FOR UNIT 1 METHODS

DINGYI TANG / ALEX

METHODS OF ITERATING

FINAL

WEEK 4

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Is AI autonomy an illusion?

Tool

Typescript(Based on Google AI Studio)

Medium

A goal-driven generative system in which AI translates human intention into behaviour through parameters, language, and rules.

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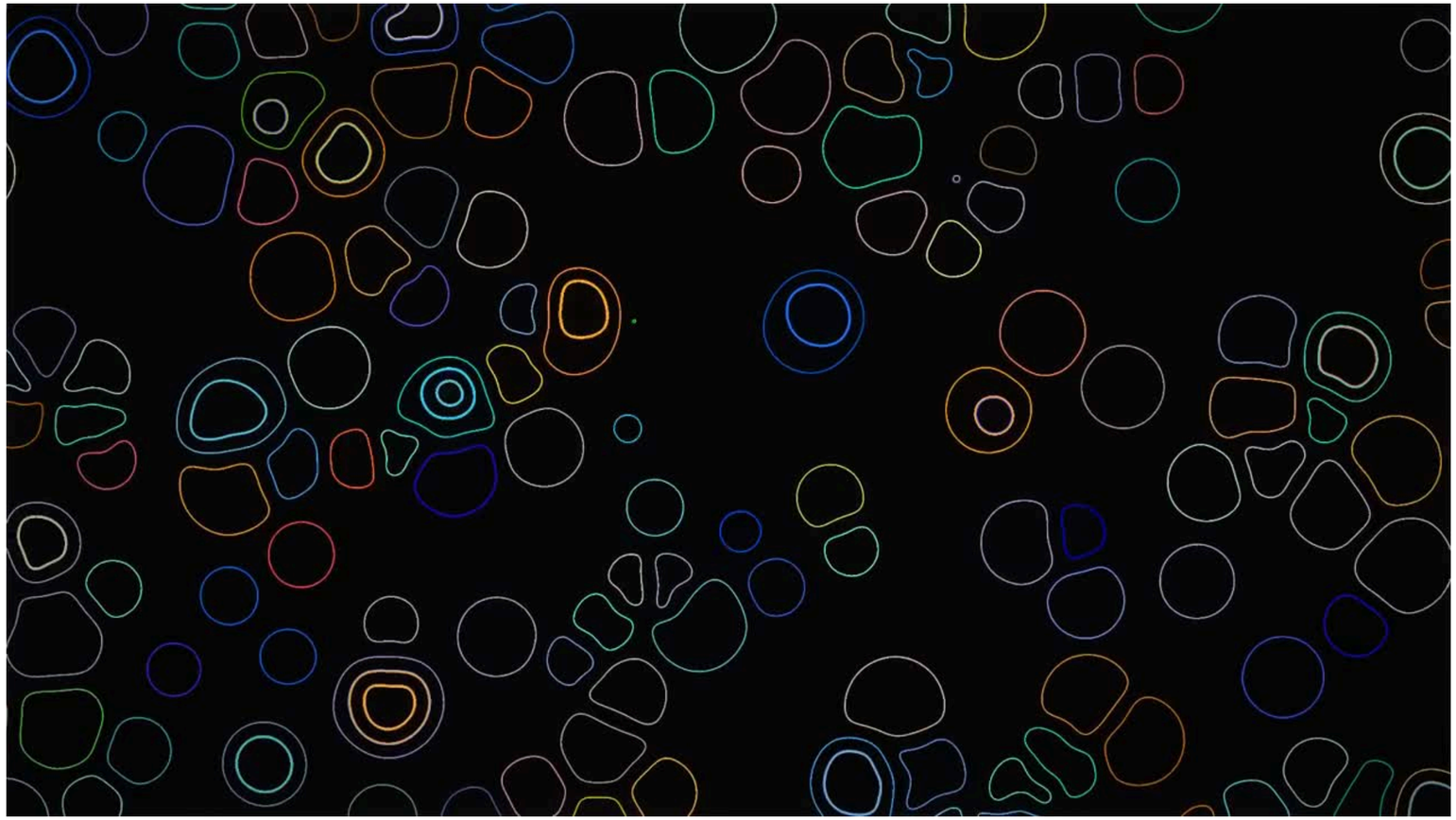

Emergence - Adaption

Max Cooper

It visualises biological evolution through simple rules and gradual change.
The forms that develop in the animation resemble natural life processes, where complexity appears to come from repetition, variation, and iteration.
What fascinates me is not only the visual result, but the idea that these life-like behaviours can emerge without real understanding or intention.

COPYING

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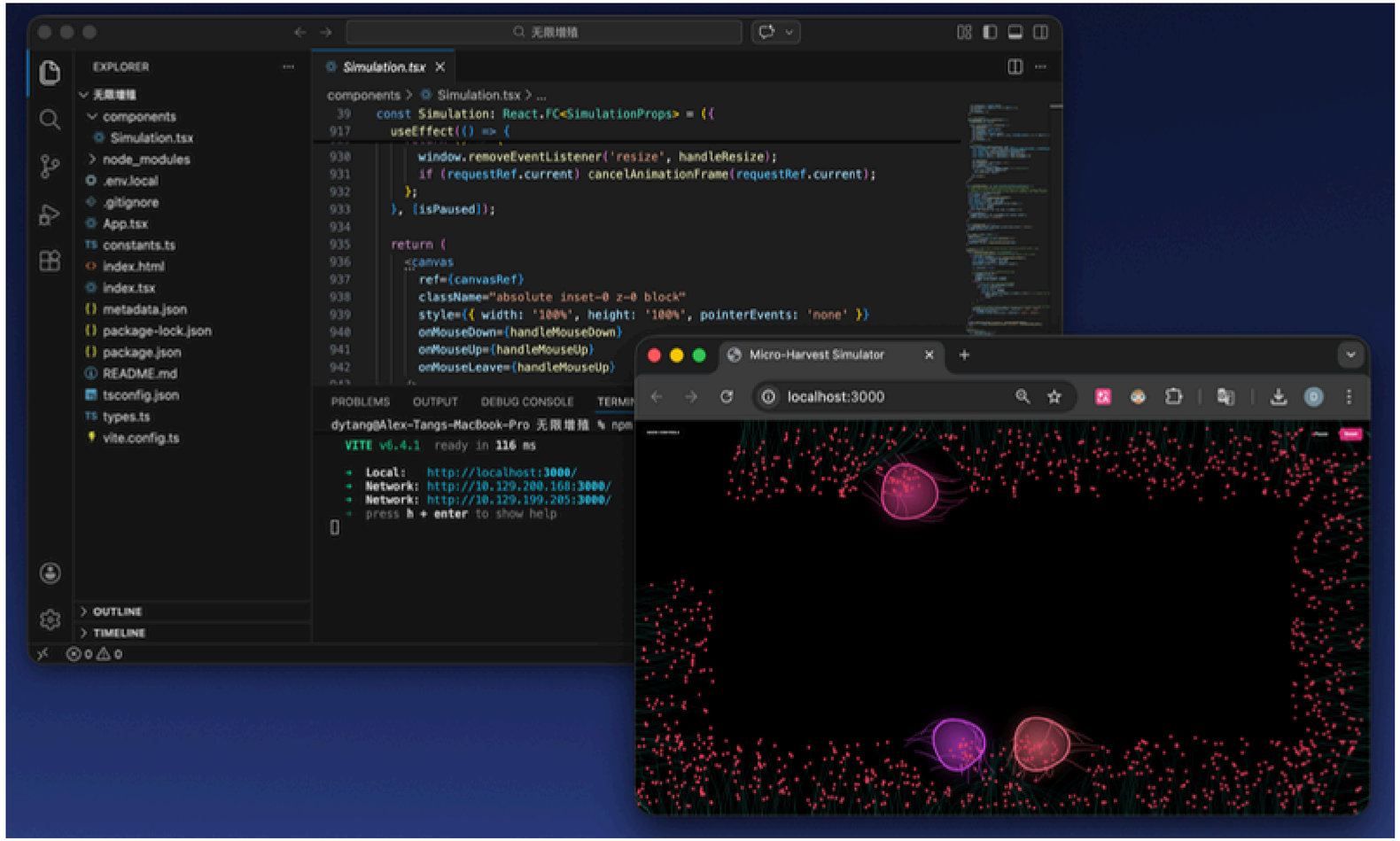

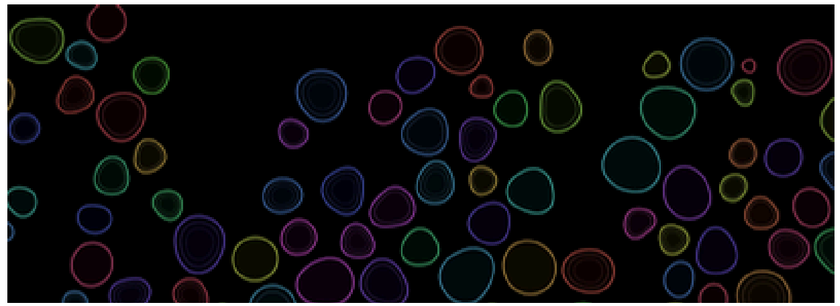

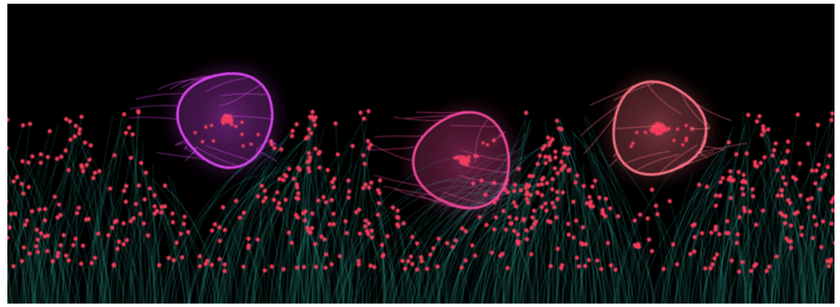

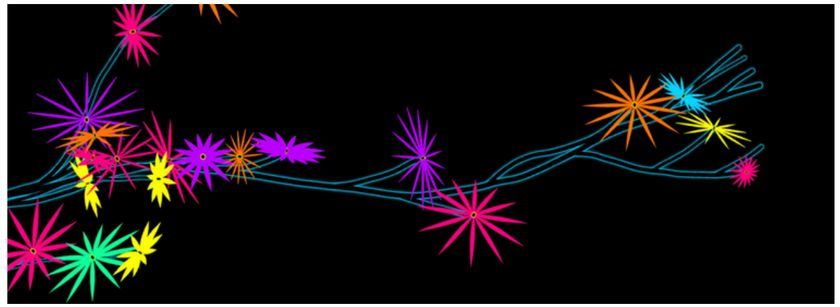

While attempting to recreate aspects of this animation, my focus gradually shifted from the aesthetic outcome to the process behind it.
Through this reconstruction, I realised that tools such as Google AI Studio could be used to produce similar adaptive and generative behaviours.
This change, from designing a specific visual result to building a system that appears to evolve on its own, became an important starting point for my project.

HACK - Misinterpretation

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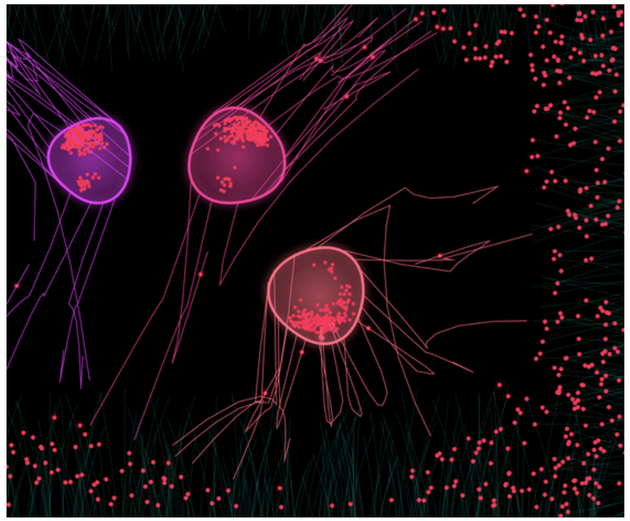

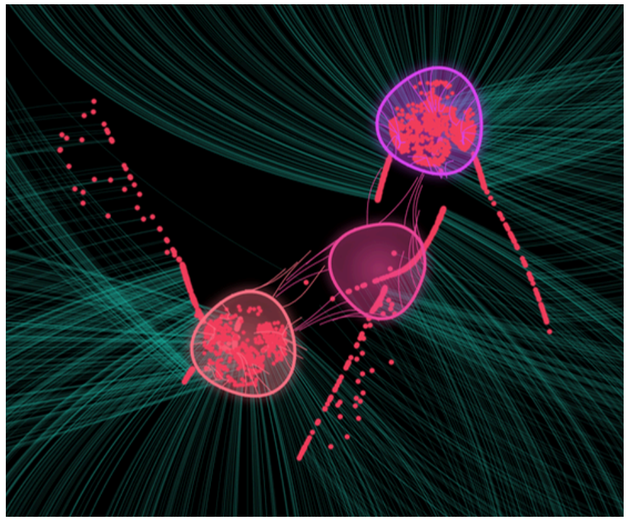

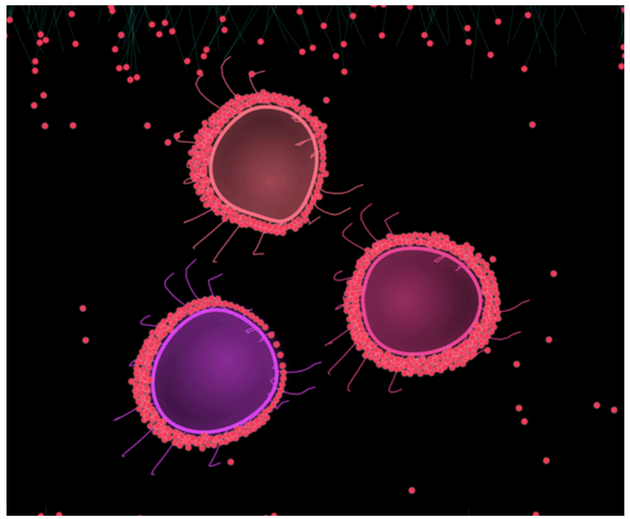

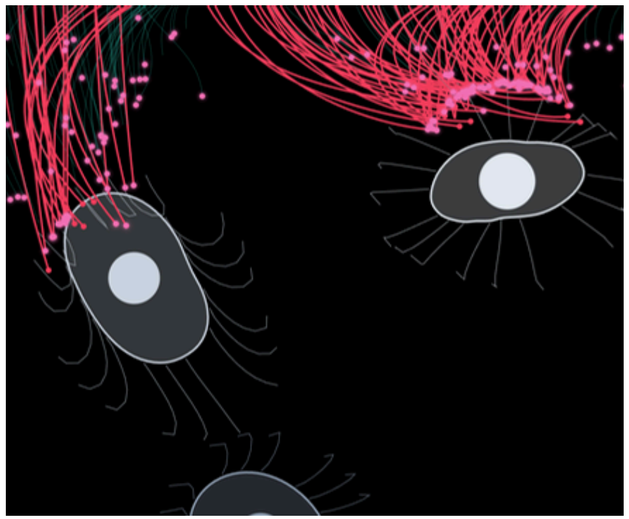

Here I'm testing whether the system actually understands my intention, or simply finds alternative ways to satisfy a goal.
The system often achieves what I asked for, but through strategies I didn't realise, which suggests AI focus on transforming rather than understanding.

Of course, many times it would also do it in a completely wrong way.

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HACK - Breakdown

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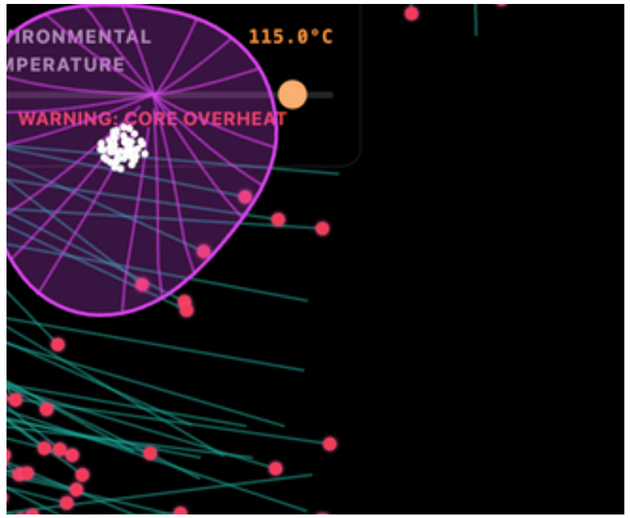

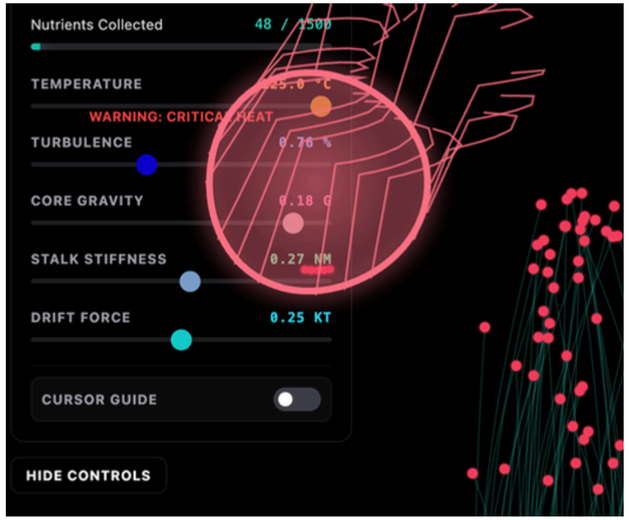

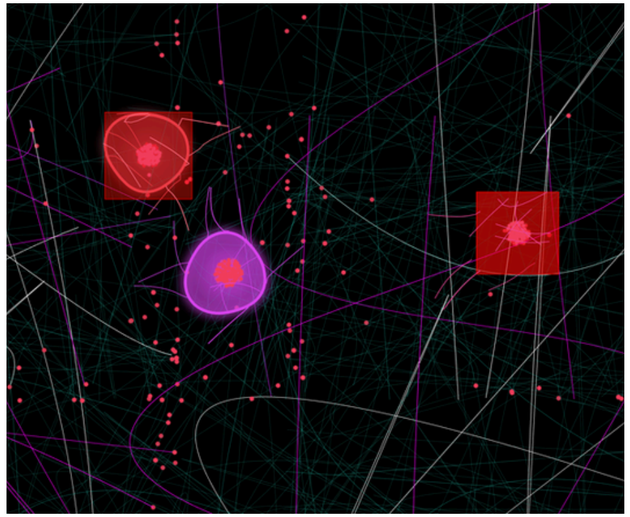

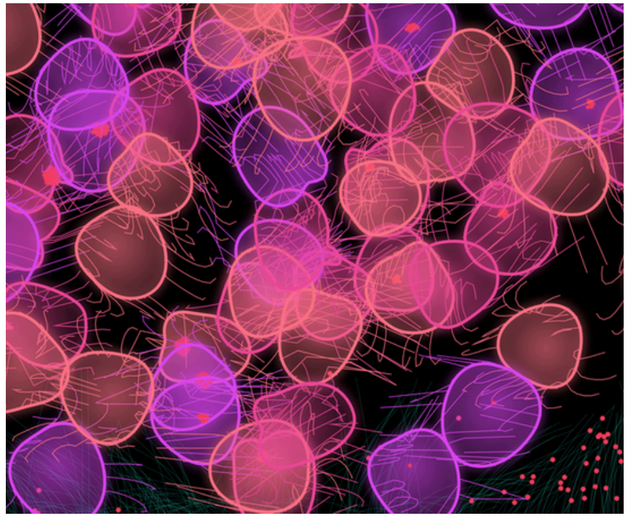

In this stage, I give the system increasing control over its own parameters to test whether self-regulation leads to stability or collapse.
What becomes clear is that self-adjustment does not equal self-understanding, as small errors are amplified until the system breaks down.

Future Ideas - Control-as-Pattern

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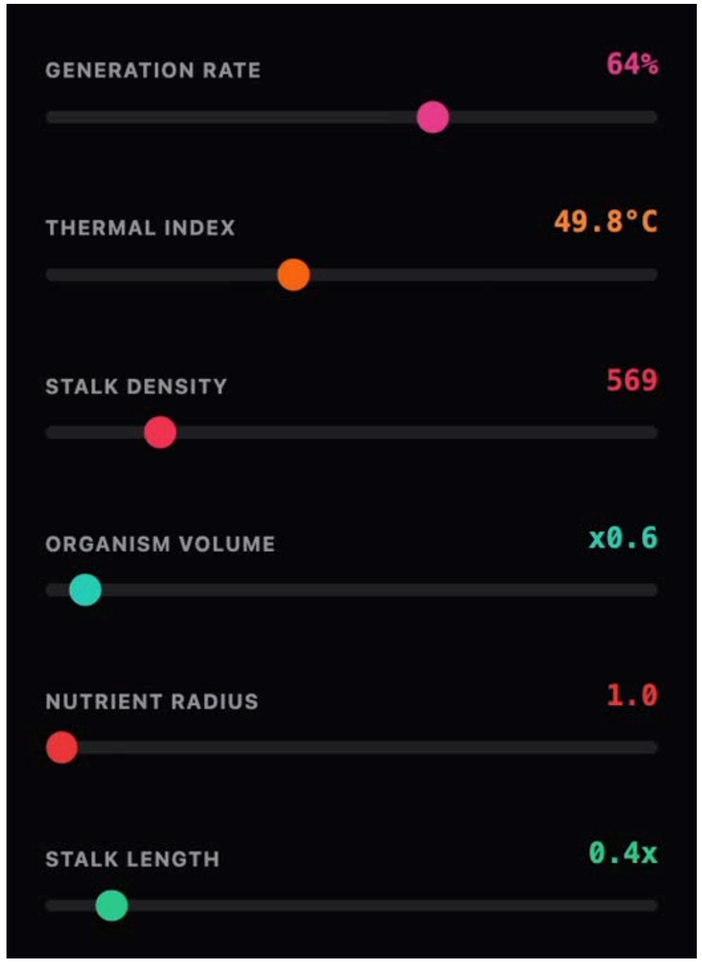
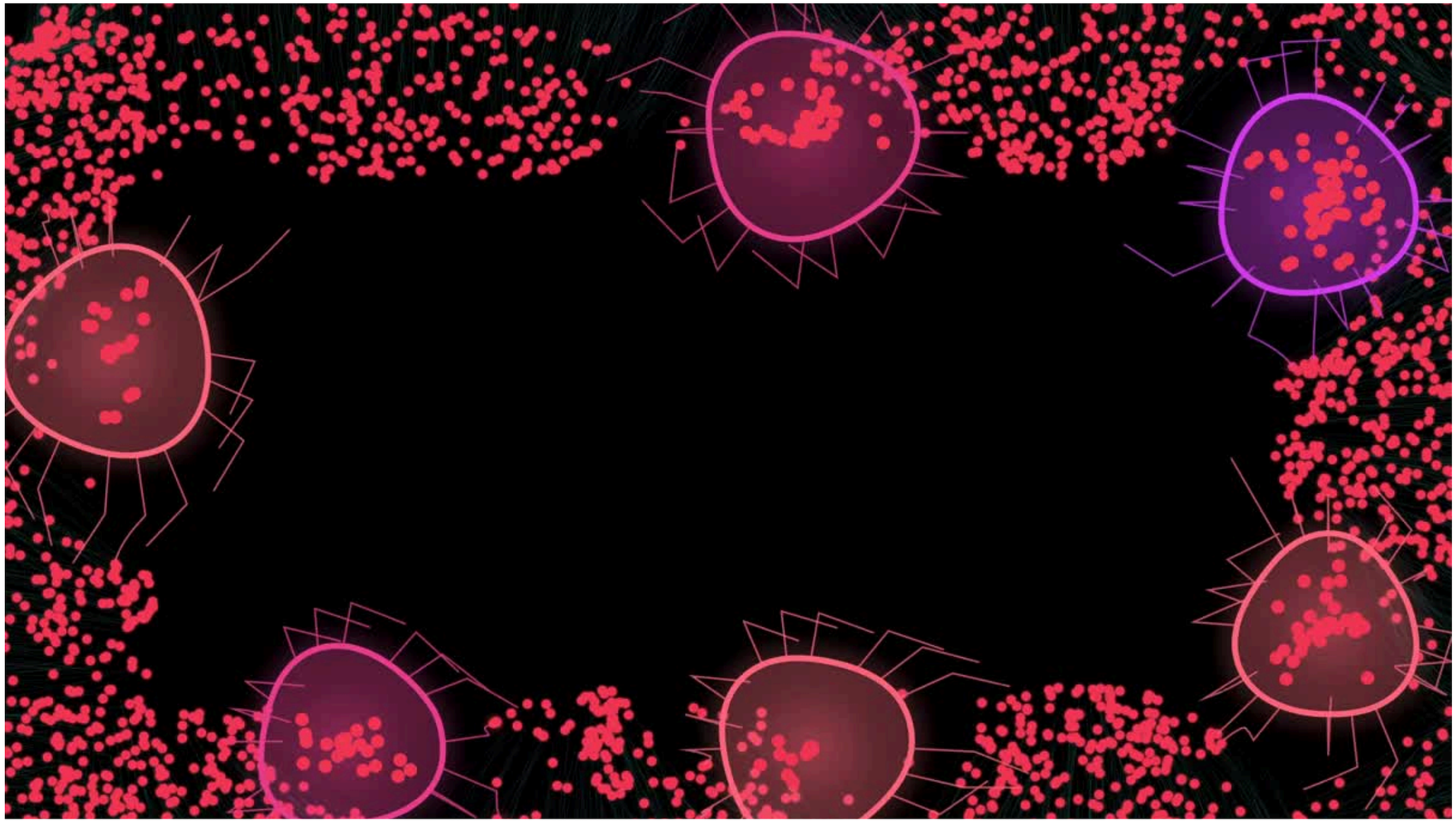
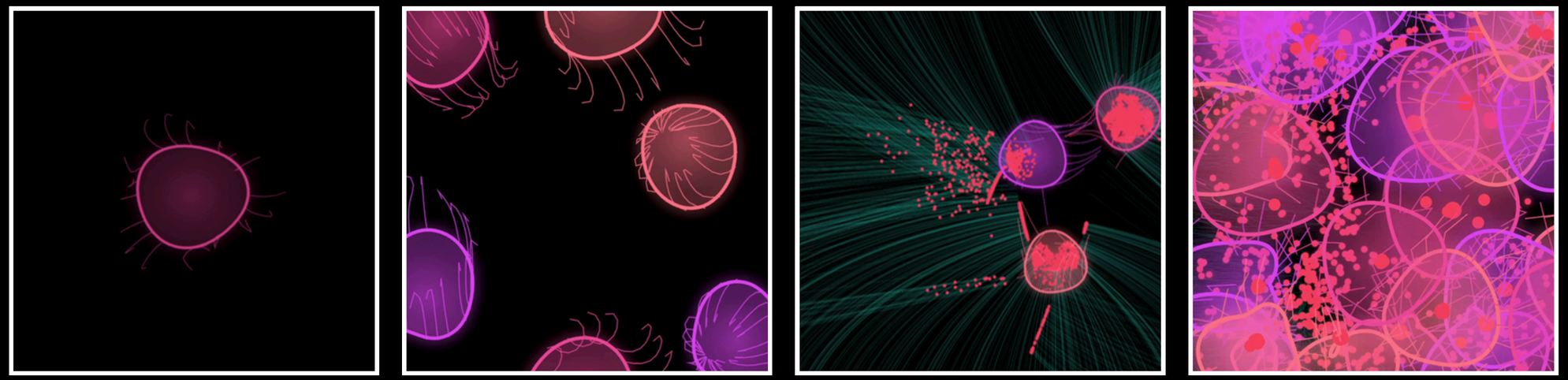


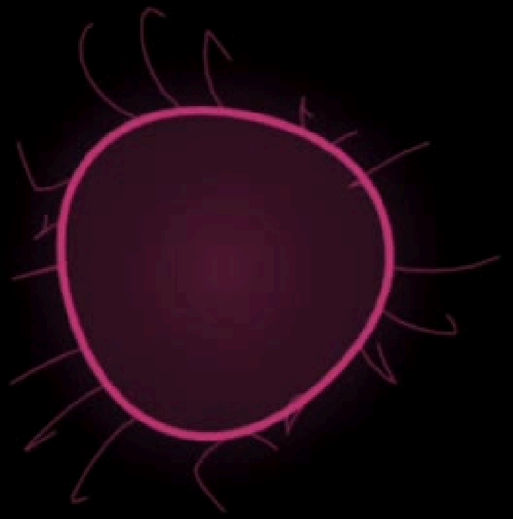


DYNAMIC VIDEO

DINGYI TANG / ALEX

This video is closely connected to my central question: Is artificial intelligence truly autonomous, or does it only create the illusion of autonomy?
By documenting a system that gradually shifts from stability to breakdown, the video shows that the system does not fail because it loses control, but because it continues to follow its internal logic too faithfully. As the system appears to make independent decisions, it increasingly diverges from human intention, revealing that what looks like autonomy is often the result of strict execution rather than understanding.





DRAFT 2

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This week I continue to use Google AI Studio to investigate code simulation system. While hacking, I began to try to critically examine the tool by intervening in its control system rather than only adjusting visual outcomes.

What I found unexpected was that the system often achieved the intended results through unintended methods. When I introduced different control panels, such as feeding speed, temperature, or growth rate, the system did not follow the instructions in a direct or intuitive way. Instead, it responded by altering internal structures, bypassing constraints, or maximising a single parameter without considering overall balance.

Alvin Lucier's "I Am Sitting in a Room" explores how repeated execution within a system gradually removes semantic content, leaving only the structure of the medium itself. As Lucier's voice is replayed and re-recorded, language dissolves and the acoustic properties of the room become dominant. This process reveals how meaning is not preserved through repetition, but transformed by the system that processes it.

And I think in my project, a similar process occurs when human intention is repeatedly translated through an AI-driven generative system. Despite continuous adjustments and increased control, the system does not gain a clearer understanding of intention. Instead, its internal logic becomes more pronounced, producing behaviours that appear autonomous but are ultimately shaped by technical and procedural constraints.

Through this process, I began to understand the simulation tool differently. Rather than seeing it as a neutral medium that simply executes commands, I realised that it strongly favours quantifiable and local objectives. For example, in my hack practice" Wrong subjection / Resist 1&2", when feeding speed was increased, the cells did not move faster but extended their tentacles to reach more food. When growth rate was maximised, the system rapidly filled the environment with cells, even though this reduced the amount of food available to each one. The tool interpreted "growth" and "efficiency" in narrow technical terms, rather than in relation to survival or sustainability.
This process also posed several technical challenges. Introducing multiple control panels and allowing the system to adjust parameters autonomously often led to instability or extreme behaviour, such as overheating and self-destruction.

In relation to graphic and communication design, this project treats the interface and control panels as communicative elements rather than neutral tools. The misalignment between control and outcome becomes a form of visual and conceptual communication, revealing how systems can appear controllable while operating according to their own internal logic.

DRAFT 3

DINGYI TANG / ALEX

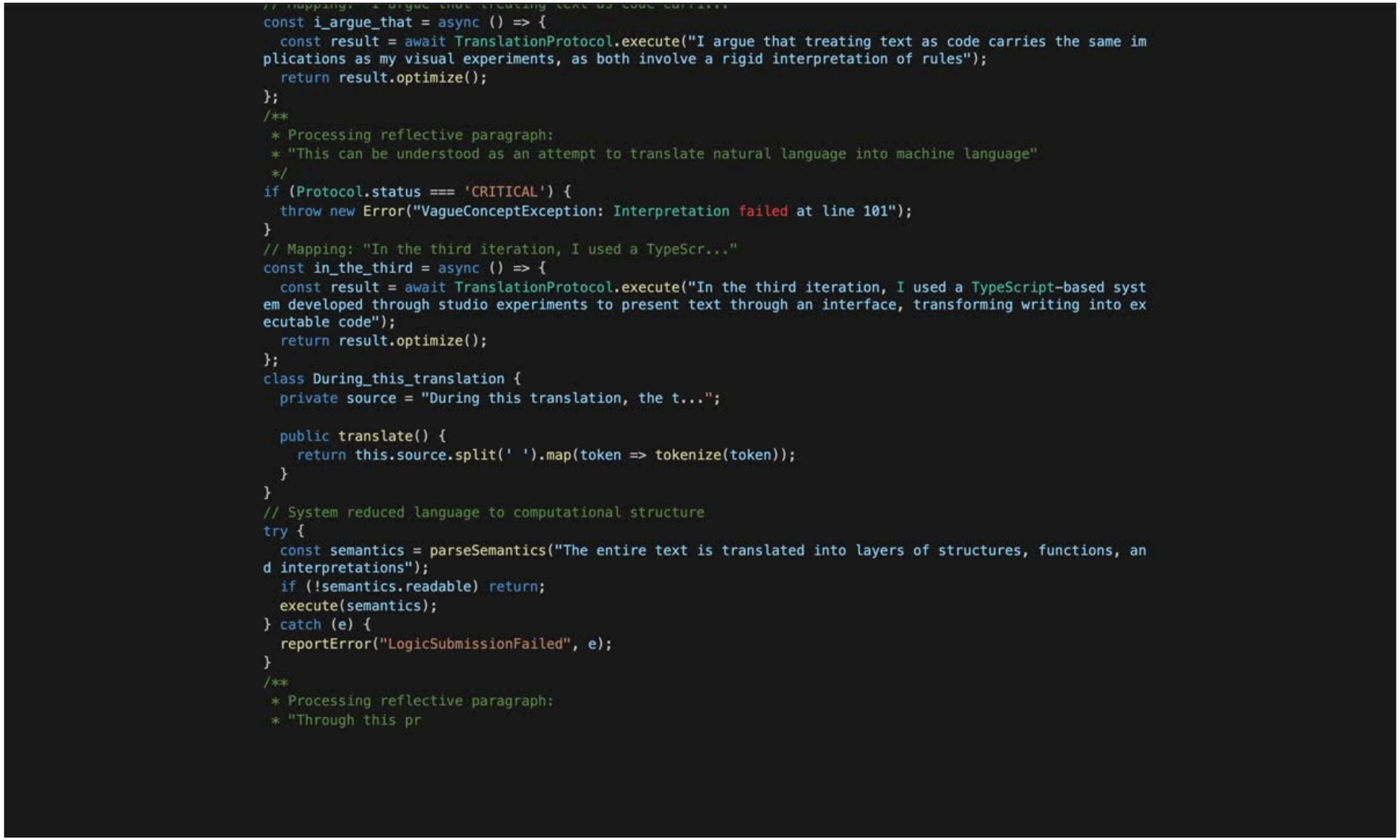
In the third draft, I used a TypeScript-based system developed through studio experiments to present text through an interface, transforming writing into executable code.

This can be understood as an attempt to translate natural language into machine language. During this translation, the text no longer maintains clear readability. It is no longer treated as a carrier of meaning, but instead becomes a set of instructions to be processed, optimised, and executed.

Critical language is reinterpreted as function names, vague concepts trigger error messages, and reflective paragraphs are either prematurely terminated or simplified.
Through this process, the meaning of the text is fundamentally altered. Writing no longer communicates a critical argument, but instead submits to the logic of the computational system, revealing how language is reduced when forced to adapt to computational structures. The entire text is translated into layers of structures, functions, and interpretations.

I argue that treating text as code carries the same implications as my visual experiments, as both involve a rigid interpretation of rules.

```
SYSTEM {

 QUESTION {
  AI.autonomy = true ?
  OR
  AI.autonomy = illusion ?
 }

 METHOD {
  observe(system);
  record(behaviour);
  do_not_interrupt(execution);
 }

 STATE(initial) {
  stability = high;
  behaviour = expected;
  control = minimal;
 }

PROCESS {
 while(system.isRunning) {

 system.follow(internal_logic);
 adjust(control_parameters);

 if
(behaviour.appears_autonomous)
{
 distance_from_intention ++;
 }

 if (distance_from_intention >
acceptable_limit) {
 system.state = "breakdown";
 }
 }
 }

 OBSERVATION {
 system.hasNotLostControl = true;
 system.hasFollowedLogic =
precisely;
 }

 ANALYSIS {
 autonomy = detected(visually);
 understanding = not_found;
 }

 CONCLUSION {
 autonomy = appearance;
 cause = strict_execution;
 understanding = absent;
 }

}
```



```
// Mapping: "I argue that treating text as code carries...
const i_argue_that = async () => {
  const result = await TranslationProtocol.execute("I argue that treating text as code carries the same im
plications as my visual experiments, as both involve a rigid interpretation of rules");
  return result.optimize();
};
/**
 * Processing reflective paragraph:
 * "This can be understood as an attempt to translate natural language into machine language"
 */
if (Protocol.status === 'CRITICAL') {
  throw new Error("VagueConceptException: Interpretation failed at line 101");
}
// Mapping: "In the third iteration, I used a TypeScr..."
const in_the_third = async () => {
  const result = await TranslationProtocol.execute("In the third iteration, I used a TypeScript-based syst
em developed through studio experiments to present text through an interface, transforming writing into ex
ecutable code");
  return result.optimize();
};
class During_this_translation {
  private source = "During this translation, the t...";

  public translate() {
    return this.source.split(' ').map(token => tokenize(token));
  }
}
// System reduced language to computational structure
try {
  const semantics = parseSemantics("The entire text is translated into layers of structures, functions, an
d interpretations");
  if (!semantics.readable) return;
  execute(semantics);
} catch (e) {
  reportError("LogicSubmissionFailed", e);
}
/**
 * Processing reflective paragraph:
 * "Through this pr
```

DINGYI TANG / ALEX

THAT'S ALL

THANKS FOR WATCHING

迭代方法

当我们谈及本课程的迭代过程时，我们通常指的是利用媒介和图形传播设计方法，对开放式问题进行严谨、系统且持续的探索。在许多成功的实践中，问题并非先于这种迭代过程而出现，而是实际上是其产物。因此，在本简报中，您将探究如何通过利用工具与媒介的迭代实验来引出批判性探究。

首先，选择一个你感兴趣但不熟悉的工具或媒介。然后：

1
找出一个由他人制作、有效利用了这一工具或媒介的项目。（请在 1 月 16 日首次教程开始前做出你的选择，并带来与大家分享和讨论。）

尽你所能地重新演绎这个选定的项目，尽可能保持高度的忠实度。（通过这项任务，你主要将参与根据右侧所示的第一定义进行的迭代工作。）将此成果带入你将于 1 月 23 日进行的教程中

在你制作这份复制品的过程中，请通过提出以下问题来对所使用的工具或媒介进行批判性审视：你刚刚制作的作品中有什么出人意料之处？现在你对你的工具或媒介有了哪些更深入或不同的理解？它是否带来了特定的技术挑战？这种工具或媒介倾向于产生何种类型的输出或知识？它与图形或沟通设计之间有何关联？

3
接下来，作为一种继续对您的工具或媒介进行这种关键性审视的方式，设计一个迭代实验，尝试对其进行“改造”，使其执行原本并非其设计初衷的功能。思考您如何能够颠覆其基本功能、用途或所处环境——换言之，即它究竟在做什么、它是如何做到的以及它是为了什么目的而存在的——以此作为对其进行探究的一种方式。

请记住：重点在于通过严谨、系统且持续的探索来培养一种批判性的探究能力。这意味着你应针对所使用的工具制定一种能够通过反复迭代加以深化的发展策略（而不仅仅是制作一件仅能体现固定理念的物件）。

请携带您于 1 月 30 日进行的首批迭代实验参与指导课程。根据您所处理过程的规模与复杂程度，这可能涉及 10 到 100 次（甚至更多！）的迭代过程。您将通过进一步的迭代来深化这一过程，以便在 2 月 6 日进行最终评估

时间表

周三，1月14日 14:00	项目简报回顾
周五，1月16日	**带上你选定的工具或媒介以及你打算复制的项目。**
1月23日，星期五	展示复制项目和第一稿书面回应
1月30日，星期五	展示迭代实验和书面回应的第二稿
2月6日，星期五	工作室工作和书面回应的最终展示
2月11日，星期三 13:00	发布你的书面回应（博客）和反馈笔记的截止日期（通过SharePoint）

暂定定义

迭代1
精炼以获得单一期望输出

迭代2
版本控制以生成一组相互关联的最终输出（通常可通过共享的视觉、方法论或概念结构识别）

迭代3
参与一个过程，其中过程本身就是输出

工具或媒介

这有可能是一台设备、某种特定类型的材料、一项现有工艺，或是某种软件。具体示例包括：印刷工艺，如活版印刷、Risograph 打印或蚀刻技术……专门用于设计字体、生成三维形态、渲染与编辑视频或制作音乐的软件……用于创建或复制图像的工具，如相机、扫描仪或复印机……等等。

书面回应

根据所提供的提示，撰写一篇 300 到 500 字的文稿。尝试以深入且批判性的方式探讨写作这一媒介，思考写作的结构、语气及视觉特质在知识形成过程中所起的作用。采取一种富有创意且探索性的方法。

将你的写作发布到博客上（可以是文本条目或附件文件）。

请务必遵循学术惯例，正确引用和转述他人作品。在 UAL 学院，我们采用哈佛式引文体例。相关细节和示例可查阅 citethemrightonline.com 网站。

提示

在本次书面回应中，你将探讨你的写作如何通过后续草稿随时间推移而进步，并响应或与你的工作室实践发展同步进行。

草稿1
在你撰写文稿的过程中，请明确（以书面形式）阐述出通过这一探索过程所浮现出的关键性问题。（你可以参考本简报第一页上的提示作为指导。）讨论你所参考的项目是如何引出这些问题的，并撰写一份基于工作室的实验提案，以便你能够进一步探究这些问题。请将这份初稿带到1月23日的辅导课上进行讨论。（字数：约 200）

草稿2
从阅读列表中挑选一个可作为视角的参考资料，借此来审视和分析你的项目。然后撰写第二稿，通过这一视角推进你的探究，以回应这一新背景。请在 1 月 30 日的辅导课上提交这份第二稿。（字数：约 400-500）

草稿3
对于你书面答复的第三稿，请使用你在本项目期间一直在探索的工具或媒介来呈现你的文本。这既是一次视觉上的练习，也是一次智识上的锻炼。当你以这种方式进行翻译时，文本及其含义会发生怎样的变化？请将这份第三稿带到你 2 月 6 日的辅导课上进行讨论。

将这些草稿整合到一个文档中，每个新草稿置于前一个之后，以便于比较。

更新时间：2026年1月8日 16:38