
iNVENTX 2025 Creative Exhibition

SUSTAINAISSANCE: Emotion . Expression . Identity

Inner Renaissance: The Noise Within, The Calm Beyond

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Abstract

Inner Renaissance: The Noise Within, The Calm Beyond is a multimedia installation that captures the emotional journey from mental chaos to a state of calm. Drawing from research on the impact of background music on attention and emotional regulation, this artwork features two contrasting digital visuals. One side represents cognitive overload with complex abstract strokes and tension-filled composition, while the other presents a visual sense of peace through smooth gradients and minimal elements. Each visual is paired with a unique audio experience using soundscape compositions that reflect the emotional state of the artwork. By scanning a QR code or using an AR app, visitors can listen to the corresponding music and feel the transformation within themselves. This work reflects the theme of “SUSTAINAISSANCE” through emotional renewal, self-awareness, and the sustainable use of digital tools to enhance creative expression. The project encourages reflection on how sound, emotion, and design contribute to our mental well-being. It aims to show that sustainability is not only about the environment, but also about sustaining the self through emotional balance and mindful engagement with the world.

Keywords Emotional balance; Digital soundscape; Immersive design; Visual expression; Cognitive clarity; Personal transformation

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Artist Statement

Concept and Theme

This artwork emerges from my ongoing exploration of how background music influences learning, emotion, and focus. As a creative academic, I am interested in translating internal psychological experiences into sensory forms through sound and visual design. *Inner Renaissance* visualises two contrasting emotional states, mental noise and inner calm, using abstract digital imagery and soundscapes to reflect how shifts in auditory environments can shape emotional perception and awareness.

The conceptual foundation of the work is informed by my postgraduate research on the psychological and cognitive effects of background music in educational settings, where I observed how certain sound environments could help individuals transition from mental fatigue to improved focus and clarity. This observation inspired the visualisation of emotional states before and after such a shift, framing sound as both a catalyst for transformation and a medium for reflection.

The work aligns with the theme “SUSTAINAISSANCE: Emotion, Expression, Identity” by foregrounding emotional sustainability as a form of renewal. It reflects the inner chaos commonly experienced in an overstimulated digital world and contrasts it with the sense of serenity that can emerge through mindful engagement with sound and visual harmony. In doing so, the artwork explores personal identity as a fluid and responsive state, shaped by emotional balance and sensory experience.

Sustainability, in this context, is understood as the care and maintenance of one’s internal emotional environment. By relying on digital tools and minimal physical resources, the work also supports creative sustainability through accessible, scalable, and low-impact media, reinforcing the idea that renewal can occur both internally and through responsible creative practice.

Approach and Process

The artwork was developed through an integrated process of digital visual design and soundscape composition. Two contrasting psychological states, stress and calm, were first conceptualised and then translated into abstract visual and auditory forms. This dual structure formed the basis of the installation, allowing the audience to encounter emotional contrast through both sight and sound.

The visual components were created using layered digital illustration and painting techniques, informed by colour psychology, abstraction, and motion-inspired composition. These visual elements were designed to convey varying degrees of tension, density, and balance, reflecting internal emotional states rather than literal representation.

The accompanying soundscapes were composed using digital audio software, supplemented by AI-assisted music generation tools where appropriate. Each audio piece was structured to correspond with the emotional character of its paired visual: the stressed state was expressed through fragmented, irregular sound textures, while the calm state was represented through softer, flowing ambient tones. Together, these soundscapes function as emotional cues that guide the audience's perceptual experience.

To enhance accessibility and interaction, the audio elements were made available through QR codes embedded within the visual presentation, with augmented reality (AR) explored as an alternative access method. This interactive layer allows viewers to move beyond passive observation and actively engage with the work, experiencing shifts between emotional states through a multisensory encounter.

Overall, the integration of visual design, sound composition, and interactive technology reflects an immersive creative process that extends beyond traditional static formats, encouraging personal reflection through participatory engagement.

Meaning and Impact

This artwork reflects on how individuals experience their inner emotional landscape within an increasingly overstimulated environment. By presenting a contrast between chaos and calm, the work invites viewers to consider how they respond to mental clutter, stress, and sensory overload, and to reflect on the role of emotional clarity in everyday life.

Through the integration of sound and interactive access, the work extends beyond visual observation to create a more intimate, multisensory experience. This interaction encourages personal engagement, allowing viewers to move between emotional states and recognise the subtle transitions that occur through shifts in sound, attention, and perception.

At its core, the artwork proposes that inner emotional states are significant and malleable, and that tools such as music, design, and mindful reflection can support navigation between emotional extremes. By juxtaposing the “noise within” and the “calm beyond,” the piece functions as a mirror through which viewers may reflect on their own emotional journeys and internal rhythms.

Ultimately, the work frames emotional renewal as a form of personal sustainability. It suggests that emotion and identity are not fixed, but fluid and responsive to both internal awareness and external environments, reinforcing the importance of sustaining mental well-being alongside broader conversations on sustainability.

Materials and Techniques

The visual components of the artwork were created using digital illustration and painting software, primarily Adobe Illustrator, with additional compositing and blending completed in Adobe Photoshop. These tools were used to construct layered abstract compositions that emphasise balance, contrast, and visual density, reflecting differing internal emotional states.

The audio elements consist of two contrasting soundscapes composed using Reaper as the primary digital audio workstation, supplemented by AI-assisted music generation tools for selected instrumentation. Each soundscape was structured to convey a distinct emotional condition: one simulates overstimulation and tension through fragmented textures and irregular rhythms, while the other promotes calm and mental focus through softer tonal layers and fluid ambient structures.

Interaction was facilitated through the integration of QR codes embedded within the visual presentation, with optional augmented reality (AR) elements explored as an alternative access point. This approach enables audiences to engage with the work in a personal and self-directed manner, transforming the installation into a multisensory experience without the need for physical audio equipment.

The exclusive use of digital media supports a sustainable production process by minimising physical resources while ensuring accessibility, portability, and adaptability across future exhibition contexts and platforms.

Artistic Influences

This work is informed by ideas and literature from music psychology and the cognitive sciences, particularly discussions on how sound influences emotion, attention, and perceptual focus. These perspectives provided a conceptual backdrop rather than a prescriptive framework, shaping the way sound and visual elements were considered as tools for emotional modulation and reflection. Visually, the artwork draws inspiration from abstract expressionism and digital minimalism, emphasising abstraction, emotional intensity, and restraint. These influences guided the use of layered forms, contrast, and reduction to convey internal psychological states without relying on figurative representation.

Musically, the work is influenced by ambient and experimental sound practices, including the compositional approaches of artists such as **Brian Eno** and **Dhafer Youssef**, as well as contemporary sound designers who explore atmosphere, texture, and emotional resonance. The integration of AI-assisted audio generation alongside original sound material reflects a contemporary creative approach that balances experimentation with intentional authorship.

The use of interactive technologies, including QR-based access and optional augmented reality elements, was informed by recent developments in immersive media and sound-based experiential practices. Together, these influences support a sustainable creative methodology that foregrounds emotional engagement, accessibility, and adaptability within a digitally mediated artistic context.

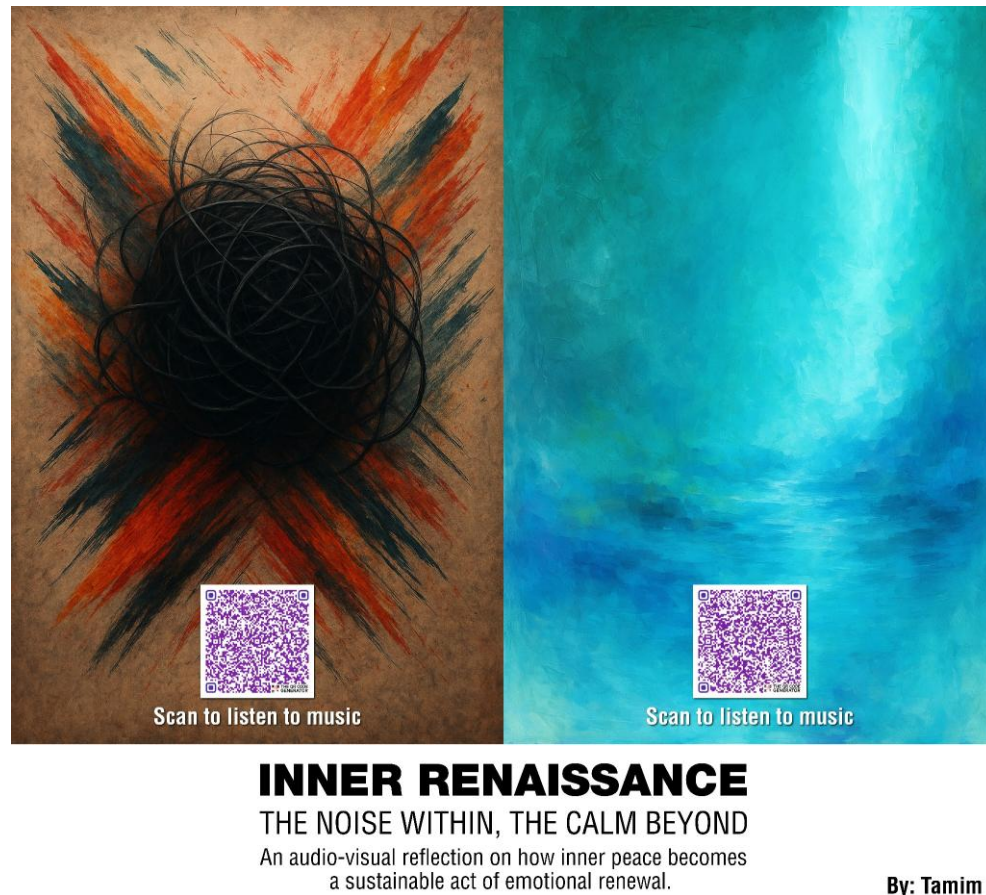


Figure 1. Visual Artwork with QR Code for Music Track Access

Conclusion

Inner Renaissance: The Noise Within, The Calm Beyond brings together sound, visual design, and creative inquiry to explore emotional transformation as a form of sustainability. The work proposes that sustainability extends beyond environmental and material concerns to include the emotional and mental environments individuals inhabit, positioning creative expression as a meaningful pathway for self-renewal and reflection.

Through the intentional use of digital tools, the artwork invites audiences to engage with shifts between cognitive noise and emotional clarity, highlighting how sound and visual abstraction can influence perception, attention, and inner awareness. In doing so, the work frames identity as a responsive and evolving condition, shaped through sensory experience and mindful engagement.

Situated within broader conversations on sustainable creative practice, *Inner Renaissance* emphasises emotional balance as an essential dimension of renewal. Looking ahead, the project holds potential for adaptation within educational, wellness, and therapeutic contexts, where immersive and interactive art may support emotional reflection and mental well-being through accessible, low-impact digital means.

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Authors' Bio

Ts. Muhammad Tamim Faruq Bin Khairul Azmi is a lecturer, researcher, and creative practitioner at Multimedia University, Cyberjaya, Selangor, Malaysia. His expertise lies in audio design, visual design and storytelling, and the intersection of creative technology with emotional experience. Tamim is actively involved in research on background music in learning environments and is currently pursuing his PhD on the emotional impact of AI-generated music. He believes in the power of interdisciplinary art to influence mental well-being, identity, and sustainable self-growth.

Prof. Dr. Tse-Kian Neo is a Professor at the Faculty of Creative Multimedia, specialising in Multimedia Technology in Education and Constructivist Learning Environment. He is currently a member of the Centre for Innovative and Immersive Technology, COE for Immersive Experience. He is a MBOT Professional Technologist member as well as a panel member for the Creative Industries domain. He is currently an assessor of several government grants including FRGS, and PRGS and international journals.