

Amanda O'Farrell

BA3b Project Summary

Having come away from the Ampersand collaboration supposedly working with someone who was rarely there, I was slightly sceptical about another collaboration. We had previously worked together successfully and knew we shared a lot of the same interests about social interaction. Before Ampersand was finished we decided to use the 'Found Objects' task as a tester of our suitability. For me it was particularly about finding out about the commitment to the project and how we functioned within discussion. As we got through the week it was clear Emma was as, if not more, enthusiastic and we agreed the little time we had left at NUA had to be used to it's full potential. Discussion of concepts was one area that left me cautious, as we were in the early days we were talking about ideas from interests and I had a feeling Emma expect a lot from me in this area. And after Ampersand this part of my process was injured.

As the 'Found Objects' task came to an end and we began thinking up ideas, we both made the mistake of letting third year pressures alter the way we work. Looking back I know I was focused on the final outcome; a fundamental mistake, which took us two weeks to find and correct. However I believe subconsciously I knew something was wrong, as I pushed for extra time with tutors. This was a learning curve in which we found out how we work together supporting each other, as well as showing us our individual strengths. I felt myself pushing the idea of having a subject, because other wise there is no meaning or purpose for the work. We struggled against each other, as Emma wanted to create a task or piece of work with little or no reason. And I didn't want to let myself fall into that feeling of not having purpose to support our outcomes, as I had in Ampersand.

After hours of discussion we came to the conclusion of looking at Offensive Gestures. Hands and gesticulations has been an interest of mine for so long, I didn't want Emma to feel bullied into it. However after this was decided I was able to let the idea of purpose go a little bit, and I suggested we went out to do some observational drawings. These led to the laser cuts which are a perfect example of how we work together. Whilst I had a strong belief in research around the subject, both first and second hand. Emma very quickly became experimental, testing 3d materials and how layers can be used to form bigger interactive pieces of work.

I still feel as though finding second hand theoretical and psychological research feels to me. I do enjoy and know a bit about the subject of co-verbal gesticulations and elements to do with gestures, although both cover vast amounts of studies. Maybe it's because the subject is daunting, but it makes me question if Emma is really interested in the subject, or just enough to produce our degree work about it. It is such a huge subject with many areas and I think we should have pinpointed where we'd wanted the work to go. However with the psychological research of Wundt and McNeill we reached two solid research heavy outcomes, so perhaps I am being over critical. This is one aspect I never realised had so much effect on how I work. As Emma pointed out to me I analyse and question everything we do, from articles i've read to colours Emma's chosen. Sometimes more often than not I believe being critical is a good skill, as the hardest work to evaluate can be your own.

The publication was an element to our work that I thought might cause issues. During one tutorial it became instantly clear to me that our publication couldn't be what we'd hoped. It needed to be the element that drew the other two pieces of work together, and crucially, help it to be understood. With hindsight I can see I was avoiding having the conversation with Emma as I knew how much she wanted the zine to be it's own identity and to have it's own purpose. However when we spoke I think she understood, even if she may not have agreed, but this led to me designing the publication. I had designed the website, and Emma believed it would make sense for the layouts to be matching. I had very little problem with this at first, however as I was going about it I felt a lot of pressure. It came about at a time when I had to be writing my parts of the blog, as well as editing the photos, editing her writing, uploading everything onto the website, and helping her in creating our 3d work. I should have asked her to help in some of these tasks, as there was a huge amount of pressure on me during the last few weeks before hand in. We had to be organised and manage our time well, but with the amount of work we were doing towards the end it became difficult.

Overall I found the fast working pace satisfying. From the beginning we were meeting and talking about work daily. Earlier in the year I hardly used the studios at all, but it was where Emma and I would often meet. Working on so many differing outcomes, with varying research was exhilarating and I felt I proved to myself how much effort I can put into my work. And as I hope it carries on, into our future as Curb Illustration.