RESEARCH SUMMARY

ABSTRACT

My enquiry explores how individual perceptions of a shared text can be collectively constructed, visualised, and experienced through interactive graphic systems. Through iteration and user research, my project has shifted from attempting to accurately translate imagination into fixed imagery, to investigating how interpretation can evolve and remain open within a constrained participatory visual environment. My work also critically responds to contemporary AI image generation by proposing an alternative model grounded in authored assets, constraint, mediation, and human interaction rather than automated visual production.

My work has developed iteratively across coding, interaction design, illustration, animation, and web-based participation. In earlier stages of the project, I prototyped ideas using Figma and p5.js, then developed a rule-based platform using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript that translated written descriptions of a poem into generated visual scenes. User testing revealed significant limitations with this approach, particularly the difficulty of capturing perception through language alone and the flattening of imagined atmospheres into static and fixed imagery. In response, I redirected the project towards a more visually interactive and movement-based system.

My most current platform allows users to construct lively, animated scenes by arranging pre-designed visual assets within a digital canvas, mimicking a pond environment from the original Haiku. As users add, remove, or layer elements, the accompanying poem dynamically rewrites itself live while the surrounding visual atmosphere shifts through colour, motion, and interaction. Each contribution can then be published to a collective online archive where animations, poems, and interpretations accumulate over time, transforming my project from an individual act of translation into an open, shared and evolving ecology of interpretations.

Moreover, my project is relevant to graphic communication design practices concerned with interaction, systems, digital media, and participatory environments. It also engages wider discussions surrounding collective authorship, procedural design, online communities, and alternatives to automated image generation. By positioning graphic communication as something temporal, collaborative, and continuously evolving, my work contributes to contemporary conversations around how meaning is constructed, mediated, owned, and shared within networked digital spaces.

CONTEXT

My work situates itself within contemporary graphic communication design practices that embrace interaction and participatory forms of making, moving away from static visual transmission and fixed outcomes. My position has been shaped by a range of projects and texts that both align with and challenge my own approach, in particular, Umberto Eco's 'The Open Work', Claire Bishop's 'Artificial Hells', and Johanna Drucker's 'Graphesis' helped shift my focus towards constructing communication through user interaction, procedural systems, and temporal change. At the same time, my project positions itself against contemporary AI image generation, instead operating as a human-designed environment where meaning remains unstable and continuously reshaped through participation.

A key theoretical foundation for my work is Umberto Eco's concept of the "open work". Eco argues that "a work of art is never really 'closed', because even the most definitive exterior always encloses an infinity of possible 'readings'" (Eco, 1989, p.24), essentially framing artworks as inherently incomplete structures activated through interpretation. While this provides a useful starting point for understanding variability in meaning, my project expands on his argument by operationalising openness through a designed digital system where users actively construct the work through interaction with a structured set of visual elements and rules instead of simply interpret a fixed work in multiple ways. This process was also influenced by Tim ingold's writing on lines and movement, particularly his understanding of meaning as something produced through ongoing processes of navigation and relation rather than fixed representation. However, this shift also exposed a limitation in Eco's model when applied to computational environments, where interpretation is inseparable from the systems and interfaces that shape how meaning can emerge.

This tension was further developed through Claire Bishop's critique of participatory art in Artificial Hells. Bishop challenges the assumption that participation is inherently "democratic", highlighting instead how participatory systems often conceal uneven distributions of control, authorship, and agency (Bishop, 2012). This critique became central to the role of participation in my project, because while the system appears open to user input, it is fundamentally structured through authored assets, predefined animations, and rule-based transformations. Instead of treating this as a limitation, my project embraces it as a deliberate design condition. Her framework helped me position my work within a changing space between openness and control, so participation is carefully mediated. This also complicated ideas around "relational aesthetics", particularly the assumption that participation alone can generate meaningful social exchange. Instead, my project focuses on how interaction is structured and framed through design.

My third key reference, Johanna Drucker's 'Graphesis', further expanded my enquiry by positioning graphical systems and interfaces as active producers of meaning rather than neutral containers for information. Drucker argues that digital environments shape interpretation through their underlying structures, procedural logic, and modes of interaction. This thought became especially important in understanding my project not as a representation of a poem, but as a system through which interpretation is generated. Her distinction between generative and representational forms also connects closely to early hypertext systems such as Ted Nelson's Xanadu project, which imagined .

non-linear and interconnected forms of reading long before contemporary networked interfaces. This hypertext system was brought up again by a visiting practitioner at CSM regarding my project, which influenced the idea of generating a new poem by the user based on what they added or removed from the pond scene. Overall, my intention for meaning to emerge through accumulation, layering, and interaction across a shared digital environment, where users continuously reshape the relationships between text, image, animation, and interfaces was heavily informed by these three texts.

In terms of specific practices, my project is situated within computational graphic design, creative coding, and interactive web-based systems. It has been developed using HTML, CSS, and JavaScript, positioning it within a lineage of browser-based experimental design practices that treat the web as a generative and participatory space instead of a static publishing platform. This aligns my work with contemporary digital design networks that explore interaction, animation, and procedural systems as core communicative tools, embedding control through tool limitation while providing creative agency to the user. However, unlike purely generative or AI-driven systems, my project maintains strict authorship over its visual assets, ensuring that all imagery is human designed, curated, and controlled rather than machine-generated.

My project is also situated within broader discourses of participatory media and networked authorship. While participatory frameworks are often associated with relational aesthetics, their implementation in digital environments raises specific questions about agency, control, and visibility. In this context, my project operates as a hybrid system: it invites user participation but within a clearly defined visual and procedural language, prompting the user to actively explore their thoughts and inspire creativity through limitation. This creates a tension between openness and constraint that is central to its design logic.

My project also responds to the increasing normalisation of AI-generated visual content within creative industries. Rather than competing with automated systems in terms of scale or output, my project projects itself as a slower, more deliberate alternative grounded in mediation, interaction, and collective authorship. Furthermore, this positions my work within a critical professional context where questions of authorship, automation, and visual culture are increasingly urgent. Moreover, my work is embedded within systems of online participation and distributed networks of users, as the inclusion of a collective archive transforms individual interactions into a shared evolving dataset of interpretations, effectively producing a networked visual ecology. This shifts the role of graphic communication design into designing the conditions under which collective meaning can emerge over time.

Overall, my project is situated at the intersection of interactive design systems, participatory digital art, and critical computational practice. It engages with theoretical frameworks of openness and participation, while critically repositioning them within a constrained, authored, and anti-automated system of visual communication.

PROJECTED CONTRIBUTION

My project currently contributes to graphic communication design by repositioning the discipline away from the production of fixed visual outcomes and towards the design of interactive, participatory systems in which meaning is constructed through user engagement. Instead of treating communication as a linear process of delivery, my project frames it as a dynamic and evolving conversation between system, user, and collective archive. In doing so, I'm expanding my role as graphic designer from image-maker to system designer and curator of conditions for interpretation.

Practically, my work demonstrates how constrained visual systems and procedural interaction can be used to construct shared environments for meaning-making without relying on automated image generation, which is particularly significant in the context of increasing reliance on AI-driven tools within creative industries today. By deliberately rejecting generative AI in favour of authored visual assets and rule-based creativity, my project proposes an alternative model of digital production grounded in transparency and intentional design, showing how complexity and variability can still be achieved through structured systems rather than algorithmic automation.

In a theoretical sense, my project contributes to ongoing discussions around authorship, participation, and the instability of interpretation in digital environments, also building on the idea of open systems while critically reframing them through the lens of constraint and authorship, arguing that "openness" in digital design is always shaped by underlying structures and decisions. The inclusion of a collective archive further extends my argument by positioning interpretation as something accumulative instead of static or individual.

Professionally, my project has greatly developed my skills in creative coding, user interface design, and system-based visual communication using HTML and visual design tools like Figma or Adobe Suite. This was something I was actively seeking as someone coming from an illustration background looking to move into the digital space. More importantly, beyond the limits of this course, my approach offers a foundation for continued work in interactive media, participatory design systems, and web-based artistic platforms that engage audiences as co-authors.

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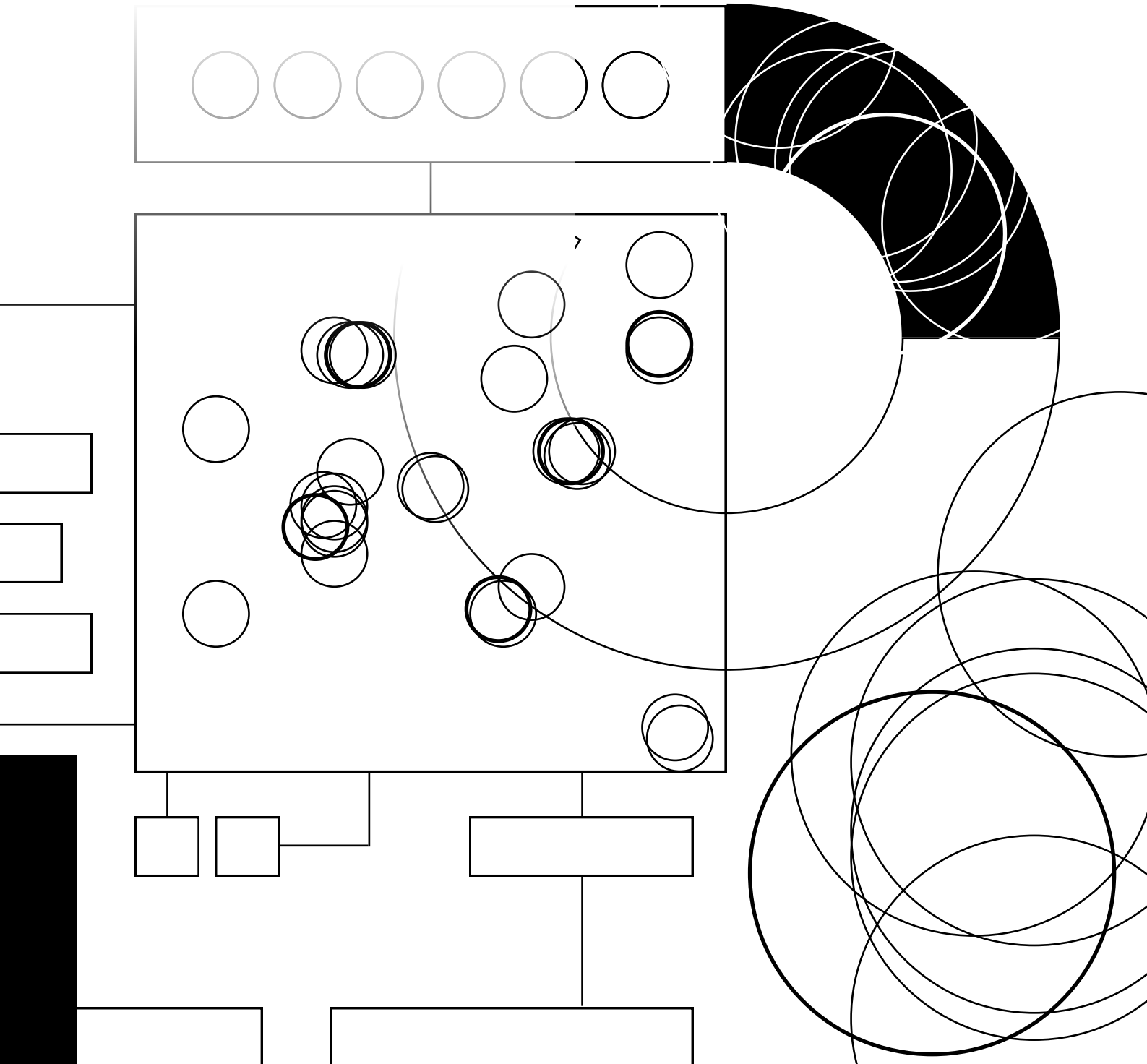
MINI READER

READING THE OPEN SYSTEM

THÉA DUBOIS



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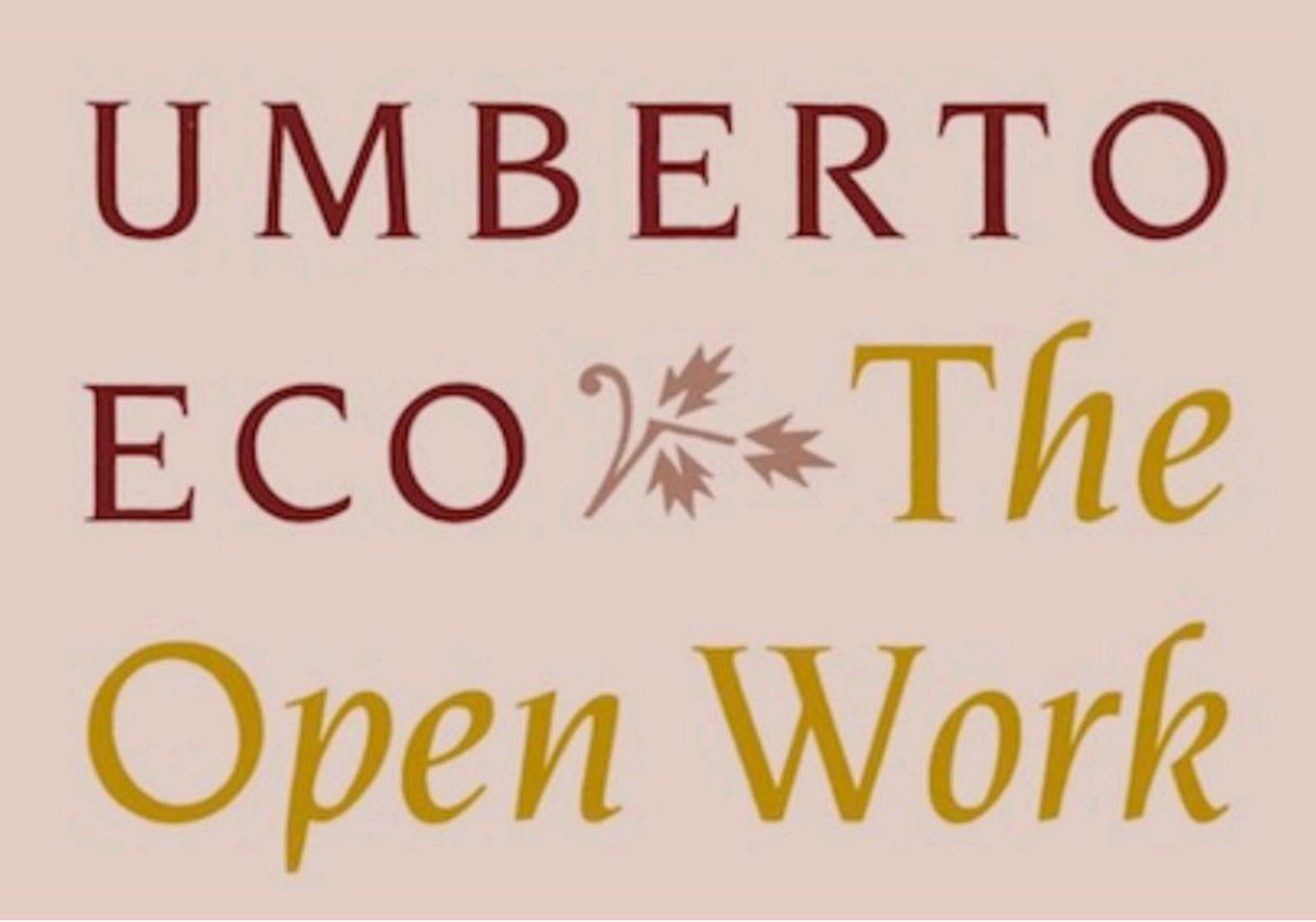
INTRODUCTION

This reader brings together three key texts that have shaped the development of my project: Umberto Eco's The Open Work, Johanna Drucker's Graphesis: Visual Forms of Knowledge Production, and Claire Bishop's Artificial Hells. While each text approaches art, design, and participation from different angles, they collectively form a shared concern with how meaning is produced through structure rather than fixed content.

Across these readings, interpretation is consistently framed as something active, situated, and shaped by conditions of production. Eco establishes the idea that openness is not simply multiplicity of meaning, but something embedded within the structure of a work. Drucker extends this into digital and graphic environments, where systems, interfaces, and data structures actively generate the conditions for interpretation. Meanwhile, Bishop critiques how participatory practices distribute authorship and agency, revealing how even "open" systems remain structured by control, roles, and institutional frameworks.

These texts have informed the direction of my design project on The Old Pond, supporting the shift from fixed outcomes towards constructing systems in which meaning is produced through interaction. This reader does not aim to summarise each text independently, but to position them in relation to one another as a way of thinking through how interpretation operates within designed environments and in relation to my own project and system.



> The poetics of the open work is an expression of such a historical possibility: here is a culture that, confronting the universe of perceivable forms and interpretive operations, allows for the complementarity of different studies and different solutions; here is a culture that upholds the value of discontinuity against that of a more conventional continuity; here is a culture that allows for different methods of research not because they may come up with identical results but because they contradict and complement each other in a dialectic opposition that will generate new perspectives and a greater quantity of information.

(Eco, 1989, p.83)

Eco's concept of the "open work" shifts away from fixed meanings in art, instead suggesting that multiple interpretations can exist at once rather than resolving into a single reading. This idea influenced my project to move away from generating fixed visual outcomes, towards the idea that openness is not only interpretive but structural, where the platform itself can be designed to remain variable and unfinished through participation, supporting a participatory system.

Therefore, I leaned towards enabling users to construct their own animations and poems, which accumulates within a collective archive of continuously evolving and sometimes conflicting outcomes, producing a myriad of interpretations for a single poem.

Contemporary poetics proposes a whole gamut of forms—ranging from structures *that move* to the structures *within which* we move—that call for changing perspectives and multiple interpretations.

But, as I have already pointed out, a work of art is never really "closed," because even the most definitive exterior always encloses an infinity of possible "readings."

If we want to pursue our analysis of the "openness" proposed by contemporary poetics, and establish the degree of novelty it has brought to the historical development of aesthetics, we must first find out what, in fact, distinguishes the intentional "openness" advocated by contemporary art movements from that which we consider typical of all works of art.

(Eco, 1989, p.24)

The distinction between the natural openness of all artworks to interpretation and the intentional structural openness of contemporary works suggested to myself that while any work can generate many outcomes, "open works" are specifically designed to remain variable through participation, movement, and changing perspectives.
This guided the development of my project when I realised the outcomes became more interesting when openness existed within the system itself, rather than only in the audience's interpretation of the poem. My platform was therefore redesigned to stay structurally open, allowing users to actively construct and transform visual and textual outcomes through iterative interaction.

In its advocacy of artistic structures that demand a particular involvement on the part of the audience, contemporary poetics merely reflects our culture's attraction for the "indeterminate," for all those processes which, instead of relying on **a** univocal, necessary sequence of events, prefer to disclose a field of possibilities, to create "ambiguous" situations open to all sorts of operative choices and interpretations.

In the first place, I believe that poetics in certain cases reflects, in its own way, the same cultural situation that has prompted numerous investigations in the field of information theory. Second, I believe that some of the methodological tools employed in these investigations, duly transposed, might also be profitably used in the field of aesthetics (as we shall see, others have already done this).

(Eco, 1989, pp.44-45)

I wanted to treat openness in a more operational way, inspired by how Eco frames openness as interpretative possibility still dependent on a pre-existing structure of information. It is not just about allowing different readings of the poem, but about building the rules, assets, and constraints that actively produce those readings.

Information theory tries to calculate the quantity of information contained in a particular message. If, for instance, on August 4 the weather forecaster says, "Tomorrow, no snow," the amount of information I get is very limited; my own experience would have easily allowed me to reach that conclusion. On the other hand, if on August 4 the forecaster says, "Tomorrow, snow," then the amount of information I get is considerable, given the improbability of the event. The quantity of information contained in a particular message is also generally conditioned by the confidence I have in my sources.

Information is, therefore, an *additive* quantity, something that is added to what one already knows as if it were an original acquisition.

In fact, information should be first defined with the help of much simpler situations that would allow it to be quantified mathematically and expressed in numbers, without any reference to the knowledge of a possible receiver. This is the task of information theory. Its calculations can suit messages of all sorts: numerical symbols, linguistic symbols, sound sequences, and so on.

Eco's use of information theory sits in tension with my work, as it treats meaning as something linked to novelty and expectation, but this idea risks reducing interpretation to a measurable probability. On the other hand, my system treats information as something produced through interaction, where each action (adding, removing, or layering elements) changes the state of the work and therefore its meaning.

Additionally, my platform reframes communication as a structured system instead of focusing on transmitting a message, moving the emphasis away from what is being communicated and instead on how it is organised and generated through interaction.

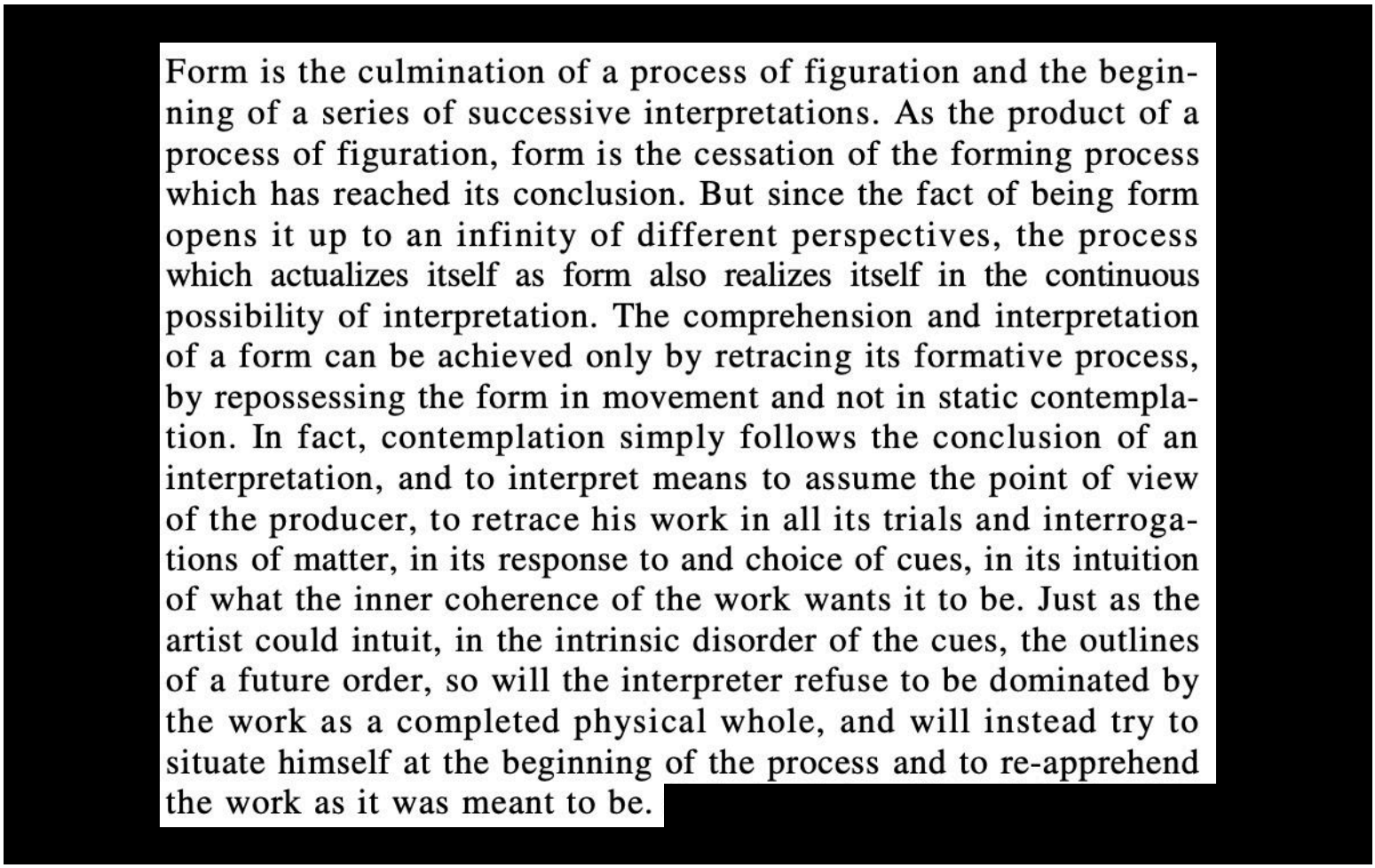
Eco also describes perception as a fluctuating process shaped through the interaction between observer and observed. This was an interesting detail for me, as it shifted from the idea of a fixed representation of reality. Here, he suggests that meaning is not inherent in what we see, but in what emerges through a continuous negotiation between different possible configurations.

"If we compare different points of view . . . then we realize that one of the fundamental characteristics of perception is that perception is the result of a process *of fluctuation* that involves a continuous exchange between the disposition of the subject and all the possible configurations of the object—configurations that are more or less stable within a more or less *isolated* spatiotemporal system characteristic of that particular *behavioral episode* . . . Perception can be expressed in terms of probability, like those used in thermodynamics or in information theory." Consequently, the percept is none other than the temporary stabilization of a sensible configuration resulting from the more or less redundant organization of useful information that the receiver has selected from a field of stimuli during the perceptual process. The same field of stimuli can yield an indeterminate number of more or less redundant patterns; what Gestaltists call the "right form" is such a pattern, the one that "requires the least information and the most redundancy." Consequently, the "right form" corresponds to the "maximal state of probability of a fluctuating perceptual whole."

(Eco, 1989, p.81)

This process could be understood as probabilistic, where perception stabilises into a temporary "form" selected from multiple possible interpretations.

In my project, this was realised by a designed system of interaction where users construct visual scenes by adding and removing elements, producing constantly shifting configurations. A key aspect of my work is that each state is temporary, with meaning emerging from the arrangement of components rather than a fixed image.
Eco's "right form" becomes the most legible configuration at any moment, but it remains unstable and can change through further interaction.



(Eco, 1989, pp.163-164)

This excerpt highlights how interpretation is an active process that extends beyond simple reading or critical analysis, as Eco argues that acts like translation, performance, reconstruction, and adaptation are all forms of interpretation, because they re-activate a work by retracing and repeating its formative process under new conditions.

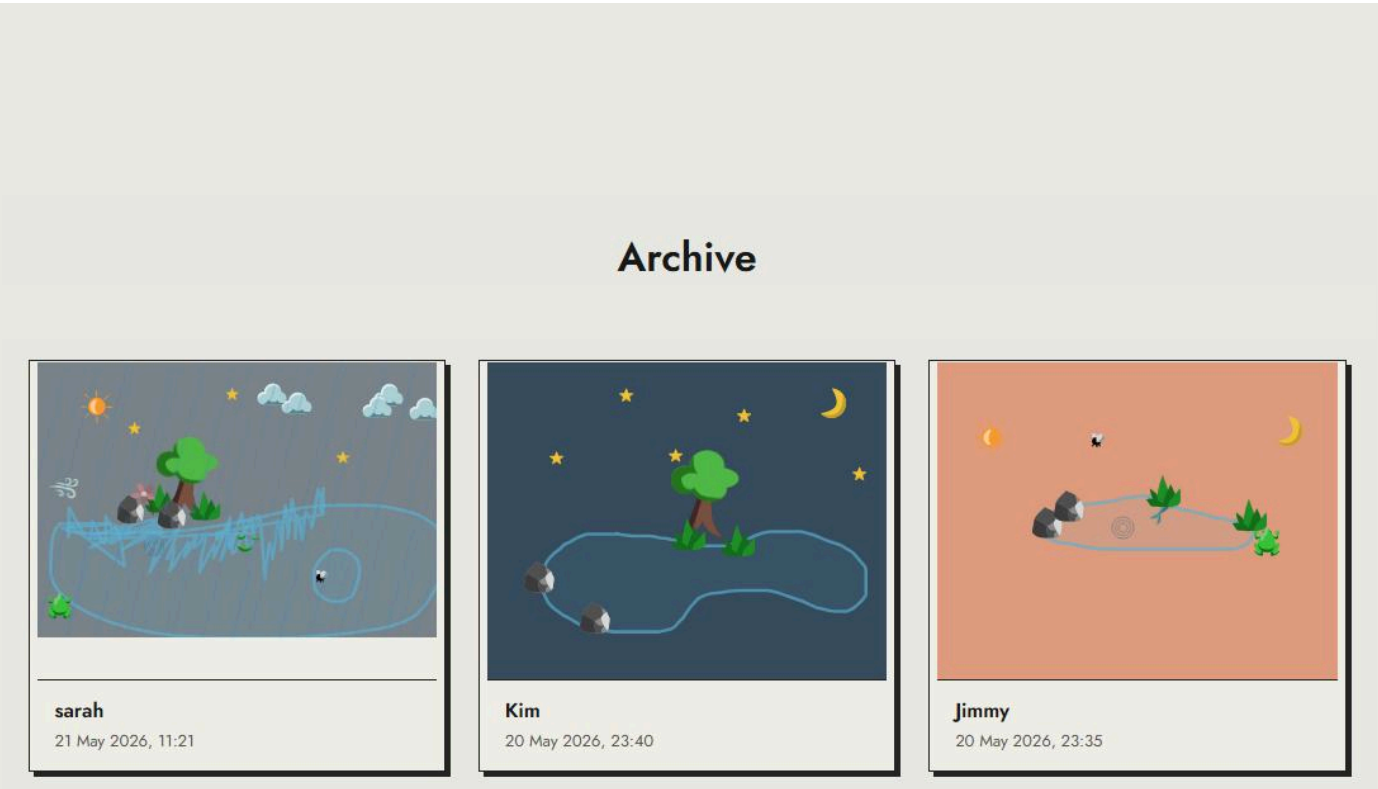
In this expanded view, interpretation in my work is not just a passive reception of meaning. It is a transformation of the work through material, contextual, and procedural shifts that alter how it is experienced and understood by both the participants and viewers. Even when the original structure remains identifiable, its realisation changes depending on how it is re-enacted, meaning each instance produces a slightly different version of the work rather than a fixed outcome.

the difference between the simple reading of a work and a real critical judgment of it is based not on quality but rather on complexity and commitment. They are both interpretive acts; just as translations are interpretive acts, as well as performances, and the transposition of a work into a different medium, and, for that matter, the reconstruction of an unfinished or mutilated work, even—and this might sound like an outrageous assertion, though it is perfectly, if exceptionally, justified by the practice of both critics and performers—the alterations made in a work in the course of its performance.

All these instances involve an interpretation that, retracing a formative process from the very beginning, repeats its outcome even though often under different circumstances.

(Eco, 1989, pp.163-164)

The idea that interpretation is not understood as reading a fixed text but as constructing a version of it through interaction is central to my work. User testing revealed to me that users do not respond to a completed work; instead, they actively re-make it through the selection and arrangement of visual elements within a designed system.
Each outcome is therefore both a repetition and a transformation of the same underlying structure, with meaning emerging through variation across multiple user-generated creations.



(Figure 1. Example User-Generated Interpretations)

the hallmark of an artistic orientation towards the social in the 1990s has been a shared set of desires to overturn the traditional relationship between the art object, the artist and the audience. To put it simply: the artist is conceived less as an individual producer of discrete objects than as a collaborator and producer of *situations*; the work of art as a finite, portable, commodifiable product is reconceived as an ongoing or long-term *project* with an unclear beginning and end; while the audience, previously conceived as a 'viewer' or 'beholder', is now repositioned as a co-producer or *participant*. As the chapters that follow will make clear, these shifts are often more powerful as ideals than as actualised realities, but they all aim to place pressure on conventional modes of artistic production and consumption under capitalism.

(Bishop, 2012, p.2)

Bishop describes a shift in participatory art from fixed artistic objects towards open-ended systems shaped through audience involvement. In her example, the artist becomes a producer of situations rather than discrete outcomes, while the audience shifts from passive viewer to active participant. Like Eco's concepts, this framework relates to my project, where users construct animated visual interpretations of a shared poem within a structured interactive environment. The work exists not as a singular finished outcome, but is continuously evolving as a collective system shaped through participation and accumulation over time, since each user contribution adds to and alters the overall geography of the work.

The objective of Roberts and the core group of *What's the Time in Vyborg?* wasn't simply to offer an aesthetic or intellectual experience to an outside public but to facilitate the creation of a temporary community engaged in the process of solving a series of practical problems. The project aspired to have a real efficacy in the site in which it came to happen. Accordingly, any valuation of it should be at the same time artistic and ethical, practical and political.[29]

Bishop often critiques participatory art practices that prioritise social or practical outcomes over aesthetic experience, arguing that "success" is often measured in terms of real-world impact rather than artistic value, using critic Reinaldo Laddaga's comments on *What's the Time in Vyborg?* as her reference to highlight a division between participants and external audiences, suggesting that participation does not necessarily produce equal or unified forms of engagement.

This perspective is quite relevant to my work as users construct interpretations of a poem within a structured system that produces both an interactive experience and a visual archive, raising questions about how participation is valued, and whether meaning is produced through aesthetic form, social interaction, or system functionality.

important tropes: the division between first-hand participants and secondary audience ('temporary community' versus 'outside public'), and the division between artistic goals and problem solving/concrete outcomes.

aesthetic experience is 'simply' offered, compared to the implicitly more worthwhile task of 'real efficacy'. This uneven inclination towards the social component of this project suggests that contemporary art's 'social turn' not only designates an orientation towards concrete goals in art, but also the critical perception that these are more substantial, 'real' and important than artistic experiences.

the point of comparison and reference for participatory projects always returns to contemporary art, despite the fact that they are perceived to be worthwhile precisely because they are non-artistic. The aspiration is always to move beyond art, but never to the point of comparison with comparable projects in the social domain.[30]

(Bishop, 2012, p.19)

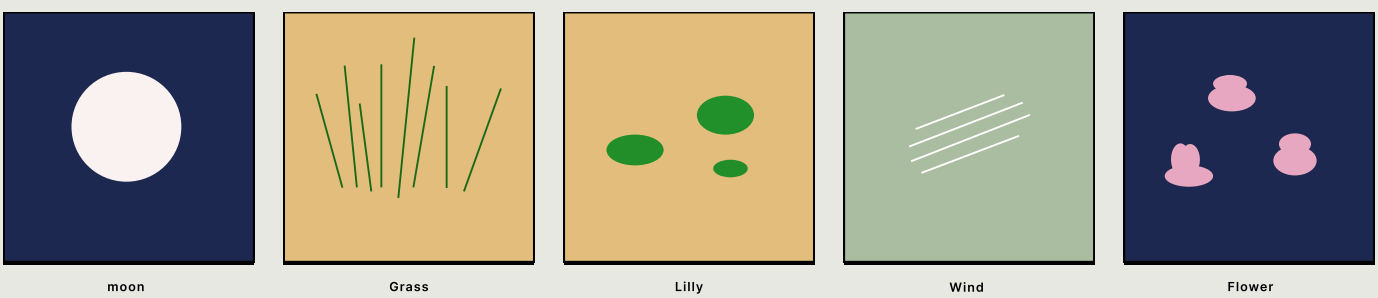
The best-known example of this tendency is unarguably Tino Sehgal, who is adamant that his practice not be referred to as 'performance art' but as 'situations', and that his performers be referred to as 'interpreters'.[9] While his insistence is somewhat pedantic, it nevertheless draws our attention to the scored nature of Sehgal's work, and to its relationship with dance: as every critic of his output has observed, the artist was trained in choreography and economics before turning to visual art. *This Objective of That Object*, for example, places the viewer within a highly controlled experience: as you enter the gallery, five performers with their backs turned to you urge you to join in a discussion on subjectivity and objectivity. The performers tend to be philosophy students, but their semi-scripted dialogue comes over as somewhat depersonalised and rote, and any contribution you make to the debate feels self-conscious and hollow, since it is impossible to alter the work's structure, only to assume your role within it. (If you remain silent, the performers wilt onto the floor until a new visitor enters the gallery.) Although Sehgal makes a point of renouncing photographic reproduction, his works seem actively to tear apart any equation between liveness and authenticity; indeed, the very fact that his work runs continually in the space for the duration of an exhibition, performed by any number of interpreters, erodes any residual attachment to the idea of an original or ideal performance.

(Bishop, 2012, p.224)

Bishop earlier described participatory works as structured "situations" where audiences are invited to take part, but only within predefined roles and constraints. Although these works appear interactive, the underlying structure remains fixed, meaning participants operate inside a system they cannot fundamentally alter.

This highlights how participation can be carefully choreographed to produce a sense of agency while still maintaining authorial control within my project. Therefore, users construct visual interpretations of a poem through interaction with predefined animated elements, and meaning emerges through guided interaction instead of open-ended authorship.

CHOREOGRAPHED PARTICIPATION



(Figure 2. Example Element Background Influence)

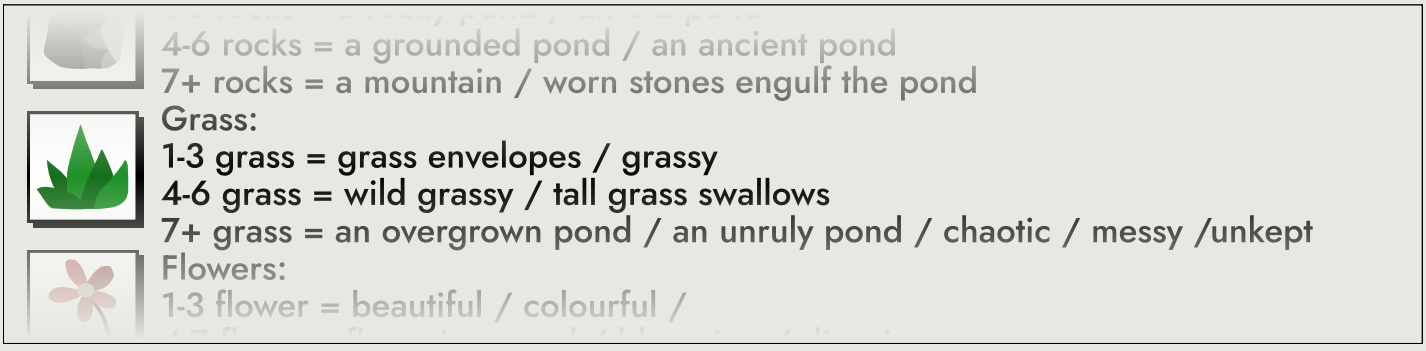
The emergence of the term 'project' to describe the new social orientation of art emerges with full force at this juncture. 'Project Unité' self-evidently references this shift by referring to its entire enterprise as a 'project', with all the connotations of an architectural project that organises social relations. In the catalogue for 'Sonsbeek 93', Valerie Smith states that she would like to include 'collaborative *projects*, which would directly question the idea of a single artistic identity and celebrate collective creativity': 'In "Sonsbeek 93" artists are penetrating institutions. They take on another role, like . . . working in a prison, making a radio narrative, making a work where you have to eat a meal in a restaurant.'[35] Although Mary Jane Jacob doesn't define the term 'project', it is her systematic word of choice for the eight practices she presented in 'Culture in Action': all are embedded in real social systems and involve participation with lower class or marginalised communities. On a formal level they are uncertain in their beginnings and endings, and impossible to represent visually through photographic documentation. In terms of a social goal, the projects in 'Culture in Action' are also somewhat contradictory: on the one hand, they express an activist desire to be interacting directly with new audiences and accomplishing concrete goals; on the other, they do this through an embrace of open-endedness, in which the artist is reconfigured as a facilitator of others' creativity.

(Bishop, 2012, p.205)

The idea of the "project" emerged as a dominant model in socially engaged art, where artistic practice shifted from producing objects to organising ongoing social and participatory systems. In this reference, the artist becomes a facilitator rather than a sole author, embedding the work within real social contexts and open-ended processes.

However, Bishop also highlights a tension within these practices, where claims of openness and collaboration remain structured by artistic frameworks and institutional conditions, alluding to Eco's work in a similar way. This duality is relevant to my project because participation is enabled through a designed system of constraints and possibilities, and openness is always shaped by the underlying structure of the platform itself.

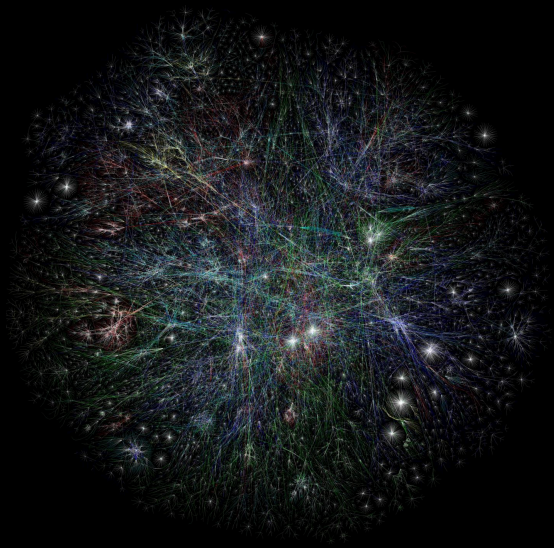
ARTISTIC FACILITATION



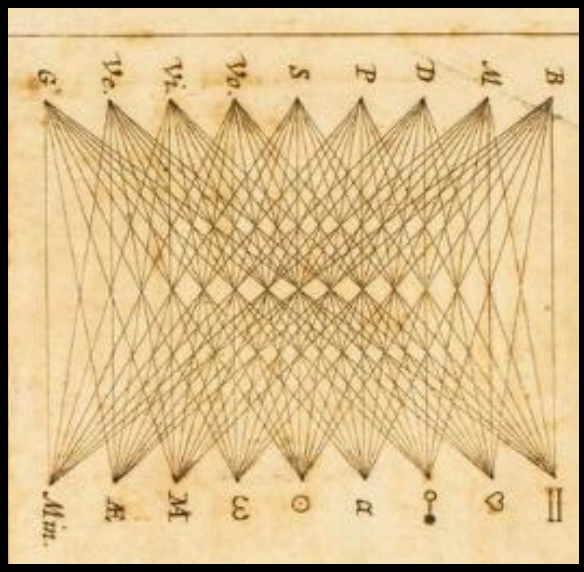
(Figure 3. Example System Keyword Design)

Johanna Drucker

Graphesis
Visual Forms of Knowledge Production



(Figure 4. Barrett Lyon, The Opte Project, Mapping the Internet 2003)



(Figure 5. Combinational Knowledge, Athanasius Kircher's 1669)

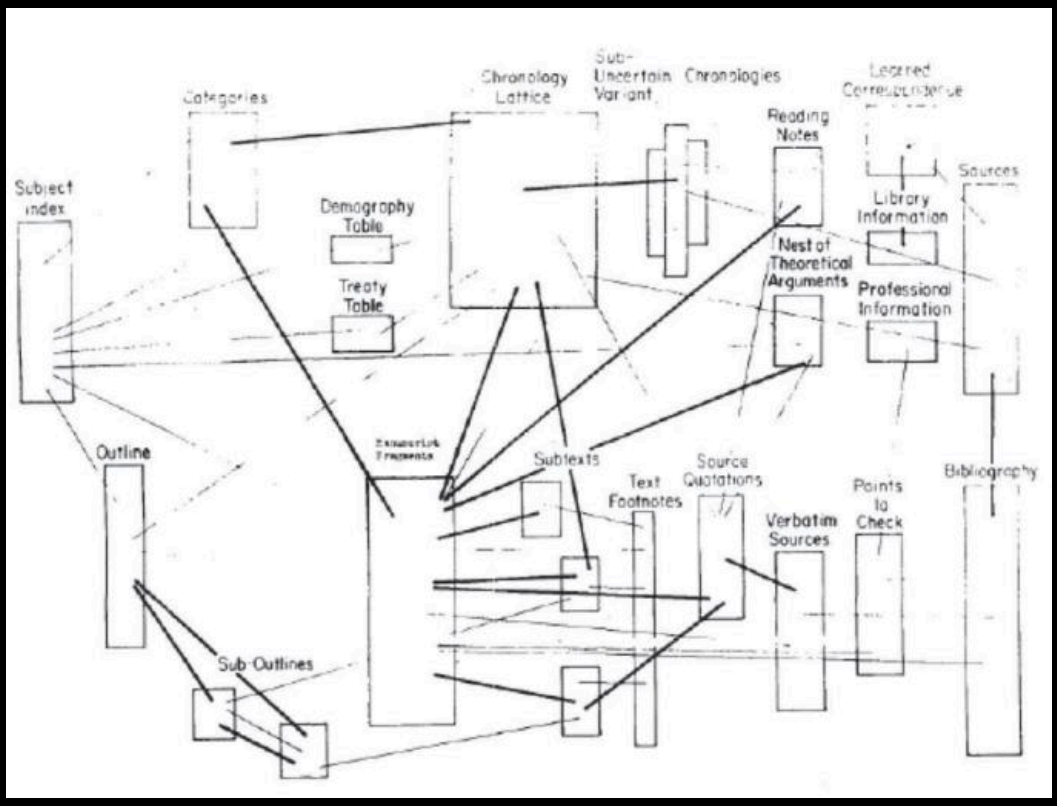
> At first these two images seem remarkably similar. Both appear to be representations of knowledge networks made of points and lines. But one was first published in 1669 by Athanasius Kircher as a demonstration of the system of the medieval mystic Ramon Llull's "great art of knowing." The other was created more than three hundred years later. Generative, diagrammatic, dynamic, Kircher's image produces the knowledge it draws. By contrast, the recent image of Web traffic only displays information. It is representation of knowledge, not a knowledge generator, whose graphic display conceals the decisions and processes on which it was based. Kircher's image was generative and dynamic by contrast to the fixed representational image it resembles.

(Drucker, 2014, pp.2-3)

Drucker distinguishes between generative and representational diagrams: generative systems produce knowledge through their structure, while representational systems simply display information and obscure the processes behind their production, much like AI today. Visual form therefore operates either as an active producer of meaning or as a passive reflection of it.
In relation to this text, my system functions as generative rather than representational, making this distinction quite important as interpretation is not pre-existing within the work, but produced through the system's operations, and therefore challenges contemporary use of AI in image generation.

VISUAL ELEMENT SET

(Figure 6. Visual Element Set)



(Figure 7. Ted Nelson, Xanadu file structure 2007*)*

Drucker's argument that contemporary digital environments are structured by systems and interfaces which shape how content is produced and understood, often without critical awareness, is an important point to note when designing my system, especially considering AI. My platform doesn't have neutral tools as I generate the conditions through which meaning is formed, driven by underlying data structures, APIs, and procedural rules.
In this context, design becomes a generative framework rather than a representational act, producing forms of content that emerge through the logic of the system. This perspective is important as it actively determines how users can construct, combine, and transform visual elements within the system.

> These ways of working have become so integral to our daily practice that we barely pause to consider their structuring principles or effects.
>
> Now hypertext seems quaint, its tropes evoke nostalgia rather than future visions. Augmented displays and networked databases that produce real-time texts from protocols that are geo-spatially located, or triggered by data profiles and personae, or other automated processes, make hypertext seem like child's play in an early sandbox of digital imaginings. Nonetheless, our critical engagement with database rhetoric as a compositional mode lags behind. The notion of creating content types to undergird creative or even critical scholarly writing and shaping discourse production as an extension of data formats is only the province of a few experimental writers or scholars. Digital display and the behaviors afforded by APIs, application programming interfaces, have generated the aesthetic vocabulary that drives most new forms of textual production online. Back-end conceptu-

(Drucker, 2014, p.172)

To imagine new intellectual forms of interpretation is also to design the spaces and supports that structure interpretative acts. If the armature of print, now much imitated in electronic environments, has organized argument to accord with its conceptual capacities, then what will the emerging features 181 of networked and digitally supported interpretation be like?

Reading graphical environments in analog or digital space and spatializing arguments through graphical means are two aspects of graphic interpretation. The first is a form of critical literacy, the second a compositional activity.

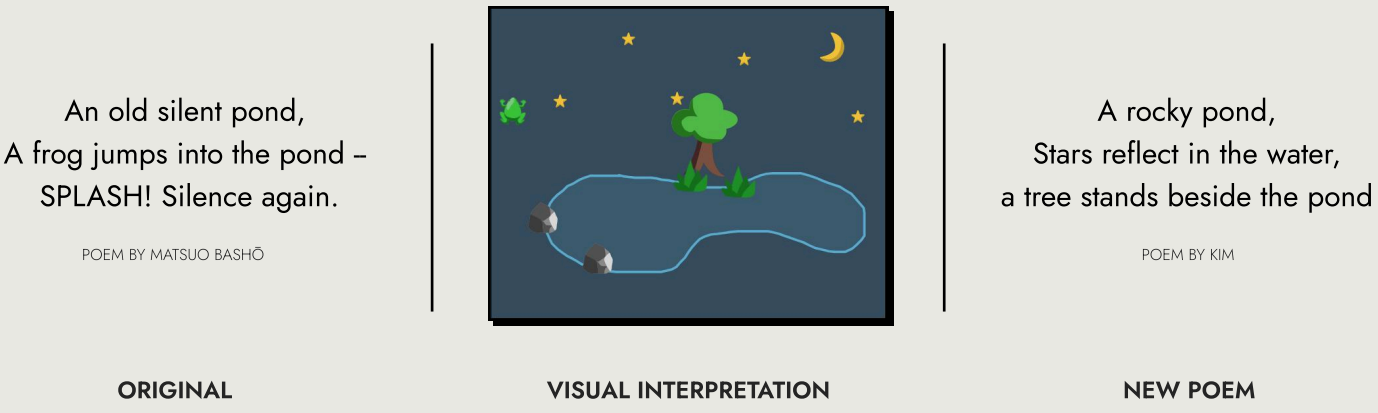
(Drucker, 2014, p.180)

Interpretation is not only a cognitive act but is shaped by the designed environments in which it takes place. This is a shared argument that has been repeated in different ways across all three of my references in this reader: interpretation is structured as much by systems as by perception. This has therefore heavily informed how I approach my own work, leading me to redesign the spatial and structural conditions through which users generate meaning within the system.

Drucker situates this shift within a move away from print, which historically organised argument and thought, towards networked and digital environments that actively produce new interpretive structures. In this context, interpretation becomes inseparable from composition, as both reading and making are enacted through engagement with designed graphical systems.

In my project, this takes the form of a rule-based interface where users build interpretations of a poem by working with a set of predefined visual elements. Rather than meaning existing in advance, it is generated through the act of using the system, where each interaction reshapes the relationships between image, text, and structure.
Overall, these texts have led me to understand interpretation less as something that happens after a work is made, and more as something produced through the systems that organise how we engage with it.

RULE-BASED INTERPRETATIONS



(Figure 8. Rule-based interpretation flow)

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LIST OF FIGURES