



## **Making the Familiar Unfamiliar**

**Peter Blagg**

The output is a creative project that explores the uncanny.

### **Research process**

Blagg engages in practice-based research exploring elements of The Uncanny. Blagg used key terminology from texts on the uncanny and attempted to apply them in a practical manner in the manufacture of familiar objects, investigating whether uncanny objects can be made using a recognisable systematic process. Blagg ran a series of workshops and exhibitions exploring audience interaction with and responses to the artefacts. Blagg tested ideas about how different audiences interacted with the work, developing activities, questioning and discussion techniques. Blagg was interested in how audiences passing through the exhibition responded to the artefacts in comparison to focus group participants.

### **Research insights**

Blagg's work focuses on everyday objects and how they have the potential to become uncanny. How familiar, seemingly innocuous, mundane and trivial pieces of design are able to alienate, frustrate or simply evoke uncertainty within their audiences. The participants did not require an in-depth knowledge of the uncanny to partake in this session. Blagg was able to gain user insight through interaction, play and discussion. This research added to his proposed understanding of certain concepts within the uncanny such as intellectual uncertainty and the doppelganger, the evaluation and discussion of these notions suggested a more complex view of links between uncertainty and interactions with objects. Blagg is interested in applying a more pragmatic approach using hand held objects to explore the vagaries of ideas surrounding the uncanny, could intellectual uncertainty be felt or described by participants through a more measured approach.

### **Dissemination**

The output was disseminated through a series of workshops and exhibitions including:

- Making the familiar unfamiliar, Leeds City Art Gallery. 12 May 2018.
- Lates, National Science and Media Museum Bradford. 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018.
- Playtime, Leeds City Art Gallery. 5 December 2017.

Selected objects.







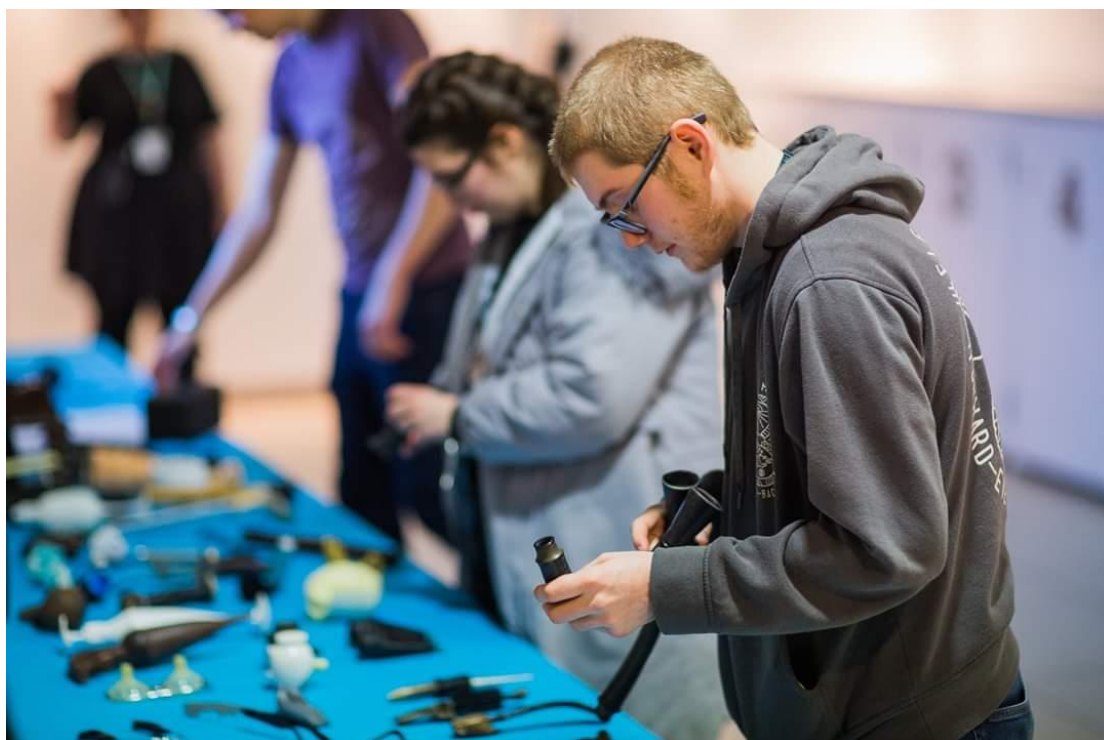


Exhibitions and interactions.

Leeds Art Gallery. 12<sup>th</sup> May 2018.



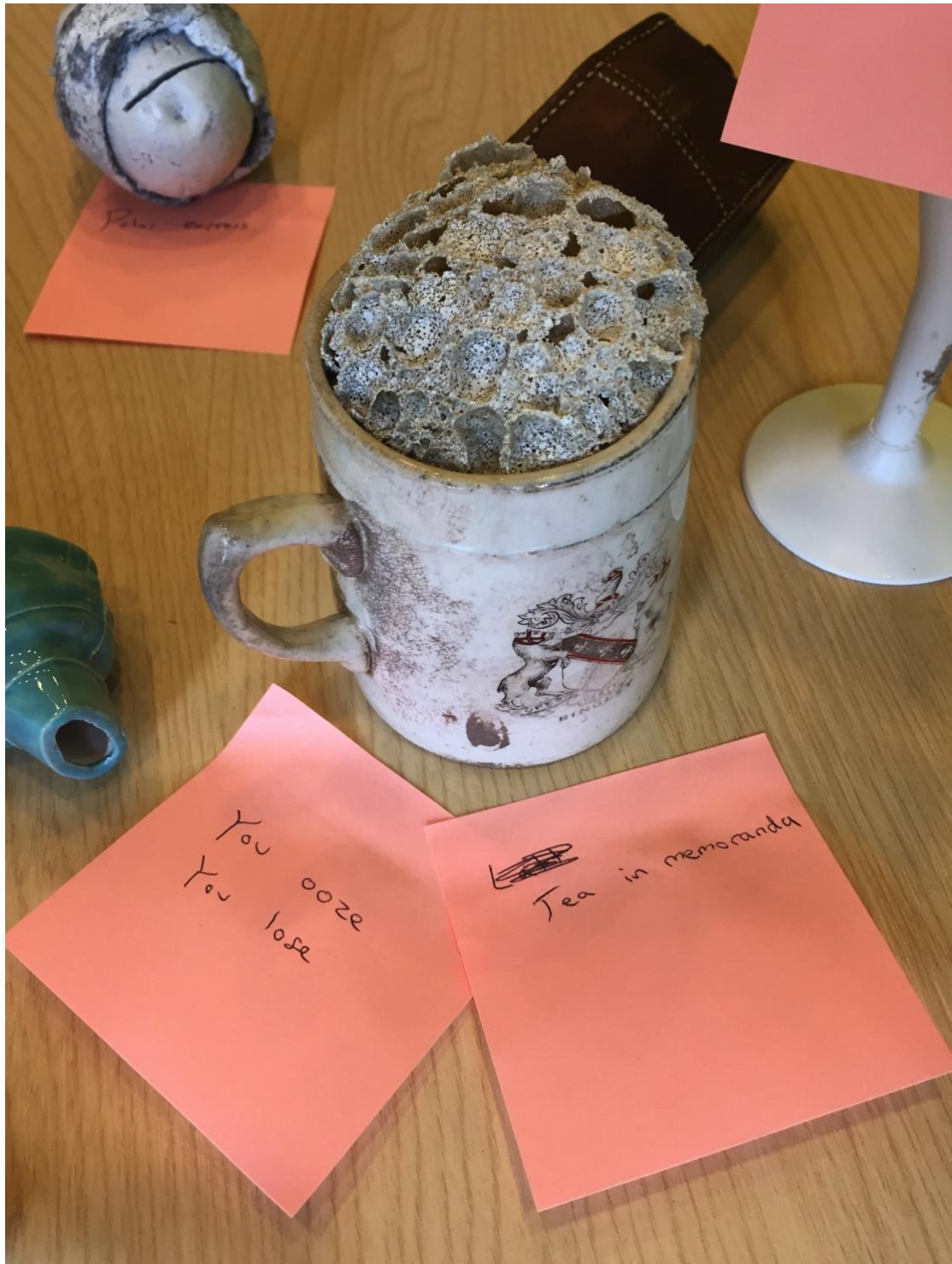
National Science and Media Museum Bradford. 8<sup>th</sup> March 2018.





Leeds Art Gallery. 5th December 2017.





Selected response sheets.



Describe your interaction with the objects you have chosen to handle.

Some I have handled gingerly. Like the one with the horse tooth. I liked the ones with the insulating foam material. Mostly I have chosen simply to observe.

Group together 4 objects that you feel relate to one and other.

Object numbers:

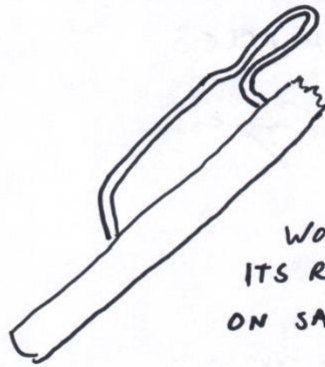
- o Comb-glasses
- o Knife-handled toothbrush
- o Foam-comb
- o bone hairbrush

What do the objects suggest to you? Why do they relate together?

They all have something to do with personal grooming - a familiar activity made unfamiliar with these item combinations.

Describe any objects you specifically did not want to choose and why.

I don't want to touch the ones featuring horse teeth. For all I know it's spent 30 years in a horse's mouth.



Draw a picture of an object.

Describe your interaction with the objects you have chosen to handle.

working out how the familiar everyday objects work together combined. It confuses my brain - I try to find a function for it - like I want to use it for what I know them to be.

Group together 4 objects that you feel relate to one and other.

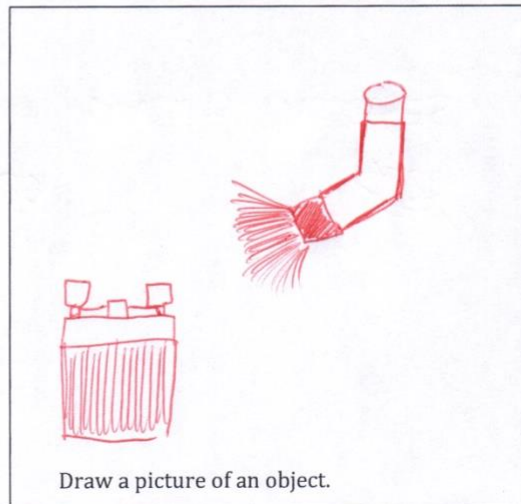
Object numbers:

tactile objects combined with gods/aerods.

What do the objects suggest to you? Why do they relate together?

There is nice poetry between them. It's as if they suit each other. I look at them and think - yeah they look good together

Describe any objects you specifically did not want to choose and why.



How did you feel about it?

I found it tactile to touch  
and hold - pleasantly so

Draw a picture of an object.



Draw a picture of an object.





Selected film stills.



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