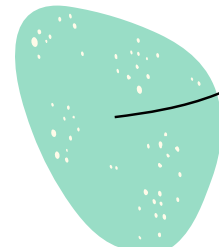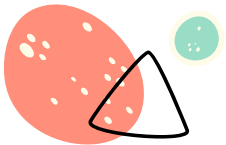# PARALLAX

AN AUDIO TOOL FOR DISCOVERY AND REDISCOVERY

Antonella, Delace, Joy, and Sarah

Problem Statement: Understanding Public Art

- Public art often fades into the background of one's perception
  - How can new context (**new perspectives, new views**) be added to objects?

- Similar to museum exhibitions, the physical context of public art is static
  - How can objects be dynamic (**more interactive, bring objects to life**) without changing them?

- How can we create **experiences** that have a **lasting impact on visitors?**
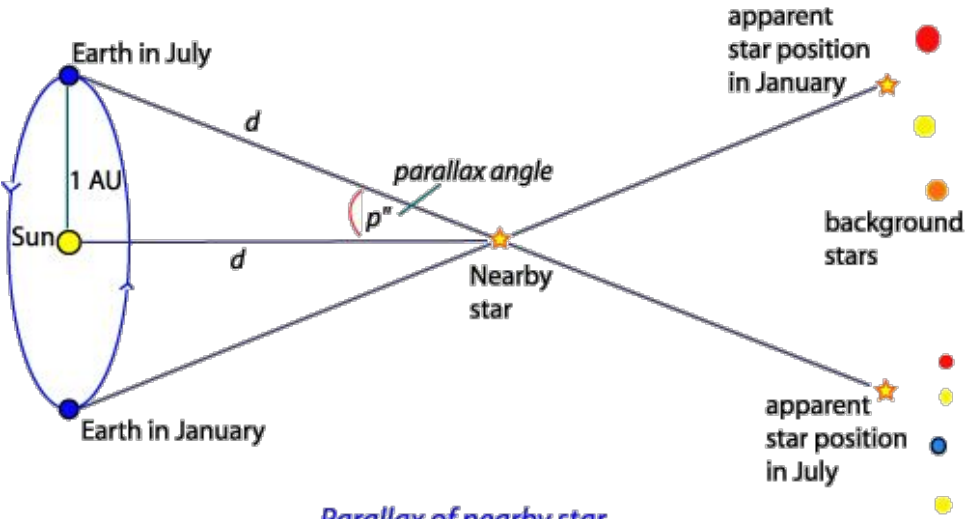
Parallax

Parallax is an audio experience that focuses on discovery and rediscovery. The idea of using new angles, both physically with a work of art and mentally with new information from peers and docents, is a key element we've identified in our project.

Parallax exists as a web app where users can choose several entry points to explore MIT's public art, discover new pieces and details of familiar works, share their views, and listen to others.
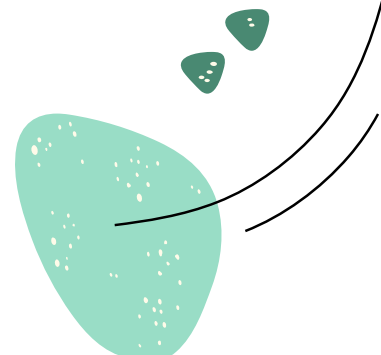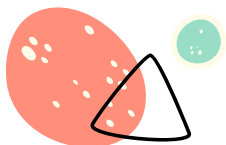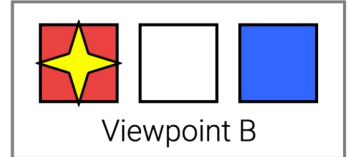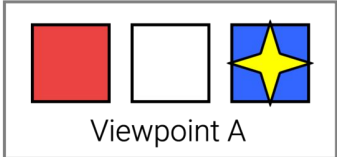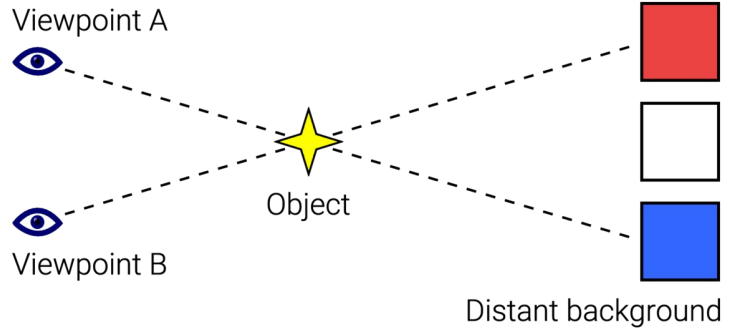
PARALLAX

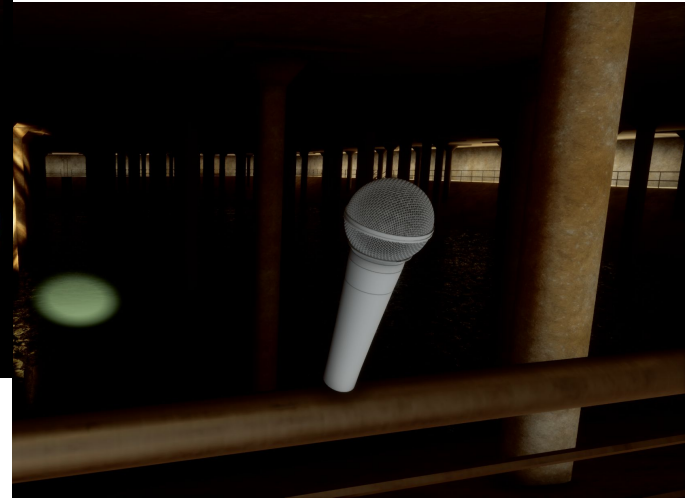## UNDERSTANDING THE IMPACT OF AN ANGLE

Parallax of nearby star

Background Research

01 — Field Overview

02 — Discussions with the LIST

**03** — User Research + Class Feedback

Field Study: *Reservoir*
Camille Utterback

- Recognizing audio and participatory projects as a method of enhancing experiences

Discussions with the List

- Partnered with the List because of its outdoor exhibition

- Our discussions with Emily Garner from the List helped us identify the users of MIT's public art and **identify our persona.**

- We particularly chose a target audience of **MIT students** after understanding their lack of engagement despite proximity to a plethora of museum objects.
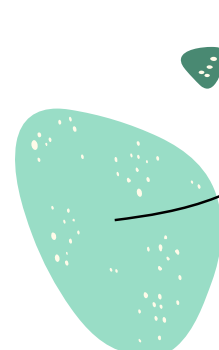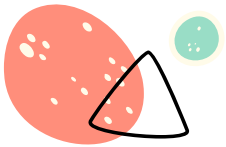
User Research

In personal interviews, students emphasized interest in discovery of new art:

- How interested are you in art?

- How much do you know about art at MIT?

- Did you know that there is an audio tour for the public art at MIT? If not, would you ever use it? Why?

- What do you think would help you engage more with the art on campus?

"I really like art but I sometimes get bored of museums because I often feel they lack a more 'personal' component."
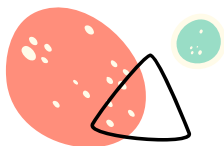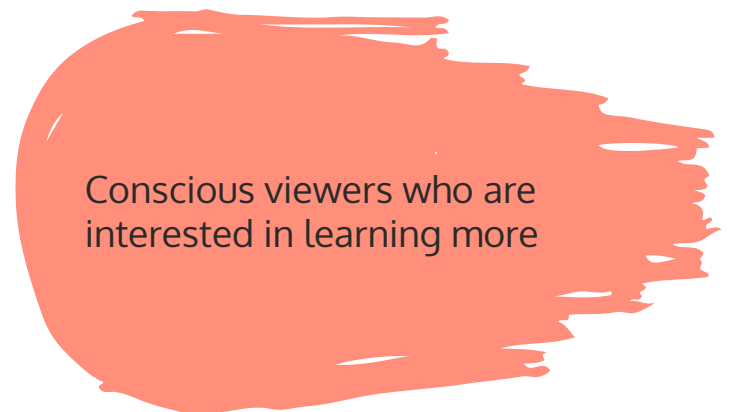
Personae

MIT student body

Conscious viewers who are interested in learning more

Uninterested viewers who quickly move on from the viewing experience

User Research

Answers:

- Majority of our respondents reported that they knew very little about public art at MIT

- 88% of students asked were unaware that an audio tour for public art at MIT existed, though many said that they would be interested in it if they knew

- Different users wanted different experiences: some discussed wanting to hear comments only from curators, others only wanted to hear comments from other community members
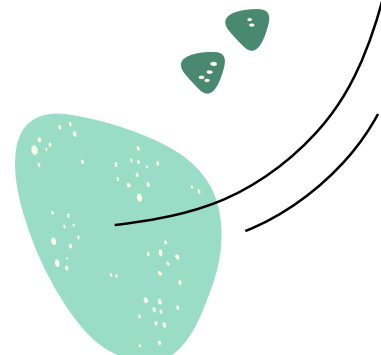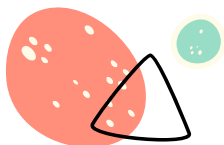
Working Prototype Demonstration
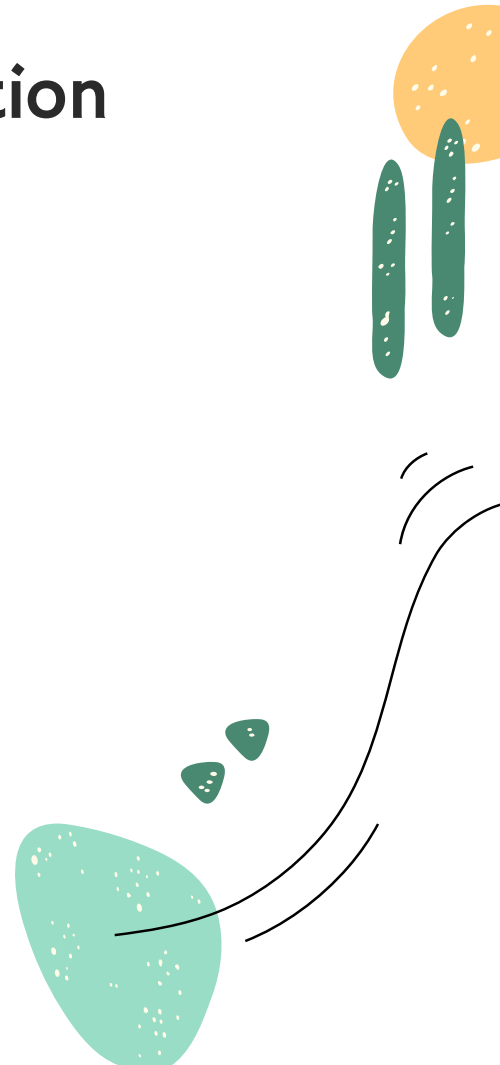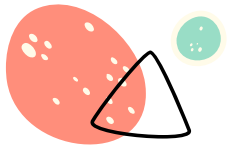
Enabling Technologies

- **Roundware (back-end)**

  An open, flexible, open-source framework by Halsey Burgund which lets you collect audio from anyone with a smartphone or web access. It also stores, organizes and re-presents the audio content. Utilizes a Google Maps API for location services.

- **React.js and Node.js (front-end)**

  A dynamic front-end that allows users to experience an interactive interface that updates in real-time.

Wireframe

Welcome

Introduction

Parallax is a participatory audio experience which aims to give a new context to public art on campus.

Check out the map to see where you can find art on campus, and select specific artworks to get more information on them.

Click the listen button on the pages for particular artwork to hear thoughts from other people, and press record to leave your own behind.

Content Agreement
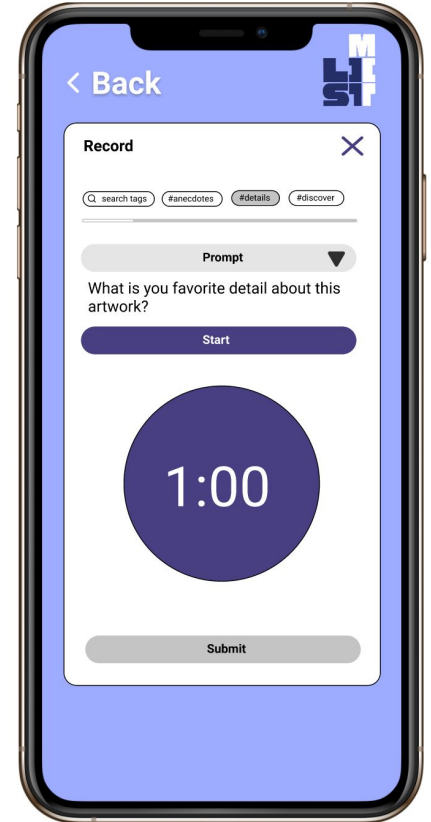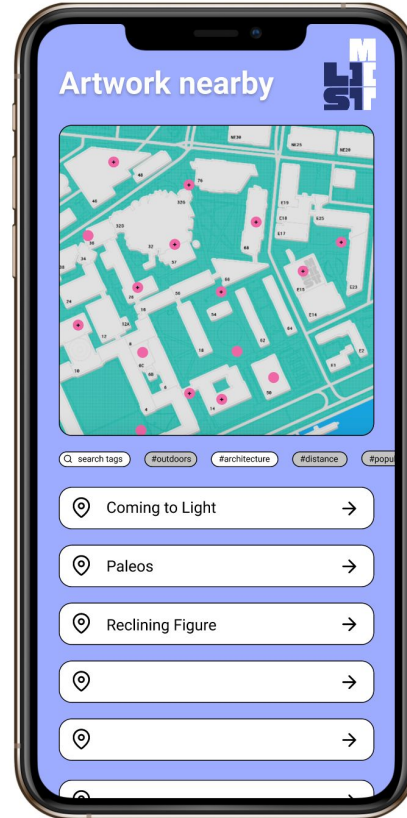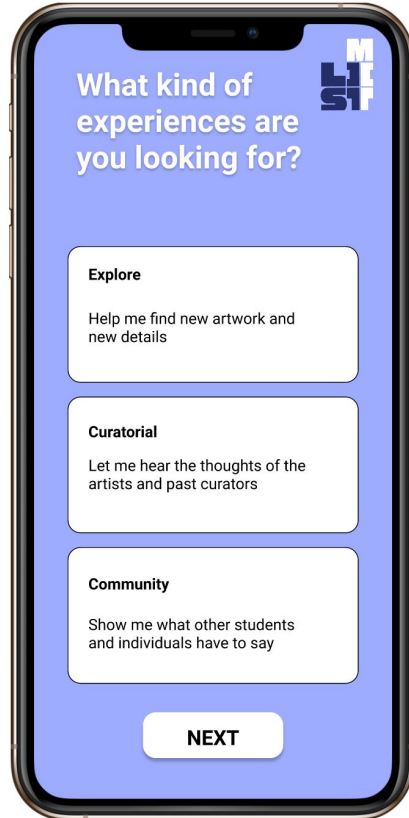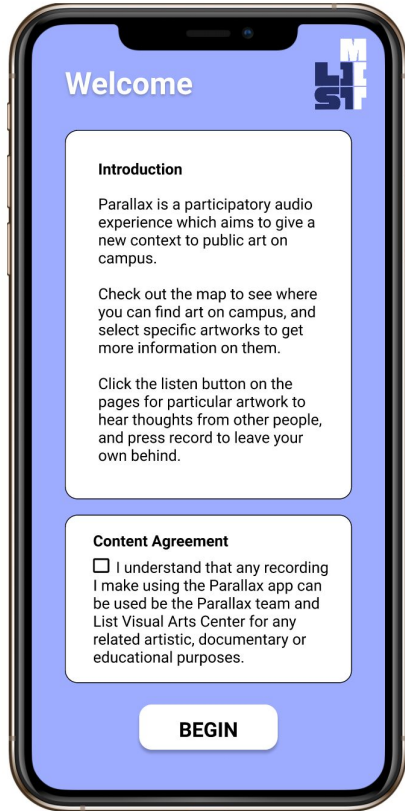☐ I understand that any recording I make using the Parallax app can be used be the Parallax team and List Visual Arts Center for any related artistic, documentary or educational purposes.

BEGIN

What kind of experiences are you looking for?

Explore

Help me find new artwork and new details

Curatorial

Let me hear the thoughts of the artists and past curators

Community

Show me what other students and individuals have to say

NEXT

Artwork nearby

🔍 search tags   #outdoors   #architecture   #distance   #popu

📍 Coming to Light   →

📍 Paleos   →

📍 Reclining Figure   →

📍   →

📍   →

‹ Back

Record   ✕

🔍 search tags   #anecdotes   #details   #discover

Prompt ▼

What is you favorite detail about this artwork?

Start

1:00

**Submit**

Future Directions

- **Accessibility**

  Even as an audio-based tool, we would like to include generated transcripts for each recording so that Hard of Hearing groups can also experience Parallax.

- **Incorporating the List's Technologies**

  A future direction of the app is creating connections with the existing Oncell app hosted by the List as well as their website.

- **Music**

  Roundware existed as an audio project, and music is a tool identified by MIT students and the List as an interesting element of personalization and an opportunity to gather components to easily refer back to after an experience.
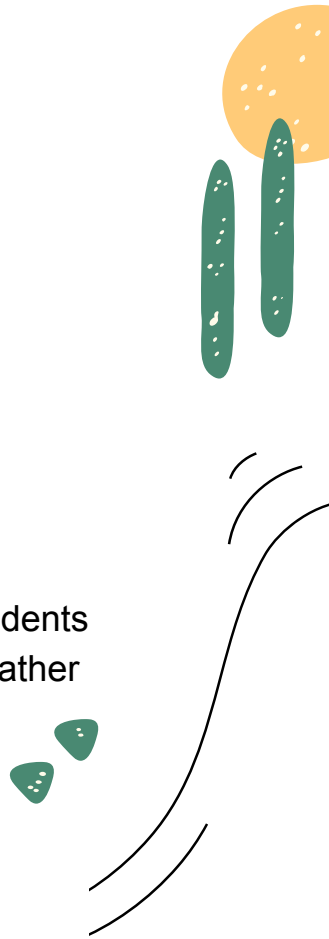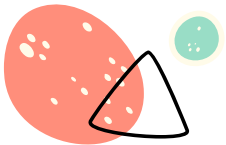
Thank You

- **Professor Fendt**

  For guiding as through the whole process and for introducing us to different museum experts who inspired us in our project.

- **Halsey Burgund**

  For providing us support and giving us access to the most recent code from the roundware-web-template. For answering our questions on the backend side of the project.

- **Emily Ann Garner**

  For giving us constructive feedback about our project from the perspective of an expert in on-campus exhibits and sharing with us the List recordings for their audio tour.

- **Nim Shapira**

  For helping us structure our project and pointing out possible improvements and changes we could make in order to make Parallax more attractive to the general public.
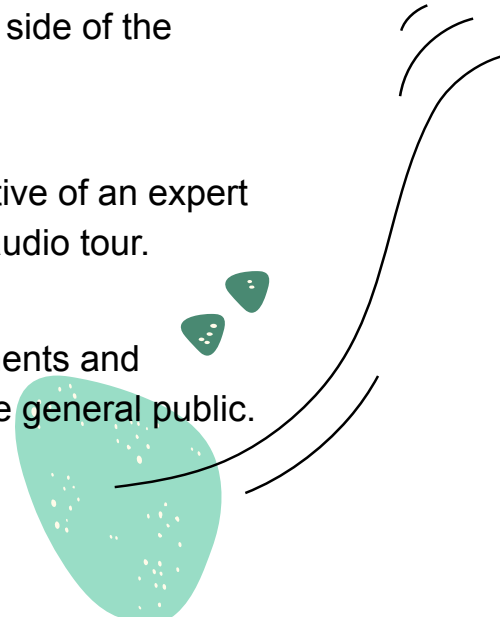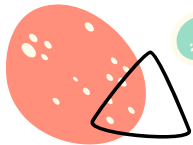
THANK YOU!
Questions or Comments?