



Faculty of Design

2022

## Sensing Our Way Through Design over Time

Drake, Gemma and Mosse, Rose

---

### Suggested citation:

Drake, Gemma and Mosse, Rose (2022) Sensing Our Way Through Design over Time. In: Proceedings of Relating Systems Thinking and Design, RSD11, 3-16 Oct 2022, Brighton, United Kingdom. Available at <https://openresearch.ocadu.ca/id/eprint/4238/>

*Open Research is a publicly accessible, curated repository for the preservation and dissemination of scholarly and creative output of the OCAD University community. Material in Open Research is open access and made available via the consent of the author and/or rights holder on a non-exclusive basis.*

*The OCAD University Library is committed to accessibility as outlined in the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#) and the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act \(AODA\)](#) and is working to improve accessibility of the Open Research Repository collection. If you require an accessible version of a repository item contact us at [repository@ocadu.ca](mailto:repository@ocadu.ca).*



Relating Systems Thinking and Design  
2022 Symposium  
University of Brighton, Brighton, UK,  
October 13-16, 2022

## **SENSING OUR WAY THROUGH DESIGN OVER TIME**

### **How sense-making practices can help us foster a sense of care for the long-term future**

**Gemma Drake, Rose Mosse**

Independent Consultant | Independent Consultant

We are living in unprecedented times, two and a half years into living with covid-19 and the layering of the health, cost of living and ecological crises facing us. Have we had time to stop? How are we learning from these urgent challenges? How are we caring for ourselves and each other?

In this in-person workshop, we will explore individual, relational and collective experiences of sense-making practices around the theme of 'design over time'. Sense-making allows us to locate ourselves within the dynamics, contexts and paradigms we are part of and influenced by. It helps us to reveal where we are and align people toward more just and beautiful futures.

The workshop will incorporate movement, meditation, somatic, and art-based practices, working with the physicality of the environment and the in-person group dynamics. Drawing from Process-Oriented Psychology and Organisational, Relationship, Systems Coaching, participants will move through group systems constellation, and individual reflective practice to explore their relationship to a provocation explored through time. Finally, we will hold a space to integrate learning and insights through creative and embodied practices.

At the heart of our practice together will be a spirit of care and support. We know that it's hard to corral engagement, navigate power and work through

## RSD11 SUBMISSION FOR REVIEW

uncertainty. We know that change-work can be isolating, affronting, and bring up inner conflicts. We are offering a space to help you deepen your enquiry in a collective. We've picked tools that we find nourishing and offer them up as practices that we hope you'll return to.

KEYWORDS: systemic design: relational systems dynamics: reflection: coaching: futures thinking: sense-making: embodiment

RSD TOPIC(S): Cases & Practice, Design over Time

In this workshop, we are offering you the space to slow down and reflect on the provocations on offer at RSD11 as well as the questions and tensions you may be bringing. Through exploration of a range of methodologies including Organisational, Relationship, Systems Coaching, Theory U and Process-Oriented Psychology, participants will have space to explore, generate insights and learn both individually and collectively to deepen their sense-making practices as a tool for ongoing inquiry.

Sense-making is a powerful transdisciplinary practice to support individuals, relationships and organisational systems to collectively learn. Like "flexing a muscle" the value is the repetition and regular practice, tuning our awareness to patterns and rhythms over time. In this way, we develop our capacity to act as a catalyst for change because, as Otto Scharmer says, "...to really profoundly change the world requires us to connect to our emerging self".

The 7 themes and provocations provide such rich fodder for introspection - we cannot begin to speak to them with any authority. But, we have tools that help systems see themselves - find alignment, sense their boundaries, understand differing perspectives, and move forward together. We think that these tools are powerful and potentially transformative offerings, especially important for people engaged in the work of social innovation, systems change and design. We've worked with people who have found their flow, met their shadows, changed their opinions and experienced breakthroughs. We hope you'll find these tools similarly useful - at the conference and beyond. *Come prepared to move, create, dance.*

## **Workshop format**

120 minutes | in person interactive workshop | maximum number of participants: 25

## **Workshop Agenda**

**Introduction and setting the scene.** Gemma and Rose will present their work and justification for reflective practice as a necessary tool for any practitioner.

**A somatic movement exercise,** to ground participants and arrive. An individual movement-based meditative/ embodied activity to ease you in.

**Group Systems Constellation.** Using systemic constellation work, the group will check in around some of the provocations listed under the theme of design over time. Constellating a system is a method for revealing the voices in the system and creating a visual representation of a particular topic. The tool helps teams/groups/systems reveal themselves and uncover the nuance in different people's perspectives, including how they feel about the current system, their current role, and any desired change. It's an embodied, visual and auditory way of using the physical space to map a group's thinking and feeling on a topic. An invitation for the system to reveal itself and from that to find its own wisdom in how to move forward into its next evolution.

**Individual alignment coaching over time.** An individual reflective activity where we explore the past, present, future, and your relationship to time surrounding one of the conference provocations. This will be an embodied activity, where you'll be invited to see multiple perspectives exploring questions like.... "what needs to be let go of in the present to bring about the desired future?", "what seeds of the future exist in the today?" and "what is possible in the future that is not in the present today?" (drawing wisdom from Bills Sharpe's Three Horizons). Participants will be invited to explore a series of prompts through words, pictures and the body.

**Integration.** Finally, we will come together in plenary again to collectively process our "futures" and co-create a vision that will support participants to take steps to create it. This portion of the workshop will provide participants with the space to integrate their

learning through the sharing of their insights and an arts-based practice. We will support each other to view the conference, our work, and our personal lives, with a renewed perspective.

## **References**

ORSC CRR Global (2020). *Dojo Workbook: Tools and skills for mastery*. Benicia, CA: CRR Global

Mindell, A. (1995). *Sitting in the fire: Large group transformation using conflict and diversity*. Portland, Or: Lao Tse Press.

Scharmer, C. O., & Kaufer, K. (2013). *Leading from the emerging future: From ego-system to eco-system economies*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Doubleday/Currency.

Sharpe, B. (2013). Three Horizons. *The Patterning of Hope*. International Futures Forum.

Wheatley, M. (1994). *Leadership and the New Science*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Wheatley, M. Frieze, D. (2011) *Walk out walk on a learning journey into communities daring to live the future now*. Berrett-Koehler

---