**Week 1 review**

The first week of Creative Technology has been a unique experience for me. Jon and Martin introduced some new concepts and techniques that made me think about design in a different way, which is always good. However, there were definitely some down sides to the experience as well as I found myself working out of my comfort zone most of the time.

We started by learning about the Arduino, which was a first for me. I have not had much experience working with hardware and electronics, so it took me a while to wrap my head around how it works. The most challenging part was combining the hardware, software and a concept based on the “Connected Home” or “The Interned of Things”. It was difficult to figure out where to get started and how to apply everything I was learning into a strong concept.

The process of coming up with new ideas was more fun. Everyone in class got involved, we were able to think of several out-of-the-box ideas in very little time. This was an ongoing theme with the class, Jon encouraged us to think more outside the box and not have any constraints when coming up with new things to design.

We began some of the classes by watching videos, the video about the scale of things in outer space and at a molecular level was quite interesting. After the first couple of days I started to get a little more productive with my sketches and ideas.

One of the mistakes I made in the beginning was trying to work backwards, learning new techniques on the Arduino and working backwards to come up with a concept. Eventually I realized this was the wrong approach, especially from me. I have a background in user experience so my strength is in coming up with concept and connecting that with real people. Once I could do that I could start thinking of ways to implement that concept in a simple way. It didn’t have to involve elaborate code or prototypes.

The idea I ended up sharing on the last day was one of my simplest ones. The concept was to use connectivity to make sure the fridge was never empty. It could be used by roommates on the go to always stay aware of whether they have enough food, who is doing the groceries etc. Or by parents to who might be concerned about their son/daughter living in a shared accommodation.

Jon suggested that I make the idea broader for a more significant problem. It could be applied to people that faced a real shortage of food, as opposed to students who were just being lazy. It could possibly provide a way to connect communities with the right resources and people that could help them. For example, food banks or neighbouring farms. I really like this idea because it is solving a real problem and is quite simple. I plan on pursuing this idea and refining it more before I start working on the next phase.

My biggest take away from week 1 is that I learned something new. Despite not coming up with nearly as many sketches as I would have liked I consider it to have been a very productive week for that reason.