

WEEK 1 THE RUNAWAY HORSE AND THE RABBIT HAIR

This course is a whole new world for me. My past endeavors fall into two buckets: one involves facilitating my target group to do things through "I use to enable...(my target group) do ... the other is: I want to apply this kind of design so that I can figure out .../ understand ... better. Now, all of a sudden, it's not about ticking off tasks; I can pretty much explore anything I want. I thought, "Ah, this must be contemporary design." But, is it contemporary design?

So, this whole "design deliverable" concept is pretty open-ended. It can be anything from performative art and participatory acts to sculptures, poems, digital objects, etc.... I love poems, I love performative art, and I love participatory acts and sculptures.

I feel lost. I'm like a runaway horse, let go of the reins and now reveling in newfound freedom, but I need a moment to wrap my head around it. I have to break free from my old ways of thinking – no more obsessing about the 'impact' on the 'users.' It's time to figure out what I want to develop in the coming weeks. It's time for a free run.

I think climbing up the rabbit hair might be the best thing I'm going to do right now. get rid of the warm fur and I can see the true feral world on the rabbit hair tip. I feel I have to get into some kind of realm to connect my thoughts to the feral world.



ALL MORTALS ARE BORN AT THE VERY TIP OF THE RABBIT'S FINE HAIRS, WHERE THEY ARE IN A POSITION IMPOSSIBILITY OF THE TRICK. BUT AS THEY GROW OLDER THEY WORK THEMSELVES EVER DEEPER INTO THE FUR. AND THERE THEY STAY.

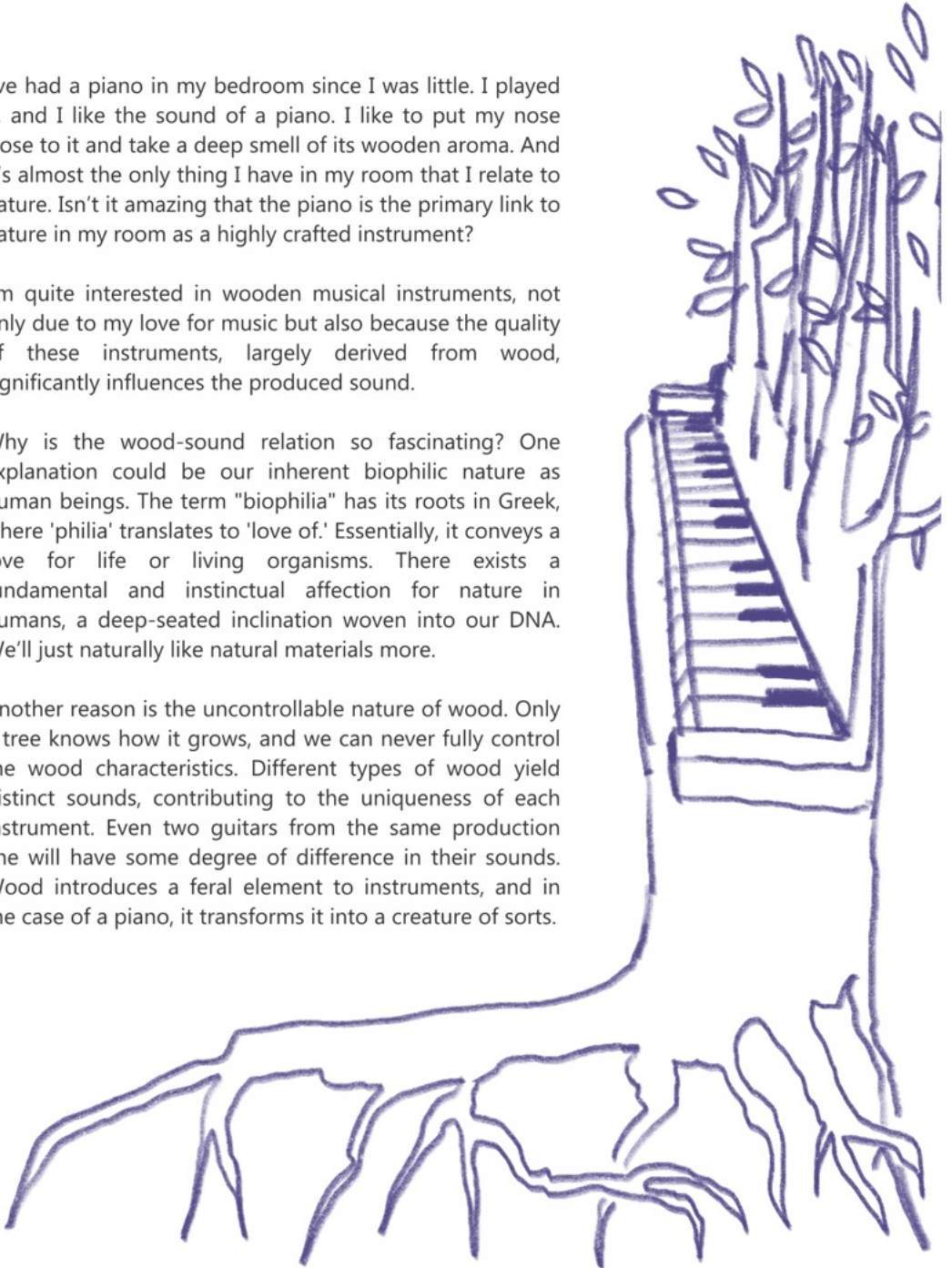
MY FERAL CREATURE IS A PIANO

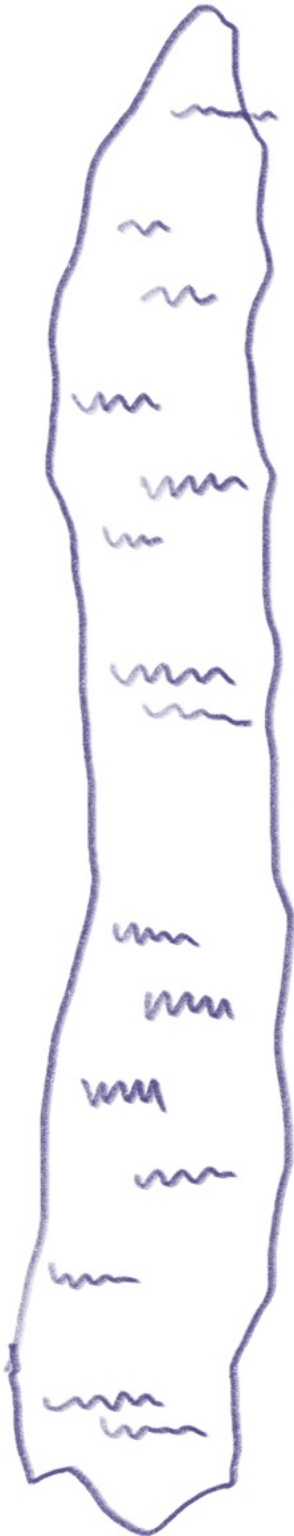
I've had a piano in my bedroom since I was little. I played it, and I like the sound of a piano. I like to put my nose close to it and take a deep smell of its wooden aroma. And it's almost the only thing I have in my room that I relate to nature. Isn't it amazing that the piano is the primary link to nature in my room as a highly crafted instrument?

I'm quite interested in wooden musical instruments, not only due to my love for music but also because the quality of these instruments, largely derived from wood, significantly influences the produced sound.

Why is the wood-sound relation so fascinating? One explanation could be our inherent biophilic nature as human beings. The term "biophilia" has its roots in Greek, where 'philia' translates to 'love of.' Essentially, it conveys a love for life or living organisms. There exists a fundamental and instinctual affection for nature in humans, a deep-seated inclination woven into our DNA. We'll just naturally like natural materials more.

Another reason is the uncontrollable nature of wood. Only a tree knows how it grows, and we can never fully control the wood characteristics. Different types of wood yield distinct sounds, contributing to the uniqueness of each instrument. Even two guitars from the same production line will have some degree of difference in their sounds. Wood introduces a feral element to instruments, and in the case of a piano, it transforms it into a creature of sorts.





FIELD TRIP

My connection to nature became less ineffable after this trip.

I didn't know what I could expect from this field trip. I was uncertain about what to anticipate from this field trip, but the experience itself was thoroughly enjoyable.

First of all, Nuuksio National Park is very beautiful. I had previously visited in mid-September when there were still blueberries and the weather was warm. Returning in late October offered a completely different setting. The grass bore a layer of frost, and the air carried a distinct fragrance.

Engaging with nature in this manner always brings me joy, though expressing it in the language of design proves challenging. Drifting, particularly in the context of engaging with fellow students, proves highly beneficial. Peer discussions, especially amidst the beauty of the woods, are incredibly stimulating for generating design ideas.

I now realize that a field trip serves as a profound means of relaxation for me. The natural beauty enhances my focus on design thinking without overthinking.

Reflecting on my return from Nuuksio, my response to the question, 'How to use design to express my connection to nature?' is to 'focus on my sensory impressions of nature' and present it as if narrating a story."

努克西奥国家公园有一个狭长的湖，和许多常绿树木。

WEEK2 MY FERAL PLACE

My feral place is my room, located in the Aalto University Otaniemi Campus, at Servin Majjan tie 12, Espoo, Finland. I reside here while doing my exchange semester at Aalto University. The reason behind my selection is the substantial time I've already spent in this familiar space. The place has left me with vivid sensory experiences, creating a personal connection. My window is a bit broken, and my door allows leaks, unexpectedly exposing me to the cold wind and the surprisingly loud rain while lying in bed.

The contrasting comforts and discomforts I've encountered in my feral place have sparked intriguing questions: What brings me comfort, and what causes discomfort? Is there a clear boundary between the two?

In essence, these contrasting emotions represent an internal conflict within me. It is a fight between humanity's inherent desire for a stable, cozy dwelling and the innate biophilia(1) within us. The term "biophilia" has its roots in Greek, where 'philia' translates to 'love of.' Essentially, it conveys a love for life or living organisms. There exists a fundamental and instinctual affection for nature in humans, a deep-seated inclination woven into our DNA. The fundamental questions then become: How do they fight with each other? And how do they compromise with each other?



WEEK3 HOW TO PRESENT MY IDEA INTO A DESIGN & UROBOROS WEBSITE

I can't believe it, but it's only now that I've looked at the official website of the UROBOROS festival for the first time.

The projects on the website are presented dynamically. This doesn't refer to co-creation with the audience during interaction but rather a dynamic vitality of theirs. In other words, I can feel how they come to life. The process of their creation is enough to be astonishing and leaves a deep impression. I have a very deep impression about a project "Rising Together – Reimagining Human-AI Co-Creation through Encountering the (Sour)dough" The process of sourdough preparation serves as a strong guiding metaphor for discussing the human-AI cocreation. It's very provoking like many other projects shown in this festival.

But how can I do that as well?



"SOURDOUGH" 中国叫它 "老面", 直译过来是 "OLD DOUGH"

人们把它放在冰箱里, 这样用:



树叶

脚步

呼吸

草果

风

雪地

SOUND

The term "Soundscape" is new to me, but the digital/vintage pedals, sound recording, audio editing, and some audio editing software are not. I have some experience dealing with these gadgets but only from the perspective of music production. The lecture on soundscape introduced me to a broader scope of possibilities in sound design and its practical applications. I began focusing on the actual sound – considering its characteristics and the associations it evokes, rather than its musicianship or how well it complements other soundtracks.

sound itself is a medium that provides a vague portrayal of the myriad emotions. Sound is less immediate, requiring time for the comprehension of the stories and emotions carried. This characteristic enhances the storytelling aspect of the cocreation with my feral place. Sound surpasses photos in conveying depth, as it allows people room for imagination. It surpasses text because, unlike text, sound lacks human-created language; it stands as raw, direct recordings of memories, accessible to other-than-human entities. Sounds can also overlap, creating harmonies. And there is a rich resource of sound in my feral place.

交响乐

翻书

WEEK4 Mth FIELD SITES

Beautiful beautiful feral places!

The Seurasaari Park is very impressive. It was large and quiet. Mosses looked so green and fresh and vital. Flock of sparrows grabbed my fingers and used its little beak to pick nuts from my hand. I felt inches of lively life in my hands. Although feeding birds is forbidden, but, what an incredible experience!

And the hay house! Old houses are lovely. Especially the small icicles on the eave. We talked about our feral data and feral artifacts, I gained a lot of energy from the conversation.

Kiitos kiitos kiitos!

“拉普兰米的，干草生产
季人们暂住的小屋”

“HAY HOUSE”



MINÄ OLEN! MINÄ OLEN!
MINÄ OLEN! MINÄ OLEN!
MINÄ OLEN! MINÄ OLEN!
MINÄ OLEN! MINÄ OLEN!
MINÄ OLEN! MINÄ OLEN!

VIDEO EDITING

Everytime I saw people showing their video works, I feel a strong impulse to create a small video myself. And that was what happened today. The video showed in the video editing was very touching.

If I have more time, I would really like to work as video editor or producer. I'm just very interested in making videos (exluding film videos). It's a perfect medium for expressing ambiguous meanings and artistic beauty.

I like when I present my work and people ask: " What does it mean?" or when people say: "I think it means..." Of course, I llike it even more when I'm the person trying to figure out what a artistic video trying to convey.

MINÄ OLEN!



WEEK5 INDIVIDUAL PROJECT CONSULTATION

I have been coding for a couple of days. Although I know that I'm not good at JavaScript at all but been stuck on the command that can be completed with just a few lines of code is absolutely frustrating.

But Marketa and Zoë's feedback really gives me motivation again. The feedback is very positive and confirms that learning process is the most important. And I love how teacher talked about my project with their own words and I found that's a way clearer explanation the meaning I wanted to convey but couldn't articulate.

CREATIVE WRITING SESSION

It feels easier to write something. I've never done this kind of English writing practice or should I say writing games. As a Chinese student, my English education contains only formal and academic writing. And I actually haven't needed any "interesting writing" knowledge in any case yet. So, these writings are very new and very interesting for me. And made me realised how bad my English writing is. Although I always know that my English writing is not good.

And I really appreciate that I don't have to share. Although I've shared some experience and I'd love to. But as I have said many times, I like how relaxing this course is.

And the peer feedback activity was(or should I use 'is' here? my English just not perfect haha) very fun. My concern is: I'm afraid of audiences find my design is too shallow while I intended to tell more with it.

And I got three feedbacks:

1. Try thinking of why your project/ your place is meaningful to you
2. Focusing on your feeling
3. People perceive things differently, stay true to what feels important to you. Where does this fear originate from?

While I understand that prioritizing my own feelings is the right approach, it proves to be challenging for me. Designing for 'users' and external goals has been my focus for years, making it less natural to turn inward. I am truly grateful for these feedbacks as they boost my confidence significantly.

WEEK6 FINAL DESIGN PRESENTATION

I felt the same as everyone- 20 minutes sounds very long. But it is not long at all. Everyone has a lot to say and every project is brilliant and elicited many discussions. The presentation is more like a share session.

I don't feel like writing a lot about my presentation or the feedbacks I got, because I enjoyed the "feedback-conversation" at that moment and now I want some time to process them in my head and let them be there and change my design thinking (a little bit) forever.



Btw, I believe it's due to the close congregation possibly causing avian flu. I observed a sign in Hyde Park that prohibits people from feeding birds and provides an explanation along these lines.

我很享受今天的
PRE. 玛格塔老
师说, 用汉语写
这些声音, 可能又
会有不一样的感
受, 所以我来试
一试。用中文时,
我当然感到更自
由。或许这有利
于我想出一些好
主意, 但我从没
真正地用汉语
进行一个项目, 我
似乎没有这样
的机会, 但我一
定要试一试。

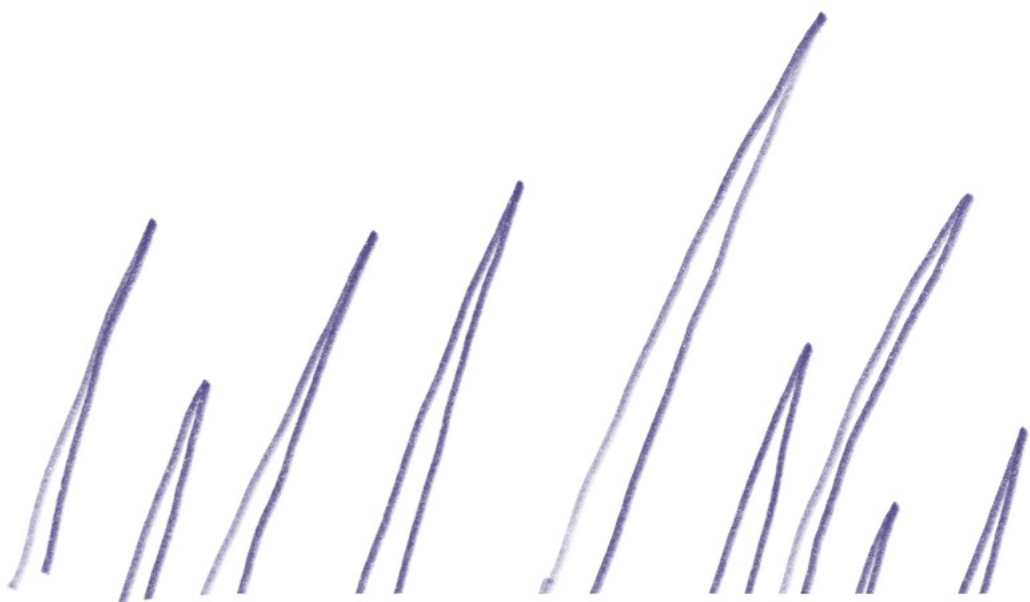
SUOMI & EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN

As an exchange student, it's the last course I have in Aalto University. (I've had two courses in total haha) Finland is a warm(for me mentally) and chilling place, I would really like to stay longer. Helsinki, though large, exudes a humble charm. I find a sense of relaxation and tranquility here, and my life is never boring.

This course, too, provides a calming atmosphere. Despite having a substantial workload, I can tackle it at my own pace, proceeding step by step. While this may sound ordinary, it holds great value for me. In many of my previous courses, I often felt overwhelmed and had to exert immense effort to meet learning objectives. Here, I can take my time and still make significant progress.

In my studies at Aalto, it's acceptable to attend lectures or classes in a comfortable manner. There's no pressure to have all the right answers or be a perfect presenter. I can genuinely focus on acquiring knowledge and expressing my thoughts.

“在汉语中，我们会说，这个地方
有一种‘松弛感’
赫尔辛基和阿尔托大学就是这
样的好地方。
在这里我度过了非常好的时
光。”



And don't forget,

CLIMB HIGHER

