

# Soft Cuddly Object



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8 page Project Plan

Nikki Vieler

## Product Idea and Context

The product idea stems from an image I came across in the Minor Visual Culture. I came across an image/video of the Dutch State police officer giving a child a soft cuddly teddy bear after an automobile accident. I took this image/video as my starting point for the project, which my teacher had requested. I then decided to give myself the assignment to design a nice soft cuddly toy for a partner or stakeholder.

I also watched an interview and read a theory/book written by Timothy Morton. In his book *Human Kind* he writes about humans trying to find a better relationship with **objects**. **I wish to do this by intervening in a child's life at an early stage and by designing a soft and cuddly object which helps the child develop a more appreciative relationship towards objects.** I believe that in **the long run, that's a good idea**, this is my minimal theoretical reinforcement of my original concept.

So a soft and cuddly toy which serves as a visual symbol of a soft and cuddly object for a child to coexist with is the visual outcome. I shall organise and arrange the requirements of the project as an Autonomous Product Designer. I shall do this with Lievegoed Huize Thomas. I have included the SWOT Analysis in the Bibliography and notes.

### Justification

Considering the time that we are living in, it is very important that the human species improves its relationships with the objects around it (as we are living in an age of near utter human annihilation). A simple start is the design and production for an artisanal, cuddly and soft object which can make humans relate to other objects in some peaceful, pleasant and non-violent way. By doing so the human species may just learn that looking after and caring for other objects might just make them not wipe out its own species. Making objects nice, soft and cuddly, to invite people of all kinds to join together and give shape to the world.

The visuality of the object shall preferably be inviting and shall exude/communicate a soft and cuddly message to the target group. The Target group are children at the Lievegoed Huize Thomas between 6-9 years old.

The goal of the project is to address the interaction between a human child and an object in a pleasant way. The designed soft cuddly object shall serve as a statement of a call for greater human-object coexistence on Planet Earth.

### Learning goals:

#### Ability to communicate:

##### Learning Goal:

The student can locate a specific target group and communicate with that Target group (children between 6 and 9 years old at Kinderdagcentrum Huize Thomas).

##### Evaluation Criteria:

The student has identified, documented and communicated with the target group and/or target group's supervisors.

#### Ability to cooperate:

##### Learning Goal:

The student has designed a product with the Target Group that sufficiently meets the Target Groups demands.

##### Evaluation Criteria:

The student has collaborated with the Target Group and its **supervisor's** and documented the collaboration in a process book and/or film.

The student has identified and documented the Target Groups demands.

## Materials & Techniques

The Materials I shall use shall be chosen with minimal intention to harm Planet Earth. However, this does not mean that I can provide an absolutely neutral impact to my product. That's almost impossible. Breathing in and breathing out air has an impact on the climate, so does designing and fabricating a product. I will do what I can to minimise the impact, however not at the expense of my target group and product idea.

This means that I will first look to make use of recycled materials. As I have some of recycled materials from previous projects. However **if this doesn't meet the target groups client demands, then I shall look to use materials that are as sustainable as possible.**

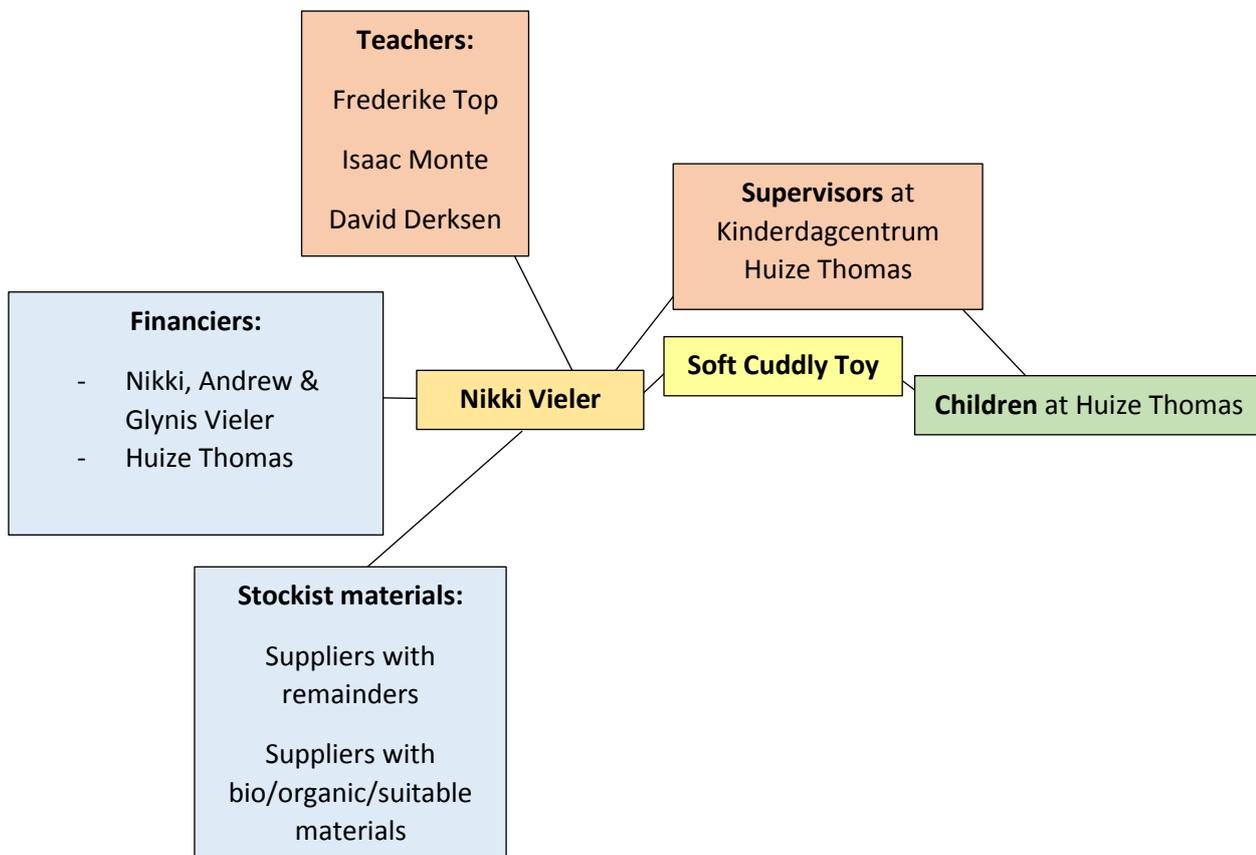
This includes therefore:

- Recycled textiles
- Organic cotton or textiles (wool is also an option) produced in a sustainable manner.
- Recycled buttons
- Buttons 3D printed from PLA.
- Organic or recycled/found thread

The main techniques I will use are sewing, stitching and ironing.

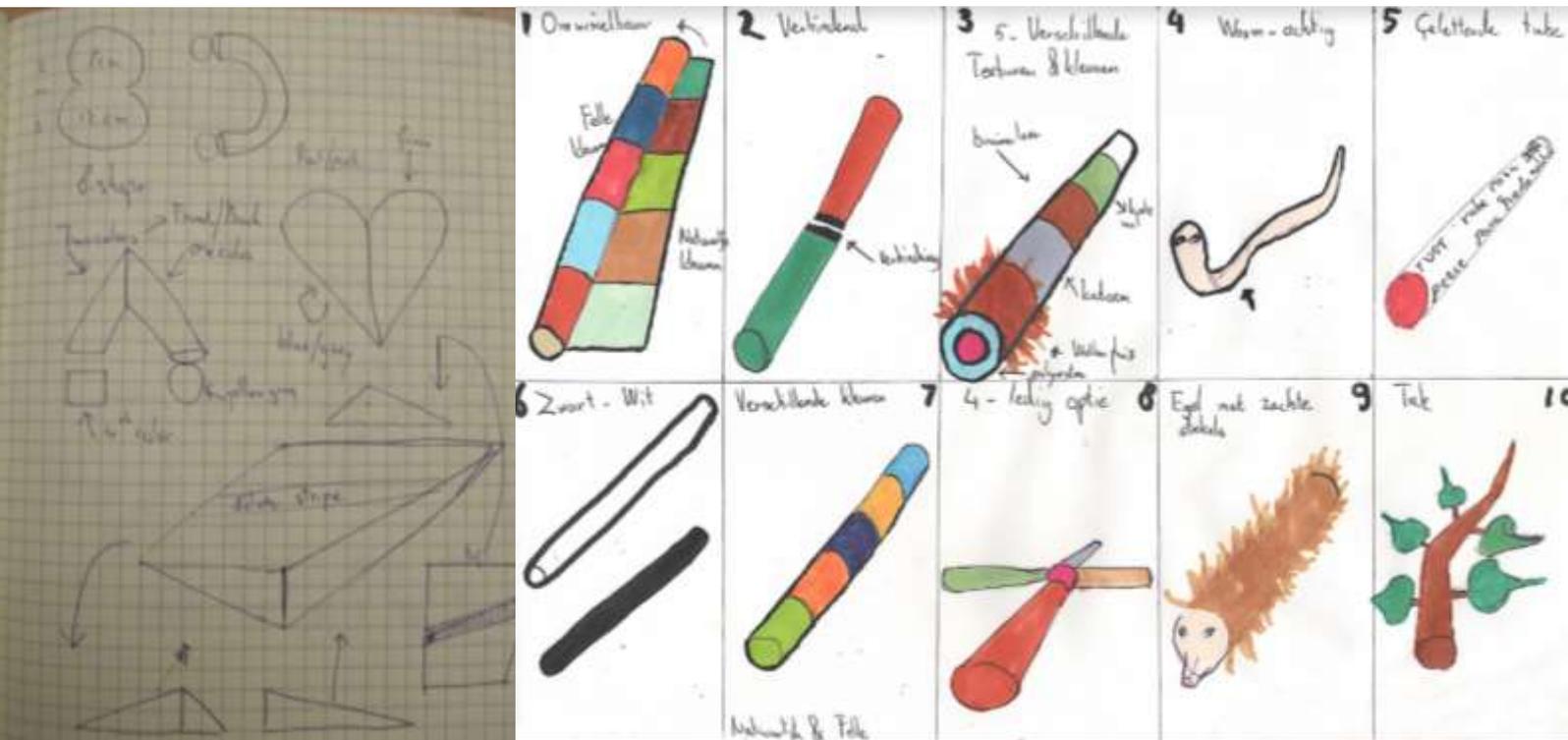
I might use embossing or silkscreen printing, but due to the fact that this is not a very sustainable production method and probably not required, I will probably not use it.

## Stakeholders



## Technical Detail/Drawing

The image depicted below is a drawing of some of the prototypes I have made/designed. Drawings of the final prototype have been made as well. I prefer to make, then draw drawings, but here's some anyway.



## Prototypes/Development

I will make some prototypes to take with me to Huize Thomas for the interview and from there I will iterate until I have a final design. Depicted below are some of the prototypes. As of now these objects have an abstract form as I was experimenting with forms, materials, techniques and the limits of forms. The final object shall be fully designed after testing with the target group.



## About the Designer & Previous work



Nikki Vieler is a starting Visual & Autonomous Product Designer, Researcher and Writer who designs objects & systems for objects, organisations, people and clients. His personal assets are rapid prototyping skills, theoretical framing, research, writing and an explorative approach. Nikki has an interest in exposing problems and addressing them in solutions-oriented approaches.

Nikki has a practice oriented around Digital Craft, Object Oriented Ontology, Theory, Research, Visual Culture and Ecology. He advocates nonviolence as a means to a better form of co-existence. He also has a preference to design and fabricate products on demand or to create visual narratives with Products.

**Nikki's strengths are combining theories and practical work, flexible production skills and his ability to adapt to situations rapidly.**

Nikki also has an interest in collaborating with and working on assignments with multiple partners and stakeholders.

In the end he hopes to make Planet Earth a more hospitable peaceful and better place to live, by designing meaningful objects and methods of co-existence. Nikki also seeks to gain an understanding and become more meaningfully and non-violently politically engaged through his work.

[nikkivieler.com](http://nikkivieler.com)



## Visual Agrilogistic Violence

Agrilogistic (Agricultural logistics) violence remains a relatively unseen phenomenon within a Dark Ecology. Agrilogistic violence is a structural slow violence which damages objects and living species by the distribution of polymer products through an unrestricted and ungoverned free market. The polymer products are derived from crude oil which has been greatly prized by modern culture and has often been obtained in violent means. In order to address this issue, Agrilogistic violence needs to become a visual phenomenon.

To do this I will create a series of maps by researching objects such as an OLA (Unilever) Schatkist and through the means of iteration create a series of counter-cartographic maps which seek to visualize and address the issue of Agrilogistic violence which originates and are mainly transported through the Silk Roads. The main emphasis of this project will be to seek the means of stimulating a public discussion about such matters and providing human consumers the input and means to address the issue of Agrilogistic violence in our violent geography.

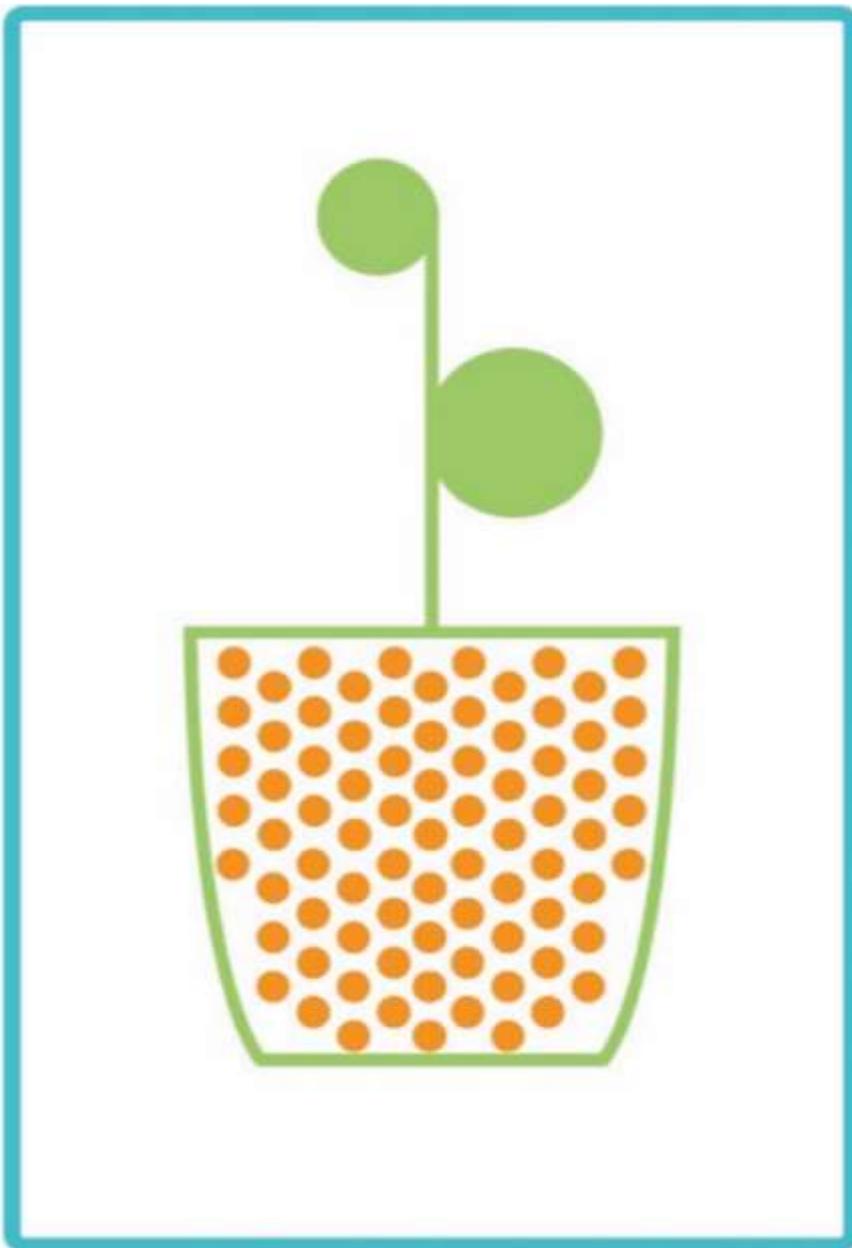
The main task of this project is to provide an accurate and as-empirical-as-possible collection of maps which are framed in a comprehensive narrative. The maps are there to stimulate consumers and citizens to act differently and to address direct and indirect Agrilogistic violence in society. The maps will provide a simple yet rigorously based narrative, which most people will be able to comprehend. These maps could be created in different media, both digital and analogue and could be placed on the internet.

In order to do this, I will take a forensic approach to a found object (an OLA/Unilever Schatkist) and use mapping of digital, scientific, historical, artistic and scholarly data. This should provide an oversight of the complexity of globalized Agrilogistic violence, including the powers and hierarchies at hand. The narrative provided with these maps shall provoke concern amongst users and consumers in this system, which will hopefully lead to a meaningful (activist) stance towards these damaging systems.

In addition to this I will refine and explore target groups, but this shall remain a project for in the public domain. This is a project that attempts to stimulate people to address structural Agrilogistic violence which takes place in and via seemingly peaceful (liberal) democracies.

## Bibliography:

- Morton, Timothy. *Dark Ecology. For a logic of future coexistence*. New York: Columbia University Press, Print. The Welles Library Lectures.
- Yergin, Daniel. *The Prize: The Epic Quest for Oil, Money & Power*. New York: Free Press; Reissue edition (December 23, 2008)
- Weizman, Eyal. *Forensic Architecture: Violence at the threshold of detectability*. New York: Zone Books 2017
- Frankopan, Peter. *The Silk Roads; A New History*, Bloomsbury publishing. 2016 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition
- Doel, Marcus A. *Geographies of Violence*, London: Sage publication Ltd. 2017 Print. Society and Space series.
- Bureau D'Études, *An Atlas of Agendas, Mapping the powers, mapping the commons*, Paris: Onnamatopee 2015. Print



## The Giving Tree

The Giving Tree is a collaborative educational project concerning the design and prototyping of an aquaponics system for the classroom.

I joined up with Niko Arranz, Levi Baeten, River Diephuis, Gino Martina & Jurgen Meijer to collaborate on a design for an aquaponics system in the classroom. We as a group decided that we wanted to help children understand the complexity **and fun one can have in growing one's own food.**

My own personal contribution was to research, conceptualize and design a workshop manual for the system to be implemented in class. This meant doing significant theoretical research into psychology, child development and child-classroom interaction models so as to formulate a workshop manual.

The eventual model was constructed and tested in a classroom. We are in the process of testing it with children as well.

I also liked the idea of creating an aquaculture, so as to bypass Agricultural Logistics.



## Notes & Bibliography:

Timothy Morton – Human Kind

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1AEy2KmHwh0>

Van Tuinen, Sjoerd. The Cosmic Artisan, Akker, Robin Van den, et al. Metamodernism: Historicity, Affect and Depth after Postmodernism. Rowman & Littlefield International, 2017.

### SWOT analysis Q10

What went well:

- Found Target Group
- Made a product
- Demonstrated in the Hague
- Approval of police in the Hague
- Documentation was quite thorough
- Good attempt at connecting Major & Practice
- Laying the connection between Object Oriented Ontology is nice
- Doing the project in the public sphere is a good plan.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> presentation was well done.
- Essay was a nice summary

What went wrong?

- Too complex project.
- Target Group could be more specific.
- **Documentation wasn't thorough enough and too long.**
- First two final presentations could have been better.
- **Profile doesn't match practice.**
- Connection practice and Major not thought through on grounds of method with the course component.
- Connection OOO can simply be a design for an object, not more is required.
- Think a little bit **longer about what you can do in the public realm, it's not mandatory.**
- Be clear in your political position.
- **Essay isn't necessary**

What should I do differently, what can I learn from this (Opportunity & threats):

- Keep the project relatively simple
- Try to make it immediately tangible.
- **Don't add anything that isn't relevant.** Choose a super clear target group, if you can give them their names.
- **Don't work from a theoretical reference, but you can make references, you don't have to be difficult in that.**
- Make a description of your work and try to leave out anything none visual.
- Make your documentation short and to the point.
- Connection **practice and Major doesn't have to be complicated.** A visual Object suffices.
- Collaborate and discuss with your teachers your work. That will make it clear.
- **If you would like to do something in the public sphere, take your time to do so. If it's not needed, don't do it.**
- Design a singular object
- Make sure that your presentation is neat and tidy.
- Make your own political position clear.