interaction between the fields of art and design, which is expressed in a form of multimedia (the final product of mini-projects).
- The interaction between analogue design methods and digital storytelling (virtual outcome from personal interviews).

The most important dream that I had was to deliver my truthful love, respect, encouragement and trust to the participants who believed in this project. In the further chapters of this paper, I'm going to illustrate how I proceeded with this life-long project of mine, in several categories.

5. The journey this paper brings you to

This paper consists of two parts: One is the main thesis, and another is the outcome gallery. The main thesis shows the process of combining the theory and practice, alongside with field research and experiments. It first introduces the motivation and background of this project which is connected to the main literature reviews and methodology analysis (in-depth interview, storytelling, live painting, and composing). After that, field research of meeting the participants and each of the experiments is showcased. The next part is about building the platform for this project and documenting the process as videos. Then, the last chapters of this part reflect the project and share the learning, contributions, conclusions as well as the possible next step. Finally, the appendix of special thanks and bibliography follows. The second part of this paper is the place where all the detailed experiment results (scripts, paintings, song lyrics, and album arts) are illustrated, as a gallery.

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

II. *Background & Motivation*

“Why do we need this project?”

1. Contemplating social media
2. Technology & Autobiographical storytelling
3. ‘Capturing’ and ‘Owning’ the moments

1. Contemplating social media

Are you not a 'lonely person' who has many 'friends'? Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Tiktok, Tinder.... Numerous social media platforms are flooding with the status, short stories and images of your 'friends', and yourself. It is also believed that social media has brought people more connected, yet less happy (Twenge, Jean M., iGen, Atria Books, New York, 2017). What would be the reason behind this irony? How do the algorithmically generated connectivity and storytelling methods are failing us? And most of all, what can people find in this project which has been missing in the social media of nowadays?

As mentioned briefly in the introduction of this paper, the main motivation for me to conduct 'The Portraits of Life' was to understand people's lives and to suggest a new method of self-reflection. While conducting the interviews and meeting new people, the need to study about current technology and how social media intrudes in our lives became more and more apparent: especially throughout the feedback session of early experiments, the participants of this projects addressed the notion of 'being super connected and being super lonely' at the same time. Also, they talked about the alternative satisfaction that this project provided, which couldn't be found in the algorithmically generated storytelling of other social media platforms.

Therefore, while concreting the project ideation and gathering the background knowledge, I conducted a specific field research while collecting the quotes from my participants. The quotes were about what they think of social media's benefits and failures in storytelling, how often they are using the platforms, and for what purpose. This was to collect the data from the actual users of contemporary social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The people I gathered for this side-field research were mainly my participants, and I naturally addressed this question after our in-depth interview sessions. Here are some of the quotes collected from the participants of this project, about their thoughts regarding social media (with their initials):

- "I want it, but I hate it – You know, I often see it because it helps me to keep up with my friends. But actually, everyone seems to be enjoying a great life, except for me. And while looking into what I have generated so far in my timeline, I also look like a person who doesn't have any bad days. I know that's not true and I don't like how deceiving my stories can be." – E, a participant who uses Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn almost every day
- "I don't use it that often. It makes me feel like peeking at other people's lives, and I can't stop comparing myself with them. I also think the stories they tell are not reliable. I had a bad experience of using it, it was not too terrible, but I actually quit using social media because of it – Somehow

I couldn't delete the data of my ex because other people had our pictures, and for some who didn't know we had a bad break up, they continuously asked how we were doing, with their 'friendly' intentions.” – *J, a participant who used Facebook until last year and uses Instagram*

- “I use it for killing time. It makes me feel distanced from the random people I see in the social media, and I can laugh about their funny reactions or even accidents which could be dangerous to the person but hilarious to the others. Also, I don't share my real personal ideas in social media. It's just my opinion, but I think nobody does.” – *C, a participant who has Facebook, Twitter and Instagram account but hardly upload things*
- “It can be helpful for making an event with my friends or to update myself for the current issues that are happening in this world. But I'm afraid of using it, as once my account was hacked and I had to deal with the rubbish contents which I would never upload them by myself. Tons of misunderstanding happened between the people I knew, and I had to explain that it wasn't me who did it. The thing is, it happened in one platform, but I had to deal with other direct messages from the people in other platforms as well. That's because this issue was spread also to other people on different platforms.” – *E, a participant who mainly uses Facebook and twitter irregularly*



**Figure 1. Social media platforms that we daily use. (Source:<https://internationaldirector.com/the-c-suite/going-social-should-your-c-suite-be-on-social-media/>, visited in 2020.)*

2. Technology & Autobiographical storytelling

The sentences above are the selective quotes that could represent other experiences or opinions about social media's storytelling method. The thing to clarify here is, the selected quotes are mainly about the negative perspectives. However, it is also noticeable that out of 13 people who did the in-depth interview, none of them has shown a 'positive' attitude towards the usage of social media as a trustful autobiographical storytelling method. This gave me insight into the current status of people's lives in social media. I also asked the participant's experience of creating autobiographical stories before the emergence of smartphones and social media platforms. The most popular method was the hand-written journal, glued photo album book and sticker notes.

There were different types of storytelling, and the branches were quite diverse. A participant talked about the illustration sketchbook she created every day in childhood, and others showed me the pictures of some of her photo diaries. The interesting thing is, a very little amount of people were keeping this fashion after the emergence of smartphones. "I just don't need to glue the photos anymore." One participant said. Smartphone galleries generate the storyline while analysing the images with the data of time, place and face recognition. Moreover, if it is posted on social media, images could be shared and duplicated in many other ways. What I could observe was that the method of recording and mediating

oneself has changed with technology, but the core psychology of this behaviour stays the same – we want to remember ourselves with a smile, and sometimes visit the memories again that built who we are.

Then how does the notion of imagery affect the whole process of mediation? Ritesh Uttamchandani, a photographer said, "It's almost therapeutic: the process of inconspicuously, yet instantly, reacting, receiving, and recording on a palm-sized phone... – Ritesh Uttamchandani (Crist, Steve, Shoemaker, Megan, The Instagram book, AMMO, Korea, 2014, p.96)". As Uttamchandani said, images play a crucial role of mediating oneself, and while looking deeper into the psychological aspect of how people go through the self- mediation process, we can take a look at what Bolter and Grusin declared. "Because we understand media through the ways in which they challenge and reform other media, we understand our mediated selves as reformed versions of earlier mediated selves. – Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin (Remediation: Understanding new media, Cambridge MA: MIT press 2000, p.232)."

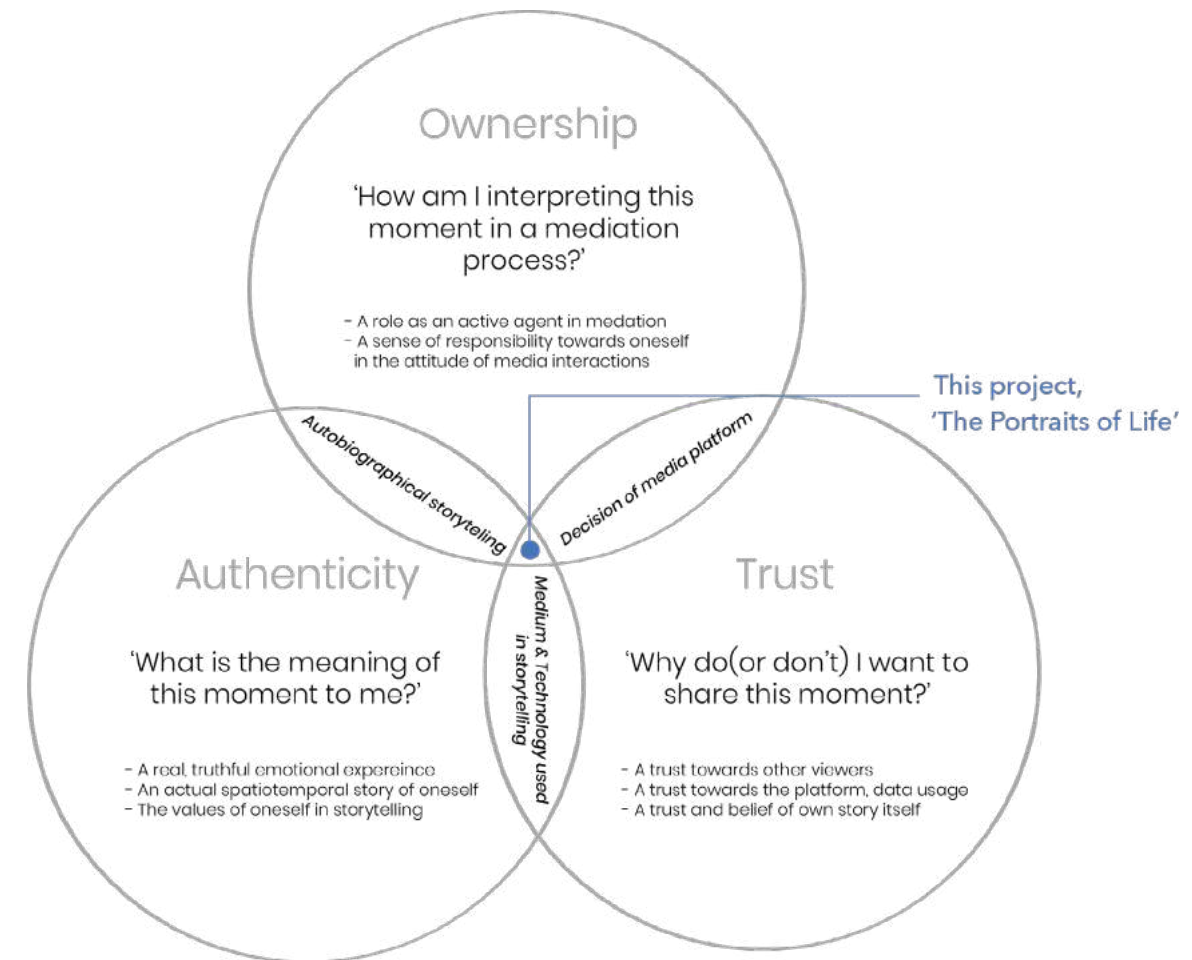


**Figure 2. Capturing the moment of inspiration in a mediation process, a photo taken from Ritesh Uttamchandani. (Source: <https://www.riteshuttamchandani.com/>, visited in 2020.)*

Autobiographical storytelling as a form of mediation is a process of spatiotemporal interaction inside of oneself. The impact of technology has changed the form of interactions, and the spectrum of it. Once the technology of nowadays could afford us the speedy, good quality self-created media which are easy to make, the analogue method of storytelling and its connectivity changed into virtual forms – paintings into digital pictures, hand-written books into V-log videos, and so on. Nowadays, mediation also embraces the social aspect of creating, digesting, and gaining feedback on the content. This idea is illustrated well in the book, ‘Life after new media’. Here is the quote from the book which shows how mediation affects a human being: “Mediation becomes a key trope for understanding and articulating our beings (...) as well as the acts and process of temporarily stabilising the world into media, agents, and networks. (Kember, Sarah, Zylinska, Joanna, Life after new media: Mediation as a vital process, The MIT Press, London, 2012.)” Then what are we missing in the super-rapid, hyper-connected, data-driven mediation method of social networking system? To answer these questions, I revisited the quotes that the participants provided me and found the key elements that made this project special to them.

3. ‘Capturing’ and ‘Owning’ the moments

“Publication media such as blogs and Twitter make it more efficient for us to communicate with many people at once, but they make it hard to tailor our communication for specific relationships. Thus, many of the things we read on such sites are of little interest. (Donath, Judith, *The Social Machine: Designs for Living Online*, The MIT Press, London, 2014.)” As Donath mentioned, the quality and agility of social media’s connectivity don’t necessarily relate to the quality of it. While talking about the ‘quality’ and ‘depth’ of storytelling, it doesn’t only tackle the interactions between different people – but it also embraces the interaction of individuals with oneself as an agent of the whole mediation process. We can take a look again at the quote from one of the interviewees, that using social media as a platform of autobiographical storytelling made that person feel ‘decisive’ for oneself. We can take these issues from several different perspectives. First is the ‘ownership’ and the process of interpreting the moments in one’s life, second is the notion of ‘trust’, and the last one is about ‘Authenticity’. These ideas are closely connected together, as can be seen in the following diagram.

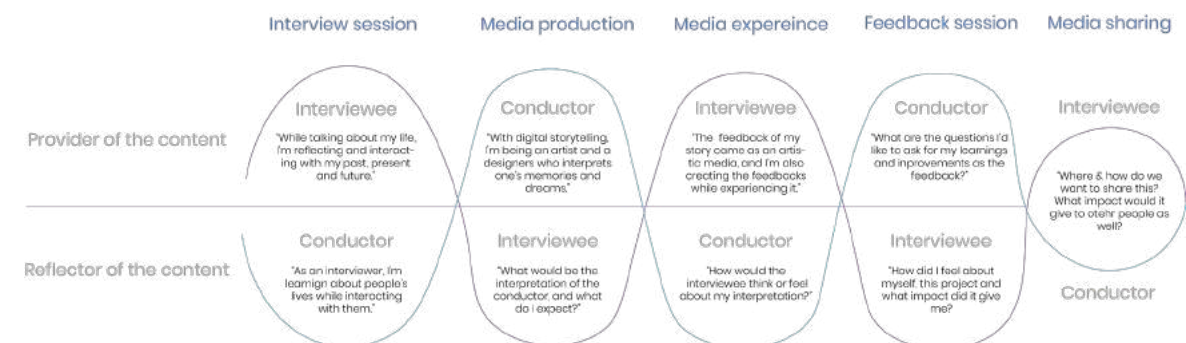


**Figure 3. Positioning the key ideations of the project ‘The Portraits of Life’, derived from the research. (Source: From the in-depth interview results and case-studies of the usage of social media’s autobiographical storytelling process, Image created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.)*

The agile process of taking the image or videos, adding short texts and posting them helps us to capture the moments vividly. “Photography is in a privileged position to capture this flow because it takes on and reveals, instead of concealing, the agent cut which is involved in transforming matter into objects. In this, it produces life forms, rather than merely recording them.” Said Kember, and Zylinska (Kember, Sarah, Zylinska, Joanna, *Life after new media: Mediation as a vital process*, The MIT Press, London, 2012). However, the thing left behind in the general process of mediation nowadays is the focus of the subject, who interprets and digests the whole process of media creation and sharing. If we imagine a person who is just to upload a picture on the Instagram, the notion of ownership could give the questions such as: What would be the idea behind of producing this fragment of stories which would eventually fill up the timeline? And what impact do you actually want to create to yourself and to the others who visit this episode? Having the ownership of one’s autobiographical story is also an honest action of knowing what the agent really wants through the mediation process, in the bigger scope, it relates to the sense of one’s existence, as the term ‘Dasein’(Heidegger, Martin, *Being and Time*, Translated by John Macquarrie & Edward Robinson. London: S.C.M. Press, 1962).

On the basis of ownership, the notion of authenticity and trust are the other cores of how the mediation process could be determined in the sense of outputs. What platform is reliable to let my stories known? To whom I want to share this, and what

kind of digital technology would be suitable for my storytelling? In this project, ‘art’ becomes one of the main methods to answer these questions. The project takes the attitude of balancing between the methods of current technology(video, digital art) with analogue experience of storytelling. The authenticity of autobiographical storytelling is transferred in the imagination of hand-drawn portraits picturing the most personal parts in one’s life, and the layers of interactions are embedded in five steps of interwoven co-creation: In-depth interview session, media production, media experience, feedback session, and media sharing. The figure below shows the concept of this whole process.



**Figure 4. Interwoven co-creation and mediation process of 'The Portraits of life' (Image created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.)*

The quotes from some of the participants show how this project connects the ideation of ownership, authenticity and trust in their experience. (With their names which they provided as the participants of this project.)

- “I can say this video is actually ‘me’ – this is an amazing summary of my whole life.” – *Jaeyoon*.
- “I cried and smiled while watching this several times. It was very emotional, genuine, and lovely.” – *Sabrina*.
- “During the interview, it was like opening up my book and closing again with satisfaction.” – *Elias*.

As the conclusion of this chapter, we can see that the ‘liveness’ of this project is coming from the three points mentioned above, which social media of nowadays tends to miss in their algorithmic storytelling. Thus, as a conductor of this project and as an explorer of the whole process of interactions it provides, I’d like to address that the mediation process of ‘The portraits of life’ is about transcending the shallow spatiotemporal connectivity of what we experience today.

It challenges the usage of media technology of nowadays into more human-centred methods – The media which provides the contents that people would truly relate to, regardless of when and where they would be in their lives. That’s because,

for the participants, these experiences of co-creation would always stay as one of the standing points of recapping how their lives have been, in a most personal way. one of the quotes from my participants supports this idea:

- ““It would be interesting to do this project again, after 5-10 years later. I will be able to see who I was back then, and what I became now. I will see the growth of mine. And the story will never get old, because it’s about me, a real me.”
– *Julian*.

III. *Related Literature Reviews*

"How did the study of society and psychology built this project?"

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

1. About the people, our society

- Consumerism taking over us
- How do people produce their 'image'
- How do people reinforce what they perceive

2. About psychology, our minds

- Psychoanalysis – What happened?
- Logotherapy – What will happen?
- CBT – What should you do?

1. About the people, our society

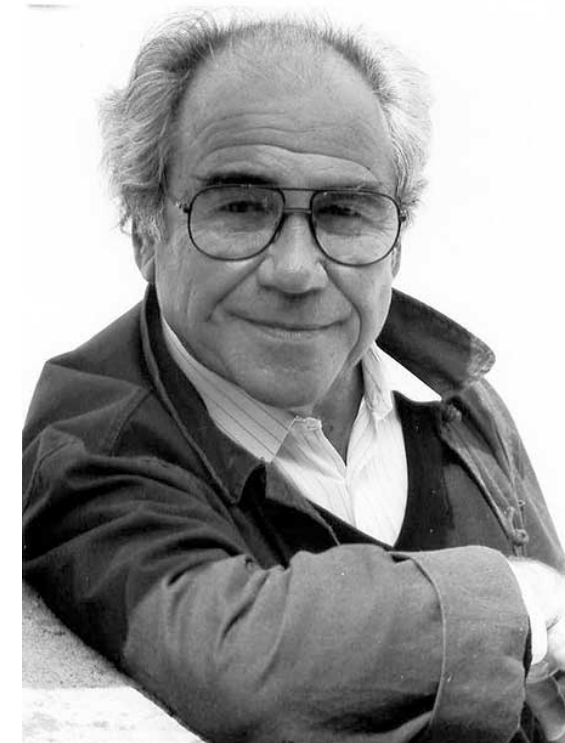
'I feel empty inside.' This is the inspirational sentence that I could collect from the 2-days of free flow seminar which was to find out the ideas for the bachelor project of ZHdK. Why do people feel negative about themselves? What is the current situation that we are having in our society which creates the hollowness? To build up the background knowledge about the people and the world we live in, I first investigated the mechanisms of how our society and mind work.

1) How do you estimate your value? – consumerism taking over us

Social systems influence an individual's decision-making, thinking, and even perceptions. What systems of our society are making our mind hollow? Jean Baudrillard, the author of 'The Consumer Society' claims that the reason is in the consumerism that came together with the liberalism after the war (Baudrillard, Jean, The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures, Redwood books, UK, 1970).

People are educated to translate their values into objects such as luxury goods and captured in the images that the media creates to empower the system. This relates to the book 'Mesmerization' by Gee Thompson (Thomson, Gee, Mesmerization, Thames & Hudson, U.K., 2008), which dives deeper into what concepts have been making those images

strong and how the media has empowered them. One of the most memorable concepts that I got in this book was about 'Luxury fever (same book, page 60)', how the luxury industries 'mesmerized' the lifestyle of the people and even their body shapes in the same context of Baudrillard's book. Selling of lifestyle has been supported by the emotion of 'exclusiveness', that the one has the prestigious social status and therefore, having a more satisfying life.



**Figure 5. The image of Jean Baudrillard. (source: <http://eswinfield.blogspot.com/2010/09/jean-baudrillard.html>, visited on 2020.)*

*2) How do you see yourself?
– how do people produce their 'image'*

While walking alongside the Bahnhofstrasse of Zurich, there are many mesmerising images that catch people's attention. What do these images represent? I got a hint from John Berger's book, 'Ways of seeing'(Burger, John, Ways of Seeing, Penguin books, UK, 1972). In the book, Berger said "Publicity is the culture of the consumer society. It propagates through images that society's belief itself (same book, page 139)."

While seeing the images in the Bahnhofstrasse, the idea that Berger claims comes very clear. The books made me think about what our society is believing in and how it is creating a sustainable system as our daily lives. After reading Gustave Le Bon's 'The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind'(Le Bon, Gustave, The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind, tredition, Hamburg, Germany, 2013), I could understand better about how this 'social spell' could work with strong images of trustable idol – which in most of the democratic society it is no longer a single dictator, but is a concept of 'being economically superior' itself. This also led me to think deeper about the power of the image while making my prototypes.



**Figure 6. The image of Bahnhofstrasse (source:<https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-guide/zurich/shopping/bahnhofstrasse>, visited in 2020.)*

3) *How do you feel about yourself?*
– how do people reinforce what they perceive

After finding out the social aspects, I explored the personal and individual aspect of how our mind works. I first looked up Harari's 'Homo Deus'(Harari, Yuval, Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow, Vintage books, USA, New York, 2015), to see the human's history in a bigger scope and how our desires led us to form the society in a certain way.

After reading this book, I was amazed by the idea that even though humans could solve many problems through technology, we can't say we became 'happier'. What is happiness, then? In the book 'How to create a mind'(Kurzweil, Ray, How to Create a Mind: The Secret of Human Thought Revealed, Penguin Group, USA, 2012), it suggests happiness and pleasure can be a different thing.

However, the important thing is that our mind is being 'created' by our repetitive actions and feedbacks, which is called 'redundancy' for if it is for the happiness or the pleasure, or even for the addiction. If the redundancy is getting strong enough to reach our subconsciousness, it would form as the 'complex' inside of our subconsciousness as Jung addressed in many of his books. Murray Stein's Jung's Map of Soul'(Stein, Murray, Jung's Map of the Soul: An Introduction, Open Court Publishing, USA, Chicago, 1998) supports this idea.

To form one's life with better feelings, I could see that the one should have 'the positive perceptions' while reading Daniel Kahneman's book that describes our thought process and behaviour patterns (Kahneman, Daniel, Thinking, fast and slow, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, USA, 2013).



**Figure 7. The image of Carl Jung. (source:<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csyx20>, visited in 2020)*

2. About psychology, our minds

Even though this project is not focused on therapeutic exercises, I gained a lot of help from the related studies in the field of different psychological approaches. Also, for me to make interview questions that can lead to a deep understanding of one's life, it was crucial to have knowledge about how the questions could guide people's state of mind while answering them. Therefore, the sequence of the question was very important and it influenced the whole interview process very much.

1) Psychoanalysis – What happened?

Starting from Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Psychoanalysis has been one of the profound fields of psychology. When it comes to therapeutic methods, it becomes a method of deep conversation about past events. It could be a traumatic experience, or finding the suppressed unconsciousness (Freud, Sigmund, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, Gutenberg project, checked on 20.02.2020).

As it brings the former experiences up to the surface and helps people to reflect on it, they can also go back to the emotions of what happened back then. When creating the interview question asking about their past experiences, this inspired me to focus on the emotions that people felt, as emotions can transcend through time and memories. This later became

a narrative of how the participants overcame the darkest time of their lives, and how they felt when they overcame it. Later on, the question led them to remember the very specific details of their most thankful and happiest moment of their life. So, throughout the journey of past emotions, the interview questions let the participants look back from the perspective of the present.

2) Logotherapy – What will happen?

Another big impact that I had was from a psychiatrist called Viktor Frankl (1905-1997, Austria). In his book 'Man's Search for Meaning' (Frankl, Victor, The Man's Search for Meanings, Beacon Press, Boston, USA, 2006. Initially published in 1946, Vienna, Austria)', he illustrates the idea of logotherapy with two parts. The first part is about how he suffered from the holocaust in Auschwitz, and how does that terrible experience influence people's minds. The second part is about what he figured out to be the method of overcoming the deep hollowness and emptiness by changing the perspective and looking into the future.

From his books, I got inspired to question my participant about meaningful things in their lives in the perspective of the present. Then I asked them what do they dream about to be in the 5-10 years. It was about pulling up positive emotions while imagining themselves in the future. It also contains the meaning of reflecting what the participants value the most.

Like this, the ideas gained from logotherapy added another layer to my design process.



**Figure 8. The image of Viktor Frankl (source: IMAGO/Viktor Frankl Institut, visited in 2020.)*

3) CBT – What should you do?

Cognitive Behaviour Therapy is about setting a goal and reinforcing yourself with a changed perception to achieve that goal. Once a person changes his or her behaviour or thinking patterns, that person will have a higher chance of becoming who they want to be (Edelman, Sara, Change Your Thinking with CBT: Overcome stress, combat anxiety and improve your life, Ebury Publishing, London, UK, 2018.)

I regarded this as a 'practice' of self-fulfilling prophecy and put it at the very end of the interview. After thinking about their future, the participants specifically talked about what they will do to fulfil that goal. Also, they were asked to leave the message from the future, when their dreams came true. It was an act of giving encouragement from themselves, enhancing their belief through 'image training'.

When this part was re-enacted in the script, the participants gave the feedback that this resonated them much more once they heard it again with my voice. Also, this was one of the best parts I could select from the whole process of producing final outcomes, as it had multiple layers of theory transformed into practice.

IV. *Methodology Analysis*

“What are the main methods as well as the related projects?”

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

1. About in-depth interviews methods

- Preparing & conducting semi-structured interviews
- Probes that can help in the interview sessions
- Things to keep in mind and things to avoid

2. About storytelling - Narrative and dramaturgy

- Two interpretation of 'voice'
- Summarsing the interviews in scripts
- Inspiration - HUMAN the movie (2015)

3. About art - Exploring the roles of live-painting

- When portraits became selfies (The brief history)
- Creating art videos with Live painting
- Inspiration - A live painting storyteller, LEEYEON

4. Designing sonic space and composing music

- The role of music in 'The Portraits of Life'
- Composing and to creating the songs
- Inspiration - Song projects of 'HEAVN'

1. About in-depth interviews methods

I choose In-depth interview as the main method in my design process. This has been one of my main interests while studying interaction design so far, and I could go back to one of the investigations I did in one of the theory modules. The main reason I focused on this method was to collect the stories of people with a deep understanding. At the beginning of the process, I tried out mixing different methods such as cultural probes and body-storming in the interview session. However, throughout time, I figured out that providing them with the environment to focus on their emotion would help more. I choose the method of a blindfold to block out some of their sensory experiences (explained more in the chapter, 'Field research'). I kept the idea of cultural probes in the questions though, as that opened up the possibility of people remembering their past more vividly.

Preparing the questions and conducting semi-structured interviews

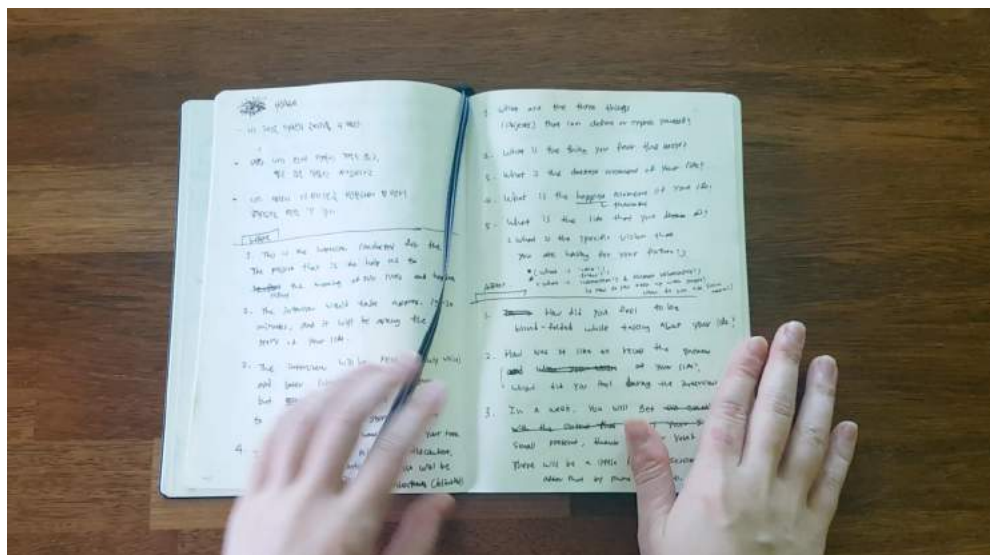
For general information, there are structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview methods that the designers could use. (Wilson, Chauncey, Interview Techniques for UX Practitioners: A User-Centered Design Method, Elsevier, USA, 2014). The semi-structured interview has certain kinds of questions that the interviewers could prepare and ask the interviewees while conducting the research. Deciding what

kinds of questions that the designers(or interviewers) should ask could be a very critical point to be determined beforehand, as it could affect the result of the interview quite drastically. This is why I prepared the basic structure of the questions before, then followed up with detailed questions to support the bigger topic during the interview. In the whole process, I made the questions to be open, so that they would not be answered with simple yes, or no. Also, I added the narrative such as 'time travelling' while conducting the interview so that the participants could feel comfortable enough. It was important to give a lot of space to the interviewees, but I kept the topics and necessary information to be always on track. Therefore, while conducting the interview, I wrote down the main ideas and checked the flow of the questions (S. Weiss, Robert, Learning From Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies, The free press, NY, USA, 1994).

Probes that can help to know beforehand going on actual interviews

Before having your interviewee in front of me, I prepared for the possible situations that can happen during the interview. The first thing to prepare was knowing the probes that can create a comfortable environment for the interviewee. As my participants were blindfolded, I tried to let them know that I was hearing and understanding well about what they were telling me. I got a lot of help from the videos of Dr. Leslie Curry of the Yale University, who talks about the seven types of

probes which could be specified as silent, echo, neutral, direct, phased assertion, detail, and clarifying. (Qualitative research methods: https://youtu.be/wbdN_sLWI88, checked on 2020.) I especially used the probes such as repeating the last words of participants, having some short and neutral words in between such as 'um-hm' or 'I see'. Also, if an interviewer is not certain about what he or she just heard, it was also important to ask directly to the interviewer to tell more about that. In this case, rather than asking "Sorry, what's that again?", I asked the details such as 'Who was it?' or 'What did he do, if you could tell me?' Most importantly, even though I positioned myself emotionally not attached to the stories of my participants, I tried to create a good rapport by encouraging them to open up with some of my experiences and positively reacting towards the brave decisions they made back in the days.



**Figure 9. The image of notes prepared for the interview questions, Picture taken from Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

Tips for the mindset

- Things to keep in mind and things to avoid

The mindset was one of the most important points of the entire process of this project. The thing I wanted to avoid the most was treating my participants as data resources of developing my own prototypes. Also, I tried to avoid the 'Doctor-patient' situation as often can be seen in therapy sessions, as I positioned myself as an 'explorer', not an 'advisor'. This influenced a lot to the approach of my interview, trying not to guide the narrative of the whole story in a specific way. This is because directing or influencing the responses by asking leading questions should be avoided both implicitly or explicitly. Also, I told my participants to take enough time for opening up, and didn't push them too quickly from one topic to the next. Not interrupting in the middle was one of the basic things to keep in mind as well, as that can take the opportunity away from the interviewees to open themselves up (Curry, Leslie, 2015). Like these, I put myself an interviewer's hat on my head and try to listen attentively with courtesy (Curry, Leslie, 2015). These were the main etiquettes of respecting the person in front of me, as the conductor of this project.

2. About storytelling – Narrative and dramaturgy

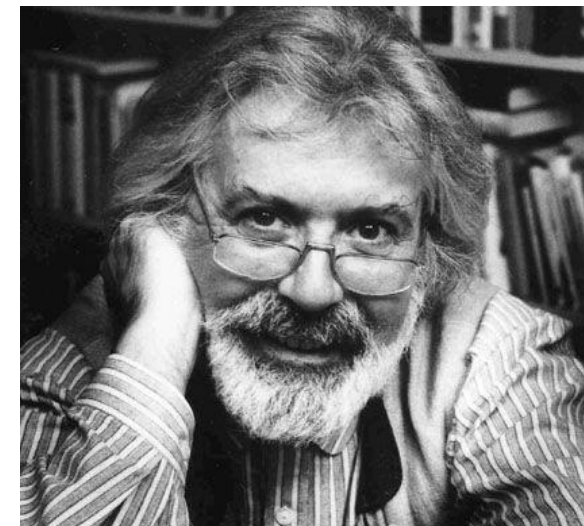
Two interpretation of ‘voice’

Storytelling is one of the most important and fundamental parts in ‘The Portraits of Life’. The goal of storytelling in this project is to be precise about the facts that the interviewees provide. Therefore, the narrative should try to avoid the manipulation as much as possible, while concentrating on the coherency and consistency of the story. Finding the right ‘voice’ matters the most in scripting, as Michael Ende (writer and philosopher, Germany) said: “When you are telling a story, you need a special voice that matches to make it true. – Michael Ende, 1929–1995.”

In this context, the ‘voice’ can mean two things. One as a sonic method of translating the narrative into a narration, regarding; the length, pauses, breathe, and tone of the voice as well as the manners and pronunciation. For each of the prototypes in the experiment, this was determined thoroughly in three steps. First is the observation towards the interviewee during the interview session. At this pace, it is important to take note of the impression that the conductor had in the atmosphere during the interview. Second is analysing the patterns and voice tone, talking habits and manners of the interviewee while revisiting the interview, listening to the recordings again. The last step is checking the recording of the narration of conductor and

estimating if the mimicry functions in between the right lines of delivering the character well enough and not getting too far into the ‘uncanny valley’.

Another meaning of ‘voice’ can be the style or intention while delivering the story. If the first meaning of voice is more related to an artistic and personal interpretation of each of the interview session itself, this part focuses more on the objective side of storytelling. The stories I delivered to each of the participants were in the first-person narrative. For each script, the nuance was like as if the participants were talking about their own life, but with the voice of another person. This was to give an effect of keeping an objective distance when the viewer saw the story of oneself, yet to still transfer the autobiographical and personal interpretation of one’s story.



**Figure 10. The image of Michael Ende, who claimed the importance of ‘voice’.
(Source: <https://es.babelio.com/auteur/-Michael-Ende/5409>, visited in 2020.)*

***Learning to create the script
while summarising the interviews***

Creating the scripts was one of the main challenges that I had as a conductor. First of all, it was a difficult task for me to sum up the interview sessions which were around 1– 2.5 hours long. The important task was to deliver the story accurately and clearly while not losing a whole storyline that could be held in a narrative of a 5–6 minutes long video. Also, as the interviews were about private thoughts and events in the life of a person, assuming or judging certain moments of the story by myself as a writer could lead to a big mistake.

As I had experiences of writing and publishing a storybook, building up the narrative were not the main task in this process. However, these were the kind of stories which shouldn't be fantasied or made up by the scripter. Therefore, I had to set the clear boundaries of my interpretation while summarising and choosing the main route of writing the script. Also, when it came to delivering and expressing the situations, thoughts, and feelings, I tried to choose the exact words that the participants used. To do that, I have re-visited the voice recordings of each of the interview and wrote down the words that the participant used. The notes that I took while conducting the interview helped me a lot as well, like a map showing where the stories should be heading.

The design of the script could be different from person to person, as the interview questions and answers were quite different for each participant, just like their different personalities. The main format that I built helped me to contain all of these different contents. The first section and the last section were the important parts of that format. First, I started with a sentence that could illustrate the personality or characteristic of the participant. For example, it could be like 'I think I'm a ...person', or 'If I could be an animal, I'd like to be a ...'. These first one or two sentences were like the points that the participants could directly relate to as their story. After this, illustrating the rest of the contents became a lot easier.

The last sentence was one of the most emphasized parts in the script, as it was purely contained with what the participants said as a message to oneself. It was in the form of a message sent from the future self to the present self. And here, several layers of interpretation could create harmony. The participants can hear his or her words again, as if one is talking to oneself, but also in a way that his or her friend is talking to them (as it is narrated in the conductor's voice). Therefore, with advising and encouraging one's dreams, the last part of the script helps the wishes of the participant and the conductor's voice delivering it to come together in one.

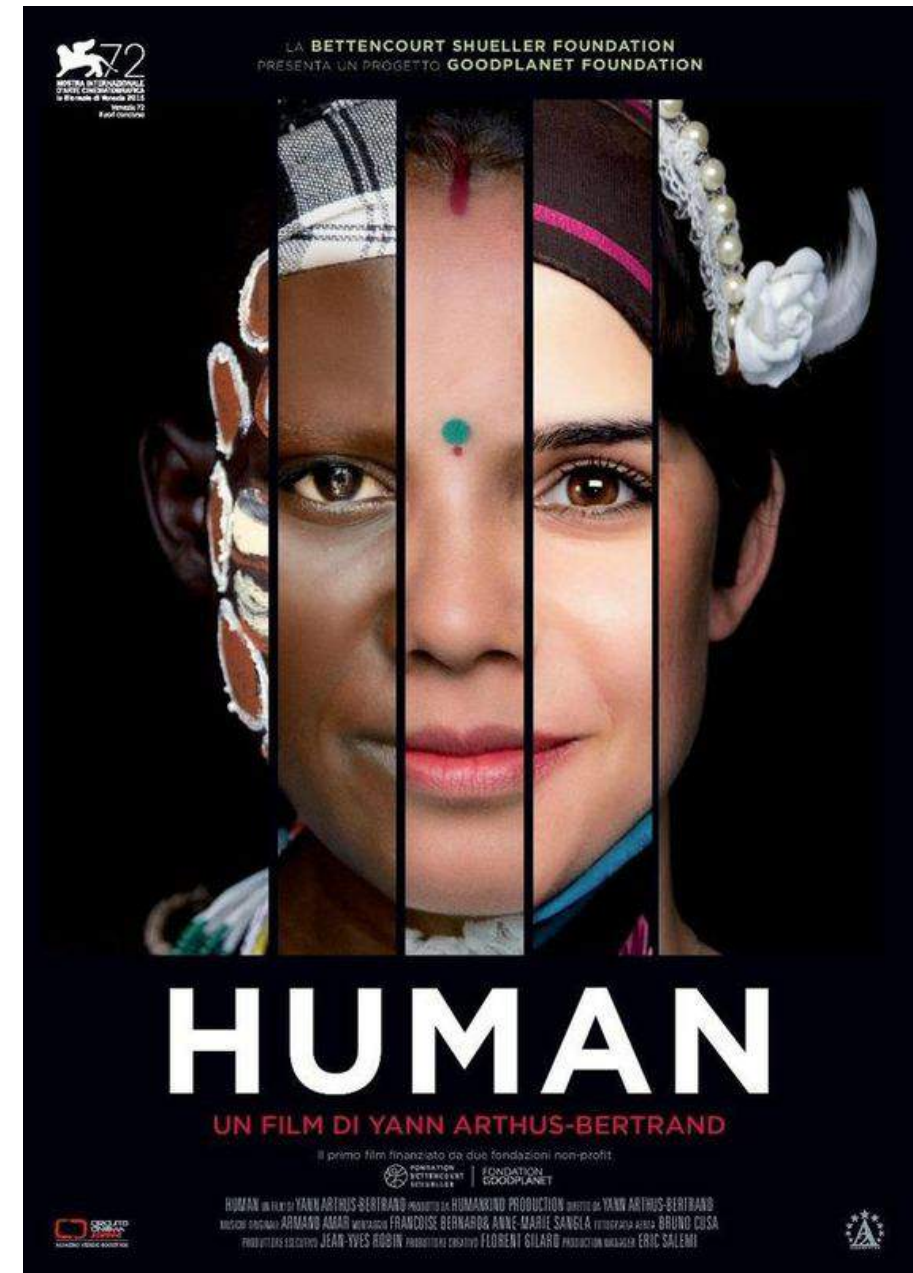
Inspiration

– HUMAN the movie, Yann Arthus-Bertrand (2015)

To talk about one of the most inspiring projects that helped me to learn about interviewing, scripting and narrating, I'd like to introduce 'Human(2015)' by Yann Arthus-Bertrand. 'Human' is a documentary movie that consists of three parts in the web version. (The official site: <http://www.human-themovie.org>) Yann Arthus-Bertrand is an artist and a filmmaker who had fundamental questions about human life. He interviewed and collected the actual stories from 60 countries. He had 2,000 interviewees and spent 3 years for this project with his diverse team of translators, journalists, and cameramen. (sourced from 'Human the movie channel': <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUWrdbnBOEQ>) His work shows the unity that we have as humans, despite the difference in language, economical and political status, age and other ethnographic aspects.

“What is it that makes us human?
Is it that we love, that we fight?
That we laugh? Cry? Our curiosity?
The quest for discovery?”

– 'HUMAN' the movie, 2015



**Figure 11. 'HUMAN' The movie by Yann – Arthus-Bertrand, 2015. (source: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJy4nUoID4R3hlcP8XCLX9Q>, visited in 2020.)*

The movie transparently illustrates the life of humans in the middle of various global struggles like war and poverty. Also, it shows the meaning of life with philosophical notions such as love and happiness. While conveying the stories, the movie helps the audience to keep the attitude of an observer. It doesn't force certain emotions but let the story be told by itself from the people who experienced it. This form of storytelling delivers the feeling of truthfulness and lets the viewers decide how to reflect on the topics that the movie demonstrates. 'The Portraits of Life' was inspired by this objective voice of storytelling, which gives the audience the power to digest the stories that they hear.

The scenography of this film also plays a huge role in this entire project. It portrays various scenery of nature in many countries from a bird's eye perspective. This shows a consistent contrast between the life of a single human (the interviewees) and the world around it. But eventually, the viewers can see the inevitability of humans being the part of that nature, with the repeating rhythm of the landscapes overlapping the scenes of the interviews. If the scenography in this movie was focusing on objectively delivering the reality of humans, 'The Portraits of Life' focuses more on showing the invisible parts of the people. The images in 'The Portraits of Life' is an artistic interpretation of this invisibility of values that human life has. Rather than contrast, it tries to create harmony with the narrative so that the image emerges from the story itself. This affects the whole concept and the process of creating the artwork, such as

the reason behind choosing analogue illustrations, in the live painting method.

3. About art – Exploring the roles of live-painting

When portraits became selfies

When the camera was invented in the 19th century, there were people who thought it would be the end of the painters who used to produce the portraits. However, it led artists to open new genres of art such as impressionism, expressionism, surrealism, cubism, and even more. Capturing the moment and personal interpretation of the artist's eyes became one of the main parts of art, also in the sense of creating the self-portraits. (Sourced from 'How the invention of photography changed art: <http://www.peareylalbhawan.com/>, checked on 2020).

Nowadays, the technology of recording films and taking pictures has even opened up the possibility for individuals to create their own selfies and portraits. Those images are used as a way to express oneself, as well as to show the specific surroundings, atmosphere, and environment that the person is surrounded by. The development of digital tools made it possible for snapshots and selfies to become one of the key methods of autobiographical storytelling. With the notion of sharing, social media provide another layer of meaning in

these self-created images. The intertwined relationship of image creator and observer in today's mediation method gave me the idea of co-creation in the process of creating one's portrait.

Therefore, I questioned myself: 'What if sharing personal stories can be the resource of one's portrait? What if an artist's interpretation can be merged in the mediation process of remembering and sharing the moments of one's life?' If the conductor who shared the events in life with the participant could devote one's interpretation as an artist, that can create a deeper meaning of sharing. I thought this could be the way for both the participant and the conductor to have ownership in the mediation process of this project, as co-creators. And to make this possible, the next step was to find 'how' to showcase and deliver this idea.

***Learning to create art videos
with the power of Live painting***

The reason for choosing a live-painting method was quite simple. As a person who enjoys drawing and painting, I had an experience of knowing the effect of looking at a painting getting done. Rather than looking at the finished painting, I always enjoyed the whole process of how the image developed, as it was almost a therapeutic and meditative journey of getting full ownership regarding the moments of creating the image. I thought this process could be one of the

main difference that artwork could provide while comparing to the photograph. To deliver a whole journey of painting getting done, I choose to record the process of what I'm creating as a live-painting video. This was also a metaphor of showing how the participant's life has been progressing so far, which featured in the portrait and the following narration.

The focus of the portrait was not necessarily demonstrating the participant's actual image. I tried to look behind the faces of the people, to deliver the story and atmosphere that each participant had in the interview session. As an interviewer, I have built trust and listened to their stories. And as an artist, I have interpreted their lives as an image with my ways of expressions. To show the whole process as a live-painting, I tried to find a digital tool which has a variety of brushes that I can use to express my artistic creativity. Also, I didn't prefer to show a time-lapse of myself standing in front of a camera while painting. This is because I intended the participant to feel the development of the painting without any disturbance of another person being present in the video. I hoped one to feel how the story of oneself being progressed together with the artwork, alongside the rhythm that narration creates.

The best tool I could find for creating artworks was in Apple's AppStore. Ipad's 'Procreate' application (<https://procreate.art/ipad>) and its related tutorials helped me a lot to learn a new method of creating the live-painting. I have exported the live-painting time-laps and made a video out of it. I could edit

the length of the image and adjusted the saturation while creating the video, later in the premiere. What I considered the most while creating the video was the combination of the development of the artwork and the narration. The rhythm they created influenced the whole dramaturgy of the story. In the video, I started with my voice before starting to show the image, while expressing the character of the participant in the sentence. It was to show the participant that the image is about his or her story. Later on, throughout the feedback session and experiments, the artwork evolved to even including my wishes towards the participant's future dreams. The power of the live-painting helped a big part in the storytelling of digital outcomes.



**Figure 12. Image of Juyoung Yi, Creating the artwork with Procreator Application, photo taken by HENNA, 2020.*

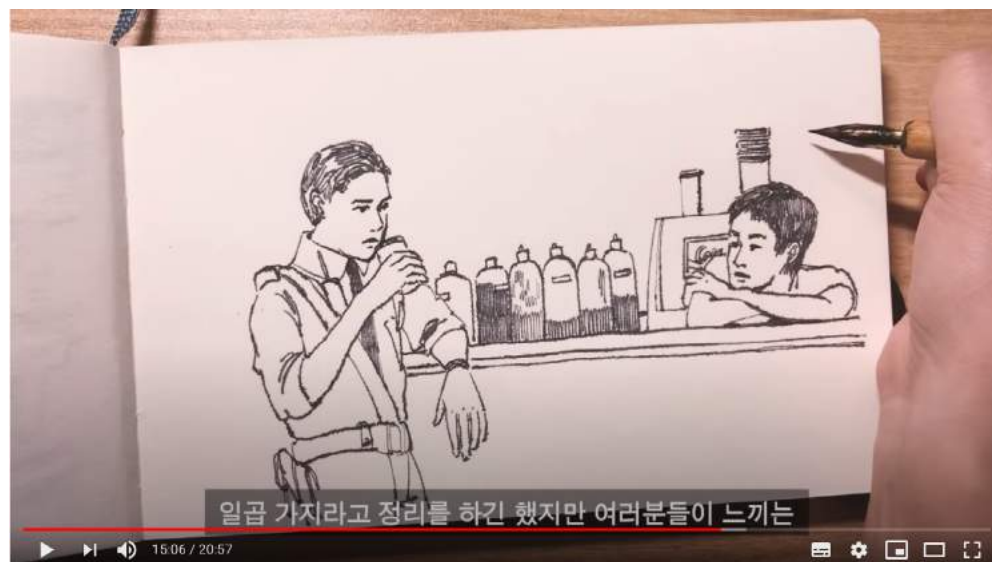
Inspiration – A live painting storyteller, LEEYEON

LEEYEON is a South Korean YouTuber, who uses live painting in the storytelling of her videos. She claims herself as a 'painting YouTuber' and shares her daily thoughts with narration while showing her hands, drawing simple illustrations. She also gives some advice on making a narrated live-painting video. I learned the importance of putting the subtitle, as the image could take away the viewer's focus from the narration. As delivering the story accurately was important, I have created the subtitle for each of the videos. I was inspired by the attitude of LEEYEON, how she naturally narrated her own thoughts. It was like as if she was telling the story of herself to the others. This method of 'first-person point of view' helped me a lot to create the atmosphere in writing the scripts and narrating them.

The main difference between LEEYEON's videos and this project was in the purpose of creating the artwork. While LEEYEON and most of the other painting Youtubers tried to provide the methods of illustrating or drawing, 'The Portraits of Life' focuses on how the viewer interprets the whole story, and the artwork becomes a part of delivering that narrative. As this project is formed with many co-creation, my focus was not in showing the finished artworks and delivering the skills as an artist. Therefore, even while creating the artworks, keeping the balance between the interviewer, designer, artist and co-creator was a mandatory task for me to perform. Live-painting

method and my painting skills played an important role in creating video outcomes, but it had to support the story of each participant.

While taking a deep look at LEEYEON's videos, I have learned that images can also work like languages. In my live painting videos, I didn't make a pre-sketch of an image, as that almost works like a 'spoiler' of the whole storyline. I tried to develop the image naturally and only kept the overall image inside of my head while creating the artworks. It was a challenge to use colours and drawing the contents in a sequence, but I think this process helped me to develop the skills and creativity as an artist as well.



**Figure 12. Image of Juyoung Yi, Creating the artwork with Procreator Application, photo taken by HENNA, 2020.*

4. Designing sonic space and composing music

The role of music in 'The Portraits of Life'

Creating the background music and songs was one of the main parts that I challenged myself as a conductor of this project. I have never seriously composed before, and I have no instruments to work on. But my musical journey started with feedbacks that my mentors told me in the BA preparation seminar. Back then, I had a prototype of a live-painting video that I created with one of my participants, with free background music that I found online. Then, one of my mentors (Nicole Foelsterl) said, "What if the conductor can also create the soundtracks of the participant's stories? It could make digital gifts more special and authentic, don't you think?" That was a new idea for me, and it influenced me to research many music-creation tools.

One of the reasons why I tried hard to have the right background music was because I learned that music plays a huge role in making the atmosphere of the video. The first prototype was very emotional and the piano music that I used in the background was enforcing that mood, according to Dr. Joëlle Bitton (one of my beloved mentors). As further steps, I wanted to create the background music to be more subtle and supporting the narrative of the whole story. I got inspired by the instant live jazz music in several night-live shows, where

the instruments work as the supportive background music of what the speaker said. As each of the stories was different, the music should also be varied. Therefore, I found the tool called the 'GarageBand', which is a free application that can be used in various Apple devices. I preferred the interface of the laptop version, as it was not too far from 'Reaper', which was the sound design tool that I often used in my previous projects.

Later on, 'Garage band' helped me to even create songs for each of the portraits. I needed a lot of courage to sing and send my participants the songs, but it turned out to be a big step forward in the digital gifts. It presented a great effect on the entire project that I couldn't imagine before, which was the notion of 'fun'. As a conductor, I could get the feedback from the participants that they enjoyed the song a lot. While hearing the song, the participants could have a more relaxing approach of these whole co-creation process, and share the personal shyness that I could have felt while composing and singing the song. That was a humane and fun moment that lightened up the mood of this project while enriching the creative field of the outcome.



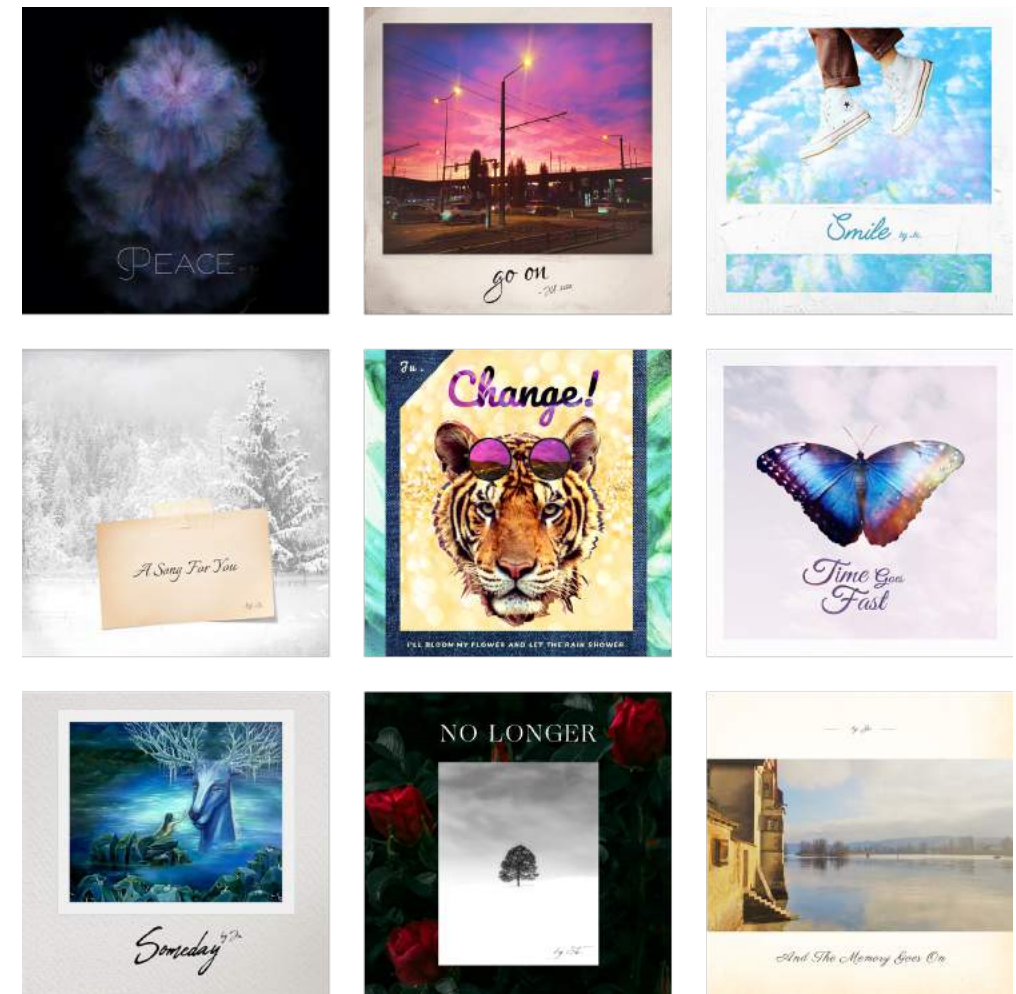
**Figure 14. Juyoung Yi, composing music with Garageband, photo taken by HENNA, 2020.*

Learning how to compose and to create the songs

Garageband was a new tool for me, and one of the difficulties was that I didn't have an electronic keyboard that I could use to connect to my computer. When I wanted to record the higher or lower notes which surpasses more than an octave, I had to stop playing the digital instrument in Garageband move the notes by my hand. Metronium helped me to keep the consistent rhythm of the music that I composed, and I gradually learned how to adjust the ambience and reverb of each of the instruments that I used while creating the background music.

The basic digital instrument that I used was 'Grand Piano', 'Harp', 'Flute solo', and 'Strings Ensemble' in Garageband. I preferred using classical instruments, as I wanted to deliver a cinematic atmosphere for each of the stories. Sabrina, one of my participants who received the gift said, "It was like someone made a movie out of my life." I was happy to hear that, as I was willing each of the participants to feel like a protagonist of their own life stories. Also, as the stories are about our lives, I wanted to give a wholistic sonic space which represents the perspective of a bigger scope of reflecting our lives.

While the background music was focusing on delivering the general nuance as a supportive sonic element, songs played another role. It was more of a creative journey of featuring certain points of the participant's story. For example, I got inspired by some of the sentences that my participants said. That led me to create lyrics and melodies, featuring the keywords as the theme of the song. For each of the songs, I have attached the lyrics and created an album-art before sending them to the participants. Album art was another form of digital art which could represent the atmosphere of the song. It was interesting to see how the roles of music and image could change in two different steps of the gifts: The first one is the live-painting video that illustrates the wholistic story of a participant with my narration, where the music should support the contents as the background. Next one is the song, featuring the focused part of the participant's story, while album art introduces the glimpse of the main content, the music.



*Figure 15. The album arts created for each of the songs, made by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

Inspiration – Song projects of ‘HEAVN’

‘HEAVN’ is a band of two artists from Amsterdam. They compose and write songs together, and conducted a project called ‘Eyes closed stories’. They asked 13 people all over the world to listen to their music and then share their stories. Each of the stories was uploaded in a weekly base. HEAVN also collaborated with the symphonic orchestra in Amsterdam. Their songs feature the themes of our lives, such as loss, love, freedom. For me, it was impressive to see how they created the song that explores various fields while collaborating with the feedback of the people who listened to their music.

‘The Portraits of Life’ has a more personal, and different layers of approach in music, but it was inspired by this multi-genre approach of creating a song. Like I did in creating the live-paintings, my main goal was not creating a song with a perfect vocal to show my best talent as a musician. I tried to find the right melody and atmospheric expressions to deliver the theme of my participant’s story. It was difficult to do it with a free application, though, as it had limited access to adjusting the pitch and choosing the effect. I overcame some of this difficulty by remixing the outcome later on in reaper and adjusting the limiter in the Garageband.

If HEAVN’s project ‘Eyes Closed Stories’ were like collecting a feedback round of their music, I have conducted some experiments with the participants with the song that I gave

them. For example, there was a participant who meditates regularly and values peace as one of the most important concepts in his life. I have created a song called ‘Peace’ for that participant and wrote the lyrics that could resonate him with what he told me in the interview session. Then, I asked him to listen to the song before and after his meditation session, to see it had an influence on him. Actually, that participant said he liked the song the most from the gifts, and that it reminded him of the notion of peace when listening to it. The experiment was an interesting finding that the song can have a positive impact, playing the role of reminding the values in our lives.



**Figure 16. HEAVN’s Eyes closed Stories project. (source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KO4uyWbO0Kc&list=PLRvsEcc6_hqqbkv1_8ux9zpYowa9zzXYC, visited in 2020.)*

V. *Field Research*

“How to co-create with people?”

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

1. Gathering the participants with trust
2. Opening up with the blindfold method
3. Providing a secure environment
4. Offline interviews turning online

1. How to build up trust – gathering the participants

I had a big dream of meeting people and talking about our lives openly. However, my shy personality was a big challenge to overcome. Also, I had no idea where to start to gather my participants. Therefore, my first interviewee which I had as the first prototype was my mother. She was the first person who felt comfortable to open up about herself, and I thought it would be a good opportunity to listen to her story as well. Even though we were close family, this project helped us to understand each other better, and I could see my mother in a more objective perspective, not only as my mother. This was a beautiful experience of finding multidimensional aspects of a person, which gave me the courage to take this further with the people who are less close to me.

The next target group was the people I knew well. They were mostly from my working place called Yova, a company in Limmatplatz. As a student, I was working only part-time. But was having a nice relationship with them. However, as they were my coworkers, I didn't know them very well on a deep level. I first took the courage to talk about my project to some of the people and tried to convey the value of this project that I'm believing in. My honesty and courage helped to gather the first group of participants, who I became to know better. While having in-depth interview sessions and sending them digital gifts, I realised that they were the people who were having

amazing and beautiful stories of their own lives. Throughout this project, we could be good friends beyond working together.

The next step was getting the recommendations from the people who participated in this project. The people recommended their friends, family and other co-workers that they knew. With a strong trust of this project, it was getting easier to find people who were willing to open up about their lives and to share the moments that they had. Also, while gathering more participants, I could overcome the shyness as I had to be in the position where I could provide a trustful, and comfortable situation for the people. The process of meeting people who I didn't know broadened my mind and courage of meeting the people. I could find myself believing in this project more and more, with strong ownership and more concrete positioning of myself as the conductor.

2. How to open up – the blindfold method

From the very first interview, I used the method of wearing blindfolds with the participants. This is because I believed closing the eyes and covering some of the visual inputs would help the people to travel in their minds better. It was from my experience of meditation when I close my eyes and focus on the flow of my inner self. I thought blindfolds would be a better method than closing the eyes, as the participants should have

to concentrate on their physical parts even more while trying to close the eyes all the time. While being blindfolded, people could naturally close their eyes and focus on the stories that they were telling.

The blindfold methods turned out to be a very good decision while listening to the feedback that the participants gave me. The most interesting feedback that I heard from many of the participants was about ‘travelling to a distant place with the blindfold’. As a conductor, I had to open my eyes and write down the notes without the blindfold. However, I think that also helped me a lot as it would have been difficult for me to focus on their stories while having the eye-contact all the time. The blindfold method was a big finding that helped me to conduct the interview sessions.

I have taken this blindfold method further, as some of the participants felt a bit nervous to wear a blindfold. Once they were wearing it, they felt comfortable. So the challenge for me to solve was to make wearing the blindfold more approachable. I have made a few choices of blindfolds and put a special one in a bag – as a surprise. The one who stepped out to take a bit of courage to open the bag could see the blindfold that he or she would be wearing. The surprise blindfold was a floppy, funny one that made everyone laugh. It was such a simple exercise, but this had an impact on the participants to trust in their decisions and opening up the stories better.



**Figure 17. The participant wearing blindfolds (the ‘surprise’ one), with the conductor (Juyoung Yi). The screenshot from the final video of the project, made by Juyoung Yi. (All images are taken from Juyoung Yi, 2020.)*

3. Provide a secure environment – continuous communication

Before starting the actual interview, I had a time of having some small talk with my participants and mentioned again of the purpose of this project and the interview session. Then, I told them that their stories will be recorded, only the voice. I explained the purpose of recording the interviews is only in writing the scripts for making the gifts. The participants felt more comfortable with this transparent communication, and it was a very important part of building trust.

To ensure transparent communication throughout the whole process, I have checked whether they felt comfortable in sharing the stories at the end of the interview session. Also, after the feedback session when the participants received the gifts, I asked them if they'd like to share the story in public or not. For the ones who were willing to share some parts of their gifts, I asked if they would like to use their first name or to use another name, or being anonymous.

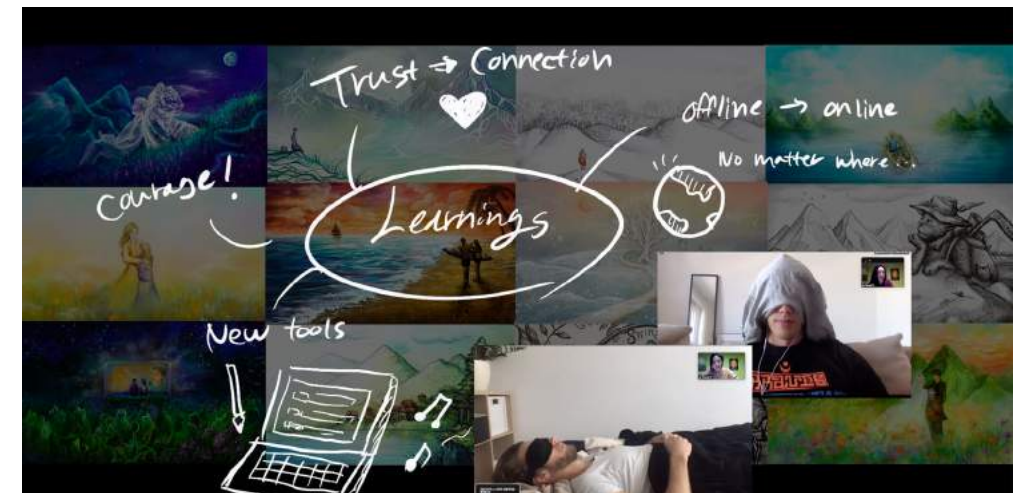
The big discussion with the participants was building a platform for the project. This is because we agreed that youtube or Facebook channels are not the best for containing the works that we co-created. We didn't want to use an existing media platform so that we decided to build a website that can hold the soundtracks and images that this project has. This step was also one of the defining moments in this project, as it had a big impact of packing up the outcomes that we created.

4. Adapting to the situation – offline interviews turning online

There was a big change in this project due to the pandemic. The unprecedented situation made it impossible for me to personally meet up the interviewees. Also, I had to fly back to my home country without any plan. Even though situation of lockdown was quite frustrating, I could get help from the video call meeting that I had when I was working remotely Korea.

In online-interviews, I gave my participants the task to make his or her own blindfold. They understood the situation and prepared the blindfolds which were comfortable for them. One participant used the one that he usually wears when going to sleep, and the other one put his T-shirt on his head. These small improvising became a playful moment for us. This method made it possible for the participants to still enjoy wearing the blindfold like the offline interview sessions.

As the advantage of this changed interview method, the participants could feel more free in their own space. They could lie down on the bed, lean on one's comfortable chair and open up about one's idea. This showed that this in-depth interview could be held in many spacial and cultural contexts, no matter where the participant is.



**Figure 18. The participant wearing blindfolds in online sessions, featured in the 'learnings' part of the final video of the project. (All images made & taken from Juyoung Yi, 2020.)*

VI. *Experiments*

“How the prototypes affect the participants?”

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

1. The Portraits of Life_ Henna
2. The Portraits of Life_ Sabrina
3. The Portraits of Life_ Jaeyoon
4. The Portraits of Life_ Jeong
5. The Portraits of Life_ Calum
6. The Portraits of Life_ Elias
7. The Portraits of Life_ Julian
8. The Portraits of Life_ Christine
9. The Portraits of Life_ Eliah
10. The Portraits of Life_ Joëlle
11. The Portraits of Life_ Erik
- 1.2 The Portrait of Life_ Peter
13. The Portrait of Life_ Jakob

**Before starting this chapter :*

While combining the research and methods which are demonstrated in the early sections of the paper, I could meet 13 people to co-create our experiences together in 'The Portraits of Life'. In this section, I'm going to introduce the representative end results of the prototypes (the paintings from the digital gifts). Alongside that, each participant's feedback is included as the data which are gathered to provide the insights of this project's potential. One of the main conclusions that I could find in this process was the notion of devotion. This connects to the fact that the conductor produced every part of the prototype, and this gift-making enhances the authenticity of the outcomes. This is because the conductor is the one who built the trust with the participants from the beginning, so that the participants can relate better to the gifts while regarding this context. The following learnings and findings are mentioned more thoroughly in the 'Conclusion and next steps' chapter.

1. The Portraits of Life_ Henna



**Figure 19. 'Henna's memory' (Prototype of the first portrait), created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

"It was a heart-warming experience. I could feel the video was healing my soul, and this will definitely be an unforgettable memory. There was nothing like these presents before, and there will never be. It is the story about me, and the whole narration and image were based on my story. I will keep this for my life for sure. And whenever I need some strength in my life, I will look at it again.

Also, I could see myself very clearly again, that I have been a happy person and that my life has been actually okay so far. I think while watching the painting and the video, my thoughts would change in a positive way."

- Henna

2. The Portraits of Life_ Sabrina



**Figure 20. 'Sabrina's wedding', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

"I cried and smiled while watching this several times. It was very emotional, genuine, and lovely. It was beautiful and sad at the same time. It was like somebody made a movie out of my life. I also like the point that the narration was not my voice, but the voice of someone else. I think the script delivered my life very well. I will watch this video for many times. Especially regarding the current situation I'm going through, I think it would let me remind myself in the future about this point of my life, and how I went through all of these.

It was very encouraging, and it will always be a very special present. I had the courage to show this video to my husband, and we could have a deep conversation. I also recommended this project to him. He is going to participate in this project as well. I let the people in the company I'm working at. I believe this project will be also a great opportunity for the people who even haven't meet the interviewer personally."

– Sabrina

2. The Portraits of Life_ Jaeyoon (#Five jobs)



**Figure 21. 'Jaeyoon's Dream', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

"I can say this video is actually 'me' – this is an amazing summary of my whole life. This is the best personal present that I have ever got. The whole feeling that I wanted to deliver in the interview melt so well in the video. The narration and voice are great, and it makes my eyes water by just listening to the whole story. It is a very special experience. It was like watching a short movie or a TV program. I will print the picture out and hang it on my front door. This makes me feel very strong and encouraged for some reason.

I'm a positive person, and yet this gift gives an even more positive effect on me. I think this could also be a good help for the people who are dealing with depressions. This would make a new paradigm for the ones who want to find happiness in their lives again. I believe this is one of the most beautiful projects that I experienced so far, and I would like to see other videos as well. This project should be spread as wide as possible, and I will be able to gain hope and thankfulness of life in other's stories as well. I think other people would feel the same. I highly recommend this project for the ones who are willing to look back on their lives."

- Jaeyoon

3. The Portraits of Life_ Jeong, A Buddhist Nun



**Figure 22. 'The Temple In Snow', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

“The voice of narration was very soothing and comforting. I think it was a good choice to not using my own voice, talking about my life. Even though it has been such a long time ago, it was nice to recall the happiest moments that I had in my life. I felt like I lived a good life in the woods while being friends with nature, quietly and peacefully while seeing this video.

The painting is natural and I love the atmosphere it brings. It would remind me of that time I had, and it is good for my mood. I also liked the serene music that was playing at the back of the whole video. I feel I’ve received a great gift that I don’t deserve in some way, and I’m thankful for how it shows the moments of my life so well. It makes me calm and relaxed. I’m thinking about having this picture printed in my room. I’m very grateful.”

– Jeong

5. The Portraits of Life_ Calum



**Figure 23. 'Calum's Future Holiday', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

“It is probably the most personal gift I’ve ever received (not a surprise when it’s literally about me but still). I really love it. The story sounded like me telling my own story, and it delivered my life very well. I think it was a good idea to have a different narrator than me – it’s like a blindfold that I wore during the interview, I could enjoy the video better while not being disturbed by my own voice.

I had some good tears while watching the videos, it was tears of happiness and it made me realize who I’ve been so far. I could recall my memories as if they were flooding. I especially loved the end part, as it gave me peaceful feelings. I’m not sure if I’d like to share this video with other people as this is very personal. I already watched it several times and will visit it again several times.”

– Calum

6. The Portraits of Life_ Elias



**Figure 24. 'The Future of Elias', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

“The gifts are so amazing, and I think the artwork is incredible. It’s very interesting to see myself from an outside view. I prefer listening to my story with someone else’s voice. It’s like someone talking to me while talking about me. The gifts were very touching and it resonated me as I could really connect to what I feel. The story was accurate, and at the same time, was an interesting summary. I really love the image, the background music, and the song composed for me – which was a different part of the gift.

The song was very touching as well as the other parts of the gifts. I listened one time when I felt bad, and it helped me to see things from a different perspective. It was very supportive, just knowing that someone had put so much effort into preparing this. I especially liked the end part, where my future self telling what to do for my present self. It’s like a reminder that I’m getting better and going to the good life. I saw the video listened to the song several times. I’m not sure if I’ll share this with anyone, perhaps to the ones who really know me and understand me well.”

– Elias

7. The Portraits of Life_ Julian



**Figure 25. 'The Julian Town', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

“It was totally getting the points of my life and was like listening to myself with someone else’s voice. It was like my motivation talking to myself, especially I loved the part where my future self was telling me about how I would go on. I already watched it a lot and will watch this many times for sure. The soft voice of narration, picture and storytelling was amazing. It is impressive how the whole interview answers could be like a comprehensive storyline.

I can see that this project gave an effect of therapy to me, really makes me feel who I am again. However, it was very different from therapy at the same time – I have many friends who visited therapy, and I know how it was difficult for them to talk about it. It almost felt like they were a bit ashamed of it as if they were having a problem. So I could see how that process could be a negative effect on them. But in this project, it felt like a pleasant surprise.”

– Julian

8. The Portraits of Life_Christine



**Figure 26. 'The Big Hug', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

"I had to stop the video several times as I got very emotional. I will see the video again for sure. It was quite an abstract experience as if it was feeling like I was hearing someone else's story. I think it was nice to not hear my voice directly because I really enjoyed that abstract atmosphere. It's like hearing the story and realizing 'Ah, it's about me!'. Also, it was interesting to see the artistic interpretation of my life. I felt my story was delivered accurately, and I couldn't even notice the background music as it was intertwined so well with the story.

The image was so beautiful, and I love how it develops in the video. Also, I think the theme 'hug' was very powerful. I think it will be also interesting to see this video again after several years, to see who I become. The gifts were such amazing work and would like to do it again in the future."

- Christine

9. The Portraits of Life_ Eliah



**Figure 27. 'Eliah The Wild Cat', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

"I was speechless while seeing the gift! It was so amazing. Haha, I think I bragged about myself during the interview, as I could see how I sounded like a person who is proud of oneself. It was a lot of fun to join the interview and to get the gifts, I really think this is an amazing job. I feel like my life has been romanticised a bit, but the details I wanted to convey was accurate. I could feel the narrator was trying to show my talking manner, which was also funny.

The whole project made me very curious and I could see that the outcome is very cute. In the gift, at first, I wanted my part like a brave warrior to stand out more in the video. But while watching it several times, I realised I like myself better like an open-hearted person who tries to be optimistic. My favourite part is the end of the video, and I'd like to share this video on my Instagram account."

- Eliah

10. The Portraits of Life_Joëlle



**Figure 28. 'Joëlle's Garden', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

“It was very moving and touching. I loved the narration and was sometimes surprised by the words I said while hearing my story with someone else’s voice. It was an interesting experience to feel distanced about my story. I could relate to the story well, and could really engage with it. Also, it was nice to see how the artwork develops with the story, as the live painting created a rhythm in the story as well.

Talking about rhythm and music, I really liked the background music. It was not overwhelming, but fitting well with the mood of the story. Also, while thinking back the interview session, It was like a brain massage and such a nice moment to reflect about myself. I wonder how the interview questions could be pushed forward and be provocative, to see in what extend it could make people open up their minds.”

– Joëlle

11. The Portraits of Life_Erik



**Figure 29. 'Erik in peace', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

“The gifts were very nice, interesting, emotional and touching. It resonated me a lot and was also visually appealing. It was nice to hear somebody else talking about my life, as it was like looking into a mirror in an appreciated way. The story was condensed and summarised, but was pretty accurate. I’m quite an audible person, so especially the narration and the song were the parts that I liked the most.

The song, especially, was super nice. The melody, the singing voice was nice and I listened to it 4-5 times. I think it could help when the anxiety issue comes. During the song, I felt very peaceful and I think I will listen to it from time to time. It was surprising for me that the conductor could compose and sing as well. Also, for the video, I will re-visit it once in a while, like a photo album that I have of my life.”

– Erik

12. The Portraits of Life_Peter



**Figure 30. 'In Peter's Mind', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

“I was very happy while opening the gift! My favourite part was the story being told by the narrator, as I enjoyed it a lot like listening to an audiobook. I could relate to the story of my life well in this video. I really like the mood of the painting, and I think it would be interesting if I can participate in this project again in 5-10 years.

Also, I think it was courageous for the conductor to compose and sing a song for me. The song was nice, and it was the most amusing part of the gift. I can really recommend this project to everyone, as it would be a good opportunity to think about their lives and dreams. In that regards, I enjoyed the interview session as well. It was a great opportunity to see who I became and what I dream in life. The comments that the conductor made were also encouraging and giving me positive feelings.”

– Peter

13. The Portraits of Life_Jakob



**Figure 31. 'Good Bye, Lonely Tree', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

“This made my eyes wet. It was a very interesting experience. It was like looking at the mental mirror showing myself. The story was condensed as a concise summary of myself. I could see the clear picture of myself, and the music and painting were beautiful. I think hearing my story with someone else’s voice gave some kind of awkward feeling, in a positive sense. I think if it was my voice, it would have been like a normal journal. I could have an objective view towards myself and could reflect on my life from a different perspective. I especially was surprised by the script, as it was very accurate and described my story even better than I articulated.

In general, just to see how a person could go into deep into my life was very touching. It was a great devotion with amazing artwork and with great background music. I think there will be a good chance for me to watch it again, and it would be in the time when I’m depressed and when I want to look back on my life again.”

– Jakob

VII. *Platform Development*

*“What is the right communicatino
method for this project?”*

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

1. Finding documentation methods
2. Designing the online platform

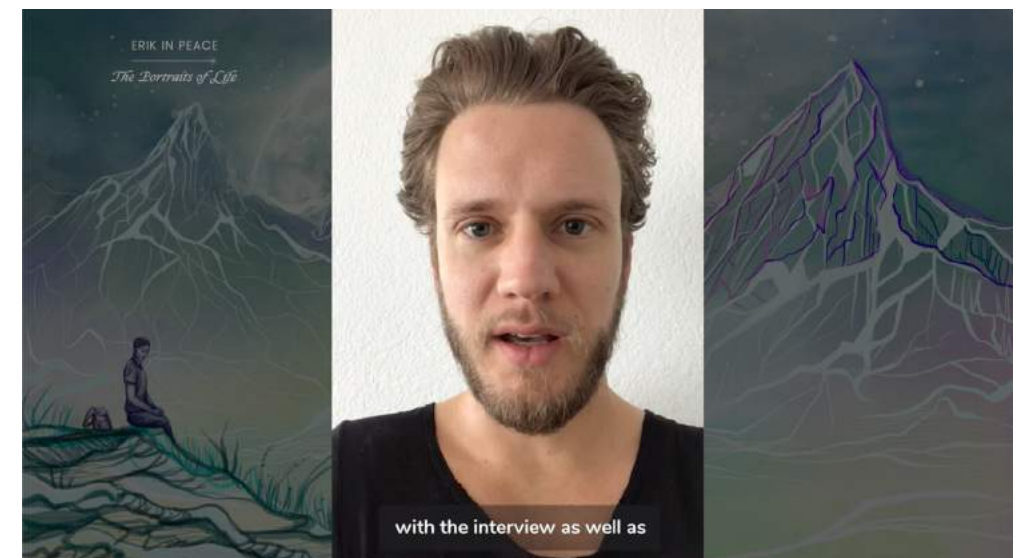
1. Finding documentation methods

An important step in the final process was finding a way to communicate this project with other people. As it would be hard to have a physical exhibition, I tried to think of the method that could document the idea and process of the project online. I thought videos would be one of the best ways to show that and tried out to make short versions of the documentation in 1-2 minutes.

As a result, I created several videos that could show the essence of this project. The first one was a one-minute glance, that could show the whole concept of this project in a minute. I decided to make it in the live-painting style that I had throughout this project. Next one was a real feedback video from the participants. I asked 3-4 people who joined this project to show how they felt in a portrait mode. This was to show the actual co-creators behind this project and to show how the project affected them. Then I created a journey video of this whole process, showing how this project developed. To show the process, I made the snippet of the portraits while collecting 1-2 sentences from each video of the participants.



**Figure 32. The screenshot of 'One Minute Glance' video, live-painted, scripted and narrated by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*



**Figure 33. The real participant feedback video gathered from the 4 participants, edited by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*



**Figure 34. The screenshot of the journey video, live-painted, scripted and narrated by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*



**Figure 35. The collage used in the snippet video made and edited by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

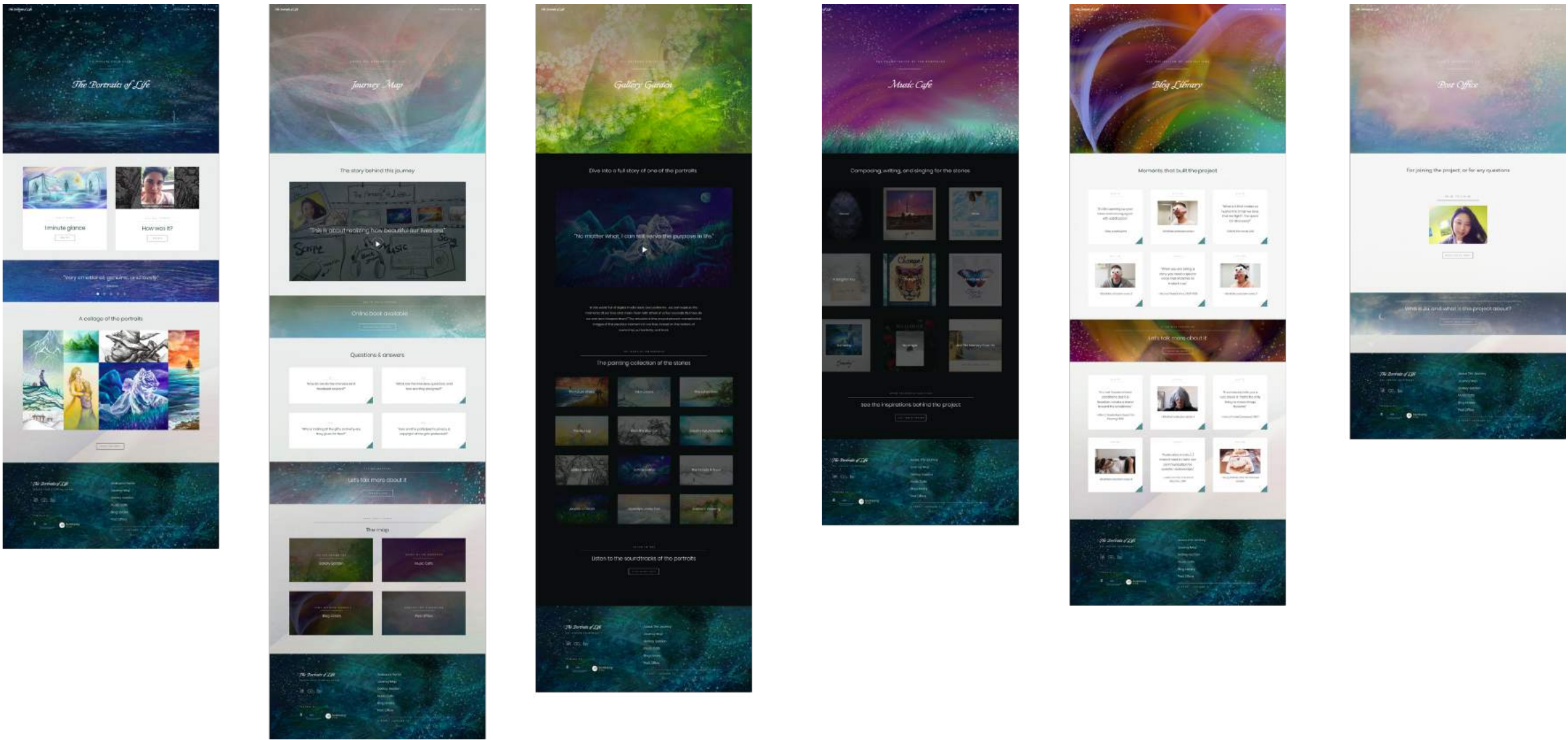
2. Designing the online platform

After making the videos, I have thought about the new online platform that could showcase the results of this project as well as the videos that I made. I asked the opinions of my participants of how they feel about sharing their gifts in a website. This is because Social media platforms such as youtube were not the best way to share our outcomes. Also, as this project would proceed further even after the BA, I thought it would be a good idea to maintain an online platform that could be updated regularly.

I have worked on the UI, UX design in Figma, and updated the design while communicating the developer that I could meet in South Korea. He didn't have an experience of making the website, but he tried his best to show what would be the best solution for creating my website. To adapt to technical difficulties, there were many things to change from the initial design. But it became my first experience of working with a developer and building a website of my project.

The online platform contained with 6 main parts. 'Welcome home' section introduces the general points of the project, and 'Journey Map' shows the process of it while giving the guidance of navigating the website to the users. 'Gallery garden' showcases the artworks, alongside one of the full stories of a participant. Music cafe features the songs created during the project, and 'Blog library' features the pictures and

quotes that built the moments of the project. Most importantly, the users can contact the conductor in ‘The Post Office’ page, and by clicking the button which is always displayed in the menu bar.



**Figure 36. A glimpse of the finished website UI (featuring the artworks created by Juyoung Yi as headers & footer images), created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

VIII. *Evaluation and Conclusion*

*“Reflecting the project and
collecting the findings.”*

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

- 1. Reflection on the conductor’s role
- 2. Evaluation & the next step
- 3. The fields of contribution
- 4. The learnings & conclusion

1. The roles of the conductor

There were many roles that I had to perform in this project, which helped me to position myself in a multidimensional perspective. One of the important roles was being an artist who portrays one's story with the digital medium. I could explore many creative fields while scripting, recording it with my voice, doing the live painting, composing the individual background music, translating (for non-English speakers), making subtitles, and editing all of them into the form of a video. And as a designer, I took a position as a manager of the whole process – approaching potential participants, conducting interviews, co-creating, getting feedback, and assessing the prototype to develop it further, as well as determining and creating the online platform.

2. Reflecting the 'dreams' & the next step

To evaluate this project, I could revisit the dreams I had at the beginning. The feedback from my participants and checking the aspects of the development of this project were the main data that I use in this evaluation process.

- The interaction between the past memories, present values, and future dreams of a person is possible through in-depth interview sessions with the questions based on logotherapy, psychoanalysis, and CBT. The artworks (live painting, music) that features that person's story.

- This project showed the authenticity of the interaction between the co-creators with the notion of trust, in the process of exchanging the project's prototype and feedback.
- By combining live painting, music, scripting and re-enacting, the interaction between the fields of art and design can be successfully delivered to the participant in a form of multimedia.
- In the mediation process, this project presents the interaction between analogue storytelling and technology by combining the in-depth interview results with digital interpretation.

The research and field research shows that these points were possible because of authenticity, ownership and trust that this project has. However, this leads to another important point, regarding the potential conductors. While being a co-creator of 'The Portraits of Life', I can evaluate that this project is highly depending on the individual style and creativity of the conductor. Therefore, I would evaluate the versatility of the design process can be a difficult part. I believe this can be taken further in the future, to seek the possibility of having multiple conductors in this project. It would also open the question of how more than one conductor can build up the trust with the participants.

Furthermore, as the next step of this project, I would point out reaching out the complete strangers to the conductor. This project was based on the relationships which were based on the conductor's social boundaries (my workplace, school, etc). It could go further by getting the recommendations from the participants and meeting new people. However, as a conductor, I think it would broaden this project's potential if the unknown participants could be gathered online. That would give a challenge of building trust with strangers and opening our stories up to each other.

3. The fields of contribution

After reflecting the ideas above, there were other points that were addressed which were the new findings of possible contributions. They are specified in the psychological aspect, co-creation aspect, methodological aspect, social aspect, media aspect, and human aspect.

Psychological aspect

"A design-process that can help people to feel positive about their lives by reflecting on the present values, past memories and future dreams with logotherapy, psychoanalysis, and CBT methods in an in-depth interview session."

Co-creation aspect

"Developing a method to have a trustful and more convenient environment for the conductor and the participants by using the blindfold as a tool to open up. Also, showing the process of building ethical relationships between the co-creators by developing a new platform of communication which can protect the personal data."

Methodological aspect

"A novel way of combining art, storytelling, in-depth interview and psychology in the field of interaction design. Also, proving that this can provide the notion of ownership, authenticity, and trust to the participants with the metaphor of 'gifts'."

Social aspect

"Seeking out the new possibility of an online co-creation session of self-reflection, as a therapeutic experience of revisiting one's memories and values while staying at home (especially in a post-pandemic situation)."

Media aspect

"Seeking out the new possibility of an online co-creation session of self-reflection, as a therapeutic experience of revisiting one's memories and values while staying at home (especially in a post-pandemic situation)."

Human aspect

“Helping people to feel positive about themselves, while getting over the loneliness with trust, deep understanding and connectivity during the personal in-depth interview and by co-creating the gifts. Also, making that connection possible in many cultural contexts with video call technology.”

4. The learnings and conclusion

The lessons learned from this project can be described as two main parts. One is the learnings regarding the field as conclusion, and another is about personal development. The reason behind having the two parts is to show the objective findings that this journey provided, as well as the insights that I gained as a conductor on the level of personal acknowledgements and growth.

The learnings regarding the field

- The benefit of being an interaction designer: We can explore multiple fields and combine them together to create a novel method of contributing to our society in a transdisciplinary way. In this project, the combination of art, design, psychology, and media showed that interaction designers could make invisible personal data into visible digital storytelling, while helping people to have a positive experience of recalling their life-moments.

- What artists and designers can contribute to the mediation process of autobiographical storytelling: With technology, we can easily capture the moments of our lives. But the rapid and shallow mediation process in a contemporary social media platform is lacking ownership, authenticity, and trust. This project provides these missing points by building trust in co-creation sessions, making the authentic and personalised story of a participant, and enriching the sense of ownership while showing the development of one's life in the process of live-painting.
- How the notion of 'devotion' influences the experience of the participants in a design process: 'The Portraits of Life' is the project that deals with the data of personal life and stories, and the participants open up their moments to the conductor with trust. Therefore, every single element of the 'digital gifts' being created by the conductor enhanced the connection of co-creators, as a method of showing respect and gratitude towards each participant's story. However, this can also be a difficulty regarding the versatility of this project's methodology, as the project could be shaped very differently for other conductors.
- How the combination of art and design help the interactions of one's past, present, and future: Live painting, narration and music create the rhythm in the process of self-reflection of the participant's, which helps one

to focus on the flow of his or her story as an emotional journey. Also, listening to one's story with the other's voice plays an additional role in keeping an objective view of reflecting oneself, in a very personal story. These intertwined methodologies can bring moments of oneself together while experiencing 'the gifts'.

The learnings regarding the field

- The courage of approaching people: The important thing was to really believe in the project, and in its value. Then I could feel the courage automatically coming out from deep inside of me. This led me to approach people with an honest and kind mindset. They might have seen I'm a shy person, but they could also sense the trust that I had in me and my project. That is how I could start a good co-creation.
- Positioning myself as a conductor: Sometimes it is difficult to conduct several roles at the same time. Especially while listening to deep stories of the participants as an interviewer, feeling the responsibility of sharing one's life moments and empathising with it can be emotionally heavy. Keeping the right distance with the participant's story and making clear about the roles of the conductor helped me to position myself in this project.
- Skills I developed while creating the gifts: I could explore the fields that I have never tried before. One was using the method of live-painting with the procreate app. I could learn a new method of digital painting. Also, I developed the skills of composing with the new composing tool called Garageband. Making more than a dozen multimedia outcomes helped me to be confident in producing and editing videos, and working with a web developer upgraded my skill as a UX, UI designer.
- Adapting to changes: When pandemic happened, I had to leave all my stuff and fly back to South Korea. In the middle of the chaos, I learned that the changes in the situation can be interesting challenges to discover a new method to conduct the project. The important thing was the mindset of adapting to the challenges. With this spirit, I could make online interviews enjoyable with my participants.
- Being aware of privacy issues: As this project is about our lives and deep thoughts, as well as the important moments, it is crucial to be sure if the participant feels safe to open up. From the beginning of the interview session, I learned being as transparent as possible is the key to build up the trust. Also, updating the process of the project and methods of sharing the outcomes to the participants helped to maintain the trust.

- Project management (time): Each participant had a different schedule and it was difficult to conduct interviews and feedback sessions like first planned. Also, as I had to create everything in digital gifts, managing the time was one of the main difficulties. I used google calendar and set the alarms for each session, and always read the planner before going to bed and starting my day.
- About us, the people: Even though I thought I knew the people that I met in my days, it turned out that I can never know them fully. Therefore, I learned not to judge them with quick assumptions, or first impressions. People have their own stories and reasons to be who they are, and respecting that is the first step to understand each other better. With understanding, we can love each other's lives and be friends."
- About this project, about me: I learned that I'm a person who really enjoys creating, and have lots of love towards people. This project helped me to find myself and what I would like to do in my life, as a good starting point. Thus, as the conclusion of this project, I could see that 'The Portraits of Life' would be a lifelong project of mine.



**Figure 37. Ju, the conductor of this project, a photo taken by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

IX. *Appendix*

*“The helpers behind this project
and the bibliography.”*

CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

- 1. Letters for special thanks
- 2. Bibliography

1. Letters for special thanks

The participants

To. Henna, Sabrina, Jaeyoon, Jeong, Calum, Julian, Christine, Elish, Elias, Joëlle, Erik, Peter, Jakob.

It was a great journey to getting to know you all. The moment of interviewing and creating your gifts was the best time in the three years of my study and my life in Switzerland. I deeply appreciate the trust and love you sent me while participating in this project.

Mentors

To. Karmen, Luke, Joëlle, Verena, Jürgen, Florian, Nicole, Matthias.

Your support and help became great energy to conduct this project. The design methods and mindsets that I learned from you would be a great base for my future journey. Thank you for believing in this project, and believing in me.

Web developers

To. Lee Young Ho, Tae Sang Park

It was a great opportunity to work with you. Thanks for your courage regarding helping me with the development project

that you didn't try before. Without your help, it would have been impossible to build an online platform. I send you a lot of love and respect.

Material & Mental support

To. Yi Han Goo, Ha Hye Ran

Thank you very much for providing the devices and material that I needed throughout this project. Your full support made this project to develop further. You have connected great people who could help me in this project as great mentors. I deeply appreciate your presence in my life.

...And more

To. Yova family in Limmatplatz & IAD crew

My dear friends, even though we are physically far away, I'll always remember that I have good friends in Switzerland. Thank you for creating such an amazing environment for me, and I will always appreciate the time we could spend together

p.s.

Dear reader, if you were reading this paper so far, I'd like to thank you for joining the journey of 'The Portraits of Life' with me. Wish you all the best, and hope you would stay safe and connected no matter where you are.

2. Bibliography

Readings

*by orders of appearance in the paper

(Background & Motivation)

1. Twenge, Jean M., iGen – Why today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy – and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood and What That Means for the Rest of Us, Atria Books, New York, 2017.
2. Moura, Hudson, and 4 others, Interactive Narratives, New Media & Social Engagement, University of Toronto, October 23–25, 2014.
3. Farrow, Elaine; Dickinson, Thomas and Aylett, Matthew P, Generating Narratives from Personal Digital Data: Using Sentiment, Themes, and Named Entities to Construct Stories, ACM Conference Extended Abstracts on Human Factors in Computing Systems, April, 2015.
4. Headlee, Celeste, We Need to Talk: How to Have Conversations That Matters, Harper, US, September 5, 2017.
5. Jaynes, Julian, The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind, HMH Books, 2000.

6. Gibson, James, The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception, Psychology Press, 1986.
7. Ingold, Tim, The Perception of the Environment, Psychology Press, 2000.
8. Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, Rochberg-Halton, Eugene, The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self, Cambridge University Press, US, 1981.
9. Foucault, Michel, The Order of Things, Pantheon Books, US, 1970.
10. Heidegger, Martin, Being and Time (Sein und Zeit), Harper Perennial Modern Classics, US, 2008.
11. F. Rosenberg, Jay, The practice of philosophy: a handbook for beginners, Prentice-Hall, US, 1978.

(Literature review)

12. Baudrillard, Jean, The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures, Redwood books, UK, 1970.
13. Le Bon, Gustave, The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind, tredition, Hamburg, Germany, 2013.
14. Thomson, Gee, Mesmerization, Thames & Hudson, U.K., 2008.

15. Harari, Yuval, Homo Deus: A Brief History of Tomorrow, Vintage books, USA, New York, 2015.
16. Burger, John, Ways of Seeing, Penguin books, UK, 1972.
17. Kahneman, Daniel, Thinking, fast and slow, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, USA, 2013.
18. Stein, Murray, Jung's Map of the Soul: An Introduction, Open Court Publishing, USA, Chicago, 1998.
19. Jung, Carl, The Red Book, W. W. Norton & Company, NYC, 2009.
20. Kurzweil, Ray, How to Create a Mind: The Secret of Human Thought Revealed, Penguin Group, USA, 2012.
21. Freud, Sigmund, A General Introduction to Psychoanalysis, Gutenberg project(online), checked on 20.02.2020.
22. Frankl, Victor, The Man's Search for Meanings, Beacon Press, Boston, USA, 2006.
23. Edelman, Sara, Change Your Thinking with CBT: Overcome stress, combat anxiety and improve your life, Ebury Publishing, London, UK, 2018.

(Methodology analysis)

24. We need to talk, Celeste Headlee, SmallBigMedia, USA, 2017.
25. Crabtree, B. F., & Miller, W. L. (Eds.), Doing qualitative research. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1997.
26. Alasuutari, Pertti, Researching Culture – Qualitative Method and Cultural Studies, SAGE, London, 2000.
27. Wilson, Chauncey, Interview Techniques for UX Practitioners: A User-Centered Design Method, Elsevier, USA, 2014.
28. S. Weiss, Robert, Learning From Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies, The free press, NY, USA, 1994.
29. (FHI) Mack, Natasha and others, Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide, Module 3: In-Depth Interviews, North Carolina, USA, 2005.
30. A. Maxwell, Joseph, Qualitative research in the design process, Chapter 7: Designing a Qualitative Study, USA, 2008.
31. (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates) The Human-Computer Interaction Handbook, Chapter: An Ethnographic approach to design, Blomberg, Jeanette, London, 2003.

32. Dillard, Annie, *The Writing Life*, Harper & Row, New York, 1998.
33. Strunk J.R., William, *the Elements of Style*, Harcourt, US, 1918.
34. T. Kellogg, Ronald, *The Psychology of Writing*, Oxford University Press, UK, 1999.
35. 'How the invention of photography changed art: <http://www.peareylalbhawan.com/>, checked in 2020.

Related projects

*by orders of appearance in the paper

1. Heierli, Lisa, Herzog, Florian, *Language of the hands*, 2017 (Source: <https://interactiondesign.zhdk.ch/projekte/sprache-der-haende/>)
2. Emin, Tracy, *My bed*, 1998 (Source: <https://www.widewalls.ch/tracey-emin-art/>)
3. MoodFood, supported by EU, 2018 (Source: <https://moodfood-vu.eu/about/project/>)
4. Project helping, US, 2018 (Source: <https://projecthelping.org/draft/>)
5. Vasinee, Kath, *FOMO*, 2017 (Source: <http://kathvasinee.com/>)
6. Häner, Romina, *Bouche-à-Oreille*, 2019 (Source: <https://trendsandidentity.zhdk.ch/projekte/bouche-a-oreille/>)
7. James Video – motivation, Youtube channel, 2020 (<https://www.youtube.com/user/bonttekorea>)
8. Duit, Jeremy, *Talklife app*, 2019 (Source: <https://web.talklife.co/>)
9. Yann Arthus-Bertrand, Yann, *HUMAN*, 2010 (Source: <http://www.human-themovie.org/>)
10. Fitz, D.Florian, *100 Dinge*, 2018 (Source: <https://www.kino.de/film/100-dinge-2018/>)
11. LEEYEON, *Live-painting Youtube channel*, 2020 (Source: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKw7Jsu2cMU_D4yK8VMmslQ)
12. HAEVN music, 'Eyes Closed Project', 2020 (Source: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCGIygiYkKxn7g7fFNfDXskg>)
13. CIID, *Life During Covid-19: A Collective Journal of Everyday Experiences*, 2020 (<https://www.cov19stories.com/>)

Images

*by orders of appearance in the paper

1. Figure 1. Social media platforms that we daily use. (Source:<https://internationaldirector.com/the-c-suite/going-social-should-your-c-suite-be-on-social-media/>, visited in 2020.)
2. Figure 2. Capturing the moment of inspiration in a mediation process, a photo taken from Ritesh Uttamchandani. (Source: <https://www.riteshuttamchandani.com/>, visited in 2020.)
3. Figure 3. Positioning the key ideations of the project 'The Portraits of Life', derived from the research. (Source: From the in-depth interview results and case-studies of the usage of social media's autobiographical storytelling process, Image created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.)
4. Figure 4. Interwoven co-creation and mediation process of 'The Portraits of life' (Image created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.)
5. Figure 5. The image of Jean Baudrillard. (source: <http://eswinfield.blogspot.com/2010/09/jean-baudrillard.html>, visited in 2020.)
6. Figure 6. The image of Bahnhofstrasse (source:<https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-guide/zurich/shopping/>

[bahnhofstrasse](https://www.travelandleisure.com/travel-guide/zurich/shopping/), visited in 2020.)

7. Figure 7. The image of Carl Jung. (source:<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/w3csyx20>, visited in 2020)
8. Figure 8. The image of Viktor Frankl (source: IMAGO/Viktor Frankl Institut, visited in 2020.)
9. Figure 9. The image of notes prepared for the interview questions, Picture taken from Juyoung Yi, 2020.
10. Figure 10. The image of Michael Ende, who claimed the importance of 'voice'. (Source: <https://es.babelio.com/auteur/-Michael-Ende/5409>, visited in 2020.)
11. Figure 11. 'HUMAN' The movie by Yann – Arthus-Bertrand, 2015. (source: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJy4nUo1D4R3hlcP8XCLX9Q>, visited in 2020.)
12. Figure 12. Image of Juyoung Yi, Creating the artwork with Procreator Application, photo taken by HENNA, 2020.
13. Figure 13. Image of LEEYEON's live painting. (source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ISgWNOO-LMo>, visited in 2020.)
14. Figure 14. Juyoung Yi, composing music with Garageband, photo taken by HENNA, 2020.

15. Figure 15. The album arts created for each of the songs, made by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
16. Figure 16. HEAVN's Eyes closed Stories project. (source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KO4uyWbO0Kc&list=PLRvsEcc6_hqqbkv1_8ux9zpYowa9zzXYC, visited in 2020.)
17. Figure 17. The participant wearing blindfolds, with the conductor (Juyoung Yi). The screenshot from the final video of the project, made by Juyoung Yi. (All images are taken from Juyoung Yi, 2020.)
18. Figure 18. The participant wearing blindfolds in online sessions, featured in the 'learnings' part of the final video of the project. (All images made & taken from Juyoung Yi, 2020.)
19. Figure 19. 'Henna's memory' (Prototype of the first portrait), created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
20. Figure 20. 'Sabrina's wedding', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
21. Figure 21. 'Jaeyoon's Dream', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
22. Figure 22. 'The Temple In Snow', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
23. Figure 23. 'Calum's Future Holiday', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
24. Figure 24. 'The Future of Elias', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
25. Figure 25. 'The Julian Town', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
26. Figure 26. 'The Big Hug', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
27. Figure 27. 'Elijah The Wild Cat', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
28. Figure 28. 'Joëlle's Garden', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
29. Figure 29. 'Erik in peace', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
30. Figure 30. 'In Peter's Mind', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
31. Figure 31. 'Good Bye, Lonely Tree', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
32. Figure 32. The screenshot of 'One Minute Glance' video, live-painted, scripted and narrated by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
33. Figure 33. The real participant feedback video gathered from the 4 participants, edited by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
34. Figure 34. The screenshot of the journey video, live-painted, scripted and narrated by Juyoung Yi, 2020.
35. Figure 35. The collage used in the snippet video, made and edited by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

36. Figure 36. A glimpse of the finished website UI (featuring the artworks created by Juyoung Yi as headers & footer images), created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

37. Figure 37. Ju, the conductor of this project, a photo taken by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

Stories of co-creators

- Henna (Jan. 13.2020)
- Sabrina (Jan. 19. 2020)
- Jaeyoon (Feb. 01. 2020)
- Jeong (Feb. 10. 2020)
- Calum (Feb. 22. 2020)
- Elias (Feb. 25. 2020)
- Julian (Feb. 26. 2020)
- Celeste (Mar. 06. 2020)
- Elish (Mar. 09. 2020)
- Joëlle (Mar. 11. 2020)
- Erik (Apr. 11. 2020)
- Roman (Apr. 15. 2020)
- Jakob (Apr. 17. 2020)

PART 2. THE OUTCOME GALLERY

This part presents the detailed experiment results of this project. Each script of the participants is showcased together with the following artwork. Alongside that, it shows the song lyrics and album arts which came out from the experiment.

I. *The Collection of Scripts*

*"The stories of all the participants
who co-created this project."*

THE STORIES

1. The Portraits of Life_ Henna
2. The Portraits of Life_ Sabrina
3. The Portraits of Life_ Jaeyoon
4. The Portraits of Life_ Jeong
5. The Portraits of Life_ Calum
6. The Portraits of Life_ Elias
7. The Portraits of Life_ Julian
8. The Portraits of Life_ Christine
9. The Portraits of Life_ Eliah
10. The Portraits of Life_ Joëlle
11. The Portraits of Life_ Erik
- 1.2 The Portrait of Life_ Peter
13. The Portrait of Life_ Jakob

1. The Portraits of Life_ Henna

Well.. when you ask me the things that can describe who I am, it's hard to find.

The most meaningful thing for me is my daughter. Also, my husband. I guess what means the most to me is the people, not necessarily the objects. Hm, what else... I think learning is also very important to me. I'm always learning. I love reading books, and the little sentences that resonate my heart. There are so many little things that I love. It can be the wind, sunlight, or the scent of a rose on a rainy day. I found these things in little moments of my life.

If you ask my favourite book, it's hard to choose one because there are so many of them. But I can say that the thing I cherish the most is the truthfulness. I feel thankful and happy to meet truthful books and people. I feel like it is a waste of time to spend with a person or to read a book if there is nothing real inside of them.

Now let's think about what I fear. Well, what do I fear? The only thing I fear is my family being left behind when I have to leave this world now. I think they are not ready yet to handle that. That's because they are very soft-minded people. Other than that, I can't think about something that I'm afraid of, honestly. I'm not afraid of ageing, not afraid of being sick... I can accept that they are all just part of my life. Luckily till now, I could live a

life without a lot of fear, as thankfully I could have an average life to not worry too much about it.

However, there was a moment for me when I didn't want to live anymore. It wasn't a suicidal thought or something, but I was too worn out. There was a time when my mother was ill when I was 22. Every night when I went to bed, I didn't want to wake up the next morning. Living was a pain day after day while seeing my mother getting weak, suffering from the isolation among the others. It was a long battle which drained my motivation to go on.

Other than that, my life was quite neutral. But if I can bring only one or two happiest memories with me, I remember the honeymoon in Hawaii, playing with my young daughter and having snacks in the picnic. Oh, and there was one rainy day. We were wearing our rain boots, and we splashed the water around the puddle. It was a lot of fun. Then together, we smelled the wet, crimson roses which fully bloomed in our garden. That was one of the happiest moment of my life.

Now thinking about my future, and how I'd like to live happily, I actually realised that the world has changed so dramatically from the one I knew before, through youtube. From that day, I decided to change my thoughts and actions.

I always thought that I tried my best in living my life diligently, but it seems like this world has changed even faster than

the changes inside of me. So I made up my mind to learn new things even harder and I'm really following up with that promise. I'm happy with this part of me. If I imagine doing this for a year, I can see myself being confident about myself, for sure. And hard things may come to my life of course. But I believe I will enjoy the whole process of going through it, eventually.



**Figure 19. 'Henna's memory' (Prototype of the first portrait), created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

2. The Portraits of Life_ Sabrina

'Home' is the thing that has the most meaning to me. In my home, there is a little girl who is like a mirror of mine. I see myself inside of her. This motivates me to change my own behaviour before telling her what to do. Even though it is not always easy with a child, I try to keep the place tidy. And I also love cooking in our kitchen with some fresh ingredients in the fridge. I should admit that it's hard to keep the balance between everything I should manage. But while cooking, I can really relax and have some enjoyable time.

Regarding the word 'time', my new baby in the belly will come out anytime soon. All I want is only the best for my children if I can already say that in the plural (laugh). Um, and I should have more courage to deal with my current struggles, I know that as well. You see, my husband has been looking for a job for a year. And now he is also considering working abroad if that can be another possibility.

This will be a big change in our family, and... a big challenge as well. I'm always trying to do my best for the people I love, but it's also what I fear. My career at work, my affection towards my family... What if all of these were just for my own pleasure at the end? This kind of thinking brings me down, but I know it is better to be open about this.

When I was having one of the hardest times of my life, I also

overcame it by being brave to talk about it. It was when my ex-boyfriend who have spent 5 years together with me suddenly decided to break up. One day, he wanted to see me in some kind of forest. Then he gave me my stuff, already all packed, and took the house key back from me. It was totally out of the blue.

But even in that frustrating moment, I tried to rebuild all my friendships again and tried to move on from that. I think that effort paid off, as now I can even laugh about it. This is why I'm trying not to hide the situation I'm facing now as well. Because once I open up, I know I'm not alone anymore.

Now, let's go back to one of the happiest and thankful moments in my life. Many people assume that it would be the day when my daughter was born, but actually, it was the day when I got married. I don't think I'm too much of a romantic person or something, But I still remember that day so vividly. We got all the things planned out, and everything was just right. I was wearing a white dress, and all my friends all over the world came to see me. We were standing on a beautiful mountain Rigi, near the lake of Lucerne.

I still remember the bouquet, the flowers were also from that place, freshly picked, so original, colourful and elegant. As it was summer, in June, we actually had a sudden rain. And we planned to do our things outside! The people were worried if the weather would spoil my mood, but you know what? The

rain stopped in 30 minutes or so, and after that, we could have the most beautiful sunset in the clear scenery. That was actually a blessing from the rain. It was really amazing.

In the near future, I dream about having a perfect balance between being a mom, having a career, and also taking some time for myself. I know it's so easy to feel guilty when I think I'm not a great mom, or if I feel like I'm asking for help from others too much. but I know I should have the courage to prioritise myself sometimes.

And if I can leave a message to myself from the future, once I figured the whole thing out, I'd like to say...

"Hey, Well done for getting through all of these. Having awareness about your situation is one of the most important things, and you did it. Make time for yourself, and take all the bits of help that you can get. Don't feel guilty about it. See the other side. This will be helpful for everyone in the end, and this is how we make positive effects together."



**Figure 20. 'Sabrina's wedding', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

3. The Portraits of Life_ Jaeyoon

There is no need to compare with others. My life has its own way, ...and someday it can turn out to be great, so I'm confident. For me, I always had my dreams. The things supporting that were my self-esteem, self-confidence and my religion. I was not that great at school, But I tried to be my best for the things I can do well.

Actually, my family wasn't that wealthy when I was young. So it made me think a lot about what I should do in the future. And now after mid-forty, I'm doing them step by steps, even dreaming a new dream. A few years ago, I made an album as a singer, and I'm living as a farmer of my own farm. I'm also a show host in many events, while being an author of my autobiography. As I'm having a job in a company as well, 'Five jobs' as my nickname is not only a joke, right?

Actually, I didn't have so much to fear so far. What I'm feeling sorry is...that I couldn't have a child. But sometimes, getting older makes me think about death. We only live once, and there are so many things I'd love to do. That's how I'm passionate about my life, I guess. I do believe I have the strength to do anything, and if something doesn't work, there will be another way.

Um... my parents were farmers. My mother was a small lady who had nine children. I was the youngest one, and I still

remember. It was a cold winter night when I was sick, In the middle of the blizzard. My mother held me on her back and went to the only pharmacy far away. She spent 4 years, taking care of my father before he passed away, and she used to say her wish would be seeing me getting married. And fortunately, I could keep that promise.

When I can no longer see the people I love in this world, It makes me powerless that there's nothing I can do for them now. No matter how the time passes, it will be always on my mind. Because even in the scene of people that I don't know, whenever I see parents meeting their children, it leaves tears on my eyes.

To be honest, I wanted to be a teacher. But because of the hardships in my family, I had to choose a totally different way. Still, there's nothing 'late', isn't it? Even in my age, I went to the Korea National Open University and now almost graduating from the Business administration. The fun fact is that I'm doing much better than the old school days. And as I'm giving many speeches about fulfilling one's dreams, perhaps I could say I actually achieved what I wanted to do before.

In my life, what I cherish the most is the relationships with other people. That's because I think people are my biggest assets. I think that led me to dream about being a broadcaster, which affected my character in choosing my dream. And farming brings me a lot of pleasure with sharing the fruit of my efforts

with others. That naturally brings me so many of thankful people around me.

To talk about them, I can mention my boss who supports me, But really, I can't leave my wife behind. She is the one who understands and supports my outgoing character. Even when I wanted to release my first album as a singer, instead of saying 'Are you crazy?', she said 'Okay, then give it a try.'

In my everyday life with good people around me, there could be some hardships and the things I should pray for, but I never thought like 'What is wrong with my life?'. Perhaps the feeling of thankfulness is making this possible. I do appreciate even with the little details. In fact, just being able to breathe is a thankful thing.

So, the future I dream of is being a popular broadcaster. Also, I'll still be a farmer in nature while spending my own time. I actually imagine that in 5 years, this is a possible scenario. I have been in a radio program for a moment and ranked my name in the search engine. Then even got a call from a TV show to be on their program. If people can know about me like this, I'm confident about fulfilling my dream. And when the day comes that I achieve all my dreams, I will say to myself like this.

'It's truly a graceful moment. Here we are, after all the time. You did a great job. But you know it, right? That there is another dream ahead of us.'



**Figure 21. 'Jaeyoon's Dream', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

4. The Portraits of Life_ Jeong, A Buddhist Nun

Maybe it's because of my age, but I feel pathetic towards everything. Every animal, everyone who is getting old...Even my master, who have spent several decades with me. Watching her ageing gives me some kind of sorrow. I know that's all part of nature, but still... it makes me feel sympathetic.

Well, it's same for me as well. My body feels pain here and there, as I'm getting older. But still, praying for Buddha helps me to go through all that. Maybe I can put it as the strength of praying, um, the great joy it brings. Alongside that, I truly enjoy being in the serene nature, with the sound of the birds, and warm sunlight in the afternoon.

While taking a close look, there are invisible opportunities that can lead one to be a monk. No matter the person is old, or young, and even after getting married, there can be a moment when the one can see 'Oh, this is the path that I should take.' I think it's a good choice to experience the life of a monk. There is a freedom which can't be found in the mundane world.

Well, maybe it's because I should learn more in life, I do have some fears, still. Buddha said that there's no need to worry for what hasn't happened yet, but I'm afraid of natural disasters. Our little temple may look very peaceful from the outside, but as it is built upon the rocks on the top of the mountain, it can be quite dangerous. Especially when we had a strong

earthquake before, I got very anxious and worried because of the falling rocks.

However, there was also a time for me to show a little courage. A long time ago, when I was living in a dormitory, there was a conflict between two nuns in our class. I was using the same room with one of the nuns, and she asked for my help. With my help, she wanted to expel the other nun from our class. I strongly said no, and told her it is the thing for two of them to solve. In a little and a strongly bound community, saying no was not that easy.

Hm... the hardest moments for me was... when I got a call from my family outside of the temple, that my youngest brother was very sick. And my sister who was older than him passed away in her early 40s because of cancer.

I felt guilty as if what my siblings went through was all my fault. I could just pray with all my heart, but there was nothing else I could do. Praying was the only strength that I had back then. I closed up all my emotions until they became numb. Just thinking, that perhaps that's their karma.

Time is medicine. After 10 years like that, Now I think 'Well, that's how her life supposed to be, and maybe that's why she lived her life so diligently.' But there were many little happy and thankful moments as well. I especially remember the temple 'Bubheungsa' in the mountain region of Gangwon-do. It was

a very peaceful morning. The last night before that day, we had heavy snow all night long. After waking up, everything was covered in white underneath the pine forest. In the middle of that silence, while standing alone, I could see that I was living in paradise.

While looking back my life as a nun for nearly 37 years, now I would like to spend the time on my own studies. I have prayed a lot for the others so far. After 5, 10 years, I would be nearly 80. So I think it would be important to get ready for the departure of my life. The time comes quite soon, you know.

What would last as the most thankful thing in my life is that I could meet my master, the senior nun.

When I was younger, I used to climb up the mountain in winter with bare hands to find the greens and made her nice soup. I'm not sure if she remembers that now.

I know, back in the days I exerted myself, when I believed too much in my youth. Looking back, that was regretful and foolish. But still, I'm here after all these years.

To myself, I'd like to say...

"You are a person with a good heart, and I cherish that. It was a good job of enduring all the hardships so far. Like you believe in Buddha, I believe in your strength to deal with other things. You lived very hard and fully."



**Figure 22. 'The Temple In Snow', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.*

5. The Portraits of Life_ Calum

Uh... to describe who I am, I think I can talk about my favourite animal, which is a dog. I have a similar personality to a dog, I think. Trying to be excited about everything, and trying to be a good, loyal person... I lived in the south of France when I was younger. I went to the beach most of the weekends, and I still like swimming and being close to the water. Also, I love trying out new stuff. Recently I'm into playing the guitar, I started learning it the last year when I moved alone to Zurich.

In my life, I'd like to discover new things and have many experiences. It can be like learning a new instrument, moving to different places, or going to the concert of the singer that I never knew before. And if there is a thing to be afraid of, that would be wasting my time by making the wrong decisions. You know, some choices that would make me regret eventually, leading my path far away from a worthwhile life.

For me, a worthwhile life is about making good connections with people, with the ones who actually care. Also making sure that everything I do is having a good impact on them. I know I feel vulnerable

while seeing my parents getting old. That's because I love them a lot. To my older sister and me, a home they built has been always a good place to live. They made me who I am, and I'm happy with that.

Moving around the world and having friends in multiple cities can be a hard thing to deal with. I can't see the people I like that often, and sometimes I wonder 'Should I've stayed with them?' It's hard to see when they are still having their lives together and it's not the same for me anymore. The loneliness associated with that and the feeling of missing out that's not always that easy.

I still remember the time when I was 6. Our family moved to France and I didn't know how to speak French at all. Even though I was so young back then, I can still recall the feelings that I had in the classroom, where I was just sitting and looking outside of the window, hoping the day to end soon. I just wanted to go home and be with the people that I could actually talk to.

But the idea of moving away means not being stuck in the same routine, and I think I'm pretty good at handling that now. Rather than just feeling down about being alone, I try to do something that makes me feel good, like playing the guitar. And I know that while pushing through the challenges, I feel alive.

So for me, happiness is like that. Um, being in the moment, concentrating what I'm doing right now. It's like the time that I had with my family 2 years ago, in Thailand. It was a Christmas day, and we had a boat trip in Phuket. Every one of my family was there, just relaxing in the beautiful nature. There was

nothing to worry about, and it was a perfect family day. I was in my favourite kind of place, in the middle of serene water, fully living in the moment.

Well, in ten years, I'd probably like to have my own family and definitely would like to have a dog. I enjoy my job now, software development. But maybe I'll be able to be a freelancer who doesn't have a monotonous life of being stuck in the office all day long.

I'll be living with precious people around me, not too many, but my own family and friends. I dream about living in a place somewhere exotic, and staying active, keep on exploring. Our house would not be in the centre of the city, as we are going to have our own garden, near the place like the ocean or mountains. I have good memories of growing up in nature, and would like to give that experience to my future children as well.

If you ask me what 'Love' is, I think it can be a smile. A smile you can see in your family's face, when you come home every day. It's something you look forward to, the people who are waiting for you, and you know that they will be there. Also, like the same hug that you give every day. These little things that build-up the overall feeling of love. And obviously, a dog running towards you. Oh, and my future dog's name would be something like human names, such as Robert or Michael, as I think it's quite funny.

If my 32-year-old future self can leave some message to me, it would be like...

"Be more outgoing towards people, and don't wait for things to just happen. Get all of your stupid ideas outside. As now is when you are young, and you can afford the time to do all of that. Also, don't get into the career life too early. Because you have more than enough time for that later on. Keep on trying to have as much fun as you can because you never know when it could stop. Oh, and go see your parents more often. And hey Calum, don't worry about all the small things that are happening right now. You are definitely on the right path. You might not get there as fast as you hope, but you have the right mindset to get where I am."



**Figure 23. 'Calum's Future Holiday', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

6. The Portraits of Life_ Elias

I think I'm a structured person, it's mostly my nature, I think. Sports are really a big part of me. I liked soccer as a child, and got interested in snowboarding, then went into the world of kite surfing. I really enjoy the flow state that I can experience when I'm just into the moment while doing sports, I always have a desire for that kind of phase when the time goes super fast.

Hm... as a child, I often felt very lonely. Maybe that built my biggest fear, the loneliness. I lived with my mother and stepfather for 10 years. But for me, a place for my dad was always missing. I couldn't really feel home that much in my family. But I think I've been having a lot of good friends. Um... but somehow, until recently, I couldn't share my deep thoughts with them. I think it was because of my fear, that I wasn't sure that they would stay with me regardless of what I say about myself.

I think what I missed in my childhood has influenced my life quite a lot. Actually, when I finished my bachelor, I had a break-up and moved out of my house. Then one day, I had the first panic attack. It lasted for almost a week. All my energy was drained to get rid of that feeling, and I really had no idea where it was coming from. I think I was really good at ignoring all my emotions. But I decided to go to therapy sessions, and I could understand where those feelings were coming from. Also, I learned how to listen to myself better.

Um.. and now I can see the positive side of this whole thing. I'm happy how my interests are helping me to deal with this hardship, and also glad that I'm gradually getting better as well. Also, it's a grateful thing that I have many good friends, and actually, throughout the struggle, I could see that I'm having a good family, also. It became an opportunity to reshape my relationship with them. With the people who are important to me, I can talk more openly comparing to my past, and now I know who is truly there for me in my life.

Recalling the thankful moments in my life, I was very happy when I could meet my good friend who was studying at the same university with me. He also became a nice roommate of mine. I felt comfortable with my friend's open and straightforward personality. Looking back, the whole combination of moving in together and building a nice friendship was definitely a great time to have.

Hm, I'm also very looking forward to being better soon in the near future, to the point where I can visit different places freely, without any emotional struggles. Soon, when I'm travelling or enjoying my hobbies, I'd like to take a huge deep breath, and think 'Ah, this feels good.' Also, I'd like to find what I really want as my future career. Apart from what I'm currently doing now, I'd love to figure out more about the direction that would be the best for me to go on for the next 50 years or something.

I believe that once I understand who I am better, that will lead me to be in a good relationship as well. Because that's the thing I'm missing in my life right now. I think love is something that you can feel inside of your bones, Um, feeling of being home, being honest and having some admirations for the parts of the person that you are being with. It's just like... knowing that I'm in the right place.

Um, if my future self could leave some message to me, after accomplishing the things I wished for, I'd like to say...

"Just look at where you have been, and see how it became better. Look what you have learned so far. I know it's not always easy, but try to enjoy the way to get where I am. You will be able to do it by taking some hard steps of listening to yourself, about how you really feel."

"Having dreams and desires are good, and you are welcome to use them to find me. Maybe you can break them down into simple goals, and write about what you could put the efforts on. Just realise that life is super short and super beautiful. Make the best out of it."



**Figure 24. 'The Future of Elias', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

7. The Portraits of Life_ Elias

I was born and raised in the beautiful city of Zurich. When it is summer, the place turns into heaven. I have many friends, they are very important to me. I love them very much, and try to keep up with them regularly. I mean, what the life is for, if there are no real friendships? My friends often become my good inspirations, and with them, I can feel my life is being full of creativity. They really open up my mind and help me to understand myself better.

My biggest fear is always the future. I don't know what will happen, and I'm scared of getting old. I don't want to be an old man who becomes the burden for the people I care. Also, I'm afraid of losing the mindset that I'm having now. I'm free, and I don't want to fit into the standard that our society has built upon us. Actually, if I'm getting old, I'm afraid that maybe I'll lose this spirit eventually. I don't want to take too much responsibility, as it would also restrict my freedom. I have many things on my bucket list, and I need the freedom to do all of them, you know.

When my parents were divorced, I just ignored the whole situation and took my step back from them. Whenever they argued, I just shut my door and didn't listen. So, talking about the relationship, I think being honest is very important. Also, for me, I want some flexibility while being with someone. It's not only because of seeing how my parents were, but it is what I

learned throughout my life. The two people shouldn't cling to each other, but they need to be independent.

I think love takes a lot of time. It will take a very long time for me to know a person, and it should be something that I can feel that the person beside me is like a part of me. I can love a lot of people, and I think I have a lot of love. Well, there are different kinds of love, I guess, but I think love can be something that embraces the whole nuance of good friendship, relationship, and even more.

Haha, this reminds me when I met my dream girl. I wouldn't say it was the happiest moment of my life, as I don't think happiness is something that can be captured at the moment. It was more of a dopamine-high point of my life. I saw her in the same tram quite often, and I really wanted to talk to her. And I did, eventually, after a year and a half. But still, I didn't ask her number or something. We just talked for 5-10 minutes, and that was it. And I could never see her again. Maybe it was the right thing to do, as I'd also prefer to keep my own fantasy. Yeah.... maybe it was for the best.

You know, I'm a person who really tries to see the bright side of each and every event happening in my life. It's because I hate to be a regretful person. I can learn from my past sometimes, and having too much sorrow doesn't help, anyways. When I was travelling to Croatia, I could see how blessed I am to be living in Switzerland, and that I have many good people around

me. I really learned how to appreciate my life, and I'm happy about it.

So, the darkest and happiest time of my life is always 'now', the present. That's because I'm afraid of the future, yet I'm being grateful for my days at the same time. I just hope one day, I'll be a happy old person, who is healthy enough to maintain my whole body. And if it is getting too much for me, maybe I'll even think about 'EXIT', who knows. But I'm not sure about that for now.

Before that, I have a dream to fulfil. You know, I have lived for almost 10,000 days till now. For the upcoming 10,000 days, I'm going to do the things in my bucket list, to make sure that I won't regret. Then for the next 10,000 days, I'd like to help the world to be a better place. It will be hard to change the world entirely, but I hope I'll be able to find something that I can do.

And I'd like to build a small village with my closest friends, maybe in nature, the kids would be running around and we can share the works together, cook and eat together, and be like a huge family. It would be a little utopia of me and my friends. A little of town of ours.

And when my future self can leave a message to me, um... to who I am now, it would be like...

"Do the things you have in your head. Do your bucket list. And

good friendship is really important, because the older you get, the lonelier you become. You know some people don't care about it because they have their partners, but remember when your partner is gone, you'll be left alone. So keep up with your friends. Or you might regret. But I know you are in the right direction, and you know that as well, right?"



**Figure 25. 'The Julian Town', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.*

8. The Portraits of Life_Christine

You know... it's really special to have someone who really cares about you, and you know that he will always be there for you. I feel lucky to have that kind of person with me, my wedding ring shows that. I have travelled a lot in my life, and I think the notion of home is quite important to me. Home is somewhere I can feel safe, and where I have the control of my own space. Also, it's the place for me and my soulmate.

Hm, thinking about the special people besides my husband, I have many friends who share similar experiences and the same points of view with me. I think how we create empathy and understand each other are strongly bonding us together.

As a social person, my biggest fear is being alone. It can be mostly like human nature, that I'm afraid of being left behind from the people and not being supported by them. There can be some trivial misunderstandings which can lead to a big miscommunication. That can create some frustrating moments, and things can go out of my control.

Actually, when I was in high school, I think I was in a big mess. It was definitely not a stable point of my life and I was having such low self-esteem. My parents and I were not having a perfect relationship, and I remember my brother was not very kind to me, too. Also, during that period, my 'so-called friends' didn't help my life to be any better.

I still remember one of the teachers told our class, that we should enjoy our high school time, as it is going to remain as one of the best moments of our lives. Of course, I strongly disagreed. If I can go back to that time, when I had not enough money to be independent and was often shameful for who I was, I'd just like to give myself a big hug. Now, looking back, all the negativities which I was framed into was not true at all. I became a decent, successful adult, and I'm proud of who I am now.

To that young girl who I once was, I'd like to tell her that everything is just fine. And that she is not a bad person. I'll tell her to not listen to what those adults say. Because there can be some small mistakes, but that doesn't mean that she is a dishonest person.

Uh, and I want to be different from how my parents were. Even though now I can see that they do care for me, especially I could feel that on my wedding day, but still, I'd like to give more security to my future children. I'd prefer to raise them as independent beings, but would be a mom who doesn't have a short temper. I want them to be confident about themselves. Also, I hope that the home I built for them would be a place where they'd like to visit for Christmas when they grow up. A home which is peaceful, quiet and safe.

Now, as a full-grown adult, I'm so glad that I have my own

power. I have the financial ability to decide on my life, and I don't need further validations from the other people who once were the authorities of my childhood. I know when I was younger, I just tried to avoid the shame, and I was hiding away my actual feelings. Yeah, as I said, I just want to give myself a big hug.

And in the future, I'd like to have more control over my life. I believe making more money would help me with that. Maybe I could be a more measured, diplomatic person as well. And I hope I'll be a happy, calm, hard-working and a loving person.

So, in the next 5-10 years, I imagine myself being in my home, probably somewhere near the lake, having a cup of coffee in the sunlight... and talking to myself,

"Well done, and good on you."



**Figure 26. 'The Big Hug', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

9. The Portraits of Life_ Eliah

Uh... My best friend is really a big part of me, I've known him since I was in kindergarten. He is just like a part of my family. I love my close people, and I love nature. Wild cats are such cool animals, and I'd like to have a free spirit like them. Um, and I also love sports, I really like playing hockey.

I used to be a hockey player in my University, and I did pretty well, I was a goalie. Actually, I dreamed of being a professional player. I even travelled to America for that dream I had. But well, you know, not every dream follows the first expectations, though.

I had some tough time in America, probably one of the hardest days of my life. There was high competition, and some unfair situations. Maybe I wasn't confident enough about myself as well. Two and a half years... and I went back to my country.

Then I made up a decision to join the army, as all men in my country should do that at some point. I choose the hard course, which was quite notorious. People thought I wouldn't make it, actually. But I did it. And I was proud of myself.

You see, life is a continuous challenge, like a game to me. I'm not afraid of failures or frustrations. There are always some good things that I can learn from them, and there is always a way to go on.

What I fear the most is maybe the fear itself, being afraid of not trying my best in my life, not living fully, not taking the risk. That's why I choose that course in the army as well. After spending the time in America, I wanted to make my turning point. So I took another challenge.

And I can say that the challenges I made so far were really rewarding to me in the end. I still remember the day when my friends and family all gathered together and had a lot of fun. I had three days off from the army, as it was a parent's day. I think what I did in the army made my father proud as well. So, I'm happy that I didn't take the easy way. And this is why I love to try things out with all my heart.

Talking about love, I think that notion holds a lot of things. It can be some kind of energy, you know? It can be everything you do, how you treat other people, or how you interact with any living creatures... Also, I think real love is embracing even the bad parts. So I can take the risks in my life, and love how I pursue it, despite the consequences. that keeps me up to dream about my next goals.

Um, I'm a person with a lot of big dreams. I enjoy my job in my current workplace, but I have so many things that I'd like to do in my life. What I'd really like to do is to be a full-time actor, playing many roles, maybe also in my favourite series. Now, acting is like a side-job for me. But maybe in 5-10 years, this

would come true,
who knows?

The thing I'd tell myself from that future would be...

"Do a lot of sports and be active. Spend some time with the people you love. And take good care of your mom, as she is getting old, be a good brother and a good son.

And hey, I know you worry a lot, but really, don't stress yourself too much, and don't take it too seriously. Because as you can see me now, you didn't give up."



**Figure 27. 'Eliah The Wild Cat', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

10. The Portraits of Life_ Joëlle

Um... I really love green plants, so I have a lot of house plants in my home. But there is one particular plant which is really important for me because it was the plant that my mom had before she passed away. Now the plant is still alive, and it became ten times bigger since I brought it with me. I'm very happy to see that plant still thriving.

Um... not only my plants, but I really love nature in general. Also, I have lots of ceramic objects around me which I like creating whenever I have the opportunity. Clay or ceramics are hard to control, but you can never fail with them. Because whatever the outcome is, it is the mark of what the object has become even if it cracked or fell apart. So in the end, it has the beauty which symbolises the imprecision. That's why I think clay and ceramics are meaningful to me, as the concept and as the object.

Um, what else... the notion of writing and reading is so engraved in me. Even though I embraced computer screens and I love machines, robots... but I have to say that I love reading books or writing on the paper, as it is much more free, relaxed and inviting. It associates with a better mood. Talking about the literature or languages, I've been always surrounded by a world of words. I speak French as my mother tongue and fluent in English. Now I'm learning German, I speak Hebrew, um... a bit of Spanish, Italian, and Russian... I think these surroundings

are really intertwined with my life, from my childhood, up until now.

Well, when I was a child, I was a shy girl. Socialising was not always easy for me for some extends. Um, I was from a family of immigrants, so I felt like I was always in between. And all my siblings were older than me, and kind of already grew up without me, so that could create some loneliness. That also relates to the sort of fears of being rejected, or being excluded. But I would say what I fear the most in my life might be the fear itself. I'm afraid of not doing the things because of getting too afraid to try them. I know challenges may come day after day, as it is an everyday situation.

But rather than fear, there is something which I can find in the details of everyday life as well. It's the happiness I feel in the collection of moments, which is not always consistent or permanent. Sometimes, I just sit in my living room, and look around, noticing a particular colour, or an object, or the reflection of the outside world from the window, And I really appreciate the beauty of the world around me. That's how I feel about the notion of happiness. It's like noticing your own breath - It is there when you notice it.

One of the recent moments that I felt a great happiness is when I was dancing with my good friend. I haven't seen him for a long time, actually. But whenever we are dancing together, I can feel that he is just the right dance partner. I feel lucky to

find that kind of perfect connection.

Talking about dancing, I really love swing dancing. The rhythm of the music, and dancing with the right partner gives me the feeling like the song 'I could have danced all night', which is from the musical, 'My Fair Lady'. Not only when I'm dancing, but I think the feeling of connection can also happen in different phases and incidents in life. I think showing gratitude and expressing these moments with kindness could relate to the notion of love. Also, love is something to practice every day. That goes beyond humans, as the idea of being able to embrace the world around you in a way. It's the being complete in connection and pulsating with the world at the same time, like a dance or a conversation.

I try to live in the moment as much as possible, and maybe I'm not the best planner. But I do believe in coincidences or chances, and I'd like to see it as my way of thinking about the future. Um, in 5 or 10 years, the thing I personally hope for myself is not letting the fear to take over my life. I'd like to keep living with patience while being healthy, and being surrounded by my family and friends. I hope I'll still be able to share my knowledge, be able to create, and sustain the life which I have now. Also, hopefully, I'll thrive better in my own art and research, that I could gain more echo - It's hard to define what it means exactly yet, but it can be some sort of amplification which relates to finding whatever I shared with my students in their works later on, and that may take some time, I guess.

And In a bigger scope, I hope that the world is more sustained, that we care more about the environment and human rights. So, if I could see these dreams are fulfilled later on and maybe could leave a message from that future, I'd like to say to myself like...

"Even though it seems like there are so many disruptions going on in this world right now, try to keep looking at what our world has been harvesting. The good will win overall, hopefully. And I know you went through a lot of difficult times. What you did so far is a lot of hard work. Good job. Thank you, and I love you."



*Figure 28. 'Joëlle's Garden', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

11. The Portraits of Life_ Erik

Thinking about back in the days, I almost feel like telling the story of a different person. I always tried out to see how far I can go, and surfed through the edges. I know I'm a pretty sensitive person, but I've developed the tools to not get hurt. I don't share my emotional problems with others as I'm quite closed-up for that. I'd like to solve my own things by myself, before talking about it.

As a human, I think I'm afraid of being hurt or hurting other people. I don't want to disappoint others, or to be a burden to them. And sometimes, I fear what I'll reveal about myself as well. I remember that throughout my life, I really didn't like losing control. It's about what I do next and how life goes next, and so on... Maybe this relates to the anxiety issue that I still have sometimes, once in a while.

And you know, I live alone, seeing my friends getting married, having their own lives. It's true that I feel lonely quite frequently, but that's okay. I don't think I'm just ready for a relationship yet. Also, I like the benefits of solitude, peace, and the flexibility of life. And I can understand myself better like that. It's a lifestyle that I choose.

Well, as humans, we all have good and bad memories and stories to tell. Even though I'm not bound to them that much, I also have some.

Five years ago, I tried a drug which didn't fit me well, and that was not a good decision. It might have been the worst experience, ever. I thought I would go crazy, as there was nothing left, but just complete meaninglessness and emptiness around me. I felt like somebody just ripped reality out from me. I swept into the endless spirals of anxiety and fear while having no control at all. And that was the starting point of my anxiety attacks. It was one of the big moments that defined me, as I've become a person who meditates very regularly since then. Looking back, I almost feel like that this was meant to happen to me, to start my practice of meditation.

Now, if I dive deeper into the past before that, there was also another turning point which led me to the lifestyle that I have nowadays. I had a bad experience with a woman who I really liked. When the relationship with her was over, I felt I was completely played with, and powerless. I know before that happened, I was always a relationship guy and wasn't really interested in casually meeting women. but that changed a lot since then, for almost 10 years.

Before meeting her, I thought that desire of wanting someone should be it, but then I realised there is something wrong there. And after the years of many casual dates, Now I know that I've seen it all, and it was fun, but I feel like there is something else to do in my life. So I'm not married, and practising what I'd like to explore in my life.

Well, going back to even younger days, I only have blurry memories of my childhood. I was quite a stubborn child, and remember having some conflicts with my father as a teenager. I don't remember a particular moment, but it was like a continuous noise in my life.

Thinking about the notion of family, I guess it is the thing that I can't get away from no matter what. And I made my peace with that. Well, I'm very grateful for my parents, and I know that for my family, I'll always be there for them. And you know, I was very sure that I would have my own family for the last 25 years of my life, but I'm not sure anymore. Who knows?

Now, let's try to think of some happy stories that I had. Even though I don't remember grandeur points, there were some collection of moments that were really nice. Running around in Spain when I was a child, the romantic time that I spent in Tuscany, visiting a nice festival with my close friend, when I got my master thesis grade of 6.0...

Actually, I can see my life has been on a constant happy base. I never had to stress about my life unless I choose to. I was always one of the brightest students in school, and didn't struggle financially while growing up, and I could meet some women that I liked, and now have a successful career.

Regarding happy and thankful times, I can see that they are

all these small moments that I spent with different people. It's like the things you can feel when you are always living in the present, and that's what I'm currently discovering in my days.

And I know, for all the memories, there are some moments that leave marks that define me, but it's not really me. I'm always in present, but sometimes I don't see that. We mistake the noise in our days as what life is, all these concepts and stories... But while accepting life, being more relaxed, letting go of desires, then we can see that life is... just the way it is.

We have our glasses on our minds formed with our experiences. But while being in present, I can feel this sense of myself gets softer, and I realise that the beings around me are not that much different from me. I can see them as what they are, with more understanding and respect.

I think that could be called love, in some way. I still don't know what that word means exactly, but I can just look around and see the plants or other animals and somehow see my own reflection inside of them. When I find my way to be in present, peace automatically comes my way. And I think that is the best thing that I can find now.

It is stable and less fleeting than happiness. And being in the present is how I get there. So I believe they are like two faces of one coin. Just two different aspects of the same thing, even though we need words to describe them.

So with this perspective, to me, I would say the future is even less relevant than the past. I really don't know what I want to do in the next 5-10 years, as I'll just do what I'll do. But I believe in good karma and have a deep trust in life that it will bring whatever I suppose to experience. I just don't try to have any expectations in life, and hope I could be as present as I can at one point. Also, I hope I'll help as many people as I can. I just want to be there for the others, you know. I believe that comes like an automatic process when I'm fully in present, and appreciating the world around me.

So, if I can leave some words from my future to myself now, I'd like to say...

"Chill, there is no need to rush. It's all gonna happen in a way it should be. Keep doing what you are doing now and relax. Just water that plant and let it grow."



**Figure 29. 'Erik in peace', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

12. The Portrait of Life_ Peter

If I could be an animal, I'd like to be a tiger.

I think tigers are so beautiful and majestic. They live in a family, take care of their kids, hunt to provide, and not that selfish. They are just impressive.

And when it's kinda hard to know how I should live my life, as a concept or as a philosophy, Stoicism helps me a lot in different situations. Just as a simple example, in the morning when it's so comfortable in bed and tempting to set the alarm again for an hour later, I remember what Marcus Aurelius, the Roman emperor said;

"Look at you lying around, while all the bees are working and all the ants are doing their jobs. While the whole nature is living and doing something, you are lying here just to feel nice? Are you born to feel nice?" This kind of idea reminds me of my purpose in life, and becomes the guidelines of how I act and how I interact with other people.

Also, I think I can define myself as a minimalist. For me, minimalistic life is not living in a shed of a forest. It's more about really valuing the things I own, and being surrounded by the things that really define me, and that I truly need.

About the things I value, I can imagine some daily objects such

as my boxing glove, pictures that I have from the last year, and the smoothie mixer that I use three times a day, which helps me to stay healthy.

And I can think of my girlfriend who is a person I can always talk to and rely on. I'd really like to help her and her close people to be happy and to reach their goals. I think that can relate to the notion of love, also.

While in love, I can see my own good getting far less important than the good for the people I cherish. I wouldn't mind devoting all of my effort for them. So, I'd say I really love my girlfriend, my best friend, and my family.

Family can be the people where my blood is from, and also the circle of people that I feel comfortable, being welcomed and being loved as a member of them. For these people and the world that I belong to, I try to be a good member of nature, and to be helpful for the community. I'm working on it, but it hasn't been always like this.

When I was younger, for almost 10 years or so, I was facing a very difficult phase in life. I got involved in many troubles and fights, and made my parent's lives hard. Even though I was not a bully who picked on the weakest or something, for the people who didn't deserve that kind of situation, I'd like to tell them that this was nothing to do with them personally.

I think back then, it was important for me to be respected from everywhere, and sometimes to be feared, even. And I didn't know how my actions would affect other people. It wasn't mean to hurt anyone, and I just couldn't think and care about it. To myself in the past, I'd like to say...

"What useful or good do you expect to come out of this action? Just think how you influence others, and if this is really helping you as well."

Well, after my puberty, I really switched and I think all of these experiences actually built who I am now, as a person who can speak out from one's mind and uses the power to speak up for the others.

I know I really feel happy while helping others and I think it all went along with the transition that I had while becoming a person who I am nowadays.

Hm, thinking about that kind of happy incident, I remember helping my brother when he missed his train for a concert. It was weekend, I got up early in the morning, just to drive him there, and it took 5 hours straight by car.

I told him not to drink in the car, but he did it, and he spilled his drink. I told him to not to eat, but he ate his sandwich, and it fell on the seat. But I didn't care about it at all. I wasn't mad at him, and I just expected nothing in return. And then after the

concert, I took him back, with another 5 hours drive.

You know, actually, when I care for the people while helping them, maybe I'm not actually putting myself aside, after all. It's because I know I feel better while doing it.

And for everything that I do, I want to know how that benefits everyone. It's like knowing the true reasons behind my actions. If I can do so, I believe I won't be afraid of making good changes in my life.

You see, I don't like to be one of the people who are not open to change and always complaining about their lives. I always try to change, again with this stoic philosophy to do my best in the present, as I don't have control over my past and my future. And if I do my best in the present, I think I won't be in the future that I'm afraid of.

Well, while imagining the next 5-10 years, I'd like to be a person doing my best at that moment, and not really worry about the small details that maybe could happen or not.

And if I can leave some message from my future, this is what I'd like to tell myself.

"If you find out what you can do, and what your purpose is, never take the long route. Go directly to your goal. You don't know what the future will be, so you need to do it right now.

Even though if you get a disease, get hurt, or lose someone, it doesn't matter because you can still serve your purpose in life. So, nothing can impact you, after all. And if you always do what's good, nothing can go wrong. Because in the end, it's going to come out good."



**Figure 30. 'In Peter's Mind', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

13. The Portrait of Life_ Jakob

I'm a naive person, and I believe the good in everyone around me. I value my mind which guides me through my life, as I think I have quite a logical and reasonable one. Also, I deeply care about my environment, especially the people around me. My close family, friends, and mentors are the ones I deeply care about. I learn a lot from them, and can really reflect myself through them as well. And I can say I care about the world that I belong to in a political and in a global level.

Um, if you ask me what I fear the most, that would probably be losing that values I have right now. But that doesn't necessarily mean I'm afraid of changes. I try to challenge myself to be out of my comfort zone. And currently, I'm trying to live in a different country... I'm looking forward to seeing how it goes.

I try to live as pure and honest as I can, and whenever I find a coward inside of me, I try not to be like that. Because you see, I'm quite a cautious person who is shy and thoughtful. My father told me once that I'm the one who always act with a plan, maybe the coward inside of me hesitates to take actions which I didn't plan ahead.

Um, I don't want to let down the people I love. I don't want to be a person who makes bad decisions and regrets afterward. If I hurt the people I love, I know that it will be quite hard for me. Actually, I had an incident when I was younger, with the

girl that I liked in the classroom. We were just mobbing each other, and it was fun at the beginning. But after some time, I could see I got too far. Even though it was a long time ago, I still remember that incident. And when that memory arises in my mind sometimes, I try to avoid it and push it down.

I can say that it was one of the hard moments I had, even though I'm not a big fan of choosing some specific moments for these kind of things. There was also the time when I was even younger, when I had to skip the class and study with older ones. I didn't want that, and I think I got pretty shy after that. Um, then there were some moments when I was a bit addicted to nicotine and when I had a hard experience with a drug I tried quite foolishly. Well, now I don't do any drugs,

And, um, I had a girlfriend some years ago. It's was a difficult time for me and for her. I was so busy finishing my bachelor, and she was getting ill. The whole situation was so stressful. I didn't know how to handle that, and while seeing her getting worse, I felt completely useless. If I could, I'd like to tell myself back then to just relax and talk more openly about the struggles with her. And I want her to know that she is a person with a beautiful mind who deserves a lot of love.

Well, talking about love, I think there can be some different kinds. Universal love is an understanding and appreciation of people. Romantic love is an irrational one, making my emotions go wild. And sexual love happens when I'm interacting with

a person with intimacy. I think I have a universal love for everyone. And for my family and close friends, I have a deep feeling of love which makes me very grateful. I remember when my sister and her boyfriend moved near my parent's place, and all of my family and close people had an amazing time together while celebrating that. The harmony we made, and seeing my sister creating her life with her loved one... that just made me so happy and thankful.

Someday, I hope I'll have my own family as well. I don't want to have a specific image towards my future, though. That would lead me to set up my own misery and pain. I just can imagine myself in Switzerland, raising my children, living close to my family, working in a company with the right mindset, or maybe having a company of my own, who knows?

Hm, if I could leave a message from that future to myself now, I'd like to say...

"Hey Jakob, you are an idiot, and you know that, right? Even though you accomplished what you wanted, it doesn't matter, as you still got nothing. Everything is just the same. So, don't strive for your dreams too much. You can never truly possess them, and you know that. No matter what happens, you are still just caught in your own consciousness. And you see, your life is already perfect, like it always has been."



**Figure 31. 'Good Bye, Lonely Tree', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*

II. *The Collection of Songs*

*"The melodies and lyrics inspired
by the stories of participants."*

THE SONGS

1. Peace
2. go on
3. Smile
4. A Song For You
5. Change!
6. Time Goes Fast
7. Someday
8. No Longer
9. ...And the memory goes on



*Figure 38. The album art of 'Peace', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.

Peace

Sun set in darkness
I seat alone in silence

Sound of my breath is
a song I hear in peace

All the drops of time will pass
away and I will just let them stream

All the things I were and wanted to be
are not who I am and I'll just be here

Someday I can feel lonely
I know love is still there for me

Seasons change and I'll let it go
Somehow I know I meant to be myself

Soft and Gentle moment of peace
I swim in deep
and let it all stream

Sun rise in morning
I seat alone in silence

Sound of my breath is
a song I hear in peace

Around me the world is beautiful
And I just see them as how they are

All the things I laughed and cried for
are now all behind of the memories

And someday I can feel lonely
but I know that it's okay for me

Soft and gentle moment of peace
I swim in deep
and let it all stream



*Figure 39. The album art of 'go on', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.

go on

I asked
how can I go on?
and they said
be gentle to every wind

Even though
it is all money-making
and even though happiness
is not delightfulness

Don't be afraid
it will pass
no matter how
it hurts

Oh even though reality
makes me sick
in the stomach

And even though
it's getting late
the stars are guiding our way

Before telling goodbye
for all that you once knew
can you feel it
Oh can you feel it

Its you, its you
My friends my dearest ones
with the bright smiles
covered in cigarette smoke

Hiding the dark sides
oh you are my stars
scarred by the wind

But you know
what they said

And I think I can go on
and I will be
gentle to every wind

Oh even though
it is all money-making
and even though happiness
is not delightfulness

Don't be afraid
it will pass
no matter how
it hurts



*Figure 40. The album art of 'Smile', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

Smile

I've been to many places
like wind blowing from another land
I've seen so many graces
kind people greeting me from other lands

But I know it's gonna take a little while
to make this place my home
And I will miss all the ones
that I left all behind my memories

But I know in my heart I'm gonna try
Once again my life will be new
and the sun will shine my way
Even when the night comes I'm not afraid

And I've been to my own dreams
where happiness plays a song like a band
It could be any places
where my kind people greet me when
I'm back home

And I know love is all what I'll see
in the smiles of their faces
Not a word will be needed
'cause we know what all we know
and how we feel

We've been to many places
like clouds floating to another land
We collected all the pieces
of our hearts when it crashed
in stranger's land

Still believe in the adventures
'cause they will lead us all to places
that we dream

And I know love is a smile that I'll see
in the places where I belong
on the faces of the people I love
And we know what all we know
and how we feel

All I dream in this life is nothing more
Someday I will find myself
in the places where I belong
where kind people greeting me
when I'm back home

without a word feeling love
in their smiles



*Figure 41. The album art of 'A Song For You', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.

A Song For You

I just want you to know that
no matter where you are
no matter how it hurts

There is someone who knows that
how hard it is to take
how dark it is to feel

If you ever feeling lonely
just know that you are safe
you know that you are strong

And I know you are beautiful
and you are my good friend

All the pain and
all the sorrow

They are history
and the future is yours

You will find the way to
get where you want to be
and be who you dream to be

And you will find your love
someone that feels just right
someone to share the life

And I know you are loved
and you are not alone

All the pain and
all the sorrow

They are history
and the future is yours

You are safe
Your are strong
And you are not alone



*Figure 42. The album art of 'Change!', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

Change!

Why you ask me about my past
are you gonna be my friend

Oh I'm not gonna be the last
to make the changes in my mind

I've been through days
that were dark and blue

So now what's in my eyes
are the ways to be true

Oh I'm brave like a tiger
I see myself in a mirror

I know I got all of this power
I'll bloom my flower
and let the rain shower

Oh and why worry about the future
when life is as blurry as adventure

I will find what I have to do in life
I know I'll never gonna lose my life

I've been through days
that were bright and green

So now what's in my eyes
are the ways to be me

Oh I'm brave like a tiger
I see myself in a mirror

I know I got all of this power
I'll bloom my flower
and let the rain shower



*Figure 43. The album art of 'Time Goes Fast', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.

Time Goes Fast

Time goes fast
and I don't know
where I'm going tonight

It's alright
And I see myself in the mirror
telling me that's gonna be alright

Sometimes its hard to
swallow up all inside

I didn't choose it to be my life
but I'm doing what I can do

Somehow I'm stronger
than I thought I could be

I know I can be myself
If I take some other steps

And time goes fast
I'll go somewhere
to my dreams
will lead me tonight

Time goes fast
and the wounds will be healed
and it's gonna last long

as life is too short
And I'm going to make the best of it
I know it's going to be alright

Someday I just feel like I'm
lost in the sea

But I know I'll be alright to
go on like this

Somehow I'm stronger
than I thought I could be

And I didn't choose this but I know
I can do this on my own

And time goes fast
I'll go somewhere
to my dreams
will lead me tonight



*Figure 44. The album art of 'Someday', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

Someday

Someday when I'm dark
I know I will think of you

Somehow you are
there for me

How long it will take
I don't know
but I can wait

How long, it's not important
but I can wait till
you come to me

Oh someday
it will be hard

but I know that we'll
meet someday

someday

Someday when I feel
that I'm drowning to
the bottom of the ocean

Someday when I'm feeling safe
and I, I know
it's you somehow

How long it will take
I don't know
but I can wait

How long, it's not important
we can wait
till you come to me

Oh some day
it will be hard

but I know that we'll
meet someday

someday



*Figure 45. The album art of ‘No Longer’, created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

No Longer

And there was a lonely tree
all alone in the winter cold

Standing there like a memory
forever still in my mind

I know that time has passed
and I've grown to face myself

So I walked into the world
that I built inside of me

And my fear said run away
but I hugged that lonely tree

Then realised it was no longer there

The snow flakes fall from sky above
The clouds are white like little dove
Somehow I know my winter will be
not cold from now on

I walk through my memories
and brush away the sorrow

And finally the sun is here
I'm waking up from the winter cold

Oh I see that it was me
that I feared so far

Now I let go all the pains
that I held so far

I grew though the tears
and I hugged the lonely tree

And now the time has passed
and I've grown to love myself

The lonely tree is no longer there
My lonely tree is no longer here



*Figure 46. The album art of '...And the memory goes on', created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.

And The Memory Goes On

(This piece consists of instruments only.)



III. *References*

“The Images and stories which are featured in the part 2.”

CONTENTS

- 1. Featured images
- 2. Stories of co-creators

1. Images

*For the same from the images which are used before, it followed the numbering of part 1.

1. Figure 19. 'Henna's memory' (Prototype of the first portrait), created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
2. Figure 20. 'Sabrina's wedding', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
3. Figure 21. 'Jaeyoon's Dream', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
4. Figure 22. 'The Temple In Snow', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
5. Figure 23. 'Calum's Future Holiday', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
6. Figure 24. 'The Future of Elias', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
7. Figure 25. 'The Julian Town', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
8. Figure 26. 'The Big Hug', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
9. Figure 27. 'Elijah The Wild Cat', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
10. Figure 28. 'Joëlle's Garden', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
11. Figure 29. 'Erik in peace', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
12. Figure 30. 'In Peter's Mind', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
13. Figure 31. 'Good Bye, Lonely Tree', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
14. Figure 38. The album art of 'Peace', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
15. Figure 39. The album art of 'go on', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
16. Figure 40. The album art of 'Smile', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
17. Figure 41. The album art of 'A Song For You', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
18. Figure 42. The album art of 'Chang!', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
19. Figure 43. The album art of 'Time Goes Fast', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
20. Figure 44. The album art of 'Someday', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.
21. Figure 45. The album art of 'No Longer', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.

22. Figure 46. The album art of '...And the memory goes on', created by Juyoung YI, 2020.

2. Stories of co-creators

- Henna (Jan. 13.2020)
- Sabrina (Jan. 19. 2020)
- Jaeyoon (Feb. 01. 2020)
- Jeong (Feb. 10. 2020)
- Calum (Feb. 22. 2020)
- Elias (Feb. 25. 2020)
- Julian (Feb. 26. 2020)
- Celeste (Mar. 06. 2020)
- Elish (Mar. 09. 2020)
- Joëlle (Mar. 11. 2020)
- Erik (Apr. 11. 2020)
- Roman (Apr. 15. 2020)
- Jakob (Apr. 17. 2020)

8th of June. 2020

The Portraits of Life,
book & artworks created by Juyoung Yi
Webpage: <http://www.portrait-life.com/>

© Zurich University of the Arts,
Department Design, Interaction Design



The End of The Journey