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*The Portraits of Life*

JU YOUNG YI



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# *The Portraits of Life*

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## Imprint

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## **ABOUT THIS BOOK**

This thesis presents the ideation and the process of combining the theory and practice in 'The Portraits of Life'. Alongside the field research and experiments, This paper presents the learnings, reflection, and the next steps of this project.

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## 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

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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.



## II. *Background & Motivation*

*“Why do we need this project?”*

### CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

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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)."

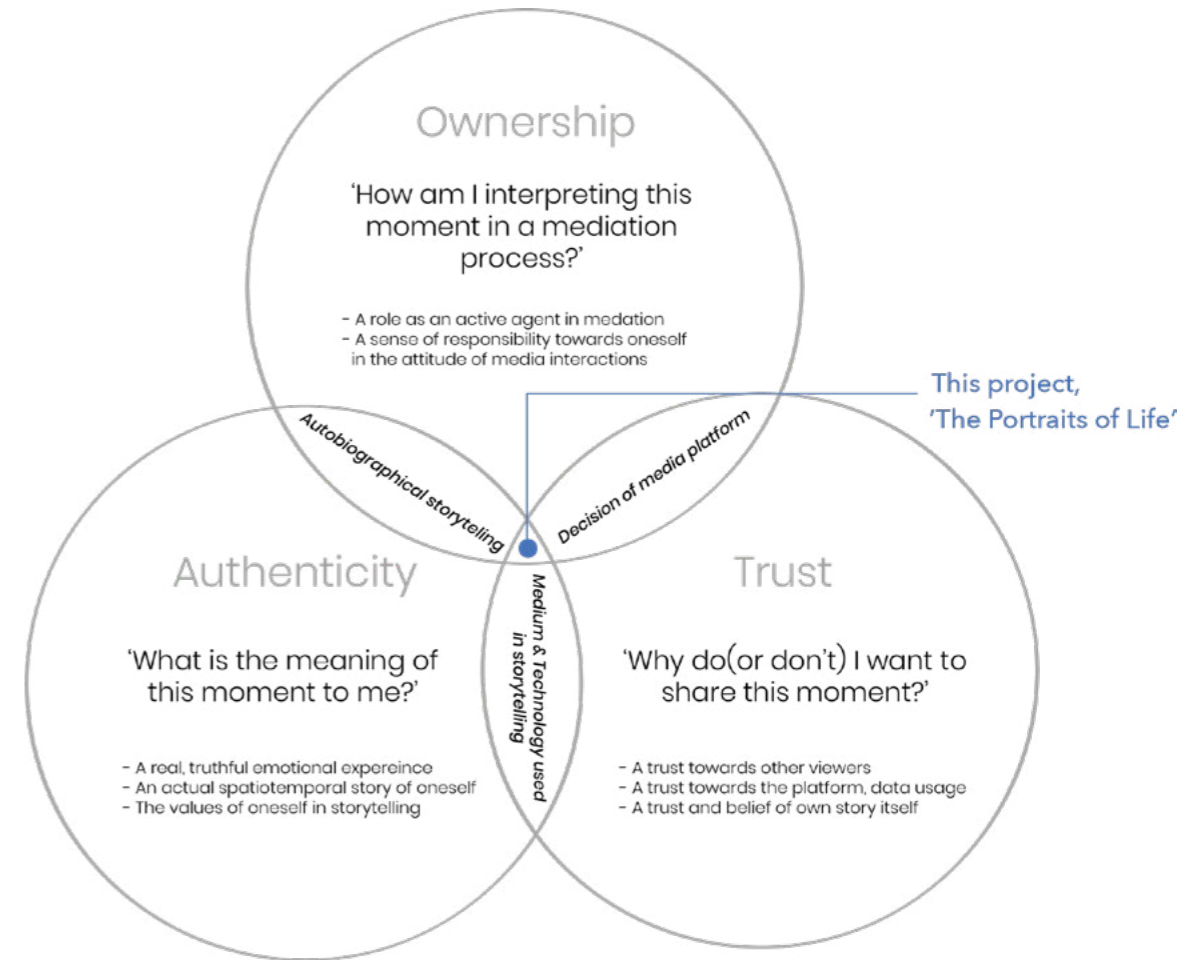


*\*Figure 2. Capturing the moment of inspiration in a mediation process, a photo taken from Ritesh Uttamchandani. (Source: <https://www.riteshuttamchandani.com/>, visited in 2020.)*

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.

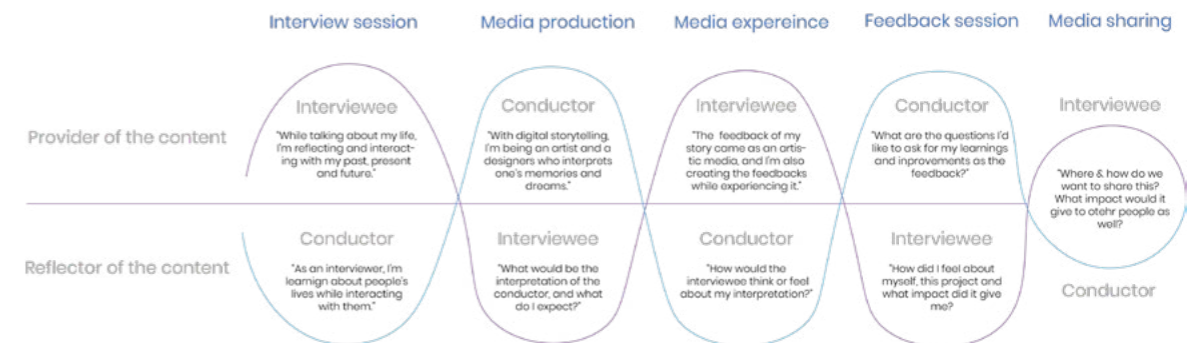


*\*Figure 3. Positioning the key ideations of the project 'The Portraits of Life', derived from the research. (Source: From the in-depth interview results and case-studies of the usage of social media's autobiographical storytelling process, Image created by Juyoung Yi, 2020.)*

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

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#### 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

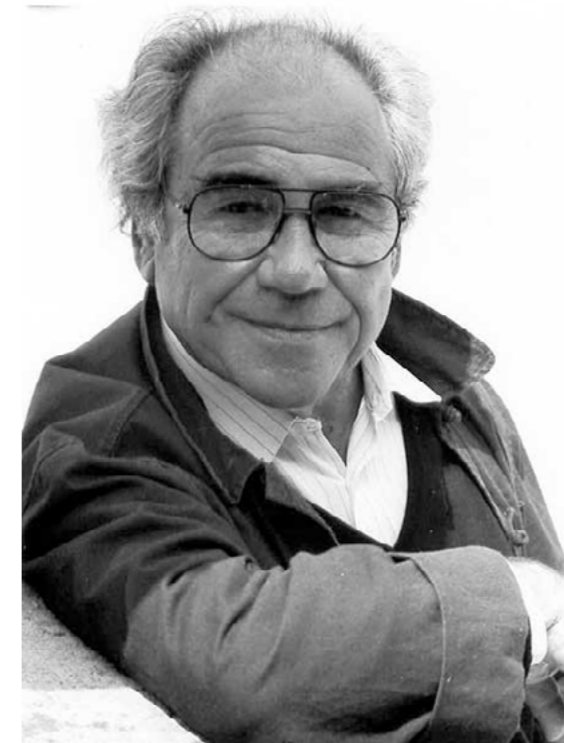
'I feel empty inside.' This is the inspirational sentence that I could collect from the 2-days of free flow seminar which was to find out the ideas for the bachelor project of ZHdK. Why do people feel negative about themselves? What is the current situation that we are having in our society which creates 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

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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

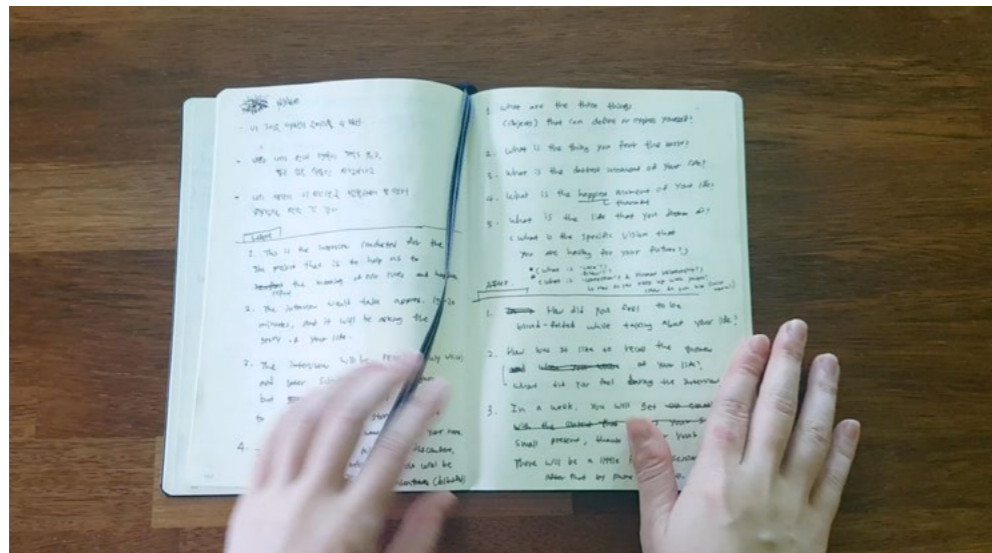


probes which could be specified as silent, echo, neutral, direct, phased assertion, detail, and clarifying. (Qualitative research methods: [https://youtu.be/wbdN\\_sLWI88](https://youtu.be/wbdN_sLWI88), checked on 2020.) I especially used the probes such as repeating the last words of participants, having 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.

### *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.



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

## 2. About storytelling – Narrative and dramaturgy

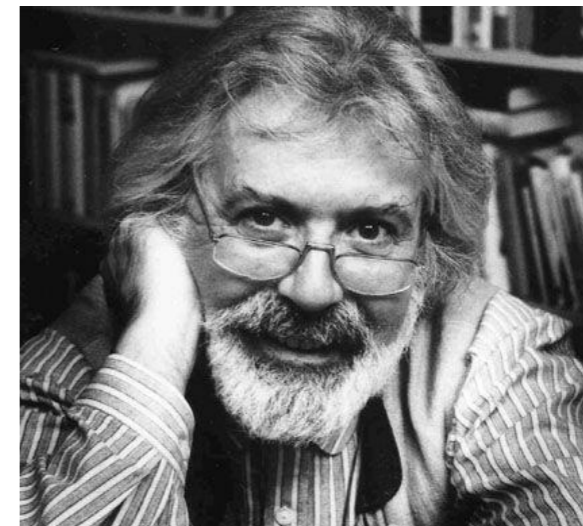
### *Two interpretation of ‘voice’*

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=qUWRdnbOEOQ>) 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.*

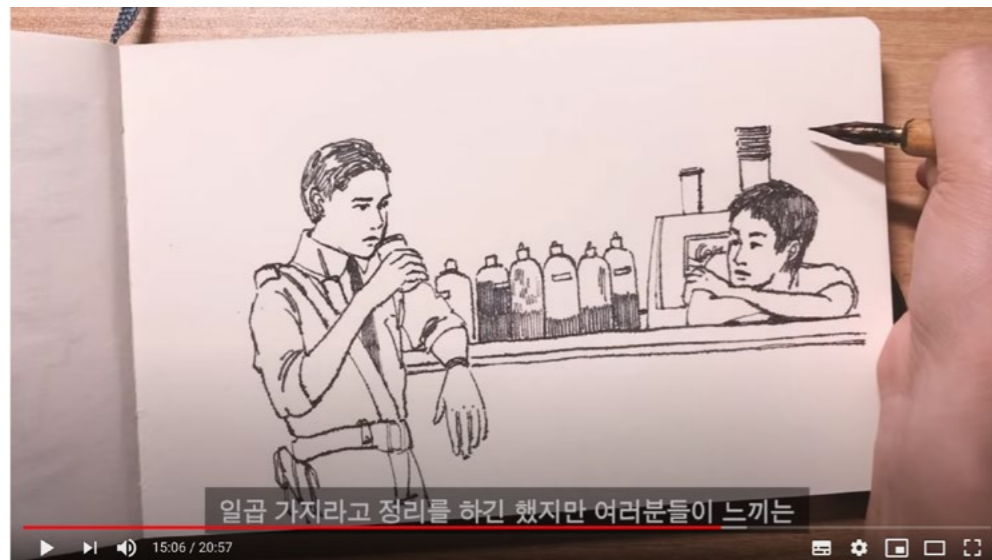
### ***Inspiration – A live painting storyteller, LEEYEON***

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.



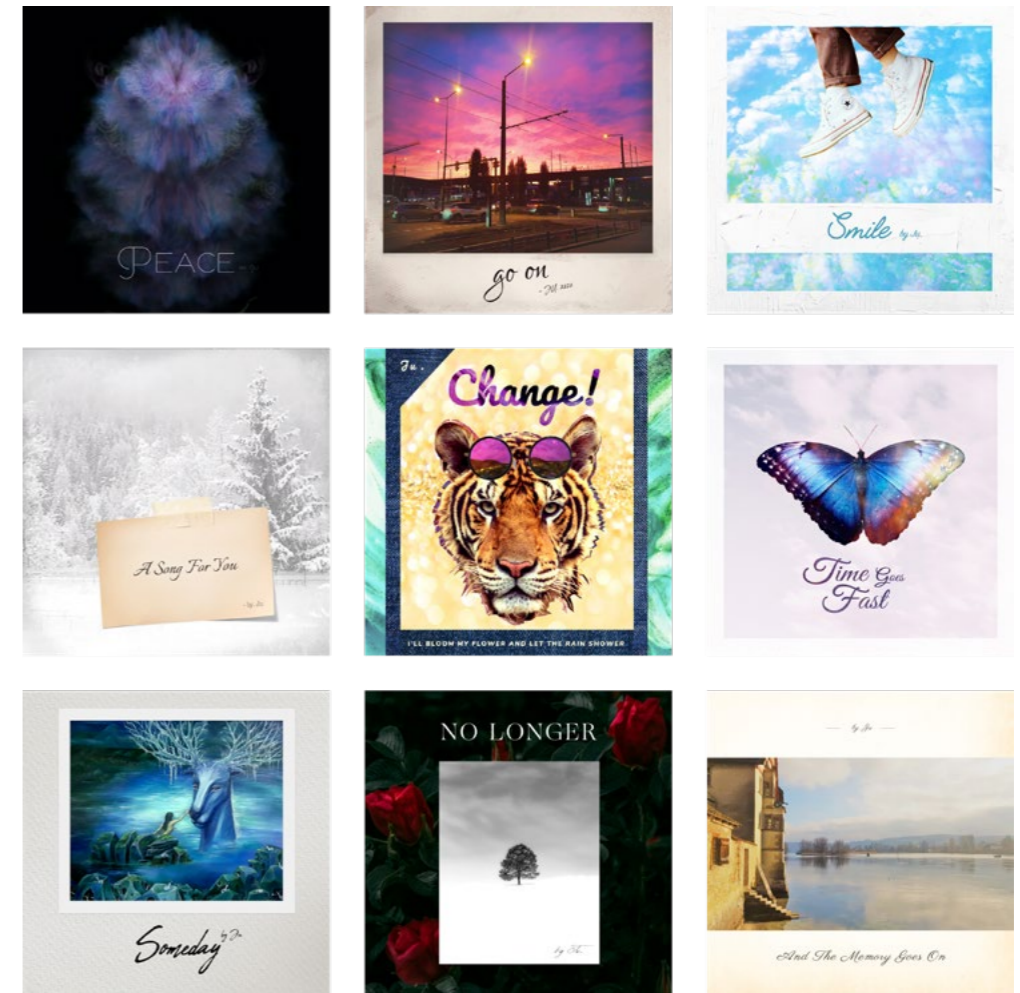
*\*Figure 14. Juyoung Yi, composing music with Garageband, photo taken by HENNA, 2020.*

### ***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=KO4uyWb00Kc&list=PLRvsEcc6\\_hqpbkV1\\_8ux9zpYowa9zzXYC](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KO4uyWb00Kc&list=PLRvsEcc6_hqpbkV1_8ux9zpYowa9zzXYC), visited in 2020.)*

## *V. Field Research*

*“How to co-create with people?”*

### CHAPTER IN A GLANCE

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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.

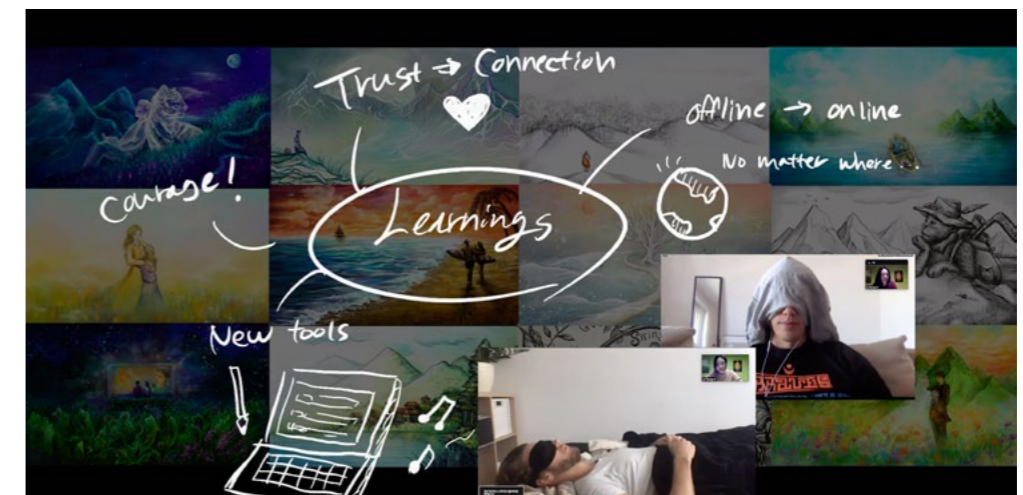
The big discussion with the participants was building a platform for the project. This is because we agreed that youtube or Facebook channels are not the best for containing the works that we co-created. We didn't want to use an existing media platform so that we decided to build a website that can hold 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

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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\_ Elish
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\_ Elich



*\*Figure 27. 'Elich 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.”

- Elich

## 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

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1. Finding documentation methods
2. Designing the online platform

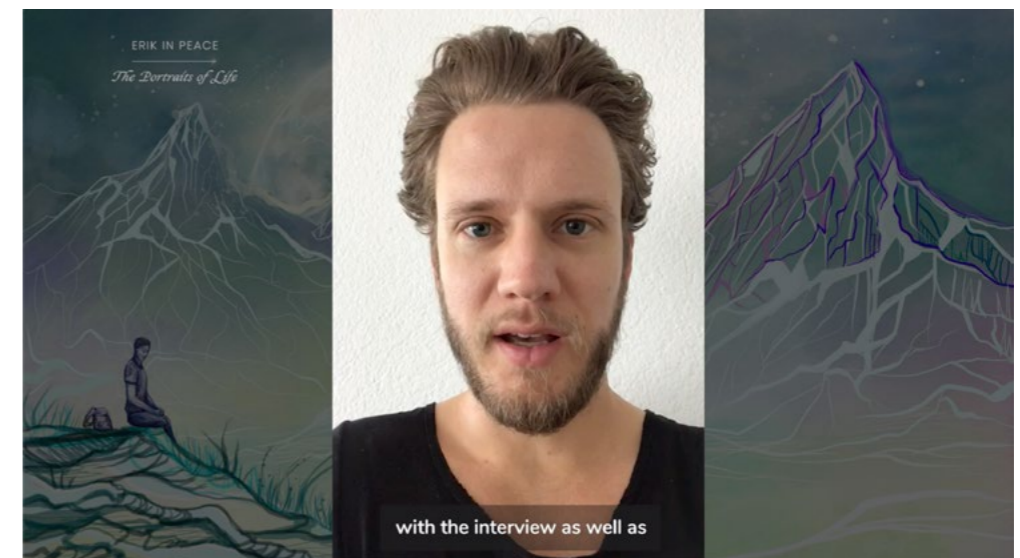
## 1. Finding documentation methods

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.

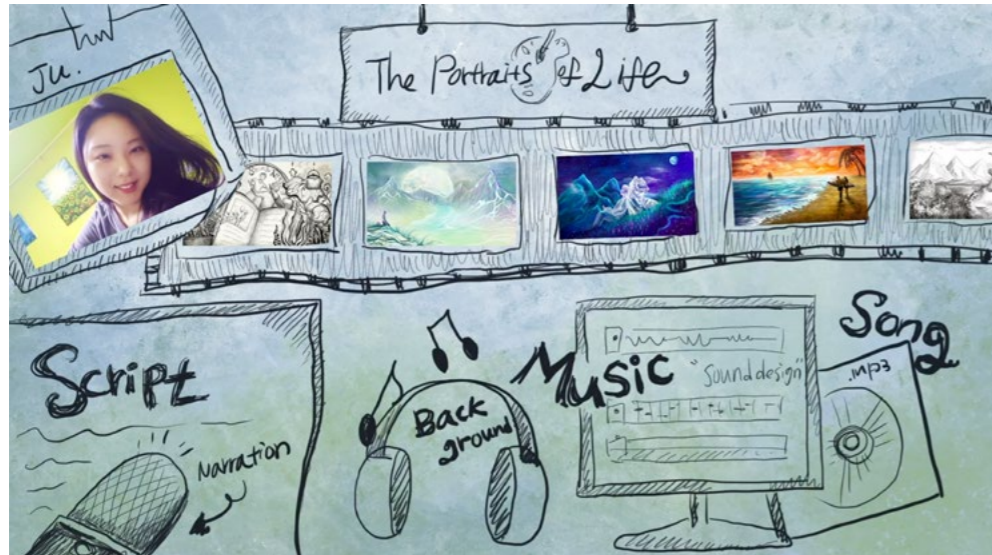


*\*Figure 32. The screenshot of 'One Minute Glance' video, live-painted, scripted and narrated by Juyoung Yi, 2020.*



*\*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.

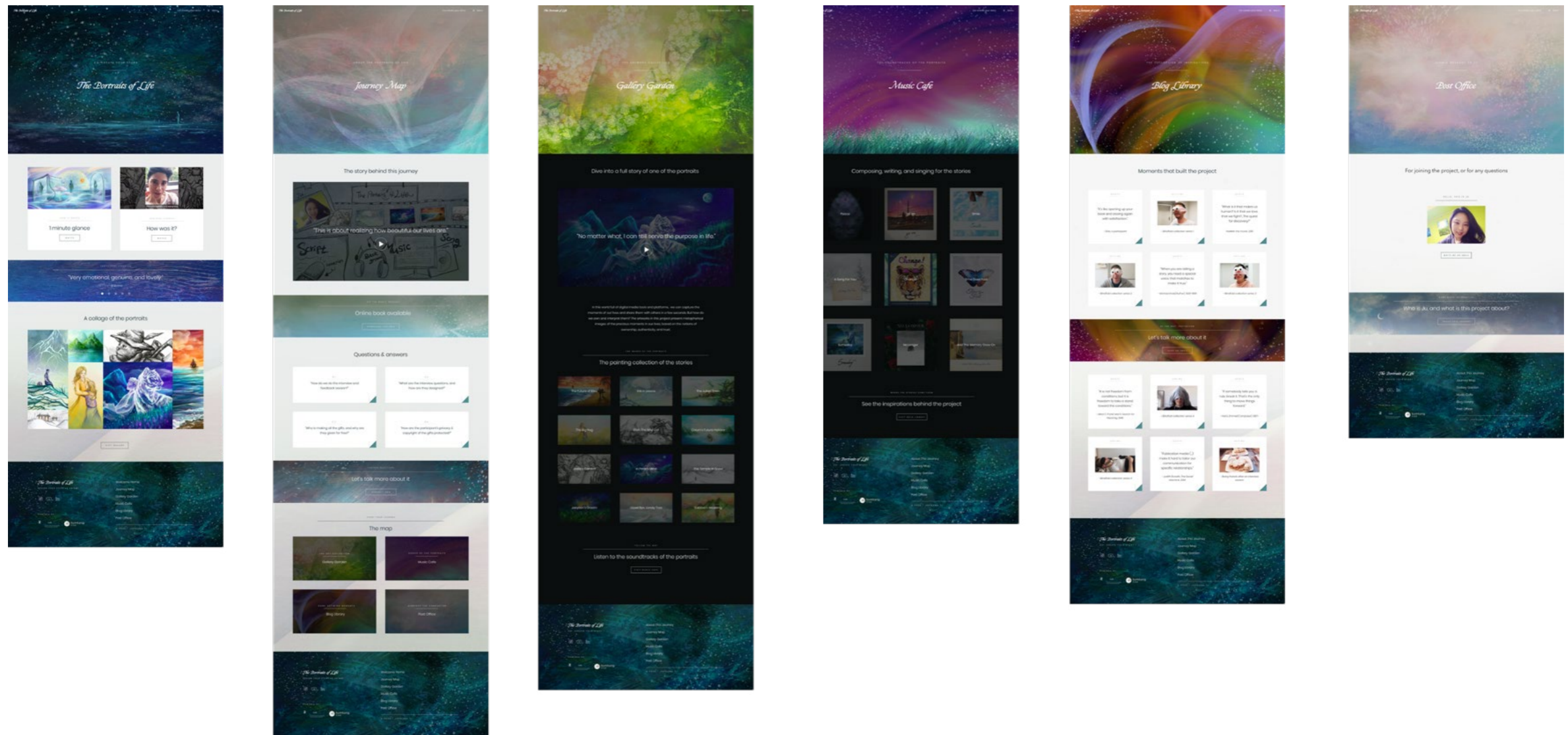
## 2. Designing the online platform

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

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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 personal learnings***

- 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

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1. Letters for special thanks
2. Bibliography

## 1. Letters for special thanks

### *The participants*

To. Henna, Sabrina, Jaeyoon, Jeong, Calum, Julian, Christine, Eiah, 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.*

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\*by orders of appearance in the paper

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## *Images*

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

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Department Design, Interaction Design



The End of The Journey