

Selling Tiny Ideas: Spreading Awareness of Interactive Art Installations
Through the Adaptation of Small Projects

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A thesis exhibition presented to OCAD University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Design in Digital Futures

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2023

Selling Tiny Ideas

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Abstract

Selling Tiny Ideas is an ongoing study that explores the possibilities within transforming the prototype-like projects of artists into sellable products. The research study will record and investigate the process that a project may go through from developing the prototype to market research and conceptualising the procedure for potential amateur and emerging artists. The investigation takes into consideration the physical transformation of the object as well as the business perspectives of a common sellable product. With each project released into the world, new approaches to merchandising will be acquired, adding more pertinent information to the small but existing database. Specifically, the study will investigate interactive artworks as a catalyst for inspiration, but the knowledge acquired can pertain to artists of other categories. The creative outcome, *Selling Tiny Ideas* will be presented as three sellable products inspired by three different student-created interactive art installation projects. Overall, the thesis aims to explore new perspectives on adapting and merchandising existing installation-based artwork.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express thanks to my primary advisor Alia Weston and secondary advisor Nicholas Puckett for their valuable expertise and suggestions in the process of navigating the treacherous waters of this thesis project. It was their encouragement and professional knowledge that helped me complete this quest. I'd also like to thank OCAD faculty, Cindy Poremba and Emma Westcott for their feedback and comments on the development of this project. This accomplishment would not have been possible without your support.

I would also like to thank my cohort and friends for helping me find last-minute participants and having faith in me and my project.

And to my parents for their understanding and care.

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Author's Definition of Terms

The following terminology: *artist*, *audience*, and *product* have been frequently referred to throughout this thesis paper. Subsequently, this section will briefly outline what these terms denote when confined to this given context. Note that these definitions are for reference and not definitive to who would find this research useful nor indicative of the limits or potential of the findings of this study.

The Artist:

According to various sources, an artist is generally considered to be a person with the talent and skills to conceptualize and make creative works [1]. These artworks may take many forms including but not limited to architecture, ceramics, digital art, drawings, mixed media, paintings, photographs, prints, sculpture, and textiles. In certain contexts, artists will also refer to individuals who may also hold titles such as an artisan or craftsperson. Artisans or craftsperson are generally identified as 1. individuals who produce decorative arts derived from an idea that is not their own, or 2. individuals who create their own designs but works in materials traditionally associated with craft art like fashion jewelry or glass blowing. Generally, individuals who identify as members of the second category will find the perspectives of this study more relevant.

In the following paper, the author also refers to two categories of artists: 2D artists and 3D artists, with 3D artists being relevant to the investigation in question. The author wrote the paper with the understanding that 2D art is artwork possessing length and width, such as drawings or paintings [2]. 3D art is art with dimensions of height, width, and depth, and possibly occupying and interacting with a certain space [3]. This can include artworks like sculptures or installations. Amateur and emerging artists were also identified as categories of artists in which the paper studied and pertains to. In general, the study is more useful to artists with fewer initial resources

available to them who are likely to identify themselves as amateur or emerging artists. When referring to resources, this could include start up funds, access to information or anything that may limit the size of the initial business plan.

The Product:

This research study acknowledges the individuality of each artist and the variety in products that can be created. The results of the products created from the experimental exploration component of this study can be identified as decorative miniatures and smaller 3D adaptations of existing 3D artwork. However, artists can choose to focus on product functionality or marketing their products as souvenirs depending on the needs and wants of their fan base. The items produced can take the form of a décor item that could be placed on desks, shelves and tables or be more functional like a nightlight, lamp, or humidifier. In general, the study advocates for the creation of aesthetic miniature adaptations of existing artworks and will identify the benefits and opportunities of doing so through primary and secondary research.

Audience: The audience or potential consumers of the artist's products are explained as mainly populated by members of the artist's existing fanbase. This can include the artist's social media following as well as anyone who knows of the artist's works through other means such as word of mouth. The reason that artists will find their target consumers from their existing fanbase is because this group already enjoys the aesthetics and/or meaning behind the art or brand that they create. Since these potential customers already resonate with the shared values of the artist's original work, they will be more likely to purchase a miniature adaptation of the work. Oftentimes this group will possess a range of budgets and offering products at lower prices than the original can help artists reach audiences who have less money to spend on art related expenditures.

A probable consumer might be someone who has visited the artist's installation or viewed the artist's artwork on social media through photographs and/or videos and enjoyed the experience

or understood and felt a connection with the meaning behind the piece of artwork. After this occurrence, the potential consumer might wish to keep a memory of the experience, or they may want to advocate for the meaning behind the artwork since it aligns with their own values through purchasing a related item. In addition, the audience might just happen to want to purchase an item of that use (for example, their desk looked empty, and they were looking for a décor piece to fill the space) and will be more likely to purchase the artist's design compared to a more common product due to the uniqueness and symbolic value of the product. As well, the artist advocating for their own designs can potentially increase the audience's awareness of the product and help them notice it amidst the saturated market of modern times.

Since consumers may already own items of certain functionality, exploring the possibilities within creating a variety of 3D products from 3D art installations helps widen the possibilities. In addition, the audience might have different perceptions of what they could envision occupying their home or office space and it would be beneficial for artists to offer more product selections at varying price points to accommodate their preferences.

Platforms that artists can use to showcase their products can include social media like Instagram shopping, global online marketplaces like Etsy, or the artist's own website. Artists can also sell their products in person at markets or events. Artists can decide where their audience is depending on their branding and where they are likely to find most of their fan base. The platforms mentioned in this paper like Etsy and selling through social media are all beginner friendly and requires little initial investment. Therefore, artists relevant to this study may find these and similar platforms more feasible and useful.

1.0 Introduction

The thesis project: *Selling Tiny Ideas* studies the feasibility of adapting existing interactive installation artwork into sellable merchandise. Throughout the study, three pieces of artwork will be assessed and prototyped into reproducible products (see example Figure 1). Insights gained from this research design process will demonstrate the value of transforming artworks so that they can be accessible to a wider audience.

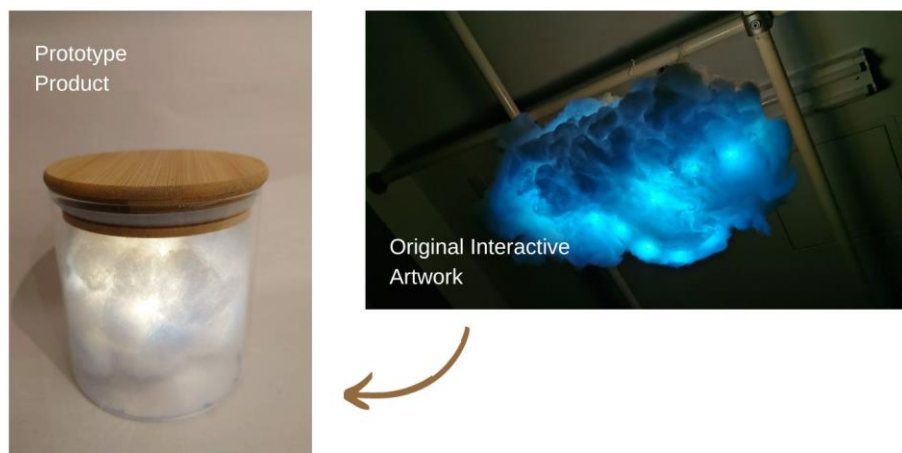


Figure 1: Cloud Lamp Product (left) adapted from “*There’s Magic in the Air and it’s called Bluetooth*” Interactive Artwork made by me and project members in 2021 (right)

1.1 Background and Context

With the rise of the digital age, social media and print-on-demand services have changed and redefined the way artists do business. Within the past year alone, over 80% of the generation Y cohort bought art online with half of these same buyers stating that they use Instagram for art-related purposes (Simianer, 2016). In addition, artists are no longer constrained to selling just the original piece. Artists can also earn money by merchandising, which is the process of

reproducing art on another surface to create a sellable product (Tingum, 2016). For example, Japanese American artist, Audrey Kawasaki, who does a lot of complicated portrait paintings on wood; also sells T-shirts and enamel pins (Audrey, n.d.). However, due to the nature of enamel pins, Kawasaki simplifies the pieces into more definable lines and colour sections so that they can be portrayed on the small object. Similarly, another Instagram artist, Lora Zombie, has created a huge product collection based on her paintings including apparel, tarot cards, sketchbooks, and stickers (Lora Zombie, n.d.). In most of these cases, the artists must alter their artwork slightly to accommodate the merchandise's dimension or material requirements. Turning artwork into prints and merchandise is a great way for artists to earn money for what they do. It also allows them to spend more time and energy on their pieces when they know that their artwork can generate continuous or additional income. However, in most of these cases, the artists work at a 2D scale and therefore very little adaptation is needed to turn their pieces into items like prints. However, one can imagine that this process is a lot more complicated and challenging for artists who work at a 3D scale.

The emergence of print-on-demand services has indeed created a huge change in the art industry, allowing products to be created as they are sold (Bosch, 2017). These services are a great tool for 2D artists to allow them to quickly merchandise their artwork without needing to incur inventory and start-up costs. This means that even emerging and amateur artists can easily commodify their artwork. Although operating at slightly lower profit margins, the reduced overhead significantly lowers the risks that artists take on should they choose to begin selling these reproductions ("*13 Benefits*," 2021). However, a quick look at the current print-on-demand platforms available shows that their main target user is 2D artists and almost all customization options only take into consideration the display of artwork at a 2D scale ("*Artist-designed*," n.d.).

The lack of print-on-demand resources available for 3D artists essentially means that emerging and amateur artists will find it more difficult to attain this extra revenue stream and additionally

reach a wider audience. Note that artists with an adequate level of recognition for their artwork and access to more resources may not associate with these challenges.

As an amateur artist myself who produces artworks ranging from drawings and paintings to sculptural pieces and interactive artworks; my personal experience has been that it is much easier to find the resources and tools I need to merchandise my 2D artworks. For example, a quick google search of “how to turn paintings into prints,” or “how to turn artwork into stickers” brings up numerous results: from print companies who can do the work for me to YouTube tutorials that explains the steps in detail. But, searching for “how to turn interactive or installation artwork into products” results in very few relevant articles.

So, why is it so important for artists to consider merchandising and providing this option?

According to Daniel Grant, an author and contributing editor of the *American Artist* magazine: even when looking at widely acclaimed artists like Picasso: “only a small fraction of art collectors ever show interest in owning something the Spanish artist created, let alone are able to afford it. Other fractions of the market exist for miniatures...for that reason” (Grant, 2022, p.xii).

Essentially meaning that in order to target a wider audience and maximize profit, artists need to create corresponding solutions. This thesis study can act as a reference for artists who have a financial goal in mind.

Throughout the thesis, I will be addressing this predicament by exploring ways in which 3D artists can participate in ways of monetizing artworks with little to no start-up costs. Interactive installation art of this category will be used for prototyping and shown to potential consumers for user testing in order to gain insights into the research question posed in this thesis.

1.2 Research Question

How can interactive art installations be successfully adapted into a smaller, sellable product, which creates more value for the artist and the buyer/audience?

1.3 Overview

In Chapter 2 of the research paper, objectification and monetization will be studied through secondary research to better understand the relationship between interactive installations, the participant, and everyday objects. As well, it will outline the challenges that artists face in the business environment. This knowledge will then be used to experiment and transform the central concepts of these interactive art installations into sellable adaptations in later Chapters. Noted, Chapter 3 of the paper will briefly explain the methodology used to explore the research question. Chapters 4 and 5 will discuss in more detail the prototyping and user testing components respectively, providing examples and primary data. The outcome of the project will be explained in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7 will summarize the learnings gained throughout the thesis and conceptually apply them to a broader context.

2.0 Contextual Review & Literature Review

2.1 Contextual Review

Entrepreneurship in the arts is an evolving influence that goes beyond just helping artists acquire business skills (Roberts, 2012, p.62). Roberts explains that with the influx of competition due to the rise of social media, success in the field of art requires true innovation like blending genres to create something truly distinguishable. Creating merchandise, and discernible

products is an approach that can help artists win the entrepreneurial game. Not only can it provide artists with a relatively stable extra source of income, but it also encourages fans to engage more with the artist's content and can even turn fans into ambassadors for their unique brand (Khan, 2022). In this Chapter, I will start the conversation by discussing artists who have successfully expanded their area of sale. This may involve creating product lines centred around their art brand or introducing reproduced limited editions of their artwork. The artist's mediums range from 2D to 3D work and their products are also hybrid in nature, exploring a variety of possibilities. Note that the artists explored in the contextual review are all very well known, and their successes demonstrate the potential of merchandising and its upper limits. Less successful artists and their merchandising efforts will be explored in the case studies section of Chapter 5.

i. **Mr. Doodle**



Figure 2: *Making his mark* (2017) by Robert Dex
<https://www.standard.co.uk/culture/artist-doodles-all-over-walls-of-the-exhibitionist-hotel-in-kensington-a3562696.html>

The famous Mr. Doodle (real name: Samuel Cox) is an English artist who is known by this pseudonym because he doodles all day (Garnica, 2019). Cox brands himself as the “crazy cartoonist from England.” His work consists of consuming drawings on any surface “as if it were an artistic virus” (Figure 2). He and his art are very well

recognized, especially on social media. Mr. Doodle has an online store where he sells various products sporting his infamous doodles. His creations have caused a lot of movements and are able to adapt to the world of fashion, art, furniture design, urban art, and graffiti (Garnica, 2019).

Although Mr. Doodle does sell some of his original art, his focus is on building his “Doodleland” brand of merch, collaborations, and sponsorships (Cavalier, 2021). What’s worth studying about Mr. Doodle is the way he has created a brand around his artwork, making every single one of his products truly recognizable. An artist is confined by the physical time and space that they have and can only do so much in a given time. But an *artist brand* can go above these limitations and travel to all corners of the world in the form of merch (Cavalier, 2021).

Mr. Doodle’s success exemplifies the importance of branding and merchandising. As the artist’s social media presence grows and his works amass a substantial fanbase, this creates numerous potential consumers and the demand for products that are available in larger quantities and varying price points. Another reason this artist’s merchandising efforts is a worthy study is that the artist’s doodles tend to take up entire walls of space which means that the product designs must be altered to some degree.

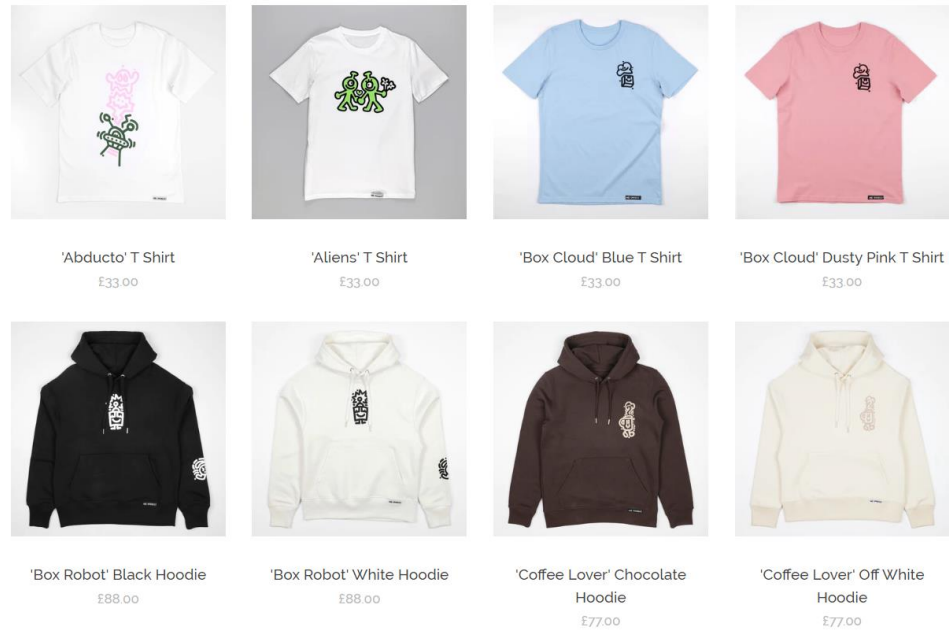


Figure 3. Screenshot from *mrdoodleshop.com*

Mr. Doodle's clothing brand generally only flaunts one section or one symbol from his drawings (Figure 3). However, despite this simplification, the products are still recognizable as designs created by the artist. Mr. Doodle's product represents a 2D-to-2D transformation in which his doodle drawings are printed on a relatively flat surface, although some changes were made to accommodate the size and style of the product, the modification is relatively easy. In the next section(s), we will talk about a 3D artist and their product design concepts.

ii. Daniel Arsham



Figure 4: Daniel Arsham a key figure in contemporary art
<https://blog.artsper.com/en/get-inspired/daniel-arsham-the-artist-breaking-the-rules-of-art/>

Daniel Arsham (Figure 4) is a New York-based artist whose practice centres around sculpture and utilizes various elements of art and architecture to complete his performance (“Daniel Arsham,” 2017). Much of his work explores the distortion of forms whether that be environments of eroded walls, stairs going nowhere, and large landscapes where nature overrides structures. Arsham’s pieces are typically black, white, or shades of grey and common themes within his works are corrosion, calcification, and glitches.

Arsham has collaborated with a number of brands like Adidas, Dior, Porsche, and Pokémon to create unique products and installations (Ebert, 2022). The artist’s works are easily recognizable, and his timeless works make him very influential in street culture. His collaborations are very successful and tend to generate a lot of attention for himself and the partnering brand (Nicholson, 2020).



Figure 5: *Crystallized Pikachu Future Relic Blue* (2020) by Daniel Arsham
<https://www.artsy.net/artwork/daniel-arsham-crystallized-pikachu-future-relic-blue-daniel-arsham>

One of Arsham's marketing tactics is creating limited edition products where there are only a certain number of pieces introduced worldwide. Each edition is verified with its edition number and authenticity ("*Arsham Editions*," n.d.). For example, his blue *crystallized Pikachu* was limited to 500 worldwide and priced at \$2,100 each (Figure 5). Many of Arsham's products are made of resin and aluminium oxide and are cast from a hand-sculpted version (Beard, 2020). Essentially this means that more versions of this product can be made available for sale, however, Arsham deliberately chooses to limit the number of creations he releases into the world as part of his pricing strategy. As with basic economic knowledge, scarcity can lead to an increase in demand and a greater sense of perceived value (Luth Records, 2023).

Arsham's success exemplifies that this may be a good strategy for artists as it may be difficult to completely commodify certain artworks. Worth mentioning is that Arsham normally does a lot of larger-scale installations, but he specifically creates smaller-scale works like the *crystallized Pikachu* with reproducing them in mind. These smaller

versions are similar to his installation work in style and topic but much simpler. This is interesting because the artist is specifically creating original artwork with merchandising in mind, and the design progress is worth studying when considering the creation of art-inspired merchandise.

iii. Takashi Murakami



Figure 6: Takashi Murakami in front of his work by Grailed
https://www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/close_look/the_psychedelic_world_of_takashi_murakami-5204

Takashi Murakami is a famous Japanese contemporary artist who creates paintings, sculptures, and films populated by repeated motifs (Figure 6). Inspired by Japanese painting, sci-fi, anime, and the global art market, the artist creates mutating characters of his own design (“*Takashi Murakami*,” 2018). One of the characters he is famous for is the *Takashi Murakami Flower* which is a smiling flower with various colour variations that is well recognized and can be found in fine art, pop culture and commercial products. Murakami sells many products inspired by the popular flower design and one of them is the Murakami flower plushie (Figure 7), a popular collectable (“OWITY,” 2021).



Figure 7: Screenshot taken from Takashi Murakami Plush Figures <https://stockx.com/takashi-murakami-collectibles/plush-figures>

The flowers have also been featured on album covers and celebrity goods like hoodies and t-shirts. It is not often that you see artworks like paintings being turned into merchandise like plushies. However, Murakami's successful marketing of this product substantiates the potential of adapting artworks into popular conventional items. Murakami's plushie product is an iconic example of the translation of form: turning a 2D painting into a 3D common household item. It proves that creative means can transcend medium when designing products. This product is worth studying because even though its material and form have changed, the plushie is still very recognizable as Murakami's flower. And the preservation of the central meaning within a piece of artwork when adapting it into another form will be explored further in the experimental phase of this thesis project.

iv. Random International

Random International is an art group that is well-known for large-scale interactive art installations ("*Random International Biography*," n.d.). The group was founded in 2005 by Hannes Koch and Florian Ortkrass and is now comprised of a global team of talents

whose works range from sculpture and light to kinetics and video. Topics that the art group explores pertain to the impact of technological development on the human condition (*“Random International,”* n.d.). Much of the group’s artwork is experimental in nature and fuelled by questions like what it means to be alive and possess different views of the world and each other. One of Random International’s ongoing interactive art installations is *Swarm Studies*, which started in 2010 and has since developed into many versions. However, whether it’s *Swarm Studies I* developed in 2010 or *Swarm Studies XIII* of 2018, the core concept remains the same. The installation focuses on a series of individual light sources which can react to a sensory environment with acrobatic efficiency like the flocking of birds. When a person approaches, the swarm alters in different demeanours and paths in reaction. The movement and behaviour of the swarm appear like a natural phenomenon or a group of living creatures reacting to human activity (*“Swarm Study,”* 2010).

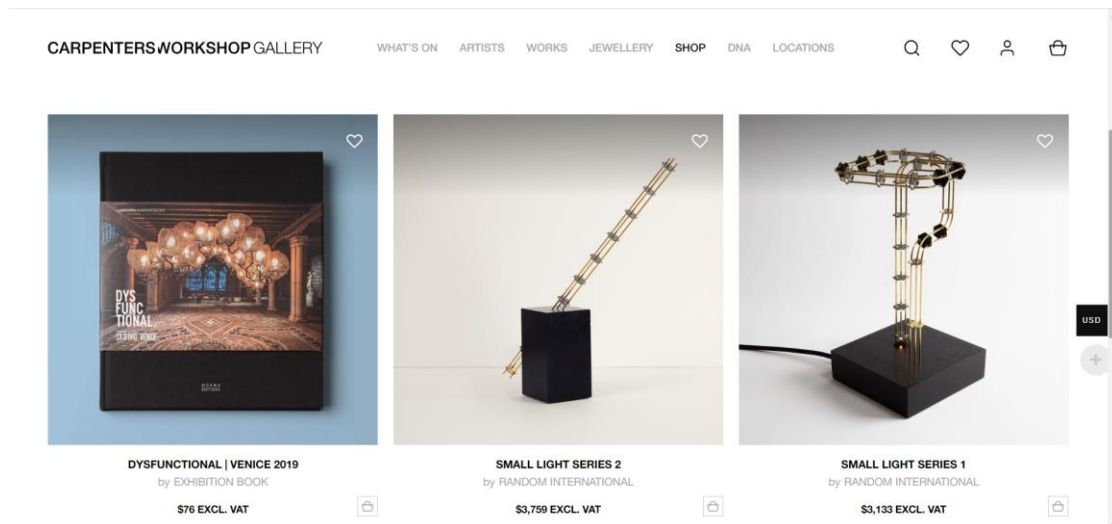


Figure 8: Screenshot taken from *CarpentersWorkshop Gallery*
<https://carpentersworkshopgallery.com/artists/random-international/shop/>

Random International has very few products available for their fans. Currently, the art group only has one type of product for sale which is the *Small Light Series 1 & 2*. This

type of product is inspired by the *Swarm Study* series and similarly explores ways in which light can embody movements like living entities. The work focuses only on one aspect of the original art installation and the expressive qualities of its core medium which is light ("*Random International: Shop*," 2023). Perhaps most relevant to this thesis study, this example explores the possibilities and design aspects of transforming an interactive art installation into a smaller, functional product. At \$3,000+ the product that Random International designed provides a very good high-end reference for the research question at hand. But on the other hand, the lack of variety in products inspired by interactive art installations even by such a famous art group shows that there is still an absence of quality ways in which interactive art installations can be transformed into sellable merchandise.

v. Insights from the Contextual Review

The contextual review reveals that many famous artists offer some sort of merchandise option for their fans and there are varying ways they can go about doing so. Different from the original, products derived can be offered at various price points. This also allows more variety in the buyer population as fans can choose the variation of product and the amount of money, they would be willing to pay. The review also shows that creating merchandise from existing artwork does not devalue the original. Instead, the merchandise can act as a form of engagement factor that can help hype up the original. This phenomenon is seen very explicitly in Mr. Doodle's case with his "Doodleland" endeavour. The examples presented also show that these types of artist-created merchandise can sell for a higher price than products of similar function. For example, Murakami's flower plushie is being sold for prices ranging from \$145 - \$989 ("*Buy Takashi Murakami*," 2023).

Referring back to the research question [Chapter 1.2], it can be seen that the success of these products demonstrates the potential and value of adapting artwork into smaller, sellable versions of themselves. In addition, Random International's example shows that this adaptation can also be conducted on interactive art installations although the resulting products lack variety in terms of styles and price. A similar interactive artist group: Humans of 1982 who is known for producing thought provoking sculptures and experiential installations, also creates similar smaller products that can be purchased ("*Humans since 1982*," n.d.). The main type of product they offer is the ClockClock 24 series which is a kinetic sculpture and wall clock ("*ClockClock*," n.d.). The clock sculpture products sell for prices starting at \$8,900-\$15,100 depending on its edition. Although these interactive art groups are a great reference for the adaption of form, amateur and emerging artists would probably be looking to offer products at lower prices in correspondence to their fanbase.

Generally, the artists studied in the contextual review are all very successful individuals and groups who can partner with large companies and brands. However, not all artists have the same amount of investment and resources available to do the same.

Therefore, a possible solution may be to take on more of the designing and creation process themselves. Examples of this will be explored further in Chapter 5.1.

2.2 Literature Review

The literature review consists of several sections which are essential in helping understand the context, necessity, and practicability of the research question posed in this study. The first half of the review will research and discuss artists' relationships to business, marketing, and merchandising. This will consist of identifying gaps in resources and opportunities as well as exploring the elements of successful product designs which will be used to understand the

potential and criteria of an artist's merchandising efforts. The latter half of the review will define interactive art installations and identify the challenges that this particular group of artists may face. Specifically, the engagement element of interactive art installations will be investigated to better understand the most crucial piece of this type of artwork. Finally, the review will attempt to draw connections between these two very different areas of knowledge and strive to unveil opportunities within transforming interactive art installations into sellable objects.

i. Artists as Entrepreneurs

Karen Munnelly (2022) reveals: "many artists find themselves in the role of an entrepreneur and small business owner as they manage multiple overlapping jobs" (p.1). And it is the reality that often artists have to engage in contrasting activities to fund their practice. Even in a preparatory setting such as art school; over the years, the "demand for interdisciplinary courses" has increased (Roberts, 2012, p.53). And it is shown that the infusion of entrepreneurship within the arts in program offerings at universities is beneficial and can help artists gain important skills that they will need in the future. The educational shift towards business practices within art shows that business knowledge is important to artists and may help give them a competitive advantage. So, what is the connection between artists and business?

Although most art graduates enter their careers with the expectation that their acquired training will lead to something tangible, it often ends up leading only to partially related fields like arts administration or art teaching where their work is less than practising art (Grant, 2022, p.ix). Even worse is the end of the entire art career for some, despite having gone through so much school for it. According to Grant, this phenomenon is "[s]imply because one doesn't know how to pursue a career in art" (p.ix). The author goes on to explain that although business and art appear unrelated, successful artists are often ones that know how to commit to business tasks like developing marketing plans, establishing the correct pricing strategies, and delivering

quality sales pitches. But because these intangible skills are not always taught at schools prior to artists having to enter their careers, many artists are “unaware that they have choices, or that they have more than one way to achieve success” (p.x). And by success, the author has defined it as the ability to make a living solely from art-related activities. Consequently, artists need more readily available resources to help them understand the art world and the opportunities within it. Artists need to learn more about the different options that they have and understand how they can develop strategies suited for themselves so that they can compete in the marketplace. Especially as new technology emerges, the traditional way of how artists earn money is behind the times and many successful artists have adapted to new strategies for generating income from their artwork (p.71).

As explored in the contextual review, many artists have selected to create merchandise based on their artwork as a way of creating profit. For some artists, merchandising is just one source of their many revenue streams, while for others it may be their main source of income or the way they engage with their audience. Either way, it does create an extra option for artists. An artist must learn to find their market and expand the varieties of art they offer to capture consumers’ attention in this saturated market (p.xii).

ii. The Art of Product Design and Branding

Like mentioned in the previous section, artists need to know how to develop strategies for carving out a market for themselves. Art is often perceived to be a luxury item because of the rarity and expensiveness of art (“*Art as Luxury*,” n.d.). Artists should try to understand how they can continue to convey similar values when merchandising. Like seen in the contextual review, some artists can do so by creating limited edition products and focusing on identifiable visual similarities between the merchandise and the original artwork. According to researcher Takumi Kato (2021), design aesthetics is seen to play a major role in product design and even

influences the perceived value of products (p.671). Hence, the researcher mentions that designers should take into consideration design aesthetics when developing valuable premium products.

It will also be important for artists to understand what elements influence product appearance and choice. In another similar study done by Creusen and Schoormans (2005), it was found that product appearance plays a large role in consumer choice and is an opportunity for differential advantage (p.64). Findings from the study showed that six different roles of product appearance (communication of aesthetic, symbolic, functional, ergonomic information, attention-drawing, and categorization) are important in influencing product choice. These six items, although not always co-existing, are all elements which create value for customers and help give a quality impression. These six categories were tested with a large qualitative study (N=142) which verified the importance they played in consumer choice. Communication of aesthetic and symbolic functions is found to be the most important and influential. This study shines insight into why some artist merchandise sells so well, as artists' products are more likely and can more easily incorporate these characteristics.

As mentioned, the aesthetic value of a product is seen to be very important to consumers; although this criterion is subjective at times, the article has defined it as pertaining to pleasure derived from seeing the product. Essentially something that is beautiful is rewarding in itself, and when comparing products or similar function and price, consumers will prefer the one that is most appealing to them (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005, p.65). In addition, the study found that consumer goods which hold symbolic meaning also encourage product selection and can even cause consumers to select them against products with clearly inferior tangible qualities. Another thing worth noting is that a product can communicate symbolic value just through its appearance, although other strategies like advertising and ambassadors can be used (Creusen & Schoormans, 2005, p.66). This shows that artwork inspired by art installations is likely to sell

well as they meet these requirements, especially in terms of symbolic value. Derived from a piece or pieces of artwork and designed by the artist, the product can easily be unique and aesthetic. Artists' merchandise can be designed to preserve the original meaning of the artwork resulting in perceived symbolic value.

Because of the success of many artists' merchandising efforts, researchers Rodner and Kerrigan (2014) even states that there is a lot that mainstream businesses can learn from artists and the creativity within building an art brand (p.101). Key findings from their study show that innovative and dynamic art brands are more relevant, and lessons learned from the creative process can help managers develop brand strategy. According to the researchers, artists have the ability to foster various types of capital (social, cultural, symbolic) when developing a brand which can translate to financial value. Generally, the market looks quite promising for artists, especially those with somewhat of an existing fanbase to create and design products which align with their art style. And the demand for aesthetic products and their existing consumer base can give artists an edge over other products of similar functions.

iii. Understanding Interactive Art Installations

Interactive art is a category of art that requires engagement and is designed to respond to the actions of interactants (Krzyzaniak et al., 2022, p.1). The pieces are often visual or sonic in nature and involve some sort of technology which allows the artwork to respond to movements, sound, or another sort of input. The flow of information between the interactant and the installation is central to the artwork, and the artwork is not complete when presented alone. An interactive art installation may take the shape of an event and instead of creating a final piece, artists will create an activity area for the audience to participate in (p.1).

Advancements in technology have caused interactive art to become more and more prevalent ("*New technologies*," 2023). Interactive art first came to life in the 1970s, when artists were

searching for new ways of communicating with their viewers with the goal of bringing art closer to daily life. During this time, many different groups of artists were interested in this form of art because it demanded active participation from the audience and the role of the observer was augmented; “break[ing] the boundaries between life and art” (“*What is interactive art,*” 2022).

So what will happen when active participation with the art piece is reduced? Most likely in any sort of adaptation, the interaction will not be as effective as the original. As seen with the *Small Light Series* products derived from Random International's *Swarm Study* installations: to scale down the product, there were significantly fewer lights involved and the human movement factor was removed; making the experience less immersive [see section 4 of the 2.1 Contextual Review]. So will this negatively impact the user experience? According to researchers Bilda et al (2008), experiential goals are not task-specific (p.529) and the type and level of creative engagement that happens with interactive installations can vary depending on the individual who interacts with them (p.525). The study explains that recent trends have “begun to focus on fun, pleasure, goodness and beauty as experiential goals” (p.529). Similarly, the audiences’ appreciation of interactive art goes beyond usability and it is seen that they can solely appreciate aesthetics and other qualities depending on their personal trait. Consequently, factors can be missing from the adaptation, whilst users’ understanding of the piece remains intact. This makes creating adaptations of interactive art installations appear more plausible; as size, cost, technology, and other factors may create limitations for how many elements of the original can be included.

iv. Impact of Environment on Interactive Art

In any sort of adaptation, the interactive art installation will have to be removed from its original environment, whether that be a gallery or exhibition. The resulting product will likely be placed in a home or office environment which will be very different from its original intention. Fortunately,

studies have shown that social context is more important than space when inducing engagement (Akpan et al., 2008, p.2213). As defined by the researchers Akpan et al., space is defined as the geometric structure that enables or constrains certain types of behaviours, whereas place (social context) refers to the way that space gains social meaning over time through interactions with it. This means the memories, experiences, norms and patterns of behaviour associated with the space. In this study, participants engaged with the same interactive installation in ten situations with varying spatial and social properties. Essentially, the study found that a conducive social context can overcome a poor physical space when inducing engaging interaction. The audience's general understanding of the piece is very relevant and encourages active participation (p.2221). This demonstrates that an interactive piece's success is not rooted in its situated location and an adaptation can exist in a different location but still encourage engagement given that the social context of the piece remains intact.

As mentioned, it appears that interactive installations can exist in various forms. However, what about interactive installations in environments such as domains of work, recreation, culture, and leisure? With recent advances in interactive technologies, there have been efforts to introduce interactive environments in these sectors (Morrison et al., 2007). The study which is based on evaluations of two fieldwork studies found that ludic engagement is generally useful, and non-use engagement in interactive art installations can be useful in certain work-related situations (p.509). The study pertained more to employees of art-technology sectors, but the researchers mentioned that it will be harder, but not impossible to apply the usefulness of ludic engagement to a more general audience. Although comparatively, findings from the research showed that functionality and efficiency will be more important in a non-gallery environment which misaligns with the goal of supporting a playful, ambiguous, experimental experience that interactive artists often have in mind, this is not definitive or indicative that these supporting elements are not useful (p.509). Essentially, this research indicates that creating products which create ludic

engagement is functional and relevant to users in various contexts. In addition, since many interactive installations don't have functionality and efficiency in mind, some of these elements can be incorporated into an adaption of the product so that the merchandise derived from the original can be incorporated into an everyday setting.

In general, this section provides insights into the possibility of removing the locational and environmental element of art installations to help understand the feasibility of transforming art installations into everyday products. The meaning that different spaces in which interactive art can exist were explored. When bringing interactive art installations out of their original environment, maintaining the meaning/social context of the product is important, and what makes this process achievable.

v. Concluding Thoughts from the Literature Review

Throughout the literature review, we have discussed the importance and opportunities of creating art-related merchandise. We have also examined interactive art installations and how their concept allows for a simpler adaptation that can exist within a different environment. But how can we utilize the findings from these two areas of study to make connections?

Well, a summary of findings from the literature review shows that artists need to consider merchandising in order to keep up with emerging trends and practices. In addition, products that provide aesthetic and symbolic value are preferred by consumers, and artist brands regularly communicate aesthetic, social, cultural, and symbolic value. Now, as advances in technology cause interactive art to become more widespread, interactive artists should also consider merchandising to increase their revenue. Later sections of the review found that the removal or simplification of interactive art elements will not alter most users' understanding and thus appreciation of the work. In addition, context or meaning is found to be more important than the environmental habitat the artwork resides in. These two points show that an adaption of an

interactive art installation will still maintain the user's interest and therefore is an opportunity for artists to consider.

Petrelli et al (2016) who conducted a study on "*Tangible data souvenirs as a bridge between a physical museum visit and online digital experience*" mentioned that the souvenirs can provide visitors with a reminder of their visit and can encourage further engagement with the subject matter (p.281). This provides some inkling of the potential of selling souvenirs to visitors of an art installation. This paper is important in helping understand what materialistic takeaways and reminders of interactive art installations mean. However, the study was inconclusive as to consumers' willingness to uptake these souvenirs due to outside factors such as exhibition layout and signage which influenced the results (Petrelli et al., 2016, p.293). But the study did mention that it may be worth pursuing for museums to devote effort to these post-visit experiences.

Overall, findings show that creating merchandise from interactive art installations is feasible and even desired. However, from just secondary data it will be difficult to understand how the process can be done, therefore Chapter 4 will explore this in more detail. As explained in section one [i. Artists as Entrepreneurs] of the literature review, artists need more access to relevant and tangible knowledge and this study will contribute more specific information to the existing data.

3.0 Methodology and Method

It is no secret that art is a career without a straight path to success. In his book, Grant (2022) says: "every known method of attaining career goals that have worked for certain artists, failed for others"(p.x). However:

...throwing up one's hands or waiting for lightning to strike is no answer either. The business side of being an artist means knowing what the options are and making informed choices. Too many artists are unaware that they have choices, or that they have more than one way to achieve success – defined here as the ability to make a living as an artist (Grant, 2022, p.x).

Therefore, in this thesis project, we will be attempting to acquire knowledge through research-creation and thus deliver information in a way that artists can become more aware of the options they have. In this Chapter, the methods and methodology that will be used to acquire knowledge will be discussed. As successful artists already have their own approach to making profit, this research will pertain more to amateur and emerging artists who have fewer resources and options available to them. In particular, the study will investigate how interactive installation artists can introduce new ways of monetizing their artworks into the market through research-creation. With amateur and emerging artists in mind, these methods should not incur a hefty overhead nor need inventory to proceed. Artists who take on more of a romantic view of art may not find this study as useful. Again, worth noting is that there are no right or wrong answers to developing a path to success and artists can find and utilize the information that they find makes sense to them. More than generalized knowledge, this research study takes a look at the possible operating methods of a very specific group of artists by starting with studies conducted on a single artist [Sections 3.1 and 3.2 will explain the methodology used in more detail].

3.1 Research-creation

As a consequence of the difficulty of finding academically proven sources on the merchandising efforts of less recognized artists, this thesis project will employ artistic experimentation combined with academic research and user testing to acquire knowledge on the given topic.

This will allow for more specific and targeted information to be gained. Thus it can be seen that research-creation will be the main research approach of this thesis project.

According to Owen Chapman and Kim Sawchuk:

“Research-creation’ is an emergent category within the social sciences and humanities that speaks to contemporary media experiences and modes of knowing. Research creation “theses” or projects typically integrate a creative process, experimental aesthetic component, or an artistic work as an integral part of a study. Topics are selected and investigated that could not be addressed without engaging in some form of creative practice, such as the production of a video, performance, film, sound work, blog, or multimedia text” (2012).

In my thesis, research-creation will be mobilized through the creative process of prototyping products which are inspired by existing interactive artworks. These artistic products are an integral part of the study.

According to a definition offered on Queen’s University’s recruitment website, a variety of research can emerge from the Research-Creation method, but one might consider that this type of research is a continuum framed by two modalities: research-for-creation and research-from-creation (Murray & Naaman, 2023, para. 5). Research-for-creation is research into a topic where the nature of the output is undetermined and the research process itself can generate valuable knowledge (para. 6). Research-from-creation is where the artist or researcher produces a piece which will be analyzed (this could be via interviews, surveys, etc.) to draw findings (para. 7).

Both research-for-creation and research-from-creation methods were mobilized to complete this thesis study. First, I used secondary research to determine the feasibility and opportunity of

creating sellable products based on existing interactive installations [Chapter 2]. This provided some guiding criteria for conceptualizing the prototyping aspect of the experiment [Chapter 4]. During the prototyping stage, valuable information was learned through the designing and making process. These methods of obtaining knowledge generally fall under the research-for-creation category. Then, following the research-from-creation method; the prototype products which are the piece that is to be analyzed, were shown to participants. These participants then provided feedback from which important insights are drawn [Chapter 5.2 Case Studies].

3.2 Procedure

1. Conducting secondary research

The thesis process will begin with conducting secondary research to provide direction for the experimentation. This knowledge will then be used to experiment and transform the central concepts of these interactive art installations into sellable adaptations. The importance of the secondary research is to validate the feasibility and necessity of this research as well as provide some sort of evaluation criteria for the experimentation phase of the project. [This process is recorded in Chapter 2: Contextual and Literature Review].

2. Collecting Netnography Research

Netnography is a type of qualitative, interpretive research that pertains to studying social media; it is derived from ethnography (Kozinets, 2015). The contextual review component of this research paper exemplifies some very successful examples of artists' merchandising efforts. However, the group studied is not representative of the type of artist who would find the research discoveries of this thesis valuable. In addition, beginning the selling process by creating products through handmade or other similar

methods is not epitomized. Artists who need and will use these options would likely be amateur or emerging artists with a small fanbase and not enough money earned to warrant heavy investment costs. These artists do not have articles or news written about them and will most predominantly be found on social media like Instagram and possess between 2k-500k followers. [A few artists of this category will be discussed in the case examples section of Chapter 5.1].

3. Prototyping Products

The prototyping process will begin by looking at previous interactive art installations that I have created. Concept designs will take into consideration the learnings from secondary research and the research goal of the thesis. After developing the concept, I will test a variety of materials (keeping in mind the cost and replication possibility) and figure out the best supplies that should be used to make each product. Then, I will create a handmade prototype product from the concept developed. This process will be documented and analyzed for findings [this process will be explained in more detail in Chapter 4].

4. Case Studies

Finally, I will conduct primary research to assess user experience. This component will consist of two parts: a survey and an interview. For the survey component, I will recruit 20-30 participants to gain some insights into the population's general willingness to buy handmade and interactive art-related merchandise. [The Survey Questions can be found in Appendix A]. The interview component will involve fewer participants (around 6-8), but try to discover the reasons and details behind answers. In addition, interview participants will be shown the prototype products and asked their thoughts regarding these items. [The Interview Script can be found in Appendix C]. This will give participants something

more tangible to evaluate and critique. [Relevant data gathered and analyzed from these studies will be explained in the Case Studies section of Chapter 5].

4.0 Project/Prototype Chapter

Throughout the thesis project, I have been trying to conceptualize and understand the process of adapting an interactive art installation into a sellable item. The design process is abstract in nature as any artistic pursuit can result in an endless range of possibilities and the transformation of an art piece is no different. At this point in the study, several criteria have emerged that the prototyping concept should take into consideration.

In the introduction section of the thesis, a challenge was posed: what should artists do when fans cannot afford their original painting or are not willing to pay a premium price for it?

Throughout the thesis, we have been exploring the possibility of merchandising as a solution to this issue. This means that the resulting product needs to be much cheaper than its original, and should be able to be produced in larger quantities. In the literature review section, we have also discussed the importance of the aesthetic and symbolic value of a product, especially one pertaining to interactive art, as maintaining the meaning of the piece is an essential element that impacts buyer preferences.

Finally, as the study concerns emerging and amateur artists with the goal of providing a profit option for these artists, the product should be cost-efficient and simple to make. In the following sections, I will be explaining the prototyping process for creating products with these criteria in mind and investigating what it means to be an amateur/emerging artist with few resources at hand.

By investigating a process in which artists can hand make the items they sell; allows artists to provide products to a consumer base as small as one person. Products can be made to order

so that time and cost only accumulates with each order that is placed. This method allows artists to accumulate sales up till they have the capacity to make them. Provided that each product takes the artist 30 minutes to 1 hour to make, artists would be looking at a means of having around 80-200 products available per month that could be available to be sold. Should the demand for artists' products increase beyond this capacity, artists can consider increasing their prices and/or their efficiency [Chapter 7.2 Future Investigations].

4.1 Prototype Product 1: Flower Light



Figure 9: The Flower Light Sample Product Image

A. General idea

Product 1 is the first attempt of its series, and the outcome of the prototyping process is the Flower Light. The Flower Light is comprised of 4 white flowers situated in a small glass dome. Inside each of the flowers is a small red LED that lights up in reaction to its environment.

B. The Inspiration

The idea behind the Flower Light product originated from an interactive art project titled “Flower Pollution.” The “Flower Pollution” project was first created by students Kelly Xu and Siyu Sun for a course assignment. This original piece is made up of a bouquet of white paper flowers in a large glass vase. The flowers are made from fragile tissue paper and inside each flower is a red LED light which turns on when human presence is sensed. The meaning behind the art is to express the destruction that humans have the potential to cause and warn those who get too close to the flowers.



Figure 10: “Flower Pollution” an interactive art piece

C. The Designing Process

Deriving elements of the “Flower Pollution” project, the new design must include as many elements as possible of its original whilst meeting the “sellable” criteria described in the research question. Because the vase of the original project is too large to be shipped safely and/or economically, other replacements have been considered including small glass candle holders, jars, and cups. For the initial design of the product, I decided to go with a dome-shaped glass planter. This is because this planter can be easily

purchased at any dollar store and the curved bottom which is intended to hold soil can be used to hide the wires and Arduino. Various materials were also considered for the flower construct. Because the original interactive project had red LEDs inside the flowers, this meant the material selected had to be translucent. Light has to be able to shine through the flowers, but the LEDs should not be able to be seen from the outside.

After testing various materials, Shrinky Dink plastic was used to create the flowers. This is because this material is highly mouldable and looked the best when a light was put inside of the material. After revising the design of the original, the conceptual product is now easier to handle, place, and construct.

D. The Prototyping Process

In order to successfully adapt the “Flower Pollution” product, several stages of prototyping were done to arrive at the final sellable version of the merchandise.

i. Version 1

In version 1, the interactive element has not been added. The prototype is simply created to determine the size, structure, and visual appearance of the final product. This first model is about recreating an item with resemblance to its original piece at a smaller scale, using cheaper materials. After experimenting with different materials, a creative twist was put on the product to augment its appearance and accommodate room for the wires that had to be attached underneath the flowers which are to use a glass dome to contain the flowers rather than a vase.



Figure 11: Flower Light Version 1

ii. Version 2

In version 2, the interactive element has been added. Red LEDs are now placed within the white flowers which are triggered by a light sensor. Similar to the “Flower pollution” piece, this Flower Light prototype consists of a handful of flower lights that turn red in reaction to human touch and the amount of light in the room. In order to keep the design simple and budget-friendly, a photoresistor was used instead of the proximity sensor of the original product. In order to keep in line with the human touch/presence element of the original piece, the light sensor has been specifically programmed to be de-sensitive. This is so that the continuous red light is only triggered when the user physically covers the light sensor with their finger. This serves to express the same message that humans cause more destruction when they touch or influence nature.

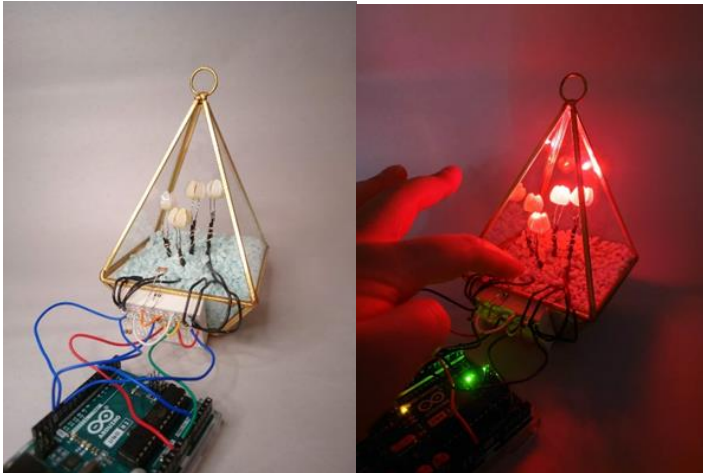


Figure 12: Flower Light Version 2

4.2 Prototype Product 2: Cloud in a Jar

A. General Idea

Although the much larger interactive cloud installation is hung from a gallery ceiling with wire, its smaller adaptation simply lives inside a jar. The cloud in a jar is a small décor piece that also serves as a light. Inside the cloud is a programmable RGB LED light.

This smaller model does not include sound, as the sound was not a major component of the original art installation and is not necessary to convey the meaning of the piece.

B. The Inspiration



Figure 13: An example of three colour modes of the “There’s Magic in the Air and it’s Called Bluetooth” interactive art installation.

The original inspiration behind the cloud lamp pieces is an interactive art installation titled: “There’s magic in the air and it’s called Bluetooth.” It was designed and created by students Kelly Xu, Zhino Yousefi, and Prayag Ichangimath. This interactive installation consists of a single cloud that changes in colour and sound in reaction to a human’s gestures to mimic the weather. In order to do this the viewer must hold the wand in their hand and complete one of two gestures. By default, the cloud is lit blue and by completing gestures one will make the cloud flash to mimic lightning and when connected to a laptop can produce a thunder sound. Gesture number two will cause the cloud to transform into colours of the rainbow. The installation is meant to create a notion of “man controlling nature.” The installation is meant to make the user feel more in control of their environment and lives. The goal of the installation was to explore the proximity between people and their environment and how this impacts the way we view the world and share connections.



Figure 14: An example of the “There’s Magic in the Air and it’s Called Bluetooth” interactive art installation being controlled.

C. The Designing Process

Overall “There’s magic in the air and it’s called Bluetooth,” is a complicated project that took 3 members over 20 hours to create. One of its most complicated components is establishing the Bluetooth signal between the two pieces: the cloud and the wand so that gestures with the wand can be picked up by the cloud. Due to the complexity of this component, the Bluetooth component must be removed completely. In addition, many components of this installation must be simplified. Because the original installation was hung from the ceiling a different situation for this had to be created. At first, a wire structure was considered to hang the small cloud from, however, it was quickly realized that it is very easy for the cloud to collect dust and is very difficult to clean. This is when I came up with the design of putting the cloud inside of a jar. This would solve the issue and preserve the project for longer as the item is meant to be used as an everyday object and not a one-time installation.

D. The Prototyping Process

i. Version 1

Version one is about trying out various materials. Like the original piece, the cloud is made from cotton. Due to having to scale down the cloud, some tests were done to control for the amount of light that would shine through. As well, instead of the small box that was placed inside the original piece, the new version uses bamboo sticks to mimic a similar structure inside the clouds that provides the cloud with shape and can hold some of the components like the LED lights and wires. This test version also included a regular light to test the translucency of the material.



Figure 15: Cloud Lamp Version 1

ii. Version 2

In version two, the RGB LED was added. Due to the product being situated inside a jar, the design did not take into consideration using sensors. Instead, buyers can interact and customize the colour of the lights by taking the lid off and plugging the Arduino (which is attached to the lid of the jar) into their computers to program the colour and pattern of lights should they wish. The product could come with a simple set of instructions telling buyers how they can do so. Should buyers not want to commit to this extra step, the product will arrive already programmed to go through a rainbow of colours which recreates the second reaction of the original installation.



Figure 16: Cloud Lamp Version 2

4.3 Prototyping Product 3: Zen Garden Desk Piece

A. General idea

Product number three is a small desktop Zen Garden piece. Users can raise air plants on it and rake the sand as a way of meditation. When users press the small stone in the bottom right corner of the garden, a light will turn on and users can fidget with this little gadget as a stress relieving mechanism.

B. The Inspiration

As the world moves faster around us, our lives are forced to become fast-paced to keep up. The Zen Garden interactive art piece titled “Zenscape” is meant to remind everyone to slow down and spend some time with themselves. The piece is a calming immersive project that users can experience and adapt as part of their self-care ritual in their own homes. This interactive installation was created by students: Kelly Xu, Zhino Yousefi, and Siyu Sun for a course project. The interactive piece involves users touching and toggling various parts of the display to create different output outcomes.



Figure 17: “Zenscape” an interactive art installation

C. The Designing Process

The original project “Zenscape” has 4 inputs and 2 outputs with similar functions. For simplification purposes, the new design will focus on mimicking one of the inputs and one of the outputs of the original. The display will similarly be designed to look like a garden, but much smaller, and serve as a playable desk décor for stress relieving.

D. The Prototyping Process

i. Version 1.

Version 1 of the product is a Zen Garden piece of similar design as the original but embedded into a photo frame. In the corners of the frame is a grass and stone area where air plants can be raised and in the middle is fine sand. A rake will come with the product so that users can create patterns in the small garden.

ii. Version 2.

The second version of the product is the same as the first, however a circuit component will be glued to the bottom of the photo frame and the sand and other decor elements are placed on top of this. The product utilizes the button sensor as its input and the LED lanterns as its output. When the user presses the rock, the light will turn on.

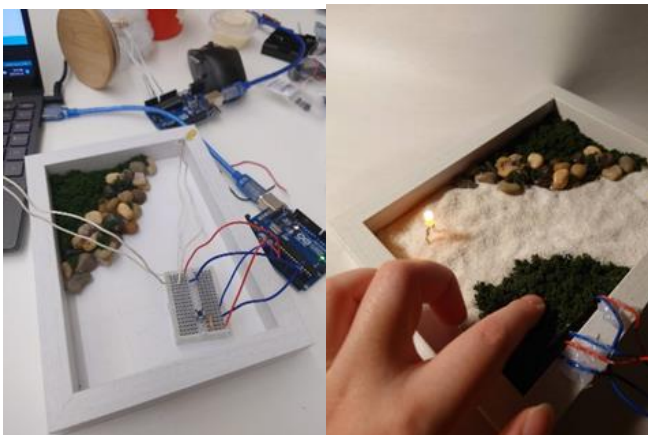


Figure 18: Zen Garden Desk Piece Version 2

4.4 Findings from the Prototyping Process

By actually designing and creating sellable products from existing merchandise, there was knowledge gained that couldn't be derived from just studying theory. In summary of the findings; the adaptation process was quite easy and the three unique examples show that a variety of installation artworks can be adapted successfully. However, throughout the designing and making process, a lot of problem-solving was involved. Sometimes materials had to be substituted or creative solutions had to be thought up (for example: putting the cloud inside a jar in order to protect the fragile material). Pertaining to all three product outcomes: all materials other than the Arduinos and small electronic parts were sourced from Dollarama (a local dollar store). This showed that common cost-efficient materials can be used to create sellable products, and in the early stages of artists' merchandising efforts, there are low-cost material options available. However, designing the products did take a significant amount of time. After that, each unit of product created took much less time than the original but still cost the artist around 1 hour of time to make. Therefore, this meant that prices can't be too low and artists may have to think about creating more premium-priced limited edition products or reducing time spent on handmaking each product by using machinery, tools, and/or outsourcing some components of the process.

The charts below show the time and cost it takes to make the reproducible, sellable product versus the original installation. Although producing these products cannot be done at a large scale, it does help the artist get started. Should they sell well then the artist can move on to other methods of merchandising or switch to a premium-priced strategy. Nevertheless, this strategy provides artists with low-cost attempts to try out different product concepts. It gives artists room to fail and learn from mistakes without incurring a hefty cost. It also allows them to

create prototype products that they can use to test and demonstrate to potential consumers to receive feedback for improvements [the benefits and challenges of this method will be further explained in Chapter 6].

Product 1: Flower Light

	<i>Original Artwork:</i>	<i>Version 1 (without the interactive component):</i>	<i>Version 2 (with the interactive component):</i>
Time needed to make 1 unit:	12 hours*2 people	1 hour*1 person	2.5 hours*1 person
Cost of materials to make 1 unit:	\$40	\$7.25	\$17.7

Table 1. Cost of making the Flower Light Product

Product 2: Cloud Lamp

	<i>Original Artwork:</i>	<i>Version 1 (without the interactive component):</i>	<i>Version 2 (with the interactive component):</i>
Time needed to make 1 unit:	25 hours*3 people	0.75 hours*1 person	2 hours*1 person
Cost of materials to make 1 unit:	\$130	\$6.6	\$16.6

Table 2. Cost of making the Cloud Lamp product

Product 1: Zen Garden Desk Piece

	<i>Original Artwork:</i>	<i>Version 1 (without the interactive component):</i>	<i>Version 2 (with the interactive component):</i>
Time needed to make 1 unit:	20 hours*3 people	2 hours*1 person	3 hours*1 person

Cost of materials to make 1 unit:	\$100 (not including iPad)	\$3.8	\$15.5
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Table 3. Cost of making the Zen Garden Product

**Note that the times are approximate as the handmade factor is difficult to control for but will not exceed a difference of +/- 30 minutes. As artists become familiar with making these products their efficiency will likely increase. A more detailed breakdown of the cost of supplies can be found in Appendix E.*

The reason that the cost of labour is not included here is that artists will have their own perceived value of their time and price their products accordingly. Artists may also include the time it took them to design the product into the price of the item or consider it to be a learning experience for them. In a sense, the artist will have to strategize similarly to a start-up business and figure out at what units of sale they will be profitable and whether the design process will be worth the effort.

5.0 Case Studies and Case Examples

5.1 Case Examples

Uncomfy.co (Tammy) is a polymer clay artist with 97.9K followers on Instagram (Tammy, n.d.). The artist started out by posting images and videos of the different characters and figures she created with clay but eventually, they gained so much popularity that she turned them into products (Figure 19). Currently, one of her main revenue streams comes from selling repeated designs of her clay products which she handmakes. Currently, Tammy prices her items as \$55-\$65 for a keychain, \$70-\$90 for a desk piece, and \$105 for a keycap. Her products are generally made to order but the artist does have a maximum number of products she can sell in a given week. Recently, she also designed cheaper items like enamel pins based on her clay characters

so that fans with a lower budget can also purchase her work. The enamel pins are outsourced so that she can dedicate more of her time to other parts of her practice. Uncomfy.co is quite successful with her merchandising model and earns \$8,000+/month as a full-time artist (Uncomfy.co, 2023).

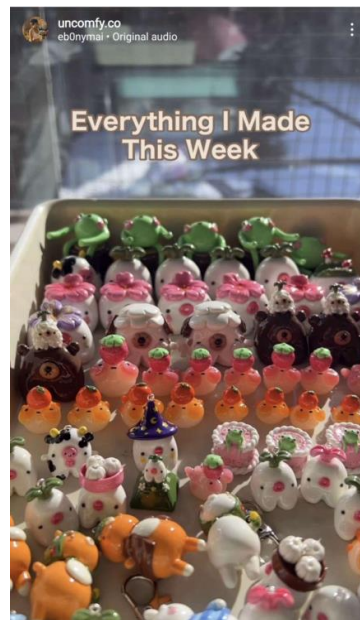


Figure 19: Screenshot from Uncomfy.co's Instagram page
<https://www.instagram.com/uncomfy.co/?hl=en>

Grumpykidstudio (Garbo) is a ceramics artist with 240K followers on Instagram (Garbo, n.d.). She started out by posting videos of herself making pottery pieces that sport her signature grumpy face. The designs eventually gained recognition, and this gave her the idea to invest in initial tools like a pottery wheel so that she can start selling her signature mugs (Figure 20). She creates her products in batches and announces restocking times each week. Her products are priced at around \$100+ each and sell out within minutes of each restock. The artist uses moulds to speed up some of the making processes, but each mug still takes her a significant amount of time so she has hired 4 part-time assistants to help her out. In a recent post, she mentions that a lot of followers have been asking how they can support her work when they don't have a

budget for a handmade piece. Therefore, the artist has been looking into creating stickers, candles and other products that can be offered at cheaper prices to her followers.



Figure 20: Screenshot from Grumpykidstudio's Instagram page
<https://www.instagram.com/grumpykidstudio/?hl=en>

This small study shows handmaking items as a viable way to merchandise. With this model, the artists were able to get started quickly when they realized that people were interested in their artwork. In addition, as they accumulate more fans and revenue, they can gradually invest in better machinery and items like moulds to increase the number of products they can produce in a given time. Eventually, as their popularity increases to a certain level, some of the artists will start to outsource their products or partner with companies to offer products in larger quantities. However, without being able to offer those initial products it would be difficult for these artists to reach this point. For example, a lot of the content that the artists create which brings awareness to their brand is about how they run their business and come up with new product designs for their fans. This netnography research helps us understand how the hand-crafted product model works and how it benefits emerging artists. The small accomplishments of these artists demonstrate that there is a certain level of demand for these types of merchandise. In the next

section we will investigate whether there is a demand for products created from interactive art installations specifically.

5.2 Case Studies

A. Findings from the Survey

In order to get a better sense of the potential market for merchandise derived from interactive art installations, a short survey was conducted to gather some general information regarding people's willingness to buy these products. Participants were random and not controlled for any demographics or other traits. A population of N=29 completed the survey and answered a series of questions [Appendix A].

General insights of the survey are as follows:

- 24% of participants were strongly likely, and 52% were likely to purchase one of the following types of products (night light, desk decor piece, small home decor piece)
- 17% of participants were strongly likely, and 62% of participants were likely to purchase an interactive product.
- On average, participants were willing to pay 2.59 times more for an interactive product compared to a regular product of the same design
- On average, participants were willing to pay 3.45 times more for a handmade product compared to a regular product of the same design
- On average, participants were willing to pay 2.9 times more for an art-inspired product compared to a regular product of the same design.

[Appendix B provides a more detailed description of the complete survey results].

B. Findings from the Interview

Proceeding the survey, it is important to get more details regarding the reasons behind potential consumers' willingness to purchase. Participants were selected at random and not controlled for any demographics or other traits. A population of N=7 completed the survey and answered a series of open-ended questions [Appendix C].

General insights of the survey are as follows:

- Most participants' first comment regarding each product was its aesthetic value.
- Without any other prompts, the reason behind most participants' willingness to buy is due to the aesthetic nature of the product.
- After learning about the inspiration behind the product, most participants were more willing to buy the product. This can but does not always equal a higher perceived monetary value as well.
- According to participants, the interactive component (maintaining the interactive element of the original through sensors) was the least important in influencing their willingness to buy. Only 1 out of 7 participants showed interest in the transferring of the sensor component.
- Generally, participants cared more about the meaning behind the product if it was something that aligned with their personal values or was something they were concerned about. The stronger they cared about the deeper meaning behind the product the more it increased their willingness to buy after learning about the original installation behind the artwork.
- Participants had varying preferences over which products they would be willing to buy and this was largely based on personal traits and their perception of the usefulness of the product. (For example, participants who work from home were more likely to buy the third product which was a desk decor piece that offered stress relieving properties).

[Appendix D offers all the insights gained from the Interview process].

6.0 Selling Tiny Ideas

Essentially, the outcome of the *Selling Tiny Ideas* project is the knowledge surrounding the adaptation of more unique and specific types of artworks. In this study, three different student-created interactive art installation pieces were conceptualized into merchandise. The resulting designs are items that can be sold at a cheaper price and larger quantity than the original installation they were derived from.

As the artist of these pieces, the value I receive from adapting these artworks into smaller pieces is that I would be able to sell them to a wider audience and thus induce more awareness and sales. I can potentially advertise these products to my social media followers and visitors of any shows I may have. Fans of my artwork would have a unique and useful item that they can purchase which aligns with their aesthetic values. Given the time it would take to make one unit, I would probably price the products at around \$40-60 for the non-interactive version and \$60-120 for the interactive version. Such a model would also allow me to increase the price with higher demand. If I sell beyond my capacity to make them, I can possibly replace some of the processes like creating the flowers, by investing in a Cricut machine (a machine which can cut any design that is uploaded to it via a PC) or using 3D printing.

The benefits of merchandising in such a way are that there would be very low start-up costs and it is a great way to get started on introducing products to fans. The products can be made to order so that there will only be time and material expenditures when an order is placed. By not needing to invest in inventory, allows room for mistakes whilst I figure out what my fans like through experimentation.

However, the challenges of such a merchandising model would be that there would be a lot of problem-solving involved. The artist would have to figure out what materials work and troubleshoot any issues that may arise with the design. In addition, the cost of time to make each product greatly elevates the expense of each item for consumption. Other issues may be that each product will have small variations which would be difficult to control for. In Instagram artist, grumpykidstudio's case, flawed products are discounted and sold in a separate section of her shop ("Discounted," n.d.). However, artists must take into consideration the time cost of making mistakes when pricing their items.

Lastly, not every design will be successful, and artists may sometimes be engaging in work that provides little to no monetary reward in return. Although some artists get lucky, and their products gain popularity right away, most artists should be prepared to engage in a long and repeated process of designing and learning. Theoretically, with each product that is released in the world, new insights can be gained so that the next product can be better and more profitable.

7.0 Conclusion

Selling Tiny Ideas aims to provoke artists into thinking about new ways and forms of earning profit. It initiates a debate surrounding whether artists should engage with the option of merchandising. Particularly concerning amateur and emerging artists, the study attempts to act as a reference as well as help these artists understand that they have options for merchandising (even when lacking resources or funds). This project presents the process of transforming interactive art installations into sellable products and tests the feasibility of this through the research-creation process. The study provides insight into the research question through the exploration of possibilities.

So, can interactive art installations be successfully adapted into a smaller, sellable product, which creates more value for the artist and the buyer/audience? This has been argued for throughout the thesis. The secondary research component showed that there was indeed a demand for artists' products, and more price variety can be offered. And thus, consumer demand can convert into revenue for the artist. The user testing component of the study also showed that participants were indeed more interested and placed more value on products after learning that they were inspired by existing interactive artwork and/or that the products' components held symbolic meaning.

Generally, findings from the user testing component correlated with the research propositions that were outlined in the literature review. All participants (N=7) commented on the aesthetic component of the products and mentioned that it contributed to their willingness to purchase; this is similar to findings from section 2 of the literature review. However, participants had varying degrees of appreciation for the symbolic value of the product. This is slightly different from the secondary research findings which explained symbolic value and meaning as the most important factor in viewers' appreciation of interactive installations. Further analysis of this showed that participants generally only cared about the symbolic value of the product if it aligned with their personal values. For example, participants who do not regularly contemplate environmental issues indicated that they would be less likely to purchase a product that helped raise awareness for the environment. This means that artists will have more luck with marketing to their existing fanbase who already appreciate their artistic expression versus trying to bring target a different group of consumers.

Another finding which aligns with the literature review is that all participants indicated that they found the products more interesting when they learned that it was inspired by an existing interactive art installation. This knowledge caused most participants to be more willing to buy the product. Yet, this did not always result in a higher perceived value of the product. Some

participants mentioned that they still felt the product is worth the same price because the functionality did not change. However, the symbolic meaning and story behind the art piece would likely catch their attention and cause them to choose this product over others. This means that artists can still use this concept to their advantage when marketing but may need to consider ways in which they can offer products at cheaper prices or design products with more functionality.

Another very important finding that arose from the data collection stage of the research is that most participants (6 out of 7) believed the interactive component of the product to be the least important factor in their willingness to buy. Although the participants enjoyed the interactive components of the original piece, they found that the resulting product may function better without the interactive component. Participants were worried about the interactive component breaking or impacting the battery life and did not find it useful when embedded in an everyday item. Although findings in the literature review showed that not all elements need to be translated over when merchandising, this finding still came as surprising as the interactive aspect of these artworks is their core concept. Nonetheless, despite this concern, participants were generally willing to buy at least one of the products presented and the most common reason is due to the aesthetics of the product and the uniqueness factor behind it being made from an interactive installation.

As an artist, I have learned a lot through the process of researching, experimenting, and designing this thesis. Throughout the process, I have discovered the potential of merchandising and transforming artwork. There were also insights I couldn't have obtained without experimenting and doing user testing. Initially, as part of the prototyping process, version 1 of the development was meant to be a learning stage to get to version 2 of the product. However, after conducting user testing, it was found that perhaps both designs of the product had value and can be sold separately to fans at different price points.

Integrating artwork into everyday life not only encourages consumers' willingness to make a purchase, but it also helps spread awareness of the artist's unique brand. In conclusion, this thesis project offers a new perspective on the possibilities of merchandising interactive installation artwork and possibly other types of artworks. This is all done in an effort to contribute knowledge to this research topic and inspire emerging artists with similar aspirations.

7.1 Scope and Limitations

1. ***Transforming the Installation:*** As each artist is a unique individual committed to varying types of practices, there will never be one correct way to merchandise products that can be followed. Each artist will still have to do a good amount of exploring to figure out what works best for them. And all whilst being restricted by technology, skill, money, and access to materials. And the complicated design process may turn away many artists, especially when they could receive nothing in return for their efforts. More likely, artists can use this study as a guide or reference when investigating their options themselves, but it will not be able to give them any exact steps to success.
2. ***Copyright & Fraud:*** As with any business concerning original design, legal issues and plagiarism need to be considered. Especially since: “[re]cently, a slew of independent visual artists have come forward to accuse various major fashion brands of using their work without permission or payment” (Kaplan, 2016, para. 1). Unfortunately, this phenomenon will deter a lot of artists from allocating time to designing products which can be easily copied and reproduced. However, as people become more aware of this issue, technology and laws are being put in place to counteract these measures. Similarly, student artists are also studying ways in which

new inventions can combat intellectual property theft from emerging artists. For example, the thesis project: “TAILORMADE: Fine Art Merchandise,” written by a MA student Mirabelle Alan (2020) proposes a plan for creating a platform that can sell artist merchandise whilst maintaining artistic integrity. Further discussion of this topic is beyond the scope of this study, but artists should not be deterred from designing original products for fear of being plagiarized.

3. **Spreading Awareness:** Unfortunately, artists cannot just develop a product and expect it to sell. In all probability, artists who utilize or reference the findings of this research study will have a small but existing fanbase to which they can advertise their products to. However, that is not to say that artists shouldn't create merchandise if they have no social followers. On the flip side, recording the process of making these items and posting them on social media can help them gain awareness and followers (refer to the examples in Chapter 5.1).

7.2 Future Investigations

The methods and experimental findings from this study are meant to get artists started on thinking about what they can do at their current stage with the limited amount of resources that they have at hand. Artists are not restricted to just these possibilities and can utilize the knowledge from this research to expand into new options. Moreover, should artists' merchandise sell beyond their capacity to handmade products, they can consider other alternatives. Artists can consider 3D printing services and partnering with companies at this point as they will have enough consumers to warrant some amount of designing and start-up costs. How artists can do this successfully may be a great future investigation but is beyond the scope of this study. Furthermore, only interactive art was adapted in this research, but the findings do pertain to artists of other categories. In particular, many 3D artists may find this

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information useful. Should more time be allocated to this study, more categories of artists can be studied as well and varying types of prototypes can be developed to compare results.

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Appendices

Appendix A. Survey Questions:

Thank you for participating in this short survey! By opening this link you will be entered in a draw to win a \$25 digital gift card. It is predicted that 20-30 participants in total will enter the draw. Winners will be notified by email.

Before you begin the survey, please read the information in the form attached. [Link to survey consent form]

SECTION 1.

1. Do you consent to the use of your information as described in the survey consent form?
 - A. Yes
 - B. No (if you selected this option, please close the survey, your answers will not be recorded).
2. Do you understand that participation in this survey is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw from the survey at any point during the process or withdraw your data from the study after submitting any time prior to March 1st?
 - C. Yes
 - D. No (if you selected this option, please close the survey, your answers will not be recorded).
3. What is your first name? (optional)
4. Please provide your email address.

SECTION 2:

- The following are some definitions that may help you understand the questions present in this survey:
 - o **Interactive art:** is a type of art that responds to the actions of the interactants or environment.
 - o **Commercialization:** is the process of introducing a new product or production market into the market. To *commercialize* something would be to turn it into a product that customers can buy.

Please answer the following questions. If the answer you envision is not available, please select the closest possible choice.

1. You will buy one of the following types of products within the next year: night light, desk décor piece, small home décor piece.
 - A. Strongly disagree
 - B. Disagree
 - C. Agree
 - D. Strongly agree

2. Do you own/have owned one of the following products: night light, décor piece, small home décor piece, that you have bought for yourself?

- A. Yes
- B. No

3. Do you believe that adding an *interactive* component to the following types of products: nightlight, desk décor piece, small home décor piece, will generate more interest for you? (An example might be a night light that turns on when it senses your presence).

- A. Strongly disagree
- B. Disagree
- C. Neutral
- D. Agree
- E. Strongly agree

4. Are you more likely to buy a product if it had one or more *interactive* components?

- A. Strongly disagree
- B. Disagree
- C. Neutral
- D. Agree
- E. Strongly agree

5. How much more \$ would you be willing to pay a for a product that has one or more *interactive* pieces compared to a non-interactive piece of the same/similar design? (*If you selected 1, it means you would be willing to pay the same price or 10 means you are willing to pay 10 times more. Use a \$10 item as your basis for imagination, at 10 times its price it would be \$100*)

[1-10]

6. Are you more likely to buy a product if it was handmade?

- A. Strongly disagree
- B. Disagree
- C. Neutral
- D. Agree
- E. Strongly agree

7. How much more \$ would you be willing to pay if the item is handmade? (*If you selected 1, it means you would be willing to pay the same price or 10 means you are willing to pay 10 times more. Use a \$10 item as your basis for imagination, at 10 times its price it would be \$100*)

[1-10]

8. How much interest do you have in buying a product that is inspired by an art piece?

- A. Strongly disagree
- B. Disagree
- C. Neutral
- D. Agree
- E. Strongly agree

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9. How much interest do you have in purchasing a product that holds a deeper meaning or message.

- A. Strongly disagree
- B. Disagree
- C. Neutral
- D. Agree
- E. Strongly agree

10. How familiar are you with interactive art or interactive art installations? (Familiarity can derive from learning and reading about or creating your own).

- A. Very unfamiliar
- B. Unfamiliar
- C. Familiar
- D. Very Familiar

11. Are you more likely to buy a product that is inspired by an interactive art installation?

- A. Strongly disagree
- B. Disagree
- C. Neutral
- D. Agree
- E. Strongly agree

10. How much more \$ would you be willing to pay if the item is inspired by an interactive art installation? *(If you selected 1, it means you would be willing to pay the same price or 10 means you are willing to pay 10 times more. Use a \$10 item as your basis for imagination, at 10 times its price it would be \$100)*

[1-10]

11. How much more \$ would you be willing to pay if the item is interactive, handmade, and inspired by an existing interactive art piece. *(If you selected 1, it means you would be willing to pay the same price or 10 means you are willing to pay 10 times more. Use a \$10 item as your basis for imagination, at 10 times its price it would be \$100)*

[1-10]

12. Would you like to be emailed the results of the study?

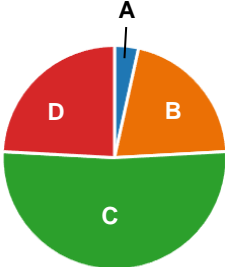
- A. Yes
- B. No

Appendix B. Survey Results:

5. You **will** be purchasing one of the following types of products within the next year: night light, desk décor piece, small home décor piece. (0 point)

[More Details](#)

A	● Strongly disagree	1
B	● Disagree	6
C	● Agree	15
D	● Strongly agree	7

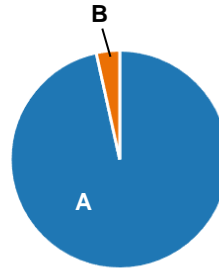


Selling Tiny Ideas

6. Do you **own/have owned** one of the following products: night light, décor piece, small home décor piece, that you have bought for yourself? (0 point)

[More Details](#)

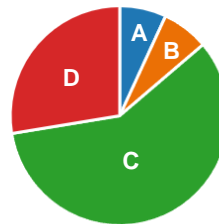
A	● Yes	28
B	● No	1
C	● I can't remember	0



7. Do you believe that adding an *interactive* component to the following types of products: nightlight, desk décor piece, small home décor piece, will generate more interest for you? (An example might be a night light that turns on when it senses your presence or hears your voice). (0 point)

[More Details](#)

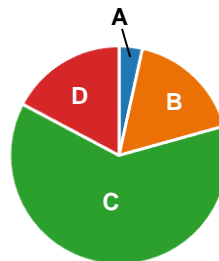
A	● Strongly disagree	2
B	● Disagree	2
C	● Agree	17
D	● Strongly agree	8



8. Are you **more likely** to buy a product if it had one or more *interactive* components? (0 point)

[More Details](#)

A	● Strongly Disagree	1
B	● Disagree	5
C	● Agree	18
D	● Strongly agree	5

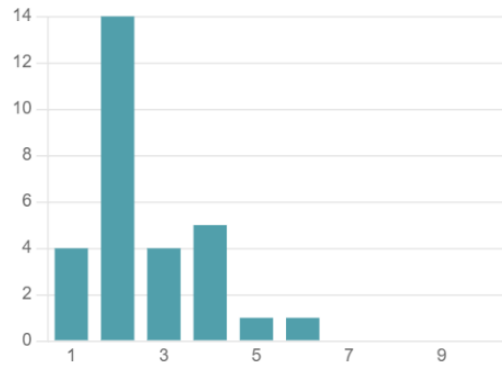


Selling Tiny Ideas

9. How much more \$ would you be willing to pay a for a product that has one or more *interactive* pieces compared to a non-interactive piece of the same/similar design? (If you selected 1, it means you are only willing to pay the same price or 10 means you are willing to pay 10 times more. Use a \$10 item as your basis for imagination, at 10 times its price it would be \$100) (0 point)

[More Details](#)

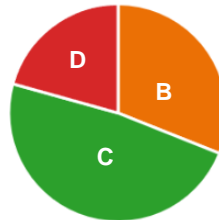
2.59
Average Rating



10. Are you more likely to buy a product if it was handmade? (0 point)

[More Details](#)

A	● Strongly Disagree	0
B	● Disagree	9
C	● Agree	14
D	● Strongly agree	6

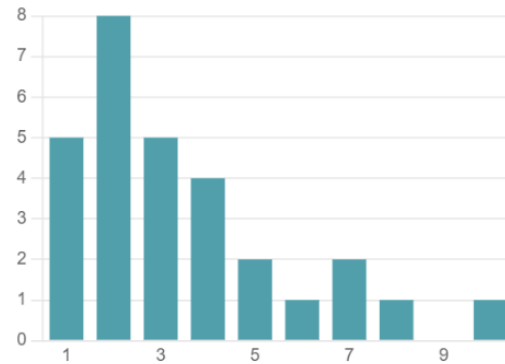


Selling Tiny Ideas

11. How much more \$ would you be willing to pay if the item is handmade? (If you selected 1, it means you are only willing to pay the same price or 10 means you are willing to pay 10 times more. Use a \$10 item as your basis for imagination, at 10 times its price it would be \$100) (0 point)

[More Details](#)

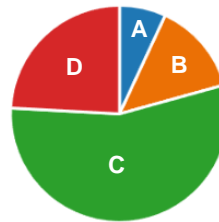
3.45
Average Rating



12. How much interest do you have in buying a product that is inspired by an art piece? (0 point)

[More Details](#)

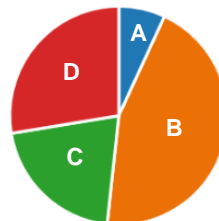
A	● Strongly Disagree	2
B	● Disagree	4
C	● Agree	16
D	● Strongly agree	7



13. How much interest do you have in purchasing a product that holds a deeper meaning or message? (An example might be flower lights which turn red when it senses human presence to represent the potential destruction that humans can cause to nature). (0 point)

[More Details](#)

A	● Not Interested	2
B	● Slightly Interested	13
C	● Relatively Interested	6
D	● Very Interested	8

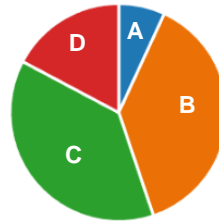


Selling Tiny Ideas

14. How familiar are you with interactive art or interactive art installations? (Familiarity can derive from learning, reading about, experiencing, or creating your own). (0 point)

[More Details](#)

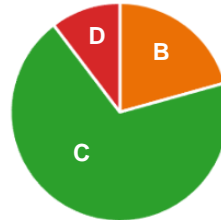
A	Very Unfamiliar	2
B	Unfamiliar	11
C	Familiar	11
D	Very Familiar	5



15. Are you more likely to buy a product that is inspired by an interactive art installation? (0 point)

[More Details](#)

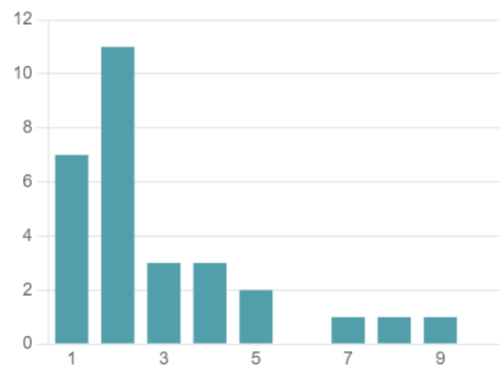
A	Strongly Disagree	0
B	Disagree	6
C	Agree	20
D	Strongly agree	3



16. How much more \$ would you be willing to pay if the item is inspired by an interactive art installation? (If you selected 1, it means you are only willing to pay the same price or 10 means you are willing to pay 10 times more. Use a \$10 item as your basis for imagination, at 10 times its price it would be \$100) (0 point)

[More Details](#)

2.90
Average Rating



17. How much more \$ would you be willing to pay if the item is interactive, handmade, and inspired by an existing interactive art piece. Please Write your answer as a percentage below:

110%	100%	30%
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Selling Tiny Ideas

	269%		40%		25%
	3 times		30%		300%
	50%		10%		20%
	50%		\$200		50%
	200%		10%		15%
	Twice the price		33%		1.5 times
	10%		300%		90%
	20%		20%		30%
	65		3 times		

18. Is there any additional feedback you'd like to provide? (optional)

	answers based on perceived value, but may not actually buy if no budget
	Sometimes just want to keep things simple, since phones and screens are already demanding attentions, non-interactive still objects are also of great importance
	My markings for my willingness to pay more may be low because I like both interactive and regular craft works. I like non interactive not technology decor more
	I am typically quite thrifty with my purchases, but the right design and ethics makes me justify paying more
	I think I would pay more based on the interactivity and it's relevancy to the art piece. Also, if I'm buying it for someone else, I'd likely pay more than buying it for myself.

Appendix C. Interview Script:

Interview Script

1. *Hello [participant's name], thank you for coming to this research study. I'm sure you have already received the information regarding what will take place today. Before we begin, do you have any questions for me?*
2. *Please know that participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You are welcome to withdraw from this study at any time during this interview. Your data will not be collected and used if the study is incomplete. The study will take around 30 minutes to conduct. This interview will be recorded for note taking purposes only, the raw file will not be shared with anyone outside the research committee. Should you wish to withdraw your data from the study after the study is completed, please indicate so prior to March 1st by email, and your data will be entirely deleted.*
3. *I will begin by demonstrating the first prototype product we will be reviewing. There will be a total of three.*
4. *Prototype Product 1 is a flower night light. This is how it functions (I show how light turns on when I move my hand close to it).*

Questions Part IA.

- A. What are your initial thoughts of the product? Does it interest you in any way?
 - B. What issues do you foresee with this product? Any areas of improvement?
 - C. Would you be willing to purchase a product like this? How much value do you place in a product like this?
5. *I show the video of the interactive art installation that the product 1 is inspired from.*

Questions Part IB.

- D. What do you think about this adaptation? Do you think the product stayed true to its original inspiration?
- E. Are you more interested/more willing to buy this product now that you've learned where the inspiration came from?
- F. Are there any other thoughts/suggestions you'd like to share with me?

6. *Prototype Product 2 is a cloud night light. This is how it functions: (I show how light turns on when in reaction to sound).*

Questions Part 2A.

G. What are your initial thoughts of the product? Does it interest you in any way?

H. What issues do you foresee with this product? Any areas of improvement?

I. Would you be willing to purchase a product like this? How much value do you place in a product like this?

7. *I show the video of the interactive art installation that the product 2 is inspired from.*

Questions Part 2B.

J. What do you think about this adaptation? Do you think the product stayed true to its original inspiration?

K. Are you more interested/more willing to buy this product now that you've learned where the inspiration came from?

L. Are there any other thoughts/suggestions you'd like to share with me?

8. *Prototype Product 3 is a garden desk décor piece that is constructed inside a picture frame. This is how it functions (I show how things move inside the frame in reaction to my touch).*

Questions Part 3A.

M. What are your initial thoughts of the product? Does it interest you in any way?

N. What issues do you foresee with this product? Any areas of improvement?

O. Would you be willing to purchase a product like this? How much value do you place in a product like this?

9. *I show the video of the interactive art installation that the product 2 is inspired from.*

Questions Part 3B.

P. What do you think about this adaptation? Do you think the product stayed true to its original inspiration?

Q. Are you more interested/more willing to buy this product now that you've learned where the inspiration came from?

R. Are there any other thoughts/suggestions you'd like to share with me?

10. Do you have any other feedback you'd like to share with me regarding the study in general or any of the products or all three of the products?

11. Would you be interested in learning about the study results of my project in the future? If yes, you will receive an email from me after the project is completed.

Thank you so much for participating in this interview!

Appendix D. Interview Data:

Product 1: The Flower Light

Product 2: Cloud Lamp

Product 3: The Miniature Zen Garden

Interview #1. Participant A.

<p>Insights regarding Product 1</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Thought it was pretty.· Worried whether product was battery operated? And whether the batteries are replaceable?· Worried about amount of light it would give off. Whether it would be useful as a night light or something beyond just a décor piece.· Would be willing to buy. Probably would pay around \$12.00. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Believed it did stay true to the original (colours are the same, same concept and flowers and mentioned they couldn't tell if the specific flower was the same or not).· Thought miniature would be cute as a little desk ornament.· Feels they are more likely to buy the smaller one, but the meaning behind the piece does not affect their opinion on monetary value. But mentioned that this is because the interviewee is not their personal value. Might be more likely to purchase if belief was something they were concerned about.· Participant just thought that the flowers turning red to represent destruction was kind of fun but couldn't resonate with the meaning.· Participant mentions that they find more value in the product because it is a handmade product rather than the artistic meaning· Participant mentions that the product reminds them of a sun capture sort of and suggests that that could be a possibly or a possible type of product to create
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**Insights
regarding
Product 2**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- Think the cloud is very interesting and the concept is more interesting than the flower product. Enjoys the variety of colours.
- Worried about not knowing how to program. Like the customizable colours but wouldn't know where to start with that. Even after told that there would be very specific instructions provided, was still intimidated by the word: "coding".
- Gave some suggestions for putting Christmas tinsel in the cloud to look like little lightning streaks and just because it would be reflective too and shiny
- Probably would be willing to pay 20-30 dollars.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Enjoyed the adaptation and thought the product stayed true for the most part. Noticed the nighttime element and through the product would work well as a night light.
- Thought it was cute and kind of whimsical to have this tiny version of the larger cloud.
- Would be more interested/likely to buy the product now that the participant learned of where the inspiration came from. Placed more value on it although not necessarily monetary value now that the participant knows that the product was derived from a piece of art as it made her.
- After learning of the meaning behind the piece the participant thought the product to be less of a consumer product and more authentic, could see how this lamp could be seen on Pinterest and felt like there's more thought behind it rather than oh, it's just bright and colourful.

<p>Insights regarding Product 3</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participant thought the product was cute and liked the miniature element of it. Although participant has never had a desk Zen Garden and doesn't see the purpose in it, they can understand that it might be a fun toy to play with. Because they never had one before, don't really know what they are used for. · But thinks it could be soothing to tend and clean things. · Worried about the loose sand, maybe the sand might spill out when shifting things. · Suggested maybe using magnetic sand or something like that. · Personally, does not think they would be interested in purchasing this product because they aren't interested in a Zen Gardens in general. They mention that it is because they've never needed one before and have other methods of relaxing like doodling or doing a Sudoku puzzle book. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participant thought that the larger version looks more fun and reminds them of a doll house in a way that little pieces can be moved around. · Participant likes the larger version better but can understand how the miniature was created from the larger one and felt that it stayed true to its adaptation. · Participant thinks that if they had played with the larger version first, for example, they went to a museum or something and saw the larger version there and then in the gift shop of the museum they saw the little one, they would be likely to buy it.
<p>Final Thoughts about All 3 Products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The participant's favourite is the cloud lamp. They can imagine it in their bedroom and thought the flower product was aesthetically pleasing as well.

Interview #2. Participant B.

<p>Insights regarding Product 1</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Participant's first thought was that the flashing red lights would be dizzy. But they like how it looks when the light is off.· Think it's interesting that touching the bottom of the flower would make the flowers react· Participant doesn't understand why the flowers are red in colour believes that other colours may look better.· Participant says that they are not willing to buy this product as they understand the use for it. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· After learning about the original inspiration, participant said several times that this was very interesting. And it was interesting to learn about the back stories and stuff and would like to learn more.· Now understands why people are willing to buy it.· Says that it would be super cool if the product was something they could get from a souvenir shop after experiencing/visiting a gallery or where it was originally demonstrated.· Says that learning about the concept would definitely change their mind of whether they would be willing to purchase the product and how much they would pay for it. They mentioned that they might not buy it if they didn't know the concept and meaning behind the piece.
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**Insights
regarding
Product 2**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- Think that the product was very ambient.
- Was worried about not knowing how to do the customization, programming part. Even when explained that it would be very simple to do with step-by-step instructions was still intimidated by this element. Says it's a bit of a mental block.
- Would be willing to own a product like this but felt like the product may look cheap during the day so would not be willing to pay a lot of money for it.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Participant liked the original installation very much that they felt a little bit upset that the smaller product wasn't able to include all the elements of the original.
- Thought maybe even if the wand waving/gesture control was not possible, maybe Bluetooth control might be able to do something similar.
- Liked the thunderstorm effect very much, more so than the rainbow colours and felt that if the product was able to reflect that output instead, they would be much more willing to purchase it. Mentioned several times that they just liked the thunderstorm component of the original very much and they are just very into that and is less willing to buy the product now that they learned about this effect that was shown in the installation.

<p>Insights regarding Product 3</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participant thought the product was cool looking · Was worried about the loose sand and knocking it over as well as shipping and handling. Was very worried the product would get caught on something. · Says personally would not be willing to buy the product and the reason is because they do not have a big desk and wouldn't know where to put it. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participant thought the product did stay true to the original inspiration. And the re-designed concept was done quite well. · Participant did not change their willingness to buy as the original did not affect them very much. They did not feel like the original installation allowed them to de-stress.
<p>Final Thoughts about All 3 Products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The participant says that generally, if they were to personally experience the installation they would be much more likely to purchase a product derived from that experience. They said that they would be more likely to buy it from a souvenir shop rather than later from the artist's website as it is easier and more time efficient. But if the installation was online then a link to the store would be equally convenient for them.

Interview #3. Participant C.

<p>Insights regarding Product 1</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participant thinks that the product is aesthetically pleasing and wouldn't mind having it on their desk as a nice piece of decoration. Though it was visually interesting.Participant is not sure about the red light. Wished maybe it would be a more agreeable colour, that the bright red made them feel like a club or something.Says they would be willing to buy a product like this though, thought it would be a good gift. Can imagine themselves gifting the product to someone as it's pretty cool. Was willing to pay maybe \$30 to \$50. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">The participant felt like it was a good adaptation because the core concept is still there.After learning about the original inspiration, participant was able to understand the product more. And think that it makes more sense now. Participant says before they were complaining about the colour of the lights but now, they know about the meaning and thought put into the product.Participant says they would be more willing to buy the product now that they'd learned of the inspiration although the monetary value, they'd place on the product remains the same. But they are invested in the creative thought process.Also mentions that the product is an enclosed design and maybe if the flowers were more exposed (vulnerable) it would take on more similar meaning to the original.Participant thinks that if they can appreciate the meaning more behind the art, they would be equally more likely to purchase the product associated with it.
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**Insights
regarding
Product 2**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- The participant likes the cloud product better than the flower one.
- Think it's attractive that the product is customizable. And think that it's cool to be able to choose their own colours.
- Was worried that the cloud was too delicate, maybe it will fall off.
- Participant feels like the product is not as intricate as the previous, there's not as many details so they would be willing to pay \$20-\$40 for it.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Participant thinks that the product could be more intricate like the original.
- Suggests maybe if can't fit all elements of the original installation into one product, then they can create a few separate products instead.
- Participant thinks it was cool to hear about the story and think more deeply about the meaning behind the product.
- Participant says they would be more willing to purchase and pay for money for the product because they resonated with the meaning conveyed of the original installation with Covid and being out of control of their lives and everything.

**Insights
regarding
Product 3**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- Participant thought it was interesting to look at and cute looking but says they like practicality and doesn't know what they think about in terms of practicality regarding this product.
- Was worried about spilling the sand and a mess and having to be careful with this product. Worried about cleaning.
- Think that because the product is bigger, they'd be willing to pay more for it like maybe \$50-\$60.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Participant liked having the wooden rack to poke around the sand and wished the smaller model would come with something similar.
- Thinks the original installation is more interesting with the interactive component and the iPad but understands how the smaller model won't be able to include all the elements of the original.
- Understands how they might get stressed or anxious at work and this little distraction would be helpful.
- More willing to buy the product now that they've learned about the original inspiration but the monetary value they'd place on it is the same.
- Wishes that the smaller model includes sound through as to the participant sound (like rain sounds or ASMR) is an important element in helping them relax and this smaller model was missing this element.

**Final Thoughts
about All 3
Products**

- Participant says they like the products very much due to aesthetics but wished they were mass produced items so that they could be more economic.
- Participant says that if they were able to fully experience the concept like going to the installation themselves they would be more willing to buy the product associated with it.
- Participant thinks that generally the products are not as functional as they'd like so the design aspect and meaning behind them is what makes most sense to them, and the reason they would buy them.

Interview #4. Participant D.

<p>Insights regarding Product 1</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Participant thought product was cool, would like to use it for décor probably.· Asked about the battery, does it have to be connected to a wall.· Didn't like the light, interactive component as much.· Participant does say they would like to buy it though as it is pretty and is willing to pay around \$30-\$35. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Understands the adaptation concept but feels like design wise there is not as much connection to the original.· Generally, learning about the original installation behind the product did not increase the participant's willingness to buy, the value they place on the product as they did not personally resonate with the product.· Says that this is probably because they couldn't personally connect to the meaning behind the piece and couldn't associate it.· Basically, the participant says that they are willing to buy the product because they like it as décor and not much else.
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<p>Insights regarding Product 2</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Thinks that product is very pretty.· Like that it uses replaceable batteries and is customizable.· Would be willing to purchase it as thinks it's aesthetic.· Would probably be willing to pay \$25. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Learning about the inspiration behind the product did not change the participant's mind regarding whether they'd like to buy the product.
<p>Insights regarding Product 3</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Participant doesn't really like this third product. Doesn't like the sand and mess and it taking up space somewhere, collecting dust.· Essentially, the participant doesn't like how the product looks and it's the deciding factor for why they wouldn't buy the product. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Participant is still not willing to purchase the product even after learning about the inspiration, however they can understand where the inspiration came from and how it might have a place in people's lives.

**Final Thoughts
about All 3
Products**

- The participant essentially says that they don't care very much about the meaning behind the product or the inspiration behind it. The participant mentions that they normally do not buy art related or handmade products and would rather buy something mass produced but economic from a retailer than an artist.
- Participant says the reason they may buy something is they going to use it, or is it going to make them happy? It's hard for them to associate the meaning of someone else's work and connect it.
- But participant says if they were to enjoy the original installation, they may buy something of it as a souvenir. They think of it more as memories rather than the meaning behind the artist.
- Essentially in terms of these products, the participant says they are interested in purchasing the first two products because it looks like nice décor and would make them happy or smile because they are pretty.

Interview #5. Participant E.

<p>Insights regarding Product 1</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participant thinks the product is beautiful and simple.Participant wonders if the sensor can cover a larger area to trigger the light.Would be willing to buy this product and would be willing to pay around \$15-30, probably leaning more towards \$30. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participant thinks that it might be interesting if there are two to three colours to choose from. Thinks that maybe green and red would help convey the meaning more. Thinks the current one is too simple.Thinks that it is interesting so that makes it more valuable. Would be willing to pay \$20, but up to \$100.
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**Insights
regarding
Product 2**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- Thinks it might interesting to add speakers to the cloud. Or some sort of sound sensor or sensor that reacts to touch.
- Thinks that they may be willing to pay around 20 to 30 dollars for this product as they think it's too complicated to customize or connect it themselves.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Participant thinks that it is a good product. It is attractive and interesting. Like the meaning behind the product the human to control nature sort of aspect.
- Says would definitely be more likely to buy the product now that they learned about the inspiration but maybe would not be willing to pay a higher price. But maybe would be more willing to pay a higher price if there was a sound element.
- Thinks it might be interesting, sell better if there was more use for the product/more functionality. Like maybe if the cloud was a humidifier, they would be more likely to buy it.

<p>Insights regarding Product 3</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participant found it difficult to understand the use for the product as it was quite subjective and didn't serve a real purpose like a light. · Can't imagine how they can use it to relax. After explaining that it was like a fidget gadget but more aesthetic, the participant was able to understand. · Says that they may not buy it themselves but could imagine that it may cost \$15-20. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Participant thinks that the original one makes more sense as there's a lot of functions and feels more like a little game compared to the smaller product. · Generally, did not change their mind about willingness to buy as they aren't too enthusiastic about this product and think that it's not too useful.
<p>Final Thoughts about All 3 Products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The participant says if they were to experience any of the installations themselves they would definitely be more willing to purchase the products. · Participant says that they care about the appearance and function of the product more than the meaning behind the product. In addition, the price would be a factor as well. But generally, the meaning and sensors was a less important component when deciding whether to buy the product. · Participant says they would be more willing to buy if the product was created and designed by an artist that they like.

Interview #6. Participant F.

<p>Insights regarding Product 1</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Participant likes how it looks similar to those planters or décor that is sort of trendy right now, like the geometric shaped products.· Thinks that the light is pretty cool although not sure why the light has to turn red.· Thinks the product is well made, and pretty sturdy.· Thinks that it is quite small and not sure what it could be used for other than décor or a small light, wishes that it could be more useful like maybe even hold pencils or something.· Might be willing to buy and would pay around 20 dollars for it. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">· Thinks that the product is quite different from the original, even though they understand that the concept is the same.· The participant says that if they saw an installation at like MoMA and thought it was really cool they would buy a miniature version at the gift shop and they can envision these products being something similar.
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**Insights
regarding
Product 2**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- Participants likes the second product because of the appearance and the design. But says it's really just personal bias.
- Participant says they are not really sure what they would use it for.
- Doesn't really like hands on stuff so not sure if they like having the customization option. Feels like they don't have the energy to set it up.
- Participant would be willing to pay maybe 20 to 25 dollars for it.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Participant felt like the adaptation stayed true as the main focus is the cloud which was brought over to the miniature.
- Participant would be more willing to buy the product after learning about the product but wasn't willing to set a higher monetary value on the product.

**Insights
regarding
Product 3**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- Participant really likes this third product because they can see the purpose of having one and they would have a use for it. Participant has seen similar miniature Zen gardens and thinks that the product is aesthetic.
- Participant has never used a Zen Garden before so they are not sure if they can take up tending to it.
- Mentions that there is a lot of sand but gets how it can be used.
- Participant is willing to pay \$30-40 for this product. And also because it's bigger they find more value in that.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Participant thinks that the product was very similar to the original installation.
- Participant says they would be more willing to buy the product after learning about the original.
- Participant says that the other products were too small so didn't add as much décor but this product is a better size.
- Participant says they would rather purchase the original installation rather than the product because it would be more fun. But they wouldn't be willing to pay that high of a price due to lack of disposable income that they'd be willing to spend on art related products.

**Final Thoughts
about All 3
Products**

- Generally, participant says that the meaning behind the piece or staying true to the original installation would not impact their purchase decision. They say it's more like if they experiences/saw an impactful installation and want to remember seeing it they might buy something like a miniature of it at a gift shop but translating the interactive component over did not impact their purchase decision.
- In this situation the participant says because they can't take home the original, especially with live art or installations that are very large they would be interested in taking home a smaller piece of that.
- Participant gave an example which is they saw this art piece at MoMA where two people kept running at each other, a performance art and thought it would be interesting if there was a product derived from that experience that they could take home.
- Participant says maybe didn't resonate with the products and inspirations behind the products shown during the interview because they were more interested in grander scale work and would maybe want to get a souvenir or product derived from larger installations.
- Participant says that they'd be more likely to buy the product if the meaning behind the product was something that resonated with them personally. And maybe that's why they liked the Zen Garden product more because they work from home and could sort of resonate with the burnout issue.
- Reasons that made the participant more willing to buy the product was subjective, but participant felt like the interactive component did not add much value to them. They care more about the concept and having a smaller version of something.

Interview #7. Participant G.

<p>Insights regarding Product 1</p>	<p><i>Initial Thoughts regarding the product:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participant thinks that it is a good size to place on a desk or a side table and it wouldn't get in the way. Thinks it would make desk space look better.Wonders what would happen if the sensor malfunctions? Wishes that the light option is always available and the sensor reactant light is just an add-on.Participant would be willing to buy and would be willing to pay around 20-30 dollars for it. <p><i>Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">After viewing the original installation, the participant says that they do think it stayed true to its original inspiration and the meaning behind it.Wonders how the participant will learn of the information behind the piece when they go to buy the product.Would be more interested in purchasing if they saw the original installation first.Would be more willing to buy the product now that they learned about the inspiration behind the product and would be willing to pay slightly more. Maybe around \$35.Worried about the concept for colourblind people and whether buyers can choose to have the red light or meaning or just purchase a regular product.
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**Insights
regarding
Product 2**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- Think that product is similar to the first one but it's more unique and aesthetically pleasing because of the cloud concept.
- Participant can envision themselves buying it but thinks that it does potentially look like something that might be available at Walmart or Dollarama.
- Says they would probably not pay a higher price if they learned that the product is handmade.
- Participant was worried that at first glance the buyer may not know how to use the product.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Participant likes the jar element because they feel like the original installation's concept of control was translated over through containing the product inside a jar even though the original did not have the jar element.
- Participant says that they would be more interested in purchasing the product now that they know the inspiration behind it. And would slightly place more monetary value on it.
- Suggests that if the cloud could be controlled with a remote it would be more interesting and useful.

**Insights
regarding
Product 3**

Initial Thoughts regarding the product:

- Participant thinks that the product is a good size and can imagine that it will be very useful for people who are fidgety when they are working or study and it could be a good product to have and play with.
- And since work can be stressful the participant imagines that a lot of people may want to have this.
- Participant is worried that fidgeting with the product might cause it to break especially the light component as it looks quite fragile.
- Participant says they would be willing to purchase the product and would pay maybe around \$30.

Thoughts after learning that the product is inspired from an interactive art installation and the meaning behind the piece:

- Participant thinks that you can clearly see that the smaller version is inspired from the larger model even though some elements of the original was not included in the smaller product.
- Participant says that now that they learned of this information they would be more willing to buy it but monetary value would be around the same or maybe a little bit more.
- Participant also says that compared to the larger installation, even if it were available for sale, they'd be much more likely to buy the smaller model because it's more compact and useful can be more easily incorporated into their living space.

<p>Final Thoughts about All 3 Products</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The participant says that if they were to get in contact with the original installation first and was able to experience it in a gallery they would be more likely to buy the corresponding product. · Participant says that the most important aspect of wanting to buy the products is that it is aesthetically pleasing and the visual aspect. The interactive component was not very important to them. · Participant says that the meaning behind the product does matter in determining their willingness to buy because it shows that the person put thought and care into making the product and creating connections, but it does not necessarily have to be sensors or interaction meaning could be felt and understood from just how it looks. · In addition, participant says that if the meaning or connections aligned with their own they would be more willing to buy it.
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Appendix E. Breakdown of Costs of Supplies:

Product 1: The Flower Light

Version 1 (no interactive component):

- Glass dome: \$4
- Sand: \$0.5 (\$1.25 for 500g, each product utilized 170g)
- Shrink plastic: \$0.7 (\$1.4/sheet each product utilized ½ sheet)
- Lights: \$2.5

Version 2 (with interactive component):

- Glass dome: \$4
- Sand: \$0.5 (\$1.25 for 500g, each product utilized 170g)
- Shrink plastic: \$0.7 (\$1.4/sheet each product utilized ½ sheet)
- Seed Arduino: \$10
- Breadboard: \$1
- Wires: \$0.5
- Photoresistor: \$1

Product 2: Cloud Lamp

Version 1 (no interactive component):

- Glass container: \$4
- Cotton: ~\$0.1 (\$2 for 90g)
- Lights: \$2.5

Version 2 (with interactive component):

- Glass container: \$4
- Cotton: ~\$0.1 (\$2 for 90g)
- Lights: \$2.5
- Seed Arduino: \$10
- Wires: \$0.5
- RGB LED: \$1

Product 3: The Miniature Zen Garden

Version 1 (no interactive component):

- Photoframe: \$2.5
- Sand: \$0.6 (\$2 for 700g, each product utilized 200g)
- Stones: ~\$0.2 (\$1.25 for a pack)
- Grass decor foam: ~\$0.5 (\$5 for a pack)

Version 2 (with interactive component):

- Photoframe: \$2.5
- Sand: \$0.6 (\$2 for 700g, each product utilized 200g)
- Stones: ~\$0.2 (\$1.25 for a pack)
- Grass decor foam: ~\$0.5 (\$5 for a pack)
- Seed Arduino: \$10
- Breadboard: \$1
- Wires: \$0.5
- Leds: \$0.2 (\$1 for 10)