

Call for Papers

Number #11

The Designer as *Bricoleur*: Exploring Praxiology, Epistemology, and Phenomenology in Design Research

Process | Knowing | Artefact

Issue Editors: Daniel Echeverri (Masaryk University) and Patrick Lichty (Winona State University)

We invite contributions that explore design research through the lenses of praxiology (design practice and processes), epistemology (design knowledge and ways of knowing), and phenomenology (experience of designed artefacts) (Cross 1999). The central, transversal theme is the *researcher-as-bricoleur* (Crotty 1998; Denzin and Lincoln 2008).

Background

Design research occupies a unique space where creative exploration and scholarly inquiry converge (Niedderer and Roworth-Stokes 2007). Moving beyond traditional scientific methodologies, it embraces speculation, open-endedness, and generative approaches. This call seeks to deepen understanding of how design knowledge is generated, validated, and disseminated (Gaver 2012; Pierce 2014), focusing on the actions, knowledge, and experiences of the design researcher as a bricoleur.

Drawing on Lévi-Strauss (1966), the bricoleur is one who creatively adapts and improvises with available materials and knowledge to solve problems. This approach resonates with the iterative and exploratory nature of design research (Redström 2021), where solutions often emerge organically through experimentation. It also aligns with constructionist (Harel and Papert 1991) and the constructivist (Koskinen et al. 2011; Krogh and Koskinen 2020) principles of design research, and with the concept of Research through Design (Frayling 1993; Findeli 1998), all of which view knowledge as actively constructed through engagement with design processes and outcomes.


Possible application areas for these explorations include, but are not limited to, interaction design, service design, material design, system design, and social design. We particularly encourage submissions that investigate hybrid forms of making—such as additive and subtractive fabrication, large language models, robotics, mixed/augmented/virtual reality, parametric and generative methods, biotechnologies, and smart materials—as tools at hand for the bricoleur



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Themes

Theme 1: Design Praxiology and the Bricoleur

How do designers, acting as bricoleurs, navigate, adapt, combine, or reinvent existing design processes to address challenges?

- Adaptive design processes: How designers creatively adjust their approaches in response to evolving project needs and constraints.
- Resourceful use of materials and tools: How designers innovatively leverage available tangible and intangible resources.
- Prototyping as bricolage: How the iterative creation of prototypes through experimentation yields insights, thereby serving as a form of bricolage.
- Meeting user needs: How the bricoleur-designer understands and responds to user needs and wants through practical action and iterative refinement.

Theme 2: Design Epistemology and the Bricoleur's Ways of Knowing

How does the designer as a bricoleur generate and validate design knowledge? What are the unique forms of knowing that emerge from their resourceful and hands-on engagement with design?

- Embodied knowledge in design practice: How practical experience and the manipulation of materials contribute to design understanding.
- Learning through making: How creating artifacts leads to knowledge acquisition.
- The role of intuition and improvisation: How the bricoleur's capacity for intuition and improvisation shapes the design process and knowledge generation.
- Combining knowledge sources: How designers draw upon and synthesise knowledge from diverse fields in bricolage fashion.

Theme 3: Design Phenomenology and the Bricoleur's Creation of Meaningful Experiences

How do designers, as bricoleurs, shape the meaning and experience of their designed artefacts for users? How does their engagement with form, materials, and finishes impact human experience?

- The designer's intentionality: How the designer's conscious engagement with design objects shapes the overall human experience.
- Empathy and understanding of subjective experiences: How designers, like bricoleurs attuned to their materials, understand and respond to users' subjective experiences of designed objects.
- The role of artefacts as embodiments of design knowledge: How forms, materials, and finishes of designed objects embody implicit knowledge.
- Creation of meaningful artefacts: How the bricoleur-designer crafts artefacts that resonate with users and impact their everyday lives.

Research Designs and Methodological Approaches

- Case studies of design projects exemplifying the researcher-as-bricoleur approach.
- Theoretical explorations of the intersections between bricolage and design research methodologies.
- Empirical studies of how designers utilise available resources and adapt methods in practice.
- Analyses of how embodied knowledge and learning-by-making contribute to design expertise.
- Investigations of the phenomenological impact of artefacts created through bricolage.

- Reflections on challenges and opportunities of embracing the researcher-as-bricoleur identity.
- Studies on the role of improvisation and intuition in design problem-solving.
- Other relevant designs and methods.

Formats

- Conventional research papers
- Photo essays: Visual narratives of the bricoleur's process, materials, or experiences.
- Pictorial papers: Integrating diagrams, sketches, or illustrations as central components of the argument.
- Videos: Short films or documentaries capturing design processes, interviews, or reflections.
- Zines: Self-published creative works offering unique perspectives on the bricoleur concept through text and visuals.

Submission Guidelines

Important dates:

- Call for contributions: 15 April 2026
- Submission deadline: 1 September 2026 (noon, Hong Kong Time)
- Peer review notification: 1 November 2026
- Final publication: 1 February 2027

Submissions must follow the guidelines for the applicable contribution type, detailed at cubicjournal.org. Please note that *Cubic* follows the Chicago Manual of Style for referencing (see <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>). Send final submissions to Daniel.Echeverri@mail.muni.cz and patrick.lichty@winona.edu (issue editors), and copy editors@cubicjournal.org.

All contributions will be double-blind peer-reviewed. Works will be published for open access. No publication fee will be collected.

Editor Bios

Daniel Echeverri, MFA, PhD, is a graphic designer and Assistant Professor at Masaryk University (Czech Republic), specialising in interaction design and emerging technologies. His research explores digital and tangible interactive narratives through the Research through Design methodology, examining how material engagement shapes design epistemology and user experience. Holding a PhD from The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Daniel embodies the *researcher-as-bricoleur* approach—viewing making as generative inquiry rather than mere production. His work emphasises how physical artefacts, often integrated with digital components, influence narrative meaning-making and impact. With teaching and professional experience in the Americas, the Middle East, Asia, and Europe, his academic interests include concept development within diverse cultural contexts.

Patrick Lichty, MFA, PKP (Winona State University, United States) is an artist, designer, and theorist whose work investigates the spatial, material, and experiential dimensions of digital culture. An Assistant Professor at the Mass Communication department and Creative Digital Media at Winona State University, his research and creative practice

explore how computation, networks, and immersive systems reshape narrative, textuality, and everyday experience. Working across installation, animation, augmented and virtual reality, and networked performance, Lichty approaches making as a mode of critical inquiry—treating creative production as a means of generating theory as well as artefacts. His scholarship draws on media theory, digital humanities, and practice-based research methodologies to examine spatial text, hypermedia, and emergent forms of digital authorship. With professional and exhibition experience spanning North America, Europe, and Asia, Lichty's teaching and research emphasise interdisciplinary practice, research through making, and the role of creative production as a legible and rigorous form of humanities scholarship.

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