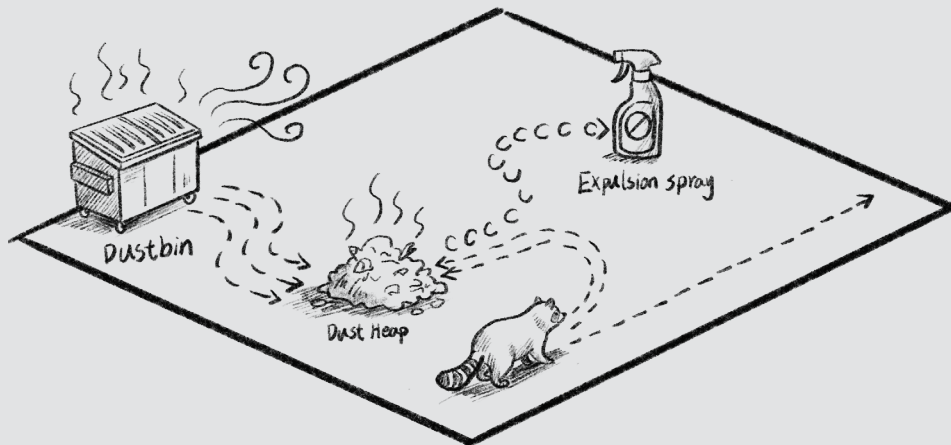


Project 4

Raccoons' Nighttime Wanderings in the City

This project leverages raccoons' highly developed tactile and olfactory mechanisms to transform urban infrastructure into maps they can interpret. Through vertical sensory maps and micro-narrative storyboards, I envision a respectful, non-intrusive coexistence between humans and raccoons, exploring novel ways for both species to share high-density urban environments.



Inspiration And Information Collection

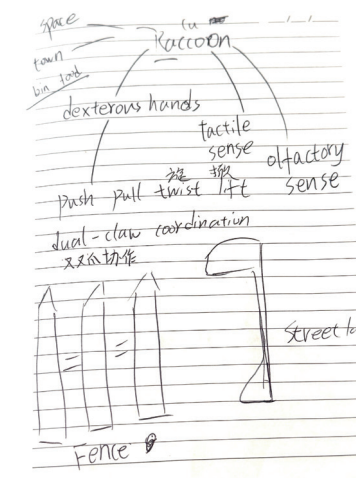


I often see amusing footage in online videos: raccoons entering cities at night, rummaging through trash cans for food. These images have sparked my thoughts on the relationship between cities and raccoons, and the possibility of establishing a form of communication between humans and raccoons.

Raccoons' entry into cities represents a successful adaptation to this urban habitat: cities not only provide high-density heat sources and vertical structures that mimic natural dens—such as attics and pipes—but humans also indirectly help them evade natural predators in the wild. Simultaneously, leveraging their evolutionarily developed dexterous forepaws and intelligence, they can easily understand and memorize human facilities, thereby successfully achieving urban settlement.



Kate McLean's "Scent Maps" transform the invisible scents of cities into visual representations, using flowing curves to depict how odors disperse through the air and employing dots of varying colors and densities to mark scent sources and their intensities. This inspired me: Raccoons rely on their sense of smell, navigating their nocturnal paths by scent trails. Thus, I wanted to create a city scent map from a raccoon's perspective.



After gathering this information, I gained a deeper understanding of raccoons.

Design And Drawing

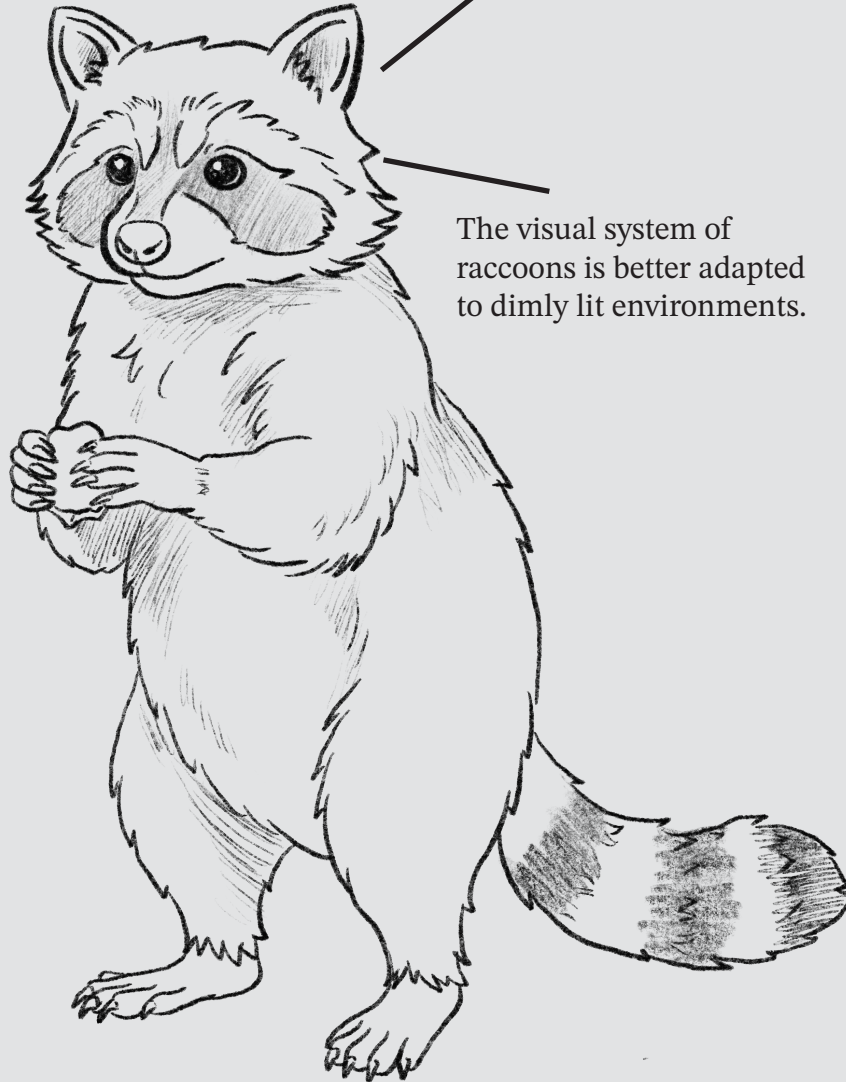
Raccoons not only use their noses to smell, but also employ the vomeronasal organ above their upper jaw to analyze scents (such as pheromones or specific chemical markers).

Raccoons possess an exceptionally strong spatial memory map, enabling them to remember where food is located and which paths lead to dead ends.

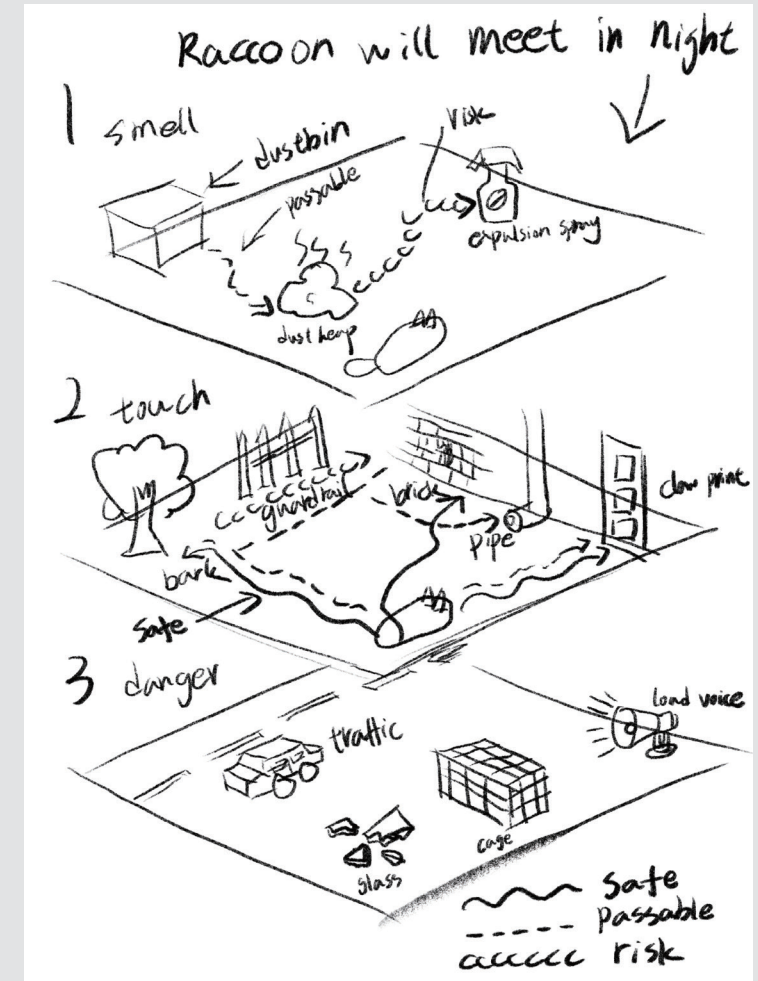
The visual system of raccoons is better adapted to dimly lit environments.



The number of tactile nerve fibers in the palms of raccoons' front paws is 4 to 5 times greater than in other mammals. The area of their cerebral cortex dedicated to processing touch is exceptionally large.



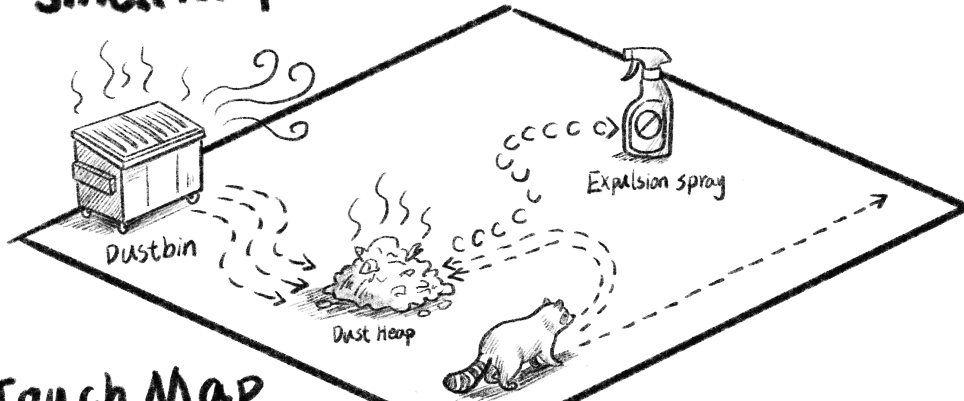
Information About Raccoons



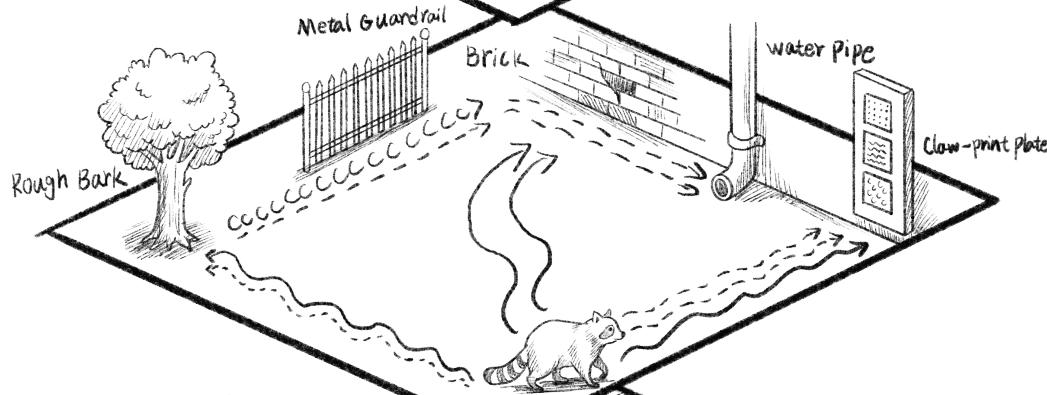
Based on the raccoon's unique sensory interaction mechanism, I designed a vertically layered urban nocturnal navigation map. This map transcends human physical perspective, deconstructing urban space into olfactory, tactile, and risk zones. It disregards physical distance as a metric, instead documenting only sensory allurements and survival threats of high priority to raccoons. Through this visual contrast, it vividly reveals the starkly different sensory world raccoons inhabit within the same physical space.

Raccoon Night Map

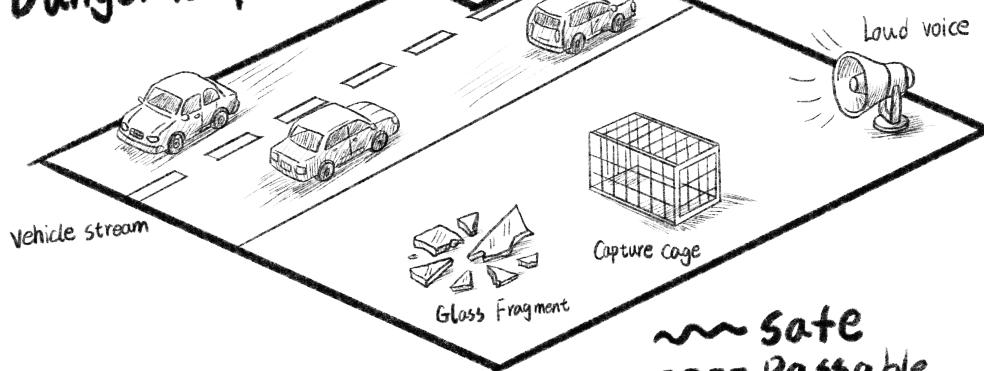
Smell Map



Touch Map



Danger Map



~~~~ safe  
 ---- passable  
 cccc Risk



As a narrative extension of the sensory map, the storyboard unfolds like a series of microscopic slow-motion shots, meticulously revealing the raccoon's continuous cognitive loop: touch—perception—response. Through immersive scenes framed from the raccoon's perspective, I aim to dismantle humanity's lofty, observing stance, inviting viewers to join the raccoon in experiencing confusion, exploration, and the process of obtaining food. In the story's final chapter, I also express my vision for restrained, respectful, and non-intrusive coexistence between humans and raccoons in the city: documenting only the cleanup, not the individual creatures themselves.

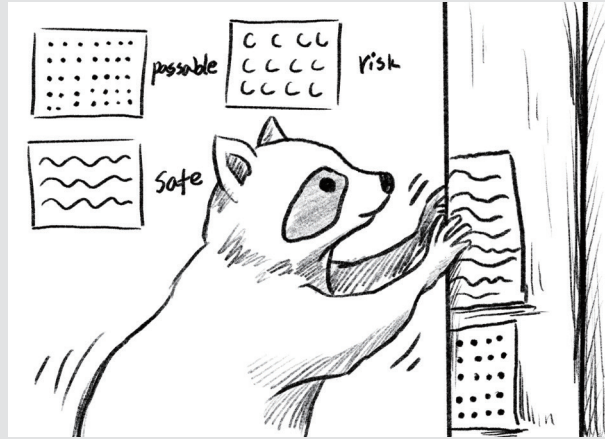
# Storyboard

**1, Raccoons foraging for food at night in the city.**



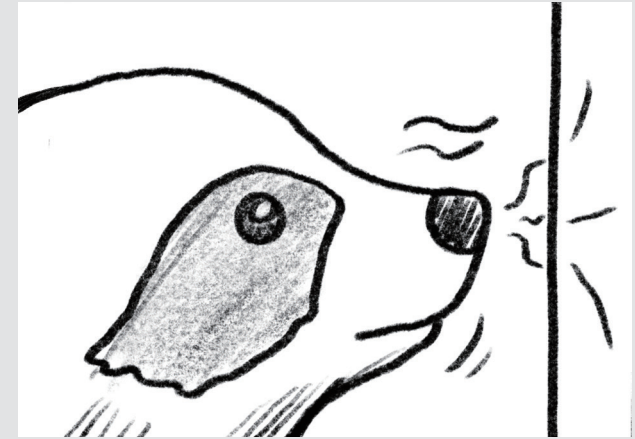
In the cracks of the city, raccoons live there.

**2, Raccoons read the texture of the paw print board.**



The raccoon touched the claw mark plate on the street lamp to determine whether it should take this route.

**3, Raccoons sniff out scents**



The raccoon uses its nose to sniff out scents and determine whether the area ahead is dangerous.

**4, Raccoon touches the railing**



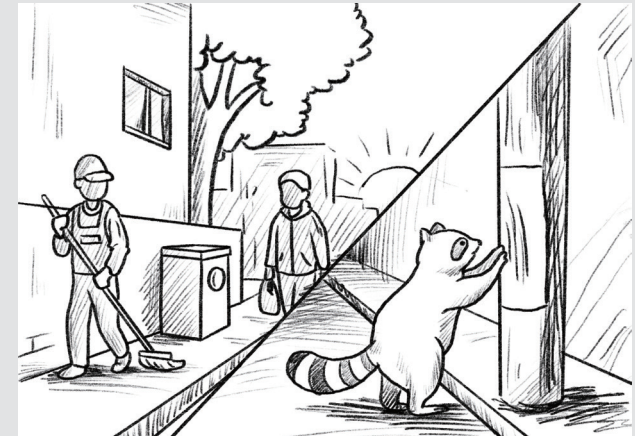
If the raccoon touches the railing and it vibrates, it cannot pass through; otherwise, it can pass through.

**5, Raccoons use supply boxes**



The raccoon pressed the button on the supply box to obtain the food inside.

**6, Harmonious City: Day and Night Contrast**



Human workers clean the city environment and mark it in the early morning, while raccoons use these marks to navigate the city at night.