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CO-ACT Method Cards

Description

The CO-ACT Method Cards are made to provide tangible learning materials through examples of how to effectively notice, relate, and co-produce among multispecies actors during a design process. These method cards were inspired by the DSKD Method Cards created in 2011 by Silje Kamille Friis and Anne Katrine G. Gelting. Like the DSKD Method Cards, the CO-ACT Method Cards are organised into different categories offering guidelines in notice, relate, and co-produce among multispecies actors. The CO-ACT Method Cards offer detailed explanations of grounding what is being investigated, why the method could be of interest, how to go around the method as well as pointing to examples of other practitioners who are using this mindset in their practices. Each method relates to the project's explorations but can be applied to other contexts than textile dye production. Please enjoy the methods and find the following definitions for further clarification.

What?

To support the intention of the method.

Why?

To establish the essential reason to use the method within a design process that involves multispecies actors.

How?

To offer a step-by-step guideline, a recipe, on how to approach the described method. The aim is to inspire new ideas to adapt and incorporate the approach into your design process or practice.

Examples

Each method card provides examples of former and current designers, artists, and design researchers' work showcasing how this method could be used. Each example is listed chronologically and provides both, the project and authors' names, and links to the exemplified work.

I hope you will find the method cards useful.

Noticing intra-action through bodily engagements

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Noticing intra-action through bodily engagements

What?

Noticing intra-action through bodily engagements is a method that examines a situation through bodily engagement. This method allows you to bodily sense the position, shape, materiality, smell, etc of other actors intra-acting in your case or design process. 2

Why?

Bodily movement and engagement with the surroundings can create a new notion to a situation and the actors involved.

How?

Within the CO-ACT project an example of a recipe is created to exemplify how this method could be approached.

Recipe

You would need a camera with a timer setting and your body.

1. Bring a phone or camera to your investigated site or situation.

2. Orientate yourself to the surroundings and choose the actors whom you want to bodily intra-act with.

3. Set a timer of 10 seconds on your phone or camera. Within these 10 seconds you can run to an actor and try to take shape of it.

4. Reflect on your bodily experience and observations and ask yourself what this physical intra-action made you become aware of and how this awareness can take shape in your design process or practice.

Examples

- *Mineral walks* by designer Petra Lilja, 2021. A performative walk in a limestone quarry allowing speculations to human intra-action with limestone as a material embedded within the human body. <u>https://www.petralilja.com/mineral-meditation-walk</u>
- *HABITAT body scaping* by artist Nana F. Schottlânder, 2021. An explorative journey examining a site and the intra-actions within location, matter, and materiality through bodily engagements. <u>https://www.metropolis.dk/habitat-bodyscaping/</u>
- *Feral Atlas* by Stanford University, 2021. An online platform featuring journeys and essays that explore the multifaceted aspects of the more-than-human Anthropocene. <u>https://feralatlas.supdigital.org/</u>
- Urban recipe by Yuxi Liu and Seda Özcetin, 2022. A co-creative project that explores the urban recipes that gives new ways of relating to the more-than-human. <u>https://www.4tu.nl/du/projects/Exploring%20the%20urban%20living%20experience/</u>

Relating through bodily co-action

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Relating through bodily co-action

What?

Relating through bodily co-action is a method that draws attention to the lives of multispecies by physically embodying their movements and behaviours.

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Why?

Embodying the behaviours, movements, and experiences of other species is a method that allows us to envision empathic and intra-connected futures among diverse multispecies actors.

How?

Within the CO-ACT project an example of a recipe is created to exemplify how this method could be approached.

Recipe

You would need a multispecies actor of interest and your body.

- 1. Choose an actor of interest.
- 2. Observe the movements, behaviour, and time of the actor.
- 3. Try to transform your observations into bodily movements.
- 4. Try to join the created bodily movements into a step-by-step pose.
- 5. Test it with others.

6. Reflect on your experiences and observations and ask yourself how this method has affected your perspective to your actor of interest.

Examples

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- Animal Superpowers by designer Chris Woebken, 2007. A sensory design project addressing the perspectives of animals' senses beyond the human experience. https://chriswoebken.com/Animal-Superpowers_
- Goatman by designer Thomas Thwaites, 2016. A design project exploring how close modern technology can take humans to take on characteristics from other animals. https://www.thomasthwaites.com/a-holiday-from-being-human-goatman/
- EXERCISE TO UNLEARN THE CANON by Vivian Tauchmann, 2019. A design research project that envisions a future of empathy, cooperation and plurality through the use of embodied performance. <u>http://www.vivientauchmann.com/exercise-to-unlearn-the-canon</u>
- Urban Refuge by designer Hannah Roche, 2022. A design research project that documents views of Glasgow through the eyes of multispecies to challenge the human perception of the city. https://gsashowcase.net/hannah-roche/

Communicating co-action

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Communicating co-action

What?

Communicating co-action is a method that brings orientation to the engagement with multispecies actors by using sound.

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Why?

Listening is a way to acquire first-hand experience of a situation enabling us to act with greater care in a design process.

How?

Within the CO-ACT project an example of a recipe is created to exemplify how this method could be approached.

Recipe

You would need a recorder and the 2.2 CO-ACT toolbox which you can pick up at the technical support office at DSKD. The 2.2 CO-ACT toolbox is provided with a guidebook, a hydrophone, minijack, digging tool, gloves, and a pruning shears.

1. Follow the description of the guidebook in the 2.2 CO-ACT toolbox in order to make the recordings in a careful way.

2. Chose a site for investigation. Remember to keep track of your recordings by taking notes of each recording.

3. Go record.

4. Compare the recordings while asking yourself what you hear, what is different, and why that might be? These observations can be used to relate to your multispecies actors.

Examples

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- *Melbourn mussel choir* by artistic researcher Natalie Jeremijenko, 2015. A research project on water ties intra-action with mussels' movement. <u>http://www.carbonarts.org/projects/melbour-ne-mussel-choir/</u>
- Sea synthesis by Xandra van der Eijk, 2017. A design project that maps the sound of windmills impact on actors living in the ocean. <u>https://www.xandravandereijk.nl/projects/seasynthesis</u>
- Sounding soil by designer Marcus Maeder, 2019. A design research project that invites the public to record current sound of soils around Switzerland. <u>https://www.soundingsoil.ch/</u>
- *PLURIVERSE* by associate professor Stine Køijer and the AIR LAB, 2020. a sound installation that establishes a connection between the tree, the individual, and the forest. <u>https://airlab.itu.dk/plurivers/</u>

Mapping co-action

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Mapping co-action

What?

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Mapping co-action is a method that provide orientation to all the multispecies actors involved in your design process, irrespective of their level of participation.

Why?

By mapping all the actors involved in a design process, you can identify gaps and specific areas that require additional attention and care.

How?

The CO-ACT project has developed an illustrative recipe as an example, demonstrating an approach to implementing this method.

Recipe

You would need A3 paper, a pen, and some Posters.

1. Draw a circle on the paper, marking the starting point of where you began and the closing point of where you completed the circle: Label these points as "Beginning" and "End" respectively.

2. Begin by documenting all the actors, both humans and non-humans, involved in your design process. Write the name of each actor on a poster and arrange them chronologically on the drawn circle.

3. Examine the specific area within the process where you can integrate care for all the actors involved. Seek inspiration from Chapter 3.2 of the book "CO-ACT: Multispecies Design in Practice."

4. Write your ideas down.

5. Reflect on your experience and engage in meaningful discussions with colleagues, business partners, or friends to share your insights and perspectives.

Examples

- *Multispecies Design* by PhD Daniel Metcalf, 2015. A thesis that addresses questions of human-animal interaction. <u>https://ualresearchonline.arts.ac.uk/id/eprint/13351/</u>
- On textile farming: Living indoors by designer Svenja Keune, 2019. A project that considers plants and environmental factors in textile design for interior spaces. <u>http://svenja-keune.de/en/projects/enon-textile-farming-seeds-as-a-material-for-textile-design/</u>
- Interspecies play by artists Takuma Kikuchi, Lucy Li, Florian Sapp, and Alan Schiegl, 2021. A playful art project proposing a co-active play between urban animals and humans. https://designinvestigations.at/projects/interspecies-play/

Co-active co-procudtion

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Co-active co-production

What?

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Co-active co-production is a method to create speculative prototyping using regenerative design thinking to address more holistic design processes.

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Why?

The concept of regenerative design thinking has the potential to offer caring orientation to the multispecies actors involved in your design process.

How?

The CO-ACT project has developed an illustrative recipe as a practical demonstration of the approach to implementing this method.

Recipe

It is recommended to prioritise Method 3.1 while considering Method 3.2 as a subsequent step in the process. Additionally, it is advisable to gather bits and scraps beforehand to prepare for the creation of your forthcoming speculative prototypes.

1. Select one multispecies actor in your current or former design process.

2. Deliberate on how to engage in a thoughtful co-action with your selected actor by considering its specific needs. Pose questions such as: What are its requirements, and how can you establish a co-active system that attends to these needs throughout your design process?

Find bits and scraps around you and try creating speculative prototypes of what such a co-active system might look like. This exercise can be short 5min or longer as you prefer.
Reflect on your experience and bring your speculative prototype into a discussion with colleagues, business partners, or friends.

Examples

- *Fibershed* by researcher Rabecca Burgess, 2018. A regional fiber systems that build soil & protect the health of our biosphere. <u>https://fibershed.org/</u>
- *Fashion Fictions* by Dr. Amy Trigger Holroyd, 2020. Fashion Fictions brings people together to generate, experience and reflect on engaging fictional visions of alternative fashion cultures and systems. <u>https://fashionfictions.org/about/</u>
- Living futures Scenario Kit by Danish Design Center, 2020. An exciting combination of narrated stories from the future and concrete tools and guides for using them in the present. <u>https://livingfutures.org/</u>
- Organism Democracy by the Organisms Democracy NGO 2020. Organisms Democracy is a political system in which fight for equality for all living beings who inhabit/use a state territory. <u>https://organismendemokratie.org/en/factions/</u>