



SEA INSIDE

BY MARTEN SIMS

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THESIS ABSTRACT

The emerging practice of transformation services employs design skills in non-traditional territories and brings together a diversity of intelligences, communication types and frameworks from which to define a problem and develop real-world solutions. *Sea Inside* is a contribution to the growing discourse around the transformations taking place at the intersection of design, culture and marine ecology.

The thesis paper describes the importance of exercising a holistic approach to solving complex problems – such as the current crisis threatening our planet’s ocean (and by extension, ourselves). This technique has emerged and developed from my practice of designing a small-scale temporary environment – in the form of a pilot exhibition, interactive features and creative workshops – that attempt to focus participant’s actions and dialogues on the relationship we have with the sea around, and inside us. The project intends to transform people’s perspectives, maintain current positive association and/or provide critical reflection and reflexive opportunities to engage with the subject matter of the ocean. It is hoped that this evolution of the intersections between multiple creative disciplines will support the continued transformation of the participants and encourage actions towards designing and implementing more sustainable ways of living with the ocean in the future.

KEYWORDS //

Transformation Design; Transdisciplinary Design; Co-Creation; Co-Design; Open Space; Holism; Six Senses; A(x4) Research Method; Kinesthetic Learning; Systems Thinking; Situational Dynamics; Reflexive Action and Reflective Engagement; Dialogic Learning and Action; Proxemics; Cultural Activism.

For the sea

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As with all work on complex issues, it takes a village to raise a paper. Well, you know what I mean. I'd like to acknowledge my nan, Joan, for her continued strength and love; my parents, Jon and Kaye, for giving me so much ocean to play with as I was growing up; my girlfriend Julie, who inspires me every day with a new story about nature; to Deborah Shackleton, whose expert supervision these past two years has been essential to this work; and to Jane Slemon for her comments, encouragement and good humour.

LIST OF TERMS

CREATIVE CLASS

Used by Richard Florida to signify a broad group of individuals ranging from “Scientists and engineers, university professors, poets and novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, designers, and architects, as well as the “thought leadership” of modern society”, the Creative Class includes “nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts, and other opinion-makers”.

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Non-formal education is defined as an organised and sustained educational activity that may take place both within and outside educational institutions and cater to persons of all ages. (OECD 2010, 23)

TRANSFORMATION DESIGN

I am defining transformation design as any kind of service which intends to transform the perspectives, opinions and actions of the people involved with either its process or its outcome.

Transformation Design is a human-centred, transdisciplinary process that seeks to create desirable and sustainable changes in behaviour – of individuals, systems and organisations. It draws on a variety of design disciplines – critical design, conceptual design, service design, communication design, industrial design, interactive and experience design – as well as non-design disciplines such as ethnography, narrative and storytelling, cognitive psychology, the life sciences, linguistics and cultural anthropology.

Hilliary Cottom and Charles Leadbeater of London agency Participle in the UK have recently employed Transformation Design practices in a redesign of the prison system; design and development of a system for improved diabetic self-care management; as well as investigating the design and delivery of health services to an aging population.

TRANSDISCIPLINARY DESIGN

Leaders in this new and emerging practice, Parsons The New School for Design states that their MFA in Transdisciplinary Design was developed “for a new generation of designers who want to address pressing social issues using new ideas, tools, and methods. Students work in cross-disciplinary teams, consider issues from multiple perspectives, gain insight from industry leaders, and emerge with a portfolio of projects showcasing design as a process for transforming the way we live in the 21st century.” (Parsons, 2012)

REFLEXIVE-ACTION

Reflexivity is an interactive process that takes into consideration the relationship between self, other and context. Reflexivity expands the frame to include an examination of the underlying assumptions and priorities that shape interaction within a given time, place and situation (like a conflict). Being reflexive requires that parties examine their priorities before they react. This involves asking “Why this situation is so important to me? Why do I care so much?” “What have I done to contribute to the problem?” and “What might be done in order to contribute to its resolution” (Rothman 1997, 37).

REFLECTION-IN-ACTION

Reflection is related to self and improving future practice through a retrospective analysis of action. Even in the reflection-in-action process, reflection is post facto, relating to completed stages and analysing them before taking the next step. Reflection is future-focussed in that it seeks to improve practice through an understanding of the relative successes and failures of previous events; however, it remains connected to the past focussing on completed stages. Reflection takes the form of a cumulative body of knowledge that can then be used to improve practice. Although reflection influenced the development of reflexive practice, there are profound differences (Rothman 1997, 37).

SIX SENSES

The *Six Senses* (*Design Story, Symphony, Meaning, Empathy and Play*) are researcher and author Daniel Pink’s observations that in order to enhance the way that we learn about behaviour transformations, we must attempt to engage as many of these six creative, or right-brain senses, as possible. The Six Senses were combined with the Ax4 for the major praxis component of this research.

AX4 RESEARCH METHOD

The Ax4 (*Actors, Actions, Artifacts and Atmosphere*) is a multi-layered design research method developed by action researcher Paul Rothstein. The method applies a broad structure that designers working in the field of experience design can apply as methods to engage the viewers and participants.

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‘When I was in despair, I was weeping amid the sea. Seemingly perpetual sorrow was ceased by the brimful sounds of waves. And I saw the glittering surface of the sea. It consoled me, leaving me a sort of warm solace and hopeful. I do not recall what truly lay beneath the deep and dark sea. It still remains a mystery. The sea reveals truth, inexplicable and ineffable, embodying both sides: light yet dark, floating yet sinking, enigmatic yet clear . . . The sea was a non-dualistic devotee who taught me how to hum.’

Christine Cho – artist and poet / *Sea Inside* exhibition

CHAPTER 1

WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?

1.1 THESIS OVERVIEW

The main emphasis of the *Sea Inside* project was to explain and clarify a handful of methods that any of us can employ to work towards connecting ourselves better to the ocean. For those of you interested in enhancing your knowledge of which kinds of creative methods and methodologies can be employed in social change and transformations – the littering of references to Transitions and Transformation Design should not disappoint. I have done my best to explain briefly what these are, in the context of what I have done, which was to design an exhibition and workshop series that demonstrates the value of employing the creative practices in marine conservation issues.

The research employed the use of art, design and media as well as participatory workshops and activities that offer the creators, audience and participants reflexive and reflective opportunities to explore and interact with the sea around and inside us. It was important from the beginning to engage the creators, audience and participants in the role of identifying themselves as a part of the ocean, and not separate from it. By choosing the name *Sea Inside*, an attempt was made to reach deeper into the sometimes intangible, invisible, spiritual connections that we have with the ocean as well as our more obvious physical, inter-sensual interactions with it.

Although much of the praxis component was collaborative, co-created and/or creatively directed by me, the project was also a massive team effort, with two other assistants helping me plan and curate the final stages of the exhibition. In total, the exhibition and workshops featured the work of over fifty people, including undergraduate and masters students and faculty from Emily Carr University as well as

contributors from the local Vancouver community. A broad range of participants with multidisciplinary interests, backgrounds and outlooks were engaged with the process, such as Foundation-level designers at Emily Carr University, a policy analyst from Simon Fraser University, a field-based researcher with OceanGybe, a labyrinth-maker and a Haida Elder.

Over the course of the core research period of ten days, an estimated number of 300 (reflexive) engagements were recorded in the form of audience participation in workshops, activities, and reflexive-actions with the interactive pieces within the gallery-space. The estimated number of individuals who spent between 10–15 minutes in the gallery-space (as opposed to walked through it as a corridor) was 500–1000 persons. The number of people who spent between one and 10 minutes in the gallery was estimated at an additional 1000 persons, making a total of between 1800 and 2300 persons. An estimated 90% of those who attended a workshop or activity had also spent more than 30 minutes in the gallery exhibition leading to multiple exposures to the theme. Each workshop was attended by about 30 participants, each. Local newspaper *The Province* also featured the *Sea Inside* in their daily column *THE-LIST: Great Things To Do Today*.

As of Saturday, May 19th 2012 several museums and galleries have received a proposal for re-exhibiting the *Sea Inside*, and meetings will be planned in the near future. Specifically, *The Gulf of Georgia Cannery Museum* has installed four pieces from the *Sea Inside*, namely: *Pictogram Game*, *Ocean's Worth*, *Planet Ocean* and the fabric seaweed piece *Kelp* for their one year show titled *Seafood For Thought*.

1.2 COULD THIS ACTUALLY MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

As pompous as it might sound, I offer this paper because despite the complexity, intractability and wickedness of all the complex problems our ocean currently faces, I truly believe that we can find solutions if we address behaviour transformations creatively, holistically and systemically.

A word of warning though: while I do believe that the practices I've employed in this research *can* and *do* make a difference to the way that we perceive, relate-to and solve complex problems, this is not to suggest that these things or people are, as author and professor David Orr suggests 'magic bullet solutions' – for such a thing simply does not exist. This research perhaps confirms and illustrates that Transformation Design practices and creativity *are* important and *can* make a difference because the intention is to build the capacity for solutions that work both now and in the future.

‘Putting a price on nature makes us uncomfortable, yet ironically this very act may be one of the only tools we have in our chest to convince the powers that be that nature sustains us. The ‘Jobs vs. the Environment’ discussion has become all too familiar, but these two things are not mutually exclusive. In fact, the environment provides us with jobs, which if we take the necessary precautions, could sustain us in perpetuity. As coastal people we see this everyday: whale-watcher tour operators benefit from biodiversity, fishermen benefit from the flow of salmon biomass that is ideally replenished every year, First Nations art is inspired by the ocean and sold around the world, restaurant owners purchase local oysters for their discerning customers, and so on.’

Claire Havens – artist and policy analyst / *Sea Inside* exhibition

CHAPTER 2

A DEEP DIVE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

From the Arctic to the Atlantic, Indian, Antarctic and the Pacific – to the thousands and millions of interconnected seas, gulfs, bays, marshes, wetlands, swamps and creeks – the global ocean covers seventy-one percent of our planet’s surface. The ocean ecosystem is an indescribably immense, interconnected and diverse ecological system. It is intimately connected to land through the Earth’s tide-inducing waltz with the moon, and the sun – which affects the evaporation, condensation and precipitation of the global exchange of life-giving water. Beneath this seemingly two-dimensional surface, the ocean engulfs the tallest mountain, the deepest trench and the largest canyon on ‘Earth’. It contains 97 percent of all life on the planet, produces over half of the world’s oxygen, absorbs carbon dioxide and through these processes makes this planet a hospitable place for every single one of the seven billion+ humans who both occupy its shores, and interact with it through their routines, consumption habits and cultures (Earle, 2009).

2.2 LET’S GO A BIT DEEPER

Global trends ranging from overfishing, predator loss, global warming, acidification, de-oxygenation, pollution and habitat destruction lead many experts to believe that the global ocean is in a state of crisis that has not been experienced since the Permian-Triassic extinction event – also known as *The Great Dying* – which eradicated some 95 percent of marine species when the oceans lost their oxygen some 250 million years ago (Mitchell, 2009, 89). Jeremy Jackson of the *Scripps Institution of Oceanography* observes that ‘Today the synergistic effects of human impacts are laying the groundwork for a comparably great Anthropocene mass extinction in the oceans, with unknown ecological and evolutionary consequences . . . Halting and

ultimately reversing these trends will require rapid and fundamental changes in fisheries, agricultural practice, and the emissions of greenhouse gases on a global scale' (Jackson 2008, 11458).

In her book *Sea Sick: The Global Ocean In Crisis*, Canadian environmental author Alanna Mitchell translates that kind of massive, complex, doom and gloom scenario into something that we can understand and connect with. She reminds us that 'the sea is the mother of life, we carry her within us. We are connected in the most fundamental possible way with the global ocean that gave us life . . . The ocean holds not just the origin but also the fate of life' (Mitchell 2009, 88–89). Mitchell is referring to preeminent UK biologist, Dr. John Zachary Young's observations that 'living things still retain in their ionic make-up certain characteristics of the sea, indeed some authors have interpreted the blood plasma of vertebrates as a relic of the Palaeozoic Era [542 to 251 million years ago]' (Young 1950, 88–90). No matter how far we are away from it, the sea plays one of the most critically important roles in the survival of the human race (not to mention the countless billions of other species the planet currently plays host to). Yet, according to Jackson as well as an overwhelming plethora of peer-reviewed scientists, the data suggests that the ocean – the origin, mother, and life-support system of all life on planet Earth – is once again losing its ability to sustain us.

Some authors have suggested that in order to begin to address these problems, we have to first map out the complex structures and underlying patterns that ocean ecosystems are being affected by and look past the surface-level *what, where, how* and *who*, and start examining the *why*. *Why* do we do this to ourselves? David Orr notes: 'Whatever their particular causes, environmental problems share one fundamental trait: with rare exceptions they are unintended, unforeseen, and sometimes ironic side effects of actions arising from other intentions. We intend one thing and sooner or later get something very different. We intended merely to be prosperous and healthy but have inadvertently triggered a mass extinction of other species, spread pollution throughout the world, and triggered climatic change – all of which undermines our prosperity and health. Environmental problems, then, are mostly the result of a miscalibration between human intentions and ecological results, which is to say that they are a kind of design failure' (Orr, 2006, 13–14). If we intended to live in a better world, but what really happened was that – even over the short term – we ended up destroying it, especially the life-giving ocean as a result, how can we begin to restrain ourselves? How can we repair this damaged relationship we have with the sea?

2.3 SOLUTIONS IN THE DEEP

Towards the end of *Sea Sick*, Mitchell refers to the conviction that 'hope' brings her and how she has hope for the future because of the example set by Monica Sharma, a United Nations physician working on complex problems in Africa (such as genital mutilation and AIDS/HIV). Sharma facilitates sessions in which religious groups and communities come together and discuss *why* they do what they do. She notes that it takes days of deep discussion and hard work with a focus on providing the community with an opportunity to 'unleash imagination and creativity' (Mitchell 2009, 201). Only then, after they have

undergone this deep, intensive process can they return to their villages and begin to solve these problems by changing their habits. For Sharma, the key to transformation is first knowing that transformation can happen, followed by employing imagination and creativity, asking why, and never using the same formula. She informs Mitchell that “For transformation to happen, we first need to understand that transformation is possible. And for that to happen, we need to strip ourselves psychologically naked and figure out what each of us stands for. What is the story about the world that makes sense to us emotionally? What is it that we believe? What are we here for?” (Mitchell 2009, 201).

Sharma is tapping into the right-brain, the side of the brain that deals with creativity, emotion and freedom from routine, habits and structure (attributes commonly associated with the left-brain). She is asking the kinds of questions that can trigger learning, adaption and transformation. These important questions can help us to break free of old patterns and habits that are no longer working for us. If this technique works with complex human matters like religion, Aids/HIV and genital mutilation, then what role might these creative practices and techniques play in enabling us to form a better connection to invisible, intangible, and indescribable things like the ocean?

2.4 THE ROLE OF CREATIVITY IN PROBLEM SOLVING

In *A Whole New Mind*, author and journalist Daniel Pink confirms the qualities of the right-brain as ‘creative, nonlinear, intuitive, holistic, inventive, empathic, joyful, and meaningful’ (Pink 2005, 5). Pink goes on to explain his research into the brain’s aptitudes, or what he calls *High Concept* and *High Touch*. He writes that “‘High Concept’ involves the capacity to detect patterns and opportunities, to create artistic and emotional beauty, to craft a satisfying narrative, and to combine seemingly unrelated ideas into something new. ‘High Touch’ involves the ability to empathize with others, to understand the subtleties of human interaction, to find joy in one’s self and to elicit it in others, and to stretch beyond the quotidian in pursuit of purpose and meaning’ (Pink 2005, 2–3). As with Monica Sharma, Pink’s research highlights that the right-brain is more concerned with learning, adaptation and transformation. It ‘lights up’ when it is given new challenges or problems to solve.

Social and economic theorist Richard Florida offers his own version of hope in his book *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2005) when he reminds us that ‘Human Creativity is a virtually limitless resource. Every human being is creative in some way. Each of us has creative potential that we love to exercise and that can be turned into valuable ends. Furthermore, creativity is the great leveller. It cannot be handed down, and it cannot be “owned” in the traditional sense. It defies gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and outward appearance’ (Florida 2005, 33). According to Florida, the Creative Class contains at least 30% of the US workforce – 38 million people (xxvi). That’s a lot of people who could be the catalyst to create the kind of transformation our society desperately needs. The good news is that there are many of us who are already engaged with creative problem solving. Florida indicates that the Creative Class is made up

of a broad group of individuals ranging from scientists and engineers, university professors, poets and novelists, artists, entertainers, actors, designers, and architects, as well as the “thought leadership” of modern society: nonfiction writers, editors, cultural figures, think-tank researchers, analysts, and other opinion-makers (xxvi).

Likewise, Italian design thinker Ezio Manzini speaks of a new and emerging confluence of three characteristics that outline a hopeful future for mankind. One characteristic is the abundance of human creativity. He states that ‘Thanks to the promising experiences accumulated to date, we can outline a new scenario. This emerging scenario lies at the intersection of three main innovation streams: the green revolution (and the environmentally friendly systems it makes available); the spread of networks (and the distributed, open, peer-to-peer organizations it generates); and the diffusion of creativity (and the original answers to daily problems that a variety of social actors are conceiving and implementing)’ (Manzini 2010, 8). So what kinds of creative techniques are Sharma, Pink, Florida and Manzini referring too? How can we make sure not to neglect them?

As a result of knowing that creativity and diversity were imperative to transformational change, I set out to discover and examine an array of both design and creative techniques which are employable in a range of diverse circumstances. For example, Sharma noted that she had employed over 5000 different methods to help solve her problems (Mitchell 2009, 201). While the idea of employing multiple types of creativity and many senses in ocean conservation is no new thing, at times, this project required that I step outside of the traditional design disciplines in order to search for ways of engaging others in the ocean context. I’ll discuss these in the next few chapters.

‘Cape Breton Island was fished and coaled, and what is left are lonely wharfs and mine shafts searching blindly beneath the Atlantic. Desperation welcomes back company men with sticky signatures and rich talk before burned up tap water. Hard living means many families head west for Albertan sands if only to make some money. The fish that fed the Mi’kmaq and the settlers are gone or are going. It seems that the rivers and shores have no refuge of their own. Nevertheless the people still fill themselves with music, dancing and stories. The corniced shoreline bristles with hunched black spruce trees, and deep lakes and churning rivers carve into the highlands as farmhouses stand determinedly over the old worked land . . . Things are reverting back to a more lonesome and patient state.’

David Peters – photographer, writer and cement layer / *Sea Inside* exhibition

CHAPTER 3

TRANSFORMATION & TRANSITIONS

3.1 EXPERT + HOLISTIC THINKING = SOLUTIONS

Alex Fung of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University uses the metaphor of a ‘Toolbox’ with multiple tools in it to describe the kind of approaches he encourages his students to bring in attempting a challenge. Fung is aware that if we neglect the role that creativity plays in our lives, then we undermine our ability to deal with creative ways to solve complex problems. Without the right tools, we are left with an improper starting point for the job and we will revert to employing known techniques to unknown problems which aren’t always successful. He is fond of reminding his students of the old adage ‘If the only tool that you have is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail’ (Fung *et al* 2008).

The idea of employing multiples of something, of being un-specialised in our approach to complex challenges, is an interesting field to research for several reasons: primarily, it gets us thinking outside our discipline-centric core skill-set to consider other realities that intersect with our own. As with the hammer, expert, or discipline-centric thinking can get us into trouble. According to behaviour analysts Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, ‘The typical expert is prone to sound exceedingly sure of himself. An expert doesn’t so much argue the various sides of an issue as plant his flag firmly on one side. That’s because an expert whose argument reeks of restraint or nuance often doesn’t get much attention’ (Levitt, Dubner 2005, 28). Likewise, David Orr notes that ‘over and over the language of the specialist trumps that of the generalist – the specialist in whole things. The result is that the capacity to think carefully about ends, as distinct from means, has all but disappeared from our public and private conversations’ (Orr 2006, 56). By quoting these

examples I am not trying to suggest that we don't need experts but that we need to be aware that experts may not be seeing the whole picture. We need to get the experts talking to the systems thinkers – experts in whole things. This is exactly what Alanna Mitchell did when she spent time with and interviewed all those marine scientists: she brought together expert knowledge and transformed it into plain English.

In the book *Glimmer* design thinking expert Warren Berger detects that 'There is a growing faction, both inside and outside the design world, that argues in favour of approaching a problem or a challenge with less expert knowledge, not more' (Berger 2009). This would also appear to be the case in design education as the gears of design for social change shift towards coaching students in transdisciplinary practices which rely on holistic problem-solving skills, rather than expert-centric ones. Design educators such as Thomas Darwin, Sarah Stein Greenberg and Jamer Hunt at Parsons The New School For Design, in New York City are a few examples of those leading the way in an emerging design practice known as Transdisciplinary Design that considers problems holistically and as integrated into other complex systems. Likewise, in the business world of design, things are changing too: *Design Intelligence*, an articles, research, and essential industry news website recently published an article with the opening headline 'Opting for depth over breadth of expertise is a false choice that will lead individuals, organizations, the [design] profession, and industry in the wrong direction' (Deutsch 2011).

Amongst the designers he interviews and quotes (such as Paula Scher, Michael Bierut and Tim Brown) Berger also mentions the work of innovation expert and author Cynthia Barton Rabe who 'has helped popularise the notion that breakthrough ideas are more likely to come from 'Zero Gravity Thinkers', meaning those who aren't weighed down by expertise and conventional wisdom. Some innovation pundits now refer to the 'curse of knowledge', which holds that as expertise increases, creativity wears off' (Berger 2009). He continues by indicating that 'The best designers seem to have a natural eye for spotting patterns and discerning possible relationships between things that most of us view as being separate and unrelated. Once they see a possible relationship, they work to make the pieces fit. Designers are trained to synthesise.'

Interestingly, designers seem to find themselves centered around a vast network of creative practices. One explanation for this is that most designers are what Tim Brown (CEO and president of experimental design firm IDEO) terms 'T-shaped' (Brown, 2009). Brown suggests that designers rest on a singular disciplinary trunk (in my case – graphic design) reaching and branching outwards laterally towards other skills and interests. For me, Brown's 'T' concept sounds a lot like a tree (Figure 1): whose broad-reaching roots and rhizomes feed a core disciplinary skill; whose vertical trunk forms the specialised practice we know best; and whose branches, twigs, leaves, buds and fruits form the intricate network of additional lateral attributes. Like 'T's, not all trees are alike; there are notable differences between a maple and a spruce! We must also remember that this singular system is intimately inter-connected with the greater root-system and canopy-structure of others.



3.2 TRANSDISCIPLINARITY AND TRANSFORMATION DESIGN

Liz Sanders, of design firm *Make Tools* confirms that 'Design today is characterised by a blurring of traditional design domains' (Dykes *et al* 2009). As the field of design blurs, expands and transitions, it begins to incorporate skills and tools that are more appropriate to the issues these kind of large, complex social and environmental matters pose. Although the field of design is already pretty broad, it expanded extra-dimensionally in 2006 with the introduction of an emerging practice referred to as *Transformation Design* by the UK Design Council. This practice has been identified as addressing some of the most wicked and intractable problems of our time. At the core of the practice is the belief that all people are creative and that creativity can be catalysed into play and sustained through facilitated processes.

In broad terms, transformation design is described as 'A human-centered, interdisciplinary process that seeks to create desirable and sustainable changes in behavior and form – of individuals, systems and organizations – often for socially progressive ends. It is a multi-stage, iterative process applied to big, complex issues – often, but not limited to social issues. Its practitioners examine problems holistically rather than reductively to understand relationships as well as components to better frame the challenge. They then prototype small-scale systems – composed of objects, services, interactions and experiences – that support people and organizations in achievement of a desired change. Successful prototypes are then scaled' (Burns *et al*, 2012). 'Because transformation design is about applying design skills in non-traditional territories, it often results in non-traditional design outputs' (Burns *et al* 2006, 21). Intrinsic to the practice is the notion of designing *services, experiences and interactions* instead of the traditional design output: *objects*. For example, one output from a transformation designer working on the issue of an aging population might be to design ways, systems and services for elders to reconnect with the youth, who learn to take care of their elders while discovering and absorbing skills they may not have been exposed to otherwise (such as cooking, storytelling etc.).

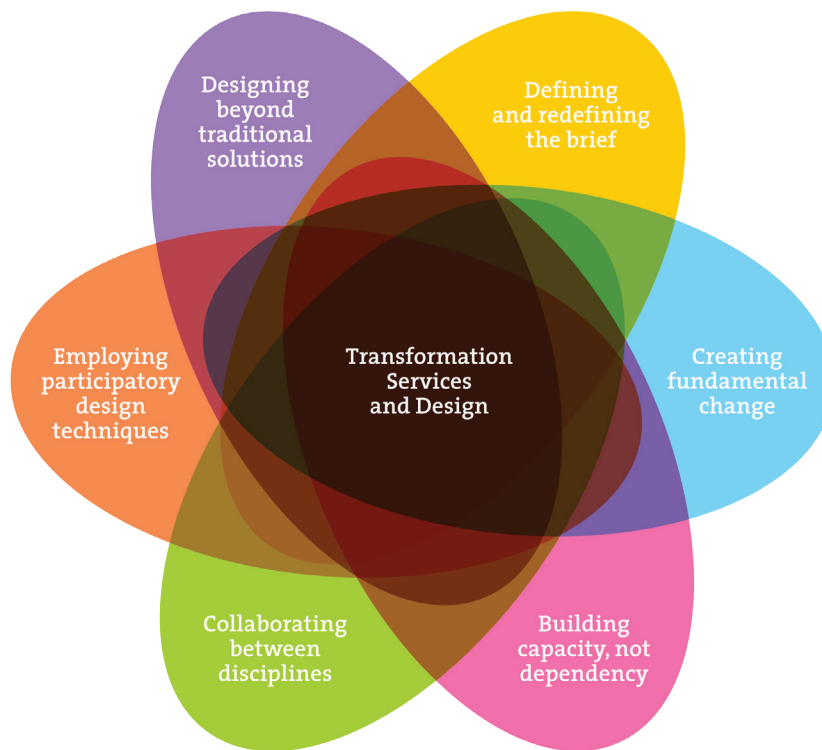


FIGURE 2

Figure 2 illustrates the six overlapping characteristics that are central to the practice of transformation design. Although this model has since been outdated by design researcher Daniella Sangiorgi's *Seven Transformative Practices and Principles* (2011), I read Sangiorgi's paper after completing the majority of this research and so refer to the original six characteristics above throughout this research. Because it is comprised of multiple characteristics, many are not central to the design discipline and not all need to be employed in order to address a complex problem. This is simply a framework from which we can base our understanding of the holistic nature of the transformation design practice. An individual or team employing these techniques may therefore be required to work trans-discipline (in other fields such as biology or anthropology). Zachary Stein, a senior analyst for the Developmental Testing Service and a doctoral student in philosophy and cognitive development at Harvard School of Education, defines the *Transdisciplinary Designer* as an 'Individual [who] demonstrate[s] at least two disciplinary competences, neither of which is primary. They work and contribute to both and generate unique findings, conceptions and artefacts as a result of an emergent trans-disciplinary perspective. They are able to communicate with those from a variety of disciplines in a synoptic manner' (Stein 2007, 99). As with transformation design, *Parsons The New School For Design* states that their program in transdisciplinary design is 'for a new generation of designers who want to address pressing social issues using new ideas, tools, and methods' (Parsons The New School, 2012).

Co-founder of British transformation design agency Participle and writer of both *We Think* (2009) and *Cloud Culture* (2010) Charles Leadbeater describes the process that these new and emerging disciplines engage with in his ongoing project *For, With, By and To* (2012), in which he argues that 'there are only four main ways in which we organise most social activities or address social changes. "For" solutions are

delivered to us. “With” solutions we devise cooperatively with other. “By” solutions we depend on self motivation and DIY. “To” solutions depend on instruction, command and coercion, to get things done’ (Leadbeater 2010). On his personal website, Leadbeater highlights some of the catalysts and trouble-makers that persist in complex problems, he states that ‘Crudely speaking the 20th century was shaped by the rise of more complex, powerful and sophisticated “For” and “To” solutions in virtually every walk of life, at the expense of “With” and “By” solutions, cooperation and self help. This dependence on “For” and “To” solutions has come at great costs, not least the ability of those delivering to abuse their power. We need to redress this imbalance and develop more effective “With” and “By” solutions in virtually every area of life, from learning and health, to ageing and dying, to politics and the environment’ (Leadbeater 2012). For Leadbeater and Participle co-founder Hilary Cottam, the system needs to be repaired not by simply reinstituting the same fragmentary or hyper-individualised, hierarchal methods and practices that cause and effect the dysfunction and disconnection of the system itself, but by rethinking the system from the ground up. To do that we must pay closer attention to those six integral characteristics of transformation design, we must consider less doing things *for* and *to* people, but *by* and *with* them.

Because of my background in graphic design and my interests in environmental activism, it was all too tempting to work *for* and *to* my audience by highlighting the negative actions humans make towards the sea: oil pollution, plastics pollution, the devastating effects of unsustainable fishing practices etc.. Yet, having done this kind of work many times, I wanted to see if I could work more holistically and incorporate the *with* and *by* principles of transformation design into my practice, rather than just create more human shame – which may not give the receivers of the information ownership of the solutions on offer, which may give them less incentive to transform their perspectives or habits. Once again, I needed to increase my awareness of holism and look beyond the field of design for ideas, inspiration and possible solutions.

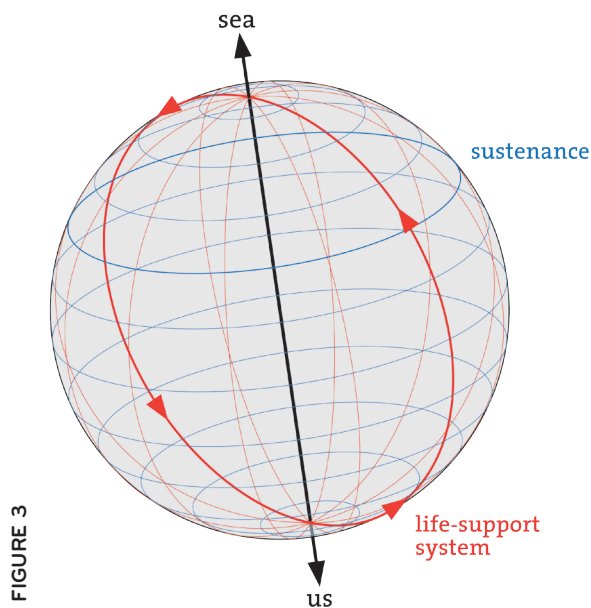
3.3 AN INTEGRAL VISION

For those of you who don’t know about it, Ken Wilbur’s *A Theory of Everything* is not some practical toolkit, but more of an over-arching idea that ties multiple themes together. Amongst other things, Wilbur discusses Don Beck and Chris Cowan’s theory of *Spiral Dynamics*, which talks about the different *Memes* (Dawkins 1976) or states of human nature, value systems or collective intelligences, which can apply to both individuals and cultures. Like William Bridges theory of *Transitions* (which I will get to later), these *memes* indicate that human nature is not fixed. Like transdisciplinary design, transformation design and systems thinking, spiral dynamics takes into account an infinite number of variables, which is of course important where complexity is involved. Wilbur describes the power of holistic thinking by remarking that ‘A little bit of wholeness is better than none at all, and an integral vision offers considerably more wholeness than the slice-and-dice alternatives. We can be more whole, or less whole; more fragmented, or less fragmented; more alienated, or less alienated – and an integral vision invites us to be a little more whole, a little less fragmented, in our work, our lives, our destiny’ (Wilbur 2000, pxii). Although *A Theory*

of *Everything* is not a practical toolkit or set of rules like the six characteristics of transformation design, it is still important to note that it is important to consider ‘everything’ at once. The question is: how do we connect these creative, design and holistic themes with the work that needs to be done to save the ocean?

Generally speaking, the sea lies at the exact opposite pole to our being as creatures whose knowledge and wisdom of our surroundings developed at a much later stage in our evolution, by which time we were evolving on land. For many of us the ocean is still alien, mysterious and unfamiliar, and many are mentally and spiritually – if not physically – disconnected from the sea and cause harm to it as a result of this detachment. Although many of us are disconnected from the ocean ecosystem (Figure 3), we are still completely and utterly dependent on it for the complex wealth of life-support systems (such as temperature regulation, oxygen production and carbon sequestering) and sustenance (such as food) it gives us (indicated by the blue and red lines). In broad terms, this diagram is describing ‘disconnection’: the gap between many of us and the sea is simply too big. We don’t understand it, we don’t know what’s wrong with it and we don’t know that we need to transform our actions towards it.

GENERALISED PROBLEM OF HUMAN TO OCEAN SYSTEM DISCONNECTION



Designer, architect and entrepreneur Buckminster Fuller is famous – amongst his numerous inventions – for having stated that ‘You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete’ (Fuller, 1975). So what current models exist that avoid such things as ‘disconnection’? UK designer Thomas Darwin writes in *Change Design* that ‘The “design mind” requires us to believe that there is something to be done about a situation, a way to close the gap between how things are and how we hope they could be.’ (Darwin 2010, 32). So what might a better (but still broad) model look like? Businessman, author and environmentalist Paul Hawken offers the simple suggestion, that ‘The way to restore the vitality and health of an ecosystem or immune system is to connect more of a system to itself’ (Miller, Hawken 2011, x). So one solution to this complex problem might be to design products and services that reconnect people with the sea (Figure 4).

PROPOSED SOLUTION TO PROBLEM: RECONNECTION

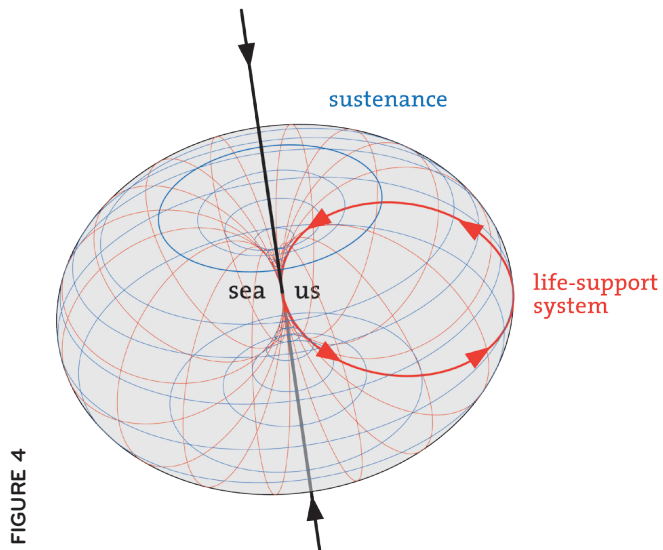


FIGURE 4

This idea of reconnecting fragmented or polar systems (which should naturally be connected, but through some fault of human intentions have actually become disconnected) has been discussed by philosophers, designers, environmentalists, politicians and also by those working in the field of medicine. Likewise, Hawken's idea goes against much of what the existing reality is doing – which is to put more space between the people and the place, and thus separate and segregate them. Hawken continues by stating that 'The way to restore society is to restore the lost and severed connections between people and place, between livelihood and production, between food and farmer, to re-knit the commonwealth. A society is too complex for any one person to understand or dictate. It needs the same interventions that healing a disease requires, which is to create the conditions wherein the organism can heal itself.' (Miller, Hawken 2011, x). I believe that Hawken is referring to the wisdom in Samuel Hahnemann's principles of *Homeopathic Medicine*. One of Hahnemann's basic principles was the term he coined 'Like cures like' (Hahnemann, 1976) which summarises neatly this generalisation I'm making of connecting polar, or fragmented entities like us and the sea. Once again, this notion of *seeing inside* ourselves appropriately describes the action we are required to make, hence the play on words with the name 'Sea Inside'.

With this in mind, would it possible to design objects, interactions, experiences and services that enable us to re-connect our senses to the sea, to bring us just a little bit closer (just a little) to this overarching solution of holism? And if I achieved that, would we be less fragmented, less individual, less alienated than before? Would we be more able to find creative solutions from within?

3.4 ESSENCES

In his seminal work spanning 35 years of primary grounded research, author Richard Louv coined the phrase "Nature Deficit Disorder" which describes the reality that, because so many of us lack direct connection to place and experience in nature nowadays, we end up destroying it. After reading Louv's *Last Child In The Woods* (2005) I feared that my praxis would lead me to do the complete opposite of what I

intended: that, as Orr suggested, I would simply be making the problem worse through some unforeseen wicked side-effect. Considering my options and Jacques Cousteau line 'People protect what they love' I arrived at a dilemma: what if I make my audience fall in love with something *unreal*? What if that love is for a seductive, elegantly designed, but quintessentially man-made thing? I needed to consider that by creating something unreal (i.e. a designed object) I might perhaps further my audience (or perhaps another yet unborn generation) from the very thing I was trying to connect them with.

Philosophers Plato and Aristotle discuss the issue in *Essences*; to them, man-made objects which are representations of natural ones reduce or extract the essence (or all-senses-perception) of the original thing. For example, you could say that a painting of a sunset is a reduction of the sunset, because one cannot possibly capture everything about that sunset (the movement of the waves; the motion of the clouds; the colours changing; the three-dimensionality of it all; the smells of salt; barbecue and smoke from the fire; the heat fading fast; the cold wind creeping in; and the warmth of a lovers hands brushing the sand from your skin etc.). A painting limits the number of senses one can experience the original thing. According to Plato/Aristotle, the capturing of essences is man's attempt to contain or own something – which to them is an illusion. Plato stated that 'Artistic practise is the creation of a layer of imagery which distances us further from essences' (Cazeaux 1987, 605a-c).

Likewise, designer John Thackara warns us in his book *In The Bubble* of overloading the visual sense, saying 'Visual representations also undervalue the knowledge we have by virtue of having bodies. Sensitivity to changes in our environment through time develop best if we learn to use all our senses, not just sight' (Thackara 2005, 170). Let me repeat that: all our senses, not just sight. He goes on to talk about what some refer to as *Situational Dynamics* (Coser 2003, 520-523), which like the *Essences*, speak about the critical importance of place and situation in involving the senses, "Understanding is not only embodied, it is also situated," says anthropologist Lucy Suchman, who wrote a classic text on the subject. Suchman has spent her career trying to persuade senior managers and computer scientists that "human activity is not primarily as rational, planned and controlled as we like to think. It is better described as situated, social, and in direct response to the physical and social environment" (Thackara 2005, 171). Louv himself is well aware that televised pictures of nature don't necessarily mean that we feel better connected to it. Like Plato, he suggests that nothing can replace direct connection to the essences of all things, and to engage all of the senses in nature.

Broadly speaking, Louv's research has also shown that an adult who played in their local woods as a child is far more likely to want to protect trees, forest habitats and be engaged in other conservation issues later in life. He notes that these people have an intrinsic knowledge of what a forest *does* and how that forest *relates* to every other forest on the planet. They know why we need them and because of their love for them, will protect them courageously. David Orr reinforces Louv's theory and writes that most people

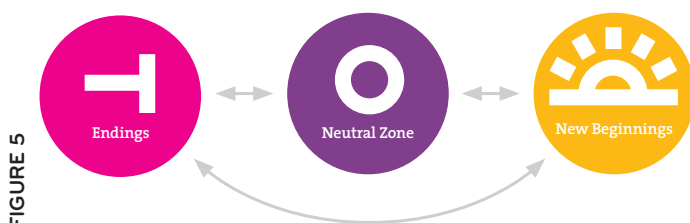
who consider themselves environmentalists tend to share three things in common: a) They have had experience in nature at an early age; b) They have had an older mentor or family member who shared a love of the natural world; and c) They later read some seminal book that said clearly what they were feeling deeply but could not express well (Orr 2006).

Likewise, French pioneer diver Jacques Cousteau is famous for saying “People protect what they love”, and both he and many others since have spent a lifetime producing documentaries so that others might see what they had experienced in the ocean first-hand. These filmmakers wanted us to feel the same awe that they did. However, what Kolb, Thackara, Louv and other ethnographic researchers understand is that televised images act as *support* for an all-sensory connection to place. A heavy-overload of the visual sense cannot replace direct connection, and in some cases distances us from the essences of a place.

3.5 TRANSITIONS

Nineteenth-century German philosopher, poet, composer and classical philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche proposes the opposite of Plato and Aristotle’s *Essences*. He writes that the creative arts form the epitome of human genius, that they do not capture or reduce essences, but magnify specifics that may have otherwise gone unnoticed. In his paper *The Ethical Dimension of Aesthetic Research* design researcher Clive Cazeaux notes that ‘Art, for Nietzsche, far from being a morally deceptive layer of imagery, is instead constitutive of the human being’s capacity to be and act in the world’ (Cazeaux 2003, 5). Like many of the designers, ethnographers and systems thinkers I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Nietzsche was well aware of the polarising effect of expert thinking and flag planting. He states that ‘An enormous amount of harshness, frigidity and loneliness exists because we think we see in opposites instead of transitions’ (Nietzsche 1977, 86) and encouraged us to ‘Become that which we seek to be and act in-between concepts’. These concepts – the ‘in-between’, these ‘transitions’ – acknowledge the creative attributes of the right-brain and its ability to consider different current states of being and knowing. The left-brain – which prioritizes and prefers order, rationality, routine, conservatism and what David Orr calls ‘hyper-individualised specialisation’ (Orr 2006) – perceives transition or change as ‘chaos’, which is unknowable and therefore wrong. According to management consultant and author William Bridges ‘Chaos is the primal state of pure energy for every true new beginning’ (Bridges 2001). In *chaos*, we are more open to transition from one state of knowing and being to the next, to take a leap of faith. Bridges has developed a three-point *Transition Framework* (1991) to identify a loose set of phases a person experiences in transition: *Endings*, *Neutral Zone* and *New Beginnings* (Figure 5).

WILLIAM BRIDGES THREE-POINT TRANSITION FRAMEWORK



A point of note here is that (depending on the situation), one can transition backward as well as forward. An example of this might be that we give up eating meat after reading about animal suffering, but later we might also migrate back towards old habits after we've tried being vegetarian or vegan for a year or two.

Importantly, each stage speaks of the state of what *was*, what *is* and what *will be*. Bridges' work is oft-quoted in social-change dialogues and writing as authors get to grips with the variations of transitions and change. The website *Transition and Social Change* makes the following statement: 'While change is external and tied to a certain situation, transition is the internal emotional process of how [one] respond[s] to and come to terms with that change' (Rodriquez-Vars 2012).

So what role does creativity play in the local, regional and global attempts to transition humanity through uncomfortable *Endings*, the doldrums of the *Neutral Zone* and onto *New Beginnings* – where environmental issues like the ocean are concerned? Despite the abundance of guidance, mentorship and practical skills that exist to tackle personal and spiritual transformations and liberate us with *New Beginnings*, these collective energies seem somewhat disorganised when compared to the ordered, conservative, hyper-individualised global corporate machine that chomps – minute by minute – on the biosphere. Now I needed to consider how I might incorporate these new ideas of essences and transitions into my work.

‘Our group works with the idea that in our gut/stomach is where we hold our emotions and vulnerable swampy feelings. A swamp is a small dense body of water rich and full of life. A sea is everything else. Huge, vast and full of life and death and everything in between. We can connect and explore our relationship with the sea inside and out by exploring our relationship with ourselves and each other . . . Ideally we can find the beauty in all the seas, even the ugly, scary parts and address the issues that kill it.’

Connor Polishak – *Swamp Theatre* facilitator and social worker / *Sea Inside* workshop

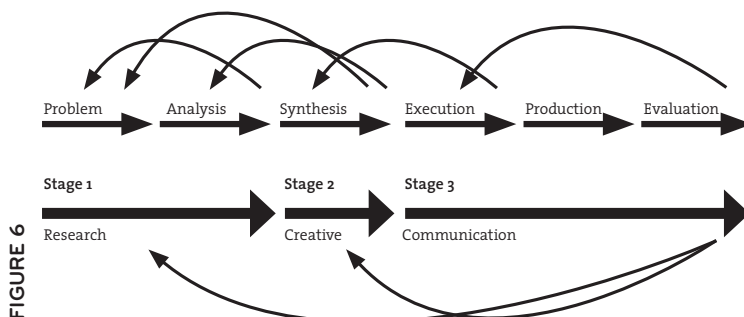
CHAPTER 4

THE DANCE OF PRIMARY RESEARCH

4.1 THREE STEPS FORWARDS, TWO STEPS BACK

The idea that transitions and transformations happen in waves reflects how the design process works. For many people, designers included, the design process is both unframable and chaotic. It takes time to go deep into something and deal with this dangerous, shadow-thing that lurks below. Sometimes we end up giving more time and energy than we can imagine to a cause, even if that cause is ourselves. Like many diagrams on transitions and transformational behaviour change, Australian design researcher Cal Swann’s diagram (Figure 6) from the paper *Action Research and the Practice of Design* (Swann 2001, 53) seduced me immediately. I like this diagram because it not only describes the design process, but pretty much accurately mimics my own research path – especially all the back stepping.

CAL SWANN’S DIAGRAM EXPLAINING ‘ACTION RESEARCH AND THE PRACTICE OF DESIGN, 2001



The reason why I like this diagram is because it reminds me of the old adage ‘Three steps forward, Two steps back’. I say this, because those first three points along the top: *Problem*, *Analysis* and *Synthesis*, represent the places I spent a lot of time this past two years. Sanders calls this the ‘Fuzzy Front-end’ of the design process (Sanders 2006, 2). As with all complex problems, each time I was about to make or do something, I would

either realise a knowledge deficit I had or would be redirected back to the first stage, the problem, which I would analyse over and over, without actually doing or making anything (Stage 3). Part of this had to do with the fact that I began to research practices well outside of the realm that I was familiar with, often by placing myself into both 'formal' and 'non-formal' learning situations (OECD 2010, 28). These 'non-formal' kinds of primary learning have taken place in either offices, community centres, drama workshop spaces or centres for learning, while 'formal' learning has taken place within the spaces of academic institutions. Whether non-formal or formal, each experience has offered great insight into what was happening on the ground (or rather, in the ocean!) and provided me with excellent opportunities to talk with experts, speakers and to ask questions. I have also learned a significant amount from speaking, facilitating and participating in the more 'non-formal' learning situations.

After reading the paper entitled *Knowing by Being-There Making* (2008) by Cameron Tonkinwise – which discusses, amongst other things, Carters advocacy of the importance of understanding and knowing by being present in primary research situations (as opposed to secondary or tertiary – such as reading or listening to a description of a situation or case-study) – I realised that despite my feeling of being 'lost-in-the-woods' (Berger, Mau, 2011) this kind of primary research was beginning to foster in me a deeper kind of critical thinking, reflection and knowing about acting. Tonkinwise notes that 'All forms of valid research involve the tacit 'being-other' that is most explicit, even if still tacitly, in making. To know something is never to know something objectively, but to know it subjectively, that is de-subjectively, by being it, experiencing generally what it is by becoming it' (Tonkinwise 2008, 9).

Tongue-twisting quotes aside, much of my own journey working in transformations has to do with being *present in the knowing and becoming* (transformed) through the research process of exploring both soft and hard facilitation techniques, formal and non-formal learning. To read a full account of these experiences it's probably best to check out the section on formal and non-formal primary research in Appendix B, page 58.

4.2 RETURNING TO THE BEGINNING

To explicitly highlight one of those research *Eureka!* moments, in October of 2011 I watched the movie *Spoil*, in which a team of dedicated photographers from the *International League of Conservation Photographers* (ILCP) are deployed in what the ILCP calls a 'RAVE': a Rapid Assessment Visual Expedition. The team heads to the Great Bear Rainforest off the coast of British Columbia to meet with the Gitga'at First Nations. Their intention: to capture photos and stories of the area and bring them into the international spotlight using the medium and power of photography and publishing in magazines like *National Geographic*. At the post RAVE press conference in Vancouver, Conservation Director of *Pacific Wild*, Ian McAllister (obviously aware of the concept of 'Essences') introduces the motivation behind the campaign to the press saying 'It is a heck of a responsibility you know, to take a place that is so precious

and so spectacular and put it into images. But I've seen campaigns before in British Columbia where an image truly changes the outcome of an issue . . . I believe these images will truly change the course of this issue' (Jennings, 2011). I began to weave into the idea of engaging multiple-disciplines of creative output the notions of transformation and transitions. What if I could make things or design experiences that both enhanced the essences and showed the invisible connections that we have to the ocean? I had also learned that just using one medium (like photography) to translate these essences might not be enough, so I began to research a range of creative techniques for creating experiences that highlighted environmental issues.

In 2001, David Buckland's *Cape Farewell* exhibition premiered at the Natural History Museum in London, England. Greg Hilty, director of PlusEquals Arts Consultancy, described the project as follows: 'At the heart of the Cape Farewell enterprise lay three expeditions to the High Arctic on board the schooner Noorderlicht in 2003, 2004 and 2005, undertaken by artists from disciplines including film, photography, installation, cartooning, sound, painting, sculpture, dance, architecture, digital media, and literature alongside scientists, educationalist and journalists' (Buckland *et al* 2006, 90).

Experiential learning theorist David Kolb observes that concrete or direct 'experience is the source of learning and development' (Kolb 1984). Those involved in *Cape Farewell* had taken themselves to a place, directly experienced a problem, actively observed the effects of climate change first-hand, reflected on their experiences, and dialogued with others of diverse backgrounds about these experiences. Finally, they either created artworks from their own disciplinary specialisation or absorbed and combined skills with others, by co-creating or co-designing responses of their experiences. Kolb's experiential learning frameworks have been integrated by many education practitioners, the most recent I have come into contact with being the *British Columbia Ministry of Education's 'Environmental Learning and Experience Interdisciplinary Guide For Teachers'* which states that 'It is acknowledged that direct experience with a concept or problem, followed by opportunities for observation, reflection and negotiation leading to further inquiry, presents the richest form of learning' (Zandvliet *et al* 2007).

Once I compared Kolb's more complex model of formal learning styles with the kind of non-formal practices those on either the Cape Farewell or LLCP missions were undertaking, I began to consider the idea that conceptualisation (making and doing) appeared to happen *at* or *between* any one of these fields as Bridges and Nietzsche suggest, not in the linear (clockwise) form presented in Kolb's example of formal learning (which requires a situation in which the facilitator/mentor has tighter control over the participants/students). In many other situations however (such as those involving adults no longer in full or part-time education) experience designers don't have the kind of control we might prefer. There is a fuzziness, a non-linearity to non-formal learning. Creativity, making and doing can and should be evoked at any stage of the process, not just as the result of a linear approach. This process is illustrated in an original diagram in Figure 7.

FIGURE 7



The type of educational framework presented in this diagram more closely mimics what William Bridges suggests when he talks about the fact that one can just as easily shift backwards, or repeat experiences and lessons despite the fact that one has less information than they might wish to proceed to creating, making or doing something. Likewise, my model is also similar to the methods and practises employed by design researchers such as the aforementioned Cal Swann as well as: Kurt Lewin; Hilary Collins; Ernst Stringer; by institutes such as the Royal College of Art, UK; Aalto University School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Finland; and Umeå University in Sweden. This more reflexive model also encompasses *Reflexive Action and Reflection in Action* techniques from design researchers: Valkenburg and Dorst (practices which have been modified from Schön) at the University of Delft, Netherlands; Liz Sanders at the University of Ohio, USA; and Transdisciplinary Designers studying at Parsons The New School for Design in New York.

Like the ILCP's idea of the RAVE, the theme behind *Cape Farewell* is exquisitely simple: combining art and climate change would bring the *essences* of what can't be seen directly *by* the public, would immerse and ground us in the human story of the environment, the place, the tragedy. The first thing that stands out about *Cape Farewell* is the diversity of participants and creative outputs involved, and of the all-sensory perception employed to engage both the artists and viewers. The second thing is that the participants worked in teams, often experiencing the processes of disciplines not familiar to them: scientists made artworks; dancers made snow-structures; a photographer claimed rights to an island that had been newly revealed by the retreating ice. Choreographer and dancer Sioban Davies' piece involves the entire twenty or so expedition personnel performing a *Walking Dance* on an ice-field that had encapsulated their ship. Disciplinary-hats were swapped in favour of inter-disciplinary collaboration, co-creation and experimentation.

Like those involved in Cape Farewell, designers have also been known to employ hybrid practices of art, design and media. British designers Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby (better known by their company name *Dunne & Raby*), as well as designers working at Droog Design in Amsterdam are well known for designing and making sometimes nonfunctional but evocative artworks, objects and exhibitions. Likewise, Dutch designer Jurgen Bey (who has been promoted heavily by Droog) and Martí Guixé, a Catalan-born self-defined *ex-designer* employ gallery or exhibition spaces to communicate concepts of social issues. Objects they create have the power to evoke emotional reactions in the viewer/participant while there is no person present.

In an interview in *Bright Minds, Beautiful Ideas*, Jurgen Bey mentions that 'Moviemakers often use the same idea in their films . . . in the movie *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* gravity is defined in such a convincing way that many a spectator fancies to be able to ascend after it has finished – if only for a second' (Annink, Schwatz 2003, 173). The interviewer, Louise Schouwenberg, goes on to add that 'For a designer it is an exciting idea that not only people, but also objects, are suddenly not what we thought they were – weightless, for example'. Professor and author Sherry Turkle notes that '[Evocative Object] Theory enables us to explore how everyday objects become part of our inner life: how we use them to extend the reach of our sympathies by bringing the world within' (Turkle 2007, 307).

These objects can be practical and sold into the public (as in a chair), or merely objects created to catalyse debate within the gallery context (as in a non-practical seating item – a chair that might collapse easily if it was actually sat on). Some artifacts perform as both functional *and* evocative objects. Dunne & Raby's *Compass Table v2* (2002), for example, was an experimental piece with 25 compasses set into a table-top. The compasses brought attention to the otherwise completely undetectable (for a human) magnetic field of the earth, as well as the magnetic fields of metal objects that were placed on or near the table itself. Specifically, these designers excel in *Design for Debate*, *Critical Design* and *Design Noir*, in which the designer creates objects and experiences that have the ability to employ themselves in both formal and non-formal learning situations, are capable of bringing attention to the essence of a distant or unseen phenomena; and are intended to provoke specific reactions in the viewers.

Throughout the project entitled *todayifeel*, (2009) Kenzo Kramarz attempted to create artworks and objects that would evoke human emotions. In one piece Kramarz projected giant white fish onto the side of a building. For Kramarz 'The intention was to bring a visual representation of nature to a densely urbanized location in central London. Although green areas such as parks are part of the everyday life for Londoners, the ocean and sea life are certainly not. The idea therefore was to transform a building into an imaginary, improbable fish tank . . . Passers-by in the street were not indifferent to the shoal of giant fish moving smoothly on concrete, and became engaged in conversations as to the nature and intention of the film, while at the same time smiling and responding positively to this unexpected and pleasant surprise'

(Noble and Bestley 2011, 206). Similarly, but on a much more grand scale, the New York based experiential design firm ESI Design (led by participatory, experience and interaction designer Edwin Schlossberg) designs 'innovative social spaces and intuitive communication platforms that help clients and their audiences interact through the power of collaboration' (Schlossberg 2012).

The message here is that these individuals and groups know that by creating hybrid practices that merge the rationality and logic of the sciences with the emotive and empathic qualities of the arts, and by exposing their audience to essences and issues that are not visible – they provide intriguing, holistic approaches to some of the more complex problems our society faces.

‘These songs are about finding refuge on the sea; they dream of a healthy vast ocean that took millions upon millions of years to arrive at its recent abundance and a fraction of a moment to set off balance. The sea teaches us to pay attention. We can’t trust it. But it should be able to trust us.’

Jane Slemon – musician, human sciences and biology teacher / *Sea Inside* exhibition

CHAPTER 5

FOR, WITH, BY AND TO

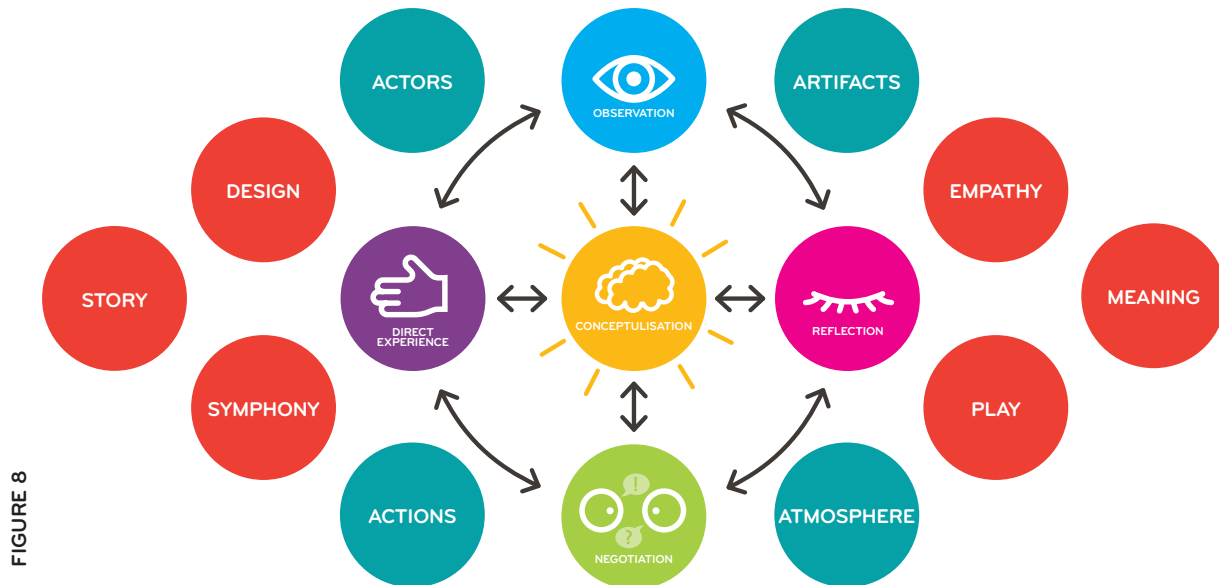
5.1 COMBINING METHOD WITH PRAXIS

Because of the examples presented in chapter 4, I began to consider on what scale I could achieve something similar with my limited time, budget and resources. As an experiment with the field of ‘evocative objects’ and inspired by examples like Dunne & Raby’s *Compass Table*, I created *Don’t Panic!* which cost \$50, and yet was seen by thousands of passers-by walking along the beach and seawall around Vancouver. Another piece, *Seal Sees the Sea* was a movie I made to evoke animal empathy in the viewer as the movie is shot from the perspective of a harbour seal. See Appendix A, p56–57.

As with the examples of designers, artists and those working in media featured in Chapter 4, I had attempted to create work that might evoke particular reactions in the viewers relationship to the sea. Against the multitude of competitive messaging, advertising and media that we are exposed to on a daily basis however, I was uncertain that my efforts had actually transformed or even touched those who interacted with them. The more powerful and grand idea of a World Café, a large-scale exhibition or an experience like those employed by Edwin Schlossberg (founder of ESI Design) began to look more appropriate to affect deeper levels of transformation, as well as provide multiple-intersection points of those present in the experience. I began to consider the notion of combining multiple practices and frameworks together as well as involve others in the making and doing part of the process so that the overall result employed skills well beyond my abilities as an individual. Generally I was intrigued by how I might combine the following: transformation design; transdisciplinary design; co-creation and co-design; facilitation and open space; dialogic learning and action; kinesthetic learning; systems thinking; reflexive and reflective engagement; proxemics; formal and non-formal education (OECD, 2010); situational dynamics; cultural activism; and design for debate.

With this mass of broad frameworks in mind, I was now able to map-out a framework of actionable techniques that I would be able to employ. I also wanted this framework to be both relevant to me, and to others in the future. It needed it to be comprehensive, yet something that is intuitive and taps into what many of us already know about interacting and engaging people. The three methods the framework employs are David Kolb's *Experience as the source of learning and development*; Daniel Pink's *Six Senses: Design, Story, Symphony, Empathy, Play and Meaning* (2006) and; Paul Rothstiens *A(x4): Actors, Artifacts, Atmosphere and Actions* (1999). Figure 8 shows a composite of these three methods.

COMBINATION OF KOLB'S ADAPTED EXPERIENCE MODEL WITH THE AX4 AND SIX SENSES



Many of these techniques are already employed by ethnographic practitioners, transformation designers and experiential designers for the gallery or exhibition space (like Schlossberg). This combined framework simply addresses what might be considered 'an ideal' – to attempt to use all of them at once, which might lead to a deeper kind of transformation within the practitioners and participants.

As I have already discussed Kolb's model let's explore the other two now. Daniel Pink's *Six Senses* provides a good framework for us to employ when attempting to engage people in our cause. Pink, Sharma, Cottam and Sanders talk at length about the need to 'light up' the creative right-brain, in order to achieve transformation. Remember, the experience and interactions that were created *intend* to either transform people's perspectives, maintain current positive association and/or provide critical reflection and reflexive opportunities to engage with the subject matter of the ocean. So it needed to be *Designed* in a way that enabled people to do that, which is one of the reasons why I chose to make an exhibition. An exhibition enables many people to interact with the theme of the sea. The narrative running through my exhibition, the idea that the creative class can make their own stories visible and tangible to others provides the *Story*. Each individual piece describes not my personal association with the sea but other people's. The exhibition and activities simply perform the function of providing the artist with a platform to do that. Each artwork in its own right, relies on some form of physiological or psychological connection to the sea, and many of

the pieces or aspects of the workshops require *Empathic* responses from the viewers/participants.

Each piece *Means* something to the artist who created it. By offering artists the opportunity to write about their relationship to the sea, the viewer is offered an opportunity to see the human-scale of the meaning, not just the grand scale of the problem or the data: which is what can often happen with various kinds of reductive research that is applied in the sciences. And while many of the pieces and activities required a more meditative and reflective stance, I also provided an array of activities that involved participant interaction, which in turn encouraged them to *Play*, to dialogue, to actively negotiate, to employ full-body kinesthetics, to vocalise and of course participate in the all-important site-specificity of the intertidal labyrinth. The latter not only engaged the participants' entire body, but also did so in close proximity to the ocean context. Finally, across all of these five other senses, the entire project retains a harmony – a *Symphony* – through its branding, its style, through its messaging and through its broadness of scope. Forty people were involved in the making of this exhibition and it comes across as symphonic – many people acting towards one common goal.

Rothstein asks researchers to consider the importance of the following four things: *Actors, Artifacts, Actions, Atmosphere*. As Dunne & Raby, Bey and Guixé suggest, objects – or what Rothstein calls *Artifacts* – also behave as actors. That is, they act upon the viewer or participant, when no person is present. Still, there needs to be some distinction though, as *Actors* (both facilitators and the viewers/participants) were also present in the *Sea Inside*. The exhibition and workshop series included a variety of *Artifacts* in the form of artworks, video installations and interactive pieces. Some of these pieces also required some form of interaction or participation (so we're shifting the viewer into the participant role), where they had to interact either in the gallery to make a comment, or during a workshop where they are required to use their body/voice to make or do something. This linked back to what Pink said about *Play* (Pink 2006, 177).

So once again, the *Actions* required *Actors* to make them, and in this making and doing, we were surrounded by *Artifacts* within the gallery-space. In the storytelling workshop, *Artifacts* made were intended to be taken home, thus extending the experience and providing the person with a reason to continue to consider the things they learned while participating in the experience. Finally, the whole show retained a brand-essence, with the colour-scheme and creatures used in the illustrations chosen to depict the kind of wildlife we might find here on the BC Coast. The *Atmosphere* employed in the exhibition therefore provided the viewer with an opportunity to feel as though they are immersed in the ocean, that they were a part of it, and that they were suspended momentarily beneath the sea. This incorporated much of what Pink is discussing in the chapters *Design* and *Symphony*. Readers will have noticed that some of the *Experience Model*, *Six Senses* and *A(x4)* methods overlap one another and as such, the combination of the activities and the exhibition encompass Kolb's idea of *Direct Experience, Observation, Reflection* and *Negotiation*. And there we have it, both practical methods interconnected and interwoven together with research methods.

5.2 TRANSDISCIPLINARY PRACTICE

Throughout my research – especially towards the production stage of the exhibition, workshops and activities – I began to take on more of the kinds of roles that I'd been both reading about and witnessing first-hand. As my practice began to get more fuzzy, my roles merged and overlapped with both expert disciplines (such as graphic design), familiar disciplines (such as curation) and new disciplines I had no experience in at all (such as grant writing). I would like to highlight several of the roles that contributed to my transdisciplinary praxis: Exhibition Ideation and Conceptualisation; Grant Writing (\$500 granted from the President's Research Fund for the Documentary Film, and \$500 from the Student Union for Catering and Posters); Brand identity, illustrations, posters, exhibition components (Didactics, Banners, Quote-wall); Producer (Posters, Artwork: *Shark Savers*, *Local Marine Life*, *Ocean's Worth*); Designing and populating the website; Co-curating the exhibition (with Avalon Mott and Amanda Pentland); Producing artwork (*Lime Seeds*, *Seal Sees the Sea*); Artwork Co-creation (*Kelp*, *Ocean's Worth*, and *Pictogram Game*); Funding Music and Artwork production (*All I have to Give*, *Shark Savers*, *Local Marine Life*, *Ocean's Worth*, *Pictogram Game*, *Kelp*); Exhibition Installer/De-staller; Research Ethics applications and; Researcher/Observer.

At last I was working 'With, By, For *and* To' simultaneously.

‘The preservation of the sea is important because it influences our day-to-day quality of life (temperature, climate....). Also, humans need to look beyond their own species and realize how important the sea is to all creatures and plants. For me the sea is a special place because I grew up close to it and am used to how it effects the quality of light, the humidity in the air. My relationship to the sea is complicated. I love being on the water but I tend to get seasick.’

Lynn Price – artist / *Sea Inside* exhibition

CHAPTER 6

THE SEA INSIDE

6.1 STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF METHOD AND PRAXIS

The tiered approach and structural analysis of my transdisciplinary praxis and research activities is identified as a diagram (see Figure 9 overleaf). At the diagram core, the exhibition artworks function en-masse as an inter-disciplinary, inter-sensual platform that demonstrated the array of personal and emotional attachments that the contributors had with the ocean. Amongst these artworks, a handful of pieces provided viewers with interactive, reflective and dialogic opportunities, each of which fed directly back into the project itself – transforming it over time. Additionally, facilitated workshops and activities involved reflexive and kinesthetic opportunities induced participants to engage multiple-senses in the context and subject matter. Each of these is explained with icons and images over the next few pages.

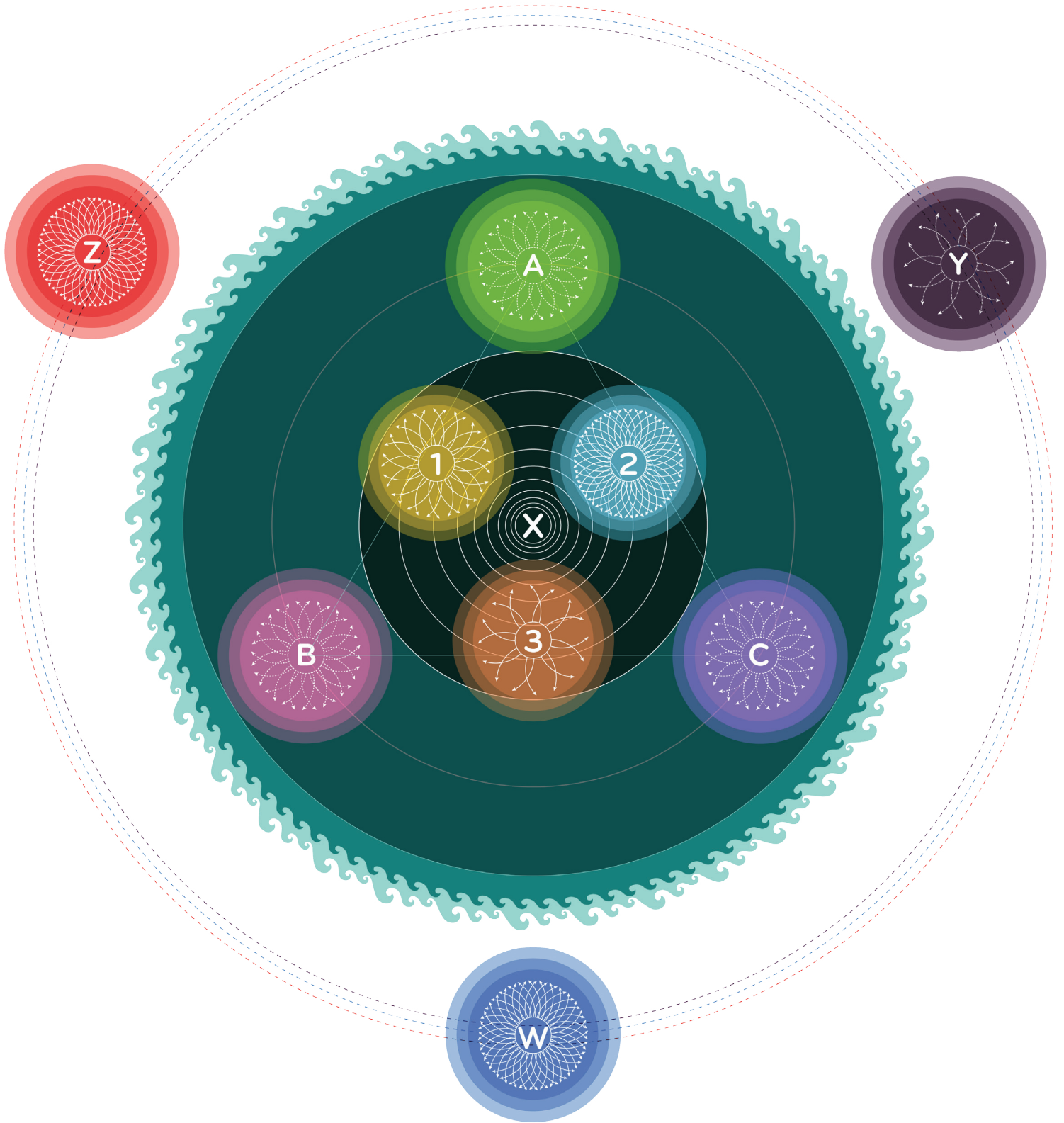


FIGURE 9



CONCOURSE GALLERY, I.E. GALLERY AND MEDIA GALLERY EXHIBITIONS //

CURATED BY MARTEN SIMS, AVALON MOTT AND AMANDA PENTLAND

The core component of the research took place in the form of an exhibition featuring the work of over forty artists – undergraduate and masters students and faculty from Emily Carr University as well as contributors from the local community. Amongst the mediums on display were photography, painting, sculpture, audio, musical, film, motion, poetry, drawing, illustration and graphic panels.

The project also received contributions from a number of other individuals who volunteered time for poster, preparing and serving food and drinks for the opening night, and planning media releases.

Praxis + Research methods // Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Dialogic Learning and Action; Co-creation; Non-Formal Education; Situational Dynamics; Proxemics; Do, Re-think, Believe.

OPENING NIGHT

Over the course of the evening, an estimated 300–400 people attended the opening. Vegetarian food, tea and fruit punch was served and live music played throughout the evening. The general reception was overwhelmingly positive, from both primary, secondary and tertiary information sources.



FIGURE 10

GALLERY BY DAY

Over the ten-day period that the Concourse Gallery, Media Gallery and IE Gallery hosts the *Sea Inside*, an estimated 200 reflexive engagements are recorded in the form of interactions with pieces within the gallery-space. The total number visitors was between 1800 and 2300 persons.



FIGURE 11

IE GALLERY

During the evenings and nights, the two video pieces featured in the IE Gallery were highly visible to pedestrians walking along Johnston Street. On many occasions, I witnessed people walking off the path to spend a few minutes looking through the glass at the videos within.



A. IE GALLERY AT NIGHT FROM JOHNNSON STREET



B. PEDESTRIANS WATCH THE FILM THROUGH THE GLASS DOOR (IMAGE COURTESY OF LAWRENCE WONG)



C. PEDESTRIANS WATCH THE FILM THROUGH THE GLASS DOOR (IMAGE COURTESY OF LAWRENCE WONG)



D. MANTA RAYS SWEEP BY IN DENISE QUESNEL'S 'NIGHT DIVE' (IMAGE COURTESY OF LAWRENCE WONG)

FIGURE 12 – A, B, C, D

ARTWORK EXAMPLES AND VARIETY

For more details visit http://www.seainsideproject.com/?page_id=2651

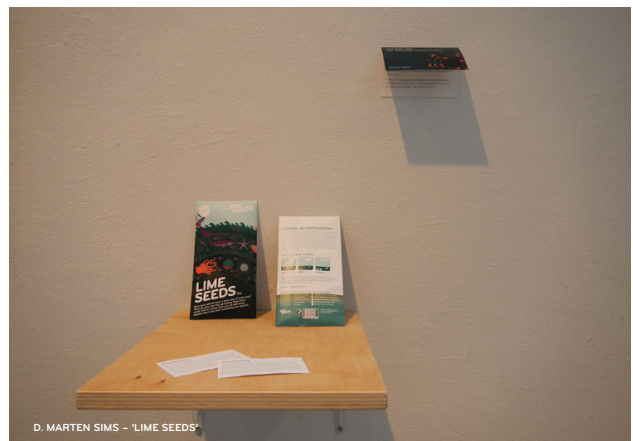
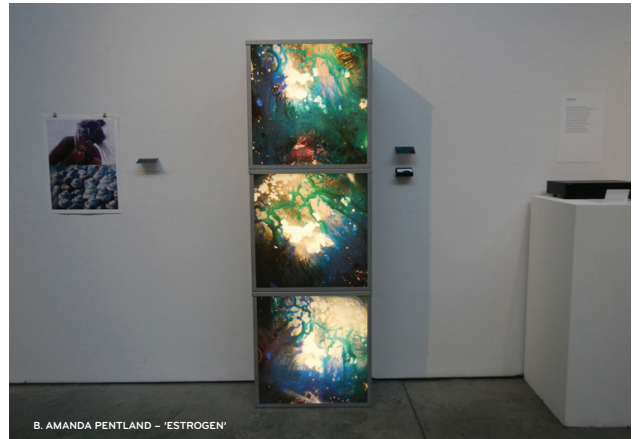


FIGURE 13 – A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H

GENERAL INTERACTIONS

For more details visit http://www.seainsideproject.com/?page_id=2651



FIGURE 14 – A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H



INTERACTIVE #1 // 'OCEAN'S WORTH' / CO-DESIGNED BY CLAIRE HAVENS AND MARTEN SIMS

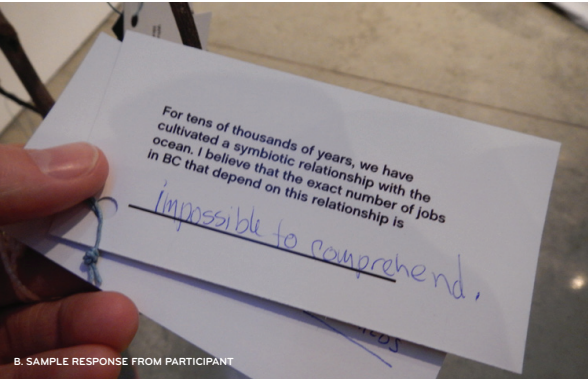
Ocean's Worth provides an opportunity to engage in a speculative conversation by inviting the audience to complete a question or sentence on the price – or pricelessness – of the ocean and its creatures. Once completed, they hang the price tag on a branch protruding from the wall.

Praxis + Research methods // Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Dialogic Learning and Action; Proxemics; Do, Re-think, Believe.

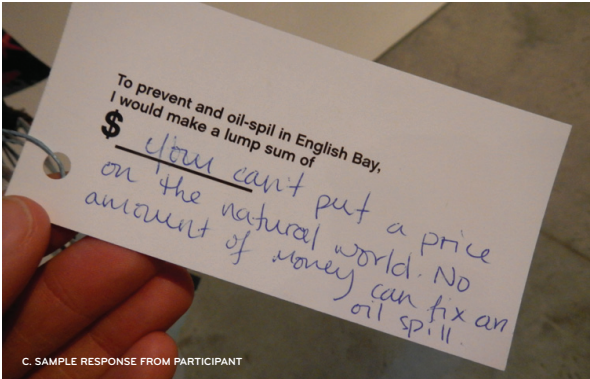
My Roles // Ideation, Co-Creation, Funding, Production, Installation



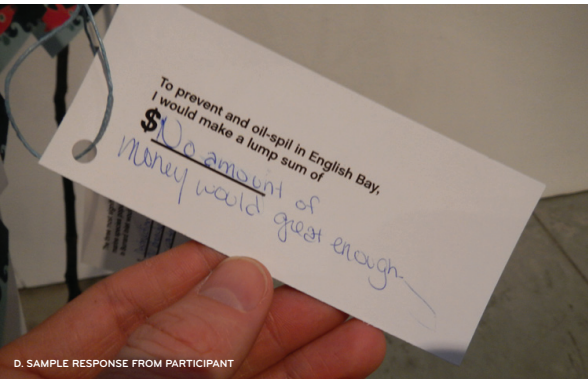
A. THE PIECE INCLUDED SEVEN IMAGES, A BAMBOO TRAY (WITH THE QUESTION CARDS IN IT), AND A BRANCH THAT AUDIENCE MEMBERS HANG THE QUESTION CARDS ON FOR OTHERS TO READ



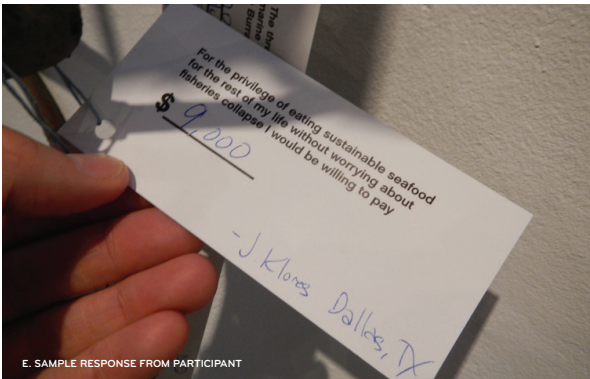
B. SAMPLE RESPONSE FROM PARTICIPANT



C. SAMPLE RESPONSE FROM PARTICIPANT



D. SAMPLE RESPONSE FROM PARTICIPANT



E. SAMPLE RESPONSE FROM PARTICIPANT

FIGURE 15 – A, B, C, D, E



INTERACTIVE #2 // 'PICTOGRAM GAME' / CO-DESIGNED BY CRYSTAL CHAN AND MARTEN SIMS

Visitors could use any combination of about 200 pictograms to construct a sentence that responded to a sentence about the ocean.

Praxis + Research methods // Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Dialogic Learning and Action; Proxemics; Do, Re-think, Believe.

My Roles // Ideation, Co-Creation, Funding, Installation

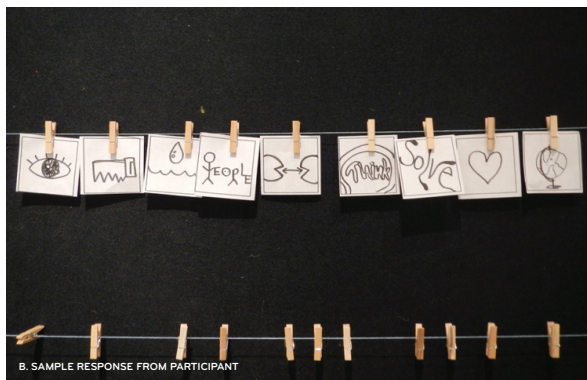


FIGURE 16 – A, B, C, D, E



INTERACTIVE #3 // 'COCOLITHOPHORE' /

CO-CREATED BY ANGELA SMAILES, WILL PHONG-LY AND JORDAN RIVERA

The Cocolithophore is an tent-like interactive feature within the gallery space that can seat three persons. Audience members who climb inside the structure are invited to meditate on these microscopic life-forms that supply the planet with between 50–70% of its oxygen. An audio component of breathing sounds and waves runs inside the Cocolithophore helping participants focus on their breathing and perhaps leave the sometimes busy gallery behind.

Praxis + Research methods // Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Dialogic Learning and Action; Situational Dynamics.

My Role // Part-concept Ideation



FIGURE 17 – A, B, C



ACTIVITY A // WALKING THE LABYRINTH AND BLESSING /

LABYRINTH BY LES BLYDO, BLESSING BY KOONJUT – HAIDA FIRST NATIONS

This activity took place at the off-site location of Kits Beach in Kitsilano, Vancouver. Thirty participants walked the labyrinth, which provided an opportunity to engage in introspective and ongoing retrospective reflection as a reflective conversation of the activity. To read a full account of this workshop, please refer to page 84, Appendix F.

Praxis + Research methods // Creative kinesthetics; Grounded Theory; Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Dialogic Learning and Action; Proxemics; Non-Formal Education; Rites of Passage; Situational Dynamics; i.e., Liminality; Interruption Theory; Do, Re-think, Believe.

My Roles // Part-concept Ideation, Research Ethics, Poster Designer, Host, Participant, Researcher, Photographer



A. WALKERS AT VARIOUS POINTS IN THE LABYRINTH PATH



B. ONCE IN THE CENTRE OR UPON EXITING, PARTICIPANTS TALK OR APPEAR TO MEDITATE IN SILENCE



C. A FEW HOURS AFTER IT WAS DRAWN AND WALKED, THE LABYRINTH IS RECLAIMED BY THE SEA

FIGURE 18 – A, B, C



ACTIVITY B // STORYTELLING WORKSHOP /

CO-DESIGNED AND CO-FACILITATED BY ZARA CONTRACTOR AND MARTEN SIMS

This co-facilitated storytelling workshop and activity engaged participants directly within the gallery-space and provided an opportunity to engage in stop-and-think reflection that facilitated an inquisitive conversation with the ocean context. By facilitating the writing of poems or stories, the workshop encouraged participants to relate how they felt about things going on in the ocean. To read a full account of this workshop, please refer to page 88, Appendix F.

Praxis + Research methods // Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Think + Make or Look, Think, Act; Facilitation and Open Space; Proxemics; Co-creation; Dialogic Learning; Non-Formal Education.

My Roles // Part-concept Ideation, Research Ethics, Poster Designer, Host, Co-Facilitator, Rock and Bottle finder (and mule), Researcher, Photographer



A. PARTICIPANTS GATHER AROUND THE LONG TABLE AND BEGIN THEIR THE EXERCISE



B. PARTICIPANTS CHOOSE SHELLS WITH 'EMOTION' WORDS ON THEM



C. PARTICIPANTS WRITING THEIR 'MESSAGES IN BOTTLES'

FIGURE 19 – A, B, C



ACTIVITY C // 'SWAMP THEATRE WORKSHOP' // CO-FACILITATED BY SWAMP THEATRE

This three hour workshop involved a range of kinesthetic and dialogical activities intended to get the participants out of their minds and into their bodies when thinking and acting about the ocean. Participants engaged with stop-and-think reflection that facilitates an inquisitive bodily conversation on the issues of ocean conservation and human equality. To read a full account of this workshop, please refer to page 93, Appendix F.

Praxis + Research methods // Creative Kinesthetics; Theatre of the Oppressed; Theatre For Living; Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Facilitation and Open Space; Co-creation; Dialogic Learning and Action; Non-Formal Education; Proxemics.

My Roles // Co-concept Ideation, Research Ethics, Poster Designer, Host, Participant, Researcher, Photographer



A. PARTICIPANTS ENGAGE WITH A MOVEMENT EXERCISE MID-WAY THROUGH THE WORKSHOP TO LOOSEN UP



B. SWAMP MEMBERS DANIELLA, EVE AND RIANNE (LEFT TO RIGHT) PERFORM THE 'SCENE'



C. PARTICIPANTS SHOUT AND CONNECT TO ONE ANOTHER DURING 'IMAGES'

FIGURE 20 – A, B, C



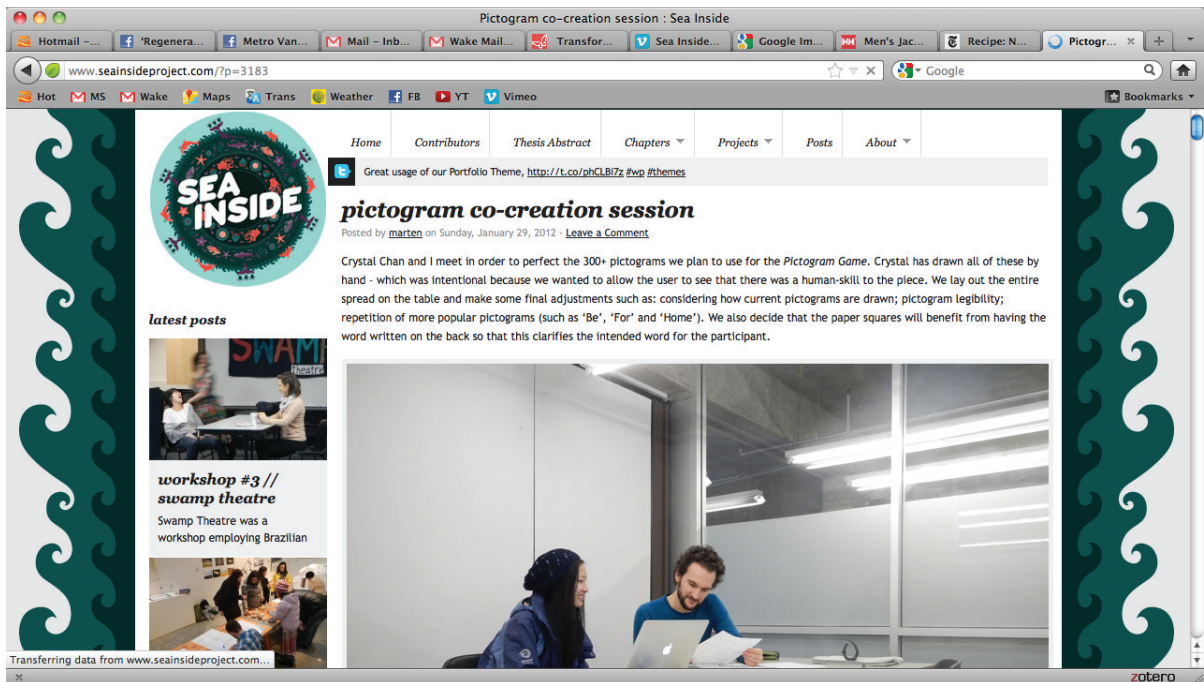
ONLINE // SEA INSIDE WEBSITE + VIMEO // DESIGNED BY MARTEN SIMS

Many of the research events and practical elements of the *Sea Inside* were captured and recorded on the seainsideproject.com website. Videos were uploaded to my Vimeo account and provided an opportunity for others to engage with the project if they missed the 'live' version of it – especially the activities and workshops.

Praxis + Research methods // Non-Formal Education

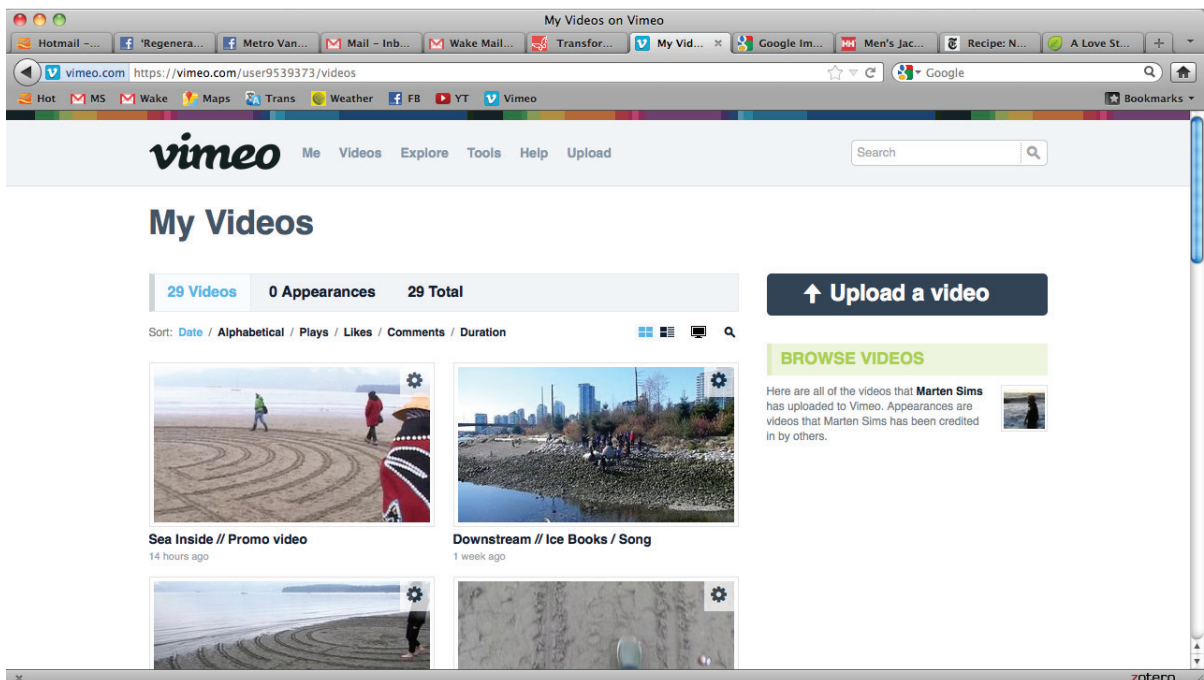
My Roles // Creation, Design, Writer

FIGURE 21



SCREENSHOT FROM THE SEAINSIDeproject.COM WEBSITE SHOWING AN ENTRY FROM JANUARY 2012 IN WHICH CRYSTAL CHAN AND MYSELF WORK ON THE PICTOGRAM GAME

FIGURE 22



SCREENSHOT FROM MY VIMEO PAGE SHOWING SOME 29 VIDEOS OF WORK PRODUCED AND CAPTURED MOMENTS FROM THE SEA INSIDE



TAKE-AWAY ITEM // 'LIME SEEDS PACKET' // DESIGNED BY MARTEN SIMS

One take-away item was present during the exhibition, the *Lime Seeds Packet* was created as a spoof or parody of actual seeds that one might wish to sprinkle on the sea to make it less acidic. The back of the pack contains instructions and diagrams indicating what to do with the seeds. The actual contents of the packet are a pinch of the colourful candy known as 'Nerds' and a piece of paper with a message about what we can *really* do about the issue of ocean acidification. Within two days of appearing in the gallery, the ten packets I made were gone, and subsequent replacements were also taken.

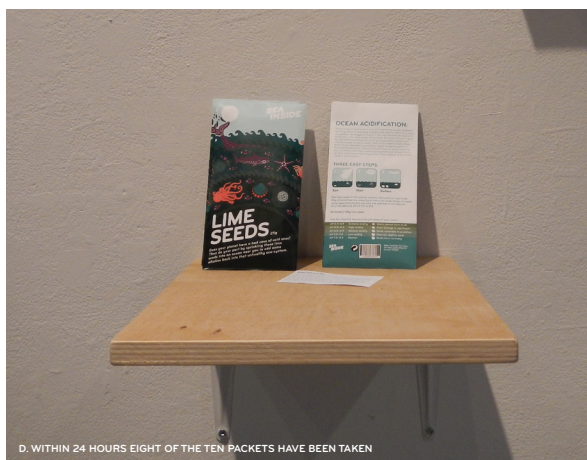
Praxis + Research methods:

Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Dialogic Learning and Action; Do, Re-think, Believe.

My Roles // Ideation, Creation, Design, Production, Installation



A. AN AUDIENCE MEMBER HOLDS THE 'LIME SEEDS' PACKET, WHICH SHE THEN PLACES IN HER HAND-BAG TO TAKE HOME



D. WITHIN 24 HOURS EIGHT OF THE TEN PACKETS HAVE BEEN TAKEN



E. WITHIN 36 HOURS ALL OF THE PACKETS ARE GONE AND NEED TO BE REPLACED

FIGURE 23 – A, B, C



Z // DOCUMENTARY MOVIE // FILMED AND EDITED BY CHRISTIAN A. MEJÍA ACOSTA

Due to the short-lived nature of the exhibition and workshops, and my awareness of what artist and author Suzanne Lacy refers to as the *Audience of Myth and Memory* (Irish 2010, 14), we capture as much of the experiences and activities as possible on film. This was then translated into a short movie describing the ideas behind the project. It was intended to be used as both a way for others to access the project, as a pitching tool for gallery-spaces and as a device that describes the transformative capabilities of the project to those not present.

Praxis + Research methods // Reflexive and Reflective Engagement; Non-Formal Education.

My Roles // Ideation, Grant Writer (\$500), Graphic Designer, Producer



A. CHRISTIAN ANTONIA MEJÍA ACOSTA FILMS DISCRETELY DURING THE SWAMP THEATRE WORKSHOP



B. CHRISTIAN FILMS LES BLYDO AND KOONJUT AS THEY PREPARE FOR THE BLESSING



C. CHRISTIAN SPEAKS TO AN ATTENDEE OF THE OPENING NIGHT

FIGURE 24 – A, B, C

‘The preservation of the sea is important because historically it sustained my people, the Haida, since time immemorial. Our very lives are dependent on the provisions of the sea. For me, the sea is a special place because it’s what I’ve known since birth – in the *Circle of Life*, it is essential for our physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. My relationship to the sea is spiritual. It revives my soul to be close to the water. The rhythm of the waves invokes peace like nothing else could.’

Koonjut aka Veronica Godard – Haida First Nations Elder and teacher / *Sea Inside* workshop

CHAPTER 7

WHAT HAPPENED

7.1 CO-CREATION AND TEAM EFFORT

Although much of the praxis component was collaborative, co-created and/or creatively directed by me, the project was also a massive team effort, with two other colleagues helping me with planning, gallery curation and exhibit installation. In total, the exhibition and workshops featured the work of over fifty artists, both undergraduate and masters students and faculty from Emily Carr University, as well as contributors from the local Vancouver community. Among the mediums on display during the exhibition were photography, painting, sculpture, audio, music, film, motion, poetry, drawing, illustration and graphic panels. The project also received contributions from a number of other individuals in the form of volunteering time for posterage, preparing food and drinks for the opening night, and media relations.

Over the course of the core research period of ten days, an estimated number of 300 (reflexive) engagements were recorded in the form of audience participation in workshops, activities, and reflexive-actions with the interactive pieces within the gallery-space. The estimated number of individuals who spent between 10–15 minutes in the gallery-space (as opposed to walking through it as a corridor) was 500–1000 persons. The number of people who spent between one to 10 minutes in the gallery was estimated at an additional 1000 persons, making a total of between 1800 and 2300 persons. An estimated 90% of those attending a workshop or activity had also spent more than ten minutes in the gallery exhibition leading to multiple exposures to the *Sea Inside* theme.

7.2 WHAT HAPPENED?

UK advertising guru Mark Earls advises that ‘The single most important principle to understand [and therefore transform] human behaviour is interaction – that is, mass behaviour arises from the interaction between individuals and not as the result of powerful external forces’ (Earls 2007, 30). Earls uses two simple diagrams in reference to his own attempts to get people onto the dance floor while DJ-ing. What is

intriguing about these two diagrams is that they clarify both what we think happens (Figure 23), and then what most likely happened (Figure 24). Figure 23 described what I would have liked to have happened.

To read a full account of what happened please take a look at the detailed descriptions of the workshops featured in Appendix F, p84–97. Broadly speaking, it was important for me as a researcher to observe the audience and participants' actions, interactions and intra-actions without making assumptions that what we did directly affected their behaviour. I can't assume that those who attended a workshop or went to the exhibition changed their behaviour – will they start eating sustainable seafood, ride their bike more, visit the beach more... who knows? That is beyond the scope of what I intended to cover in this research. What I chose to look at were the kinds of interactions and responses generated by the spaces, the process and the opportunities that were offered.

7.3 WHAT REALLY HAPPENED?

Despite my intention to give people reason to focus on the ocean, to focus on the issues that are currently facing the ocean, what really happened is infinitely more complex, chaotic even. Take a look at Figure 24 to see what I'm talking about. Earls proposes that 'What really matters is what each of the individuals in the mass does to the others' (Earls 2007, 30). Even this complex diagram doesn't show factors such as time, which of course would give the diagram motion. As William Bridges suggests, in reality people transition from one state to the next. They might change, become something new, revert to something old, shift, slide, morph, fall in love, fall out, tell someone about what they did that day, forget to tell them, etc.. My intention was to start a wheel revolving by giving people something to do for a little while. From that moment on each of them supplies the energy to keep the wheel in motion.

Earls also reminds us that 'Attitudes tend to change after behaviour, not before . . . we tend to assume that each individual thinks, decides, then acts. Models of behaviour change which support this way of thinking such as AIDA (awareness-interest-desire-action) still have a lot of currency in the business world . . . The truth seems to be that each of us brings attitudes and accounts of what happened into line with what we've just done. Do-rethink-believe, if you will.' (Earls 2007, 30). In describing these issues from the human-scale of the problem, by weaving stories, hybrid perspectives of essences and actions together, *Sea Inside* provides participants with multiple opportunities for others to engage in dialogue, movement and situations both beside the subject matter of the sea, as well as in a more formal situation like the gallery – this is what leads to a greater sense of connection with the ocean, with ourselves, with others. In this sense I only attempted to provide the audience with an opportunity to experience alternative ways of being and acting with the world, which may provide them with the incentive to seek out other kinds of experiences that transform them over time.

WHAT HAPPENED...

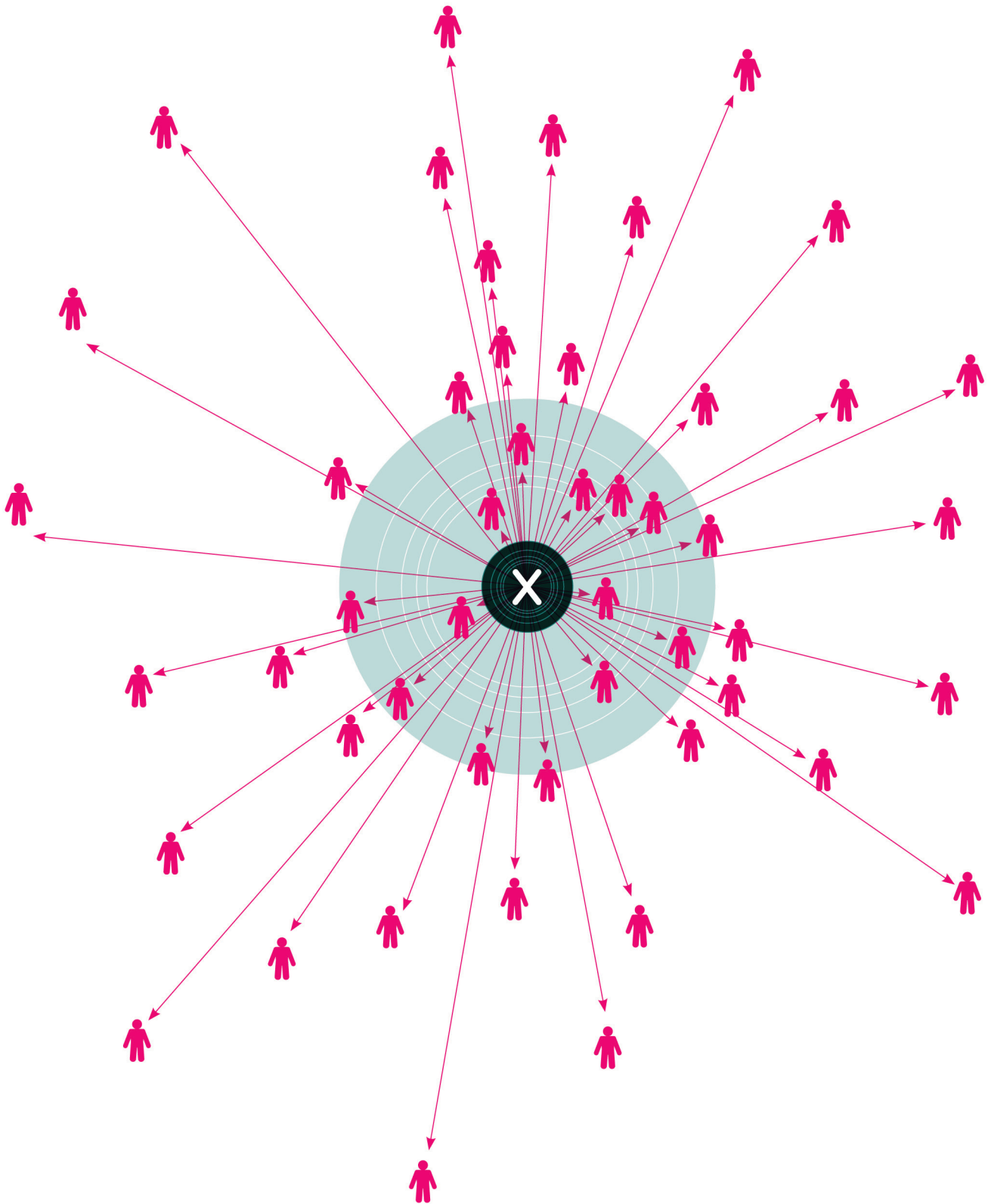


FIGURE 25

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED

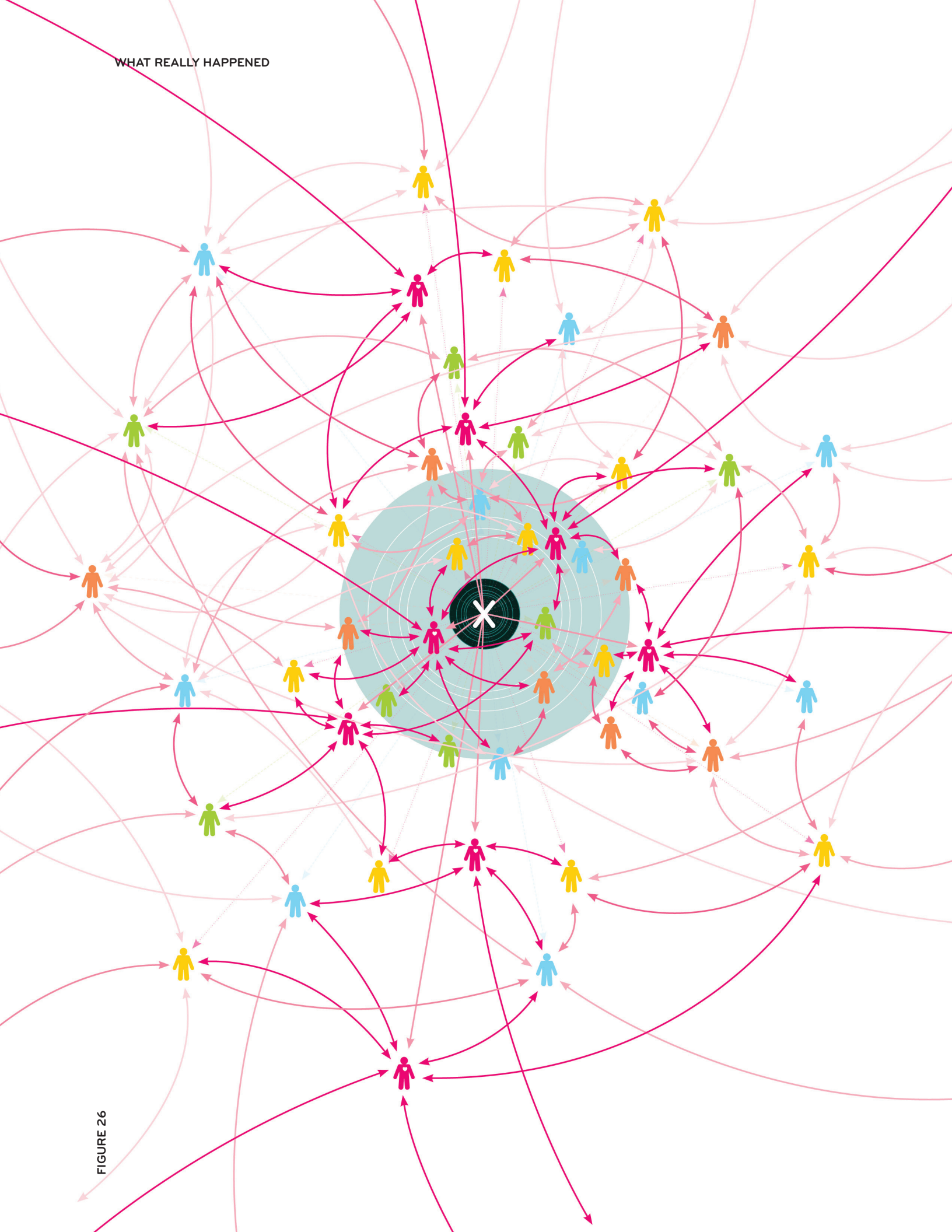


FIGURE 26

‘The preservation of the sea is important because it is the life-force behind all living things on this planet. Every living thing exists and continues to exist because of water. For me, the sea is a special place because I feel a deep connection to it in my every sense. To smell, taste, hear, feel and of course see the sea is awe-inspiring, meditative and exciting all at once. My relationship to the sea is too emotional to explain. I think it must be love!’

Vicky Bowes – artist, framer and musician / *Sea Inside* exhibition

CHAPTER 8

SUMMARY & FUTURE WORK

8.1 SUMMARY

As I already mentioned, French pioneer diver Jacques Cousteau is famous for saying “People protect what they love”. Two of my greatest loves – design and the ocean have guided this research, which has taken me on a journey to places I both expected and did not expect to experience. It has tested my ability to think critically about how to solve complex problems, and to consider that no matter how complex some problems are, no matter how broken or disconnected the parts of the system are – we created them, ergo we are the ones who can begin to heal them. And we can look both around and inside ourselves for those solutions. For this reason alone, I needed, I thought to engage the artists, audience, participants’ and actors in the role of identifying themselves as a part of the ocean, and not separate from it. By working with the concept of the name *Sea Inside*, I made an attempt to reach deeper into the sometimes intangible, invisible, spiritual connections that we have with the ocean, as well as our more obvious physical, inter-sensual interactions with it.

This more holistic approach to the problem emerged and developed from an in-depth analysis of ways to catalyse and sustain behaviour change. It morphed from an initial idea that focused on creating and hosting a series of World Café’s to the design of an event that featured an exhibition, interactive features and facilitated workshops. The intention was to both transform the audience and participants’ perspectives by both providing them with a multitude of opportunities to experience the positive and negative associations that creative people have with the sea, and provide critical reflexive and reflection opportunities for viewers and participants to engage with the subject matter.

By employing a flexible framework based on a hybrid of David Kolb’s *Experience as the Primary Source of*

Learning, Daniel Pink's *Six Senses* and Paul Rothstiens A(x4) methods, I think that I have actually taken a step towards healing parts of this fragmented system in a way that others can mimic in their own conservation and humanitarian projects. I chose to consider the transformation that happens when we employ as many of the senses as possible and encourage people to *do* something to connect better to the ocean. Also, by choosing to research the combination of multiple disciplines I have attempted to avoid enhancing the delusion that any one specific discipline holds the 'magic-bullet' solution to the current ocean crisis.

If people really do protect what they love, as Cousteau says, then I am happy to confirm that a few people who experienced the *Sea Inside* fell just a little bit more in love with the ocean. Perhaps some people were able to see – just a little bit more clearly – inside themselves and inside other people too. Because of this, I believe that this research has demonstrated that by considering transformation design practices and utilising the power of the creative class (which bring together a diversity of intelligences, communication types and frameworks), we can provide an audience and participants with a real-world solution – not just a hypothesis about how to create behaviour change, but *actual* transformation.

Both during and since completing the praxis component of the project, I have received many positive comments from people about their experiences in the process of employing their creative practice for this cause; or the taking part in a workshop and activity; or the access to members of the public (who could and did make comments within the exhibition and workshop spaces). It brings me great joy to know that I was able to provide others with a new experience by bringing them closer to the essence of the ocean, and, yes, to point out what we are doing wrong to the ocean and also what we are doing *right* – to shine the light in both directions. Many participants commented on how spiritual in nature the activities and this exhibition was and still is for them. Others mentioned the 'one voice' that the different events spoke with – which allowed them to form new connections to the kinds of complex, out-of-sight environmental issues the *Sea Inside* deals with. In this sense I am pleased that the human-scale of the story of the sea came across in a symphonic united manner, and not as a chaotic multitude of disparate ideas. I also hope I have demonstrated firmly that the answer lies in the millions of actions, interactions and intra-actions that make up the space *between* the people and the territories that the disciplines occupy.

As you have surely garnered by now, I cannot say with certainty what transformative experience each of the audience members or workshop participants had in relation to *Sea Inside*, but I can say that as of Saturday, May 19th 2012 several museums and galleries received a proposal for re-exhibiting the *Sea Inside*, and meetings are to be planned in the near future. Specifically, *The Gulf of Georgia Cannery Museum* has installed four pieces from the *Sea Inside*, namely: *Pictogram Game*, *Ocean's Worth*, *Planet Ocean* and the fabric seaweed piece *Kelp* for their one year show titled *Seafood For Thought*. I believe that it is no coincidence that the two interactive pieces were chosen, and that, due to their nature, both, '*Planet Ocean*' and '*Kelp*' enable the viewer to feel closer to or immersed in the ocean.

8.2 NEW BEGINNINGS

Over the past two years I have come to understand that we can design and facilitate situations that connect people better to the essence of a place and to issues by employing the creative practices. Everyone is creative and collective creativity reconnects us to things that we have missed; if done wisely and over an extended period of time, such creativity has the potential to both drive and sustain systemic change. Designers, artists and performers have the tools and know-how to break-down complex problems; singers, songwriters and musicians can direct us through the use of metaphors to change our behaviours; and film-makers can seduce us with stories of the changes we are making in our own lives to both confront and form alliances and to augment empathy in those who did not know or believe that they could transform. And the good news is that everyone is creative and can channel our creativity into making a meaningful and authentic world that challenges the status quo and asks the deep questions about where we are going and what kind of world we want to live in. We have the power to change our own actions, to go beyond friendships and reach out to people we don't know and whisper, pull and seduce them outside, into the rain, up a mountain, under the sea.

Despite the complexity, intractability and wickedness of all the complex problems we currently face, if we address behaviour transformations creatively, holistically and systemically I truly believe that we can find solutions. For my part, it is my hope that this research demonstrates that, yes, we are up to the task.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

DON'T PANIC

In the summer of 2011 – with CA\$50 of biodegradable cork, hemp string and some rocks – I created the piece entitled *Don't Panic!* (Figure 8) which made appearances at two of the most popular beaches in the Vancouver area on the busiest weekend of the year: the July fireworks festival. The cork fins bobbed around in the intertidal zone. Nearby, two signs with messaging about the plight of sharks in the global ocean provided information to passers-by. The project was intended to evoke a variety of reactions in the viewers: from surprise; to joy; to intrigue; to concern; and then (hopefully) to action.



Figure i – A, B, C

APPENDIX A

SEAL SEES THE SEA (TO WATCH THIS VIDEO HEAD TO [HTTP://VIMEO.COM/33217015](http://vimeo.com/33217015))

Harbour Seal's form an integral part of both the tourists and residents' impression of the Vancouver seascape. Walking along the seawall, we humans are often surprised by the sudden appearance of seals, who seem just as curious about us. Their sudden materialisation is often just as swift as their disappearance (frequently with no indication of where they might reappear – much to the annoyance of photographers). This piece reverses the perspective by following the journey of a inquisitive harbour seal as she visits a variety of sites around the Vancouver shoreline and seawall throughout the day – watching us humans as we go about our various activities and sightseeing.



Figure ii – A, B, C, D, E

APPENDIX B

FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL LEARNING

To be quite frank with you, up until quite recently, I was rather distressed that my future as a designer had not turned out the way that I wished it to: I always imagined myself 1. producing print work for humanitarian, environmental or conservation causes (in fact I have – among other things – worked on the rebranding of the World Wildlife Fund), 2. designing for *Adbusters Magazine* producing a liberal and socialist call-to-action; 3. or designing layouts for *National Geographic*. Like many designers, I have struggled with the roots of design and its preoccupation with materialism, capitalism and thoughtless rapid consumption – which don't reflect my own habits of living simply and taking the time – as poet William Henry Davies (1911) wrote – to '*stand and stare*' at the beautiful world we live in.

For some years now I have been looking for new ways to either escape such specialisation, and design, instruct and work on projects and problems that are meaningful to me and that I was passionate about. But it's difficult to find something when your job-description is pre-determined: after all, graphic designers do graphic design. The end. Right? Surely specialisation is better. After all, it's very rewarding to be valued for being good at something, isn't it? Or is there a way to merge my multiple passions and at the same time continue to expand my knowledge by learning and absorbing new techniques and skills with my interest in nature, the ocean, science, people and design? How can I use my skills to my advantage? What skills don't I currently possess that I need? As described in Cal Swann's *Action Research* diagram, I found myself needing to go back, take parts of who I was and combine them with the me I wanted to be, both in practice and in reading.

As I went on this journey of discovery and reawakening, I began to consider my new responsibilities. The task I was attempting meant I had to take great care to avoid or reduce the number of wicked problems I encountered or created as a result of whatever practical components I built into the project. The act of taking on both problems and responsibilities lead me to consider designing dialogical experiences, World Café and/or participatory workshops that involved as few natural resources as possible, and in this sense, my praxis might both resonate deeply with the participant, and also *Touch the Earth lightly* – as Australian architect Glenn Murcutt (2000), or Vancouver artist Dennis Darragh (2008) recommend – in terms of products made from natural resources.

As someone trained in the methods and practices of communication design and environmental stewardship, however, I found a tension between two notions: doing *less* and doing *more*. And although the idea of doing less is very Zen, or very Amish, the idea of doing *more* suddenly becomes more appealing if it slows, stops or reverses particular kinds of madness, such as the killing of sharks, turtles or dolphins. Perhaps we should use every resource at our disposal to save such magnificent beings? Ric O'Barry, speaking in the Academy Award-winning documentary movie about the Taiji dolphin slaughter *The*

Cove, hammers the message home in simple terms, saying 'To me, you're either an activist or an inactivist' (Psihoyos, 2009). To O'Barry, the idea of someone doing nothing to halt the slaughter of innocent dolphins is insane. Likewise, pro-skier, JP Auclair – featured in the beautifully shot ski and environmentally themed movie *All.I.Can* – reminds us that 'People that spend a lot of time in the mountains and people that spend a lot of time outside are basically on the front lines of it all. We can see it happen firsthand. We feel like we need to be doing less of this, less of that, but I don't think it's about doing less. I think it's about doing more' (Corsland, Mossop, 2011). For me, the tension lies in how best to place our energies by choosing to efficiently both touch the earth lightly, or get more active in the earth's safe-keeping. It's all a matter of what kind of action or inaction – what kind of energy – achieves the best results both in the short term, and over the long term.

I find many of these ideas incredibly inspiring and feel that much of what I am trying to achieve lies somewhere in the middle of these themes, or rather, focuses on shifting to more efficient and effective means of holism (deploying the either reflexive or reflective action when required, rather than burning out being *too* active, or tip-toeing lightly around the big problems that need to be dealt with). In some ways, these two things, reflexive and reflective action could be considered Yin and Yang.

While the idea of designing and facilitating something similar to either a RAVE, an expedition, or even working with public programs about the ocean right here in the city of Vancouver appealed to me, I knew that it would take more time, effort and resources than I presently had at my disposal. So although these ideas were great starting points I felt not only that it was possible to replicate them, but also that others were already dealing with this in a very professional manner. Yet what was missing from the arts and design community? What could members of this creative class do to help connect us better to issues and themes related to the sea?

Another idea I toyed with was of creating dialogic processes by designing and employing Open-Space facilitation techniques or producing a series of Margaret Wheatley's much discussed World Café (or unConference). Wheatley is a proponent of the need for communities to take action and change themselves from the inside – based on what they already know about themselves and what they want. She suggests that 'We can only be wise together' (Wheatley, 2005); that is, if we think we can tackle problems from within the walls of the discipline-centric castles we've created, then we're gravely mistaken. Advertising guru and author Mark Earls would agree, 'The true nature of mankind is that of a super-social ape. We are programmed to be together; sociability is our species' key evolutionary strategy; we feel happier with others; our brains develop through interaction with others and when our brains don't develop properly this often robs us of key human skills. When they develop properly we have the most amazing capabilities to live together and create things together' (Earls, 2005). Although we desperately need more opportunities to get together to discuss the problems, we also need to employ actions that

solve these problems by doing something about them, even if the most appropriate action is to do nothing. The idea of getting people together to either discuss or make something visible appealed to me immensely because it might avoid isolated thinking and the idea that we expect some kind of scientific or technological solution to save us. John Thackara continues his thoughts about 'smart recombinations' and strategy creation, he talks about the importance of togetherness in 'the creation of new combinations of knowledge, resources, and capabilities ... [of] connecting people with actors from different economic and knowledge domains' (Thackara 2005, 218).

This advice comes at a time when it appears that we truly do need to make the most of opportunities to get people together, face-to-face, to talk about complex problems. *Philosophy of Dialogue* creator, Austrian-philosopher Martin Buber writes that 'All knowledge is dialogic' (Thackara 2005, 180), meaning that humans are gifted with the rapid ability to share our knowledge because we can talk to one another. Thackara continues that "Maybe we just need to talk to other humans beings more – face to face. It sounds trite, but for thousands of years, talk was one of the main ways that humans tried to understand and influence the world around them. Then came media."

The debates around screen, audio and other forms of electronic media become more and more urgent as researchers continue to investigate the effects of technology on humans. Professor and author Sherry Turkle discusses this in her book 'Alone Together' (Turkle, 2011). I felt shivers down my spine as I read about Turkle's observations that we are now expecting more from technology than we are of those around us. *Aloneness* should not be confused with *Solitude* which Richard Louv considers of environmental, social, psychological and spiritual importance for the development of our brains. Louv says 'A growing body of research links our mental, physical, and spiritual health directly to our association with nature – in positive ways. Several of these studies suggest that thoughtful exposure of youngsters to nature can even be a powerful form of therapy for attention-deficit disorders and other maladies. As one scientist puts it, we can now assume that just as children need good nutrition and adequate sleep, they may very well need contact with nature' (Louv, 2008, p3). Because of this dislocation with nature and because of our new-found reliance on technology to provide us with answers, the human fantasy of a utopian science-fiction future in which we are saved by inventors, nanotechnology or some other technological rabbit-in-the-hat solution has us believing that we do not have to change anything in our current daily lives. From Malcom Gladwell's article on the October 4th, 2010 issue of *The New Yorker*, *Small Change: Why the revolution will not be tweeted*, to the Arab Spring, to the entire *Occupy* movement, to Wheatley, Earls, Turkle, Wilber, Hawken, Suzuki, Louv, Kolb, Buber, Thackara and most of the Elders of the world advocate the importance of being present in person, with whatever technology present as a basic means to connect people.

The idea of designing opportunities to connect people, in person, to other people or to nature seemed like something that is actually worth researching. If I could get those people to make or do something, to co-

create something together, then I would be all the more satisfied that I was providing an opportunity for transformation.

Amongst all this reading and watching of movies, several primary research case studies are worth mentioning which leads me to present conclusions. Firstly, the city of Vancouver is notable on a global scale for many reasons: its natural beauty; its access to nature; its intimate connection with the ocean that much of it is surrounded by; its research into oceans and fisheries at both SFU and UBC; its City Hall's wish to become The Greenest City in the World by 2020; its arts and music scene; its connection with its recent past of activism, socialism; and its communities comfort with political liberalism. As well as hosting lectures conventions, conferences and meetings, the city is also host to numerous 'unConferences' throughout the year, which presents both 'formal' and 'non-formal' learning opportunities that I have taken part in and have directly informed my research.

THE HORSES MOUTH

I recently had the pleasure of meeting several prominent scientists working within the field of marine science. Most notably, Dr. Verena Tunnicliffe of the Victoria based 'Venus Project', and Dr. Paul Snelgrove, Director of the 'Census For Marine Life' (COML). Both presented at the Vancouver aquarium and Morris J Wosk Centre For Dialogue at SFU respectively. On several occasions now I have both met and emailed Dr. Nicholas K. Dulvy and Lucy Harrison of the Shark Specialist Group (SSG) through my work with the Wake Project (Dr. Dulvy was instrumental in encouraging Wake to focus on unsustainable fishing practices, rather than focus on sharks). I have also attended several talks about fisheries management and ocean sciences at UBC, of particular note was the talk on coral bleaching and reef degradation by Dr. Scott Heron of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), as well as the 'Downstream' workshop I facilitated with Dr. Paul Harrison on 'Our Nitrogen Footprint' at Emily Carr University organised by Rita Wong. The panel for the Downstream workshop also consisted of writer and journalist Alanna Mitchell, who spoke of the three most dangerous things our ocean is facing: reduced oxygen, increased temperatures and decreasing pH; as well as Bryson Robertson and Huge Patterson of the OceanGybe research project who spoke about their seventy thousand kilometres sailing voyage around the world collecting ocean and beach-based plastics.

I have learned many things from these discussions and presentations, both from the speakers and from the audience's reactions. I've also been frustrated by some of the explanations I've been offered. For example, as part of the US Government, members and representatives of NOAA are trained to use specific terms when representing the organisation in public. In one instance, one new employee was informed that he was not able to use the term 'climate change' because it did not agree with the political nature of his organisation's mandate. Instead he was required to use the softer term 'global warming'. Once again, I was reminded of the need for independent, peer-reviewed research over government funded projects.

These formal kinds of learning often took place within an academic institutional setting (like UBC, SFU or ECU), offered great insight into what was happening on the ground (or rather, in the ocean) and provided me with excellent opportunities to talk with the speakers and ask questions of them about their research and findings. Alternatively, I have learned a significant amount from what some might consider to be 'non-formal' learning situations. As I mentioned a moment ago, Vancouver plays host to many *unConferences* throughout the year. These events employ the kind of Open Space and World Café facilitation techniques championed by Margaret Wheatley and Valerie Brown. For those of you who don't know what I'm talking about, the World Café is more of a loose set of facilitation *Design Principles* or rather, an 'integrated set of ideas and practices that form the basis of the pattern embodied in the World Café process' (Homer, 2012). These principles can be used to help guide and facilitate any number of individuals through a collaborative calendar, topic and dialogic spaces, often with the aim of creating a safe space that can tease out input and value from all participants involved (as opposed to conferences, which often rely on the *Sage from the stage* approach) – in which the audience plays the role of the receiver of information.

The first event of its kind that I participated in was *DeGrowth*, an unConference hosted by the *Work Less Party* in early 2010. The *Work Less Party* is a political party focussed on environmental justice, community welfare and worker's rights. Amongst the conference organisers was Conrad Schmidt, author of the rebellious and hilarious book *Alternative's to Growth* (2010), which was on display at the front desk at the event. I subsequently bought this book and read it with interest, especially after participating in some of the round-table discussions facilitated by... whoever wanted to facilitate them. Up until this point, I had not experienced this kind of situation before. At *DeGrowth* – and subsequent unConferences that I attended such as *Wiring the Social Economy*, *Greenest City Camp*, *Navigating the Great Turning*, David Suzuki Foundation's *Green Café* and the one that I was most involved with the *Design Thinking unConference* – remarkable dialogical and learning opportunities occurred for upwards of 300 attendees per event. For much of the initial half of my research I was keen to learn how to employ and utilise Open Space facilitation techniques and to engage multiple-audiences with the subject matter of the ocean. My idea was that getting people to talk about it would spark a chain reaction of action.

As I continued through the summer internship with the *Design Thinking unConference* held at Emily Carr University however, I realised that these kinds of events lacked particular interactive, creative and making opportunities for those involved. Some of the time, they just seemed to provide opportunities for the same groups and individuals to show up, socialise and complain about the problems. There existed no framework for designing and facilitating collaborative methods of learning and co-creating solutions over the long term. Verbally, other participants discussed with me their feelings around being disconnected from the application of *Design Thinking* to those they had met because nothing was *created* or *made* together. Unlike the Amish, they hadn't built a barn.

NOTE: THERE WAS NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY. THE EVENTS WERE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AND OTHER PEOPLE WERE TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS IN THESE SITUATIONS (APPLIES TO IMAGES FEATURED OVER THE NEXT FEW PAGES)

Villy Christiansen (left) and Daniel Pauly, from the 'Sea Around Us Project' at UBC, Oct. 2011



Verena Tunnicliffe (standing) and Paul Snelgrove of the *Census of Marine Life* present at SFU, Nov. 2010



Parks Canada archaeologist Henry Cary and author Brian Payton at the Vancouver Aquarium, Feb. 2011



Figure iii – A, B, C, D, E



Figure iv – A, B, C, D, E

'Greenest City Camp' unConference at the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue, SFU, March 2011



Figure v – A, B, C, D, E

'Media Café' meetup at W2 Storyeum, June. 2011

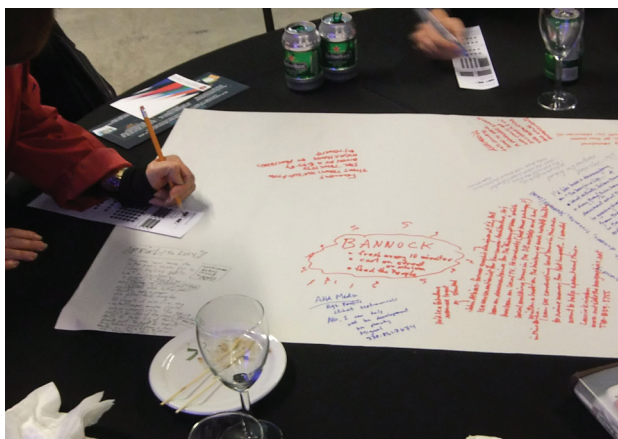


Figure vi – A, B, C, D, E



Figure vii – A, B, C, D, E

Another event of similar comparison, was the meetup called *Change Through Design*, which took place in the summer of 2011 and at which I was a speaker. I also used this as a research opportunity to ask questions about the organiser's ideas behind getting people together to talk and socialise about issues that were important in the community of Vancouver. Once again, I was reminded that although the event got people connecting and socialising, the question on my lips always seemed to be 'What next?'. Another meetup perhaps? This feeling reminded me of the need of the designer to deal with the second stage of problem-solving, the *solving* part. Providing opportunities for people to get together and introduce themselves is only one-step in the process. Once again, I began to look around for a way to get people to *do something*.

On the Saturday evening of the *Design Thinking unConference* I went to my first (of many) *Vancouver Design Nerd 'Creative Jams'*. I had been invited to these events many occasions before, but was either too busy or somehow put off by the name. I mean, come-on, the word 'Nerd' is in it. The *Design Nerds* employ a mixture of soft Open Space facilitation techniques and high-energy reflexive action (controlled by bottlenecking participants with tough time-frames and rapid countdowns), mixed with potluck food and booze to help lubricate the conversation and creative process. The *Design Nerds* have a simple equation that describes the process better than I could:

(Shared Values + Diversity + Brainstorm) ^{Potluck + Booze} = Innovation

They were applying design thinking, action and co-creation at once and it worked. It really worked. Speaking to Eesmyal Santos Brault, Tom Wynn and Sarah Hay at the steering committee meetings (I am now part of the steering committee) I was told that the primary focus of the Jams was not to deal with problems, but to have fun and be creative. If they led their process with problems, then perhaps the participants might use their left-brain too much, and not come up with the kind of creative ideas that turn people on?

The Jam had the same kind of energy that another event I had attended in October of 2010, less than two months into the MAA. I attended the five-day/four night *Social Change Institute* (SCI) at *Hollyhock* (*Canada's Lifelong Learning Centre*) on one of the larger northern Gulf islands, Cortez. SCI taught me many ideas about how to engage participants in a multi-sensory approach to problems solving as it included workshops, leadership skills, and marketplace exercises. Interestingly, I think that many of the ideas that I had not previously put together came from my experience at SCI, in the sense that it was very much designed to transform participants into thinking and acting about their goals, business missions and actions in new ways. The range of workshops, activities, breakfasts, lunches, dinners and the location of Cortez Island itself provided multiple intersections into personal transformation with and for others. Stina Brown's excellent facilitation of the proceedings, as well as Joel Solomon's charismatic leadership and charm, made the five day roller-coaster of mentally challenging and physically exhausting activities professional and smooth despite some hiccups with speaker delays.



Figure viii – A, B, C, D, E

THERE WAS AN EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY AT SCI. I HAVE OMITTED IMAGES SHOWING WORKSHOPS AND EXERCISES

The 'Social Change Insitute' at Hollyhock, Oct. 2010



Figure ix – A, B, C, D, E

SCI also provided an interesting design in the container that these activities fit into: some of which range from the more familiar themes of keynote presentations (Kara Pike's introduction to the importance of your personal story was particularly memorable), as well as the more World Café-like settings of group workshops, problem-solving exercises and the more business-focused *Marketplace of Ideas*, in which a panel of seasoned 'social changers' advised organisation directors on how they could improve their strategy and productivity.

Although some of the ideas that I have learned over the past two years are fading, more than anything, I would say that I changed a lot during those five days on Cortez – transformed even. I have not yet been fully tested on how much I have transformed and that is a good question for me to consider: how do we even know that transformation happens? Can we even begin to demonstrate it? How long does it take to transform? Due to the speed at which things are expected to change these days, is it possible that we don't have the time to recognise integral transformation, or to even perform the right-of-passage or ritual that allows us to feel like we've passed some sort of milestone in our journey, and are not returning to an old version of ourselves?

Activities that I participated in October of 2010 are still quite present in my current approach to problem solving because the learning involved a multitude of senses. It was deep, intimate, participatory, co-created, experiential, kinesthetic etc. despite it being over a short period of time.

In October 2011, Rita Wong approached me to present my work with the *Wake Project Society* at her Art History class entitled *Creative Waters*. Rita and I decided to break the three-hour time-slot up into two parts, a presentation section at the beginning and a workshop to finish. To begin, I told the story of how I fell in love with the sea as a child and how important it was to me growing up. I also talked of my discovery of my mission in life to do what I could to help save the ocean by describing the experiences I had with sharks and rays on the Galapagos Islands in 2008. Fellow society member Julie Sabau then proceeded to introduce some of the local problems that exist right here in the city and how important it was that we don't assume that problems happen 'elsewhere', as an oil spill or deep-sea fishing operation, but within our own city. We then proceeded to employ the workshop technique developed by the REOS Institute called *Systems Thinking With the Iceberg Module* (Grillo, 2010). This activity got the students up out of their chairs and gave them the ability to connect to the subject matter just discussed and to employ dialoguing, negotiation and reflexive action with their colleagues. The over all aim to offer them opportunities to become better systems thinkers.

PHOTOGRAPHY PERMISSION WAS ASKED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WORKSHOP

Co-facilitated presentation and workshop for the 'Wake Project Society' at Emily Carr University, Nov. 2011



Figure x – A, B, C, D, E

PHOTOGRAPHY PERMISSION WAS ASKED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WORKSHOP

Co-facilitated presentation and workshop for the 'Wake Project Society' at Emily Carr University, Nov. 2011

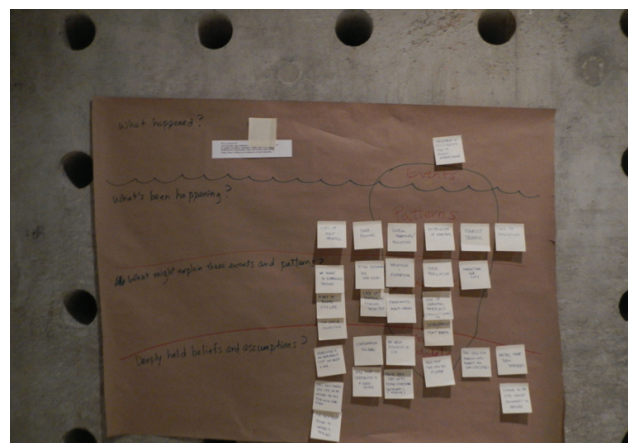


Figure xi – A, B, C, D, E

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH ETHICS FORMS

For complete responses from all participating artists and workshop facilitators, please see the following pages on the *Sea Inside* website: http://www.seainsideproject.com/?page_id=2651



SEA INSIDE

Research Invitation // Consent Form
Date // 18th January
Project Title // Sea Inside: Design, Culture and Marine Ecology

Principal Investigator // Marten Sims
Emily Carr University of Art and Design
604 726 1451, msims@ecuad.ca

Faculty Supervisor // Deborah Shackleton, Associate Professor Graduate Studies
Emily Carr University of Art and Design
604 844 3800, dshack@ecuad.ca

Invitation

Sea Inside is an exhibition and workshop series exploring the spiritual and physical relationship that we have with the sea around and inside us. The primary purpose of this study is to understand two things: whether participating creatives were connected better to the theme of the ocean, and; were the participating audience better connected to the marine issues addressed in the exhibition and workshops.

What's involved

As a participant in this research, your artwork or facilitated workshop will be featured at *Sea Inside*. You will be either providing artwork that you have created/co-created, or will be facilitating a workshop of some sorts.

Potential Benefits and Risks

Benefits may include: gaining a broader understanding of your creative practice; gaining a more in-depth understanding of the ocean and your relationship to it; participating in a unique opportunity to display your artwork or work with other creatives and; giving viewers or participants an opportunity to address their relationship to the sea and to themselves. There are no identified risks to participating in this research.

Confidentiality

Participants will be shown the utmost of respect during and after the process of their participation. I will be asking you to complete a series of sentences prior to the event, as well as a follow-up set of sentences that requires you to discuss your thoughts on the exhibition. Records of participant interaction will be recorded in paper and on digital file, and stored on the password protected hard drive of myself: Principle Investigator, Marten Sims. Please note that confidential data will be securely stored by the university and will only be accessible to the named researchers for 5 years after the conclusion of the project. I may also publish the findings in the future so it will be studied by the commons as this project is not something that I want to keep to myself and a few others within academia. Access to my research will not be restricted in any way as this project is public and intends to remain so. Although I have no current plans to use this research, I may wish to reexamine this project at a later date, perhaps to include parts of it into a book. I do not yet know what kind of book, but it would be nice to have the option.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this research is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to complete these sentences or refuse to participate in any component of the study. Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any date, or to request withdrawal of your data and you may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled.

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH ETHICS FORMS

For complete responses from all participating artists and workshop facilitators, please see the following pages on the *Sea Inside* website: http://www.seainsideproject.com/?page_id=2651

Publication of Results

Results of this study may be published in reports, professional and scholarly journals, students theses, and/or presentations to conferences and colloquia. Results will also appear online at www.seainsideproject.com. In any publication, data will be presented in aggregate forms. Quotations from the completed forms will not be attributed to you without your permission. Images of you will not be published without your permission. Feedback about this study will be available from the Principle Investigator (Marten Sims, 604 726 1451, at msims@ecuad.ca until August 2012, and marten@martensims.com from August 2012 onwards). Emily Carr University of Art + Design will also require an electronic backup of the data. Feedback will be available in the form of writing or verbal responses, and can be accessed via my email address (above).

Contact Information and Ethics Clearance

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please contact the Principal Investigator or the Faculty Supervisor (where applicable) using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at the Emily Carr University of Art and Design [insert file #]. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact the REB Assistant, Lois Klassen at ethics@ecuad.ca

Consent Form

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name // _____


Signature // _____ Date // _____

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH ETHICS FORMS

For complete responses from all participating artists and workshop facilitators, please see the following pages on the *Sea Inside* website: http://www.seainsideproject.com/?page_id=2651



SEA INSIDE

Researcher // Marten Sims // MAA candidate
Thesis Supervisor // Deborah Shackleton // Associate Professor of Graduate Studies
University // Emily Carr University of Art + Design

Digital Image, Video and Text release Agreement

Sea Inside: Design, culture and marine ecology

Sea Inside is an exhibition and workshop series exploring the spiritual and physical relationship that we have with the sea around and inside us.

I, the participant, am receiving this letter because my contribution of physical artwork or workshop is a part of the *Sea Inside* project. In signing this release it is my understanding that the material is to be used solely for academic purposes and that the major outcome will be a presentation of the final results in the MAA thesis. I understand the risks and contributions of my participation in this project and agree to participate. I agree to allow use of images and text for documentation and display of the project results as identified below.

Please check all that apply:

ANONYMITY //

☐ Yes, I consent to the inclusion of my identity (name) in all documentation and publications

☐ No, I do not consent to the inclusion of my identity (name) in all documentation and publications. I choose to remain anonymous.

DIRECT QUOTATIONS //

☐ Yes, I consent to being quoted in all documentation and publications

☐ No, I do not consent to being quoted in the documentation and publications

IMAGES AND VIDEO RECORDINGS OF ME OR OF MY PROPERTY //

☐ Yes, I consent to the use of digital photos taken during the exhibition and workshops to be used for research and publication purposes.

☐ No, I do not consent to the digital photos taken during the exhibition and workshops to be used for research and publication purposes, including academic papers and conferences.

☐ Yes, I consent to my photo being published in any of the final publications, including academic papers and conferences.

☐ No, I do not consent to my photo being published in any of the final publications, including academic papers and conferences.

I will indemnify and hold the student, and the University, and its employees safe and harmless against any legal prosecution or suit arising from or prompted by the use of all or any portion of the material in which I am quoted or appear. I am signing this release freely and voluntarily and in executing this release do not rely on any inducements, promises or representations made by said student or Emily Carr University of Art and Design.

Name // _____ Date // _____

Signature // _____

Witness Name // _____ Date // _____

Signature // _____

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH ETHICS FORMS

For complete responses from all participating artists and workshop facilitators, please see the following pages on the *Sea Inside* website: http://www.seainsideproject.com/?page_id=2651



SEA INSIDE

Marten Sims
msims@ecuad.ca
604 726 1451

page 1

Letter of Agreement

Dear Artist/Participant,

Firstly, thank you for your interest in the art exhibition *Sea Inside*. This letter is a formal agreement for you to review, sign and return to either Marten Sims, Amanda Pentland or Avalon Mott prior to the hanging of your work.

Statements:

As you may be aware, this project has a few underlying intentions. Beneath the featured artworks and workshops lies the belief that we – the creative class – can play a role in transforming other people's perspective of and actions towards the ocean by raising important questions about the way that we treat it, and by extension, ourselves. This exhibition invites us to look within ourselves for connections and relationships with the ocean that we may, or may not be aware of, and to strengthen the bond that viewers/participants have with the ocean. As part of this project I would be grateful if you could spend a few moments of your time completing some or all of the sentences found overleaf.

The use of these sentences will help create a better harmony with all of the contributors and piece descriptions. Once completed, this text will be placed both near to your piece for the audience to read and in an exhibition booklet. The intention of using a harmonized description allows the viewer to find commonalities within the exhibition context and offers them insights as to what thoughts you had when you made or selected this specific work.

We, the project director and curators, will:

- Provide the description of the overall show, which will be displayed in the entrance to the Concourse Gallery, on the project website www.seainsideproject.com and on the Facebook event page.
- Hang your artwork for you on Thursday 9th and Friday 10th February, 2012
- Promote the show in and around Vancouver through posters, flyers, social media and word-of-mouth
- Display your work on the project website: www.seainsideproject.com
- Display your work for the agreed upon period of February 10th – 19th, 2012
- Use an image of your work to promote the exhibition on the SeaInsideProject.com website as well as Facebook
- Post your name and artwork description (see Page 2) during the show

You, the artist/participant will:


- Meet with Marten Sims, Avalon Mott or Amanda Pentland to discuss content, expectations and logistics
- Bring your artwork to Mitchell Studios at 1st and Pine one week prior to the hanging of the show
- Indicate via email if you would like to host an artist talk event
- Provide us with your full name, work titles, dates and dimensions of art pieces
- Provide us with a completed description of the work and your relationship to it (see Page 2)
- Have the artwork install-ready by February 9th and delivered to us at Mitchell Studios
- Promote the artist talk event (if applicable)
- Be responsible for the take down the artwork on the agreed upon date of February 19th, 2012

Continued on page 2...

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH ETHICS FORMS

For complete responses from all participating artists and workshop facilitators, please see the following pages on the *Sea Inside* website: http://www.seainsideproject.com/?page_id=2651



Marten Sims
msims@ecuad.ca
604 726 1451

page 2

I (print name) _____ have read and agree to the terms listed on Page 1.

Signature // _____ Date // _____

Please complete the following in reference to your artwork:

Name _____	Date _____	Size _____	Medium _____	Install ready? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Name _____	Date _____	Size _____	Medium _____	Install ready? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Name _____	Date _____	Size _____	Medium _____	Install ready? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Name _____	Date _____	Size _____	Medium _____	Install ready? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Name _____	Date _____	Size _____	Medium _____	Install ready? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
Name _____	Date _____	Size _____	Medium _____	Install ready? <input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N

Before completing this section, please sign and return a copy of the Consent form to Marten Sims

A set of questions about your work (optional):

This contribution to the *Sea Inside* examines... _____

The preservation of the sea is important because... _____

For me, the sea is a special place because... _____

My relationship to the sea is... _____

The exhibition will take place on **February the 11–19th, 2012**. You are invited to the opening on Friday 10th, 6pm. Installation will commence **Thursday Feb. 9**, but we'd like to have the finished artwork in our possession at least one week in advance of the opening, so please negotiate with Marten what date you can drop your artwork off. Remember, this show is only one week long, so don't forget to arrange transport and collect your artwork on the destall date of **February 19th**. If you cannot drop off or deliver your artwork, please try to arrange for someone else who can, or else please contact me using the details provided at the top and I will see if I can find someone who can. If your work requires installation apparatus (such as a ladder), then please inform me immediately.

Many thanks, we'll see you soon!

Marten Sims, Amanda Pentland and Avalon Mott

For more information about this project, please head to www.seainsideproject.com

APPENDIX C

RESEARCH ETHICS GALLERY AND LABYRINTH SIGNAGE

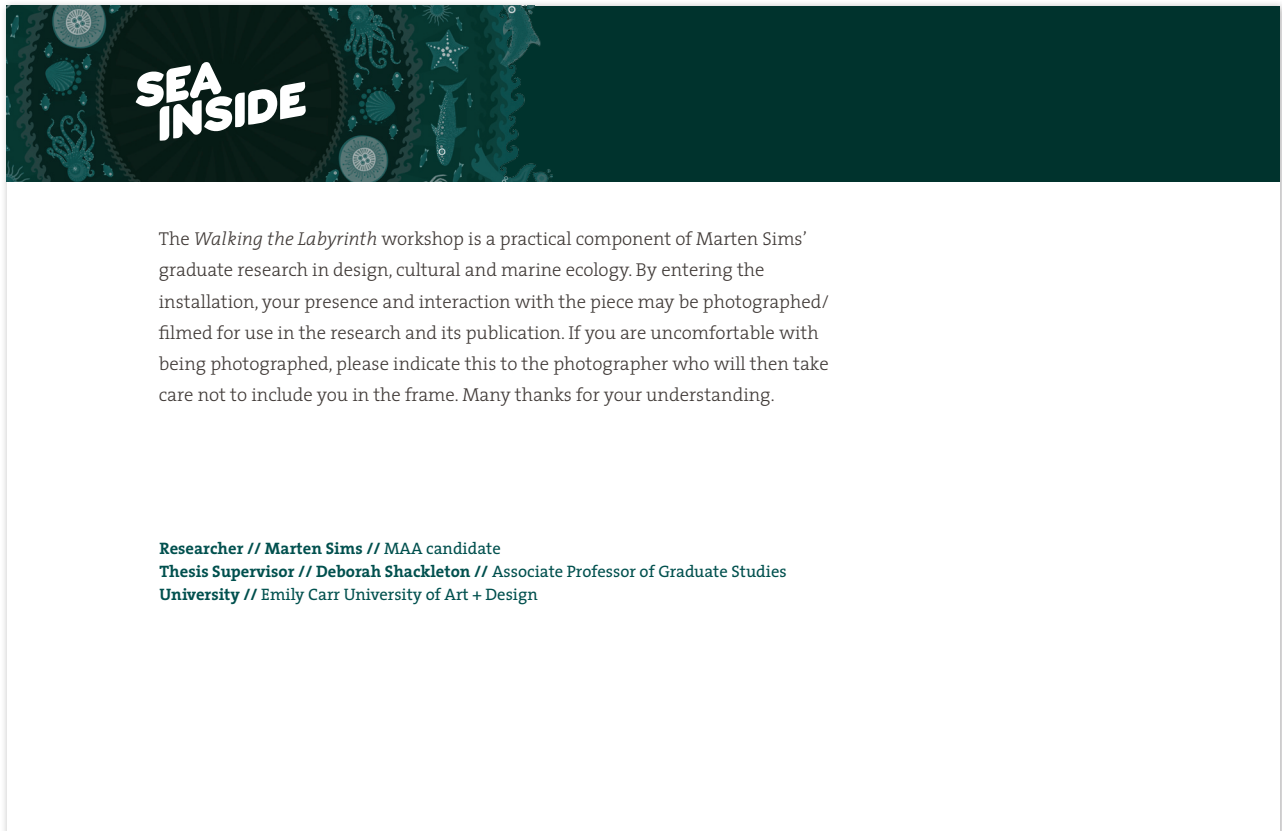


Figure xvii

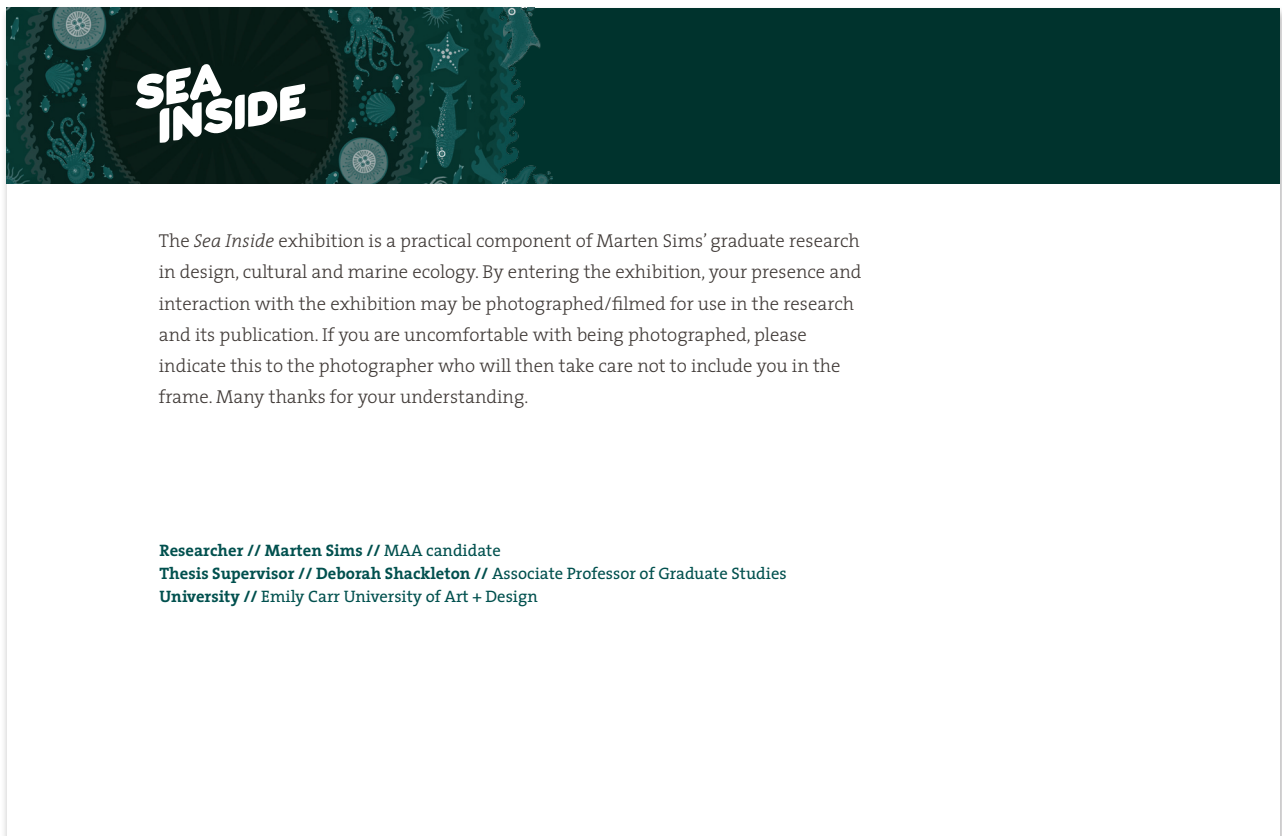


Figure xviii

APPENDIX D

EVENT POSTERS

POSTERS AND ILLUSTRATIONS DESIGNED BY MYSELF

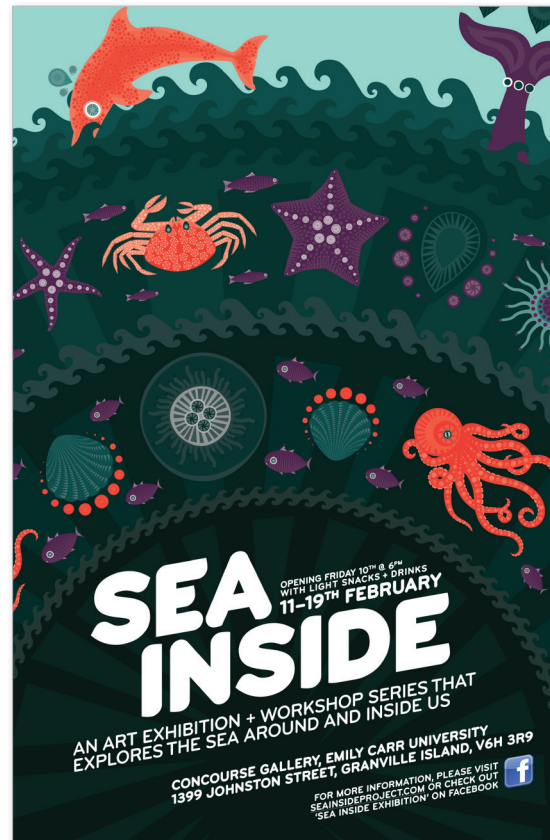
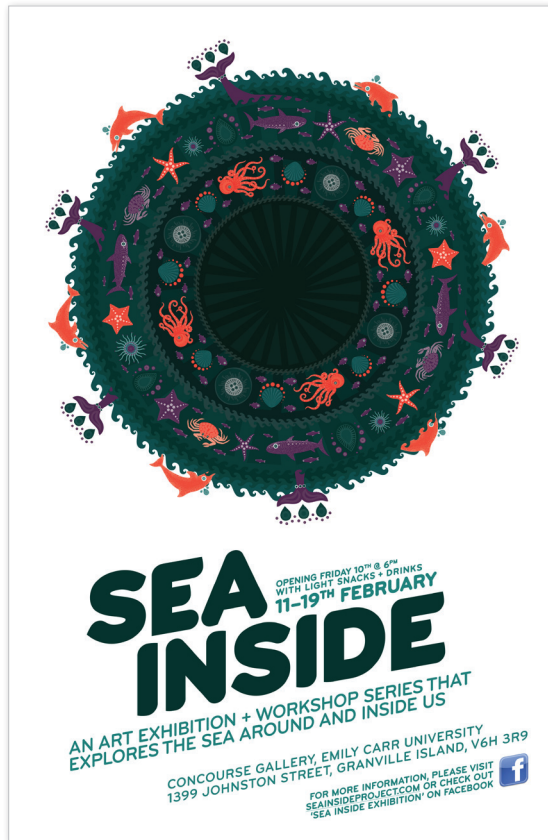


Figure xviii – A, B, C, D

APPENDIX D

EVENT POSTERS

POSTERS AND ILLUSTRATIONS DESIGNED BY MYSELF

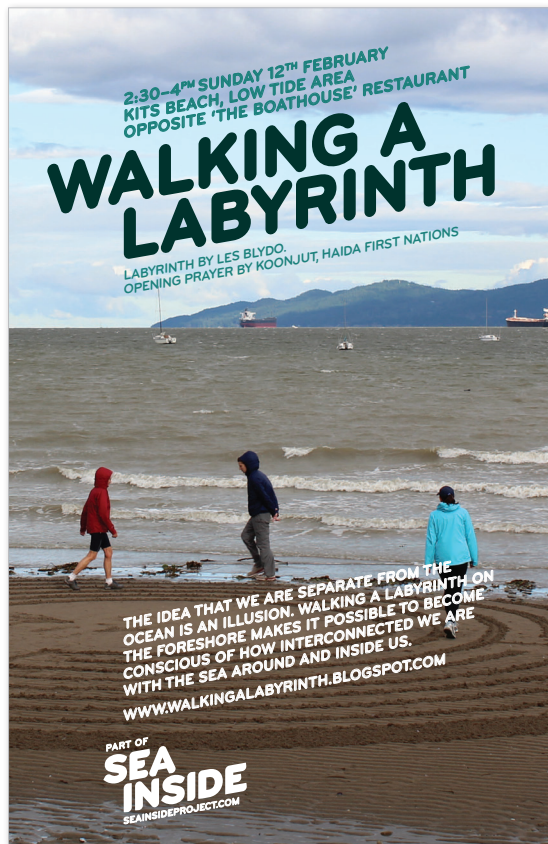


Figure xix – A, B, C

APPENDIX E

EXHIBITION PREMISE AND MANDATE

(THIS DIDACTIC WAS PRESENTED TO VIEWERS AT THE GALLERY ENTRANCE)

From the Arctic to the Atlantic, Indian, Antarctic and the Pacific – to the thousands and millions of interconnected seas, gulfs, bays, marshes, wetlands, swamps and creeks – the global ocean covers seventy-one percent of our planet's surface. The ocean ecosystem is an indescribably immense and diverse ecological system. It is intimately connected to land through the Earth's tide-inducing waltz with the moon, and the sun – which affects the evaporation, condensation and precipitation of the global exchange of water. Beneath this mostly two-dimensional surface, the ocean engulfs the tallest mountain, the deepest trench and the largest canyon on 'Earth'. It contains 97 percent of all life on the planet, produces over half of the world's oxygen, absorbs carbon dioxide and makes this planet a hospitable place for every single one of the seven billion+ humans who both occupy it's shores, or interact with it through our routines, consumption habits and cultures.

The beauty and mystery of the ocean has provided inspiration for a broad variety of creative and artistic practices for thousands of years. Storytellers, painters, poets, musicians, dancers, designers, sculptors, photographers and many others have incorporated themes and impressions of the sea – it's creatures and our interactions with it – into their work. More recently, evidence of the increasing degradation of the ocean ecosystem and the effects of a changing marine environment have brought a new urgency to these cultural responses. Artists of all kinds have channeled their creativity into works that bring us face-to-face with themes that might have otherwise gone unnoticed and extend to us an opportunity to re-examine our relationship with the ocean.

Figure xx – A

CONTINUED OVERLEAF...

Sea Inside is an exhibition and workshop series which draws on developments that have emerged from the holistic practices of transformation design, systems thinking and cultural activism. It examines ways in which the creative and artistic practices can assist to emphasize faltering interdependent systems and highlight positive relationships between humans and the ocean. Over forty contributors from Emily Carr University including students and faculty, as well as creative practitioners external to the institute have participated in the production and co-creation of this body of artwork and workshops.

As you enter the three gallery spaces or participate in a workshop, the curators invite you to both reflect upon the artworks and to reflexively interact with features that request your immediate response or comment. We also wish to note that this vast array of seas, gulfs, bays, marshes, wetlands, swamps and creeks that exists 'out there' – which lies a few steps from where you are currently stood – also includes you, and when you loose sight of ocean, you might never need to search further than within yourself to rediscover the *Sea Inside*.

Created and Designed by Marten Sims

Curated by Amanda Pentland and Avalon Mott

Including artwork, production and an assortment of wonderful contributions by Adam Stenhouse, Amanda Pentland, Angela Smailes, Avalon Mott, Brian Inakovs, Christian Mejia Costa, Christine Cho, Claire Havens, Crystal Chan, Dale Gamble, David Ellingsen, David Peters, Denise Quesnal, Duane Elverum, Irene Lim-Khng, Jane Slemon, Jon Sims, Jordon Rivera, Julie Sabau, Karolle Wall, Karsten Smith, Koonjut aka Veronica Godard, Les Blydo, Lucas Sinopoli, Lynn Price, Maksim Bentsianov, Marten Sims, Mike Swallow, Renee Sutton, Robin Pickell, Sandra Sabau, Sara Ciantar, Sasha Mann, Sean Arden, Sophie Shalbert, Stephanie Jonnson, Sogol Assadbeigi, Tom Powell, Vicky Bowes, Will Phongly, Yasher Nijati, Zara Contractor, the Swamp Theatre: Connor Polishak, Eve Belle, Rianne Svelnis, Stephen Cheng and crew, and finally, you – the viewer, the participant.

The Long Table was created by Alexandria Mitchell, Joshua Welsh, Justin Hay, Laura Kozak and Theunis Snyman

APPENDIX F

ACTIVITY OBSERVATION NOTES

WORKSHOP #1 // WALKING THE LABYRINTH

Walking the Labyrinth explores avenues of my research into situational dynamics – what happens when we position ourselves directly beside the ocean, in the liminal space of the intertidal zone and participate in an activity which involves walking a temporary labyrinth drawn in the sand. In addition, how do participants engage with the act of walking (centering, facing all directions, unwinding), of meeting and dialoguing with others, or reacting-to or reflecting-on the First Nations blessing that was offered, of the incense burned, the sound of hammer and chime? And how does the combination of these factors play a role in connecting walkers better to the ocean – from which we are ‘borrowing’ some time from the tide – without directly experiencing it, i.e. getting wet!



Figure xxi – A, B, C, D

Date: 12/02/12

Research observation time: 1–5pm (4hrs)

Labyrinth by // Les Blydo

Blessing by // Koonjut aka Veronica Godard, of the Haida First Nations

My roles: Co-organiser, Host, Participant, Researcher

Research interests:

Creative kinesthetics (Robinson, 2011)

Grounded Theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967)

A(x4): Actions, Artifacts, Actors and Atmosphere (Rothstien, 2006)

Reflexive and Reflective Engagement (Schön, 1983)

Six Senses: Story, Design (Context, Facilitation), Play, Meaning, Empathy, Symphony (Pink, 2006)

Dialogic Learning and Action (Freire, 1970, Flecha, 2000)

Non-Formal Education (OECD, 2010)

Rites of Passage (Van Gennep, 1909)

Situational Dynamics, i.e. Liminality (Coser, Thomas 1977, 2003)

Proxemics (Hall, 1963)

Interruption Theory (general theory)

Do, Re-think, Believe (Earls, 2007)

Lateral Thinking (de Bono, 1970)

Forced Connection (Treffinger, D.J.; Isaksen, S.G. and Dorval, K.B.)

WHAT HAPPENED:

I met with Labyrinth creator Les Blydo on Kits Beach just after 1pm. The day was silvery-grey, with intermittent light rain and fortunately, almost no wind. I returned Les' wave as I headed down the slope towards the area that we had selected the week before. The intertidal zone smelled of the deep richness of decay and salt, and that sea-freshness one gets when the air touches the cheeks and makes the eyes weep slightly. The ocean was almost perfectly flat, a massive mirror of silvery-white flecked with grey. Inch-sized waves kissed the shores. To the northern end of the beach we could see a bare-chested paddle-boarder and his friend circling a couple of Mergansers hanging out near the rocks at the point. Another solitary bird, paddled just offshore, and appeared slightly cautious of our proximity. Gulls and crows on the other hand, pecked over the debris on the beach as though we weren't even there. The intertidal area around Kits Lido – the massive outdoor pool usually packed during the summer – was full of exposed rocks, damp with seaweed and barnacles, and despite the fact that to some, there was plenty to see in the intertidal zone at that moment in time, I could not help but be reminded that just fifty years ago, this beach was crawling with an abundance of life (purple, orange and brown sea-stars, sea cucumbers and hypnotizing nudibranchs). Despite seeing photographs of the First Nations village of Snauq, (the village that chief August Jack Khatsahlano called home) which was situated on the land now occupied by the northern end of Kits beach and Vanier Park, I cannot imagine what this land would have looked like those 200 years previously, having been so thoroughly reshaped by man and machine in recent years.

By 2pm, the tide had still not receded as much as we had hoped, so we waited patiently for a space large enough to start drawing the labyrinth to appear in the flat, hard sand. Standing in this space and facing

towards the land, we could barely make out the heads of the walkers and runners using the seawall trail up by the restaurant – the beach recedes at such a steep angle that I (at 178cm, 5' 11") would have been fully immersed in the ocean had the tide been high. This situation is both advantageous and disadvantageous because although it offers some semblance of privacy for those walking, it also means that once drawn, the two-dimensional labyrinth may be missed by many people who do not look down to the intertidal zone. I immediately thought it was foolish of me to not bring a sandwich-board sign and prop it up by the restaurant.

I need-not have worried. Soon, a small crowd had gathered, some of whom had read about the labyrinth on Les' blog, some of whom had been to the show and heard about it by word-of-mouth, in posters, and some who were just walking by and wondered what was going on. It might have also had something to do with the spectacularly decorated ancestral cloth featuring the split-tail orca that Koonjut, of the Haida First Nations, was wearing around herself.

Soon, the tide reached its zenith, and Les quickly moved to action with his bamboo poles and string, rapidly constructing the labyrinth within 20 minutes.

As I sat slightly up the beach watching as one after the other entered and proceeded through the labyrinth, I felt a similar parallel was emerging to Siobhan Davies' Walking Dance, undertaken on the 2004, 2005, and 2006 Cape Farewell expeditions, in which the entire crew of the schooner the Noorderlich walked across the icefield their ship was entrapped in. As people walked, they appeared to either become lost in their own world, concentrate intently on the lines in the sand, or nodded/smiled/acknowledged others when passing them, brushing shoulders (the concentric circles are 1ft apart), or catching a slower walker up! Once in the centre some conversations broke out, while others chose to close their eyes and, deep in thought/bliss may have been focusing on the journey they had just walked.

Finally, as the tide turned and began to lick the outer ring, a man came over, took off his shoes and walked the labyrinth. He did not seem at all bothered by the numbing February water and stood for many minutes at the entrance. Slowly, the ocean erased the labyrinth markings and footprints, taking in the memories and energies of those who walked.

SUMMARY

The research goal for this liminal, intertidal activity was to address a non-formal approach to connecting participants with the ocean by encouraging audience participation, reflexive and reflective engagement, as well as induce kinesthetics (walking, moving), providing an opportunity for people to be within close proximity to others (who otherwise may have passed one-another by on the seawall), leading to dialoguing. For many, this was their first time walking a labyrinth (of any sort) and could therefore be marked as a Rite-of-Passage for that individual, or group. As with all my research, I attempted to include both Rothstien's Ax4 (Actions, Artifacts, Actors and Atmosphere) and Pink's Six Senses (Story, Design, Play, Meaning, Empathy, Symphony).

Through my observations, I witnessed many moments where the participants engaged with many, or all of the above topics, but non-more than their 'walking' contribution was obvious to them. In this sense it is difficult to comprehend internal thought processes and mental models that may have emerged and developed over the course of their participation. This is made particularly tricky to assess because of the randomness that ones thoughts might transition through from one state to the next (i.e. from skepticism, to curiosity, to engagement, to realisation, back to skepticism, to engagement). What remains even a week later might be even harder to conclude. For the purposes of this research, my aim was to provide an opportunity that took place off-site from the gallery and institutional environment and to take advantage of the kinds of situational dynamics evoked by making this process by the sea. All the senses were engaged (all but taste), locomotion and kinesthetics are favoured to dialogue, audio or visual stimulus.

Over 30 people walked the labyrinth that day, some who knew about the Sea Inside, and others who were passing by along the path and along the beach and felt draw into the labyrinth. For many, it was a grounding and spiritual experience, for others, it was fun, a way to connect to others with whom they may have passed on the path without notice.

WORKSHOP #2 //ONCE UPON A TIME... STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

Once Upon a Time... explores the use of narratives and storytelling techniques (employed within the gallery-space) and utilised specific tools (stones, shells, glass-bottles, wooden-table) to assist in grounding the participants in the act of creatively engaging with the theme of the ocean, environmentalism, sustainability and storytelling.

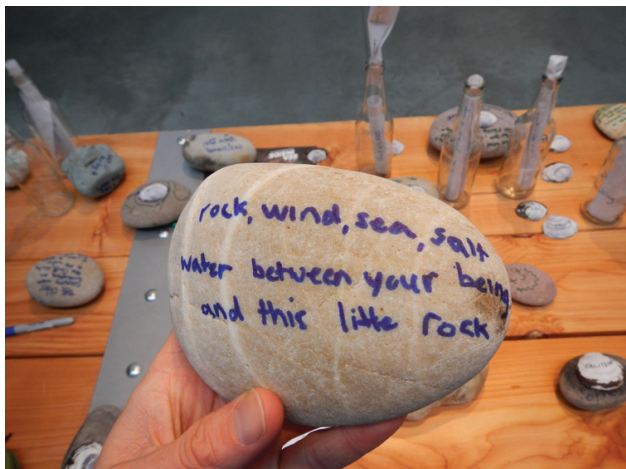


Figure xxii – A, B, C, D

Date: 15/02/12

Research observation time: 4–6pm (3hrs)

Activity created and facilitated by: Zara Contractor and Marten Sims

Tools: Shells, Pebbles, Glass Bottles, Pens, Paper, The Long Table

My roles: Co-creator, Co-organiser, Co-facilitator, Researcher

Research interests:

Reflexive and Reflective Engagement (Schön, 1983)

Think + Make or Look, Think, Act (depending on the school)

A(x4): Actions, Artifacts, Actors and Atmosphere (Rothstien, 2006)

Six Senses: Story (obviously), Design, Play, Meaning, Empathy, Symphony (Pink, 2006)

Dialogic Learning (such as reading aloud to strangers) (Freire, 1970, Flecha, 2000)

Non-Formal Education (OECD, 2010)

Proxemics (Hall, 1963)

Lateral Thinking (de Bono, 1970)

Brainstorming (Osborn, 1963)

Forced Connection (Treffinger, D.J.; Isaksen, S.G. and Dorval, K.B.)

WHAT HAPPENED:

The storytelling workshop was co-facilitated by myself and MAA Design candidate Zara Contractor. We met the day before the workshop to run over the specifics of what we were going to do and made a plan of actions to involve as many ocean themes as possible. Zara had collected some shells and small pebbles, but we felt there was a need to allow the participants to go deeper by offering them a plethora of visual apparatus to engage with. We met on the morning of the workshop and headed to Point Grey to collect a bag-full of absolutely stunning larger pebbles. Although she had lived in Vancouver for over six months, Zara – from the city of Karachi in Pakistan – had never been to the beach in Canada before, and so I was thrilled to be able to introduce her to the beautiful Western Hemlock ravines out at Tower Beach. The pebbles were then hauled up the 463-or-so steps back to the car, and we then proceeded to track down about thirty clear bottles from Joe's Bottlebank at 26th and Main, which we subsequently stripped the labels from using baking soda, a couple of knives and lots of elbow-grease. The bottles would be used to place messages inside (Message-In-A-Bottle) for other gallery-spectators to either read, or reflexively engage in making their own stories.

While the bottles dried I went to meet Industrial Design student Theunis Snyman, who had agreed to lend us 'The Long Table' which I had first encountered at the City Studio project on False Creek. The Long Table is a transportable table made from Western Hemlock donated to the design students by the City of Vancouver. It have been used for public engagements to talk about water usage, as well as a table to eat food from. We decided to apply for permission to use the table inside the gallery space because it would suit both the sustainable aspect of the exhibition, as well as the natural and local colour theme that the *Sea Inside* employed. The table was set up in the centre of the Concourse Gallery between the Cocolithophore and the Kelp (we shifted Sophie Shalberts chalk board to the staircase), and placed the bottles, rocks, shells, paper and pens on the table. There were no chairs for this workshop. It would take less than a half-hour of people's time, and we liked the idea that they were using their bodies, rather than resting. This would keep the energy flowing and give them the option to move around the table to interact with the objects when they needed to.

Immediately people began to ask us what we were doing, and we explained that is was for the workshop. The first was a truck driver called John, who happened to be walking by the gallery and decided to check it out. The second was a woman who was interested in one of the university art programs. We convinced them both to participate.

EXERCISE 1 // STONE STORY

There were two parts to the storytelling workshop. Participants could choose to do one, or both exercises, but we preferred that they do both in the order we designated. The first involved two parts: a brain-storm of words in which the participant was requested to pick one word to begin with. We did not choose the word for them and we did not tell them what the second part of the exercise was. What we did do was suggest that this word start from a position of what they had experienced within the gallery so far. From this first word, participants were then instructed to rapidly output 30–50 words in sequence. Each new word linked to the previous word. For example: sand, bucket, water, drink, glass, etc.. They were given five minutes to make up to 50 words, and we would count-down the times (“3–minutes remaining! . . . 2–minutes! . . . 1 minute! . . . 30 seconds! . . . Okay, wrap up!”). This exercise was very exhilarating and the participants laughed and joked around. Some of them got stuck on a word, but we kept encouraging them to just push through and not think about the pattern too much. As more gallery visitors overheard the activity, they too wanted to join in, intrigued by the commotion. Because of the newcomers, Zara and I split the facilitation up, with her dealing with the second part of the exercise and me, instructing those who had just showed up. Before long the long table was full and participants had to move to the floor, and and the plinth where Duane’s piece was located.

The second part of this exercise was to circle five of the 30–50 words (once again, without instruction as to what was coming next). They had two minutes to reflect on this, but most people did it more rapidly. While we dealt with the different people, now at different stages of the exercises, some participants talked amongst themselves, with people they stood next to, who they didn’t know or joked around with friends about how they felt about their word choices. Others moved off to the side to stop and appeared deep in concentration, awaiting further instructions. There was also a continuous stream of people not participating who wanted to know what was going on and kept interrupting. Interestingly, this also caused people who were participating to strike up new conversations by explaining what they were doing to others.

Once five words were selected, we then asked that they choose a pebble from the pile on the table, and to use the five words to write a story or poem onto the pebble. For example, one participant selected five words ‘Plastic’, ‘Tentacles’, ‘Sea Urchins’, ‘Acidification’ and ‘Phytoplankton’, and subsequently wrote this poem on a pebble:

*Plastic creeps up the food chain,
threatening aquatic bodies big & small
Hello tentacles of acidification
Hello tardigrade hope...
Rain listens to sea otters digesting sea urchins
Phytoplankton make air.*

Another example:

*Quiet calm
Mountain, forest, ocean, cloud, wind, tree.*

*Many directions coming from
Sometimes welling up
Sometimes faltering
Gathering strength
Slowly and carefully
The ground up builds from courage*

The choosing of the pebbles themselves caused an interesting reaction in the participants as they became quite particular about the size, shape, texture, form and perceived 'preciousness' of the stone. After pausing for a moment, some participants swapped one rock for another. Perhaps because of the warm-up exercise and the energy now created by the excitement of being 'released' by that lateral thinking exercise, all of the participants now appeared to go deep into flow, most becoming silent and rapidly writing their stories and poems. We gave them ten minutes, but almost all participants were done before we asked them to wrap up. At this point Zara and I shifted to soft facilitation, and let the participants do their own thing while we focussed on the kind of hard-facilitation required to instruct newcomers.

Once again, it helped having two of us, because we also had a captive audience of 10–12 participants, some of whom began to ask us about the bottles and shells. For those who had finished their stone writing though we requested that they wait until some of the others had finished theirs, and then asked if anyone wished to read their stories or poems aloud to the group. Although some participants were initially bashful about doing this, and one girl sheepishly passed her pebble for her friend to read, generally the response was positive. Two University faculty read theirs first. They were poetic, and well read. The truck driver spoke after them. He had a soft, but confident and commanding voice. I was blown away by how imaginative and well-crafted his story was.

As each of the participants read out their stories, we waited silently for them to finish and thanked each of them in turn for their words. There was no applause, perhaps because of the seriousness of the themes that some people had chosen to deal with.

EXERCISE 2 // MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

The second exercise employed soft-facilitation, and was more simple than the first. Almost all of those who had participated in the first stayed for the second, with the exception of one who had a meeting. Participants were given the instructions all in one go this time: choose a shell with an emotion written on it (i.e. despair, love, fear, anger), and use the small sheets of paper to write a message, which they were told would be put into the bottle. Some people jumped to the conclusion that we would actually be putting these bottles in the ocean, but we assured them that this part would remain in the gallery for others to read. It was just a reference that would help them imagine the idea that the bottle might take years to arrive in the hands of the reader. Participants were then given a suggested cap of ten minutes to write their letters, and asked to read them once they were completed. As before, some finished before others, and chatted to us and other participants about their stories while they waited. John, the truck driver went first, with his word 'Awe':

The rivers of light flow south. The fluid rivulets absorb life-enriching nutrients, transporting further down the system. Eventually, these life-building minerals feed the great plumes in the estuary of green. Ancient life began here, nourishing the people and animals. 'Awesome' is the nourishing effect of such a minuscule organism and the large amount of life it supports! Ocean algae, kelp and the rest are so awe-inspiring it leave one speechless yet profoundly exuberant! Sea, ocean, tidal rivers, seabed, waves, dolphins, electric eels all awe-inspiring.

Another story that caught my attention was this one from a recently arrived mechanical engineer from Newfoundland, who had walked into the gallery on a visit to Granville Island. His word was 'Oil':

Sorry... It is now 2012, I don't know when this bottle will be found. Today we exploit the sea and our natural waterways for our own gain. We buy oil, move oil and fragment oil across the sea with no back-up plan in case of a spill. A spill that will permanently spoil the natural biotic and abiotic beauty of this body of water. I hope by the time you find this, humanity has realised your importance and intrinsic value to all species on earth. I feel guilty in my apathetic stance and consideration when I buy or promote the ocean's exploitation. To who finds this, learn from my mistake, and appreciate the ocean, because we need it more than it needs us.

Once again, participants waited respectfully for others to read aloud, and I detected no nervousness in the speakers this time. Those who had not spoken before chose to read aloud this time. We thanked everyone verbally, with others nodding, or muttering thanks, often at the solemn tone of the letter's content and the tone spoken. After everyone had read out their letters, they were asked to roll them tightly and to place them inside the glass bottles on the table. Participants could unroll them and read them later if they so wished. We thanked everyone for their words, their time and their performances and wished them a good day. Some stayed to speak with friends, new acquaintances, or asked us further questions about the *Sea Inside* and other workshops. We offered the participants the opportunity to leave their stories and poems on display, and all were happy to do so.

SUMMARY

All the materials continued to remain in the gallery for the remainder of the exhibition. Simple instructions were left for other participant. Eventually all the rocks, paper and bottles were used, with people making stacks in the centre of the table. While some of the responses that came after the facilitated workshop were somewhat immature (declarations of love for another student in the bottles), I am content that we offered the participant to once again take part in a creative activity that most of us can engage with – whatever our writing skill-level.

While I cannot speak for everyone present, this workshop touched me deeply, the way that people wrote, and what they wrote about. Especially the way they spoke about either the sea, or a concern that they had for it. For me this demonstrated that many levels of creativity reside within each and every one of us. We just need opportunities to engage with them, and make new connections in the space between.

WORKSHOP #3 // SWAMP THEATRE WORKSHOP

Swamp Theatre was a workshop employing Brazilian Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* and Vancouverite David Diamond's *Theatre For Living* dialoguing, kinesthetic and haptic techniques. It was an experimental learning technique that employed the use of facilitated exercises and guided interactive theatre, where the spectator could choose to become an SpectActor, in which they replace a character in a scene.

Swamp Theatre was started in Vancouver in early 2011 by a team of semi-professionals who had trained with Diamond and other theatres, and wanted to develop their own grassroots practice. I attended many of their first workshop sessions in early 2011, and had been talking about collaborating with Rianne on a theatre-related project for years.



Figure xxiii – A, B, C, D

Date: 17/02/12

Research observation time: 6–10pm (4hrs)

Workshop by // Swamp Theatre – Eve Belle, Rianne Svelnis, Connor Polishak, Richard Porteous, Danielle Williams, Sofia Novikova, Aurora Prevelic and Karen Kohv

My roles: Co-organiser, Host, Participant, Researcher

This workshop involved the following participatory techniques:

Creative kinesthetics (Robinson, 2011)

Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1993)

Theatre For Living (Capra, Diamond, 2007)

Reflexive and Reflective Engagement (Schön, 1983)

A(x4) (Well x3 actually): Actions, Actors and Atmosphere (Rothstein, 2006)

Six Senses: Story, Design (Context, Facilitation), Play, Meaning, Empathy, Symphony (Pink, 2006)

Dialogic Learning and Action (Freire, 1970, Flecha, 2000)

Non-Formal Education (OECD, 2010)

Proxemics (Hall, 1963)

Lateral Thinking (de Bono, 1970)

Forced Connection (Treffinger, D.J.; Isaksen, S.G. and Dorval, K.B., 2006)

WHAT HAPPENED:

I met with Eve and Rianne three weeks prior to the workshop date at the fantastic eatery known as East Is East, at 26th and Main Street. I was late and they were keen to hear what I had to pitch to them after I had been talking to Rianne about this idea for about a year now. We went over some ideas for what might or might not work for the theatre workshop, talked about how we could integrate the forum theatre aspects into the workshop and keep it relevant with the idea of active and internal transformative change and the ocean. On the day of the workshop, I was initially preoccupied with a lecture that was given by designer lecturer Charlie Cannon from Rhode Island School of Design, but once in the room, I became intently focused on the warm-up that Connor, Danielle and Rianne were getting stuck into. Christian, the filmmaker, had also arrived and was capturing parts of the process in case there was some sort of unanimous vote-out by the participants against filming the process. We simply didn't know what they would say. We also didn't know how many people would show up, and at 6:28pm, only a handful of people were in the room. Eve confessed to me at the debrief that this made her feel a bit nervous. However, 6:45, there were 31 people present, which is a lot of people to facilitate and give space to, but it worked out swimmingly. I was particularly impressed by how well the Swampers integrated ideas from the *Sea Inside* into the workshop and addressed oceanic themes at key moments throughout the workshop. The majority of the workshop was taken up with a series of exercises that involved the participants in physically moving, reflexively engaging with one another, by looking, watching, walking, silently introducing themselves. Others than the 'Check In' and 'Check Out' at the beginning and end, participants rarely spoke throughout the workshop. Theatre of the Oppressed employs hard facilitation to ensure that the participants get into the bodies, and out of their heads as much as possible. The workshop schedule was made up of the following exercises, each of which was facilitated by a different 'Swamper':

3 min	Rianne	Guidelines & Theatre of the Oppressed history
20 mins	Eve	Check In
5 mins	Rianne	Step into the Circle
20 mins	Rianne	Eye Contact; Hypnosis
40 mins	Connor	Images
1.2 hrs	Eve	Scene
3 mins	Aurora	Character Peel
25 mins	Eve	Check Out

Eve's introduction was well practised and she spoke formally, but kindly. With permission, her opening to the evening is repeated here for those who were not present.

I'd like to acknowledge that we are on unceded/stolen/colonized Coast Salish Territory.
And to give thanks as we are guests living and loving on this land.

It is especially important to keep these issues of colonization and decolonization in mind this evening as we touch on issues of the environment and environmentalism. Indigenous communities, not only here, but all over the world are the most vulnerable, the most affected by environmental destruction: be it the Tar Sands, the Enbridge Pipeline, or the Vancouver based mining company, Fortuna Silver in Oaxaca City, Mexico. Where a few days ago three locals were shot and killed by the police while trying to stop a water system from being installed on their land because it would be supplying the mine with water.

When Marten, the mastermind behind the *Sea Inside* exhibition, first came to me and asked the Swamp to be involved in offering an experiential component to the exhibition and we were still brainstorming he asked me if there might be some exercise in which we could get the participants to become fish, or get into the mind frame of being fish. In order to relate to the ocean, the sea... And while that's a nice thought, us all becoming fish – (and I say this with love) we're not fish. And we'll never be fish.

In terms of connecting with the sea, and the environment in general, all we can do, as humans, is look inside ourselves, and ask ourselves questions; to be curious.

What prevents us from seeing the environment as being a part of us?

What allows us to see ourselves a separate?

Hopefully, tonight we'll be able to listen a little more closely, not only to what's going on up here [points to head]. But also here/here/here [points to body parts].

And when we're listening that closely to our bodies and one another, I think that is the first step in listening to what our earthly body is trying to tell us.

In order to capture the workshop on film and in photographs, Eve asked formal permissions from the participants. Two people opted out, but the 28 others were happy to be included, so care was made to leave the two who had raised their hands out of the image frame. In addition, the film-maker Christian had worked with the United Nations for several years and was comfortable becoming a participant for the first one hour of the workshop. This way participants became familiar with him as one of them, and not as just an observer. Others participants, Swamp members and myself also took images during the workshop to capture specific moments.

The evening then began with what is known as *Check-In*. This is described as '*A time to put yourself on the table, undivided attention, no cross-talk, twinkling [in which participants wiggle their fingers towards someone who makes a comment they like – used rather than speaking], check [making a tick with hand], be mindful of your time.*'

Participants were asked to make a shape (symbolising how they feel right now); say their name; their Preferred Gender Pronoun (see below); and respond briefly as to why they came tonight. As with the idea of 'acting between concepts', the use of the Preferred Gender Pronoun helps us create a culture that recognizes that not everyone fits into or is interested in fitting into the gender binary. This creates a space where people can identify themselves as they see fit.

As we moved through the evening, two points of interest are worth focussing on with regard to this research. First, Rianne's facilitation of '*Step Into the Circle*' tied neatly to the *Sea Inside* as it requested that the group make a circle and 'step in' to the circle if they had ever done what she said. One of her first comments was '*Step into the circle if you've ever swam in the sea*'. Everyone stepped in. Eve then added '*Step into the circle if you've ever swam in the sea, touched something weird and felt really gross*'. Almost everyone stepped in. Another person added '*Step into the circle if you've ever gone skinny-dipping in the sea*'. A few people stepped in. Soon, other participants were engaging in introducing their own sea-based experiences, with a lot of laughing at the kinds of things that people were willing to admit, and a lot of 'twinkling' as people agreed with others in silence. The act of using our bodies too provided people with the opportunity to move closer into the centre depending on how strongly they associated with the statement made.

The second point of note was the carefully scripted 'scene', which I had witnessed performed earlier as Rianne, Connor and Daniella practiced. The scene focused on a dialogue taking place at a 'kitchen table' between a mother and two children, who were late teens, early twenties. Amongst other things the girl admits to her mother that she's decided to come off birth control because she read somewhere that she's '*Pissing estrogen into the sea and it's bad for the environment!*'. The intention was to provide

an opportunity for the spectators to realise that change often comes at the cost of negotiation, and that complex problems often involve talking to others about how you feel and negotiating with others, rather than simply deciding to do something and then acting independently of others. The 'Scene' is designed so that the spectators can become *SpectActors* by replacing either the sister, brother or mother characters and continuing with the scene to see if they can make it safer. The newcomer however, must be careful because the two other characters do not always react in the way that the newcomer intended them, and so some *SpectActors* were unsuccessful in improving the situation. In one instance, a *SpectActor* made the scene worse by attempting to replace the mother. She was overly stern and forceful, at which point the girl exploded at the mother exclaiming that she can't tell her what to do. Another situation made the situation much better when a spectator replaced the teenage girl, who then asked her mother to please listen to her because she had something important to tell her, at which point the dialogue turned positive and the situation became more safe.

The idea behind involving others in this particular scene was that, we must often practice for the real world in a safe situation, as we can make mistakes in a workshop that we might not necessarily wish to make in the real world. In many senses, this scene works like prototyping in the design process, as the designer has to figure out how to solve a problem before she tests it in the real world.

SUMMARY

I witnessed a multitude of emotions in the other participants during the workshop. They ranged from pleasure, to fear, to thigh-slappingly hilarious, to complete concentration, stillness and seriousness. It was a great experience to be a part of this, as well as to observe how others reacted to the facilitation and the context of looking within ourselves for solutions in this safe space. Participants were secure, safe and well looked after. At one point a woman who had admitted that she was going through some personal issues at the 'Check In' began to cry (a regular occurrence at a workshop) and was looked after by Eve and Rianne.

Swamp member Connor offered a solid summary at his 'Check Out' at the end of the evening. He mentioned that for their group, the 'Swamp' is this damp, wet part of our bellies where things (emotions, feelings) sometimes get stuck. He said that simply knowing where that was made him think that he understood himself a bit better, but now he had to imagine that there was this whole sea inside of himself and he felt both overwhelmed and ready to find out more about this Sea Inside. He also mentioned that despite all that may be going wrong 'out there' in the ocean, the best place to start is with our own actions, towards ourselves, and then towards one-another, and then towards nature, because that is something that we do have more control over.

Once again, the use of full-bodily engagement and reflexivity in the reactions of the participants, as well as the overall design of the workshop and the participation witnessed, I am happy to note that many people perhaps fell just a little bit more in love with themselves, with others and with the sea.