

Get back
to living

CONTENT CATALOG

2026-
2027



BRICK
SOCIETY

It's never been harder to be a part of the tech community if you have a basic level of empathy.

Brick Society is a Creative Technology Collective focused on what our tech oligarchs are set on leaving behind - community, compassion, and genuine, hard-earned skill.

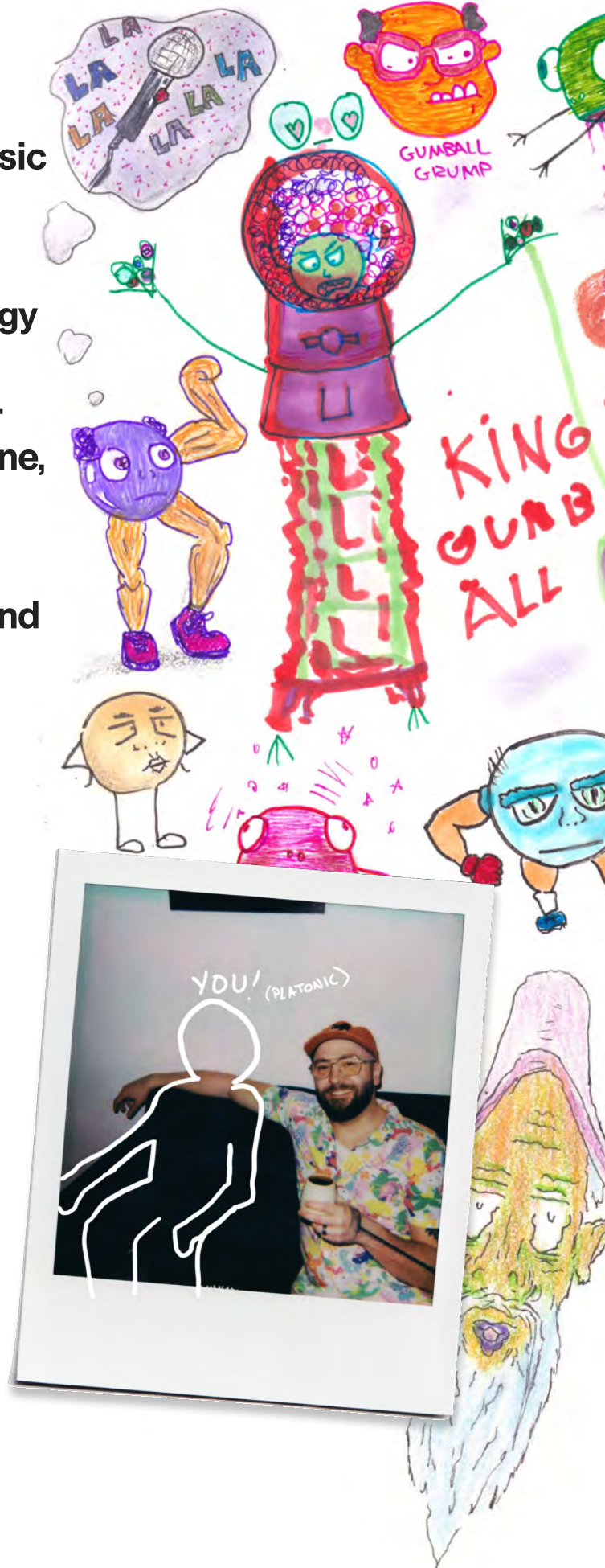
Small groups, live classes, on-demand feedback and support, lead by industry veteran and design educator **Nick Anderson**.

After seven months of wild experimentation, following my instincts, and then refining those instincts with a live and verbose community, I'm happy to share Brick Society's first Content Catalog.

Inside is over 30 workshops, lectures, games, and outlandish activities crafted to reignite the intrinsic passion for creating technology for other human beings, in a world increasingly favoring bots and algorithms.

If something here inspires you, reach out and let's talk about what it would look like for you or your team. Let's make something weird together.

-Nick Anderson



How it Works



- 1** Brick Society is a Collective of Nick's best and brightest former students, colleagues, and like-minded professional creatives.
- 2** Members connect through a private network to exchange ideas, share stories, and teach what they know.
- 3** These ideas turn into internal events that gather feedback and opportunities for collaboration.
- 4** The best content is refined, debated, verified, and then added to the content catalog for the year.
- 5** Nick and/or other Brick Society members will show up where you are, digitally or physically, to share what our collective has learned.



Building an Experience

Our workshops can be a one-off experience, a series, or a recurring practice.

Below are some possibilities, but 2026 is the year of adaptability. If you need something different or have an idea, pitch it! We love a challenge.

One-Off Workshops

We're happy to stop in for an hour or two, give a talk or run a workshop, and then let you get back to work.

We've got plenty of pre-built content (check the next page!) but we're also happy to make something bespoke for your team.

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Workshop Series

We can also build a set of workshops around a specific topic or issue, scheduled around your team's availability.

These can be sequential (for example, a multi-week course on web development), or a random assortment of workshops or talks.

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Recurring

Let us take care of the routine maintenance - we can run weekly retros, creative studio time, emotional checkins, or monthly games.

While we already have quite a few pre-built (page 11), we're happy to brainstorm some more.

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12



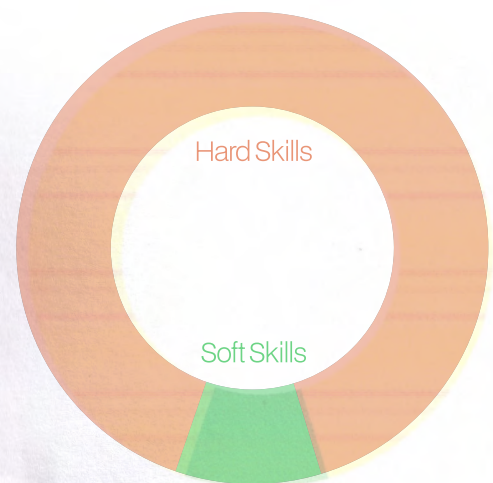
Brick Society Approach to Upskilling and Continuing Education

Through two research studies we performed in 2025 and Spring of 2026, we've seen a shift in what creative technology workers need to do their best work. And it's a significant departure from the colleges and bootcamps that lead us to this point.

Traditional Model: Hard Skills Ad Nauseam

Organizations like Coursera and LinkedIn Learning continue this method, providing **short, async, non-participatory content** based around learning a single, mechanical skill. Content concerning soft skills are either left out, or at best, presented in a "tips and tricks" format that emphasizes shortcuts over deep understanding.

Traditional

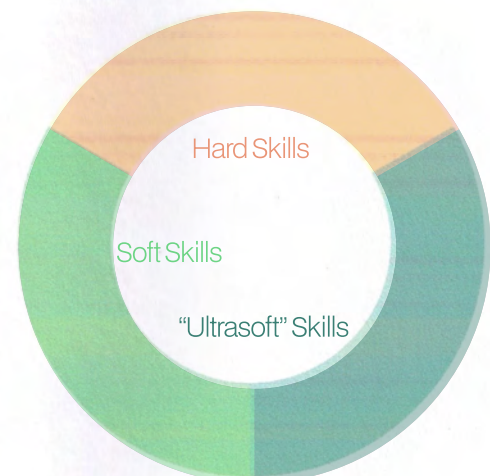


Research-Backed Model: Human-Centered

In reality, managers, C-Suite, and creatives like designers, developers and marketers all reported a shift from focusing purely on hard skills, to **proficiency in using skills on the job**.

It's not that surprising - given the proliferation of AI tools, team consolidation into siloed apps like Figma, and the millions of Youtube tutorials teaching them for free - **hard skills aren't the barrier to entry anymore. It's how you use them.**

Research-Backed



Skill Types

Hard Skills

Mechanical Knowledge

Hard skills are where we all start - without these, the work can't get done in the first place.

It's never been easier to access this kind of learning thanks to resources like YouTube - as a result, **Brick Society focuses on niche and under-taught fundamentals.**



Image Manipulation: How to Work with & Optimize Image Files

Soft Skills

Actionable Wisdom

Soft skills are easily 70% of any creative job; they're what make you a professional. **These skills can rarely be learned solo**, instead they require on-the-job experience, group work (ex. Hackathons), or coaching to refine.

We put together **small, focused cohorts** on a variety of subjects to explore together, lead by seasoned industry professionals.



Eugh, People: A Workshop on Dealing with Humans

"Ultrasoft" Skills

Self-Preservation

Creative tech workers are reporting burnout at record numbers - many of us were never taught the skill of self-repair.

"Ultrasoft" skills harness the ability to care for yourself and grow your creative foundation.

The further a creative gets in their career, the less opportunity they have to explore alternative skills and travel down paths that don't guarantee success. We've created **workshops ranging from serious to downright whimsical** to shake the dust and help remind us why we got into this line of work in the first place.



Imposter Syndrome



Workshops by Dominant Skill

Hard Skills

Mechanical Knowledge



Image Manipulation: How to Work with & Optimize Image Files

Image quality is a joint effort between designers and developers, yet it's often pushed off by both teams.

Participants will review real files and case study examples to hone their understanding of how imagery is processed on the web.

Also features **Soft Skills**



Scoping: How to Budget Your Time & Not Blow Estimates

There is a choice every creative worker must make - to learn how time works, or spend the rest of their nights making git commits at 3am. If you're excited to learn more about option 1, then this workshop is for you.

Participants will learn simple methods for estimating effort, assigning a percentage of risk, and fairly charging for their time.

Also features **Soft Skills**, **Ultrasoft Skills**



Create Your Own Typeface: A How-To Workshop

How hard can it be to make your own font?

The answer, of course, is very - but that will not stop us from showing you exactly how to go about it.

Participants will leave with their very own font - even if it sucks - as well as a wealth of typographical knowledge.



Texture, Mixed Media, & Physical Objects in Digital Design

Modern websites are often completely vector-based except for photographs, and AI is only accelerating flat design. What about scanning physical objects, using collage techniques, and bringing texture back into digital?

Participants will learn techniques for incorporating found objects, interesting textures, and other analog materials into digital design.



Understanding AI

Forget about workflows and tokens - this workshop is focused simply on understanding WHAT the current forms of AI are, and HOW they work.

Participants will start with the roots of AI as written in classical literature, to our first forms of narrow AI, up through machine learning and neural networks.

Hard Skills (Continued)

Mechanical Knowledge



Steal Better: Finding & Using Public Domain Assets

Learn how Public Domain and Creative Commons licenses work, and how to utilize the free archives that already exist. No previous experience necessary!

Participants will leave with a better understanding of copyright law, and a stack of new resourcing methods to obtain free imagery, movies, and music.



Design Trends Report

Every year we're inundated with curated trend lists, from major agencies to individual influencers - but how useful are they?

Participants will be led in an engaging discussion and debate on the accuracy, merits, and helpfulness of our industry's top prognosticators.

Also features **Soft Skills**, **Ultrasoft Skills**



How The Web Works

So - what even IS internet? From your most basic questions, to the client-server relationship, to hand-coding your first website, we're here to inform the non-technical in clear, non-judgmental language.

Note: This class can be as long as you want it to be, from a single session to multiple weeks of content. Write Nick for details.

Participants will leave with a clearer understanding of how websites and IT work, and depending on the number of sessions, a basic website they've made themselves and a Github account with a few green squares!



Gamification without Addiction

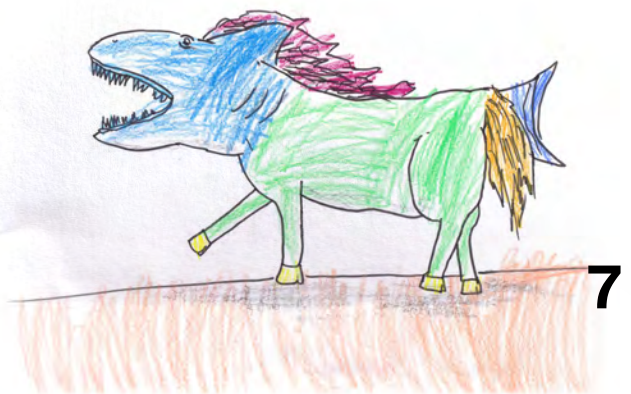
While social media has used gamification to create endless scroll addiction, there are still ethical, helpful ways to make tasks more enjoyable.

Participants will learn the basics of game theory as well as a variety of use cases from successful projects.

Topics In Development

Any of these peak your interest? Let us know and we can talk about what it would take to get them ready for you.

- Design Tokens
- Raspberry Pi Basics
- Web3, Federated Internet, & dWeb
- Sustainability
- Filter Bubbles & False Consensus



Soft Skills

Actionable Wisdom



Working with Developers

Modern tech workers are often separated by discipline, making it hard to learn anything about what the more technical team members you work with do.

Participants will learn ways to break down that technical barrier and align interests even when you're (literally) not speaking the same language.

Also features **Hard Skills**



Staying True in a Post-Ethics Tech Industry

If you, like so many others, are feeling that perhaps your hard-won skills are being put to work on questionable things, come and let us talk you through ways to identify and approach the unethical work being dropped on your desk.

Participants will walk through specific ways to push back and take ownership of their work.

Also features **Ultrsoft Skills**



Job Hunting in a Broken System

If you're like most job-seekers, you are thwarted at every step while applying for jobs. Fake posts, AI-filtering, and global access to all opportunities has created a hellscape that can easily make it seem hopeless to keep pursuing work.

Participants will explore the less-trodden paths to work, like community building, networking, and direct action.

Also features **Hard Skills**, **Ultrsoft Skills**



Tech/Design Challenges & Soft Skill Practice

There's nothing like the fear of being handed a whiteboard marker during an interview - but we can at least make it less scary.

Participants will walk through timeless strategies for tech and design challenges, as well as strategies for answering soft skill questions regardless of the situation.

Also features **Hard Skills**



Simple Sabotage: Fighting Fascism in Modern Online Spaces

In 1944, the US created the "Simple Sabotage Field Manual" to distribute to resistance groups in Nazi-occupied countries, showing how to grind oppressive forces to a halt, all without violence or detection. In this workshop, we're distributing an updated version.

Participants will learn the current state of mass surveillance, and how to combat unwanted data collection in a number of scenarios.

Also features **Hard Skills**, **Ultrsoft Skills**

Soft Skills (Continued)

Actionable Wisdom



Storytelling

Almost every creative project comes down to the story you tell about it - whether it's convincing a client, talking about your previous work, or knowing how to present yourself. **Note: This class can be as long as you want it to be, from a single session to multiple weeks of content.** Write Nick for details.

Participants will learn universal tools for explaining decisions and skills, as well as build a personal resource for future storytelling.

Also features **Hard Skills**, **Ultrasoft Skills**



Eugh, People: A Workshop on Dealing with Humans

Our work is mostly talking to people - and unfortunately, you rarely get to decide which people.

Participants will explore tactile strategies and mental models that will help them strategize their approach in collaborative work.

Also features **Ultrasoft Skills**



Job Search Tracking & Strategy

You're not keeping track, are you? No wonder you panic every month, give up, only to do the same thing a few weeks later. THERE'S A BETTER WAY.

Participants will learn essential skills and tracking models for managing the job search like a Product Owner - except the product is you!

Also features **Hard Skills**



Design Studio

Sometimes, you just need a little structure and pressure to get the work done.

Participants will be led through a one-hour, classic Design Studio session. The exercise can be used as an opportunity to break through a tough problem, or simply as a demonstration for how to use them on future roadblocks.

Also features **Hard Skills**

Topics In Development

Any of these peak your interest? Let us know and we can talk about what it would take to get them ready for you.

- Surviving Toxicity on the Job
- Client Combat: Pushing Back
- Design Advocacy
- AI Ethics



Ultrasoft Skills

Self-Preservation



De-Corporatizing Your Life

If you're sick of Enshittification, here's one way to fight back.

Participants will be introduced to techniques and software options to start small on pulling back from big tech, with solutions that are digital, physical, and mental.

Also features **Hard Skills**



Maintenance in an Era of Innovation

After 30+ years of nonstop innovation, the digital roads we use daily are looking a little worse for the wear.

Participants will explore the impacts of the techno-optimism that led us here, and learn strategies for maintaining the most essential systems for the most vulnerable populations.



You've Been A Wonderful Audience: Safe Space Presentations

Having trouble articulating your project decisions? Come and practice in front of kind, supportive folks that have been exactly where you are.

Participants will need to bring some piece of current or past work to discuss.

Also features **Soft Skills**

ABOLISH! Series

ABOLISH! is a lecture series in which we take a concept we assume is positive and argue against it.



Abolish Speed

In Abolish Speed, we take aim at every project manager's favorite metric - velocity! Would we do better work if we moved slower? And perhaps more importantly, could we still get things done and make a living?



Abolish Easy

In Abolish Easy, we examine our culture's current obsession with avoiding difficulty, and what we stand to gain by taking the harder route.



Abolish Efficiency

In Abolish Efficiency, we're talking about effectiveness, and all the things it can mean - at work, in our craft, and for the clients we do business with. Are there advantages to having a few bumps along the road?

Ultrasoft Skills: Recurring Group Workshops

The following workshops function better as a series, and require more group participation.



Group Art Time

Join in some side-by-side arts and crafts time! Doesn't matter what your art form is - bring something half finished and go.

Participants will work on art together in a shared space. At the end they can talk about it, screen share it, or keep it to themselves.

Also features **Hard Skills**, **Soft Skills**



Hobby Talk

The science is clear - creatives who don't engage in some other kind of meaningful activity will lose their minds. So, what are you doing to keep sane? All types of hobbies are encouraged - crafting, collecting, playing, whatever!

Participants will be given a time slot to talk about and/or show their favorite hobby to the group. Discussion and questions encouraged!

Also features **Hard Skills**, **Soft Skills**



Retro

WHAT A WEEK! Forget the standard metrics - this is a time to check in emotionally, share our triumphs and struggles, and learn more about folks we don't normally get to interact with.

Participants are given access to a shared board and are encouraged to share everything EXCEPT the metrics they're used to presenting in meetings.

Also features **Soft Skills**



Unlicensed Group Therapy

We're required by law to tell you that there are no therapists on staff here - but there isn't any at Better Help either, so how bad could this be?

Participants discuss their week - professional and personal, technical and philosophical, with our team of empathetic creative weirdos.

Topics In Development

Any of these peak your interest? Let us know and we can talk about what it would take to get them ready for you.

- The Right to Repair Movement
- Understanding & Developing Taste
- A Paradise Built in Hell: Case Studies on Disaster Design
- Consciousness & Intelligence in AI



Games & Creative Exploration

Gameplay is a crucial part of all societies, especially when collaboration is expected to get things done. At Brick Society, we skip the classic get-to-know-yous and jump straight into the deep end. These games are **designed to teach skills and create lasting engagement**, as well as provide some “good friction” to move us past pleasantries into actual problem-solving.



Archive.Org Show & Tell

Inspiration can only come if we're actively collecting experiences outside of our bubble - and Archive.Org is about as far outside of daily life as you can get!

Players will scour Archive.Org before the session and come ready to present up to three entries for Most Interesting Thing Found on Archive.Org!



PechaKucha Battle

PechaKucha is a Japanese storytelling format in which a presenter shows 20 slides for 20 seconds per slide, telling a story with minimal text. Not only is it great for building public speaking, there is - of course - a surprise twist.

Participants will prep a deck beforehand and can work alone or in teams - but only two teams will make it to the Chaos Round.



KILL ALL GIANTS!

Tired of our tech overlords towering over us? Then grab that sling! In this game, teams compete to create features for the tech monopoly of their choice that they believe will drive their user base away once and for all.

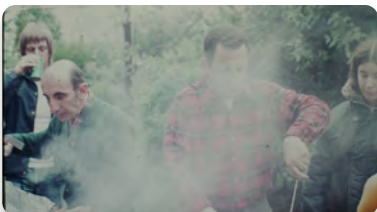
Players will work in a timed round to create the pitch, and are judged not just on competency and creativity, but on the likelihood that your terrible feature could, in fact, end up in a future build.



Bad App Pitch Meeting

Teams or individuals compete to create the worst idea for an app. Bonus points to teams that are able to create a slide deck or proof of concept for the judges.

Players will work in a timed round to create the pitch; entries are judged on hilarity, creativity, and feasibility.



Portfolio/Work Roast

Seasoned design instructor Nick Anderson will roast your work, portfolio, or whatever else needs honest critique. As harsh as it is practical, this is a longstanding crowd-favorite for the roastee and the audience alike.

Participants will hear some earnest and much needed critique, while the audience learns best practices that can be applied to their own work.

Games & Creative Exploration Continued



Personas Non Gratis, The Collectable Card Game

We're used to judging our work against personas that represent the people we want to use our product - but how about the ones we're trying to keep away?

Teams or individuals will take turns presenting work while drawing anti-persona cards to "battle" against. For instance a hacker, stalker, disinformationist, etc.



Exquisite Corpse ADVANCED!

Despite the morbid name, this is a classic grade school art activity - each participant draws a bit, then passes it to the next person, until one collaborative work is finished. What makes our version Advanced is our modern digital tools and our "Client Request" mechanic (Spoiler Alert: They have a lot of ideas).

Participants will get a starting point, based on the skills and predilection of the whole group. Client Requests are thrown in randomly to increase chaos.



Client Horror Stories

👻OOoooOOOoo!!!!👻 Bring your scariest client stories. Names and places can be changed, but we want to know the spine-tingling truth!

Participants will need to prep a story ahead of time, and are encouraged to structure their story like a classic campfire tale (S'mores available on request). Best story will be awarded a spooky prize.



The Self-Driving Trolley Problem

What's your thoughts on self-driving cars? Because you're about to have a lot more of them!

Participants will work as a team to design the guiding rules of a self-driving car, and in doing so learn a lot about unconscious bias, ethical assumptions, the concept of predestination and the paradox of free will.

Trigger Warning: This session by necessity discusses fatal car crashes, including those involving children and animals. The discourse is timely and important, but may be too much for some participants and teams.

Got a tough nut to crack?

Games make it easier! If you need a way to relieve some tension, find a better solution, or change up a process, [send me a message](#) and I'll see what we can do. After 9 years of teaching and raising two curious and stubborn children, I can make almost anything into a game (except for brushing your teeth. I still haven't solved that one).



Brick Society Member Talks & Workshops

The power of Brick Society is the members - dozens of passionate creatives excited to share what they know with you. If there's something you want your team know, just ask - chances are, someone in our collective can speak on it, or knows someone who can.

Here's a look at some previous events and talks run by our members:



Bread & Roses with Courtney Estes

Courtney Estes (Senior UX Designer at CPI Security) told the story of her unlikely start in the industry - running restaurants. Like many of the best designers, she began her study in a seemingly unrelated field, only to find that the human factors of systems design don't change with the medium. Her journey is hardly straightforward - Courtney shared her experience of tragedy, perseverance, and compromise with remarkable vulnerability in a talk all creatives should hear.



Best Case, Worst Case: Research Reality Feat. Erin Piccinati & Kellie McDonald

How much does research really matter? Senior designers Erin and Kellie compared notes from opposite ends of the spectrum: one whose project has allotted the time and budget for robust research, and one who has had to fit it in wherever the project allows. They shared real lessons from both sides and taught practical ways to champion research on your team, no matter what your project allows for. They also showed us their matching tattoos and told stories that made us believe that there is still magic to be discovered in life.



Ask An Engineer: No Stupid Questions

Zeb Girouard hosted a lengthy Q&A session in which he answered burning questions about software engineering, especially the dumb ones! Zeb has had an illustrious, 20-year career in both Engineering AND Education (not to mention a minor in Creative Writing and Spanish from Carnegie Mellon!) - but unlike that one crabby developer that's always "away" on Teams, Zeb is ready to give his knowledge away freely.



The Design of Historical Preservation

As the lone employee at the Edgewater Historical Society, Heather Keller has the unique perspective of how the design process is being applied all around us, both digitally and in the context of historical architecture. The act of preservation is a reminder of human resilience and capability, and a testament to how our design choices echo through the rest of history.

Brick Society Member Talks & Workshops Cont.



Music for Non-Existent Worlds

Brick Society's resident music curator Walker Esslinger (of Walker's Record Shop fame) took us through the process of creating music that matches experiences - even experiences that haven't happened yet.



Physical Prototype Design

Zoe Calish lives the life promised to us in Art School - playing with cardboard and petting dogs all day. With a team of industrial designers, Zoe's orchestrated physical spaces like Veterinarian waiting rooms and makeup counters, and made a lot of cool physical prototypes as a result.



Value vs Worth

As a researcher that's worked for Microsoft, Thomson Reuters and more, Lina Rothman has been asking great questions for her entire career. In this talk, Lina walked us through her strategy for working towards what actually matters in life.

Looking for something specific?

Let us know what kind of content you're looking for, and there's a good chance we have a member who can speak to it.

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Thanks for reading the

**CONTENT
CATALOG!**

That's all for now.

Don't be a stranger!

Hope to see you in Brick Society or at a future event. Reach out if you have questions or wanna book some time to talk through your ideas:

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