

## **An Invitation for Provocation**

As part of a conference called "Creativity, Play, and the Imagination across Disciplines," to be held in New York at Columbia University on May 26-28, we are holding a workshop called "A Cabinet of Curiosity." The workshop will feature an actual cabinet containing a number of boxes, each box in turn containing a "provocation." Each provocation in the cabinet will be created by a different person, with the goal of inspiring an exploratory, creative, or reflective response in the user. A provocation might also involve doing an activity that can be done on the spot, in 15 minutes, by a person who engages with the object(s) or other stimuli in the box. We are asking a range of designers, artists, educators, and other creative thinkers to create provocations. Provocations may be more or less concrete or abstract, but they must exist, at least in part, as some sort of physical object that can fit on the shelf of the cabinet. Provocations may contain written instructions, or they may be "self-explanatory." We expect provocations to utilize a variety of different approaches, including engaging participants in design tasks; invoking role-playing or character-playing; presenting explicit or implicit puzzles; using sound, taste, touch, smell, or bodily movement; and so on.

We would like you to design and build one of these provocations.

***What's in it for you?*** We hope you see this as an opportunity to exhibit your work in an interactive way to a thoughtful, diverse audience. The provocations will be documented in photos and video, and posted on the web, along with relevant explanations. Needless to say, we will fully acknowledge and thank each provocation designer in all materials related to the workshop. There may also be an opportunity to sell your work or include it in a virtual or physical travelling exhibition (see below).

### **Details:**

1. The provocation should fit into a space roughly the size of a shoebox. (Exact maximum dimensions 7 1/2 by 5 1/8 by 14 3/8 inches.)
2. Your provocation should be completed (or at least be at a point where it can be assembled in a short time) by May 1.
3. It must be possible to easily pack and ship your provocation. We can do simple assembly of components on-site if necessary.
4. We will be happy to return your provocation to you if you wish. However, at your discretion, we can include your provocation in a potential sale of the cabinet (with a share of the proceeds going to you), and/or include it in a potential travelling exhibition.
5. We would like to make a 1-minute video of you talking about your provocation, and we also plan on photographing your provocation and videotaping people interacting with it at the conference. With your permission, these photos and videos will be posted on a project website and/or YouTube.

**Finally...** here are some terms that have inspired us as we think about curiosity. You don't have to address any of them, but we include them here just in case they might inspire you, too: *Interest, wonder, creativity, memory, play, exploration, secrets, mysteries, artistic expression, suspension of disbelief, narrative, physicality, sensory, design, metaphor, imagination.*

In anticipation,

Aviva Dorfman, Susanna Hapgood, Remi Holden, Jeff Kupperman, and Suzy Knezek

Questions?

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