Experiential Design – Rethinking relations between people, objects and environments

• Paper / Proposal Title: Process

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• Abstract (300 words):

I am a lecturer on BA (Hons) Graphic Arts and Design, a course unique in its use of experiential teaching methods, diversity of creative practices and a non-hierarchical, collaborative learning environment. In the second year we run GAD5.2 Process Brief, a module which encourages a process-led approach to creative practice. On the surface, this is the ubiquitous Graphic Processes unit, but in practice this far from the convention.

On the first day we go Magnet Fishing at the Leeds Liverpool canal using high-strength retrieval magnets to pull rusted objects from the water. We don't tell the students how to fish, we instigate an opportunity for self-instruction. In Cave Drawing we listen to lectures on the subject of the vagus nerve so that our mind is distracted whilst our body chooses to paint. We don't tell the students how to paint, we just join in the activity ourselves. We
run **The Workshop That Must Not be Named**, a session where the only permitted planning is a room booking. Again, we don’t tell the students what to do; their guess is as good as ours. The key here is stepping back, but not away; we are stepping back and joining the community.

**GAD5.2 Process Brief** is about activity: doing and making; it isn’t concerned with outcomes. In this way the material and the method become a conduit allowing us to move between disciplines as such distinctions no longer seem to fit. At a point within the module there is a moment where students forget that they are learning, and we forget we are teaching. We are fostering an inclusive, creative community, one which is reciprocal and social.

This presentation will focus on **GAD5.2 Process Brief** outlining case studies from the module as a methodology for others to use within their practice.

**Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Benjamin Hall is an animator and educator whose practice spans animation, coding, creative writing, performance, assemblage and documentary. He is one week away from submitting a practice-led PhD titled **Society is the Workshop: Community as Material and Method within a Loose Parts Practice**. This enquiry proposes a method for collaborative arts practice based around workshops made up of moveable parts, and an expanded definition of Simon Nicholson’s Theory of Loose Parts. As part of his research practice, Hall creates animated films, his most recent **Dum Dum (De De Bom)**, a collaboration with his six-year-old son has been screened at film festivals worldwide. Hall is currently a senior lecturer on **Graphic Arts and Design**, and **Illustration** at Leeds Beckett University and also tutors for the Open College of the Arts.