

Hua Shu

Posts from me

Finishing Up

Posted on [August 2, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

I can't believe this is the end! 10 weeks passed by so fast and tomorrow is our big day. I feel like an athlete in training for years and tomorrow is the olympics.



This has been the most rewarding and fun summer I have ever had. I can't believe how much I have learned in 10 weeks. Everyone in VRAC has helped me grow— my teammates Shea and Alex, my friends, my roommates, my grad mentors (including Britta and Eleese), my faculty advisor, and of course, Pam, Stephen and Elliot. Especially Pam! Thanks for taking such good care of us and always looking after our needs and breaking up our ties. We won't have a shirt if you weren't there to give us guidance:) Though we were away from home for 10 weeks, everyone in VRAC has made us feel like we have an extended family here in Iowa and I can't thank everyone enough for how much they have taken care of me.

Our project has come along well. I stayed in VRAC to finish folding some brochures we are going to pass out tomorrow. I was having a little trouble with the paper cutter but they turned out okay. After 20 exports, the animation turned out smoothly . there is still a bit lag when it is played at a bigger size, but at least the playback is smooth when it is played at the size it is intended to be. You can watch the animation [here](#).

inside of our brochure

Posted in [REU](#) |

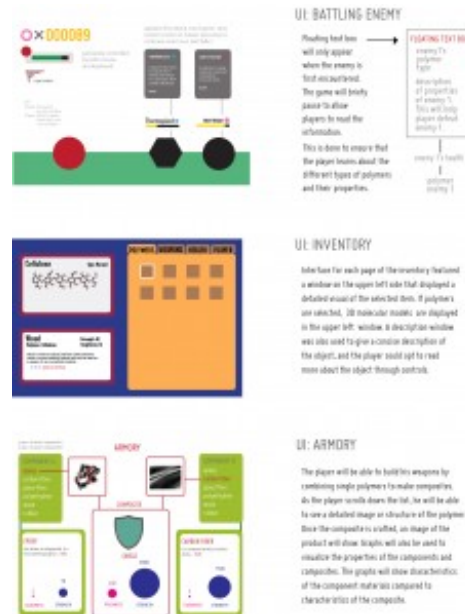
Demo Day

Posted on [August 1, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

Today we had a demo for friday and it was really rewarding. We figured out where to project our work. Shea is working with Unity and trying to get it to export the demo, but it seems to be difficult. Hopefully he will be able to achieve a good export tomorrow.

Animation is looking promising but right now exporting seems to be the biggest problem. Flash has a terrible build in converter to mov and makes the clip extremely lagged. It gets worse when it is projected on a big screen when it gets incredibly lagged. maybe a few more renders will make the mov more smooth.

I am really glad I followed Stephen's demo advice made the brochures. they seem to be a good way to display our UIs which did not fit in to the poster and people like souvenirs.



Posted in [REU](#) |

Poster finished:O

Posted on [July 30, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

It's good I actually feel caught up enough to blog today. we turned in our poster today. In the morning I was rushing because we had changed an illustration on the poster and could not get the image to show up correctly on the poster. Whenever we tried to save it as a png it just turned out blurry. it seems like there are just too many vectors in the image and it does not like the compressions. In the end, we decided to inset a simpler version of the image, which is sad because Alex made really cool texture for woody, our wood monster.

The remaining of the week we will try to finish our paper. Shea made a lot of progress in unity and we are aiming to have the mock up finished this week. I just need to work on finishing up the animation, which requires adding more footage. I guess I just have to stay up a little later the next few days, but I think everyone is in the same boat.

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catching up

Posted on [July 24, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

I haven't written in awhile because I have been so busy trying to catch up everything with the animation and poster. The last few weeks feel like the end of an academic semester. We are busy with the details of our animation and game.

Things in Unity is rough but Shea is doing great work and trying to figure out. We had a rough time last week because Unity was in Javascript, a language Shea was unfamiliar with. However, he was able to figure out more things out along the way with the help of some people at the lab.

Things are looking up, but we definitely need to do a lot of work the last few weeks.

The poster is looking good. Our group had a relatively easy time figuring out the layout of the poster because our project is much less quantitative than some of the other groups. Our mentor recommended to add more pictures and it may interfere with the layout but I am sure I can figure it out when I sit down and play with everything.

I guess I just wished we had more time because it feels like we still have a lot of work to do. The animation is coming along, but I definitely gonna illustrate more scenes because the dialogues are long. I am also having a lot of problem exporting through flash, but it seems like it's just a trial/error process and I might just have to export multiple times to get the error free clip.

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Our progress so far

Posted on [July 16, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

We have been very busy trying to catch our progress. Shea is working more on Unity Pro and character illustration. I



tiled our poster into actual size. I was worried the font might be too small but it seems okay. Poster looks great and I look forward to putting the rest of the material up there.

Another plus is I download aftereffects! hopefully I can watch some special effect tutorial to figure out some special effects in the animation like fire and smoke. etc. But so far I am really excited. Last week was a lot of sit backs for me because I felt kinda stuck on the animation– so far, I am feeling more accomplished today and looking forward to playing with things in after effects. Here is some footage (we have more now. this was rendered two weeks ago) some scenes are placeholders and the render made some parts a little funny. promise everything will look better much later.

[Uncut animation footage](#)

Posted in [REU](#) |

Recycle

Posted on [July 11, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

2012 ISU SPIRE EIT

VRAC. HCI

TELEROBOTICS

RICK STONE, Faculty mentor
ELEASE MCLAURIN, Graduate mentor

Andrew Lilja
Sarah Belter
Charlecia Brownlee



Jordan Williams
Monica Berron
Adriana Phillip

**ISIS
MEDICAL
PROJECT**

ELLIOT WINER, Faculty mentor
BETHANY JOHNSKE, Graduate mentor



**ESCAPE
FROM
POLYMER
ISLAND**

MICHAEL NESSLER, Faculty mentor
AMY BAUER, Graduate mentor
DANNY VENNERBURG, Graduate mentor

Shea Brown
Alex Hurns
Hua Shu



Tim Honeywell
Amanda Skinner
Andrew Mendez

**DEPTH
PERCEPTION IN
VIRTUAL
ENVIRONMENTS**

JON KELLY, Faculty mentor
MELISSA BURTON, Graduate mentor



design into a poster. haha. boredom.

enjoy.

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[T shirt design...\[updated\]](#)

Posted on [July 9, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)



I changed it to RGB. easier to see and program computer graphic uses RGB. makes more sense.

Jordan had the same thought! what a smart man:)

Sheas been working in Unity and put in some placement art work for a scene today! it was really cool and I can't wait till we actually get to the interaction part. The animation has been slow but coming along.

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*******>>>> T shirt design .**

Posted on [July 8, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)







sorry telerobotics. I really can't remember what your robot looks like. I can change it if you guys have something else in mind.

I tried to combine everyone's ideas? andrew's idea for each group to have a logo. Amanda's idea for the glasses, the controller and the robot.

they vary a little bit by the text.

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FRIDAY

Posted on [July 6, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

Friday is finally here. I really enjoyed this week working on our own. it was nice having fourth of july off.

I did a lot of work on the intro animation this week, though I just export it as a mov and it's only 11 seconds long. but we are getting there... kinda? I just really need to get the voice over in so I can make sure the speed is good.

Shea did a lot of work with Unity today exploring ragespine. The program seems to be really picky, especially when importing layered objects. Ragespine reorganizes your layers and sort them in alphabetical order if you renamed the layer. so basically we have to make sure our layers are in alphabetical order when we import our files. interesting. painful. but interesting.

Yesterday Amanda and I got super dehydrated and passed out. I have been working most of this week so I am really looking forward to relax later tonight and hangout with friends. But the ultimate goal by the end of the weekend is getting 2/3 of the animation done and record/ fix/ make them prettier throughout next week.

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busy

Posted on [July 6, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

I just realized I haven't written in a while. I am trying to work on my animation. it's taking a lot longer than I would like, but I am trying to make the illustration as powerful and as visually stimulating as I can, though flash always makes everything more difficult than it should be. I also haven't used flash in a while, so i am still getting used to animating things in flash.

Our presentation went really well today. We received a lot of constructive criticisms and they will definitely help us making our presentation better in the symposium– which is strange to think about! it'll be here in four weeks. Time is running out fast and I really just plan to work my butt off in the next four weeks with poduction. Hopefully by this weekend I can post a rough cut demo reel here of things:)

Shea is exploring Ragespine and Unity and getting used to the software. It is definitely gonna be difficult for all of us to work on one computer, but we can probably divide up the work somehow. We just gonna keep working and so far we have been doing well! Good job Shea and Alex:) you guys are awesome and I am proud of the way we have been working.

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update on things

Posted on [June 29, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

Today has not been as productive as earlier in the week. I think Shea and Alex and I are just really tired from writing the paper. Yesterday Eleese helped us go over our introduction paragraph and it seems like we have a few things to fix. However, we did a little direction with our methods, which is good, because we really wasn't sure how to write our methods and results paragraph. I did manage to finish my part of the methods though.

Today is also Amanda's 21st birthday! We plan to order pizza (finally getting some cinnamonstix) with everyone. Tomorrow we will go to the farmers market, getting some fresh produce and things and perhaps watch a movie or have dinner together. Tim's birthday is Sunday so we will probably do something special too.

We also have a lot of work to do this weekend. This paper we have been so busy with our paper and other assignments that we barely got a chance to work on our game. I wasn't aware but some how we are not doing a web platform anymore, just 2D. I initially struggled with the idea (since I feel like web would reach more people, student can play at home, etc), but just 2d can mean more detailed graphics/ sound. I am really hoping to make our game as visually stimulating as possible. This weekend I really need to do a lot of work with characters and scenes.

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Ethics

Posted on [June 28, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

Today we had our debate for our Ethics class. I only have debated once back in high school and I think Alex and Shea probably have not debated much either, so we were a little confused with the procedure in the beginning. As time went on, we figured it out and made a lot of good points! It seems like we all just need to work on our presence and I definitely need to work on my posture: No one is gonna take you seriously if you don't take yourself seriously and other people's perception of how serious you take yourself is a large part of that (in debate anyways).

Our group photos were also on the drive now– all kind of prettiness happened; all kind of creativity happened. The photos got us a lot of laughs but I hope to finish the rest of methods paragraph finished. We got an okay start but we are struggling with what to put in the methods paragraph because we are the only group that is not doing any official testing with human subjects.

Technically, the game/ui/features would be our result (since the game is our result...?) but I am not sure. waiting to ask Eleese some advice at two so we can finish this by 5 pm and go back to character designing for our game.

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A Super Candid Shot

Posted on [June 28, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)



#ourreuexperiance

it's cheesy but just being silly and loving each other;)

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Intro is completed!

Posted on [June 27, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

Today was a productive day for us. We spent the whole day really trying to finish our intro. Our program area paragraph needed some work so we wrote a completely new one. We also fixed up our literature review and wrote our problem area paragraph! Three people writing one paper is really hard, especially if we all came from disciplines, but we did it! and I am very very proud of us for the way we worked with each other! I felt like we really compromised and listened to each other's ideas.

Audrey came in the afternoon and showed us this open sourced program called jmol that models molecules. It exports to Maya and is a pretty neat program. Not having to model a bunch of molecules will save us a ton of time, which we will definitely need once things start rolling.

Also, as of yesterday around 4pm, we got our unity pro license:) ! yay! now we are just waiting for the plug ins.

good job everybody!:)

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Team Meeting

Posted on [June 26, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

The highlight of today so far has been the ethics class, which was interesting and more like a seminar. We talked about a range of issues that dealt with personal and work ethics as well as responsibilities associated with professions like designing and engineering. The class was really engaging and Elliot brought in a lot of events dealing with ethics to our attention.

We have been making progress on our intro. Alex, Shea and I each wrote a new problem area paragraph and now we are trying to combine the three pieces into a conglomeration. At 2 pm, we will go over the script with our mentors and see if there are any other changes to make. Hopefully our script will be specific enough to be the final version. If everything goes successful, we should be finally making progress towards production by the end of the week.

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finalize the script.

Posted on [June 25, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

The past week , my group got a lot of work done. We have a pretty finalized script now. (7 pages long). Alex did a lot of work on the script. She compiled everything we have and put in a lot of creative directions in to the plotline.

Thanks to a lot of constructive feedback from the last [post](#), I made some new interfaces for our game. the text only appear during battle and once it show up the game slows down pauses when the player encounters the first enemy of each type. (since it would get really annoying to pause the game every time). Shea suggested this great idea- I

am really excited to see this interaction once we start making the unity. I am also thinking somewhere in the control/inventory we need to have a key of all the different color symbols and explain briefly each type because the information in the text box is not going to stay, so the information contained in the boxes should be accessible elsewhere as a reminder.

We are still fixing things up, any suggestions are welcomed:) so far we have switching health and currency on the list.

Our OpenGL project is finishing up nicely. We are trying to place more cameras that shift perspective— so far the atom is rotating with electrons orbiting around.

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Work Day

Posted on [June 22, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

Today is our first loosely structured work today it feels really nice because we get to work on whatever we want and structure it ourselves. So far, I feel like I have gotten more done than the last few days. There is still a lot of work that needs to be done over the weekend. For one, we really need to finalize our script. So far we are a little behind the timeline we set up for our research project. I am just really looking forward to get down working on our research project.

We did a literature review of the research in education video games and have decided to animate the first part of the project— with a voiceover and some atmospheric music. I am not sure how far the animation should go, but I guess we just really need to finalize the script.

Our Open GL project is coming along fine, with some glitches to fix. The obj is not loading with the mtl information for some reason. But other than that, we are making good progress towards getting the project completed. I hope to finish 85% open gl project so we can really get started on a finalized script over the weekend.

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ZE GAMERS... or anyone who interact with screens, we need your opinion.

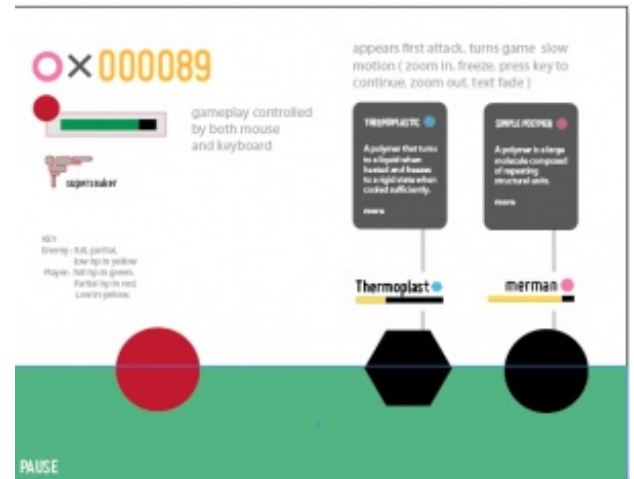
Posted on [June 21, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

so we made a mock mock mock interface for our game and we really need your opinion

we are trying to figure out the best way to incorporate learning into the game play.

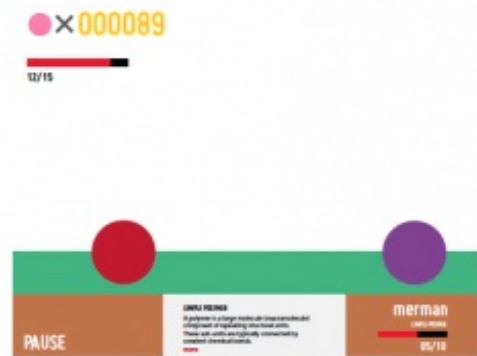
and to be quite honest, I hate textual things in games (because seriously, who is gonna read it?) and I definitely tried to come up with metaphors to make the whole gaming experience better/ feels less like education, but our mentors feel more comfortable having with text, which I can understand why but still really the idea still makes me uncomfortable. They suggested having a villager giving you a lecture (which sounds too school-ish for me) or having a sidekick giving you hints (which sounds impossible considering all the things we have to do already).

so this is what we came up with in the end.



there is a text window in the middle of the screen near bottom so you can read about the type of polymer the enemy is, which will provide hint to how to defeat the enemy, user can read more if they choose to . I don't expect them to read it, but as their eyes slide across the screen to look at the score, at least they will get some exposure to the information and pick up certain words (esp if we color code some words like monomer, etc) .

The first time they battle a certain enemy, it will turn on. if they battle the same type of enemy, the tab will minimize unless the user choose to open it to read about it. Shea also had a this wonderful idea to introduce graphic symbols for different polymers. so they can be next to the enemy type as an additional visual cue to what type they are later on when the text minimizes.



any thoughts on how to make this more effective or suggestions?

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Power Outage

Posted on [June 20, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

We were working in the lab yesterday when the power went out. It was strange when VRAC suddenly became so quiet– noises of monitors, stokes on keyboards, beepings in the lab. all gone.

We got back to Freddy and nothing was working. It was starting to get hot there without the AC, so we all decided to go out for dinner at Fighting Burritos. It was really good. Mine was a little more expansive with guacamole, but it was all worth it.

Later that night we went back to campus to take our group picture. Britta has us do a light painting, which was really cool because I have never done light painting before. We took some pretty ridiculous pictures and I was sad some of them turned out to be blurry or simply. wrong. but it was really funny just being on campus in the dark, noticing how shiny the stars compare to back home.

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Our solar system

Posted on [June 19, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

This week we are learning opengl and making a solar system for our project. Its going well so far and we are having a lot of fun scripting everything. Shea is getting very into it and making sure the planets are rotating right.

Yesterday we made a timeline charting our progress in our research project. Our goals are really high, but i am ready to not sleep to get done what we need to do.

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Our progress so far

Posted on [June 18, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

We created a brief literature review regarding educational video games. Shea, Alex and I divided up the work load and we each read three articles regarding different areas in educational games.

I am not surprised at how controversial the topic is.

though i can't help not agreeing with some of the arguments some of the paper made. One paper called for a text extensive approach... and i know i would hate the concept of a QA box within a video game. how is that different from an text book?

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last day of HCI

Posted on [June 15, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

it's last day of HCI. I can't believe this lecture is finally over! it seems like we learned so much in only two weeks.

Today we will present our evaluation on the library kiosk and what an terrible application it was. so excited!

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ideas ideas ideas

Posted on [June 14, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

I really have no idea what to write about. We have been doing modeling for the past two days and it's really interesting. I am not the best at modeling but I am trying.

On the other hand, my modeling instructor John and I are having a good conversation about game design. He gave me many good advice about how to design and create game.

I am really excited about the thai, plotluck friday and the room ! i t'll be so much fun.

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sound/ performance

Posted on [June 12, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

I really loved the lecture we did today. I think sound is one of the most important thing in creating an experience and one that is commonly forgotten. I was even more excited when Professor Harding brought up Performance Art. I think performance art is absolutely fascinating— actually in August, I am going to NYC to be assistant to a performance piece.

I think this is the first time I truly feel that the subject of interdisciplinary is being touched. Though we have been here for a few weeks, most of our coursework were very programming/ tech based and to me, creating an interaction means approaching someone from multiple sense-audio, visual, sound, touch, and taste. One certain sense can be trigger by layers of others. I guess I just wish the classes we took were more than modeling, research and programming— I wish they taught us how to create things, not how to make things.

And finally, here is Marina's [Rhythm 10](#).

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3

Posted on [June 8, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

I am just gonna start numbering these posts because it is becoming really hard to get creative with the titles— and people are more likely to click it because the titles are not characters. (#OMGHCI)

climbing the wall was really intense. I climbed half way up and my arms totally exploded. void upper body strength. Hopefully by the end of the summer, I'll be able to climb onto the top of the wall. (I am trying really hard to not make this into some cheesy metaphor, but it is really hard.)

On the other hand, today was the last day for our programming class. I am really thankful there is no more visual studio but I think I am gonna miss Eric. He tried so hard to get us interested and make this a better experience for us. I am definitely gonna miss his humor.

I am excited about learning maya. I don't have a huge interest in modeling— but this week has made me look forward to maya much much more.

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the big wall

Posted on [June 7, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

I am so excited to climb the big rock climbing wall in the gym tonight! Since I am the most uncoordinated person, it's gonna be really embarrassing and fun.

Our programming class is almost over — Shea, Alex and I just started on working on our programming project. I think we are all very independent and ambitious people, but we are getting more used to working together as a team everyday as we worked more closely with each other. As for c++. I will definitely review Eric's slides even after his class.

As for our game project, we are moving along the way. Currently, we are trying to create a second script with dialogue and descriptions of things/ items, in addition to getting program installed and renting out equipments. With that said, it's so cool we can rent out drawing tablets through design building. At my school, you can only rent visual art equipment out if you are a major— I wonder if you can do the same with cameras here? I think I will definitely try to check out a video camera next time.

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Birthday

Posted on [June 6, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

It's so sweet that Pam got Charlencia a cake for her birthday! It really makes me feel like part of a family.

The programming class is pretty challenging, but I enjoy how fast paste it is. I don't mind research and trying to learn it all myself after the lecture. the only thing that is hard is to also keep up the progress with our research project along with our class project.

Nevertheless, I am looking forward to this weekend though it seems like a lot of work is ahead. Last weekend was really fun even though we all woke up and ordered terrible chinese food and watched NPH on netflix. I love everyone I am meeting here, even Shae and his lame pick up jokes.

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so far

Posted on [June 5, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

After some intense scripting and storyboarding, our game finally has a script! It makes me feel better knowing that we can get started on actually making our project soon.

I really enjoyed the luncheon lecture today with Stephen. Especially afterwards when we discussed about graduate school and job opportunities for people in the HCI and user experience field.

I am surprised that no one has mentioned Edward Tufte's "Visual Explanation" as a recommended book, but it is definitely a good read for anyone who is interested in information and data visualization designs. (But read cautiously– you will start to notice how poorly made charts are in every day lives, and **it will annoy you alot**). you can read about him

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Rope Course

Posted on [June 4, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

The rope course surprised me. To be honest, I was not looking forward to the rope course because I am not athletic at all. However, the rope course focused much more on trust and teamwork instead. I have it chance and it was fun in the end.

As a reward for our hard work at the rope course, our mentors took us to purple cherry, a local froyo place.

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Art Walk

Posted on [June 4, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

Last Friday we went to the art walk in downtown Ames.

I was really excited about the art walk because in Baltimore we have Artscape, which is a big outdoor art festival with local visual and performing artist and I thought it might in interesting to see a similar event here in Ames.

The overall feeling of the art walk is cozy and small. It is much smaller than Artscape in Baltimore but just as interesting. We saw many interesting pieces made by local artist. The art ranged from pencil drawings, quilting and digital illustration. People are very friendly to talk to you about their art and interests.

There are also many interesting stores in downtown Ames, especially the antique stores and the game shops. I think the next time I go to downtown I will definitely bring more money to purchase fancy lamps and boardgames (and popcorn).

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The campus

Posted on [June 1, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

It was a really nice day today so I decide to get up early to walk around the campus. Before I came here, I read that Iowa State has a very beautiful campus and this is evidenced by the architectures I see on my way to VRAC. The most impressive building on this side of the campus I have seen is the library, which has a very de stijl feel. The college of design is also surprising. The outside appears very old but the inside is full of large windows and rigid structures, definitely more interesting on the inside.

I love how green the campus is. There are so many glass windows on every single building here to ensure maximum

amount of light to preserve energy. Even the trash can is solar powered.

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First Post

Posted on [May 31, 2012](#) by [Hua](#)

Hello. My name is Hua and I am from Maryland. I live in the DC metropolitan area but I consider Baltimore my home. I am currently attending University of Maryland, Baltimore County, pursuing a BFA in Visual Art with a concentration in design. During my free time I like watch movies. I am very interest in film, animation, video, and sound. With that said, I enjoy learning about anything experimental, interpretative and abstract expressions.

I am really excited about our summer at VRAC because I love interactions. Everyone is also very friendly. I absolutely loved the informal dinner we had the first day. It definitely helped us loosen up and getting to more each other on a more personal, impressionable basis. The mentors for our project are very nice and open to new ideas. It seems like we are going to have a lot of artistic/ creative freedom with this project and I can't wait to get started!

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Press f for fullscreen.

