



AUTISM IN THE FUTURE

Building a more inclusive environment

School of Visual Arts, NYC
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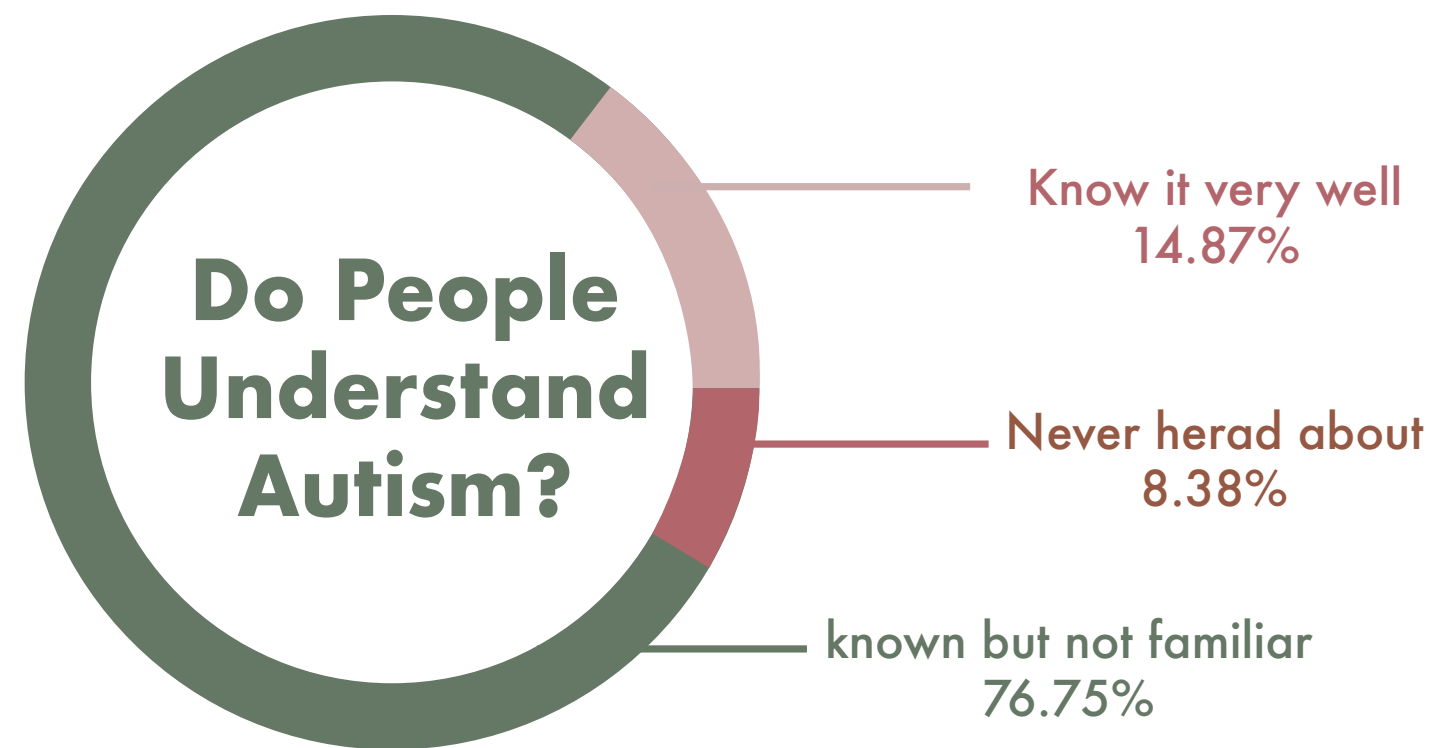
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BACKGROUND

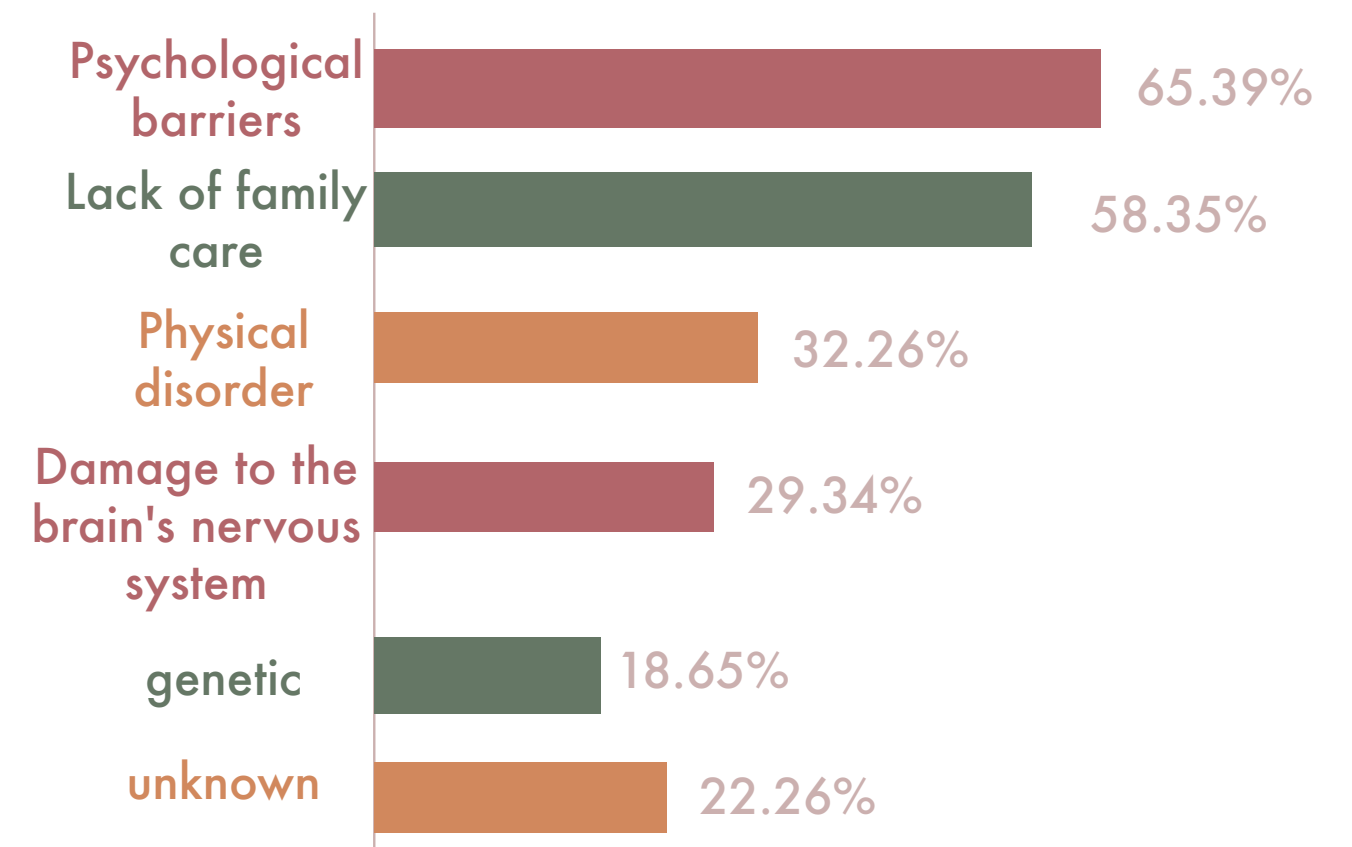
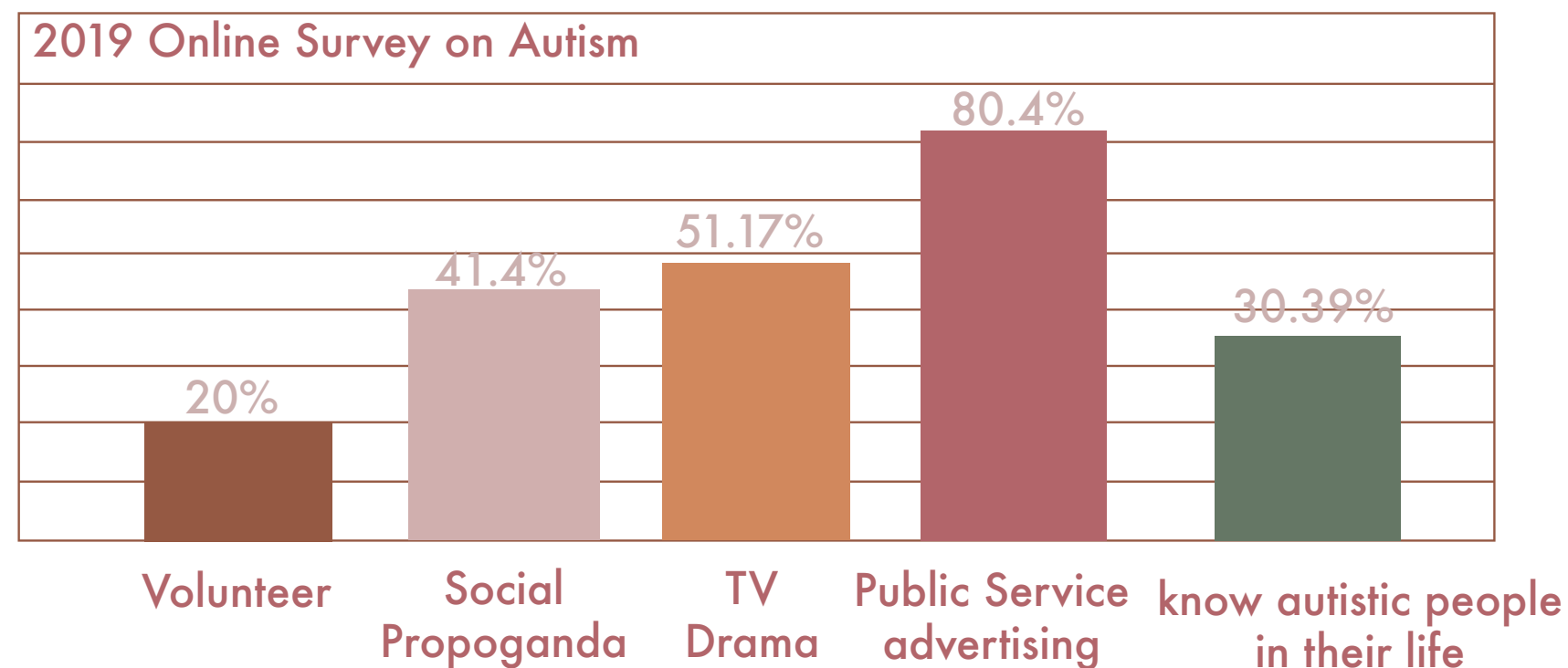
For most Chinese, "autism" may still be a very strange word. Autism, also known as "Autism Spectrum Disorders", is a complex group of neurodevelopmental Disorders that result from brain Disorders. The cause of the disease has been widely discussed, the disease covers a wide range of manifestations are also different. It is characterized by lack of social interaction/communication, difficulty in applying learned skills, severe lack of self-regulation, and strangely rigid and repetitive behavior, and sensitivity to sensory stimuli. Autism is often accompanied by mental retardation, seizures, hyperactivity, withdrawal and other mood disorders.

More than 80% of the population is unaware of autism



people thought the causes of autism

How Do People Understand Autism?



PROBLEM HIGHLIGHTED

1. Growing Population

the population of people with autism spectrum disorder is becoming larger and larger, there are 14 billion autistic people in China and that number is growing at a rate of 10 percent a year, autism spectrum disorder has become the most common form of childhood mental illness.

2. Lack of Awareness

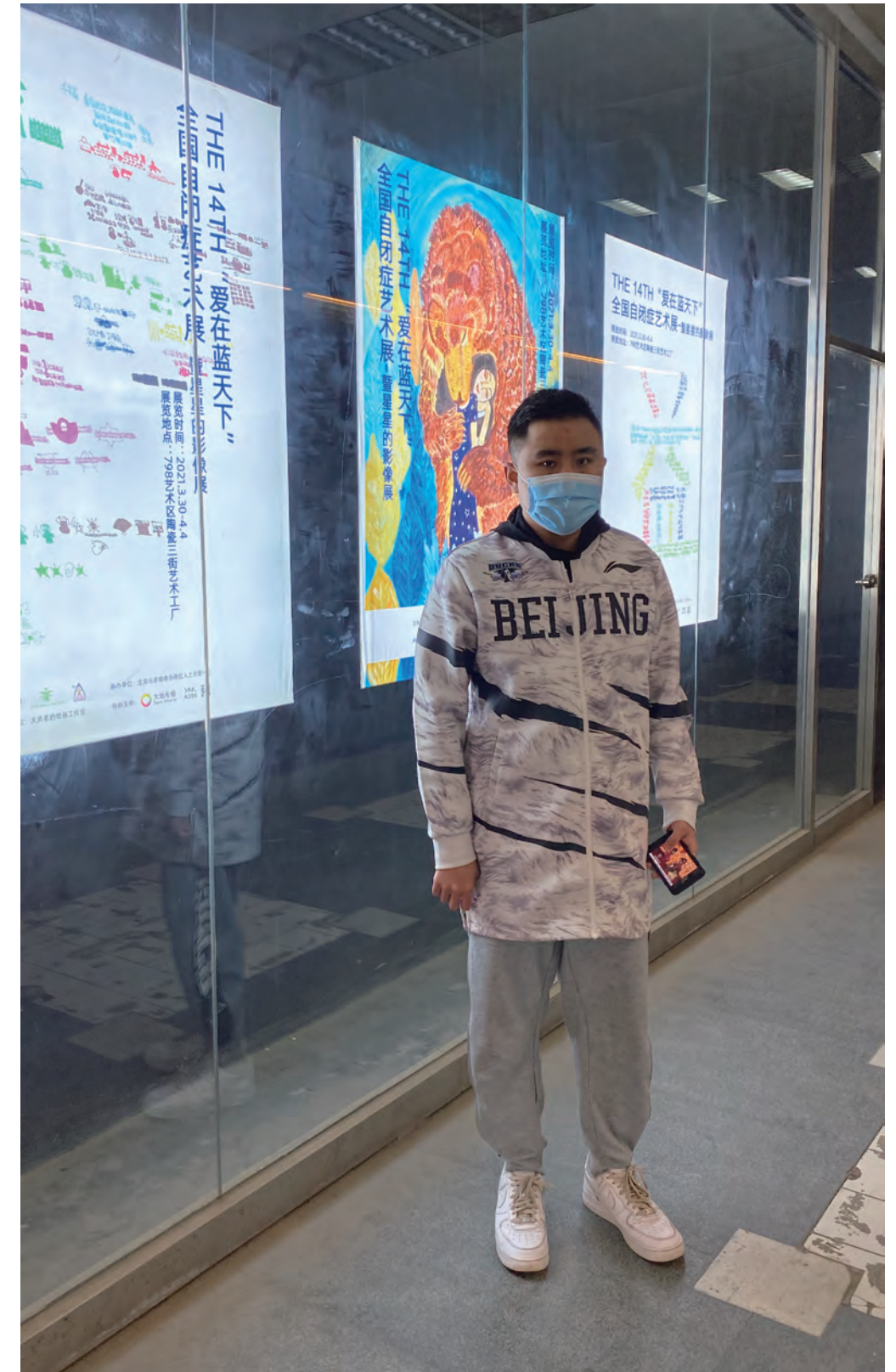
Facing such a large population, surprisingly most people do not know much about it, and more than 80% do not know about it.

3. Misconceptions

There are too many misconceptions about the autistic group in the society, which makes them subject to all kinds of discrimination.

Why I choose this topic?

I have a cousin with autism, and I have seen firsthand how difficult their lives are, and how much discrimination they have experienced. But everything is getting better. Since he went to the Goldenwings Art Rehabilitation Service Center for Disabled Children, my cousin fell in love with painting. Through painting, he found some confidence, and his symptoms also improved a little. Although there is no cure for autism, some relief in symptom may seem like clutching at straws. I've seen so many of these kids at Goldenwings, who are healing their minds and alleviating their symptoms through art. As a designer, I hope to help them with my little power, tell their stories to the public and improve the social awareness of autism.



Partnership



Golden wings open painting therapy class (including manual, clay sculpture), music therapy and cognitive nature class (ecological rehabilitation) of art, recruit 5 to 15 disorder children intelligence, spirit, mutilation, therapist from the special educational experience of painting and music therapists rehabilitation counseling, humanization and personalized art edification for disabled children, Grow up in a relaxed and happy atmosphere.

Art rehabilitation is a form of therapy of combination of art and psychology, can help reduce stress, physical, mental and psychological relaxation and health, training hand-eye coordination and integration of limb motor nerve, to stimulate the brain cognitive function, inspire children's creativity and imagination, promote the self-exploration, strengthen the concept of self and improve self-esteem, Soothe the symptoms of physical and mental diseases, adjust the traumatic experience, improve the development of insight, enjoy the fun of artistic creation.

Through regular visits to the Goldenwings twice a week, I have established a relatively good relationship with parents and their manager. Through interviews, I have learned about parents' caring pressure and their thoughts and expectations on their children's current situation. Conducted in-depth interviews with four parents.

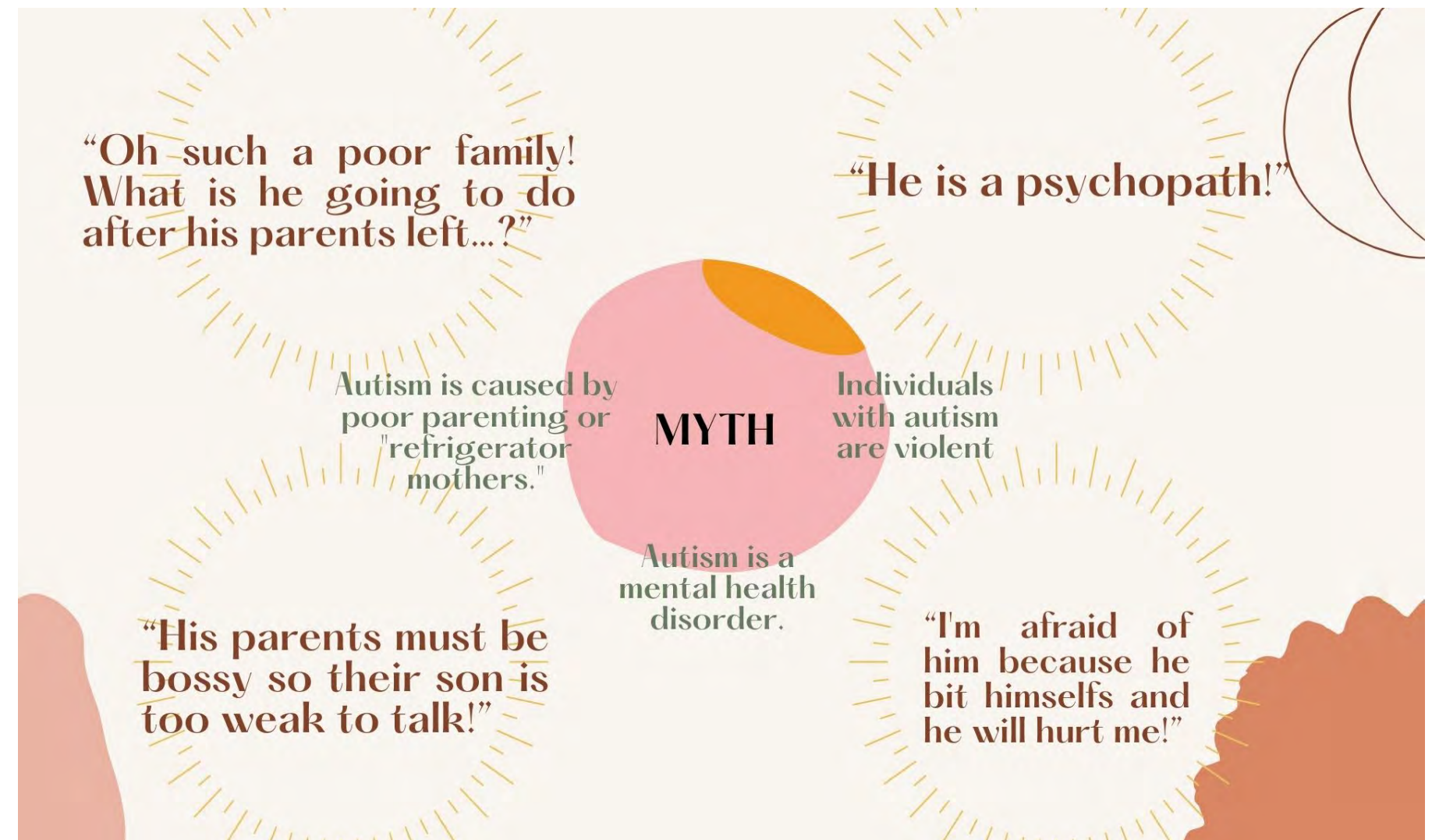
Problem Framing

Research Goal: Understand more challenges the autism group are facing.

Participants: Parents, students and staff of Goldenwings

Insights/What I found:

- Autistic parents are under huge pressure, they want to live one day longer than their children, or they even want to take their children with them when they die.
- There are a lot of misconceptions about the autistic community in society.
- They have language barriers, but they can still understand emotion and meaning of the dialogue.





"I'm afraid of eye contact, people always stare at me in a glaring manner."

"if someone still treats me like a toddler, I feel hurt."



"Actually, treat us as normal person according to our age will be fine."

Meet Kang

–age: 22

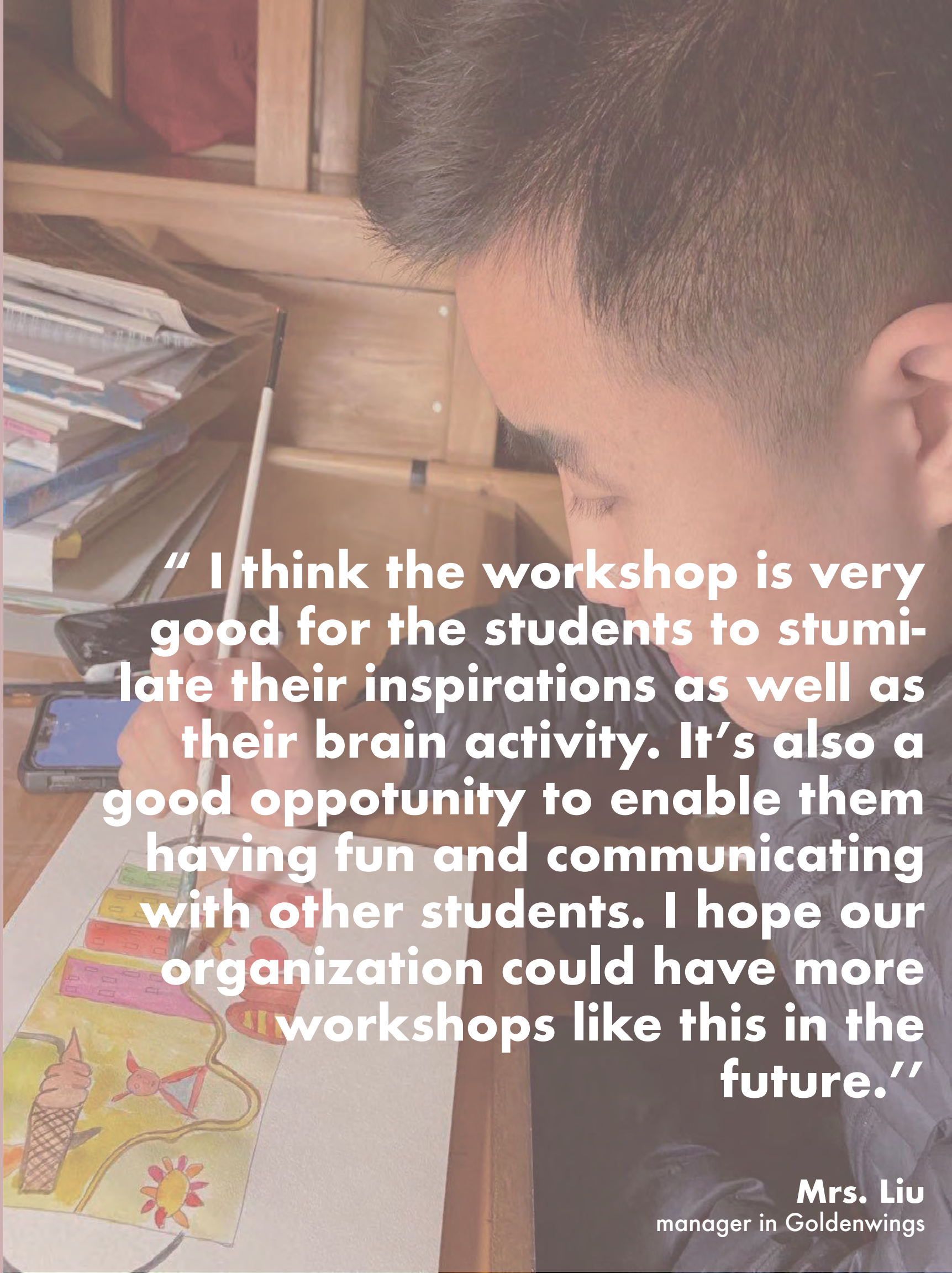
–autistic student in Goldenwings

Kang is 22, and he is an autistic student in goldenwings, the partnership organization I worked with. He works as a poster designer in a bookstore and he likes playing basketball, saxophone and also painting. His paintings have been exhibited in the National Center for the Perform Arts. Even like him, he still receives discriminations from sociey.

Prototype

About Prototype

After I interviewing and observing in the Goldenwings Art Rehabilitation Service Center For Disabled Children I tried out few path to gathering the idea of providing the people with autism a better future, including help them enhancing their vocational skills, communication skills, cognitive ability and give them confidence to feel that they are very useful. The paths are Art Workshop and Educational Game. The main idea is that I want to explore how the concept of bringing a better future for the people with autism and which one is the most effective and acceptable approach for people with autism.



“ I think the workshop is very good for the students to stimulate their inspirations as well as their brain activity. It’s also a good opportunity to enable them having fun and communicating with other students. I hope our organization could have more workshops like this in the future.”

Mrs. Liu
manager in Goldenwings

Prototype 1

Facial expression game

Description:

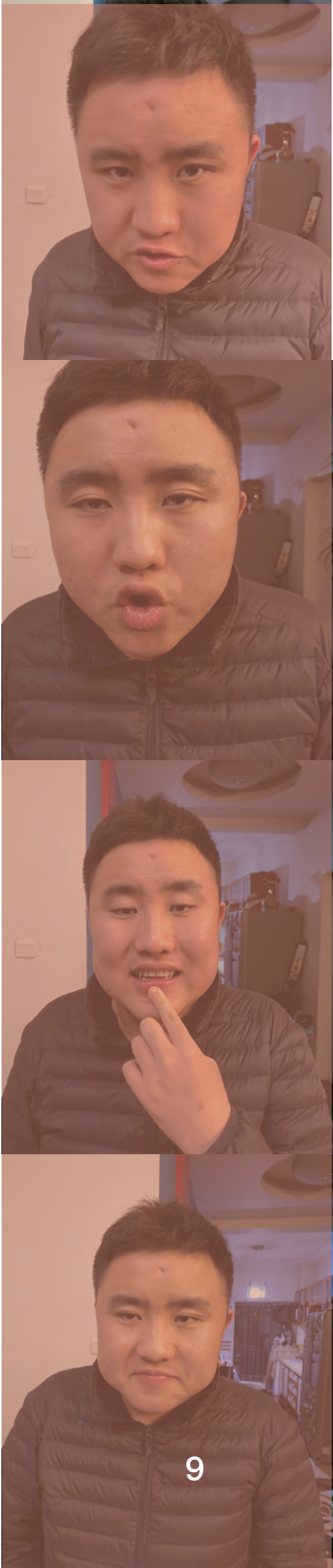
Students will find a partner and pair up. Every student make their own masks. Then, one student in the group wear thier own facial expression mask. Each group have to make a scenario of using different emotions, student will have to make reaction or conversation about their partners' facial expression.

Goals:

- understand more facial expression
- understand how to express their emotions
- making a space for the autistic students to express their thoughts and give play to their imaginations confidently.

Results & Big Learning:

Students were having fun.
Students can understand more facial expression.
In the dialogue, some students can use their facial expression in different scenarios.





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We are
together



Goldenwings

有
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自闭症宣传海报

Autism Awareness Design Competition

Collaboration between Students with Autism and Designers

Description:

The college designers will choose their favorite mask made from the artworks made by the autistic artist. After that, they will use the artworks as an inspirations to create a propoganda poster. We will open an online Autism Awareness Design Competition, all the designers will be invited in this competition.

Goals:

Find a place to connect the autistic artists and the real-world designers. The collaboration between them is helping the autistic students bridge the gap from school to society, also give them confidence and sense of fulfillment to the autistic people.

Prototype 2



**Artwork from
Student with autism**

Test Feedback:

From the test, I realized that I don't need to hold a workshop to teach them any skills. Since the goal of this collaboration is to change the perception and raise the awareness for the autistic people in the society. Since the Goldenwings is focusing on enhance the cognitive and communication skills of the autistic people. I should focus more on developing the ideas around collaboration, how to connect different dots? How to connect the goldenwings, the society and the people who are willing to help the autistic people together?



Results & Output:

During the pandemic, creating an online platform where the autistic people can upload their artworks in a inspiration library, and design propaganda competitor can use their insirations to create their own propaganda posters. All he propaganda posters will be showed in the exhibition. The posters are for sale, the money will belong to the autistic people. The designers will have a thanks letter of helping autistic people.



**Poster from
Design students**



Prototype 3

Sensory Game

Description:

introduce different materials and show students how to use this material to make art work. After showing the material, show them the name card of the material and let students learn about the name. After that. Play Play Play!! Have fun! Exploit their imagination and make their own artwork!

Goal:

- Autistic students are sensitive to certain materials. By touching and feeling different materials, it's helpful for their cognitive ability towards novelty.
- This game can better exploit their imaginations and enable them make more abundant artworks.



What I learned:

1. The whole process was smooth
2. They can create their own colors and have their own ideas
3. Some of the students were very enthusiastic to me. They greeted me at the beginning and hold hands to me warmly
4. They were very corporated
5. They enjoyed the process of creating the masks
6. Their parents and teaching assistants are very supportive of my work



Challenges:

1. Students with autism have shorter attention spans
2. They didn't fully understand what I was saying
3. Communication is always a problem
4. To the understanding of emotion and how to control emotion very much

Improvements:

1. I should talk to the teaching assistant more and make a more suitable study plan together
2. In fact, I should provide more patterns or some masks of next week, they can put the patterns on the masks to make them more colorful.
3. talk to the goldenwings to make this a real program.

Thesis Statement

After conducting the research and analyzing the autism group and my partner organization system, I arrived at my point of intervention and come up with my thesis statement which is:

How might we change society's perception of people with autism spectrum disorders in China which enable them not being discriminated, not being treated differently in the future?

Intervention

Workshop + Exhibition

During the implementation of the final intervention, I found that the collaboration is not the most important part, and the main point of the exhibition should be convey the inner world of the autistic people. So the key content of the exhibition should be the masks painted by the autistic students in my workshop.

Intervention-exhibition



Goal:

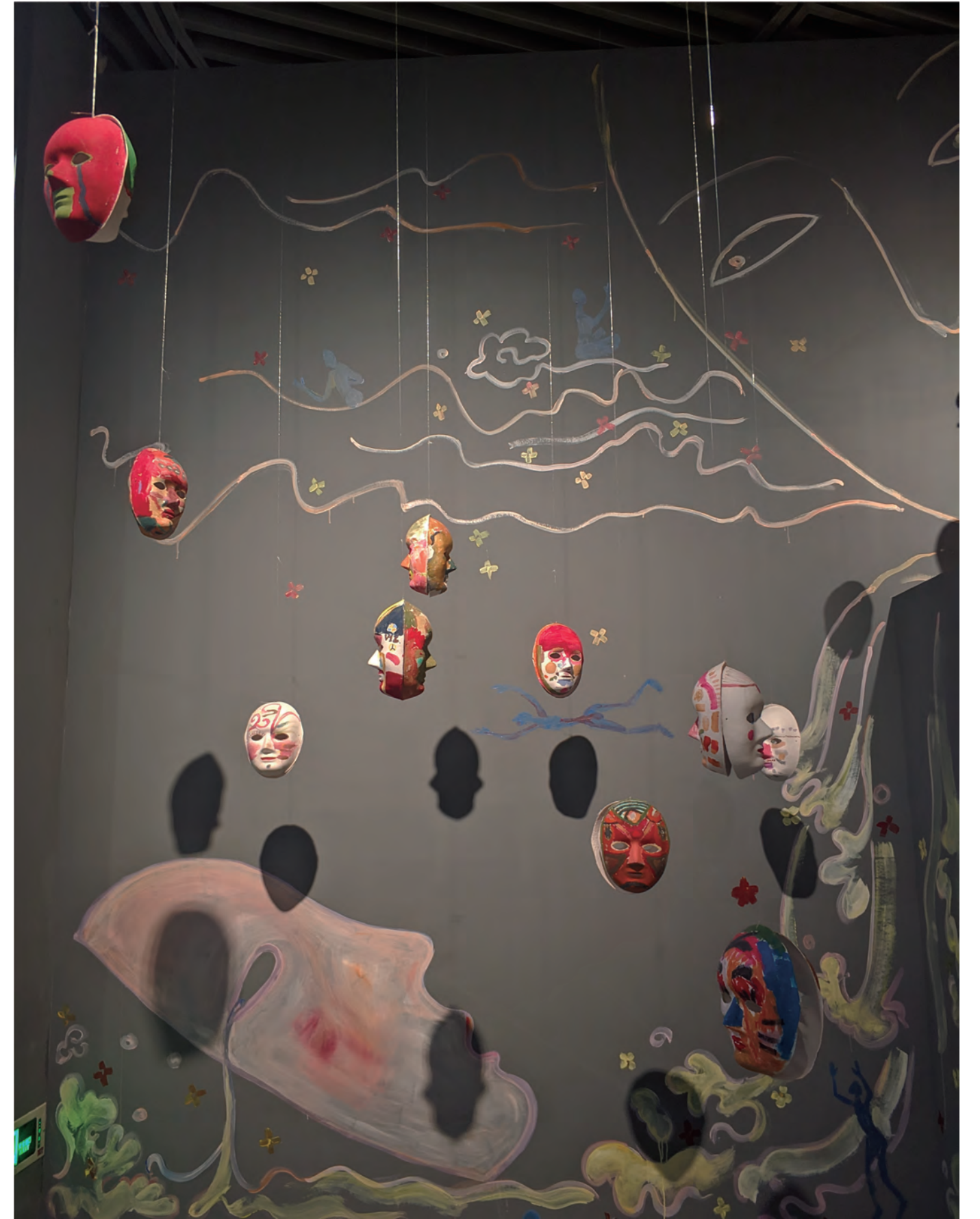
- Reveal the inner world of autistic people
- Change society's perception of autistic people
- share my project to stakeholders or a larger audience/community



A total of 54 people participated in the exhibition, including families with autism, but the rest were members of the public. According to my questionnaire survey of the participants, 85% of them are not very familiar with autism, and they are shocked that even autistic people can draw such powerful works. Of those who didn't know about autism, 90% said they had a better understanding of the condition.

Exhibition

Intervention



Brochure

齐来做个 Friend (朋友)

我真的很想和你们交朋友，以下是与我们相处的小技巧：

1

眼睛对视，让我听话专注

2

说话简单，让我更容易理解

3

配合动作，让我更加清晰

4

给我鼓励，让我更加勇敢

5

了解情绪，让我努力表达

6

真心相处，让我感受真诚

7

保持微笑，让我们携手同行

只要你们愿意向我们走近一步，
我们就会成长一步，
只要有你们群星的守护，
我们将会一起点缀这美丽的天空，
照亮地球。

一、地球上的星星

人人都是笨小孩。你怪点，我怪点。你慢点，我笨点。

同学们，你们好！我是一个自闭症孩子，大家也叫我来自地球上的“星星”。

因为我们就像天上的星星一样，拥有属于自己的生活轨迹。

接下来我来介绍一下自己，让大家熟悉“特别”的我们。

1、什么是“自闭症”呢？

自闭症 又称“孤独症”，是一种先天性脑功能发育障碍，主要表现为社交、沟通、语言、兴趣和行为异常特征，起病于3岁之前，3岁以后表现明显，绝大多数儿童需要长期的康复训练和特殊教育支持。

2、“星星”的常见行为特征

A

突然大哭或大吵，自言自语重复一些话语

B

语言难以理解
你说“早上好”，我却说“我要去玩”。

C

注意细节，忽略周边
我走到马路上，会太留意他人喝东西的声音，而忽略左右的车辆。

D

交友困难
我想交朋友，但不懂得沟通，甚至记不住别人名字。

E

情绪难以控制
我会突然想起伤心的事情，或者外界的声音 / 环境令自己不舒服时，我会出现坐立不安，发脾气。

F

刻板行为，常依恋某种物品或重复做着同一件事情
我不适应新环境，会坚持自己的生活顺序。

G

会出现有异常人的天赋
我可能画画很好看，可能音乐感很棒，记忆力超等等。

绘聚大能量·伴我齐同行

如果你愿意做我的朋友，可以把这幅画用色彩填满吗？
我们的生活因为有了你们的参与，充满色彩，
让我们一起交朋友，携手同行吧！

Outcome




workshop satisfaction
9.96/10



exhibition satisfaction
9.95/10

90%
thought they better understand autism

60%
interested to help autistic people

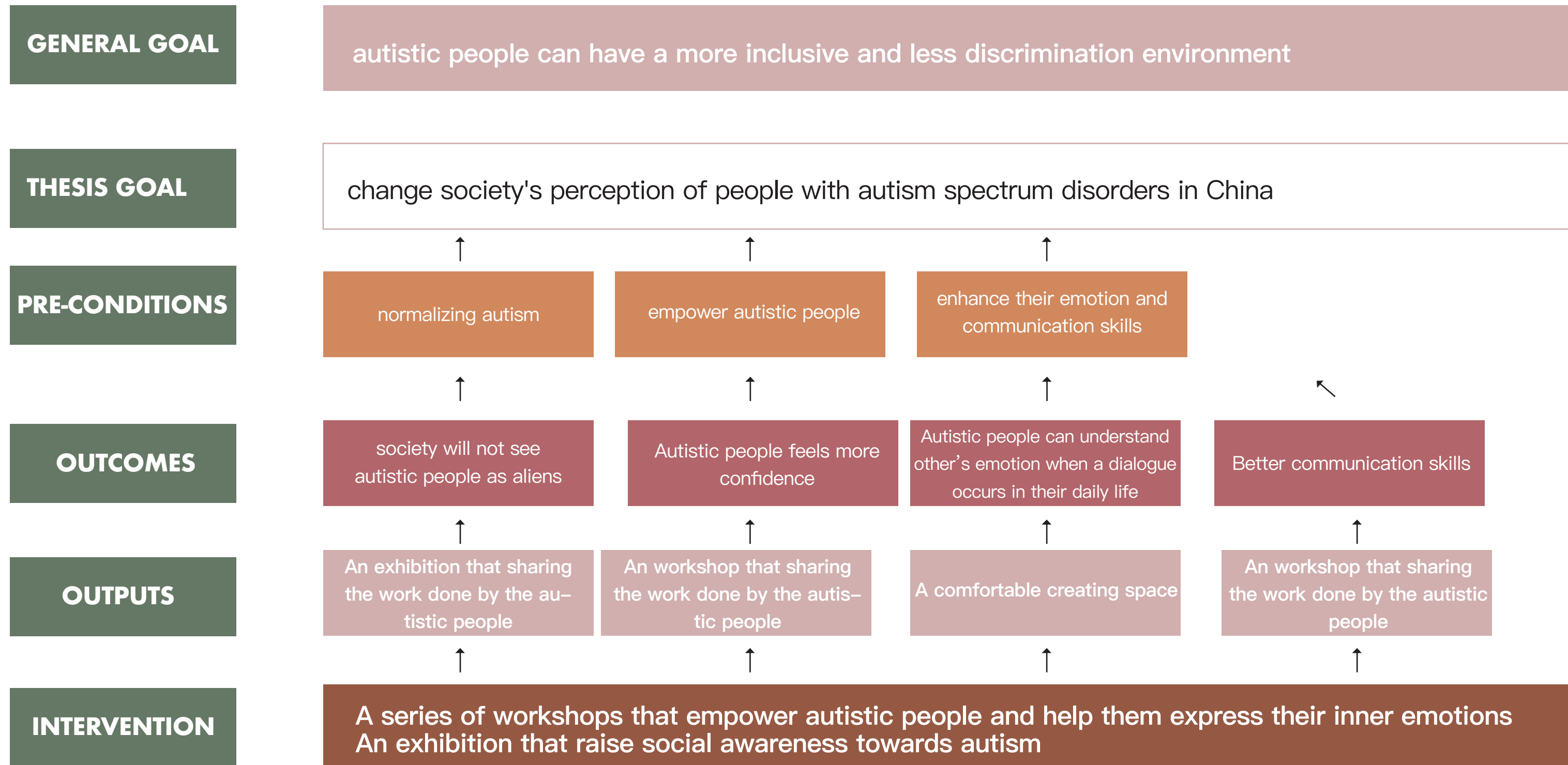


It is hoped that the public will be more tolerant to autistic people. Only their tolerance can remove the main obstacle for them to go out from home into the society, and they will have more opportunities to contact with the real life, the real society and the real social occasions, and then they will make progress. So that there will never be “loneliness” in the world.

–Mrs.Liu
Manager of Goldenwings



Theory of Change



Log Frame

INPUTS	PROCESS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES	IMPACT
<p>Human Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">–Autism Expertise–Workshop teaching assistant–event manager–manager of GoldenWings <p>Financial Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">–Rent for the space–Budget for masks, pigment and printing <p>Equipment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">–Laptops–Cell phones–Printer–Masks–promotional materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">–come up with ideas–Build relationships with GoldenWings organization–co-create the content of the workshop with partners–confirm the agenda of each workshop–make masks–take the masks to the exhibiting space–Make posters and promotional materials–promote the activity, send invitations–Gather the feedback and share with GoldenWings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">–Executable workshop plan–4 workshops–Polished face masks–A good relationship with GoldenWings–Plan for the long-term collaboration–Sustainable development–An exhibition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">–Increased skills of facilitation–Increased availability and accessibility of resources for the autistic group–Increased participants–strong partnerships–autistic people feel empowered, supported and confident–more people got to know more about autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">–Producing more and more masks will result in a powerful piece, may even cause a social sensation in the future–The topic of autism has once again become a hot topic in society–autistic people can gain more social confidence

Learnings & Reflection

Strengths & Success:

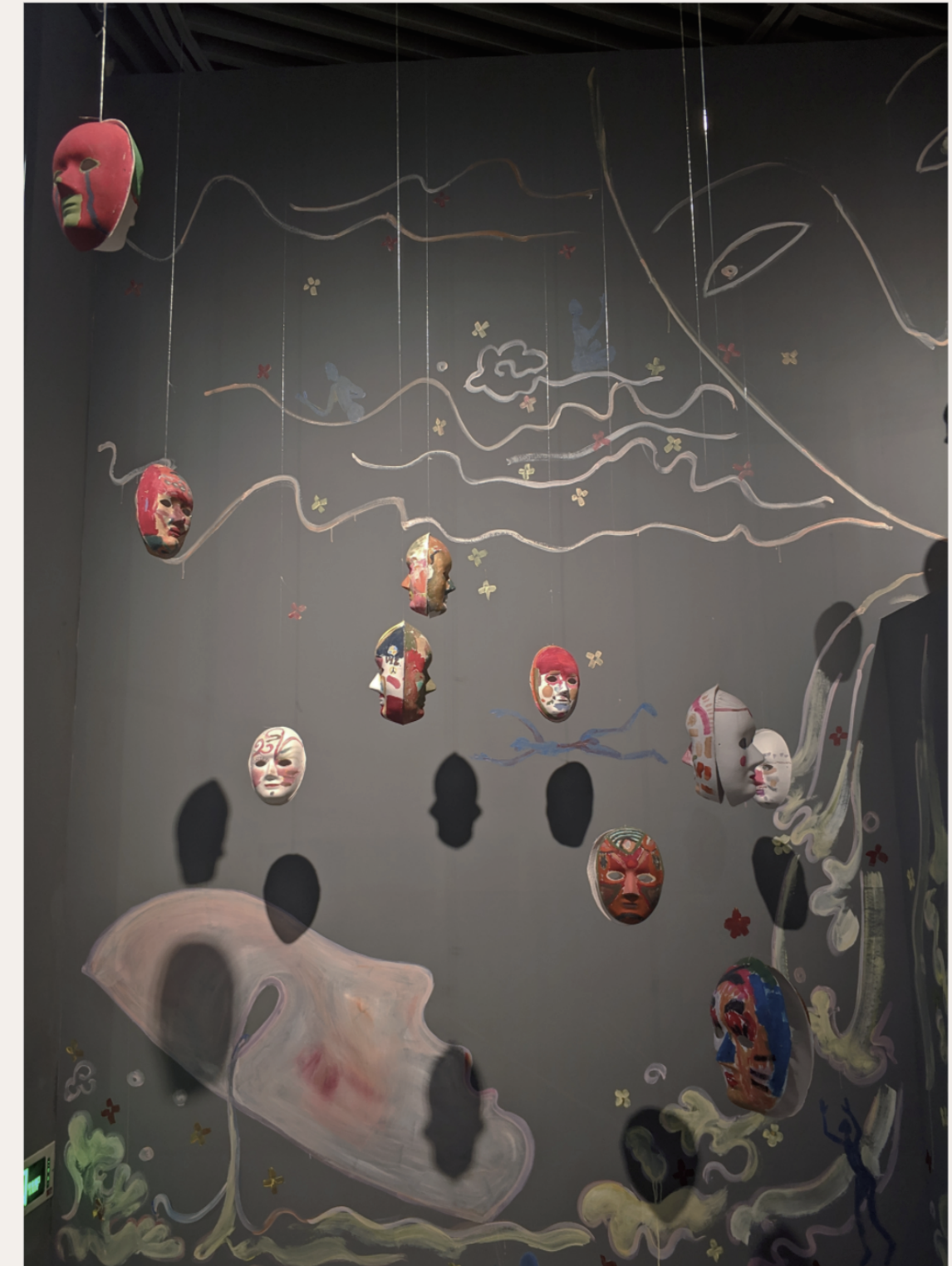
- Exhibition went well
- workshop was highly compliments by the partner organization and will be used as an program in the future
- prepared everything for the exhibition & workshop on time.

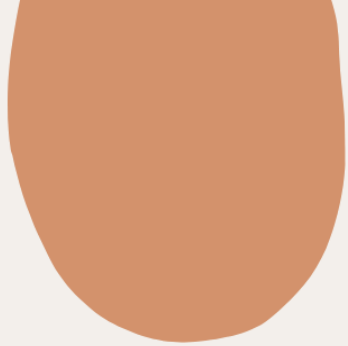
Improvements:

- Leave enough times to prepare an opening reception

Learning & Reflection:

- I learned how to prepare an workshop and an exhibition by myself
- I learned that autistic people are also warm people
- I learned that track the process and make timeline is very important
- I want to evolve the workshop in the future, to make it more professional





I envision the world in the future
where society can be more tolerant,
every autistic people can be
respected and live their life to the
fullest!

My vision



Special Thanks

Fei	<i>Goldenwings Art Rehabilitation Service Center For Disabled Children</i>
Xiaodong	<i>Beijing Institute of Graphic Communication</i>
Kara	<i>My Advisor</i>
Miya	<i>DSI Chair</i>
Peng and Kang	<i>Student and parents</i>
2021 Cohort	<i>DSI, SVA</i>



*Let's pay attention to autistic group and
make them a better future!*

