

Get Set

Year: 2005
Level: First Year, Autumn Semester 1
Unit: 100396 Creative Strategies 1
Duration: 5 days
Dates: April 5, 12, 19, May 3, 10

Origin

'Get Set' was the offspring of 'Go Get Got' offered in the previous year, both scheduled as the introductory step to Project 2. 'Go Get Got' required the acquisition of sixteen things of the same kind, numerically this proved unwieldy so for 'Get Set' the set was reduced to eight.

Premise

I introduced this step with a performance of sorts that used as its soundtrack a compilation sampler put together as a limited edition CD by Chris Fortescue called 'Slowdown' in which some well known songs were recorded with the brakes on, each as a slowed down 'slurred' rendering. Using the visualiser I variously rolled marbles around a circular mirror, did something similar with colourful mapping pins within a clear plastic tray and swivelled or rotated a bottle of water, its turbulent contents 'broadcast' live to air. I also screened an extract of a film made about the Australian novelist Gerald Murnane called 'Words & Silk' which conveyed an epiphanic moment or revelation that (amongst other things) linked a marble to the eye of a horse. I re-read Baudrillard's 'systems of objects' (from 'The Revenge of the Crystal' collection) in reference to collecting and in the wake of Benjamin (as background noise).

I used the example of a dog and dogness (I invented the term 'Docga' as the 'idea of a dog') to explore the theory of forms and traversed the 'one over many' principle and the 'third man argument', perfectability (the ideal, as an idea), teleology, eugenics, notions of purity (pedigree over against the mongrel), hybridity, the original and the copy.

'Get Set' was a propositionally more formal account of its predecessor, the applied logic of *qualification* more strictly played out. I gave as an example of escalating qualification that of a red car that gains in rarity as its conditions of qualifying increase:

cars

red cars

red cars parked

red cars parked with fuzzy dice suspended from a rear view mirror

red cars parked illegally with fuzzy dice suspended from a rear view mirror

red cars parked illegally in the rain with fuzzy dice suspended from a rear view mirror

red cars parked illegally in the rain with fuzzy dice suspended from a rear view mirror and the radio on

red cars parked illegally in the rain with fuzzy dice suspended from a rear view mirror and the radio on and a dog in the back seat

red cars parked illegally in the rain with fuzzy dice suspended from a rear view mirror and the radio on and a dog in the back seat scratching

Participants were required to become 'collectors' of very odd 'things' where the items in question could be notional situations rather than single entities: a particular combination or relationship between things; the inbetween-ness of the circumstance being the 'thing' collected rather than the things-in-themselves.

Having acquired a 'set' each participant was then required to enact sorting processes based on different criteria described as 'ordering systems' each was required to devise five different systems, each revealing something different about the set in question.

The next stage was to initiate a 'breeding' program whereby the most perfect 'specimen' out of the eight of a kind was 'cross-bred' as a 'stud' with four other 'species' generating hybrid offspring. There were six 'species' to select from: an apple, a stone, a frog, a funnel, a glass of water and a boot.

The four hybridised offspring through a further process devised by Harry 'disappeared' and reappeared as a single entity (see step 3: '4 into 1')

The final 'Presentation' stage allowed an opportunity to fully explore what is meant by 'presentation' in the etymological sense. I talked at length about the various implications of this term, referencing sonar and presence along the way. Goya's two versions of the Duchess of Alba was proffered to further tease out the sense of pre-sent presents (presence).

GET SET

8 of a kind

A *kind* is a set of similar things.

As a collector collect eight of a *kind*.

This collection will constitute a *set*.

The set will *capture* eight instances of the same kind.

The kind you are collecting should possess a scarcity value.

The scarcity of the kind of thing you chose to collect is *conditioned* by a set of qualifications.

The more highly qualified the kind of thing becomes, the more difficult it is to locate and capture.

Qualification in this instance refers to the application of *attributes* to effectively regulate what can qualify for inclusion.

Attributes are a sequenced set of related conditions or clauses that place limits and restrictions upon the kind of thing that can constitute a collection.

Potential instances of the kind can only qualify as part of the set in meeting all the set conditions.

The conditions are terms that determine compliance or common agreement between the instances.

Select a kind of thing

Set the terms

Collect eight instances of the kind you have selected

This will constitute your set

Instances of kinds (by way of example and not to be used)

People-who-wear-hats-in-George-Street-standing-near-traffic-lights-and-lighting-a-cigarette, Empty-playground-swings-on-a-sunday-in-the-vicinity-of-a-bird, The-sound-of-eggs-two-minutes-in-the-frying-pan-near-to-a-boiling-kettle-of-water, junk-mail-protruding-out-of-metal-letterboxes-near-to-a-for-sale-sign, ashtrays-on-round-tables-sunlit-containing-more-than-four-cigarette-butts, leaning-chained-bicycles-in-front-of-shop-windows, the-rattle-of-supermarket-trolleys-on-sloping-wet-tarmac, spin-dryers-accelerating-in-front-end-loaders, barking-dogs-that-have-been-provoked-after-dark, puddles-no-bigger-than-a-dinner-plate-that-reflect-the-passing-image-of-a-plane-in-the-sky-overhead, empty-Otto-bins-that-have-landed-with-their-lids-open-and-any-odd-number-painted-on-the-front, oak-trees-in-Lutheran-cemeteries, switched-off-TV-sets-in-the-vicinity-of-a-pot-plant-with-a-pet-cat-passing, parking-blue-cars-(the-sound-of)-reversing-into-an-underground-car-park, when-a-referee-blows-a-whistle-and-a-crowd-of-onlookers-applaud-at-least-two-of-which-are-eating.

Set Menu

Sorting the Assortment

Given that there are 8 instances of a kind forming a set, the issue arises of how they are sequenced.

'Sequencing' has a significant impact upon the way in which the set can be understood.

Ordering a set

Think about ways in which you can order your set (about).

This requires their organization in relation to an ordering system:

A criteria that is systematically applied to the set to determine their sequence or relationship to one another.

Sequences activate numerical considerations as to where each instance finds itself in the sequence.

Issues of relative placement arise: first and last, or in the middle, of before and after, or near the beginning or towards the end, or above and below, to the left or to the right, in front or behind etc.

These are issues prompted by series of things, of the serialisation of things.

What goes first? What comes last?

The issue of arrangement.

How is the set to be arranged and why in this sequence and not in that?

The ordering system that sorts the set crucially reveals certain specific potentials of that set and draws attention to particular commonalities that the set contains.

What to do

Presenting your menu

Nominate a minimum of five very different classification or ordering systems that could be applied to your set that would significantly alter the way in which it could be sequenced and presented.

The ordering systems selected need to be written down and submitted at the end of the session.

“RED-CARS-PARKED-
ILLEGALLY-IN-THE-RAIN-
WITH-FUZZY-DICE-
SUSPENDED-FROM-A-REAR-
VIEW-MIRROR-AND-THE-
RADIO-ON-AND-A-DOG-IN-THE-
BACK-SEAT-SCRATCHING.”

DOCGA

IDEAL

(ETERNAL, TRANSCENDENT, PERFECT, PURE THOUGHT)

IDEA

REAL

(TRANSIENT, CONTINGENT, IMPERFECT, PARTICULAR THINGS)

ONE SINGULAR

IDEAL PERFECT EXEMPLARY FORM: KIND OF THING

MANY PLURALITY

IMPERFECT COPIES, VERSIONS, EXAMPLES, INSTANCES

PHILOSOPHER: PLATO

BOOK: PARMENIDES

THEORY OF FORMS

ONE OVER MANY PRINCIPLE

THIRD MAN ARGUMENT

AUTHOR: GERALD MURNANE
B. 1939 MELBOURNE

NOVEL: TAMARISK ROW (1974)

FILM: WORDS AND SILK

S.O.N.A.R.

SONIC, NAVIGATION AND RANGING

REMAINING
REMAINDER

(*RE: BACK, MANERE: TO STAY*)

TO CONTINUE, ENDURE, LEFT OVER

ECHO

PRESENTATION

THE ACT OF PRESENTING

TO SEND FOR

(TO SUMMON)

UNDER SECRETLY, TO WARN,
TO HINT, MOANING – MEANING

PRESENT

1. BEING IN A CERTAIN PLACE
2. **HERE** OR AT HAND
3. PERTAINING TO TIME THAT **NOW** IS
4. PRESENT TIME, THE PRESENT TENSE

IS THIS
THIS IS

PRESENCE

THE STATE OF BEING PRESENT

PRESENT

- 1 TO INTRODUCE INTO THE PRESENCE OF
- 2 TO INTRODUCE FORMALLY
- 3 **TO EXHIBIT OR OFFER TO THE NOTICE**
- 4 TO OFFER AS GIFT
- 5 TO LAY BEFORE A PUBLIC BODY FOR
CONSIDERATION

PRESENCE

THE STATE OF BEING PRESENT

PRE SENT

SEND - SENT

- 1 TO TRANSMIT, TO FORWARD.
- 2 TO CAST, TO THROW, TO BESTOW.
- 3 TO CAUSE TO HAPPEN.

THE IDEA OF “DOG”

THE “DOGNESS” OF A DOG

THE PEDIGREE
(NOTIONS OF PURITY)

HYBRIDITY

THE MONGREL
(NOTIONS OF IMPURITY)

THE IDEA OF
PERFECTABILITY:

EUGENICS
(GOOD BREEDING)

TELEOLOGY

THE SCIENCE OF FINAL CAUSES

THE DOCTRINE THAT EVERYTHING WAS
MADE FOR A PURPOSE

FROM: *TELOS* – END, AFAR

MIDDLE OF A MUDDLE

TYPES

TYPICAL

(MARKS OF A BLOW)

FROG

BOOT

APPLE

STONE

FUNNEL

GLASS OF WATER