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Makers to Change-Makers: A pedagogic investigation into making as a transformative tool.

This is a joint submission!!

This paper explores the Making practice as tool and agency for rethinking the complexity of issues around the social and urban landscape. How can Making enable new hybrid relationships that are needed to explore new ways of living, working, learning. What spaces are needed to develop new frameworks for the transition from Maker to Change-maker?

Through using Pomona Island as a case study for a pedagogic project to develop future visions to inform the regeneration of a brownfield site on the borders of Manchester, Salford and Trafford in the UK, design students from Manchester School of Art and ArtEZ Institute of the Arts, Arnhem (NL), worked with Manchester Metropolitan University's LiFE 'Living in Future Ecologies' research group and MA Landscape Architecture students to develop and present proposals for intervening in the urban landscape.

As Education Institutes we value the outside spaces as our laboratory, where students have space to imagine, invent and explore the unknown as ways of rediscovering the city. Making and Thinking within the context is a rich soil to foster awareness, learning to shift from desired outcome towards understanding the depth of context and meta-physical matter. Enabling the rich possibilities of creating and designing together in open, participatory and imaginative ways requires new forms of learning. In *Speculative Everything*, Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby propose a kind of making that is used as a tool to create not only things but ideas. For them, making is a means of speculating about how things could be—to imagine possible futures.

Through the two-day workshop students researched, tested and designed OPISO sensing instruments that interpreted and proposed future scenarios in response to Pomona Island. OPISO derives from the ancient Greek word, which means behind or back, but refers not to the past but to the future. Early Greek imagination envisaged the past and the present as in front of us, something that we can see. The Future was viewed as invisible, meaning that we are walking blind, backwards into the future (Knox, 1994).

Using this creative discourse, participants developed their own view and interrogation exploring new tools and contexts to influence transformative change on the current or future state of the brownfields. Through the making students addressed issues on nurturing city eco-systems, city center regeneration and learning from local histories or the politics of place. The participants explored ways in which to influence, inspire, mediate and change social reasoning.

Making became a way that design scenarios could become acted out, envisioned through material role play, materialized philosophical questions as real experience to better understand creative opportunities. The crafting of objects through material language acted as an interface and mediator for understanding (Adams, 2014) that meant objects became ways in which to codify and understand different social and material contexts. The work was exhibited through a 'Salon' exhibition event to a public audience as part of Design Manchester 2016. The Manchester School of Art and ArtEZ Institute of the Arts continue to collaborate and deepen research on the notion Maker to Change-Maker.