

Project 1: Ghost in the Machine



INTRODUCE

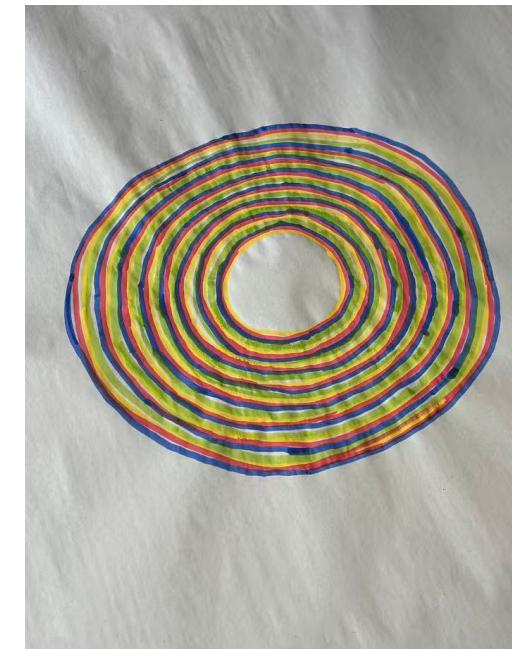
What is conditional design

Conditional design is a way of designing by setting clear rules and conditions first, instead of drawing one fixed final result. The final outcome is generated when people follow these rules

WORKSHOP 1

Process

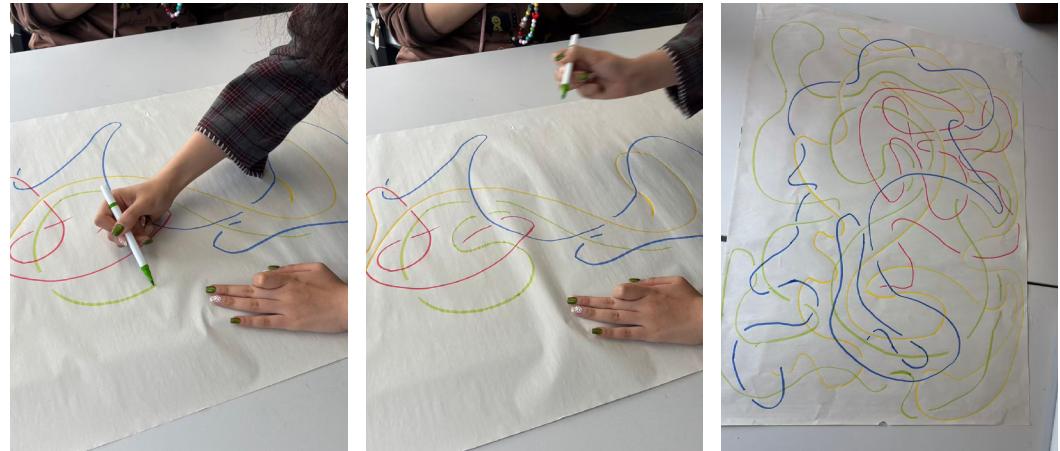
We engaged in some exercises from the Conditional Design Workbook. The first exercise required us to draw circles one after another.



WORKSHOP1

Process

In the second exercise, we were required to cross the line drawn in the previous exercise.



In the third exercise, we were required to complete a face scan without communicating.

WORKSHOP1

Process



In the last exercise, we were asked to work in groups to draw continuously on a piece of paper, without touching each other's lines.

Conclusion Workshop1

At first, everyone was drawing easily, but as the picture became more detailed, everyone became more cautious, and I started making mistakes. We were all participants; no one could control the final result. It's more about enjoying the process than the outcome.

TEAM WORKSHOP

In this workshop, we need to prepare a set of rules for condition design in groups.

Rule

Draw a triangle that does not touch any other triangles.

Draw a triangle that shares exactly one full side with one triangle.

Draw a triangle that touches one triangle at exactly one vertex.

Draw a triangle that intersects one triangle along two sides.

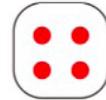
Draw a triangle that intersects with two different triangles.

Draw a triangle that overlaps others, but break the lines at the intersections.

In this activity, participants determine drawing rules by rolling dice, with each person sequentially sketching a triangle according to the dice result.

Schematic diagram

All **red** triangles depicted are those required by the conditions.

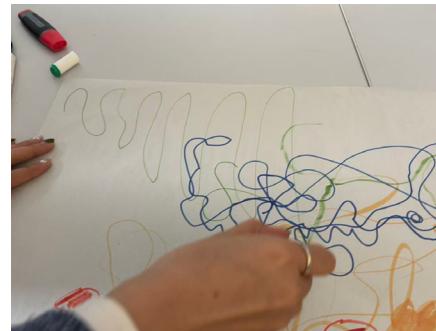
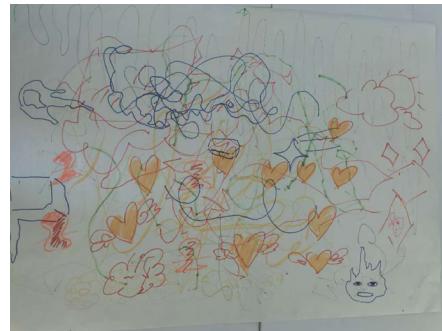


TEAM WORKSHOP

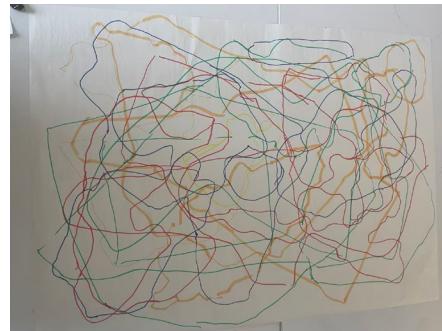


As time passed during the exercise, with less and less space remaining on the paper, everyone returned to a cautious attitude.

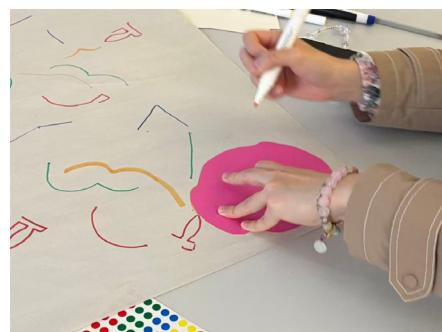
OTHER WORKSHOP



Each round, tasks are determined by drawing lots.



Fold the paper into your desired shape and trace its outline.



Cut out a pattern you like, and then tangent the outline of the pattern to the previous person's pattern.

REFLECTION

In the Conditional Design manifesto, the second part “Process” mentions a sentence — “The process is the product.” This sentence runs through almost all of our course exercises. It made me rethink the meaning of “process” in design. As a designer, I often focus on the final presentation and ignore the process itself.

It is important to say that in Conditional Design, the process is not a preparation stage such as research, sketching, or making, but part of the work itself.

It emphasises that designers need to set certain rules that allow the work to naturally generate results during the process.

This idea made me realise that design does not always have to be fully controlled by “me”. It can be an open system. The task of a designer is to create a system that allows results to happen naturally.

In our exercises, we were asked to follow simple rules to create a result. Even though everyone followed the same rules, the outcomes were all different.

These differences made me understand that Conditional Design is not about randomness, but about variation under logical constraints.

It asks us to explore “openness within control” — to set clear rules, let changes happen on their own, and observe the process and results that follow.

REFLECTION

During this process, I also understood another sentence from the manifesto:

“We use logic to design the conditions through which the process can take place.”

This means we use logic to design the framework where change can happen.

The designer decides, through research, which parts can change by audience and which should control by themselves, building a logical system.

In this way, the changes that happen are not random — they are controlled and meaningful.

From these experiments, I learned that Conditional Design focuses on the relationship between people and the work.

The “process” of the work needs “input” to continue.

As the manifesto says:

“Input should come from our external and complex environment: nature, society and its human interactions.”

This reminds us that the audience is not a passive viewer, but a co-creator.

Their participation is one of the key conditions that keeps the system running.

Because every participant reacts differently, the outcome can never be exactly the same.

This openness is what Conditional Design wants us to experience and reflect on.

Through this course, the most important thing I have learned is that in Conditional Design, the process is not just a way to reach the result — it is the result itself.

Designers need to use logic and rules to build a system and allow the audience’s participation and environmental changes to shape the outcome.