

Etude One: Stranger Things

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Searching one's environment for objects that spark innovation and enchantment can at first prove difficult, yet upon closer inspection and scrutiny, several objects held the power to approach new worlds and provoke the six human drives as researched in the "Enchanted Objects" text written by David Rose.

Objects that I had found but did not investigate included:

- a shoehorn
- a tennis ball
- my house keys
- a nose piercing
- a lighter shaped like a tiny electric guitar
- a shattered 50watt lightbulb
- an aerosol can
- a whisk
- a disposable camera
- a diva cup
- a switchblade
- and hair stuck in my shower drain

To find objects that truly resonated with me and struck emotional response and curiosity, further inspection was required.



Fig.1 Pregnancy test stick beside box it came in.

TEST

My first object was a pregnancy test. It is a medical object that beholds the levels of hCG (human Chorionic Gonadotropin) in a user's urine. This object is

meaningful to myself as it reminds me of a more frightening time; being young and being afraid of

unplanned pregnancy. This specific kit (refer to Fig.1) was purchased with the intention for it to be lent to a fellow coworker. My work in the summer months isolates myself and 45 other individuals in the British Columbian bush for multiple days at a time, and access to emergency contraceptive, birth control and pregnancy tests can prove tricky. I learned last summer, that pregnancy scares are quite common in my coworkers, so I this kit was bought to serve as a potential piece of mind for those experiencing the 'false scare.' This affords another individual near me answers to their own health. It serves as omniscient . The pregnancy test is smooth, small and is made of plastic. It looks like a marker; and has a thumb hold, so the user doesn't accidentally get their stream of urine onto their hands. Inside is a tiny detective strip that provides the user insight to their own body. (99% of the time as specified by the packaging.) This object connects to the sexual health industry. Sex can be condemned as a taboo topic, so the user in question buying the product could potentially use it in secret, and generally these objects are used in private places (i.e the toilet.) A user purchasing, and then becoming affiliated with such an object could potentially challenge the social spaces around them, and their public or private relationship to sexuality, family planning, and political choices.

In its plastic body there is a tiny window on the top flat side of this object. (Fig.2) If the user is pregnant the device will display a small blue cross within the window, if the hormone is

absent from urine, the device will only present one stripe to indicate that the object has been used, and that the hormone is absent. This device is omniscient.



Fig. 2 Pregnancy testing stick.

SCARF

This object is a soft material and is quotidian to my life in the winter months. I used this scarf everyday for several years to travel back and forth from university when it is cold outside. It has served as a blanket, scarf, hood, pillow, seat, shirt and hat. Its versatility makes it a regularly used item in my closet, and its dark colours make it easy to match to other clothes, thus its common wear. One winter holiday away from Montreal, I had travelled back to Toronto to celebrate the holidays with my family. I had a partner at the time who it for a couple weeks, because the scent of me was on the object and thus, reminded him of me. Scent is an evocative sense and can aid with memory. This object provided a teleportation in his memory to me. The

enchantment of this object comes from the sentimentality behind it. The robust and soft build of the object made me use it everyday. However, the evidence of my use made it sentimental. It has no conductive potential, and is made out of wool. The object is very soft and inviting to touch. (Fig. 3 and 4.) This object would resonate very little with other people. It is ordinary, a scarf can be worn publicly, and is seen commonly on many user around local Montreal in public spaces (i.e. the Metro, grocery stores, on the street, and in general public spaces) Each relationship to a scarf is individual to each user. My scarf provided temporary sensory teleportation.



Fig. 3 and 4
Scarf folded and otherwise.

HANDLE

This third object is an old, partially damaged faucet handle, that I acquired years ago while exploring with a friend. This could be perceived to other as an old piece of rubbish with no function, but unfortunately to my friends recent death I do not intend on ever not owning this small piece of metal. It was acquired while we were exploring underground tunnels, and the escapade is fond in memory. It was discovered already broken off of its faucet, lying on the ground. It was dusty and abandoned when I decided to pocket it. It has a metal build with a screw and a tiny washer. It has ergonomic finger placements all around its handle so regardless of its rotation, if held the handle will fit in your hand and isn't difficult to orientate.

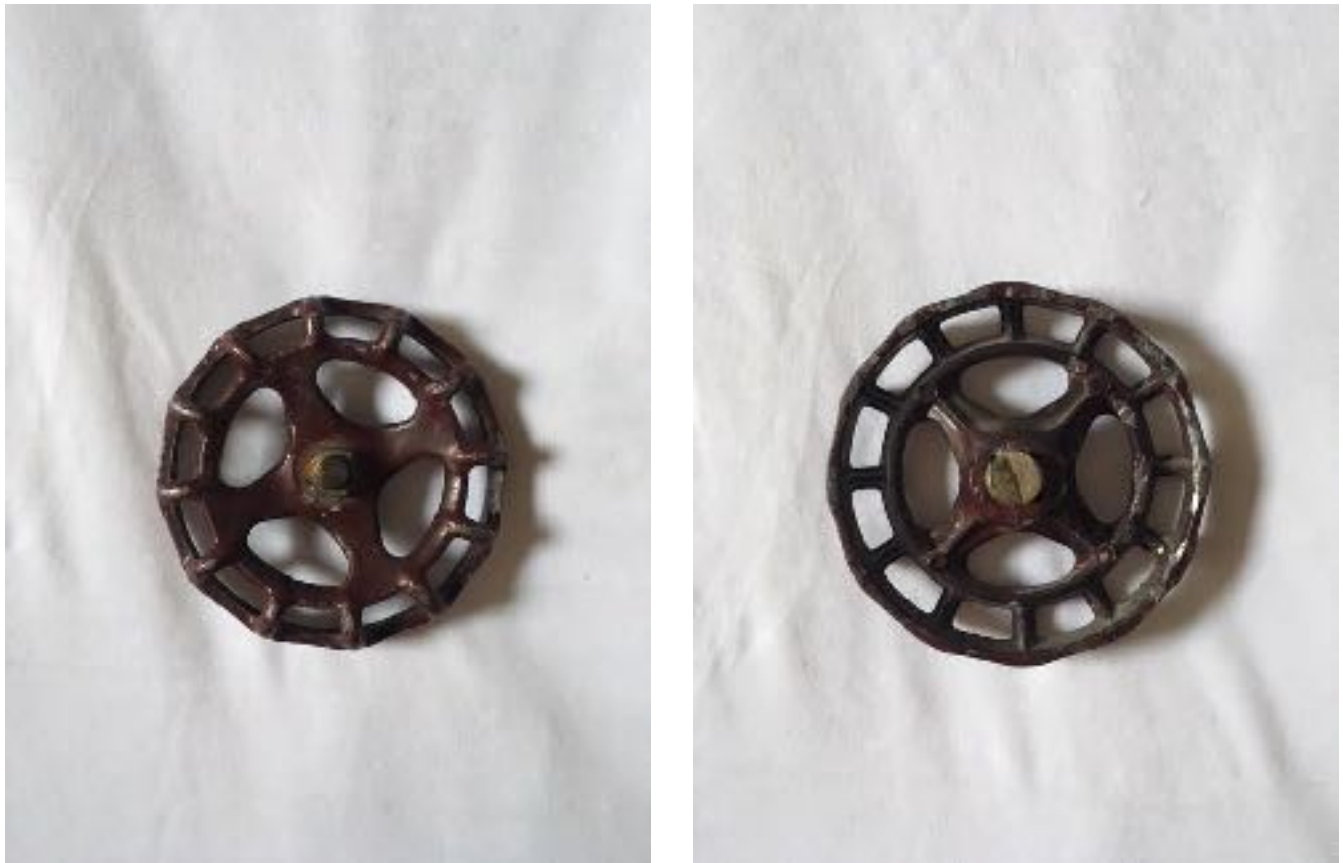


Fig. 5 Top of the handle (left) and bottom of the handle with metal fragment (right.)

The faucet has conductive potential as it is metal. Its unusual form is also quite intriguing, it is a round, dimensional polygon shape as a whole and is reminiscent of a natural object built off a central axis. (i.e a flower or pinecone). (Refer to Fig. 5.) Its size (the size of a palm), weight (the weight of an orange) and robust exterior imply that it is 'heavy duty' and something for specialization only. The handle had been cast into a mold and painted red, to be visible in the dark passageways.

This object has the power to function and turn on and off a specified water source. Yet personally has the power of immortality, it beholds my own memory of the adventures shared with my friend. Personally this immortalizes our interactions and memory.

ENCHANTMENT

My favourite object for exploration is the scarf. The memory of scent is very sentimental and relatable to a large audience. A scarf that can produce the natural scent of your loved ones could be socially questionable yet could allow a person to fully remember a memory in scent. Being swathed in someone else's scent could be beneficial to those in long-distance relationships, parent-child relationships when separated for long periods of time, and could even be used to remember situational anecdotes potentially embedded into this enchanted object.

It could also be transformed into a machine that hugs a user. Two identical scarves exist, and then two loved ones, friends or family could provoke a hugging feeling, caused by a sensor in one scarf that is transmittable to the constriction of another.

A scarf could become a device that glows when a loved one is nearby, synchronized to a GPS tracking device in a cellphone.

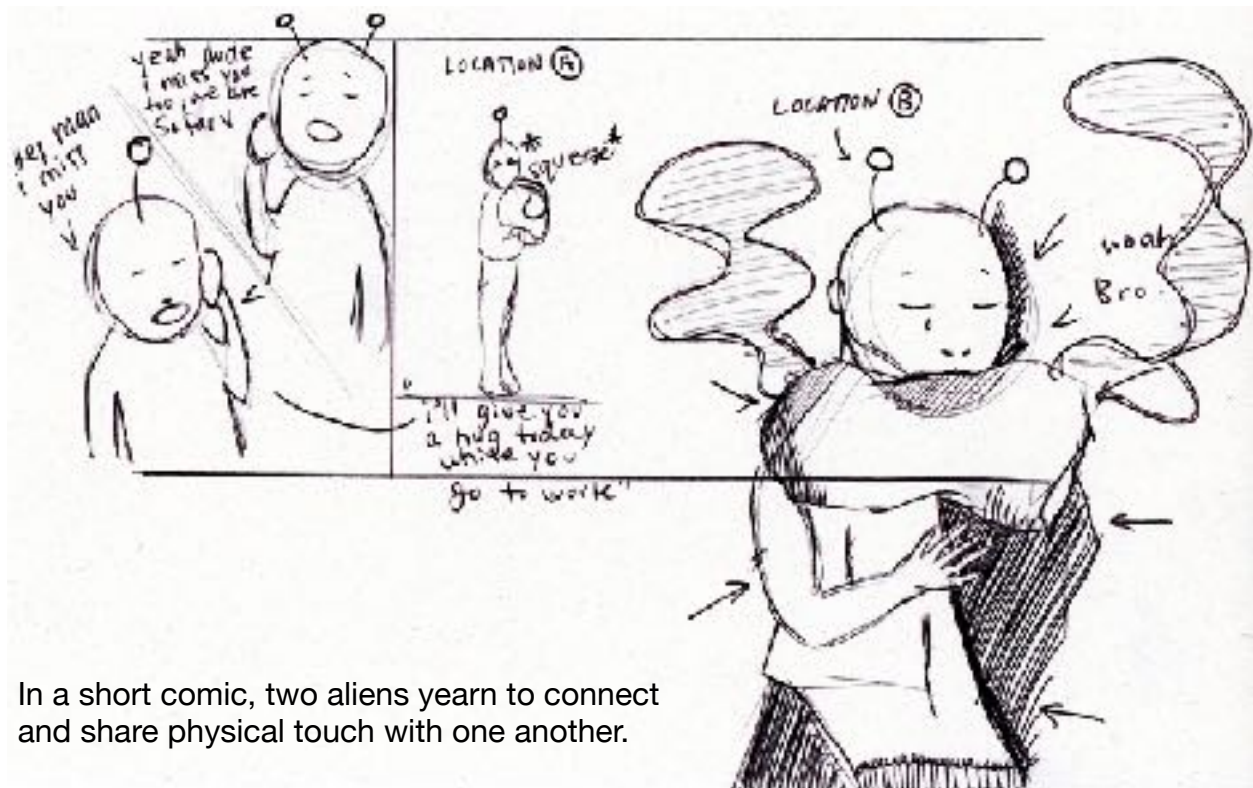
Featured is an illustration of the faucet handle, connected to a simple horn. The handle could be magnetically inclined to turn itself according to proximity of a subject, releasing the sound of my friend's recorded public speaking, general conversation or laughter. (Fig. 6.)



In this illustration, a user is connected to another source, potentially another user. Scent is released from the device.

A glowing heart can illustrate that a user is 'loved'.

Scarf can transmit the scent and thus,



In a short comic, two aliens yearn to connect and share physical touch with one another.

At a predetermined time, one alien transmits a 'hug' and physical response to the other using their twin scarves.

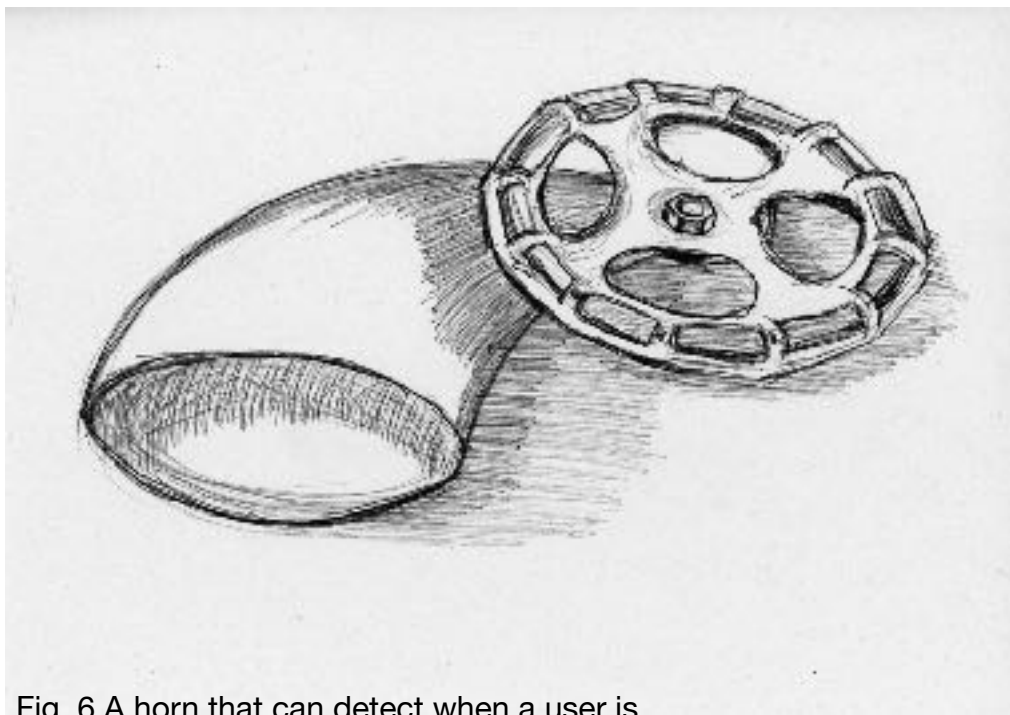


Fig. 6 A horn that can detect when a user is in close proximity. Magnets within the metal handle turn it upon itself to start playing a voice recording. The recording is more easily heard (or the volume turned up), when the user gets closer.