

1. Barthes, R. (1977) 'Death of the Author', *Image, Music, Text*. London: Fontana Press, pp. 143–148

"To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing."

In Week 1, I made 100 iterations of a flower from my Unit 1 observational studies, using a simple condition: look at the previous iteration for 5 seconds, hide it, draw from memory in 2 minutes, no erasing, repeat. By iteration 50, I was no longer consciously directing what I drew. My hand, or muscle memory, was.

Barthes argues that the author's intention doesn't determine a text's meaning; that meaning is produced in the reading, not the making. This reframes a question my iterations kept asking: who actually made iteration 100? I designed the condition, but I didn't design the outcome. The accumulated logic of my own forgetting did that.

Barthes gives me a way to think about this – authorship in iterative practice isn't located in one person making deliberate decisions. Rather, it is distributed across a system, across time, and across repetition. The further the drawing got from the source image, the less I could claim to have made it. My hand, in essence, had taken over. The author, in Barthes' terms, was already gone.

2. Perec, G. ([1974] 1997) 'The Street', *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces*. London: Penguin Books Ltd, pp. 46–56.

"What I hope for from it, in effect, is nothing other than the record of a threefold experience of ageing: of the places themselves, of my memories, and of my writing."

In the 'Places' section of this extract, Perec describes a durational practice of returning to twelve Parisian locations yearly, writing one description on the spot and one entirely from memory, sealing both without comparing them. What he is after is the record of divergence itself; how the place, his memory of it, and his writing all age differently over time.

This mirrors the structural logic of my iterative drawing practice precisely. Each of my 150 drawings (week 1 + week 2) is both a description from memory, and a record of how that memory has drifted from the previous iteration.

Perec renders the gap between observed reality and remembered reality the most honest data available, rather than a failure. His instruction to "force yourself to write down what is of no interest, what is most obvious, most common, most colourless" also resonates with my choice of subjects – the stool, the lily pond, the cat charm on a flip phone – objects so ordinary they would be invisible to anyone but me.

3. Boym, S. (2001) *The Future of Nostalgia*. New York: Basic Books.

"Nostalgia is a romance with one's own fantasy."

Boym's distinction between restorative nostalgia, which attempts to reconstruct the past faithfully, and reflective nostalgia, which dwells in the longing itself, embracing fragmentation and incompleteness, precisely describes what my iterative drawing practice produces.

I began week 2 intending to draw objects and places from memory, but what emerged were not accurate reconstructions. They were romances with my own fantasies of those objects. The flip phone grew a cat charm in every iteration. The Blythe doll gradually absorbed my own illustration style.

Boym helps me understand that this drift is not failure, but instead, the condition of reflective nostalgia itself; the image at the precipice of memory, always mediated by present perspective. My drawings therefore document what it feels like to reach for these objects in the fog of my memory, rather than what they look(ed) like.

4. Blauvelt, A., Maurer, L., Paulus, E., Puckey, J. and Wouters, R. (2013) *Conditional Design Workbook*. Amsterdam: Valiz, pp. ii-xiv.

"Avoid arbitrary randomness. Difference should have a reason."

The Conditional Design Manifesto provided the structural framework for both weeks of this project. Its insistence that difference should have a reason pushed me away from drawing 100 different flowers or 50 different objects from my childhood, and toward finding a single tight condition that could generate meaningful variation.

My conditions that I set for both parts of the project is Conditional Design logic applied to human cognitive limitation, rather than to rule-based mark making.

What interests me is the tension between CDM's emphasis on designed systems and the fundamentally uncontrollable nature of memory as a mechanism. I designed the condition, yet I could not design what my memory would do within it.

5. Steyerl, H. (2012) 'In Defense of the Poor Image', *The Wretched of the Screen*. Berlin: Sternberg Press, pp. 31–45.

"The poor image is a copy in motion. Its quality is bad, its resolution is low."

Steyerl theorises the poor image, degraded through circulation, compression, and reproduction, as carrying its own form of truth precisely because of its imperfection. In 'Methods of Iterating,' I applied this to risograph feedback loops. In Unit 2, I find a different inflection: my memory drawings are poor images produced by biological, rather than digital, compression.

Each iteration loses resolution not through file format degradation, but through the lossy algorithm of human recall. What persists across iterations functions like the artefacts that survive digital compression: the details the system deemed most essential. Steyerl's framework, originally applied to digital image circulation, reveals something about how human memory circulates images internally – always degrading, always partial, and always carrying the marks of transmission.

6. Nara, Y. (2001) *Nobody Knows*. Tokyo: Little More.

"Time passes by before it fades and vanishes. I want to grab it even a bit and make it last. Sometimes it's a diary I draw, drawn over and over so I don't forget."

*Nobody Knows* is a collection of Nara's rough sketches, doodles, scribbled notes, and drawings. They are unpolished and intimate. It reads less like an artist's monograph and more like a private journal made public.

This quote, scrawled directly onto one of his sketches, describes my practice more precisely than I could have myself. His drawings are not observations of the world but attempts to hold onto it before it slips, a diary made from repetition and the fear of forgetting. My iterative condition does the same thing: drawing the same object five times from memory, each time trying to grab what the previous iteration almost lost.

Nara's characters are described as "a representation of himself," drawn from deeply-etched memories of childhood. By the fifth iteration of the Blythe doll she looked like a character I would design. By the fourth flip phone, I had written my own name on the screen. When memory is the only source, what emerges is inevitably a portrait of the person doing the remembering.