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PAULO GOLDSTEIN

“Repair is beautiful”

Paulo Goldstein works predominantly with creating his designs from the old, revamping them to form a whole new ideal. Hold on though on second, you’re probably thinking about lots of plastic bottles, mixtures and concoctions that make your head spin. But level down for a moment. Paulo’s work is very unlike this, working with a various extent of objects. Having completed a two years Masters in Industrial Design at Central Saint Martins, with a Distinction might I add, he is now into the working world to develop his interests to form a unique process.

So let’s get into this amazing brain and see what has been done and is to be completed for the future...

Nicola Manuel: *What a brilliant achievement to have come out of a well-known university with a Distinction, congratulations! What did you base your MA project on during the time at Central St Martins and is it finished?*

Paulo Goldstein: Thank you, I can only say it wasn’t an “easy ride” but extremely rewarding. I based my project on the attempt to solve a type of frustration caused by broken objects but mainly by a broken financial system and all its complexities.

This project is far from finished in a conventional sense. I raised many issues, which drove me to the development of a personal

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the research. Potentially this will produce a stronger body of work, leading to a natural evolution of the project.



Paulo in amongst his inventions.

NM: Describe what your final piece means to you and where the title 'Repair is beautiful' appeared from.

PG: My project is a commentary on certain elements of our extremely complex social structure and how some flaws in this structure affects us, in the individual level. What the project tries to do is raise questions, problematise, and comment on the technological paradigm and its unintended consequences by offering an alternative view.

The full title of my project is: "Repair is Beautiful – Homo Faber and the broken things". The term *Homo-Faber* means "man-the-maker", in my project, the term stands for values of craftsmanship, empowerment of the individual and resourcefulness. This *Homo faber* persona, with a hands-on approach and use of human ingenuity and creativity, tries to control this uncontrollable and complex scenario, of financial crisis, resulting in neurotic behaviour, by designing over-repaired objects that reflect its environment. Repair and craftsmanship play a crucial role in balancing idealism with practicality, showing a different alternative, not better, just different.

In his book "Small is Beautiful: a study of economics as if people mattered", E.F. Schumacher says that **growth and efficiency** are the main concern of our economic system, having technology as the major tool to achieve these goal. Schumacher proposed an idea of leading technology back to the real need and 'actual size of man. Man is small, and, therefore, small is beautiful'. The Title "Repair is Beautiful" is a direct influence of Schumacher's idea.

NM: *What were your main reasons for taking an MA in the first place?*

PG: Since I graduated in Fine Arts in Brazil in 2003, I've always wanted to study some more and develop my ideas a bit further. When the financial crisis hit in the end of 2008, the investors took there money from the project that I was working as a model-maker, so I got unemployed for the whole year of 2009. With this situation, it felt like the right moment to apply for the MA, and give myself more opportunities, including an academic life.



Repaired Chair.

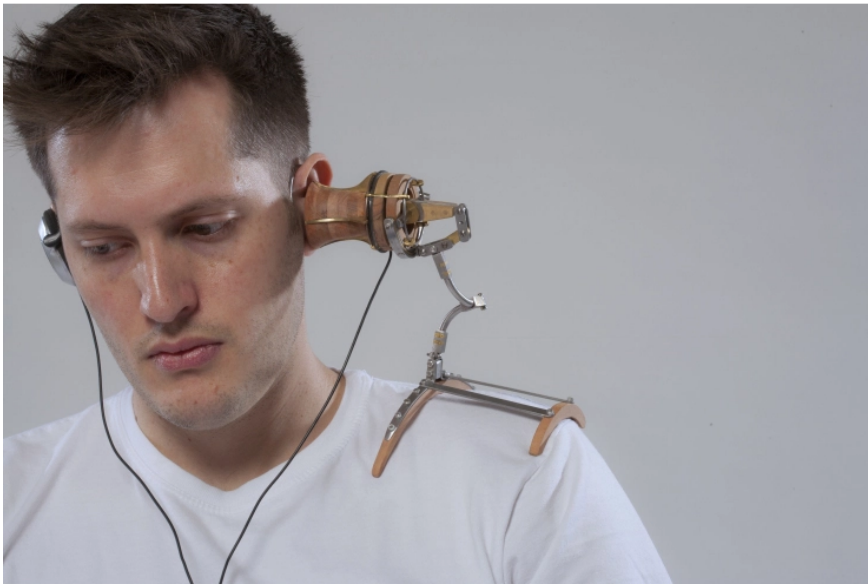
Repaired Chair

NM: *Movement within your work is quite clear with the adaptation of objects to your experience of working with animation such as 'Mr. Fox', 'Shaun the Sheep' and the new release by Tim Burton, 'Frankenweenie'. What has been your favourite to work on and why?*

PG: I liked all of them. 'Fantastic Mr. Fox' was a personal achievement because it was my first big step into the stop-animation business, but I must confess that 'Frankenweenie' became a special one. With 'Frankenweenie', I empathize with the story, I like the concept of bringing 'things; back to life (in my case broken objects), I liked the aesthetic, the inspiration from classic horror movies, and it was a project that I was more involved in the making of the puppets. But apart from the technical aspects, it was nice meeting Tim Burton and was really interesting seeing how personal and passionate he was with this movie. His attention and desire for the human imperfections and subtleties on the sculpting of the characters... It was a great experience.

NM: *Can you see yourself doing many more animations or do you wish to pursue your own creations?*

PG: Stop Motion animation is a childhood passion. I would like to work on a few more productions, not only animation, but live action as well. Those are things I would like to do, but my main focus is on my own creations, in pursuing my own ideas. I want to work on things that are challenging, and that inspire people.



The Headphone.

NM: *Back to your own creations. What led the motivation to create from the pieces that you have made your design work from?*

PG: Well each piece in the collection has its own story. The *Anglepoise* and the *Headphone* were mine, so there is the emotional aspect of it, the *Chair* was found in a bin close to where I live and the *Ipod* was bought on eBay for £5,00. The only thing that they have in common is that they were broken and discarded. Apart from the conceptual aspects mentioned before, what led the motivation to create from these pieces was a *celebration to repair*, the empowerment of craftsmanship and the attempt to get the feeling of control back in my own hands.

Being inspired by Schumacher's idea of scaling things down, by Bruno Latour's discussions of the power negotiation between man and technology and David Pye's view of the nature of workmanship, I tried to combine there views with my own frustration of being completely powerless when faced by the small scale consequences of financial crisis. I repaired broken objects using elements of this broken system, creating intriguing new objects that talk about the absurdity of it all. I can't repair the whole system or social structure and I can't affect it in the same scale that they affect me, but I can make pieces that reflect the environment that created them and question our society as a whole.

NM: *When did the passion for making things appear?*

PG: The passion for making probably started when I was 10 years old and playing with my action toys. I was confronted by the frustration caused by my G.I. Joes and their broken thumbs, which made their basic function (killing each other) almost impossible. Without thumbs they couldn't hold their machine guns, bazookas or any other killing tools. When this problem happened to one or two of my G.I. Joes it was ok because every army needs a doctor and maybe a nurse. However, I couldn't start a war with an army of thumb less soldiers. So Peter Pan's enemy, Captain Hook, inspired me. Prosthetics! Prosthetics was the obvious solution to my problem. So for the first time in my life I repaired something. I hacked my disabled toy soldiers using materials and tools from my environment (a thick aluminium sheet, scissors and pliers) to make prosthetic knives and gadgets, giving them a second chance to achieve their functionality (search and destroy the enemy). With this experience of repairing something I discovered this passion for making things for transforming something into something else and I felt really empowered by the potential of making things with your hands. Twenty years later these same passion is still present in my life.



Repaired Headphones.

Repaired Headphones

NM: *What can we expect to see from you next?*

PG: As mentioned before, my project "Repair is Beautiful" is far from over, I have a few more pieces that I want to make to have a stronger body of work that will help the concepts of the research to flow easier through the pieces and to the audience. With the production of these new pieces I intend to explore a bit more on a few issues that I just scratch the surface and I think that naturally the project will evolve into something else, but always having the scale idea that "man is small"...

Apart from my own main project, I'm looking for collaborations with other people, presentation opportunities, commissions and exhibitions. Considering the inspirational nature of my project and the visual research and production, I'm always looking for people, institutions and companies that would like to sponsor my work.

It feels appropriate to finish this answer with the following quote:

"The factory of the future will cease to be a madhouse and will become a place in which the creative potential of *Homo faber* will come into its own. This is above all a question of relationship between human being and tool."

Vilém Flusser

Time for those quick round questions to finish off...

Animation or book? Book

São Paulo or London? That's an unfair question... both

Loud or quiet? Quiet

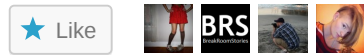
Hand or digital? Hand

Design or maker? Both

So from G.I. Joe's and Captain Hook we now see before us how Paulo really did get to where he is today. What an achievement, one that he should be so proud of! If you want to have a look further at Paulo's work then just click [here](#). Also check the new film '[Frankenweenie](#)' and of course '[Fantastic Mr. Fox](#)'.

Who said inventing things needed to be all scientific eh?

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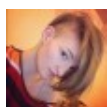
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