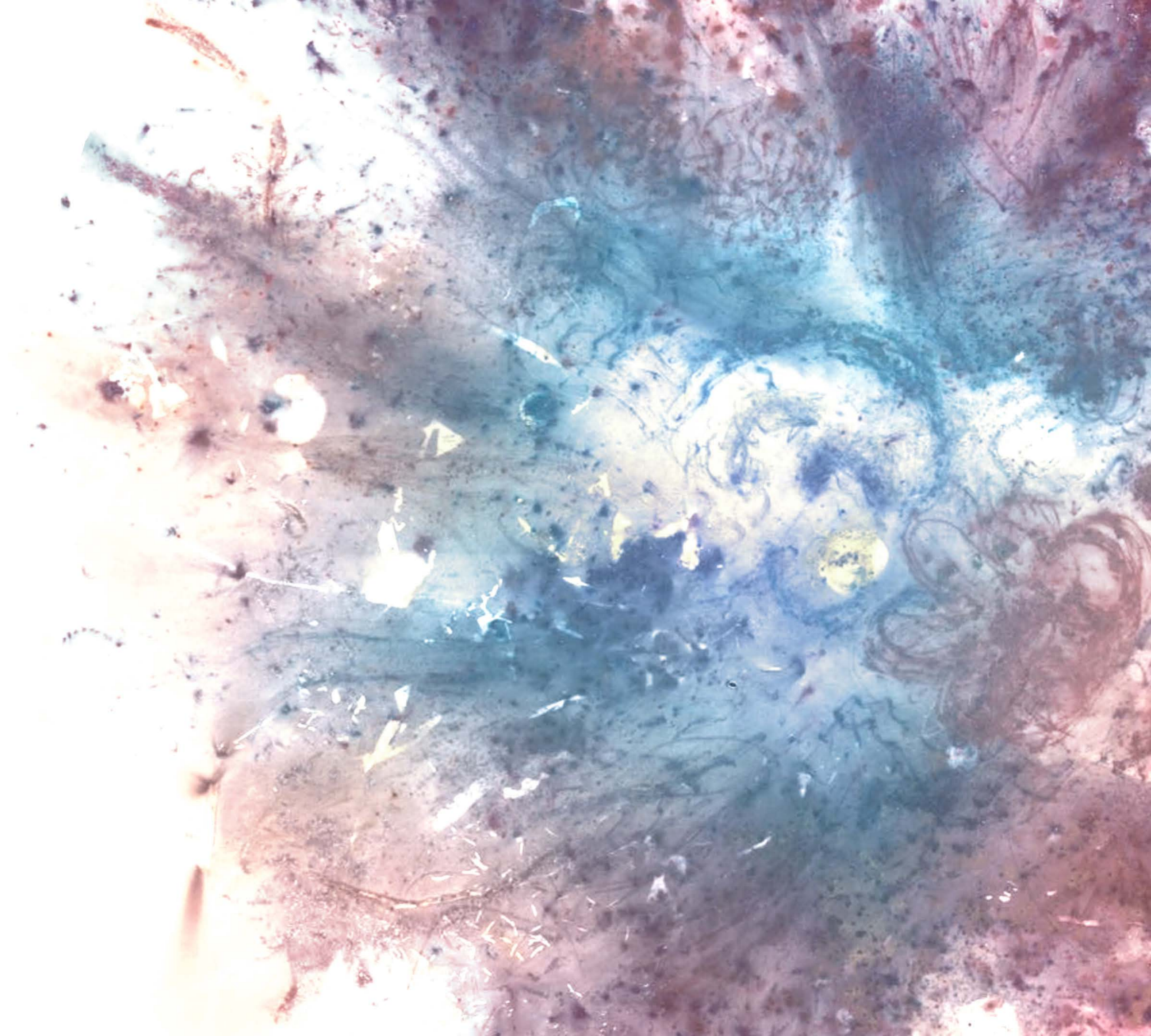


TALK TO ME

Project Type:

Print, Interactive, Augmented Reality





Origin of the creative idea

Talk To Me challenges designers to transform a single presentation into a multi-platform design system. In a world where people move seamlessly between devices, media, and environments, this project asks: how can one message live powerfully across print, digital, and immersive experiences? By creating both a tangible print piece and an interactive AR/VR component, the work explores how design can bridge gaps between physical and digital, spark curiosity, and provoke conversation, ultimately turning one voice into a unified, immersive story.

Project Components

Select an online presentation that speaks to you (TED, 99U, AIGA, news media, comic-con, etc.). It can be a single talk or part of a series, but it must be at least 15 minutes in length. You should be able to access or transcribe the talk so you can fully engage with its content.

01.

The Print Component

Using the transcript and core ideas, create a print piece that interprets and expands the presentation. Your printed component must:

- Contain the full transcript (edited for design clarity is acceptable)
- Include visuals (illustrations, graphics, photos) that extend the message
- Be expressive with format, typography, and material — but always in service of communicating the content

02.

The Immersive Component

Expand the experience by creating an AR, VR, or interactive component.

Key rule: it can't just be "eye candy." Ask yourself: How does this deepen the message or fill a gap in experience?


Build at least three points of interaction.

Chosen Concept

Cai Guo-Qiang



Key Takeaways



Liberation Through Art

The artist used explosions to break free from repression, timidity, and control.



Oscillation and Balance

His work constantly moves between extremes: destruction/construction, control/freedom, dictatorship/democracy, violence/beauty.



Transformation Through Fire

Each explosion obliterates something, but also reveals new forms, new beauty, or new meaning.



Art as Hope

By redirecting the violence of explosions into acts of creation, the work offers hope: beauty can emerge from destruction, art can transform fear into wonder.

Transformation

**Destruction
and Creation**

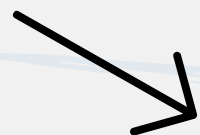
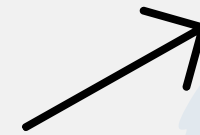
**Control and
Freedom**

**Key Phrases to
Tie Message
and Emotion**

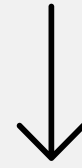
**Accident
and Intention**

**Violence
and Beauty**

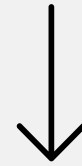
Storytelling



Physical Component



Flexagon to emulate a firework exploding as you flip the panels



Interactive Component



Scan an image in the flexagon book to see the firework explode

Transcript

More than 1,000 years ago, when Chinese alchemists were developing elixir of immortality, one recipe caused an explosion. Boom. Boom. They named their discovery "fire medicine," the Chinese word for gunpowder. *From the very beginning, gunpowder has been about accidents, loss of control and destruction. But it's also been about the healing power and unseen energies.* I dreamed of becoming an artist when I was little, but like my father, who was an avid painter himself, I was cautious and timid. Caution is a fine quality in life, but not so in art. And Chinese society was also very controlling when I was young, so I longed for an artistic medium that could help me free myself and lose control. I came from an ancient city in southeast China called Quanzhou. The city had many firecracker factories when I was young, so it was easy to get gunpowder. When I first began using gunpowder to create art, I would lay out a canvas in the living room and set up small explosions on it. Seeing the canvas on fire one day, my grandmother threw a linen rag over the flame and put it out with a small puff. It was my grandma who taught me that while it's important to light fires, it's more important to know how to put them out. Over the decades, I've grown closer to gunpowder and mastered more techniques. My creations forever oscillate between destruction and construction, control and freedom, dictatorship and democracy. For example, [here](#) I first painted my imagination of Paradise, a mirage of temptations. I exploded colored gunpowder to create a sensual and dazzling garden, so beautiful that I didn't want to lay a finger on it. However, I picked up my courage and scattered black powder all over this beauty. Covered it with a blank canvas and ignited again. Bang! When I removed the canvas on top, the once enchanting garden was now forever sealed beneath the black. However, what shocked me the most was the canvas on top, which now looked like an apparition of that heavenly garden. *At the end of 1986, I moved to Japan. My cosmology, which till then was a simple one, developed by stargazing and studying feng shui in Quanzhou, suddenly expanded to include the latest developments in modern astrophysics.* As a young artist from China, my grueling experiences with getting visas around the world inspired me to explode a chain of big footprints that traversed the Earth. The footprints would evoke extraterrestrials racing across several kilometers, *bam bam bam*, in only a few strides, ignoring artificial borders and disappearing into the distance. After decades of attempts around the world, this concept was finally realized as 29 footprint fireworks at the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Olympics. *The big footprints walked across the 15-kilometer central axis of Beijing, like an invisible giant in the sky. Witnessed by 1.5 billion people in person and through live broadcasts, this work symbolized the era's idealistic delusion of globalization.* In the early '90s, I conceived a work titled Sky ladder, a ladder made of fireworks that would connect heaven and Earth. I made many failed attempts to realize the idea over 21 years. *The difficulty of the project lay in its technical requirements. We needed a helium balloon of over 6,000 cubic meters in order to raise a ladder as high as the World Trade Center. Once up, the balloon could easily be blown away. And because it would carry lots of dangerous materials, we had to acquire numerous permits for land, sea and air. In my hometown, it's said that 500 meters is the height of the clouds, so the ladder symbolized a useful dream of reaching for the stars and touching the clouds. I've created so much art around the world, but my grandma has never seen any of them in person, so I was determined to do something awesome for her to see. One morning in 2015, at the crack of dawn, a golden ladder rose into the sky. It was a birthday present for my grandmother, who turned 100 that year. She passed away one month later.* In 1995, I moved from Japan to New York with my wife and daughter. After I came to New York, my work became more site-specific, addressing more socio-political themes and reflecting the changes I've developed from living in the West. This transition also allowed me to better thrive in different cultures around the world. Some have asked why I never deal with the subject of sex. I would often say, "Isn't explosion sexy in itself?" Ten years ago, I was invited to create an artwork in Paris. I decided to invite 50 couples from around the world to a sightseeing boat on the Seine, where they would first enjoy a 12-minute firework display that simulates the process of lovemaking. Why 12 minutes? Because that seems to be the average duration of French lovemaking. According to the internet. Excited by the passionate climax of the fireworks, the couples then entered individual tents to do whatever they wanted. When satisfied, they could press a button and trigger fireworks from a small boat nearby. I had prepared 300 shots of fireworks. However, the couples didn't use them all. In the end, the fireworks spelled out the words: "Sorry, gotta go." Nighttime fireworks are visible because of light and are more focused on the explosions themselves. Daytime fireworks rely on smoke. They are like a painter's brush moving across the sunlit sky in real time. In Shanghai, I realized the daytime fireworks "Elegy," lamenting the severe environmental problems China faces. On the day, clouds loomed low over the Huangpu River, and the firework smoke lingered in the air long afterwards, like an ink painting with its gentle sorrow. For my solo exhibition at Uffizi Galleries, I created fireworks in the shapes of flowers and plants from Renaissance paintings. People from across the city could see the fireworks as they launched from the Michelangelo Square, reigniting the spirit of the Renaissance. Last year I realized the project "When the Sky Blooms with Sakura" in Fukushima, which suffered the earthquake and tsunami 12 years ago. On the June day, we had a rare collaboration of the wind and the waves to realize these daytime fireworks like a symphony of reverence for nature. I've realized over 600 solo exhibitions and projects worldwide, often facing numerous challenges such as weather conditions, legal regulations and social-political hurdles. But such is the nature of my art. Behind the momentary magic lies countless unknown factors. Gunpowder and I have been travel companions on a 40-year-long, fantastical journey. Yet, I have never grown tired of it, thanks to its uncertainty and uncontrollability. *And it's the same fascination with the unforeseeable that led to my research in artificial intelligence that began in 2017. This led to the launch of my AI Cai, my custom AI model. AI Cai deep learns from my artworks, archives and areas of interest. It also mimics contemporary and historical figures I admire developing distinct personas that can debate with each other, forming an independent and free community. AI Cai is my artwork, but it's also a partner for dialogue and collaboration. In the future, it may even create art by itself. Recently, we also enabled AI Cai to sprinkle and ignite gunpowder on canvases. Nowadays, if I burn through a canvas, it's usually an intentional loss of control for effect. But when AI Cai burns something, it's a genuine accident. Perhaps AI Cai is that rash, clumsy boy Cai.* People often assume that I like fireworks, but what I really like are explosions. I like their energy and magic. Over the years, the goal of my gunpowder creations has never been political, but their results do carry political significance. At a recent Nobel Prize event, I said, "Using explosions to create beauty rather than warfare and violence provides a sliver of hope for our shared human future." Gunpowder helped me set my timid personality and liberate myself in a repressive society. Its uncertainty makes me both uneasy and exhilarated. *That's similar to my interactions with AI. The unknown and uncontrollable aspects of AI are indeed unsettling. But today, as contemporary art seems weak and conservative, I hope that AI can help me unleash creativity, transcending the current dimensions of human cognition. Can AI reveal heavenly secrets and open a door to interspecies civilizations for us?* If the disruptive nature of gunpowder can bring hope to people through the beauty of explosions, then can the unsettling power of AI do the same, bringing hope to mankind's future by expanding the unknown world? I'm always at the beginning of the next great journey. *Thank you everyone, and thank you AI.*

Typography Exploration

AgencyFB RegularWide

Cai Guo-Qiang

AgencyFB BoldWide

Cai Guo-Qiang

AgencyFB BlackWide

Cai Guo-Qiang

DM Mono Light

The quick
brown fox
jumps over
the lazy dog

DM Mono Regular

The quick
brown fox
jumps over
the lazy dog

SicTaoyame Regular

Cai Guo-Qiang

SicTake-Karami Regular

Cai Guo-Qiang

Tchig Mono Light

The quick
brown fox
jumps over
the lazy dog

Tchig Mono Regular

The quick
brown fox
jumps over
the lazy dog

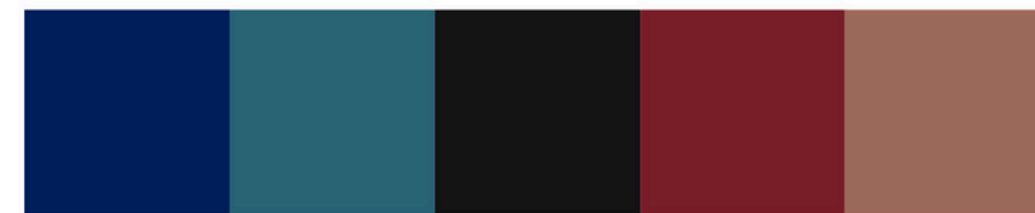
Tchig Mono Light

The quick
brown fox
jumps over
the lazy dog

Tchig Mono Regular

The quick
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Color Exploration



Chosen Elements

SicTaoyame Regular

Cai Guo-Qiang

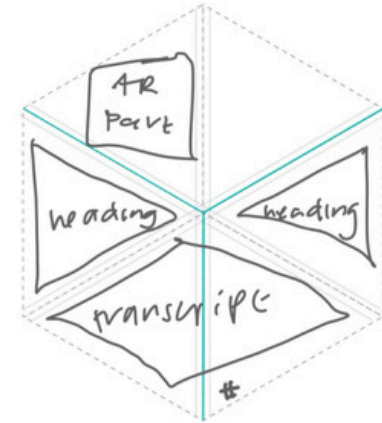
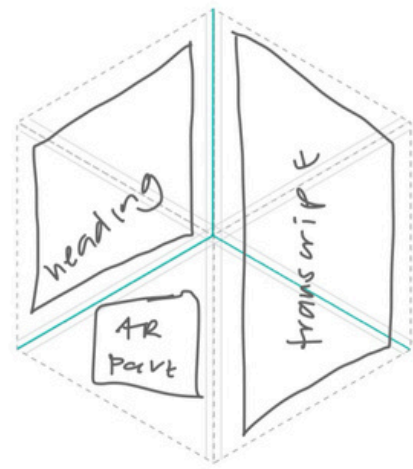
Old Claude LP Regular Regular

Cai Guo-Qiang

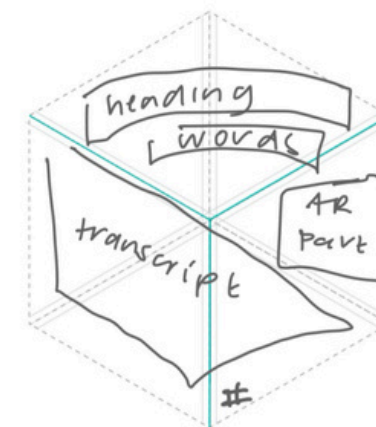
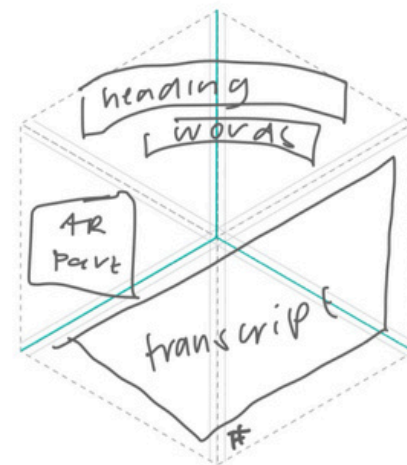
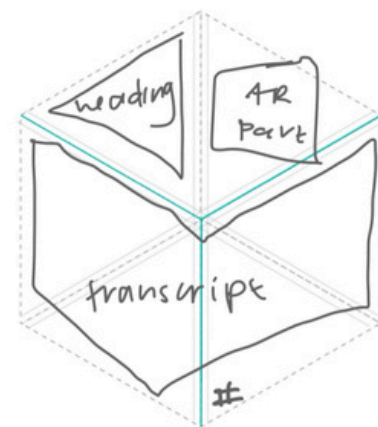
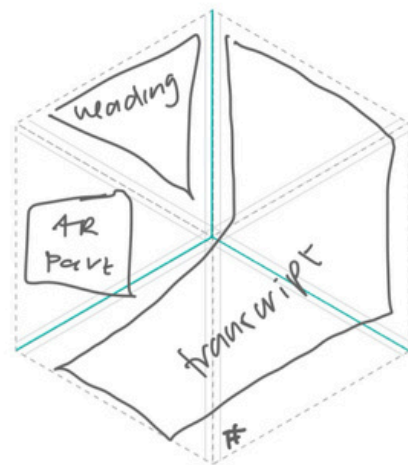
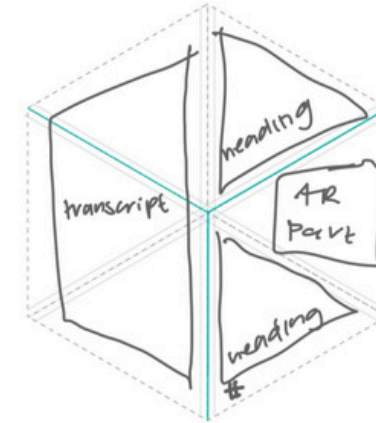
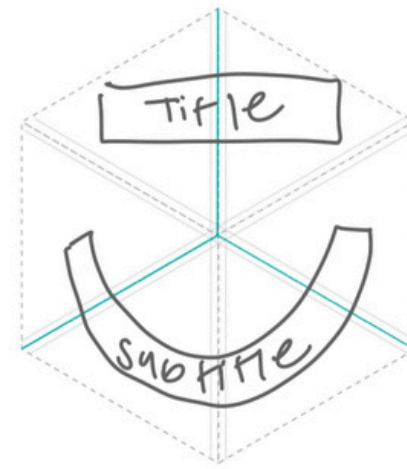


Flexagon Explorations

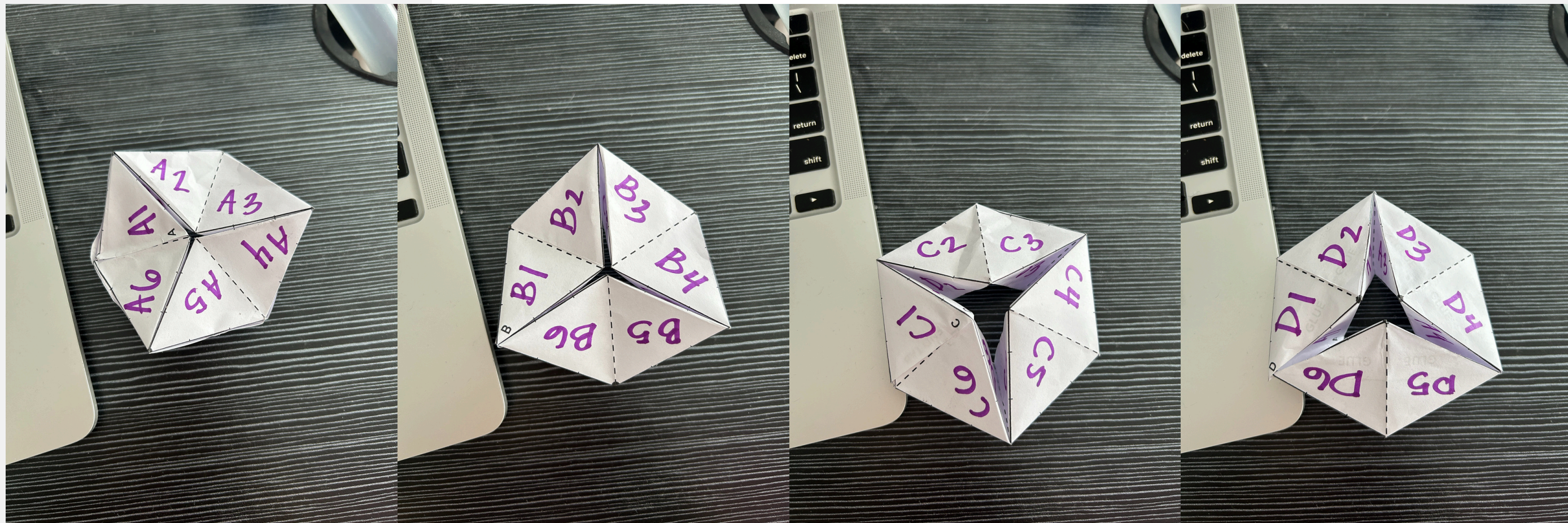
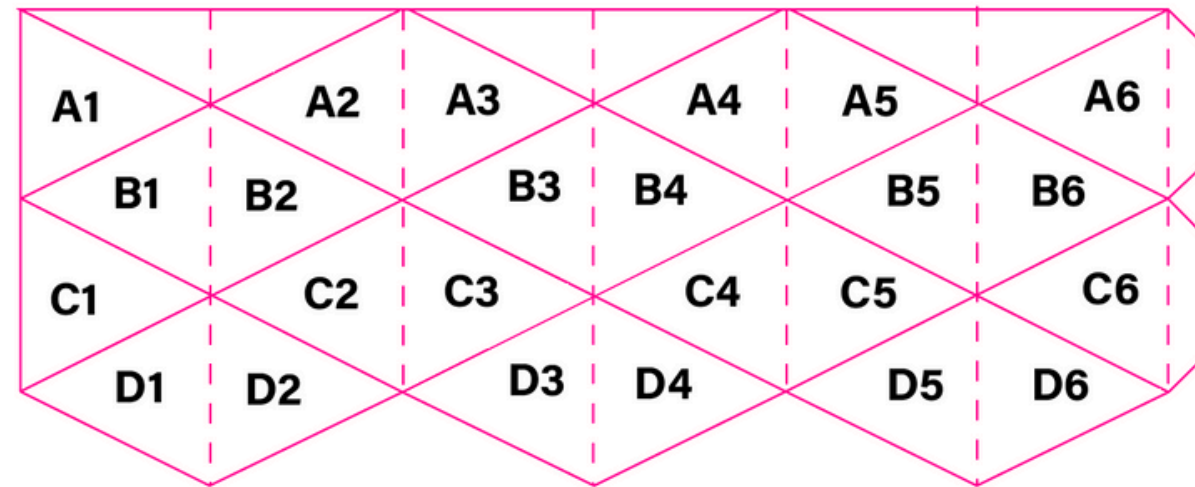
AR: orb explosions vid / ignite a piece / rendering of piece through camera



headings: "bang, boom, etc." / quotes / themes / piece titles



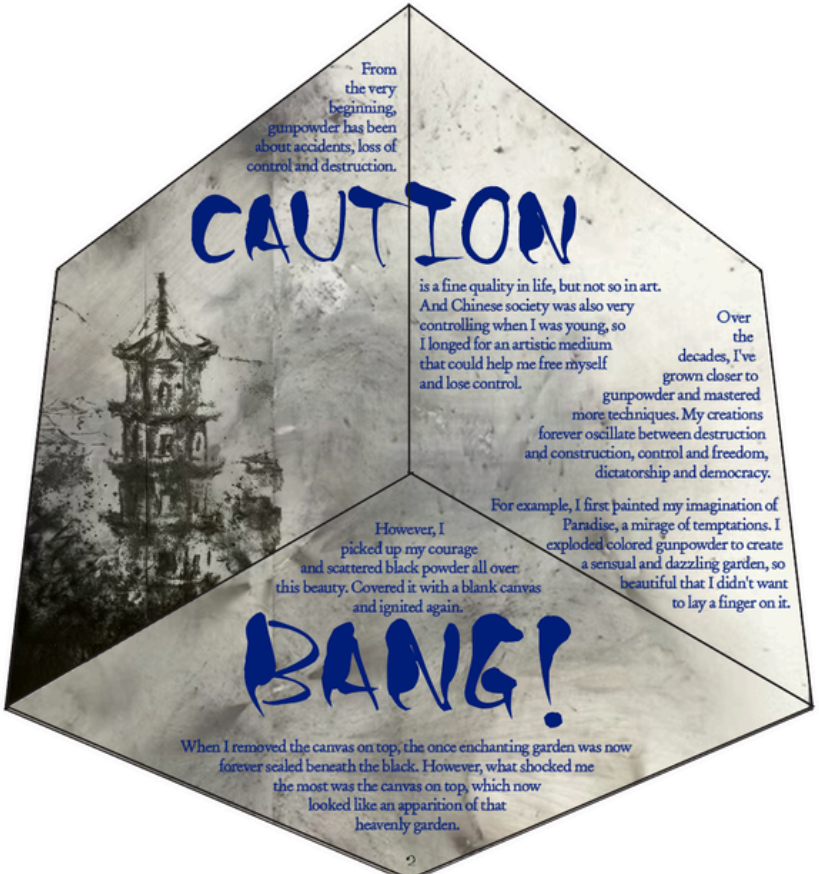
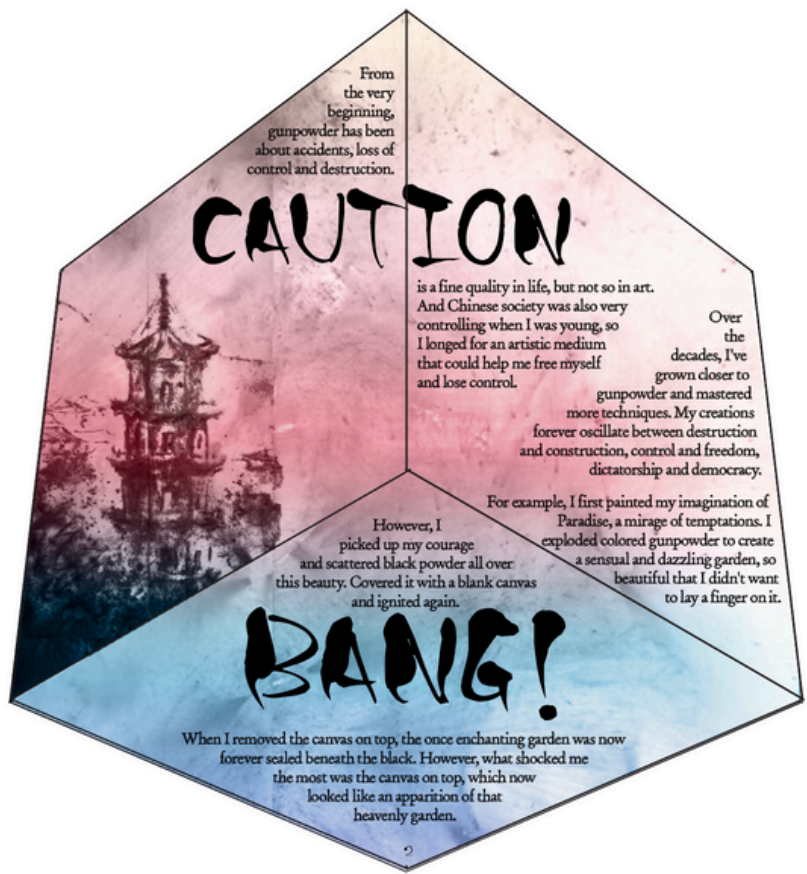
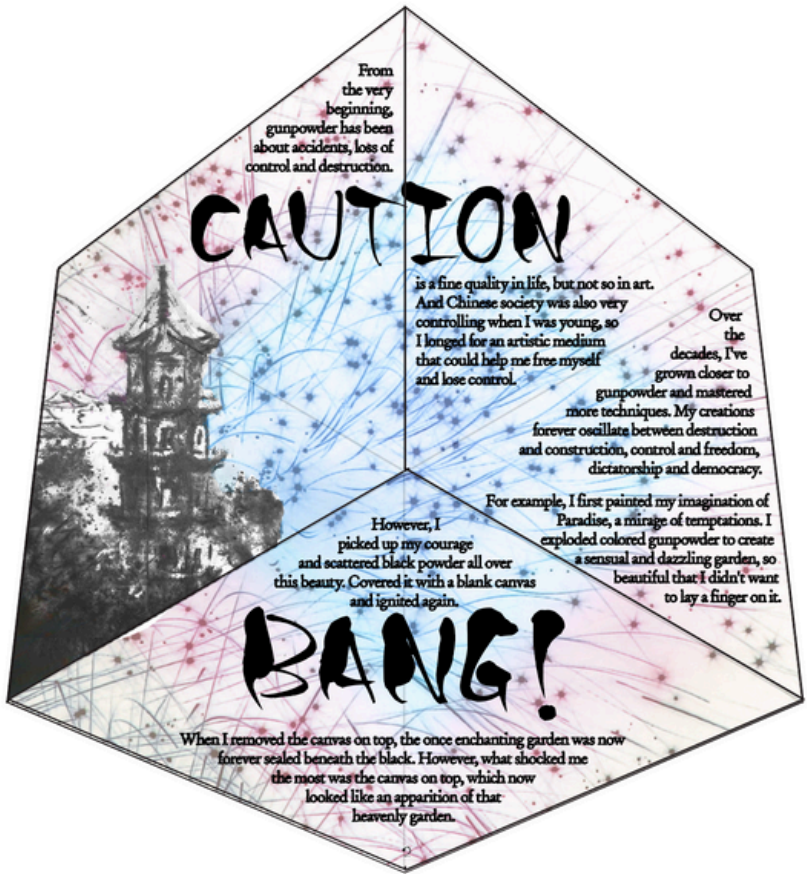
Flexagon Explorations



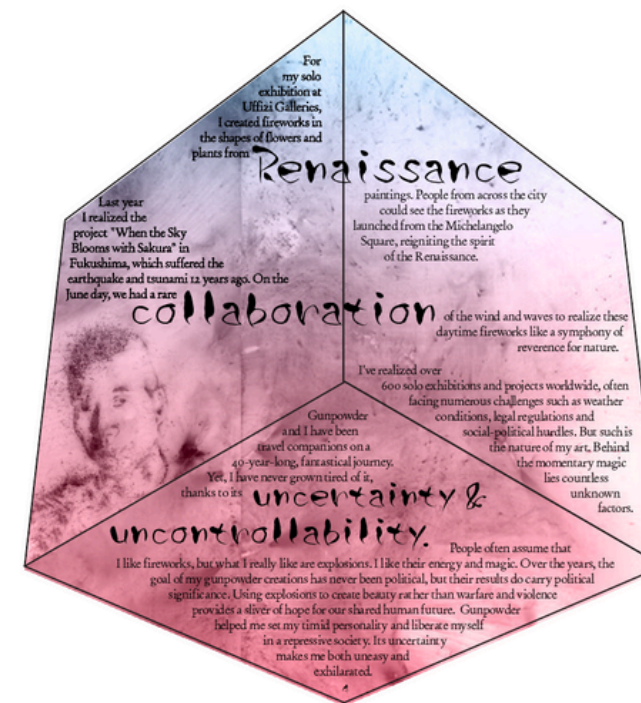
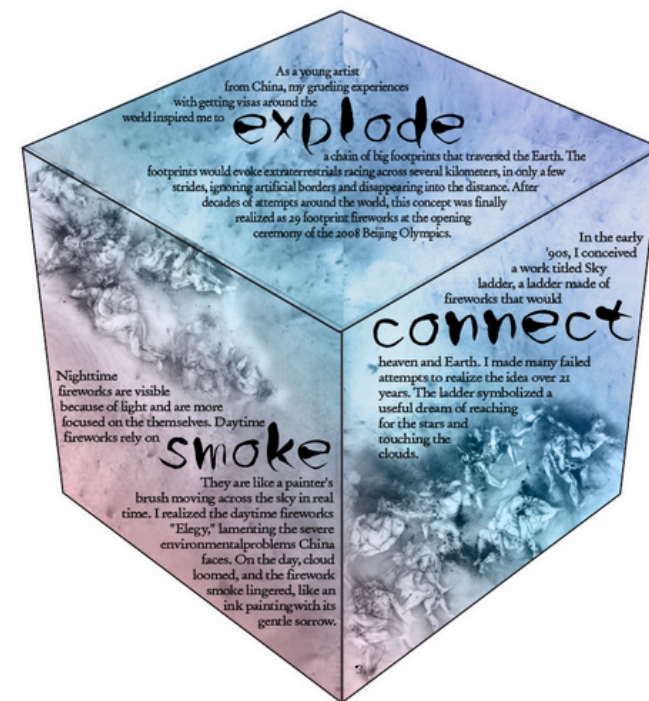
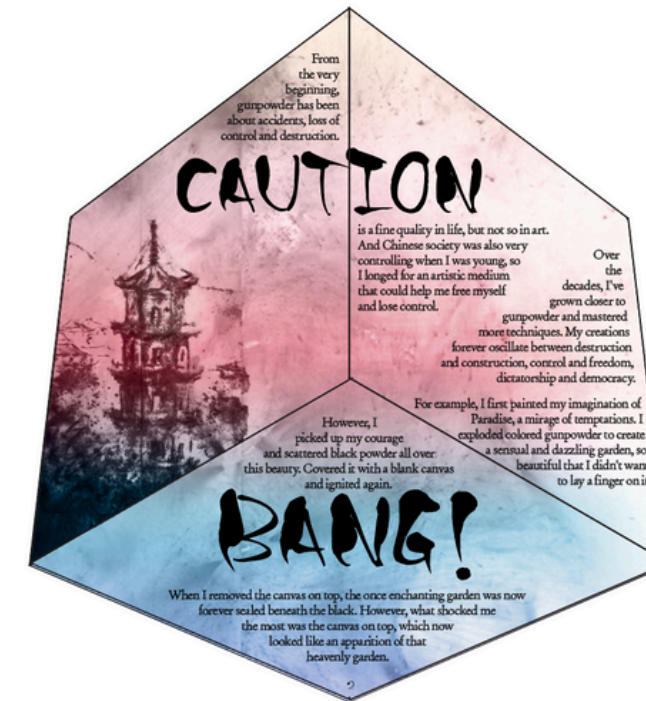
Layout Explorations



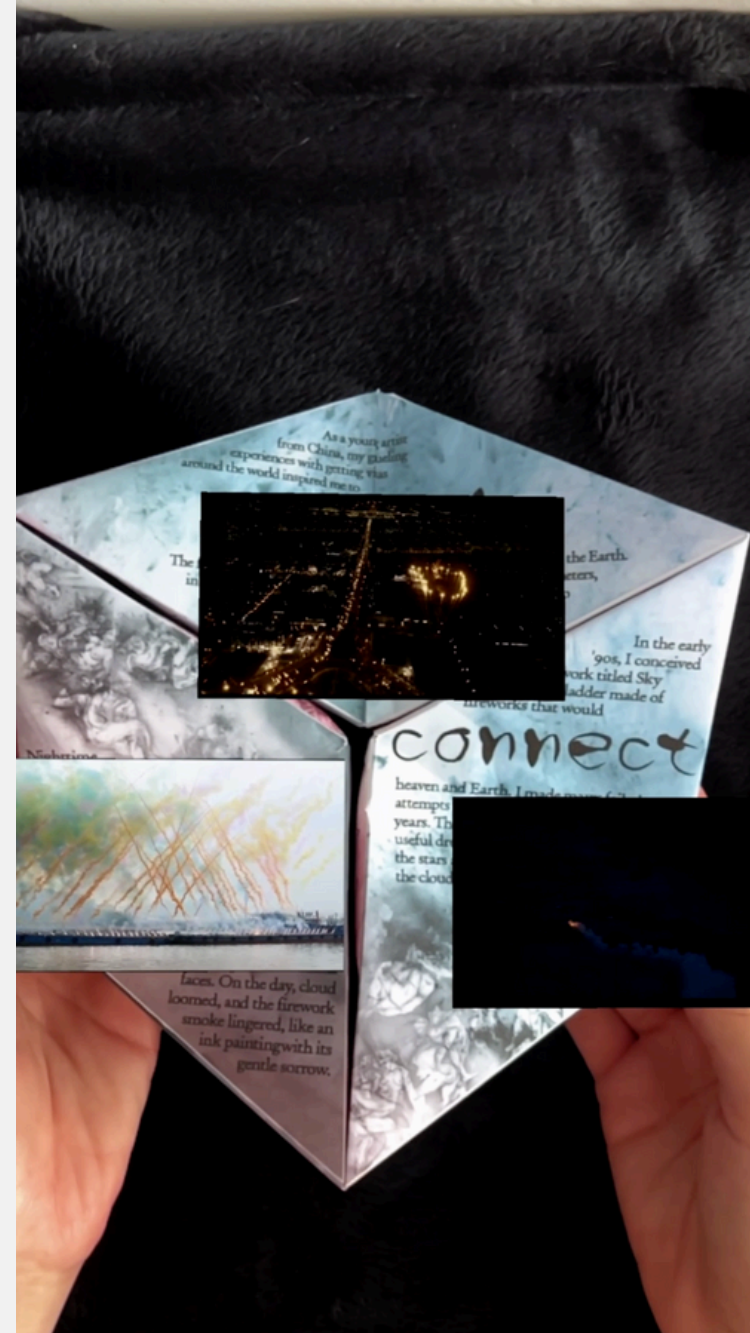
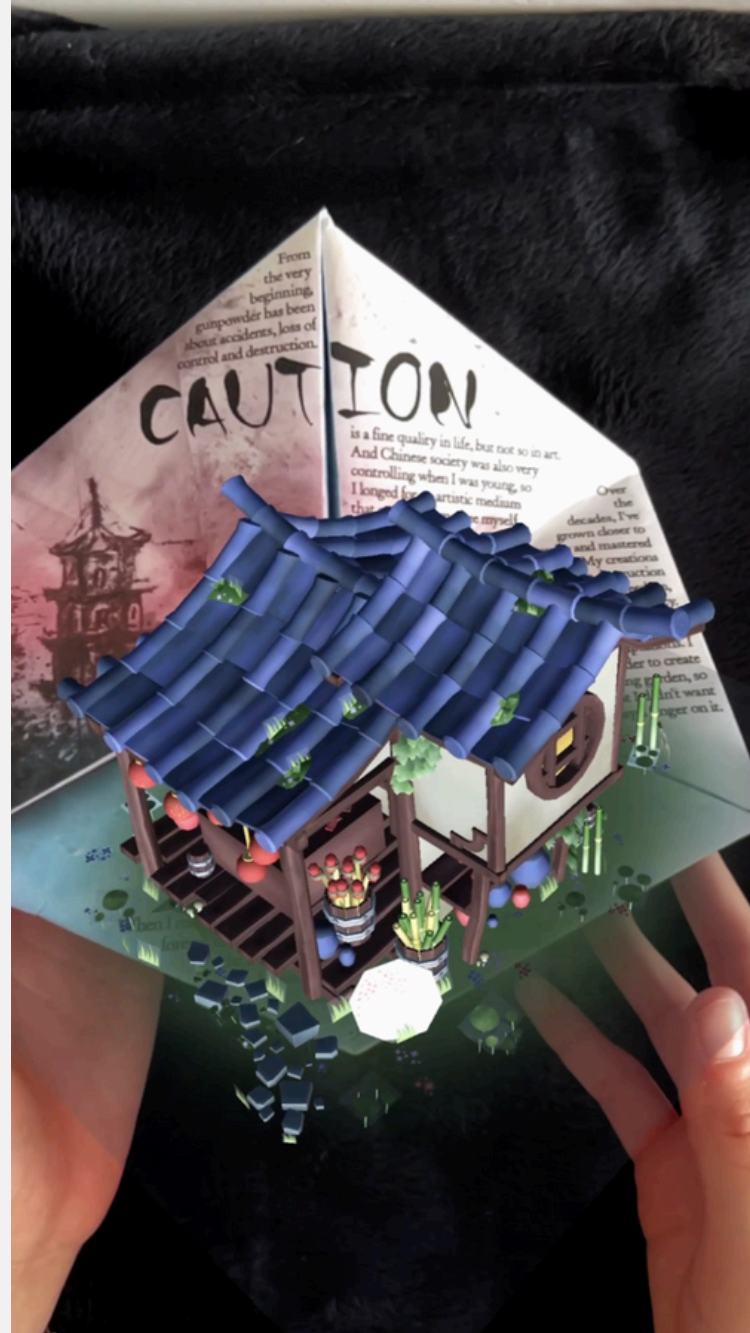
Color Explorations



Digital Finals



AR Stills



Discover
hidden interactions



Scan with the
Halo AR app



THE ART OF
EXPLOSION

Guo: Cai
Qiana

From
the very
beginning,
gunpowder has been
about accidents, loss of
control and destruction.

CAUTION

is a fine quality in life, but not so in art.
And Chinese society was also very
controlling when I was young, so
I longed for an artistic medium
that could help me free myself
and lose control.

Over
the
decades, I've
grown closer to
gunpowder and mastered
more techniques. My creations
forever oscillate between destruction
and construction, control and freedom,
dictatorship and democracy.

For example, I first painted my imagination of
Paradise, a mirage of temptations. I
exploded colored gunpowder to create
a sensual and dazzling garden, so
beautiful that I didn't want
to lay a finger on it.

However, I
picked up my courage
and scattered black powder all over
this beauty. Covered it with a blank canvas
and ignited again.

BANG!

When I removed the canvas on top, the once enchanting garden was now
forever sealed beneath the black. However, what shocked me
the most was the canvas on top, which now
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explode

a chain of big footprints that traversed the Earth.
The footprints would evoke extraterrestrials racing across several kilometers,
in only a few strides, ignoring artificial borders and disappearing into
the distance. After decades of attempts around the world,
this concept was finally realized as 29 footprint
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Nighttime
fireworks are visible
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Daytime fireworks rely on

smoke

They are like a painter's
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smoke lingered, like an
ink painting with its
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For my solo exhibition at Uffizi Galleries, I created fireworks in the shapes of flowers and plants from

Renaissance

Last year I realized the project "When the Sky Blooms with Sakura" in Fukushima, which suffered the earthquake and tsunami 12 years ago. On the June day, we had a rare

paintings. People from across the city could see the fireworks as they launched from the Michelangelo Square, reigniting the spirit of the Renaissance.

collaboration

of the wind and waves to realize these daytime fireworks like a symphony of reverence for nature.

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