

## INVITATION FOR EXPLORING HUMAN-OBJECT COLLABORATIONS

*Soft Invitation (Invitation of residents and guests into one of my interests)*

This little “scene” is a play-field for exploring material agency through human-object interaction. The play invites you to move away from the “puppeteer” mode of interaction where objects are controlled manipulated, where one becomes a “collaborator” with the objects.

In historically-conventional definitions, objects have been defined as passive entities granted agency by humans. This view implies a hierarchical, top-down model of engagement, where an object’s ontological status is externally bound. Such a perspective renders the object inert—something acted upon, rather than something acting *with*. Anthropologist Tim Ingold critiques this approach:

“I suggest that the problem of agency is born of the attempt to re-animate a world of things already deadened or rendered inert by arresting the flows of substance that give them life. In the EWO [environment without objects], things move and grow because they are alive, not because they have agency. And they are alive precisely because they have not been reduced to the status of objects.” (Ingold, 2010, p. 7)

This play seeks to undo the habitual patterns of engagement we’ve been taught—to reorient us toward perceiving and responding to the agency of materials. By doing so, we may open up new ways of questioning and that might reshape our relationships with the objects.

As you hold the magnet and approach the wire objects, a magnetic field activates. All agents become entangled: the magnet, the delicate wire forms, your hand, and the surface on which the interaction unfolds. Together, they co-create a shared and entangled habitat.

Within this entanglement, attend to your senses: of touch, movement, listening. What comes up in this relational field?

Here are some questions to play with:

- What kinds of relationality emerge between your hand, the magnet, the wire objects, and the surface?
- In this shared field, what could it mean to *support, bring forward, render capable, let be, or enable*—rather than to *tame or control*?
- How might you move with, rather than act upon the objects?

**Write here what bubbles-up from your play:**