

ETUDE ONE: STRANGERTHINGS

CART 360 | FALL 2019

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GITHUB:

<https://github.com/melanieabbet/CART360>

INSTRUCTORS:

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After investigating my place of residence, I realized that few objects other than those with which I have an emotional bond seemed interesting or significant to me. However, in order to explore different horizons, I decided to choose only one object with which I have an «emotional» link.

For the other two objects I turned to something functional and that it is very useful to me as well as to an object of useless decoration but which fascinates me a little.

SCARF

The first object I found is a ZARA scarf. I have it since 2014. It is probably made of a mixture of different materials (textiles) such as Cotton or Polyester, however I cannot know for sure because I cut the label before putting it on for the first time. It is in a dark red colour and the edges are slightly tapered



due to wear and tear. This scarf is of very good quality, resistant, also soft and warm but above all it is very large. It forms a rectangle about 1 metre by 2 metres. It is an object that seems non-conductive to me but in certain conditions is filled with static electricity.

As I searched for object and when I found this object I realized that I do not easily attach myself to things but more to the memory or to the emotion that these things transmit to me.

I have a sentimental connection with this garment because it was my mother who gave it to me during a family shopping day so that I could take it with me during my year-long stay in Germany. As I find it very pretty and very practical I have worn it often, Germany being also a rather cold and humid country, I had quite a few opportunities. Moreover, the small village of Remscheid in which I stayed is not known for its good weather, most days are grey and the comfort of a warm and soft clothing is necessary.

Wearing it I remember my family but also all the good times I had that year outdoors with friends, ice skating, bus rides, city evenings, girls' or lovers' dinners and countless other moments. This is what makes the emotional connection I have with this object clearer. It is an object that even if used in cold weather evokes warmth and a feeling of joy, nostalgia or sometimes sadness depending on my



current state. I continue to use it and it is this scarf that has accompanied me here in Montreal. I think many people have experienced this kind of feeling towards a textile, whether it is a t-shirt, a sweater, because textiles can keep a smell that you love or can often be linked to particular events, or be a door to memories like this scarf for me.

SWISS KNIFE

The second object I chose was my Swiss Army knife from Victorinox. It is a functional object that accompanies me daily but without any particular emotional value for me.

I always carry it with me on the ring of my keys. I've had it for so long that I can't say how long. There are different versions, mine is an advertising version of the "classic SD" Swiss Army knife. It is white and silvered with a small cross on the front and the advertising logo on the back, it measures 58mm long for about 1.5 cm wide, it weighs 22g. The blade is not lockable but with the chisel blades are very sharp. It is guaranteed for life, which says a lot about its quality.

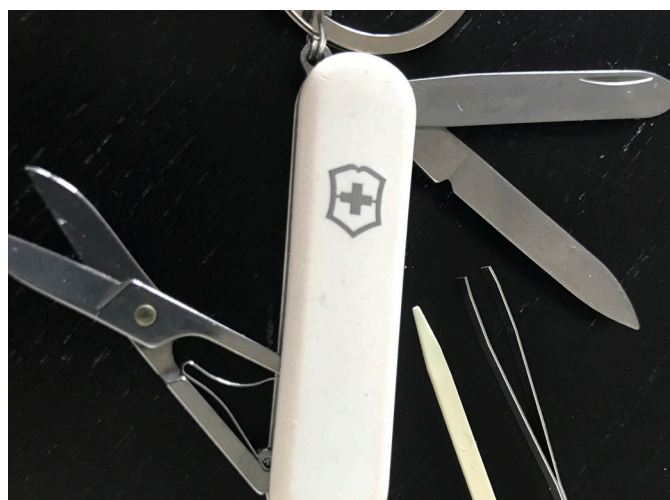
It is made of stainless steel and plastic, conductive and insulating, and cold to the touch. I like him because he is small in size, small enough to travel in the cabin of the plane and he carries tools that are often useful to me: nail file, small knife, scissors, screwdriver, tweezers and toothpick. These functions are very appreciable but one day I will offer myself another with the additional functions: ballpoint pen, flashlight and bottle opener (for the moment I complete these missing functions by other key rings or by other means). I would probably choose another color as well.

This object reminds me of Switzerland even if not all Swiss people walk around with one of these knives. I don't have any emotional ties with this object, losing it tomorrow would give me the opportunity to have a new one.

However, I consider it an essential and I am often annoyed when I forget to take it with me. It's a good example of a successful design: compact and efficient. I have never needed to give him special



care and I am always very proud to have him with me when someone needs him, whether it is for a broken nail, a picnic for which we forgot the knives or a splinter planted during a walk in the forest. The larger versions are also very good and I have one or two versions also they have more options and are perfect if needed in the car but are more annoying and cumbersome to carry.



SEQUIN CUSHION

The last object I decide to choose was an object that doesn't even belong to me. He was acquitted by my roommate at a street fair for the modest sum of 5 dollars because she found him «nice» and not of too bad quality (to use her own words).

It is a square pillow on which are sewn reversible sequins black and silvered. More than the cushion itself what I like are the rhinestones, round and flat they reflect the light on the silver side and are black on the other. They are sewn in such a way that one can choose their black/silver orientation even if some are as if frozen in a certain position. These sequins are made of plastic but the original sequins were made of shiny metal which I find interesting for their conductive property. As for the cushions, made of fabric on the back, they are filled with cotton wool and are simply placed on our sofa most of the time. However, it is not comfortable to lean on it, the sequins scratch and it is not ideal. So it always ends up either on my lap or my roommate's lap when we sit down to talk or watch a movie.

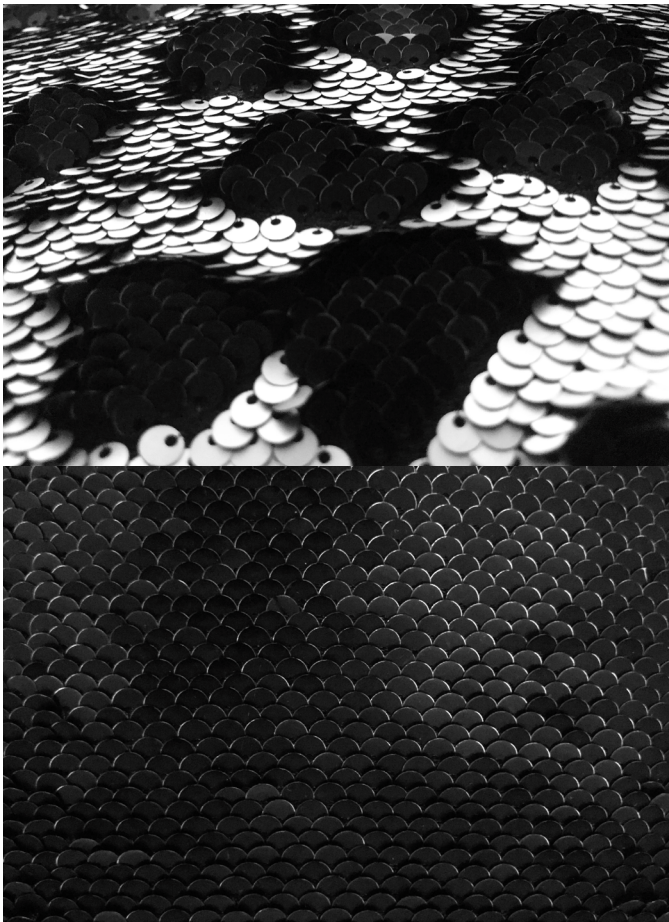
I still chose it as an object because I realized that wi-



thout paying attention to it, we always draw shapes when we have it in your hands. This keeps us busy, we finally use it as a drawing surface, a bit like the magnetic boards we used to play with my sisters to make drawings and erase them over and over again. My roommate has fun leaving messages at the surface from time to time.

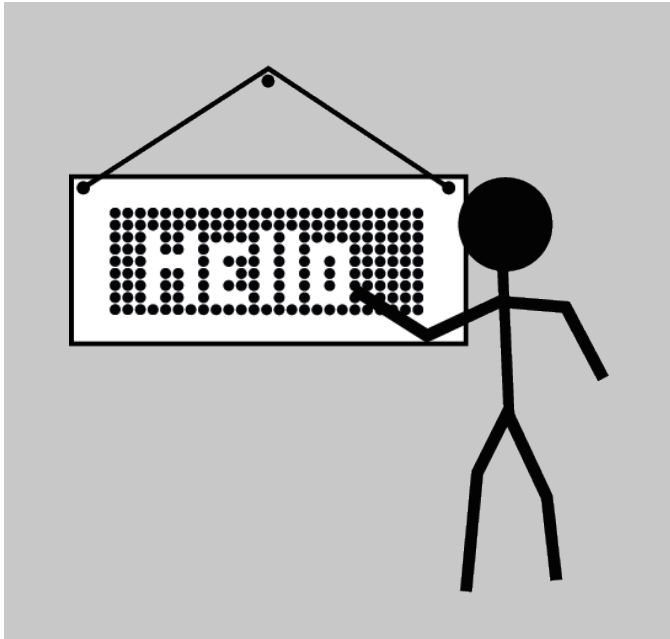
So even if it is an object that doesn't really have any functionality other than its decorative aspect, it is possible to interact with it. A single sequin did not have much effect but the technique with which these sequins are sewn together makes it an interesting and fun material and surface to play with. It becomes a kind of experience. It is even relaxing to have fun changing the color sequins. The touch is quite addictive and the sequins even produce a rather satisfying sound that reminds us of a certain scratching instrument like the Venezuelan guacharaca or the equator guayo.

Of these three objects, it is the latter that I would choose as a starting point to imagine an interactive experience, mainly because even if the emotions related to memory are an interesting and complex aspect, it is in my opinion less easily approachable because it is more personal and dense. In the case of sequins, the direct experience with the material and the game aspect of it seems to me to be the best way to communicate a few things in an installation. Moreover, if the sequins are metallic, it opens up various possibilities.



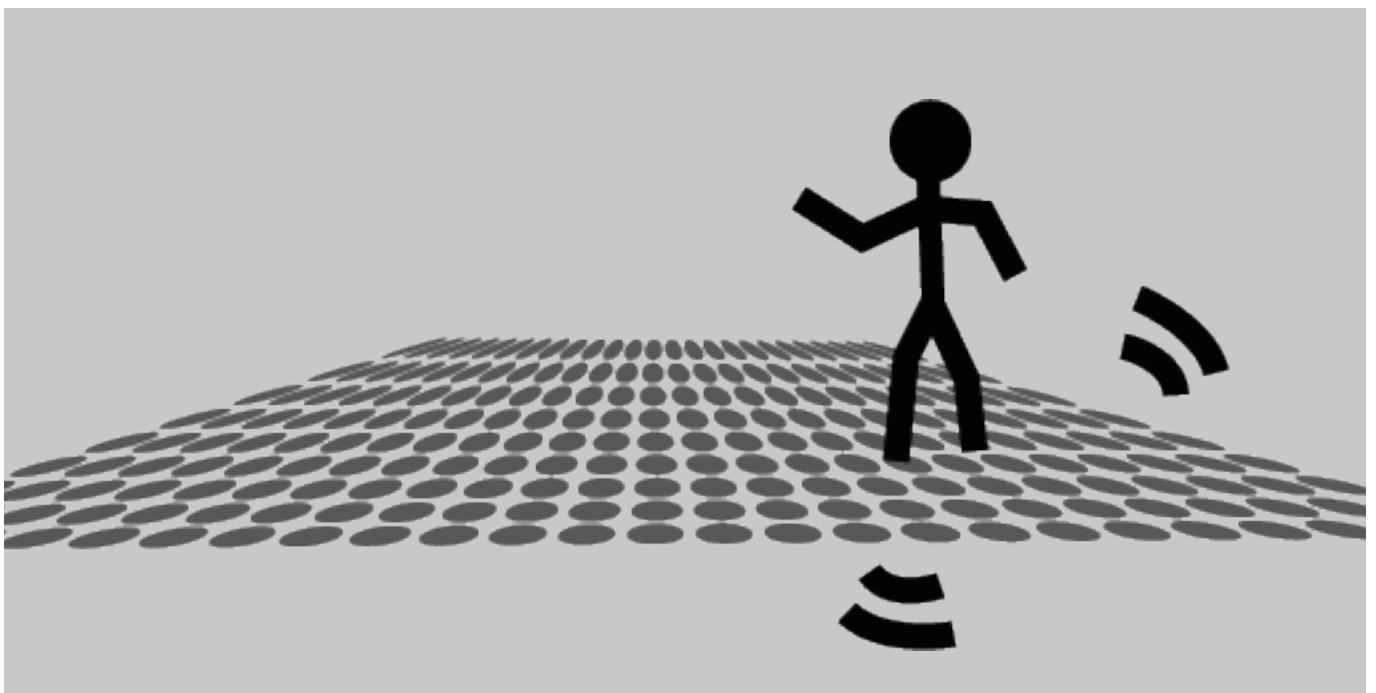
REVERSIBLE BOARD

This concept take advantage of the reversibility of the material. There is no need of electronic material, the board work like a normal black board: people can write message on it and erase it indefinitely.



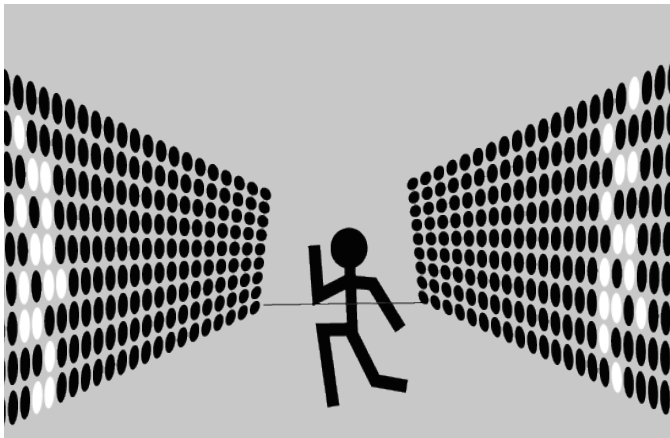
METALIC FLOOR

Metalic floor is an experiential installation, people walk on the sequin, the metal detected the interaction and vibrate. It could also possibly has others feedback.



THE ROOM

For The Room installation all the walls are covered with sequin, they do not react to touch but are triggered by a motion detector. The sequin inverts and moves according to the spectator's movements, all accompanied by sound effects. The installation aims to encourage visitors to interact with the environment in order to discover all its functions. With several visitors moving it create a variety of different paintings and unique melody.



The visitor enters the room and makes a first movement. The wall reacts in a sonorous and visual way according to the movement performed by the spectator. Until the interaction is of the type «0-0 reacting» (*What is Interaction* by Hugh Dubberly, Paul Pangaro and Usman Haque.)

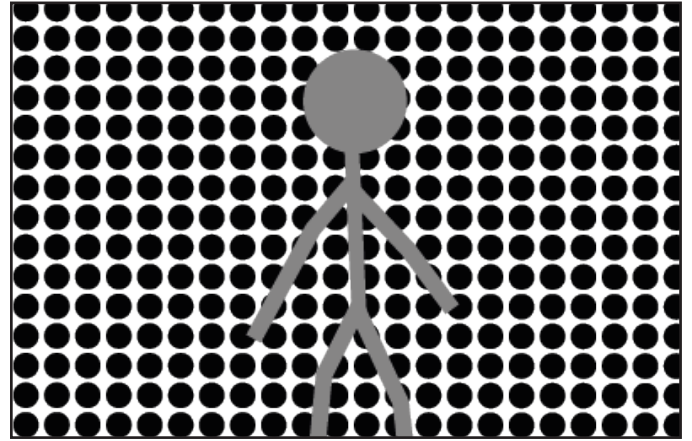
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On the other hand, if the spectator gets caught up in the game and complicates these movements, which also complicates the feedback. He will have analyzed the feedback from the east wall will be more like this second configuration «0-2 Learning».

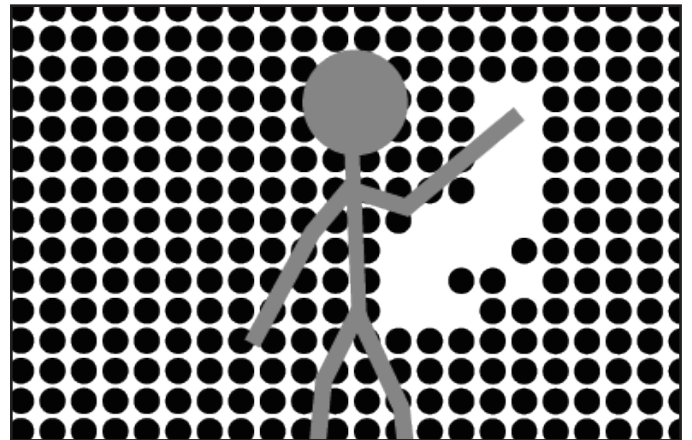
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Depending on the complexity of the feedback I think we can even place this installation in this loop «1-2 Managing Entertaining»

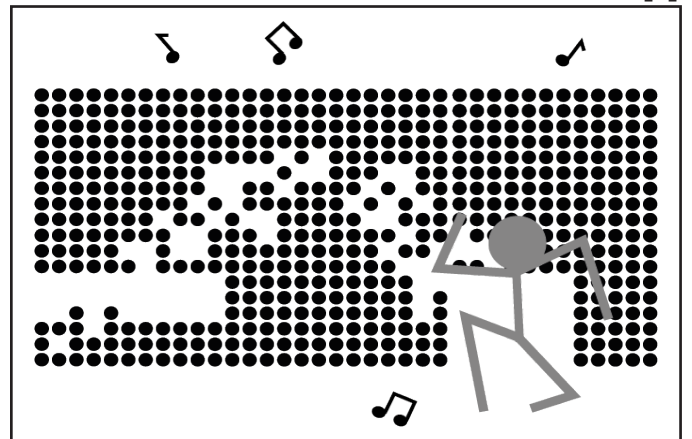
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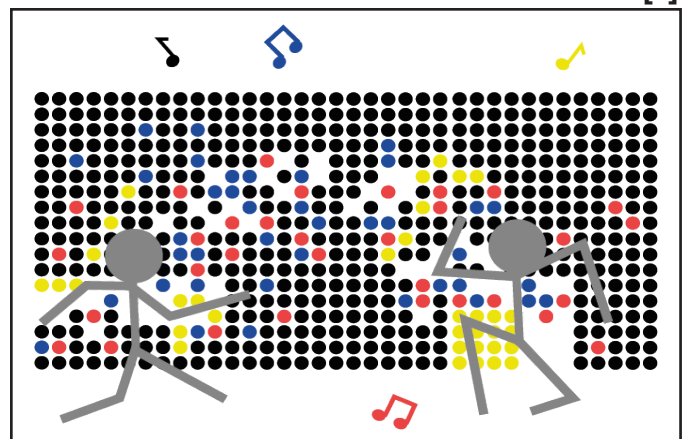
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