

CONVERSATION TEMPLATE:**Abstract**

This conversation focuses on the radical imaginary, an idea which positions design research as a field of critical and imaginative thinking. It will be divided in three acts. The first act will involve a provocation suggesting the need for a more energetic and imaginative vigour in design research. The second; embodying and practicing, places human and non-human bodies at the centre of the conversation and suggests that design research should make room for more performative and symbiotic relationships between subjects and objects. The third act, assemble!, focuses on generativity and the need for a productive community of people and technologies around which we can gather to derive common interests, identify future themes, and develop new methods. We specifically site this conversation in a Limerick snug bar, traditionally the room in a pub where patrons can have a quiet drink away from the prying eyes of the crowded public bar. According to convention the snug is traditionally a safe space for women, a place for reflection and measured opinion, part of the general tumult of social life, but separate from it - somewhere where people can talk freely without fear of judgement or sanction.

THE SNUG: A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS ABOUT DESIGN RESEARCH

Keywords: Design research; imagining; assembling; embodying

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2. Context of Conversation Topic

Imagining, embodying, assembling

This proposal is for a conversation about design research that build on three different acts.

The first act, a radical imaginary, positions design research as a field of critical and imaginative thinking. The conversation will involve a provocation suggesting the need for a more energetic and imaginative vigour in design research. The second embodying and practicing, places human and non-human bodies at the centre of the conversation and suggests that design research should make room for more performative and symbiotic relationships between subjects and objects. The third act, assemble!, focuses on generativity and the need for a productive community of people and technologies around which we can gather to derive common interests, identify future themes, and develop new methods.

The background to this topic is a collaboration between London College of Communication, UAL and BAU Design College of Barcelona who together have been developing a shared interest in how to articulate the procedures and responsibilities of design researchers, how to expand our respective areas of activity, how to respond more sensitively to place, and how to engage bodies and minds in the production of design-oriented knowledge. The proposal builds on a joined Design Research Seminar which took place in June 2017 at BAU. The seminar resulted in a conversation about design research while cooking a meal together. This shared experience which contributed to the conversation is what we aim to expand into the proposed conversations in Limerick. We will invite guests to the conversation from the wider artistic community so as to include diverse voices from outside our own disciplines and to follow up on our desire to be more connected and responsive to place.

Our conversation, as reflected in the title of this proposal, will take place in a Limerick snug bar, usually a room in a pub where patrons can have a quiet drink away from the prying eyes of the crowded public bar. The snug is traditionally a safe space for women, a place for reflection and measured opinion, part of the general tumult of social life, but separate from it - somewhere where people can talk freely without fear of judgement or sanction. The session will take place Tuesday 26th from 6 to 8pm. to avoid clashing with other events.

3. Conversation research question

1. How can design research include more radically imaginative voices and contributions?
2. How can we place our embodied selves and the varied bodies of the ecosystem that surrounds us at the heart of design research?
3. When we assemble what ways do we have of ensuring that positive future directions for design research emerge ?

4. Set-up of your session

The conversation will be held in Jerry Flannery's pub snug on Tuesday June 26th, at the evening between 6 to 8pm in order to allow attendants to go to the rest of events. The conversation will be convened and facilitated in pairs moderating the three acts. We will frame the conversation and moderate proceedings according to our guiding questions, and we'll all be involved in assisting the progress of the conversation.

We will facilitate the inclusion of diverse voices and the specifics of location (snugs). We will also organise and coordinate documentation and transmission of the conversation.

We propose to transmit our conversation live online and if possible on the local radio spectrum, either through Live95Fm or using a micro transmitter of our own. The conversation will be recorded and transcribed for wider dissemination and sharing.

5. Type of space and equipment required

We will be scouting and arranging Limerick snug prior to the conference. Our preference is Jerry Flannery's pub snug.

We will facilitate open exchange by inviting speakers to respond to participant questions, and conversely asking participants to actively involve themselves in the conversation. Since snug bars are designed to be intimate spaces we anticipate that participants will be seated around a common table in close and unguarded conversation with other attendees. Conversations will be recorded but we do not anticipate the use of microphones or amplification. Convenors will summarise the outcomes of conversations, ensuring that participant voices are heard.

We will provide any equipment necessary, i.e. recording devices as well as methods to transmit the conversation live online and if possible on the local radio spectrum through Live95FM or using a micro transmitter.

6. Dissemination strategy

Our approach to dissemination is democratic. We plan to record and transcribe conversations, the resulting documents will be made publicly available online and participants will be encouraged to use them in new creative ways which may include publications, artworks, research data, or performance. Thinking about how a conversation may be most productively summarised, a published script, reconstructed performance, or graphic novel style format may be considered.

7. References

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About the Convenors:

Dr Eva Verhoeven

Dr Eva Verhoeven is a crossdisciplinary (artist, designer, researcher, educator...). She is interested in the consequences of technological developments and its relays into culture – currently exploring the potential of post-human centred design within the context of the anthropocene.

Dr Jaron Rowan

Jaron is the Academic Coordinator of the Doctoral and Research Unit UDR-BAU, at Bau, Design College of Barcelona. He has a PhD in Cultural Studies from Goldsmiths. Jaron's research interests include cultural policy, weird epistemologies and design based research practices.

The logo for the Design Research Society International Conference 2018, featuring the letters 'DRS' in a large, white, sans-serif font above the year '2018' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. The background is a gradient from orange on the left to purple on the right.

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Dr John Fass

Dr John Fass is a designer, researcher and teacher of design at London College of Communication, and the Royal College of Art. His research interests include interface ethics, and design externalisation. He has presented his research and design work internationally.

Paul Bailey

Paul Bailey is a graphic designer, researcher and educator at London College of Communication and Jan van Eyck Academie, Netherlands. His practice, presented internationally, surveys the acts of reading and watching against the backdrop of new and emergent information environments.

Marta Camps Banque

Course Leader for BA (Hons) Design at Bau, Design College of Barcelona. Marta is researcher and teacher. Her current research project explores, from a pedagogical perspective, the tensions between regulated forms of knowledge and wilder forms of wisdom.