

Urban Futures Symposium

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Presentation: *Between a Rock and a Soft Place:
An Exploration into the Blurring of Selfhood and
Physical Space*

In this practice-based research project, I proposed how I will use New Materialism and Creative practice as tools to explore the complexities of inorganic (object) and organic (human) relationships. After its conception at the turn of the 20th Century, it has gained traction as an interdisciplinary theory that offers versatility within study due to its lack of a clear or concise definition (Dolphijn, Gamble). The malleable nature of New Materialism is both a challenge and an attribute as it gives scholars the opportunity to create new lines of inquiry by re-acting, re-reading, questioning and creating diverse discussions by disrupting the boundaries between fields of study (DeLanda, Dolphijn). The proposed research within this paper looks at New Materialist scholars and Creative Practice research to consider how these fields can be used to examine the complex nature between objects and humans. This practice-based research project is a response to questioning what objects we own, how objects come into our lives and why we discard objects. Utilising the materiality of mixed media, I intend to create a body of work that will explore these questions through three projects. The first takes the form of a tongue-in-cheek “catalogue” photo series aiming to observe endeared objects. The second takes the form of a short form stop-motion video about family heirlooms which aims to examine the complexity of memory objects hold. The third project is a documentary on the process of rejecting and discarding objects. Each project examines a differing relationship and aims to contribute to Object Attachment theory through engaging New Materiality and Creative Practice Research.

