

# Atelier Maker

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For as long as humans have existed, we have been makers. From creating crude weapons to hunt prey, forming clay bowls to eat and drink from to 3D printing biomatter to repair organ damage, our shared history shows that at the centre of all human advancement lies the pursuit of making. However, it would be misleading to think of making as purely functional. Amongst the oldest acts of human making are objects for adornment and joy. Our recent history saw the 'make do and mend' attitudes during WW2, the DIY culture which emerged in the fifties and grew in the 70s and 80s aligned with Punk and Thatcher's Britain and most recently the Maker Movement of the noughties which gained momentum after the financial crash of 2008. These instances demonstrate a human need to use our own capacity and available resources to fix, create and change things in the face of hardship. With the advances in technology, that DIY spirit has been combined with access and knowledge of computers and digital fabrication tools to provide people with the capacity to fix, create and change at a level akin to professional manufacturing. Karl Marx said that power belongs to those who have control of the means of production whilst Ivan Illich was critical of industrial making replacing this with a vision for "convivial tools" that encouraged people to think for themselves and be more socially engaged. Is it possible then, at least in theory that as makers we have blurred the lines of power, class and wealth creation making human equality a possibility to pursue whilst raising interesting questions about creative provenance and ownership?

## Make

In week 1, as individuals, each of you are asked to learn a new skill, different to everyone else's in the class, that could be described loosely as making. What you make need not be functional; it might be playful, intriguing, surprising or provocative. These do not have to be digital making skills but can be if you so wish or hybridised and existing in that grey area between manufactured object or thoughtful thing. You should explore, practice and develop over the course of the module. You will write an individual editorialised instruction article similar to those in Make magazine.

In groups - to be identified in week 3 - you will collaborate in writing a long read article referencing books, blogs and other research to provoke discussion about an aspect of making in your article. Prompts will be provided to each group as a starting point. Each article will be compiled as part of a final atelier publication including the 'instructional articles' submitted in week 4.

## Crafting objects and spatial

# interventions

In the same small groups, you will be asked to conceive, design, prototype and craft an interactive physical digital object or space inspired by your groups insights around 'making' gathered through your preparation research for your article. Your object or space might be political, playful, practical, instructional, poetic and/or provocative.

## Forming an atelier

As a whole year group, you will be expected to act as a coherent atelier. This will involve sharing out roles, tasks and responsibilities and also developing a collective identity and ethos. Together, you will create a brand, a photo shoot, a catalogue, social media presence and an exhibition/workshop/seminar series, in which you will present your final prototypes. This experience will be valuable for your portfolios, degree show and future careers. You should seek publicity nationally and internationally: our goal is to 'make' some noise.



*Wilma @ Citadel Leith 2018, Samira Boon& Next Architects, Magdalena Borzeka Bell, Vones et al., 2018, Milne, 2017 and Kieran Connely- interactive music installation.*

*"We put thirty spokes together and call it a wheel;  
But it is on the space where there is nothing that the Utility of the wheel depends.  
We turn clay to make a vessel;  
But it is on the space where there is nothing  
That the utility of the vessel depends.  
We pierce doors and windows to make a house;  
And it is on these spaces where there is nothing  
That the utility of the house depends.  
Therefore, just as we take advantage of what is,  
We should recognize the utility of what is not"  
Tao Te Ching: 6<sup>th</sup> cent*

