

## **PROJECT TITLE: Velveteen Rabbit**

by Agnieszka Pokrywka

**DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT:** *The Velveteen Rabbit or How Toys Become Real* is a children's novel from 1922, written by Margery Williams and illustrated by William Nicholson. It is both the story about a stuffed rabbit and his quest to become real through the love of his owner and about the owner who was making the stuffed rabbit alive by the power of imagination.

Inspired by this novel, the idea of reusing childhood's dreams and implementing them as a core of *Velveteen Rabbit* project came in to being. This proposal aims to stimulate creativity of the people who are not used to express their feelings by the mean of programming and to reflect on stereotypical opinions about unemotional appliance of computer technology.

The project is planned to be realized in 4 meetings + exhibition. The workshop aims to collect group of people (5-10 participants) who are familiar with Arduino, an open-source single-board microcontroller (or any other hardware programming language which could make possibly easy retraining to this platform), and are not used to express their emotions and personal experiences by the mean of computer technology. The workshop is planned to be executed during 4 meetings (their frequency will be accustomed to the possibilities).

- **1<sup>st</sup> meeting. Arduino introduction.** The aim is to recognize the skills of the participants and if needed improve them to make the stakeholders able to follow further participation in the project.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> meeting. *Velveteen Rabbit* novel reading.** The participants will be introduced to the book content and encouraged to remind and develop own memories about their childhood toys. The participants will be asked to revive the toys which remained from their childhood (or found these which are somehow fitting to their memories) and by the use of Arduino make their childish imaginations happen.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> meeting. Development of the project.** The participants work on making their personal projects. The process is experimental, collaborative, focussed both on technical implementation of the ideas and wider emotional reflection on the childhood's reminiscences.
- **4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Finalization of the project and preparation to the exhibition.**
- **Exhibition.** “Alive”, interactive toys are being exhibited.

Through these 4 meetings I will observe and document the process of project implementation and interview the participants. Collected in this way data will appear as a supportive material during the exhibition.

In “Velveteen Rabbit” project I see myself in the role of integrated participant who will naturally stimulate, shape, and provoke attendant's creativity and reflection.

Introductory lecture on working practice and work, Lunch Bites session, specified lecture related to my

research/practice will be done during above described schedule.

**MOTIVATION:** *Velveteen Rabbit* is a part of *Hybrid Atelier Beta* which is a series of 3 open source based computer art workshops focussed on various groups of stakeholders differing regarding to the level of their art and programming knowledge:

- *1.0. Vanishing Point.* The workshop devoted to people who have no background in art nor computing (April 2011, Poznań PL).
- *1.1. Smoke on the Water.* The workshop devoted to people who has artistic background but relatively pure knowledge about programming (September 2011, Trondheim NO).
- *1.2. Velveteen Rabbit.* The workshop devoted to people who are fluent in computing but are not connected anyhow to art (under construction).

Hybrid Atelier is an artistic and research project, devoted to simultaneous practice in the field of art and programming by the use of open source languages, with special interest in creative process appearing on the junction of these two disciplines. Hybrid Atelier understands computer programming as an artistic activity where open source solutions additionally amplify inventivity and cooperation by open exchange of inspiration, skills, and knowledge. In the special interest of the atelier is to observe, document, analyze, and systematize creative process appearing in a junction of art and open source code.

More info: <http://hybridatelier.cc/>