

Manchester, UK

Object Lessons

Authors:

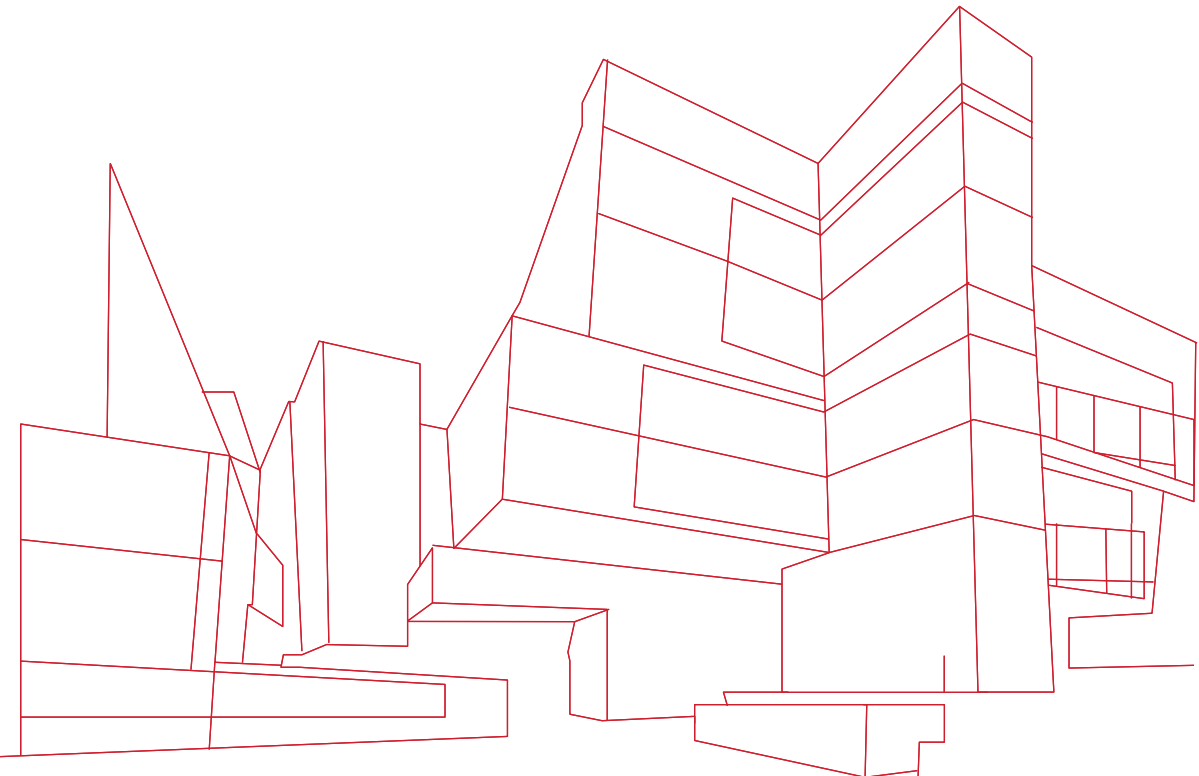
Stephanie Boydell

Curator: Manchester Metropolitan University Special Collections

David Grimshaw

Senior Lecturer: Manchester School of Art

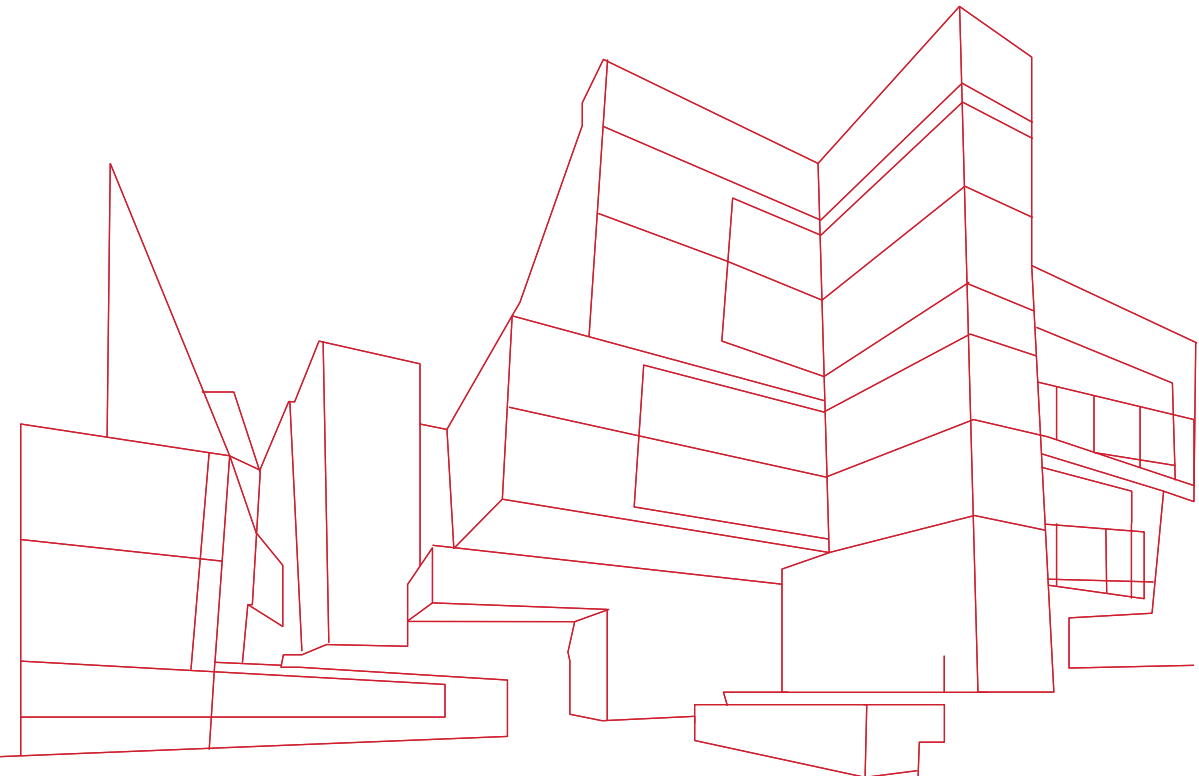
Manchester Metropolitan University



Manchester, UK

Object Lessons

What is the value of engaging with the physical object within design research and education, evaluated through the application of the “Material & Process Innovation Collection”, at Manchester Metropolitan University Special Collections





Drawing from the Antique, c1900



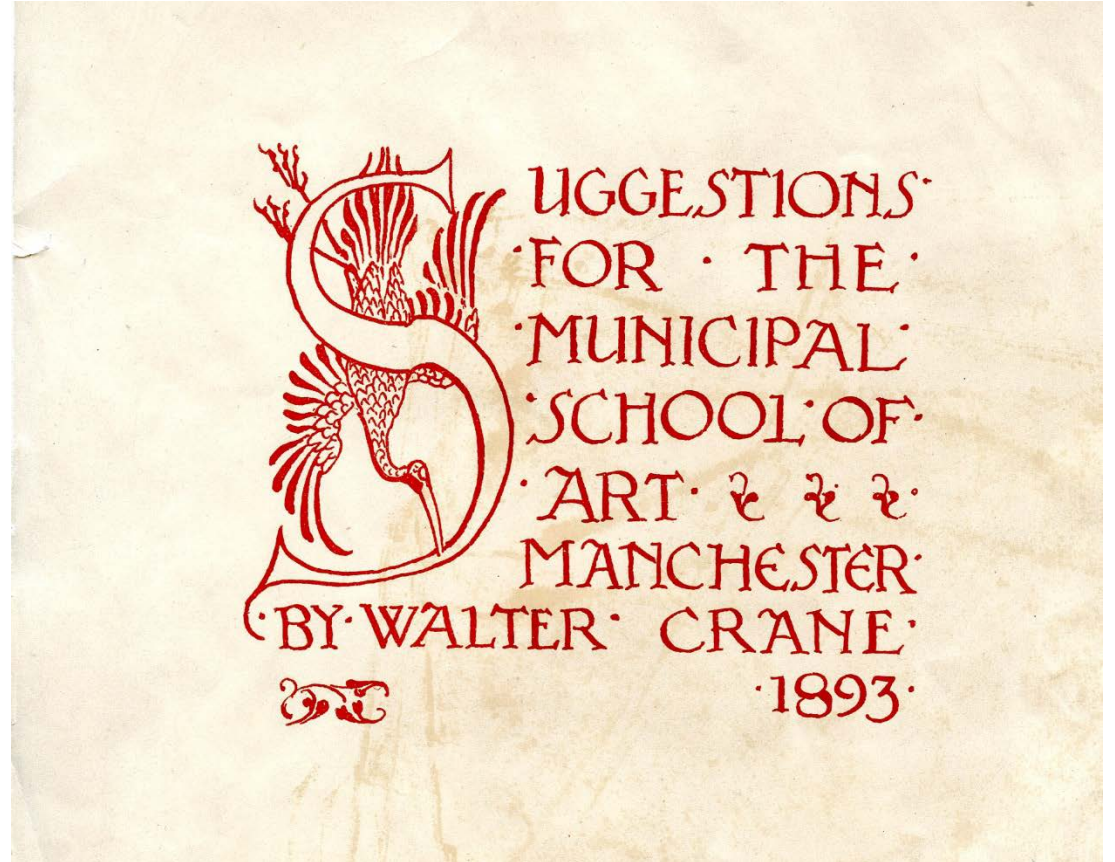
The Arts and Crafts Museum, c1900



Iznik Vase by William De Morgan. 1888-1897



Original watercolour illustration from "Columbia's Courtship", by Walter Crane, 1892




"Recommendations and Suggestions", by Walter Crane, 1893



hicarquitectura.com/2015/01/feilden-clegg-bradley-studios-manchester-school-of-art

MMU Special Collections presents



The Language of Process:

How new materials and technologies are changing product design

23RD SEPTEMBER – 20TH DECEMBER 2013

FREE ADMISSION
 Monday – Friday 10am – 4pm
 Thursday 10am – 7pm
 Saturday 12noon – 4pm

MMU Special Collections Gallery
 3rd Floor, Sir Kenneth Green Library
 Manchester Metropolitan University
 All Saints, Manchester, M15 6BH

0161 247 6107
 fb-spec-collections@mmu.ac.uk
 @MMUSpecial
 www.specialcollections.mmu.ac.uk

MANCHESTER SCHOOL OF ART 151
 ACCREDITED MUSEUM
 Manchester Metropolitan University

www.Blow Away Vase by Front for Model, www.moos.com
 microswaver Adrian Hume, Manchester Metropolitan University



Stephanie Boydell - Curator
 Manchester Metropolitan University Special Collections

David Grimshaw - Senior Lecturer
 Manchester School of Art

Manchester Metropolitan University



Images courtesy of UK Crafts Council - make:shift conference
Manchester Museum of Science and Industry 2016

photographer Simon Webb



Stephanie Boydell - Curator
Manchester Metropolitan University Special Collections



David Grimshaw - Senior Lecturer
Manchester School of Art



Manchester Metropolitan University

Figure 1

Compared with viewing objects as images,
how informative was experiencing the physical object in enabling you to:

- not infomative
- Less infomative than images
- The same as Images
- More infomative than images
- Essential

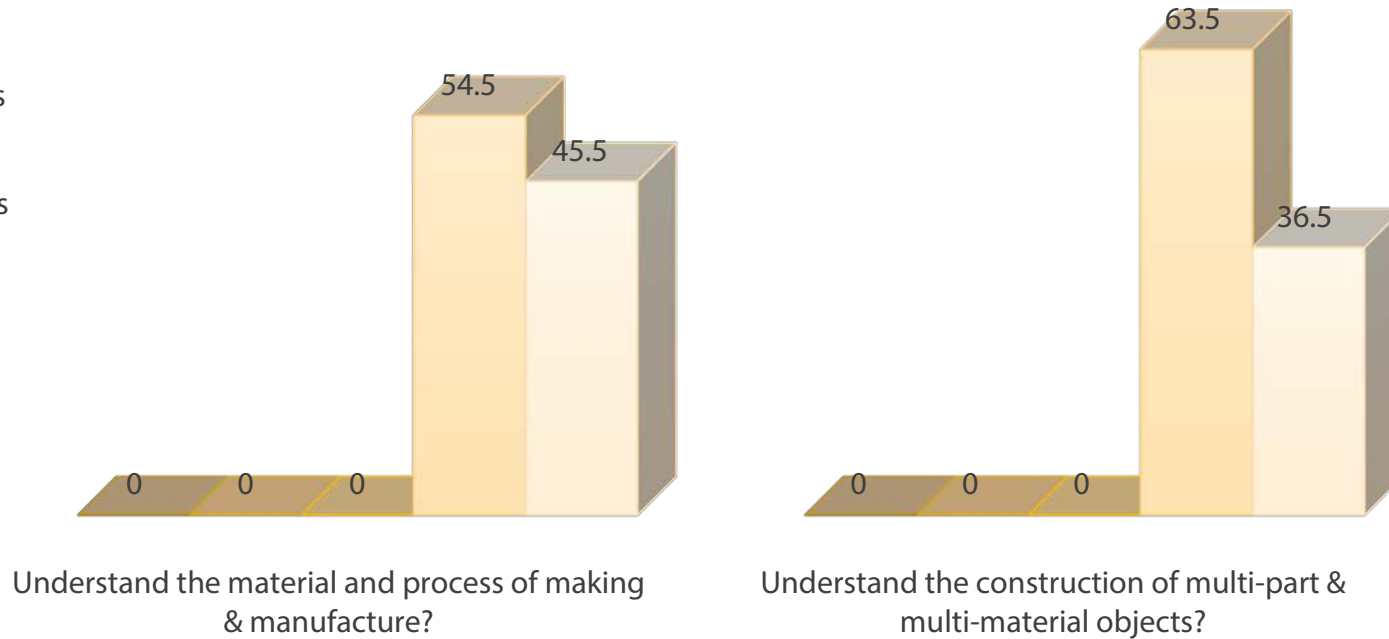
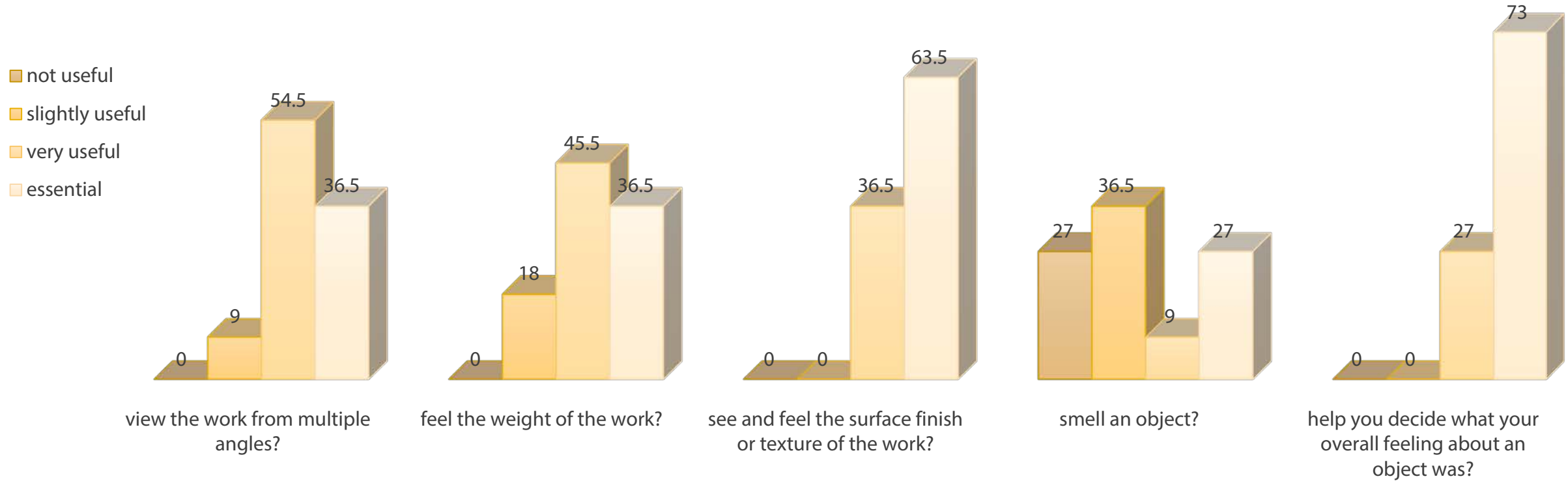


Figure 2

Compared with viewing objects as images, how useful was it to:





Bone Jar - Formafantasma

“Seeing objects in galleries is always a little frustrating to me though as I want to pick them up and inspect them properly from all angles. When I found out that one of (Formafantasma’s) Bone Jug was in Special Collections I was so excited as this meant I could actually handle the object I had been so inspired by”

...“Being able to pick up the jug, handle it, see it from all angles and inspect exactly how it had been put together was really useful for my practice and I felt really lucky to have that privilege.”



Bone Jar - Formafantasma

“If I had just seen photographs of the Bone Jug I may have assumed it was fully functional, but being able to handle it in person enabled me to discover its flaws in functionality.

This didn't make me like the object less, as I love it for reasons besides its functionality, but it did help me further understand how I feel about functionality, and in turn, assisted me in developing my own practice.”



Bloom Table Lamps - Patrick Jouin
2010: image Thomas Duval

“(I particularly remember) the Bloom Table Lamp by Patrick Jouin, because it was 3D printed in one process, I could see the detail and structure better by viewing it in person. This provides deeper understanding of how it works which impressed me a lot.”

“It was obvious to me that when I actually looked at an object with a view of seeing how it was manufactured etc, it was so much more beneficial than looking at it on a screen. You’re able to compare and contrast with other objects because you can see it in detail. Images do not provide this benefit.”



“...it made me realise the potential for working with CAD/CAM, before I felt that you don't have to engage with CAM process as much as you actually do, I felt you just press 'go' and that's it”

Bloom Table Lamps - Patrick Jouin

2010: image Thomas Duval



“There is something I find really inspiring about handling a piece of work that has been created by designers who I aspire to be like. It sounds kind of silly, but handling artwork in the reading room as opposed to seeing flawless, professional photographs of artwork makes me feel like success is more achievable”

“It makes me think further about my future career, moreover, it develops my focus in specific area such as production process and material use. In addition, by viewing those collections, some of them really broaden my mind about product design, that’s really helpful while I am developing my personal ambitions”

Endless Chair - Dirk van der Kooij
2010: www.creativeholland.com



“I believe the Special Collections is essential for the university. I have had the luxury of being able to attend design shows in London, Eindhoven and will be attending Milan in the April. For students who cannot attend these design shows or get a personal experience with products, the Special Collections gives them that opportunity. If anything growing it more would be a must.

Lectures referencing objects and telling students they can go and physically interact with them on University premises is fantastic.

Increase the collection!”

Endless Chair - Dirk van der Kooij
2010: www.creativeholland.com

Conclusion

We think that the student responses indicate that access to physical objects is important in developing design ideas and practice.

Similarly the development of collections using a large pool of expert suggestions, looking at material that speak to the “now”, not collecting with the established canon in mind, is not a risk, but a venture into collaborative collections development that has enriched the museum for both current and future users.

MMU Special Collections

MANCHESTER
SCHOOL OF ART

