



# What is Authenticity Please?

AUTHENTICITY PLEASE was about exploring the notion of authenticity relating to the internet and what constitutes authentic art, particularly in the digital age. What is authentic when it comes to how we consume different media and types of artwork.

Throughout the semester we looked at various pieces and forms of art from the last century leading up to the current day. Personally I found it particularly interesting to see how the development of different technologies influenced the perception of what is, and could be, a piece of art.

# #Selfie

So initially I took this task pretty literally and sought ways which I could physically take photos of myself. Anything that I found with a reflective surface I would see if I could go about getting a photo of myself visible. This was actually a really good introduction to how a DSLR works for me, as beforehand I had really only used my phone camera to take selfies.

While the exercise of finding ways to express ourselves in a photo was so that we can show others what our interests are, I found this task to be a perfect way in which I discovered the art of taking a photo. I've never found that I connect with traditional artwork much, however I've come to appreciate photography as an artistic medium much more than before now that I've had this chance to explore it on my own.



*The back of my front door*



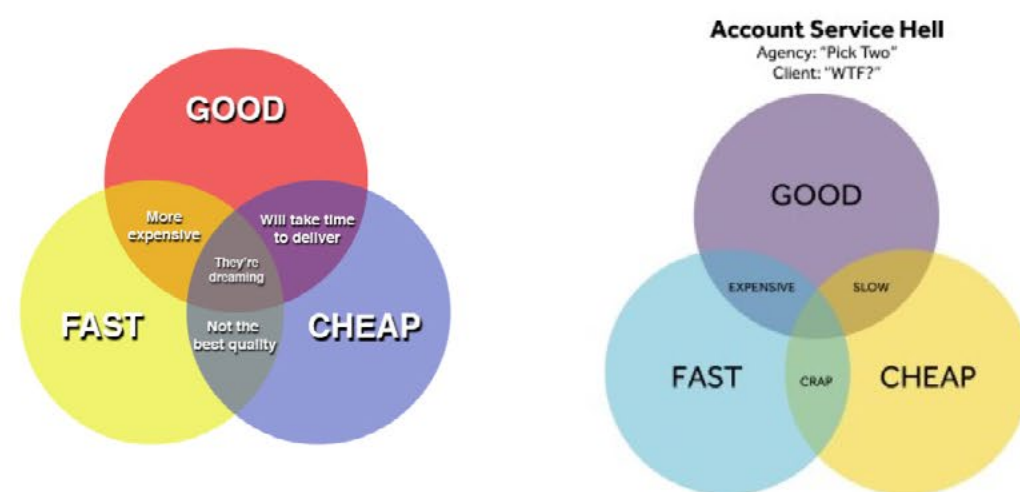
*My computer screen*

# Developing an idea

Tomas Byers

## AUTHENTICITY PLEASE - Mission statement

- Cheap products, why do they exist and why do we buy them when we know they are shit?
- Why do we get annoyed when a cheap product we buy breaks, is it because it looks like an expensive brand and so we expect it to perform the same?
- Do consumers fully understand what goes into the production of something to get the desired result?  
i.e.



If a product is not an original idea then is it still a real product?  
Nothing is an original idea though.  
Products are born from need, not from greed. (Getting into the history of invention now)



### 2. Star Trek (1966-1969)

The concept of the Communicator was so advanced at the time that mobile phone inventor Martin Cooper actually credits it as his major influence for developing the first Motorola cell phone.

comparing cheap products

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Full Face Drugstore vs. Highend Makeup Tutorial  
Christen Dominique 4.2M views · 1 year ago  
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Cheap vs Expensive Paint Watercolor Comparison ♡ Maremi's Small Art ♡  
Maremi SmallArt · 32K views · 9 months ago  
important links: ———♥♥♥♥♥ my Instagram: [http://instagram.com/maremis\\_small\\_art](http://instagram.com/maremis_small_art) my Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/>

Testing Cheap Drugstore Hair Products To Find The BEST | Dove, Axe, Old Spice, Got2B, American Crew  
alpha m. 880K views · 6 months ago  
25% Off Discount Code: HIGHQUALITY25 <http://peteandpedro.com> Pete & Pedro Putty (Award Winning): <https://peteandpedro.com/>

Price Comparison (World Most Expensive Things)  
Reigarw Comparisons 9M views · 1 year ago  
3D animated comparison of some of the most expensive stuff in the world. And how much stacks of \$100 you will need to buy that.

Screenshot of my notes when I was brainstorming different directions I could take with this project.

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=comparing+cheap+products&page=&utm\\_source=opensearch](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=comparing+cheap+products&page=&utm_source=opensearch)

This next part of the project I began by generally researching the factors which affect the product of a given item or product (pictured in the left image). I found I was quite interested in the concept of 'knock-offs' or 'fake' products - items which are designed to appear like a more expensive product but with a cheaper price tag and generally don't perform the same function as well. Perfect for discussion the notion of authenticity.

As I looked in this topic further I found it interesting how we, as the consumer, purchase a cheaper item fully knowing it to be of lesser value and yet still expecting it to perform like its more expensive counterpart.

**zubits**  
magnetic lacing solution

**16 lbs holding force**

Zubits "magnetic array" technology makes the strongest Neodymium magnets even stronger.

Shoelace securing clips included.

Sealed magnets. Waterproof. Will not corrode.

Self-align when closed.

Condensed magnetic array does not attract metal from the outside.

**DON'T BE FOOLED!**

**7 lbs holding force**

**FAKE**  
magnetic shoe closures

Weak disc magnets not strong enough to keep shoes closed.

No securing clips included.

Exposed magnets loosen, fall out, and corrode if wet.

Attracts metal or nails to stick to the outside

WARNING: Fakes are being sold under many names but they are all the same.

<https://zubits.com/>

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<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/underworld-inc/video-gallery/>

EPISODE 237

**Dollar Store Town: Inside the World's Biggest Wholesale Market**

Category: Objects | Date: 11.22.16 | Producer: 99pi

**G**o into any dollar store in the United States and you'll find the same kind of stuff. There are grocery items and cleaning products, some of them generic and others brand-named. But then there are other things for sale—toys and jewelry and knick-knacks that have a kind of generic cheapness to them.

Dollar stores are not just a U.S. phenomenon. They can be found in Australia and the United Kingdom, the Middle East and Mexico. And a lot of the stuff—the generic cheap stuff for sale in these stores—comes from one place. A market in China, called the International Trade Market, or: the Futian market.

<https://99percentinvisible.org/episode/dollar-store-town-inside-worlds-biggest-wholesale-market/>

I think I'm getting somewhere...

I found the whole concept of 'fake' products really intriguing - how can an object that someone put time and care into designing be regarded as 'fake'?

I wanted to find a way to have a conversation around what constitutes an authentic product; an authentic idea. Because no idea is ever really original if it comes from a shared need that we all have.

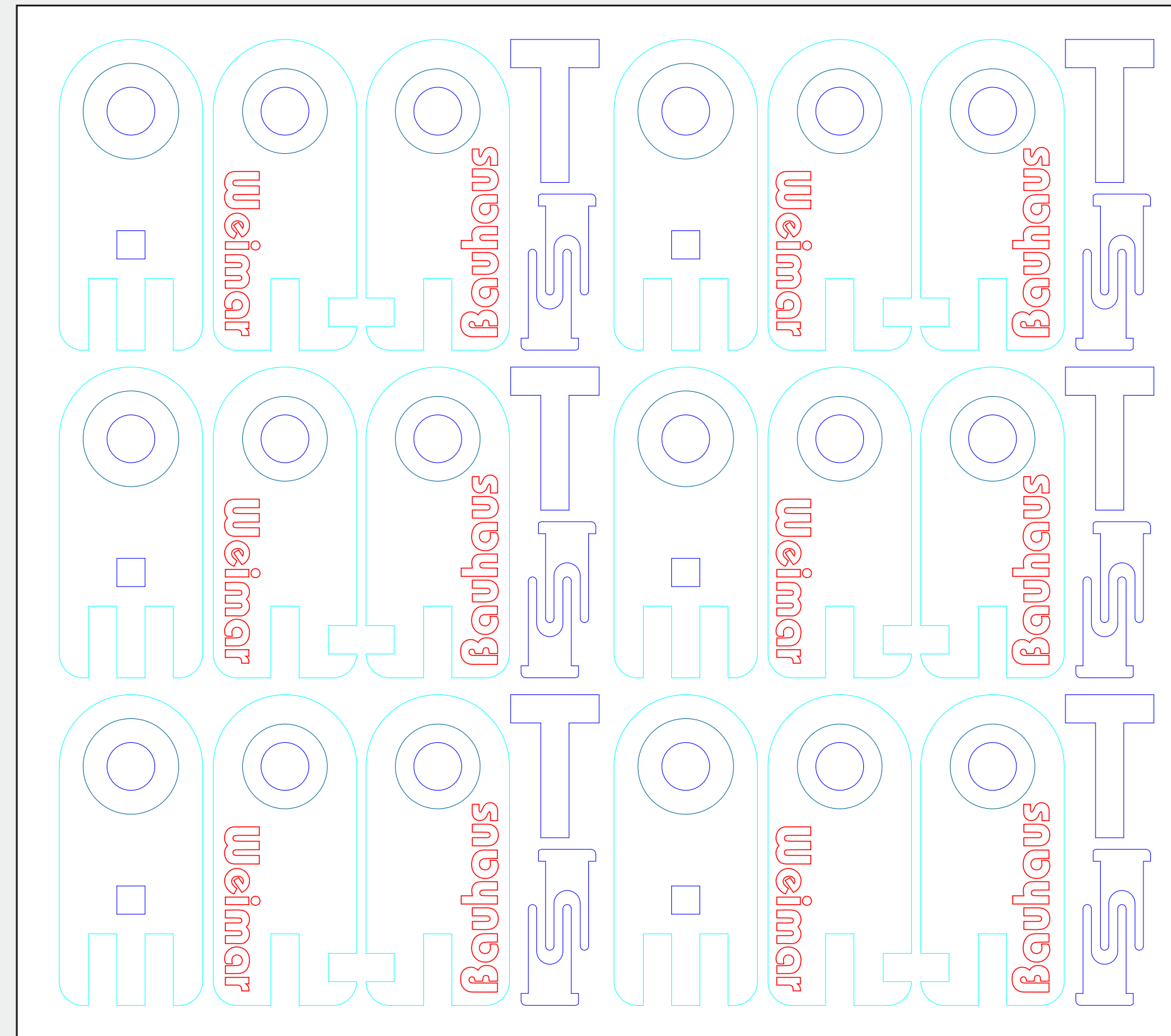
# Designing the Resolverator

The Resolverator is a small, wooden device that revolves about itself. It's basically a cool, little gadget that demonstrates what you can do with laser cutting.

I will admit that I didn't have much of a goal in making this device; I was using the laser cutter for a different project at the time and thought it was a good idea. The resolverator turned out to be a good little product to feature in the Winterwerkschau 2017 as I could ask actual people how much they would pay for something I made.



The laser cutter at work



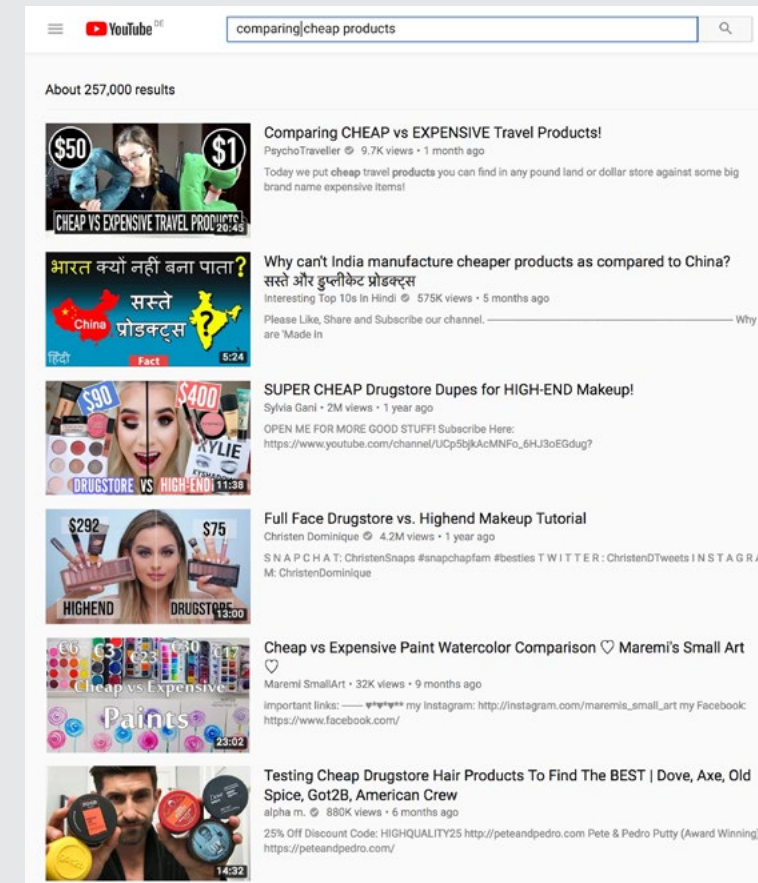
Laser cutting PDF for the Resolverator

# The Poster

Tomas Byers | Bauhaus Universität Weimar 2017/2018



## HOW DO YOU MAKE SOMETHING?



How much does it cost to make something?

*How much are you willing to pay for what you need?*

Where do you stop paying for something you need, and start paying for a brand?

*Objects and tools have always come from a need.*

If something is not an original idea, then is it still a real product?

*However, what is truly original...*

This poster was, admittedly, put together last minute because I needed my exhibition to have a feature that wasn't just a weird looking device on a table. My aim with the poster was to give context to the conversation I was attempting to have around product value and the consumer society we have.

Regardless of if I ended up achieving that conversation or not, it didn't stop me from plonking some images and words on a page and then running off the printing shop before the exhibition opened...



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My (quick) poster aimed at encouraging viewers to consider their perceived value of a product

TOMAS BYERS - BAUHAUS UNIVERSITÄT 2017/2018  
AUTHENTICITY PLEASE - JÖRG BRINKMANN

# The Exhibition & Reflection

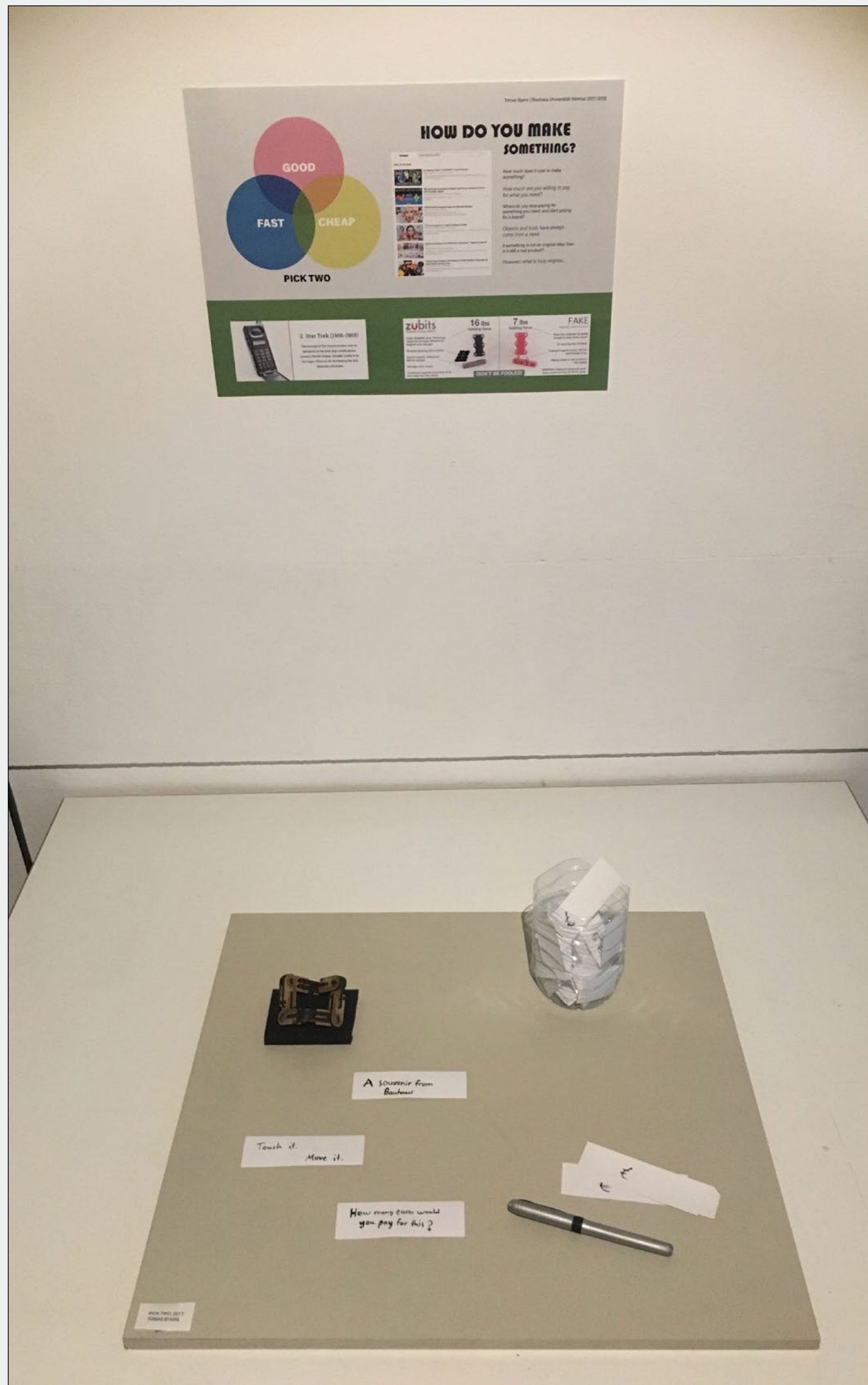
My exhibition consisted of the aforementioned poster, one lasercut resolverator and a pen with some paper asking participants to write down what they would pay for this device. The answers I received ranged between €2 and €15 with most being around €7 - €8.

While I'm not sure if the participants thought much more about the philosophy behind human value and price, I would have liked to make another resolverator out of a different material and run the same test again. I felt that I spent a lot of time in this class researching and trying to decide what I felt was the direction I wanted to take.

To bring it back to what I said at the start about photography, I think that I have enjoyed this class immensely because of the conversations we all had. Discussing the notion of Authenticity in such a broad spectrum of mediums but also being able to see what it means to an individual artist has really influenced the way in which I think about art.

"You can copy and paste, but nothing is ever real" - Jörg when he was talking about authenticity on the internet.

TOMAS BYERS - BAUHAUS UNIVERSITÄT 2017/2018  
AUTHENTICITY PLEASE - JÖRG BRINKMANN



My little stand in the exhibition room



The Resolverator