Philippe Cao, Ritual for Empowerment, 2014

Beginning with the text on the arena channel, I've always thought of technology as just a tool but seeing it as a form of language comparable to poetry was super eye-opening. I chose to look at the Ritual for Empowerment website under the "removing function from form" category. In this category, the text states that the websites are examples of separating the aesthetic of the tool from its proposed purpose, and reimagines the outward facing elements of our tools and browsers. After being on the website, the experience is unexpectedly underwhelming. Not underwhelming in a bad way, but at first when I read about it in the arena channel, I was expecting the experience and the amount of choices to overwhelm me.

After actually navigating through the website and clicking on the buttons, I was very excited to test every button and to learn what the results would be. I can see how the aesthetic was removed from the website, since all the buttons are just kind of laying on top of another and don't seem to have any colorful CSS properties that would make it more engaging. I will say I got pretty easily bored, after clicking a couple buttons and revealing a couple messages. It just didn't seem to have any more elements to interact with other than the buttons, and after hearing about the aspect of control, there just didn't seem to be a lot of different and interesting elements to control.

Anyways, I really did enjoy the experience of the website for the time I was on it, and the messages are super cute and funny. I think there is a human desire for control and entertainment, especially over our own digital experiences. There are a lot of possibilities and to explore them all is exciting.