

Project description "eget project"

- Inefficiency -

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Project description

Introduction

This Project description is about the “Inefficiency” project I worked on between nov. 12th, 2013 until jan. 3rd, 2014. The Project contains a theoretical part, an essay in which I wrote down some thoughts about Inefficiency and a practical part that I will describe here.

An explanation about why I chose Inefficiency can be found inside the essay

When thinking about inefficiency I soon got the idea of an obstacle, which disturbs people in their everyday life. “It should be a product that is in the way and forces the user to make some kind of detour, maybe to discover something new on this detour. It would be a functional piece of furniture or object, but the function is very unpractical. Probably the object will be for a certain spot in HDK.” was my goal, described in my project description.

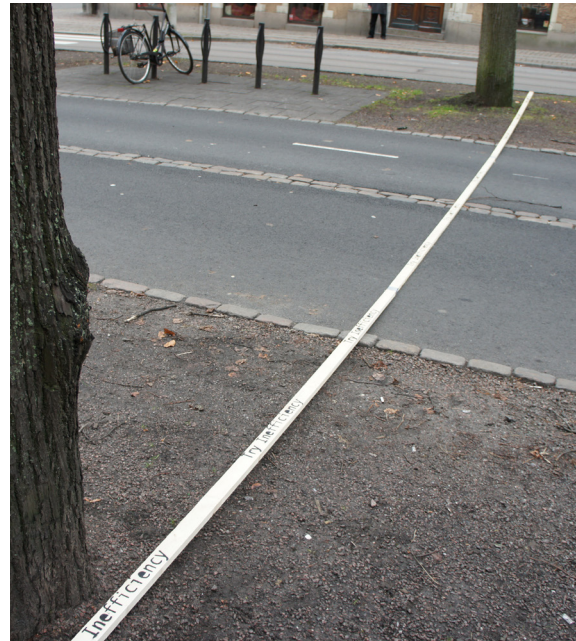
The end product is the reaction of the people in public spaces to my objects. Videos of these reactions are an important part of the project and can be found together with this document.

Process

In this project I worked with experiments instead of a research, so I started the project with some experiments in public space.

I first started with small obstacles in the street and filmed people's reactions to it. I put some wooden sticks out on a busy walk- and cycling path, about 3 centimeters high. So bikes would slow down and pedestrians would maybe stop and read my slogan I sprayed on the sticks, "try inefficiency". Many people did not take further notice of the obstacle. But some stopped at least shortly and read the slogan. I made this experiment several times and changed the order of the sticks, but there was no significant difference in the reactions.

The next effort, trying to get more attention, was a small pyramid that I put on the path, additional to the sticks. The pyramid had some holes where people could look inside. The reactions to it were still quite small. It is hard to tell if more people stopped. At least with this obstacle it happened two times, that somebody took away the sticks and one guy took a photo of the obstacle, after looking at it for a while.



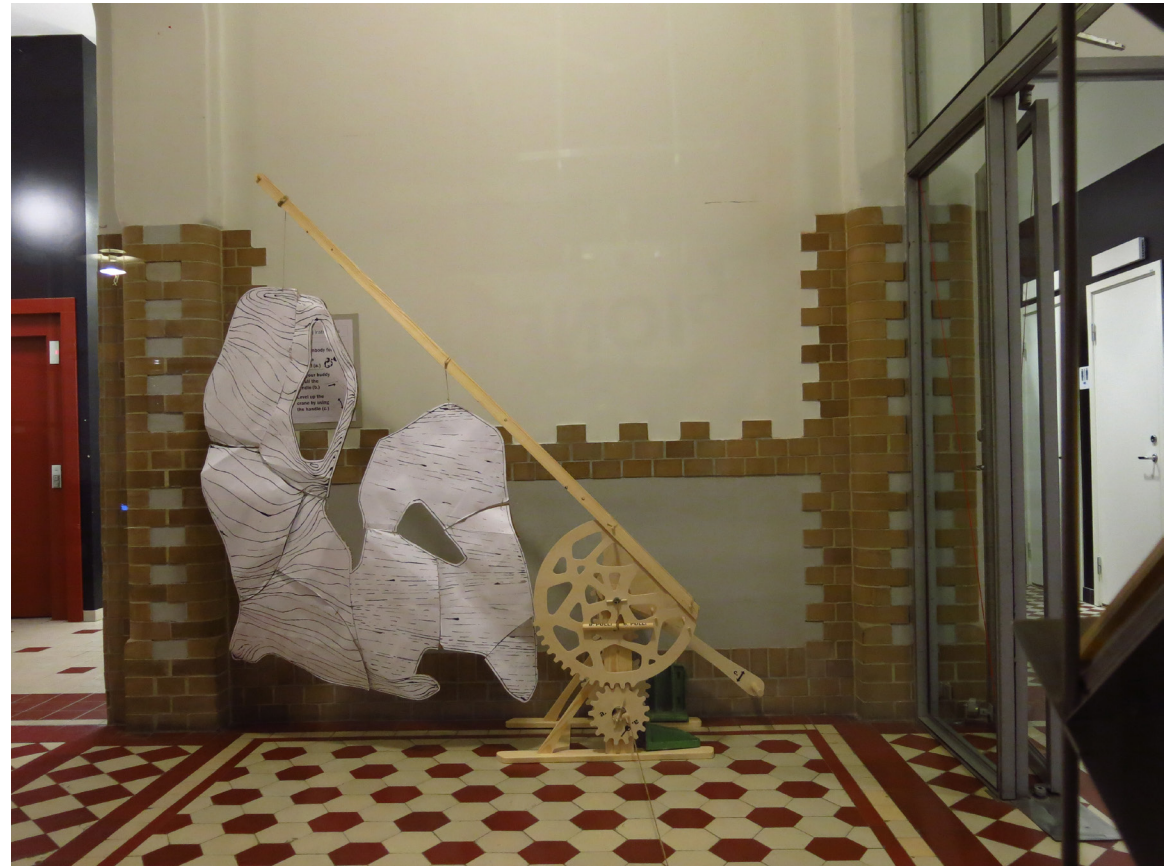


I decided that these obstacles were not enough. I wanted to force the people to interact. So I came to the Idea of something that breaks when people walk by, so the people would feel guilty and try to repair it. The first Experiment with that idea was a pyramid made out of 3 sticks that were leaning against each other and were just connected through rubber strings. One of the Sticks was connected to a cord that was going over the walkway inside HDK. When people touched the cord, the pyramid would fall down. The problem was here, that the pyramid was quite hard to repair and it was a really annoying job to do. Some people tried to repair it, some walked away.

With the background of these experiments I decided to make a more complex object. My Idea was now to create something that gives the people a positive feeling, I wanted the interaction with the obstacle, or you could say trap, to be fun. When thinking about efficiency and inefficiency, I thought about social interaction as being far away from efficiency. So I had a new goal, I wanted to bring people together and I wanted them to spend some time together, that they would have never spent without hitting the obstacle. In that way I wanted to make them to create time.

So I constructed some kind of crane that falls down when people walk by. On the crane would be hanging something that crashes down when the crane falls. In order to fix the trap the fooled person needs somebody to help him, because in the three steps, that are needed to fix the crane, he has to do two things at once, pulling on one handle while pumping up the crane on another handle.

I built that crane and tested it in HDK. Unfortunately nobody fixed the crane in the way I wanted, but would say I reached the goal of creating time. Still quite a lot of people just walked away after breaking it, but others met while trying to fix the machine and had fun together. Sadly some overrated security issues forced me to stop the experiment in the school, but hopefully I can continue experimenting somewhere else or I will after making the trap safer.



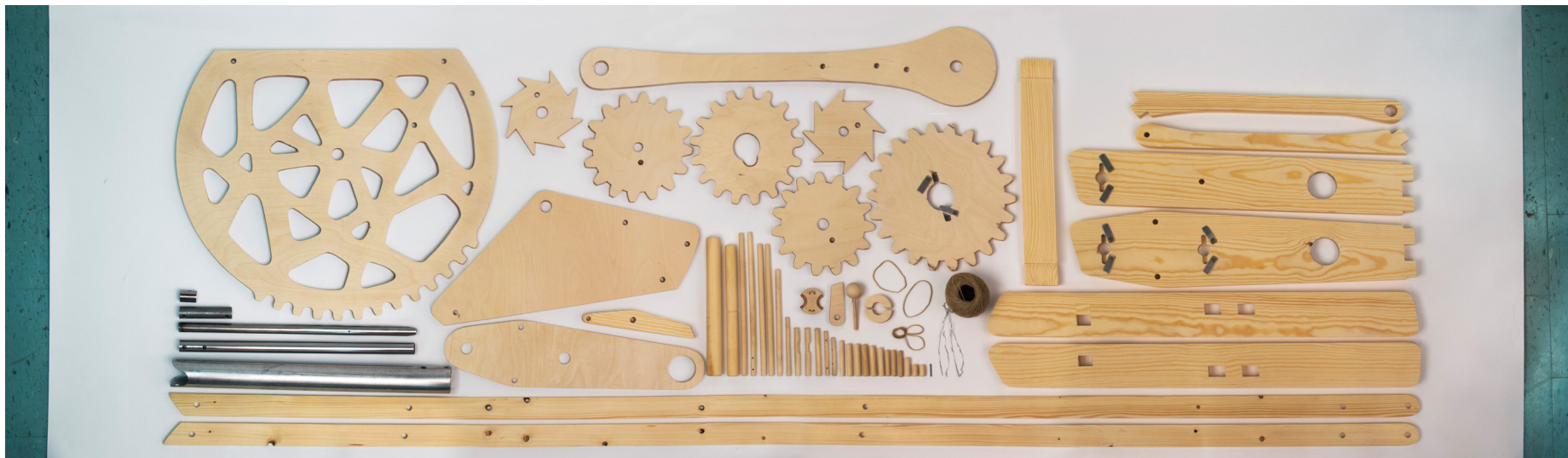
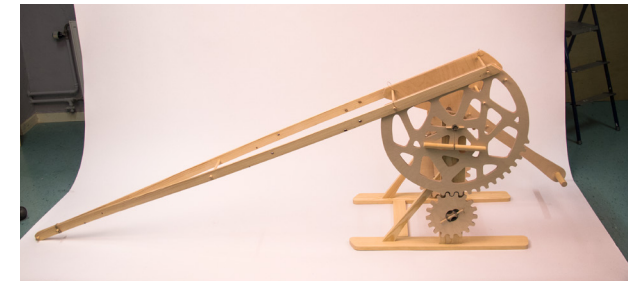
Construction

The Crane is a wood construction with metal pipes as axis. In order to pump up the crane with the big handle, two requirements have to be fulfilled:

1. There is a ball that can lock one of the gears to the lower axis. It has to be in place.
2. The other handle has to be pulled. It is connected to a cord and can pull one of the gears into the transmission system. When not pulled, this gear snaps back out of the system due to rubber strings.

See the Instruction video for better understanding.

The whole construction can be assembled and disassembled without any tools, only some cord is needed.



Conclusion

I think the project is a nice experiment and so far successful. The machine is able to create some unsuspected nice time for people in their daily life. It is some kind of time-machine.

The machine could probably also be used as some kind of analysis tool for public spaces. It could be set up on different locations, such as train stations, bus stops, libraries or shopping malls. Presumably there will be a difference in the reaction of the people in different locations. In that way you could learn more about a certain spot.

The machine I build is maybe a bit too small to handle a busy spot in public space.

It was really refreshing not to start with an ordinary research but go out and make experiments.

I hope I can continue with the project in one way or another.

