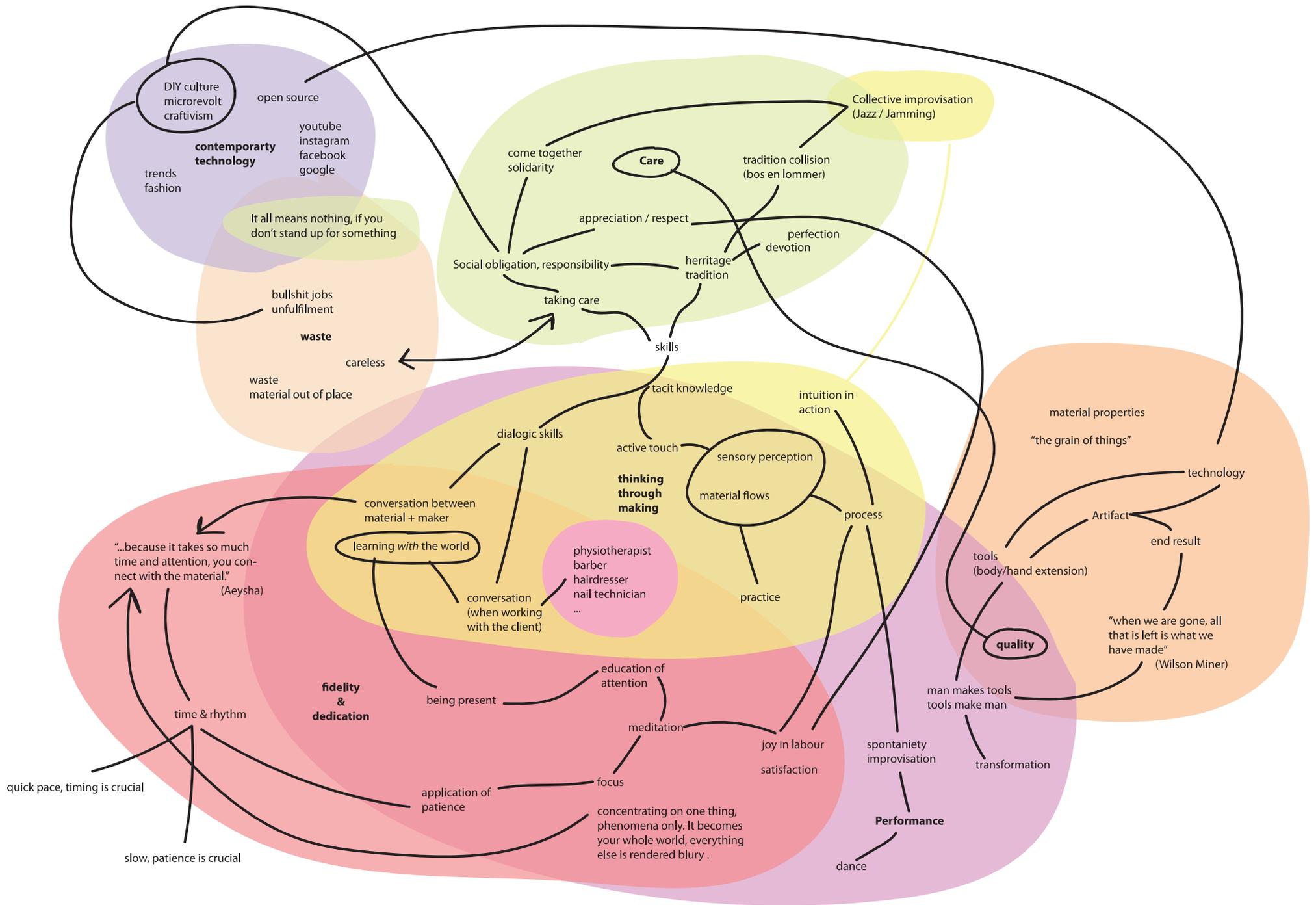


This is a collection of concepts, ideas and images that are born out of the impressions and observations done during the stay of 2 weeks in Bos en Lommer (Amsterdam)

The foundations were made during talks and interviews with the local craftsmen of Bos en Lommer + lectures in WOW, this information has been mapped and analyzed. Further research on the topic is done with information acquired from the internet, talks and books (Making by Tim Ingold / Are We Human by Beatriz Colomina / The Tactual Experience of Objects by Marieke Sonneveld).



Key concepts

Practice

Thinking through making

Touch

Humans and Tools

Care

Social responsibility

Waste

Craftivism

Dialogue

Performance

Collective improvisation

Thinking through making

Instead of learning from facts about the world we can be enabled to be taught by and with the world around us.
(Gregory Bateson/Deutro-learning)

The art of inquiry

Allow knowledge to grow from our practical and observational engagement with the beings and things around us.
(Dormer 1994)

Learning to learn

To know things, you have to grow into them, and let them grow into you, so that they become a part of who you are. Knowing is a process of active following, of going along.

Tacit knowledge (skills)

The kind of knowing that cannot be transmitted by language (opposing explicit knowledge). Tacit knowledge is created through the making which is an ongoing conversation between *material flows and sensory awareness*.



The process is meditative and because it takes a lot of time and your attention, you connect with the material.
(Ayesha)

I find it important to feel the material you work with and know what the material wants, how does it bend, behave and what qualities so that I know how can I use it.
(Meike)

I like the fact it all starts with a lump of clay, basically dirt. And it ends with opening the kiln and seeing the surprise. You can never really know what to expect, the glaze has its own mind.
(Natalia)



The craftsmen does not impose form on matter, but finds the grain of things and bends the grain to his/her evolving purpose.
(Tim Ingold)

*I hear and I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand*
(Confucius)

Touch

Active touch

Contact, Connect and Understand

As soon as babies are born, they're ready and willing to start learning and all of their five senses are active. One important way in which they learn is through touching.

They hold, squeeze and swing whatever comes into reach. Their world becomes an exciting environment, in which they learn to develop their skills through manipulating balls, dolls, bicycles and in which they learn how to avoid unpleasant encounters, such as the pointy cactus.

Although children are aware that *they* are the active agent in kicking the ball and riding the bicycle, it is not always clear whether they are cuddling the toy or whether the toy is cuddling them; touching becomes *interactive*.

Touching is interactive, touching implies being touched. (Seeing does not imply being seen, neither does hearing imply being heard)

Touching and being touched are integrated into one phenomenon = *the tactual experience*.

People need to touch to know and understand the world around.



Tactile / kinesthetic learning

Montessori teaching method (Learning through touching)

Maria Montessori viewed the child as one who is naturally eager for knowledge and capable of initiating learning in a supportive, thoughtfully prepared learning environment. Her method attempts to develop children physically, socially, emotionally and cognitively. Her methodology is being widely used to this day.

Montessori method teaching elements:

- * Student choice of activity from within a prescribed range of options.
- * A constructivist or "discovery" model, where students learn concepts from working with materials, rather than by direct instruction.
- * Specialized educational materials developed by Montessori and her collaborators often made out of natural, aesthetic materials such as wood, rather than plastic.
- * Freedom within limits.



"One only learns and grows through and from experience, in physical interaction with a material world"

(Dewey)

"A world in which touch is poorly addressed is likely to weaken the feeling of being in contact with the world, which may lead to a disappearing feeling of self-awareness."

(Bergsma)

Humans and Tools

Paradoxically, touch may also blur the boundary between the experienced self and the world.

“The example of people’s capacity to feel *through* objects, by ‘incorporating’ these objects as part of their own body.” (Polanyi, 1967)

For example, a blind person feels the world at the end of his/her white stick, and a carpenter feels the wood through his/her saw.

Tool - an object used to extend the ability of an individual to modify features of the surrounding environment for a specific purpose.

Tools are body & mind extensions and a good example of how the merging between maker + material manifests itself.

(material transformed into a shape&state that enables connection with, and transformation of the human body and it’s abilities)

“The jug shapes the void and is in turn shaped by it”
(Heidegger)



The human hand is human not of what it is but because of what it makes.

The human body is designed

Design is prosthetic, producing new human bodies by transforming old ones. The image of a stable, singular human figure served by design is a fantasy, an effect of design rather than its starting point. The body itself is designed. It is remade deeply and daily - starting with its very silhouette. Before design, there is never a clear line between the inside and the outside of the human body, the end of one body and the beginning of another. Our inside is made of the outside that constantly passes through it.



Maker - Material

Inventing the human

The emergence of the human through the continuous invention of artifacts involves an uncanny mirroring. The human becomes human in seeing itself in the things it makes, or seeing its possibility in those things. So the human doesn't simply invent tools, tools invent the human.

"We shape our tools, and thereafter our tools shape us."

(John Culkin)



Homo Faber

the concept that humans are able to control their fate and environment as the result of the use of tools

It's difficult to really understand the degree to which we are made by things. It's only when we go back in time to see how this began that this fact seems true. It isn't that we are the only animal to use tools; it's that we rely on them for survival and we depend on them, to say who we are.

When we are gone,
all that is left is
what we have made
(Wilson Miner)



Animal crafts

The use of basic technology is also a feature of other animal species apart from humans. These include primates such as chimpanzees, some dolphin communities, and crows. Considering a more generic perspective of technology as ethology of active environmental conditioning and control, we can also refer to animal examples such as beavers and their dams, or bees and their honeycombs.

Technology

The simplest form of technology is the development and use of basic tools. The prehistoric discovery of how to control fire and the later Neolithic Revolution increased the available sources of food, and the invention of the wheel helped humans to travel in and control their environment. Developments in historic times, including the printing press, the telephone, and the Internet, have lessened physical barriers to communication and allowed humans to interact freely on a global scale.



Technology

Technology (“*science of craft*”, from Greek, *techne*, “art, skill, cunning of hand”; and - *logia*) is the collection of techniques, skills, methods, and processes used in the production of goods or services. Technology can be the knowledge of techniques, processes, and the like, or it can be embedded in machines to allow for operation without detailed knowledge of their workings.

Open source is a term denoting that a product includes permission to use its source code, design documents, or content. It most commonly refers to the open-source model, in which open-source software or other products are released under an open-source license as part of the open-source-software movement. Open source helps to form open collaboration and access data and information easier than ever before.



Philosophical debates have arisen over the use of technology, with disagreements over whether technology improves the human condition or worsens it. Neo-Luddism, anarcho-primitivism, and similar reactionary movements criticize the pervasiveness of technology, arguing that it harms the environment and alienates people; proponents of ideologies such as transhumanism and techno-progressivism view continued technological progress as beneficial to society and the human condition.

How is social media and the open source information changing the process of acquiring skills ?

*I was following this shop on **instagram**, came here to ask if I can work here and now I am here for 8months.*
(Peter)

*I learned the basics from the **Internet and YouTube**. I see - I do and this is how I learned all I know.*
(Frank)

*I usually plan and then make. I'm finding lots of inspiration on **instagram** from famous chefs and restaurants.*
(Boris)

*I learned by just doing and also watching **youtube**, from some of my friends who come over.*
(Daan)

*Learned everything from my parents, later more techniques from the **Internet**.*
(Mohammad)

*I have to improvise all the time. I constantly follow trends on **instagram and facebook**, you have to be aware of all the unicorns and minions that kids love and create a strategy for flavours.*
(Frank)

Bullshit jobs

The office of unfulfilment

David Graeber published an essay, which argued the pointlessness of many contemporary jobs, particularly those in fields of finance, law, human resources, public relations, and consultancy.

It became a basis for a YouGov poll, in which 37 percent of surveyed Britons thought that their jobs did not contribute meaningfully to the world.

The essay argues the existence and societal harm of meaningless jobs. The book contends that over half of societal work is pointless, which becomes psychologically destructive when paired with a work ethic that associates work with self-worth.

Graeber claimed that a great many jobs in the managerial, clerical, sales and service sectors are not real jobs with genuine utility, but, rather, ones whose purpose is unclear to almost everyone, including those doing them. These jobs Graeber termed “bullshit jobs”.

“ford-ism” - industrialization, splitting the work into small parts that can be done by anyone, under-paid workers. And it does not bring about knowledge evolution. This is the force that is opposing craftsmanship and making our lives dull.

(Reinier)



Are some contemporary jobs unfulfilling because the worker is not able to see the result, effect of his/her work?

Seeing the result directly gives me a positive feeling of accomplishment.

(Nicoleta)

I like working with the dough. It is satisfying to work on something and see your result. Doesn't even matter so much what I do in the bakery, I like it all.

(Erin)

Quit your job, start living

*I used to work in **tourism and recreation management** for 2 years and it was awful, basically fooling people. I decided to become a physiotherapist because I wanted to help people.*

(Johana)

*I used to study **IT** and worked as a cook at the side. Worked for a few years in IT and got depressed, quit it to become a full time cook.*

(Alessandro)

*I started to study and work in **sociology** during the 60's. After realizing that it has absolutely nothing to do with life as it is, I quit and worked as a plumber for 30 years.*

(Reinier)

I have a friend, who after working 20 years in a bank archive, quit his job and decided to ride a bike while singing and selling ice cream. He rides what he calls the “Robertos Ijsbike”.

(Frank)

*I studied and worked in London in **finance**. I can't imagine myself going back.*

(Natalia)

Care

Social responsibility

Doing unfulfilling work, bullshit jobs is hurting people mentally and often leads to depression, burn out and a boring life. People want to do meaningful action. We want to take care of something, someone. This gives fulfilment to our lives.

What is quality for you?

When you do the absolute best you can and you genuinely care for the patient.

(Johana)

“The desire to do a job well for its own sake”

(Sennett)

Devotion / Heritage / tradition.

Some shops have been here for decades, you can meet the founders offspring there, continuing the craft into the present day.

I run a business and have responsibility towards my family. If you do it for passion only, it's not enough.

(Frank)

I was helping my dad here since I was 7 years old. Its a family business.

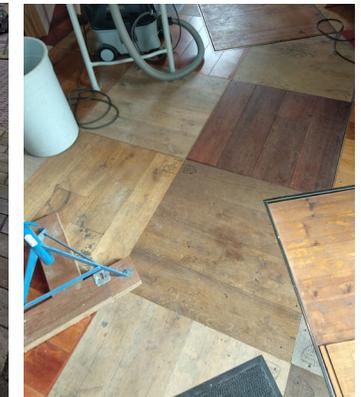
(Muhammad)

I have been helping out my dad in the bakery since I was 12.

(Erin)



Picture of the father of Simon the fish artisan. The shop is being taken care of 4generations.



Waste - material that has lost it's place.



taking care of mistreated material

“Saving great material is one of my main motivations.”

Jeroen treats materials which are often seen as cheap, boring and disposable, with attention and care, so that they gain a detailed, well-made quality.

“I collect envelopes and stationery from companies who change their identities, from ones that go bankrupt and other individuals. I then turn them into notebooks which are usually given back to them.”

All of the furniture in my workshop is either found or made out of found, trashed materials. The entire floor is made out of wood sample tiles that a floor shop left behind.

(Reinier)



Crafts as an agent for social change?

It all means nothing, if you don't stand up for something

Craftsman = civil servant

Social responsibility is a duty every individual has to perform so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystems.

Are your actions bearing your values?

Shokunin

Shokunin is a Japanese word for “artisan” or “craftsman”, which also implies a pride in one's own work. In the words of shokunin Tashio Odate:

Shokunin means not only having technical skill, but also implies an attitude and social consciousness... a social obligation to work his best for the general welfare of the people, an obligation both material and spiritual.

When I prepare an order I do it as if I would be cooking for my mother and brother. I get most satisfied when the client is happy.

(Alessandro)

On Fridays I work at Cascoland Collective, I offer a repair cafe. Cascoland is great! They saved me when I had some trouble with the city hall.

(Reinier)



Craftivism

Craftivism is a form of activism, typically incorporating elements of anti-capitalism, environmentalism, solidarity, or third-wave feminism, that is centered on practices of craft - or what can traditionally be referred to as “domestic arts”. Craftivism includes, but is not limited to, various forms of needlework including yarn-bombing or cross-stitch. Craftivism is a social process of collective empowerment, action, expression and negotiation. In craftivism, engaging in the social, performative and critical discourse around the work is central to its production and dissemination.

#DIY culture

#Microrevolt



The highway demolished part of the village, and a lot has changed. I am gathering information and images from archives. Me and my wife want to make an exhibition, show here about the Sloterdijk village and its history (pointing out to b&w pictures on the wall)

(Reinier)

Dialogue

Communication skills

Searching for truth through dialogue - exposing assumptions
"Lets sit in a circle together and then something will happen"
(Humberto Schwab)

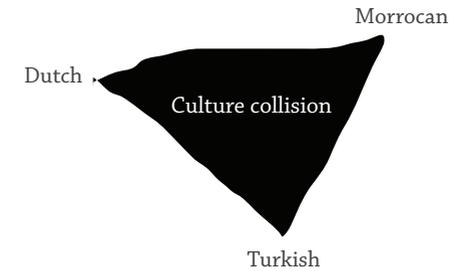
"your you is how you interact with others / the environment around.
You are not your thoughts. You are your interaction."
(John Dewey)

I sometimes feel like a psychologist, clients often tell me their wor-
ries which is also a cause for physical pain.
(Johana)

I take my time. I want to understand the person, her/his hair and
create personal contact.
(Deborah)



How can we come together but still keep our differences?



Restoration - conversation with the past?

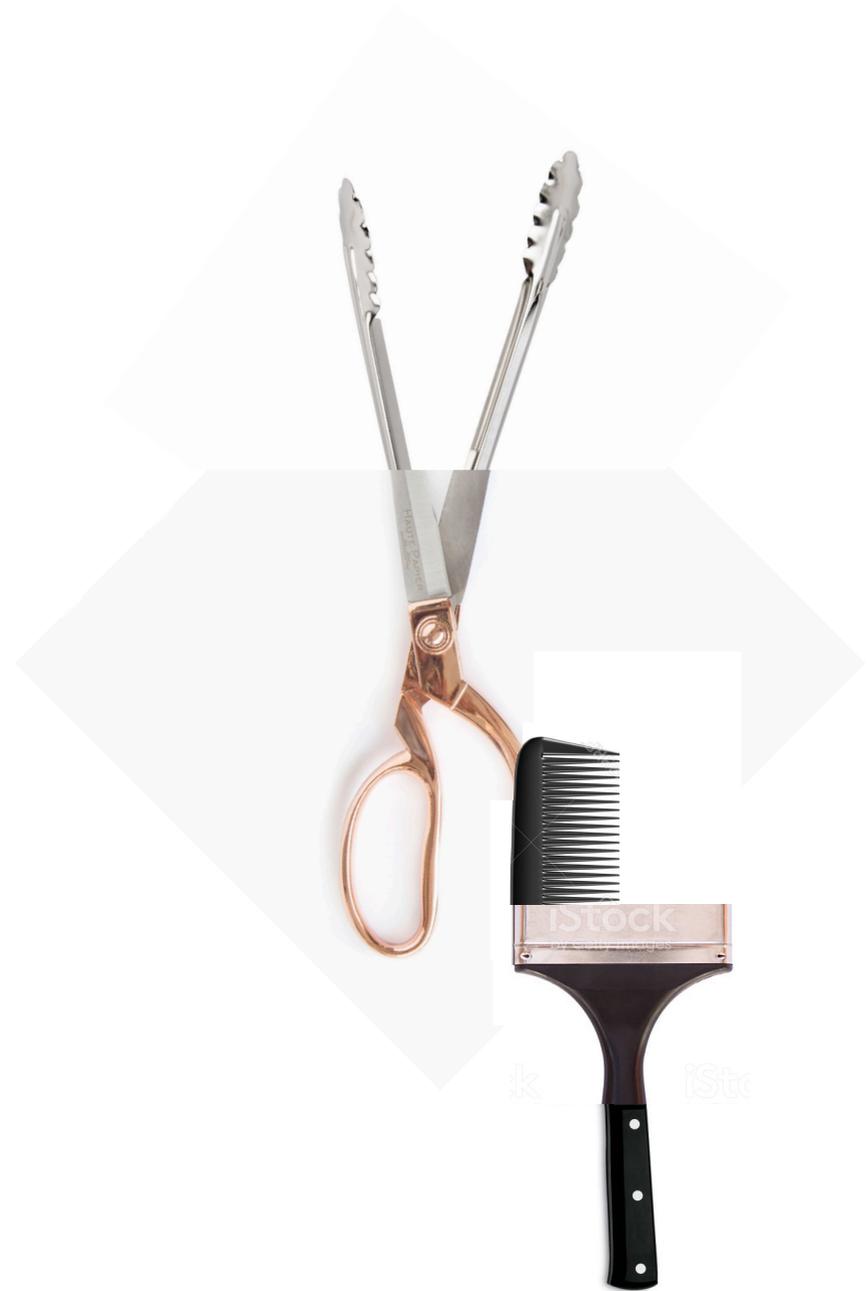
Dialogue

consolidation/integration

"We don't need rules but rituals" (H. Schwab)

Weave the different threads together to create a strong social fabric.

#Collaboration
#Cross-disciplinary
#Collage



Performance

Practice, process, movement

In the act of making, attitudes give rise to choreography and gesture. The process is central in any craft, it is what may take you to a meditative state and even render you super focused on the present moment.

When I come to work and start working, my body and mind is put to the work, it is calming me down, taking away stress. You put your mind to focus on only one thing, only on the material. In this moment, the rest of the world doesn't matter.

(Ramon)



Form is the end - death.

Form making is life.

(Paul Clay)



Collective improvisation

Trust, listen, groove

“The city as a complex participatory system”
(Caroline Nevejan)

Participant observation - It is to join with people in their speculations about what life might or could be like.

Improvisation is at the heart of dialogue. When musicians are jamming they are having a conversation with each other but only they talk with vibrations of their musical instruments.

“Lets sit in a circle together and then something will happen”
(Humberto Schwab)



How can we have fun improvising together, when we all play such diverse instruments?

When asked about collaboration with other craftsmen - I think we are self-sufficient, I always think that I know what is the right way to do things. So would be difficult to work with someone who is convinced in different methods than mine.

(Erin)

Perhaps to facilitate such collaboration inbetween diverse craftsmen, a moderator or conductor is necessary. The designer can take the role of a bridge.



Taking the role of mediator or conductor in the orchestra of crafts?

