



**teahouse**  
*vending machine*

Jing Zheng  
MFA Thesis . 2008

Instant tranquility in 30 seconds!

installation, hectic urban life, natural rhythm, contemplation, irony

# Thesis statement

- Hectic rhythm of urban life
- Teahouse Vending Machine -- delivers instant tranquility
- Promote the emergence of quite contemplation in nature



# Design approach

To take a critical approach by giving ironic commentary on the stressful urban life.



**hectic urban rhythm**

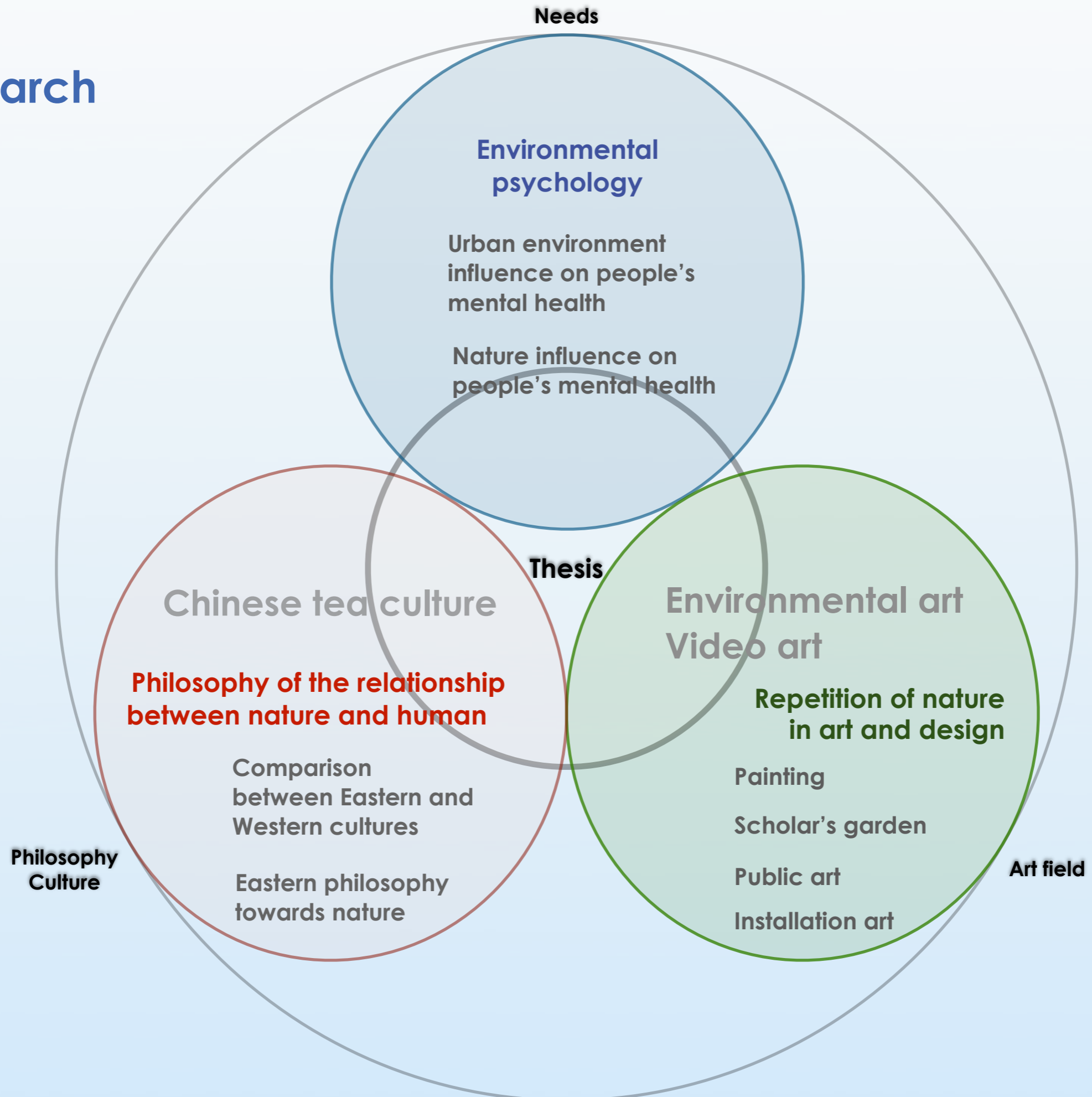


**peaceful natural rhythm**

# Design concept

- “**Tea House**” is a **multi-sensational** installation in the form of an artistic **vending machine**
- It aims to deliver instantaneous peace and quiet when user chooses from green tea, flower tea or black tea. Each of them is a short abstract visual, acoustic, and olfactory experience.
- It exploits the **conflict** intentionally and **ironically** to raise people’s awareness of their disconnection to nature in their hectic everyday urban life.

# Research



# Conceptual Precedent



Public art piece  
Traffic light tree (1998)  
by Pierre Vivant

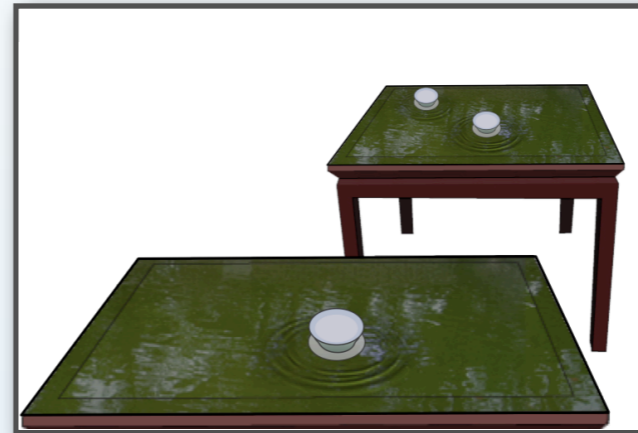
# Methodology

- Design approach
- Product design
- Technology system design and implementation
- Video + sound iterations and testing
- Smell design and testing

# Previous design iterations

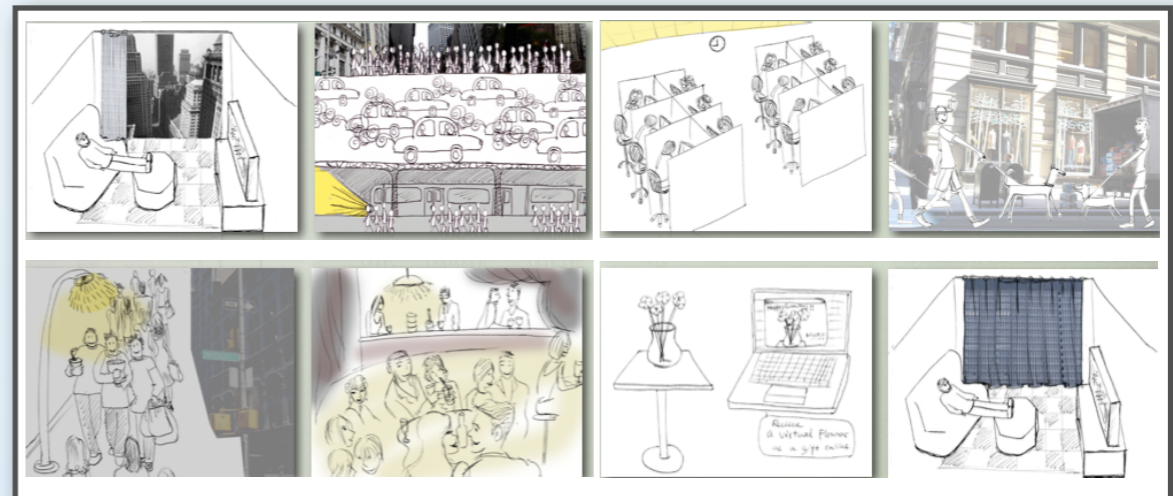
I::Thesis

interactive tea table  
natural surroundings,  
inner perception of nature



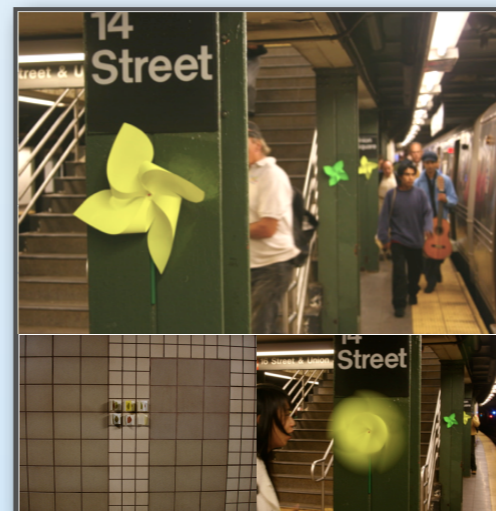
II::Anti-thesis

identify different rhythms



III::Public art

rhythms and time in  
public spaces



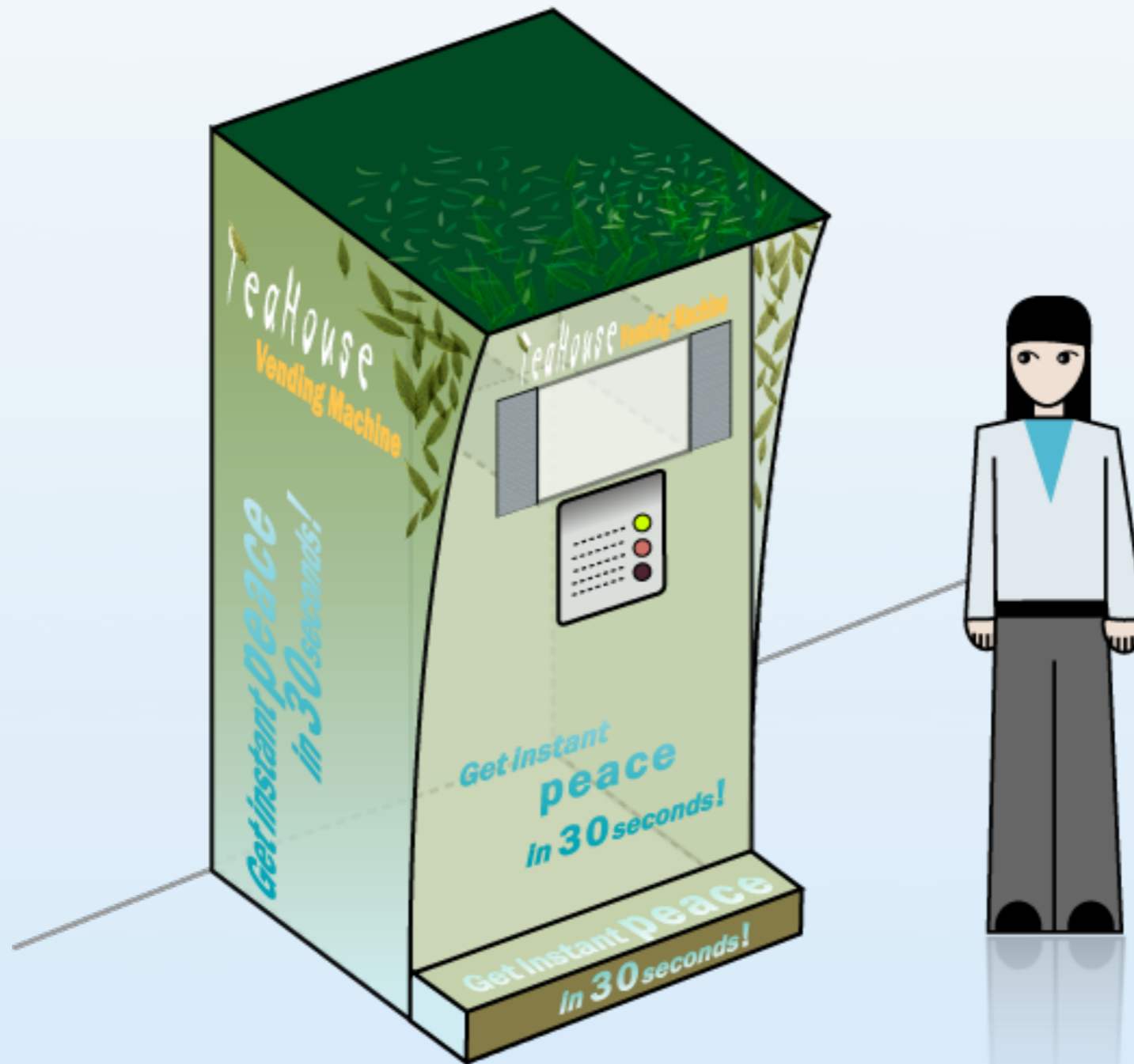


# Product design iteration I



too abstract, difficult for user to understand what it is about

## Product design iteration II



too literal, too commercial, not artistic

# Final product design



present the conflict between an artistic installation experience and the form as a symbol of hectic rhythm of urban life

teahouse  
vending machine

Instant tranquility in 30 seconds!

## User scenario





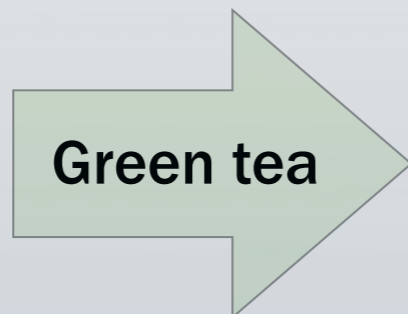
**teahouse**  
vending machine  
Instant peace in 30 seconds

**Instruction:**  
This vending machine is called Tea House. It delivers free instantaneous peace and quiet through virtual green, flower, and black tea. Each of them is a multimedia presentation that brings a simple and peaceful natural experience.

**To operate:**  
1. Select a flavor of tea by pressing the corresponding button  
2. Watch through the aperture and enjoy the experience



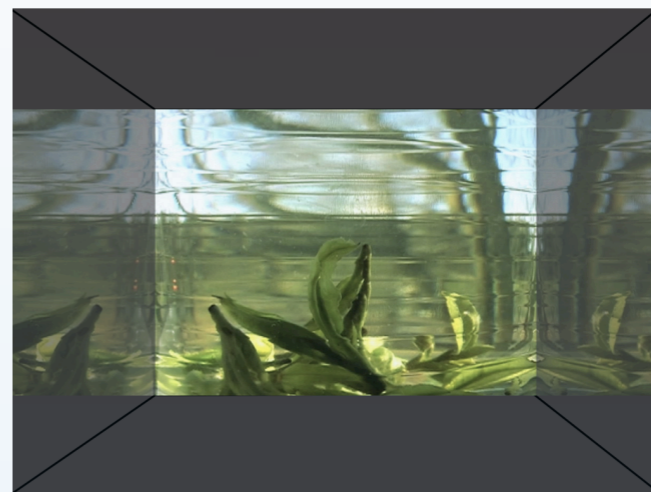
Read the instruction →



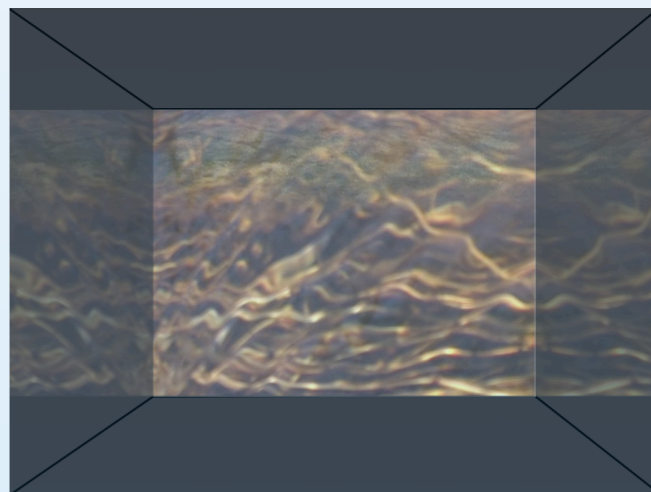
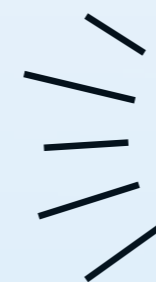
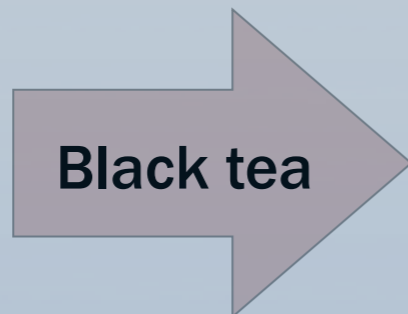
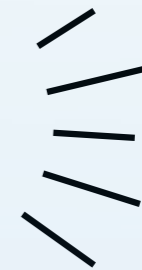
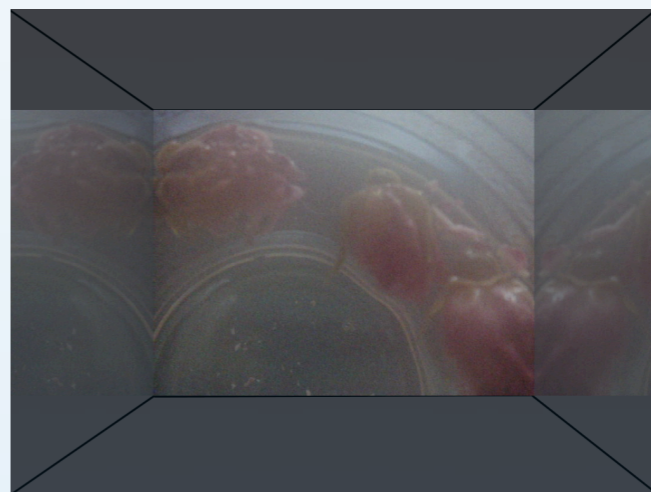
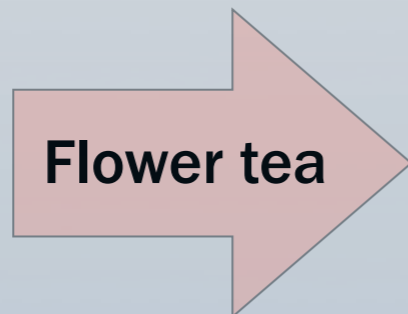
sound



video



smell



# GREEN TEA



touch a button



Watch videos  
through the window

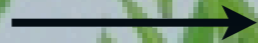


An advertisement for a 'teahouse vending machine'. The central image shows a person from behind, wearing a brown jacket, standing in front of a large, dome-shaped structure. The structure is covered in a dense pattern of green tea leaves, creating a 'teahouse' atmosphere. At the top, the text 'teahouse vending machine' is displayed, with 'teahouse' in green and 'vending machine' in orange. Below this, a dark green rounded rectangle contains the text 'Instant tranquility in 30 seconds!'. On the left side, the text 'Watch videos through the window' is followed by an arrow pointing towards the structure. On the right side, the text 'Hear the sound Imagine the natural taste' is preceded by two arrows pointing towards the structure.

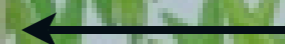
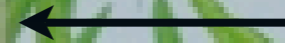
**teahouse**  
*vending machine*

Instant tranquility in 30 seconds!

Watch videos  
through the  
window



Hear the sound  
Imagine the  
natural taste

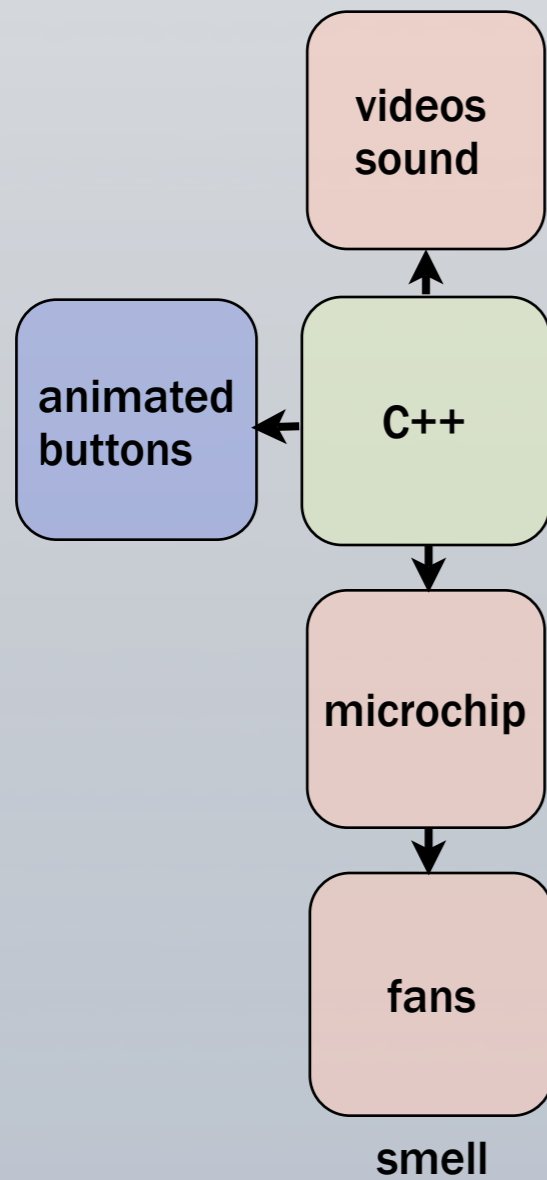


# User experience design & development

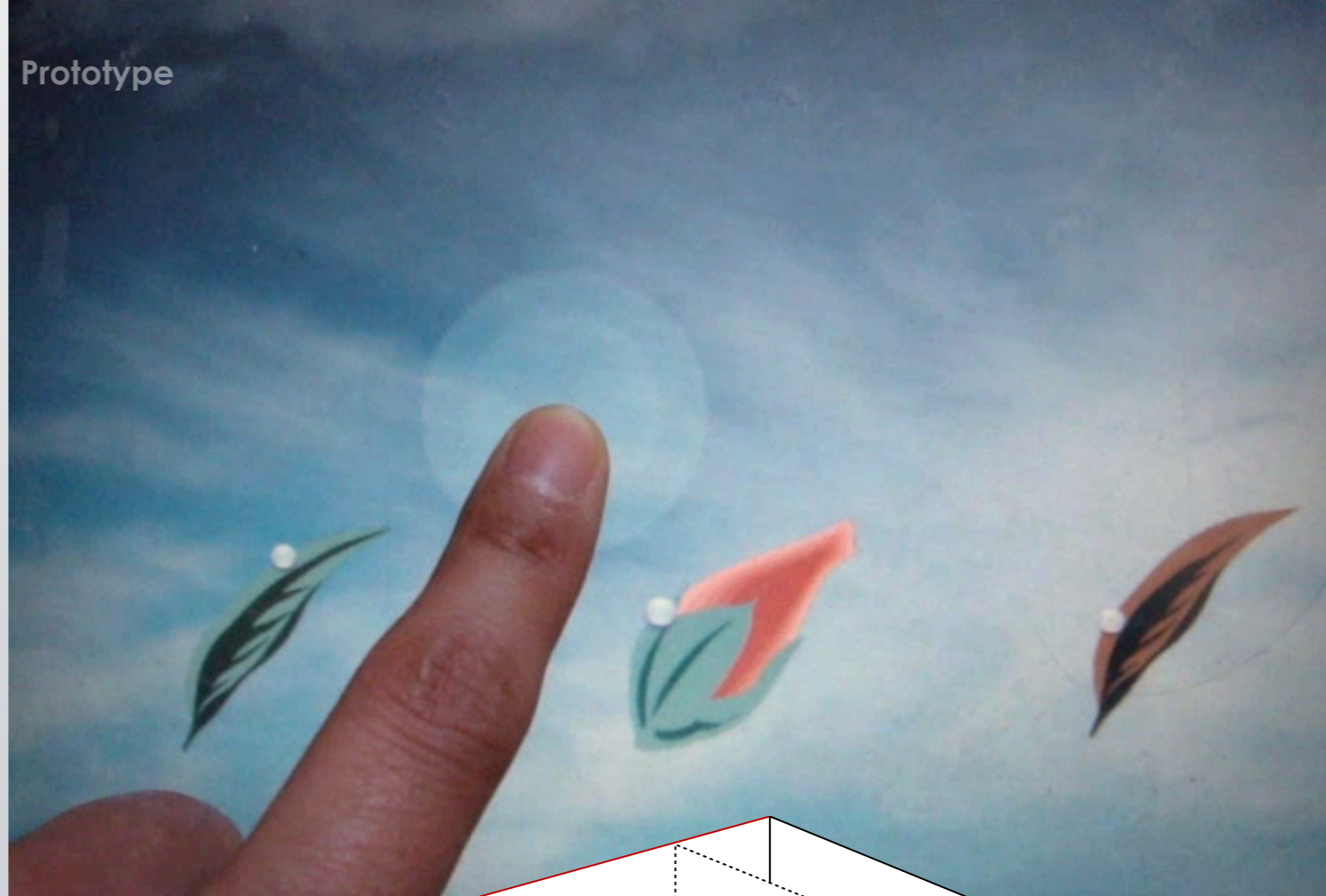
- Technical system design and implementation
- Video + sound design and testing
- Technology to create smell

# Technology prototype

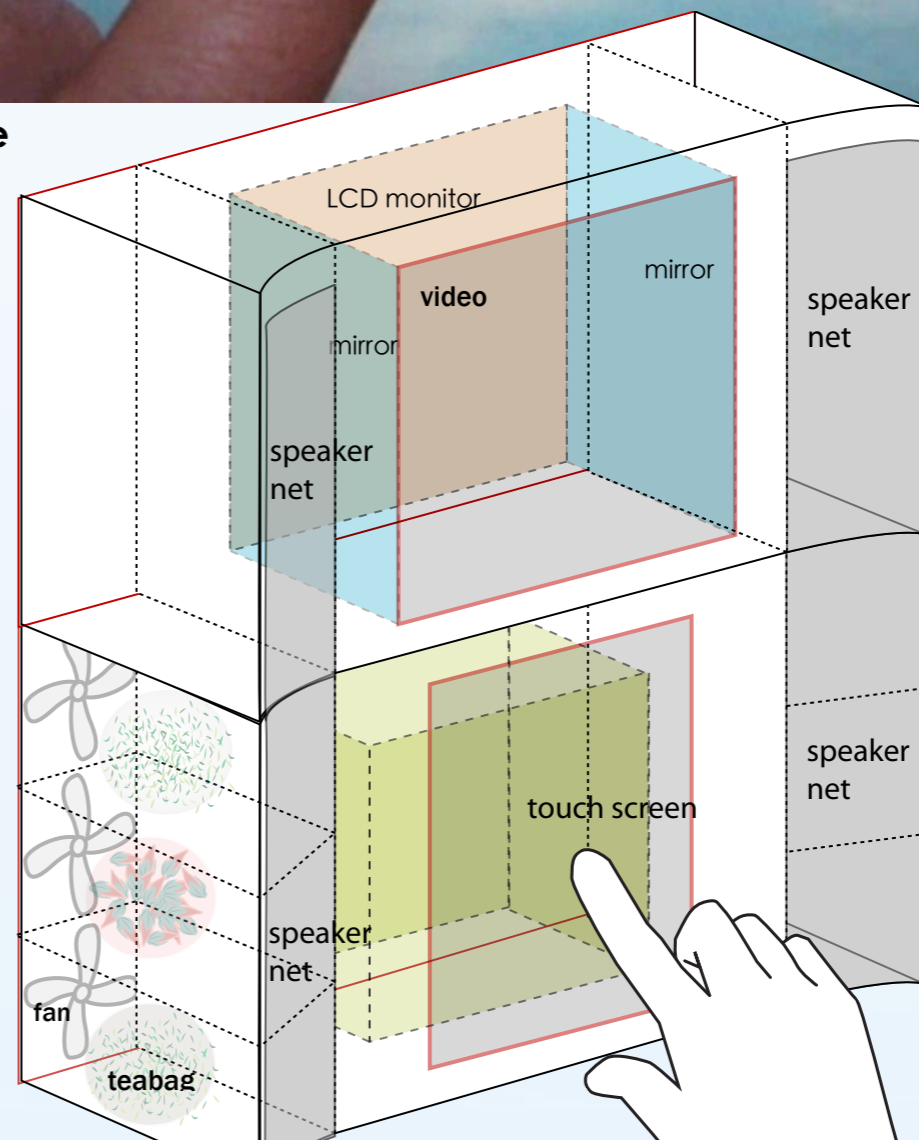
Technology diagram



Prototype



Structure



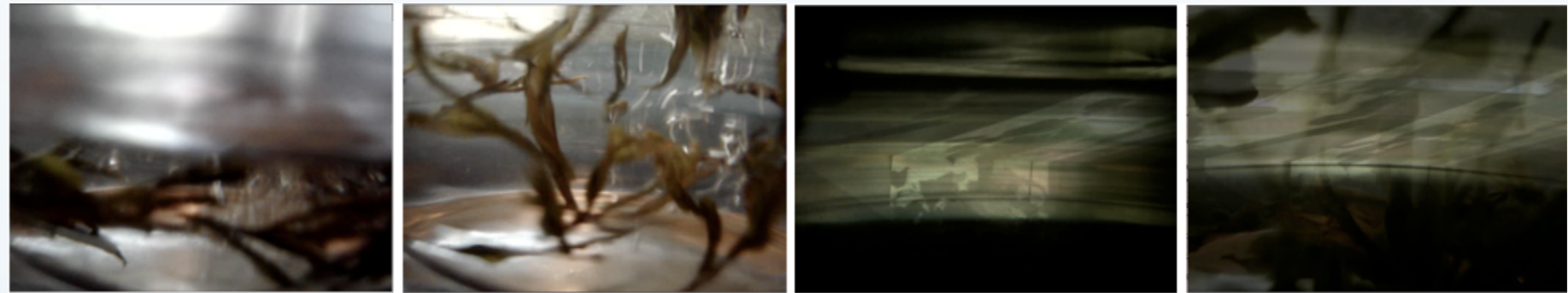
# Video & sound

## Goal

- To convey the idea that tea is a way for people to nourish their inner connection to nature
- To create metaphorical tea experience
- To bring this experience in a short period of time

# Videos iterations

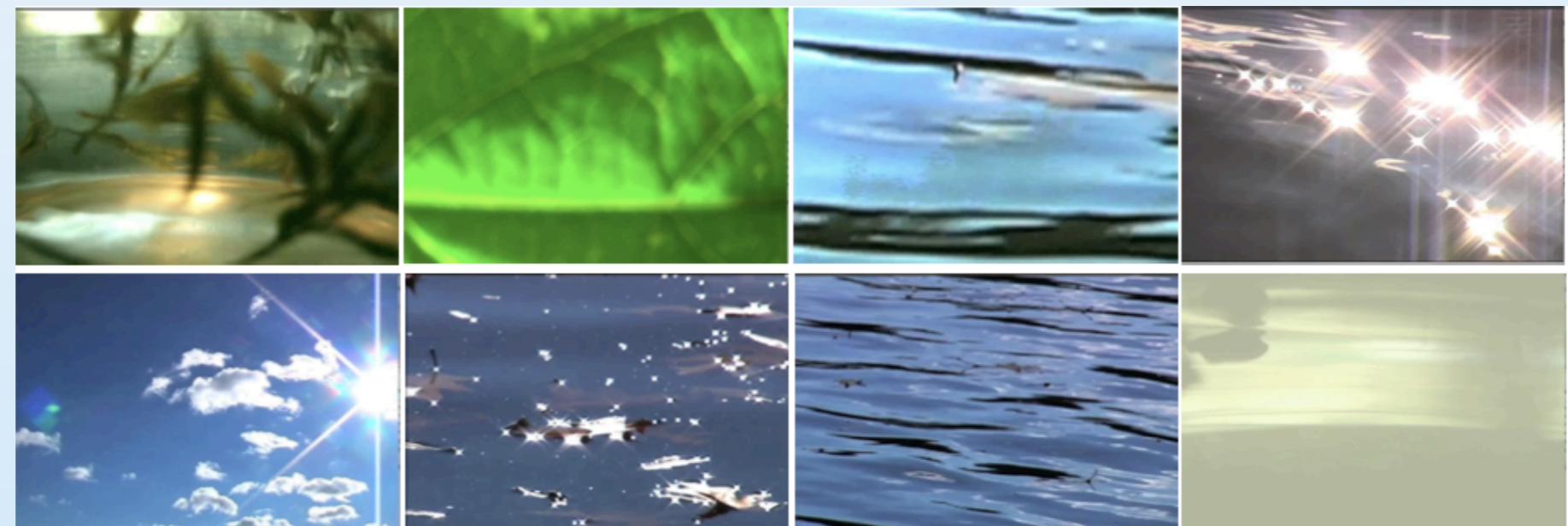
Iteration I :: 45 seconds



Iteration II :: 90 seconds



Iteration III :: 120 seconds

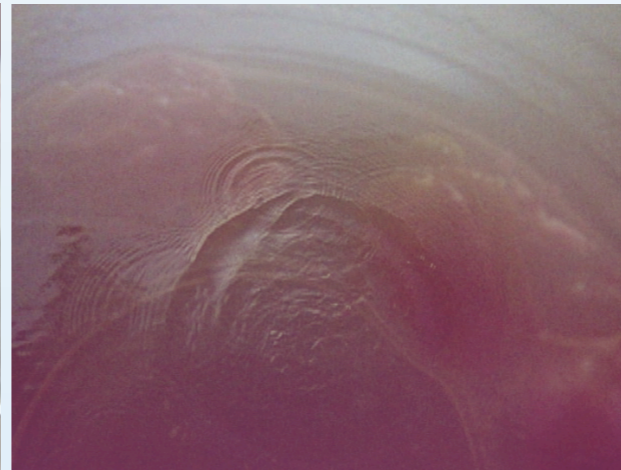


## Three tea videos

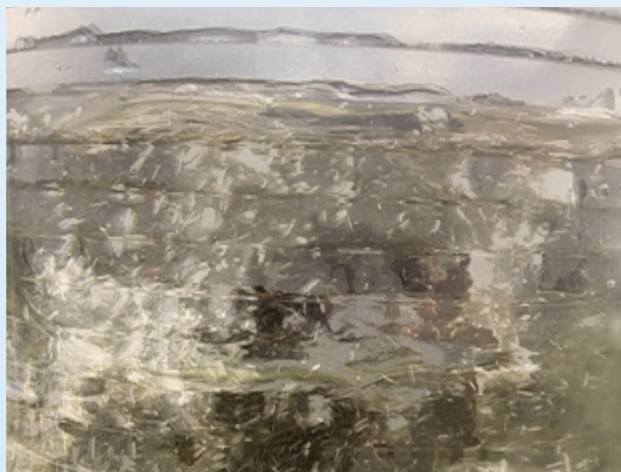
Green tea (90 seconds)



Flower tea (95 seconds)



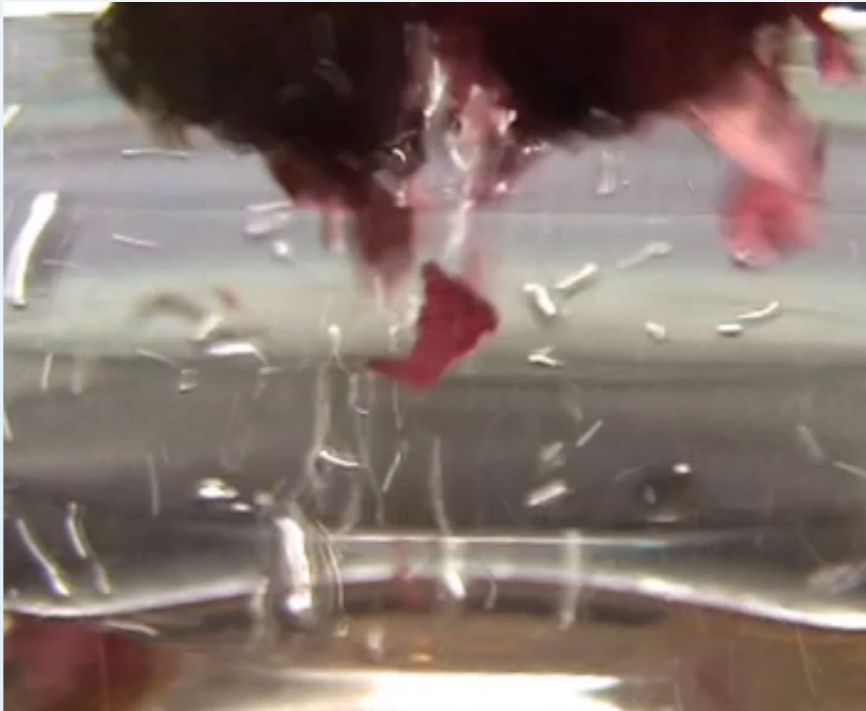
Black tea (90 seconds)



Three tea videos



Black tea (90 seconds)



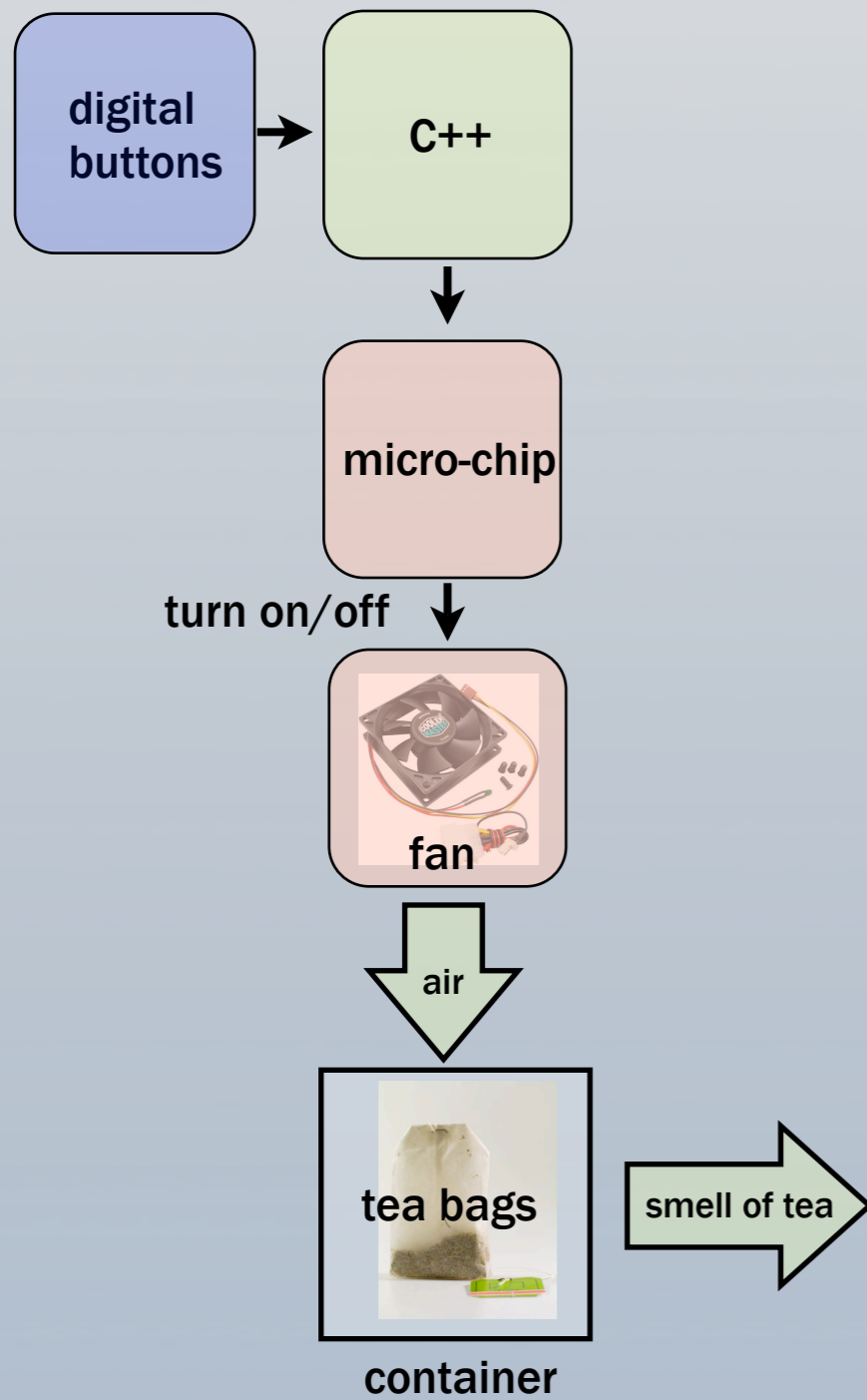
Flower tea (95 seconds)



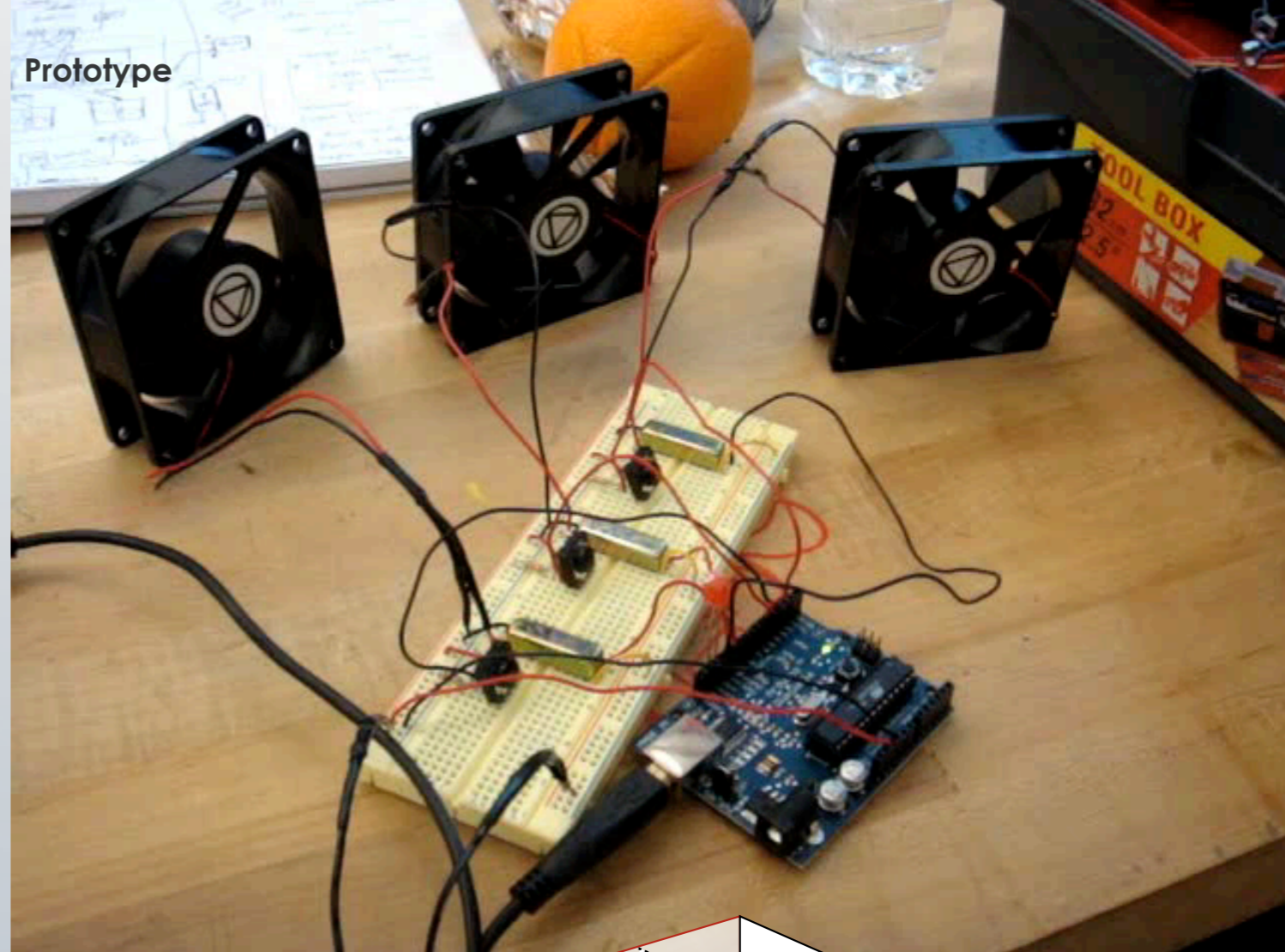
Green tea (90 seconds)

# Smell

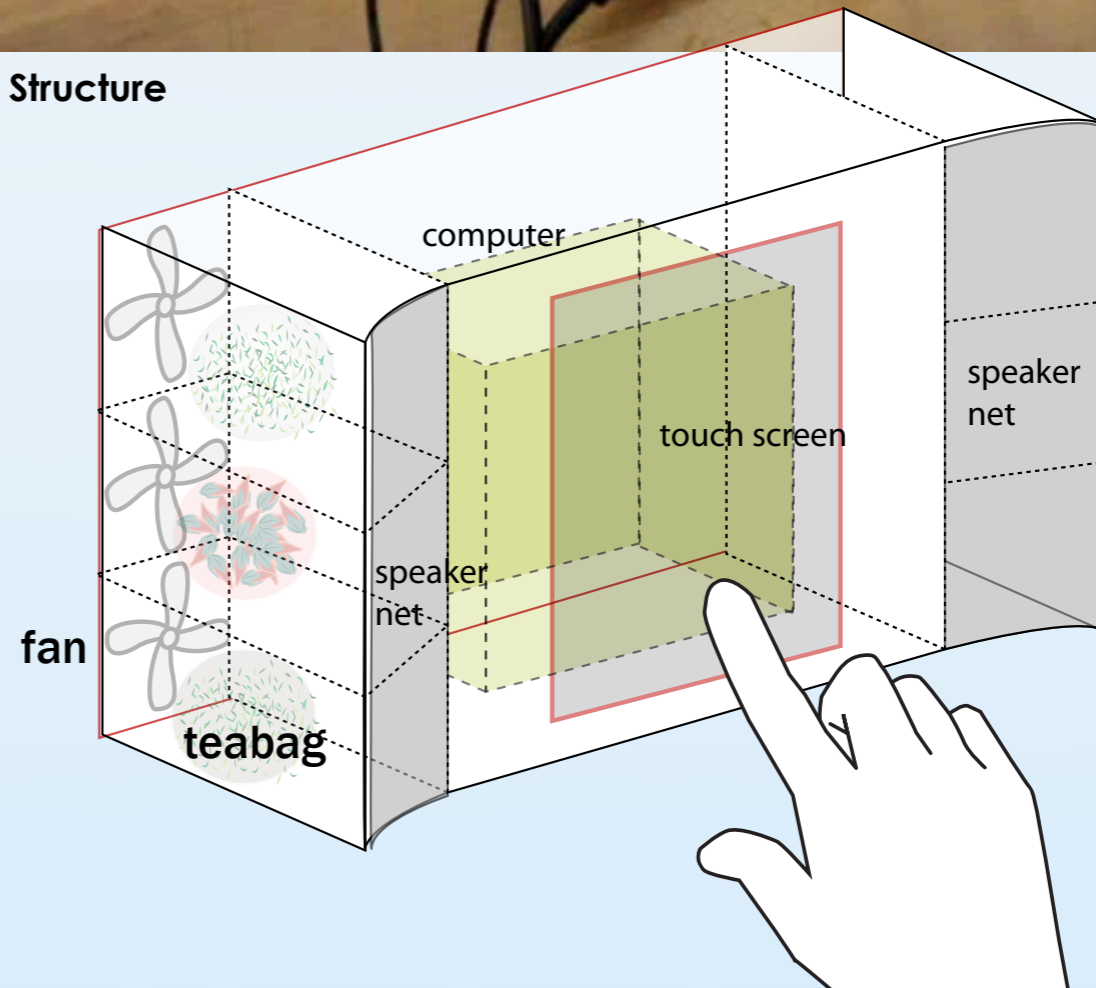
## Technology diagram



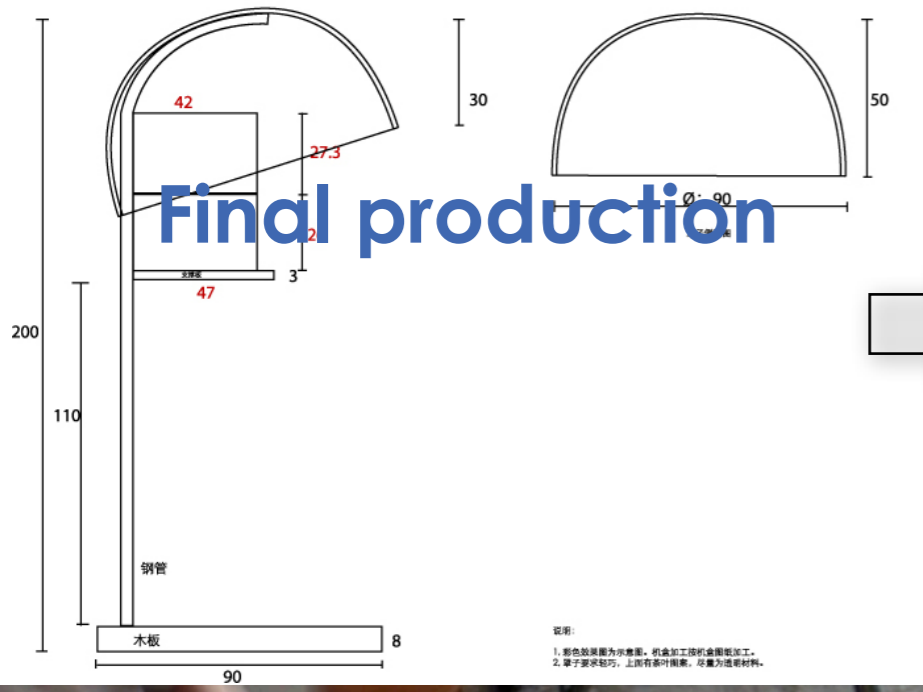
Prototype



Structure







## Final production and user testing



# Summary of feedback

- Users liked the design concept and the product design. Most of them felt the relaxation and inner connection to nature. Half of them thought the design approach was ironic. They wanted to use this vending machine again.
- They were satisfied with the sound and video design in general, and thought the style of videos were consistent, although they had different favorite videos.
- The instruction interface, control panel design and the height of the installation made the user experiment not very comfortable.



# Conclusion

- I use a critical approach to design a teahouse vending machine to promote people's inner connection to nature in their hectic daily urban life.
- After the process of developing this thesis, I realized this design can create an ambiguity between an artistic design for urban relaxation and a philosophical ironic comments on urban life. However, I need to carry out more user tests and do more research to improve the installation design and user experience.
- The design and technology in my project are bonded together naturally, and they are unified coherently under the theme of my thesis which is to promote the harmony between nature and human.

Thank you



Instant tranquility in 30 seconds!

Instant tranquility in 30 seconds!

vending machine