

Project 1: Re understanding Rules, Systems, and Authorship in "Ghosts in Machines"

The first project, "Ghosts in Machines," was the starting point for my thinking transformation throughout the entire module. At first, my understanding of the concept of "ghost" was mostly at the symbolic level, seeing it as an invisible but continuously operating force in technological systems, such as algorithmic logic, invisible rules, or overlooked control mechanisms. In practical design practice, I gradually realized that the real focus of this project is not on the technology itself, but on how people are guided, restricted, and even reshaped in their behavior and perception within the system. Design is no longer just about outputting a visual result, but about creating conditions and rules to bring out mechanisms that are often overlooked. In the practice of conditional design, for the first time, I clearly felt the unease of "losing control". In the past, the design process often emphasized the dominant position of the designer: from concept to form to result, they all attempted to maintain a high degree of consistency and predictability. However, in this project, the results cannot be planned in advance, and visual forms are generated through continuous interaction between rules, actions, and materials. This has forced me to reflect on the concept of "authorship" - is the role of designers changing when the design outcome is not entirely determined by personal intent? I gradually realized that in conditional design, designers are more like planners of the system rather than direct creators of the final form. This project also helped me understand the value of "imperfection" and "contingency". Those seemingly chaotic or uncontrollable generated results actually record the true state of system operation and expose people's immediate reactions to rules. Design here is no longer about masking complexity, but about making complexity visible. Project one laid an important foundation for my subsequent learning: design can be a way to reveal the logic of a system, rather than just pursuing visual completion.

Project 2: Retraining Perception Modes through Invisible Signals

'Making the Invisible Visible,' builds upon Project 1 by shifting my focus from 'system' to 'perception'. Compared to the first project, the practice in this stage is closer to daily experience, but it also challenges my understanding of the design object more. The concept of 'invisible signal' was initially vague to me, making it difficult for me to determine what constitutes a true signal and what is simply background noise. It wasn't until I started recording and translating through sound that I gradually realized that the so-called 'invisible' is often not because it doesn't exist, but because we have become accustomed to ignoring them. In experiments using sound as a medium, I began to consciously slow down the pace and focus on listening to the environment. This process itself is a form of design training. By transforming the rhythm, pitch, and intensity changes of sound into lines, I realized that perception is not passive reception, but needs to be reactivated and organized. Especially after conducting experiments with others, I found that although there were differences in each person's drawing style, the visual results still showed some consistency under the same sound conditions. This made me realize that invisible signals contain both subjective experiences and objective structures. This project has helped me re-understand the role of communication design. Design doesn't necessarily have to be 'persuasive' or 'explanatory', it can also simply guide people to refocus on things that already existed but were overlooked. At the same time, I also began to reflect on the ethical issues of rule setting: which voices did I choose as my research subjects? Do these choices already imply value judgments? Project 2 has made me more aware that design is never neutral, and even the

simplest rules can affect how people understand the world.

Project 3: Facing the Contradiction between Data and Emotion in Quantifying Self

'The Quantified Self,' further shifts the focus back to the 'self,' but this time, the self is not presented through subjective expression, but is reconstructed through data structures. In the process of continuously recording the number of chats, relationship types, duration, and emotional states, I gradually realized that data does not simply reflect reality, but is constantly reshaping my understanding of my own behavior. Especially when trying to convert emotions and intimacy into numerical values, I strongly feel the compression and simplification brought by quantification. This project made me question the "measurability" advocated by contemporary digital platforms. In my data, high-frequency interactions do not necessarily bring high emotional value, and truly meaningful communication often occurs in fewer but more concentrated relationships. By visualizing this unequal relationship, I realized that design can not only reveal patterns, but also misunderstandings. Quantifying oneself is not about giving an accurate 'who I am', but about exposing the limitations of data narratives. In the design process, I consciously retained hand drawn traces and juxtaposed them with digital visualizations to resist excessive rationalization caused by data. This choice is also a statement of stance: not all experiences should be fully standardized. Project three has made me realize more clearly that communication design in the data age is not only responsible for beautifying information, but also for critical filtering and reconstruction.

Project 4: Ethical Shift from Human Centered to Non Human Perspective

The fourth project 'Interactions with Non Humans' was the most impactful practice for me in the entire module. Using non-human life as the design object forced me to completely abandon the design logic of using humans as the default user. When studying the living conditions and perception patterns of earthworms, I gradually realized that the visual, interface, and efficiency standards that humans are accustomed to are almost meaningless from a non-human perspective. This made me reflect: can design only serve humanity, or can it become a communication medium between different life systems? In the process of building speculative systems, I became acutely aware that I could not truly 'replace' non-human perspectives. What I do is always an approximation and translation. This incompleteness made me realize that non-human design is not meant to provide solutions, but to expose the boundaries of anthropocentrism. Through animation and visual metaphors, I attempt to make viewers aware of the hidden ecological logic in urban environments and question the value orientation of existing infrastructure. This project has made me more aware of the ethical dimension of design. Design not only shapes behavior, but also expresses stance. Including non-human beings in the scope of design thinking is itself a value choice. Project four prompted me to view communication design as a practice with social and ecological responsibilities, rather than just a tool for meeting service needs.

Summary:

Looking back at the four projects of the entire module, I can clearly see my continuous transformation and accumulation process in design methods and thinking patterns. Each project continues to ask questions based on the previous one, which gradually makes me realize that

design is not a linear process of solving problems, but a way of constantly deepening understanding.

In practice, this module enables me to establish a more conscious and conscious relationship between manual production and digital tools. Whether it's manual operations in conditional generation, real-time rendering in sound translation, or data recording and speculative image construction, I no longer view media as mere technical means, but as a part of concepts and methods. Media selection itself becomes an important component of design thinking, rather than an ancillary step. This transformation also made me pay more attention to the rhythm, traces, and uncertainty in the production process, and began to understand that "completion" is not always the only criterion for measuring design value.

At the level of thinking, I gradually learned to accept ambiguity, incompleteness, and uncertainty of results, and regarded them as inevitable and even necessary conditions in design exploration. Unlike the previous pursuit of clear answers and stable output, I have begun to pay more attention to the complexity of the problem itself and the guiding and revealing role that design plays in it. Especially in projects involving data, self narrative, and non-human perspectives, I constantly ask myself which perspectives my design is magnifying? What existence did you inadvertently overlook again? These reflections have made me more vigilant about the hidden power relationships and value judgments in design.

More importantly, this module has significantly enhanced my ethical awareness and self-awareness in the design process. I began to realize that communication design is not a neutral carrier of information, but a practice that continuously intervenes in reality. Design not only shapes visual forms, but also shapes ways of understanding the world and defining which objects are worth paying attention to. In this sense, design is a responsibility, not just an expression.

In general, this module impels me to shift from result centered design thinking to process, reflection and position centered design practice. I gradually understand communication design as a comprehensive approach that spans perception, systems, data, and ethics, rather than just a technical capability for visual output. This experimental driven and self reflective design approach will continue to play a role in my future learning and practice, and become an important foundation for me to build my personal design stance.