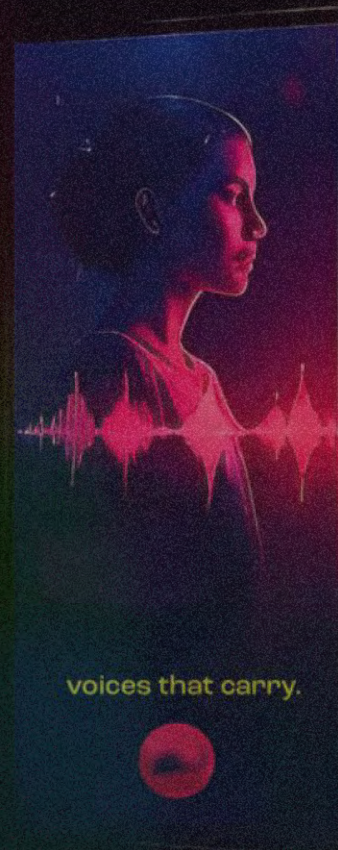


Women are
more powerful
together.

THE GIRL WORD

unplugged.

THE REVERB BOOTH



voices that carry.



HOW DO VOICES BECOME POWERFUL?

A woman with short blonde hair, a nose ring, and a black earring is shouting into a black megaphone. She has a tattoo on her right arm and is wearing a white t-shirt. The background is a solid blue color.

Women are often told that we must speak louder to be heard, believed, understood and respected. However, the science of sound teaches us that signals grow stronger through reinforcement.

The Girl Word translates this principle into an interactive design framework, exploring how repetition, resonance, and collective participation transform individual voices into cultural influence.

Rather than asking women to amplify themselves, the project asks what becomes possible when we amplify one another.



RESEARCH FOUNDATIONS

A communication problem observed across science, psychology, media, and design.

1. Voice

Collective narrative shifts the perspective from a single, isolated incident to a systemic truth. It signals to decision-makers that an individual's experience is backed by the weight of a community.

2. Sound

A sound wave is a traveling pressure variation that is initiated by a vibrating source... Sound waves can undergo reflection, refraction, interference, and diffraction.

3. Power

The in-equal authority shown to women effects not only how much we speak, but also to the respect we are shown, the length of time we are given to speak, and how we view our capacity, influence and power.

4. Participation

Women received only 72% of their fair share of speaking opportunities when they were outnumbered. Equal participation emerged only when women comprised roughly 60% of the group.

THE GIRL WORD MODEL

The Girl Word introduces a new model for understanding how influence emerges. It's not through volume, but through reinforcement, resonance, and collective carry.

Influence inspires new voices,
and the cycle begins again.

6. Influence The signal, now amplified, changes culture.

5. Collective Carry Many voices come together to share the story.

4. Resonance The message creates emotional connection.

3. Reinforcement Others repeat, validate and support it.

2. Attention The signal is noticed.

1. Voice A single expression enters the world.



THE SYSTEM

Rather than existing as a single installation or application, the project functions as an ecosystem that allows voices to move across physical, digital, and communal spaces.

Designed to build community in both digital and physical spaces, the system includes:

- Our immersive installation, The Reverb Booth
- Participatory listening and audio creation with our mobile application
- A growing archive of stories, resources, and events live on our website

Together these experiences invite participants to listen, contribute, carry, and strengthen women's voices through repeated interaction.

THE REVERB BOOTH

The Reverb Booth transforms invisible communication dynamics into a physically tangible experience.

Visitors step into a quiet, theater-like sound booth where they encounter women's voices through audio, visual and sensory components.

Inside the booth, participants don't simply consume stories. Video, audio and physical vibration work together to allow participants the embodiment of resonance.

By listening, carrying, and reinforcing voices, visitors experience how attention itself becomes a form of power.

The booth demonstrates that amplification is not produced by volume alone, but through sustained participation. It creates a distraction free environment that promotes deep listening and resonance.



MOBILE INTERFACE

The companion app extends the installation beyond the museum, allowing participants to continue exploring amplification in their everyday lives. Four interactive modes reveal different ways voices become stronger.

The app also interacts with The Reverb Booth experience, creating a continuous dialogue between physical and digital experiences.



pulse

Repeat. Reflect. Resonate.

carry

Listen. Hold. Carry.

signal

Explore. Discover. Connect.

amplify

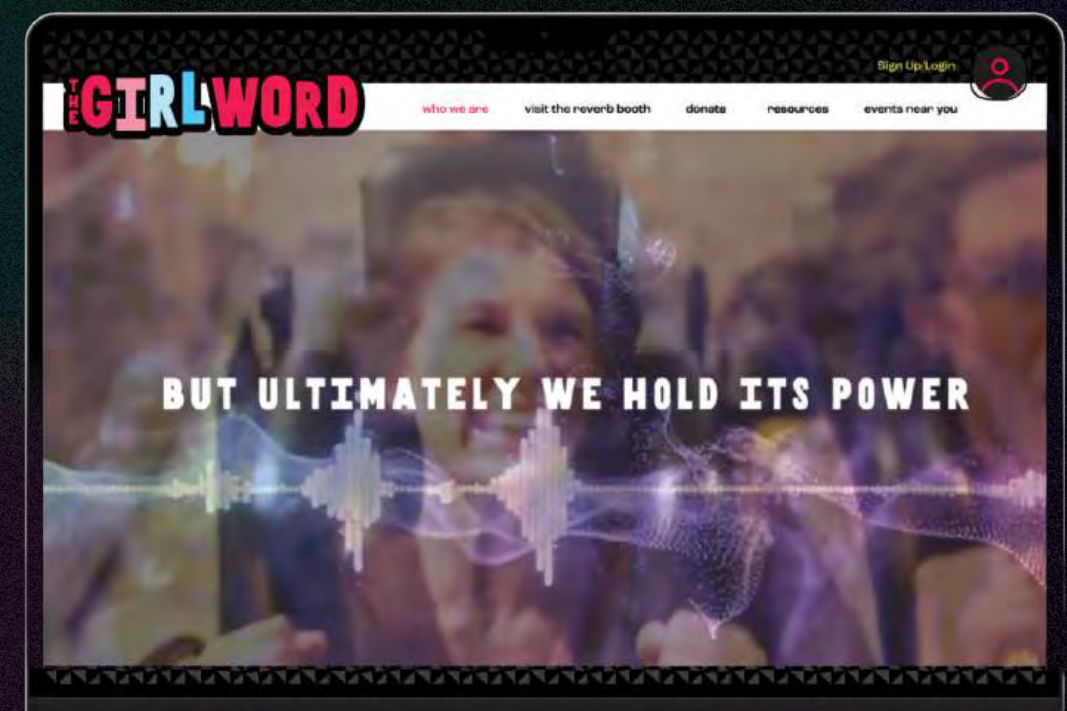
Speak. Measure. Strengthen.

COMMUNITY

The Girl Word website extends the experience beyond the installation, creating a living archive of voices, stories, poetry, music, and community events. Explore featured contributors, discover new perspectives, share your own story, and follow The Reverb Booth as it travels to new communities.

featured voice: kate baer

New York Times bestselling poet Kate Baer is one of the first featured voices in The Girl Word. She generously contributed an exclusive recording of "re: Me Too," allowing visitors to experience—and carry—her words through collective participation.



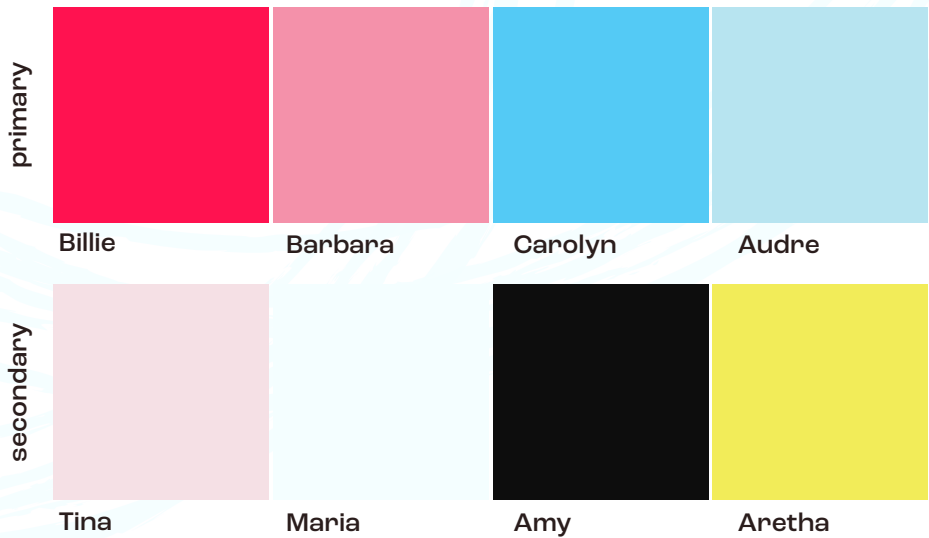
VISUALIZING AMPLIFICATION

Inspired by the bold femininity of classic blue eyeshadow and pink lipstick, the visual identity pairs nostalgic color with raw, hand-drawn elements that celebrate the humanity of every voice. Contemporary typography brings clarity and expression, creating a system that feels real, empowering and bold.

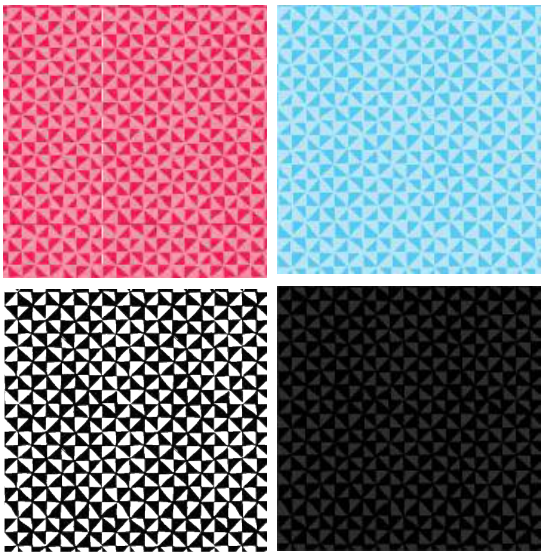
primary logo



color palette



patterns



typography
TITLE: TAYLOR PENTON KARI
subtitle: roc grotesk bold
Body: Roc Grotesk Medium

ui/ux components



CONCLUSION



The Girl Word proposes a new way of understanding influence, not as something individuals inherently possess, but as a force that communities create. Inspired by and guided by the science of sound, the project demonstrates that voices become powerful through attention, reinforcement, and collective participation. When we choose to carry one another's voices, amplification becomes more than a metaphor; it becomes a design strategy for social change.

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Biography
Courtenay Ahuja is a graphic designer and art director based in Nashville, Tennessee. After more than a decade leading visual merchandising and store design for global luxury brands including Tiffany & Co., she returned to graduate school to earn her MFA in Graphic Design from the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). Her work explores how graphic design can make invisible social systems visible, with a focus on communication, participation, and women's voices. Through research-driven experiences that bridge physical and digital environments, she creates design systems that invite people to engage, contribute, and build collective understanding.

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Colophon
The Girl Word was conceived, researched, designed, and prototyped by Courtenay Ahuja as her MFA thesis at the Savannah College of Art and Design. Special thanks to poet Kate Baer for generously contributing an exclusive recording of re: Me Too, and to the women who shared their stories and experiences in support of this project.

selected references

Marta Eichsteller, How telling one person's story can represent the voices of many.
Rossing, The Science of Sound
Christopher Karpowitz & Tali Mendelberg, The Silent Sex