



M1.1

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Who am I?

I am Nicky. I wasn't always Nicky, it took me some time to get here. Lives are journeys and for the past ten years my journey has been one of a design student. My Bachelor education was exploratory, I've learned about some great design travel destinations, I even visited a few; I learned a lot about who I am as a designer. The past years in between my education was a trip of conquering, it took me over a mountain, where I have learned a lot about who I am as a person. It is time to combine the two and see where the next trip takes me.

I know that I have a stronger appreciation for spatial compositions of shapes and colors. I like the transformative qualities of fashion; how wearing something on the outside influences how you feel on the inside. Instead of a reflection of how you are feeling, it can become a tool to make you feel a certain way. Listen to invigorating music and you start to feel energized. There is a quality in there how projecting what you want to feel like will help you reach this feeling. I like a good cup of coffee and the way it can change the pace of life like a rollercoaster rolling uphill and slowing down for the next dip.

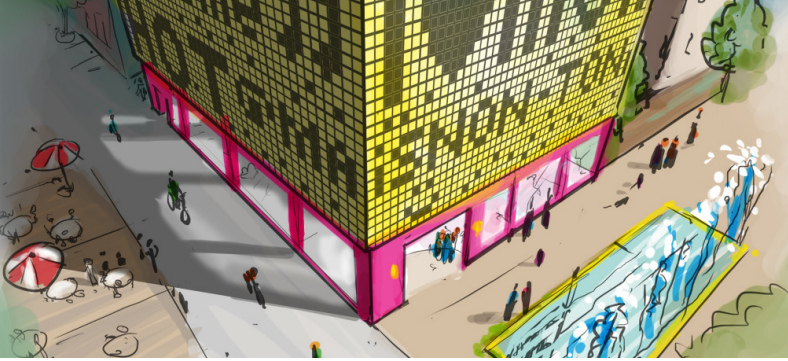
I love to create in all shapes and sizes; making digital and physical drawings, or in the shape of music. The most important lesson I have learned is that if I feel challenged, I can go great lengths in my dedication to a piece of work. I can give myself these challenges by keeping on pushing myself and stepping out of my comfort zone. Comfortable is safe, but it doesn't hit home emotionally, and I want my designs to truly stem from a place where I feel passionate about them.

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B3.2 Phyxels, Urban Screen; For my FBP, I made a system for the facades of cinemas and theatres. A system scans social media for interesting topics concerning the theatre, and displays them on the outside of the theatre through a system of moving tiles, drawing a bridge between the digital and the physical building.

How did I get here?

During my Bachelor education, I developed a broad base of design experience. Starting my final Bachelor project, I felt like I had strongly developed my aesthetic and ideation skills, but my prototyping and social cultural approach were lacking. I initially chose this project to fill these gaps, but in the end it opened a lot of interesting doors to subjects that really fascinate me; how users interact with each other around a product in public spaces, and how the relation of a product and user can be beyond that of a mere functional tool. My final project felt like a stepping stone; the product I designed was one that connected the digital and the physical world, and took place in a public space setting where users shaped the functionality and appearance of a product by using it together. From this I derived a direction to develop myself in. My vision is still not as clear as I'd like it to be; I will try and make it more concrete throughout this semester through the several modules, activities and the project.

I want to make my designs spark social interactions in a public context. Users could work collectively to change the appearance of a product, turning it into a direct reflection of their behavior. By placing the product in a different public context, the functionality and appearance might change completely. After a while, the product becomes like a story; a vessel for meaning, and a small piece of time and history. In a way, the user and the product are co dependent on each other; the product delivers a certain service to the user, and the user's activities are what keeps the product alive; when there is no interaction, the product dies.



M1.1 Craft Stories Revisited; My current project is Craft Stories, where I will explore the process and stories behind crafting and how we can apply these values to have a craft approach towards new production techniques and designs.

Where do I want to go?

I want my products to act as vessels for sharing social interactions and values in a public setting. The product provides a certain service to the user, but its life is dependent on how users interact with it; if the interaction disappears, the product dies as well. Where will this vision take me?

In the short term, during my design research project I will approach my project from a public social context. Since my project focuses on values of crafts and wearables, I will search for what stories take place in a public space concerning this subject. Through my modules, I will learn a more concrete approach towards design research to apply. Public space implies an openness that will likely have my users stemming from different cultural and societal backgrounds. In my other modules, I will learn how my designs can form a common grounds for these different backgrounds to come together.

This first semester will be a research project, but in the long term, I could take the results of such a research, distill it's design opportunities, and build concepts on them. I will have to improve my skills in electronics to further develop working prototypes, and perhaps it would be interesting to follow courses from social science educations to help me grow my cultural awareness, and architecture courses on the design of public spaces and their psychological affects. I hope to work in the overlap of these fields where I can bring these subjects together in my designs.

How will I get there?

My modules and project will help me become more focused in my design research, and will help me learn how my designs can form common grounds for users of different cultures to interact within.

Outside of the modules and the project, I want to work on my prototyping skills, either in the shape of workshops, or by helping out companies with projects involving electronics. As an exchange of services, I could do a lot of electronics works and learn from experts, while helping them speed up the production process.



Module / Constructive Design Research

The first module I will follow will be the Constructive Design Research Module. In this module, I hope to explore different approaches to design research, and to gain a more concrete understanding of what design research entails. During my Bachelor, I have done some research throughout my projects, but it never felt like it was grounded in science and academics. I hope to become more focused in my own research and to find an approach that suits my project. By exploring different perspectives and roles during a design research, from a first to a third person perspective, I hope to have a basic research understanding that I will be able to apply to my project.

Module / Intercultural Markers in the Design Process

The Intercultural Markers module will serve as a follow up for the Design Research module, and will act as a glue between the first module and the Social Interaction one. In this module, I will explore how cooking a dish shares a lot of similarities with a design process; by assuming the roles of a chef, a sous chef, and an observer, I will be able to apply and test my experience in different design perspective roles from my previous module. Working with students from a different culture will help me find intercultural common grounds where I can gain and share insights that cross my own cultural borders in order to gain a bigger understanding of how other cultures look at products, rituals and services. I hope to look for such common grounds in the Social Interaction module.

Module / Social Interaction in Public Spaces

The Social Interaction module will be a cumulation of the first two modules, integrated into a direction I started to work in during my Final Bachelor Project. I will travel to China to work together with Chinese design students, in order to make public installations that draw bridges between the digital and the physical world. The end result will be a mix between a field/showroom approach depending on the direction the work takes, and I will have to find common cultural grounds like in the Intercultural Markers module for design communication with the international students. I expect this module to have a big impact on my vision and direction as a designer.

Project / Craft Stories Revisited

In the Craft Stories project, I will try and apply values of old crafts on modern production techniques, in the shape of a research project. In relation to my vision, I will look at the symbiotic interaction between wearables and the user. Wearables can be a reflection of feelings and values of the user, what happens to these projected reflections? I will look at what the social interactions around a user's wearables are beyond that of the individual but in sharing the interactions with others, either in a familiar setting or a public space. Crafting as a process has an impact on the final wearable product as opposed to a mass produced machine made product; I will analyse what values the crafting adds to the wearable and what values resonate with the crafting process itself. What if I apply this process to something that takes place in a public space and could such a process or product reflect this crafting process?

What are my concrete goals?

To have a better overview of what I want to learn in my Design Research semester, I have translated my learning objectives into concrete goals



▶ I want to learn how to structure my design research. During the Constructive Design Research Module my approach will become more concrete and I will learn what the different roles of data gathering in research can be. I can reflect on how I could use the newly learned approaches in my project.

▶ I will practice the roles in Design Research in the Intercultural Markers module. I will learn to find ways for my designs to act as common grounds for researchers, designers and users of different cultures. I will reflect on both the applied design research roles, and what kind of common grounds I could put into my project.

▶ To further learn about intercultural common grounds and doing design research by placing products in a public context, I will follow the Social Interaction in Public Spaces module. I will apply my learned skills in finding these common grounds, and practice my prototyping skills through the making of an installation. I will also reflect on both working abroad and how my design approach relates to that of the Chinese students

▶ I want to further develop my skills for designing for public spaces. In my Craft Stories project, I will try and research how craft values appear in public spaces, and if possible design a service or product as a research tool to see what social interactions related to craft can be opportunities for future designs. I will reflect on how this project has helped shaped my vision, and how I applied the skills I learned throughout the modules.

▶ Outside of the project and modules, I want to develop my skills with electronics. By working in the workshops of experts on prototyping, I can provide them with extra labor, while they can broaden my understanding of electronics and lower my threshold to use them in my designs. I will reflect on in what way I can use the learned skills in my project and have the expert provide me with relevant feedback.